

Upgrade to and Set Up Windows Vista

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What You'll Need

- A computer
- Any edition of Windows Vista®

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Upgrade to Windows Vista

Windows Vista makes the most of your computer with new and improved security, digital media programs, and searching capability. It's easier than ever to upgrade to Windows Vista or find and buy a new Vista PC that meets your needs. And with great personalization options and built-in support services, you can't go wrong.

IS YOUR PC READY?

If you're running Windows XP®, you can find out if your computer is ready for Windows Vista by using the **Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor™**. This downloadable application scans your computer and helps you choose which edition of Windows Vista is best for you.

To read more, or to download and run the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor, go to <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/buyorupgrade/upgradeadvisor.msp>

1. You should see a dialog box pop up for the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor program, asking to install on your computer.
2. Click **Run** and then **Next**. You may also have to click **Accept** when you see a licensing agreement.
3. After the program installs, close the dialogue box, go to your desktop and doubleclick on the **Windows Upgrade Advisor** icon.



Figure 1—Windows Upgrade Advisor icon

Upgrade to Windows Vista *(continued)*

4. Click **Start Scan** to begin the scanning process. This may take several minutes. Once the scan is complete, click **See Details**. The advisor will present you with a recommendation based on your needs.

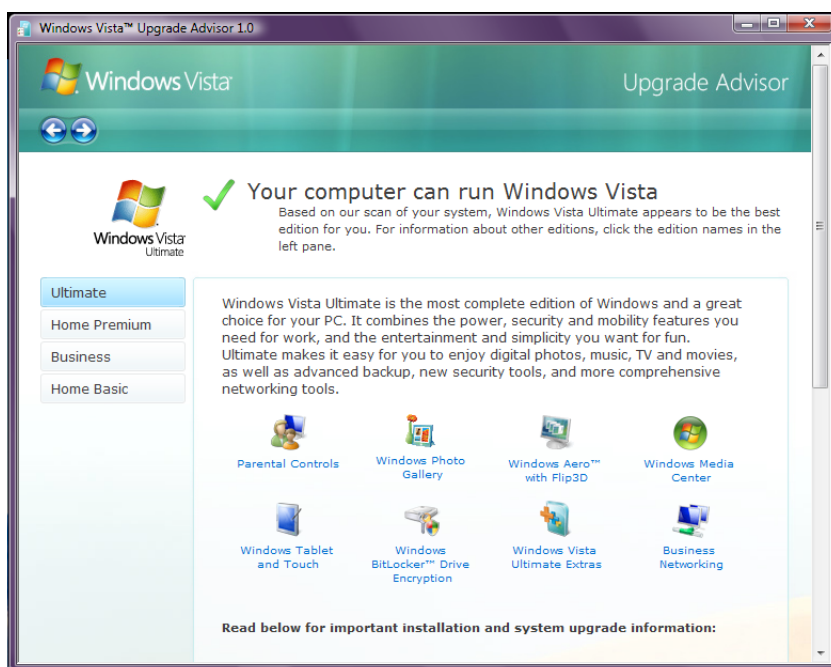


Figure 2—Windows Upgrade Advisor scan results and recommendations



Before you run the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor, plug in any USB devices such as printers, external hard drives, or scanners that are regularly used with the PC you're evaluating.

Upgrade to Windows Vista *(continued)*

If you are running a previous version of Windows

Depending on the version you currently have running, you will have the option to do one of the following:

- An **in-place install**, which allows you to install Windows Vista and retain your files, applications and all of your settings as they are.
- A **clean install**, which requires that you back up and transfer your files, settings, and applications to an extra hard drive or other storage device before installing Windows Vista.

Choose the option that best fits your particular situation.

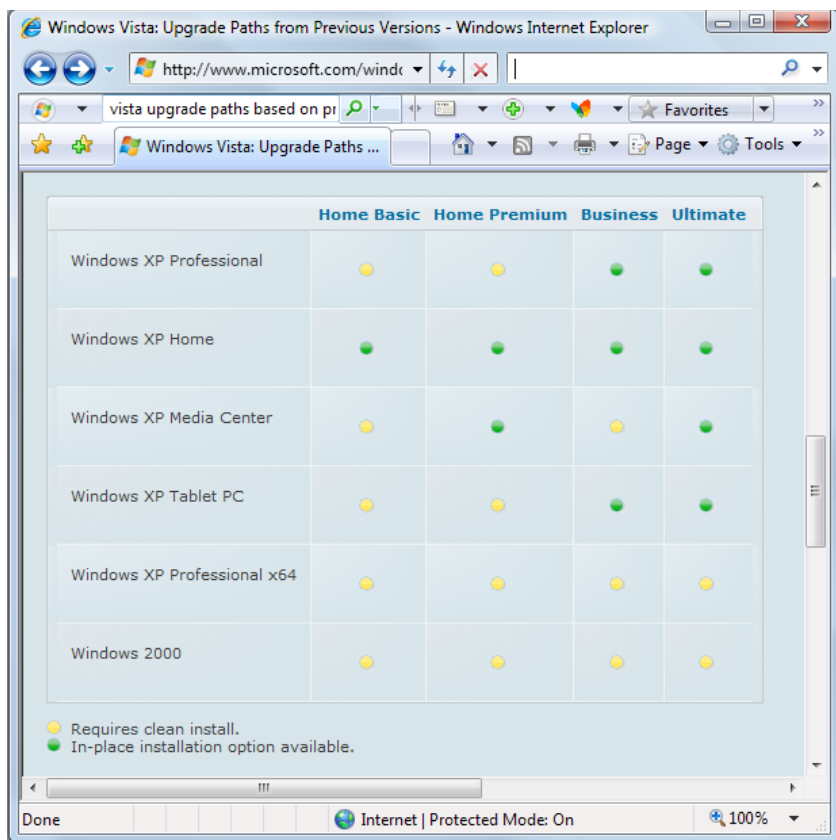


Figure 3—Installation options based on version

Upgrade to Windows Vista *(continued)*

WANT TO GET A NEW PC?

If you're looking to buy a new PC, there are a ton of options out there—so, whether you're into gaming, home entertainment, or working on the go, there's a Windows PC that's great for you. And because we partner with some of your favorite stores, like Best Buy, Amazon.com and Staples, you can find lots of deals.

With so many options, we know it can sometimes get a little tricky to know which one's for you—that's where **Windows Laptop Selector** comes in. Windows Laptop Selector asks you a series of questions about what you're looking for, then creates a wish list of PCs that you can use to find a PC online, send to a friend, or print out and take to the store with you. Try it out and let us know what you think! Just go to Windows Laptop Selector at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-laptop-selector/>

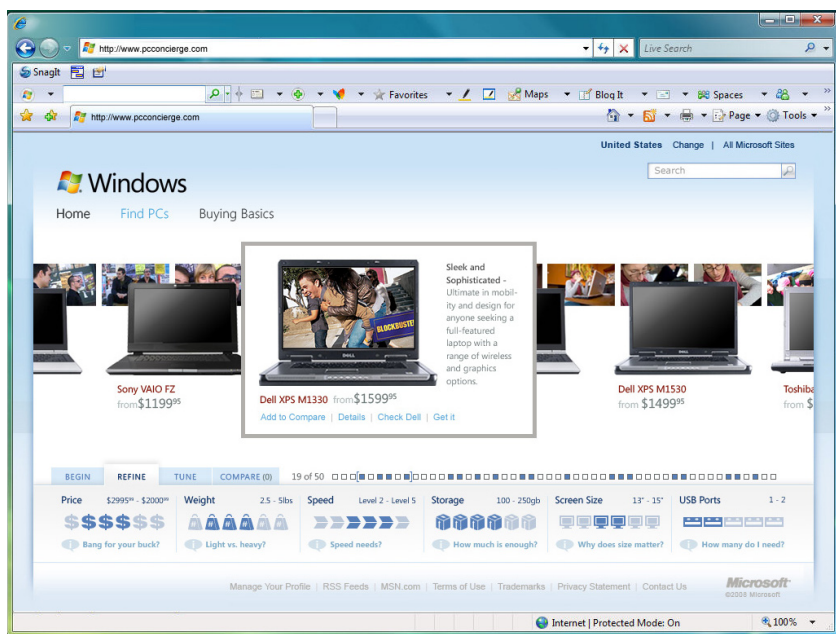


Figure 4—Windows Laptop Selector

More Information

- Windows Vista—Look How Far We've Come—Overview: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/whynow.mspx>
- Windows Vista Download: http://www.windowsmarketplace.com/content.aspx?ctId=394&tabid=1&WT.mc_id=0107_109&wt_svl=20516a&mg_id=20516b
- Windows Vista—Special Offers: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/shop/specialoffers.mspx>

Personalization

Once your PC is up and running with Windows Vista, you can personalize it to fit your life and what you love. In this section, we'll review just some of the many ways you can make your PC your own.

MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO YOUR DESKTOP

Your desktop can become the kind of welcome screen you've always wanted. You can set your Windows background to be an old picture of your college roommates or a picture of your trip to Europe with just a few clicks. And as your needs and preferences change, so can your desktop.

Change your desktop background

1. Open the Personalization menu by right-clicking on your desktop, and then clicking **Personalize**.

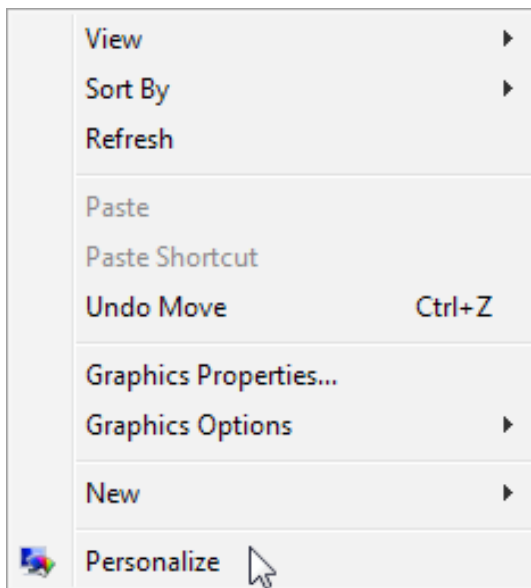


Figure 5—Personalize Menu

2. Click **Desktop Background**.

Personalization *(continued)*

3. Click to expand the **Picture Location** button, and pick a folder with pictures to browse.

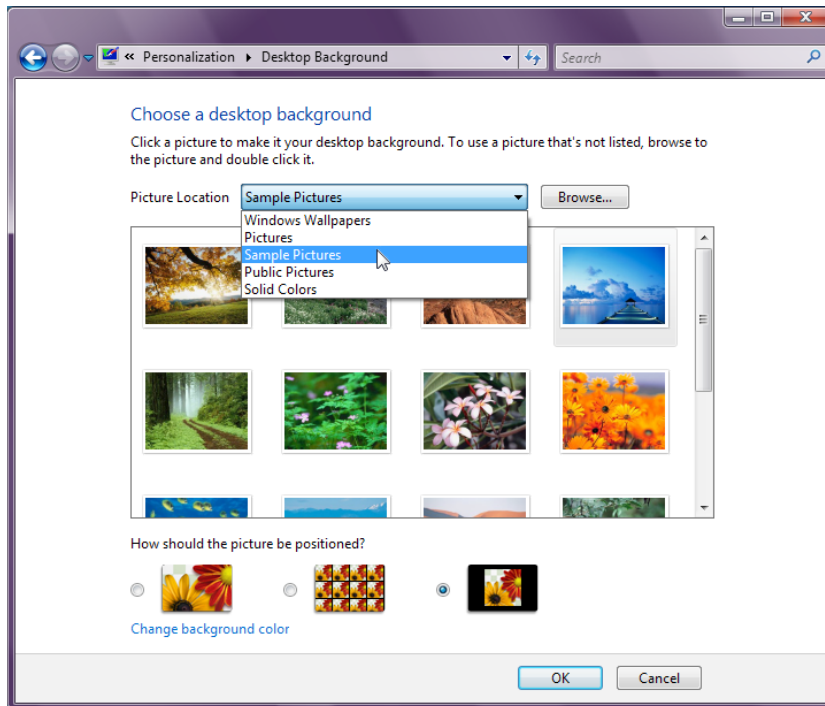


Figure 6—Choose a desktop background

4. Click on the picture you would like to use as your desktop background.
5. Select one of the layout options listed under **How should the picture be positioned?**
6. Click **OK**.

Personalization *(continued)*

Customize colors

1. Open the Personalization menu by right-clicking on your desktop, and then clicking **Personalize**.
2. Click **Window Color and Appearance**.
3. Do one of the following:
 - Select a color from the choices provided
 - Click **Show color mixer**, and then use the **Hue**, **Saturation**, and **Brightness** sliders to create your own custom color.

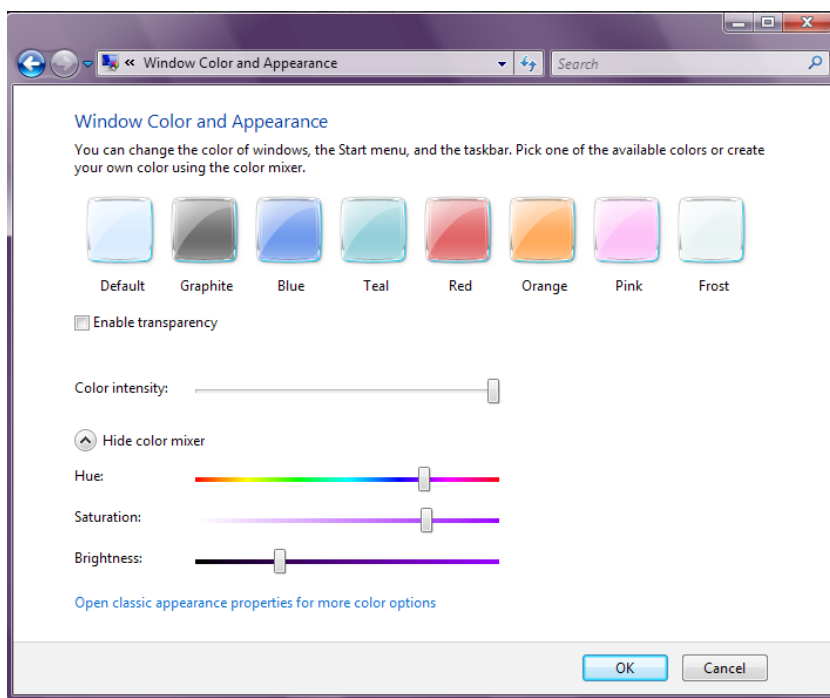


Figure 7—Window Color and Appearance options

4. Move the **Color intensity** slider to adjust color intensity.
5. Click **OK** to save your changes.

Personalization *(continued)*

Use pictures as a screen saver

1. Open the Personalization menu by right-clicking on your desktop, and then clicking **Personalize**.
2. Click **Change screen saver**.
3. Click to expand the **Screen saver** list, and then click **Photos** or **Windows Live Photo Gallery** (may not appear on all systems).

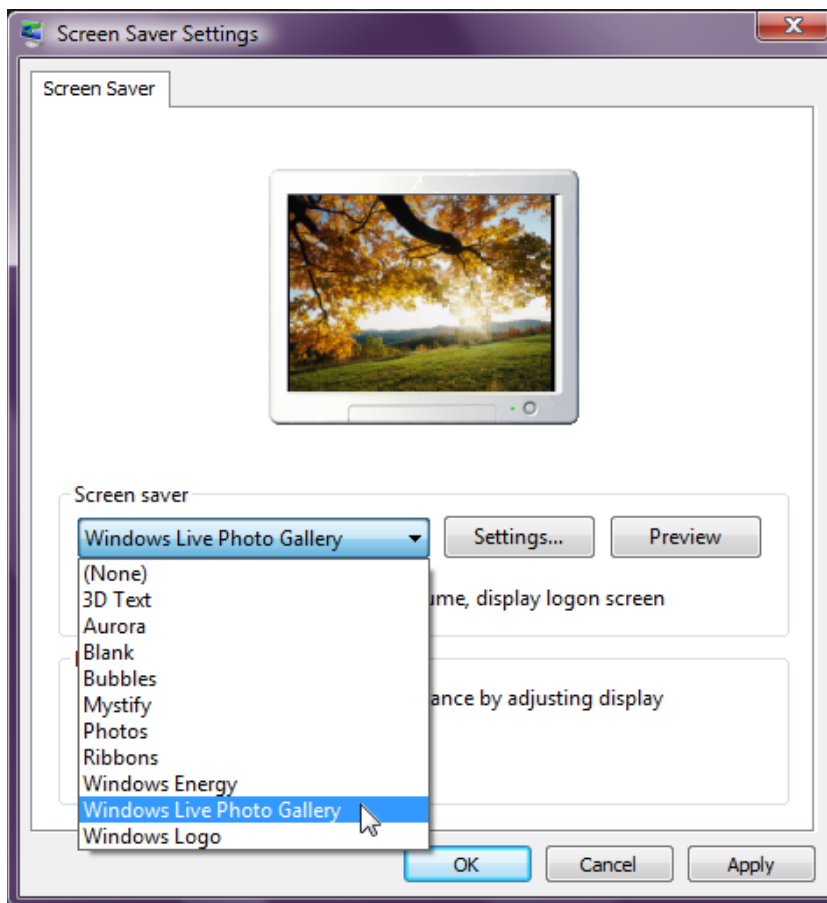


Figure 8—Screen Saver Settings menu

4. If you want to specify a location for the pictures you want to use in your screen saver, or modify the slide show speed, click **Settings**.
5. After you make your changes, click **Apply**.
6. Click **OK**.

Personalization *(continued)*

CUSTOMIZE YOUR SIDEBAR

Keep the things you need most right at your fingertips by customizing your Windows Sidebar.

1. Open Appearances and Personalization by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Control Panel**, and then clicking **Appearances and Personalization**.
2. Click on **Add gadgets to Sidebar** under the **Windows Sidebar Properties**.
3. To add a gadget to your sidebar, drag and drop it in your sidebar.



Figure 9—Windows Sidebar and gadgets

Personalization *(continued)*

4. Adjust the placement of gadgets on your desktop by dragging them out of the side bar and dropping them into the desired location.
5. If you right-click on a gadget, you can choose to **Move**, **Attach to Sidebar**, adjust **Opacity**, or **Close Gadget**.



You can always add more gadgets to your desktop. A wide variety of Sidebar gadgets, from games to productivity tools, are available for download on the Windows Live Gallery Website at <http://gallery.live.com/>

REMOVE EXTRA SOFTWARE

Lots of extra programs on your computer can sometimes slow it down. From time to time, it's a good idea to remove the programs you don't use anymore.

1. Open Programs and Features by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Control Panel**, and then clicking **Programs**.
2. Under Programs and Features, click **Uninstall a program**.
3. Select the program(s) you want to remove.

Personalization *(continued)*

4. Click **Uninstall** or **Uninstall/Change**.

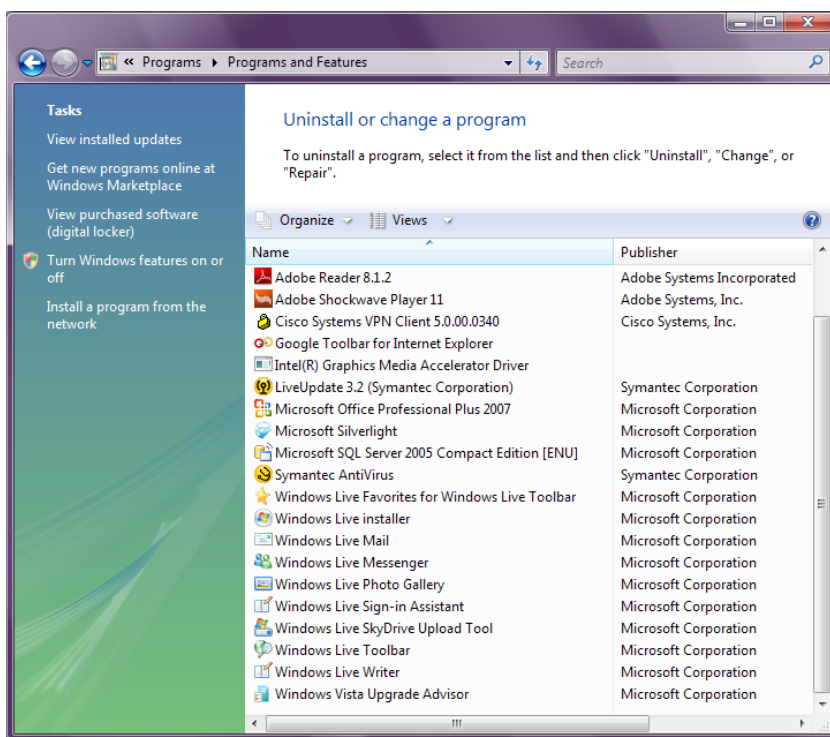


Figure 10—Uninstall or change a program menu

You may be prompted for an administrator password or confirmation. Enter the requested information or provide confirmation to continue.

More Information

- Windows Vista Help & How to—Personalize your computer: <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/personalize.mspix>
- Windows Vista Help and How to—Customize Windows Sidebar: <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/help/03d792aa-f273-4478-9f55-25d7dce1d5981033.mspix>

Activation, Registration, Support, and Services

Before you dive in and start enjoying all of the programs and features on your Windows Vista PC, take a moment to review the activation and registration instructions, and to acquaint yourself with some of the support and services options available to you.

ACTIVATION

Activation helps verify that your copy of Windows Vista is genuine and gives you access to Microsoft help and services. You must activate Windows Vista within 30 days after installation.

1. Open Windows Activation by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Computer**, clicking **Properties**, and then clicking **Click here to activate Windows now**.

If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.

To check your Windows activation status, do the following

1. Open System by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **System and Maintenance**, and then clicking **System**.
2. Under Windows activation, you can view your activation status. You can also change your product key by clicking **Change product key**.



A product key is a unique combination of numbers and letters that is used during Microsoft software installation to "unlock" or open the software. If you don't enter the product key when you are prompted during the installation, the product may not open until you enter the product key. Microsoft product keys contain 25 characters that are typically divided into groups of 5. It's typically located on an orange or yellow sticker on the back of the CD case or the DVD case.

Activation, Registration, Support, and Services *(continued)*

REGISTRATION

Sign up for product support, update information, tips and tools by registering your software with Microsoft.

1. Open Welcome Center by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Control Panel**, clicking **System and Maintenance**, and then clicking **Welcome Center**.
2. In the search box, type **Register Windows online**.



Figure 11—Register through Welcome Center

3. Double-click **Register Windows online**, and follow the instructions on the screen.



Activation is required to use Windows, but Registration is not. Activation is the process of ensuring that your copy of Windows is used according to the Microsoft Software License Terms, whereas registration is the process of providing information to sign up for product support and update information.

Activation, Registration, Support, and Services *(continued)*

SUPPORT

At some point, you may run into a computer problem or task that's confusing. Windows has several options to help you find the answers you need.

Use Windows Help and Support

Windows Help and Support is the built-in help system for Windows. It's a place to get quick answers to common questions, suggestions for troubleshooting, and instructions for how to do things.

1. Open Help and Support by clicking the Windows logo and then clicking **Help and Support**.

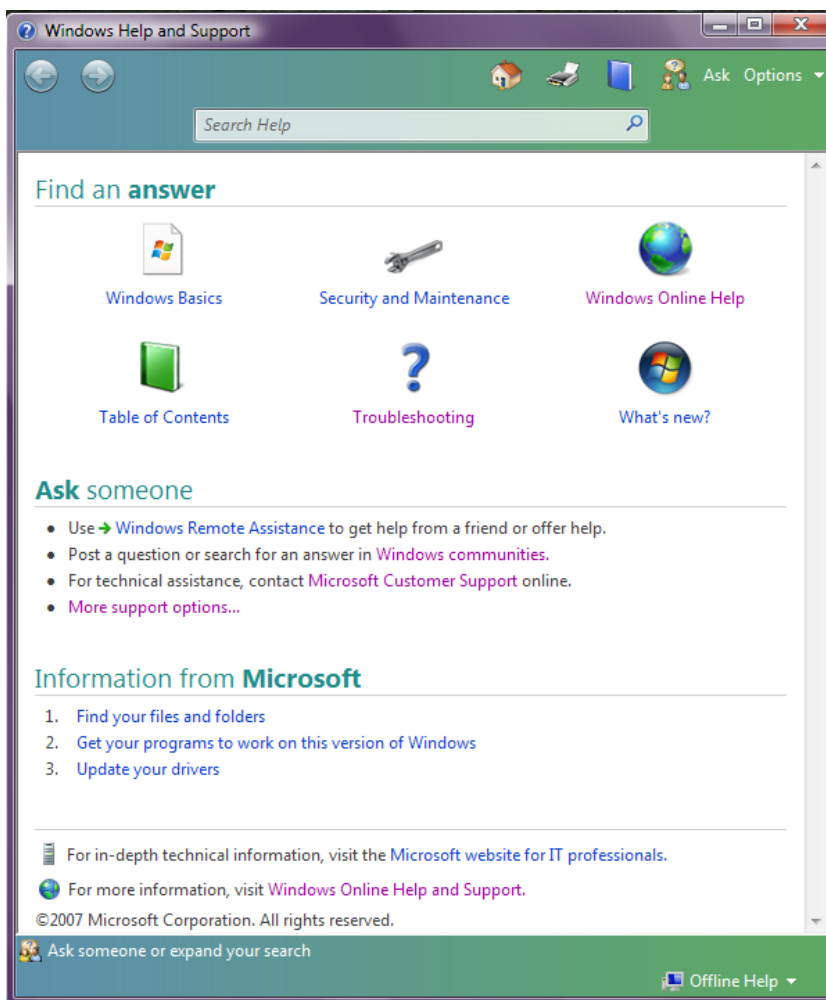


Figure 12—Help and Support Menu

Activation, Registration, Support, and Services *(continued)*

2. In the **Search Help** box, type a word or two describing what you need help with.
3. Press **ENTER**.

A list of results appears, with the most useful results shown at the top.

4. Click one of the results to read the topic.
5. To return to the search results, click the back arrow in the upper left-hand corner of the window.

Get help from other Windows users

If you have a question that isn't answered by Help information, you can try getting help from other Windows users.

1. Open Help and Support by clicking the **Start** button and then clicking **Help and Support**.
2. Browse the options under **Ask someone** and do one of the following:
 - Click on **Windows communities** or **Microsoft Customer Support** to search for help.
 - Select **Windows Remote Assistance**. Choose **Invite someone you trust to help you**, and then follow the prompts.

Activation, Registration, Support, and Services *(continued)*

- Find help by going to the Windows Vista Newsgroup website at <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/communities/newsgroups/en-us/default.aspx> and typing your search terms into the **Search For:** field.

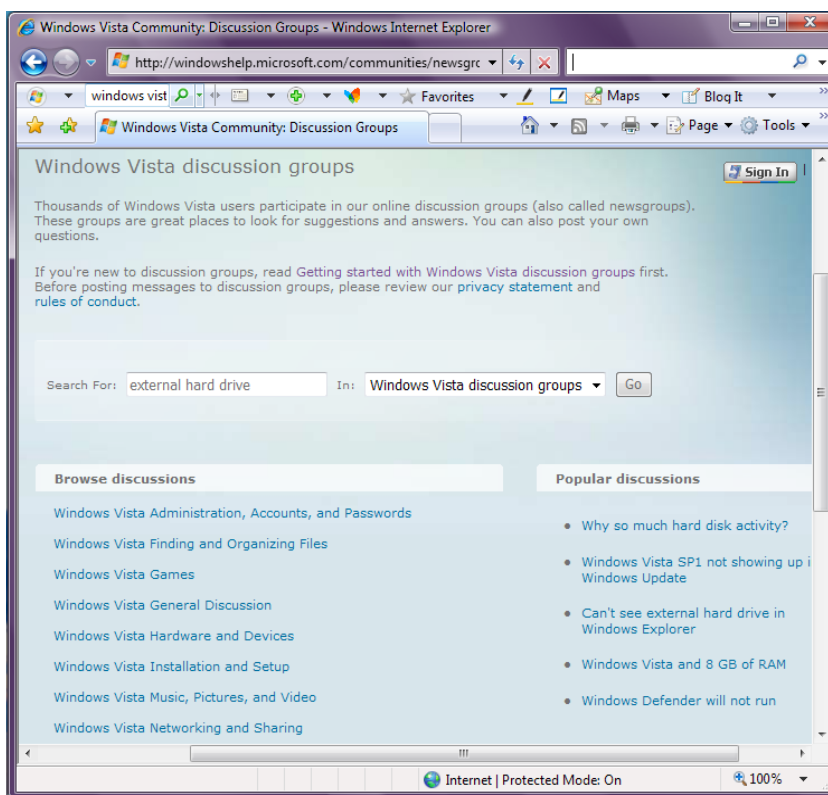


Figure 13—Windows Vista discussion groups



You don't need a Windows Live ID to search or read the newsgroups, but you need one to post on the Windows Vista Newsgroups Web site. If you don't have one, you'll get the opportunity to create one the first time you try to post a question.

Activation, Registration, Support, and Services *(continued)*

Get help from the pros

Still stuck? Get help from a pro (technical support professional). You can usually contact a support professional by phone, e-mail, or through an online chat—just choose whatever works best for you.

Whom you should contact depends. If you bought a new computer and Windows was already installed, your computer manufacturer provides support. If you purchased Windows separately, Microsoft provides support. Support may have a small fee or be free of charge, depending on the terms of your purchase and whether you've submitted previous support requests. To learn more about customer support options, including phone numbers, check out <http://www.support.microsoft.com>.

More Information:

- Windows Vista Help & How to: <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/710dcbcc-da2c-482b-9de5-cc15225565e61033.mspx>



SITES MENTIONED IN THIS GUIDE

Windows Vista: http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/default.aspx?wt_svl=10437WH_OS_All1&mg_id=10437WHb1

Windows Download Center: http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/download/AllDownloads.aspx?displang=en&qstechnology=&wt_svl=20513a&mg_id=20513b

Windows Vista Help & How to: <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/default.msp>

Windows Laptop Selector at: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-laptop-selector/>

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