Microsoft Windows Vista
See it done. Do it yourself.
Second Edition
Covers Windows Vista SP 1
Shelley O'Hara
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INTRODUCTION TO EASY MICROSOFT
WINDOWS VISTA

Becoming familiar with a new operating system, such as Windows Vista, can seem like a daunting task. There’s so much to learn! And in this new version of Windows, there are so many different features; the interface looks different, commands aren’t where you expect them to be, the entire way things work has seemingly been overhauled, all with the goal of making things easier. And they will be easier … after you learn how Windows Vista is set up and how it works.

When you sit down to use a computer, you don’t want to spend your time staring at it, hoping to figure out how to send a simple email. You want to be able to start right away; you want to take advantage of all the cool things you see advertised. Sending pictures of your children or grandchildren, listening to music and burning your own CD collection of your favorite tunes, watching movies, and so on, are all easily accomplished if you have the right foundational understanding of how to use Windows.

That’s why Easy Microsoft Windows Vista, Second Edition comes in so handy: it provides concise, visual, step-by-step instructions for showing you how to do the things you want to do with your computer. And while it’s perfect for beginners, it’s also ideal for anyone upgrading to this new version of Windows.

In this book, you’ll start with a quick overview of what is new in Vista and then move straight into the basics of getting around and getting things done. You’ll learn how to start programs, the main reason you have a computer. (A program is what you use to “do” things on your computer—send email, browse the Internet, write letters, edit photographs, and so on.) Plus, you’ll discover so much more—how to play games, how to purchase music online and then burn it to a disk, and how to get pictures from your digital camera to your computer and then print or email them.

In addition, you’ll find out how to maintain your computer to avoid problems, protect your computer from viruses and other security concerns, improve your computer’s performance, personalize your computer so that it works the way you want, and expand its capabilities (like adding a printer or setting up a network).

All the skills you need to use your computer and Windows Vista are covered and in an easy-to-follow, visual format that gets you up and running with Windows Vista in no time.

This edition has been updated to include the changes that occurred in Windows Vista with the release of Service Pack 1 (SP1). SP1 for Windows Vista includes a large number of changes and fixes. Most of them aren’t visible to you, the end user, but they do aid in the stability and speed of your computer. One of the more notable improvements is an increase in file copy speed, particularly copies across a local area network. In addition, SP1 bundles all the patches for Vista that have been released up to March 2008. Where they did affect the content of this book, updates have been made. For more information on SP1, go to Microsoft’s website at http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/sp1.mspx.

As for using this book, you can read it cover to cover or use it as a reference when you encounter a problem or a feature you don’t know how to use. Either way, Easy Microsoft Windows Vista lets you see it done and then do it yourself. Here’s to happy computing!
WORKING WITH PROGRAMS

You can find an enormous number of programs that are available to use with Windows Vista. For example, a word processing program, such as Microsoft Word, enables you to create, edit, and print documents. There are Windows programs for just about anything you can possibly dream of doing on your computer, and probably a few you’ve never thought of. You can use word processing, database management, movie creation and editing, drawing, and other programs in Windows. This variety of programs gives you all the tools you need to perform your work, do everyday tasks, or simply have fun.

In Windows, you can use one of several different ways to start a program; none of them is necessarily better than the other. Which method you use will depend on what you happen to be doing on the computer at the time you go to start up a program.

This Part covers not only how to start and exit programs but also provides some basic information that is important to know when working with any type of program.
STARTING PROGRAMS

- Instant Search text box
- Displays all programs
- Last frequently used programs
- Pinned programs
STARTING A PROGRAM FROM THE START MENU

Most of the time you spend using your computer will be spent working in some type of a program—a word processing program to type letters, a spreadsheet program to create budgets, and so on. You can start a program in many ways, including from the Start menu. When you install a new Windows program, that program’s installation procedure will set up a program folder and program icon on the Start menu.

1. Click the Start button.
2. If you see the program listed that you want to start, click it from the opening list. Skip to step 7.
3. If the program is not listed, click All Programs.

**TIP**

Programs Listed

Windows Vista lists the programs you use most often on the opening Start menu. The programs you see listed will vary from those shown with this task.

**TIP**

Programs vs. Applications vs. Software

The terms program, application, and software are used interchangeably and mean the same thing. That is, if you hear about a word processing application, it’s the same thing as saying word processing program.
If you see the program you want to start, click it, and then skip to step 7.

If you don’t see the program listed, it may be contained in a folder (for example, Accessories). Click a folder to view the programs contained in the folder.

Click the program you want to start.

The program is started. (Here you see Paint, an accessory program included with Windows that is found in the Accessories program folder.)

**TIP**

**Listed Programs**

Opening programs from the Start menu can be a little confusing until you become familiar with where they are stored. Windows automatically lists some programs on the main Start menu, while other programs are found in the All Programs list. Other programs are stored in folders within the All Programs list.

**TIP**

**Setting Up Programs**

You can find information about installing new programs in Part 13, “Setting Up Programs.” In that same Part, you also learn how to add program shortcut icons to your desktop, making programs easier to find and start.
EXITING A PROGRAM

Close a program when you finish working in it to free system memory. Too many open programs can tax your system’s memory and slow the computer’s processes, such as saving, printing, switching between programs, and so on.

1. Click File and then click Exit.
2. The program is exited.

TIP
More Ways to Close
You can also press Alt+F4 or click the Close button (the one with the X) in the program’s title bar to close a program.

CAUTION
Save First
If you have not saved a file before closing that file’s program, a message box appears asking if you want to save the file. If you do, click Yes; if not, click No. If you want to return to the document, click Cancel.
STARTING A PROGRAM FROM A SHORTCUT ICON

In addition to the Start menu, you can start programs from shortcut icons. Some programs automatically place shortcut icons on the desktop when the program is installed. You can also manually create shortcut icons to programs. This task covers how to start a program from a shortcut icon.

1. Double-click the shortcut icon on the desktop. (Shown here is a shortcut icon for Windows Mail.)

2. The program starts and displays in its own window. A taskbar button for the program appears in the taskbar.

TIP
Create Shortcut Icons
You can create shortcut icons to any of your installed programs. To do so, see Part 13, “Setting Up Programs.”
SWITCHING BETWEEN PROGRAMS USING TASKBAR BUTTONS

You may often work with more than one type of program at the same time. For example, you might want to compare price figures from an Excel worksheet with a price list you’ve set up in Word. You might want to copy text from a word processing document to a presentation program, such as PowerPoint. Switching between programs enables you not only to compare data but also to share data among programs. Windows Vista enables you to quickly switch from one program to another.

If you have more than one program running, you should see a taskbar button for each program.

Click the button for the program you want to switch to (in this case, Windows Photo Gallery). That program becomes the active program.

How Many?

The number of open programs at any one time depends on the amount of RAM (random access memory) in your computer. If you find you constantly have to close programs or the computer runs very slowly when you have several programs open, you might want to look into increasing the amount of physical RAM in your computer. Check with your computer’s manufacturer or a local computer hardware store.
SWITCHING BETWEEN PROGRAMS WITH WINDOWS FLIP

In past versions of Windows, you could press Alt+Tab to see mini-pictures of the open programs. You could then scroll to the program you wanted. Windows Vista has improved on this capability. You can now see live thumbnail versions of the windows rather than stagnant icons. You can also use this feature (called Windows Flip) to switch between programs.

1. With more than one program running, press **Alt+Tab**.
2. Icons for all open programs display in the window. You can use the arrow keys to scroll to the icon to get information, such as the program name. You can also scroll to the program to select the one you want to switch to.

TIP
Windows Flip 3D
If your computer supports Aero (a glass-like, transparent interface), you can also use Windows Flip 3D. It works like Windows Flip only you see a three-dimensional stacked view of your open windows.
SAVING A DOCUMENT

You save documents and files so that you can open them later to print, edit, copy, and so on. The first time you save a file, you must assign that file a name and folder (or location). You save documents pretty much the same way in all Windows programs; this task shows you how to save a document in WordPad.

1. With an unsaved file open, click File, Save As in the program.
2. In the File name text box, type a descriptive filename, replacing the generic name.
3. Click the Save button. The document is saved.

TIP
Save Again
After you’ve saved and named a file, you can simply click File and select Save to resave that file to the same location with the same name. Any changes you have made since the last save are reflected in the file. You can also use program shortcuts such as a toolbar button for saving or a shortcut key (usually Ctrl+S).

TIP
Save As
You can also save the file you are working on to another folder on your system or with a different name. This is often useful when working with photographs that you are editing so that you don’t lose your original file.
CREATING A NEW DOCUMENT

When you create a new document, many programs prompt you to select a template on which to base the new document. A **template** is a predesigned document. You can select the template, if prompted, and create the new document.

**In the program, click** **File**, **New**.

If you see a **New** dialog box, click the type of document you want to create and then click the **OK** button.

A new document is displayed.

**TIP**

**Shortcut**

As a shortcut, you can click the **New** button to create a new document based on the default template.

**HINT**

**Exceptions**

For complex programs, such as PowerPoint (a presentation program) and Access (a database program), you might be prompted to make some selections before the new document is created. Refer to your program documentation for help on creating new documents with these programs.
OPENING A FILE

When you save a document, the program saves the document information as a file with the name you entered and in the location you specified. The purpose of saving a document is to make it available for later use. You can open any of the documents you have saved. You can then make changes or print the document.

1. Click **File** and then click **Open**.

2. If you see the file you want to open, double-click it and skip the remaining steps. If you do not see the file you want to open, move to step 3.

3. Click the arrow next to **Folders** to expand the list of folders on your computer.

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**TIP**

**Can’t Find a File?**

If you can’t find the file you want to work with, it could be because you did not save it where you thought you did. Try looking in a different drive or folder. If you still can’t find it, try searching for the file. (For more information about searching for files, see Part 5, “Working with Files.”)
In the list of folders, navigate to the folder that contains the document you want, and then click the folder name to view the list of documents within the folder.

Double-click the document you want to open.

The document is opened.

**TIP**

**Use Favorite Links Pane**

Explorers include a pane with favorite links of commonly used folders or locations for storing documents. You can select a drive or folder from this list to find the document you want to open. See Chapter 1, “What’s New in Microsoft Windows Vista,” for more information on Explorers.
Absolute Beginner’s Guide to Home Networking, 290
accessibility options, 206-209
accessories
calculator, 260
Calendar
  changing views, 270
  entering tasks, 271
  scheduling appointments, 268-269
  viewing, 267
Contacts
  adding, 261
  deleting, 266
  editing, 262
  grouping, 264-265
  searching, 263
new and improved, 8
Notepad, 282
Paint, 283
  adding text, 285
  color, 286
  drawing shape, 284
  erasing part of drawing, 287
WordPad, text, 272
  copying, 276-277
  deleting, 275
  formatting, 280-281
  moving, 278-279
  selecting, 274
  typing, 273
accounts
  administrator versus standard, 187
computer
  log off, 26
  logon, 14
  switching users, 26
deleting, 186
multiple user set up, 186-187
music purchase, 119
parent control setting, 190-191
password assignment, 188-189
address books, Contacts
  adding, 261
  deleting, 266
  editing, 262
  grouping, 264-265
  searching, 263
addresses, Web sites, 159
administrators, user types, 187
Aero Glass, 4
All Programs list, 31
antivirus programs, 180
applications. See also programs; software
calculator, 260
Calendar
  changing views, 270
  entering tasks, 271
  scheduling appointments, 268-269
  viewing, 267
Contacts
  adding, 261
  deleting, 266
  editing, 262
  grouping, 264-265
  searching, 263
Notepad, 282
Paint, 283
  adding text, 285
  color, 286
  drawing shape, 284
  erasing part of drawing, 287
WordPad, text, 272
  copying, 276-277
  deleting, 275
  formatting, 280-281
  moving, 278-279
  selecting, 274
  typing, 273
appointments, scheduling, 268-269
arranging windows, 23
associations, files, setting, 69
Attach File to Message button, 136
attachments, email
  adding to message, 136
  opening, 137
audio CDs
  burning, 123
  playing, 110
  ripping tracks, 122
shuffling tracks, 113
visualizations, 115
volume options, 114
automatic installations, digital cameras and scanners, 100
AutoPlay, setting options, 225

B
Back buttons, 24
back ups, file restoration, 256-257
backgrounds, desktop, 15
changing, 15
colors, 196
Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
BCC (blind carbon copy), email messages, 135
blocked senders, 152
blocking pop-ups, 184
broadband connections versus dial-up, 156
browsing Internet, hyperlinks, 158
Brush tool, 286

C
calculators, 260
Calendar, 8
changing views, 270
entering tasks, 271
scheduling appointments, 268-269
viewing, 267
calendars, sharing, 8
CD-ROMs, copying files, 65
CDs
audio
playing, 110
shuffling tracks, 113
visualizations, 115
volume options, 114
copying pictures to, 103
Classic Menu, customizing, 218
Classic View, Control Panel, 78, 82
Close command, 19
closing windows, 22
colors
adding to drawing, 286
desktop background, 196
schemes, customizing Vista, 195
selecting unique, 195
compressed files
extracting, 238
saving space, 236-237
Computer menu, computer system drives, 42
Computer window, sorting content, 50
computers
back up file restoration, 256-257
Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
disk
cleanup, 235
compressing files, 236-238
defragmentation, 242-243
information, 234
Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
scanning for errors, 240-241
hardware installation
manually, 248-249
troubleshooting, 250-251
power management, 231
restarting, 27
scheduling tasks, 244-247
shutting down, 27
System Information, 232-233
System Restore, 252-253
viewing drives, 42
Windows Updates
automatic, 228-229
manually, 230
configuration, faxes, 148-149
connections
Internet, hardware requirements, 154
troubleshooting network, 296
Contacts
adding, 261
deleting, 266
editing, 262
grouping, 264-265
searching, 263
contacts, email
adding addresses, 142-143
using to enter names, 144
Contacts List

Contacts List, 8, 134
Control Panel, 17
different views, 78
System and Maintenance category, 226
back up file restoration, 256-257
Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
compressing files, 236-238
defragmentation, 242-243
disk cleanup, 235
disk information, 234
hardware installation, 248-251
Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
power management, 231
scanning disk for errors, 240-241
scheduling tasks, 244-247
System Information, 232-233
System Restore, 252-253
Windows Updates, 228-230
Control Panel Home view, 78
controllers, games, 125
controls, Windows Media Player, 112
copying
files, 64-65
folders, 54
Cover Page template, 150
Create Mail button, 134
customizing Start menu, 218-219
customizing taskbars, 220-221
customizing Vista
accessibility options, , 206-209
color schemes, 195
desktop
applying image, 197
backgroups, 196
theme, 194
monitors, resolution setting, 199
mouse movements, 200-201
screen saver selection, 198
sound scheme, 202-203
system date and time, 204-205
dates, system change, 204-205
defaults
audio CDs, 110
file
programs, 69
searches, 73
printers, 80, 83
programs, 224
Windows Defender, 179
Windows Mail, 145
defragmentation, disks, 242-243
Delete File dialog box, 216
Delete Files button, 235
Delete Items folder, cleanup, 139
deleting
Contacts, 266
e-mail folders, 145
Favorites Center sites, 164
file tags, 74
files, 66-67
folders, 53, 57
printers, 83
deselecting files, 60
desktops, 4, 12
applying image, 197
backgroups, 15
changing, 15
colors, 196
color schemes, 195
computer
logging off, 26
logon, 14
restarting, 27
shutting down, 27
switching users, 26
Help command, 24-25
icons, 15
main elements, 15
selecting themes, 194
Start menu, 16-17
windows
arrangement, 23
closing, 22
maximizing, 18-19
minimizing, 19
moving, 20
resizing, 18, 21
Details pane, 61
Device Manager, 251
Device Settings tab, 86
dial-up versus broadband connection, 156
digital cameras, 96
deleting images, 99
setup
automatically, 98
manual, 100-101
transferring images from, 99
Windows Photo Gallery
copying pictures to CD or DVD, 103
fixing photos, 104-105
organizing pictures, 102
printing photos, 106-107
Disk Cleanup dialog box, 235
Disk Defragmenter dialog box, 243
disks
cleanup, 235
compressed files
extracting, 238
saving space, 236-237
defragmentation, 242-243
information, 234
labels, 234
Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
scanning for errors, 240-241
displaying toolbars, 223
documents
printing
cancel job, 91
previewing, 87
steps, 88-89
saving, 36
Documents folders, 43
downloads, visualizations, 115
drag-and-drop copying, folders, 54
dragging files
copying, 64
moving, 63
drawings
adding text, 285
color, 286
erasing part, 287
shapes, 284
drivers
best substitutes, 251
reinstallation, 250
drives
Explorer Window, basics, 44-45
locating files, 38
viewing system contents, 42
DVDs
burning, 123
copying pictures to, 103
playing, 124
Ease of Access Center, 206-209
e-mail
contacts
adding addresses, 142-143
using to enter names, 144
files, 70
junk mail
filtering, 151
setting options, 152-153
mail folders
creating, 145
moving messages, 146
searching for messages, 147
pictures, 106
sending, 126, 262
Windows Mail
attaching file to message, 136
Delete Items folder cleanup, 139
deleting messages, 138
email options setting, 140-141
forwarding messages, 132
opening file attachment, 137
reading mail, 130
responding to mail, 131
sending new mail, 134-135
sorting messages, 133
starting, 128-129

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@samspublishing.com
entertainment, media management

Entertainment, media management, 7
Eraser tool, 287
Error messages, hyperlinks, 158
Exiting programs, 32
Explorer, 2, 5
files
opening, 68
printing, 70
Explorer Window
changing folder view, 49
customizing layout, 51
grouping content, 52
opening folders, 44-45
sorting content, 50
extracting compressed files, 238

Failure to Deliver notices, 134
Favorite links, 39
Favorites Center
adding site, 163
organizing, 164
rearranging, 166-167
selecting site, 165
Faxes
configuring, 148-149
receiving, 150
sending, 150
Files
associations, setting, 69
back up restoration, 256-257
changing views, 61
compressed
extracting, 238
saving space, 236-237
copying, 64-65
deleting, 66-67
deselecting, 60
disk cleanup, 235
e-mail sizes, 136
e-mailing, 70
Explorer
opening, 68
printing, 70
grouping content, 52
keywords, 6
locating, 6, 38
Instant Search, 71
running saved searches, 73
saving searches, 72
moving, 63
opening, 38-39
preset folders, 43
properties, adding, 75
refreshing list, 46
renaming, 62
selecting, 60
tags, 6, 74
viewing details, 61
viewing on home network, 298-299
Windows Easy Transfer, 304-311
Filters, junk mail, 151
Firewalls
Windows Easy Transfer, 307
Windows Security Center, 182
Flash drives, Windows Easy Transfer, 306
Folders, 40
copying, 54
creating, 53
deleting, 53, 57
E-mail
creating, 145
deleting, 145
moving messages, 146
searching for messages, 147
Explorer Window
basics, 44-45
changing view, 49
customizing layout, 51
grouping content, 52
sorting content, 50
Files
copying, 64-65
deleting, 66-67
locating, 38
moving, 63
Hierarchical lists, 45
Instant search, 46
moving, 55
naming, 53
navigation, 46-47
opening, 44
presets, 43
renaming, 56
selection, 48
sharing, 299
viewing computer drives, 42
viewing on home network, 298-299
fonts
printers
installing new on computer, 94-95
viewing, 92-93
printing sample list, 93
sources, 92
G
Gadgets, 8
games
controllers, 125
controlling access, 191
Windows Media Player, 125
Games folder, 2, 7
Google, search statistics, 162
Graphic Equalizer settings, 115
groups, 52
hard drives
cleanup, 235
compressed files
extracting, 238
saving space, 236-237
defragmentation, 242-243
disk information, 234
Explorer Window, basics, 44-45
Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
scanning for errors, 240-241
viewing system contents, 42
hardware
installation
manually, 248-249
troubleshooting, 250-251
Internet requirements, 154
Help command, 24-25
Hibernate option, 26
hiding toolbars, 223
history, Windows Defender scans, 179
History List
clearing, 169
viewing, 168
Home buttons, 25
home networking
printer
selecting shared, 302-303
set up, 300-301
sharing options, 294-295
viewing folders and files, 298-299
viewing status, 296-297
Windows Easy Transfer, 304-311
wireless client set up, 290-293
home pages, Internet Explorer, 170
hyperlinks, browsing Internet, 158
icons
creating for programs, 213
deleting, 216
desktop, adding, 15
images
deleting from camera, 99
displaying to desktop, 196-197
transferring from digital camera, 99
input devices, volume options, 114
installation
fonts on computer, 94-95
hardware, manually, 248-249
new programs, 212
installed printers, displaying, 82
Instant Search
bar, 46
feature, 6
field, 10
locating files, 71
interface, 4
Internet
access from online services, 154
emailing links, 171
enhanced features, 9

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@samspublishing.com
Favorites Center
adding a site, 163
organizing, 164
rearranging, 166-167
selecting site, 165
firewalls protection, 182
hardware requirements, connecting, 154
History List
clearing, 169
viewing, 168
hyperlinks, 158
ISP accounts, 154
music purchase, 118-119
ordering photos, 107
printing Web page, 172-173
privacy levels, 185
search engines
basics, 162
searching text on page, 161
site built-in tools, 161
tabbed viewing, 160
time, 205
typing URL addresses, 159
Internet Explorer
emailing link, 171
launching, 156-157
setting home page, 170
Internet service providers. See ISPs
ISPs (Internet service providers), 154
connecting to Internet, 154
firewalls, 182
logging on and off, 128
J-L
junk mail, 130
filtering, 151
setting options, 152-153
keypads, 260
keywords, adding to files, 6, 74
labels, disks, 234
launching Internet Explorer, 156-157
layouts, windows, 129
Library, Windows Media Player, 113, 116, 120-121
links
emailing from Internet Explorer, 171
favorites, 39
List pane, hiding, 111
locating files
Instant Search, 71
running saved searches, 73
saving searches, 72
logoffs
computer account, 26
ISPs, 128
logons
computer account, 14
ISPs, 128
LPT ports, printers, 79
Magnifier tool, 283
mail
attaching file to messages, 136
Delete Items folder cleanup, 139
deleting messages, 138
e-mail options setup, 140-141
forwarding, 132
opening file attachment, 137
reading, 130
responding to, 131
sending new, 134-135
sorting, 133
maintenance
back up file restoration, 256-257
Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
disks
cleanup, 235
compressing files, 236-238
defragmentation, 242-243
information, 234
Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
scanning for errors, 240-241
hardware installation
manually, 248-249
troubleshooting, 250-251
power management, 231
scheduling tasks, 244-247
System Information, 232-233
System Restore, 252-253
Windows Updates
  automatic, 228-229
  manually, 230
malware, Windows Defender, 177-179
maximizing windows, 18-19
McAfee VirusScan, 180
media, management, 7
Media Center, 2
Media Library, 7
Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
Message Header pane, 131
messages
  attaching file, 136
  canceling before sending, 132
  Delete Items folder cleanup, 139
  deleting, 138-139
  email options setting, 140-141
  forwarding, 132
  junk mail
    filtering, 151
    setting options, 152-153
  locating, 147
  moving to folders, 146
  opening attachment, 137
  receiving, 129
  sending, 129
  sending new, 134-135
  sort order, 133
  sorting, 133
  spell check, 141
Minimize command, 19
minimizing windows, 19
modems, 126
monitors, resolution setting, 199
mouse, movement settings, 200-201
Move command, 19
movies, media management, 7
moving
  files, 63
  folders, 55
  windows, 20
MSHOME default workgroups, 298
MSN, searching Internet, 161
multiple users
  public folder sharing, 295
  set up, 186-187
music
  setting options, 113
  Windows Media Player
    burning CDs, 123
    creating playlist, 120-121
    online purchase, 118-119
    ripping CD tracks, 122
    searching, 117
Music folders, 43
naming
  folders, 53, 56
  renaming files, 62
navigation folders, 46-47
Navigation pane, 5, 63
  folder hierarchical list, 45
  opening folders, 44
Network and Sharing Center, 11, 294-295
Network Awareness, 11
Network Diagnostics, 11
Network Explorer, 11
networks
  expanded features, 11
  fax server connection, 149
  firewalls, 182
  printer
    selecting shared, 302-303
    set up, 300-301
  sharing options, 294-295
  viewing folders and files, 298-299
  viewing status, 296-297
Windows Easy Transfer, 304-311
  wireless client set up, 290-293
Norton AntiVirus, 180
Notepad, 282
notification areas, changing, 222
Num Lock button, 260
opening files

opening files, 38-39, 68
optional updates, 230
Organize Favorites dialog box, 164
output devices, volume options, 114

Paint, 283
  adding text, 285
color, 286
drawing shape, 284
  erasing part of drawing, 287
paper sources, printer, 85
parental controls, setting for user accounts, 190-191
passwords
  adding to account, 14
  adding to accounts, 188-189
pausing printers, 91
performance
  back up file restoration, 256-257
  Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
disks
  cleanup, 235
  compressing files, 236-238
defragmentation, 242-243
  information, 234
  Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
  scanning for errors, 240-241
hardware installation
  manually, 248-249
  troubleshooting, 250-251
power management, 231
scheduling tasks, 244-247
System Information, 232-233
System Restore, 252-253
Windows Updates
  automatic, 228-229
  manually, 230

Personalization Control panel
  accessibility options, 206-209
color schemes, 195
desktop
  applying image, 197
  backgrounds, 196
  theme, 194
  monitors, resolution setting, 199
  mouse movements, 200-201
  screen saver selection, 198
  sound scheme, 202-203
  system date and time, 204-205

phishing scams
  checking Web sites, 183
defined, 10
Photo Gallery, 7
photos
  copying to CD or DVD, 103
  editing, 104-105
  emailing, 106
  media management, 7
  ordering prints online, 107
  organizing, 102
  printing, 106-107
pictures
  copying to CD or DVD, 103
  deleting, 104
  editing, 104-105
  emailing, 106
  ordering prints online, 107
  organizing, 102
  printing, 106-107
  saving edited, 105
Pictures folders, 43, 101
Play Slide Show button, 102
playlists
  audio CDs, 121
  Windows Media Player, creating, 120-121
Plug and Play hardware detection, 248
pointers, mouse movement settings, 201
pop-ups, 184
ports, printers, 79
Ports tab, 86
power management, 231
Power Options dialog box, 231
preferences, setting for printer, 84-85
presets, folders, 43
Preview pane, 5, 129
previewing Web page, 172-173
Print buttons, 25, 88
Printer icons, displaying print queue, 90
printers
   adding, 78-81
   canceling print job, 91
   defaults, 80
   deleting, 83
   disk, 81
   displaying installed, 82
documents
   preview, 87
   steps, 88-89
fonts
   installing new on computer, 94-95
   viewing, 92-93
multiple print copies, 89
networks
   selecting shared, 302-303
   set up, 300-301
paper sources, 85
pausing, 91
ports, 79
preference selection, 84-85
print ranges, 89
setting default, 83
setup, 70
testing, 303
viewing
   properties, 86
   queue, 90
Printers control panel, 70
printing
   files from Explorer, 70
   help topics, 25
   Web pages, 172-173
privacy, Internet security levels, 185
programs, 28. See also applications; software
   blocking access, 191
documents, saving, 36
   exiting, 32
   installation, new, 212
   opening files, 38-39, 69
   pinning to Start menu, 217
setting defaults, 224
shortcut icon
   creating, 213
deleting, 216
starting from shortcut icon, 33
starting from Start menu, 30-31
switching between
   taskbar buttons, 34
   Windows Flip 3D, 35
uninstalling, 214-215
versus applications and software, 30
properties
   adding to files, 75
   viewing for printer, 86
Properties dialog box, 61, 234
public folders
   multiple user set up, 295
   sharing options, 294
quarantined software, 178
queues, printers, 90
RAM (random access memory), 34, 239
Reading Pane, 5
recommended updates, 228
Rectangle tool, 284
Recycle Bin, 67
refreshing file lists, 46
reminders
   tasks, 271
text, 75
renaming
   files, 62
   folders, 56
Reply All button, 131
resizing windows, 18, 21
resolution, monitors, 199
restarting computer, 27
restarts, computer updates, 230
restoration
   back up file restoration, 256-257
   Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
   System Restore, 252-253
Restore command, 19

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@samspublishing.com
safe senders

S

safe senders, 153
Save As dialog box, 194
Save Search button, 72
saved searches, running, 73
saving
documents, 36
email attachments, 137
ScanDisk utility, 241
scanners, 96
document scan, 100
setup
automatically, 98
manual, 100-101
scans, Windows Defender, 179
scheduling tasks, 244-247
schemes, colors, 195
scientific calculators, 260
screen savers, selection, 198
scrollbars, 21
search engines
basics, 162
searching text on page, 161
site built-in tools, 161
Search Folders, 6
searching files
Instant Search, 71
running saved searches, 73
saving searches, 72
security
account passwords, 14
blocking pop-ups, 184
email attachments, 137
Internet privacy levels, 185
users
multiple user set up, 186-187
parental controls, 190-191
password assignment, 188-189
Web site phishing, 183
Windows Defender, 177-179
Windows Security Center, 176
checking virus status, 180-181
firewall protection, 182
Security Center, 174, 176
checking virus status, 180-181
firewall protection, 182
icon, 176
selecting
files, 60
folders, 48
Send To command, copying files, 65
senders
blocking, 152
safe, 153
sending
email
messages, 129
system requirements, 126
faxes, 150
Sent Items folders, 135
serial ports, printer connection, 79
settings, Windows Easy Transfer, 304
shapes, drawing, 284
sharing
home networks, 294-295
folders, 299
Sharing tab, 86
Sharing Wizard, 11
shortcut icons
creating, 33
creating for programs, 213
deleting, 216
starting programs, 33
shortcuts, Print button, 88
shutting down computer, 27
signal strengths, wireless networks, 297
Size command, 19
slide shows, 102
software. See also applications; programs
versus programs and applications, 30
quarantine, 178
viewing installed programs, 178
Software Explorer, 178
Soper, Mark Edward, Absolute Beginner’s
Guide to Home Networking, 290
sound, scheme change, 202-203
T

transparency, adjustment

tabbed viewing, Internet, 160

tags
  adding to files, 74
  adding to pictures, 104
  assigning to pictures, 103
  deleting, 74
  files, 6

taskbar buttons
  switch between programs, 34
  windows movements, 22

taskbars
  changing notification area, 222
  customizing, 220-221
  desktops, 15

tasks
  entering on Calendar, 271
  scheduling, 244-247

technical information, 232

testing printers, 303

text, WordPad
  copying, 276-277
  deleting, 275
  formatting, 280-281
  moving, 278-279
  selecting, 274
  typing, 273

Text tool, 285

Theme Settings dialog box, 194

themes, desktops, 194

time, system change, 204-205

time zones, changing, 205

toolbars, displaying or hiding, 223

Tools tab, 234

tracks
  audio CDs
    copying, 120
    shuffling, 113
  ripping audio CDs, 122

transparency, adjustment, 195

spam, 130
  filtering, 151
  setting options, 152-153

speakers, volume control, 114

spell checking, email messages, 141

Spelling button, 141

spooling, 86

spyware, Windows Defender, 177-179

standard folders, Windows presets, 43

standard users, user types, 187

Start button, desktop, 15

Start menu
  customizing, 218-219
  desktop, 16-17
  pinning program, 217
  starting programs, 30-31

switching users, 188

System and Maintenance category, 226
  back up file restoration, 256-257
  Backup and Restore Center, 254-255

disks
  cleanup, 235
  compressing files, 236-238
  defragmentation, 242-243
  information, 234
  Memory Diagnostic Tool, 239
  scanning for errors, 240-241

hardware installation
  manually, 248-249
  troubleshooting, 250-251

power management, 231

scheduling tasks, 244-247

System Information, 232-233

System Restore, 252-253

Windows Updates
  automatic, 228-229
  manually, 230

System Information, 232-233

System Restore, 252-253

system security, Windows Security Center, 176

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@samspublishing.com
troubleshooting

back up file restoration, 256-257
Backup and Restore Center, 254-255
hardware installation, 250-251
Help commands, 24-25
System Information, 232-233
System Restore, 252-253

U

UAC (User Account Protection), 9
uniform resource locator (URLs), 159
unique colors, 195
unnamed networks, 291
updates
optional, 230
recommended, 228
Windows Updates
automatic, 228-229
manually, 230
URLs (uniform resource locator), 159
USB flash drives, Windows Easy Transfer, 306
USBs, printer connection, 79
Use Default Settings button, 219
User Account Control, 229
User Account Control dialog box, 229, 294
User Account Protection (UAC), 9
users
multiple user set up, 186-187
parental controls, 190-191
password assignment, 188-189
switching, 26, 188

V

video, Windows Media Player, 124
View Files button, 235
views, files, 61
viruses
available antivirus programs, 180
infecting computers, 181

W-Z

Web
Favorites Center
adding a site, 163
organizing, 164
rearranging, 166-167
selecting site, 165
History List
clearing, 169
viewing, 168
hyperlinks, 158
printing page, 172-173
search engines
basics, 162
searching text on page, 161
site built-in tools, 161
tabbed viewing, 160
URLs defined, 159
Web sites, checking for phishing, 183
Welcome Center, 14, 233
Window Vista Web Filter, 191
windows
arrangement, 23
closing, 22
layout change, 129
maximizing, 18-19
minimizing, 19
moving, 20
resizing, 18, 21
scrollbars, 21
Windows Calendar, 8
Windows Defender, 174, 177-179
Windows Easy Transfer, 304-311
Windows Explorer, displaying, 47
Windows Flip 3D, switch between programs, 35
Visualizations, 115
volume, audio CDs, 114
Windows Mail, 127
  attaching file to message, 136
contacts
  adding addresses, 142-143
  using to enter names, 144
Delete Items folder cleanup, 139
deleting messages, 138
e-mail options setting, 140-141
folders
  creating, 145
  moving messages, 146
  searching for messages, 147
forwarding messages, 132
junk mail
  filtering, 151
  setting options, 152-153
opening file attachment, 137
reading mail, 130
redesign, 10
responding to mail, 131
sending new mail, 134-135
sorting messages, 133
starting, 128-129
Windows Media Player, 108
  audio CD
    playing, 110
    shuffling tracks, 113
    visualizations, 115
    volume options, 114
burning CDs, 123
controls, 112
games, 125
Library, 113, 116, 120-121
music
  online purchase, 118-119
  searching, 117
playing video clips, 124
ripping CD tracks, 122
window basics, 111
Windows Photo Gallery, 2, 7
camera
  copying pictures to CD or DVD, 103
  manual setup, 100-101
  organizing pictures, 102
digital camera
  automatic setup, 98
  transferring images from, 99
photographs
  fixing, 104-105
  printing, 106-107
scanner
  automatic setup, 98
  manual setup, 100-101
Windows Security Center. See Security Center
Windows Update dialog box, 230
Windows Updates
  automatic, 228-229
  manually, 230
Windows Vista, updates
  accessories, 8
  Explorers, 5
  finding files, 6
  interface, 4
  Internet features, 9
  media management, 7
  network feature expansion, 11
  Windows Mail redesign, 10
WinZip, compressing email files, 136
wireless networks, client set up, 290-293
wizards
  adding printers, 78-81
  dialog box Back button, 78
WordPad, text, 272
  copying, 276-277
  deleting, 275
  formatting, 280-281
  moving, 278-279
  selecting, 274
  typing, 273
WORKGROUP default workgroups, 298
workgroup names, 298
worms, Windows Defender, 177-179
zooming, 283