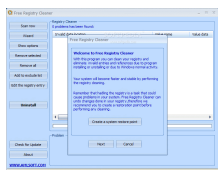


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Free Registry Cleaner

Registry Cleaning

Eliminate invalid registry entries

Everybody knows that the heart and soul of Windows system is composed by registry entries. The moment these get corrupted and cluttered with unneeded items your computer's performance will slowly start to decrepit. Left unattended the issue may even extend up to the point of a system crash. To tell you the truth I have not seen too many of these on Vista, but on XP seeing the blue screen had almost become part of the monthly routine. Anyway, for those still running XP (and judging by the market share there are still plenty of XP running machines out there), here's a nice little application designed to keep your registry clean and in order. It is free and extremely easy to use, but its most important feature is reliability. Free Registry Cleaner (not a very original name, but it says a lot) is designed to work on Windows 2000/XP/2003, but I managed to make it run on Vista as well. In my case the application installed with absolutely no problems, but it just would not run and kept displaying the need of a certain DLL file which was missing (**MSVBVM50.DLL**). Testing the application on different Vista Business equipped machines resulted in the need of the file. To make it easier for those running Vista, [here's](#) where you can download the DLL. Just unzip it and place it in your Windows folder on system drive. The icy blue interface integrates perfectly with Vista but it also fits well in XP. Immediately after launching the application you are prompted to create a restore point in order to avoid unnecessary problems. You should check though if system restore feature is enabled on your computer as the software will not give a warning in case system restore is turned off. The next step in the process is selecting registry areas you want to be checked. The **eight sections** include information about computer users, computer itself, orphaned DLLs, virtual devices, invalid font references, file association links and ActiveX and COM elements. Scanning your registry for the aforementioned elements is strictly dependent on the size of the registry and its state. A more fragmented registry leads to more extensive times for finishing the operation. The list of options runs in the left hand side of the application window. The settings available are not at all complicated and any user can handle them with ease. If you wish to create another **restore point** without restarting the application, there is nothing easier as all you need to do is start the wizard. Pressing "Wizard" button will cause the application to behave as if it had been launched again. "Show Options" button opens the door to making some configurations regarding areas to be scanned for invalid information and add parts of the registry to be excluded. Unfortunately the flexibility of the application extends only over exclusion list. Free Registry Cleaner allows you to add a text string and enable exclusion of parts of the registry containing that string. You can also proceed to editing registry entries and re-define the value path, change value name, type and value itself. However, you should be careful as meddling with the registry can lead to a whole set of problems. Besides cleaning your registry the application is also equipped with a software **uninstall utility** designed to safely remove all the traces of installed programs. There is nothing special about it as it will simply run the uninstall executable that comes with the selected software. Free Registry Cleaner will not scan the registry for left-overs from Uninstall Manager and will not automatically remove uninstall residue. But "Scan" button is a click away and it will start the process. The application does quite a good job but you should know that you will have to use multiple registry cleaners for the best cleaning possible. My recommendations go with [EasyCleaner](#) and [CCleaner](#), two worldwide known freebies that will contribute to improving your computer's performance in more than one way. Testing Free Registry Cleaner revealed that the app still misses some spots in the registry and additional intervention from other softwares is needed. However, it does a good

job and it is reliable. But after a software uninstall do not expect all the traces the app made in the registry to be eliminated as a manual search reveals left-overs. Do not get suspicious if Free Registry Cleaner roots out a myriad of registry issues (on my virtual machine it detected 911 invalid registry entries) as many of them do not present even a low risk. I have to admit that on XP the application did a hell of a job as all detected problems were successfully eliminated for good. On Vista there are still issues and a set of three files could not be eliminated and reappeared at the next scan. **The Good** The application is absolutely free and very easy to use. There aren't too many options available, but it also comes with an uninstall manager to remove applications safely from your computer. You get to add certain elements to a text string based exclusion list. **The Bad** On Vista it does not perform that good. "Remove Selected" options is problematic and does not work every time. Also, some files could not be removed and reappeared at the next scan. Uninstall Manager simply launches the uninstall executable of the selected application. I wish there was an option to scan the registry for entries particular to uninstalled application. **The Truth** On XP it works great as during our testing it removed all detected files with absolutely no problem. A test with other registry cleaners revealed that Free Registry Cleaner did a good job with both detecting and eliminating registry issues. But it is not perfect (like no registry cleaner is) and I recommend using it together with the aforementioned two freebies ([EasyCleaner](#) and [CCleaner](#)). *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*