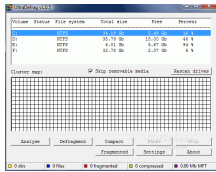


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Defrag Alternative

Keep drives running fast

File fragmentation is a well known issue on Windows enabled platforms. The issue is not extinct yet and you have to do this every once in a while (depending on the disk activity) in order to keep your HDD in tip top shape. Otherwise, the hardware will considerably slow down file operations and that's not the way to go. However, you are not alone on this one in the sense that Windows operating systems come with a defragmentation tool that does the job with more or less responsibility and, for a quick job, it is OK. But if you really want your files defragmented the proper way, I suggest you pick up a third party program for the task as chances are that it will perform much better. Remodeled Disk Defragmenter in Vista seems to do a better job and also comes with scheduling options in order to defragment your files automatically. But you know what they say: you make a first impression only once, so a third party is still desirable. Solutions in this respect are many, maybe more than enough and they all do the job one way or the other. Ultra Defragmenter is absolutely free and though it may not look too trustworthy, it does a great job. Some of its advantages include the small engine written in C language only, fast defragmentation and safety in moving files. The executable is a little under 100KB and it comes with native x64 support. It can work with no problems on most Windows editions (Windows 2000, XP, Server 2003, Vista, 64-bit platforms included). No NT 4.0 support though. The latest and greatest edition of Ultra defragmenter has a very simple and compact interface and very few settings can be done. The moment you launch the application it'll take a moment to scan for all available drives (takes less than a second). The drives displayed are accompanied by proper details like file system used, total size (in GB), amount of free space in both GB and percentage. Removable media such as USB keys can also be included in the list. Lower in the application window there is the cluster map which is empty at the beginning but as soon as defragmentation process starts it'll be filled with colored squares representing directories, files, fragmented files, compressed files and size of MFT (Master File Table). This way you'll have a visual on the state of the selected partition. Defragmentation process starts with analyzing the drive and if you take a look at the bottom of the window you'll see the number of directories available on the drive (all of them), total files and how many of them are fragmented. With the completion of the analysis, Ultra Defragmenter will place an HTML report on the drive containing the fragmented files and the number of fragments. If all you want is the report of fragmented files just generate it by pressing Fragmented button in the interface (look for FRAGLIST.HTM report in the root of the drive). Setting up the application is quite easy. There aren't many options available, but the present ones let you use a file filter which works both for file inclusion and exclusion. If you need a faster defragmentation process, you can configure Ultra Defragmenter to skip files larger than a certain size. The options also allow the user to set the map update interval for the most accurate view. The default value is fixed at 500ms. Report configuration seems to be the richest in features as you can choose encoding (UTF-16 or ASCII) and the Debug Print can be detailed or normal. Unfortunately, HTML is the only format defragmentation report can be saved into, but it renders the information quite well. About section contains the legend for the color codes used in the visual map of the selected drive. The difference between this and the explanations at the bottom of the main application windows is that About will give you the codes for the unfragmented files and the free space. Ultra Defragmenter's work with defragmenting of the files is not as good as expected, but helps optimizing the disk in a way. It is alacritous on the job thanks to the kernel driver mode engine. However, when it comes to compacting the results are not exciting at all. **The Good** The application is

absolutely free and very easy to install. Does the job fast and provides visual feedback of the operations it executes. Filter options let you easily include or exclude certain file formats from the process. **The Bad**The job is not properly done and on large disks, there will still be fragmented files. The interface is maybe a bit too simple for Vista environment and it does not fit quite well in XP either. Compacting of the files does not reach the expected results. After the first job, there will be absolutely no change no matter how many times you re-run the process. It cannot optimize more than one drive at once. **The Truth**The average job it does should do the trick for a while, but the engine is not powerful enough to give you the best defragmentation. It comes in very handy when you're in need of a defragmenting tool and want to avoid Windows Disk Defragmenter, though. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*