

# Windows 7 operating system upgrades



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## So you want to upgrade your older computer to Windows 7 ?

From time to time, I am asked if I would like to take on the job of upgrading someone's older computer to the new Microsoft Windows 7 operating system. I can't blame them as none of the previous versions of Windows can compete with its features. However, my answer is always 'no thanks', and my reasons are outlined in the remainder of this document.

This is also a beneficial warning to those who attempt to do it themselves or pay someone else who is willing to take on the extremely time consuming risks involved.

- **Windows 7 full retail version costs over \$400**

The only sensible version of Windows 7 64bit ( keep away from 32bit \* versions ) to use for a complete operating system replacement, would be the full retail package ( around \$400.00 ). Cheaper 'Upgrade' versions are a waste of time and effort as they are designed to be installed 'in-place' ( on top of an existing previous version of windows. ) This is a total waste of time as most attempts of this end up being totally unstable catastrophes. Some technicians have discovered 'special tricks' to circumnavigate the 'in-place' installation requirement of these versions, but Microsoft will detect most of these attempts and abort the installation process.

The cheapest OEM ( **O**riginal **E**quipment **M**anufacturer ) versions of Windows 7 that come pre-installed on new computers cannot be legally purchased separately. If you do manage to obtain one and try to install it on a computer that was not licenced to use it, Microsoft have the right to 'deactivate it' once discovered via their on-line licence checking system. Also, the shop or business who sold the OEM version to you becomes 'directly responsible' for that licence so if the customer inadvertently contacts Microsoft for any reason in the future, the illegal sale of the licence is traced back to the seller who will attract the wrath of Microsoft's lawyers.

License Comparison	
OEM System Builder Software	Full Packaged Retail Product
Must be preinstalled on a PC and sold to another unrelated party.	Is intended to be re-sold separately from a PC for installation by the end user.
Cannot be transferred from the PC on which it is preinstalled. <a href="#">See details.</a>	May be transferred with some limitations. <a href="#">See details.</a>
Must be preinstalled onto a new PC using the OPK. <a href="#">See details.</a>	Does not have an OEM Preinstallation Kit (OPK). Media inside the box can be used to install software onto a personal computer.
System builder that preinstalled the software must provide support for the software.	Microsoft provides <a href="#">support services.</a>
License terms are granted by the system builder to the end user.	License terms are granted by Microsoft to the end user.

- **Your computer or components may be incompatible**

New brand name computers are designed and assembled using parts that are certified by Microsoft to be Windows 7 64Bit compliant. There are a multitude of older computers assembled using components they may not be compatible. An upgrade would require an inspection of all your computer components and attached accessories. These would have to be carefully individually researched via the hardware manufacturers to ensure they are compliant.

All your current software would also need to be checked, as many programs will not operate on Windows 7 64Bit. ( This issue is often overlooked )

Microsoft does provide an on-line checking system that you can run from the link below to at least pick up any obvious problems. However, it is known to miss critical items from time to time so you cannot trust it 100%. You will still need a manual inspection of the computer hardware, accessories and software.

Windows 7 Upgrade advisor link : - <http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?id=20>



- **Labour time involved makes the entire process impractical**

My business provides professional support for the entire process of purchasing new computers and fully preparing them for the final on-site installation. The entire process takes approximately 2-3 days and is capped at 10 hours costing \$770, ( \$77 per hour inc GST ). The actual labour time involved is around 15 – 20 hours not including the final on-site installation and support training which takes around 4 extra hours.

The details of this procedure can be found on my web site, [www.exenvoid.com](http://www.exenvoid.com) in the 'New Computer Installations' section.

This 14 page PDF document will give you some insight of the extremely time consuming process.



Note that this process is for a new computer with a factory pre-installed version of Windows 7, so at least I know the hardware will be compliant, and some of the work is already done. The rest of the time to get the operating system and desktop environment prepared for actual on-site delivery takes around 8 – 10 hours and around 2GB to 4GB of internet downloads consisting of 100s of critical updates and patches.

Therefore, the attempt to install a Windows 7 operating system on a computer that was not designed to use it would actually take a lot longer because of the extra time required before the upgrade was even started. A job of this type would attract at least a capped 15 hour labour time with no guarantee of success. ( I do not charge anything for unsuccessful jobs so it would mean a total waste of time for me if a problem rendered the job impossible to complete. Hence the risk factor does not make it practical to even start. )

➤ Windows 7 64 Bit full retail product	\$ 400.00
➤ Labour time capped 15 hours	\$ 1155.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1555.00</b>



## So you no longer want to upgrade your older computer to Windows 7 ?

Of course not. What a totally impractical waste of time and money when you could just go out and purchase a new computer with it pre-installed for a lot less money.

- **So why on earth do so many other people seem to do it all without a problem ?**

Operating system installations and upgrades should only ever be attempted by a computer technician or a ' knowledgeable ' and very patient computer enthusiast. This is no different from the multitude of people who have the ability to remove and replace the engine in a motor vehicle. A home mechanic takes all the risks and saves thousands of dollars in labour. Removing and replacing the operating system in your computer can be just as complex and time consuming. The only people who successfully upgrade their computer operating systems have a lot of time on their hands and know what they are doing.

- **Final points to consider**

You will always find someone willing to take on risky impractical jobs for a lot less money if you look hard enough. So if you get an offer to do the job, ensure you take these very important steps:

- ❖ *Ensure you insist the person doing the job creates a system image of the current state of the computer's hard drive BEFORE they start. This will allow them to revert the system back to the condition it was in the moment you handed it to them. This is critical in case the upgrade process fails for whatever reason. This 'project failure insurance' may take many hours to create and if the person doing the job is not willing or does not know how to do this, you are really taking a grave risk handing your computer over to them.*
- ❖ *Ensure you will bear no labour charges if the upgrade process fails for whatever reason. ( Get this in writing ) Many 'odd' computer people will take on ridiculously impractical jobs that are doomed to fail. They usually have no problem asking you for labour charges for their failed attempts, sprouting 'mumbo jumbo' non-sense of why they could not possibly have foreseen the problems that caused the job to fail.*
- ❖ *Ensure the Windows 7 64bit product you purchase for the upgrade is 100% legitimate. Don't listen to tales from anyone who insists it's okay to use a 'funny' version because no one will ever know. Microsoft are not stupid. All Windows 7 licences are randomly checked by hidden Microsoft systems when computers are connected to the internet. All incorrectly licenced or pirated versions are traced and dealt with.*

\* 32Bit versions of Windows can only address a maximum of 2.4 - 2.8GB of system RAM. These days 4GB of ram is standard in most good new computers. Clever buyers are upgrading to 6, 8 or even 12GB of RAM to maximize the Windows 7 64bit performance. The 32Bit versions of Windows should only be considered if you are going to be using it on a computer that will never need to have more than average performance or you have an expensive hardware accessory or software product that has no support for the 64Bit version.