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Using Windows XP

Use System Restore to Undo Changes if Problems Occur

Published: August 24, 2001

Every time you download or install a new game, application, or software update, you make changes to your computer. Sometimes that change may make your system unstable. Have you ever wanted to go back to the way it was? With System Restore, you can.

System Restore works a lot like the Undo command in Microsoft Word. You can use System Restore to remove any system changes that were made since the last time you remember your computer working correctly. System Restore does not affect your personal data files (such as Microsoft Word documents, browsing history, drawings, favorites, or e-mail) so you won't lose changes made to these files.

How does System restore work?

Windows XP periodically records a snapshot of your computer. These snapshots are called restore points. Windows XP also creates restore points at the time of significant system events (such as when an application or driver is installed) or you can create and name your own restore points at any time. If you've installed a program that has made your computer unstable, you can open system restore, choose a restore point, and return your computer to its previous stable state.

When you run System Restore, a calendar is displayed to help you find restore points. If you don't use your computer every day, some days might not have any restore points. If you use your computer frequently, you might have restore points almost every day, and some days might have several restore points.

Use System Restore to undo changes you've made to your computer

Before you open the System Restore console, you may want to save your work and close all programs since System Restore requires you to restart your computer.

There are two ways to access System Restore – through **Help and Support** or through your **All Programs folder**.

Through Help and Support:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **Help and Support**.
2. Under **Pick a Task**, click **Undo changes to your computer with System Restore**.
3. Follow the instructions on the wizard.

Through the All Programs menu:

1. Click **Start**.
2. Point to **All Programs**.
3. Point to **Accessories**.

Related Links

- [How-to Article: Use Backup to Protect Data from Loss](#)
- [Overview: Recover from Technical Problems and Get Help When You Need It](#)
- [Technical Overview: Reliability Improvements in Windows XP](#)

4. Point to **System Tools**.
5. Click **System Restore**.
6. Follow the instructions on the wizard.

Creating a restore point can be useful any time you anticipate making changes to your computer that are risky or might make your computer unstable. If something goes wrong, you select the restore point you just created and Windows XP undoes any system changes made since that time.

Create a Restore Point

1. Open System Restore. (See step-by-step instructions above.)
2. Click **Create a restore point**, and then click **Next**.
3. In the **Restore point description** box, type a name to identify this restore point as seen in Figure 1 below. System Restore automatically adds the date and time that this Restore Point is created.

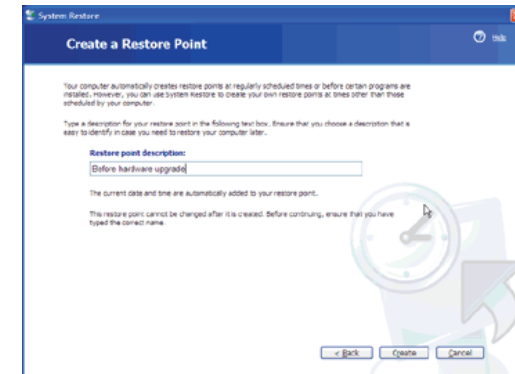


Figure 1. Creating a restore point

- To finish creating this restore point, click **Create**.
- To cancel restore point creation and return to the **Welcome to System Restore** screen, click **Back**.
- To cancel restore point creation and exit the System Restore Wizard, click **Cancel**.

To view or to return to this restore point, from the **Welcome to System Restore** screen of the System Restore Wizard select **Restore my computer to an earlier time**. Then select the date you created the restore point from the calendar in the **Select a Restore Point** screen. All of the restore points you created and your computer created on the selected date are listed by name in the list box to the right of the calendar.

Note System Restore does not replace the process of uninstalling a program. To completely remove the files installed by a program, you must remove the program using Add or Remove Programs in Control Panel or the program's own uninstall program. To open Add or Remove Programs, click Start, click Control Panel, and then click Add or Remove Programs.

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