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## Two monitors are better than one

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You can never have enough screen space, especially when organizing and working on your digital pictures. Instead of buying a larger monitor, if you're using Windows XP, you can buy an inexpensive second monitor and connect it to your computer— instantly doubling your desktop space. Flat panel [LCD monitors](#) look great and will save room on your desk; [CRT monitors](#) also work well and can be less expensive.



There are several different ways you can make use of this extra screen space when working at home or in your office. If you take a lot of digital pictures, some of the advantages to having dual monitors at your work space include:

- When browsing your picture library, you can view the thumbnails on one monitor, and use the second monitor to view pictures full screen to check for proper focus and image quality.
- When editing photos, you can use one monitor to browse the pictures with Windows Explorer or a photo library program, and use the second monitor to edit the pictures with your photo-editing software.
- If you need to stay on top of your e-mail while working, you can keep your inbox open on one monitor and work on your photos on the other.

### What you'll need: desktop computer

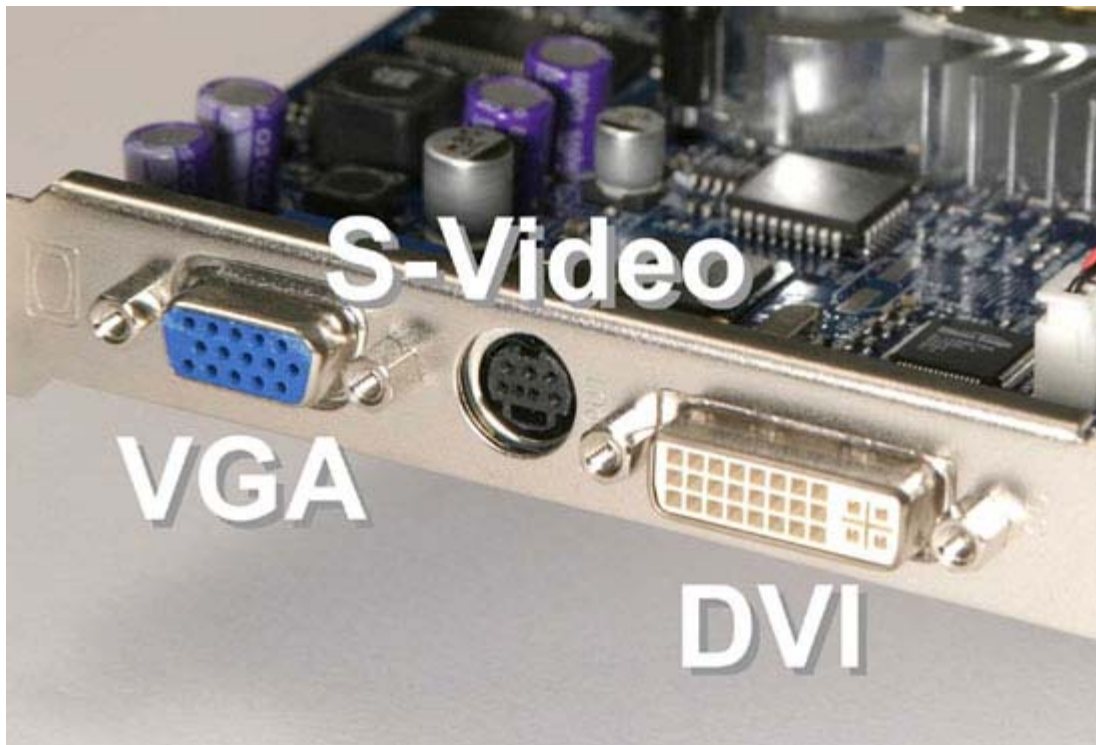
Many new desktop computers support dual monitors without requiring any additional hardware. To see if you have more than one monitor connection, look at the back of your computer for two Video Graphics Array (VGA) connectors or two Digital Visual Interface (DVI) connectors or one of each.

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Most new desktop computers include two connectors to support dual monitors.

If you only have a single VGA or DVI connector, you will need to install a video adapter. You can either install a second video adapter or replace your current video adapter with one that has two VGA or DVI connections. Installing video adapters can be difficult if you're not familiar with the inside of your computer, so you may want to seek assistance from a local computer retailer that offers computer upgrade services.

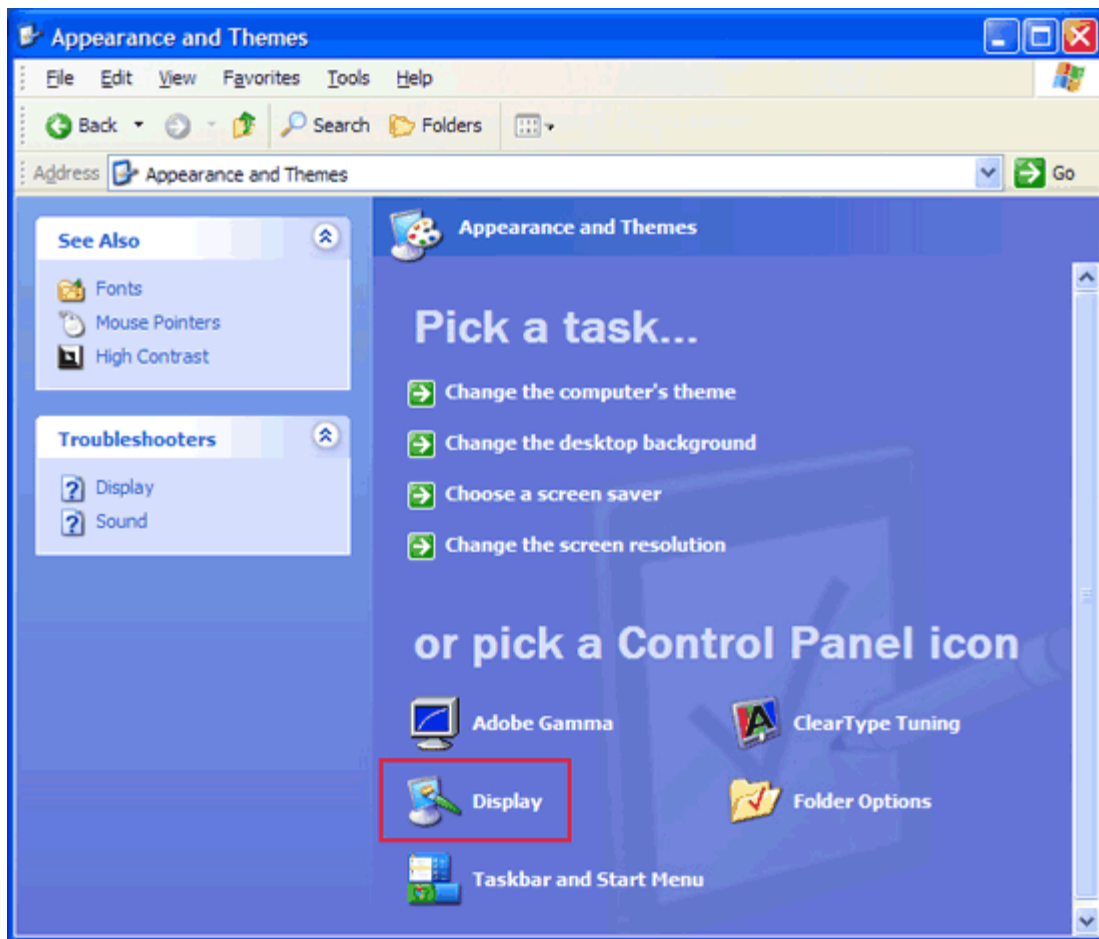
### **What you'll need: laptop computer**

If you have a laptop computer made in the last several years, you can almost certainly support an external monitor by connecting it to the VGA or DVI connector on the back of your computer. The external monitor can act as a second display to your laptop's built-in display.

### **Configuring your displays**

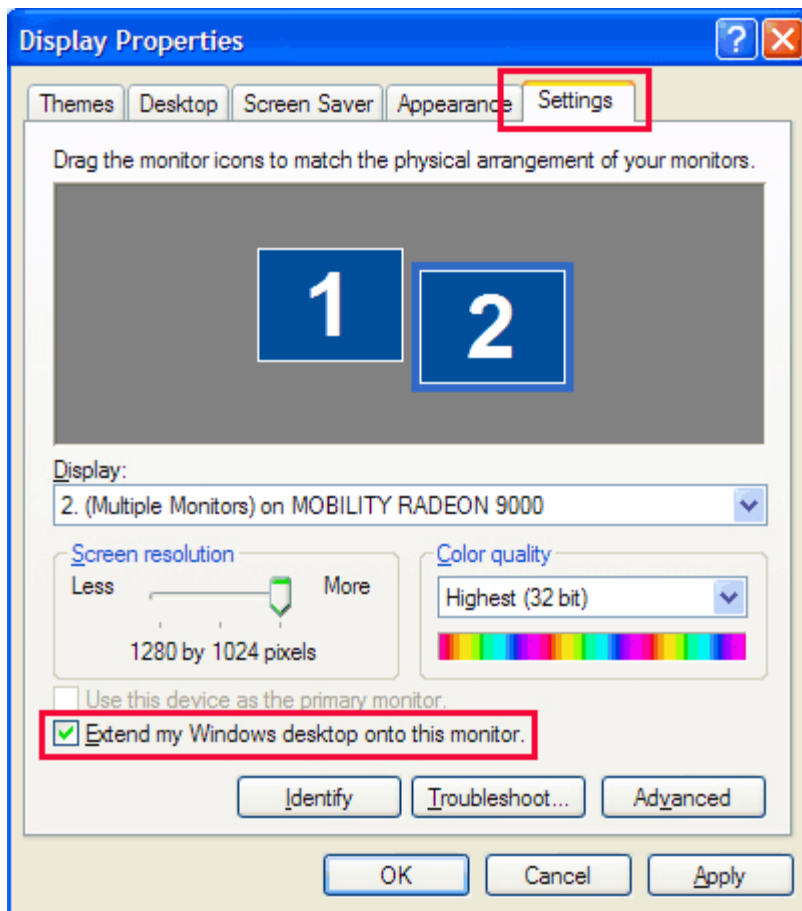
Connect your second monitor, and then restart your computer so that it detects the new monitor. Once you have restarted your computer, you'll need to adjust your display settings by following these steps:

1. Click the **Start** menu, and then click **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Appearance and Themes**, and then click **Display**.



Once you connect your second monitor, you need to adjust your display settings.

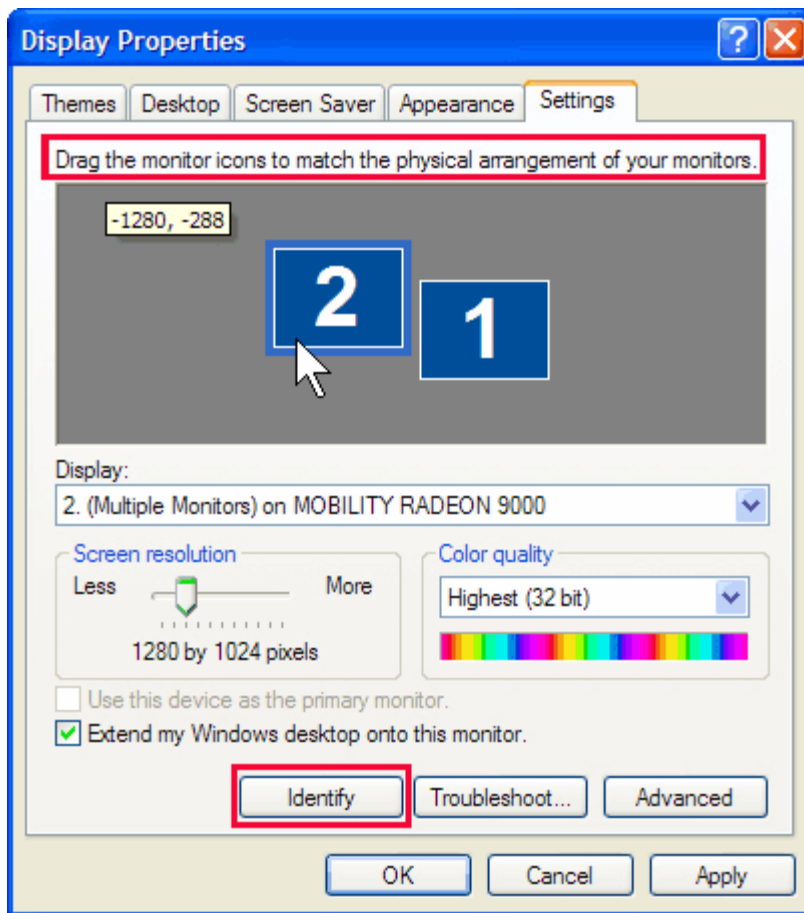
3. In the **Display Properties** dialog box, click the **Settings** tab.
4. Click the monitor icon labeled 2, and then select the **Extend my Windows desktop onto this monitor** check box.



Extend your Windows desktop to your second monitor.

**Troubleshooting:** If you do not see two monitor icons, your computer might not support multiple displays. First, make sure that you have Windows XP installed. Then, visit Windows Update by clicking your **Start** menu, selecting **All Programs**, and then clicking **Windows Update**. Then click **Custom Install**, and install any available hardware updates. You may also need to visit your computer manufacturer's Web site to install an updated display driver. If you still do not see two monitor icons, you may need to install an additional display adapter, as described earlier in this article.

5. If necessary, drag the monitor icons so that they are arranged in the same way as the monitors on your desk. Click the **Identify** button to indicate which monitor is 1 and which monitor is 2.



Drag the monitor icons to match the physical arrangement of your monitors.

6. Click **Apply**. Windows XP will activate your new monitor.
7. Click **OK**.



A dual monitor setup enables you to view the same image side by side.

Once your monitor is set up, you can use your mouse to grab the title bar of a window and drag it to your new display. If a window does not move when you drag it, double-click the title bar first, and then drag it. Having two monitors will forever change the way you work with your computer. Be creative and experiment with the sizing of application windows and what information you can keep in constant view while doing multiple tasks.

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#### Was This Information Useful?



#### **Tony Northrup**

Tony Northrup is a writer, Internet engineer, and digital photography enthusiast. Tony has a decade of experience making networks and servers connected to the Internet run smoothly. He has authored and co-authored eight books about using Windows and has written dozens of articles about Internet technologies. When he's not on his deck writing, he plays with home-automation technologies and takes pictures for display in a Web photo album. He lives in the Boston area with his wife Erica and cat Sammy. You can learn more about Tony by visiting his Web site at <http://www.northrup.org>.

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