

Back to Basics

Creating a Program Icon on Your Desktop

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Did you ever wonder how those icons you double-click on your Desktop screen get on your Desktop? Well, most of those icons represent PROGRAMS and most people like having the programs they use most often on their desktop. Those icons are placed there when you install a new program or software. If you purchase a program on a disk or download it from the internet, most likely the installation of that program will place a new icon (or icons) on your desktop. For example, if you purchase a new printer you will have to install (from a disk or the internet) the programs that make that printer work with your computer. You will see at least one new icon on your desktop after you install a new printer. Those program icons on your desktop are really SHORTCUTS to the programs. You can see that an icon is a “shortcut” because it will have a small white box with a blue arrow in it at the lower left corner of the icon.

So how do you put your own program icon on your desktop? To do this you simply click on the “Start” button (or “start orb” as they say in Windows 7) and then click on “All programs” on the start menu. This shows a list of ALL the programs on your computer. Many programs are in folders. For example, the Paint program and the Calculator program are in the “Accessories” folder in this list. Just click on the folder to see the list of what is inside.

Let’s create a shortcut icon on our desktop for the “Paint” program. Click on the Start button, then click on “All programs” (or just hold your mouse arrow on “All programs” without clicking and it will still open the list). On this list, use the scrollbar if needed to find the “Accessories” folder and left click on it to see what is inside. Did you find the “Paint” program? Ok, put your mouse arrow on “Paint”, HOLD DOWN the “Ctrl” key (that’s the Control Key on your keyboard) and while you are holding down that Ctrl key DRAG the Paint program to a blank area of your Desktop. (“Dragging” the mouse means holding down the left mouse button while you are moving the mouse – just like “dragging” a card when you play solitaire). Now let up the mouse and the Ctrl key buttons – and PRESTO, there you have it! Sure, there are other ways to do this as well, but always make sure that you are creating a “shortcut” and that the new icon has that little white box with the arrow in it.

Yes, you can DELETE any “shortcut” icon from your Desktop by right-clicking your mouse on it and then left-clicking on “delete” option on the menu that appears. This will remove the icon from your desktop and put it in your “Recycle bin”. You can restore anything from your recycle bin if you change your mind, but if you delete it from the recycle bin it will be gone. Then you will have to create it again from the “All programs” list.

The Desktop screen on your computer and the Start menu have many functions and options. Some people like to put a whole lot of icons on their desktop but that makes it so busy and crowded that it is no longer easy to use. Don't be shy about using Google to ask your questions about the Desktop or anything else – you will be surprised at how much Google can help you!