

Windows 7 Product Editions: A Comparison

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Back in February, I wrote an article, [Windows 7 Product Editions](#), in which I discussed the various SKUs (stock keeping units, or product editions) that Microsoft would provide with its next operating system. Now, with nearly fully-functional versions of each product edition available to the public, I thought I'd provide a series of tables comparing each Windows 7 product edition, similar in scope to [the work I did documenting Windows Vista](#).

I believe these tables will help you pick which Windows 7 product edition makes the most sense for you, based on your needs and wants. Let's dive right in.

Note: This set of tables has been updated for the final, shipping versions of Windows 7. Unlike similar comparisons, these tables were generated using not by simply observing each product edition, but also by using Microsoft's internal reporting mechanisms to determine exactly which features are, in fact, available in each version. For this reason, I can reasonably state that this is the most complete and accurate list of Windows 7 features anywhere. That said, I'm still human and could have made mistakes transcribing the information. If you see anything wrong or missing, or would like to see a certain feature added, please [contact me](#).

Finding what you need

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Availability

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Retail packaging			Yes	Yes	Ult. only
Can purchase electronically			Yes	Yes	Ult. only
Pricing: Full version			\$199.99	\$299.99	\$319.99 (Ult)
Pricing: Upgrade version			\$119.99	\$199.99	\$219.99 (Ult.)
Bundled with new PCs in major markets		Yes	Yes	Yes	Ult. only
Windows Anytime Upgrade (WAU)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
WAU pricing/To Home Premium	\$79.99	\$79.99			
WAU pricing/To Professional		\$114.99	\$89.99		
WAU pricing/To Ultimate	\$164.99	\$164.99	\$139.99	\$129.99	
Virtualization rights (Can be installed in a virtual environment)			Yes	Yes	Yes

User interface features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Windows Basic UI	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Standard UI	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Aero UI ("Glass")			Yes	Yes	Yes
Aero Peek			Yes	Yes	Yes
Aero Snaps	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aero Shake			Yes	Yes	Yes
Aero Background			Yes	Yes	Yes
Libraries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Flip	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Flip 3D			Yes	Yes	Yes
Live Taskbar Previews	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Live Preview (Explorer)			Yes	Yes	Yes
Jump Lists	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Search	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Security features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
More granular UAC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Action Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Defender	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Firewall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IE 8 Protected Mode and DEP support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Update (can access Microsoft Update)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fast User Switching	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Parental Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Performance features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
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Windows ReadyDrive	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows ReadyBoost	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SuperFetch	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
64-bit processor support	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Physical processor support	1	1	1	2	2
Processor core support	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Max RAM (32-bit)	4 GB	4 GB	4 GB	4 GB	4 GB
Max RAM (64-bit)	n/a	n/a	16 GB	192 GB	192 GB

Reliability features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Windows Backup	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
System image	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Problem Steps Recorder	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Backup to network				Yes	Yes
Encrypting File System (EFS)				Yes	Yes
BitLocker					Yes
BitLocker To Go					Yes
Automatic hard disk defragmentation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Versions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create and attach (mount) VHD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Bundled applications

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Internet Explorer 8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Gadgets and Gallery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Games Explorer with basic games (FreeCell, Hearts, Minesweeper, Purple Palace, Solitaire, Spider Solitaire)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Premium games (Internet Backgammon, Internet Checkers, Internet Spades, Mahjong Titans)			Yes	Yes	Yes
Calculator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paint	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Snipping Tool			Yes	Yes	Yes

Sticky Notes			Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Journal			Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Fax and Scan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows PowerShell and ISE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
WordPad	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
XPS Viewer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Digital media and devices

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Windows Photo Viewer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Basic photo slide shows	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Media Player 12 with Play To	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Media Player Remote Media Experience			Yes	Yes	Yes
MPEG-2 decoding			Yes	Yes	Yes
Dolby Digital compatibility			Yes	Yes	Yes
AAC and H.264 decoding	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DVD playback			Yes	Yes	Yes
Can install MPEG-2 (DVD playback) add-in	Yes	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
Windows Media Center			Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of TV tuners supported			4 of each type (analog, digital, etc.)	4 of each type (analog, digital, etc.)	4 of each type (analog, digital, etc.)
Windows DVD Maker			Yes	Yes	Yes
Device Stage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sync Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Networking features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
SMB connections	20	20	20	20	20
Network and Sharing Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
HomeGroup sharing	Join only	Join only	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ad-hoc network create and join	Yes	Yes, but accessible only via Start Menu Search	Yes	Yes	Yes

Improved power management	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Connect to a Projector	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Remote Desktop	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Remote Desktop Host				Yes	Yes
IIS Web Server			Yes	Yes	Yes
RSS support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Internet Connection Sharing	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Network Bridge	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Offline files				Yes	Yes

Mobility features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Windows Mobility Center	Yes (No presentation mode)		Yes (No presentation mode)	Yes	Yes
Windows Sideshow (Auxilliary display)			Yes	Yes	Yes
Sync Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tablet PC functionality			Yes	Yes	Yes
Multi-Touch support			Yes	Yes	Yes

Enterprise features

	Home Basic	Starter	Home Premium	Professional	Enterprise & Ultimate
Domain join (Windows Server)				Yes	Yes
XP Mode licensed				Yes	Yes
AppLocker					Yes
Boot from VHD					Yes
BranchCache					Yes
DirectAccess					Yes
Federated Search (Enterprise Search Scopes)					Yes
Multilingual User Interface (MUI) Language Packs					Yes
Location-aware printing				Yes	Yes
Subsystem for UNIX-based Applications					Yes

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