Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)

An **OEM** (Original Equipment Manufacturer) Package is pre-installed/pre-loaded software and is sold bundled with the machine and is branded with the PC Manufacturers name .e.g. OEM Software sold with a Dell Machine will be branded on the CD as follows: "only to be sold with the distribution with a dell PC. OEM software cannot be installed on another machine, as it "lives and dies" with the machine that it was pre-installed on initially. The software is licensed to the machine and not the user.

Large Manufacturer Pre-installed Windows COA

To confirm that you have a genuine Microsoft Windows operating system, look for the Certificate of Authenticity (COA) affixed to the body of your computer. COAs cannot be purchased separately. Each pre-installed Windows COA features the Microsoft product name printed near the top of the label and a 25-character product key.

The COA displayed above has been in production since February 2007. If your COA does not match the one displayed above, you may have a previous version. To view previous versions of this COA access: http://www.microsoft.com/resources/howtotell
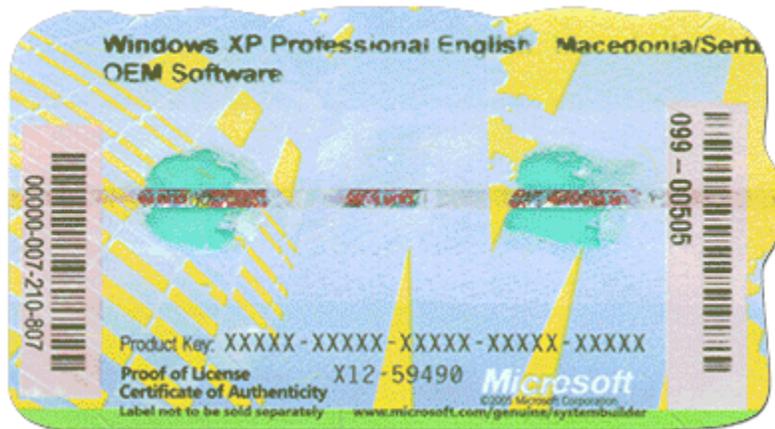
The latest pre-installed Windows COAs contain a Port-Hole™, completely filled in with paper fibers, near the middle of the COA, shaped like a Windows flag with two interwoven threads that run vertically through its center. The words "Your Potential" are hidden beneath a heat-activated layer on the right thread. The left thread has red microprint of the words "Our Passion." (There may be variation to the shape due to manufacturing techniques.)

This COA is typically blue in color. However, in Asia it is available in rose, and for Windows Starter Edition installations it should be green.

Commercial Original Equipment Manufacturer (COEM or DSP)

A **COEM** (Commercial Original Equipment Manufacturer) formally known as DSP (Delivery Service Partner) Package is very similar to OEM, the difference is that it is not branded with the PC Manufacturers name and it is sold over the counter. The same licensing policy and procedure applies, COEM Software cannot be installed on another machine, as it "lives and dies" with the machine that it is installed on initially. The software is licensed to the machine and not the user.

Small Manufacturer Pre-installed Windows COA

To confirm that you have a genuine Microsoft Windows operating system, look for the Certificate of Authenticity (COA) affixed to the body of your computer. COAs cannot be purchased separately. Each pre-installed Windows COA features the Microsoft product name printed near the top of the label and a 25-character product key. If your COA does not match this one, you may have a previous version.

The latest small manufacturer pre-installed Windows COAs contain two Port-Holes™ near the middle of the COA with blue-green backgrounds. The Port-Hole on the left is an oval and the Port-Hole on the right is shaped like a Windows flag, each with individual paper fibers visible around the inside edges. (There may be variation to the shape due to manufacturing techniques.)

This COA is typically blue-green in color. However, in Asia they are available in rose, and for Windows Starter Edition installations they should be green.

Full Packaged Product (FPP) / Retail Software

With regards to FPP (Fully Packaged Products – Retail, off the shelf boxed Products), you are allowed more flexibility as you can un-install the software and install it on another machine, taking note that it is also licensed to be installed on one machine at a time. With regard to this type of licensing, you still cannot load it on more than one machine, the only flexibility is that it is licensed to the user and not the machine therefore it can be un-installed and re-installed again unlike OEM/COEM.

Retail Software COA

To confirm that you have genuine Microsoft retail software, look for the Certificate of Authenticity (COA) affixed to the top of the retail packaging. A COA should always accompany the product with which it is associated. COAs cannot be purchased separately.

The COA displayed above has been in production since December 2006. If your COA does not match the one displayed above, you may have a previous version. To view previous versions of this COA access: http://www.microsoft.com/resources/howtotell

The COA features the product name printed on the label, as well as a background image created by repeating micro-printed words. These words are blue letters on a white background in a distorted curve. This COA has a rounded lower left corner.

The left side of the COA contains a transparent Port-Hole™ with individual paper fibers visible around the inside edge. Interwoven vertically through this Port-Hole™ is a metallic thread with well-defined letters that read "OUR PASSION" in red and "MICROSOFT". One way to check whether your COA is genuine is to gently rip the edge of the COA to determine that the thread is actually interwoven into the fibers of the label rather than printed on top.