

[Revitalize your PC and save money](#)

Upgrading your PC is a great way to save some of your cash; swapping out old hardware for newer, faster components is often cheaper than buying a new PC, and if armed with some technical knowledge, can match the results, speed and pep, of a newer computer. It's wise to come up with a game plan before you start randomly upgrading parts, though.

Your battle plan must start with a little inspection of your current computer configuration. As you well know, some components are easier to upgrade than others, and some, - not necessarily the most expensive ones - , may lead to the dreamed increase in performance. For instance, purchasing and installing a new CPU is more of a hassle than buying some extra RAM. Also, the newly bought RAM will make your computer run faster and you will not regret your choice.

The list of priorities for IT purchases must always start with the RAM. A little word of caution is necessary: take a look at your motherboard manual and other documentation concerning your existing hardware and see which type of RAM you must purchase. If the new RAM is not compatible with the rest of the computer, then it will be just wasted cash.

Buying RAM also depends on other considerations. For instance, a CPU with a high bus rate works well with a memory that has a low access time. In such situations, purchasing new or extra RAM is a must.

Do you tax your PC with cycle hungry tasks like playing 3D games or editing digital videos? Or perhaps your PC came stock with an onboard graphics card and you've a spare slot just waiting for a faster graphics adapter to give your rig a little more pep. This type of upgrade can be costly, so be sure you know what type of performance boost you need.

For example, if all you do is surf the web, check email, and type up the occasional Word document, it doesn't make sense to acquire a \$600 graphics card equipped with the cutting edge of 3D rendering hardware. Also, consult your PC's manual to determine the type of bus-PCI Express, AGP, PCI, etc.-your motherboard supports for its graphics adapters. Once you've acquired your graphics card of choice, the installation should be straightforward and painless.

After taking care of the RAM and the graphics card, it is time to estimate how much memory you need to store up all your files, data, music and movies. If you are a gatherer and you like to place lots of stuff on your hard drive, so they can come in handy whenever you want, then a bigger hard drive is next on your list. There is always a solution to make backup on DVD's or pen drives, but you will see that, in time, your hard drive will seem to shrink under the pressure of your files.

Another great plus of new hard drives is that they come with a special software that provide you with the ability to transfer all of your old hard drive into the new one. This means that you do not have to install Windows all over again and you do not have to appeal to intermediary backup solutions just for this. You will surely enjoy the advantage of having a new faster hard drive that will save and load files at a speedier rate than you experienced before.

Lastly, on your list, the motherboard can take its place. This is more of a delicate matter than what was said so far. Cutting edge motherboards are not so necessary as you may think, at the first look. Also, if you have a brand computer, like Dell or IBM, you will see that it is pretty hard to squeeze a new motherboard into the old case, which will force you to buy a new case, as well, just for the sake of the motherboard.

This is how a plan for upgrading a computer should look like. Make your own little research and decide which parts need most to be replaced. Only this way you will get the best off your upgrade and enjoy a more competitive machine.

About the Author

Kay Brenner is a [Faster computer](#) expert who restores slow PCs, saving you time and money wrestling with a slow PC. To learn how to avoid computer problems, download a free [PC Tune Up](#)