

Upgrading from Windows XP to Windows 7

Overview

Note: We highly recommend printing out this tutorial. The Windows 7 installation process will restart your computer. If you don't return to this webpage, the printed instructions will help you complete the installation process.

Introduction

Windows XP can't use the Upgrade installation option to install Windows 7. However, you can still install Windows 7 by selecting the **Custom** option instead.

This tutorial guides you through the process of using Windows Easy Transfer to move your files and settings off of your PC, installing Windows 7 using the Custom option, and then moving your files back to your PC. **Be sure to read the tutorial thoroughly before following the steps.**

Before you begin

A Custom installation has several important differences from the Upgrade option that you need to know about:

- **A Custom installation of Windows does not preserve your programs, files, or settings.** It's sometimes called a "clean" install for that reason.
- **You'll need to reinstall your programs.** This means that you'll also need the original program installation discs or setup files for any programs that you want to install in Windows 7.
- **You'll need to save your files to an external location off of your PC before you install Windows 7.** To make moving files off of your PC easier, we recommend using one additional piece of equipment—an *external USB hard disk*. They're readily available at electronics and office supply stores, and they're an easy way to add additional storage space to your computer. (If you don't have a large amount of data, you might be able to use a smaller USB thumb drive.)

In this Tutorial

Step 1: Run Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor	2
Step 2: Move files and settings	3
Step 3: Install Windows 7	5
Step 4: Restore files and settings	8

What You'll Need

- ▶ An external hard drive or large capacity USB flash drive
- ▶ An Internet connection
- ▶ A Windows 7 installation disc

Step 1: Run Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor

To check if there are any issues with your computer that might affect installing Windows 7, download the free Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor. It scans your computer and lists any potential issues with your computer's hardware, devices, or programs, and recommends ways to address them.

First, download the installation file for Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor, and then install it. Then, after Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor is installed, run it to check your computer for any issues.



View issues that might affect upgrading

Note

- Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor can't run on 64-bit versions of Windows XP. To find out which version of Windows XP you're running, click **Start**, right-click **My Computer**, and then click **Properties**. Under **System**, if you see "x64 Edition" listed, you're running 64-bit Windows XP. (If you don't see it listed, then you're running 32-bit Windows XP and can continue running Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor.)

Download and install Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor

1. To download the installation file, go to the Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor page at the [Microsoft website](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/upgrade-advisor.aspx) (<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/upgrade-advisor.aspx>).
2. Click **Download the Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor Beta**.
3. Click **Download**, and save the installation file to your computer.
4. Double-click the installation file.

If you're prompted to install .NET 2.0:

1. Click **Install .NET Framework 2.0**.
2. Click **Run**.
3. In the security warning dialog, click **Run**.
4. Click **Next**.
5. If you agree to the license terms, click **Install**.
6. Click **Finish**.

7. Double-click the Upgrade Advisor installation file again.
5. Click **Next**.
6. If you agree to the license terms, click **Next**.
7. Click **Install**.
8. Click **Close**. (If you see a pre-selected checkbox, clicking **Close** will open Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor.)

Open and run Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor

1. If Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor is not yet running, double-click the **Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor** shortcut on your desktop.
2. In the security dialog, click **Yes**.
3. Click **Start check**.
4. Read the report and make note of any issues that the Upgrade Advisor finds.
5. If you want to save the report and print it later, click **Save Report**, type a name in the **File Name** box, and then click **Save**.
6. Click **Close**.

Step 2: Move your files and settings using Windows Easy Transfer

Windows Easy Transfer is a free download that helps you migrate your files and settings to another location before you install Windows 7, and then back to your PC after Windows installation is completed. First, download the installation file for Windows Easy Transfer, and then install it. After Windows Easy Transfer is installed, run it to save your files and settings to your storage device.

Important

- In order to use Windows Easy Transfer, you will need somewhere to temporarily store your files and settings off of your PC. We recommend using an external USB hard drive, though if you don't have a large amount of data, you might be able to use a smaller USB thumb drive or other storage device.
- Do not attempt to use the File and Settings Transfer Wizard in Windows XP. The wizard is incompatible with Windows 7 and you won't be able to restore your files in Windows 7 if you use the wizard. You need to use Windows Easy Transfer instead.

You'll also need to be running Windows XP Service Pack 2 or higher. If you not sure, click **Start**, right-click **My Computer**, and then click **Properties**. Under **System**, if you see "Service Pack 2" or "Service Pack 3" listed, you can use Windows Easy Transfer. If you need to install the latest service pack, go to the Windows XP service pack page at the [Microsoft website](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/322389) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/322389>).)



Download and install Windows Easy Transfer

1. Log onto your computer using an account with administrator privileges.
2. To download the installation file, go to the Windows Easy Transfer page at the [Microsoft website](http://www.microsoft.com) (<http://www.microsoft.com>). If you are running the 32-bit edition of Windows XP, select the file labeled **x86**. If you are running the 64-bit edition of Windows XP, select the file labeled **x64**.

Note: Windows Easy Transfer can't transfer files from a 64-bit version of Windows to a 32-bit version of Windows. This means if you're running 64-bit Windows XP but you plan to install 32-bit Windows 7, you won't be able to use Windows Easy Transfer to migrate your files and settings.

3. Click **Save**, and save the installation file to your computer.
4. When you are ready to install Windows Easy Transfer, double-click the file.
5. On the **Windows Easy Transfer for Windows 7** page, click **Next**.
6. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish installing Windows Easy Transfer.

Open and run Windows Easy Transfer to save your files and settings

1. Connect your external USB hard drive or other storage device.
2. Click **Start**, click **All Programs**, and then click **Windows Easy Transfer for Windows 7**.
3. Click **Next**.
4. Select **An external hard disk or USB flash drive**.
5. Click **This is my old computer**. Windows Easy Transfer scans the computer.
6. Click **Next** to transfer files and settings from the selected user accounts.

7. Enter and retype a password and write it down and keep it in a safe place, or leave the boxes blank, and then click **Save**.
8. Browse to the external USB hard disk or other storage device where you want to save your Easy Transfer file, and then click **Save**.

Warning

- You **must** save the Easy Transfer file to your USB hard drive or other storage device, and **not** to the default location "My Computer". If you don't save the Easy Transfer file to your external storage device, the file you just created will be deleted during the Custom installation of Windows 7.
9. Windows Easy Transfer will begin saving your files and settings. Do not use your computer during this time.
 10. When you see the message **These files and settings have been saved for your transfer**, click **Next**.
 11. Windows Easy Transfer displays the file name and location of the Easy Transfer file you just created. Write down the file name and location so you can get to it when you're ready to transfer files to Windows 7. Click **Next**, and then click **Close**.
 12. Ensure that the file is saved to your storage device, and then disconnect the device from your computer.

Gather program installation discs and files

It's important to remember that the Custom installation option doesn't preserve any of your programs, so you'll need to reinstall the programs that you want to use in Windows 7.

1. Make sure you have the installation discs or setup files for the programs you want to keep.
2. You might have downloaded some programs from the Internet. If you still have the installation files on your computer (often called setup.exe or similar), copy those to your external hard drive as well. If you don't have the installation files, you'll need to download them again after Windows 7 installation is complete.

Step 3: Install Windows 7

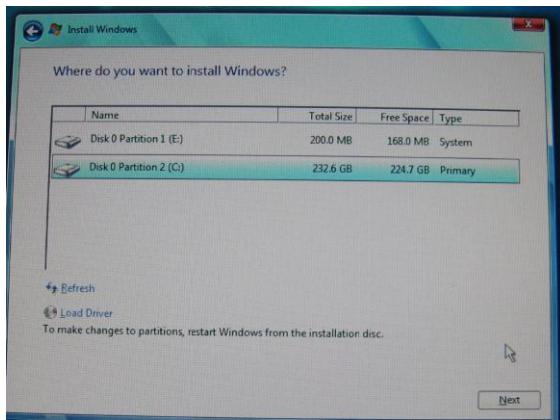
Before you begin, do the following:

- **We highly recommend printing out this tutorial.** The Windows 7 installation process will restart your computer. If you can't return to this webpage, the printed instructions can help guide you through the rest of the installation process.
- Connect your PC to the Internet so you can get installation updates during the installation process. (If you don't have an Internet connection, you can still install Windows 7.)
- Select either the 32-bit or 64-bit Windows 7 installation disc, depending on whether you want to install a 32-bit or 64-bit edition of Windows 7. If your computer is currently running a 64-bit version of Windows XP, you can use the 64-bit installation disc.

- Find your 25-character Windows product key. You can find it on the installation disc holder inside the Windows package.

Perform a Custom installation of Windows 7

1. Turn on your PC.
2. After Windows XP has started, do one of the following:
 - If you downloaded the Windows 7 installation file, double-click on the file.
 - If you have a Windows 7 installation disc, insert the disc into your computer. Setup should start automatically. If it doesn't, click **Start**, click **My Computer**, open the Windows 7 installation disc on your DVD drive and then double-click **setup.exe**.
3. On the **Install** Windows page, click **Install now**.
4. On the **Get important updates for installation** page, we recommend getting the latest updates to help ensure a successful installation and to help protect your computer against security threats. Your computer will need to be connected to the Internet during Windows 7 installation to get these updates.
5. On the **Please read the license terms** page, if you accept the license terms, click **I accept the license terms**, and then click **Next**.
6. On the **Which type of installation do you want?** page, click **Custom**.
7. Select the partition containing Windows XP (this is often the computer's C: drive), and then click **Next**. (Do **not** select your external USB hard drive.)



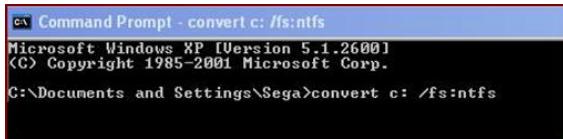
If Windows can't be installed to the partition you selected

If an error states that Windows can't be installed to the partition you selected, and **Show details** reveals a dialog stating "Windows must be installed to a partition formatted as NTFS", then your computer's hard disk is likely formatted using the older FAT32 file system.

You'll need to convert your hard disk to the latest version of NTFS prior to installing Windows 7. To do this:

- a. Cancel Windows 7 installation, and remove the installation disc.

- b. Click **Start**, point to **All Programs**, point to **Accessories**, right-click **Command Prompt** and then click **Run as...**
- c. Select **The following user**, select a user with Administrator permissions, type the password, and then click **OK**.
- d. In the Command Prompt window, carefully type **convert <drive>: /fs:ntfs** where **<drive>** is the letter associated with your Windows XP installation. For example, if Windows XP is on your C: drive, type **convert c: /fs:ntfs** (When you type, be sure to include a space immediately before /fs:ntfs)



```
cmd Command Prompt - convert c: /fs:ntfs
Microsoft Windows XP [Version 5.1.2600]
(C) Copyright 1985-2001 Microsoft Corp.
C:\Documents and Settings\Sega>convert c: /fs:ntfs
```

- e. Press **ENTER**.
 - f. When asked "Would you like to force a dismount on this volume?", type **Y**, and then press **ENTER**.
 - g. When asked if you want to schedule the drive to be converted the next time the system restarts. Type **Y**, and then press **ENTER**.
 - h. Close Command Prompt.
 - i. Click **Start**, click **Turn Off Computer**, and then click **Turn Off**. (You need to shut down the computer completely rather than simply selecting Restart.)
 - j. Turn on your computer. Windows will proceed to convert the hard disk to NTFS and then restart your computer. Do not use your computer during this time.
 - k. When Windows XP starts again, return to Step 2.
8. In the Windows.old dialog that appears, click **OK**.
 9. Continue to follow the instructions to finish installing Windows 7, including naming your computer and setting up an initial user account. You can give this first user account the same name that you used in Windows XP, or you can give the user account a new name.

Step 4: Restore your files and settings using Windows Easy Transfer

After you've installed Windows 7, use Windows Easy Transfer again to move your files and settings back to your computer. Then, you can install your programs and check for new or updated drivers.



Choose which accounts and files you want to transfer

Move files and settings back to your computer using Windows Easy Transfer

1. Plug in the storage device that contains your saved Windows Easy Transfer migration file.
2. Click the **Start** button, click **Computer**, and under **Hard Disk Drives**, double-click your storage device.
3. Browse to the location where you saved the Easy Transfer file, called **Windows Easy Transfer – Items from old computer**, and double click the file. (If you gave the file a different name when you originally created it, browse to that file and double-click it.)
4. If you entered a password when creating the Easy Transfer file, type the password and then click **Next**.

Note: If you receive an error that you don't have enough free disk space to migrate your files back to your computer using Windows Easy Transfer, you can use Disk Cleanup to delete temporary files left over from Windows 7 installation and free up additional disk space. To learn how to do this, read the **Post-install clean up (optional)** section at the end of this page.

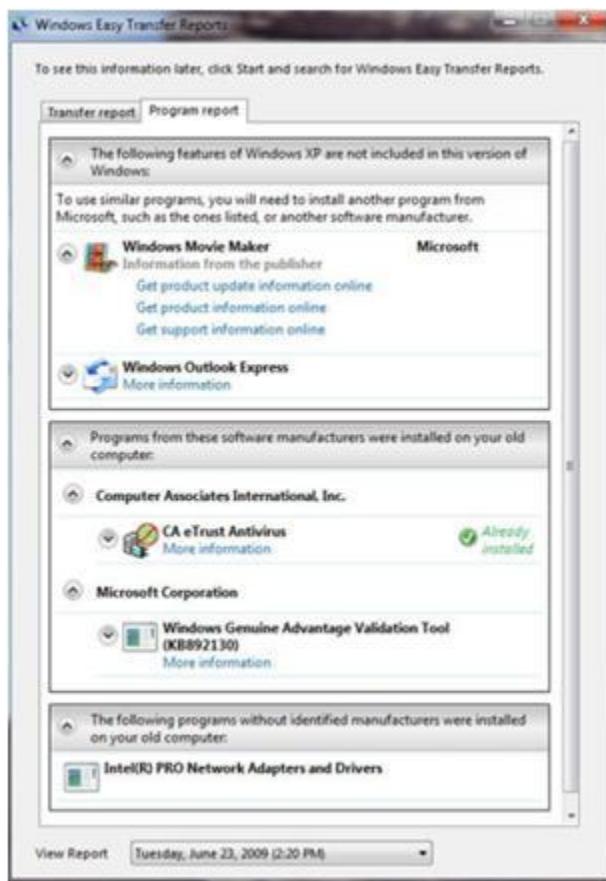
5. By default, Windows Easy Transfer moves, or maps, the original account you used in Windows XP to create the Windows Easy Transfer file into the account you are currently logged in to. If there are other accounts you are transferring, Windows Easy Transfer will create those accounts automatically. Do one of the following:
 - To change how the Windows XP accounts are mapped in Windows 7, click **Advanced Options**.
 - To accept the default account mapping, click **Transfer**.
6. After the transfer is complete, you can view a report listing the files that were moved from Windows XP to Windows 7, and a list of programs that you might want to reinstall.
7. Click **Close**. If you are prompted to restart your computer, click **Restart now**.

8. When you log on to a transferred user account for the first time, you'll be prompted to change the user account's password. Click **OK**, and in the dialog that appears, do one of the following:

- If you want to give the user account a password, (recommended), type a new password in **New password**, retype it in **Confirm password**, and then press **ENTER**. There's no need to type the old password from Windows XP in the Password box.
- If you don't want to give the user account a password, leave the boxes empty and then press **ENTER**.

Reinstall programs

Windows Easy Transfer also provides a report detailing the programs you used in Windows XP that you might want to reinstall. To reinstall your programs, you'll need to use the installation discs or setup files that you gathered earlier.



See a list of programs you might want to reinstall

If your computer came with several programs preinstalled, you might see programs listed in the report that you've never used before or have used rarely. When you begin reinstalling programs, start with the ones that you know and use regularly.

The first program we recommend installing is new antivirus software for your computer. If you don't have new antivirus software for your Windows 7-based PC, you can browse for new programs online at the [Windows 7 Compatibility Center](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/compatibility/) (<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/compatibility/>).

Note: Some programs such as Windows Mail are no longer included in Windows 7. If you used Windows Mail or Outlook Express as your e-mail program, you'll need to install a new e-mail program to read your saved messages or send and receive e-mail. You can get similar programs from other software manufacturers or from the [Microsoft website](http://download.live.com/wlmail) (<http://download.live.com/wlmail>).

Update drivers

A driver is software that allows your computer to communicate with hardware or devices. Without drivers, the hardware you connect to your computer—for example, a video card or a printer—won't work properly.

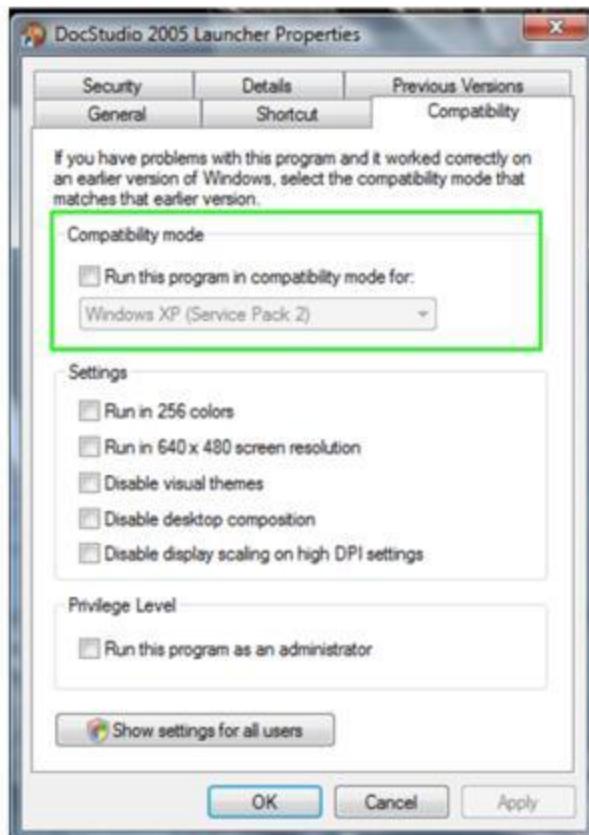
In most cases, drivers come with Windows or you can find them by using Windows Update and checking for updates. Click the **Start** button, click **All Programs**, and then click **Windows Update**.

If Windows doesn't have the driver you need, you can usually find it on a disc that came with the hardware or device you want to use, or on the manufacturer's website. For more information, see "Update a driver for hardware that isn't working properly"

Small notebook PCs and drivers

Some small notebook PCs that were running Windows XP might not have specific Windows 7 drivers for features such as function buttons. If Windows Update doesn't find a driver, visit your computer manufacturer's website and search for a download or support page where you can search for drivers for your PC.

You can try to install a driver made for Windows XP onto your Windows 7-based PC. If the Windows XP driver won't install, you can try changing the compatibility settings on the driver's installation file.



Choose the version of Windows you were running before

1. Download or copy the driver installation file to your computer.
2. Right-click the file, click **Properties**, and then click the **Compatibility** tab.
3. Under **Compatibility mode**, select the check box, select your earlier version of Windows from the drop-down menu, and then click **OK**.
4. Try reinstalling the driver.

Post-install clean-up (optional)

During Windows 7 installation, if you don't format the partition, files that were used in Windows XP are stored in the Windows.old folder. The type of files in this folder depends on your computer.

After you've used Windows 7 for a while, for example one or two weeks, and you're confident that your files and settings are back where you want them to be, you can safely reclaim disk space and use Disk Cleanup to delete the Windows.old folder.

Note

- Before you use Disk Cleanup, make sure that all of your files and settings migrated correctly to Windows 7 where you expected them to be. Deleting the Windows.old folder can't be undone.
1. Click **Start**, type **Disk Cleanup** in the Search box, and then click **Disk Cleanup**.
 2. Click **Clean up system files**.

3. Select **Previous Windows installation(s)** and any other categories of files you want to delete.
4. Click **OK** and then click **Delete Files**.