

ANSWER QUEST TIP SHEET

JANUARY 2001 – WE ANSWER YOUR TECHNOLOGY QUESTIONS



HOW TO UNINSTALL SOFTWARE (AND I DON'T MEAN THE DELETE KEY)

We all know how to install software... but do you know how to UNinstall it?

You are asking, "Why do I need to know this? I have a 60 gigabyte hard drive!"

Well, although newer PCs are coming out with EXTREMELY LARGE hard drives, there are times when you install a program then notice that your PC has started doing strange things that it didn't do before.

If you call tech support, they might ask "Have you installed anything since you noticed the problem?" Trying to UNinstall first could save you an hour on hold listening to elevator music.

One important thing to know is you should never go to Windows Explorer and just use the delete key to remove program files/directories. Newer software might write files not only to it's own directory but also to the windows directory and/or write information into configuration files. If you delete instead of UNinstall, all this might accomplish is the inability to UNinstall your software the correct way.

Now on with the UNinstall process!

There are several different ways. But the first thing you should always do is: close all open programs before you start this process. Normally, when you UNinstall an application, it will want you to restart Windows when it is finished. This is so it can remove additional files or configuration information from your PC.

With that in mind, and all your other applications closed, one way to UNinstall is to click START on your Task Bar and then click PROGRAMS. Look for the software program's folder. There might be an UNinstall icon in there. If so, click it.

Or, with the invention of Windows 95 (and later versions of Windows), there's another place. Click on START then SETTINGS then

CONTROL PANEL. You will see an icon for ADD/REMOVE PROGRAMS. You should see every program you have installed (there are exceptions and some might not be listed). Simply click once on the software you want to uninstall then click on REMOVE.

During the UNinstall, you might receive questions or prompts. Simply click on the response that continues the UNinstall process. Another question that might come up is "This file might be shared, do you want to remove it?" (This is not a direct quote.) Most of these files are small in size and don't take up much room so I opt to leave them. If you delete a file that is used by another program, that other program won't work and you will have to re-install it.

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When the UNinstall is finished, it may prompt you to restart your system. **DO IT!** If you don't restart, it will not finish the cleanup process.

That's it! You have now successfully UNinstalled a program. Keep this in mind, if you uninstall a software program that came with your computer, make sure you have the CD or

diskettes to re-install it. Some software comes pre-loaded and you won't have access to re-install it.

Also, there are programs that will help you uninstall but you must have them installed before you start adding new software.

Here are some good links for more information:

CNET'S Help.com

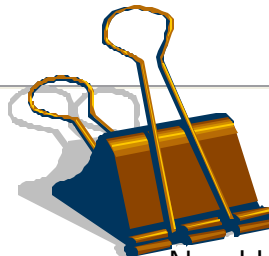
<http://www.help.com/cgi-perl/search3.pl?query=uninstall&type=1&parts=011111>

ZDNet: Help & How-To

<http://www.zdnet.com/zdhelp/stories/main/0,5594,2397200,00.html>

TechTV

<http://www.techtv.com/callforhelp/howto/story/0,23008,3008520,00.html>



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