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Firefox
Microsoft

[Firefox 3.1 Beta 1 Just Around the Corner](#)

Beta 1 candidates are up for grabs

The first Beta build of Firefox 3.1 is just around the corner. In fact, Mozilla is hammering away at the successor of Firefox 3.0, in order to be able to release it as early as next week.

Codename Shiretoko has already passed two Alpha milestones, and has at least two Betas waiting for it before it will evolve into Release Candidate stage. Alpha 1 shipped at the end of July 2008, with the second Alpha being delivered at the start of September. At this point in time, Mozilla has yet to provide a specific delivery deadline for Firefox 3.1 Beta 1.

However, the bits for the first Beta of codename Shiretoko are as palpable as possible. Mozilla is, in fact, offering [candidate builds of Beta 1](#) to developers but, of course, as is the case with any open source project, the downloads are available to all users. However, Firefox 3.1 Beta 1 has yet to be finalized, with Mozilla only estimating a release for the week of October 13.

Firefox 3.1 Beta 2 is planned to be made available in November 2008, and at this pace, it is unlikely that Mozilla will be able to ship the final version of Shiretoko by the end of 2008. In this context, the successor of Firefox 3.0 could slip into 2009, with Mozilla having already taken that possibility into consideration.

The availability date will qualify Firefox 3.1 as a candidate to take [Internet Explorer 8](#) head on. Microsoft has already offered [IE8 Beta 2](#), and is reportedly gearing up for a November release. IE8 is designed to catch up in terms of features, standards support and performance with its rivals, and Firefox 3.1 will have more of a challenge than version 3.0, which, although setting a record in terms of downloads in the first day, is failing to convert users away from IE. Actually, Mozilla has admitted that [75% of all Firefox installations go dead](#).

Firefox 3.1 Alpha 2 is available for download [here](#).