

Ask the Geek

- GEEK - (1) The name given to scientifically savvy folk;
(2) A person who is interested in learning and becomes deeply involved in their interests.

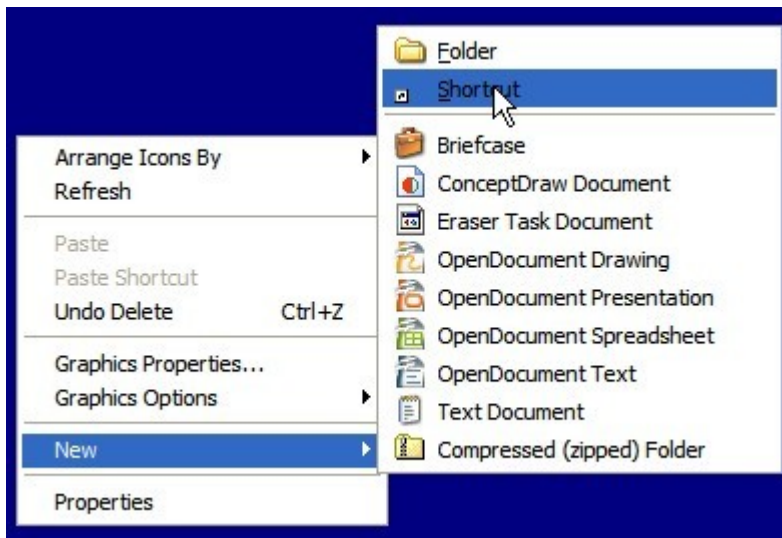
Computer Won't Shut Down? Try This

In my [August 30, 2007 posting](#), I promised you a step-by-step guide for creating your own custom shutdown button that almost always bypasses XP shutdown problems. Even if you're not having problems, creating this button makes shutting down your computer a one-click operation, saving four keystrokes over the standard five-click Start-->Shut Down-->[arrow]-->Shutdown-->OK sequence.

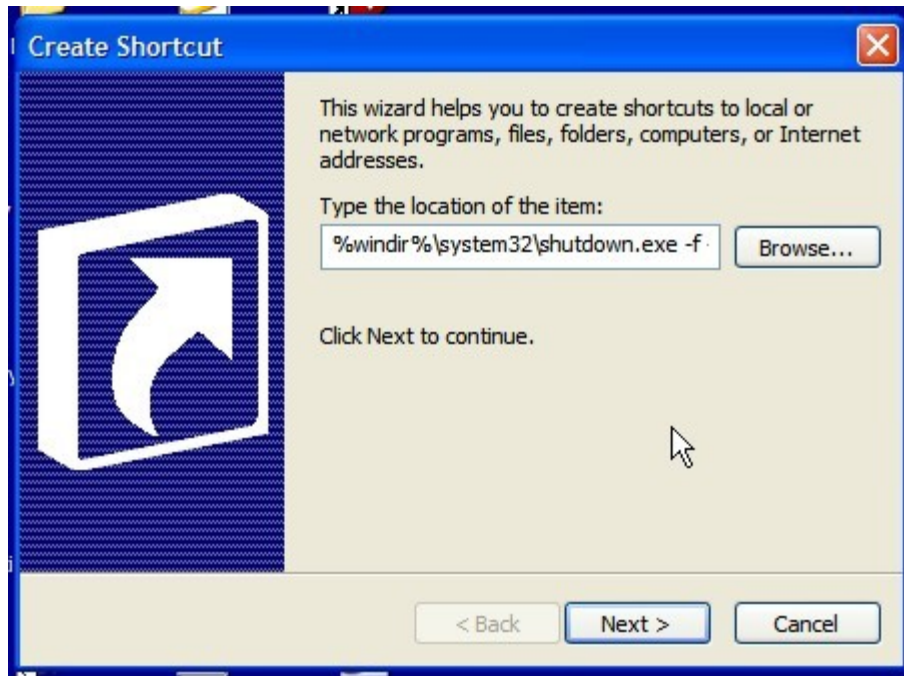
I get a lot of "Ask the Geek" emails from people whose computers won't shut down properly, either hanging up or rebooting endlessly. (Sometimes, nothing at all happens and you have to press and hold the power button.) Rather than trying to answer each question, I made this tip available to everyone. You see, trying to diagnose what may be causing shutdown problems is difficult without my being at the machine. There's a Microsoft article, "[Resources to help troubleshoot shutdown problems in Windows XP](#)," that describes the process, but it's not simple; such in-depth troubleshooting is usually beyond the average PC user.

But there *is* a simple way to force your computer to shut down that often works like magic. It's a command built into Windows XP called, appropriately, "shutdown.exe." Just click Start-->Run and type "shutdown -f -s -t 0" (without the quotes) and hit Enter. Your PC will shutdown immediately. The problem is, if you have to type that every time you want to shut down, it's almost as bad as the problem it solves—it's a nuisance. Here is how to make your own one-click custom shutdown button.

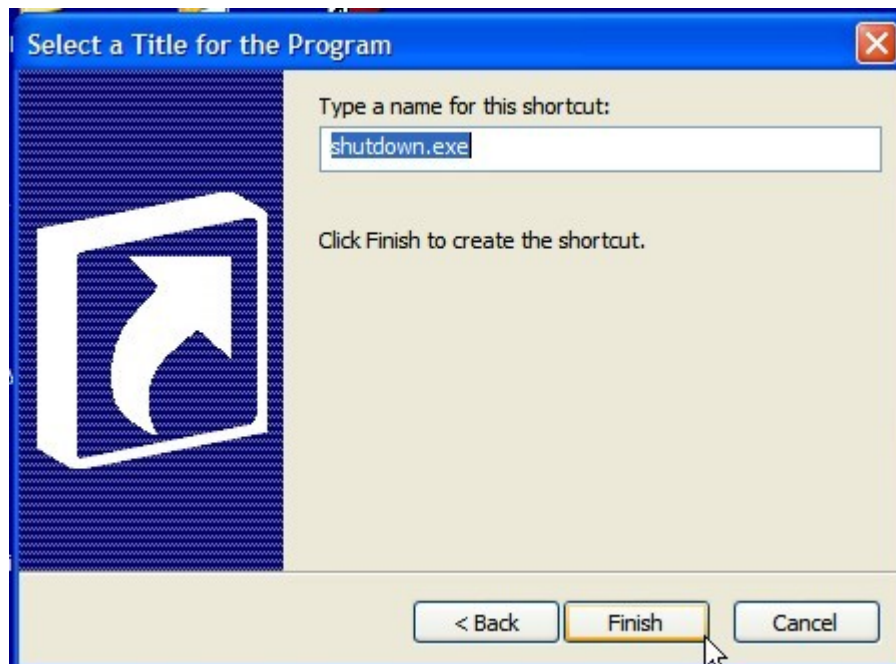
First, right-click anywhere on the desktop and select New-->Shortcut.



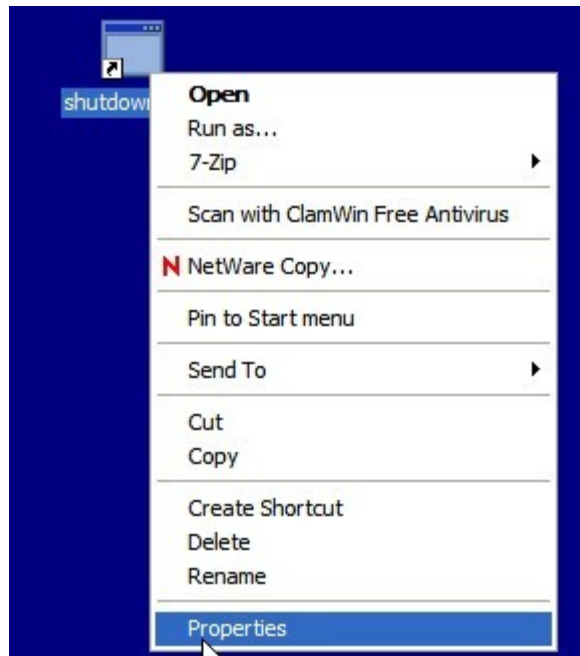
Next, enter the command for your shortcut, %windir%\system32\shutdown.exe -f -s -t 0 and click Next.



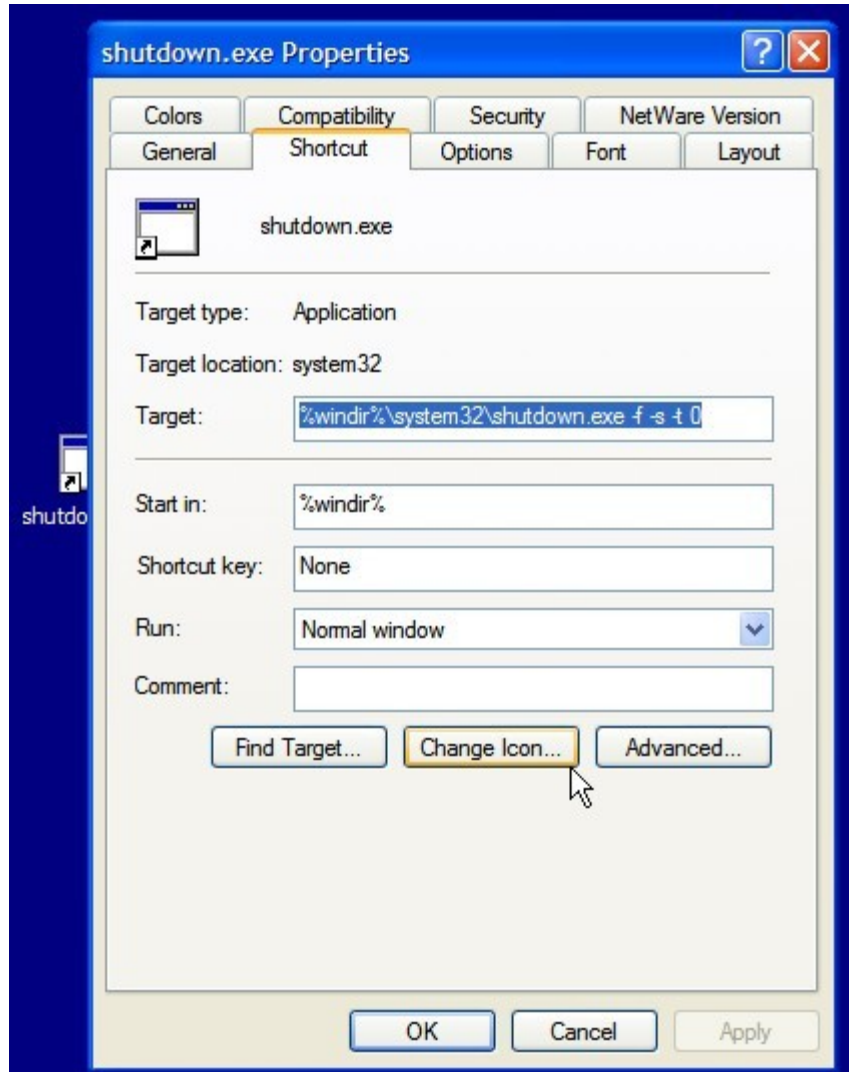
Give your shortcut a name and click Finish.



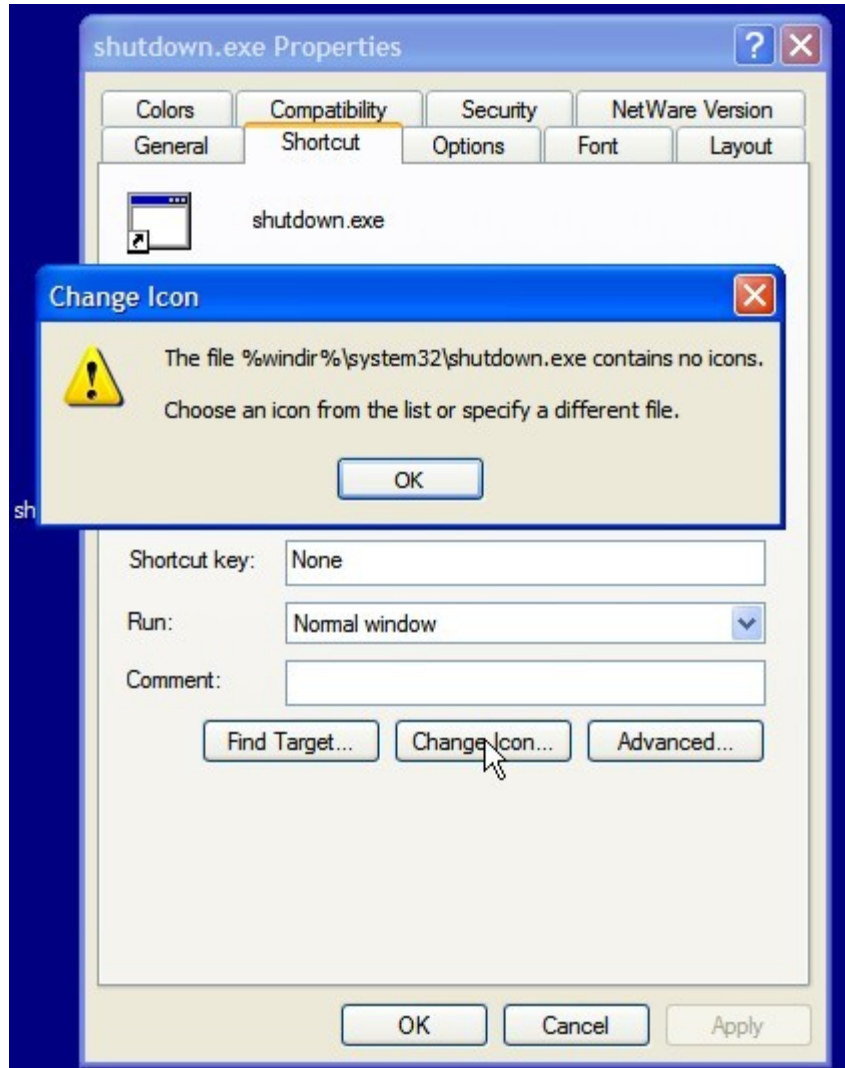
Now, you'll want to give your shortcut a special icon, so right-click the new shortcut and click Properties.



You'll see this. Click on the Shortcut tab, then click on Change Icon.



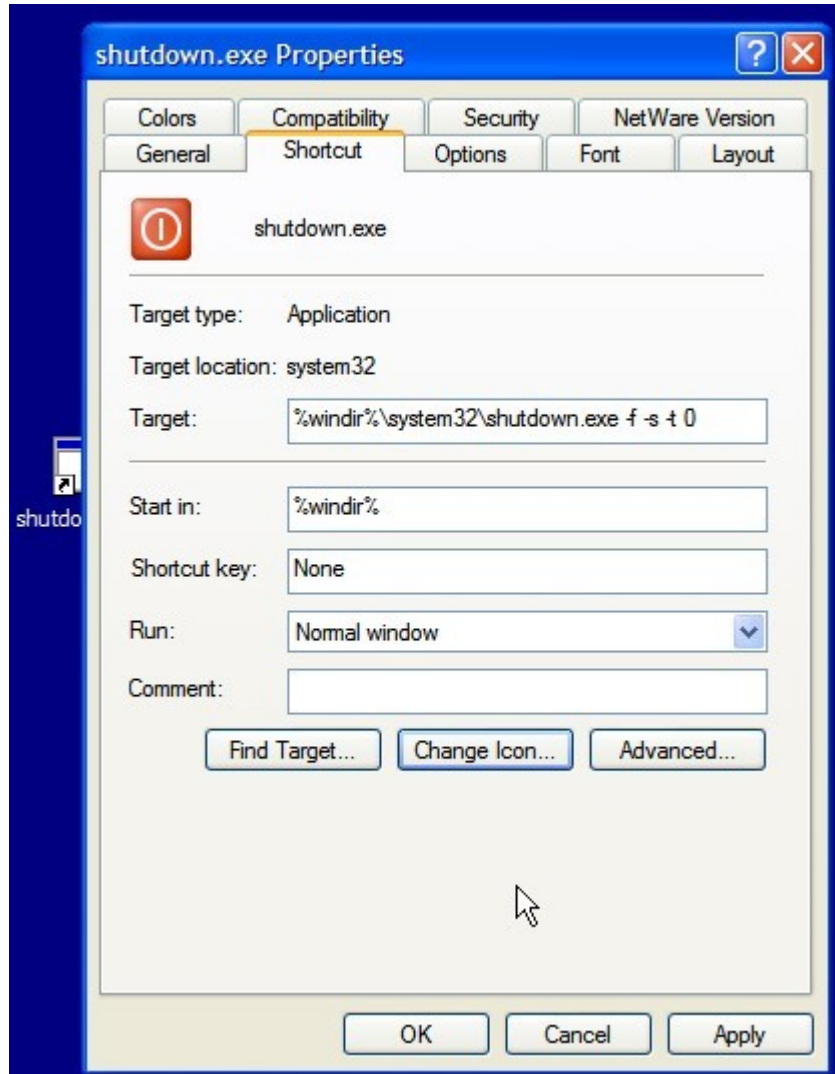
You'll see this message. Click OK.



You'll see this window with a bunch of different icons. Select the one that looks like the shutdown button and click OK.



The icon in your shortcut will change. Click OK.



Your shortcut will now look like this.



Now, click on the shortcut and hold the button while dragging the shortcut to the Quick Launch bar. Drag the icon right next to the Start button. Now, when you want to shut down your computer, simply click on your new custom shutdown button.



I hope this solves your shutdown problems, and makes your working with XP a bit easier.

Cheers!

Ken "The Geek" Harthun

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