

Desktop ricing

What "ricing" means?

Ricing is a term commonly used by car tuning enthusiasts. It means "customizing" - in that case, changing up the car's painting, adding lights and parts that change its design (usually giving it a more aggressive/"cooler" look).

What's "desktop ricing"?

To "rice" a desktop basically means to make it look nicer to the eye. Most people will associate this to changing the wallpaper to something better and making the desktop items more organized or just getting rid of them entirely.

Thankfully, desktop ricing goes well beyond that:

For years, web forums mainly focused on technology, anime and video games occasionally had threads where users shared their desktops.

The same applies to websites like Reddit and image boards like 4chan.

Within these threads users regularly shared tools and configuration files that helped with changing the appearance of Windows desktops.

It should be noted that some of the software that was widely used is either no longer supported anymore or not compatible with Windows 10.

I also should mention that not everyone uses Windows, some are Mac users and others enjoy using Linux. However, for obvious reasons the focus of this guide will be towards Windows and Mac.

So how do I "rice" my desktop?

First off, start with the basics: clean up your desktop

- Get rid of shortcuts* (either use the start menu or just attach things to the taskbar, heck, you can even put those shortcuts inside a folder)
- If you're using Windows 10 I recommend unpinning everything from the start menu and going into "settings" and enabling the fullscreen start menu option
- If you really want to have stuff on your desktop at least don't clutter it with tons of folders
- Download alternative icons on the internet for programs that have ugly default ones (eg: audacity, obs etc...) and replace them
- Make use of virtual desktops to make your workspace more organized (each desktop includes 1 to 3 windows max. of a certain app)
- Only keep on your taskbar things that are useful, don't make it cluttered

It's important to mention that some programs aren't really used just for aesthetics: the real purpose is to make your life better. If your "rice" makes your experience using the computer more difficult just for the sake of aesthetics you're doing it wrong.

List of Windows apps:

- 7+TaskbarTweaker: lets you customize how the windows 10 taskbar works (it even lets you hide the half assed windows 10 logo of the start menu)
- WinAeroTweaker: lets you change a ton of stuff on window's appearance (size of titlebars, font used on titlebars, set 100% black/white colors on the taskbar and titlebars etc...)
- TBIconBlanker: blanks out the taskbar icons to make it look more minimalistic (I

- recommend using it with taskbar icons uncombined)*
- UXTheme: I don't really recommend this one because it can break things depending on which theme you're trying to install and which version of windows 10 you're on
- Alt drag: lets you drag windows by holding alt + right clicking them instead of dragging them from the titlebar
- Firefox: by far the most customizable browser, you can make it look like anything you want
- QTTabBar: adds a ton of features to explorer most importantly, tabs (it also adds previews on hover for images)

***it's features require setting stuff up so don't expect it to work perfectly out of the box**

- OldNewExplorer: lets you change explorer's design and make it look more minimalistic removing the cluttered ribbon menu from windows 8/10

Important notes: This guide may have programs that can potentially break your windows installation so I highly recommend doing a backup/making a system restore point.

What to avoid: Try avoiding bloatware (useless software) like rainmeter. Ok, I'll admit, you can make some nice widgets with it but ultimately? it's pretty useless, doesn't look nice in most cases and just looks bad.

Try to use either Firefox or Chromium or Microsoft Edge, regular Chrome isn't really that good.

Try not using low resolution wallpapers, it doesn't matter if your monitor has a low resolution, high resolution wallpapers will still look better.

List of Mac apps:

- Redquits: makes it so the close button actually quits an application instead of just closing the window.
- Xtrafinder: adds a ton of functionality to finder (cut and paste, create a new file from a template - PNG/HTML/etc...)
- Bartender: hides menubar items under a minimalistic button and lets you pick what gets hidden and what doesn't
- Spectacle: lets you split windows to sides just like on windows
- BackgroundAudio: adds a volume control on the menubar for each individual app (doesn't work for some apps for some reason)
- Miniplay: adds a playback controller for spotify and iTunes as a notification center widget (it even shows the album cover :D)
- Handshaker: lets you transfer files from android phones to your mac and vice-versa (it even has a nice interface with thumbnails and can even connect through wifi if both your mac and phone are connected to the same wifi network)
- Playonmac: lets you install some windows programs on the mac
- Minicalendar: replaces the menubar clock, shows a mini calendar and lets you add more information to it
- Transmission: simple, easy to use and minimalistic torrent app

How to change application icons on macOS:

1 - Go to applications or wherever the .app is on your Mac and right click it

2 - Choose "get info"

3 - Drag and drop a **.ICNS** file into the icon of the application (a blue outline will appear once you hover it)

*this only works if the image is properly converted to .ICNS (use a web tool to do that)

**some applications will change the icon during launch because it includes multiple icons so you'll need to go through the application files and replace all the icons.