

4 reasons to never buy a pre-built PC

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5. Higher cost than self-assembling the system

Prebuilt PCs are more expensive than custom-built PCs, but how much more expensive? Whether you're buying from OEMs like HP and Dell, system integrators, or browsing the shelves at your local electronics store, you're paying someone else to do things you could handle yourself—which is why prebuilt PCs command such a high price.

Consider a standard \$1,400 gaming PC from a big box store. Ignoring the cost of assembly and branding, the actual hardware inside is usually around \$900-\$1,000. That's a 30-40% premium for someone who spends an hour putting the parts together. For that extra \$400, you could upgrade to a more powerful GPU, double the RAM, or buy one of those high-refresh monitors that make your games look better.



4. Limited upgrade options and exclusive components

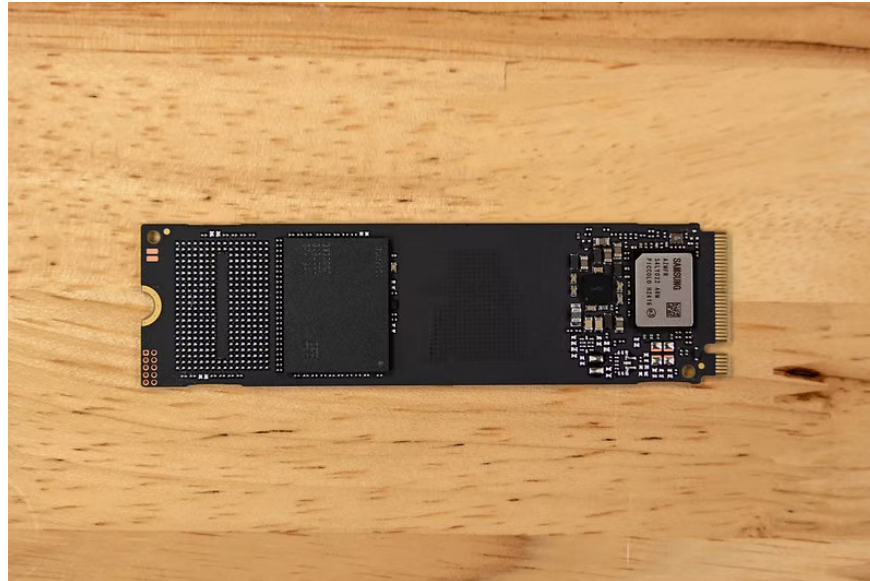
When you buy a pre-built PC from an OEM like HP, Dell, or Lenovo, you're stuck with proprietary components. The case, power supply, and motherboard often use non-standard designs that aren't compatible with common components. So when it's time to upgrade, you can't just pop in a new GPU or CPU—you're forced to replace half the system.



3. Less control over component quality and specifications

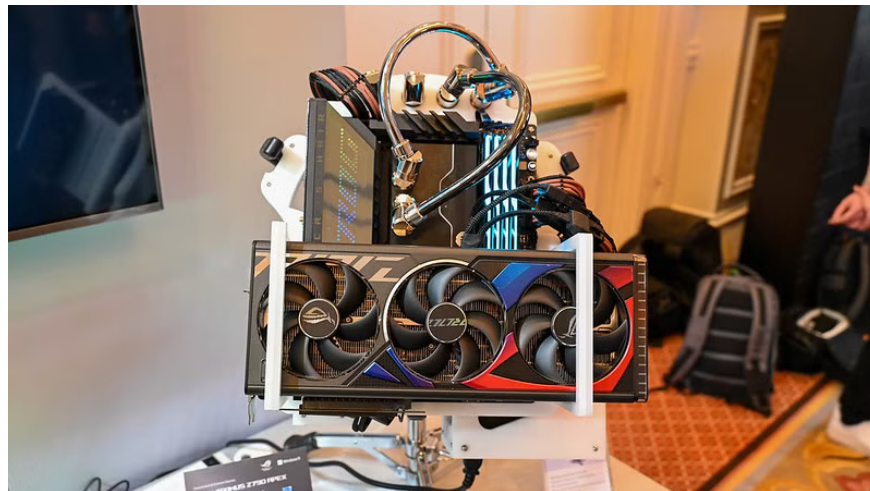
The quality of the hardware components is just as important as the specs. The built-in spec sheet tells you what you're getting, but not who made it. Aside from the GPU and CPU, manufacturers are vague about component brands.

That 1TB NVMe drive could be a Samsung 980 Pro or a slower entry-level model. The 16GB of RAM could be a high-end model or a cheap, low-end model running at lower speeds. Same goes for the power supply, CPU cooler, case fans, and motherboard. In most cases, new cheap components are included.



2. The warranty claim process is longer and depends on the manufacturer

Most pre-built PCs come with a standard 1-year warranty; maybe 2 years if you're lucky. Meanwhile, individual components often come with much more extensive warranties — power supplies and memory typically come with 5–10 year warranties, SSDs typically come with 3–5 year warranties, and even cheap motherboards often come with 3-year warranties.



When a pre-built PC fails after the first year, you're on your own. Even under warranty, the process can be a nightmare. You'll likely have to pay for shipping both ways for RMA service, and unlike individual components (which only ship the defective part), you may need to ship the entire machine—which typically costs \$50 to \$100.

1. Choice: Pre-assembled or custom assembled

Building your own computer may seem intimidating, but it doesn't have to be difficult. All it takes is a little research and a free afternoon. Having a friend who's done it before can make the process easier, and even seasoned computer builders appreciate having an extra pair of eyes on them when installing expensive hardware.

Admittedly, pre-built PCs have their benefits. Maybe you need the machine right away, or you find a special clearance sale. Businesses also like the simplicity of support from a single vendor. These are valid reasons, and we won't judge anyone for choosing convenience when it makes sense.

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