Should I buy Ryzen 3, 5, 7 or 9?

AMD is a strong competitor to Intel processors for desktop PCs. However, with so many different options on the market, especially with three generations of AMD Ryzen now available, it can be difficult to choose the right one.

This article will help you choose the best AMD Ryzen processor based on your needs.

Ryzen 3: The Budget Option

Ryzen 3 is generally the most affordable processor in the AMD Ryzen line. This chip is focused on value, so don't expect a lot of performance. However, we recommend this option if you're on a tight budget and just need a computer to do basic tasks.

The latest version of the Ryzen 3 is the 8300G, which has 4 cores and 8 threads and offers integrated graphics. It's also only available in pre-built systems, so you can't buy this processor if you want to build your own PC.

If you're trying to save money by building a PC, you can pick up the Ryzen 3 4100, which launches in April 2022 for $100. It's currently available on Amazon for $66.57, but you're better off spending $10 more on the AMD Ryzen 5 5500, which launched at the same time and is $76 on Amazon at the time of writing.

Ryzen 5: For Mainstream Use

The Ryzen 5 processor offers the best balance of price and performance, currently the lowest-end offering for AMD's Ryzen 9000-series chips. Despite being called "low-end," the Ryzen 5 9600X offers excellent performance with 6 cores (12 threads) and a boost clock of up to 5.4 GHz.

So if you're looking to build a computer that can comfortably handle most applications, let you multitask, and even play some AAA games, you should go with a Ryzen 5 processor. The latest AMD Ryzen 5 9600X costs $279 on Amazon at the time of writing, but if you're on a budget, you can opt for the AMD Ryzen 5 8600G instead, which is $100 cheaper (at $167.99 at the time of writing).

The AMD Ryzen 5 8600G is arguably the best value option on our list of the best CPUs with integrated graphics. That way, you don't have to buy a discrete GPU, which would certainly add to the cost of your PC build. But if you're a serious gamer, you should move up to the next tier in AMD's processor lineup.

Ryzen 7: For hardcore gamers

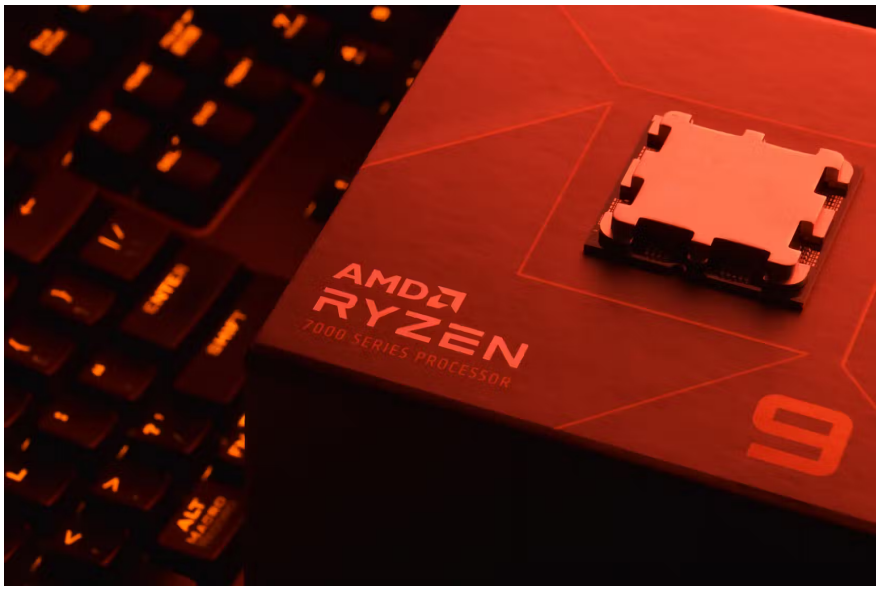
AMD Ryzen 7 has the edge when it comes to gaming performance, with 8 cores and 16 threads. Some Ryzen 7 variants even offer a higher TDP of up to 120 watts, allowing you to push the chip to its limits when needed. The Ryzen 7 9700X, which launched in August 2024, is the latest generation of Ryzen 7 at the time of writing.

However, if you're really into gaming, you should go with the AMD Ryzen 7 7800X3D.

That's because the 3D V-cache on the X3D chips is so well suited to gaming that even AMD's Senior Director of Consumer Processors told Tom's Hardware that they'll even outperform Ryzen 9000 series chips in gaming.

But if you can't afford the $359 launch price of the Ryzen 7 9700X, consider the Ryzen 5 7600 X3D instead, which is priced at $299, saving you $60. While this chip isn't a Ryzen 7 and will perform worse in other tasks, it's still powerful enough to give you a great gaming experience.

Ryzen 9: For Professionals



If you need a computer for heavy-duty computing, like simulations, you should go with the Ryzen 9. The Ryzen 9 5000 Series has up to 16 cores, making it perfect for demanding applications like Adobe Photoshop, AutoCAD, or Blender. You can even get the X3D version of the Ryzen 9 chip for more specialized applications that require a larger CPU cache.

However, if you only use your computer for basic tasks and gaming (even professional esports), the Ryzen 9 is an overkill. Instead, buy a Ryzen 7 processor, specifically the Ryzen 7 X3D chip, and use the money you save to buy more RAM, a better GPU, or a bigger screen.