What to do if your Profile Storage Space gets too full (Windows 7)

Well first of all, what is "Profile Storage Space" and why would it get too full?

Profile Storage Space is the Folder tree that Microsoft Windows creates, and keeps up-to-date, for each user. It holds all the information that it needs to allow you to work using your own customisable settings (e.g. desktop colour, icon locations, printers you use etc). In addition this is also where Windows and other applications such as Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook etc) store details about who you are so that you get your Email, that your name appears in the auto fill fields and so on. Finally this is the area where Windows stores the information used for your Roaming Profile, which by copying this information onto the server each time you log off is what allows you to sit down at any PC on the network and get your personalised settings.
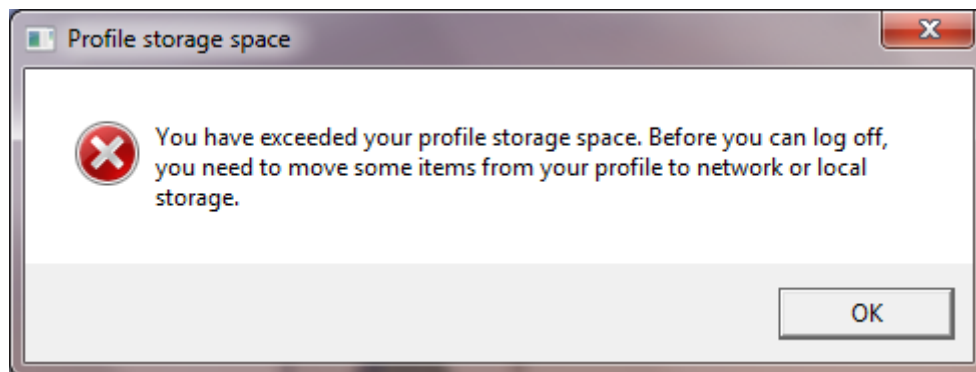
Ok, that's all fine and well, you say, but why would it get full?

Well, bluntly, this is because there has been a limit imposed on the maximum allowable Profile size. Primarily this has been done to facilitate the Roaming bit of your Profile. As stated previously this information is copied back to the server each time you log off, so that induces a load onto the server. If this was unrestricted, well you can imagine the consequences to the server capacity. Add to that the fact that the more information that needs to be copied each time the longer it takes to log off. By the same token when you log on the PC downloads the latest information about you from the server image of your Profile, and again the more information the longer it takes. Consider then the possibility of visiting a remote office around the country and that information has to be transmitted across a telephone line… You can see where this is going.

Secondly, excessive Profile size can indicate a software configuration issue that could ultimately create problems throughout the network.

For these reasons the maximum Profile Storage Space limit has been set to 35Mb, a size that has been determined to maximise functionality for every user, and one that under normal usage should not fill up.

Ok, so you've been working away happily when you get a message to tell you that your Profile Storage Space has exceeded its Limit (see Screenshot 1), and you get a little red circle with a white X in the system tray at the bottom right hand side of the screen (see Screenshot 2)

Screenshot 1

Screenshot 2

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What do you do about it?

Well before you rush off and contact the Computer Support team there are a number of things you can do to help yourself.
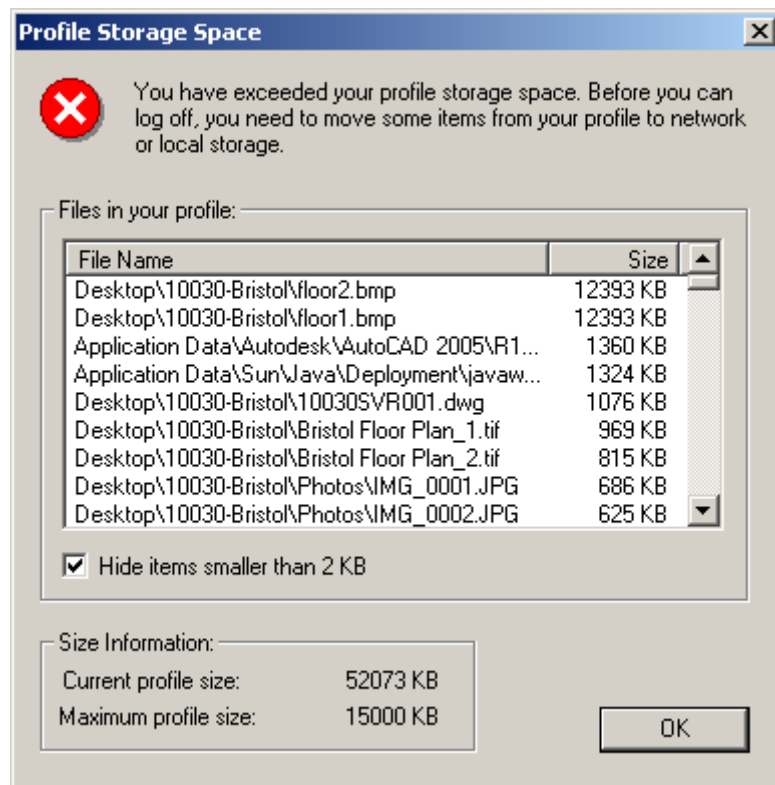
1. If you double click the *Waterman Intranet* icon on your desktop you will open a folder where you will find a file named **Cleanprofile.bat**. Double click it. That will remove some known problems. If you still have the error message continue through the next steps.

2. Have you saved any files or folders to your *Desktop*? If you have you should move them to a more appropriate location – your *H:\drive* for example, or perhaps in a Project Folder location. If you want to access these files quickly use a shortcut to the file/folder instead of putting the actual data on your desktop.

3. Same story with anything you have saved into the *Documents* area. Move these files/folders to a more suitable area. In fact do not use *Documents* at all.

4. Some programs (e.g. Word) place temporary files in your Profile area. Closing these programs will usually delete these temporary files automatically. There is usually an option within these programs to configure where these temporary files are placed. Changing this to *C:\Temp* should stop this recurring.

5. If you still have a problem after cleaning up the *Desktop* or *Documents* and closing all programs then you need to dig a bit deeper to find the guilty files. If you Double-Click the Red Circle (with the White Cross) in the System Tray (Screenshot 2) you will see a window titled *Profile Storage Space* (see Screenshot 3) This window will provide you with details of all the files that make-up your Profile, including the Path and file name as well as the size of each file. Use this list to identify files that do not need to be part of your Profile – these will generally be file names you recognise as having created, copied, saved, moved etc. and will have common file extensions like .doc, .dwg, .jpg, .xls and so on. The rule of thumb here is "if in doubt leave it alone", if you delete the wrong file here it can result in your Profile becoming corrupt, which will require Computer Support to create a new one, so be careful. Once you have a note of the offending file names and Paths you're ready to take the next step. It would have been the logical thought to have had a small button next to each file giving the option to delete the offending item, but the terms "logical", "thought" and "Microsoft programmers" don't necessarily go together.

6. Close ALL opened applications. Then from the Start button open *Computer* and browse to *C:\users\your-logon-name*. It will probably look something like Screenshot 4 or Screenshot 5. If it looks like Screenshot 4, select *Organize/Folder and Search Options* from the toolbar and then select the *View* tab (Screenshot 6). Then select *Show Hidden Files, Folders and drives* as in Screenshot 7, then / *Apply* / *OK*. After that *your-logon-name* folder should look like Screenshot 5 with hidden folders showing as a lighter colour and you can now either drill down to find the files you have identified from the Profile Storage Space window or you can *Search* for them. Once found these files can be Deleted or Moved as you deem appropriate.

7. Next you can run a Search for temporary and aborted file types. With the *C:\users\your-logon-name* open type in the *Search* window for file you want to find as in Screenshot 8. In the *Search* box you can type in some common redundant file type extensions. – (E.g. *.tmp , ~*.*) (Note: Separate each file type with a semi-colon to perform a combined search – file names that start with a tilde (~) are abandoned or open files). Assuming that you have closed all applications prior to reaching this stage it is relatively safe to delete the files found in the search.

8. Another group of files that may be deleted are the shortcuts that are stored in *Recent*. Individually these do not take up much space, but if you have a few hundred (or thousands) of them it can add up to a considerable amount and will significantly increase the amount of time that it takes to log on to the computer.

9. Internet Explorer can also be guilty of adding data to your Profile. Things like Cookies and Temporary Internet Files can build up over time. If you open Internet Explorer and select *Tools* from the menu bar then pick *Internet Options*, you will see option to Delete temporary files, history, cookies etc.. Selecting Delete will give you the option to determine which files to delete.

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10. One final thing that will help to keep your Profile tidy is to ensure that your Internet Explorer settings have been configured to *Empty Temporary Internet Files folder when Browser is Closed.* To do this in Internet Explorer select *Tools, Internet Options* and on the *Advanced* tab scroll down to the Security section (see Screenshot 9).
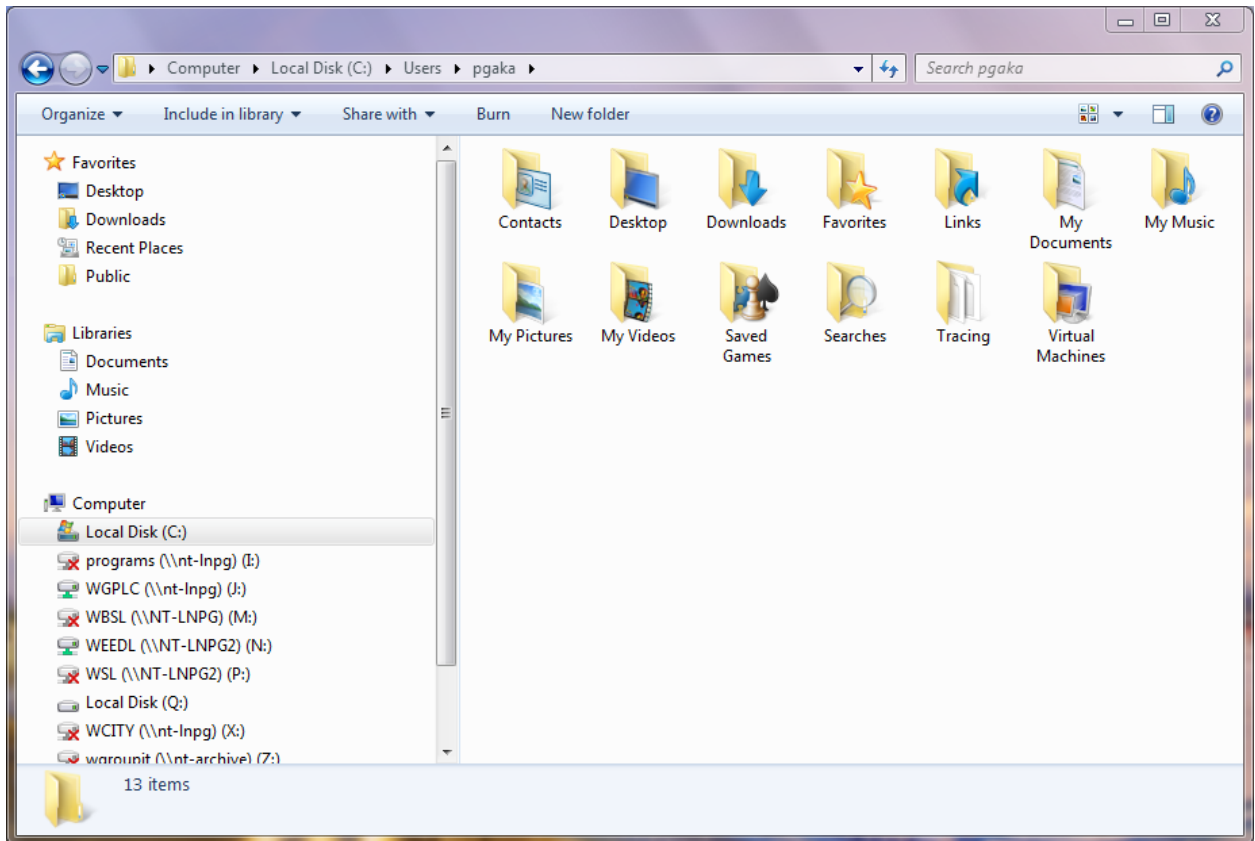
Your Profile should now have reduced to an acceptable size to allow you to work normally.
If the problem persists, of if your Profile has not reduced sufficiently, then contact Computer Support as it could be that something has not been configured correctly and requires a more technical solution.
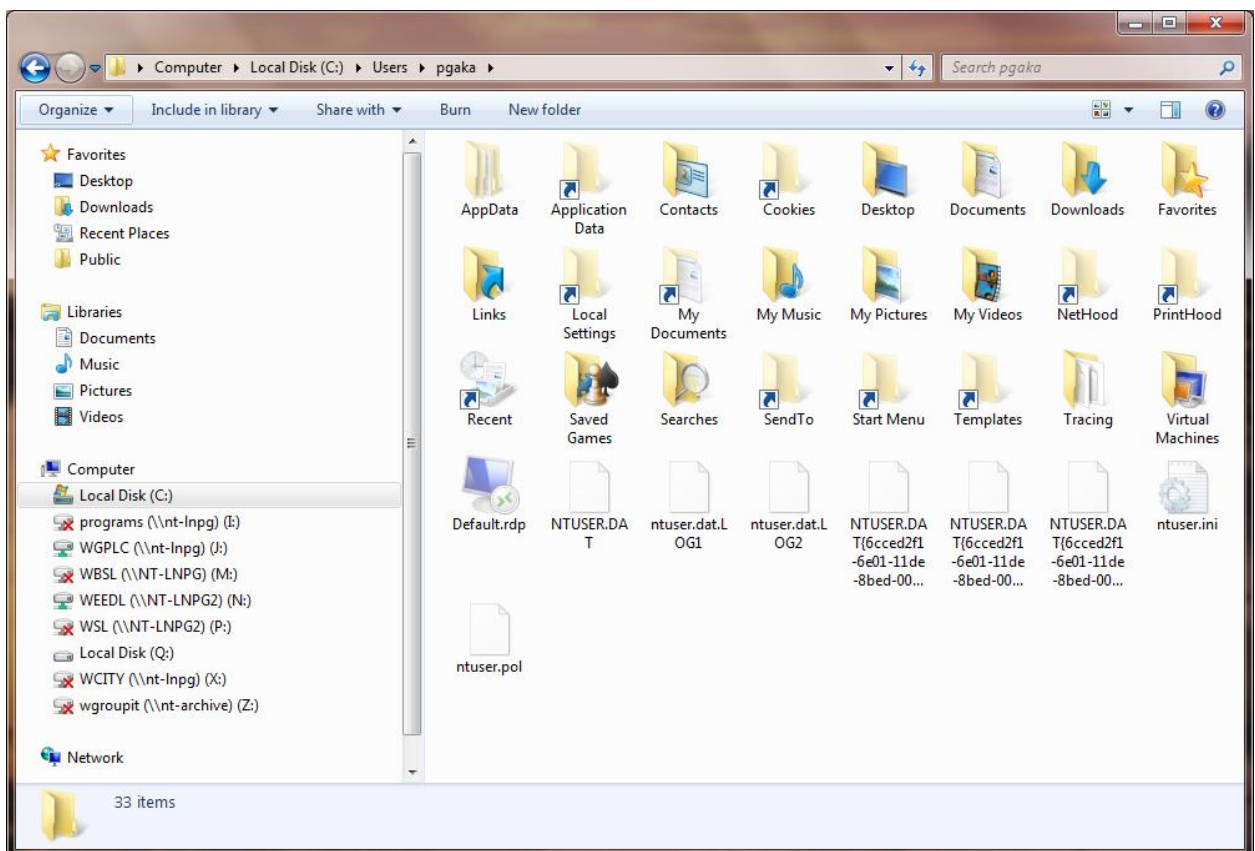

Screenshot 3

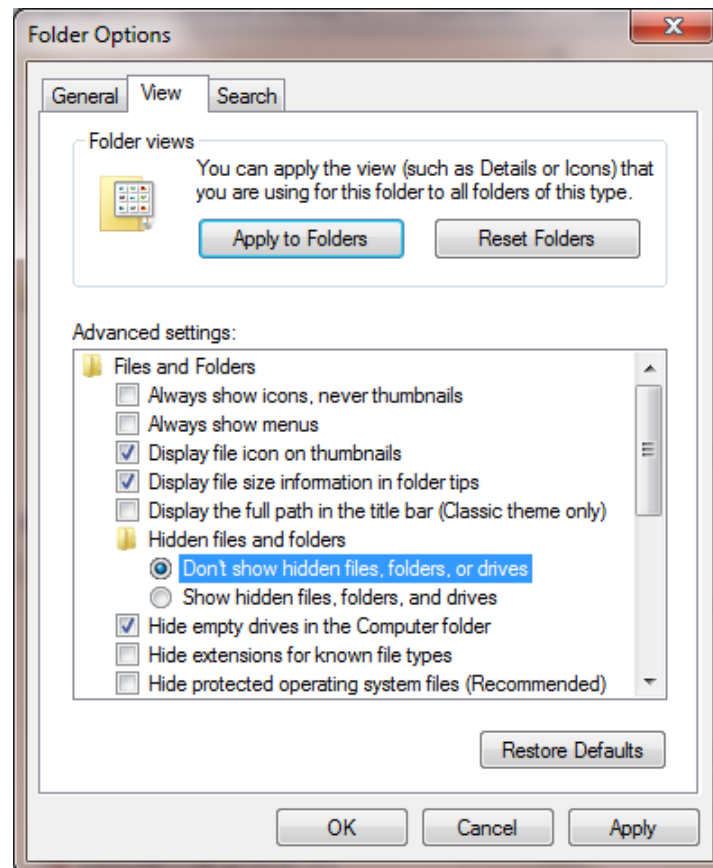# What to do if your Profile Storage Space gets too full (Windows 7)
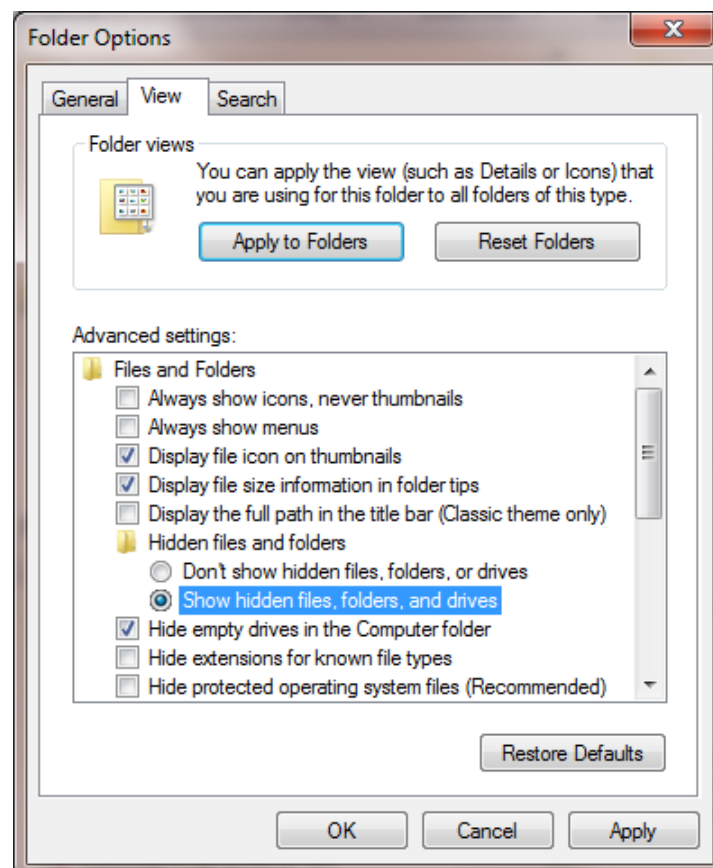

Screenshot 4

Screenshot 5

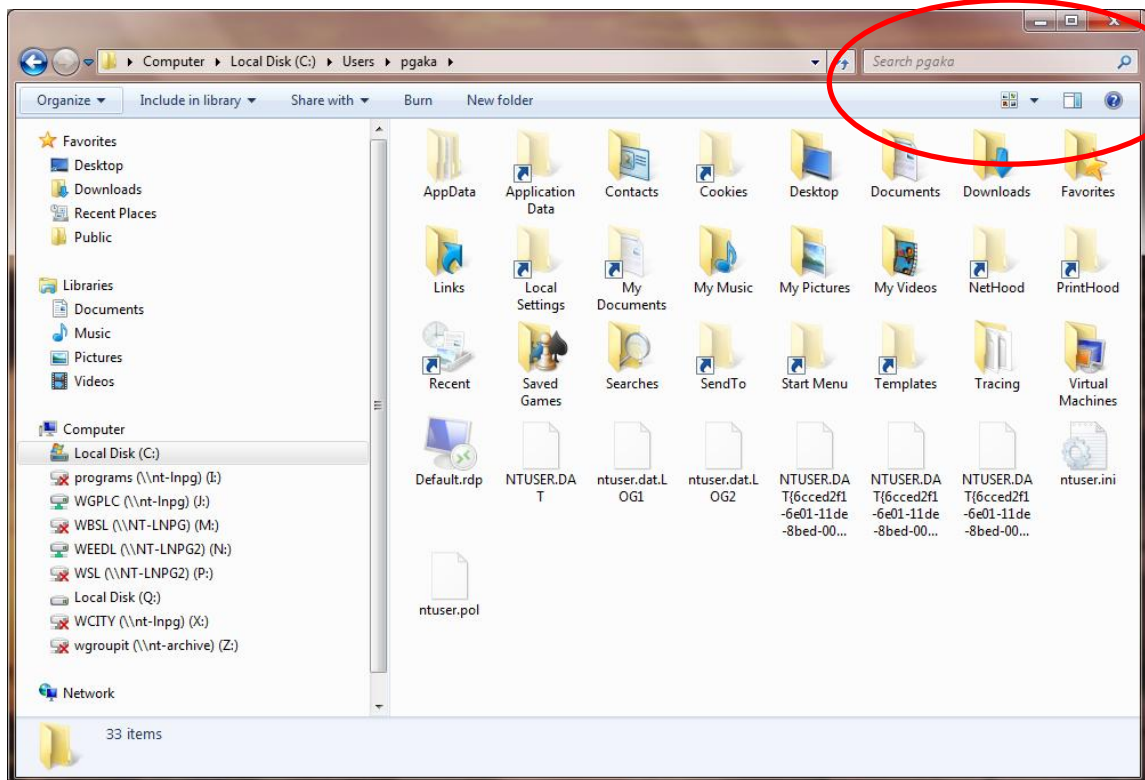# What to do if your Profile Storage Space gets too full (Windows 7)
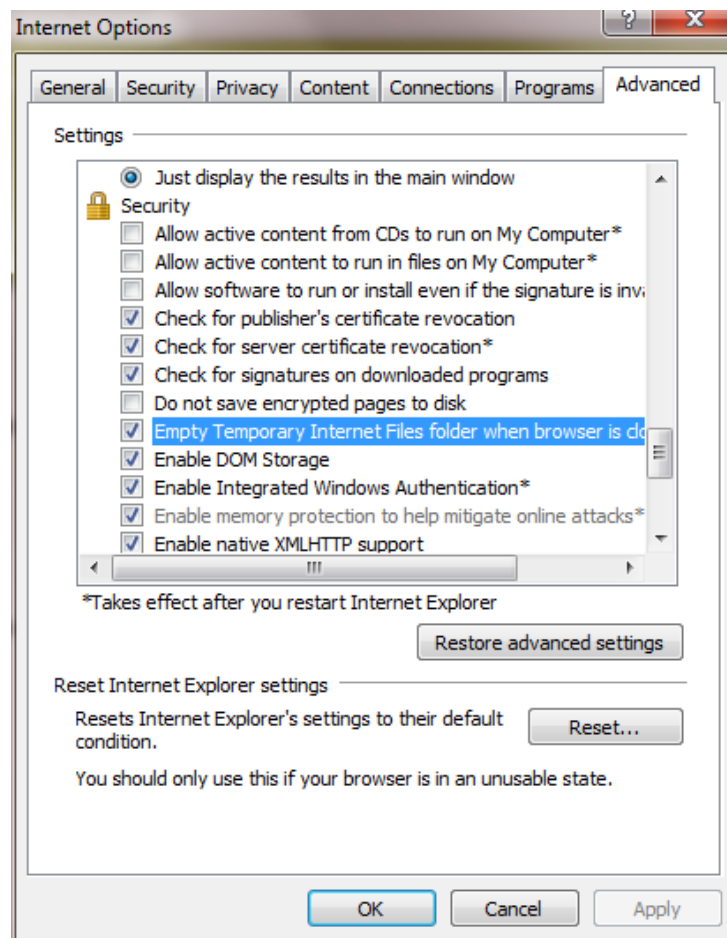

Screenshot 6

Screenshot 7

What to do if your Profile Storage Space gets too full (Windows 7)

Screenshot 8

Screenshot 9