If sluggish PC performance is giving you the blues, you'd do well to invest in the $49.95 iolo System Mechanic 10, a utility suite designed to blow the virtual dust out of worn machines by repairing the registry, defragging the hard drive, and eliminating files that stymie snappy performance. iolo System Mechanic 10 serves up new features not present in the previous iteration—Program Accelerator, CRUDD Remover, and the marvelous multi-PC friendly Whole Home Licensing, which lets users install the software on any number of their home PCs without restriction ([details](#)). All in all, it's one of the best PC tune-up utilities around, as it digs deep, cleans up PCs well, and offers informative, easy-to-understand help about the problems that plague computers.

**System Requirements and Interface**

Compatible with Windows 7, Vista, and XP PCs, iolo System Mechanic 10 requires just 30MB of disk space, 256MB of RAM, and an Internet connection for activating the license. Unlike other PC tune-up utilities, such as AVG PC Tuneup 2011 ($29.95, 4.0 stars), which limit you on the number of licenses, iolo System Mechanic 10 lets you install the software on any number of your computers provided that it's not for business purposes—a welcome feature in the age of the multi-PC household. If you have iolo...
System Mechanic 9 installed on a PC (with time remaining on your service), you can upgrade to System Mechanic 10 at no additional cost by clicking the download button when prompted.

The interface looks very similar to iolo System Mechanic 9 with the familiar red-white-and-blue color scheme. Like the previous version of System Mechanic, this version has several options in the left pane (Overview, Automated Tasks, Anti-malware, Firewall, All-in-One Tools, Individual Tools, IntelliStatus, and History), the content of which appears in the main pane when clicked.

iolo System Mechanic 10 also installs a useful widget on the desktop that gives you at-a-glance PC health and security readings. From this widget you can launch any number of iolo System Mechanic 10’s features to begin the clean up process.

**Specifications**

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Business, Personal, Enterprise, Professional</th>
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<tr>
<td>OS Compatibility</td>
<td>Windows Vista, Windows XP, Windows 7</td>
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**The Clean Up Process**

The Overview screen opens by default when the program is launched, and it’s where the “Analyze Now” button lives. Clicking the arrow next to it opened drop-down box that presented two choices: "Perform Quick Analysis" and "Perform Deep Analysis." The former is a one-to two-minute scan that looks for the most common PC problems; the latter is a five-to seven-minute scan that checks for all problems. Considering the heavy use that our test laptop had received, I went with the second option. Approximately six minutes later finished the scan and uncovered 2,502 problems. This is fewer problems found than the Comodo System Cleaner’s (Free, 3.5 stars) 2,515 and AVG PC Tools 2011’s 2,705, but the differences may be attributed to differing views of what constitutes a problem. After the scan, the system was given a "Fair" health reading.

Beneath the reading appeared a highlighted message: "Boost speed and stability by removing redundant programs with CRUDD Remover." CRUDD is iolo’s acronym for Commonly Redundant or Unnecessary Decelerators and Destabilizers—fancy talk for duplicate programs that clog your system. The idea behind CRUDD Remover is to eliminate those extra programs as each application install theoretically slows your PC’s performance a bit. After running CRUDD Remover, 9 problems were detected on the PC, which were explained in wonderful detail on the "Problems" screen.

It was there that I discovered that the hard drive was 14% fragmented, there were 15 repairable security vulnerabilities, 300 registry problems, and more. What was truly cool about that iolo System Mechanic 10 didn’t just serve up a number—it provided blurbs that explained why these problems negatively impact performance. I checked off all nine problems, clicked the "Repair All" button, and performed the required reboot. Performing another deep scan revealed that all but one problem was fixed, and that straggler was one beyond iolo System Mechanic 10’s scope: No installed anti-malware program was detected on the system.

I also ran iolo's patent-pending Program Accelerator, which smartly re-aligns all of a program's dependent files on the hard drive. It’s touted as being better than disk fragmenters which can blindly
compact and separate files even more. It took approximately 15 minutes for Program Accelerator to work its magic, and when it was done, I discovered that it had re-aligned over 30,000 files and eliminated 96 file fragments. Four further files were defragmented after a restart.

**Performance Improvements**

I tested iolo System Mechanic 10’s ability to whip a PC back into shape by performing three tests—running the Geekbench system performance tool, measuring boot times, and transferring a 1.1GB folder of mixed media to external storage—before and after running the software to compare the computer's potency. Each test was run three times and averaged. Before AVG PC Tuneup 2011 scrubbed the system, the 2-GHz Intel Core i7 X990 Style-Note notebook with 4GB of RAM, and an 80GB Intel SSD drive achieved a 5,903 Geekbench score, booted in 50.3 seconds, and transferred the 1.1GB folder in 40.5 seconds.

After using iolo System Mechanic 10, the system saw the most improved performance of all the tune-up utilities tested: The GeekBench score rose to 6033 (better than AVG PC Tuneup 2011's 6009, Comodo System Cleaner's 5,991, and PC Tools Performance Toolkit 2011's 5969); the boot time decreased to just 42 seconds (swifter than AVG PC Tuneup 2011's 43.1, PC Tools Performance Toolkit 2011's 46 seconds, and Comodo System Cleaner's 48.7 seconds). The file transfer speed dropped to 40.2 seconds (a few seconds faster than AVG PC Tuneup 2011's 43.3 second, and Comodo System Cleaner’s 44.2 seconds, but slower than PC Tools Performance Toolkit 2011’s 39.3 seconds).

As with AVG PC Tuneup 2011, the overall system performance was incredibly fast and snappy—windows and menus opened in a blink.

**Slight NetBooster Bonus**

The NetBooster internet booster is designed to stabilize and speed up your internet connection by optimizing settings—iolo states that it’s beneficial to run it before playing Web-connected video games and assists in opening Web pages faster. Cracked.com loaded in 5.7 seconds before running NetBooster, which decreased slightly (after clearing the browser's Internet history, rebooting, and activating the tool) to 5.4 seconds—a marginal increase.

**Should You Use iolo System Mechanic 10?**

The answer is a resounding yes. iolo System Mechanic 10 bested AVG PC Tuneup 2011, Comodo System Cleaner, and PC Tools Performance Toolkit 2011 in performance and installation flexibility. iolo System Mechanic 10 is our new PC tune-up utility champ.