

It's time to Clean Up!

1. Set aside some time to do this. Probably best done at the end of the day.
2. Completely [delete all the 'temp' files](#) and [empty the 'Recycle Bin'](#).
3. [Internet Explorer](#) is used by all sorts of programs and the cache fills up with thousands of files. Clean out the cache.
4. [Use 'msconfig'](#) to stop programs loading at start up.
5. [Get those icons off the desktop!](#)

This 'note' is 'free' but not to be copied as if it is yours! This revision was brought about by the fact that Microsoft Windows 7 will not run the script called 'CleanUp!.vbs'. It is no longer easy to write a simple text script and have it work on the client's PC. This means I would have to charge for my time to visit the client to do the following 'clean up'. The 'user' is now not to be trusted [by Microsoft] as he/she can be impersonated by a virus or worm. So to stop the malware from getting to your system, Microsoft have demoted you the user.

These four methods will help to keep your Windows PC running at a reasonable speed.

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[Helping people with computer problems since 1987.]

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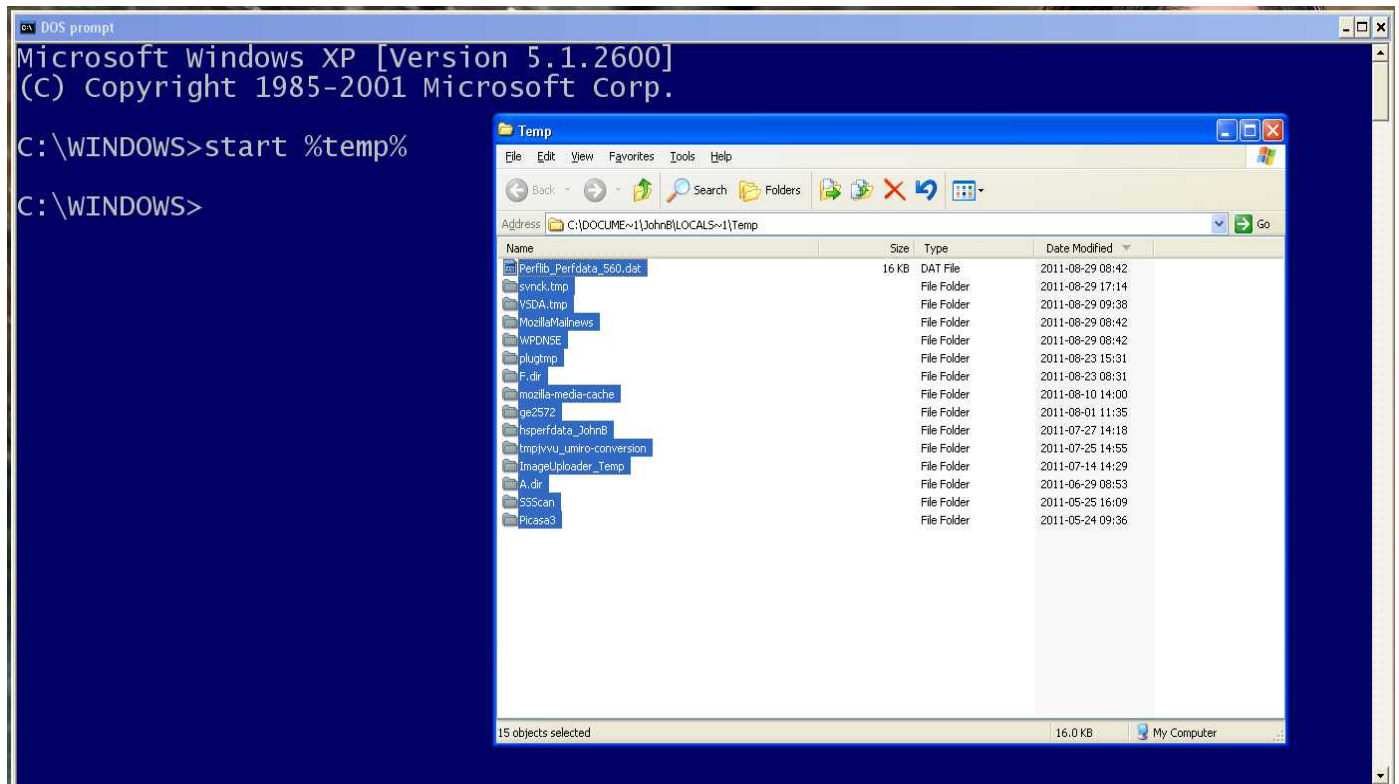
Clean out the 'temp' (temporary folders).

You (the logged in person) and Windows itself creates a multitude of files temporarily. It stores them in the 'TEMP' folder and should delete them after use or after closing down Windows. But they don't. Just the other day, one of my clients was suprised to find that 923 MB was released when the temp files were deleted.

I can't find it! Where is the 'TEMP' folder?

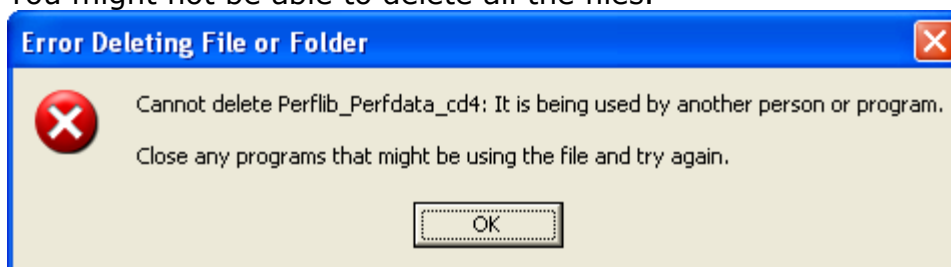
There are several places for this folder. One will probably be under 'C:\Windows\temp'. There will also be one under your login folder. That will be difficult to find with 'Explorer'. Rather use a 'command prompt' or DOS session to find it.

1. Start button | Run | type 'cmd' [in WinXP] and press the ok button or use Enter key. Or type 'cmd' in the search box and press enter in Windows 7|Vista. In Vista|Windows 7 you may have to 'run as Administrator' to get the best results.
2. Now type: 'start %temp%' and press enter. Don't forget the space between start and %temp%. An 'Explorer' window should open up with lots of files in it. Switch back to the DOS session and type 'exit' and press Enter. This closes the window. Goto the 'C:\DOCUME~1\xxx\LOCALS~1\Temp' (e.g.) window and click 'edit' and 'Select All'.
3. Now (this is important!), hold a shift key down and press the 'Delete' key.



So what are you waiting for? Click the 'yes' button or press the 'Y' key and the files will be deleted forever... Until Windows starts getting slow again.

You might not be able to delete all the files.



Try selecting all the other files and using 'Shift and Delete' to delete as many as you can. Windows uses temporary files as does programs like Microsoft Office apps. These will be 'in use' when you try to delete them. Try closing any applications that are in use.

There will probably be files in your 'C:\Windows\temp' folder. Navigate there and select all (like above) and delete them. Try 'CD \Windows\temp' and press the Enter key.

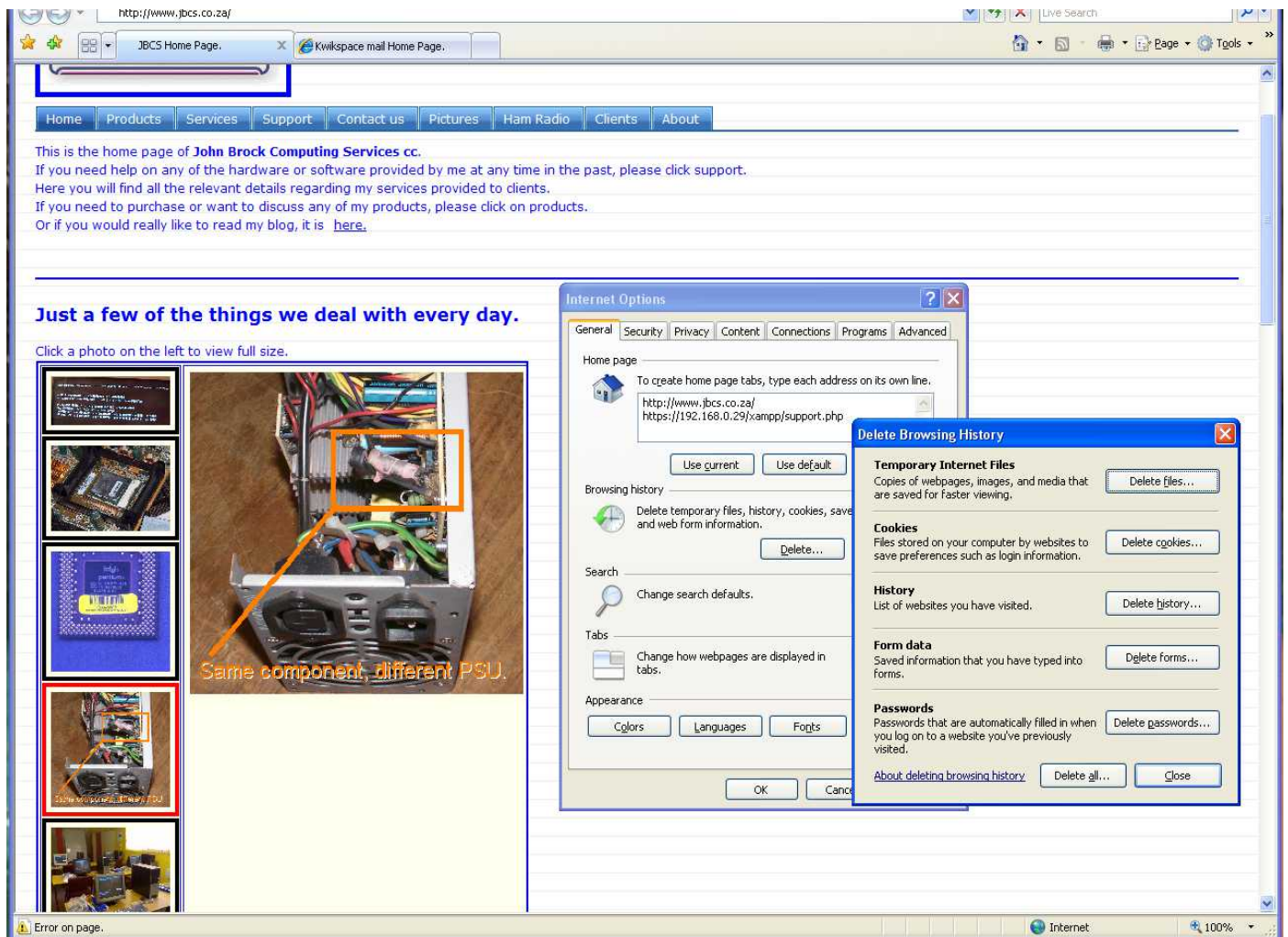
Empty the 'Recycle Bin'.

The files that are there, if you haven't restored them by now, chances are you won't need them ever again. So right-click the recycle bin and click; 'Empty the Recycle Bin'.



Internet Explorer

You might not be using Internet Explorer but Windows applications will use it to do all sorts of things. The cache store in IE is huge by default. In one case it was set to 1.6GB! So this will very likely need cleaning out. If Internet Explorer is slow to start make it perform faster by deleting all it's temporary files.

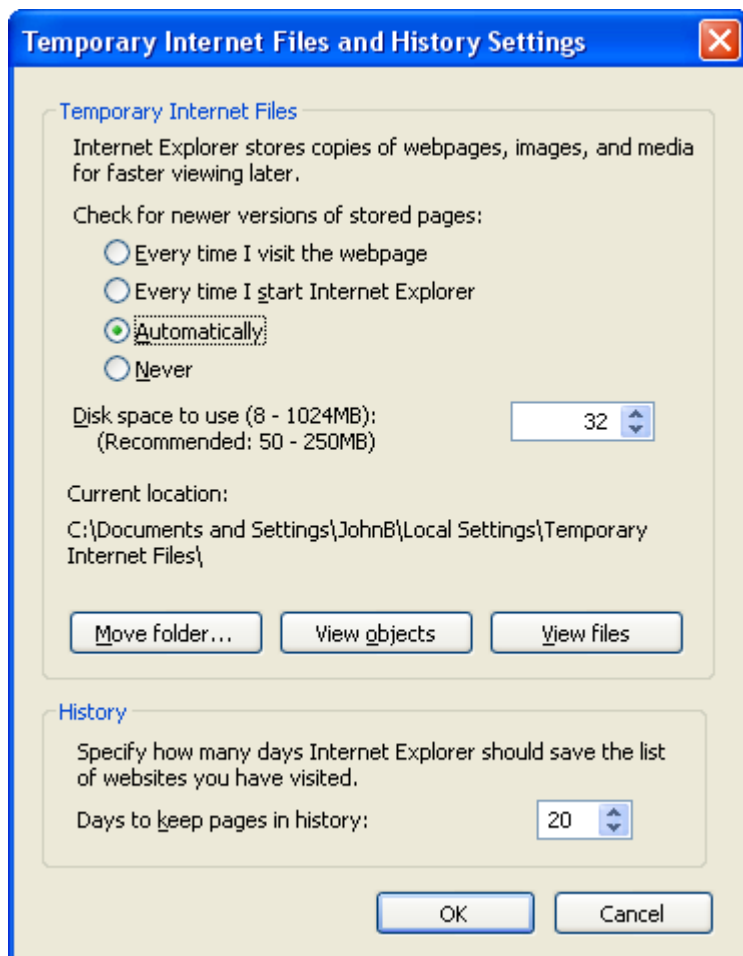


You will need to run Internet Explorer to get at the cache settings easily. Press the Alt key to show the menus. Select the 'Tools' menu and then 'Internet Options'. Then select 'Browsing History's 'Delete' button.



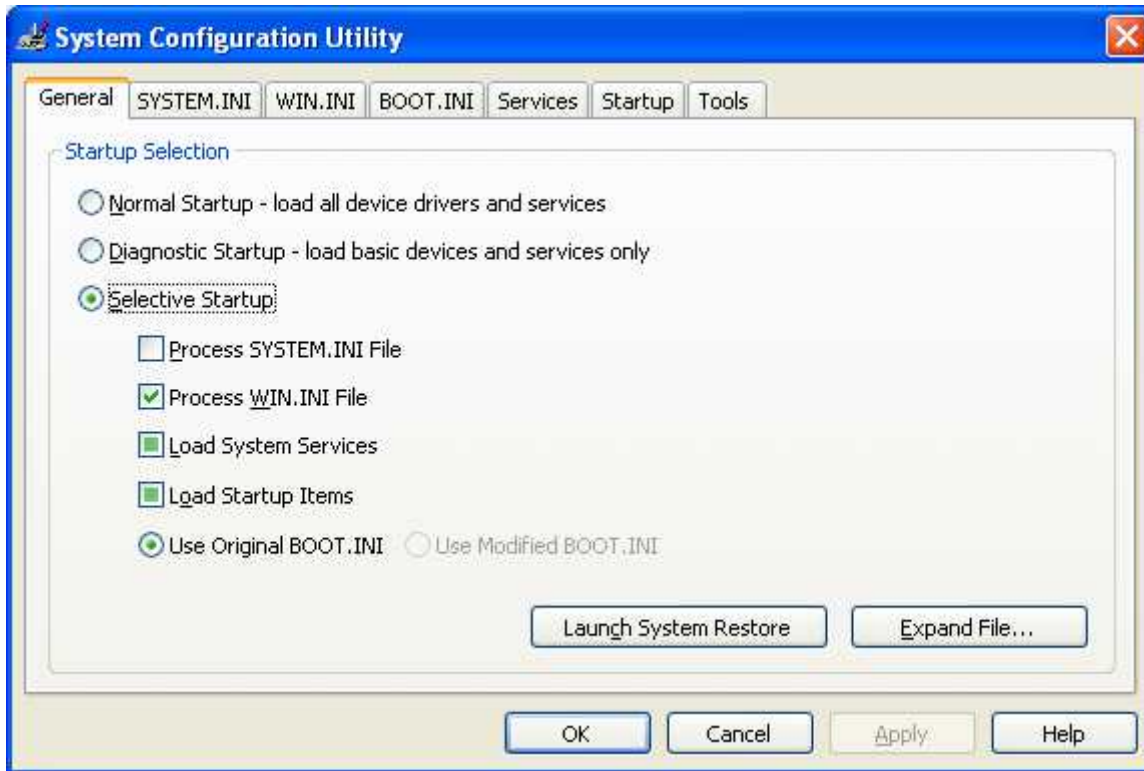
This is Internet Explorer 7, it is similar in IE 8. Previous versions had their very own tab for this. Delete the 'Temporary Internet Files' by clicking the 'Delete files' button.

Then 'Close' this window. And select the 'Settings' button. This should bring up:-



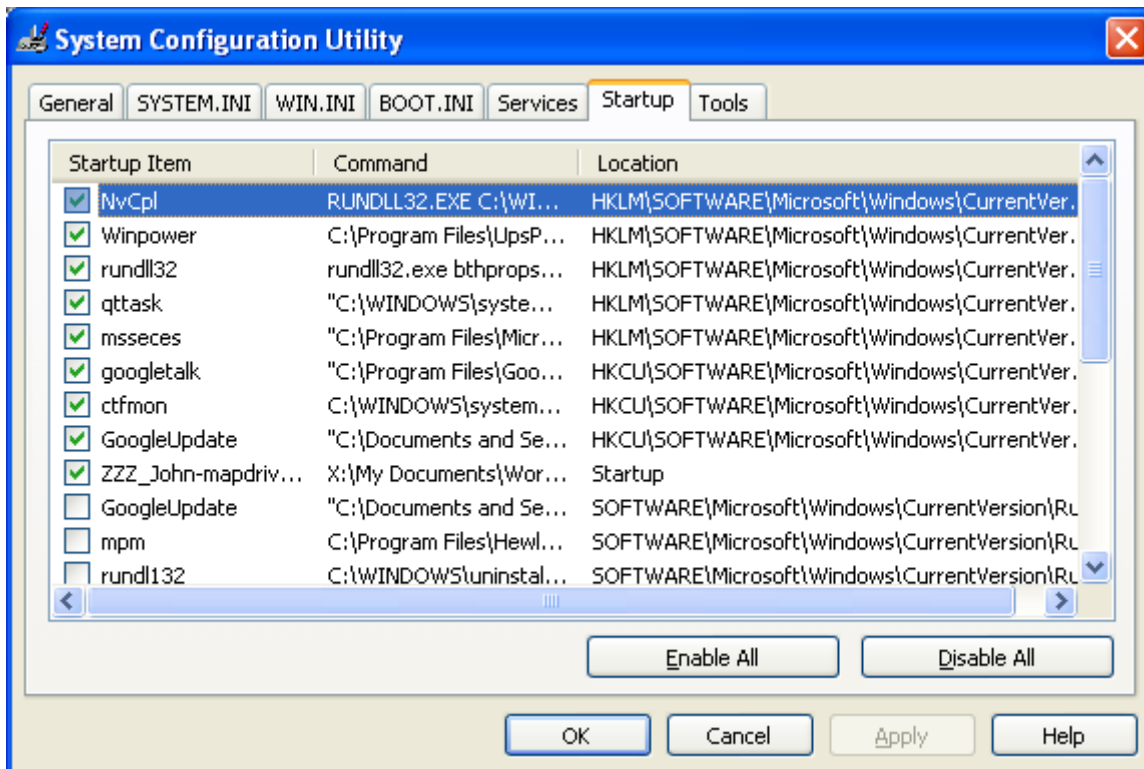
Set the 'Disk space to use' to some reasonable number. I have mine set to 32 Megabytes. Then press OK.

Using 'msconfig' to clean out files (programs) that are starting up with Windows



You can run the utility by clicking the Start button and selecting 'run'. Type 'msconfig' and press the 'Ok' button.

Click on the 'Startup' tab.

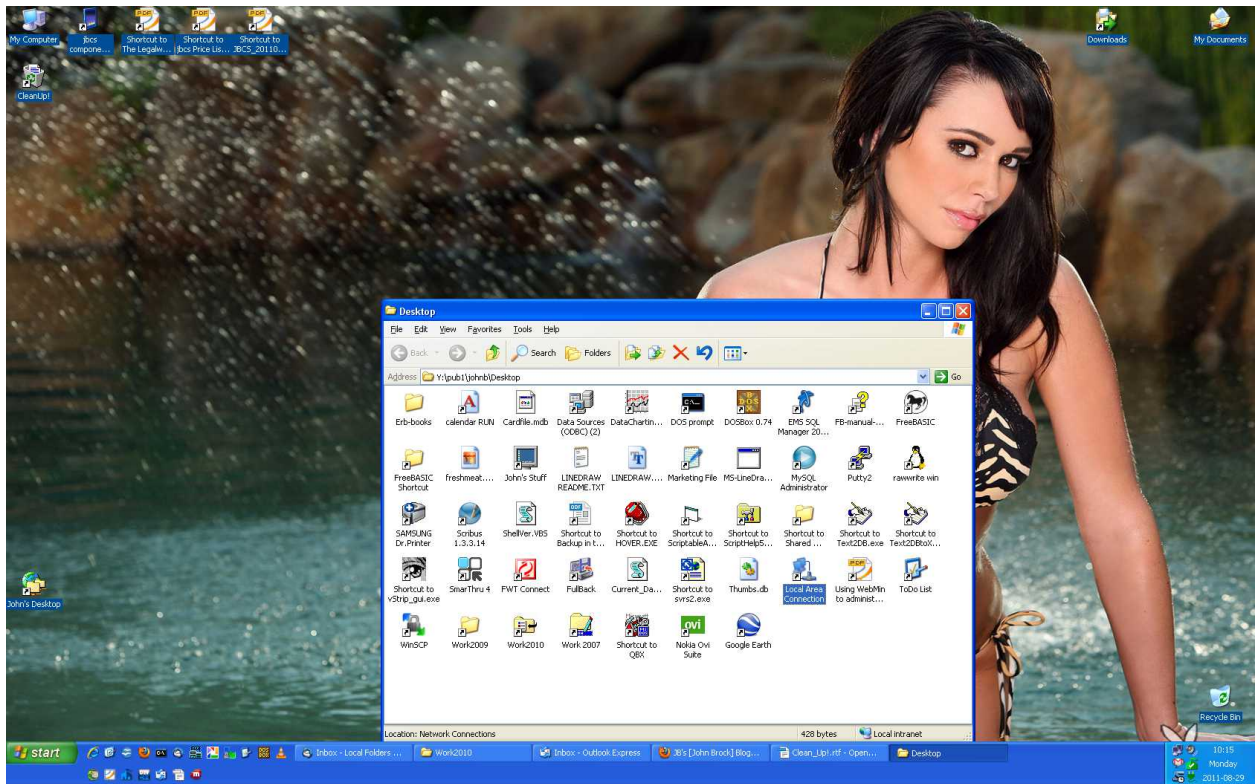


My example shows some that are 'ticked' and some that are not. Try clicking on disable all to begin and when you restart, check what applications 'whinge and moan'. But you will see just how fast your PC can start up. Run 'msconfig' again to enable the items you need at startup.

Hundreds of icons on the desktop

Each icon is 'registered' at start up by Windows. They don't take up much in the way of memory but each file has to be 'read' and 'registered'. Put the ones you don't use often into a folder on the desktop. You can change the icon for that folder to something that makes sense to you. It can then contain all the icons that you don't need every day.

Like this:-



Now you have finished deleting all those files, go defragment the hard disk. While it is doing that have a well earned cup of coffee or glass of wine.

Notes

While doing a search for a picture called 'desktopicons', I found a *gazillion* [a technical term similar to humongous.] Desktop.ini files. These are used by Windows to customise each folder/directory. So there are a great many of these on your hard disk. They all have directory entries. They all are hidden and most are system. So you cannot delete them...

The procedure to delete them is not an easy one. Let me know if you would like to remove them.

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[Still helping people with computer problems...issues.]