

Windows Experience Index	How “good” is your computer? Start→Control Panel→Classic View→System→Performance (lower left side) “Rate this Computer” Whatever component has the lowest score – whatever is the weakest link – will be the WEI final score (i.e., if you upgrade other components besides the weakest link, the score will remain the same). If you are going to do a lot of games on your computer – or you are an advanced PhotoShop user-- you will want a high graphics rating. If you are going to be doing complex calculations, then you will want a high processor. Currently 1 is the lowest and 5 and above is high and higher. To run Vista, you want at least a 4 in Processor, Memory, Hard Disk, at least a 3 in Graphics.
Vista Service Pack 1	If you have Vista, you should download and install Service Pack 1. You can download it from: http://www.microsoft.com/Downloads/details.aspx?familyid=B0C7136D-5EBB-413B-89C9-CB3D06D12674&displaylang=en
User Account Control	What is User Account Control? In theory it’s a good thing: it’s a failsafe checks to ensure that users truly want to perform a task that would normally require administrative privileges. Without this, technically, malicious software could install on users' computers without notifying the users. In practice, it drives you nuts because you constantly see the pop-up: “Windows needs your permission to continue”. If you have a good firewall, anti-virus and anti-spyware, then you may want to disable this constant pop-up. See the next page for how to turn it off. To Turn Off “User User Account Control”: Control Panel→ User Accounts→Turn User Account Control On/Off De-Click the box in front of “Use User Account Control (UAC) to help protect your computer”. (Restart required)

<p>Windows Aero</p>	<p>A new feature in Vista is the “look” on the desktop. Windows Aero, which Microsoft describes as the premium visual experience of Windows Vista features a transparent glass design with subtle window animations and new window colors.</p> <p>Examples of what Vista Aero does:</p> <p>1) Thumbnails of open program: Hold down the ALT-key and Tap the TAB key, you will see a thumbnail of program and windows you have open. In regular windows, you would only see the program icon (not a thumbnail).</p> <p>2) See the 3-D effect: Hold down the Windows Key, while pressing the TAB key – you see each open program/window in 3-D format.</p> <p>However, all this, and the transparent glass and subtle windows animations require a lot of graphical power. Unless you are hooked on this “look”, turn it off. This will help speed up your computer.</p> <p>To Turn Off Windows Aero look: Start→Control Panel→Personalize→Window Color and Appearance→Open classic appearance properties for more color options→{Change the Color Scheme to: Windows Vista Basic, Windows Standard, or Windows Classic). Note: this is also where you can select a color scheme for more contrast.</p>
<p>Ease of Access Control</p>	<p>Vista (and XP) have many features for “Ease of Access”.</p> <p>To activate some of the basic features: Control Panel→Ease of Access</p> <p>Play around with the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magnifier On-Screen Keyboard Narrator High Contrast <p>Warning: sometimes it is difficult to figure out how to turn OFF these features. The trick is to click the upper right “X” in the dialogue box.</p> <p>Vista can also be programmed for speech recognition.</p>

<p>Additional Time Zones</p>	<p>Add additional time zones – Click once on time in lower right corner Click on “Change date and time settings” Click “Additional Clocks” (add whatever you want) Additional clocks will show when you “hover” the mouse over the time.</p>
<p>SideBar Gadgets</p>	<p>Vista SideBar gadgets are fun – you can keep track of the weather, airline prices, etc. Just keep in mind that each SideBar gadget uses CPU resources, some gadgets use more resources than others. To keep your computer running spritely, use sidebar gadgets sparingly.</p> <p>Right-Click the Sidebar to Add/Remove Gadgets If SideBar gadgets is not showing, you can turn it on: Start→programs→accessories→Windows SideBar</p> <p>sidebar tutorial: www.vistax64.com/tutorials/81260-windows-sidebar-startup.html</p> <p>more gadgets: http://www.thoosje.com/vista-sidebar-gadgets.html</p> <p>SideBar is also found in the control panel under: “Windows Sidebar Properties”</p>
<p>ReadyBoost</p>	<p>Ready boost:</p> <p>With Vistas ready boost feature you can use a flash drive and increase your system performance. The drive acts as an extra RAM. To use this feature you need at least a 2GB USB drive. Follow the below steps to use this feature:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.First connect the USB Flash Drive to an empty USB port on your pc 2. Then go to Start--> MyComputer 3. Right Click the USB Drive in MyComputer and select the Ready Boost Tab 4. Choose Use this device 5. Select as much space as you can free up for RAM usage vs. Storage on the flash drive. <p>Note: I tried 8 different USB flash drive devices I had lying around. None of them worked for ReadyBoost. When plugged in, Vista gave the error: This device does not have the required performance characteristics for use in speeding up your system." Below is a webpage that shows you how to edit your registry to enable any USB device to be used for</p>

	<p>ReadyBoost in Vista.</p> <p>The reason the registry edit works is because it is telling Vista that the inserted USB drive is faster at reading and writing than it really is, which means that you may not see all of the benefits that ReadyBoost offers. But at least you will be able to experiment with it and be your own judge whether it enhances performance or not.</p> <p>ONLY follow the instructions on the webpage below to edit your registry IF you are an EXPERT who can edit your registry confidently, AND you BACKUP YOUR REGISTRY BEFORE you make any edits.</p> <p>Again, Edit your computer's registry at your own risk!!!!</p> <p>http://cybernetnews.com/2007/04/26/cybernotes-use-any-usb-drive-or-memory-card-with-readyboost-on-vista/</p>
<p>Windows Indexing Service</p>	<p>To restrict Windows Indexing: Control Panel→System & Maintenance→Performance (left side bottom) →Adjust Indexing Options you can remove locations you don't use</p> <p>If you don't use the "search" mechanism in Windows very often, disable it altogether. Windows indexing service will slow down your computer all the time, so that the few times you do a search, it will be faster. With indexing turned off, you can still search, the search will just be a little slower.</p> <p>To disable Windows Search Service: Services→Windows Search: Disable</p>
<p>Virtual Memory</p>	<p>Vista handles Virtual Memory in a file (paging file) which changes size all the time. Make it a constant size to take load off managing it. If you have more than one hard drive, keep Virtual Memory (paging file) on a drive that Vista did not install (i.e., not the OS drive).</p> <p>To make the paging file a constant size: Start→Control Panel→System→Performance→Advanced system settings→Performance →Settings→Advance (tab)→Virtual memory→Change→ 1) De-check "Automatically manage paging file ..." 2) Make the initial and the maximum paging file file the same as the total amount of RAM you have.</p>

<p>Extra Visual Effects</p>	<p>Visual Effects are fun, but use up the computer's resources. In addition to turning off Windows Aero, you can turn off (and most likely never miss) other visual effects.</p> <p>Start→Control Panel→System→Performance→Advanced system settings→Performance →Settings→</p> <p>De-check everything Except for (i.e., KEEP the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show shadows under menus Show shadows under mouse pointer Show translucent selection rectangle Show windows content while dragging Smooth edges of screen fonts Use drop shadows for icons labels on the desktop Use visual styles on windows and buttons
<p>DEP – disable/enable</p>	<p>DEP: Data Execution Prevenion</p> <p>DEP is intended to prevent an application or service from executing code from a non-executable memory region. DEP perform additional checks on memory to prevent malicious code or exploits from running on the system by shut down the process once detected. However, Data Execution Prevention may accidentally shut down legitimate process from valid applications or services, particularly third-party installers used by software developers that release their products for download through the Web, or software programs that are less commonly used. DEP normally does not, or fails to display or show, any warning or information or acknowledgment message prompt that can let you know that DEP has shut down a process, thus you are unaware of the reason why your setup file cannot run, or why your computer cannot start a service and etc.</p> <p>Note you can control some functions of DEP in:</p> <p>Start→Control Panel→System→Performance→Advanced system settings→Performance →Settings→Advanced→Performance→Settings→Data Execution prevention.</p> <p>You can also disable it:</p> <p>To Disable DEP in VISTA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click Start 2. Click All Programs 3. Click Accessories 4. Right Click on Command Prompt

	<p>5. Left click on Run as Administrator</p> <p>6. Click the Allow button if it asks you for permission</p> <p>7. Type or copy and paste this into the command prompt window: bcdedit.exe /set {current} nx AlwaysOff (note: the squiggles around “current” are to the right of the “P” key)</p> <p>8. Hit enter and you should see the confirmation: Operation Completed Successfully</p> <p>9. Reboot and DEP should be off. (to Turn On DEP back on, you need to do two commands: bcdedit.exe /set {current} nx AlwaysOn bcdedit.exe /set {current} nx optin</p>
Power Settings:	<p>The default power setting on a laptop, even when plugged in, is: “Balanced”. Some people prefer this setting, others feel the “High performance” setting makes Vista faster, although it uses more energy and thus is not as “green”. Try changing the power settings for yourself to see which suits you best.</p> <p>To change the power settings: Control Panel→Power Options→Click on “High Performance”</p>
Defraggler	<p>Vista automatically runs a defragger at 1am on Wednesdays. By default, it does not defrag files larger than 64 MB, and the nice GUI from XP is gone. If you are comfortable in handling your own defragging, disable that “service”. As an alternative, you can download and install an excellent, free defragmenter program from www.defraggler.com. A nice feature of defraggler is that you don’t have to defragment the entire drive, you can select one file for defragmentation. Defraggler also shows you how many fragmentations are in each file.</p> <p>To Turn off Automatic Disk Defragmentation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to Start→ My Computer 2. Right-Click on C: Drive and click on Properties 3. Select the Tools Tab and click on Defragmentw 4. Uncheck “Run on a schedule” <p>Download and install Defraggler from www.defraggler.com.</p> <p>Run it manually once a week.</p>

Shadow Copy	<p>Another free and very useful program is ShadowExplorer (www.shadowexplorer.com). This free program allows you to browse the shadow copies created by Vista Volume Shadow Copy Service. In plain English, shadow explorer can show you available point-in-time copies of a file, allow you to browse shadow copies, and to retrieve versions of files and folders.</p> <p>www.shadowexplorer.com</p>
Services	<p>When Windows boots up, it loads over 134 services, all of which use up your CPU resources, and many of which you don't really need. Do not toy with turning off services if you are a novice. If you are an expert, you may want to disable some services. Here's a site that shows you how to turn off services, and which ones you most likely won't need.</p> <p>http://www.vistarewired.com/2007/02/18/services</p>
LLTD – install on XP's on Vista network	<p>This item applies to networks with more than one computer which need to connect and "see" each other. A Vista computer will normally not see XP's in the network neighborhood because Vista Network Map uses a discovery protocol called Link-Layer Topology Discovery (LLTD) that queries other devices on the network to determine how the network is organized. LLTD must be install on all XP's and down-level computers in order for Vista to "see" them.</p> <p>If you have a Vista and XP's in a network, you will want to see:</p> <p>http://support.microsoft.com/kb/922120</p>

<p>IPv6</p>	<p>IPv6 is here now and will be very prevalent in the future. IPv6 increases the number of possible IP addresses and adds some security protocols, however, networks requiring IPv6 are not very prevalent right now, so unless you find you really need it, you may want to uninstall it to simplify your networking and internet configurations.</p> <p>You will want to be sure to leave IPv4 so that you can still get on the internet. Please don't try doing this if you are a novice.</p> <p>To uninstall IPv6: Control Panel→Network and Sharing Center→Local Area Connection→View Status→Properties→De-Click "Internet Protocol Version 6 (TCP/IPv6)</p>
<p>Tablet Computer Features</p>	<p>If you don't have a Tablet PC, then you can turn off the Tablet PC features: Control Panel→Add/Remove→ System Components→uncheck Table PC You can also disable "Tablet PC Input Services" in services.</p>
<p>Turn Off Hibernation</p>	<p>Turning off Windows Hibernation:</p> <p>Windows hibernation might use a large amount of system resources. If you don't really use this feature then you can disable hibernation by doing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to start> Control Panel> Power Options 2. Now click Change Plan Settings 3. Click on Change Advanced Power Settings 4. Expand the Sleep selection 5. Expand the Hibernate After selection and enter zero on the box. 6. Click Apply
<p>Speed up External Drives</p>	<p>Speeding up external hard drives:</p> <p>Write caching is disabled in external drives as it allows you to connect and disconnect any external drive frequently, but in case if you have a drive which is hardly disconnected then this feature might just decrease your performance. You can enable this feature if you are not disconnecting your external drive frequently by doing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to Start, then right click on Computer and select Manage. 2. Click on Device Manager on the side menu. 3. Expand Disk drives and locate your external drive from the list.

4. Right click on the drive and select Properties.
5. On the Policies tab, select Optimize for performance.
6. Next, check "Enable write caching" on the disk and check "Enable advanced performance".
7. Select OK and restart your pc.

Speed up SATA drive

Enhancing your SATA disk performance:

You can improve the performance of your SATA hard disk by enhancing write caching. But in case you have frequent power cuts and low battery then I strongly recommend you not to do this as there is an increased risk for data loss or corruption. You can enhance your writing cache by doing the following:

1. Go to Start and in the search bar type Device Manager and hit Enter.
2. Expand Disk Drives.
3. Right click on your hard drive and select Properties.
4. On the Policies tab, check Enable advanced performance.
5. Hit OK and close Device Manager