

Bertha Guides



**to free computer programs
and other stuff!**

**What version of
Windows?**

Disclaimer

All programs and instructions throughout this guide have been thoroughly tested. However no responsibility can be accepted for any loss, damage or other disruption that may occur while following this guide.

Bertha Guide

What Version of Windows?

(and other stuff)

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Introduction

At first glance it is easy to think that you really don't need to know anything about your computer, such as what version of Windows you are using. You really couldn't be further from the truth!

iTunes is a very popular program released by Apple which plays music and video on your computer and (this is the important one) synchronizes the music on your computer with your iPod (a portable music and video player - a must have for younger people).

iPods cost from £30 to £300 and must be paired with a "parent" computer so they will work as Apple intended. Obviously, if you're spending that kind of money you want the maximum number of features possible!

Imagine your despair then, if you'd just bought a £300 iPod touch (top of the range) only to discover that your computer used Windows XP Professional 64 bit version, and iTunes doesn't work with that version of Windows!

Quite often you will have seen a "minimum specification" for things you buy to use with your computer. Programs (or software, which is effectively the same thing), printers, even mobile phone software all have a minimum computer requirement to work properly.

The technical detail can be very confusing but all you need to do is have a basic idea of what you are being asked to look at.

Help and Advice

Mouse Clicks.

“Click” means click once using the button on your mouse that you use most (usually the left button).

“Double Click” means click the button above twice, one click after the other.

“Right Click” is one click with the other mouse button.

RAM, Processor, Operating System, Service Pack - what are they?

Firstly, don't worry if you don't know your RAM from your Service Pack. As a plain and simple computer user, there is no need for you to have anything more than a passing idea of what are quite technical ideas.

RAM is the amount of memory installed in your computer. As a generalisation the more RAM the faster a computer is. In modern computers it is measured in **GigaBytes** which is usually shortened to GB. So a computer with 2 Gigabytes of RAM would be shown to have 2GB. Don'tt bother with what this means technically, it really doesn't matter.

The **Processor** is the brain of a computer, it's very small, has millions of microscopic components and creates so much heat that it needs a fan to keep cool (yes, that's the humming you hear from your computer).

Operating System or **Windows Edition** is the version of Windows installed on your computer and is the software that makes you computer work.. Bertha Guides are written for XP and Vista and will be updated to cover the latest version, Windows 7. Depending on the processor in your computer, Windows will be either 32 bit or 64 bit versions. Within each version of Windows there are a number of different editions. XP comes in Home, Professional and Media Centre for example. One final variation is the **Service Pack** level. Vista (for example) has over 50 million lines of code (or instructions) which all have to work correctly all of the time for your computer to work. Obviously sometimes there are problems. These problems are solved by updating Windows over the Internet (that's what's happening when you can't turn off the computer normally but have to leave it installing updates). Every now and again Microsoft release a Service Pack which is a “super update”.

This means then that a typical, up to date computer could be using an operating system of Windows XP Home, 32 bit, Service Pack 3. A mouthful, yes - something to worry about, no.

RAM is memory? I thought that was on my hard drive!

There are two kinds of memory in a computer. RAM which is used by the computer to run programs and storage memory which is used to store things like letters, music or pictures. Confusing isn't it?

Another way to think about them is this way. Anything stored in RAM changes all the time and is deleted when you turn the computer off. Storage memory stays until you delete it.

Storage memory can be found on a hard drive but it can also be found on a floppy drive (not very common nowadays), a CD or DVD, an external hard drive and on those USB drives that look a bit like marker pens.

Is all this important?

Well sorry to say but, yes it can be.

How big is a GB?

Actual size isn't important all you need to know is relevant size. Hence a Byte is smallest, then comes a Kilobyte (KB), then a Megabyte (MB), then a Gigabyte (GB) and then a Terabyte (TB).

There are bigger, but computers haven't reached that size yet!

XP or Vista?

As you are starting up your computer there will be a screen saying which version of Windows you are using, XP or Vista.

However, I don't know about you, but I always turn on and go and make that essential first cup of coffee so always miss that "valuable" bit of information!

If you do the same don't worry, you won't need to sit gazing at the screen next time you fire the computer up (much too boring). Instead look at the desktop (the first screen you see once the computer has finished firing up). Look down at the bottom left of the screen and the following generalizations should apply.

If you see something like this then you are using Windows XP.



If you see something like this then you are using Windows Vista.



For the purpose of this Guide let's call both the above buttons the "Start" button.

Software System requirements

Look at the table below. It's taken from the system requirements web page for OpenOffice.org (http://www.openoffice.org/dev_docs/source/sys_reqs_20.html)

System Requirements for OpenOffice.org 2

Microsoft Windows

- Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows 2000 (Service Pack 2 or higher), Windows XP, Windows 2003, Windows Vista (*enhanced Vista integration from version 2.2*)
- 128 Mbytes RAM
- At least 800 Mbytes available disk space for a default install (including a JRE) via download. After installation and deletion of temporary installation files, OpenOffice.org will use approximately 440 Mbytes disk space.
- 800 x 600 or higher resolution with at least 256 colours

To use the program "OpenOffice.org" (it's an office package including word processor, spreadsheet and presentation program and yes, there is a Bertha Guide available) your computer must, at the very least, equal these requirements. (i.e. This is the minimum requirement).

You will notice that no mention is made about the processor. When this happens assume that the software will be quite happy to run on any processor in use today and so you can be safely ignored.

In the next section of this guide two computers are used to show how to find the information needed to see if the system requirements are met. Once you have read those two pages, decide if they meet or exceed the requirements above.

The answer is on page 11 but don't cheat!

Find out which version - XP.

Step 1

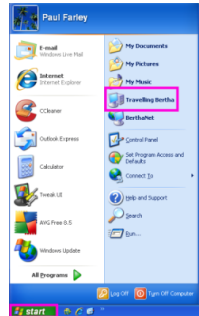
Click on the “Start” button which will open a window above it.

Step 2

The resulting window will look something like this (the “Start” button from Step 1 is boxed bottom left).

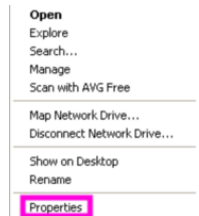
Now look for “My Computer” (or the name of your computer if you have changed it) in the list to the right. The computer used in this example is called “Travelling Bertha” (and is boxed) and has a little picture of a computer next to it.

Once you have found the right place, right click to open the next window.



Step 3

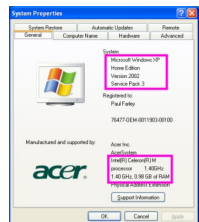
Look for the word “Properties” which is right down at the bottom in this example (boxed again) and click on the word to open the next window.



Step 4

You will now see a window with a number of tabs along the top. The “General” tab should be the one visible by default (without changing anything) which is lucky, as this is the one wanted.

There are two particular areas that we are interested in and both are boxed in the picture.



The top box tells us about Windows, in this case Travelling Bertha is using Windows XP Home Edition, Version 2002, Service Pack 3. Ignore the “Version 2002”, as that just says when Windows was originally installed.

The bottom box tells us about the computer processor and RAM memory. Again, Travelling Bertha has an Intel Celeron M 1.40GHz processor and 0.98GB of RAM.

Don't worry what that all means so long as your computer has a higher specification than that required by the new program, printer or whatever.

Find out which version - Vista users.

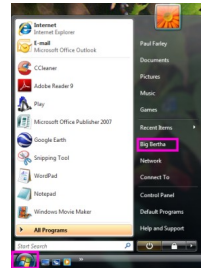
Step 1

Click on the “Start” button which will open a window above it.

Step 2

The resulting window will look something like this (the “Start” button from Step 1 is boxed).

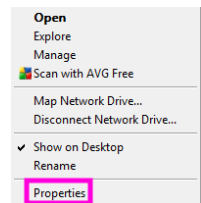
Now look for “Computer” (or the name of your computer if you have changed it) in the list to the right. The computer used in this example is called “Big Bertha” and is boxed. (Before you ask, yes all the computers here at Bertha Central do have Bertha in their names! Sad or what??)



Once you have found the right place right click to open the next window.

Step 3

Look for the word “Properties” which is right down at the bottom in this example (boxed again) and click on the word to open the next window.

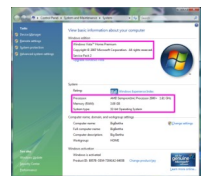


Step 4

Unlike in XP there are no tabs this time, just a window with links to the left and the information we want to the right.

Again there are two particular areas that we are interested in and both are boxed in the picture.

The top box tells us about Windows (Windows Vista Home Premium Service Pack 2) while the bottom box tells us about the computer itself (AMD Sempron Processor 2600+ 1.16GHz, 3GB RAM and 32 bit Operating system).



Once again, don't worry what that actually means. All you need is a general understanding of how to apply it to a system requirement list.

Software System requirements - answers.

	Minimum Requirement	Computer 1 (page 8)	Computer 2 (page 9)
Windows	98, ME, 2000 (>SP2) XP, 2003, Vista	XP Home Service Pack 3	Vista Home Premium Service Pack 2
RAM	128MB RAM	0.98 GB	3 GB
Meets requirement		✓	✓

As can be seen from the table above both computers will be able to run OpenOffice.org as they both exceed the system requirements. Don't forget, these are *minimum* requirements so anything with a higher specification will not only run fine, it will run faster!

Let Bertha show you how to

- Save hundreds of pounds on programs for Windows computers
- Listen to music for free
- Keep passwords, pictures and documents safe and secure
- Banish viruses and other nasties for ever

Quite often you need to know which version of Windows is installed on your computer. Not quite so simple as you might imagine given that it could be XP, Vista or even Windows 7. It could be 32 bit or 64 bit. It could be any sort of Service Pack from 1 to 3 depending on which Windows you are talking about!

Just to make things really confusing how much memory does your computer have? And what is memory???