

By: ~~March 2008~~ ~~March 2008~~, Technology News Editor

[Windows XP SP3 Build 5503](#)

Available for download via torrent trackers

Windows XP Service Pack 3 is yet to reach the end of its evolution, even if RTM is reportedly just around the corner. The last official step Microsoft took with the third and final service pack for XP was to deliver the public versions of Release Candidate 2 in English, German and Japanese on March 6, 2008. So far, the Redmond company has only admitted to taking [XP SP3 as far as RC2 Build 3311](#). But at the same time, XP SP3 Build 5503 is now available for download via torrent trackers and warez websites. However, Microsoft failed to confirm in any way that it offered a new development milestone for XP SP3. Release Candidate 2 for XP SP3 was initially dropped in the same week when Windows Vista Service Pack 1 and Windows Server 2008 were released to manufacturing at the start of February. XP SP3 RC2 shipped to some 15,000 testers as a private release, before Microsoft opened up the beta at the end of the past month to the general public. Now, XP SP3 RC2 is available for download both via Windows Update and as a standalone [download](#) straight from the Microsoft Download Center. Last week, [Jane Maliouta](#), the program manager for IE8 Deployment and Management, gave a clue pointing out that XP SP3 RC2 was the same, or very close to XP SP3 RTM. At the same time, Maliouta made a reference to Windows XP SP3 (RC2 candidate - Build 3311 or higher), without mentioning the build designed to succeed 3311. The latest version of XP SP3, available exclusively as a leaked variant, and with no confirmation whatsoever that it is an official development milestone from Microsoft, is labeled 5.1 (2600 build 2600.xpsp.080306-1604:Service Pack 3) or 5.1.2600.080306-1604, v.5503. Because there is no build number displayed by either System Properties or by About Windows, XP SP3 Build 5503 has been advertised as the RTM version of XP SP3. As far as the English version is concerned, the adjacent information is size 315.48 MB; MD5: 0f88c125ee4ab608e2744ef3d18a686e; SHA1: e1621b38e71a98df4bf4cc928a68dd144d34ec02 and CRC-32: e516340c. But the jump from build 3311 all the way to 5503 means that this leaked release has to be taken with a grain of salt, because it might not be what it claims, and instead provide just a fake variant of an earlier testing build of XP SP3. At the same time, Microsoft appears to no longer be offering XP SP3 via Connect. This could mean that the Redmond company is in fact preparing to deliver the gold bits of XP SP3.