



Windows 10 Solutions

Essential Tips, Tricks & Fixes for every Windows 10 user

OVER
875
Tricks, Tips
& Fixes



- Essential troubleshooting guides and tips
- How to make your Windows 10 faster

- Protect your PC from viruses and malware
- Backup, recovery and security tutorials



Windows 10 Solutions

Whether you have been using the latest OS since its release or if you are only just getting around to upgrading, Windows 10 Solutions is full of useful advice, essential tips and all you need to take your computing knowledge to the next level. Our step-by-step guides and tutorials make getting more from your computer easy and there is something new to learn on every page.

With tips, tricks and fixes for every main area of your Windows 10 life, from maintaining and optimising your key hardware and software to delving under the hood of the operating system with tweaks and mods, there is something here for anyone who wants to go beyond being able to send an email and browse the Internet. Tired of not understanding why your PC crashes or runs slowly? Then this is the place to start!

BDM's
Windows 10 Solutions
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The articles in these pages that follow are intended as a guide only. We are not advising you to change your device, and would actually advise against it if you have even the slightest doubts. There are potential risks to the hardware and software involved, and you must be aware of these before you decide to alter anything on your device. Read all of the information here carefully and then make up your own mind whether you want to follow our guides. We take no responsibility for damage to your smartphone, tablet, computer or any other device used in the process. If you are unsure, please do not buy this publication.



BDM's Desktop Series: Windows 10 Solutions

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History and Future of Windows

There can't be many users who wouldn't agree that Windows 10 is the best and most innovative OS from Microsoft for some years. However, in the short time since its release, it has seen many changes and improvements. Over the next few pages we will look at Windows 10 from its launch in 2015, right up to today, and then on into the future for the OS.

Windows 7/8.1 ►

In contrast to Windows Vista, Windows 7 was generally praised by critics, who considered the operating system to be a major improvement over its predecessor due to its increased performance, its more intuitive interface (with particular praise devoted to the new taskbar), fewer User Account Control popups, and other improvements made across the platform. The update to Windows 8 and 8.1 was not so well received. Although reaction towards its performance improvements, and security enhancements was positive, the new user interface was widely criticised for being confusing and difficult to learn; especially when used with a keyboard and mouse instead of a touchscreen.

Windows 10 Launch ►



The initial release of Windows 10, codenamed Threshold 1, was a big event. Given away free to users of older versions of Windows, 10 introduced new innovations like Cortana, Microsoft Edge and the Xbox app. Multitasking was made easier with improvements to Snap Assist and the addition of Task View and the Action Center. Windows Hello added biometric authentication that provided users with instant access to Windows 10 devices simply by showing your face or using your fingerprint to login.

July 2015



November Update ►



This small update, known as Threshold 2, was more about consolidating the Windows 10 launch version and fixing some initial release bugs, than it was about adding new bells and whistles. Cortana, Edge and the Start menu were all improved, with the only completely new addition to the OS being the Find My Device feature. There was, however, a significant boost to system performance as Windows 10 was further optimised.

500
Million+
Windows 10 devices in use

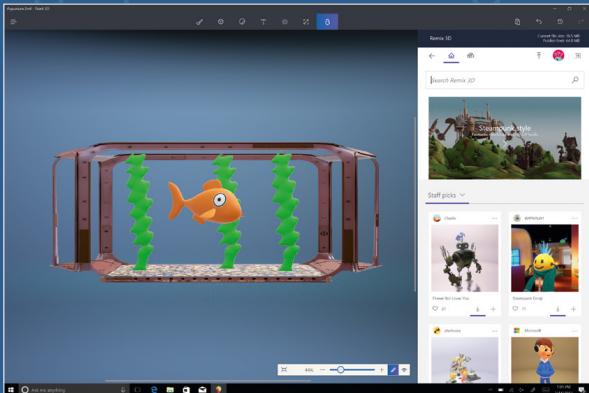
November 2015

Anniversary Update ►

The first major update of Windows 10 was known as the Anniversary update or Redstone 1. Again there were some improvements to major Windows 10 features such as the taskbar and Start menu, with a dedicated section in settings for customising both. The Edge browser had a massive overhaul, with the ability to pin tab added, among much else. Edge extensions finally arrived, allowing users to add tools to Edge such as AdBlock. Windows Ink Workspace, aimed more at users on Microsoft Surface, made its first appearance on the OS. From this update onwards, Windows 10 has really felt like a solid and exciting OS.

*Used for over
1 Billion hours
every day*

Creators Update ►



The Creators update, codename Redstone 2, introduced several new Microsoft apps, along with some great improvements to system features and existing apps. Now with the Creators Update, you have a new app called Paint 3D, allowing you to create or modify 3D objects. Built-in game streaming with Beam was added, and is the easiest and most interactive way to stream your gameplay on Windows 10. There is a new tab preview bar in Edge, along with the ability to set tabs aside for later.

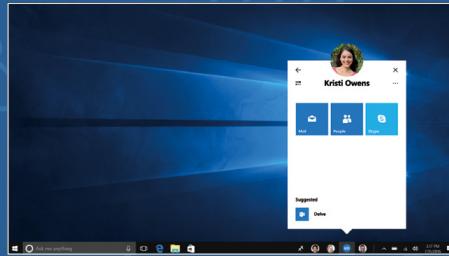
August 2016

April 2017

Late 2017

300 Million+
people use Windows 10
every day

Fall Creators Update ►



Redstone 3, known publicly as the Fall Creators update, promises lots of additions and changes to the OS, including completely redesigned core apps, new features such as Windows Timeline and OneDrive Files on Demand and the ability to pick up where you left off when switching between Windows 10 devices. A new Story Remix feature will be added, allowing users to create video slideshows, and new VR tools are expected too. Redstone 3 also takes the first steps towards Project Neon, a complete design overhaul for Windows 10 coming next year. You can read more about the future of Windows 10 overleaf.

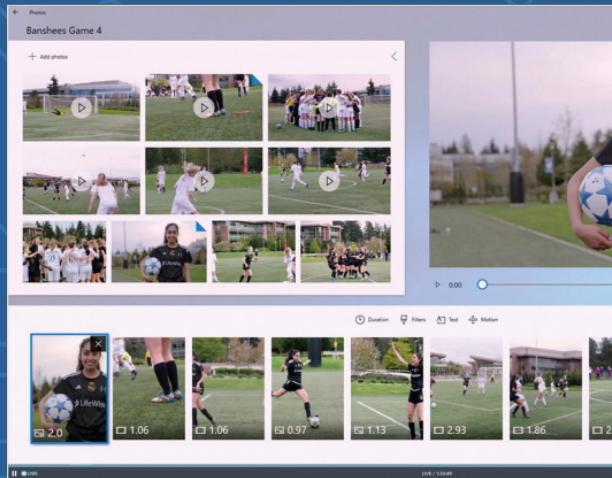
Over
700,000
apps
on the Windows Store

Windows 10 Fall Creators and Beyond

The Fall Creators update, due in the third quarter of 2017, is the third of four updates in the Redstone line. It isn't expected to be huge in terms of new features but will include important updates to the system preparing for Redstone 4. Redstone 4, due in 2018, looks like it will be a major update, in terms of features and design, paving the way for the Project Neon design shift. For now though, let's take a look at what is coming in the immediate future.

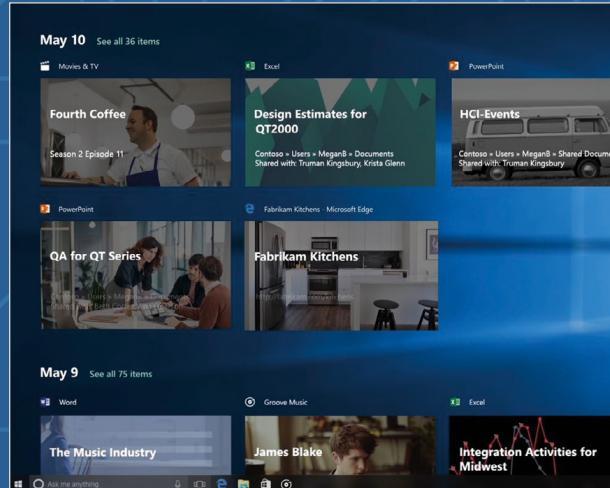
Around 50% of all PCs now run Windows 10

Remix Your Photos ▶



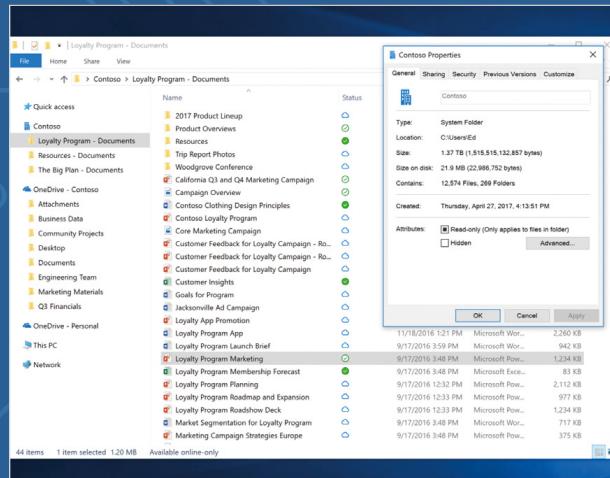
Story Remix uses AI and deep learning to organise and transform your photos and videos into stories. Story Remix brings your memories, or even your friends' photos and videos together to create stories with a soundtrack, theme and cinematic transitions. You can also create mixed reality by adding 3D objects to your photos and videos to tell stories in a whole new way or turn your photos and videos into your canvas, drawing on them with Windows Ink.

Time Travel ▶



Timeline lets you jump back in time to find what you were working on, whether it was 2 hours or 2 months ago. With Timeline in Windows 10, you can now jump back in time to find what you were working on. With a visual timeline that displays what you were doing when, you can easily hop back into files, apps, and sites as if you never left. This is a major, and sure to be useful, addition to the Windows 10 interface.

Save Internal Disk Space ▶

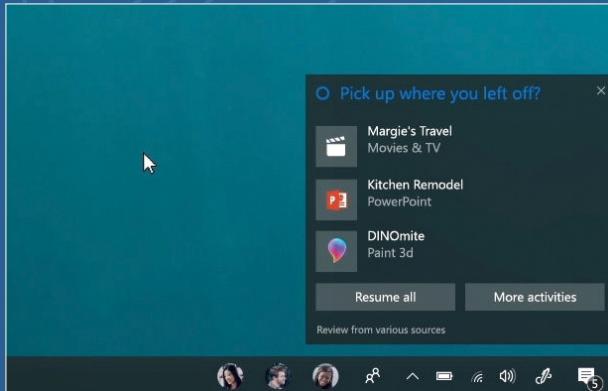


OneDrive Files On-Demand will allow you to access your files in the cloud without using storage space on your device. All your files can be seen in File Explorer and accessed on demand whenever they are needed with a few clicks. Files On-Demand also allows you to open online files from within desktop or Windows store apps using the Windows file picker. Simply select the file you want to open in the file picker and the file will automatically download and open in your app.

Edge users spend 44 billion minutes

online each month

Pick Up Where You Left Off ▶



This new feature of Cortana lets you pick up where you left off across Windows, iOS and Android devices. Imagine logging off your PC and having the doc you were editing pop-up on your phone. Cortana asks if you want to pick up where you left in your app, doc or website. It's like having your PC and your phone finish each other's sentences.

Mixed Reality ▶

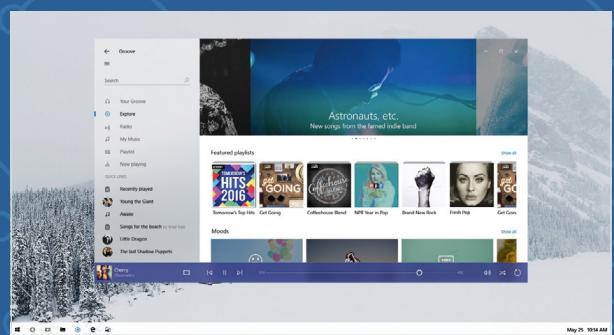
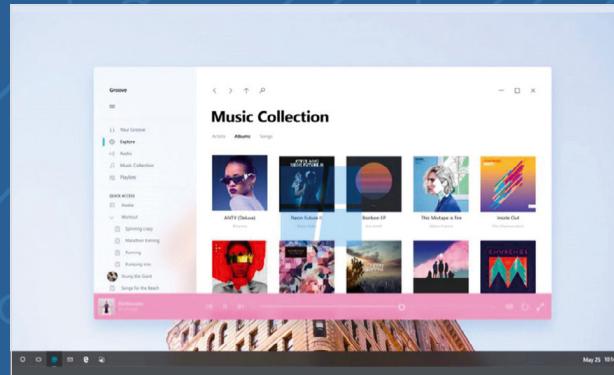


The Windows 10 Fall Creators Update will also see the magic of mixed reality brought to consumers around the world. The magic can be yours when you pair a Windows Mixed Reality-ready PC with affordable Windows Mixed Reality headset and motion controllers. The motion controllers offer precise and responsive tracking of movement in your field of view using the sensors in your headset. There is no need to install hardware on the walls around you.

Project Neon Preview ▶



Project Neon is the codename for the upcoming UI upgrade for Windows 10. Project NEON will focus heavily on animations, simplicity, and consistency, adding transparency to some components and edging towards a more Material design. The whole thing looks like it will bring a much more modern and fresh look to many parts of the OS, and from the images released so far, looks like a very nice, if subtle, overhaul.



Know Your Computer

Even if you don't intend to build your own computer, or even upgrade one, it is a good idea to at least understand the standard components inside. The key to keeping your PC running smoothly and efficiently is a better understanding of how everything works together, from the RAM to the Hard Drive.

Central Processing Unit (CPU) + Cooler ▶

The 'brain' of your computer, where all of the complicated computational stuff happens. If you are not familiar with the inside of a PC, it can be surprising just how small and seemingly simple this component is. In this image, the CPU is hidden behind a cooler (as it will be in every PC, although the cooler style will vary).

Exhaust Fan ▶

Even if your computer doesn't have an intake fan (although this is unlikely) it will have an exhaust fan at the back. This is normally positioned at the top of the case at the back and is designed to suck out hot air created by the various components. Again, this is very easy to replace as long as you use the correct size replacement.

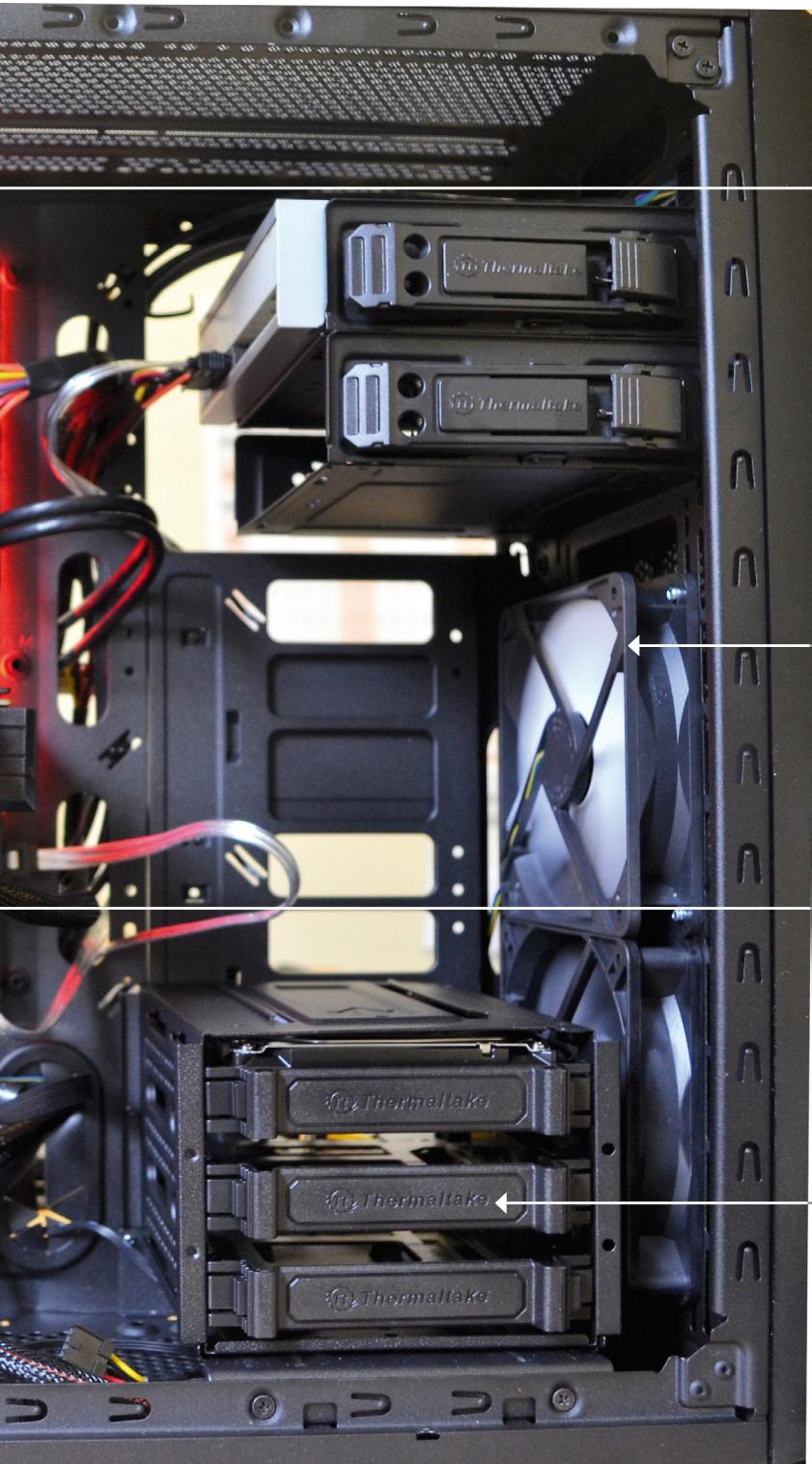
Graphics Card (GFX or GPU) ▶

Just like any other component, the exact size and style of the graphics card will vary between different computers. The one shown here is a fairly high-end card, aimed at gaming and other graphically intensive tasks. Modern GFX cards will always be plugged into the PCI-e slot on the motherboard.

Power Supply Unit (PSU) ▶

This black (or grey or silver) box distributes power from the mains to each component of your computer, either directly or indirectly through the motherboard. Some PSUs will have spare cables coming out of them but modular PSU's should only have the cables needed for the components in your system.





Random Access Memory (RAM) ▶

RAM is what the PC uses to store data as it is working, on a temporary, moment-by-moment basis. The amount of RAM in your computer will vary but modern systems will normally have at least 8GB, spread over at least two RAM chips or modules. More RAM is nearly always better and can really help to improve PC performance.

Intake Fan ▶

Most computers will have at least one intake fan but many will have two or more. The intake fans are normally at the front of the case and designed to pull air inside the unit to help keep the components cool. Case fans are very easy to replace but you will need to make sure you have the correct size (120mm, 140mm, etc.).

Motherboard ▶

The motherboard, also sometimes referred to as the mainboard, is the foundation of your computer, connecting everything up, distributing power to components and generally holding everything together. If you ever open up your PC, always try to avoid touching the surface of the motherboard directly.

Hard Drive (HDD or SSD) ▶

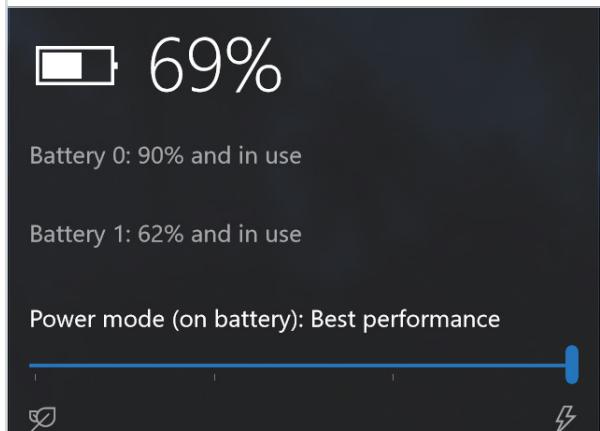
This is where all of the personal files, software and system files on your computer are stored. Your computer may have a traditional hard drive, a newer (and better) solid state drive or even a combination of both. Modern PC cases have the hard drive fitted into a small sliding tray, usually at the front of the case.

Fall Creators Tips and Tricks

By now, you should have the latest Fall Creators update (or later) on your Windows 10 PC. This update, whilst not crammed with shiny new features, does include lots of very welcome improvements to existing apps and features. Let's take a look at some of the cool new things Windows 10 can do.

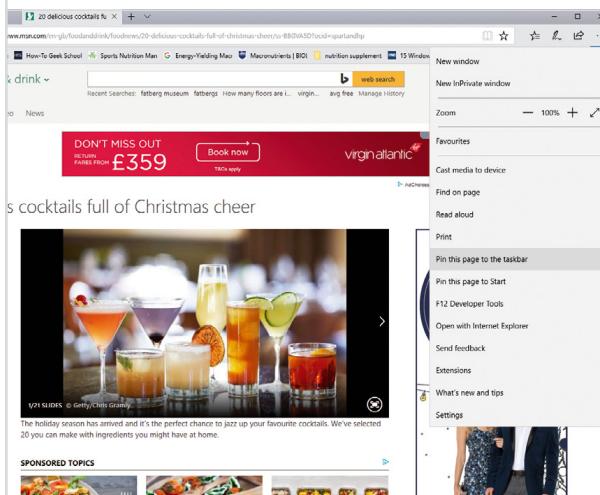
Battery and Performance Slider ▶

The new Performance Power slider lets you set the right balance between battery-life longevity and system performance and responsiveness. Choose to optimise for battery life on a long flight or go with performance when you're gaming or photo editing at home. Simply click on the battery icon in the taskbar and use the slider to choose your performance and battery balance (laptop and tablet only).



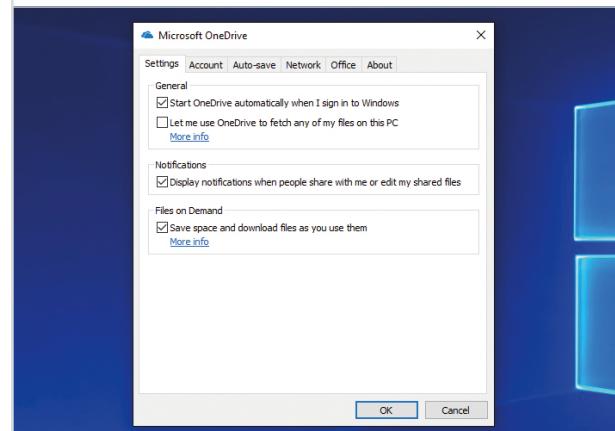
Pin Websites to the Taskbar ▶

You can now pin your websites to the taskbar whilst browsing in Microsoft Edge. With the Windows 10 Fall Creators Update, you can pin your favourite websites to the taskbar and have the icon show up in the taskbar for instant access. Simply head to the menu, select 'Pin this page to the taskbar' and watch the site icon appear.



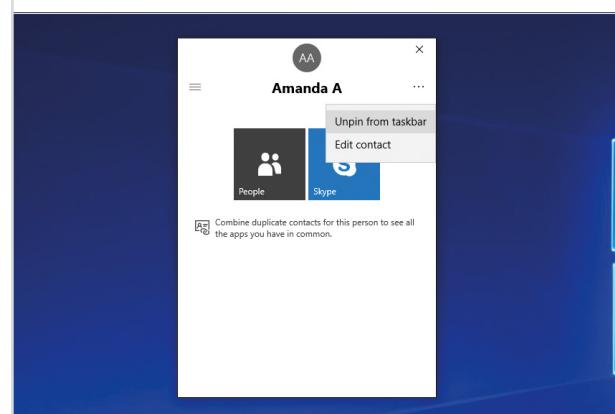
Save Disk Space ▶

You can now access your saved files in OneDrive just like any other file on your PC without filling up your disk space. Make sure you're signed into OneDrive on your device. Right-click the OneDrive cloud icon in the notification area, at the far right of the taskbar, and select Settings; or select Start and search for OneDrive. On the Settings tab, select the 'Save space and download files as you use them' box. Right-click a file or folder and select Always keep on this device or Free up space.



Quick Access to People ▶

You can pin your top people to the taskbar for one-click access to those who matter most. Communication apps, starting with Mail and Skype, come up together custom-filtered by individual. Tap on your pinned contact to send an email or chat using Skype without having to open the apps. Once pinned, sharing is as easy as dragging a file directly onto the pinned contacts in your taskbar; or you can share directly via the 'Share' picker by choosing from the recommended list of your top people.



Read with Fewer Distractions ▶

For a clean and simple layout with fewer distractions, select Reading view in the address bar. You can even change the reading view style (light, medium or dark) and font size to find what's most comfortable for you. When you come across an article you want to save for later in Microsoft Edge, select Add to favourites or reading list and then Reading list > Add; or right-click any link and select Add to reading list. When you're ready to read, select Hub and then Reading list.



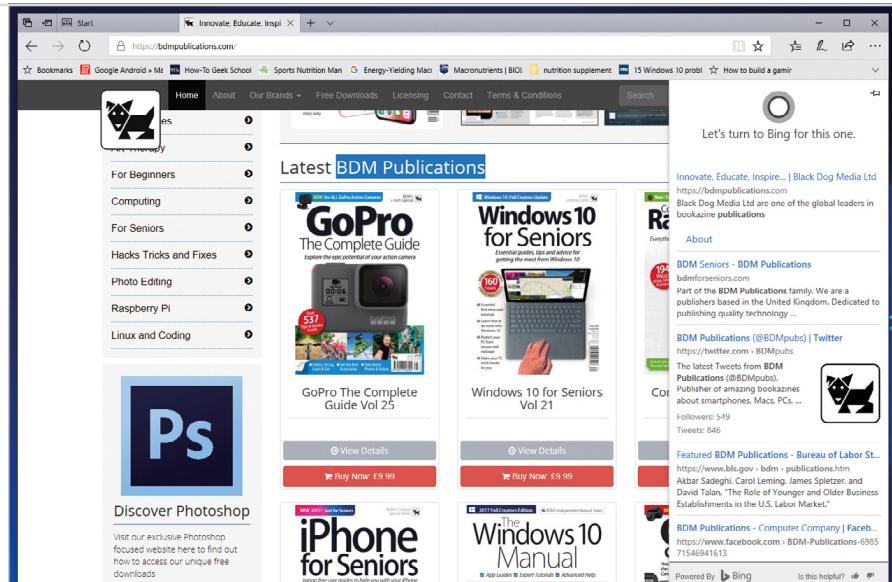
Edit any Favourite URL ▶

Once you have updated to Windows 10 Fall Creators, you can edit the URL of any favourite in the Favourites menu or the Favourites Bar in Microsoft Edge. Simply go to Hub, then Favourites; right-click on a favourite and select Edit a URL. This might seem like a minor addition to Edge but it can be very useful.



Ask Cortana in Edge ▶

When you stumble across a topic on the web that you want to know more about, Cortana is your all-knowing guru. Highlight a word, phrase or image, press and hold (or right-click) it and then select Ask Cortana to get more info or find related images. This is a really useful tool but you need to have Cortana set up first.



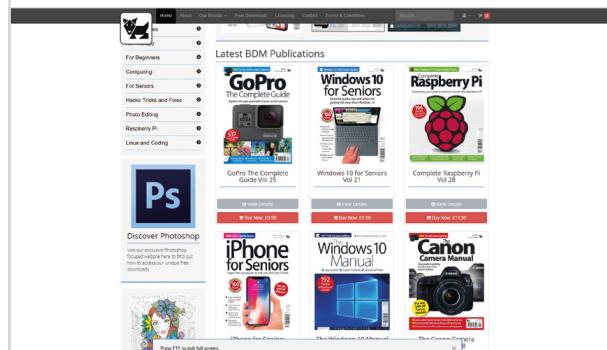
Voice-activated Power Commands ▶

You no longer have to stop what you're doing to turn off or lock your PC. Instead, you can use voice commands to control power options. Commands include: "Hey Cortana, restart PC"; "Hey Cortana, turn off PC"; "Hey Cortana, sign out"; and "Hey Cortana, lock PC". To prevent accidental shutdown, restart or sign out, Cortana will ask you for voice confirmation when using these commands.



F11 for Full Screen in Edge ▶

There is now an easy full screen mode in Microsoft Edge. Simply press F11 or choose the new Full Screen icon within the Settings menu (three dots) to take your websites full screen. You can exit Full Screen view by pressing F11 again or by clicking the Restore icon in the top right corner.



Your free Windows 10 upgrade is here!

- Reservation - Confirmed
- Download - Complete
- **Upgrade - Available**

Here's what happens next:

1. Expect a 10 second prep of your device
2. Review the license agreement
3. Choose when to upgrade

OK, let's continue.



Installing, Upgrading and Updating

Learn how to install, upgrade and update Windows 10 quickly, easily and safely; and then discover the tools you can use to make sure that your OS is always accessible and always recoverable if the worst should happen.

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 - 21 Ready to Install**
 - 21 The Boot Process**
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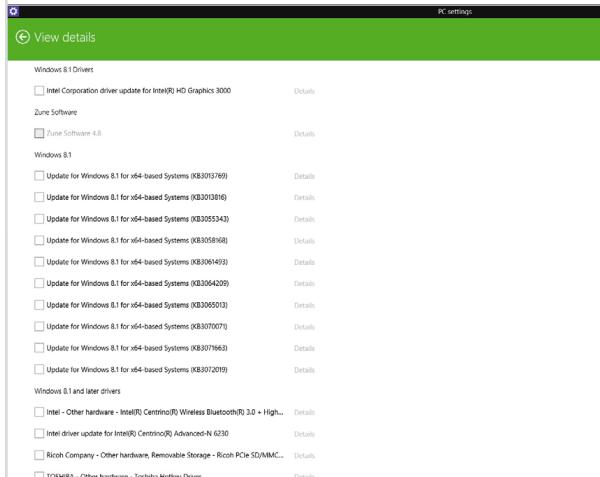
Upgrading to Windows 10

If you want to upgrade to Windows 10 from Windows 7 or Windows 8 you can do this for free. Providing you've installed all of the latest Windows 10 updates you should be offered the free upgrade via the process we've outlined below.

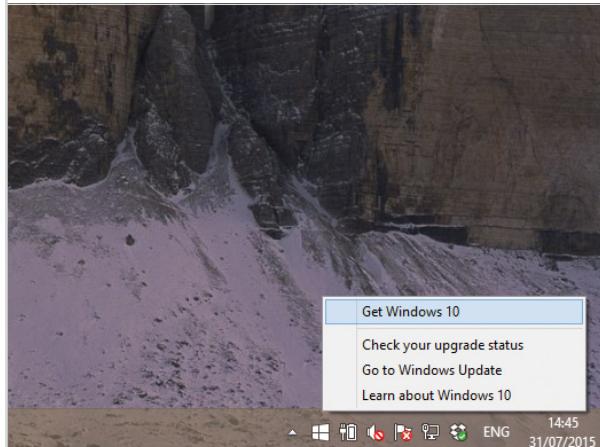
Upgrading to Windows 10 from Windows 7 or 8.1

Installing Windows 10 on a Windows 7 or 8.1 PC is a relatively simple process. Because of the way Windows 8 works, it is quite a change and takes the desktop back to being far more like Windows 7.

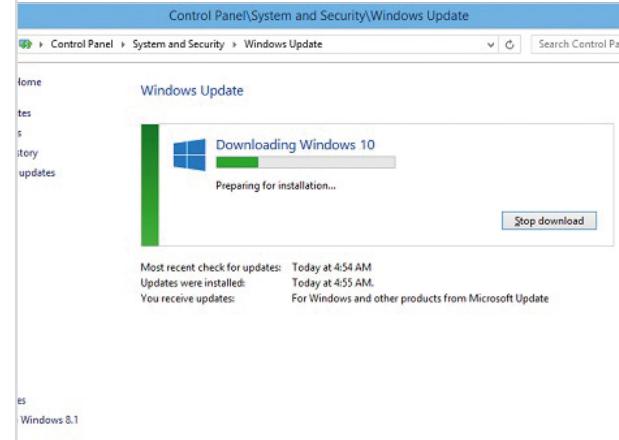
- 1** The first thing you need to do is to make sure you have installed all of the updates for Windows 7 or Windows 8. This means your PC is up-to-date and is ready to receive the upgrade; update KB3035583 means that you'll receive the Get Windows 10 app.



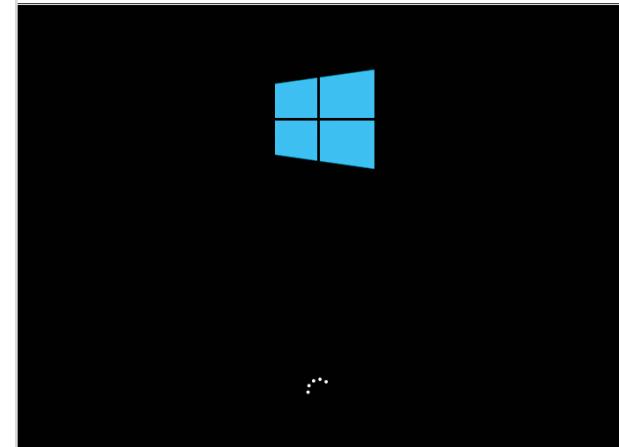
- 2** Here's the Get Windows 10 app as it appears in the taskbar. Here we're using a Windows 8.1 PC. As you can see there's a little Windows symbol in the notifications area which you can right-click to get Windows 10. You're also able to check your upgrade status from here, which you might need later on.



- 3** You may be placed in a queue when you sign up for your upgrade. When it was first released this was because Microsoft wanted to regulate how many people were downloading it at once. When Windows 10 is downloading it will show in Windows Update like this.



- 4** Once downloaded, you'll then be guided to restart your PC and begin the installation. If your download is delayed, it could be that there is high demand at that particular time. This part of the process will probably take some time, so put your feet up and get a cup of tea!



5 Your PC will run through several things during this time, including checking that everything installed and connected to your PC is OK with the update. Here the process is checking our devices. Installing Windows 10 can wildly vary in how long it will take to install depending on the age of your PC and other factors such as processing power.



Getting devices ready 50%

6 Expect your PC to also restart several times during the installation process. It's not something that can be done quickly we're afraid. But when you see this blue screen appear (no, it's not like an old 'blue screen of death' from earlier versions of Windows) you know the real setup is about to begin.



Just a moment...

7 You may be asked to identify whether this PC belongs to a company or if it's a personal PC. This is because we're installing Windows 10 Pro here, rather than Windows 10 Home and it's because different rules apply for PCs being used in a business environment. Click Next to move through the process of setting up more personal preferences.

Who owns this PC?

This choice is important, and it isn't easy to switch later. If this PC belongs to your organisation, signing in with that ID will give you access to their resources.

My organisation

I own it

8 Next you'll be asked to sign in with your Microsoft account. You almost certainly do have one and if you have a Outlook.com, Hotmail or Xbox account you can use those details (you should also be able to use Skype details if you sign in with an email address). You can also retrieve a lost password if you've mislaid yours.

Make it yours

Your Microsoft account opens up a world of benefits. Sign in for your personalised experience. Learn more.

graham_daniels@outlook.com

[Forgotten my password](#)

No account? Create one.

[Skip this step](#)

[Microsoft Privacy Statement](#)



Back

Sign in

9 If you don't have a Microsoft account, you can still sign up for one from the screen you saw in the previous step. You'll only need to provide basic details. You can choose whether to create a new email address or just use an existing one – you don't need to use a Hotmail or Outlook.com email address.

Let's create your account

Windows, Office, Outlook.com, OneDrive, Skype, Xbox – they're all better and more personal when you sign in with your Microsoft account.* Learn more

<input type="text"/>	Surname
<input type="text"/>	someone@example.com
Get a new email address	
<input type="text"/>	Password
<input type="text"/> United Kingdom	

*If you already use a Microsoft service, go Back to sign in with that account.



Back

Next

10 Next we're going to set up a PIN. Despite what it says on this screen, passwords are still very much key to Windows 10 and it's still the ultimate way of accessing and retrieving your information. However, it's faster to sign in with a PIN, so that's what we'll set up.

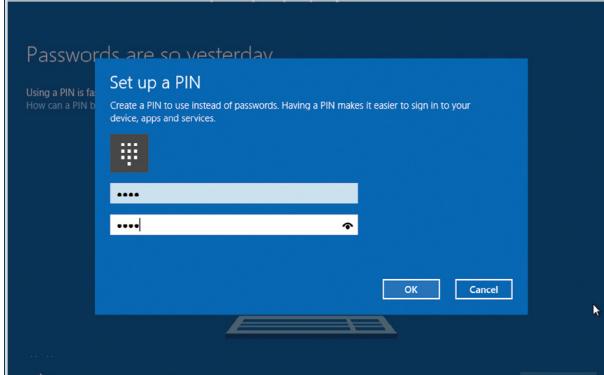
Passwords are so yesterday

Using a PIN is faster and more secure than a password – we think you'll love it.
How can a PIN be safer than a long password?

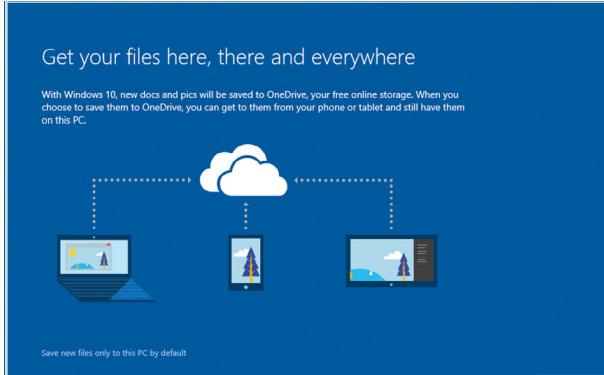


[PIN me!](#)

11 PIN codes are four digits exactly the same as with your bank card. However, we'd never recommend you use the same PIN code as you use for your banking. Once this is set up, you'll be able to log into Windows with the number, although you can fall back on your password too.



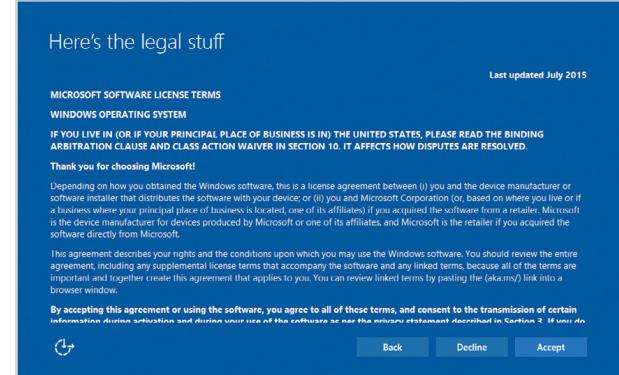
12 OneDrive is set up as a default in Windows 10. We've explained a lot more about OneDrive on page 32, but it's Microsoft's cloud storage system that enables you to access your files on multiple devices. If you don't want this or you use an alternative, click Save New Files Only to This PC by Default.



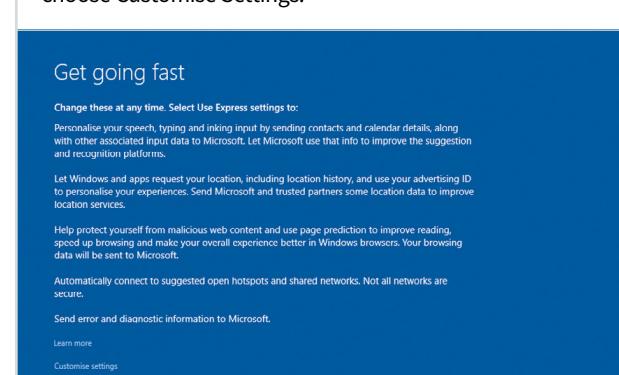
13 Cortana is the virtual assistant within Windows 10. It can provide you with useful information such as weather, upcoming appointments and so on. But you'll need to give it permission to collect information from your PC. Or rather, you'll need to opt out if you don't want it. Click Not Now if you don't.



14 The legal agreement is a standard part of signing into any new software and Windows 10 is no different. It contains all the standard legal stuff when you're provided with software to use that you don't own the copyright for. Unless you're intending to stop using your PC, click Accept.



15 Next you're offered to 'Get Going Now' – this is a little confusing as it's essentially asking you to use the settings Windows decides for certain things, but what have we been doing for the last few steps other than customising settings? Most of the settings are fairly standard, but if you want to check them, choose Customise Settings.

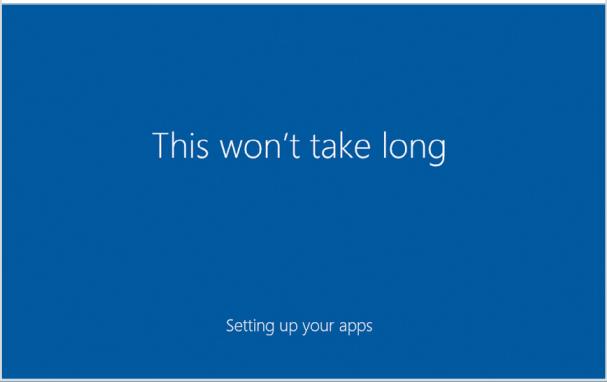


16 This screen tells you about the new standard default apps. It's a bit sneaky as this is Microsoft's way of telling you that these will be the default apps for web browsing, looking at photos, listening to music and watching videos. You can always use other apps of course, so if you want to alter the default at this stage, select Let Me Choose My Default Apps.



17

You'll then see this screen which may be present for a few minutes. Windows takes a bit of time to configure the apps you use with your PC and make sure they're configured correctly for Windows 10. This process could be slow if you had a lot of older apps installed.



This won't take long

Setting up your apps

18

You're almost there! Finally before you get the lock screen, you'll see this display. You may find that the installation of Windows 10 is actually quite quick if you've got a relatively fast PC that's uncluttered by too many apps. But it's probably going to be the opposite if your PC has a lot of stuff installed.



Let's start

19

Welcome to the lock screen. If you're a Windows 8.1 user, this will be familiar to you. If you're a Windows 7 user, this won't be the case as there was no lock screen as such in Windows 7. Click anywhere to reveal the sign in page.



20:44
Saturday 18 July

20

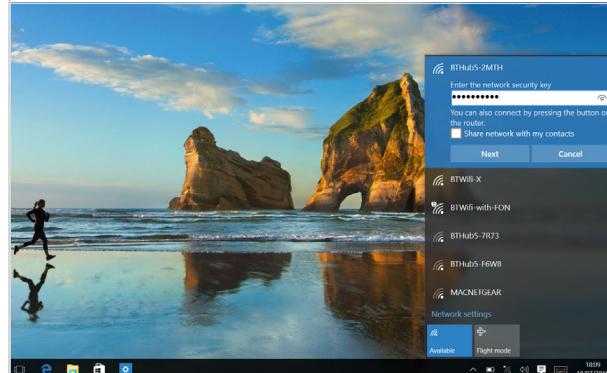
You'll note that we're now asked to sign in with our new PIN code, but you can click Sign-in Options should you need to sign in with your password. Note that you can also shut down or restart your PC from here using the controls in the bottom right.

**21**

Here's your new desktop. As you can see all the key apps are arranged in the Start menu, but you can take them out of the 'tiles' area and add whatever you wish – everything is still accessible via 'All apps'. Check out our guide to the Start menu in a few pages' time.

**22**

You may have been asked to do this during the setup, but if your PC isn't already connected to the Internet, the first thing to do is to go and find your Wi-Fi network. Click the wireless network symbol from the notifications area and enter the security key.



Installing the Windows OS

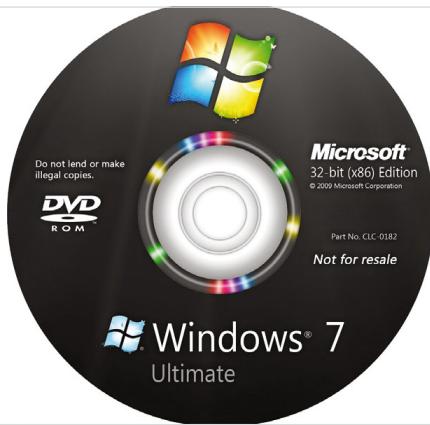
Installing the Windows OS, be it 7, 8 or 10, on a brand new PC is not quite as simple as booting up, putting in the installation disk and following the on-screen instructions. Don't worry though, once you know the fairly easy steps you need to take, getting the operating system onto your new PC should be a straightforward process. This is also a good time to get used to working in the BIOS menu.

The Installation Media

The first thing to consider is the installation media you want to use to install Windows. This can be either a shop bought install disk, a created disk or a prepared USB flash drive.

1

If you have an official Windows installation disk, you can skip this part and move on to the boot process. If you have an old copy of windows, it is usually possible to reuse that to install windows on your new PC, as long as it is not already registered on another PC, or is no longer being used on another PC, although this is a slightly more complicated process.

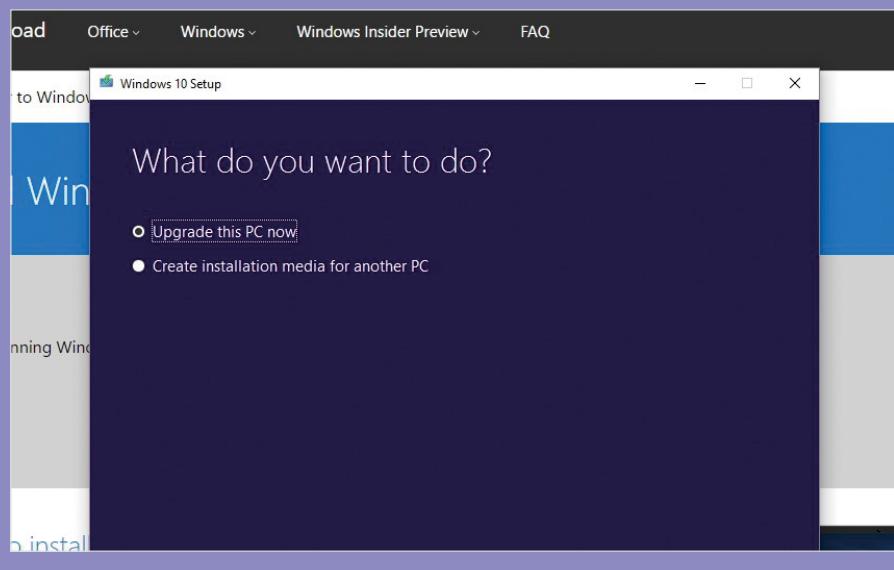


2

Increasingly, Windows is offered as a downloadable file rather than a physical disk. Just as with a disk, when buying a digital copy of Windows, it will need to include a unique activation key. You will be asked for this during installation. A digital download of Windows will be an ISO file, which is just an archive of a CD/DVD (called an Image). This will need to be burnt to a disk or a bootable USB flash drive.

Media Creation Tool ▶

Download the Windows Media Creation Tool from the Microsoft website and run it. Select Create installation media for another PC. Select the language, edition and architecture (64-bit or 32-bit) for Windows. Choose the installation media (DVD or USB), click Next and then select Finish when it's done.



Ready to Install ▶

You now have everything you need to install a fresh copy of Windows on a new PC: Original installation disk or created install media, an activation key and your blank PC. Now you need to take a look at how to get a PC with nothing on it to read a DVD or USB that's been inserted.



The Boot Process

The BIOS is preinstalled on your motherboard and controls all aspects of how your PC boots up, as well as many other things. It also allows you to manage the boot order.

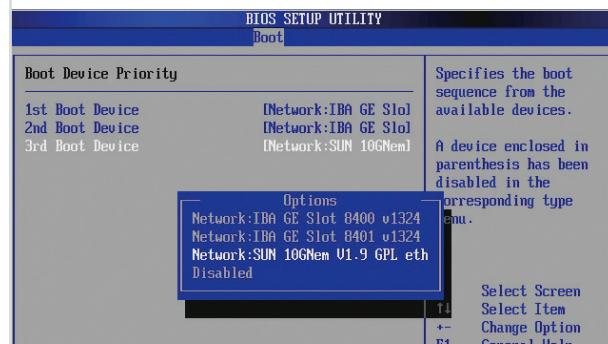
1 If you have never done it before (and many people won't have) changing things in a BIOS menu can seem daunting. However, all you are doing here is changing the boot order, so the first thing the PC encounters is your disk or USB drive with the Windows ISO on it. It can then boot from the disk, prompting it to install Windows.



2 BIOS (Basic Input Output Subsystem) is a programmable chip that controls how information is passed to various devices in the computer system. A typical method to access the BIOS settings screen is to press ESC, F1, F2, F8 or F10 during the boot sequence. Power your PC up, insert your bootable disc or USB, restart and press the relevant keyboard key until the BIOS menu opens.



3 Use the arrow keys to select the BOOT tab. System devices appear in order of priority. BIOS settings allow you to run a boot sequence from a floppy drive, hard drive, CD-ROM drive or an external device. You may configure the order that your computer searches these physical devices for the boot sequence. The first device in the order list has the first boot priority.



4 Save and exit the BIOS setup utility and the computer will restart with the changed settings. Windows installation should now begin. Because you are using a brand new hard drive, you will need to choose where to install Windows (main drive area, or create a partition). In our experience, there is little need to create a separate partition for Windows these days.



Back Up with a Recovery Drive

A recovery drive is one of the best ways to ensure that you don't lose everything on your computer in the event of a critical malfunction. It can help you both troubleshoot and fix problems, even if the PC won't start as it normally would. All you need is a blank, formatted USB flash drive (sometimes called a thumb drive) and this step-by-step guide.

Creating the Recovery Drive

Creating a recovery drive is a relatively simple process, although it takes a bit of time, but one which could save a lot of frustration in the future.

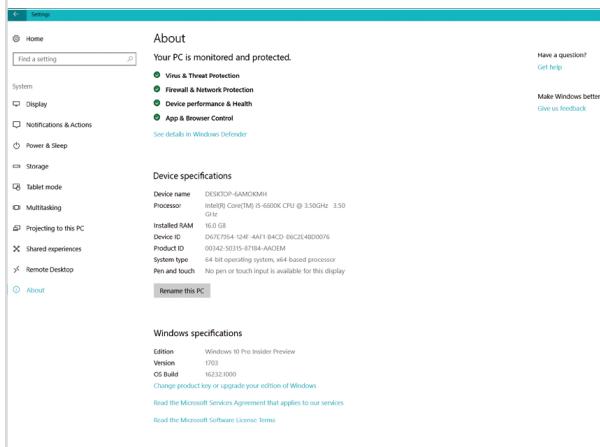
1

The first thing you need to do is find a USB drive that is large enough and then make sure it is ready to be used. The USB drive you decide to use won't be able to be used for anything else like storing other files, etc. so make sure it is a spare, or bought specifically for the task.



2

A basic Windows 10 recovery file will be less than 500MB but if you choose to include system files in the backup (recommended), so you can use it to reinstall Windows, you will need much more space. A basic recovery drive can be as small as 1GB but a full recovery drive needs to be at least 8GB.



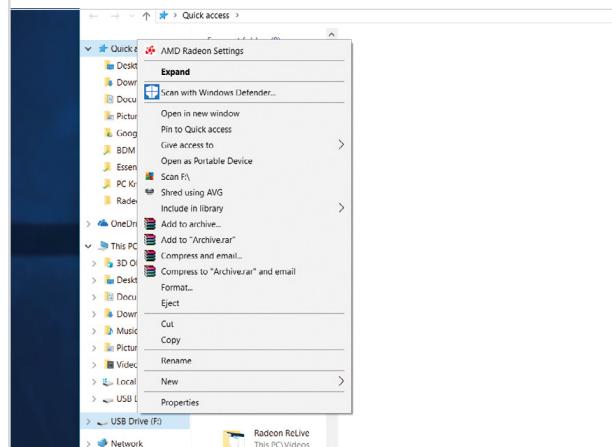
3

Your USB drive needs to be wiped of everything currently on it before the recovery drive is created. You can do this during the set up process later or you can format it yourself right now: a useful thing to know how to do. Insert your USB drive into a free USB slot on in your computer.



4

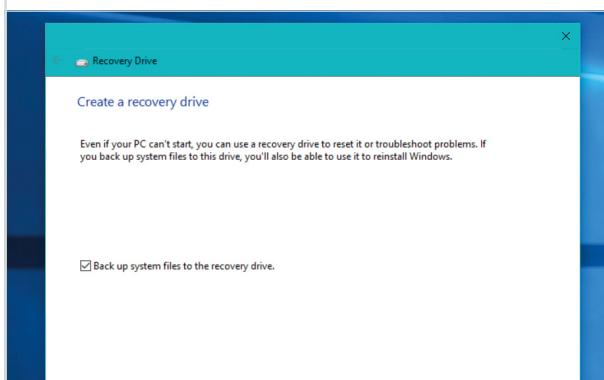
Open the File Explorer on your computer and you should see the USB flash drive listed in the sidebar. It will probably be labelled as the (E:) or (F:) drive. Right-click on the drive label and select Format from the action menu. Leave the settings as default (should be FAT32) and then click Start.



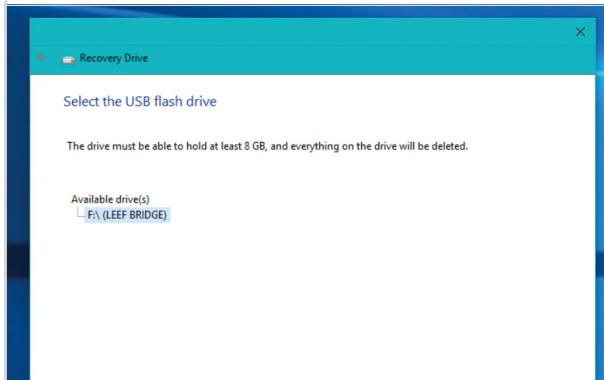
5 You should now be ready to create your recovery drive. In the search field, type “Recovery Drive” and select the Create a Recovery Drive result. In newer versions of Windows 10, you might also be able to find the Recovery Drive in the main apps list, opened by clicking the Start menu button.



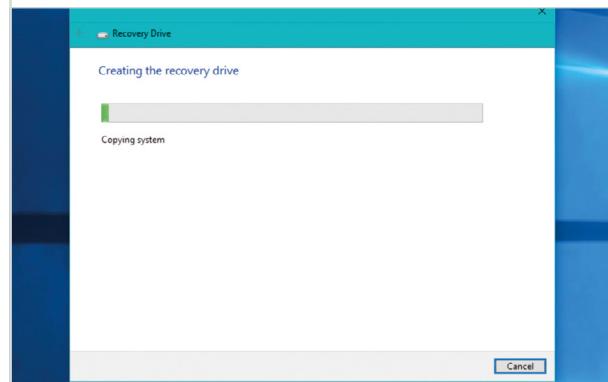
6 Allow the software to “make changes to this PC” and the setup wizard will open. This first screen is where you choose whether you want to back up system files with the recovery drive, so you can use it to reinstall Windows 10. If you do, tick the checkbox and then click Next.



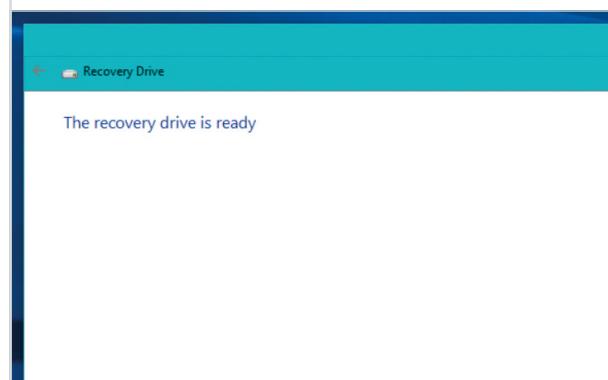
7 After a few moments, you will be asked to select the USB flash drive you wish to use. If you only have one USB drive inserted, it will be the only one shown and will be automatically selected. You are reminded again how much storage space the drive needs, and that all existing data will be wiped.



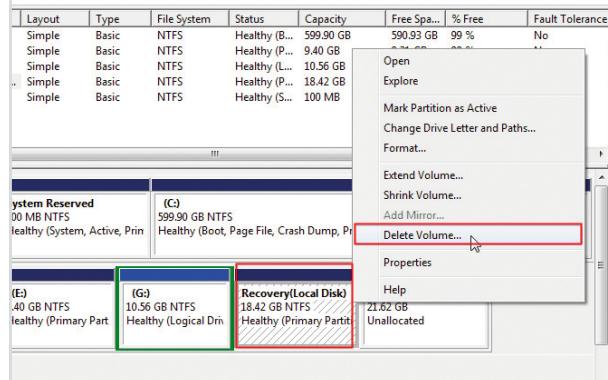
8 Click Create on the next screen and the process will begin. This may take a while to complete, so go make a coffee and leave it to run. A progress bar shows how far along it is, should you need to check. Do not remove the USB drive, or turn off your computer, before the process finishes.



9 When the process is complete, you should be prompted to delete the recovery partition on your PC, to save some space; as long as you plan to keep your recovery drive, this is safe to do. If you are not sure, you can leave the recovery partition in place; it can be deleted at a later date if you wish.



10 If you did not already have a recovery partition on your computer, you won’t see this step. You will simply be informed that the recovery drive is ready, and to click Finish. Remove the USB drive from your computer and put it somewhere safe. It is a good idea to label the drive so it is not reused.



Resetting Your Login Password

Whenever you create an account for Windows, it's always wise to create a password reset disk just in case you forget or accidentally reset your password. Even if you do not create a disk for each account, you should certainly create one for the administrator account.

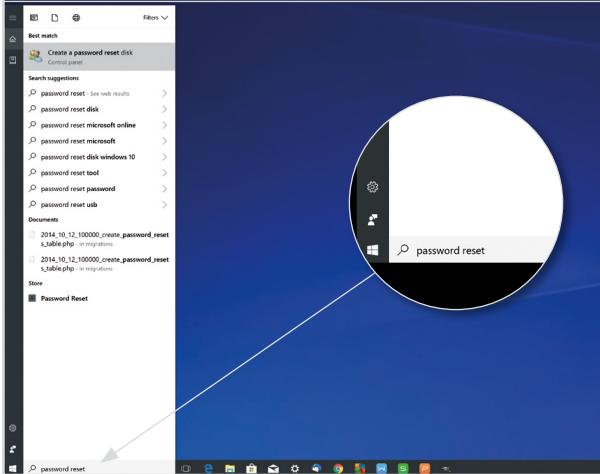
Creating a Reset Disk

A password reset disk allows you, as the name suggests, to reset the forgotten password by inserting the disk or USB stick during the boot sequence.

- 1** Insert a disk or USB flash drive into your PC. It is unlikely that your computer has a floppy drive but you can buy USB sticks very cheaply these days and you only need a small amount of storage space on it, as the password reset file is only a few KB.



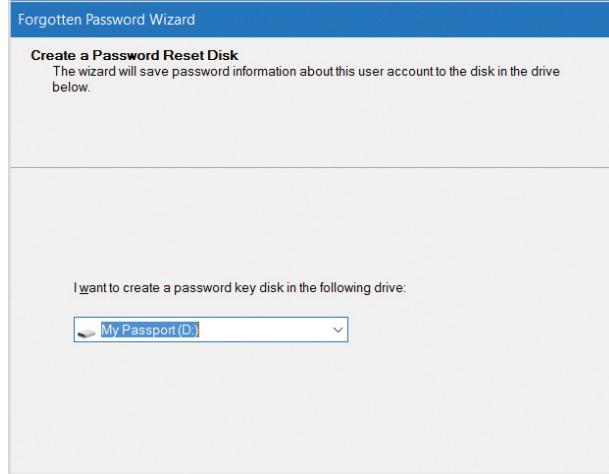
- 2** In the search box, type "password reset". As you type the password reset creation tool should appear at the top of the results. You will also see settings for changing passwords and for choosing whether a password is requested when you wake up your computer.



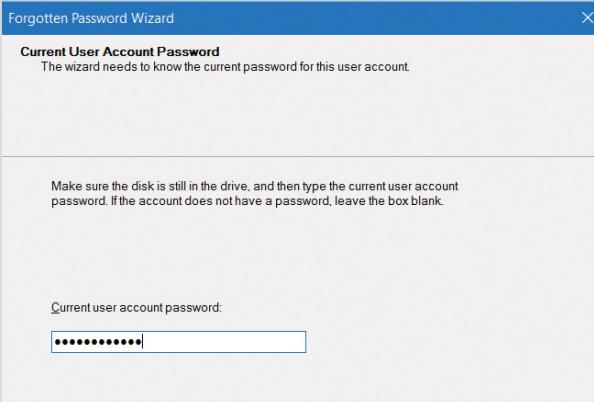
- 3** The Forgotten Password Wizard will now open. Click Next and select the storage device you wish to use for your reset disk from the dropdown menu. Make sure that you choose the correct removable disk (there could be several shown).



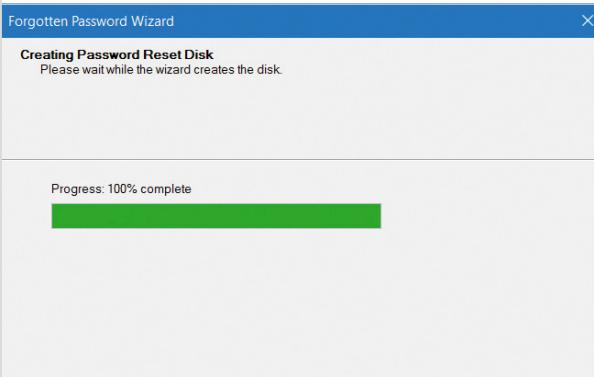
- 4** Enter your password when prompted. When the creation process finishes click on Next and then Finish. You can now remove the disk or USB stick and keep it somewhere safe; ideally, label it so you don't forget what is on it.



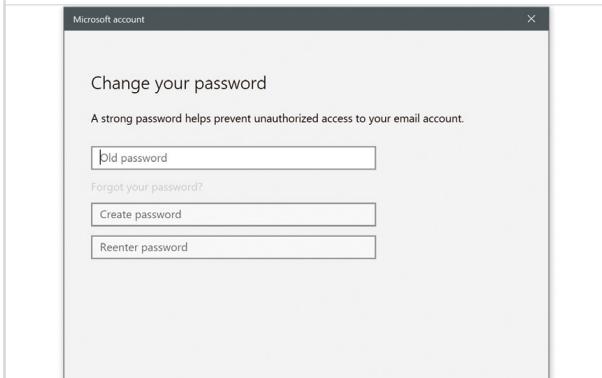
5 To use your password reset disk, try to log into the account for which you need to reset the password. After you enter an incorrect password an option to reset the password will appear. Click on it.



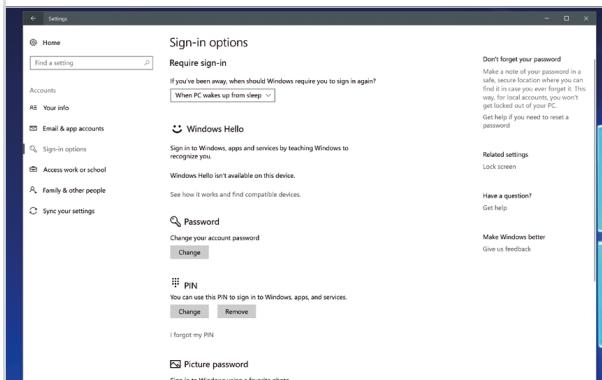
6 Click on next when the wizard window appears. Insert your password reset disk (if you haven't already) and select it from the dropdown menu. If your computer can't detect the disk or USB, try removing it and then replacing it.



7 Click Next and you will be prompted to enter a new password twice and a password hint. Then click Next. Click on Finish and you should then be able to log in to your account using the new password you just set up.

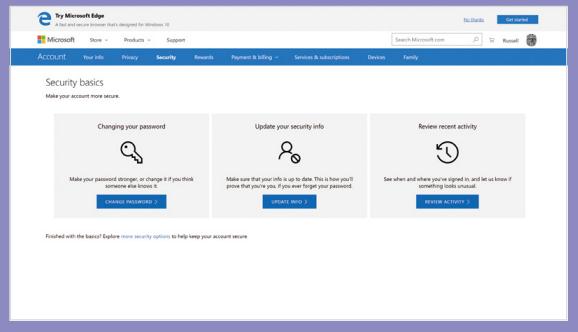


8 This method of resetting your forgotten password is probably the easiest and most convenient but it obviously requires you to have thought ahead and created the reset disk or USB drive in the first place. Luckily, there are alternative password reset methods.



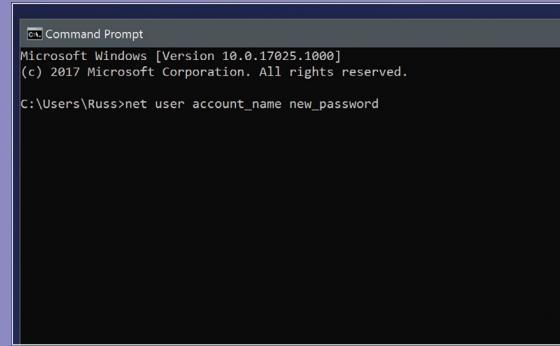
Reset Online ▶

When you forget your Microsoft account password, just use another computer to visit the “<https://account.live.com/password/reset>” or “https://www.top-password.com/knowledge/_blank” Windows Live password reset page on the Microsoft website, where you can reset the password online. It's relatively easier than resetting local account password.



Other Sign-in ▶

If you can still sign in with a PIN, open the Command Prompt (Admin). To reset your forgotten password, type the following command: `net user account_name new_password`, and press Enter. Replace account_name and new_password with your username and desired password.



Manage Windows 10 Updates

Keeping your Windows 10 computer up-to-date is important for several reasons. First, major updates such as the Anniversary update, will add new features and second, smaller updates usually fix problems, close security holes and add improvements.

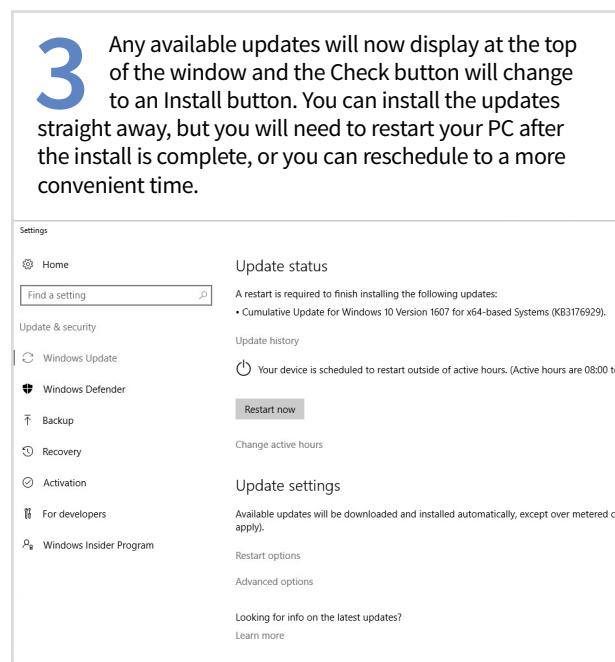
Checking for Updates

If you think that your PC needs to be updated, you don't need to wait for the automatic update process to kick in. You can quite easily check for updates yourself.

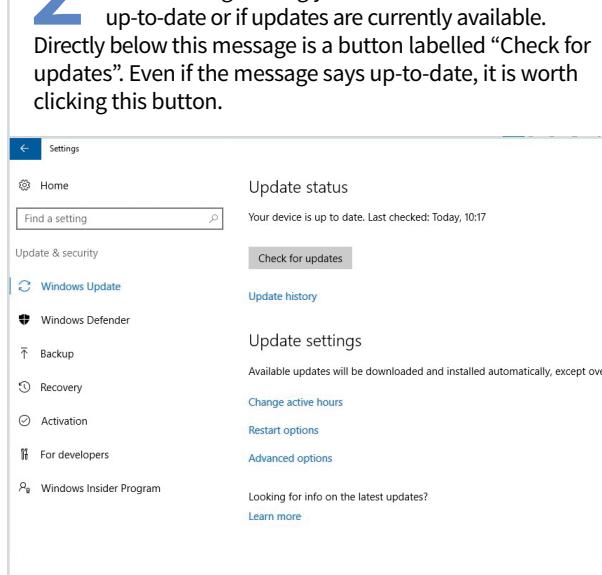
- 1** You can find the Windows 10 update information in the main settings app. Tap the Windows key or click the Start menu button and then select the Settings icon from the side of the menu. Click the “Updates & Security” heading in the menu to open the relevant settings screen.



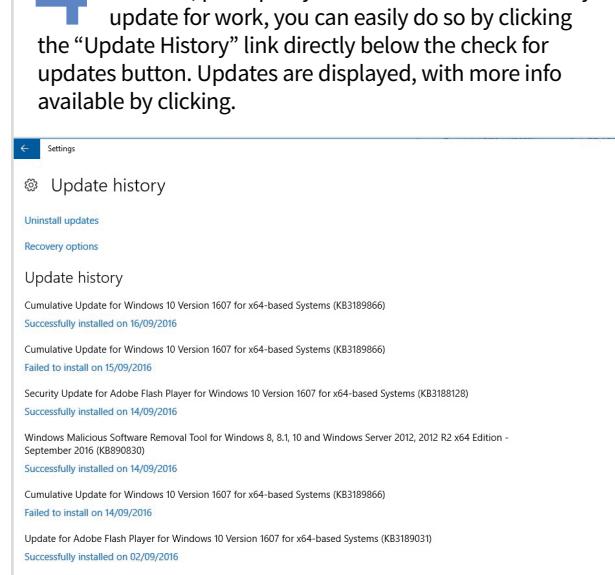
- 3** Any available updates will now display at the top of the window and the Check button will change to an Install button. You can install the updates straight away, but you will need to restart your PC after the install is complete, or you can reschedule to a more convenient time.



- 2** At the top of the window you should immediately see a message telling you whether Windows 10 is up-to-date or if updates are currently available. Directly below this message is a button labelled “Check for updates”. Even if the message says up-to-date, it is worth clicking this button.



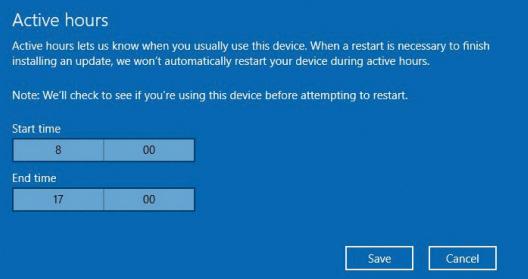
- 4** If you want to check which updates have been installed, perhaps if you need to confirm a security update for work, you can easily do so by clicking the “Update History” link directly below the check for updates button. Updates are displayed, with more info available by clicking.



Windows Update Settings

There are several additional and advanced options available which can make the whole update process quicker, easier and more efficient, which is always a good thing.

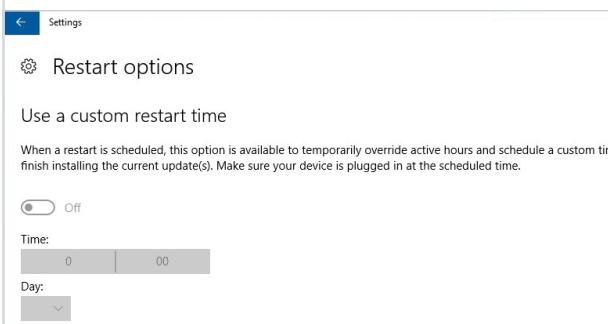
Active Hours ▶ By setting your active hours, you can tell your computer when you will most likely be using it. If you have updates set to automatically install and restart, they will only do so outside of your active hours. Useful for ensuring updates don't lose you school or office work.



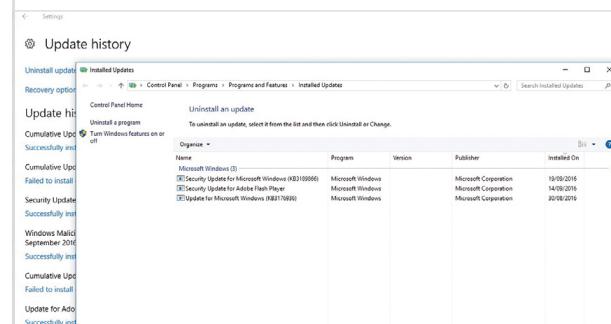
Automatic Set Up ▶ Some updates require you to restart your PC and sign in to Windows in order to finish installing the update. Windows 10 can help prevent this from happening by allowing Windows to use your sign in info to create a special token. Go to Advanced update options > Use my sign-in info...



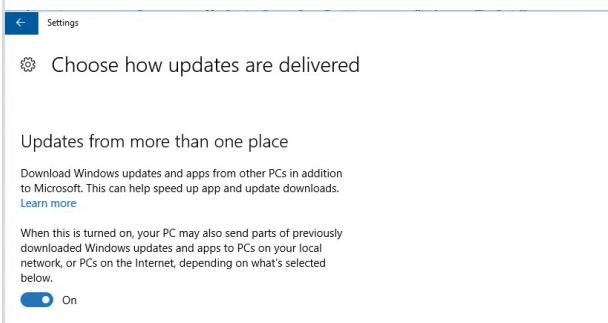
Custom Restart Time ▶ When a restart is scheduled, this option is available to temporarily override active hours and schedule a custom time to finish installing the current update. You will still need to make sure your device is plugged in at the scheduled time.



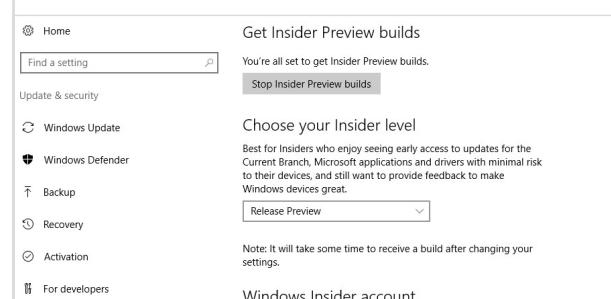
Uninstall Updates ▶ If for some reason you need to uninstall a particular update, perhaps the update is causing some software to not behave properly, you can do so fairly easily. From the Updates windows, click Update History > Uninstall Updates and use the interface to remove the update.



Update Delivery ▶ You can choose how Windows updates are delivered in the Advanced Options. Windows Update Delivery Optimisation lets you get Windows updates and Windows Store apps from sources in addition to Microsoft. This can help you get updates and apps more quickly.



Windows Insider ▶ As a beginner, you probably aren't too worried about seeing updates before they are released to the general public but this is exactly what the Windows Insider program lets you do. By joining the Insider program, you are potentially helping in the development of Windows 10 and beyond.



What to Keep Updated in the OS

Discussing updates is one thing but how do you go about making sure that you have the latest updates and that all the necessary components are being updated correctly? Thanks to the improved update process of Windows 10, this is surprisingly easy.

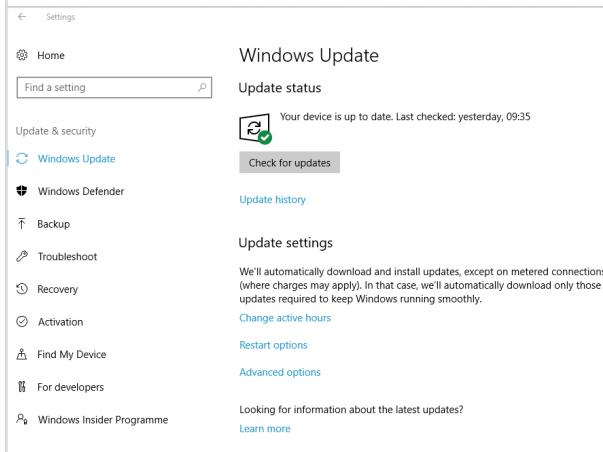
Keeping Up To Date

While it's easy to update Windows 10, there are elements that can be missed. We've already mentioned that it's not only Windows that needs updating but also software and drivers.

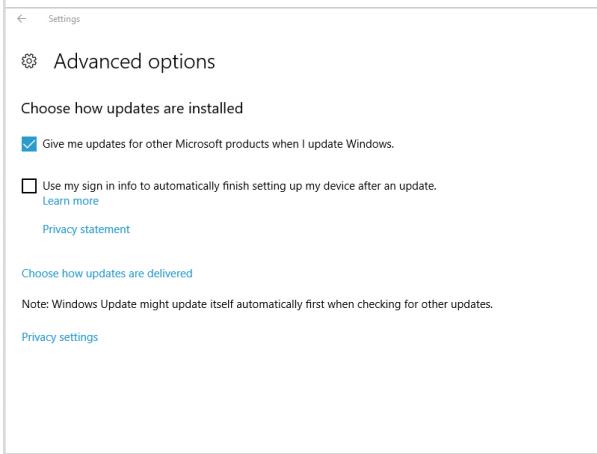
1 The first port of call is undoubtedly Windows Update. Click on the Windows Start button followed by Settings, the cog icon just above the power icon on the strip to the side. This will open the Windows Settings interface, locate the last entry, Update & Security and click it.



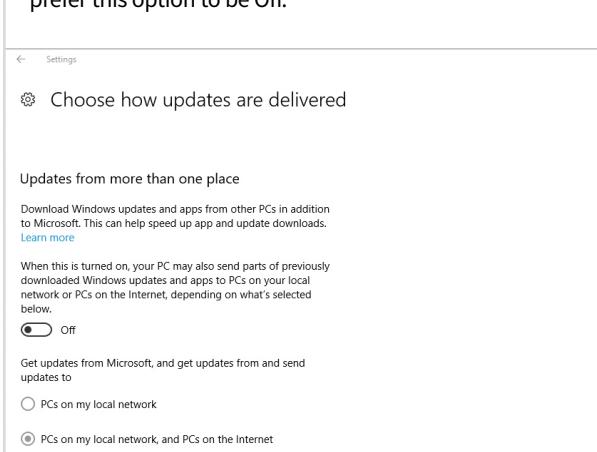
2 By default Windows Update will automatically check for, download and install updates for the core Windows 10 files. You can check for any on the spot by clicking the Check for updates button; and you can see what's already been updated by clicking the Update history link under the update button.



3 If you click on the Advanced Options link under the Update Settings section, you can then tick a box that enables Windows to automatically check for updates for other Microsoft products, such as Office and so on. It's recommended to make sure the box is ticked, for better security and protection.



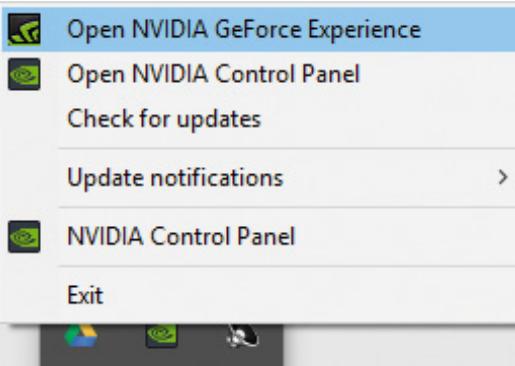
4 Within the Advanced Options page click the link for Choose how updates are delivered. This page details the way Windows updates can be pushed to other computers on your network, or even the Internet. While it's a grand idea, there are concerns over privacy from some parts of the community. It's your choice but we prefer this option to be Off.



5 Hardware drivers are usually automatically updated by Windows Update but while signed by Microsoft the drivers themselves aren't always the latest versions. Therein lies a problem, even though signed, the MS drivers won't utilise the hardware as well as the driver developed by the hardware manufacturer.



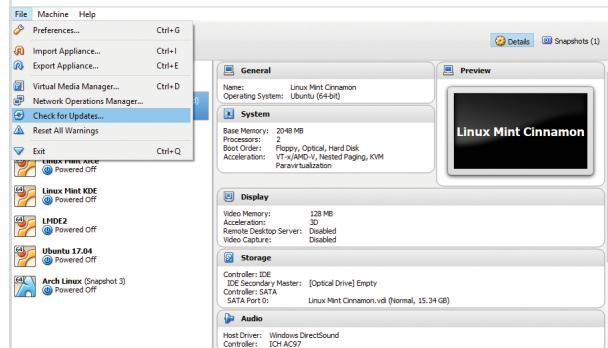
6 In such cases it's often best to use the hardware manufacturer's driver, as this is more up to date and features security patches as well as performance updates. For example, if you own an Nvidia graphics card right-click the Nvidia icon in the taskbar and select Open Nvidia GeForce Experience.



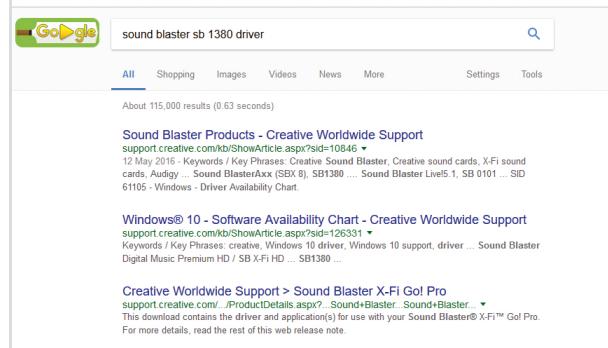
7 The Nvidia GeForce Experience allows you to improve in-game graphics and check for the latest drivers. Usually this is done automatically and you are notified of any available drivers. However, If you want to check manually, click on the Drivers tab followed by Check for Updates.



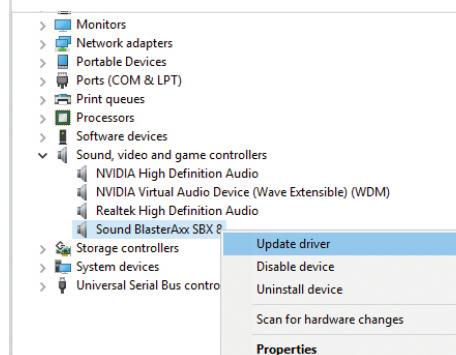
8 Third-party programs and applications also require regular update checks. Again, this is usually done automatically; when you launch the program in question it often checks for the latest version. If not, look for links such as Check for Updates or similar, usually in the Help, About or even under the File menus of your favourite app.



9 If you've attached some hardware and Windows 10 hasn't been able to load a driver for it, and there isn't any documentation detailing the driver (this often happens with hardware purchased from eBay and others), then you'll need to hunt one down. Start by locating the device's product name and number and enter it into a search engine.



10 You can often force Windows 10 to locate a driver by right-clicking the Windows Start button and choosing Device Manager from the menu. In the Device Manager window, select the hardware you want updating, right-click it and select Update Driver.





Windows 10 Accounts and Customisation

From setting up a new Microsoft account to customising the OS with third-party software, this section will let you make Windows 10 your own. Learn how to fix those things that annoy you about the operating system and even make it perform automatic tasks.

- 32 Setting Up a Microsoft Account**
 - 34 Protecting Your Microsoft Account**
 - 35 Two-step Verification**
 - 36 Sign In Options**
 - 38 Setting Up Parental Controls**
 - 40 Windows 10 Desktop Personalisation**
 - 42 Lock Screen Customisation**
 - 43 Adding New Themes**
 - 44 Applying and Modifying Themes**
 - 46 Personalise the Start Menu**
 - 48 Tweaking and Modifying Windows 10**
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 - 54 Customisation Software Reviews**
-

Setting Up a Microsoft Account

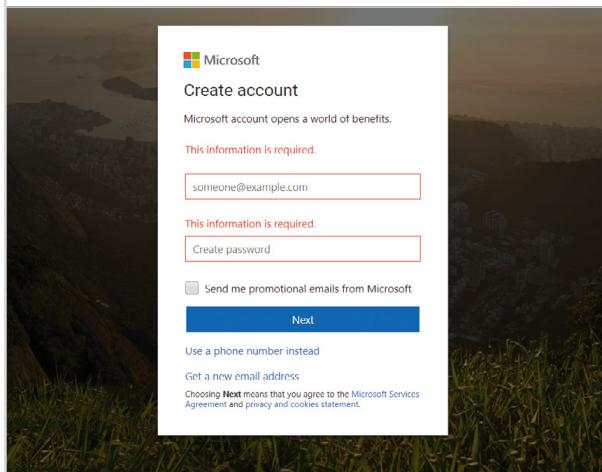
A Microsoft account is an important part of using Windows 10. It gives you single sign-in access to all of the Microsoft and Windows 10 services, from Skype and Office to Outlook and the Store. Setting one up should be the first thing you do in Windows 10.

Set Up and Configure Your Account

Microsoft prefers its users to have a single main account. Here we show you how to create one as well as look at any other further settings you might need.

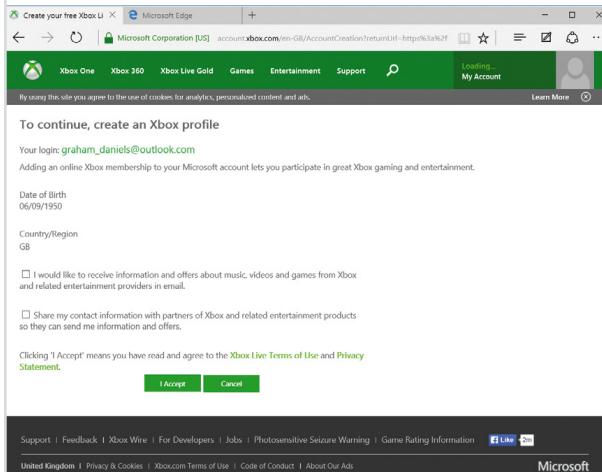
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You can sign up for an account when you install or initialise Windows 10 for the first time but you can also create one at www.account.microsoft.com. This is also where you can customise your account settings, which we'll come onto shortly.



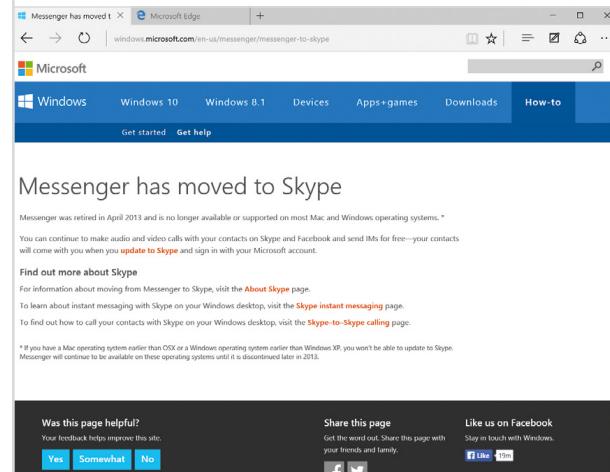
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Even if you think you don't have a Microsoft account, it's quite possible that you do have one. Ever had a Hotmail or Outlook.com address, or did you use MSN or Windows Live Messenger? You can sign in with those same credentials.



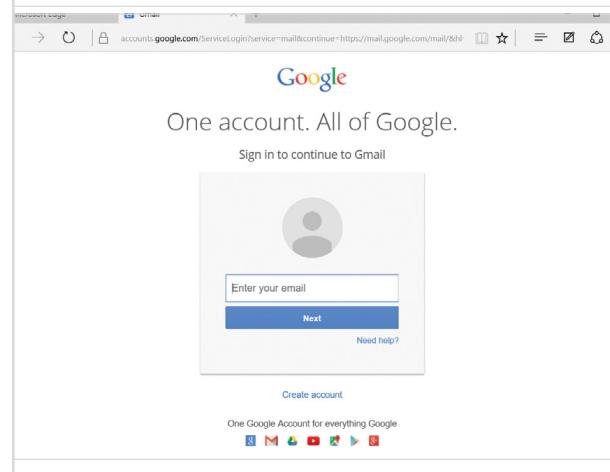
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In addition to Windows and Outlook.com, you can also use your account across all Microsoft services including Xbox Live, Skype, Office and Bing, as well as Windows-powered phones (your Contacts are automatically synchronised with your account too).

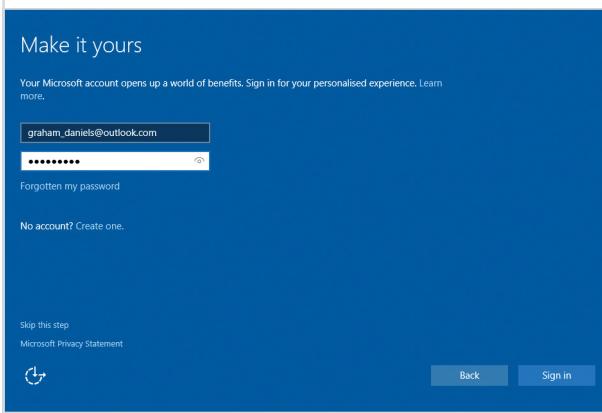


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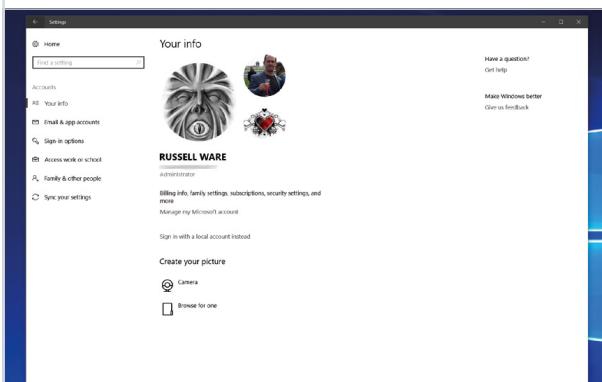
You can create a Microsoft account with any email address (you used to have to have an Outlook or Windows Live account). So even if you use Gmail, you can still get a Microsoft account. It's optional whether you have a new Outlook.com email account as well.



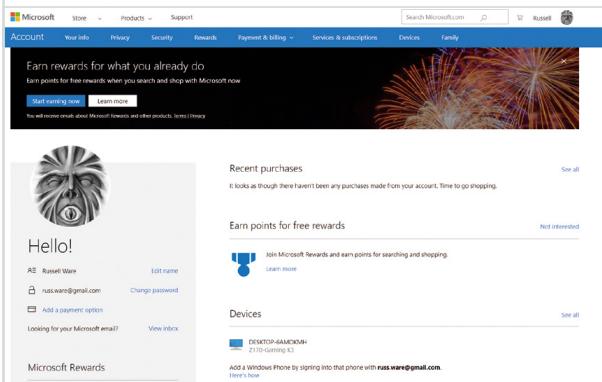
5 During the initialisation process for Windows 10, you will be asked to sign in using your Microsoft account (you can also sign in with a Local Account). Microsoft will then go and fetch any information connected to your account, such as your profile picture, etc.



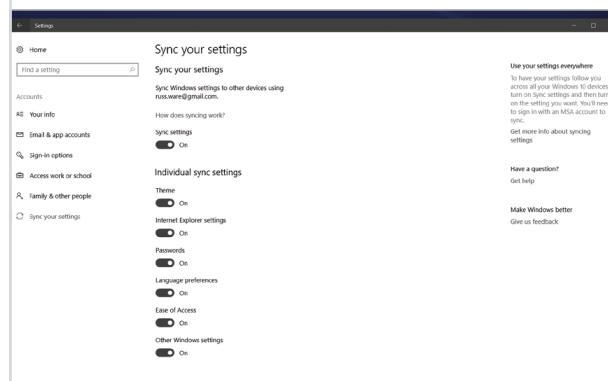
6 Once you've signed in using your Microsoft account, you can configure it from within Windows 10. Open the main Settings and choose Accounts. You can change options to do with the account itself here as well as how often your computer should require you to sign in.



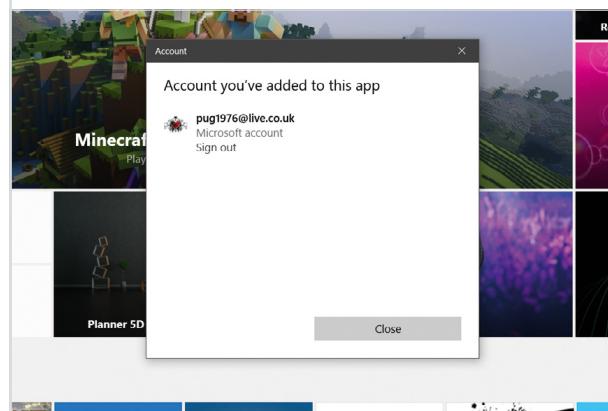
7 Clicking Manage your Account will take you to your account page online. You may see an update to your account terms and conditions when you do this for the first time. Here you can see recent purchases, your devices, personal info (plus payment info) and change your password.



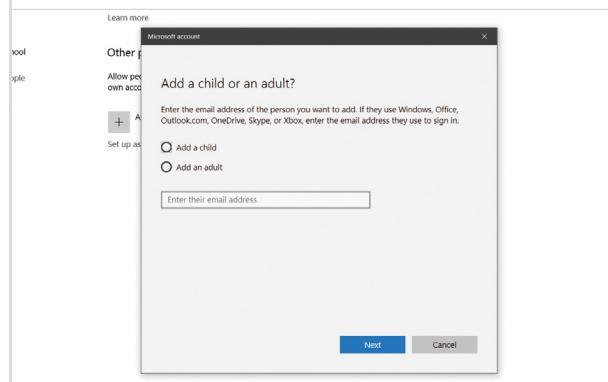
8 Back in Settings > Accounts > Sync your Settings, you can tell your PC what details you want it to synchronise to your Microsoft account. Aside from several other options, you can choose whether you want your stored passwords to be synchronised using your account.



9 Services within Windows that use your Microsoft account, such as Mail or the Windows Store, will now automatically have your account details pre-filled. You will be able to get access to your purchase history and more via the individual apps.



10 Within Settings > Accounts you can also add family members to your PC, so they use their own login and don't have to share your account. You can specify time limits and restrict the type of games that can be played. You can even add people that aren't in your family group.



Protecting Your Microsoft Account

Your Microsoft account is more important than ever when using a Windows 10 PC as it is a single point of access to all of your apps, services and security and privacy info. It's therefore more important than ever to make sure that the account is secure and that only you can access it. These tips will help you keep your account secure, and recover an account that has been compromised.

Account Security Tips

Before we look at recovering a compromised account, or adding advanced security features, here are some basic security tips that everyone should use.

Create a Strong Password

It's especially important to have a strong password if you use a Microsoft email address, like Outlook.com or Hotmail. This is because many services now use your email address to check your identity. Use a unique password and don't pick something (like your D.O.B) which can be easily guessed.

The screenshot shows a web-based password generator. At the top, it says "Secure Password Generator". Below that, it says "iWelcome the 100% European - CIAM Platform Provider". It includes a note from Gartner: "Gartner ranks iWelcome the best in the world with an 'excellent' rating. iwelcome.com/CIAM". The main interface has a "Password Length:" dropdown set to 16. There are several checkboxes for character types: "Include Symbols" (e.g. @#\$%), "Include Numbers" (e.g. 123456), "Include Lowercase Characters" (e.g. abcdefgh), "Include Uppercase Characters" (e.g. ABCDEFGH), and "Exclude Similar Characters" (e.g. i, l, I, L, o, O). There are also checkboxes for "Exclude Ambiguous Characters" (e.g. !@#\$%^&*), "Generate On Your Device" (checkbox checked), "Auto-Select" (checkbox checked), "Save My Preference" (checkbox checked), and "Load My Settings Anywhere" (checkbox checked). Below these are "Generate Password" and "Advanced..." buttons. At the bottom, there are fields for "Your New Password:" and "Remember your password:", both containing placeholder text. A note at the bottom says: "Remember your password with the first character of each word in this sentence."

Manage Your Trusted Devices

If you lose or give away a device that you use to sign in to your Microsoft account or if you know that someone else has access to your devices, be proactive and remove the trusted status from your devices. To remove trusted devices, go to the Security basics page and select more security options.

The screenshot shows the "Security basics" section of the Microsoft account settings. It includes three cards: "Changing your password", "Update your security info", and "Review recent activity". The "Changing your password" card has a "CHANGE PASSWORD" button. The "Update your security info" card has a "UPDATE INFO" button. The "Review recent activity" card has a "REVIEW ACTIVITY" button. Below these cards, a note says: "Finished with the basics? Explore more security options to help keep your account secure."

Beware of Phishing Emails

Microsoft will never ask for your password in email, so never reply to any email asking for any personal information, even if it claims to be from Outlook.com or Microsoft. Google 'how to spot a phishing email' to find lots of useful advice on avoiding these potentially nasty messages.

The screenshot shows a Gmail inbox with numerous spam emails. Some of the subject lines include: "Happy New Year. We missed you... Today we're giving away £1000.00! We'd love to see you for a while. We've been sending you daily reminder emails but you're not responding... To keep the site", "Outdoors Essentials From Only 79p", "Buyer Offers (2)", "Todays Offers", "End Of Sale! New Up To 70% OFF", "Ol' Eli?", "The PAPER WORKS", "Laptops", "Bargain Books", "EBOOK DOWNLOADS", "Google Calendar", "Dropbox", "Tutor", "ActiveWear", "Fitness & Nutrition", "Journeys from 0000", "New project 012 comes to Russia now", "Horrible Bands", "ADDS Newsletter", "Add me as a friend", "You can opt when the Kardashians do it to 'Follow'... What's happening to your social media accounts?", "SHOP NOW! Get great deals on the latest fashion essentials.", "Your High Heels Is In Style", "Kite SALE! Big Boots, Small Sizes", "Two Florida state senators appear to admit to a 'bribe after' moment", "Your Bill's Here... Analytics to help you online using my Webshop (was new here... Your bill for account number ending 0033 is ready, where it's due", "Star Wars Flash SALE - Officially Licensed Jumper & Top for £24.99 (+20% off... This month it's due £22.00. Go to Bill...", "The Daily Deal OF THE DAY STAR WARS FLASH SALE OFFICIALLY LICENSED...", "Tired Dad Alert - 40% Off... 1 Hour Only - Limited Stock Listed", and "Star Wars Flash SALE - Officially Licensed Jumper & Top for £24.99 (+20% off... This month it's due £22.00. Go to Bill...". Most of these emails are from "russell [REDACTED]@gmail.com".

Make Your Account Recoverable

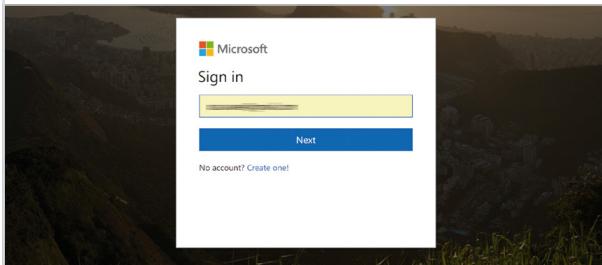
Add security info to your account to make it easier to recover your account if it's hacked. Because this info can help keep your account safe, it's important to keep it up to date. Add or update your security info on the Security basics page. You can find this by logging in to your Microsoft account online.

The screenshot shows the "Security settings" section of the Microsoft account settings. It lists two entries: "russell [REDACTED]@gmail.com" with the status "Will receive alerts" and "07791932" with the status "Won't receive alerts". Below these, there are "Add security info" and "Change alert options" buttons. A note at the bottom says: "Security info up to date? Explore more options to keep your account secure."

Recover a Compromised Account

If your Microsoft account has been compromised, it means that someone might be using your account to access your personal info or send spam.

1 If you think your Microsoft account has been compromised, try to sign in to it online. If you're already signed in on your device, sign out first. If you successfully sign in, you should change your password immediately. This will stop anyone who knows your password from signing in again.



2 If you can't sign in to your account, your password may have been changed by someone else. Select 'Forgot my password' on the sign-in page, and then 'I think someone else is using my Microsoft account'. Follow the instructions to recover your account using the Recovery form.

Why can't you sign in?

I've forgotten my password
 I know my password, but can't sign in
 I think someone else is using my Microsoft account

Optional: Why do you think someone else has access to your account?

Select reason

Cancel Next

3 The account recovery form works by asking questions about your account that only you could answer. Then, Microsoft will review your answers and respond within 24 hours, with either instructions to get back in to your account or a denial of access. For best results, always try to do the following things.

Recover your account

We can help you reset your password and security info. First, enter your Microsoft account and follow the instructions below.

Enter the characters you see

New Audio

Cancel Next

Terms of Use Privacy & Cookies Sign in Microsoft

4 If possible, fill out the form on a computer that you've used to sign in to your account before. Answer as many questions as possible, although be aware that not all questions will apply to you, and make sure that you give an email address you can access easily, even if it is not your own email address.

Recover your Microsoft account

Help us to keep this account secure by verifying that it's yours. To get back into your account, much info as you can.

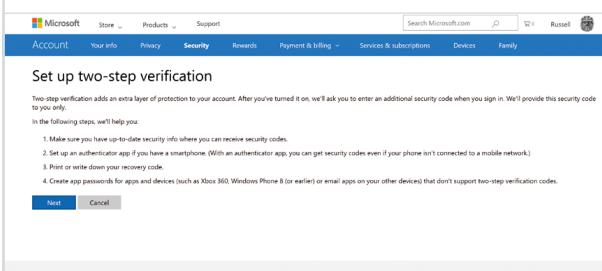
Account info

First Name
Last Name
Birth date

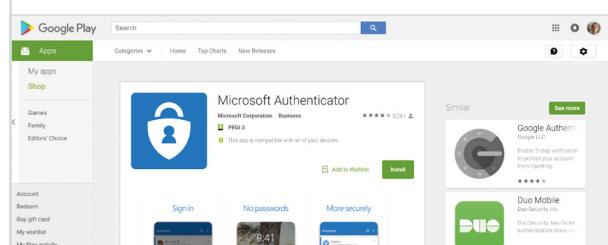
Two-step Verification

If you need an extra layer of protection, two-step verification can help protect your account by asking for two forms of identification when you sign in.

1 Go to the Security basics page and sign in with your Microsoft account. Select more security options. Under Two-step verification, choose 'Set up two-step verification' to turn it on. If you turn on two-step verification, you will always need two forms of identification to sign in.



2 Download the Microsoft Authenticator app to verify your identity quickly and securely. With this app you don't have to wait for security codes to be sent to you. Instead, open the app to see a new security code ready to go any time you need it. Microsoft Authenticator is available for iOS, Android and Windows Phone too.



Sign In Options

New technologies inside Windows 10 enable you to log in with a fingerprint reader if you have one and – in the future – you'll be able to use facial recognition too. But you can still set up a picture password or PIN to make logging in easier.

The Various Ways You can Log into Windows 10

Whether you use a password, PIN, picture password or fingerprint to log into Windows 10 we've got you covered. Let's take a look at the different ways available to sign in to Windows 10, from the least to the most secure.

What You See

When you start-up Windows 10, you'll see the lock screen. If you used Windows 8, it's something you'll be familiar with. You can get other information displayed here including network and battery life information, and you can change what appears in Settings > Personalisation > Lock Screen.



Facial Recognition

If you've seen adverts for Windows 10, you'll have seen that it makes a big play of not needing your password to log in. The catch is that you need a special Intel RealSense camera to use facial recognition. Laptops will have this built-in, but few do as yet.



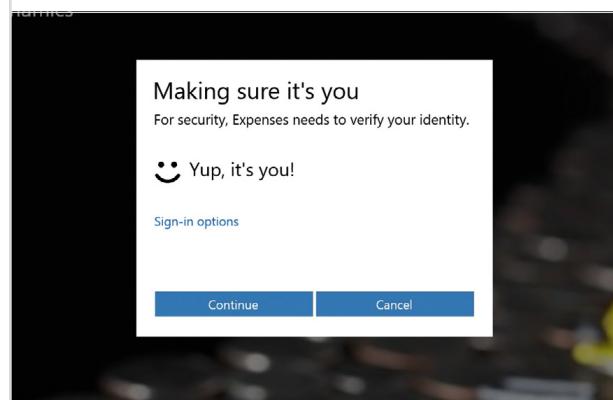
Log into Windows

As soon as you click any key or tap on the lock screen you'll get this – the Windows logon screen. You can use your password, fingerprint reader, picture password or PIN if you've set one up. Here a PIN is our default, but you can always use the Sign in Options button to use a different method providing it's set up on your PC.



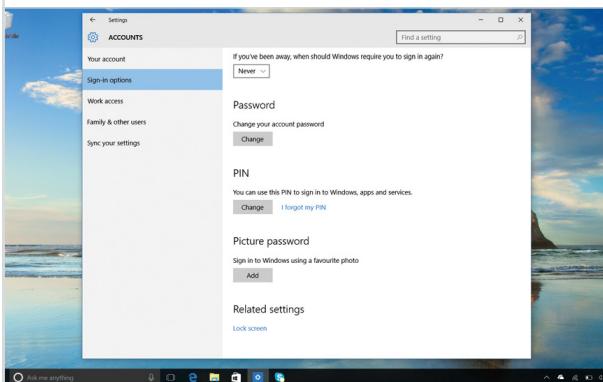
Verifying Identity

Future devices will be able to recognise who we are. This is an image of a demo from Microsoft, but it shows how our identity could be verified by our device's camera for financial transactions, logging into websites and much more. This technology – along with the ability to log in using your fingerprint - is referred to as Windows Hello by Microsoft.



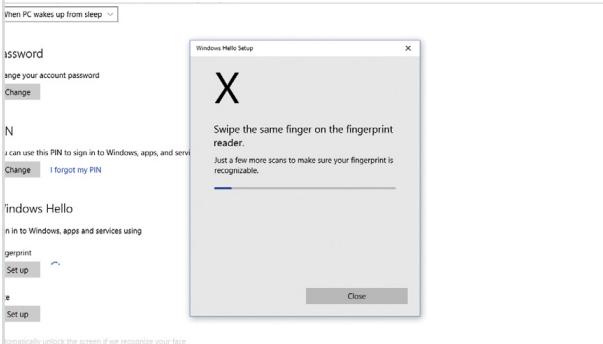
Sign-in Settings

You'll find the settings that govern logging into Windows in the Accounts section of the Settings app. Here you can set up your PIN should you choose to, or set up a picture password. It's this latter option we'll look at setting up for much of the remainder of this tutorial.



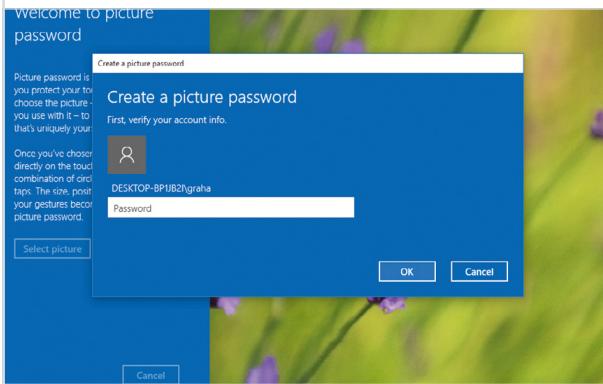
Set Up a Fingerprint Reader

If your PC has a fingerprint reader or compatible RealSense camera, you'll see extra options in this Settings screen under Windows Hello. Click the Set Up button to get started with these and you'll run through a setup wizard. Next, we'll show you how to set up a picture password.



Your Password

As with every time you set up a new way to log into Windows, you'll be asked to provide your password. Passwords don't go away completely even if you specify a new way to log in; you'll still need it to log onto Windows services online, for example.



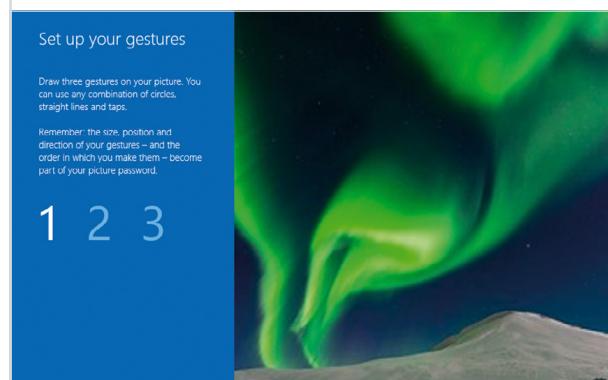
What is a Picture Password?

A picture password can be used with a mouse or touchscreen, but it comes into its own when used with the latter. That's because it uses particular gestures to identify you and this isn't the easiest thing to do with the mouse. You define these gestures by 'drawing' them on top of a picture.



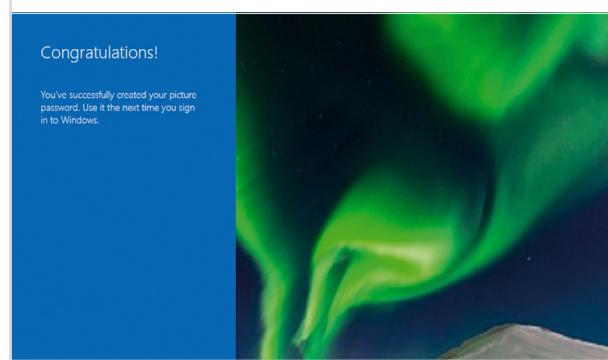
Any Image

You can use any image you choose, as you can see, we've changed from the default option in the previous slide. Next you need to do three gestures on this image, so we did one following the shape of the landscape and another couple following the shape of the green light.



Confirm and Finish

Once you've performed your gestures, you need to confirm them by drawing them once more with your finger. Some people find this a bit difficult, but once you get the hang of it, you'll be fine. If you're worried about being locked out of your PC then don't be – remember, you're always able to use your password or PIN as well.



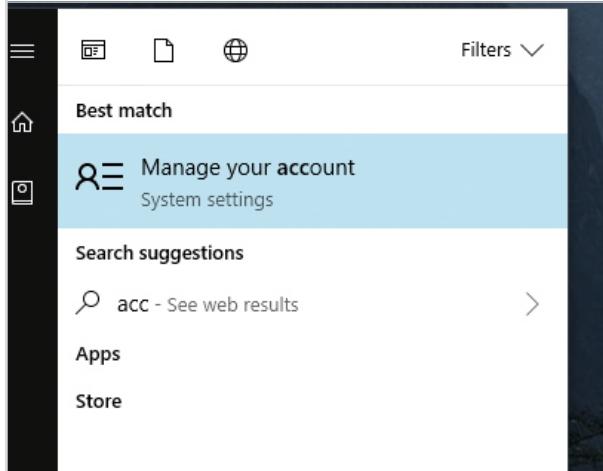
Setting Up Parental Controls

If you're sharing a Windows 10 computer with your children, or they have one for themselves, then setting them up with their own account can be helpful. A Windows 10 child account gives them freedom, whilst allowing you to set up certain restrictions.

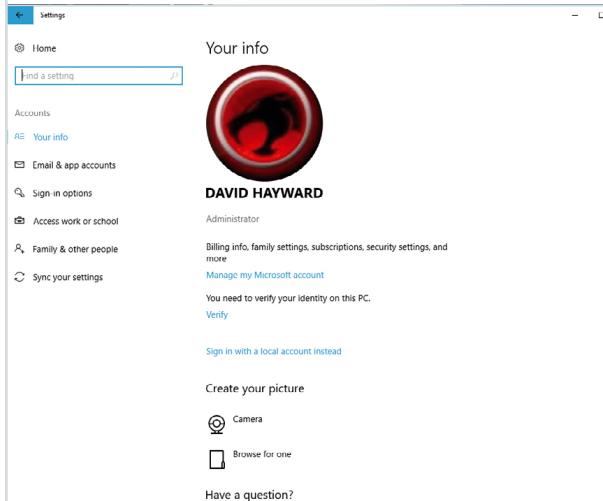
Windows 10 Child Account

With a Windows 10 child account you're able to set up age restrictions and time limits and ensure they're not visiting sites or using apps they shouldn't.

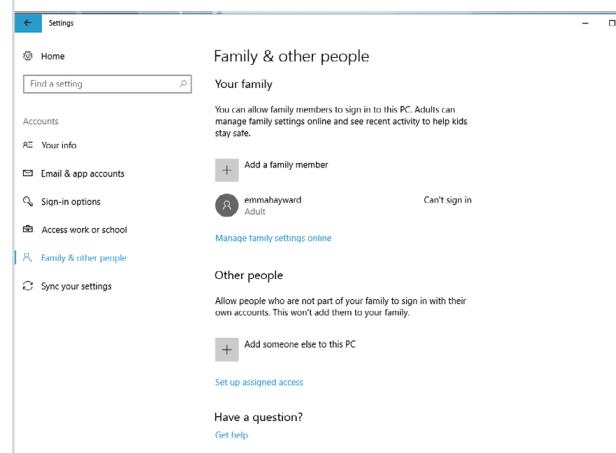
- 1** Start off by clicking the Windows Start button and typing 'account'. The first result that should appear is Manage your account, if anything else appears, as in you have some work labelled 'account' or such, then scroll down until you find the Manage your account option.



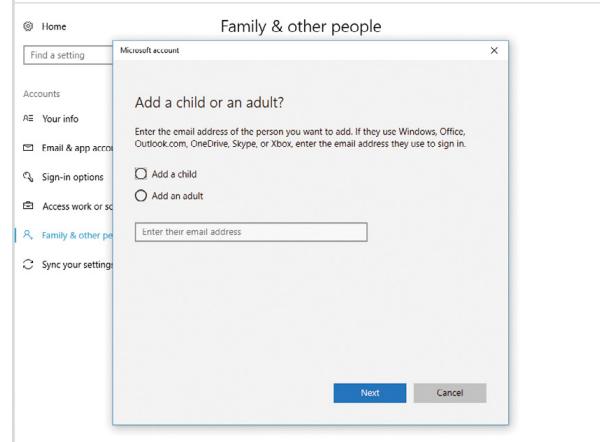
- 2** You'll now find yourself at the Windows 10 Settings page, in the Accounts section portal. Notice there are links down the left-hand side, look for the Family & Other People link and click it to continue with the process.



- 3** You'll need to sign in with a Microsoft account for this to work. If you've not already set up a main Microsoft login account for Windows, you'll need to click the Sign in with a Microsoft account option. Once done, you'll be presented with the current family members who already have MS accounts.



- 4** Next, click on the Add a Family Member link, by the plus sign under the Your Family section. This will launch a new pop-up window to create a new Microsoft account. You need to make sure that your child has an email address and that you or they can currently access it to authenticate the process.



5 Click the Add a Child option in the new account window and enter their email in the text box section below. When you're ready, click on the Next button.

Add a child or an adult?

Enter the email address of the person you want to add. If they use Windows, Office, Outlook.com, OneDrive, Skype, or Xbox, enter the email address they use to sign in.

Add a child

Kids are safer online when they have their own account

Add an adult

anon.child.2000@mail.com

The person I want to add doesn't have an email address

8 The child's account is now ready to be activated. The message box informs you that you'll need to respond to the email Microsoft has sent before they're able to login in to the Windows 10 computer. Click the Close button when you're ready.

Good to go!

You invited anon.child.2000@mail.com to be added to your family as a child. Until they accept the invite from their email, they'll be able to log into this device without family settings applied to their account.

Let them know they'll need to be connected to the internet the first time they log into the device.

6 You'll now get the message that it's not a Microsoft account, click the link to Create a Microsoft Account. This will bring you to a new window with the email address you've entered already filled in. Complete the relevant details and click the Next button to continue.

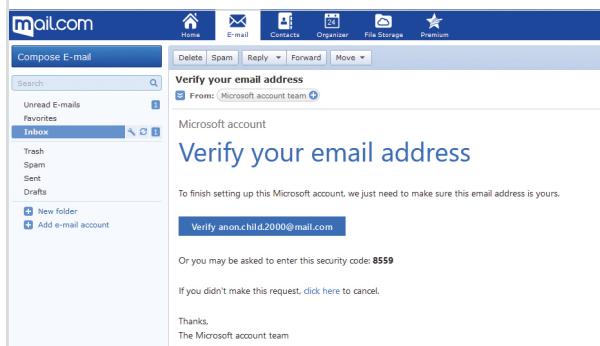
Let's create an account

Windows, Office, Outlook.com, OneDrive, Skype, Xbox. They're all better and more personal when they sign in with their Microsoft account. [Learn more](#)

After you sign up, we'll send you a message with a link to verify this user name.

anon.child.2000@mail.com
Get a new email address
.....
United Kingdom
January 6 2000

9 Microsoft will send some emails to the child's account. One will be a Verification email, which you, or your child, will need to click the link to activate the account. They need to login to Microsoft online to complete the process. The other email will be an invitation to join the family account, which you also need to Accept.



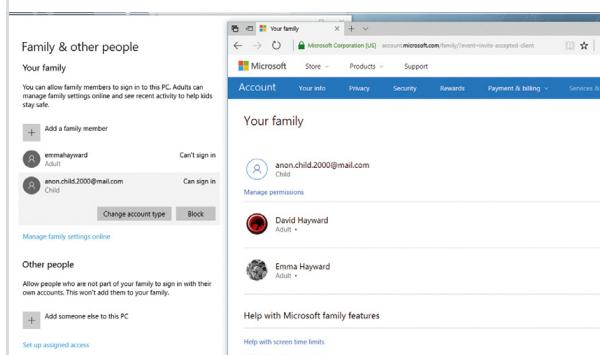
7 The next section details what level of search and advertising Microsoft will allow to the account. Obviously you can untick both boxes, or leave them as they are, depending on what you want. However, for the sake of enhanced privacy, we recommend unticking both. Click Next when you're ready.

See what's most relevant to them

Make sure they see the search results, advertising, and things they'll like most when Microsoft personalizes their experiences by using their preferences and learning from their data. Change these settings online and in some Microsoft products and services.

- Enhance their online experiences by letting Microsoft Advertising use their account information. (They can change this setting at any time.)
- Send them promotional offers from Microsoft. (They can unsubscribe at any time.)

10 Using the child account to join the family will send emails to you confirming the accepted invitation. Back at the Windows 10 Family & Other People window, you can now click the child's account and allow it to login; or manage it via the Microsoft Family portal online, which we'll look at in the next tutorial.



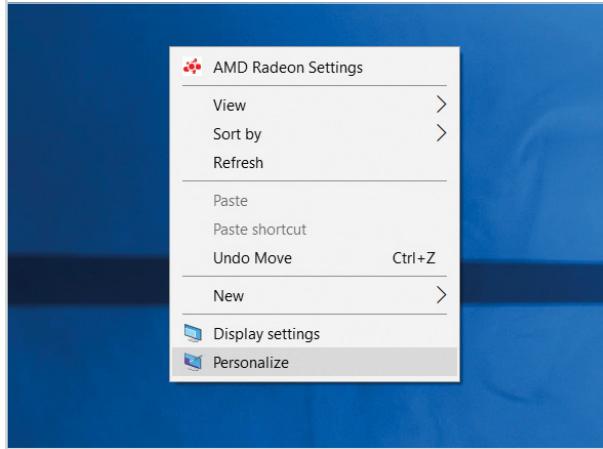
Windows 10 Desktop Personalisation

One of the most welcome features of Windows 10 is the return to the familiar desktop environment and there are many ways to customise it to suit your needs and tastes; including icon size, background image and colour scheme.

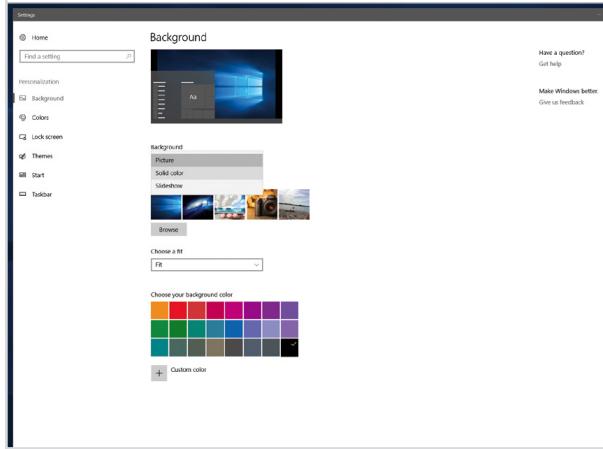
Change the Desktop Background

The Desktop personalisation procedure hasn't changed much since Windows 7, so if you've used that OS before this will feel very familiar.

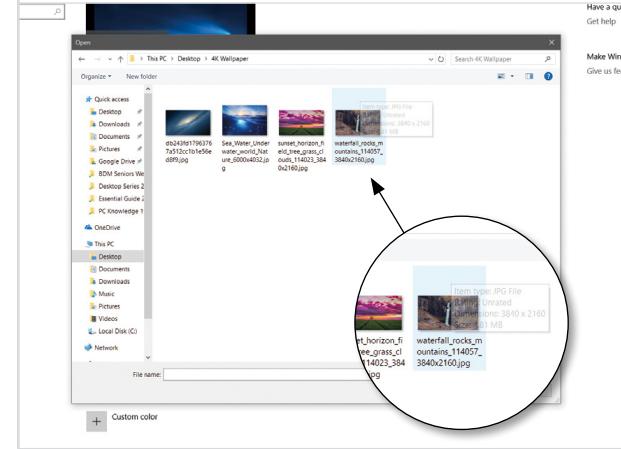
1 You can get started with personalising the Windows 10 Desktop in exactly the same way as you did with Windows 7. For anyone completely new to Windows, that means right-clicking anywhere on the Desktop screen and selecting Personalise from the action menu that appears.



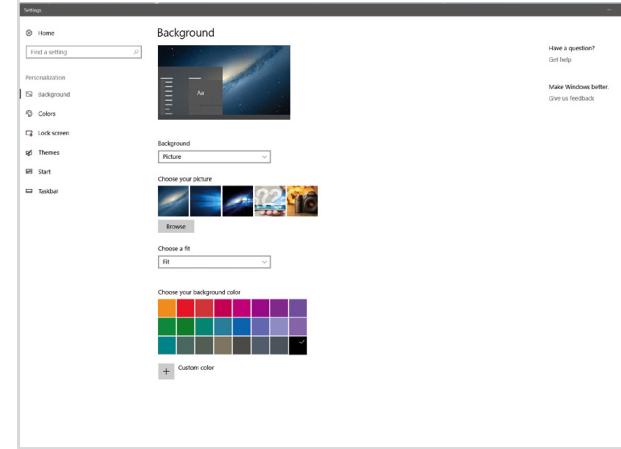
2 The Background settings will be displayed first by default. Click the first drop-down menu to select whether to use the default backgrounds, solid colours or choose to display folders of your own images. Your choices here changes what is displayed in the background settings.



3 To select your own pictures for the background, click on the Browse button and navigate to the folder containing the images you want to use. For best results, you might need to crop some of your pictures to the same aspect ratio, i.e. widescreen, as your monitor screen.

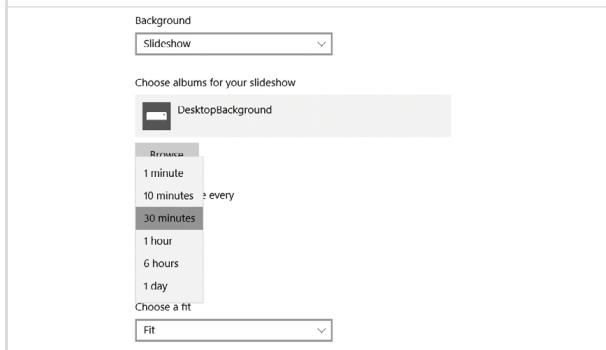


4 To set a picture as your Desktop background, simply click on it. It will instantly be set as your new Desktop background image (a preview will display). The screen shows you the last five images used or you can click the Browse button to choose a new one from your folders.

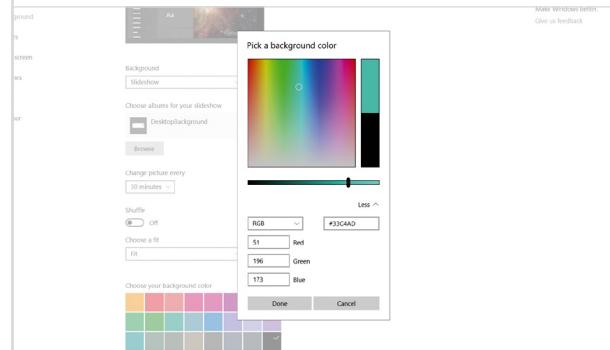


5

If you opt for Slideshow, you will see some additional options to choose from. You can set the interval for the slide show from the 'Change picture every' menu and decide how you'd like the images to fit on the screen by clicking the 'Choose a fit' menu.

**6**

Even if you set a background image, you can also change the colour of the actual desktop. Click on the Colours option at the bottom and choose a background colour. You can also choose a custom colour from a more detailed hexadecimal colour selector.

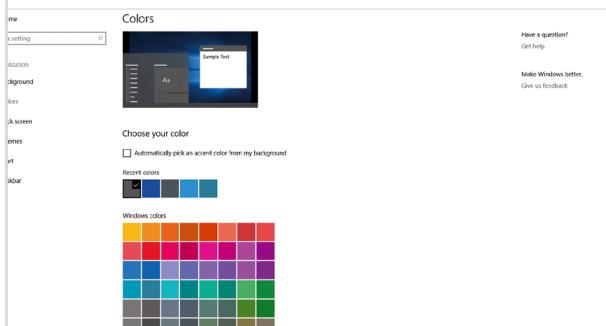


Set Accent Colours

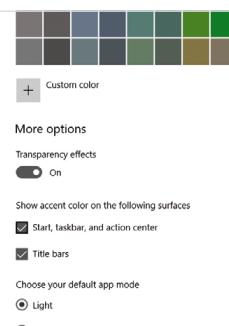
By accent colours we mean the colour of the taskbar, the Start menu and the frames of new windows and so on, that you open on your computer.

1

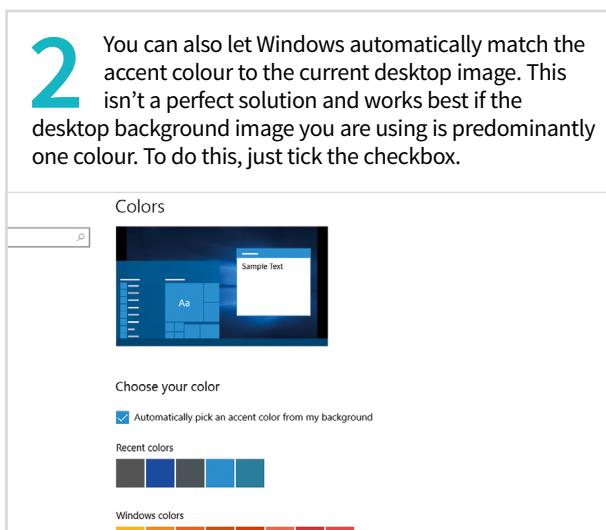
Apart from the desktop background, you can also change the colour of the taskbar and the Start menu and other system components. Click on the Colours option in the menu sidebar and choose an accent colour from the swatch. Recently selected colours are also displayed.

**3**

You can actually choose where the colour accent is applied. You can set it so it changes the Start, taskbar and Action Center and the Title bars of windows. You can also pick one or the other, or a combination of all options. You can also make these elements semi-transparent.

**2**

You can also let Windows automatically match the accent colour to the current desktop image. This isn't a perfect solution and works best if the desktop background image you are using is predominantly one colour. To do this, just tick the checkbox.

**4**

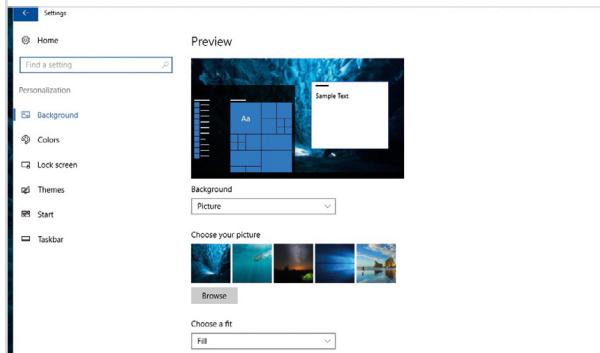
Since the Creators update, most of the core Microsoft apps allow you to choose either a light or dark theme (several have had this option for a while now). You can set the default app theme colour in the colours section of personalisation; this can be overridden in the app settings.



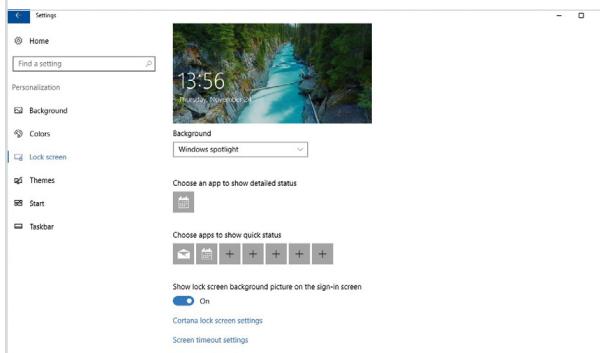
Lock Screen Customisation

The lock screen can feature custom backgrounds with Spotlight Images, display app statuses, and even give you direct access to Cortana.

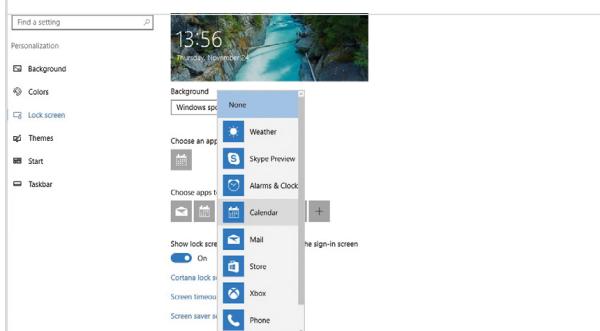
1 The first thing to choose is whether to display one of your own images, a slideshow of images or something from Windows Spotlight. If you choose either of the first two of these, more options will appear to select the images you want to use (single or multiple).



2 You will see that there are two separate sections for adding apps here. The section with the single app icon is the one which will display more detailed information and the section with seven icons/spaces for adding apps which will show quick statuses.



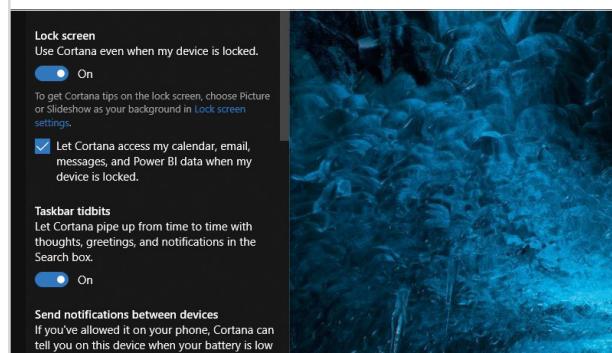
3 You can add as many apps as you wish here, up to the maximum of eight. To choose which apps have statuses displayed, click on one of the spaces and choose from the pop-up menu that appears. The menu for the detailed information space will be slightly shorter than for quick statuses.



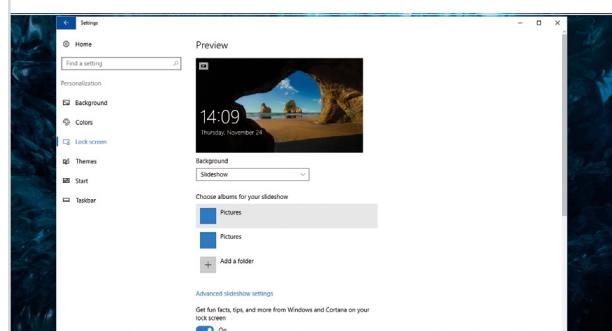
4 You can check how the detailed and quick statuses are displayed on your lock screen by letting your PC sleep; or by pressing the Windows key and choosing Sleep. Be aware however, that statuses may not show up straight away for things like Messages and Email.



5 There are several other lock screen customisation options here. You can choose whether to display an image on the sign-in screen as well as the main lock screen and there are direct links to Cortana settings, where you can control how Cortana works on the lock screen.



6 The final two links take you to screen timeout and screen saver settings. The settings you choose there will depend on your personal preference and also on your computer location. Setting a shorter timeout means that your computer will be secure if you have to leave it.

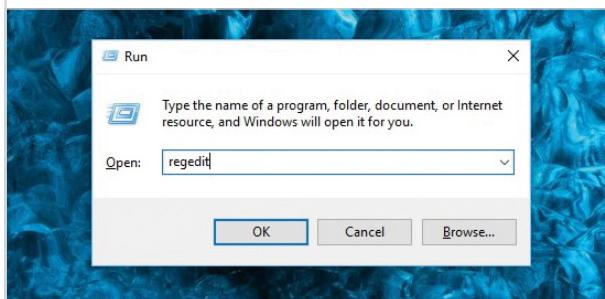


Disable the Lock Screen

There is no setting to disable the lock screen completely but it is still possible to do by delving into the Registry. This is fairly advanced customisation, so approach with care.

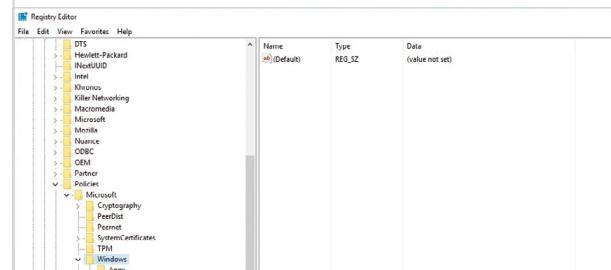
1

To access the Registry, press the Windows key + R, enter regedit, and then click OK. With the Registry open, navigate to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\. Right-click the final Windows folder and click New > Key.



2

Name this new key "Personalisation" and then navigate inside it. Right-click inside the right-hand pane and select New > DWORD (32-bit) Value. Name it "NoLockScreen". Then double click this new value and change the Value data to 1. Then click OK and exit the Registry Editor.

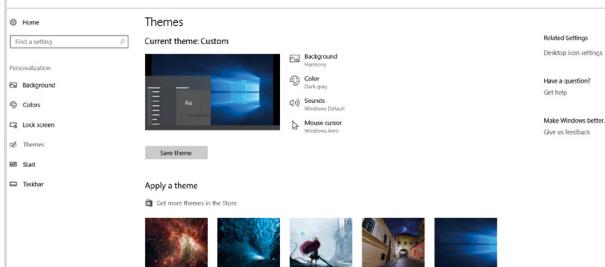


Adding New Themes

Themes can be added from a variety of sources but the best place to find them initially is the official theme page from Microsoft, or from the Windows 10 Store.

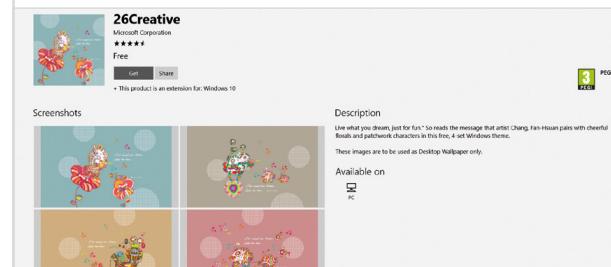
1

You can access the current theme page in a couple of different ways. You can open the web browser and navigate to www.support.microsoft.com/en-gb/themes, or Google "Windows 10 themes". Alternatively, open Settings > Personalisation > Themes and click 'Get more themes in the store'.



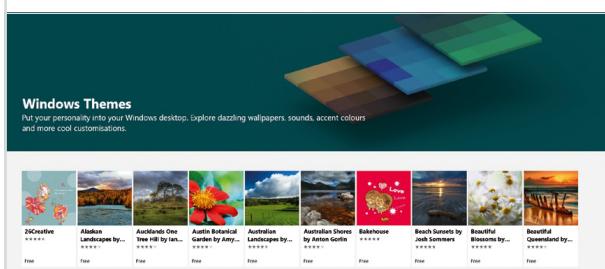
3

Each theme is displayed with a thumbnail and the number of images supplied shown. The Microsoft theme page doesn't allow you to view all of these images before you download, you just have to base your choice on the title and thumbnail. Click Download on any you like the look of.



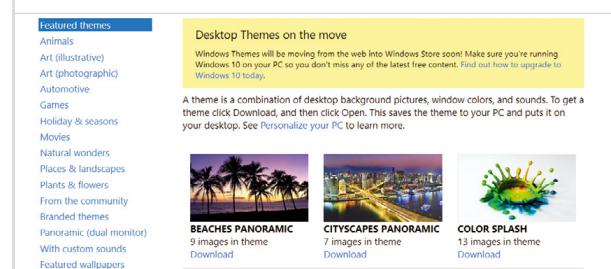
2

All of these actions should bring you to the same themes page. Be aware that all themes here will soon be moved into the Windows Store app. Themes are listed in a variety of categories down the side of the page, ranging from Featured Themes, to themes with custom sounds supplied.



4

Different themes will contain different amounts of content. Some might only have a colour profile and a few desktop wallpapers; others might contain icons, colours, wallpapers and sounds. Even the simplest of themes is likely to be more than just changing the desktop wallpaper.

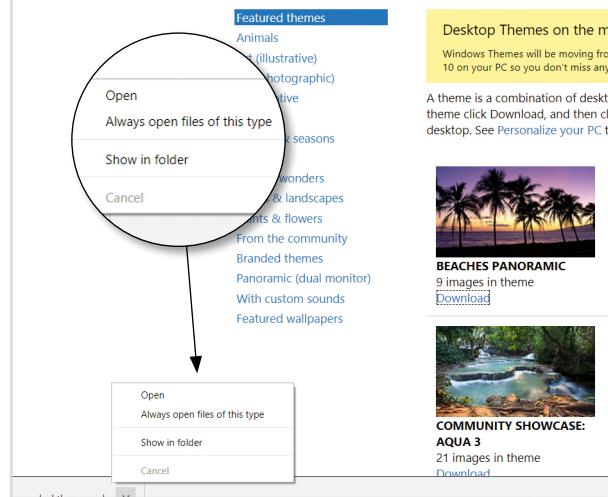


Applying and Modifying Themes

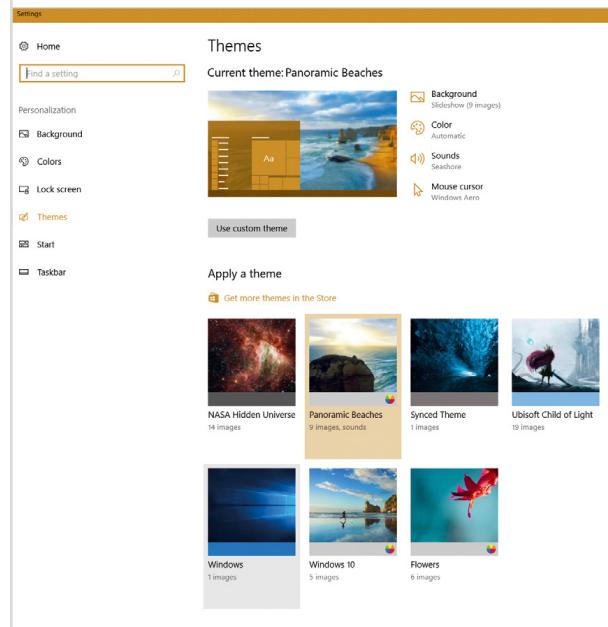
Once themes are downloaded you can view, customise and select them from a fairly new section in the main settings (settings > personalisation > themes).

1 Once a theme is downloaded, you may need to open it to activate it. You can do this directly from the download interface that appears at the bottom of the browser window (showing download progress) or you can go to your Downloads folder, right-click on the file and click Open.

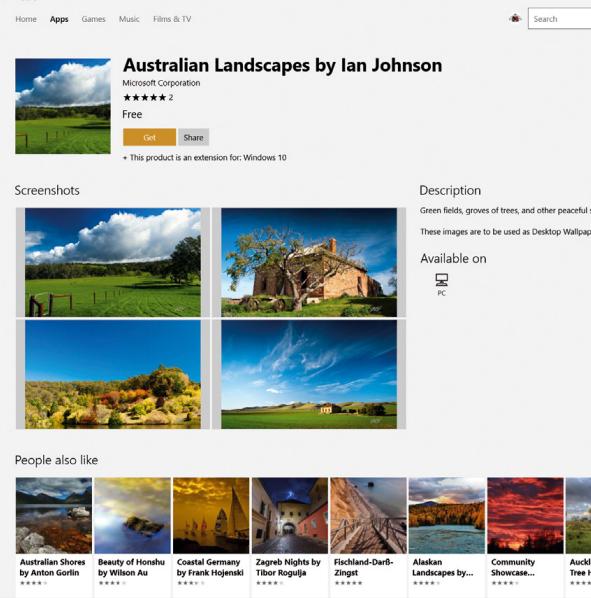
Desktop Themes



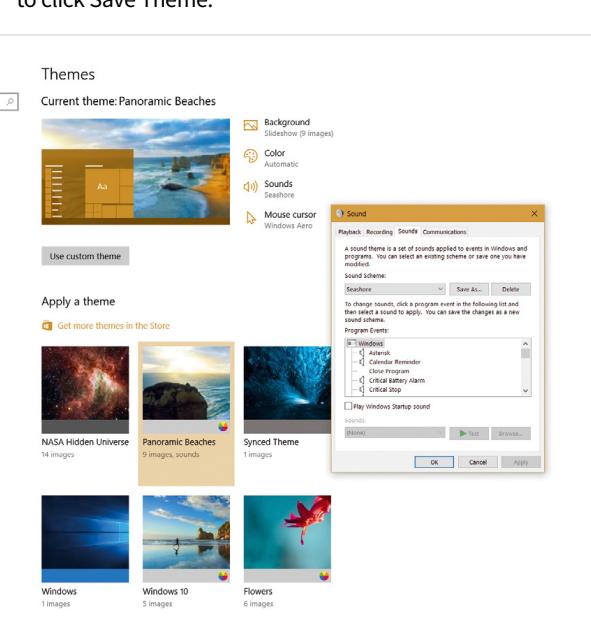
2 The theme will then be applied, and the first desktop wallpaper in the sequence will appear on your screen. Any colour profile changes will also be applied. If you want to manage the theme settings, head to Settings > Personalisation > Themes > Theme Settings.



3 Themes downloaded from the Windows Store won't need to be activated in this way. You can just click the Get button on the theme page in the store and then view the theme in settings > personalisation > themes. You can switch between themes here just by clicking the thumbnail.



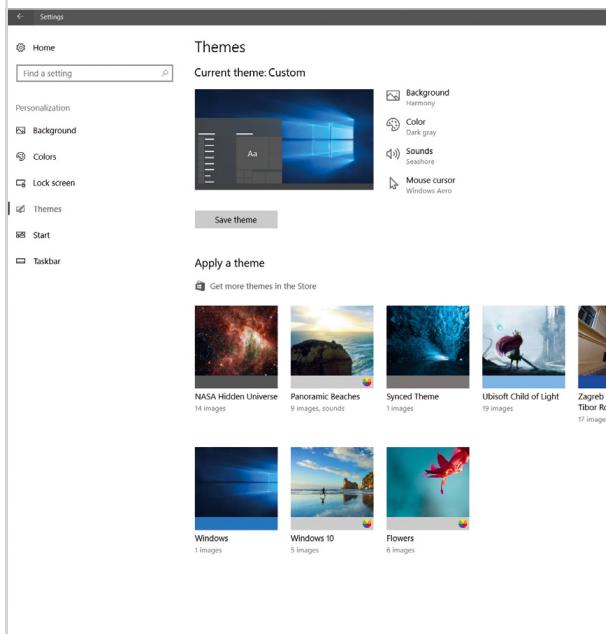
4 Each theme applied can be customised further using the options in the Themes section. You can alter the background, colour, sounds and even the mouse cursor of any theme, making it completely unique to you. When you have chosen the changes, you will need to click Save Theme.



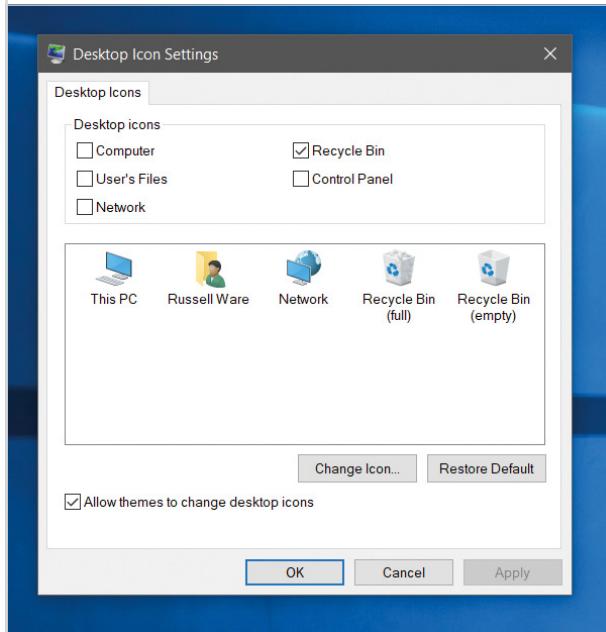
Change Your Desktop Icons

If you use desktop icons such as This PC, your personal folder or Network connections, you can change those icons. You can even download complete icon packs online, giving your desktop a completely different feel.

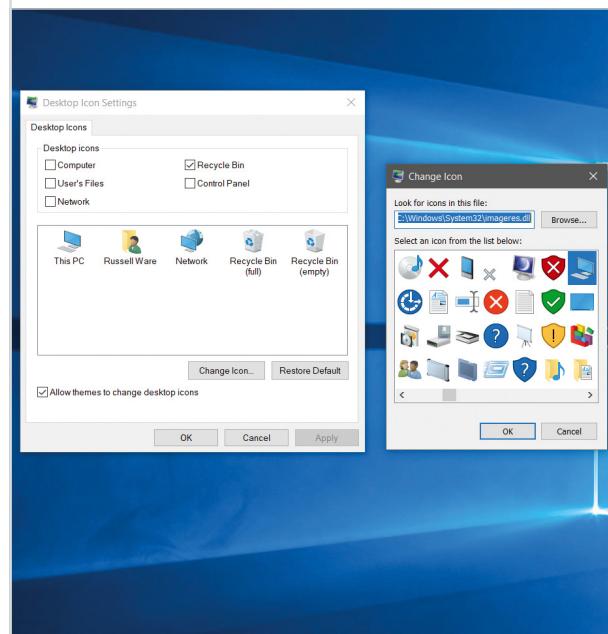
- 1** Open the Personalisation screen of the Settings menu and select Themes from the sidebar menu. You now need to look for the Related Settings option. In the Related Settings section, click on the link to Desktop icon settings.



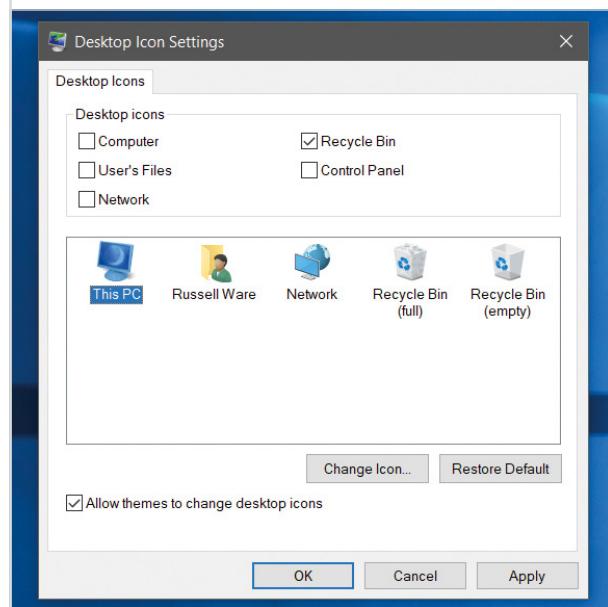
- 2** The window that now opens lets you choose which default icons appear on your desktop. The Recycle Bin is just about essential but the others, including Computer, Users Files, Network and Control Panel icons are optional.



- 3** If you wish to do so, it is possible to choose different icons for these system tools and you can even download custom icons online. To change the appearance of the desktop icons, click on the icon you want to change and then click the Change Icon button.



- 4** The icon chooser window that appears will look very familiar to veteran Windows users, since it's essentially unchanged from Windows 98. Scroll through the gallery until you find an icon you like or use the Browse button to navigate to any icon pack you've downloaded.

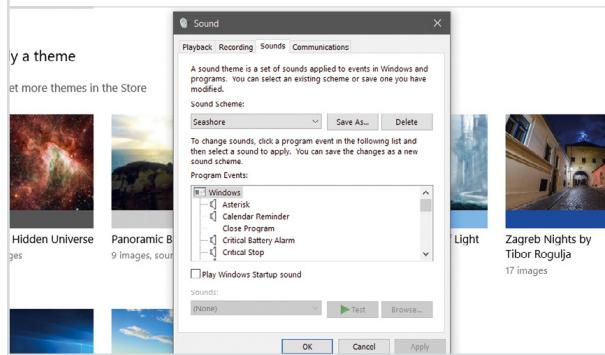


Personalise Windows Sounds

You don't like the default Windows sounds? You want to replace them with all your favourite Star Trek sound effects? No problem!

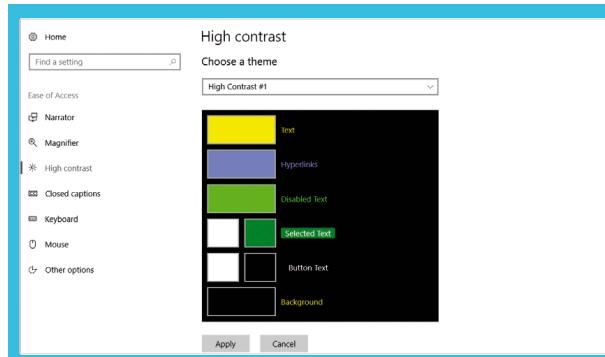
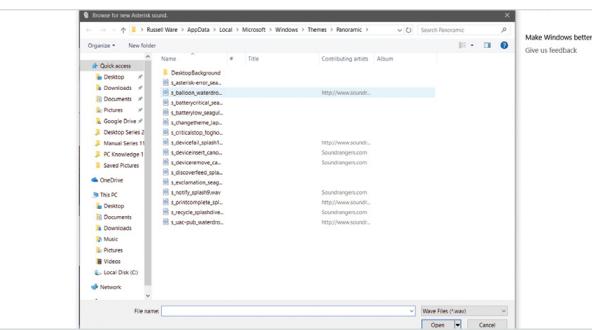
1

To change the sounds that Windows uses to notify you about events and problems, open the Personalisation control panel as explained previously and click on Themes in the sidebar menu, then click on Advanced sound settings.



2

To change a sound, first select it from the list of sounds shown in the Sounds control panel, then click on the Browse button. Navigate to the folder containing the sounds that you want to use and then double-click the new sound. You can click on the Test button to hear what it sounds like.



Improving Visibility ▶

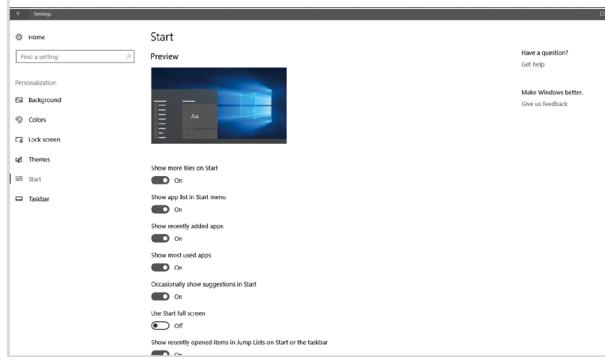
Windows 10 incorporates a number of features designed to improve accessibility for people with impaired sight, including a range of high contrast Desktop themes. You can activate these from the Personalisation control panel. Activate the panel by right-clicking on the Desktop and selecting Personalisation and then click on one of the high contrast themes presented. You can exit the theme by clicking back on the previous theme.

Personalise the Start Menu

The final Customisation menu option lets you customise the Start menu to suit your needs. There are other ways to customise Start but these options should be enough for most users.

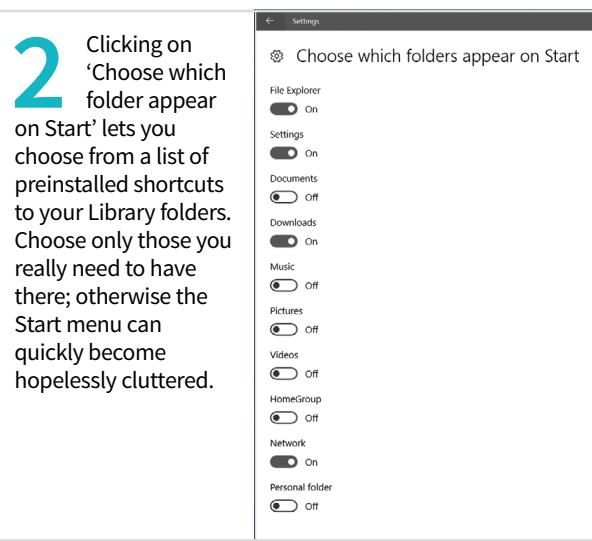
1

You are presented with a list of toggle switches that activate certain options. The 'Use Start full screen' effectively returns you to the Windows 8.1 Start screen, so you'll probably want to leave it off unless you have a specific need for a full-screen menu.



2

Clicking on 'Choose which folder appear on Start' lets you choose from a list of preinstalled shortcuts to your Library folders. Choose only those you really need to have there; otherwise the Start menu can quickly become hopelessly cluttered.



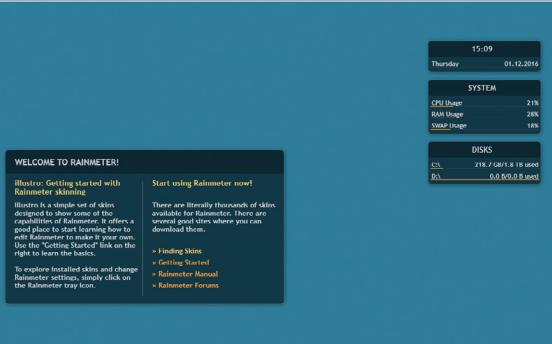
Add Tools to the Desktop

If you want to take your customisation of the desktop to the next level, you can begin to add desktop tools such as Rainmeter.

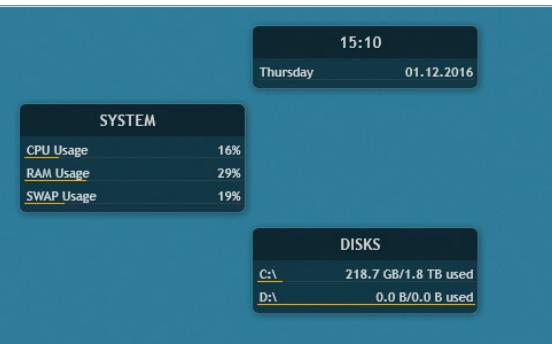
- 1** Start by downloading the Rainmeter installer from the Rainmeter.net. To install the software, run the installer program that you downloaded and follow the instructions. You will have the choice to choose from the 32 or 64bit versions during the process.



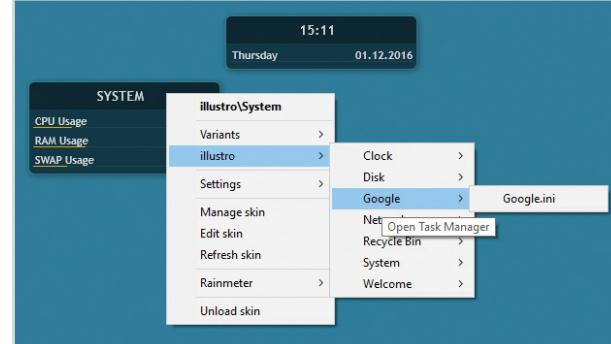
- 2** The first time you run Rainmeter, your desktop will look something like the image here. Each small window on the right side of your screen (System, Disk, etc.) is a skin. This is the illustro skin set. The app remembers each skin's location and settings independently.



- 3** To move a skin, just click and drag it to a new location. The easiest way to interact with Rainmeter skins is through the context menu (right-click on the skin). A skin may have any number of tabs, buttons, menus or other bells and whistles in its design.



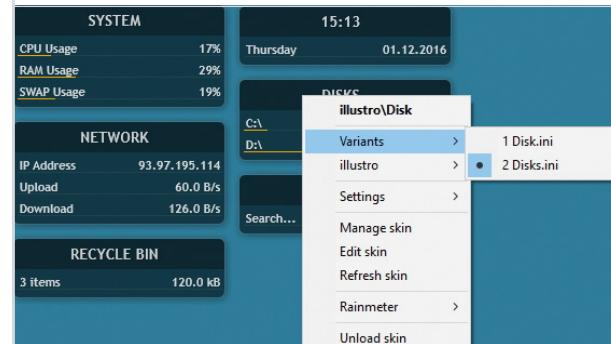
- 4** You can use the context menu to load skins from your library. Right-click on any of the skins and select illustro > Google > Google.ini. The Google skin will appear in the top left corner of your desktop. You can now drag it into place alongside your other skins.



- 5** You can also unload (remove) a skin with the context menu. Right-click the new Google skin and select Unload skin. You will see the skin fade away and disappear (useful for getting rid of the welcome skin). When a skin is unloaded, its location and settings are still saved.



- 6** Skins can have different variations. To see an example of one with variants, right-click the Disk skin and select Variants in the context menu. Variants share the same location and settings, and only one of a skin's variants may be loaded at a time.



Tweaking and Modifying Windows 10

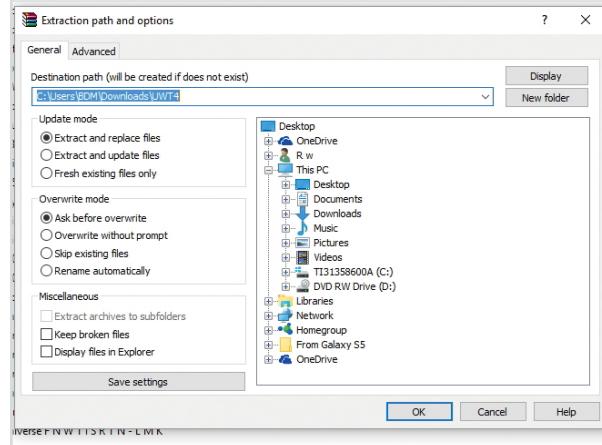
There are plenty of ways to customise Windows 10 built right in to the operating system. However, if you really want to tweak and modify the system, you will need to resort to external software. Ultimate Windows Tweaker 4.1 allows you to modify the appearance, security and performance of Windows 10.

Set Up Windows Tweaker

The Ultimate Windows Tweaker (UWT) software is not available as an app, so you will need to download the file from <http://www.thewindowsclub.com/ultimate-windows-tweaker-4-windows-10>.

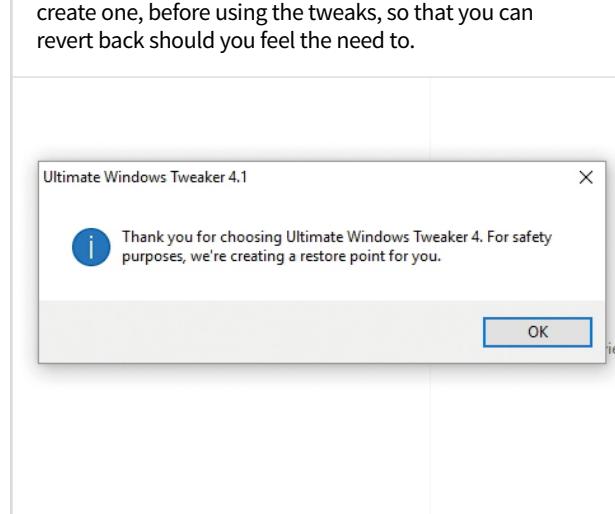
1

Once you have downloaded the zip file, extract its contents and move the program folder to your desired location. Pin its executable file to your Start menu for easy access. Do not separate out the contents of the download as it is important that the contents stay in the same folder.



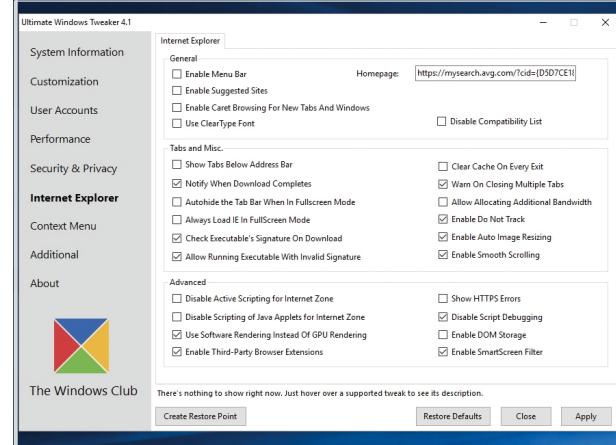
2

As when making any large system changes to your computer, you should create a system restore point first. You can use the Create Restore Point button that UWT offers. The software prompts you to create one, before using the tweaks, so that you can revert back should you feel the need to.



3

These tweaks are not really meant for beginners. It is recommended that you do not over tweak your system in one go. We suggest you apply tweaks for only 1 category every day, see how your system performs, before moving on to apply more tweaks if you don't see problems.



4

To apply a particular tweak, check or uncheck the boxes or use the sliders provided. Once you have selected one or more tweaks, click on the Apply button. Some tweaks may apply instantaneously. If a system restart is required, you will be reminded to restart your computer when you exit.

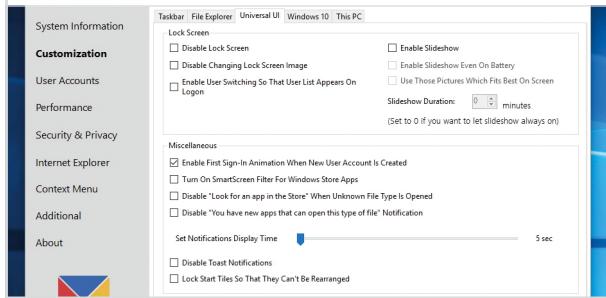


Tweak and Mod Menus

Each of the menus in UWT4 contains lots of different settings and options, from simple appearance tweaks to more complicated performance mods.

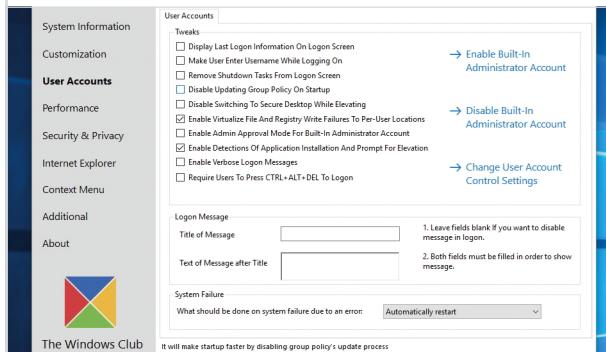
Customisation Menu

Under this category you will be able to tweak settings of your taskbar, Thumbnails, File Explorer and the Modern UI. You can opt to use Light or dark theme for OS or apps, disable Start animations, use default or change Battery Date & Time flyouts or change the Volume Control.



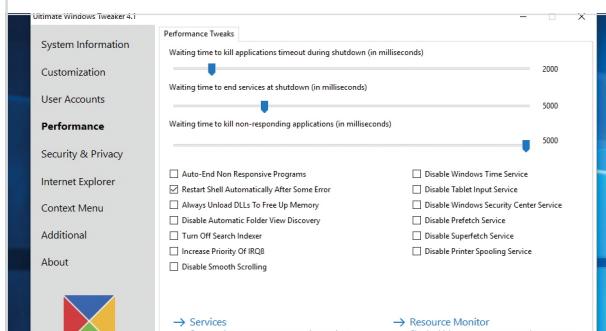
User Accounts Menu

Under the User Accounts tab, you will be able to change your User Account settings, Logon information and sign in options. You can also change the User Account Control settings here.



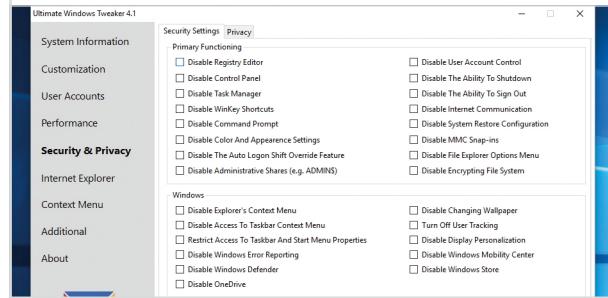
Performance Menu

The Performance tab offers tweaks to optimize Windows 10 to best suit your requirements. While most of these settings are best left at their default values, this panel gives you quick access to change them, should you wish to. Tweak these settings VERY carefully at first.



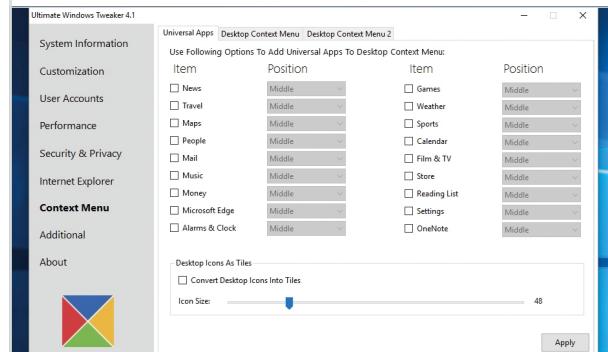
Security & Privacy Menu

If you want to restrict access to some Control Panel applets like Windows Updates you can do so easily. You can disable Telemetry, Biometrics, Advertising ID, Cortana, Windows Update sharing, Feedback requests, password Reveal button, Steps Recorder, disable Wi-Fi Sense and Application Telemetry.



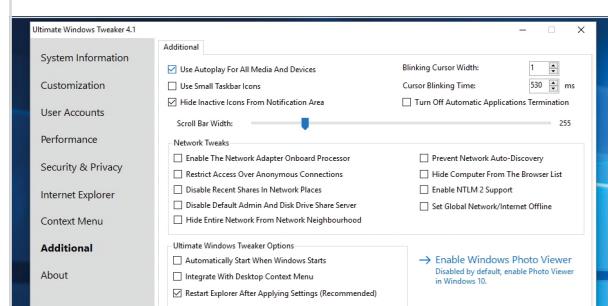
Context Menu

Add Windows Store apps, features and useful functions to the right-click context menu and Scan with Windows Defender, Clear Clipboard, all built-in default Windows Store apps and more to the context menu.



Additional Tweaks Menu

Under this category, you will see some additional system and Network tweaks. You can also set UWT to behave the way you want it too. By default, when you apply a tweak and click Apply, UWT4 will automatically restart explorer.exe to apply the tweak. Change its behaviour if you wish.



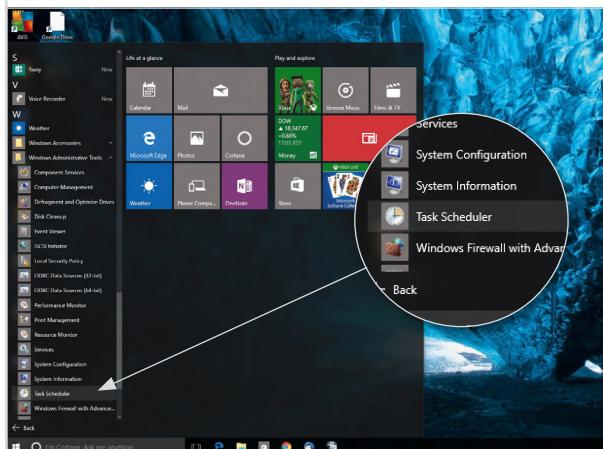
Using the Task Scheduler

The Task Scheduler in Windows 10 is, in many ways, very similar to that found in older versions of the OS. However, in Windows 10, Battery Saver Mode can impact on how it operates (if using a laptop). This guide looks at how the new scheduler works and how we can modify its use.

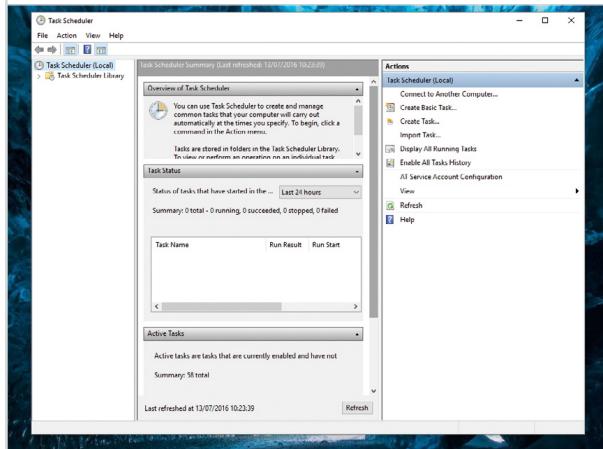
Scheduling New Tasks

The Task Scheduler can be a very powerful tool for increasing automation in Windows 10. Let's take a quick look at exactly how to use the Windows 10 Task Scheduler in normal day-to-day PC operation.

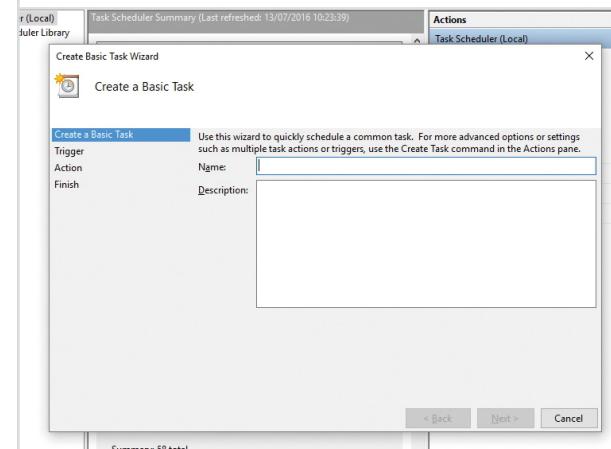
- 1** Search for “Task Scheduler” in the Cortana search pane or navigate to it in Start menu > All Apps > Windows Administrative Tools > Task Scheduler. The simple scheduler window will now open. This is split into three sections: Scheduler Library, Scheduler Summary and Actions.



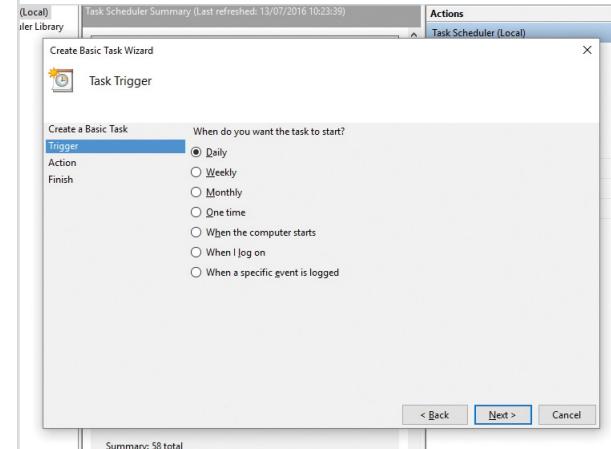
- 2** You have three main options for adding new tasks to the schedule: Create Basic Task, Create Task and Import Task. For now we will stick to creating a Basic Task. You can start the process by clicking in the Action panel or using the Action menu in the menu bar of the window.



- 3** The Basic Task wizard will now open. Give your task a name and description (optional) and click Next. You now need to choose the trigger. This can be set to happen daily, weekly or monthly, to happen just once. You can choose starting or logging on to your PC as a trigger also.

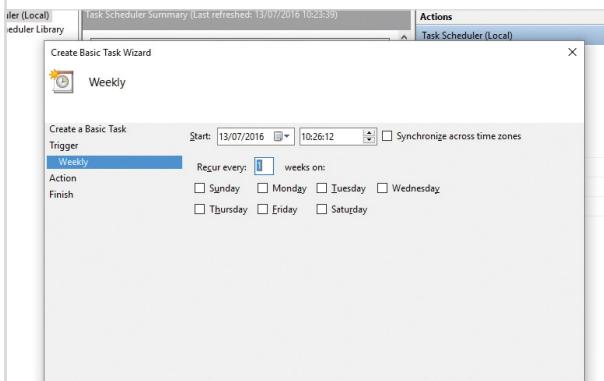


- 4** If you choose daily, weekly, etc. you will need to set further time options when you click Next. If you chose the final trigger option, When a specific event is logged, you will see a set of drop down menus. Here you can choose the event log, source and give the event an ID.

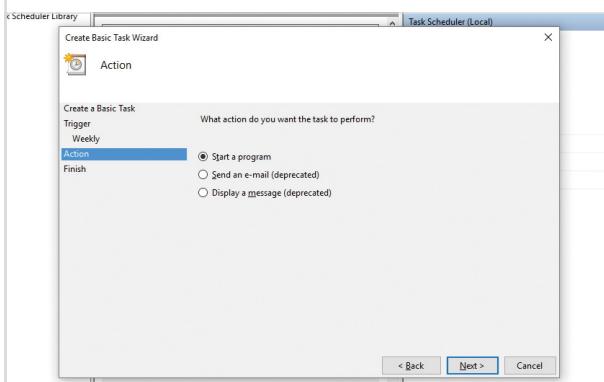


5

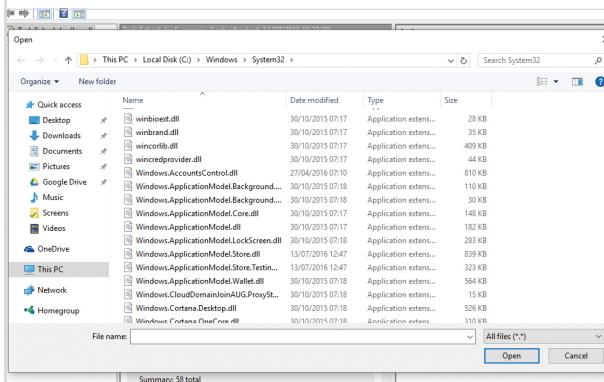
For now let's stick to a timed trigger. Choose Weekly and click Next. Use the various boxes to choose when the task starts and how it should recur from then on. Click Next to continue. You now need to choose the Action being triggered by your choices in the previous steps.

**6**

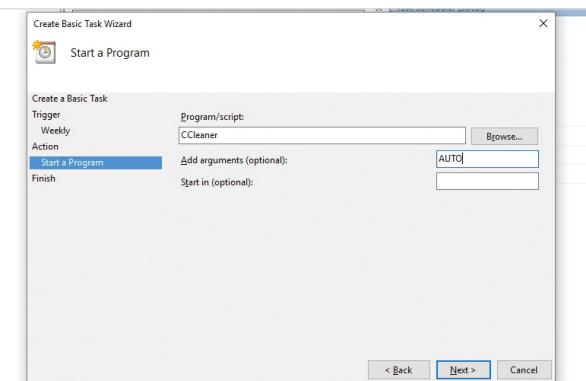
The main action is Start a Program or app but you can also choose to send an email or display a message. If you choose to send an email, you will then need to complete things like recipient address and the message itself. If you choose to display a message, you will need to write it.

**7**

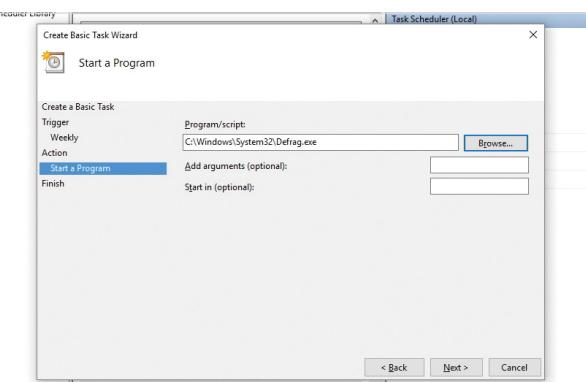
For this guide, we will look at starting a program. You can now type the name of the program or script in the Program/Script field. If you prefer you can click Browse and search through available programs to find the one you want to start. You are looking for .exe (executable) files here.

**8**

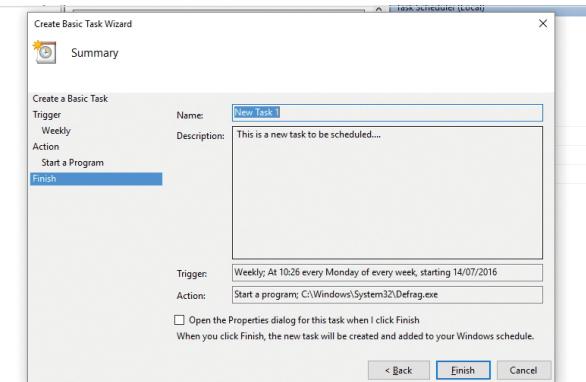
You can also add optional arguments, which some programs support. For example you can specify the /AUTO argument with CCleaner to automatically run CCleaner on a schedule. The exact arguments supported will differ between programs and if you're not sure, it is best to check.

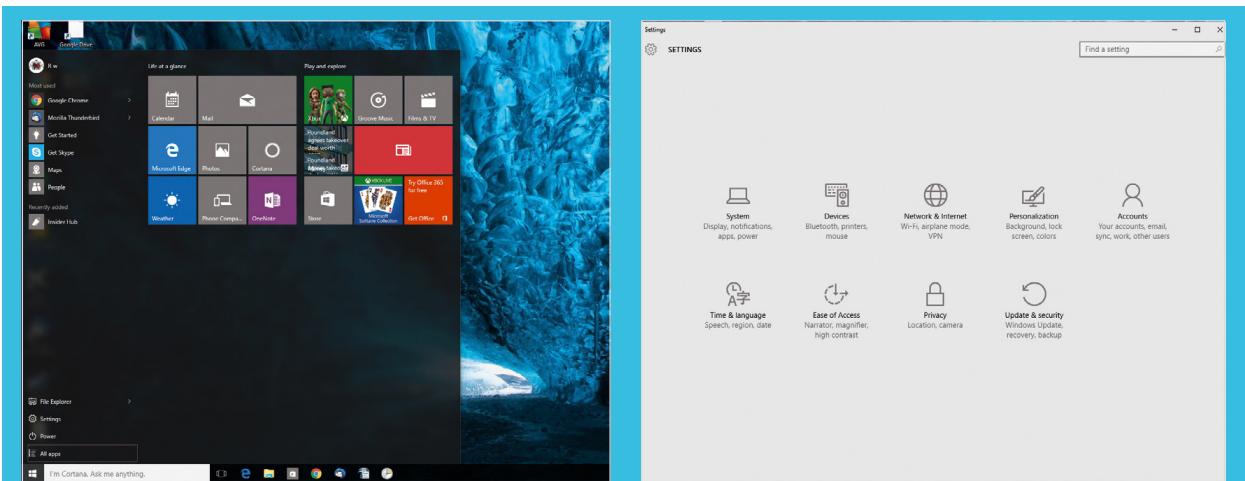
**9**

Get creative. Task Scheduler doesn't just need to be used to run CCleaner or Defrag. If you use a specific program on a regular basis, you can use the Task Scheduler wizard to create a task that opens the program for you automatically according to the schedule you choose.

**10**

You can now review the completed task creation by clicking Finish once. If you are happy with all of the settings, etc. click Finish again. If you want to change anything, use the Back button to navigate to the relevant section. You can also choose to open the Properties after finishing.





Task Scheduler in Windows 10 ▶

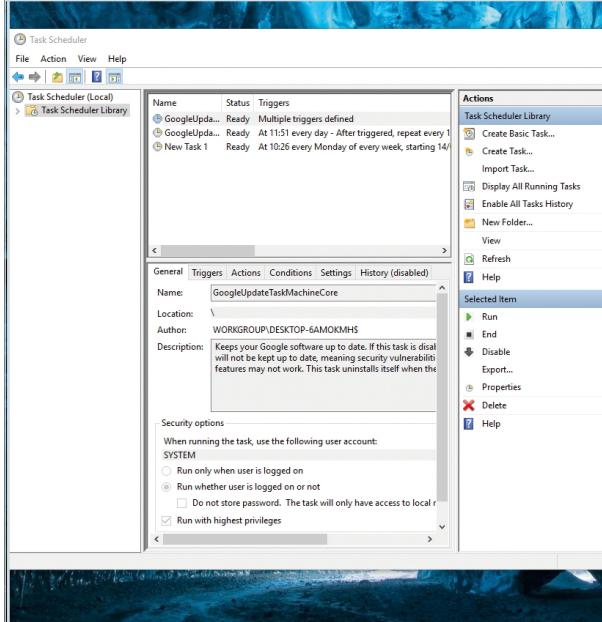
Although the method of creating and managing tasks manually is the same in Windows 10 as it was in 7 and XP, if you are using a portable device, the way the OS prioritises tasks has changed. This change is due to the new Battery Saver mode, which is able to postpone certain tasks if they meet certain criteria.

If Windows 10 detects that the user isn't using their computer, it considers the system idle. This means that some scheduled processes won't execute. For example, disk optimisation runs at set intervals when the computer idles. However, when operating on battery power, running disk optimisation on a spin-up Hard Disk Drive (HDD) could negatively affect your system's uptime.

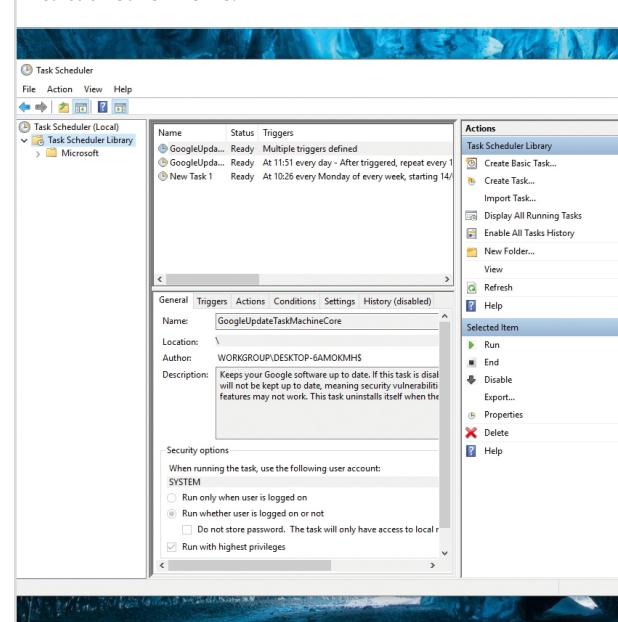
Modifying or Deleting Tasks

You may want to modify existing Windows 10 tasks or even delete them altogether. This should always be done with care and research beforehand.

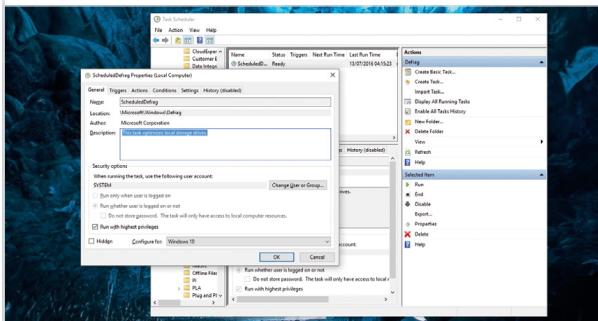
1 The theme will then be applied, and the first desktop wallpaper in the sequence will appear on your screen. Any colour profile changes will also be applied. If you want to manage the theme settings, head to Settings > Personalisation > Themes > Theme Settings.



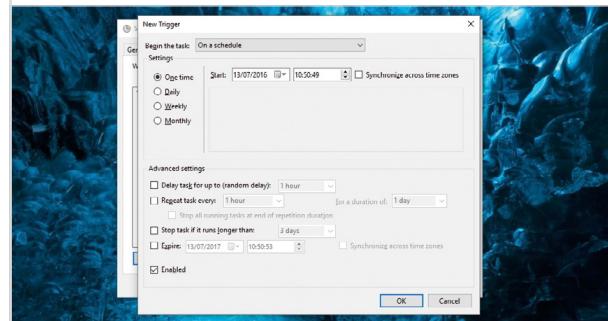
2 Each theme applied can be customised further using the options in the Themes section. You can alter the background, colour, sounds and even the mouse cursor of any theme, making it completely unique to you. When you have chosen the changes, you will need to click Save Theme.



3 For example, click on the left facing arrow for Microsoft. Then click on the left facing arrow for Windows. From the list of entries that appear, find the Defrag option and click on it. In the centre panel, double-click on ScheduleDefrag. This will open a new properties pane.



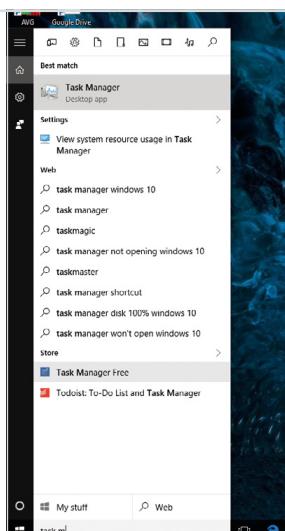
4 The properties pane shows the triggers and conditions that control the Defrag utility's behaviour. If you want the process to run regardless of Battery Saver, you'll need to make sure that none of the triggers are idle state, or are part of auto maintenance. They must run though when logged out.



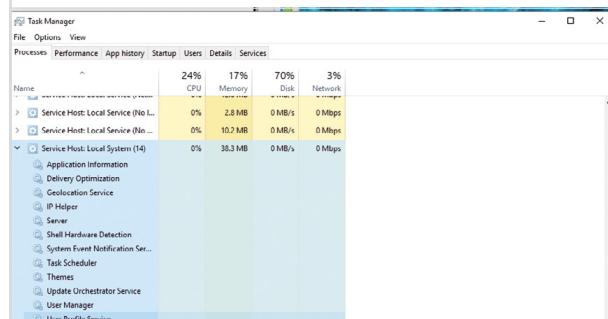
Turn Off Task Scheduler

Although there is no simple switch to turn off individual tasks or to turn off the Task Scheduler as a whole, you can disable it in another way.

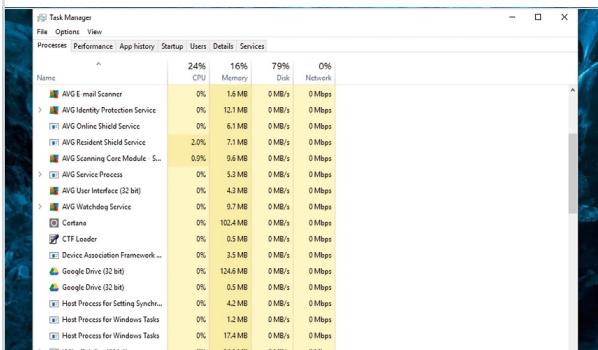
1 To turn off or disable the Task Scheduler temporarily whilst in Battery Saver Mode, as turning it off all the time could adversely affect performance, you need to open the Task Manager. You can search for this using the Cortana search field or by looking in Start menu > All Apps.



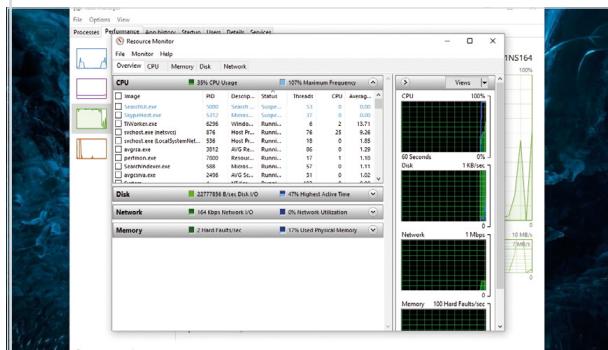
3 You should see the Task Scheduler in this list. Right-click on the entry and choose Disable from the contextual menu. To re-enable it, simply right-click and choose Enable from the contextual menu. Remember to turn this service back on after leaving Battery Saver Mode.



2 You can also open the Task Manager by pressing the key combination Ctrl + Shift + Esc. Next locate the entry for Service Host: Local System (followed by a number) on the processes tab and click on the left facing arrow to show the full list of processes inside.



4 The Task Scheduler offers much more than optimized battery performance. It can automate boring processes, including suspend and sleep. For anyone looking to shave a few precious minutes off their work routine, the Task Scheduler is a must have tool.



REVIEW

FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



CustomizerGod



DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.door2windows.com/customizergod

Windows 10 brings with it a fresher icon style, aiming for flatter and smoother icons on the desktop and in the Start menu.

However, not everyone will like this style, although it's actually set to change again later this year when Project Neon hits our computers, and some may want a change. CustomizerGod is a superb tool for customising Windows. It lets you customise the icons in almost any part of Windows according to your taste. For example, if you want the start button to look different, you can use CustomizerGod to change it from the Windows logo to something fun like a sweet or a smiley face.

If you are inexperienced with customising and are worried about messing up Windows, fear not, as CustomizerGod has an easy revert option, making it one of the safest and easiest customisation tools you'll ever use. The tool is very easy to use, just select the element of Windows you want to change, from the menu on the left of the interface, and then choose the icon you want to use from the main panel. If you want to see more options of a particular icon, you can right-click to see several alternatives.

REVIEW

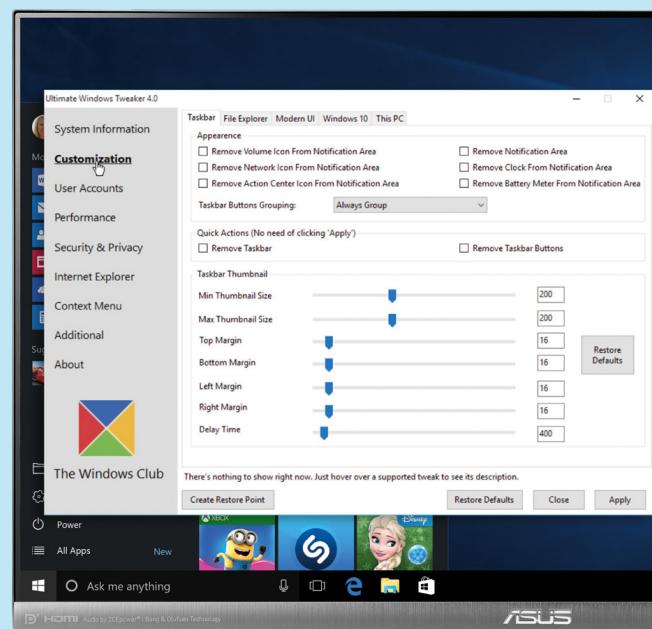
FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



Ultimate Windows Tweaker 4

Previously available for older versions of Windows, and incredibly popular too, Ultimate Windows Tweaker 4 is now fully updated for Windows 10. Those of you who have upgraded to Windows 10, would definitely want to use it to tweak your Windows 10 and personalise your computing experience. With careful tweaking, this seemingly simple piece of software can make your system faster, more stable, more personal and more secure with just a few mouse clicks; it's not just to make it look better/different to the stock version. This isn't about adding themes or changing desktop colour but is a tool for customising the elements of the OS that are unwanted or just no longer useful to you.

The Ultimate Windows Tweaker is tiny, weighing in at just 495 KB but it includes over 200 tweaks to experiment with. Like its predecessors, UWT 4.0 sports a clean, minimalistic UI, offering links in the left panel and tabs on the top in some categories. Hover over any tweak and helpful tool tips will tell you what the tweak does. Ultimate Windows Tweaker is like a tweak UI for Windows 10. While you may be able to access all these via the Windows 10 Settings app, the Registry Editor or the Group Policy Editor, Ultimate Windows Tweaker makes things easier for you by offering many useful tweaks from its single interface.



DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.thewindowsclub.com/downloads

REVIEW

FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★

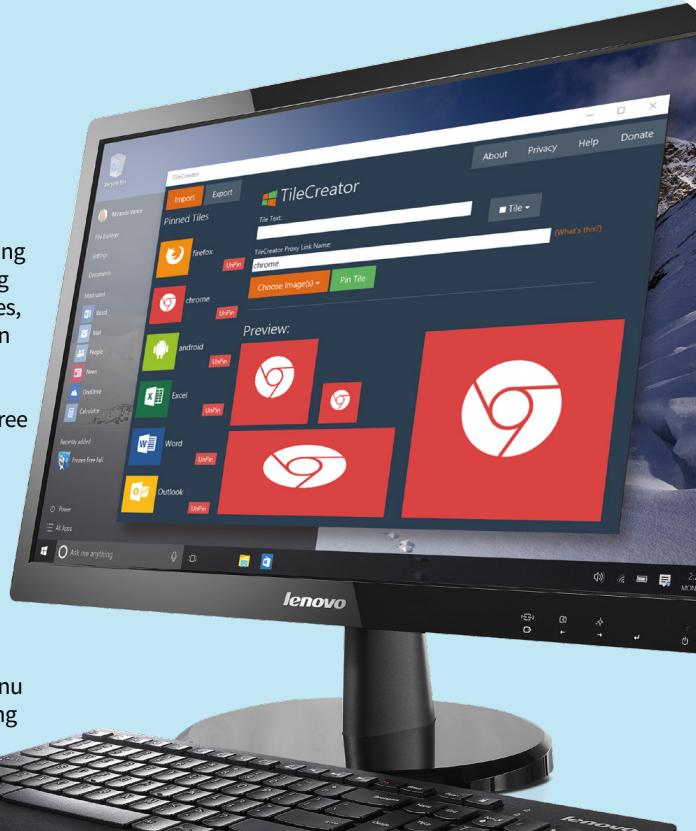


TileCreator

The Start menu in Windows 10 has been massively improved over time and is now a very powerful and useful tool for making your Windows experience more intuitive. Once you start using the Start menu as a quick-launch platform for apps and games, you may begin to feel that it is lacking some personality. It can also look a bit messy when you add software from sources other than the Windows Store because many such programs won't have a tile-friendly icon. Luckily, there is a completely free app in the store that can help with this problem.

TileCreator does exactly what you might expect it to, letting you create tiles for the Start menu in Windows 10.

Furthermore, it can be used to customise existing tiles to suit a particular style and even use your own photos and images as tiles. You will need to install a small piece of software called TileCreator Proxy once the app is installed. This allows the app to execute and run commands; Windows Modern apps from the Store can't do this. Check the help menu in the app to see how to download the proxy. If you are looking for an application to help you style your Start menu, this is a great place to start.



DOWNLOAD HERE ► Windows Store

REVIEW

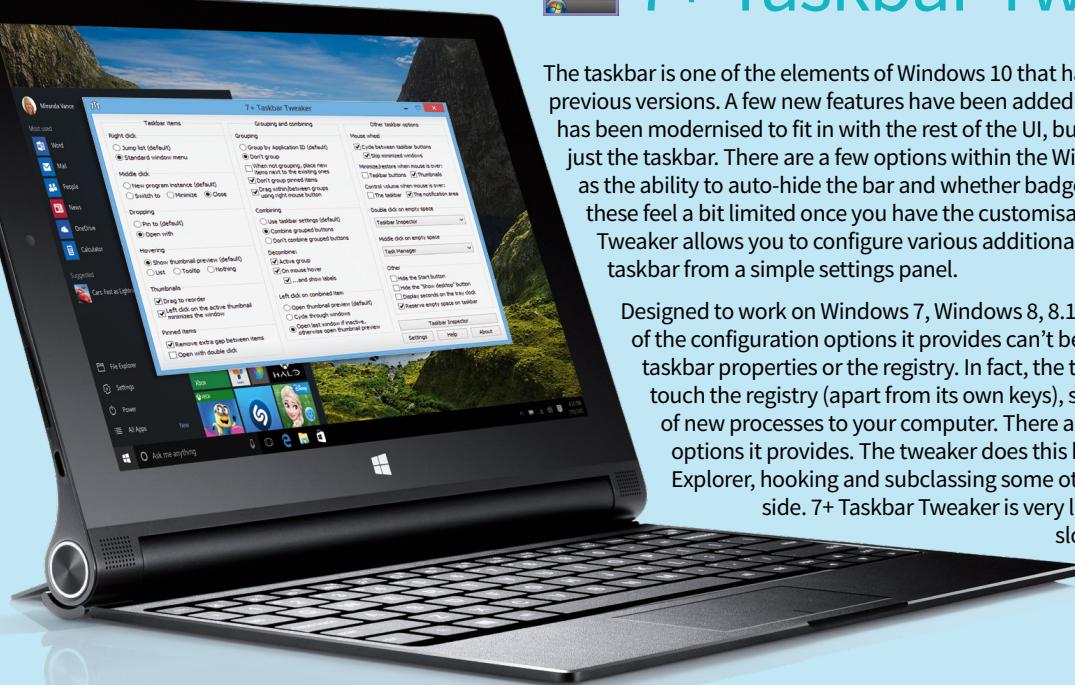
FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



7+ Taskbar Tweaker

The taskbar is one of the elements of Windows 10 that has barely changed from previous versions. A few new features have been added over time and the design has been modernised to fit in with the rest of the UI, but otherwise the taskbar is just the taskbar. There are a few options within the Windows 10 settings, such as the ability to auto-hide the bar and whether badges are displayed but these feel a bit limited once you have the customisation bug. 7+ Taskbar Tweaker allows you to configure various additional aspects of the Windows taskbar from a simple settings panel.

Designed to work on Windows 7, Windows 8, 8.1 and Windows 10, most of the configuration options it provides can't be tweaked using the taskbar properties or the registry. In fact, the tweaker doesn't even touch the registry (apart from its own keys), so you avoid adding lots of new processes to your computer. There are no registry keys for the options it provides. The tweaker does this by injecting a DLL to Explorer, hooking and subclassing some other methods of the dark side. 7+ Taskbar Tweaker is very lightweight. It shouldn't slow down your system and uses an extremely small amount of memory.



DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.rammichael.com/7-taskbar-tweaker

Manage Your Files, Folders and Libraries

In Windows 10, your files are everything. Learn how to create, manage and protect your files, whether that means choosing where they are installed, adding new files, or editing existing ones. You will even learn how to back up every important file on your PC.

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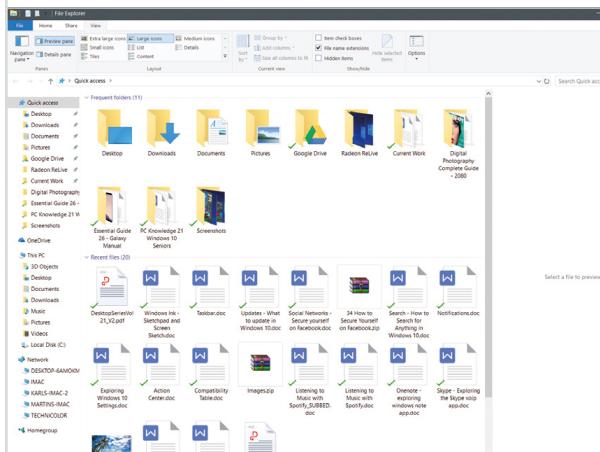
Using the File Explorer

Here we'll take you through the improvements to the general Windows 10 file browser. Many features remain from Windows 7 and 8 (such as clicking in the far right of the taskbar to minimise everything) and apps on the taskbar work the same.

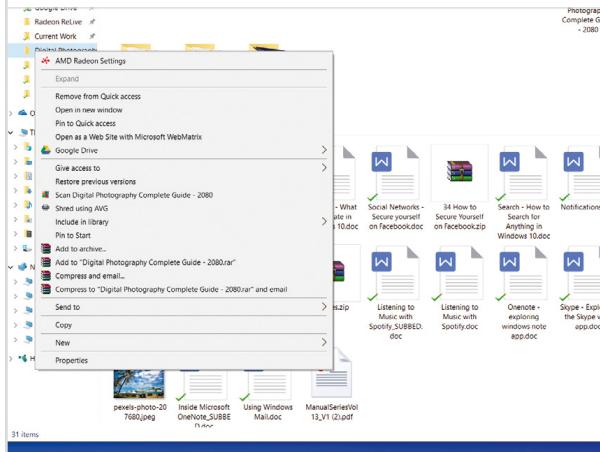
What's New in File Explorer

File Explorer is an often undervalued part of Windows and while it hasn't really changed for several versions of the OS, Windows 10 introduces some enhancements, which we'll take you through here.

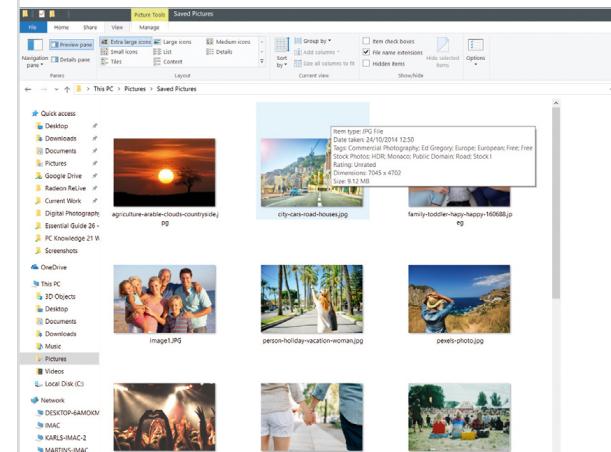
1 The way you browse files in Windows 10 is broadly similar to previous versions of Windows, but File Explorer has been enhanced. The main Quick Access window shows you your most frequently used folders (after all, how many of us dip into more than five or ten folders in a day?) and also recent files.



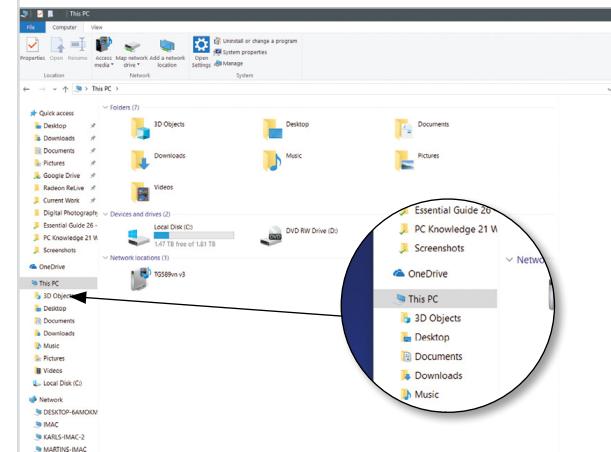
2 The sidebar also works on the same principle and via a new Quick Access feature you can pin folders or files that you want to stick around. It will also show you Frequent folders too. You can pin things permanently onto Quick Access by right-clicking them and selecting Add to Quick Access.



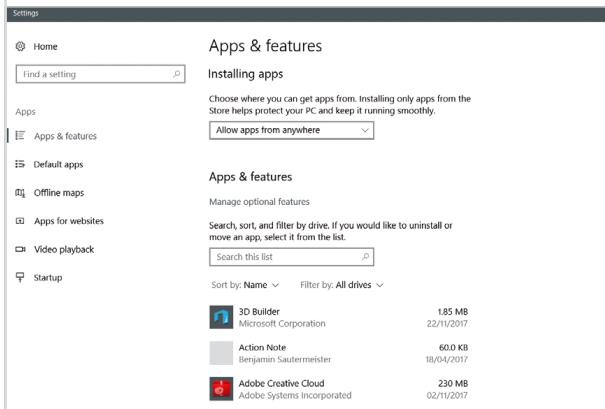
3 There are also new icons across all File Explorer views, while there are a lot more file operations that you can access on the menu at the top of the window (known as the 'ribbon' in Microsoft speak) without the need to use the right-click menu. This is to make it easier for PCs with touchscreens.



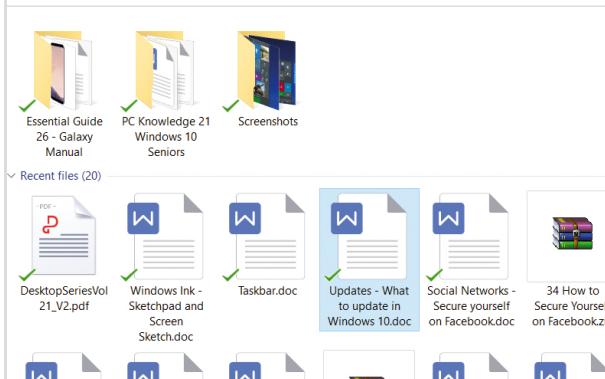
4 This PC is similar to before, but the link to Control Panel has been replaced by the Settings app, which you can now see on the menu bar. Although the Control Panel is still present in the background of Windows 10, Microsoft intends for you to use the new Settings app and directs you there wherever possible.



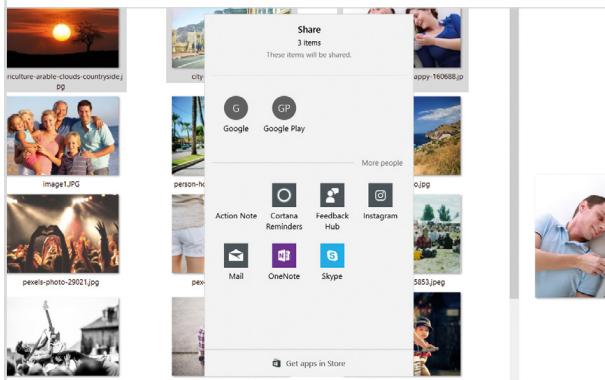
5 Also from This PC (you might know it as My Computer if you previously used an older version of Windows), you can access the Programs and Features Control Panel area if you want to uninstall something.



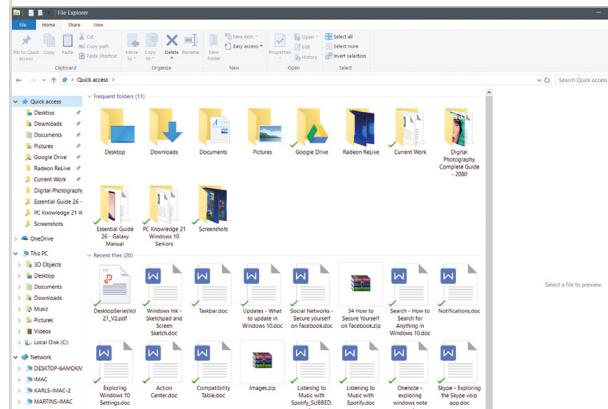
6 File Explorer's Share tab also gets a new treatment, with the Share logo (first introduced with Windows 8's Charm bar) now used for file sharing from all apps. You can choose to email a file straight from the File Explorer window, add it to a zip file or share it with other Windows users.



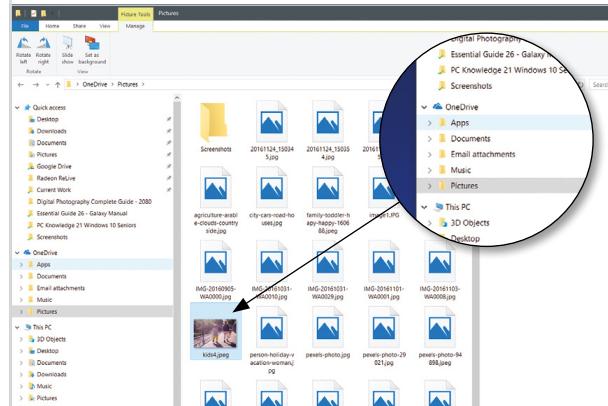
7 If you want to see what other options you have for sharing – perhaps using the Windows Mail app – highlight the files you want to share, then click Share. A pop-up bar will appear on the left of the screen and will show you the options you have to share that file(s) or folder(s).



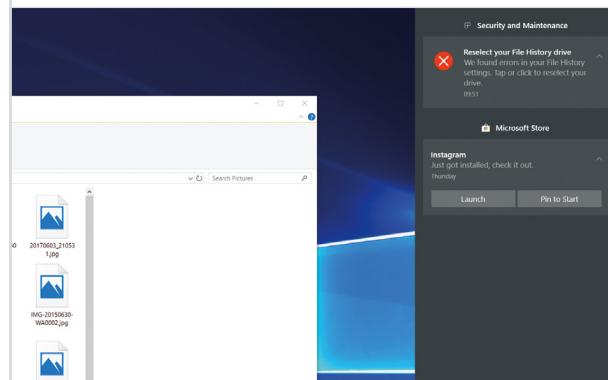
8 The Windows 8 Charm bar has been abandoned in Windows 10 and the functions for Windows Store apps are hidden away inside the apps themselves; functions such as the Settings for the app itself and the ability to Print or Share.



9 If you've come from an earlier version of Windows, you might not be familiar with OneDrive. It's Microsoft's cloud storage application and it's available right from File Explorer in Windows 10, so you can access your files just as if they were on your own computer.



10 On-screen notifications have changed in Windows 10. Unlike in Windows 8, where they display in the top right of the screen, all notification action is now centred around the bottom right. There's also a place where notifications reside after they've popped up.



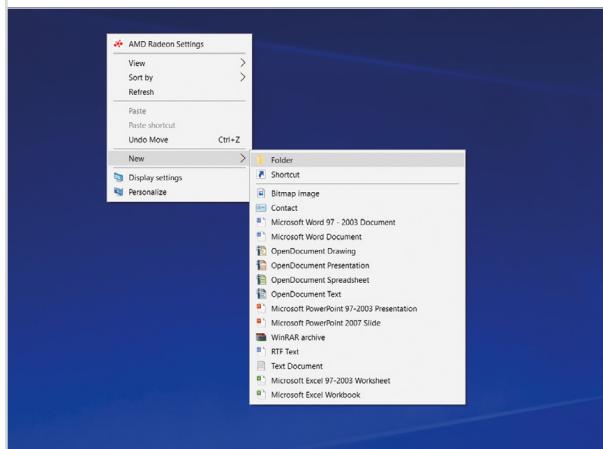
Create and Manage Folders

Despite all of the changes to the Windows OS, folders have remained as one of the core tools for organising your files. Much more than just boxes to keep your photos or music files in, folders can really help to improve how you use Windows 10 on a day-to-day basis.

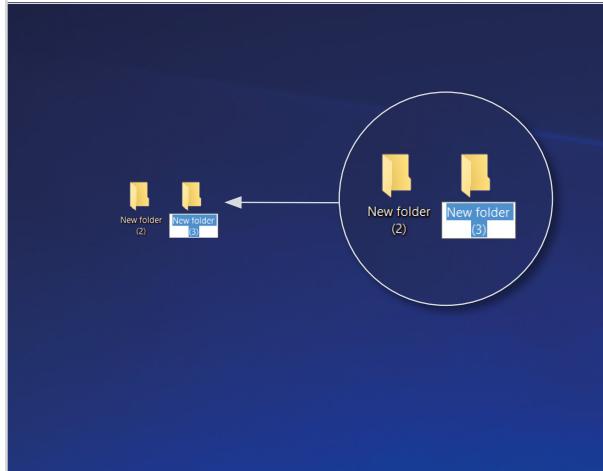
Creating New Folders

It may sound too simple if you are a long time Windows user but here's a look at how to create new folders on the desktop and within other folders.

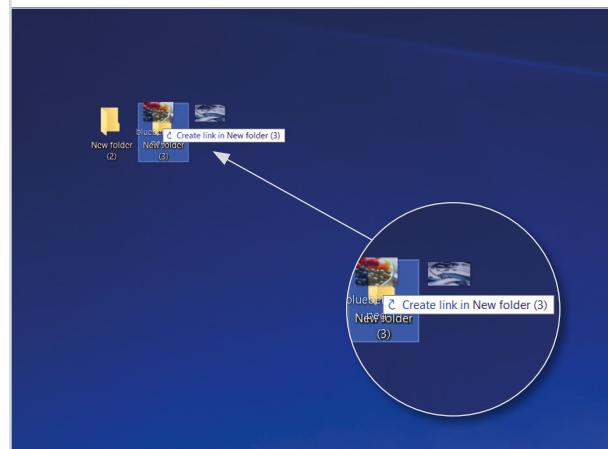
- 1** On the desktop, right-click and select New folder from the action menu that appears. The familiar yellow folder icon will then appear at that position on the desktop (wherever you clicked), with the name automatically set as 'New folder' but highlighted ready to change.



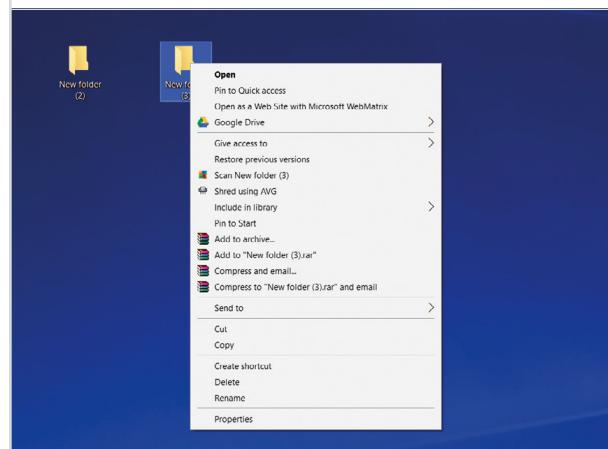
- 2** You can leave the name as 'New folder' if you wish. If you then create a second folder next to the first, it will automatically be named 'New folder (2)'. You can rename a folder at any time by left-clicking on the title once, or right-clicking and selecting Rename from the menu.



- 3** Double-click any folder to open it and view the contents. You can move items into a folder by selecting, dragging and dropping into an open folder or a closed one. If the folder is closed, drag the selected items over the top of it until the folder is highlighted, then release.



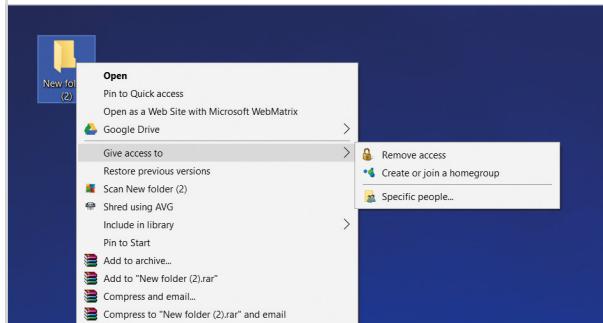
- 4** To delete a folder, right-click on it and select Delete from the action menu. You can also click and drag the folder to the Recycle Bin icon on your desktop. Anything in the folder will also be placed in the recycle bin. To move folders around the desktop, just click, drag and drop them.



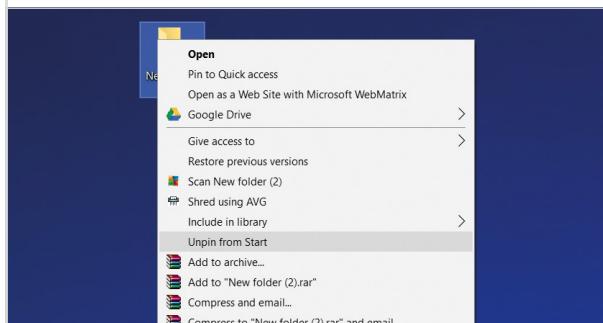
Managing Your Folders

Once created, folders can be adapted and customised in a number of ways. You can even change the default icon used whenever a new folder is added.

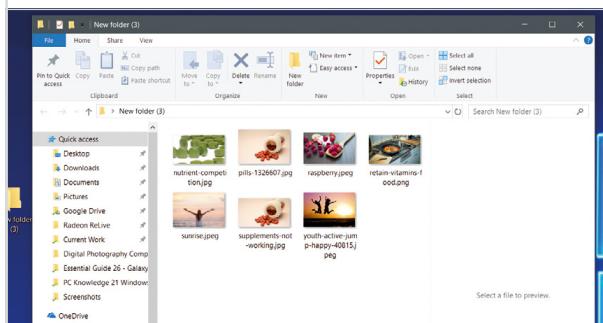
1 You can manage a folder in a number of ways without even opening it. Right-click on any folder and the action menu appears. The exact options that appear will depend on the apps or software you have installed but can include scan for viruses, compress, shred, zip and more.



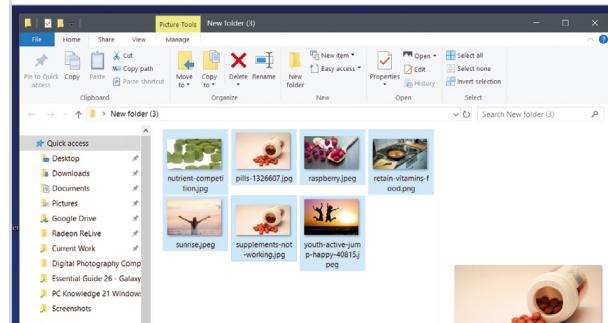
2 The standard (Windows 10) options in the folder action menu include Pin to Quick Access, Open, Share With, Pin to Start, Send To, Cut, Copy and Create Shortcut. If there is a small arrow next to an option in the menu, it means a further options menu will open when rolled over.



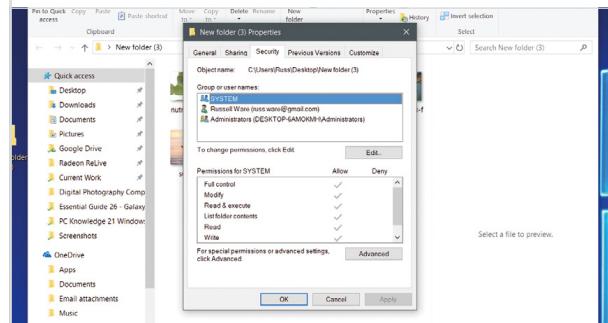
3 Open the folder and a whole range of further options are available along the top of the new window. You will see four main tabs along the top: File, Home, Share and View. Each one of these, when clicked, will display a different set of further options relevant to the section.



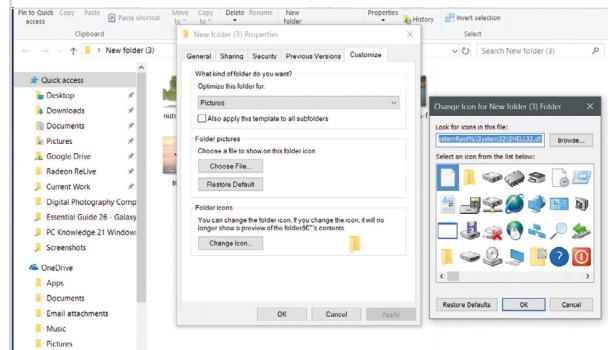
4 Most of these options are self-explanatory, such as copy, paste and select all but some are a little more confusing. Most casual computer users won't need to use 90 per cent of the options in their day-to-day use but it is worth understanding them anyway. Add a few files to the folder and experiment.



5 If you want to get really deep into managing your folders, there are even more options to explore. Open any folder and right-click anywhere inside the main window. From the action menu that appears, click Properties. Here you can manage all sort of things, from security to icon style.



6 To change the icon style, that will change the style of all folder icons, click the customise tab and then click Change Icon at the bottom. Scroll to view all of the available icons (downloaded icons can be accessed by browsing), click on your preferred icon and click OK.



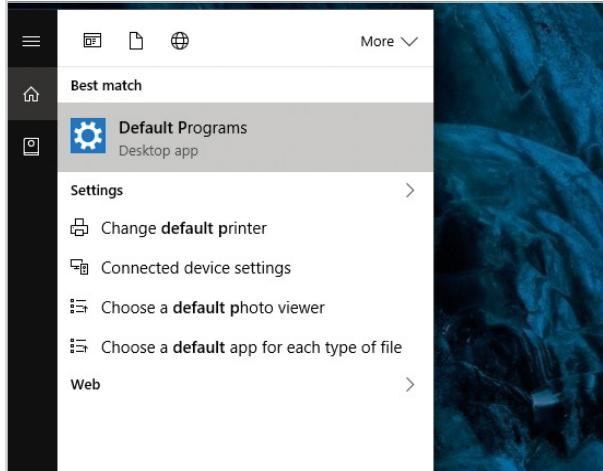
Changing File Associations and Protocols

Windows 10 comes with its own default set of associations that open specific file types. A file association controls which apps or programs are set to open which types of files. If you're not happy with the default associations and want to choose your own, it's easy to do.

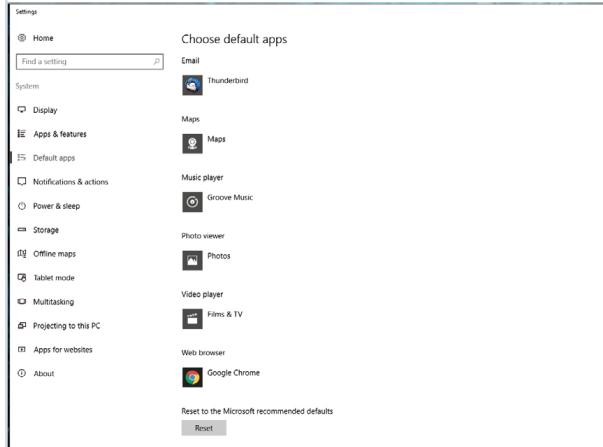
Default Programs and Protocols

The ability to change the default apps and programs that Windows 10 uses goes a long way to helping you take full control of your PC and the system software.

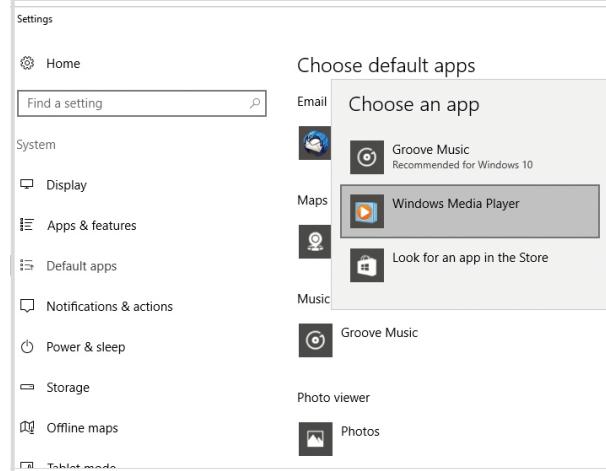
- 1** Click on the search bar on the left of the taskbar and type “default programs”. You can also navigate to this settings tool by opening the All Apps list, scrolling down to W and clicking Windows System > Default Programs. Either way, open the tool on screen.



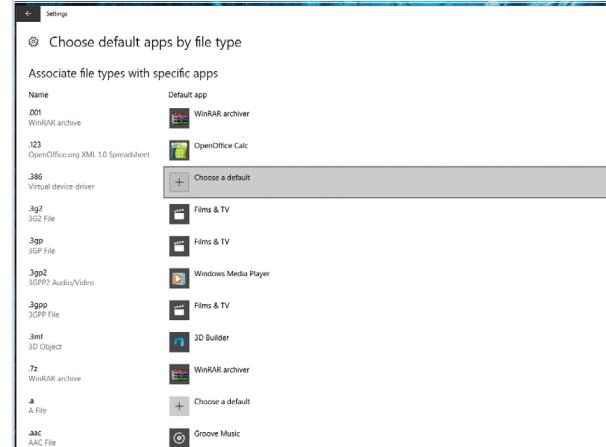
- 2** A list of apps already associated with various functions will appear. Click on any of these to see alternative options. The options shown will vary depending on the apps you have installed at this time. If a function has no apps associated with it, you can click ‘Look for app in the Store’.



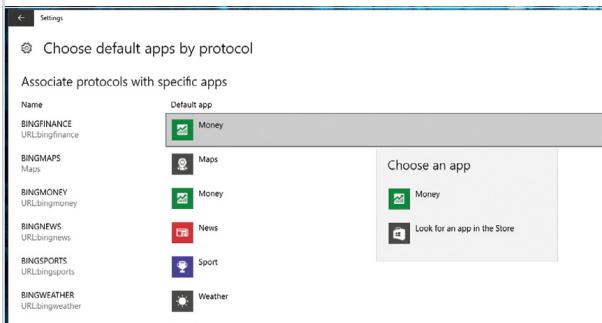
- 3** Below the description, you will see two options: Set this program as default and Choose defaults for this program. The amount of default file associations are also shown. Click ‘Set this program as default’ first.



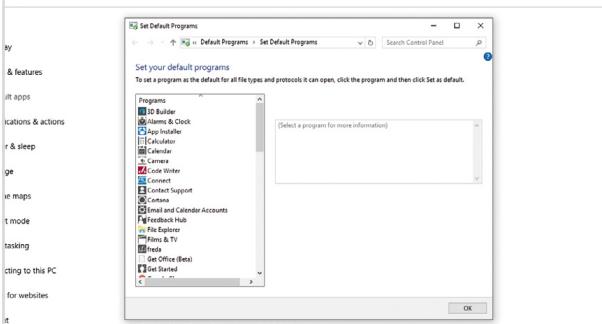
- 4** Next, click on the ‘Choose default apps by file type’ option to see a list of all the file types that can be associated with your currently installed apps. These are the types of files which will automatically open in that app when clicked. Anywhere a + is shown, is without a default app.



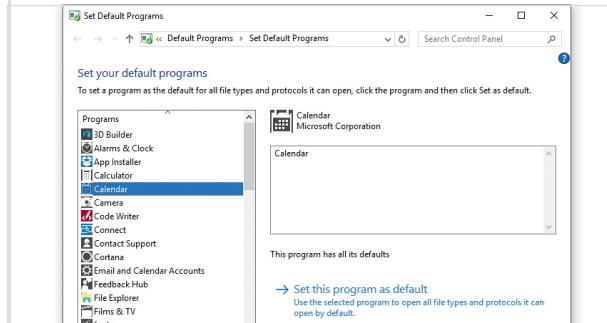
5 You can also choose default apps based on protocols. This generally means that typing or accessing a certain URL will trigger the app to open, rather than a webpage. For example, if MAILTO is detected by the browser, our default email client (Thunderbird) will launch to handle the request.



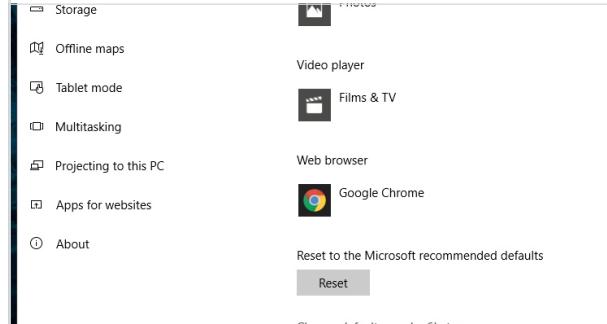
6 Finally, you have the ability to set defaults by app, rather than choosing apps to go with certain files or actions. Click 'Set defaults by app' at the bottom of the screen. A new window will open, displaying a list of apps on the left. Click on any app you want to change the defaults for.



7 You now have two options: Setting the app as default for any and all files or protocols it can open, or choosing individual defaults the app will use. Clicking the first results in an instant change, clicking the second will show you a list of current defaults for that app, allowing you to choose.



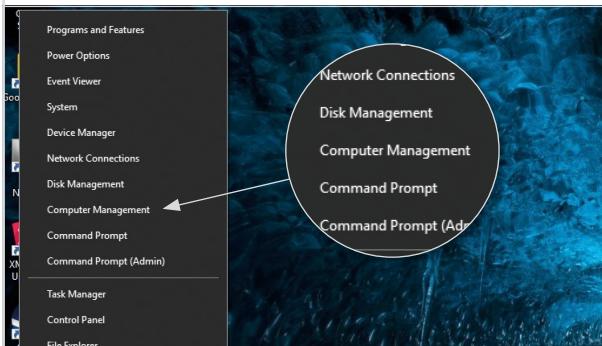
8 If you run into problems after changing protocols and defaults, you can easily reset to the Microsoft recommended defaults with a click of the button on the Default Programs screen. This may mean that you have to go back through your list and change some settings but it can be a useful fix.



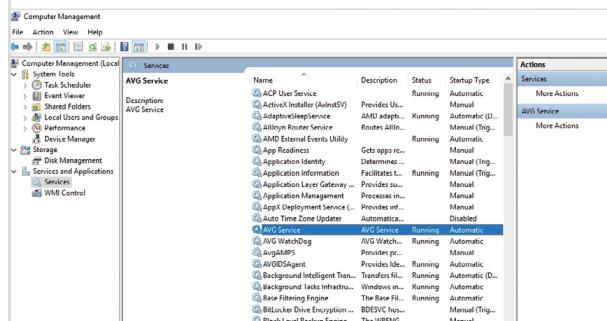
Running Services

Being able to check which Windows Services are running at any particular time is also a useful option, as it can help to diagnose performance or stability issues.

1 The easiest way to get to the Services panel is by going through the Power User menu. Right-click on the Start menu button on the far left of the taskbar and select 'Computer Management' from the menu that pops up; this is the Power User or Win-X menu.



2 Click the 'Services and Applications' option in the left-hand panel of the window that opens. Then click 'Services' to show the full list. The list will be large but not all services will be running at any one time. Click on any to see more details, including management option, for that service.



Moving Installed Apps to a New Drive

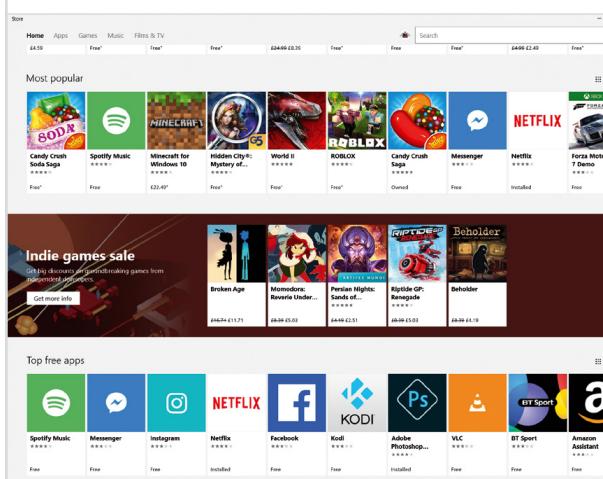
Windows 10 makes it easier than ever to control where your downloaded apps and software is installed. There is now no reason to worry about moving all your apps to another internal drive, or even to a removable USB flash drive, in the event that you need to create space on your main hard drive. With just a few clicks of your mouse, you can move apps around to whichever storage area suits you best.

Change Where Apps are Installed

Not every user realises that apps can be installed on the hard drive of their choice, not just the one preselected by the Windows 10 OS. Knowing this is useful for general Windows 10 maintenance.

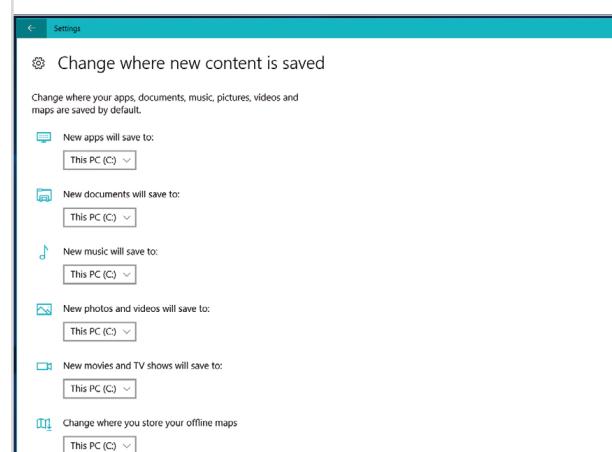
1

By default, apps you install will be saved to the main partition of the hard drive (usually the C drive). However, you can choose to save them to any other connected drive, both internal and even removable external hard drives (including USB flash drives).



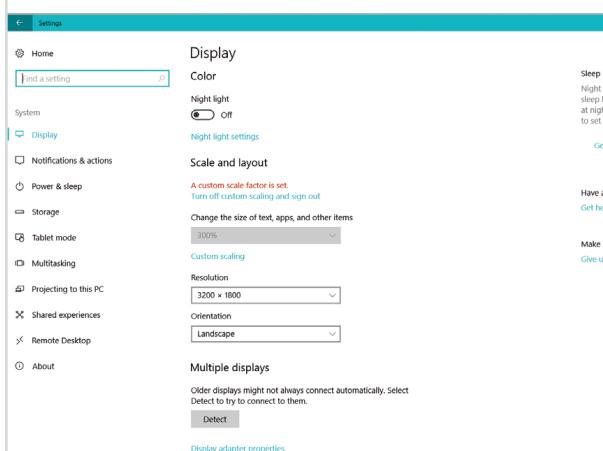
3

Click on 'Change where new content is saved' and a new list will open. Here you can see exactly where apps, documents, music, photos, videos and more are saved by default (unless this has been changed previously). Each of the listed items will have a drop-down menu below it.



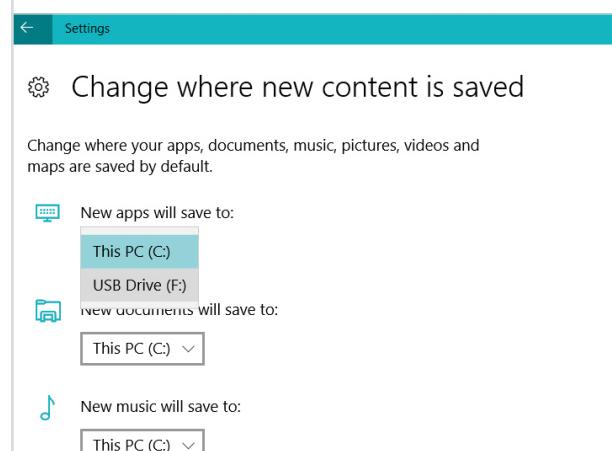
2

In the newer versions of Windows 10, this is a reasonably easy thing to do. Open the main Settings and click on System. Here you will see a whole list of useful sections, but the one you need to open is the Storage section. This will show a visual representation of your storage drives as a whole.



4

Click the drop-down menu below Apps and choose the new drive or partition you want apps to be saved to. This only changes where apps (from the Store) installed after this moment are installed. Previously installed apps will still be saved on to the drive that was set when they were added.

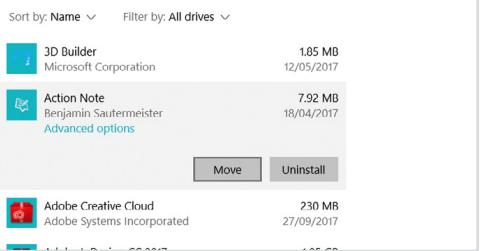


Move Installed Apps

If you have a lot of apps installed, moving them to a different drive can be one of the easiest ways to free up space on your main storage volume. Be aware that not all apps can be moved.

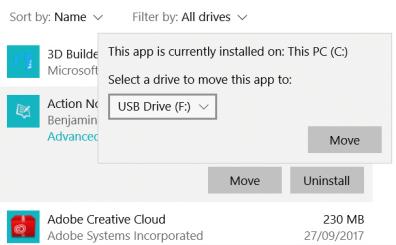
1

You can move already installed apps, if you like. There's no limit to the number of different drives you can store apps on. This allows you to make the most of the storage space you have available. To do this, head to Settings > Apps > Apps & features. Click an app and click the Move button.



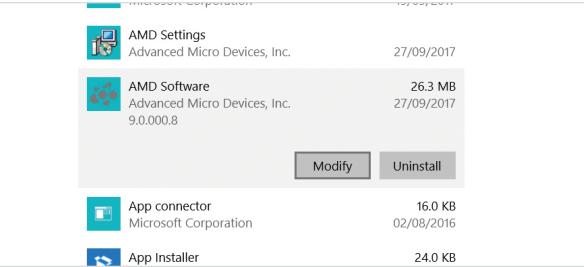
2

You will then be shown where the app is currently installed and will be asked to choose another drive for the app to be saved on to. Drives are listed in a drop-down menu, with their drive letter shown to make picking the right one easier. Click Move again when you are happy with your choice.



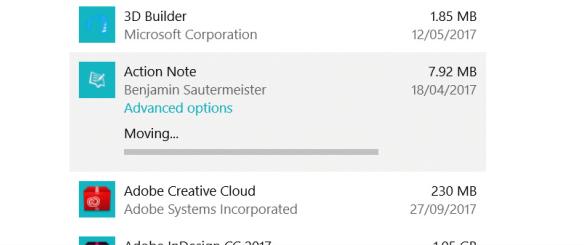
3

You may see a Modify button instead of the Move button. This means the app is a traditional desktop app, and you can't move it. If you see a Move button, but it is greyed out, this is a Microsoft system app and also cannot be moved. You can only move apps installed from the Windows Store.



4

If you move or install apps to an external drive, the apps will cease to work if the drive is unplugged. This is why you cannot move Microsoft system apps to a different drive. Apps that you need to have always available should be left in the main system hard drive partition.

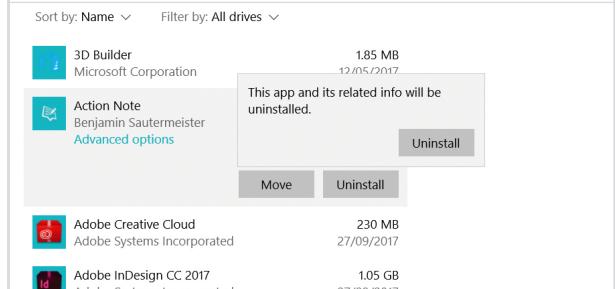


Removing Apps and Software

There are two different ways to remove apps and other software from your Windows 10 computer, but both options may not be available in every instance, so it is useful to understand each.

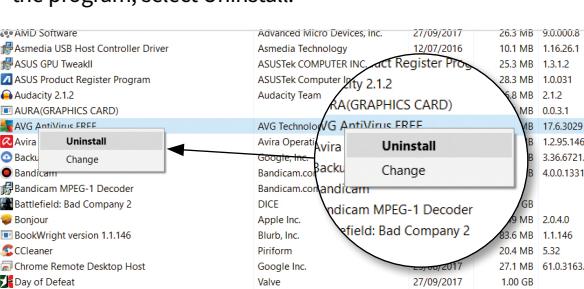
Remove in Settings

In Windows 10, the easiest way to remove apps or other software is in Settings. Open settings and select Apps. Select the program and then select Uninstall. Follow the instructions on the screen. Be aware that some apps built into Windows can't be uninstalled.



Remove in Control Panel

On the Start menu, enter Control Panel in the search box and select Control Panel from the results. Select Programs > Programs and Features, and then select the program. To fix the program, select Repair or, if that's not available, Change. To remove the program, select Uninstall.



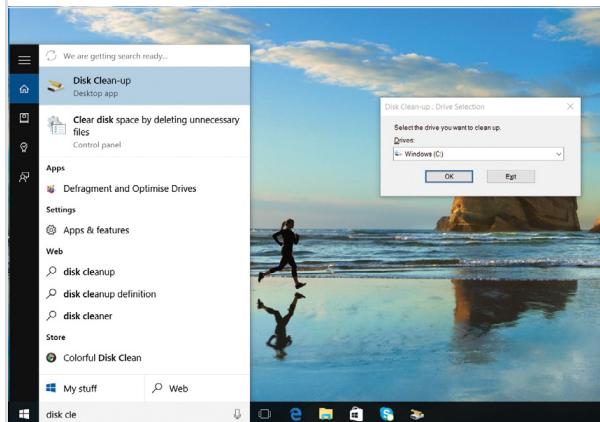
Free Up Space in Windows 10

Disk Clean-up is the best way to free up space on your PC. It will clear up redundant files accumulating on your hard drive including temporary files and Downloaded Program files. But that's not the only way you can free up space, as you'll see...

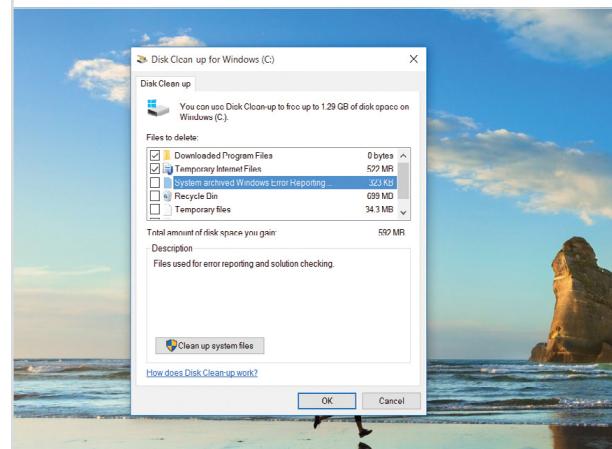
Clearing Space on Your PC

It's worth giving your machine a little spring clean every so often and that doesn't just mean removing unwanted files and folders. Disk Clean-up should be an essential part of your PC maintenance.

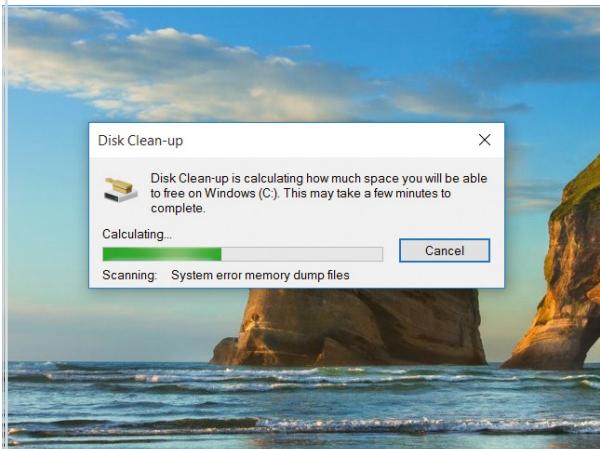
Clean Up ► Disk Clean-up is a utility included with every copy of Windows. When you launch it (here we've searched for it using the search box on the taskbar), you'll get this small window appear. It will help you rid your PC of detritus that builds up over time as you download files from the Internet or install and uninstall apps.



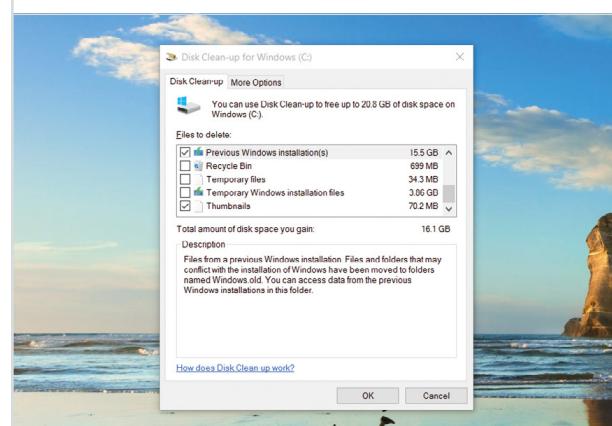
Scan Results ► If you're scanning a second hard drive, it's unlikely Disk Clean-up will find a lot on it as it is mostly concerned with Windows files. And that's what we're looking at here in the results window. As you can see, you can check which items you want to remove from your PC. Click OK to remove.



Which Drive? ► You'll be asked to select the drive you want to clean up. Most of the time there'll only be one drive you wish to clean up (your C: drive), but it could well be that you've got more than one storage drive on your PC. Disk Clean-up will then begin to scan your drive for things it can sweep up.

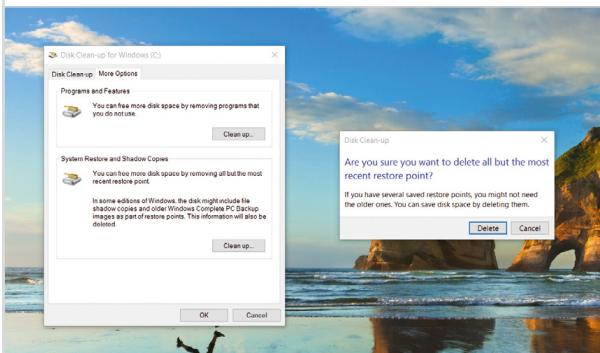


System Files ► We actually didn't click OK in the last step; instead clicking the Clean Up System Files option. This won't harm your Windows installation, but will clean up extraneous files that some people prefer to keep. If you upgraded from an old copy of Windows, this includes your Windows.old folder on your hard drive.



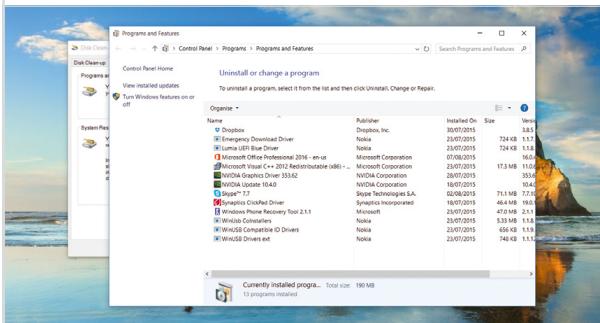
More Options

If you click the More Options tab, you'll see this window, taking you straight to the Add/Remove Programs area of Control Panel. It also gives you the option to remove old restore points that take up space inside Windows. The latest restore point will always be kept in case of a problem with your PC.



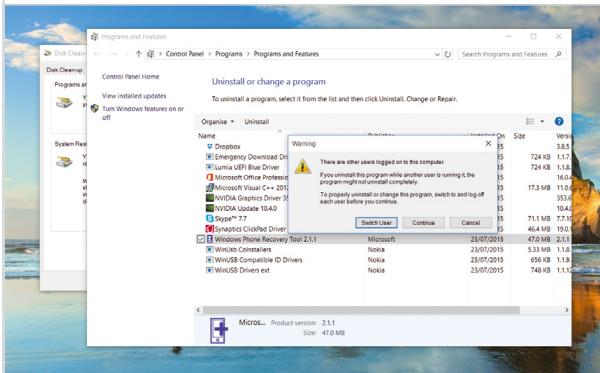
Programs and Features

This area of Control Panel is one of the most used, although it's not designed to be utilised quite as much in Windows 10 – the idea is that you'd uninstall using the method in the final step on this page. Still, it's the only way to see how much space your desktop applications are taking up. You can also access it via Control Panel > Programs.



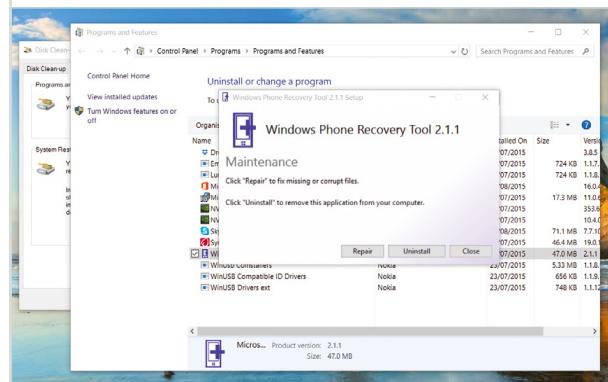
Other Users

If you try and uninstall a program with other users logged onto the PC, you'll always get a warning that other people may be using the application and so it may not uninstall properly. Get other users to log off before uninstalling programs if this is an issue.



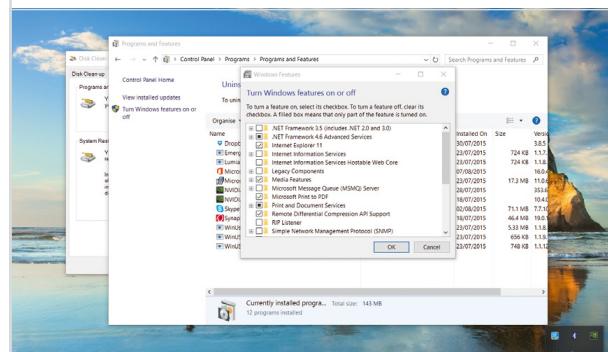
Uninstaller

Each desktop app has a different type of installer (or, in this case, uninstaller). Many are very similar, but you do get ones that differ, and one such is this app from Microsoft. Often you will be asked if you want to repair the application. You don't – you want to uninstall.



Windows Features

This is for advanced users only. Also from this screen you can select Turn Windows Features On or Off. You're able to uninstall elements of Windows that you don't use – perhaps the old Internet Explorer, for example, or Microsoft's Print to PDF plug-in if you have an alternative solution that you use.



Uninstall from Start

You're also able to easily uninstall apps from the Start menu – simply right-click on the app in question and select Uninstall from the menu that appears. It's the best way to uninstall any app, whether it's come from the Windows Store or not.



Creating File Backups

A recovery drive is one of the best ways to ensure that you don't lose everything on your computer in the event of a critical malfunction. It can help you both troubleshoot and fix problems, even if the PC won't start as it normally would. All you need is a blank, formatted USB flash drive (sometimes called a thumb drive) and this step-by-step guide.

Creating the Recovery Drive

Creating a recovery drive is a relatively simple process, although it takes a bit of time, but one which could save a lot of frustration in the future.

1

The first thing you need to do is find a USB drive that is large enough and then make sure it is ready to be used. The USB drive you decide to use won't be able to be used for anything else like storing other files, etc. so make sure it is a spare, or bought specifically for the task.



3

Your USB drive needs to be wiped of everything currently on it before the recovery drive is created. You can do this during the set up process later or you can format it yourself right now: a useful thing to know how to do. Insert your USB drive into a free USB slot on in your computer.



2

A basic Windows 10 recovery file will be less than 500MB but if you choose to include system files in the backup (recommended), so you can use it to reinstall Windows, you will need much more space. A basic recovery drive can be as small as 1GB but a full recovery drive needs to be at least 8GB.

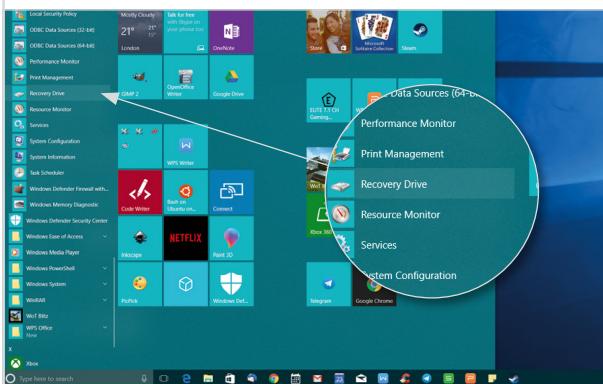
The screenshot shows the Windows Settings interface. On the left, there's a sidebar with options like Home, System, Storage, and About. The main area is titled 'About' and displays information about the PC's protection (Virus & Threat Protection, Firewall & Network Protection, Device performance & Health, App & Browser Control) and device specifications (Device name: DESKTOP-6AMOKMH, Processor: Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-6600K CPU @ 3.50GHz 3.50GHz, Installed RAM: 16.0 GB, Device ID: D6E7E754-124F-4AF1-84CD-B6C2E4B00076, Product ID: 00342-50315-87184-AA0EM, System type: 64-bit operating system, x64-based processor). At the bottom, there's a 'Rename this PC' button.

4

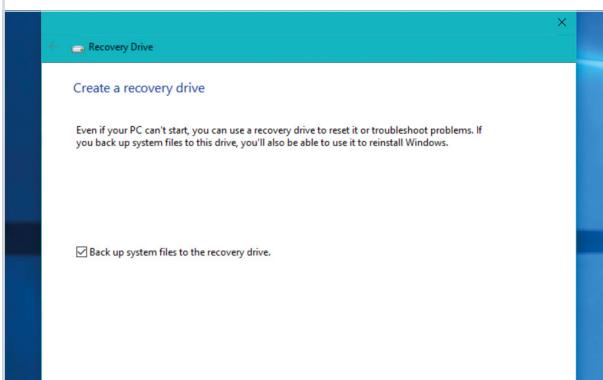
Open the File Explorer on your computer and you should see the USB flash drive listed in the sidebar. It will probably be labelled as the (E:) or (F:) drive. Right-click on the drive label and select Format from the action menu. Leave the settings as default (should be FAT32) and then click Start.

The screenshot shows a context menu for a USB drive labeled '(E:)'. The 'Format' option is highlighted. Other options in the menu include Quick access, Scan with Windows Defender, Open in new window, Pin to Quick access, Give access to, Open as Portable Device, Scan P.F., Shred using AVG, Include in library, Add to archive..., Add to "Archive.rar", Compress and email..., Compress to "Archive.rar" and email, Format..., Eject, Cut, Copy, Rename, New, and Properties.

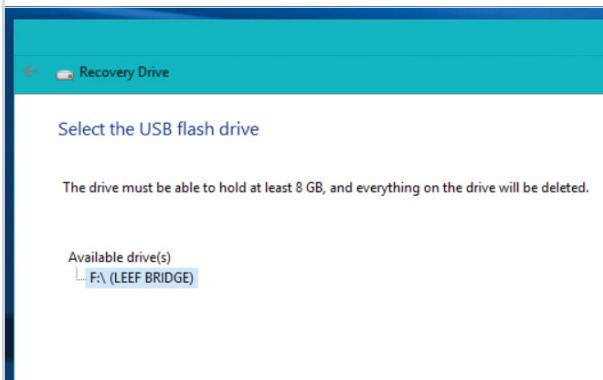
5 You should now be ready to create your recovery drive. In the search field, type “Recovery Drive” and select the Create a Recovery Drive result. In newer versions of Windows 10, you might also be able to find the Recovery Drive in the main apps list, opened by clicking the Start menu button.



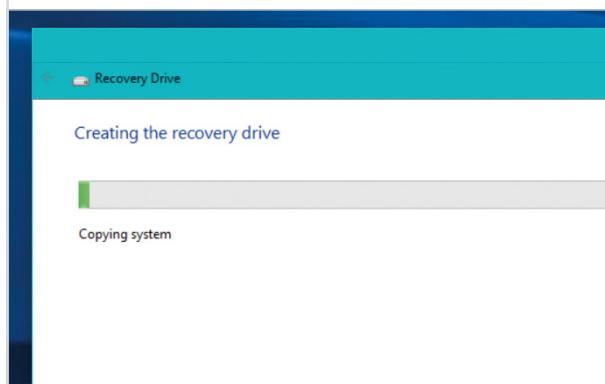
6 Allow the software to “make changes to this PC” and the setup wizard will open. This first screen is where you choose whether you want to back up system files with the recovery drive, so you can use it to reinstall Windows 10. If you do, tick the checkbox and then click Next.



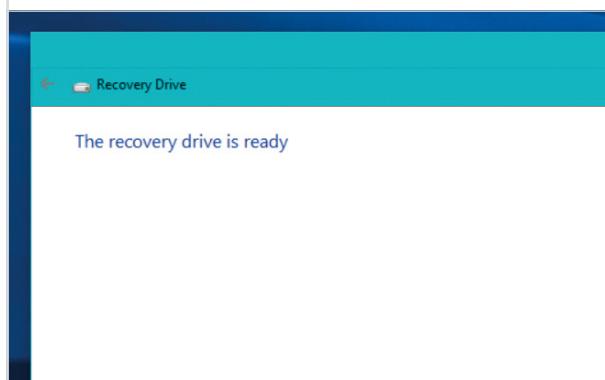
7 After a few moments, you will be asked to select the USB flash drive you wish to use. If you only have one USB drive inserted, it will be the only one shown and will be automatically selected. You are reminded again how much storage space the drive needs, and that all existing data will be wiped.



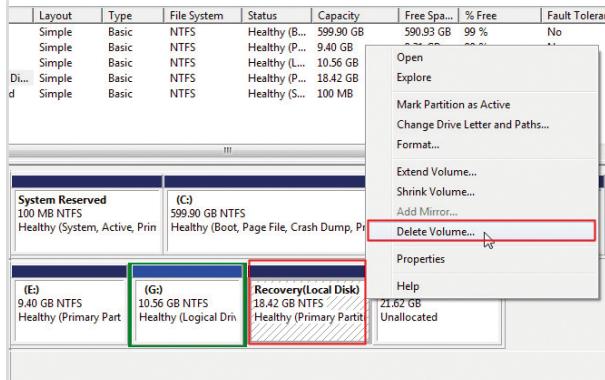
8 Click Create on the next screen and the process will begin. This may take a while to complete, so go make a coffee and leave it to run. A progress bar shows how far along it is, should you need to check. Do not remove the USB drive, or turn off your computer, before the process finishes.



9 When the process is complete, you should be prompted to delete the recovery partition on your PC, to save some space; as long as you plan to keep your recovery drive, this is safe to do. If you are not sure, you can leave the recovery partition in place; it can be deleted at a later date if you wish.



10 If you did not already have a recovery partition on your computer, you won’t see this step. You will simply be informed that the recovery drive is ready, and to click Finish. Remove the USB drive from your computer and put it somewhere safe. It is a good idea to label the drive so it is not reused.



Manage Libraries in Windows 10

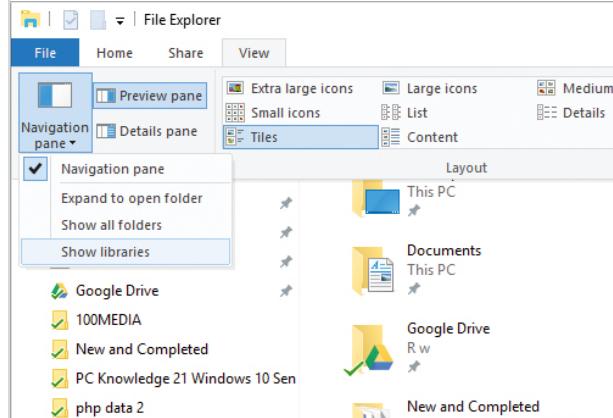
Libraries in Windows have long been used as a central place for bringing together related files. They differ from file folders in that they contain links to a collection of folders, either locally or across a shared network, rather than the actual files themselves. The default Windows 10 libraries are: Documents, Music, Pictures and Videos.

Find and Manage Libraries

Libraries are very useful tools, even if they have been slightly side lined in Windows 10. Let's take a look at using your libraries effectively.

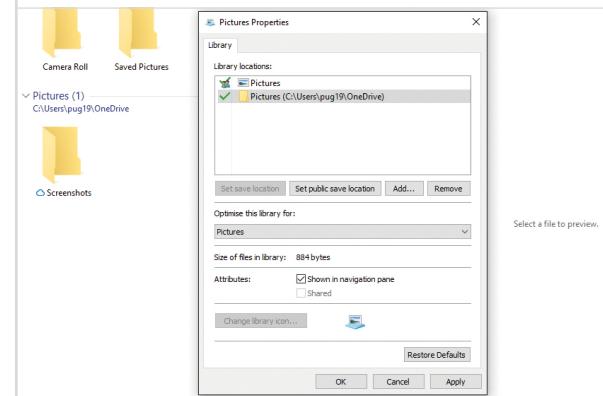
Displaying the Libraries

► By default, Windows 10 doesn't show the libraries in the sidebar of the File Explorer (or any other folder) as it used to in older versions. To reveal the library folders, open File Explorer and click the View tab and then Navigation Panel. You can then choose to show libraries.



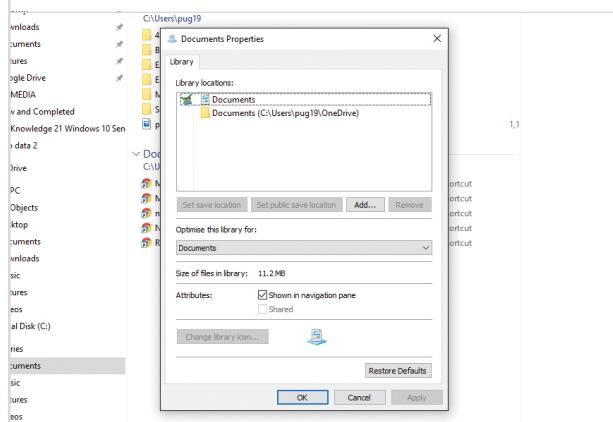
Change Default Save Location

Each library has a default save location. Whenever you choose to save or copy a file to a library, it will be saved to that location. You can change the default save location of any library. Right-click on the library in file explorer, choose Properties and either select or add a location using the top window.



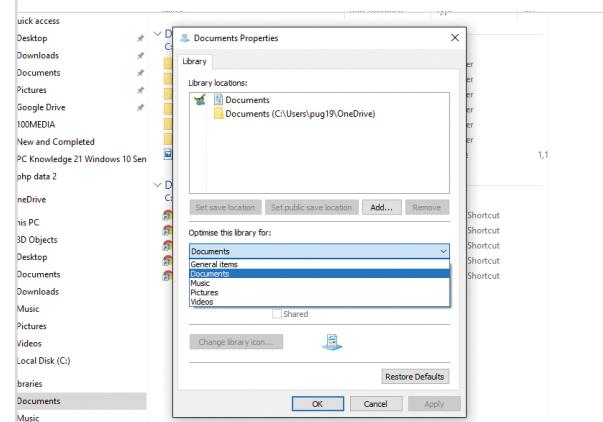
Reordering Files in Libraries

► Adding a folder in a library doesn't actually change the storage location of the files or folders within it. The library simply gives you a quick way to reach those files. To reorder folders, select a library and then right-click on it. Select Properties and then reorder the folders shown by drag and drop.



Library Attributes

► If required, the following library attributes can be modified within Windows Explorer, the Library Management dialog or the Library Description file (*.library-ms): Name, Library Locations, Locations Order and Default Save Location. You can also optimise libraries for particular file types such as music.



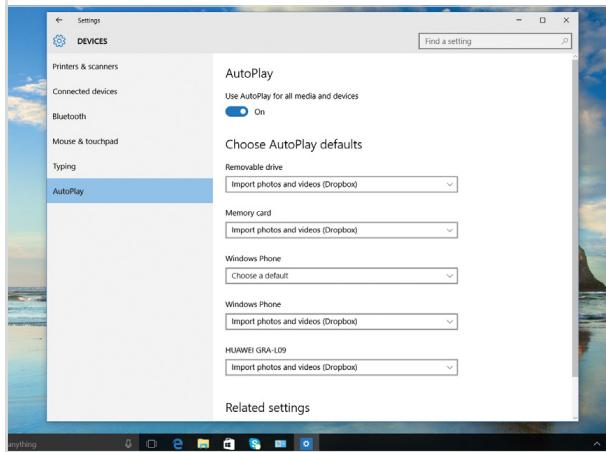
How to Use AutoPlay

AutoPlay is the function in Windows that determines what automatically happens when you plug in a USB drive or click on an email link. It's an important thing to know how to configure, but it's something that isn't the easiest to find.

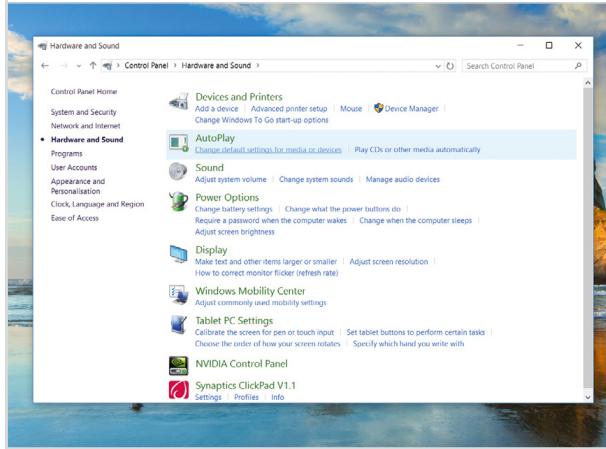
Set Up AutoPlay

You can configure the programs you want to have priority using the AutoPlay options in both the Settings app and Control Panel. Here's how to set up and use the AutoPlay feature in the Windows 10 operating system.

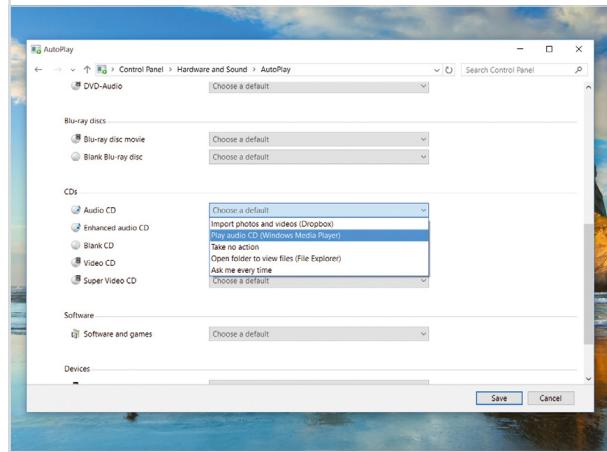
1 In Settings click on Devices, then select AutoPlay from the bottom of the list. You can then choose the options you want for a variety of common options. Here we've got the cloud app Dropbox highlighted if we insert a memory card into our laptop. Our photos are automatically uploaded to our cloud storage.



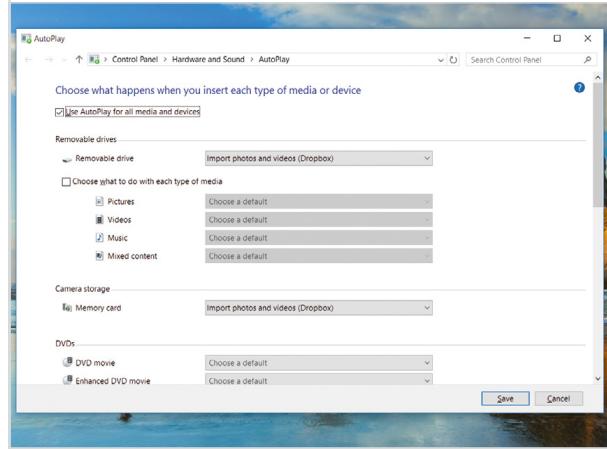
2 However, the AutoPlay options within the Settings app aren't exactly comprehensive, since they only deal with the most common AutoPlay options. For a more detailed configuration selection, you need to go to Control Panel > Hardware and Sound and then click on AutoPlay.



3 In Control Panel you'll see all the options you could see in the Settings app plus a whole lot more. There are options for all kinds of things and notably what you want your computer to do if you insert a DVD (if you have a DVD drive). Do you want it to play the disc in Movies & TV or in another app you choose?



4 There's an option for memory card, too. It's a more complex version of the one in the Settings app; you can also filter removable drives by type of media – so you can specify a default for pictures, another for videos and so on. Just click the relevant box and the options will no longer be greyed out.



Import Photos into Windows 10

Importing photos from a digital camera or phone on to your PC may seem like a simple task to some but if you have never done it before you can encounter problems and have no idea how to fix them. Let's take a look at importing photos from phone, tablet or camera.

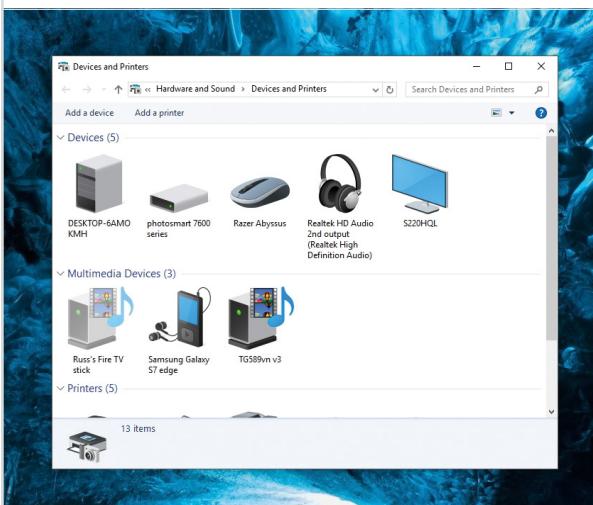
Importing to a Folder

Importing your photos or images directly to a folder on the desktop, or elsewhere, is the traditional method. It tends to be quicker but offers fewer importing options.

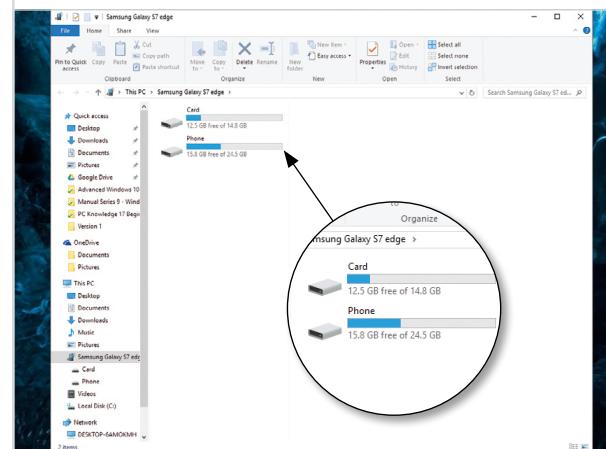
1 The first thing you need to do to import photos directly from a phone or camera is to connect the relevant cable to your PC. In almost all cases, this will be a USB cable of some sort. You will have been supplied a transfer cable with the device you are using. Plug this into a free USB port.



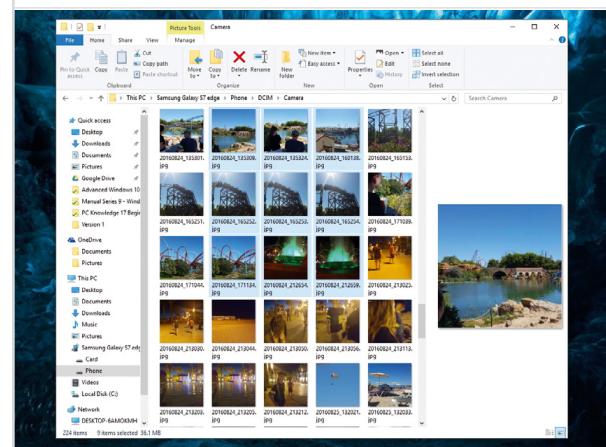
2 Plug the other end in to your phone or digital camera and wait a few moments. Your PC should detect the device and may need to install some drivers to make the USB connection work.



3 Normally, when you first plug a device in to your computer which contains storage of some sort, Windows will ask how you want to handle the files in that storage. Scroll down the list to see 'Open in a Folder'. In some cases, Explorer will open showing the connected device.



4 Now click on the device storage: this may be Phone and Card on a smartphone and navigate to where the photos are stored. This will normally be in a folder called DCIM on your phone or camera. You can now simply cut and paste or drag and drop images to a new folder on your PC.



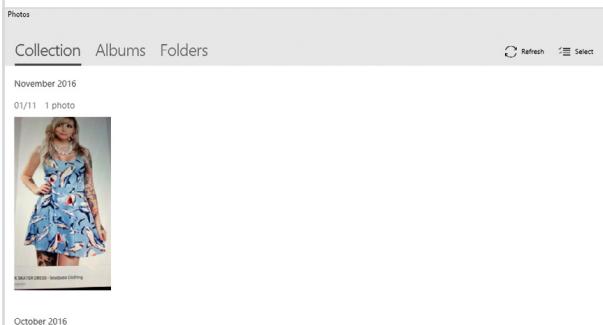
Importing to the Photos App

The Windows 10 Photos app is a great tool for importing photos from a phone, tablet or camera. It allows you to preview and individually pick images more easily, and even sorts them.

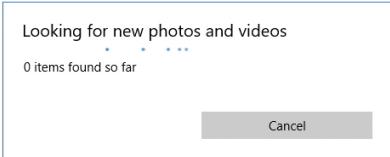
- 1** Open the Photos app on your Windows 10 PC. Now connect your phone or camera to your computer using the relevant USB cable. If you see the popup menu asking how you want to deal with the storage media you just connected, ignore it or click it closed.



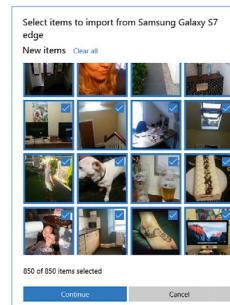
- 2** The Photos app should have opened up with the Collections screen showing. If not, click the tab at the top to open it now. Along the top of the Collections tab are your controls: Refresh, Select, Slideshow and Import. Import is the only one you need to click at this point.



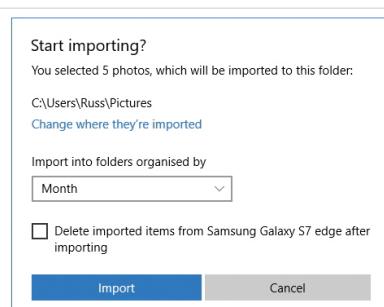
- 3** The Photos app will now search for photos available to be imported. If your device is not connected properly, or the correct USB drivers are not installed, it will fail to find anything at this point. If you are transferring from a phone or tablet, you may also have to unlock the screen to continue.



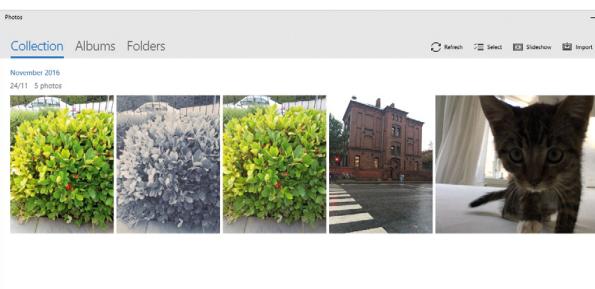
- 4** By default, every image detected on your device will be selected for importing. If you want to import everything, click Continue. If not, you can use the check boxes on the images to select those you want to import; use the Clear All and Select All buttons as required.

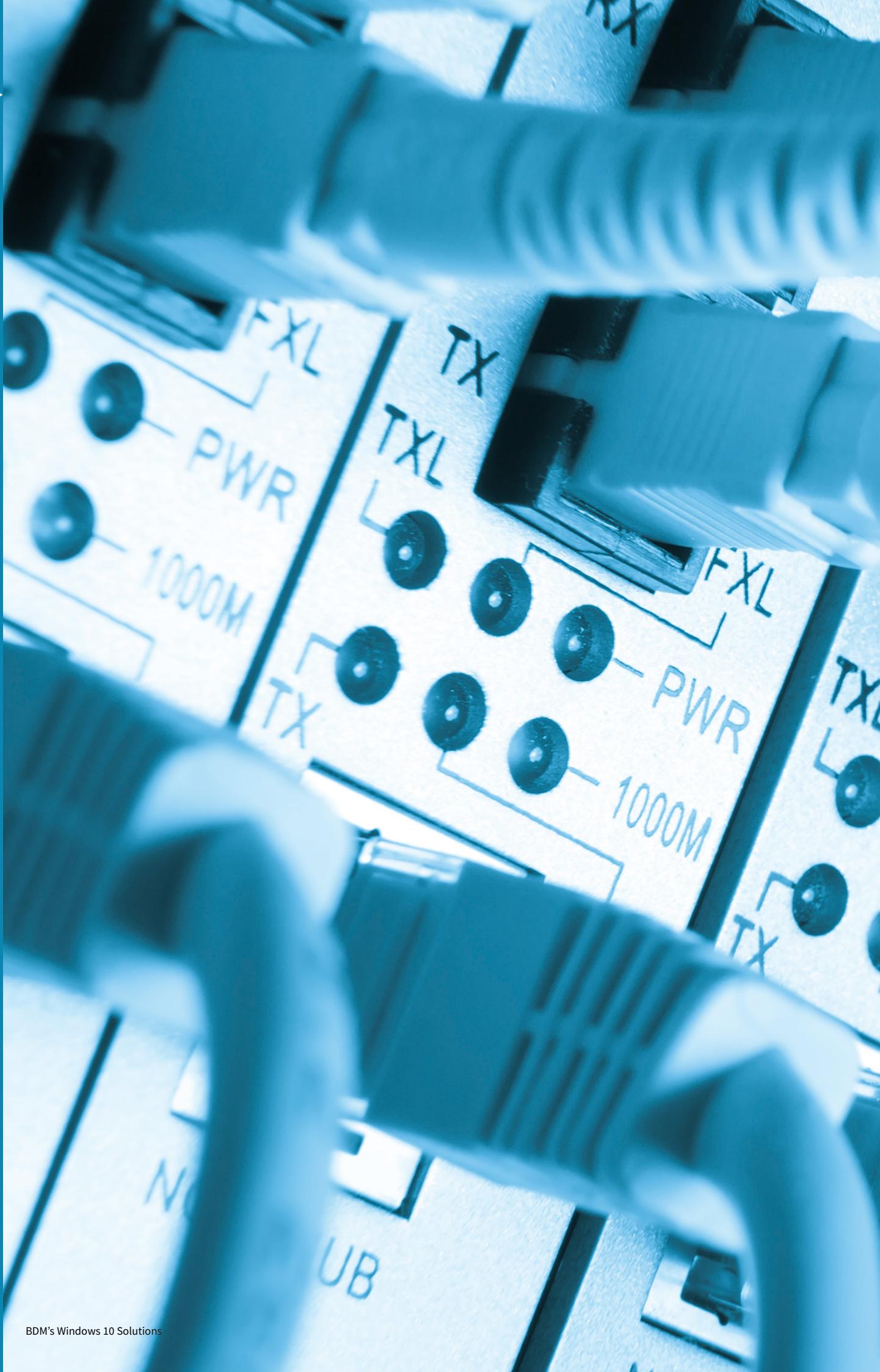


- 5** You can now choose where the imported photos will be saved. By default, this will probably be somewhere like C:\Users\YourName\Pictures. Click the 'Change where they're imported' link to do just that. You can also choose to import into folders arranged by month or day.



- 6** Click Import. Your image will now begin to appear in the Photos app window, within the Collections section. An album will also be created called Last Import. Click on one of the images shown to begin editing or enhancing it with the tools Photos offers.





Network and Internet

Network connections and the Internet can be a minefield of problems if you don't know what you are doing. This section will make sure that you can connect to and use the Internet safely and easily and show you how to make the most of the online services offered by Edge and more.

-
- 76 Connect Your PC to the Internet**

 - 78 Installing an Alternative Browser**

 - 80 Limiting Data Usage when Tethering**

 - 80 Check Network Usage Details**

 - 80 Manage Browsing Data**

 - 81 Pause or Disable OneDrive**

 - 81 Reduce Streaming Video Quality**

 - 82 Mastering the Edge Browser**

 - 83 Customising Microsoft Edge**

 - 85 Microsoft Edge Extensions**

 - 86 Microsoft Edge Tips & Tricks**

 - 88 Secure Yourself on Facebook**

 - 90 How to Secure Your Wireless Network**

 - 92 How to Continue on PC**
-

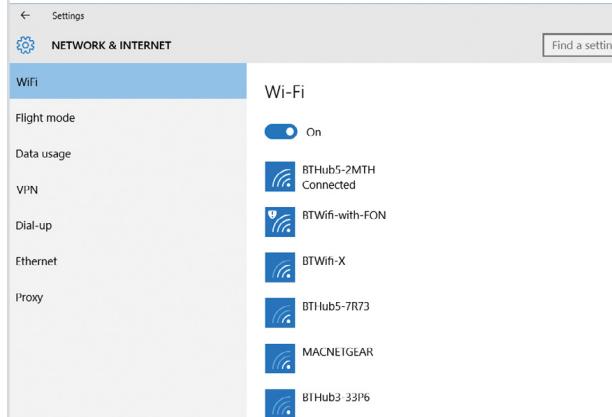
Connect Your PC to the Internet

Setting up your Internet connection is an important step in Windows 10. Joining and managing networks is easier than ever. One of the new features is Wi-Fi Sense that enables you to securely share network connection details with your contacts.

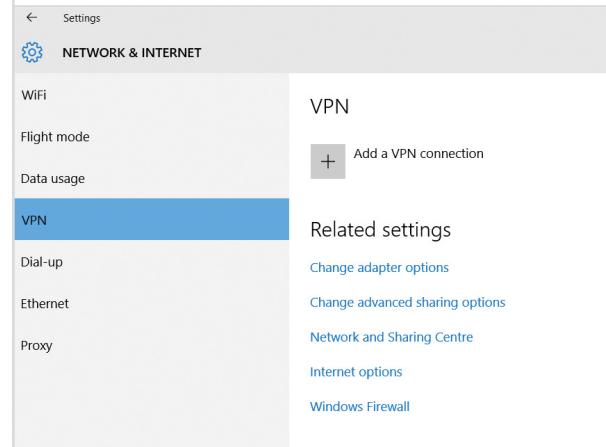
Manage Your Network Settings

We'll show you how to master your Wi-Fi settings and explain what you need to do if you have a problem connecting to the Internet in Windows 10.

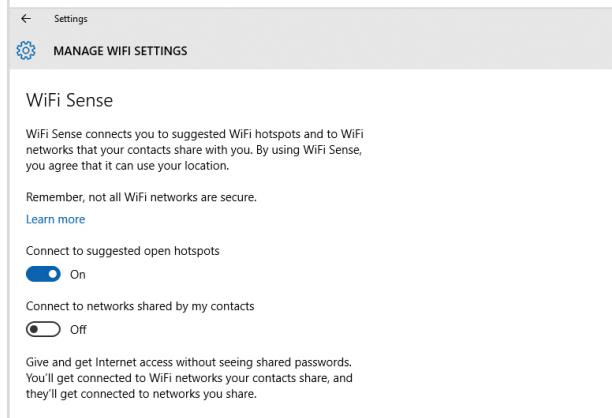
Your Settings ► Network and Internet is one of the key sections within the new Windows 10 Settings app. It features a plethora of settings for the different ways to connect to the Internet. While the Wi-Fi screen is fairly straightforward, there are different settings windows for Ethernet connections and even dial-up.



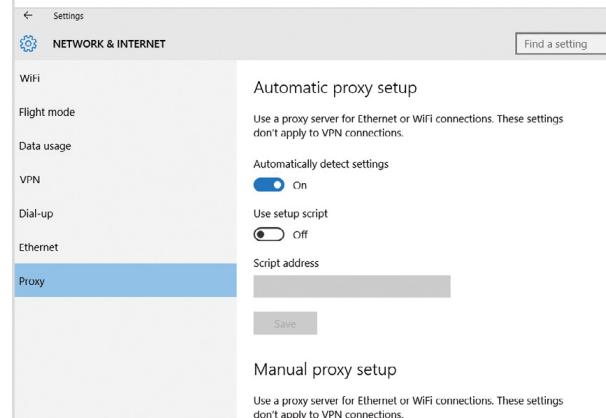
VPN Settings ► If you need to log into a corporate network, this is where you need to enter the appropriate settings. It's fairly easy to do but you'll need the configuration details from your IT helpdesk (they will have to enable you to have VPN access) plus your username and password.



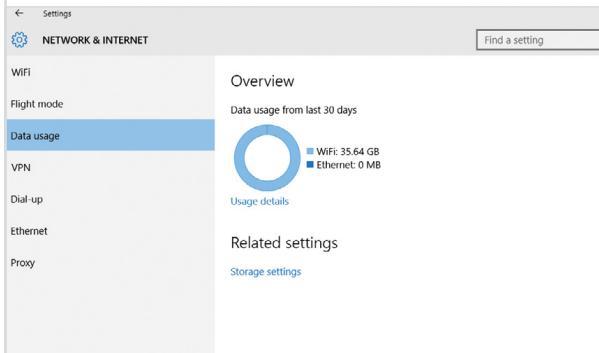
Wi-Fi Sense ► We don't mind ourselves but some people are worried about the security implications of sharing network settings; or simply don't want to automatically connect to networks shared by others. You can disable it by visiting the right settings; just click Manage Wi-Fi Settings from the Wi-Fi window. You can also manage your known networks here.



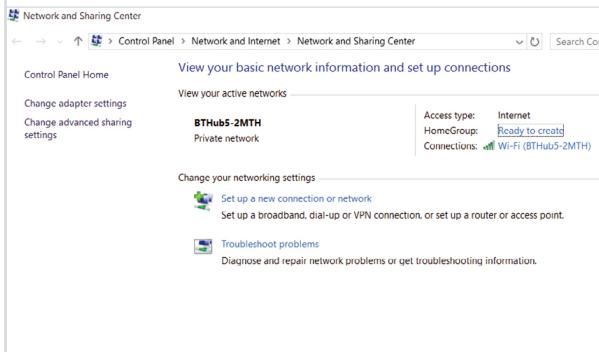
Proxy Settings ► If you use a proxy server, this is where you enter any specific settings to do with that. However, Windows 10 should automatically detect proxy settings. Note that the settings you configure here won't apply if you connect via a VPN, because a VPN is essentially a tunnel directly into the corporate network you're connecting to.



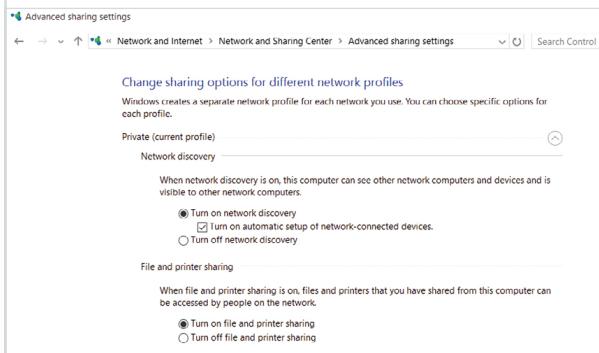
Your Usage ▶ In a move designed to keep up with more mobile-based computing devices like the iPad, Windows 10 now includes a data usage page in Settings too. Here it splits your data between wired and wireless. We'd like to see more advanced settings than this too, so you could see how much data you used on a public wireless hotspot, for example.



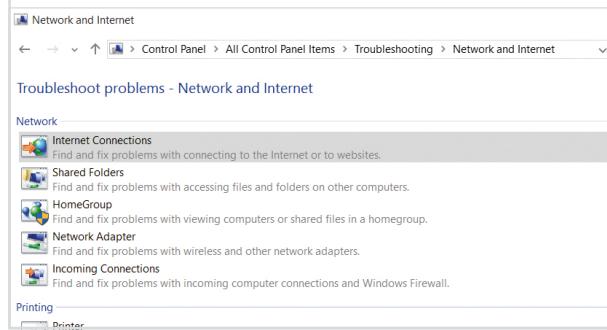
Control Panel ▶ Here we've left the Settings app and we're now in the Network and Sharing Center within Control Panel. The easiest way to get to this is to search for it or go to the Control Panel by right-clicking the Start button and selecting it from the menu. You can also get to it by right-clicking any network icon in the notifications area near the clock.



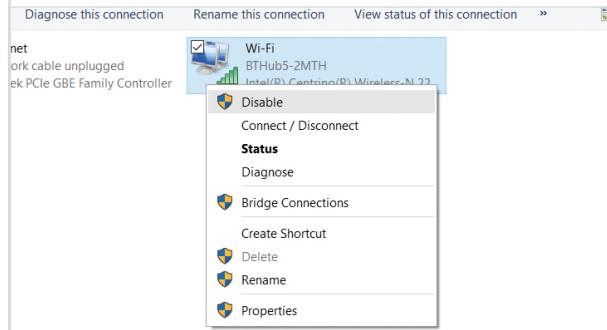
Sharing Settings ▶ From the previous window, select Change Advanced Sharing Settings from the left-hand sidebar. You'll be taken to this screen where you can turn on network discovery; this governs whether your computer can see others on your network and whether you are visible to them. You can also turn file and printer sharing on or off.



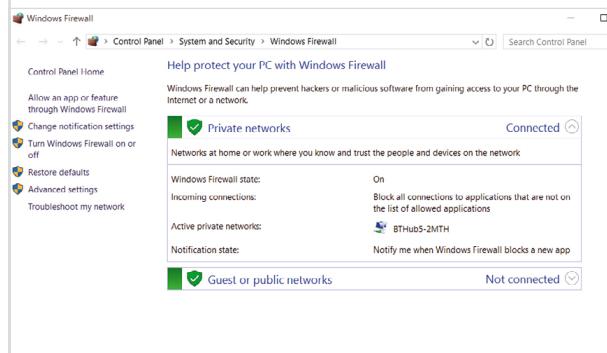
Troubleshoot ▶ From the Network and Sharing Center you can also click the Troubleshoot Problems button if you're having issues with connectivity and networking. Another way to troubleshoot problems with a Wi-Fi connection is to right-click the Wi-Fi icon in your Notifications area near the clock. Select Troubleshoot Problems from the menu that appears.



Disable Adapters ▶ Another thing you can do is to disable and re-enable your network adapter (like the Wi-Fi card in your laptop). View your network connections by clicking Change Adapter Settings in the Network and Sharing Center and then right-clicking the network connection in question in the view above. Disable it and then re-enable.



Firewall ▶ Another thing to bear in mind is the Windows Firewall. Normally you won't have any dealings with this whatsoever but if you're having problems accessing the Internet with a particular app, ensure it is listed here. Go to Control Panel > Update and Security > Windows Firewall and then select Allow an App or Feature through Windows Firewall.



Installing an Alternative Browser

The Edge browser is a great tool for surfing the Internet but it isn't perfect and it certainly isn't as feature-rich as some of the more established web browsers available; but just because Edge comes preinstalled with Windows 10, that doesn't mean you can't install a second browser to use instead.

Browser Choice

There are dozens of different browsers available, from the market leaders such as Chrome and Firefox, to more specialised offerings which focus on security or speed.

Chrome ► Google Chrome is a freeware web browser developed by Google. It was first released in 2008 for Windows and was later ported to most other platforms. As of September 2016, StatCounter estimates that Chrome has a 62 per cent worldwide usage share of desktop web browsers.

Opera ► Opera is a web browser developed by Opera Software. The latest version is available for Microsoft Windows, macOS and Linux. Opera includes built-in tabbed browsing, a bookmarks bar, add-ons and a download manager. Opera Speed Dial allows users to add an unlimited number of pages shown in thumbnail form.

Firefox ► Firefox, or Mozilla Firefox, has consistently been one of the fastest browsers around since its launch more than 10 years ago. Features include tabbed browsing, spell checking, incremental find, live bookmarking, Smart Bookmarks, a download manager, private browsing and location aware browsing.

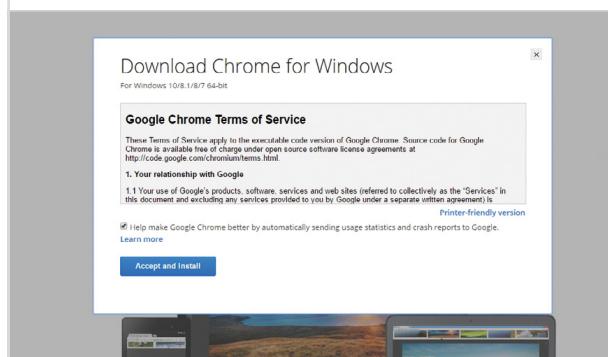
Torch ► If you really fancy something different, Torch is definitely niche. Torch is a Chromium-based web browser and Internet suite developed by Torch Media. Torch handles common Internet related tasks such as displaying media, sharing websites via social networks, accelerating downloads all directly from the browser.

Installing a Browser

Installing an alternative browser is very easy once you have decided which one to go for. Let's take a quick look at the process of installing Google Chrome.

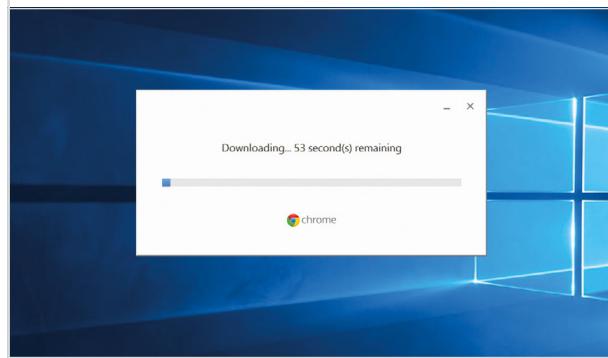
1

To install Chrome for your user account, the first thing you need to do is download the installer file from <https://www.google.com/chrome/browser/desktop/index.html>. Just click the big blue button and wait for the installation to finish.



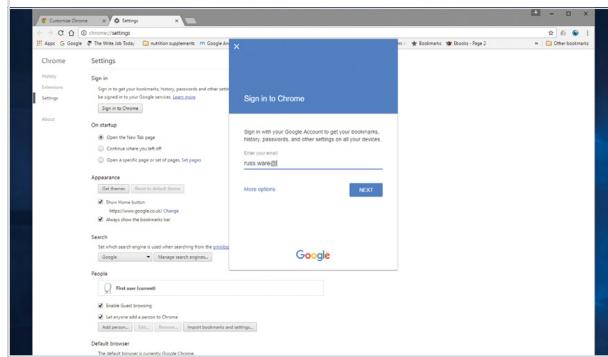
2

When prompted at the bottom of the browser windows (where download progress is shown), click Run or Save. If you chose Save, double-click the installer file to start the installation process. Follow the steps shown on screen to complete this part of the process.



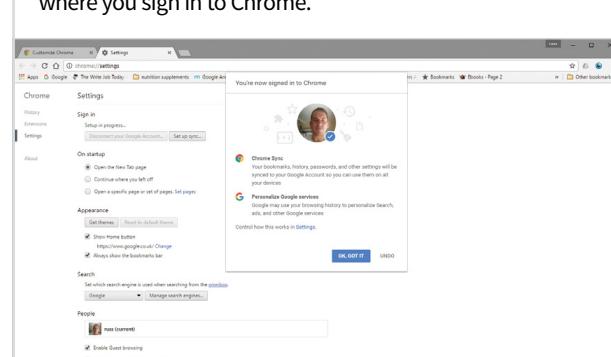
3

If you have used Chrome in the past, on a previous PC or before you installed Windows 10, you should have a Google account. Use this to sign in and Chrome will import all of your previous bookmarks, settings and extensions. Click Settings > Sign in to Chrome.



4

Signing in to Chrome connects your Google account to your browser for a more personalised browsing experience. All your Chrome data, like your bookmarks, history, passwords and other settings, is synced to your Google account and available on any device where you sign in to Chrome.



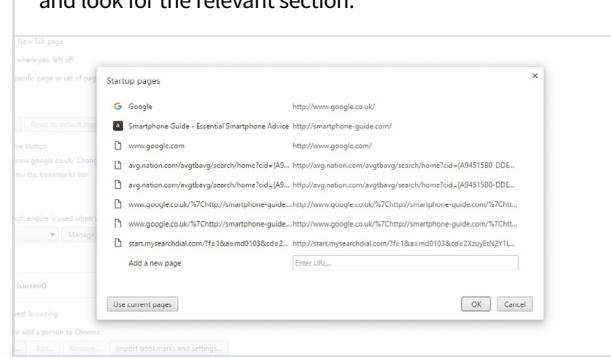
5

Most of the mainstream browsers offer some sort of account, so your information is saved, although few do this quite as thoroughly as Google Chrome. If you don't want to sync everything, you can also select which types of Chrome data you do.



6

You can customise Google Chrome to open any page for the homepage or start-up page. Your start-up page is the one that shows when you first launch Chrome on your computer. Your homepage is the one you go to when you click Home. Head into Settings and look for the relevant section.



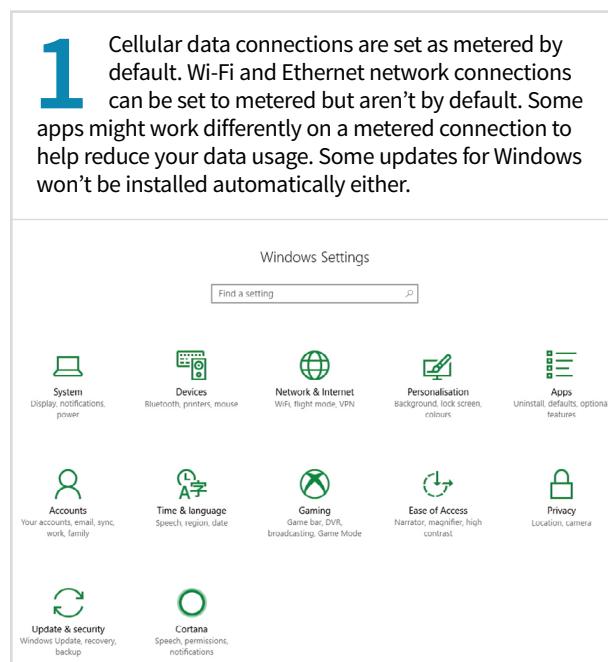
Limiting Data Usage when Tethering

If you are out and about with your Windows 10 laptop and need access to the Internet, you have the option of connecting through your smartphone, using a tethered connection. Tethering means connecting your phone to the mobile data network (e.g. 3G, 4G) and then connecting a second device via Wi-Fi to the phone to make use of that connection.

Set Your Tethered Connection to Metered

Windows 10 can be quite data-heavy, as mentioned, especially if an update happens to become available when tethered. Luckily, you can tell Windows to automatically limit data use.

1 Cellular data connections are set as metered by default. Wi-Fi and Ethernet network connections can be set to metered but aren't by default. Some apps might work differently on a metered connection to help reduce your data usage. Some updates for Windows won't be installed automatically either.



2 To set a Wi-Fi network connection as metered, click Start > Settings > Network & Internet > Wi-Fi > Manage known networks. Select the Wi-Fi network > Properties > turn on Set as metered connection. Unfortunately, many Windows apps completely ignore the metered connection setting.

← Settings

TP-LINK_AP_4C1A

Make this PC discoverable

Allow your PC to be discoverable by other PCs and devices on this network. We recommend turning this on for private networks at home or work, but turning it off for public networks to help keep your stuff safe.

Off

Metered connection

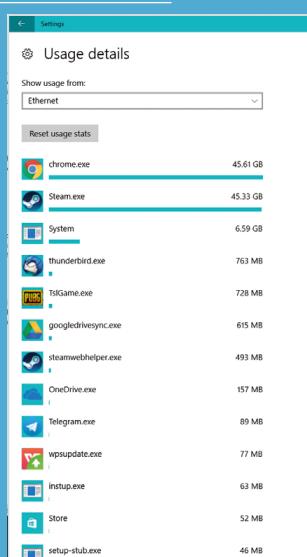
If you have a limited data plan and want more control over data usage, make this connection a metered network. Some apps might work differently to reduce data usage when you're connected to this network.

Set as metered connection

Off

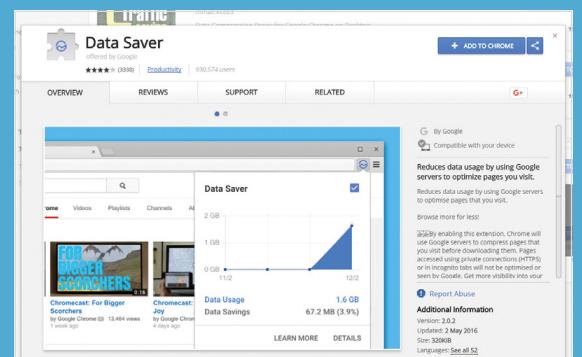
Check Network Usage Details ▶

You can also view a log of how much data applications on your PC have used in the last 30 days. This can help you identify applications that might be using data in the background. To check this, head to Settings > Network & Internet > Data usage and click the graph to see more details.



Manage Browsing Data ▶

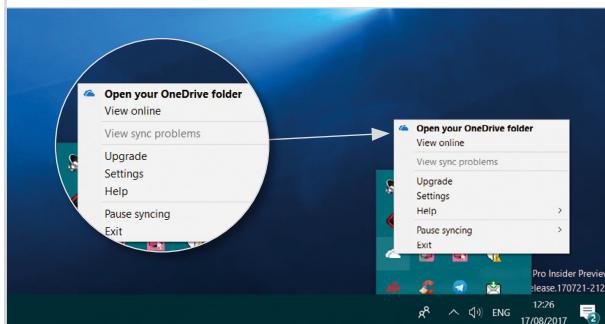
You should now have reduced background data use, including updates and cloud syncing, so data use will be in the apps you use; for example, Google Chrome. You can install a handy extension for Chrome which limits data. Go to www.chrome.google.com/webstore/ and search for Data Saver.



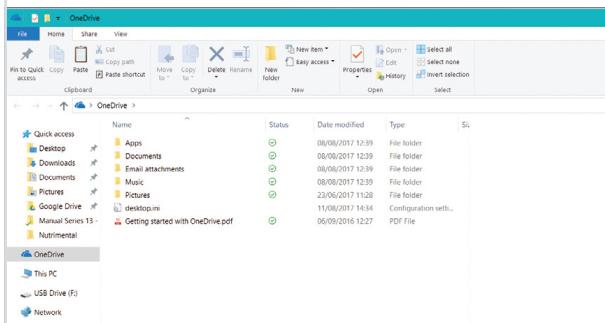
Pause or Disable OneDrive

If you use OneDrive to backup images, etc., pausing it while you are tethering can help to reduce data use. If you never use OneDrive, you can even completely disable it.

1 Stopping OneDrive just for the duration of your tethering is easy. Click the Hidden Icons arrow in the taskbar, bottom right of the screen, and right-click on the OneDrive icon (the cloud). From the Action menu, either click on "Pause Syncing" (you can choose a duration) or click Exit.



2 OneDrive in Windows 10 can be disabled through your computer's Local Group Policy Editor. This doesn't remove OneDrive from your PC but it stops it from syncing with the cloud or connecting with other apps, and removes it from the navigation pane in File Explorer.

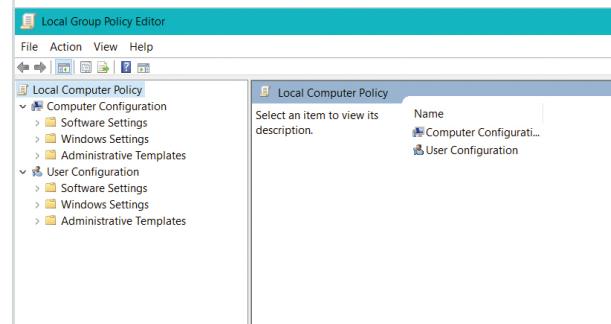


Name	CPU time	Network	Metered network	Tile updates
Cortana	0:03:27	8.6 MB	0 MB	0 MB
Groove Music	0:04:44	4.7 MB	0 MB	0 MB
Store	0:00:25	2.7 MB	0 MB	0 MB
Skype	0:03:38	2.2 MB	0 MB	0 MB
Photos	0:02:20	1.7 MB	0 MB	0 MB

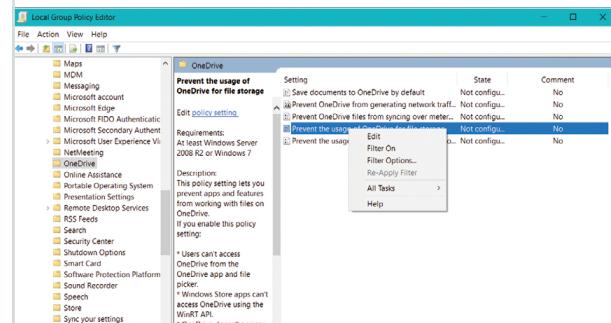
Check Task Manager ▶

The Task Manager is a great tool for checking to see which apps or services are using a lot of data at any time. To open the Task Manager, press **Ctrl+Shift+Esc** or search for it in the Start menu search field. Click at the top of the Network tab to display high usage services at the top.

3 Press the Windows key + R to open the Run box. Type **gpedit.msc** and click OK. In the Local Group Policy Editor, in the folder list under Local Computer Policy, navigate the folders to Local Computer Policy > Computer Configuration > Administrative Templates > Windows Components > OneDrive.

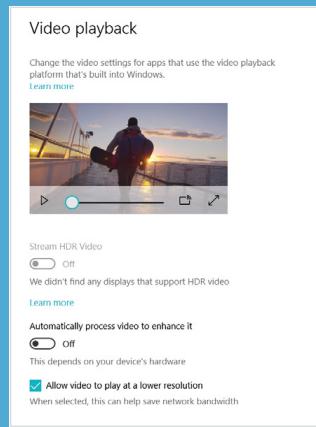


4 On the OneDrive screen, under Settings, click Prevent the usage of OneDrive for file storage. In the Prevent the usage of OneDrive for file storage box, select Enabled, then click OK. Be aware that disabling OneDrive like this will disable it for all users of the PC, not just you.



Reduce Streaming Video Quality ▶

Streaming or downloading videos is a surefire way to burn through your data quickly and is best avoided when tethering. However, if you need to view video over a tethered connection, you can tell Windows to reduce quality in Settings > Apps > Video Playback. Click 'Allow video to play at low res.'



Mastering the Edge Browser

Edge replaces Internet Explorer as the main Internet browsing tool in Windows 10. Edge is designed to be safe and fast and it boasts several innovative features such as the ability to set aside tabs and highlight parts of web pages and share them with others.

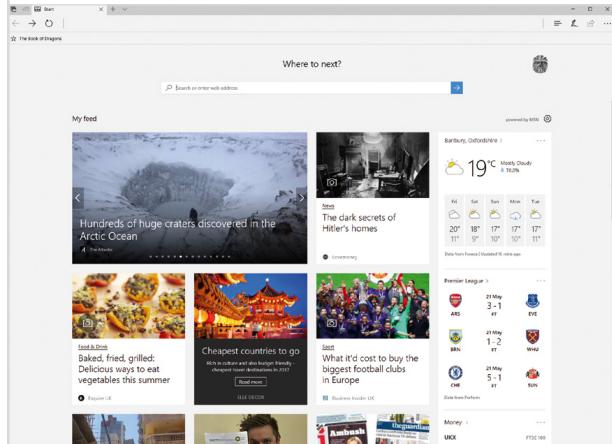
Get Started with Edge

Edge is fast and fluid and we think you'll like it. It may not have the capability of Chrome or Firefox as yet but for basic web browsing it's almost perfect.

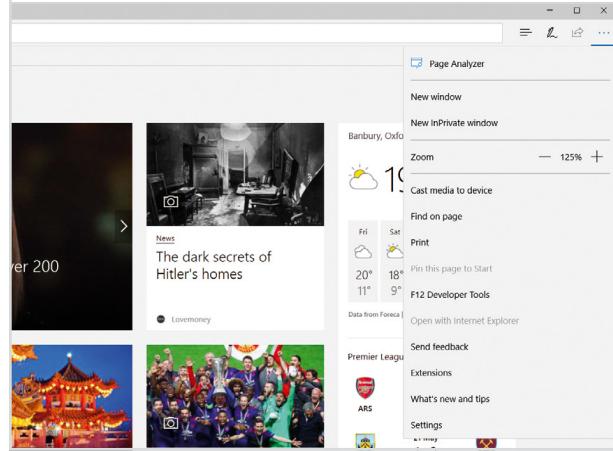
- 1** Microsoft Edge carries on Internet Explorer's use of a stylised 'e' as its logo. This is to make things simple for users who are familiar with Internet Explorer. Click on this icon in the taskbar to open Edge or on the Start menu and find it in the All Apps list.



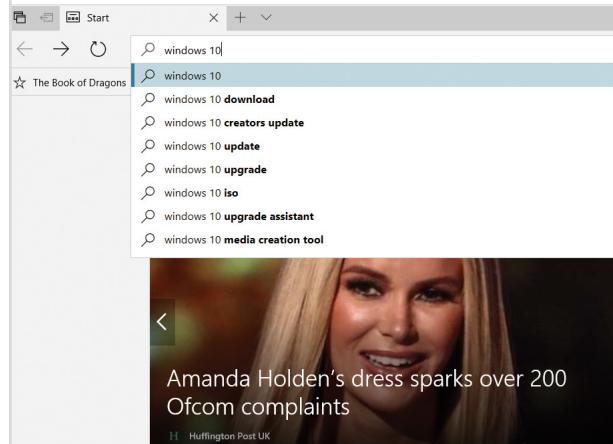
- 2** If you're familiar with almost any modern browser, you will instantly be at home. The forward, back and refresh panel is almost identical to other browsers. The default new tab page shows your most visited sites but you can have news from MSN appear instead.



- 3** As well as Edge's main controls in the top left, there are other items in the top right including the main menu to access more options. This is shown by the ellipsis (...) icon. From the main menu you can open a new window or a new InPrivate window as well as zoom into the current page.



- 4** You can begin using Edge by typing a search term or a complete website URL (address) in the search field near the top of the screen. Search results are then displayed in a fairly standard mixed list of links, images and videos. Click on any of them to see the website they link to.



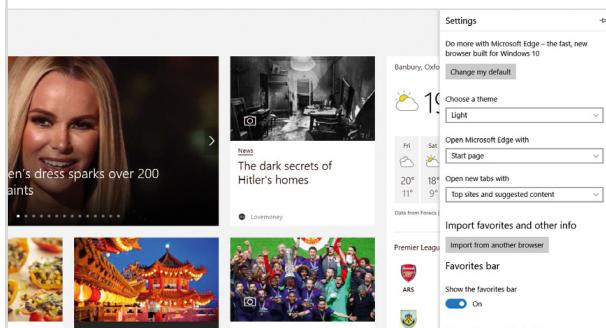
Customising Microsoft Edge

Once you become accustomed with the basics of Microsoft Edge you can start to explore the many options and settings available for personalising and customising.

Accessing the Settings

► From this menu you're also able to

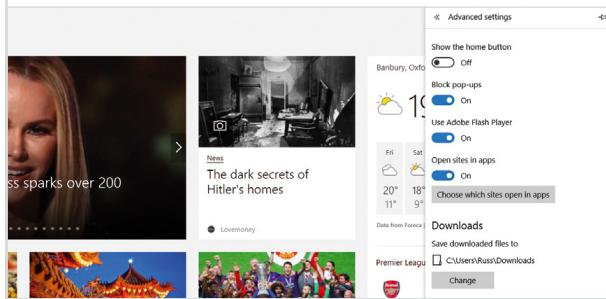
access Settings as well as Print and Find, to locate a word or phrase in the open web page. Another option enables you to pin a particular web page to the Start menu as a tile should you wish to.



Advanced Edge Settings

► The basic Settings menu is pretty

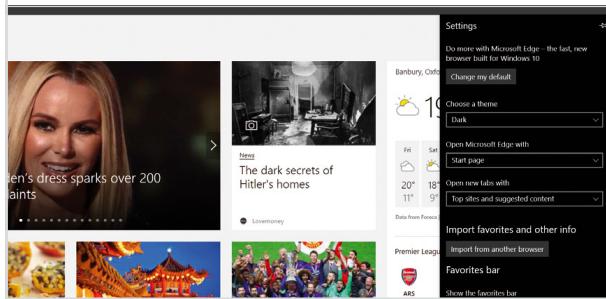
lean on options but an Advanced Settings button at the bottom takes you into another menu with further options. This part of Edge is for more advanced users and it covers privacy, such as enabling browser cookies and other security settings.



Change the Edge Theme

► As well as the 'light' default

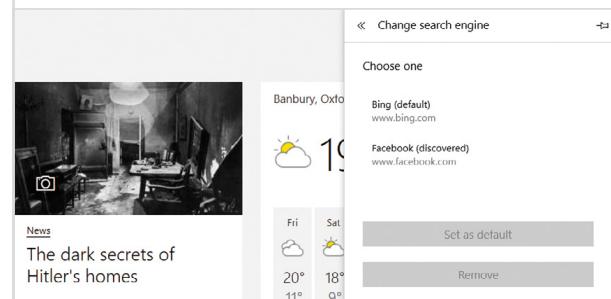
theme of Microsoft Edge, there's an option in Settings to display a black theme. It's becoming a lot more common for applications to have dark themes, with the Windows 10 taskbar dark too. It's a good alternative to having super bright apps.



Change the Search Engine

► Microsoft Edge

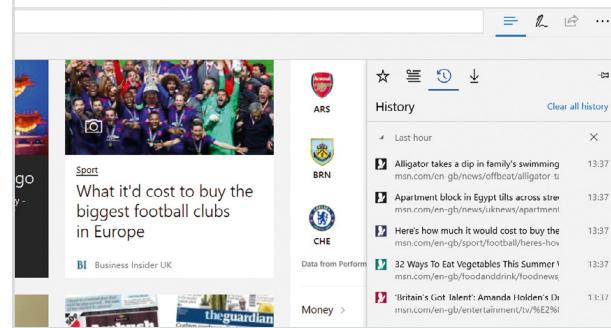
is set to use Bing as its default search engine but you can change search provider in the Advanced Settings menu. As you type into Edge's search box, the browser recommends search suggestions. You can turn this off here should you want to. We find it quite useful.



The Edge Sidebar

► Again in the top right, the

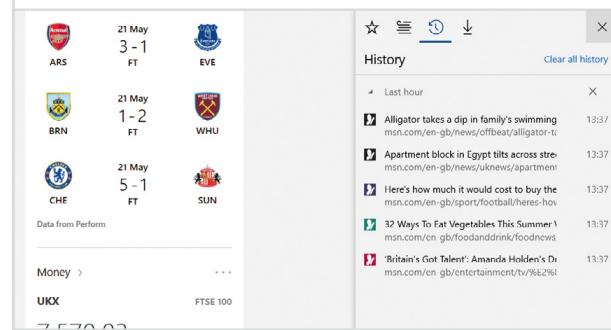
icon launches the sidebar featuring your Reading List, Favourites, Downloads and History. If you've used Internet Explorer at all recently, this sidebar will be familiar to you as it's basically the same interface element. However, Reading List is new.



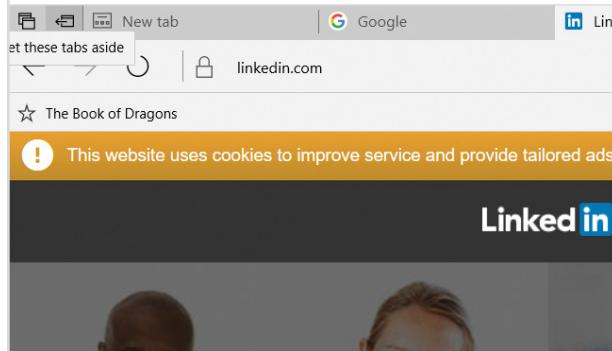
Pinning the Sidebar

► In the top right of the

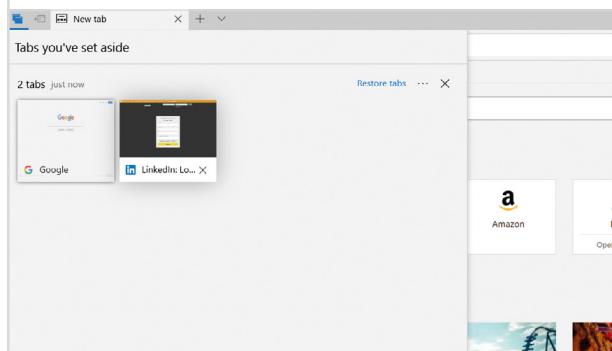
sidebar there's a pin to keep the sidebar open, rather than just temporarily. You can move easily between your Reading List, Favourites, Downloads and History; just use the icons at the top of the bar to select the one you need.



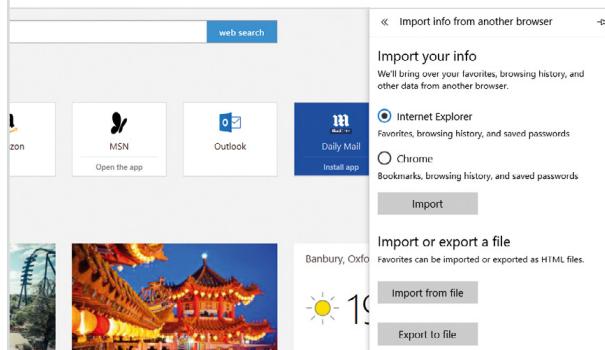
Set Aside Tabs ▶ You can now set tabs aside, rather than closing them completely, so that they are easier to go back to later. Tabs that are set aside should not take up bandwidth, so you don't need to worry about lots of open tabs slowing down your browsing. Tabs set aside are still there even after closing Edge.



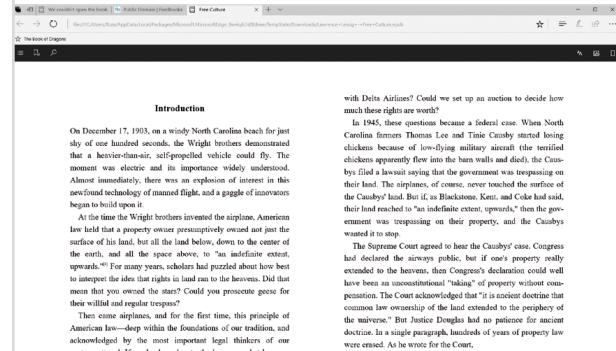
View and Restore Tabs ▶ Tabs that are set aside can be viewed in the new Tab Viewer. You can access this by clicking the small down-facing arrow next to the New Tab button at the top of the window. Clicking any tab here switches to it. Alternatively, click the Tabs sidebar button at the top left of the window.



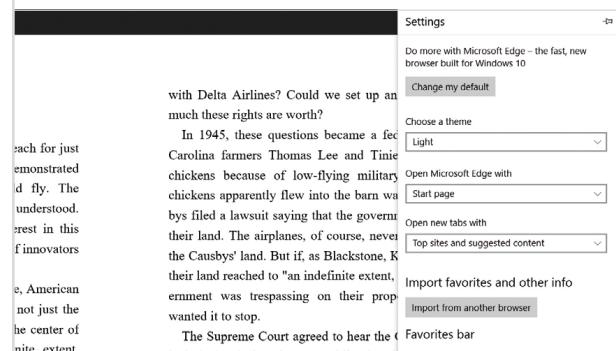
Import Your Bookmarks ▶ Edge now makes it easy to import bookmarks saved in another browser (Google Chrome for example). Quickly get your bookmarks, saved passwords and browsing history from other places on your PC by selecting More > Settings > Import from another browser, and then choosing the correct one.



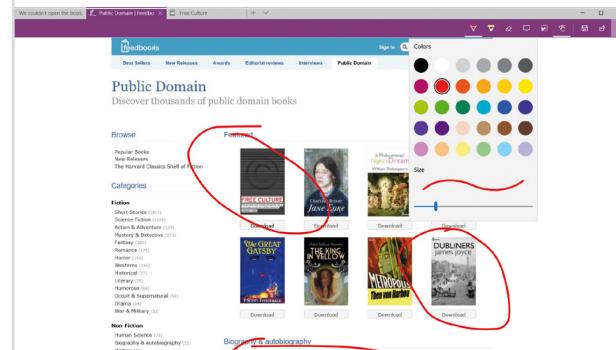
Read eBooks in Edge ▶ The latest update to Microsoft Edge lets you read eBooks in .epub format. Books in this format automatically open in Edge when double-clicked. They can then be saved to the Reading List for easier viewing at a later date. Take a look at www.feedbooks.com/publicdomain for some freebies.



Enable the Favourites Bar ▶ One of the folders is called Favourites Bar. This is a bar you can toggle on and off to permanently display certain Favourites in a strip underneath the address bar. To enable this feature, go to Settings via the main menu and switch the Favourites bar on using the toggle.



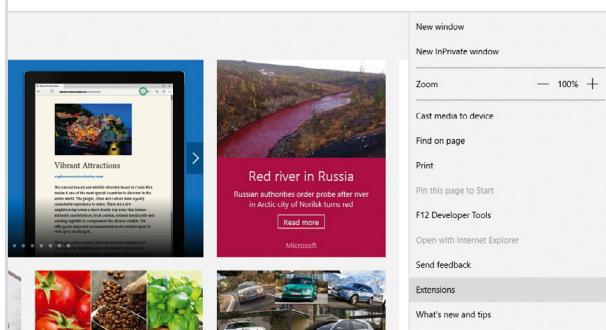
Annotating Pages ▶ Making notes on web pages and sharing the results is one of the best new features in Edge. Launch this mode using the pen button next to the sidebar control in the top right of the main window. The editing controls include a pen, a highlighter, an erase function, an annotation feature and a copy tool.



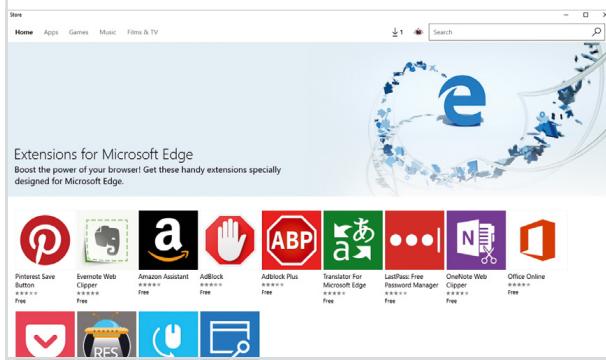
Microsoft Edge Extensions

A new addition to the Edge browser in the Windows 10 Anniversary update is extensions. Extensions are small pieces of software you can add to Edge to give additional functions.

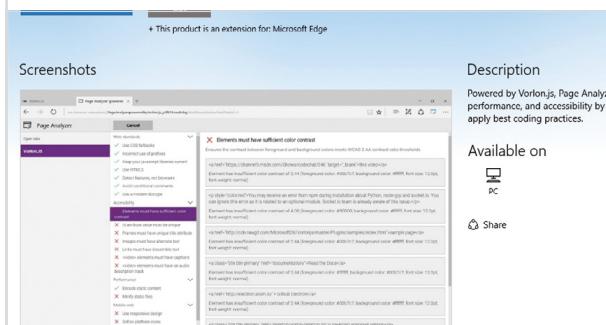
- 1** Open the Edge browser on your PC and look for the small menu button at the top right of the window. Click this and then click the new Extensions link. When the extensions panel opens for the first time, it should be empty apart from a link to Get extensions from the Store.



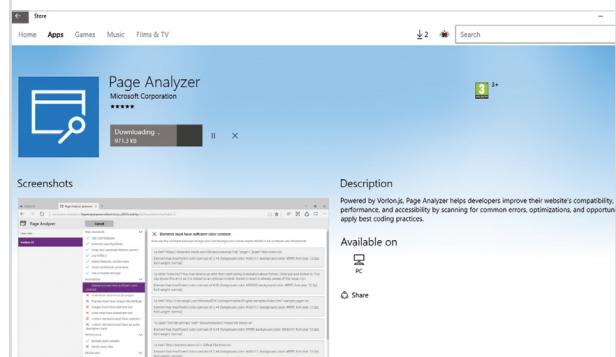
- 2** Click the link and the Microsoft Store app opens, displaying the available extensions. There are not that many to choose from right now but more will be added as app developers learn to take advantage of this new Anniversary feature in Windows 10.



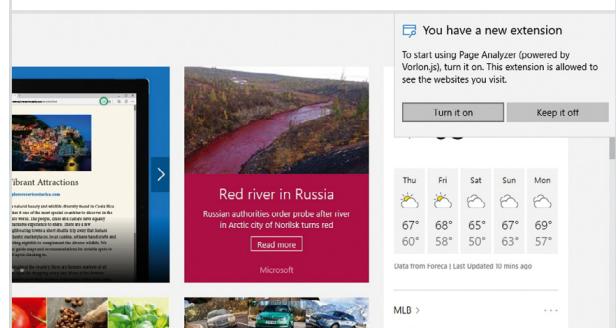
- 3** Click on any of the extension icons shown to open the information page. This tells you more about what the extension does, which devices it is available on and the minimum system requirements to run it properly. Scroll down the page to see user reviews and recommended extensions.



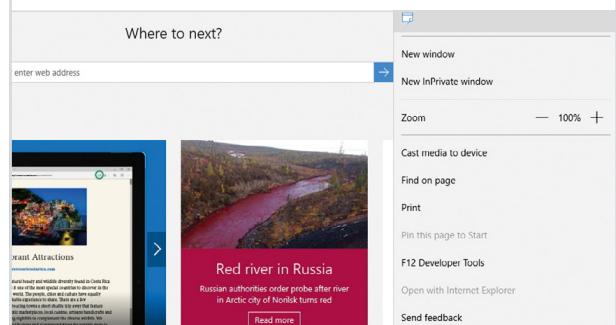
- 4** To begin installation of your chosen extension, click the Get button at the top of the page. This then changes to show installation progress which, depending on the size of the extension, should take just a few seconds. The button then changes to say Launch.



- 5** Clicking Launch will take you back to Edge with the extensions sidebar open. You then need to choose to enable the extension in Edge or keep it turned off for the present. Important information, such as whether the extension needs access to certain details on your PC is shown.



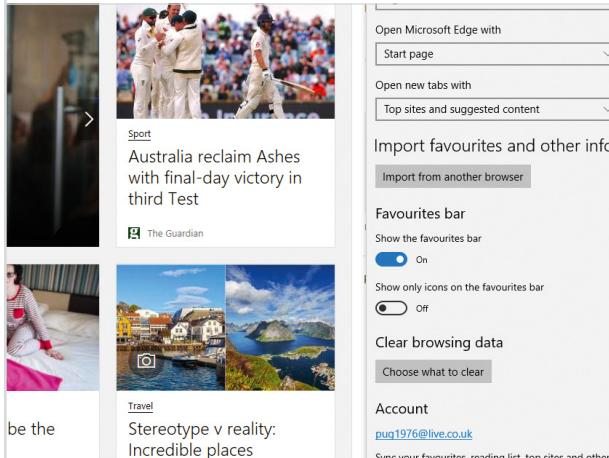
- 6** How you use your new extension depends on what it actually does. The one we installed here is for analysing the structure of websites, so when we get to a website we want to examine, we have to click the menu button and then select the extension from the list at the top.



Microsoft Edge Tips & Tricks

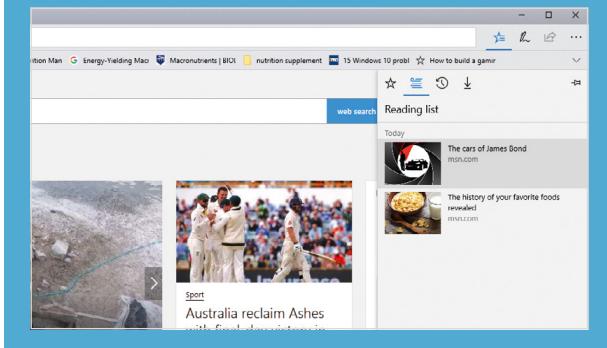
Microsoft Edge provides new ways to find stuff, manage your tabs, read e-books, write on the web and get help from Cortana right in the browser. You can add extensions to translate websites, block ads, manage your passwords and much more. Let's take a look at some of the tips and tricks that can make using Edge fast, efficient and frustration free.

See the Favourites Bar ► You can add any site to your favourites in Microsoft Edge. Select the Add to favourite's or reading list button; then rename the favourite if you want and then select Add. To Display the favourites bar, select the More icon on the address bar, then Settings. Select View favourites settings and then turn on Show the favourites bar.



Take Your Reading With You

Reading list in Microsoft Edge gives you a place to save articles, e-books or other content you want to read later. You can see your reading list on all your Windows 10 devices when you “<https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/help/17201>” \t “<https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/help/17204>” sign in with a Microsoft account. You can also read e-books in your browser. Select any book (.epub format) on the web and it automatically opens in Microsoft Edge, where you can save it to your reading list.

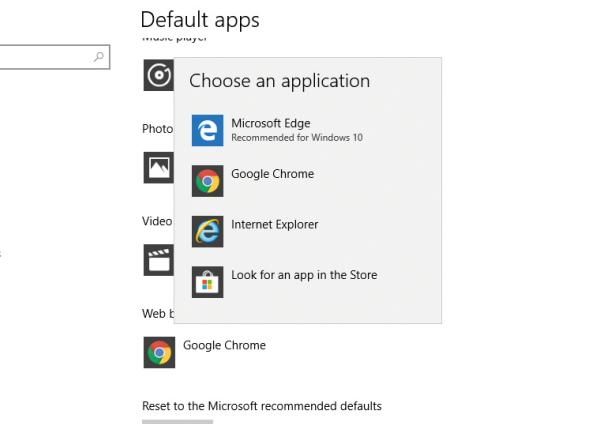


Reading View ► If you find a website too busy with adverts and flashing images, you can view it in Reading View. Navigate to the website and select Reading view (the small book icon) in the address bar. You can even change the reading view style (light, medium or dark) and font size to find what's most comfortable for you; click anywhere on the page and select Options.



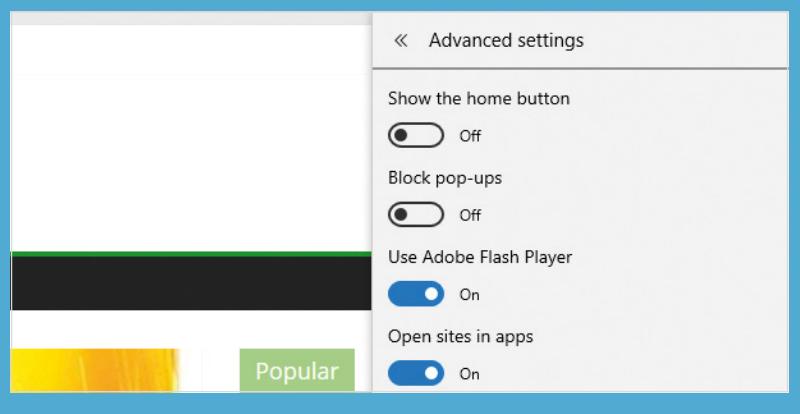
Change the Default Browser

► The final tip for Edge, is that you don't actually have to use it; you can change the default browser in Windows 10 (the browser that automatically opens when you click links, etc.) Select the Start button and then type “Default app settings”. In the search results, select Default app settings. Under Web browser, select the browser currently listed and then select Microsoft Edge or another browser.



Blocking Pop-ups in Edge ▶

Pop-ups, although seemingly less prevalent on the Internet as they were a few years ago, can still appear with depressing regularity when browsing. However, Edge lets you block them before they appear. Open Microsoft Edge from the taskbar and select More > Settings and then scroll down and select View advanced settings. Turn Block pop-ups to On.



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Edge window with a search result for "Is Matcha Tea Really a Superfood?". The page content discusses the health benefits of Matcha tea, mentioning its history in Japan and its growing popularity. It includes sections on where it comes from, how it's made, and its nutritional value. A sidebar on the right provides additional links and information about Matcha tea, such as its green color and its use as a superfood.

Ask Cortana in Edge ▶

When you stumble across a topic on the web you'd like to know more about, Cortana is your all-knowing guru. Highlight a word, phrase or image, press and hold (or right-click) it and then select Ask Cortana to get more info or find related images. This is a really useful tool but you need to have Cortana set up first.

Auto-complete Web Forms ▶

AutoComplete remembers how you filled out your name, address and other info in web forms, which makes filling out similar forms in the future quicker and easier. To turn on AutoComplete, select the More actions button. Select Settings > View advanced settings and then turn on Save form entries.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced settings' panel in Microsoft Edge. It includes options for saving form entries (off), sending Do Not Track requests (off), getting Cortana to assist in Microsoft Edge (on), and searching in the address bar with Bing (on). There are also buttons for 'Offer to save passwords' (on) and 'Manage passwords'. A note at the top states that some features might save data on your device or send it to Microsoft to improve your browsing experience.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Edge window titled "Browsing InPrivate". A message at the top states: "When you use InPrivate tabs, your browsing data (such as cookies, history or temporary files) isn't saved on your device after you've finished. Microsoft Edge deletes temporary data from your device after all your InPrivate tabs have been closed." Below this, there is a link to "Read the Microsoft privacy statement".

InPrivate Browsing ▶

If you would rather that your browsing history wasn't saved on the computer you are using (perhaps when using a shared computer), you can browse using the InPrivate mode. When you use InPrivate tabs or windows, your browsing data (like your history, temporary Internet files and cookies) isn't saved on your PC once you're done. In Microsoft Edge, select the More icon and then New InPrivate window.

Secure Yourself on Facebook

Facebook has become one of the best sources for cyber criminals to gain personal information on the Internet. Without realising it, a user is giving out reams of data and in most circumstances they're making it public.

Create a Safer Facebook Profile

The dangers of social media aren't just for young people, many adults have been duped into befriending someone they don't know and exposing their personal information.

- 1** Facebook's policy forbids the use of fake names but it does allow nick names to be used. Where possible, use your nickname instead of your real name. This will effectively hide your real name details from those who would wish to exploit it.



- 2** Set up two-factor authentication, alerts about unrecognised logins and make sure that emails from Facebook are encrypted. These can all be found in the Settings > Security and Login section. These three security tools will instantly make Facebook more secure.

- 3** Go to Settings > Privacy and make sure that the Who can see my stuff section is set for just friends, as opposed to friends of friends or public. This will effectively hide your Timeline contents from others and only your confirmed friends will be able to see any updates.

Privacy Settings and Tools	
Who can see my stuff?	Who can see your future posts? Who can see your friends list? Review all your posts and things you're tagged in Limit the audience for posts you've shared with friends of friends or Public?
Who can contact me?	Who can send you friend requests?
Who can look me up?	Who can look you up using the email address provided? Who can look you up using the phone number provided?
Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your Profile?	

- 4** Never post any contact information on your profile. We often automatically start filling in the phone number field on a site but take a moment to consider what the ramifications could be should your number be made aware outside your circle of friends. That also includes house address too.

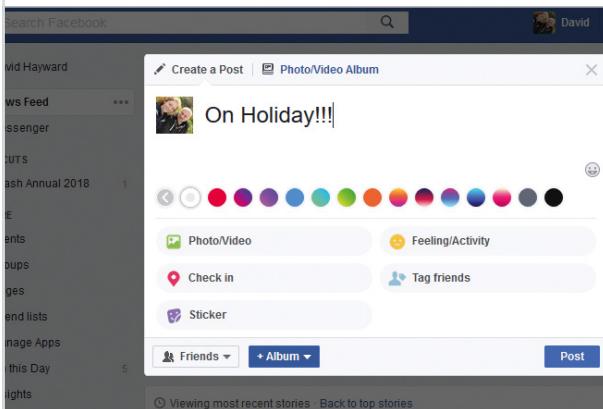
Mobile Settings

Activating allows Facebook Mobile to send text messages to your phone. You can receive notifications for friend requests, messages, wall posts and status updates from your friends. You can also update your status, search for phone numbers, or upload photos and videos from your phone.

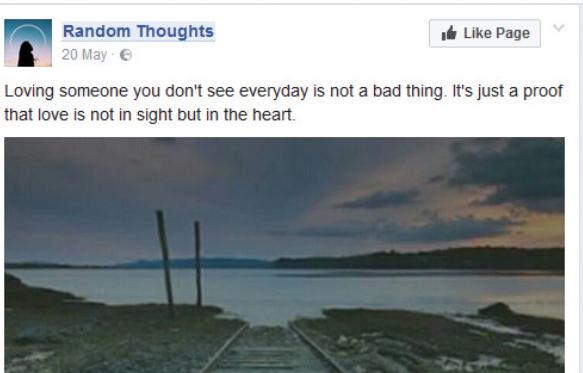
+ Add a phone

Learn more about using Facebook on your phone at [Facebook Mobile](#).

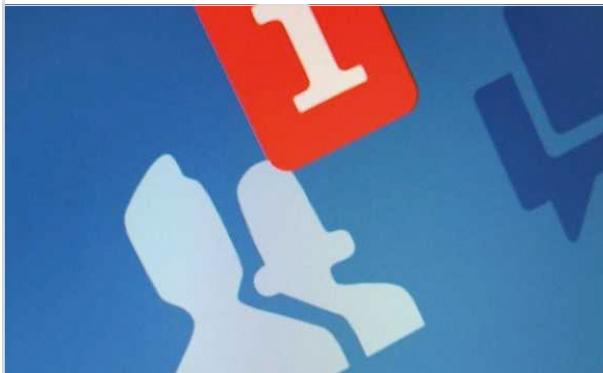
5 Tempting as it may be, try to avoid posting your location. Whether you're at home alone or you're on holiday, should that information be made available then a criminal will know that your house is empty or worse, that you're alone in it.



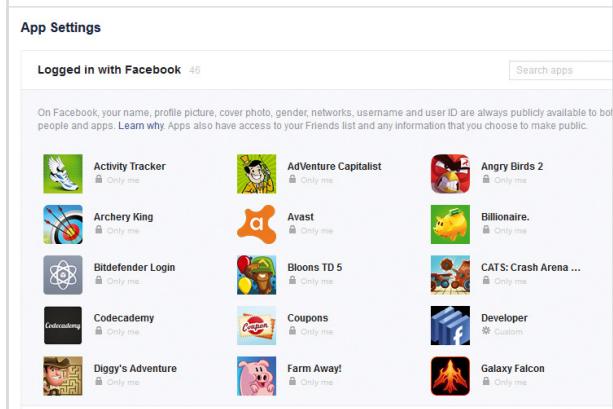
6 Try to avoid sharing thoughts of the day, inspirational quotes, fake news or other such items that appear on your Timeline from others. Often these instances are created to farm for shares and likes and can often be traced back to individuals who are looking for active Facebook accounts.



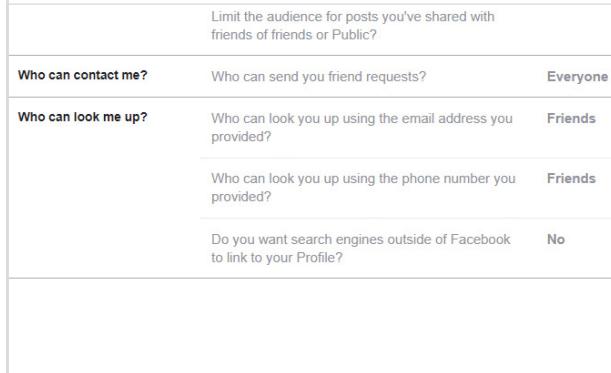
7 Do not automatically accept every friend request you get. Take a moment to check the person out and if necessary message them to find out who they are and how they know you. If their answer is vague, then it's best to ignore the request, as they could be fishing for information.



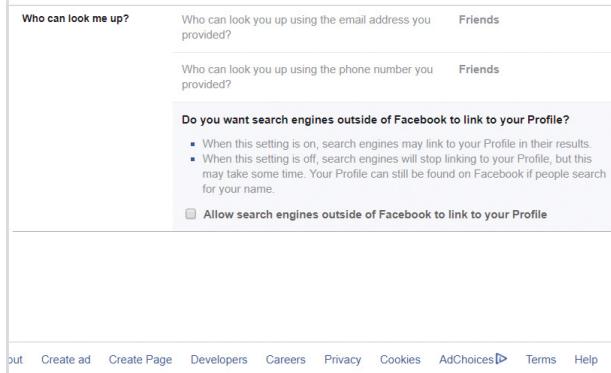
8 Not all apps you install on your phone or tablet are good. Take a moment to read what an app will try to access when it's installed. Often a rogue app will attempt to access your Facebook account to farm for information on you and your friends.



9 Whilst in the Settings > Privacy section, consider editing the default options for the Who can look me up fields. These will prevent the public, or even friends of friends, from being able to find you on Facebook, which in turn adds a higher level of security to your account.



10 Finally, ensure that the Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your profile option is set to No. This will hide you from someone who has entered your name into Google in the hope that they might be able to find your Facebook account.



How to Secure Your Wireless Network

It may seem a little far-fetched but it's quite feasible for a hacker to sit outside your house with a tablet or laptop and gain access to your home network via the router's Wi-Fi signal. Understandably this is quite rare but it's worth considering beefing up your protection.

Wi-Fi, Lock and Key

A lot of the standard tips on protecting your Wi-Fi merge with those of protecting your wired network. It's common sense mostly and keeping an eye on what's going on in your own network.

1 All routers come with a generic username and password. Depending on the model and manufacturer of the router, it's surprisingly easy to get hold of the username and password. For example, view www.routerpasswords.com and choose your router. With that being the case, change the administrator username and its password.

Welcome to the internet's largest and most updated default router passwords database.

Select Router Manufacturer:

- BELKIN

Find Password

Manufacturer	Model	Protocol	Username
BELKIN	F5D6130	SNMP	(none)
BELKIN	F5D7150 Rev. FB	MULTI	n/a
BELKIN	F5D8233-4	HTTP	(blank)
BELKIN	F5D7231	HTTP	admin

If you can't find the exact model of the router you are looking for, try a password from an alternative model from the same manufacturer. Use passwords across different models.

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3 The Service Set Identifier (SSID) is the name of the router that's broadcast so you're able to locate and connect to it. Most routers will display the name and ISP, or the make and model, making it easier for a hacker to find the information they need to gain access. It's recommended therefore to frequently change the SSID.

BT Smart Hub Manager

Home > Wireless

Change settings Back

Here you can see your BT Smart Hub's wireless settings. If you want to change anything, click on Change settings to go to the advanced wireless page where you can customise your set-up.

2.4 GHz and 5 GHz

Wireless:	On
Channels:	2.4GHz - Smart (Channel - 11) 5GHz - Smart (Channel - 36)
Network name:	BTHub6
WPS:	On
Band steering:	Off
Security type:	WPA2 (Recommended)
Wireless mode:	Mode 1

2 ISP supplied routers tend to have their own set of usernames and passwords. Although these are more secure than that of the default set, they are still obtainable from the more dubious quarter of the Internet. A potential hacker will easily be able to get hold of sets of passwords, so where possible change the ISP default username and password.

Please enter the admin password

System

Forgot password
Log out / Restore factory reset

Show characters

If you've forgotten your admin password or can't log in, press the 'Help' button below

Help

OK Cancel

4 It's also possible to select an option to hide your SSID from being broadcast. Whilst this doesn't stop it being hacked, it does make it a little more difficult for someone who's casually looking around for networks to access. You'll need to consult your router documentation to find how to hide your make and model's SSID.

LINKSYS

Wireless

Setup Wireless Security Access Restrictions Applications & Gaming Administration

Basic Wireless Settings Wireless Security Wireless MAC Filter Advanced

Wireless Settings

Wireless Network Mode: Disabled

Wireless Network Name (SSID):

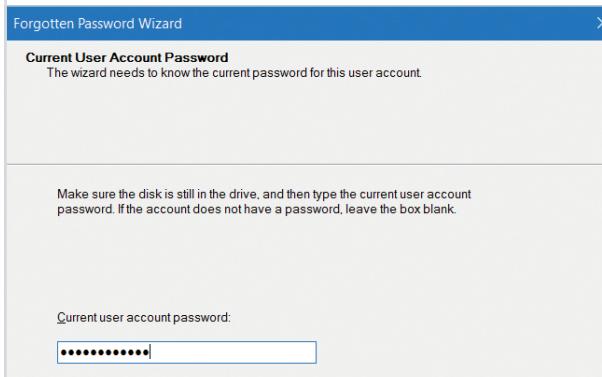
Wireless Channel: 1

Wireless SSID Broadcast: Enable Disable

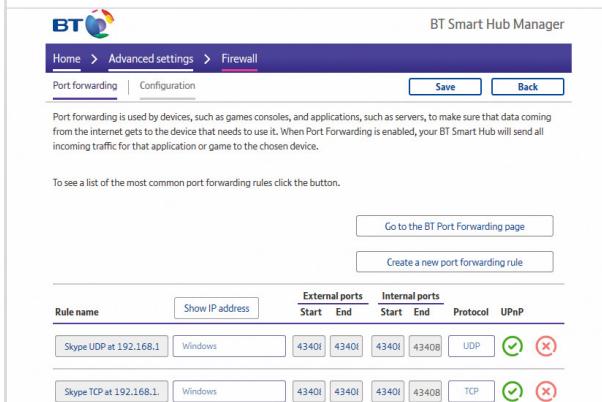
Save Settings Cancel Changes

How to Secure Your Wireless Network

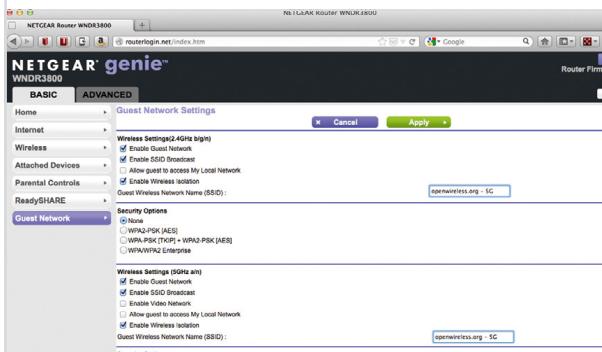
5 Most modern routers will already come with the latest security standard enabled, WPA2 but there are instances of some routers defaulting to a lesser security type for the sake of device compatibility. It's essential that you ensure your router is using the latest and best form of encryption for your protection.



6 The firewall that comes with Windows 10 is good but the firewall from third-party AV software is even better; and for extra protection, make sure that the router's firewall is enabled and doesn't have any potential leaks.



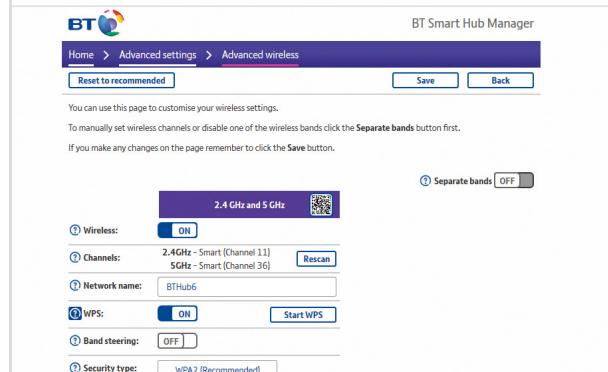
7 Some routers come equipped with the ability to allow a guest network. This enables users to connect to the router without requiring an encrypted password. Obviously this is a potential huge gap in your home network security. If you have no need of a guest network, then look to the documentation on how to disable it.



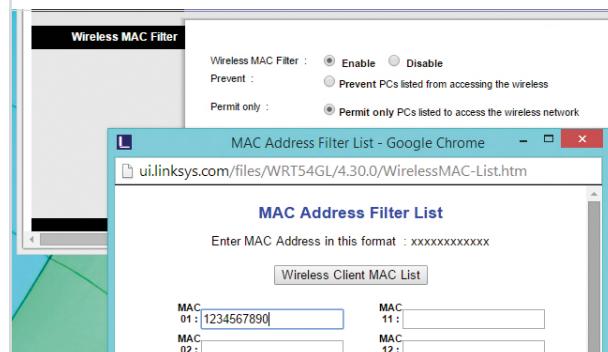
8 Most users will have their router located in the living room, near the master phone socket. This means that not only will the router broadcast through the house, it's also broadcasting over much of the street in front. Consider placing the router in a more central location of your house. This offers great coverage, while limiting its signal reach beyond.



9 The WPS button on a router and a device will allow easy pairing of the two without the need to enter the encryption password. This is certainly convenient but someone who may gain physical access to your router will be able to pair their own device. Look to turning off WPS in the router's settings.



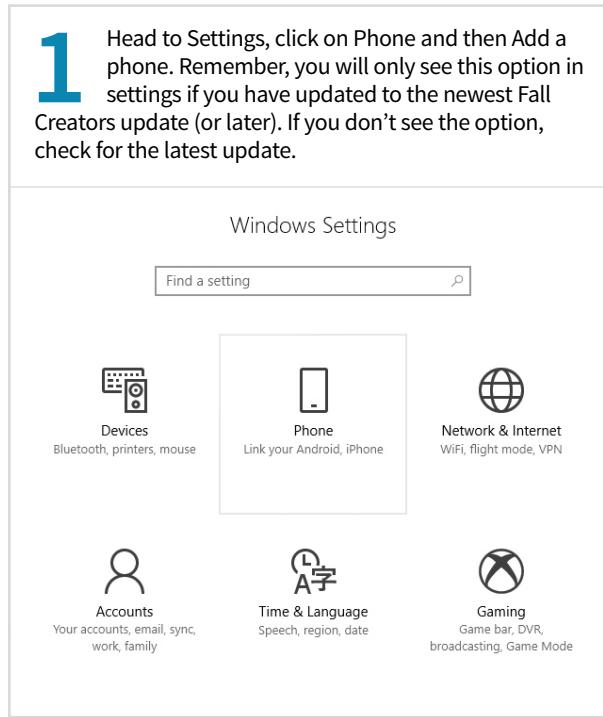
10 Filtering MAC addresses was discussed previously but it's worth repeating with regards to wireless network security. By filtering those devices that are allowed to connect to your router and keeping an eye on what's connecting, you're able to control your security to a far higher degree than usual.



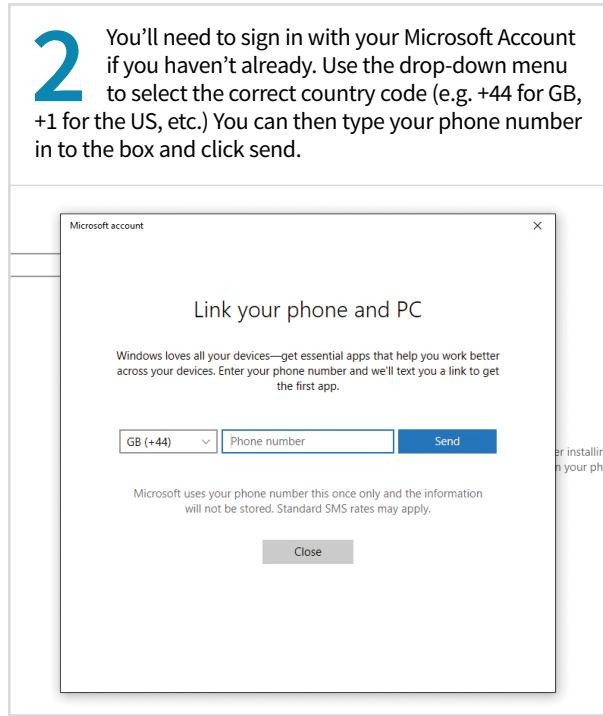
How to Continue on PC

Have you ever wished that you could easily switch from browsing the Internet on your phone, to browsing on your PC? With Windows 10 Fall Creators Update, you can now forward webpages to instantly open on your PC, so you can continue what you're doing: researching that project, shopping for those shoes, finishing that article and with all the benefits of the bigger screen.

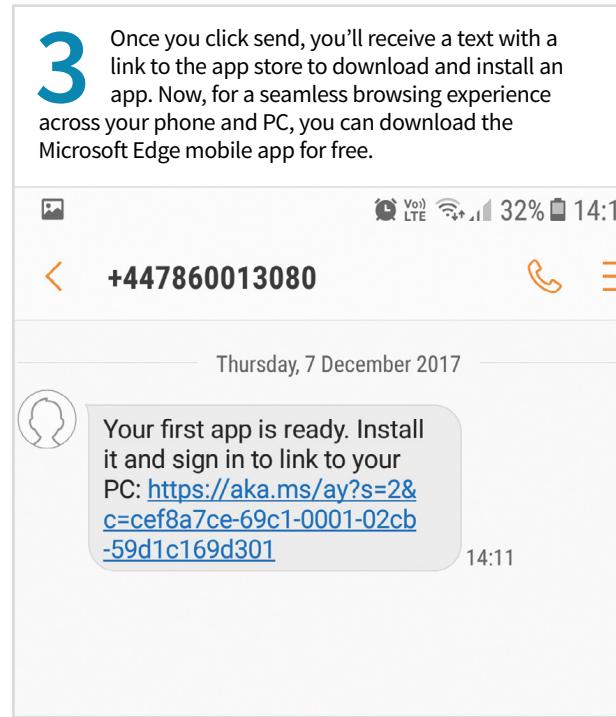
- 1** Head to Settings, click on Phone and then Add a phone. Remember, you will only see this option in settings if you have updated to the newest Fall Creators update (or later). If you don't see the option, check for the latest update.



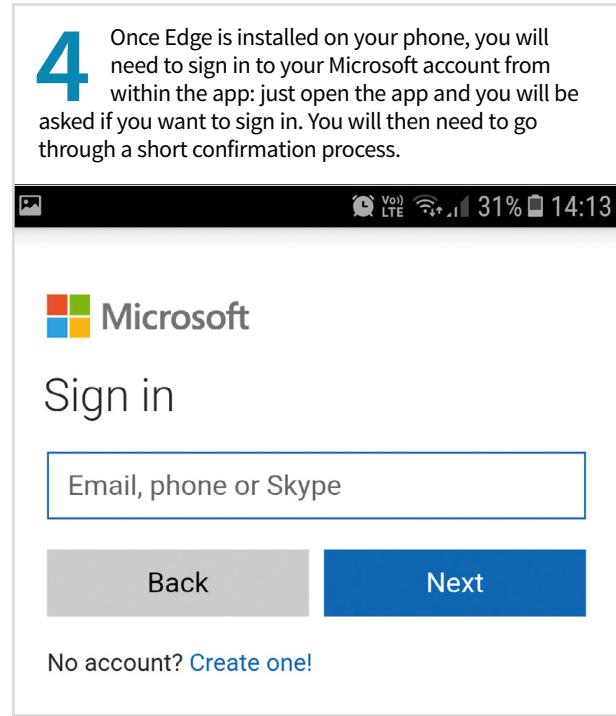
- 2** You'll need to sign in with your Microsoft Account if you haven't already. Use the drop-down menu to select the correct country code (e.g. +44 for GB, +1 for the US, etc.) You can then type your phone number in to the box and click send.



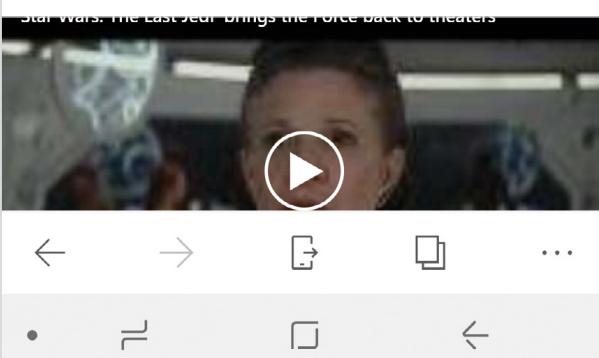
- 3** Once you click send, you'll receive a text with a link to the app store to download and install an app. Now, for a seamless browsing experience across your phone and PC, you can download the Microsoft Edge mobile app for free.



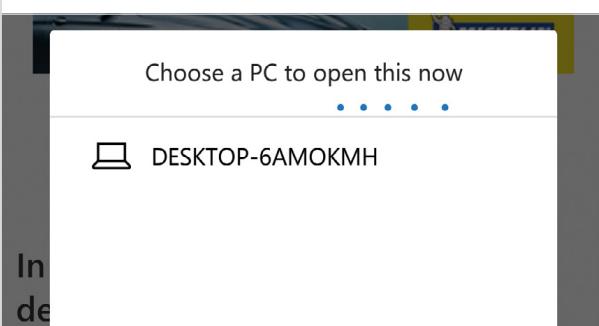
- 4** Once Edge is installed on your phone, you will need to sign in to your Microsoft account from within the app: just open the app and you will be asked if you want to sign in. You will then need to go through a short confirmation process.



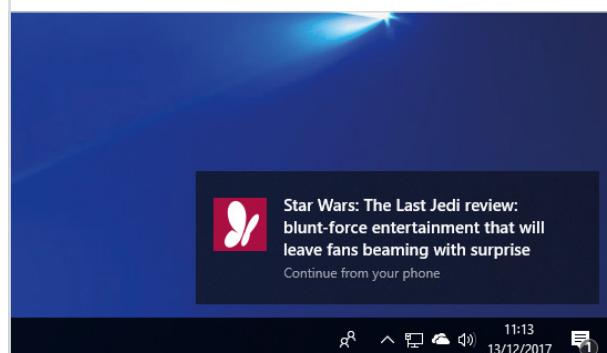
5 If you're looking at a website in the Edge app that you want to continue looking at on your PC, simply find the Continue on PC icon on your iPhone or Android phone; on our Android phone, it is at the bottom, in the middle.



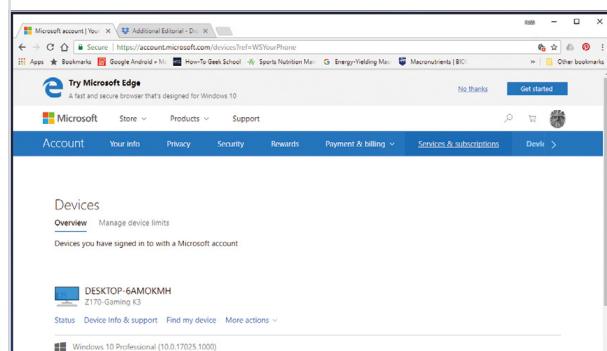
6 When you tap the Continue on PC icon, a new window will open, showing you the computers that are available to continue on. Tap the computer name or ID to continue now. Alternatively, you can choose to continue later by tapping the option at the bottom.



7 If you choose Continue later, the website will show up under Action Center as a New tab for you to click on later, whenever you're ready. There isn't, as yet, a way to reverse the process and continue on your phone from Edge on the PC.



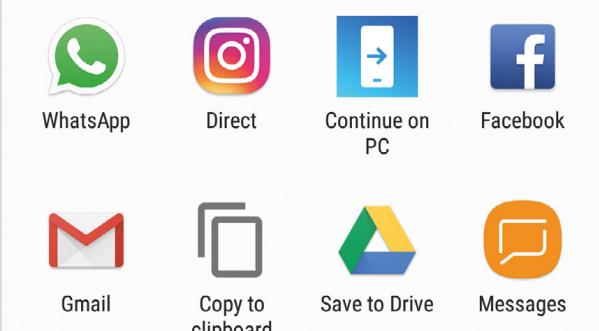
8 You can manage the devices connected to your Microsoft account (and therefore accessible by this feature) by visiting www.account.microsoft.com, signing in and then clicking on the Devices tab at the top of the page.



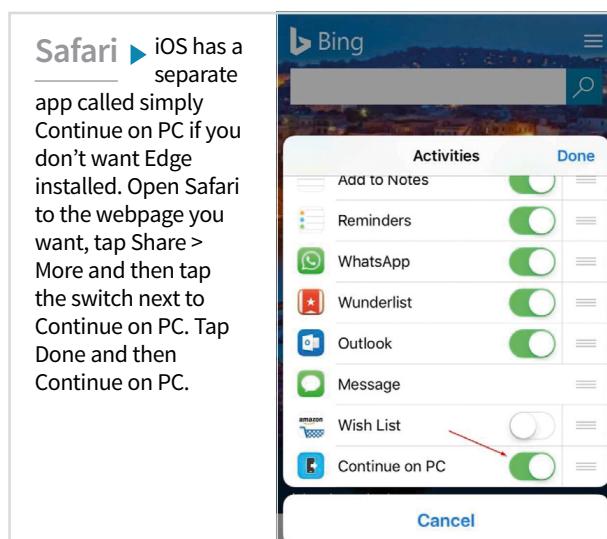
Continue from Chrome or Safari

Once Edge is installed on your Android or iOS device, you will get a new sharing option, Continue on PC, in other browsers you have on the device, including Chrome and Safari.

Chrome ▶ Once you have followed the setup process above, open Chrome on your device and navigate to the page you want to view. Tap the menu button in Chrome (top right corner) and select Share from the menu. You should see Continue on PC as an option.



Safari ▶ iOS has a separate app called simply Continue on PC if you don't want Edge installed. Open Safari to the webpage you want, tap Share > More and then tap the switch next to Continue on PC. Tap Done and then Continue on PC.





SCANNING...

SCANN

Privacy, Security and Antivirus

With the threat of malware, viruses and ransomware seemingly ever-present, the privacy and security of Windows 10 is more important than ever. Learn how to manage privacy settings in the new dashboard, how to protect yourself from viruses and also use advanced security features.

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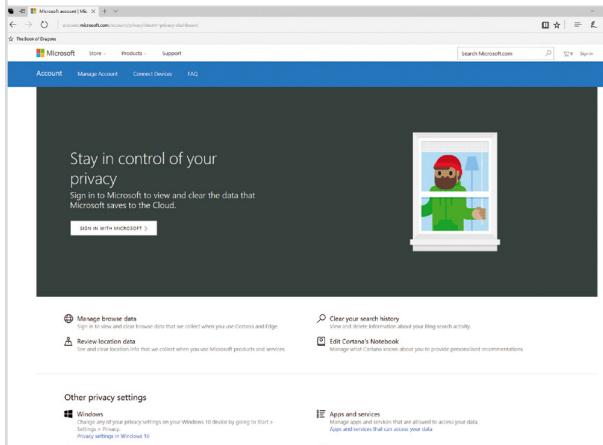
Manage Your Privacy in Windows 10

Being in control of security on your computer is important but almost as important is being able to control your privacy settings. Microsoft recently launched a web-based privacy dashboard tool and this has now become available to everyone in the Creators update.

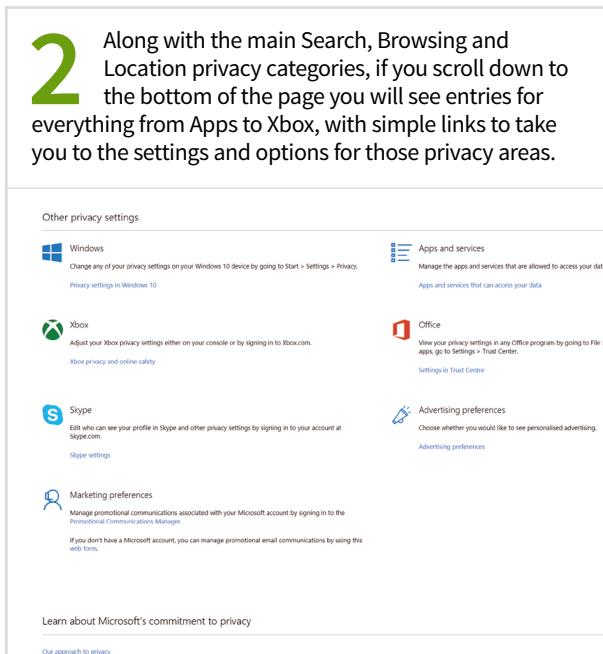
The Privacy Dashboard

The privacy dashboard is web-based rather than in the settings and it allows you to manage multiple devices from a single interface, as long as you are logged in to a single account.

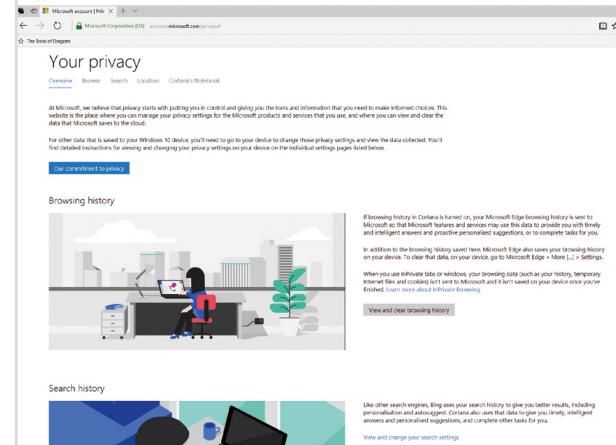
- 1** Open your browser and navigate to www.account.microsoft.com/privacy. If prompted, use your Microsoft account details to log in. You will be logged in to the privacy overview page that lets you quickly see what privacy settings the dashboard contains and controls.



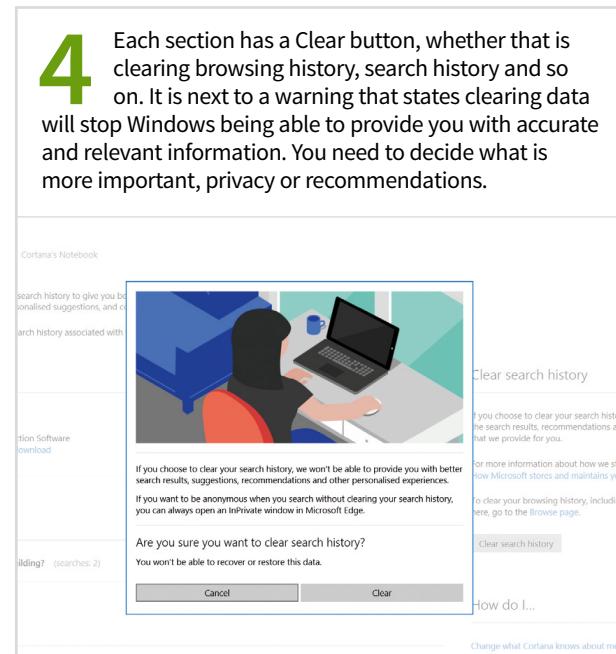
- 2** Along with the main Search, Browsing and Location privacy categories, if you scroll down to the bottom of the page you will see entries for everything from Apps to Xbox, with simple links to take you to the settings and options for those privacy areas.



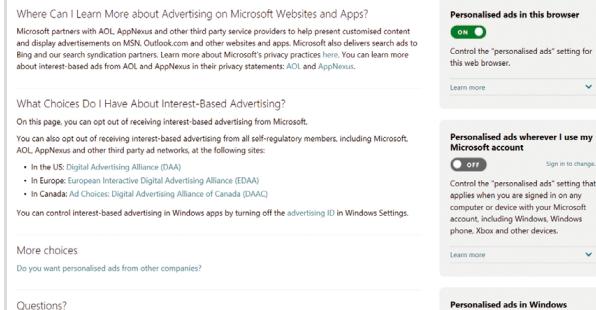
- 3** Click on one of the main categories, Search, Browsing, Location or Cortana, and you will see more information. This could include a list of searches you have made or websites visited (in Edge only, not other browsers), interests Cortana has saved for you or locations you have been.



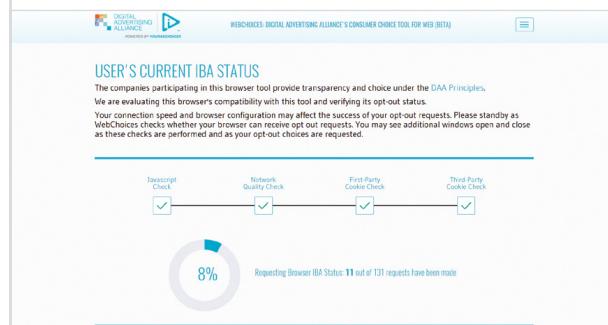
- 4** Each section has a Clear button, whether that is clearing browsing history, search history and so on. It is next to a warning that states clearing data will stop Windows being able to provide you with accurate and relevant information. You need to decide what is more important, privacy or recommendations.



5 Another useful privacy section in the dashboard is the Advertising Preferences. This lets you control whether personalised adverts are shown to you in the Edge browser. Some of the ads you may receive on Microsoft websites and apps are tailored to your previous activities and searches.



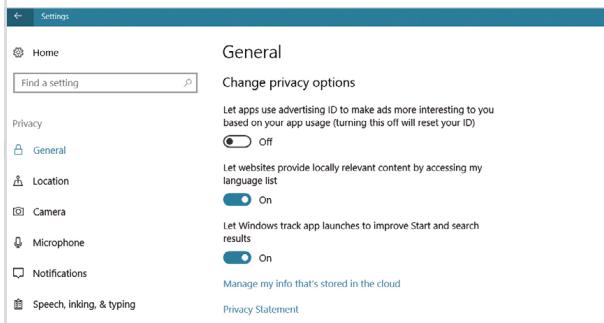
6 There is also a browser tool that lets you choose if the adverts you see come from companies other than Microsoft. Click the option under More Choices and wait for the Digital Advertising Alliance scan to finish. You can then choose from the list to see adverts from different advert providers.



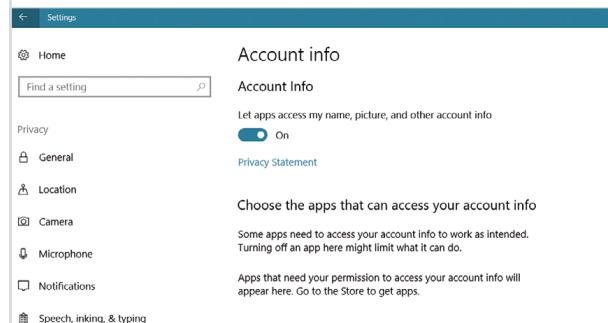
Privacy Settings

There are, of course, still privacy options in the main Settings app in Windows 10. This is generally added to and improved with each OS update.

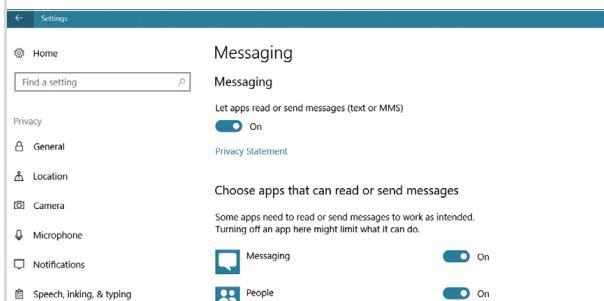
General Privacy ► Privacy has its own section within the settings; here there are many different categories covering everything from Location to Background Apps. Click on each of the privacy categories to see the options within that category. Use the slider switches to allow or block privacy actions.



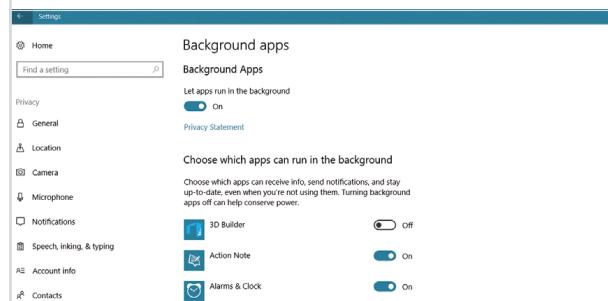
Account Info ► Apps are able to access very basic personal settings such as your name and account information. This is so they can sign you in automatically to your Windows account for things like Xbox Live or the Windows Store. You can turn this off wholesale or on an app by app basis.



Messaging Apps ► We're using Windows 10 on a laptop here but if we had a tablet with a SIM card we would be able to get control over which apps were able to send messages over SMS and MMS. You probably want this to be restricted to just your Messaging app; most apps really shouldn't have access to your texts.



Background Apps ► You can control which apps you allow to run in the background. If you're on a laptop or desktop this probably won't be that big an issue, but you may want to turn these off on tablet devices to conserve power. Some apps you may not use, like Get Office, really don't need to run in the background.



Understanding and Preventing Malware Threats

Viruses, malware, ransomware, trojans, worms: the Internet can sometimes seem like a breeding ground for nasty things that can ruin your day, and your computer. Let's take a look at the main threats online, learn how to recognise them and to avoid things like viruses and ransomware. Then, discover simple ways to avoid and fix them before the damage is done.



Viruses ►

Viruses are bits of malicious code that hide within software, electronic files, etc., waiting to be unknowingly installed onto a PC. The aim of a virus is not always obvious, and not always the same. Some viruses are created and released by people who just want to see the world burn, those who like causing chaos and misery for their fellow man. Some are designed to create back doors into systems or steal information.

In most cases, viruses are designed to do one thing: make your computer inoperable.

Viruses are well named for their ability to spread themselves through a computer system, infecting multiple files, until they are unknowingly passed on by the infected user. Once spread through a system, they can be annoyingly difficult to get rid of. The infection happens once an infected piece of software or an executable file is run for the first time. Exactly what is then infected varies depending on the virus.

Our Advice:

Many infections come from files attached to emails, so make sure you have antivirus software installed that can automatically scan attachments. Even with AV in place, treat any email attachment as suspicious, unless from a known sender. Free downloads from websites can also be a hiding place for viruses, so make sure you scan these too. Run a full system scan with your antivirus software; use the new Offline Scan in Windows Defender if in doubt.

Prevention Tips:

Avoid running any software you have not first scanned with an antivirus program. Always be careful double-clicking executable files (files that end in .exe) and be wary of clicking on links on websites you don't completely trust. Know the signs to look for that show you might be infected: unusually slow computer, lag when opening windows, etc., strange pop-ups and error messages.



Malware ▶

Malware is a fairly loose term and can refer to any malicious software, including viruses, spyware, worms, trojans, ransomware, etc. It can take the form of “https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executable_code” \o “Executable code” executable code, “[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Script_\(computing\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Script_(computing))” \o “Script (computing)” scripts, active content, and other software. Malware is defined by its malicious intent, acting against the requirements of the computer user — and so does not include software that causes unintentional harm due to some deficiency.

All good antivirus software will be looking for malware in all its forms. The term Malware is used interchangeably with Virus in many cases, but as long as your PC security software mentions it, you should be fairly well protected.

Our Advice:

See the previous “Viruses” boxout for advice on Malware removal.

Prevention Tips:

Any good antivirus/antimalware software installed should be your first defence. Make sure system restore points are enabled on a Windows PC (see the Ransomware section below for more details) and avoid opening suspicious links, attachments and files. Run a full system scan with your antivirus software; use the new Offline Scan in Windows Defender if in doubt.



Ransomware ▶

Ransomware is a form of malicious software which is designed to lock access to files (or even to the whole computer) and threaten the victim into paying money for unlocking them. The infected user will often see just a single window on screen, informing them of the ransomware attack and payment demand. Any attempt to close the window in the normal way will fail and they will be prevented from performing almost all normal functions on their computer.

This can be extremely scary for an inexperienced computer user, especially if there is sensitive material on the device, or if it is used for running a business. Ransomware attacks appear to be increasing, as many people will believe they must give in and pay to prevent embarrassment or the loss of years of work.

Our Advice:

Never pay! Take a breath, do a bit of research and you should see that Ransomware is actually one of the easiest online threats to remove and fix. For a step-by-step guide to restoring a PC infected with ransomware, read our guide here.

Prevention Tips:

Aside from having a good antivirus program protecting your PC from being infected in the first place, Restore Points are the key to surviving a Ransomware attack. By default, Windows 10 has system restore switched on, which allows you to roll back your computer to an earlier point (before the infection occurred). If you want to check, or manually create a restore point, search for Restore Point on your PC and click ‘Create a restore point’ in the results. You should be able to see if your main system drive is protected.



Scareware ▶

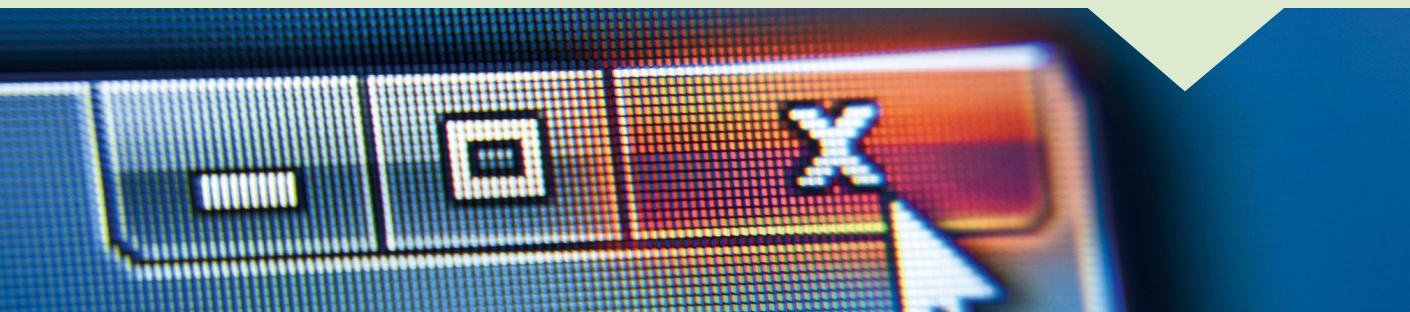
Scareware is similar to ransomware in its approach but demands money in a less direct way. Scareware usually appears in the form of a pop-up telling you that your computer is infected with a virus or some other sort of malware. Often this is in the form of a fake system scan with multiple angry red results, exclamation marks, flashing warning symbols. This is all carefully designed to scare you into clicking the Clean Now (or similar) button. When you do so, you will be told that you need to pay for the full version of the cleaner software.

Our Advice:

If the software presenting scan results is not something you installed, or if the warning appears in the web browser, it is very probably scareware and should be ignored. If you are unsure, it takes just a moment to do a system search on your PC for the named software. If you are at all worried about the warning, update and run a scan in your preferred antivirus software suite (AVG, Kaspersky, etc.).

Prevention Tips:

It isn't always possible to avoid seeing scareware, but you can certainly reduce your chances. Choose, install (and keep up-to-date) an antivirus program. Avira, Avast, AVG and Panda Security all offer free virus protection. Be wary also when installing other software, as even seemingly safe software can sometimes ask to install third-party toolbars, etc. If you are not paying attention, you can easily add dodgy software yourself.



Adware ▶

Adware is generally less of a threat than viruses, ransomware or scareware but you should still try to keep your PC free from it. Adware is usually bundled up with other software or apps and is designed to sell you things or point you in the direction of a website, etc. It is more annoying than malicious but because adware forces itself to the foreground, it can use up system resources that you might need to do the things you actually want to do on your computer. Add two, three, four bits of adware, all doing the same resource-hungry things and you can see the potential problems.

Our Advice:

If you start seeing adverts popping up or notice a new toolbar at the top of your browser, or indeed anything you are not expecting to see, have a look at your installed programs. Open Settings > Apps > Apps & Features and go through the list. If you see something you don't recognise as being installed by you, do a quick Google search on it to see if it is known Adware. If it is, you can just uninstall it.

Prevention Tips:

Adware, as we have already mentioned, is often bundled up with legitimate software you are installing. In most cases, during the installation process you will be asked to 'uncheck the box if you don't want...' or 'Do you want to install so and so for free?'. Just uncheck or don't check the box (whichever is relevant). The key is to make sure you read each screen of the installation process when adding software.

Digital Security FAQ

Trying to understand the digital security world can be hard work. There's so much to take in, that it's easy to become lost in the quagmire of acronyms and conflicting information. Hopefully we can help you out, with these ten FAQs.



Do I need an antivirus program? ►

Without a doubt, yes. Windows 10 uses the built-in Windows Defender program to help protect you online. It's more than ample for most users but often better security is required.



Viruses and malware are only on dodgy sites, right? ►

No, sorry. Even legitimate websites can be infected with a virus or some other form of malware. Remember too, a computer virus can enter your system in ways other than just going online.



Does having extra security cost? ►

Most of the security changes you can adopt don't cost anything, just you being more aware and knowledgeable about what's going on. In terms of an antivirus product, most of the better total security suites will cost you an annual subscription.

Is online banking safe? ►

Online banking is remarkably safe and utilises the latest and continually evolving security encryption technologies. There's military grade security at every level of the online process, and it's highly unlikely to be hacked.



Are hackers after me? ►

Whilst it's true that most hackers aren't interested in the average user, they're after bigger targets, there are instances where you could be targeted for one reason or another. Generally speaking, the average user will only be targeted en masse in a country-wide phishing or similar attack.



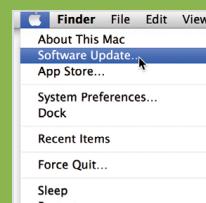
Can I keep a phishing phone scammer on the line? ►

Yes, there's nothing stopping you. A school of thought is that while you keep them on the line, turning it into a mock-prank call, you're saving someone else from being duped. However, it's best to simply tell them you know they're trying to scam you and hang up.



How often do I need to update everything? ►

Windows 10 keeps a continual update cycle in operation, delivering the latest updates in the background. However, it's always best to do a regular check for any updates for both Windows and any programs you regularly use.



How do I know if something being offered is a scam? ►

That's a difficult question to answer. More often than not, if it's too good to be true then it's likely to be a scam of some form or another. There are times when genuine offers are made but it's best to research as much as possible before committing to anything.

I think I've just been scammed, what do I do? ►

If you think you've been scammed, you need to quickly make some changes: change your Windows password, inform your bank that your details may be compromised, email friends and relatives that you've been scammed, file a police report, scan your computer for threats, and check your credit card reports.



I've opened a scam email attachment, what do I do now? ►



There's a good chance you may have a virus on your computer. Close all open programs, open Windows Defender and do a Full Scan of the system. If anything is detected Defender will tell you what to do; also, consider a third-party AV suite and scan the computer again.

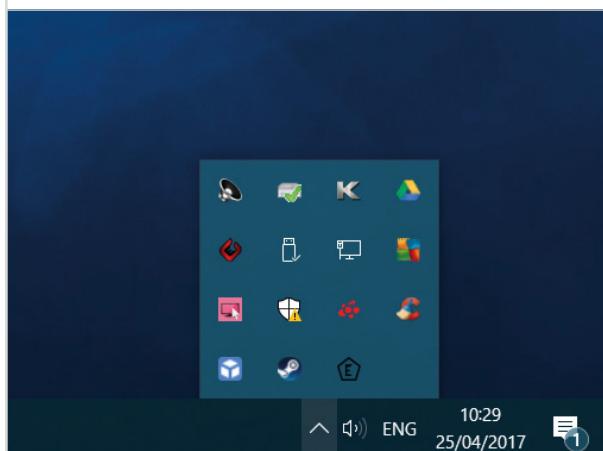
Protect Your PC with Windows Defender

Since a recent update, Windows Defender, the preinstalled security tool for Windows 10, is better than ever. Defender now includes automatic analysis of suspicious software. You can even run a powerful offline scan that can pick up nasties that a normal scan may not.

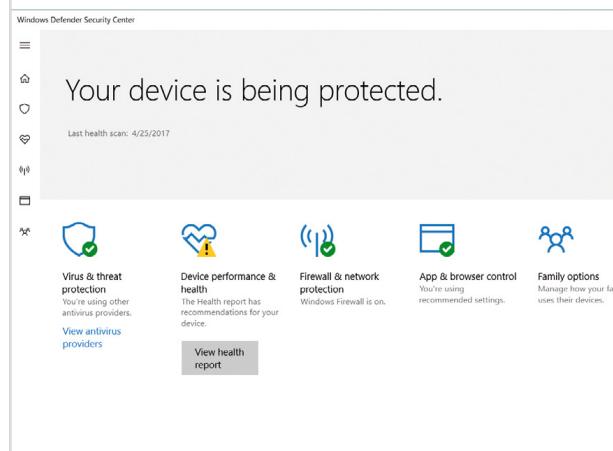
Set Up Defender

By default, Windows Defender should already be running but if you are using a PC that has had antivirus software on in the past, parts of it may have been disabled.

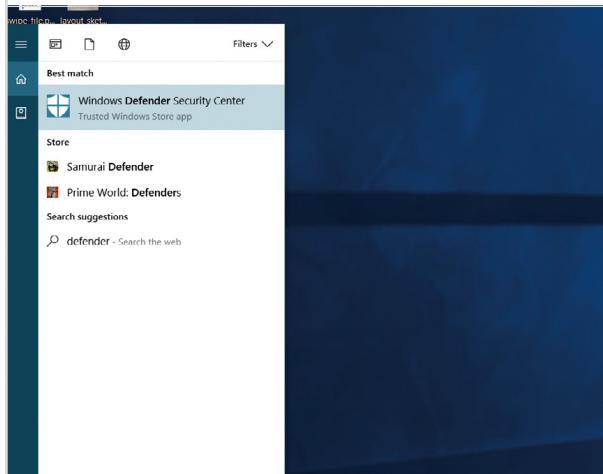
1 The first thing to do is check that Defender is already running. You can quickly check this by clicking on ‘Show hidden icons’ (the small arrow button) at the right-hand end of the taskbar. If you see the Defender shield logo, you are protected. At least, you are protected partially.



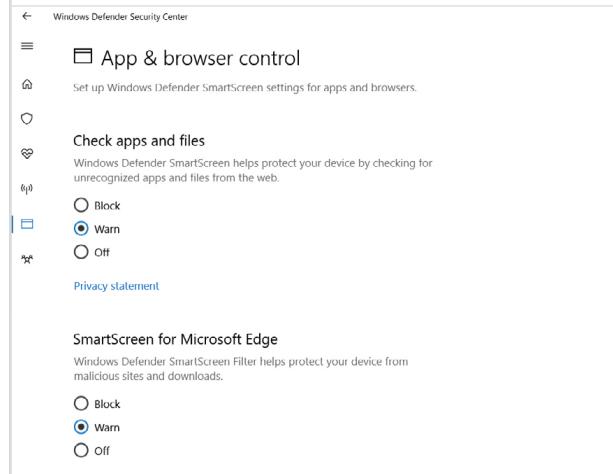
3 Since the Creators update of April ‘17, Defender is much more in keeping, design-wise, with the rest of the Windows 10 interface, although it still opens in a separate window. The Defender Security Center is split into several sections, including antivirus, firewall and device performance.



2 Now it’s time to check out the Defender settings and features. You can right-click on the icon in the hidden icons pop-up, and then click Open. You can also, in the search box on the taskbar, type “Defender” and then select Windows Defender from the list of results.



4 Below each of the section icons, you can see basic info about that section, including whether it is currently enabled or not. Click on any of the section titles and you are able to see more information, along with any options available for that particular part of Defender.



Running a Virus Scan

You can scan your PC for viruses in a couple of different ways with Windows Defender. Click the Virus & Threat Protection icon to get started.

<p>1 If you are using a third-party antivirus program, such as Kaspersky or AVG, it will say so at the top of the window. If you want to check exactly which, click the link 'View antivirus providers'. This opens the Windows Control Panel. Click Security to open the panel and look for Virus Protection.</p>	<p> Virus & threat protection View threat history, scan for viruses and other threats, settings, and get protection updates.</p> <p>Other antivirus providers You're using other antivirus providers. View antivirus providers</p> <p>Windows Defender Antivirus options You can keep using your current provider, and have Windows D periodically check for threats.</p> <p>Periodic scanning <input checked="" type="radio"/> Off</p>	<p>3 You can, if you are not sure the Quick scan is enough, perform an offline scan. This is a much deeper scan and certainly takes longer to perform. It is, however, much more likely to find some of the more devious viruses and other threats. Click Advanced scan and select offline scan > Scan now.</p> <p> Scan history No threats found.</p> <p>Quick scan running... Time elapsed: 00:00:02 339 files scanned</p> <p> Cancel</p> <p>Feel free to keep working while we scan your d</p> <p> Virus & threat protection settings You are using the settings that Microsoft recom</p> <p> Protection updates Protection definitions are up to date.</p>
<p>2 You can still use Defender to scan for viruses, with or without other antivirus software present. Back in the Virus & Threat Protection window, click the Quick scan button to get started. A progress bar appears, along with some details of files scanned and time elapsed.</p>	<p> Virus & threat protection View threat history, scan for viruses and other threats, specify protection settings, and get protection updates.</p> <p>Other antivirus providers You're using other antivirus providers. View antivirus providers</p> <p> Scan history No threats found.</p> <p>0 28637 Threads found Files scanned</p> <p> Quick scan Advanced scan</p> <p> Virus & threat protection settings You are using the settings that Microsoft recommends.</p> <p> Protection updates Protection definitions are up to date.</p>	<p>4 The other options here let you check for protection updates, as well as change the Virus & Threat protection settings; for example whether real-time protection is on. You can also choose files or software to exclude from scans and change the notification settings for Windows Defender.</p> <p> Virus & threat protection settings View and update Virus & threat protection settings for Windows Defender Antivirus.</p> <p>Real-time protection Locates and stops malware from installing or running on your device. You can turn off this setting for a short time before it turns back on automatically. <input checked="" type="radio"/> Off</p> <p>Cloud-based protection Provides increased and faster protection with access to the latest Windows Defender Antivirus protection data in the cloud. Works best with Automatic sample submission turned on. <input checked="" type="radio"/> On</p> <p>Privacy statement</p> <p>Automatic sample submission Send sample files to Microsoft to help protect you and others from potential threats. We'll prompt you if the file we need is likely to contain personal information. <input checked="" type="radio"/> On</p> <p>Privacy statement Submit a sample manually</p>

Windows Firewall

A firewall is often the first defence against viruses and other Internet nasties, so make sure you at least use the one provided by Windows 10.

<p>1 You should always run Windows Firewall even if you have another firewall turned on. Turning off Windows Firewall might make your device, and your network if you have one, more vulnerable to unauthorised access.</p> <p>Your device is being protected.</p> <p>Last health scan: 4/25/2017</p> <p> Virus & threat protection You're using other antivirus providers. View antivirus providers</p> <p> Device performance & health The health report has recommendations for your devices. View health report</p> <p> Firewall & network protection Windows Firewall is on. View health report</p> <p> App & browser control You're using Recommended settings.</p> <p> Family options Manage how your family uses their devices.</p>	<p>2 To turn Windows Firewall on or off, select the Start button, open Windows Defender Security Center > Firewall & network protection, choose a network profile and then under Windows Firewall, turn it on or off.</p> <p>Windows Defender Security Center</p> <p> Private (discoverable) network Networks at home or work, where you know and trust the people and devices on the network, and where your device is set as discoverable.</p> <p> Active private networks</p> <p> Network</p> <p> Windows Firewall Helps protect your device while on a private network. <input checked="" type="radio"/> On</p>
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REVIEW



Avira Free Security Suite

If you are only going to download and install one of the free programs in the security section, make it this one. Avira is, in our opinion, the best free security suite you can add to your computer. Offering superb anti-virus protection, a ransomware shield and a browser scanner, Avira is one of the easiest ways to keep your PC safe from the threats of the modern Internet. Not only that, it also gives you a selection of tune-up tools and access to a VPN, to make your browsing anonymous; again it's completely free.

Anti-virus Scanning ▶

Award winning protection from malware (viruses, Trojans, worms, etc.). Avira scans unknown files in real-time for malware and exploits and identifies potentially unwanted applications hidden within legitimate software. The Protection Cloud acts as an early warning system and analyses unknown files in the cloud, anonymously, from millions of users, to protect you from threats as they emerge in real-time.

Ransomware Protection ▶

Prevents ransomware from encrypting your data and taking them hostage. Avira blocks more than 1 million ransomware attempts every month. The software accomplishes this with a unique heuristic technology, which stops ransomware before it can do you any harm.

Real-time File Scanning ▶

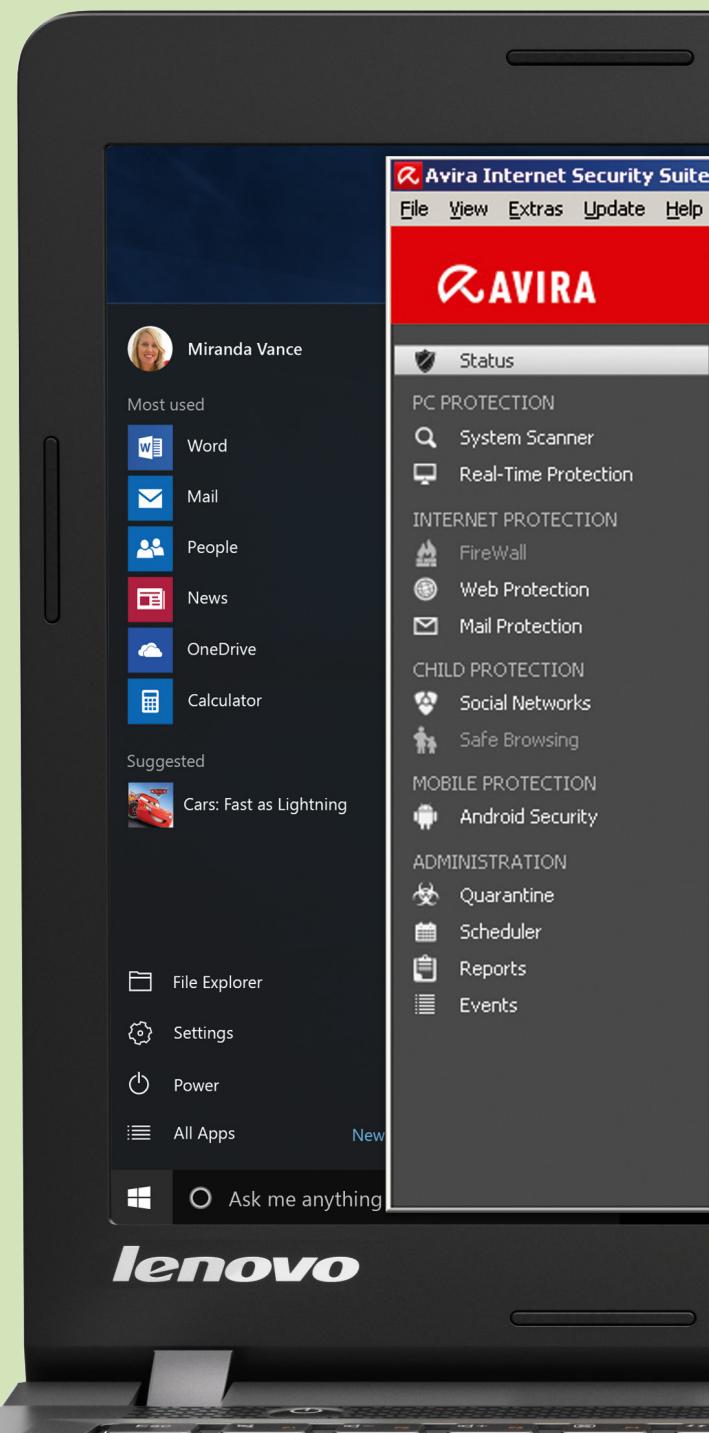
Avira scans in real-time. The proprietary URL cloud technology not only scans websites automatically and in real-time but also protects you from emerging threats that are unknown to most search engines.

Block Phishing and Infected Sites ▶

Avira Scout is built with your security and privacy as a central focus. The award winning technology, directly integrated into the browser, automatically blocks infected and phishing websites for you.

Fixes for Speed, Memory and Privacy ▶

System Speedup analyses your start up speed, shows you its evolution over time and makes you faster with one click. It also offers you an initial optimisation of junk files and cookies and helps clear your digital traces.



DOWNLOAD HERE ▶ www.avira.com/en/free-security-suite

FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ | OVERALL ★★★★★

Online History Wipe ▶

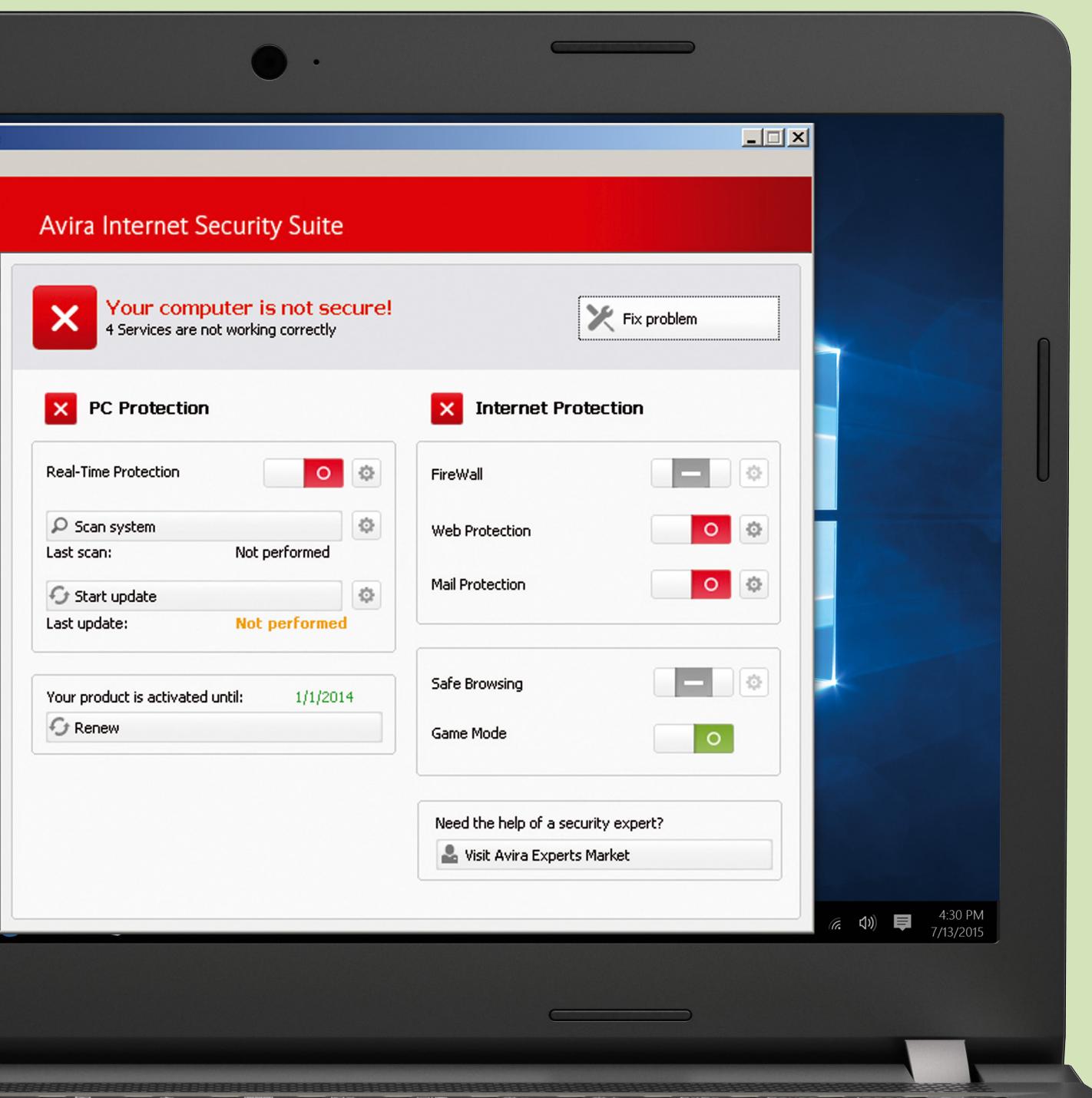
Avira Scout integrates a no track functionality that blocks companies such as Facebook and Twitter from monitoring what you visit, download and shop for. It is also one of the few browsers that does not collect data.

Communication Encryption ▶

Avira uses 256-bit encryption for all communication with the Internet. 256-bit encryption offers more combination possibilities than there are stars in the universe and would take more years by billions of computers to crack than the age of the universe. Impressive!

IP Address Masking ▶

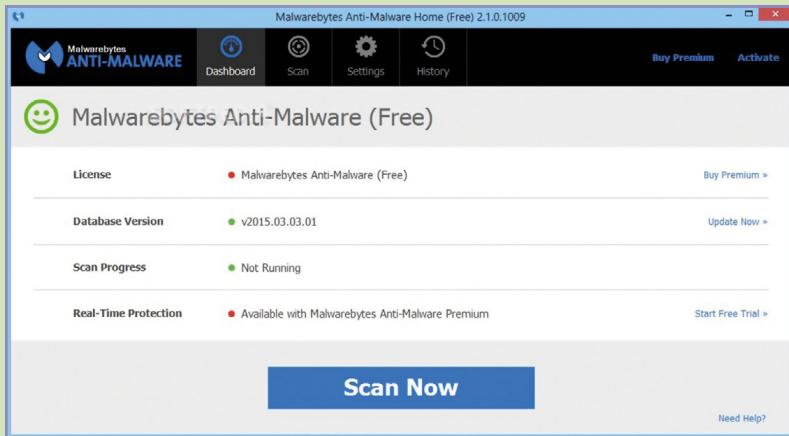
Whether on your laptop or desktop, Avira Phantom VPN masks your IP address, safeguards your private data and secures your connection on all networks. It also prevents advertisers and eavesdroppers from tracking you. As far as they can see, you're an anonymous user from an ever-changing location.



FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



Malwarebytes Anti-malware



The term malware is used to describe lots of potentially nasty things that can find their way onto your PC, from viruses and hijackers, to adware and ransomware. Malwarebytes Anti-malware Free will scan for and protect you from all of them for 14 days after installation and then just from general malware and rootkits after the trial period. If you want the extra protection, you can upgrade for a fee but as this guide is all about free software, we would suggest just using the basic version and combining it with Avira or Bitdefender.

Before the trial expires, Malwarebytes will detect and remove malware in real-time with advanced anti-malware, anti-spyware, and anti-rootkit technology. It scans for the newest and most dangerous threats automatically, so you're protected without having to even think about it. A rootkit is a collection of computer software, typically malicious, designed to enable

access to a computer or areas of its software that would not otherwise be allowed (for example, to an unauthorised user) and often masks its existence or the existence of other software. Malwarebytes also wraps your browser and software programs in four layers of defence, stopping attacks that use vulnerabilities in those programs to infect your computer.

If you are running a business from your computer, you might have seen some troubling reports in the news about ransomware attacks. The full version of Malwarebytes stops unknown and known ransomware with proprietary next generation technology that works

proactively to shield your files. This is a powerful, comprehensive defence that blocks ransomware and not a simple decryption tool. It also detects and prevents contact with fake websites and malicious links. You are proactively protected from downloading malware, hacking attempts and infected advertising.

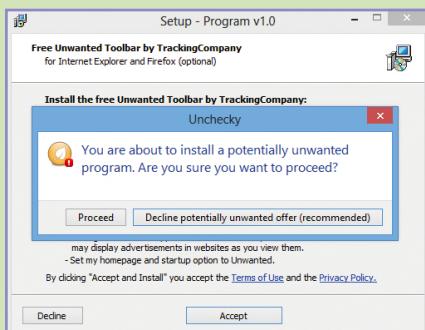
Several of these tools and features remain after the 14-day trial finishes and if you are in the process of creating your own suite of free security tools, and we heartily recommend that you do, this is a great addition to a more virus-centric tool such as Avira. You are reduced to reactive scanning and fixing, rather than prevention, so we wouldn't recommend relying on the basic version as your only defence. However, when all of this is further combined with a good firewall, your PC will be well on the way to becoming a digital fortress.

DOWNLOAD HERE ➤ www.malwarebytes.com

FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



Unchecky

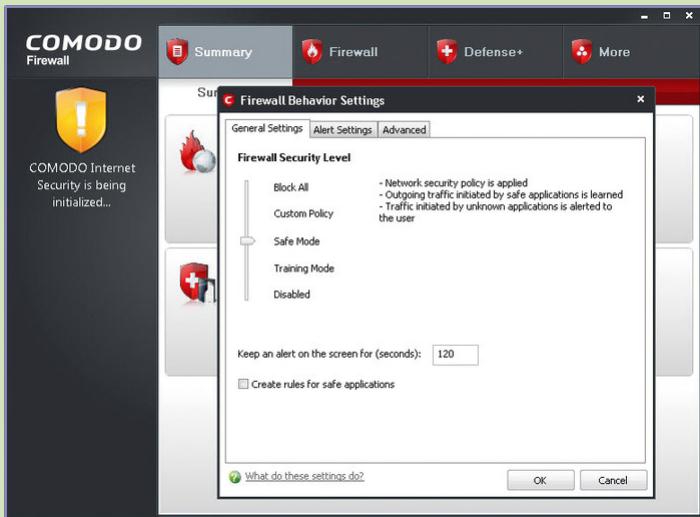


Downloading and installing free software is a lot easier these days but often free can mean that you also get offered sponsor software along with the main software. This can be in the form of toolbars or browser extensions and unless you are very careful, you can soon end up with lots of unwanted or unneeded software lurking on your PC. Unchecky is a simple piece of software to stop this problem automatically.

Unchecky automatically unchecks unrelated offers, saving you mouse clicks and making it less likely to miss a checkbox of an unwanted offer. Installers often try to sneak additional programs as a natural part of the installation. Unchecky warns you when you try to accept a potentially unwanted offer, which makes it less likely to be accepted accidentally. You just install Unchecky and forget it, letting it quietly work in the background, keeping your computer secure.

DOWNLOAD HERE ➤ www.unchecky.com

Comodo Firewall



Windows includes a free basic firewall as standard and for many users this will be all they need. After all, it passes most standard inbound tests (both stealth and open port), it doesn't have many pop-up alerts and it doesn't require a separate software installation. It doesn't even need to be enabled as it's on by default and runs seamlessly and quietly in the background. The Windows firewall has seen significant improvements since the initial version way back in Windows XP but if you want or need more controls over outbound protection and features such as HIPS (Host Intrusion Prevention System), you will need to look to a third-party program.

Comodo's award winning free firewall is an absolute must have for us and it should be for anyone concerned about PC security. Comodo Firewall offers all the features you might expect from a firewall and adds in several that really bump up the protection level. The most interesting of these is Default Deny Protection (DDP) that references a list of over two million known PC-friendly applications. If a file that is not on this safe list knocks on your PC's door, the Firewall immediately alerts you to the possibility of a malware attack. All this occurs before the malware infects your computer. Its prevention-based security is the only way to keep PCs totally safe.

DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.comodo.com

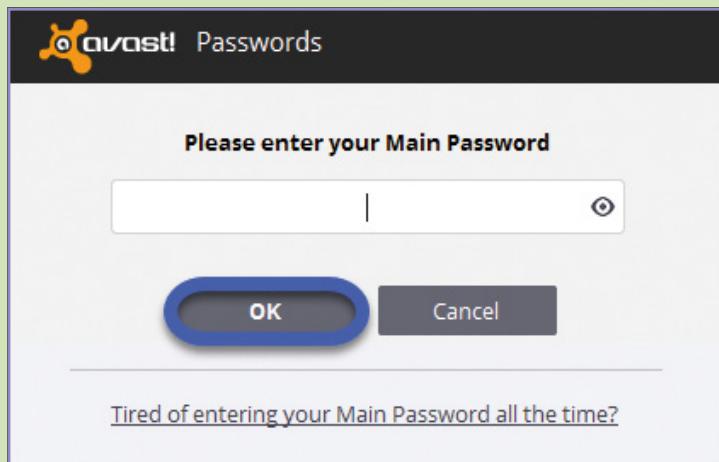
REVIEW

Avast Passwords

There can be few people around these days who do not have at least a couple of passwords to remember and if you are anything like us, you have about 15. From making payments to sending emails, strong passwords are a vital part of our online life. Many browsers offer to store your identity information; however, this is not very secure and can be easily hacked. When you store passwords in your browser, they are stored on your device along with the information necessary to decrypt them.

Avast Passwords stores your passwords with a much more secure level of encryption and protects all your data with a password known only to you, so that your data remains safely hidden from any unauthorised access. It securely stores your sensitive information and enables you to quickly log into your online accounts and complete web forms. When you use Avast Passwords you can quickly import any information stored in your browsers and be sure it is stored with top of the line security. Quickly import your autofill info from Chrome and Firefox, which are unsafe places to

store your passwords. Avast Passwords will easily autofill login information for all of your accounts, so you don't have to enter the same info every time. Start storing the safer way without all the copying and pasting.



DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.avast.com/en-gb/passwords

Tips for Staying Safer Online

Keeping your computer, and the personal data which may be stored on it, safe and private is not as big a challenge as it might seem. The News is full of stories about “Hackers” but the chances of your personal computer being directly targeted are very small. What is more important is to understand how you should interact with websites and the simple ways to ensure your data is as secure as possible.

Online Safety Basics

The best and most effective way to protect your privacy, security and the continued smooth operation of your Windows device is to install a good security and anti-virus app. There are some good free apps available, such as Avast Antivirus or AVG, as well as more comprehensive security software suites that you'll have to pay to use, such as Kaspersky Internet Security.

Do Your Homework Before Buying Online ▶

While the majority of online retailers are perfectly reputable, there are a few that are less than honest. If you're not sure you can check out the company's reputation on shopper comparison sites such as Pricerunner or Kelkoo or simply type the name into Google along with terms such as “fraud”, “rip off” or “complaint”. See what others have been saying about them and if they have a lot of negative feedback then take your money elsewhere.

Read Your Bank Statements ▶

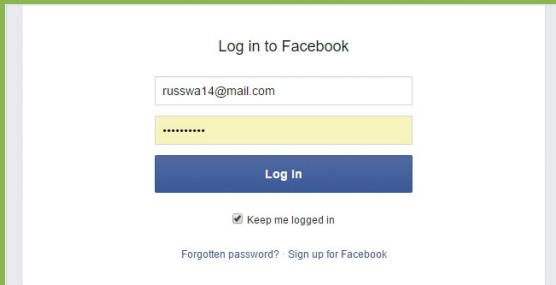
Whether you have printed statements or you do all of your banking online, it's a good idea to check your bank and credit card account regularly. If you see any suspicious payments that you don't recognise, contact your bank and get them to look into it. Most credit cards offer protection against online fraud but they can only act on it if you report it.

If it Sounds too Good to be True... ▶

If you receive an email, text or chat message telling you that you've won millions on a lottery you've never entered, that a deceased relative you've never heard of has left you a fortune or that some foreign businessman wants to move a huge sum of money and needs your help to do so, don't bother replying; simply delete the message at once. This type of scam is known as an “advance fee fraud” or 419 scam, after the Nigerian penal code law that it contravenes.

Online Password Tips ▶

It can be tempting to use the same or similar passwords for several different websites or apps. This can be a bad idea, particularly if your chosen password is something easy to guess such as your name or date of birth. Here are a few tips to consider when creating passwords.



1. Keep them Unique

Having a unique password for each website or app you are required to log in to is a very good idea, particularly for things like email and online banking. Although security on a banking website is likely to be very good, if you use the same password on a website with less stringent security, you risk it being compromised on one and used to gain access to the other.

2. Keep them Random

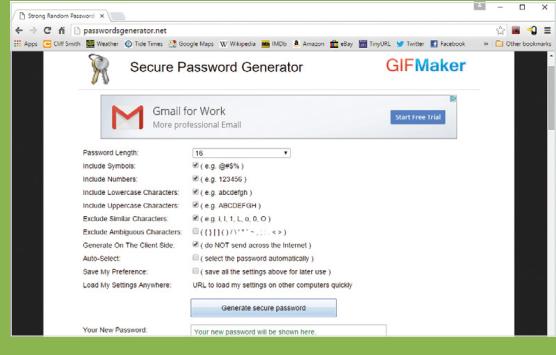
Try to avoid using anything that is easy to guess, including personal information like your name, date of birth or address. These things are all very easy to discover and often the first things someone will try to get into your accounts. Also avoid, if possible, using real words or sequential strings of numbers (e.g. 123456789).

3. The Longer, the Better

Short passwords are much easier to crack than long ones, so be sure to avoid anything less than eight characters and, if possible, go for something at least ten characters long. There are 4000 times more possible combinations of ten letters and numbers than there are for eight letters and numbers.

4. Use a Mixture

Once you start adding in symbols and mixed case letters, along with numbers, into your passwords, the possible variations rise to over 6 quadrillion (for an eight character password). The password A1z7yDbP is many thousands of times more secure than a1z7ydbp.



Password Managers ▶

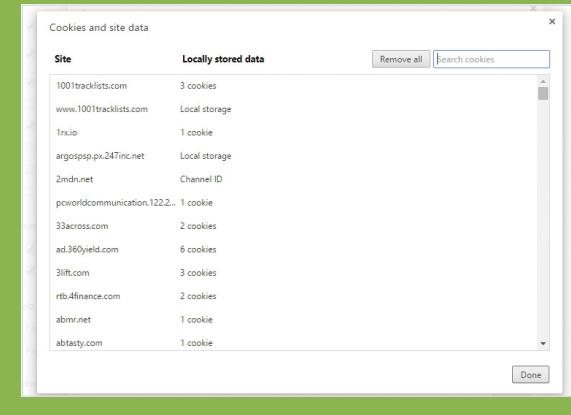
For most people, keeping a written list of their passwords is perfectly okay as long as you make sure that it is not left in plain sight on your desk, etc. Even keeping a text document on your computer with your passwords listed is not usually a risk; just don't call the file 'Passwords' and leave it on the desktop. A much safer way is to use a good Password Manager. These simple bits of software let you store your passwords in a locked file on your computer. As long as you have a very good password to get into the manager, your other passwords will be safe. You then only need to remember one password, instead of 10 or 20. Lastpass is a very good and free example of a password manager.



What Are Cookies? ▶

Cookies (or HTML Cookies) are small files used by websites to recognise individual users; or rather, recognise their computer. When you visit a website, a cookie is stored in a temporary folder on your computer. When you next visit that site, the cookie will be checked for. Different sites use cookies to store different information but a good example is information in a form being automatically filled when visiting a site you have used recently to order something.

Almost all modern browsers, including Internet Explorer and Chrome, allow you to block cookies from being downloaded. However it is worth remembering that many websites now need cookies to work properly and so blocking them could mean your browsing experience is a frustrating one. Cookies are nothing to be afraid of; they are simply used to make the Internet work better.



Finding and Installing Free Software

Finding free software is relatively easy but finding free software that doesn't fill your PC with junk or farm your details and sell them off to the highest bidder is a little harder. That is why we have put together this guide to the best free software for Windows 10 PCs. Not only do we show you where to find great free software but also some of the cool things you can do with it. Let's take a look at how to go about safely installing free software.

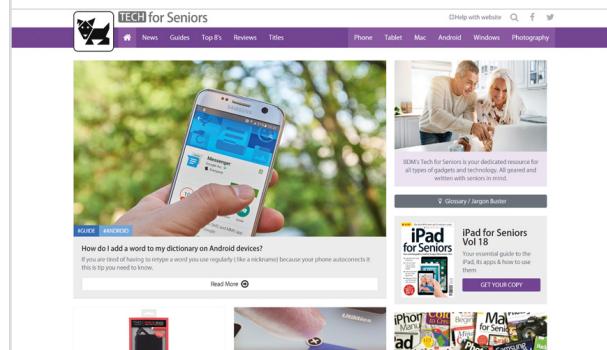
Finding Free Software

Some simple tips that will make finding the free software you need as easy and as painless as possible.

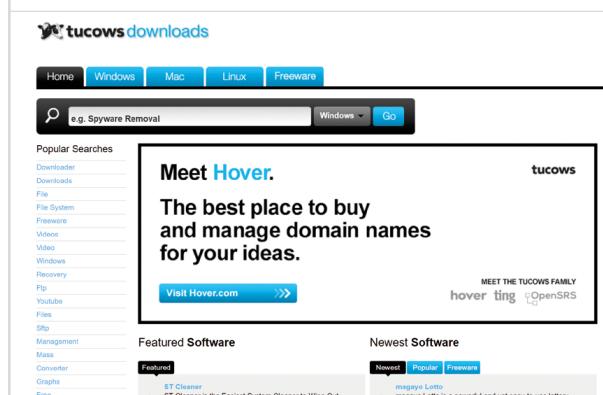
Go Direct ▶ If you know the name of the software you need, or even the company that makes it, it is often best to go straight to the source to download it. It is in the interest of the software company to make downloading their software as painless as possible and you can be sure that you will be getting the latest version, rather than finding a link to an older version that is still floating around the Internet.



Tech Websites ▶ Many of the large, well-known tech review websites will also offer links to download software and not only the software they have reviewed or featured. In some cases, the download is from their servers, other times the link will be either direct to the software maker or to one of the large software libraries. Just Googling "free software" is an option of course but can lead you to some less safe parts of the Internet.

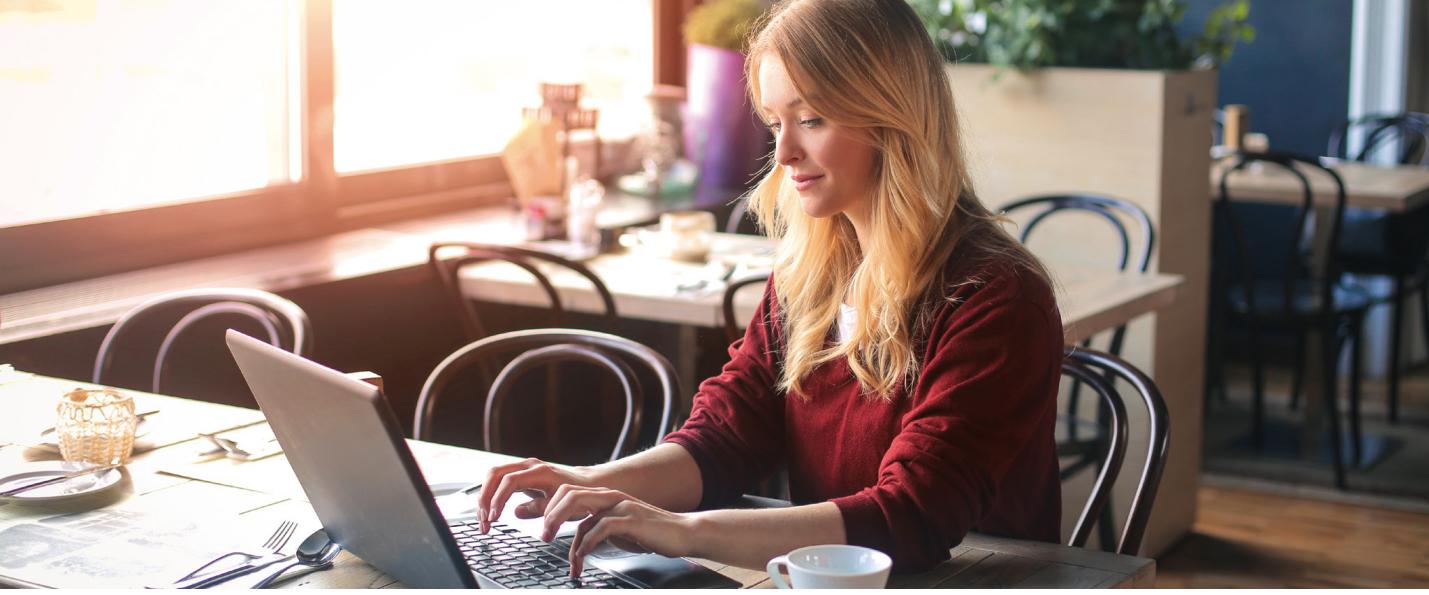


Software Libraries ▶ There are lots of massive general software libraries on the Internet, as well as several smaller, more targeted libraries. These are generally a good place to find free software, if you stick to the known and trusted ones. Sites like FileHippo.com, Tucows.com and Download.com offer a massive range of different free software and are a relatively easy and safe way to download it.



Recommendations ▶ If friends or family use a Windows 10 PC, why not ask them if they can recommend any good free software of the type you need? As with almost anything, a recommendation from a trusted person is usually better than a recommendation from elsewhere. If you do take a recommendation from elsewhere, try to work out if the person recommending has anything to gain from it. This magazine, for example, is not in any way partnered with any of the software companies we have mentioned.

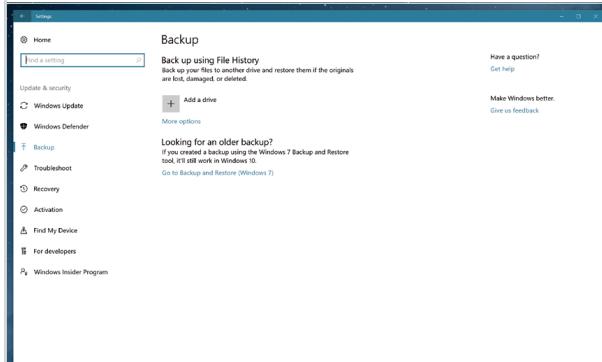




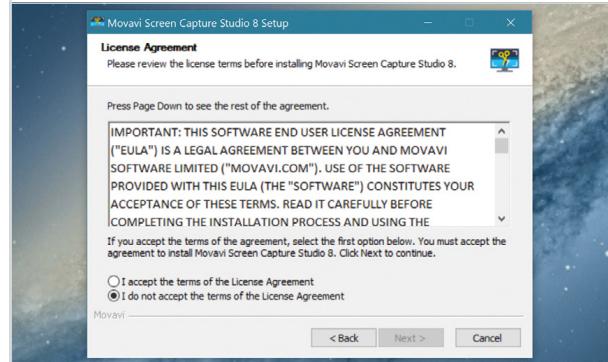
Installing Free Software

If you are getting your software from trusted sources, like those mentioned above, you should be fairly safe in terms of viruses, etc. but there are still things to consider before you install.

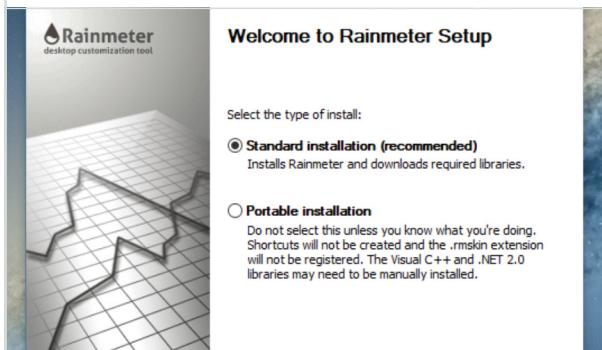
Backup Your System ▶ You should already be creating regular backups of your system and if not, why not? It only takes one fairly major system issue to make you realise that spending a few minutes backing up once in a while, can save hours or even days setting everything back up after a major problem. When installing any major new software, create a backup or a restore point first.



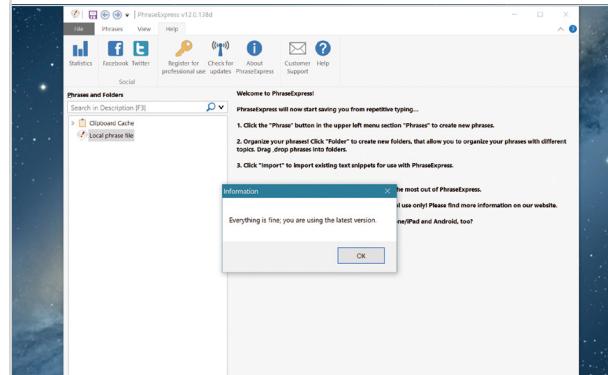
Ditch the Add-ons ▶ Some free or as-supported software will ask to install additional bit of software during the set up process, known as PUPs or Potentially Unwanted Programs. These can be browser plugins, third-party tools or almost anything else, both related and unrelated to the main product. In almost all cases we have ever seen, choosing not to let the extra software install is the best idea.



Read the Small Print ▶ It is almost universally accepted that no one reads the terms and conditions, which are often staggeringly long and boring, that come with most PC software but that doesn't mean that you should just skip through all of the installation screens. Check what you are being asked to agree to when checking boxes and if you are unsure, do a little research to find out what particular terms mean.



Check for Updates ▶ If you are downloading from the software company that makes the software, you will usually be getting the latest version; but if not, check for updates as soon as the software has been installed. Most programs will have a link in the interface for checking for updates (it will usually be in the About section) and updating is usually a fairly quick and painless process.



Free, Freemium and Ad-Supported. Is Free Really Free?

Very little of any real value is completely free these days and software is no exception. There are various levels of “free” within the software industry, from Freemium to Ad-supported. Over the next couple of pages we will explain the differences, which will hopefully help you to be more informed and better able to make the right choices for your Windows 10 PC.

Free ► Free means completely free at point of download and that all features of the software are available to use without upgrading or purchasing subscriptions. Free software can have adverts within it, but nothing that pops up or forces you to read or click before letting you use it. It could be argued that no software is completely free in our modern world, due to the fact that even entering your name, email and other basic details to log in could be valuable to the developer; data about users is very valuable these days.



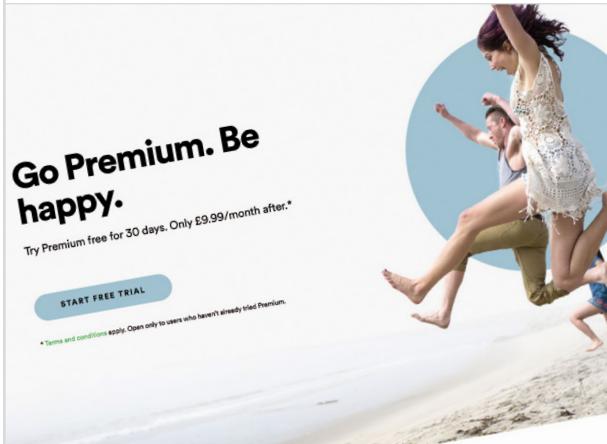
Ad-supported ► Ad-supported software, as the name suggests, is free software that is supported (financed by) adverts. These could be in the form of pop-up and pop-under adverts, small ad panels within the software interface or splash adverts that you are forced to watch for a few seconds before the software interface is shown. Often, ad-supported software will offer the ability to turn off the adverts by paying a small fee. Some freemium software will also remove adverts for paying users.



Freemium ► The freemium business model is not a completely new idea but it is certainly much more widely used nowadays than it has been previously. Freemium means that software is given away for free at point of download and should offer enough features to make it useful and usable. Certain “premium” features will be behind a paywall, requiring you to upgrade or subscribe before you can use them. A good example of this is Skype. Skype now comes preinstalled with Windows 10 and offers you completely free PC to PC Internet calls, as well as instant messaging and other features. If you want voicemail, conference calls or connection to landlines, you will have to pay a fee.



Trialware ► Trialware is free software with a built-in time limit. You can try out the fully featured program until the trial period is up, normally 14-28 days but sometimes much shorter, and then most trialware reverts to a reduced or non-functional mode. If you decide to pay the fee, you will receive a registration code to unlock the program. Trialware has become the norm for online Software as a Service (SaaS).



Using Dynamic Lock

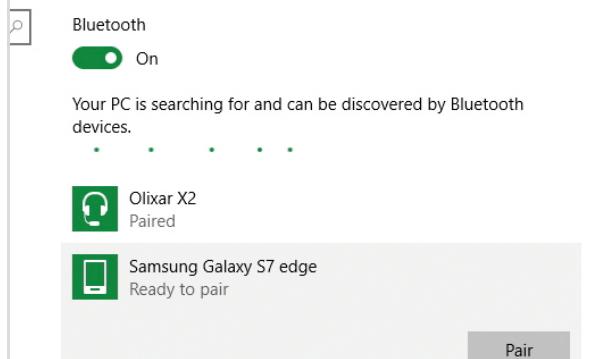
The Creators update for Windows 10 introduces several new tools and features, including Dynamic Lock. This allows you to have more control over the security of your Windows device, with even less effort. It is designed to detect a trusted device nearby and lock and unlock the computer as it moves away or comes close.

Setting Up Dynamic Lock

Dynamic Lock works by sensing the proximity of a paired device, such as a smartphone. In this example, the first thing we need to do is pair with our phone. Using other Bluetooth devices will be almost exactly the same.

1 Dynamic Lock will only work if your PC has Bluetooth connectivity. This usually means a laptop, which makes sense as these more portable devices are more in need of security measures. Open Settings > Devices > Bluetooth & Other devices. Turn Bluetooth on using the slider switch and do this on your phone as well.

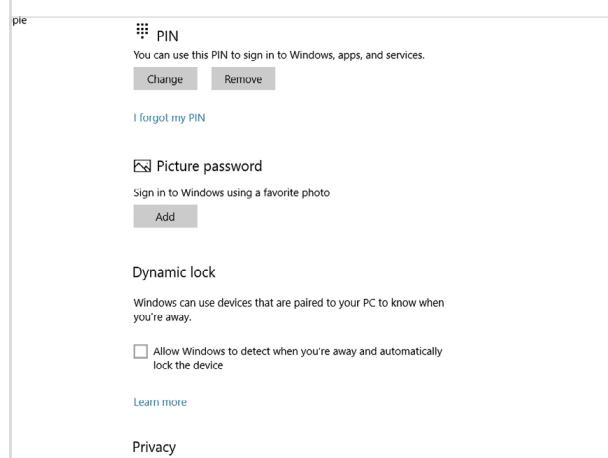
Manage Bluetooth devices



2 Once you see the phone listed under available devices, select it and pair to it. If you can't see your device listed, you may need to update your USB drivers for your PC: look for Bluetooth USB Module in Device Manager. Once paired successfully, you are ready to begin setting up and using Dynamic lock.

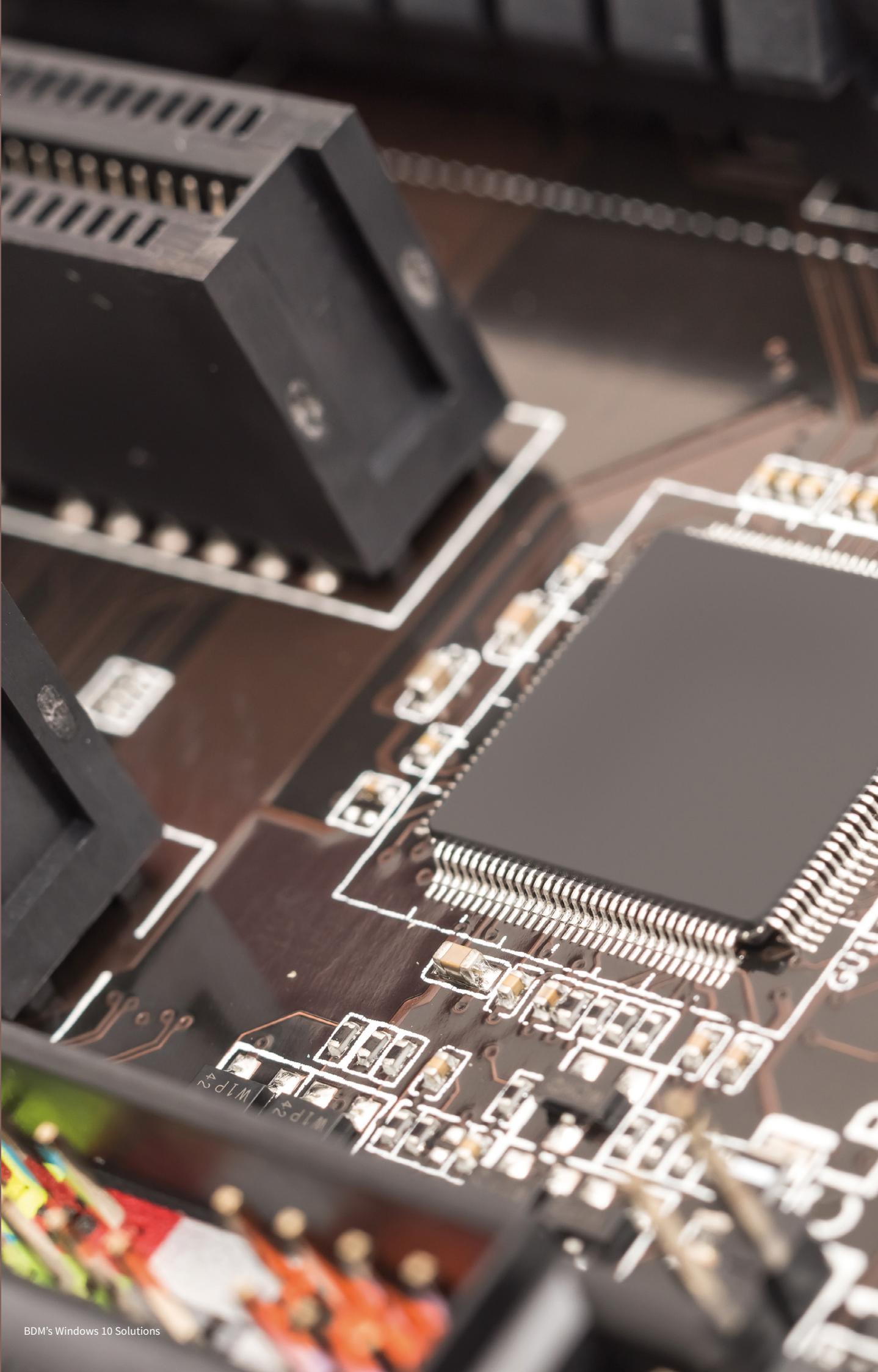


3 Go to Settings > Accounts > Sign-in Options and scroll down to see the Dynamic Lock section. Check the box that says 'Allow Windows to detect when you are away and automatically lock the device'. Hopefully, assuming Bluetooth is working, that is all you need to do to start using the feature.



4 Dynamic Lock does have some limitations at the moment, although these might be ironed out. The lock will not kick in until 30 seconds after it detects the Bluetooth signal has moved away, and if someone jumps on your computer within that time and starts to use it, it doesn't activate at all.





Maintenance and Performance Fixes

Keep your Windows 10 PC running smoothly with these guides to everything from disabling adverts to tweaking the Windows registry files. Discover some of the most useful maintenance software available and learn how to give your PC a boost by adding to or maintaining the hardware.

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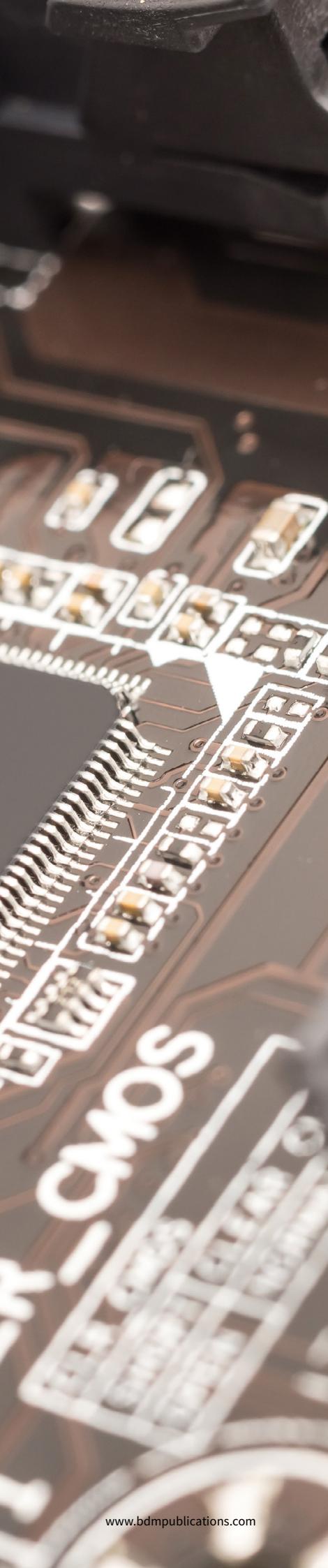
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How to Disable Adverts in Windows 10

Windows 10 has a lot of built-in advertising. This is part of the business model and is to be expected in some respects. That doesn't stop them being really annoying at times. Thankfully, if you know what you are doing, you can disable most of the advertising that Windows tries to slip in front of you.

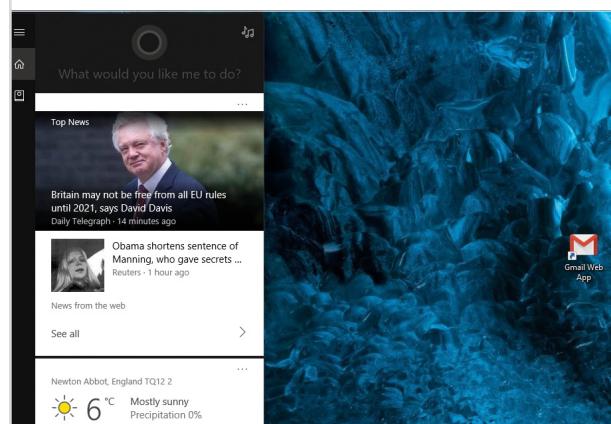
Disabling Annoyances

Windows 10 is pretty good at putting adverts in front of you and certainly, some of the adverts may not even seem like adverts until you start to take notice of them.

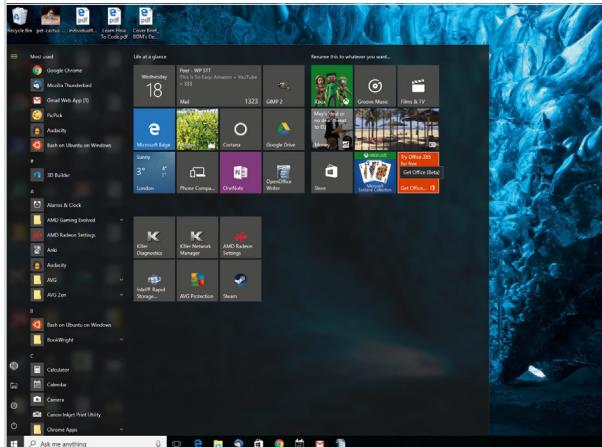
Lock Screen Ads ► Shortly after you enable Windows Spotlight for the lock screen, you will soon start to see the occasional advert for games like Tomb Raider appear among the pretty images. To disable the adverts, simply switch to the Picture or Slideshow options in the Personalisation settings.



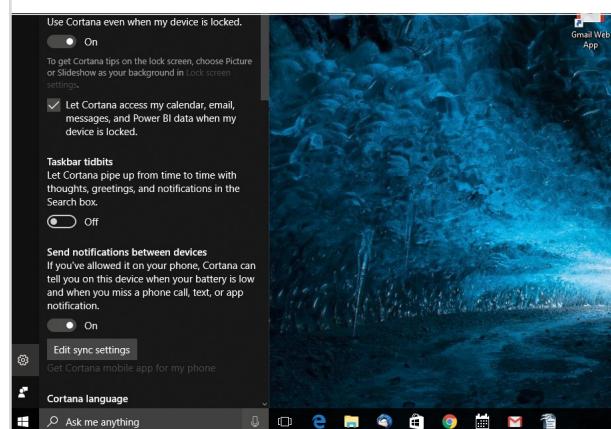
Get Rid of Fun Facts ► Although Cortana will occasionally provide you with an interesting fact when you click the search bar; often they are interspersed with adverts too. You can disable 'Get fun facts, tips, and more from Windows and Cortana on your lock screen' in Settings > Personalisation > Lock Screen.



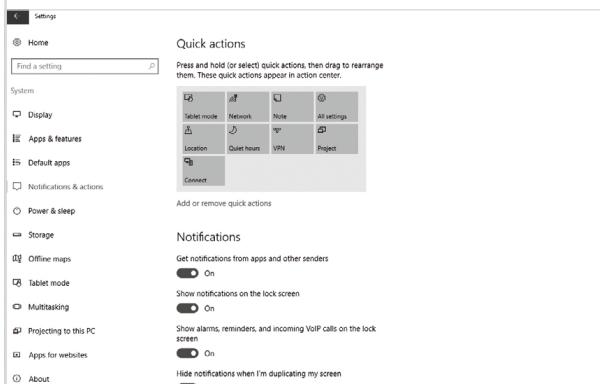
Suggested Apps ► Windows 10 will occasionally show suggested apps in your Start menu. Sometimes these are free apps but often they are paid apps and games. Essentially, these are adverts. Head to Settings > Personalisation > Start and set the 'Occasionally show suggestions in Start' setting to Off.



Calm Cortana Down ► Following on from the previous tip, you can also stop Cortana from doing that annoying thing when it bounces around in the taskbar to get your attention. If you don't want Cortana nagging you, click the Cortana search bar, click Settings, scroll down and disable the 'taskbar Tidbits' option.



Microsoft Tips ► Okay, so this might be classed as borderline as far as it being advertising but if you are fed up of being advised to 'Use Edge to save battery life', head to Settings > System > Notifications & Actions and disable the 'Get tips, tricks and suggestions as you use Windows' option.



Get Office Notifications ► Windows 10 includes a 'Get Office' app that sits there, suggesting you download the software for a free trial period. Head to Settings > System > Notifications & Actions, scroll down and turn it off. You could also find the Get Office app in your Start menu, right-click it, and select 'Uninstall'.

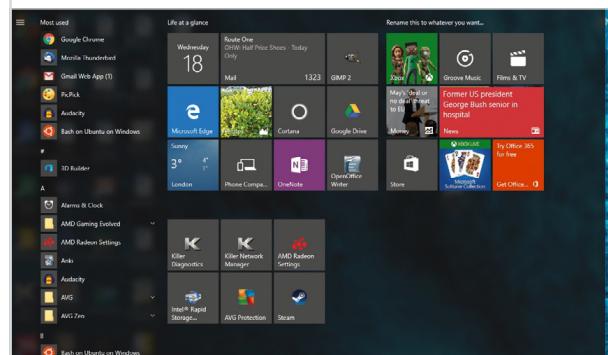


Ad Blocking Software

The tips above will allow you to block many of the adverts Microsoft has added to the Windows 10 interface but what about the adverts you see on your favourite websites. Unfortunately, there isn't a Windows 10 setting to turn these off, but there is bit of software that can help.



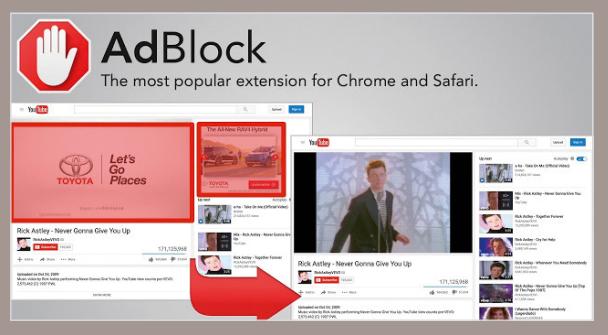
Disable Live Tiles ► While you can remove the apps that are installed as part of the Microsoft Consumer Experience program, Windows 10 also includes a few apps you can't uninstall but will use the Live Tiles to advertise. To disable live tiles that annoy you, right-click a tile and select More > Turn live tile off.



Unpinning Windows Apps ► Rather than turning live tiles off, you can simply unpin the tile from the Start menu. Right-click a tile and select 'Unpin from Start' to get rid of the tile entirely. If you prefer a less cluttered Start menu, you can even choose to unpin all the tiles and only use the All Apps list to launch apps.



AdBlock, The No.1 ad blocker with over 200 million downloads, blocks YouTube, Facebook ads and others in most places on the web. AdBlock works automatically but lets you choose to continue seeing unobtrusive ads, white-list your favourite sites or block all ads by default.



Windows 10 Registry Tweaks

The Windows Registry can be a scary place to visit if you don't understand how things work. It is true that there are often simpler ways to action some of the changes shown below but understanding the inner workings of your Windows 10 PC is key to understanding how to accomplish more with your screen time.

Ad Blocking Software ▶

The Windows Registry is a hierarchical database that stores low-level settings for the Microsoft Windows operating system and for applications that opt to use the Registry. The kernel, device drivers, services, Security Accounts Manager (SAM) and user interface can all use the Registry. The Registry also allows access to counters for profiling system

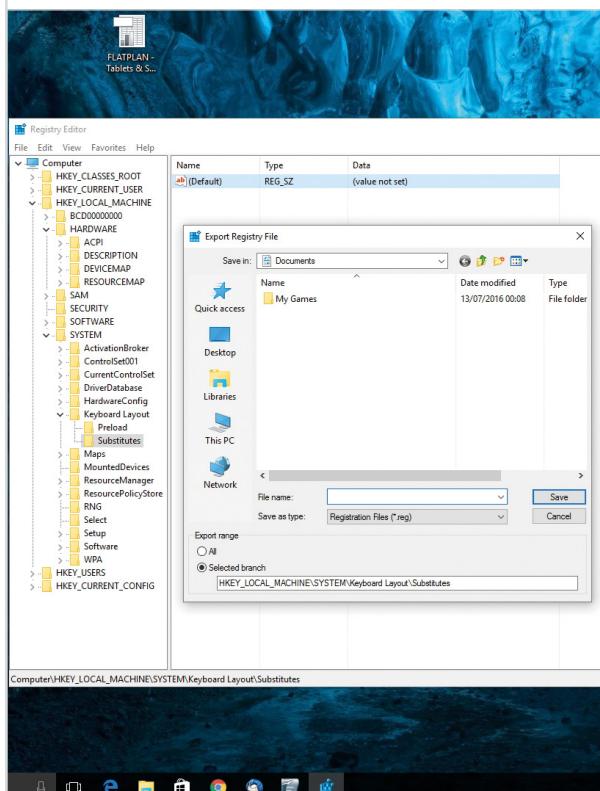
performance. Prior to the Windows Registry .INI files stored each program's settings as a text file, often located in a shared location that did not provide user specific settings in a multi-user scenario. By contrast the Windows Registry stores all application settings in one logical repository, a number of discrete files, and in a standardised form.

Backing Up Your Registry

Before you edit any part of your system registry, it is always a good idea to make a backup of all keys that you intend to edit. Here we will look at the simple and quick method of backing up Windows Registry keys.

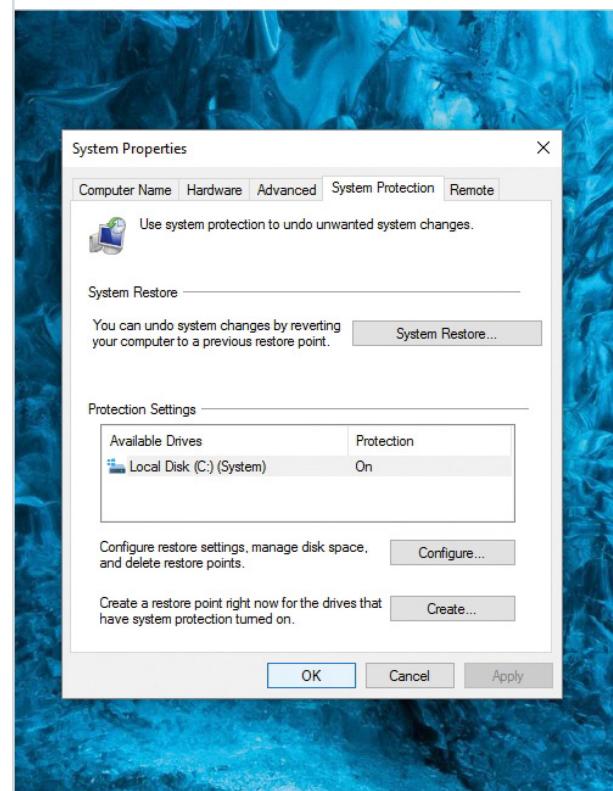
1

You can back up any of the keys in the registry by right-clicking on any of them in the editor and then selecting Export. This will save into a .reg file that can be run to reapply the old value of that key at a later date. This is the minimum backup step you should take before editing.



2

An easier backup method is to make a System Restore point that includes a snapshot of the registry. Go to Start, type "restore", select Create a restore point, select a drive and click Configure...; then pick Turn on system protection, set the Max Usage space and click OK.

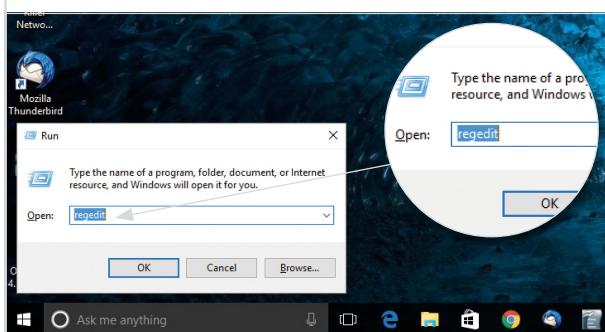


Registry Tweaks

So let's get down to tweaking some registry keys. Registry keys always start with HKEY, followed by the location in the file system. Once you find and select the HKEY you want, you will see that further options are available.

1. Access the Editor

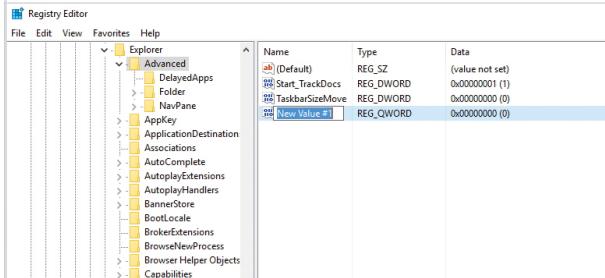
To open the registry editor, all you have to do is open the Run prompt with Windows Key + R, then type in "regedit" and hit Enter. If you know a certain value you want to change, you can navigate through the registry to find it by clicking the + sign next to each registry key.



2. Increase Taskbar Transparency

In Registry Editor, go to following key: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced

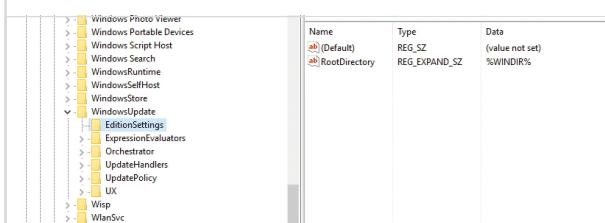
In the right side pane, create new DWORD UseOLEDTaskbarTransparency and set its value to 1.



3. Prevent Windows Update from Automatically Restarting

In Registry Editor, go to following key: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WindowsUpdate\AUkey

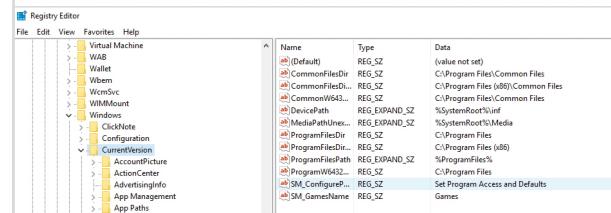
Right-click in the right pane and create a new 32-bit DWORD value named: NoAutoRebootWithLoggedOnUsers. Set its value to 1.



4. Disable System Tray Notification Balloon Pop-ups

In Registry Editor, go to following key: HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced

Create a new DWORD value, name it EnableBalloonTips and set its value to 0.disable Wi-Fi Sense and Application Telemetry.

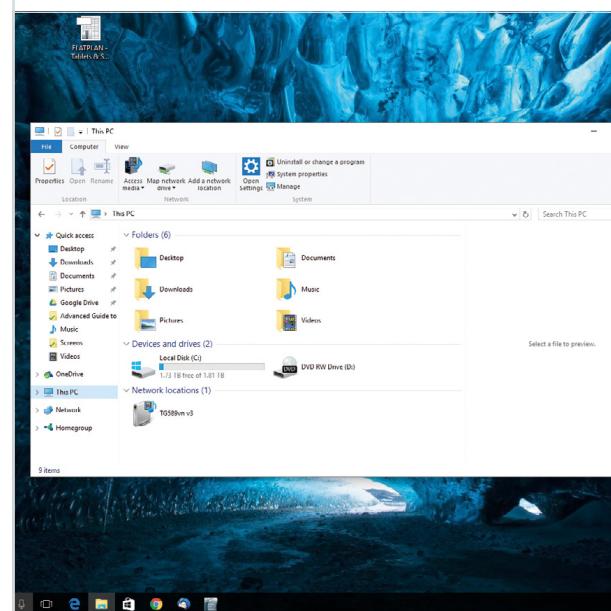


5. Hide Folders from This PC

In Registry Editor, go to following key: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\FolderDescriptions\<FOLDER-GUID>\PropertyBag

Substitute the <FOLDER-GUID> above with one of these:
Desktop: {B4BFCC3A-DB2C-424C-B029-7FE99A87C641}
Documents: {f42ee2d3-909f-4907-8871-4c22fc0bf756}
Downloads: {7d83ee9b-2244-4e70-b1f5-5393042af1e4}
Music: {a0c69a99-21c8-4671-8703-7934162fc1d}
Pictures: {0ddd015d-b06c-45d5-8c4c-f59713854639}
Videos: {35286a68-3c57-41a1-bbb1-0eae73d76c95}

If ThisPCPolicy is set to Show, then the folder is visible. If you change it to Hide, then the folder will be invisible.



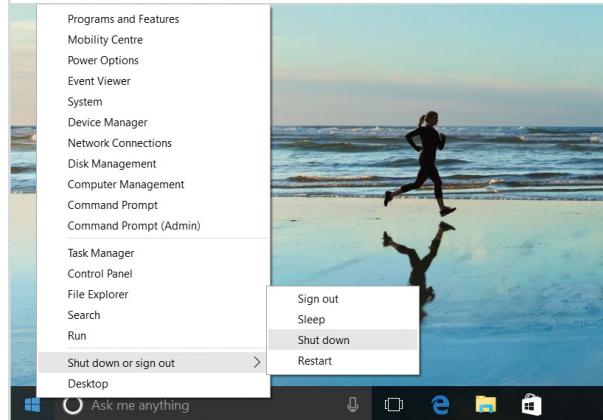
Using the Power Menu

Windows 10 boasts a secret Power Menu (as did the version of Windows before it), that gives you access to several useful system and maintenance tools and features. Here we show you how you can use it to your advantage to quickly access networking settings and extra features that power users need.

Power Up

The secret Power Menu enables the more advanced Windows 10 users among you to quickly access key settings that you probably commonly use, but are buried deeper within the system.

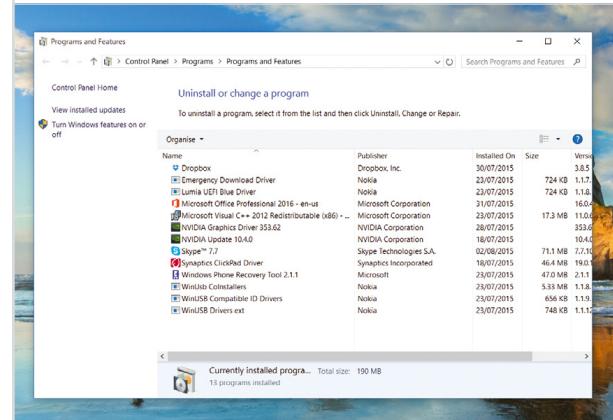
Start it Up ► You open the Power Menu using the Start button, but instead of just clicking it to open the Start menu, right-click the button. You'll see this menu appear. Note that you can also shut down or sign out here, too. This menu was created for users who felt the Windows 8 Start screen didn't give them access to what they needed.



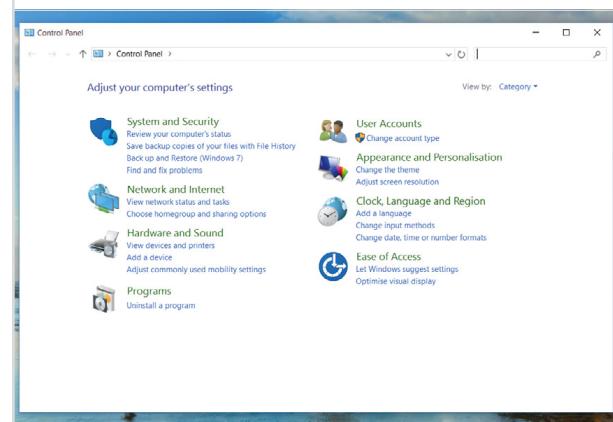
Command ► We'll look at the Command Prompt on the next page. You can access it from the Power Menu. If you're an administrator on your PC, you can start what's called an Elevated Command Prompt that enables you to get deep access into files and programs, rather than just basic access.



Uninstall Desktop Apps ► The Power Menu is also a quick route to getting to the part of Control Panel that enables you to uninstall desktop apps. Now Windows 10 enables you to uninstall any application by right-clicking it and selecting Uninstall from the context menu that appears – but this is the best route if you need to uninstall several things.



Control Panel ► The Power Menu is also the best way to get to Control Panel. The Settings app may be the new user-friendly method to change things in Windows 10, but Control Panel still contains a lot of advanced settings – not least hardware troubleshooting, themes, backup, restore and network sharing options.



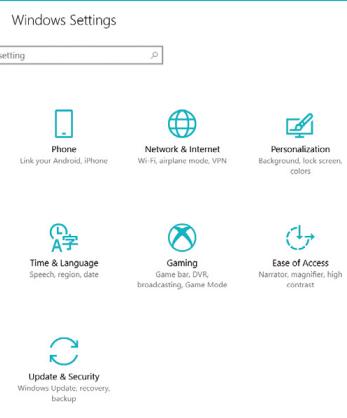
Using Storage Sense

When your Windows 10 computer begins to run out of space, typically you manually empty the recycle bin and delete temporary files to free up storage space; then use different tools, such as the built-in Disk Cleanup utility. You can now use Storage Sense to automatically get rid of junk files. In this guide, we'll show you the steps for setting up this feature in Windows 10.

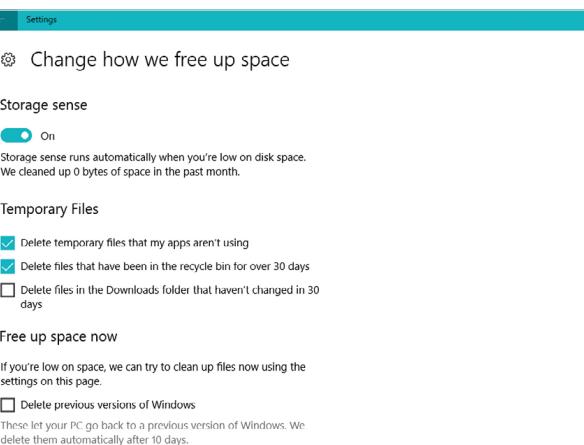
Updated Storage Sense

Storage Sense has been a part of Windows 10 for some time but it has been updated and added to in the Creators update. If you don't see the options mentioned here, make sure your OS is up to date.

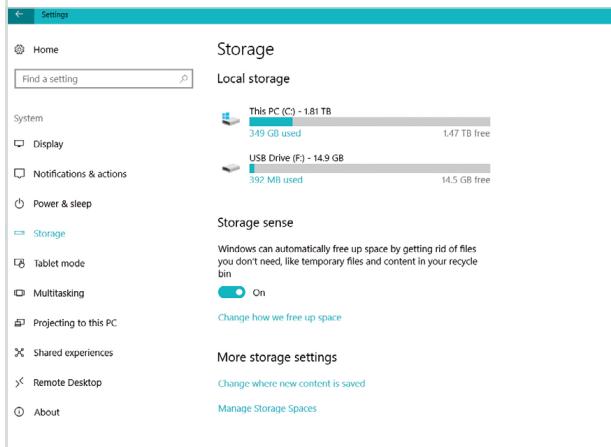
- 1** To enable Storage Sense on Windows 10, open Settings > System > Storage. Click on the Storage Sense toggle switch. Once you enable the option, Windows 10 will automatically delete junk files from your PC, including some temporary files and items in the recycle bin older than 30 days.



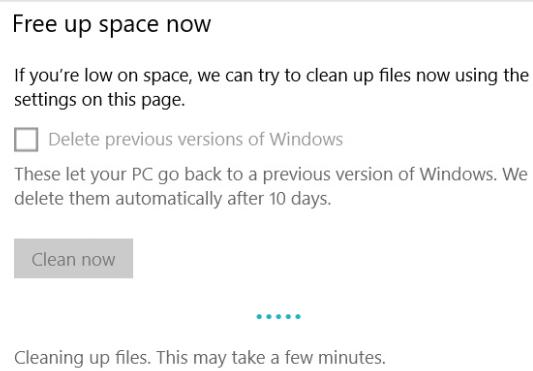
- 3** You can, within certain limitations, select which items Storage Sense should remove automatically. In Settings > System > Storage, click on the 'Change how we free up space' link below the Storage Sense slider. You can see that there are three different options, which can be combined in any way you like.



- 2** Storage Sense isn't a manual storage wipe. If you need to clear out space right now, and you have large files in the recycle bin that aren't 30 days old, you will need to delete them manually. Things like old versions of Windows, installation files and update logs will also need to be removed manually.



- 4** You can also see the option to 'Delete previous versions of Windows'. These are deleted anyway, but not for several days after an update. If you really need to clear some space, select the option and then just click the Clean Now button and wait for the process to complete.



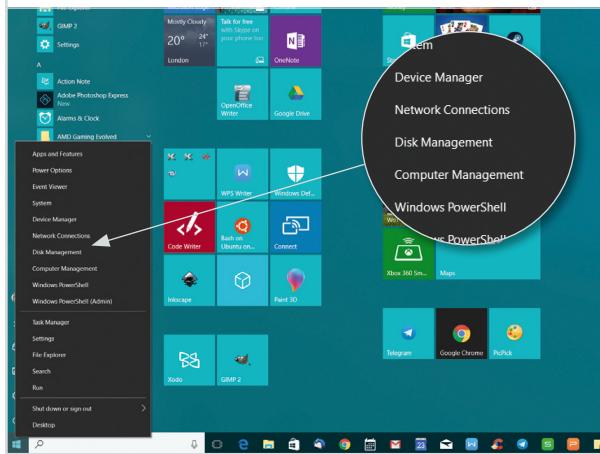
Manage Your Disk Partitions

Disk partitioning is the creation of one or more separate regions on a PC hard disk (hard drive) and all modern drives need at least one partition to begin storing files. A partition could be the size of the whole drive or just a tiny part of it. There are several reasons why you might need to create a new partition on an existing hard drive and Windows 10 now allows you to do that relatively easily.

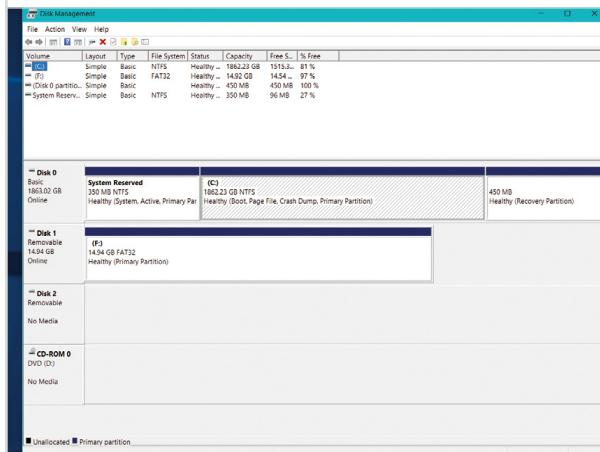
The Disk Management Tool

There are several free programs available for creating partitions but the Disk Management tool is just as good and built right in to Windows 10.

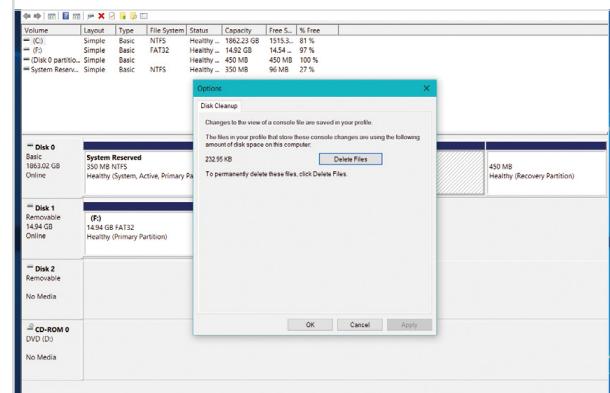
1 The first thing you need to do is find the Disk Management tool. The easiest way to open the tool is to use the hidden Start button menu. Right-click on the Start menu button and select Disk Management from the menu that appears. There are several system tools here, so it is a useful trick to know.



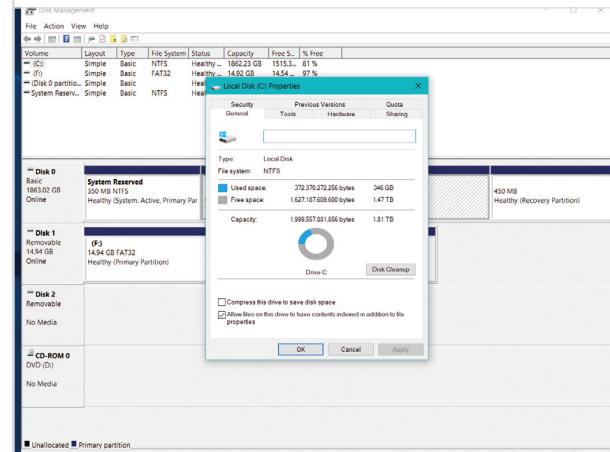
2 The Disk Management tool shows all of your internal and removable drives (even USB flash drives, etc.) along with details of the capacity and current amount of space being used. Depending how your hard drive was initially configured, you will see one or more partitions in place.



3 You can use the seemingly simple Disk Management tool to resize, create, delete and format "<https://www.howtogeek.com/184659/beginner-geek-hard-disk-partitions-explained/>" partitions and volumes, as well as change their drive letters and all without downloading or paying for any other software. You can also simply use it to check the health of your disks.



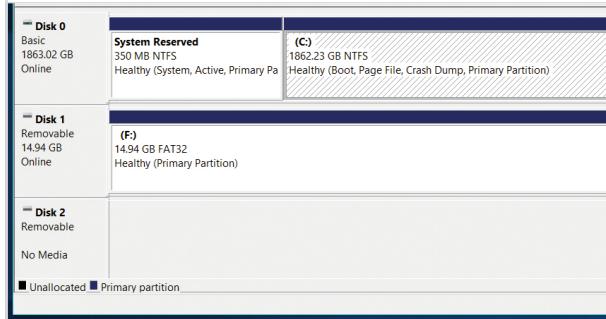
4 The tool shows partitions and volumes, which are similar but different. A partition is space that's set aside on a disk separate from the other space on that disk. A volume is a partition that's been formatted with a file system. We will mainly be talking about volumes in this guide.



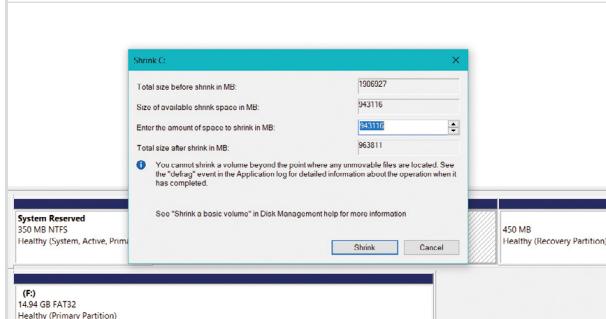
Resizing a Volume

If your disk is set up as one big volume and you want to create an extra partition for a second volume, you will need to know how to resize the existing one.

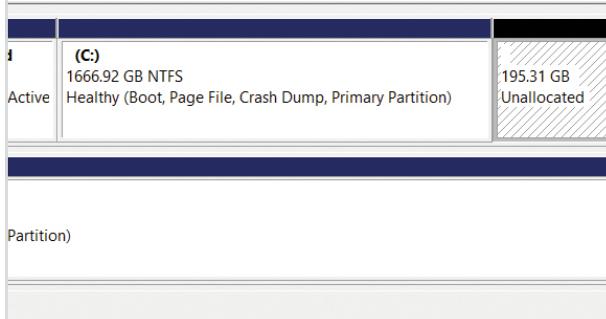
1 You will need to make sure that there is enough free space on the drive before you can shrink a volume. For example, if you have a 500GB volume which has 200GB of data already stored on it, you will only be able to shrink it by a maximum of 300GB, the amount of remaining space.



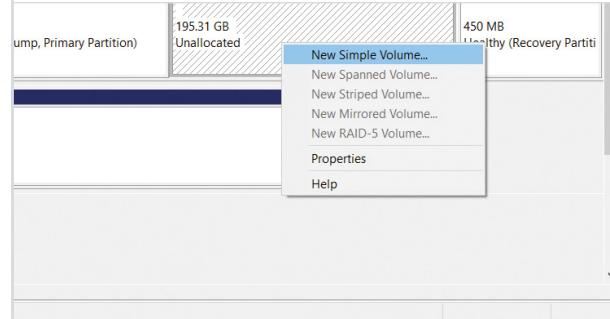
2 Right click on the volume you want to shrink in either the top panel or the bottom one and click ‘Shrink volume’ from the Action menu. You will then need to enter the amount you want to shrink the volume by in MB. So if you wanted to shrink it by approximately 500GB, you enter ‘500000MB’.



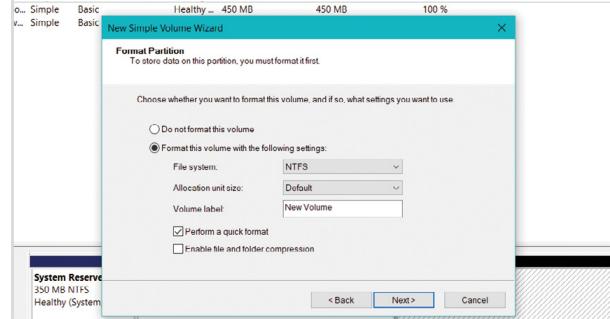
3 When you have clicked the Shrink button, you should see that the disk now contains the shrunken volume and some new, unallocated space. If desired, you could now extend the volume back into that space, by right-clicking and selecting ‘Extend volume’ from the Action menu.



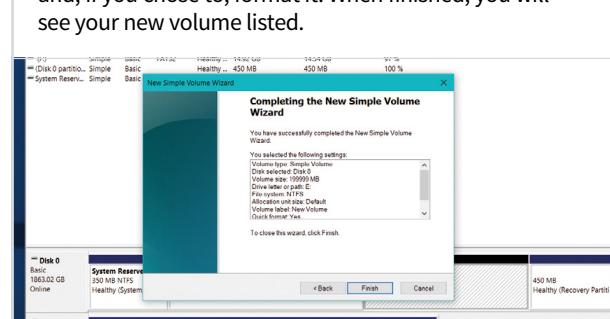
4 To create a new volume in that unallocated space, right-click on it and select New Simple Volume from the Action menu. In the New Simple Volume Wizard window, click Next to get started. Specify the volume size you want to create and then assign it a drive letter on the next screen.



5 You will then need to decide whether to format the partition. You will need to format it before you can begin using it but if you are planning on installing a second operating system, in order to dual-boot, you will need to let the new OS format the partition during its installation.



6 Otherwise, go ahead and format the disk; pick a “<https://www.howtogeek.com/235596/whats-the-difference-between-fat32-exfat-and-ntfs/>” file system to use and assign a volume label. Click Next when you’re ready and then click the Finish button; Windows will now start to create the volume and, if you chose to, format it. When finished, you will see your new volume listed.



Exploring the Task Manager

The Task Manager is a very useful tool but even if you have been using Windows for some time, you might never have looked at it before. The Task Manager contains information on PC performance, the number of running apps, how many processes are pulling power from the processor and much more.

Processes Tab ▶

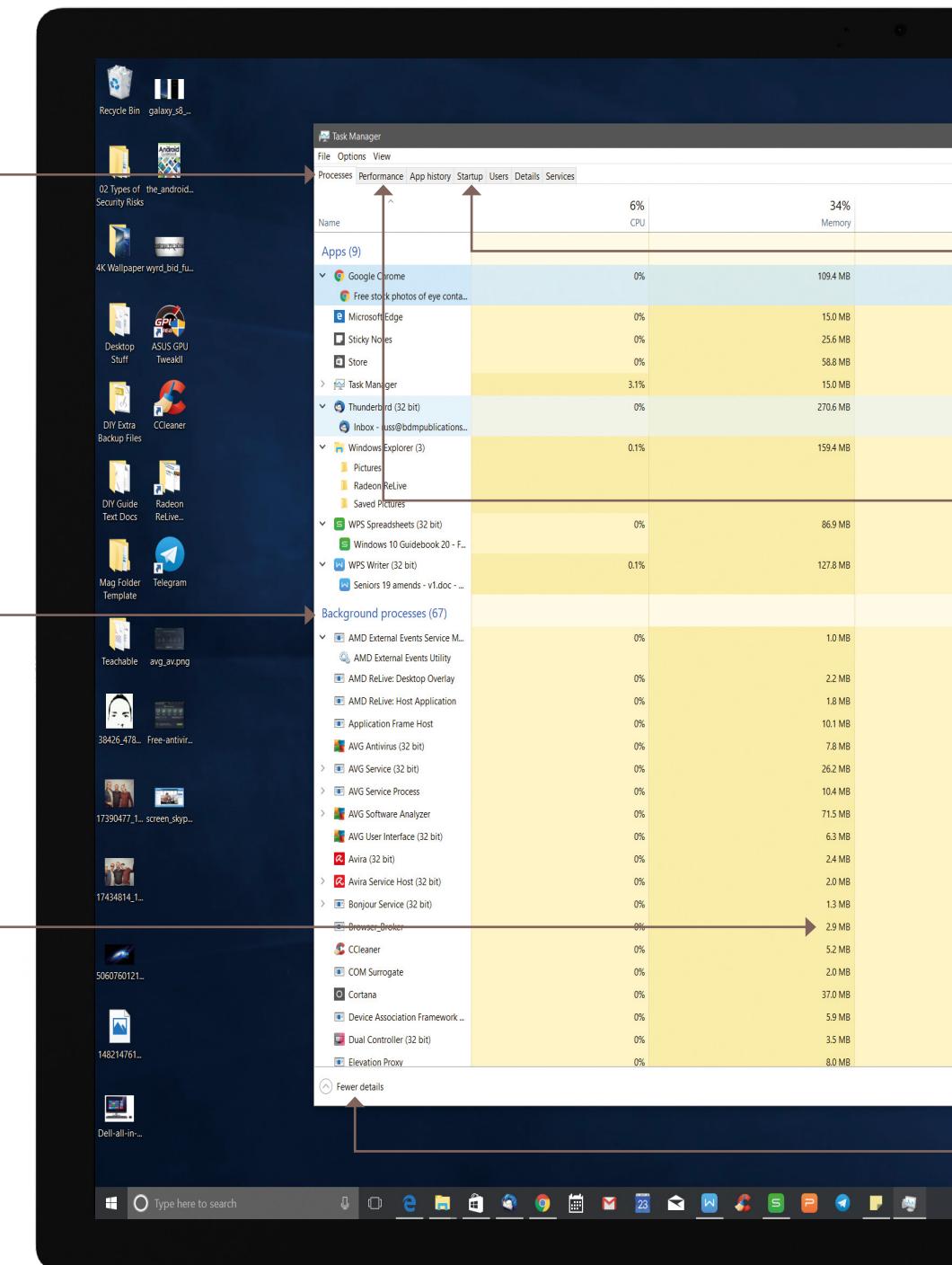
The Processes tab is the default tab when the Task Manager is opened. You can open the task manager by simply searching for it in the main search panel. Just as with any other app or piece of software in Windows 10, you can pin a shortcut to the Task Manager, to the taskbar or as a desktop icon.

Process List ▶

With the Processes tab selected, a list of all processes is shown. Processes are bits of software that run in the background, either running or waiting to run when a corresponding action is taken. As you can see from the list here, things like Cortana and AVG are shown; these you would obviously want to leave.

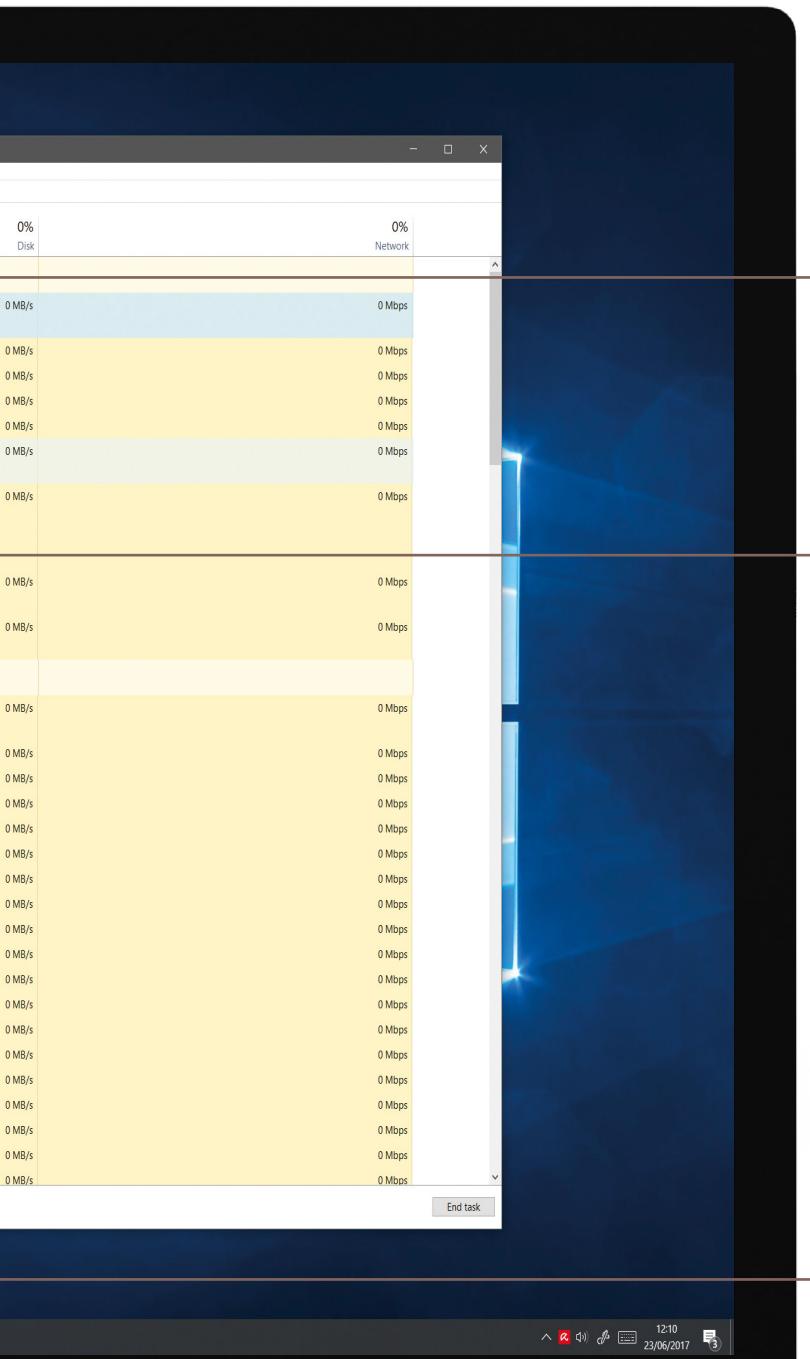
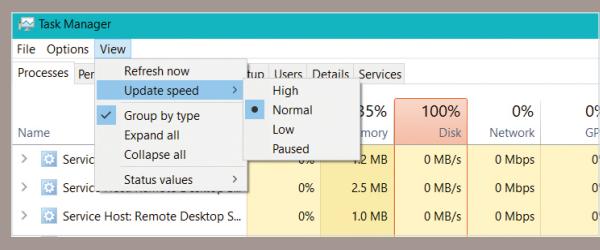
Resource Usage ▶

If you find your PC becoming slow and sluggish during normal use, you may have too many processes running. By looking at the resource usage chart, you can see exactly which apps are taking up the most processing power, physical memory, disk space and even network bandwidth. If something is particularly resource hungry, you can right-click and stop it.



View Options ►

The View options at the top of the Task Manager window allows you to do several things. You can manually refresh the current tab and also change the automatic update speed. For example you can change how the processes are displayed. Either by grouping them by type, expanding or collapsing the list, or showing status values.



Start-up Tab ►

The Start-up tab contains a list of all the apps, programs and processes that are enabled every time you start your computer. If your computer is brand new, this list should be fairly small and filled with essential items. But as you install new apps and software, this start-up list can become bloated and slow down boot up. You can disable auto start-up here.

Performance Tab ►

Another useful tab in the Task Manager is Performance. This gives you a real-time performance overview, allowing you to pinpoint exactly how well your hardware is coping with whatever you are doing at the time. If Task Manager is the only app open, the performance chart should be very stable but if you are running several apps, it will show any power spikes.

Fewer Details ►

You can view a limited version of the Task Manager by clicking on the “Fewer Details” button at the bottom of the window. This makes the window small enough that it can be left open, in the corner of your desktop for example, but still show relevant information. You can get more information at any time by clicking “More Details”.

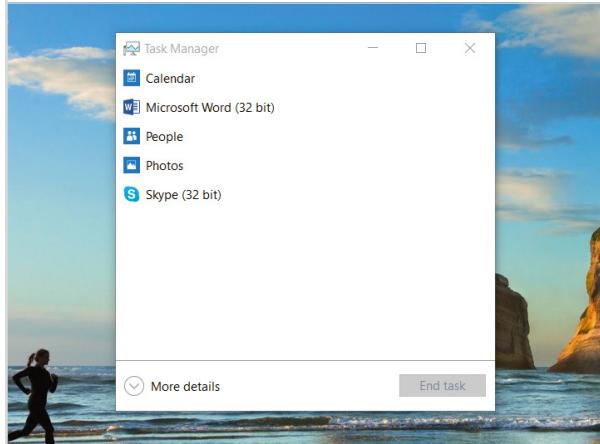
Monitor Tasks with the Task Manager

If you have a program that isn't working, want to control what starts up when your PC does or you want to see what's running on your PC, then Task Manager is the place to go. Access it via the Power Menu (right-click on Start) or by pressing **Ctrl+Alt+Delete** and selecting it from the Security Options menu.

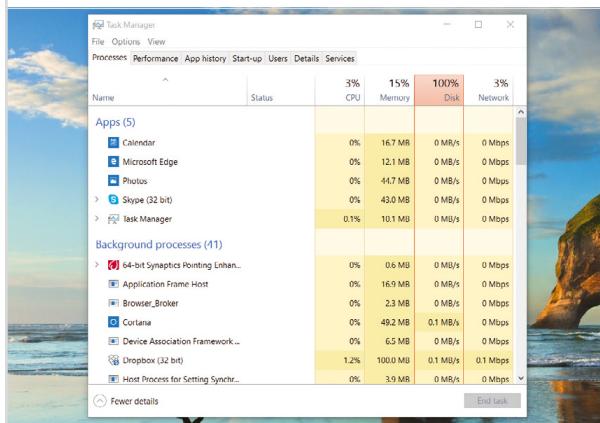
Manage Your PC

Task Manager is a lot more complex than it used to be and it's now a useful insight into your PC and app performance, allowing you to check anything from Wi-Fi usage to app crashes and much more.

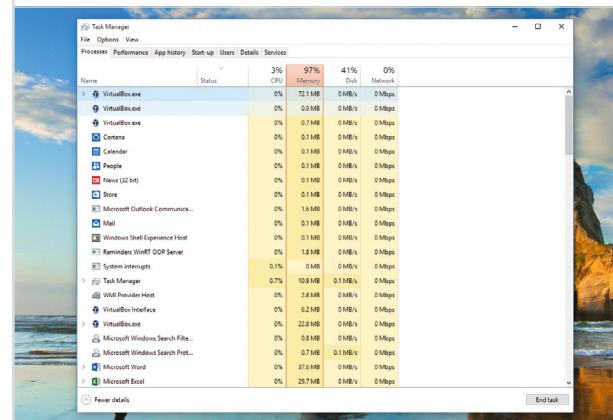
1 Task Manager starts life as this fairly unassuming little window. If you have an app that is unresponsive, select it and click End Task. Beware that if you do this to an app with unsaved work in it, you will lose your work. Clicking the More Details button will expand the Task Manager window.



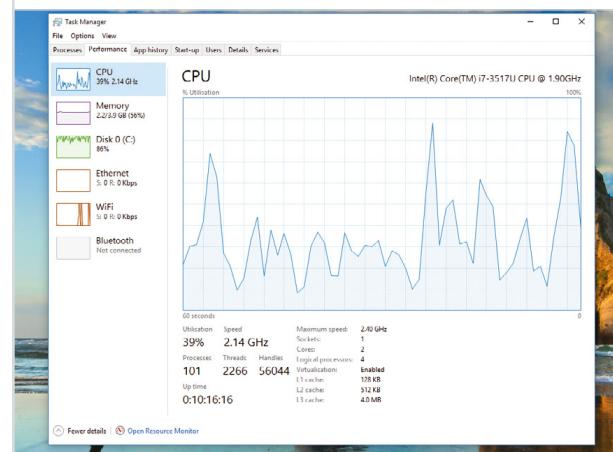
2 This window is a little more complex, but the 'Apps' part of the window is essentially what we were looking at in Step 1. Now the apps have been joined by background processes. Your PC will most likely be running tens of these unless it's box-fresh. Here we've got 41. These are things such as Cortana, which runs in the background, and our trackpad software.



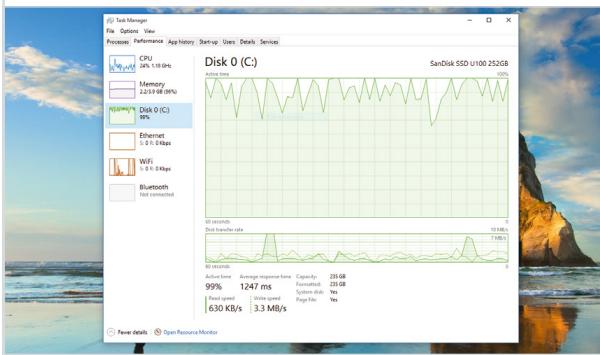
3 You can see what system resources each app is using in each column. Here Excel is using around 74MB of memory, for example. Memory use is almost at its maximum, as you can see at the top of the column. Maxed out resources are no bad thing – after all your PC is there to be used – but when apps crash, they are usually using resources and not relinquishing them.



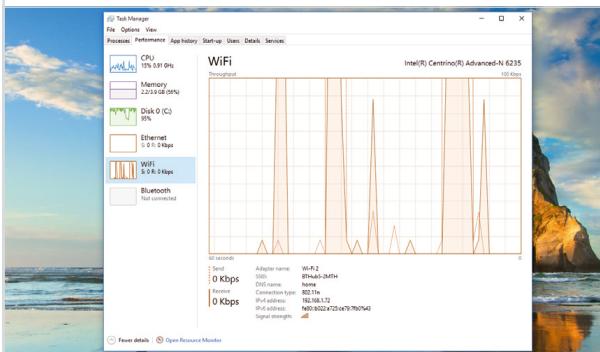
4 If an app crashes, then you need to select it and click End Task as before. You should always try and give it time to recover (especially if you will lose work). Now we've clicked the Performance tab at the top of the window and we can see the usage of important elements of our PC.



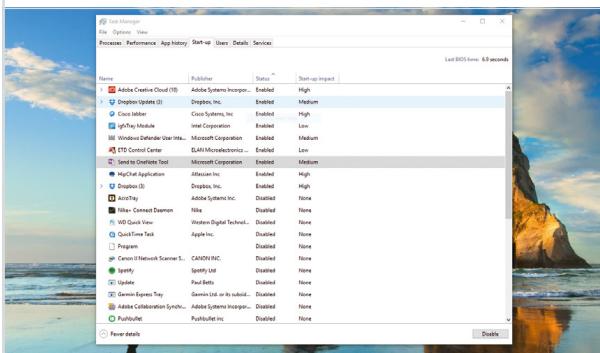
5 Here's our disk usage – as you can see it's pretty active! You will also have this if you have several big apps open (we've got Edge, Spotify, Word and Excel open in this example). In the previous step you could see our processor usage, and as you may have noticed, we've only been using around 40 per cent of its capability during the last minute.



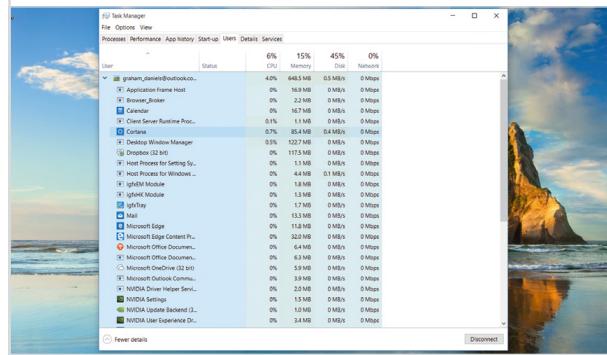
6 Wi-Fi usage (you can also see wired network usage if you use that to connect) is more sporadic as the network connection tends to be used intermittently – unless you're copying files or similar. Here we're streaming music, which appears to download in chunks. Notice there's no data being received or sent right at this moment.



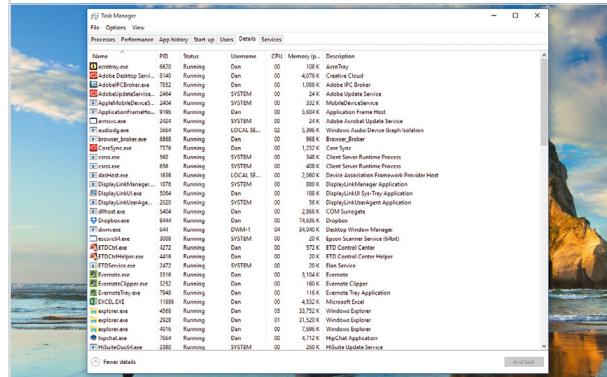
7 The Start-up tab is one of the most important in Task Manager. While you can configure an app such as Skype to start-up when Windows does and disable the same within the app, some applications are sneaky and enable themselves to start when Windows does. Here you can select the app and either enable or stop this from happening.



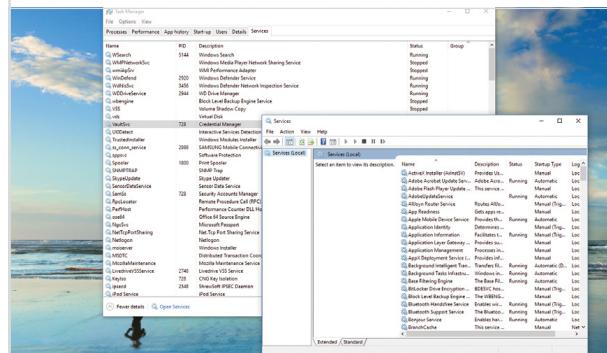
8 Although it's of limited general use, the Users tab details what apps and processes are running on a per-user basis. This might be useful if your PC is running slowly and you want to see what resources someone else who is logged into the PC is hogging. They might have something wasteful running in the background, for example.



9 The Details tab is really for pro users only and has full information on each running process and which user is responsible for it. You can also see how much resource the process is taking up as well as what is called a Process ID, or PID, that identifies the process on your machine.



10 Services are programs that run in the background. The chances are your PC is running lots of them. For example Windows Defender, the built-in security software, runs in the background as a service. As well as viewing the active services in Task Manager, you can click the Open Services link to manage services on your PC.



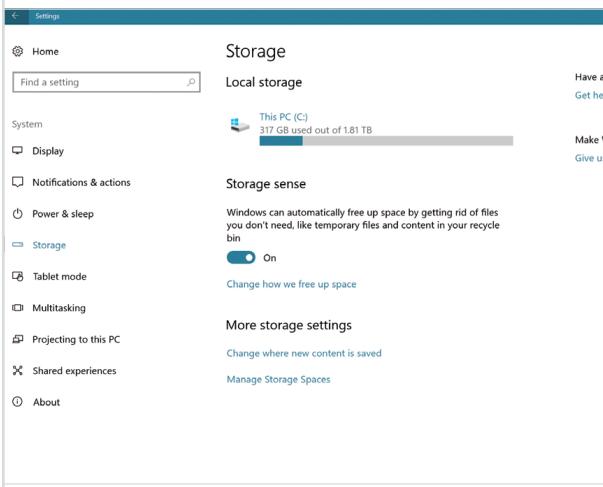
Using Windows 10 Maintenance Tools

Before you start to add software to help with maintenance, it is worth checking out the numerous tools included with the OS. These are spread out over several menus but once you find them you will see that they can really help with security and performance.

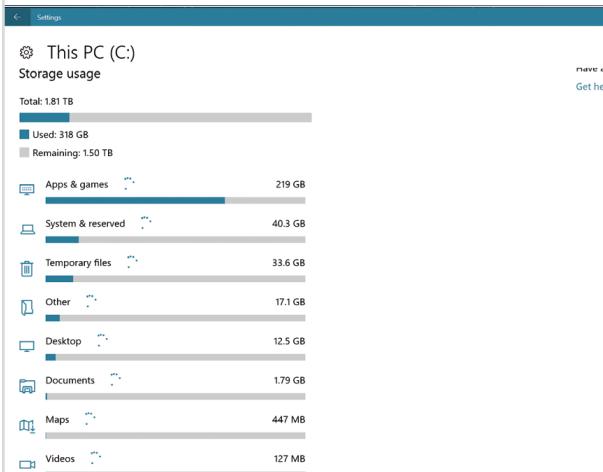
Maintaining Windows 10

Windows 10 is a lot better at keeping you informed of problems than previous versions were. It is, however, up to you to keep on top of maintaining the OS if you want the best experience.

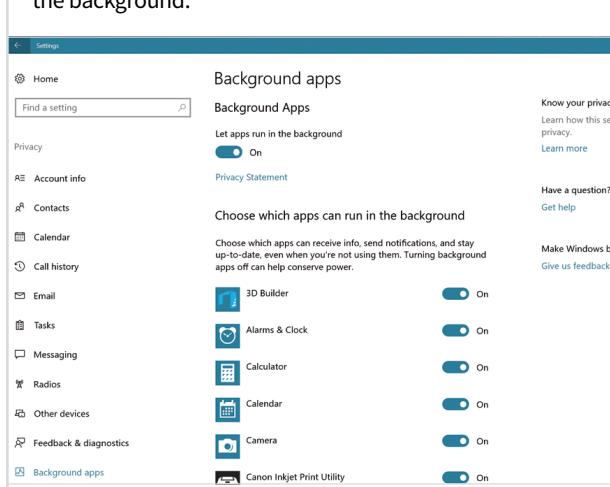
Storage Sense ▶ Activating Storage Sense lets the system software automatically free up storage space by getting rid of files you no longer need. These can include temporary files such as cookies and the contents of your Recycle Bin.



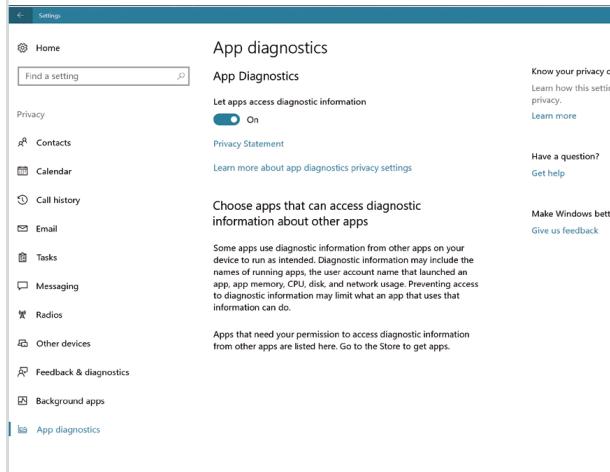
You can choose when files are deleted, e.g. after 30 days in the Recycle Bin or if apps don't use them for a certain amount of time. Alternatively you can simply click a button to Clean Now rather than setting automatic cleaning. You can find the Storage Sense option in Settings > System > Storage.



Background Apps ▶ One of the easiest ways to conserve power (for laptop users) and reduce processor strain, is to take control of Background Apps. These are apps that are, by default, allowed to receive info, send notifications and update in the background.

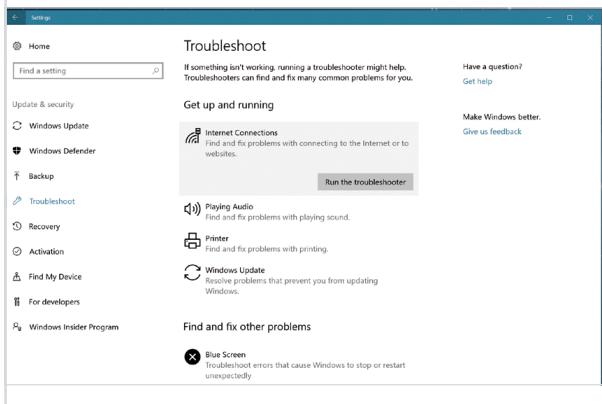


You can either stop all background apps with a single slider click or you can prevent individual apps from running in the background. Go to Settings > Privacy > Background Apps and look through the apps listed. If you see apps that you don't need notifications or updates from, click the slider to disable its background activity.

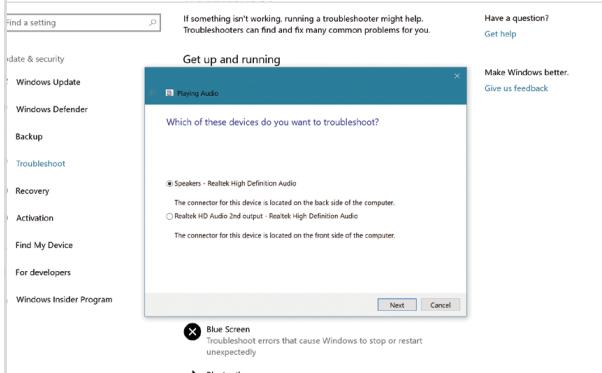


Troubleshooters

► Windows 10 includes a number of troubleshooting tools, aimed specifically at certain problems such as audio loss or patchy Internet connection. This is often the best place to start when trying to solve problems with your PC and Windows 10, as the OS contains many drivers for common devices and may just need a small software update.

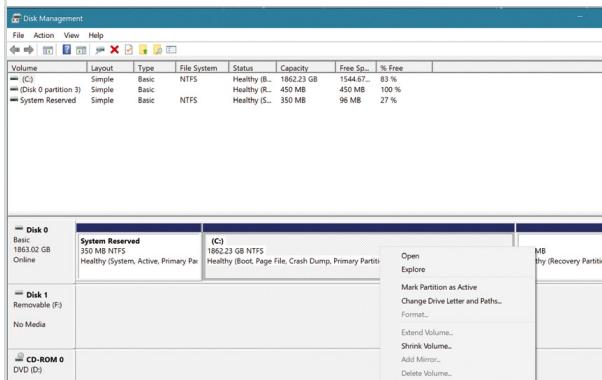


You simply look through the list of troubleshooters and click on the one which applies. Choose Run the Troubleshooter and then follow the instructions to try and solve the problem. You can find the troubleshooters in Settings > Update & Security > Troubleshoot.



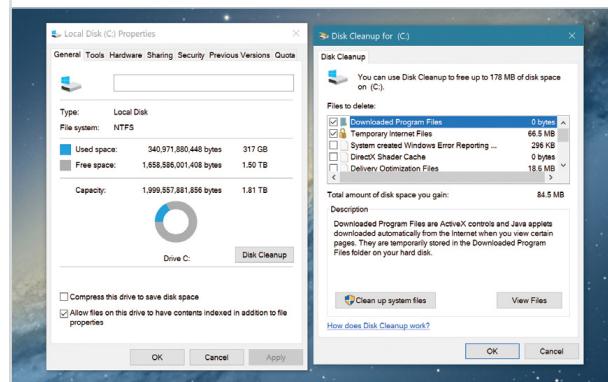
Disk Management

► The Disk Management tool is more about diagnostics than actual maintenance but it is a useful way of checking whether your hard disk has space available and is healthy. The panel will show all of your disks, as well as all of the partitions.

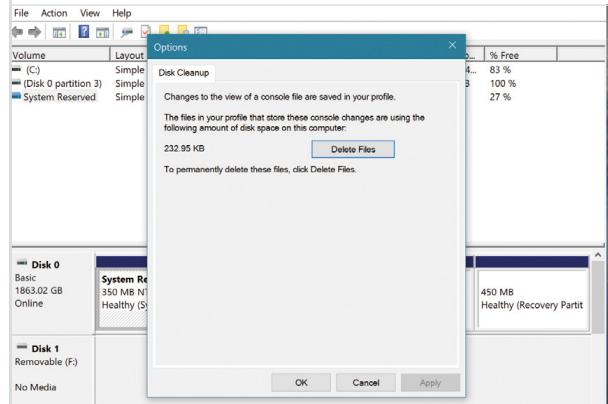


Disk Tools

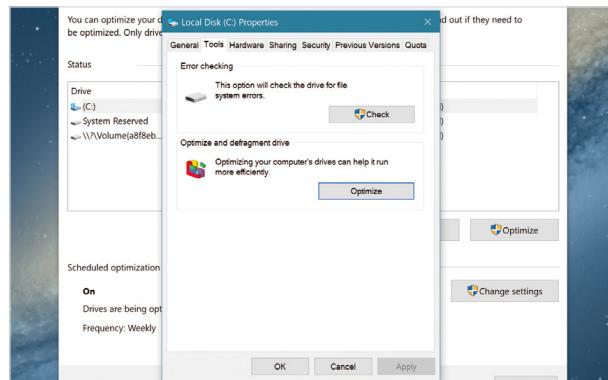
► There are several tools built in to Windows 10 (and also in older versions of the OS) that allow you to clean, fix and manage your hard disk. Open the File Explorer and look in the left-hand column for 'This PC'. Select it and then right-click on Local Disk (C:). In the General tab, you will see a button for Disk Clean-up that lets you get rid of temporary Internet files, old program files and so on.



If you click the Tools tab, you can use the Error Checking tool and the Disk Defragment tool. Both of these tools can help your hard disk run more efficiently. Click on either button and follow the instructions for each.



Each column contains information about capacity, free space in MB, percentage of free space and health status. There are some further options, such as the ability to change drive letters and mark partitions as active but they are probably not worth playing around with unless you know what you are doing.



PC Maintenance Software

There are several maintenance tools built in to Windows 10 but if you really want to give your PC a thorough cleaning, then installing some specialist maintenance software is worth your time. You may be surprised at how much of a difference using one of these tools can make.

REVIEW

FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



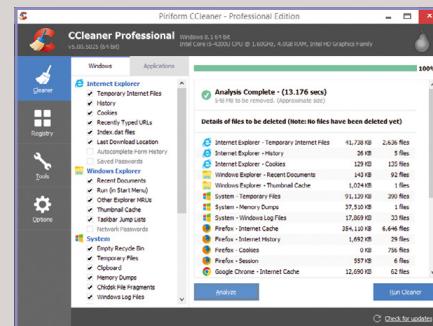
CCleaner

The slowing down of your PC is almost always a gradual process (barring something like a virus infection) and as such it is sometimes difficult to spot, until you reach critical levels of lag and frustration. At this point, cleaning your PC is always a harder, longer and more convoluted task. Regular cleaning of orphan files, unused software and things like cookies and temporary website files, with a simple piece of software like CCleaner, will take less time and can even extend the life of a computer system. CCleaner, a small and free program from Piriform, is used by millions and is one of the most trusted PC maintenance tools around.

Advertisers and websites track your behaviour online with cookies that stay on your computer. CCleaner lets you easily erase your browser search history and cookies so any Internet

browsing you do stays confidential and your identity remains anonymous.

Another problem area can be the Registry. Over time your Registry can become cluttered with errors and broken settings that lead to crashes. CCleaner's patented registry cleaner clears out this clutter to make your PC more stable. Many programs run silently in the background when you start up your computer. CCleaner helps you get to work or play faster by letting you disable unneeded programs.



DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.piriform.com/ccleaner

REVIEW

FEATURES ★★★★★ | EASE OF USE ★★★★★ | OVERALL ★★★★★



SlimCleaner

SlimCleaner Free is the first software to use social networking for PC repair and optimisation by combining the industry's fastest PC cleaning engine with a community of users who provide real-time feedback to improve computer performance. SlimCleaner Free uses social networking and community-sourced feedback to tell you what's on your computer, and what you can do about it. It's like having an army of tech-savvy geeks helping you to maintain your machine. It then gives you access to easy to use disk utilities that allow you to manage, clean and secure internal and removable media using state of the art technology.

The software lets you run a personalised defrag based on your specific PC hardware. It will identify a PC's hardware configuration and allow defragmenting to start, based on settings

intelligently determined by software and based on that individual PC. Dialogue boxes will appear that give detailed information

about what an item on a PC does and how the community views it, including peer reviews, a "what should I do?" and comments from other users. Adjustable filters let you identify unneeded software and start-ups in seconds.



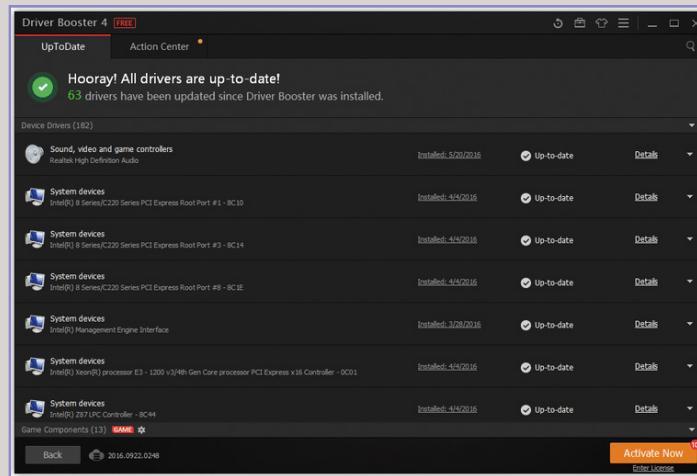
DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.slimwareutilities.com/slimcleaner.php



Driver Booster 4 Free

PC performance problems can often be related to more than just junk files and cookies clogging up the system. Another key area that can cause your system to slow down is out of date or corrupted drivers. Each item of hardware in your PC, from the optical drive to the graphics card, needs the correct software (drivers) to work properly. Some driver installers will stay on the system after the hardware is fitted and periodically alert you to driver updates. However, not all hardware drivers will do this and many can get out of date fairly quickly.

Driver Booster 4 is automatic driver updater software that can scan and fix over 400,000 devices and PC drivers provided by more than 5,000 companies. Driver Booster allows you to update your drivers more safely and securely than almost all other driver updaters. To ensure the safety of users' computers, only qualified WHQL drivers are provided by Driver Booster 4. The software automatically backs up a previous copy and creates a system restore point before updating, in case anything



unexpected happens. Automatic checking and fixing of display resolution issues after installation is a newly added feature to Driver Booster 4.

DOWNLOAD HERE ► www.iobit.com

REVIEW

REVIEW



CleanMaster

FEATURES ★★★★★
EASE OF USE ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★

If you are looking for more of a 'One Click' approach to PC cleaning, CleanMaster could be perfect for you. This simple cleaner app for Windows (and also for Android) concentrates on clearing your web and system caches and also looks for and removes junk files associated with things like videos, games and certain social media sites such as Facebook. It certainly isn't as thorough as something like CCleaner but if your PC just needs a quick fix rather than a complete clean, CleanMaster is worth a try.

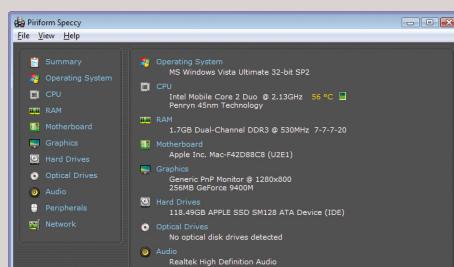


DOWNLOAD HERE ▼
<http://www.cmc.com>



Speccy

FEATURES ★★★★★
EASE OF USE ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★



Speccy is the place to start if you need to know what's inside your PC. See a quick summary or dive deeper into every aspect of your PCs hardware so you can make informed upgrade and purchasing decisions. Speccy gives you detailed information on every piece of hardware in your computer. Save time trawling through your computer for stats like CPU, motherboard, RAM, graphics cards and more. See everything laid out for you in one clean interface.

DOWNLOAD HERE ▼
www.piriform.com/speccy

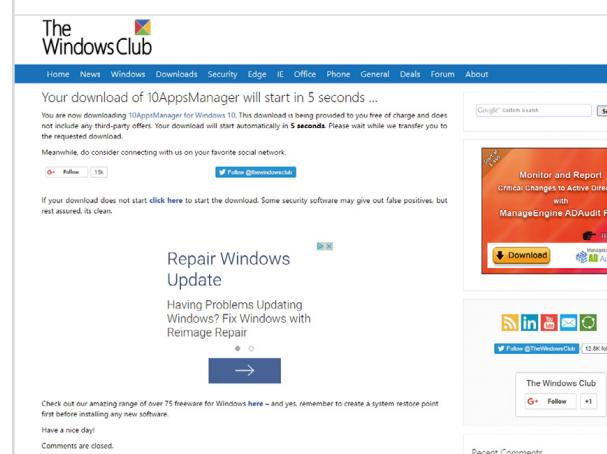
Removing Windows 10 Bloatware

Giving free upgrades to Windows 10 for existing Windows users was an almost inevitable step by Microsoft but this has seen an increase in bloatware, similar to that seen on Android devices. Thankfully there are ways to remove or disable most of it.

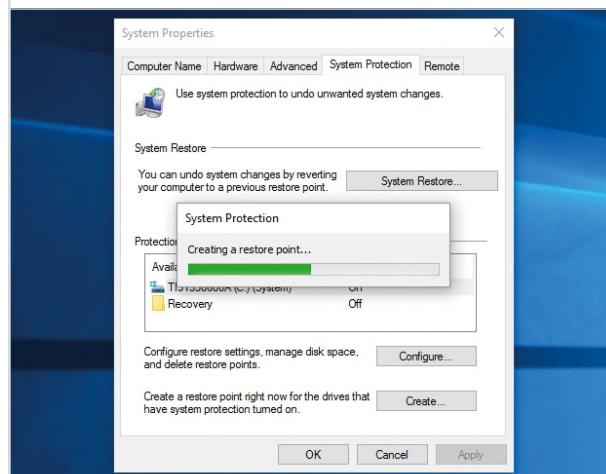
Working with 10Apps Manager

Adding software to remove other software may seem counterintuitive but this is a safer way to clean up bloatware than trying to remove it manually.

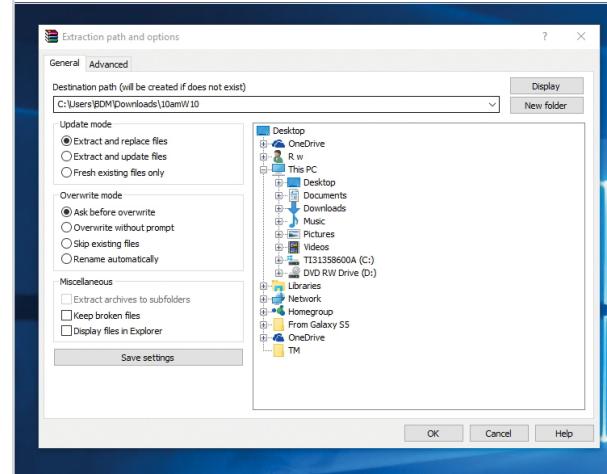
1 You can download the 10Apps Manager software from a variety of file download sites or you can get it directly from the creators at The Windows Club (www.thewindowsclub.com). It should be free wherever you download it from, so don't be fooled into paying for this software.



3 As when making any large system changes to your computer, you should create a system restore point first. You can do this via Start menu > Control Panel > System Properties > System Protection. Configure the restore settings and click "Create".



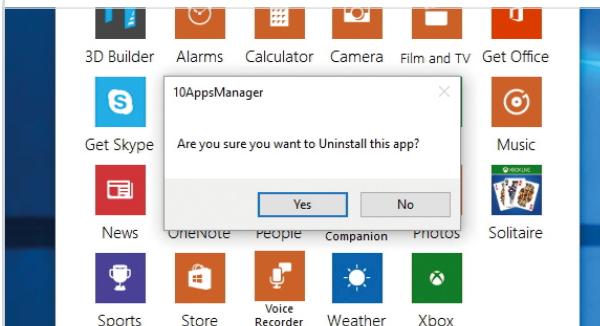
2 Extract the contents of the downloaded 10Apps Manager zip file and place the folder in your Program Folder and pin the shortcut of its .exe file to your Start menu. Do not separate out the contents of the Program folder. You don't need to install the software.



4 You can now double-click the 10Apps Manager .exe file to open the software on your computer. The extremely simple main interface will now open. Each of the tiles represents a piece of preinstalled software that you can uninstall if you have no use for it.



5 Click on any of the tiles and then confirm that you want to uninstall the app. You may need to wait a few seconds for the process to complete. You can delete as many preinstalled apps as you wish but if an app does not appear as a tile on the screen, you won't be able to add it.



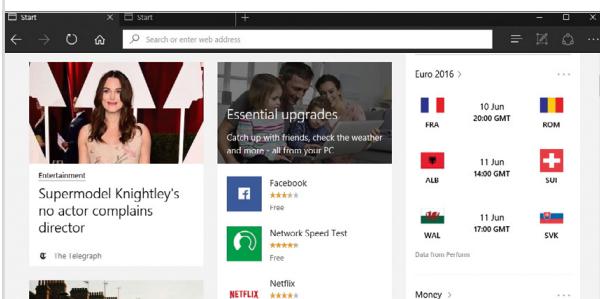
6 You can reinstall any of the apps you uninstall through 10Apps Manager. The only slight annoyance is that the software doesn't remove or alter the tile once the app is uninstalled, so it is a good idea to make a note of which apps you remove from your system.



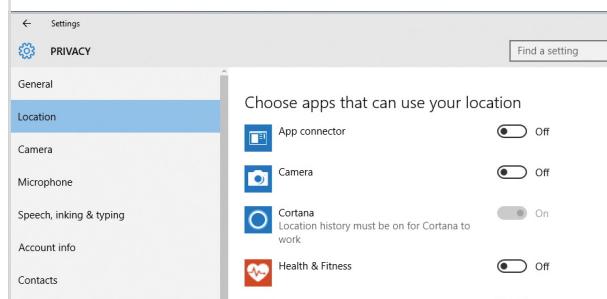
Disabling Other Features

There are several other features that, although not technically bloatware, might not be doing your computer performance any favours. Let's take a look at some of the worst offenders.

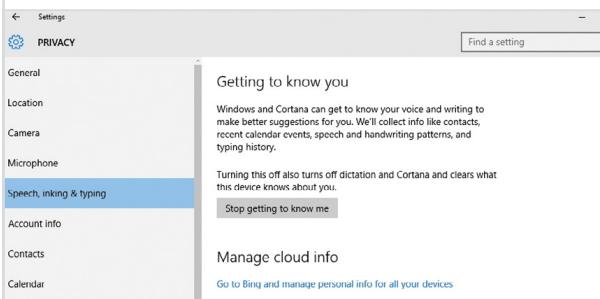
Targeted Ads ► Windows 10 assigns every user a unique advertising ID to make it easier to provide you with targeted adverts. While this cannot be removed, it can be disabled. Head to the "General" tab in Windows 10's Privacy menu. Disable the topmost toggle switch labelled "Let apps use my advertising ID..."



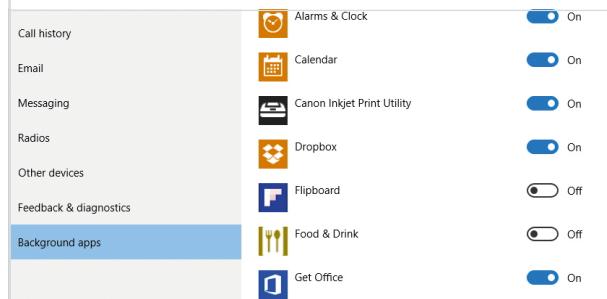
App Location Access ► Windows 10 third-party apps can access your location, webcam, microphone and more by default. Not all apps require these permissions. Go to Start menu > Settings > Privacy > Location and remove those permissions that seem unnecessary. Repeat for things like camera and microphone.



Getting to Know You ► Meant to streamline the new Windows 10 user experience, the Getting to Know You feature records logs of your typing history, saves recordings of your voice, collects information from your contacts etc. Go to Start menu > Settings > Privacy > Speech, linking & typing > Stop Getting to Know Me.



Background Apps ► This last option seems simple but it can make a big impact in terms of battery life and performance. From the Privacy menu, scroll down to the bottom of the menu, then select the "Background apps" option. From here, simply use the toggle switches to prevent these apps from running on start-up.



How to Speed Up Your Computer

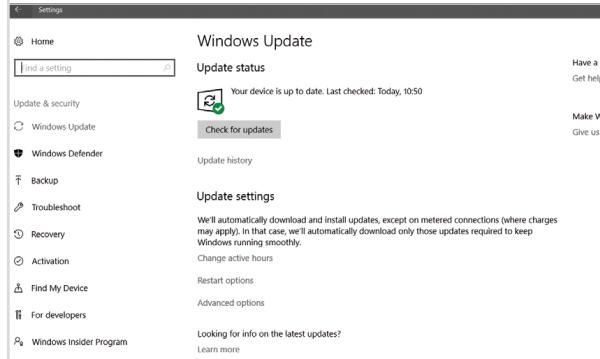
There are many ways to improve the performance of your PC. Some will produce only marginal improvements and some only speed up operations such as web searches but when you're trying to squeeze the most out of your system every little helps.

Performance without Pain

Gaining improvements in performance is pointless if it means you need to spend 3 hours a day running cleaner software or rooting through old files. These tips will improve performance, without the pain.

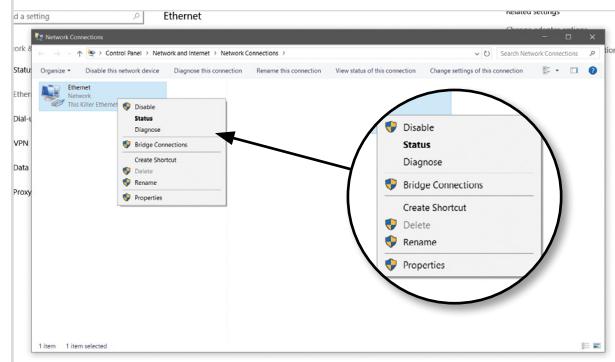
Install the Latest Windows Updates ▶

Microsoft normally releases updates monthly, although important updates will be released as needed. You should check for and install available Windows Updates, which could include: bug fixes, security patches, Windows Defender malware definitions, etc., that could help keep your system stable and improve the performance of Windows.



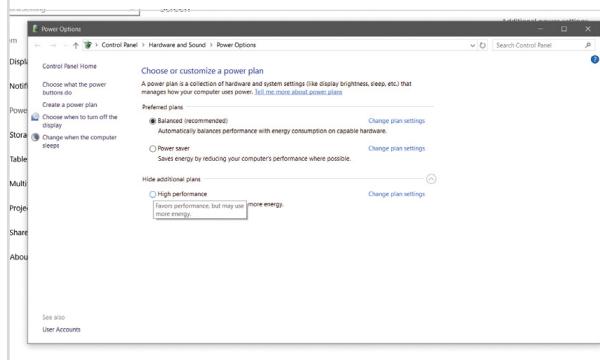
Switch to a Faster DNS Server ▶

If your ISP doesn't maintain its Domain Name Server (DNS) properly it will slow down your web searches and make connecting to websites slow and unreliable. Slow and poorly maintained DNS servers are one of the main causes of problems connecting to websites. Consider adding or using a fast DNS server like Google Public DNS in your TCP/IP settings.



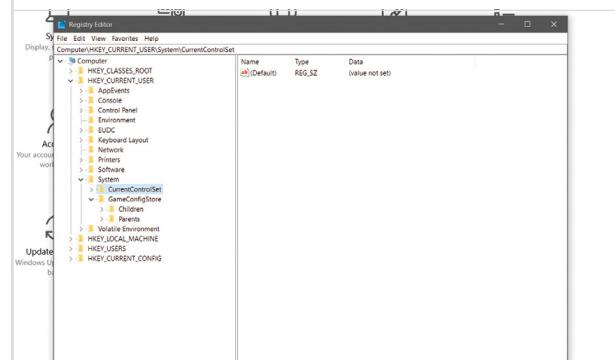
Use the High Performance Power Plan ▶

By default your PC is set to use the Balanced Power option, which will reduce power to non-essential components when not being used. By selecting the High Performance plan your PC will use more power but should run faster all the time. To change the power plan, search for Power Options in the search bar and then click Additional Power Settings > Show Additional Plans.



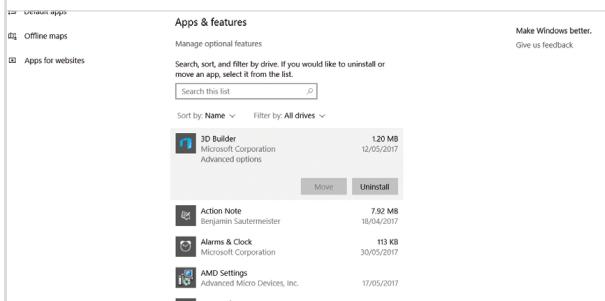
Speed Up Windows Shut Down Time ▶

If you don't mind delving about in the system registry, you can set and adjust the AutoEndTasks, HungAppTimeout, WaitToKillAppTimeout and WaitToKillServiceTimeout values, which control how long Windows waits for hung programs to close, etc. Remember, the registry is very complex and making changes can have a catastrophic effect on your PC.



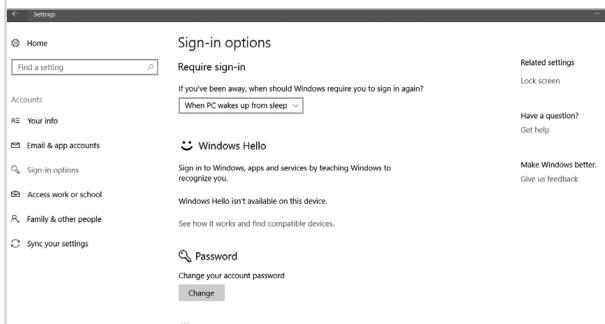
Uninstall Unneeded Programs ▶

If there are apps or games installed on your system that you just don't use anymore, it's a good idea to uninstall them. This is particularly true of off the shelf PCs that often come preinstalled with a lot of useless software. Fortunately Windows 10 makes this easy, since you can uninstall apps from the Start menu by right-clicking on them and choosing Uninstall from the pop-up menu.



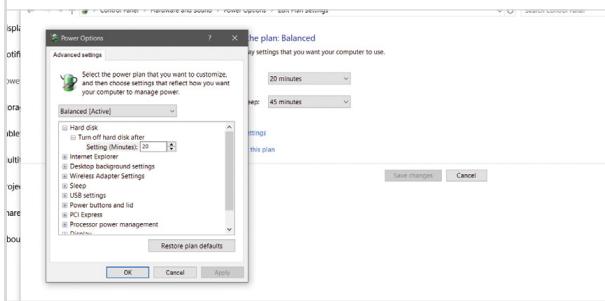
Auto Sign in to User Account at Start-up ▶

This is really not recommended for any PC to which others may have access but if you're definitely the only person that will use your PC, you might want to set it so that you don't have to sign in whenever your computer wakes from sleep mode. You can do this in the Accounts > Sign-in options section of the Settings page.



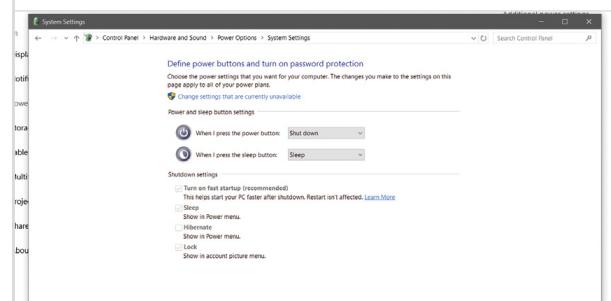
Stop the Hard Disk Shutting Down ▶

While having your HDDs turn off after a set amount of idle minutes will help save energy, it can also cause your PC to slow down significantly while it waits for the HDD to spin back up. Search for Power Options and you can adjust the idle time to never or just increase the amount of minutes. Alternatively you could install an SSD, which is always at full readiness.



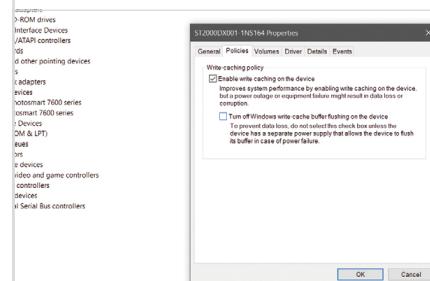
Use the Fast Start-up Option ▶

Windows 10 includes an option to start-up faster by storing an image of the Windows kernel to your hard drive when it shuts down. This saves a lot of time by bypassing a lot of driver loading. In the Power Options, click on 'Choose what power buttons do' and then click 'Change settings that are currently unavailable'. The greyed out settings will become active, including 'Turn on fast start-up'.



Enable Write Caching for Your Drives ▶

Speed up the performance of your external storage devices by enabling write caching, temporarily storing data in high speed RAM. Right-click on the Start button and open Device Manager. Expand the Disk drives list and double-click on the drive that you want to enable. Click on the Policies tab and you'll see 'Enable write caching on the device' as a check box option.



Keep Your PC Tower Clean ▶

Dust can build up inside your machine forming an insulating layer over vital cooling components and reducing their efficiency, which can have an impact on the performance of your system. It's a good idea to open up the case and give it a good clean once in a while. Obviously disconnect it from the mains first, and use a soft brush or a compressed air can to blow dust off the CPU cooling fins, etc.



Upgrading RAM Modules

One of the easiest ways to give your PC a performance boost, is to upgrade or add to the RAM modules. Known as DIMM's, or Dual In-line Memory Modules, these are modules that contain several RAM or SDRAM chips on a small circuit board. Most motherboards will have a single or double pair of memory module sockets, usually arranged in pairs.

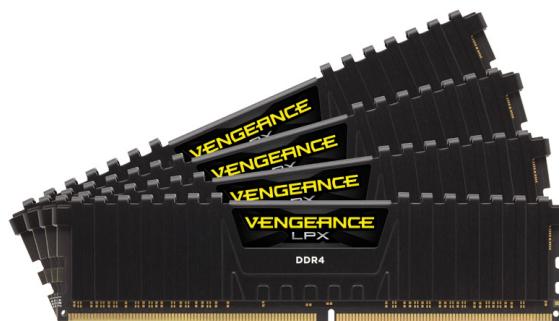
Installing the SDRAM

The RAM modules you will be fitting are quite robust but even so, they should be handled with care, and without ever touching the metal contacts along the bottom.

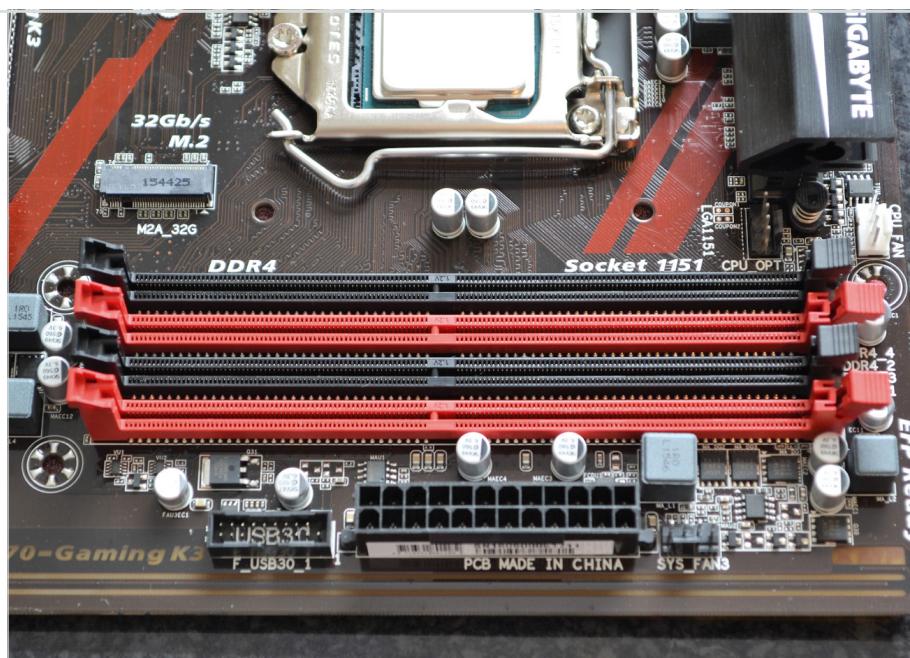
1 How you fit the memory into the motherboard sockets depends on how many matched modules you are installing. A single 8GB module will almost always go into socket 1 (unless otherwise advised in your motherboard instruction manual) but if you have multiple modules and multiple sockets, the choice is not always so obvious.



2 If your motherboard supports multiple memory channels and has more than two sockets, it is worth considering buying two 4GB matched modules, rather than a single 8GB module. Although the single 8GB might be more efficient (assuming identical latency range, etc.) two 4GB DIMMs gives you more flexibility.

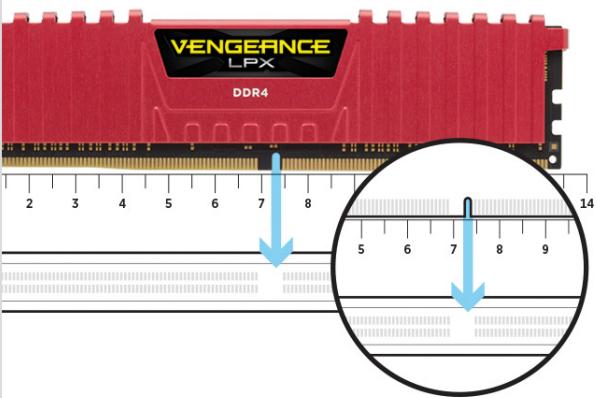


3 On many motherboards with four or more memory sockets, they will be colour-coded to show the different memory channels, as is the case with our Gigabyte motherboard. A single matched pair of modules would be fitted into sockets 1 and 3. If you had a second matched pair, these would then go into sockets 2 and 4.

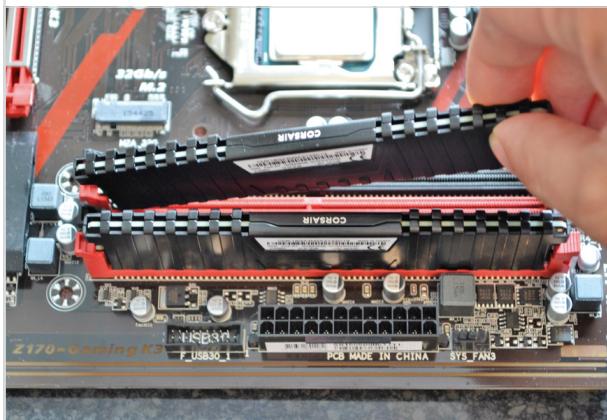




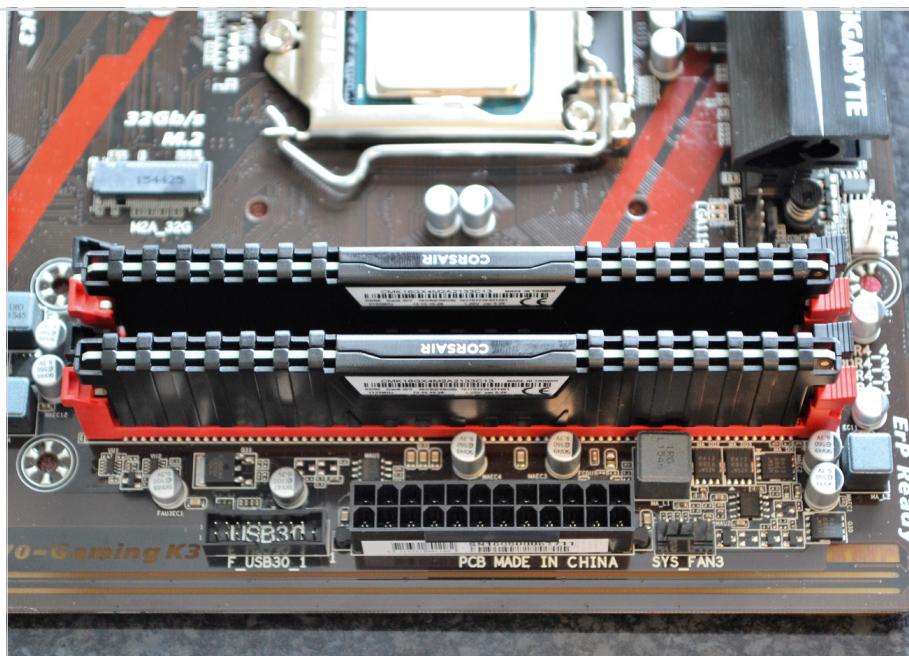
4 Memory modules have an offset notch in the row of connectors on the bottom. This will correspond with a divider in the motherboard memory socket, ensuring that you can't insert the DIMM the wrong way around. The memory socket will also usually have a hinged clip at each end, which needs to be pressed down and away from the socket.



5 Hold the module at a slightly diagonal angle, so that one end slots into the socket first. Ensure that it is pressed up against the end of the socket and then lower the other end into place. Press firmly and evenly on the top of the module to seat it into the socket. The hinged clips at either end will close, locking the DIMM firmly into place.



6 Repeat the process to fit the second DIMM of your matched pair (if fitting a matched pair or set of four modules). Give each module a firm push from directly above to ensure they are all seated snugly. Adding RAM is one of the cheapest and easiest ways of increasing PC speed; even non-gamers should aim for at least 8GB to start.



Defragment Your Hard Drive

Over time the data stored on your hard drive may get fragmented and become slower for your system to access. Windows has always included tools to clean up these fragments and Windows 10 is no different. Using the built-in Windows utility to tidy up can greatly improve performance.

Hard Drive Health ▶

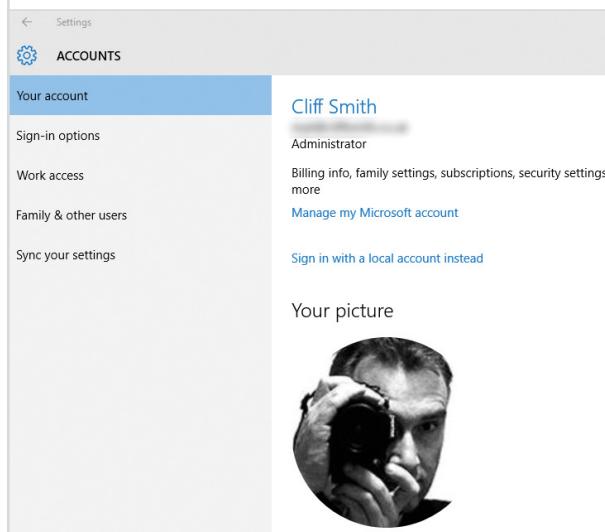
While hard disk drives provide cheap, fast and reliable bulk storage for digital data, they do suffer from one major problem. Using protocols that date back to the days when computer data was stored on big reels of magnetic tape, data is written onto the hard drive sequentially, so that it's faster to read off again. This is fine at first since the data is stored in neat blocks or sectors that it's easy for the system to find. A brand new hard drive will use its storage space efficiently for optimum performance, saving files in a neat orderly sequence. However over time you'll inevitably delete some files, or replace others with larger ones, and the hard drive tries to cope with these changes by splitting data files up to fit into available empty space on the drive. This can mean that your files are broken up into pieces scattered all over the drive, which can radically slow down access times both when saving data and when you come to read the data from the drive. The system doesn't lose the data but a hard drive is a mechanical device with moving parts, and the physical process of moving the read-write head to and fro over the drive platter from one sector to another takes a finite amount of time, and the more the head has to move the slower the access time will be. After a few years of heavy use a hard disk drive can become so fragmented that it slows to a near crawl as the system struggles to access the

scattered chunks of data. This is one of the reasons why solid state drives (SSDs) are becoming more popular. Since they don't have any moving parts their data retrieval speeds should remain consistently high regardless of how much data is stored or how often it is changed. See the previous sections of this publication if you'd like to upgrade your system to use an SSD.

Fortunately Windows includes an option to "defragment" your drive. This is an automatic process that reorganises the data on your HDD back into easily accessible contiguous sectors, making the most of the available space and greatly speeding up access times. In earlier versions of Windows this was a manually selected process that you had to remember to perform on a regular basis, but Windows 10 includes an option to automatically perform an optimisation and defragmentation procedure on all attached drives on a regular basis. If your system uses a hard disk, as most do, it's worth performing at least the first five steps of this guide, just to see if your system would benefit from defragmentation. If you're using an SSD it won't need to be defragmented, since SSDs store data in a different way to HDDs but it can still benefit from optimisation.

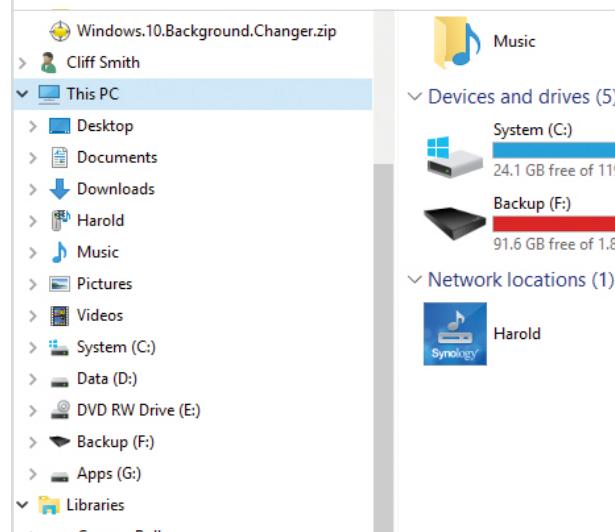
1

Log on to your PC as Administrator. You'll need to be using an Administrator account in order to perform the disk defragmentation process.



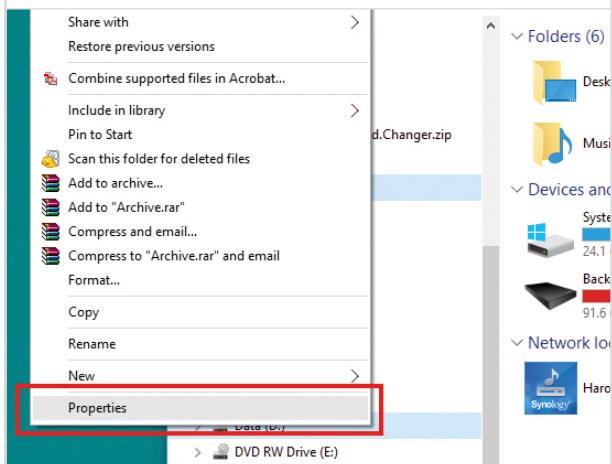
2

Click on the Start button and open File Explorer. Expand the This PC file tree so that you can see the list of drives on your system.

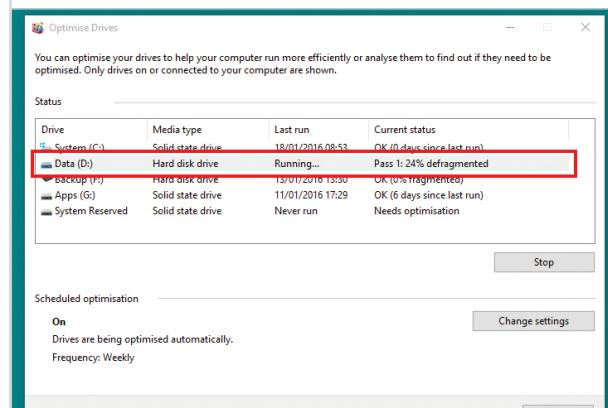


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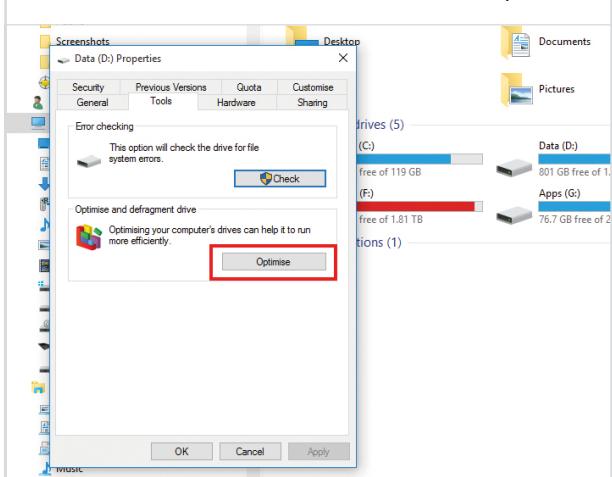
Right-click on any drive in the list and select Properties. You'll see in a moment that it doesn't matter which drive you select at this stage.

**6**

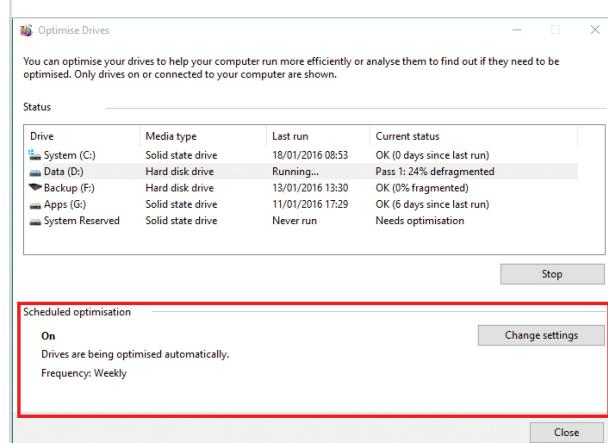
If any of your hard disk drives are fragmented, click on it and then click on the Optimise button. If it's a large drive and very fragmented the process could take a long time, so only do it if you're not going to be using your PC for a couple of hours.

**4**

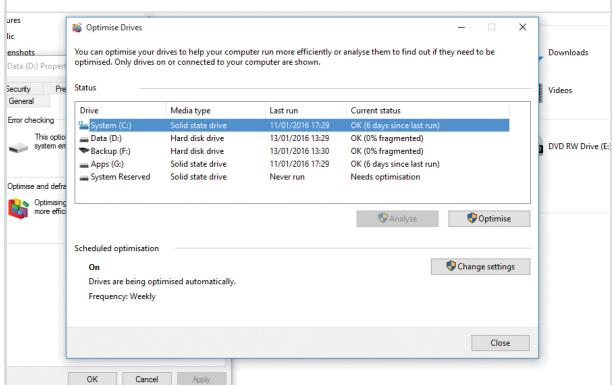
In the Properties window, click on the Tools tab. You'll see that there are two options available. Click on the button for the second one, "Optimise".

**7**

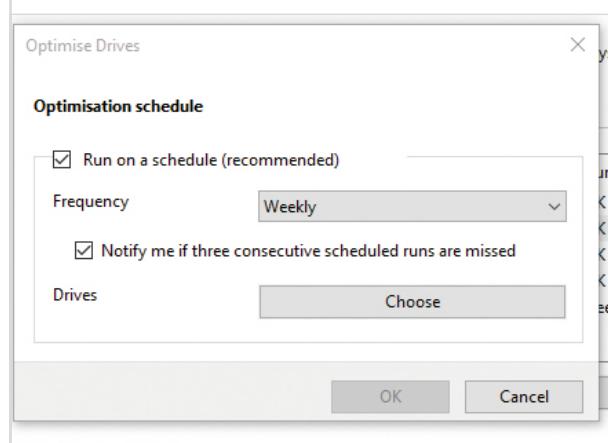
In the lower part of the Optimise Drives window you'll see Scheduled Optimisation. This should be set to On by default but if it isn't click on the Change settings button.

**5**

This will open the Optimise Drives window. Here you'll see another list of all the drives attached to your system, when the optimisation routine was last performed on each one, and how fragmented it currently is. If your system is operating at peak efficiency they should all be at 0%.

**8**

You can set your drives to be automatically optimised by ticking the Run on a schedule check box and select the interval; for systems used every day a weekly check is recommended.



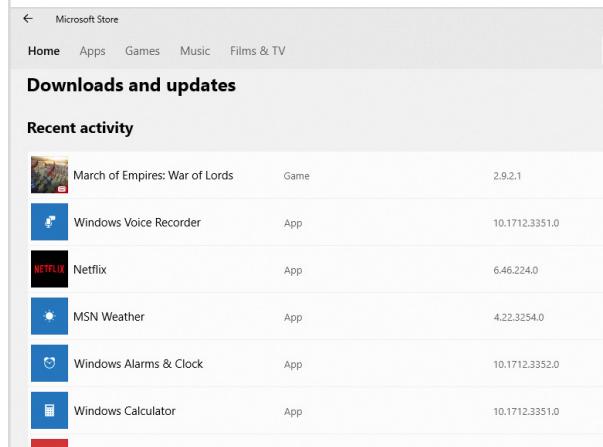
How to Reset or Fresh Start

If you're having problems with your PC, you can try to refresh, reset or restore it. Resetting your PC reinstalls Windows but gives you the choice whether it deletes your files, settings and apps. Restoring your PC is a way to undo recent system changes you've made. A Fresh Start completely removes all apps and reinstalls Windows 10 from scratch.

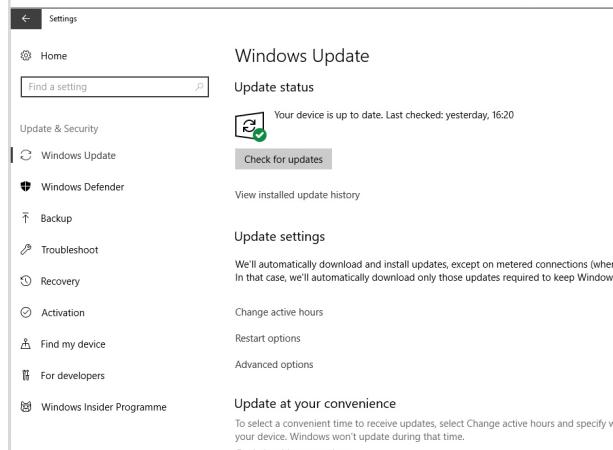
Fresh or Reset?

Refreshing and resetting your Windows 10 PC are two very different things and you should always make sure you know which is the best choice to solve your current problem.

1 If your PC isn't performing as well as it once did, and you don't know why, you can reset your PC without deleting any of your personal files or changing your settings. Apps or software not installed through the Store will be removed but Windows store apps will be reinstalled.



2 Open the main Settings app and head in to the Update & Security section. Click on Recovery and you will see several options, including Reset this PC. If you can't get into settings, you can access reset by restarting your computer while holding the Shift key; then select Troubleshoot > Reset.



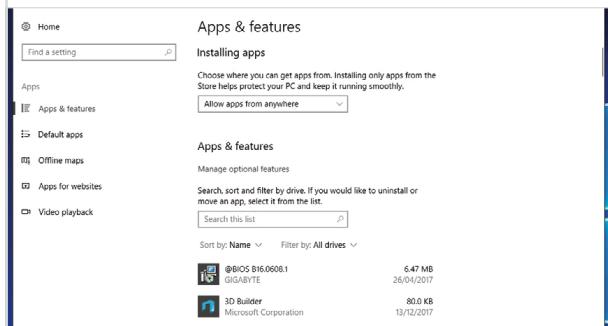
3 In Settings > Recovery, click on 'Get started' to begin the process. You will now need to choose whether to keep your files (just remove apps and settings) or remove everything. If you choose Remove everything, you will then need to choose whether to 'Remove and clean the drive'.

4 You will be warned that you won't be able to roll back to a previous version of Windows after the reset (old Windows files will be deleted). Click Next and then Reset when prompted. Windows will restart and take several minutes to reset itself. Click Continue when prompted.

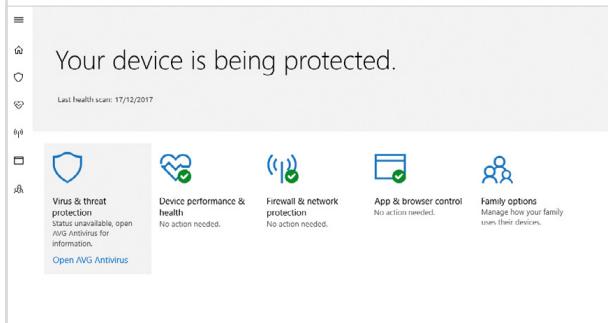
Perform a Fresh Start

Lets you perform a clean reinstallation and update of Windows while keeping your personal data and most Windows settings intact.

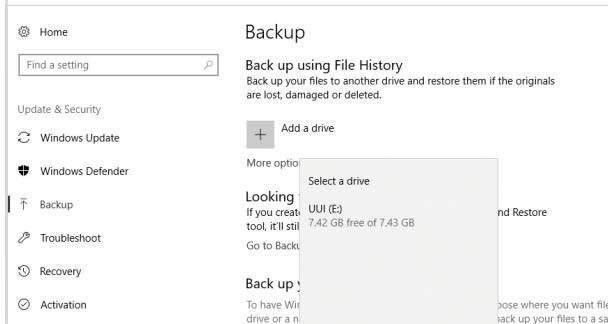
1 Be aware that Fresh Start will remove most of your apps from your device, so you will have some reinstalling to do. In some cases, a clean installation may improve your device's start-up and shutdown experience, memory usage, Microsoft Store apps performance, browsing experience and battery life.



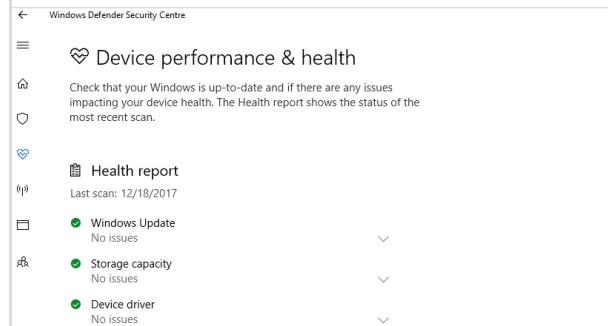
2 To find the Fresh Start tool, open the Windows Defender tool (click on the shield icon in the taskbar) and then click on the Performance & Health section. You will need to click on Additional Info and then click Get Started. If Fresh Start has previously been performed, the date will be displayed here.



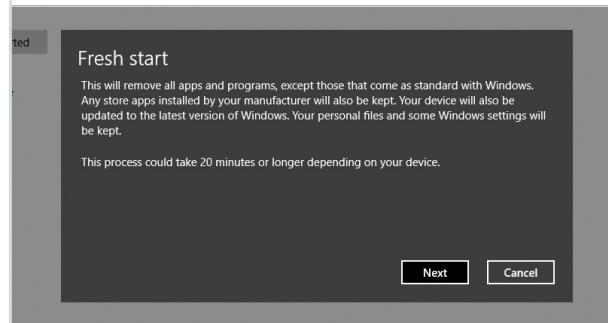
3 Microsoft recommends that you back up your files before making changes like a clean installation of Windows to your device. Make sure that you have access to all reinstallation media (such as CDs), product keys, license or login information and other materials needed to manually reinstall apps.



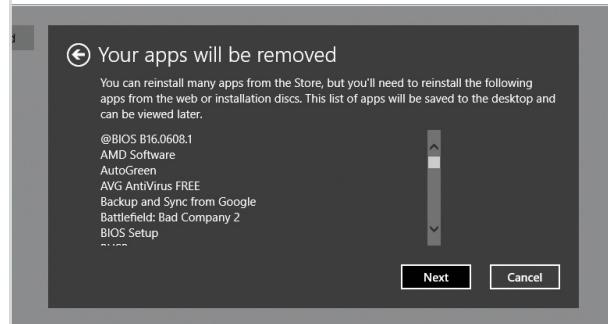
4 Click Get Started and you will see a UAC (User Account Control) dialog. Click Yes and the Fresh Start screen will appear. This screen provides a brief overview of what the Fresh Start procedure will do. You'll also get a general idea of how long Fresh Start will take to complete the procedure.



5 The software will analyse your system and then tell you which apps will be removed. There is no need to make a note of these apps, as Fresh Start will save this list and create a file on the desktop of your new, clean Windows 10 installation. Read through the list if you wish, and then click Next.



6 A Fresh Start will wipe any previous versions of Windows, so you won't be able to roll back. Click the Start button and wait for the process to complete. Once complete, your PC will restart and the initial setup screens will appear. Removed apps are displayed in an Edge document on the desktop.



Troubleshooting Windows 10

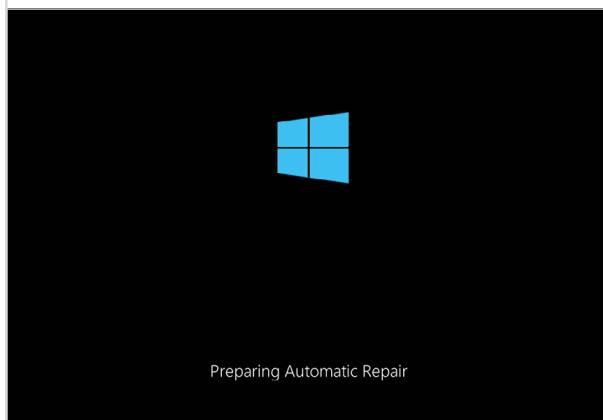
If you have a problem with your Windows 10 machine, you will need to go to the Advanced Start-up Options menu. You may also need to boot into what's called Safe Mode. Hopefully this isn't something you will need regularly but we'll run you through it anyway.

How to Use Advanced Start-up Options

Modern computers are complicated things and there's a lot that can go wrong. If your PC really isn't working correctly or seems slow, these helpful options will help you get it back on track.

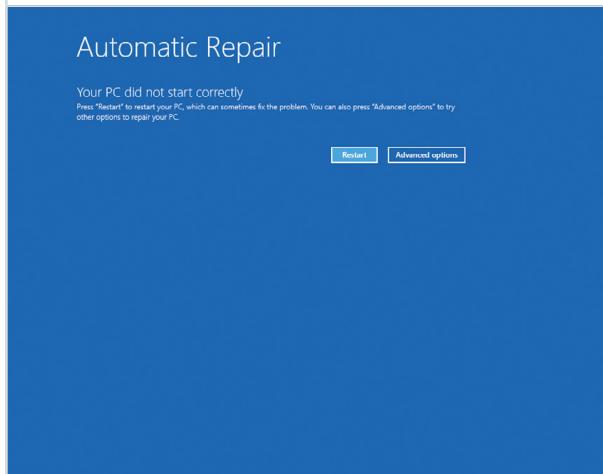
1

You may be taken to the Advanced Start-up Options menu. It will appear automatically if you have two consecutive start-up errors on your PC. But you can get to it manually from inside Windows 10 by going to the Settings app > Update & Security, clicking on Recovery and selecting Restart Now underneath Advanced Start-up.



2

If your PC didn't start correctly, you'll see this screen. It gives you the option of restarting and trying again, or clicking on Advanced Options. We're going to run you through what happens if you click on this second button – various options are available to you.



3

You'll then see this menu, which is a little transitional for our liking – we're not sure why these options aren't on the screen you get after this in Step 4 (by clicking Troubleshoot). From here, you can also continue to boot up Windows 10 or you can decide to turn off your PC if you are going to take it to a repair shop, for example.

Choose an option

- Continue
Exit and continue to Windows 10
- Troubleshoot
Reset your PC, or see advanced options
- Turn off your PC

4

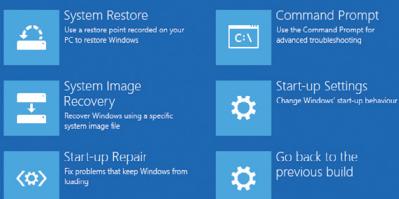
If you selected Troubleshoot, you get the option to Reset this PC. This is a little confusing in name, because it doesn't mean restart! It means resetting Windows to its factory settings (it reinstalls Windows, effectively). You can choose whether or not to keep your files, but we think this is a risky option. You have got your files backed up, haven't you?

Troubleshoot

- Reset this PC
Let you choose to keep or remove your files, then re-installs Windows.
- Advanced options

5 Advanced Options is actually the menu that we want, and you probably will do, too, if there's something seriously wrong with your PC. It's almost like the previous steps were tests to see if you really did want to get here. You can try and repair the start-up, or roll back using System Restore.

⊖ Advanced options



6 If you select Start-up Settings, you'll be shown this screen to ensure it is actually what you want (you can always go back using the Back button of course). From this you can instigate Safe Mode with or without networking access, as well as a low resolution video mode if you're having display problems.

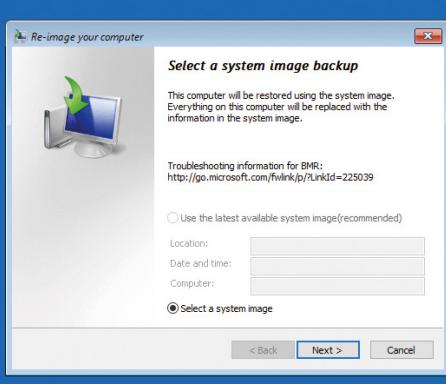
⊖ Start-up Settings

Restart to change Windows options such as:

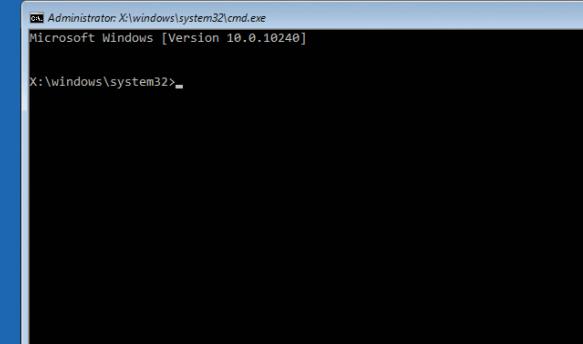
- Enable low resolution video mode
- Enable debugging mode
- Enable boot logging
- Enable Safe Mode
- Disable driver signature enforcement
- Disable early-launch anti-malware protection
- Disable automatic restart on system failure

Restart

7 If you have a system image handy (a complete backup of your PC in a system image file) you can also restore it at this point. Anything you've created since the system image was made will be lost, so again it's a reason why you should back up your files.



8 If you need to boot from a particular drive, such as USB, you can do so by starting from it using the boot options in the Advanced Options menu. You can also access the command prompt should you need to do any diagnostic checks of your files, though this isn't a common thing to have to do.



9 When your PC boots after going to Start-up Settings in Step 6, you'll see this menu. You need to press a number to boot your PC in a particular way. We'd always recommend seeing if your PC will boot into Safe Mode with Networking. If it starts up there without issue, it's probably a third-party software or driver problem rather than something with Windows itself.

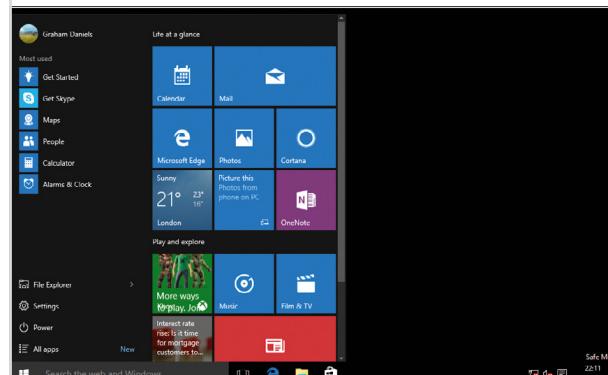
Startup Settings

Press a number to choose from the options below:

Use number keys or function keys F1-F9.

- 1) Enable debugging
- 2) Enable boot logging
- 3) Enable low-resolution video
- 4) Enable Safe Mode
- 5) Enable Safe Mode with Networking
- 6) Enable Safe Mode with Command Prompt
- 7) Disable driver signature enforcement
- 8) Disable early launch anti-malware protection
- 9) Disable automatic restart after failure

10 This is what Safe Mode looks like. As you can see, it's very much like the standard version of Windows 10, but it is lacking a little in its graphical finish. It's designed for you to troubleshoot what is wrong with your system – perhaps you need to roll back to an earlier System Restore point, for example.



Windows 10 Troubleshooting Tips

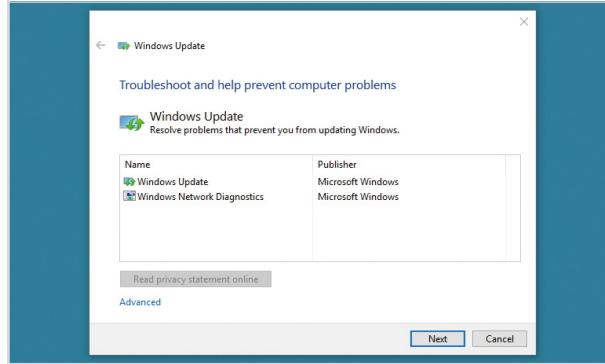
Windows 10 includes some useful tools for checking on and solving problems but sometimes you need to look a bit further and deeper. Occasionally you just need to go back to basics. These tips will help you solve some common problems encountered in Windows 10.

First Things to Check

If you're having problems with Windows Update, the Windows Update Troubleshooter might be able to automatically fix the problem. Go to Microsoft.com and search for Update Troubleshooter.

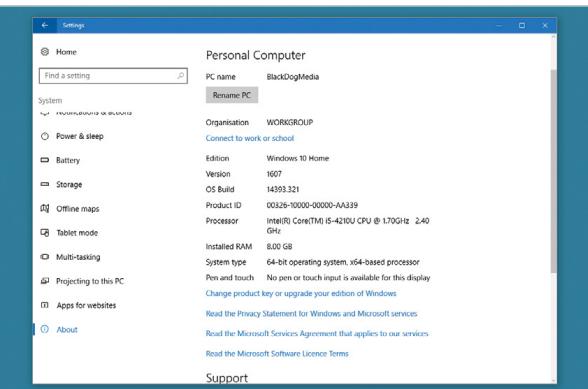
Windows Update Troubleshooter ▶

Microsoft knows that things don't always go smoothly when updating and have provided a dedicated troubleshooting tool for use during this key task. If you're having problems with Windows Update, the Windows Update Troubleshooter might be able to automatically fix the problem. Go to Microsoft.com and search for Update Troubleshooter.



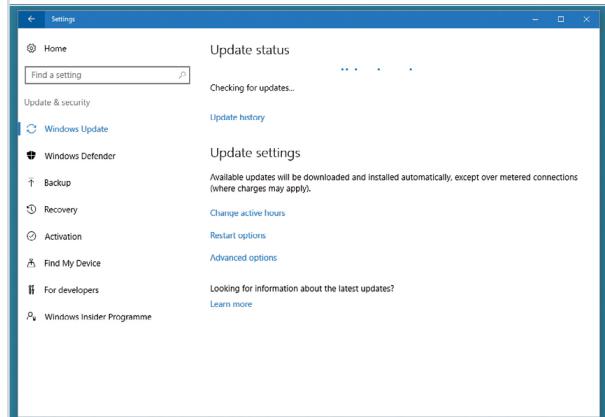
Checking System Spec ▶

If you're having trouble installing or running a particular app or game, it may be that your PC hardware is not up to scratch. All commercial software will provide details of required and (sometimes) recommended specification needed to run it. You can check system spec at any time, just go to Control Panel and select System and Security, then System.



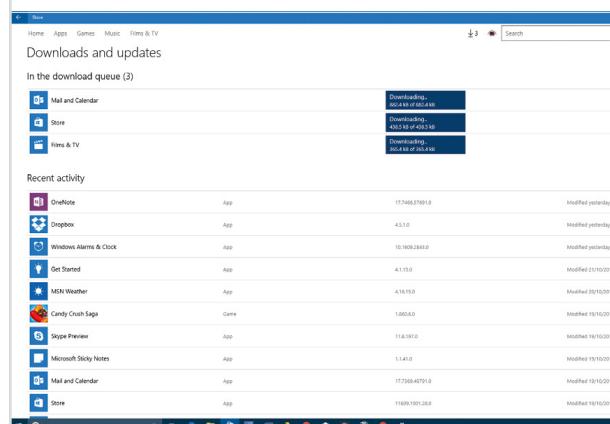
Check for Updates ▶

Keeping your copy of Windows 10 up-to-date with the latest releases can really help to avoid problems before they happen. Press the Windows logo key and click Settings. Then choose Update & security > Windows Update and then select Check for updates. Install any available updates and restart your PC if required.

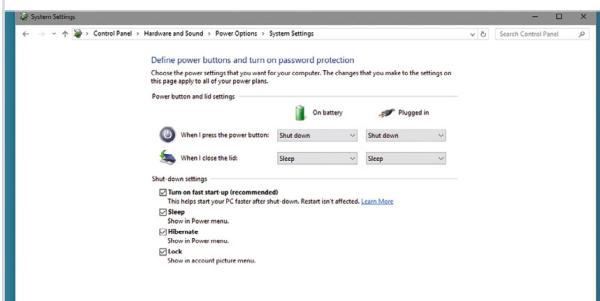


App Updates ▶

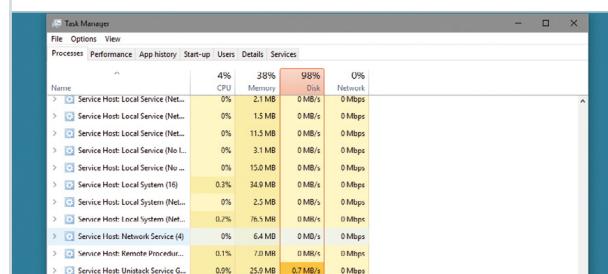
If an app or program isn't working with Windows 10, particularly after the Anniversary update, try looking in the Windows Store for an update and if that doesn't work, delete and reinstall it. To check for available app updates on the store, click the user icon next to the search bar and select Downloads and Updates.



Slow Boot Fix ▶ Like Windows 8 before it, Windows 10 uses a hybrid boot to enable fast boot times. It sounds great but can actually slow down boot for some users. Disable it by searching for Power Options in the Start menu and running the matching Control Panel applet, then in the left-hand pane click Choose what the power buttons do.



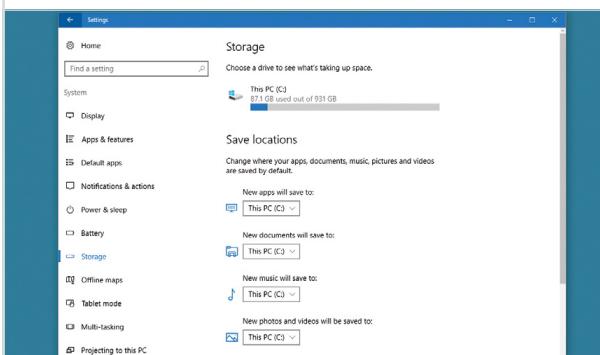
Non-responsive PC ▶ Windows 10 has a completely different shell than previous versions. The Explorer.exe process is still at its core but there are a few additional components as well. If you click the Start button and nothing happens or if the entire taskbar refuses to respond to an interaction, open Task Manager (press Ctrl+Shift+Esc), find Windows Explorer in the task list and click the Restart button.



Fresh Installation Tool

If Windows 10 is really giving you problems and you have tried everything else to fix the issue, you can try using the Fresh Install tool. You will lose any installed apps but will keep your files.

1 First make sure you have the following: an Internet connection to download the tool and the Windows 10 image and sufficient available data storage on the computer you are installing on. You need at least 3GB free for the download and the clean Windows 10 image file.



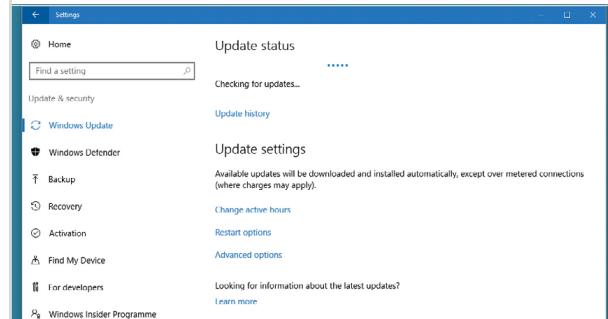
2 Download the tool <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/software-download/windows10startfresh>. There is some advice on the download page about retrieving and reinstalling Microsoft software such as Office. It is worth checking this out if you are heavily reliant on that software.



3 BACK UP EVERYTHING you want to keep! Launch the tool and review and accept the licence terms. Choose what you want to keep. If you want to keep your personal files, choose the Keep personal files only option. Select the OK button to start the installation.



4 By using the tool, you may lose your digital licences, digital content associated with applications or other digital entitlements. Drivers may also be missing. If you experience any missing drivers after the clean installation has finished, go to Settings > Update & security > Windows Update.





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Windows 10 Solutions

Windows 10 Solutions is everything you need to keep your PC running smoothly, quickly and securely. From setting up a new Microsoft account properly to customising and maintaining the OS with third-party software, this guide will show you how to personalise Windows 10. With simple-to-follow tutorials, you can learn to fix those things that annoy you about the operating system and how to make it perform better.

Installing and Upgrading

The best way to make sure Windows 10 runs smoothly, is to install and update it correctly. Learn how to install, upgrade and update Windows 10 quickly, easily and safely. Then discover the tools you can use to make sure that your OS is always accessible and always recoverable should the worst happen.

File and Folder Management

Files are everywhere in Windows 10, from music and movies to your latest spreadsheet. Learn how to manage and protect your files, whether that means choosing where they are installed, adding new files or editing existing ones. You will even learn how to back up every important file on your PC.

Security and Antivirus Advice

With the threat of malware, viruses and ransomware seemingly ever-present, the privacy and security of Windows 10 is more important than ever. Learn how to manage privacy settings in the new dashboard, how to protect yourself from viruses and how to use advanced security features.

Maintenance & Performance Tips

Keep your Windows 10 PC running smoothly with these guides to everything from disabling adverts to tweaking the Windows registry files. Discover some of the most useful maintenance software available and learn how to give your PC a boost by adding to or maintaining the hardware.

This Manual can be used with Windows 10:

Home	Pro
Enterprise	Education
Mobile	Mobile Enterprise