

By Diana Huggins

With most new software releases, there's usually something missing or different from the previous version that annoys at least one user. You can eliminate some annoyances with a few simple changes. Others you have to live with.

During the past year of working with Windows Vista, I have run into several features and changes that get on my nerves. Based on that experience, I've come up with my list of top 10 annoyances in Windows Vista.

1 No more Boot.ini

Customizing the boot menu was much simpler in Windows XP. If you ran multiple operating systems, all you had to do was open the Boot.ini and make your changes. For example, you might change the names of the installed operating systems to make them more recognizable.

It's much more complicated in Windows Vista. You no longer edit the Boot.ini file. Instead, you use a program called bcdedit, which is not user-friendly, even for experienced users. A quick glance at this program and you will likely not want to see it again.

2 Buried display settings

Why change something for the sake of change? That was my thought when I went to modify my display settings for the first time in Vista. It used to be that changing display settings was as simple as a right-click on the desktop. There is now an added level of complexity. You still right-click on the desktop, but when you select Personalize, a new window appears with a slew of Appearance and Personalization options. You have to scroll all the way to the bottom of the window to find the Display Settings option.

As you start using Vista, you'll see that this is not the only instance where it seems there are unnecessary changes.

3 Control Panel clutter

The Control Panel in Windows Vista is cluttered and more difficult to maneuver. It seems to take more clicks to reach your destination. Going back to Windows XP, I now appreciate the simplicity of its Control Panel.

You can eliminate this annoyance by switching back to the old style Control Panel. When you open the Control Panel, select the Classic View option.



4 Shutdown options

Performing a shutdown in Windows Vista is overly complicated. There are at least nine shutdown choices on the Start Menu--from Switch User to Hibernate to Sleep. Power users will have no problem choosing the appropriate option. However, try explaining how to shut down a laptop or desktop to new users when they're facing nine choices. This is where the real annoyance comes into play.

5 Application support (or lack thereof)

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is assuming that the applications you run under Windows XP will run under Windows Vista. In fact, there's a good chance that they will not. This is a big reason why I haven't upgraded my working computer to Windows Vista. I've had problems with Paint Shop Pro, McAfee Virus Scan, AutoCAD, and Adobe applications. For testing purposes, I tried installing Office 2000, but it didn't work. And my line of business apps also won't run properly.

Not being able to perform necessary tasks because an application doesn't run right under Vista is frustrating. In all fairness, it is the responsibility of the software vendors to provide support for Vista--not vice versa. However, it is still an annoyance.

6 Aero hardware requirements

Windows Vista's new Aero user interface is absolutely beautiful--if you have the hardware to support it. Aero Glass is the high-end interface that's available only with the right video card. To enable Aero Glass, your computer must be equipped with a 3D video card that supports DirectX 9 and has a Longhorn Display Driver Model (LDDM) driver. If you don't have that, you're out of luck and must fork out even more money to upgrade your hardware. Also, remember that this feature is not available in the Home Basic edition.

7 Too many flavors

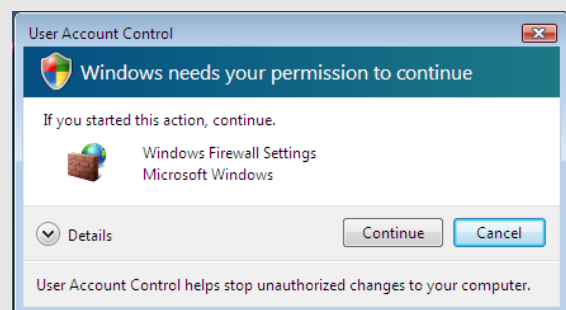
Having too many options to choose from annoys and confuses many people. Purchasing an operating system used to be simple because your choices were so limited. You could choose between this or that. With Windows XP, we saw four versions of the operating system. Now, with Windows Vista, things get even more complicated. The latest release of the Microsoft Windows family comes in [five versions](#): Home Basic, Home Premium, Business, Enterprise, and Ultimate.

So which one do you choose? It all depends on what you plan to use it for or what type of environment you work in. You need to do some research and find out what Vista features you need (or want). This will definitely help to narrow down your choices. Who knew choosing an operating system was so much work?

8 UAC prompts

The new Vista feature that people are grumbling about the most is User Account Control, or UAC. Each time you attempt to perform a task that requires administrative rights, a window appears prompting you for permission. In other words, you tell Vista you want to perform a task, but it needs to ask for your permission before doing so. Although the intention is good (it prevents unauthorized changes to your computer), the window that continuously pops up is annoying.

If you can live with the constant prompting for permission, hats off to you. Otherwise, you can eliminate this annoyance by disabling UAC through User Accounts And Family Safety within the Control Panel.



9 Budget breaker

If you don't like rising prices, you will certainly be annoyed when you go to purchase Windows Vista. Although you can buy Vista for as low as \$100, all you're getting for this price is Windows Vista Home Basic. This version is so basic that most people will not want it. It does not even support the Aero interface (see annoyance #5: Aero hardware requirements). As a result, most people will move to at least Windows Vista Home Premium, which costs \$239 retail for the full package. The price only goes up--topping off at a whopping \$399 for the full package of Windows Vista Ultimate.

10 Usability issues

Finally, this one relates back to some of the previous annoyances I have discussed. Windows Vista has managed to make what used to be simple tasks too complex. Tasks that should take one-step now take four or five steps. I am a fan of simplicity and this is something Windows Vista lacks.

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Version history

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