

12 February 2007

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[Get Vista Features on Your XP](#)

Not prepared to install Vista? Try alternative features!

Windows Vista is on the shelves! Available for the general public, not only for enterprises, everyone can upgrade the current Windows XP or buy the brand new OS from Microsoft. Due to different reasons like high hardware requirements, software incompatibility or the price, some people cannot afford to do the migration, at least not in the near future. Of course there are also the conservative users who attached themselves too much to the XP that now they hesitate to make the move believing in its endurance. For either of the cases presented above, I thought it would be interesting and useful to present you some Vista feature alternatives available for Windows XP. The presentation will consist in showing some Vista features and linked to them, the alternative for the XP users. **The New Vista look** Windows Vista includes a redesigned user interface and visual style, named Windows Aero. Aero is intended to be cleaner and more aesthetically pleasing than previous Windows versions, including transparencies, window animations and eye candy. *Solution:* In order to transform the ordinary Windows XP visual style into a Vista-like one you need to use a Windows theme that resembles to the original one created by Microsoft. The only problem is that Windows XP can use only Microsoft themes. While Microsoft didn't bother to create and provide a Vista-like theme for the XP users, you need to use a custom made one. Thank God, there are plenty of themes available for free. For instance, I can recommend you to try [Royale Vista](#), a great looking theme that includes wallpapers and fonts, all to create a similar look to Vista. Back to the compatibility problem, it can be fixed. [Click here](#) to consult a detailed guide and you will get a brand new look for your XP.

Windows Sidebar Windows Sidebar is a new panel on the right-hand side of the screen where a user can place Desktop Gadgets, which are small applets designed for a specialized purpose (such as displaying the weather or sports scores). The gadgets can also be placed on other parts of the desktop, if desired. By default, Windows Vista ships with thirteen gadgets: Calculator, Clock, CPU Meter, Currency Conversion, Feed Viewer, Feed Watcher, Notes, Number Puzzle, Picture Puzzle, Recycle Bin, Slide Show, Stocks, and an egg timer. Additional gadgets are published at Microsoft's web site, which offers both Microsoft-created and user-submitted gadgets in a gallery. *Solution:* Tempting? Don't worry, I got the replacement! [Desktop Sidebar](#) created by Sidebar XP is a nice and free application ready for Windows XP. It offers all kind of utilities like: search bar, Winamp panel, disk monitor, media player, inbox panel etc. No charge! Another solution would be using [Google Desktop](#). Acting like a sidebar too, Google Desktop works as a holder for gadgets. You can install as many gadgets you may want, all for free. Just download what you need and place it on the sidebar. **Windows Flip and Flip 3D** When using Alt+Tab to switch between open windows, a preview of each open window appears instead of just the program icon. In addition, Windows Flip 3D enables you to flip through a cascading stack of your open windows using the mouse scroll wheel. Windows can be stacked and rotated in 3D to provide views of all of them simultaneously. *Solution:* Do not believe that Windows XP is obsolete because it does not offer cool visual effects when switching between windows. Why don't you try [TopDesk](#)? It manages to bring the amazing flipping and tiling effects from Vista on Windows XP. Thumbnail view, 2D view and even 3D view of the windows can be done using shortcuts; floating buttons are mouse sensitive areas. Please consult the [TopDesk review](#) for a complete image of this cool application. **Internet Explorer 7** Windows Vista includes the latest version of Internet Explorer, which adds support for tabbed browsing, Atom, RSS, internationalized domain names, a search box, a phishing filter, an anti-spoofing URL engine, fine-grained control over ActiveX add-ons, thumbnails of

all open tabs in a single window (called Quick Tabs), page zoom, and tab groups. Tab groups make it possible to open a folder of Favorites in tabs with a single click. *Solution:* Finally, Microsoft created their first browser tab capable. Lots of IE users migrated to Firefox or other browsers in search of better security and tabbed browsing. Now they can be recovered with the launch of Internet Explorer 7. IE 7 is NOT Vista limited! It can be installed on your Windows XP free of charge with just one condition: the Windows XP you are running must be genuine. To obtain a free copy of the new IE browser, click [here](#)!

Media Player 11 Windows Media Player 11 features a fully revamped interface. The Media Library is now presented without the category trees which were prominent in the earlier versions. Rather, on selecting the category in the left pane, the contents appear on the right, in a graphical manner with thumbnails – a stark departure from textual presentation of information. Search has been upgraded to be much faster. *Solution:* Just like Internet Explorer 7, Windows Media player is Windows XP ready. Take advantage of the new look and functions of Media Player 11. To get a full copy, click [here](#). Make sure you are using a genuine copy of Windows XP or the installation won't continue if the validation check fails.