

How do I control X-Mouse settings (active window tracking)?

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20110602-00

June 2, 2011



Raymond Chen

For quite some time, Windows has had a setting officially called *active window tracking* but which informally goes by the name X-Mouse, because that was the name of the PowerToy which first exposed the feature. (The PowerToy was in turn so-named because it made the mouse behave in a manner similar to many X window managers.) The setting is exposed to end users in Windows 7 on *Make the mouse easier to use* under *Activate a window by hovering over it with the mouse*.

If you want to write your own PowerToy to control this setting, you can do so by calling the `SystemParametersInfo` function. There are three settings which collectively control the X-Mouse feature:

1. `SPI_SETACTIVEWINDOWTRACKING` : This is the master switch which enables the behavior.
2. `SPI_SETACTIVEWNDTRKZORDER` : This controls whether the window is brought to the top when it is activated by active window tracking.
3. `SPI_SETACTIVEWNDTRKTIMEOUT` : This controls how long the mouse has to be in a window before it is auto-activated.

Note that X-Mouse is a user preference. Applications should not change the setting without the user's permission.

[Raymond Chen](#)

Follow

