

WINDOWS 10: UPGRADE OVERVIEW

Microsoft is offering a free Windows 10 upgrade to Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 users. This free upgrade offer is valid until the July 29, 2016. There are a lot of great features of Windows 10 and some not so great ones. There are a few items to consider to determine whether you should upgrade.

Does your computer support Windows 10?

First, check with the manufacturer of your computer to see if they support Windows 10 on it. If your model isn't listed, don't upgrade. If your model is compatible, there is still more work to do regarding whether you should upgrade.

Here are some links for the most common manufacturers:

Dell: <http://www.dell.com/support/article/us/en/19/SLN297954>

HP: <http://www8.hp.com/us/en/ads/windows10/upgrade.html>

Acer: <http://www.acer.com/ac/en/US/content/windows10-eligible-models>

Samsung: <http://www.samsung.com/us/windows10/upgrade.html>

Lenovo: <https://support.lenovo.com/us/en/documents/ht103535>

ASUS: <http://www.asus.com/event/2015/osupgrade/upgrade.html>

Does your software support Windows 10?

Microsoft makes a compatibility checker you can run on your system. However, it requires that you install their Windows 10 nag software in order to run it and their nag software basically forces the Windows 10 upgrade on you. So, it isn't a good idea to run it.

Unfortunately, this makes checking your software for compatibility a more manual process.

Make a list of the software that you are currently using. You will need the version as well. If you are using 3rd party antivirus, remember to include that on your list of software to research.

For example:

Manufacturer	Software	Version
Intuit	QuickBooks	2014
Microsoft	Office	2010

To research, it is recommended that you go directly to the manufacturer's website and click support. There is sometimes a link right on the support page outlining what is compatible and what is not. On some sites, you will need to search for "Windows 10 compatibility" and read the resulting documents. If this is not successful, look for a support email address or a phone number to check.

If your software is not on the manufacturer's list, it doesn't mean it will not work. Sometimes, manufacturers do not test older versions for compatibility. However, if it is not listed be prepared to upgrade it to a compatible version if you decide to proceed with upgrading.

WINDOWS 10: UPGRADE OVERVIEW

Most Common Software

To make this process a little easier, here is the compatibility of some commonly used software.

Microsoft Office:

Microsoft Office 2016, 2013, and 2010 all work on Windows 10. Office 2007 is not officially supported, but Microsoft says it will run on Windows 10. If you do not have the Office suite, this includes the individual components such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Access as well.

QuickBooks

Intuit specifies that QuickBooks 2015 and later will work on Windows 10.

Adobe Acrobat

Acrobat XI and above work with Windows 10.

If you Decide to Upgrade

Windows 10 does have a method to go back to your previous Windows version if you don't like Windows 10. However, about 10% of the time it doesn't work and you either live with Windows 10, restore from a full system backup, or reinstall from scratch. If you want to upgrade, take the following steps to protect yourself. The steps may seem excessive. Windows 10 upgrades usually do not result in a non-bootable system. However, the adage "Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst" is more than appropriate in this case. It is suggested you use an external USB drive for this process.

- 1) If any software needs to be upgraded to work with Windows 10, it is recommended that you get the compatible versions in place before you upgrade. The latest software versions are almost always tested with Windows 7 and 8.1, so this should not be a problem.
- 2) Use Windows 7 or 8 backup software to create a full system backup to an external drive.
Instructions for Windows 7
<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/back-up-programs-system-settings-files#1TC=windows-7>

Instructions for Windows 8.1
<http://www.tomshardware.com/news/how-to-make-system-image-backup,26542.html>
- 3) Make a copy of all your documents, favorites, desktop items, email files, downloaded software installation files, and other personal data to an external drive.
- 4) Make sure you have a copy of any installation codes for purchased software.
- 5) If your computer came with reinstallation disks, make sure you still have them. In not, some manufacturers have software installed that will let you create them to a DVD or USB thumb drive.

WINDOWS 10: UPGRADE OVERVIEW

When you are ready, pick a day when you have lots of time to recover if needed. Then, click the link below and follow the instructions

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-10-upgrade>

If you upgrade but decide to go back to your previous Windows Version

You have a month to decide you go back to your previous version once you upgrade. Don't make major changes to your computer during this time. For example, don't add a new video card or upgrade all your software. The steps to go back are:

- 1) Make sure you are logged in using an account that has administrator rights.
- 2) Go to Settings
- 3) Update & security
- 4) Recovery
- 5) Select either: "Go back to Windows 7" or "Go back to Windows 8.1"

If you decide not to Upgrade

Microsoft is constantly pushing the Windows 10 upgrade. Fortunately, a 3rd party has made a small utility to prevent the upgrade, at least for now. You can find the instructions here:

<http://ekgnetworking.com/computer-consultants-blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/GWX-Windows-10-Stopper.pdf>