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[Wrapping up Windows XP3 SP3 Build 5512 - Download Information](#)

All XP SP3, all the time

Technically, Microsoft has yet to wrap things up with the distribution of Windows XP Service Pack 3, and is now gearing up for the final stage designed to serve the operating system through Automatic Updates. But, other than pushing the service pack to all XP users with AU enabled, the Redmond company has wrapped up with the availability of SP3, having already published the gold bits on Windows Update, and the Windows Server Update Services servers, as well as on the Microsoft Download Center as of May 6, 2008. Below you will be able to find not only a detailed description of Windows XP SP3 RTM but also a list with the resources accompanying, and even contained in the service pack. **The Official Overview of Windows XP Service Pack 3**"Windows XP Service Pack 3 (SP3) includes all previously released Windows XP updates, including security updates and hotfixes. It also includes select out-of-band releases, and a small number of new enhancements, which do not significantly change customers' experience with the operating system. Windows XP SP3 provides a new baseline for customers still deploying Windows XP. For customers with existing Windows XP installations, Windows XP SP3 fills gaps in the updates they might have missed-for example, by declining individual updates when using Windows Update," reads an excerpt out of XP SP3's overview. Despite the 2004 - 2008 gap that separates Service Pack 2 and Service Pack 3 releases, the latest major update for Windows XP doesn't even come close to its predecessor. SP3 is nothing more than a standard service pack that manages to add only a handful of functionalities, just crumbs from the Windows Vista feast, including: "Black Hole" Router Detection, Network Access Protection (NAP), CredSSP Security Service Provider, Enhanced security for Administrator and Service policy entries, Microsoft Cryptographic Module, and a revamped Windows Product Activation model. The "Overview of Windows XP Service Pack 3" is available for download [here](#). **Release Notes Part 1 and 2**Microsoft updated the Release Notes for XP SP3 as of May 16, in order to provide what it referred to as late-breaking issues about the service pack. The release Notes deal exclusively with common problems that end users deploying SP3 will come across. Internet Explorer 7, Internet Explorer 8 Beta 1, Microsoft Dynamics Retail Management System, Multilingual User Interface (MUI) Pack, Remote Desktop Client 6.1, Visual Basic Scripting Edition and Windows XP Media Center Edition 2002 are all products that will fail to play well with SP3. And although Microsoft is providing workarounds, the company does not deliver permanent fixes at this point in time. The Release Notes for Windows XP Service Pack 3 are [here](#). Additional documentation related to the service pack can be obtained here, under the same label of [Release Notes](#). Users will be able to access Microsoft's recommendations for accessing the gold bits of XP SP3, understand the preparations needed before the implementation of the service pack, the hardware requirements for installation with a focus on hard disk space, application compatibility issues and even support information. And, to top it all off, Microsoft is also providing an exhaustive list of all the fixes that it has included in the service pack. **XP SP3 Downloads** Although Microsoft recommends "customers use Windows Update to install the service pack, as it will provide the best experience," the Redmond company offers a variety of flavors of SP3. First off, a select pool of customers, namely TechNet and MSDN subscribers, get access not only to the SP3 stand-alone versions but also to the Integrated Builds, already slipstreamed by Microsoft. The general public will most likely come across SP3 via Windows Updates, with Microsoft serving them the smallest package possible, tailored specifically for their machine. In addition, the Redmond company is also delivering the service pack through the Download Center. In this regard, there are no less than three variants of XP SP3 up for grabs, each set up to satisfy a specific scenario, unlike the WU distribution process. Essentially advanced users, but also IT professionals, system administrators and developers can take advantage of extra XP SP3 releases. - [Windows XP Service Pack 3 stand-alone version](#) is available for download [here](#). - [Windows XP Service Pack 3 Checked Build Network Installation Package](#) is available for download [here](#). - [Windows XP Service Pack 3 CD Image](#) is available for download [here](#). According to Microsoft, the Windows XP Service Pack 3 Network Installation Package for IT Professionals and Developers "is intended for IT professionals and developers downloading and installing on multiple computers on a network." The Windows XP Service

Pack 3, Checked Build "is intended for IT professionals and developers downloading to a machine intending to debug or develop software on Windows XP Service Pack 3." And the Windows XP Service Pack 3 - ISO-9660 CD Image File "includes all previously released updates for the operating system. This update also includes a small number of new functionalities, which do not significantly change customers' experience with the operating system."**SP3 Resources**Microsoft did not stop with the delivery of the final bits for XP SP3. The Redmond company is in fact providing adjacent documentation designed to guide end users through the installation process. In this regard, a complete guide for [installing XP SP3](#) is published on TechNet. And Microsoft is also pointing end users in the direction of the [XP SP3 Forum](#) and of the [Solution Center](#) for troubleshooting information designed to resolve whatever problems they might have. Developers can also access the [Symbols Package for XP SP3](#) in order to perform debugging tasks, and the Windows [XP Service Pack 3 MUI Pack Update](#) , released to resolve an incompatibility issue with the XP SP2 multilingual package. And of course that XP SP3 has its own set of [deployment tools](#). "The Windows XP System Preparation tool enables administrators to prepare Windows XP system images as part of an automated deployment. You can use the System Preparation tool to perform the following tasks in a manner that is supported by Microsoft: prepare Windows for duplication from one computer to another computer; change security identifiers (SIDs) and other system and configuration settings to make them unique; configure user-specific information to be customized by the end-user when Windows starts the first time; create images of operating systems; duplicate disks; automate the Windows mini-Setup program and perform auditing tasks."There is but one step left for Microsoft to take in order for the Windows XP Service Pack 3 RTM Build 5512 to be complete, and that is the AU distribution. A member of the [Microsoft Update team](#) stated that "SP3 is currently available as a High Priority update on the Windows Update website. This means that if you go to WU and do an express or custom install - you should see SP3 listed. We're planning to begin automatic distribution (via AU) of SP3 sometime in early summer." This just so that you know there is still something to look forward to in terms of XP SP3.