


1.3.4 Windows Interface Facts

You should be familiar with the following components of the Windows interface.

Component	Purpose
Desktop	The <i>desktop</i> is the working surface that contains icons that access programs, files, applications, and file systems. The desktop is what is seen when all programs and open folders are minimized. Installing an application often adds an icon to the desktop.
Start	<p>The <i>Start</i> is the easiest way to access the most useful things on your computer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The list of programs in the Start is divided by a separator line into two sections, pinned default programs and the most used programs. ▪ The Start can be customized for each user. ▪ The Start's appearance is different with each Windows version. <p>The Start is found in Windows 7 and 10.</p>
Taskbar	<p>The <i>taskbar</i> is the bar displayed at the bottom of a Windows desktop (although its position can be changed). The taskbar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contains icons that represent each program or application currently running or pinned to the taskbar for quick access. You launch a pinned program by selecting the icon on the taskbar. ▪ Can be configured to display different types of toolbars. For instance, Quick Launch is a toolbar that contains shortcuts to designated programs.
Notification Area	<p>The <i>notification area</i> is a part of the taskbar located on the right side of the taskbar. The notification area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Displays the time and date. ▪ Displays icons that represent the applications and processes running behind the scenes on your computer, such as audio volume and security programs. ▪ Displays connectivity to the internet or a workgroup.
Windows Explorer	<i>Windows Explorer</i> is a graphical user interface (GUI) for viewing and managing the file system.
Control Panel	<i>Control Panel</i> is a compilation of various utilities that change how a computer looks and behaves. Use the Control Panel to configure settings for hardware devices, manage printers and networks, configure personal settings, and manage the system.
Aero	<p><i>Aero</i> is a set of features that improves the visual appearance of Windows. Features of Aero include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Glass effects on window borders that make borders semi-transparent (translucent). You can view objects behind windows through the window borders. ▪ Window animations when windows are opened or closed. ▪ Taskbar thumbnails that show the contents of an open window when you move the mouse over items on the taskbar. ▪ Windows Flip shows thumbnails of running programs when you use the Alt + Tab keys to switch between running programs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aero Flip 3D is activated with the  + Tab key and shows an expanded 3D view of running programs. ▪ The Show Desktop button (on the right side of the taskbar) hides all open windows. Hovering over the button makes the content of all open windows disappear (called Peek). ▪ Snap is a new feature that maximizes a window as you drag its border to the edge of the screen. Snapping multiple windows on the screen tiles them side-by-side. In Windows 10, Snap is limited to four apps on the desktop and two apps on a tablet. ▪ Shake lets you hide all but the current window. Select the top window border and shake the mouse to hide or unhide all other open windows. <p>Aero is not available in the Windows 7 Home Basic version. In addition, features depend on the graphics card in the system. For example, you might not be able to use Flip 3D if the graphics card does not have the necessary features.</p>
Search	<p><i>Search</i> is a feature to help you find documents on your computer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Windows includes a new indexing service that catalogs objects and files on your computer to improve the speed of searches on your computer. The search is typically fast because it does not search the complete hard drive but, instead, searches the index. ▪ Instant Search provides a box for typing keywords and phrases. As you type, matching results are displayed. Instant Search boxes are available on the taskbar and in other applications such as Internet Explorer, Photo Gallery, and Media Player. ▪ Custom properties are tags or descriptions that you can add to files as attributes that can be easily searched or indexed. ▪ Search Folders lets you save a search as a folder. When you open the folder again, the search is performed, and the results are displayed.
User Account Control (UAC)	<p><i>User Account Control (UAC)</i> is a feature that helps minimize the dangers of unwanted actions or unintended software installations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UAC differentiates between standard user privileges and administrative privileges. ▪ Icons next to some tasks identify tasks that require administrative privileges. In addition, performing other tasks, such as installing applications or hardware devices, require administrative privileges. ▪ If standard user privileges are not sufficient to perform a task, the system requests privilege elevation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you are logged on as a standard user, you are prompted to supply the username and password for an administrator user. ▪ If you are logged on as an administrator, you are prompted for permission before the action is performed.

Features new to Windows 10 include:

- Customizable Start lets you organize your apps and shortcuts.
- Microsoft Store allows you to purchase music, videos, games, and apps
- Cortana provides you with a personal assistant for web searching. This feature is only available in the United States, United Kingdom, China, France, Italy, Germany, and Spain. This feature is hardware-dependent.

- Microsoft Edge lets you write and highlight web pages in the Edge web browser. This feature is hardware-dependent.
- Windows Hello uses face and fingerprint sign in. This feature is hardware-dependent.
- Photos app organizes photos and videos in one location.
- Cloud storage provides integrated access to OneDrive, which provides free storage space in the cloud.
- Continuum allows you to switch between PC, tablet, and phones modes. This feature is hardware-dependent.

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