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Faxing in Windows XP

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By Sharon Crawford, Windows XP Expert Zone Community Columnist

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If you're running Windows XP, you can finally donate that old fax machine to a local charity and use the desk space for something more valuable—like a box of doughnuts. An easy-to-use fax service is built into Windows XP so you can send and receive faxes from your computer.

There are a number of advantages to moving to a Windows XP-based fax system, the main one being no wasted paper. No need to print documents before faxing them. You can read, save, delete, or attach incoming faxes to e-mail—all without using a single piece of paper. Of course, you can print them too.

Although you don't need a fax machine, you'll need a phone line, a modem, and a scanner to send and receive faxes from your computer. For faxing, the modem and scanner don't have to be anything special. Even a 33.6 bps modem will dispatch a multi-page letter in a minute or two. As to the scanner, faxes are sent in black and white and usually at a default resolution of no better than 150 X 150 dpi. Any working scanner can manage that.

Setting Up and Configuring Windows XP Fax

The fax service isn't automatically installed in Windows XP. To install the fax component:

1. Open Control Panel, and click **Add or Remove Programs**.
2. Click **Add/Remove Windows Components**. Select the **Fax Services** check box, and then click **Next**. The **Windows Component Wizard** takes care of the rest.

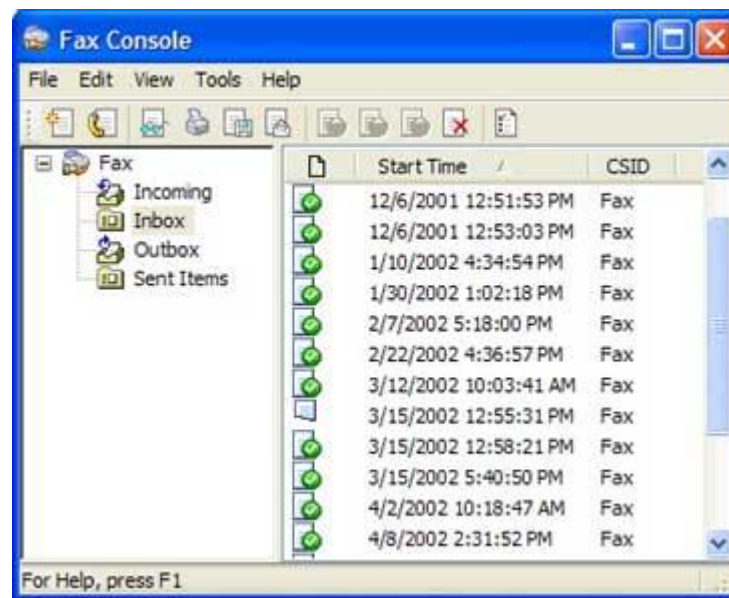
Note: If you don't have a modem already installed, take care of that now. Make sure the modem is connected to a phone line and the phone line is connected to a working jack. (You'd be surprised how often folks overlook these details.)

After the fax component is installed, the next step is configuring it. You configure the Fax service in the **Fax Console**, the center for faxing tasks. To configure the Fax Console:

1. Click **Start**, point to **All Programs**, point to **Accessories**, point to **Communications**, point to **Fax**, and then click **Fax Console**.

Related Links

- [Ask questions or discuss this topic in the Windows XP Expert Zone Newsgroups](#)
- [Windows XP Printing & Faxing Newsgroup](#)
- [Voice-over-IP Overview](#)
- [VoIP FAQ](#)
- [Knowledge Base Article: How to Fax a Scanned Document or Image in Windows XP](#)
- [Knowledge Base Article: Dialing Rules May Not Be Applied to Tools Such as Fax](#)
- [Knowledge Base Article: How to Troubleshoot Common Fax Problems](#)
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2. On the **Tools** menu in Fax Console, click **Configure Fax**, which starts the **Fax Configuration Wizard**. Click **Next** to start configuring your fax information.
3. On the **Sender Information** page, include your name or your business name and your fax number. Everything else on the page is optional.
4. On the **Select Device for Sending or Receiving Faxes** page, your modem will be selected, unless you have more than one, in which case, select the right one. Specify send and receive options, and whether you'll manually answer incoming faxes or answer automatically when received.
5. On the **Transmitting Subscriber Identification (TSID)** and **Called Subscriber Identification (CSID)** pages, enter your business name and fax number. These fields really matter when you're running special fax routing software. Most software of this kind depends on TSIDs to determine where to direct an incoming fax. See [How to Enable and Configure the Fax Service in Windows XP](#) for more information.
6. On the **Routing Options** page, specify how incoming faxes will be handled. All faxes are stored automatically in the Fax Console, but you can also print a copy or store a copy in a local folder or on your network.

When you want to change or verify any of these settings, simply run the Fax Configuration Wizard again. To open the wizard, on the **Tools** menu of the Fax Console, click **Configure Fax**.

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Sending Faxes from Your Computer

You can fax a document that's stored on your computer or you can scan a document and fax it by sending to your fax printer. In this section, I'll explain how to fax a document from your computer. If you can print a document, you can fax it.

The Windows XP Fax service uses the Windows Address Book (WAB) as its default address book for fax numbers. When you install Outlook 2000 or Outlook 2002, the fax service switches to the Outlook Address Book (OAB) as its source for fax addresses. So you don't need to maintain two address books—just one will do.

To fax a document stored on your computer:

1. On the **File** menu of the document, click **Print**.
2. In the **Print** or **Print Setup** dialog box, in the **Printer name** box, click **Fax** to open the **Send Fax Wizard**. (When faxing from an Office program, on the **File** menu, point to **Send To**, and then click **Fax Recipient**. An **Office Fax Wizard** asks for specific information and then hands the process over to the **Send Fax Wizard**.)

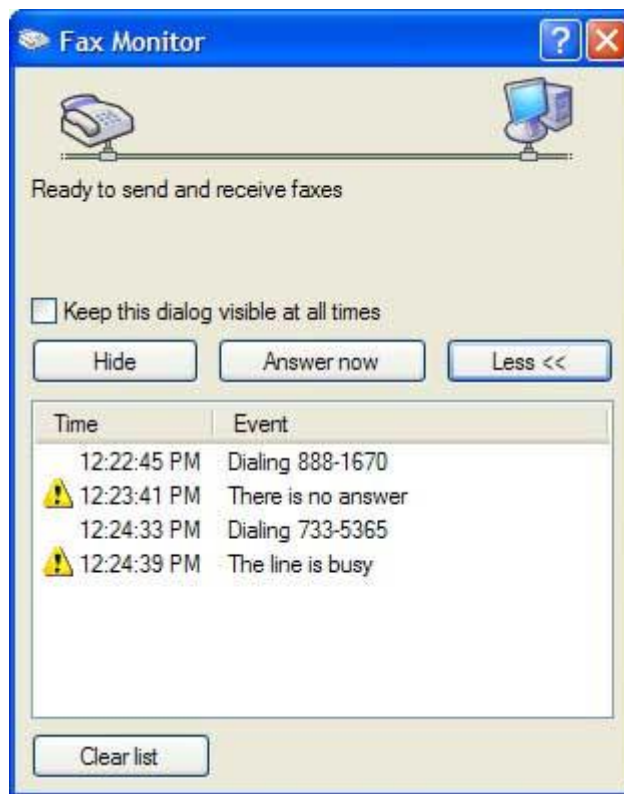


3. To supply the recipient's fax number, click **Address Book**, and select one or more recipients just as if you were sending them an e-mail message.
4. If you've already set up Dialing Rules, skip ahead. If you haven't, click **Dialing Rules**. If you need to dial an extra digit to get an outside line, or use a special carrier code, or dial an area code even for local numbers, add those settings here, and then click **OK** to return to the fax sending.

Very Important: Telephone numbers must be in the canonical form in which a U.S. number would appear as +1 (626) 555-1212. If you use even a *slightly* different form such as (626) 555-1212 or 1-626-555-1212, the dialing rules won't be applied and the fax transmission will fail.

5. Select a cover page. Choose from the list or specify no cover page at all. Personally, I forego cover sheets unless I'm sending to a big corporation where it might get lost or the document needs some clarification. If you're into cover sheets, you can download additional fax and transmission covers from the [Office Template Gallery](#).
6. Specify when the fax should be sent as well as the fax's priority. Priority only matters if you're stacking up a number of faxes to be sent at a particular time. In that case, the order of sending will be determined by the priority you set.
7. Finally, you're presented with a screen recapping the details of the fax and offering a chance to preview it. If the fax is a multi-page one, you'll be able to preview only the first page.

If you're sending the fax right away, the Fax Monitor, shown below, will start when the dialing does.

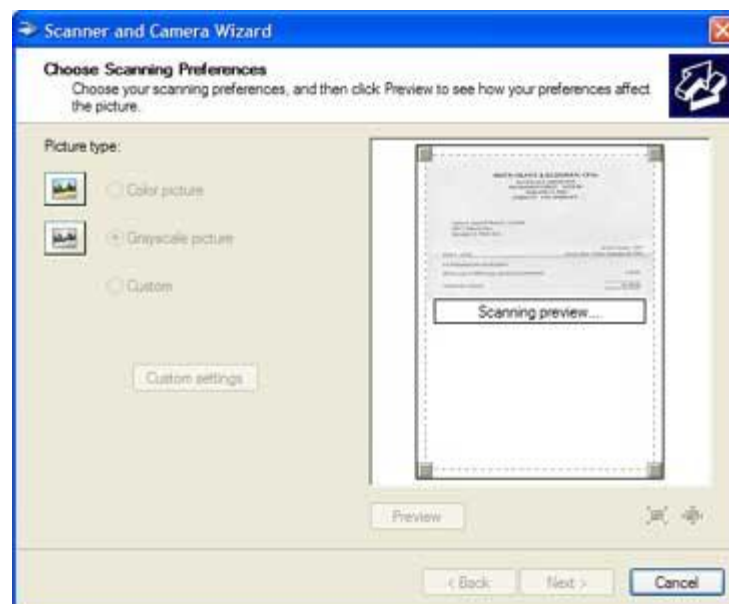


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Faxing Scanned Documents

The second way to send a fax is to scan a document and then send it to your fax printer. The software that came with your scanner can help you set up this kind of fax and send it directly to your fax printer. However, you can also fax from a scanner using the tools in Windows XP:

1. Open Control Panel, click **Printers and Other Hardware**, click **Scanners and Cameras**, and then double-click the icon for your scanner to start the **Scanner and Camera Wizard**.
2. On the **Choose Scanning Preferences** page, click **Grayscale picture**, and then click **Preview** to start the scanner.



3. Provide a name and location for the scanned document.
4. Open the folder that contains the image file, right-click the image, and then click **Print**.

The **Photo Printing Wizard** opens.

5. Select the check box for the image to be faxed.
6. Select **Fax** as the printer you want to use.

When you finish the Photo Printing Wizard, the **Send Fax Wizard** opens and you proceed as described in the procedure for sending a fax from your computer.

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Faxing from Outlook

To send faxes from Outlook, you have to add the Fax Transport Service as an e-mail account. To add Fax Transport Services in Outlook 2002, follow these steps:

1. On the **Tools** menu, click **E-mail Accounts**.
2. Click **Add a new e-mail account**, and then click **Next**.
3. On the **Server Type** page, click **Additional Server Types**.
4. On the next page, **Fax Mail Transport** is selected. Click **Next** to finish adding the account.

(For Outlook 2000, on the Tools menu, click Services, and add Fax Mail Transport there.)

To send a fax from Outlook, follow these steps:

1. On the **Standard** toolbar, click **New**.
2. In the blank message form, on the **Standard** toolbar, click **Accounts**, and then click **Fax Mail Transport**.
3. Enter your message, click **Send**, and the fax modem will connect and transmit the fax message.

You can't automatically have incoming faxes transferred to your Outlook Inbox when you're using Windows XP. Received faxes can go only to the inbox of the Fax Console and to another folder, if you specify one. (See the Knowledge Base article, [Windows XP-Based Fax Service Does Not Transfer Incoming Faxes to Your Inbox in Outlook 2000 or Outlook 2002](#), for more information.) However, if you copy incoming faxes to a folder, you can send them as attachments to e-mail messages just as you would any other file.

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Troubleshooting Fax Transmissions

Sometimes the fax doesn't make it. When that happens, you'll want to try again. You can specify how many times to retry, how many minutes apart the attempts should be, and request notification of the success or failure of the transmission. These settings are amazingly well hidden, so just follow me:

1. Open **Printers and Faxes**, right-click the Fax printer, and then click **Properties**.
2. On the **Devices** tab, click **Properties**.
3. On the **Send** tab, specify the number of times to retry sending a fax and how long the program should wait between each try.
4. On the **Tracking** tab, set options for notifications and when the Fax Monitor should open.

On the **Tracking** tab, there's also a **Configure Sound Settings** button. No point in going there because it doesn't matter what those settings are. The settings for fax events in Sounds in Control Panel take precedence.

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Receiving Faxes

After you've installed and configured the fax services, receiving faxes is as easy as falling off a log. Easier.

When you configured the Fax service, you specified how you wanted the faxes answered and where they should be deposited. By default, the **Fax Monitor** opens automatically when the modem detects an incoming fax. You can change when and why it opens on the **Tracking** tab of the **Fax Properties** dialog box (mentioned in the procedure for troubleshooting fax transmissions).

To view an incoming fax, go to the **Fax Console**, and click **Inbox**. Double-click an entry to see the fax in **Windows Picture and Fax Viewer**. Faxes are image files in the TIFF format, so they can't be edited as a text file can be. But you can view, rotate, and perform basic tasks with your fax document without opening an image-editing program. To print a fax, right-click it, and click **Print**. To send a fax as an e-mail attachment, right-click it, point to **Send To**, and then click **Mail Recipient**.

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Faxing Options for DSL or Cable Modems

You can't use your DSL or cable connection for faxing. A new technology, Voice over IP (VoIP) will undoubtedly make this possible in the future. VoIP is an inexpensive alternative to traditional telephone communication that operates over the public switched telephone network (PSTN). VoIP covers computer-to-computer, computer-to-telephone, and telephone-based communications. For more information about VoIP, read the [Voice-over-IP Overview](#) and the [VoIP FAQ](#) from DSL Reports.

If you're without a modem or you don't want to tie up your phone line, an Internet-based fax service might work best for you. Visit the sites of Internet faxing services, among them [eFax](#), and [Faxaway](#) and read their FAQs. Which service you choose depends on your pattern of fax usage. Some have excellent international rates, for example, but if you don't send faxes to other countries that probably doesn't matter to you. Also some services require that you use their software to read incoming faxes.

Sharon Crawford is a former editor now engaged in writing books and magazine articles. Since 1993, she has written or co-written two dozen books on computer topics. Her books include Windows 2000 Pro: The Missing Manual, Windows 98: No Experience Required, and Windows 2000 Professional for Dummies (with Andy Rathbone).

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