

# Follow These Steps to Upgrade To Windows XP!

Upgrading your operating system can be easy with these instructions.

Before you upgrade to Windows XP, you're going to have to determine if your PC is ready for the upgrade. If you're unsure or need a little refresher, read [Are you Ready for XP?](#)

## Upgrade vs. clean install

As with other versions of Windows, you have the option of performing a clean install or an upgrade from a previous version of Windows. The upgrade pack will allow you to do both. But, you must have a copy of the full version of your current operating system if you want to perform a clean install using an upgrade disk.

A clean install is a nice way of saying that you'll be erasing the entire contents of your hard drive and starting over from scratch. The Internet Fixes Group only recommends a clean install if for some reason the upgrade fails.

Formatting a hard drive and starting over isn't a complicated process once you know how, but it does require extensive patience and time to follow through from beginning to end.

I won't be covering how to perform a clean install of XP in this article. I have covered that in a different article. However, I will cover what you need to do to successfully upgrade you current PC to XP.

## XP Upgrade: Before You Start

After determining your upgrade eligibility, it's time get down and dirty with XP. Just like previous releases of Windows, Microsoft is selling XP Home Edition Upgrade for \$99.

This release was designed with the average user in mind. It doesn't feature some of the more advanced networking options and remote file-sharing capabilities. Pick up a copy of XP Professional Upgrade for \$199 if you're looking for those features.

## Back up all data and settings

The first step along the upgrade path is to back up all your data, settings, and anything else you can't compute without.

After you've fully backed up all your important files and settings it's time to begin.

Insert your upgrade disk into your CD-ROM. You'll notice the CD-ROM will automatically launch the installation menu. For now, minimize the menu. We're going to look at something else: [Read1st.txt](#).

Read first file

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The Read1st.txt file is located in the Docs folder of your XP CD-ROM. Start by locating this file and examining its contents. The Read1st.txt file will contain last-minute information that didn't make it into other documentation and a roadmap on which to find other useful XP information.

Now that you've become close to all of XP's readme files it's time maximize the installation menu and proceed.

XP Upgrade: Step-by-Step Instructions

Look at the installation menu. It offers three main options:

- Install Windows XP
- Perform additional options
- Check system compatibility

Even though it doesn't specifically say "Upgrade to XP" anywhere it is there.

Here's a general roadmap for performing an upgrade to Windows XP:

1. Insert the disk. This should automatically launch the installation menu.
2. Next, click the green arrow or text next to it labeled "Install Windows XP."  
This will launch the first process titled "Collecting Information" which quickly identifies if you're eligible for an upgrade.
3. Next, you should see a popup window welcoming you to the Windows setup.
4. Make sure the "Installation Type" pull-down menu reads "Upgrade (Recommended)."
5. Click the Next button.
6. Click the radio button next to "I accept this agreement."
7. Click the Next button.
8. Enter your 25-character registration code.
9. Click the Next button.
10. You'll be prompted to display an upgrade report after the installation. Leave the recommended setting alone. Choose one of the other two options if you need to have more complete or no information at all.
11. Click the Next button to proceed to "Dynamic Update."

## Dynamic update

The dynamic update will go online and download updated installation files that have been released after your copy of XP was made. Choose to download files from the Internet only if you have a broadband connection. Otherwise, just skip this section and choose to update after your install.

1. Choose the dynamic update option that best suits your needs.
2. Click the Next button to proceed to "Preparing Installation."

## Preparing installation

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After a few minutes you should receive a read-out of how much time is estimated to complete the installation process. This would be a good time to take a break if you need to, because you're about to be bombarded with all the wonderful new features inside XP.

You'll soon witness the installation beginning to copy all its setup files. When this is completed your computer will automatically restart itself. You'll then be prompted to choose an installation of Windows you'd like to start.

Don't worry. You don't have to choose anything; Windows will automatically proceed with the correct version within a few seconds. You should now see the beautiful XP logo while your computer is booting up. The installation will finish copying all setup files and then restart itself. After restarting you'll be into the next phase, "Installing Windows."

## Installing Windows

You will notice a slight difference in your display properties. The setup will continue copying installation files and other components over to your hard drive. If you're paying attention, you'll notice that your screen may flicker a few times during this process. That's OK and a good indication that the setup is almost ready for you to name your computer.

Next, you'll be asked to come up with a wonderful new name for your computer if the old name doesn't meet the new standards. Pick a name and then click the Next button to continue copying all the Network components.

## Finalizing installation

If you've reached this phase you're done. Congratulations on a successful upgrade to Windows XP. You should now see the "Tour Windows" screen. Click the Next button at the bottom to proceed to the activation process.

Windows Product Activation (WPA) is the last step along the XP upgrade path.

I recommend holding off on the product activation until you've finished installing any other additional hardware.

This will bypass having to activate your product again after making any changes to your hardware configuration. Click the Finish button to proceed to setting up your user accounts.

## Last And Final Step!

The final step is to name your user accounts. Do this now and then click the Next button to finally see your new desktop.

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