8. Install Windows Updates

You can configure Windows to automatically download and install security updates, but there may be times when you want to do this manually, just to be sure you're not missing any important updates.
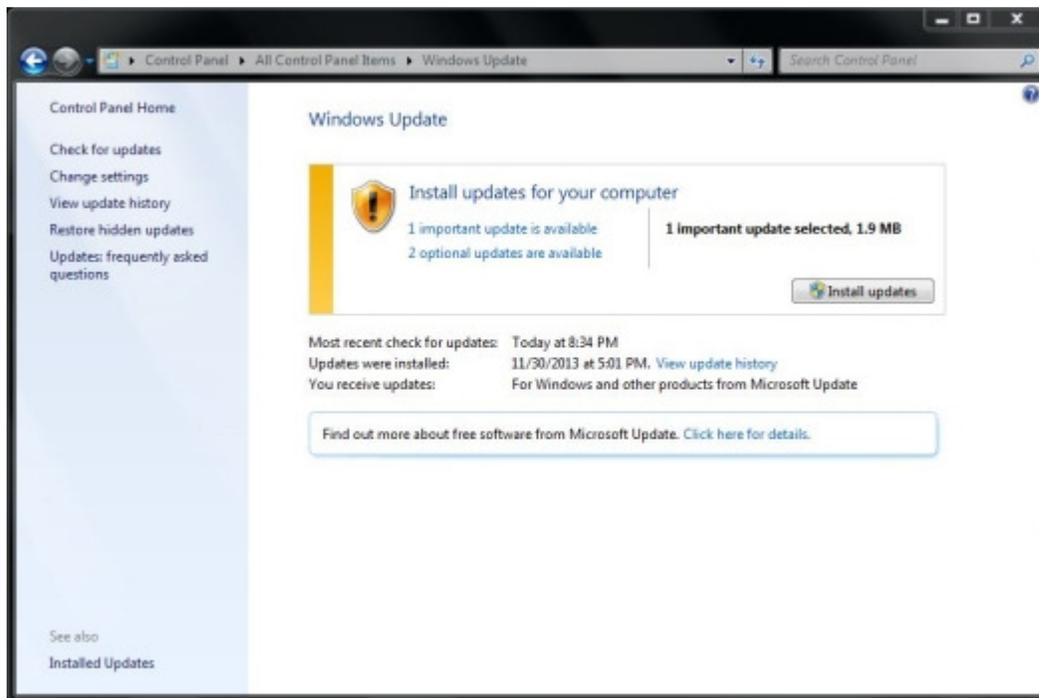
To make sure Windows updates are automatically downloaded and installed on your computer do the following on Windows 7:

1. Click on the **Start** button.

2. Click on **Control Panel**.

3. Click on **Windows Update**.

If Windows is not configured to download updates automatically click on **Change settings** from the list on the left side of the **Windows Update** window. The easiest thing to do is to just set Windows to install updates automatically without having to prompt you. You can have it check for updates on a daily or weekly basis and even specify a time so that it does this while you're not using your computer.

Windows groups updates into Important and Optional. When you configure Windows to automatically download and install updates it will only do so with the important ones. It will not install any optional updates. So it's a good idea to manually check for updates as part of a monthly maintenance routine. To do this, go back to the **Windows Update** applet in **Control Panel** and click on the **Check for updates** link on the left side of the window. After several minutes of checking

Windows will show you a list of available updates. Look through the optional updates and see if there are any you want to install.
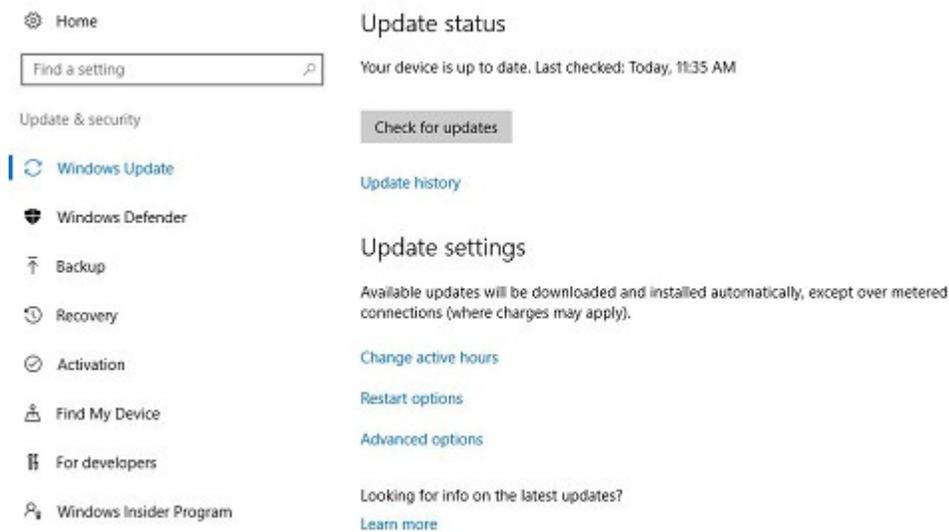

Sometimes you'll see optional updates for network and video cards, but it's better to ignore these ones and if need be, download them from the manufacturer's website. Select and install any other updates related to Windows, Internet Explorer or Office, if you have that suite.

Managing the download and installation of updates on Windows XP is very similar. Once in **Control Panel** click on **Automatic Updates**. The settings and options from that point onward are pretty much the same as on Windows 7.

Windows 10 has simplified the process of managing the download and installation of updates. Do the following to familiarize yourself with this important function:

1. Click on the **Start** button.

2. Click on the **Settings** icon ⚙ .

3. Click on **Update & security**.

4. Click on the **Check for updates** button. Windows will check and let you know if there are any updates that need to be downloaded.

Click on Update history if you wish to see a list of updates that have been installed in the past. You can then click on each item in the list and find out what the update is supposed to fix or enhance.