# User Accounts

The available user names are created automatically during the installation of Windows XP but you can add or delete users at any time. Click the Start button, click Control Panel, switch to the Category view, and select User Accounts. Choose the desired task such as creating a new account or changing an existing account. You can also click the hyperlink to learn more about user accounts. Do not expect, however, to be able to modify user accounts in a school setting.

# Implement a Screen Saver

A screen saver is a delightful way to personalize your computer and a good way to practice with basic commands in Windows XP. This is typically not something you can do in a laboratory setting, but it is well worth doing on your own machine. Right click a blank area of the desktop, click the Properties command to open the Display Properties dialog box, then click the Screen Saver tab. Click the down arrow in the Screen Saver list box, choose the desired screen saver, then set the option to wait an appropriate amount of time before the screen saver appears. Click OK to accept the settings and close the dialog box.

# Designating the Devices on a System

The first (usually only) floppy drive is always designated as drive A. (A second floppy drive, if it were present, would be drive B.) The first hard (local) disk on a system is always drive C, whether or not there are one or two floppy drives. Additional local drives if any, such as a zip (removable storage) drive, a network drive, a CD and/or a DVD, are labeled from D on.

# Minimizing Versus Closing an Application

Minimizing a folder or an application leaves the object open in memory and available at the click of the taskbar button. Closing it, however, removes the object from memory, which also causes it to disappear from the taskbar. The advantage of minimizing an application or folder is that you can return to it immediately with the click of the mouse. The disadvantage is that too many open applications will eventually degrade the performance of a system.

# The Task Manager

The Start button is the normal way to exit Windows. Occasionally, however, an application may “hang”— in which case you want to close the problem application but continue with your session. Press Ctrl+Alt+Del to display the Windows Task Manager dialog box, then click the Applications tab. Select the problem application (it will most likely say “not responding), and click the End Task button. This capability is often disabled in a school setting.

# Sort by Name, Date, File Type, or Size

Files can be displayed in ascending or descending sequence by name, date modified, file type, or size, by clicking the appropriate column heading. Click Size, for example, to display files in the order of their size. Click the column heading a second time to reverse the sequence; that is, to switch from ascending to descending, and vice versa.

# The Document, Not the Application

Windows is document-oriented, which means that you are able to think in terms of the document rather than application that created it. You can still open a document in traditional fashion, by starting the application that created the document, then using the File Open command in that program to retrieve the document. It’s often easier, however, to open the document from within a folder by double clicking its icon. Windows will start the associated application and then open the document for you.