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HOW DO I CUSTOMIZE THE WINDOWS 7 START MENU?

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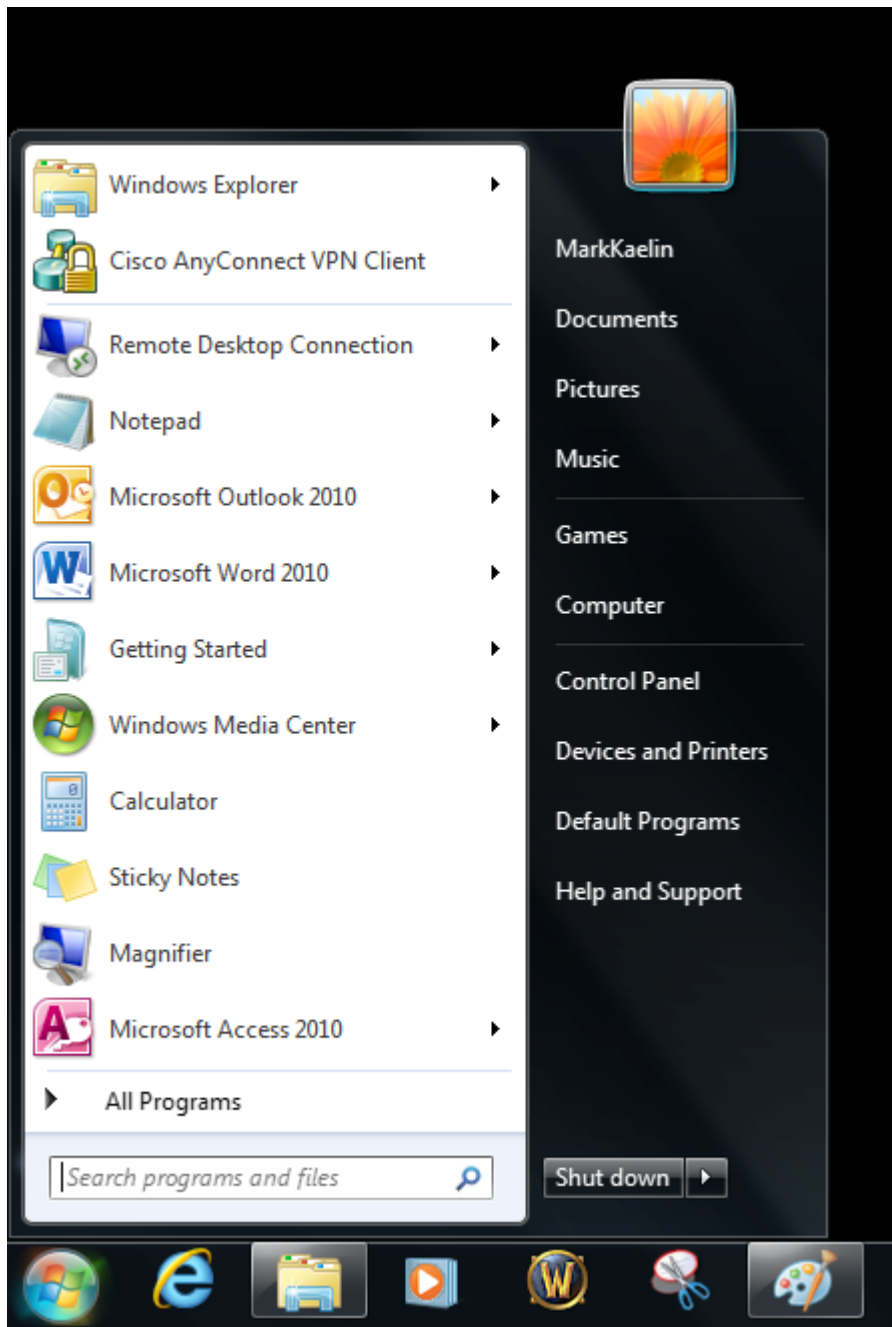
THE START MENU IN **MICROSOFT WINDOWS** IS THE FIRST PLACE MOST USERS GO WHEN THEY INTERACT WITH THE OPERATING SYSTEM. BUT THE WAY THE START MENU IS CONFIGURED IS NOT SET IN STONE. **WINDOWS 7** ALLOWS USERS TO CHANGE WHICH APPLICATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE MENU AND HOW THEY WILL BE PRESENTED. THIS CUSTOMIZATION PROCESS IS RELATIVELY STRAIGHTFORWARD AND SIMPLE, AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO USE REGEDIT.

*THIS BLOG POST IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A **TECHREPUBLIC PHOTO GALLERY** AND **TECHREPUBLIC DOWNLOAD**.*

CUSTOMIZATION

FIGURE A SHOWS A TYPICAL START MENU WITH APPLICATION LINKS DOWN THE LEFT SIDE AND LIBRARY AND FOLDER LINKS DOWN THE RIGHT. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LEFT SIDE OF LINKS IS THE ALL PROGRAMS LINK.

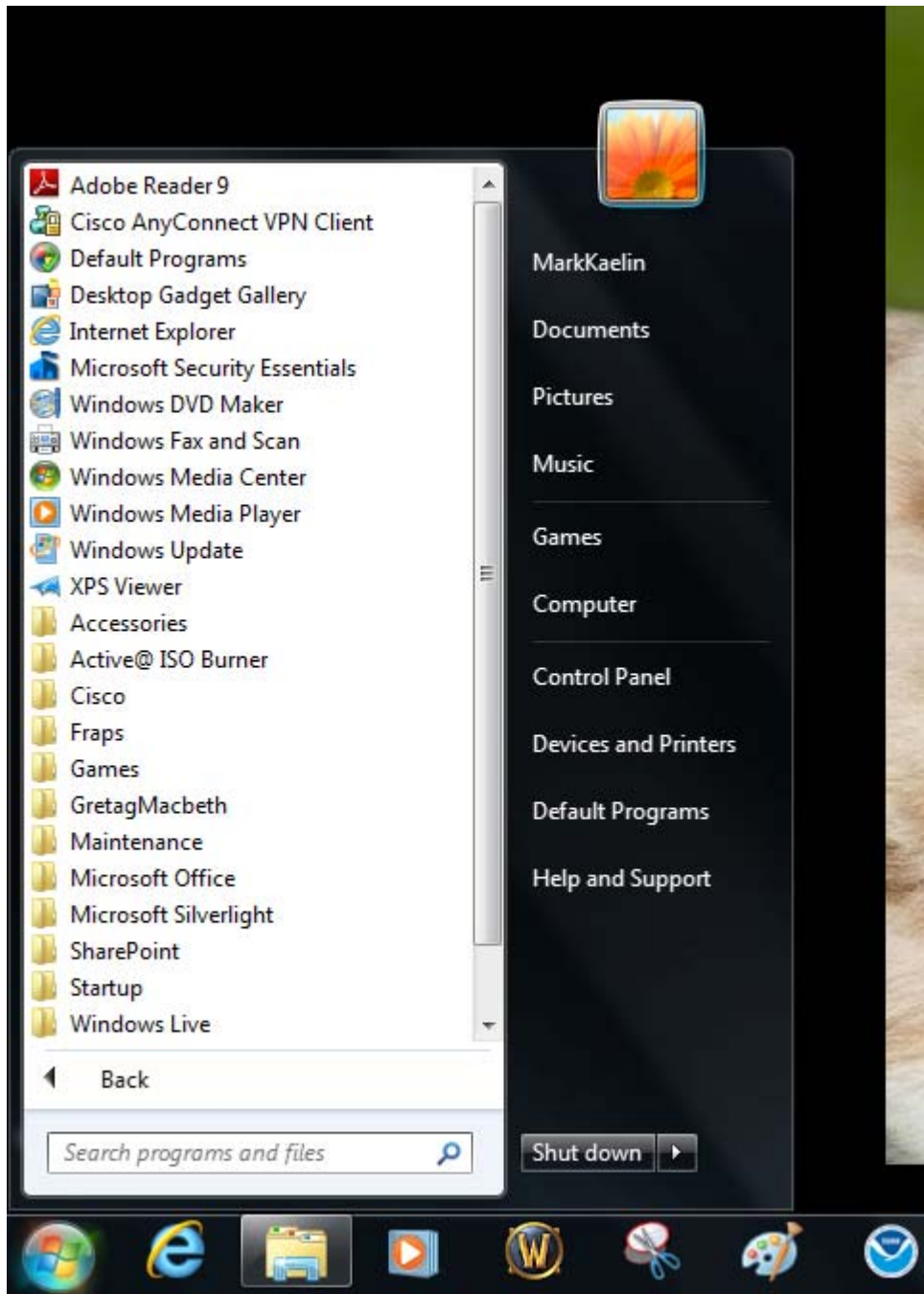
FIGURE A



THIS IS THE BASIC START MENU.

FIGURE B SHOWS THE TYPICAL LIST OF ALL PROGRAMS. WITH A FEW CLICKS OF THE MOUSE, WE CAN CUSTOMIZE THESE MENUS.

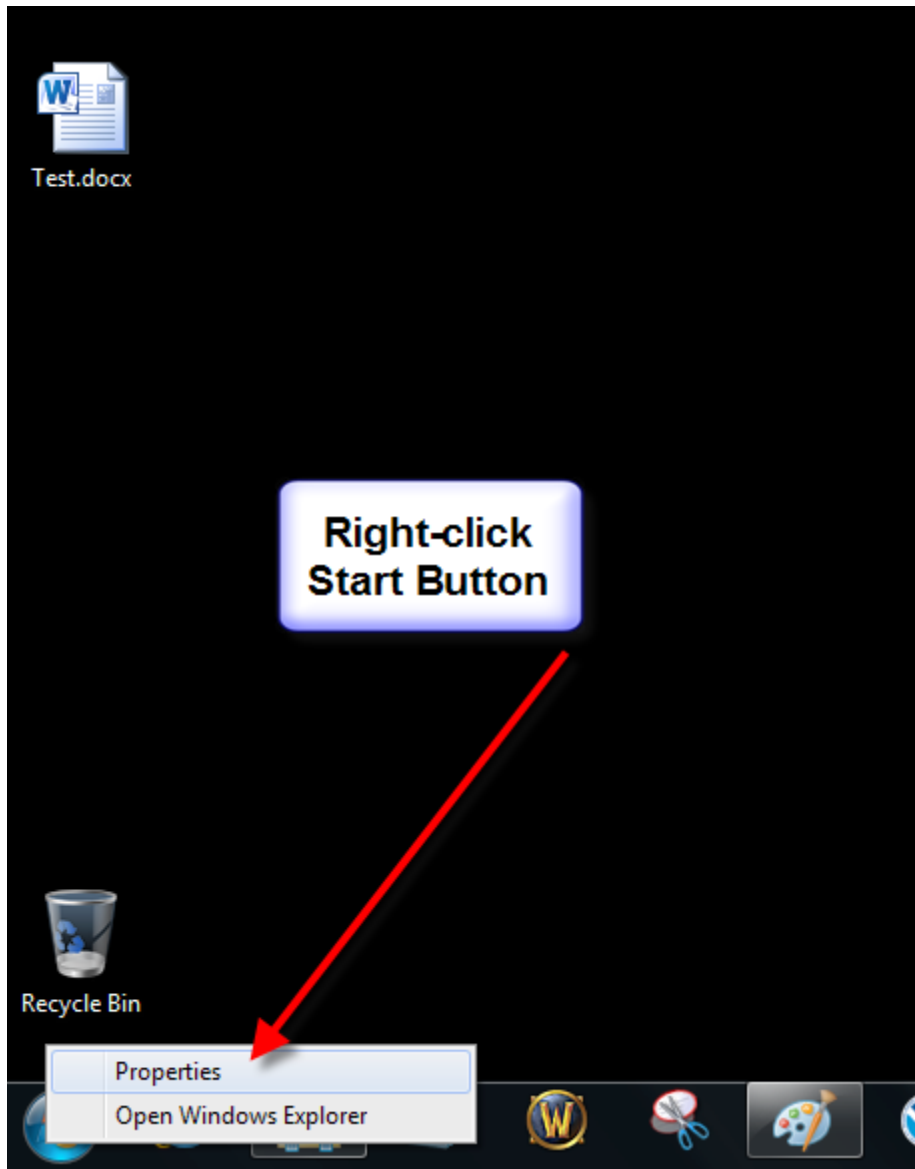
FIGURE B



THIS IS THE BASIC ALL PROGRAMS LIST.

TO START THE PROCESS IN WINDOWS 7, RIGHT-CLICK THE START BUTTON IN THE LOWER LEFT CORNER (**FIGURE C**) AND CLICK THE PROPERTIES ENTRY.

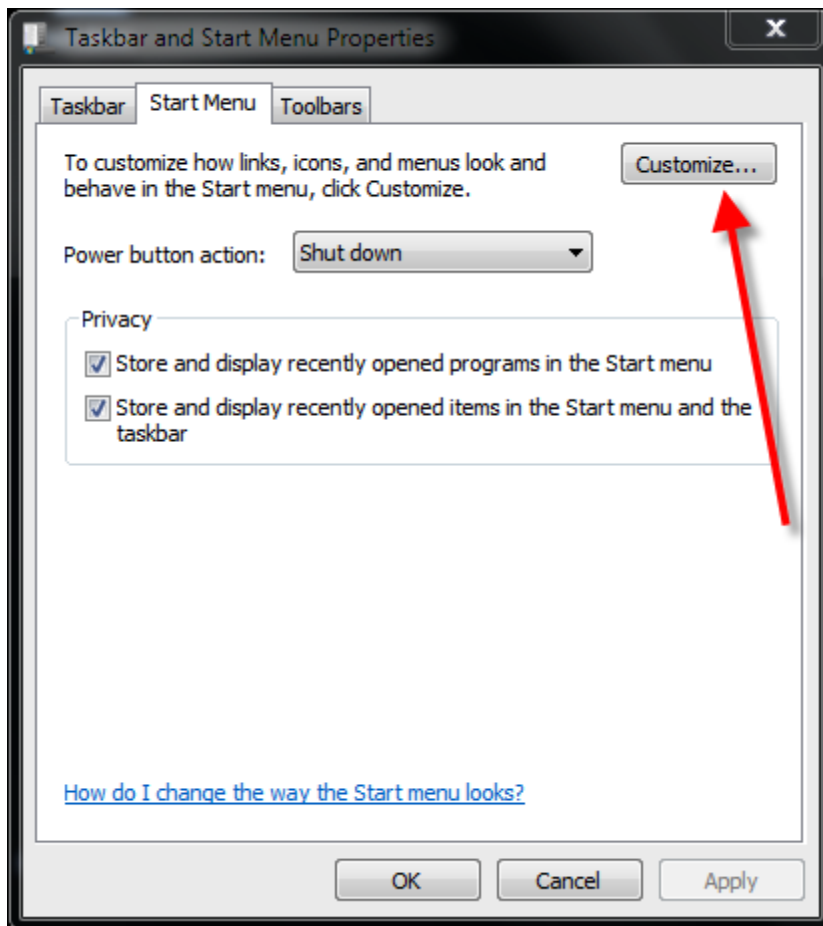
FIGURE C



CLICK THE PROPERTIES ENTRY.

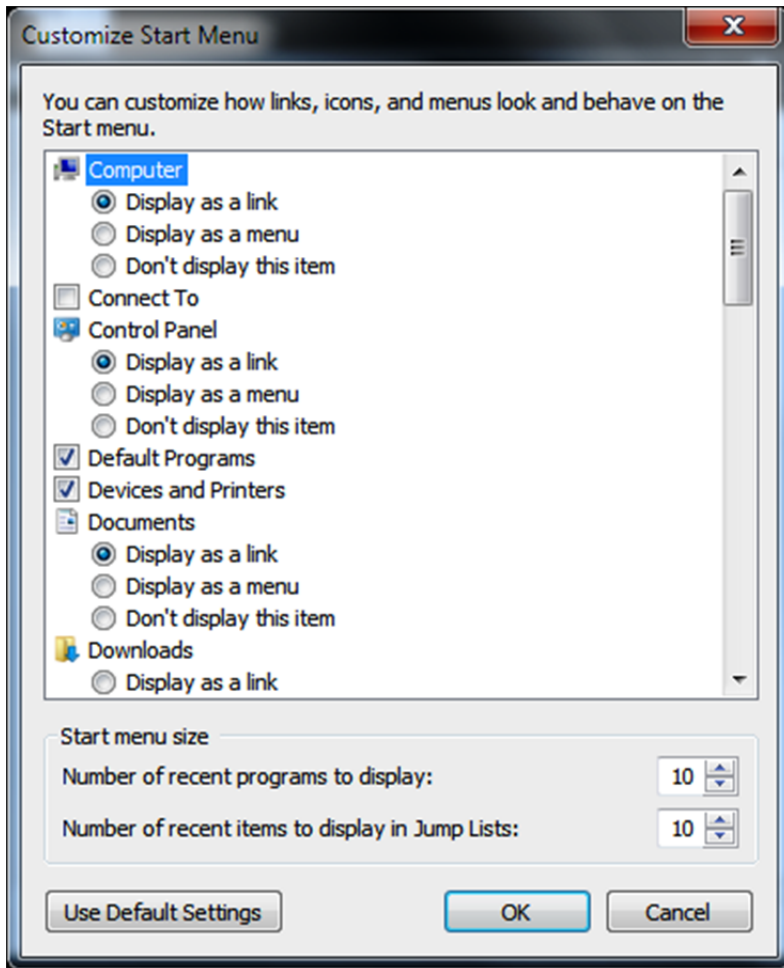
CLICK THE CUSTOMIZE BUTTON (FIGURE D) IN THE PROPERTIES WINDOW TO GET TO THE CUSTOMIZE START MENU WINDOW, SHOWN IN FIGURE E.

FIGURE D



CUSTOMIZE THE START MENU.

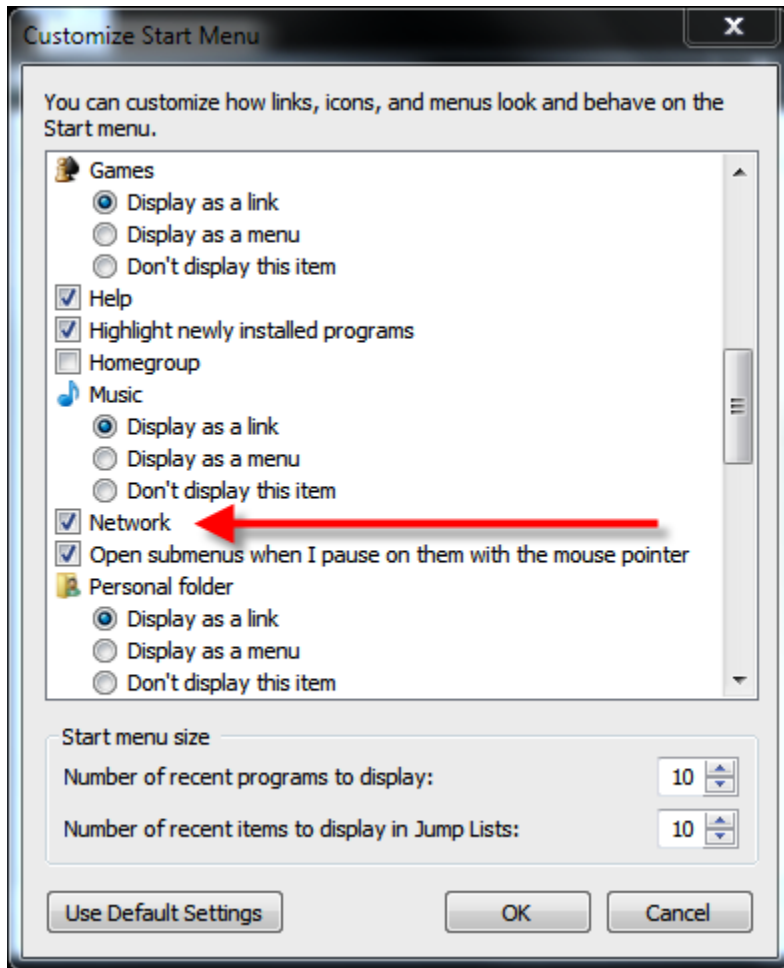
FIGURE E



THESE ARE POTENTIAL CUSTOMIZATIONS.

AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO CUSTOMIZE THE START MENU. FOR OUR EXAMPLE, WE'LL CHANGE THREE THINGS. FIRST, LET'S ADD THE NETWORK ENTRY TO THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE NAVIGATION WINDOW OF THE START MENU. FIND THE NETWORK CHECKBOX IN THE LIST AND CHECK IT (FIGURE F).

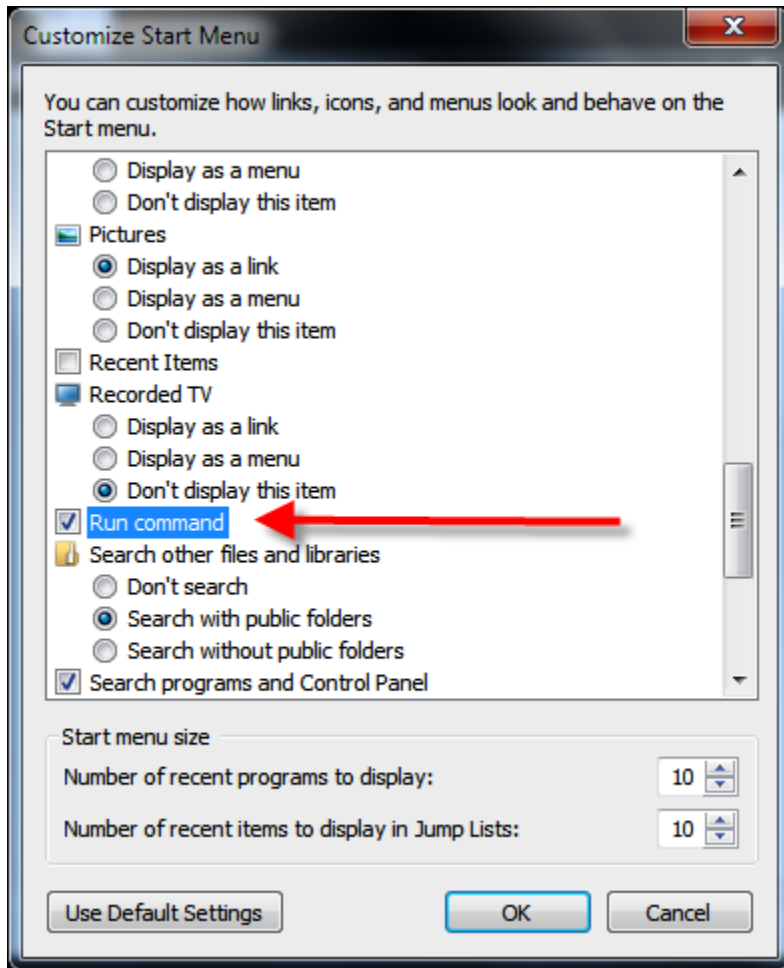
FIGURE F



PUT A CHECK IN THE NETWORK CHECKBOX.

SECOND, WE'LL ADD THE RUN COMMAND TO THE START MENU (FIGURE G) BY ADDING A CHECK TO THE APPROPRIATE CHECKBOX.

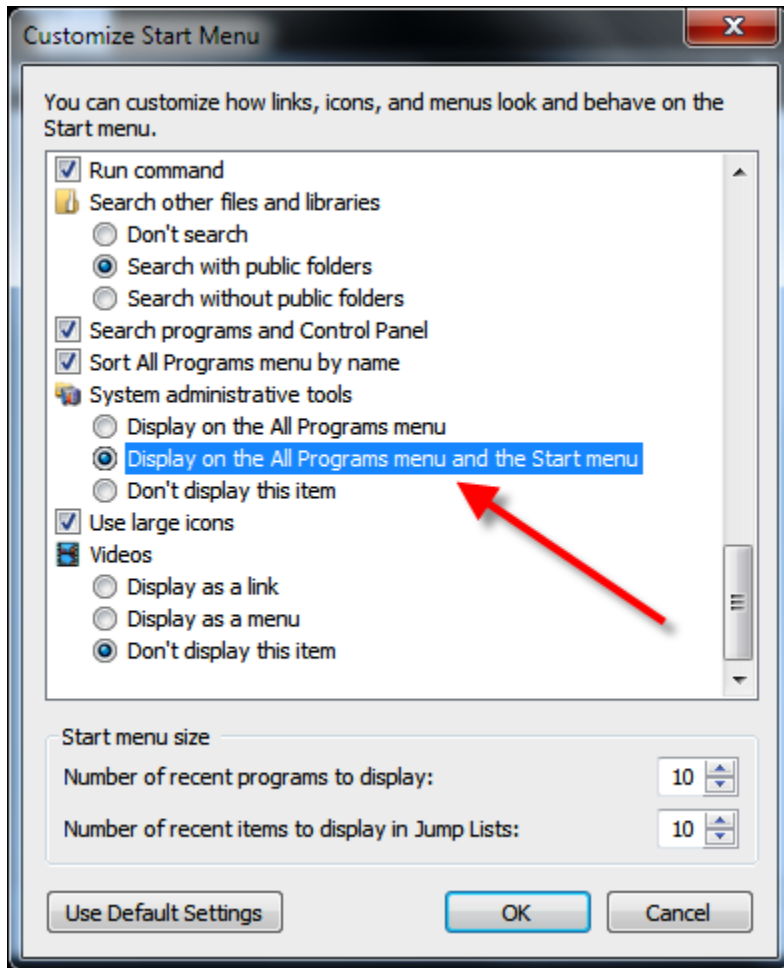
FIGURE G



PUT A CHECK IN THE RUN COMMAND CHECKBOX.

THIRD, WE WILL ADD ADMINISTRATIVE TOOLS TO BOTH THE START MENU AND THE ALL PROGRAMS LIST BY CLICKING THE APPROPRIATE RADIO BUTTON (FIGURE H).

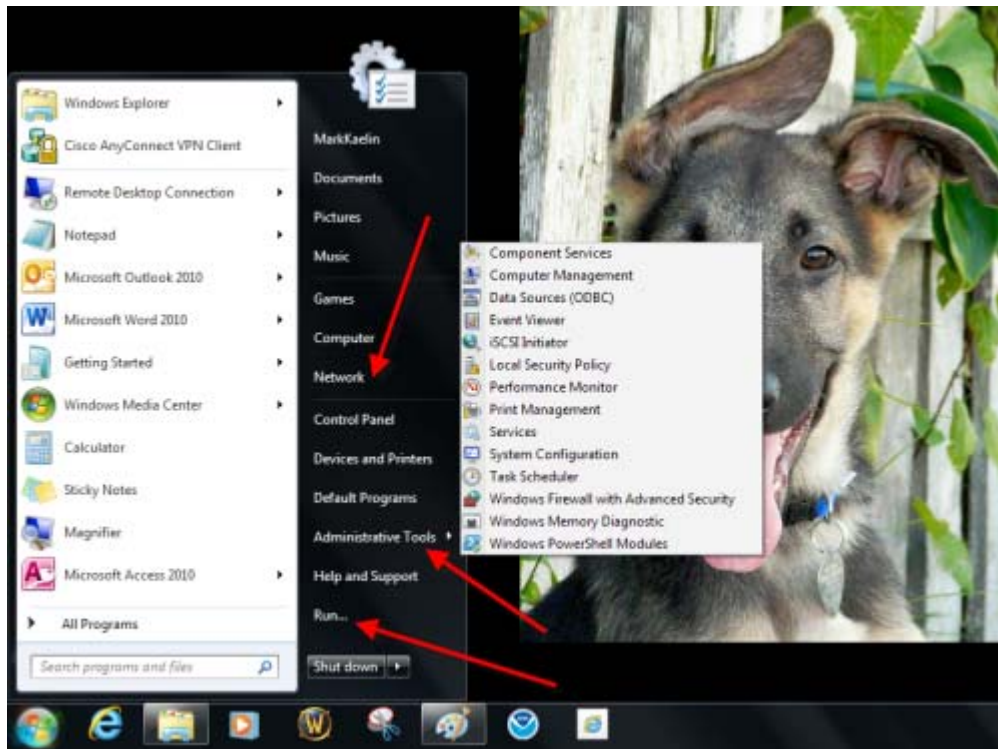
FIGURE H



ADD ADMINISTRATIVE TOOLS.

CLICK OK TWICE TO PUT THE CHANGES INTO EFFECT. NOW, WHEN WE GO BACK TO THE START MENU, YOU CAN SEE SEVERAL NEW ITEMS IN THE LIST (FIGURE I).

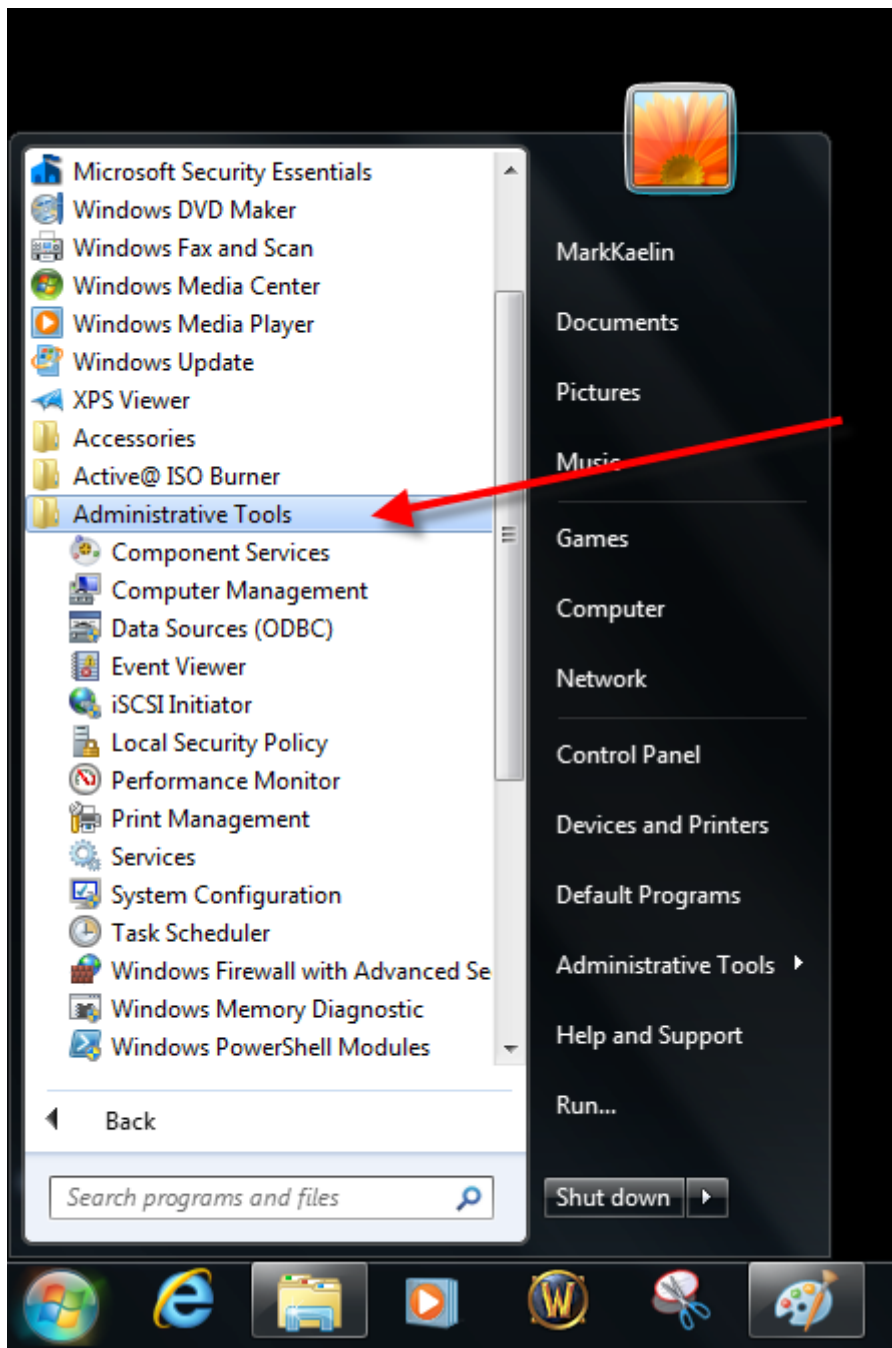
FIGURE I



NEW ADDITIONS ARE ON THE START MENU.

LIKEWISE, THE ALL PROGRAMS LIST NOW HAS AN ENTRY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE TOOLS (FIGURE J).

FIGURE J



ADMINISTRATIVE TOOLS IS ON THE ALL PROGRAMS LIST.

CHOICES

THE EXAMPLES IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE JUST THREE OF MANY CUSTOMIZATIONS YOU CAN MAKE TO THE WINDOWS 7 START MENU. I AM SURE IF YOU LOOK THROUGH THE CUSTOMIZATION LIST YOU CAN FIND SOME CHANGES YOU'D LIKE TO MAKE TO PERSONALIZE YOUR WINDOWS EXPERIENCE.

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