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Windows Vista PC
concept
Microsoft

[Windows 7 Beta vs. Windows Vista - System Requirements](#)

Vista users will not need to upgrade

I did a radio interview a while back for an IT-related show, and one of the questions was generated by user inquiries related to the system requirements for Windows 7. Windows Vista was easily qualified as a resource hog in comparison to its precursor, Windows XP, but judging from the five-year gap separating the two clients, the label doesn't exactly fit. Some users, especially business customers, fear that after coughing up a consistent amount of money and upgrading their computers, or hardware infrastructure in the case of businesses, in order to accommodate Windows Vista, they will have to do it all over again, just a couple of years later, and in the context of a global financial crisis. This will not be the case.

In terms of system requirements, [Windows 7 Beta](#) reveals that Vista and its successor are on par. This means that users will not have to pay for a hardware upgrade just to accommodate Windows 7, if they are currently running Windows Vista on their machines. Those who have bought new machines tailored to Vista, beyond the Home Basic SKU, namely Home Premium, Business, or Ultimate editions, will also be able to run Windows 7 without any problems.

According to Microsoft, Windows 7 Beta's "Minimum recommended specs call for: 1 GHz 32-bit or 64-bit processor; 1 GB of system memory (RAM); 16 GB of available disk space; support for DirectX 9 graphics with 128 MB memory (to enable the Aero theme); DVD-R/W Drive; Internet access (to download the Beta and get updates)."

The Redmond company warned that the specifications could be modified during the development process of Windows 7. "These are the Microsoft minimum hardware recommendations for systems that will be running the Windows 7 Beta. These recommendations are specific to the beta release and are subject to change," the software giant stated.

By comparison, the minimum system requirements for Windows Vista Home Premium / Business / Ultimate are: "1 GHz 32-bit or 64-bit processor; 1 GB of system memory; 16 GB of available disk space; support for DirectX 9 graphics with 128MB memory (in order to enable Aero theme); drive: DVD-R/W drive; Internet connection (to download the Beta and get updates)," Microsoft indicated. Windows Vista Home Basic can go as low as "800 MHz processor and 512 MB of RAM on a 20 GB hard drive with at least 15 GB of available space," the company claimed, but considering this system the OS would virtually be unusable.

I have been running Windows 7 Beta and pre-Beta on a laptop with under 2GHz processor and with just 1 GB of RAM, and in virtual machines with even less. Moreover, I have also been running Windows 7 Beta and the Milestone releases on a 3GHz Intel Core Duo with 4 GB of DDR3. I found that Windows 7, even if still under development, delivered, on the same machine, a performance superior to Vista's. However, in order to get the best out of Windows 7, users should have computers with at least 2 GHz processors and no less than 2 GB of RAM.

Windows 7 Beta is available for download [here](#).