

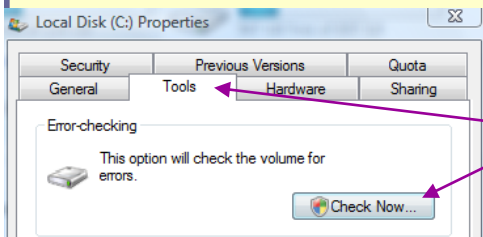
Chkdsk

What is it? Why should we use it?
Where is it? How do we use it?

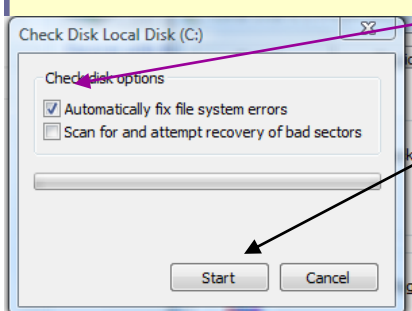
Every Microsoft operating system since DOS has contained a tool for repairing corrupted file or folder structures and checking for bad disk sectors. In DOS it was called Chkdsk, in Windows 9X/Me it was called Scandisk, and in Windows XP (and Vista/7) we are back to the name Chkdsk.

Chkdsk inspects the physical structure of a disk to make sure that it is healthy. It can repair problems related to bad sectors, lost clusters, cross-linked files, and directory errors. These types of problems can arise in a variety of ways. System crashes or freezes, power glitches, incorrectly turning off a computer can all cause corruption in the file or folder structure. Physically bumping or jarring a computer can cause the head that reads disks to hit the surface and damage sectors. Once some sort of error occurs it can propagate to create more errors so a regularly scheduled disk checkup is part of good system maintenance.

Chkdsk can also serve as an early warning that a hard drive is deteriorating. Disks gradually wear out and sectors may become bad. If Chkdsk starts finding bad sectors, that is a sign that a drive may need replacing. Unfortunately, many hard drive failures are sudden but nonetheless Chkdsk is an important line of defense.



Open the **Start Menu**.
Click on the **Computer** button.
Right click on your hard drive and click on **Properties**
Click on the **Tools** tab
Click on Check Now under the Error checking section.



Tick the first box in the next window.
If you suspect there are problems also check the 2nd box.
Click **Start**.

You will get a pop-up window saying,
"Windows can't check this disk while it's use".
(See screenshot below)



Click on the **Schedule disk check** button for chkdsk to run the next time you restart your computer.

Close your computer and restart.

Chkdsk will then perform the operation before booting. I may take a little while if you have not done this before. Be patient!!

How often should we do this? For the average user—once a month is fine. Once a week if you are using your computer for many hours every day!! Happy and safe computing ... Peggy