3 ways to repurpose an old Windows 10 PC

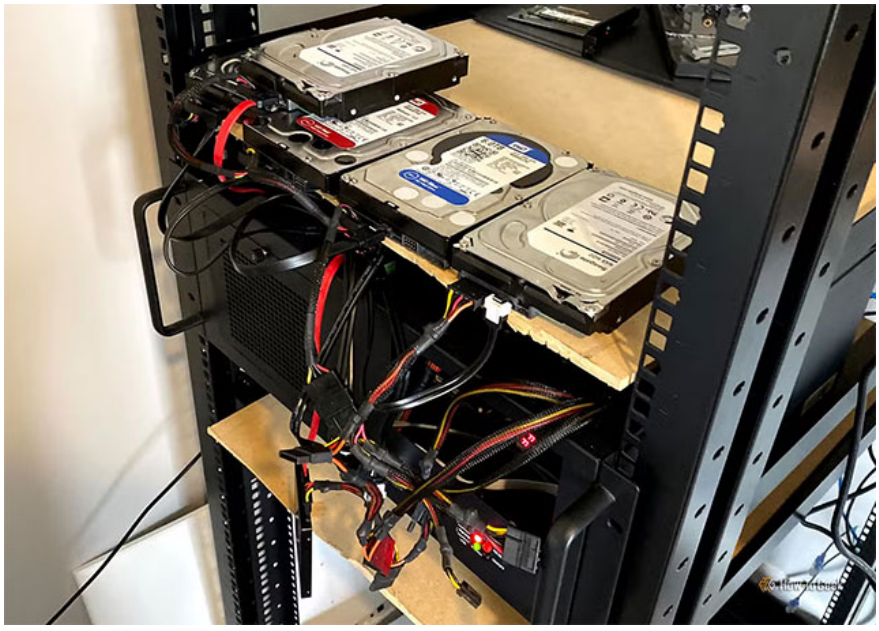
Discover 3 ways to turn an old Windows 10 PC into a useful device: build a NAS for personal cloud storage, run a lightweight game server, or build a home lab to self-host services and save costs in the long run.

With RAM and storage prices constantly rising and showing no signs of slowing down, repurposing old PC hardware has become more sensible than ever. Instead of buying a new machine, you can completely 'revive' your recently retired Windows 10 PC or a Dell Optiplex that has been sitting idle in a corner for years.

Transform old PCs into network attached storage (NAS) systems.

Network-attached storage (NAS) devices are essentially computers connected to a local network, but designed primarily for data storage. Instead of paying monthly fees to Google or Microsoft for cloud services, you can simply buy a few hard drives and install them in an old PC to create your own 'personal cloud'.

NAS systems don't require powerful hardware, especially if you only use them for backing up documents, photos, or videos. This makes seemingly useless old PCs a very reasonable option, instead of being left unused or thrown away.



Many people also utilize NAS for more tasks, such as acting as a media server. In this case, the upgradeability of a desktop PC – even an older one – becomes an advantage. Adding more RAM or installing an inexpensive GPU can allow the NAS to also handle video transcoding, serving content for playback on other devices on the network.

Using an old Windows 10 PC to run a game server.

Many modern games are notorious for poor optimization, making gameplay sluggish even on high-end systems. However, multiplayer servers are much lighter. Therefore, a Windows 10 PC can perfectly handle the role of a game server.

If you install Linux instead of Windows, performance is further improved because Linux is lightweight and consumes fewer resources. With sufficient RAM, an older PC can even run multiple game servers simultaneously without serious problems.

The great thing is that game servers almost never need a dedicated GPU. If you access the server remotely via SSH, you don't even need a graphics card. Setting up a game server nowadays isn't too complicated either, especially thanks to Valve's SteamCMD, which allows you to configure the server with just a few simple text files.

Build a home lab to self-host the service.

The world of self-hosted software is much larger than you might think, with countless free applications and strong community support. A beginner-friendly approach is to install Proxmox, which makes managing virtual machines and containers intuitive and easy to use.

If you're willing to invest some time in learning how to implement it, you can save hundreds of dollars annually on service fees, while also gaining better control over your data and privacy. A home media server is one of the most common and effective examples.

Most self-hosted services don't require high processing power. With enough RAM, even a modest PC can run smoothly. If you invest in a modern GPU, especially an NVIDIA RTX, you can even deploy and run AI models

right at home.

The three methods above are just the beginning. Once you get used to self-hosting, there are almost no clear limits to what you can run yourself on your old PC.