

Introduction

Oakton is in the process of migrating all users from Windows NT to XP operating system. Microsoft no longer provides technical support for NT and ultimately Oakton will no longer be able to support it either.

To date, most computer labs have been set up as NT-XP 'dual boot' (capable of running either operating system); users choose the desired OS from a short menu available when the computer initially boots up. Many computers in offices, on individual request, have also been set up as dual boot.

During this time of transition, new software application programs have been installed only for XP use. This is because many new programs require the XP operating system plus the same software application must be installed separately for each operating system.

Because of hard drive space limitations, many labs are now moving toward XP-only for fall 2004.

Operating Systems vs. Application Programs

An operating system is the core software on a computer. It determines how the computer executes commands, how files are stored, how peripheral devices like printers and keyboards communicate, etc. Application programs work on top of operating systems and allow users to perform specific functions such as word processing.

OS Examples: Windows XP, Windows NT, Windows 98, Mac OSX, Unix.

Application Examples: Microsoft Word, Photoshop, Netscape Communicator.

The terminology often becomes blurred to the user in part because Microsoft not only bundles many application programs with its Windows operating systems, it uses the 'XP,' '98,' etc. version designations for both the OS and applications, such as Microsoft Office.

Workshop Goals

This workshop is intended to acquaint users moving from Windows NT to XP with the new steps for the most common tasks like launching application programs, opening and storing files, and managing the desktop. **Workshops on Office XP (latest versions of Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint) will be offered separately.**

Also covered will be customizing functionality and appearance and an introduction to new XP features and utilities.

Starting XP

If XP is available on your computer it will either launch by default or you can select it from an opening menu. *See the standard login directions.*

Overview of the Desktop

There are a few key aspects to understand about differences and similarities between the NT and XP desktops as they appear & behave on Oakton workstations.



NT Desktop



XP Desktop

Similarities:

- Both have a task bar running across the bottom (default position) with a start menu to the left, a system tray to the right, and buttons representing running applications in the middle
- Both can have icons representing shortcuts to programs or files floating on the desk top

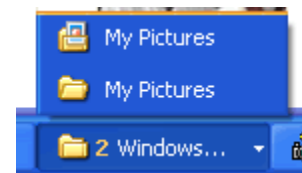
Differences:

- XP provides fewer default shortcut icons
 - Start menu absorbs some functionality
 - Shortcuts have inherent problems with launching programs that is compounded by dual boot
 - [Workshop Discussion - shortcut problems, esp. with XP]

- XP System tray can temporarily expand to reveal less critical icons
 - Click the arrow to expand or contract the tray



- Buttons on the taskbar behave differently
 - Files opened in a single app may be grouped into one button
 - Right-click to reveal and restore open files
 - Open app windows can be minimized as a group without affecting other apps.

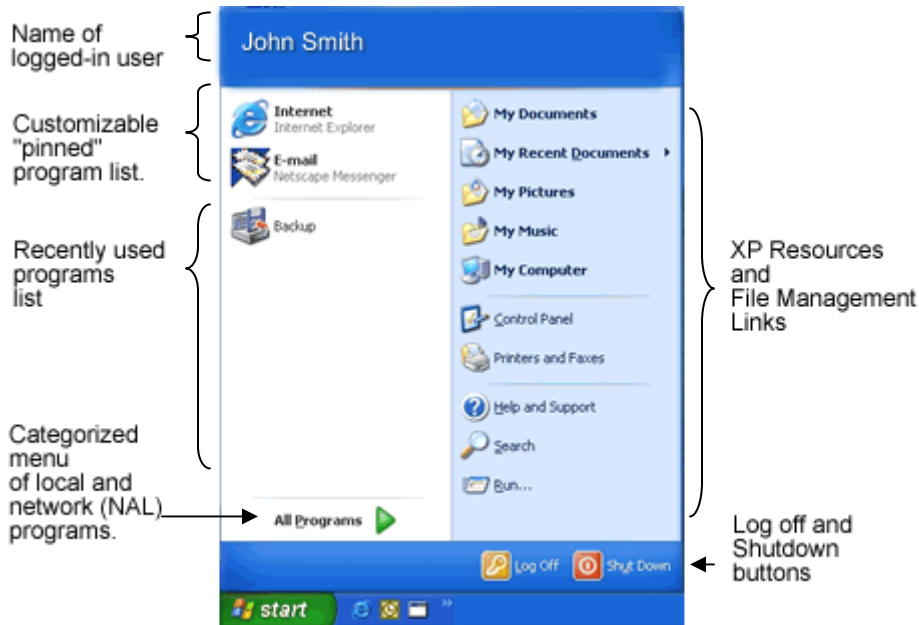


- XP's Start Menu has expanded functionality and greater customizability

The Start Menu

The XP Start Menu still provides the key functions of launching applications, system management, file management, and logoff/shutdown.

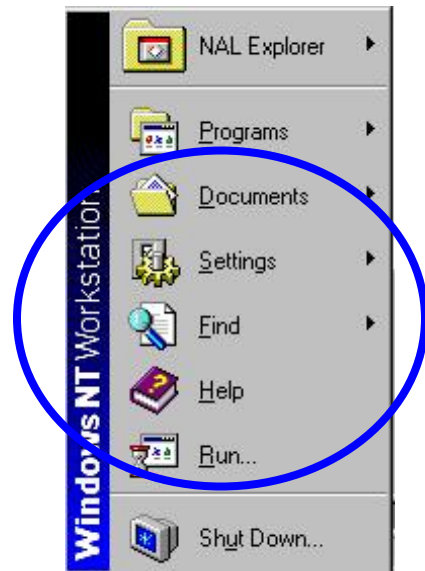
However, working within XP focuses more on the Start Menu than it did in NT. Familiar functions have been relocated within the menu, some others have been split or (re-)grouped, and still others have been renamed.



Along the right side of the menu are links to XP Resources and File management items like those found in NT on either the desktop (like 'My Computer') or the old start menu.

Some menu changes include:

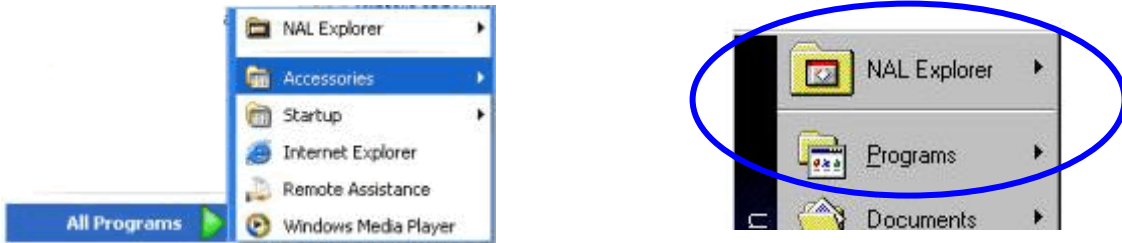
- NT's "Documents" becomes XP's "My Recent Documents"
 - "My Documents," "My Pictures," and "My Music" are new menu items—though they were available via My Computer under your H: drive *
- "My Computer" moves from NT's desktop to XP's start menu
- "Control Panel" and "Printers" move from NT's Settings to high-level visibility on the XP menu
- NT's Help becomes XP's Help & Support (and incorporates more web-based help)
- NT's Find becomes XP's Search
- "Run" is still "Run"



* When viewing the 'My *whatever*' folders in XP, they may appear to be mapped to the desktop rather than H:.

- Log off and Shut down are now both visible on the lower right XP menu. NT hid Log off as an option under Shut Down.

XP's "All Programs" incorporates a link to NAL (applications on the network) and locally installed programs, including Accessories like Notepad, Calculator and Media Player.



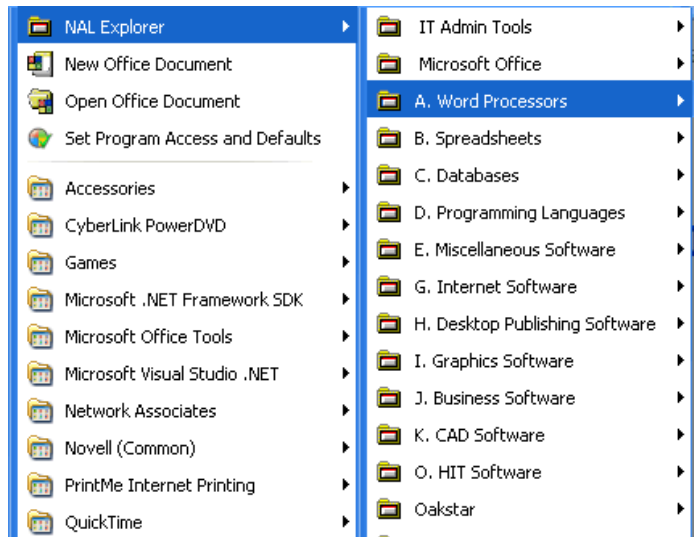
Finding & Starting Programs

XP at Oakton relies more on launching programs from the Start menu than from icons on the desktop. Launching network programs from the NAL menu helps programs load properly; launching from a desktop shortcut in our environment can result in programs missing features.

Local and network programs are found under All Programs on the Start menu. Network programs are found off All Programs' NAL sub-menu.

NAL menu choices are still divided into categories (displayed as shown here on cascading sub-menus). Some categories reflect types of programs, like 'Word Processors,' while others reflect programs of study, like 'Nursing.'

Note that Microsoft Office has it's own category PLUS individual apps like Word appear also in other categories.

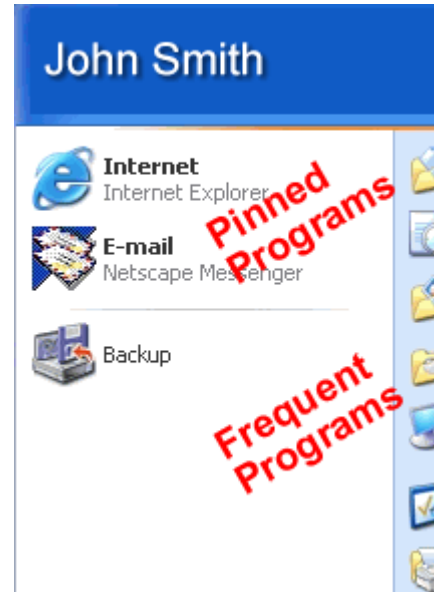


EXERCISE: LAUNCHING APPLICATIONS AND OPENING A FILE

Start Menu: Pinned Programs & Frequently Used Programs

XP allows for customizing the Start Menu typically in either of two ways.

1. The Recently/Frequently Used programs list will contain shortcuts to a number of applications the logged-in user often runs. The default number of programs listed is 6 but can be changed under Start menu properties (see Customizing the Start Menu)
2. The top-left portion of the Start Menu can be manually changed to include various local and network applications, whether you use them frequently or not. To add shortcuts, drag an application's icon into the top left of the Start Menu from any of the All Programs sub menus.



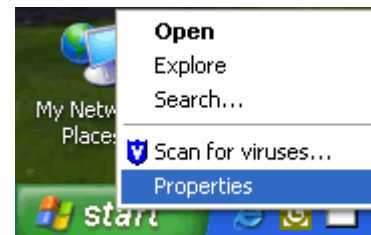
- **EXERCISE: ADDING TO THE PINNED PROGRAM LIST**

Customizing Start Menu & Task Bar Properties

Many functional and display aspects of the Start Menu and Task Bar can be adjusted to personal preference. In fact, users can reset the XP look and layout to look like "Classic" (older NT/98/95) versions of Windows—though this sacrifices XP's new features.

To customize the Start Menu

1. Right-click on the green Start button in the lower left of the screen
2. On the menu that appears, left-click on Properties
3. The Properties dialog window will appear.

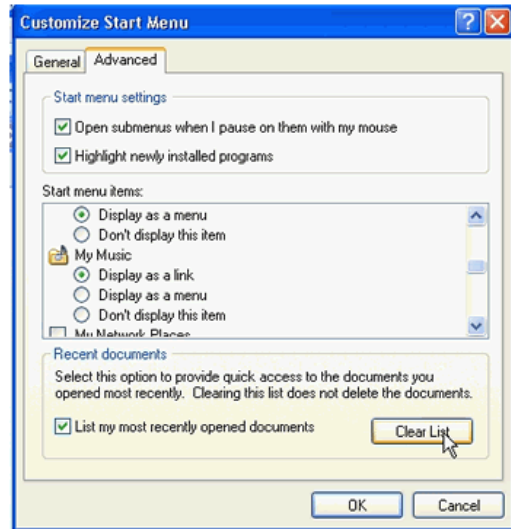


4. Click the Start Menu tab
 - The opening page will offer you the option of changing between the default XP-style menu and the 'Classic menu.'
 - You may toggle between the options clicking the radio buttons. Changes won't take effect until you click OK
5. Click Customize (upper button with normal Start Menu selected) to see additional options for the XP layout



The Customize Start Menu will appear.

- The General tab view allows users to change the size of program icons, declare the number of programs that show on the Frequently Used list, and choose which browser and email program to show on the Start Menu.
- The Advanced tab view allows users to add or delete most all items on the Start Menu. You may also change whether, for instance, clicking your My Documents menu item launches a folder (“display as a link”) or cascades a submenu (“display as a menu”).
 - Also under Advanced: you can clear the list of your ‘My Recent Documents.’



Desktop Display Properties

The overall look and settings of the XP Desktop can also be altered. To launch the Display properties dialog window:

1. Right-click anywhere on the open desktop area
2. Choose ‘Properties’ from the popup menu

Changes can be made in 5 areas (under individual tabs)

Themes

- Modify combinations of backgrounds and color schemes

Desktop

- Select and customize desktop backgrounds (like the default sky & field image)

Screen Saver

- Adjust screen savers and power management settings

Appearance

- Change look and behavior of dialog windows

Settings

- Change screen resolution and color quality

Note: The above start menu and desktop appearance changes can alternatively be made Appearances and Themes from XP’s Control Panel

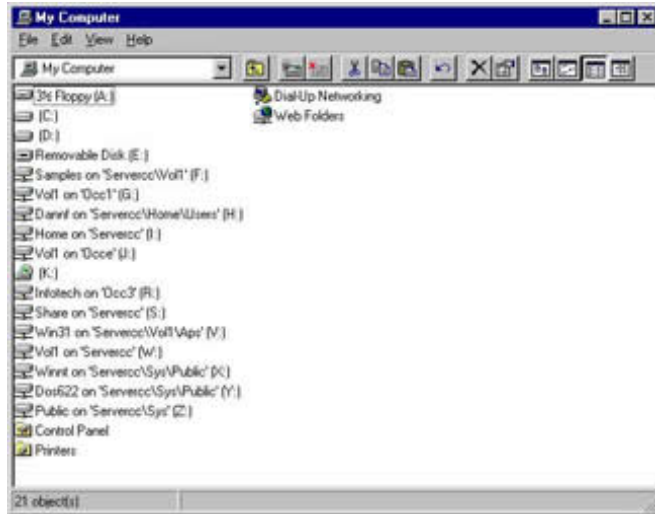


Managing Files

While Windows Explorer is still *available* (*right-click on the Start button to launch*), XP makes My Computer the most obvious program for file management by listing it prominently on the Start Menu.

My Computer has undergone some significant upgrades, featuring a combination of new tools, new “views” (ways of viewing the contents of a folder),

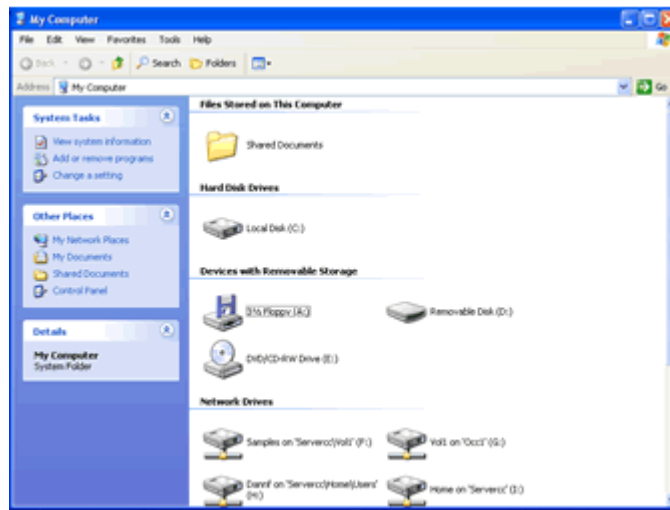
NT’s version of My Computer opens displaying the available drives. A menu and functional taskbar run across the top. The ‘List’ view of contents is shown here; contents can also be displayed as detailed lists and large or small icons.



Clicking on a drive reveals the folders and files available on that drive. Files can be selected, copied and pasted from one place to another.

With multiple My Computer windows open, files can be dragged from one folder to another.

XP’s My Computer opens to a dual-pane view. On the RIGHT side is largely a list of available drives — comparable to the information that fills the full window in NT. Shown here is the Icons view. Unlike NT, XP’s Icons view additionally groups drives by type (network, local, removable, etc.).



Other views carried over from NT include the List View and Details (or detailed list) View.

New view for XP are:

- Thumbnails view. Any images in the folder being viewed will be displayed as a small preview image.
- Tile view. All files will show as a large icon representing the type of file plus data such as file size and (for images) pixel dimensions.

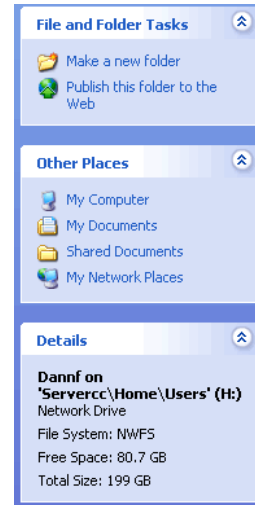


(Example of Tile View)

The Left panel of XP's My Computer is the task pane. This includes a categorized list of data and functions applicable to the files in the folder showing in the right pane.

Standard/default tasks presented when viewing a folder include such things as:

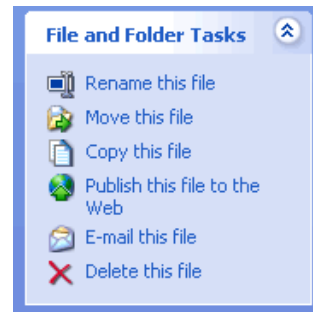
- Creating new folders
- Quick access to popular folders
- Details about the current folder or drive



The task pane is also context sensitive in that file management tasks available will change depending much on what types of files are detected in the folder or what type has been selected.

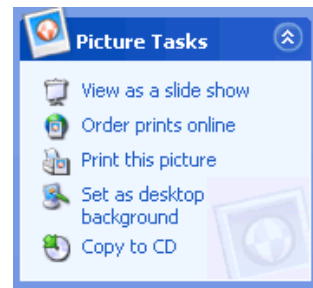
Examples:

- Selecting a folder will reveal common file management functions such as copying, deleting, renaming. Additional functions include emailing a selected file as an attachment and publishing (copying via FTP) to a web server.



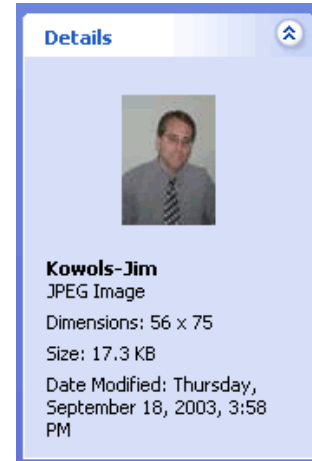
- Selecting a folder of images will reveal picture-specific tasks.

XP's My Computer allows you to view all the available images as a manual or auto-advance slide show, print pictures, place on your desktop, or launch the CD copy function



Example: Open the folder at:
S:\OCCSHARE\learnXP\images

- Selecting an individual image file in any view mode reveals details about the image along with a thumbnail.

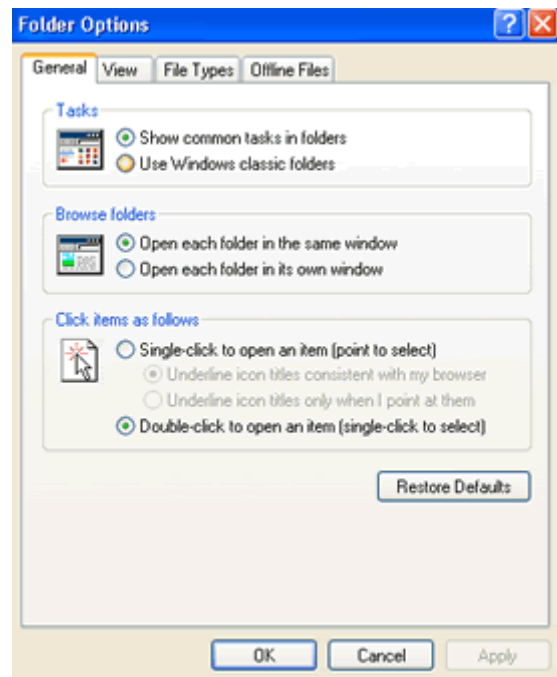


Customizing XP's My Computer

The main area within My Computer where settings can be altered is Folder Options under the Tools menu. (Folder Options is also available under Control Panel.)

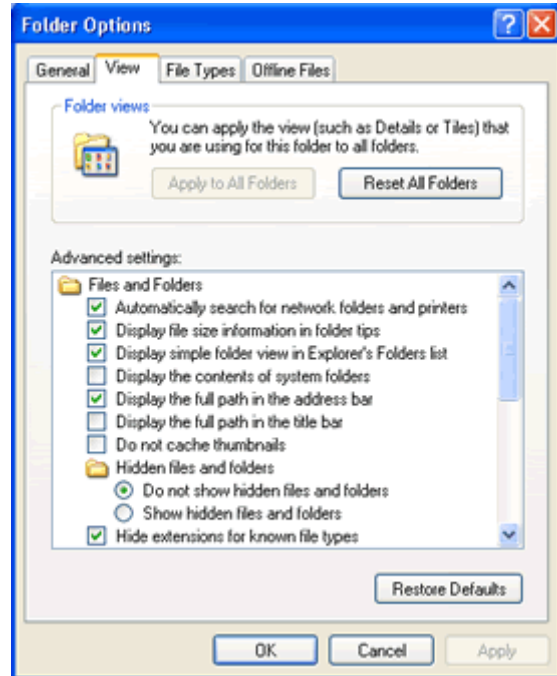
Folder Options opens to the General tab options. These include:

- **Tasks.** Users can set folders to include the XP-style task pane or go with the “Windows Classic” style-- basically the NT look.
- **Browse Folders.** Clicking on a folder can either update the existing window or open the selected folder in a new, separate window. The latter is handy for comparing folder contents or dragging items from one folder to another.
- **Click options.** Single or double-click to open a file. *This will only affect clicking within My Computer.*



The View tab includes numerous options for setting how folders display and behave. Options listed are described in a reasonably user-friendly manner and can be safely experimented with. If you want to see what turning a setting on or off does, just make yourself a note about what you changed so you can more easily go back and reverse it.

The File Types tab allows users-- depending on their user rights-- to change how files are associated with application programs based on filename extensions. For example files ending in ".doc" are associated with Microsoft Word.



The Offline Files tab largely does not contain user-changeable settings at Oakton.