

Windows 11 Customizations

Customizations that a user can make to Windows 11 are listed below. Each customization listed is a link to the instructions to make that customization on your PC. At the end of the instructions there is a link to return to the list of customizations.

The following customizations of Windows 11 involve changing Windows Settings, third party apps, running commands, and/or Registry edits. To make the instructions shorter and not repeat the same instructions for each customization, the instructions will be based the following:

- Windows Settings* User knows how to access Windows Settings and navigate the settings pages such as Settings > Apps > Advanced app settings that is given and then change the setting indicated in the instructions.
- Third Party App* User has downloaded and installed the app indicated. The instructions will indicate the setting in the app to achieve the customization.
- Registry Edit* User can open an Administrator Command Prompt, copy the command, paste the command and run the command to install the Registry key for those instructions that have a reg add command. User can copy the text in the instructions, paste in a Notepad document, save as a .reg file, and Merge the .reg file to their registry for those instructions that have a .reg file.

Some customizations that can be achieved with an app can also be achieved with a Registry edit. For such customizations both methods will be listed with OR between the two sets of instructions. Nearly all the customizations require a sign out and sign in to become effective.

[Links for downloading apps used for customizations](#)

[Winaero Tweaker](#) – Too many customizations to list.

[ExplorerPatcher](#) – The main feature about ExplorerPatcher was Toolbars on the Taskbar; however, after upgrade to 24H2 that toolbar function no longer works. Most other customizations can be achieved by Winaero Tweaker or manual edits, so I no longer use this app.

[Open-Shell](#) – The main customization with using Open-Shell is the classic Windows 7 tiered Start menu and if you desire that, then I suggest this free app. I opted to use the Windows 11 pinned app Start menu, so I no longer use this app.

[XnViewMP](#) – Photo/graphic app that can create Windows .ico files to make custom icons.

[PowerToys](#) – A collection of very useful apps (utilities) that provide very specific customizations or actions. The link provides links for downloading as well as detailed information on each app. Utilize those instructions for use of these apps.

List of Windows 11 Customizations

Warning: If you are viewing these customizations in the PDF version of this list, the commands shown will NOT copy and paste correctly because the PDF version adds a carriage return to the end of each line of the command.

Download the accompanying TXT file, Windows 11 Customization Commands, that has the same commands that are suitable for copying and pasting directly into an Administrator's Command Prompt.

These commands in the DOCX version of this list are suitable for copying and pasting directly into an Administrator's Command Prompt.

Note: Windows Security will place a Block (use block) on downloaded TXT and DOCX files. Right click and select Properties to place a check in the Unblock box on the General tab and click Apply to use the file.

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Start button – Move to left side of screen

Effect: Moves the Start button to the left side of the screen.

Windows Setting Settings > Personalization > Taskbar > Taskbar behaviors
Change *Taskbar alignment* to **Left**

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Login – Make Window 11 Login Passwordless without Microsoft Account

Effect: Allows Windows to bypass the login screen (no password needed to bootup or recover from sleep) on both Windows 11 local and Microsoft accounts without using a Microsoft account to set it up.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add "HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion>PasswordLess\Device" /v DevicePasswordLessBuildVersion /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f
```

AND

Windows Setting Enter **netplwiz** in a Run box.
Uncheck the box next to *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer* and Press Apply.
Enter password for that account 2 times and press OK.

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Hibernate/Fast Startup – Disable Hibernate and Fast Startup

Effect Disables the Hibernate function and removes the large hiberfil.sys file. This also disables the Fast Startup function which can cause problems when startup requires refreshed drivers and kernel reset as Fast Startup carries problems over to the next startup.

Windows Setting Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

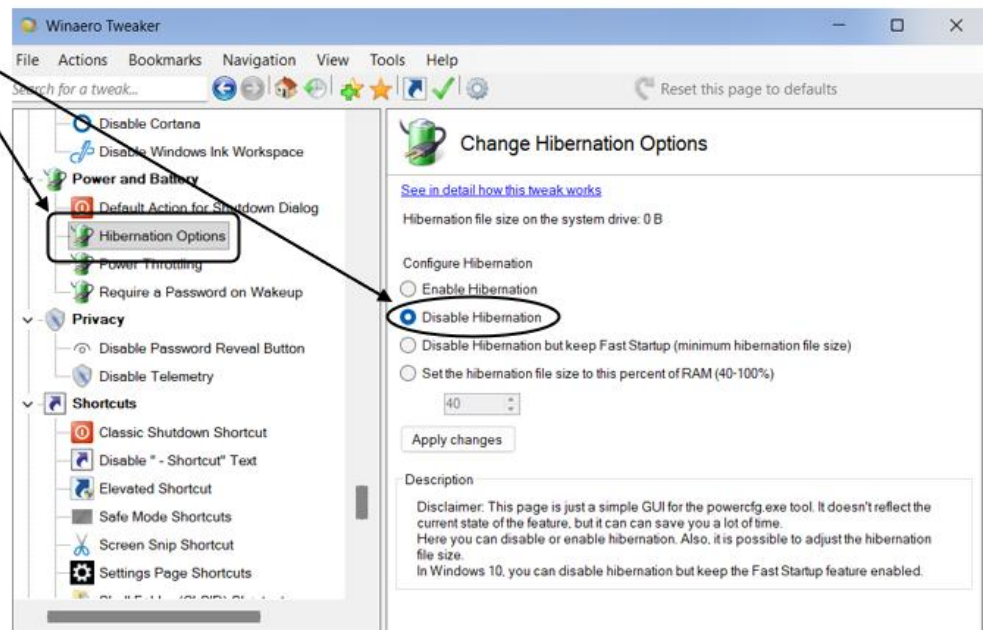
```
powercfg -h off
```

The command console will not respond unless an error has occurred.

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Power and Battery > Hibernation Options > check Disable Hibernation (as shown below):

Disable Hibernate



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Context Menus – Full Context Menus with no “Show more options” button

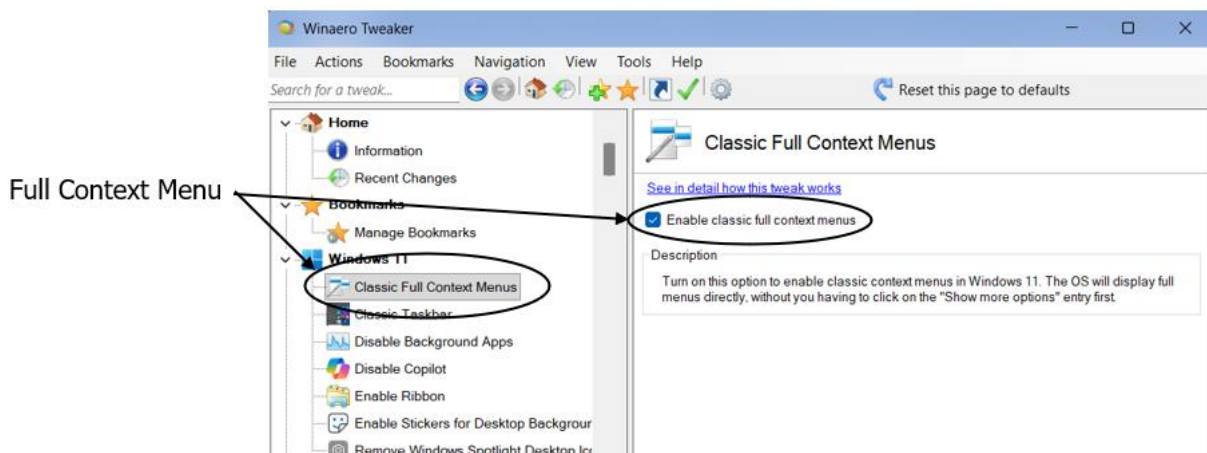
Effect Make the Context Menu (right click) display with all choices visible and no “Show more options” button to click to see the rest of the Context Menu.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator’s Command Prompt:

```
reg add "HKCU\Software\Classes\CLSID\{86ca1aa0-34aa-4e8b-a509-50c905bae2a2}\InprocServer32" /f /ve
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Windows 11 > Classic Full Context Menus > check Enable classic full context menus (as shown below)



Windows Search – Restrict searches to local drives – no Web pages for search results

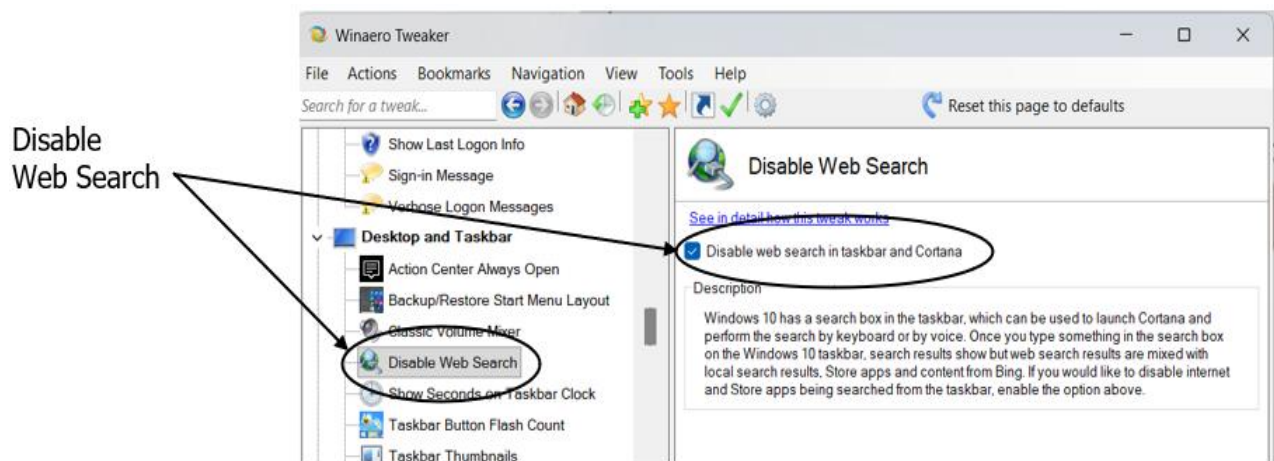
Effect A search using Windows Search on the Taskbar will no longer display web pages as results for the search and thus restrict the Windows search to local drives and files.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add HKCU\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Explorer /v DisableSearchBoxSuggestions /t REG_DWORD /d 00000001 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Desktop and Taskbar > Disable Web Search > check Disable web search in taskbar and Cortana (also works for Windows 11) (see image below).



Desktop – Add show Desktop icon to right side of Taskbar that minimizes all windows

Effect Adds icon to the extreme right side of the Taskbar that can't be seen until the pointer is over it. Clicking this icon will minimize all open windows and display the Desktop.

Windows Setting Settings > Personalization > Taskbar > Taskbar behaviors
Check *Select the far corner of the taskbar to show the desktop*

File Explorer – Remove Home, OneDrive, and Gallery from Navigation pane

Effect Removes the Home, OneDrive, and Gallery icons from the top of File Explorer's Navigation pane which allows the Quick Access icons to display at the top of the Navigation pane where you can Pin drives/folders/files to instantly access.

Registry Edit

Enter each of the following sets of commands in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

To Remove Home icon:

```
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Desktop\NameSpace\{f874310e-b6b7-47dc-bc84-b9e6b38f5903} /ve /t REG_SZ /d "CLSID_M_SGraphHomeFolder" /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Desktop\NameSpace\{f874310e-b6b7-47dc-bc84-b9e6b38f5903} /v "HiddenByDefault" /t REG_DWORD /d 00000001 /f
```

To Remove Gallery icon:

```
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Desktop\NameSpace\{e88865ea-0e1c-4e20-9aa6-edcd0212c87c} /ve /t REG_SZ /d "Gallery" /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Desktop\NameSpace\{e88865ea-0e1c-4e20-9aa6-edcd0212c87c} /v HiddenByDefault /t REG_DWORD /d 00000001 /f
```

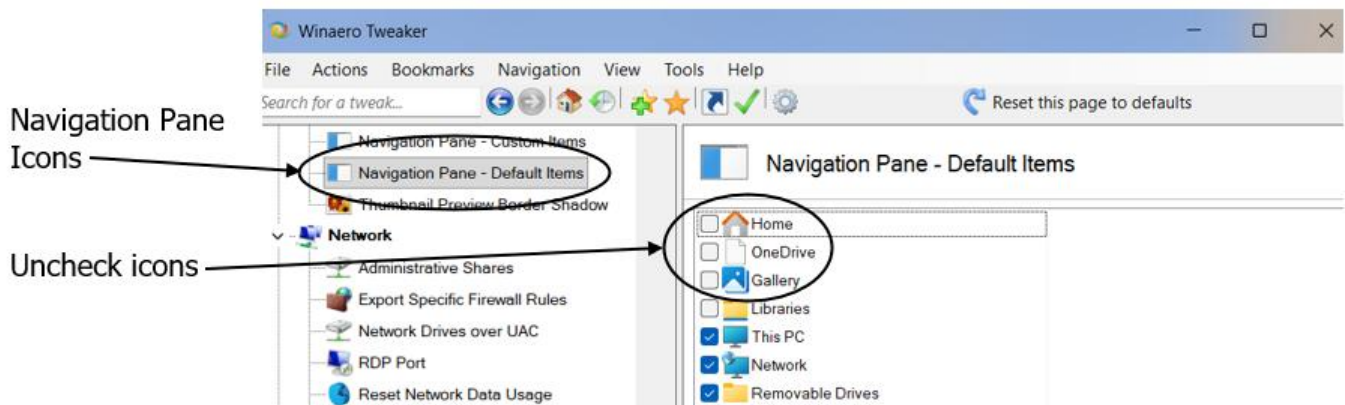
To Remove OneDrive icon:

```
reg add HKCR\CLSID\{018D5C66-4533-4307-9B53-224DE2ED1FE6} /ve /t REG_SZ /d "OneDrive" /f
reg add HKCR\CLSID\{018D5C66-4533-4307-9B53-224DE2ED1FE6} /v "System.IsPinnedToNameSpaceTree" /t REG_DWORD /d 00000000 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker

File Explorer > Navigation Pane – Default Items > Uncheck the icons that you do not want to show in the Navigation pane of File Explorer (as show in the image below)



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File Explorer – Change File Explorer default setting to open to the drive/folder you select

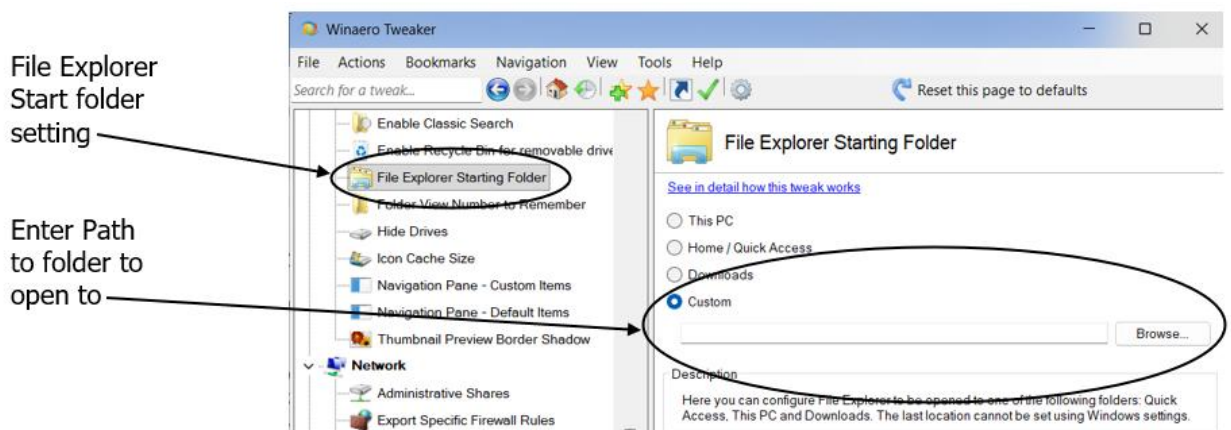
Effect Change the default setting in File Explorer so it opens to the drive and/or folder you want it to.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt replacing *Path to drive or folder* with the Path to your drive or folder such as C:\Users\Username\Documents to open to your Documents folder. Pay attention to the quotation marks and that is double quotes.

```
reg add HKCU\SOFTWARE\Classes\CLSID\{52205fd8-5dfb-447d-801a-d0b52f2e83e1}\shell\OpenNewWindow\command /ve /t REG_SZ /d "Explorer "Path to drive or folder"" /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
File Explorer > File Explorer Starting Folder > Select Custom and browse to the drive or folder you want File Explorer to open to when started.



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File Explorer – Add Control Panel to Navigation pane

Effect Add Control Panel to the bottom of the Navigation pane in File Explorer so the Control Panel can be easily accessed thru File Explorer.

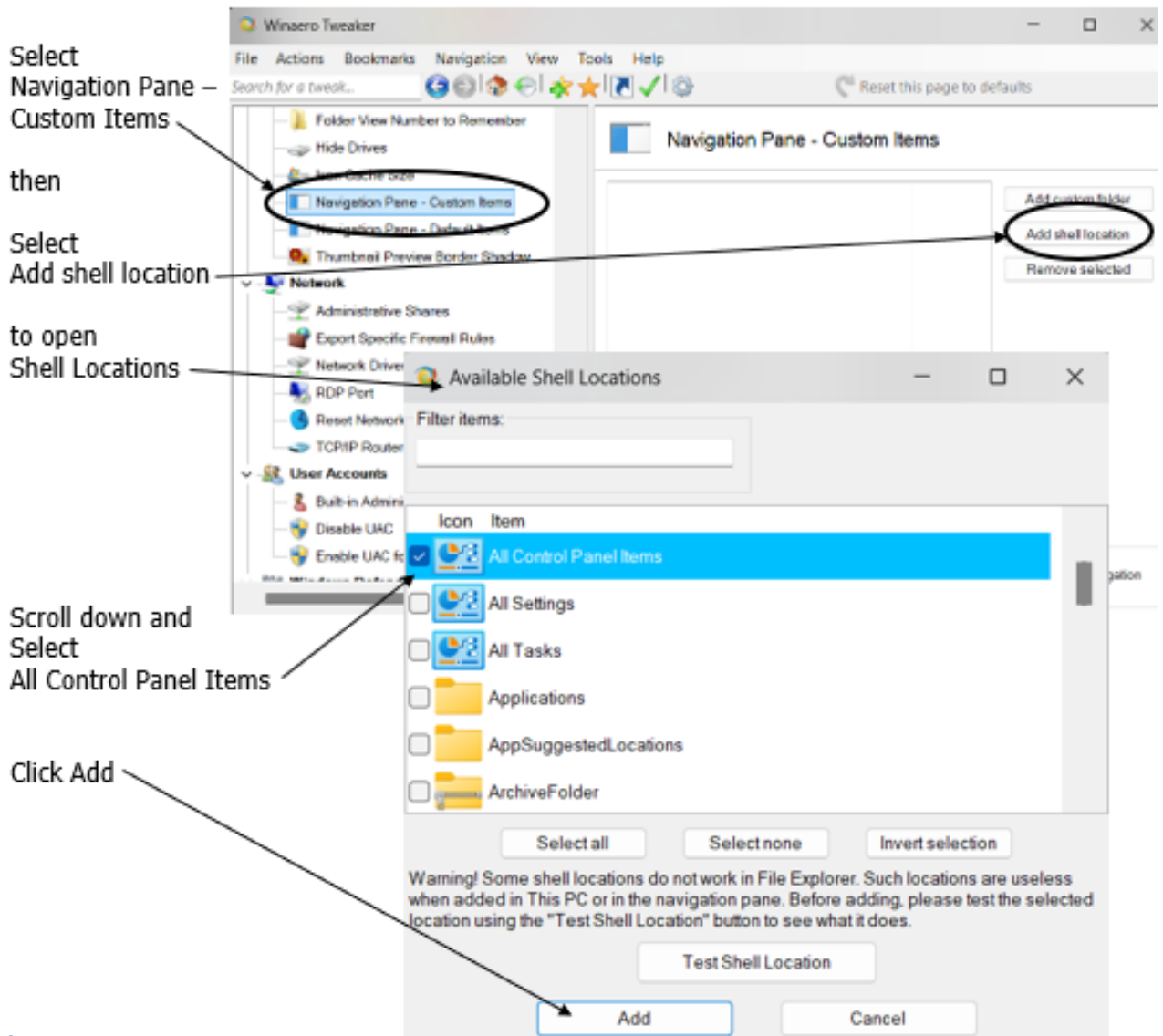
Registry Edit Enter the following commands in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add HKCU\Software\Classes\CLSID\{26EE0668-A00A-44D7-9371-BEB064C98683} /ve /t REG_SZ /d Control_Panel /f
reg add HKCU\Software\Classes\CLSID\{26EE0668-A00A-44D7-9371-BEB064C98683} /v System.IsPinnedToNameSpaceTree /t REG_DWORD /d 00000001 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker

File Explorer > Navigation Pane – Custom Items > Select *Add shell location* as shown below. From Available Shell locations window that opens, scroll down, select All Control Panel Items, and click Add to save your change (as shown below)



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Copilot – Remove Copilot icon from taskbar or Disable Copilot completely

Effect Remove the Copilot icon from the Taskbar and keep Copilot still functioning in the PC or Disable Copilot which will also remove the Copilot icon from the Taskbar.

Registry Edit *To remove Copilot icon on Taskbar but keep Copilot enabled:*
Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

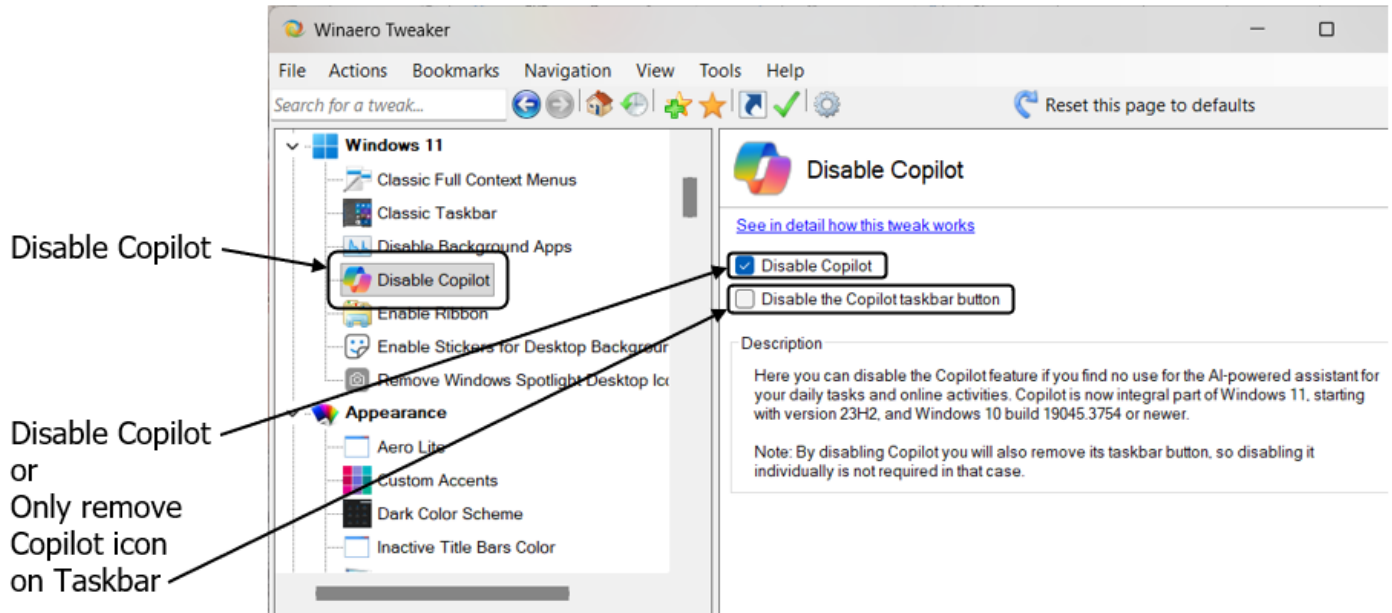
```
reg add HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced /v ShowCopilotButton /t REG_DWORD /d 00000000 /f
```

To Disable Copilot and remove Copilot icon on Taskbar:

```
reg add HKCU\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WindowsCopilot /v TurnOffWindowsCopilot /t REG_DWORD /d 00000001 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Windows 11 > Disable Copilot >
To Disable Copilot and remove the Copilot Taskbar icon select *Disable Copilot*.
or
To remove the Copilot icon from the Taskbar and keep Copilot running select *Disable the Copilot taskbar icon*.



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Windows Borders – Increase width of open windows borders to make easier to grab

Effect Increase the width of the borders around an open window to make it easier to grab for resizing the window. The border around the window will not appear visually thicker, but the mouse pointer will detect the thicker border and change to the border grab arrows over a much larger area around the border making it easier to grab.

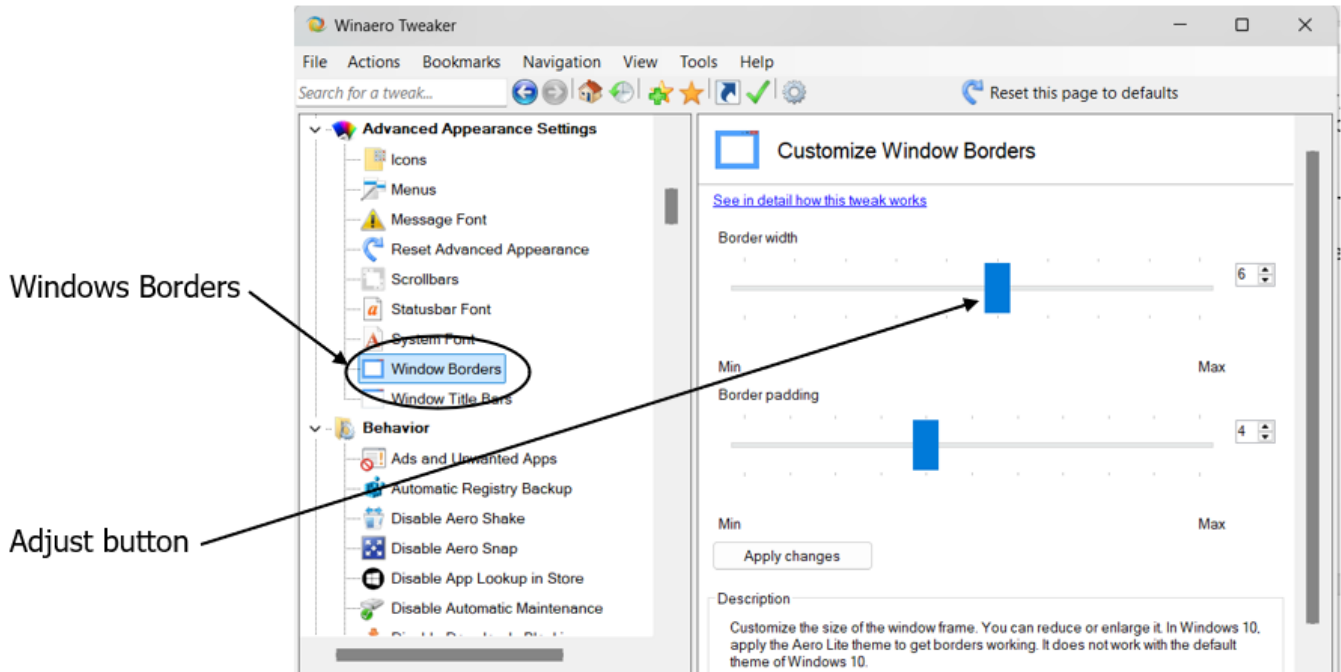
Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt with the following variable. The BorderWidth data can be set between 0 and -750 with the larger negative number being wider. Default width is -30. Most users feel that increasing to -100 makes it much easier to grab the borders, but you can adjust to suit your needs.

```
reg add "HKCU\Control Panel\Desktop\WindowMetrics" /v BorderWidth /t REG_SZ /d -100 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker

Advanced Appearance Settings > Move slide button to adjust windows border width. (as shown below)



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Scrollbars – Make scrollbars on windows thicker to make it easier to grab and use

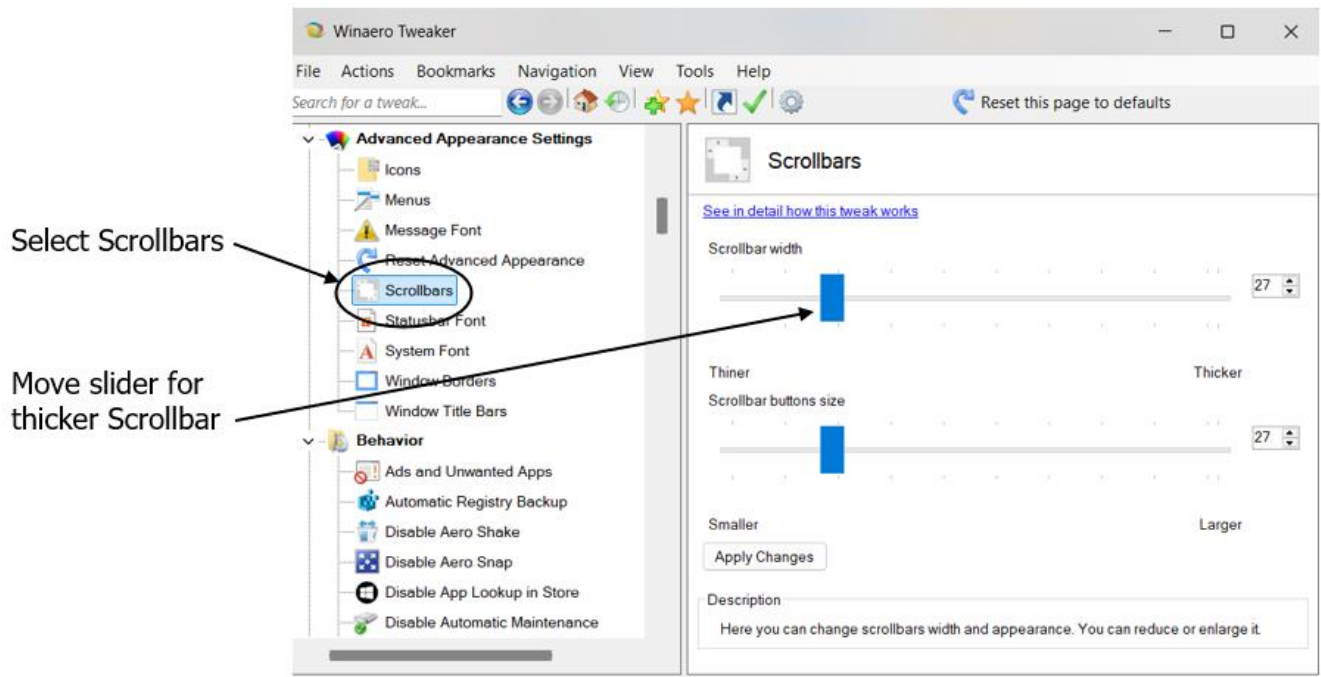
Effect Increase the thickness of scrollbars in open windows to make it easier to grab and use. This customization does not apply to some apps such as Chrome.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt with the following variable. The ScrollWidth metric is each -15 in the setting equals 1 pixel, so the setting for your screen will depend upon its size and resolution and the resulting PPI (Pixels per inch). If your PPI is 81 and you want the scroll width to be about $\frac{1}{3}$ inch which will be 27 ($81 \div 3$). To get 27 pixels use -405 (27×-15) as the data setting in the command below. Adjust accordingly for your screen's PPI rate.

```
reg add "HKCU\Control Panel\Desktop\WindowMetrics" /v ScrollWidth /t REG_SZ /d -405 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Advanced Appearance Settings > Scrollbars > Move slider bar under *Scrollbar width* to get the desired width. The number to the right displays how many pixels wide the scrollbar is set to (as shown below).



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Scrollbars – Make the scrollbar buttons larger to make it easier to grab and use

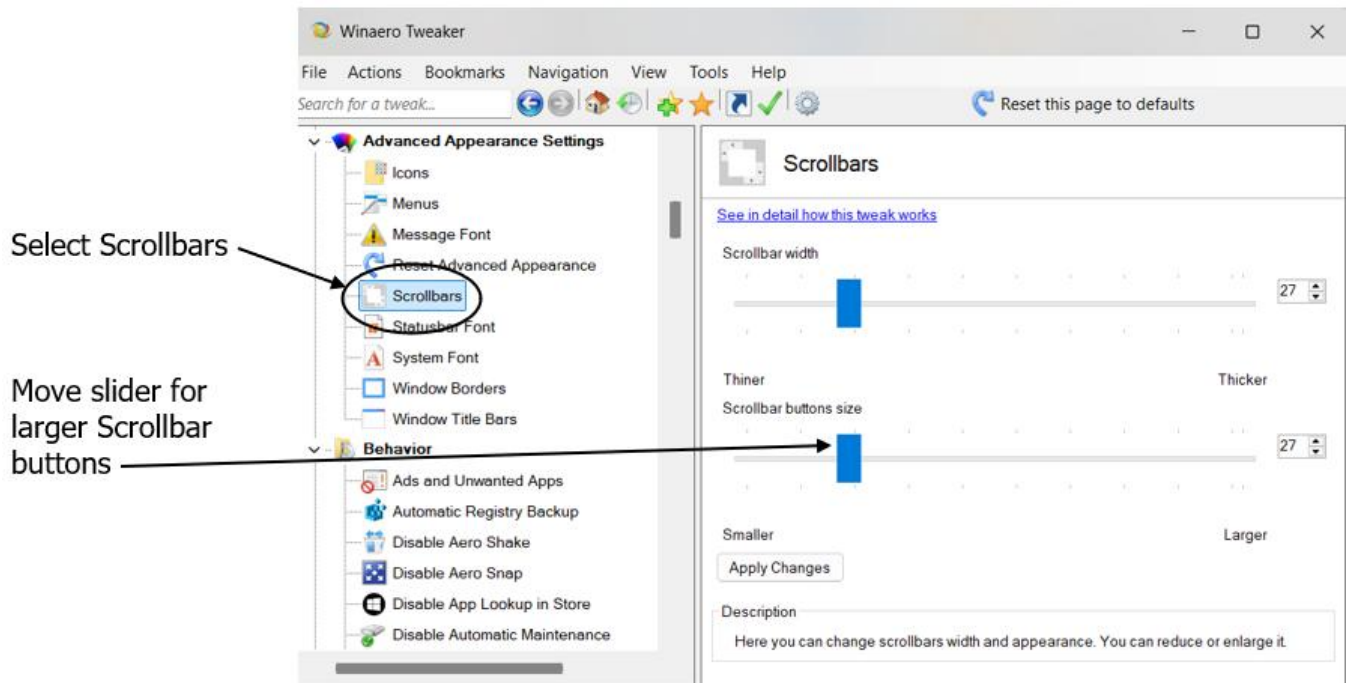
Effect Make the scrollbar button in open windows larger to make grabbing the scrollbar button easier. This customization does not apply to some apps such as Chrome.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt with the following variable. The ScrollHeight metric is each -15 in the setting equals 1 pixel, so the setting for your screen will depend upon its size and resolution and the resulting PPI (Pixels per inch). If your PPI is 81 and you want the scroll width to be about $\frac{1}{3}$ inch which will be 27 ($81 \div 3$). To get 27 pixels use -405 (27×-15) as the data setting in the command below. Adjust accordingly for your screen's PPI rate.

```
reg add "HKCU\Control Panel\Desktop\WindowMetrics" /v ScrollHeight /t REG_SZ /d -405 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Advanced Appearance Settings > Scrollbars > Move slider bar under *Scrollbar buttons size* to get the desired size (increase in size by height). The number to the right displays how many pixels in height the scrollbar is set to (as shown below).



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Shortcuts – Remove the "Shortcut" text when making new shortcuts

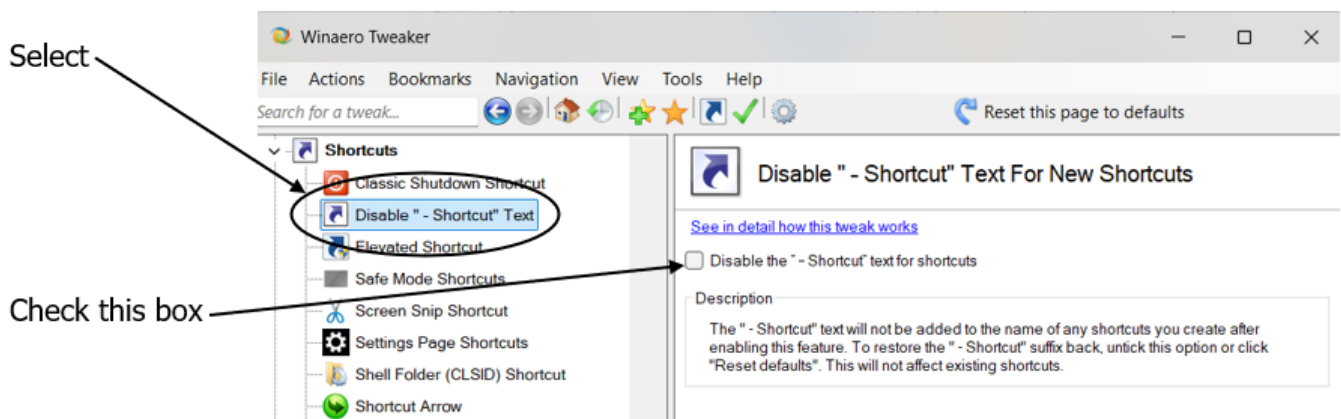
Effect Keeps the word "Shortcut" from being added as part of the name for a shortcut that you create.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer /v link /t REG_BINARY /d 19000000 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Shortcuts > Disable "-Shortcut" Text > Place a checkmark in the box next to *Disable the "-Shortcut" text for shortcuts* (as shown below)



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Shortcuts – Remove the shortcut arrow from all shortcut icons

Effect Removes the shortcut arrow from all shortcut icons which allows custom icons without an arrow blocking part of the icon image.

Registry Edit Enter the following into a Notepad document:

Windows Registry Editor Version 5.00

```
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Shell Icons]
```

```
"29"="%windir%\System32\shell32.dll,-50"
```

Select File > Save as

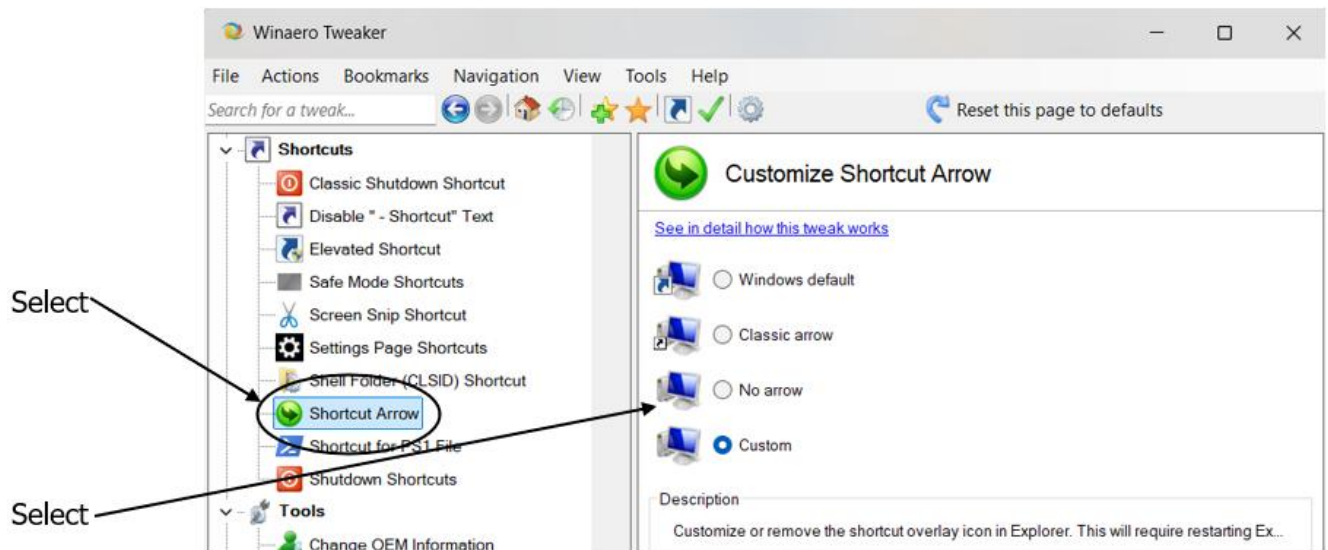
Set Save as type: to All Files

Name it NoShortcutArrow.reg

Click the saved NoShortcutArrow.reg to Merge. OK the warnings to allow the merge.

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Shortcuts > Shortcut Arrow > Select No arrow (as shown below).



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Restore Points – Remove Windows limit of only one restore point in a 24 hour period

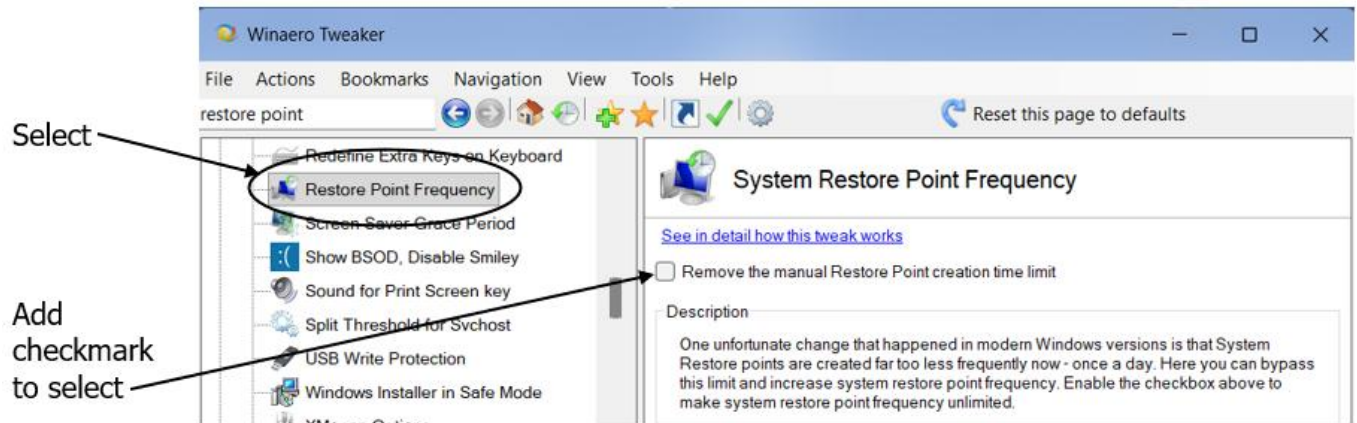
Effect Removes Windows frequency limit on restore points that only allows one restore point in a 24 hour period, thus allowing you to make a restore point anytime you want to.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add "HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\SystemRestore"  
/v SystemRestorePointCreationFrequency /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f
```

OR

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker
Behavior > Restore Point Frequency > Place a checkmark in box next to *Remove the manual Restore Point creation time limit* (as shown below).



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Desktop – Add any app to the Desktop Context Menu for quick access

Effect Add any app (or file) to the Desktop's right click Context Menu that will open that app (or file) for quick access.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt with the following changes:
Replace **XXXX** with the Name that will display in the Context Menu. Do not have any spaces in the name.
Replace **Path to app** with the full Path to the app's .exe file. Keep Path address in straight quotation marks.

```
reg add HKCR\Directory\Background\shell\XXXX\command /ve /t REG_SZ /d "Path to app" /f
```

Example: The following command adds Task scheduler to the Desktop Context Menu:

```
reg add HKCR\Directory\Background\shell\TskSch\command /ve /t REG_SZ /d "C:\Windows\System32\control.exe schedtasks" /f
```

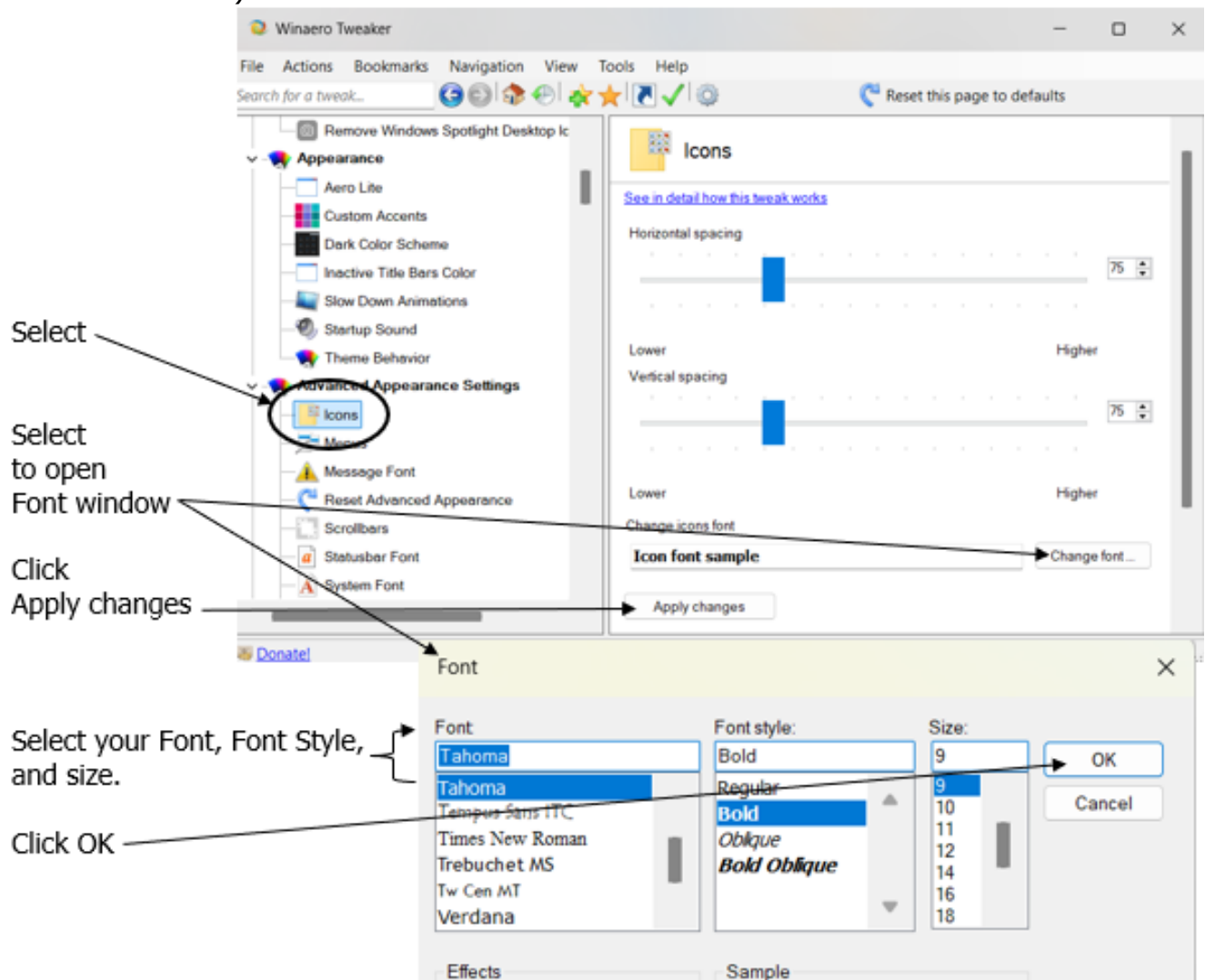
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Icons – Change Font of text used by Icons to make it easier to read

Effect Change the Font of text used for Icons to make it easier to read. This will change only the text used by icons.

Third Party App Winaero Tweaker

Advanced Appearance Settings > Icons > In the Change icons font section, select *Change font* button to open the Font window. Select the Font, Font Style, and Size to suit you. Often a different Font of the same size with a bold style will make reading the text easier without being too much. Click OK to close the Font window and click Apply changes to apply the changes you made (as shown below).



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Icons – Easily make custom icons from photo or graphic images

Effect Easily make a custom icon from any photo or graphic image that displays on your screen and use that custom icon for any shortcut or folder.

Third Party App XnViewMP
Open XnViewMP

Open photo or graphic file or make a screenshot of the image and use Edit > Paste as image.

Crop that portion of the image you want to use as the icon. The icon will be small so for a photo of a person use only a headshot. For letters, have the letter take up all the image. Make the crop as square as you can, but it doesn't have to be perfectly square.

Select *File > Save as* to open the Save as window.

Click the down arrow for *Save as type:* and select *ICO - Windows Icon*.

Name the icon and save.

Windows Setting To use the Custom icon:

Shortcut file – Right click, select Properties. On Shortcut tab click Change icon.

Browse to your custom icon file and select it. Click Apply and OK.

Folder – Right click, select Properties. On Customize tab click Change icon.

Browse to your custom icon file and select it. Click Apply and OK.

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Settings – Simplified Quick Settings window for Desktop

Effect Starting with 24H2 version, users can't edit the Quick Settings Menu (accessed with WinKey + A keyboard shortcut) resulting in settings in the Menu you will not use. The Registry key below will change that Quick Settings Menu to only Network, Bluetooth, Accessibility, and Volume control settings.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Explorer /v SimplifyQuickSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
```

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Desktop – Minimize all open windows except the one you choose

Effect Minimize all open windows except the window you want to remain open, thus clearing the Desktop except one open window.

Windows Settings Settings > System > Multitasking > Turn On *Title bar windows shake*.

Usage Grab the Title bar of the window you want to remain open with the mouse pointer and holding down the left mouse button. Move the window left and right quickly, shaking the windows sideways. This will cause all the other open windows to minimize leaving your window as the only one displayed on the Desktop.

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Mouse – Make the mouse pointer more visible and easier to see

Effect Make the mouse pointer more visible on the screen and thus easier to see.

Windows Settings Settings > Accessibility > Mouse pointer and touch >
> Mouse pointer style

Select the *Inverted* pointer (half white half black). This pointer will change from total white to total black with all shades between so that the color of the pointer is the exact opposite of the background it is displayed against, thus always a contrast difference between the mouse pointer and the background which makes it easier to see.

And/or

> Size

Move the slider scale to the right to increase the size of the mouse pointer.

Results are instant to allow you to see the increase in size. Small change in the slide produces large changes in the size of the pointer.

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Chrome – Keep Chrome's AI from collecting your data

Effect Keep Chrome's AI function from collecting your data while you are using Chrome's AI function.

Registry Edit Enter the following commands in an Administrator's Command Prompt. Can be paste as a block.

```
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v TabOrganizerSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v CreateThemesSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v HelpMeWriteSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v DevToolsGenAiSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v HistorySearchSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v TabCompareSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v HelpMeReadSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v GenAiDefaultSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
reg add HKLM\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome /v GenAILocalFoundationalModelSettings /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f
```

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Outlook – Start Outlook Offline when it first opens

Effect Start Outlook Offline and not to connect to the server when it first opens so you can control when you go online by pressing the Work Offline icon.

Registry Edit Enter the following command in an Administrator's Command Prompt:

```
reg add HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Office\16.0\Outlook\Profiles\Outlook\0a0d020000000000c000000000000046 /v 00030398 /t REG_BINARY /d 01000000 /f
```

If you desire Outlook to Start Online then change the /d to 02000000 and run the command.

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