

Microsoft Windows XP SP3 (Service Pack 3)

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Well it's finally here; Microsoft has recently released the latest, (and perhaps last) Service Pack for the Windows XP family of operating systems. Problems after installing it have been reported by some users but they are being sorted out as we come across them. So far, healthy (Intel CPU based) computers seem to be accepting this update with few problems. Since I only supply Intel based computers and my customers hopefully are keeping their systems healthy as per my instructions, we should have very few problems.

Microsoft Windows XP SP3 is an important update required by all computers running Windows XP. Similar to the usual windows critical updates that are downloaded automatically on a weekly basis (*assuming your windows updates system is set up properly*), SP3 is a little larger than usual and is a collection of all previously released updates (*excluding Internet Explorer 7.0*) and control features with a few more 'tweaks' to Windows XP. Service Pack updates for all operating systems are designed to resolve known problems, improve security, and hopefully provide better stability.

Microsoft cannot possibly pre test service packs on all of the millions of combinations of hardware and software that computer users may have. There may be some side effects that may cause minor or even major problems for some users. Please report any unusual behaviour that occurs after your update to SP3. Some updates for incompatible programs or hardware drivers may be required if problems occur.

Some AMD CPU based systems have reported serious incompatibility problems with SP3 and should not install it until checking with the manufacturer of their computer. This issue is only with brand name AMD systems not custom made systems. If you don't know if your computer is Intel or AMD based, you should definitely have the SP3 upgrade done professionally. Note: This problem is not the AMD CPU, it has been reported to be the factory software installed by the manufacturer that causes the fault.

Although obvious to technicians and experienced computer users, any service pack is going to have a very hard time installing onto an infected computer or simply a poorly serviced and unstable one. If you believe your system is unstable or infected, or you are using outdated or expired security systems etc, you would be advised to get the system serviced professionally including the installation of SP3.

Whatever condition your computer is in, Microsoft strongly advises you to backup all your critical data BEFORE you install SP3. If you do not have the means or knowledge to do this, it may be wise to book a service call and have a professional do the upgrade for you.

I have myself successfully installed Windows XP SP3 on many of my customers' computers and so far I have encountered no serious problems. All minor issues and side effects I have encountered have all been resolved so far.

Don't panic, many of us went through all of this with XP Service Pack 2 !