

COMPUTER NEWS from the



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As found on the web and other sources!

Windows 10 Bug Could Strain Hard Drives



By John Lister on September, 2 2020 “infopackets.com”.

Microsoft is testing a fix for a bug that could theoretically shorten the lifespan of some hard drives. The bug means Windows 10 was mistakenly running the defrag tool more frequently than designed.

Defragging has long been available as a way to make hard drives run more efficiently. It deals with the problem that when a computer deletes a file, it leaves empty physical space behind on the drive. The next time it writes a new file it will look for the first available suitable sized space.

Over time this can lead to wasted gaps on the physical drive. In turn, this means traditional hard drives have to move the head (which reads the data) further back and forth to reach files. This only takes fractions of a second longer, but can add up quickly and severely impacts overall performance on the system.

In simple terms, defragging rearranges the files to remove the gaps, reducing the distance the head has to move to reach any particular file.

Defragging SSDs Not Worthwhile

While defragging was recommended back in the day, modern computers with solid state disks (SSDs and NVMe) are much more efficient in handling files, so it's not usually necessary. The reason for this is because the newer style hard drives don't have read/write heads or spinning platters and therefore there is no latency when attempting to access files.

Many tech experts believe the wear and tear of effectively rewriting most files on such drives outweighs the limited benefits of defragging. Even those who believe it is worthwhile suggest only doing it occasionally.

Optimize Drives Not Working Optimally

Windows 10 does have a built-in defragging tool named Optimize Drives, but it's set to only run on a limited schedule, such as every two weeks or once a month. However, a bug in a recent update means the tool isn't correctly identifying when it last ran, and in some cases, is running every time a computer restarts. For some users that could mean it runs 30 times more often than it should. (Source: techradar.com)

With traditional hard drives, this shouldn't be a major problem, though it could cause some delays. With SSDs, Optimize Drives will normally not attempt defragging, but instead use a harmless alternative technique called TRIM.

However, Windows may attempt to defrag on an SSD if users have particular settings in the System Restore tool switched on. That could mean an increase in physical strain on the drive. (Source: pcgamer.com)

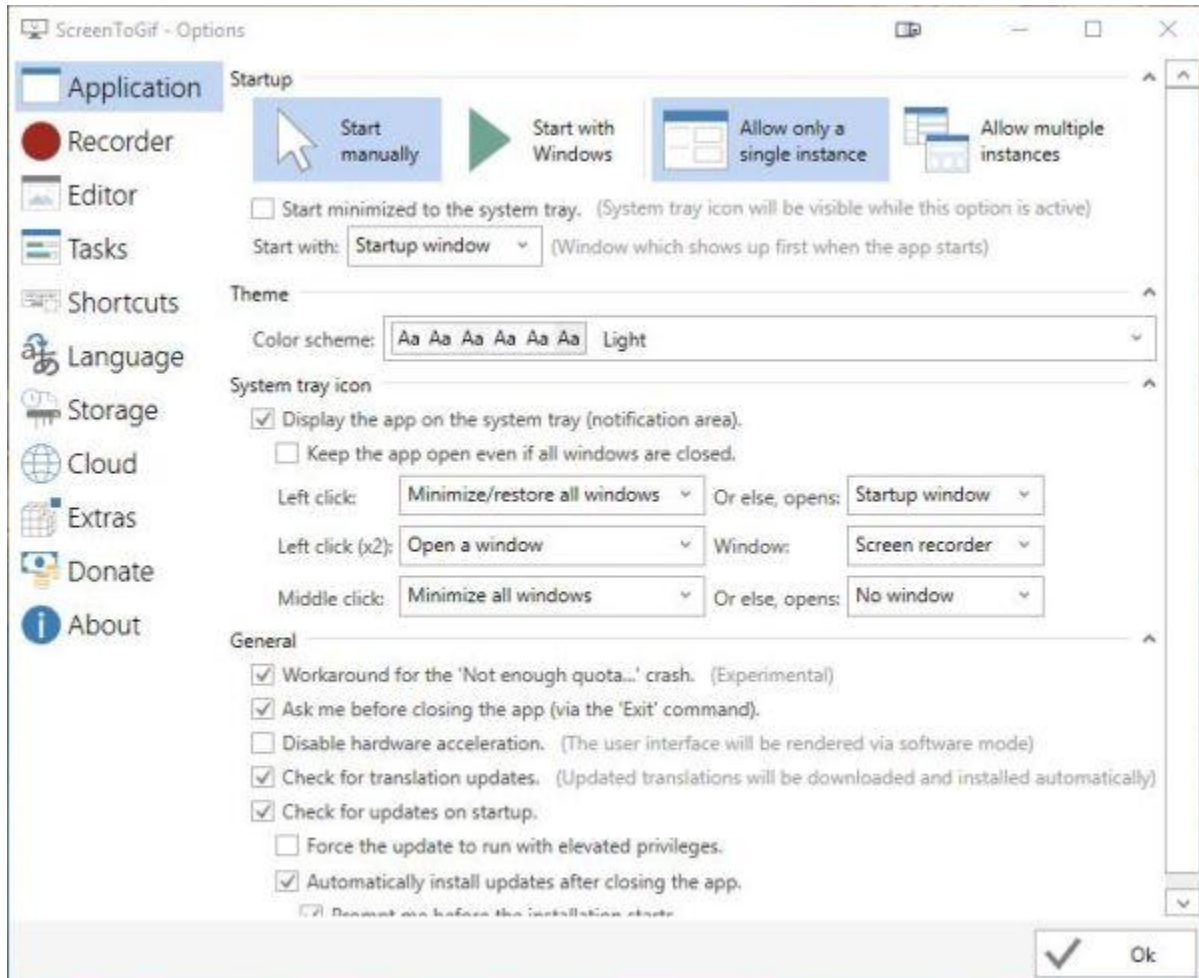
Microsoft has acknowledged the problem and is testing a fix through the Windows Insider program. It will then roll it out to the general public if all goes well with the test.

What's Your Opinion? Do you intentionally defrag hard drives, either manually or automatically? Do you know off-hand whether your computer users traditional or solid-state hard drives? If you made a deliberate choice between the two, what influenced your decision?

From “Gizmo’s Freeware.

[Easily Make GIFs From Your Computer Screen](#)

Posted: 15 Jul 2020



This small utility is a screen, webcam and sketchboard recorder with an integrated editor. Record, edit and export parts of your PC screen and save them as a GIF or video.

ScreenToGif captures selected areas of your screen, webcam or live drawings from a sketchboard which can be saved as an animated GIF, Apng, video, image, PSD or ScreenToGif project.

ScreenToGif has lots of options. It has a clean interface and is easy enough for beginners. The program has quite a few features; you can pause and record, add text, subtitles, and title frames, add the system cursor, choose from light or dark color themes, use the older or

newer interface and more.

Here's a partial list of features:

Undo, redo or reset your edits

Copy, cut and paste frames

Select multiple frames or browse to a specific frame

Preview the playback of the animation

Capture the mouse cursor and mouse clicks

Remove duplicates

Reduce framerate

Delete all previous or all next frames

Import frames

Reverse, apply yoyo (forwards and backwards) or move frames around

Alter the delay of the frames (override, increase/decrease or scale)

Move the window around

Create tasks to apply effects to your recording, so that you don't need to manually apply them every time.

Add transitions (fade or slide effects).

Resize, crop or flip/rotate

Add captions, text, drawings or shapes

Add key strokes and mouse clicks

Add borders, shadows and obfuscate (pixelate)

Add watermarks using your own image

ScreenToGif is under active development and is available in 24 languages. There's a good section on how to use the program on the site. It's small and easy to use with features you wouldn't expect to find in such a compact program.

ScreenToGif is good for making animated GIF's to share, recording tasks such as to show people how to do things on a computer (great if you provide support for others), for teachers, to be used in marketing, blogs and presentations - basically any time you need animated visual content.

ScreenToGif runs on Windows 10|8|7|Vista|XP and requires .Net Framework 4.8 or newer.

The portable and installable versions are free of malware according to Virus Total. [***Read More***](#)

Microsoft: New Edge Browser Can't be Uninstalled



By John Lister on August, 10 2020 in “Infopackets.com”.

Microsoft has confirmed there will be no option to uninstall the Edge browser once the new version is on a Windows 10 computer. There is a workaround, but it's not worth the trouble for most users.

The two versions of Edge are known by Microsoft as the "legacy version" and the "new version." The legacy version ran on Microsoft's own code, while the new version is based on Chromium, which is open source software that is also the basis of Google's Chrome browser.

One big reason for the switch is to make it easier for both website and browser extension developers to make something that works smoothly on both browser platforms. That in turn could make users more likely to try Edge.

The switch has been rolling out gradually and certainly hasn't gone smoothly for everyone, with some users reporting slowdowns in web browsing, gaming or general Windows use. That's particularly frustrating as the switch came through an update to Windows 10 that, unlike most updates, can't easily be undone.

Microsoft Explains Move

Now Microsoft has said that the new Edge browser cannot be uninstalled, stating in a support document that "the new version ... is included in a Windows system update, so the option to uninstall it or use the legacy version of Microsoft Edge will no longer be available." (Source: [microsoft.com](https://www.microsoft.com))

The good news is that Edge doesn't automatically make itself the default browser or make it difficult to set any other browser as the default. That should mean most users can similarly ignore its existence and delete any icons and shortcuts if they want.

Disk Space Shouldn't Be Issue

The main potential problem would be if the unwanted Edge installation was taking up too much disk space. Unless the browser is actually being used, Edge should only take up a small amount

of storage. Reports suggest if it does appear to be taking up a lot of space, this may be a temporary issue from the Windows Update.

Some enthusiasts have discovered a way to force Windows to uninstall Edge through a system command prompt. This isn't recommended for casual users as it could cause unintended problems, such as breaking parts of Windows which cannot be reversed. (Source: mspoweruser.com)

What's Your Opinion?

Should Microsoft let users uninstall Edge? Does it matter to you either way? Do you think Microsoft's explanation makes sense?

->>> Google Tries Anti-Scam Tactic with Web Addresses

Google is testing a new way of showing a web page address in the browser. It hopes that simply showing the domain name will make it easier for users to spot phishing scams - as already happens with some rival browsers. At the moment most browsers will show the entire web page address (URL) in the address bar. That's the box near the top of the screen that has a dual purpose in most browsers: it shows the current page address but is also where users type in both addresses and search terms. A study for Google looked at ways scammers can take advantage of the browser bar. One example was ...

<http://www.infopackets.com/lists/lt.php?id=Z0xVCVAASgAAV1REUIBRAQIL>

A TRUISM!

A day without sunshine is like, well, night.
