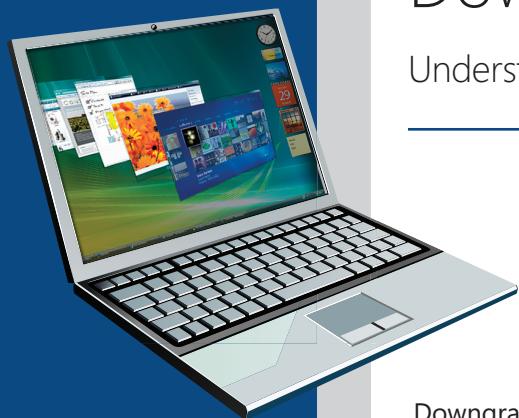


Downgrade Rights

Understanding downgrade rights from Windows Vista® to Windows® XP.



Understanding
downgrade rights
from
Windows Vista
to
Windows XP.



Downgrade rights allow your customers to acquire the most recent version of Microsoft® software (e.g. Windows Vista) but continue to run a previous version (e.g. Windows XP) until they are ready to upgrade. Customers retain the rights to use the newer version of Windows that came with the PC, and when they are ready to upgrade, they are already licensed for that newer version.

Downgrade rights are an end user right, documented in the License Terms that customers accept upon first running Windows software. Customers must first accept the Windows Vista License Terms, which provide them with the right to downgrade to Windows XP, before the downgrade can be performed. For this reason, the PC must first be preinstalled with Windows Vista and delivered to the customer. The customer must accept the Windows Vista License Terms, then the downgrade can be performed by either the end-user or an OEM when authorized by the end user.

Downgrade Rights Process

The step-by-step process for exercising downgrade rights is as follows:

Step 1 Obtain genuine Windows XP Professional media and a corresponding Windows XP Product key to perform the downgrade.

- The media should come from a prior legally licensed version from the OEM or Retail channels.
- Additionally an end user, who is licensed separately through Microsoft Volume Licensing programs, may provide their Volume Licensing media and key to their System Builder to use to facilitate the downgrade on only their systems.

Step 2 Insert Windows XP Professional media in the CD drive and follow the installation instructions for Windows XP Professional.

- OEM media will perform a clean installation, wiping Windows Vista and any other end user data from the PC.
- NOTE: A backup should be performed prior to installation.

Step 3 Once installed, the PC will require a Windows XP Professional product key, and will prompt for this key to activate the Windows XP Professional operating system.

- If the Windows XP Professional product key has been previously activated, the software will be unable to activate on-line over the Internet, due to the hardware configuration change when installing on the Windows Vista system. In these cases, the appropriate local Activation Support phone number will be displayed and the end user will be prompted to call the Activation Support Line and explain their circumstances to the Customer Service Representative. Once it is determined that the end user has a valid Windows Vista Business or Windows Vista Ultimate license, the Customer Service Representative will help them activate their software.

Step 4 Once Windows XP Professional is activated, the PC is ready for use.



OEM Versions Eligible for Downgrade

Only certain OEM versions of Windows Vista include downgrade rights; Windows Vista Business and Windows Vista Ultimate include downgrade rights to Windows XP Professional, Windows XP Tablet PC Edition or Windows XP Professional x64 Edition. Other OEM Windows Vista versions (e.g. Windows Vista Home versions) do not include downgrade rights.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Who can install the downgrade software or reinstall the original software?

A. A system builder (when authorized by the end user), or the end user can install the software. Because downgrade rights are an end user right granted in the product License Terms, the end user must first be able to accept the terms associated with the software. So, the original software must be installed first before the downgrade software is installed. The downgrade media can come from a prior legally licensed version from the OEM/system builder or Retail channels. Additionally an end user, who is licensed separately through Microsoft Volume Licensing programs, may provide their Volume Licensing media and key to their System Builder to use to facilitate the downgrade on only their systems.

Q. Can end users return to Windows Vista Business or Windows Vista Ultimate software after they downgrade?

A. Yes. End users who downgrade may reinstall the original software when they are ready to migrate. For example, an end user who downgrades to Windows XP Professional may later return to Windows Vista Business provided the end user deletes the Windows XP Professional software from the PC.

Q. What about product activation?

When a previously licensed version of Windows XP Professional is used for the downgrade, won't activation fail on the new PC?

A. When an end user is using their downgrade rights offered under the product license agreement in Windows Vista Business and Windows Vista Ultimate versions and they use both Windows XP media and a product key that was previously activated, they will be unable to activate on-line over the Internet, due to the hardware configuration change. In these cases the end user will be prompted to call the Activation Support Line and explain their circumstances to the customer service representative. Once it is determined that the end user has a valid Windows Vista Business or Windows Vista Ultimate license, the customer service representative will help them activate their software.

Q. How do end users reinstall the original software after downgrading to a previous allowed downgrade version?

A. End users must use the original OEM system builder media that was included with the PC for reinstallation. The downgrade software must be deleted from the hard drive before the original software is reinstalled.

