

# My Windows® 11 Computer *for Seniors*



AARP®

Michael Miller

FREE SAMPLE CHAPTER

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# My Windows® 11 Computer *for Seniors*



**AARP®**

Michael Miller

# My Windows® 11 Computer for Seniors

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## Dedication

*To Sherry. As always.*

## About the Author

**Michael Miller** is a prolific and popular writer of more than 200 nonfiction books who is known for his ability to explain complex topics to everyday readers. He writes about a variety of topics, including technology, business, and music. His best-selling books for Que and AARP include *My Video Chat for Seniors*, *My iPad for Seniors*, *My TV for Seniors*, *My Social Media for Seniors*, *My Facebook for Seniors*, *My Smart Home for Seniors*, *My Internet for Seniors*, and *My eBay for Seniors*. Worldwide, his books have sold more than 1.5 million copies.

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**In this chapter, you find out how to turn on and start using a new Windows 11 computer.**

- Powering Up and Powering Down
- Finding Your Way Around Windows
- Switching from Windows S Mode to Windows Home

3

## Using Your Windows 11 PC

Whether you've been using computers forever or just purchased your first PC, there's a lot you need to know about using the Windows operating system—such as where everything is, what it does, and how to do what you need to do.

### Powering Up and Powering Down

If you've already read Chapter 1, "Understanding Computer Basics," you know how to connect all the components of your new computer system. The first time you turn on a new computer, you're led through a series of steps to configure the computer for your needs. Follow the onscreen instructions to get everything set up. It won't take long.

## >>>Go Further

### TURNING ON AND CONFIGURING A NEW PC—FOR THE FIRST TIME

The first time you power up your new PC is different from what happens after you have everything set up. It's a more involved process because Windows walks you through a configuration process that gets your computer ready for you to use.

When you first turn on your new PC (by pressing the computer's "on" or power button), Windows displays a series of setup screens. You're asked a number of questions that are used to properly configure Windows for your use. For example, you need to select the region where you live, the language you speak, and so on. You also select your Wi-Fi network and enter the appropriate password.

During this initial setup process, you need to enter the email address and password for your Microsoft account. If you don't have a Microsoft account, click Create Account and follow the onscreen instructions.

Throughout this entire process, just follow the onscreen instructions and make the necessary choices. When you're done, Windows finishes the installation process and displays the desktop, with everything set up and ready to use.

The *next* time (and all subsequent times) you turn on your computer, things are a lot simpler, as noted in the following steps.

---

#### Booting Up

Technical types call the procedure of starting up a computer *booting* or *booting up* the system. Restarting a system (turning it off and then back on) is called *rebooting*.

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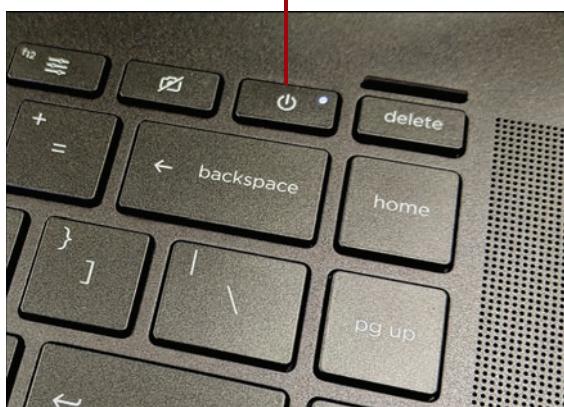
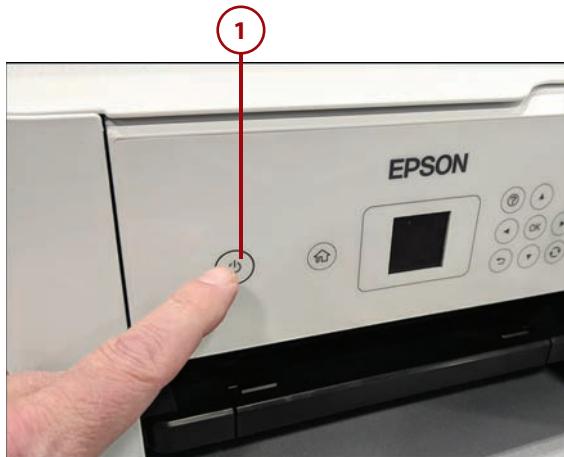
## Turn On Your Computer

After you've gone through the initial setup and configuration, turning on your computer is easy, especially if you have a notebook or 2-in-1 PC. It's just a matter of powering on everything connected to your computer—in the right order.

- 1 Turn on your printer, monitor (for a traditional desktop PC), and other powered external peripherals.
- 2 If you're using a laptop PC, open the laptop's case so that you can see the screen and access the keyboard.
- 3 Press the power or "on" button on your computer. Windows launches automatically and displays the lock screen.

## Lock Screen Information

The Windows lock screen displays a photographic background along with some useful information—including the date and time, power status, and Wi-Fi (connectivity) status.



- 4 Press any key or move your mouse to display the sign-in screen.
- 5 Enter your password or PIN or use your PC's fingerprint scanner—however you've configured your computer's security—and then press the Enter key on your keyboard or click the next arrow key onscreen. Windows displays the desktop, ready for use.

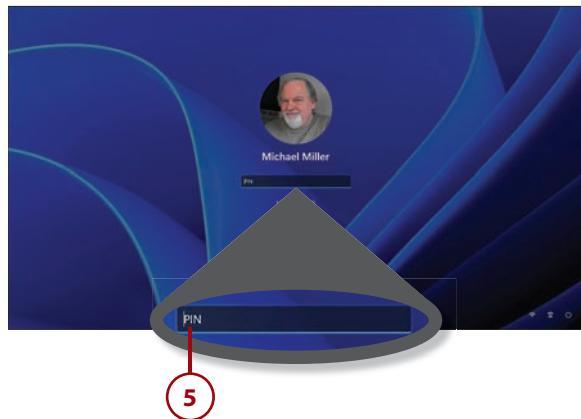
## Log In Options

Learn more about your PC's log-in options in Chapter 7, "Working with Different Users."

## Turn Off Your Computer

How you turn off your PC depends on what type of computer you have. If you have a laptop or 2-in-1, you can press the unit's power (on/off) button—although that typically puts your PC into Sleep mode instead of turning it all the way off. The better approach is to shut down your system through Windows.

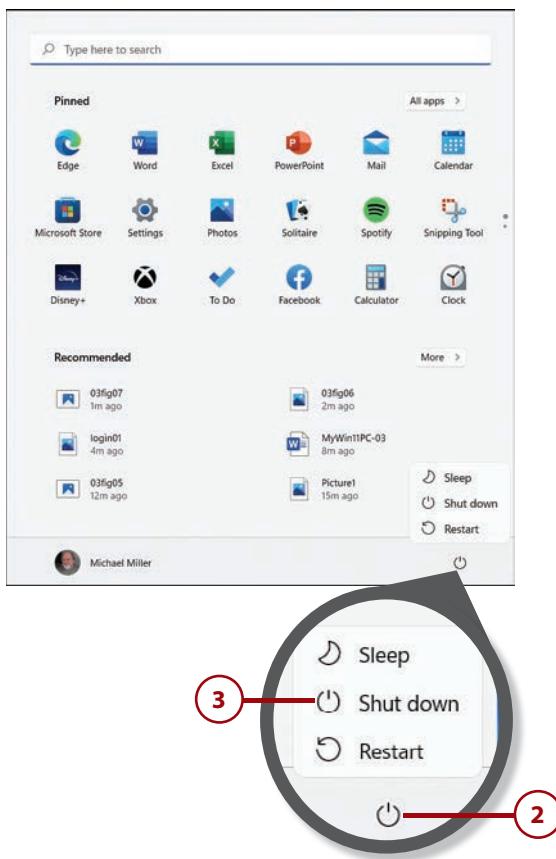
- 1 Click or tap the Start button on the taskbar or press the Windows key on your computer keyboard to display the Start menu.



- 2 Click or tap the Power icon to display the submenu of options.
- 3 Click or tap Shut Down.

## Sleep Mode

If you're using a laptop or 2-in-1 PC, Windows includes a special Sleep mode that keeps your computer running in a low-power state, ready to start up quickly when you open the lid or turn it on again. You can enter Sleep mode from the Power Options menu—or, with many laptop PCs, by pressing the unit's power button. (There's also a *hybrid sleep* mode available only on desktop PCs that places any open documents in memory while the PC goes into a low-power state.)



# Finding Your Way Around Windows

When it comes to finding your way around Windows 11, it's all about learning the different parts of the desktop. (And, for you more experienced users, the Windows 11 desktop looks and works a bit differently than what you're used to with Windows 10.)

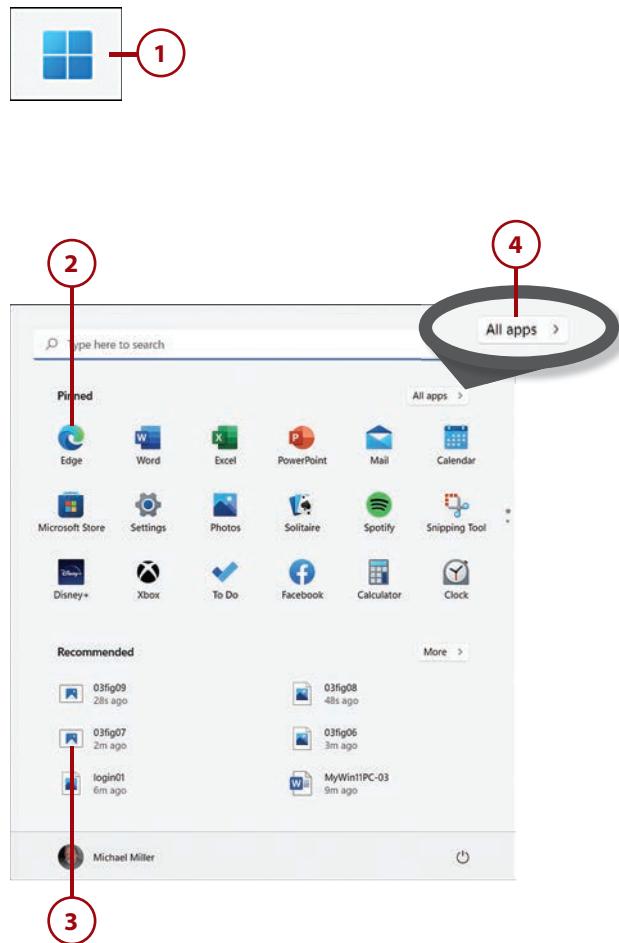
## Use the Start Menu

You access all the software programs and utilities on your computer via the Windows Start menu. You can “pin” your favorite programs to the Start menu and view apps and files recommended by Windows. You can even view all the apps installed on your computer and power off your computer from the Start menu.

- 1 Click or tap the Start button or press the Windows key on your keyboard to open the Start menu.
- 2 At the top of the Start menu, you see apps that have been pinned to the Start menu. Mouse over the Pinned area and scroll down or back up to view all the pinned apps. Click or tap any app to open it.
- 3 At the bottom of the Start menu, you see recommended apps and recently used files. Click or tap an app or file to open it.
- 4 View all the apps installed on your computer by clicking or tapping All Apps.

### Pinning Apps

Learn more about pinning apps to the Start menu and taskbar in Chapter 6, “Personalizing Windows.”

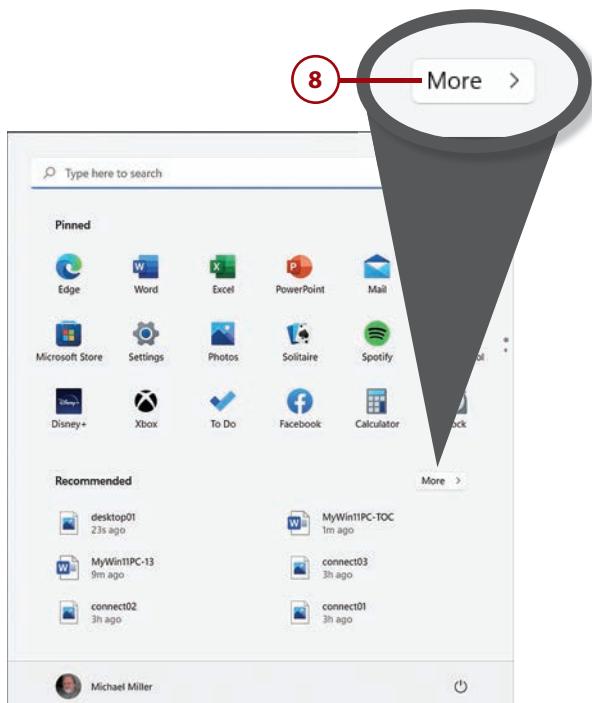
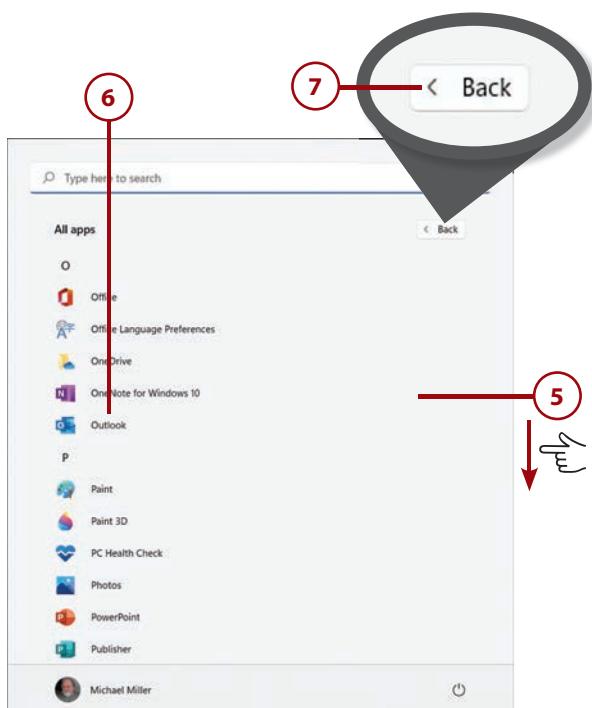


- 5 Apps are listed in alphabetical order. Scroll down the list to view more apps.
- 6 Click or tap an app to open it.
- 7 Click or tap Back to return to the main Start menu.

## Search for Apps and Files

You can also search for specific apps and files from the Start menu. Just click or tap within the Search field at the top of the Start menu to display the Search pane. (Learn more about searching from the Search pane in Chapter 8, “Using Apps and Programs.”)

- 8 View more recently used files by tapping More in the Recommended section.



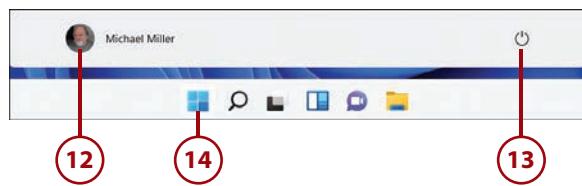
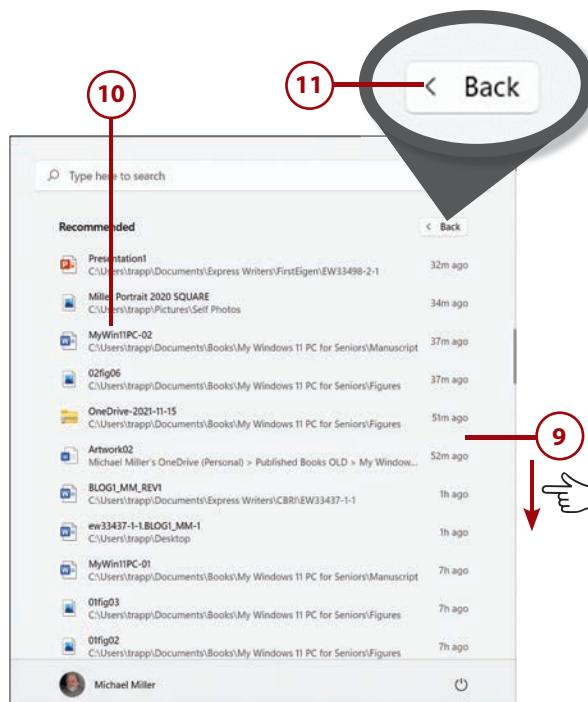
- 9 Recently opened files are listed in reverse chronological order, most recent files first. Scroll down to view older files.
- 10 Click or tap any file to open that file in the appropriate app.
- 11 Click or tap Back to return to the main Start menu.
- 12 Click or tap your account name or picture to change account settings, lock your PC, or sign out of your account.
- 13 Click or tap the Power icon to put your PC to sleep, shut it down, or restart it.
- 14 Close the Start menu by clicking or tapping anywhere outside the Start menu or clicking or tapping the Start button again.

## Different Looks

Your Start menu probably looks a little different from the ones shown in this chapter—in particular, the icons you see. That's because every person's system is different, depending on the particular programs and apps you have installed on your PC.

## Quick Access Menu

If you right-click (instead of left-click) the Start button, you'll display an alternate Quick Access menu. This is a menu of advanced options, including direct links to File Explorer, Mobility Center, and Task Manager.



## Use the Taskbar

The taskbar is that area at the bottom of the Windows desktop. Icons on the taskbar can represent frequently used programs, open programs, or open documents.

### Centered Taskbar Icons

In Windows 11, the main taskbar icons are centered by default. (If you've used previous versions of Windows, you're probably used to them being on the left side of the taskbar.) If you'd rather move the icons to the left side of the taskbar, read Chapter 6 for more information.

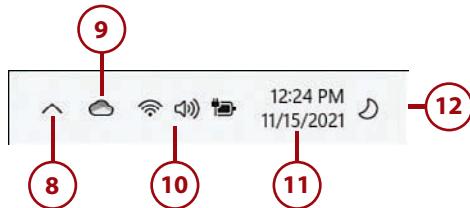
- 1 Open the Start menu by clicking or tapping the Start button.
- 2 Open any application pinned to the taskbar by clicking or tapping the application's icon.
- 3 Search your computer for files and apps, or the Web for additional information, by clicking or tapping the Search icon. This opens the Search pane, described in Chapter 8.
- 4 View all open applications in thumbnail form by clicking or tapping the Task View button. (Learn more about switching between programs in Chapter 8.)
- 5 Open the Widgets pane by clicking or tapping the Widgets button. (Learn more about widgets in Chapter 6.)
- 6 Start or join a Microsoft Teams chat by clicking or tapping the Chat icon.
- 7 Open File Explorer by clicking or tapping the File Explorer icon.



- 8 The far-right side of the taskbar is called the notification area, and it displays icons for essential Windows operations—sound, networking, power, time and date, and so forth. Click or tap the up arrow to view icons for more items, normally hidden.
- 9 Open OneDrive by clicking or tapping the OneDrive icon.
- 10 Connect to Wi-Fi networks, adjust sound and brightness levels, and make other quick adjustments by clicking or tapping the middle of the notification area to display the Quick Access panel.
- 11 View recent notifications from Windows and selected apps by clicking or tapping the time and date.
- 12 Minimize all open applications by clicking or tapping the slim Peek button at the far right of the taskbar.

## Taskbar Icons

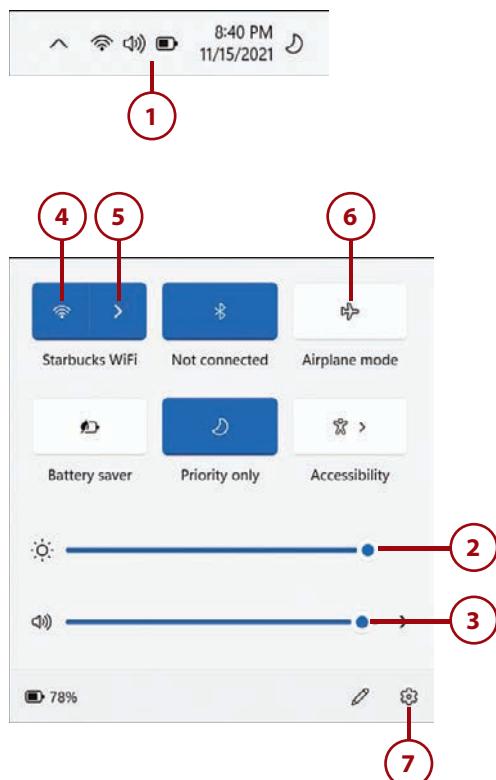
A taskbar icon with nothing underneath represents an unopened application. A taskbar icon with a short line underneath represents a running application. A taskbar icon with a longer line underneath and a slightly shaded background represents the highlighted or topmost window on your desktop.



## Use the Quick Settings Panel

Windows 11 features a new Quick Settings panel that you use to adjust basic settings—changing volume and brightness levels, connecting to Wi-Fi networks, switching to Airplane mode, and adjusting the screen brightness. You open the Quick Settings panel from the notification area of the taskbar.

- 1 Click or tap the middle of the notifications area on the taskbar to open the Quick Settings panel.
- 2 Use the Brightness slider to adjust the screen brightness.
- 3 Use the Volume slider to adjust the audio volume.
- 4 Click or tap the Wi-Fi button to turn Wi-Fi on or off.
- 5 Click or tap the Wi-Fi right arrow to connect to or switch Wi-Fi networks.
- 6 Click or tap the Airplane Mode button to turn Airplane mode on or off.
- 7 Click or tap the Settings button to open the Settings app.



## Use the Notifications Panel

The new Notifications panel in Windows 11 is where you view system notifications and notifications from selected apps. It also displays a handy calendar.

- 1 Click or tap the date and time area of the notifications area of the taskbar to display the Notifications panel.
- 2 Recent notifications are displayed here. Scroll down to view more.
- 3 Click or tap to read or take action on any specific notification.
- 4 Mouse over any notification and click the X to close that notification.
- 5 Click or tap Clear All to close all notifications.
- 6 Click or tap the up arrow by the date to display a monthly calendar. The calendar expands up while the notifications panel contracts upward.
- 7 Click or tap the up and down arrows to display the previous and upcoming months.
- 8 Click the down arrow next to the calendar to minimize the calendar and display more notifications.



# Switching from Windows S Mode to Windows Home

If you just purchased a new PC, it's likely that your computer is running a special version of Windows called Windows S Mode. Windows S Mode is just like regular Windows except it can run only Windows apps downloaded from the Microsoft Store. Computers running in Windows S Mode cannot use traditional desktop software, such as Adobe Reader and Photoshop Elements.

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## Cloud Apps in S Mode

Windows S Mode can run cloud-based apps that run within a web browser, such as Google Docs.

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Microsoft's stated reason for introducing Windows S Mode is to make Windows-based computers more secure. Apps available in the Microsoft Store are "Microsoft-verified" for security, whereas traditional software apps are not.

The built-in limitations of Windows S Mode make it less than ideal for many computer users, especially those using older software not available in the Microsoft Store. Fortunately, you can quickly and easily switch your version of Windows from Windows S Mode to Windows Home, which does run traditional desktop software. The switch takes just a few minutes of your time, and it's totally free.

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## Is Your Computer in S Mode?

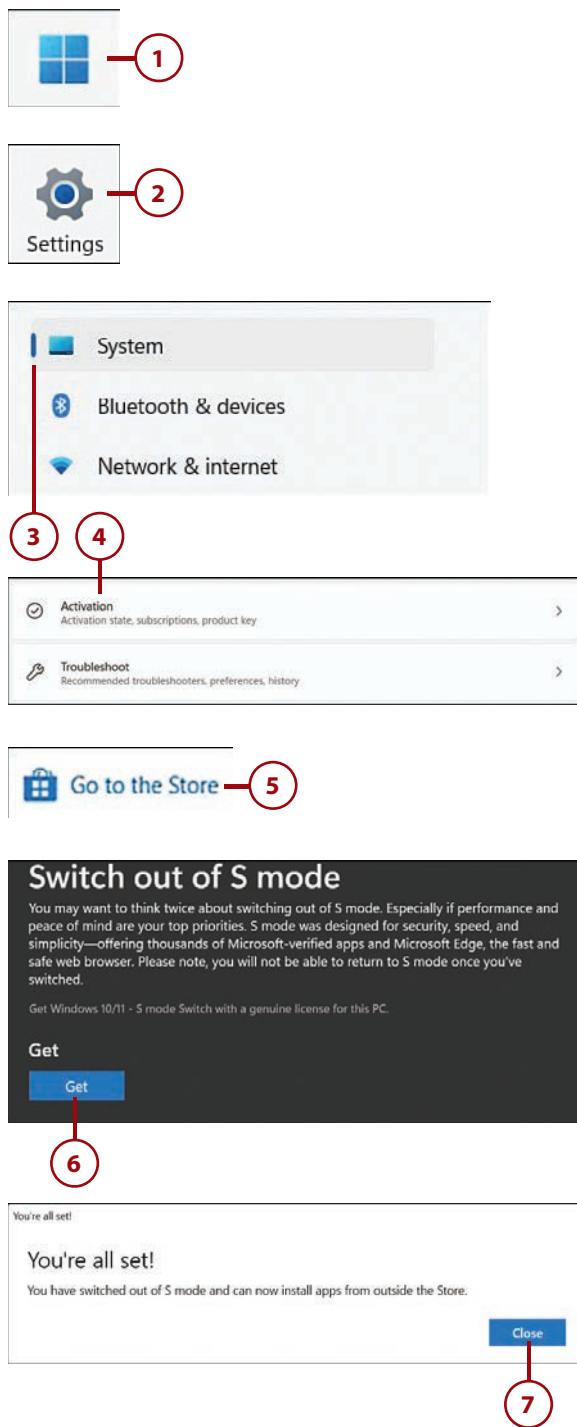
To see if your computer is running in S Mode, click the Start button and select Settings. From the Settings app, click System and then select the About tab. Scroll to the Windows Specifications section and look at the Edition entry. If it says Windows 11 Home in S Mode, your computer is running in S Mode. If it doesn't say S Mode, it's not.

---

## Switch from Windows S Mode to Windows Home

Any computer running Windows S Mode, new or old, can be upgraded to Windows Home for free. (Note, however, that you cannot switch back to Windows S Mode from Windows Home; this is a one-way switch.)

- 1 Click or tap the Windows Start button to open the Start menu.
- 2 Click or tap Settings to open the Settings tool.
- 3 Click or tap System on the left.
- 4 Scroll down and click or tap Activation on the right.
- 5 Go to the Switch to Windows 11 Home section and click or tap Go to the Store. This opens the Microsoft Store app to the appropriate Switch Out of S Mode page.
- 6 Click or tap the Get button.
- 7 It only takes a few seconds—no rebooting required—for your computer to switch from Windows S Mode to Windows Home. When Windows notifies you that the switch is complete, click or tap Close.



## >>>*Go Further*

### WINDOWS HOME, PRO, ENTERPRISE, AND EDUCATION—AND S MODE

Microsoft sells four primary versions of Windows 11: Windows Home, Windows Pro, Windows Enterprise, and Windows Education. At first glance, it's difficult to tell the differences between them, although the differences are there.

Most home and small business computers run Windows Home, whereas larger businesses and organizations run Windows Pro or Windows Enterprise. The Pro and Enterprise versions are functionally identical to Windows Home but offer more business-specific security and data management features.

There's also a Windows Education version, designed for use in schools. This version is similar to Windows Enterprise with its enhanced security and network management functions.

S Mode is available for all four of these versions. So, a home computer may be running Windows Home in S Mode and a business computer may be running Windows Pro in S Mode. When you switch out of S Mode, you switch to the main version of Windows (Home, Pro, or otherwise) installed on your computer.

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