

## Your taskbar has disappeared

The taskbar is that horizontal bar at the bottom of your computer screen that displays open programs on your desktop. The taskbar also contains the Start menu, which allows you to navigate to various programs installed on your PC. In many ways, it's your command central.

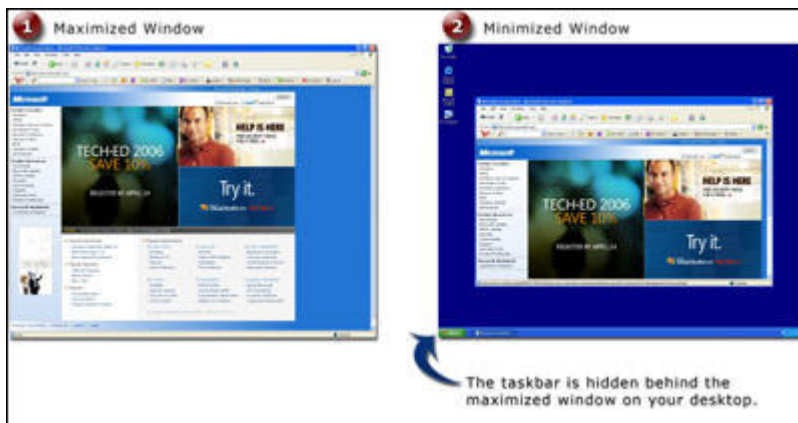
Thus, there's nothing more frustrating than going to start a program, only to find the taskbar gone. A PC without a taskbar will pull you to a grinding halt.

The good news is that the taskbar never disappears. It just hides. It may be hiding behind other open windows, or at the top or side of your screen. You can also (unintentionally) make the taskbar so thin, that it seems invisible.

The following are possible reasons as to why your taskbar has vanished, as well as solutions to keep your taskbar from ever running away again.

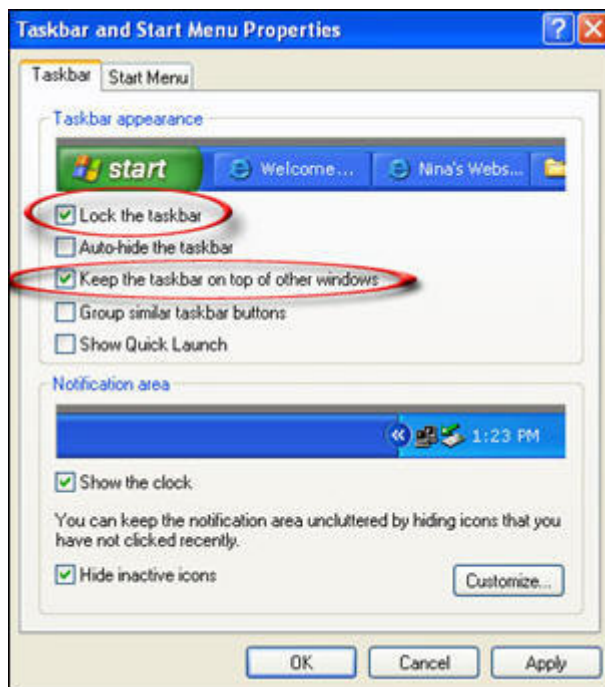
### Solution #1: Find your taskbar behind other windows

1. If you don't see your taskbar, minimize all windows on your desktop. See if your taskbar is hiding behind your open windows.



Finding your taskbar behind maximized windows

2. To set your taskbar so it's always on top of all desktop windows, right-click the taskbar, and click **Properties**.
3. In the **Taskbar and Start Menu** dialog box, click to select the following:
  - The **Lock the taskbar** check box
  - The **Keep the taskbar on top of other windows** check box
4. Click **OK**.



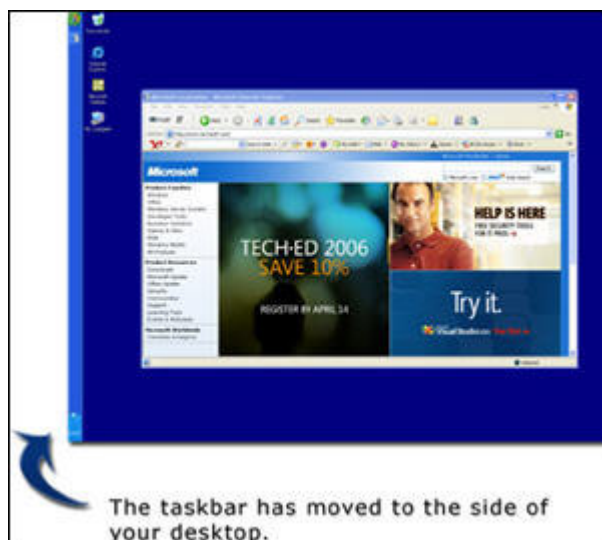
Locking and keeping your taskbar on top of other windows

Now your taskbar will always be visible, no matter how many windows you have open. Locking your taskbar also keeps you from accidentally moving it around.

## **Solution #2: Find your taskbar elsewhere on your screen**

If you have tried minimizing all windows on your desktop, and still don't see your taskbar—perhaps it's been moved. Maybe you've moved it yourself by accident. Or, perhaps someone's playing a practical joke on you. Regardless, the following will help you get your taskbar back to its proper size.

1. As you did in the previous steps, minimize all windows on your desktop. If you don't see your taskbar at the bottom of the screen, perhaps it's hanging out to the side or top of your desktop.



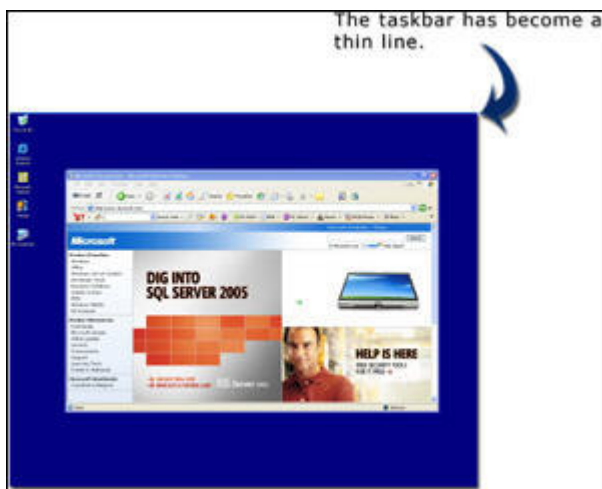
Finding a hiding taskbar on your desktop

2. Click-and-drag your taskbar back to the bottom of your screen.
3. Right-click the taskbar, and then click Properties. The Taskbar and Start Menu dialog box is displayed.
4. In the **Taskbar and Start Menu** dialog box (see Figure 7), click to select the following:
  - The **Lock the taskbar** check box
  - The **Keep the taskbar on top of other windows** check box
  - Click **OK**.

### Solution #3: Thicken up your taskbar

You can make your taskbar a thin line—so skinny it's hard to see. To see if you've done this unintentionally, perform the following:

1. Minimize all windows on your desktop. Look at each side of your screen. If you see a thin strip, that's the taskbar.



Finding a taskbar that's become a thin strip

2. Point your mouse at the strip. It changes into a double-sided arrow.
3. Click-and-drag the mouse toward the center of the screen to thicken your taskbar.
4. Once you've thickened the taskbar, you can drag the taskbar back to the bottom of the screen by following the steps in "Solution #2" above.