

# Windows 7 - IMPROVE YOUR DISPLAY READABILITY

Jim McKnight

www.jimopi.net

Windows7\_EasyRead.lwp

revised 11-11-2012

This sheet explains how to make the Text, Icons, Pointers, & Cursors bigger, bolder, and easier to read on a typical Display. NOTE: If your monitor is running at resolution higher than 1024x768, you will need to set all my recommended values to a higher number to get the best effect. Experiment and see what looks best to you.

**MAKE EVERYTHING LARGER - DPI :** (*Right-click on the Desktop > Personalize > Display*). Click "Set custom Text size (DPI)" and drag the Ruler until it reads no more than 110% (or 106 DPI) for a resolution of 1024x768. Displays running at higher resolutions can have it set as high as 140% for good readability.

**WARNING 1: This change affects all Users on this PC!**

**WARNING 2: If you make this value too large, it will cause text box problems in some programs causing only the first few words of the sentence in a box to be visible.**

**CHOOSE A THEME:** (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Theme*). If your video card is Aero capable, you will see several Aero Theme options listed. Choose the desired theme Aero or non-Aero) before continuing with Advanced appearance settings.

*NOTE: Themes affect visuals, sounds, and other system elements as well as the speed that the PC runs.* Click "Save changes".

**DISABLE TRANSPARENCY:** For better overall visibility be sure to disable transparency: (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Window color*). Click to UN-check " Enable Transparency". Click "Save Changes".

**TUNE YOUR CLARITYTYPE:** If you are using an LCD or Plasma Monitor, you should turn on ClearType. (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization > Display > Adjust ClearType text*). Check: " Turn on ClearType", click "Next", & follow the instructions for "ClearType Tuning".

**INCREASE CURSOR VISIBILITY:** (*Control Panel > under "Ease of Access", click "Optimize visual display"*). Scroll way down until you see "Set the thickness of the blinking cursor". Set the width as wide as your need. A setting of "4" works for me.

**ADVANCED APPEARANCE SETTINGS:** Increase the size and boldness of individual items.

*Note 1: Microsoft has locked out many of these settings from having an effect on various windows compared to XP and Vista. The settings seem to affect some windows and system functions, but not others.*

*Note 2: The look of these settings will vary depending on your chosen Theme or Color Scheme.*

*Note 3: These suggested values are for a display set for 1024x768. If your monitor is set for a higher resolution you will need to set the values to a higher number for good effect.)*

- **ITEMS:** (*Right-click on the Desktop > Personalize > Window Color > If using Aero, "Advanced appearance settings..."*). You should now be in the "Window Color and Appearance" window.
  - a. **Icon.** Set to size 32-36, Font = Segoe UI, Size = 10-12, click the Font "B" button for bold Text. *Note: "Drop shadows" have a big effect on the readability of Icon Text. To enable/disable Drop Shadows; (Control Panel > System and Security > System > Advanced system settings > Advanced tab > Performance; "Settings" button > Adjust visual effects).* " Use Drop Shadows for icon labels on the desktop". Try it both ways to see what you like.

- b. **Icon Spacing** (Horizontal). Increase the spacing as needed so the Icon Titles all display as desired (*This is so the text does not end with .....* ).
- c. **ToolTip** Color1 = bright yellow. Font = Segoe UI, Size = 9-10, Text color = Black, click the Font "B" button. (*Note: This no longer affects the Taskbar Tooltips*)
- d. **Menu**. Font = Segoe UI, Size = 10-12, (Click the Font "B" button, if desire).
- e. **Message Box**. Font Size = 9-12. Do not make the "Message Box" text bold! (NOTE: This does not have any effect in Windows 7 RC1).
- f. **Active Title Bar**. Set to size 22-25, Font size = 9-12. (Click the Font "B" button, if desired). (*Note: This no longer affects the Taskbar*).
- g. **Scrollbar**. Set up to size 18-25 to make the Scroll bar wider.
- h. Click on <Apply> to see the changes after each item or click <OK> to exit.
- i. It's a good idea to reboot, and re-check all changes to make sure they "took" correctly.

**MOUSE POINTER:** (*Control Panel > Hardware and sound > Mouse*).

- **Pointers** Tab.
  - ✓ Choose the "Magnified (system scheme) Pointer Scheme, then if desired find a custom "Normal Select" pointer using the <Browse> button.
  - ✓ Un-check the box for Enable Pointer shadow.
  - ✓ Un-check the box for " Allow Themes to change mouse pointers".
  - ✓ Click Apply.
- **Pointer Options** Tab: Check the box for " Automatically move the pointer to the default button in a dialog box. Check the box for " Show location of pointer when I press the <Ctrl> key. Click OK to exit.

**SAVE YOUR "CUSTOMIZED" THEME:** (*Control Panel > Appearance and Personalization > Personalization*). Click "Save theme". Name your theme and click "Save". Now, if you make any changes that make you unhappy, you can put things back in one click.

#### **FIREFOX:**

- There are some add-ons like NoSquint that improve the readability of websites.
- Also, The key combination of <Ctrl> and + keys will make most web content larger each time your press it. To go smaller, hold <Ctrl> and press the "-" Key (minus/dash key).