

# Finding Reputable Vendors for Refurbished Computers

Purchasing refurbished computers is highly cost-effective and can be a risk-free way to acquire recent, high-performance equipment that works like new at a significant discount over new machines. Refurbished computers are widely available from many local and nationwide vendors at prices ranging from <\$200 for smaller, lower-performing home models to \$400 or more for higher-end i7 machines with faster processing and more RAM and storage capacity. Refurbished servers can also be purchased.



Here is an actual current advertised example of a refurbished machine available from a reputable vendor in Austin, TX (18 years in business) with a Better Business Bureau grade of A+:

## Dell Optiplex 790 Tower

- Intel Quad Core i7-2600 3.4Ghz CPU
- 4GB DDR3 Memory
- 160GB SATA Drive
- Integrated 10/100/1000 Network Card (NIC)
- USB 2.0
- 1 Serial Port
- Windows 10 Professional (+\$50)
- 1-Year Warranty
- \$320 + tax (and shipping, if applicable)



## What does "Refurbished" Actually Mean?

A computer that is sold as "refurbished" is generally one that was:

- Returned by a customer (even if it has no damage, it cannot be resold as new after its return);
- Failed to meet the original manufacturer's quality test and was repaired or rebuilt; or
- Came from a canceled order.

Reputable refurbishers repair everything that's damaged with quality parts, then thoroughly test the computer to make sure it works properly. **This means that when you buy a refurbished product, it should both look and run like new, excepting occasional minor cosmetic flaws.**

Many refurbished products come with a warranty, though these vary depending on who refurbished the computer. When an original manufacturer refurbishes and resells a product, the warranty is likely to be at least a full year. Products refurbished by third parties often have shorter warranties of 90-180 days.

In some cases, an original manufacturer refurbished product comes with the same tech support you'd get with a new computer. Then, if you have any problems with your new equipment, you can call the manufacturer for help. Check the seller's offer carefully for support arrangements.

## Look for Certified Refurbishers

Every manufacturer has a process for certifying refurbished products. They may certify third-party shops to refurbish units, or the manufacturer may do the reconditioning itself (such as Dell).

A certified third-party refurbisher has been trained by the manufacturer and uses manufacturer-approved service techniques and parts. The refurbisher may have a second line of business repairing and servicing computers for customers.



There are many reputable companies selling refurbished computers. A simple internet search for "refurbished computers" will produce listings of both local and national sellers.

**Some of the more well-known companies selling refurbished computers on a national basis include:**

- [Amazon](#)
- [Best Buy](#)
- [Dell Factory Outlet](#)
- [Newegg](#)
- [TigerDirect](#)
- [PCConnection](#)

There are companies in cities throughout the country that sell used and refurbished computers. These products range from used low-end models that are sold “as-is” after being checked for major problems to rebuilt mid- or high-level desktop units that have been factory-reconditioned and come with a warranty covering parts and service. **Avoid buying computers sold as “used” versus one those labeled “refurbished,” as used units have not been reconditioned to work like new.**

If you are looking for a local or regional seller of refurbished computers, be sure to carefully review the company before making any purchases. Your review should address these issues:

- How long has the company been in business?
- Is the company a member of the Better Business Bureau, and, if so, what is its BBB Rating?
- Does the company have generally positive reviews on its website and/or Yelp?
- Does it address and respond to customer complaints?
- Is the company a Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher?
- Does the company back its refurbished computers with a one-year or longer warranty that covers parts and service?
- What is the return policy?

