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#52

Change Logical Drive Letters

Rearrange your drive letters with the Disk Management console in Windows NT-2003.

Changing drive letter assignments is useful if you have added a second hard drive to a Windows NT/2000/XP/Windows Server 2003 system. Suppose you start out with a hard drive as drive C:. The CD-ROM drive is automatically assigned as drive D:. A second hard drive added to this configuration would become drive E:, which is not what you might expect if you think hard disk drives are supposed to flow in logical, alphabetical order. What we have learned to expect from the days of DOS is for the second hard drive to become D: and the CD-ROM drive to become drive E:. You can make your new NT-2003 systems appear more like old DOS systems with a few simple drive-letter changes.

It may be more convenient now (and for later on if you add more hard drives or partitions) to move the CD-ROM drive letter up to a value far out of the way from any anticipated hard drive assignments. You can do the same for other removable media, such as digital cameras and USB FLASH drives that come and go—connecting the devices and then assigning them permanent drive letters so they will always show up as the same drive letter when used.



Reassign CD-ROM and DVD drive letters before installing or using any application or game that depends on the presence of a CD or DVD to run.

Although many programs can search for their respective CDs and adapt to a drive letter change, a change in drive letter may cause some applications or games to fail.

Follow these steps to shift the hard drive and CD-ROM drive letters to a more intuitive and predictable order:

1. Access the Disk Management console from Start→Control Panel→Administrative Tools→Computer Management.
2. In the left pane of the Computer Management console, select Disk Management from the list.
3. Right-click on the drive whose letter assignment you want to change. In this case, start with your CD-ROM or DVD drive, D:, and then select Change Drive Letter and Paths...
4. Click on the Change button and change this to an “out of the way” drive letter like R: (for CD-ROM) or another unused letter, then click OK twice.
5. Right-click on the new hard drive and then select Change Drive Letter and Paths...

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6. Click on the Change button and change this drive letter to D:, then click OK twice.



If your PC connects to one or more network- or server-based disk drives that have drive letters mapped to them, be sure you do not assign local drive letters that are the same as pre-defined network drives.