Note that there are commercial alternatives to Windows Remote Assistance that do a much better job at this task. This chapter shows you how to use Remote Assistance because it's free, and all Windows computers since Windows XP have it.
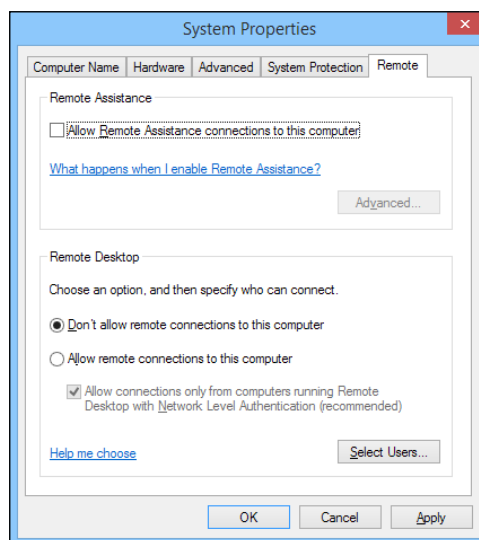
Enabling Remote Assistance

Before you can lend assistance to a remote computer, Remote Assistance must be enabled on that computer. You should enable Remote Assistance before you need it, so that when the time comes, you can easily access your users' computers. But the procedure is simple enough that you can probably walk a user through the steps over the phone so that you can then gain access.

Here are the steps:

1. **Click the Start button, type** Remote Assistance, **and click Enable Remote Assistance Invitations to Be Sent from This Computer.**

    This brings up the System Properties dialog box, shown in Figure 15-1.

FIGURE 15-1:
Enabling Remote Assistance.

2. **Select the Allow Remote Assistance Connections to This Computer check box.**

3. **Click the Advanced button.**

    The Remote Assistance Settings dialog box appears, as shown in Figure 15-2.