

Meet the Control Panel

we will explore the Control Panel. You can modify many aspects of Windows here and intermediate users will have access to all the options they need to control their computer. Master the workings of the Control Panel and you can consider yourself a seasoned Windows 7 user!

Opening the Control Panel

The Control Panel is opened by clicking Start □ Control Panel:

Control Panel Overview

The Control Panel contains an address bar and search box like many other folders. The different commands are categorized into eight groups: The following table gives you a description of all the Control Panel categories, including the various programs you can find by clicking each category's hyperlink*. As we progress through this manual, we will cover some of these options in detail. For now, let's go over the different sections:

1. System and Security

This section deals with the overall operation and stability/security of Windows 7. Here, you can open the Action Center, check system settings, manage Windows Update settings and power consumption options, and access other administrative tools.

- Action Center
- Windows Firewall
- System
- Windows Update
- Power Options
- Backup and Restore
- BitLocker Drive Encryption
- Administrative Tools

2. Network and Internet

Use this option to modify how your computer will interact with others if you are on a network. Manage network settings, set up and use the Homegroup network to interact with other Windows 7 computers, and modify Internet Explorer 8 settings.

- Network and Sharing Center
- Homegroup
- Internet Options

3. Hardware and Sound

This option allows you to modify settings for all hardware connected to your computer. This can include printers and scanners, mice, keyboard, speakers, digital cameras and audio devices, game controllers, and modems. You can also modify AutoPlay options for removable media, adjust sound and power usage options, and change display settings.

- Devices and Printers
- AutoPlay
- Sound
- Power Options
- Display

4. Programs

Install or uninstall third-party programs, set which programs will be associated with which file type, and manage gadgets.

- Programs and Features
- Default Programs
- Desktop Gadgets

5. User Accounts and Family Safety

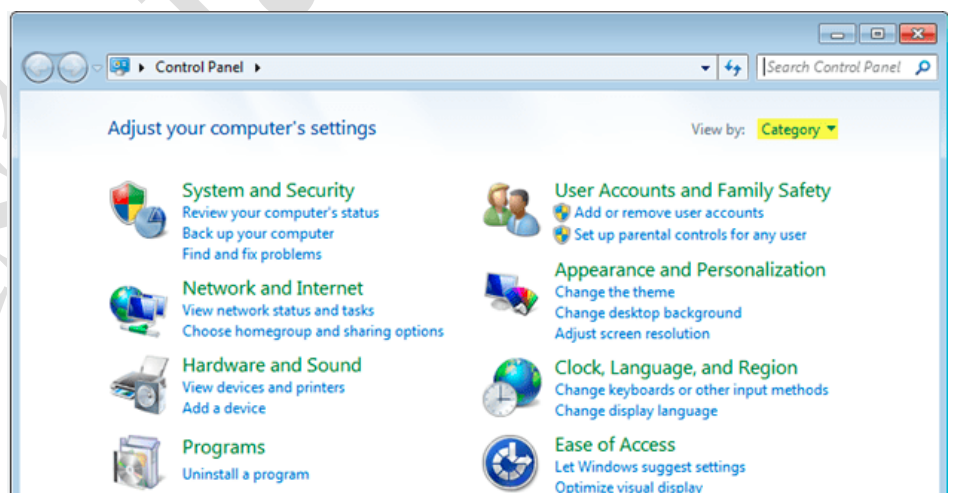
Manage users on your computer. These options are useful if the computer is to be used at home or in an office setting where many people will share the same computer. Use Windows CardSpace and the Credentials Manager to manage personal data.

- User Accounts
- Parental Controls
- Windows CardSpace
- Credential Manager

6. Appearance and Personalization

Adjust the look and feel of your computer here. Manage how the Start menu looks, adjust a number of visual elements, customize how a folder displays its contents, and view fonts that are installed on your computer.

- Personalization
- Display
- Desktop Gadgets



- Taskbar and StartMenu
- Ease of AccessCenter
- Folder Options
- Fonts

7. Clock, Language, Region

Use this option to change the date and time, change the language pack that is installed on your computer, or change other regional options such as currency and number formats.

- Date and Time
- Region and Language

8. Ease of Access

Windows 7 includes a number of different options for users who are differently abled. Enhanced contrast, text-to-speech options, and user input options allow almost anyone to have full access to Windows

- **Ease of AccessCenter**



Additional Options

If you have some hardware or software on your computer that can directly influence the day-to-day operation of your computer, you may see additional options in the Control Panel. Some options are repeated in the different categories. Clicking the actual Hardware and Sound link will open all category options, as shown in the diagram above. If you clicked the blue "Add a device" link, you would be taken directly to the sub option in the red box: Sometimes when you have clicked a link to view the details of a category or clicked a sub option, you will see some related Control Panel options: Beside the address bar at the top of the window are Back and Forward navigation buttons.

You can also return to the home screen of the Control Panel by clicking Control Panel Home:

You might have noticed that some Control Panel sub options have a small Windows Shield icon beside them. The options can only be modified by computer administrators and may be password protected:

**Setting Accessibility Options
Opening the Ease of Access Center**

The Ease of Access Center is accessible by clicking the blue logo at the login screen. A window will appear and let the user enable or disable many of the accessibility options we will discuss in this lesson. Windows will also read the options in the window to you if you move your mouse over an option. This enables some users to change accessibility options on the computer before they log into their user account. To set accessibility options from the Control Panel, click Ease of Access > Ease of Access Center: If your computer is equipped with speakers, you will hear the narrator start reading the text on the screen when the Ease of Access Center first opens: One final accessibility feature of Windows 7 is voice recognition. You can use a microphone to open programs and type documents. Click the Use Speech Recognition link to open the Speech Recognition Options window: The more you use speech recognition, the more accurately your computer will detect your voice.



Make changes to your user account



Customizing User Accounts

It is common place now to have at least one personal computer in a household at a time. In fact, it is often the case that each member of the household has access to

their own! However, if you share a computer at home or at work, you can use accounts. This enables everyone to sign in, use programs, store their own data, and customize the interface to their liking. This lesson will show you, if you are a computer administrator, how to create, modify, and remove user accounts.

Opening User Accounts

When you first turn on your computer, you have to log in by clicking your user name and entering a password. In the Control Panel, click User Accounts and Family Safety > User Accounts. If you are a computer administrator, you will see your account details: Click “Manage another account” to view all user accounts on your computer. If you are the only user, you will actually see two accounts: yours, and a guest account: Double-click any user account to view or modify its properties.



Name the account and choose an account type

This name will appear on the Welcome screen and on the Start menu.

Susan

- Standard user
Standard account users can use most software and change system settings that do not affect other users or the security of the computer.
- Administrator
Administrators have complete access to the computer and can make any desired changes. Based on notification settings, administrators may be asked to provide their password or confirmation before making changes that affect other users.

We recommend that you protect every account with a strong password.

[Why is a standard account recommended?](#)

Create Account Cancel

full access to the computer, but they are not allowed to make any changes that will affect any other user or compromise the security of the computer. Administrators have full access to all features. Click Create Account to proceed. The new account will be shown in the list of current accounts:

Choose the account you would like to change



Adding a User Account

Click Accounts and Family Safety > “Add or remove user accounts:”

Click the “Create a new account” link near the bottom of the window. Give the new account a name and then choose the account type: Standard users have nearly

Choose the account you would like to change



Create a new account

What is a user account?

Additional things you can do

Set up Parental Controls

Go to the main User Accounts page

Advanced Customization Tasks

Changing How Your Mouse Behaves

In the Control Panel, click Hardware and Sound and then click Mouse under the Devices and Printers heading.

This will open the Mouse Properties dialog box:

Under the “Button configuration” heading, you can

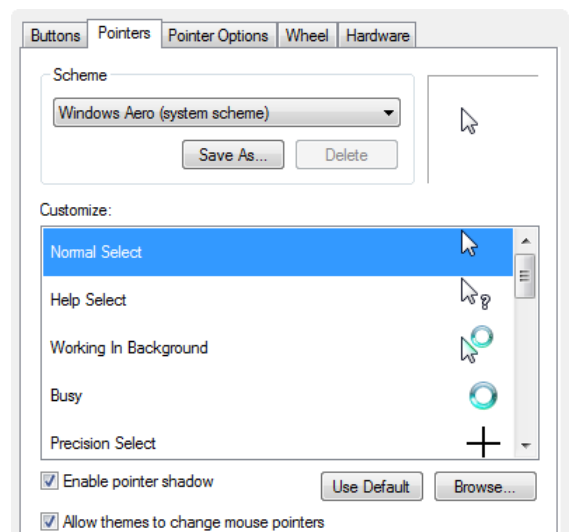
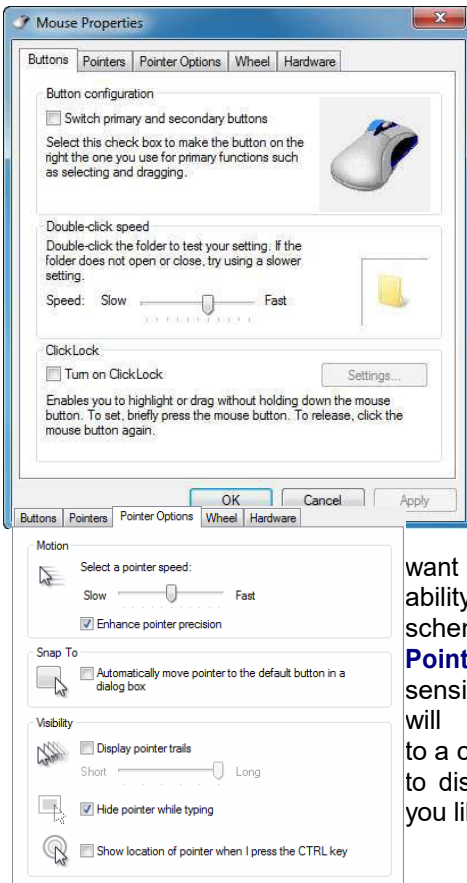


reverse the operation of the left and right mouse buttons to accommodate left or right-handed people. To adjust the double-click speed, click and drag the slider and test it by double-clicking the folder icon. ClickLock allows you to click and drag to select something without having to hold the left mouse button down all the time.

The other tabs in the Mouse Properties dialog box are as follows:

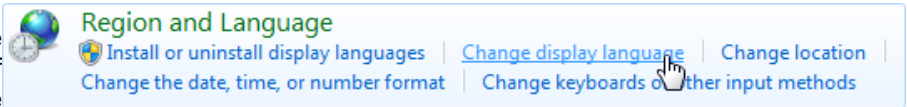
Buttons Change which type of mouse pointer scheme you want to use. You also have the ability to download new pointer schemes to have a more customized look:

PointerOptions Control how the mouse pointer will behave. Control how sensitive the mouse pointer will be when the mouse is moved, choose if the pointer will automatically snap to a command or button when you move your mouse close to a command, choose to show a pointer trail, decide if you want the mouse pointer to disappear when you type something, and have a pointer locator be displayed if you like:



Setting Your Language

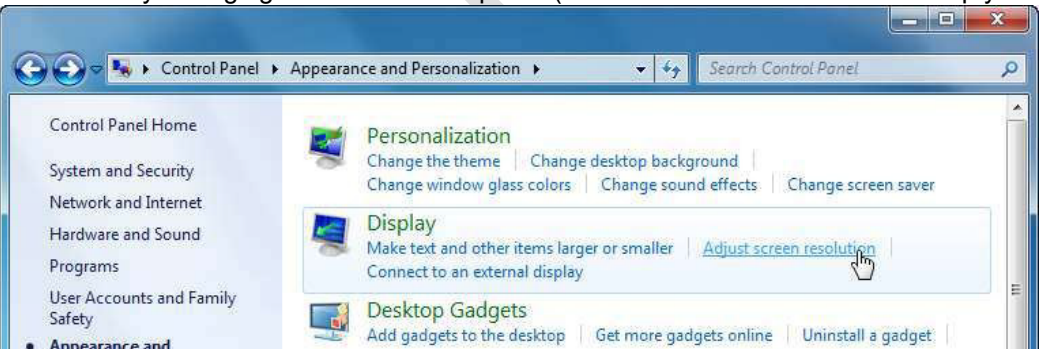
If you speak a different language than the default American English language of Windows, the best thing to do is to make sure you choose the appropriate language when Windows 7 is being installed on your computer. However, this is not always possible, particularly if you are using a public computer or if you are purchasing the computer second-hand. Fortunately, you can adjust the language using the Control Panel if you are an administrator. Windows uses two different types of language files. A Windows 7 Multilingual User Interface Pack (MUI) requires a license and only provides translation for most of the user interface.



The second type of language file is a Windows 7 Language Interface Pack (LIP). These files do not translate as much of the interface as MUIs, but are freely available on Microsoft's Web site. LIPs require a parent language. Any part of the interface that is not translated by the LIP is displayed in the parent language. Before changing the language, you need to acquire a MUI or LIP from Microsoft. Once you have acquired a MUI or the LIP, click Clock, Language, and Region and then click "Change display language" under the Region and Language heading: Next, click "Install/uninstall languages."

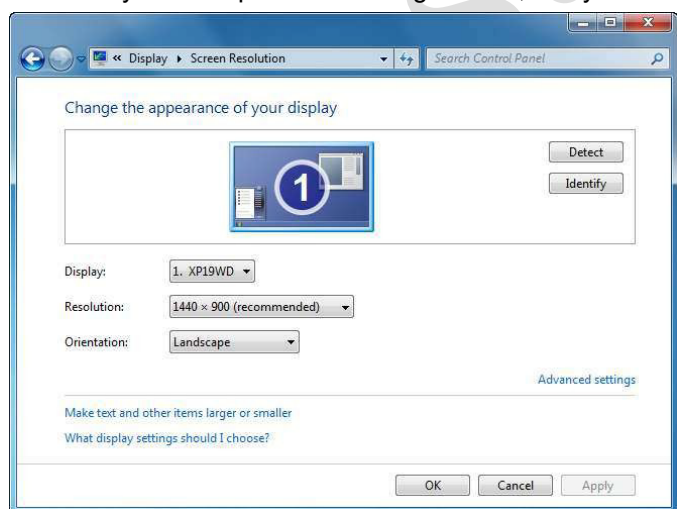
Modifying Screen Resolution

(LCD, flat screens that are now the norm). Depending on the size of your monitor, you can adjust the amount of information that can fit on the screen by changing the number of pixels (individual dots of color that make up your screen) that are displayed at once. Changing the amount of pixels is called changing the resolution. Screen resolution is measured in horizontal x vertical pixels. The default Windows 7 resolution is 1024x768 pixels, which will fit comfortably in a 17" CRT or LCD monitor. Larger monitors, like 19" or 21" and above, can support larger resolutions.



Very large resolutions, such as 1600x1200 pixels and above, are useful when you need to do fine graphical work or if you are a video game enthusiast. Larger resolutions require more processing and graphical power if you are going to be playing games or using other graphics-heavy tasks. Depending on the age of your computer, a large resolution will result in your computer becoming slower, so you may need to find a compromise when dealing with larger resolutions.

From the Control Panel, click Appearance and Personalization and then click "Adjust screen resolution" under the Display heading: Here, you can choose the resolution and orientation of your monitor. Every monitor has a native resolution. This means that the monitor has a certain number of physical pixels, like 1280x1024 or 1440x900. Monitors are capable of displaying resolutions smaller than their native resolutions, but smaller resolutions make things look a bit blurry. If you try to display a resolution that is larger than the native resolution, the picture may appear garbled or may not display anything at all. Windows 7 can detect the native resolution of most monitors. It is recommended that for the clearest picture and the least amount of strain on your eyes, you should leave the resolution at whatever Windows decides is best.

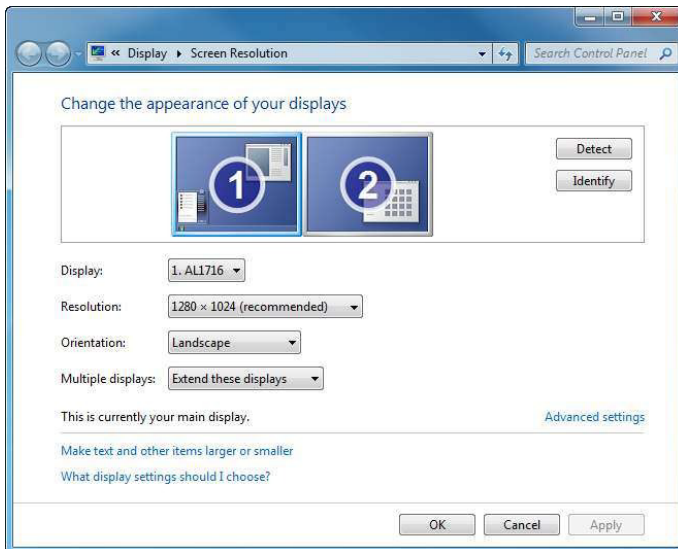


Change the appearance of your displays

Working with Multiple Monitors

If you have a desktop computer purchased as a package from a store, you may only have one video output port. If you have a custom built computer or a computer that was designed more for games or graphical work, you likely have a separate video card. These cards are attached to the motherboard and stick ports out of the back of your computer. If you have more than





one monitor attached to your computer, the Screen Resolution window will look something like this: Here you can see all of your monitors at once. You may need to click the Identify button in the upper right-hand side of the window to see which monitor is which, depending on how your computer decided which video output port should be labeled #1.

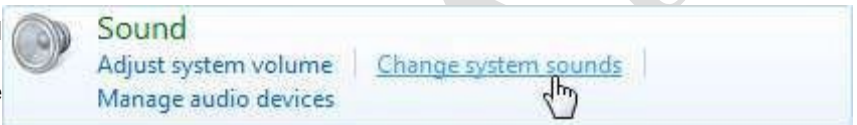
If it turns out that the monitors are not in the right order, you can either physically move the monitors or click and drag the monitor number to the location you want: Click Apply to accept these new locations.

Once the monitors are in their correct locations, you can change individual monitor options by selecting a monitor at the top of the window and then using the combo boxes to modify settings:

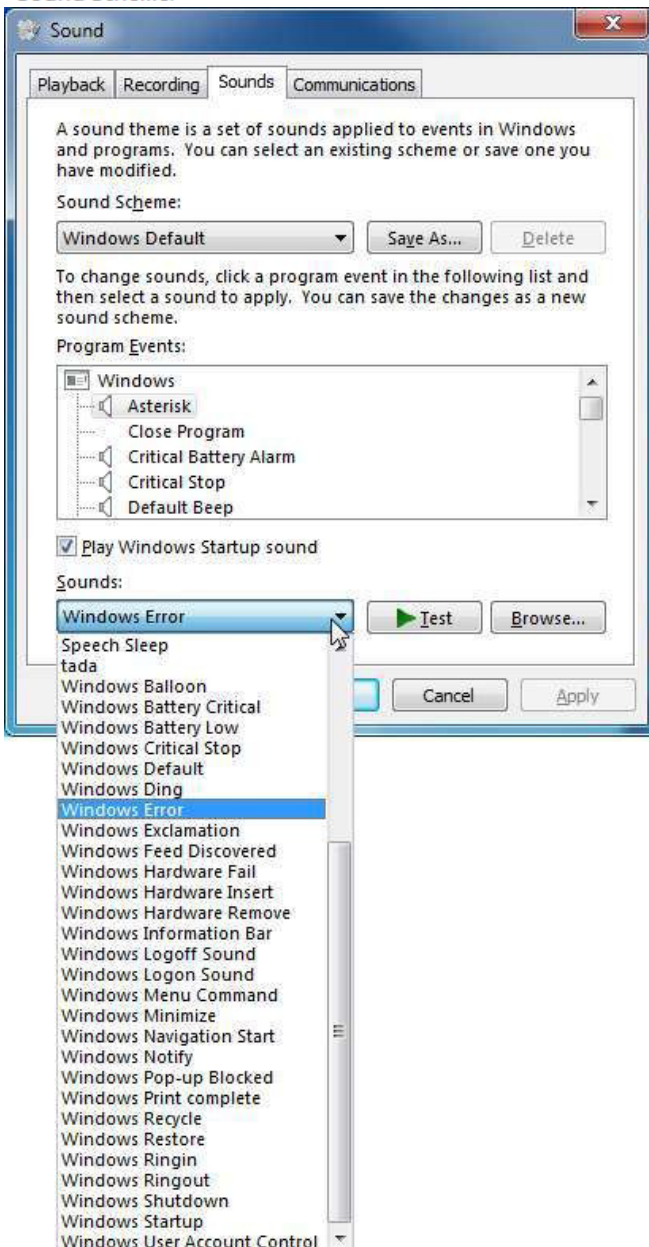
Select between the different displays attached to your computer. This command does the same thing as clicking an individual display.

Changing your Sound Scheme

Windows uses .wav (wave) files as the sound format for system sounds. The startup noise, crumpled paper noise when emptying the Recycle Bin,



Sound Scheme:



and the various other sounds you hear when using Windows are all .wav files.

Windows 7 includes a few sound schemes; a collection of themed sounds that will play when you perform certain actions with your computer. To hear the available sound schemes from the Control Panel, click Hardware and Sound and then click "Change system sounds," found under the Sound heading: This will display the Sounds tab of the Sound dialog : Select a theme from the Sound Scheme combo box:

Selecting a new theme will replace all of the critical Windows sounds with sounds in a related theme. You can also select an action from the Program Events list and click Test to hear the sound. If you want to change a sound to another clip, use the Sounds combo box to select a different sound:

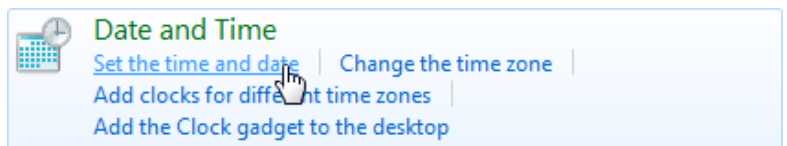
If you have another sound file you want to use, click the Browse button, and navigate to the folder that contains the sound files. If you want to save the modified scheme, click the Save As button and give the scheme a name. Finally, click OK to confirm any changes.

Changing the Date and Time

If you are moving to a different region of the world, or have suffered a power loss which can throw off the clock time, you can change the date and time in the Control Panel.

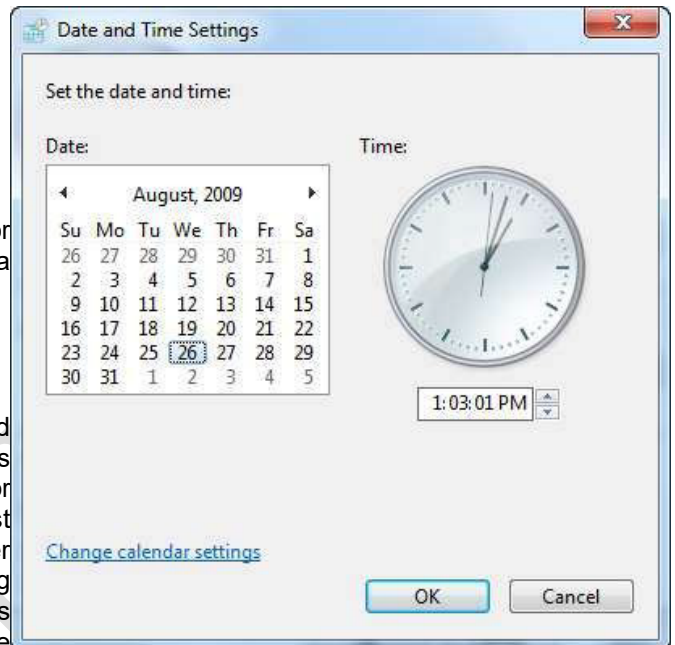
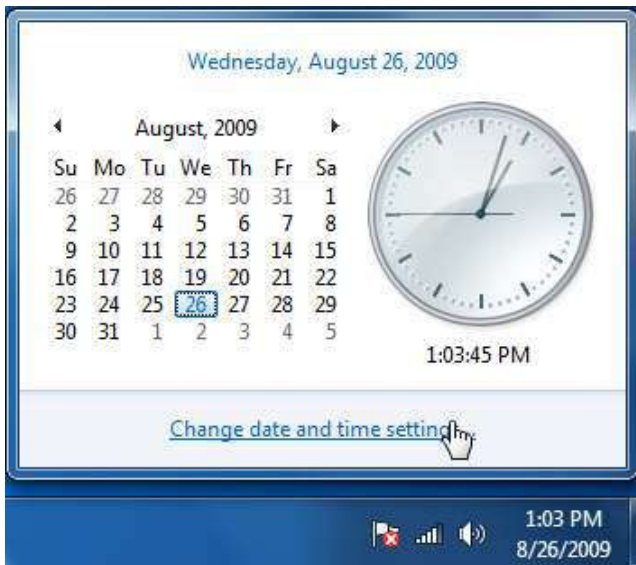
Click Clock, Language, and Region and then click "Set the time and date" under the Date and Time heading:

Now click the "Change date and time" button:



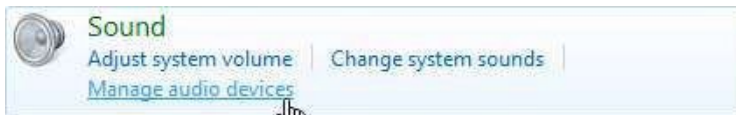
Use the < and > buttons on either side of the month to change the month, and then click a day to change the date. Click the hour, minute, or second time and type the proper time. When you are satisfied with all adjustments, click OK.

You can also click the clock in the Taskbar and then click "Change date and time settings."



Setting the Volume and Sound Properties

Your computer probably came with a set of speakers to use for sound. Nearly every computer also has the ability to use a



microphone, speakers, and other sound recording/playback equipment. Windows allows you to change the volume settings for all playback devices in one spot. The easiest way to adjust the volume is to click the speaker icon in the taskbar and then click and drag the slider up or down: If your keyboard has an integrated volume control, it can also be used to adjust the volume up or down. You can also mute the audio by clicking the speaker icon under the volume slider. If you click the Mixer link, you will be able to control the output for all devices and certain programs: To modify other sound properties from the Control Panel, click Hardware and Sound and then click "Manage audio devices." To modify an audio device, select the device and click Properties. If you have a surround system with more than two speakers, use the Configure button to change the sound hardware setup. Click OK to save any changes you have made.

