Overview

System Restore works a lot like the Undo command in Microsoft Word. You can use System Restore to remove any system changes that were made since the last time you remember your computer working correctly. System Restore does not affect your personal data files (such as Microsoft Word documents, browsing history, drawings, favorites, or email so you won't lose changes made to these files.

This is most effective to use when attempting to get rid of viruses such as a fake antivirus program.

Using System Restore

How does System restore work?

Windows periodically records a snapshot of your computer. These snapshots are called restore points. Windows also creates restore points at the time of significant system events (such as when an application or driver is installed) or you can create and name your own restore points at any time. If you have installed a program that has made your computer unstable, you can open system restore, choose a restore point, and return your computer to its previous stable state.

When you run System Restore, a calendar is displayed to help you find restore points. If you don't use your computer every day, some days might not have any restore points. If you use your computer frequently, you might have restore points almost every day, and some days might have several restore points.

Use System Restore to undo changes you have made to your computer

Before you open the System Restore console, you may want to save your work and close all programs since System Restore requires you to restart your computer.

System Restore with Windows 8

Remove everything and reinstall Windows

Do I Need Recovery Media?

You might be prompted to insert discs or recovery media that came with your PC. Check the info that came with your PC to see if your PC manufacturer provided these discs or media. In some cases, you might have created them when you first set up your PC.

To reset your Windows 8 PC

1. Swipe in from the right edge of the screen, tap Settings, and then tap Change PC settings.

(If you're using a mouse, point to the upper-right corner of the screen, move the mouse pointer down, click Settings, and then click Change PC settings.)
2. Under PC settings, tap or click General.
3. Under Remove everything and reinstall Windows, tap or click Get started.
4. Follow the instructions on the screen.

Data Management
You'll be prompted to choose whether you want to erase data quickly or thoroughly. If you choose to erase data quickly, some data might be recoverable using special software. If you choose to erase data thoroughly, this will take longer but it makes recovering data far less likely.

Refresh your Windows 8 PC without affecting your files
If your PC isn't performing as well as it once did, and you don't know why, you can refresh your PC without deleting any of your personal files or changing your settings.

Refresh vs Reinstall
Refreshing your system does not reinstall the operating system and will not meet the fresh start requirements of a quarantine. Its purpose is to remove recently installed apps and drivers that may now be interfering with the performance of your device.

To refresh your PC
1. Swipe in from the right edge of the screen, tap Settings, and then tap Change PC settings.
   (If you're using a mouse, point to the upper-right corner of the screen, move the mouse pointer down, click Settings, and then click Change PC settings.)
2. Under PC settings, tap or click General.
3. Under Refresh your PC without affecting your files, tap or click Get started.
4. Follow the instructions on the screen.

System Restore with Windows 10
Remove everything and reinstall Windows

To reset your Windows 10 PC
1. Using the search bar, open Settings.
2. Click "Update & Security"
3. Click "Recovery" on the left side of the window.
4. Select "Get Started" under the "Reset this PC" title
5. Select "Remove everything"
6. Follow the instructions on the screen.

Refresh your Windows 10 PC without affecting your files

To refresh your PC
1. Using the search bar, open Settings
2. Click "Update & Security"
3. Click "Recovery" on the left side of the window
4. Select "Get Started" under the "Reset this PC" title
5. Select "Keep my files"
6. Follow the instructions on the screen

Sources and Relevant Links
How to refresh, reset, or restore your PC Windows 8

#top