

## **The next big Windows update is coming in 2024 and it's all about AI.**

Microsoft is hard at work on the next major Windows OS update under the codename Hudson Valley, and although it's unlikely to be called "Windows 12" by Microsoft, this next release is expected to be a big one for Windows users. We're already beginning to hear leaks and rumors about what the next version of Windows is going to include, and this article is rounding up everything we know so far.

### **WINDOWS 12: WHAT WE KNOW**

Name: Unknown

Codename: Hudson Valley

Version: 24H2

Release Date: Fall 2024

Now, it's important to keep in mind that we don't know how Microsoft plans to market this next major version of Windows. Originally, it seemed likely that Hudson Valley would ship as "Windows 12," but since the departure of ex-Windows lead Panos Panay, it looks like Microsoft may opt to continue using the Windows 11 branding.

The reason for this is that the new Windows leadership team are weary of further fragmenting the Windows userbase with new versions of the product. Right now, Windows 10 has around 1 billion users, and Windows 11 has around 400 million users. Introducing a "Windows 12" would further fragment this userbase, and Microsoft would prefer having everyone on the same version of Windows, like they did with Windows 10 before Windows 11 launched.

That said, we should never say never. What we do know for sure is 2024 is when the next set of major updates and changes are expected to ship for Windows, and while we think it makes the most sense for Microsoft to market this as Windows 12, that's something we won't know for sure until closer to the time.

According to our sources, the next major Windows OS update will launch in the second half of 2024. Microsoft is already testing early code and platform work for this next version of Windows.

This next release is expected to reach an RTM milestone in April 2024, but won't be fully finalized until August 2024, before being made generally available as an update for existing Windows 11 users in the September or October 2024 timeframe.

Unlike the previous Windows 11 feature update, which shipped as a minor enablement package on the Nickel platform release, Hudson Valley will ship on a new version of the Windows platform, codenamed Germanium. This means the Windows platform will be upgraded from Nickel to Germanium, and require a full OS upgrade to install.

We don't yet know what the specific system requirements will be for Hudson Valley. When Windows 11 launched, Microsoft upped the system requirements significantly which led to a majority of existing Windows 10 PCs ineligible for the Windows 11 upgrade.

Windows 11's system requirements call for a PC running Intel 8th-generation or AMD Ryzen 2000 series and up CPUs. It also requires a TPM, and a minimum of 4GB RAM. One report claims Microsoft might up the RAM requirement from 4GB to 8GB with this next release.

We might see some features (mostly AI focused) be limited to more recent PCs with an NPU or GPU that can handle on-device AI processing, as the next version of Windows is said to heavily focus on AI capabilities, and not all PCs will be able to handle that functionality without the dedicated hardware.

Microsoft has already said that the next version of Windows will focus on AI experiences, and we've already started some early functionality in this department on Windows 11. So far, Windows 11 already supports AI camera and microphone effects, enabled by a dedicated neural processing unit (NPU.)

This kind of functionality is expected to expand with Hudson Valley, including the ability for Windows to analyze content on display and provide contextual prompts to jumpstart projects or apps based on the information that's currently being viewed.

Microsoft is also working on an "advanced Copilot," that builds off the Copilot experience we already have on Windows 11. This new Copilot will be able to remember activities and things you do on your PC and turn everything into a searchable memory that you can refer back to at any time, enhancing Windows Search as a whole.

Windows will also be able to identify objects and text within images and allow the user to easily cut out and paste those items elsewhere. Some AI features will require dedicated hardware to function.

Other features include a new AI feature for turning 2D images into 3D parralax ones for the Windows desktop, a new Super resolution feature that will upscale the quality of videos and games, and a new Live Captions mode that will be able to translate different languages in real time.

Some of this new AI functionality will require dedicated NPU hardware to function.