

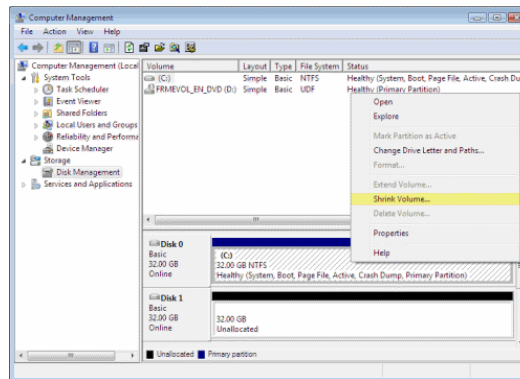
Windows Tips & Tricks

"An extravaganza of suggestions, informative tidbits, explanations, and somewhat useful hints covering a potpourri of Windows topics."

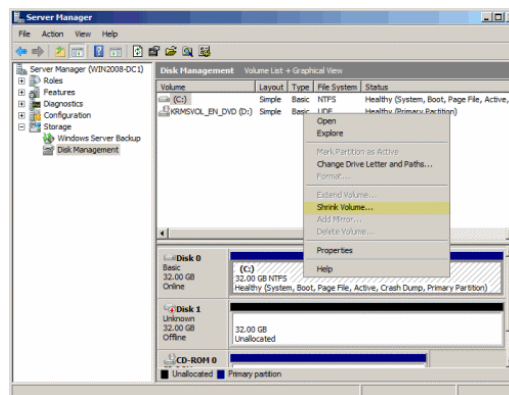
November, 2008

“Shrinking” a Volume in Vista or Windows Server 2008

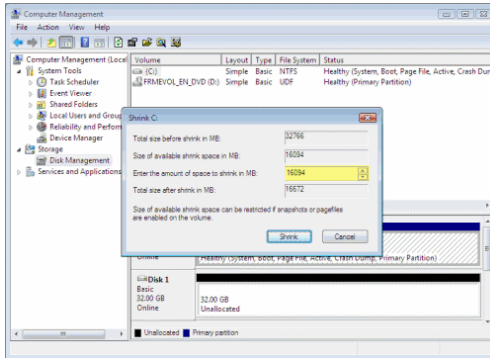
1. First, like in most administrative tasks, you must be logged on as an Administrator.
2. In Windows Vista, go to Control Panel > System and Maintenance > Administrative Tools, or on the My Computer context menu. Select **Computer Management**. In Vista, if you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.
3. In Windows Server 2008 you need to go to **Server Manager**, found in the Administrative Tools folder or on the My Computer context menu.
4. Next, scroll down till you get to the Storage section, and in it go to the **Disk Management** console.
5. Select the disk you want to shrink, for example Drive C.
6. Right-click the disk and select **Shrink Volume**.



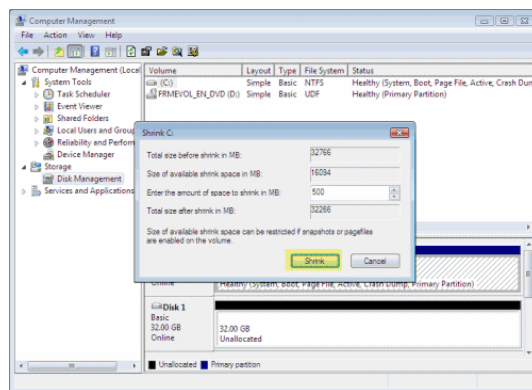
In Windows Server 2008 it looks like this:



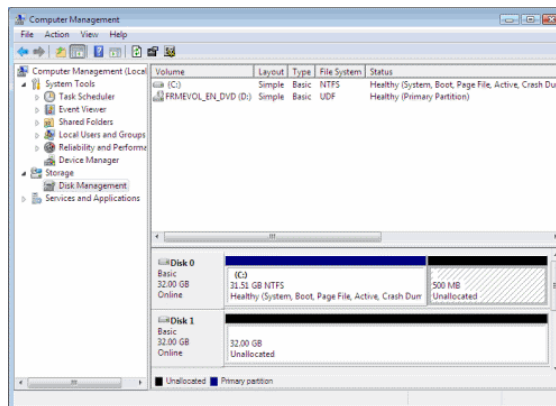
7. Click **Shrink** to use the maximum allowable amount of space.



8. Windows will do some calculations and tell you how much space can be freed. You can manually enter the amount of space you want to free by changing the "Enter the amount of space to shrink in MB" values. However note that you cannot enter a higher value than the value calculated by Windows.



9. After the shrinking process has ended you will see some unallocated space being available on the disk you've worked on.



Group Policy Preferences in Vista and Windows Server 2008

Management Requirements:

- Vista Workstation
 - Microsoft Remote Server Administration Tools (RSAT) for Windows Vista includes Group Policy Management Console
 - <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=9ff6e897-23ce-4a36-b7fc-d52065de9960&DisplayLang=en>
- Windows Server 2008
 - Tools are built into Windows Server 2008 domain controllers

Client Requirements

- XMLLite
 - <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms752838.aspx>
 - Included in
 - Windows Server 2008
 - Windows Vista
 - Windows XP with Service Pack 3
 - Windows Server 2003 with Service Pack 2 or later
 - Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.0 and later
 - For other versions of Windows you can download it from
<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/915865>
- **Client Side Extensions downloads**
 - Can be downloaded from Windows Update site (optional updates)
 - Can be downloaded from the following sites
- **Windows Vista, 64-bit edition**

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=B10A7AF4-8BEE-4ADC-8BBE-9949DF77A3CF>
- **Windows Vista, 32-bit edition**

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=AB60DC87-884C-46D5-82CD-F3C299DAC7CC>

- **Windows Server 2003, 32-bit edition**

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=BFE775F9-5C34-44D0-8A94-44E47DB35ADD>

- **Windows XP, 64-bit edition**

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=249C1AED-C1F1-4A0B-872E-EF0A32170625>

- **Windows XP, 32-bit edition**

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=E60B5C8F-D7DC-4B27-A261-247CE3F6C4F8>

Overview of Group Policy Preferences

See:

<http://support.microsoft.com/Default.aspx?kbid=943729>

Group Policy preferences are made up of more than 20 new Group Policy client-side extensions (CSEs) that expand the range of configurable settings in a Group Policy object (GPO). These new preference extensions are included in the Group Policy Management Editor window of the Group Policy Management Console (GPMC). The kinds of preference items that can be created by using each extension are listed when New is selected for the extension. Examples of the new Group Policy preference extensions include the following:

- Folder Options
- Drive Maps
- Printers
- Scheduled Tasks
- Services
- Start Menu

For more information on Group Policy Preferences see:

Group Policy Preferences Overview white paper

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=42e30e3f-6f01-4610-9d6e-f6e0fb7a0790&DisplayLang=en>

Prevent users from using USB removable disks (USB flash drives)

Whenever a new USB device is plugged-in to a USB port, the operating system checks the device and hardware id to determine if it's a storage device or not. If it determines that it is indeed a mass storage device it will load the appropriate driver, and will display the device as a drive in the Windows Explorer tree view. This is done by using the usbstor.sys driver.

If the device does not have a drive letter, you will need to assign one to it by using the Disk Management snap-in found in the Computer Management tool.

If you disable the ability of the usbstor.sys driver to run on the computer, you will in fact block the computer's means of discovering the flash drive and loading the appropriate driver.

Note: This tip will allow you to block usage of USB removable disks, but will continue to allow usage of USB mice, keyboards or any other USB-based device that is NOT a portable disk.

Block usage of USB Removable Disks

To block your computer's ability to use USB Removable Disks follow these steps:

1. Open Registry Editor.
2. In Registry Editor, navigate to the following registry key:
3. HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\USBSTOR
4. Locate the following value (DWORD):
Start
and give it a value of 4.
5. Close Registry Editor. You do not need to reboot the computer for changes to apply.

Enable usage of USB Removable Disks

To return to the default configuration and enable your computer's ability to use USB Removable Disks follow these steps:

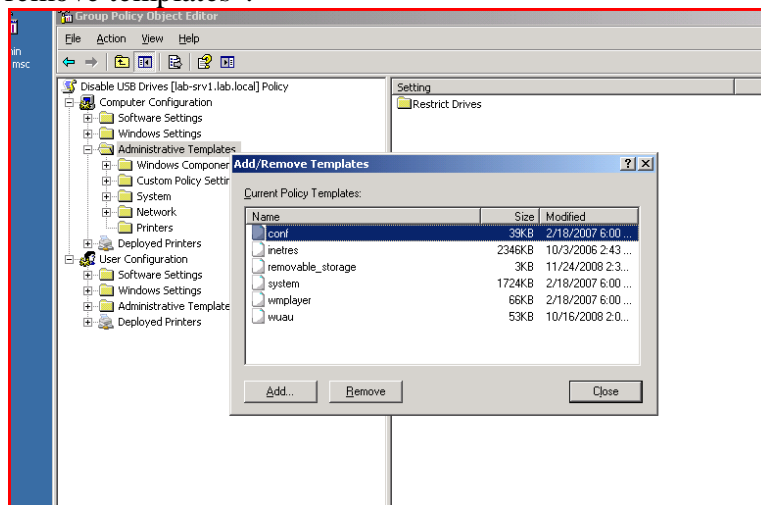
1. Go to the registry path found above.
2. Locate the following value:
Start
and give it a value of 3.

Prevent users from using USB removable disks by using Group Policy

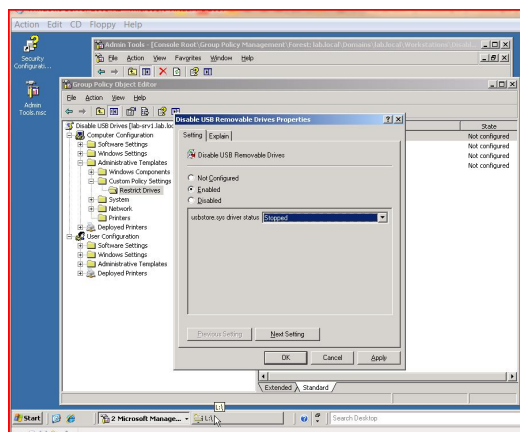
For more detail see:

http://www.petri.co.il/disable_usb_disks_with_gpo.htm

1. Download the custom ADM file from their site. Unzip the file and save it to a local folder on the computer where you run the Group Policy Management Console.
2. Create a new GPO linked to the OU that contains the workstations. Name it something like “Disable USB drives”.
3. In the GPO right click on the Computer / Administrative Templates and select “Add / remove templates”.



4. Click add and navigate to the folder where you saved the downloaded template (removable_storage.adm) file. Click “Open” to import the file into the GPO.
5. In GPMC click on “View / Filtering”, the uncheck the “Only show policy settings that can be fully managed”.
6. Click on “Computer Settings / Administrative Templates / Custom Policy Settings / Restrict Drives”. Set the “Disable USB Removable Drives” to “Enabled / Stopped”.



Disable USB drives via a utility

See the following web site for a nifty utility that can turn on and off access to USB drives:

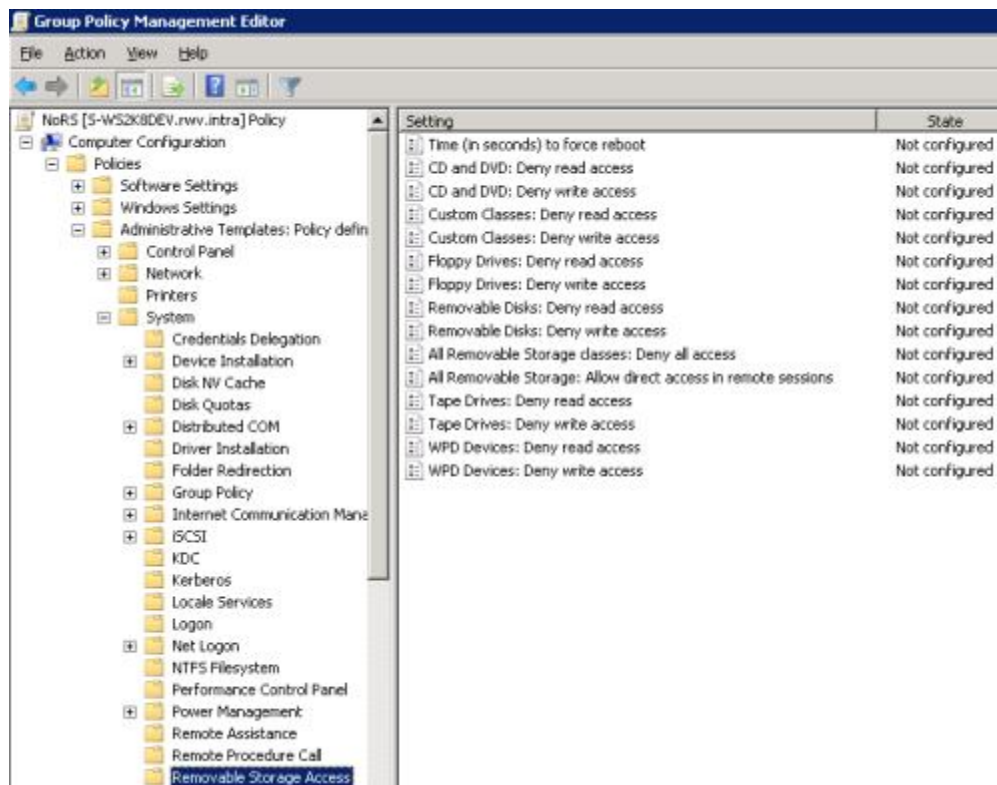
<http://www.intelliadmin.com/blog/2006/04/disable-usb-drives.html>

Control Access to USB and other drives in Windows Server 2008

While USB drives and other portable media are convenient, data protection policies may prohibit administrators or other individuals from connecting storage devices to servers. Windows Server 2008 introduces a Group Policy setting that can prohibit the read or write activities of floppy, CD and DVD drives, tape, and devices such as mobile phones, music players, and cameras. They can be collectively prohibited as well, so all classes of removable storage can be applied to this rule. (This functionality is available with Windows Server 2008 and Windows Vista, but it is ignored in previous versions of Windows.)

Figure A shows these settings in the Computer Configuration section of the Group Policy Management Editor.

Figure A



Zune Pass Enhancements

See: <http://blogs.zdnet.com/Bott/?p=604&tag=nl.e550>

“This week, Microsoft [announced a sweeping change](#) to its Zune Pass music service. The \$15 monthly price tag is unchanged, as is the basic outline of the service, which gives you the right to download any album from the Zune Marketplace (an impressive collection, to be sure) and play it on any of three PCs or three Zune devices. What’s new is 10 free song credits per month, which allow you to turn a subscription-only track into a purchase. At the going rate of 99 cents per track, those 10 credits effectively lower the subscription portion of the service to 5 bucks a month.”

Keeping the Dell Wallpaper from Loading during an RDP session

1. Open Regedit on the server.
2. Go to HKEY_USERS\.DEFAULT\Control Panel\Desktop.
3. Look for the Wallpaper value in the right-hand pane. It will probably point to C:\WINDOWS\system32\DELLWALL.BMP.
4. Double-click on the Wallpaper value.
5. Delete the contents and click OK.
6. Close Regedit.

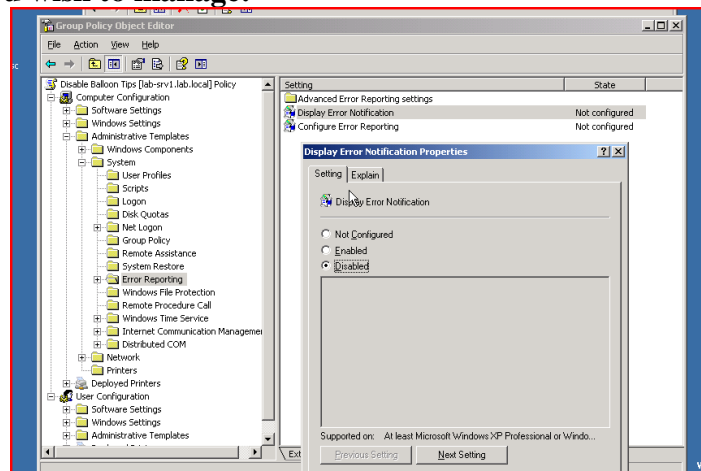
Windows XP Tip: Turn Off Error Reporting

If error reporting in XP is bugging you then turn it off. When a system error occurs in XP, a little dialog box appears asking if you want to report the error to Microsoft. Click the message box to make it disappear.

To disable error reporting, follow these directions:

1. Right-click My Computer and choose Properties.
2. Click the Advanced tab on your System Properties dialog box.
3. Click the Error Reporting button on the Advanced tab.
4. Place a checkmark next to "Disable error reporting."
5. Leave the other radio button unchecked next to the text labeled, "But notify me when critical errors occur."
6. Click OK

Alternately link a GPO with the following setting to the OU that contains the workstations you wish to manage:



TechNet Virtual Labs: SharePoint Products and Technologies

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/bb512933.aspx>

Windows SharePoint Services 3.0

- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Using Microsoft Windows PowerShell for Administration and Customization of Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services 3.0](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Enterprise Search Protocol Handlers \(Lab 8 of 8\)](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services Installation and Configuration](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Customizing Enterprise Search \(Lab 3 of 8\)](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Enterprise Search Security and Compliance \(Lab 2 of 8\)](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Creating Workflows for Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services 3.0](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: What's New in Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services 3.0 Feature Walkthrough](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Introducing Content Types for Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services 3.0](#)
- › [TechNet Virtual Lab: Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services Installation and Configuration](#)

Example:

TechNet Virtual Lab: Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services Installation and Configuration

Event ID: 1032334607

 [Register Online](#)

Language(s): English.
Product(s): Microsoft Office,Microsoft Office SharePoint Server,Windows.
Audience(s): IT Professional.
Duration: 90 Minutes
Start Date: Thursday, March 15, 2007 12:00 AM Pacific Time (US & Canada)

Event Overview

In this lab you will learn how to install Windows Sharepoint Services 3.0. You will also become more familiar with the Central Administration page and its configuration options.

Note

By registering for this virtual lab, you will receive a one-time follow up call from a Microsoft representative to inform you of special discounts and offers related to products and services presented in the virtual lab.

BackupAssist Backup Software

<http://www.backupassist.com/index.html>

BackupAssist performs automatic, scheduled backups of Windows servers to a variety of backup devices, such as tape, hard drive, REV™ drive, Tandberg Quikstor, BlueRAY , CD/DVD, and NAS. In the event of a server crash or other disaster, files and system state can be restored from the backup media. With thousands of sales in over 93 countries, BackupAssist is fast becoming a major backup software package of choice for businesses, schools and charities.

Specifically tailored to meet the needs of small and medium organizations, BackupAssist is simple to use and affordable. It's a lightweight, uncomplicated solution that allows non-technical users to easily schedule, manage and monitor backups.

Features include:

- Open File backup
- Simple scheduling wizards
- Industry-standard tape / disk rotation schemes
- User-friendly setup and configuration interface
- Live Exchange Server backup
- Live SQL Server backup (optional add-on)
- Exchange Individual Mailbox backup (optional add-on)