WINDOWS OS

Windows Personal Computers

All operating systems are extremely complex and involve hundreds of thousands of hours of development to create. It is highly recommended that any user new to an operating system take the time to read and/or take classes on the operational functionality at a level commensurate with their personal level of computer hardware and software knowledge.

Windows 10:

Windows 10 was released in mid-2015 with a free upgrade offer for Windows 7 and/or Windows 8/8.1 computers valid until July 29, 2016.   The initial acceptance of Windows 10 was minimal, with a majority of corporate and personal users opting to remain with Windows 7. The free Windows 10 upgrade program did provide sufficient incentive for users to upgrade as there are now over a half billion devices running Windows 10.

Windows 10 Upgrades:

With the Jan 14, 2020 end of life support for Windows 7 and the Jan 10, 2023 proposed end of life support for Windows 8 and 8.1 looming on the horizon, many Microsoft Windows users are faced with the dilemma of upgrading or buying a new computer.

Tech Assist has done numerous Windows 10 upgrades on a variety of devices, ranging from old Windows XP Dual Core computers up to new Intel Core i7 computers. Most of the computers were able to install Windows 10, with functional device drivers, and run with little to no problems, albeit slower than the newer models with faster processors and more memory. The redesign of the Windows 10 operating system allows it to install and run on legacy hardware, a first for Microsoft.

Although not widely publicized, Microsoft still allows for a free Windows 10 upgrade for any computer running an older version of Windows. This upgrade process takes about 1 hour and all of the original user data files and applications remain intact under the new Windows 10.

Once the new Windows 10 upgrade is completed and activated, the new Windows 10 Product Key can be used for a clean install of Windows 10. This clean install assures that no legacy software or system problems are carried forward from the previous version of Windows. This clean install process requires a complete backup all the user data files prior to the clean install. Once Windows 10 upgrade is completed and activated, the user data files can be restored to the computer. Unfortunately, with the clean install the original applications cannot be restored and must be reinstall on the computer.

Windows 8 & 8.1:

Windows 8 was released in October 2012 and was Microsoft's first attempt to integrate tablet capabilities into Windows operating systems. The general acceptance was minimal, with a majority of corporate and personal users opting to downgrade to Windows 7.

Windows 8.1 Update was released in April 2014. Mainstream support will end by Microsoft on Jan 9, 2018, but has pledged to provide security updates until Jan 10, 2023 when is will reach end-of life support from Microsoft.

Windows 7:

Windows 7 was released in October 2007 and has been the most widely accepted Microsoft operating system to date. Mainstream support was ended by Microsoft on January 13, 2015, but has pledged to provide security updates until January 14, 2020 when is reached end-of life support from Microsoft.

Windows Vista:

Windows Vista was released in January 2007 and all support was ended by Microsoft on April 11, 2017. Users with computer still running Windows Vista will encounter ever increasing issues with compatibility, especially when browsing the Internet as many websites will no longer allow access from this release. If you have a computer with this release, it may be time to upgrade to a new computer with Windows 10.

Windows XP:

Windows XP was released in October 2001 and all support was ended by Microsoft on April 8, 2014. Users with computer still running Windows XP will encounter ever increasing issues with compatibility, especially when browsing the Internet as many websites will no longer allow access from this release. If you have a computer with this release, it may be time to upgrade to a new computer with Windows 10.

Settings:

There are hundreds of setting parameters in the Windows operating systems. Although many of the Setting parameters are straightforward for the user to change, there are other parameters that can cause serious user or system problems if not modified properly.

The Settings for Windows varies name and location by release, but can usually be found by clicking on the Windows logo in the lower left corner of the status bar. Select Settings for Windows 10 or Control Panel for other versions of Windows.

<u>Tech Assist</u> has assisted numerous residents with setting up and reviewing the many options available in Settings and quite often will make changes in Settings to resolve problems with the Windows personal computer.

Microsoft Office

Microsoft Office is an office suite of applications, servers, and services developed by Microsoft. Although all of the applications had gone through previous releases, Microsoft Office was announced in August 1988 and the name was primarily a marketing term for a bundled set of applications. The first version of Office, released a year later, contained Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint. Over the years, Office applications have grown substantially closer with shared features such as a common spell checker, OLE data integration and Visual Basic for Applications scripting language. Word, Excel, and PowerPoint still remain the most widely used applications of the product suite with approximately 1.2 billion Office users worldwide.

The most widely used versions of Microsoft Office are as follows:
- Office 2007 (Extended support ended April 2017)
- Office 2010 (Extended support will end October 2020)
- Office 2011 for MacOS (Mainstream support will end October 2017)
- Office 2016 for Win & Mac (Mainstream support will end October 2020)
- Office 365 Subscription Based (Mainstream support end as not been announced)
- Office 2019 for Win & Mac (Mainstream support end as not been announced)

eMail

Refer to the NETWORKS section for specifics on email.