

Windows Operating System

Windows is a graphical operating system developed by Microsoft. It allows users to view and store files, run the software, play games, watch videos, and provides a way to connect to the internet. It was released for both home computing and professional works.

Why is Microsoft Windows called Windows?

When Microsoft Windows was not introduced, all of the Microsoft users were used MS-DOS operating system. Microsoft gave one word to most of its products; it required a new Word that can represent its new GUI operating system. Microsoft decided to call it Windows because it has the ability to perform several tasks and run applications simultaneously.

Another reason behind calling it Windows was that you could not trademark a common name like Windows. Its official name was Microsoft Windows, the first version 1.0 of Windows was introduced in 1995.

History of Microsoft Windows

Since 1983, Microsoft is producing Windows. The founder of Microsoft 'Bill Gates' announced for Microsoft Windows on 10 November 1983 and released the first version of Windows in 1985. The following table contains history of Windows from edition 1 to 11.

Versions of Windows Operating System

Let us understand the different versions of Windows Operating System along with the features of each of them individually.

1. Windows 1.0

- It was released on November 20, 1985
- Pure Operating Environment
- Used Graphical User Interface
- Simple Graphics
- Offered limited multi-tasking was expected to have a better future potential

2. Windows 2.0

- It was released on December 9, 1987
- 16-bit Graphic User Interface (GUI) based operating environment

- Introduced Control Panel, and the first version of MS Word and Excel
- Unlike Windows 1.0, it had the capacity to allow applications to overlap each other
- It was also the last Windows OS which did not require a hard disk
- Hardware played an important role

3. Windows 3.0

- It was released in 1990
- It was better at multitasking
- Used 8086 microprocessors
- It has both, conventional and extendable memory
- First version of Windows to gather critical appreciation
- Better memory/ storage

Note* – None of the above mentioned Windows was Operating Systems. They all came under the category of Windows, working based on a graphical operating environment. It was Windows 95, which was the first Operating System released by Microsoft.

4. Window 95

- It was the first complete Operating System
- It was released on August 15, 1995
- It merged MS-DOS and Windows products
- It simplified plug and play features
- Taskbar and Start menu was introduced with this Windows OS
- Advanced from 16 bit GUI to 32 bit GUI
- Long file names could be saved
- Initially, computers with Windows 95 did not have Internet Explorer installed but by the release date of Windows 95, the first version of Internet Explorer was installed in the software
- On December 31, 2001, Windows declared this version of OS outdated and ended its support for the same

5. Windows 98

- It was released to manufacturing on May 15, 1998
- It was a 16 bit and 32 bit product based on MS DOS
- It was not an entirely new version but just a tuned-up version to Windows 95
- Internet Explorer 4.01 was released along with this Windows version
- It did not support USB printers or mass storage devices
- An update to this version “Windows SE” was released in 1999

6. Windows 2000

- It was officially released on February 17, 2000. However, its manufacturing had begun in late 1999
- A core set of features was followed for manufacturing Windows 2000 but 4 different editions, targeting different sectors of the market were released. These included: Server, Professional, Advanced Server and Datacenter Server
- It was considered as one of the most secure OS ever
- A local disk manager was introduced with these Windows
- Multilingual User Interface – it supported many different languages

7. Windows XP

- While the manufacturing started on August 24, 2001, the official product was released on October 25, 2001
- Advanced portable PC support
- Automatic wireless connection support
- Fast start-up
- Better Graphical User Interface (GUI)
- Help and support centre

8. Windows Vista

- It was released on January 30, 2007
- It had an upgraded version of Graphical User Interface
- It was the first operating system to use DVD-ROM for installation

9. Windows 7

- It was released on October 22, 2009
- A large number of new features were introduced
- Redesigned Windows shell with an updated taskbar
- Incremental upgrade to the Windows line
- Libraries were added in the file management system
- A few features from the past Windows were removed
- Extended hardware support

10. Windows 8

- It was released for retail on October 26, 2012
- Optimisations for touch-based
- Installed in new devices like Laptops, Mobile phones, tablets, etc.
- Increased integration with cloud services

- Windows Store service for software distribution
- Task manager had been redesigned
- New security features were introduced
- Online Applications could be directly downloaded

11. Windows 10

- It was released on July 29, 2015
- Addresses shortcomings in the user interface first introduced with Windows 8
- A virtual desktop system
- It had the ability to run windows store apps within windows on the desktop rather than in the full-screen mode
- Included new icons
- To reduce storage shortcomings, Windows 10 automatically compresses the file size

12. Windows 11

- It was released on October 4, 2021.
- It represents a significant visual overhaul and introduces new functionality designed to improve user experience, boost productivity, and enhance security.