

# WINDOWS 10 HARD DRIVE MAINTENANCE

There are many sources of wasted disk space. Windows 10 creates some when it is installed, including updates, rollback files, and paging files, and multiple Restore Points. Some apps create temporary files during installation and uninstallation, and fail to clean up after themselves. Apps also generate log and data files that may not be necessary. Temporary download files tend to become permanent, unless occasional pruning is done.

## Here's how to prune:

1. Type "cleanup" in the search box.
2. Click on "Disk Cleanup" in the results.
3. Select the drive you want to clean up (usually your C: drive).
4. On the next screen, click the "cleanup system files" button in the lower-left corner.
5. After the disk scan, a list of items you can remove is shown.
6. Before clicking "OK" to start the cleanup, review the whole list of items that can be removed. Check the box next to any item(s) you wish to remove.
7. Then click "OK." (This process may take a couple minutes.)

## If you want to go further:

**Storage Management features** can help you see where all your disk space has gone and recover some of it.

To access this tool:

1. Enter "storage" in the search box.
2. Click on "Storage Settings."
3. Note the "Storage Sense" on-off button on the Storage main menu. When enabled, it automatically deletes temporary files and empties the Recycle Bin (of files after 30 days).
4. Click the "*Configure Storage Sense or run it now*" link to fine-tune what gets deleted and when. The default is to jettison the detritus only when available storage is very low. If you want to have a more aggressive approach, you might choose to run Storage Sense "every week" instead of "during low free disk space" and to delete files in your Recycle Bin if they are more than 14 days old.
5. Now return to steps 1 and 2.

6. The Storage app categorizes the types of files on your system drive and shows how much storage each category is consuming.
7. Click on a category to see what specific files are in it and how much space they consume. For example, in the **Apps and features** category, when you click on a specific item, buttons appear next to it: "Modify" and "Uninstall" or "Move" and "Uninstall." If a button is greyed out, you can't perform that function on that file. In general, apps built into Windows 10 cannot be uninstalled, i.e., the Camera app or Groove Music app. The Modify button will open the installer for that app, and the Move button lets you move an app to another disk.
8. Clicking on some of the other categories, such as Temporary Files, Documents, or Pictures, may reveal some large files that can be deleted. Don't delete files if you're not sure what they are.
9. **Photos, music and video files** can take up a lot of space on your hard drive. Open the Pictures folder, switch to the Details view, then sort by size to find the biggest files. Then you can review and delete the ones you don't need.

Another space-hog is **pagefile.sys**, the file in which Windows temporarily stores parts of apps and data files when the whole thing won't fit in RAM. Generally, you should let Windows manage the amount of space devoted to pagefile.sys; it will grow and shrink as needed. But if you are really tight on disk space, you can adjust the maximum size of pagefile.sys. Here's how to manage pagefile.sys:

1. Click Start and search for "advanced system settings."
2. Select the Advanced tab on the resulting screen.
3. Click on the "Settings" button in the Performance section of the Advanced screen.
4. On the Performance Options screen, click "Advanced."
5. Finally, there is "**Total paging file size for all devices.**" Click "Change" to see your options. "Automatically manage..." is the default option. Uncheck it to manually adjust things. You can set custom initial and maximum sizes; let the system manage the pagefile.sys size; or do without a pagefile.sys file altogether.
6. Whatever you change, you'll need to reboot before the changes take effect.

Another potential waste of space is **duplicate files**. Windows doesn't have an easy way to find and zap these dupes, but the free [Auslogics Duplicate File Finder](#) can do the job. It will help you sort through images, music, videos and other personal files to remove duplicate copies and free up disk space.