

How to Add a Default Printer for All New Users

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SUMMARY

NOTE: This article describes how to edit the default user Ntuser.dat file on a Windows NT workstation. You can use the same steps to edit existing profiles or to create an Ntuser.dat file for distribution with mandatory or roaming profiles. However, the security and administration issues raised by these other uses of this information are beyond the scope of this article. Use the information in this article at your own risk. When you are installing a printer for users on a Windows NT workstation, you may want that printer to be used as the default printer for all users of the workstation without adding all of those users to groups that have the right to add printers. New users can use an installed printer if the Default User profile has been correctly edited to add the correct information for that printer.

The Default User profile is created when Windows NT is installed. The first time a user logs on to a workstation (or domain), the default user profile is copied to the user profile. Therefore, only new users are affected by changing the Default User profile as described in this article.

MORE INFORMATION

WARNING: If you use Registry Editor incorrectly, you may cause serious problems that may require you to reinstall your operating system. Microsoft cannot guarantee that you can solve problems that result from using Registry Editor incorrectly. Use Registry Editor at your own risk.

To add a default printer for all new users:

1.	Log on with the Administrator account and install the appropriate default printer.
2.	Start Registry Editor (Regedt32.exe).
3.	Locate the following key: HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\Current Version\Devices Note the information for the value of the key that represents the default printer that you created in step 1. For example, "Generic / Text Only : REG_SZ : winspool,LPT1:" is the printer named "Generic / Text Only" that is installed as a local printer using printer port LPT1. Network printers are listed as \\servername\sharename with a REG_SZ value similar to "winspool,Ne00:".
4.	On the Window menu, click HKEY_USERS.
5.	On the Registry menu, click Load Hive.
6.	In the %SystemRoot%\Profiles\Default User folder, click the Ntuser.dat file, and then click Open.
7.	In the Key Name box, type ntuser, and then click OK.

8.	Open the following key: NTUSER\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\Current Version\Devices
9.	On the Edit menu, click Add Value. Create the same value you noted earlier. For example, if you are using the sample printer mentioned earlier, "Generic / Text Only" is the value name, "REG_SZ" is the data type, and "winspool,LPT1:" is the string.
10.	Locate the following key: HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\Current Version\PrinterPorts
11.	Note the information for the value of the key that represents the default printer that you created in step 1. For example, "Generic / Text Only : REG_SZ : winspool,LPT1:;,15,45".
12.	Locate the following key: HKEY_USERS\NTUSER\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\Current Version\PrinterPorts
13.	On the Edit menu, click Add Value. Create the same value you noted in the previous step. For example, if you are using the sample printer mentioned earlier, "Generic / Text Only" is the value name, "REG_SZ" is the data type, and "winspool,LPT1:;,15,45" is the string.
14.	Locate the following key: HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\Current Version\Windows
15.	Note the information for the Device value. For example, "Generic / Text Only,winspool,LPT1:".
16.	Double-click the Device value in the following key: HKEY_USERS\NTUSER\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\Current Version\Windows
17.	Edit the Device value to reflect the information you noted in the previous step. For the sample printer, use "Generic / Text Only,winspool,LPT1:" for the string.
18.	Locate the following key: HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Printers
19.	Make a note of all the values contained in this key and any subkeys. You may want to use the Save Key command on the Registry menu.
20.	Select the following key: HKEY_USERS\NTUSER
21.	On the Edit menu, click Add Key. Type Printers for the new key name.
22.	Click the following key: HKEY_USERS\NTUSER\Printers
23.	Add all the values that you noted in the step 19. You may want to restore the key that you previously saved. To do this, click the key, and then click Restore Key on the Registry menu.
24.	In the HKEY_USERS window, click the NTUSER key.
25.	On the Registry menu, click Unload Hive.
26.	Quit Registry Editor.

After you follow these steps, the Ntuser.dat file contains the same installed printers and default printer as the Administrator account. New users who log on to the computer do not need the right to add a printer to use the device. For additional information about editing the default Ntuser.dat file, click the article number below to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[146050](#) Modifying Ntuser.dat Hive So New Users Get Defined Settings