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Happy Holidays from MTM

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## How many Vistas does it take?

If you were confused by the different editions of Windows XP (Home, Pro, Tablet, Media Center), get ready to be even more overwhelmed by the choices you'll have with Windows Vista. At last count, Microsoft was planning no less than nine separate editions - but you won't find a Tablet PC edition or a Media Center Edition. Instead, tablet functionality is expected to be included as part of Vista Home Premium,

Professional, Small Business, Enterprise and Ultimate editions (but not Starter Edition or Home Basic Edition). Media Center functionality will be included in Home Premium and Ultimate Editions. Want a media center that can also join your domain? Get Ultimate Edition. Need Internet Connection Sharing (ICS)? You can do it with any edition except Starter Edition. Want Remote Desktop

services? None of the Home editions support it, nor does Starter, but Professional, Small Business, Enterprise and Ultimate all do.

So how do you figure out which edition you need for the things you want to do with your Vista computer? For a chart comparing the features in each of the nine editions, see Paul Thurrott's Web site at: <http://www.wxpnews.com/rd/rd.cfm?id=051018TI-Vistas>

## Should I wait until Vista is released to buy a new computer?

### QUESTION:

Are you thinking of buying a new desktop or laptop? Should you just wait and buy a desktop or laptop when Vista comes out?

### ANSWER:

This is a question that seems to be on a lot of minds (with regard to both laptops and desktops). Since Microsoft hasn't yet released a list of Vista compatible components, it's difficult to know whether a particular product will be upgradeable to Vista without having to make changes to the hardware.

In general, today's high end machines should be able to run Vista. Beta testers have found that Vista needs at least 512 MB of RAM, with 1 GB being the "sweet spot." That's unless you're running the 64 bit version, for which you'll need (gulp) 2 GB for best performance. You'll also want SATA hard disks, preferably SATA 2. Processor speed is less critical, but Vista will be much better able to take

advantage of dual core and multiple processors than XP.

The big question is: what video card do I need to be able to use all of Vista's neat "eye candy" features? It's looking like one of the most important requirements will be a high end video card, with at least 256 MB of memory, because the way graphics are processed in Vista is completely different (switching from bitmap to vector graphics). This makes the graphics quality much better, but requires more powerful video card because the graphics processor is now doing a lot of work that was previously done by the computer's CPU. You need a 3D card that supports the Vista display driver model and uses a high speed bus (i.e., PCI Express 16 rather than AGP) for the fancy stuff. Vista will still work without the super duper video card, but you won't get all of

the graphical effects and improvements.

Bottom line: A notebook will probably run Vista, but probably not take advantage of all graphics features. In a notebook, that's not always important to most users; It's mainly used for office applications, e-mail and Web surfing and not heavy graphics. A desktop bought now will most likely be upgradeable to Vista.

Microsoft makes the distinction between "Vista ready" and "Vista capable" hardware and is telling enterprises there's no reason to wait for the release before deploying new PCs. You can read more about their hardware guidelines here:

[http://www.wxpnews.com/rd/rd.cfm?id=051018QC-Vista\\_Hardware](http://www.wxpnews.com/rd/rd.cfm?id=051018QC-Vista_Hardware)

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### POINSETTIAS

A native Mexican plant, poinsettias were named after Joel R. Poinsett, U.S. ambassador to Mexico who brought the plant to America in 1828. Poinsettias were likely used by Mexican Franciscans in their 17th century Christmas celebrations. One legend has it that a young Mexican boy, on his way to visit the village Nativity scene, realized he had no gift for the Christ child. He gathered pretty green branches from along the road and brought them to the church. Though the other children mocked him, when the leaves were laid at the manger, a beautiful star-shaped flower appeared on each branch. The bright red petals, often mistaken for flowers, are actually the upper leaves of the plant.



### CHRISTMAS TREES

In 16th-century Germany fir trees were decorated, both indoors and out, with apples, roses, gilded candies, and colored paper. In the Middle Ages, a popular religious play depicted the story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. A fir tree hung with apples was used to symbolize the Garden of Eden -- the Paradise Tree. The play ended with the prophecy of a savior coming, and so was often performed during the Advent season.

It is held that Protestant reformer Martin Luther first adorned trees with light. While coming home one December evening, the beauty of the stars shining through the branches of a fir inspired him to recreate the effect by placing candles on the branches of a small fir tree inside his home. The Christmas Tree was brought to England by King George I from his native Germany. The famous *Illustrated News* etching in 1848, featuring the Royal Family standing gathered around a Christmas tree in Windsor Castle, popularized the tree throughout Victorian England. Brought to America by the Pennsylvania Germans, the Christmas tree became by the late 19th century.



### CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS

According to legend, a kindly nobleman grew despondent over the death of his beloved wife and foolishly squandered his fortune. This left his three young daughters without dowries and thus facing a life of spinsterhood.

The generous St. Nicholas, hearing of the girls' plight, set forth to help. Wishing to remain anonymous, he rode his white horse by the nobleman's house and threw three small pouches of gold coins down the chimney where they were fortuitously captured by the stockings the young women had hung by the fireplace to dry.



### MISTLETOE

Mistletoe was used by Druid priests 200 years before the birth of Christ in their winter celebrations. They revered the plant since it had no roots yet remained green during the cold months of winter.

The ancient Celts believed mistletoe to have magical healing powers and used it as an antidote for poison, infertility, and to ward off evil spirits. The plant was also seen as a symbol of peace, and it is said that among Romans, enemies who met under mistletoe would lay down their weapons and embrace.

Scandinavians associated the plant with Frigga, their goddess of love, and it may be from this that we derive the custom of kissing under the mistletoe. Those who kissed under the mistletoe had the promise of happiness and good luck in the following year.

