

How to control Startup programs Part 2

July 28th, 2009, 9:15 am · [Post a Comment](#) · posted by [Ed Schwartz, NOCCC](#)



*Stump the PC Club is a free tech-advice column written by members of the **North Orange County Computer Club**, which has been in existence since 1976. Visit the club's site at noccc.org. And don't forget to stop by the Gadgetress' home for the PC Club, at ocregister.com/link/pclub, to find out how to ask a question and read past answers.*

QUESTION: In a recent Stump the PC Club column, reference was made to “controlling the programs that run at startup”. Please address this serious issue. I know my computer loads lots of applications upon starting up, but how to know which I can safely avoid and how to do block them from loading? Also, I have several icons in the notification bar of programs I do not want to be running. One of them is the “Safely Remove Hardware” icon.

PC Club: This is **Part 2** of the answer to the above question. **Part 1** is available at <http://bit.ly/H24Aw>.

Here are the details on the three steps to control your startup programs:

Step 1: The first step is determining which programs startup when Windows boots. A quick way to do this is to click Start, Run and enter “msconfig” (without the quotes) in the box and click OK. If there is no Run command available you can also press the Windows logo key and tap the R key. Select the Startup tab to view a list of the startup programs on your PC. Some users also control their startup programs using this utility but an easier way follows below.

A better way to see a list of startup programs is to download the free program WhatInStartup at <http://bit.ly/19XKmS>. The program requires no installation and can be run from its current location. I always keep a shortcut to it on my Desktop for easy access. One way to make it easily accessible is to right-click the program and select “Pin to Start Menu”. The WhatInStartup program provides

much more information than msconfig. It may open a security message window when you launch the program - just click Run.

Step2: This step is to determine which programs you can live without. To find out if the program is required, record the name of the program for each entry in the WhatInStartup or msconfig window and look it up in one of the online databases. These sites, www.sysinfo.org/startuplist.php and www.bleepingcomputer.com/startups are two of the best. They also have a code at the top letting you know if the program is necessary or not. Take your list of entries that you recorded and annotate it with your own code indicating if it is required or not. I recommend that you look up all startup programs at both of these sites since it will help you to more easily decide if you need them.

Sometimes it's necessary to use the alphabetized list of these databases by clicking the letters at the top. For example, to lookup a program named "equi", it's much easier to click the "E" and scroll down to locate it.

Now let's look up EEventManager. The online databases say that this program is either not required or up to the user. What this program actually does is respond to pressing the front buttons on my Epson scanner. If I use these buttons, I should not disable this program.

After you look up a few programs you will start to get the feel of how to interpret the results.

Step3: Now that you have your list, you can run WhatInStartup and begin disabling any program you don't need. With Vista, be sure to right-click the program and select "Run as Administrator". I recommend that you disable rather than delete any entry since it makes it easier to revert to your previous configuration.

After going through this tedious process (there's no other way), you should re-boot the system to make the changes effective. It might be wise to disable a few items at a time so that if something stops working, you can always go back to your previous settings more easily. I also recommend that you maintain a written record of all of your changes. Be sure to measure your PC's boot up time before and after to see if you improved the performance. ~*Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his blog at www.edwardns.com/blog.*