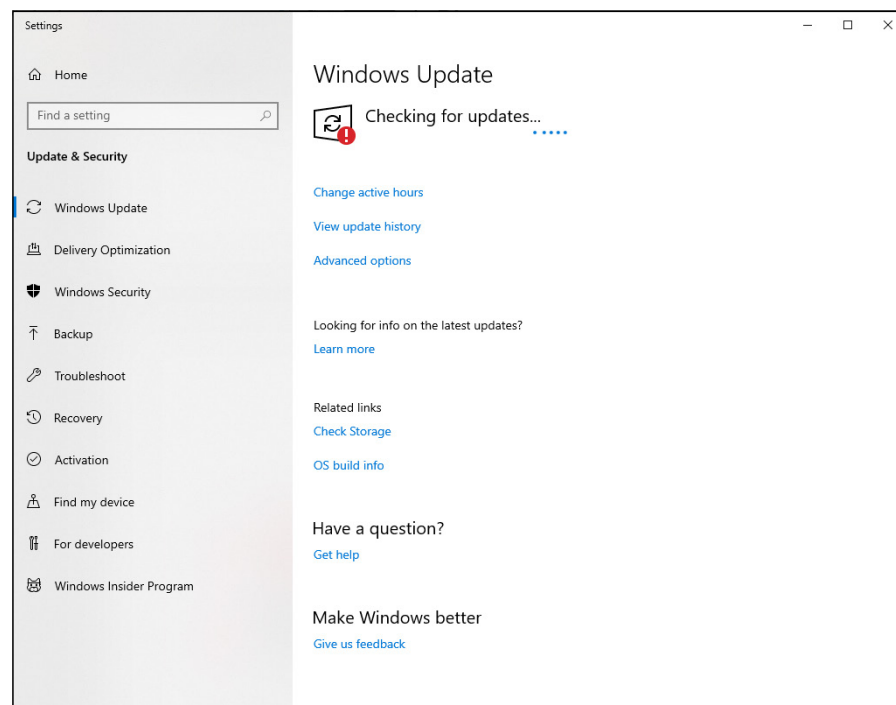


time, such as minor security or performance issues. These glitches aren't significant enough to merit a new version of the software, but they're important enough to require fixing. Most patches correct security flaws that computer hackers have uncovered in their relentless attempts to wreak havoc on the computer world.

Periodically, all the recently released patches are combined into a service pack. Although the most diligent network administrators apply all patches when they're released, many administrators just wait for the service packs.

Windows includes the Windows Update feature that automatically installs patches and service packs when they become available. These patches apply not just to Windows but to other Microsoft software as well. To use Windows Update, click the Start button, type **Windows Update**, and press Enter. The Windows Update settings appear, as shown in Figure 17-1.

From the Windows Update window, you can click the Check for Updates button to see if you have any updates that need to be installed. Any required updates will automatically be downloaded and installed.



**FIGURE 17-1:**  
Windows Update.