

Computer Tips

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Michael's Computer Services

Which Disc Should I Use?

This is a question we get regularly asked: Which disc should I use? CD-R, CD-RW, DVD-R, DVD+R, DVD-RW, DVD-RAM, CD Audio, and now Blue-Ray.

With so many discs to choose from, it can be confusing. So, to help our readers understand the different types of blank discs available, we have a few pointers.

CD-R: This is the most common CD media, and holds up to 700MB of data. The -R indicates the media format, and is the best type to use for music, data and photo slideshows (VCD). CD-R discs can be used for both data and music, although to get best music compatibility, the Digital Audio CD-R will be needed. The downside to the CD-R format is that information can only be written once to the disc, and cannot be deleted.

CD-RW: This CD media type is like a large floppy disc, where it must be formatted before use, and can be re-used up to 1000 times. These discs are commonly used for data backups, because they can have files added and deleted at different times. CD-RW are not recommended for music, as this media is incompatible with most types of CD players.

DVD-R: This is the most common DVD media format, as it is the most compatible with DVD players, and is best for home movies, data, and any large files. DVD-R come in two types: single layer, which holds up to 4.7GB, and dual layer, which holds up to 8.5GB. As with CD-R, information can only be written once to disc, and cannot be deleted.

DVD+R: This DVD format is quite common, and also comes in single and dual layer format, holding up to 8.5GB. The DVD+R is favoured by some for slightly better video and data reliability. DVD+R however are not as compatible with home DVD players, and are not cross-compatible with DVD-R. For example, you cannot copy straight from a DVD-R to a DVD+R or vice-versa. Think of the VHS vs BETA days, and you will get the picture.

DVD-RW: This format is the DVD version of the CD-RW, in that the DVD-RW holds up to 4.7GB of data, and information can be written or deleted up to 1000 times. DVD-RW is best for data backup's, where large files are required, such as backing up complete operating system and hard drive contents. As with CD-RW, DVD-RW are not recommended for music, as this media format is not compatible with CD players.

DVD-RAM: This media type is not as common, and is more expensive than other DVD formats; however, the DVD-RAM format is highly reliable, and allows data to be written and erased up to 100,000 times without loss of quality. For this reason, DVD-RAM is favoured by video editors and can be used in later home DVD Recorders. DVD-RAM discs also hold more—up to 4.7GB for single layer, and 9.4GB for dual layer discs.

Buying blank discs: So next time you need some blank DVD's or CD's come & see us for the right advice & great prices. DVD-R spindle of 50 - just \$19.95 - WOW! that's less than 40c each!



Michael's Computer Services

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