

A Simple Guide to Speeding Up Your Windows 10 Computer

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If your Windows 10 computer feels slower than it used to, you are not alone. Over time, applications, background processes, temporary files, and outdated settings can gradually reduce system performance. The good news is that many common performance issues can be resolved safely without advanced technical skills.

This guide outlines practical, low-risk steps to help improve speed, responsiveness, and overall system stability.

1. The Quickest Fix: Restart Your PC

Although it sounds simple, restarting your computer clears temporary files, resets background processes, and refreshes system memory. Many performance issues are resolved by a reboot, especially on systems that remain powered on for long periods.

2. Stop Unnecessary Startup Programs

Many applications automatically start when Windows boots, increasing startup time and consuming system resources in the background.

How to disable startup apps:

1. Press **Ctrl + Shift + Esc** to open Task Manager
2. Select the **Startup** tab
3. Identify apps you do not need immediately (for example: music apps, game launchers, update utilities)
4. Right-click the app and select **Disable**

Disabling startup apps does not uninstall them — it simply prevents them from launching automatically.

3. Identify What Is Slowing Your System Down

Task Manager provides a real-time view of how system resources are being used.

Steps:

- Open Task Manager (**Ctrl + Shift + Esc**)
- Select the **Processes** tab
- Monitor the **CPU**, **Memory**, and **Disk** columns

If an application you are not actively using consistently shows high usage, it may be creating a performance bottleneck.

4. Clean Out Digital “Junk”

Temporary files and unused data accumulate over time and can consume valuable storage space.

Disk Cleanup

1. Type **Disk Cleanup** into the Start menu
2. Select your main drive (usually **C:**)
3. Remove temporary files and recycle bin contents

Storage Sense (Automatic Cleanup)

- Go to **Settings → System → Storage**
- Enable **Storage Sense**

This allows Windows to automatically remove unnecessary files going forward.

5. Keep Your System Updated

Microsoft regularly releases updates that improve performance, fix bugs, and patch security vulnerabilities.

Windows Updates

- Go to **Settings → Update & Security → Windows Update**
- Select **Check for updates**

Driver Updates

Drivers allow hardware components to function correctly.

Important warning: Avoid “free driver updater” tools advertised online. Many are unreliable, contain bloatware, or are outright scams.

Instead, update drivers through:

- Windows Update
- The hardware manufacturer’s official website

6. Keep Malware Protection Updated

Malware and viruses often cause significant performance degradation.

Ensure that:

- Antivirus software is installed
- Virus definitions are up to date
- Automatic updates are enabled

An infected system will almost always run slower and less reliably.

7. Simplify Visual Effects

Windows includes visual animations and effects that can slow older or lower-powered systems.

How to adjust:

1. Search for **Adjust the appearance and performance of Windows**
2. Select **Adjust for best performance**

This reduces visual overhead and frees resources for essential tasks.

8. Check Your Power Settings

Laptops often default to power-saving modes that limit CPU performance.

- Go to **Control Panel → Power Options**
- Select **Balanced** or **High Performance**

Note: High Performance may increase heat and fan noise. For most users, **Balanced** offers the best compromise between speed and system longevity.

9. Remove Bloatware (Unnecessary Pre-Installed Programs)

What Is Bloatware?

Bloatware refers to software that comes pre-installed on a computer but provides little or no value to the user. These programs often:

- Run in the background
- Consume storage space
- Reduce performance

Examples include trial software, promotional apps, and manufacturer utilities.

How to Find Bloatware

1. Open **Start → Settings → Apps → Apps & Features**
2. Review the list of installed programs

Look for:

- Applications you never use
- Trial versions of paid software
- Tools you do not recognize

How to Remove It Safely

- Select the application
- Click **Uninstall**
- Follow the prompts

Important: Do not remove system components or applications you are unsure about. When in doubt, research the program name before uninstalling.

10. When to Consider a Hardware Upgrade

If software optimization is no longer sufficient, hardware upgrades can provide dramatic performance improvements.

Upgrade to a Solid State Drive (SSD)

Replacing a traditional hard disk drive (HDD) with an SSD is the single most effective upgrade for older systems.

Benefits include:

- Faster boot times
- Faster application loading
- Significantly improved responsiveness

Important note: Do not manually defragment an SSD. Windows automatically handles optimization safely. Manual defragmentation can reduce SSD lifespan.

Add More Memory (RAM)

Increasing RAM allows your system to handle multiple applications more efficiently and reduces freezing or slowdowns during multitasking.

Improving Windows 10 performance does not always require advanced technical expertise or immediate hardware replacement. By managing startup programs, keeping systems updated, removing unnecessary software, and applying basic maintenance practices, most users can restore noticeable speed and reliability.

When combined with proactive malware protection and informed upgrade decisions, these steps help extend the usable life of a Windows PC while maintaining a smooth and responsive experience.

References

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