

Speed Up Hard Drive

Use direct-memory access

There's more you can do as well. Make sure your hard disk uses direct-memory access (DMA). This lets your hard disk and CD and DVD drives transfer information to and from RAM without having to use your processor as a conduit.

DMA is usually the default, but there's always the possibility the default has been changed, so it's worthwhile to check. To do so:

1. Get to the Device Manager from within Windows Explorer by right-clicking My Computer, then selecting Properties --> Hardware --> Device Manager.



Make sure DMA is selected for each device.

2. Scroll down to the "IDE ATA/ATAPI controllers" section and click the + sign.
3. From the list that drops down, right-click Primary IDE Channel and select Properties.
4. Click Advanced Settings, and for each device, in the Transfer Mode drop-down list, choose "DMA if Available" and click OK.

Turn off automated time and date stamp updating

If you're using New Technology File System (NTFS), there's another way to speed up your hard disk. Whenever you view a directory on an NTFS volume, the file system updates the date and time stamp to show the last time the directory was accessed. This constant updating can slow system performance, particularly if you tend to access many directories during a typical workday. To turn it off:

1. Open the Registry Editor by typing `regedit` at a command prompt or the Run box.
2. Go to `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\Current Control Set\Control\Filesystem`
3. Look for `NtfsDisableLastAccessUpdate`. If it isn't there, create it: Choose Edit --> New --> DWORD Value, type:

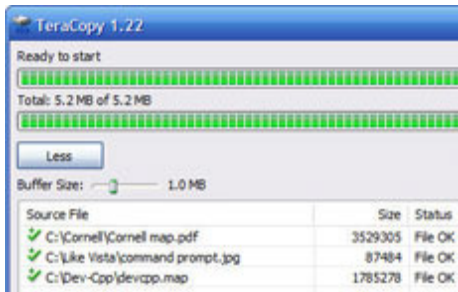
`NtfsDisableLastAccessUpdate`

into the box, and click OK.

4. Set its value to 1 by double-clicking it and typing `1` in the Value data box that appears. Click OK.
5. Exit the Registry.

Speed up file copying

No one will ever accuse XP of copying files quickly. If you've got a big file or groups of files that are hundreds of megabytes or more, you've no doubt waited and waited while XP did its work. Worse yet, you may freeze in midcopy and then have to start from scratch.



TeraCopy copies files fast.

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[TeraCopy](#) from Code Sector makes those problems a thing of the past. It uses a variety of techniques, such as adjusting buffers on the fly, to speed up and fix XP's copying problems. It even lets you pause and resume file copying, and it uses error-recovery techniques to make sure that if one file copy in a multifile job fails, the rest will still be copied.

By the way, you may at first be baffled about how to use this program. You have to use it in concert with Windows Explorer or another file manager like Q-Dir. Drag files from whichever file manager you're using to TeraCopy and then have it do the copying from there.