

LESSON 167

HOW FAST IS THIS COMPUTER?

Windows has never been able to give us an accurate picture of the CPU (Central Processing Unit). Bring up the System Properties by clicking on Start, Settings and on Control Panel. Double-click on the System icon and look at the information available in the Computer: section of the General tab. Alternatively, If your keyboard has a "Windows key" (located between the Ctrl and Alt keys in the bottom-left corner of your keyboard) press and hold it down while you press the Pause/Break key (it's located at the right side of the top row of keys).

The CPU in your computer will be described as either a "Genuine Intel" or "AuthenticAMD" processor. The rest of the description doesn't really give you much useful information. There's a better way if you have a fairly new computer.

If your computer uses an Intel processor, on the net open <http://support.intel.com/SUPPORT/processors/tools/frequencyid> (don't use the quotes). Click on "Download Utility", then click on "Download Windows version of the utility". Note that you can also download a bootable version of this software product and save it to a bootable floppy disk. In that case the utility will run every time you boot the computer from that bootable floppy disk.

Select the English version of the file and then click on "FIDENU13.EXE". Click on the North America download location. In the File download box. With "Save this program to disk" selected, click on OK. The "Save As" windows will open and Windows will want to save the file to your Desktop. Click OK. Click on the new icon on your desktop to install the ID utility. Follow the prompts to complete the install.

When you run the utility it, will display both the expected and the reported Processor and System Bus speeds. Click on the CPUID Data tab for more information, including the amount of Level 2 and Level 1 cache memory available.

If an AMD processor powers your computer, go to the Web and open <http://www.amd.com/products/cpg/bin/>. Download the file AMD CPUID by clicking on Web Only, the first entry in the second column (titles File).

Once the file is downloaded, run it from the Desktop and it will display a single window containing information on the CPU speed, level 1 and 2 Cache, the presence of MMX, extended MMX, 3DNOW and extended 3DNOW. The processor's family, model and step rate will be listed as single digit numbers.

