

WINDOWS VISTA:

Planning Your Upgrade Now

- Home Basic
- Home Premium
- Business
- Enterprise
- Ultimate Edition



Last issue, we gave you five reasons why you should upgrade to Microsoft Windows Vista. In this article, we'll tell you how to upgrade to Windows Vista: which edition of Vista to choose, what the minimum system requirements are and how to install Vista on your computer.

Picking Your Own Personal Vista

With Windows Vista, you can choose the operating system that's right for you without paying for features you don't need. Each of the five editions is tailored to a specific type of user. What kind of Vista user are you? Let's take a look:

Windows Vista Home Basic. You want the latest version of Windows but don't want to upgrade your existing Windows XP machine just for the new graphics experience of Windows Aero.

Windows Vista Home Premium. You're a home user who likes the cutting-edge look of Windows Aero and is willing to upgrade your existing computer or buy a new one to have it.

Windows Vista Business. You're a small business that wants the new security and productivity enhancements of Windows Vista with the option of running Windows Aero now or later.

Windows Vista Enterprise. You already have a volume software license agreement for Windows and run a business where easy deployment, manageability, compatibility and security are worth a premium.

Windows Vista Ultimate Edition. You want the robust functionality of Vista Enterprise edition combined with the advanced media features of the Home Premium version.

Premium Ready, Capable and Willing

If you selected the Windows Vista Home Basic or Business versions from the list above, there's good news: Your current Windows XP computer is probably Windows Vista Capable already. What does "Vista Capable" mean? It means your computer meets the minimum system requirements

to run Windows Vista without the Windows Aero graphic experience. In technical terms, a Windows Vista Capable computer is one that has:

- 800 MHz or higher processor
- 20GB hard disk (with 15GB available)
- 512MB of system memory
- CD-ROM drive (internal or external)
- DirectX 9.x-compatible graphics processing unit (GPU)

If you selected one of the other editions of Windows Vista, you'll need a computer that is Windows Vista Premium Ready to enjoy the benefits of the Windows Aero experience. A "Vista Premium Ready" computer is defined as one that has:

- 1 GHz or higher processor
- 40GB hard disk (with 15GB available)
- 1GB of system memory
- DVD-ROM drive (internal or external)
- DirectX 9.x graphics processing unit (GPU) that supports the Windows Vista Display Driver Model and Pixel Shader 2.0, with 128MB or more of graphics memory

Again, there's good news for Vista Premium users: many new desktops and notebooks meet the minimum requirements for Vista Premium Ready computers. Upgrading your existing desktop or notebook is also an option, especially if all you need is a new GPU or an external DVD-ROM drive.

Working with Windows Vista

If you decide to purchase the Windows Vista software upgrade and install it yourself on an existing computer, there are several ways you can do it. Depending on your current operating system (Windows XP or Windows 2000) and the edition of Windows Vista you've selected, you can choose to do an In-Place Upgrade or a Clean Install. If you're running Windows XP Home or XP Pro and are migrating to Windows Vista Business edition for example, you can simply install Windows Vista on your existing computer and retain all of your files and settings as an In-Place Upgrade without reloading anything. However, if you're currently running Windows XP Pro X64 or Windows 2000, you'll have to opt for the Clean Install: transfer all of your files from your computer, install Windows Vista, then transfer your files back to the computer and reload any applications. The Windows Easy Transfer option is designed to make the transfer process easy, but you'll need to have it loaded on both computers if you're transferring files from an old computer to a new one. If you're not confident transferring the files yourself, now might be a good time to call Geek Squad 24 Hour Computer Support Task Force for help.

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Getting Ready for Vista Right Now