Windows XP has two tools, Disk Cleanup and Disk Defragmenter, that you should use on a regular basis to “tune up” your computer's performance.

Over time, your computer accumulates files, such as some that come from visiting web sites, that are unnecessary and take up space on your hard disk. You should periodically remove (clean up) these files to recover disk space.

Use Disk Cleanup

1. click the Start menu, point to All Programs/Accessories/System Tools, then click Disk Cleanup.

A message box appears, calculating how much space can be freed up. Then the Disk Cleanup dialog box appears. At the top, it indicates the amount of space to be recovered if all the checked files, listed below, are removed.

2. Keep those settings, or click in the check box next to any item to check or uncheck it. Then click OK.
3. Click Yes to proceed to remove the checked files.
4. If you wish, you can remove other types of files. Open Disk Cleanup and click the More Options tab. Click the Clean up button for the type of files you want to remove and follow the on-screen instructions.

Over time as you create, delete and modify files, various parts of files may become scattered in different areas of your disk. Disk Defragmenter reorganizes your disk so that files are placed in contiguous areas so that your computer performs faster.

Use Disk Defragmenter

1. Follow the steps above to open System Tools and click Disk Defragmenter.
2. Click the name of the drive and click the Analyze button to check your disk to see if defragmentation is needed.
3. If the dialog box that appears recommends defragmentation, click the Defragment button.

If you have a problem on your computer that you can't fix, you can restore your system to an earlier point when all was working well. 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.