

SURF 'N STUFF 'N TIPS

Eliminating Remnants of Failed Programs

A failed program is a program that never did get installed correctly or work properly. Perhaps the failed program is one where you got halfway through the download and the dog yanked your Internet connection from the wall. Or it could be one where you got most of the way through the installation program and it unexpectedly exited. The reasons for failure could be myriad, and all such failures lead to a cluttered system.

If you decide that you want to get rid of the failed program, put on your detective's cap and start looking around for what the program added to your system. You can do this by either looking for a log file or manually search for files.

If you can find the log file, you can read it to discover what was done, and then manually undo what was done. (Log files can typically be opened with Notepad or some other text editor.)

Installation log files can be in any number of places. If you downloaded a program to your hard drive prior to installation, the log file could be in the same folder where you placed the downloaded file. If the installation program already created a folder for the program, the log file could also be there. Or, the log file could be in a temporary folder that the install program used. Check the various Temp folders on your hard drive to see if anything is there.

After you find the pieces, figure out whether it's okay to delete those pieces. If in doubt, rename or move the pieces to a different folder and restart Windows. If you experience no repercussions from making the change, you can easily delete the files for good.

CLEAN UP OLD ICONS:

Your desktop is a great place to park things for short periods of time but a lousy place for organizing anything long-term. Start by cleaning up the mess that's there right now. **Right-click** an empty location on the desktop, and click **Properties, Desktop**. Then click **Customize Desktop**. Click **Clean Desktop Now**. Finally, click **Next**. The **Desktop Cleanup Wizard** scans only for shortcuts. It doesn't even look at other kinds of files or folders (or zipped/compressed folders). Follow this procedure all the way to the end to move all your unused, or rarely used, desktop items. The Desktop Cleanup Wizard presents the results of its scan.

Review the shortcuts with check marks next to them, and feel free to check any shortcuts that you don't expect to use in the near future. Click **Next**, and then click **Finish**. All the shortcuts you checked are shuffled to a folder on the desktop called Unused Desktop Shortcuts.

Click OK twice to clear out the dialog boxes.

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