



What's the difference between 32-Bit and 64-Bit Windows?

It's a question we get asked from time to time so prepare to be enlightened. (And you never know it could come in handy in a pub quiz!)

The terms 32-bit and 64-bit refer to the way a computer's processor (also called a CPU), handles information. The 64-bit version of Windows handles large amounts of random access memory (RAM) more effectively than a 32-bit system. This means a 64-bit computer can be more responsive when you're running lots of programs at once and switching between them frequently.



How to choose

If your first priority is having a PC that can take advantage of increased memory and therefore perform better then consider a 64-bit PC. If you're more cost conscious or if you have older hardware and software that isn't supported by a 64-bit PC, then a 32-bit PC is a good choice. And of course choosing 32 bit doesn't mean you'll have a vastly inferior PC!

How can I find out if which programs and devices will work with 64 bit?

Visit [the Microsoft compatibility website](#) or if in doubt check with the original supplier.

To find out if your computer is running 32-bit or 64-bit Windows

Do the following:

1. Open System by clicking the Start button Picture of the Start button, clicking Control Panel, clicking System and Maintenance, and then clicking System.
2. Under System, you can view the system type.

There's a [useful FAQ](#) on this topic on the Microsoft website.

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