How do I manage Windows user accounts?

Windows gives you two different ways to manage users on a machine. For either of these methods to work, you must be logged on as an administrator.

The simple way

If you go into the User Accounts section of the Control Panel, you'll see a list of users. You can create, modify, or delete accounts here. It's pretty self-explanatory, however there are some caveats to using this tool. It may not let you add a non-admin user, complaining that there must be an administrator account in place first. This causes no end of frustration to users, who can see that there **already is** an account called "Administrator", yet Windows seems to not recognize it. "Administrator" is a built-in account, and Windows does not consider it to be a true admin account. If you want to create a regular user account, you must first create a **secondary** administrator account. Fortunately, there is a way around this restriction.

The powerful way

Another way of altering the list of users is to go through Administrative Tools. To get there, go into Control Panel → Administrative Tools. Open up Computer Management to bring up a new window. Under System Tools on the left-hand navigation panel of this window, expand the "Local Users and Groups" item. Click on Users to see the user list. From here, you may perform the usual user actions (create/delete/edit) but with fewer restrictions and more options than the simple method above. For example, if you want to create a non-admin user and the User Accounts control panel is refusing to let you do so, follow the steps in this section, then go to Action → New User in the top menu bar.