

# Windows NT 4.0

Windows NT 4.0

Version of the [Windows NT](#) operating system

A screenshot of Windows NT 4.0

**Developer** [Microsoft](#)

**Source model** [Closed source](#)

**Released to manufacturing** 31 July 1996; 28 years ago<sup>[1]</sup>

**Latest release** 4.0 SP6a (Build 1381) / 24 August 1996; 28 years ago<sup>[2]</sup>

**Platforms** [IA-32](#), [Alpha](#), [MIPS](#), [PowerPC](#)

**Kernel type** [Hybrid](#)

**License** [Commercial proprietary software](#)

**Preceded by** [Windows NT 3.51](#) (1995)

**Succeeded by** [Windows 2000](#) (1999)  
<http://www.microsoft.com/>

**Official website** [ntworkstation/default.asp](#)  
(Defunct)

## Support status

**Embedded** Mainstream support ended on 30 June 2003<sup>[3]</sup>  
Extended support ended on 11 July 2006<sup>[3]</sup>

**Server** Mainstream support ended on 31 December 2002<sup>[4]</sup>  
Extended support ended on 31 December 2004<sup>[4]</sup>

**Workstation** Mainstream support ended on 30 June 2002<sup>[5]</sup>  
Extended support ended on 30 June 2004<sup>[5]</sup>

**Windows NT 4.0** is a [preemptively multitasked](#)<sup>[6]</sup> [graphical operating system](#), designed to work with either a single [processor](#) or [symmetric multi-processor](#) computers. It was part of [Microsoft](#)'s [Windows NT](#) family of [operating systems](#) and was [released to manufacturing](#) on 31 July 1996.<sup>[1]</sup> It is a [32-bit](#) operating system available in both [workstation](#) and [server](#) editions with a graphical environment similar to that of [Windows 95](#). It was officially released on August 24, 1996, about a year after Windows 95.

## Overview

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The successor to [Windows NT 3.51](#), Windows NT 4.0 introduced the user interface of [Windows 95](#) to the Windows NT family, including the [Windows shell](#), [File Explorer](#) (known as Windows NT Explorer at the time), and the use of "My" nomenclature for [shell folders](#) (e.g. [My Computer](#)). It also

includes most components introduced with [Windows 95](#). Internally, Windows NT 4.0 was known as the Shell Update Release.<sup>[7]</sup> While many administrative tools, notably *User Manager for Domains*, *Server Manager* and *Domain Name Service Manager* still used the old graphical user interfaces, the [Start menu](#) in Windows NT 4.0 separated the per-user shortcuts and folders from the shared shortcuts and folders by a separator line.<sup>[8]</sup> Windows NT 4.0 includes some enhancements from [Microsoft Plus! for Windows 95](#) such as the [Space Cadet pinball table](#), [font smoothing](#), showing window contents while dragging, [high-color](#) icons and stretching the [wallpaper](#) to fit the screen. [Windows Desktop Update](#) could also be installed on Windows NT 4.0 to update the shell version and install [Task Scheduler](#).<sup>[9]</sup> Windows NT 4.0 Resource Kit included the Desktop Themes utility.<sup>[10]</sup>

Windows NT 4.0 is the last major release of Microsoft Windows to support the [Alpha](#), [MIPS](#) or [PowerPC CPU](#) architectures. It remained in use by businesses for a number of years, despite Microsoft's many efforts to get customers to [upgrade](#) to [Windows 2000](#) and newer versions. It was also the last release in the Windows NT family to be branded as *Windows NT* although Windows 2000 carried the designation "Built on NT Technology".

## Editions

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Windows NT 4.0 Workstation edition

Windows NT 4.0 Server was included in versions 4.0 and 4.5 of [BackOffice Small Business Server](#) suite.

## Client

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- **Windows NT 4.0 Workstation** was designed for use as the general business desktop operating system.

## Servers

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- **Windows NT 4.0 Server**, released in 1996, was designed for small-scale business server systems.
- **Windows NT 4.0 Server, Enterprise Edition**, released in 1997, is the precursor to the *Enterprise* line of the Windows server family (*Advanced Server* in [Windows 2000](#)). Enterprise Server was designed for high-demand, high-traffic networks. Windows NT 4.0 Server, Enterprise Edition includes Service Pack 3.<sup>[11]</sup> The Enterprise Edition saw the introduction of the /3GB boot flag, which changed the default virtual address space mapping from 2 GB kernel and 2 GB [userland](#) to 1

GB [kernel](#) and 3 GB userland. It also introduced a [PSE36](#) driver for mapping up to 64 GB memory (although [chipsets](#) then supported only up to 8 GB.)<sup>[12]</sup> This version also saw the first introduction of [cluster service](#).

- **Windows NT 4.0 Terminal Server Edition**, released in 1998, allows the users to [log on](#) remotely. The same functionality was called [Terminal Services](#) in Windows 2000 and later server releases, and also powers the *Remote Desktop* feature that first appeared in [Windows XP](#).

## Embedded

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- **Windows NT 4.0 Embedded** (abbreviated **NTe**) is an edition of Windows NT 4.0 that was aimed at [computer](#)-powered [major appliances](#), [vending machines](#), [ATMs](#) and other devices that cannot be considered general-purpose computers. It is the same system as the standard Windows NT 4.0, but it comes packaged in a [database](#) of components and [dependencies](#), from which a developer can choose individual components to build customized setup [CDs](#) and [hard disk boot images](#). Windows NT 4.0 Embedded includes Service Pack 5. It was succeeded by [Windows XP Embedded](#).

## References

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

1. ↑ [1.0 1.1 "Microsoft Announces the Release of Windows NT Workstation 4.0"](#). *News Center*. [Redmond, WA: Microsoft](#). 31 July 1996.
2. ↑ ["Post-Windows NT 4.0 Service Pack 6a Security Rollup Package \(SRP\)"](#). *Support*. [Microsoft](#). 19 June 2014.
3. ↑ [3.0 3.1 "Microsoft Support Lifecycle for Windows NT Embedded 4.0"](#). [Microsoft](#). Archived from [the original](#) on 3 February 2015. Retrieved 3 February 2015.
4. ↑ [4.0 4.1 "Microsoft Support Lifecycle for Windows NT 4.0 Server"](#). [Microsoft](#). Retrieved 4 September 2009.
5. ↑ [5.0 5.1 "Microsoft Support Lifecycle for Windows NT 4.0 Workstation"](#). [Microsoft](#). Archived from [the original](#) on 4 February 2020. Retrieved 4 September 2009.
6. ↑ Donald McLaughlin and Partha Dasgupta (4 August 1998). ["Distributed Preemptive Scheduling on Windows NT"](#). *2nd USENIX Windows NT Symposium*. [USENIX](#). Retrieved 4 September 2009.
7. ↑ ["Poking Around Under the Hood: A Programmer's View of Windows NT 4.0"](#). *microsoft.com*. [Microsoft](#).
8. ↑ ["Windows 2000 Professional Beta 3 Review"](#). *winsupersite.com*. Archived from [the original](#) on 2011-12-06. Retrieved 2018-03-20.
9. ↑ ["The New Task Scheduler \(Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0\)"](#). *microsoft.com*. [Microsoft](#).
10. ↑ ["NT 4.0 RESOURCE KIT UTILITIES Corrections and Comments"](#). *microsoft.com*. [Microsoft](#).

11. [↑ "Windows NT Server, Enterprise Edition Administrator's Guide and Release Notes". \*microsoft.com\*. Microsoft.](#)
12. [↑ \*Tuning IBM xSeries Servers for Performance\* \(PDF\) \(3rd ed.\). IBM SG24-5287-02. June 2002. pp. 92–93.](#)

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