Windows 10 is the most recent version of the operating system from Microsoft. Officially it was released in 2015 and was initially offered free of charge to legitimate users of Windows 7 and Windows 8.1. This new version combines features from those two previous installments to suit the users in a better way for both desktop/laptop computers as well as mobile devices.

The most notable change in Windows 10 is that Microsoft replaced the Start screen tiles from Windows 8, and brought back the Start Menu. They also removed the vertical toolbars (or "charms") that appeared from the sides of the screen. These changes make this Windows version easier to use for users of both desktop/laptops and mobile devices.

System Requirements

Although most computers nowadays probably have the necessary requirements for Windows 10. It will certainly be useful to know them in case you want to upgrade from an older system.

The main requirements are −

- A processor (CPU) with a clock rate of at least 1GHz.
- At least 1 to 2GB of memory (RAM), but Microsoft recommends 4GB.
- At least 16GB space in your hard disk.

One important thing to note is that the installation process itself will verify your computer hardware and let you know if it qualifies for a Windows 10 upgrade or not. If not, then you will need to upgrade your hardware.

Windows 10 - Getting Started

After you have installed or upgraded your Windows, you will get a Welcome Screen with the time and date. Just click anywhere to go to the User Accounts Screen.
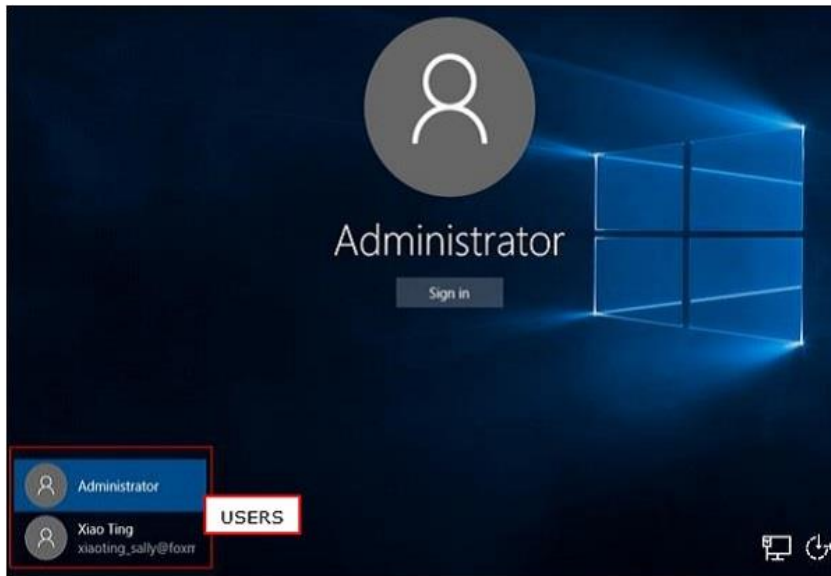
This screen lets you choose which user you want to log in to from the lower-left corner. After choosing the right user, and entering a password if necessary, you will see the Windows Desktop.

The Windows Desktop is simply your operating system main screen. Here you have access to an array of tools like the Start Menu, Taskbar, and other icons. Windows 10 also introduces a search box in the Taskbar, which facilitates browsing both your computer and the Web.

Once you get to the Windows Desktop screen, here are some basic features you will see.
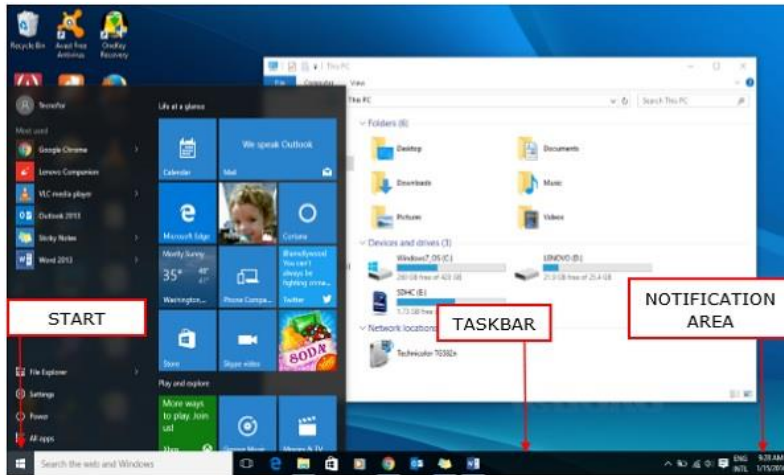
One of the most important parts of your Desktop is the Taskbar. By default, it sits at the bottom of your screen giving you access to the Start Menu, several application icons, and the Notification Area.

Windows

In Windows 10, if an application is active or opened, you will see a green line below its icon. Clicking the icon will bring the application window up.
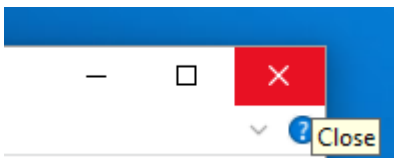
Every open window features three buttons in the upper-right corner. These are used to minimize, maximize, or close the window –

- Minimizing means that the window will hide in the Taskbar.
- Maximizing will bring the window to a full-screen size.

Windows can be moved around or resized as you please −

- To move a window, just click on its Title Bar on the upper side of the window and drag it.
- To resize a window, move your mouse to any corner until you see a double-sided arrow. Then click and drag until you reach the desired size.

Icons

Most Windows versions will feature different icons on the background. An icon is simply a graphic representation of an application or a file. To open or access an icon, just double click on it.
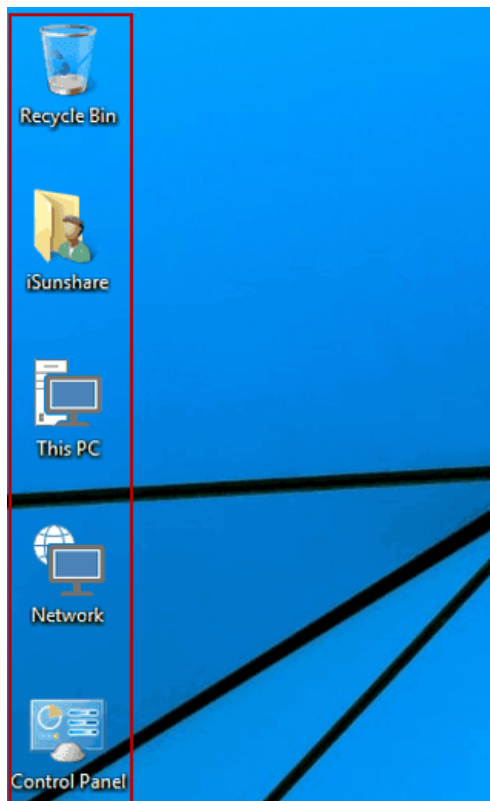
Although the amount and type of icons will vary, depending on the computer, you can add more icons by following these steps −

Step 1 − Right-click on the Desktop Background.

Step 2 − Choose "New" and "Shortcut".

Step 3 − Browse for the application or file you want to create a shortcut to.

**Step 4** − Assign a name to the shortcut and click "Finish".

Icons can also be moved around by clicking on them and dragging them to another place in the screen.

Desktop Background

Another component of your Desktop is the Background. This is simply an image that appears at the back of your screen. Most computers come with a pre-selected background, but you can change it to any image you want.

To change the background, follow these steps −

Step 1 − Right-click on the background and choose "Personalize".
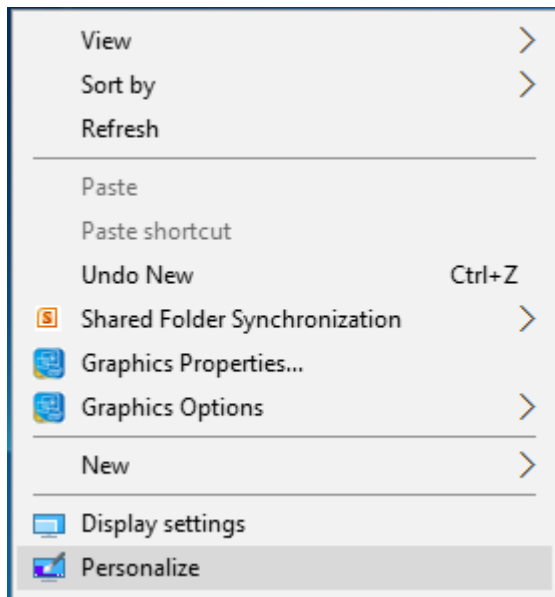
Step 2 − From the Personalization window, choose from a series of pre-selected pictures or browse for your own.
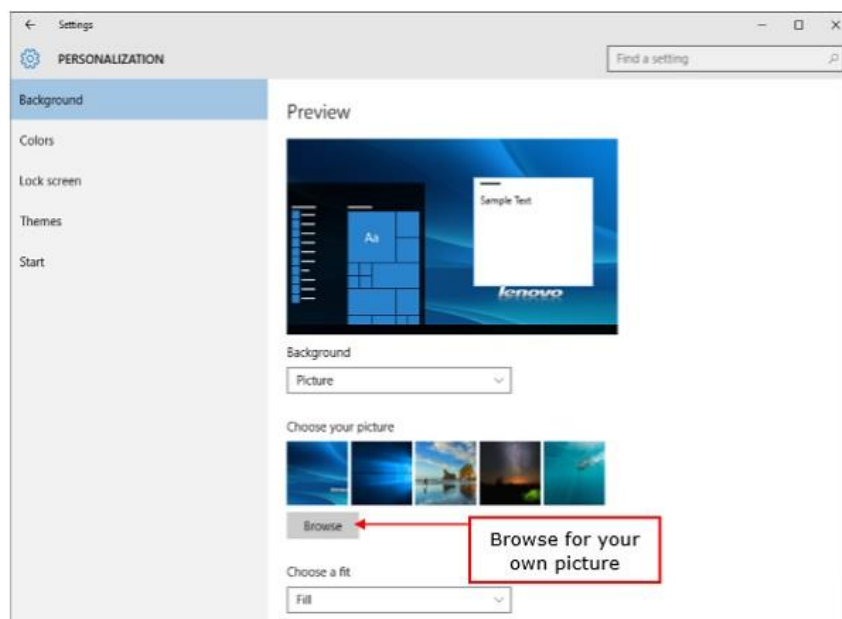
Windows 10 - Navigation

o navigate your Windows, you can simply type what you are looking for on the Taskbar search. It can be the name of a document or application, or just any information you are looking for.

Start Menu

If you are looking for a specific application, you can also open the Start Menu and click "All Applications". This will open an alphabetical list of all the applications installed on your computer.
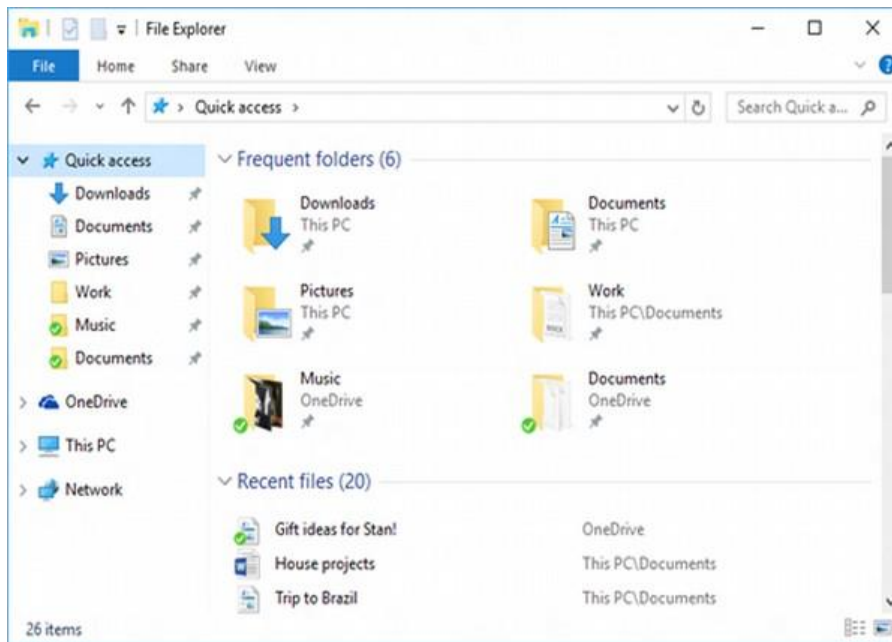
File Explorer

If you are looking for a specific document, another alternative is to use the File Explorer by clicking on the Folder icon on the Taskbar.

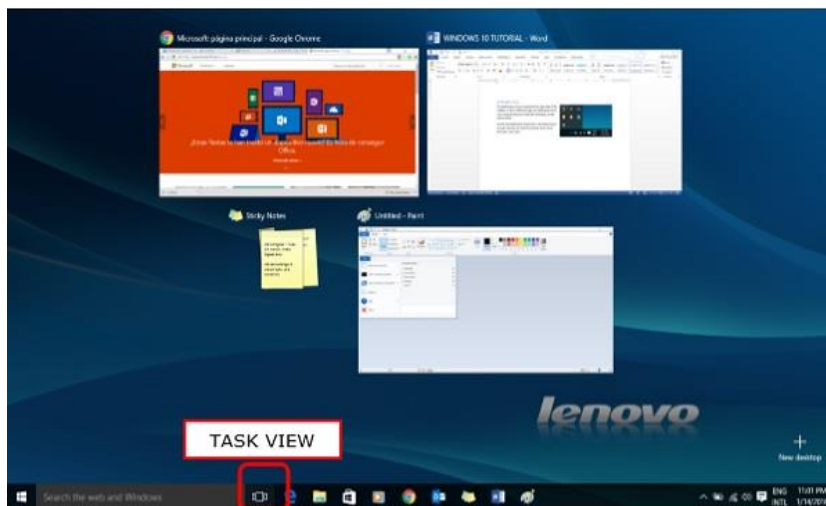In the File Explorer window, you can browse all your folders and documents.

Virtual Desktops

One of the new features of Windows 10 is the addition of Virtual Desktops. This allows you to have multiple desktop screens where you can keep open windows organized.

To add a virtual desktop, follow these steps −
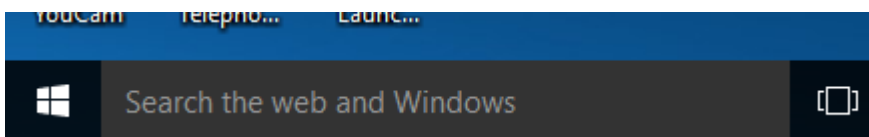
Step 1 − Click Task View on the Taskbar.

Step 2 − Click the "New desktop" option on the lower-right corner. You can access or delete the new Desktop by clicking **Task View** again.

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Windows 10 - Start Menu

The Start Menu is the main point of access to your applications. There are two main ways to open it −

Step 1 − Use your mouse to click Windows icon in the lower-left corner of the taskbar.

Step 2 − Press the Windows key on your keyboard.

The Windows 10 Start Menu features two panes.

The left pane resembles the traditional Start Menu from Windows 7 and earlier, while the right pane features live tiles that were used in Windows 8.

Left Pane

Among the things you can do in the left pane are −

- Click the username at the top of the menu to change account settings or log in with another user.
- Access the applications you use more frequently.
- A small arrow next to an application will open a sub-menu with a list of recent documents opened with that application.
- Open the "File Explorer" to navigate your folders and files.
- Change the settings of your computer like your Internet connection or changing your background.
- See different options to shut down your computer.
- See a list of all the applications installed in your computer.
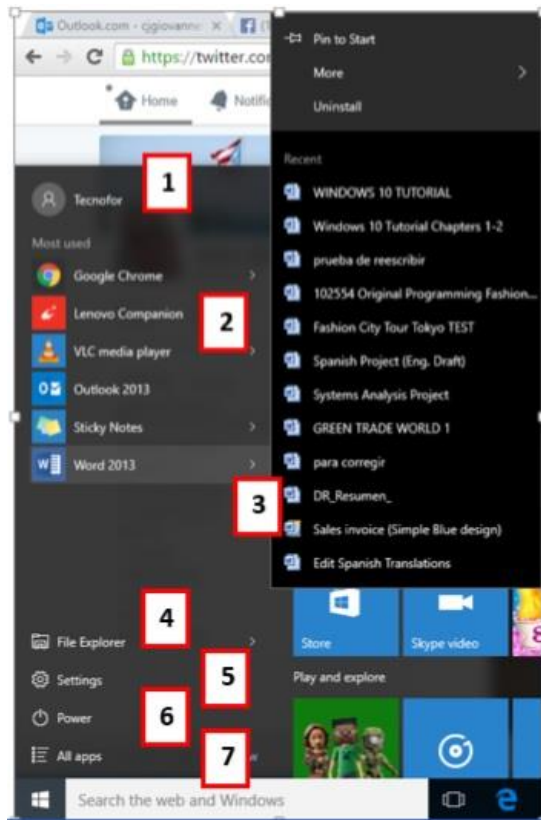
Search Box

The "Search box" on the Taskbar will allow you to search within your documents and files or on the Web for anything you write. The initial results will appear within the Start Menu itself.

The results will be grouped according to the closest match (or matches) labeled "**Best match**" at the top of the list.
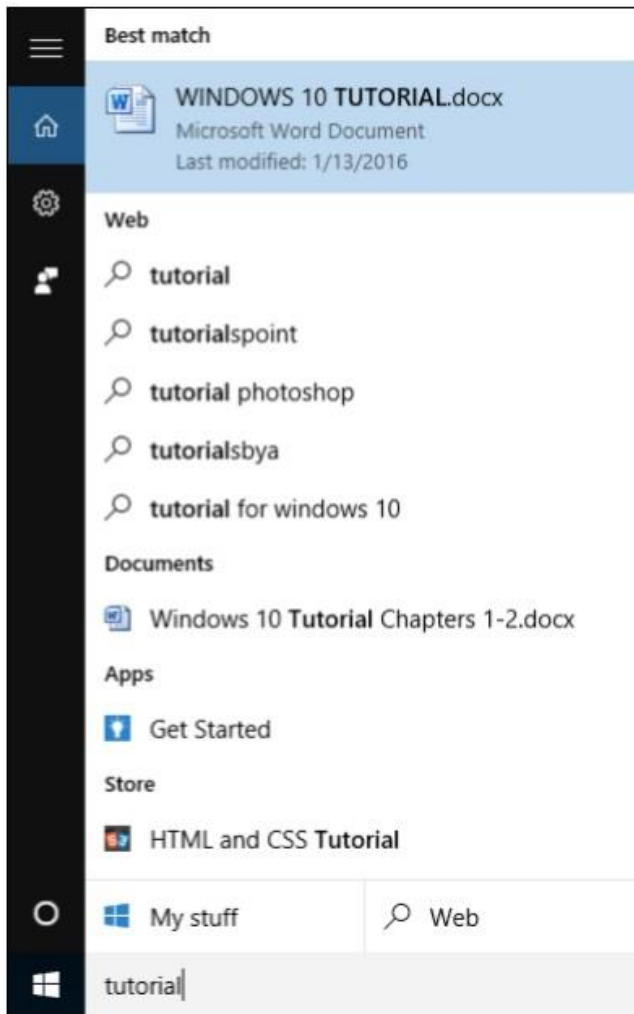
The remaining results will be grouped according to what they are or their location −

- Web results
- Documents or folders
- Apps
- System settings

The icons on the left side of the menu do the following −

 The Gear icon will allow you to configure the settings of your Search.

 This icon will let you send Feedback to Microsoft on what you like or dislike about Windows.

 The Cortana icon will activate Windows' new personal assistant.

Clicking "My stuff" or "Web" at the bottom will expand the Start Menu and limit your results to the location you choose, as well as streamlining the search.
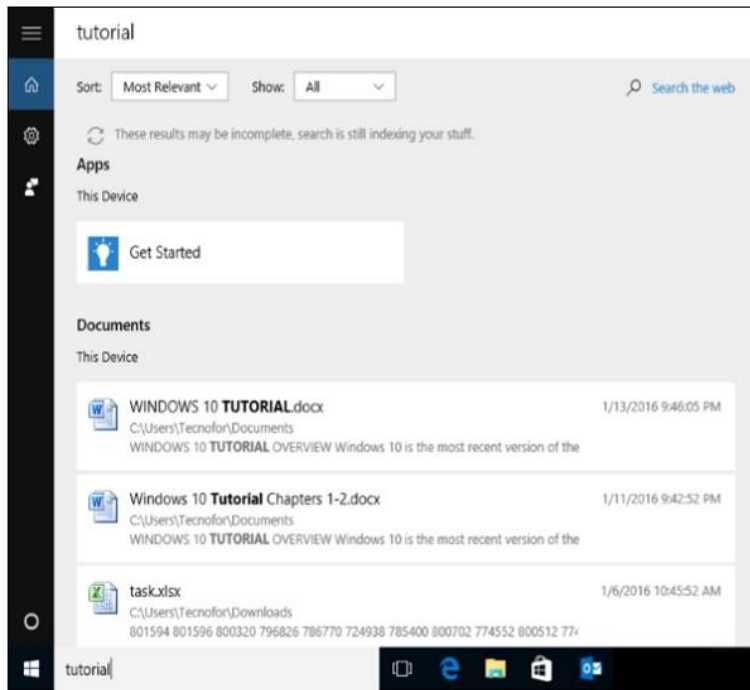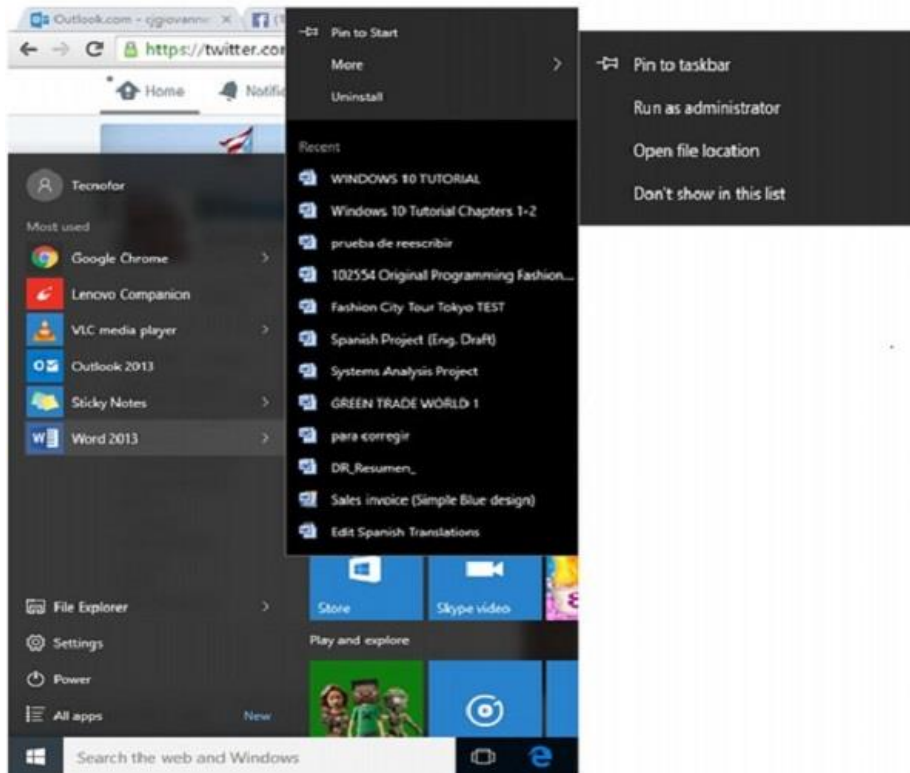
Right Pane

The right pane features a varied array of tiles, similar to the ones that were seen on the Start Screen of Windows 8.

These tiles can be moved and dragged to different places by holding the mouse button.

You can also configure them by right-clicking on them to see options to resize them or "unpin" them (remove them) from the Menu.

The whole Start Menu can also be resized by dragging the borders with the mouse to the desired size.

The Windows 10 taskbar sits at the bottom of the screen giving the user access to the Start Menu, as well as the icons of frequently used applications. On the right-side, the Taskbar features the Notification Area which informs the user of different things like the state of the Internet connection or the charge of the laptop battery.

The icons in the middle of the Taskbar are "pinned" applications, which is a way to have a quick access to applications you use frequently. "Pinned" applications will stay in the Taskbar until you "unpin" them.

Pin an Application to the Taskbar

Step 1 − Search for the application you want to pin in the Start Menu.

Step 2 − Right-click on the application.

Step 3 − Select "More" option at the top of the menu.

Step 4 − Select the "Pin to taskbar" option.

This will attach or "pin" the application icon to your Windows Taskbar.

Unpin an Application from the Taskbar

To "unpin" it, just right-click the icon in the Taskbar and select "Unpin from taskbar". You can "pin" it back again any time you want.
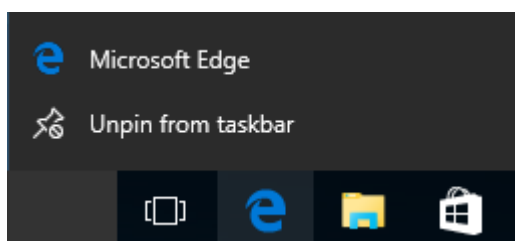

Notification Area

The Notification Area is located at the right side of the Taskbar. It shows different types of notifications from your computer like your Internet connection, or the volume level.

At first, the Notification Area shows a limited amount of icons. But you can click the upward arrow on its left-side to see other icons as well.

Task View

Task View allows you to quickly move within your open windows and applications. You can access it by clicking the "Task View" button from the Taskbar.
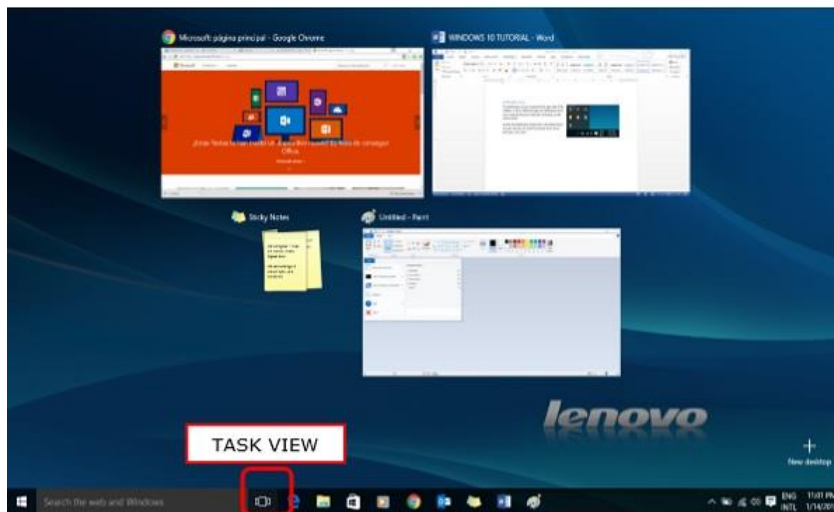
You can also press and hold the Windows key, and then press Tab to achieve the same result.

By pressing the Alt+Tab keyboard shortcut also serves a similar purpose.

Windows 10 - Tablet Mode

The Tablet Mode is a new feature in Windows 10, which allows the user to switch the system interface, whenever a tablet is detached from a base or dock. When the Tablet Mode activates, the Start Menu goes full-screen. During Tablet Mode, many other windows like the File Explorer or the Settings window also open at full screen.

How to Activate the Tablet Mode?

Step 1 − Open the Start Menu and select "Settings".
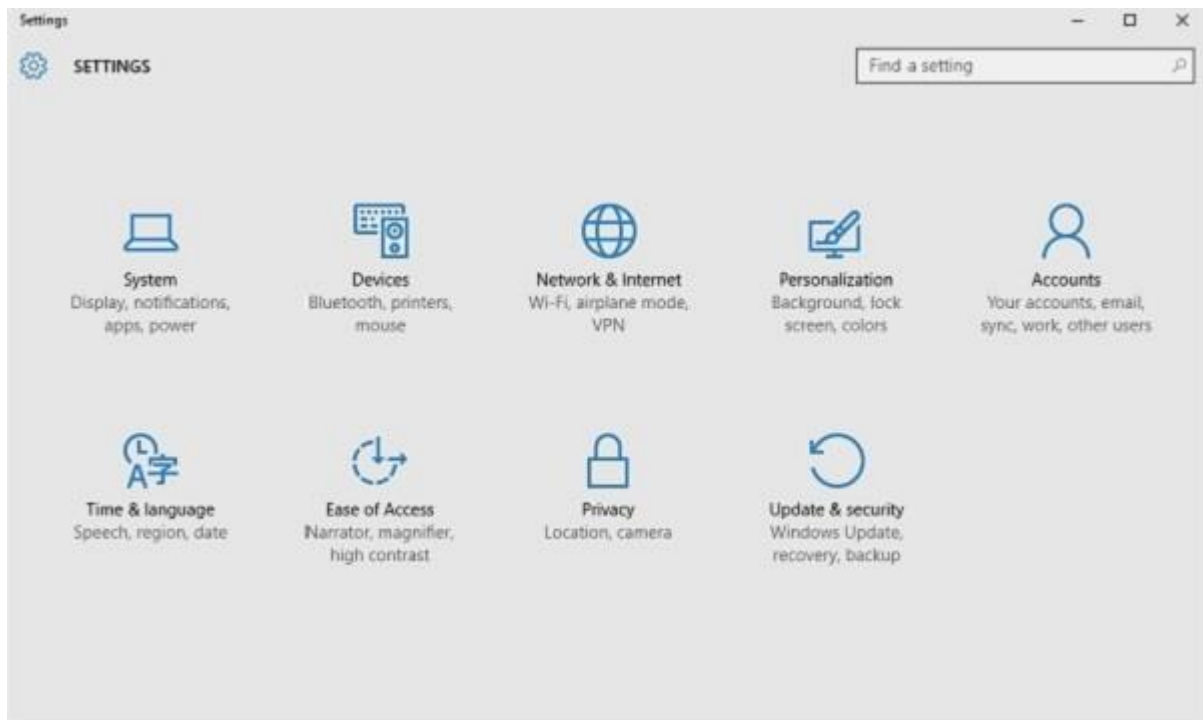
Step 2 − Select the "System" option.

Step 3 − Turn the Tablet Mode switch from "Off" to "On".
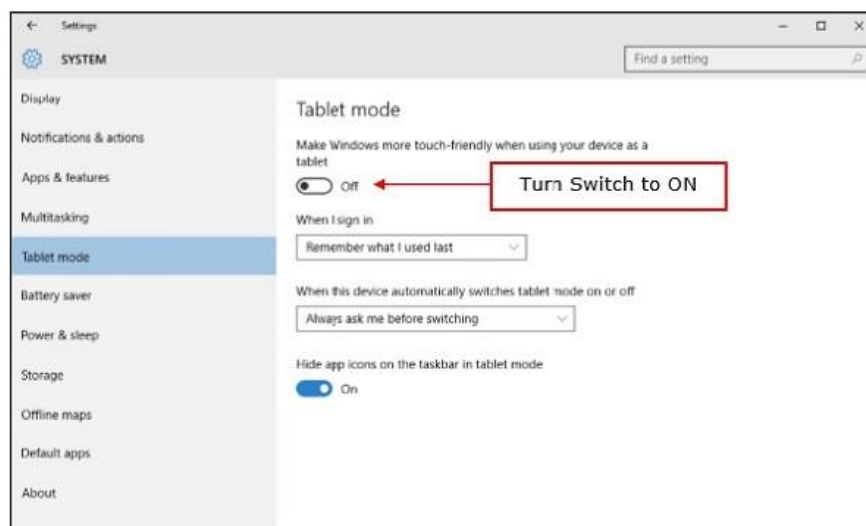
Windows 10 - File Explorer

File Explorer is the file management application used by Windows operating systems to browse folders and files. It provides a graphical interface for the user to navigate and access the files stored in the computer.

The main way to access the File Explorer is by clicking the folder icon in the Taskbar. After clicking the icon, the File Explorer window will open.

The initial File Explorer window is comprised of the following sections −

- The **File Explorer ribbon**, which resembles the ribbon featured in Microsoft Office. The ribbon contains buttons for common tasks to perform with your files and folders.
- The **Navigation Pane** gives you access to your libraries of documents and pictures, as well as your storage devices. It also features frequently used folders and network devices.
- The **Frequent folders** section on the right features the folders you've worked with recently to allow for quick access to them.
- The **Recent files section** in the lower part of the window features files and documents that you've opened recently.

The File Explorer Ribbon

In Windows 10, the File Explorer features a new ribbon toolbar, similar to the one featured in the recent versions of Microsoft Office. This ribbon contains buttons and commands for the most common tasks.

The Ribbon features four tabs, each with different commands. Among the tasks you can perform from the **Home** tab are –

- Copying and pasting files and folders from one place to another.
- Moving files and folders to another location.
- Copying files and folders to another location.
- Deleting a file or folder permanently or sending it to the Recycle Bin.
- Renaming a file or folder.
- Creating a new folder or other new items.
- Verifying or modifying the Properties of a document or folder.
- Opening a file or folder.
- Different options to select one or various files and folders.

-
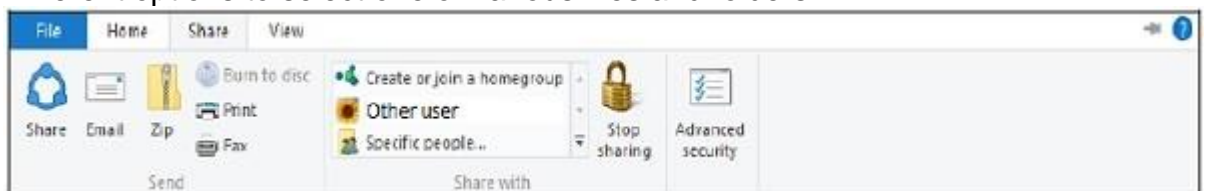
The **Share** ribbon gives you different options to share your files and folders. For example −

- E-mailing or messaging a file.
- Compressing ("Zip") a folder to take less space.
- Printing or faxing documents.
- Sharing with other users or networks.

The **View** ribbon allows you to change the way Windows displays your files and folders. Some of the changes you can make here are −

- Adding additional panes to show a preview or details of your files.
- Changing the layout of the files and folders from icons to list, and others.
- Sorting and arranging the contents of your folder.
- Hiding selected folders or files.

The **File** tab opens a menu with different options like –

- Opening an additional File Explorer window.
- Opening command windows for advanced users.
- Changing or configuring options about how File Explorer behaves.

Windows 10 - Cortana

Cortana is Microsoft's intelligent personal assistant. It is included in Windows 10, as well as with other Microsoft systems and devices like Windows Phones and Xbox, among others.

Cortana will help you find things in your computer, set appointments, answer questions, and many other things.

To use Cortana simply type a question in the search box in the Taskbar, or click the microphone icon and talk to Cortana.

The icons on the left-side are for −

- Home
- Notebook
- Reminders
- Feedback
- **Home** is the initial Cortana window where you can type or ask questions.

-
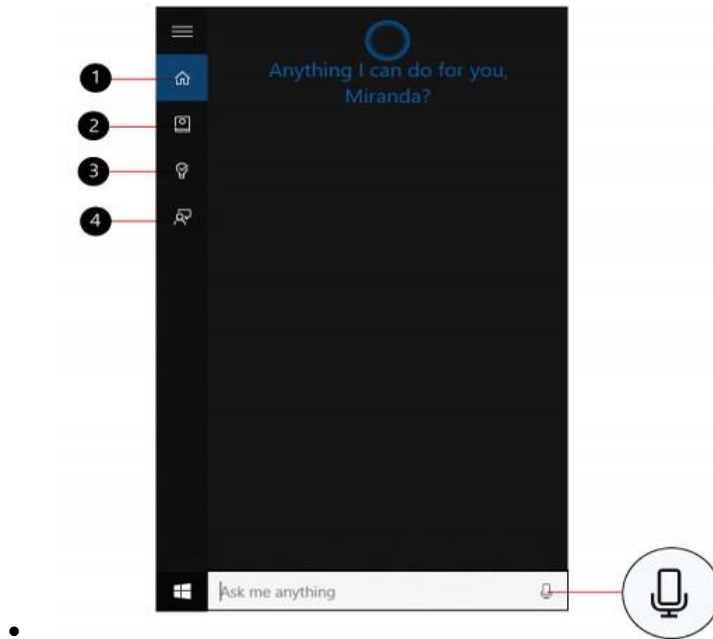
Activating Cortana

If Cortana isn't active, you can turn it on by typing "Cortana" in the Taskbar search to access the Cortana settings, or just clicking the "Gear" icon on the left-side of the menu.
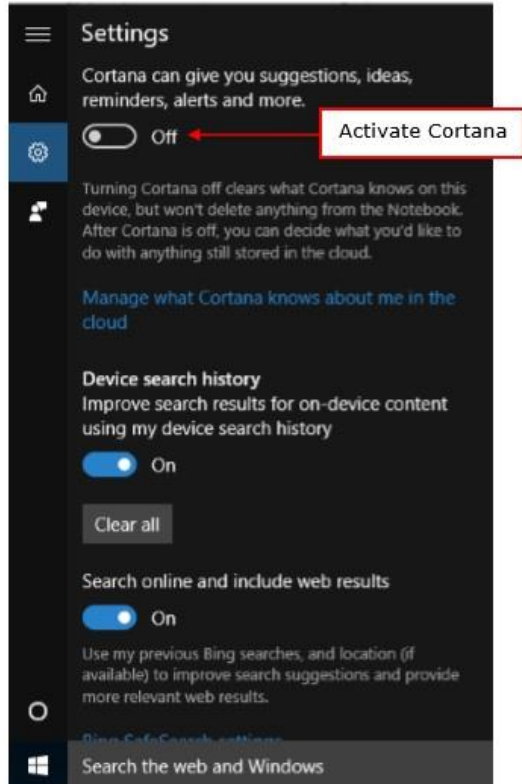
After activating Cortana, it will start gathering information about you to personalize the experience.
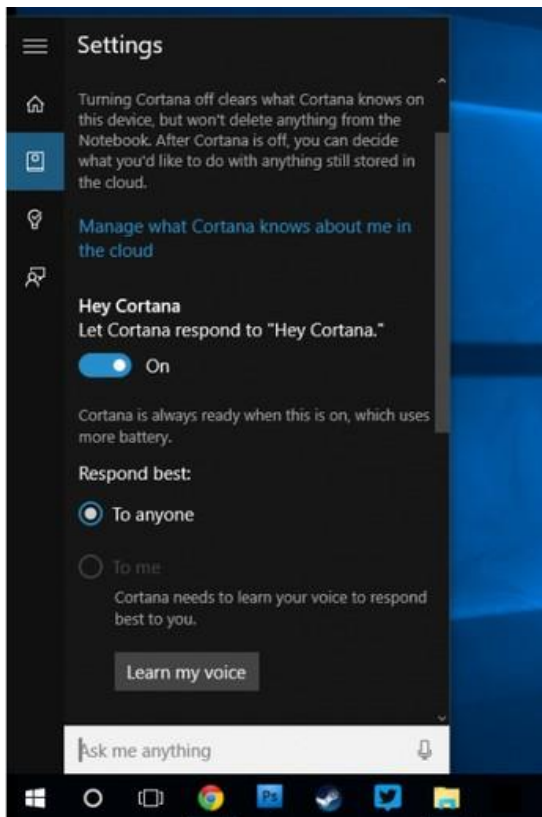
Windows 10 – Notifications

Windows 10 features a new way to present notifications. You can see them in the Notification Area in the lower-right corner of your screen.

 Clicking the Notification icon will bring up a sidebar called the **ACTION CENTER**.
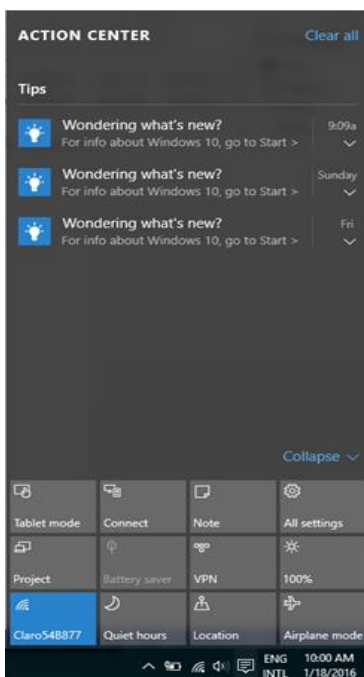
The upper part of the sidebar features **Tips** and **App** notifications, while the lower part of the sidebar presents a series of **Quick Action** buttons.

Customizing Notifications

You can customize what notifications Windows 10 presents you in the sidebar by following these steps −

Step 1 − Go to the **SETTINGS** window and choose **System**.
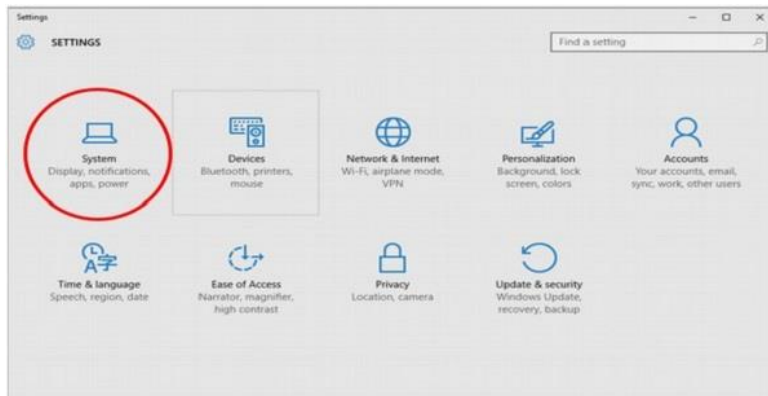
Step 2 − In the **SYSTEM** window, select **Notifications & actions**. The screen will then show you different settings where you can customize what notifications Windows 10 will show.
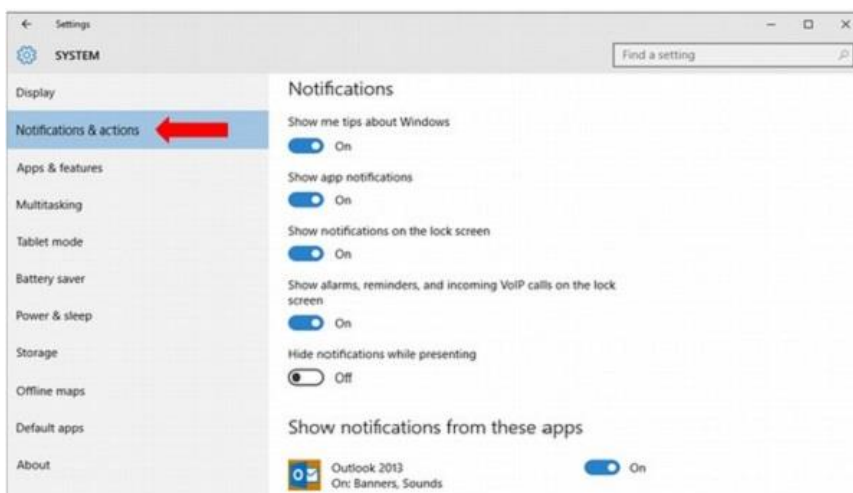
Windows 10 - Users Management

Like most Windows versions since XP, Windows 10 allows you to log in to different user accounts when using your computer. Like we discussed earlier, you can choose which account you want to log in to after turning on the computer.
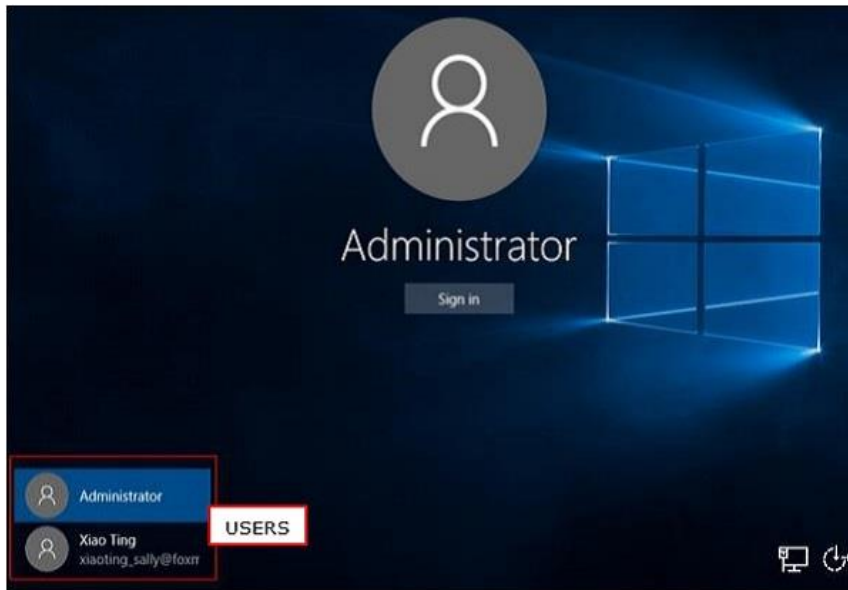
ut you can also configure or manage your user account after you're logged in. To do this, follow these steps −

Step 1 − Open the Start Menu.

Step 2 − Click on **Settings**.
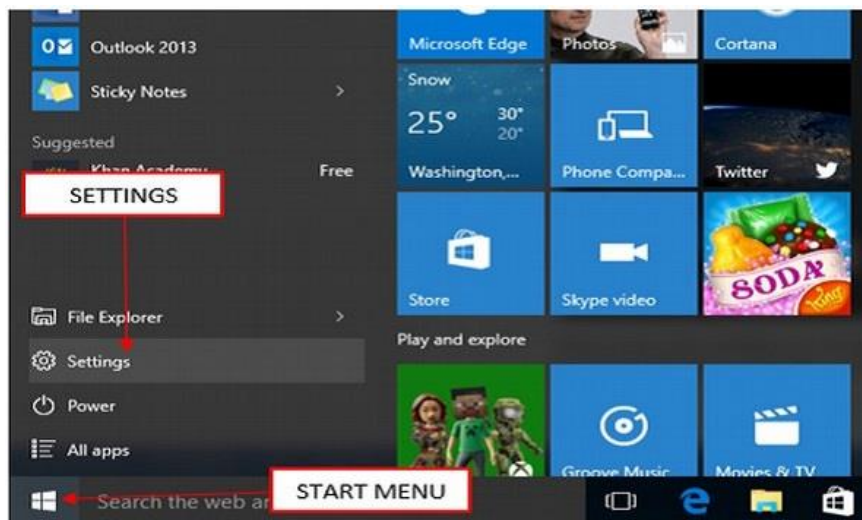
Step 3 − From the **SETTINGS** window, choose **Accounts** option.
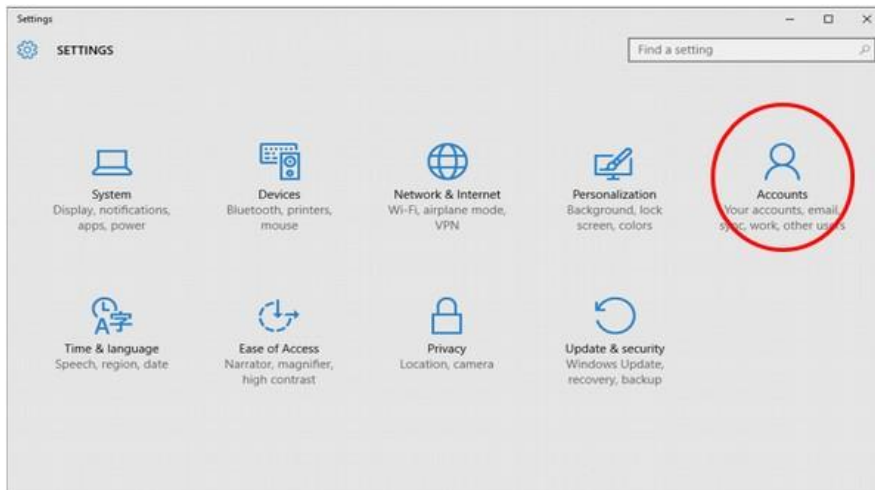
Step 4 − In the **ACCOUNTS** window, choose the account setting you want to configure.
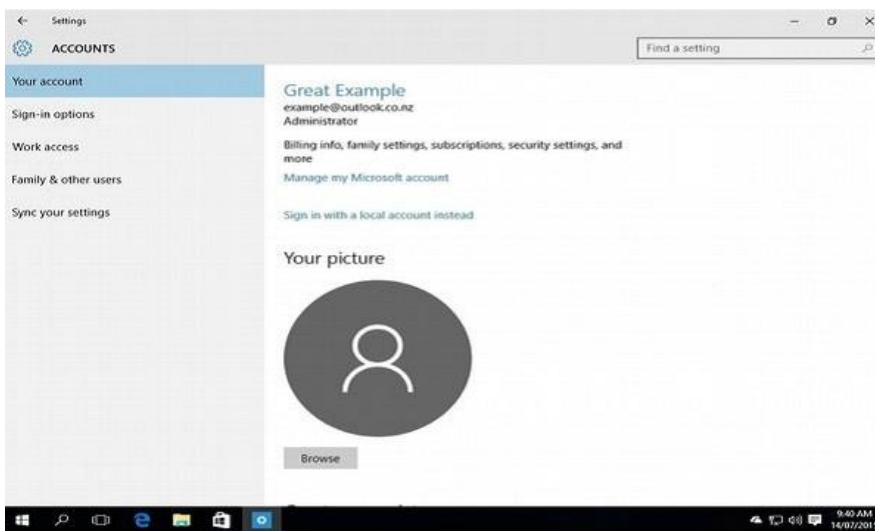
If you want to change your sign-in options, like your password, select **Sign-in options**.
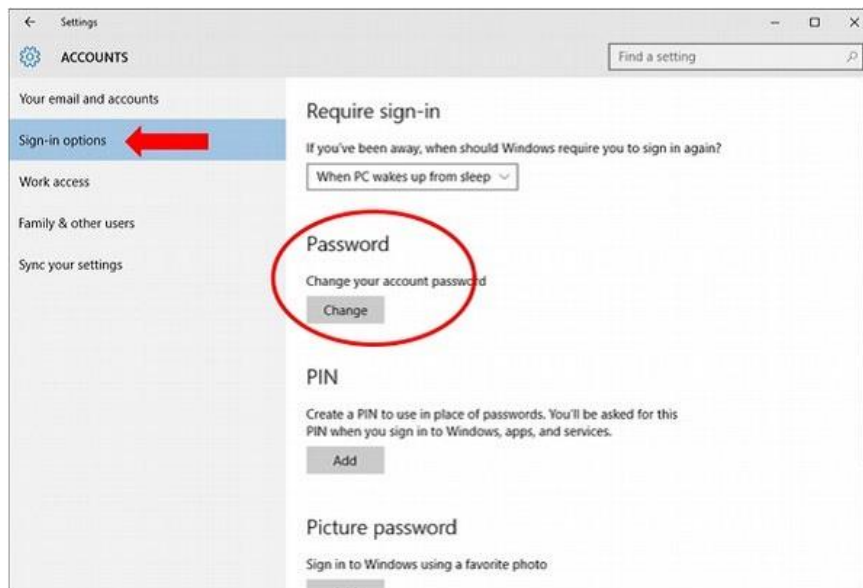
Under **Sign-in options**, Windows 10 lets you change your password. It also lets you choose when the computer will ask you to sign in.

Windows 10 - Security

Windows 10 features a series of tools to help you protect your computer from threats like viruses and other malware. The three main security tools are −

- User Account Control
- Windows Defender
- Windows Firewall

User Account Control

The Windows User Account Control is a tool that warns you when someone or something attempts to change your computer system settings. When this happens, the screen will alert you until an Administrator can confirm the change. This helps protect your computer against accidental changes or malicious software altering your settings.

Initially, this User Account Control is set at a moderate to high level, which means it will notify you only when an application tries to make changes to your computer. However, you can change this setting to your desired level by following these steps −

Step 1 − Open the **Control Panel** by searching for it in the Search bar.
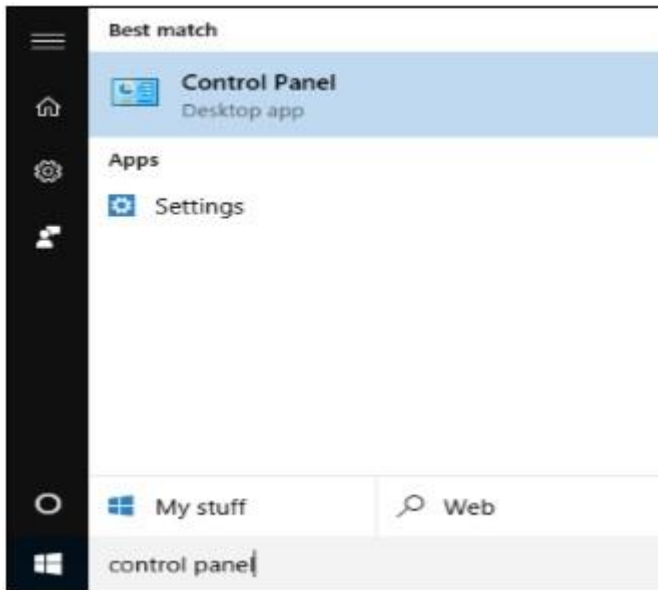
Step 2 − After the Control Panel is open, choose **User Accounts**.
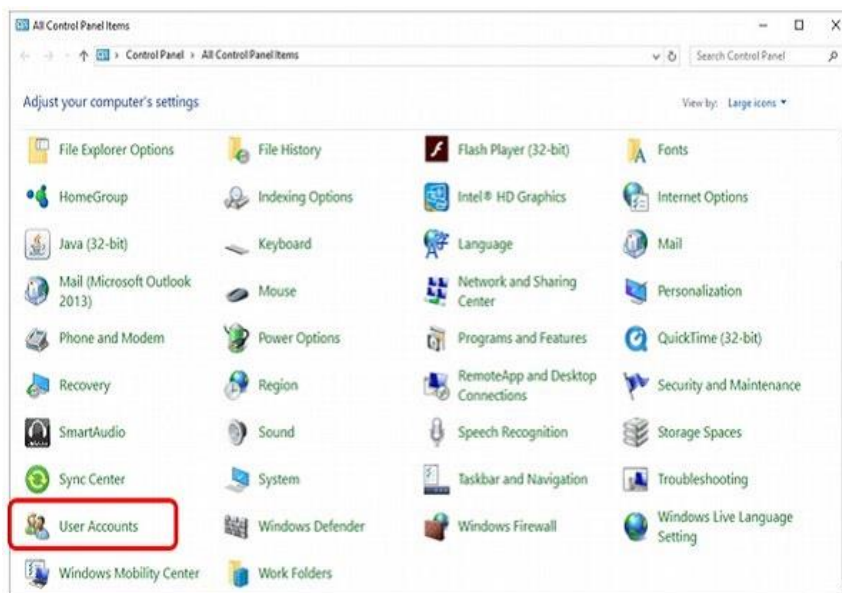
After choosing User Accounts, click on "Change User Account Control settings".
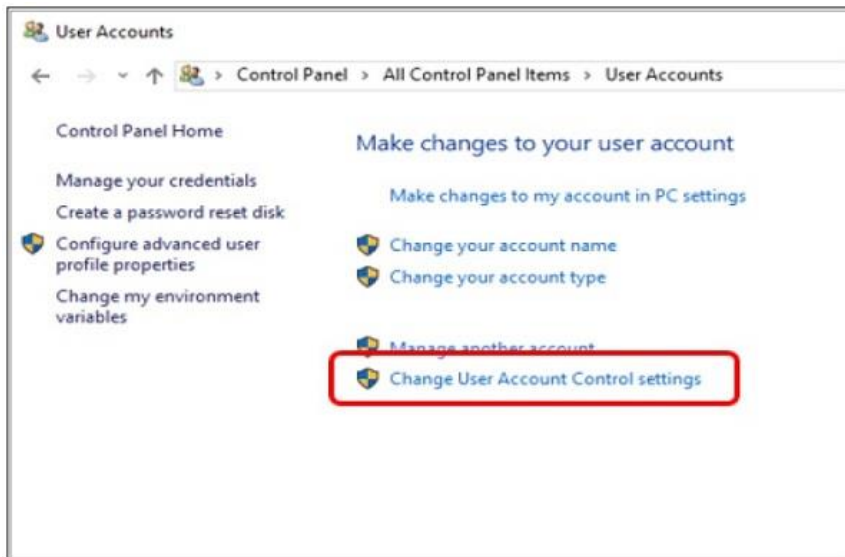
In the **User Account Control Settings**, you can move the slider to the desired position. Windows 10 will give you a summary of how your system will behave under that level.
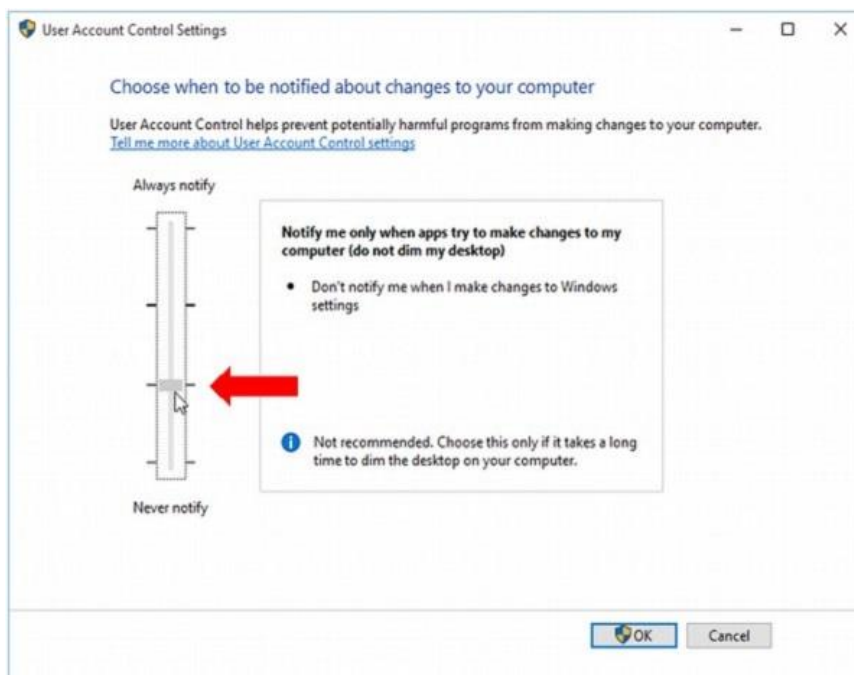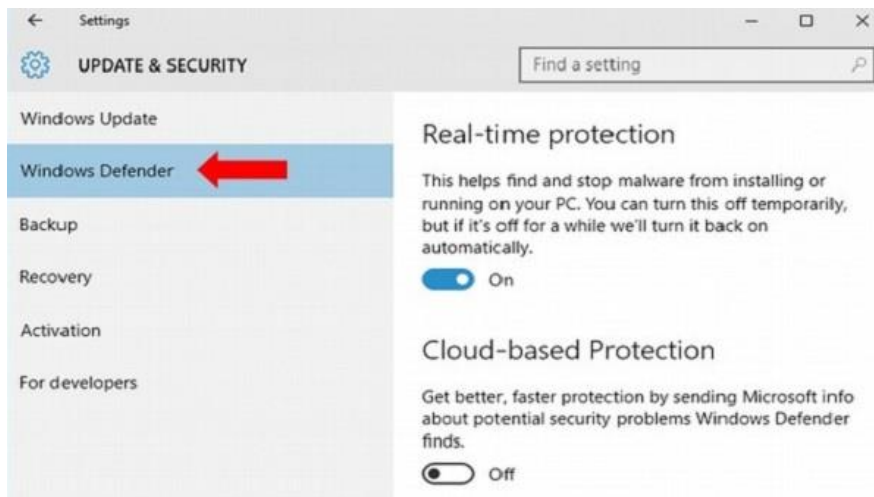

Windows Defender

Windows Defender is an antivirus and malware protection included in your operating system. It allows you to scan your computer for malicious software, while also checking each file or program you open.

To configure Windows Defender, follow these steps −

Step 1 − Go to **SETTINGS** and select **Update & security**.
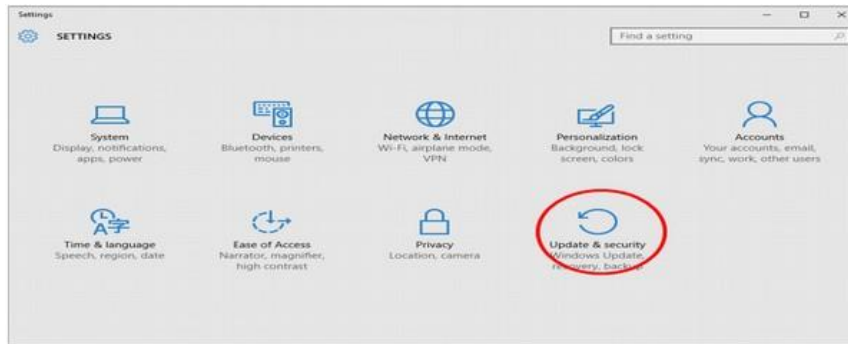
Step 2 − In the **UPDATE & SECURITY** window, select **Windows Defender**.

Here you can customize settings like turning off real-time protection or activating cloudbased protection, which allows Defender to send Microsoft information about security threats it finds

Windows Firewall

Windows Firewall prevents unauthorized access from outside to get into your computer. By default, it is turned on to protect your computer and your network.

If you want to customize your Firewall, follow these steps −

Step 1 − Open the **Control Panel** by searching for it in the Search bar.
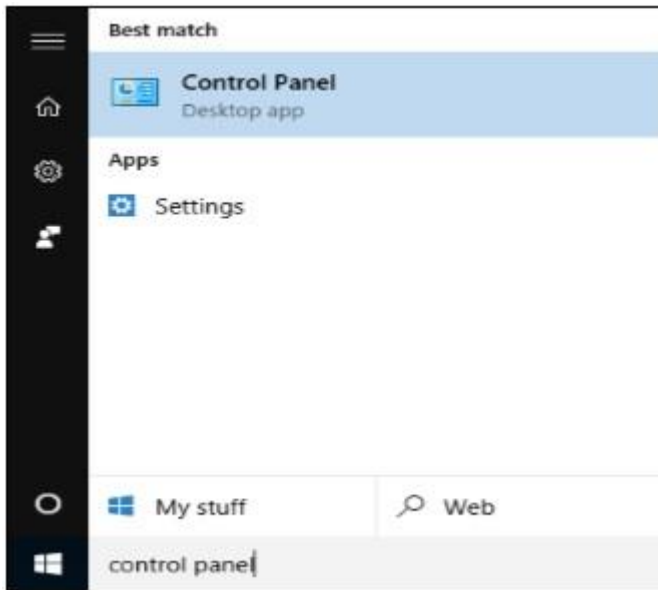
Step 2 − When the Control Panel is open, choose **Windows Firewall**.
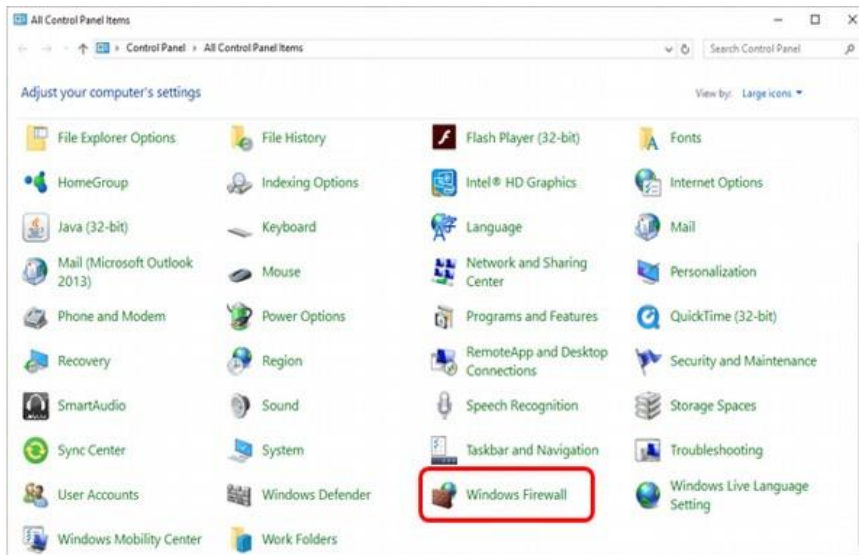
Step 3 − In the **Windows Firewall** window, you can customize the settings of it by turning it on or off or choosing when to protect your computer.
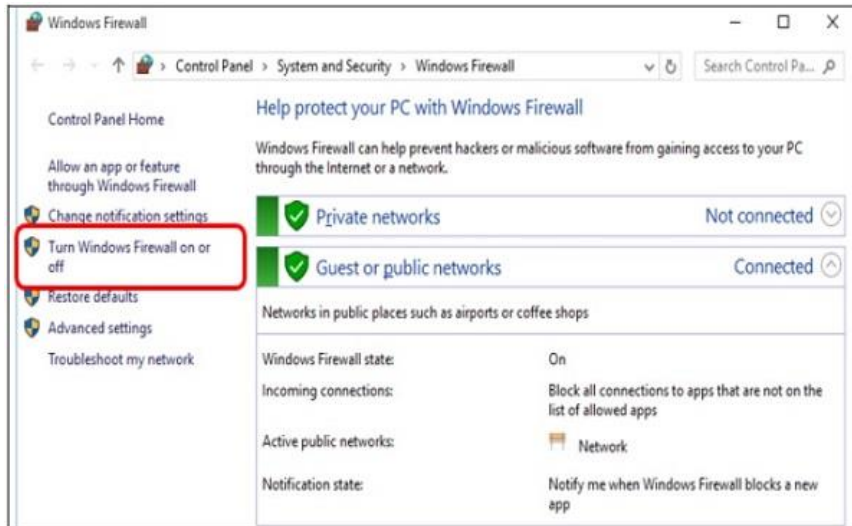
Windows 10 - Parental Control

Windows 10 allows you to set up a child's account for your children. This account will allow you to establish restrictions on how the account is used and monitor what your child does.

To create a child's account, follow these steps −

Step 1 − Go to **SETTINGS** and choose **Accounts**.
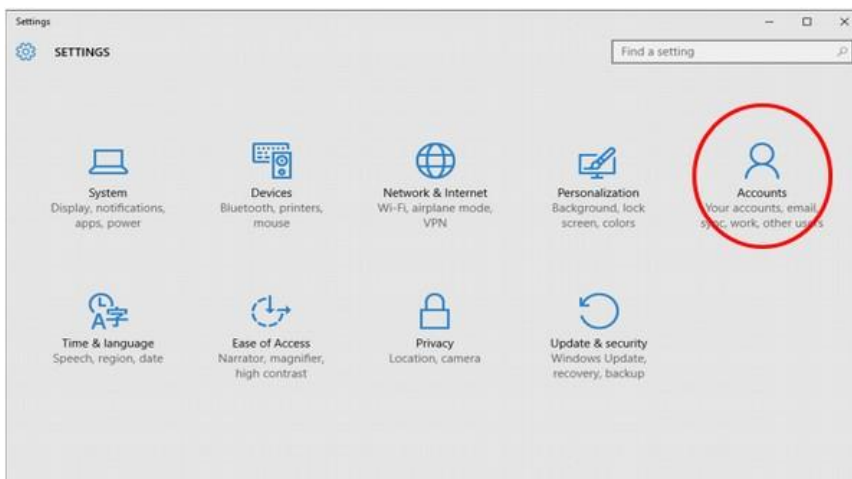
Step 2 − In **ACCOUNTS**, select the **Family & other users** option.
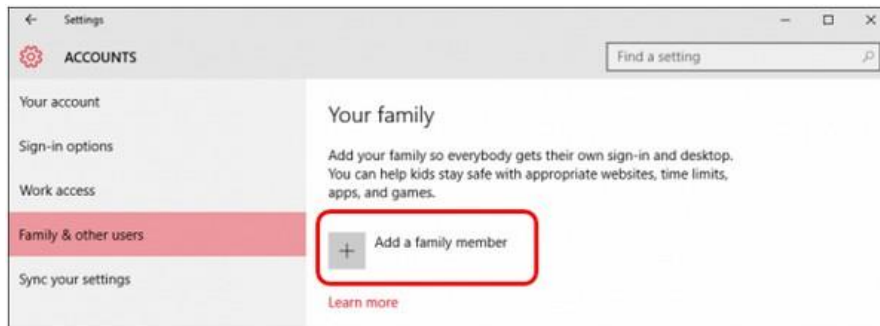
Step 3 − Click the "Add a family member" button.

Step 4 − Choose what family member you want to add (child or adult)

Step 5 − You will then be prompted to create an account for your child. If they don't have an e-mail account, you can create an Outlook account for them.
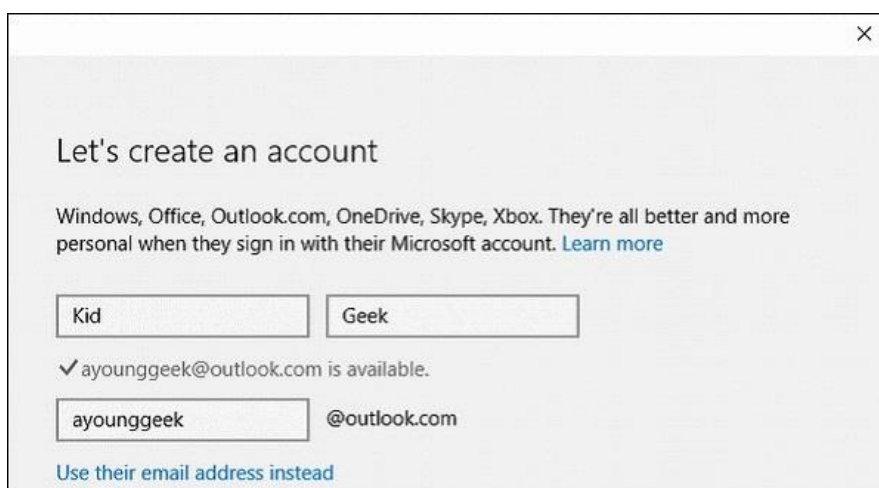
Step 6 − Provide a phone number for account security. This will be used in case the account is hacked or inaccessible.

Step 7 − Choose from some notification and experience options, for example, if you want to receive promotional offers from Microsoft.

After creation, your child can log in to his own Windows 10 account.

In addition, you can choose to monitor what your child does in his account by turning on reports on his activity −

Recent activity

August 4 through today

Activity reporting
⬤ On

Email weekly reports to me
⬤ On

Collected from
💻 MATT-DESKTOP

You can also choose to block "inappropriate websites" to limit your child's browsing only to allowed websites.

Web browsing

Block inappropriate websites
⬤ On ⬅

Applies to:
💻 MATT-DESKTOP

☐ Only see websites on the allowed list
  If you have younger children, you can make sure they'll only visit sites you've decided are safe.

Always allow these

Enter the URL of a website you want to allow:

| example.com | Allow |

| http://google.com/ | Remove |
| http://howtogeek.com/ | Remove |

Always block these

Enter the URL of a website you want to block:

| example.com | Block |

http://facebook.com/	Remove
http://instagram.com/	Remove
http://pinterest.com/	Remove
http://twitter.com/	Remove
http://youtube.com/	Remove

Finally, you can also establish when your child is allowed to log in by establishing a schedule −

Choose the times Kid Geek can use devices

	As early as	No later than	Limit per day, on this device
Sunday	7:00 AM	9:00 PM	4 hrs
Monday	7:00 AM	9:00 PM	2 hrs
Tuesday	7:00 AM	9:00 PM	2 hrs
Wednesday	7:00 AM	9:00 PM	2 hrs
Thursday	7:00 AM	9:00 PM	2 hrs
Friday	7:00 AM	11:00 PM	4 hrs
Saturday	7:00 AM	11:00 PM	4 hrs