

Improving PC Performance

When most people think they need a new PC or Notebook due to slow response, they probably don't. Why? Because the main reason for poor performance is insufficient Memory (RAM). Unless you bought a top-end machine you most likely don't have enough RAM for your computer operate to at top speed. Windows, and many of today's common applications like Internet Explorer (IE), need large amounts of RAM to operate efficiently. How much? Well, it varies. If you're running Windows XP then 1-GB (gig or gigabyte) is enough. But if you have Vista or Windows 7, you'll need at least 3-GB. Sounds expensive!?! It's not...especially if you can DIY. An upgrade from the typical 512-MB (0.5-GB) base amount to 3-GB usually costs less than \$50 and makes a HUGE difference in overall performance.

OK, but how can "I" do the upgrade? It's actually very simple. First, check how much memory you have now: Click on START, then CONTROL PANEL, and then the SYSTEM icon. There you will find your "RAM" or "Installed Memory." Second, IF you need more as per the above, go to www.crucial.com -or- www.kingston.com. Just enter your make and model and either site will show your options and even tell you how to install the upgrade. Caution... In many cases prices vary widely. Some of the best deals can be found at www.buy.com -and- www.newegg.com. Just order the specific upgrade that was recommended. Another way to do it is to take your computer to Best Buy - they will do the installation for you IF they carry the type of memory your machine needs. Of course, this quite a bit more expensive.

Now one other NO COST tip that will help browsing is to simply clear your browser's cache occasionally. For IE, click on TOOLS that appears near the top-right of the IE screen. A menu will drop down - click INTERNET OPTIONS and then the DELETE button under Browsing History. On the next menu be sure Temporary Internet Files is checked, and then click DELETE. It may take a minute or so to clear the cache. This will ensure old web pages are not displayed and might even speed-up your browsing.