Introduction to Windows 7

This document provides a basic overview of the new and enhanced features of Windows 7 as well as instructions for how to request an upgrade.

Windows 7 at UIS

Windows 7 is Microsoft’s latest operating system. Beginning in the fall of 2010, UIS will upgrade all classroom and lab PCs to Windows 7. Any new PC that is ordered will automatically come installed with Windows 7.

To request an upgrade, contact the Technology Support Center (TSC) at 217/206-6000 or techsupport@uis.edu. The TSC will evaluate your machine to see if it’s capable of running Windows 7. (Your computer needs a dual core processor and at least 2 GB of RAM.)

Please note that University licensing does NOT cover distribution of Windows 7 for personally owned computers. However, it is available for a discounted price via the WebStore at http://webstore.illinois.edu.

What to Consider Before Upgrading

There is no direct upgrade path from Windows XP to Windows 7. Therefore, the TSC will take your computer, save your files, and install Windows 7 on a clean hard drive. Please budget a couple days for this process.

In some cases, you may have older devices that will not work with Windows 7. While many vendors are providing and will continue to provide drivers for their hardware, in some cases, printers, scanners, and other devices that are more than 5 years old may have issues running on Windows 7. To check the compatibility of your devices with Windows 7, visit the Microsoft Windows 7 Compatibility Center at http://www.microsoft.com/windows/compatibility/windows-7/en-us/default.aspx.

The Sidebar

One of the new features of Vista was the sidebar, a pane on the side of the desktop where gadgets could be organized and always made available. Gadgets are mini applications with a variety of possible uses. They can connect to web services to deliver business data, weather information, news updates, traffic maps, Internet radio streams, and even slide shows of online photo albums. Due to complaints that the sidebar took up too much space, Microsoft eliminated it from Windows 7. However, gadgets can still be added, if desired.
To add a gadget,

1. From the **Start** button, go to **All Programs**, then choose **Desktop Gadget Gallery**. (Or **right-click** on the **Desktop** and choose **Gadgets**.)

![Desktop Gadget Gallery](image1)

2. Click the desired gadget from the gallery to add it. Or click **Get more gadgets online** to browse for additional gadgets.

![Get more gadgets online](image2)
3. The Gadget toolbar is available by hovering over the gadget, which provides additional settings and options.

![Gadget toolbar](image)

4. Using the drag-and-drop technique, gadgets can be placed in any location on the Desktop.

**The Superbar**

Although still named ‘Taskbar’ in Windows 7, the taskbar has been dubbed ‘the Superbar’ due to its fresh, new look and increased functionality, including:

- The ability to pin applications to the taskbar (by right-clicking on them in the Start menu)

![Taskbar with pinned applications](image)

- The ease of which pinned applications can be rearranged by clicking and dragging
- The live preview effect when hovering over an application

![Live preview](image)

- The streamlined Notification Area (available on the right side of the taskbar)
• The removal of the optional Quick Launch toolbars
• The Show Desktop button (to the right of the time display)
  - Hover over this button to temporarily minimize all open windows; click the button to minimize all windows.

The New and Improved Start Menu

As with the taskbar, applications can be pinned to the Start menu (via the right-click menu).

The Shutdown button has a side button with additional options to log off, restart, lock, etc.
Right-click the Start menu and choose Properties to more fully customize it, including altering the power button action as well as adjusting how links, icons, and menus behave.

Jump Lists

New to Windows 7, jump lists provide easy access to recently used items. Right-clicking a program icon in the taskbar provides an expanded menu with a variety of options depending on the application itself. This is a quick way to access items like recent files, quick tasks, application functions, etc.

Jump lists are also available in the Start menu via an arrow next to the application.
Items can be pinned to a jump list by clicking on the pin icon. They can be removed through the right-click menu. By default, the jump list shows the 10 most recently opened files. Pinning an item to the jump list makes it available regardless of how many items have been opened in between.

Aero Interface

The Aero desktop experience mixes cool graphics with useful new ways to manage your desktop.

**AeroPeek** allows you to peer past all open windows straight to the desktop. Simply point to the right edge of the taskbar - and watch open windows instantly turn transparent, revealing all hidden icons and gadgets.

To quickly reveal a buried window, point to its taskbar thumbnail. Now only that window shows on the desktop.

**AeroShake** allows you to cut through a cluttered desktop and quickly focus on a single window. Shake the title bar of an open window and watch as every open window except that one instantly disappears. Shake again - and your windows are back.

**AeroSnap** is a quick new way to resize open windows, simply by dragging them to the edges of the screen. Drag the title bar to either side of the window to snap them side-by-side. Drag the title bar to the top of the window to maximize it. Resize the title bar to the top of the window to
An AeroTheme is a combination of pictures, colors, and sounds. It includes a desktop background, a screen saver, a window border color, and a sound scheme. Some themes might also include desktop icons and mouse pointers.

To adjust the theme:

1. Right-click the Desktop and choose **Personalize**.

2. Select the desired theme. Or browse for more themes online.

3. Click Desktop Background, Window Color, Sounds, or Screen Saver to customize any of these options for the selected theme.
Libraries

Libraries help locate information on the computer, allowing users to gather content of similar type no matter where the files are stored.

There are four default Libraries – Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos. Each Library can gather content from up to 50 folders.

To include additional folders in a Library:

- **Right-click** the folder, choose **Include in Library**, then select the desired Library.
- Or, when viewing the Libraries, click the **Locations** button. Then browse to the desired folder.

To create a new Library:

- **Right-click** the folder, choose **Include in Library**, then click **Create New Library**.
- Or, when viewing the libraries, click the **New Library** button.
Snipping Tool

The snipping tool (returning from Vista) allows you to capture and annotate screenshots. The screenshots can then be pasted into another file, saved in a variety of formats, or sent via e-mail.

To activate the snipping tool,

1. From the **Start button**, choose **All Programs**, then **Accessories**, then **Snipping Tool**.

2. Click the **dropdown arrow next to New** to select the type of snip you want to use – free-form, rectangular, window, or full-screen.

3. Using your mouse, select the desired area.

4. This copies the snip to the clipboard, ready to paste as is in another file.
5. You can also use the pen, highlighter, and eraser tools to annotate the snip.

6. Click the **Save** icon to save the clip in a jpg, png, gif, or mht format.

7. Click the **E-mail** button to e-mail the clip either as an attachment or embedded into the message.
Sticky Notes

Sticky notes are like electronic notes that display on the Desktop. In Windows 7, you can format a note’s text, change its color with a click, and speedily resize, collapse, and flip through notes.

To add a note:

1. From the **Start menu**, choose **Accessories**, then **Sticky Notes**.
2. Type the text of the note.
3. Right-click to change the color of the note.
4. Use keyboard shortcuts to format the text of the note. For example,
   a. Ctrl + Shift + > to increase the font
   b. Ctrl + Shift + L to create a bulleted list
5. Drag the lower-right corner of the note to resize it.
6. Click the plus sign in the upper left corner to add a new note.
7. Click the ‘x’ in the upper right corner of the note to delete it. (Notes are permanently deleted; there is no Undo button.)
8. Click a note and press Alt+F4 to close the note windows; your notes will automatically be saved.
9. Click the Sticky Notes button on the taskbar to temporarily hide all the sticky notes. Click it again to bring all the sticky notes back to the desktop.

Action Center

The Action Center replaces the Windows Security Center. It can be accessed either through the Notification Tray or through the Start menu, under System and Security in the Control Panel.
The Action Center consolidates message traffic from key Windows maintenance and security features, including Windows Defender and User Account Control. If Windows requires your attention, the Action Center icon appears in the taskbar. Click it and alerts and suggested fixes for any problems will appear.

The Action Center also lets you decide which Windows 7 alerts you see. Click **Change User Account Control settings** to adjust these settings.

**Calculator**

The built-in calculator has been greatly enhanced in Windows 7. It boasts two new views – Programmer and Statistics. It also has the option to display the calculation history, perform unit conversions, and data calculations. In addition, there are built-in worksheets that allow you to calculate mortgage, fuel economy, and more.
Keyboard Shortcuts

There are many new keyboard shortcuts available in Windows 7. For example, the Windows key + the up arrow will maximize a window. For a comprehensive list of shortcuts, see http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/Windows7/Keyboard-shortcuts.

Windows XP Mode

There may be some applications that are not compatible with Windows 7. However, Windows 7 includes Windows XP Mode, which allows users to install and run many older Windows XP applications using virtualization technology. Once these applications are installed in the Windows XP Mode environment, they will be published to the Windows 7 desktop allowing users to run many Windows XP applications from a Windows 7 desktop just as if it were a Windows 7 application. For more information, see Microsoft’s Windows XP Mode page at: http://www.microsoft.com/windows/virtual-pc/default.aspx
Problem Steps Recorder

The Problem Steps Recorder allows you to capture the steps you take on a computer, including a text description of where you clicked and a picture of the screen during each click. Once you capture these steps, you can save them to a file – which can be invaluable to someone helping you troubleshoot an issue.

Please note that the Recorder does NOT capture anything that is typed. Use the comment feature to highlight where the problem is occurring.

To launch the Problem Steps Recorder,

1. From the Start menu, choose Control Panel.
2. In the upper right corner, type ‘problem’ in the search box. Then click Record steps to reproduce a problem.

3. This launches the Problem Step Recorder. Click Start Record to begin recording. As you are recording your steps, click Pause Record if needed. Use the Add Comment button to add text to your recording. Click Stop Record when finished.

4. When finished, you can save the recorded steps.