

Site Topics

Admin KnowledgeBase

Articles & Tutorials

Common for all OSes

Dial up Networking, ICS, RAS, ADSL

Direct Cable Connection

Networking

General Networking

Linux Integration

Network Protocols

Network Troubleshooting

Windows 2000

Windows 2003

Windows 95/98/ME

Windows NT 4

Windows XP

Wireless Networking

Authors

Johannes Helmig

Andrew Z. Tabona

Mitch Tulloch

Brien M. Posey

Robert J. Shimonski

Don Parker

Hardware

Anti-Spam Hardware

Anti-Virus Hardware

Firewalls & VPN

Mail Archiving

Servers

Storage

Links

Message Boards

Newsletters

RSS Feed

Software

Administration tools / Ping & trace utils

Backup software

Data recovery software

Email archiving

Help desk software

Misc. network administrator tools

Network inventory software

Network monitoring / management


Patch Management

Remote control software

Software distribution and metering

Using Remote Desktop with Windows XP Professional

Site Search

Date Launched: Dec 07, 2004
Last Updated: Dec 07, 2004
Section: Articles & Tutorials :: Windows XP
Author: Robert J. Shimonski
 Printable Version
Rating: 3.8/5 - 181 Votes
<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

In this article we will cover the use of Remote Desktop, a tool that once mastered can help you to connect over the network to remote servers to perform maintenance or to launch tests from. This article will cover the basic setup and use of it.

This will be important when we talk about Windows based networking services and how to set them up remotely, like Network Monitor for example. You could set up a remote Windows Server with Network Monitor, remotely control it via Remote Desktop and watch the packets flow over the wire from your VPN at home! Remote Desktop is definitely a tool you will want to master the use of.



"For a complete guide to security, check out 'Security + Study Guide and DVD Training System' from Amazon.com"

What is Remote Desktop?

With the Remote Desktop feature in Windows XP, you can remotely control a computer from another office, from home, or while traveling. This allows you to use the data, applications, and network resources that are on your office computer, without being in your office. In the Illustration below, you can see that an Systems Administrator can quickly (and securely) get into their corporate offices and do that, system down, no problem, you can fix from anywhere you can find an Internet connection that is stable enough to let you work.

Storage and quota software
Terminal Servers
Thin Client Servers

Featured Products



[Network Monitoring](#) with GFI. [DId 60-day Eval](#)

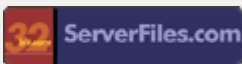


[Convert PCs to thin clients](#) with 2X ThinClientServer

Featured Book



TechGenix Sites



[Network Software Directory](#)



[Network Security](#)



[Exchange Server](#)



[ISA Server](#)

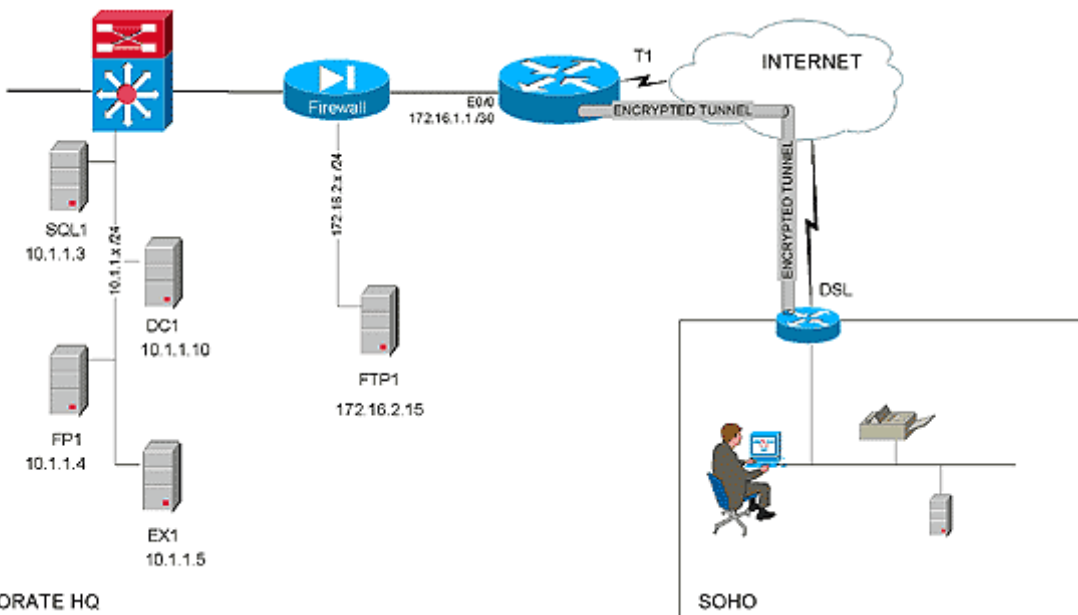


[Terminal Services](#)



[Faxing Solutions](#)

Desktop Connection as shown below.



Remote Desktop is the new name for the older Windows based Terminal Services Client that (like with Windows 2000), would allow you to connect to and manage a server remotely for up to two connections, allowing you to do maintenance on the server and so on. Remote Desktop (Windows Server 2003 / XP), allows the same functionality, except it's enhanced and easier to use.

To use Remote Desktop, you need the following:

- Windows XP Professional installed on your office computer, or whichever computer you plan to operate remotely. This computer is known as the host. This article was written using Microsoft's most current operating system – Windows XP Professional.
- Display data and keyboard data are sent over a WAN or Internet connection so make sure that you are working over a good connection... to use Remote Desktop over a slow connection could be a burden. It will work, but it may not respond as well as you would like. You can use low bandwidth connections, it will allow you to remotely control a system.

Get Remote Desktop

- The Remote Desktop Connection software is pre-installed with Windows XP so to verify that you have it, use the following URL:
 - Start => All Programs => Accessories => Communications, => Remote Desktop Connection
- If you don't have it, then you need to get it. There are options. First, you can get the Remote Desktop Connection software on the Windows XP Professional and Windows XP Home Edition product CDs
- If you don't have a CD, then you can get it online. Use the links I provided in the [links and references section](#) to get the clients if you don't have it currently available on your system.

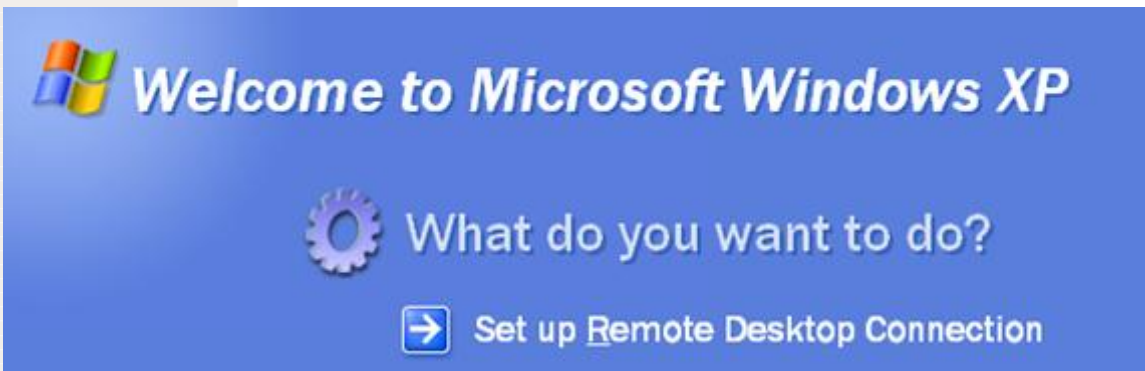
The Remote Desktop Connection software can be installed on any supported Windows platform. One you get it, install it and open it up.

Let's look at how install Remote Desktop (if not already installed)

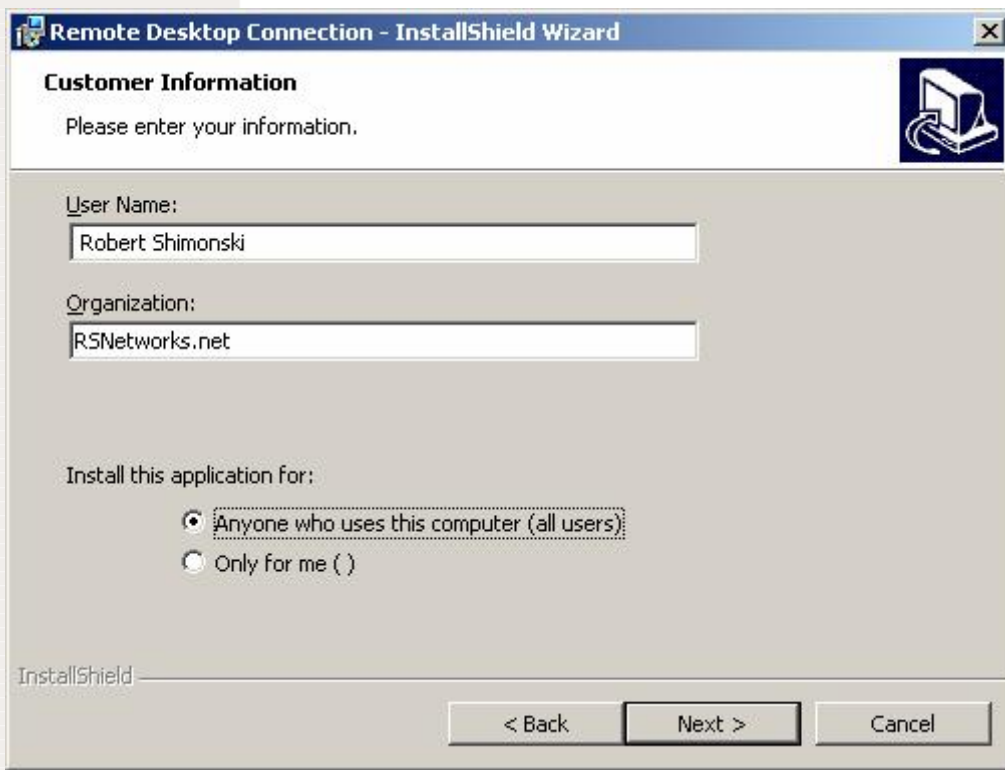
Install the Client Software

To install Remote Desktop Connection software on a client computer

1. Insert the Windows XP CD into your CD-ROM drive.
2. When the Welcome page appears, click **Perform additional tasks**, and then click **Setup Remote**



3. When the installation wizard starts, follow the directions that appear on your screen.
4. You will have to agree to the license agreement

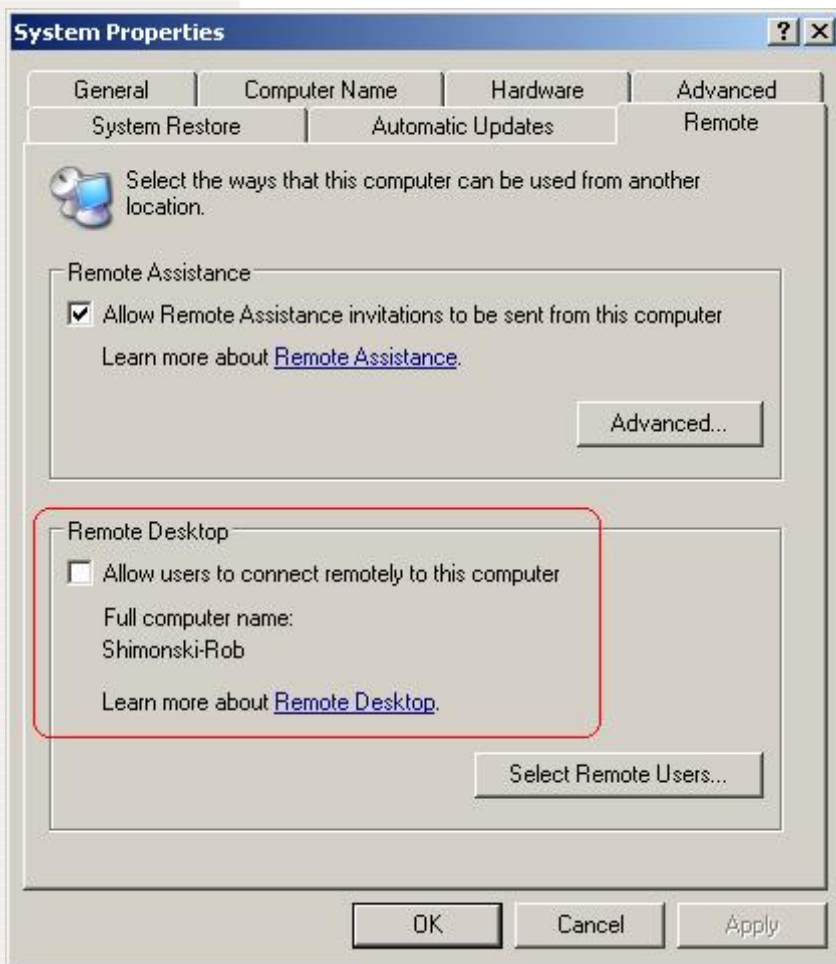


5. Enter your personal information and click Next
6. Finish the installation and you will now have Remote Desktop Installed on your XP system.

Enable Your Computer as the Host

Before you use Remote Desktop, your systems have to be set up properly to allow it to be 'controlled'. One of the first things you will need to do is to 'enable' the remote control of a system. To do that, you will need to make a quick setting change in the System Properties.

1. Log in as an Administrator (or as a member of the Administrators group)
2. Open the System Applet in the Control Panel.
3. Click Start => Control Panel => System Applet => Remote Tab



4. On the Remote tab, select the Allow users to connect remotely to this computer check box, as shown below.



5. Make sure that you have the proper permissions to connect to a computer remotely, and click OK.

Remote Desktop and XP Service Pack 2

If you're running Windows XP Service Pack 2 (SP2) and you enable Remote Desktop, Windows Firewall will be automatically configured to allow Remote Desktop connections to your computer. There is one exception; this will not happen unless you have the Windows Firewall configured to **allow no exceptions**.

To allow exceptions in Windows Firewall:

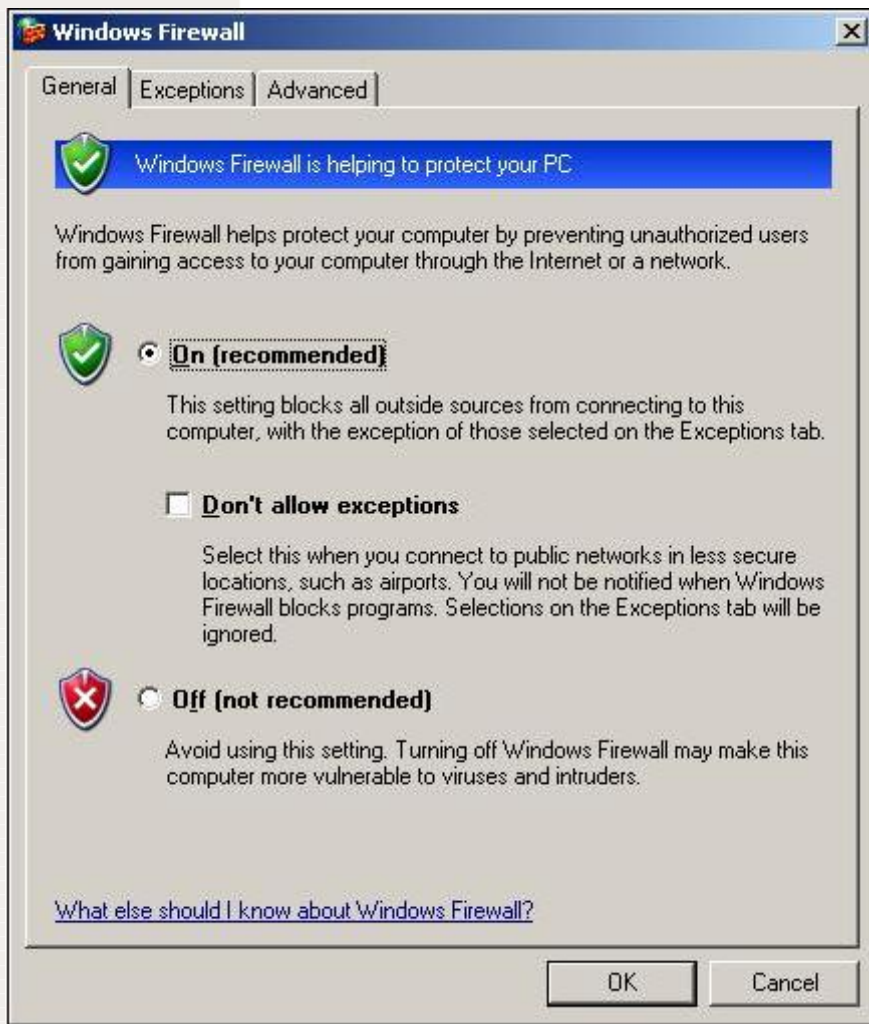
1. Open the Control Panel, Double Click the Security Center applet



2. When the Security Center opens, Click on Windows Firewall



3. Make sure you Clear the check box next to "Don't allow exceptions"



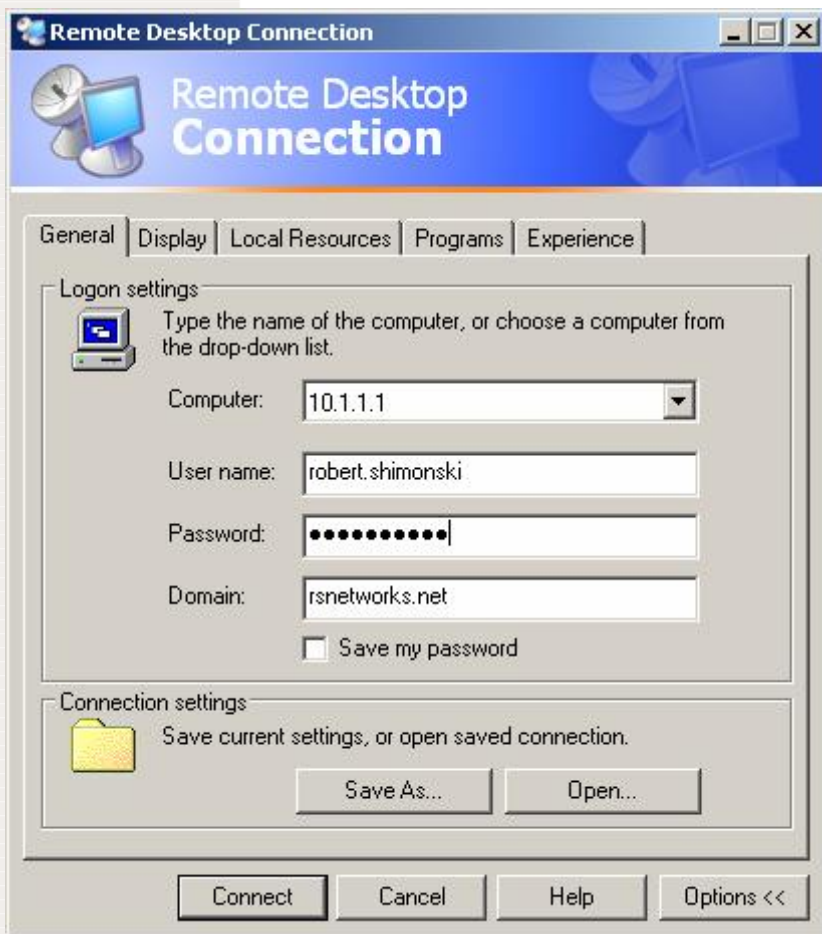
Start a Session

Once you have enabled your Windows XP Professional computer to allow remote connections, and installed client software on a Windows-based client computer, you are ready to start a Remote Desktop session.

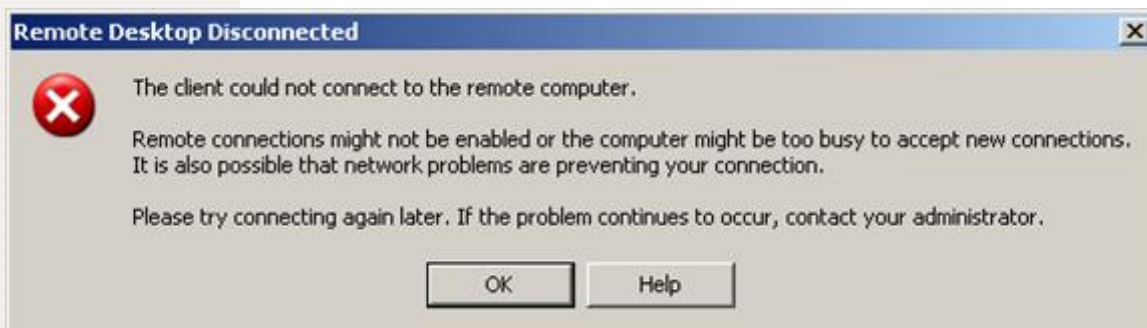
Remember, as I laid out in the diagram in the beginning of this article, you must first establish a virtual private network (VPN) connection or remote access service (RAS) connection from your client computer to your office network. Without a connection 'into' the corporate network, you will not be able to remote a server, especially if its not internet facing *like on a DMZ* and using a private [RFC 1918](#) address.

To create a new Remote Desktop Connection

1. Open Remote Desktop Connection.
2. Click Start => All Programs => Accessories => Communications => Remote Desktop Connection
3. In Computer, type the computer name or TCP/IP (shown below) address of the host you want to control... remember, they have to be 'allowed' to be controlled first.
4. Fill in your credentials, Domain if needed, save the connection as a 'profile' so you can quickly go back to it later and use it again.



5. I don't recommend checking the 'Save my password' check box because if your system becomes compromised, your servers (or other systems) have now become exposed to the Hacker. Now in the server, the whole corporate network is potentially exposed.
6. Once you have put in your credentials and all other pertinent information, Click Connect.
7. Your request will now be sent to the system you want to connect to. The Log On to Windows dialog box appears.
8. In the Log On to Windows dialog box, type your user name, password, and domain (if required), and then click OK.
9. The Remote Desktop window will open and you will see the desktop settings, files, and programs that are the system. The system that is in the corporate network can remain locked and safe while you are now inside it, working on it. Whatever you are doing cannot be seen by someone watching the console.
10. Problems do occur, most commonly it's just that the connection is either refused or it timed out because of latency. Here is a commonly seen error message:

**Note:**

To change your connection settings, (such as screen size, automatic logon information, and performance options), click on the other tabs available when you open the Remote Desktop Client.

To open a saved connection

1. Saved connections are stored in you're my Documents folder
2. Windows Explorer => My Documents folder
3. Click the .Rdp file for the connection you want to use

A Remote Desktop file (*.rdp) file is a profile that holds a bunch of settings. You can make copies of them as you would any other file and just change the options internally to that profile and save it with another name. You can copy all the *.rdp files and store them in a folder on your desktop; you can even edit the Start Menu and make a folder called RDP with all your profiles in it. Whatever makes it easy for you to manage...

To edit an *.rdp file and change the connections settings it contains, right-click the file and then click Edit.

To log off and end the session

1. In the Remote Desktop Connection window => click Start => Shut Down.
2. The Shut Down Windows dialog box appears
3. In the drop-down menu, select Log Off <username> => click OK

Summary

In this article we covered the basics of Remote Desktop. We covered what its used for, how to install it, how to configure it and how to use it. Make sure you don't leave this article out of your tool belt, in future articles you will see just how handy Remote Desktop can be.

Links and Reference Material

[Direct Download from Microsoft.com to your Desktop](#)

Click here to download the client straight from Microsoft.com

Note – if this link no longer works, just go to Microsoft downloads page which can be found on the homepage.

[Downloads Page](#)

Click here to go to the Microsoft downloads page

[Remote Desktop Connection for Windows Server 2003 \[5.2.3790\]](#)

Click here to view the Windows Server 2003 download page

[Avoid the Commute: Work at Home](#)

“Connect to Your Office”

Published: June 30, 2004 (Microsoft)

[The Next Best Thing to Transporter Beams](#)

Remote Desktop in Windows XP Professional lets you control your computer remotely using another PC. (Microsoft)

[Windows XP Remote Desktop Web Connection Overview](#)

With the Remote Desktop Web Connection in Windows XP, you can run Remote Desktop session from within Microsoft Internet Explorer. (Microsoft)

[Set Up Your Computer for Remote Desktop](#)

Read up on the three things you need to set up your computer to use Remote Desktop (Microsoft)

[Enable Your Computer as the Host](#)

Learn how to turn on the Remote Desktop feature on your office computer so that you can control it remotely from another computer. (Microsoft)

[Install Remote Desktop Communications Client](#)

If you're running Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 98 Second Edition, Windows Me, Windows NT 4.0 or Windows 2000, you'll need to install the Remote Desktop communications client. (Microsoft)

[Start a Remote Desktop Session](#)

Once you have enabled your Windows XP Professional computer to allow remote connections, and installed client software on a Windows-based client computer, you are ready to start a Remote Desktop session (Microsoft)

[Frequently Asked Questions about Remote Desktop](#)

Get answers to common questions about the Remote Desktop feature in Windows XP (Microsoft)

[How to change the listening port for Remote Desktop](#)

Describes how to change the port that Remote Desktop listens on (Microsoft)

[Installing Remote Desktop Web Connection in Windows XP](#)

Describes how to install the Remote Desktop Web Connection in Windows XP (Microsoft)

[List of Remote Desktop fixes in Windows XP Service Pack 2](#)

Lists the Remote Desktop fixes that are available in Windows XP Service Pack 2 (Microsoft)

[How to configure the Remote Desktop client to connect to a specific port when you use Windows XP](#)

Explains how to reassign a port number for a Remote Desktop client (Microsoft)

[Remote desktop connection "The local policy of this system does not permit you to logon interactively"](#)

Resolves an issue with Windows that returns an error message if you try to use the Remote Desktop Connection tool when you are not an administrator. (Microsoft)

[How to Use Remote Desktop Sharing in NetMeeting](#)

This article describes how to use the Remote Desktop Sharing feature in NetMeeting. (Microsoft)

[How to Turn On Remote Desktop Automatic Logon in Windows XP](#)

This article describes how to turn on Remote Desktop automatic logon. (Microsoft)

[The Features of the Remote Desktop Client in Windows XP](#)

This article describes the features of the Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) 5.1 client, which is included in Windows XP. (Microsoft)

[How to Disable Remote Desktop by Using Group Policy](#)

Remote Desktop is a new feature in Windows XP Professional that allows you to connect to your computer remotely and work as though you are sitting at the console. (Microsoft)

[Remote Desktop Connection Client Does Not Start Properly](#)

When you start the Remote Desktop Connection client, you may find that the window size is the same as the remote desktop size, not full screen as expected. (Microsoft)

[How a Remote Desktop Connection Affects Windows XP Professional](#)

This article describes how Microsoft Windows XP Professional functions when you use a remote desktop connection. (Microsoft)

About Robert J. Shimonski

Robert J. Shimonski (MCSE, etc) is an entrepreneur, technology consultant and published author. Robert's specialties include network infrastructure design, management and the troubleshooting of Microsoft and Cisco products. Robert has in depth experience with globally deployed Microsoft and Cisco systems. Robert works with new companies constantly to help them forge their designs, as well as to optimize their networks and keep them highly available, secure and disaster free. Robert is author of many security related articles and published books to include the best selling: "Sniffer Network Optimization and Troubleshooting Handbook" from Syngress Media Inc (ISBN: 1931836574). Robert is also the author of the best selling: Security+ Study Guide and DVD Training System (ISBN: 1931836728) and Building DMZs for Enterprise Networks (ISBN: 1931836884) also from Syngress. Robert can be found online at www.rsnetworks.net

[Click here](#) for Robert J. Shimonski's section.

Check out these recent articles by Robert J. Shimonski

- Sep 29, 2005, [Using Tracert](#)
- Sep 20, 2005, [File System Planning for Active Directory 101](#)
- Sep 06, 2005, [Window Server 2003 R2, what's new with Active Directory?](#)
- Aug 23, 2005, [Using Pathping](#)
- Aug 08, 2005, [Determining the Functional Level in Windows Server 2003](#)

[Click here](#) for more articles by Robert J. Shimonski.

Get new article updates in your Inbox

Get all the various Windows networking related articles about setting up Windows NT/XP/2000/2003 networks, troubleshooting, connectivity and more delivered directly to your mailbox as and when they are released on WindowsNetworking.com. Choose between receiving instant updates with the Real-Time Article Update, or a monthly summary with the Monthly Article Update.

Monthly Article Update

Real-Time Article Update

Email address: *

* Please note that we do NOT sell or rent the email addresses belonging to our subscribers; we respect your privacy!

●● Featured Links *

Join our mailing list!
Enter your email below,
then click the "join list" button

Admin Knowledge

RSS

[About Us](#) : [Contact Us](#) : [Product Submission Form](#) : [Advertising Information](#)

WindowsNetworking.com is in no way affiliated with Microsoft Corp. *Links are sponsored by advertisers.
Copyright © 2005 [TechGenix Ltd.](#) All rights reserved. Please read our [online privacy statement](#).