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VERMONT COMPUTING INC.

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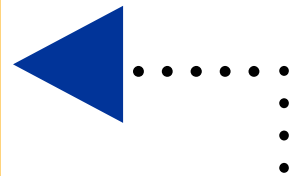


Store Hours

Mon – Fri 8:00 – 6:00

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VCI



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Newsletter

“The Vista issue”

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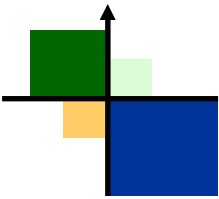


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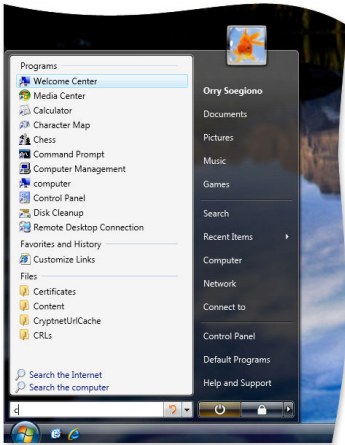


VERMONT COMPUTING, INC.

COMPUTER TALK



Windows Vista™



Vista's start menu

Windows Vista is the latest version of Microsoft Windows scheduled for release on January 30th 2007. Improved security was the primary design goal for Vista. Microsoft's Trustworthy Computing initiative, which aims to improve public trust in its products, has had a direct effect on its development. This effort has resulted in a number of new security and safety features.

User Account Control is a security technology that makes it possible for users to use their computer with fewer privileges by default. This was often a difficult thing to do in previous versions of Windows, as the previous "limited" user accounts proved too restrictive and incompatible with a large proportion of application software, and even prevented some basic operations such as looking at the calendar from the notification tray. In Windows Vista, when an action requiring administrative rights is requested, the user will first be prompted for an administrator name and password...

Another significant new feature is **BitLocker Drive Encryption**, a data protection feature included in the Enterprise and Ultimate editions of Vista that provides encryption for the entire operating system volume. BitLocker can work in conjunction with a Trusted Platform Module chip that is on a computer's motherboard, or with a USB key. Microsoft's anti-spyware product, **Windows Defender**, has been incorporated into Windows, providing protection against malware and other threats. Changes to various system configuration settings (such as new auto-starting applications) are blocked unless the user gives consent.

The new **Windows shell** is significantly different from Windows XP, offering a new range of organization, navigation, and search capabilities. Windows Explorer's task pane has been removed, integrating the relevant task options into the toolbar. A "Favorite links" pane has been added, enabling one-click access to common directories. The address bar has been replaced with a breadcrumb navigation system. The Start menu has changed as well; it no longer uses ever-expanding boxes when navigating through Programs

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Other New End-user Features:

Windows Search (also known as Instant Search or search as you type): significantly faster and more thorough search capabilities.

Windows Sidebar: A transparent panel anchored to the side of the screen where a user can place Desktop Gadgets, which are small applets designed for a specialized purpose (such as displaying the weather or sports scores).

Windows Media Player 11, a major revamp of Microsoft's program for playing and organizing music and video. New features in this version include word wheeling (or "search as you type"), a completely new and highly graphical interface for the media library, photo display and organization, and the ability to share music libraries over a network with other Vista machines, Xbox 360 integration, and support for other Media Center Extenders.

Windows Media Center, which was previously exclusively bundled as a separate version of Windows XP, known as Windows XP Media Center Edition, will be incorporated into the Home Premium and Ultimate editions of Windows Vista.

Parental controls: Allows administrators to control which websites, programs, and games each standard user can use and install.

Speech recognition is fully integrated into Vista.

Windows Vista has four distinct visual styles: Windows Aero; Windows Vista Standard; Windows Vista Basic; and Windows Classic.

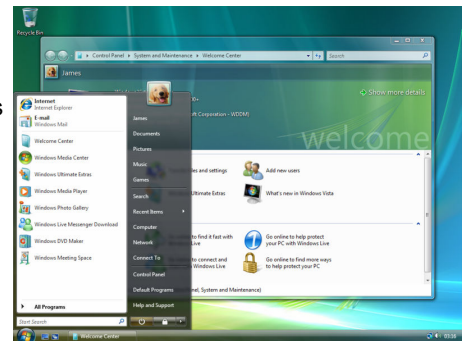
Windows Aero introduces support for 3D graphics (Windows Flip 3D), translucency effects (Glass), window animations and other visual effects, and is intended for mainstream and high-end graphics cards...Windows Aero has significantly higher hardware requirements than its predecessors.

Windows Vista Standard...mode is a variation of Windows Aero without the glass effects, window animations, and other advanced graphical effects such as Windows Flip 3D.

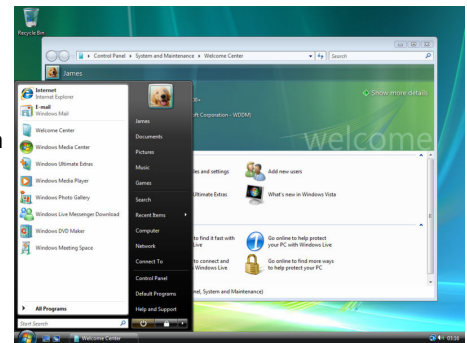
Windows Vista Basic...mode has aspects that are similar to Windows XP's visual style with the addition of subtle animations such as those found on progress bars. For computers with graphics cards that are not powerful enough to support Windows Aero, this is the default graphics mode.

Windows Classic (is) an option for corporate deployments and upgrades.

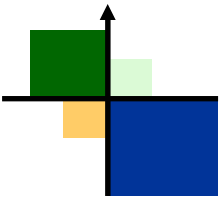
Please see the Windows Vista wiki article that this information was summarized from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_Vista for details and information on many more features..



Windows Aero (w/glass effect)



Windows Vista Standard



A BIT OF ADVICE

Windows Vista – Which version to buy?

Excerpted from "Windows Vista Editions--there's only one real choice" by Greg Shultz from www.techrepublic.com.

Windows Vista Edition	Full Package Price	Upgrade Package Price
Home Basic	\$199.00	\$99.95
Home Premium	\$239.00	\$159.00
Business	\$299.00	\$199.00
Ultimate	\$399.00	\$259.00

...I'm going to follow through with my target audience of serious Windows users and assume that you already own a copy of Windows XP and will be purchasing the upgrade package. I'm also going to assume that as a serious Windows user, your current system can be considered Windows Vista Premium Ready:

- 1 GHz 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) CPU
- 1 GB RAM
- 128 MB video card w/support for DirectX 9 WDDM driver, Pixel Shader 2.0, and 32 bits per pixel
- 40 GB hard disk
- DVD-ROM Drive

Let's focus on the price jumps as we move from the lowest to the most expensive of the four remaining Windows Vista editions. While getting a brand new operating system for under \$100 may sound like a good deal, it costs just \$59.05 to move up one level to Home Premium. It costs only \$40.00 to move up from Home Premium to Business. To move from Business to Ultimate costs \$60.00.

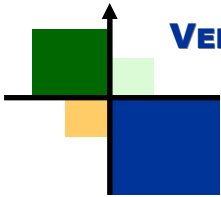
(Keep in mind that right now I'm just looking at the base price differences here--I'm not talking about the costs associated with the Windows Anytime Upgrade feature. At this time, the Windows Anytime Upgrade pricing structure is still under wraps.)

The Elimination Round

At this point, I'm going to throw Windows Vista Business out of the mix, for the simple fact that it has a very precise target audience. If you're going to be rolling out Windows Vista in a small- to medium-sized business and aren't participating in Microsoft's Software Assurance program, then you're going to use Windows Vista Business because it has everything you need for business computing and comes at a very reasonable price for a business.

Since Home Basic is the cheapest and Ultimate is the most expensive--and if the old adage "you get what you pay for" holds true--we can safely assume that Home Basic has nothing when it comes to the cool Vista features and that Ultimate has everything. In fact, this holds true when you look at the feature sets. Home Basic doesn't include Windows Aero, Flip 3D, or Live Taskbar Thumbnails, just to name a few, and Ultimate includes everything. Using that reasoning, we can throw out Home Basic.

So now it comes down to a choice between Home Premium and Ultimate editions. Here, the feature sets are very closely matched. In fact, Home Premium includes Windows Aero, Flip 3D, Live Taskbar Thumbnails and most of the cool Windows Vista features found in Ultimate. However, Home Premium doesn't include the Complete PC Backup imaging tool nor does it include the BitLocker drive encryption feature. While I'm only naming two here, these are highly prized Vista features that you definitely will want to take advantage of. And when it comes right down to it, for \$100 more than the cost of Home Premium, you can get Ultimate and have everything that Windows Vista has to offer...



SHUTDOWN

The Smoking Power Supply

(a.k.a. Why you should listen to your support technician the first time.)

“From an ex-field sales/support survivor...

I used to work in a computer store and one day we had a gentleman call in with a smoking power supply. The service representative was having a bit of trouble convincing this guy that he had a hardware problem.

Service Rep: Sir, something has burned within your power supply.

Customer: I bet that there is some command that I can put into the AUTOEXEC.BAT file that will take care of this.

Service Rep: There is nothing that software can do to help you with this problem.

Customer: I know that there is something I can put in... some command... maybe it should go into the CONFIG.SYS.

[After a few minutes of going round and round]

Service Rep: Okay, I am not supposed to tell anyone this but there is a hidden command in some versions of DOS that you can use. I want you to edit your AUTOEXEC.BAT and add the last line as C:\DOS\NOSMOKE and reboot your computer.

[Customer does this]

Customer: It is still smoking.

Service Rep: I guess you'll need to call Microsoft and ask them for a patch for the NOSMOKE.EXE.

[The customer then hung up. We thought that we had heard the last of this guy. But NO; he calls back four hours later!]

Service Rep: Hello, Sir, how is your computer?

Customer: I called Microsoft and they said that my power supply is incompatible with their NOSMOKE.EXE and that I need to get a new one. I was wondering when I can have that done and how much it will cost....”