

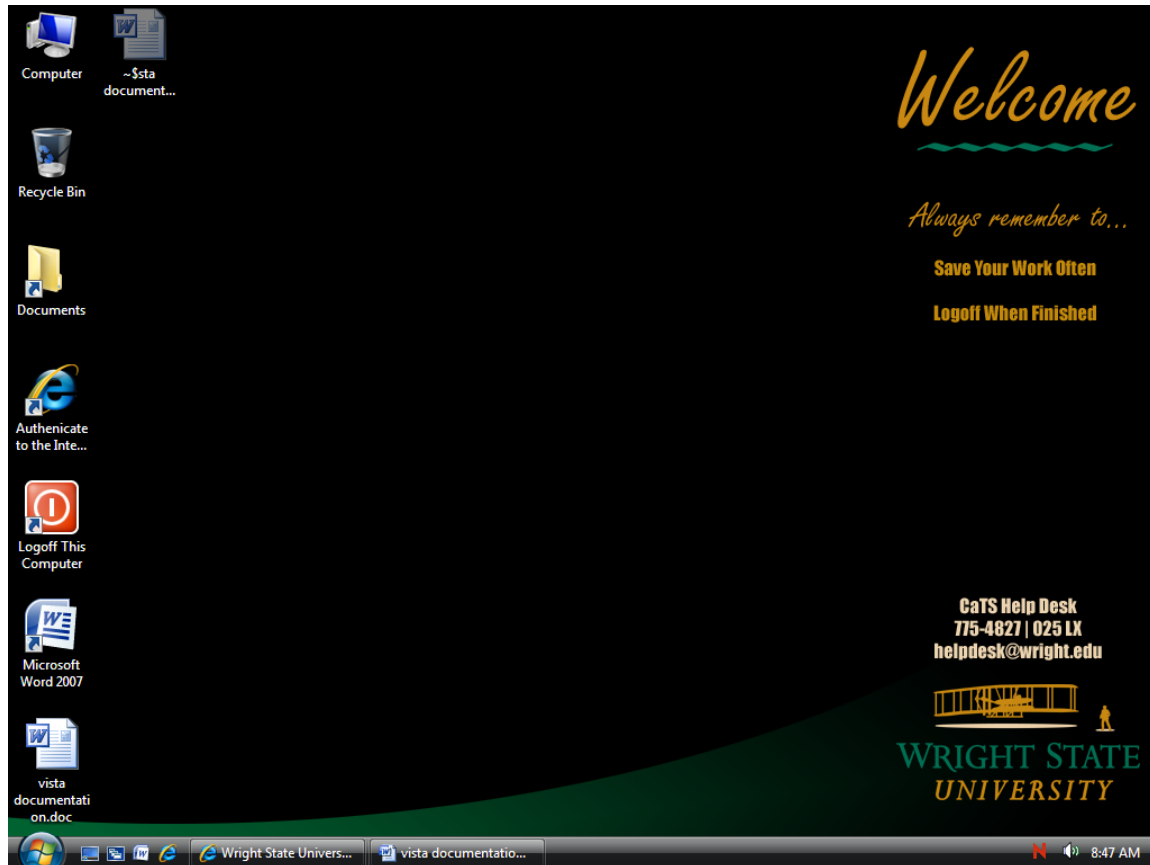
Introduction to Windows Vista

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1 - The Desktop

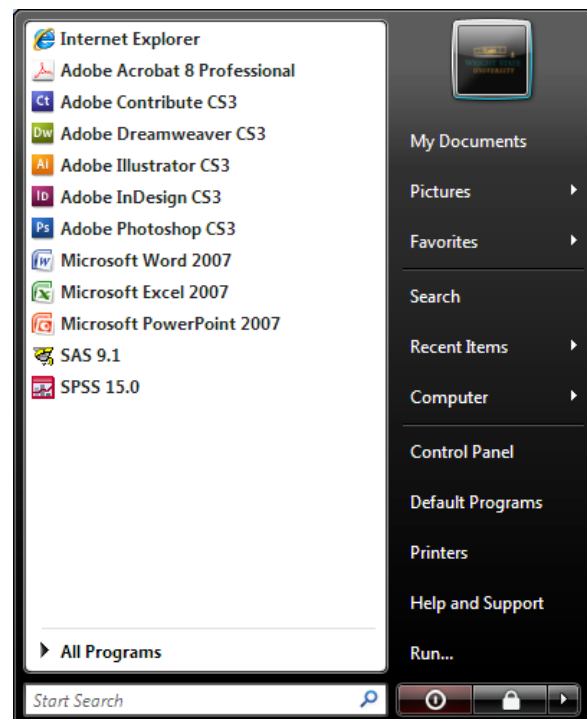
The Desktop is the main Vista screen. It is the work area where dialog boxes, windows, icons, and menus appear. Like an office desk, the Windows Vista desktop contains items you can use to do your job. For instance, from your desktop, you can perform file-management tasks and run software applications. You can customize the appearance of the desktop to suit your preferences.



Start Menu Basics

The Start Menu is, appropriately enough, your starting point in Windows Vista. All of your programs, settings, etc. can be accessed here. To begin using it, click the Windows Icon button in the bottom left corner or press the Windows key on your keyboard. On the next page are some common items you'll use on the Start Menu.

- **All Programs Menu** – Stores most of your options, such as the programs you have installed on your computer including Microsoft Office, Windows Explorer, and Windows Update.
- **Run Command** – Gives you quick access to programs, websites, etc. Just type in the name of the file or website and click OK.
- **Search** – Allows you to search for files and folders on your computer.
- **Start Search** – Allows you to type in a program and the list is being populated/updated as you type.
- **Help and Support** – Takes you to the Windows Vista Help Center
- **Recently Used Programs** – Provides quick access to programs that you use frequently by placing them just above the start button.
- **Printers** – Allows you to view installed printers and setup any new ones.
- **Control Panel** – Allows you quick access to programs that do everything from removing your programs to adjusting your mouse settings, to setting up a firewall.
- **Log Off / Shut Down** – Logs you off the system or shuts down the PC



The Start Menu may also include icons for Computer (My Computer), My Documents, Network (My Network Places), Recent Items, Music, Pictures and Games. **Tip:** Try right-clicking the Start button for more start menu customization.

Classic Start Menu

If you're not ready for the task of finding yourself through the Vista start menu, then you can switch it back to the classic XP view. Right-click in the open space on the toolbar and choose "Properties." Select the Start Menu tab and choose "Classic Start Menu."

Desktop Icons

The Desktop is where you'll find icons (small pictures) for many of your most frequently used programs. You'll most likely see icons for My Computer, My Documents, Recycle Bin, and Internet Explorer.

- **My Computer** – Allows you to see what drives are attached to your computer (for example, your local hard disk drive, your CD/DVD drives, any networked shared drives, and external drives, such as a USB flash drive). You can also view the files that are located on these drives.
- **My Documents** – Supplies a 'catch-all' place for your personal files. Within here you can see your files, any shared files from other computer users and any music or pictures you may have stored.
- **Recycle Bin** – Stores any files you delete until you empty it.

- Internet Explorer – Contains the Windows’ built in web browser that integrates with other Windows components (such as your folders and My Documents).

On the other hand, you can also create and edit icons for your own use.

- Creating Icons – To create an icon, right-click anywhere on the Desktop and choose New Shortcut. Browse for the file or program you want to create the icon for, click Next, name your icon, then click Finish.
- Deleting Icons – To delete an icon, either right-click on the icon and select Delete, or click once on the icon and press the Delete key on your keyboard.
- Renaming Icons – To rename an icon, right-click on the icon and choose Rename. You can then type in the new name. Also, try clicking once on the icon, wait half a second, then click it a second time. The text area will be visible and you can type a new name.
- Arranging Icons – To arrange the icons on your desktop, do a right-click in an open area of the Desktop, click Sort By, and choose the appropriate option from the list below.
 - Name – Sort the icons alphabetically from top to bottom, left to right.
 - Size – Sort the icons by file size (the amount of space the file takes up on your local computer).
 - Type – Sorts the icons by the type of file that it is, such as Word Documents, programs, etc.
 - Date Modified – Arranges the icons with the most recent items in the top left hand corner.
- Moving & Dragging – To move (drag) an icon, click on it once, holding down the click, and drag it to another location. You can also arrange the items wherever you would like, just right-click in the open area of the Desktop, click View, and choose Align to Grid if there isn’t a checkmark to the left of it.

Taskbar & Toolbars



The bottom of your screen contains various toolbars and icons that allow you to see what programs are running and what programs you can access easily by clicking its icon. From the left to right, the areas are: the Start button, which was discussed previously; the Quick Launch toolbar; the Taskbar; and the Notification Area, sometimes called the system tray. Sometimes other toolbars can show up, such as an address bar.

- Quick Launch Toolbar – Allows you to place icons of programs that you want to use frequently, so that you can have one click access to open them.
- Taskbar – Shows any programs or files you currently have open. You can click the toolbar buttons to go back and forth between open items.
- Notification Area – Displays any programs you have running in the background (such as a virus scanning program) and displays the time and date.

Interior Decorating Vista: Changing Desktop Properties

So you’re bored with that plain background or that rolling green hill? Don’t like the flashing stars screen saver that plagues your screen? The Personalization (Display Properties) window is your answer. From here you can change

your wallpaper, screen saver, and even your desktop theme. To access the window, right-click anywhere on an open space of your desktop, and click Personalize. Here's a rundown of what each area is.

- Window Color and Appearance – Allows you to switch from the Windows Vista Basic style to the Windows Standard (Windows XP) and change the color scheme.
- Screen Saver – Allows you to set a screen saver and its time interval. A screen saver is a picture or animation that covers your screen and appears when your computer is idle for a set period of time.
- Sounds – Changes which sounds are heard when you do everything from receiving e-mail to emptying your Recycle Bin.
- Mouse Pointers – Allows you to pick a different mouse pointer. You can also change how the mouse pointer looks during such activities as clicking and selecting.
- Themes – Allows you to set a theme for Windows which includes changing visual or auditory elements associated with menus, icons, backgrounds, screen savers, mouse pointers and some computer sounds.
- Display Settings – Allows you to set your screen resolution and other advanced monitor and video settings.

2 - Disk Management

To keep your system humming along, it's a good idea to always keep a check on how your system is running and where your files are located. Tip: Run your virus scanning program at least once a week and set it up so that it will run automatic updates. Also, try to run a spyware cleaning program such as Ad-Aware or Spybot Search and Destroy at least once weekly

- Recycle Bin – It's a good idea to empty your Recycle Bin occasionally. Files can build up in here and take up valuable space. To do so, right-click on the Recycle Bin's icon, and select Empty Recycle Bin.
- Disk Cleanup – Allows you to clean up temporary files, etc. that are collecting dust on your system. To use it, click on Start->All Programs-> Accessories->System Tools->Disk Cleanup. You'll see a checklist that you can mark them, and then remove.
- Disk Defragmenter – Sometimes, Windows will throw bits and pieces of your files across your hard drive, thus making the computer slower when trying to access these files. To remedy this, you need to run Disk Defragmenter. To access it, click on Start->All Programs-> Accessories-> System Tools->Disk Defragmenter and follow the directions.

Burning Data to a CD

Burning a CD or DVD is great for backing stuff up, transferring stuff to another computer, mailing to somebody, or archiving older files to free up hard drive space. To burn a CD follow the steps below:

1. Insert a blank disc into your PC
 - a. The autoplay dialog box appears, asking whether you intend for this CD or DVD to hold computer files or music.
2. Click the "Burn files to disc" link
3. Type the name for the disc, but don't click Next yet

- a. Live File System is a new format that allows you to drag files and folders onto it in real time. You can think of it as a thumb drive.
 - b. Mastered format is the most widely used and you basically drag the files/folders into its window. The PC duplicates the items, parking it in an invisible, temporary holding area until you're ready to burn. You burn all files and folders at once. You will need double the disk space of the files you are burning.
4. Begin putting files and folders into the disc's window
- a. Can use any of the combinations below
 - i. Drag the items into the open CD/DVD window or onto the disc burner's icon in the Computer window.
 - ii. Can highlight the files you want burned onto the CD. Choose Organize -> Copy. Click in the CD/DVD window, and then choose Organize -> Paste to copy the material there.
 - iii. Explore your hard drive and whenever you find a file/folder you'd like backed up, right-click it.

3 - Internet Security

The Internet can let socially stunted hackers enter your system unleashing their viruses, setting up remote hacking tools, feeding us spyware and trying to trick us for our credit card numbers. Windows Vista does include added security behind the scenes that you can't see but we will focus on the following security measures that you can see and change.

- Security Center – Shows you at a glance where you're safe and where you're not. Click the buttons or arrows on the right side of the screen to get more details about your security in any category. But if you want to change those settings. Control Panel -> Security -> Security Center
- Windows firewall – Acts as a gatekeeper between you and the Internet. It examines all traffic, and lets through only communications that it knows are safe; all other traffic is turned away at the door. Protects both inbound and outbound traffic which outbound is important if you may have spyware, Trojans and/or malicious software.
- Windows Defender – Protects you against spyware in two ways. First, it's a kind of silent sentinel that sits in the background, watching your system. When it detects a piece of spyware trying to install itself, Defender zaps it. Second, it scans your hard drive for infections every day, and removes what it finds. Control Panel -> Security -> Windows Defender
- Phishing Filter – A phishing attack involves receiving an email that appears to be legitimate from a bank, eBay, PayPal, or some other financial Web site. The Message tells you that the site needs to confirm account information, or warns that your account has been hacked, and needs you to help keep it safe. Internet Explorer -> Tools -> Phishing Filter
- Privacy and Cookies – Deposits preference files on your hard drive. Some cookies can be helpful like let your PC log into a site automatically or let you customize what the site looks like and how to use it. On the other hand, some cookies can record which pages you visit on a site, how long you spend on a site, what kind of information you like to find out, and so on. To check cookie settings open Internet Explorer and go to Tools -> Internet Options -> Privacy tab. Two types of cookies are described below:
 - First-party cookie: created by the site your currently visiting and generally aren't privacy invaders.
 - Third-party cookies: deposited by sites other than the one your on normally via advertisements

- Erasing Your Tracks – Internet Explorer logs every Web site you ever visit and stores cookies and could store passwords. In addition it can cache graphic/text files to speed up the page when you visit those sites again. To delete cookies and browsing history go to Tools -> Internet Options -> General.
- Pop-up blocker – Pop-ups are more than annoying; they're potentially dangerous. They're tricks hackers use to deposit spyware on your PC and can also begin a silent downloading process.



4 - Freebies

Windows includes a wide array of simple programs that makes it easier to finish your day to day tasks. Below you'll find information on these. To access them, click on Start->All Programs->Accessories-> and then the appropriate icon.

- Calculator – Contains both a simple and scientific calculator
- Command Prompt – Gives you access to the old DOS style command window
- Notepad – This is a simple text editor, mainly used to type a few notes
- Paint – A simple image editing and creation program
- Wordpad – A word processing program with more options than Notepad, but not as advanced as Microsoft Word
- Windows Sidebar – see chapter 5

Windows also includes some other programs that make your life easier (or harder, depending upon your thoughts of Microsoft). These programs include Internet Explorer, Outlook Express, Windows Calendar, Windows Contacts, Windows Defender, Windows Mail and Windows Photo Gallery. To access go to Start->All Programs

- Internet Explorer – Provides you with a way to view websites on the Internet. This is a full featured program and has many advanced options and security to make your web browsing safe and fun.
- Windows Calendar – Manages appointments and tasks.
- Windows Contacts – Provides a central directory for phone numbers, email addresses and mailing addresses.
- Windows Defender – As discussed in Part 3: Internet Security
- Windows Mail – Outlook Express has been replaced by Windows Mail, an improved e-mail program with enhancements such as junk e-mail filtering and protection against phishing messages. To check these settings go to Tools -> Junk E-mail Options. It allows you to create multiple accounts to check, to create filters, and to add signatures to your e-mail.

- Windows Photo Gallery – Digital photo management that allows you to import photos, organize, tag, rate, edit and share pictures.
- Windows Movie Maker – Allows you to edit your video from a camcorder or digital camera, trimming out the boring parts, and dress it up with credits, music, and so on.
- Windows DVD Maker – Debuts with Windows Vista and only with the Premium or Ultimate Editions. It allows you to turn your digital photos or camcorder movies into DVD's that work on any DVD player, complete with menus, slideshow controls, and other navigation features.

5 - Sidebar and Gadgets



Gadgets are easy to use mini-programs that give you information at a glance and provide easy access to frequently used tools. Windows Sidebar helps you to organize your gadgets.

As you use your computer to access information, perform tasks, and interact with software, you may at times feel like you're facing information overload. You have to open a web browser just to check the weather, open an application to view your calendar, and open a calculator program just to add up a few numbers. Now, with Windows Sidebar and its associated mini-applications called gadgets, the specific information you need is at your fingertips. Start->All Programs->Accessories->Windows Sidebar

6 - Who Needs a Mouse?

You can get to almost anything, and do almost anything, in Windows with a few clicks of your mouse. However, sometimes those few clicks can end up being more than a few, and it begins to get tedious. One way to break up the monotony and make your computing life easier is to use Windows' keyboard shortcuts. I have provided a list on a separate sheet that will include an extensive list of these shortcuts.

7 - Need Help?

It's always fun to check out Microsoft's website to see what's new and what's coming up, but Microsoft also has an extensive Help section that you can use to find information on almost any problem you are having, whether it's an error message, or just a general question. To open the Help system, choose Start->Help and Support, or press F1. By using the search option you are instructing Windows to rifle through its 10,000 help pages to search for the phrase you typed. If you want to specify online help, click the Offline Help link at the bottom of the screen and choose Get Online Help. In addition, you can head over to <http://support.microsoft.com> and do a search for almost anything. And as always, you can contact us at the Help Desk.