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Windows 7
Microsoft

[Windows 7 Build 7264 RTM-Branch - 100 Screenshot Gallery](#)

Not the gold build, but close

With the second half of July approaching the feeling that Windows 7 RTM is so close it can be tasted is getting stronger and stronger. The confirmation that Microsoft will be releasing the next iteration of the Windows client to manufacturing by the end of this month came in early June 2009, but without a specific deadline delivered. While closing in on producing the gold build for Windows Vista's successor, the Redmond company is keeping the final backing stages of the Windows 7 development process under a tight lid. But this is only valid for its own cooking ovens; once development milestones are out of Redmond Windows 7 builds manage to find their way into the wild. It is of course the case of [Windows 7 Build 7264](#) leaked earlier this week.

Quite a lot has happened between Build 7264 hitting the download pipes from torrent trackers and warez websites and the previous leaked release, [Build 7260](#). Sure enough, there are changes in the operating system itself; nothing at a large architectural stage of course, but more in respect to the details that Microsoft was still holding back from its users. Since mid-June the software giant has confirmed the [Windows 7 box design](#) and the [pricing details](#) for the platform.

At the same time, the company has kick-started the [Windows 7 Free Upgrade Option Program](#), a marketing initiative in partnership with OEMs, designed to provide end users with free upgrade editions of Windows 7 for equivalents of Vista SKUs bought with qualifying new computers between June 26, 2009 and January 31, 2010. In addition, discounted upgrade copies of Windows 7 are still available for pre-ordering, [Home Premium for \\$49.99 and Professional for \\$99.99](#), for customers in select markets, with Microsoft preparing to bring the special offerings to more countries.

And all the while the company is keeping mum on the progress of Windows 7 toward RTM. In all fairness this is by no means a new strategy for the software giant. Official details on the evolution of Windows 7 between milestones were never shared with the public. This doesn't make Build 7264 any less valid or relevant - a relevance drawn from the proximity to RTM. In this sense, while being a release from the RTM-branch, Build 7264 is not, and will not qualify as the gold build of Windows 7.

Windows 7 Build 7264 Installation

Below you will be able to see screenshots from the installation of Windows 7 Build 7264. It has been over two weeks since I performed a deployment of [Windows 7](#), and some details otherwise familiar faded a tad. But I installed every milestone of Windows 7 I could ever get my hands on, and the sheer speed of the process continues to deliver quite an impression. Even on a virtual machine with just 1.5 GB of RAM the deployment is fast, and will undoubtedly surprise end users in a pleasant manner. It's just a different league compared with previous releases of Windows.

With the exception of a few details associated with the End User License Agreement, installing Build 7264 is the same as the Release Candidate bits. But in the EULA, Windows 7 is no longer accompanied by any moniker highlighting a development phase. The operating system is referenced as plain vanilla Windows 7, an indication of the proximity to

RTM.

Windows 7 Build 7264

Largely, [Windows 7](#) Build 7264 is a case of move along, nothing new to see here. There are of course differences between RC Build 7100 and Build 7264, but only a few details reverberate to the surface of the operating system, with the new milestone bringing almost nothing new to the table. The Beta fish wallpaper is gone in favor of a stylized interpretation of the Windows logo. The versioning of programs such as Internet Explorer 8 has of course changed. And, naturally, the build string of Windows 7 has been modified, and it now reads 6.1.7264.0.win7_rtm.090622-1900, wrapped up on June 22nd. Any additional changes are less visible.

But they do exist. One example, revealed by the Terminal Services team, is the fact that the RTM edition of [Windows 7 no longer allows DirectX client-side rendering over RDP 7](#) (Remote Desktop Protocol 7). It's bound that additional modifications have also been implemented, just not detailed by Microsoft in the same manner as the removed client rendering via RDP 7 for DirectX 10.1 / DXGI 1.1 and Direct 2D applications for Windows 7 RTM.

One very relevant aspect that did in fact change is related to the activation process. [Windows 7](#) Build 7264 no longer accepts Beta Build 7000 or RC Build 7100 product keys, and will not activate. Without product keys from the Redmond company, at least for the time being, it is impossible to genuinely activate [Windows 7 Build 7264](#). Users of course have the slmgr rearm trick available to prolong the trial period to 120 days, but there's no legitimate way to make an installation of Windows 7 Build 7264 live until March 2010 when the expiration process for the operating system is scheduled to debut with bi-hourly reboots.

Meanwhile, Microsoft is pressing onward with the final development steps that will take [Windows 7 to RTM](#). According to Wzor, no less than four additional development milestones of the platform have been produced since Build 7264. Microsoft is reported to have already compiled Windows 7 Builds 6.1.7265.0.win7_rtm.090624-1905; 6.1.7266.0.win7_rtm.090626-1902 and 6.1.7267.0.win7_rtm.090629-1952. The latest bits wrapped up are said to be 6.1.7268.0.win7_rtm.090701-1900, which according to the date was finalized on July 1st, 2009.