

BAD SECTORS ON HARD DRIVE

Bad sectors are much less of a problem with the newer hard drives.....a sector is a physical location, in which data can be stored, on the various "platters" within the hard drive.....and the sectors are defined when the manufacture performs a low level format to the drive before shipment.....

Over time, the magnetic properties of the coating on areas of the disk may gradually deteriorate..... and when this happens, the read/write heads of the disk have difficulty writing a pattern to the disk that can later be read from the disk.....

These sectors that do not hold data well are called "Bad Sectors"..... SO..... it is advisable to run ScanDisk periodically to determine if there are any bad sectors..... if there are, ScanDisk will mark those sectors as bad and your system will no longer try to write data to those sectors.....

NOTE: If you are seeing more and more "bad sectors," this could be an indication that the hard drive is starting to fail..... if in formatting a floppy disk it reports bad sectors, throw it away. It's not worth taking a chance on trying to repair and use it again.

In Windows 95 & 98, the ScanDisk program can be found at Start>Programs>Accessories>System Tools.

Windows XP does not have ScanDisk listed in its System Tools list. To find Scandisk,

1. Doubleclick MY COMPUTER and rightclick the C:\ drive or the letter of the drive which you wish to scan and press Properties.
2. Click the TOOLS tab and select Error-Checking. You will get a message that it can't do a scandisk now and will ask if you'd like to schedule it for the next time you power up your computer. Select YES.

When you defrag, you put fragmented pieces of files back together again, thereby reducing the amount of fragmentation..... defrag does not necessarily increase your free hard disk space..... although if a fragmented file is e.g. spread into 3 clusters, and defrag allows that file to be located in 2 cluster, you have then picked up 1 more cluster of free space.....

Speed of individual file access is probably the biggest advantage of defragging..... when your computer requires a file, it will be retrieved faster if your computer does not have to search many locations on your hard disk.....

Bad Sectors on your hard drive come from dirt dust (Specks). Even Cigar/Cigarette Smoke. They can also come from losing power on your computer or shutting the computer off while using a program, or if you are using Windows 95/98, by shutting off the computer improperly.

To Check for bad sectors in Windows XP:

Click START...All Programs...Accessories...Windows Explorer...click + to expand My Computer. Rightclick the C:\ drive.

Click Properties...Tools...click Check Now...Select Options...click START.

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