



There are a lot of tools out there that handle a lot of tasks, from antivirus tools that also clean your drive of temporary files and make you coffee to tools that promise to “make your computer faster.” But as far as I’m concerned, few tools can make as much of a difference as [Ccleaner](#), at least on a machine that’s not infected by a virus or malware. Ccleaner is easy to use and will keep your computer cleaner, more secure, and running faster. It achieves this by safely removing temporary Internet files (and other means of tracing Internet activity), cleaning up the Windows registry, and removing temporary files and recent file lists (MRUs) from various applications.

But even though Ccleaner is a simple tool to use, that doesn’t mean you should just jump in and start cleaning everything without a bit of thought. Here are some things all users should consider before and during the use of this powerful tool.

### **1: Analyze before running the Cleaner**

I know a lot of admins who just fire up Ccleaner and hit the Run Cleaner button without doing an analysis first. Yes, this is a fast method of getting rid of temporary Internet files. But there’s no way of knowing what’s going to be deleted (until it’s deleted) and there’s no way of knowing how much free space the deletion is going to create. Make sure you hit the Analyze button first. Then, after you read the report, hit the Run Cleaner button. Using Ccleaner this way ensures that nothing is deleted that shouldn’t be deleted. Also, after you run the analyzer, you can look at detailed information (by application) and then add exceptions directly from the list.

### **2: Set up cookies you want to keep**

When you run the Cleaner, cookies are deleted. By default, cookies are retained from Google and Yahoo, but other cookies might need to be retained. To manage this, click on the Options tab and then on the Cookies button. From that window, any cookie currently on the system can be selectively added to the exclusion list. By adding these exclusions, you don’t have to worry about important cookies disappearing after each run of Ccleaner.

### **3: Always back up the registry**

No matter how reliable Ccleaner is and no matter how many successful registry cleanups it does, never do a cleanup without first backing up the registry. Ccleaner will go so far as to remind you to back up the registry every time you run a registry cleanup. If the registry is not backed up, one of those corrupt or missing registry keys that Ccleaner fixes might not really have needed fixing. If that key is then broken and was not backed up, the issue caused by Ccleaner could become catastrophic. Fortunately, Ccleaner makes backing up the registry as simple as a couple of clicks.

### **4: Use the tools to manage startup applications**

Ccleaner comes with a bonus: It lets you enable, disable, or remove programs from startup. I have always found this method of managing startup applications far easier than using the standard Windows method. What I like most about this feature is that startup applications can be enabled and disabled without removing them completely. This means if you need to temporarily prevent an application from starting up, it’s easy to do by going into the Tools tab, clicking the Startup button, selecting the application to be enabled/disabled, and clicking the appropriate button. When the application needs to be re-enabled/disabled, reverse the process.



### **5: Use the uninstaller**

One of the best aspects of Ccleaner is the ability to remove applications from within it. It typically just starts the uninstaller, but I have found that running the application uninstaller this way ends with fewer registry issues than when I uninstall from the Windows Add/Remove Programs tool. And if there are registry issues after the uninstall, registry cleanup is only a couple of clicks away.

### **Great tool, used wisely**

Ccleaner is more than just a tool to clean the registry or empty a computer of temporary Internet files. It also makes it easy to remove applications from startup and remove applications from the machine. Just make sure you use this powerful tool intelligently to avoid rendering your machine unusable.