

As requested, here is a “quicker” access to the thread “Short cuts and other tips” located at [www.vistababble.com](http://www.vistababble.com). Please understand that quicker does not necessarily means that it’s much faster; you’ll still have to do your work when searching for information.

I understand that some subjects are kind of disorganized, but you can search and choose according to your interest and create your own listing.

Note: Some of the information might not apply to current version of Vista, but it might help you to get you in the right track.

Happy computing!

P.S. Although I did a few editing, some post are kind of orphan. If for some reason you come across an issue that doesn’t make sense to you, go to the thread at [www.vistababble.com](http://www.vistababble.com) and see if there’s a related post that can get you in the right direction.

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## **Part I Vista General**

### **Installing Vista without Product Key**

Did you know you can install Vista RC1 without a product key to try out the five Vista versions....Ultimate, Home Premium, Home Basic, Business, or Starter? During the installation, leave the product key field blank, hit next, and answer no to the dialog box. Select which edition to install and check the box at the bottom.

One thing though, the key that was issues to you with RC1 does not work unless you install the complete program (Ultimate), e.g. if you choose to install Vista Home Premium, your current DVD product key is not going to work and you won't be able to activate windows. You'll be able to use whatever version you choose for 14-days, after that, you must either upgrade or do a complete installation.

By the way, I installed the starter version and performance rating stayed the same as with the Ultimate version. The PC does react much faster though.

### **Upgrading to Vista**

Can you use a Vista upgrade CD to do a clean install? For starters, if you are running Win 2000 Professional or Win XP Professional x64, you have no choice but to do a clean install, even if you purchase an upgrade copy.

Also, according to MS, if you purchase an upgrade copy of Vista, you have two options: In-place upgrade, meaning you install Vista over your old operating system; or a Clean install. With a clean install, you'll use Windows Easy Transfer to copy your files and settings to an extra hard drive or other storage device, and then install Windows Vista. After the installation is complete, Windows Easy Transfer will reload your files and settings on your upgraded PC.

However, in those two previous options, Vista should be able to detect your old operating system product key before proceeding with the upgrade. But, how about if you have a Win XP CD, purchase a Vista upgrade CD and are using a new hard drive or the hard drive is cleaned formatted, would you have to install and register Win XP first?

If I remember correctly, a clean install from Win 98 to Win XP was feasible, using an upgrade copy of Win XP, by inserting a valid copy of Win 98 when prompted during the upgrade process. The problem was that many people purchased the Win XP upgrade CD and then borrowed a Win 98 CD to validate the upgrade. However, times have change and I am sure

Microsoft is not going to make that same mistake twice.

So, will you be able to install an upgraded copy of Vista on a clean hard drive? Any thoughts

**Crabby wrote:** It's worth note that they will HAVE to allow upgrade via CD validation else the product is liable to become invalid if, for example, your hard drive busts. You are correct Felix that this was a huge security loophole for XP, however, will be rectified by validation of BOTH CDs during installation of Vista (note you can't upgrade from any version older than windows 2000). I realize that Windows 2000 can be installed without validation, but to obtain sp4 it required it and it is easy enough for vista to query servers regarding the validity of an old CD key. My two cents.

### **Quick Look at Windows Easy Transfer**

Depending on your current OS and the version of Vista you decide to purchase, your only choice might be a clean install of Vista. However, you can make your migration easier by using the Windows Easy Transfer wizard.

Using the wizard, you can transfer: User accounts; Files and folders; Program data files and settings; Email messages, settings, and contacts; Photos, music, and videos; Windows settings; and Internet settings. You can transfer your user account or all user accounts on your PC, or you can choose which data or folders to transfer.

Note: You CANNOT transfer any programs.

There are a number of ways to transfer your data:

1. USB Easy Transfer cable (not cheap). This is a special USB cable that is designed to work with Windows Vista and Windows Easy Transfer
2. Home or small business network. If you already have a wired or wireless network, you can use it to transfer all of your data.
3. Removable (external) hard drive. You can copy your data to the drive and then copy it from that drive to your new PC.
4. CD and DVD. The CD is a good solution if you are moving only small amount of data. The DVD can hold a lot more information.

### **What you wanted to know about Vista upgrade, but were too afraid to ask**

Although it was rumored for a while, the announcement of Vista coupon plan was made by Microsoft on Oct. 24. The coupon program allows a buyer purchasing a Windows XP-based PC

this holiday season to upgrade to Vista when it becomes available, presumably in January 2007.

First there is some bad news for those who wanted to get their hands on Vista Ultimate Edition; at least for now, there is no upgrade path to this version of Vista. So, if you were thinking about upgrading to Vista Ultimate Edition from XP for free, no luck there.

If you are upgrading from XP Professional, for the most part, you'll be treated as a business customer, and offered a chance to upgrade to Vista Business Edition.

For those upgrading from XP Media Center Edition, you'll get the opportunity to upgrade to Vista Home Premium Edition.

For a customer who buys or gets a boxed copy of Win XP, or for a smaller PC OEM, things are a little different. You'll be able to upgrade from XP Media Center 2005 to Vista Home Premium and from XP Professional, XP Tablet PC and XP Professional x64 to Vista Business and Vista Business 64 respectively, but will have to pay a "nominal" fee, which has not been yet been determined.

Those who plan to upgrade their XP Home Edition PC will get a choice to upgrade to either Vista Home Basic and or Vista Home Premium at 50% discount, plus shipping and handling. However, please remember that these are Microsoft's upgrade offers recommendations, and manufactures can alter the offers to make purchasing their PC more appealing. If you purchased a PC from a manufacture on or after Oct 26, make sure you get a coupon and understand your upgrade option, including any fees.

### **More on Vista upgrade**

Today is the day when you can start taking advantage of Microsoft Windows Vista's upgrade offers. However, before you go and get your PC, you must take a few things into account.

Like a mentioned on the previous post, "Know what you are getting in advance". Don't assume that you will get an upgrade coupon".

Find out what fees you have to pay and consider if you are better off just waiting when Vista is launch and getting a PC with the OS already installed.

Do a Google search and find out about the latest offers and prices. Some prices from manufactures have started to leak, here are some preliminary examples:

Dell:

1. Windows XP Home to Vista Basic = \$45 (plus shipping and handling)
2. Windows XP Media Center to Vista Premium and Windows XP Pro to Vista Premium = Just shipping and handling.
3. No need for any “proof-of-purchase requirements”, whatever that means.

HP Pavilion or Compaq Presario desktop and notebook PC, and HP Digital Entertainment Center, with a “qualifying” Windows XP operating system bought after Oct. 26th will be eligible for a free upgrade to Vista.

1. XP Home to Vista Home Basic
2. XP Media Center Edition 2005 to Vista Home Premium
3. XP Pro to Vista Business

#### Gateway

All eMachines and Gateway PCs bought on or after Oct 26th will be eligible for a free upgrade to Windows Vista.

1. XP Home to Vista Home Basic
2. XP Media Center Edition 2005 to Vista Home Premium
3. XP Pro and Tablet to Vista Business

Just wanted to add that apparently there are no upgrade offers to Vista Ultimate Edition...although it's too early

#### **Vista Home Basic**

For those who are planning to update XP to Home basic, you may want to consider whether or not it will be the right move. The fact is that Vista Home Basic is just that...Basic. Acer PC manufactures is claiming that Home Basic is Microsoft excuse to jack up prices on other versions; Vista Home Premium cost 10% more. My take on this is that if you want to get Vista, not just for its new innovation, but to take advantage of all the excellent features, then you should stay away from Vista Home Basic. And if that’s the only version you can afford, then you should stick with XP.

Here is the scoop in deciding whether or not to sip the upgrade to Vista Home Basic and choose Vista Home Premium instead. The difference is about \$30.00, depending on where you purchase your PC. Is it worth to pay the extra \$30.00? I believe it is, and not just worth, it should be your one and only choice.

However, whatever you decide, make sure the PC you are getting is eligible for the upgrade. If in

doubt, ask.

You can use the links below to find out about Vista upgrade offers from some manufactures. Feel free to add to the list.

HP [http://h20219.www2.hp.com/services/c...reg\\_R1002\\_USEN](http://h20219.www2.hp.com/services/c...reg_R1002_USEN)

Dell <http://www.dell.com/content/topics/g...=us&l=en&s=gen>

Gateway <http://www.gateway.com/vista/index.asp?page=express>

Toshiba <http://www.toshibadirect.com/td/b2c/...ExpressUpgrade>

Acer <http://global.acer.com/support/winvista/index.htm>

Systemax/Tiger Direct <http://www.tigerdirect.com/email/wem1224.asp>

Sony <http://www.learningcenter.sony.us/as...sta/index.html>

## Upgrading from WinXP

Although, as of now, we are dealing with a Beta version of vista, it won't be long before we can begin to decide whether or not we want to upgrade our Windows XP operating system. I know some people had already made that decision, but for others the decision to upgrade is not that simple.

Before heading to you favor computer store, there are a few things to keep in mind. For example, you won't be able to upgrade WinXP Professional to Vista Home Basic or Home Premium. Also, an upgrade from WinXP x64 to Vista will not be available...no matter which version of Vista you decide to get. Both of these conditions will require a clean install.

**Josh wrote:** Cool: Might I ask for your source for this information out of interest? Also I don't think for the home user that having an upgrade for their system is that important me myself I just wipe whenever

Answer: <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvist...gradeinfo.msp>

**Josh wrote:** Found it as well (but thanks for posting the above to the post) however this did make me jump up! quote from above link: "Notes: If you are currently using Windows 2000 Professional or Windows XP Professional x64, you are eligible for an upgrade copy to a corresponding or better edition of Windows Vista, but a clean install is required." So therefore if

I am reading this right all we need is Win2000 Pro (Or WinXP Pro x64 (65bit)) to get a free upgrade copy of Vista?

**Crabby wrote:** Incorrect Josh. It means that you may PURCHASE an UPGRADE for those specific versions. It will be cheaper than an upgrade for a home version.

Wish I could say otherwise, but Crabby is correct; It would be nice to get a free upgrade copy, but I believe it's telling you that although you can purchase an "upgrade" license for Windows 2000 Professional or Windows XP Professional x64; you must do a clean installed. Like Crabby mentioned, purchasing an upgrade version is cheaper than buying a full version

Read article: <http://www.pcpro.co.uk/news/96566/pc...rice-hike.html>

**Crabby wrote:** I totally agree that basic is horribly limited. I would say a great reason for it is OEM versions for PC sales where first time buyers won't know what they are getting, and once they find out they will be told they can do the 'Anytime upgrade' to a better version 🍷Crafty Microsoft! 😊

And I may add that apart from being "horribly limited", it's even basically inferior to XP Professional. You can go here [http://www.winsupersite.com/showcase...a\\_editions.asp](http://www.winsupersite.com/showcase...a_editions.asp) to get more info on all Vista Versions, including European versions.

## Shutting down your PC

Do you want your Vista power button on the Start menu to shut down your PC rather than putting it to sleep (default)? Just click Change advanced power settings and tweak the settings.

Here's how:

1. Go to "Control Panel" and click the "Power Options" icon (switch to classic view if you prefer)
2. Click "Change power settings"
3. Click "Change advanced power settings"
4. Click "Power buttons and lids"
5. Click "Start menu power button"
6. Select "settings", shutdown instead of sleep.

Here's another tip: Be default Vista place larger Icons on your Start bar. You can change this by doing a right-click on the Start menu, click properties, Customize, scroll down all the way to the bottom and uncheck "Use large icons". You font should stay the same size.

## **Quick Launch Toolbar**

The Quick Launch shortcuts are always visible on your taskbar and require just one mouse click to activate them. You can also add shortcuts to Quick Launch for folders, files and applications. The Quick Launch Toolbar is not enabled by default. To activate it simply right-click on open area of Taskbar, select Toolbars and check-mark Quick Launch. To expand the Quick Launch tool bar, right click an open area of taskbar, unlock the Taskbar and then pull the "handle" (shown as a series of small dots) to the right.

You can drag any file, shortcut or application to the Quick Launch toolbar and it'll be quickly accessible to you with just one click.

## **Task Manager**

Task Manager provides information about programs and processes running in your PC and also, displays the most commonly used performance measures for processes. You can see the status of the programs that are running and end programs that have stopped responding.

Most people access the Windows Task Manager by pressing Ctrl+Alt+Delete, however, you can access it much faster through the taskbar. Just right click on the Taskbar and select Task Manager.

## **Control Panel**

Have you noticed the new and improved control panel applications? Check them out:

Network Center. Use it to view your network and find problems with your connection.

Parental Controls. Now if you have kids, there won't be a need to buy a third party parental control software.

Pen and Input Devices. Excellent feature, especially if you own a notebook or tablet PC. And don't forget the tablet PC Settings.

Sync Center. Nice feature that allows you to synchronize PDAs, MP3 players, and other devices.

Speech recognition. You can train your PC to understand your spoken words, even with an accent.

Windows Defender. Also, available for WinXP; Allows you to check for software that could harm your PC, it scan your PC and protects it from malware.

## **Windows SideShow**

What's Windows SideShow? Basically it allows you to interact with your PC when it is off, or when you don't have access to keyboard, mouse, and monitor. For example, you are on a meeting and need access to your email. Instead of turning your laptop on, you can quickly look at a display put up on the outside of your laptop. The display can be setup to turn the PC on and off to do specific tasks. It can also be program to let you know about the next meeting, or even control Media Player to play music without opening the laptop.

You can use auxiliary displays as hand-held devices to communicate with your PC through Bluetooth or regular wireless connections, e.g. cell phones. This way you can control a Media Center PC remotely to watch movies, play music view a slideshow, etc.

### **Vista Sidebar**

Windows Sidebar is a vertical bar on one side (right side by default) of your monitor. It holds customizable software apps (gadgets), which offer quick info and easy access to commonly used tools. You can use a gadget to search the Internet (e.g. Google gadget), delete files, use a calculator, or display a slide show of your pictures. The Sidebar can be shown or hidden on your desktop, and gadgets can even be detached and moved around to your desktop.

To change which side to view your sidebar, right click an empty space of the sidebar, select "Properties", select "Right" or "Left". To close the Sidebar, simply right click and select "Close sidebar". To add gadgets, right click and select "Add gadgets". To change the "opacity" of a gadget, simply right click the gadget and select "Opacity". To detach a gadget, right click the gadget and select "Detach from sidebar". If you have the time to create your own gadget, go to <http://microsoftgadgets.com/Sidebar/...tOverview.aspx>.

### **Computer**

Want to have quick access to Computer? Display it as menu in explorer. Right click on the "Start" button, Select "Properties", on "Start menu" select "Customize". Select "Computer", click on the redial button next to "Display as a menu".

Want to have quicker access to Computer? Right click a blank space on the Taskbar, go to "Toolbars", select "New toolbar", on left pane click "Computer", make sure that "Computer" is selected and click the "Select Folder" button.

### **Welcome Center**

Don't want or need the Welcome Center every time you start your PC? Uncheck "Run at startup" located at the bottom of the Welcome Center window.

You can access the Welcome Center through the Start menu or by going to the Control Panel, System and Maintenance.

## **Snipping Tool**

The Snipping Tool captures a screen shot (snip) of an object on the screen. You can select four settings by clicking the down arrow on the "New" menu...Free-form; Rectangular; Window; Full-screen.

However, getting a Snip from a windows or menu that closes itself automatically, e.g. Start up menu, can be trickier. To get around this, simply open the window or menu and press the Print Scrn on your keyboard. Open "Paint" by going to "Start", All programs, Accessories, Paint. On the Paint window press Ctrl+V on your keyboard...this will paste the Print Scrn snapshot to Paint. Now you can use the Snipping Tool to select a specific object.

1. You can save the snip as HTML, GIF or JEP file. Just click the save snip icon or use the File, Save as.. Menu.
2. Change the ink color for the ink used to capture a snip. Click Options and select an ink color from the Ink color box.
3. To remove the ink used to capture a snip. Click Options and uncheck "Show selection ink after snips are captured".
4. To send a snip as an email attachment. Capture the snip, go to File and select Send to Email recipient.
5. Snips are automatic copy to the clipboard. To paste a click to an application; capture the snip, open the application and press Ctrl+V on your keyboard.
6. To prevent snips from being written to the clipboard. Click Options and uncheck "Always copy snips to the Clipboard".
7. To capture the full screen. Click New and select Full-screen Snip
8. To change the shape of the snip. Click New and select the shape

## **Dual Boot**

If you dual boot (multiboot) between Vista and WinXP, or another OS, you can choose which one will start when turning on your PC.

1. Open Computer
2. Click System Properties tab, and then click Advanced System Settings.
3. Click the Advanced tab, and then, under Startup and Recovery, click Settings.
4. Under System startup, in the Default operating system list, click the operating system that you want to use when turning on or restarting your PC.

5. Check Select the Time to display list of operating systems box, and select the number of seconds you want the list of operating systems to be displayed before the default OS starts. Default is 30 seconds, but that could be an eternity for some PC users

As far as I know, it shouldn't matter whether you have two partitions or two HDs. I happen to have two HDs, and up until just a few days ago, I was running Vista x86 on WinXP in each HD respectively. At present time, I'm running Vista x64 and x86 respectively...got rid of WinXP (have a back up just in case). I have not run these OS on separate partitions on same HD however. So if anyone out there has this setup, please let us know if you can choose which OS to boot from and how it's working for you.

Please note that you can't install Vista and WinXP on same partition and dual boot. If you happen to try this, Vista will take WinXP files and place them in a folder call "Windows Old". You'll not able to boot from WinXP, and you cannot restore WinXP and go back to it. Another thing, if you dual boot WinXP and Vista, and you decide to get rid of Vista later on, you can use your WinXP CD for a fast fix.

Here are the basic steps:

1. Insert disk, restart and boot to the CD.
3. Start the Recovery (ARE) Console
4. Run Fixboot
5. Run fixmbr to reset the master boot record
6. Exit and reboot
9. Now you can format the partition where Vista was installed.
8. Use the boot.ini file to remove the "Microsoft Windows Longhorn" entry.

**Crabby wrote:** If you have 2 hard drives... and are installing to each one with a different OS. Then remove the other you are installing and use the bios/boot menu to choose which to boot... saves hassle if things go wrong. A 'for instance' is if you format the drive with the boot data... then you can't boot into the other OS.

## **Sound**

Have you noticed the new cool feature in Vista? It allows you to independently control the sound level for each application that uses sound. For example, say you want to keep Windows system sounds at a mid range level, and Media Player at a lower level. You can change the volume level settings by opening the speaker volume application (lower/right hand side of notification area of task bar), click mixer, and individually change the volume level for any application that uses sound and is currently running. You can even mute the sound for each individual application.

## Sound Theme

You can easily change your computer sound, e.g. new email, to make it more personal. To do this simply click Start and type Sound on search box, then click Sound. Go to the Sounds tab, in the Program sound list; select the event you want to change the sound to, e.g. Device Disconnected, Exit Windows, Low Battery Alarm, etc. Under Sounds, click the sound that you want to associate with the event. Use the test button to preview the sound. If the sound you want to use is not on the list, click Browse to find it.

Once you made the changes, you may want to save the scheme for future use. Select the scheme, if not already selected, click Save As and type a name. If you don't want to keep it, just press Delete.

**Crabby wrote:** Some applications do not support this feature and the master volume changes instead... otherwise it is really useful

## Performance Rating

Want to know more about your performance rating? Go to C:\Windows\Performance\WinSAT\DataStore in your PC and double click the file, or drag it to IE.

## Menu Bar

Want to be able to see the old File, Tools, View, Help menu on Vista's application? Simply press the "Alt" key.

**TurboStorm wrote:** Felix, do you need a different key for the 5 OS's? I am a little confused on that one, I did a clean install, used my key from my DVD mailed to me, and it installed the Ultimate version. The email I received for the RC1 download link, had a different key. Maybe this weekend I will try each one of the versions, see which one works best.

The same key will work for all Beta versions. So, you now have 2 keys that will work on all Beta versions. All Betas are Vista Ultimate Betas.

**Znod wrote:** Just wanted to add that the DVDs (x64 or x86) include copies of all versions of vista, but the product key is Vista Ultimate only.

**Answer to TurboStorm:** Yes you do need a separate key if you want to run a different version of Vista. The key that you received is for the ultimate version. The only reason behind it, which I

can think of, is that Microsoft wants a complete test, rather than just a test on a specific version. The logic might be that if you can run the ultimate version and discovered bugs, the fix for those bugs can be applied to the other versions as well. But please keep in mind that this is just my opinion and that there might be other reasons. Do give it a try and see what happens, you have nothing to lose anyway...plus you'll get to try the version that will better fit your needs.

## **User Account Control (UAC)**

Also the User Account Control (UAC) helps eliminate security problems; its behavior can really get in your nerve. When performing task(s) that need security permission elevation, Windows blanks out the desktop, restricts its access, and brings the elevation prompt up front. Depending on your system, this can slow down your computing minutes significantly. Although the idea behind this feature is understandable due to problems with malware, viruses, hackers, etc., it could be a pain in the back side when setting up your system.

There's a solution however; you can disable the secure desktop blanking feature and re-enable after completing your setup.

1. Click the Start
2. Type gpedit.msc in search area and press Enter.
3. Click the gpedit that pops up and allow the program to run by clicking Continue in the security box.
4. On the Group Policy Object Editor window, expand Computer Configuration, if not already expanded.
5. Expand Windows Settings, Security Settings and Local Policies.
6. Click on Security Options.
7. On the right pane, scroll to the bottom of the listing, and double-click on "User Account Control: Switch to the secure desktop when prompting for elevation."
8. Select Disabled, and press OK.
9. Close the Group Policy Object Editor.

**Crabby wrote:** An easier way to disable UAC would be to go to users in the control panel and do it from there. Does your way keep UAC enabled but remove the prompt only?

**Answer:** It maintains the UAC enable, but prevents Secure Desktop from locking the desktop, which could be a hassle; especially for people with older video cards....refresh rate can be very slow.

## **Selecting Files and Folders**

Here's a tip for selecting a list of files and folders on explorer. Instead of holding down the Ctrl key to select every other file (or even the Shift key to select consecutive files) on a list, you can use a column of checkboxes instead. You can select an item or items by clicking a checkbox, and then you can copy, cut or move those items.

1. Open Explorer (You can right-click Start and click on Explorer).
2. On the upper left hand side on Organize, drop down the arrow.
3. Select Folders and Search Options.
4. Select the View tab.
5. Scroll down until you see "Use check boxes to select items".
6. Check the checkbox and click Apply and OK.

To select a file, you simply check the checkbox next to the left of the filename. You can then copy, cut, delete, send to..., etc. doing a right click on any one of the selected files.

## **Utilities**

### **Disk Cleanup**

Disk Cleanup is a Windows utility that can help you reduce unnecessary files, free up disk space and help your computer run faster. If you installed Vista as a clean install over another OS, including another version of Vista, you can run clean up to delete those files left behind by your old OS if you no longer have a need for them. It will also remove temporary files, empties the Recycle Bin, and removes other unneeded files.

To access Disk Cleanup go to the Control Panel and click System and Maintenance (or Performance Information and Tools if in Classic View). Click "Open Disk Cleanup". If prompted for administrator confirmation, Continue. Select the hard disk drive that you want to clean up, and then click OK. Click Disk Cleanup tab, then check boxes next to the file(s) you want to delete. When you are finished selecting the files you want to delete, click OK, and then click Yes to confirm the operation. You can also remove all, except the most recent restore point by clicking on the More Options tab...that's a personal choice, which I don't recommend, but it is there nevertheless.

### **Defrag**

Another application that goes hand in hand with Disk Cleanup is Disk Defragmenter. The way your files are organized on your hard-drive (HD) has a huge impact on your PC performance. If your files are neatly stored and organized (just like a file cabinet) the reading and writing that takes place within the HD will be much faster. When you add a new program and your HD is

fragmented, instead of end to end, the files end up all over your HD...that is called fragmentation.

With a few exceptions, when you install Vista (or other OS) and applications, the files are written in one contiguous block. As time goes by and you start creating and deleting documents, or uninstall, reinstalling and installing new programs, your HD is left with blank spaces all over it. Now when you install a new application your OS starts placing the file on an empty area of your HD. If the file is larger than what the free space can accommodate, the OS looks around for another free space to put the rest of the data. Now your HD has to work extra hard to find your data and will slow down your computing.

Running Disk Defragmenter rearranges fragmented data so your hard disk can work more efficiently. Although Disk Defragmenter runs automatically at specific schedule, you can run it manually. You can access Disk Defragmenter through the control panel, but for faster access, click Start and type defrag in the Start Search box. You can modify the schedule, or click Defragment now to begin defragmentation.

**Znod Wrote:** I am sold on Perfect Disk (not free, but a trial is available), and I like Registry Mechanic for registry work. Reliable sources indicate that the latter works properly on Vista. It certainly appears to do so. Among other things, Perfect Disk allows you to defrag your operating system "offline."

## **System Restore**

A safety feature build into Vista, as well as WinXP, is System Restore. This application helps you restore your computer's system files to an earlier point in time, without affecting your personal files, e.g. e-mail, documents, or photos.

In some instances, installation of a particular program or driver may cause unexpected changes to your PC or cause Windows to behave unpredictably. If uninstalling the program or driver does not fix the problem, you can us System Restore to restore your PC system to an earlier date when everything was working correctly.

System Restore automatically creates and saves "restore points", but you can also create your own restore points manually. I recommend doing this before installing or making configurations changes to your PC.

To manually create a restore point:

1. Click Start and then click Control Panel.

2. In the Search box, type "system".
3. Click Create Restore Point
4. Select the drive you want to create the restore point
5. Click Create.
6. Type a description for the restore point (Give it a name)
7. Click Create.
8. Click OK.

To restore your PC to an earlier date:

1. Click Start and then click Control Panel.
2. In the Search box, type "system".
3. Click Restore systems files and settings to an earlier point
4. Select either "Recommended restore:", or to restore to the restore point you created, select "Choose a different restore point and click next
5. Choose the restore point you created or select one from the list and click Next.

### **User Account Control (UAC)**

What are the difference in between a standard acct and an administrator acct and which one is more secure? An administrator account allows you to gain complete access to your PC and make changes that can affect other accounts. Although you can create additional administrator accounts on your PC, they are not the same as the administrator account that comes pre-installed. Additionally, the pre-installed administrator account is not protected by User Account Control (User Account Control, UAC) is a feature in Vista to help prevent unauthorized changes PCs).

When you installed Vista, the Administrator account is disabled by default and a Standard account with administration privilege is created. This is the account you'll log on to when you first use Vista. You can run this account as a Standard account until Administrator privileges are needed, e.g. changing date/time. When you try to change date/time, although UAC knows you have Administrator privileges, and are allowed to make the change, it will ask you for permission to continue. It does this to make you conscious that your action may impact all users, be dangerous, or might make your system less secure.

On the other hand, a standard user with Standard privileges can use the PC, but without the ability to make changes that may affect other users, or the security of PC without permission from an administrator. A standard user can use most software, but won't be able to install/uninstall software and hardware, delete files required for PC to work, or change settings that affect other users. This type of user cannot for example change the date/time of your PC without obtaining permission from the administrator.

Although, the User Account Protection is a great feature, it require common sense if you want to maintain your PC secure. An account with administrative privilege is not of any advantage if it is not password protected. However, even if it's password protected, it does not do you any good, if like many people I know, write the password on a blank space on your desk, on the wall, or the side of your PC. Another thing, before you leave your desk, secure your PC, either by going to Start and using the Lock icon or by using Ctrl+L.

**Znod wrote:** Good one Felix. Thanks. Incidentally, for some reason, I can't use the VistaBabble emoticons any more. How about you? And, actually, I can't use bold, italic, etc. Any tips here? This scenario developed after installing 5728. Admittedly, I haven't searched my settings for an answer yet, but I haven't changed anything. I noticed that "Disable Smiles in Text" was not checked. And, I checked it. Still no dice.



The emoticons work on this side. This would require troubleshooting on your side. Did it happen right after installing RC1 5728, or was everything working and then stop? I really don't think that Vista has anything to do with it. There's the possibility that a virus application or a malware protection program deleted a file. That shouldn't be uncommon due to programs compatibility issues. The majorities of these programs are still under the development process and will have bugs. Can you try windows restore? It's worth a try. Good luck.

## Security Center

You can use the Security Center to make sure your firewall is on, that your antivirus software is up-to-date and active, and your computer is set to install updates automatically. You can also use it to verify that your Internet security center and User Account Control are "on". To access the Security Center, go to Start, Control panel and on the search box type Security center.

Two applications you should never ignore are your anti-virus software and your firewall protection. An antivirus program can help defend your computer against viruses...as long as it's kept up-to-date. Antivirus programs scan for viruses trying to get into your e mail, operating system, or files. New viruses appear daily, so you must check for updates frequently or setup your anti-virus program to check for updates automatically. Most antivirus programs are sold with annual subscriptions, which can be renewed as needed. You can also access the Internet to find free and excellent anti-virus software.

A firewall is software or hardware that checks information coming from the Internet or a network, and then either blocks it or allows it to pass through to your PC, depending on your firewall settings. A firewall can help prevent hackers or malware from gaining access to your computer through a network or the Internet. A firewall can also help stop your computer from

sending malicious software to other computers. Having software and a hardware firewalls is recommended, however, you should not install and activate two firewall software applications as they could conflict with each other

## **Parental Controls**

Vista Parental Controls let you decide how your children use the PC. You can use Parental Controls to set the time limit that your kid(s) can use the computer, the types of games they can play, the internet websites they can visit, and programs they can run.

By setting time limits on your kid's computer, you prevent them from logging on during certain hours. You can set different log on hours for every day of the week. If they are logged on when their allotted time ends, they will be automatically logged off.

You can also control the games your kids will be allowed to play. You can control access to games, choose an age rating level, choose the types of content you want to block, and decide whether you want to allow or block specific games.

You can restrict websites your kids visit, check age rating, indicate whether they'll be allowed to download files, and set up filters to block and allow content. You can even block or allow specific websites. Additionally, you can prevent your kids from running specific applications on their PCs.

And finally, you can setup activity report so you can track what they are doing when using their PCs

1. To run Parental Controls click Start and type Parental Control on search box.  
Note that that you must set a password for accounts with administrative privileges to prevent others for turning Parental Control off.
2. Create an account if it has not been created.
3. Turn Parental Controls on.
4. Select whether or not you want an activity report.
5. On Windows Setting, select the controls for Internet, time limits, games and programs allow.

Will your kids be upset about their settings? They might, especially teenagers, but as parents, it's our responsibility to make sure they stay safe while using a computer in the Internet. Will they be able to hack the controls? When there is a will, there's a way. You should never rely solely on the software...check and know what they are doing.

## **Windows Remote Assistance**

When you feel frustrated about a problem with your PC and can't think of a solution, your best bet might be to have a friend, or trusted PC guru, show you how to fix it. You can use Windows Remote Assistance to do just that, it gives you the ability to allow someone to access your pc and help you solve the problem. Windows Remote Assistance sessions are secured, as they are encrypted and password-protected.

You can invite your friend to connect to your PC by sending an invitation through instant messaging or e-mail. Make sure to ask someone whom you can trust because that other person will have access to your files. Once your friend is connected, both of you can view your PC and discuss what you both see.

Your friend can even use his or her mouse and keyboard to work with you on your PC and, hopefully, show you how to fix the problem. And don't forget, you might be able to help someone else using this application as well.

1. Go to Start and type Remote Assistance on Search box. Now click Windows Remote Assistance.
2. On popup window press "Invite someone you trust to help you".
3. From here just follow the instructions.

## **Shortcuts**

This applies to other OS as well, not just Vista.

With today's quick pace living and high gas prices, we all try to get to our destination a little quicker and take shortcuts whenever possible. However, when it comes to PCs, although we know of the power of shortcuts, in most instances, we don't take full advantage of these little gadgets.

What's a shortcut? A shortcut is just basically a pointer to a program or file in your computer. You'll know if it's a shortcut because it will have a small arrow in the lower left hand corner of the icon. Shortcuts can be placed anywhere on your PC, but the most common places are your desktop and Start menu. Shortcuts are not difficult to make, let's use the Desktop for example.

To create a shortcut on your Desktop:

1. Right click on empty area your desktop
2. Select NEW from the drop down menu






3. Point the mouse to "Shortcut"
4. A Create Shortcut window will pop up; this is a "Command Line" dialog box. In the "Type location of the item", in text area, type the path to your program. If you don't know the path, click the "Browse" button.
5. I'm assuming you click on the Browse button. If you did, another small window will pop up.
6. Choose the program, file or application you want to apply the shortcut to and click the OK button.
7. The complete path will appear in the Command Line text box, click "next."
8. Another window will pop up and ask if you would like to rename the shortcut...that's up to you.
9. Once satisfy, click finish.
10. Test the shortcut.

Please note that there are other ways to make a shortcut. One quick way is to right click the program or file and choosing Create Shortcut.

Another useful way is by doing a "right-click-drag"; you drag the file using your mouse's right button. Once you reach the location you want to create the shortcut to, release the button and a small window will popup asking whether you want to Copy, Move, Create Shortcut or Cancel the operation.

You can also make a shortcut from an open webpage to your desktop and use it to access the web page much faster, e.g. you can open [www.vistababble.com](http://www.vistababble.com) and drag the small IE icon on the address bar to your desktop. Next time you want to visit us, just click the shortcut.

Note: Shortcuts can very easily and rapidly clutter your desktop. To prevent this, create a folder, give it a name of your choice to that folder and use it to store your shortcuts.

**Znod wrote:** I'll bet you are talking about shortcut clutter like on my desktop.   But, really, to add to your tip, I emphasize arranging desktop shortcuts so that they make you more efficient. And, in this regard, I say, make the arrangement attractive letting form follow function. And, goodness, get rid of that darn Vista Beta disclosure.   

## Control Panel

The Vista Control Panel is one of the most sophisticated and useful application of Windows Vista. It is the central area that allows you to adjust certain Windows settings, as well as to perform system maintenance, just by typing a word. For example, by typing "music" in the Search box, the Control Panel provides you with music and sound options, such as: a way to select the default program, associate file type, and change auto play settings for music media.

Additionally, it displays options to adjust system volume, change sound card settings, change system sounds and manage audio devices.

If you type desktop, it provides you quick access to desktop settings options and more. Type performance and you'll get the ability to access performance information and tools, system information and power options.

Don't understand or have questions about something specific? If you need help with performance, for example, click on the link at the bottom, "Search Windows Help and Support for performance". It's that simple. Try it...I think you'll keep going back to it again and again.

To open the control panel click start and type control in the Search box or simply click Control Panel.

## **Desktop**

When you turn on your PC and log on to Windows, the first screen that you get to see is the desktop. Imagining if you are in your office sitting behind your desk, now look at the top of your desk, this is your working area. You can compare Windows Desktop as the top of an actual desk; it serves as a your working area. As you start using programs, files or folders, they will be placed on your desktop so you can have work with them. And similar to a regular desktop, you can place things on it, e.g. files, folders, calendars, notes, reminders, etc. You can also arrange your desktop and have it well organize or have things piled up all over the desktop.

To have quick access to programs, files or folders, you place icons or little pictures on your desktop. Some people have one or two icons, while others may have a desktop clutter with these little pictures. If someone enters your office, or room, and you don't want for them to see your mess, right click an empty space on your desktop, click View, and clear the check mark next to Show Desktop Icons. This will temporarily get rid of the icons and your mess. As soon as everyone is gone, reverse the process.

When you are working with a file, you cannot see your desktop because it's blocked by the file. Now you cannot see the icon you need to open a program or folder. To alleviate this you can use the Quick Launch toolbar located at the bottom of your desktop on the taskbar. By default, the taskbar is visible even when you have a file or program open on your desktop. By placing an icon on the Quick Launch toolbar, you won't have to minimize the file you are working on to have access to other files or documents...you just click the icon on the Quick Launch toolbar. You can add items to the Quick Launch toolbar by dragging them with your mouse, or by doing a right click and selecting Add to Quick Launch.

Another handy tool of your desktop is the Start menu. You can use the Start menu to open files, folders or programs without searching all over your desktop. You can even find shortcuts for the file you were working on yesterday by clicking Start and pointing to Recent Items. Or if you just want to see a list of all the programs installed on your PC, click Start and point to All Programs.

Want to prevent a program from disappearing from your Start menu, click Start, right click the program or application you want to keep (left side of Start menu) and click Pin to Start Menu.

Finally, don't maintain important files on your desktop; keep them in Documents folder instead. Windows save all files located on the desktop on your user profile. Your user profiles are settings that allow your PC to work the way you want it to look and feel. If your user profile gets corrupted, removed or changed, (like spilling coffee on your desk) your files might get corrupted as well. If you need quick access to a file, keep an icon of that file on your desktop instead.

## **Backup**

Windows Backup can back up your PC settings, files and applications manually or by using automated scheduling. You can back up to CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, external hard disk, to another hard disk on your PC, or to a network PC or server. With automatic scheduling, you can choose when and where you want the backup to take place. You also have a choice of backing up your systems files and folders or your entire hard drive.

When backing up your entire system, Windows Back Up creates a complete image of your hard drive. You can use this backup to restore your PC contents in the even your hard disk fails. MS recommend creating a new system image backup every six months. Here's how:

1. Open the Control Panel and click "Backup and Restore Center".
2. Choose the type of restore you want to create and follow the instructions.

If this is your first backup, I suggest you do a complete PC backup. If you use a lot of programs and have those programs available, installed those programs before backing up your hard drive. Vista will create an image of the entire PC, which you can later use to restore your PC in case of a PC failure or if replacing your hard drive.

Note that if you restore your PC from a backup image, you won't be able to choose individual files or folders to restore, and all of your current files and programs will completely replaced. Also, do not choose a complete back up if you are experiencing problems with your current settings, if you do, chances are that you'll have those same problems when you restore your PC.

You should backup your files in a regular basis, or schedule automatic backups...Follow steps 1 and 2 above. Note that automatic backup will not be available in Windows Vista Starter or Home Basic versions.

If you backup important files in an external hard drive, DVD, or CD, keep them in a secure place to prevent other people from accessing your files, or better yet, have your files encrypted. Also, remember that you are currently using a Vista beta...For testing only. If you use this beta to backup your important files, you might not be able to restore those files when the beta expired.

**Znod wrote:** I'll just add that subsequent whole PC backups are incremental--so they require minimal additional storage

## **Search Tools**

Use the new/improved search tool to organize and find data more efficiently. Using the search tools allows you to find all data on your PC, including mail, music, pictures and personal files and folders quickly and effortlessly. The good thing about it is that you don't need to know the complete name of the file or folder you are searching for...just a few words will do the trick. You can also add tags to your data so it'll be easier to search. For example you can add a keyword, e.g. science, to all documents related to a specific school project. When you do a search for "science, all documents related to the science project will be displayed. You can add tags when saving the document using the "save as" command or after the document has been saved.

## **Create and format a partition**

On a previous post, I suggested to have "Documents" folders store files on a separate partition. This is important in case you have or want to reinstall Vista, as your data will not be affected. To do this, you must have a separate hard drive or a drive partitioned in two or more volumes. If you only have one hard drive with one partition, you can use Vista to create another partition.

Here's is how:

1. Click Start and type Management on search box, or click Start, right click Computer and click Manage.
2. Click Disk Management under Storage.
3. Right-click the drive you want to add your partition to and select Shrink Volume
4. Decide how much room you want to allocate to the new partition; e.g. If your hard disk has 60GB and you want to allocate 20GB for your data, you must shrink the partition to 40GB.
5. Now right click the unallocated partition you just created and select New Simple Volume.

6. In the New Simple Volume Wizard, click Next.
7. You can either create a custom size volume in MB or accept the maximum default size, and click Next.
8. Select the default drive letter or choose a different letter and click Next.
9. Click Next to format the partition and then click Finish.

## **Resource Monitor**

Want to see a detailed look at your PC performance? Use the new Resource Monitor. Go to the expandable sections just below the graphic displays. This expandable section provides a complete and comprehensive look at CPU usage, disk transfer rates, network throughput, and memory use. Check it out. Right click a blank space on the taskbar, click Task Manager, go to Performance tab and click Resource Monitor.

**Znod wrote:** And, there is, perhaps, a prettier version available by, for example, right clicking on Computer, choosing Manage, and then selecting Reliability and Performance. And, by opening Reliability and Performance, the Monitoring folder is exposed. It contains two additional charts--the best of which is Reliability Monitor.

**Davehc wrote:** Or yet another more comprehensive one. Try this. Type Msconfig in the "run" bar. Go along to Tools and "launch" the "Performance Monitor"

## **Ease of Access Center**

The Accessibility Options in WinXP has been replaced by Ease of Access Center. It provides a centralized place for all accessibility options, as well as a set of questions to guide you in selecting a particular feature. These features are designed to make the computer easier and more comfortable to use. Additionally, you can visit <http://www.microsoft.com/enable/> to add features or to obtain more information.

You can access the Ease of Access Center when logging in to your user account by clicking the Ease of Access Center icon, or click Start and type Ease of Access Center, or go to Control Panel and click the Ease of Access Center icon. These are some of the options you can select:

1. Using PC without a display: This features uses a screen reader called Narrator that will read the text that appears on the screen aloud.
2. Making PC easier to see: Can magnify the screen, adjust screen colors to make easier to see and read, and removing animations and backgrounds.
3. Using PC without a mouse or keyboard: Use on-screen keyboard to type; and Speech Recognition to control your PC through voice commands, or to dictate text.

4. Making mouse easier to use: Change size and color of mouse pointer, or use the keyboard to control the mouse.
5. Making keyboard easier to use: Adjust how Windows responds to mouse or keyboard input.
6. Using text and visual alternatives for sounds: Replace system sounds with visual alerts and display text captions for spoken dialog in multimedia programs.
7. Making it easier to focus on reading and typing: Use Narrator to read information on the screen, adjust how the keyboard responds to certain keystrokes, and control whether certain visual elements are displayed.
8. Making it easier to focus on tasks: Reduce amount of information on the screen, and set up keyboard to make it easier to type.

## **Windows Mail**

Windows Mail is an upgrade from Outlook Express, adding many new features such as phishing and junk e-mail. One drawback, however, is that it does not support the HTTP:// protocol, which was used by Outlook Express to access Hotmail. One solution to this dilemma is Live Mail Desktop.

Although in Beta form, Live Mail Desktop has many options not available with Windows Mail, including support for Hotmail. In addition, it can support web-based accounts, POP3 or IMAP enabled accounts. It also has built in protection against junk e-mail, viruses and phishing. Plus, it provides you with up to 2GB of online inbox storage.

To get Windows Live, simply click Start, go to Welcome Center and click Download Windows Live Mail desktop. Note that to use this application you'll need either a MSN Hotmail, MSN Messenger, or Microsoft Passport account.

Windows Live Mail desktop is part of Microsoft Windows Live, a set of internet-based product and services. You can view information on these products by opening the Welcome Center and clicking "Go online to learn more about Windows Live".

## **Windows Flip 3D**

Windows Flip 3D allows you to preview your open windows without clicking the taskbar. With Flip 3D you can view your windows in a stack, allowing you to flip through the stack. Here's how it works:

1. With one or more windows open, use the Windows logo +TAB keys to open Flip 3D.

2. Hold down the Windows logo key and either press TAB repeatedly or rotate the mouse wheel to cycle through each window. Or press the RIGHT or DOWN ARROW to cycle forward, or the LEFT or UP ARROW to cycle backward.
3. Releasing the Windows logo key will display the front-most window.
4. You can also press CTRL+Windows logo+TAB keys to keep Flip 3D open. Press ESC to close Flip 3D.
5. Another way to open Flip 3D is by clicking the Switch between windows button on the taskbar. Then just click a window in the stack to display that particular window.

## **Restart Manager**

Don't you hate it having to restart your PC every time you install an update? This is especially true with Win XP, where there seem to be at least one update every time you sit by the PC. Here comes Vista to the rescue. One feature of Vista that stands out from XP is called Restart Manager, which will allow updates to the OS or applications without having to reboot your PC. This will reduce the number of reboots when updating your OS. On the other hand, if you have to reboot, the Restart Manager will take a snapshot of your system and brings the OS exactly back to where it was, or update and restart an application.

Restart Manager will work in conjunction with a feature built in Office 2007 called Freeze Dry. Freeze Dry will ensure that a user will be able to recover the saved data when restarting the PC. The Freeze Dry feature is designed to remember program settings such as window size, window position, and even cursor position.

If you work in an office environment and leave the PC on at night, your IT personnel can update and restart your system without deleting any of your unfinished/opened files. When you sit by your PC again in the morning, you can continue on where you left off.

As for me, my biggest benefit is that I don't have to be concerned about the number of times my PC has to reboot due to updates or when installing applications.

## **Programs Compatibility**

Although a great number of Win XP programs will run with Vista, there are a few that will run, but with some issues or won't run at all no matter what you do. What would you do in this situation? Here are some suggestions:

First, don't go out to purchase an updated version of the program, at least not yet. Remember that we are still dealing with a Beta version of Vista; there's always a chance that your program will work once the final version rolls around. Another reason not to purchase an updated version is

that by the time Vista rolls around, software developers may have already a Vista compatible update. However, do check for updates before proceeding, as there's a chance you can download a free update.

If you cannot find an update, the next step is to change the compatibility for the program. There are two ways to change the compatibility settings: Manually or using the Program Compatibility Wizard.

To run the wizard, click Start, Help and Support, then type Compatibility Wizard and select Run the Program Compatibility Wizard. Then just follow the instructions in the wizard.

To change compatibility settings manually, simply right-click the program's icon, click on Properties, then click the Compatibility tab. You can change the compatibility mode by first placing a check mark to the left of "Run this program in compatibility mode for:", then selecting the compatible Windows operating system for the program.

You can also check mark the following settings:

**Run in 256 colors:** Uses a limited set of colors in the program. Some older programs are designed to use fewer colors.

**Run in 640 × 480 screen resolution:** Runs the program in a smaller-sized window. Try this setting if the graphical user interface appears jagged or is rendered improperly.

**Disable visual themes:** Disables themes on the program. Try this setting if you notice problems with the menus or buttons on the title bar of the program.

**Disable desktop composition:** Turns off transparency and other advanced display features. Choose this setting if window movement appears erratic or you notice other display problems.  
**Disable display scaling on high DPI settings:** Turns off automatic resizing of programs if large-scale font size is in use. Try this setting if large-scale fonts are interfering with the appearance of the program.

**Privilege level:** Runs the program as an administrator. Some programs require administrator privileges to run properly. If you are not currently logged on as an administrator, this option is not available.

**Show settings for all users:** Lets you choose settings that will apply to all users on this computer.

One more thing; do not ignore the following WARNING that appears when you start the wizard:

Do not use the Program Compatibility Wizard on older antivirus programs, disk utilities, or other system programs because it might cause data loss or create a security risk.

Although you might get the program to work, the antivirus program might not protect your PC against viruses for example, or the Register repair program might cause more harm than good, and so forth. There are many antivirus and a few utility programs compatible with Vista, so don't take a chance.

## **Reading Pane**

Had you used the reading pane on Vista yet? It lets you preview files from Documents, Music or Pictures folders. Give it a try; click Start, then Explore. Click Documents and select one of your documents (one click only). Now click Organize (upper left hand corner), select Layout, and then select Preview Pane. Do the same with music files (songs) and you can preview yours songs without opening the file...just press the play button.

One more thing, have you seen this message when posting a file on Vistababble: "Your file of 68.4 KB bytes exceeds the forum's limit of 58.6 KB for this file type"? Then, use Microsoft Office Picture Manager to resize your picture. Simply open your picture with Microsoft Office Picture Manager, select Picture from menu, and click "Resize and select "Percentage of original width x height:" Use the up or down arrow to increase or decrease the size of your picture.

**Davehc wrote:** One good tip is to try the MS help and Support item in the start menu. A huge amount of information, including most of the preceding in this thread, for example a search for "shortcuts" Unloads a huge amount of info.

**Answer:** Davehc, you are so correct. I've been around computers since 1987 and one thing I learned is that I can pretty much run most applications by simply using the help menu. However, not everyone use it, which is why people pay big bucks to attend classes on how to use Word for example.

## **Stack View**

Another great way to view your files is by using Stack View. It shows your data in stacks based on the content of a folder. For example, on a previous post, I mentioned that I ripped a bunch of my CDs to the hard drive. I open the folder where my music files are located, right click and select "Stack by" Album", they are rearranged into stacks organized by albums.

Now, you can click on a stack just like a folder and select a different view. For example, I recorded an album, which includes various artists, 12 to be exact. I open the stack and it shows

all 12 songs by titled. Doing a right click and selecting “Stack by” “Artists”, shows a stack of all artists for that particular album. Selecting “Stack by” “Folder”, shows you the location or folder where the file is located.

You can try it with documents as well. Open Documents, right click and select “Stack by” “Date Modified” for example. The files are stack by according to when they were modified, e.g. yesterday, last week, earlier this year, a long time ago.

Tip: Once you have selected a “Stack by” view, use the menu bar to select a different view; Name, Date Modified, Type, etc.

### **About Vista PC Accelerators**

Vista includes performance-enhancing features called Windows PC Accelerators to maintain PCs consistent performance. These features are called SuperFetch, ReadyBoost and ReadyDrive.

SuperFetch is enabled in all versions of Vista. It’s designed to maintain optimal memory content based on how you use your PC. It analyzes how you use your PC for several weeks to decide the content that should be present in system memory at any given time. SuperFetch also allows Vista to detect and avoid memory usage patterns that could push higher priority content out of memory.

ReadyBoost uses capable flash devices to extend the disk caching capabilities of Vista’s main memory. You can use USB 2.0 flash drives, Secure Digital (SD) cards, and CompactFlash cards. Using these devices, Vista can access data approximately 8 to 10 times faster than from your hard drive. Before the data is copied to the external device, it’s first copied to the hard drive, allowing you to remove any of the devices without any interruptions of system services or loss of data. Also, for security purposes, the data is encrypted for use only on the PC where the device is connected.

ReadyDrive is a technology that supports the use of hybrid hard disk drives (H HDD). The hybrid HDD combines the low-power consumption and speed of flash media with the large storage and low cost of magnetic drives. This minimizes dependency on the hard drive for frequently accessed sectors and speed up performance. The recommended cache size is at least 128MB; however hard disk manufacturers could easily incorporate 4GB or more cache size.

### **Windows Calendar**

With technology advances, using a PC to manage our time has become more important than ever. Windows Calendar allows you to manage your time and coordinate your schedule with relatives,

associates and colleagues. It's simple to use, and can be setup to provide you automatic notifications and reminders about specific tasks or future appointments. For example, you can setup the calendar to alert you minutes, hours, or even days ahead of time, depending on how much advance notice you want. Or you can setup a recurring appointment, e.g. staff meeting every Friday at 3:00 p.m., personal budget every two weeks, monthly health club payment, etc.

Windows Calendar also allows you to organize and manage the things you need to do by creating a personal task list. Additionally, for each task, you can describe what you need to do, set deadline for completion, set priority ranking and keep track of your progress. It even allows you to set reminders so you'll know when a task is nearly due.

To open Windows Calendar, simply click Start, type Windows Calendar and hit enter.

To create a calendar, click the File menu, and select New Calendar. Type a name for the calendar and then press ENTER.

To view your calendar by day, work week, week, or month simply click the View menu and place a check mark next to the view you want to select.

The Details Pane allows you to see a detail of a task or appointment. To view Details Pane click the View menu and check Details Pane. To close the Details pane, simply uncheck it.

To create appointments click New Appointment on the toolbar, then use the Details Pane to enter any additional information.

To create a task, click New Task on the toolbar. Use the Details Pane to write a description and any other information about your task.

You can even search for appointments or task by using the Search box (upper right hand side) by entering keywords.

## **Startup Folder**

Want to run a program automatically when Windows starts? If you want IE7, outlook, or any other program to open automatically when you start Vista, do the following:

1. Click Start, All Programs, right-click the Startup folder, and click Open.
2. Find the application you want to start automatically, right click it and select Create Shortcut.
3. Now simply drag the shortcut into the Startup folder.

Tip: Using your mouse right button, drag the application to the Startup Folder, let go of the button and select “Create Shortcuts here”.

I just wanted to add that if you don't want an application to run automatically at startup, simply delete the shortcut for that application from the Startup folder.

**Crabby wrote:** A friend of mine starts his PC up in Starcraft 🤖 What a freak!

## System Restore

System Restore allows you to easily restore your system to a previous state when you run into problem with Vista. You can start the System Restore tool from the command prompt if necessary. This might be useful if your PC doesn't start normally or in Safe Mode. To start System Restore from the command prompt simply restart your PC and press F8 during startup. From the boot options, select Safe Mode with a command prompt. Launch the System Restore tool by typing C:\Windows\System32\rstrui.exe.

**Crabby wrote:** Don't you think you should mention the repercussions of performing a system restore Felix? Like what happens to installations/drivers, and how files are dealt with etc 😊

**Answer:** Better than to have a dead PC.

**Crabby wrote:** I completely agree... but people should note that any installs (which includes drivers and windows updates) are removed HOWEVER the files are not, which can mean junk EVERYWHERE after a few restores 🤖 Windows restore literally works by taking a shot of your registry and some of it's important files and reverts to a backup. But it doesn't alter files because if it did people would lose valuable information (imagine that CV you have been working on just disappearing!).

So, your files are kept, your installs/drivers are gone... that's all I was saying, just in case people get the wrong idea about a 'restore'... it's not like an image restorer, it won't be exactly the same as it was. 😊

Before using System Restore, you should try to correct the issue. If it was a program or a driver that you just installed, then you should try to uninstall the program or the driver. If that doesn't work then using System Restore will allow you to get back to a point where Vista was functioning correctly. System Restore will not affect your files; you cannot use the program to restore a document for example.

There's a post here in this forum, by Znod I believe, where he stated that before he installed a program, he creates a restore point. This is important, because if a problem occurred, you'll be

able to get your system back to the way you had it just before the problem occurred. I would also like to suggest that once you installed the program or driver and have everything running to perfection, you should create a restore point. This way you'll be able to get your system back to this point if something happens to go wrong in the future.

## **Aero Glass Issue**

This issue was previously posted by AnthonyCook (see Aero Bye Bye thread). Also, you may want to check the thread titled "Run cmd window in administrator mode" originated by Dazzlin. The reason I want to post the info here is that I received a few questions from some users that are having this problem and wanted to know how to resolve it.

The issue has to do with Aero Glass not enabling itself even though the rating indicates that the PC should be able to run the Aero Glass. It's supposedly a known issue with Vista RC2 and should be fixed in RTM. However, if you don't get the RTM, there is a walk around so you can take advantage of the Aero Glass now, without waiting until January.

1. Click Start, type RegEdit and hit Enter.
2. Go to HKEY\_CURRENT\_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows and click DWM
3. Double-Click Composition (right pane) and set the Value data to 1 and click OK
4. Double-Click CompositionPolicy (right pane) and set the Value data to 1 and click OK.
5. Close RegEdit.

Restart DWM by opening a command prompt with administrative privileges.

1. Click Start, type CMD
2. Right-click the CMD icon and choose "Run as administrator".
3. At the CMD prompt type the following commands:  
>net stop uxsms  
>net start uxsms
4. Close command prompt

Vista Aero is a combination of many visual components. It's a new theme for Vista. It provides more info about an icon, glass like effect, informative toolbars and better navigation to applications, quicker and sharper movie action and high resolution graphics.

1. What's needed to run Aero? Windows Vista Business, Enterprise, Home Premium, or Ultimate.

2. How do you know which Vista version is running on your PC? Open the Welcome Center, click on View computer details, if not already selected. You'll find your version at the top of the window.
3. What type of hardware you need? 1GHZ Processor, 1GB of ram, 128MB graphics card.

For best results, MS recommend the following:

- 64 megabytes (MB) of graphics memory to support a single monitor with a resolution that is less than 1,310,720 pixels (for example, a 17–inch flat panel LCD monitor that has a 1280 × 1024 resolution)
- 128 MB of graphics memory to support a single monitor with a resolution from 1,310,720 to 2,304,000 pixels (for example, a 21.1–inch flat panel LCD monitor that has up to a 1600 × 1200 resolution)
- 256 MB of graphics memory to support a single monitor with a resolution greater than 2,304,000 pixels (for example, a 30–inch wide-screen flat panel LCD monitor that has up to a 2560 × 1600 resolution)

To run Aero your PC color setting must be set to 32 bit, monitor refresh must be higher than 10 hertz, your Vista theme must be set to Windows Vista, color scheme must be set to Windows Vista Aero, and window frame transparency must be on.

To make these adjustments simply right click an empty area of your desktop and select “Personalize”

## **Shortcuts**

For some reason or another, many people don't take advantage of keyboard shortcuts. Shortcuts can save time, allowing you to spend more time finishing your project. Many people find it difficult to remember shortcuts, but like everything else, you most use them until they become routine. Here are some of the most common and not so common keyboard shortcuts, plus a way to assign your own shortcut keys to open a program:

1. Control + Alt + Delete:
2. Ctrl + C: Copy selected item
3. Ctrl + X: Cut the selected item
4. Ctrl + V: Paste the selected item
5. Ctrl + Z: Undo last action
6. Shift + Delete: Deletes the selected item without moving it to the recycle bin
7. Ctrl + A: Select all items in a document or window
8. Alt + Spacebar: Open the shortcut menu for the active Window
9. Ctrl + ESC: Open the Start menu

10. Ctrl + Shift + Esc: Open Task Manager
11. WinKey: Open or closes the Start Menu
12. WinKey + D: Display your desktop
13. WinKey + M: Minimizes all windows
14. WinKey + E: Open Computer
15. WinKey + ARE : Opens Run dialog box
16. WinKey + L: Quickly locks your computer. (Not useful if your PC is not password protected)

How about creating keyboard shortcuts to open programs? By creating your own shortcuts, you'll have a better chance of remembering them. First you must create a shortcut to the program you want to apply a keyboard shortcut to, if not yet created. Also, keep in mind that the keyboard shortcut you are creating, automatically starts with Ctrl + Alt keys.

1. Right click the program, then click Create Shortcut, or use your mouse's right button to drag the item to your desktop and select Create Shortcut Here.
2. Right-click the shortcut you just created and click Properties.
3. Click the Shortcut tab, and then click the Shortcut key box.
4. Using your keyboard, press the key that you want to use for your shortcut
5. Press Apply and OK to close the dialog box.

When you click the Shortcut key box, it will display None until you select a key...so press the key you want to use, except for Esc, Enter, Tab, Spacebar, Print Screen, Shift, or Backspace. Also, place the shortcut on your desktop.

Use the following Win Logo plus key keyboard combination to shortcut your way as described:

WinLogo + D: Show desktop

WinLogo + E: Opens explorer

WinLogo + F: Opens the search window

WinLogo + L: Locks the computer

WinLogo + M: Minimizes all windows

WinLogo + R: Opens the run dialogue box

WinLogo + T: Provides detail in Taskbar of application currently in use

WinLogo + You: Opens the Ease of Access Center

WinLogo + X: Opens the Windows Mobility center

Shift + WinLogo + M: Undo minimize windows

WinLogo + a Number: Opens applications located in quick launch task bar. Count left to right.

Ctrl + Shift + Esc: Open the Task Manager

**Dazzlin wrote:** Love the quick access to Task Manager especially

## **Windows Help and Control Center Keyboard Shortcut**

ALT+C = Display the Table of Contents

ALT+N = Display the Connection Settings menu

F10 = Display the Options menu

ALT+LEFT ARROW = Move back to the previously viewed topic

ALT+RIGHT ARROW = Move forward to the next (previously viewed) topic

ALT+A = Display the customer support page

ALT+HOME = Display the Help and Support home page

HOME = Move the to beginning of a topic

END = Move to the end of a topic

CTRL+F = Search the current topic

CTRL+P = Print a topic

F3 = Move to the Search box

## **Icons**

Create shortcuts on your desktop and/or change icon for those applications you use the most; i.e. Computer, Files, Network, Recycle Bin, Internet Explorer, Control Panel.

1. Click Start and type Personalization
2. Click Personalization
3. Click Change desktop icons (left pane).
4. Under Desktop icons, check the box if you want icon to appear on Desktop or clear the check box if you don't want it to appear and press OK.
5. To change icon: highlight the icon you want to change and click Change Icon
6. Pick the new icon you want and press OK.

Note: You can also right click an empty area of your desktop and click Personalize

## **How to tell if PC has a virus**

Did you install anti-virus software? No you said? Are you been trying to figure out why your PC... is running slow?...you are getting unexpected messages?...your programs start automatically?...your hard drive sounds like is continually running?...your computer turned itself off by itself?

Although there could be many reasons for these abnormalities, chances are your PC could be

infected with a virus. Here are some steps to take if you suspect your PC is infected with a virus:

1. Scan your PC with an anti-virus program. You can search online for free utilities that scan your PC for virus for free; e.g. Microsoft Malicious Software Removal Tool (<http://www.microsoft.com/security/ma.../default.msp>), Avast Virus Cleaner (<http://www.avast.com/eng/avast-virus-cleaner.html>), Trend Micro HouseCall ([http://www.trendmicro.com/hc\\_intro/default.asp](http://www.trendmicro.com/hc_intro/default.asp)), and others.
2. Install and use anti-virus software. This is the most effective way to remove and prevent viruses from being installed on your PC.
3. If you cannot start Windows through a Normal Start, try to start PC on safe mode (Restart your PC and hit the F8 key repeatedly before the Windows logo appears). Once on safe mode use an anti-virus software or virus scanner. Also, while on safe mode, run MSCONFIG command, go to Startup tab and uncheck those programs you don't need at the moment. You can check those programs again after the virus is gone. (Don't uncheck your anti-virus program if you have one installed)
4. Go to control panel and using your Uninstall or Change program look for programs that you don't recognize. Some programs might install themselves while you visit some sites. (If you recognize a program, use Google search). If you don't need the program get rid of it.
5. Use regedit command to edit the registry. (Note, only experience users should do this. If you remove the wrong key, you might not be able to get windows to start.) Go to HEKY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion and HEKY\_CURRENT\_USER\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion and look for entries inside Run and RunOnce commands. If you see something you don't know, use Google search. If it references a virus then delete the key.
6. If everything else fails and you need to format your hard drive and reinstall your software, beware that your virus might be hiding in one of the programs. Is it an original file or a copy you received from a friend or bought at the flea market? If it's a copy, there is a chance that it's carrying the virus.

More importantly is learning your lesson. Use anti-virus software. Many are free and will help you to maintain your PC safe and sound. Download and save anti-virus program and removal tool in your PC in case you can't access the Internet (Save these files on a separate partition or CD). Use Vista Backup and Restore Center to backup your PC now that is running healthy.

**Davehc wrote:** Ref two previous postings on disabling the UAC. It's even easier than the two suggestions. Just type Msconfig in the "run" link and go to the tools tab. Down the list you will see an entry "disable User Account" - just launch it!

**Znod wrote:** Cool, and did you know that you can just type the name of any .exe program in Start Menu > Search and hit return to run the program?--e.g., msconfig.

## **Basic Wireless Troubleshooting**

If you cannot connect with your wireless adapter, there are a few things you can do to troubleshoot the connection before calling an “expert”.

Check power. This might seem obvious, but many troubleshooters make the mistake of going for the technical aspect when troubleshooting, instead of starting from the “easiest”. Here are some tips:

1. Make sure there’s power to your router or access point.
2. Reset your router or access point. Simply disconnect or turn it off for about 20 seconds or so.
3. Did you just add a cordless phone or are using a microwave? Signals from these appliances could interfere with your wireless signal. Turn them off and see. If they are the culprit, you may want to place them on another location or change the wireless channel of your router or access point, or set it to auto if it is set to a fixed channel.
4. Verify connection mode, either ad hoc- meaning the adapter is connected directly without going through a router or access point, or infrastructure- when it communicates through a router or access point. Settings in Windows must match setting of adapter. Click Start, Network to modify your connection.
5. Do you have a dual or a single band adapter? There are three standards (802.11a, 802.11b, 802.11g) 802.11b and g use 2.4GHZ frequency, while 802.11a uses 5GHZ. A dual band adapter can connect to all three, 802.11a/b/g. 802.11g and b adapters are backward compatible, but will not connect to 802.11a.
6. Stay within range? The maximum range of 802.11b or 802.11g 150 feet, while 802.11a is about 60 feet.

## **Mobile PCs**

When you travel, you want to make sure you’ll have access to the latest files and documents; Windows has made it easier for those who use a laptop, tablet or PDA. Before you leave for your business trip, use Sync Center to make sure you have the latest files on hand.

Sync Center keeps information in sync between your desktop and mobile equipment. It determines the latest version of the file and overwrites the older file with the newer version. To open Sync Center, click Start and type Sync Center in Search box, or click Start, All Programs,

Accessories and Sync Center.

If you must rely on the battery while traveling, it will help to utilize the battery power as efficient as possible. Vista Power saver helps you travel longer with battery power by lowering system performance. Although you might not be able to run a power hungry application, you'll still be able to answer your emails or relax to some music, for a longer time. To change your power option, click Start and type Power Option, lick Power Option and select Power saver.

If you are traveling with friends and coworkers and want to share info, you can use Vista Meeting Space. It allows up to ten people to work to share information through a network or peer to peer (P2P). You can share desktops and programs and distribute and edit files on each other PC. Click Start and type Meeting Space.

Finally, use Vista's Mobility Center to quickly access your mobile PC settings, all in one central location. You can adjust your screen, speaker volume, select power saver, turn off your wireless adapter, rotate the screen, connect another monitor, access the sync center or prepare your presentation. To access Mobility Center click Start, Control Panel, Mobile PC and the click Windows Mobility Center, or click Battery meter icon on the taskbar, then click Mobility Center or simply press the Windows + X keys on your keyboard. Happy computing!

And, see this thread: <http://www.vistababble.com/forums/2904-post1.html>

**Crabby wrote:** One thing I thought was odd... the snipping tool is a tablet PC function. If you remove the tablet PC functions then say bubyee to the snipping tool! 😊(Then go and reinstall it 😊)

To add to Crabby's comment; to get the mobility function you must buy at least the Home Premium Version, as it won't be available with Vista Home Basic.

## **Vista Top 10 Tips and Tricks**

Visit [http://www.windowstatnt.com/docum...s\\_&\\_tricks.pdf](http://www.windowstatnt.com/docum...s_&_tricks.pdf) to view the Top Windows Vista Tips and Tricks. You may also want to check these step-by-step as well <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/d...ng=en#filelist>

## **Manage your Files**

Do you spend a lot of time searching for a file or files that you worked on? Although it may not seem like a big deal, depending on your work environment, every minute count. However, there are better ways to organize your files and stop all that clutter. Keep in mind that organizing your computer documents is very similar to managing your paper documents. You organize your

paper files by using folders and storing them in a cabinet, drawer or box so they don't get lost. Well, just like paper files, if you don't organize your PC files, they can get lost or become difficult to find.

Here are some suggestions to better manage your files:

1. Documents help you find files faster and keep separate files from programs
2. Apply a method for naming files and folders. You should develop a naming system for the kinds of files you create most often and then stick to it. For example, "Child Nutrition, ages 2 to 4", "Child Nutrition, ages 5 and 6", "Child Nutrition, ages 7 and 12", etc.
3. Keep names short. Although you can use long file names, you should strive to keep file names as short as possible. You can use folders to do the naming for you. For example, instead of Child Nutrition at different age stage.doc., you can use this or a similar folder structure: Documents > Nutrition > General Information > Children Ages 1 to 5 > Children Ages 6 to 12 > Children Ages 13 to 17 > Adults.
4. Separate files you are working on from completed work. To maintain your files manageable, you should keep completed files separate from files you are still working on. Once a month, move the files you are no longer working on to another folder and rename the folder "Completed Files". This will make "Documents" more manageable, reducing the amount of files you need to search through.
5. Store like files with like folders. Restrict folders to one specific topic ...this will make it easier to find your files. For example, if you write about nutrition and maintaining good health, you might want to keep files about nutrition in one folder and a separate folder for "Maintaining Good Health".
6. Use shortcuts instead of multiple copies. If you need to access a file from different locations within your PC, create a shortcut instead of copying the file to the new location. For example, if you have a file stored in "Documents" and wants to access it from your desktop, create a shortcut of that file on your desktop. This way you avoid having multiple copies all over your PC.
7. Use Recent Items. This tool will help you find files you just worked on.  
Note: To open "Recent Items" click Start and then Recent Items. If "Recent Items" is not displayed, click Start, type "Taskbar" to open Taskbar and Start Menu. On the "Start menu", under Privacy, select "Store and display a list of recently opened files". You can also view a list of recent documents by clicking Start and typing recent documents.

## **Trivia**

I do have a trivia question: When you have a choice to OK or Apply, should you select Apply or OK and why?)

**Crabby wrote:** Both OK and Apply have the same function of completing the changes/command you have selected. However, OK will progress the window (ie; close it or move it to the next page) whereas apply will just apply the settings with no window progression. At least that's what I think.

### **Should you Okay or Apply...That's the question**

A while back properties and settings dialog boxes in Windows were straight forward; you could **OK** or **Cancel** the changes or you could press **Help**. However, through the years, as Windows evolved, it began to change. For starter, the **Help** button is now a small question mark located in the top right hand corner, that is, if it's available at all. Then a new button was added, the so called the **Apply** button.

Like Crabby mentioned, the **Apply** button was intended to effect the changes while maintaining the dialog box open. When you applied the changes, you could see those changes **applied** to the document behind the dialog box. If you didn't like the changes, you could hit **Cancel** to cancel the changes, or you could hit **OK** to accept those changes and close the dialog box.

The confusing part is that there appear to be no rules for software developers when designing software using these features. Some applications will disabled the **Cancel** button once the **Apply** button is selected. While others, using the **Apply** command will effect the changes for one time only, re-inverting back to the previous settings when the application is re-opened. While even on a few older applications, it's the opposite, pressing **OK** effect the changes for one time only. So as you can see, although the **Apply** button was intended to effect the changes while keeping the dialog box open, sometimes it can get more complicated than that. Should you **Okay** or **Apply**...That was and still is the question!

**Josh wrote:** Should you Okay or Apply? That is the question I would say Apply lol! 😊

Trivia Question: What are the major differences in between:

1. A 386DX and 386SX Processor?
2. A 486DX and 486SX Processor?

**Crabby wrote:** Aren't DX full 32bit whereas SX have some sort of weird floaty 16bit 24bit oddness? When they were first released I seem to remember there being something about faulty DX being sold as SX? 🤖CRAFTY!!! I would like an elaboration if you could Felix, thanks 🤖

**DX ad SX CPUs**

Answer to trivia question. Back in 1992, a friend of mine was asked about the differences in between the DX and SX processor and he basically said that the DX, on both the 386 and 486 CPUs, denoted just a better model of that particular CPU.

In 1996, while taking a course in computing building, I came across the real answer. It turned out that my friend was just partially correct. Here's a short answer:

1. When it comes to the 386DX and 386SX Processor, the 386DX had a full 32 bit bus, while the 386SX had a 16 bit bus
2. When it comes to the 486DX and 486SX Processor, the 486SX had the math coprocessor disabled, while the 486DX did not.

By the way, back in 1996 an individual walk into a PC repair shop while I was in a conversation with a tech. He had a PC and wanted to know if he could upgrade it to Win 95. I told him he couldn't because the PC had a 486SX processor, which was much slower than the DX. The tech on the other hand told him that it could be done, and the individual left his PC with the store to have it upgrade to Win 95. As of today, I don't know if the upgrade worked, but I imagine it didn't. And if it did, then it would have taken hours just to start the OS. What do you think, did it work or not?

**Crabby wrote:** I'd say it would have installed. But honestly couldn't see it running well what so ever! That tech was just in for a few extra bucks 😊

## Vista License

One thing to keep in mind when purchasing Vista is that you are limited to the number of transfers per license. Once you get your copy of Vista, you will be able to transfer your license to one machine other than the one for which you originally installed Vista; Win XP does not have a specific limit for the number of times the license is transferred.

This might be a problem for those power users and games enthusiast who like to upgrade their PCs often. Whether this encourage or discourage people from getting Vista, remain to be seen. I speak for myself when I say that I'll still want to get hold of this new OS; seems like I've been waiting for ever for it. But, at the same time, I like to keep my PC up-to-date with the latest and fastest gadgets. My decision to upgrade or not to upgrade will have to be based on the number of components that can be upgraded without triggering a new register

**Crabby wrote:** New registrations only happen with different motherboards don't they? If so it shouldn't matter too much... I hope. 😞 Either way, you should still be able to activate by phone

on any PC you like 😊 It will be the catch 22 for those of us who upgrade constantly (they can't just stop you from using a purchased product).

**Answer:** I'm not sure if it's just the motherboard. It could be a combination of motherboard, CPU and other components. As far as calling for activation after the 2nd transfer (similar to XP) I don't think that option will be available. It sounds to me that it's two strikes and you are out deal.

### **Sharing**

One issue about file sharing under Win XP is that users can see files and folders on a network, even if they don't have permission to open the folders or read the files. It may not seem like a big deal, but files and folders names can be enough to cause problems for companies. For example, consider a folder named "LayoffPlan"; especially in a large corporation, this could easily start a rumor about layoffs and could lead to low morale and/or other issues.

Windows Server 2003 SP1 adds a new feature called Access-Based Enumeration or ABE, which allows Win XP user to see just those folders or files they have permission to access.

The problem is that ABE cannot be enabled on Win XP. However, that's where Vista comes to the rescue. By having ABE built right into it, users can share folders over a network, and only those users having permission to access those folders will be able to see them.

### **Are you ready?**

Should you wait to deploy Vista as soon as it arrive or take a wait and see approach? This is a question that many corporations face as Windows Vista nears completion. Although there are many new improvements in Vista, there are other things to consider as well.

On the one hand, Vista incorporates new advanced diagnostic tools that can help diagnose PC problems, recommend possible solutions, and ensure the OS is better maintain than previous Windows systems. The Delta Sync allows users working with mobile PCs or offline files to send just the changed blocks of a file when synchronizing changes to the server, saving time and resources. The User Account Control (UAC) is a security feature in Vista that will help prevent unauthorized changes to clients PCs that could otherwise lead the PCs vulnerability to malware and hackers.

However, Vista hardware requirements may mean purchasing brand new systems in order to take full advantage of Vista's new capabilities. There is also the time and cost of training employees to learn new ways to perform tasks and use their computers more efficiently. Finally, shall a company deploy Vista as soon as it's available and possibly struggle with the integration to their network, or wait and see how others manage?

Windows Vista is just around the corner, are you ready to upgrade? That is a big question.

**Crabby wrote:** Most large firms I know of are implementing a trial of around 30 Vista capable PCs. It would be madness to implement across the board from the off. At my firm it will come in 1 PC at a time over the next 5 years as each person gets upgraded separately, although they are testing integration in London.

### **Vista's 4-level of experience**

Vista's 4-levels of user experience; Basic, Classic, Standard, and Aero

The Basic is the entry-level desktop experience; it's an upgrade to previous versions of Windows. It features a refined Start Menu, new Explorer and support for integrated desktop search and Live Icons. The Basic experience is available on all editions of Vista. The Basic entry requires just the basic Vista hardware requirements.

The Classic user experience level includes the Basic user experience with the Windows 2000 look and feel. As with the Basic, this user experience level is also available on all Vista.


The Standard user experience is the mid-range desktop experience, adding improved performance and reliability to the Basic user experience functionality. If your graphic card supports the new Windows Driver Display Model (WDDM), you can take advantage of smoother window handling, increased stability, and glitch-free visual experience. The Standard user level experience is available on all Vista editions, except Vista Starter. It requires the same hardware requirements as Aero.

Aero offers a transparent glass design, with fine effects such as lively reflections and silky animations. It incorporates two new features called Windows Flip and Windows Flip 3D. Flip allows you to flip through open windows (by using Alt+Tab), providing a live thumbnail of each window, rather than just a generic icon and file name. With Flip 3D, you can use your mouse wheel to flip through a stack of windows. Aero is available on Home Premium, Business, Enterprise, and Ultimate editions of Vista.

You can get more info on this and other topics by downloading the Windows Vista Product Guide from <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvist...rcecenter.mspx>.

**Galt wrote:** Dear Felix,

Since you seem to be one of the most informative and prolific writers of on this site (no offense to other great and informative posters) and since I'm getting tired of copying and pasting your useful and most informative posts to my Journal, could you find it in your heart to compile all

that info into a file. 

**Answer:** Galt. I'll see what I can come up with. Although, I was thinking about dividing this thread into specific/related threads (by topics); It'll probably make it easier to read. What do you think?

**Galt wrote:** That's more work for you however you make a good point, problem is your posts of useful information is all over the place, (not to mention other posters great tips) and presently I've been sticking your stuff and theirs in a long Journal to port over to Word. I've done much the same for my own personal Useful Utilities, that many users from Cnet, Zdnet and a couple of others e-mailed me for that includes links, but it's a lot of work.

Regretfully this forum does not utilize a File Transfer section as my Old PHPNuke Forum did. It was a great place to stick stuff like this.

**Davehc wrote:** Ok. I am not about to disagree - just making a point. I find one click on Help and Support and typing in what I am looking for, displays all the info (and indexing I need. I do not normally need to redefine it, whatever that means. I am not quite clear as to where you are going but I do not get that clicking onto this forum, waiting (brief) for it to open, entering your name and password, another small wait, clicking on whatever you are proposing, and then onto a keyword, can possibly be quicker

**Crabby wrote:** This great thread tells me stuff I didn't know... and I am not saying that now that I do I will use it, or that if I didn't know something I would come here first, BUT it's nice to know stuff and at least if I ever get to using any of this stuff I won't have to find the answer because I already know it. 🍷 Long live the thread of knowledge!

## Get Ready

The date many of us are waiting for is fast approaching. Now is the perfect time to get you system ready. Here are some suggestions:

Evaluate your PC by running the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor. This utility will check your PC and will make available a summary of the Vista versions the PC is capable of running. However, keep in mind that the advisor only tells you whether or not your PC can run Vista, not which requirements it doesn't meet.

Make sure you have a processor capable of handling Vista. A Vista "capable" PC needs a CPU of at least 800 MHz, while a Vista "ready" PC requires a CPU of at least 1 GHz.

Make sure you have enough RAM to get the full benefits of Vista. A Vista “capable” PC requires at least 512 MB of RAM, while a Vista “ready” PC requires a minimum of 1 GB of RAM.

Do you want to take advantage of the new 3-D Aero Glass? Make sure your graphics adapter is DirectX 9 capable. Also check for compatibility for Windows Display Driver Model (WDDM). A Vista “capable” PC requires a graphic card that has at least 64 MB of video RAM, while a Vista “ready” PC requires an adapter with a minimum of 128 MB of video RAM.

Make sure your hard drive has ample amount of space. To install Vista, you need a 40GB hard disk with a minimum of 15 GB of free space.

Vista will be shipped on DVD, so to install the OS you’ll need a DVD drive.

Decide which version of Vista you need or can afford. Choose...

1. Home Basic if you don’t need Aero Glass or any other advanced features.
2. Home Premium (a cross between XP Home and XP Professional) if you want and can afford to take advantage of Vista’s advanced features.
3. Business edition if (you guessed it) you are running or plan to run a business. This version offers standard business functionality.
4. Enterprise if you want to take advantage of the many extra features including BitLocker Drive Encryption for laptops, application compatibility tools, and multi-language support.
5. Ultimate if you want and can afford everything that Vista has to offer. This version combines the best of the home and business editions OS into one.

Check the application compatibility toolkit found at <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/pro...fault.mspx#EOB> to make sure your current application will run under Vista.

Depending on the amount of data in your current PC, you may want to consider to backup of all your files. Also, make sure you have the CDs for existing software, including product keys.

And don’t forget to visit MS at <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvist...y/default.mspx>.

Here are a few suggestions to get ready for Vista:

If purchasing a new PC before January 2007, get one that will be capable of running Vista Premium or is a Vista Premium Ready machine, with a minimum of 1GB of RAM. This way you don’t have to worry about upgrading your PC later on when you get Vista. Also, get a PC that

has extra expansion slots for RAM just in case you decide to add one or two RAM modules later on.

Choose a PC that has at least two SATA interface connectors, and if purchasing a hard drive, make it a SATA. It will result in less clutter and increased airflow. Not to mention the ability to transfer a SATA disk to future PCs that may not come with EIDE interface.

Check with the PC manufacture to see if they offer a video card trade-up program. Even though Vista will run fine with DirectX 9 video card, it's expected to be shipped with DirectX 10, which will offer better 3D video effects. Although there's no DirectX 10 video cards in the market as of yet, a video card trade-up program can save you money when the new card is available. You can send in your DirectX 9 video card and receive a DirectX 10 video card at a discount.

Although you can use Vista to partition your HD, to do so, Vista must first be installed. However, there's an alternative. You can use PE 2.0 to partition your hard drive, without installing Vista. It comes with Vista, but it can also be run by itself. It's part of BDD 2007 Beta 2, which you can download from <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/des...7/default.mspx>.

PE 2.0 allows for troubleshooting, installation and system recovery, network connectivity and the ability to run both 32- and 64-bit applications. Windows PE 2.0 is bundled in the Windows Automated Installation Kit (WAIK), and is an integral part of both the WAIK and Vista itself.

This is what you need to do to make your own bootable CD:

1. Download and install BDD 2007 Beta 2
2. Once installed, go to Program Files, BDD 2007, WAIK folder, and click on "startcd"
3. Choose Run Windows AIK setup
4. Once completed, go to Start, Microsoft Windows AIK and click the Windows PE Command Prompt
5. In command prompt type COPYPE.CMD x86 C:\Temp\x86\_PE.
6. Still in command prompt, type OSCDIMG -bc:\temp\x86\_pe\etfsboot.com -n -o c:\temp\x86\_pe\iso c:\temp\x86\_pe.iso. This will create an ISO that can be used to create the bootable CD
7. Burn the ISO and once completed, insert the CD and restart your PC.

Note: Substitute "temp" with a different destination if you want. Also, make sure you type the command as it's shown, including spaces.

**Crabby wrote:** Vista doesn't need to be installed to partition hard drives... just click advanced options when it asks where you want it installed and you can setup the partitions how you like...

then if you don't want vista when you are done just quit the install. 🤖 At least, that's what I have been doing.

**Galt wrote:** Is Vista ready? Microsoft testers weigh in! Interesting article on Zdnet by Mary Jo Foley, and of course the posters with comments are always a riot. It is worth a read however!! <http://blogs.zdnet.com/microsoft/?p=57>

**Crabby wrote:** Lol, another pointless article by a pointless person 🤖 Let's stop with the presumptions and wait to see what Microsoft do about RTM 🤖 Loved the comments at the bottom. 😊 I think vista is only really hampered by drivers and third party software now... so the sooner it gets out the better. Maybe then some more companies will start thinking about product updates. It's not like they can say the operating system isn't going to sell... so invest NOW!!! 🤖

### Latest Scoop on Vista

MS announced an upgrade-assist program for users who purchase a PC from October 26th 2006 to March 15th 2007. For system builders, four upgrades will be free, except for shipping and handling. They are:

- Windows XP Professional to Windows Vista Business
- Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005 to Windows Vista Home Premium
- Windows Tablet PC Edition to Windows Vista Business
- Windows XP Professional x64 Edition to Windows Vista Business 64

Upgrading from Windows XP Home Edition to Vista Home Basic will cost \$49, plus shipping and handling, while moving from Windows XP Home Edition to Vista Home Premium will cost \$79, plus shipping and handling.

Meanwhile:

People who buy certain HP Pavilion, Compaq Presario and HP Digital Entertainment Center computers equipped with Windows XP can upgrade to Vista for free. There may be shipping and handling fees, depending on the retailer.

Gateway will offer free upgrades for people who buy Vista-capable computers directly from the company. Shipping charges or duplication fees may be charged to people who buy Gateway computers through other retailers.

People who buy a Vista-capable Dell computer running Windows XP Home Edition will be able to buy Windows Vista Home Basic at the discounted price of \$45, plus shipping and handling

charges. Buyers of computers running Windows XP Media Center or Windows XP Professional will only have to pay shipping and handling to get a comparable Vista

**Galt wrote:** Holiday PC buyers get Vista upgrade promise. Ok, maybe my sense of humor is a bit warped, however in the interest of Felix's post and my love/hate affair with MS goes read the comments regarding the free upgrades. Some are a riot!! Link: <http://news.zdnet.com/2100-3513-6129027.html>. Here are a couple of examples: First by Mike Cox:

Beautiful thing...

I have mandated all of our MCSE staff go out and purchase new machines capable of running Vista. In order to get full compliance, my rep recommended I dock their pay \$3000 to purchase the latest and great Dell XPS Workstations capable of running the Vista eXPerience in all its glory. In order to get it through finance, I made bogus payroll loans to these folks and then sent in the paperwork. Some of the MCSEs will not be receiving checks again for a couple of months until the \$3000 is paid off. But my rep said it was mandatory to get these valuable coupons. My rep took me for Starbucks to thank me for doing the right thing.

And by itanalyst: Holiday PC buyers get Vista upgrade promise. What a nice offering by Microsoft to allow the user to promise to upgrade to its powerful new operating system. Imagine the glee and joy when you wake up Christmas morning and have a Vista coupon in your stocking. I can hardly contain my excitement in expectation of this marvelous offering from Microsoft

**Answer:** Well, what can I say? Like everyone else, Microsoft wants a large piece of the Christmas spirit. Me.

I just wanted to point out that if you purchase a PC tomorrow (Oct 26) , or after, with the idea of upgrading it to Vista OS and taking advantage of the upgrade offers, you must look for units that are labeled "Windows Vista Capable." Another thing, make sure you ask for the coupon.

Note: Not all PCs that you purchase, whether it's tomorrow or next week, will be available for the upgrade. It's important for you to ask and make sure you get it on writing.

## **Vista and CPUs**

According to Microsoft, a Vista Capable PC requires a modern 800MHz or better processor, while a Vista Premium Ready PC requires a 1 GHz 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) processor or better processor. The two dominating CPU makers, AMD and Intel have been working with Microsoft to determine which processors will best support Vista. Of course, both companies are going to recommend the best of their lineup of CPUs.

For desktops, AMD recommends Athlon 64/FX/X2, 64-bit Semprons, and Opteron processors. Intel recommends Pentium 4 processor with Hyper-Threading, Pentium D processors, and Celerons. While for mobile applications AMD recommends a Turion 64 X2, Turion 64, and Mobile Sempron processors. Intel recommends the Pentium M, Celeron M, Core Solo and Core Duo processors.

For people purchasing a new PC, meeting Microsoft's CPU recommendation should not be a problem, as modern PCs will easily exceed those requirements. However, when buying a PC, you should consider your future needs; two or three years down the road. Vista and application developers are placing a lot more emphasis on multitasking, which means better support for dual-core or Hyper-Threading-enabled processors.

For some people a single-core processor will most likely be sufficient to run Vista, but for those who want to take full advantage of everything the OS has to offer or plan to work on more than one task or application at a time, you should consider a dual-core CPU.

**Znod wrote:** Hi Felix: I have gotten lost in your wonderful thread because I don't read it daily, etc. Would it be possible to create an index to its contents, by post #, in post #1 so that we can find things in your thread? I keep wanting to refer people to specific parts of it, but i just don't have time to search through it each time. Best regards,

**Josh wrote:** Why not just put it all in a file would not take long or I could do it with your permission Felix.

**Znod wrote:** It wouldn't be fun, but I think you'd have to go through each post and pick out the major topic or topics being discussed. Identification of these topics would lead eventual to the subjects that would be included in your index. The entries in the index under each subject would be the post numbers themselves. And, as mentioned, just put the index in post #1. I am afraid that if something is not done your thread will be of greatly lessened usefulness to both the old hands and the new hands.

And, rather than focusing also on the replies to your tips, you could just index what's in your tips. Then, the reader would be responsible for ferreting out pertinent discussions of your tips. This approach would be much more manageable and would be highly useful.

**Answer:** I agree with thread getting too big and that it's getting too difficult to locate a particular post. An indexing sound great, but it'll take time. I've been working on an alternative that can be made available just to members of the forum. Once I work out the details, I'll get with Dazzlin and see what he thinks. It'll take me a few days to complete though

**Crabby wrote:** Dazzlin is a she felix 😊 And I think it is a great idea! 🌍 Especially the bit about membership being required 😊

**Znod wrote:** The membership idea sounds good to me.

But, yes, dazzlin is a well-known she.

I can't tell you what she does.

But, if known, you'd get a buzz.



🙏 Dazzlin, I should've known better. Been around too long to know that one should never assume anything, but too late now. Thank to Crabby and Znod for keeping me straight.

Anyway, for those who are concern about Vista's ability to play current WinXP games, you may want to read the following article at <http://blogs.theage.com.au/screenpla...es/003911.html>.

### **Check out your system**

Want to check out your system? Click the Start menu, type cmd and hit Enter on your keyboard. Now at the command prompt type systeminfo and hit Enter.

## **Part II Internet Explorer**

### **IE Shortcuts**

Ctrl + E = Takes you to the search box.  
Ctrl + F = Brings the find dialog box  
Ctrl + D = Link WebPages to favorites folder  
Ctrl + H = Shows your browsing history  
Ctrl + I = Bring up your favorite list  
Ctrl + N = Opens new window  
Ctrl + W = Closes currently IE window  
Alt + Left Arrow = Same as go back button  
Alt + Right Arrow = Same as forward button  
Alt + Home = Takes you to your default home page  
Space Bar = Scroll downward through a webpage  
Shift + Space Bar = Scroll upward through a webpage

### **IE Menu Bar**

1. By default, the old familiar menu bar, "File, Edit, View" is hiding under Internet Explorer 7. If you miss these menus, fear no more. Open IE7, go to "Tools" and place a checkmark on "Menu Bar".
2. You can also press the ALT key on your keyboard to momentarily bring these menus up.

### **Selecting more than one home page with IE7**

IE gives you the ability to open multiple tabs with different pages within them automatically when it starts. For example you can have [www.vistababble.com](http://www.vistababble.com), [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com), [www.goggle.com](http://www.goggle.com) to open automatically.

To setup; select Tools, Internet Options, and the Home Page section, enter all web addresses you want IE to open. Separate each address by using the Enter key. Click apply.

### **Searching with IE**

Did you know you can choose the search provider you would like to use when searching for information on the Internet? By default, IE uses Life Search when you use the search box, located on the right hand side of IE, next to the address bar. But you can change or add your favorite search provider, e.g. AOL, Google, Yahoo, etc. Here's how:

1. Open Internet Explorer
2. Click the down arrow to the right of the search box.
3. Click Find More Providers.
4. Click the provider you would like to add.
5. Click Add Provider in dialog box.
6. If you want the new provider to be the default provider, choose Make this my default search provider, before clicking Add Provider

#### Using IE search box

1. To use the search box, just type a keyword or phrase and then press Enter.
2. If you want your search to be displayed in a new tab, type the keyword or phrase and press ALT+ENTER.
3. To get to the search box without using your mouse, press Ctrl+E.

#### Using the address bar to search

1. Type Find, Go, or ? in the address bar, followed by a keyword, website name, or phrase, and then press ENTER to make a search, e.g. Go vistababble.
2. Or if you want the results to be displayed in a new tab, press ALT+ENTER after typing the phrase.

#### Here are some tips for searching

1. Be specific. Instead of horses, type black horses.
2. If you are searching for a phrase, e.g. She looked at me in a weird manner, use quotation marks, i.e. "She looked at...". This will narrow down your search to web pages that contain the phrase, and not every word on that phrase.
3. Use the minus (-) sign before a keyword to exclude web pages that contain that specific term, e.g. -vista

#### **Printing with IE7**

The ability to print with the new IE 7 is easier and more practical. For example, you can print a webpage without having the left or right margin cut off. When printing a webpage, IE7 shrinks it enough to ensure the entire page prints properly, whether you select portrait or landscape. You can also adjust margins; remove headers and footers, and increase or decrease print space.

The Print Preview also lets you print the whole webpage or just the area you selected. For example, if you want to print a webpage without graphics or ads, just select the text and use Print Preview to print just the text you selected.

Try it; go to [www.vistababble.com](http://www.vistababble.com), highlight portion of text and either right click the text or go to the printer icon (upper right hand) and use the down arrow, and select "Print Preview..." Now either use the Shrink to fit to select the size of your print or move the horizontal or vertical handles. You can also choose Custom, and enter a percentage manually.

If you want to print just the text you selected, simply choose "As selected on screen" (center menu). Now only the text you selected is shown on the screen.

Another additional feature allows you to view multiple views, up to 12 views to be exact, depending on size of the webpage.

**Galt wrote: BEWARE OF FAKE IE7 SITE**

"Trojan download site spoofs IE7 release outlet" The Register  
([http://www.theregister.co.uk/2006/10...\\_ie7\\_download/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2006/10..._ie7_download/))

"Hackers have created a bogus Internet Explorer 7 download site that attempts to load Trojan code onto the PCs of visiting surfers. People are apparently being tricked into visiting the site and downloading the product via a spoofed email message, claiming to be from support@microsoft.com." <http://msmvps.com/blogs/spywaresucks...19/186135.aspx>

**Galt wrote:** Since I do a good deal of online research, these two get used by me quite a bit.

To save a group of tabs, click the Add to Favorites button, and then click Add Tab Group to Favorites. Give the group a folder name, and then click Add.

6 How do I open a group of tabs that I've saved?

Click the Favorites Center button and then click the folder that you want to open. Click the arrow to the right of the folder name. All of the WebPages will open on separate tabs.

Lots of keyboard tips, if you just open a new blank tab, and read the info

**Want to go "Phishing"?**

What is phishing (fish'ing)? According to Microsoft: Phishing is a technique used to trick computer users into revealing personal or financial information. A common online phishing

scam starts with an e mail message that appears to come from a trusted source but actually directs recipients to provide information to a fraudulent website.

Phishing can take place through a pop up window, or being redirected to a bogus website through the web browser. With the increase number of web users doing business and banking transaction through the Internet, this has become a big security concern.

Internet Explorer 7 has a Phishing Filter™ that uses an online service, which is updated several times an hour and warns users about suspicious sites. The filter helps protect PC users from phishing scams in three ways: compares the addresses of websites a user attempts to visit with a list of reported legitimate sites; analyzes sites that users want to visit by checking those sites for characteristics common to phishing sites; and sends the website address that a user attempts to visit to an online service run by Microsoft to be checked immediately against a frequently updated list of reported phishing sites.

If the destination has been confirmed as a known phishing site, Internet Explorer 7 indicates threat level (in red) and automatically navigates user to a neutral page that contains a warning. If a site has not been confirmed as a phishing site but is behaving in a way similar to a phishing site, the Address Bar is flagged as yellow and warns the user of the suspicious behavior. The user can report any phishing sites or false positives to the Microsoft Phishing Filter directly from the browser.

To turn on Phishing Filter simply open IE7, click Tools, click Phishing Filter, and then click Turn On Automatic Website Checking...now click Turn on Phishing Filter and click OK.

Follow the same steps to turn off the Phishing Filter and click Disable Phishing Filter, and then click OK.

Please keep in mind that although this tool may help you to protect yourself against Phishing, you, as the user, must do your part. A good start is making sure the Phishing Filter in IE7 is turn on. Although, be suspicious of emails or popup windows asking you for personal information, like bank account numbers and password...better yet, call your bank to verify. But most importantly, stay inform, there are numerous places, including local and federal government, that can provide you with information on safeguarding your personal data. Education is your best tool to stay safe.

## **Quick Tabs**

Check out an easy to use feature of IE7 called Quick Tabs. It enables you to have one view of all open tabs. Simply click the Quick Tab icon located to the right of Favorites icon. Once on Quick Tabs View, you simply click anywhere on the tab to open it, or click the X to close the tab. Try this, open three or more WebPages using win IE7, the click the Quick Tab icon.

## **Part II Photo Gallery**

### **Vista Photo Gallery keyboard shortcuts**

CTRL+F = Open the fix pane  
CTRL+P = Print the selected picture  
ENTER = View the selected picture at a larger size  
CTRL+I = Open or close the details pane  
CTRL+PERIOD = Rotate the picture clockwise  
CTRL+COMMA = Rotate the picture counter-clockwise  
F2 = Rename the selected item  
CTRL+E = Search for an item  
ALT+LEFT ARROW = Go back  
ALT+RIGHT ARROW = Go forward  
PLUS SIGN (+) = Zoom in or resize the picture thumbnail  
MINUS SIGN = Zoom out or resize the picture thumbnail  
CTRL+B = Best fit  
LEFT ARROW = Select the previous item  
DOWN ARROW = Select the next item or row  
UP ARROW = Previous item (Easel) or previous row (Thumbnail)  
PAGE UP = Previous screen  
PAGE DOWN = Next screen  
HOME = Select the first item  
END = Select the last item  
DELETE = Move the selected item to the Recycle Bin  
SHIFT+DELETE = Permanently delete the selected item  
LEFT ARROW = Collapse node  
RIGHT ARROW = Expand node

### **When working with videos**

J = Move back one frame  
K = Pause the playback  
L = Move forward one frame  
I = Set the start trim point  
O = Set the end trim point  
M = Split a clip  
Home = Stop and rewind all the way back to the start trim point  
ALT+RIGHT ARROW = Advance to the next frame  
ALT+LEFT ARROW = Go back to the previous frame

CTRL+K = Stop and rewind playback  
CTRL+P = Play from the current location  
HOME = Move the start trim point  
END = Move to the end trim point  
PAGE UP = Seek to nearest split point before the current location  
PAGE DOWN = Seek to nearest split point after the current location

## **About Photo Gallery**

Windows photo gallery is an excellent application that you can use to better organize your pictures. When saving photos from your digital media, the default file name, e.g. DSC029034.JPG or P0025234.JPG, can be difficult to remember, not to mention time consuming as you go through the process of renaming each file. However, there's a better way, you can use photo gallery to get rid of all of those pointless file names and organize your photos quickly. You can name pictures all at once using the same word or phrase, and save time to enjoy a slide show of your photo album. Here's how:

1. Download your photos to photo gallery
2. Open photo gallery, if not already open. Click Start and type Photo gallery.
3. Open the folder that contains the pictures you downloaded
4. Select the pictures by holding down the CTRL key and clicking the pictures you want to rename. Or, use Ctrl+A to select all pictures in the folder.
5. Right-click the pictures, and then click Rename.
6. In the Info pane (right pane) type a name in the box, for example "My Summer Vacation". Now each picture you selected will be given a name with a different sequential number, like this: My Summer Vacation (1), My Summer Vacation (2), My Summer Vacation 2005 (3), and so on.

## **Photo Gallery Part I**

The name Photo Gallery in Vista can be misleading, as it can also handle your personal videos as well. Photo Gallery allows you to browse through all your digital media, as well viewing individual photos and videos.

Let's take a closer look:

Navigation Tree: Allows you to browse through your pictures.

List View: This is where you will see thumbnails of your photos.

Search box: Allows to find items by entering keyword or phrase.

Toolbar: Use it to select a task or to view menus.

Info Pane Shows you additional information about the picture you selected.

Navigation Bar: (bottom) Allows you to move through your photos, zoom in or out, rotate or delete your pictures.

Try this to get a better idea:

1. Click Star and type Photo, then Click Photo Gallery.
2. If the Info pane is not open, click Info on the Toolbar.
3. Select a picture or group of pictures from the Navigation Tree.
4. Click a picture in List View to see information about that picture in the Info pane.
5. Double-click a picture in List View to open it. Your picture will be fitted to the screen, alongside the Info pane.
6. To make modifications to the picture, go to the Toolbar and click Fix. It allows you to make the following simple modification: Auto Adjust, Adjust Exposure, Adjust Color, Crop Picture and Fix Red Eye.

## **Photo Gallery Part II**

The picture viewer in Vista is a vast improvement from Win XP, and it's more than just its looks, which by the way it's the first thing you'll notice when you start Photo Gallery. The viewer includes controls for navigating and reviewing your photos, just like in Win XP, but it has other features as well.

For example, the new viewer allows you to watch personal videos. This is an excellent option, especially if you have a digital camera that takes video in addition to still photos.

You can also use the photo viewer to edit your photos, without launching a separate application. The photo editing tools are not designed to fix every defect that your photo has, but it has the basic editing tools you may need to correct certain flaws, like exposure, color, red-eye or to crop your photo.

Although it's not a professional photo editing application, it provides a set of tools that you can use quickly and be satisfied with the results.

To launch the editing tools, simply click the picture you want to edit and select Fix from the Toolbar.

## **Photo Gallery Part III:**

Photo Gallery allows you to add ratings to your photos. Why rate your photos you may ask? Using ratings will help you organize and find your favorite photos much faster. The rating

system consists of five stars, with one star being the lowest rating and five stars the highest rating.

You can rate your pictures using either one of these methods:

1. With Info pane open, click the picture you want to rate and click one of the stars listed in the Info pane. To clear the ratings, simply right-click the stars rating and select "Clear Rating".
2. You can also right click the picture you want to rate, select properties, go to Details tab and click one of the stars. You can clear the rating by moving your mouse pointer just to the left of the one star rating until the ratings are cleared and do a single click.
3. Using your keyboard, use the Ctrl+Windows Logo key+a number from 0 to 5, e.g. to rate a photo five stars; press Ctrl+Windows Logo key+5. To clear all rating press Ctrl+Windows Logo key+0. (The number "0" will clear the ratings)

Once you have completed rating your photos, you can find those photos simply by going to the Navigation Tree and selecting or clicking the rating corresponding to the pictures you are looking for.

## **Photo Gallery Part IV**

Do you remember storing photos in shoeboxes? Do you remember how difficult it was to find a picture then? You had to go through the whole box just to find one specific picture. Today is no difference; although most of us stored pictures in our computers, finding them can be frustrating if they are not well organized.

Windows Photo Gallery has many options designed to help you organize, find and view your photos. Earlier, I provided an overview of the "rating" system. Now let's take a look at another option called tagging.

A tag is basically a way to describe your picture. You can create and add tags at any time or when importing them from your digital camera.

To make better use of tagging, I recommend you organize your tags in a tree, or what is known as a hierarchy. This will make your files more manageable, especially if you have a large collection of photos.

Let's take a look at an example of a tree. We'll name this tree "Family".

1. Open Windows Photo Gallery; go to the Navigation Tree, and under Tags, select Create a New Tag.
2. For the purpose of this overview we'll name the tag "Family". Name your tag and the tag

named “Family” is created.

3. To add tags to the “Family” tag, right-click “Family”, select Create Tag and type a name for the new tag, e.g. Dad, Mom, Brothers, Sisters, Husband, Wife, Significant Other and so forth.

4. You can further organize your tree by adding tags to the tags you just created. Example, right-click the “Sisters” tag, select Create a Tag and type a name for the new tag, e.g. “Younger Sister”, “Older Sister”, ect.

Now that you created a hierarchy tree, what is this going to do for you and your picture collection? Well nothing really, unless you tag your pictures to those tags you just created.

To tag a picture, simply select the picture you want add a tag to, go to the Info pane, click Add Tags, type a name for that tag, e.g. Younger Sister, and press enter.

If you have multiple pictures of your younger sister, do one of the following:

1. To select just certain pictures from a group of pictures, press the Ctrl key on your keyboard and using your mouse, click the picture you want to select. Now using your mouse, drag those pictures to the “Younger Sister” tag.

2. If you want to select all the pictures within a group, press Ctrl+A simultaneously, then drag those pictures to the “Younger Sister” tag.

A hierarchy tree is an easy way to organized photos, files, folders and so forth. It’s only limited by your imagination.

## **Windows Photo Gallery Part V**

In Windows Photo Gallery, you can use the Search box to quickly locate your photos. When you use the Search box, it filters down the photos in view to only those that match your text criteria. For example, if you are looking all photos of your “Younger Sister”, as you begin typing “Younger Sister”, all photos not related to “Younger Sister” will begin to fall away from view until just photos of your younger sister remain.

The reason for that is because on the previous post we had tagged all pictures related to your younger sister with the “Younger Sister” tag.

However, photos don’t have to be tag to find them using the Search box. When you do a search, Photo Gallery will match your search to any words that it finds in Tags, File Names, File Paths or even Captions.

You can type multiple words, e.g. trains cars. This search will show photos that match the cars and trains criteria.

## Photo Gallery Part VI

In this post we'll discuss how to fix or make minor adjustments to your photos using Auto Adjust, Adjust Exposure, Adjust Color, Crop Picture and Fix Red Eye. To correct a flaw of a photo, simply open your photo by double-clicking it and selecting Fix from the Toolbar. You can access each individual control by clicking on the corresponding button in the fix pane.

Let's go over the controls:

**Auto Adjust:** Like the name implies, when selected, it automatically adjust your photo's brightness, contrast, color temperature, and tint. Auto Adjust works well when a photo has an off color cast such as that from a light bulb, or with pictures taken outdoors.

**Adjust Exposure:** Selecting this tool brings up two sliders that let you adjust brightness and contrast. The brightness control adjusts all of the pixels evenly, making them brighter or darker. Moving the control all the way to the left will result in a very dark photo, while moving it all the way to the right, will result in very bright photo. The contrast slider adjusts pixels relative to each other. Moving the contrast slider all the left will result in a very gray, low contrast image, while moving it all the way to the right makes the colors rather vivid.

**Adjust Color:** If using the Auto Adjust control did not bring the results you wanted, you can adjust Color Temperature, Tint and Saturation by using Adjust Color. Clicking Adjust Color brings three sliders that work together to obtain the best color for your image. Color temperature refers to the relative intensity of blue to red. Moving the slider to the left will bring a bluish tone, while moving it to the right bring a reddish tone. Use the tint slider to adjust green and red casts in your photo, while the Saturation slider can be used to adjust the intensity of the colors. Moving the Saturation slider all the way to the left, will create a black and white image of your color photo.

**Crop Picture:** You can use this control to improve your photo composition or to zoom in on a certain part the picture. It has built in aspect ratios that can be used when you want your photo to fill the whole print. For example, selecting the 4 X 3 ratio, will crop the image so it can fit in a 3 x 4 photo paper. You can also crop and image to use as your PC background.

**Fix Red Eye:** Replaces the red-eye on your photo with a darker color. To use this tool, simply click the Fix Red Eye control, drag a box around the red-eye and let go. If you are zoomed in, you can pan your picture by pressing the "alt" key and dragging the image. I recommend zooming your photo when fixing red-eyes to get a better view and make a more accurate selection.

Use these tools to play around and practice with your photos. You can always undo any changes by using the Undo All command located at the bottom of the Fix pane. Or you can always come back to your photo and select Revert to Original.

## **Photo Gallery Part VII**

When you edit a photo for the first time, Windows Photo Gallery creates a copy of the image. This is done automatically so you don't have to go around making copies, ending up with multiples copies all over your hard drive.

If at any time you want to go back to the original, you can revert back the file by following some simple steps.

1. Open the file in the Gallery Viewer
2. Click the "Fix" button
3. Click the "Revert" button, located at the bottom of the fix pane.
4. Select Revert to Original and confirm it.

You can also keep two copies of your image by going to File and selecting "Make a Copy...". This allows you to maintain your original copy unchanged, while editing the copy you just made. This is also useful if you want to keep two images, e.g. one with adjusted exposure, and another one cropped for better printing.

Vista also gives you some control in managing your original photos. For example, you can tell Photo Gallery how long it should maintain the original. Click File and select Option. Under "Original Images" use the "Move originals to Recycle Bin After" selection box to tell Photo Gallery how long to keep your original photos.

One more thing, if you use the Windows Vista Backup utility, you must select the option to backup photographs and images if you want Vista to backup your original photos. Happy computing.

## **Photo Gallery Part VIII**

Windows Photo Gallery allows you to combine your photos and videos to play a slideshow. You can do this thanks to the blue button located at the bottom of the Photo Gallery screen. You can use the built-in themes to view your photos in different ways, for example to vary in the number of photos/videos you see on screen, change the look-and-feel of the background or add animation effects.

Themes are organized in the slideshow menu in groups, with the top three groups, i.e. Classic, Fade, Pan and Zoom, Black and white and Sepia themes, being displayed at full-screen. The Classic theme is a carry-over from Win XP slideshow; for those who prefer simplicity. The bottom group, i.e. Album, Collage, Frame, Glass, Spin, Stack and Travel, displays your photos and videos in a single or multi-layout format, with different themed backgrounds and some with animated effects.

Let's take Windows Photo Gallery slideshow for a spin.

1. Using the Navigation Tree select all Pictures and Videos
2. Press the blue button and or F11 function key on your keyboard
3. Once your slideshow begins, select a theme. You can also select the speed for transitions, as well as other options.

## Windows Media Player Part I

Windows Media Player has an easy-to-use interface, which can allow anyone to play digital media files, organize digital media, burn music CDs, rip CD music, sync digital media files to a portable music player, and shop for media content.

I've been using the player to backup all my CDs to the hard drive, and so far it hasn't disappoint me. Through the years, I have collected well over 300 CDs, mostly Salsa and Merengue, and just yesterday I decide to "rip" them to my computer. So far I have to say that the process has been very smooth and I have been satisfied with the results. Once I have ripped them to my hard drive, my next step is to make custom CDs of my favorites songs. Once I accomplish that, I'll post my experience on this site.

Right now I just want to post the experience I had so far with ripping my CDs to my hard drive. First of all, there is a difference between ripping a CD and burning a CD. Basically, the term "rip" is the process of copying digital media audio CD, while "burn" refers to the process of copying files to a CD.

To rip my CDs, the first thing I did was to decide where to rip my CDs to. Although Media Player can use its default folder (the Music folder in your HD), I am using a spare 80GB HD. The HD was actually installed in an enclosure, but I removed it from the enclosure and installed it directly to my PC; less wires outside my PC to worry about.

Once I took care of that, I click on Start and Windows Media Player (WMP). Since this was the first time I used WMP, it began its setup process; you have two setup choices...Express or Customize. I chose the latter to make sure I had exactly what I wanted and nothing else. Once I had completed the setup I went to WMP Taskbar, located at the top of WMP window, and right-click on an empty area and click to check mark Show Classic Menus...this menu is hidden by default. I then click on Tools, Options and open the Rip Music tab. On the "Rip music to this location" I chose "Change", went to "Computer" and selected the HD I had just installed and pressed OK. I pressed the "File name" button and selected "Album", "Track number" and "Song title" and pressed OK.

For format, I selected the default, "Windows Media Audio". I check marked "Rip rip CD when inserted" and "Always". I also checked "Eject CD when ripping is complete and selected the "Best Quality" for Audio quality.

I inserted my first CD; Media Player went to the Internet and downloaded the CD information, including singer and information about the album, track number, songs title, length for each song, composer and other info. Then the program started to rip the music to the HD

automatically. Once ripping was completed, the CD was ejected. I inserted another CD and the same process began automatically.

After I ripped about 10 CDs, I went to the HD where the files were stored. WPM had organized the CDs by singer and albums...one folder for every singer. So far I can say I had “Una experiencia religiosa” or “A religious experience” (the title of one of the songs I ripped to the HD). I have ripped over 40 CDs and all is well.

Windows Vista allows for different views for each folder. I just opened the folder and used the down-arrow on the View menu to select how I wanted to view my folders. ..I just slid the bar on the left. I also opted to “Group” each folder by name; folders are grouped in alphabetical order. You can also see that with the selected view, I can readily see the album cover, making the selection of a particular album much easier.

## **Windows Media Player Part II**

After I ripped over 80 of my CDs to the HD, I tried to use Windows Media Player to play the files. I right click the folder, which I named CD backup, but did not find the menu titled “Play with Media Player”. So I went to the folder’s Properties (right click, then clicked “properties”). I went to the “Customize” tab, and under “Use this folder type as template:” I selected “Music icons”. I also placed a check mark for “Also apply this template to all subfolders”, and then pressed OK. I right click again and this time the “Play with Media Player” menu was active for the folder. I clicked on it and the music began to play, just like that.

Once the music began to play, I went to the Play menu and selected “Shuffle” for music mode. Then I went to the “View” menu and clicked on “Enhancement” and selected “Show enhancements”. Here I got access to some options; e.g. Play Speed Settings, Quiet Mode, SRS WOW Effects (must download, \$14.00-didn’t go for it), Video Settings, Color Chooser, Crossfading and Auto Volume Leveling, Graphic Equalizer and Media Link for E-Mail.

I turned on auto volume leveling to maintain the sound level for each track the same throughout playback mode. I also turn on the crossfeeding and set the overlap to 0.0 seconds...this allows WMP to play each track in succession, with no pause in between. The Graphic Equalizer can be customized or you can choose a predetermined mode... I chose the predetermined “Dance” mode. I left all other options as defaulted and began to enjoy the music.

The music sounded crisp and pleasant. I have an older set of 30-watt PC speakers with a subwoofer, not top of the line, but the sound is excellent for my bedroom. I did burn a CD with WMP; I will post my experience with that later.

### Windows Media Player Part III

Now I was ready to burn a CD. I inserted a blank CD-R, click Start and selected Windows Media Player. On the Taskbar, I selected the Burn menu, easy enough, and the burn window shows up. The albums I previously ripped to my HD appeared, along with a list of songs for each album. On the right hand side WMP shows a CD-R available in CD Drive (J). There's a bar just below the CDR icon that shows how many minutes remain on the CD...this is an improvement from previous Windows Media Player versions. Just below the bar, there's space to drag the music to create a burn list. So it was just a matter of dragging the music files to this location and hit the Start Burn located at the bottom right hand side.

However, I wanted to see what options I had before proceeding. I clicked Burn and a menu came up with the following choices: Audio CD, Data CD or DVD, Eject Disc After Burning, Apply Volume Leveling Across Tracks on audio CDs, More Options..., Help with Burning.

I chose More Options...

For Burn speed, I selected Fastest. This was my first burn with WMP, so I figured if the CD does not work, then I'll try recording at a lower speed. There are four choices; Fastest, Fast, Medium and Slow.

I also selected, "Automatically eject the disc after burning". One note, if you push the CD back in after it has been ejected and you have chosen the "Rip music automatically when CD is inserted", WMP will start ripping the CD you just created. My advice, deselect the "Rip music automatically when a CD is inserted". Use this option only to rip CDs, and then turn it off when you are done.

I selected "Apply volume leveling across tracks on the CD...I wouldn't do it any other way. For Data Discs you get your choice of files list; WPL (Windows Media) or M3U (Windows Media Player). I chose WPL for my CD. I also placed a check mark for "Use media information to arrange files in folders on the disc".

There's a choice to convert music to a lower bit rate. By converting to a lower bit rate, you can get more songs in a CD. I chose not to convert the music because I want my music to be as crisp and near to perfect as possible. I then clicked OK and started to drag my selections to the right pane. As I dragged the music to create the list, the "remaining" bar kept me inform of how much room I had left on the CD. Once it got to the 2-minute warning, I knew it was time to hit the Start Burn button.

So here are the results. I managed to get 16 songs in the CD. It took about 3:30 minutes to burn and the CD ejected automatically when the burn was completed. I then pushed it back in and

WMP started to play the songs. Then I removed the CD and placed it on my CD player...it sounded just great.

One option available in most CD burning software, but not on WMP, is the option to reduce the amount of time it takes to move from one track on to the next. When I listen to music, I don't like pauses, or at least long pauses, so I kind of miss that feature. Other than that I feel Windows Media Player has the basics to record your CDs. The interface is quite simple and it's free...as long as you buy Vista that is.

### **Windows Media Player Keyboard Shortcuts**

Ctrl+YOU = To enter URL or path to a media file

Ctrl+O = Opens a explorer window

Ctrl+N = Opens the drag item pane

Ctrl+M = Opens/Closes classic menu

Alt+T = Opens the Tool menu

Alt+P = Opens the Play menu

Alt+F = Opens the File menu

Alt+H = Opens the Help menu

Alt+V = Opens the View menu