

How to Customize your Windows Desktop Without Frying your Computer or Collecting a Bunch of Spyware.



Most of the advertisements that you see in your email for "free screensaver!" or "Add smiley faces to your email!" or "free search bar!" are actually spy-ware programs that are far from free. While they are running, they are monitoring your surfing traffic and emails, sending your web history and email address to spammers. 🤖 In worst cases, they can even destroy your default settings in Internet Explorer and Windows itself. It is unfortunate that people use them, when these programs only make automatic changes that the user can made on their own -without the spy-ware.



The good news is that you don't need these programs to make your desktop a friendlier place to work. The most important concept to remember: Any picture that you see can be made into a background, any BMP file can be made into a custom screensaver, any icon can be attached to any file, and any cursor you find can be used as a mouse pointer. Also, Windows default colors can be changed to anything you want. 🌈

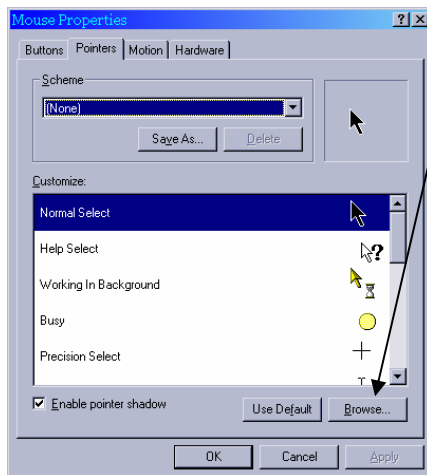
If you find a mouse pointer you want to put on your computer:

The file needs to have the extension ".CUR". You can find custom cursors on the web, or on other people's computers. We have a collection of them in G:\Icons\Cursors.

There are 15 different pointers in Windows, depending on what you're doing: "Normal select" (arrow) and "Busy" (hourglass) are the most commonly seen. Once you have the ".CUR" file, save it to your c: drive.

Go to **My Computer**, double-click **Control Panel**, and double click **Mouse**.

Click on the **"Pointers"** tab.



Click on the mouse pointer you want to change and click **"Browse."**

Select it and click **OK**. There it is!

Lather, rinse, repeat for any other pointers you want to change in the list.

When you have it the way you want, click the **"Save As"** button and give it a name. It will remember your

pointer settings and you can call them up. You can make several schemes and change them when the mood suits you.

If you see a graphic that you want to make a background:

You can get pictures from anywhere - the web, other people, or digital photos from home. We have a collection of backgrounds in P:\backgrounds. If you're going to be collecting a lot of them, you might want to make a separate folder on your C: drive and put them there.

Go to "My Computer," double-click "Control Panel,"

Double click "Display," and click on the "Background" tab.

There is a "Browse" button, click there and browse and click the picture. Voila! It's a background!

If you see a graphic that you want to make a screensaver:

The Windows screensaver "3d Flying Objects" creates a small flag that flutters around your screen. Here's the cool part: You can change the "texture" of the flag to point to any ".bmp" picture! *

Save your graphic as above.

Now go to "My Computer" and double-click "Control Panel."

Double click "Display" and click on the "Screen Saver" tab.

Change the screensaver to "3d Flying Objects" and select the "Settings" button.

Change the type to "Textured flag" from the dropdown.

Click the "Texture" button and "Browse" out to your picture.

Click "OK" and you have a custom screensaver!

If you want to change icon of a program:

Right click the program's icon and go to "Properties."

If it lets you change the icon, there will be a button marked "Change Icon."

You can "Browse" out to C:\winnt\SHELL32.dll and change the icon from the ones available.



..Saving Pix off the web:

In Internet Explorer:
Right click the picture,
and select "Save Picture
As" from the dropdown.

The "Save As" dialog will
pop up, with the name
and place to put the file.
The default place to put
it should be C:\Winnt
or C:\Windows
(whichever you have).

You can also **browse** to any program (they are the files with EXE after them) and select an icon from there. Click **OK**, and the icon will change! Icons are available all over the web. Simply use your favorite search page to look for "Free icons". We also have a collection of them in G:\Icons

If you want to change the Windows colors:

Go to **"My Computer,"**

Double-click **"Control Panel,"** and double click **"Display."**

Click on the **"Appearance"** tab.

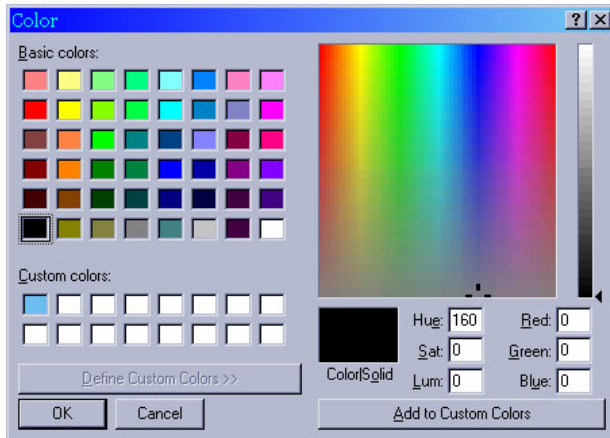
Second dropdown box is called **"Item"**

Select whichever item you to change. You can then change the color of the item, the size, the font and size (if it has text), or whatever.

A note on colors: although it shows only a few colors when you click on **colors**,



there is a button at the bottom called "Other" that lets you select any color of the rainbow for your object.



Move the crosshairs on the right to the color you want, and move the slider on the far right to decide lightness/darkness. Click **"Add to Custom Colors"** and click **OK** and that color is available!

* some graphics need to be converted to BMP format before you can make a screensaver out of them. After saving the graphic, go to "Start" "Run" and type in `kodaking` and click "Run." This will open the image converter Windows comes with. Use "File" "Open" to find the file and open it in Imager. Now go to "File" "Save As". Under "Save As Type" at the bottom of that screen, change the type to "Windows Bitmap (BMP)" .

Change the name, and remember where you saved it, or change the save point, and click save. Now close Imager and you can repeat the steps above.