

Start Menu Guide

This guide describes the Start menu in Windows XP, and focuses on using it to open programs.

Using the Start menu to open programs can be easier than having to find a desktop icon. You can configure the left hand side of the menu to have items for all the programs you regularly use.

It's also easy to navigate the Start menu using the keyboard. For example, you can set the menu up so that you can open Microsoft Word by pressing **WINDOWS KEY**, then **W**.

Layout of the menu

User name	
Pinned items	Folders and Drives
	Windows components
Most frequently used items	
	Miscellaneous items
All programs	
Log off Shut down	

Menu components:

- Pinned items. These items remain on the menu until the user changes them.
- Most frequently used programs. These are updated by Windows based on the frequency of use of the programs. You can change the number of programs in this list, and some people prefer to set this to zero, and just use the pinned items, which are under user control.
- All Programs sub-menu (access key: **P**).
- Folders and drives. Items can include My Documents, My Computer, etc.
- Windows components. Items can include Control panel, and printers.

- Miscellaneous. Items can include Search, Run, Help, etc.
- Log off (access key: **L**).
- Shut down (access key: **U**).

Navigating the menu

You can navigate the menu using the keyboard as follows:

- **WINDOWS KEY** opens the Start menu, and **ESC** closes it (leaving the focus on the Start button).
- **UP** and **DOWN ARROW**. Allow you to move through all the items in the menu. Like all menus, if you move past either

end of the menu, you wrap to the other end.

- **LEFT** and **RIGHT ARROW**. These can be used for moving between the two columns.
- Access keys and first letters. A quick way of finding a menu item is to type a single letter. Some of the menu items have an access key (accelerator key), for example, the access key for the All Programs sub-menu is **P**. For all the other items, you can use the first letter. If you press a single letter, and this matches only one access key or initial letter of an item, then that menu item is opened — there's no need to press **ENTER**. If there are multiple matches, then keep on pressing the single letter

until you find the item, and then press **ENTER**.

To take advantage of using a single letter to navigate the menu, you may need to rename some of the items, as described in the following section. For example if the menu contains the items “Microsoft Word” and “Microsoft Excel”, then renaming them to “Word” and “Excel” makes them quicker to find.

Customizing the menu

Rename an item

1. Either right click a menu item and choose Rename from the shortcut

menu, or select a menu item and press **F2**.

2. Type in the new name, and then press **ENTER**.

Pinned items

- Add a program to the pinned items.
 - A. Right click either a program icon on the desktop, or a program somewhere on the All Programs menu.
 - B. Choose “Pin to Start Menu” from the shortcut menu.
- Remove a pinned item from the menu.

Right click the item on the Start menu, and choose either “Unpin from Start

Menu” or “Remove from This List” from the shortcut menu.

Most frequently used programs

As mentioned above, some people prefer to set the number of the most frequently used programs which are shown on the Start menu to zero. To change the number of these items:

1. To open the Taskbar and Start Menu Properties dialog, right click the Start menu, and choose Properties from the shortcut menu. (or press **WINDOWS KEY** which opens the Start menu, then **ESC** which closes it and leaves the focus on the Start menu. Then press **ALT + ENTER.**)

2. The Taskbar and Start Menu Properties dialog opens. This dialog has two pages: Taskbar and Start menu. On the Start menu page, click the Customise button, which is about half way down the right hand side of the dialog box.
3. The Customize Start Menu dialog opens. This too has two pages: General, and Advanced. On the General page, in the Programs section, there's a spin box with the label "Number of programs on Start menu". Set the number of programs, and then click the OK button at the bottom of the dialog (or press **ENTER**) to close the dialog.
4. Click the OK button at the bottom of the dialog (or TAB to the OK button and

press **ENTER**) to close the Taskbar and Start Menu Properties dialog.