<u>XP - IMPROVE YOUR DISPLAY READABILITY</u> ©©

How to make the Text, Icons, Taskbar, Pointers, & Cursors bigger, bolder, and easier to read on a typical Display. <u>*NOTE: If your monitor runs at a higher resolution than 1024x768, you will need to set all the values to an even higher number for good effect.)*</u>:

1. **OPTIMIZE MONITOR SETTINGS** *(Right-click Desktop > Properties > Settings Tab > Click the <Advanced> button):*
    a. On the Monitor Tab, make sure the actual Brand and Model of your Monitor is shown. *If it's wrong or it says "Generic" or "Plug & Play", then update the driver using the CD that came with the Monitor. Insert CD, click Properties, Driver Tab, <Update Driver>, OK)*

    b. Next on the Monitor Tab, make sure to check the box "☑ Hide modes that this monitor cannot display"

    c. Select the highest available refresh rate for your display *(at least 75 Hz if possible).*

    d. When done, click <OK>,

    e. On the Display properties Window, select the best Resolution for your Monitor. Higher is better. For LCD's always pick the native Resolution. Set Colors: Highest (32-bit).

    f. Click <OK> to exit.

2. **DPI:** *(Right-click on the Desktop > Properties > Settings tab > Advanced button > General Tab).*   Click the "DPI Setting:" Down Arrow, select "Custom Setting" and drag the Ruler until it reads <u>no more than</u> 110% or 106 DPI (at 1024x768). Displays running at higher resolutions can need it set as high as 140% for good readability. ***WARNING: This change affects all User Accounts! ALSO: If you make this too large, it will cause text box problems in some programs where you will only see the first few words of the sentence in a box.***

3. **LARGE ICONS:** To make the Desktop Icons Larger, *(Right-click on the Desktop > Properties > Appearance tab > Effects Button).* Check the box ☑ Use Large Icons.

4. **SMOOTHING SCREEN FONTS:** If you are using an LCD or Plasma display, you may want to turn on Font Smoothing, either ClearType or Standard. *(Right-click on the Desktop > Properties > Appearance Tab > Effects).* Check the box: "☑ Use the following method to smooth edges of screen fonts", and select "ClearType" or "Standard". (I prefer Standard over Cleartype). To finetune ClearType, you can use the Cleartype Tuner Program from Microsoft at: http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.mspx

5. **DISPLAY PROPERTIES:** You can increase the size and boldness of the text of individual items: *<u>(Note: The default values will vary depending on the Theme selected. Also note that these suggested values are for a display set for 1024x768. **WARNING:** These settings have limited or no effect on some PCs or Themes. You may see a change after a restart. (Right-click on Desktop > Properties > Appearance Tab > click the Advanced button):</u>*

    a. Select Item: **Icon**. Set to size = 32-36, Best Font = ARIAL NARROW, Size = 10-12, click the Font "B" button for bold Text.

    b. Select Item: **Icon Spacing** (Horizontal and Vertical). Increase the spacing as needed so the full Icon Title text all displays on the Desktop as desired. *(NOTE: You will have to Log-off/Log-on to see any change in Horizontal or Vertical Icon spacing after you change the value).*

c. Select Item: **ToolTip** Set Color1 = bright yellow. Font = Microsoft Sans Serif, ARIAL or ARIAL NARROW, Size = 8-10, Text color to Black, click the Font: "B" button.

d. Select Item: **Menu**. Font size = 9-12, click the Font "B" button. *(Affects the "All Programs" Menu)*

e. Select Item: **Message Box**. Font size = 9-12. ***WARNING: Do not make the "Message Box" text Bold*****!**

f. Select Item: **Active Title Bar**. Set to size = 22-26, Font size = 9-12. Click the "B" button. *(affects the Taskbar Icons & Text)*

g. Select Item: **Scrollbar.** Set to size 15-18, to make the Scroll bar wider.

h. Click <OK> to exit "Advanced Appearance", then <Apply>.

i. Re-check all changes to make sure that all the new settings took, then click <OK>.

6. **DESKTOP ICON TEXT BACKGROUND.**
   a. TRANSPARENT:
      1) For the background behind the Icon Text to be transparent, these four conditions must be met:

         • (*Control Panel > System > Advanced Tab, "Performance", click <Settings> button).* The box must be checked for "☑ Use Drop Shadows for Icon labels".

         • (*Right-click Desktop > Arrange Icons by).* Make sure "Lock Web Items on Desktop" is NOT checked.

         • (*Right-click Desktop > Properties > Desktop Tab > Customize Desktop > Web Tab).* Clear all checked boxes.

         • Make sure the Desktop Wallpaper is an image file (JPG or GIF), and not HTML.

      2) If the above conditions are met and you still cannot get the background to go transparent, try this tip:

         • Go to *(Control Panel > Accessibility Options > Display tab)*. Click the box for "☑ Use High Contrast" to enable it, then click Apply. Then uncheck the box and click Apply again. Then click "Settings", and under the High Contrast Appearance Scheme, Choose "Windows Standard" from the drop down menu. Then Select OK and then Apply. Hopefully, you can now get transparent Icon text background.

   b. SOLID:
      1) To create a solid color background for the Icon text, go to *(Control Panel > System > Advanced Tab, "Performance", click <Settings> button) and* un-check the box; "☐ Use Drop Shadows for Icon labels". NOTE: The color of the text background will be the color of the desktop background set in Display Properties:*(Right-click on Desktop > Properties > Appearance Tab > Advanced button > Desktop > Color 1),*

7. **CURSOR VISIBILITY**: *(Control Panel > Accessibility Options > Display Tab).* Under Cursor Options, move the Width slider to make the blinking cursor a little wider. *Don't overdo this.*

8. **MOUSE POINTER:** *(Control Panel > Mouse).*
   a. Pointers Tab. "Normal Select" pointer. Choose a more visible scheme or a custom pointer with the <Browse> button. *NOTE: I like the Scheme = Magnified (system scheme)*

   b. If desired, click the box "☑ Enable Pointer Shadow".

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    c. Pointer Options Tab: If desired, click the box "☑ Display pointer trails", and set as long as desired.

9. **FIREFOX:**

    a. There are some add-ons like NoSquint that improves 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.