

LESSON 138

DEFRAGGING MADE EASIER

One of most common complaints I get about Windows has to do with defragging. The defrag process moves clusters around on your hard drive to eliminate empty spaces between those clusters so your hard drive doesn't waste time trying to read empty spaces. The problem is that there are several things that can cause the defrag process to slow down or to fail before completion. Here's what you need to know.

The easiest way to run defrag is in Windows Safe Mode, since Safe Mode runs without any drivers. To get to Safe Mode, hold down the Ctrl key as Windows 98 starts. You'll see a menu of choices. Select Safe Mode. If you use Windows 95, hold down the F8 key before Windows starts loading and select Safe Mode from the menu.

Now you can click on Start, Programs, Accessories and then on System Tools. You can run Disk Defragmenter from there.

If using Safe Mode seems a bit much for you, you can run Defrag in regular Windows mode, but there are a couple of caveats here. Both Screen Saver and Power Management can cause problems for Defrag.

To turn off your Screen Saver, right-click on the Desktop and then on Properties. Click on the Screen Saver tab and then click on the black arrow to the right of the Screen Saver selection. Select (None) and then click on OK.

To disable Power Management, double-click on My Computer and then on Control Panel. Now double-click on Power Management and set System standby, Turn off monitor and Turn off hard disks to "never". Click OK and then close the control panel by clicking on the X in the upper right corner of the Control Panel window. Now run Disk Defragmenter. You can always return the settings you changed to their original setting. See--I told you the Safe Mode was easier.

