

## [Will the Real Availability Date for XP SP3 Please Stand Up](#)

*March 24 or late April*

With Windows Vista Service Pack 1 and Windows Server 2008 having RTM'd on February 4, 2008 and made available to the general public on March 18 and February 27, Microsoft has just [Windows XP Service Pack 3](#) in the ovens. As Vista SP1 and Windows Server 2008 were being released to manufacturing in early February, XP SP3 moved to Release Candidate 2 stage, and was dropped as a private beta. The Redmond company subsequently opened up the XP SP3 RC2 build to all XP users with the last release shipping on March 6, 2008. Still, there is no official word from Microsoft at this point in time that points to the RTM date for XP SP3, beyond the official reference to a delivery ahead of mid 2008.

According to [CRN](#), citing a date from a leaked version of XP SP3, namely build 5503, the final version of the third and last service pack for XP is next week, Monday March 24. this date was in no way confirmed by the Redmond company, and although XP SP3 is in the final stages of baking its also highly unlikely that it will be finalized by next week. March 24 is in fact the date when support for XP SP3 will kick into effect across Microsoft and its OEM partners, and not necessarily the availability date.

Yesterday, Microsoft confirmed in [an email to Softpedia](#) that XP SP3 build 5503 is an official build of Windows XP. But at the same time a company spokesperson revealed that the build 5503 was a private beta designed for a limited number of testers. While Microsoft still points to an availability date set by mid-2008, [TechArp](#) stated that the deadline for the RTM of XP SP3 is aimed for the second half of April when the company will release the service pack for the following languages Chinese (Simplified), English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish. After the initial wave of XP SP3, the Redmond company, withing a timeframe of approximately 21 days, plans to offer the service pack in Arabic, Chinese (Hong Kong), Chinese (Traditional), Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Portuguese (Portugal), Russian, Swedish, and Turkish.