

# Windows 7 - IMPROVE YOUR DISPLAY READABILITY ©

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Windows7\_EasyRead.lwp

revised 3-11-2010

This sheet explains how to make the Text, Icons, Pointers, & Cursors bigger, bolder, and easier to read on a typical Display. NOTE: If your monitor is running at resolution higher than 1024x768, you will need to set all my recommended values to a higher number to get the best effect. Experiment and see what looks best to you.

## **OPTIMIZE DISPLAY SETTINGS**

- a. Advanced Settings (DESKTOP PC's ONLY): (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Display > Adjust resolution > Advanced settings*).
  - 1) Adapter tab: make sure the Adapter Type matches your video hardware. If it is only identified as "Generic", "Default", or "Standard", you will not get the best results. You should try to install the correct Video Adapter driver either from the Manufacturer or from Microsoft updates.
  - 2) Monitor Tab: Make sure the Monitor Type matches your Display. If it is only identified as "Generic", "Default", or "Standard", you will not get the best results. You should try to install the correct monitor driver using the CD that came with your Monitor or from the Manufacturer or from Microsoft updates.
    - i. Make sure to check the box " Hide modes that this monitor cannot display".
    - ii. Select the highest available refresh rate for your Monitor (*at least 75 Hz, if possible. Except LCD's*) and click <OK> to exit to the Display Settings.
- b. Display Settings: (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Display > Adjust resolution > Advanced settings*).
  - 1) Select the best Resolution for your Monitor. *Higher is better*. For LCD's always pick the native Resolution. Set Colors: Highest (32-bit).
  - 2) Click <OK> to exit.

**DPI:** (*Right-click on the Desktop > Personalize > Display*). Click "Set custom Text size (DPI)" and drag the Ruler until it reads no more than 110% (or 106 DPI) for a resolution of 1024x768. Displays running at higher resolutions can have it set as high as 140% for good readability.

**WARNING:** *This change affects all User Accounts! ALSO: If you make this value too large, it will cause text box problems in some programs causing only the first few words of the sentence in a box to be visible.*

**CLEARTYPE:** If you are using an LCD or Plasma Monitor, you should turn on ClearType. (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Display > Adjust ClearType text*). Check: " Turn on ClearType", click "Next", & follow the instructions for "ClearType Tuning".

**THEME:** (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Theme*). If your video card is Aero capable, you will see several Aero Theme options listed. Choose the desired theme (Aero or non-Aero) before continuing with Advanced appearance settings. NOTE: Themes affect visuals, sounds, and other system elements as well as the speed that the PC runs. Click "Save changes".

**CURSOR VISIBILITY:** (*Control Panel > under "Ease of Access", click "Optimize visual display"*). Scroll way down until you see "Set the thickness of the blinking cursor". Set the width as wide as your need. A setting of "4" works for me.

**ADVANCED APPEARANCE SETTINGS:** Change the Appearance of individual items: (*Right-click on the Desktop > Personalize > Window Color > If using Aero, "Advanced appearance settings..."*). You should now be in the "Window Color and Appearance" window.

**Note 1: Microsoft has locked out many of these settings from having an effect on various windows compared to XP and Vista. The settings seem to affect some windows and system functions, but not others.**

**Note 2: The look of these settings will vary depending on the chosen Theme or Color Scheme.**

**Note 3: These suggested values are for a display set for 1024x768. If your monitor is set for a higher resolution you will need to set the values to a higher number for good effect.)**

- a. Item: **Icon**. Set to size 32-36, Font = Segoe UI, Size = 10-12, click the Font "B" button for bold Text. *Note: "Drop shadows" have a big effect on the readability of Icon Text. To enable/disable Drop Shadows; (Control Panel > System and Security > System > Advanced system settings > Advanced tab > Performance; "Settings" button > Adjust visual effects).  Use Drop Shadows for icon labels on the desktop*. Try it both ways to see what you like.
- b. Item: **Icon Spacing** (Horizontal). Increase the spacing as needed so the Icon Titles all display as desired (*so the text does not end with .....*).
- c. Item: **ToolTip** Color1 = bright yellow. Font = Segoe UI, Size = 9-10, Text color = Black, click the Font "B" button. (*Note: This no longer affects the Taskbar Tooltips*)
- d. Item: **Menu**. Font = Segoe UI, Size = 10-12, (Click the Font "B" button, if desire).
- e. Item: **Message Box**. Font Size = 9-12. *Do not make the "Message Box" text bold!* (NOTE: This does not have any effect in Windows 7 RC1).
- f. Item: **Active Title Bar**. Set to size 22-25, Font size = 9-12. (Click the Font "B" button, if desired). (*Note: This no longer affects the Taskbar*).
- g. Item: **Scrollbar**. Set up to size 18-25 to make the Scroll bar wider.
- h. Click on <Apply> to see the changes after each item or click <OK> to exit.
- i. It's a good idea to reboot, and re-check all changes to make sure they "took" correctly.

**MOUSE POINTER:** (*Control Panel > Hardware and sound > Mouse*).

- **Pointers** Tab.
  - ✓ Choose the "Magnified (system scheme) Pointer Scheme, then if desired find a custom "Normal Select" pointer using the <Browse> button.
  - ✓ Un-check the boxes for " Enable Pointer Shadow" and for " Allow Themes to change Mouse Pointers".
  - ✓ Disable Pointer changes by un-checking the box for " Allow Themes to change pointers".
  - ✓ Click Apply.
- **Pointer Options** Tab: Check the box for " Automatically move the pointer to the default button in a dialog box. Check the box for " Show location of pointer when I press the <Ctrl> key. Click OK to exit.

**FIREFOX:**

- a. There are some add-ons like NoSquint that improve the readability of websites.
- b. Also, The key combination of < Ctrl and + > keys will make most web content larger each time your press it. To go smaller, press < Ctrl and - > Keys.