Microsoft Windows 7

11 – Personalising Windows 7

CORPORATE **LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**

PERSONALISING WINDOWS 7

INFOCUS

Windows 7 uses a **graphical interface** – lots of colours and other visual effects – that can be infinitely personalised to suit your temperament and mood.

In this booklet we will show you how to:

- gain an understanding of personalisation options in Windows 7
- change the desktop background
- change and customise themes
- apply a screen saver
- mouse pointer settings
- adjust the screen resolution
- change sounds in Windows 7
- add and customise desktop gadgets.

UNDERSTANDING PERSONALISATION OPTIONS

Some people like to work on nice wood-grain mahogany desks; others prefer a nice oak or ash finish. Others like to use a glass top and have pictures, say of loved ones and the family, beneath the glass. Just as you personalise your work place or your home, you can customise Windows 7 to suit your personal taste and preferences.

Almost Unlimited Options

There's almost unlimited options for personalising Windows 7, such as the way it appears on the screen, how it presents information to you, how you communicate with others, and even the sounds you hear.

Generally, most changes are confined to:

- the desktop: changing the colours, adding a picture, displaying text, and so on
- the overall colour theme: applying your favourite colours
- the screen saver, which is activated to preserve power when the computer has been dormant for a while
- mouse pointers: such as their size and shape
- the size of the display (referred to as its *resolution*), how much can be seen on a particular monitor, and the overall sizing of text and graphics
- the sounds that the computer makes.

There are several reasons why Windows 7 provides personalisation options.

Personalising As A Statement

Have a look around at the computer screens of the people at work and you'll notice that there probably isn't a lot of similarity between them. The Windows 7 screen, known as the desktop, is one of the easiest and most rewarding areas to personalise.

When allowed, people will use bright colours, exotic fonts, clip art and even photos to make their computer stand out from the crowd. Background photos of holiday destinations, cars or motorbikes, kids, and even pets adorn the screens of many. Some choose a colour or theme to add interest to their screens.

Sometimes computers are set up to reflect a corporate identity – many banks and credit unions for example display a company logo and colour scheme, especially on computers that are visible to the general public.

Personalising As An Aid

There are personalising options that can actually assist in working with the computer. For example, colours can make it easier to see certain features. Changing the screen resolution can make it easier to read the text on the screen, or see more features of the screen, depending upon the needs of the user.

Personalising As Protection

Screen savers, for example, were originally designed to refresh the screen and protect the computer monitor from damage caused when the same image remains on the screen for a considerable period of time. These days, however, screen savers are more likely to be used for displaying interesting patterns or pictures. Screen savers are activated usually after a specific period of inactivity on the computer. When they are active, hitting a key on the key board or a simple mouse movement restores the screen to its former state.

Screen savers can also be set up so that when a key is pressed or the mouse is moved a full log on is required to return to the normal screen. This ensures that other people can't access your data when you walk away from your computer.
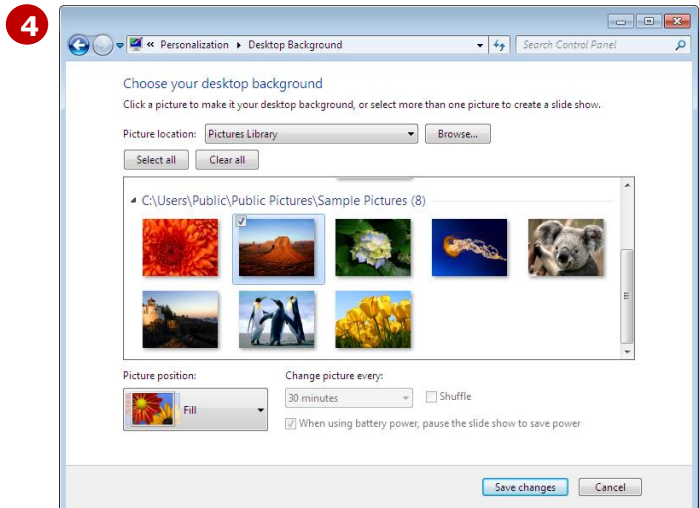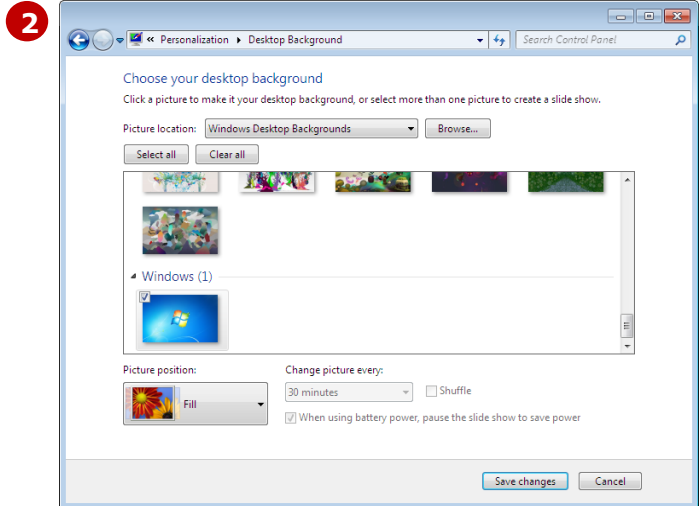
CHANGING THE DESKTOP BACKGROUND

In Windows 7 the screen that appears when you log on to the computer is referred to as the **desktop**. When you purchase a new computer most of the manufacturers will place their own image or logo as a **background** on the desktop. You can easily customise the desktop background yourself, by choosing to give it a colour, place a picture on it, add a wall paper effect, and the like.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1 Right-click on an empty area on the desktop and select **Personalise**

2 Click on **Desktop Background** to display the background settings

3 Click on the down arrow ▾ to browse through the available pictures

4 Click on the drop arrow next to **Picture location** and select **Pictures Library**

The Pictures Library displays pictures stored in the Pictures Library...

5 Click on various pictures to preview them on the desktop, then click on a picture you'd like to apply to the desktop

6 Click on the drop arrow for **Picture position** and select the different options to see how the picture will appear on the desktop

7 Click on the drop arrow under **Picture position** and select **Fill**

8 Click on **[Save changes]** to apply the changes

9 Click on **close** to close the window

For Your Reference...

To add a picture to the desktop:
1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on **Desktop Background**
3. Select a **Picture location**
4. Select a picture and click on **[Save changes]**

Handy to Know...

• If you have your own photos you can use the **[Browse]** button next to **Picture location** to locate your picture and apply it to the desktop background.

OTHER BACKGROUND OPTIONS

The ***Desktop Background*** option features various options for customising the desktop. You can add a sample or public (from the network) picture, add your own picture, choose a ***Windows*** wallpaper, specify a solid colour or choose a combination of colours and pictures. The technique for choosing these is much the same for each option.

① Using Your Own Pictures

Pictures are stored as special picture files, usually with a ***.jpg***, ***.jpeg*** or ***.png*** file extension. These are the most common picture file formats produced by digital cameras and also for sending via the internet. Your pictures could come from a variety of sources – they may be pictures you have taken yourself, or ones sent as attachments in email messages.

1. Load the picture onto your computer (this can usually be done by plugging your digital camera into the computer and following the prompts that appear on the screen, or by saving the picture attachments sent to you in email messages), and save in the ***Pictures*** library.
2. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
3. Click on ***Desktop Background***
4. Click on the drop arrow next to ***Picture location*** and select ***Pictures library***
5. Click on the desired picture to select it, and then click on **[Save changes]**.

② Using A Solid Colour

Solid colour backgrounds are often used in organisations where the background colour is set to match the organisation's company colours.

1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on ***Desktop Background***
3. Click on the drop arrow next to ***Picture location*** and select ***Solid colours***
4. Click on the desired solid colour, and then click on **[Save changes]**.

The ***More...*** option at the bottom of the window allows you to create your own colour from the RGB colour palette.

③ Using A Picture And A Solid Colour

If your pictures are small, or you'd simply like to have them as the focus on the centre of the screen you can set a solid colour as the background, and then add the picture to sit on top.

1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on ***Desktop Background***
3. Click on the drop arrow next to ***Picture location*** and select the location of your picture
4. Click on the drop arrow under ***Picture position*** and select ***Centre***
5. Click on the drop arrow next to ***Picture location*** and select ***Solid colours***
6. Click on the desired solid colour to apply around the picture, and then click on **[Save changes]**.

④ Using Windows Desktop Backgrounds

Windows Desktop Backgrounds are special graphics that are installed with Windows 7 and are available for you to use. They might be pictures, drawings or even colour schemes.

1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on ***Desktop Background***
3. Click on the drop arrow next to ***Picture location*** and select ***Windows Desktop Backgrounds***
4. Click on the desired picture to select it, and then click on **[Save changes]**.

CHANGING THEMES

The overall appearance, look and feel of Windows 7 is determined by *themes*. Themes enable you to make a change to several aspects of Windows 7, including the appearance of windows, menus and dialog boxes, the style and size of fonts used, icons, desktop backgrounds and more.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1   Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Personalise**

2   Click on the down arrow ⏷ to browse through the available themes

3   Select **Windows 7 Theme** under **Basic and High Contrast Themes**

You can customise the theme to suit your tastes...

4   Click on **Window Colour** to open the **Window Colour and Appearance** dialog box

5   Click on the drop arrow below **Item** to display a list of items

6   Select **Active Title Bar**

View the changes in the preview window...

7   Click on the drop arrow below **Colour 1** and select a colour

8   Click on the drop arrow below **Size** (for Font) and select **10**

This will increase the text size to 10pt...

9   Experiment with options for other items and then click on **[Cancel]** to close without saving the changes

③
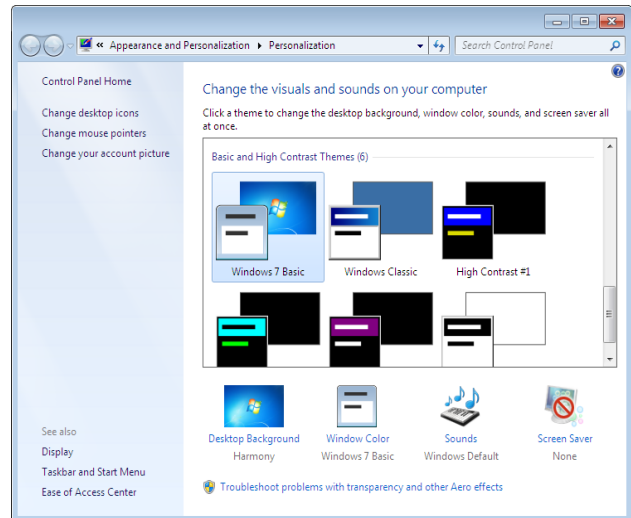
④
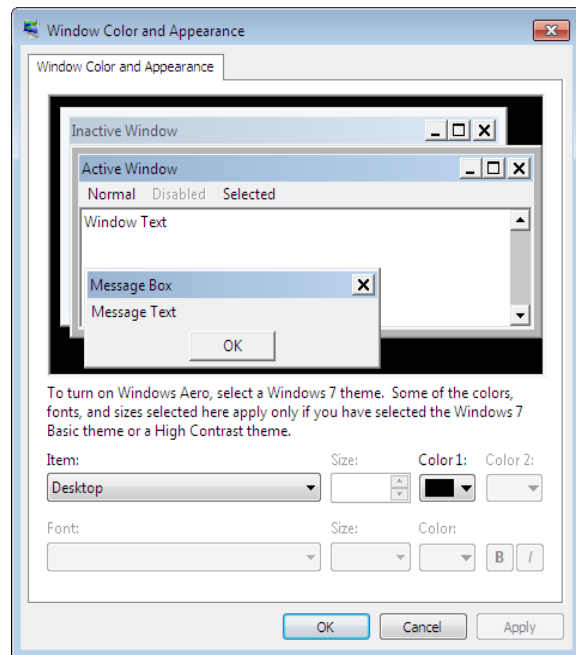
For Your Reference...

To change a Windows 7 *theme*:
  1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
  2. Select the desired theme
  3. Click on **Window Colour** to modify theme elements, such as windows and menus

Handy to Know...

• Some elements of the **Aero** themes, such as translucent windows, will only work on computers installed with a minimum 128MB graphics card, and at least the **Home Premium** edition installed. Users with the **Starter** or **Home Basic** editions of Windows will not have Aero themes available.

SETTING A SCREEN SAVER

Screen savers were designed initially to protect your computer screen from phosphor burn. However, as technology has become more sophisticated, screen savers are now used mainly to personalise your computer, such as applying moving pictures or patterns. Screen savers can also be used to password-protect your computer.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1. Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Personalise**

2. Click on **Screen Saver** to display the **Screen Saver Settings** dialog box

3. Click on the drop arrow below **Screen saver** and select **Photos**

   This screen saver will shuffle photos from the Pictures library...

4. Click on **[Preview]** to preview the screen saver

5. Move the mouse to return to the **Screen Saver Settings** dialog box

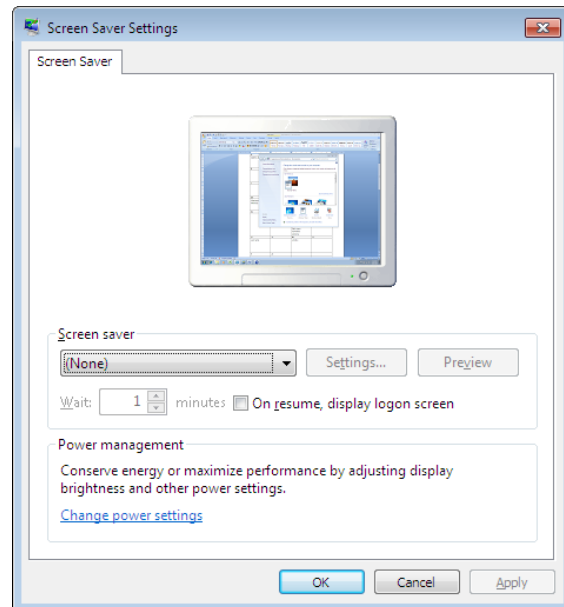6. Repeat steps **3** to **5** to preview the **Ribbons** screen saver

7. Click on the up arrow once for **Wait** to set to **2** minutes

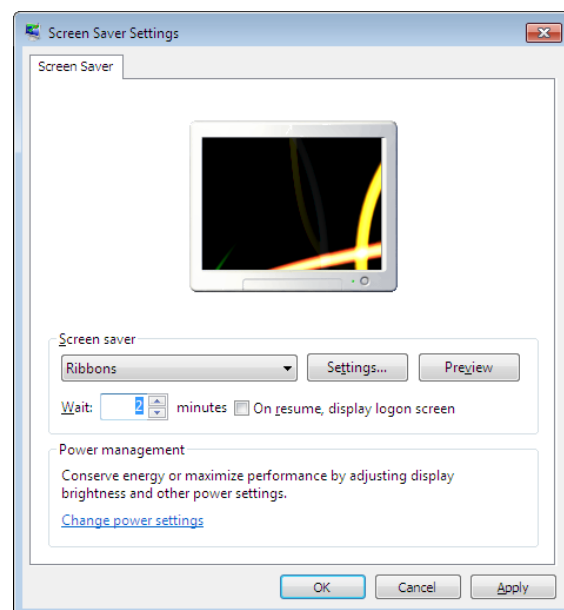   *The screen saver will activate if the computer is idle for two minutes...*

8. Click on **[OK]** to apply the changes to and return to the **Personalisation** window

9. Click on **close** [x] to close the window

For Your Reference...

To set a **screen saver**:

1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on **Screen Saver**
3. Select the screen saver from the **Screen saver** drop down menu and click on **[OK]**

Handy to Know...

- If you want the screen saver to display the logon screen, ensure **On resume, display logon screen** is ticked. This provides an extra layer of security in case someone tries to access your computer when you are away from the computer.
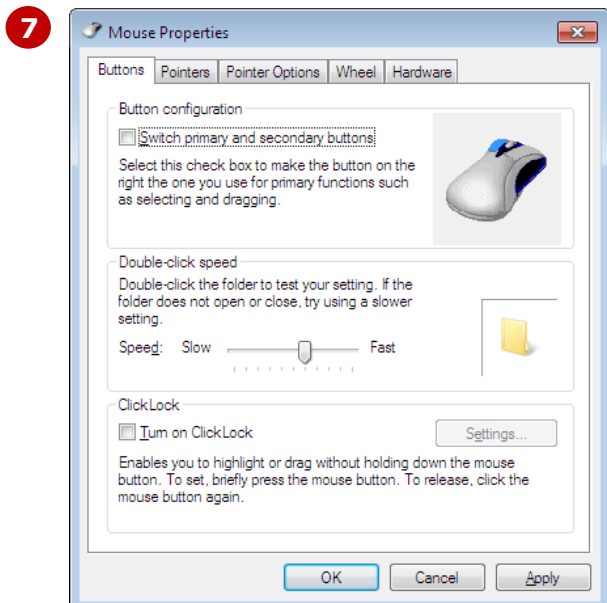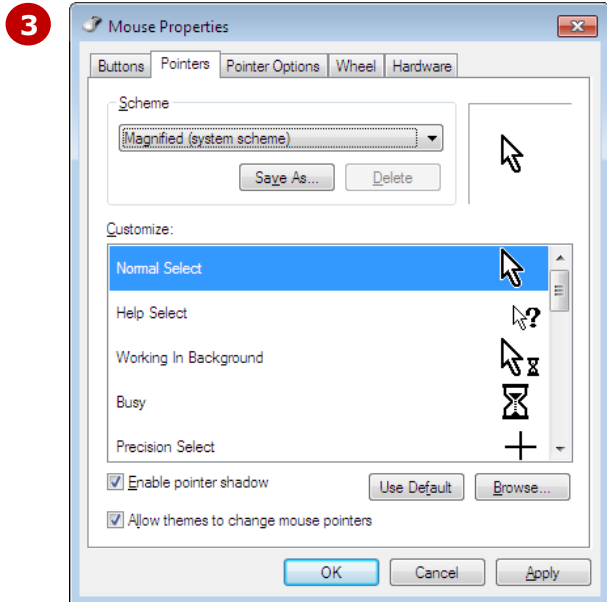
CHANGING MOUSE POINTERS

You can change the way your mouse pointer looks and behaves. For example, you can increase the size of the mouse pointer so it is easier to see, or you can change the look of the pointer for a more personal touch. You can also change the speed of the pointer or even change the left mouse button to the right. To modify the pointer, you need to change its *theme*.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1 Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Personalise**

2 Click on *Change mouse pointers* to display the *Mouse Pointers* dialog box

3 Click on the drop arrow for *Scheme* and click on *Magnified (system scheme)*

4 Scroll down the list for *Customise* to see how the pointer will look while performing different operations

5 Repeat steps *3* and *4* to view the different schemes, then select a theme you like

6 Click on **[Apply]** to save the changes

7 Click on the *Buttons* tab to view the options available

Here you can swap the left and right mouse buttons...

8 Click on the *Pointer Options* tab to view the options available

Here you can change the speed of your mouse...

9 Click on **[OK]** to exit the *Mouse Pointers* dialog box

③ Mouse Properties

Buttons | Pointers | Pointer Options | Wheel | Hardware

Scheme
Magnified (system scheme)
Save As... | Delete

Customize:

Normal Select
Help Select
Working In Background
Busy
Precision Select

☑ Enable pointer shadow   Use Default | Browse...

☑ Allow themes to change mouse pointers

OK | Cancel | Apply

⑦ Mouse Properties

Buttons | Pointers | Pointer Options | Wheel | Hardware

Button configuration
☐ Switch primary and secondary buttons
Select this check box to make the button on the right the one you use for primary functions such as selecting and dragging.

Double-click speed
Double-click the folder to test your setting. If the folder does not open or close, try using a slower setting.
Speed: Slow ——————— Fast

ClickLock
☐ Turn on ClickLock   Settings...
Enables you to highlight or drag without holding down the mouse button. To set, briefly press the mouse button. To release, click the mouse button again.

OK | Cancel | Apply

For Your Reference...

To change the mouse pointer:
1. Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on *Change mouse pointers* to display the *Mouse Pointers* dialog box
3. Choose the desired theme and click on **[OK]**

Handy to Know...

* It's worth your while to spend some time exploring the options available in the *Mouse Pointers* dialog box. Select an option and then click on **[Apply]** to preview the changes and see how the mouse will behave.

CHANGING DISPLAY SETTINGS

Screen resolution refers to the clarity, or sharpness, of what you see on the screen. The higher the screen resolution, the smaller the pixels and therefore, the sharper the image. As pixel size is increased, the clarity of the image is reduced, but text and image size is increased. The type of resolution available to you depends on the graphics card installed on your computer.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1 Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Screen resolution**

2 Memorise the current **Resolution** setting

3 Click on the drop arrow for **Resolution** and drag the slider to **1400 x 1050** (or something similar if this is not available)

4 Click away from the menu to hide the menu, and then click on **[Apply]** to view the new settings

The windows and text appears larger and you will be asked whether you want to keep the display settings...

5 Click on **[Revert]** to restore your original settings

6 Repeat steps **3** to **5** to preview other resolution settings

7 Click on **[Cancel]** to exit the dialog box
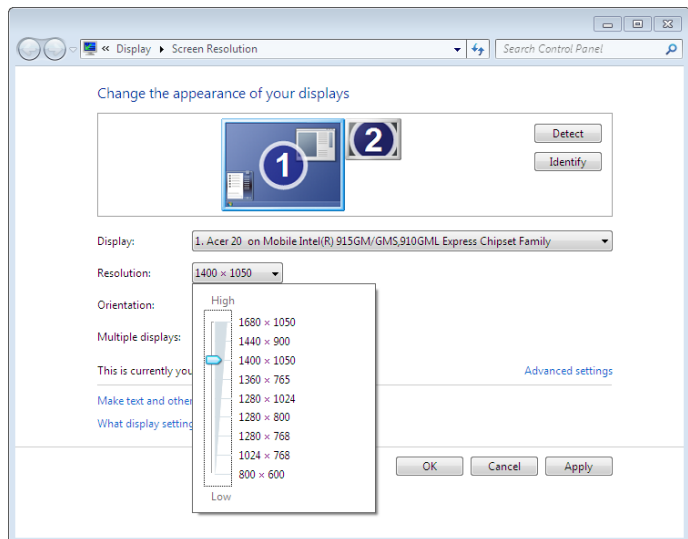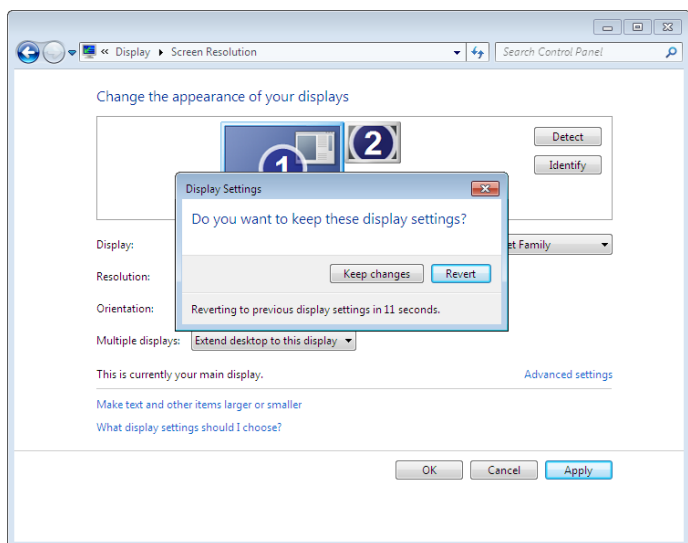
For Your Reference...

To change the screen resolution:
1. Right-click on an empty area on the desktop and select **Screen resolution**
2. Click on the drop arrow for **Resolution** and drag the slider to the desired setting
3. Click on **[OK]** to apply the changes and exit the dialog box

Handy to Know...

- You can adjust the size of text and other items on screen by clicking on **Make text and other items larger or smaller** in the **Screen resolution** window, and then selecting the desired size. Click on **[Apply]** to save the changes.
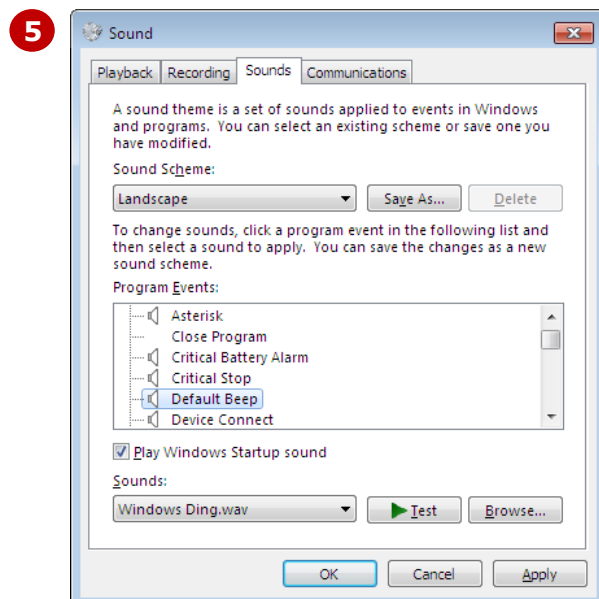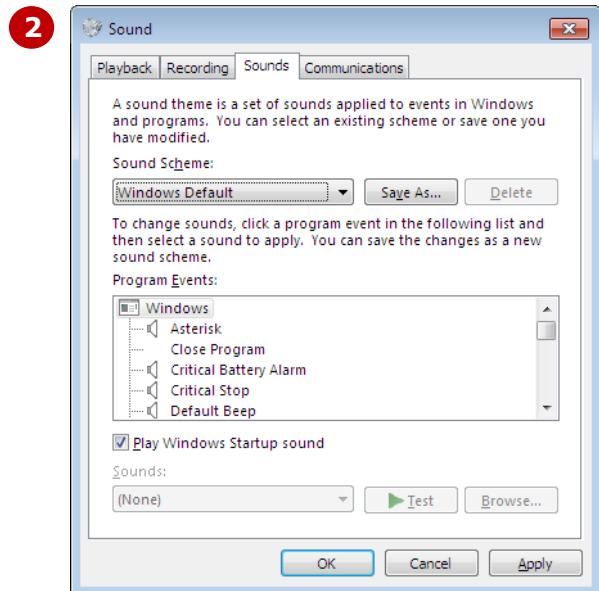
PERSONALISING SOUNDS

Windows 7 is designed to provide a rich multimedia experience. As well as changing the visual elements on the screen, you can also change the sounds that you hear as you work with Windows 7, such as new message alerts, error alerts, and many, many more! You can change the sound *scheme*, as well as change sounds for individual *actions*.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1 Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Personalise**

2 Click on *Sounds* to display the *Sound* dialog box

3 Click on an action in *Program Events*, and then click on **[Test]** to play the sound

Items without a speaker beside them indicate that a sound has not yet been assigned...

4 Repeat the above step to test sounds for other actions

5 Click on the drop arrow for *Sound Scheme* and select **Landscape**

6 Click on an action in *Program Events* that appears with a speaker beside it, and then click on **[Test]** to play the sound

7 Spend a few moments selecting different sound schemes and testing the sounds for various actions

8 Select a sound scheme and then click on **[OK]**

2

5

For Your Reference...

To change the sound scheme in Windows 7:
1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Personalise**
2. Click on *Sound Scheme* and select the desired scheme
3. Click on **[Apply]** to save the changes

Handy to Know...

- Actions appearing in *Program Events* without a speaker beside them indicate that no sound has been applied. To apply a sound to an action, click on the action to select it, then click on the drop arrow for *Sounds* and select an action. Click on **[Test]** and then click on **[Apply]** when you've finished.

WORKING WITH GADGETS

Gadgets are mini-programs and tools designed to be displayed on the desktop. Windows gadgets include a clock, a calendar, weather information and a game. As well as using the default gadgets, there are literally thousands of gadgets available online to download to suit your taste, personality and lifestyle, such as radio stations and news feeds.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

1 Right-click on an empty area of the desktop and select **Gadgets** to display the **Gadgets** window

2 Double-click on the **Weather** gadget to add this gadget to the desktop

3 Click and hold the left mouse button on the gadget and drag to the bottom of the screen

4 Hover over the gadget to reveal the mini-toolbar next to the gadget

5 Click on the **Options** tool to display customisation options

6 Type your current location in **Select current location**

7 Click on **Search** for a list of locations and select your location

8 Click on **[OK]** to display the weather for your location

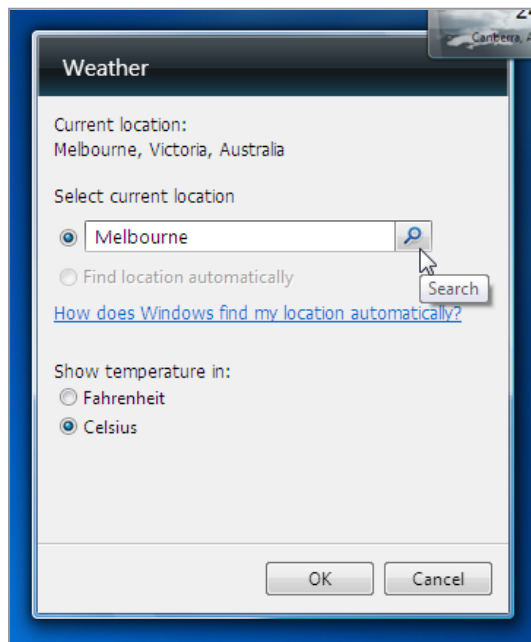**9** Experiment using the different gadgets and exploring their options

For Your Reference…

To add a gadget to the desktop:
1. Right-click on the desktop and select **Gadgets**
2. Double-click on a gadget to add to the desktop
3. Hover over the gadget and click on **Options** in the mini-toolbar to customise the gadget

Handy to Know…

* To access more desktop gadgets, click on **Get more gadgets online** in the **Gadgets** window, and click on **Get more desktop gadgets**. Browse to locate and download a gadget – but beware! Gadgets are not verified by Microsoft, so run your anti-virus software on the file before installing.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Congratulations!

You have now completed the **Personalising Windows 7** booklet. This booklet was designed to get you to the point where you can competently perform a variety of operations as outlined in the task list on page 2.

We have tried to build up your skills and knowledge by having you work through specific tasks. The step by step approach will serve as a reference for you when you need to repeat a task.

Where To From Here…

The following is a little advice about what to do next:

- Spend some time playing with what you have learnt. You should reinforce the skills that you have acquired and use some of the application's commands. This will test just how much of the concepts and features have stuck! Don't try a big task just yet if you can avoid it - small is a good way to start.
- Some aspects of the course may now be a little vague. Go over some of the points that you may be unclear about. Use the examples and exercises in these notes and have another go - these step-by-step notes were designed to help you in the classroom and in the work place!

Here are a few techniques and strategies that we've found handy for learning more about technology:

- visit CLD's e-learning zone on the Intranet
- read computer magazines - there are often useful articles about specific techniques
- if you have the skills and facilities, browse the Internet, specifically the technical pages of the application that you have just learnt
- take an interest in what your work colleagues have done and how they did it - we don't suggest that you plagiarise but you can certainly learn from the techniques of others
- if your software came with a manual (which is rare nowadays) spend a bit of time each day reading a few pages. Then try the techniques out straight away - over a period of time you'll learn a lot this way
- and of course, there are also more courses and booklets for you to work through
- finally, don't forget to contact CLD's IT Training Helpdesk on **01243-752100**