

# XP great for old machines

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I've now converted two machines to XP from win 98 and win Me, and I'm amazed at how much better they run. Especially, on the Win 98 machine, which took many seconds to load huge 20 and 40 mb mailboxes in Outlook Express, even when compacted and defragged. In XP with NTFS the same mailboxes load right up.

In both cases I sent for more memory but went ahead and installed and configured everything with 128 mb. That was a bit laggy, but it was usable. The added 512 for one and 256 for the other really livened things up. The one with 384 mb total has typically 100mb free.

The machines were K7's -- A Tbird 1000 and an Athlon XP running at 1500+ speeds. Judging from the 1000, I would say that a Duron 700 could run XP just fine in 384 mb.

I haven't tried 256 mb alone, but that is how much is used after boot on my 2 gig system, so I suspect it would lag a bit without some headroom.

While on 128 mb one was much faster -- I think it was because it had a 7200 rpm disk and the other has a 5400 rpm one. With all the swap file action, that could explain it.

Those old machines may not be up to heavy video and games, but for surfing they are snappy.

Of course you can run into disadvantages, such as bios that don't know anything about usb hard drives, and have usb 1.1, and no built-in nic and an aversion to a pci one, though it might work ok in a different slot.

In my installs I used bootitng to create a small partition to install to, then as I went I kept copying it to free space, so that when I hit a snag and something bombed I deleted the XP and went back to a copy. I could have booted a copy, but I copied the copy back into XP's space so the copy would protect my next move. I wound up with a pristine, never locked up, never had a bad driver or program install, XP. I imaged it to free space, slid the image to the end of the drive, and resized XP to fill up the rest of the disk.

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Boy are those folks I did it for happy!

I don't know if you'll be able to do this with Vista Basic.

The one weird thing is the message that pops up and then disappears before you can read it, on shut down. But I guess there has to be a Windows-ism or two.

So I'm hoping those installs take years to deteriorate to the point where we'll extract all the data and restore them from the image, then copy in the new data.

BTW besides all documents I had backed up the e-mail store, address book, and favorites. They copy in fine in safe mode. I replaced the default e-mail store after recreating the accounts. I used the new address book to import the old one. I copied in the favorites. You just have to find where they all are.

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Ed Light

Smiley :-/

MS Smiley :-\

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