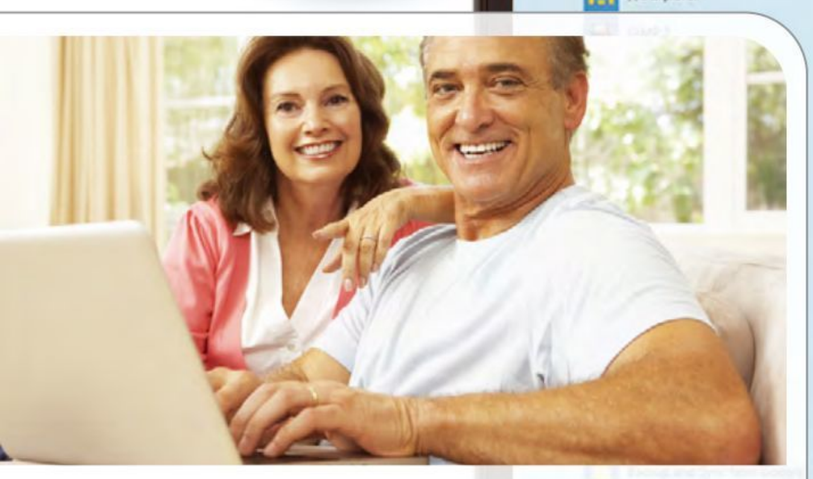
The Only Windows 10 Manual for Seniors

BDM's PC Knowledge Series

The Windows 10 Seniors Manual

160 PAGE SPECIAL EDITION



- Easy to follow step-by-step guides and tutorials
- Learn about all the new features of Windows 10
- Essential security, privacy and anti-virus advice
- Get the most from your PC every time you use it

NEW for 2020

Volume 29 £9.99

US$19.99
Can$20.99
Aus$21.25
NZ$19.99

9 772050 987006 29

100% INDEPENDENT

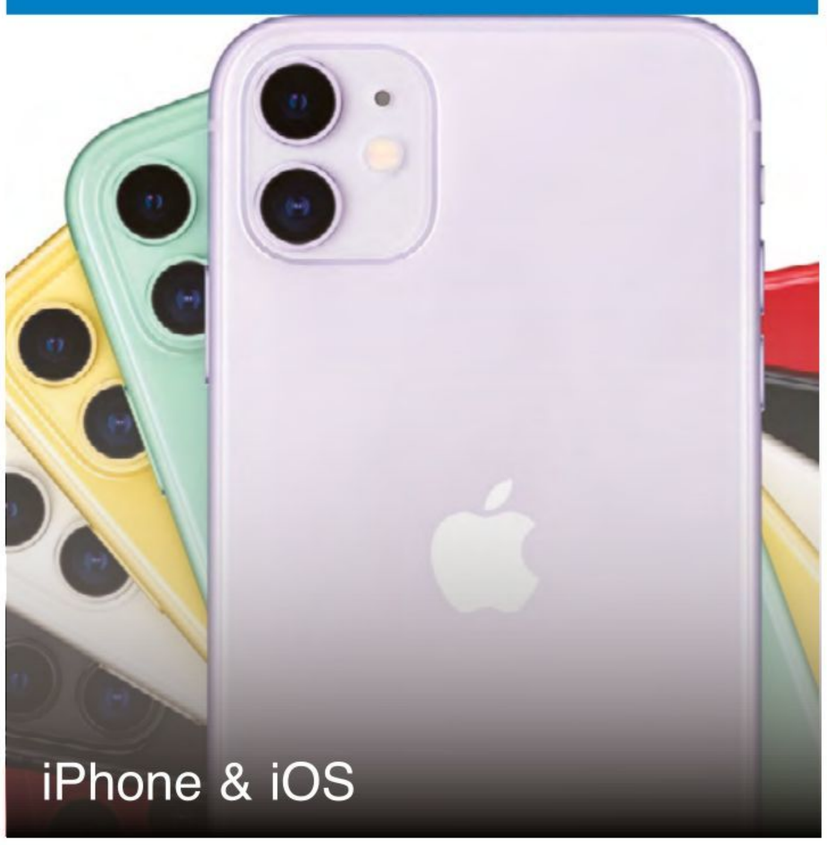
Black Dog Media

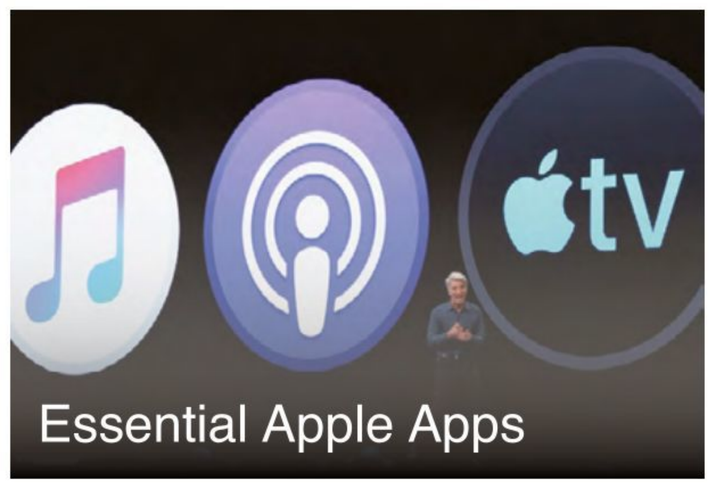
Master Your Tech From Beginner to Expert

To continue learning more about Your Apple tech visit us at:

www.bdmpublications.com

FREE Tech Guides





EXCLUSIVE Offers on our Tech Guidebooks

- Print & digital editions
- Featuring the very latest updates
- Step-by-step tutorials and guides
- Created by BDM experts

Check out our latest titles today!

bdmpublications.com/ultimate-photoshop

Buy our Photoshop guides and download tutorial images for free! *Simply sign-up and get creative.*

PLUS

SPECIAL DEALS and Bonus Content

Sign up to our monthly newsletter and get the latest updates, offers and news from BDM. We are here to help you Master Your Tech!

BDM's PC Knowledge Series

The Windows 10 Seniors Manual

Windows has never been more usable, secure, or well-designed as it is right now, but getting the most from your Windows 10 PC still takes a bit of work and knowledge. Even with all of the stress relieving, time-saving apps and software Microsoft has added over the last few years, you might still need some help getting around the best operating system to date.

The Windows 10 Seniors Manual is designed to be both an introduction to Windows 10, and a guide for taking how you use your PC to the next level. Covering everything from using the Start menu to what steps to take if you think you have been hacked, there is something new to learn on every page. No matter if you have never used Windows before, or just want to improve your existing knowledge, this is the guidebook for you!

Russ Ware
Editor
Email: russ@bdmpublications.com

@bdmpubs BDM Publications www.bdmpublications.com

Contents

10 Get Started with Windows 10

12 **Accounts** – Setting Up a Microsoft Account

14 **Child Account** – Setting Up Parental Controls

16 **Settings** – Exploring the Windows 10 Options

18 **Desktop**
Exploring Start, Action Center and Taskbar

20 **Start Menu**
Using the Main Windows 10 Menu

22 **Action Center**
Managing Alerts and Notifications

24 **The Taskbar** – An Essential Windows 10 Tool

26 **File Explorer**
Exploring the Windows File Manager

28 **File Explorer**
Learn How to Navigate Windows 10

30 **Folders**
Create and Manage Desktop Folders

32 **Task View**
Learn How to Multi-task in Windows

34 **Timeline** – Manage Your Activities

36 **Notifications**
Manage Notifications in Windows 10

38 **Mobile** – Connect Your Phone to Your PC

40 Internet, Email and Search

42 **Internet** – Connect Your PC to the Internet

44 **Edge** – Exploring the Secure Edge Browser

46 **Edge** – Browsing Safely with Microsoft Edge

50 **Search** – Using the Search Tools

53 **Cortana** – Using the Personal Assistant

56 **Cortana**
The Most Useful Cortana Commands

58 **Mail** – Explore the Email App in Windows 10

60 **Email** – How to Set Up and Use the Mail App

64 Security and Privacy in Windows 10

66 **Security** – Windows 10 Security Features

68 **Privacy** – Make Full Use of the Privacy Tools

70 **Defender**
Using the Windows Defender Tools

72 **What To Do if You're Hacked**

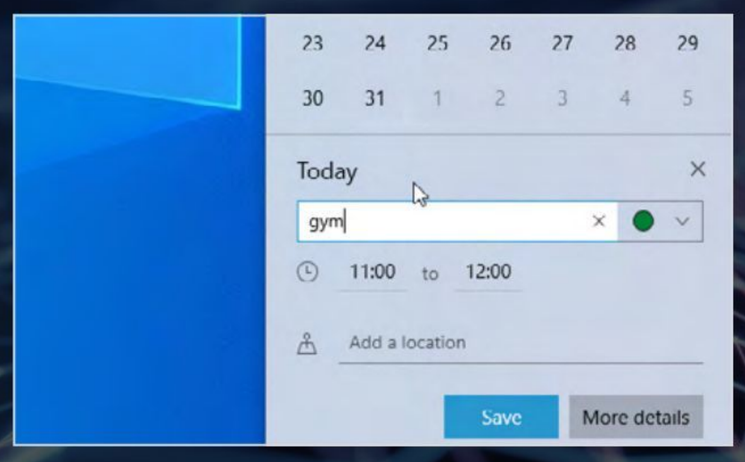
76 **Malware**
Removing Malware from Windows 10

78 **Public Wi-Fi** – Protect Your Devices in Public

81 **Antivirus**
Four Brilliant Virus Security Options

Contents

6 Windows 10
Learn How Windows 10 has Evolved



9 Windows 10
Exploring the November 2019 Update

82 **Browser** – Your Guide to Safer Surfing

84 **Viruses** – Learn More About Malware Threats

88 **Security Tool**
Find My Device and Remote Lock

90 Windows 10 Apps, Software and Tools

92 **Windows Store**
Explore the Windows 10 Marketplace

94 **Windows Store**
Finding Apps and Windows Downloads

96 **Maps** – Explore the Powerful Maps App

98 **Maps** – Learn How to Navigate with Maps

100 **People**
Manage Your Contacts in Windows 10

102 **Calendar**
Explore the Microsoft Calendar App

104 **Photos**
How to Manage and Edit Your Photos

108 **Skype** – Exploring the Skype App

110 **Skype** – Making Calls with the Skype App

112 **OneDrive**
Using the Files On-Demand Tools

114 **Cloud Storage**
How to Get Free Cloud Storage

116 **Clipboard** – How to Use the Cloud Clipboard

118 **Games** – The New Windows 10 Game Bar

120 **Screenshots** – Using the Snip & Sketch Tool

122 **Printing**
How to Install a Printer in Windows 10

124 **Sticky Notes**
Using the On-screen Sticky Notes

126 **Apps** – 10 Essential Windows 10 Apps

128 Manage and Maintain Windows 10

130 **Desktop**
Personalise and Customise the Desktop

136 **Recovery** – How to Create a Recovery Drive

138 **Power** – Windows 10 Power Options

140 **Task Manager**
Explore the Windows 10 Task Manager

142 **Memory** – Check and Manage RAM Usage

144 **Updating**
How to Keep Windows Up-to-date

146 **Updates**
What to Keep Updated in Windows 10

148 **Cache** – Clear Windows Update Cache

149 **Libraries** – Manage Libraries in Windows 10

150 **Maintenance**
Using the Built-in Maintenance Tools

152 **Laptops** – Care and Maintenance Tips

154 **Performance** – Six Steps to a Faster PC

156 **Troubleshooting**
Using Windows 10 Troubleshooting Tools

158 **Troubleshooting**
Diagnosing Windows Problems

160 **Glossary**
Our Essential Windows Jargon Buster

Windows 10
Learn How Windows 10 has Evolved

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, even 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 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 the 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 log in.

Used for over
1 Billion hours
every day

Anniversary Update

The first major update of Windows 10 was known as the Anniversary update, or Redstone 1. Again, there were continuing 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 added ability to pin tabs, 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.

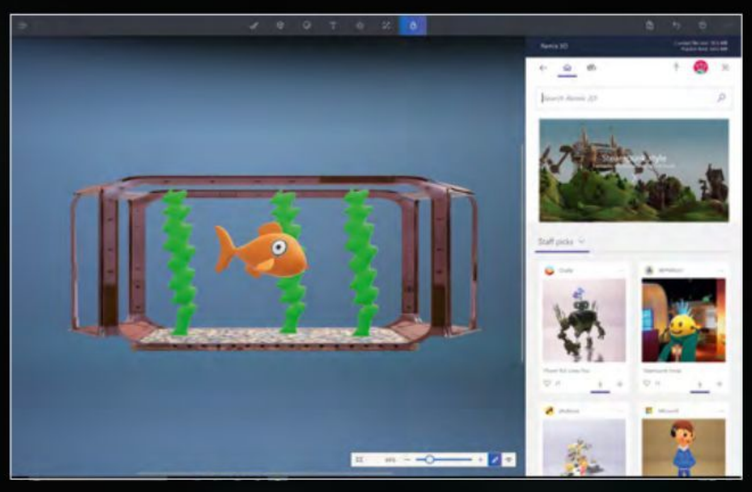
November Update

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

July 2015 — *November 2015* — *August 2016*

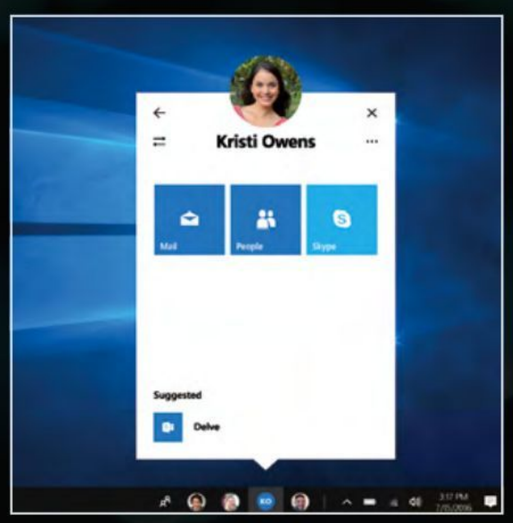
Creators Update



The Creators update, codename Redstone 2, introduced several new Microsoft apps, along with some significant 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.

Fall Creators Update

Redstone 3, known publicly as the Fall Creators update, brought 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. Redstone 3 also takes the first steps towards Project Neon, a complete design overhaul for Windows 10 that continues to be gradually introduced.



300 Million+
people use Windows 10
every day

Spring Update

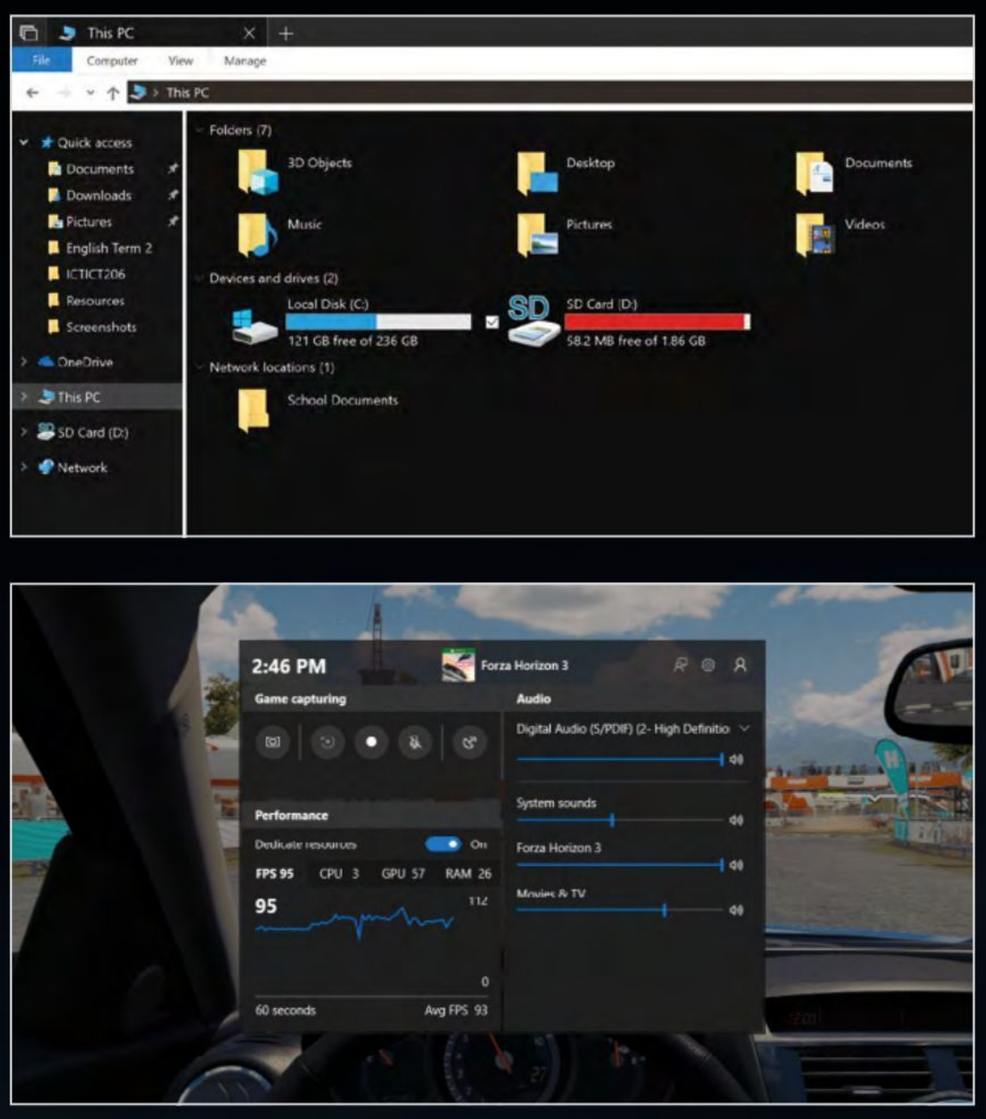
The Windows 10 Spring Update had a rocky start to life, being postponed while instabilities were addressed. However, the Microsoft community welcomed its first-quarter 2018 release. A cumulative update, called KB4093105, was pushed through prior to the main Spring Update release, which prepared the system and patched instabilities recognised by those testing the Insider Preview builds.

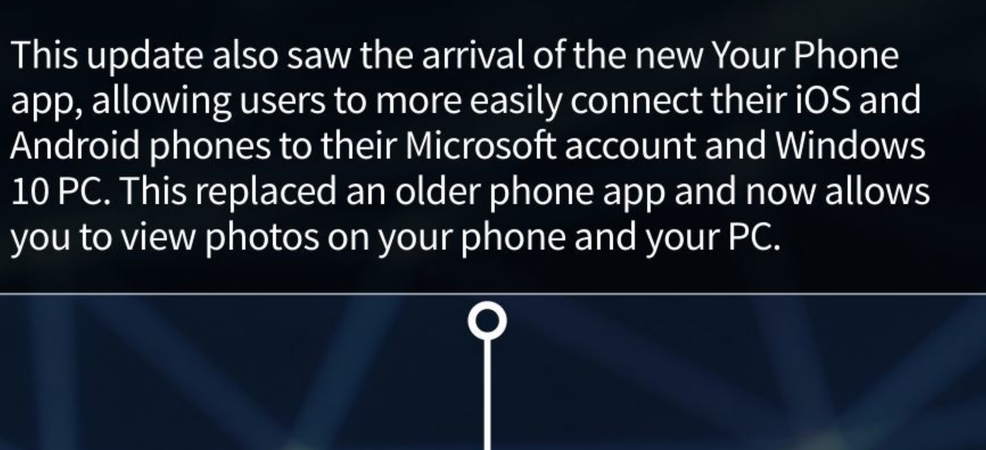
With updates to the Edge browser, the introduction of the long-awaited Timeline feature, file sharing with nearby devices and much more, the Spring Update certainly gave Windows 10 a much-needed uplift.

The UI also had a facelift of sorts, with the introduction of Fluent Design, formally known as Project Neon; which is the first major update of the UI. There was certainly a lot on offer from the first major update of 2018.

Over
700,000 apps
on the Windows Store

April 2017 — *Late 2017* — *April 2018*





October Update

As seems to be the trend, the October update (version 1809) saw lots of small changes and improvements, including tweaks to Cortana, Microsoft Edge, File Explorer and the Game Bar. There were several overall design changes, including some new dark modes, and the introduction of the Cloud Clipboard.

This update also saw the arrival of the new Your Phone app, allowing users to more easily connect their iOS and Android phones to their Microsoft account and Windows 10 PC. This replaced an older phone app and now allows you to view photos on your phone and your PC.

Edge users spend

44 billion minutes

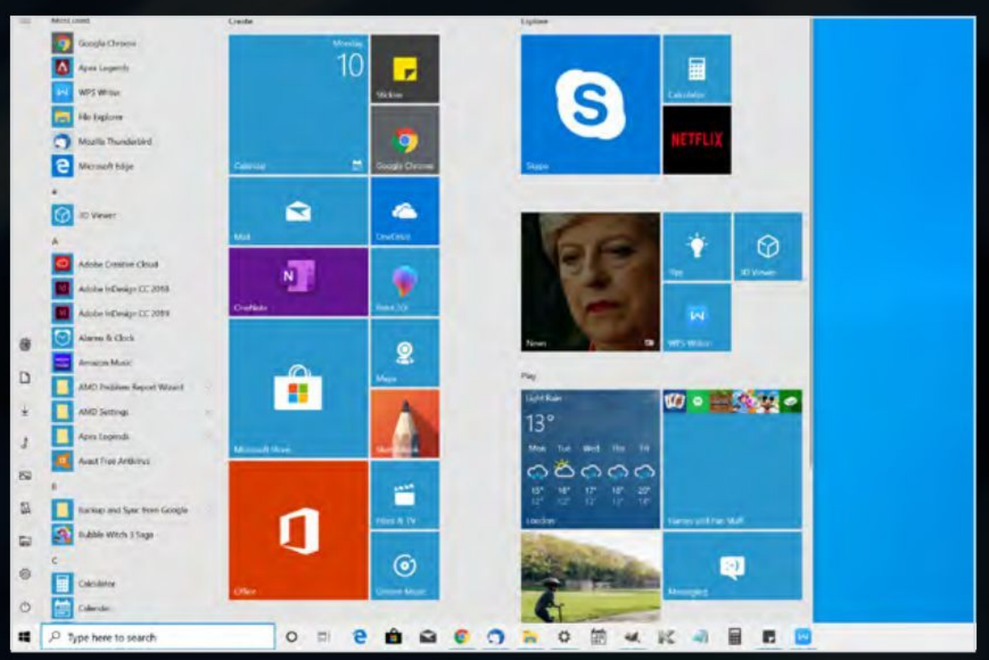
online each month

May 2019 Update

Although lacking any major, brand-new features like Timeline, the May update (version 1903) includes a whole host of improvements, tweaks and boosts to Windows 10. Some, such as the speed boosts and security updates, require no input from the user.

Cortana and Search have split apart, with Cortana being given its own icon in the Taskbar. A brand new light mode has been added, so users now have light and dark mode for both Windows and apps, and the two modes can be combined.

The Start menu, one of the most important and well-used elements of the Windows 10 desktop, also had a slight update. It is now less cluttered than previously, with the default layout being a single column of tiles. Windows update now gives you much more control. You can let Windows control Active hours based on your regular activity, and you can also pause updates for up to 7 days.



Around

50% of all PCs

now run

Windows 10

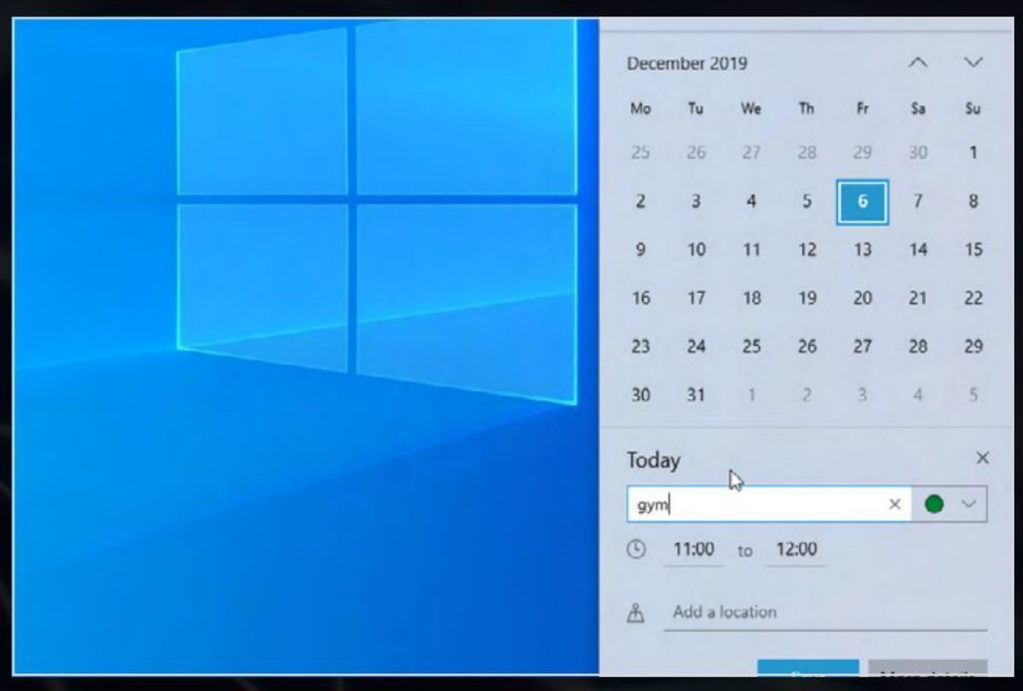
October 2018 — *May 2019*

Windows 10
Exploring the November 2019 Update

The November update to Windows 10 (version 1909) was another seemingly small update, with no new features added. There were some improvements and tweaks to existing apps and system tools, and, as always, several security improvements (if you need a reason to update, security should be it).

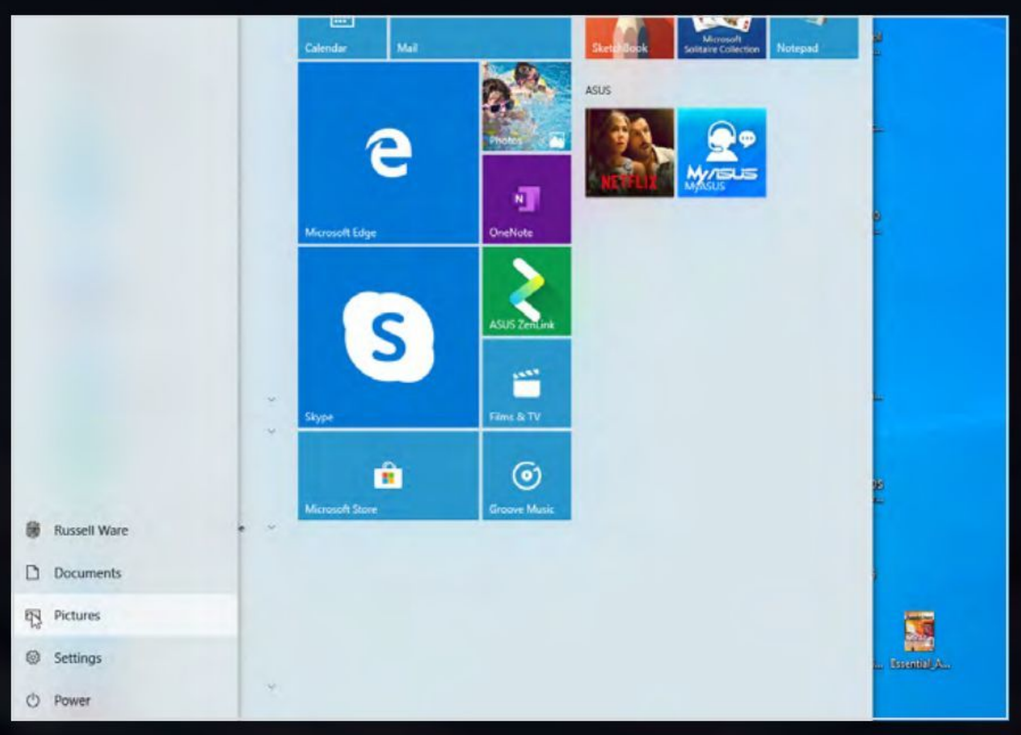
Quick Events

You can now quickly create an event straight from the Calendar flyout on the Taskbar. To open the Calendar flyout just select the date and time, at the lower right corner of the Taskbar, pick your desired date and start typing in the text box–you'll see inline options to set a time and location.



Start Menu Navigation

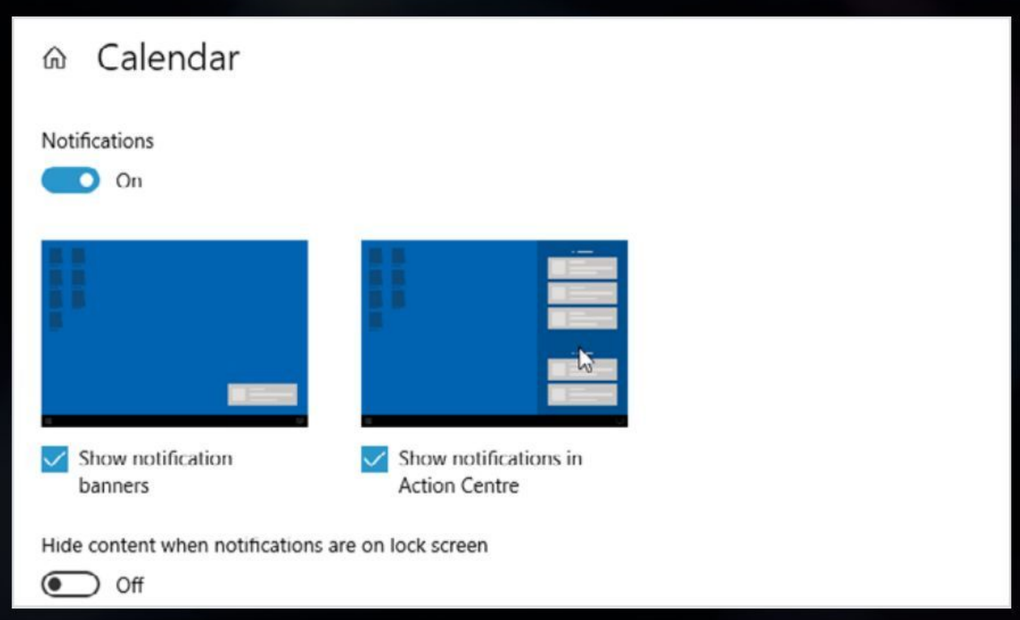
The navigation pane on the Start menu now expands when you hover over it with your mouse, to make it easier to see the options contained there. Not the most exciting update ever, but it certainly helps to make Windows 10 more user-friendly and accessible.



Notification Options

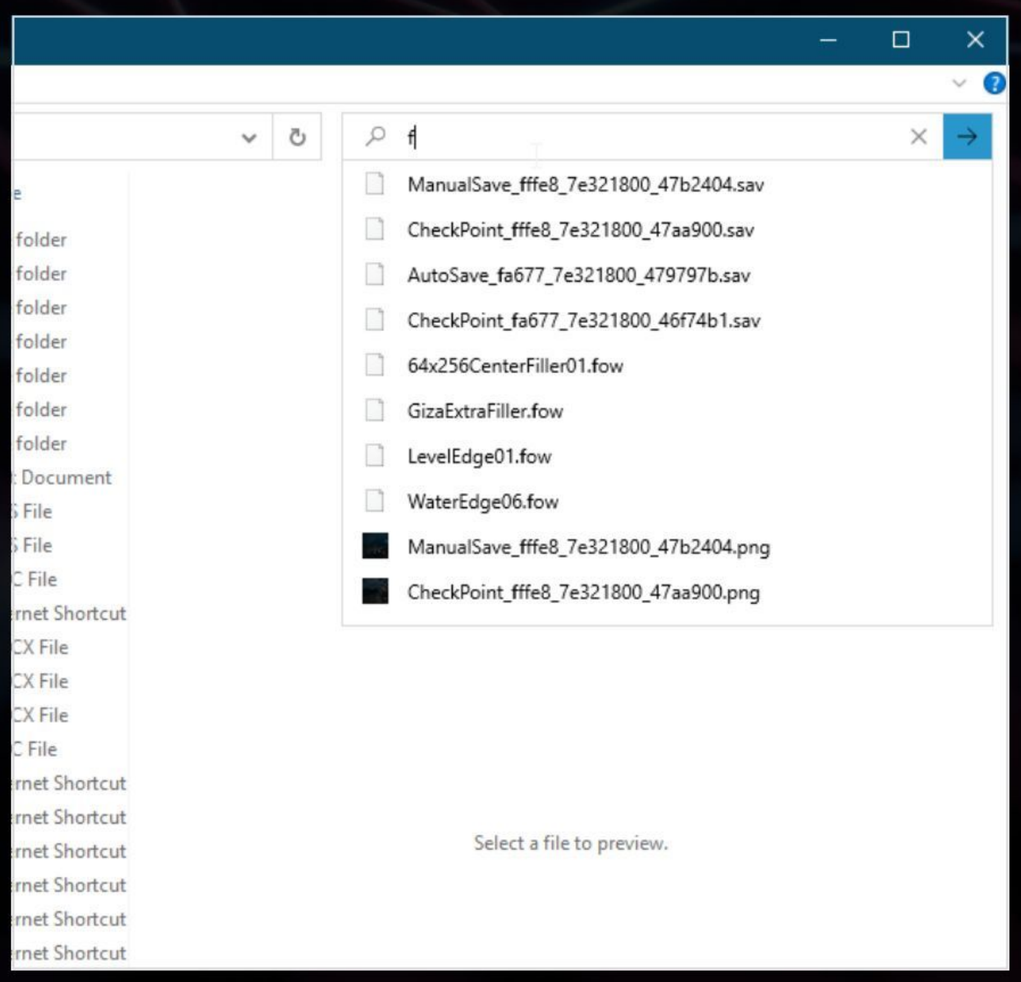
Microsoft has added user-friendly images to show what is meant by "banner" and "Action Center", when adjusting the notifications on apps, which makes these settings more approachable and understandable. To see these, head into the App settings and click on any app that uses notifications.

Notifications now defaults to sorting senders by most recently shown notification, rather than sender name, making it easier to find and configure frequent and recent senders. They have also added a setting to turn off playing sound when notifications appear.



File Explorer Online Search

File Explorer now checks files stored online in OneDrive when you use the built-in search tool. Suggestions appear as you begin typing, and you can then right-click any of the options to open the file's location.



Contents

12 Accounts
Setting Up a Microsoft Account
12 Set Up and Configure Your Account

14 Child Account
Setting Up Parental Controls
14 Windows 10 Child Account

16 Settings
Exploring the Windows 10 Options

18 Desktop
Exploring Start, Action Center and Taskbar

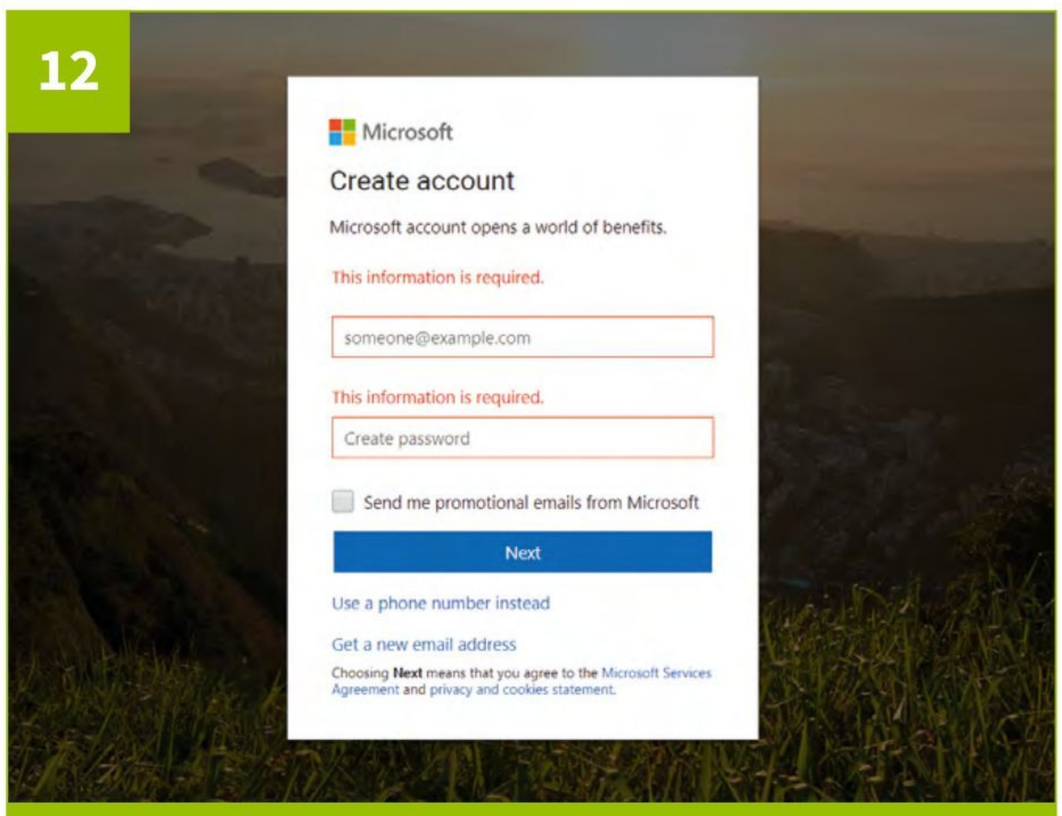
20 Start Menu
Using the Main Windows 10 Menu
20 Get to Grips with Start

22 Action Center
Managing Alerts and Notifications
22 Exploring the Action Center

24 The Taskbar
An Essential Windows 10 Tool
24 Mastering the Windows 10 Taskbar

26 File Explorer
Exploring the Windows File Manager

28 File Explorer
Learn How to Navigate Windows 10
28 What's New in File Explorer?



Set up a Microsoft account

Get Started with Windows 10

The Windows desktop has gone through many changes in recent years, culminating in what you see on your monitor today. There's a lot of powerful features to get familiar with, so, to discover how to get up and running with Microsoft's latest version of Windows, read on.

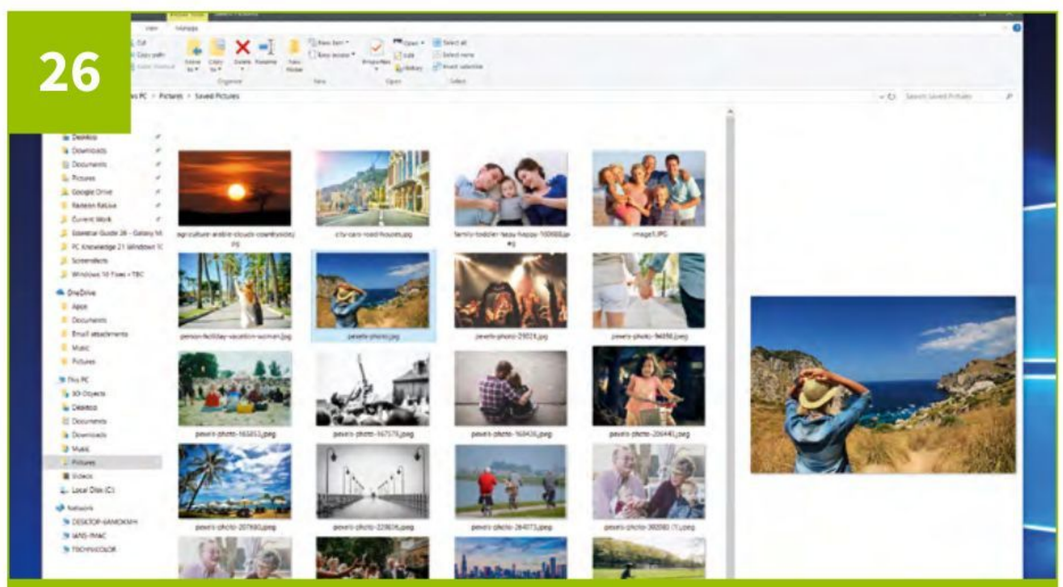
30 Folders
Create and Manage Desktop Folders
30 Creating New Folders
31 Managing Your Folders

32 Task View
Learn How to Multi-task in Windows
32 Using Task View
33 Using Virtual Desktops

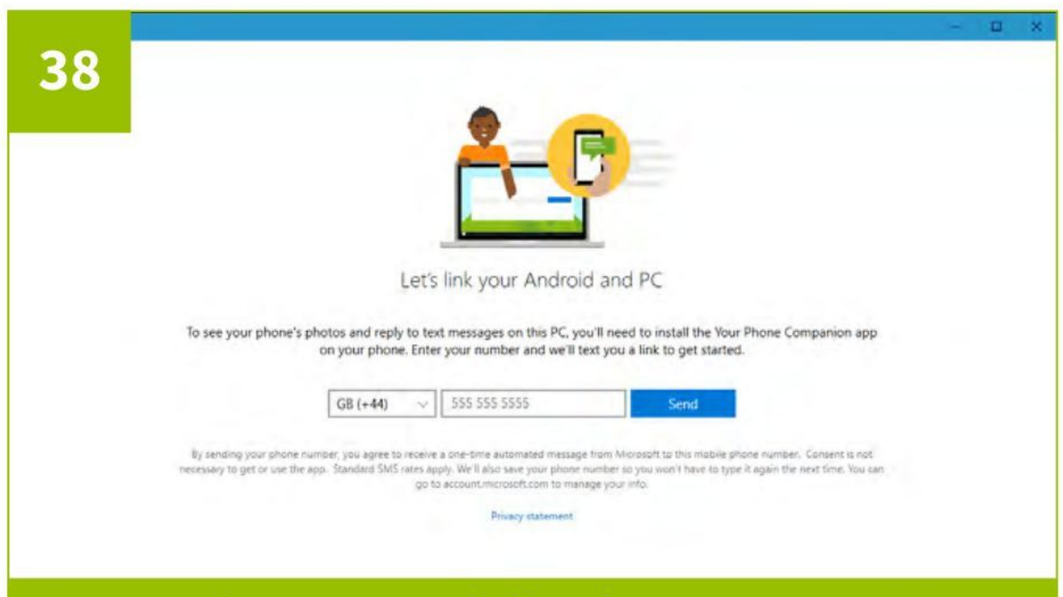
34 Timeline
Manage Your Activities

36 Notifications
Manage Notifications in Windows 10
36 Viewing Notifications
37 Managing Your Notifications

38 Mobile
Connect Your Phone to Your PC
38 Set Up the Your Phone App



Exploring the Windows File Manager



Connecting your mobile phone to your PC

Accounts

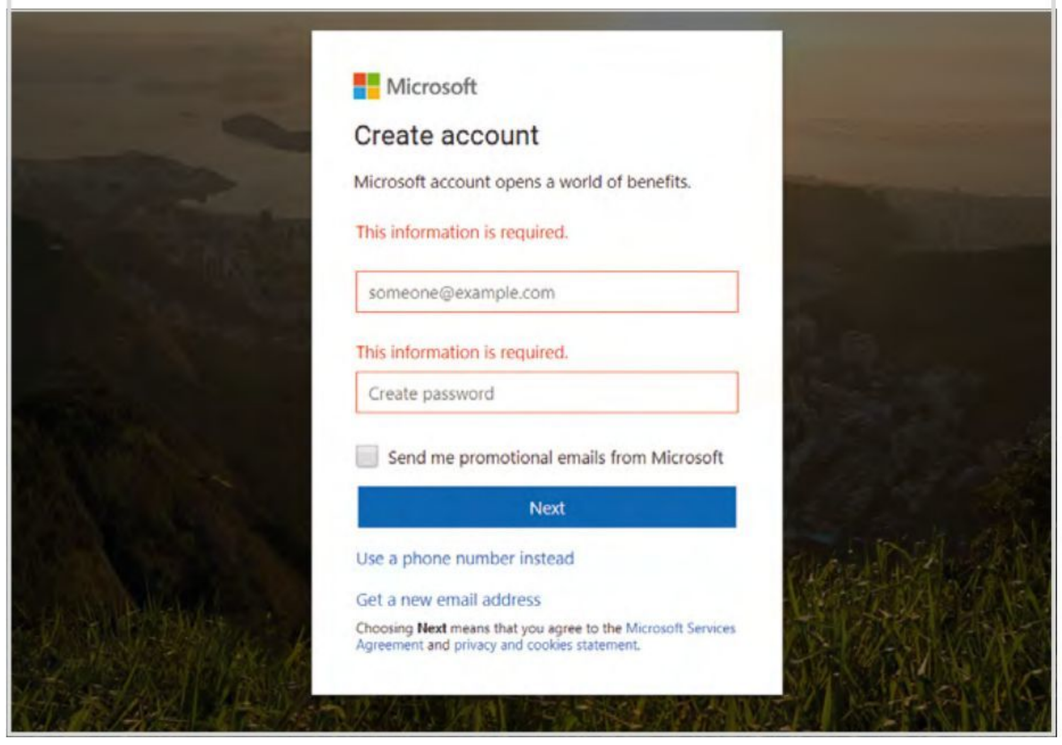
Setting Up a Microsoft Account

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.

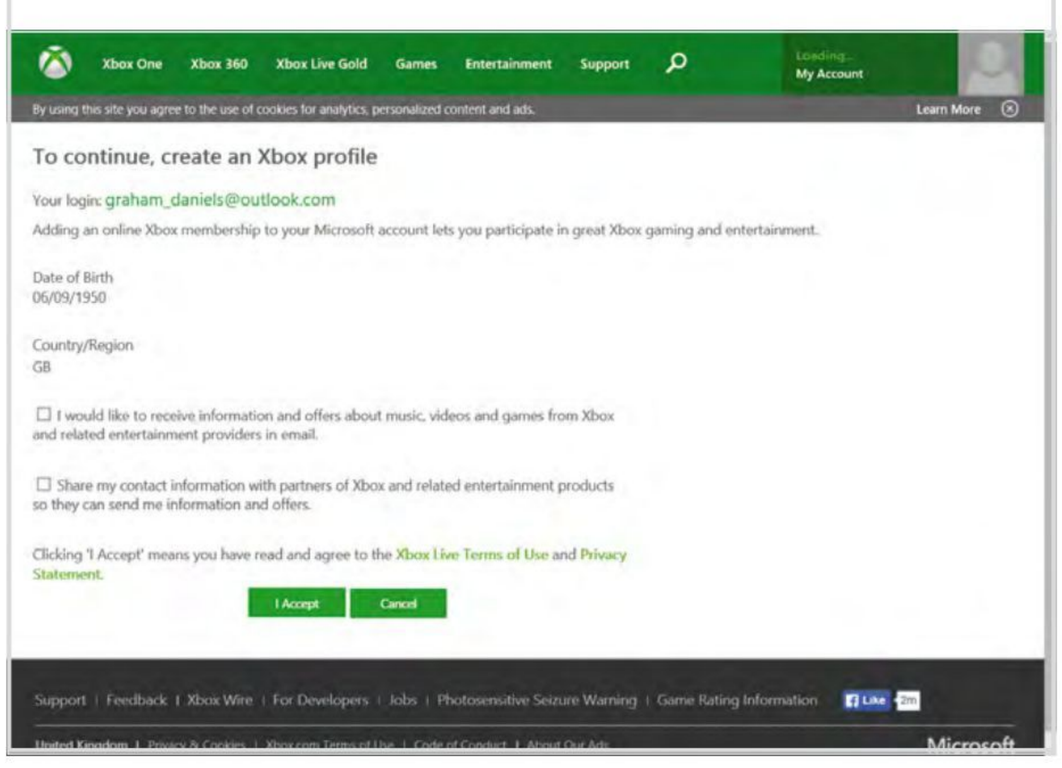
Set Up and Configure Your Account

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.

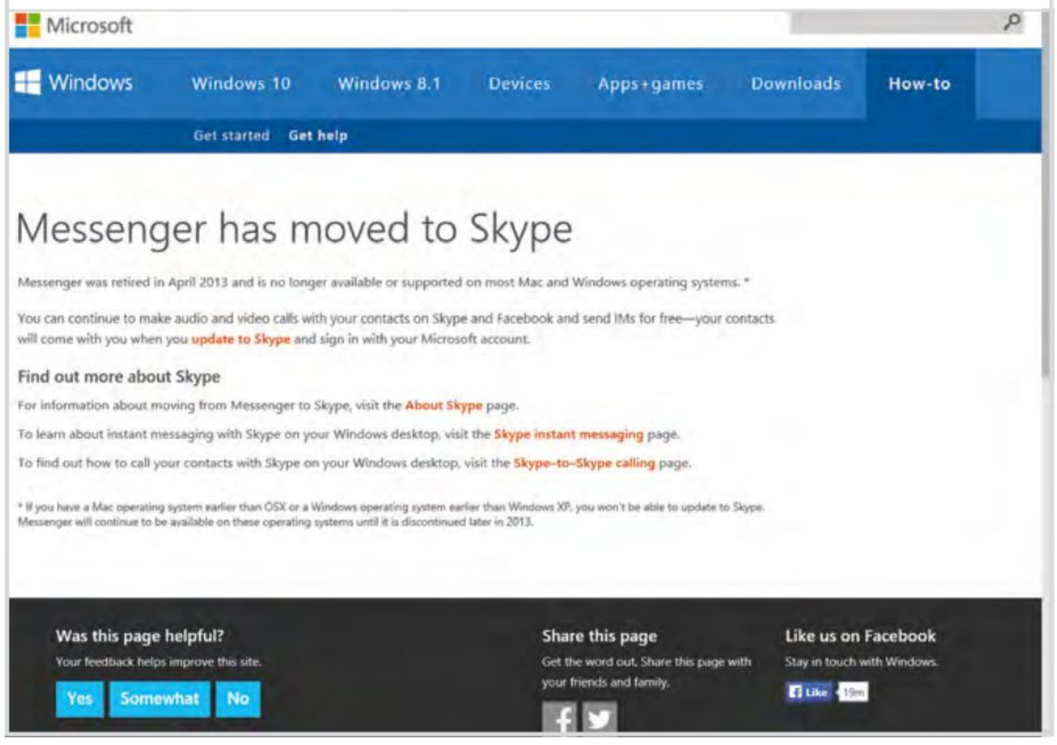
Step 1 You can sign up for an account when you install or initialise Windows 10 for the first time but you can also create one at www.account.microsoft. com. This is also where you can customise your account settings, which we'll come onto shortly.



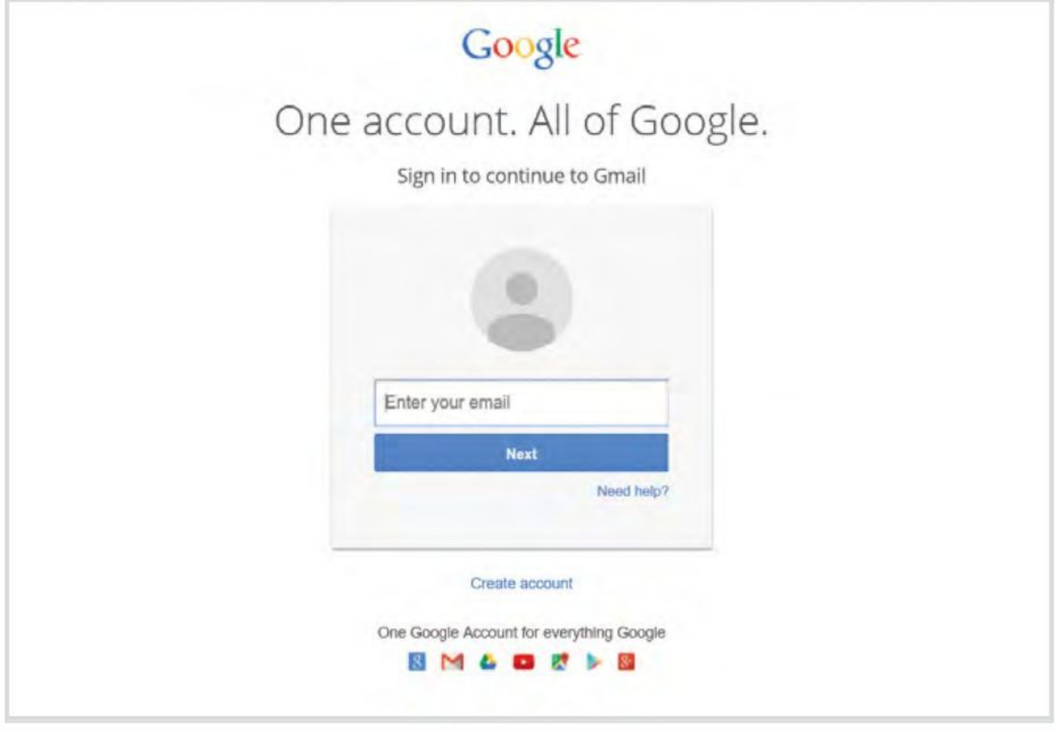
Step 2 Even if you think you don't have a Microsoft account, it's quite possible that you do have one. Ever had a Hotmail or Outlook.com address, or did you use MSN or Windows Live Messenger? You can sign in with those same credentials.



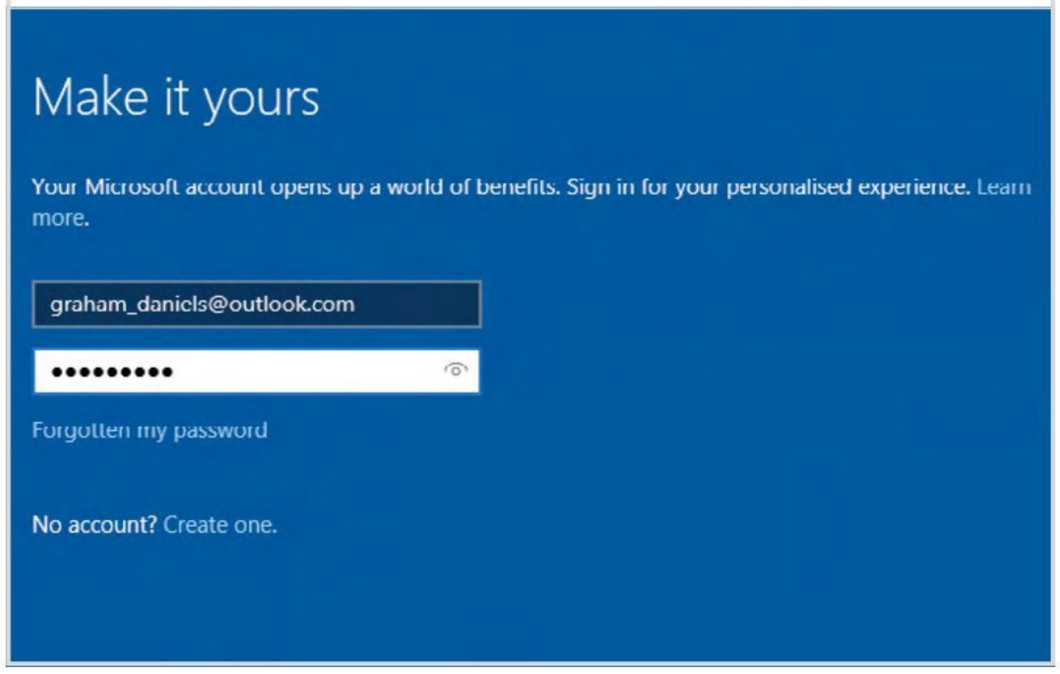
Step 3 In addition to Windows and Outlook.com, you can also use your account across all Microsoft services including Xbox Live, Skype, Office and Bing, as well as Windows-powered phones (your Contacts are automatically synchronised with your account too).



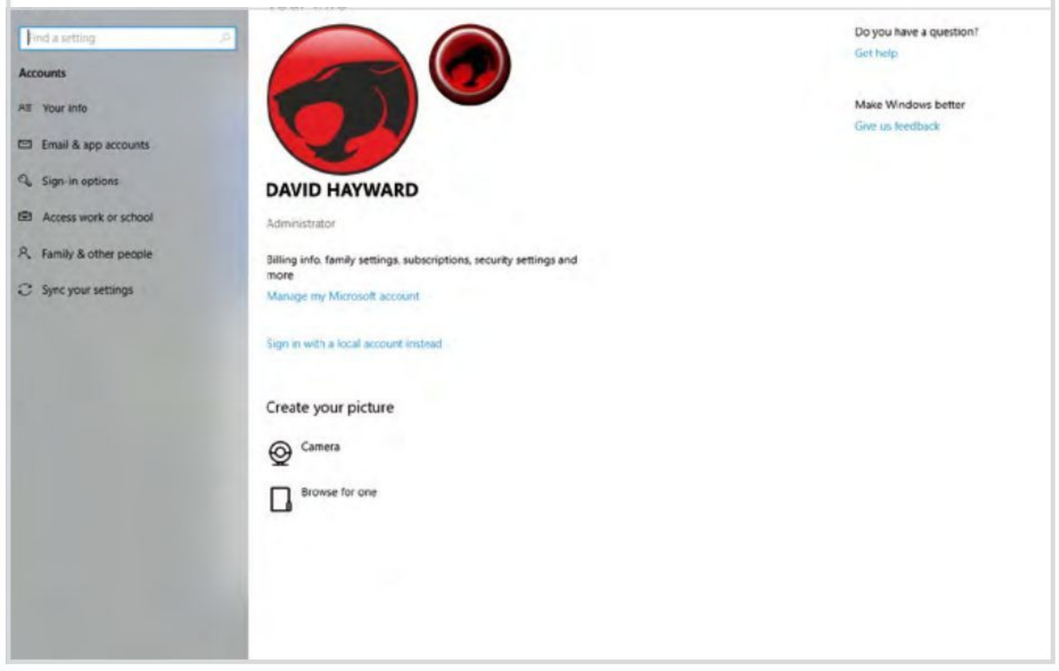
Step 4 You can create a Microsoft account with any email address (you used to have to have an Outlook or Windows Live account). So even if you use Gmail, you can still get a Microsoft account. It's optional whether you have a new Outlook.com email account as well.



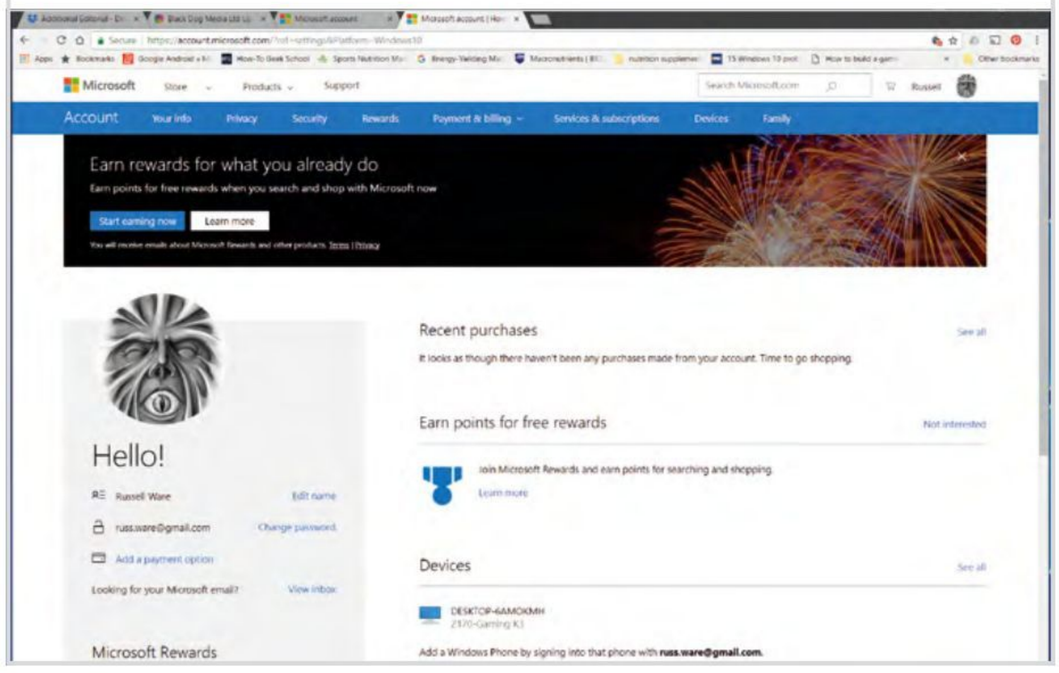
Step 5 During the initialisation process for Windows 10, you will be asked to sign in using your Microsoft account (you can also sign in with a Local Account). Microsoft will then go and fetch any information connected to your account, such as your profile picture, etc.



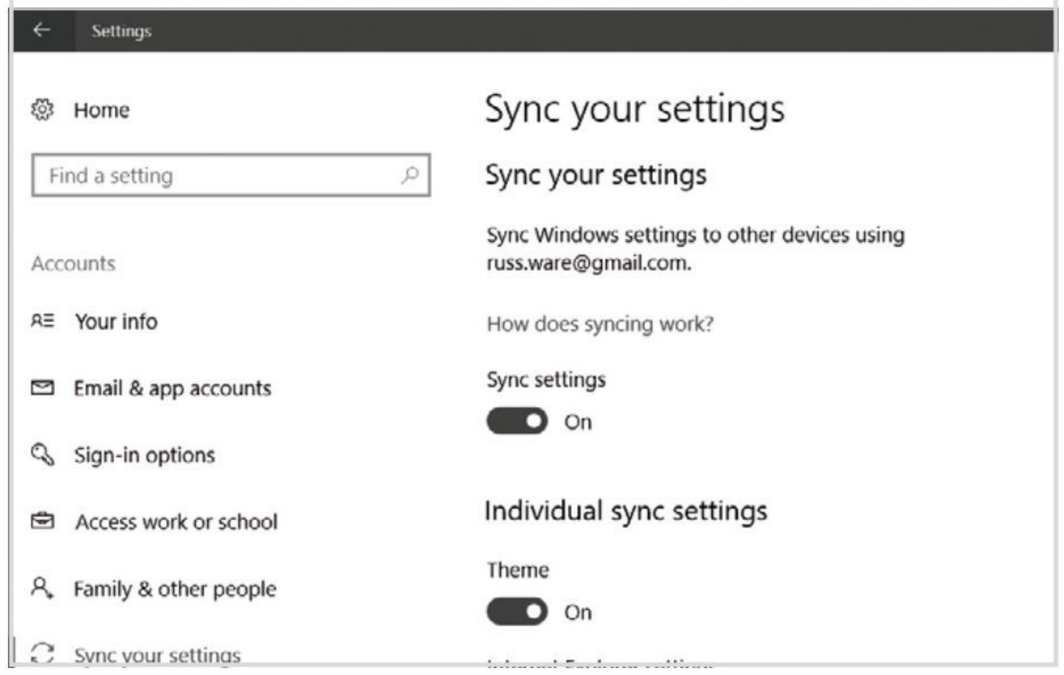
Step 6 Once you've signed in using your Microsoft account, you can configure it from within Windows 10. Open the main Settings and choose Accounts. You can change options to do with the account itself here as well as how often your computer should require you to sign in.



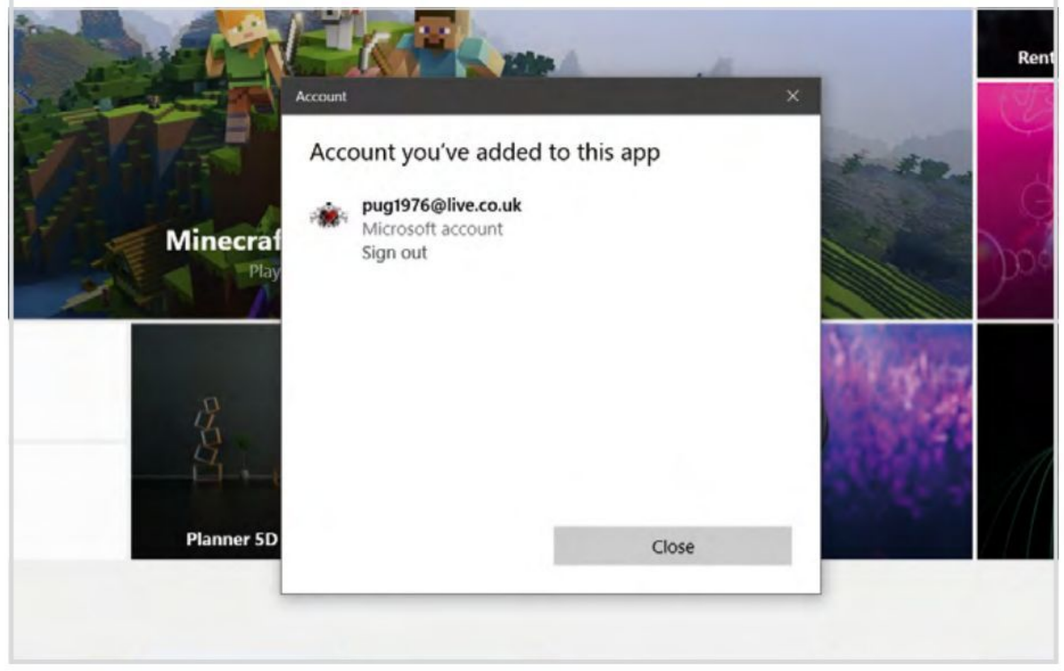
Step 7 Clicking Manage your Account will take you to your account page online. You may see an update to your account terms and conditions when you do this for the first time. Here you can see recent purchases, your devices, personal info (plus payment info) and change your password.



Step 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.



Step 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.



Step 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.

Child Account

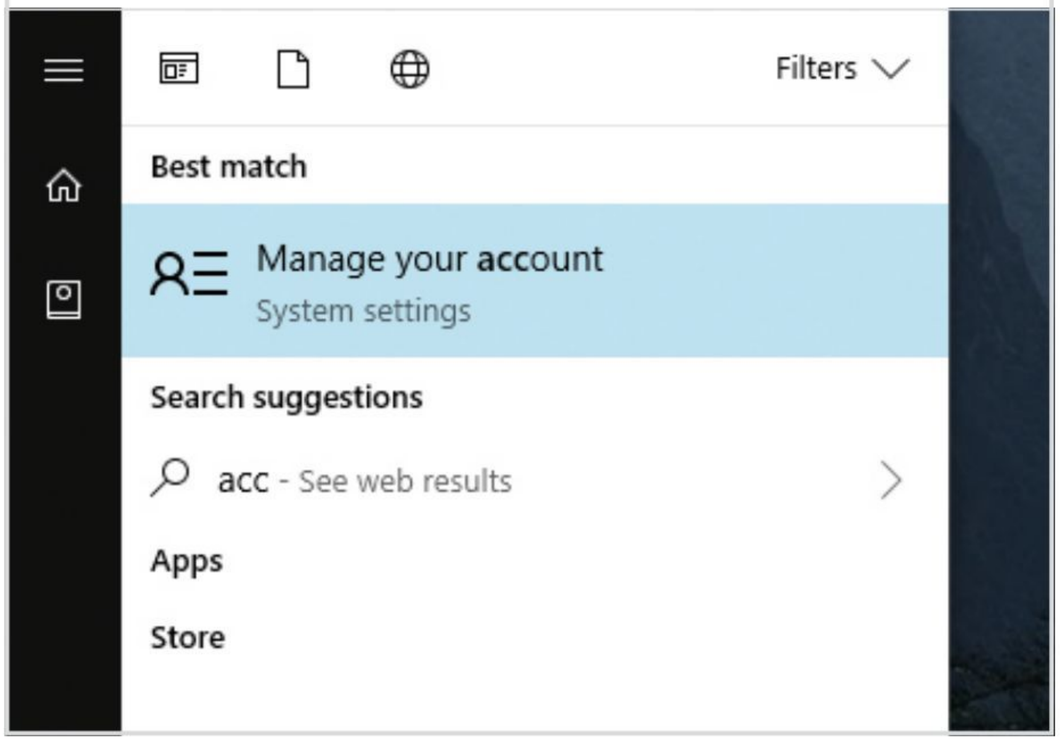
Setting Up Parental Controls

If you're sharing a Windows 10 computer with a child, 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.

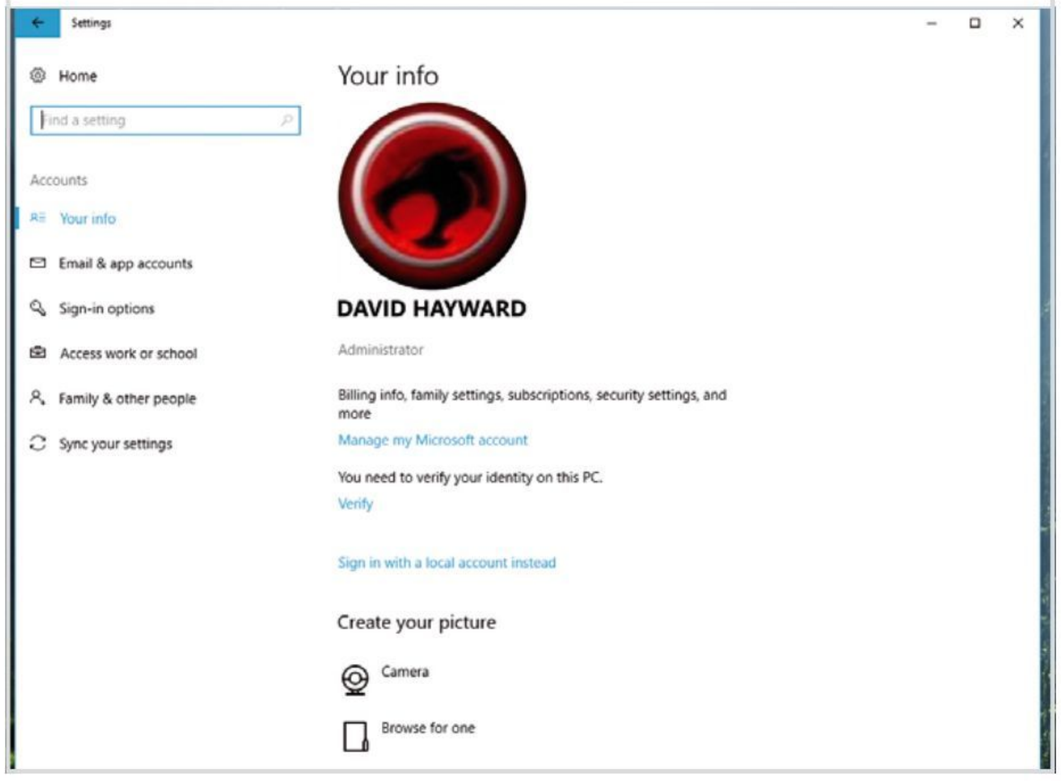
Windows 10 Child Account

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.

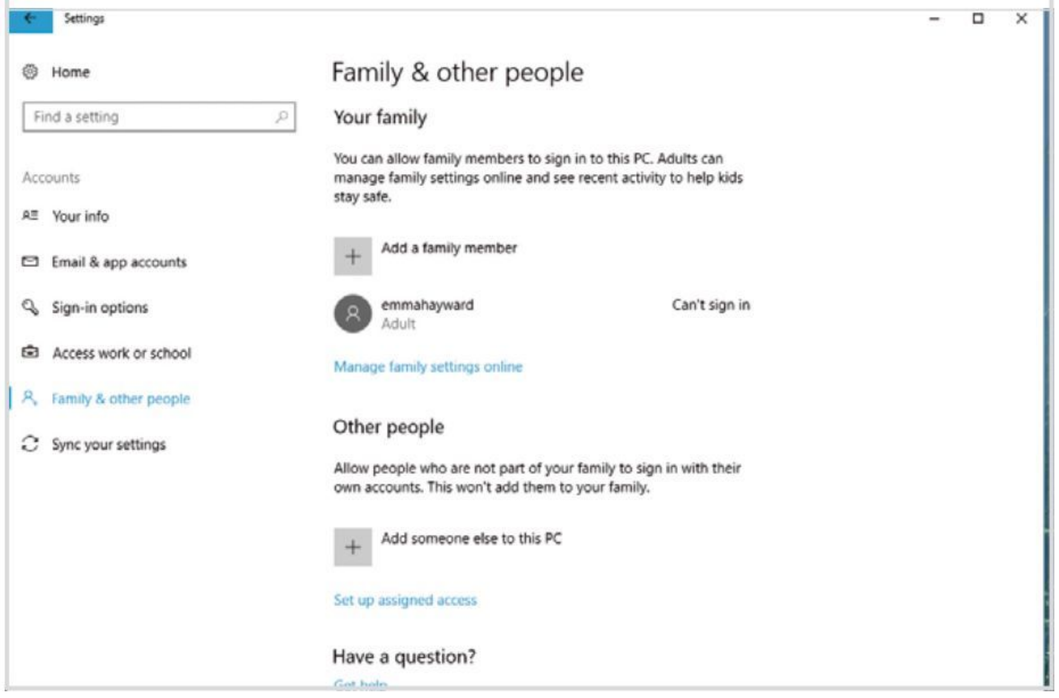
Step 1 Start off by clicking the Windows Start button and typing 'account'. The first result that should appear is Manage your account, if anything else appears, as in you have some work labelled 'account' or such, then scroll down until you find the Manage your account option.



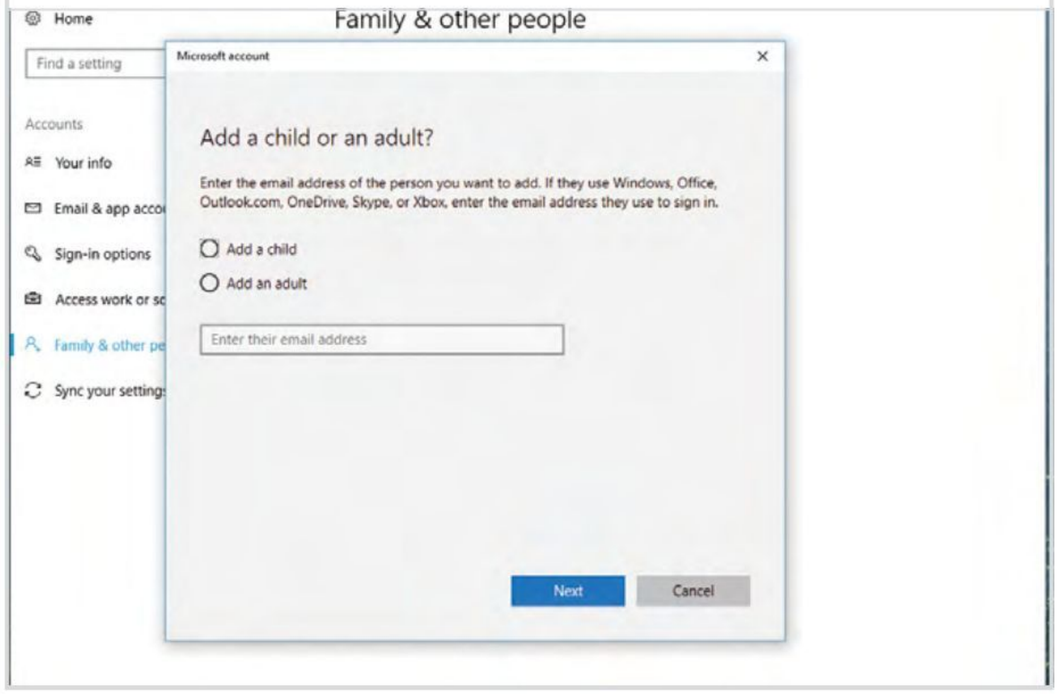
Step 2 You'll now find yourself at the Windows 10 Settings page, in the Accounts section portal. Notice there are links down the left-hand side, look for the Family & Other People link and click it to continue with the process.



Step 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.



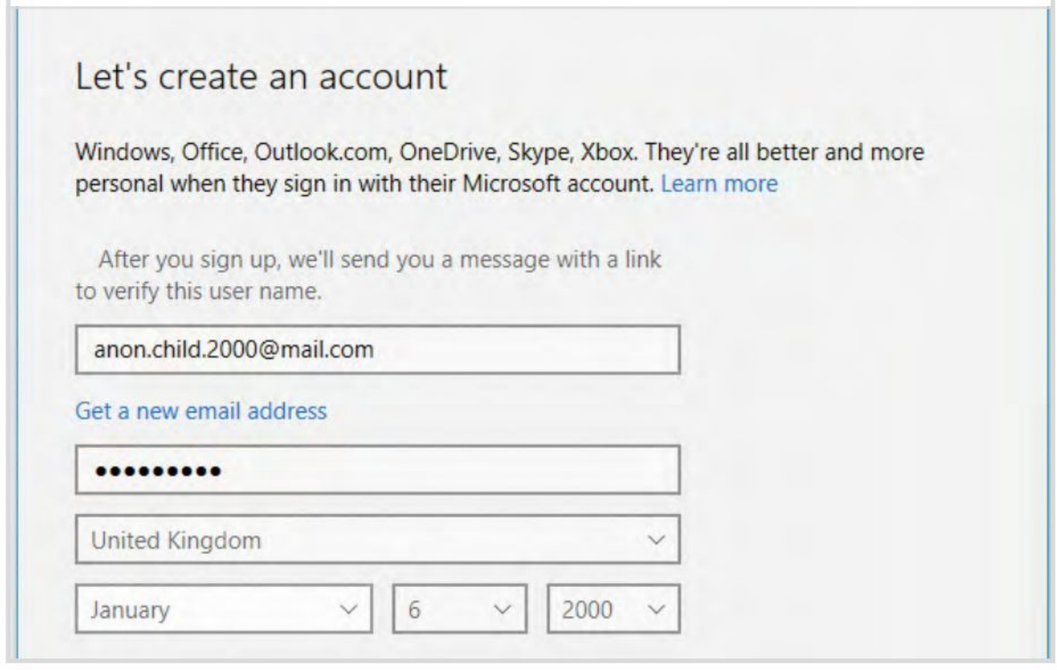
Step 4 Next, click on the Add a Family Member link, by the plus sign under the Your Family section. This will launch a new pop-up window to create a new Microsoft account. You need to make sure that your child has an email address and that you or they can currently access it to authenticate the process.



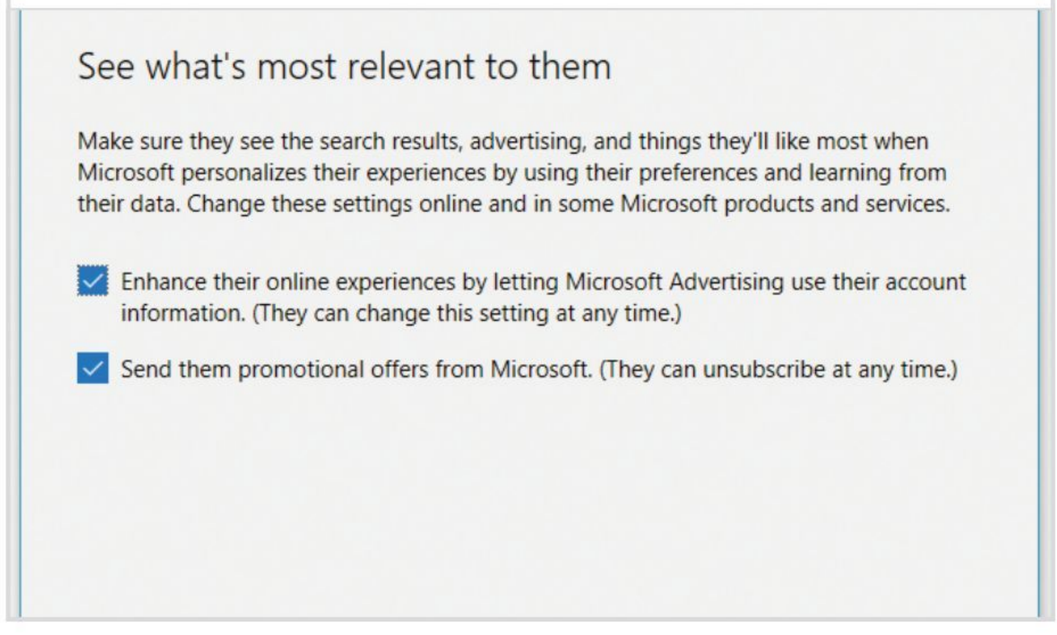
Child Account

Step 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.

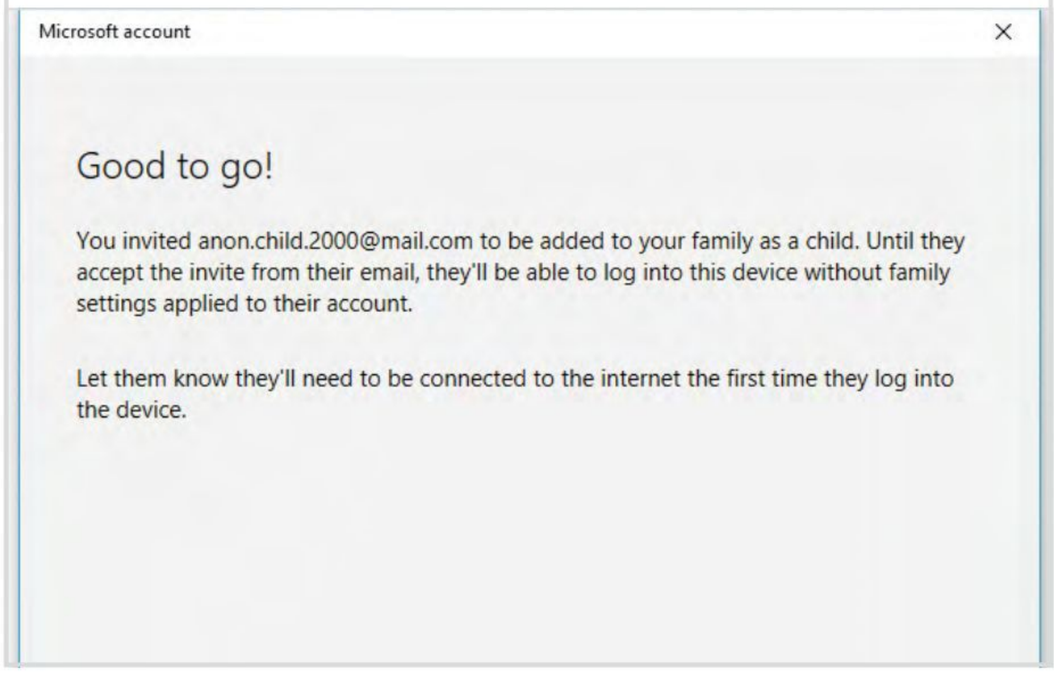
Step 6 You'll now get the message that it's not a Microsoft account, click the link to Create a Microsoft Account. This will bring you to a new window with the email address you've entered already filled in. Complete the relevant details and click the Next button to continue.



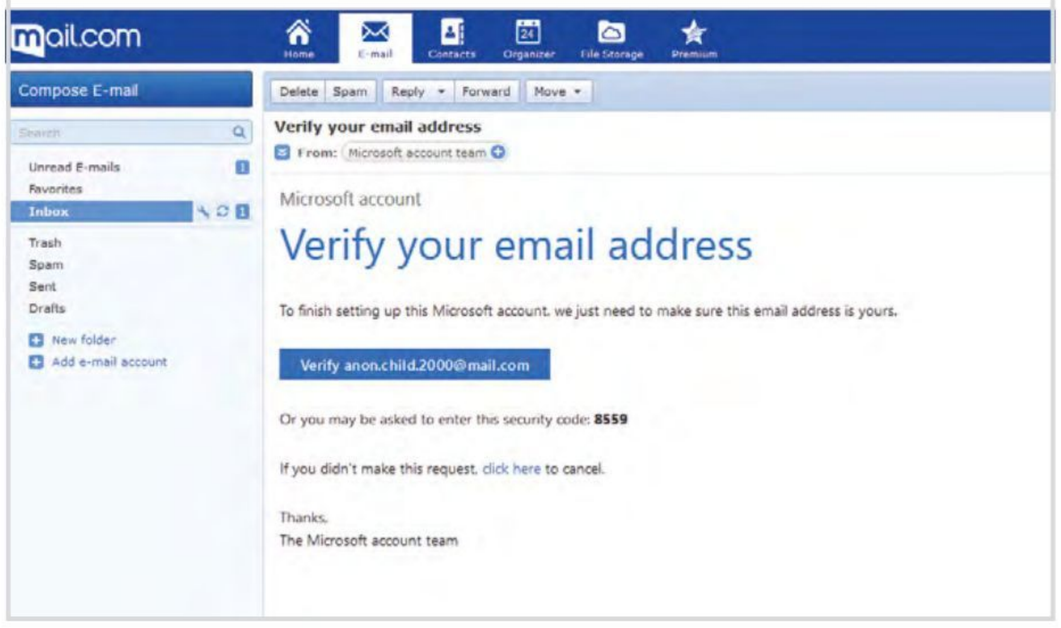
Step 7 The next section details what level of search and advertising Microsoft will allow to the account. Obviously you can untick both boxes, or leave them as they are, depending on what you want. However, for the sake of enhanced privacy, we recommend unticking both. Click Next when you're ready.



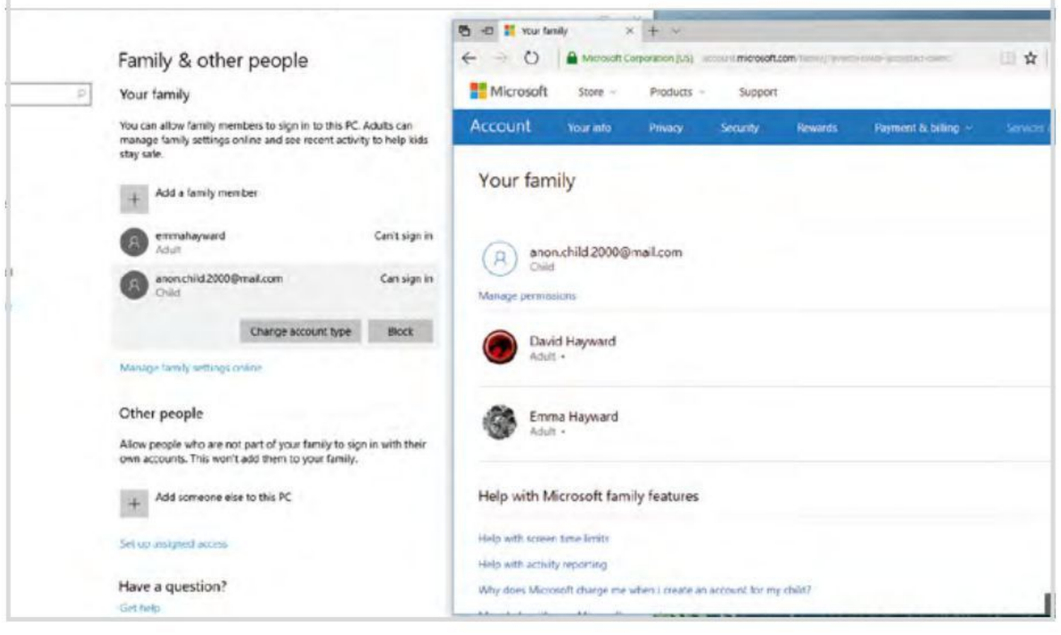
Step 8 The child's account is now ready to be activated. The message box informs you that you'll need to respond to the email Microsoft has sent before they're able to log in in to the Windows 10 computer. Click the Close button when you're ready.



Step 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 log in 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.



Step 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 log in; or manage it via the Microsoft Family portal online, which we'll look at in the next tutorial.



Settings

Exploring the Windows 10 Options

Windows 10 settings are actually spread across a couple of different menus but the main settings can be accessed by clicking the Start menu button, where you should see them pinned in the folder list. If not you can search for 'Settings' using the Windows 10 search bar. You can pin the settings icon to the taskbar or Start menu for easier access.

External Device Settings

This is where you come to manage all of your connected devices, from printers and scanners to your mouse and keyboard. Related settings are also found here, including Bluetooth and touchpad settings if you are using a laptop.

Main System Setting

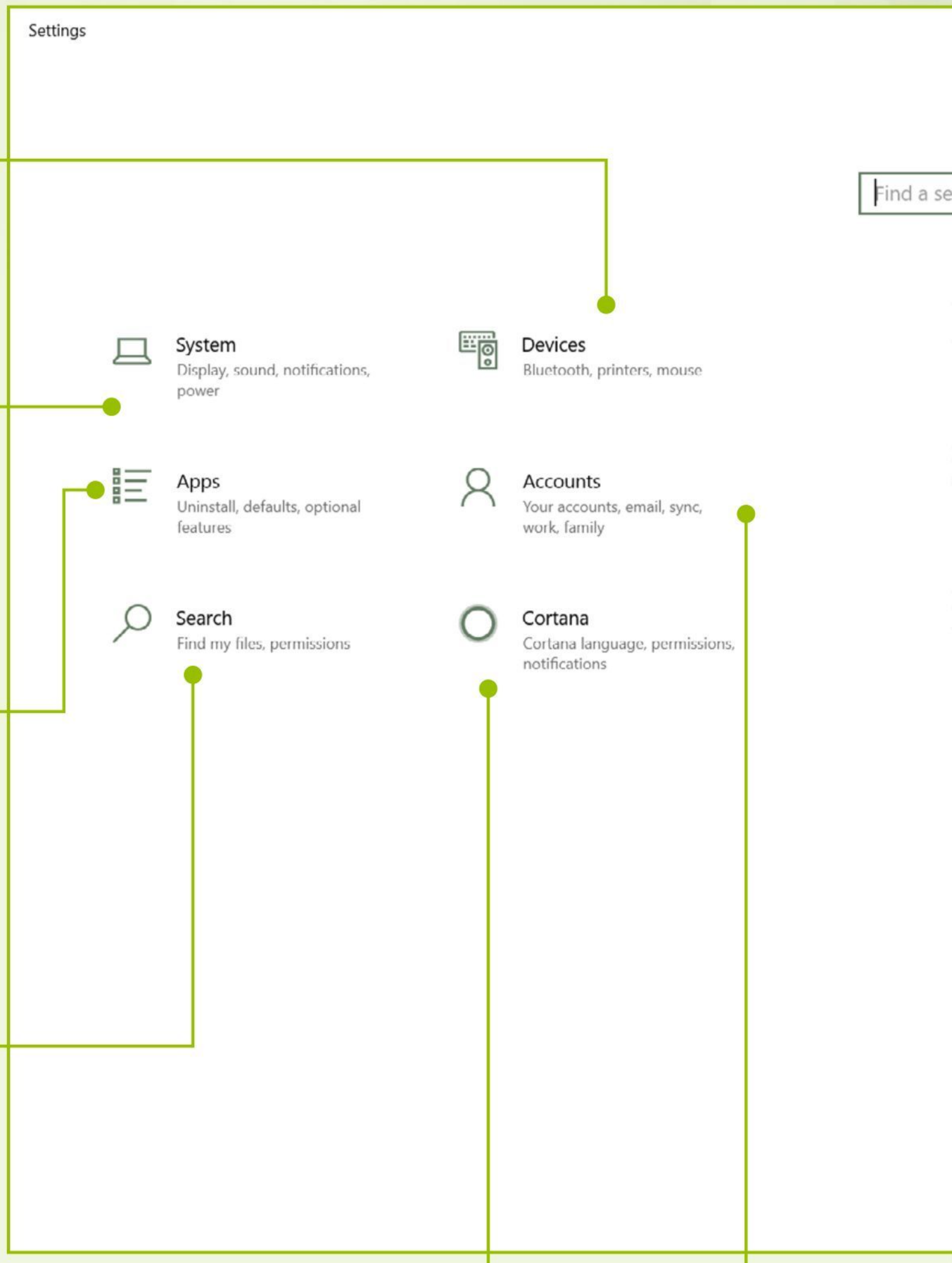
Here you can find settings and options for things like the Display, Notifications, Apps, Power and Storage. The About section contains lots of information about the hardware in your computer as well as the operating system software version being used.

App Settings

This is where you can find details on all of the apps you have installed on your Windows 10 computer. The main list shows you the name, file size, developer and the date it was installed (or updated). You can also set app preferences here, so which apps are used to complete certain tasks.

Search

Now that search and Cortana have been split apart, there is a new group of settings for search. Here you can control Safe Search settings, cloud search content, and your search history. You can also control what is searched (all files, or just libraries and desktop).



Cortana Settings

Since the Fall Creators update you can access the Cortana settings through the main settings panel, rather than just through the Cortana sidebar. There are some new settings to find here since the update, including the ability to manage cloud search options.

Account Settings

Account settings contains all of the options you need for managing your local Microsoft account. This includes the secure sign-in options such as password, PIN and picture password, as well as the new Dynamic Lock settings, workplace or school access settings and Microsoft Family settings.

Settings

Phone Sync Settings

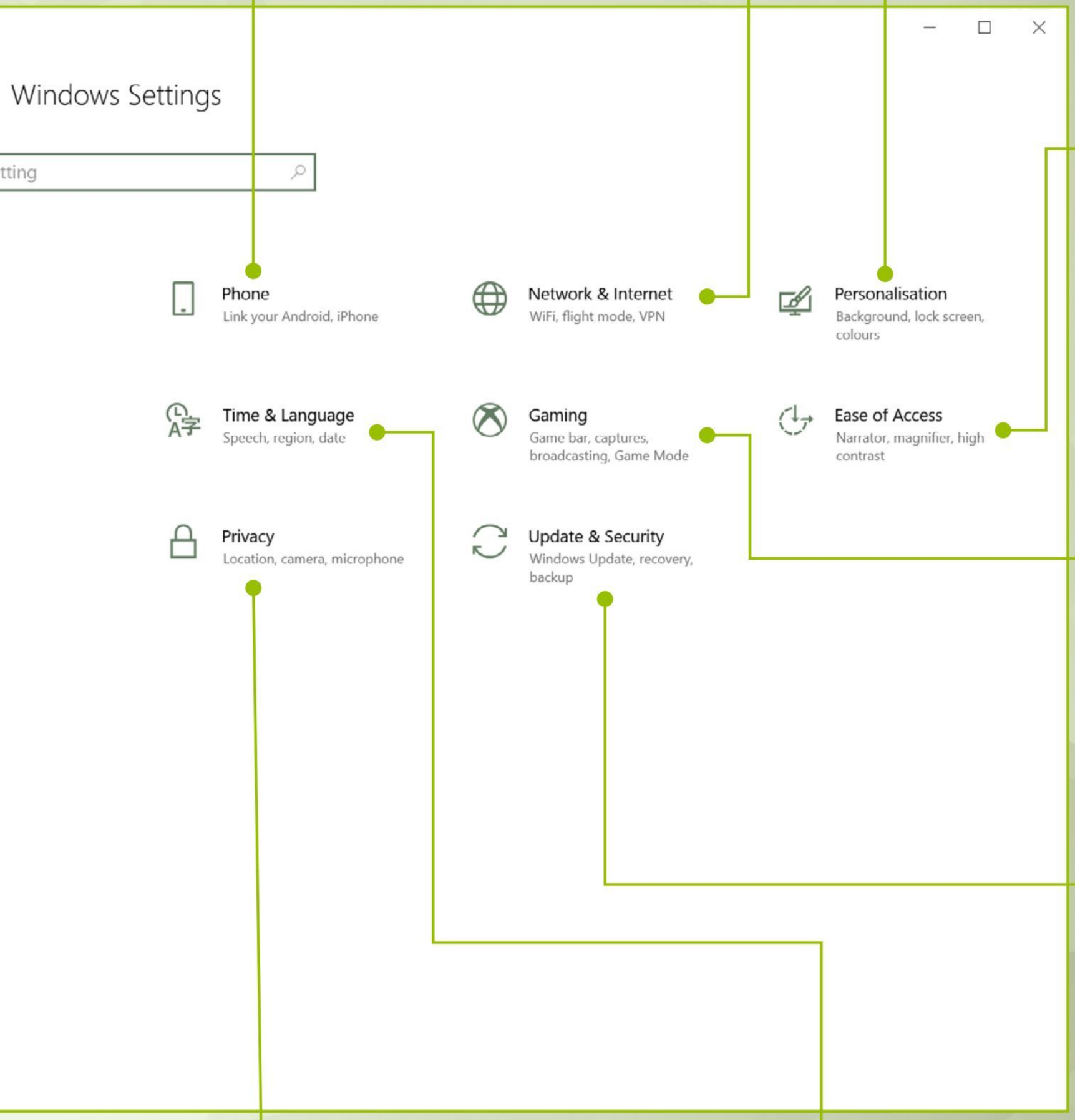
A new addition with the Fall Creators update is the ability to link your Windows, Android or iOS phone to your PC and share documents, files and data more easily between them more easily. This section of the settings lets you set up the phone sync, and manage it afterwards.

Network & Internet Settings

If you are having problems with your Internet connection, this is where you should come to find details and information. Everything from Internet options to flight mode and firewall settings can be found here. Each section contains links to more advanced options.

Personalisation Settings

Nearly everything about the way Windows looks can be customised to some degree. Personalisation settings include options for changing the desktop wallpaper, colours of menus and windows, lock screen settings and the theme management tools.



Ease of Access Settings

Previously called Accessibility, if you have additional accessibility needs to use a computer efficiently, you can find lots of settings here to make life easier. From a narrator tool and screen magnifier, to closed captioning and mouse and keyboard settings. You can even make the cursor thicker and easier to see.

Gaming Settings

A new addition to the settings with the recent update, here you will find the newly added gaming tools. These include a game recorded (Game DVR), the tools for broadcasting your games and the Game Mode option. This helps to optimise any games you play on your PC.

Update and Security Settings

It is important to make sure that your Windows computer is up-to-date with all the latest updates and revisions. Within this settings menu, you can check to see which updates are available to download and install. You can also create backups and recovery discs here.

Privacy Settings

The privacy settings contains sections for all of the main areas where your privacy may be compromised, including some which might not be obvious at first. Click on each of the section headings to see additional settings and options.

Time & Language Settings

In addition to the obvious settings for the time and date displayed on your computer (having this information correct is more important than many think) this is where you come to change the display and input language for your computer.

Desktop

Exploring Start, Action Center and Taskbar

The Start menu, taskbar and Action Center are likely to be three of the most used areas of the Windows 10 interface for most people. There have been several additions and improvements to these tools in the recent updates, making them even easier to use, so let's take a look at what you can do with these essential Windows tools.

All Apps List

As you use Windows 10 and the various apps and software, a list of your most used tools will appear here. This is constantly updated as your use of the OS evolves. At the top of the All Apps list is a Recently Added section, showing newly installed software and a Most Used section showing your favourite applications. Click either heading to open a jump to letter menu.

Start Menu Folders

If you pin apps to the Start menu, their icons will appear below the block of tiles. You can now move these app icons into folders within the Start menu. To do this, click and drag one icon on top of another. If the bottom icon expands slightly rather than moving out of the way, drop the icon to create the folder.

System Folders

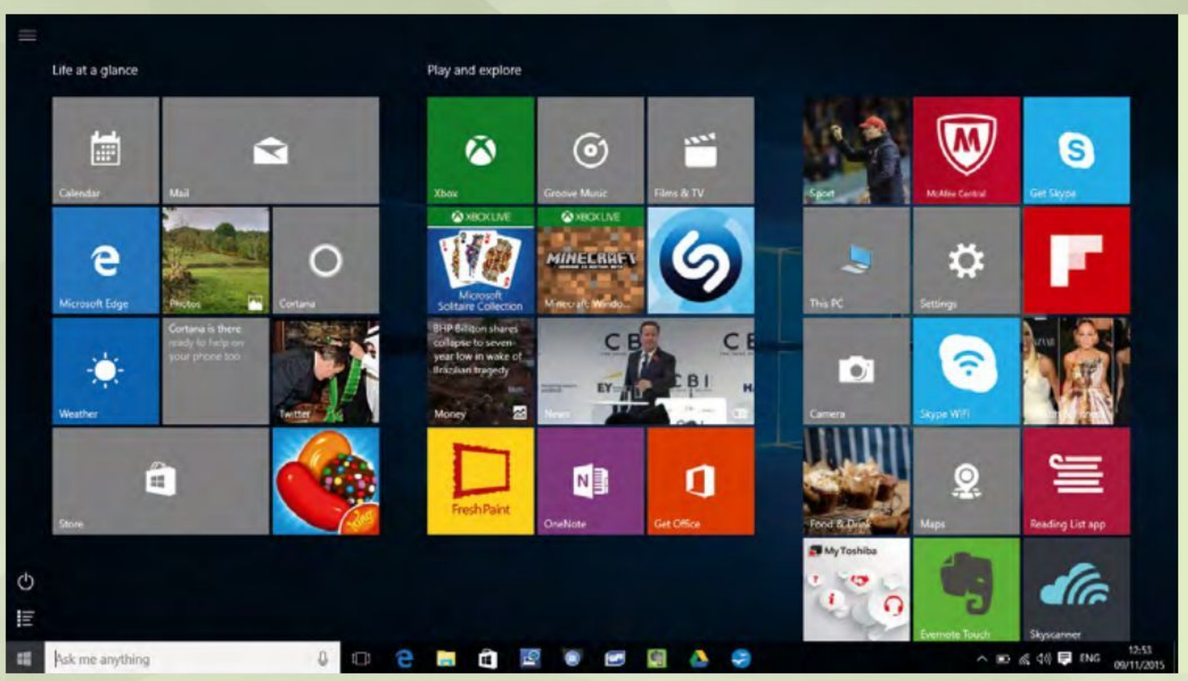
You can change the folders that appear in the bottom half of the Start menu, depending on how you use Windows 10. Settings, Power and All Apps will always be present in this part of the menu but everything else can be chosen in Settings > Personalisation.

Search Bar

The search bar is always visible to the right of the Windows button, unless viewing an app or game in full screen mode. Click in the Ask me Anything box and the search window will open. You can either type your search term or, if set up, use the Mic to ask Cortana. When the search menu opens, it will hopefully be prefilled with relevant information and links.

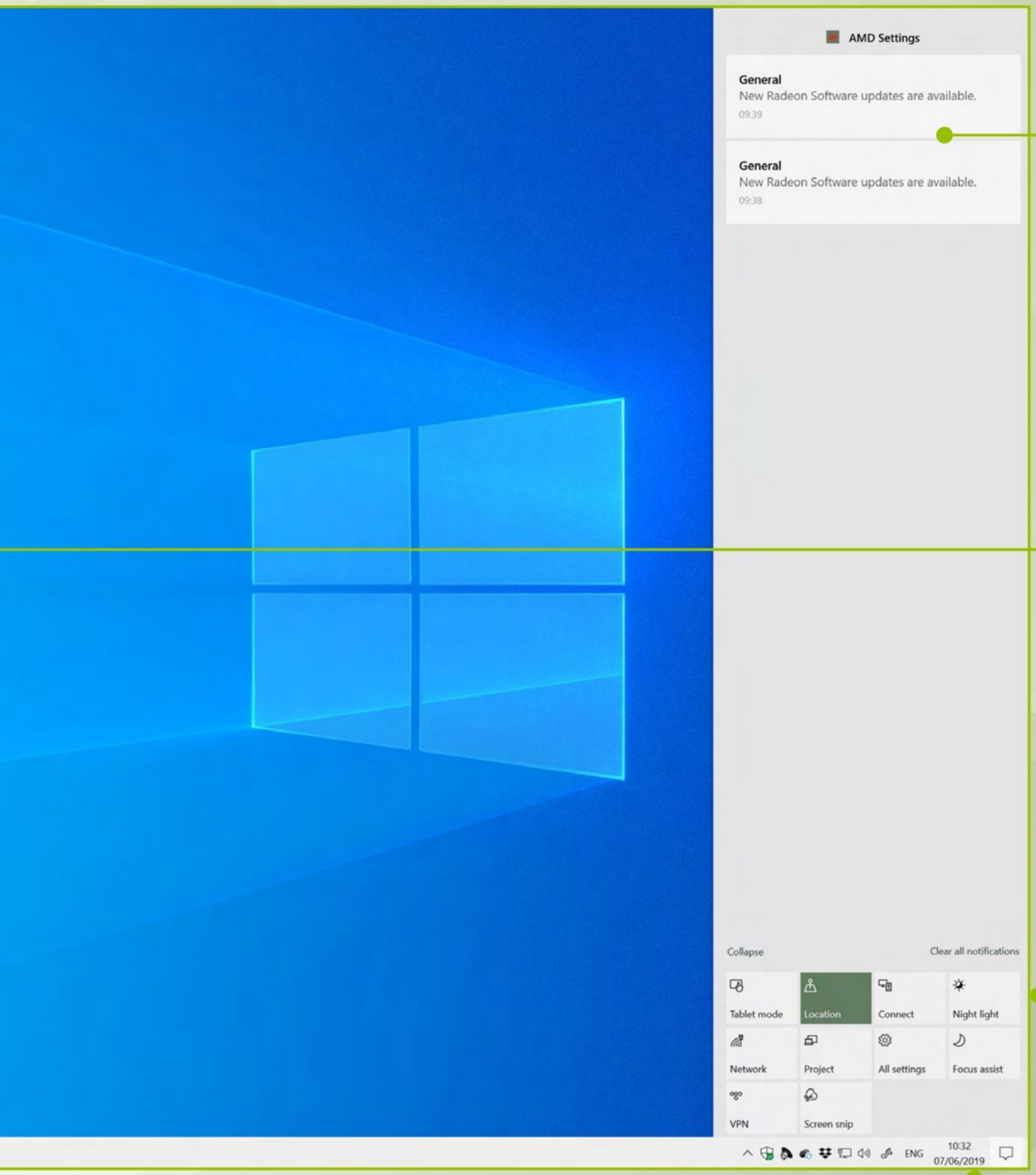
Taskbar (left)

The taskbar contains shortcuts to many of the most commonly used apps, including the Edge browser, App Store and File Explorer. You can add any app to the taskbar by right-clicking on the tile or app icon and selecting Pin to taskbar from the menu. Right-clicking on the taskbar will also allow you to add different toolbars to it.



PERSONALISATION

You can personalise the Start menu and taskbar in a number of ways. Open the main settings and click on Personalisation. In the Start section you will see sliders to control whether you see recently added apps, most used apps, etc. You can also set the Start menu to display in full screen like it did in Windows 8.1.



Action Center Notifications

Notifications in the Action Center range from security alerts and system errors, to emails and Facebook updates. If you are seeing notifications here that you don't need, Twitter updates for example, you can right-click the heading and turn off notifications for that app.

Start Menu Tiles

Just as with Windows 8.1, the tiles that appear in the Start menu display information (when appropriate) from the apps and services they link to. You can customise the look of the tiles by right-clicking on them and selecting an option from the menu that appears. Tiles are now automatically split into relevant sections, e.g. Play and Explore.

Quick Settings

The Quick Settings displayed here will vary depending on the device you are using. You will normally see Wi-Fi, Note, All Settings, Bluetooth, Location and Quiet Hours here at the very least. If the Quick Settings menu is collapsed, click the Expand button to show the full menu. You can now customise the Quick Settings buttons shown in Settings > System > Notifications and Actions.

Taskbar (right)

The right-hand side of the taskbar contains several essential Windows tools. Here you can check battery power (if using a laptop), your Wi-Fi connection details, speaker volume and several other things. You will also find the button to open the new Action Center here. The Anniversary update added notification badges here, so you can see unread notification amounts at a glance.

Start Menu

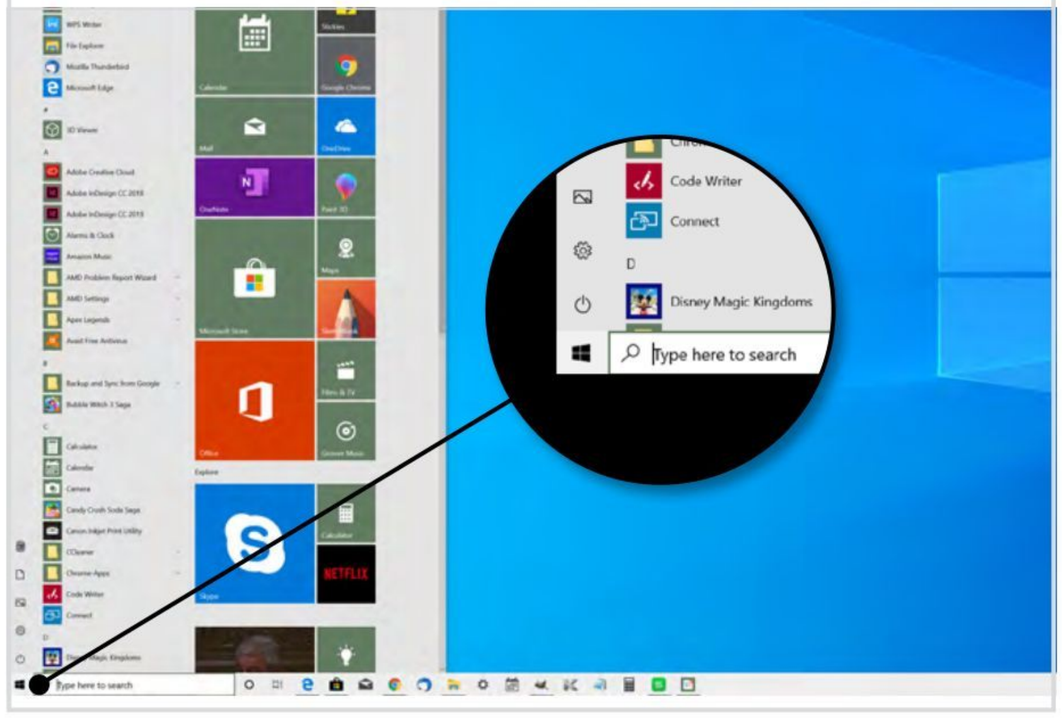
Using the Main Windows 10 Menu

The Start menu in Windows 10 is useful for much more than just displaying a list of your apps and software. It includes Live Tiles, shortcuts to folders and settings, and you can even create folders within the menu itself. Learning how to use the Start menu is a must.

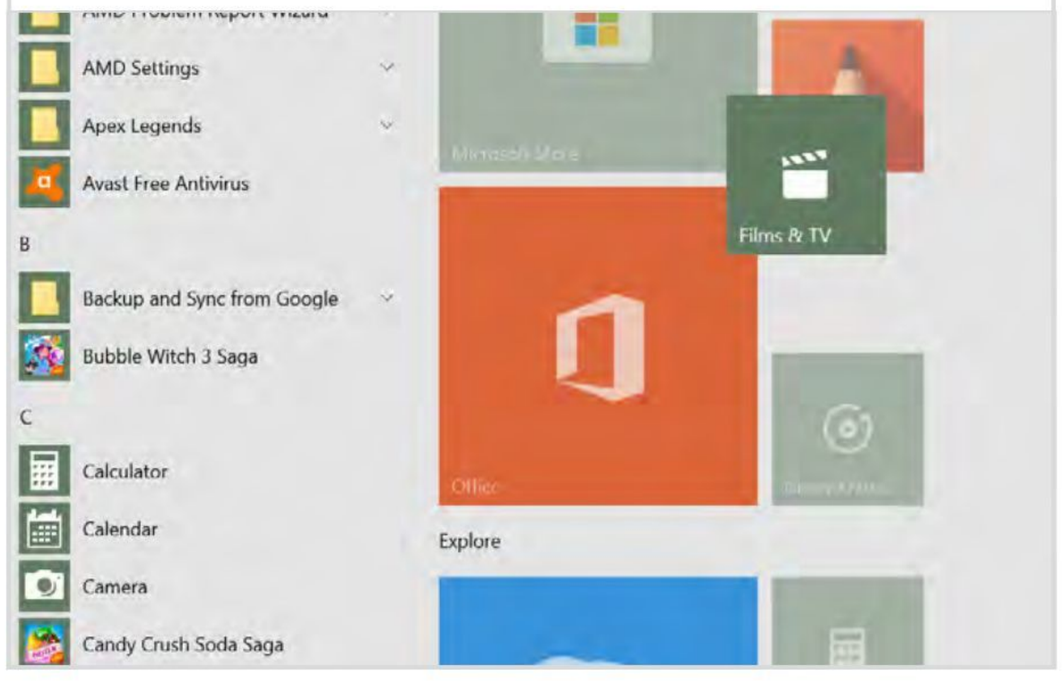
Get to Grips with Start

Microsoft has completely redesigned the Start menu for a new era and it seems to be improved with every update to the OS, so it takes a little getting used to at first. Here's our tour of the new Start.

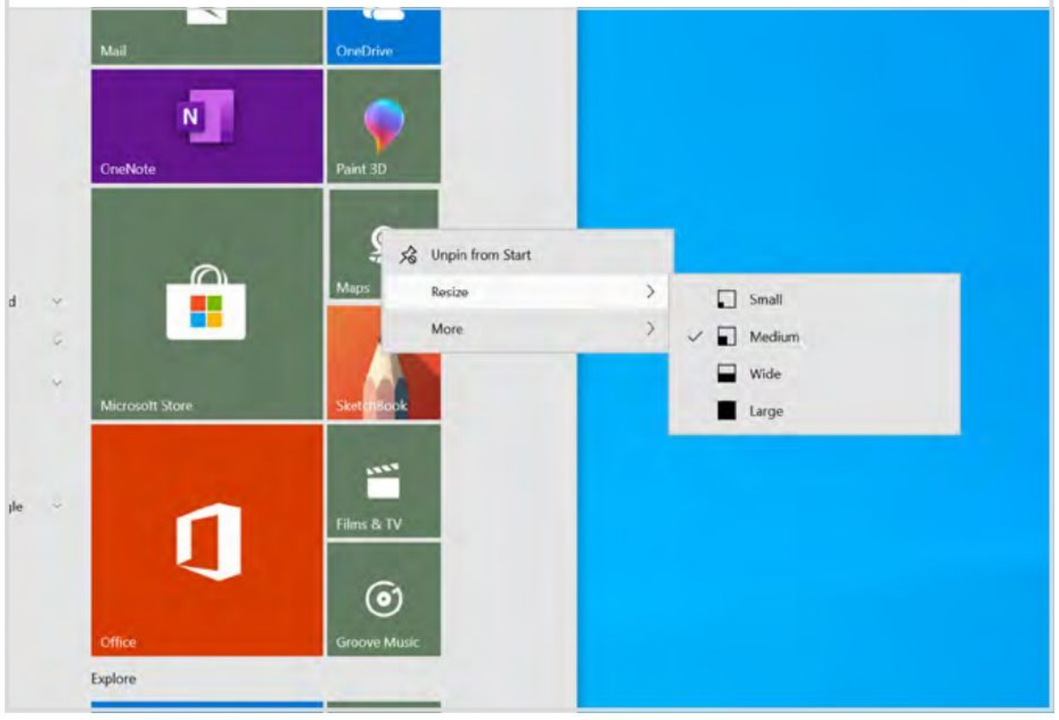
Step 1 You open the Start menu by clicking the Windows icon in the bottom left of the desktop or by pressing the Windows Key on your keyboard. The menu in Windows 10 is a mix of the Windows 7 and 8 styles but works better than either, with a list of apps on the left and Live Tiles on the right.



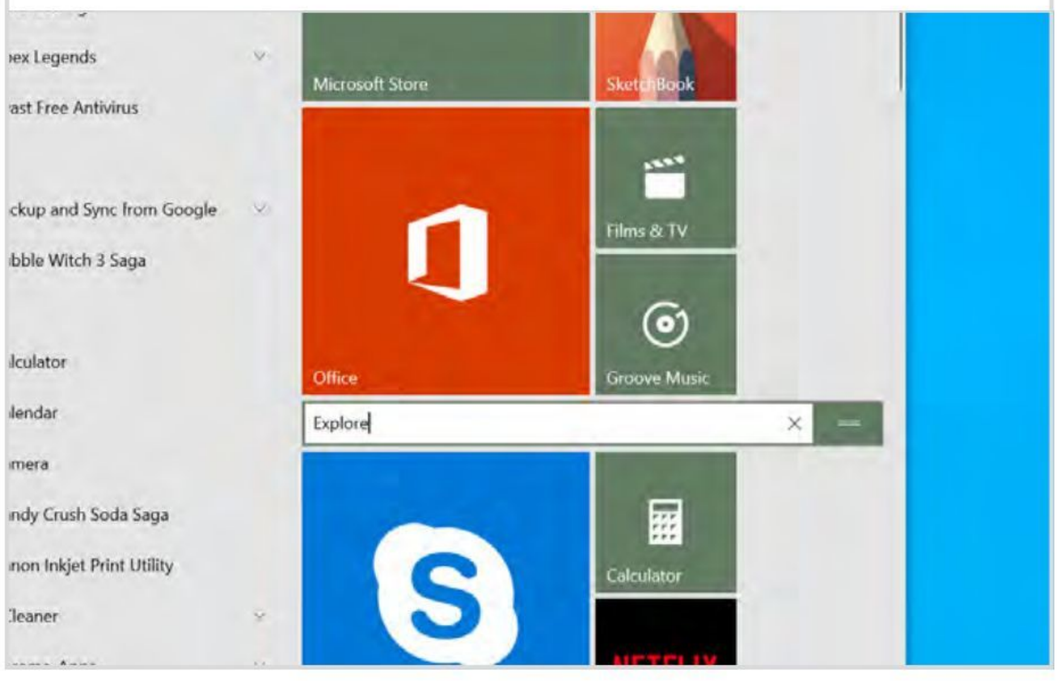
Step 2 The live tiles work in the same way as they did in Windows 8. You can drag any of them around the menu should you wish to reorder them. You can right-click any file, folder or app in Windows 10 and select Pin to Start to include it here. Once in the menu, click and drag to rearrange tiles.



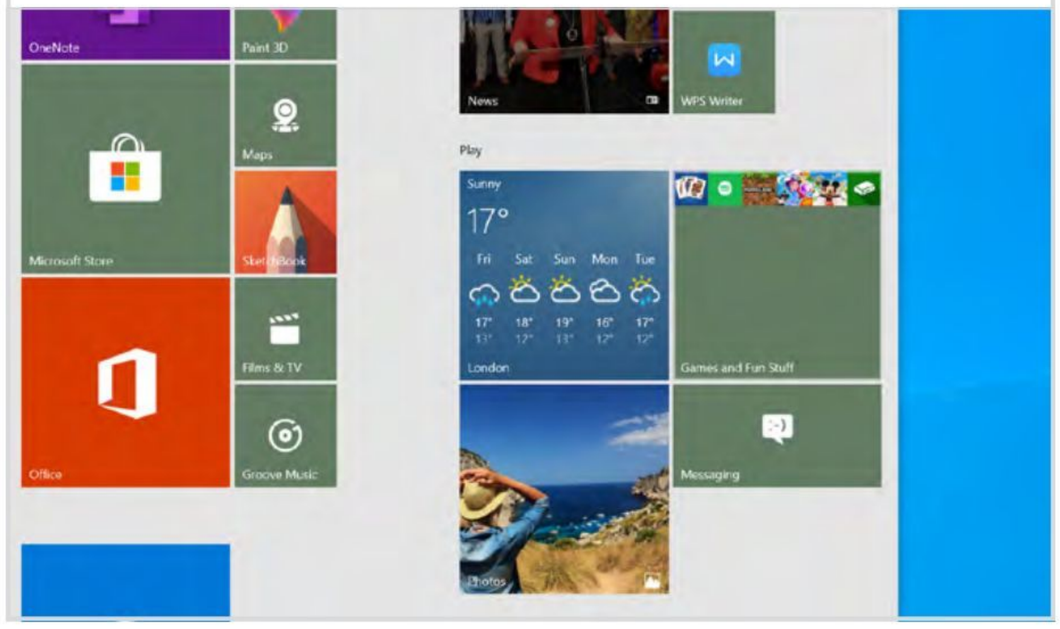
Step 3 You can right-click anything in the live tiles area of the Start menu to bring up the tile menu. This lets you resize, unpin and even turn the live tile into a static tile. There are up to four different sizes of live tile: small, medium, wide and large, giving you lots of ways to build the perfect Start menu.



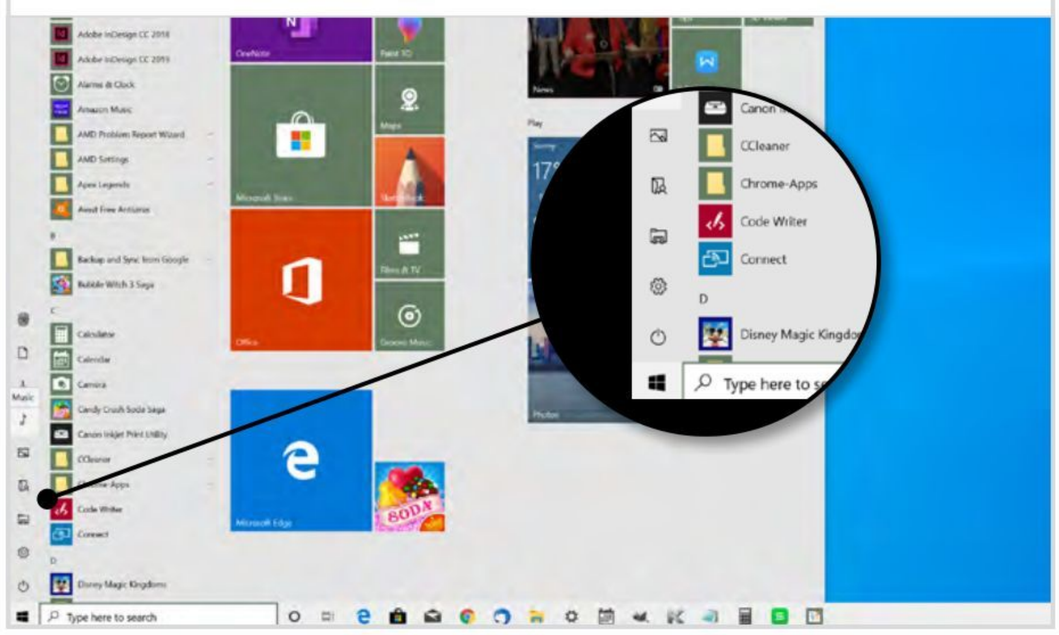
Step 4 The tiles are split into groups. You can click the headings on existing groups to rename them. Dragging one of the tiles to the bottom of the menu, to an unused area of the menu, enables you to create a new group. A bar will appear at the bottom to indicate that a new group will be created.



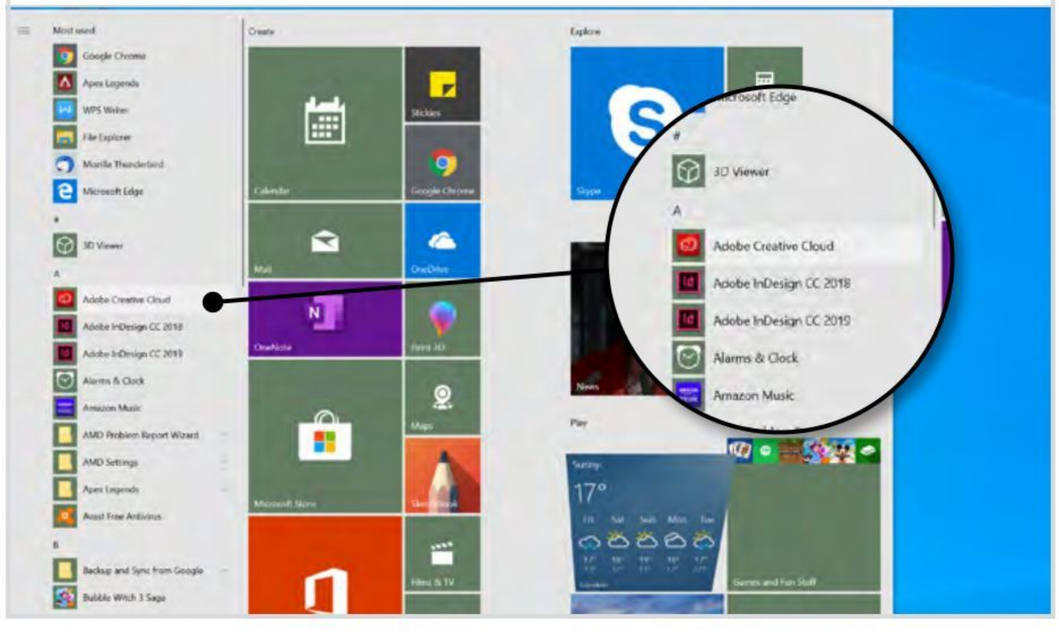
Step 5 The Start menu now allows for the creation of folders. This means that you can further organise the menu by keeping related app icons in a single place. To create a folder, simply click and drag an app icon over another. The icon beneath will expand slightly. Drop the dragged icon and the folder is created.



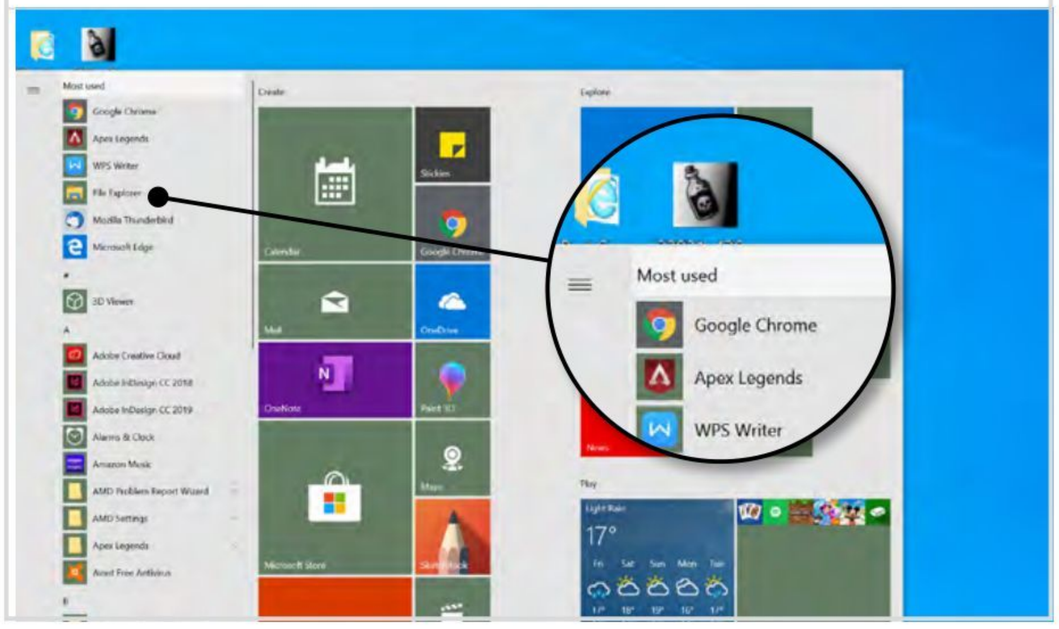
Step 6 On the left-hand side at the bottom, there's a list of key items, such as the Settings app and a shortcut to the File Explorer. Click the power icon and you can shut down or restart your PC. You can add more options to this shortcut section in Settings > Personalisation > Start > Choose which folders appear.



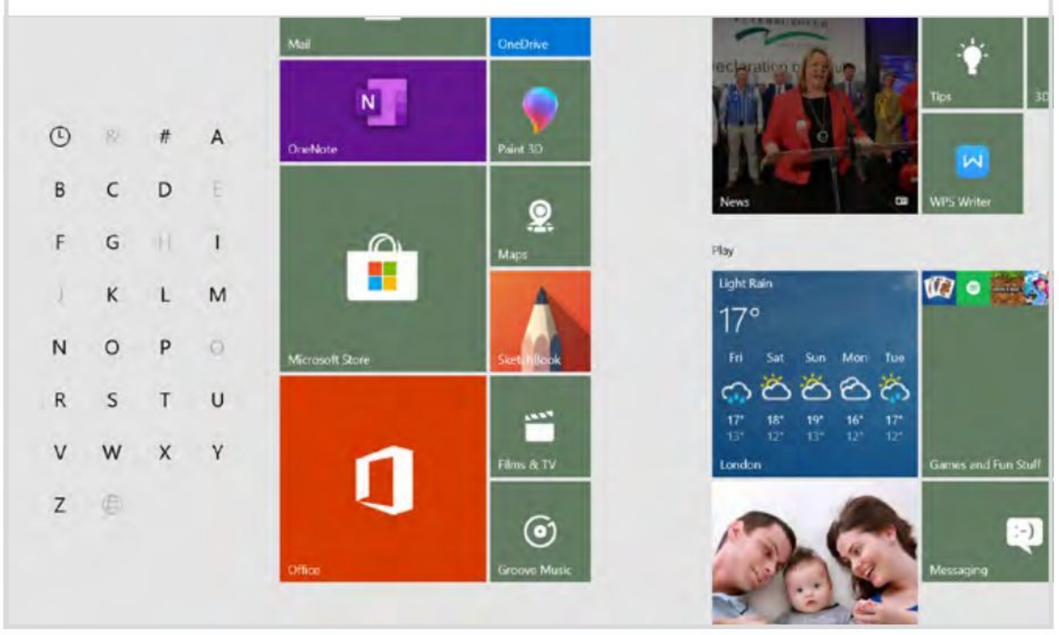
Step 7 The final area of the Start menu is the apps and software list. This displays all of the installed apps and software on your computer (software which doesn't require installation to run won't be shown here). Scroll up and down to view the full list and click the arrow next to apps to see more options.



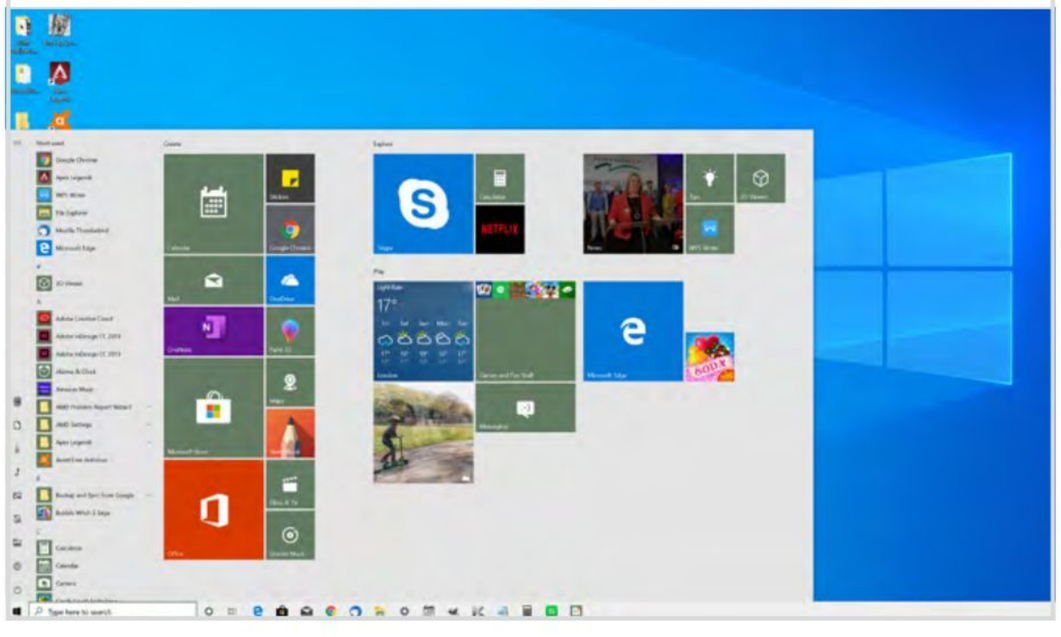
Step 8 The Most Used section at the top of the list enables you to access recently opened programs. This will also show recently opened files, so if you have Microsoft Word installed, simply go to the menu next to the icon in the most used apps menu and you can instantly open your recently worked upon files.



Step 9 Clicking on any of the headings (including the individual letters) of the apps list will open an A-Z selection menu. You can then quickly click on any of the letters to skip directly to the listed apps that begin with that letter, rather than having to scroll down through the entire thing.



Step 10 Finally, Windows 10 also makes it easy to resize the Start menu. Move the mouse to the edges and resize handles will appear, so you can have it covering half your screen or a much smaller proportion. You can even set the Start menu to open full screen, by going to Settings > Personalisation > Start.



Action Center

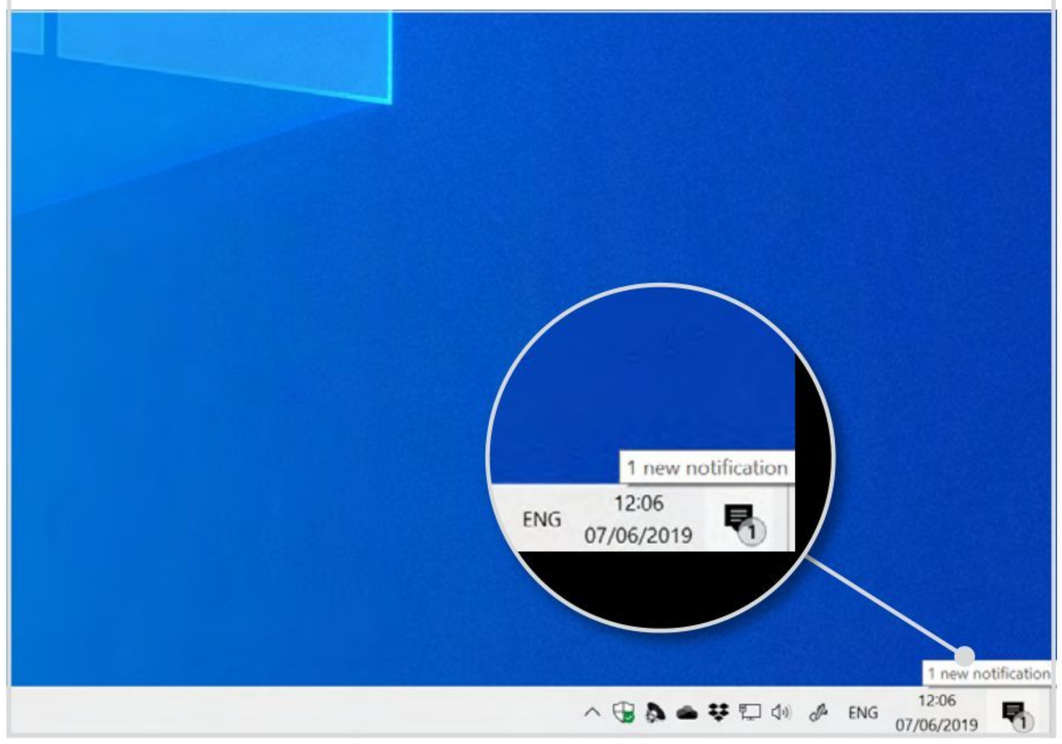
Managing Alerts and Notifications

There have always been pop-up messages in Windows but now there is a centralised way in which these are viewed and interacted with. Called the Action Center, it is designed to work more like the notifications panel on a smartphone or tablet.

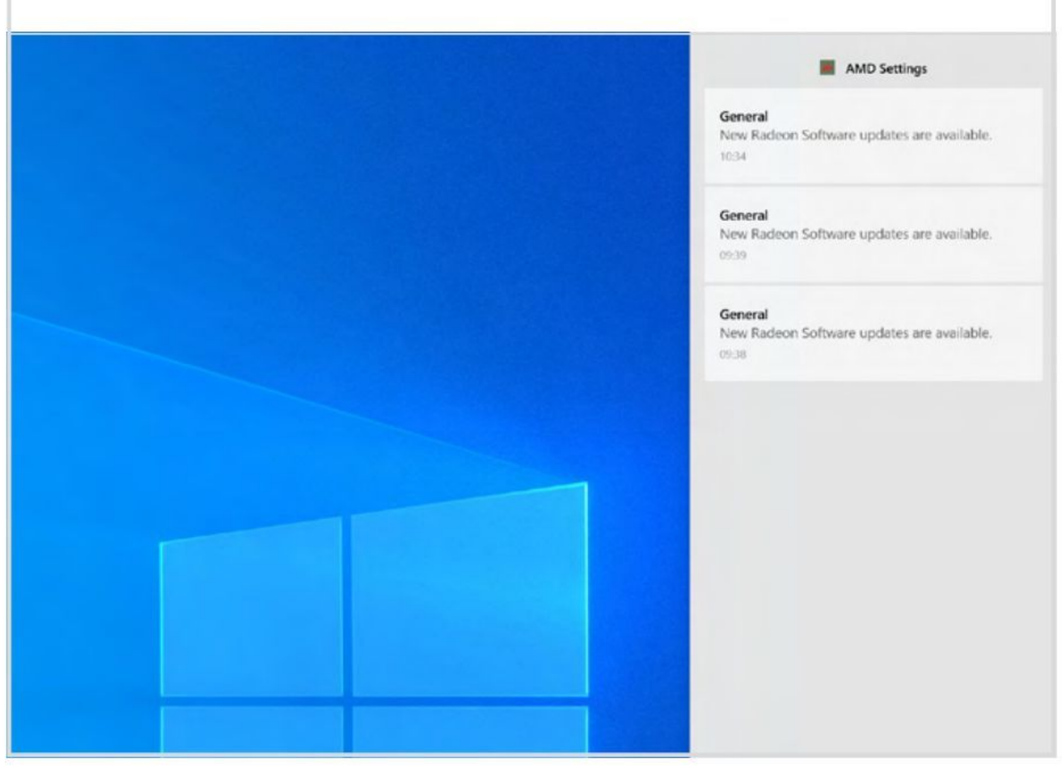
Exploring the Action Center

The new Action Center is a key interface element in Windows 10, providing you with access to Quick actions buttons as well as the notifications and alerts.

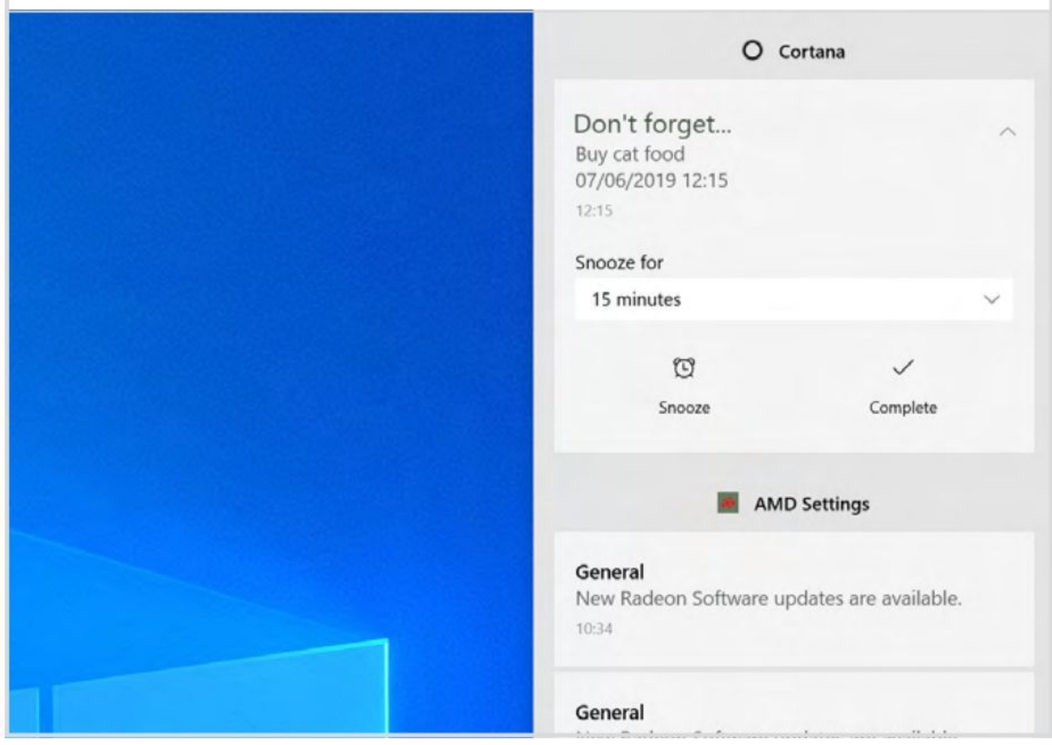
Step 1 You can open the Action Center by clicking the speech bubble icon on the far-right of the taskbar or by pressing the Windows Key + A on your keyboard. If you hover the mouse pointer over the Action Center button, it will tell you if you have any new notifications.



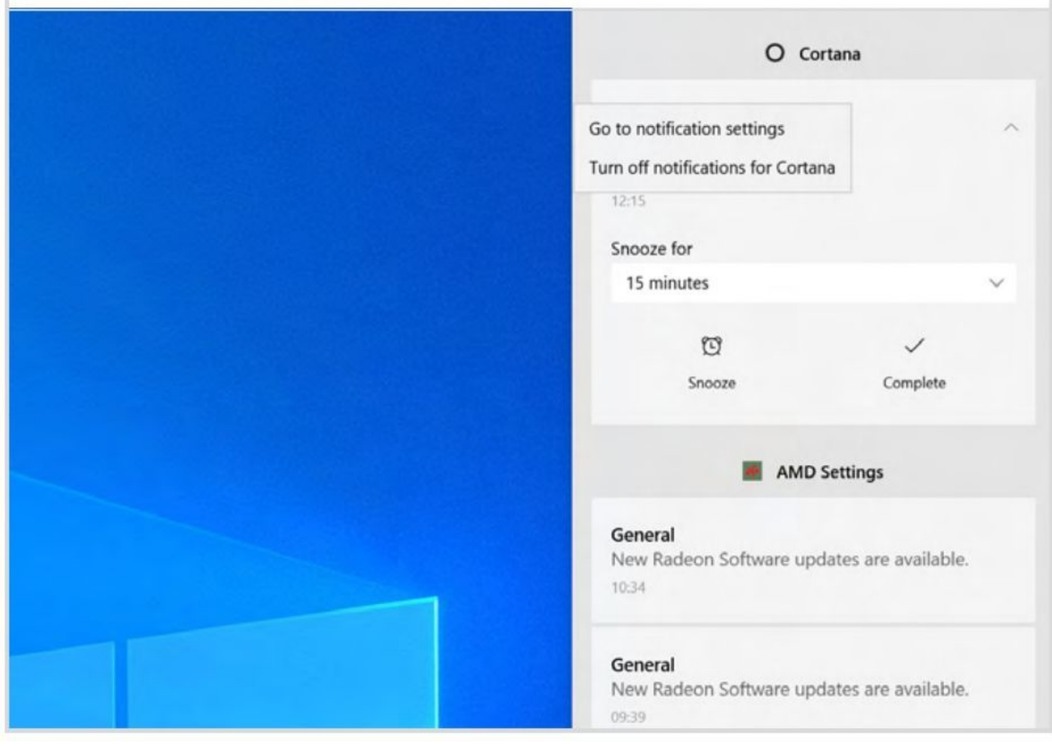
Step 2 This is what the Action Center looks like when you click the button. Any notifications are grouped by app, with a heading showing which app they are from. Notifications will remain in the panel until you actively dismiss them or action them (click through to the apps).



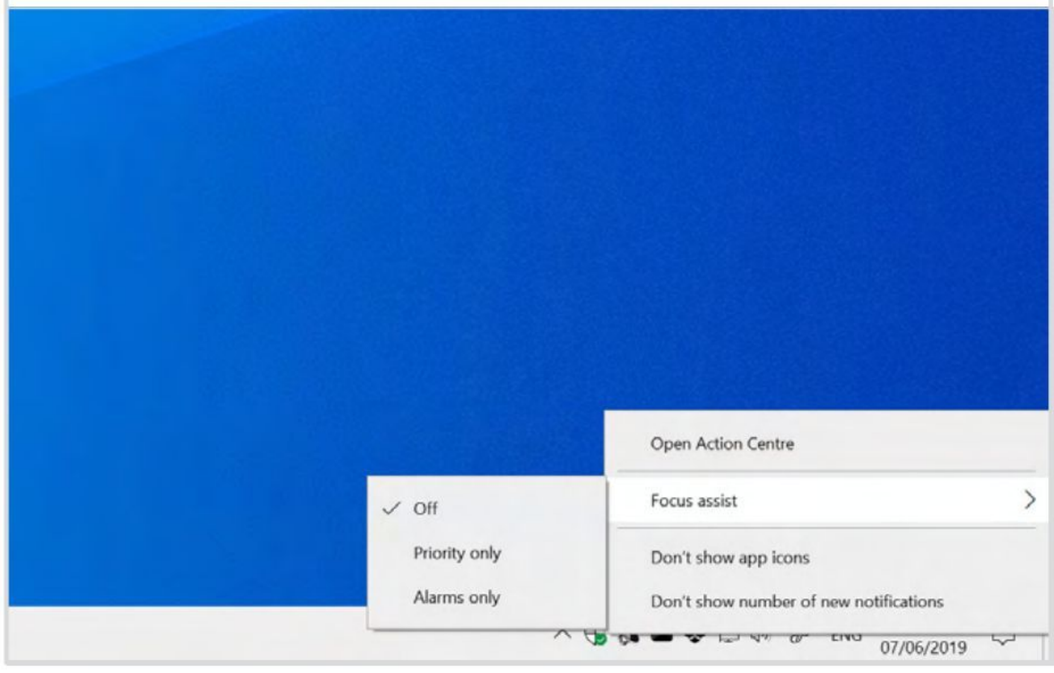
Step 3 Clicking on a notification will take you to the app that generated it. You can also interact with certain notifications within the Action Center panel. On this screen, you can see that the Calendar notification allows you to snooze it for various lengths of time.



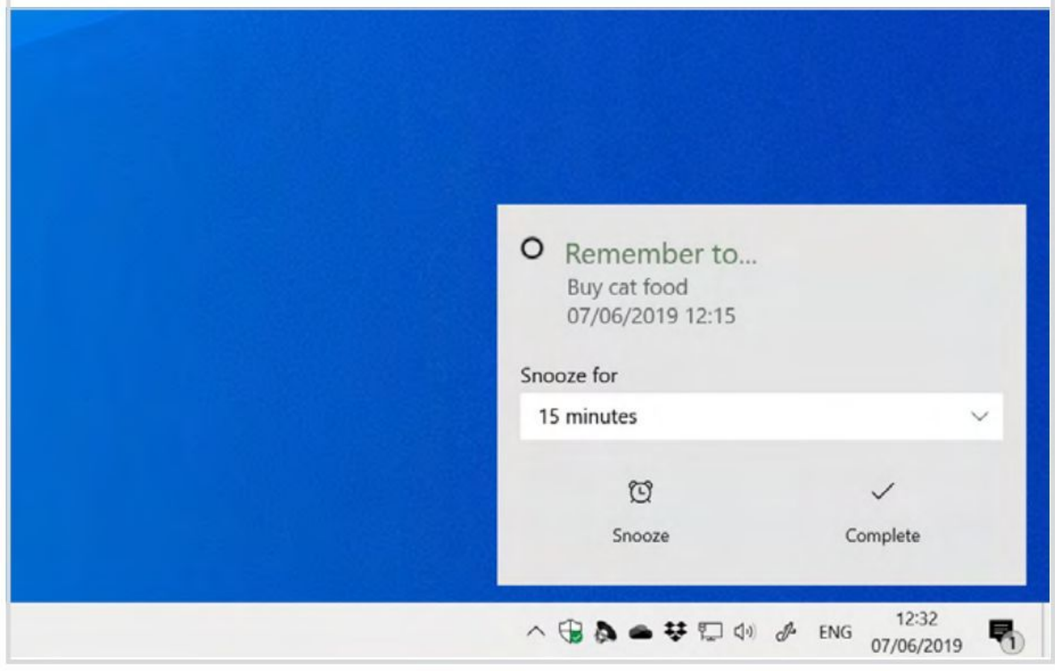
Step 4 You can also control whether or not an app sends notifications, or whether notifications are prioritised, from within the panel. Right-click on the app heading when a notification arrives and choose the desired option from the action menu that appears.



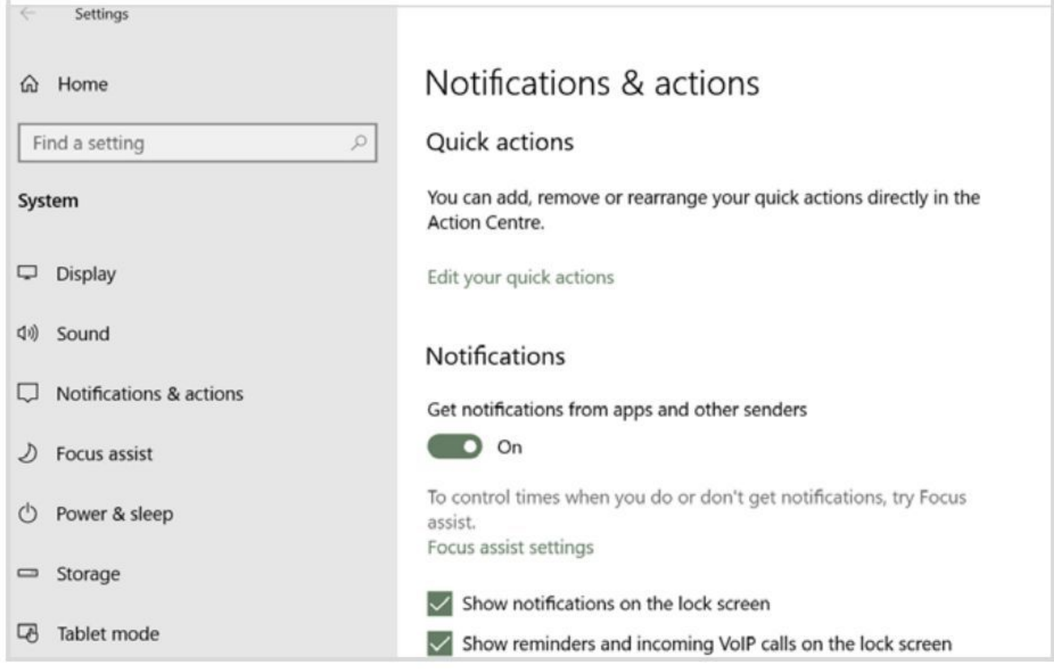
Step 5 If you right-click on the actual Action Center button in the taskbar, you will see some different options in the action menu that appears. These include the option to turn on Quiet hours, show/hide app icons and show/hide the number of notifications on the button.



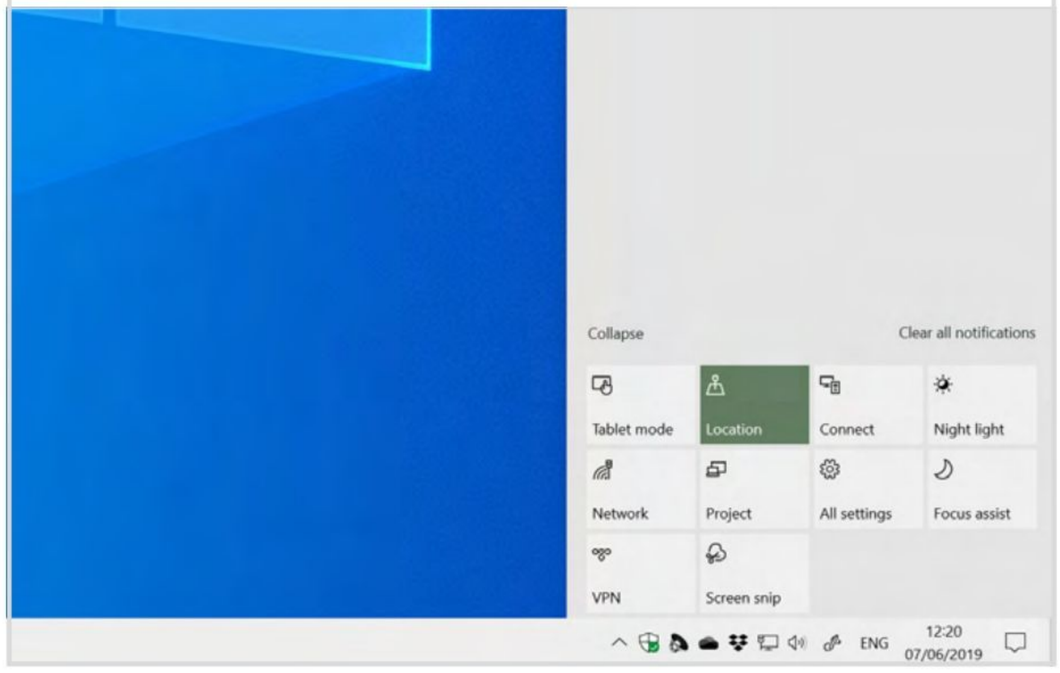
Step 6 In addition to being displayed in the Action Center, notifications will create a pop-up window that appears at the bottom right of your screen. Clicking on these pop-up windows will also take you to the app that generated the notification (the Calendar app for example).



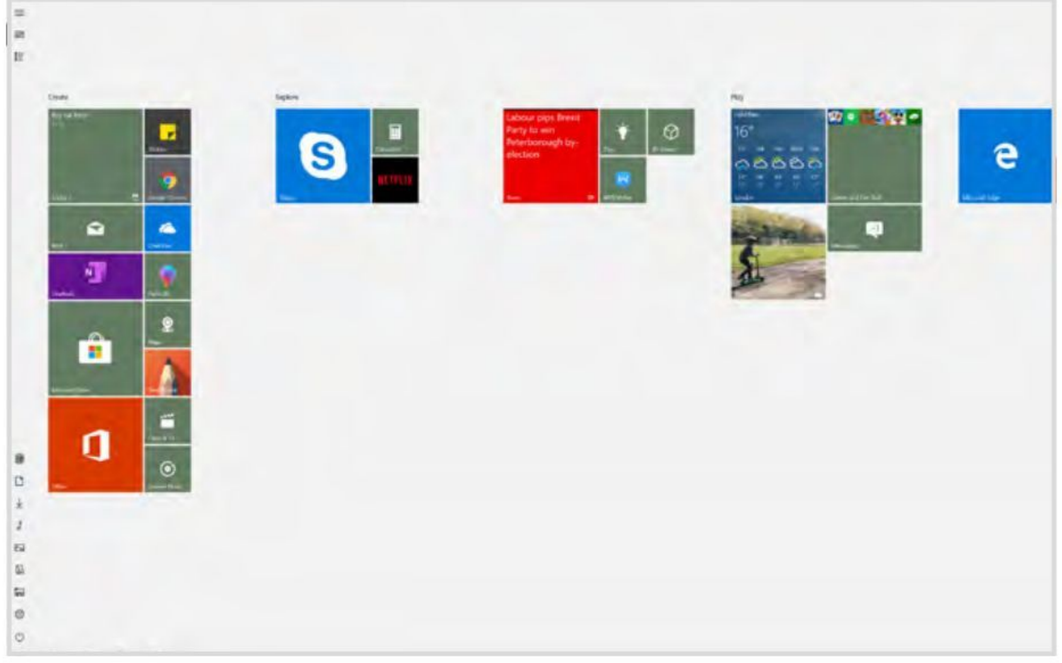
Step 7 When you're done with the notifications on the menu, you can click the Clear All button at the top to dismiss them. In Settings > System > Notifications and Actions, you can choose the Quick Actions that appear at the top of the bottom panel in the Action Center.



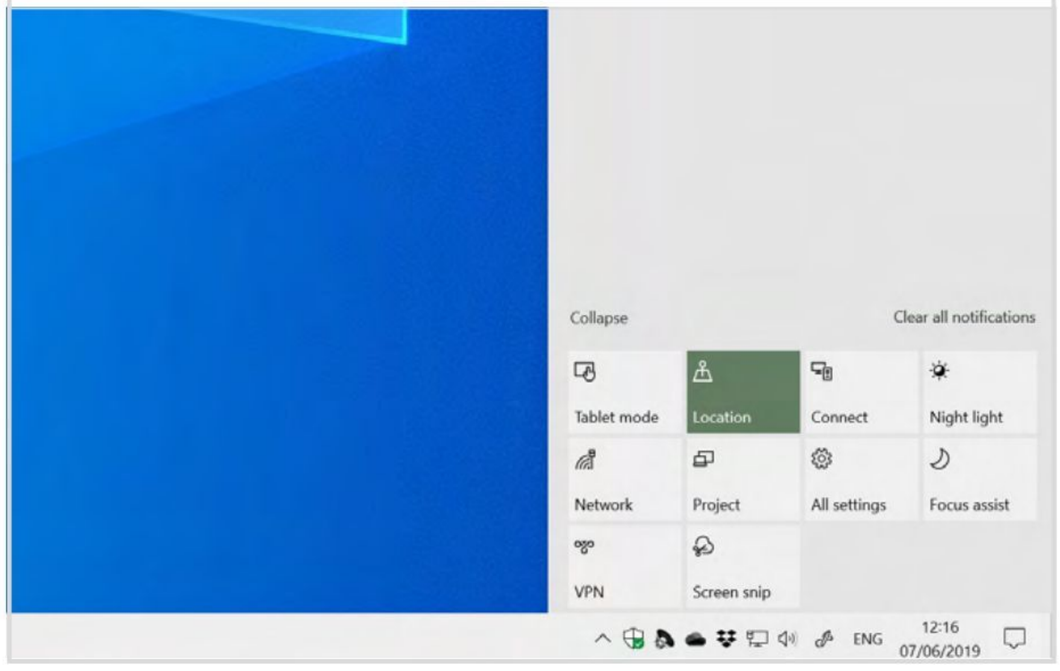
Step 8 A very useful addition to the Action Center is the Quick actions panel at the bottom. This allows you to quickly perform some key functions (or actions) such as connecting to Wi-Fi. You can expand or collapse this bar by clicking the relevant heading.



Step 9 The Quick actions panel contains the Tablet mode button. Tablet mode automatically prepares the desktop for use with a touchscreen and your fingers; perfect if using Windows 10 on a touchscreen laptop or tablet. Upon activation you will notice an instant change.



Step 10 Whether you are on a Windows tablet or a laptop, at some point you will probably need to shut down the Wi-Fi and Bluetooth (on an aircraft for example). Clicking Flight mode halts all wireless communication and places an aeroplane icon in your notifications area.



The Taskbar

An Essential Windows 10 Tool

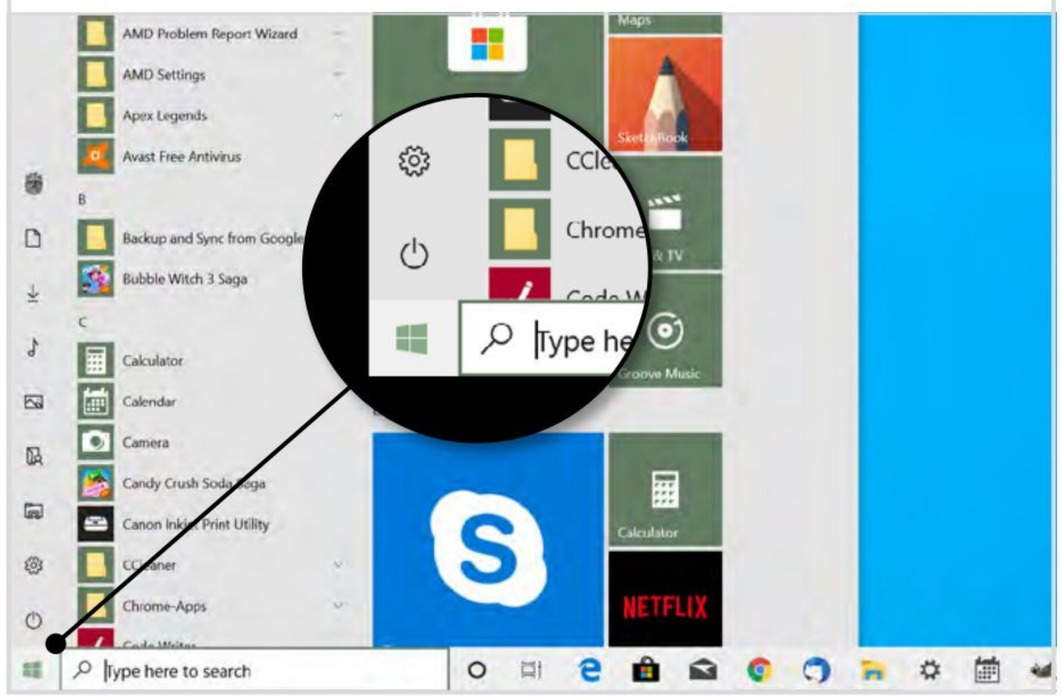
The taskbar not only gives you quick access to several key Windows 10 tools like Search and Cortana, it can be further customised with pinned apps, system tools and settings. Making full use of the Taskbar can really improve how Windows 10 works for you.

Mastering the Windows 10 Taskbar

There are a lot more features and functions of the Taskbar than may first meet the eye. Let's take a look at how you can discover and master them.

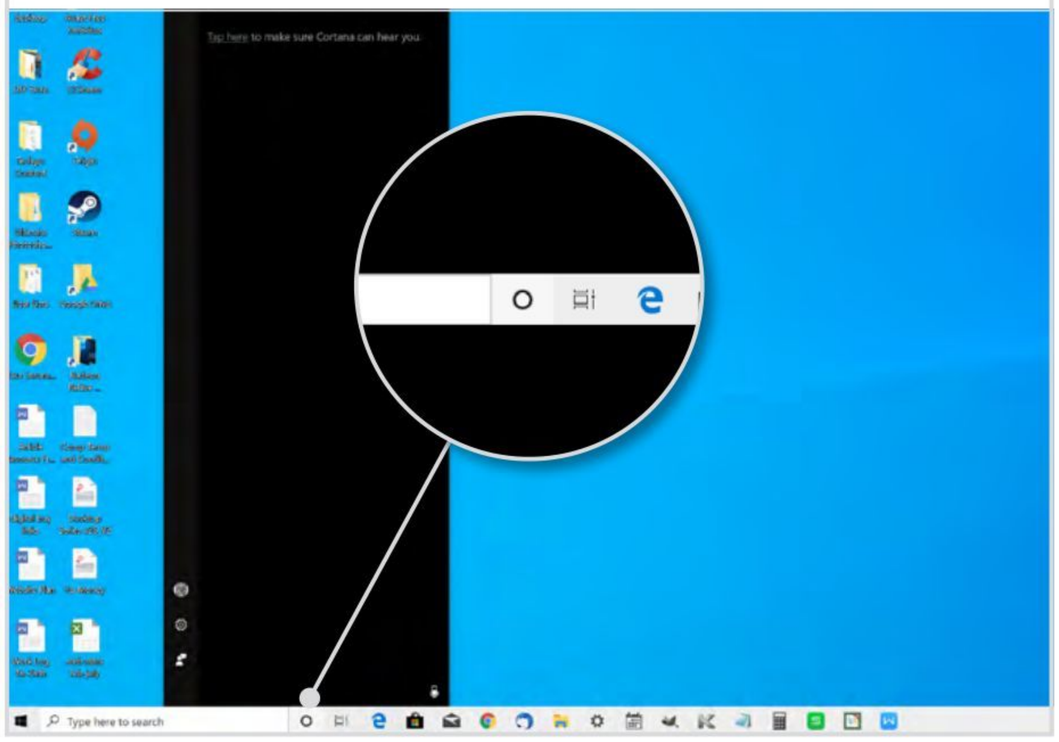
Start Menu Button

Clicking this, as you will no doubt know by now, opens the Start menu. This is where you find all of the apps and software on your computer listed, along with Live Tiles and system folders. Right-clicking on the Start menu button opens a different menu, containing links to system tools like Task Manager.



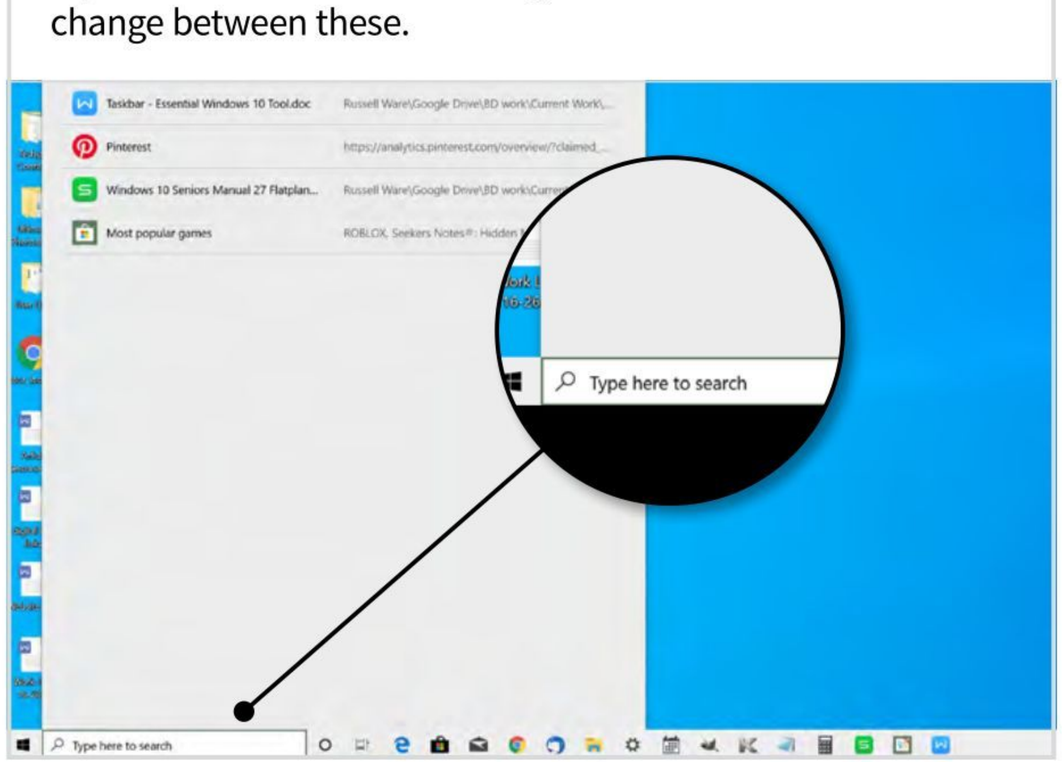
Cortana

Cortana is now separated from Windows search, and is activated using the small circular button next to the search box. It is now a more focused virtual assistant, allowing you to create reminders, lists and perform functions using voice, or one of the many Cortana-connected apps.



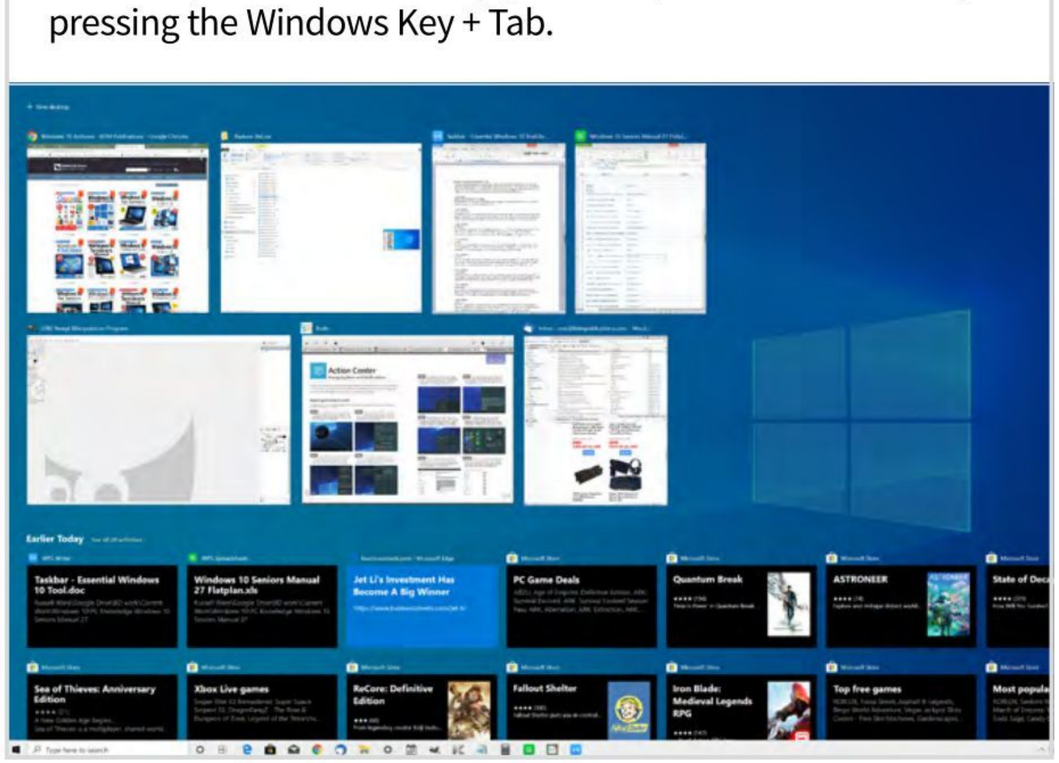
Search Box

The Search box is integrated into the taskbar in Windows 10, so it is always visible and available. Just click anywhere in the search box to begin using it. If you prefer, you can hide the search box completely, or replace it with a search icon. Right-click on the Taskbar to change between these.



Task View

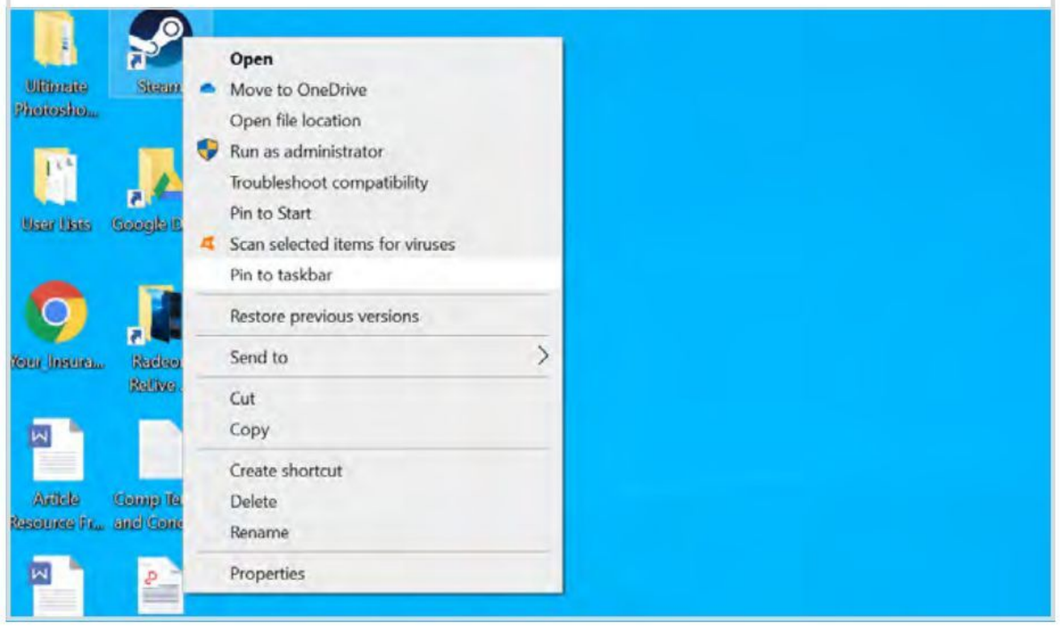
The icon next to the search bar is Task View, which also includes Timeline. This is Windows 10's new way to switch between open apps and it's really rather good, providing you can get used to using it. Click to open or alternatively you can open the Task View by pressing the Windows Key + Tab.



Taskbar

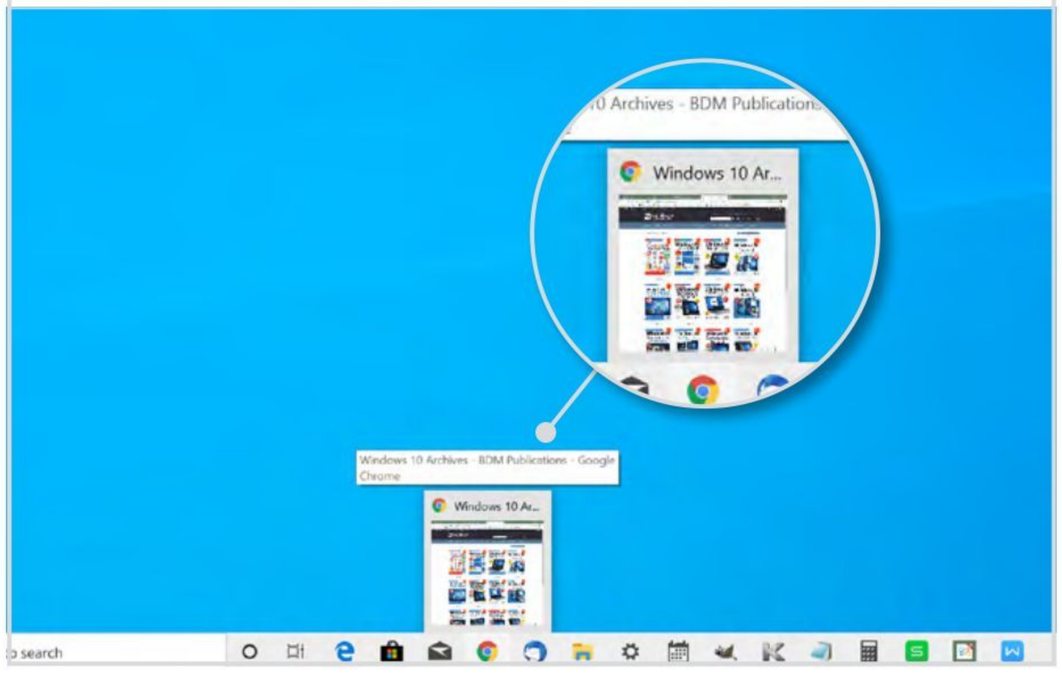
Pinning Apps

A few apps and other software will be pinned to the taskbar when you first use your Windows 10 PC. You can add more as and when you choose. To pin apps, right-click on the app icon anywhere you see it (Start menu for example), click More and then Pin to Taskbar. Shortcuts can also be pinned.



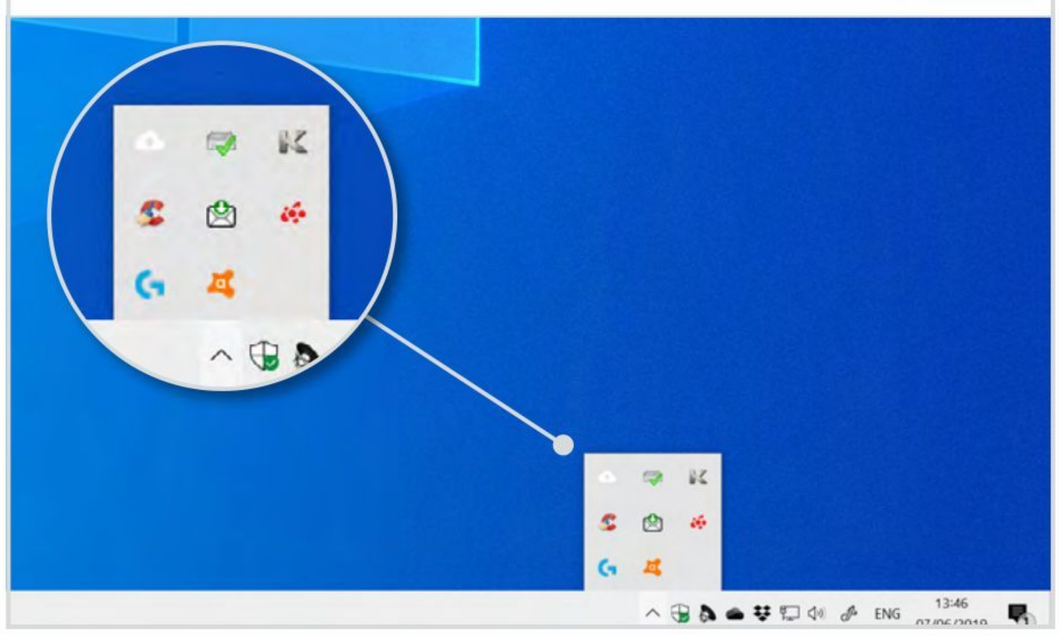
Peek

Hovering over any open app icon in the taskbar brings up a Peek preview of the window. If a movie is playing, for example, you will see it playing here too. If you mouse over the preview, the X icon appears so you can close the window down directly from the taskbar should you wish to.



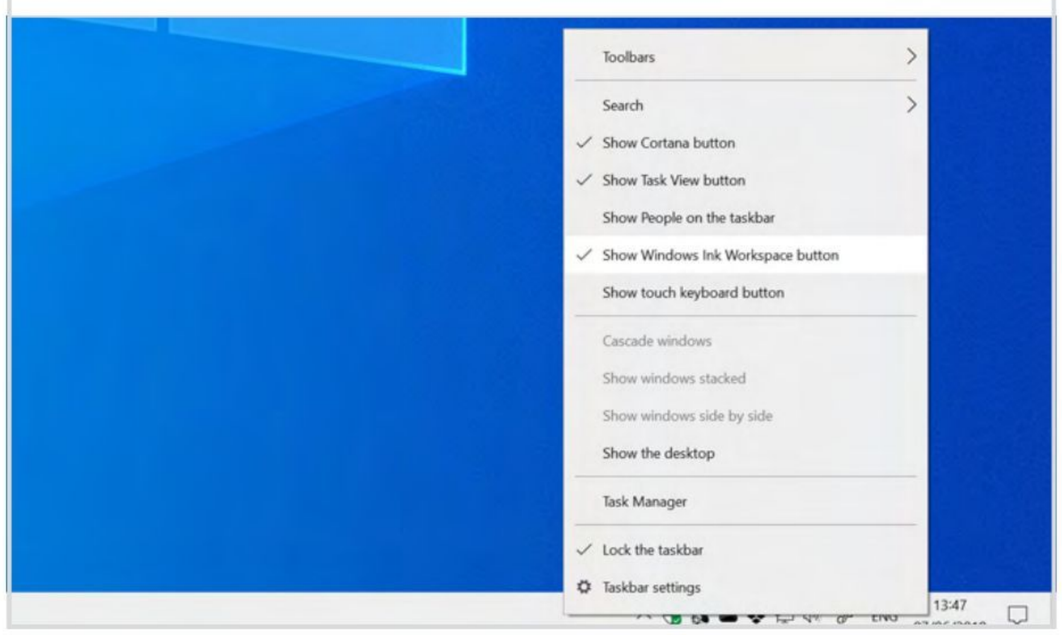
System Icons

Quick access to various system tools, including sound and network settings. The exact icons that appear here will vary depending on your system set up and apps installed. If we were using a laptop here rather than a desktop, for example, a battery icon would be in the notifications area.



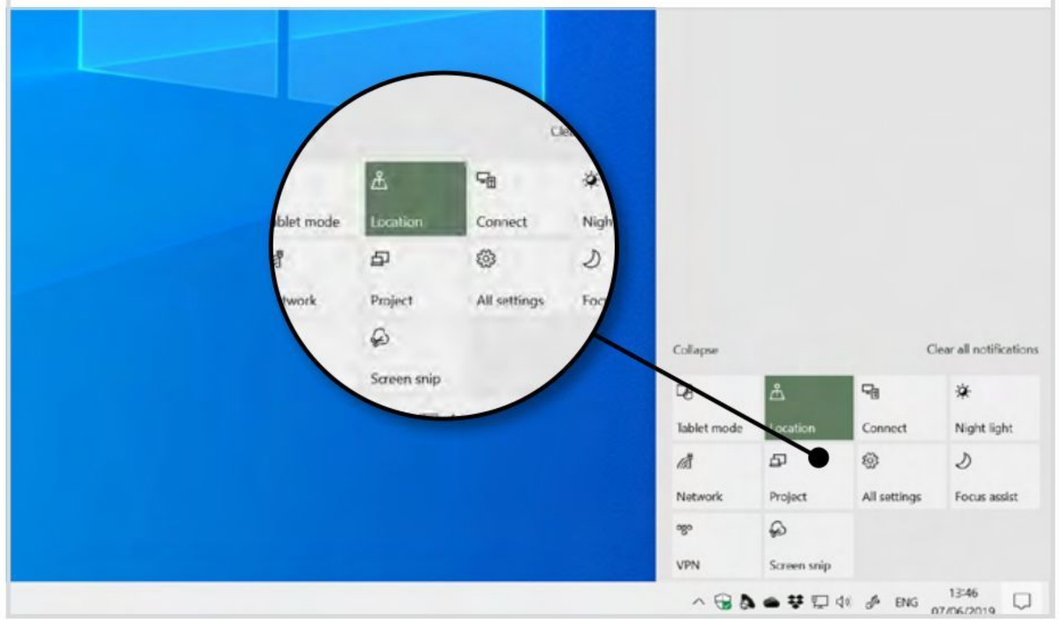
Taskbar Tools

The taskbar contains several unique tools. These can be shown or hidden as you prefer. They include the People app, Task View, the Windows Ink workspace and the Touch keyboard button. Right-click anywhere on the taskbar and you can show or hide these tools in the menu that appears.



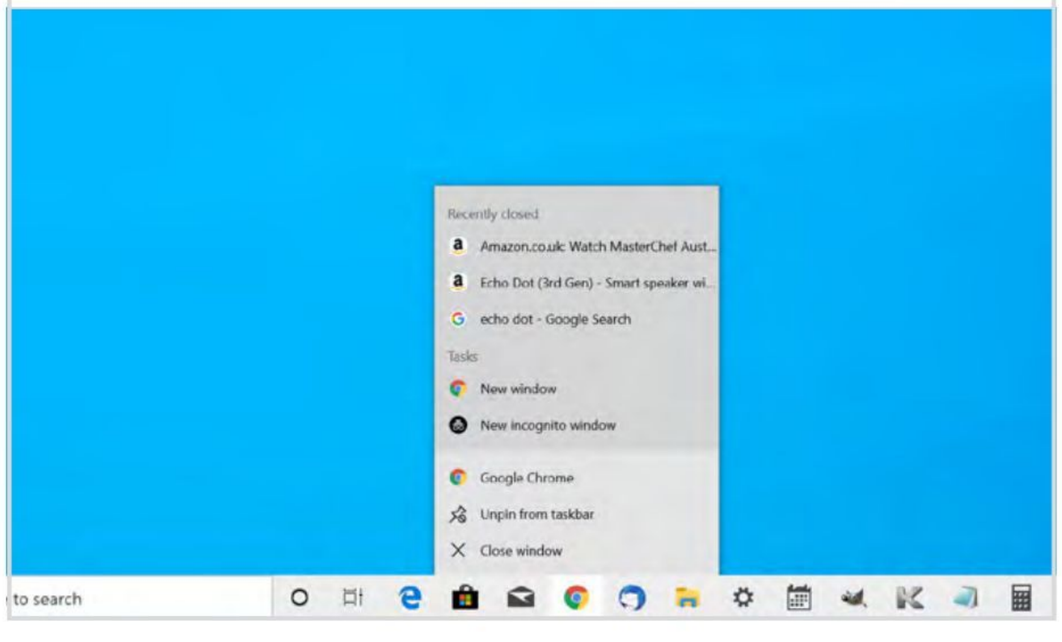
Notifications

The Action Center gathers together all your pop-up notifications from things like the email app or Windows update. It also features Quick Settings buttons for things like Wi-Fi. The Anniversary update added notification badges, meaning you can see how many unread notifications you have.



Jump Lists

Right-clicking anything on the taskbar once again brings up a context menu. Apps such as Word and Excel feature jump lists, showing you recent files that you can pin to the list using the drawing pin icon. What appears in the jump list varies between apps, e.g. Edge will show recent websites visited.



File Explorer

Exploring the Windows File Manager

The File Explorer is much the same as it was in previous versions of Windows but it is still worth you exploring it. The File Explorer is one of the most overlooked tools in Windows but if you want to be able to find your accumulated photos, music files, and word documents without having to use Search, it is definitely something you should be familiar with.

File Explorer Toolbar

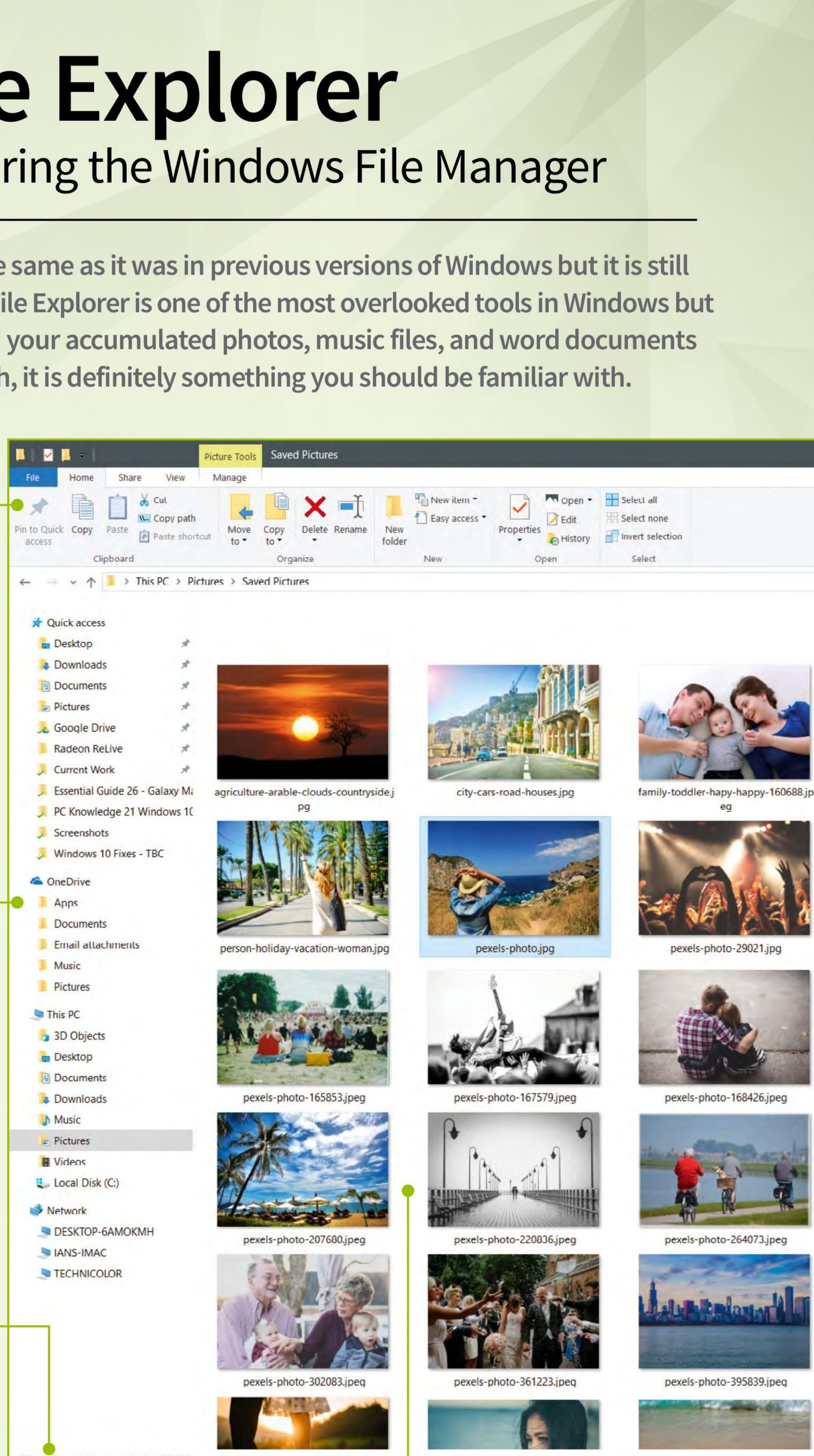
This tabbed toolbar contains all of the tools you need to manage the different files and folders you can view. The main tab is Home, which contains tools for pinning to the Quick Access pane in the Start menu, copying, pasting, moving and renaming files. Once you have selected a file or folder in the main pane, the tools become active.

Navigation Pane - Folders

The left-hand sidebar contains a list of different file folders on your computer. Clicking on any of the folders shown here will display the various files and folders inside, in the main pane. The list is split into sections, including Quick Access/Recent, OneDrive and This PC. If you right-click on a blank area, you can choose to show All Folders here.

Info Bar

The thin bar along the bottom of the File Explorer displays several bits of useful information. If nothing in the main window is selected, the info bar shows the total number of items in the selected folder. Click on a file and the file size is also shown here. If you select several files, the number of items selected is shown, along with the total size of all selected items combined.



THE VIEW TAB

The View tab in the File Explorer allows you to completely change how the window looks, how files are displayed and even whether each item has a permanent check box next to it. One of the most useful tools in the View tab is the Details Pane button. This switches the Preview Pane to show a list of file details instead. This is particularly useful if you are looking at images.

SHOW LIBRARIES

Your Libraries in Windows 10 are preset system folders that are the default locations for your Camera Roll, Music, Saved Pictures, Documents, Pictures and Videos. You can easily have these displayed in the File Explorer. Right-click on any free area of the Navigation Pane and from the menu, click Show Libraries. You can then expand the list of libraries by clicking the small arrow.

Window Controls

Almost every window that opens in Windows includes these controls. From left to right they are: Minimise, Maximise and Close. Just below the standard window controls is a small arrow and a question mark. The arrow is used to show and hide the File Explorer toolbar, which is useful for smaller displays. The question mark will, when clicked, open a help page.

Preview Pane

If the preview pane is enabled, approximately a third of the File Explorer window and indeed, any other folder that you open will be reserved for a preview of any selected files. Normally, only image, html and text files will display a preview in this pane. The preview pane can be increased or decreased in size by clicking and dragging the scroll bar to the left of it.

Folder View

The two buttons here let you choose between viewing the contents of the folder in a thumbnail format or alternatively, as a list. When the folder items are displayed as a list, you can choose to display a varying amount of information, including date last modified, file type and file size. Items shown as a list will still display a preview in the Preview Pane when selected.

Folder Contents Pane

When a folder is selected in the File Location sidebar, its contents are shown in the main pane. The contents of any single folder may vary greatly of course but Windows uses standard icons to show Word documents, text files, various different image formats and shortcuts to apps and software. As you can see here, images will usually be displayed as a thumbnail unless view settings have been changed.

File Explorer

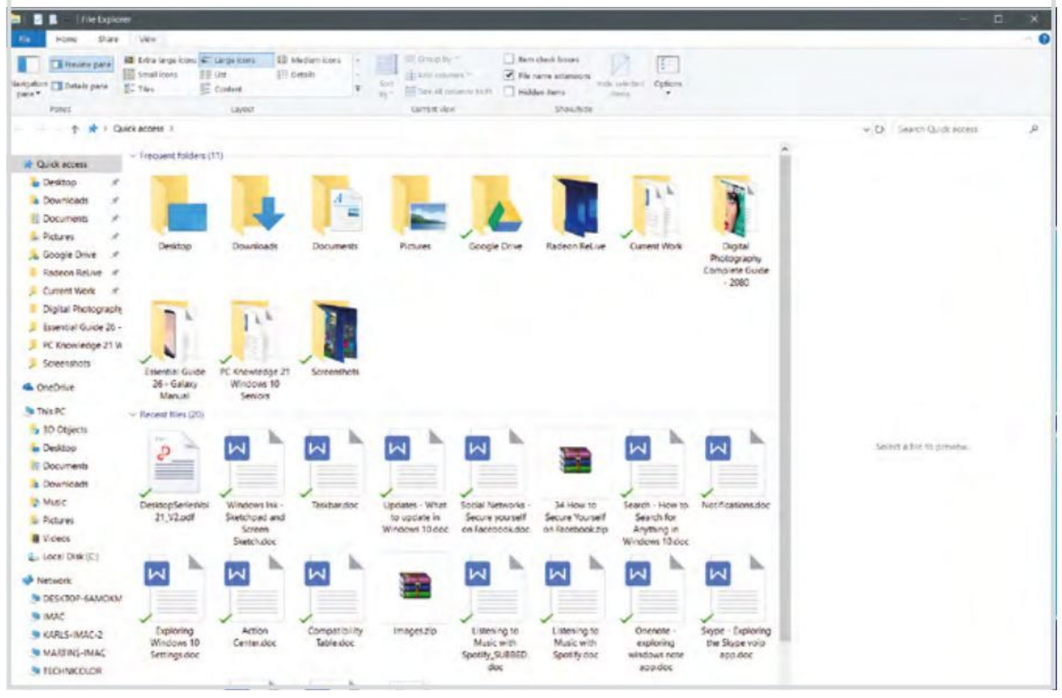
Learn How to Navigate Windows 10

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.

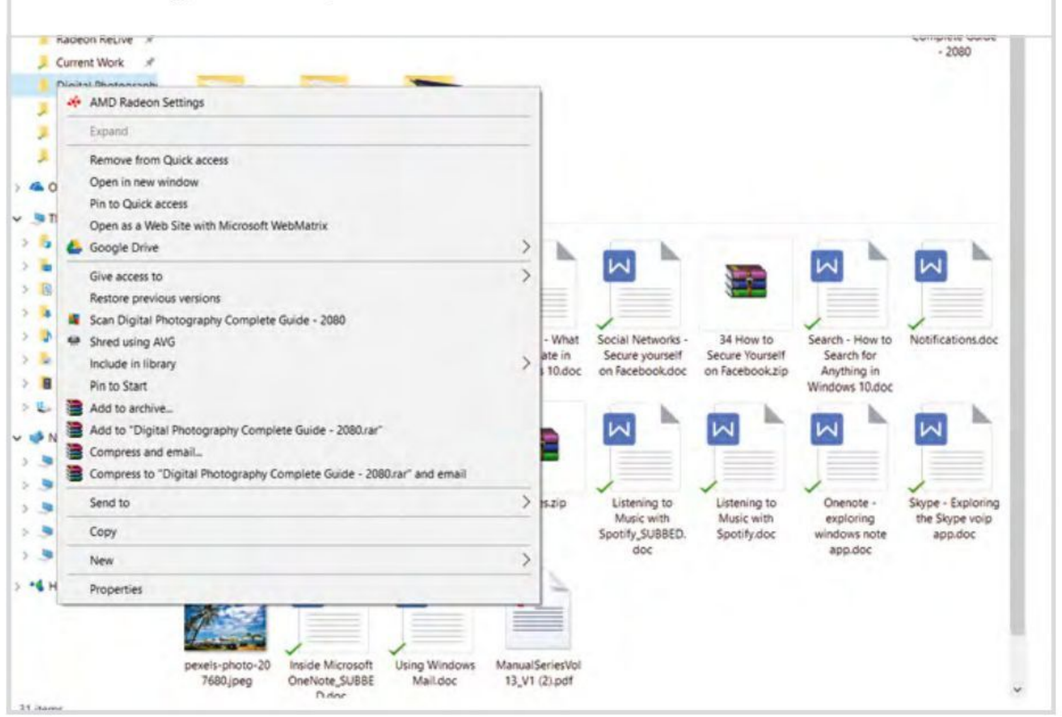
What's New in File Explorer?

File Explorer is a much undervalued part of Windows. And while it hasn't fundamentally changed for several versions of the operating system, Windows 10 introduces some interesting enhancements, which we'll take you through here.

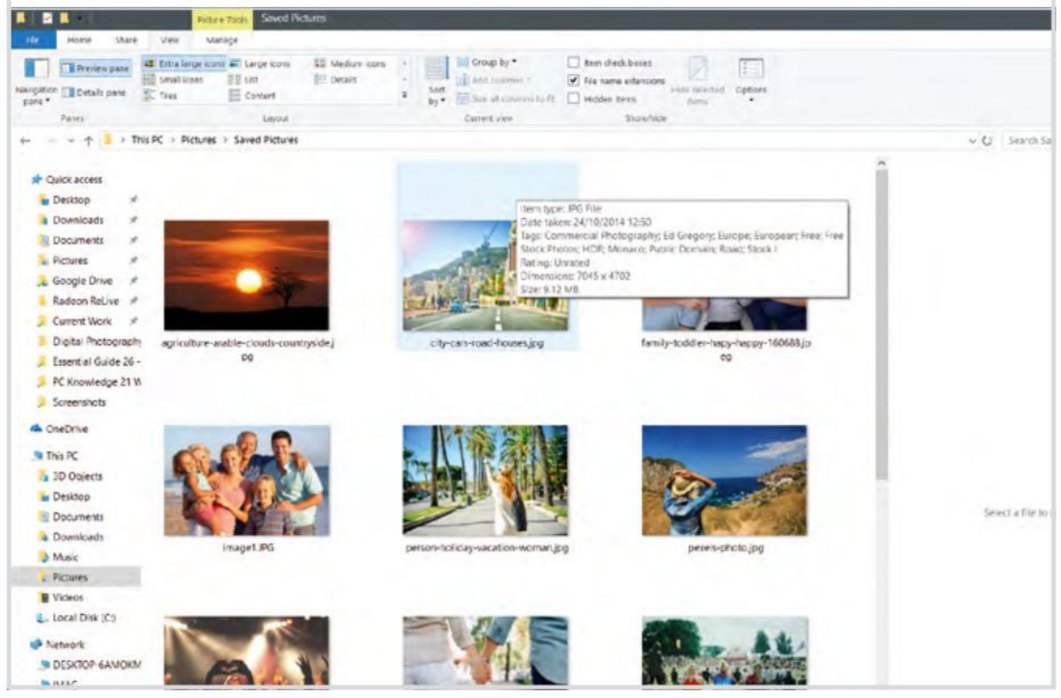
Step 1 The way you browse files in Windows 10 is broadly similar to previous versions of Windows, but File Explorer has been enhanced. The main Quick Access window shows you your most frequently used folders (after all, how many of us dip into more than five or ten folders in a day?) and also recent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



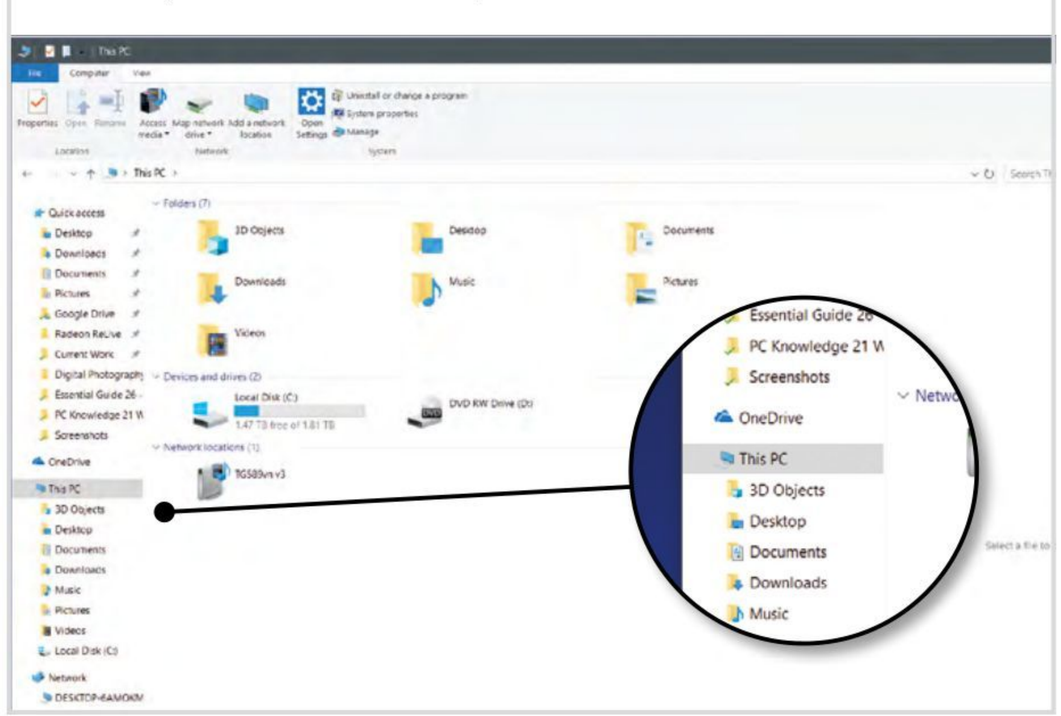
Step 2 The sidebar also works on the same principle and via a new Quick Access feature you can pin folders or files that you want to stick around. It will also show you Frequent folders too. You can pin things permanently onto Quick Access by right-clicking them and selecting Add to Quick Access.



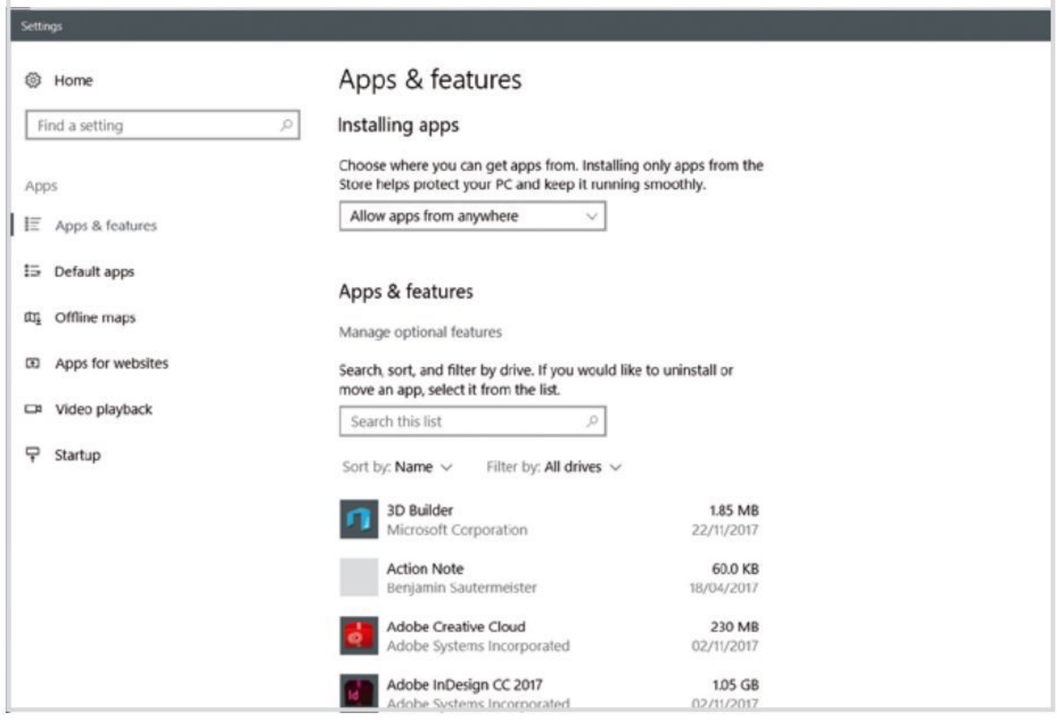
Step 3 There are also new icons across all File Explorer views, while there are a lot more file operations that you can access on the menu at the top of the window (known as the 'ribbon' in Microsoft speak) without the need to use the right-click menu. This is to make it easier for PCs with touchscreens.



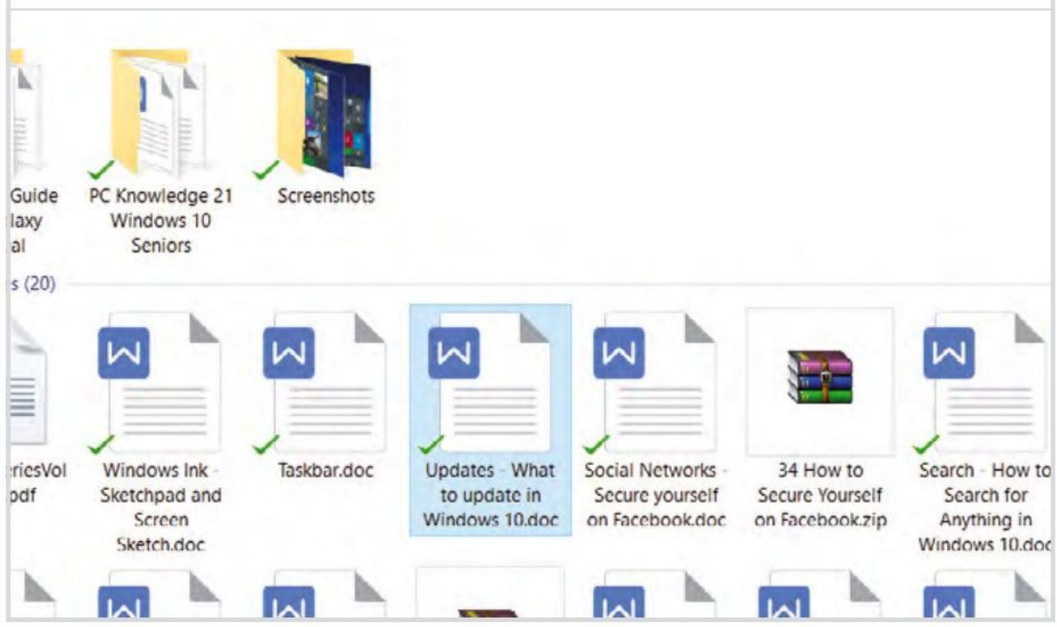
Step 4 This PC is similar to before, but the link to Control Panel has been replaced by the Settings app, which you can now see on the menu bar. Although the Control Panel is still present in the background of Windows 10, Microsoft intends for you to use the new Settings app and directs you there wherever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



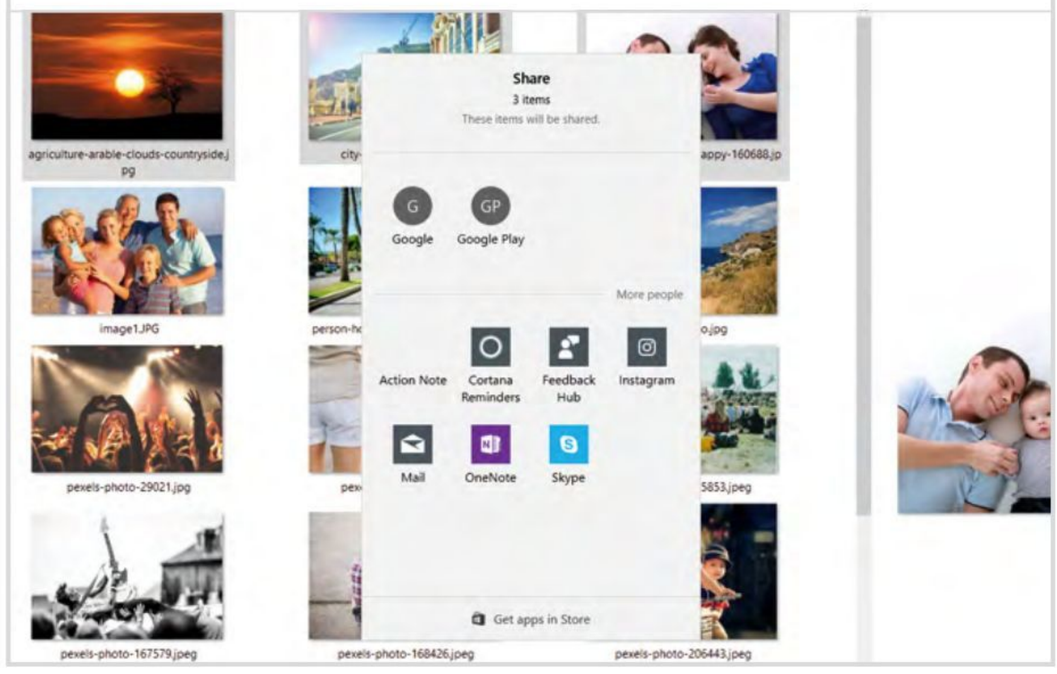
Step 5 Also from This PC (you might know it as My Computer if you previously used an older version of Windows), you can access the Programs and Features Control Panel area if you want to uninstall something.



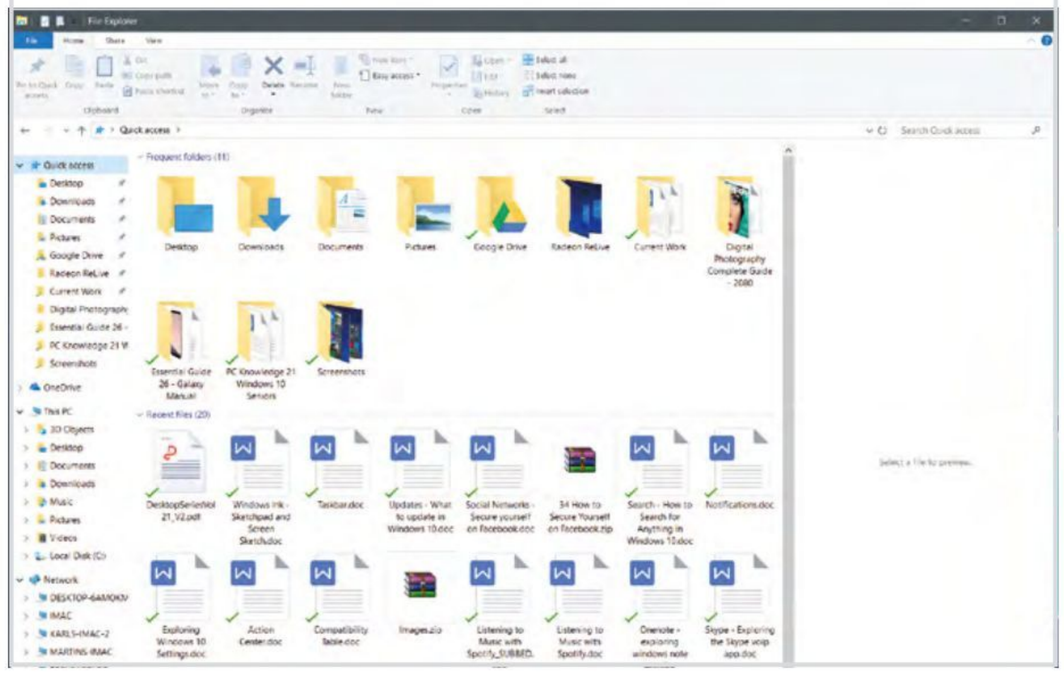
Step 6 File Explorer's Share tab also gets a new treatment, with the Share logo (first introduced with Windows 8's Charm bar) now used for file sharing from all apps. You can choose to email a file straight from the File Explorer window, add it to a zip file or share it with other Windows users.



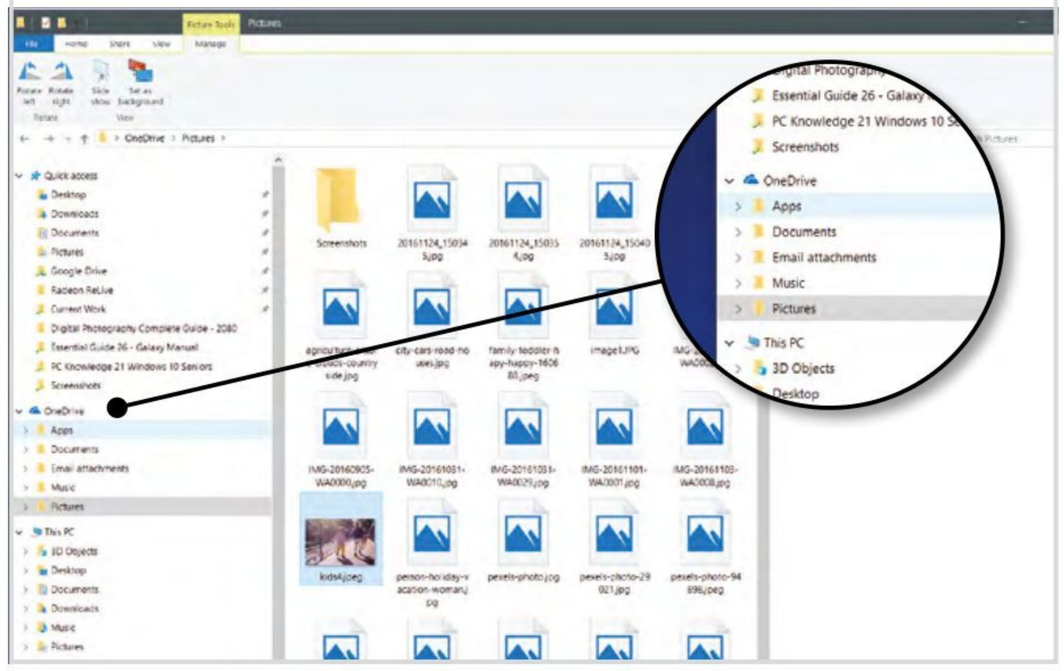
Step 7 If you want to see what other options you have for sharing – perhaps using the Windows Mail app - highlight the files you want to share, then click Share. A pop-up bar will appear on the left of the screen and will show you the options you have to share that file(s) or folder(s).



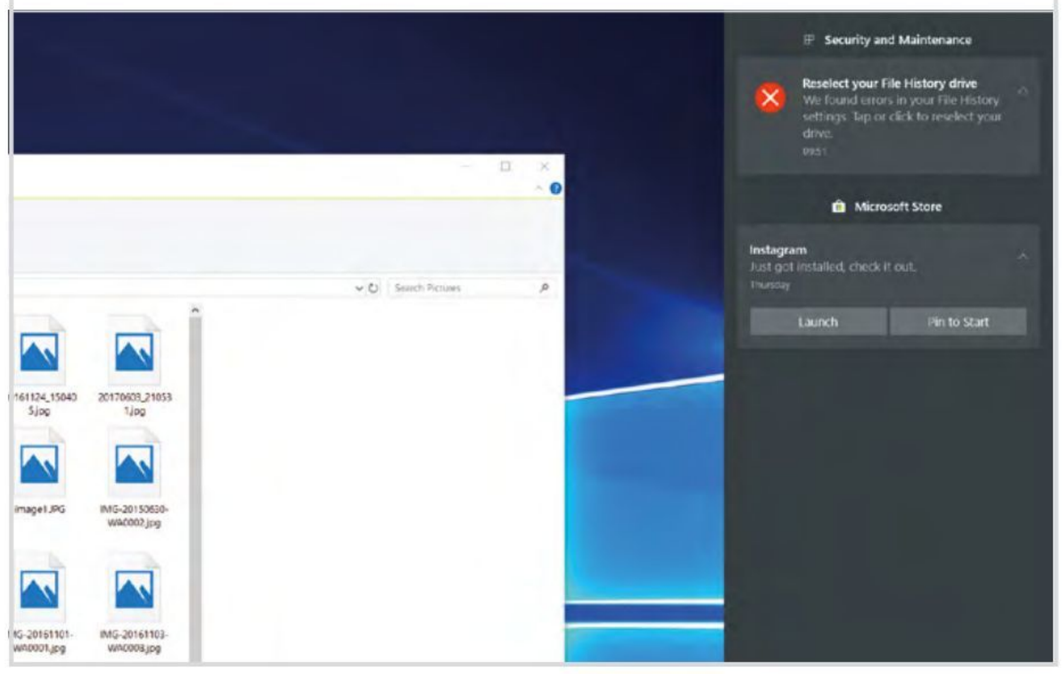
Step 8 The Windows 8 Charm bar has been abandoned in Windows 10 and the functions for Windows Store apps are hidden away inside the apps themselves; functions such as the Settings for the app itself and the ability to Print or Share.



Step 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.



Step 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 on the bottom right. There's also a place where notifications reside after they've popped up.



Folders

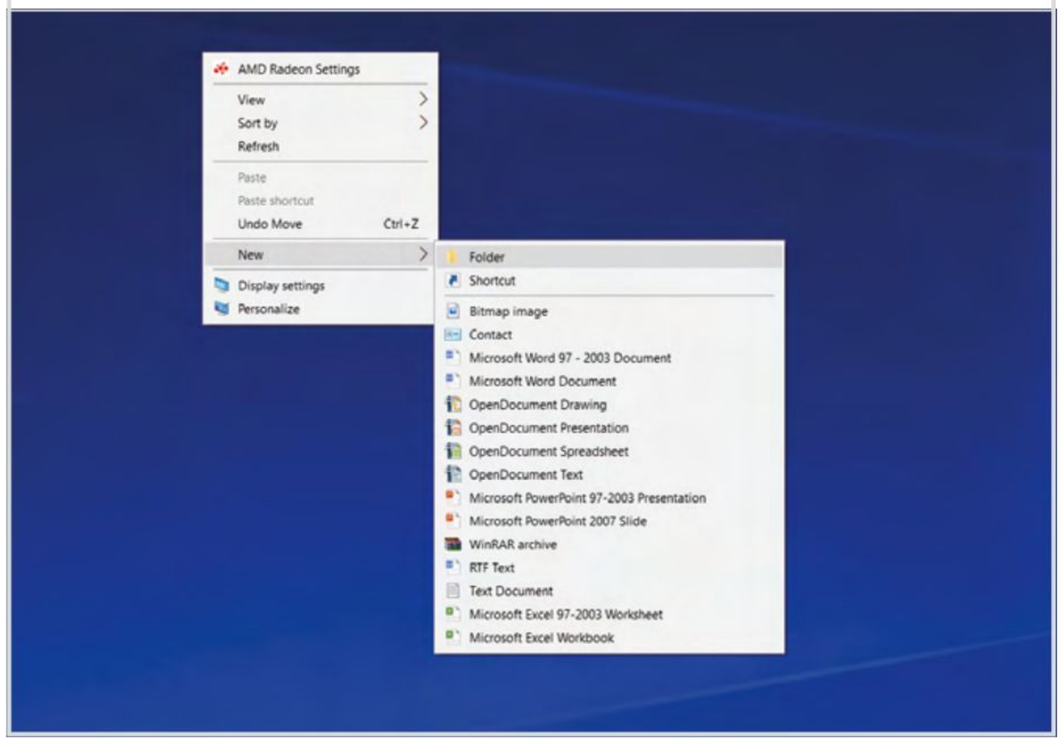
Create and Manage Desktop Folders

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.

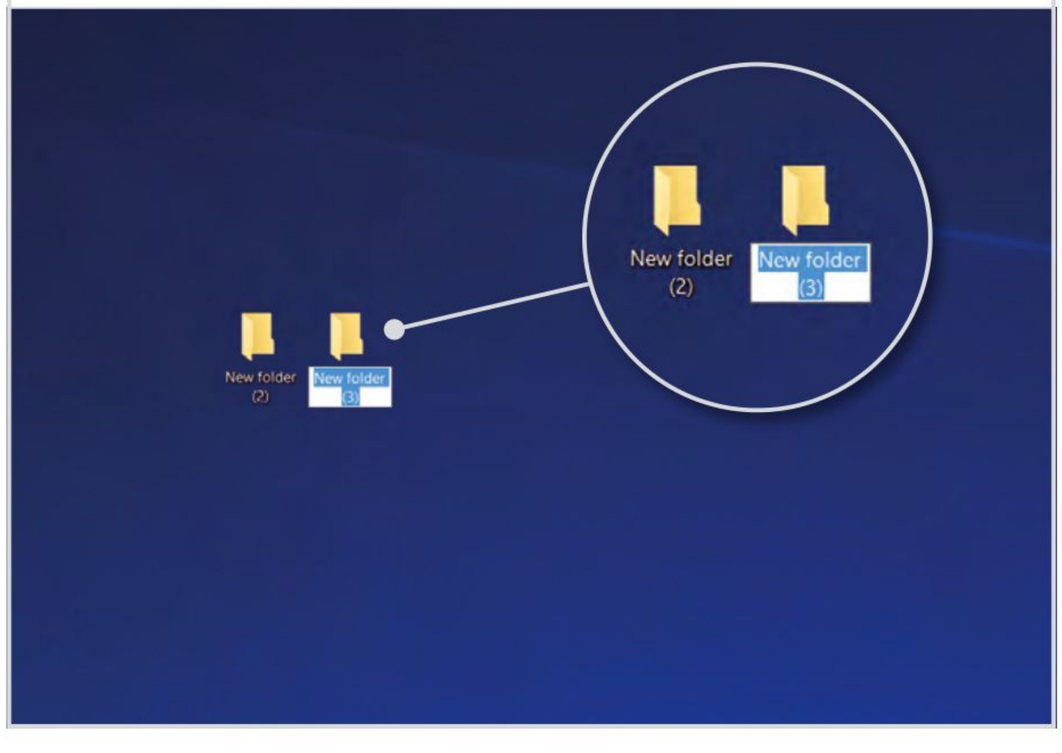
Creating New Folders

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.

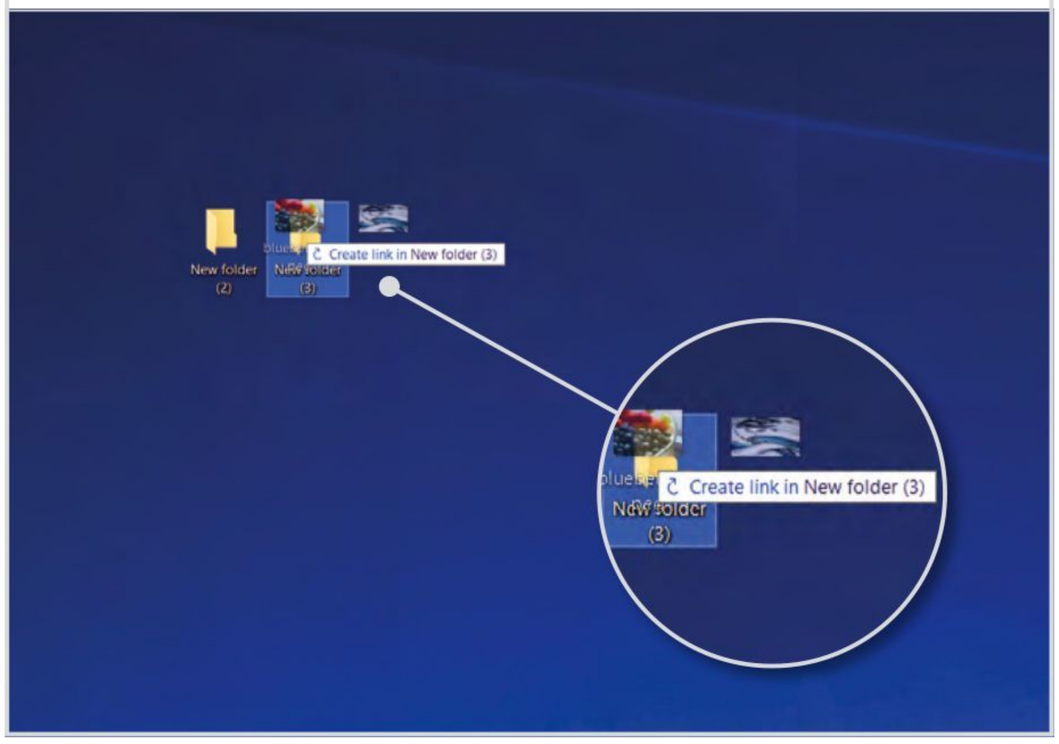
Step 1 On the desktop, right-click and select New folder from the action menu that appears. The familiar yellow folder icon will then appear at that position on the desktop (wherever you clicked), with the name automatically set as 'New folder' but highlighted ready to change.



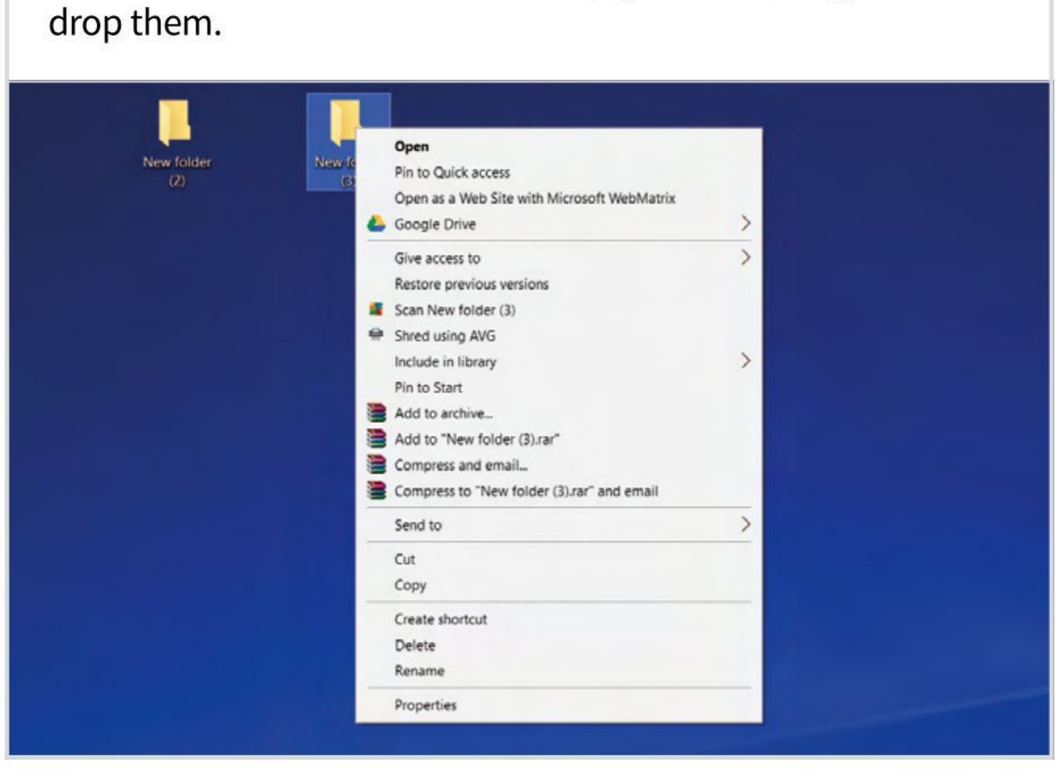
Step 2 You can leave the name as 'New folder' if you wish. If you then create a second folder next to the first, it will automatically be named 'New folder (2)'. You can rename a folder at any time by left-clicking on the title once, or right-clicking and selecting Rename from the menu.



Step 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.



Step 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.

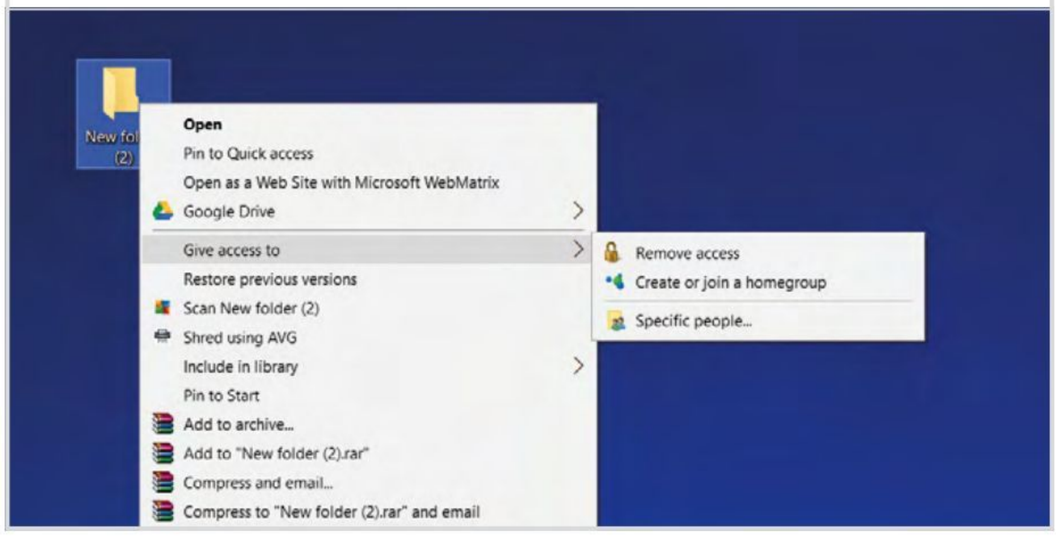


Managing Your Folders

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.

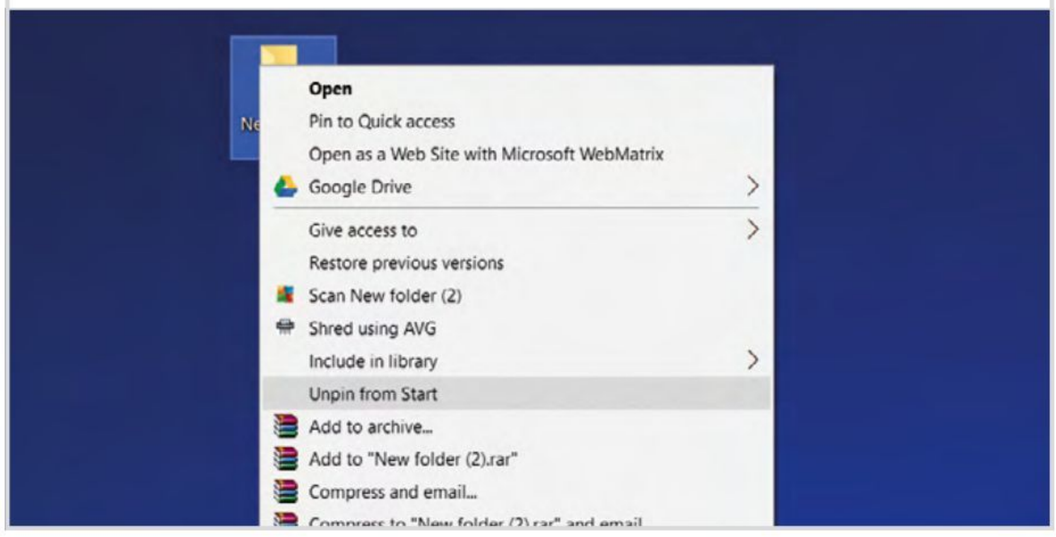
Step 1

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.



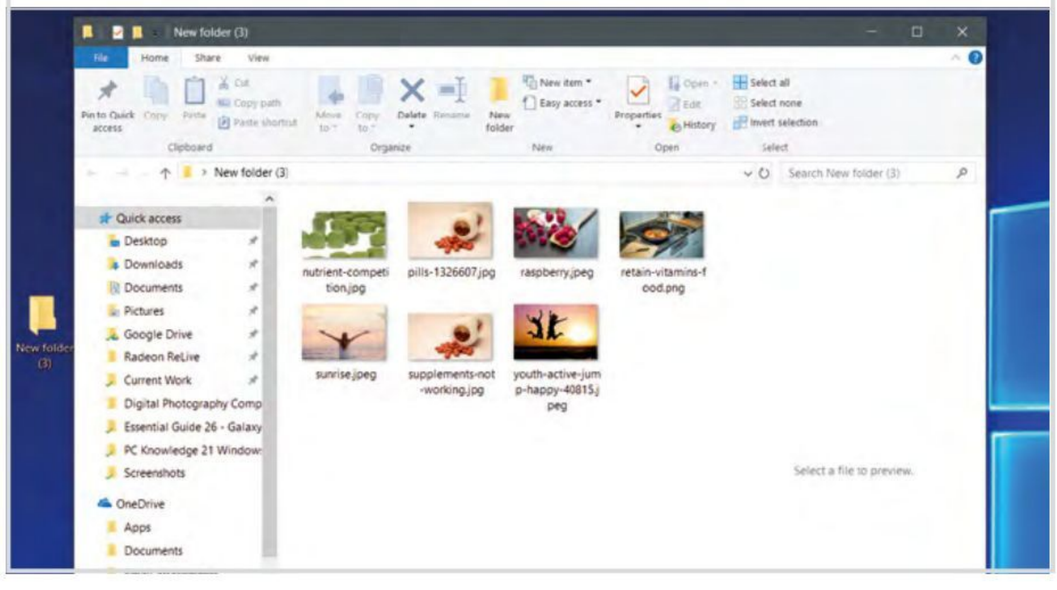
Step 2

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.



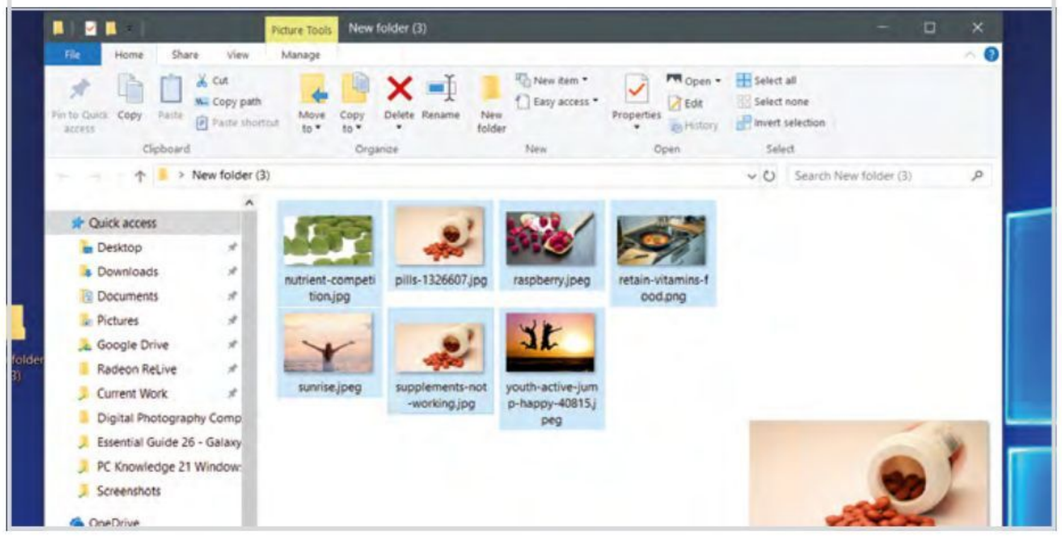
Step 3

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.



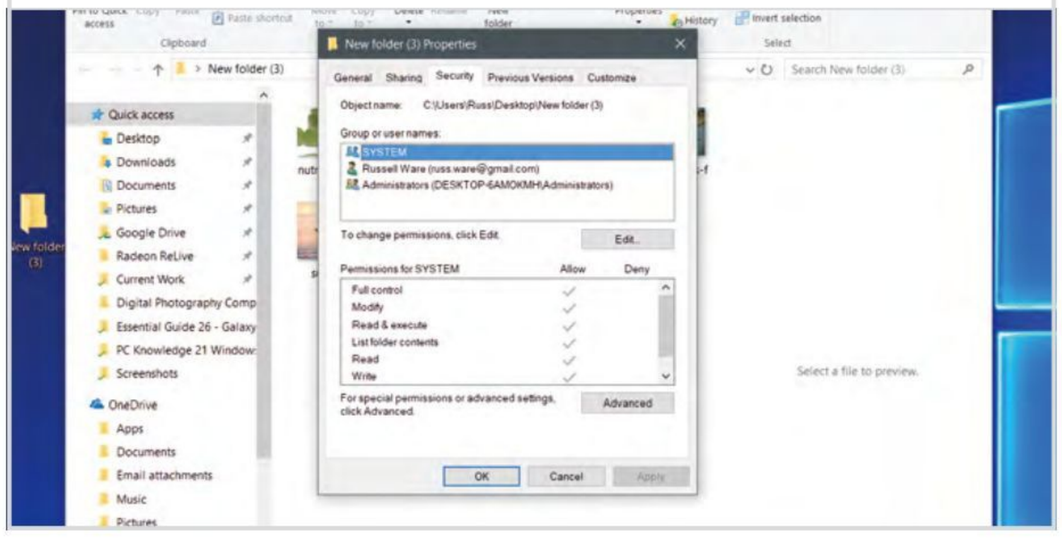
Step 4

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.



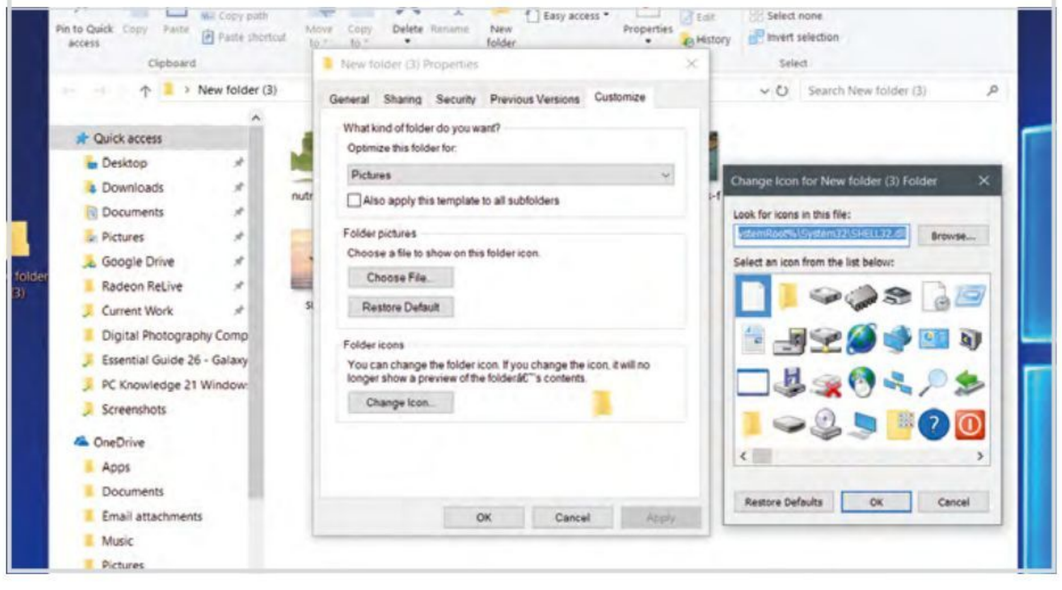
Step 5

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.



Step 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.



Task View

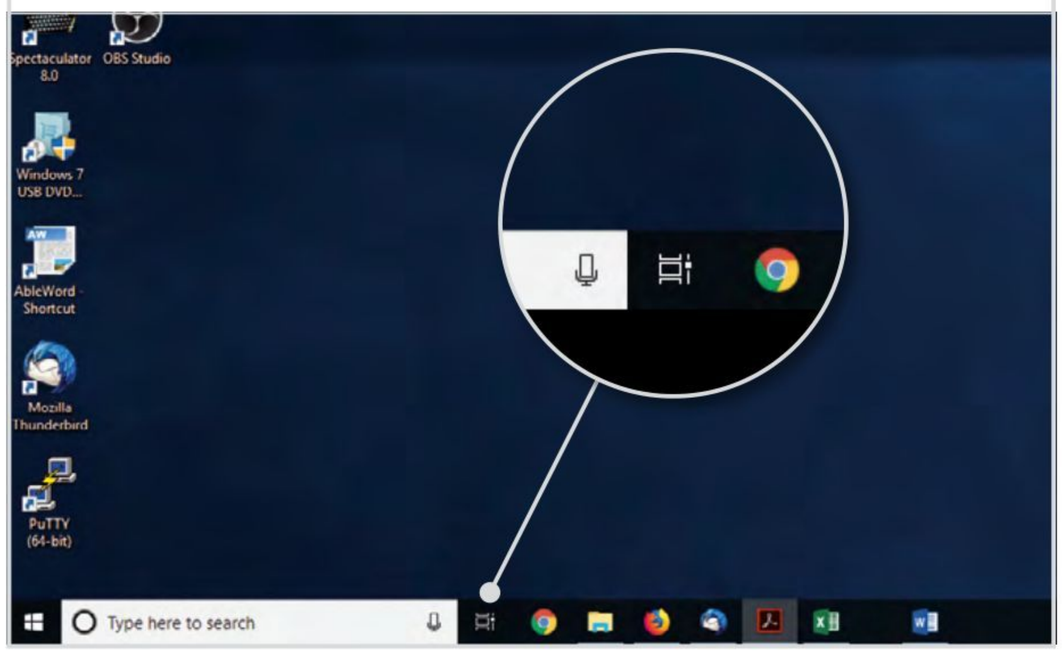
Learn How to Multi-task in Windows

Windows 10 has taken huge steps towards creating an OS which is suited to everyone, including busy multi-taskers. It's easier than ever to switch between tasks in Windows 10 with Task View and you can even have extra workspaces for working in different apps.

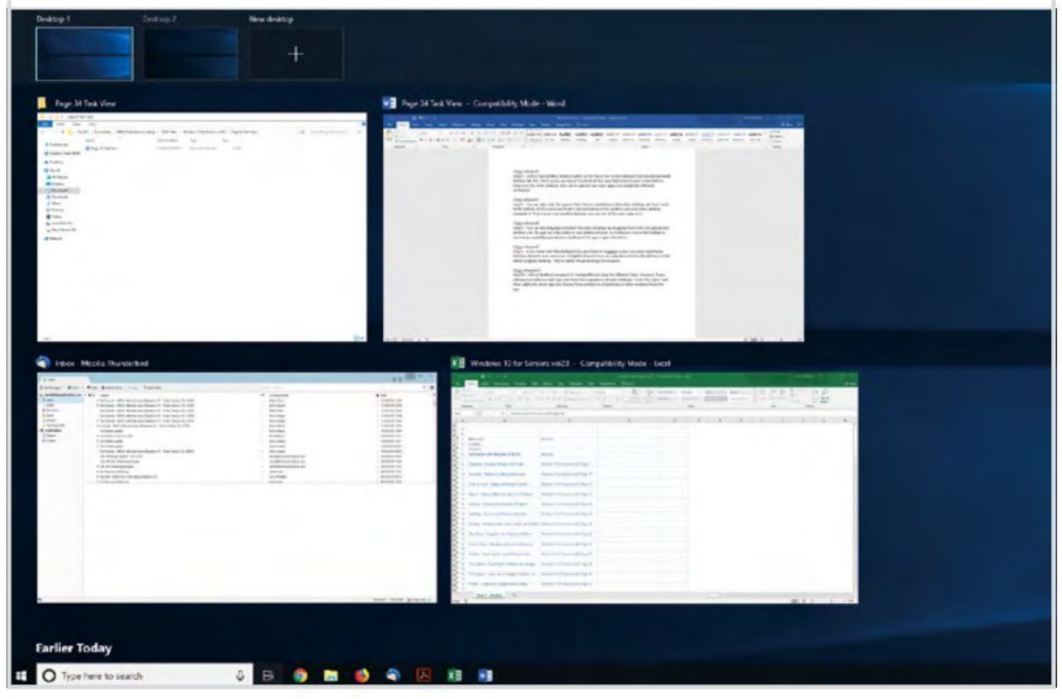
Using Task View

Task View is a quick way to view and manage all of the windows and apps open on your PC at any given moment, even those that are minimised.

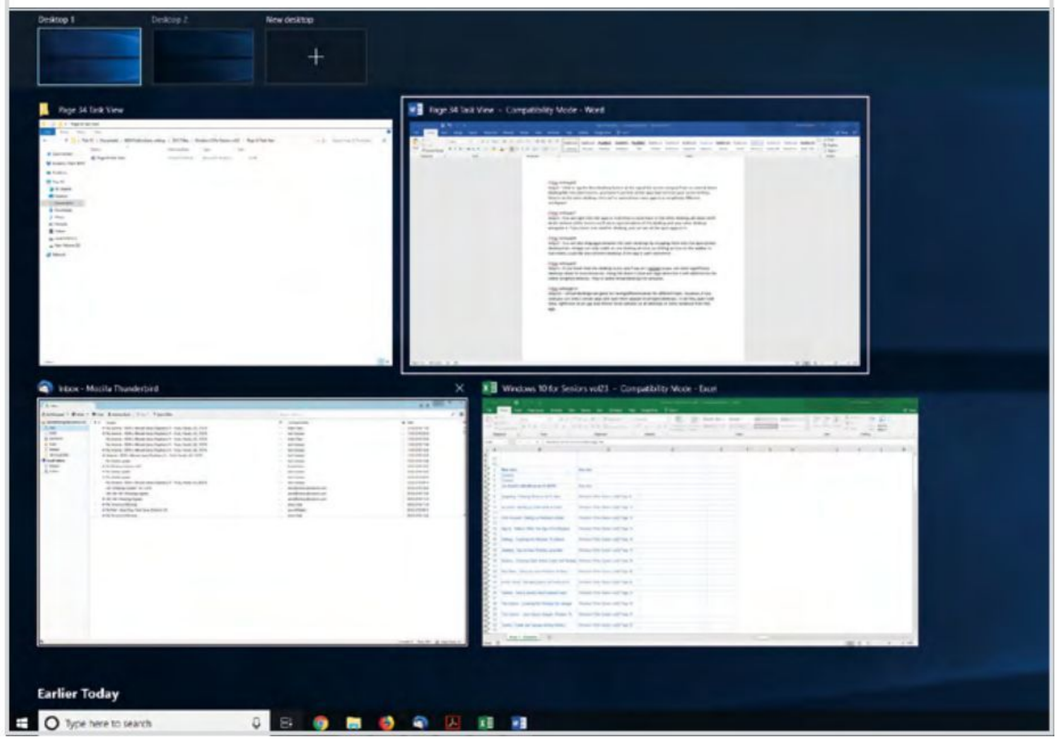
Step 1 Task View is located next to the Windows 10 Search Box, identified as a filmstrip type icon. It has changed recently, due to the Spring Update, and now incorporates both Task View and the Timeline features. Don't worry if your icon is different, it could be because the latest update hasn't been applied yet. The functionality is the same, however.



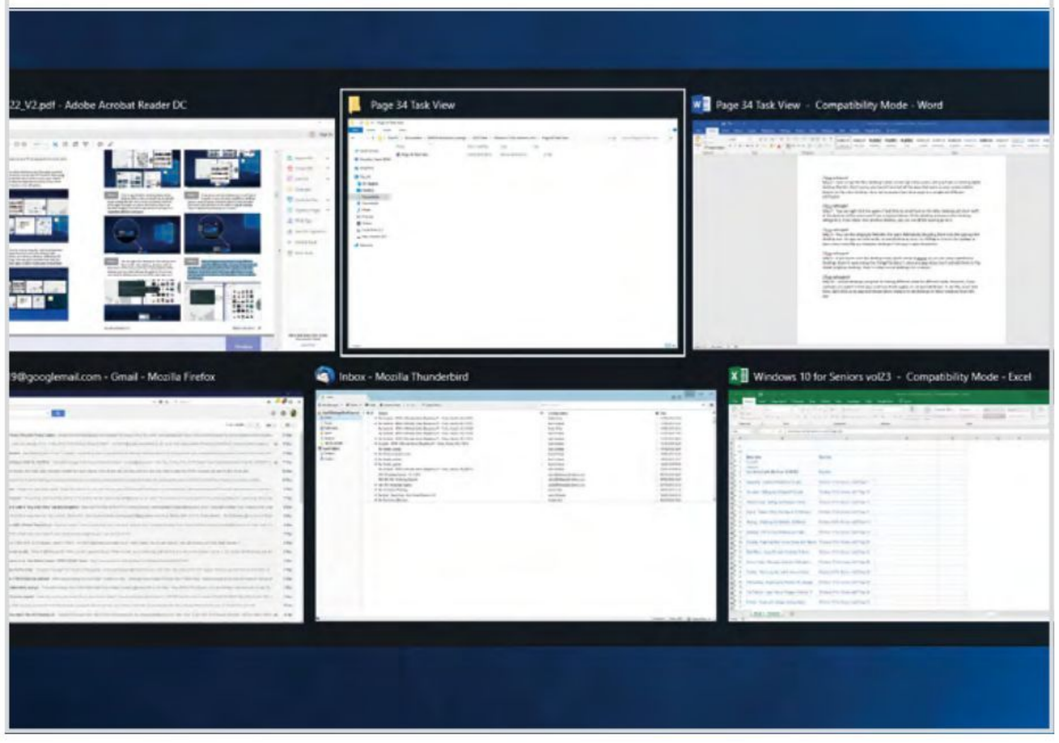
Step 2 Click the Task View icon, or press the Windows Key + Tab, to bring up the Task View and Timeline display manager. The display shows the current open and active apps on the system. It remains in this view until you click one of the active apps or press Windows Key + Tab again to switch back to the desktop.



Step 3 In addition to clicking on one of the apps you want to launch, you can also flick between them using the arrow keys and hit return on the one you want. What's more, you can also close apps from here too: as you hover over with the mouse, a cross appears.



Step 4 If you're used to using Alt + Tab to flick between apps then don't worry, this feature is still enabled. However, as in previous versions of Windows, it's just for switching. Even though it looks like Task View, Alt + Tab just switches apps, it doesn't enable you to close them.

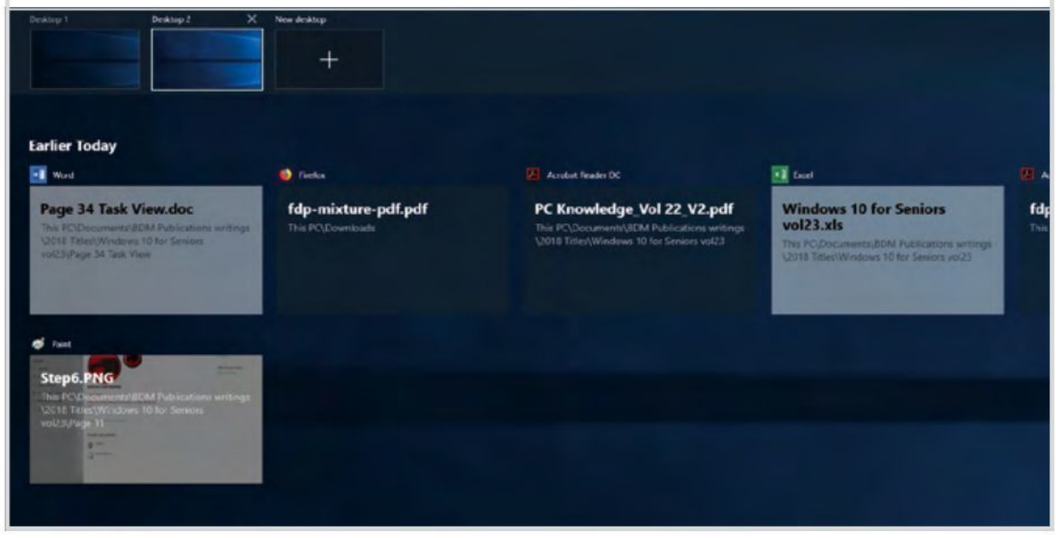


Using Virtual Desktops

Virtual Desktops is a Linux feature that Microsoft has adopted for its more recent versions of Windows. It's a great way of separating apps across multiple desktop spaces and helps you concentrate and split your workload.

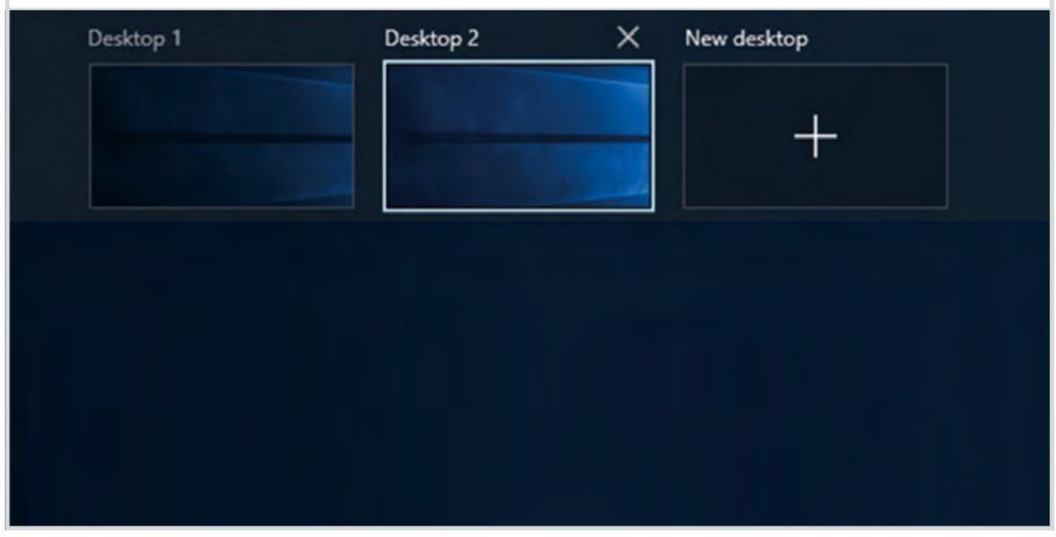
Step 1

One of the great features in Task View is the ability to add extra desktops. Virtual desktops are essentially extra workspaces, so for example you can have one space with your email and chat windows open and another where you're working on a PowerPoint presentation without email distraction.



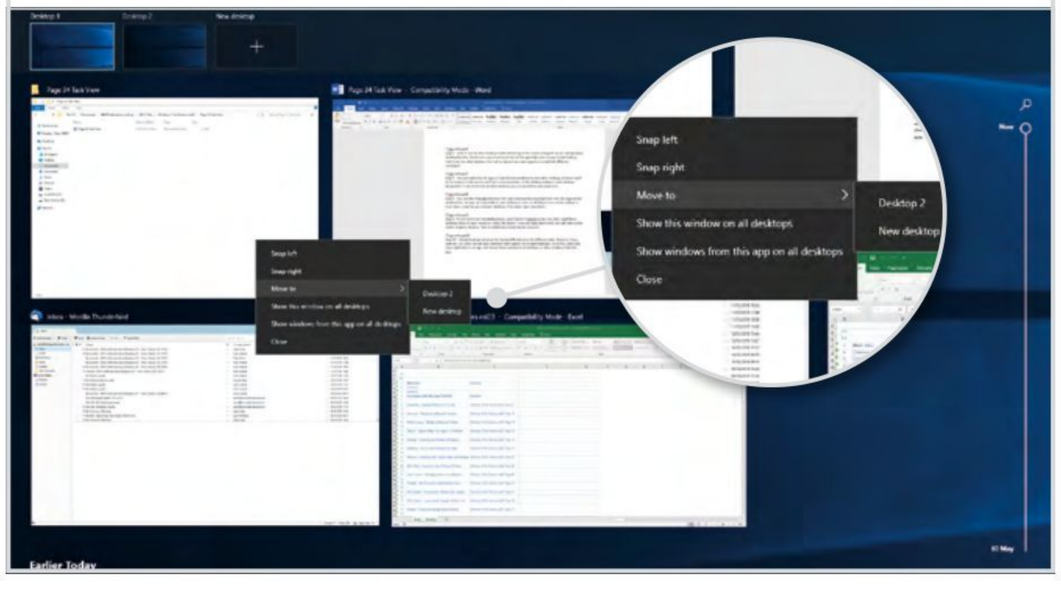
Step 2

Click or tap the New Desktop button at the top of the screen and you can see an entirely blank desktop like this. Don't worry, you haven't just lost all the apps that were on your screen before, they're on the other desktop. Here we've opened two more apps in a completely different workspace.



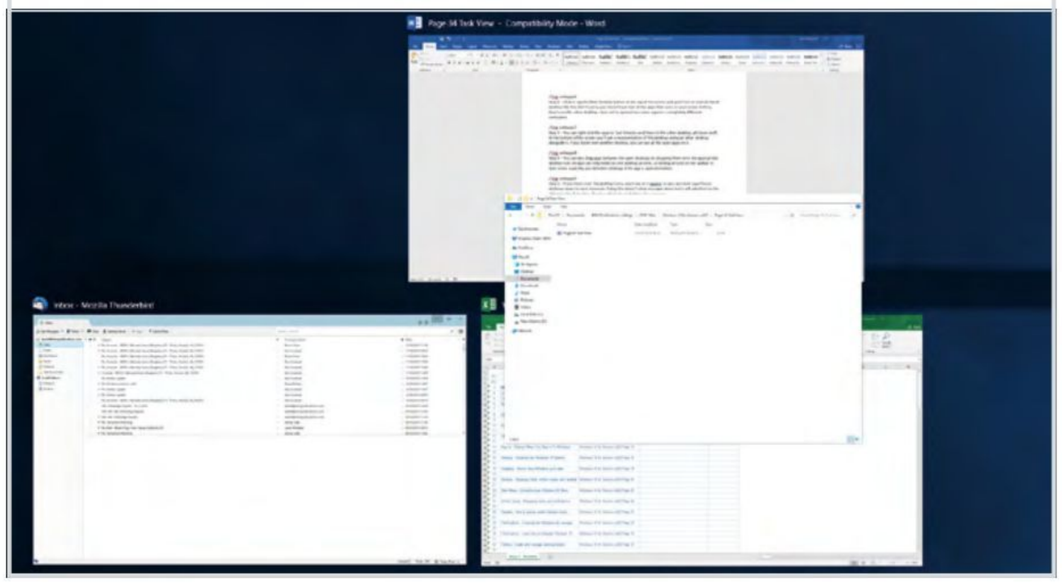
Step 3

You can right-click the apps in Task View to send them to the other desktop, all clever stuff. At the top of the screen you can see a representation of this desktop and your other desktop alongside it. If you hover over another desktop, you can see all the open apps on it.



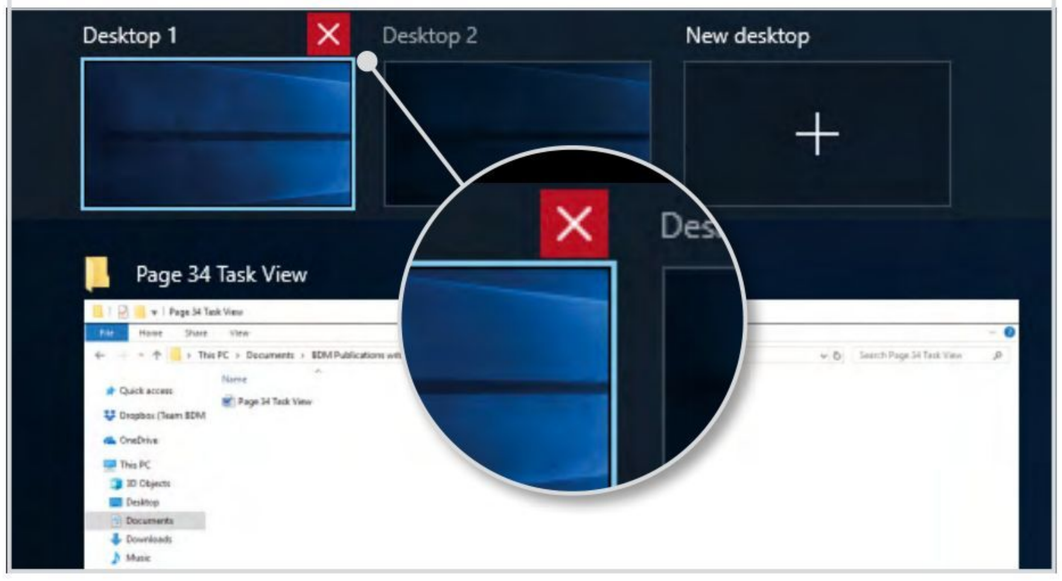
Step 4

You can also drag apps between the open desktops by dropping them onto the appropriate desktop icon. An app can only reside on one desktop at once, so clicking an icon on the taskbar or Start menu could flip you between desktops if the app is open elsewhere.



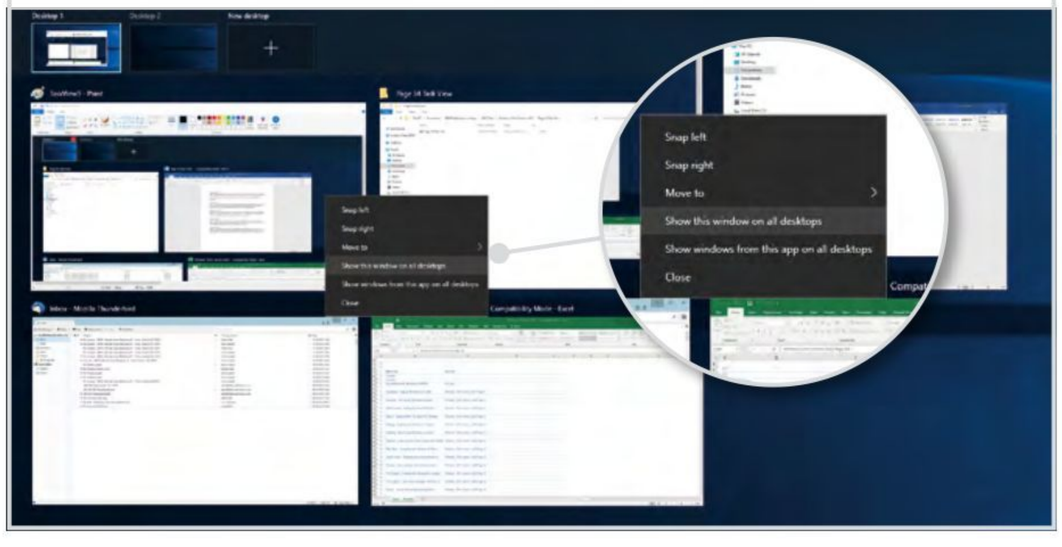
Step 5

If you hover over the desktop icons, you can see an X appear; now you can close superfluous desktops down to save resources. Doing this doesn't close any apps down but it adds them to the oldest (original) desktop. They're called virtual desktops for a reason.



Step 6

Virtual desktops are great for having different areas for different tasks. However, if you wish, you can select certain apps and have them appear on all open desktops. To do this, open Task View, right-click on an app and choose Show window on all desktops or Show windows from this app.



Timeline

Manage Your Activities

One of the most useful additions to the Windows 10 OS in the Spring Creators update is Timeline. This handy feature allows you to easily get back to anything you were working on previously, without having to have dozens of windows left open all over your computer. You will only see the Timeline features when you click the Task View button if you have the latest update installed.

New Desktop

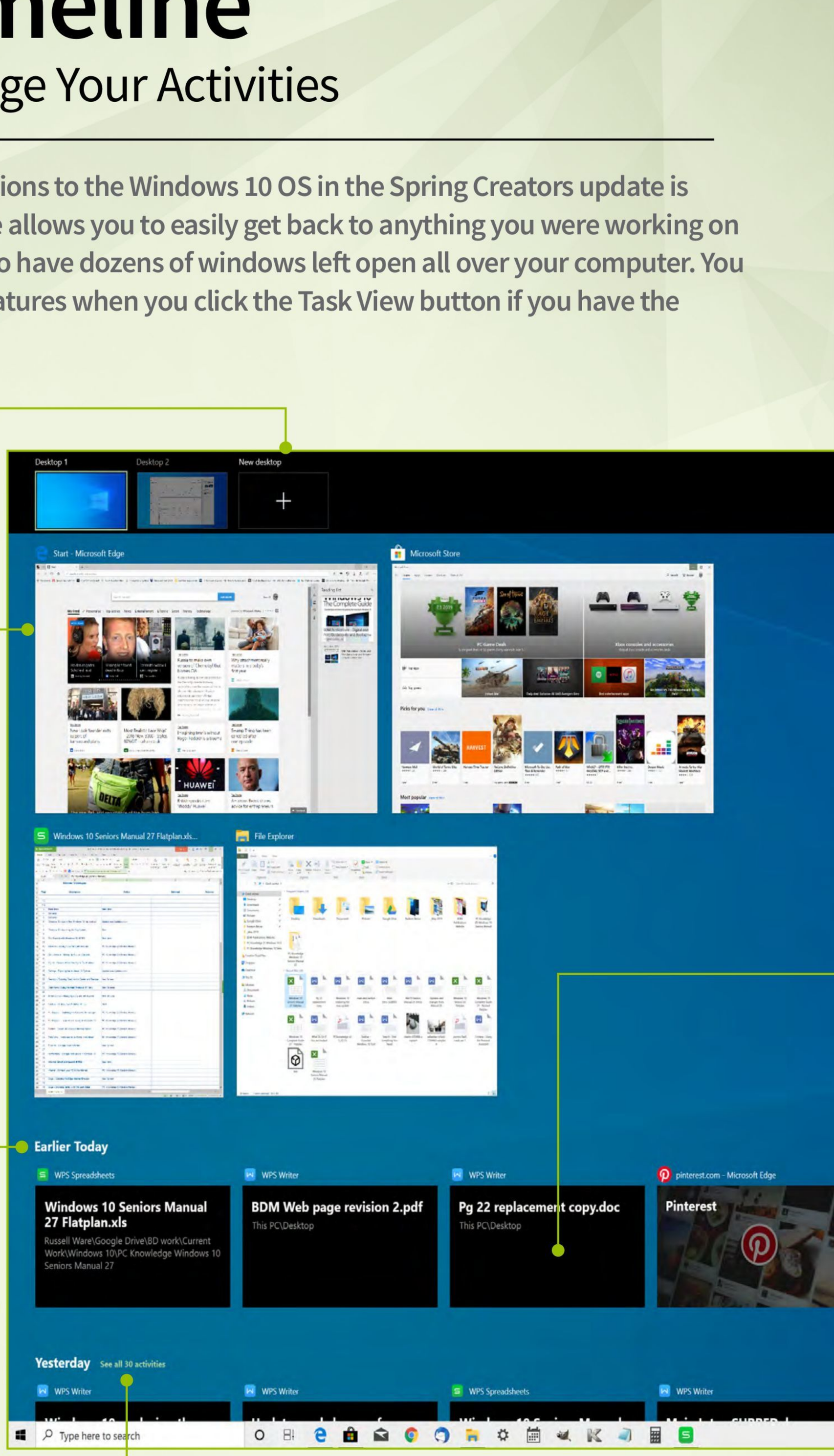
Just as with the old version of Task View, there is a button to add extra virtual desktops. Virtual desktops are essentially extra workspaces, so for example you can have one space with your email and chat windows open, and another where you're working on a PowerPoint presentation without email distraction.

Task View

Timeline introduces a new way to resume past activities you started on the current PC, other Windows PCs, and even iOS/Android devices. The feature enhances Task View, allowing you to switch between currently running apps and past activities. The default view of Timeline shows snapshots of the most relevant activities from earlier in the day or a specific past date.

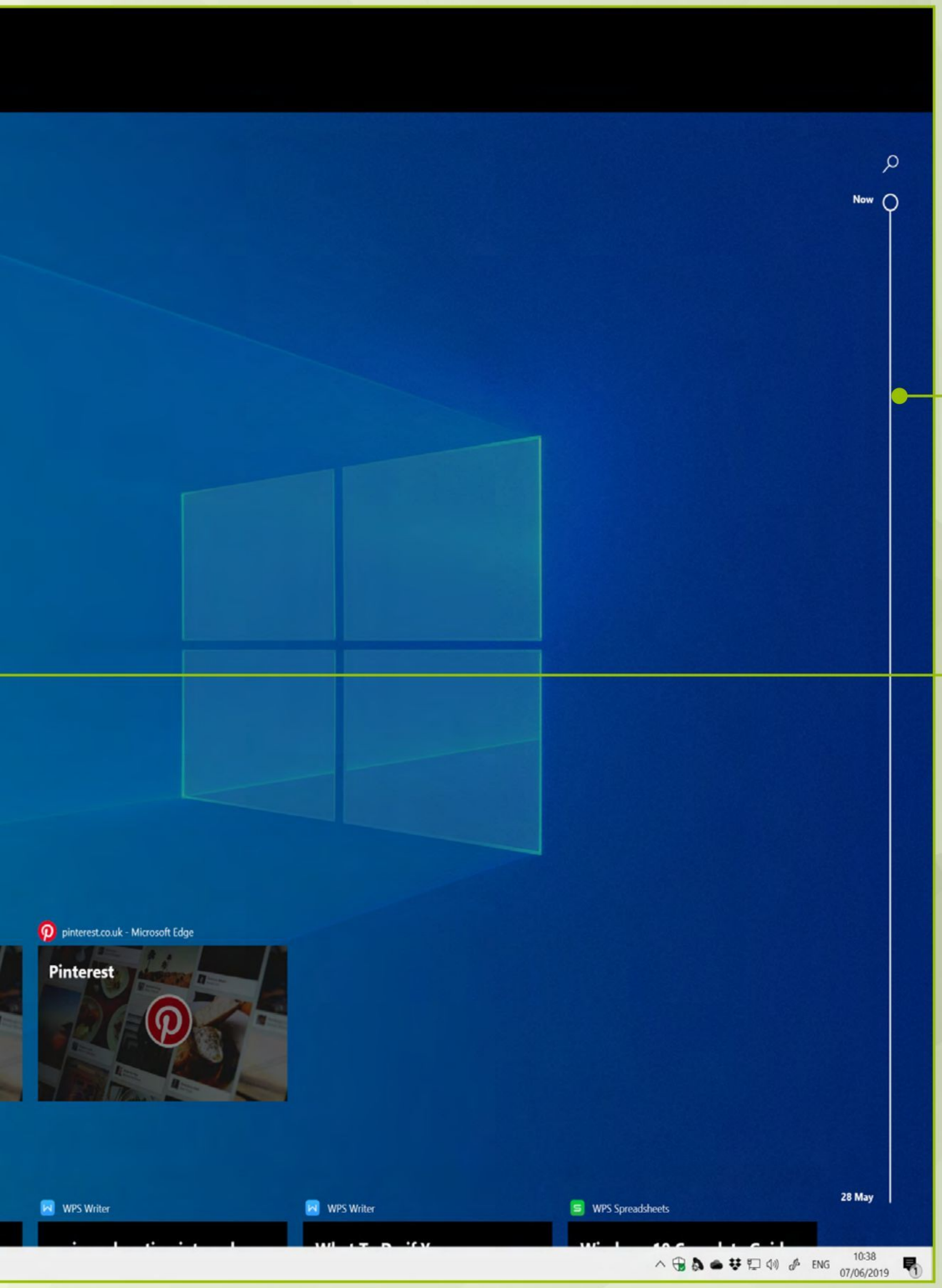
Earlier Today

The Earlier Today panel shows the latest activities on your Windows 10 PC. Documents you have viewed, apps you have opened, and websites you have visited can all be displayed here as a thumbnail image. Click on any of the thumbnails to be taken back to that app, document or web page.



CORTANA AND TIMELINE

In addition to resuming past activities through Timeline, your personal digital assistant Cortana will suggest activities you might want to resume to help you stay productive as you switch between your phone, laptop, and other Cortana-enabled devices. This experience is powered by the same activities that appear in Timeline.



Getting Started

Use your PC normally. After a while, select the new Task View icon in the taskbar; you can also open Task View by pressing the Windows logo key + Tab. Below your running apps, you'll see past activities in the Timeline. If you have more than one PC, try using Timeline on all of them — you'll see the same activities no matter which PC you're using.

Activity History

The new activity history settings page allows you to control which accounts appear in Timeline. This is most relevant for users with multiple accounts, such as a personal Microsoft account, and a work or school account. Settings here also let you disable activity collection and clear your activity history.

Annotated Scrollbar

A very useful annotated scrollbar makes it easy to get back to past activities in Timeline. The scrollbar will change to display dates, days or even times within a single day. You can scroll the Timeline screen using the arrow keys on the keyboard, or by clicking and dragging on the scrollbar.

Activities

In Timeline, a user activity is the combination of a specific app and a specific piece of content you were working on at a specific time. Each activity links right back to a webpage, document, article, playlist, or task, saving you time when you want to resume that activity later.

All Activities

There's also a way to see all the activities that happened in a single day—just select See all next to the date header. Your activities will be organised into groups by hour to help you find tasks you know you worked on that morning, or whenever. And if you can't find the activity you're looking for in the default view, search for it.

Notifications

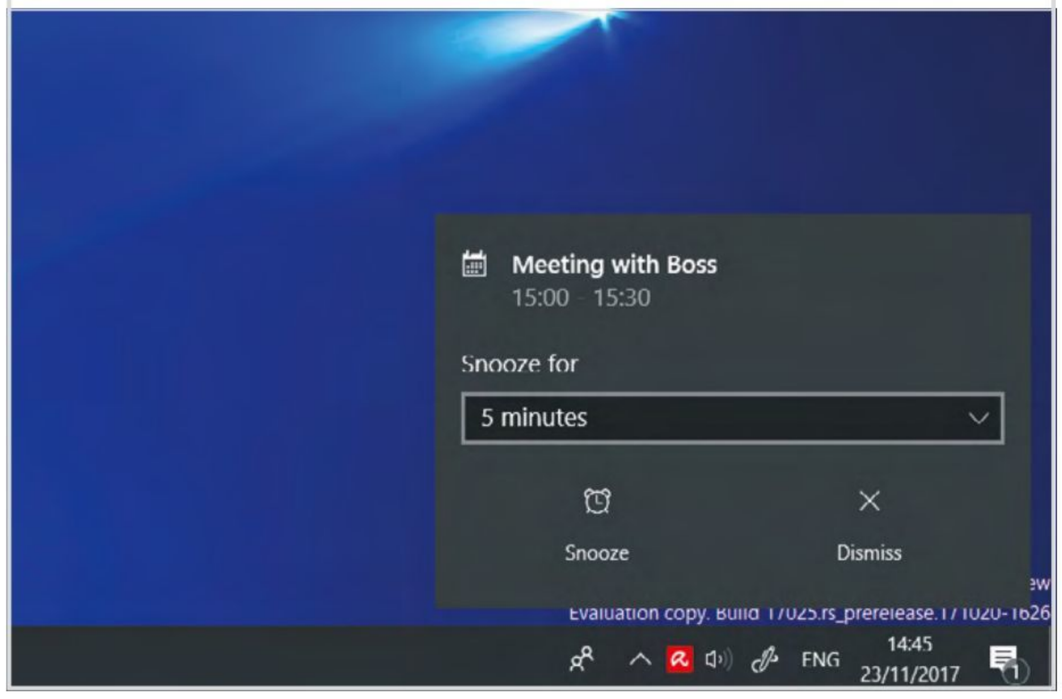
Manage Notifications in Windows 10

If you've used a modern smartphone, you should be all too familiar with Notifications and alerts. Windows 10 has embraced the use of similar notifications in a much bigger way than older versions. Here's how to manage those useful little pop-ups and alerts.

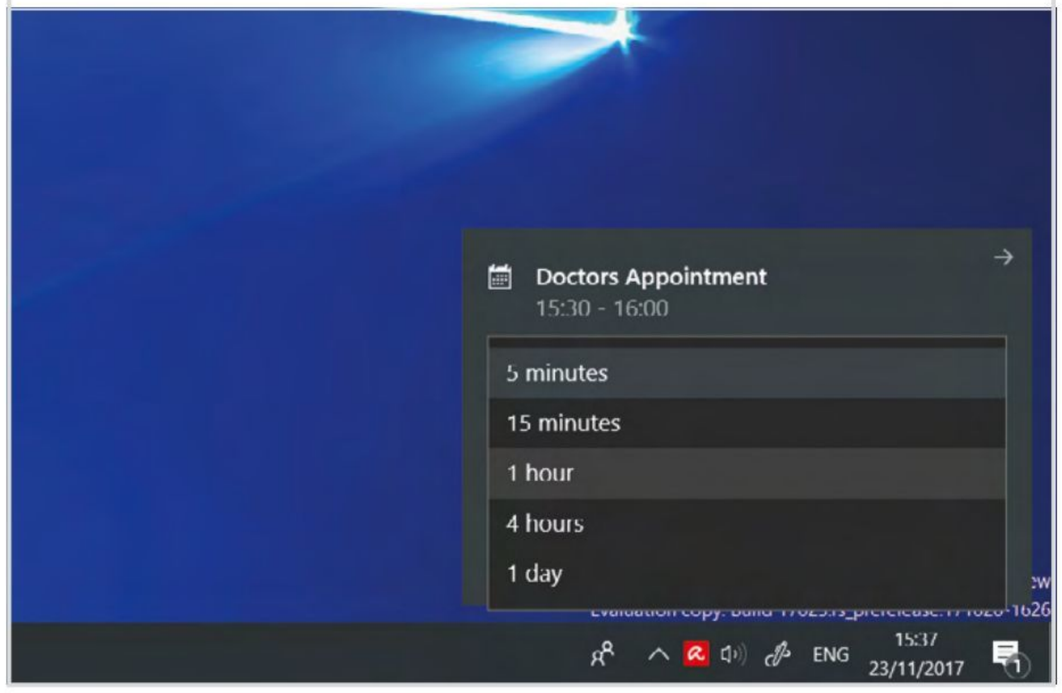
Viewing Notifications

Viewing your notifications is very straightforward, as they are all grouped together within the Action Center. You can see when you have new notifications by the numbered badge that appears.

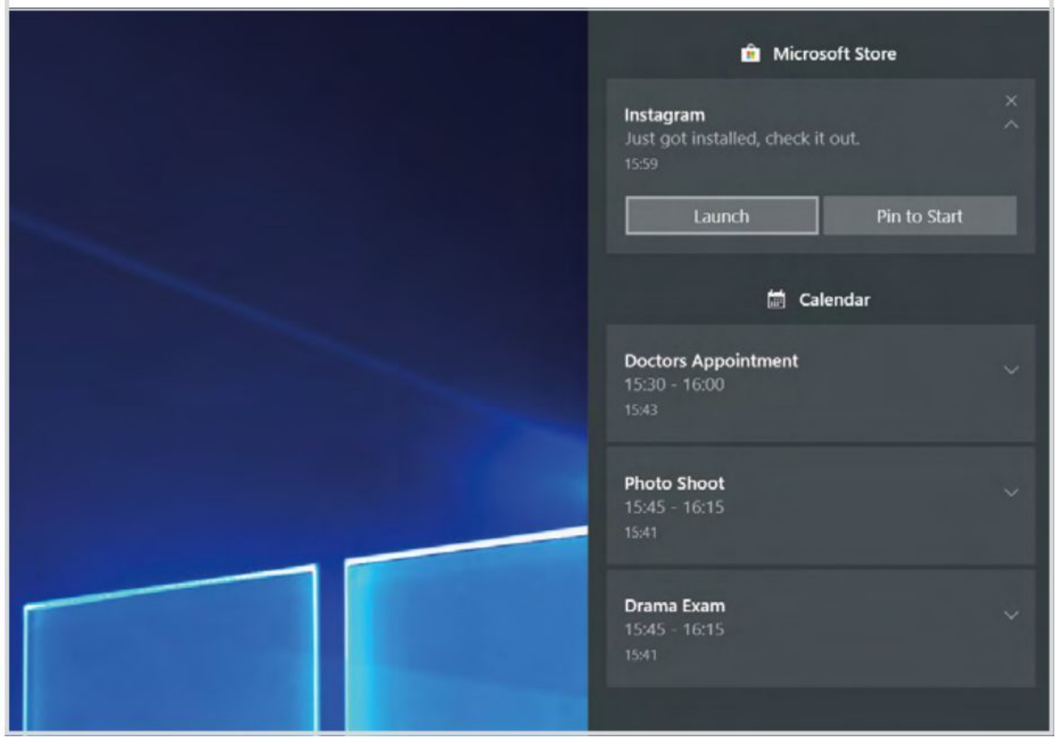
Step 1 Some notifications pop up in a small window in the bottom right corner of the screen as they arrive, others will simply arrive in the Action Center and display a badge on the Action Center button, again at the bottom right of the screen. To see your active notifications, click the Action Center button.



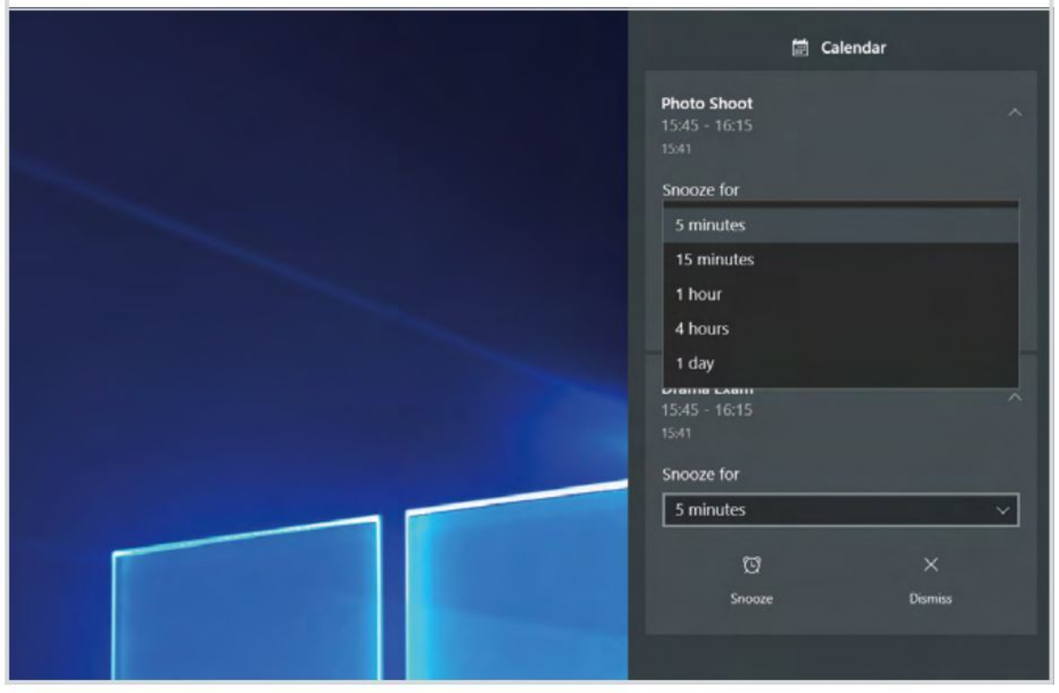
Step 2 Notifications are displayed under relevant headings and will be grouped together accordingly. So if you have two different Calendar app notifications, find them grouped together under a calendar heading. Notifications that pop up a window will vanish after a few seconds if you ignore them.



Step 3 Some notifications can be interacted with in the pop-up or in the Action Center. For example, after installing an app such as Spotify, a notification will appear telling you that the installation was successful, and letting you launch the app or pin it to the Start menu straight away.



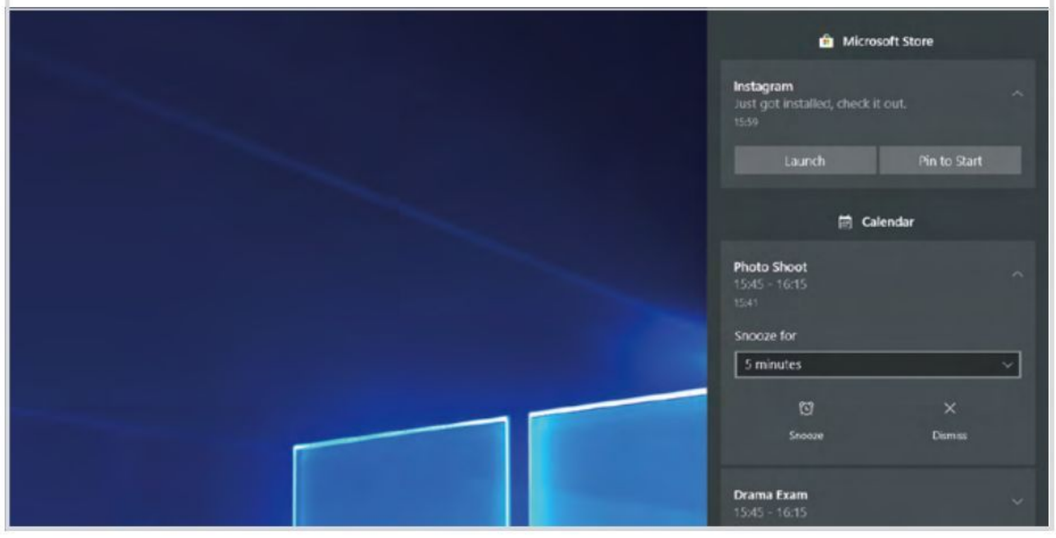
Step 4 Notifications of events from the Calendar app will always appear as a pop-up first and then appear in the Action Center. You have the option to interact with both, by snoozing the notification for a selectable period of time. Doing this will remove it from notifications until it pops up again later.



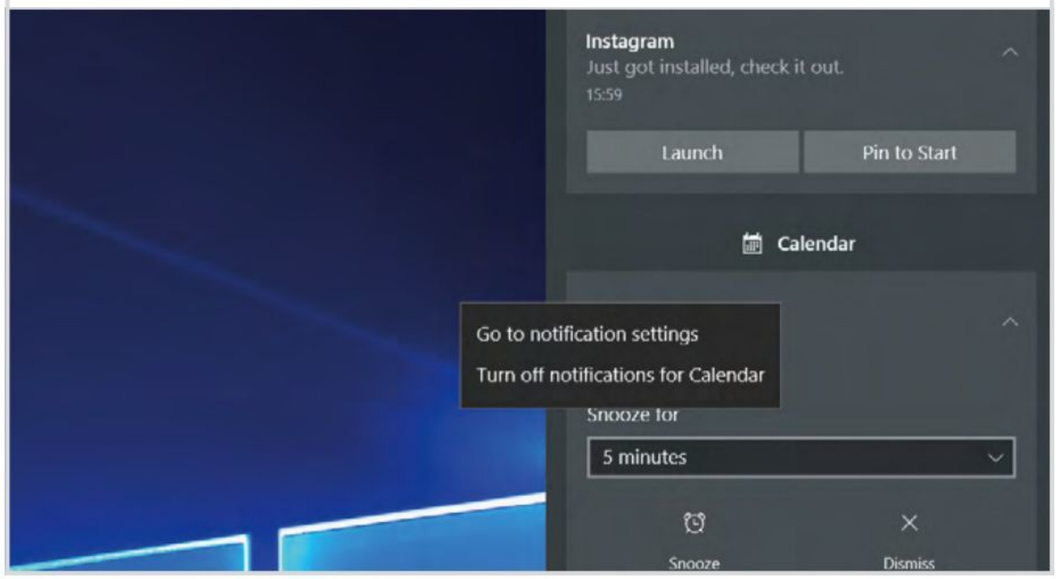
Managing Your Notifications

You have a high level of control over how you are notified of things happening or requiring attention on your Windows 10 computer. Let's take a look at managing your notifications.

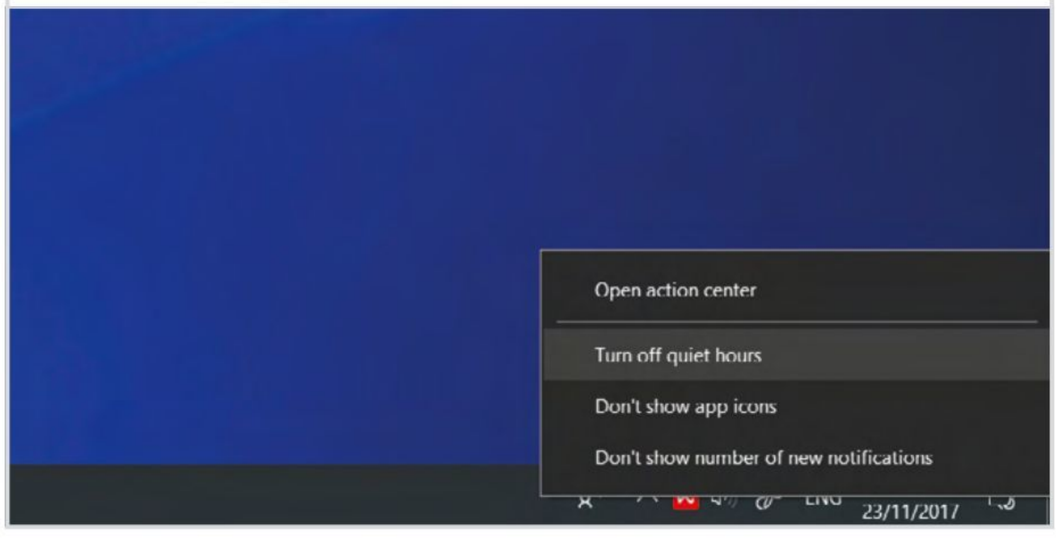
Step 1 Notifications that are showing in the Action Center will disappear after you have clicked on them or actioned them. You can also remove them from the panel by hovering your mouse pointer over them and clicking the X that appears. Some notifications can be safely ignored, but be wary about which.



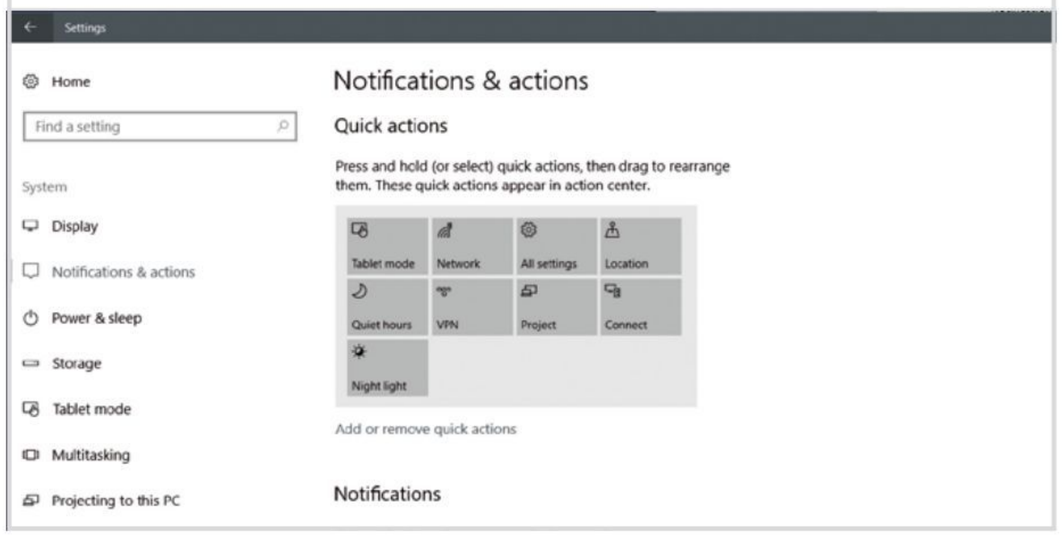
Step 2 Right-clicking on a notification heading in the Action Center will bring up a small action menu allowing you to choose to turn off future notifications from that app or service, or make it a priority. You can also go directly from this action menu to the main notifications settings.



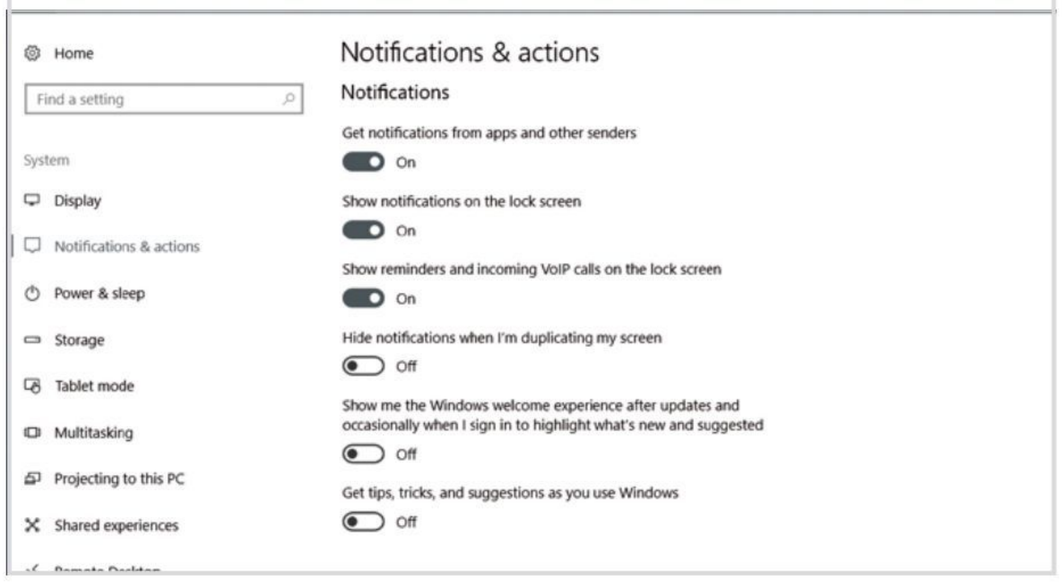
Step 3 Right-clicking on the Action Center button will bring up a small options menu, allowing you to turn on/off Quiet hours (a period when no notifications are shown), whether app icons are shown in the Action Center and whether the number of notifications is shown on the Action Center button.



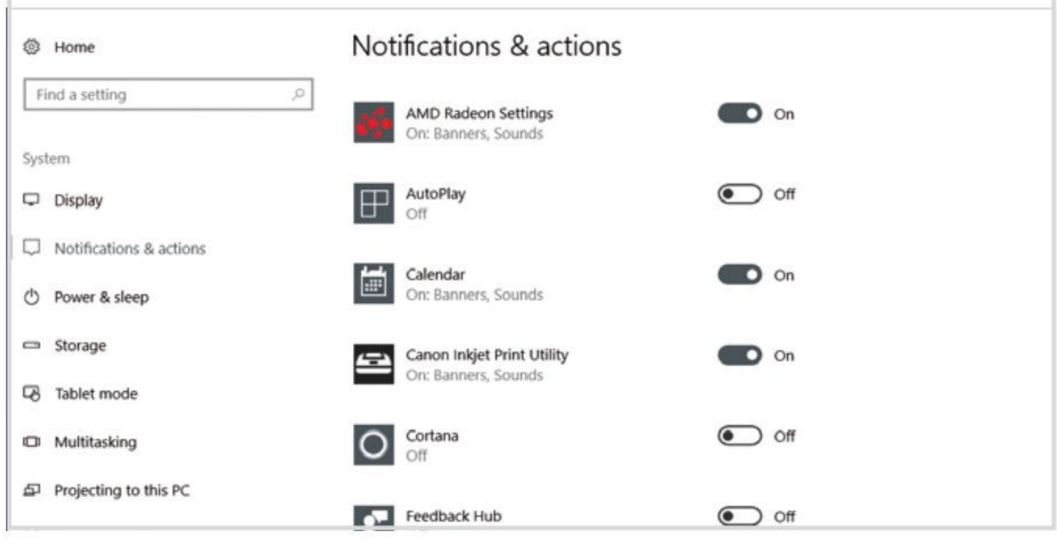
Step 4 Open the main Settings > Notifications & actions and you can see several more ways to manage your notifications and the Action Center. At the top you will see the panel for reviewing, adding and removing Quick actions buttons (that appear in the Action Center). Available Quick actions will vary.



Step 5 You will also see a few sliders that allow you to control general notifications settings such as whether you get notifications from apps, notifications are shown on the lock screen of your PC and whether they are shown when you are duplicating the screen.



Step 6 Below these are sliders to enable or disable notifications for individual apps or services in Windows 10. Click on the name of the app or the feature and a new screen will open, letting you fine-tune the notification setting for each in much more detail (e.g. set the max number of notifications to show).



Mobile

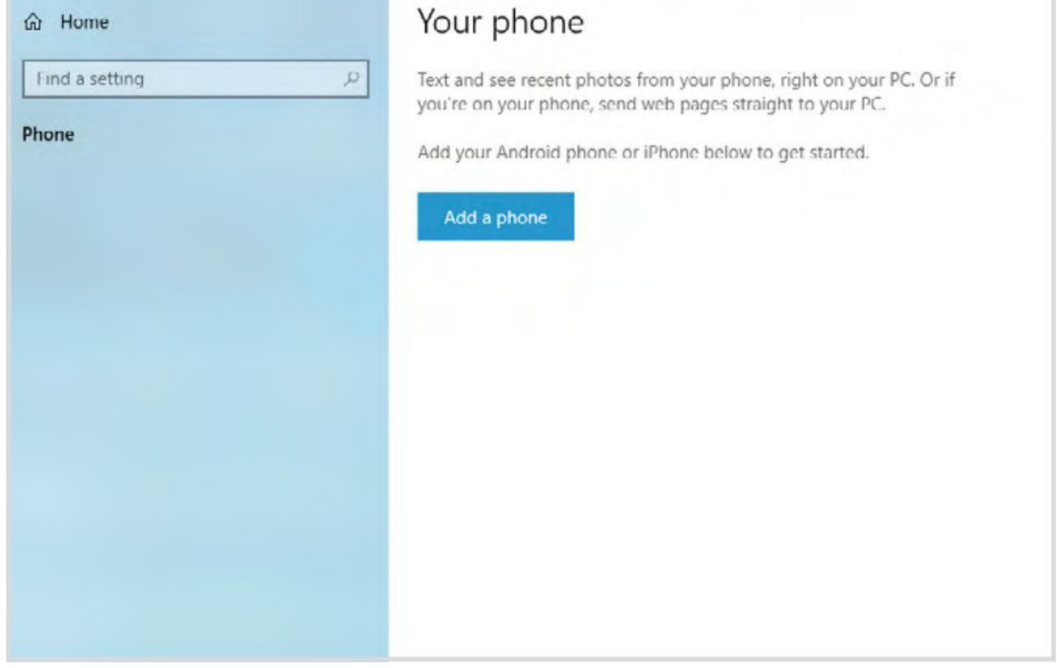
Connect Your Phone to Your PC

You can connect an iOS or Android phone to both your Microsoft account and Windows 10, allowing you to view the photos on your phone from the comfort of your desktop and even view call and SMS details on your computer as they arrive on your phone.

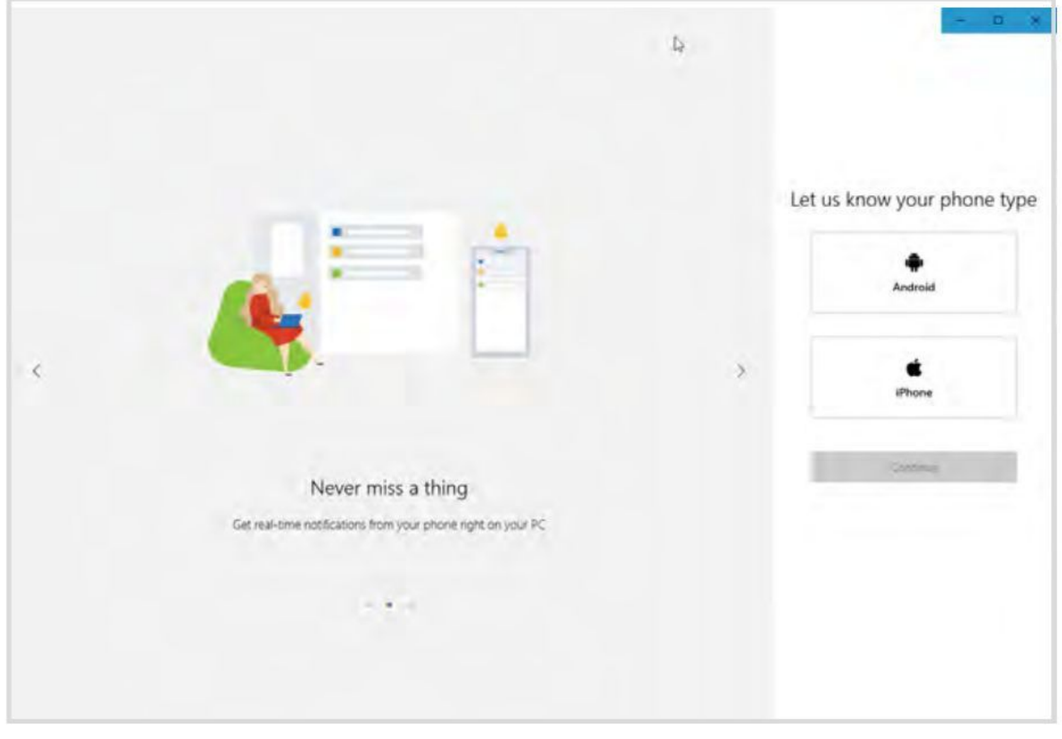
Set Up the Your Phone App

The setup steps for connecting a mobile device to Windows 10 are almost exactly the same for both iOS and Android devices.

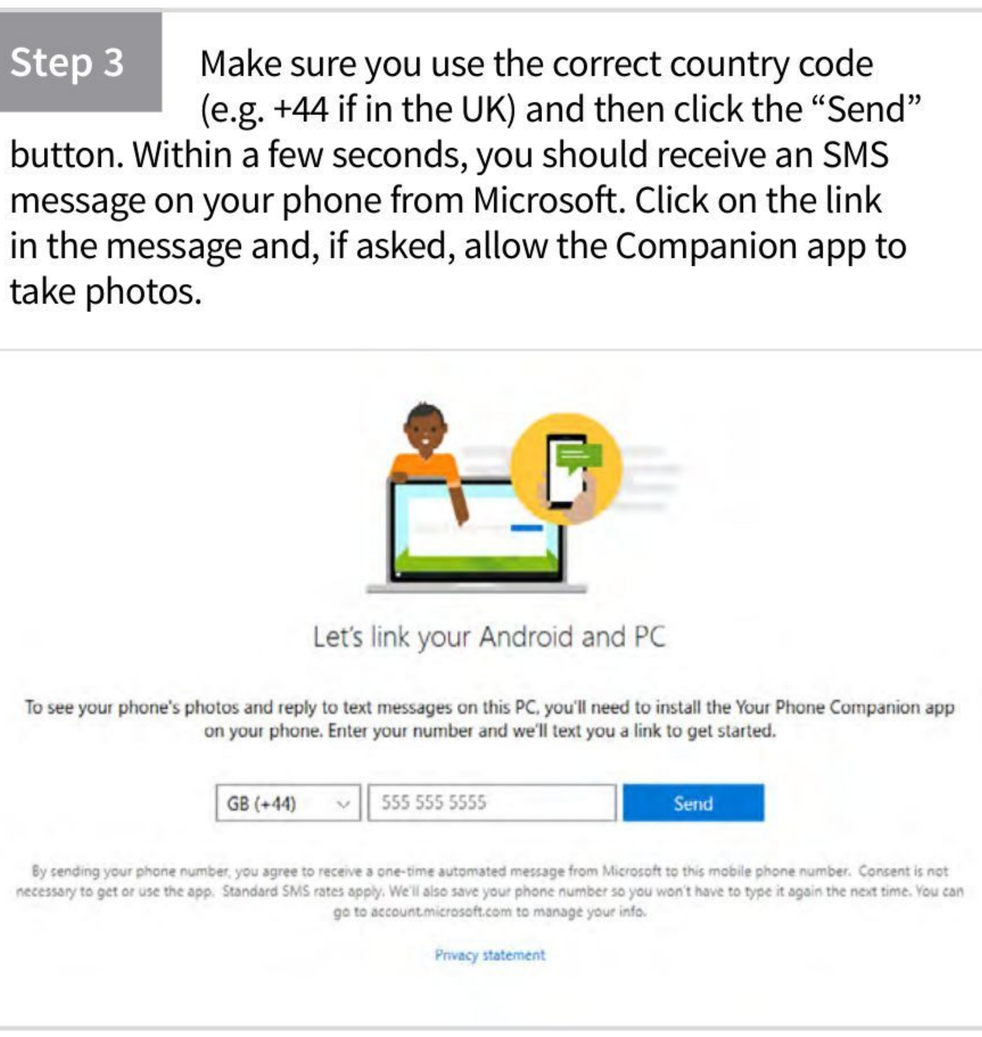
Step 1 Open the Settings and look for the "Phone" option. Click the link and then click the "Add a phone" button on the next screen. The Your Phone app then opens in a new window. You can also get to the app directly from the link at the bottom of the apps list in the Start menu.



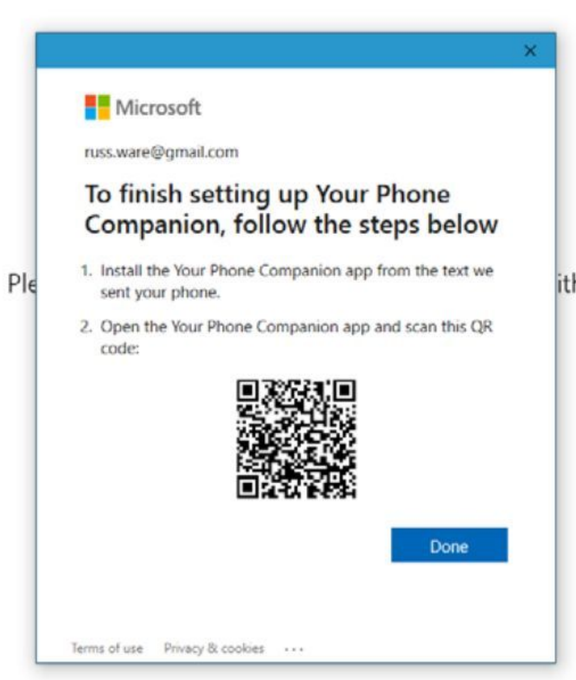
Step 2 In the right-hand sidebar, click on the type of phone you have (Android or iPhone) and then click "Continue"; another window opens, showing your Microsoft account. To link your phone to your PC, you need to enter your phone number here (if not already in your account).



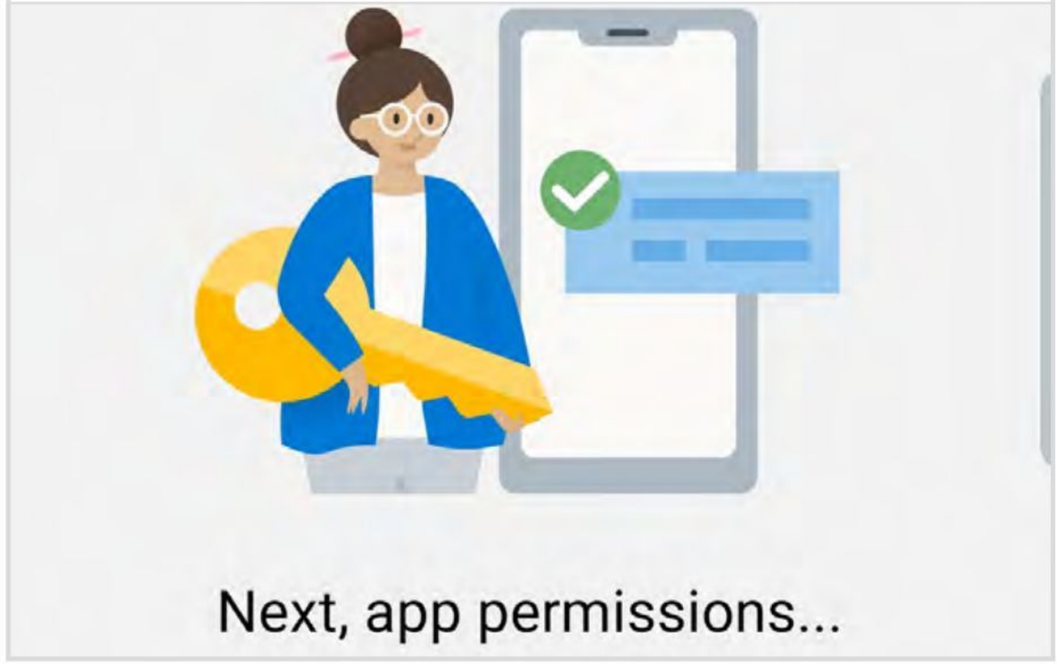
Step 3 Make sure you use the correct country code (e.g. +44 if in the UK) and then click the "Send" button. Within a few seconds, you should receive an SMS message on your phone from Microsoft. Click on the link in the message and, if asked, allow the Companion app to take photos.



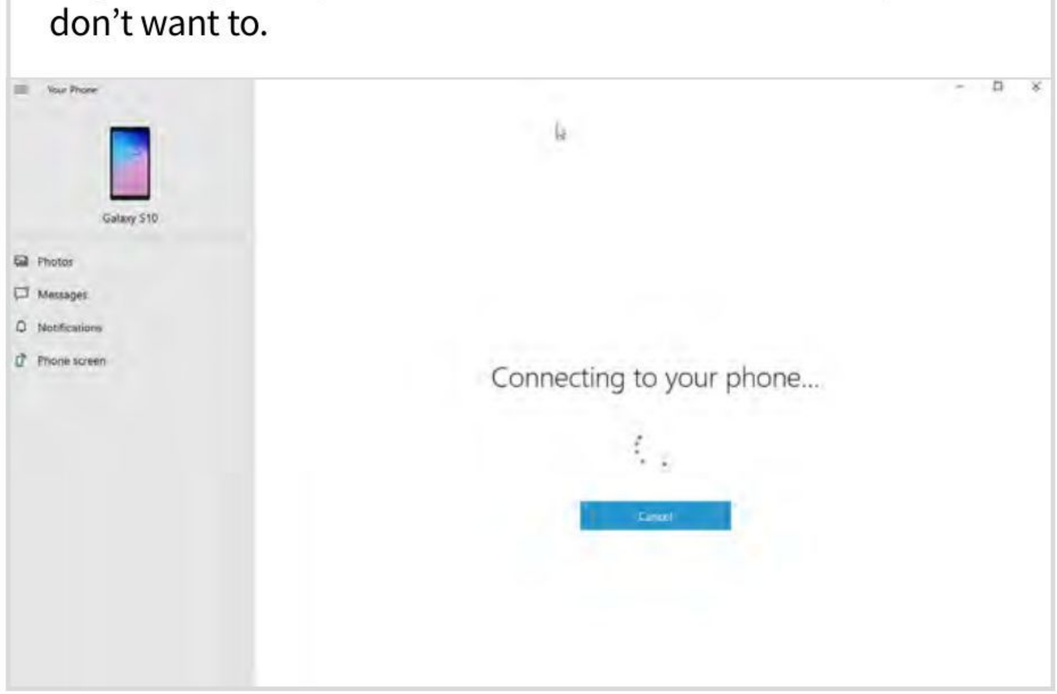
Step 4 Meanwhile, on your computer screen you should see a new window open, showing a QR code. Scan this using the Companion app now open on your phone. Again, you may be asked to allow certain app permissions on your phone. If you decline, you can't connect your devices.



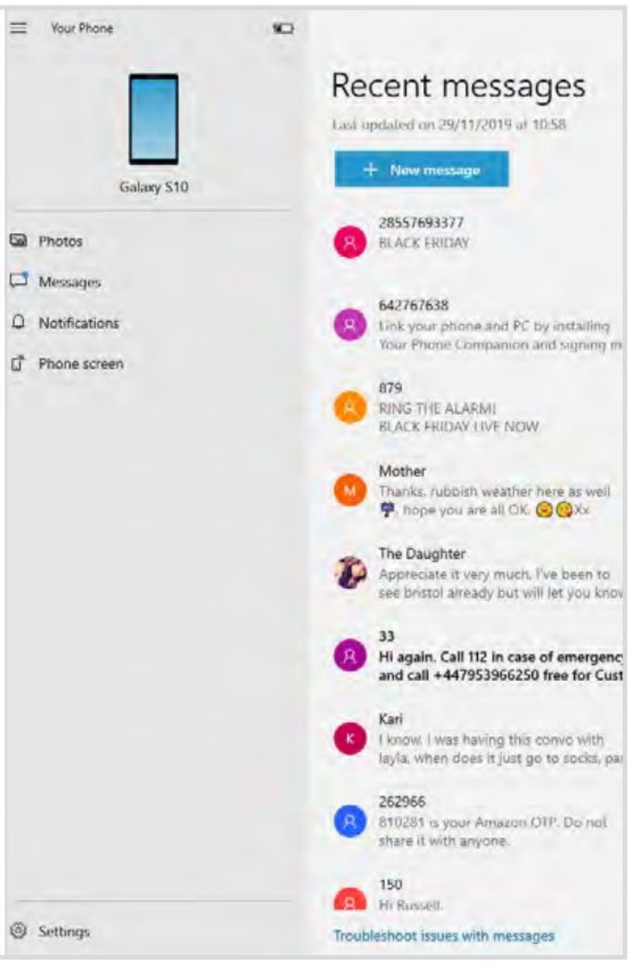
Step 5 If all is successful, you should now see your phone displayed in the Your Phone app on your computer. There is a new screen displayed on your phone, this shows the settings for the Microsoft companion app, alongside to which Windows 10 computer it is connected.



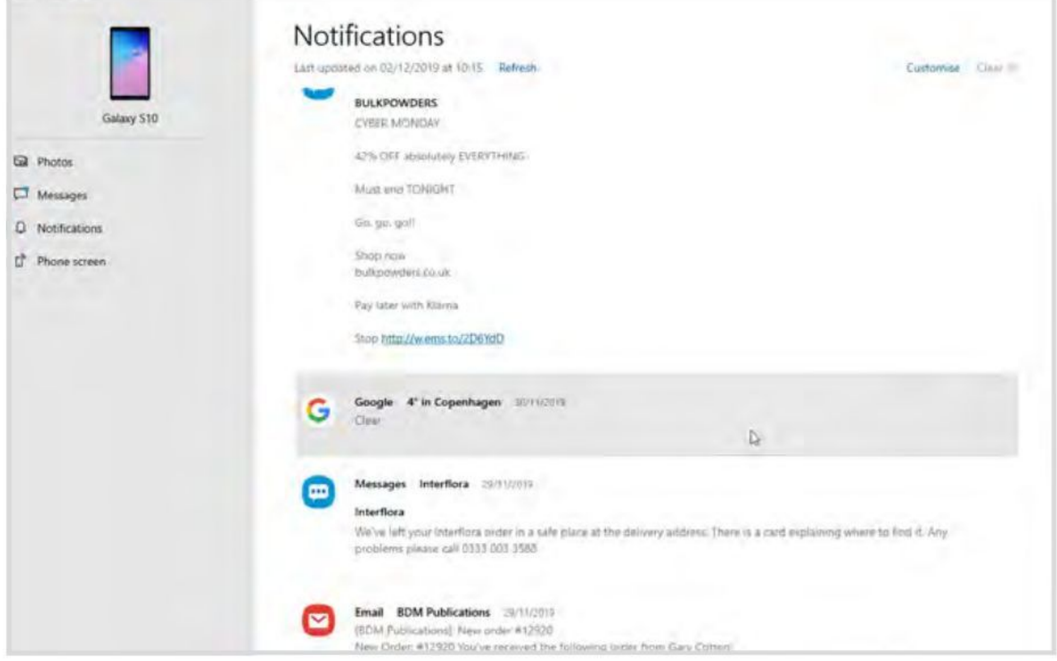
Step 6 Now it's time to start using the Your Mobile app. In the left-hand sidebar are several different sections. These include Photos, Messages, Notifications and Phone Screen. Each part of the app needs to be enabled to begin using it, so you don't have to allow full access if you don't want to.



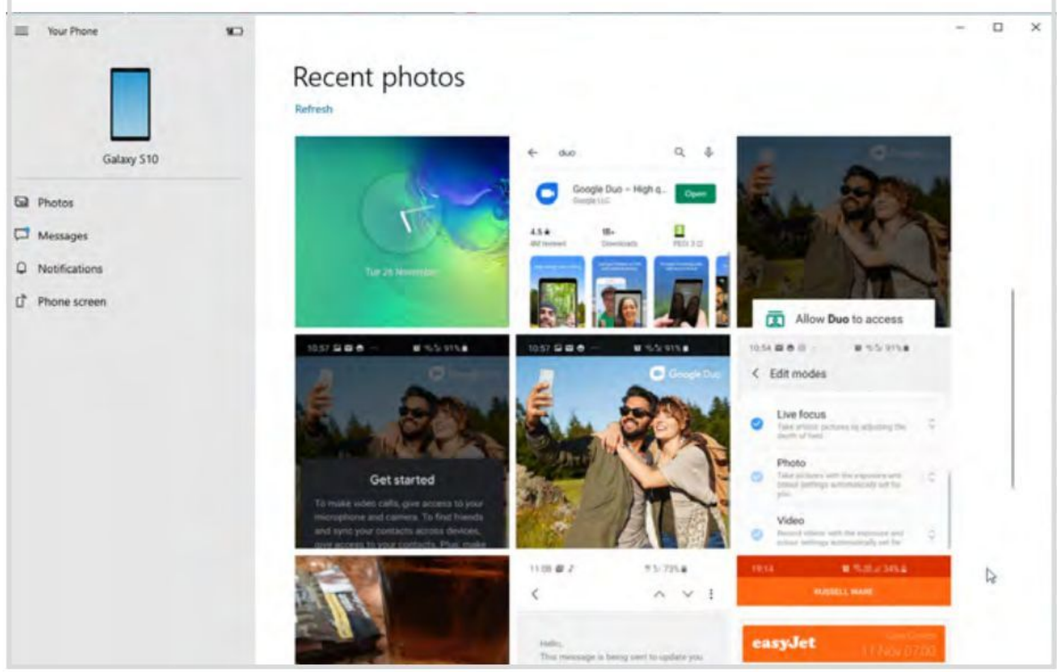
Step 7 Click on Messages first, and then click the "See texts" button. When asked, send the notification to your phone to ask permission to access messages (if already given, this opens the messages list). Your phone messages are now displayed, and you can click on any to read and reply.



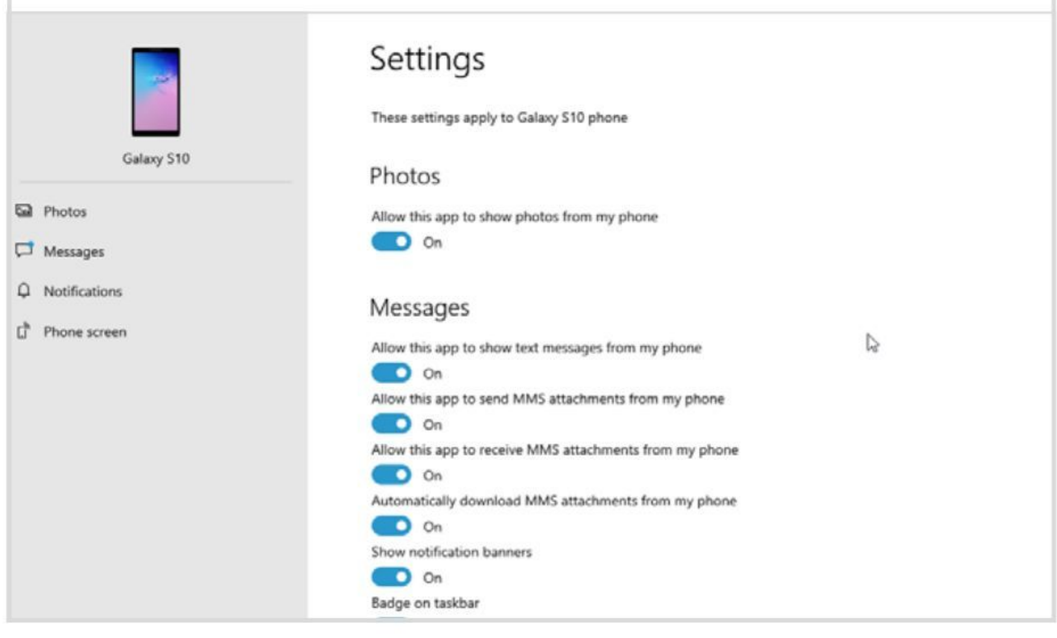
Step 8 If you want to be able to see notifications from your phone on your PC screen, you need to click on Notifications and then click "Get Started". Again, you need to allow this on your phone settings, which are opened by clicking the button on the screen in the Your Phone app.



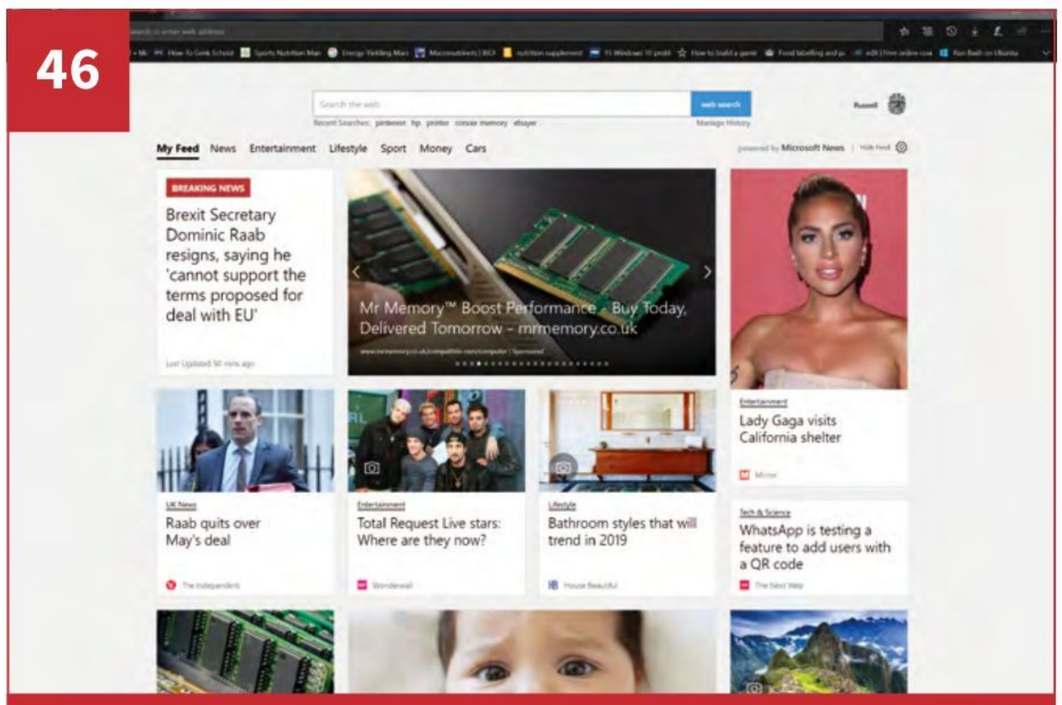
Step 9 To view photos stored on your phone from the comfort of your PC, click the Photos section. Allow access as before, and then wait while the view refreshes. The most recent 25 images captured on your phone are displayed. You can open them in the Photos app by clicking on them.



Step 10 The Phone Screen option allows you to mirror your phone screen on your PC, displaying everything that is happening on your mobile device in the live feed of the Your phone app. To fine-tune any settings, click the Settings button at the bottom of the sidebar in the Your Phone app.



Contents



Browsing with Microsoft Edge

42 Internet
Connect Your PC to the Internet
42 Manage Your Network Settings

44 Edge
Exploring the Secure Edge Browser

46 Edge
Browsing Safely with Microsoft Edge

46 Get Started with Edge
47 Edge Tabs
47 Edge Tools
48 Customising Microsoft Edge
49 Write Notes in Edge
49 Edge Tips and Tricks

50 Search
Using the Search Tools
52 Advanced Search Settings

53 Cortana
Using the Personal Assistant
53 The Cortana Notebook
54 Cortana Skills
55 Cortana Tips and Tricks

56 Cortana
The Most Useful Cortana Commands
56 PC Control Commands
56 News and Finance

Internet, Email and Search

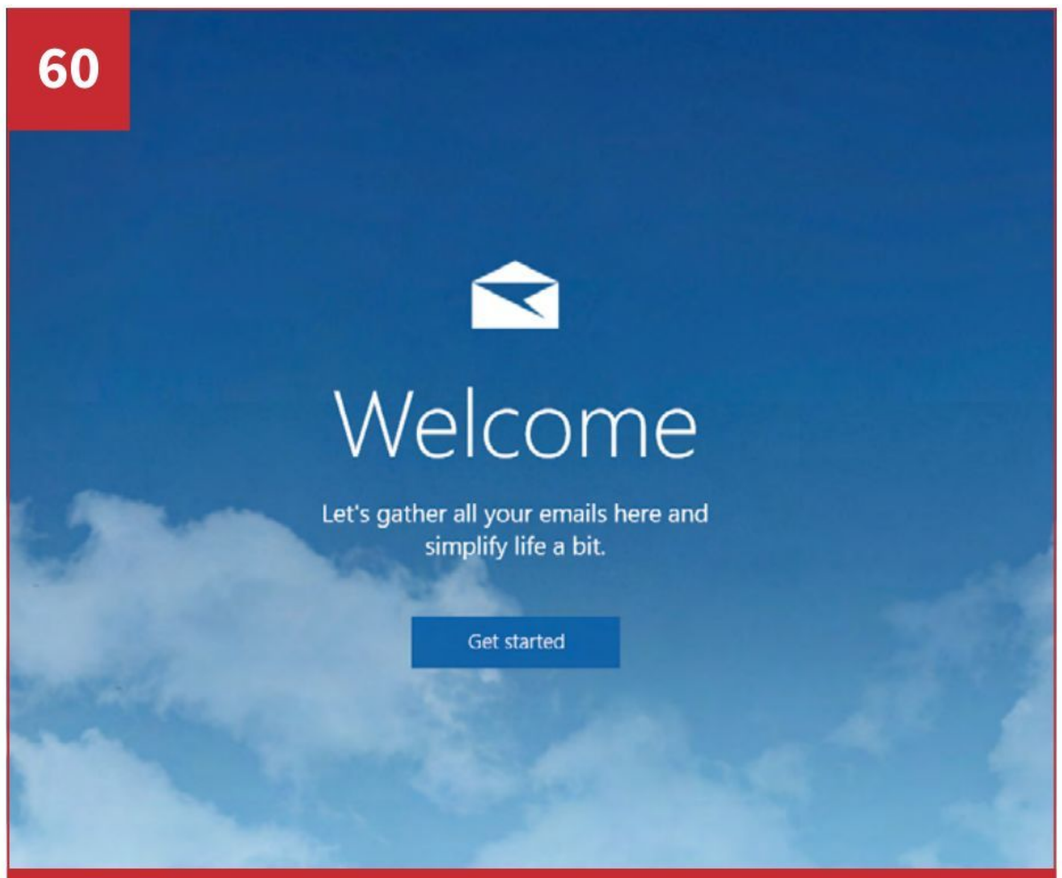
Microsoft's Edge browser is the new and upgraded version of the classic Windows Internet Explorer. However, browsing the Internet is just one element of getting online, so we also look at how to set up and use your email with Microsoft Mail. Finally, learn how to use Cortana, the Windows 10 digital assistant.

56 Getting Information
57 Entertainment Commands
57 Reminders and Notes
57 Contacts and Communication
57 Other Useful Commands

58 Mail
Explore the Email App in Windows 10

60 Email
How to Set Up and Use the Mail App
60 Meet Your New Email Client

Useful Cortana commands



Setting up the Mail app

Internet

Connect Your PC to the Internet

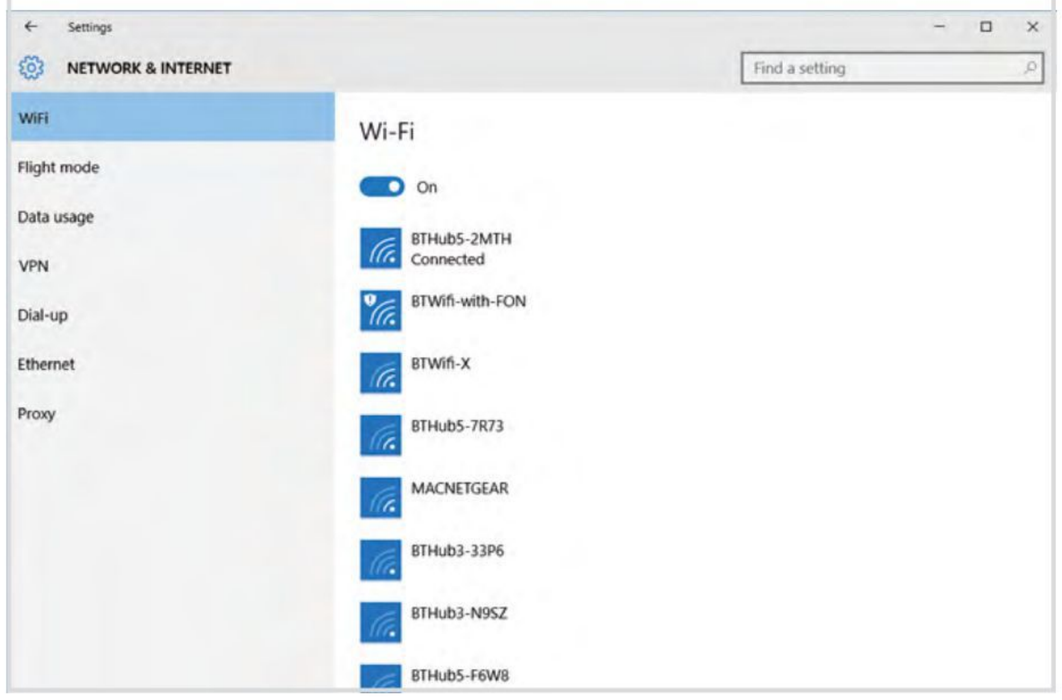
Setting up your Internet connection is an important step in Windows 10. Joining and managing networks is easier than ever. One of the new features is Wi-Fi Sense that enables you to securely share network connection details with your contacts.

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.

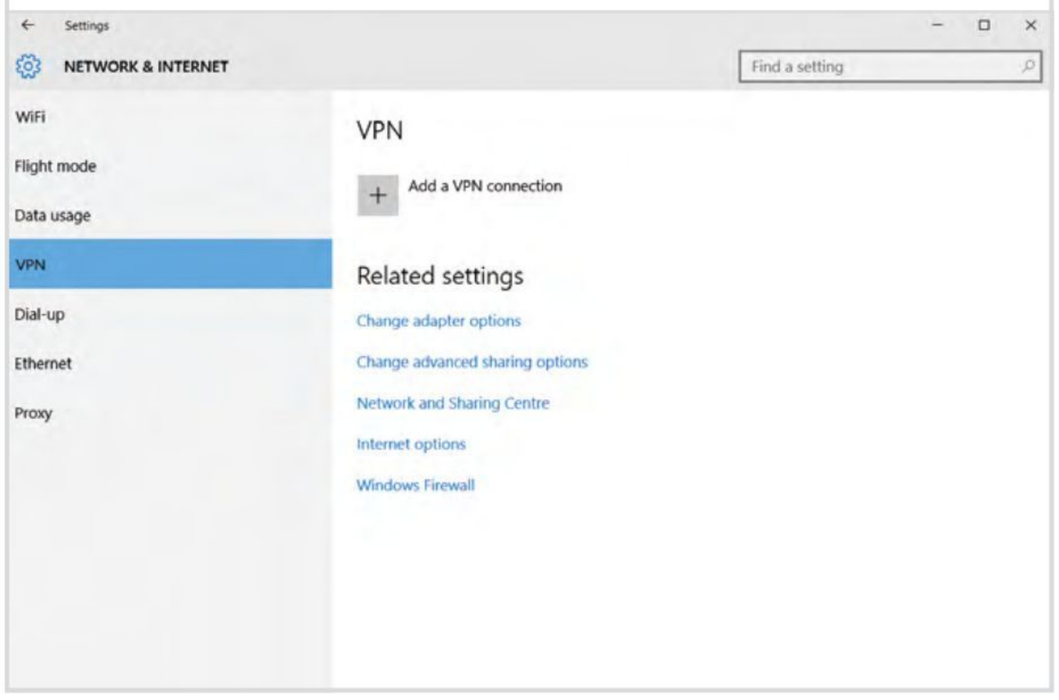
Your Settings

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.



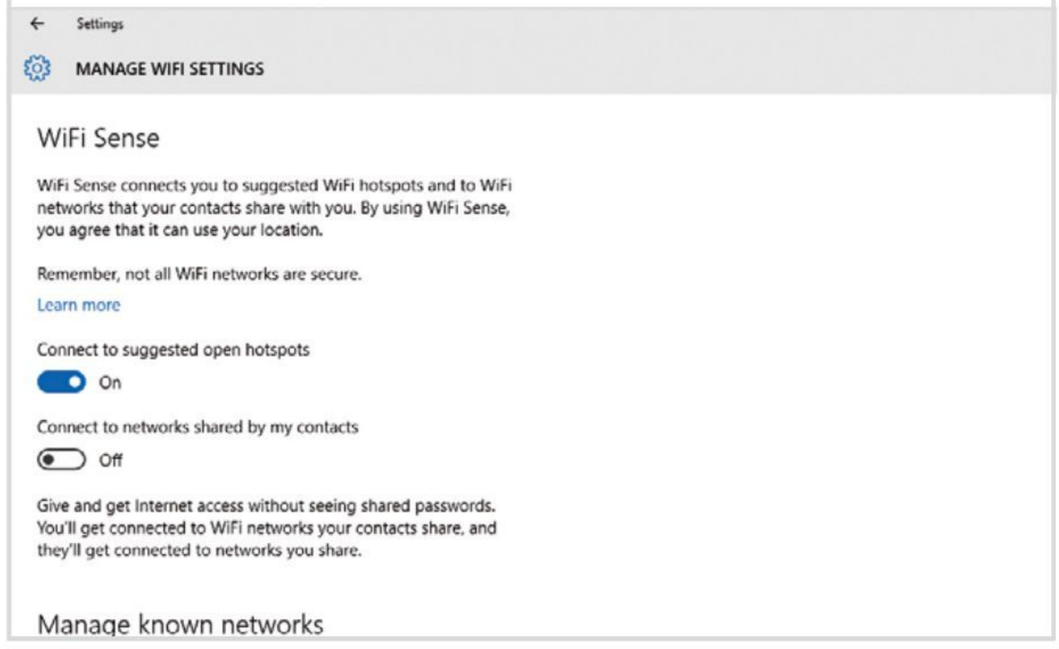
VPN Settings

If you need to log in to 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.



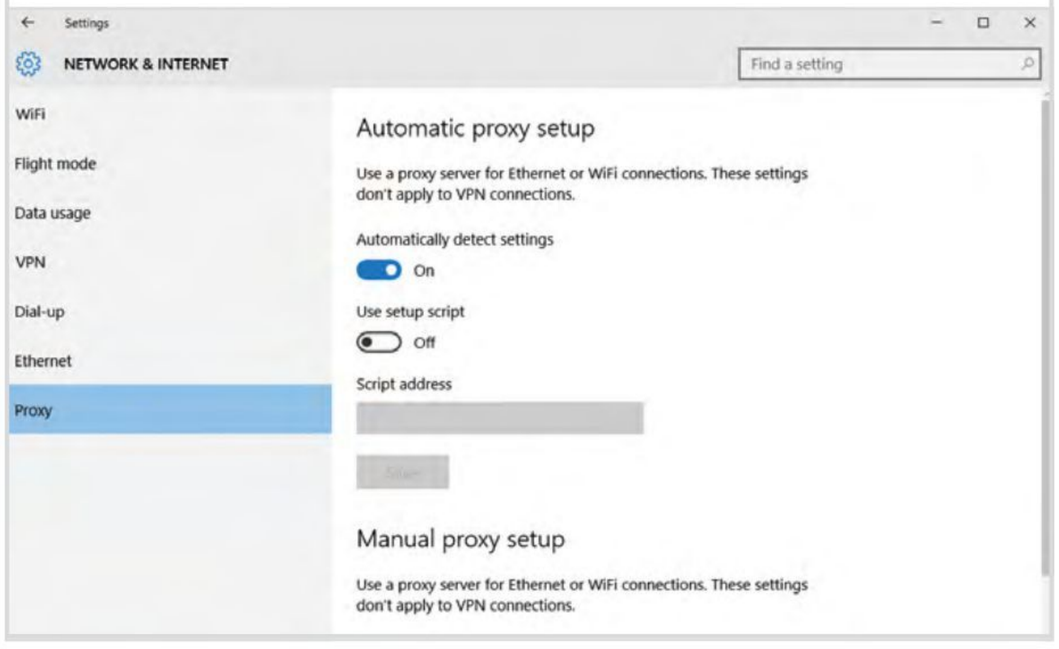
Wi-Fi Sense

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.



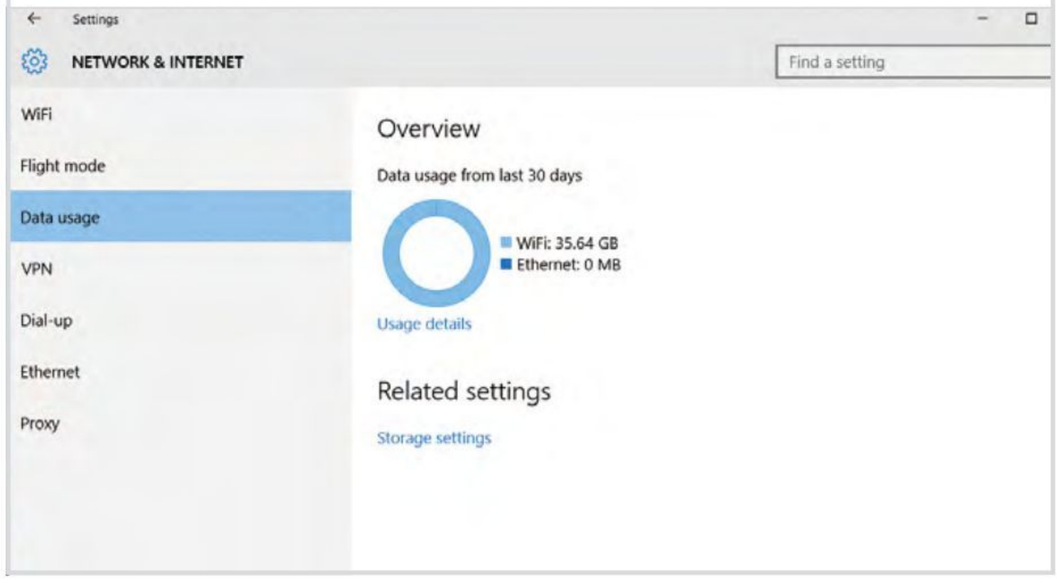
Proxy Settings

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.



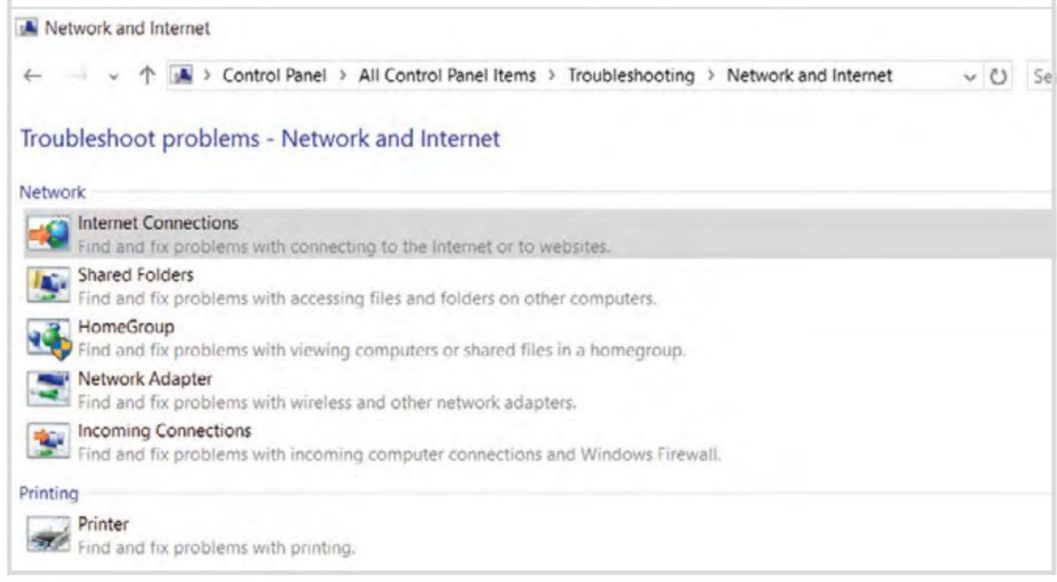
Your Usage

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.



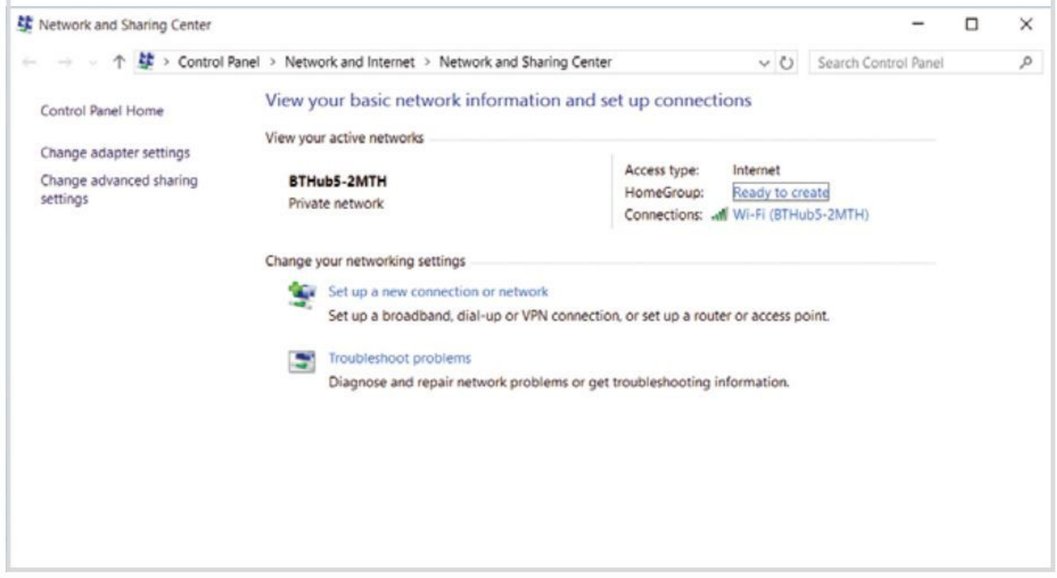
Troubleshoot

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.



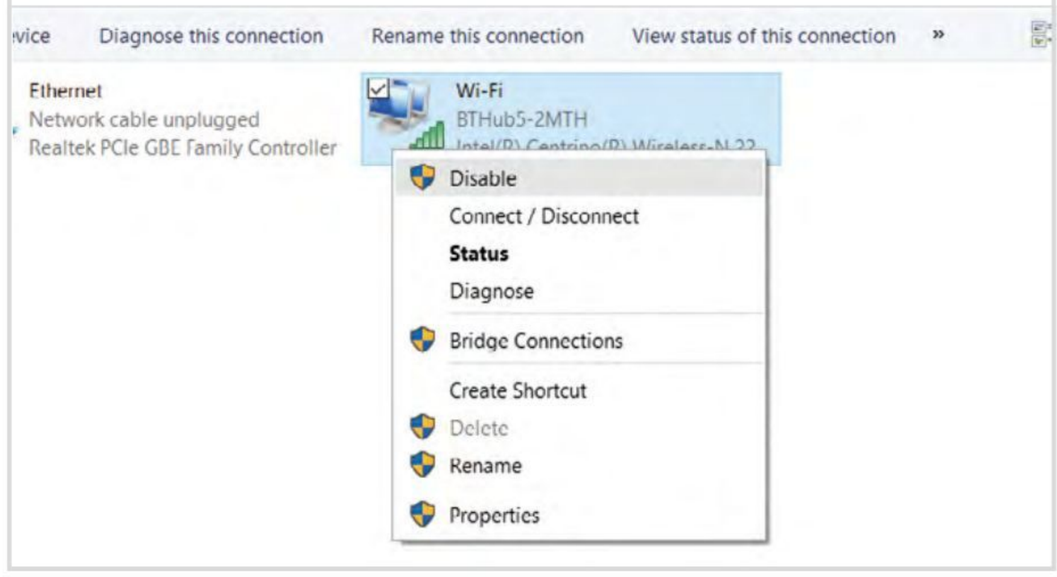
Control Panel

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.



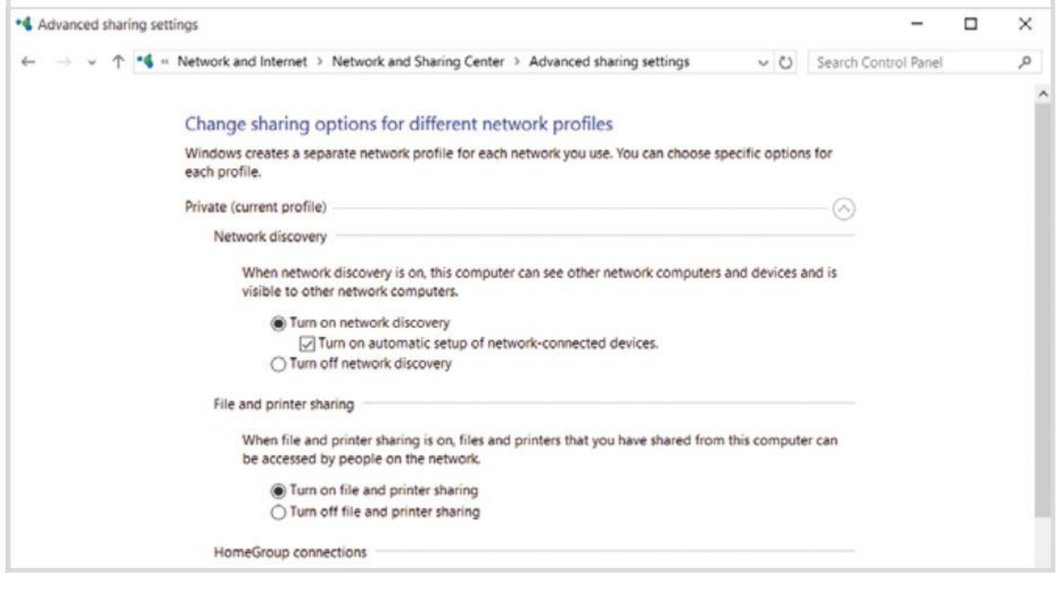
Disable Adapters

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.



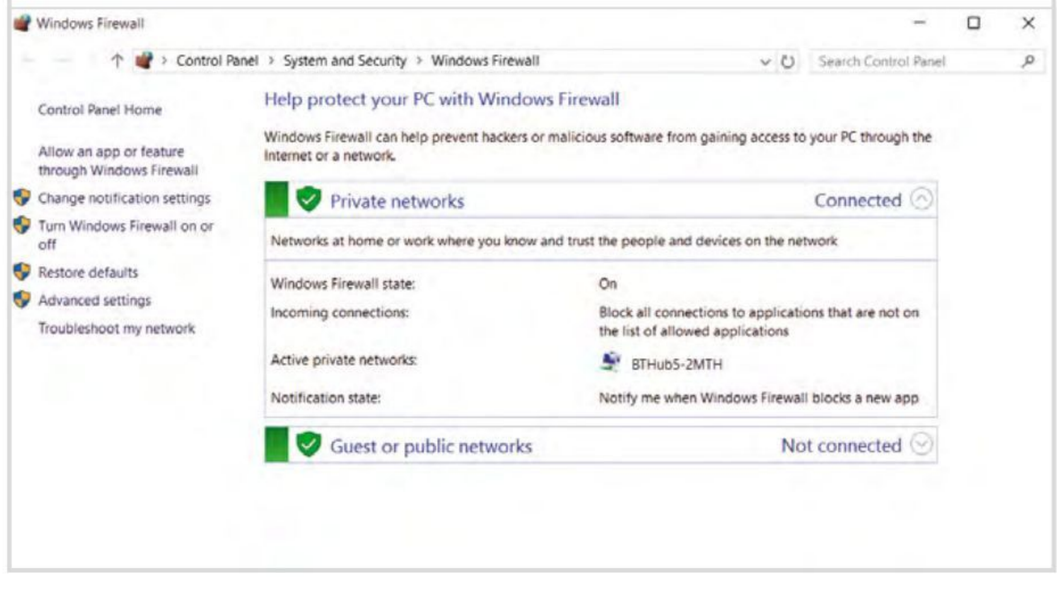
Sharing Settings

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.



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.



Edge

Exploring the Secure Edge Browser

Microsoft Edge lets you move quickly from browsing to doing. Write or type notes directly on web pages and share them with others, read online articles free of distraction and save your favourite reads for convenient access later.

Browser Controls

Up in the top left corner, where you would probably expect to find them, are the browser controls. These include the button to add a new tab, the Page refresh button and the Page forward/Page back buttons. Right-click on the main tab and you will see additional options, including Re-open Closed Tab.

Search Bar

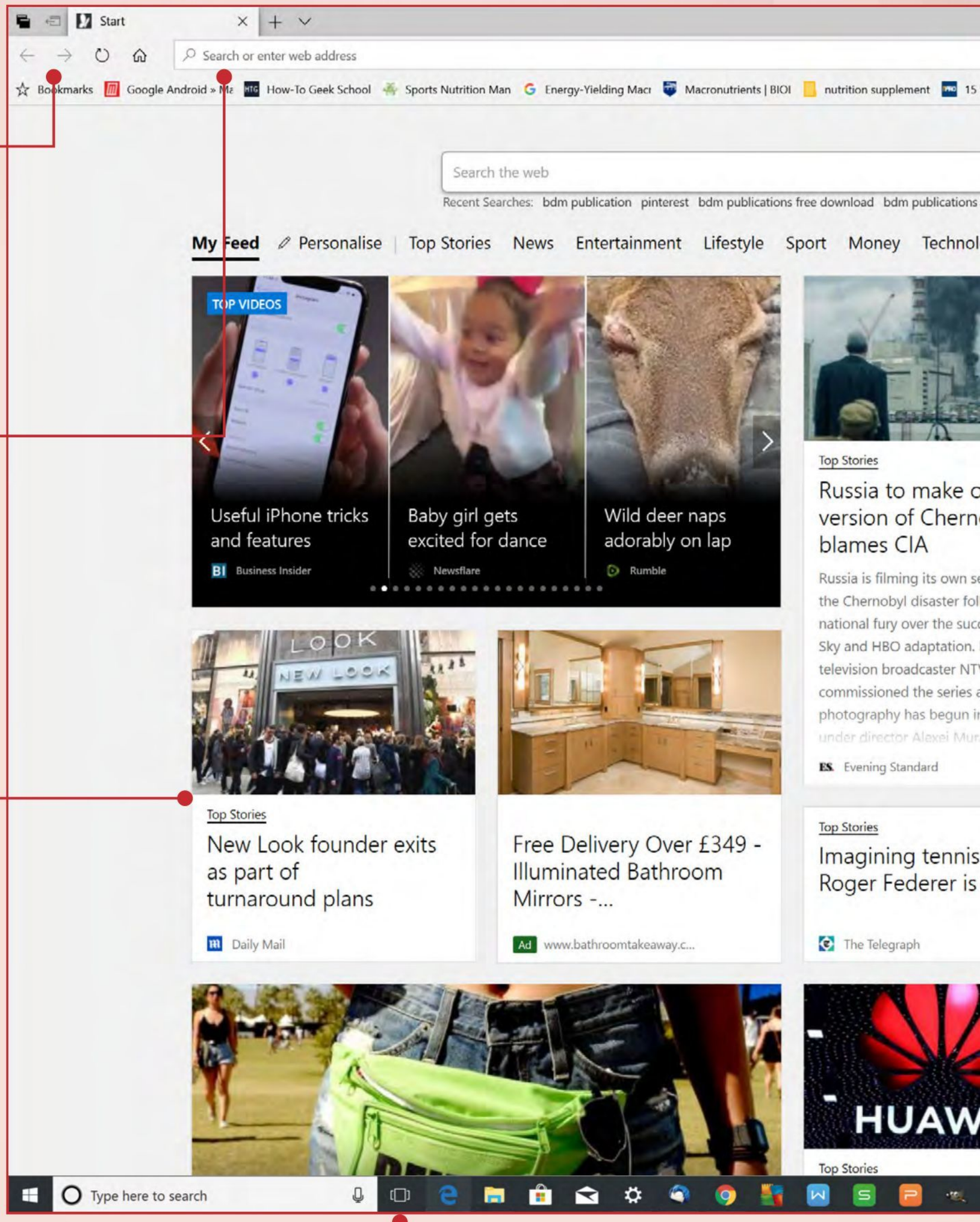
There's no need to go to a website to search for pictures of adorable penguins or cute kittens. Stay put and save time by entering your search in the handy address bar. You'll get search suggestions, instant results from the web and your browsing history on the spot.

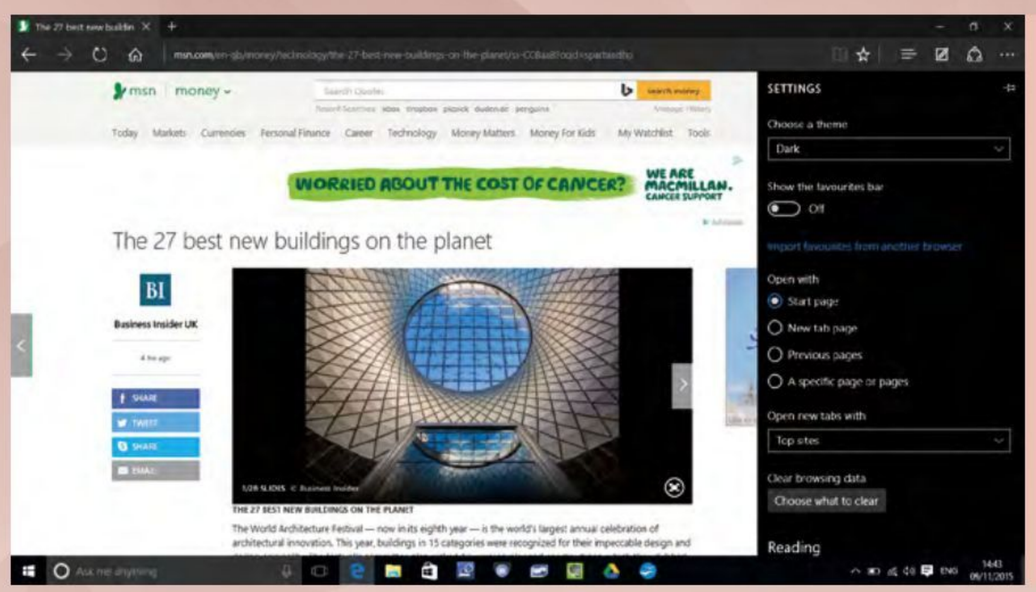
News Feed

The main Home screen of Microsoft Edge is your News Feed. The news feed is provided by MSN and is made up of news stories based on your geographical location. If you are in the UK, the news will be from UK news websites, in the US, the news will be from American sources.

Task View

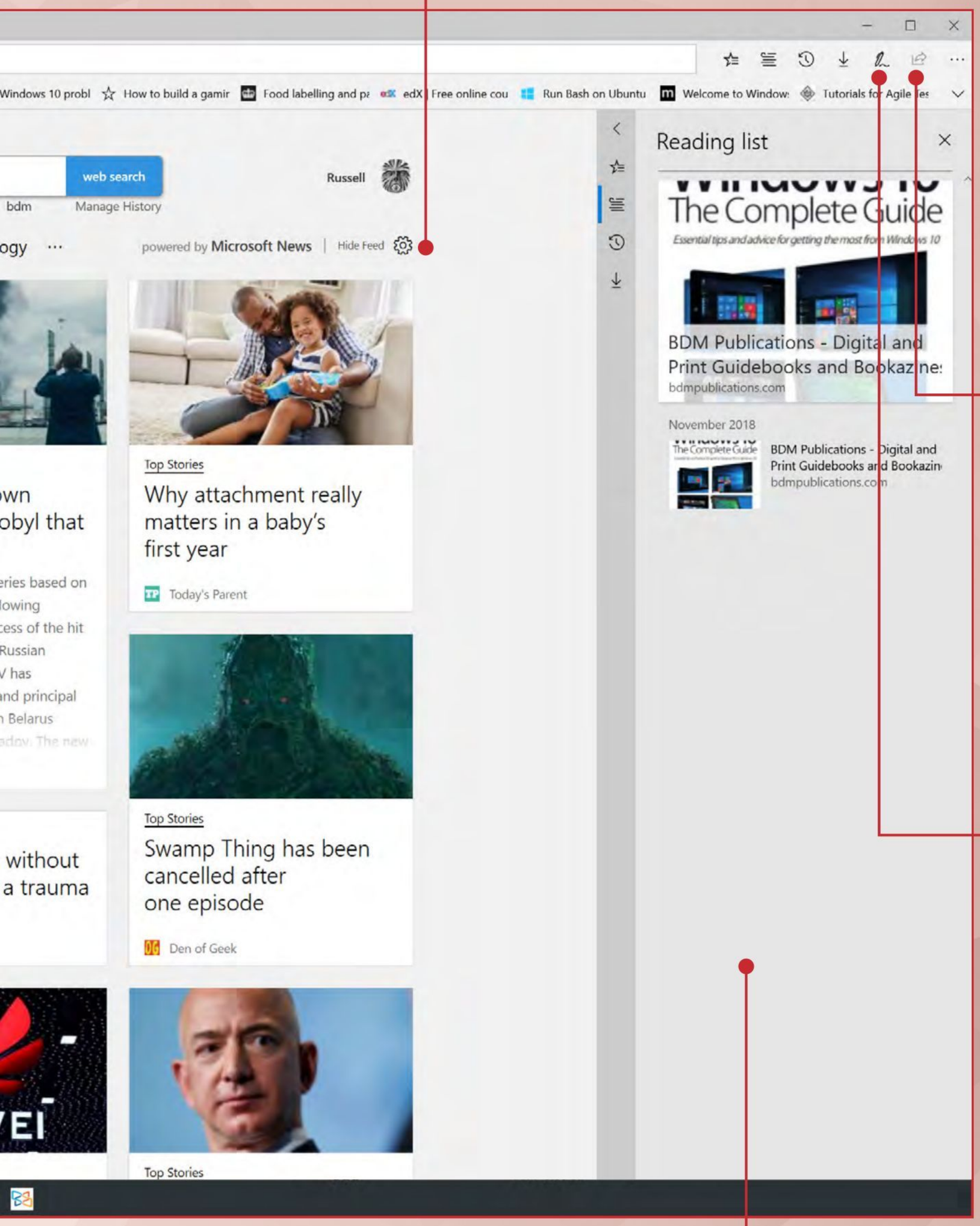
The taskbar, which remains at the bottom of the screen when using Edge, contains a button that switches to Task View. Task View allows you to quickly view any open windows and folders, displaying them as thumbnails. This includes any open Edge browser windows.





EDGE SETTINGS

Alongside options to change the style of the Edge browser, including changing to a dark theme, are several important settings. You can choose how the Edge browser opens, showing the Start page or another specified page for example. The advanced settings include options to block pop-ups and allow Flash Player.



Customise Feed

You can customise the news feed to provide stories and articles that interest you personally. Click the Customise button and then choose your required location (UK, US, etc.). You can then click on the various categories, including: Entertainment, Money and Sport, and make them your favourites.

Share

Windows Edge gives you more ways to share your discovered content than ever before. Click the Share button whilst on any web page and the Sharing panel will open. The title of the page will be displayed. Click this to choose whether to share a link or a screenshot. Then click the app you wish to share with.

Web Note

Microsoft Edge on Windows 10 allows you to hand write notes on top of ANY website you visit. When you are on a website and want to add a written note, simply click the Web Note button. A new menu bar opens, allowing you to choose pen colour and thickness. Now write your note and click Save.

The Hub

The taskbar contains shortcuts to many of the most commonly used apps, including: the Edge browser, the App Store and File Explorer. You can add any app to the taskbar by right-clicking on the tile or app icon and selecting “Pin to Taskbar” from the menu.

Edge

Browsing Safely with Microsoft Edge

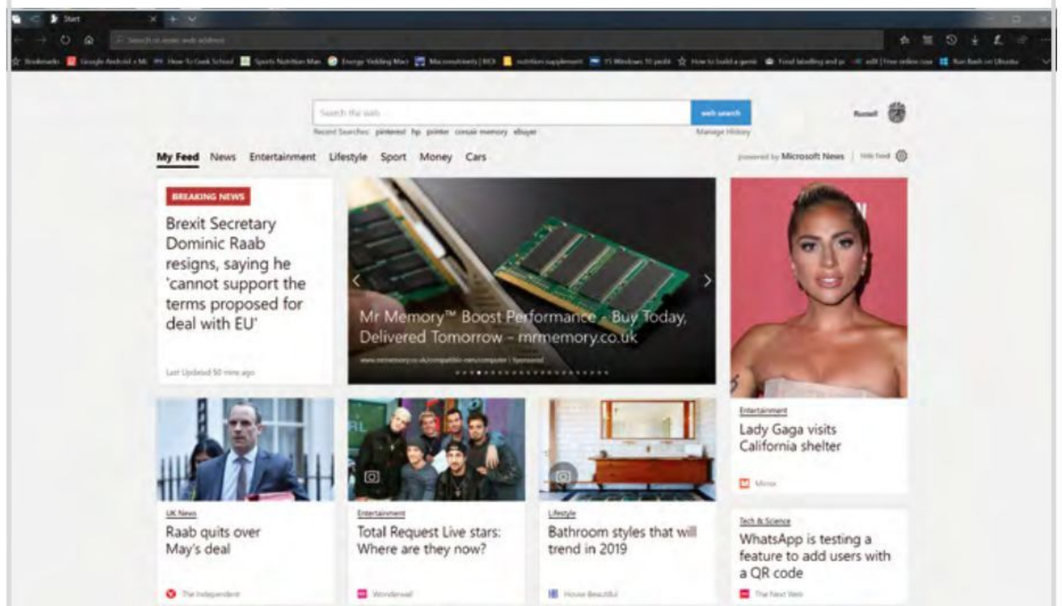
While it may not have the popularity of the Chrome browser, Microsoft Edge is getting better with every update. Edge is focused on modern web standards and boasts several innovative features, such as the ability to save tabs for later viewing.

Get Started with Edge

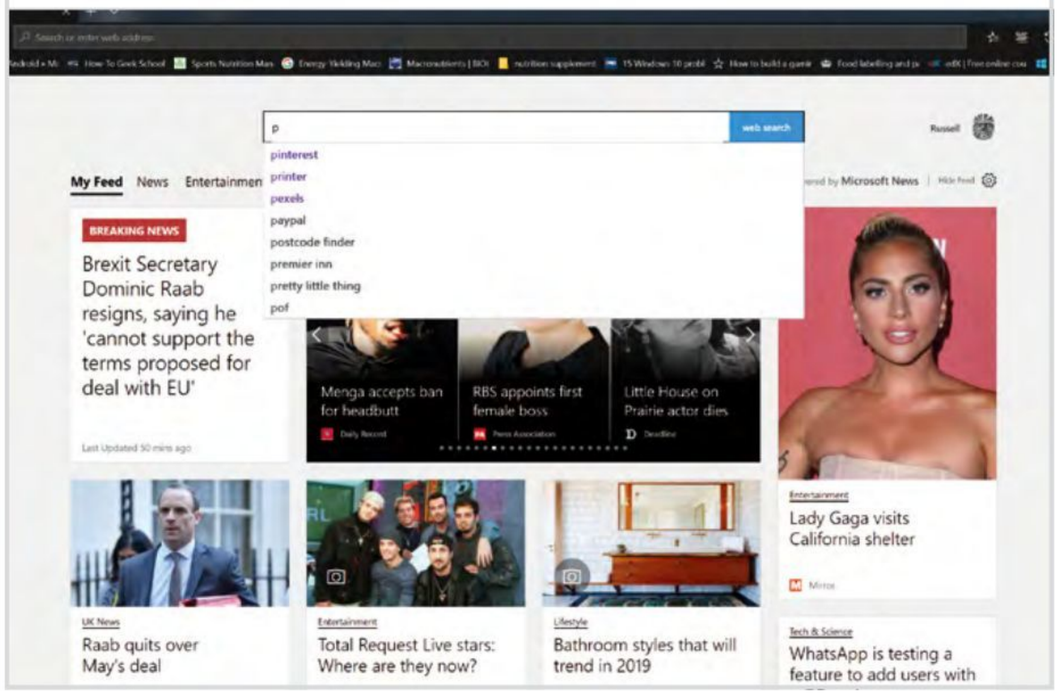
Edge is fast and fluid and we think you'll like it. It may not have the capability of Chrome or Firefox as yet but for basic web browsing it's almost perfect.

Step 1 You can open the Edge browser by clicking the stylised 'e' in the taskbar or by selecting it in the main apps list in the Start menu. The default Start tab will be displayed when Edge opens. This shows you news stories from Microsoft News, tailored to your geographic location.

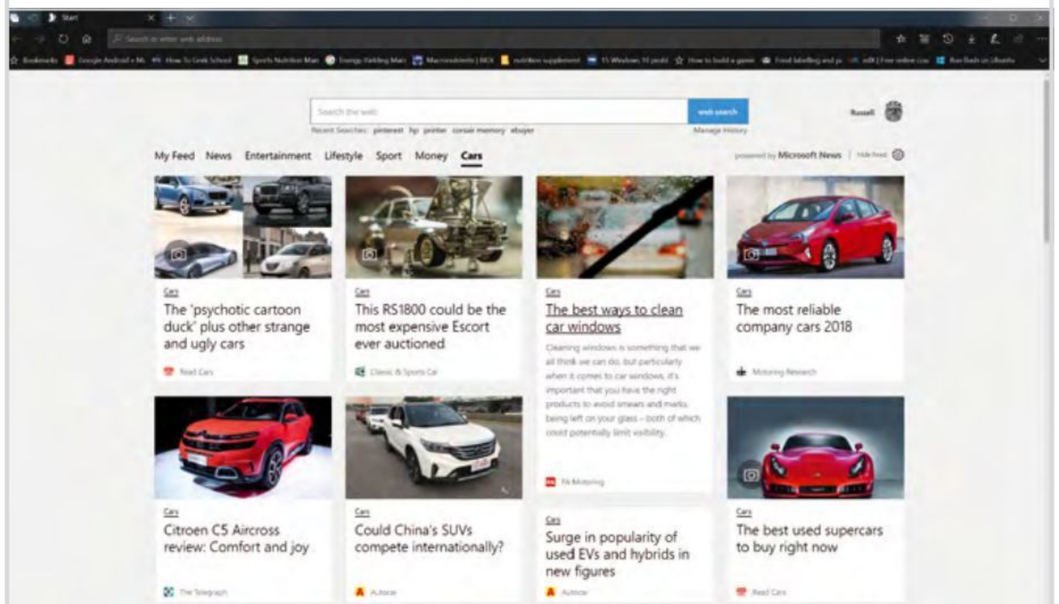
Step 2 All of the main Edge controls run along the top bar. On the far left are the Back, Forwards, Refresh Page and Home buttons; just above these are the Set Aside and All Tabs buttons (more on those later). Clicking the + opens a new tab and clicking the small arrow opens the tab preview panel.



Step 3 To search for a website or web page, you can either type in the search field at the top (which is always there) or you can type in the 'Search the web' box if you are still on the default Start tab. When you type in either box, Edge will show a list of suggestions based on what it thinks you are looking for.



Step 4 The Microsoft news feed displayed on the Start tab is split into sections: News, Entertainment, Sport, etc. and you can scroll down in each section to see lots more stories. Click on any of the stories in the feed to be taken to the source website; this will open and display in a new tab.

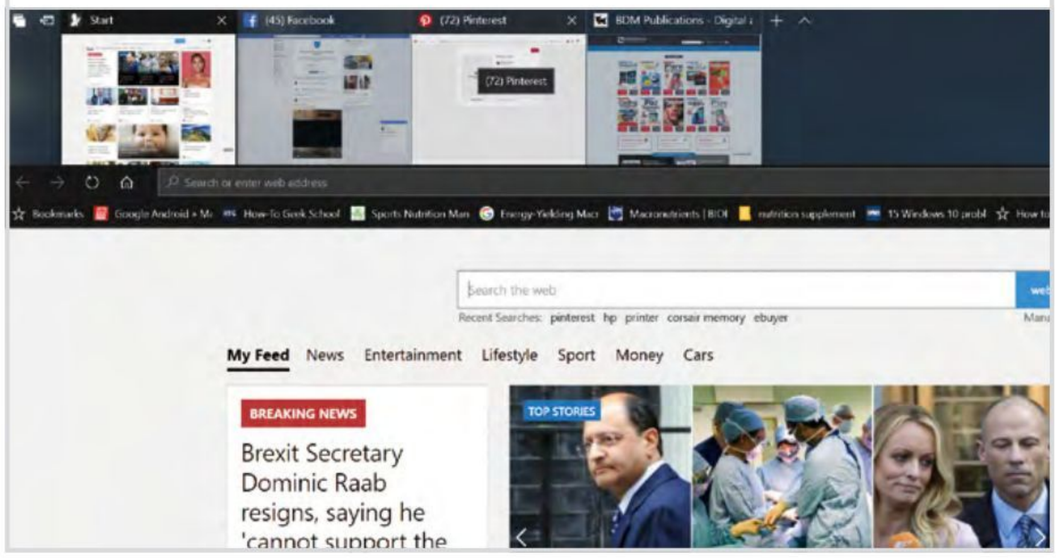


Edge Tabs

Tabs, lined up along the top, are a way to view multiple websites or pages in a single browser window.

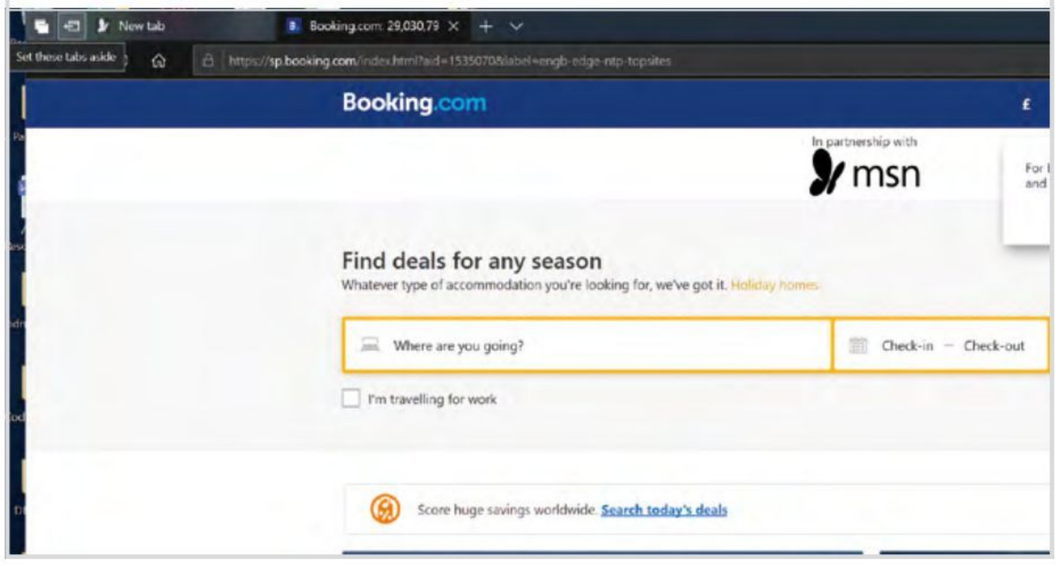
Open New Tabs

New tabs are opened either when you click on a link (if the link is set to open as a new tab) or by clicking on the small + button at the top left of the browser. You can have lots of tabs open at the same time. To preview your open tabs, click the small arrow button on the right of the last tab.



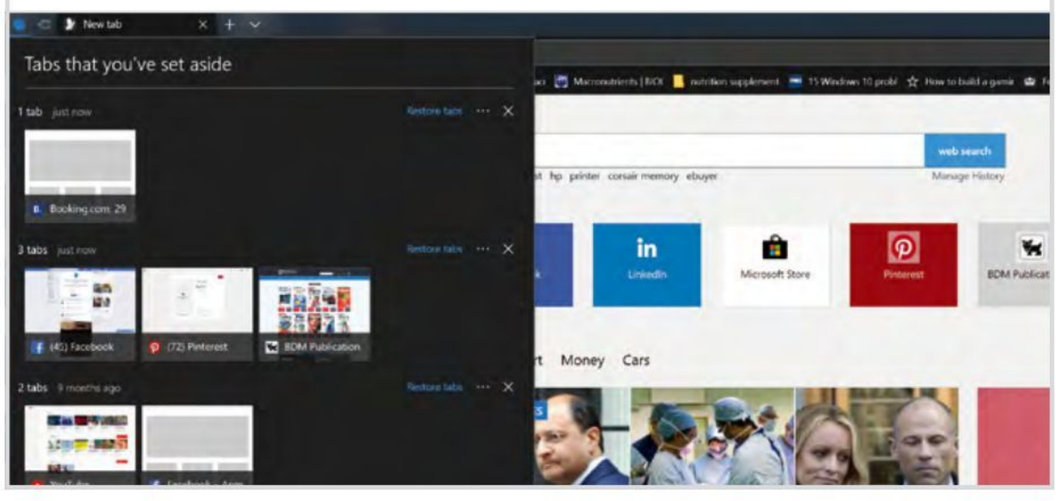
Set Aside Tabs

You can now set tabs aside, rather than closing them completely, so that they are easier to go back to later. Tabs set aside will still be there even after closing Edge. To set aside a tab, select it so it is displayed in the browser window and then click the small Set Aside button in the top left corner.



View and Restore Tabs

Tabs that are set aside can be viewed in the Tab Viewer. You can access this by clicking the small button next to the Set Aside button in the top left of the window. Clicking any tab here will restore it to the tabs bar. Top remove a set aside tab, hover the mouse over it and click the X that appears.

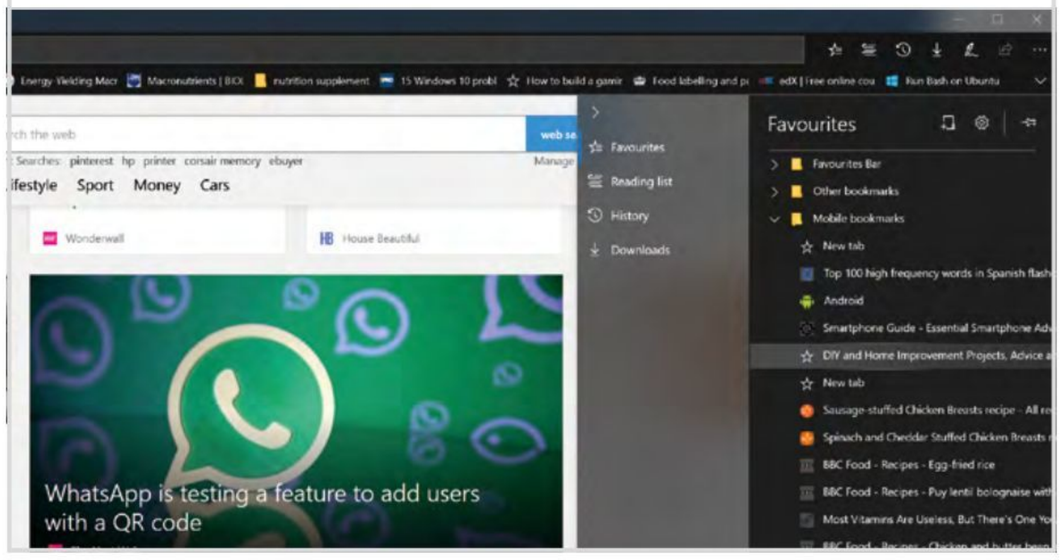


Edge Tools

Clicking any of the several buttons in the top right of the Edge browser window will open the sidebar.

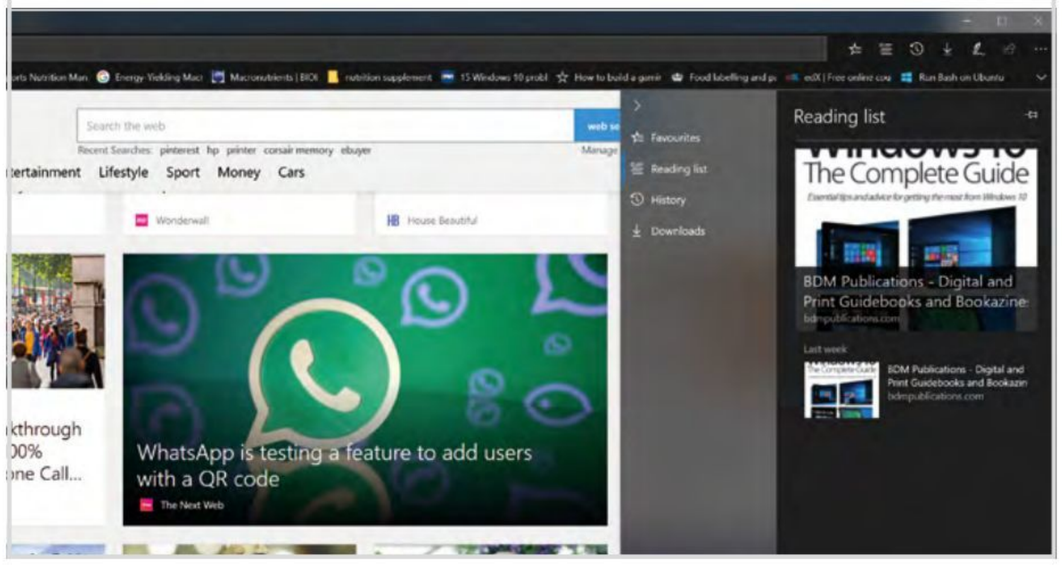
Favourites

You can add web pages to favourites by clicking the small star icon in the address (URL) bar at the top of the window. When you do this, a small panel will open, allowing you to choose a favourites section to save it in; here you can rename the bookmark and also choose to save pages to the Reading List.



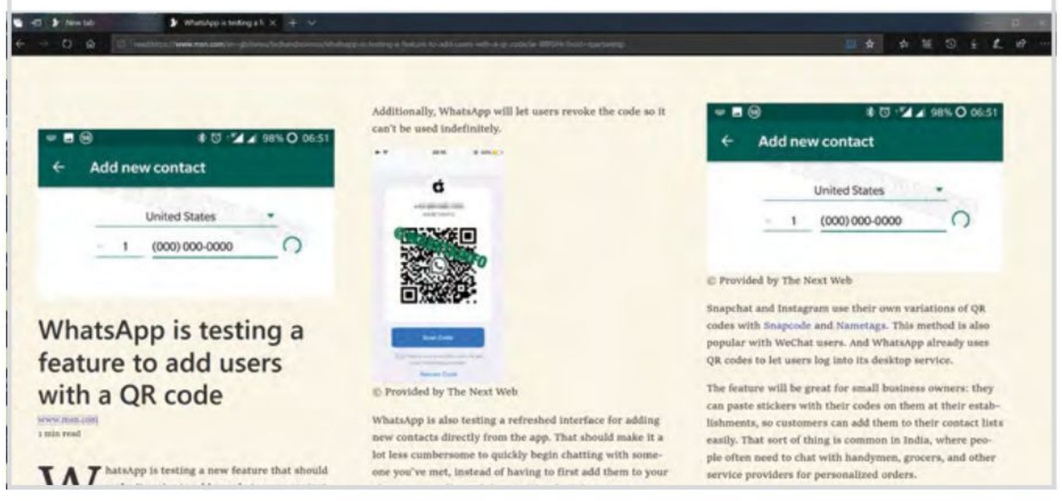
Reading List

The Reading list lets you save website articles, e-books (which can be read in the browser) or other content you want to read later, even when offline. When you come across an article you want to save for later in Microsoft Edge, click the star icon in the address bar and then on Reading list > Add.



Reading View

Reading view changes a web page into a clean and simple layout with fewer distractions. Click the book icon in the address bar to switch to Reading view. You can then change the reading view style and font size by clicking anywhere on the page and using the options in the menu bar that appears.

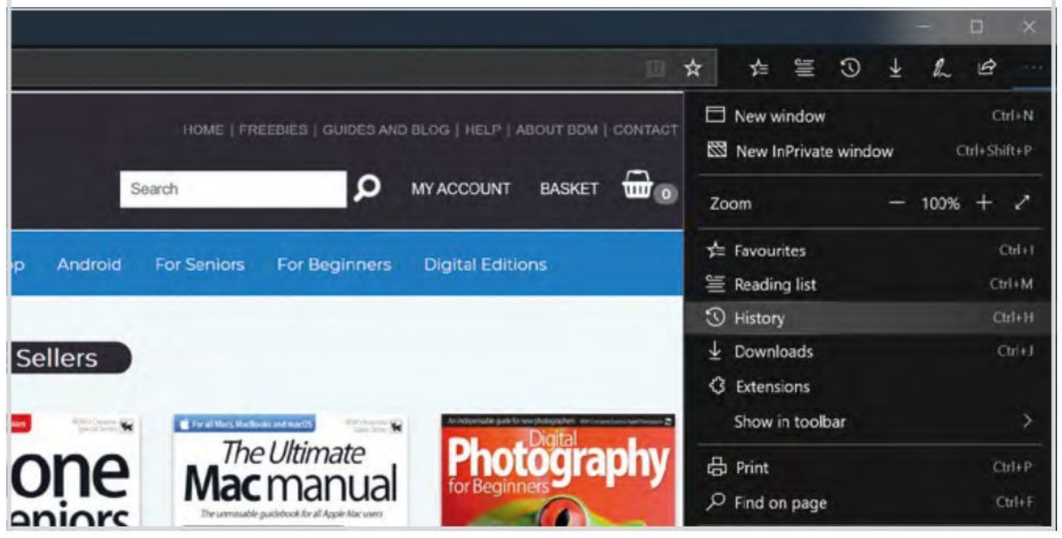


Customising Microsoft Edge

Once you get a bit more used to the basics of Microsoft Edge you can start to explore the many options and settings available for personalising and customising.

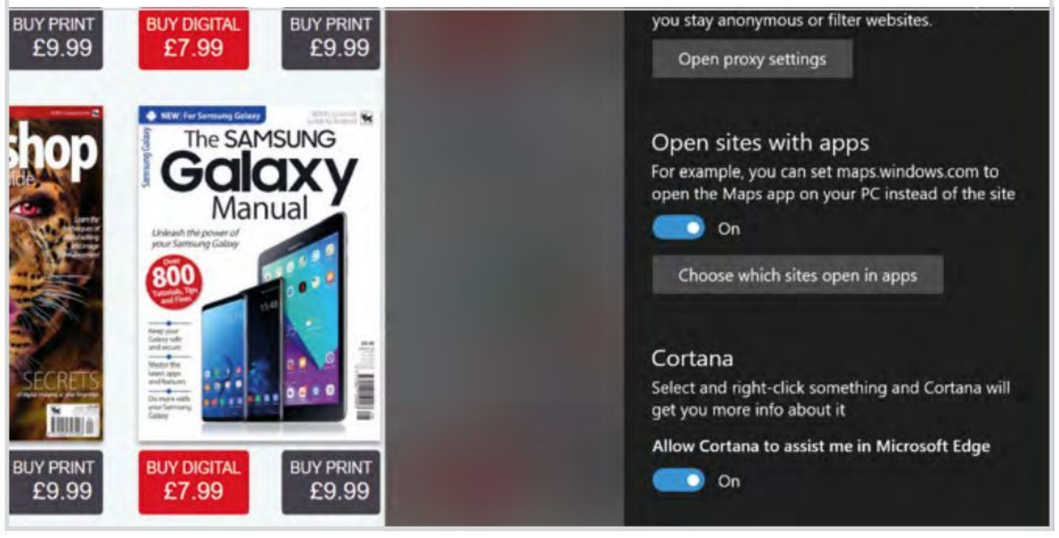
The Edge Menu

Click the Menu button (three small dots in the top right) to open the Edge menu. From this menu you're able to access Settings, print a page and find words or phrases in the open web page. Another option allows you to pin a particular web page to the taskbar as an icon, should you wish to.



Change the Search Engine

Microsoft Edge is set to use Bing as its default search engine but you can change search provider in the Default Settings menu. When you type into Edge's search box, the browser will recommend search suggestions. You can turn this off here should you want to (we find it quite useful).

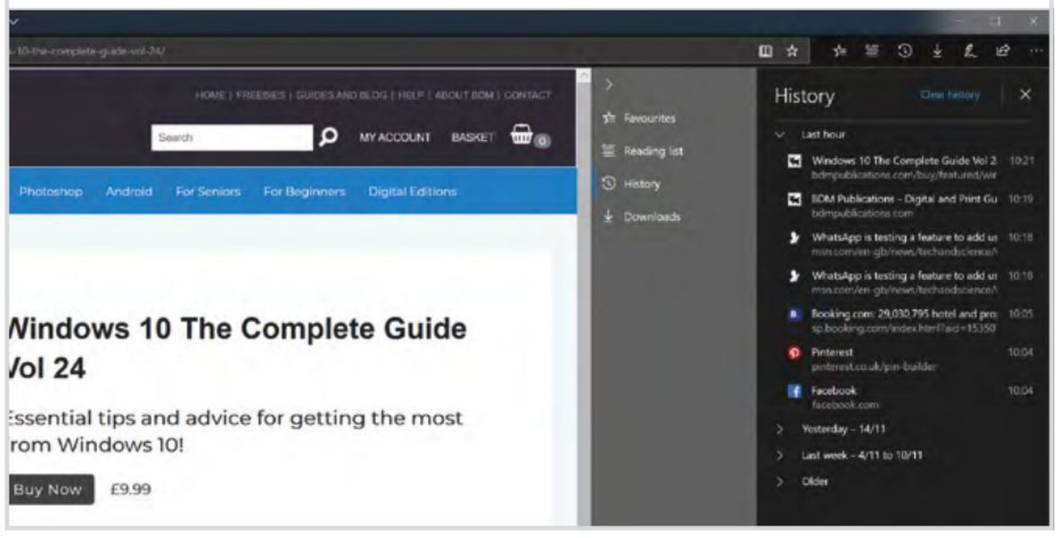


Microsoft Edge Settings

Clicking the Settings option in the Edge menu opens another menu with further options. Tabs down the side of the menu take you to different settings sections, including Privacy & Security and Advanced. In the General settings, you can change the theme, homepage and other basic options.

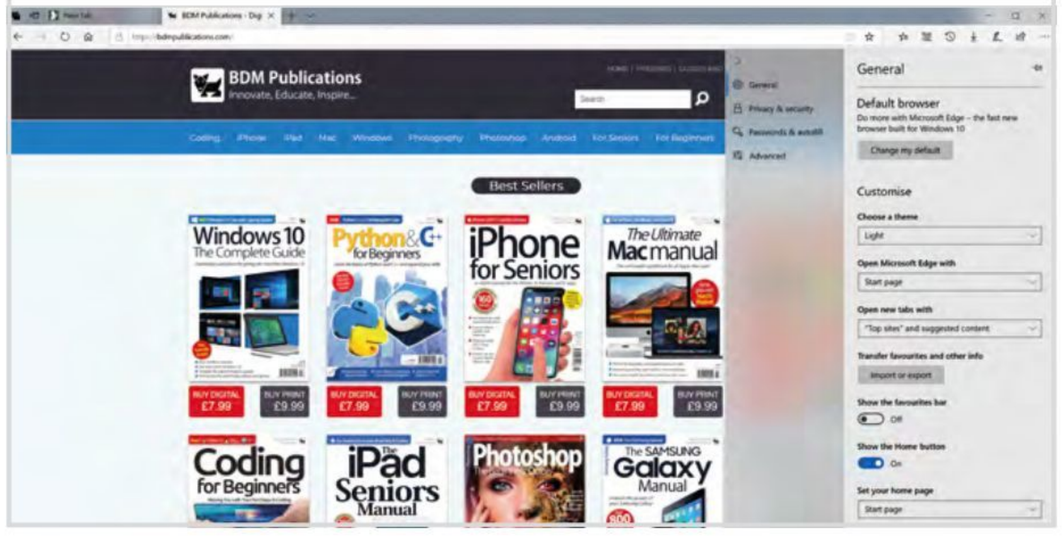
Pinning the Sidebar

In the top right of the Favourites/Reading List 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.



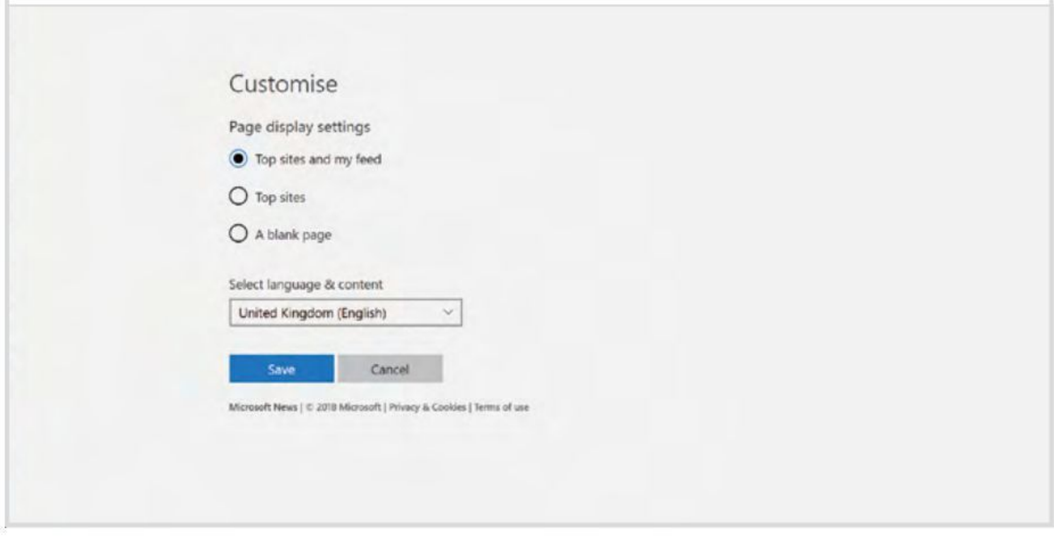
Change the Edge Theme

In addition to 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 and the Windows 10 taskbar is dark too. It's a good alternative to having super bright apps.



New Tab Options

When you open a new tab, it shows the news feed by default. You can change this to also display a list of your most visited websites along the top, or to simply display a blank page with a search bar. To change these options, open a new tab, click the gear icon on the right and select your options.



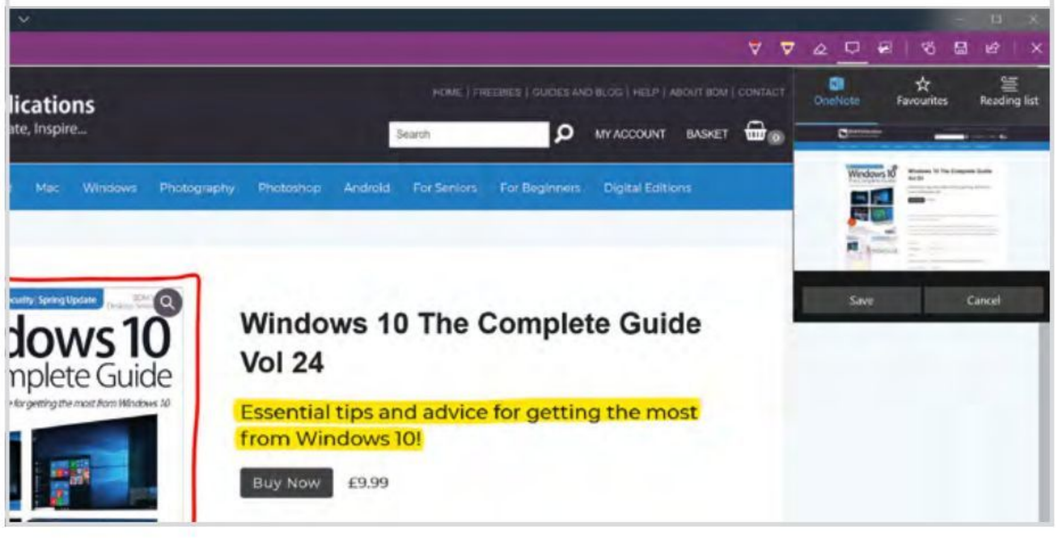
Write Notes in Edge

Edge is the only browser that allows you to write and draw on web pages from within the browser itself.

Step 1 With the web page that you want to make notes on open, click the Add notes button (the pen icon) in the top right. You will see a new toolbar appear at the top, which includes (left to right) Pen tool, Highlighter, Eraser, Typed note, Clipping tool, Touch writing, Save note and Share.

Step 2 Select the pen tool and use the mouse to draw or write on top of the now static web page (no links, etc. will work in this mode). If you have a touchscreen PC, click Touch Writing and then use your finger or stylus to write or draw instead. Try out the other tools such as the highlighter and clipping.

Step 3 When you have finished making your notes or drawings over the top of the page, you can either save an image of it or send it to someone via email or other communication app. To leave the add notes tool, click the X on the right of the toolbar. You will see that the original web page is unchanged.

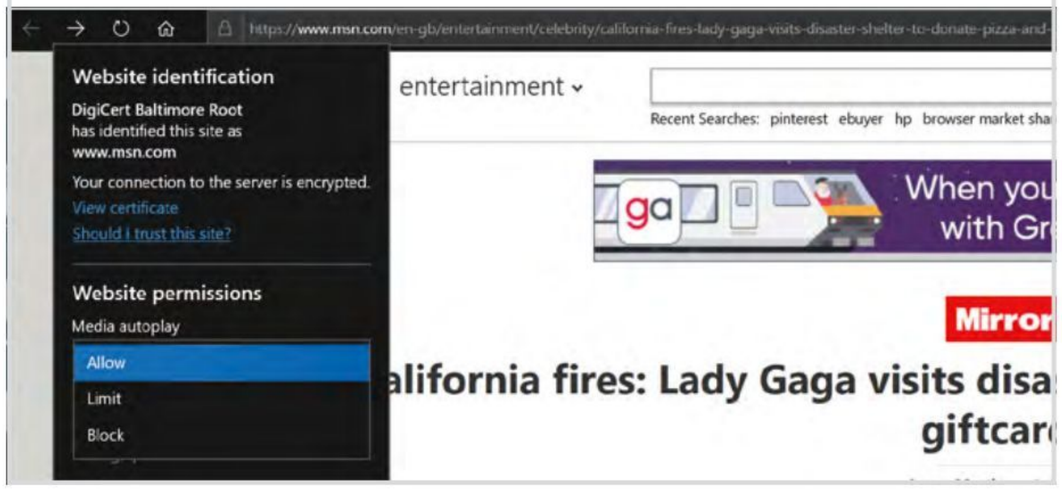


Edge Tips and Tricks

A few ways to make Microsoft Edge even better to use, from blocking autoplay videos to improving focus.

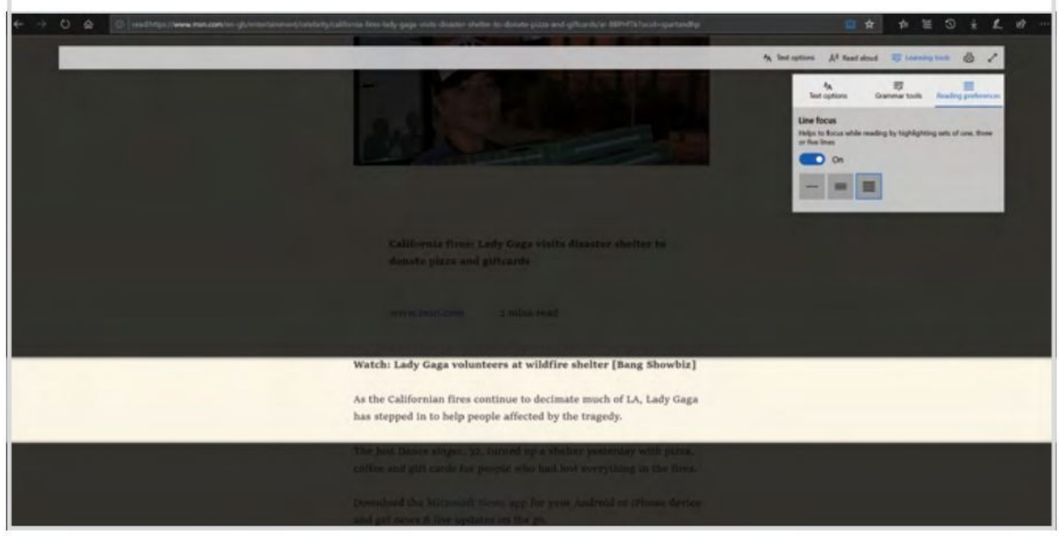
Stop Videos from Playing Automatically

To block annoying autoplay ads and videos on a web page, select the Show site information (the padlock or 'I' icon) in the address bar and then Media autoplay settings under Website permissions. You can choose to limit or block videos. You will need to refresh the page to see changes.



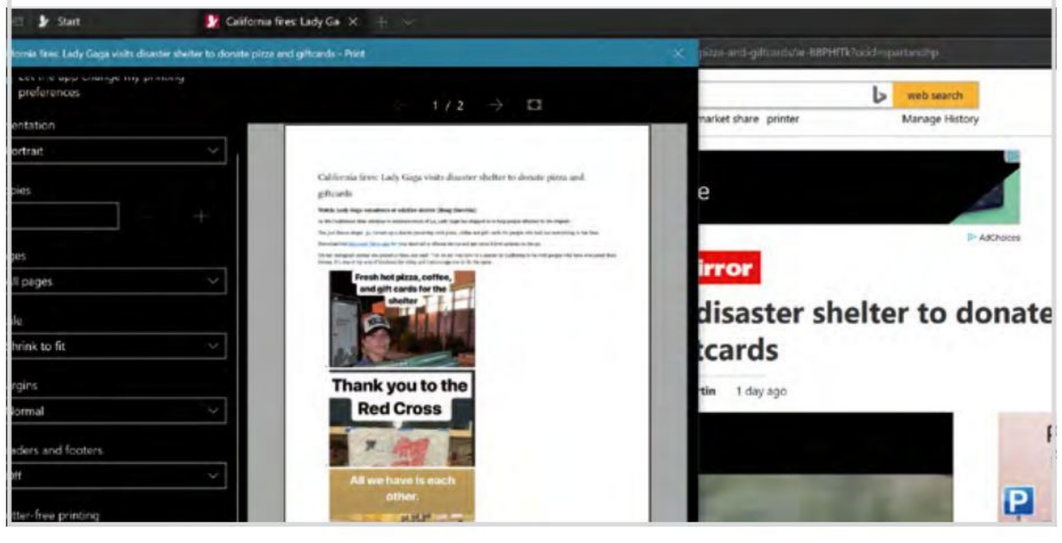
Improve Focus while Browsing

When you're browsing a web page in reading view, you can narrow the focus of the content by highlighting one, three or five lines at a time. Click anywhere on the page, select Learning tools > Reading preferences. Turn on Line focus and then choose the number of lines to view.



Clutter-free Printing

When printing web pages, you often end up with lots of unneeded clutter on the page. Save paper by only printing the content you want without ads or other clutter. Select More > Print and turn on Clutter-free printing. This only works on web pages where reading view is available.

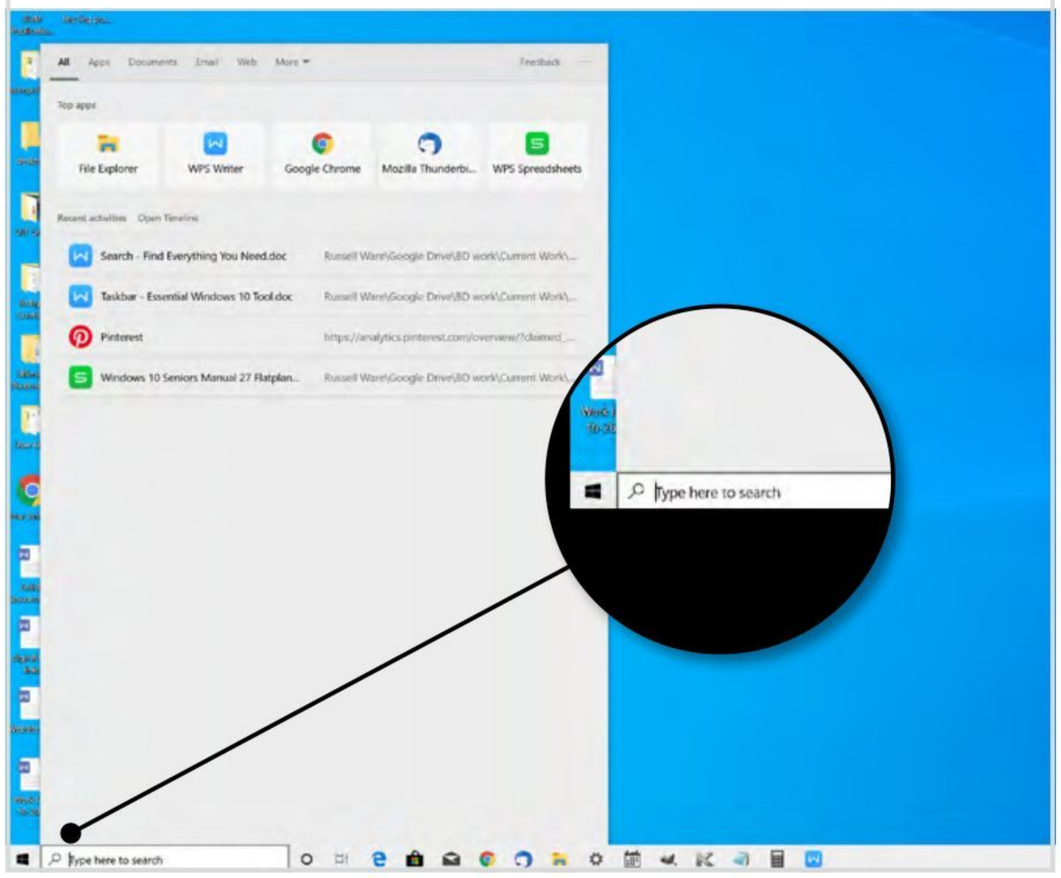


Search

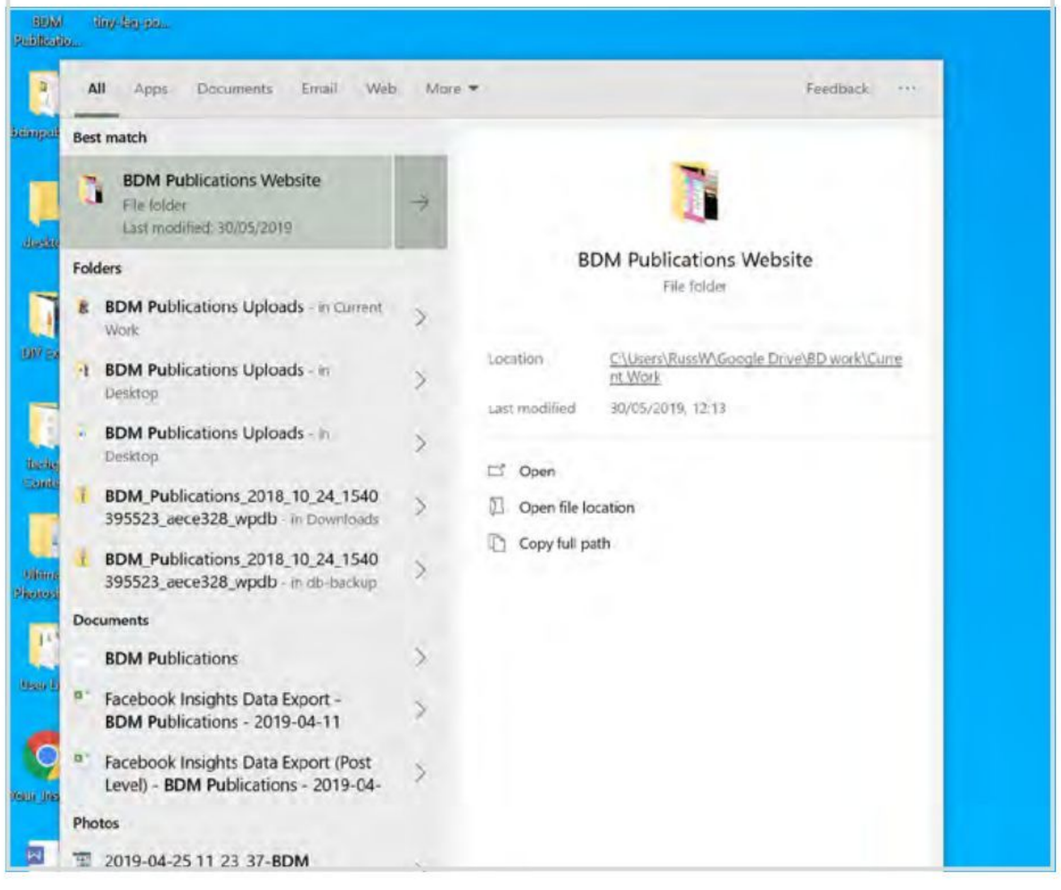
Using the Search Tools

Search and Cortana are no longer combined into one tool in Windows 10. Search now has some additional tools and settings which help you find things both on and off your computer. Added extras to search include recent activities and most used app links.

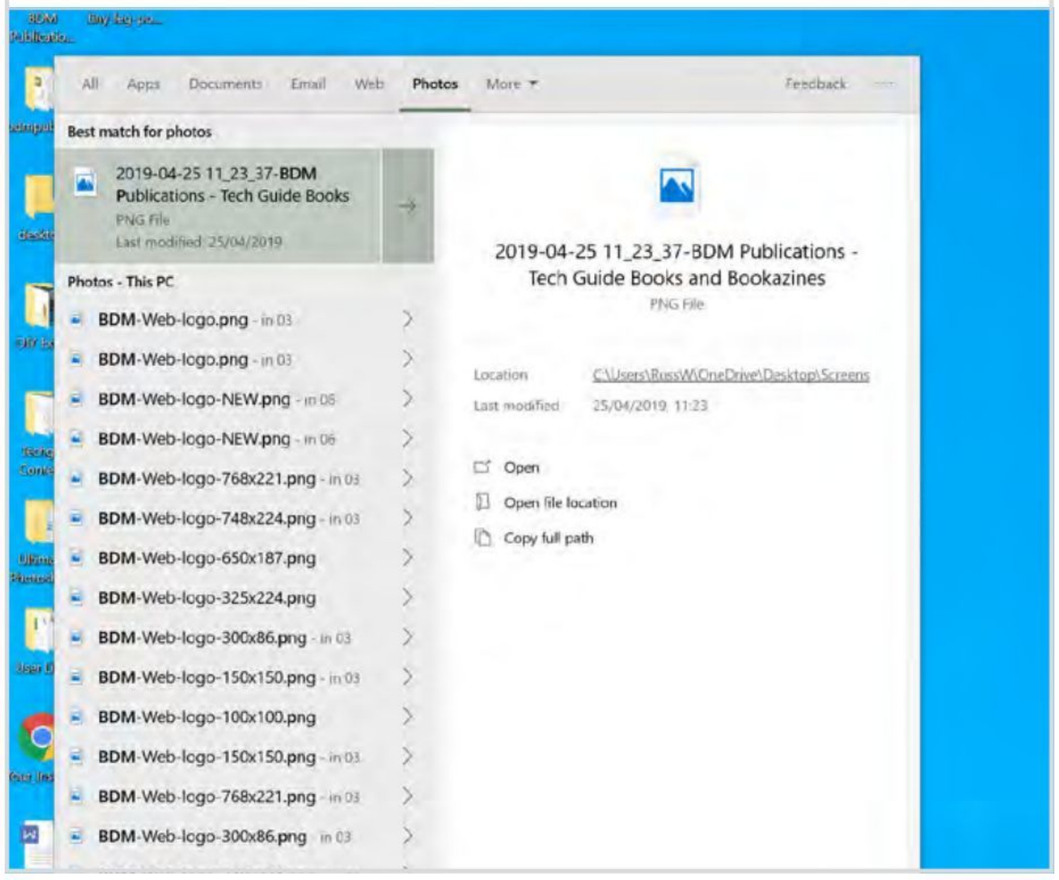
Step 1 Click in the search field at the left of the Taskbar and the new search panel will pop up on screen. You can now simply start typing your search term and watch as the results are listed in the panel. The results will be split into sections such as Documents, Apps, Photos and Web.



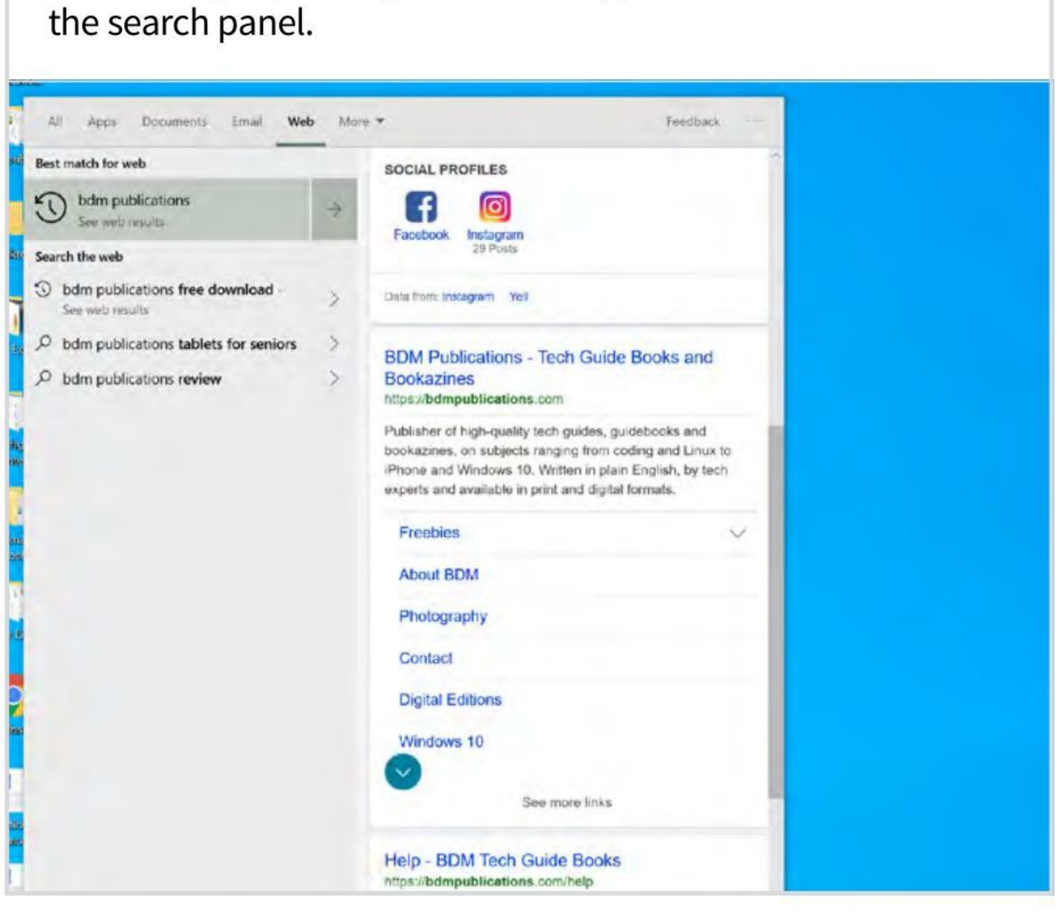
Step 2 If the app, setting, photo or document you are looking for is highlighted at the top of the search panel as you type, you can simply press Enter to open it. To view a non-highlighted result or category, you can just click on it to open it (open a web result in the browser, for example).



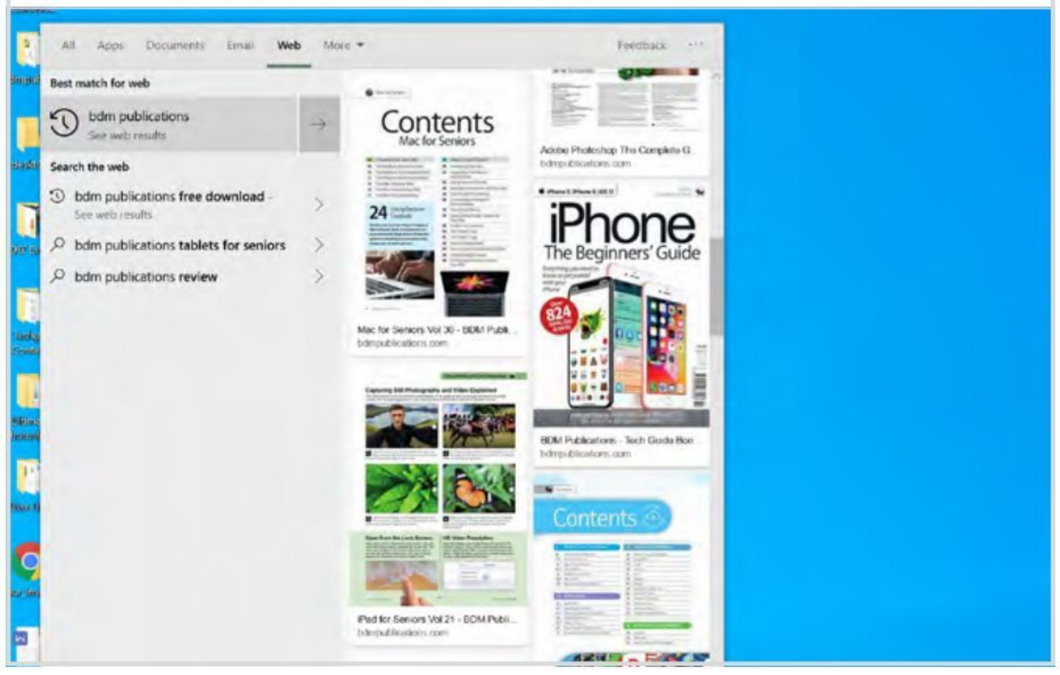
Step 3 If you don't want to display everything associated with your typed search term, you can use the tabs at the top of the search panel when it opens. These let you filter results to just Apps, Documents, Emails, Web, Folders, Music, People, Photos, Settings and Videos.



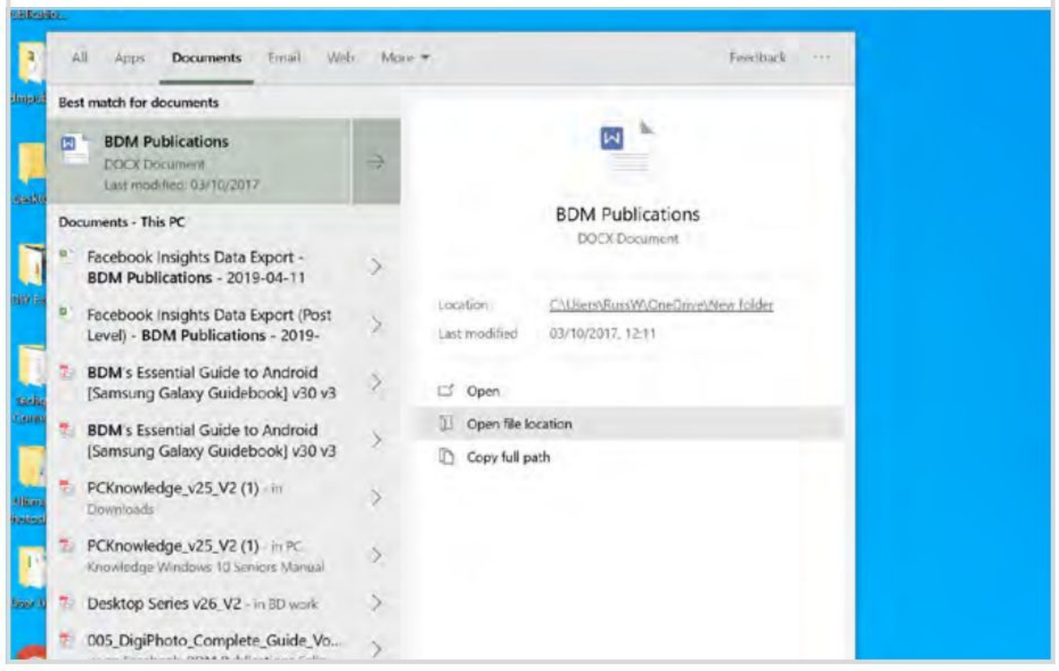
Step 4 Results will display more information on the right side of the search panel. For example, a web search will display a list of search results from Bing. Mouse-over any of the results in the list on the left, and then click the right-pointing arrow that appears to see more info in the search panel.



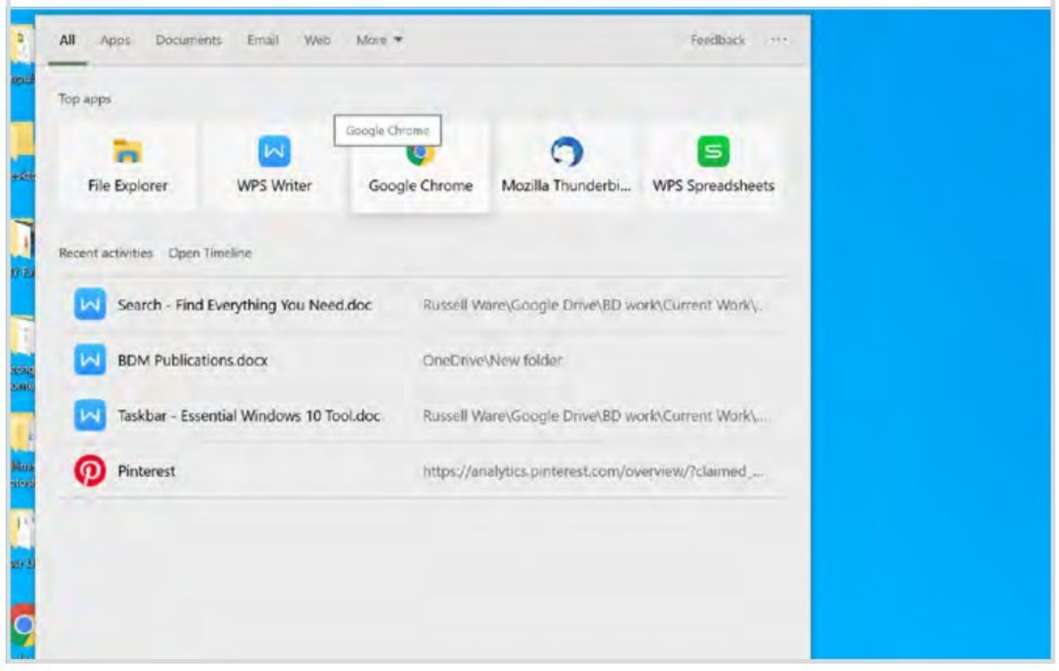
Step 5 When web results are shown in the search panel, you can scroll the list to see more (assuming there are more than a few results) just like when viewing search results in Bing or Google. You can further refine search results shown, by using the web, images and videos tabs at the top.



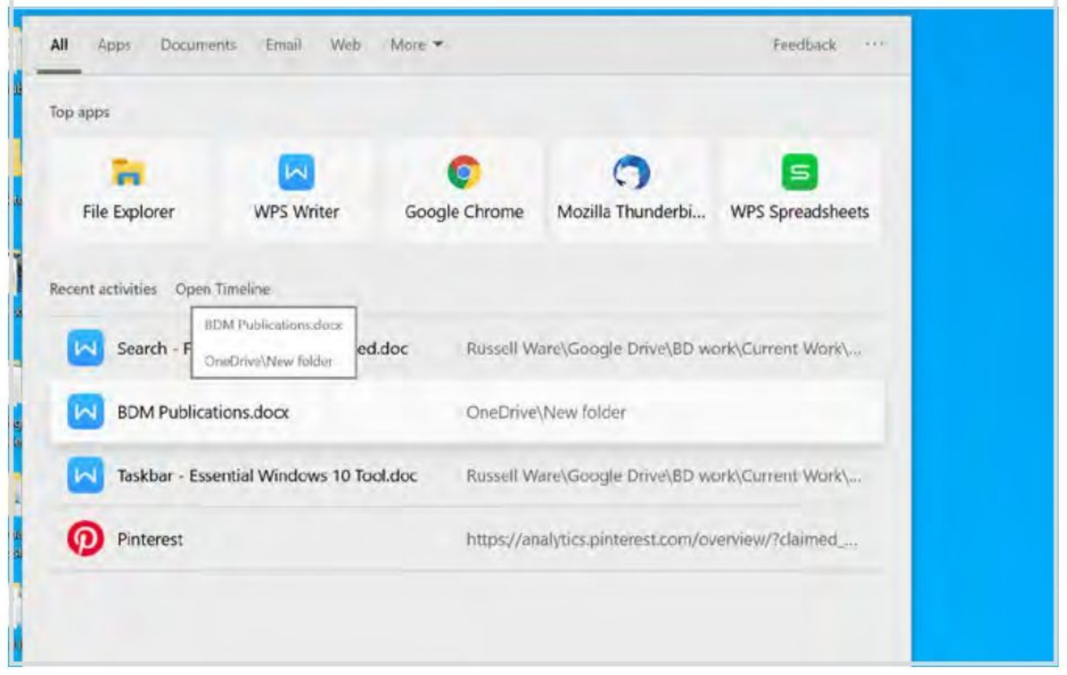
Step 6 For things like documents and photos on your computer, the right panel will display information about the file (when it was created and where it is stored), as well as links to Open, Open File Location and Copy Full Path to the file. Apps found in the store have an Install link.



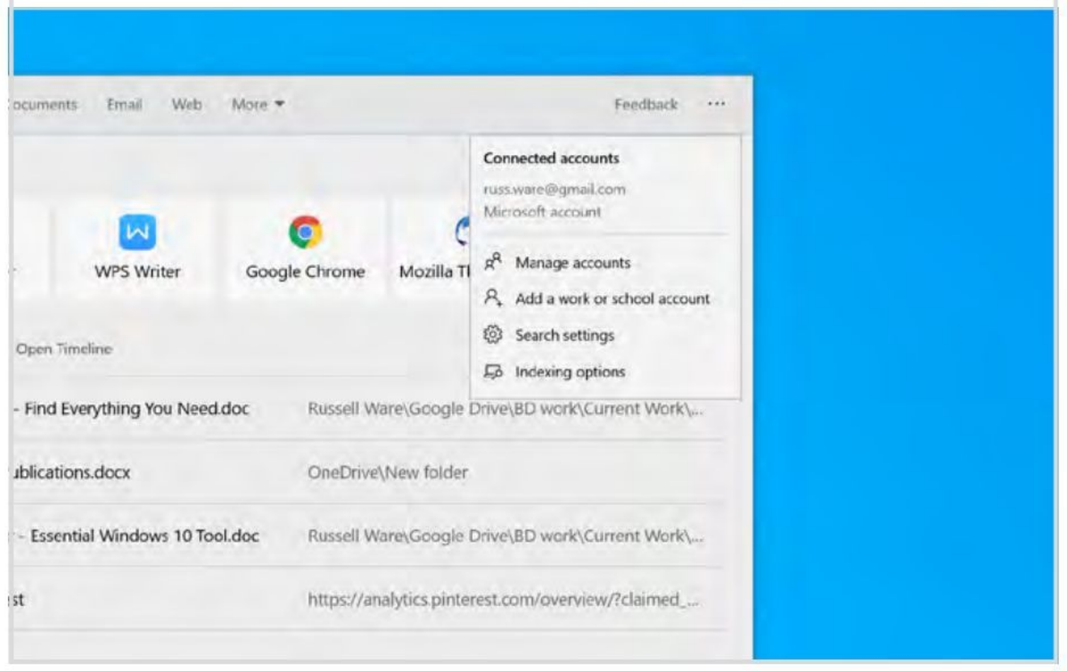
Step 7 The search panel also includes a set of links to your most used apps or software. These are displayed along the top of the panel when it first opens, but are replaced by search results as you begin to type. Clicking on any of these app links will open the app directly from the panel.



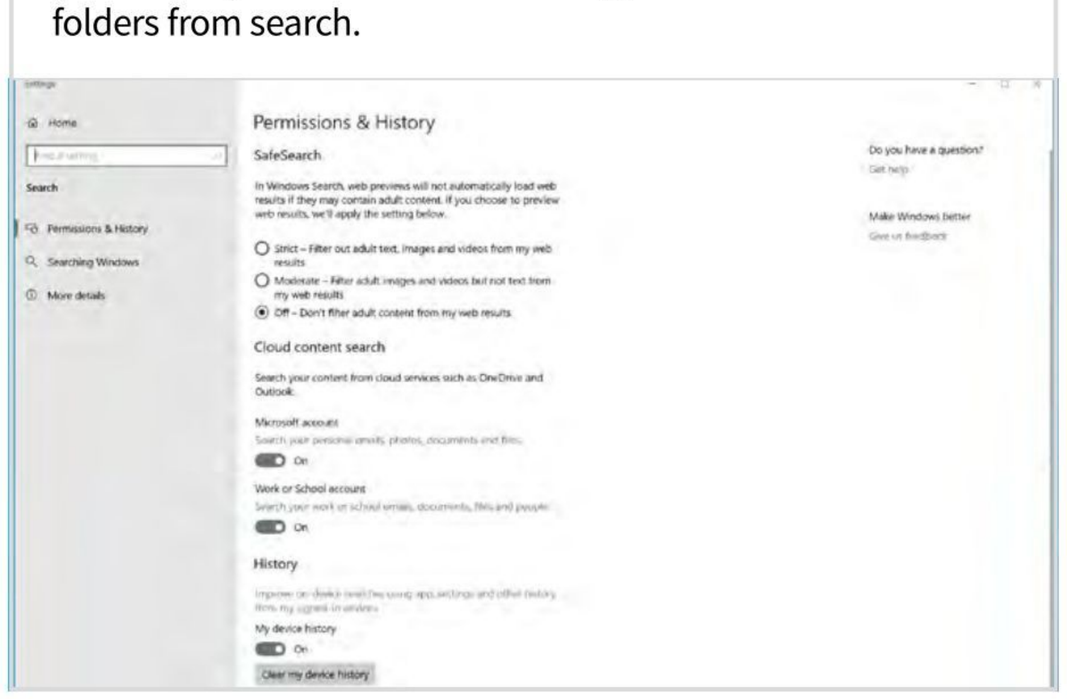
Step 8 Search is linked to Timeline, so the search panel also shows recent activities when first opened. These include documents you have recently edited, web sites and pages you have visited and app/games you have had running. Click the "Open Timeline" link to do just that.



Step 9 You can access search settings from the Menu button at the top right of the search panel. This will also tell you which account is currently in use and connected to search. Click the link to manage accounts, including which email account will be searched here.



Step 10 Click on Search Settings to open the main settings app to the relevant section. Here you can control Safe Search settings, cloud search content, and your search history. You can also control what is searched (all files, or just libraries and desktop) and choose to exclude folders from search.

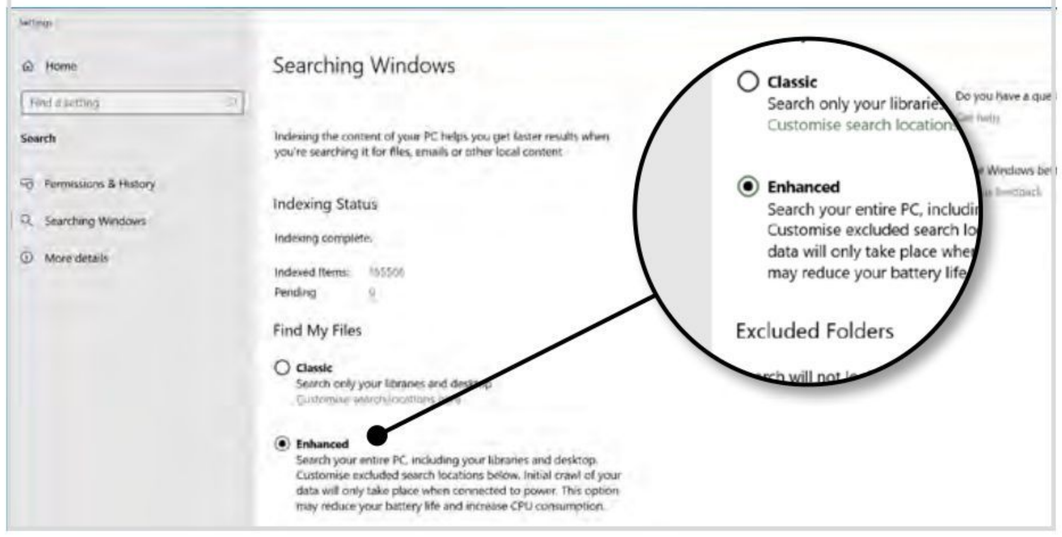


Advanced Search Settings

Head into the main settings app and click on the Search section. Here you can find search settings under two categories: Permissions and History, and Searching Windows.

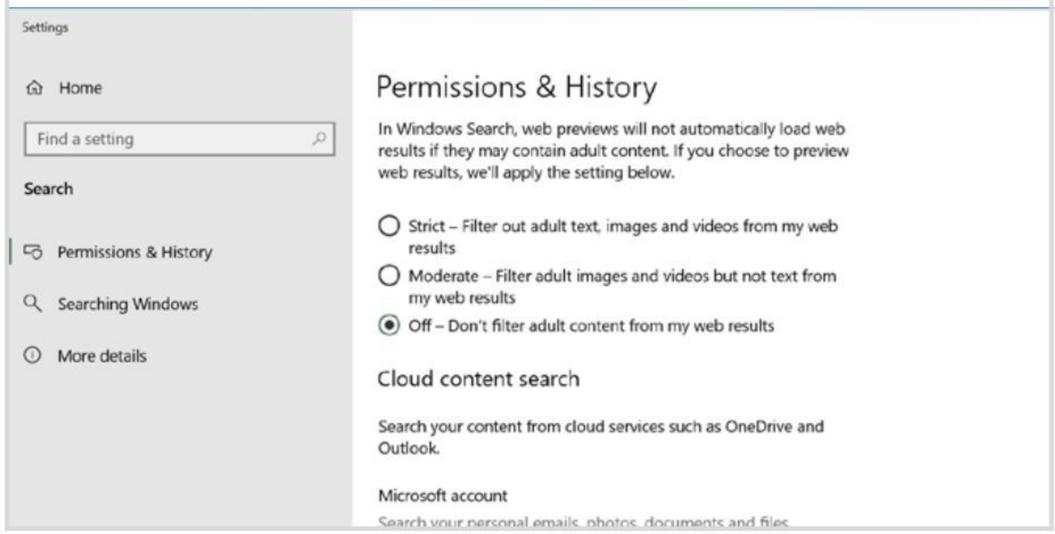
Enhanced Search

The default file search setting is Classic, which just returns results from your libraries and from your desktop folder. You can change this to Enhanced search, which will re-index your files and provide a much wider set of search result in the search panel. Libraries and desktop are still included.



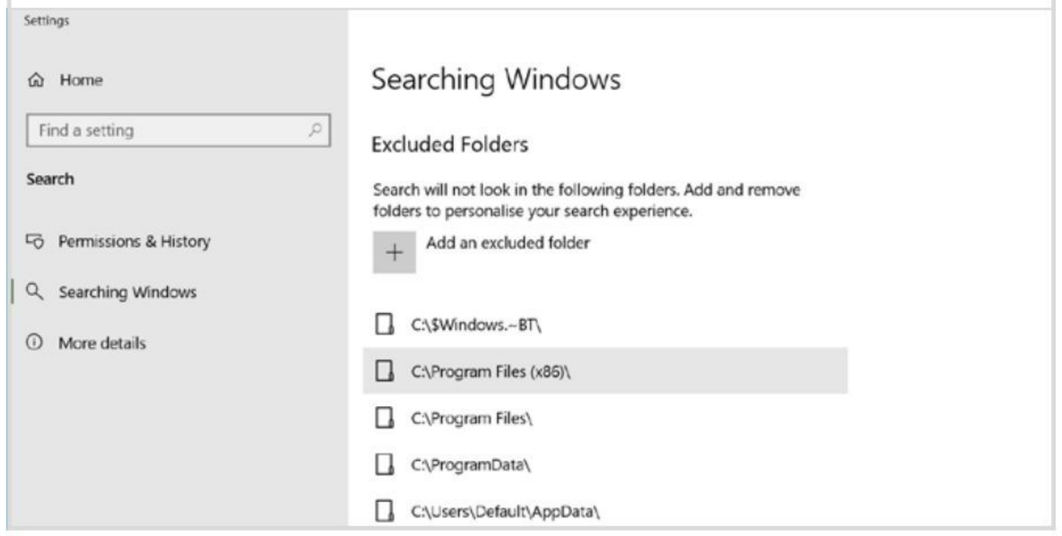
Manage Search History

Windows 10 can collect search history from one or more devices, to provide a much more personalised search experience. If you prefer, you can disable search history, either on a single device or across all of your connected Windows 10 devices. You can also clear existing search history.



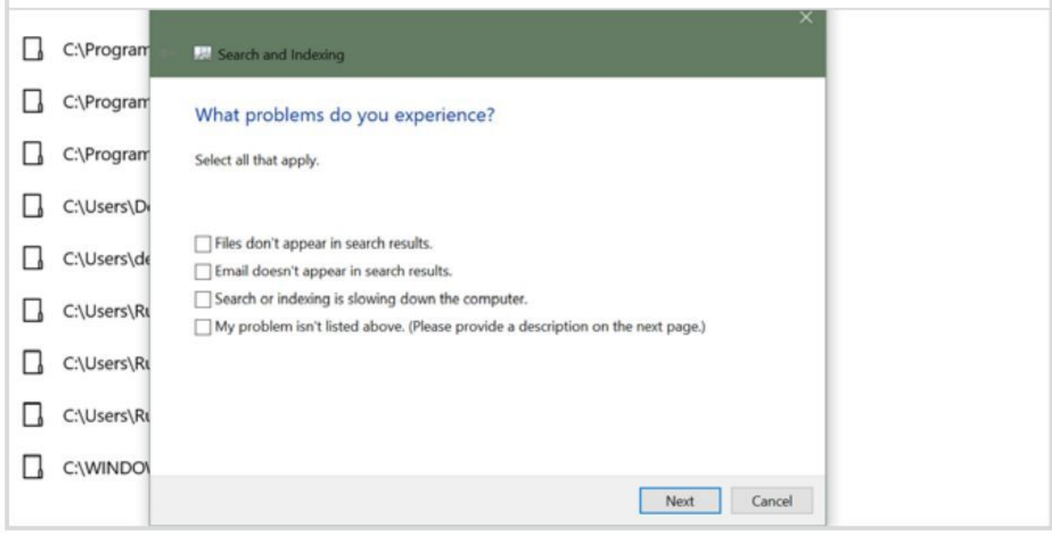
Excluding Folders

You can choose enhanced search and then exclude folders from the search index. This means that those folders and their contents won't appear in search results. There are already several folders excluded, including important system folders and things like AppData.



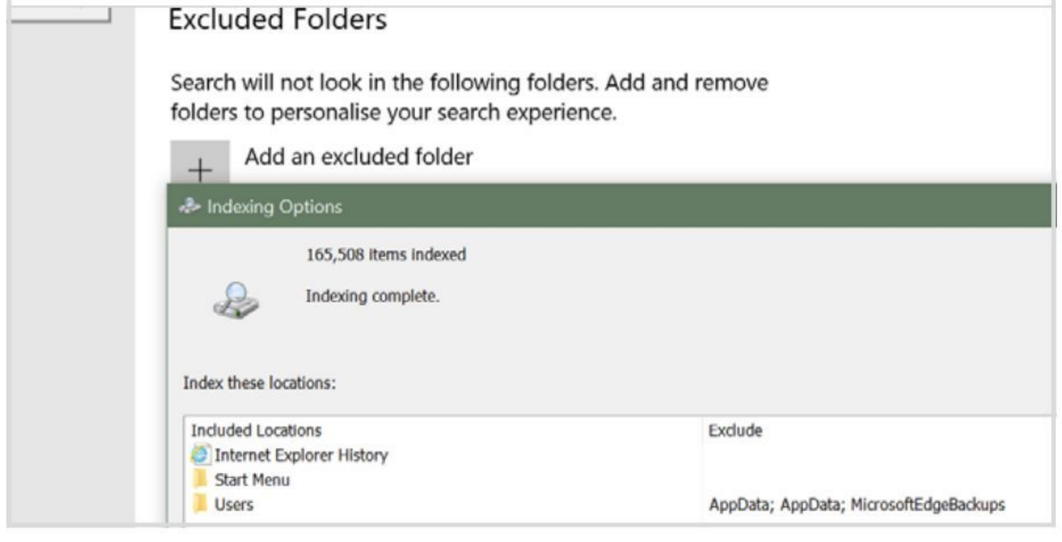
Troubleshoot Search

If you having problems with search (files not appearing in results as expected, for example), you can run the indexing troubleshooter. Open Settings > Search > Searching Windows and scroll to the bottom. Run the troubleshooter, and then select the problem you are having.



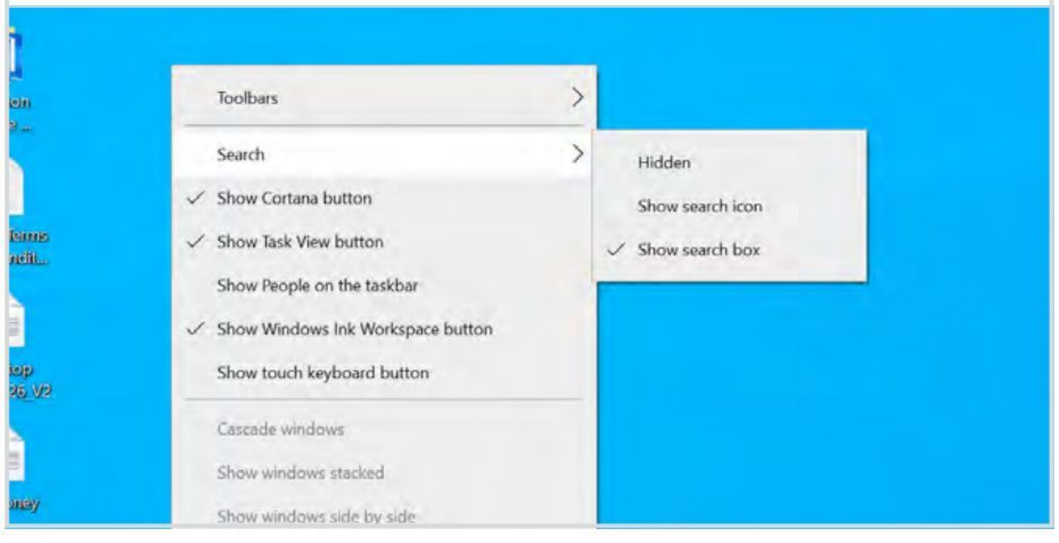
Advanced Index Settings

You can further tweak the areas of your computer that are indexed by the search by clicking on Searching Windows > Advanced Search Indexer Settings. Here you can choose to index encrypted files, rebuild the search index, and even change the search index location.



Taskbar Display

Windows 10 now separates the search field from the Cortana button. You can further customise how search is displayed in the Taskbar if you wish. Right-click on the Taskbar and highlight "Search" from the action menu. You can choose Hide, Show Search Icon or Show Search Box.



Cortana

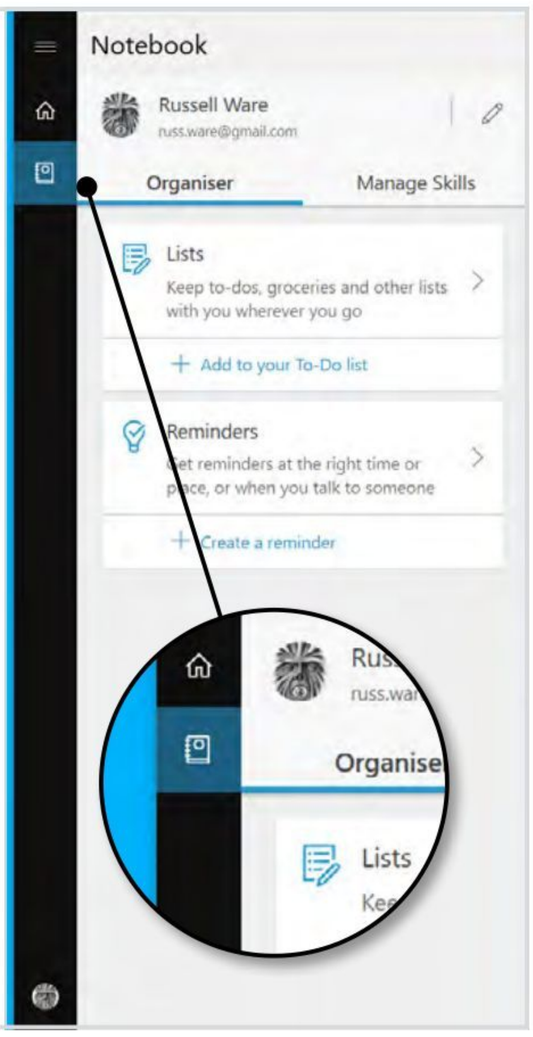
Using the Personal Assistant

Cortana is your personal digital assistant in Windows. The more you use Cortana, the better your experience will be. So if you haven't used it much yet, or are feeling slightly underwhelmed, this guide will show you just how powerful a tool it can be.

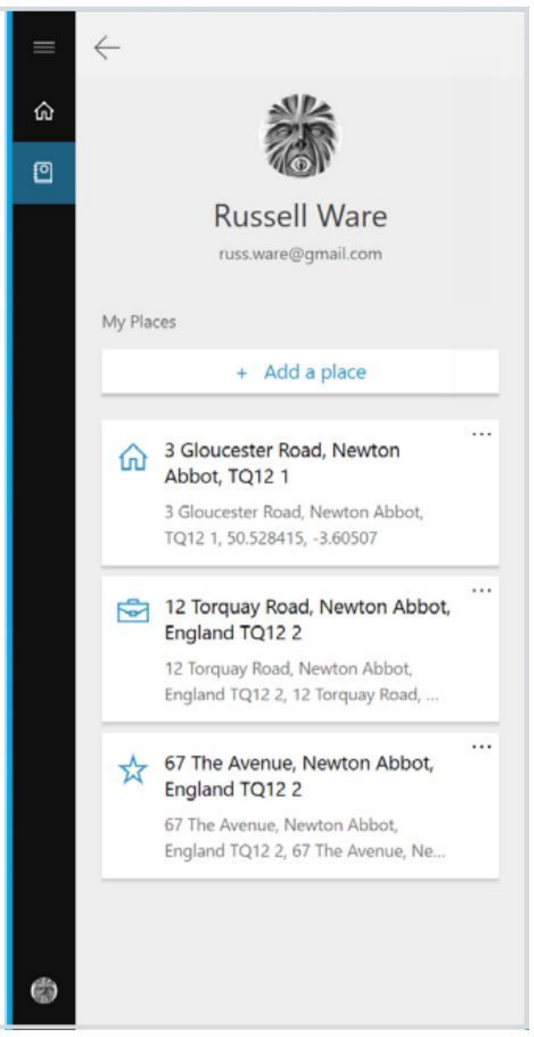
The Cortana Notebook

The Notebook in Cortana is your way of making the feature more helpful when using it every day with your PC and Windows 10. The Notebook contains the Organiser and Cortana Skills.

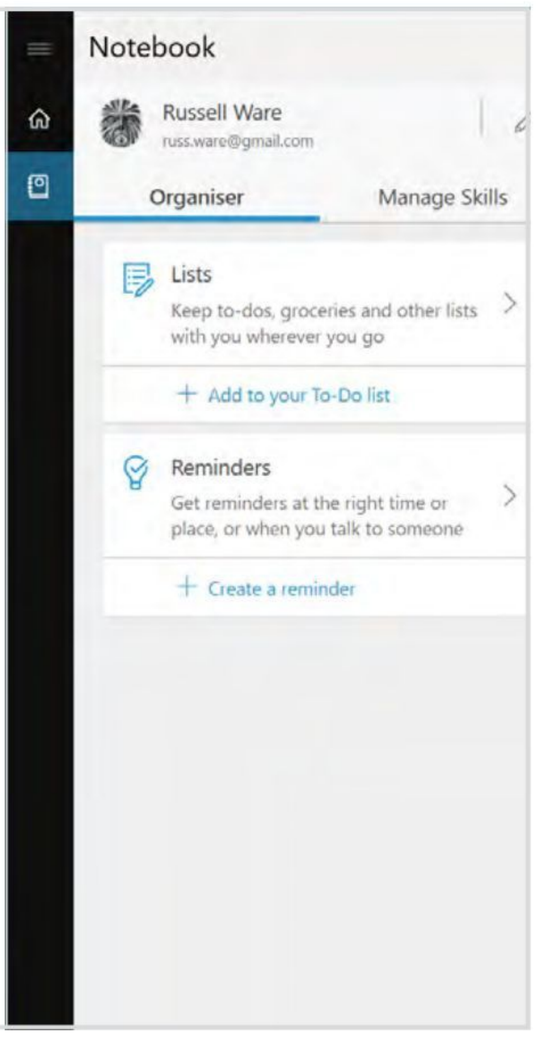
Step 1 You can view your Notebook by clicking in the search field in the Taskbar, and then clicking the Notebook icon in the left sidebar. You will see your name, plus the email address associated with your Microsoft account, at the top. And below that, two more tabs, for Organiser and Manage Skills.



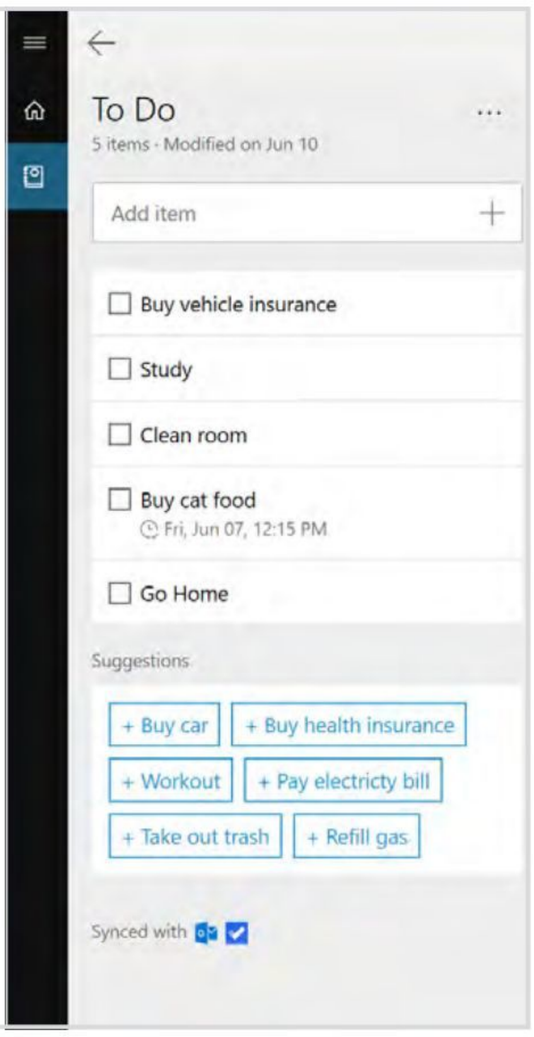
Step 2 To edit some of the information about yourself, click the Edit icon (the pencil) next to your name. Click "Add a place" to search for, and then add, important locations to Cortana. These could be your home address, your work address, or the location of your favourite cafe.



Step 3 With the Organiser tab selected, you will see your lists and reminders. If you have not created any, you will see the options to create both. Click the Lists option and you can choose to create a shopping list, a to-do list, or any other type of list. Also here are some pre-made lists, but they can be altered.

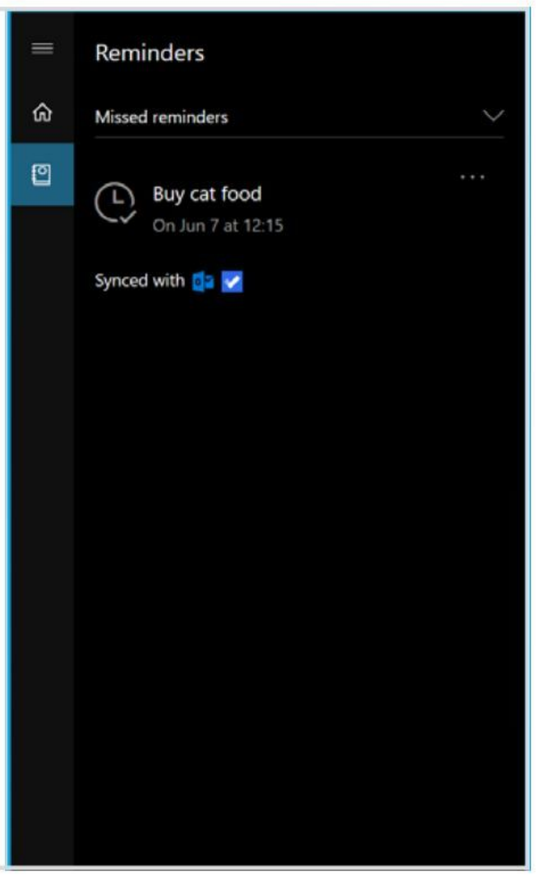


Step 4 When you open a list, you will see suggestions for things to add. Click these to add them, along with a check box. If you want to add custom items to the list, just type what you want in the text field at the top and click the + button. Click the Menu button at the top of the list to delete all items from it.



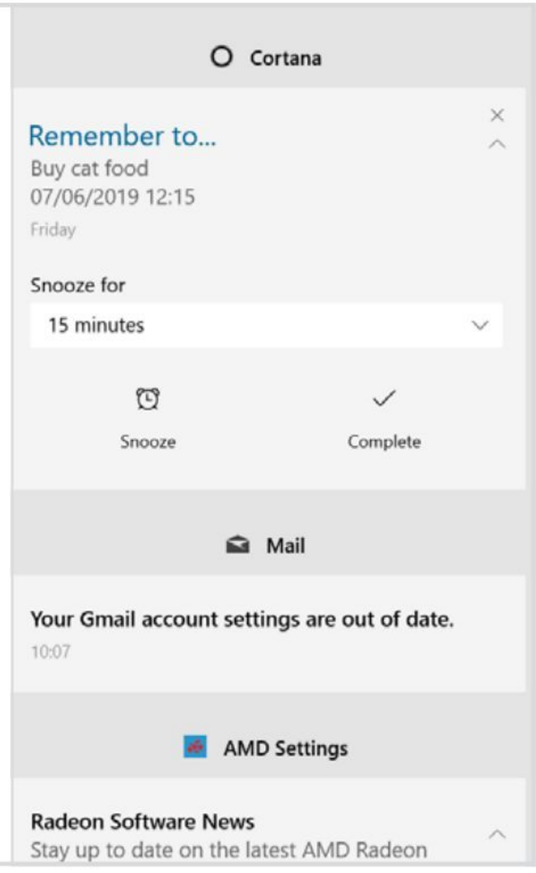
Step 5

Back in the Organiser panel, click the Reminders option to view and add reminders. With the reminders panel open, click the + button at the bottom to begin a new reminder. Type a name for the reminder, and then use the buttons below the name to set a time, place or person, or to add a photo.



Step 6

Once reminders are set in Cortana, they will appear as a pop up and, at the allotted time, as an Action Center alert. You can then snooze, or set the reminder as complete, just as you can for any alert that appears in the Action Center. A list of previous reminders remains in the Cortana Reminders panel.

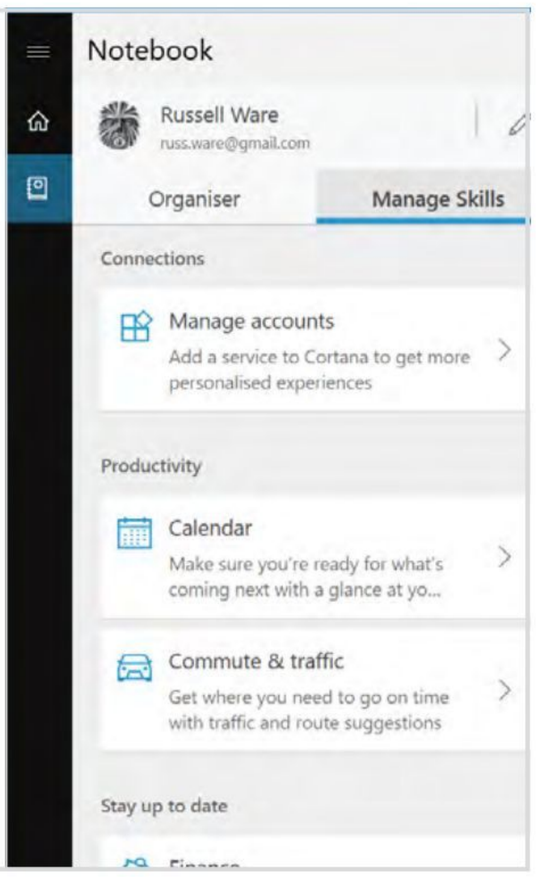


Cortana Skills

Cortana Skills are the various things you can allow Cortana to do, such as connecting it to a Gmail account or allowing it access to your music library.

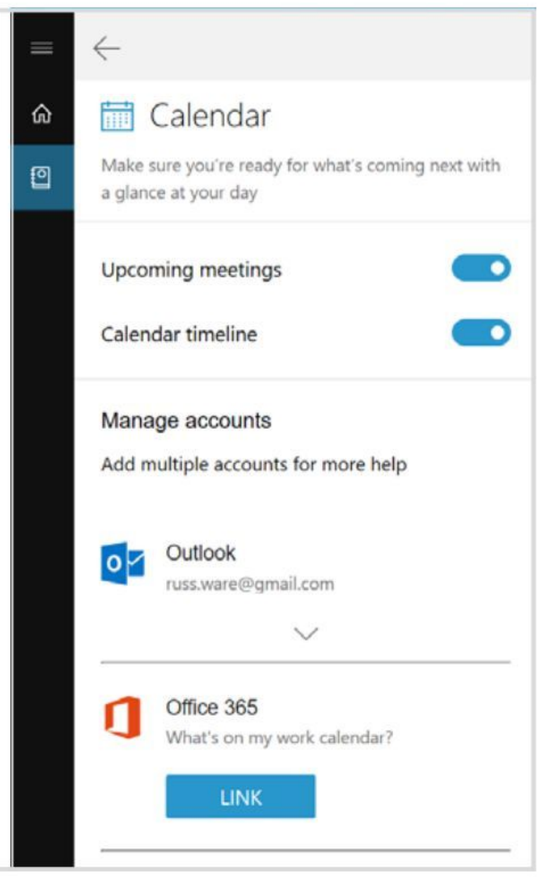
Manage Skills

You can manage your Skills by opening the Cortana panel and clicking on the Notebook. Select the “Manage Skills” tab, and then scroll down to see the skill category you want to manage. The exact skills you’ll see here will vary, depending on the apps and features you have in Windows 10.



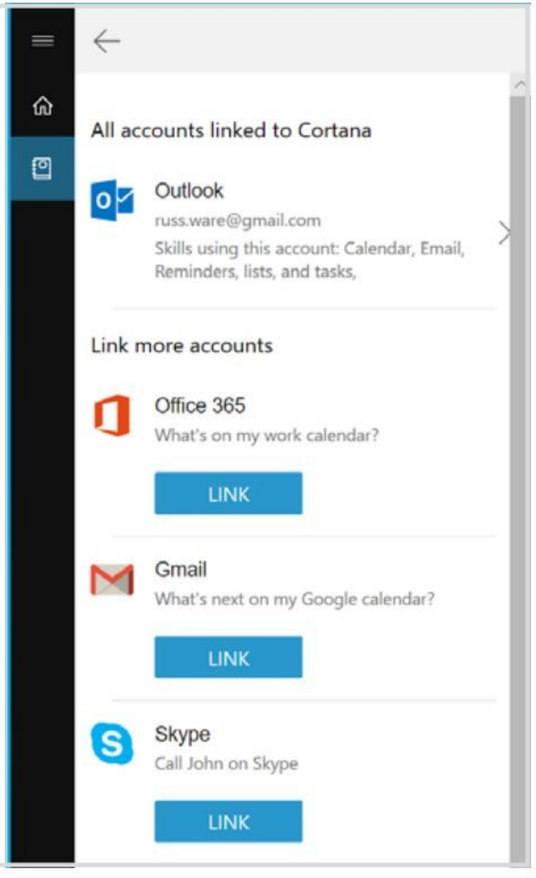
Calendars & Reminders

You can choose whether Cortana can access and display your upcoming meetings, your upcoming reminders, and your calendar timeline. You can switch each of these options on and off independently. For this to work, you will need to be using the Windows 10 Calendar app, not a third-party app.



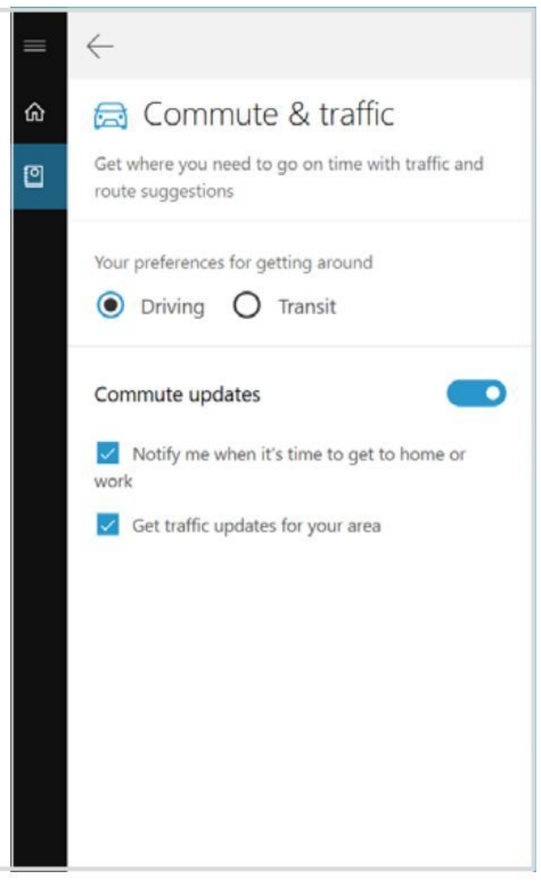
Connected Services

This skill allows you to connect app services like Gmail, or Wunderlist, to Cortana. Select the option you want to connect, then click the Connect button. Normally, you will then need to sign in to the account associated with that app or service (your Gmail account login, for example).



Commute & Traffic

This skill can be set to work with driving times, or public transport times, and will alert you to traffic congestion and delays on your way to or from work (or to and from any other of “your places”), and can even tell you when you need to leave in order to arrive at a meeting, or appointment, on time.

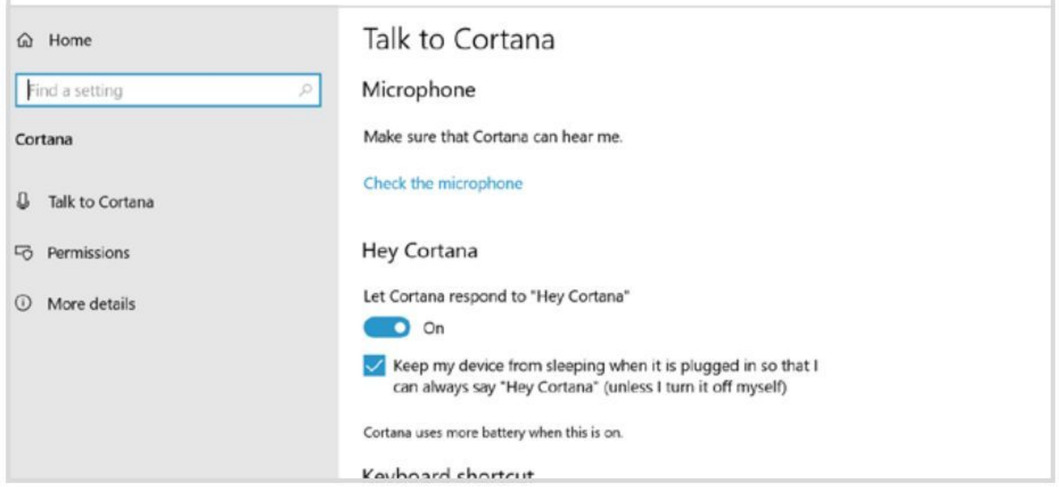


Cortana Tips and Tricks

As well as helping you search, both on and off your computer, and letting you create lists and reminders, Cortana has some other clever tricks up its electronic sleeve.

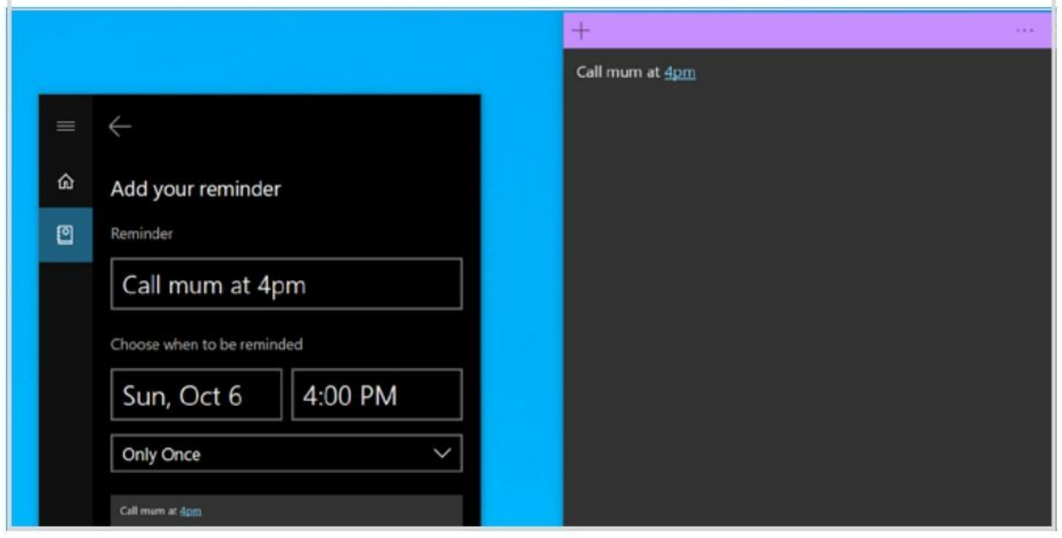
Notification Mirroring

Forward app notifications from your phone to your PC. Download and sign in to Cortana on your Android phone. Then go to Cortana settings on your PC, and switch on Send notifications and information between devices. Messages and alerts you receive on your phone, will now be mirrored on your PC.



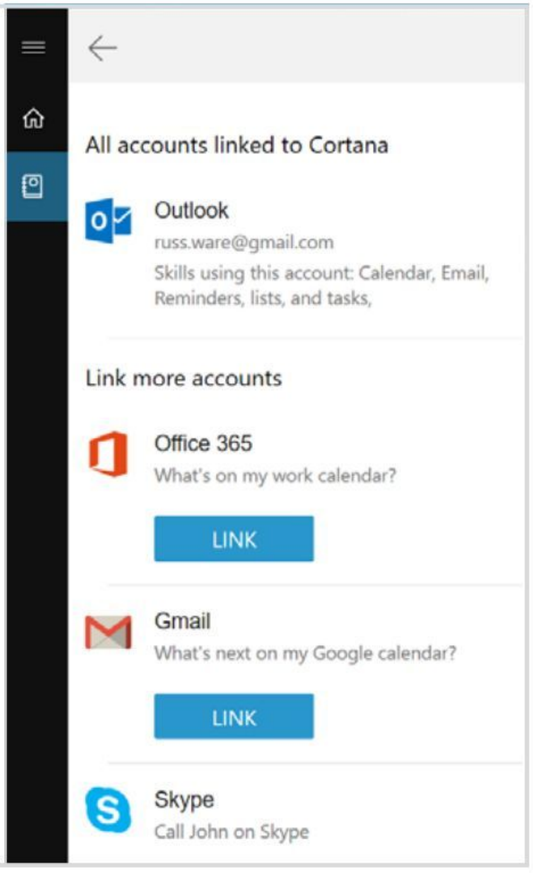
Sticky Note Reminders

Cortana can be instructed to create a reminder from a Sticky Note message. Open Sticky Notes and type, or use the Pen, to write down a reminder like “Call Mum at 4 PM.” Select the text that’s in a different colour, then select Add Reminder. Select Remind and Cortana will remind you later.



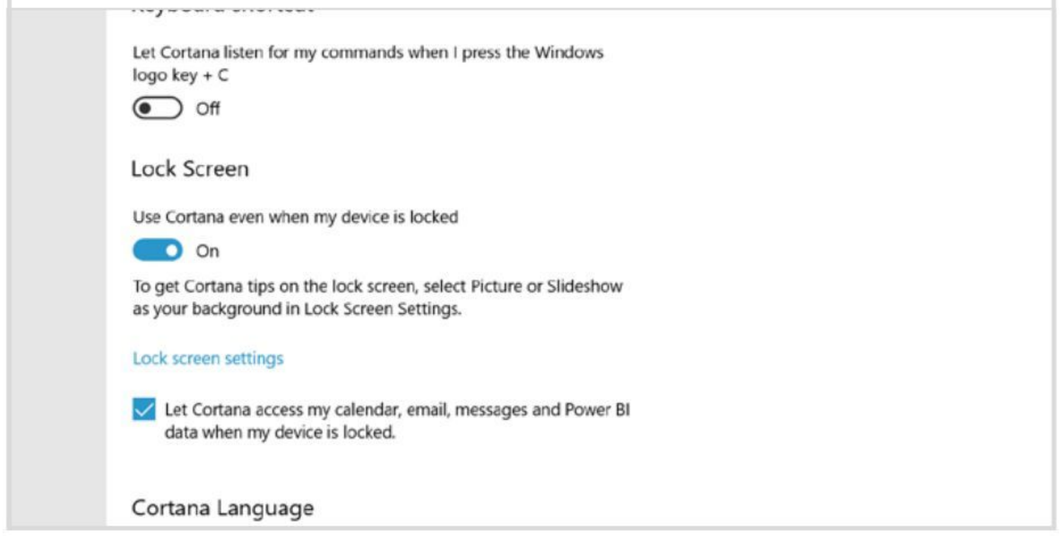
Cortana and Alexa

Connect Cortana and Alexa. Enable the Alexa skill and link it to your Cortana account. Then, just say “Cortana, open Alexa” on your Windows device and talk to Alexa as you normally would. Alexa and Cortana are always getting smarter, so new features like music and audible will be available soon.



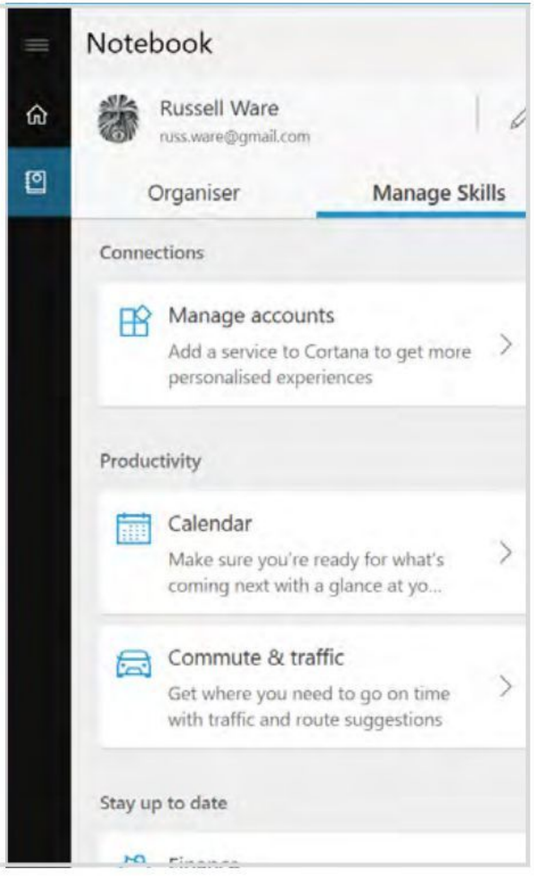
Locked Device

You can use Cortana to search for something, or do something, even when your device is locked. You need to turn on Use Cortana even when my device is locked in Cortana’s settings. When your PC is locked, say “Hey Cortana” and ask her something to see this in action.



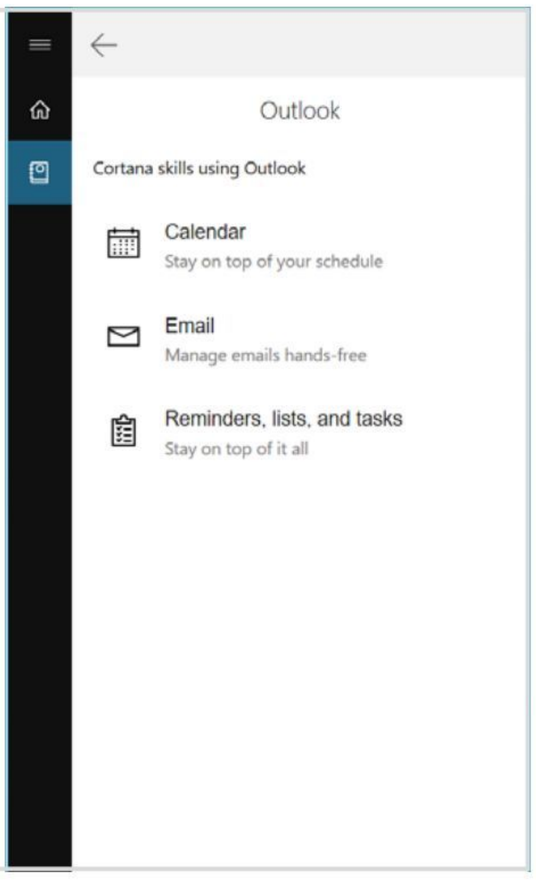
Change Your Name

You can change what Cortana calls you. Select the Search box on the taskbar to open Cortana. Select the Notebook and then select your hyperlinked email address. Select Change my name, enter the name you want Cortana to call you, and then select Enter.



Track Packages

You can have Cortana track your packages. Open Cortana and select the Notebook icon and then Skills. Connect Cortana to Outlook (or other email provider) and then go to Permissions in the Cortana Settings and switch on Communications history. This allows Cortana to recognise package confirmation emails from most major carriers.



Cortana

The Most Useful Cortana Commands

“Hey Cortana,...”

PC Control Commands

“Hey Cortana, lock PC”
“Hey Cortana, sign out”
“Hey Cortana, turn off PC”
“Hey Cortana, restart PC”

Hey Cortana, open Action Center

“Hey Cortana, go to/Open [app name].”
“Hey Cortana, go to/Open [name of site.com].”

“Hey Cortana, open Settings”
“Hey Cortana, open Action Center”
“Hey Cortana, turn on/off Bluetooth”
“Hey Cortana, turn on/off Wi-Fi”

News and Finance

Hey Cortana, show me top headlines

“Hey Cortana, show me latest news”
“Hey Cortana, show me [topic] news”
“Hey Cortana, show me [company name] stock”
“Hey Cortana, search the web for [term]”

“Hey Cortana, what was the score of the last [sport team] game?”
“Hey Cortana, what’s [percentage] of [money]?”
“Hey Cortana, what’s [number] times [number]?”
“Hey Cortana, what’s the square root of [number]?”
“Hey Cortana, convert [number] cups to fluid ounces”

Hey Cortana, what was the score of the last Liverpool game?

Getting Information

Hey Cortana, what’s the traffic like on the way home?”

“Hey Cortana, what time is it?”
“Hey Cortana, what time is in [location]?”

“Hey Cortana, what’s the weather like?”
“Hey Cortana, what’s the weather like in [location]?”

“Hey Cortana, where is my package?”
“Hey Cortana, find restaurants near me”
“Hey Cortana, find bars near me”
“Hey Cortana, what’s interesting nearby?”
“Hey Cortana, what’s the traffic like on the way home?”
“Hey Cortana, track flight [flight number]”

Reminders and Notes

"Hey Cortana, schedule a phone call with Mike tomorrow at 11 am"
"Hey Cortana, add doctors appointment to Tuesday at 2 pm"
"Hey Cortana, remind me to take out the bin when I get home"
"Hey Cortana, how's my schedule looking?"
"Hey Cortana, when is my hospital appointment?"

"Hey Cortana, set an alarm for 9am"

"Hey Cortana, set an alarm for 9 am"
"Hey Cortana, take a note"
"Hey Cortana, create [note name] note"
"Hey Cortana, what's the meaning of [word]?"
"Hey Cortana, what day is Christmas day this year?"

Contacts and Communication

Hey Cortana, show me emails from Jenny

"Hey Cortana, call Mark"
"Hey Cortana, call Mark on speakerphone"
"Hey Cortana, write an email to [contact] saying [message]"
"Hey Cortana, show me emails from Jenny"
"Hey Cortana, what is Mark's phone number?"

Entertainment Commands

Hey Cortana, what movies are playing near me?

"Hey Cortana, play [artist]"
"Hey Cortana, play [album name] by [artist]"
"Hey Cortana, stop music" or "Pause music"
"Hey Cortana, what is this song?"

"Hey Cortana, what movies are playing near me?"
"Hey Cortana, who was the director for [movie name]?"

"Hey Cortana, tell me a joke"
"Hey Cortana, tell me a riddle"
"Hey Cortana, tell me something interesting"
"Hey Cortana, tell me something funny"

Other Useful Commands

"Hey Cortana, translate [word] to [language]"
"Hey Cortana, who is [person name]?"
"Hey Cortana, set a timer for [time]"
"Hey Cortana, how much time is left on the timer?"
"Hey Cortana, how far away is [location]?"

"Hey Cortana, how do I install a printer?"
"Hey Cortana, how do I update Windows?"
"Hey Cortana, how do I make a backup?"
"Hey Cortana, how do I connect a wireless device?"
"Hey Cortana, what is love?

Mail

Explore the Email App in Windows 10

Long gone are the days of Microsoft Outlook Express being included with new releases of the OS, replaced instead by the Microsoft Mail app. This app first appeared in Windows 8, was vastly improved in 8.1 and has now been improved yet again for Windows 10.

New Mail Button

If you are not replying to an email, but rather starting a new email, you can do so in a couple of different ways. You can either click the New Mail button at the top of the Mail Menu or you can use the Ctrl-N. Both methods open a new email in the main window, with a blank recipient field.

Mail Menu

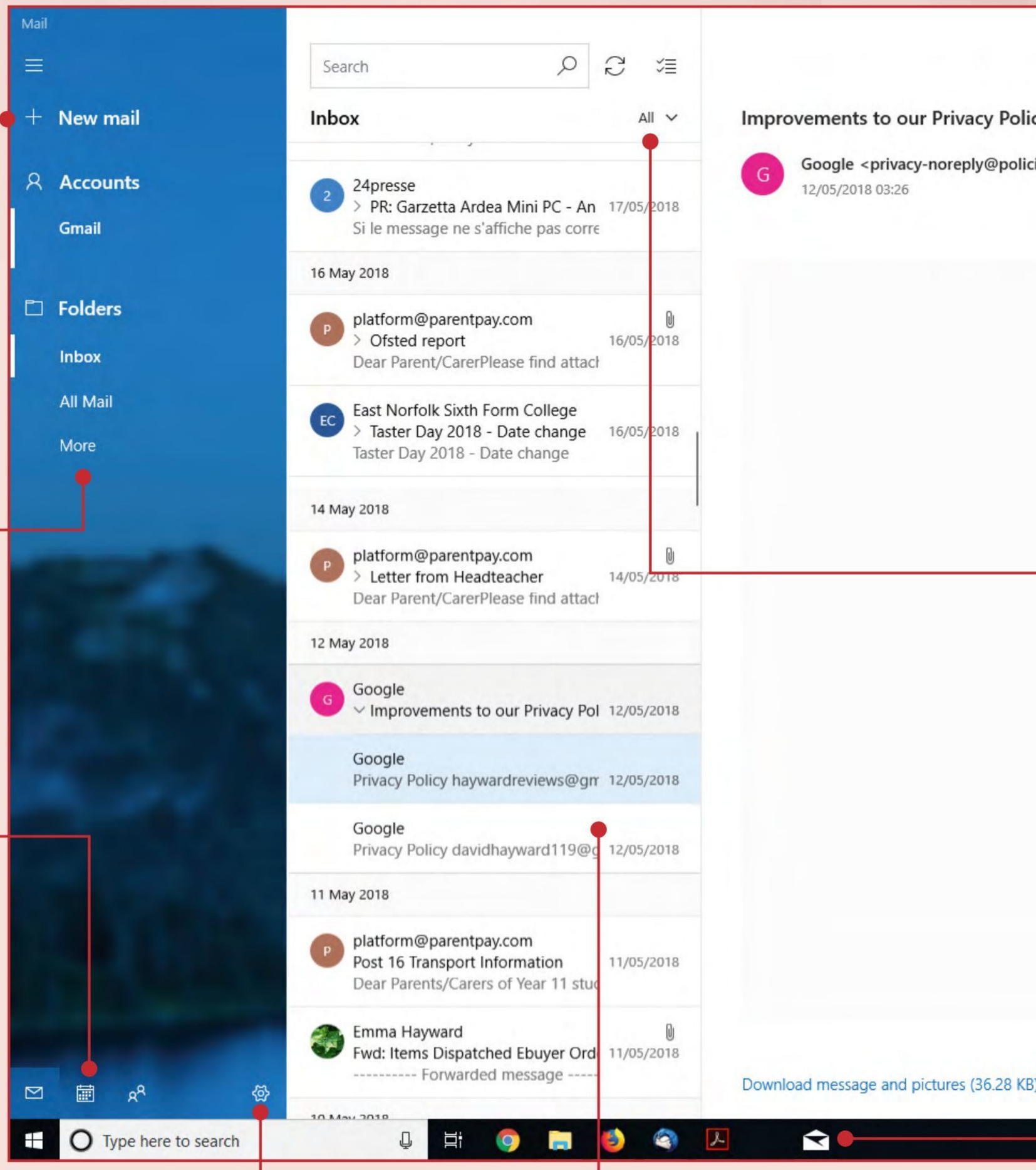
The left-hand menu, which can be minimised and expanded using the button at the top of the panel, contains all of your email accounts (those you have added to Windows Mail). Click on any of your email account headers and the individual folders, such as Inbox and Sent Items, are displayed here also.

Calendar View

You can open the Windows Calendar app directly from within the Mail app. Click the Mail app icon at the bottom of the Mail Menu panel and the calendar screen will open in a second window. If you have never used the Calendar app before, you will need to link it to an account.

Mail Settings

The settings for the Mail app allow you to easily add accounts, change how emails are displayed when they arrive, whether outgoing emails have a signature (which can be customised) added to them, as well as how you are notified of new emails in Windows 10.

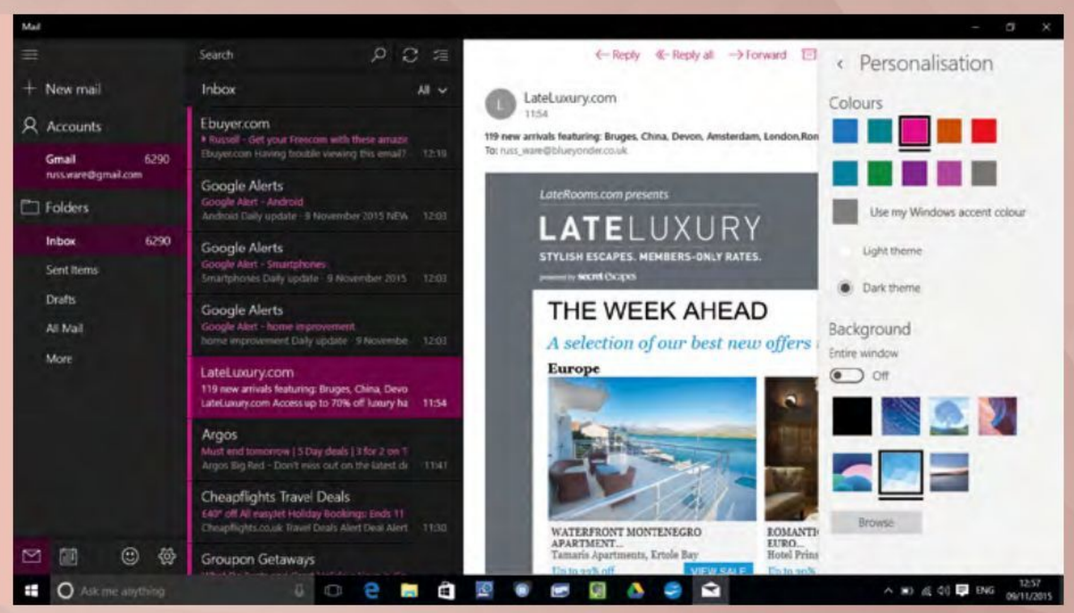


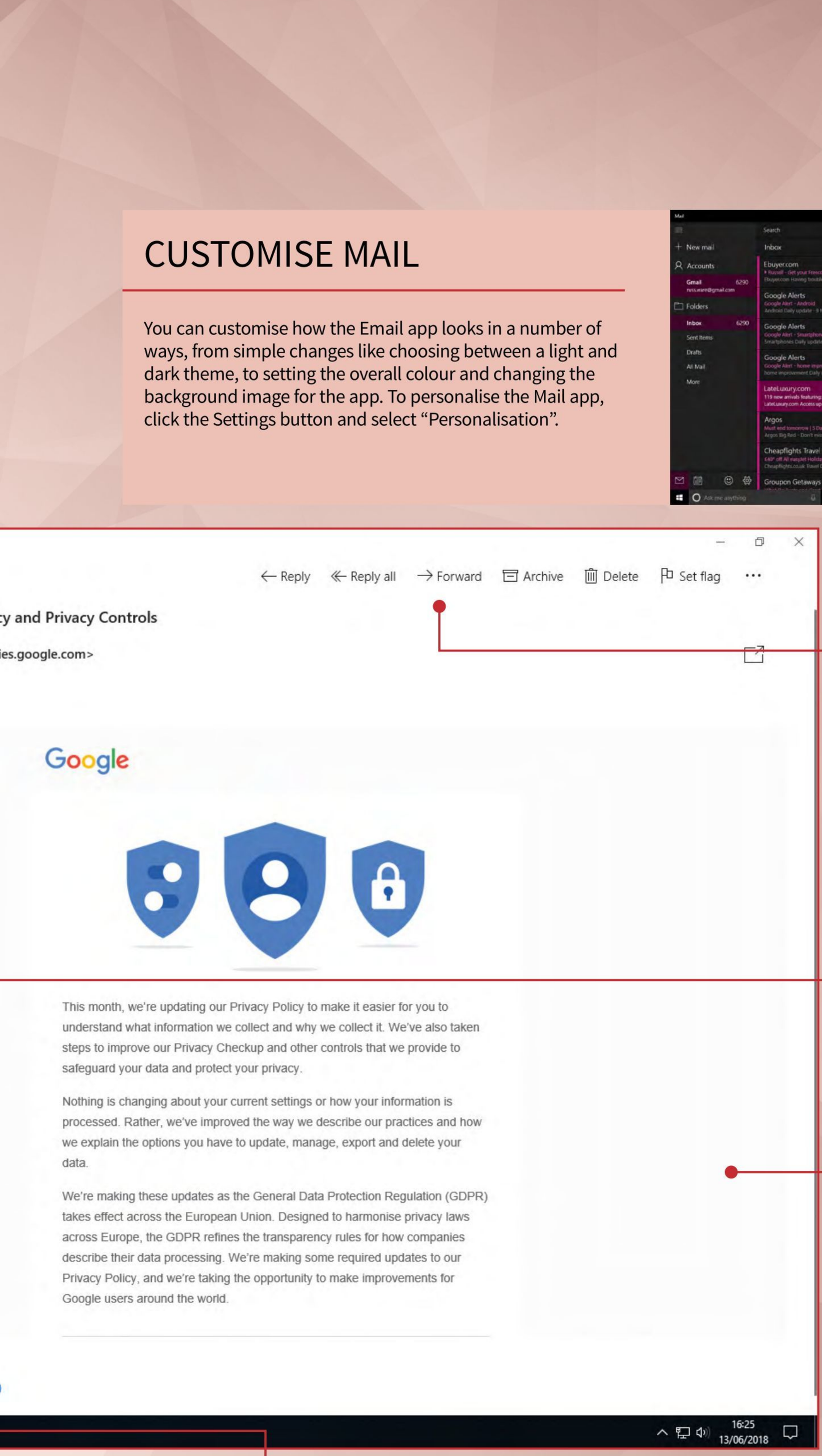
Mail Folder

The messages in whichever email folder you have selected are shown in this panel. By default, the most recent emails are at the top of the list. You can change how the emails are viewed, so that only unread or flagged emails are displayed, using the dropdown menu at the top of the inbox.

CUSTOMISE MAIL

You can customise how the Email app looks in a number of ways, from simple changes like choosing between a light and dark theme, to setting the overall colour and changing the background image for the app. To personalise the Mail app, click the Settings button and select “Personalisation”.





Message Options

In a row along the top of the main message window are the message options. These include Reply, Reply All, Forward, Archive and Delete emails; more options can be seen by clicking the Menu button to the right. The message options only appear when viewing a received message.

Message Tools

Roll over or click on any of the messages in your inbox, sent items or drafts folders and three icons will appear. These let you quickly Archive, Delete or Flag any message directly in the folder panel. Archived messages can be recovered at any time and returned to the inbox if required.

Main Message Window

When you start a new email or select an email in one of the mail folders, it will appear in the main message window. As you would normally, you can scroll down to view all of the messages shown. You can roll over the address in the To: field, to see more contact details.

Taskbar Icon

Whenever you open an app in Windows 10, a highlighted taskbar icon will appear at the bottom of the screen. This makes it easy to switch between multiple open apps, or to quickly see which apps are currently running. You can pin your most used apps to the taskbar by right-clicking and selecting Pin to Taskbar.

Email

How to Set Up and Use the Mail App

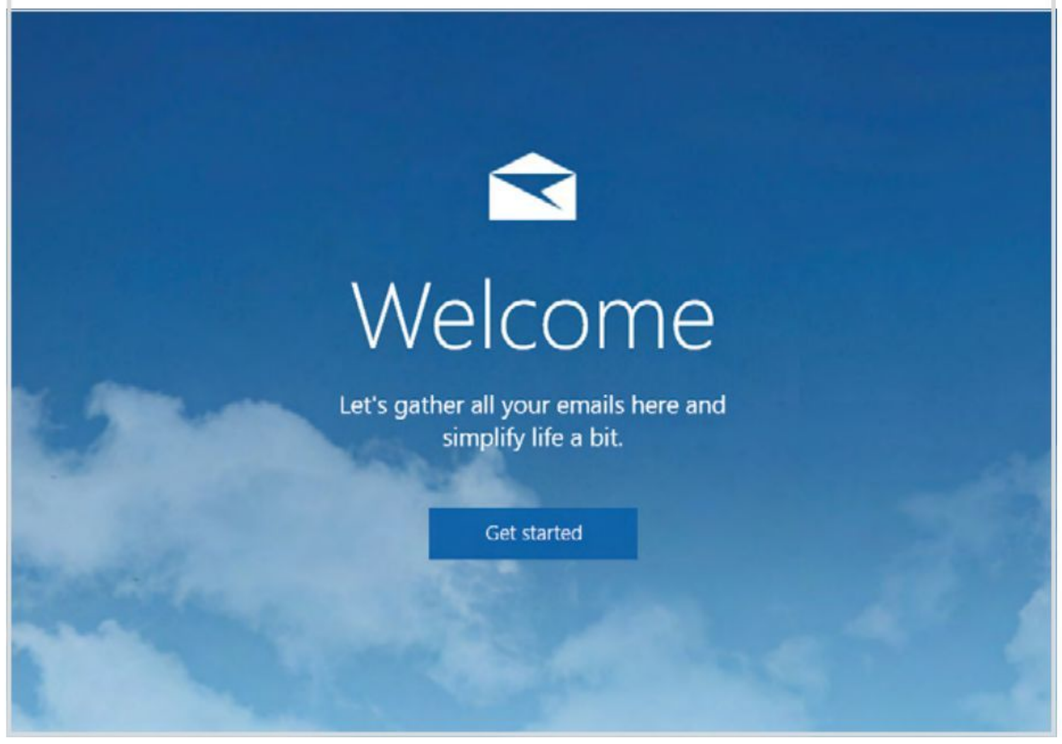
The Windows 10 new email client is a lot different from previous apps such as Outlook Express. It's a relatively recent idea for you to have all your email in one place, whether it's your work account, a Hotmail or Outlook address or email from Gmail.

Meet Your New Email Client

Mail has been completely redesigned for Windows 10 and is wholly unrecognisable from the Windows 8 equivalent (that's a good thing). But even with these improvements, it still needs a bit of tweaking before it comes into its own.

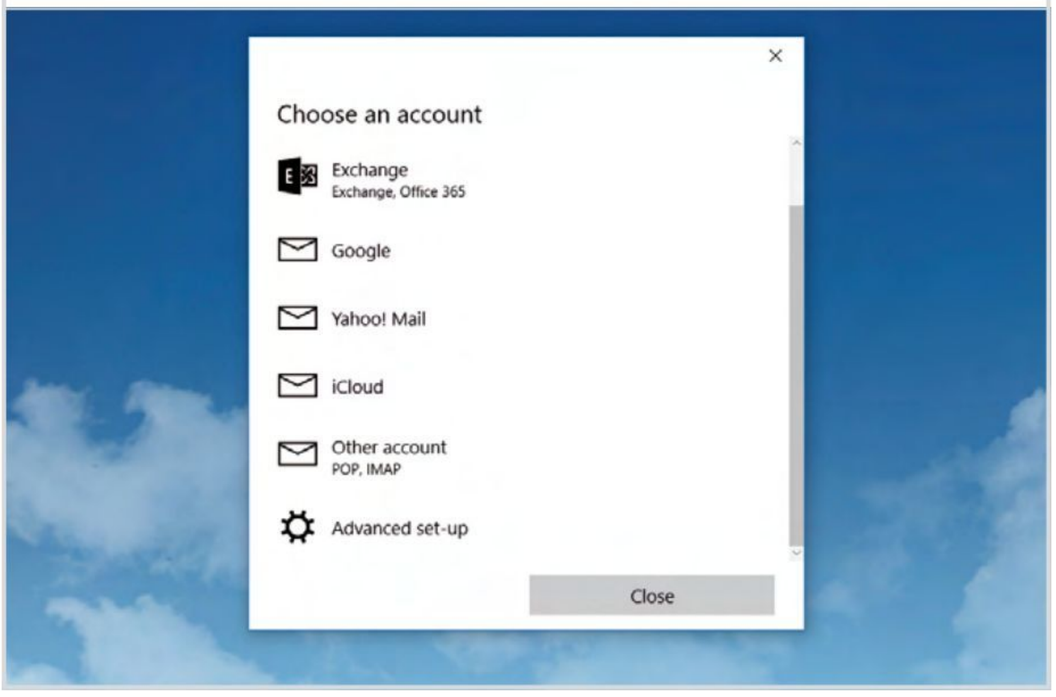
Welcome

As it says here, the idea behind the Mail app in Windows 10 is to gather all your emails together in one place to "simplify life a bit". The app is quite clever in how it handles email and it certainly differs to older apps such as Windows Live Mail and Outlook Express.



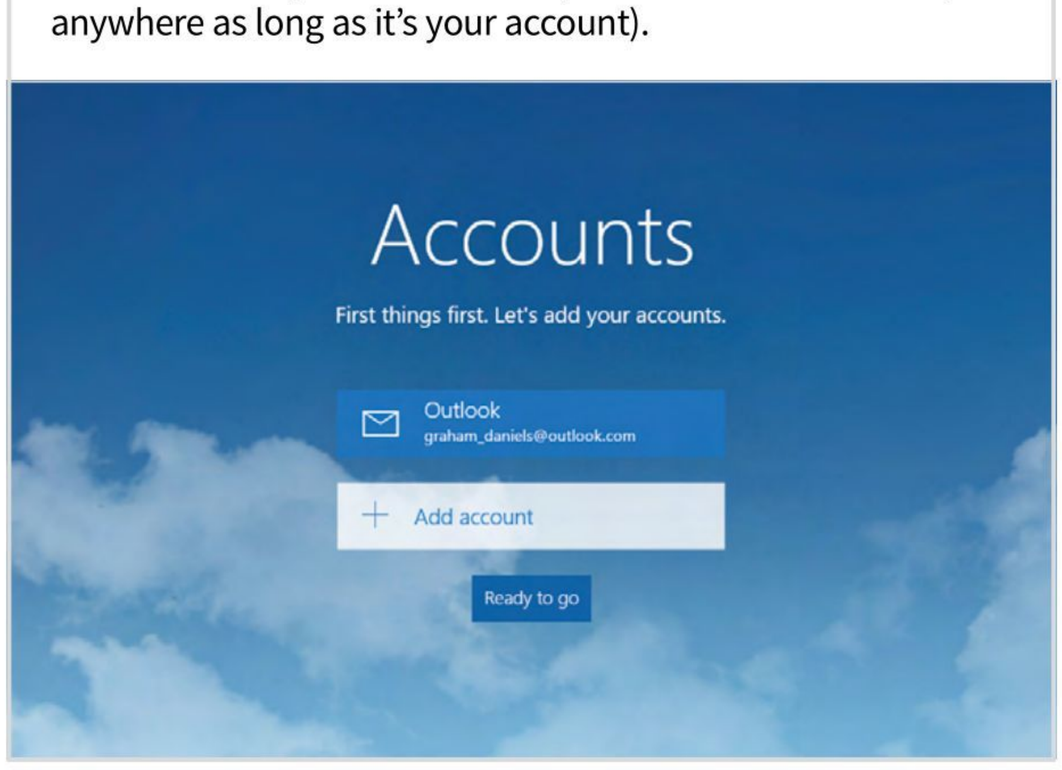
Account Type

If you click Add Account, you can add accounts from many popular providers including Google, Yahoo and Apple's iCloud. You can also set up other more specialist accounts if you have the details. Finally, there's also an option to add a Microsoft Exchange account if your workplace uses that (including Office 365).



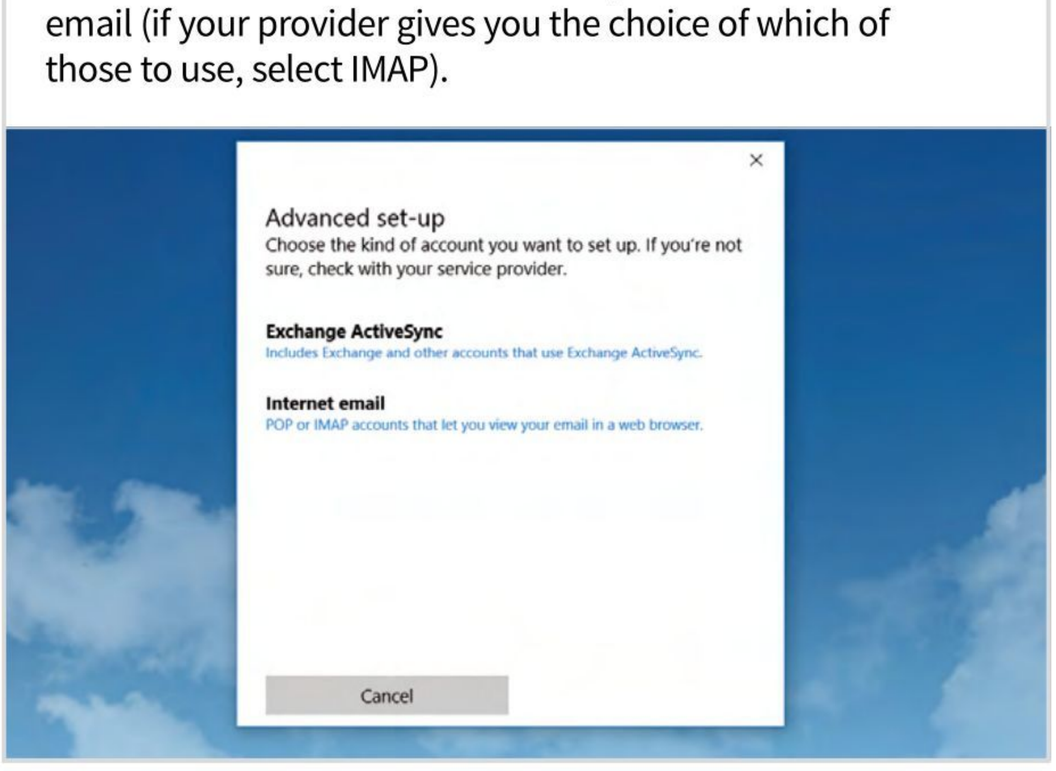
Default Account

If you signed into Windows 10 with a Microsoft account, the Mail app will automatically pull this in if it's enabled for email. As you can see, you can also click Add Account if you have other email accounts you want to add (this can be from basically anywhere as long as it's your account).



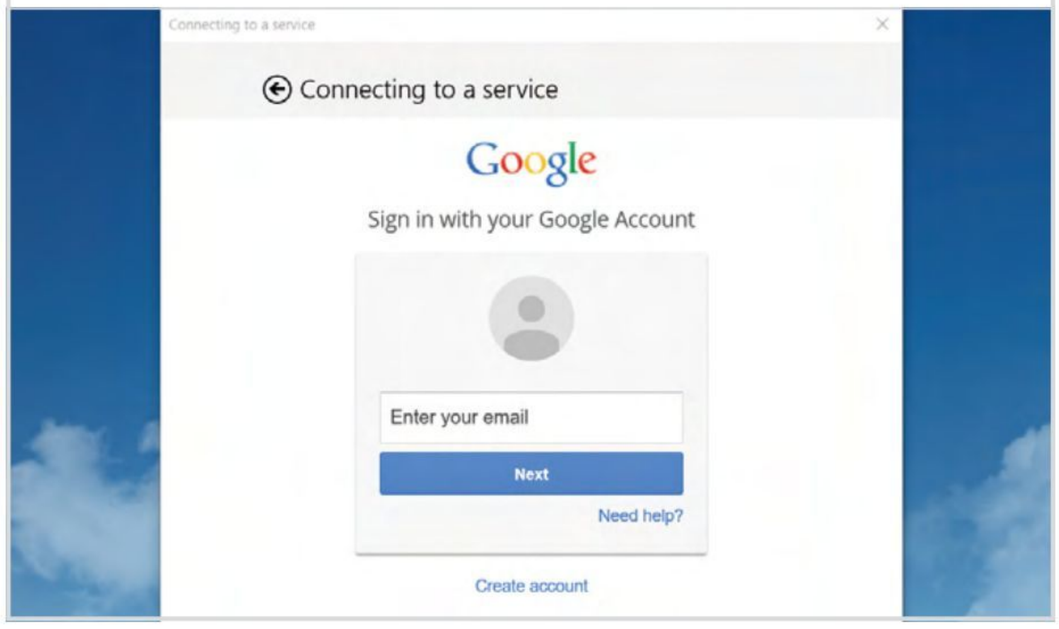
Advanced Set-up

If you need to select the Advanced Set-up option, you can choose between the type of account you're setting up. Usually you'll select the Internet Email option – this includes accounts that use the POP3 or IMAP protocols to retrieve email (if your provider gives you the choice of which of those to use, select IMAP).



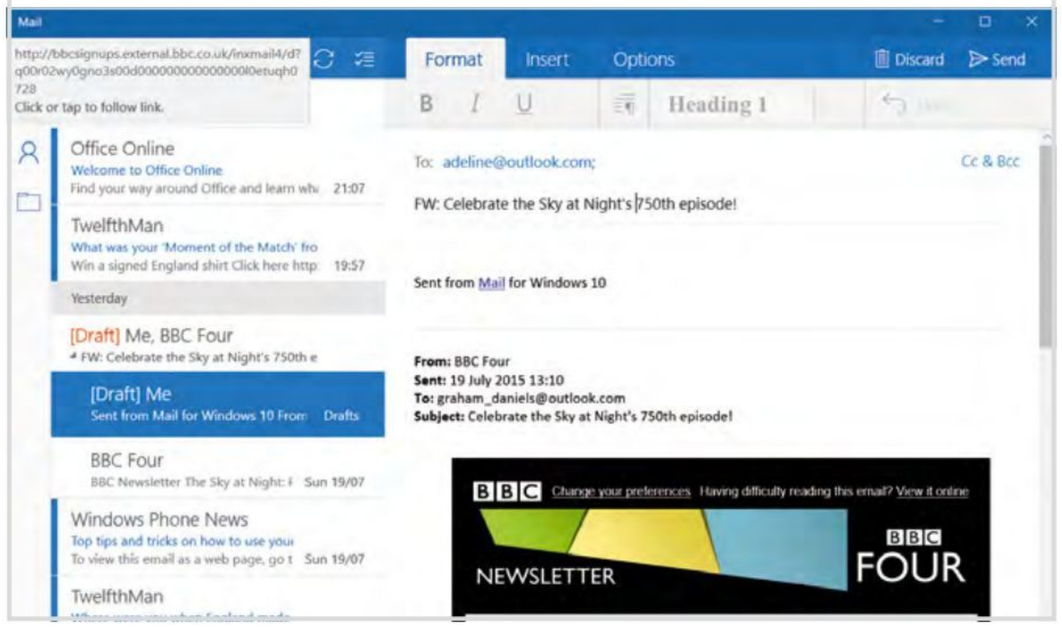
Google Accounts

If you're adding a Google account, you'll get this somewhat familiar pop-up appearing inviting you to enter your username and password. If you have Google's two-step authentication enabled, you'll get a text message to confirm your identity and you'll be asked to enter it.



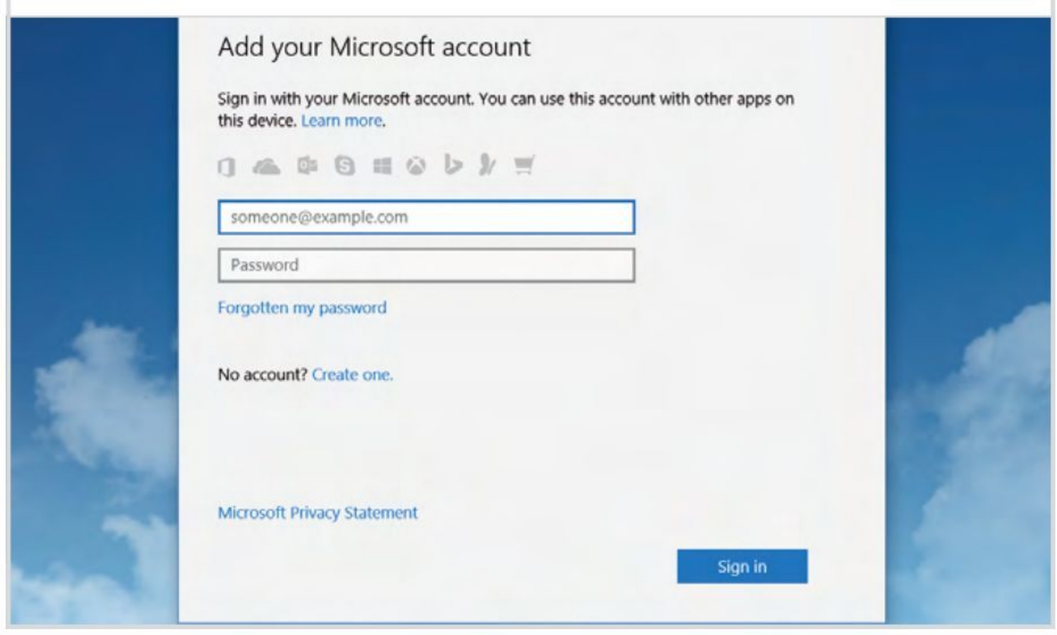
Writing a Mail

There's also a Refresh button as well as a Select mode, so you can select various emails (with a view to moving or deleting them). Now we've clicked the Forward button along the top to forward this email. As you can see, this has created a draft under the original email on the left.



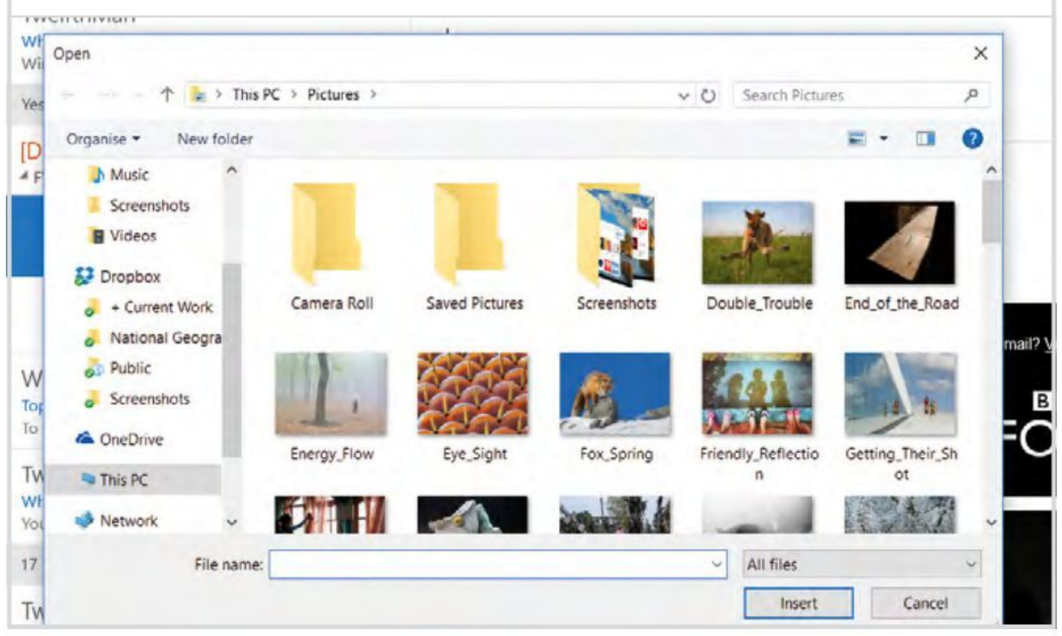
Microsoft Accounts

As we said before, normally your Microsoft account will have already pulled in automatically. If not, you can add it manually. Just enter your email address and password. If you don't already have a Microsoft account, you can set one up from here by clicking the link and following the steps.



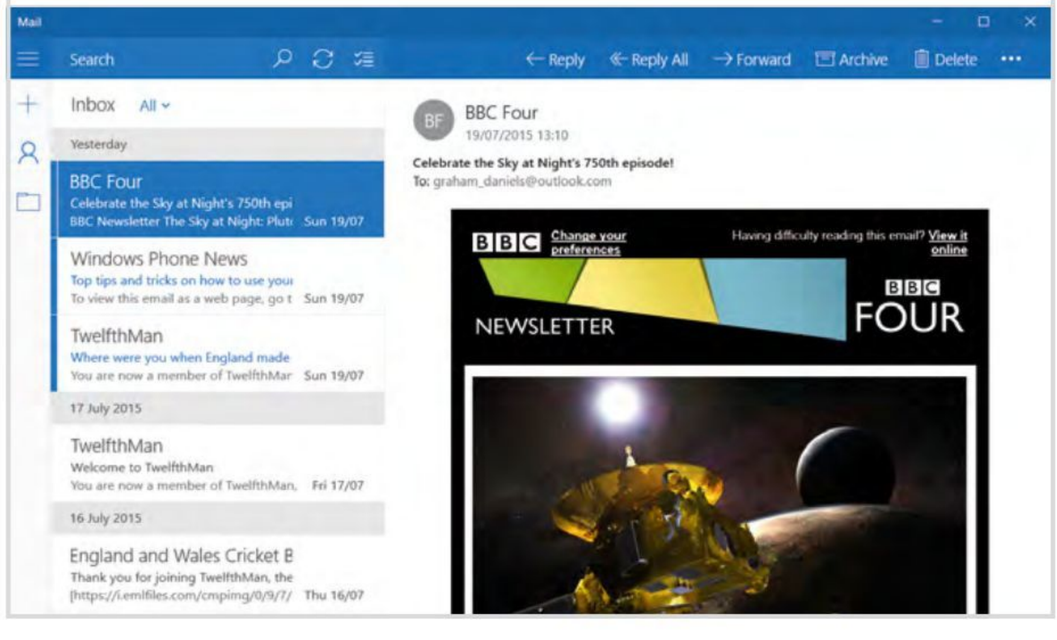
Insert Attachment

Emails are 'grouped' like this in Mail, meaning that if you and a friend have a conversation, all the emails will be grouped together so that they're easy to retrieve. You'll notice we're still composing our email here, and we've clicked the Attach button to select an attachment.



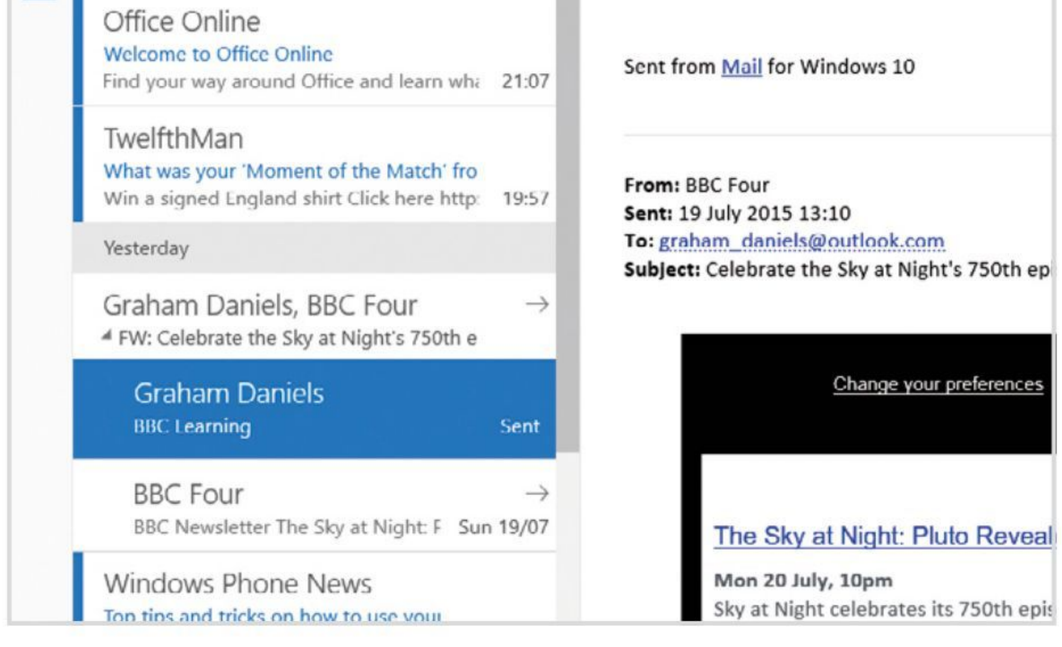
Your Inbox

Here's your inbox! Your email list is shown on the left, with the contents of each email appearing on the right. We have three new emails here, designated by the blue colour. You can also search for any emails using the search box at the top – this works much more quickly than in older apps.



Sent Mail

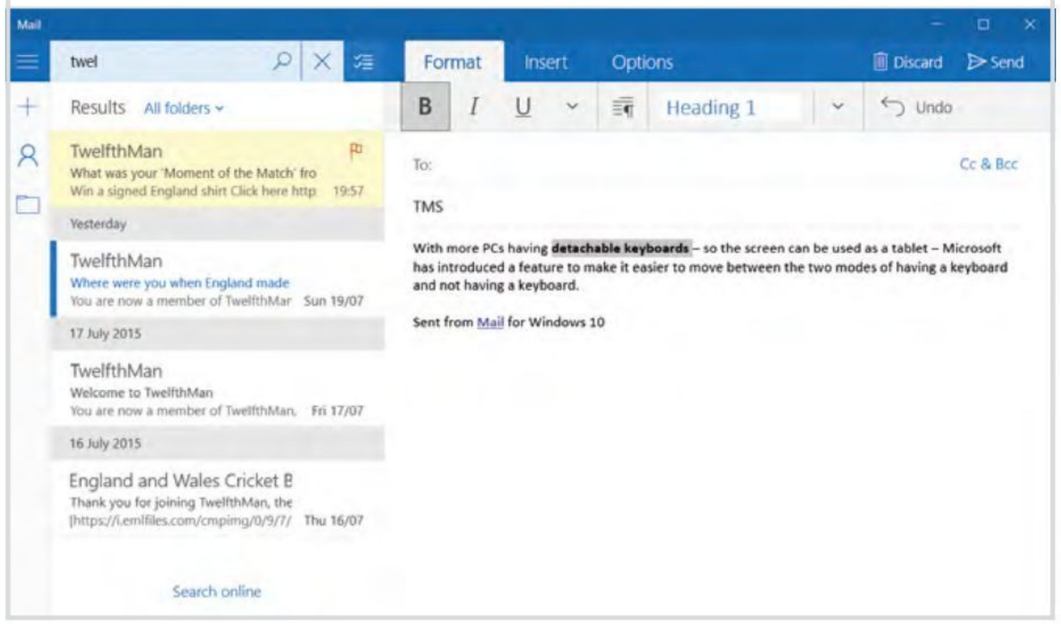
This is what a sent mail looks like. As you can see, it's now 'nested' under our original email and the sender is me (or you). You're able to look at just sent items in your folder still, and we'll show you how to do that in a few steps.



Email

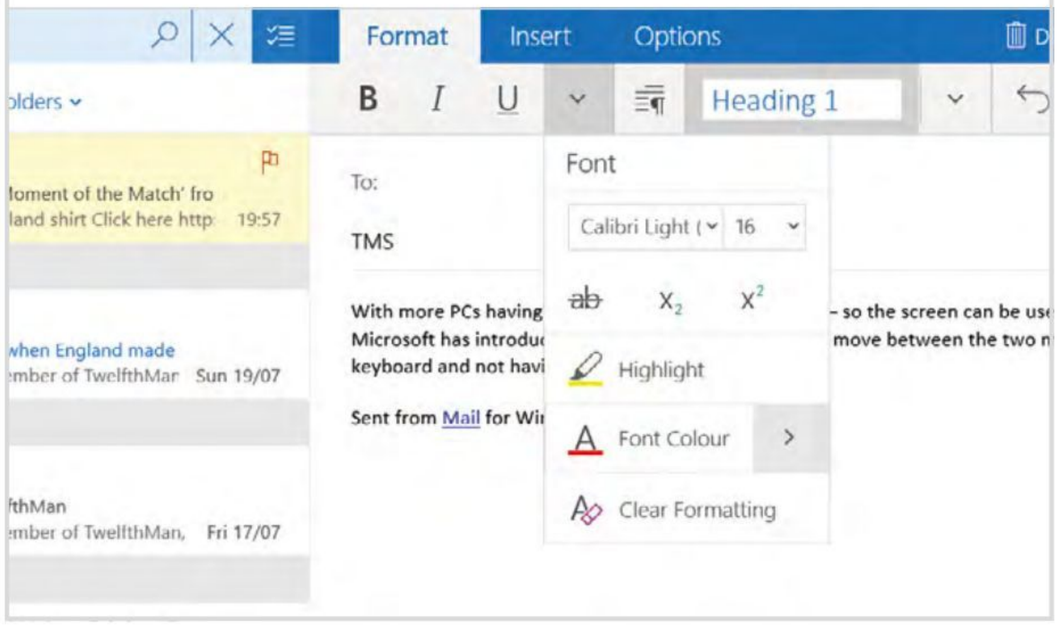
Edit Text

As well as just writing simple plain text emails, there are plenty more editing functions in Mail, which we'll check out in the next few steps. Using the Format tab at the top of the editing window, you can change selected text – here we've used bold to highlight a particular phrase.



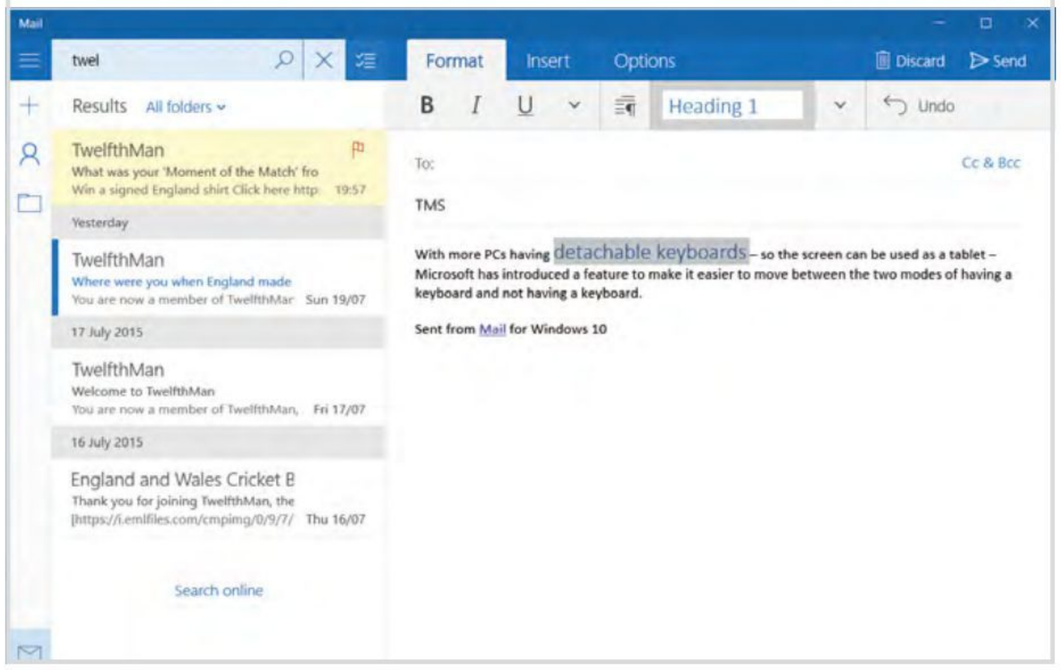
More Text Options

As well as styles, Bold, Italic and Underline, there are other ways you can make text stand out or add emphasis. As in Word, you can have subscript or superscript text or add highlighting (quite useful for quick editing of paragraphs in emails). Finally, you can clear the formatting of any selected text.



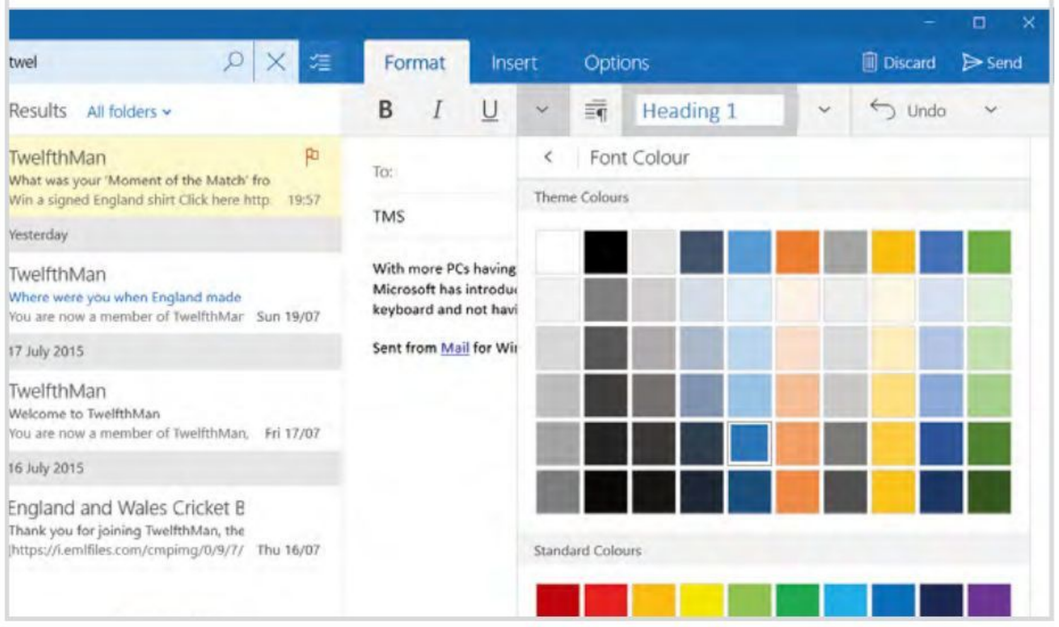
Apply Styles

There are also various pre-defined styles you can apply to text – useful if you're writing a long email and you need to have sub-headings or headlines in the text. These work very similarly to styles in Microsoft Office; styles that you might use for a report or essay.



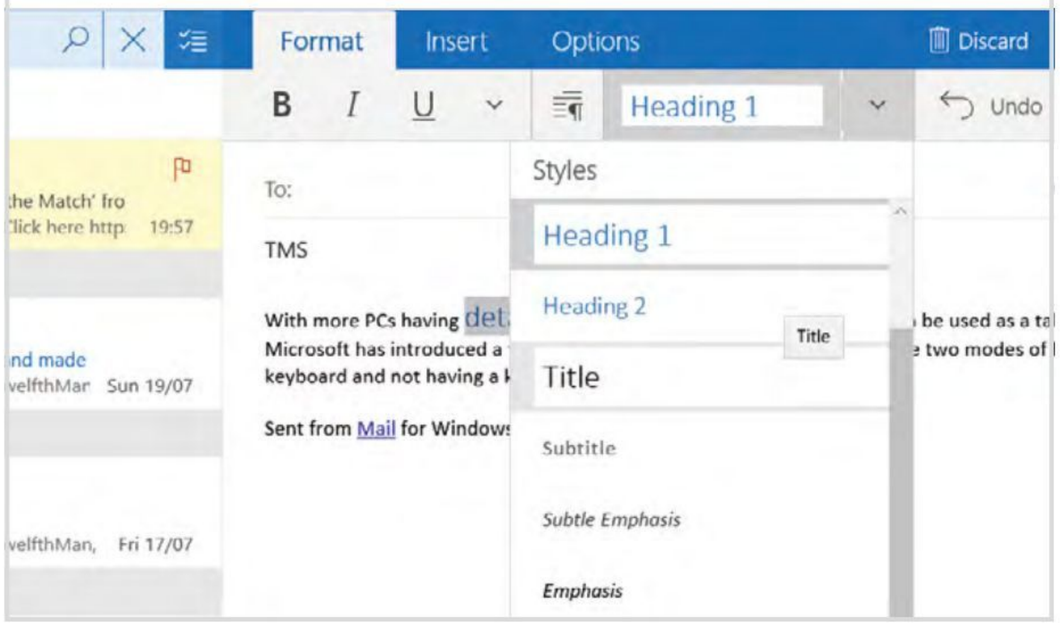
Change Colour

You're able to easily change the colour of the text in your email and, while you still have a limited range to choose from, you've still got a lot of choice (far more than in many other apps, anyway). Strangely Windows chooses to take most of these colours from your current Windows theme. No, we're not sure why, either.



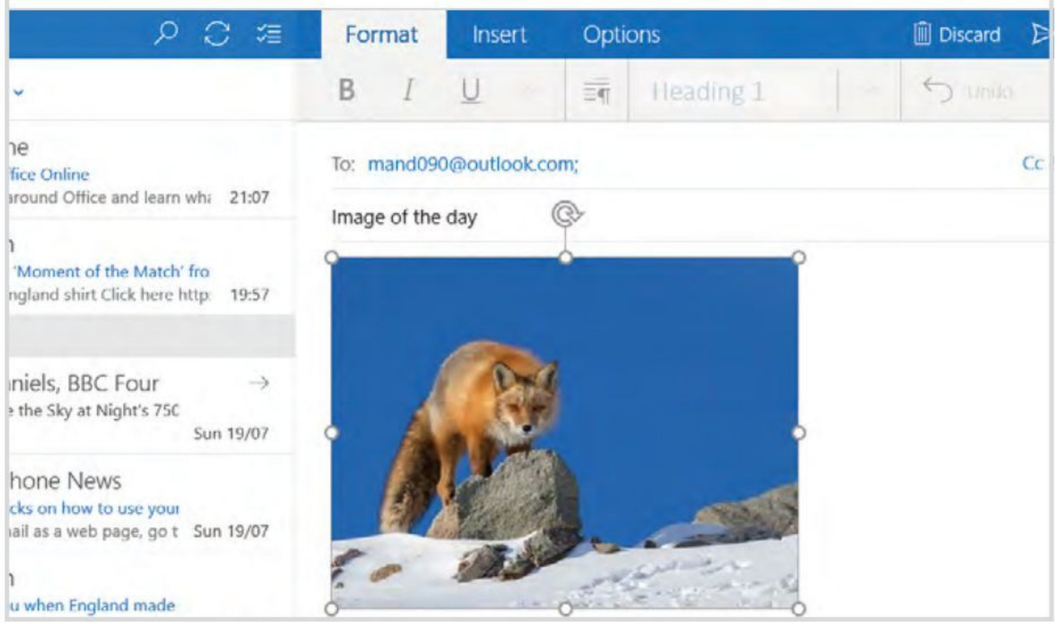
Define Styles

You can browse through these styles using the drop-down arrow next to the style selection box. As well as fairly standard styles, there are some other ways you can get text to stand out including quotes and what are called 'Intense' styles, which place quotes in between parallel lines to encourage reading.



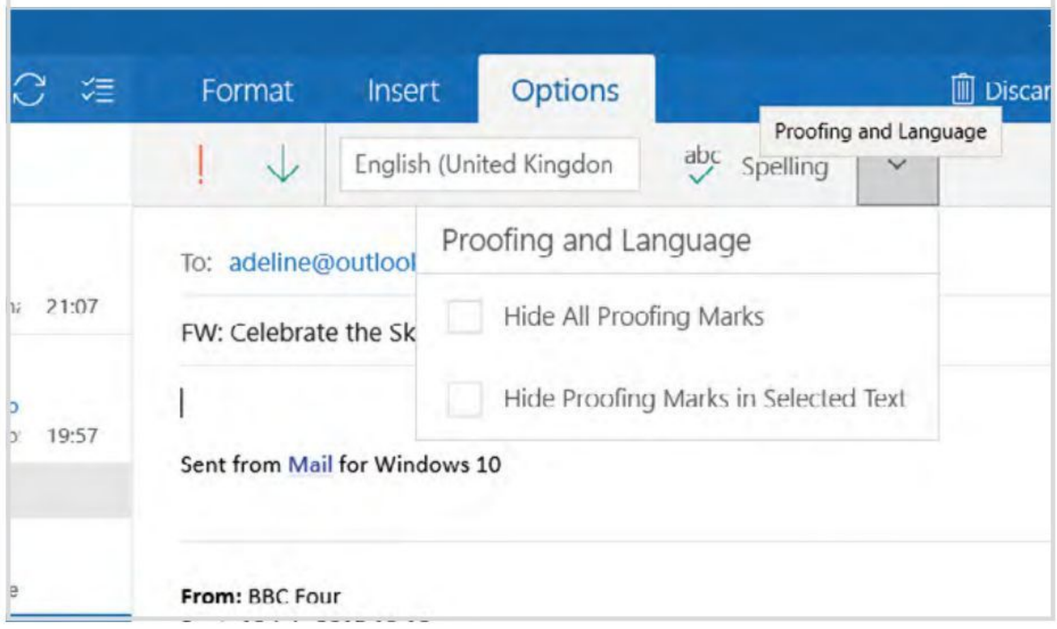
Inserting Images

As well as the button to include attachments, the Insert tab features a Picture button so you can insert an image into your email, as opposed to just sending it as an attached file. Once inserted, you can select it with your mouse and adjust its size (drag the corners as you can see here).



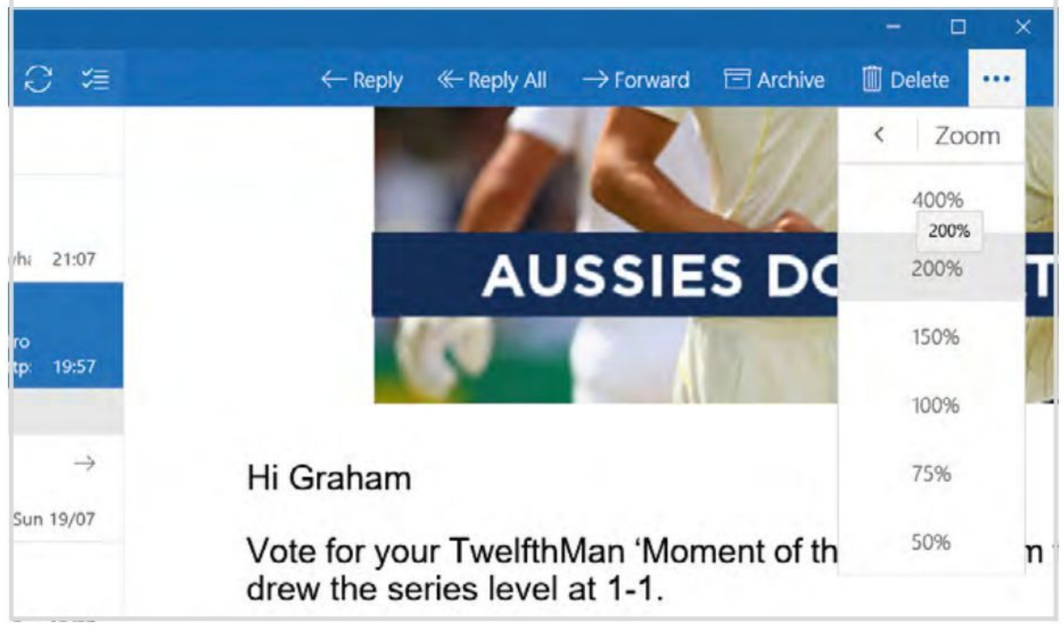
Spelling Options

Before you send an email, you can always spell check it – this is integrated into Mail under the Options tab. You can select the language you need (you might be emailing a hotel in France so using French, for example) and correct any spelling errors as you go.



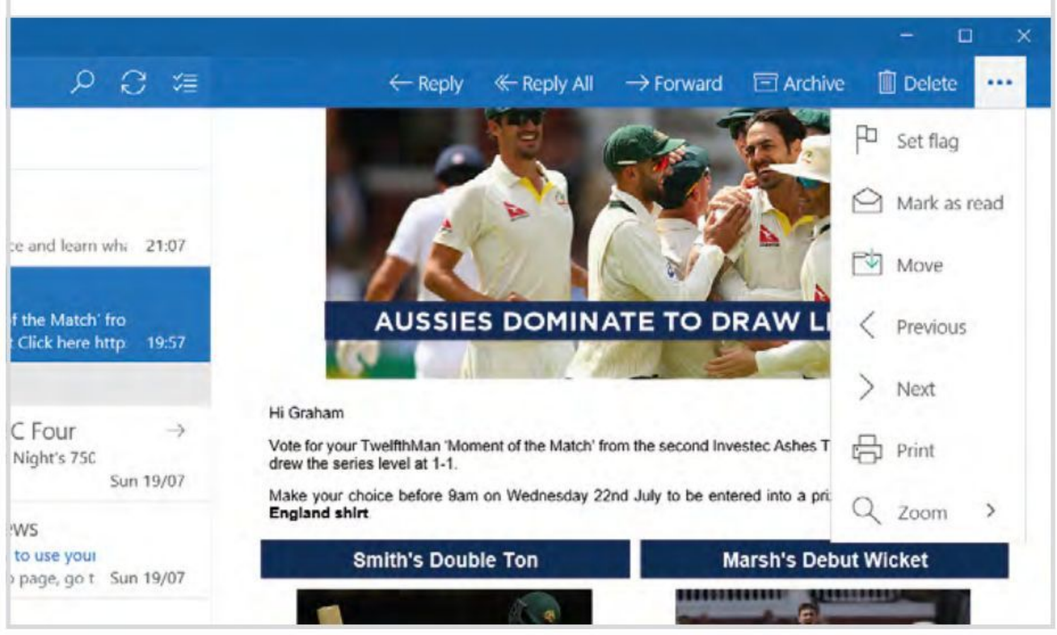
Change Zoom

If the text in emails is too small for you, you can zoom in to your messages – again, this is also accessed through the ··· menu. A handy keyboard shortcut for zooming in is Ctrl-+ to zoom in or use Ctrl and – to zoom out. This actually works in most apps, including many web browsers, too!



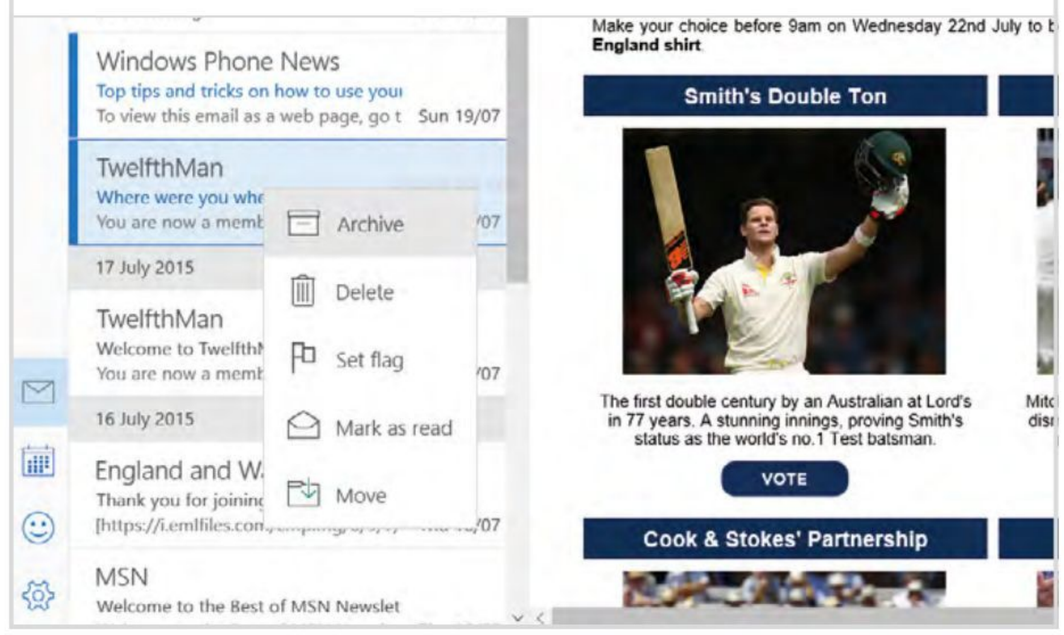
Email Menu

As well as the basic reply, reply all, forward, archive and delete commands at the top of each email, there's also this extra menu – just click the ··· button. You can move to the next email or previous message if you want to do that, but crucially you can also move your email into a folder.



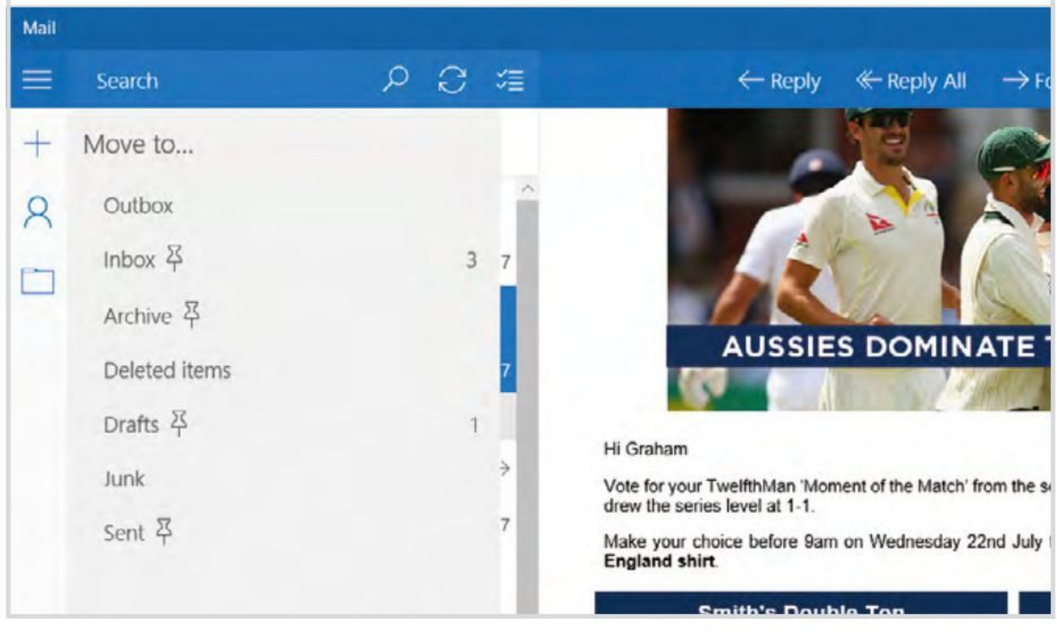
Right-Click

Even if you're not actually looking at a particular email, you can still perform numerous actions on it. You can right-click on emails to move, archive or delete them or mark them as read/unread. If you're deleting emails, you can also just select them and use the delete key (we find this is actually the easiest way).



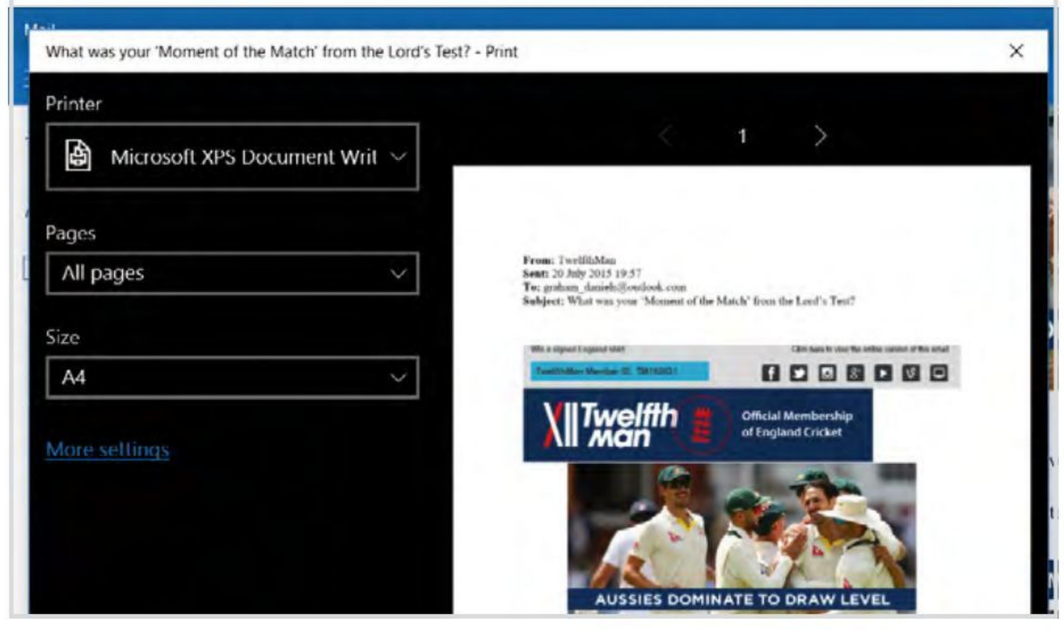
Move Folder

If you chose to move your email in the previous step, you'll see this browser view which enables you to add your email to an existing folder. You can always create a new folder for storing emails in particular categories. If you just want to remove your email from the inbox but still keep it, use Archive.



Print it Off

From this menu you can also print off emails – this will open the now-standard Windows print dialog box which is now black (presumably to make the predominantly white print preview stand out). You can select to print off the whole email or just the first page, as well as browse through the pages using the controls at the top.



Contents

66 Security
Windows 10 Security Features

68 Privacy
Make Full Use of the Privacy Tools
68 The Privacy Dashboard
69 Privacy Settings

70 Defender
Using the Windows Defender Tools

72 What To Do if You're Hacked
73 How Will You Know?
73 What To Do Next
73 Change Your Passwords
74 Check Your Bank and Credit Card Statements
74 Recover Your Accounts
74 Examine All Your Accounts Carefully
75 Scan For Viruses/Malware
75 Contact Friends, Family and Colleagues

What to do if you're hacked

Protect your devices on public Wi-Fi

Security and Privacy in Windows 10

Learn how to defend your PC against viruses, secure your privacy, back up your important files and restore them, in case of an emergency. Viruses, spyware, malware, ransomware and other digital threats are ever-present, but in this section, you can learn how to best combat this unwanted side of the Internet.

76 Malware
Removing Malware from Windows 10
76 Malware Busters

78 Public Wi-Fi
Protect Your Devices in Public
78 What Makes Public Wi-Fi Unsafe?
79 Five Ways to Make Public Wi-Fi Safer to Use

81 Antivirus
Four Brilliant Virus Security Options
81 Better Protection

82 Browser
Your Guide to Safer Surfing
82 Safer Surfing

84 Viruses
Learn More About Malware Threats
84 Viruses
85 Malware
85 Ransomware
86 Scareware
86 Adware
87 Digital Security FAQ

88 Security Tool
Find My Device and Remote Lock
88 Enable Find my Device
89 Using Remote Lock

Learn more about malware threats

Security

Windows 10 Security Features

Microsoft is often accused of developing insecure and 'broken' operating systems. However, what the Redmond company delivers is an easy to use system that's as secure as it can be without compromising its use. It's a difficult balance to maintain and security can suffer in the long run.

Security leaks, holes and flaws in development code appear all the time, for every operating system. Windows 10 has the bad luck of being at the top of the security flaw news pile. However, here are ten reasons why it's actually a secure OS to use.

> ***Windows 10 Security Improvements***

Virtualisation-based Security

VBS is an improvement to the core Windows security, it stands for Virtualisation-based Security and uses a mixture of hardware and software enforced developments to create an isolated, hypervisor restricted subsystem for securing the OS core data. Nothing unsigned by Microsoft is allowed to be injected into the kernel or executed.

Secure Booting

Secure Booting utilises the new UEFI (Unified Extensible Firmware Interface), the replacement for the older and more vulnerable BIOS, along with Windows Trusted Boot code integrity and ELAM (Early Launch Anti-Malware) capabilities, to protect the computer as soon as you power it up.

Windows Hello

Windows Hello may seem like a glamorous feature rather than a security feature but it's really quite an impressive layer of protection. Hello supports passwordless biometric authentication methods, such as iris, facial and fingerprint, together with a PIN code to help protect access to Windows 10.

Microsoft Passport

Windows 10 uses the Microsoft Passport single sign on solution that supports the open FIDO Alliance security authentication standard (www.fidoalliance.org) and utilises cryptographic keys to secure access to network and local resources.

Trusted Platform Module

If your computer has a TPM chip (Trusted Platform Module), Windows 10 can utilise the hardware cryptographic key therein to link Passport and Windows Hello to authenticate the user and operating system with local, network and Internet resources.

Credential Guard

Windows 10 Credential Guard protects the user details and Windows authentication keys within the VBS layer. This isolates the authentication service against network and local attacks, stopping keyloggers and other worms from gaining your login details.

Device Guard

Windows 10 has introduced Device Guard, a highly secure tool that determines which programs and scripts should be allowed to run on the computer. It utilises the VBS layer to protect the core system files and with a list of what's allowed and not allowed to run it can prevent most malicious content from being executed on your system.

Rolling Upgrade

Windows 10's unique method of upgrades now ensures that the latest versions to software, tools and applications are continually upgraded on the computer. The new rolling upgrade process has been widely criticised by many, as there's no opt-out for upgrades available. On the flip side, you're always up to date.

Windows Defender Security Center

Windows Defender Security Center is significantly improved over previous versions of the software. The new Fall Creators Edition version offers virus, ransomware and threat protection, device health, firewall protection, app and browser control and family options all under the one roof.

Protection Features

Among the aforementioned security elements, Windows 10 offers User Account Control, Kerberos Armouring, Smartscreen, TPM Key Attestation, Advanced Auditing Settings, Mandatory Integrity Controls, Virtual Smartcards, EMET enabled protection and many more impressive protection features.

Privacy

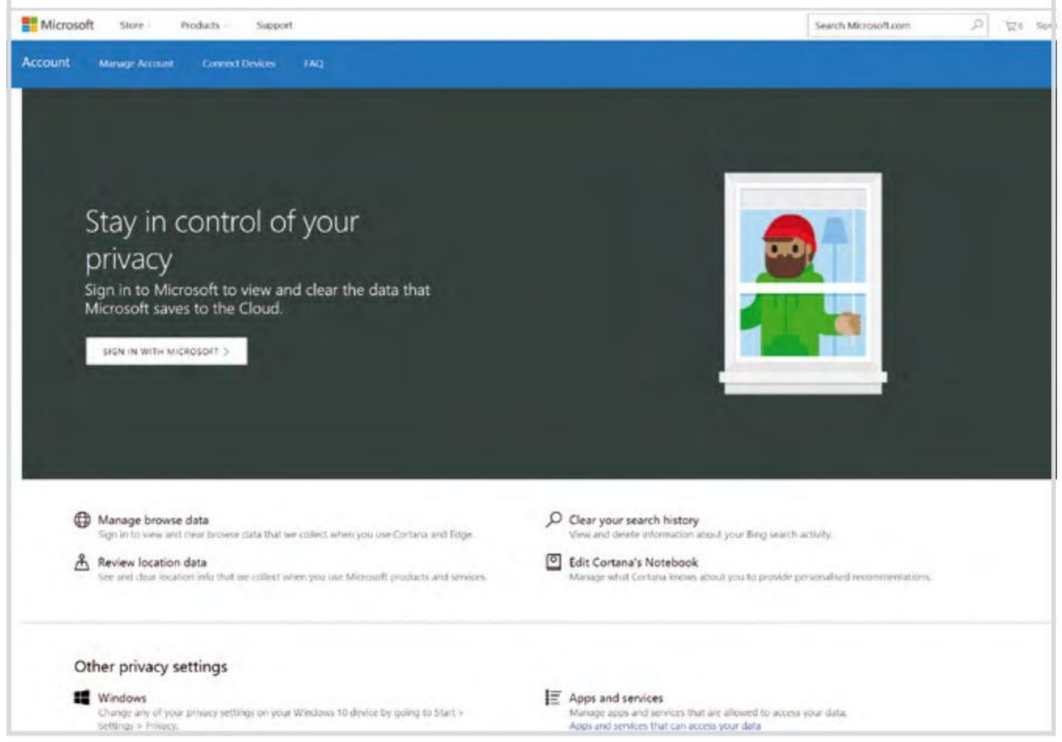
Make Full Use of the Privacy Tools

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.

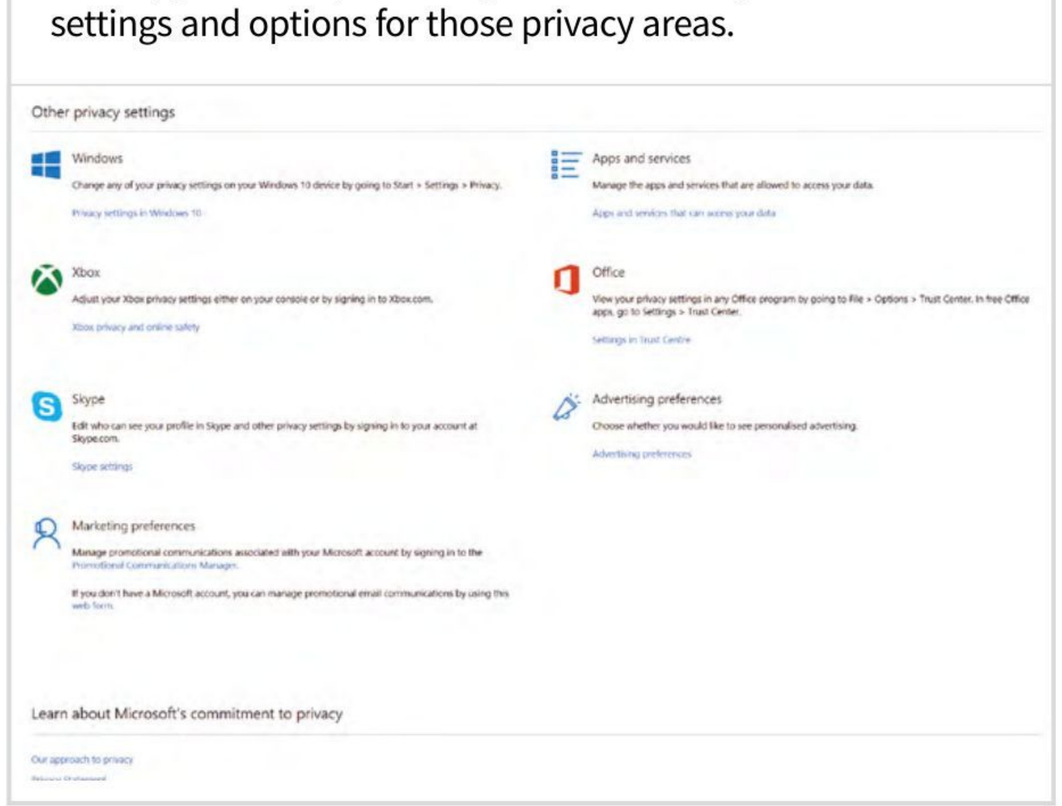
The Privacy Dashboard

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.

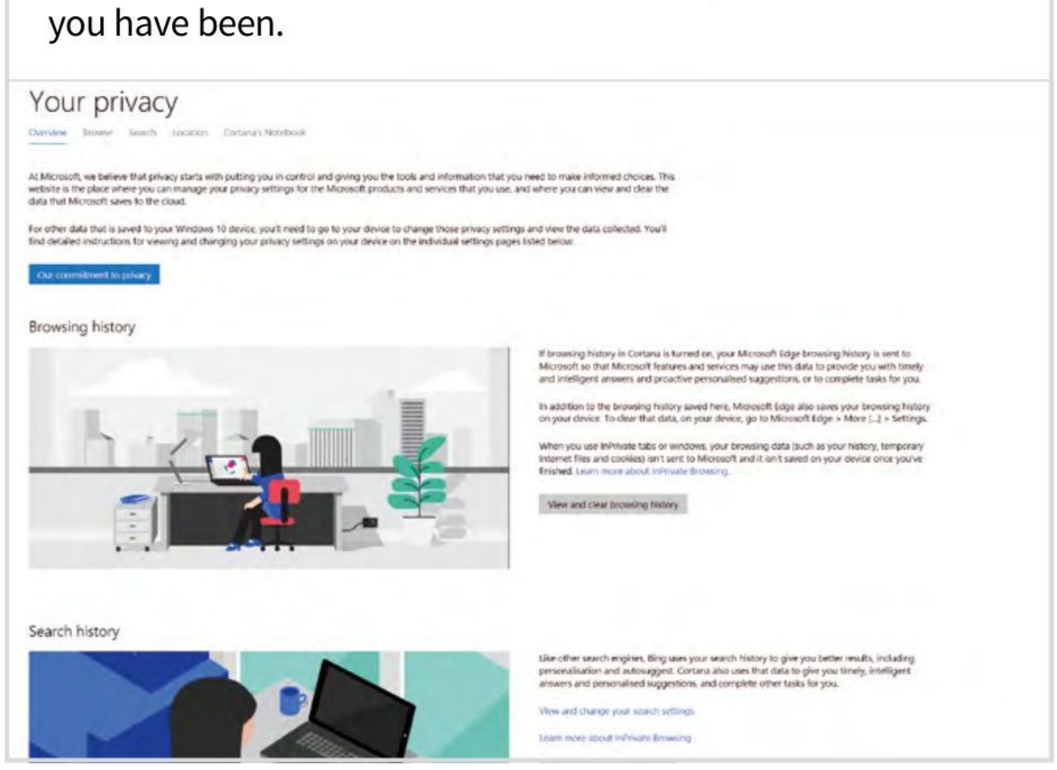
Step 1 Open your browser and navigate to www.account.microsoft.com/privacy. If prompted, use your Microsoft account details to log in. You will be logged in to the privacy overview page that lets you quickly see what privacy settings the dashboard contains and controls.



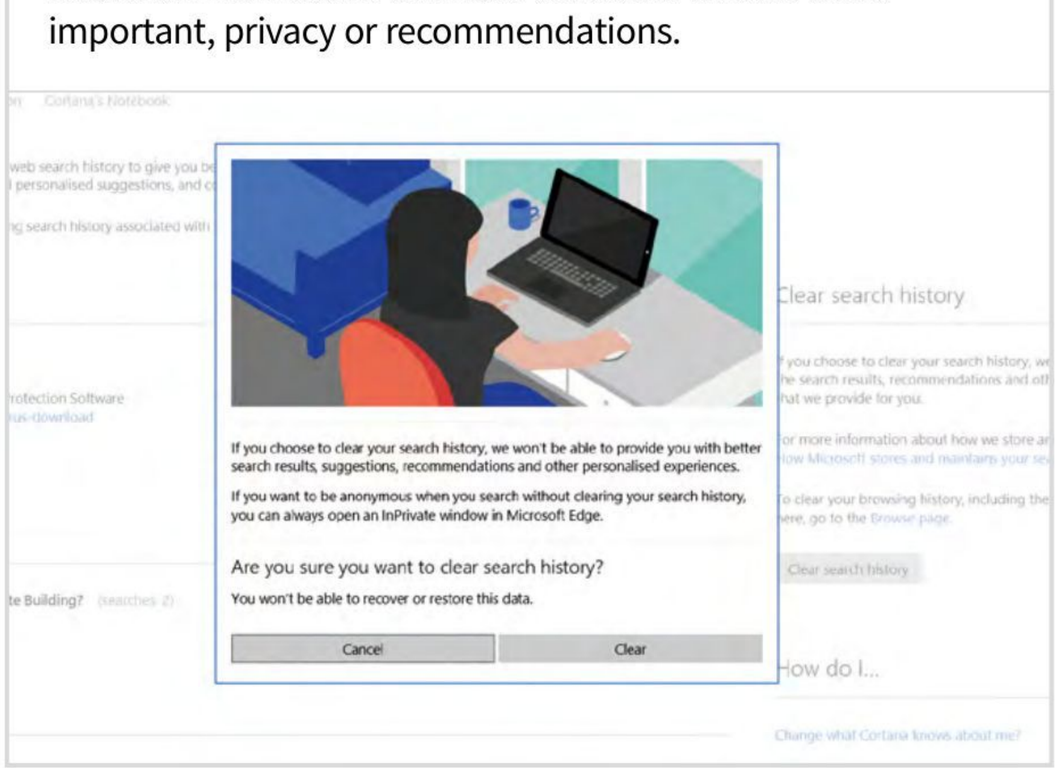
Step 2 Along with the main Search, Browsing and Location privacy categories, if you scroll down to the bottom of the page you will see entries for everything from Apps to Xbox, with simple links to take you to the settings and options for those privacy areas.



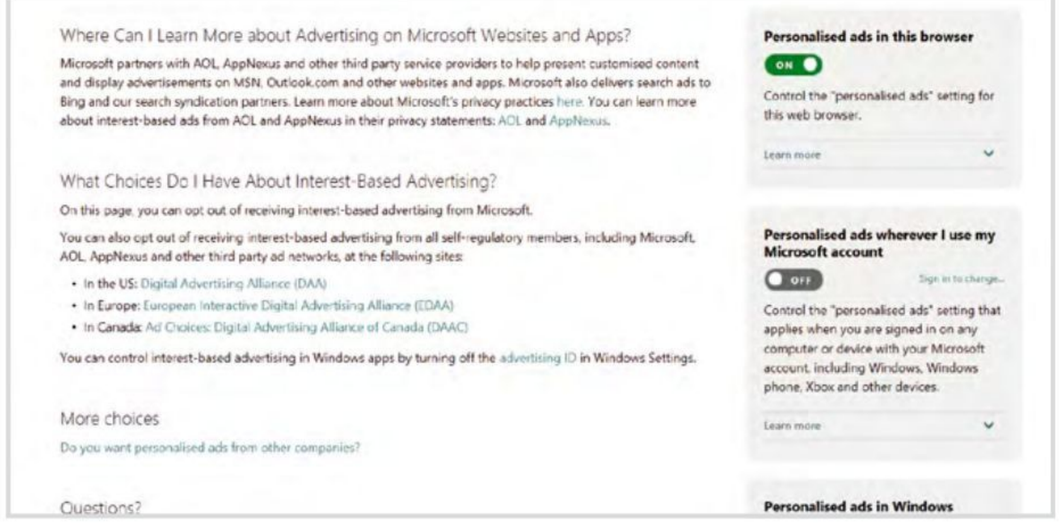
Step 3 Click on one of the main categories, Search, Browsing, Location or Cortana, and you will see more information. This could include a list of searches you have made or websites visited (in Edge only, not other browsers), interests Cortana has saved for you or locations you have been.



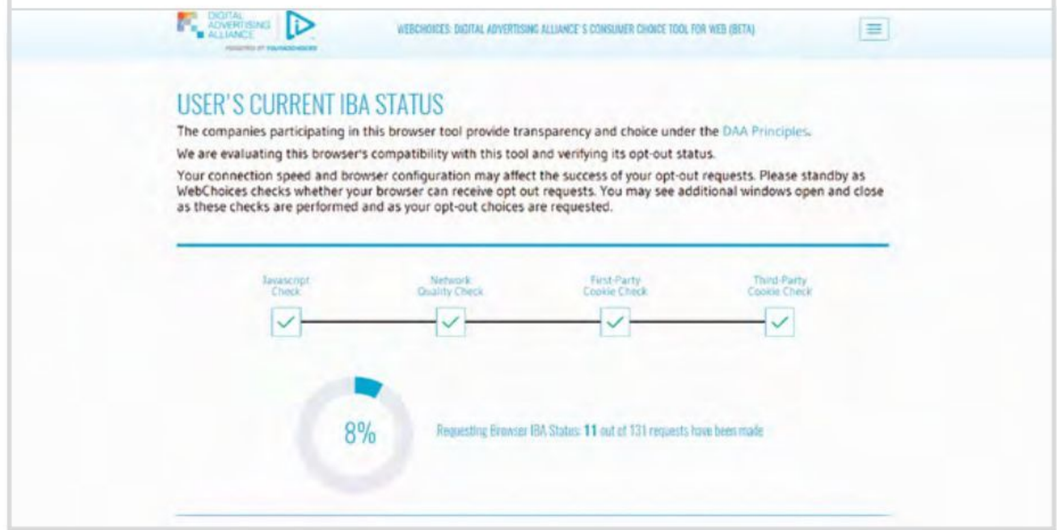
Step 4 Each section has a Clear button, whether that is clearing browsing history, search history and so on. It is next to a warning that states clearing data will stop Windows being able to provide you with accurate and relevant information. You need to decide what is more important, privacy or recommendations.



Step 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.



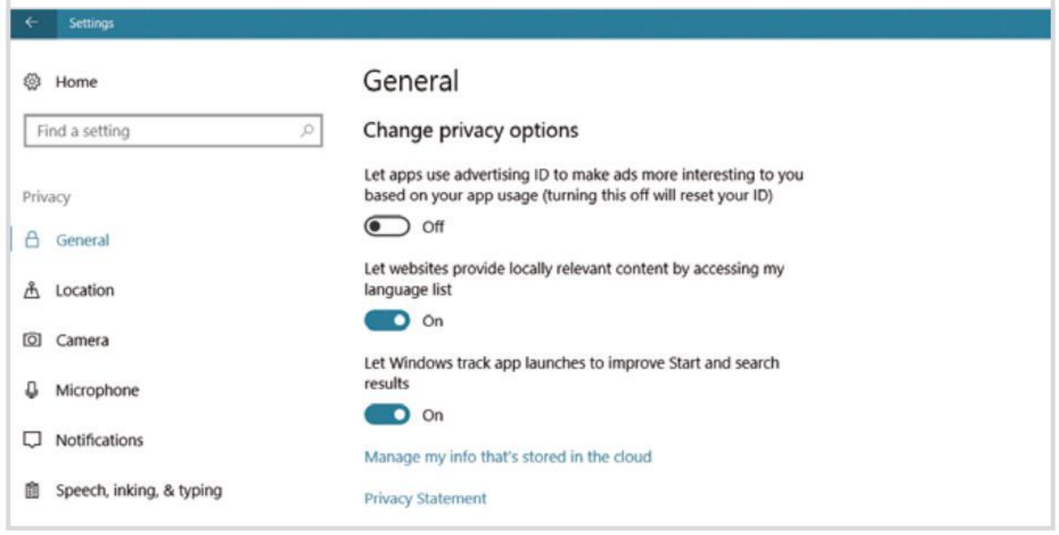
Step 6 There is also a browser tool that lets you choose if the adverts you see come from companies other than Microsoft. Click the option under More Choices and wait for the Digital Advertising Alliance scan to finish. You can then choose from the list to see adverts from different advert providers.



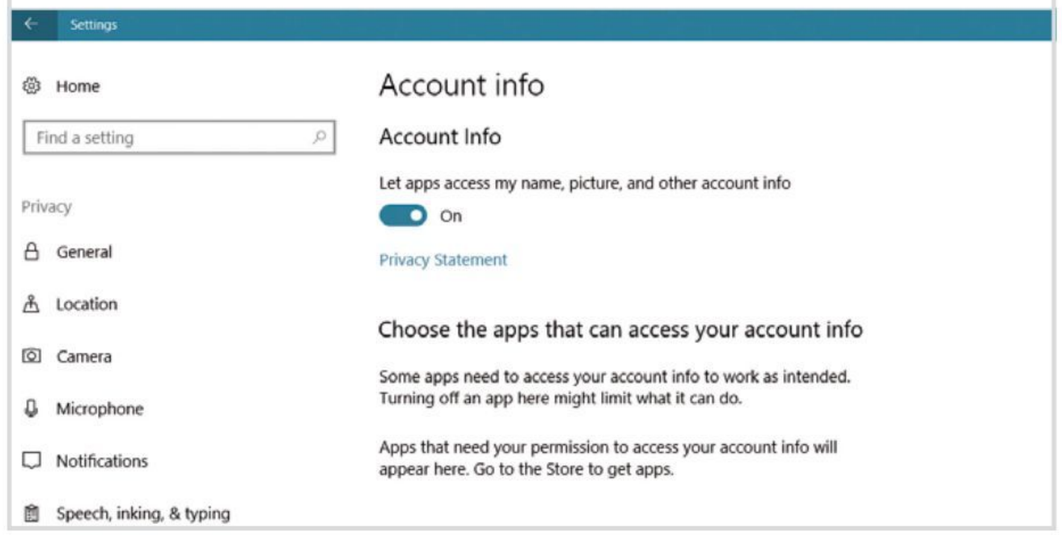
Privacy Settings

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.

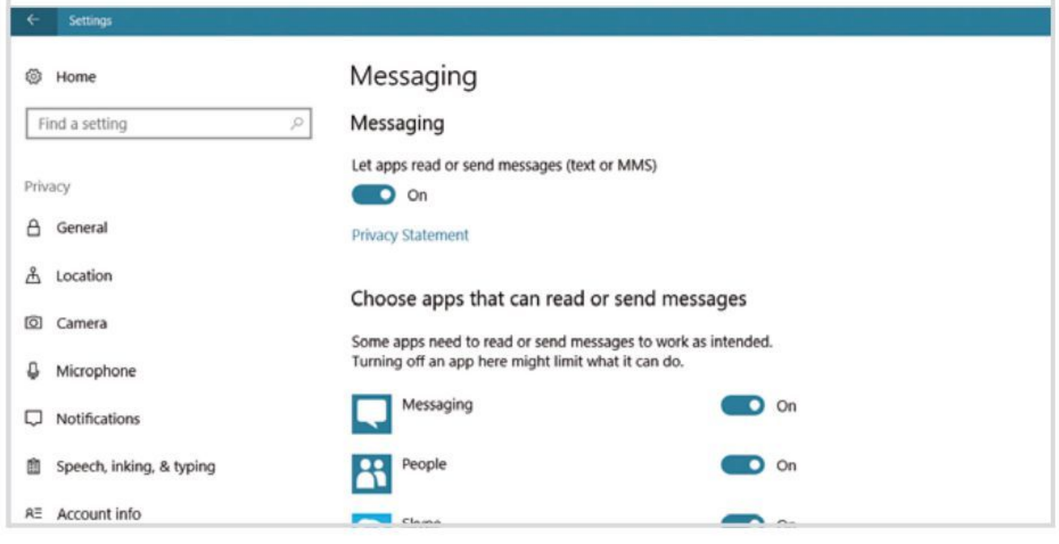
General Privacy Privacy has its own section within the settings; here there are many different categories covering everything from Location to Background Apps. Click on each of the privacy categories to see the options within that category. Use the slider switches to allow or block privacy actions.



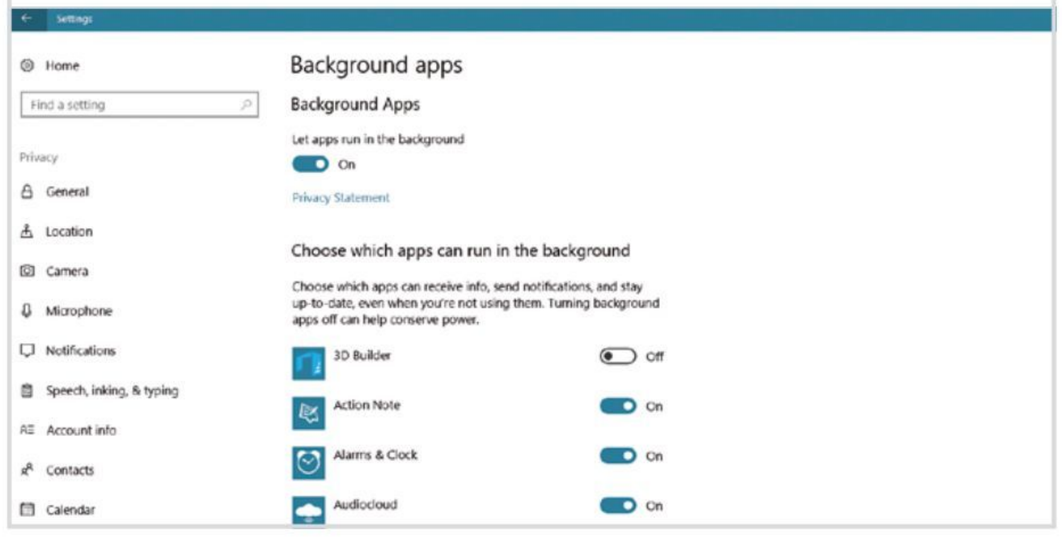
Account Info Apps are able to access very basic personal settings such as your name and account information. This is so they can sign you in automatically to your Windows account for things like Xbox Live or the Windows Store. You can turn this off wholesale or on an app by app basis.



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.



Defender

Using the Windows Defender Tools

Microsoft Edge lets you move quickly from browsing to doing. Write or type notes directly on web pages and share them with others, read online articles free of distraction and save your favourite reads for convenient access later.

Virus & Threat Protection

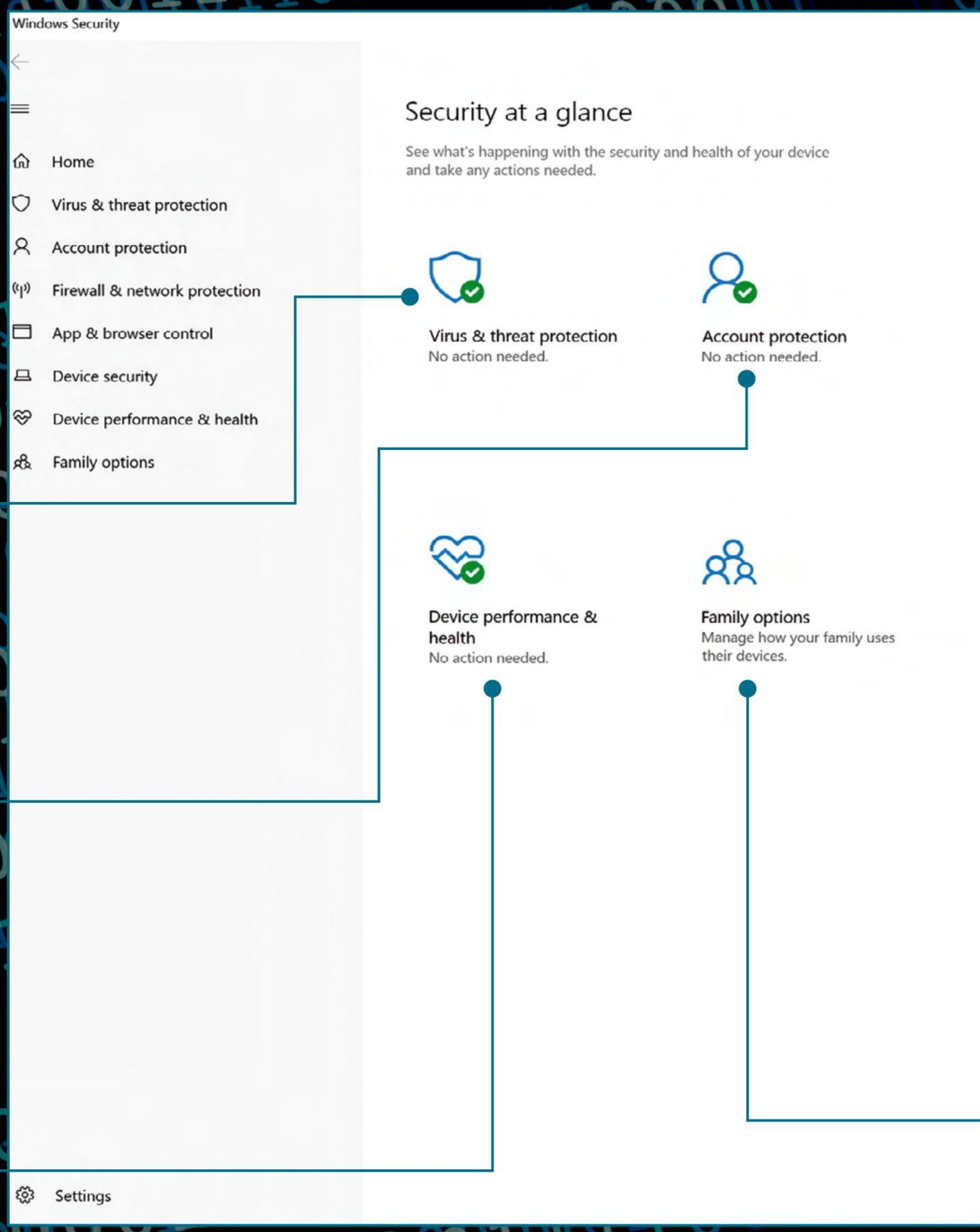
This is where to check and scan for viruses and other threats to your Windows 10 security. Here you will find tools for preventing viruses and other malware from ever taking hold of your computer, as well as the tools needed to check for anything which already got through your defences.

Account Protection

This is where you manage account and sign-in security for Windows 10. This includes the Microsoft account you are signed in to (or the option to sign in to one), Windows Hello and Dynamic lock. Clicking on any of the options here will simply take you to the relevant area of the main settings.

Device Performance & Health

Displays issues with the health and performance of your computer, including the status of the Storage capacity, Apps and software and the Windows Time service. This is also where you come if you want to begin the process of performing a Fresh Start on your computer.

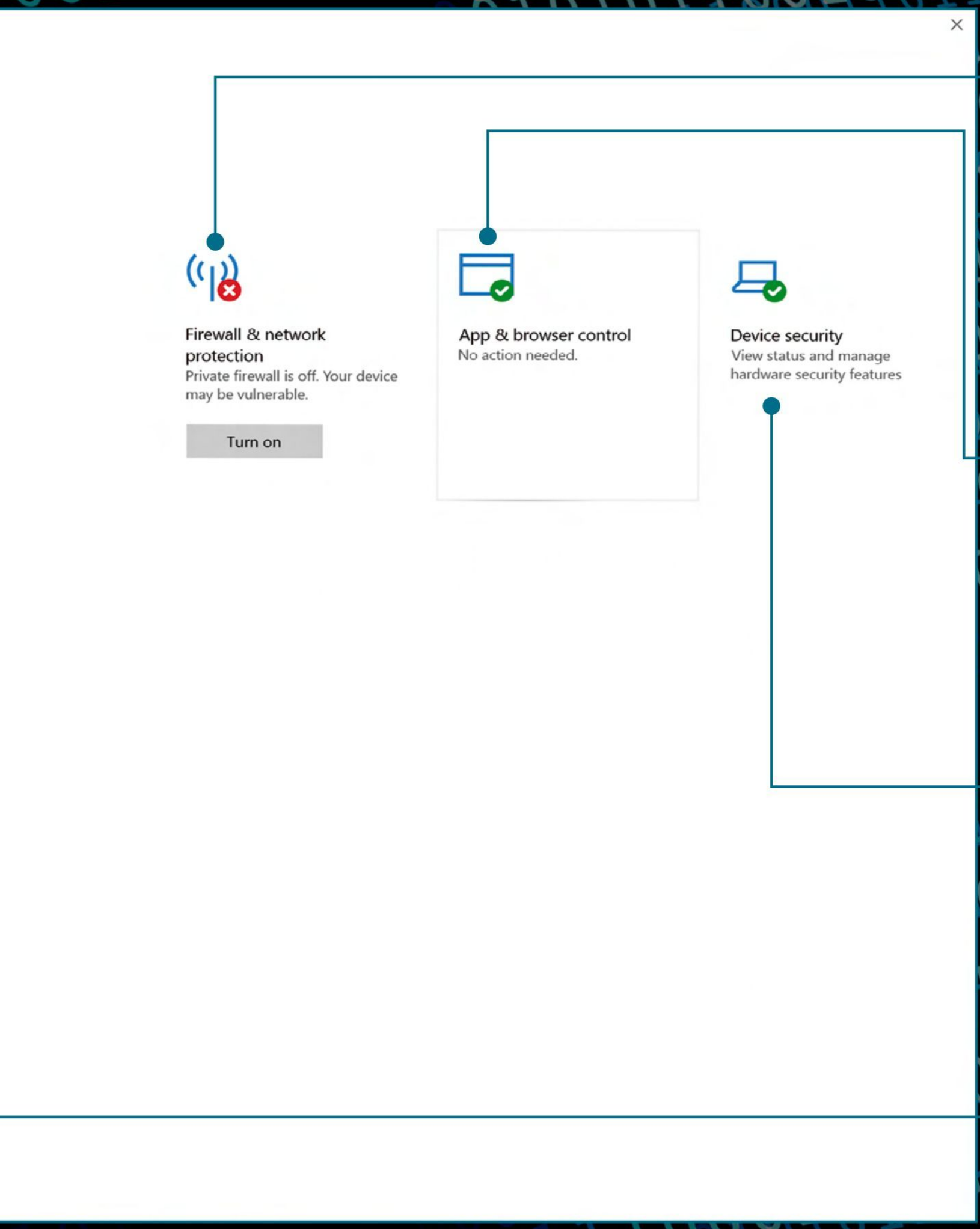


WINDOWS DEFENDER DASHBOARD

The dashboard is the main screen of Windows Defender and opens when you click the “Defender shield” icon in the taskbar. It lets you check the security of your computer at a glance, but doesn’t really give you much information beyond whether an action is needed or not needed within the various security sections.

Ideally, you want to see a green tick on each section of the dashboard.

If you see a warning symbol, there are suggested actions that you should take a look at, while a red X means something needs your immediate attention.



Firewall & Network Protection

Windows Defender includes three firewalls, for: Domain network, Private network and Public network. You can turn each of these firewalls on or off at will, although you will normally only be connected to one type of network at a time (if you are at home, usually a Private network).

Apps & Browser Control

This section contains the settings for Windows Defender SmartScreen. This helps to protect your Windows 10 device from potentially dangerous apps, files, websites and downloads. It also includes a link to download Application Guard and lets you control Exploit protection.

Device Security

Despite the title, this isn’t really a hub for device security. You can learn more about Core isolation (virtualisation- based security) and enable the memory-integrity feature, helping to prevent malicious attacks to core, high-security processes.
Note: The exact options here can vary depending on device.

Family Options

The Family options feature in Windows Security provides you with easy access to tools for managing your children’s digital life. Use Family options to help keep your children’s devices clean and up to date with the latest version of Windows 10 as well as protecting your kids when they’re online.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE HACKED

There are literally hundreds of millions of email addresses and account details stolen by hackers each year, sometimes in a single massive breach, such as the Equifax attack from a few years ago, but sometimes directly from your own computer. Being the victim of a hack sounds scary to most people, but while you should take it seriously, there is often no need to panic. If you think you have been hacked, just follow the instructions here to get your online life back on track.

HOW WILL YOU KNOW?

You may hear about a big data breach in the news, or from friends and colleagues, and if the company hacked is one you have accounts with, it is worth following all of the steps below just in case. Often, the first you will know about being hacked is a call from your credit card company or bank about unusual activity, or from friends/relatives suddenly receiving strange requests for money from you.

Many of the large email providers, such as Gmail, will alert you if there is a new login to your account from an unrecognised location or device. Or you may simply find that you have been logged out of an account and your password is no longer working.

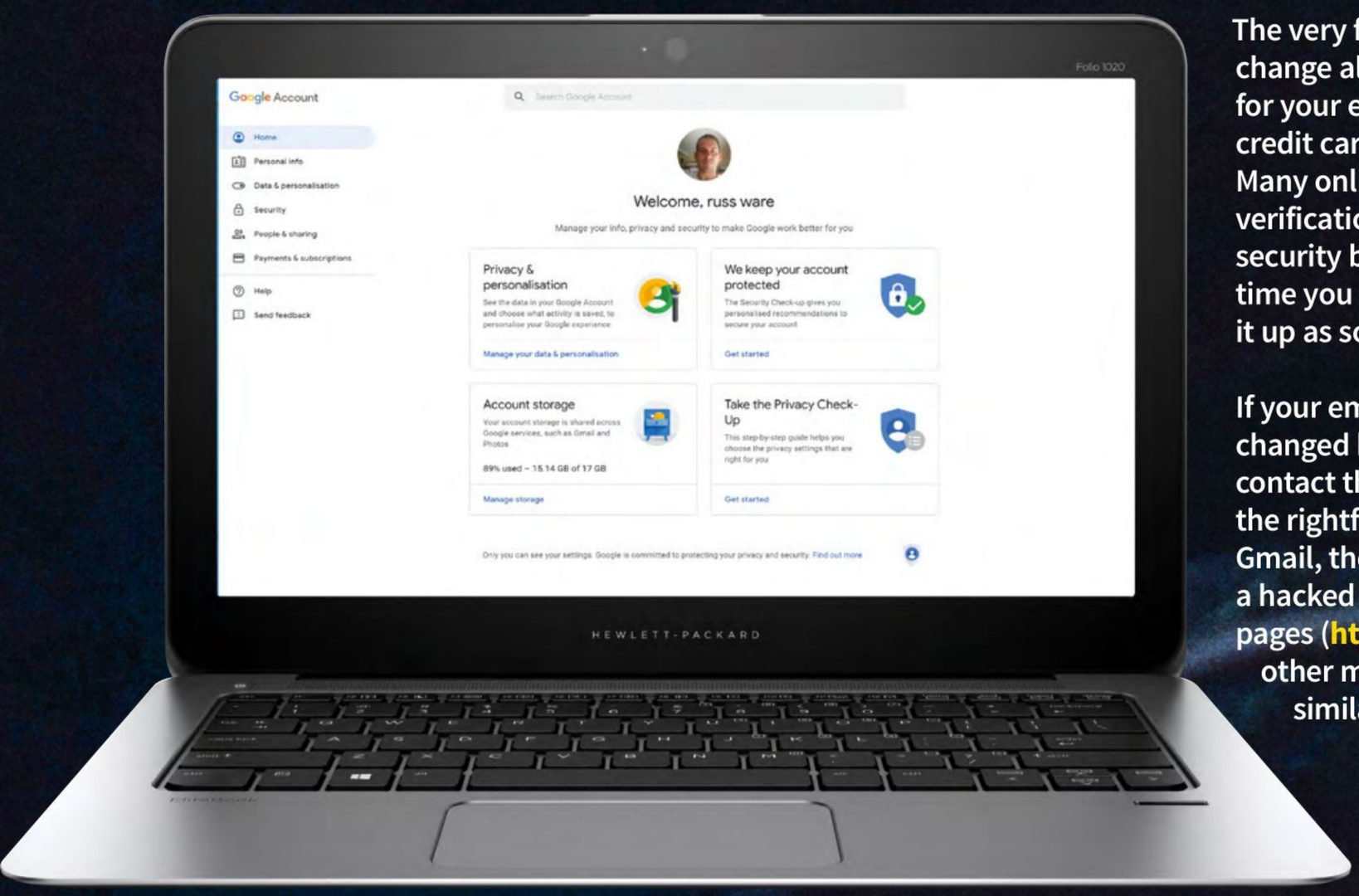
The most important thing is not how you discover how you have been hacked, although we urge you to keep a close eye on all your online activity, but how you act immediately after you find out.

You can check if your email address has potentially been involved in a data breach by entering it in to the Have I Been Pwned website.
https://haveibeenpwned.com/

WHAT TO DO NEXT

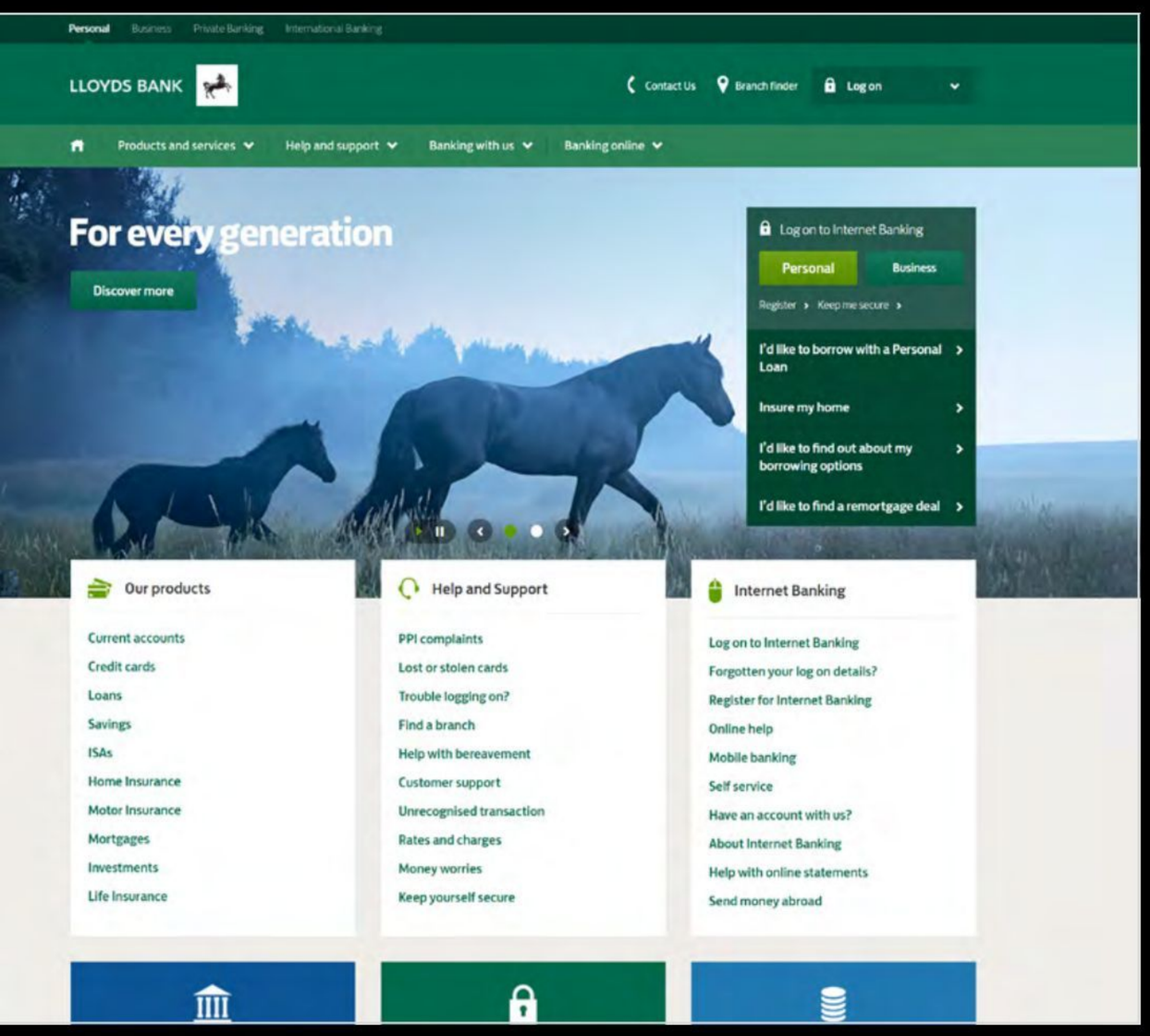
Even if you think only one account has been targeted, you should still move to protect ALL of your important accounts. This is especially true if you main email account has been breached, or if you use the same email and password for all of your online accounts.

CHANGE YOUR PASSWORDS



The very first thing you need to do is change all of your passwords, especially for your email account, banking accounts, credit card accounts, PayPal, etc.
Many online accounts now offer 2-step verification, which adds an extra layer of security by sending you a passcode each time you try to log in. If this is available, set it up as soon as possible.

If your email account password has been changed by the hacker, you will need to contact the provider and prove you are the rightful owner of that account. For Gmail, there are instructions for recovering a hacked account on the Google support pages (**https://support.google.com**). The other main email providers should offer similar advice.



EXAMINE ALL YOUR ACCOUNTS CAREFULLY

This includes banking, email, online shopping accounts, especially if you use the same password for multiple logins. Check your email inbox and sent mail box for things you haven't signed up to or sent. Think about how you recover a forgotten password on almost any website: You request a password reset to your email address. If someone has got hold of access to your emails, they could do the same.

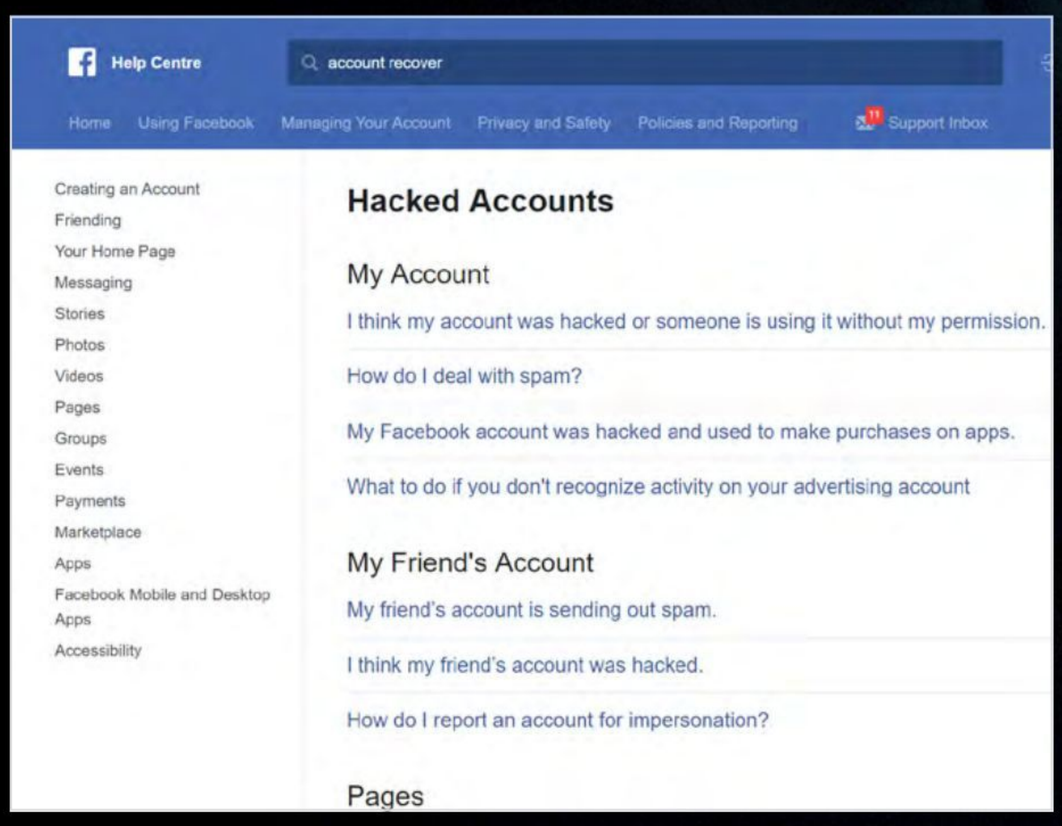
Look for any unusual activity at all, and if you spot some, contact the website or company to let them know your account may have been breached. Often, they can help you sort it out the fastest way.

If your email account has been taken over, and the password changed, you will need a way to prove that you are the rightful owner. This is why it is important to have two separate email addresses, as you can usually use a second email address as the alternate contact for the main address.

CHECK YOUR BANK AND CREDIT CARD STATEMENTS

Check both your bank account and credit card statement for any unusual activity (online and immediately if possible, but if not contact your bank/credit card company and ask for a statement). It is also worth informing both your bank and credit card company what has happened, so that they can be aware and alert for any unusual activity in the near future.

Having to get new cards issued may be a hassle, but it is less hassle than trying to sort out the mess left when a hacker starts buying things using your card details.



RECOVER YOUR ACCOUNTS

Major companies such as Google, Facebook, Twitter and Microsoft are well aware of the possibility of accounts being hacked, and most offer processes to get the account back to normal. Indeed, the company may well be the first to realise an account has been hijacked and shut it down for you. Head over to the homepage of the website in question and check the knowledge base/help desk for advice on what to do next.

Just remember that if you get an email from Facebook, Twitter, etc., telling you that your account has been breached, make sure that it is legitimate and not someone phishing for your login information. You can read more about spotting scam emails at **https://bdmpublications.com**.

SCAN FOR VIRUSES/MALWARE

If your computer has been infected with a virus or malware, this could be where the hacker got your details, so none of the steps above are any use if the underlying source of the breach is still sitting on your device waiting to send all of your updated information to the hacker. Run a complete virus scan, using reputable scanning software from the likes of Norton, Kaspersky, Panda or McAfee.

If using Windows 10, then the Windows Defender tool offers an Offline Scan, which can find even particularly well-hidden malware on your computer. This scan will take at least 15 minutes to complete, but is the most in-depth scan offered by the free anti-virus software.

CONTACT FRIENDS, FAMILY AND COLLEAGUES

If you think that your email or social media account has been hacked, contact friends, family and colleagues top let them know. There have been many cases where a family member or friend has received an email supposedly from a stranded person, asking for help (in the form of money) so that they can get home. Making people aware, means they will be less likely to fall for this sort of scam.

Malware

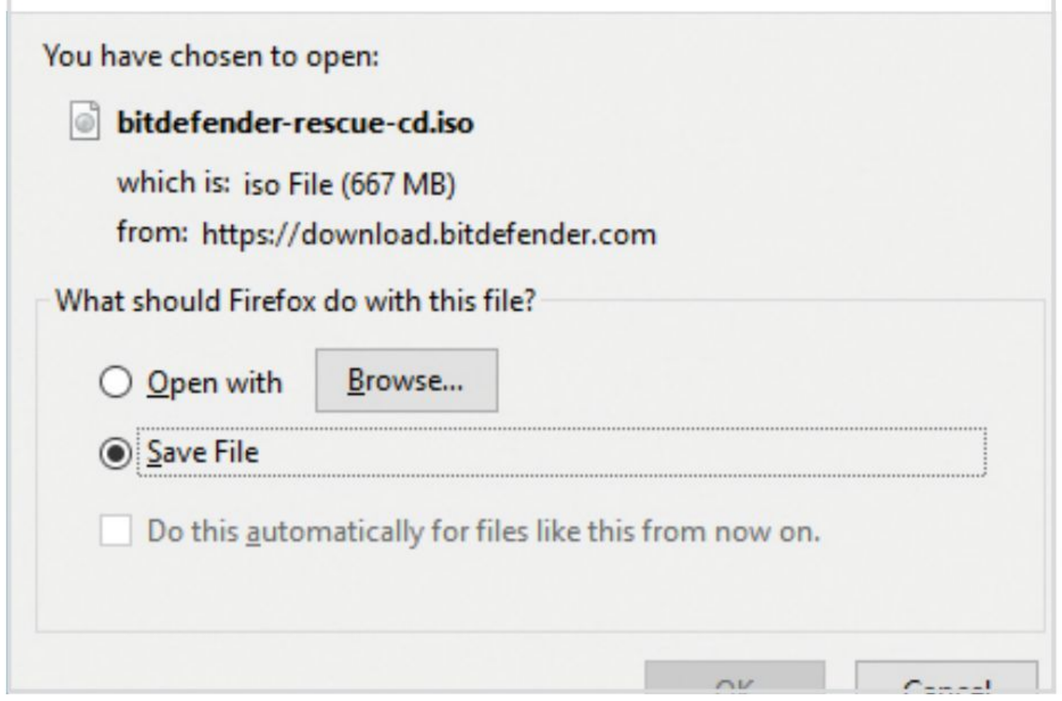
Removing Malware from Windows 10

Previously we have looked at ways to prevent being scammed or indeed getting malware on your system but what if you're unlucky enough to already have some form of digital infection? Thankfully there's a way to remove malware and viruses from your computer.

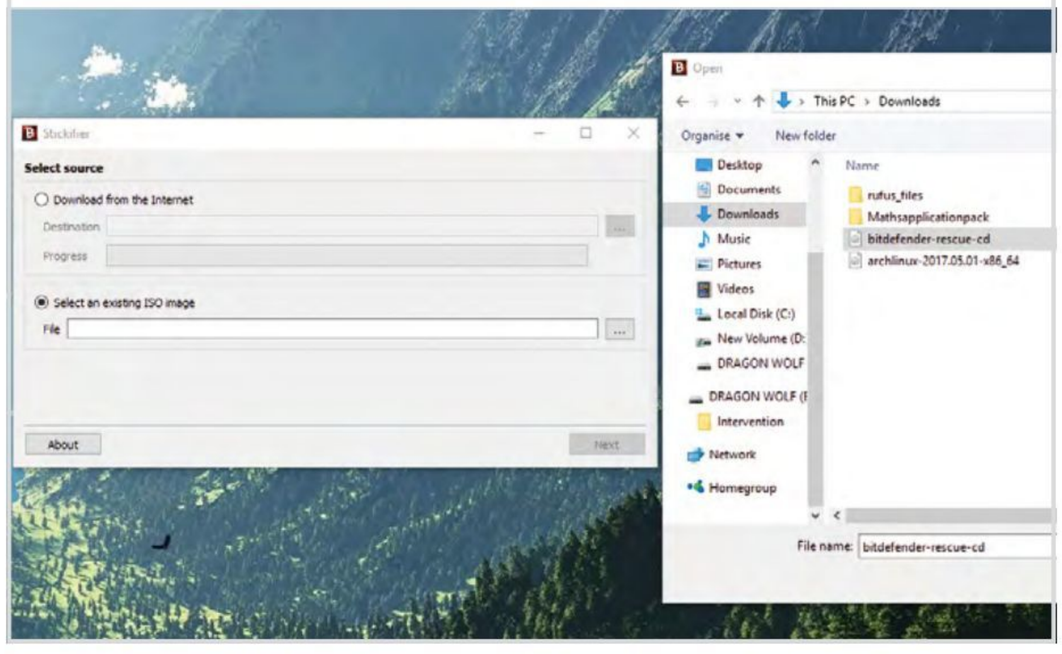
Malware Busters

For this tutorial let's use a preconfigured rescue disk from Bitdefender. You need to transfer or burn the disk contents to a CD or a USB stick and boot into the safe environment through one of those mediums.

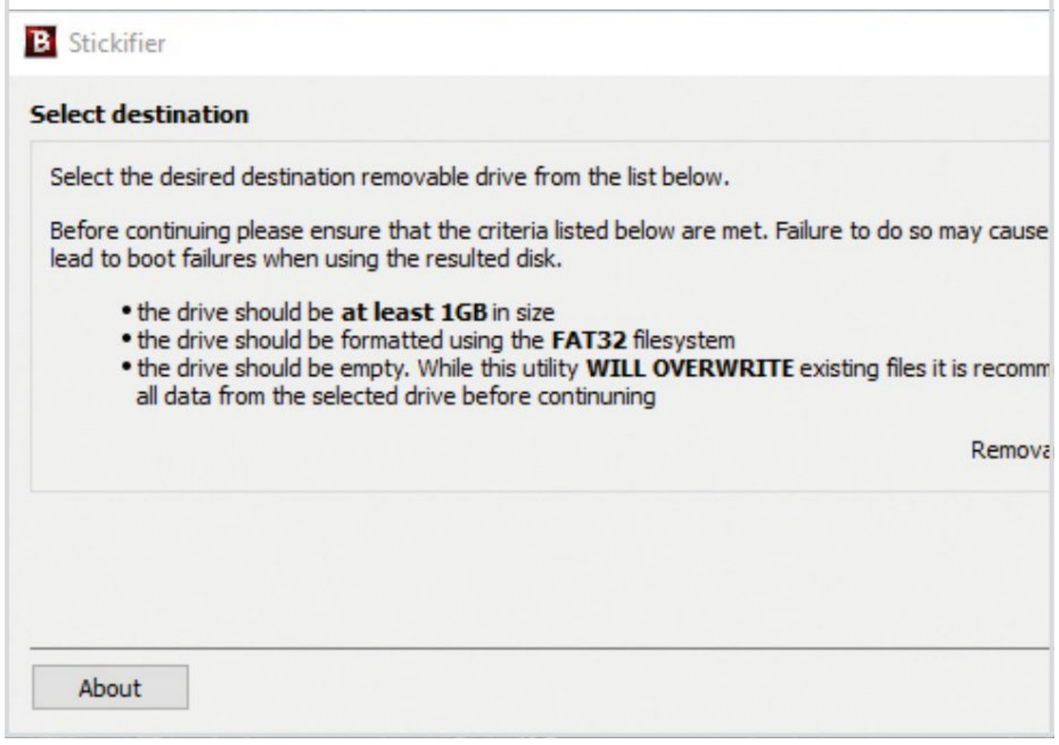
Step 1 Make sure you have a blank CD or a USB stick that's at least 1GB in size. The Bitdefender Rescue Disk is downloaded as an ISO, which is an image file containing all the disk information, and can be downloaded from www.download.bitdefender.com/rescue_cd/latest/bitdefender-rescue-cd.iso.



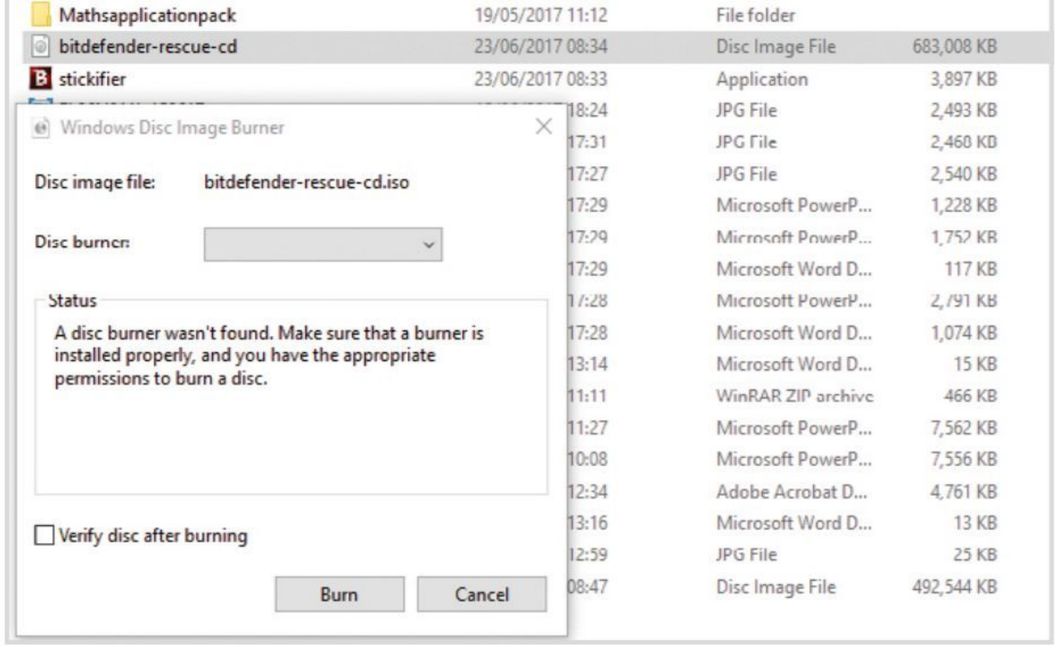
Step 2 To transfer the ISO to USB, download Stickifier, which is an executable that doesn't require any installation. Insert your USB stick and double-click Stickifier. Click the Select an Existing ISO Image option followed by the three full-stops and using Windows Explorer, locate the downloaded Bitdefender Rescue ISO. Click the Open button to select the image and continue with the process.



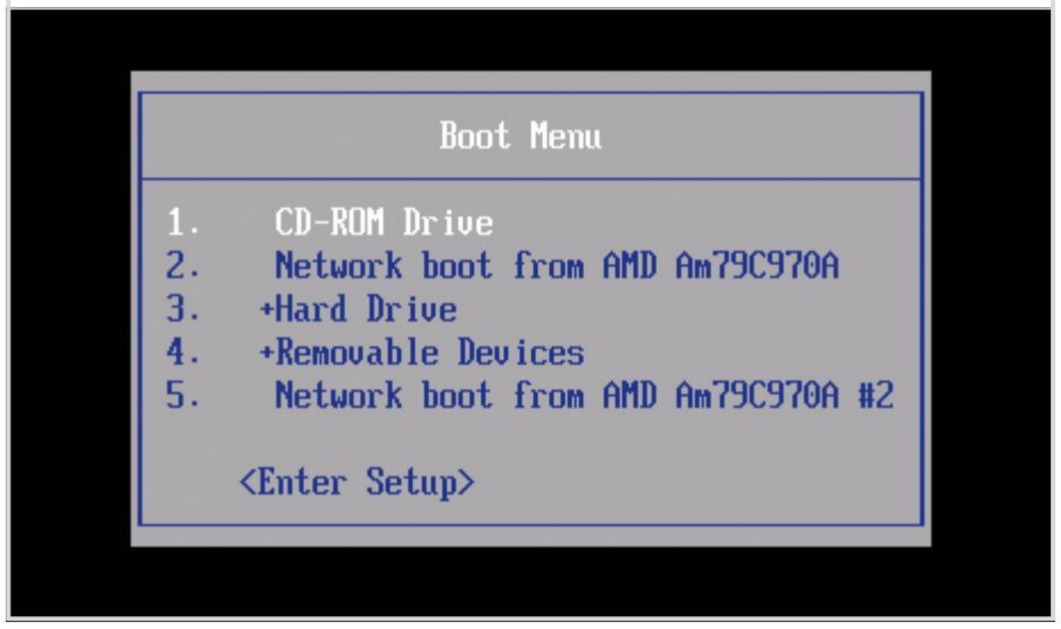
Step 3 Click the Next button and using the drop-down menu next to Removable Drive choose the drive letter of your USB stick. Click Next to start the transfer of the image. Once the image is transferred, click the Finish button, remove the USB stick and power off your computer.



Step 4 If you're using a CD, start by inserting the CD into the drive. Locate the downloaded Bitdefender Rescue ISO, right-click it and choose Burn Disc Image from the context menu. Tick the Verify disc after burning option and click the Burn button to start the process. Once the ISO is burnt to the disc, you can power off your computer.

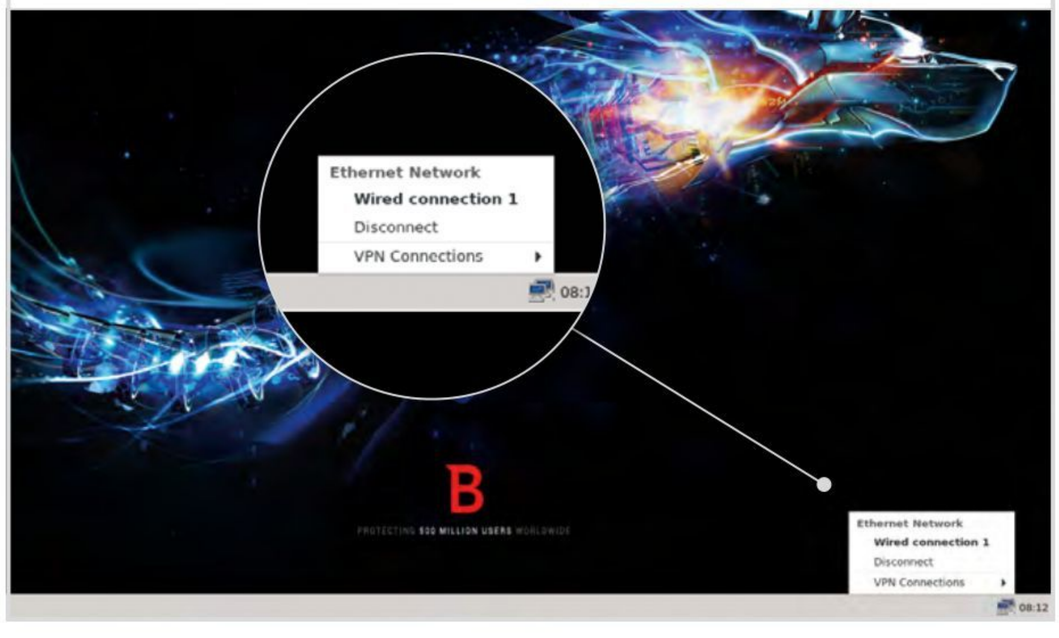


Step 5 You now need to allow your PC to boot up into the Bitdefender Rescue CD environment. Power up your PC and open the Boot Option Menu; this could be accessed by pressing F12, depending on the make and manufacturer of your PC motherboard. With the boot options available, select either the CD or USB stick and press Enter.

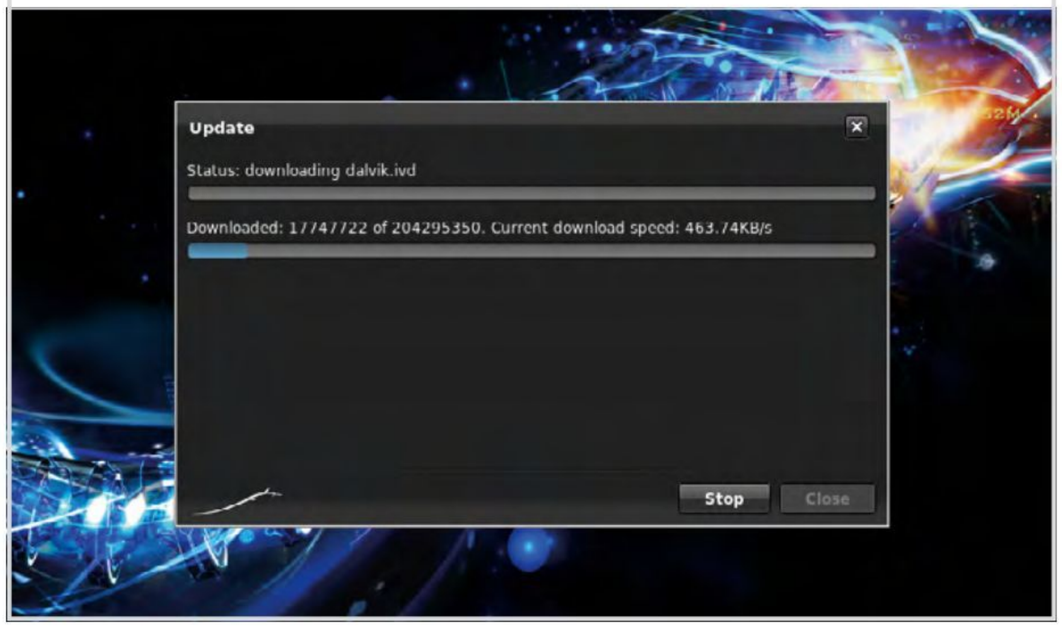


Step 6 The PC will now boot into the Bitdefender Rescue Disc environment. This is a custom Linux operating system with all the necessary Bitdefender security tools preinstalled. First, you need to choose which language to load the environment. Use the arrow keys and press Enter for your language choice.

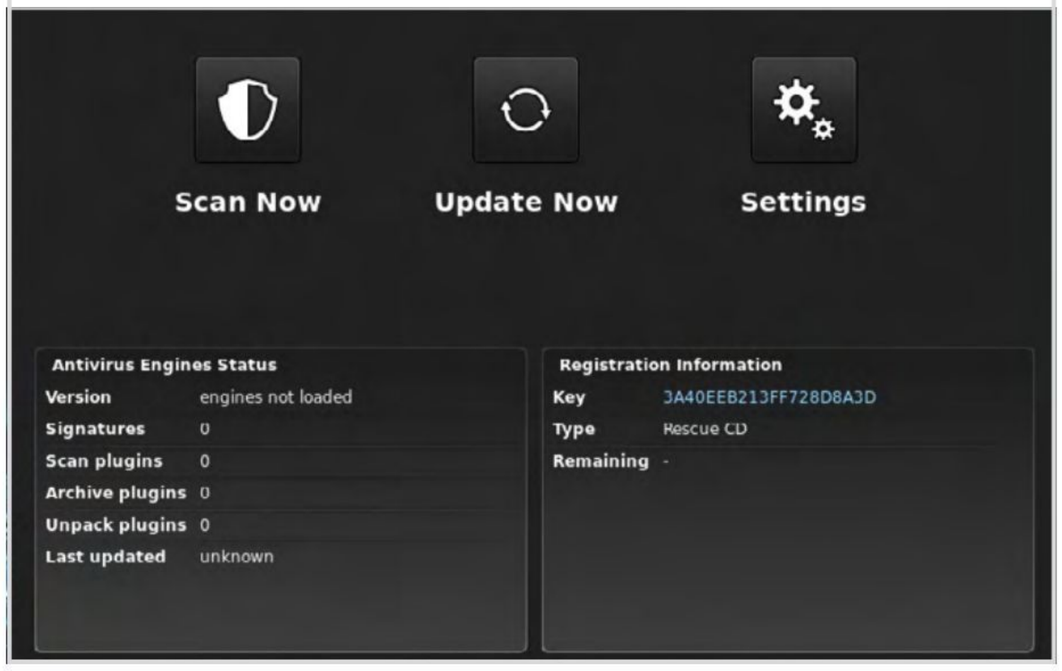
Step 7 Ideally you should use a wired Internet connection but if you're on wireless, click on the network icon in the bottom right of the desktop to establish a connection with your router. Once you're connected to the Internet, double-click the red Bitdefender icon on the desktop, labelled Antivirus Scanner.



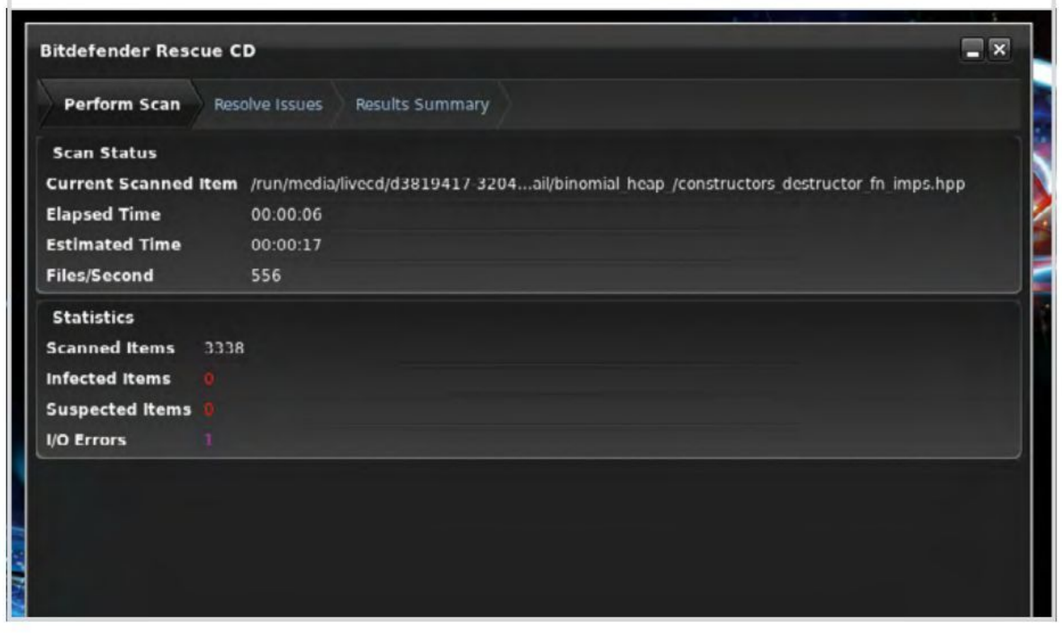
Step 8 You need to accept the license agreement notification first, so tick the 'I agree' box, followed by the Continue button. The virus scanning software will then start to automatically update itself with the latest virus definitions from the Bitdefender servers. The process won't take too long, so let it run through the update.



Step 9 Once the update is complete you're taken to the main Bitdefender Rescue CD antivirus interface. The three main options: Scan Now, Update Now and Settings are fairly self-explanatory; the Settings allows you to set a few more options regarding the scan but the defaults will suffice.



Step 10 To remove a virus on your PC, click on the Scan Now button. Select the drive you wish to scan and click the Open button to commence scanning the system. Any viruses found will be detailed along with options for removal. The process may take some time, so be prepared for a lengthy wait.



Public Wi-Fi

Protect Your Devices in Public

There are few places where you can't now find a wireless connection for your laptop. And while this is great for those of us that want to stay connected day and night, accessing Wi-Fi in a public place does bring with it some dangers not found on your home network.

What Makes Public Wi-Fi Unsafe?

The very same features that make publicly accessible Wi-Fi hotspots desirable for you and us, such as the lack of authentication needed to connect, also makes them desirable for hackers.

Let us start by saying that not all public Wi-Fi is equally unsafe. A coffee shop that has a new Wi-Fi password chalked up on the board every day is probably safer to use than one where the password has been the same for five years, but not by much. As a rule of thumb, you should assume that any network connection you do not control will have fewer defences against interception and should be treated as unsafe.

Hackers are able to insert themselves (virtually) between your device and the network connection point, so all of the information sent to and from the network passes through the hacker, who then passes it on. As this information passes, it can be collected without you even knowing it has passed through a third party device.

Even if a hacker doesn't want to farm your data directly, if you allow file-sharing across a network then public Wi-Fi connections can be used to distribute malware. This malware could hide itself on your device and cause all sorts of problems, from logging keystrokes to sending spam emails to contacts as if they are from you.

As the use of public Wi-Fi increases, you can expect the number of different ways hackers can find to attack those using it to increase, as well. That doesn't mean you need to stop using Wi-Fi Hotspots, you just need to ensure that you are not the easy target most hackers are looking for.

If you want to stay connected, but also want to keep yourself and your device safe, there are a few simple things you can do to tighten up security without compromising your Internet access.

Five Ways to Make Public Wi-Fi Safer to Use

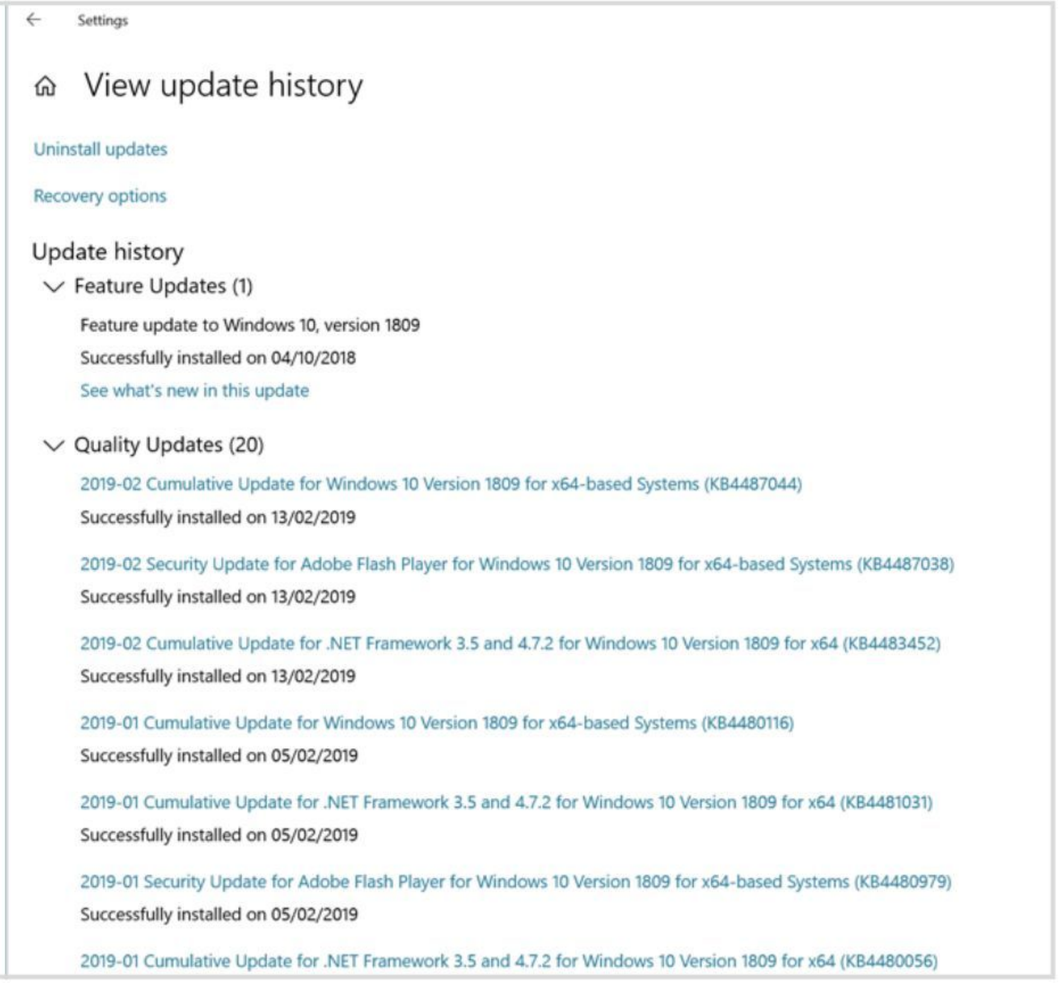
Following any one of these steps will increase your security when using public Wi-Fi. Using all of them will make your PC many, many times safer and more secure.

1 Keep Your Device Updated

Software updates, as well as providing new features, will often include security updates, so it is important to make sure all of your device software is the most recent version. This includes apps and programs, as well as OS updates. Almost all modern devices, from your laptop to the smartphones and tablets you use, make it very easy to keep things updated, often alerting you to the availability of an update or processing updates automatically.

If you have turned off automatic updating on your device (and don't want to turn it back on in the settings), make a point to regularly check for them yourself and of course apply them, as soon as possible, especially on devices that may be used to connect to public Wi-Fi.

In Windows 10, you can find update information in Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update. If updates are available to download, they will be displayed here (along with any previous failed updates, etc.).

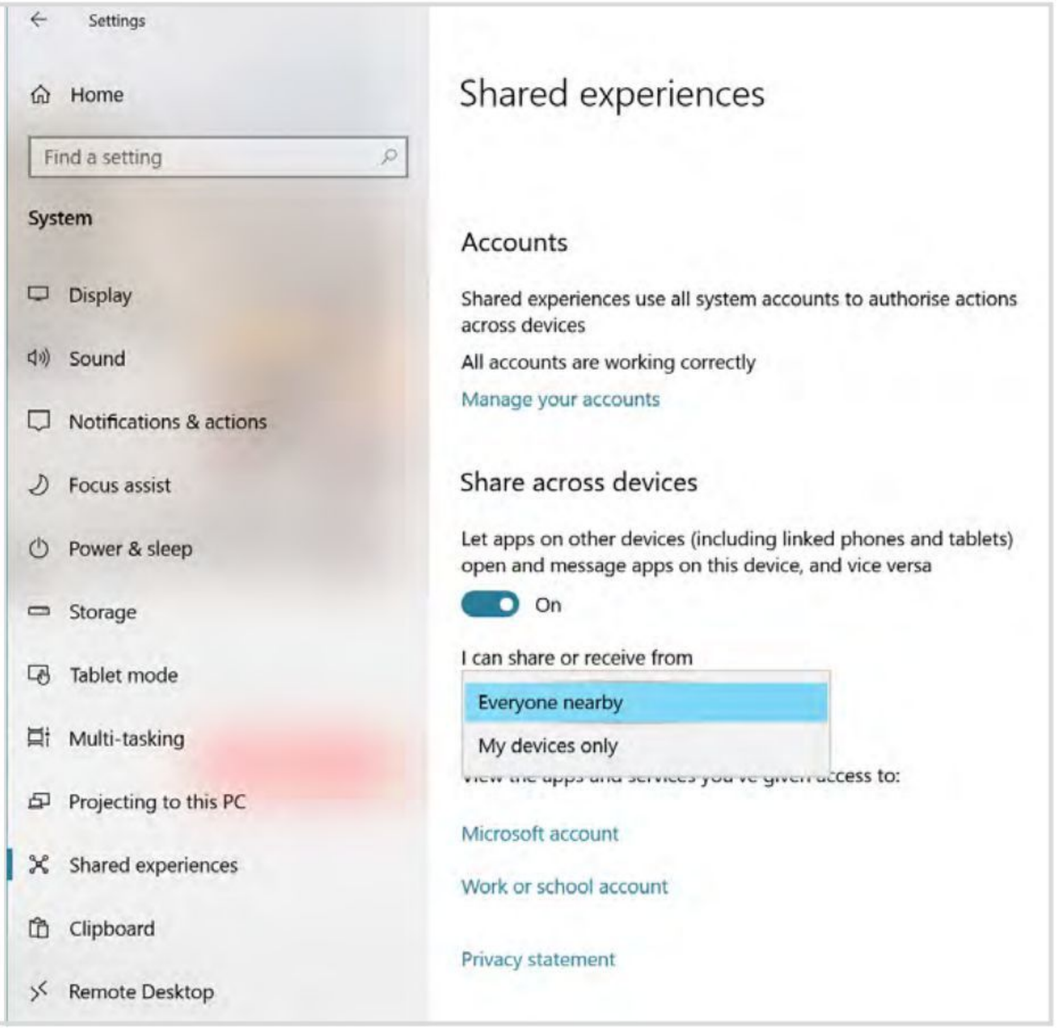


2 Turn Off Sharing

Your PCs, phones and tablets are designed to interact easily with other devices you own, using a system known as Sharing. Sharing, as the name suggests, allows data or files to be shared or accessed from devices on the same network. This is normally perfectly fine when all of your devices are connected to your home network, but not so fine when you are connected to a public Wi-Fi hotspot.

When using your devices online in public, you should always turn Sharing off. This can be done in System Preferences (on a Mac), in Network and Sharing (on a Windows PC). In Windows, you can also just select "Public" when asked about a new network connection.

Many mobile devices also allow you to turn off Network Discovery or Device Visibility, meaning it is hidden from other devices connected to the same network. You can normally find this option in the Connections or Wi-Fi settings.
In Windows 10, you can find further sharing options in Settings > System > Shared Experiences.



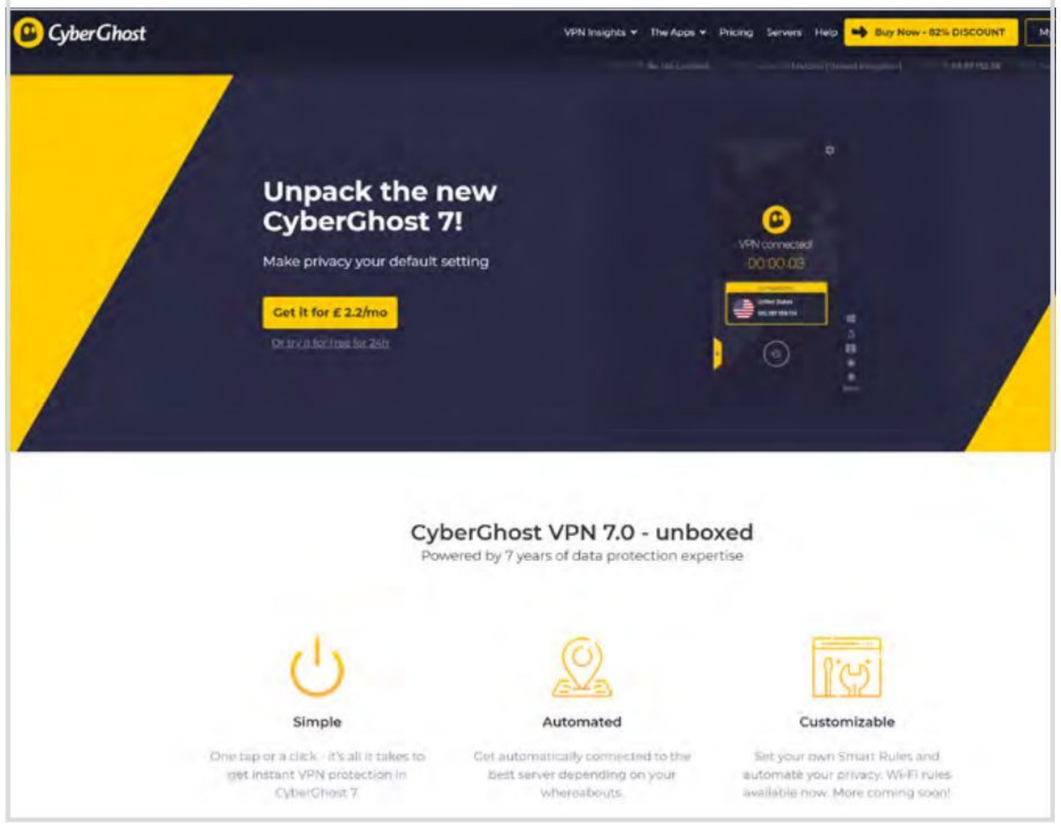
3 Use a VPN

A VPN, or Virtual Private Network, is a great way of protecting yourself and your device from hackers. They are becoming increasingly popular and therefore increasingly cheap and easy to use.

A VPN provides you with a secure, private and encrypted network to log in to, from your device. Any data sent to and from your device is then encrypted by the VPN at both ends (known as end-to-end encryption). Anyone trying to access your data would need the encryption key to decode it.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of VPN services available, for computers, smartphones and tablets. Some of these are free and others charge a small monthly fee, depending on the level of security offered. Even a basic, free VPN is better to have than no VPN at all!

Once the VPN is set up, all you need to do is log in to it from the device you want to protect before using the public Wi-Fi connection as you normally would to browse the Internet, send emails, etc.



4 Install and Maintain Antivirus Software

Having a good Antivirus package installed is extremely important, even if you only ever use your device in your own home and even more important if you regularly use public Wi-Fi hotspots.

Many modern antivirus packages offer browser protection, helping you to identify malicious websites before you click a single link on them. They also make it very hard for hackers to install malicious software on your device remotely, by offering improved firewalls and malware scanning.

Notably, it is not enough simply to have antivirus software installed. You also need to make sure that it is regularly updated with the latest malware definitions, so that it knows about the latest threats and is able to counter them effectively.

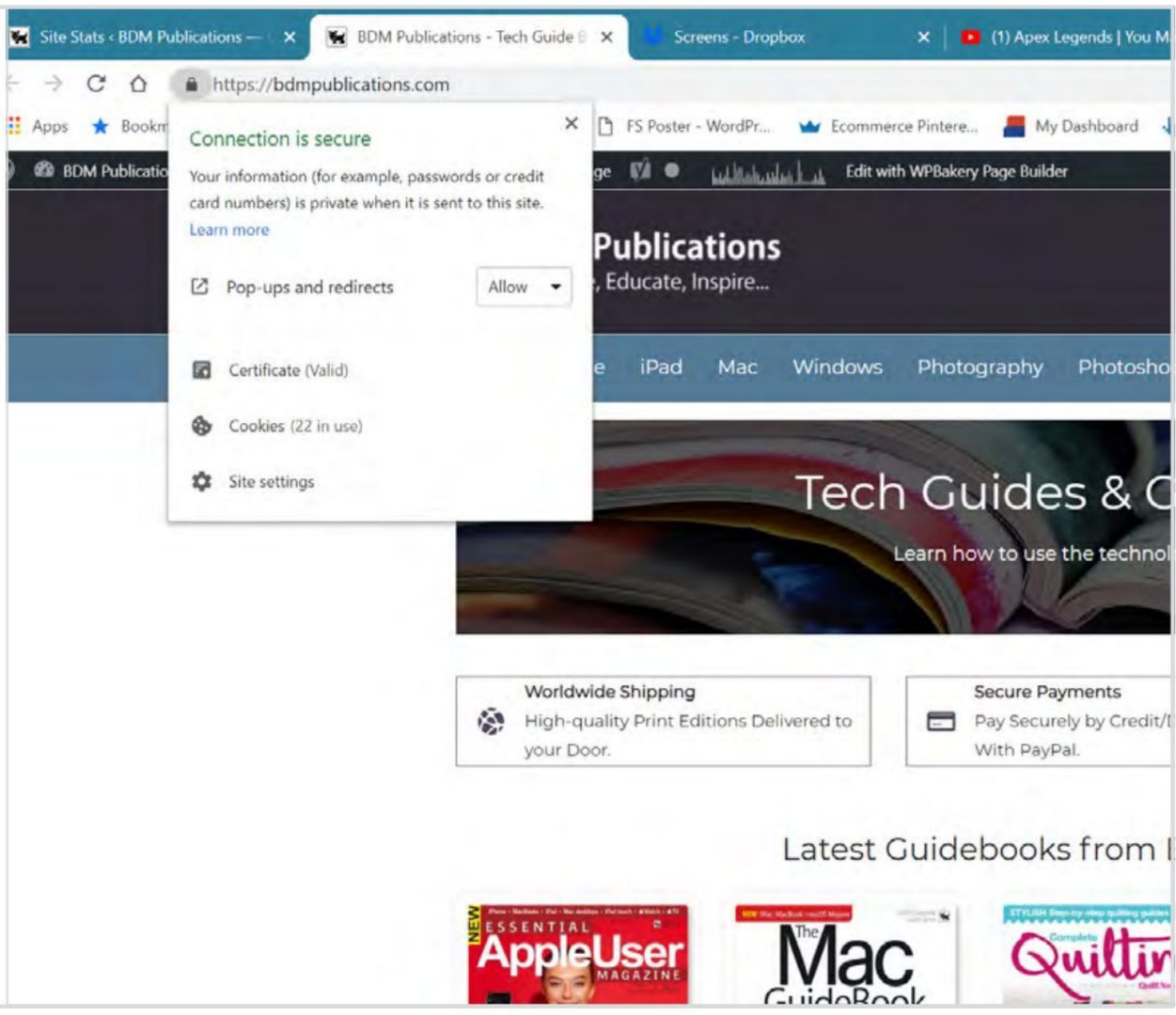
Some of the biggest names in Antivirus software include: Norton, McAfee, Symantec, Bitdefender and Kaspersky, all of whom offer a range of packages for home and business. You can also find very good, free software from the likes of AVG, Panda Security and Avast.

5 Use Only SSL Connections

Many of the biggest, frequently used websites, now use SSL connections (particularly since Google suggested that websites not using the HTTPS protocol would be flagged as unsafe and potentially appear lower in the search results).

As a general rule, even when not browsing through public Wi-Fi, any websites you use regularly and that require you to log in or enter your credentials, should be set to “Always use HTTPS”. Most websites that ask for details about you have an HTTPS option somewhere in their account settings (if they don’t already force HTTPS across the site).

This might not seem as important on a videogame forum as it does on a banking website, but hackers are aware that people use the same passwords over and over again, so seemingly “safe” websites can be a goldmine of information about you for those clever enough to realise it.



Antivirus

Four Brilliant Virus Security Options

While the built-in Windows Defender is a great antivirus and security tool, it's nowhere near as capable as one of the many third-party security suites. The likes of Bitdefender, McAfee and Symantec have years of security specialism behind their products.

Better Protection

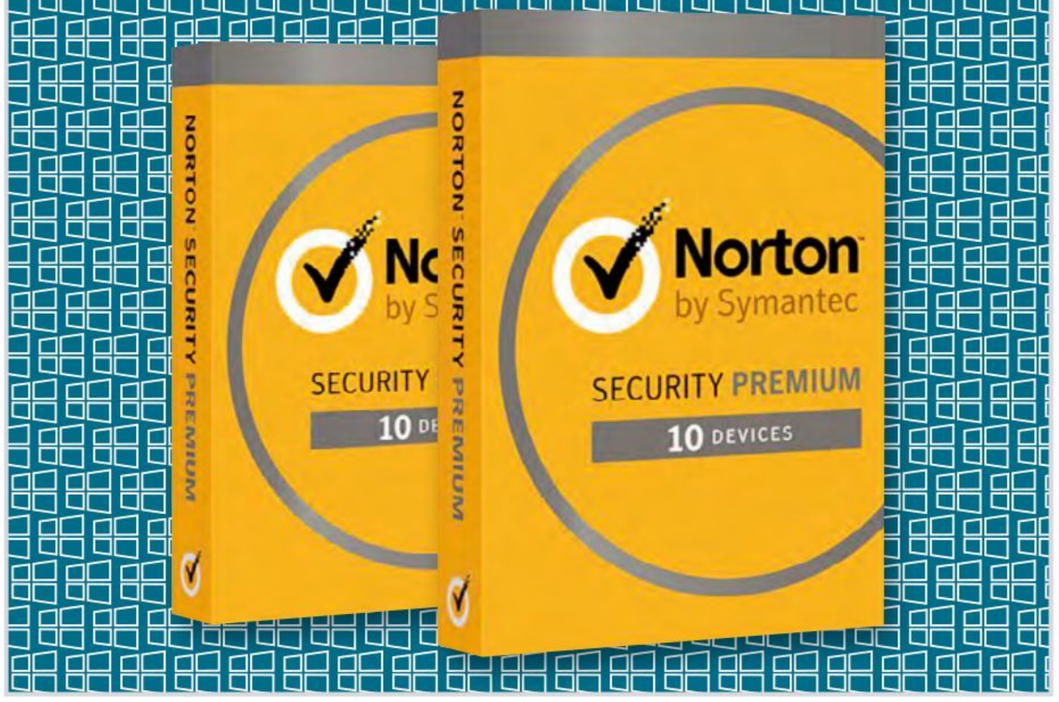
A third-party security suite offers much more than virus scanning. With one of these, you're covered against most, if not all, digital threats. Here are ten security suites worth considering if you're serious about your digital protection.

Bitdefender

Bitdefender Total Security 2020 is the latest security suite from one the world's leading security specialists. This version offers unrivalled levels of protection and performance for Windows, macOS and Android platforms. There's even an advanced ransomware protection element to help protect your folders.

Symantec

Norton Security Premium is the top choice for the home user from Symantec. With it you can protect up to ten PCs, Macs, smartphones or tablets and it will keep you safe when shopping online, general surfing or conducting transactions.

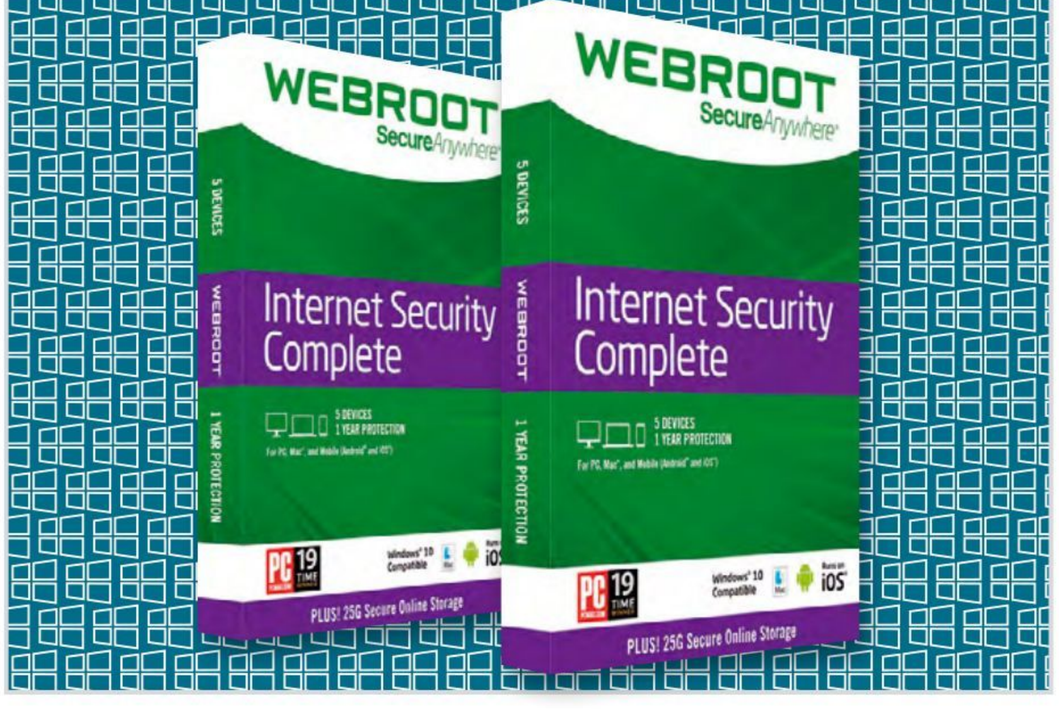


McAfee

McAfee Total Protection offers a 100 per cent guarantee of virus removal, or you get your money back. There are three main versions available: Antivirus Plus, Total Protection and Livesafe; each has its own particular twist but all offer excellent security features and benefits.

Webroot

Out of the three possible solutions available from Webroot, Webroot Internet Security Complete is the one for home users to consider. With it you're protected from virtually any threat, as well as getting 25GB of secure online cloud storage.



Browser

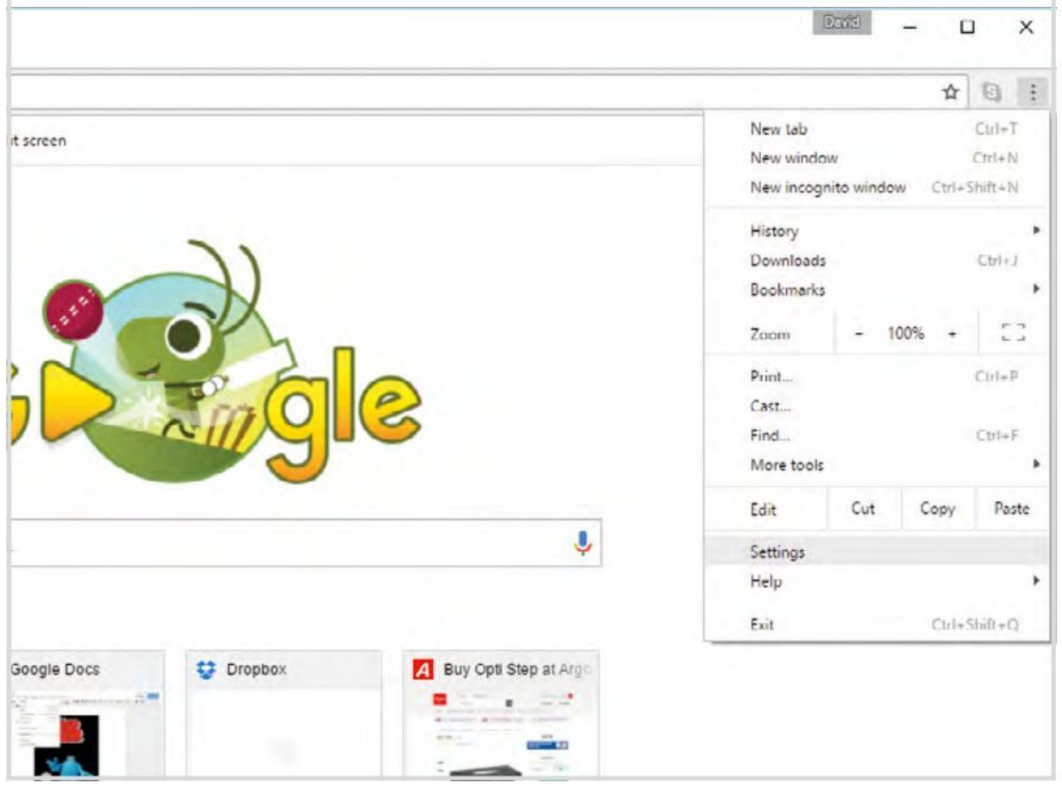
Your Guide to Safer Surfing

The web browser is possibly the weakest link in the entire Windows 10 security chain. It's the software product that's on the front line, the one that will bear the brunt of any Internet attacks and, as such, the one area you can easily improve your security.

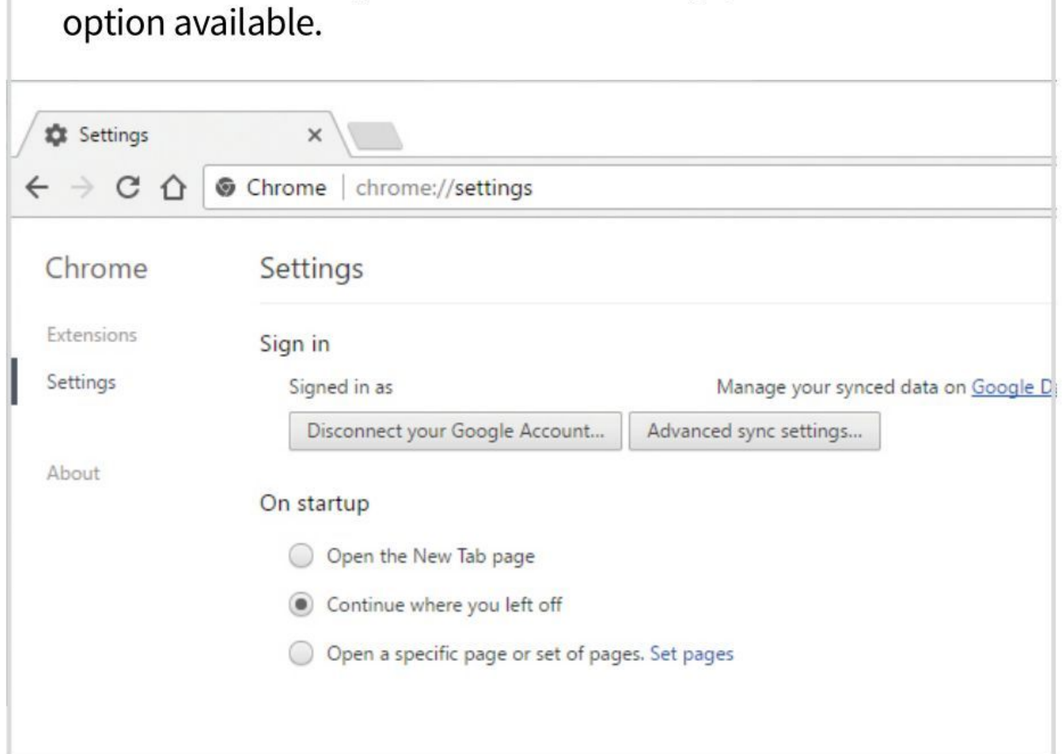
Safer Surfing

Securing your web browser isn't too difficult. There are plenty of options available, including some third-party add-ons you can use to improve things. For this tutorial, we're using Chrome.

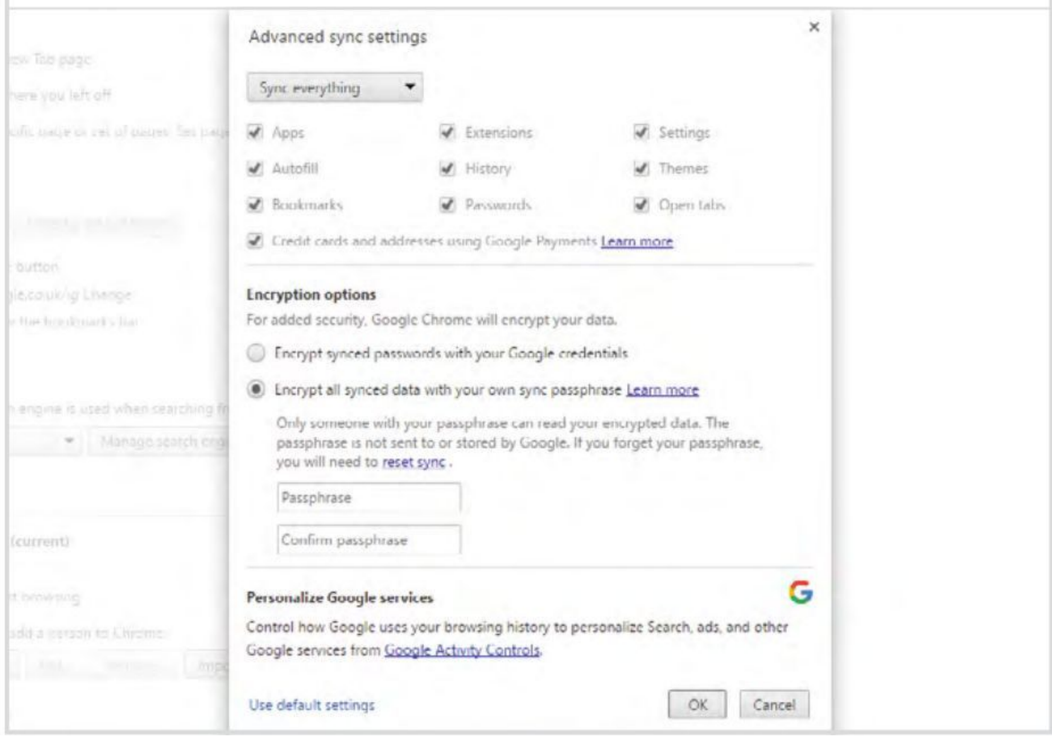
Step 1 Start by opening Chrome and clicking on the three vertical dots in the top right of the browser window. This is the link to the available options; from the list choose Settings.



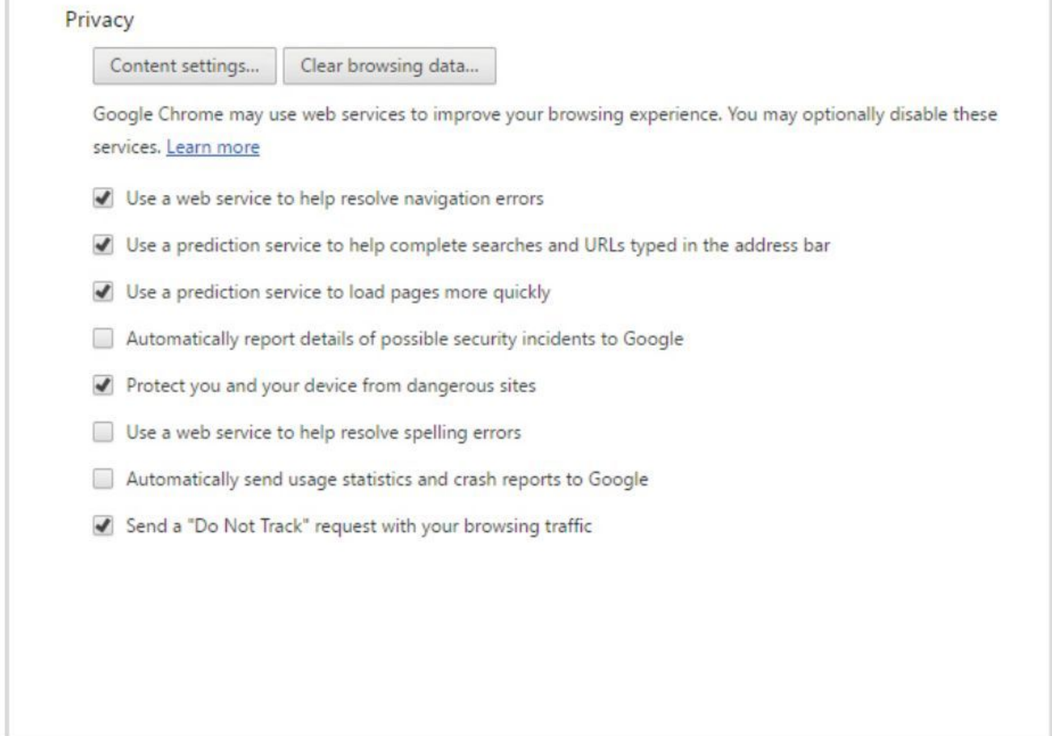
Step 2 It's generally recommended that you sign in to Chrome using a Google account, as this can greatly improve the overall security of the browser. For example, when you sign in, click on the Advanced Sync Settings button, found under the Sign In section of Settings, and the first option available.



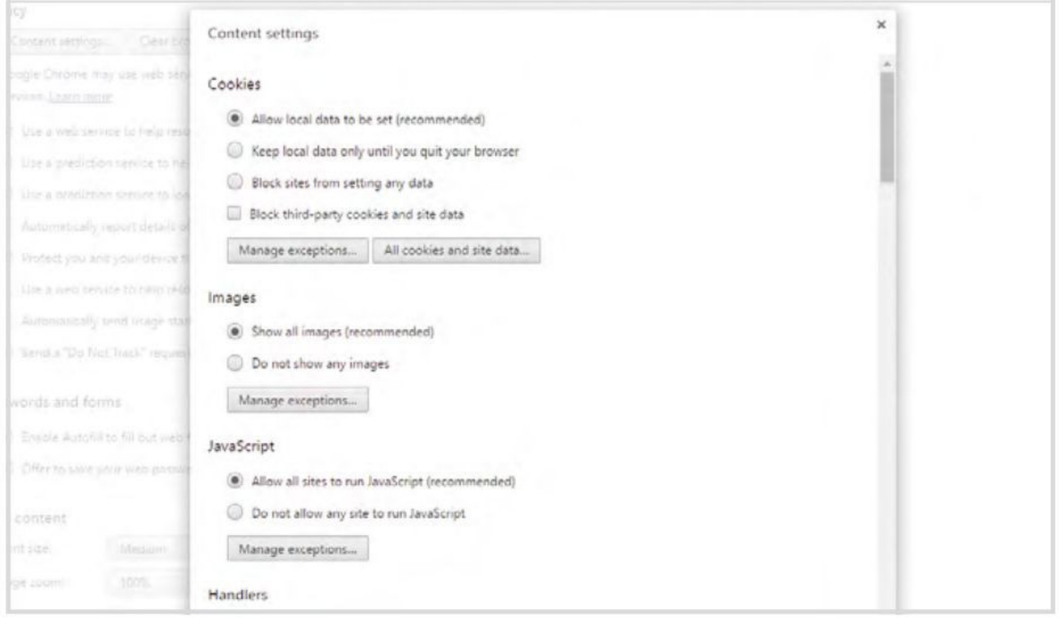
Step 3 With the Advanced Sync Settings box open, select the option for Encrypt all synced data with your own sync passphrase. Enter a secure, memorable passphrase in the boxes provided and this will enhance the security of all data synced between Chrome and the Internet.



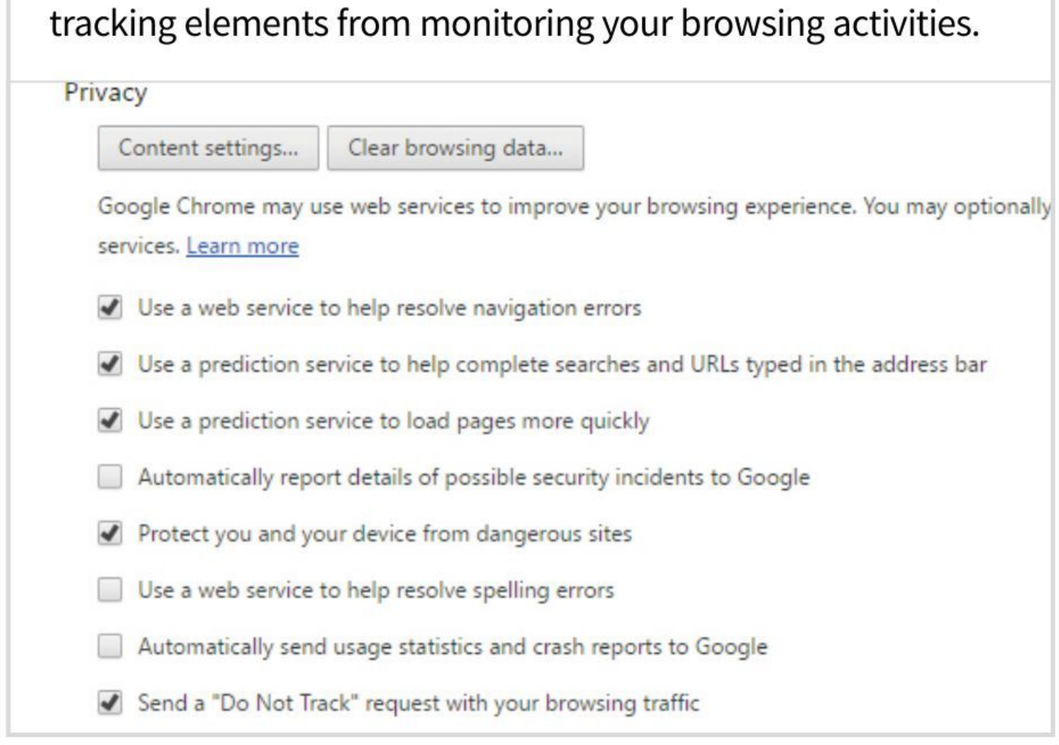
Step 4 Look to the bottom of the Settings page and click the link for Show Advanced Settings. The first new section to appear under the Advanced settings is Privacy. Start by clicking on the Content Settings button.



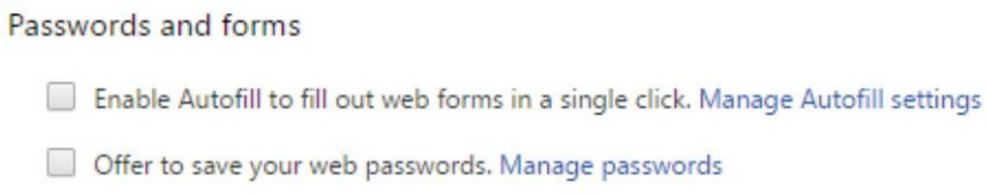
Step 5 Content Settings allows a greater degree of control over Cookies, JavaScript, Flash, Pop-ups, your computer's microphone and even the webcam. It's an extensive list so we can't go into all the options within this limited space. For maximum security, disable JavaScript and Flash and make sure the mic and webcam are protected too.



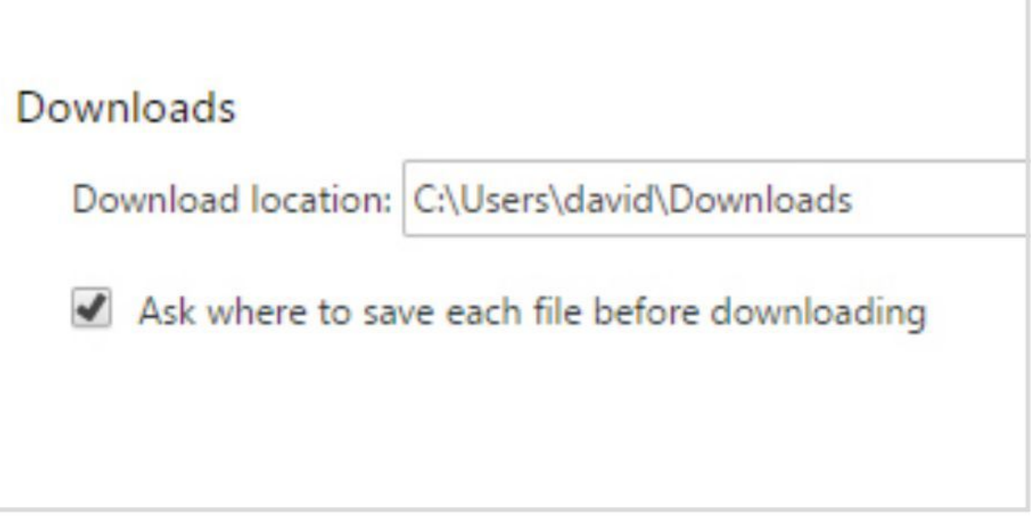
Step 6 Click the Done button when you're finished with Content Settings, to return you to the Chrome Settings page. While still in Privacy, ensure the last option, Send a "Do Not Track" request, is ticked. This will stop any tracking elements from monitoring your browsing activities.



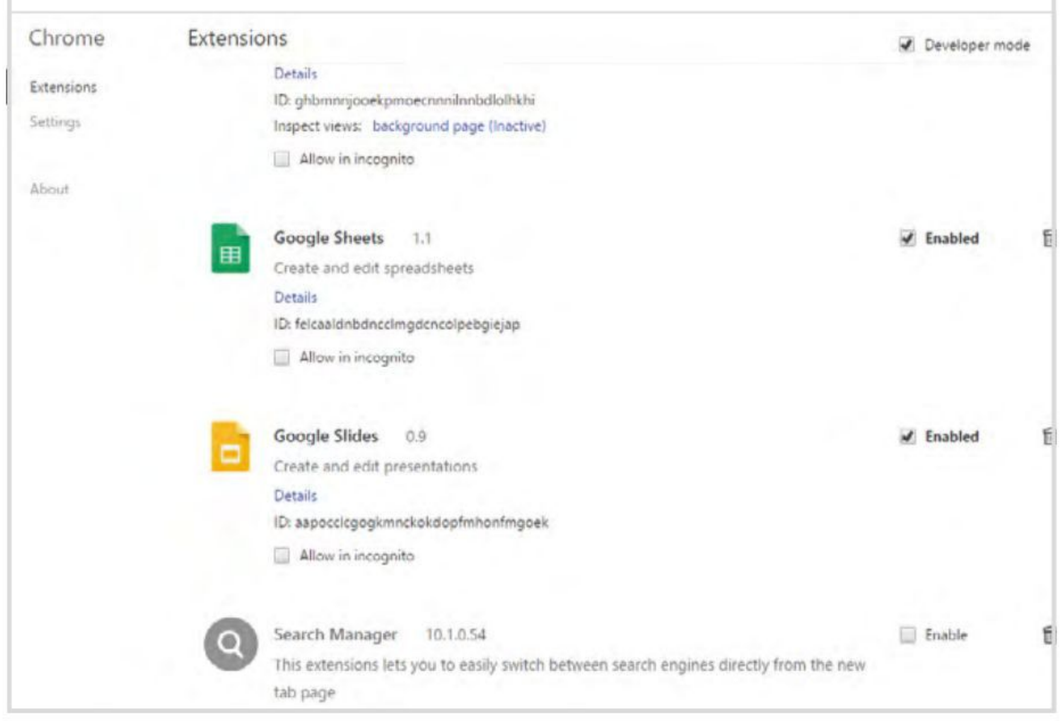
Step 7 Just under the previous step's tick box, it's also recommended that you untick the two Passwords and Forms boxes that offer to enable Autofill and Save your Passwords. Whilst it's a pain to constantly enter passwords, this will stop any hijack Chrome attacks from gaining your usernames and passwords.



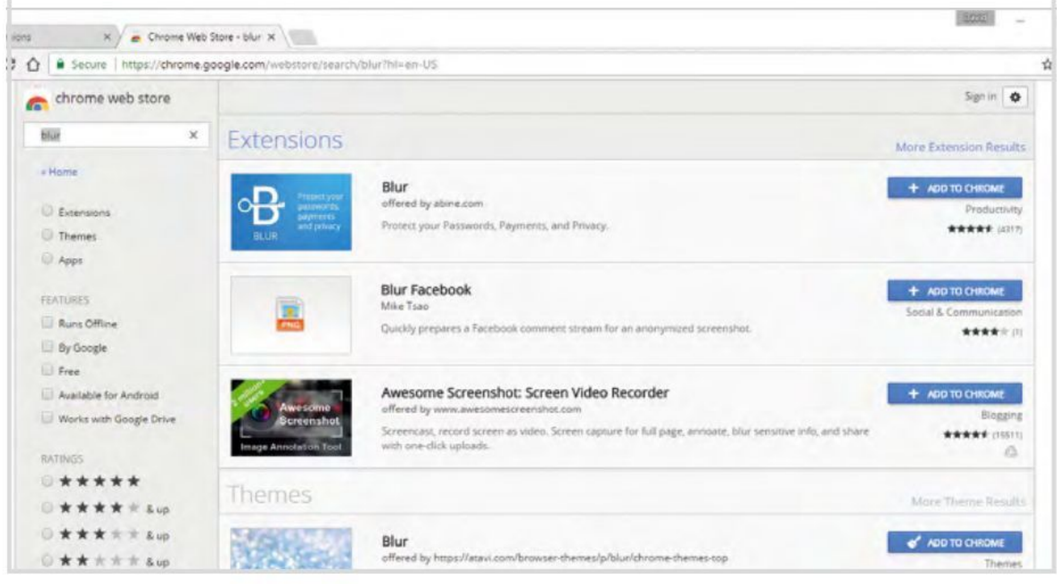
Step 8 Under the Downloads section, it's an idea to tick the box Ask where to save each file before downloading. Again this can be a bit of a pain for the user; however it stops malicious background downloads from infecting your system, giving you more control and the ability to stop the process.



Step 9 To the left of the Chrome Settings page you can see links for Extensions, Settings and About. Click the Extensions link and with the Extensions page open, scroll down to the bottom and click the Get More Extensions link.



Step 10 With the Chrome Web Store launched, via the Extensions link, search for AdBlock Plus. Within the results, click on the Add to Chrome button on the first option for AdBlock Plus. This will install an advertising blocker within Chrome, securing you from any threats from Internet advertising. Do the same for Blur (an anti-tracking add-on) and HTTPS Everywhere.



Viruses

Learn More About 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 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:

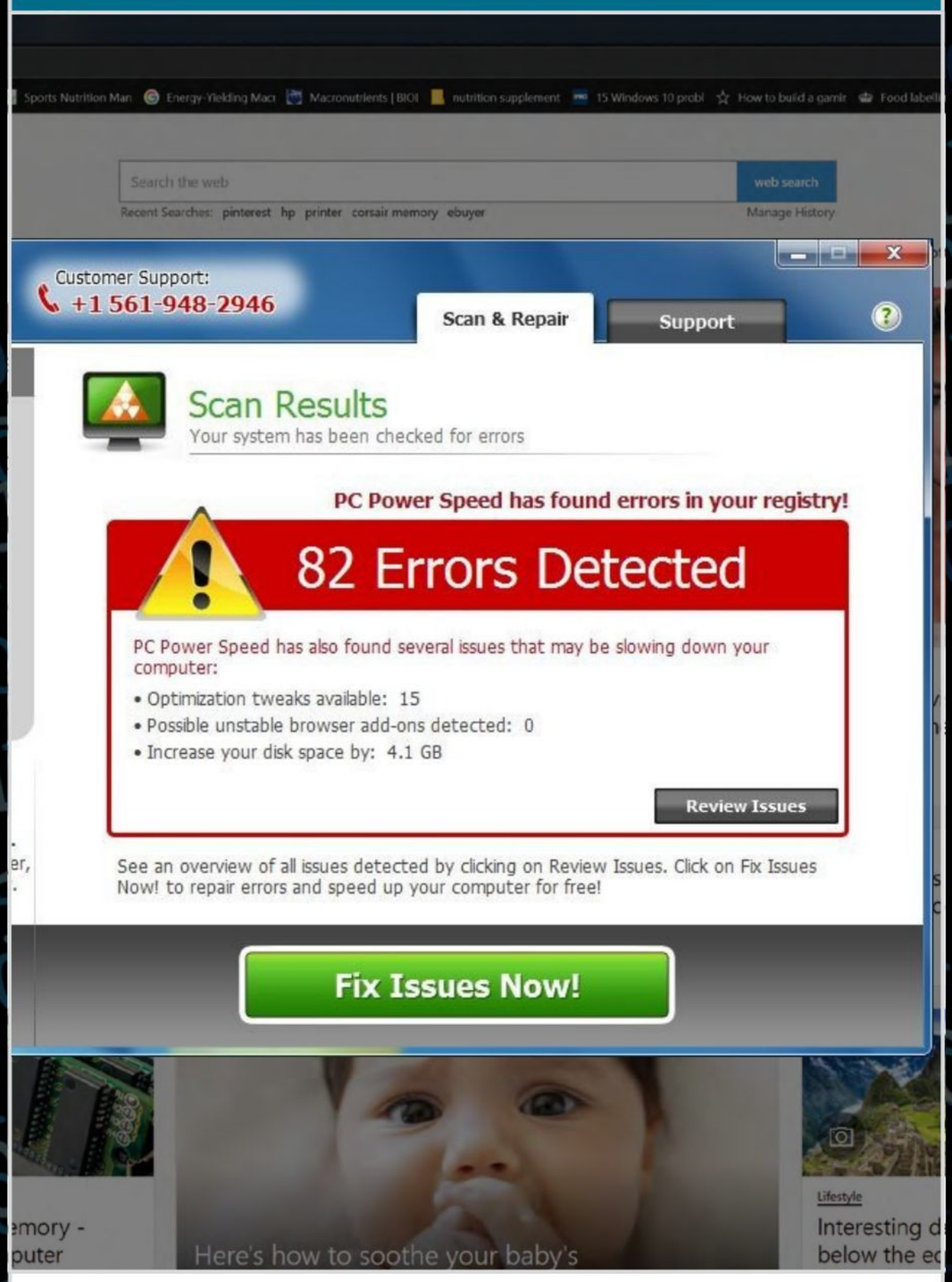
Never pay! Take a breath, do a bit of research and you should see that Ransomware is actually one of the easiest online threats to remove and fix. For a step-by-step guide to restoring a PC infected with ransomware, read our guide here.

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.

Viruses

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.

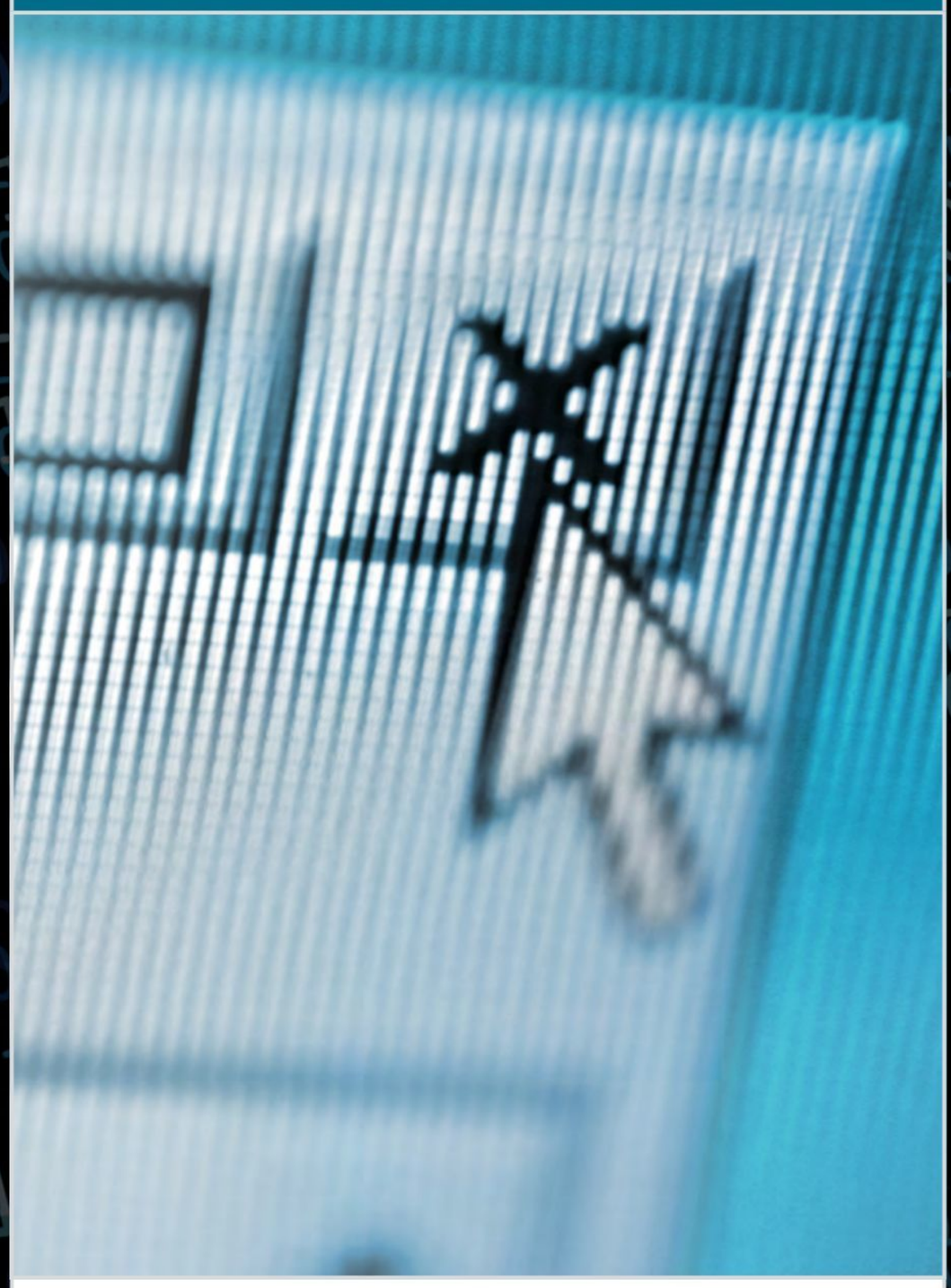
Our Advice:

If the software presenting the 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 eight 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.

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.

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.

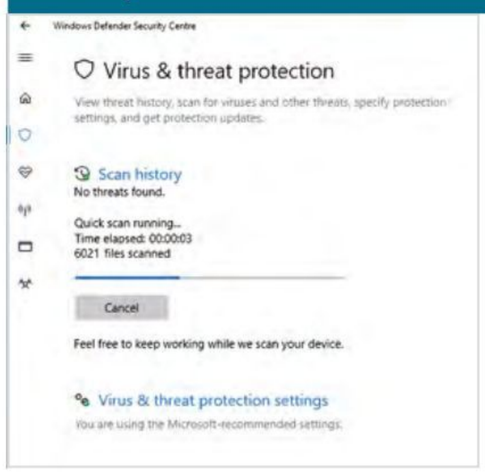
How do I know if something being offered is a scam?

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.

Security Tool

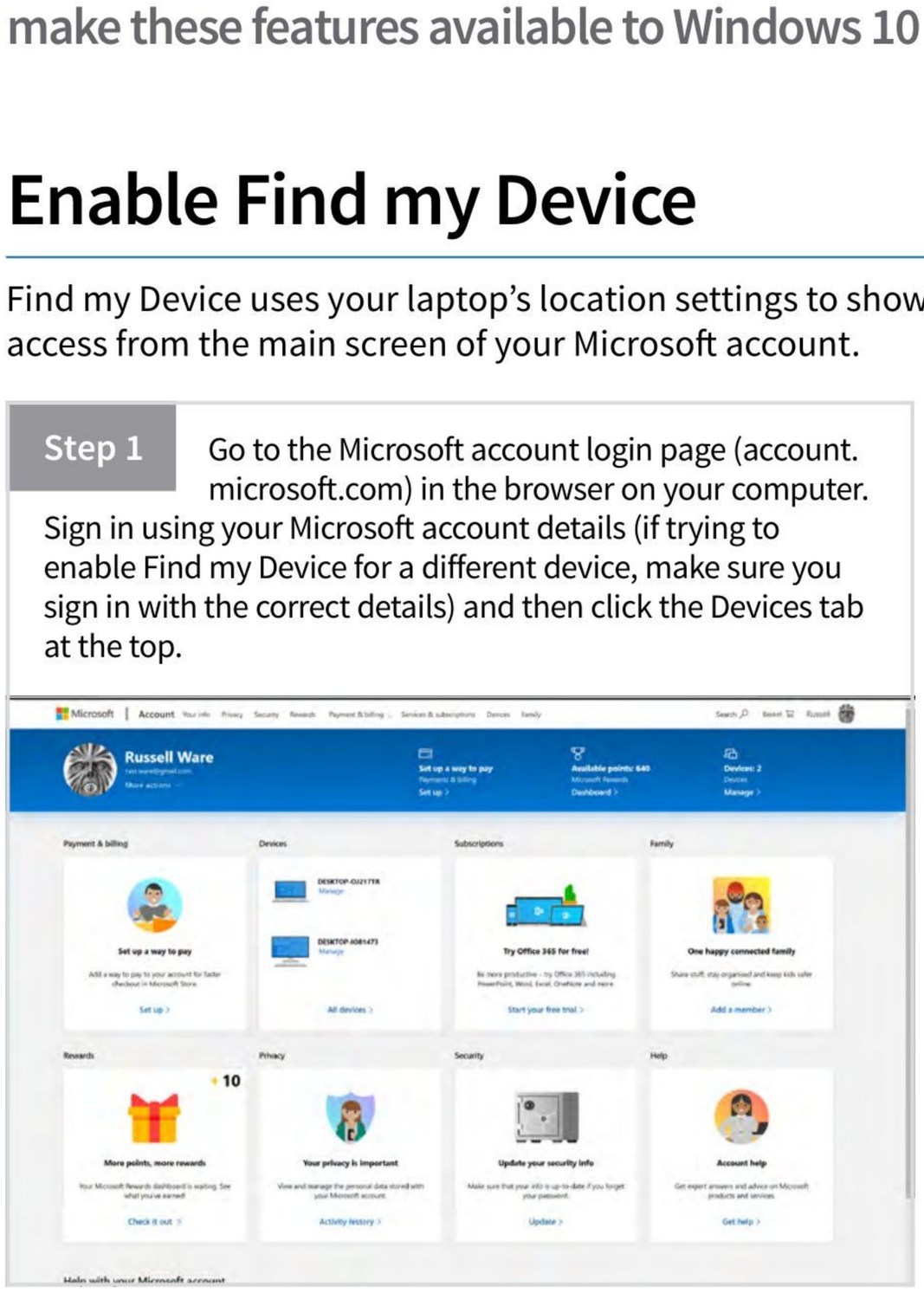
Find My Device and Remote Lock

Remotely tracking, locking, or disabling mobile devices has been the norm for several years now, helping to increase security when a device is lost or stolen. Microsoft has decided to make these features available to Windows 10 users with its own "Find my Device" option.

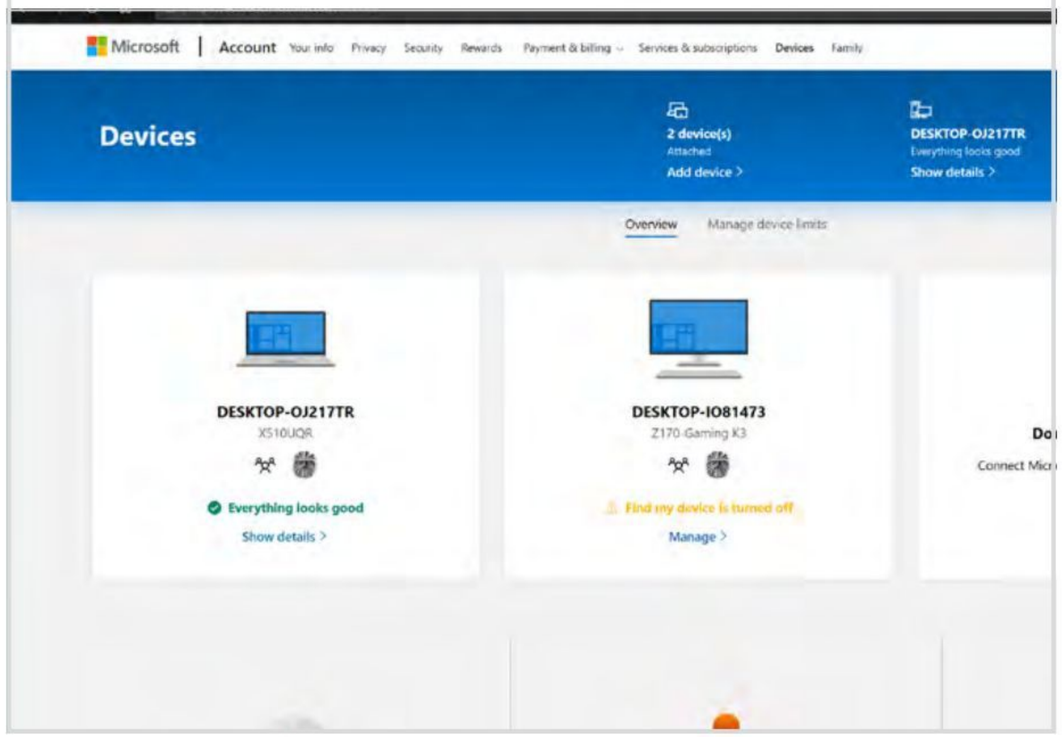
Enable Find my Device

Find my Device uses your laptop's location settings to show its last known physical location on a map, which you access from the main screen of your Microsoft account.

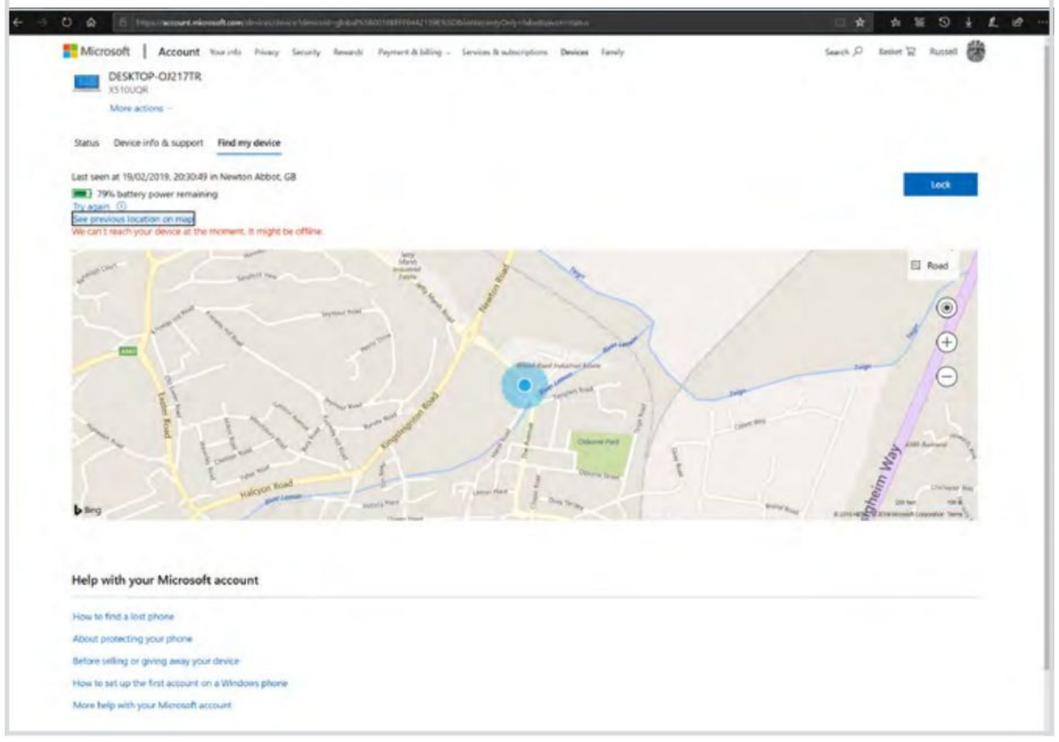
Step 1 Go to the Microsoft account login page (account.microsoft.com) in the browser on your computer. Sign in using your Microsoft account details (if trying to enable Find my Device for a different device, make sure you sign in with the correct details) and then click the Devices tab at the top.



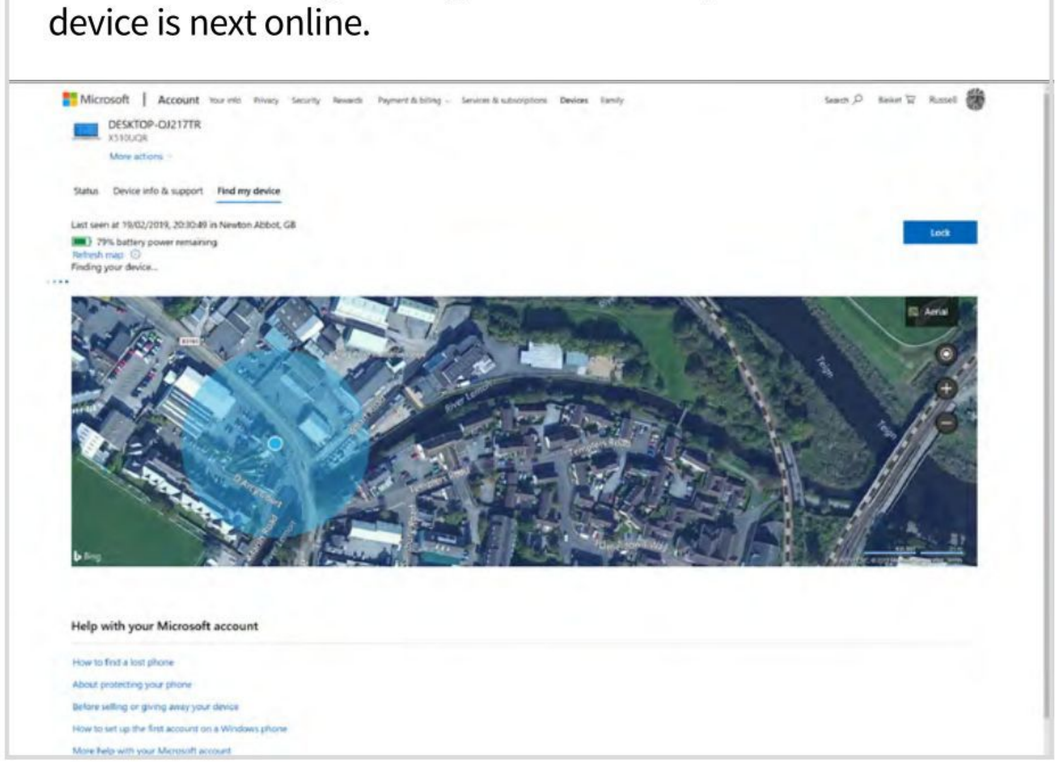
Step 2 You should see your device listed on the Devices screen. On the panel, click "Manage" for the device you want to locate and then click "Enable location". This is found above the map image, below the battery power indicator. You need to wait for the setting to be enabled.



Step 3 If able to, your device turns on Location access, and after a few seconds, the map image updates to display the last registered location of the device. You can scroll and zoom the map using the controls, or your mouse/trackpad. You can also change the view style.



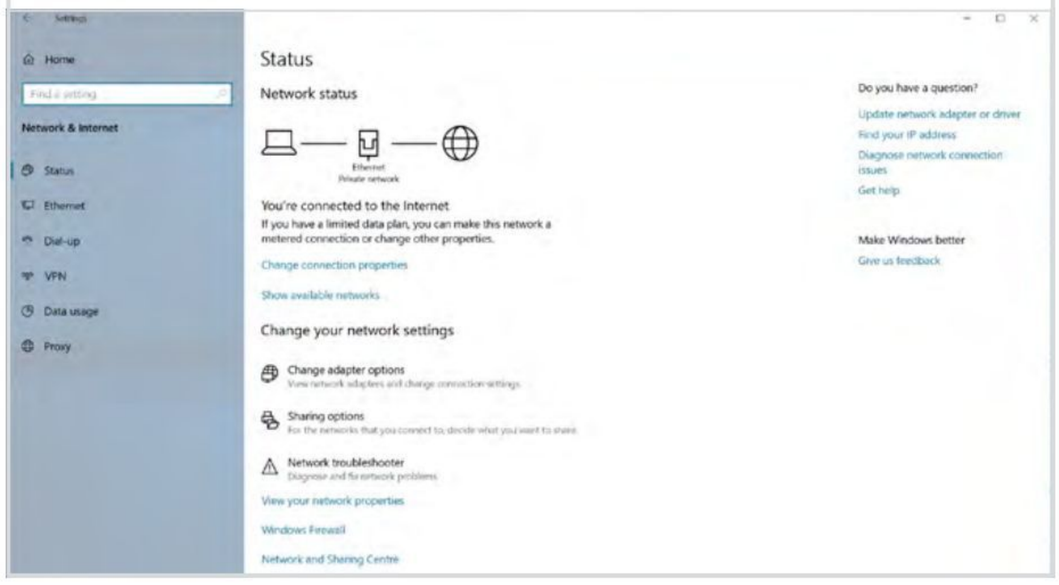
Step 4 If the device is offline, you won't be able to activate Find my Device, and you will see a warning telling you so. You should still be able to see the previous last known location by clicking the link that appears above the warning message. This will be updated when the device is next online.



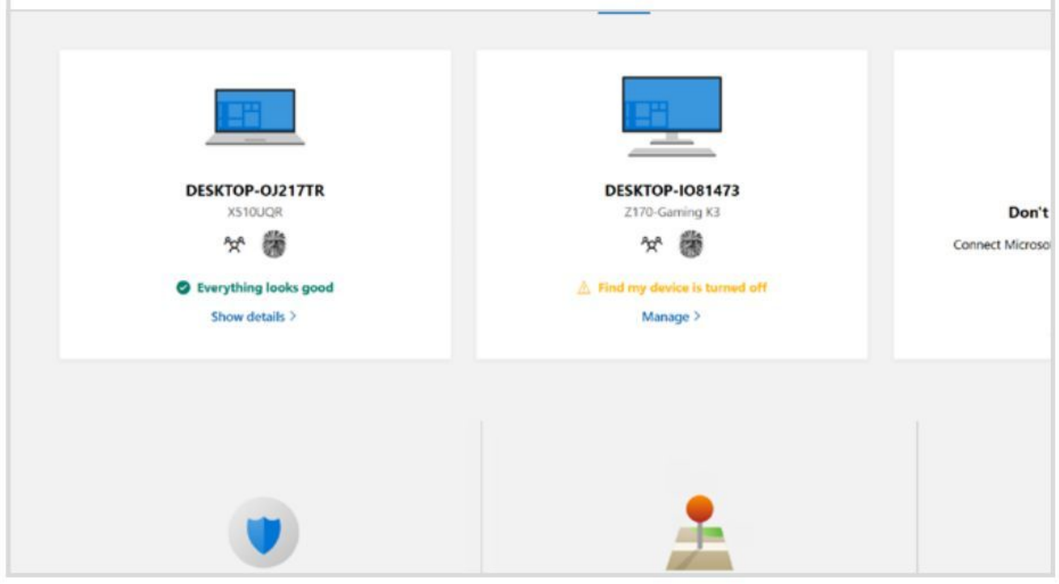
Using Remote Lock

As is usual with this type of mobile phone feature, before you can use the Remote Lock feature, you will need to make sure a few things are set up within your Microsoft account.

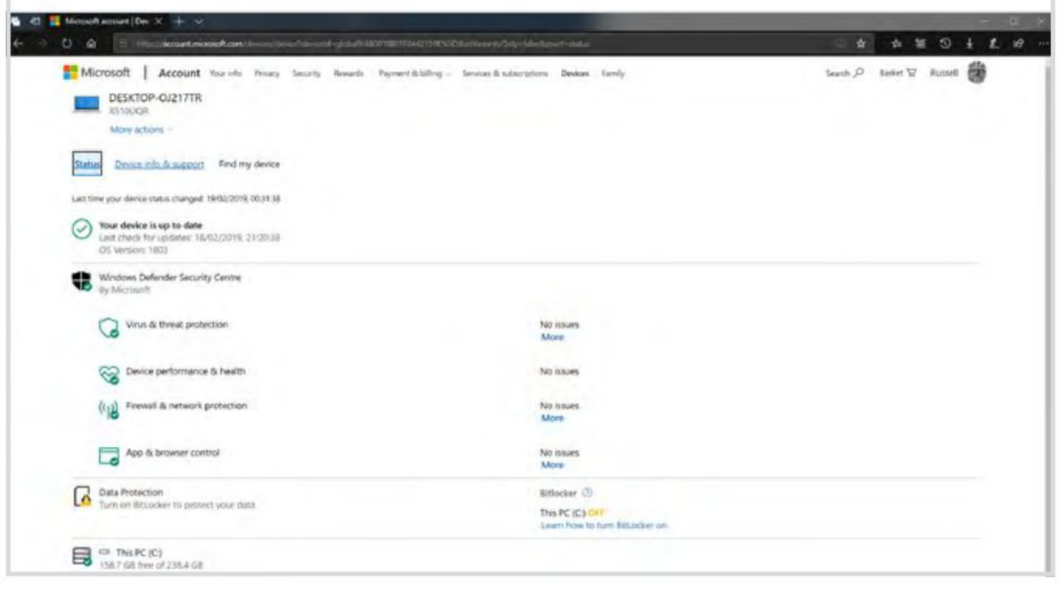
Step 1 For the Remote Lock feature of Find my Device to work, your laptop needs to be connected to the Internet, the feature must already have been enabled and set up, and you must be using a Microsoft account (not a local account) with administrator privileges enabled.



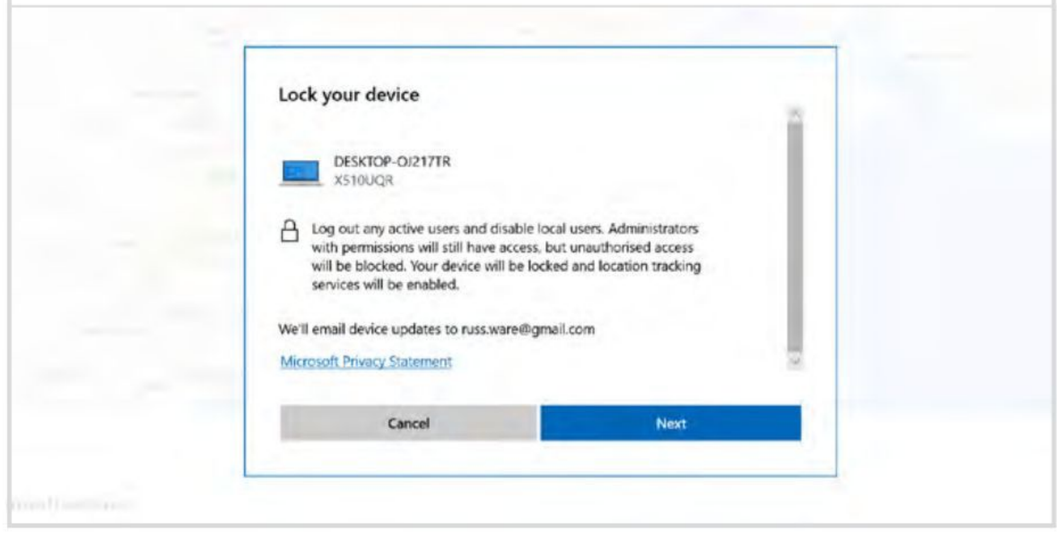
Step 2 Sign in to your Microsoft account (account.microsoft.com) in the web browser on your computer. Click on the Devices tab at the top, or select All Devices from the panel on the account homepage. Any devices that use this Microsoft account are displayed on the screen.



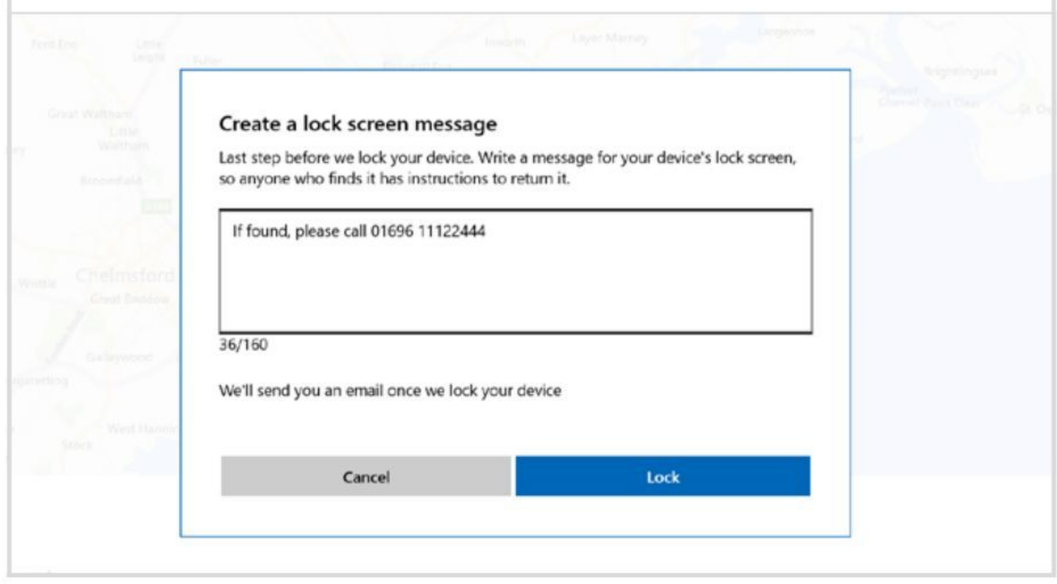
Step 3 You see a warning on each device panel, telling you that "Find my device is turned off". Click the Manage button for the device on which you want to set up the feature. The next screen should show a large map, along with options to enable location, and a large blue "Lock" button.



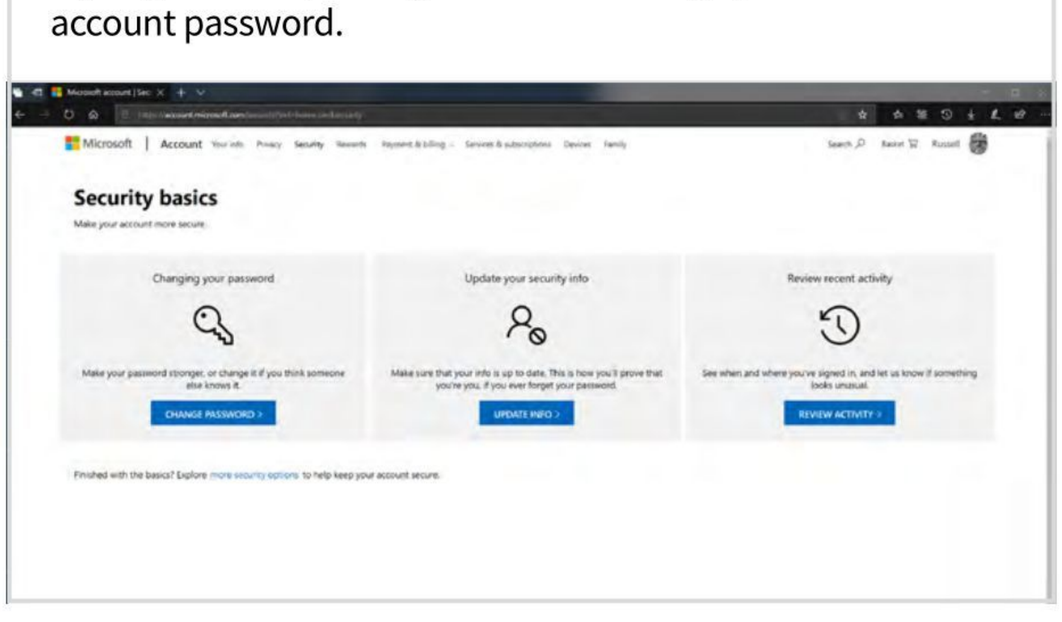
Step 4 Click on the Lock button and a new window opens explaining what will happen to the device once it is locked. This includes logging out active users and disabling local users, enabling location tracking and locking the device. An email is sent to the account address once the lock is complete.



Step 5 Click Next, and you have the option to create a custom message to appear on the lock screen of the device. This could be a message asking anyone who finds the locked device to contact you (with contact details included, obviously), or anything else you can fit into 160 characters.



Step 6 Finally, click the Lock button to complete the process. Remember, if you manage to retrieve the device, you will need to have administrator privileges to get back into it. If you think the device is lost forever, or even if you get it back, it is a good idea to change your Microsoft account password.



18+

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

Contents

92 Windows Store
Explore the Windows 10 Marketplace

94 Windows Store
Finding Apps and Windows Downloads
94 Take a Look Around

96 Maps
Explore the Powerful Maps App

98 Maps
Learn How to Navigate with Maps
98 Moving Around in Maps
99 Planning a Route

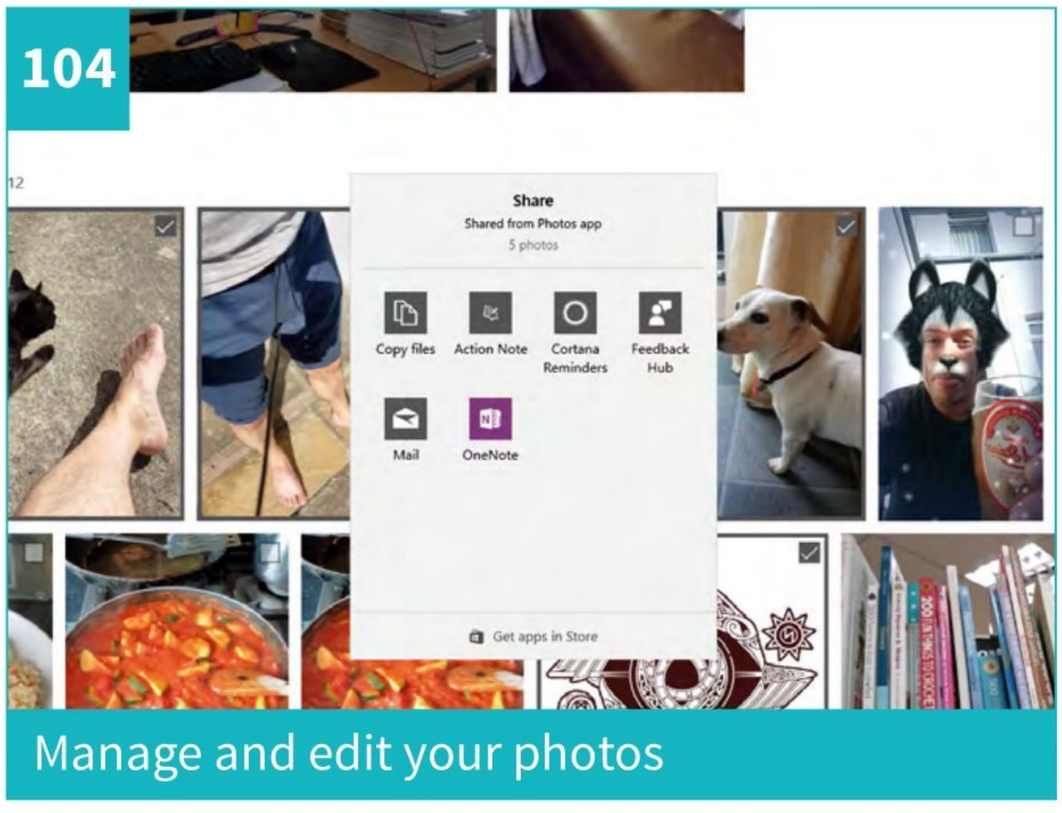
100 People
Manage Your Contacts in Windows 10
100 The New People Button

102 Calendar
Explore the Microsoft Calendar App

104 Photos
How to Manage and Edit Your Photos
104 Managing Your Images
106 Drawing on Images
106 Editing Images

108 Skype
Exploring the Skype App

110 Skype
Making Calls with the Skype App



Manage and edit your photos

Windows 10 Apps, Software and Tools

A key element of Windows 10 is the updated Windows Store. Within it, you can find thousands of apps that are easy to install, covering everything from editing photos, communication, productivity, and social media. We dive into the Windows Store and take a look at a selection of top apps for you to download, install and try out.

110 Install and Use Skype

112 OneDrive
Using the Files On-Demand Tools
112 Using Files On-Demand
113 On-Demand Files

114 Cloud Storage
How to Get Free Cloud Storage
114 What is Cloud Storage?

116 Clipboard
How to Use the Cloud Clipboard
116 A New Way to Copy + Paste

118 Games
The New Windows 10 Game Bar
118 Using the Game Bar

120 Screenshots
Using the Snip & Sketch Tool
120 Taking Screenshots with Snip & Sketch
121 Open the Snipping Mode with PrtScn

122 Printing
How to Install a Printer in Windows 10
122 Install a Local Printer
123 Install a Wireless Printer

124 Sticky Notes
Using the On-screen Sticky Notes
124 Adding Sticky Notes

126 Apps
10 Essential Windows 10 Apps

Discover ten essential Windows 10 apps

Windows Store

Explore the Windows 10 Marketplace

Windows 10 comes with great built-in apps including Skype and OneDrive, but that's just the beginning. The Windows 10 Store has loads more to help you stay in touch and get things done, plus more games and entertainment than ever before, many of them free! Expanding your PC's versatility will depend on being able to navigate the app store.

Category Tabs

Just as with other online app stores, the Windows Store features several different download categories. These include Apps, Games, Music and Films. Each category has its own Home screen, which displays: Most Popular, Top Free and Trending sections.

Featured Apps

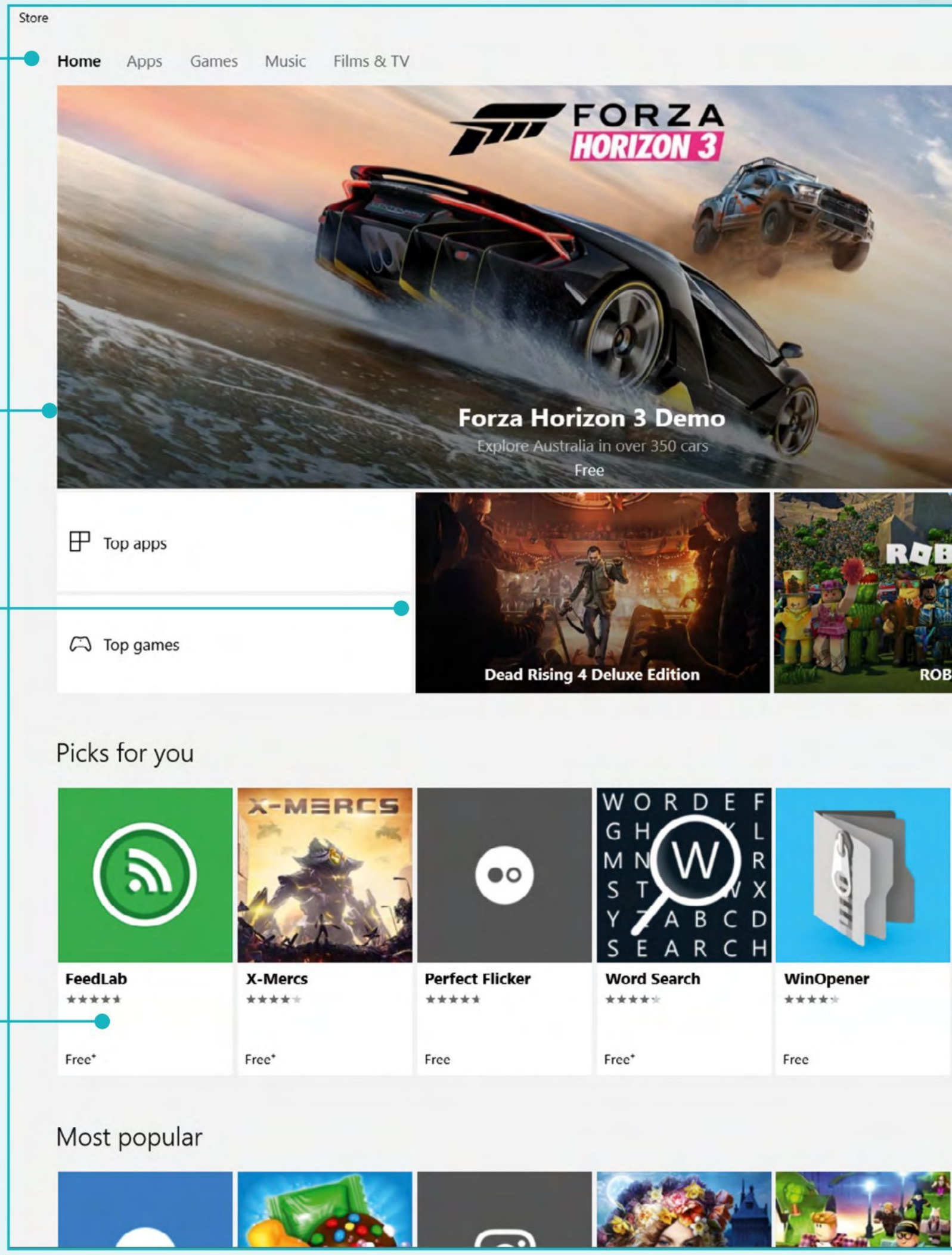
The Featured Apps slider will display those apps or games that are trending or have been particularly popular. This display is constantly updated and is a good way of finding out what other Windows 10 users are using and playing.

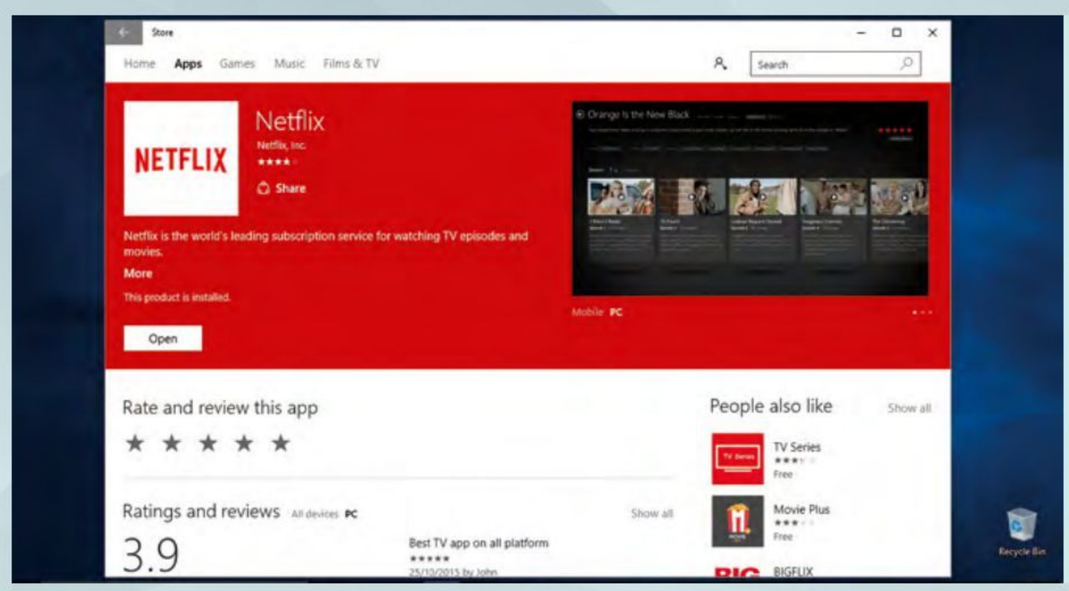
Software Charts

These links take you to lists of the most popular and most downloaded apps and games on the Windows Store. Once you click on one of the links, you can further refine the chart using the links on the left-hand sidebar. Filters include Top Free, Top Paid, Best Rated and New & Rising.

Apps and Games

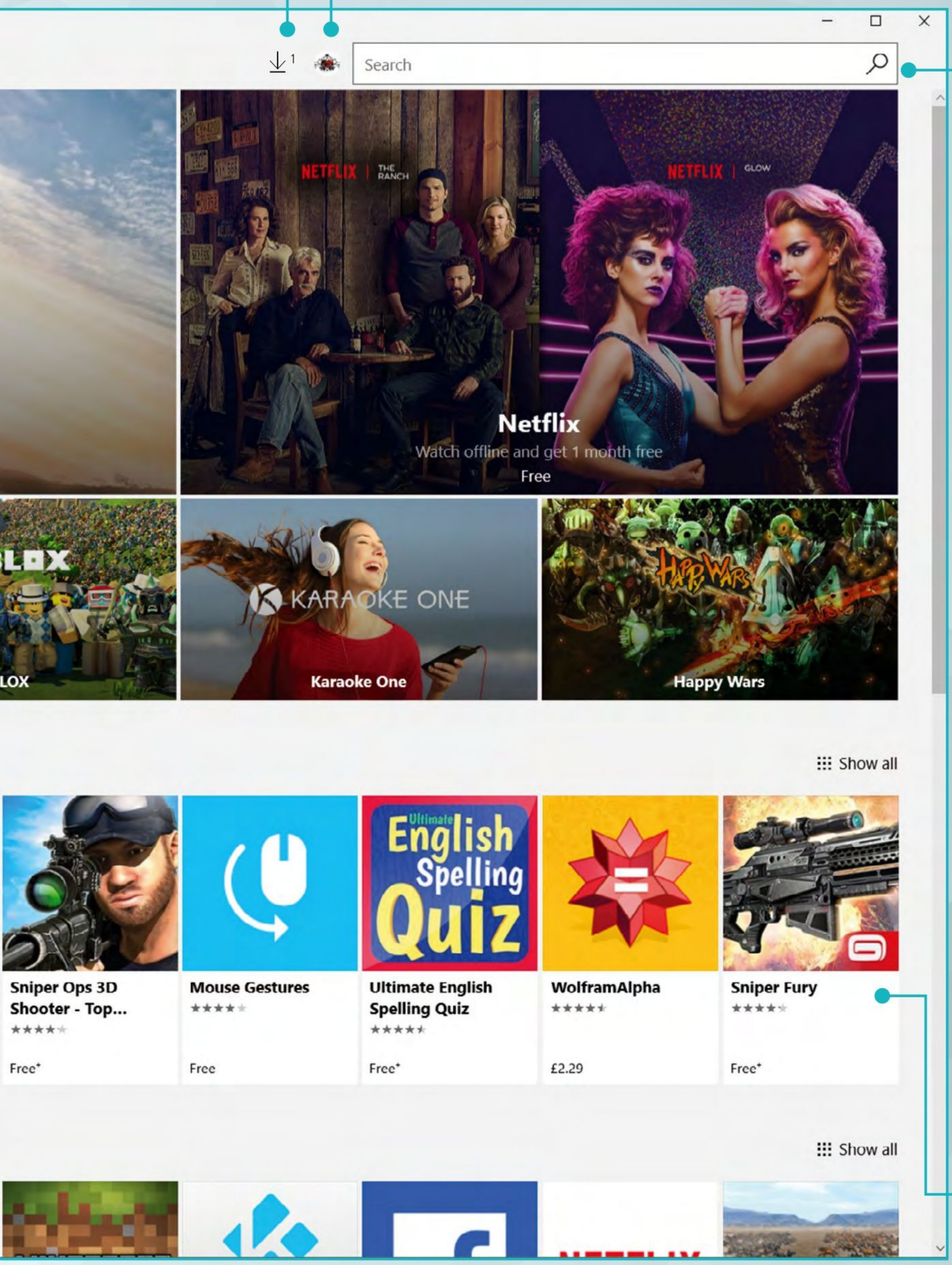
As you scroll down the main page of the App, Game, Music or Film Home screens, you will see additional sections showing Most Popular, Top Free, etc. If you want to see all of the apps in a particular section, click the Show All button on the right.





APP INFO SCREEN

Once you have found the app or game you want to install, click on the icon to open the app info screen. This screen displays the average app score, user reviews, similar app suggestions, as well as a list of features and updates. Click the Free, Buy or Try button to install the software.



Downloads/Updates

If there is an update or new download available for any app you currently have installed on your computer, a notification will appear here. The number shows how many updates/app downloads are waiting. Click the arrow and select the required action (update, retry etc.).

Store Settings

Click the small Account icon here to see the store settings option. Here you will find details of the Microsoft account currently being used, along with several sliders used to control things like automatic app updates. You can also control who can install new apps on your PC.

Search Bar

You can use the main search bar in the taskbar to search for apps, games, music and films in the Windows Store (store results will have the store icon next to them in the results list). Alternatively, you can search just inside the store by using this search bar.

Windows Store Offers

Periodically, the Windows Store will feature offers for its users. This could be a free Groove Music 30 day trial, or other download offers. Click on the link to read more about the offer and then follow the instructions to take advantage of it.

Windows Store

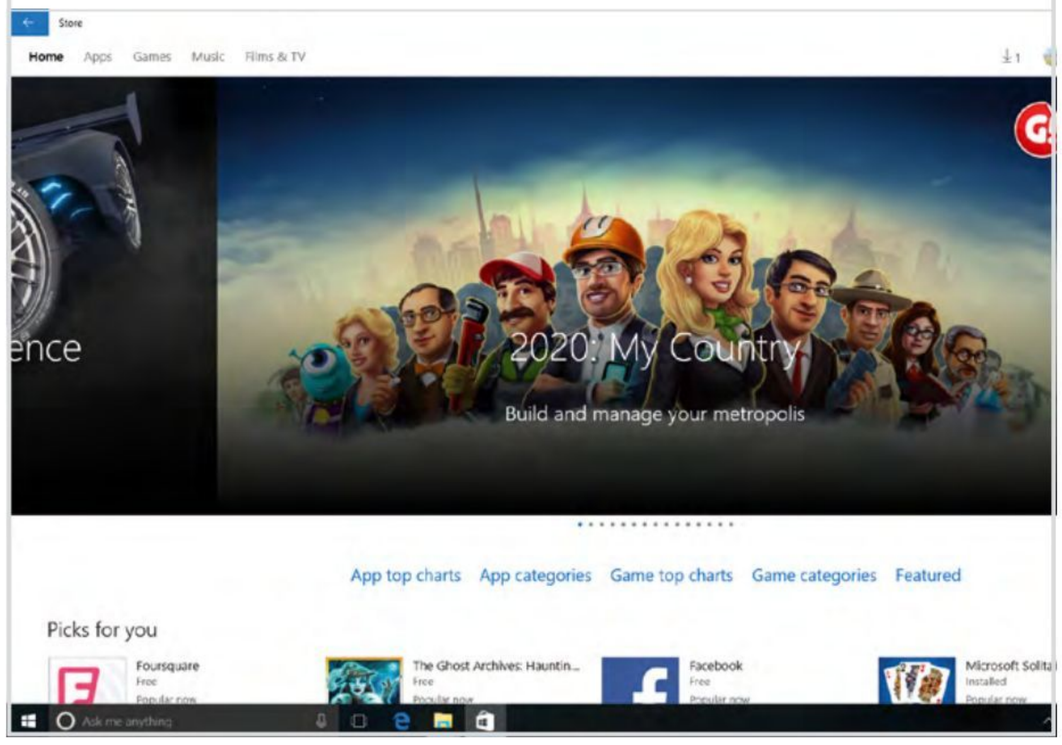
Finding Apps and Windows Downloads

There was a Windows Store inside Windows 8 but Microsoft has a new version inside Windows 10. That's because, like the new so-called 'Universal' apps, the Store will work across all Microsoft devices including Windows Phones and the Xbox One.

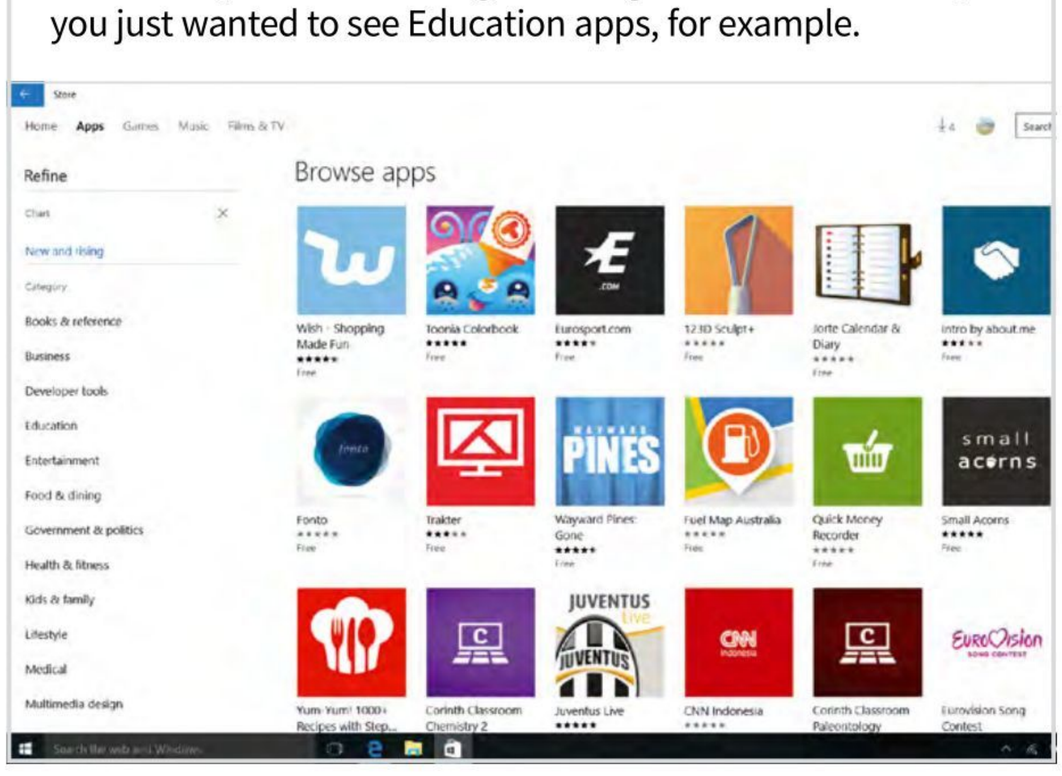
Take a Look Around

The great thing about the new Windows Store is that the quality of the apps has improved, so it's actually worth browsing. But aside from better apps, the whole experience of looking for new software has been improved in Windows 10.

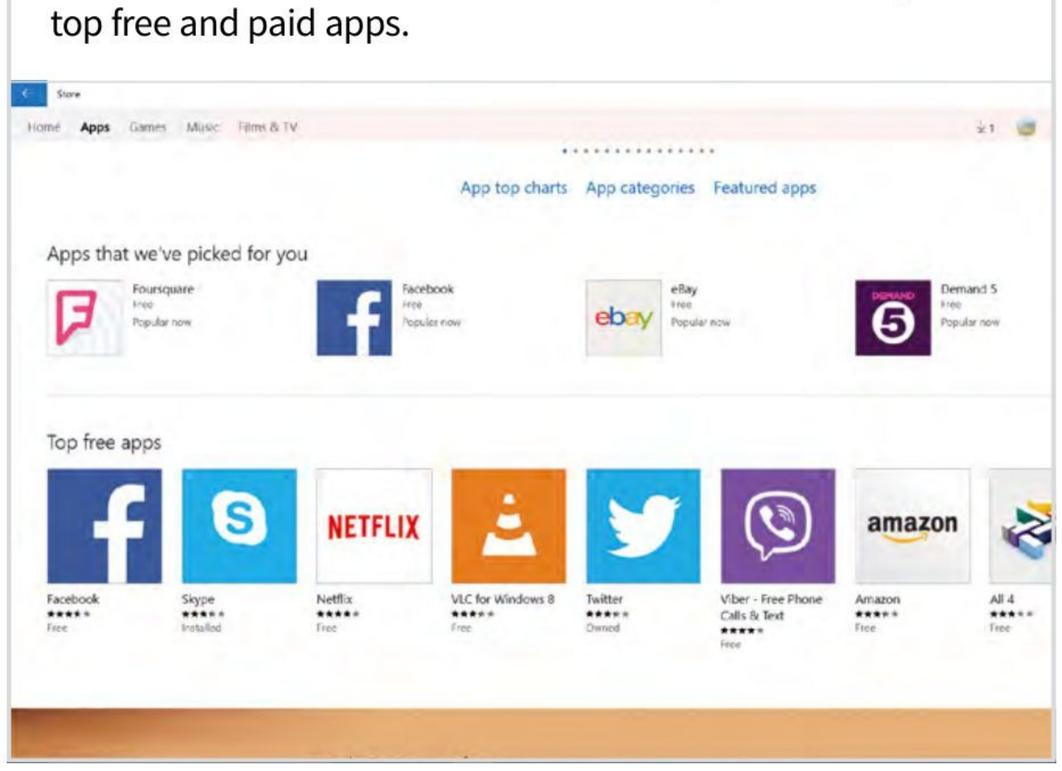
Step 1 As well as being more responsive to use, the Windows Store has improved vastly in terms of content – as well as apps and games there are now movies to buy or rent and music to download. You can switch between the major sections using the buttons at the top of the window.



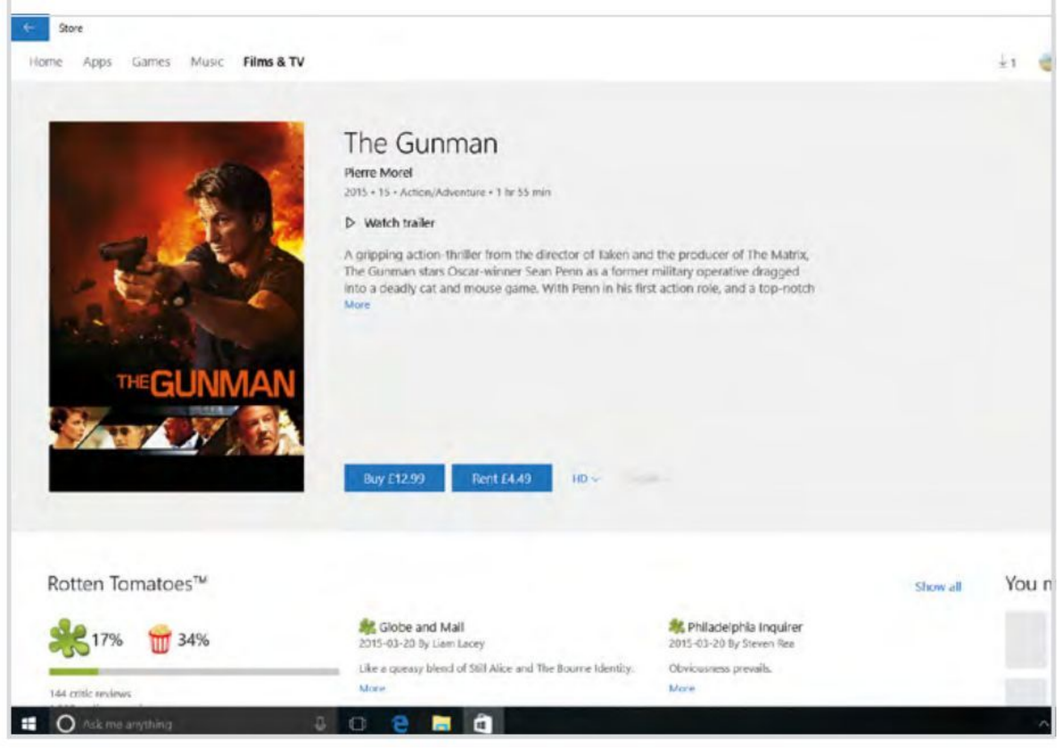
Step 2 Clicking on one of these main sections – here we've clicked on Apps – takes you to a Browse screen where you're presented with the latest apps as well as those that are growing in popularity at the moment. You can also refine your search using the categories on the left – say you just wanted to see Education apps, for example.



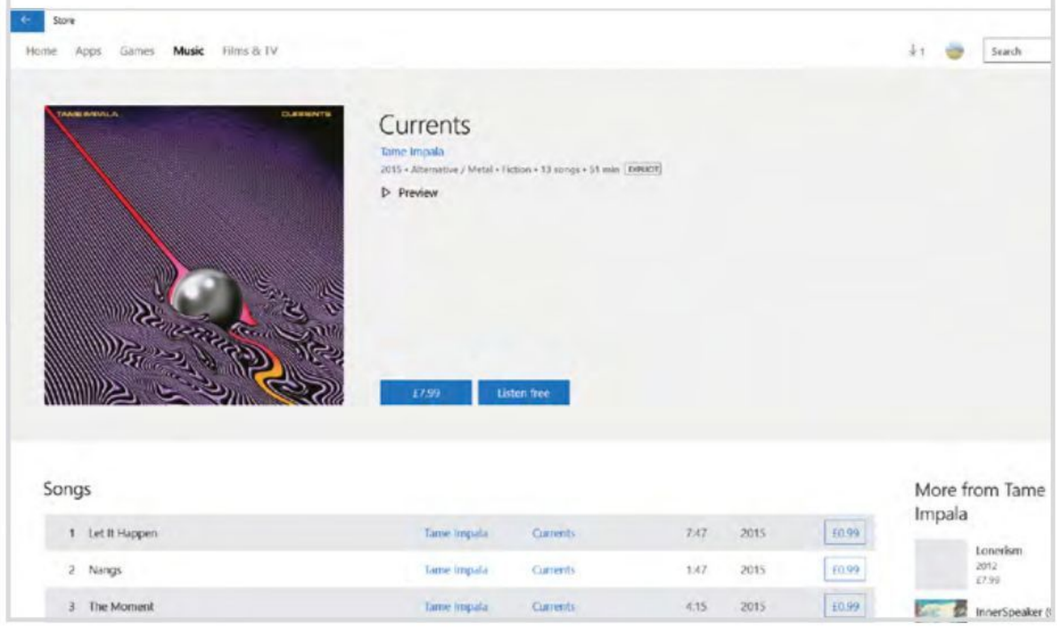
Step 3 Each section also features charts of the most downloaded apps as well as curated app recommendations. Here the selection is reasonably uninspiring but presumably this would improve as you downloaded more apps. You can also easily flick through the top free and paid apps.



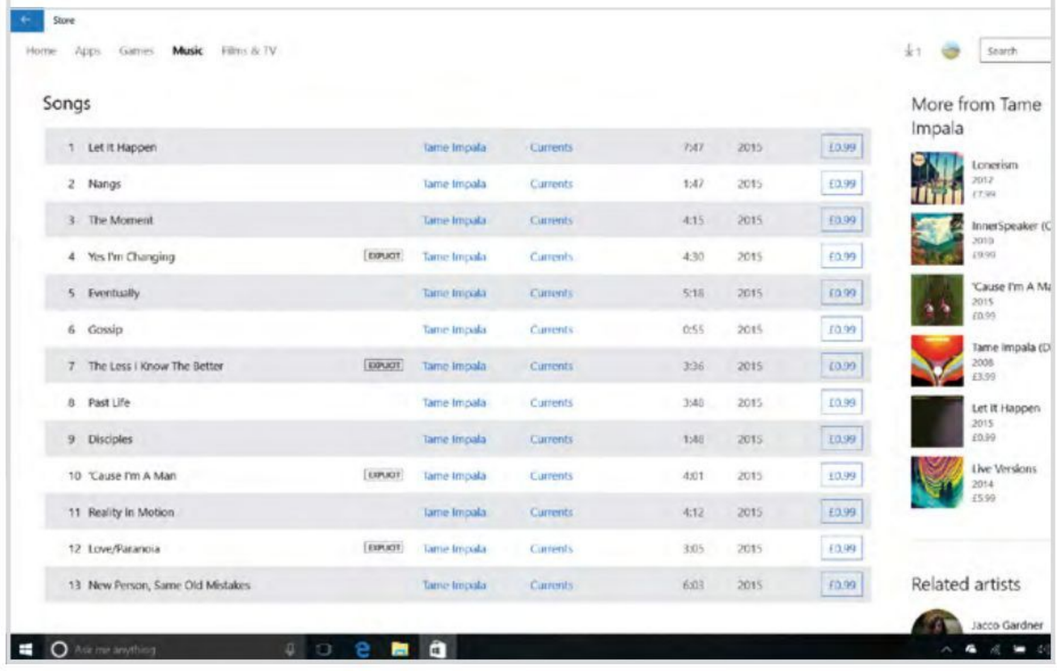
Step 4 As in many Windows 10 apps, there's a search box in the top right. The search will pick up results from across the Store, whatever you search for. Here we've found a film we'd like to see. This page is roughly the same whether you're looking at a game, movie or app.



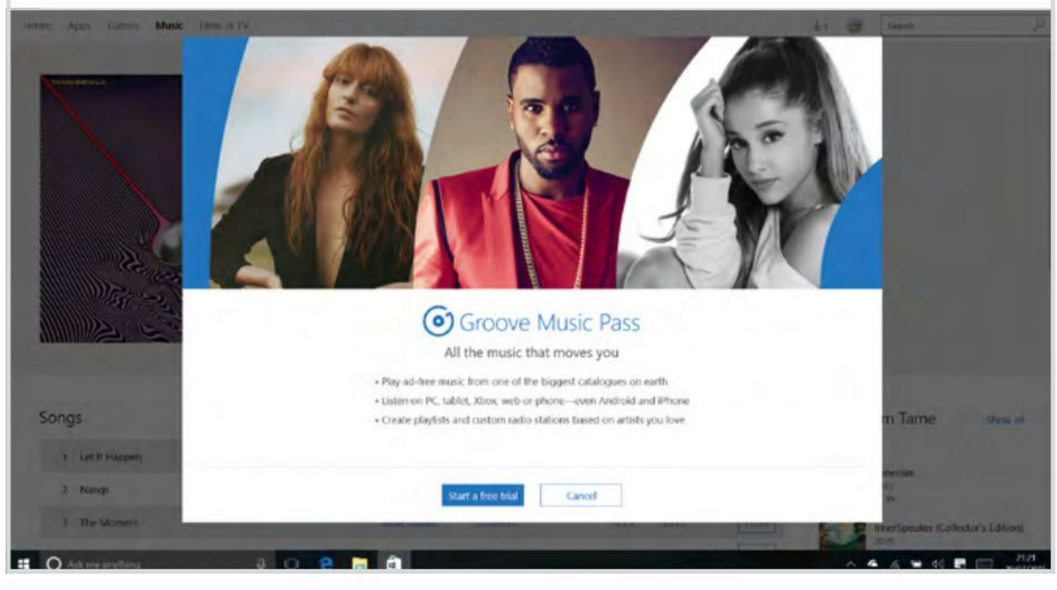
Step 5 Here's what it looks like if you go to an album page in the Music section. Like the movie page in the previous step, there's a Buy link but no button to rent as there is with movie downloads. With movies you can also choose to watch the trailer, while you can preview a snippet of music.



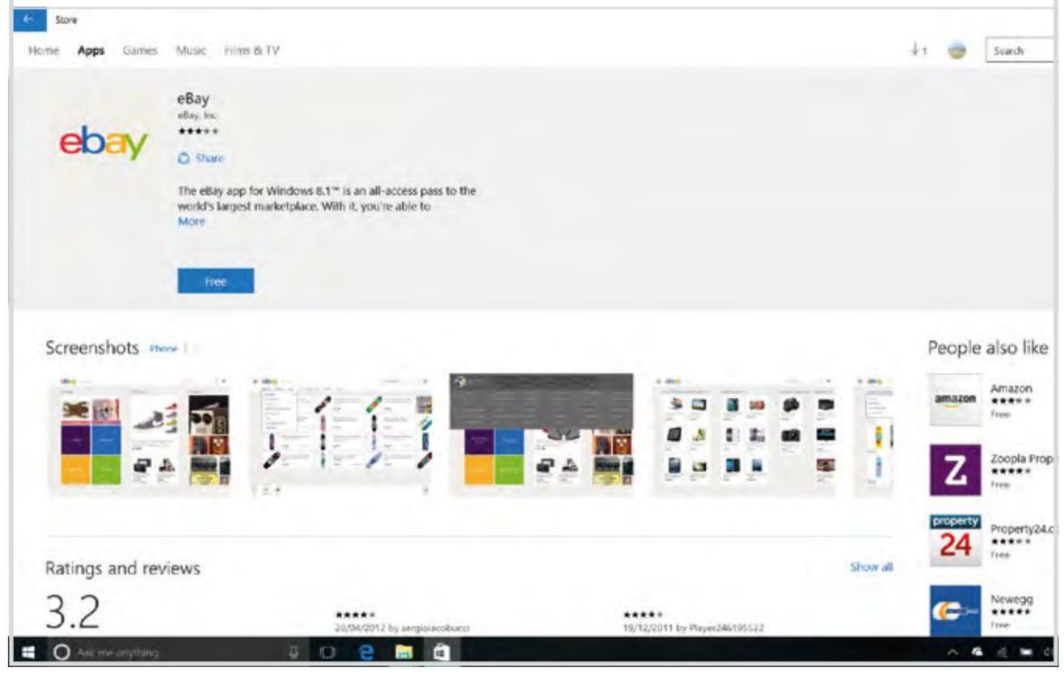
Step 6 You're also able to buy single tracks, too – here they're 99p. At every stage the Windows Store will select other appropriate content for you to look at (often from the back catalogue or related artists), while you can also click any artist or album name to go to the relevant page.



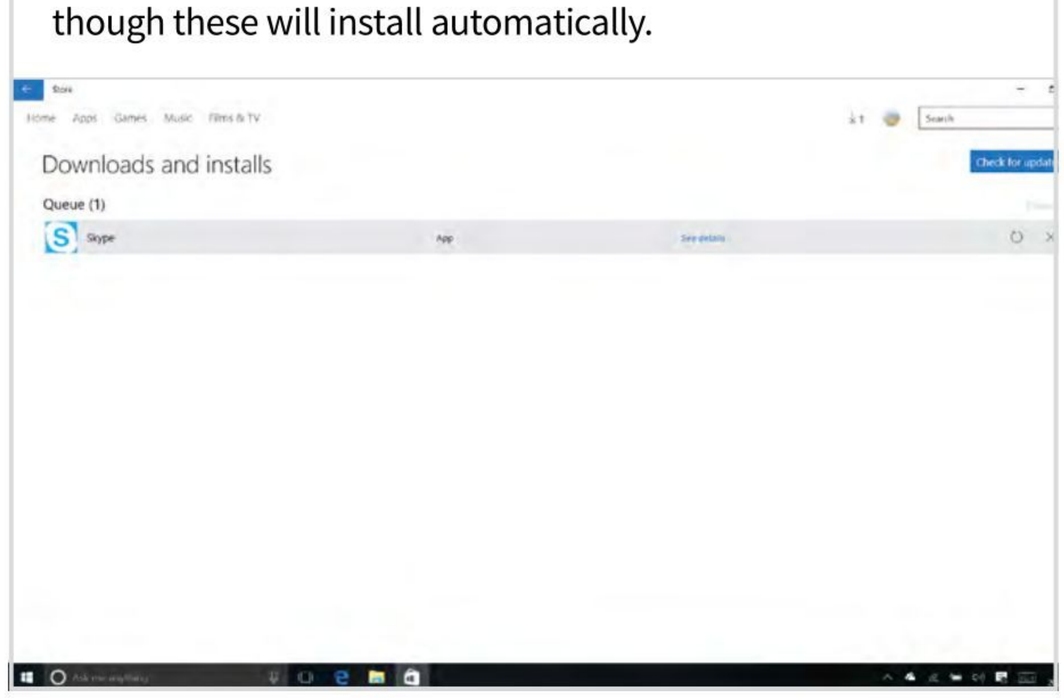
Step 7 Should you wish to, you're also able to join Microsoft's subscription music service Groove Music Pass. We've talked more about the service in our Groove Music app tutorial, but essentially it gives you unlimited access to the Windows Store music catalogue and you can listen on basically any device, including Android and iPhone. There's a 30-day trial but the service usually costs £9/$12.60/€10.25 per month.



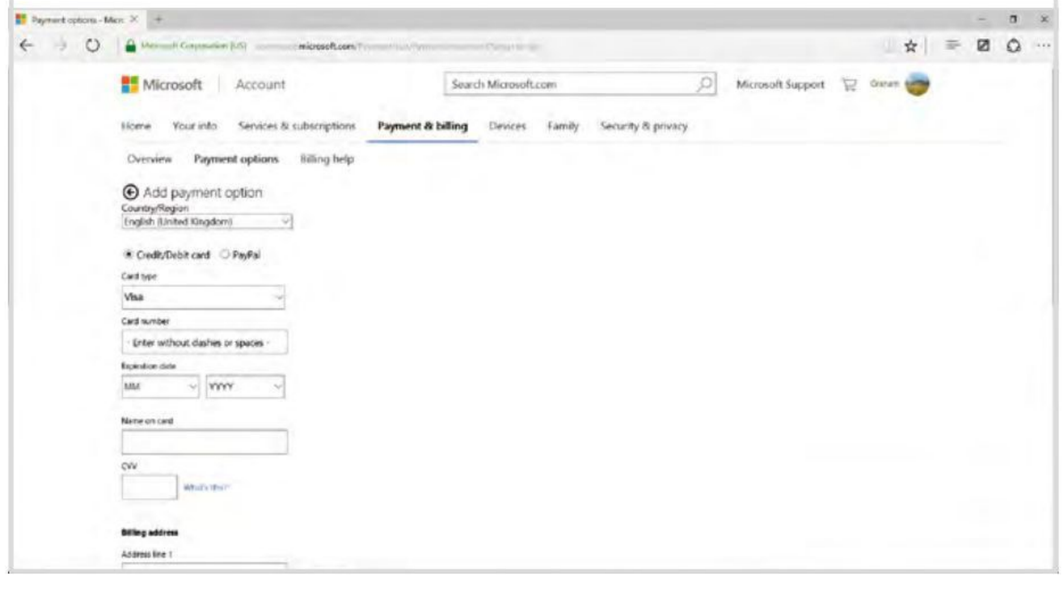
Step 8 You don't have to pay for most apps on the Windows Store. There are stacks of apps you can get hold of for free. Each app has a helpful star rating and user reviews, so you can always see which apps aren't ones that are recommended by others.



Step 9 When you download an app or other content, it will be added to your download queue. Apps will download and then install relatively quickly but other content – especially HD movies – could take longer. You can also click the blue Check for Updates button to check for app updates, though these will install automatically.



Step 10 Paid-for apps use your credit or debit card. This is all connected to your Microsoft account and you can view your current account and billing information at account.microsoft.com. You can have multiple payment options should you choose to. At the Microsoft account site you're also able to view what Microsoft services (like Groove Music Pass) you're currently signed up to.



Maps

Explore the Powerful Maps App

Just like Google, Microsoft provides its own Maps app. This incredibly useful tool not only shows you a 2D map of anywhere in the world but also lets you see a satellite view, traffic information and even view major cities in 3D. You can even draw or write on top of maps.

Directions

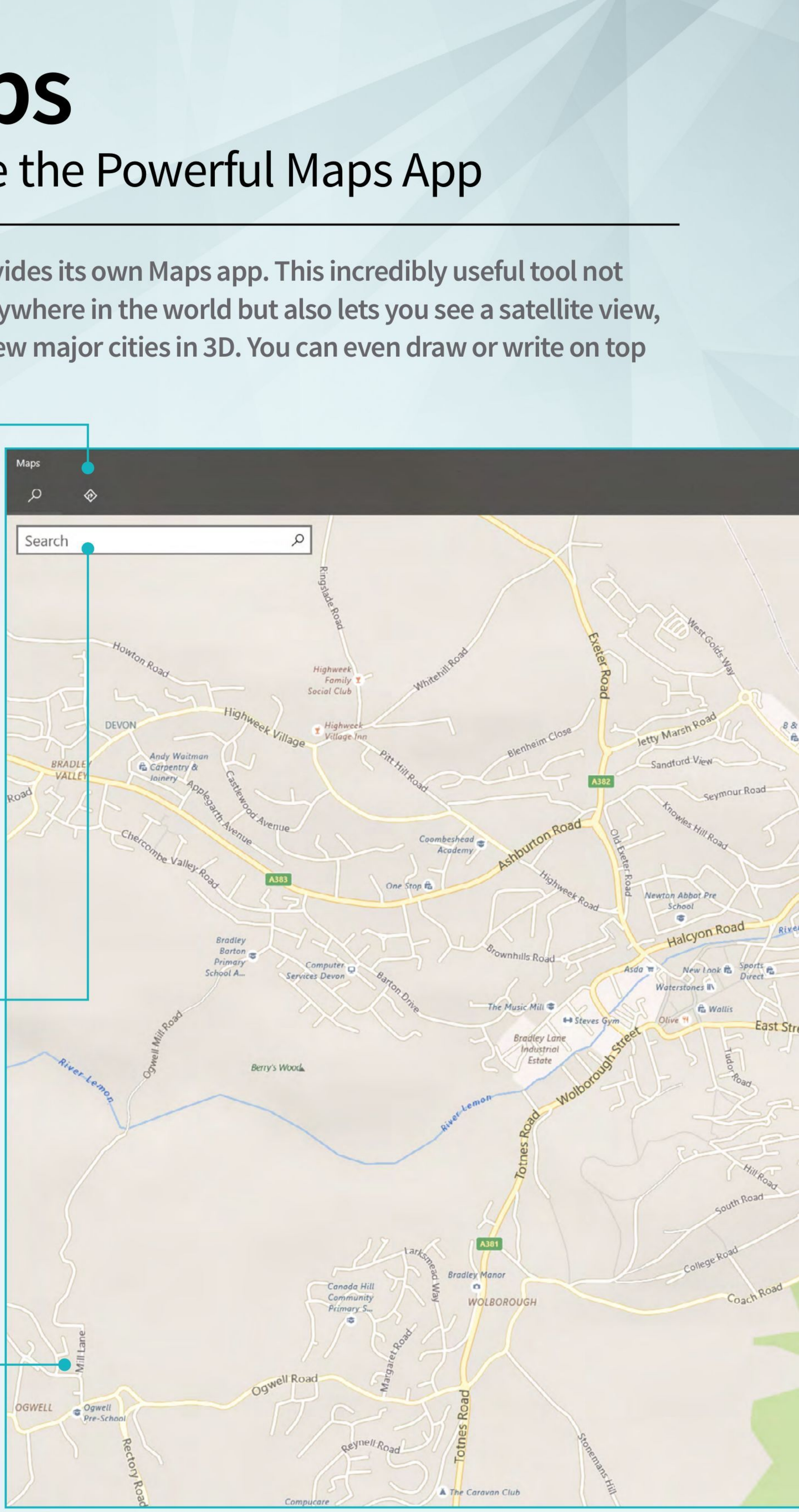
You can use the Map app to plan routes: in a car, by public transport and even on foot. Select your chosen transportation method using the icons at the top of the Directions pane. You can either leave the A field as My Location or type a new one. In the B field, type your destination. The route will appear on the map. You can refine the route by clicking the Options button.

Search

Click the Search button on the left-hand side of the map window and a new pane will open. This pane contains some search suggestions, such as Hotels and Coffee and Shopping, with the standard search field at the top. As you type your search, suggestions will appear in the search pane. You can click any of these to find that location.

Maps View

The Maps view is the default one for the Maps app. This is what will greet you when you first load the app on your Windows 10 PC. You can zoom in and out of the map using either the + and – buttons on the control panel on the right of the window or by scrolling back and forward with the scroll wheel on your mouse (if you use one).



Maps

Your Location

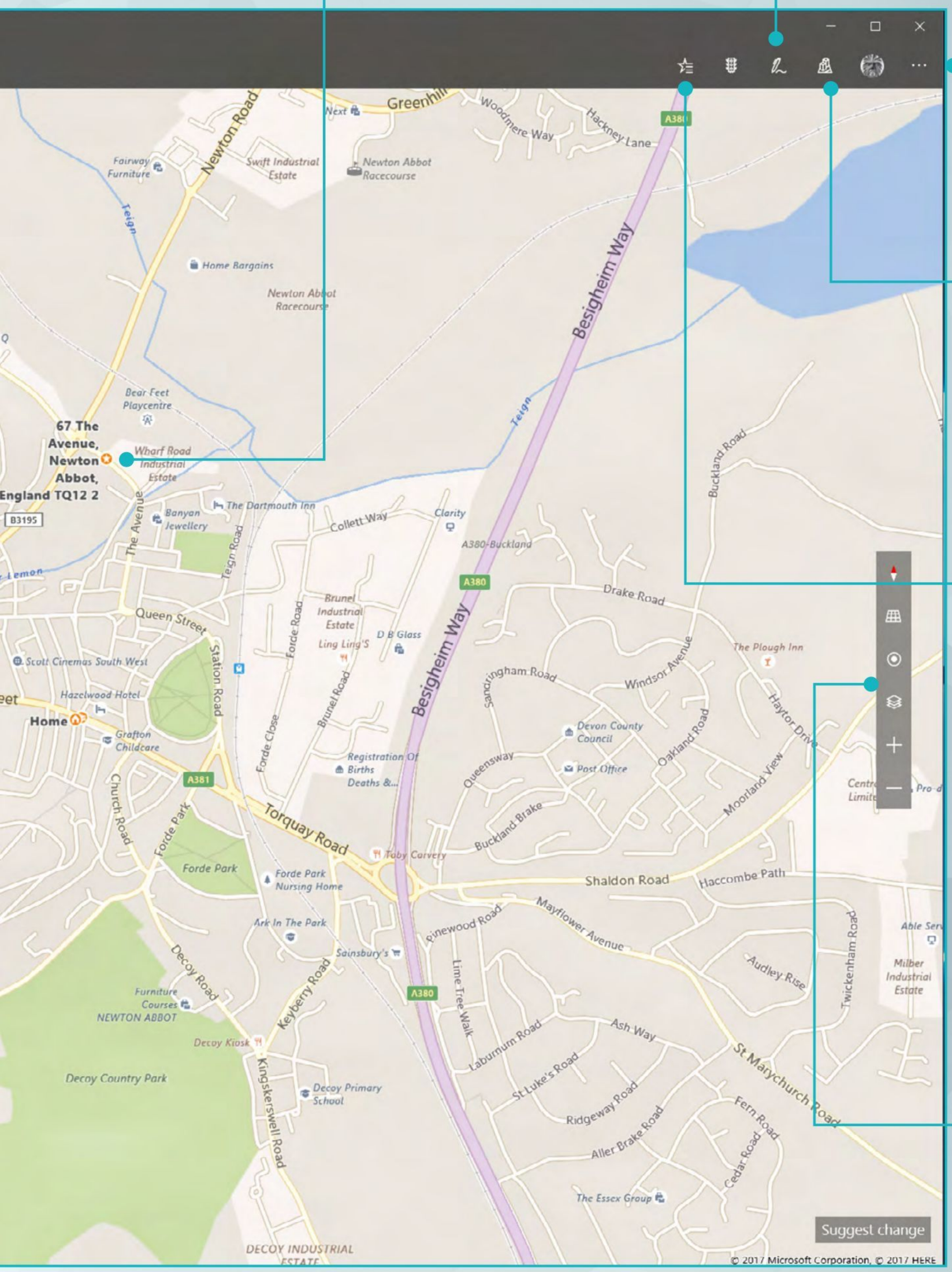
When you open the Maps app it will try to pinpoint your approximate location. You may be asked to allow this location tracking to happen. Your location will then be show on the map as a small black and grey circle. You can click on this to see more information, if available, and then save the location as a favourite by clicking the star in the pane that opens.

Windows Ink

Windows Ink allows you to write or draw on a map using the various pen tools (including colours). You can also use the pen to trace a route and have Maps tell you the distance of the line drawn, or even the directions for the route you marked out. You can then save the customised map. It is really very clever and fun to play around with.

Maps Settings

The Maps app settings let you choose the units of measurement used, depending on your preference and your preferred defaults for directions and location. This last option will be used if the app can't find you, by using location services. You can also download maps for offline use or upload maps that have been saved elsewhere, that have been shared with you perhaps.



3D Cities

The 3D Cities button should be fairly self-explanatory. Click the button to open the pane and you will see an alphabetical list of the cities with thumbnails that have been mapped in 3D. Click the Country/Region heading at the top to refine the list. Click on any of the thumbnails to load the 3D map; loading time will vary, depending on your Internet connection speed.

Saved Places

The Saved Places pane contains all of your saved locations. These can be anything from a favourite coffee shop to the street where you parked your car in a new city. To add places, search for a location and select the star underneath the correct one in the search results list. You then have the option to give the favourite a nickname or set it as Home or Work.

Rotate & Tilt

The small floating control panel on the right of the Maps window contains several useful tools for changing the current view. The top two controls are rotate and tilt, allowing you to either rotate the map around the central point or tilt the map to give you an isometric view. You can easily centre your view on your location again by clicking the third icon down.

Maps

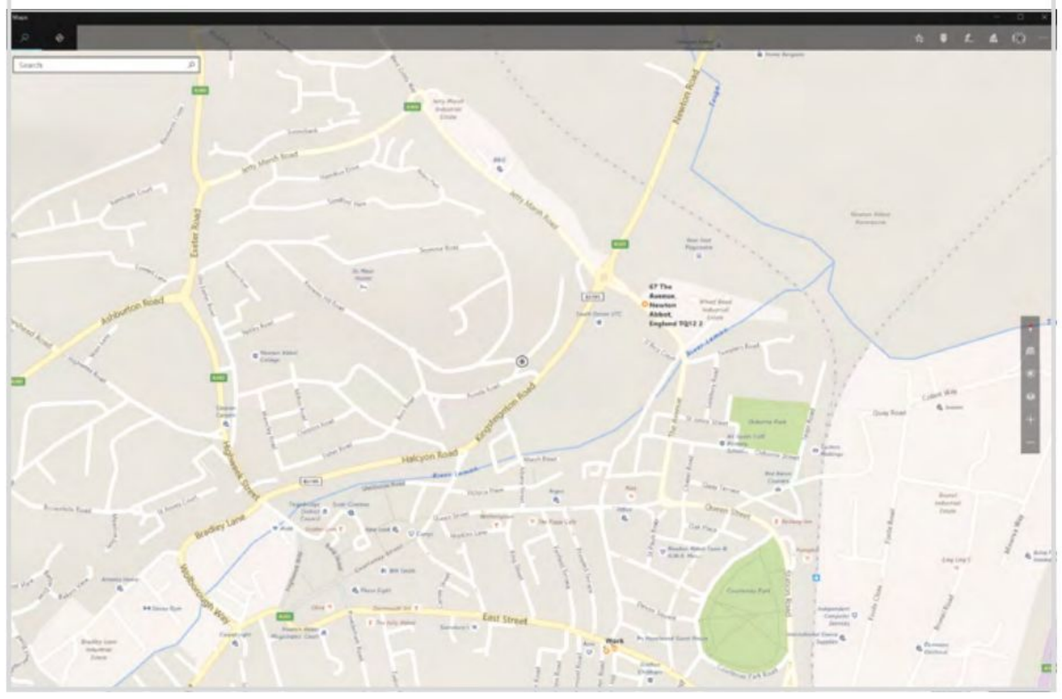
Learn How to Navigate with Maps

Boasting excellent mapping, great aerial photography, up-to-the-minute traffic and the ability to calculate directions by public transport, road or foot, the Maps app is one of the very best ways to navigate. New additions make the Maps app even more useful.

Moving Around in Maps

There are few controls in the Maps app but they allow you to do a lot of things very easily. Let's take a look at how you move around in the app.

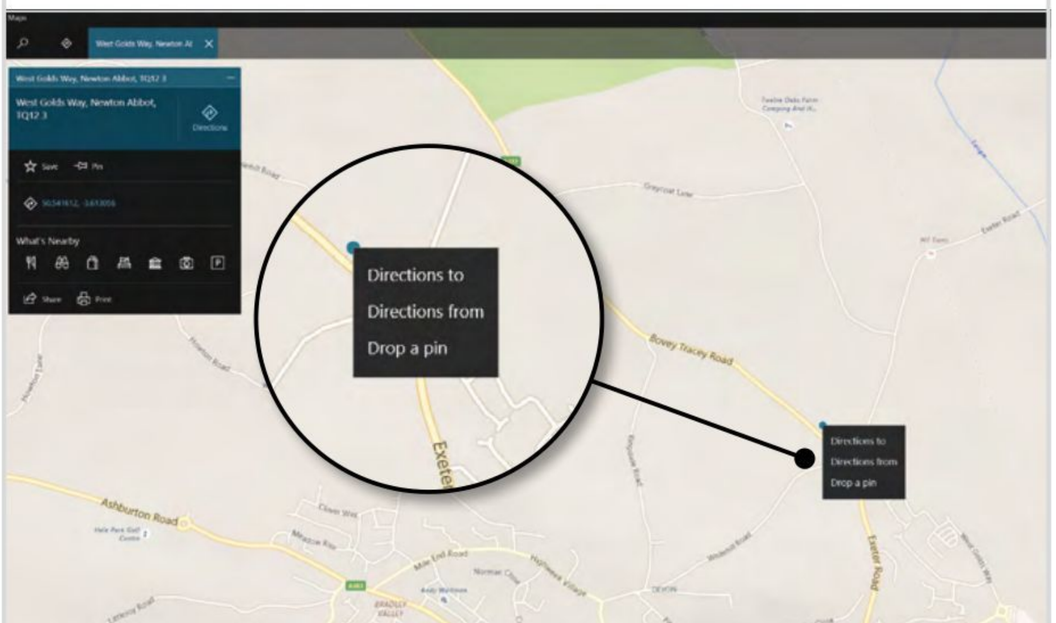
Step 1 The easiest way to move the map around is to left-click and drag it and use the mouse wheel or trackpad slider to zoom in and out. This allows you to move the map around to focus on the area you need. If you are zoomed far out of the map, double-clicking the mouse zooms in quickly.



Step 2 Maps has a dedicated control panel on the side of the window containing, from top to bottom: Rotate, hold pointer on it to see; Tilt, hold pointer over to see options; Show Location; Map Views/Layer; and Zoom in and Zoom out. You can also tilt by holding the right Mouse button and moving up and down.

Step 3 Clicking on things like Saved Places or 3D Cities in the top control bar, tabs will line up alongside the permanent Search and Directions buttons at the top left of the window. You can then click on them at any time to see the information contained in each pane or tab.

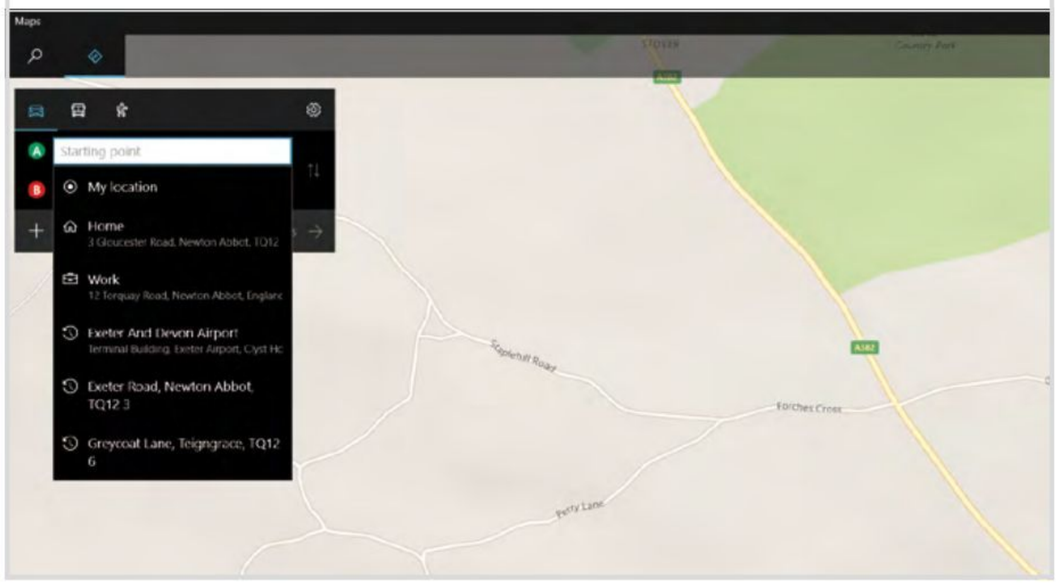
Step 4 Right-clicking on the map brings up a small action menu. This lets you set a To location, a From location (for planning a route), add a new destination and drop a pin in a specific location. When you drop a pin, a new window opens allowing you to search for things at that location, add favourites and more.



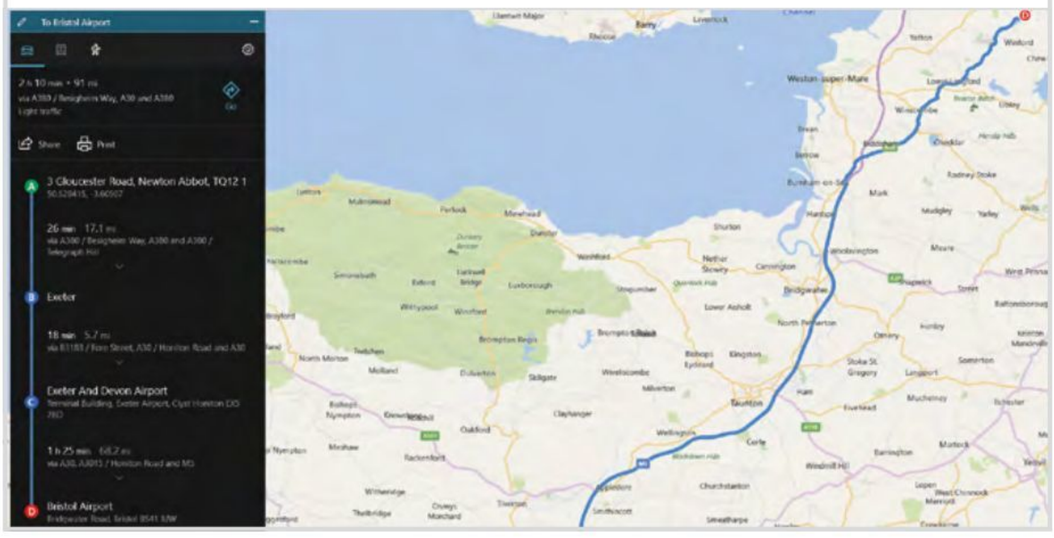
Planning a Route

Maps is great for checking out an area, looking around a city or just finding businesses local to you. It is also great for planning detailed routes.

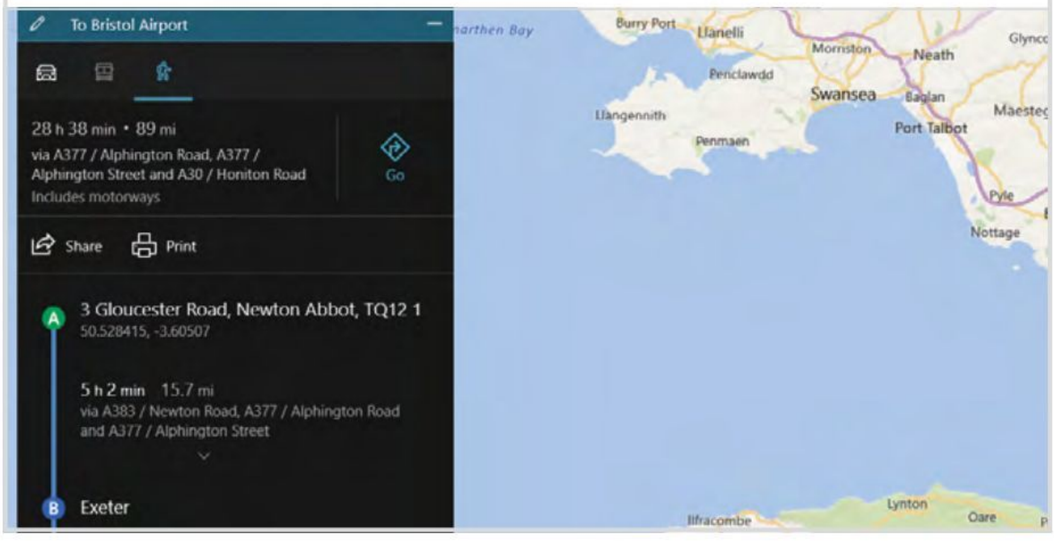
Step 1 To start planning a route, click the Directions tab at the top left of the Maps window. A small panel opens with boxes for your starting and ending location. You can either type a destination or you can choose one from the list that appears below the box when you click on it.



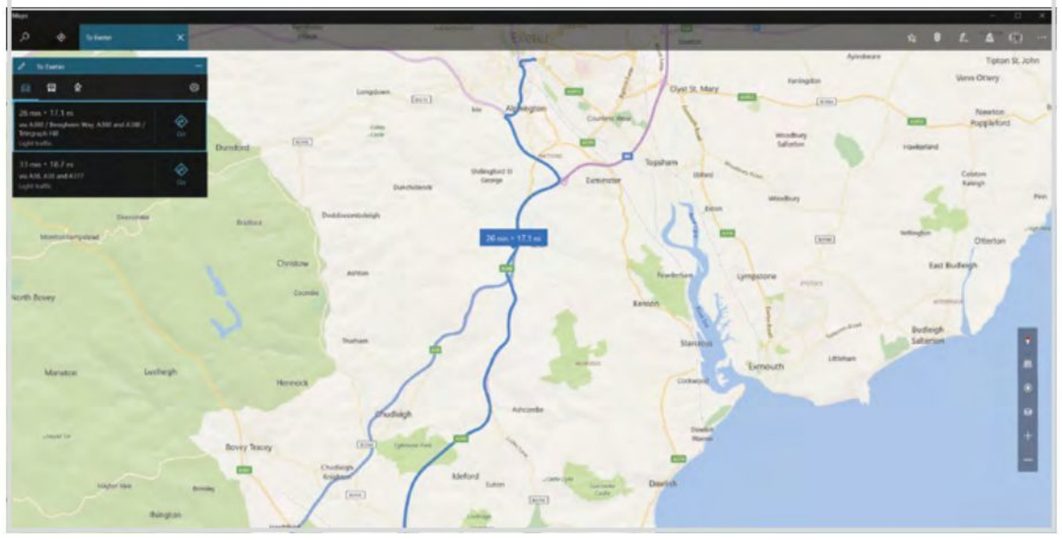
Step 2 If you need to make detours or multiple stops along your route, you can click the + button to add more destination boxes. Each one can have a destination in it, making up your complete route. When you view directions, each of the destinations you added is marked with a relevant letter.



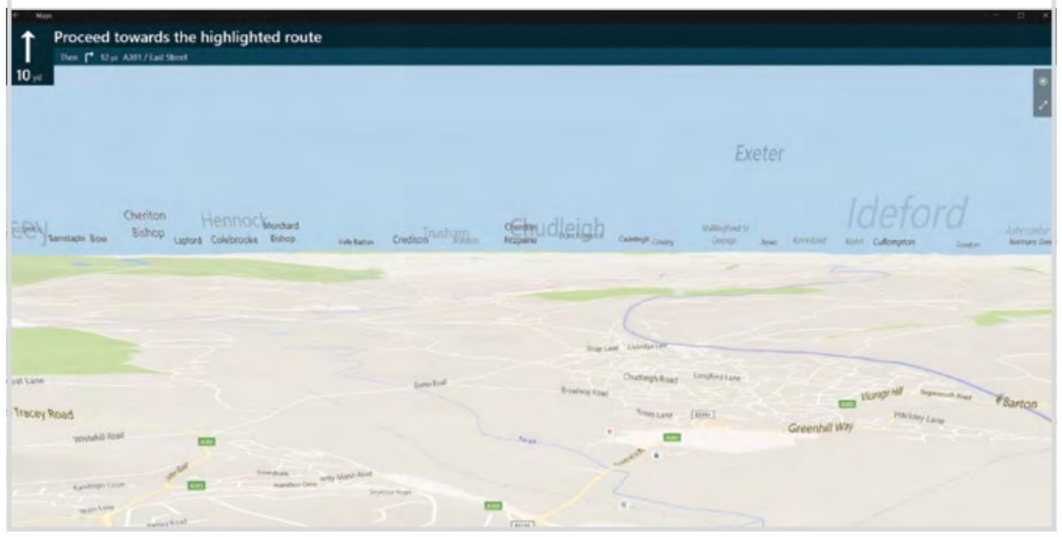
Step 3 Routes vary depending on whether you are driving, walking or need to take public transport. You can quickly flick between these options using the buttons at the top of the directions pane. When you have your start and end points entered and travel method chosen, click Get Directions.



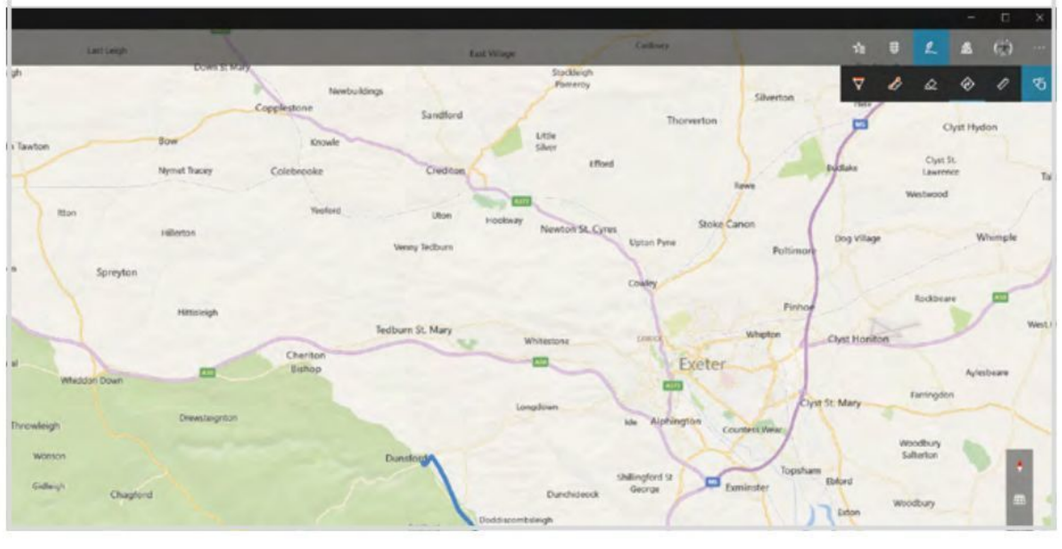
Step 4 The route is now shown on the map, with an estimated travel time readout above the destination. If alternative routes are available, they are shown as a light blue line, with the main route shown as a dark blue line. Points along the route are marked, usually where a change of direction is needed.



Step 5 If you click Go in the directions pane, Maps switches to a satnav-style view and traces your route as you continue along it. This is more for portable devices such as phones and tablets that you could use for directions in a vehicle. Click the Back button to return to the normal maps view.



Step 6 You can also plan a route by drawing it. Click the Ink button and then the Directions tool in the menu that opens. Draw a line along the route you wish to take and Maps refines that into a proper route along roads, missing dead-ends, etc. You can save or share the route just as with any other.



People

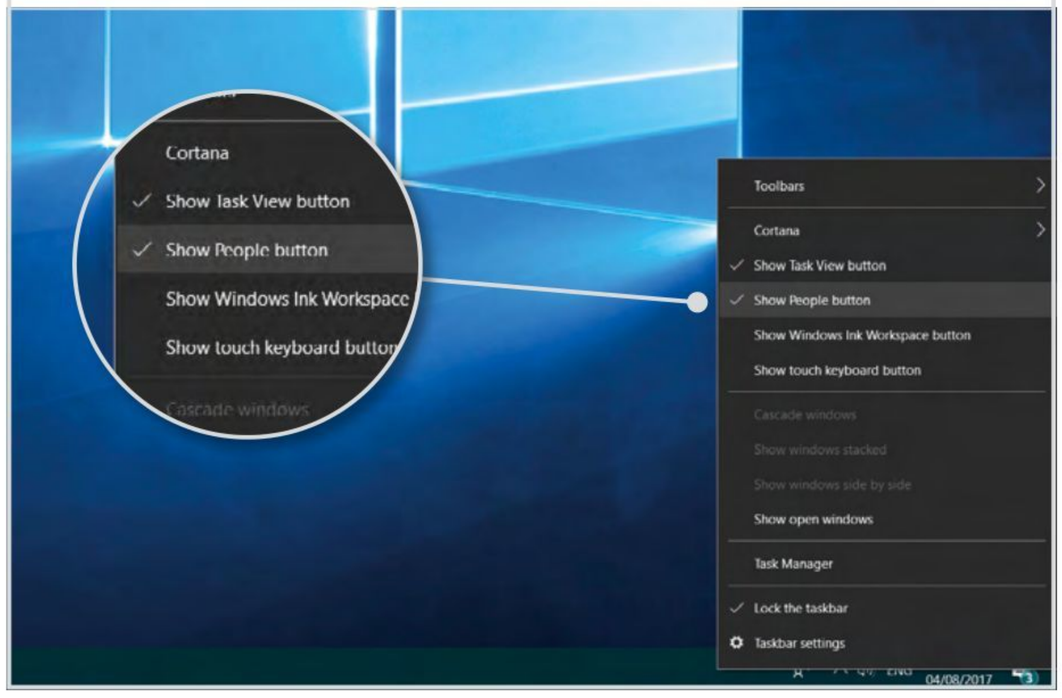
Manage Your Contacts in Windows 10

The People app has been a part of Windows 10 for some time but in the more recent update to the OS, it has had an overhaul. New features have been added, along with a brand new taskbar icon. Let's take a look at this excellent way of keeping track of your contacts.

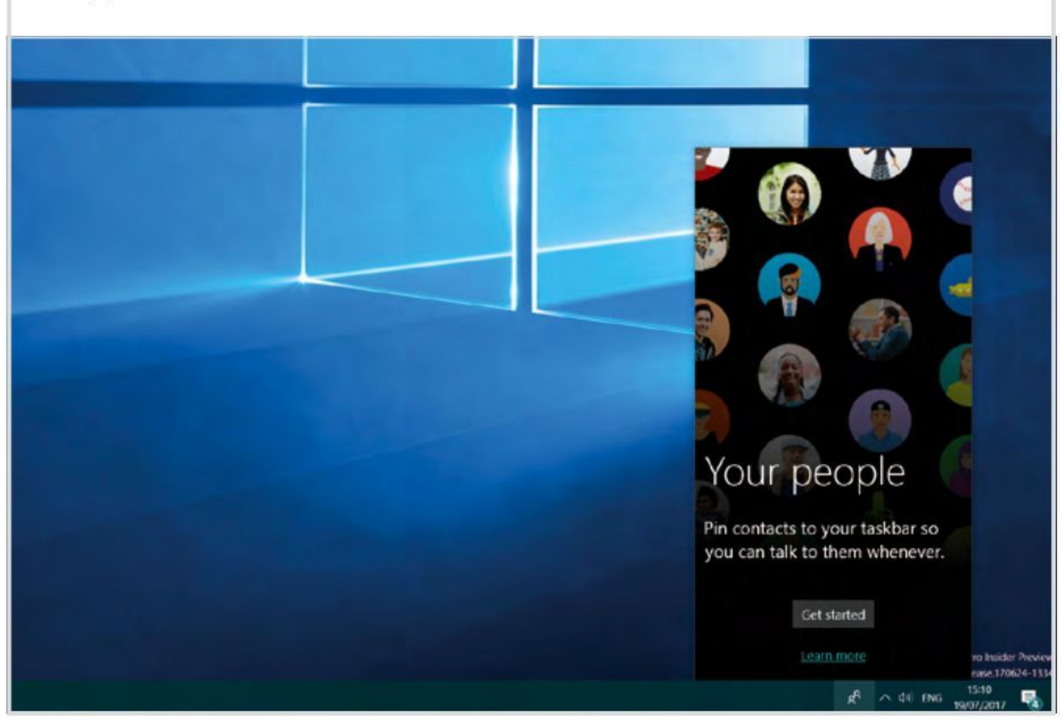
The New People Button

If you can't see the People button in the taskbar, and can't activate it in the action menu, you may be running an older version of Windows 10. Check your available updates.

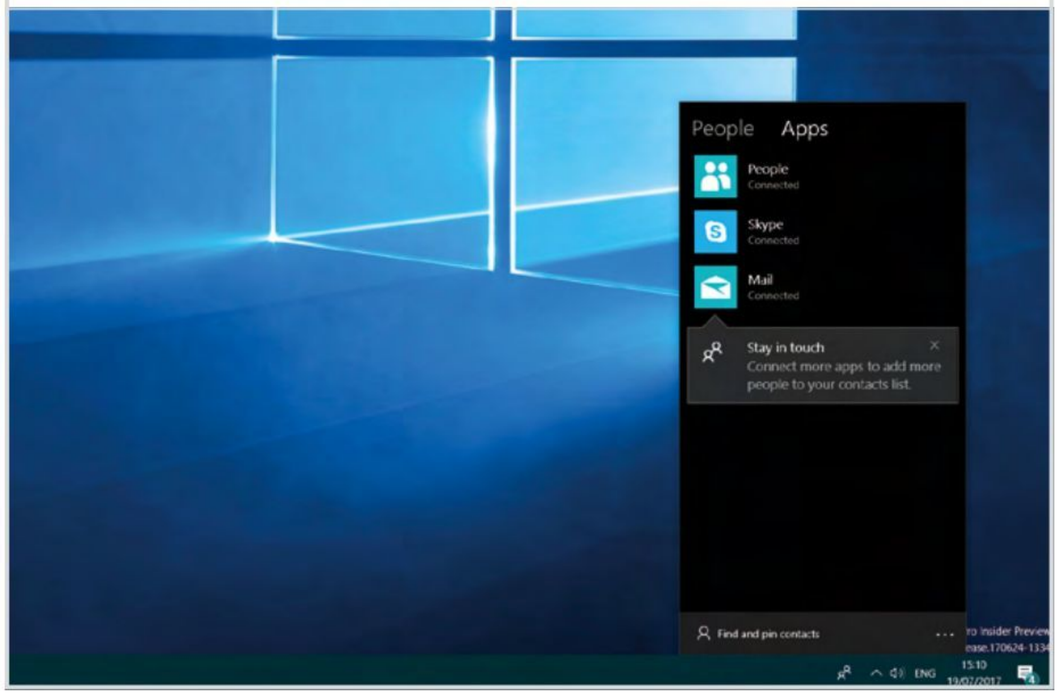
Step 1 After the newest Creators update has installed, you will see a small people icon on the right-hand side of the taskbar. If you don't see the icon (it looks like two people, one standing behind the other), right-click on the taskbar and select "Show the People Button" from the action menu.



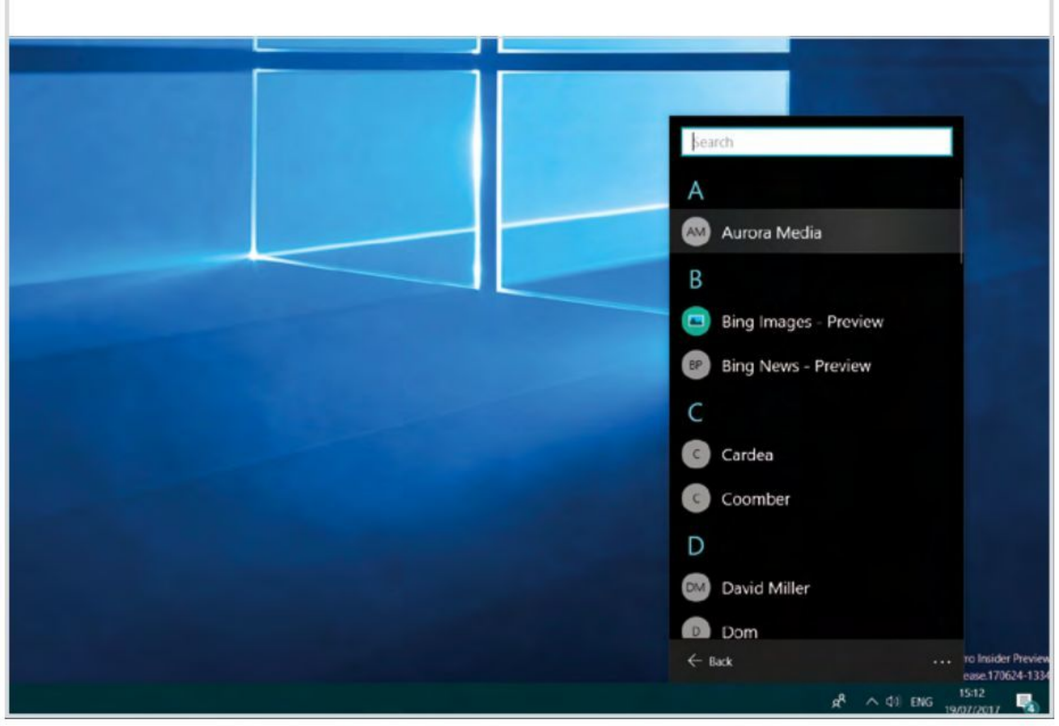
Step 2 Click on the button and a new People panel will open. Click on the Get started button at the bottom of the new panel. Now click on the Apps tab. This will show you a list of apps that the people app is currently pulling contact information from. It may include apps such as Skype and Mail.



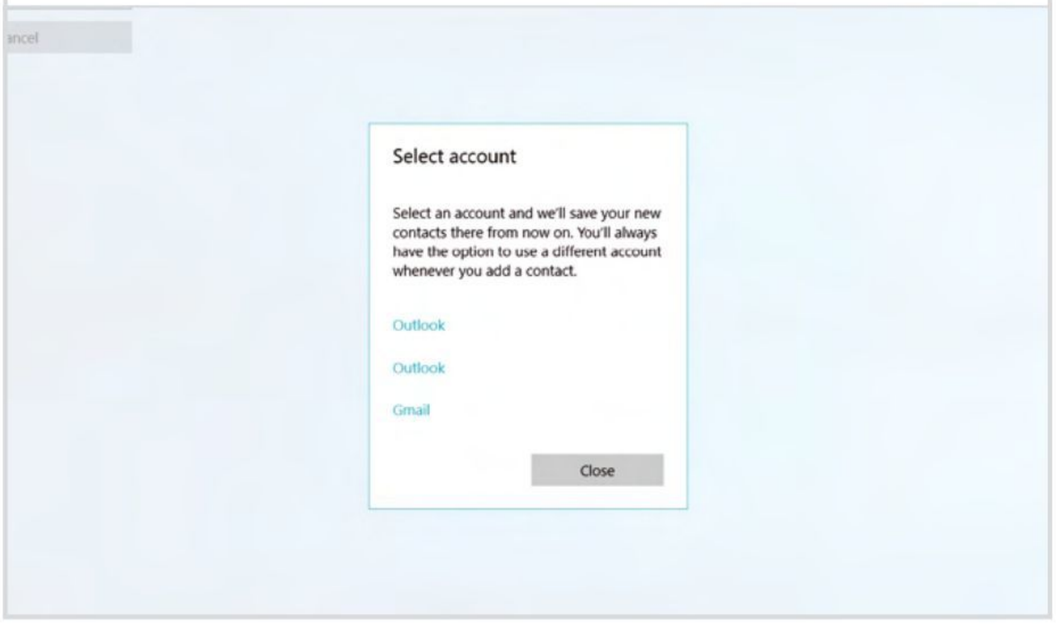
Step 3 You may need to connect the apps before People will start checking for contacts. If an app is not already connected, but is available to be, it will have a link next to it: Click to connect this app. The app in question will open and it will be linked to People. Any new contacts in the app will be added.



Step 4 The People tab in the panel will eventually show a list of regular contacts, or people you have Shoulder Tapped (or who have Shoulder Tapped you). Right now it will probably be empty and you can't manually add people to this panel; although this option may be added in the future.

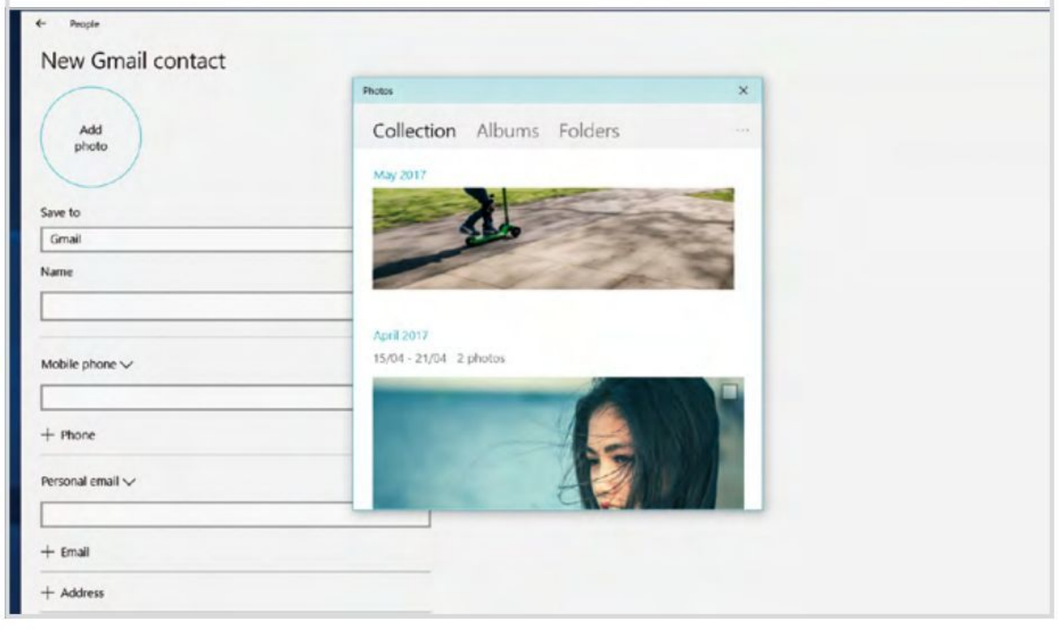


Step 5 You can open the original (but updated) People app either through the People panel on the taskbar, or by clicking on it in the main apps list in the Start menu. To add a new contact manually to the People app, click on the People button, select the More button and then New Contact.

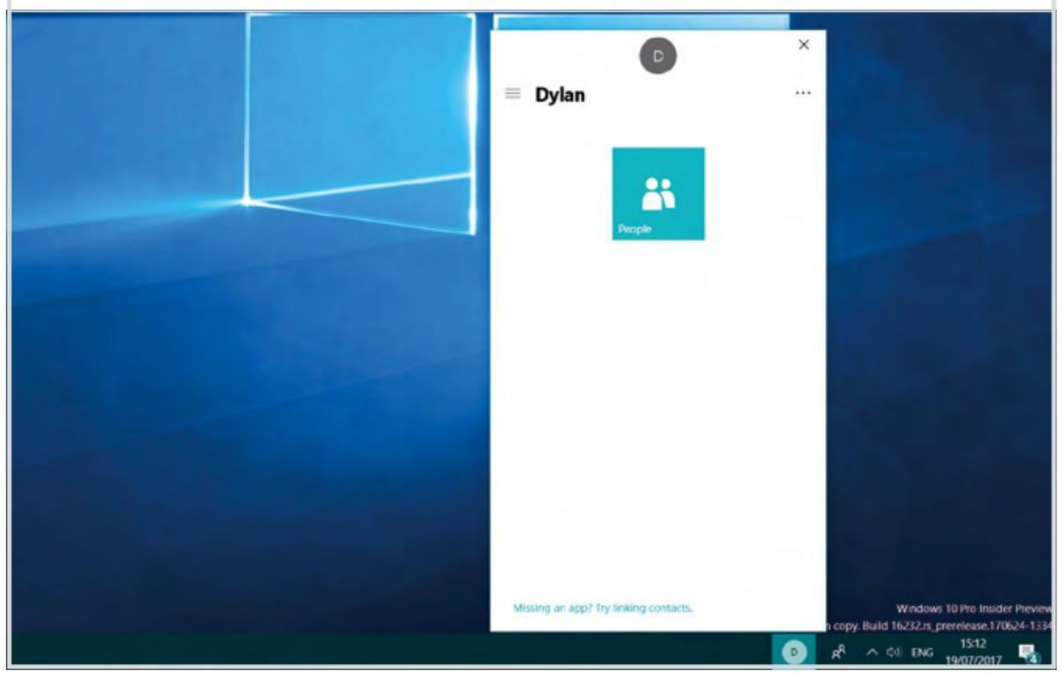


Step 6 The main app will open in a new window and you will be asked to choose and account to save the contact to: usually Outlook but can also include things like Gmail accounts, if you use one. You can then enter the name, phone number and any other contact details in the fields provided.

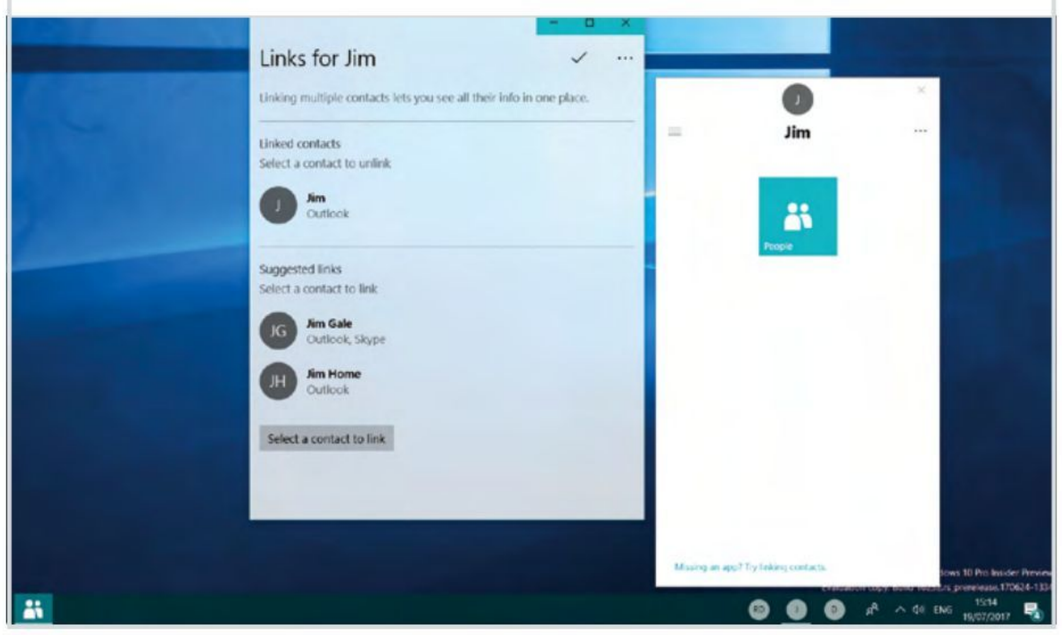
Step 7 You can add a photo to your contacts, just like on a smartphone, if you have one to hand. Click the Add photo circle on the new contact creation screen and navigate to the photo you want to use. The default photo selection is the Photos app but you can browser to any folder you want.



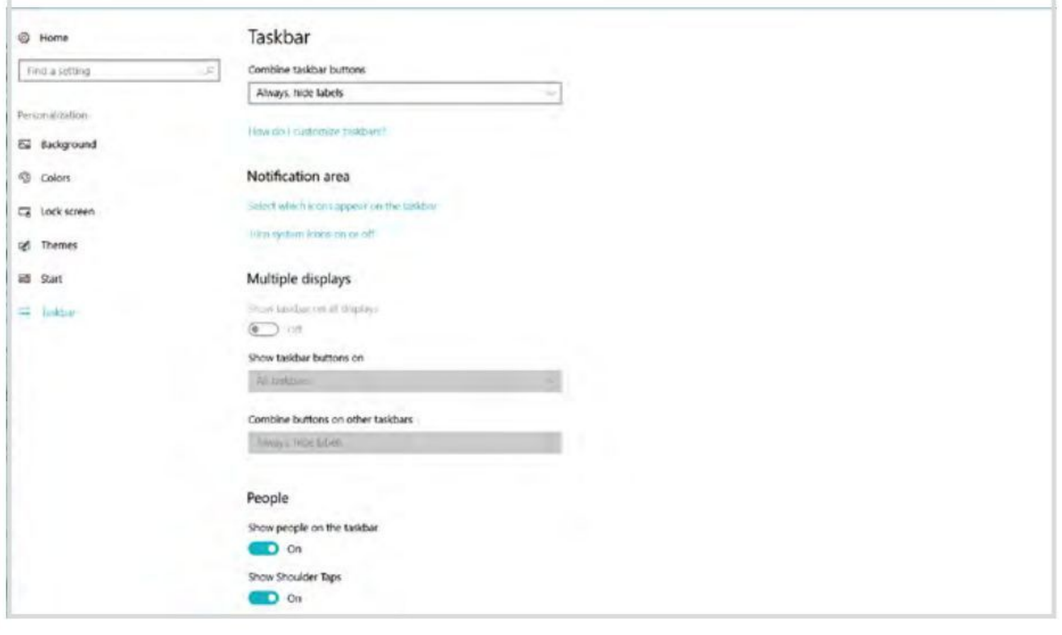
Step 8 The new People app allows you to pin a number of contacts to the right side of the taskbar for quick access. Click the People button and then click "Find and pin contacts". A list of your contacts will appear in the panel. Scroll down until you find the contact you want to pin.



Step 9 Click on the contact to pin it to the taskbar. A separate window will also open, showing you the contact details. This is the windows that will open each time you click on a pinned contact. A well as the contact details, it also contains links to the main app, and options for unpinning.



Step 10 Shoulder Taps are notifications from contacts, from apps like Skype, that animate in the taskbar. To enable Shoulder Taps, go to Settings > Personalisation > Taskbar and scroll down to People. You can enable or disable Shoulder Taps and enable or disable Shoulder Tap sounds here.



Calendar

Explore the Microsoft Calendar App

The Windows 10 Calendar app is a fully integrated planning tool that can be linked up to your email accounts and easily synced to your other Windows 10 devices. Adding new events can be done manually, or you can simply use it to view national and public holidays, all of which are automatically added based on your location.

Add New Event

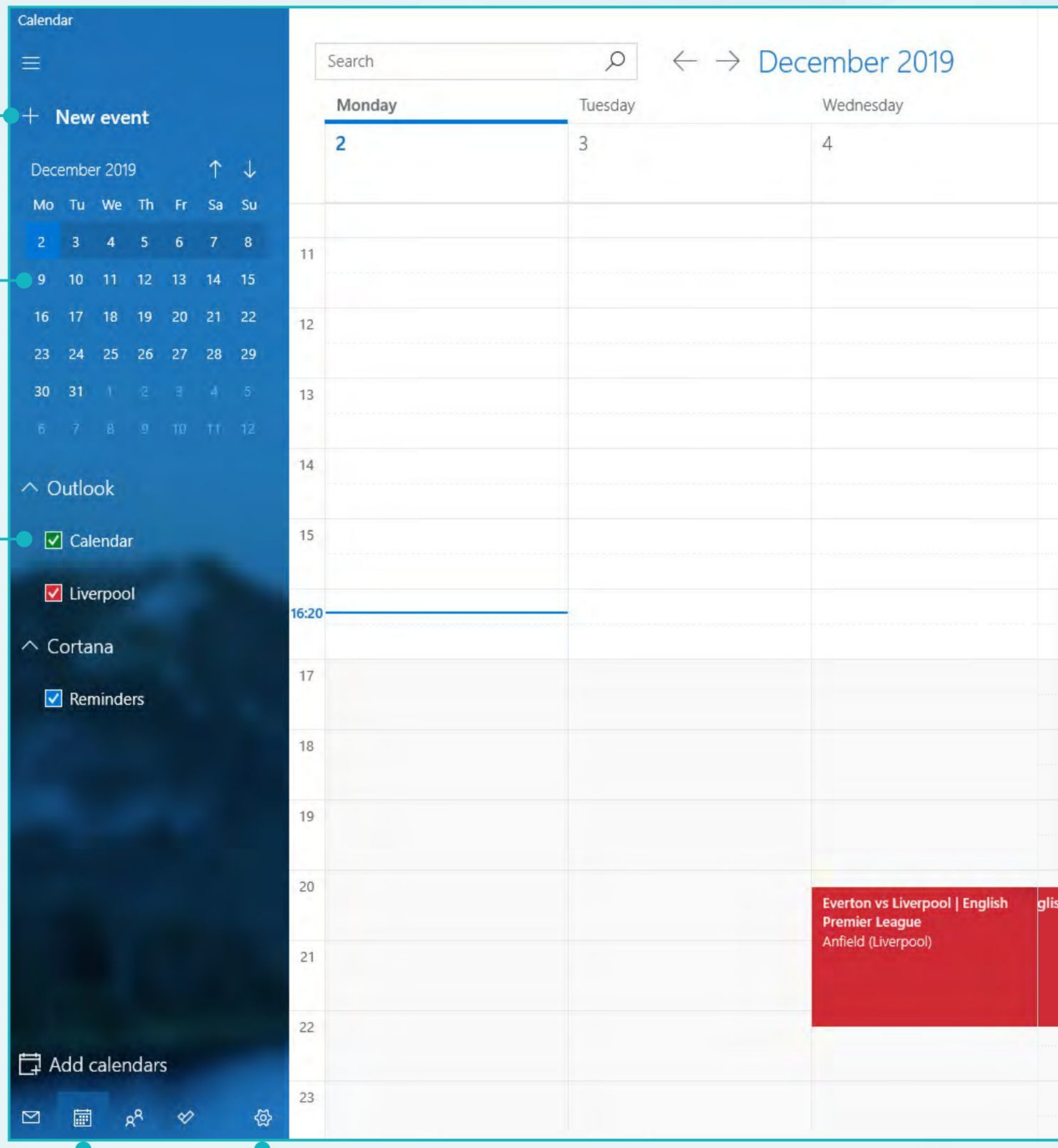
There are two main ways to add a new event to your calendar. You can either click on the date in the main window or, if the date you want is not in view, you can click the New Event button here. You can then add an event name, location, and a start and end date. Give the event a short description, especially if you plan to share it with a contact. You can do that by adding people using the pane on the right of the Add Event screen.

Monthly View

No matter which view you choose for the main Calendar pane - day, week, etc. - the month preview always shows a full month. You can use the arrows above the mini calendar to skip to different months and clicking on a date brings that date into view on the main Calendar pane. The current day is highlighted in the Month Preview.

Linked Calendars

Your calendar can be linked to your email account, which is shown here. If you are using Gmail for your email account, and have any calendars set up in Google Calendar, these are also shown here. You can use the checkboxes to select and deselect calendars from showing in the main pane; each is colour coded, so you know from which custom calendar an event comes.

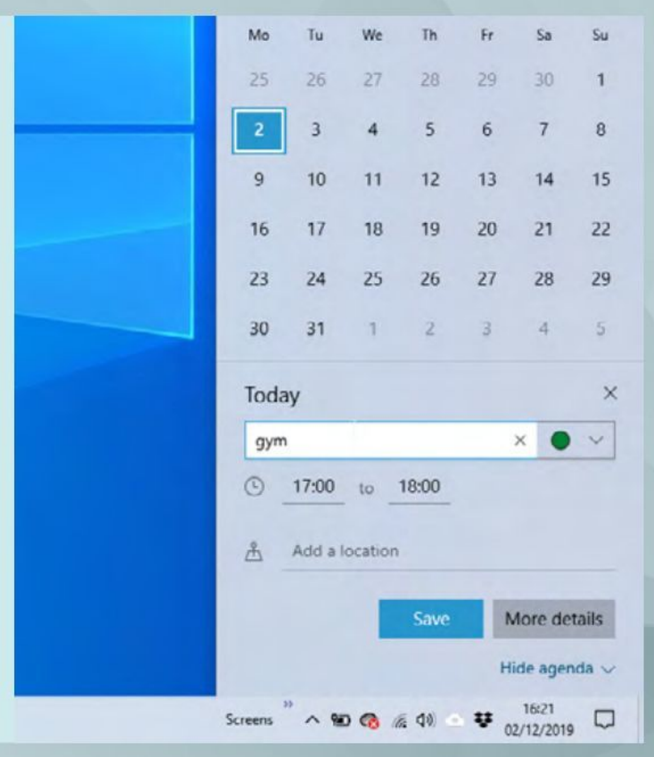


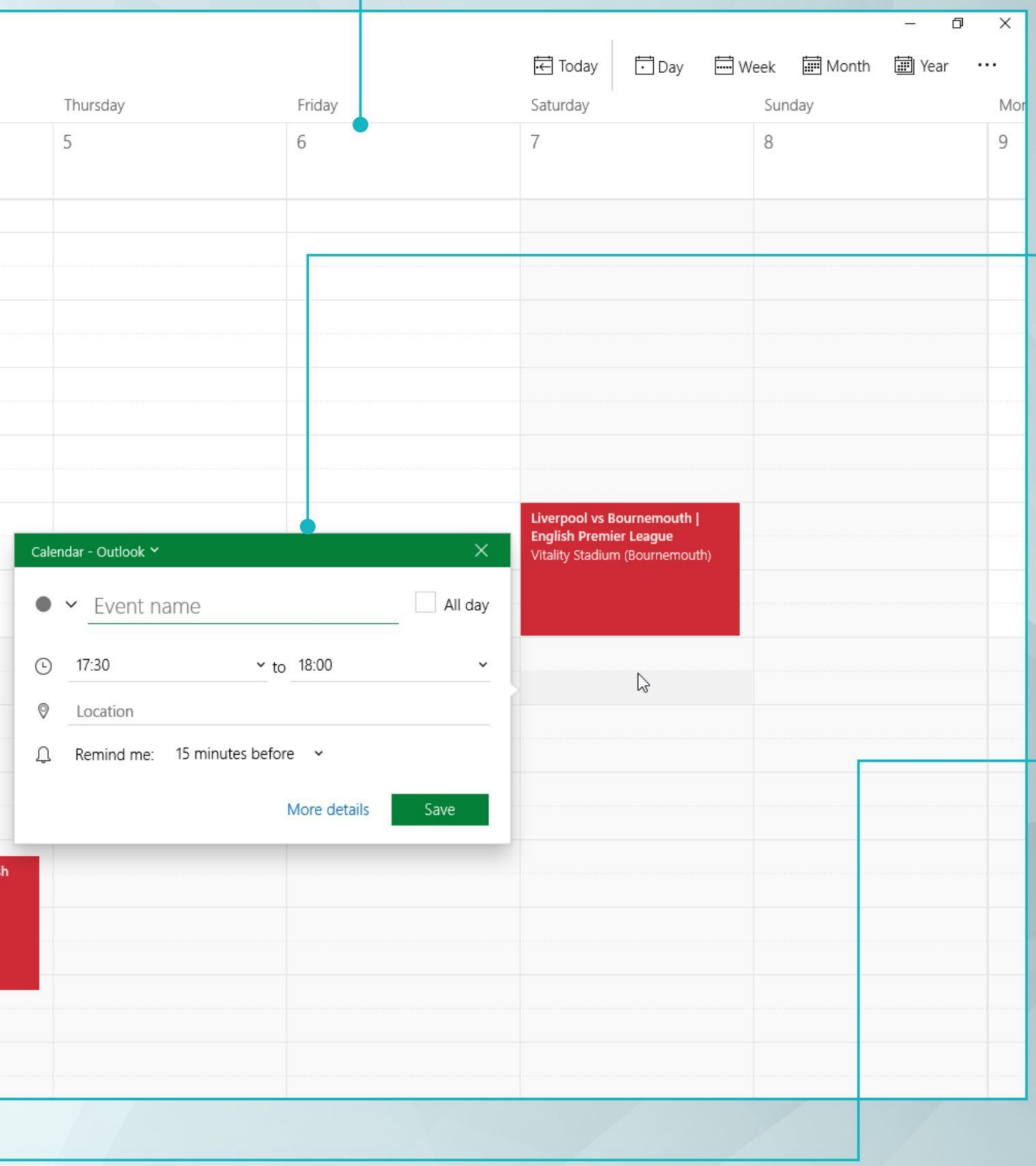
Calendar Pane

The main Calendar pane, however you choose to view it with the View buttons, contains several different bits of useful information. Public and national holidays are automatically added, based on location. The current day is accentuated in your chosen highlight colour. Weather and temperature information is shown for the current day, along with a few days after. Clicking the weather symbol opens the Weather app.

CALENDAR POPUP

You can now add a new event from the calendar popup in the Taskbar, without having the main Calendar app open. Simply click on the date in the Taskbar, select the date you want to add the event/reminder, and then begin typing in the text box below the date grid.





Add Event

Click on any day in the main pane, or any hourly slot in day view, and a mini Add Event pane opens. You can use this to add an event to your calendar quickly. The pane includes event name, time-slots and location; it also lets you choose into which custom calendar you want to add it. If you choose to add more details, click the More Details button, if not, click Done to add the event.

Calendar Settings

Alongside various customisation settings, such as the ability to choose light and dark themes and change the default highlight colour, are settings for adding new email accounts and changing the default view. You can also add public or national holidays manually, in Calendar Settings, if they have not been correctly added automatically.

Switch to Tabs

The Mail and Calendar apps are closely linked, and you can quickly switch between the two using the buttons here. Receive an email with an appointment in it, and you can quickly add it to your calendar using the tools in the Mail app. You can also quickly switch to the People app and the ToDo app using the tabs/buttons here.

Photos

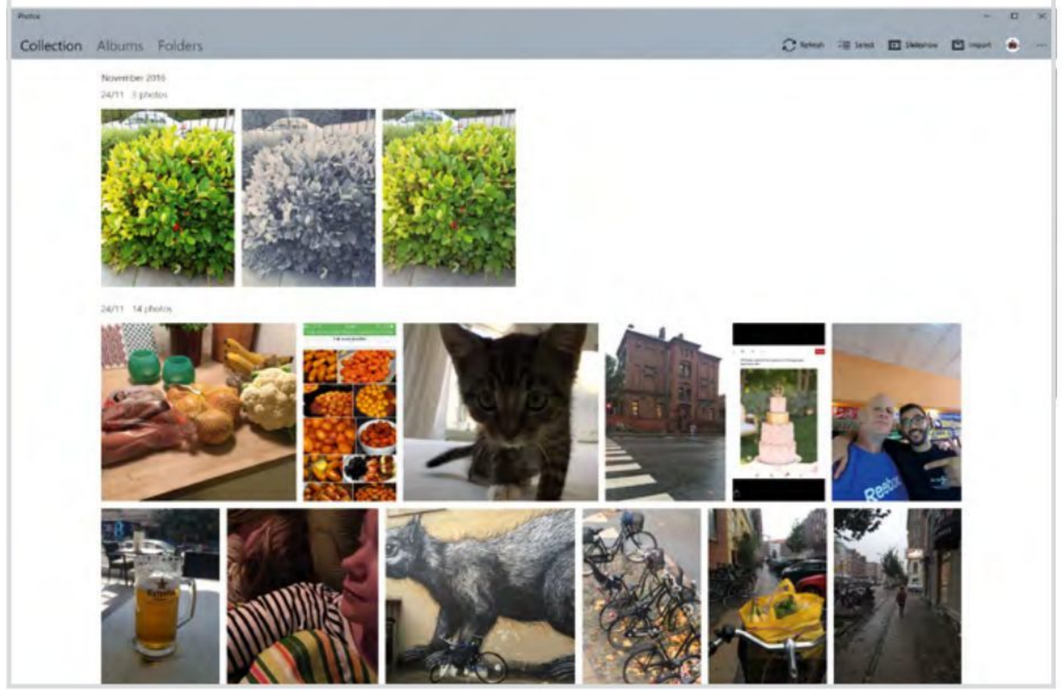
How to Manage and Edit Your Photos

The Photos app was first introduced in Windows 8 but it wasn't the best experience when compared to most third party apps. In Windows 10 it has been improved, with better ways to browse photos and a lot more editing options to make the most of your images.

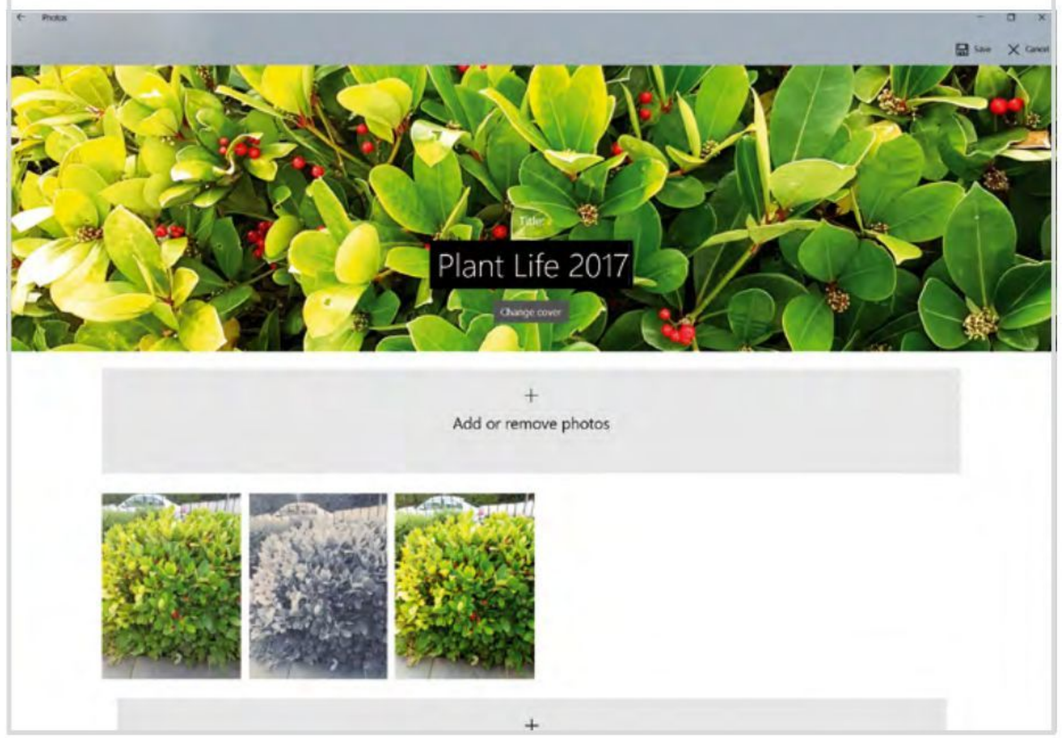
Managing Your Images

The Photos app has seen some useful improvements over the last few years and is actually very powerful now. It doesn't offer the flexibility of an app like Photoshop Elements, but it does a lot of simple edits very well.

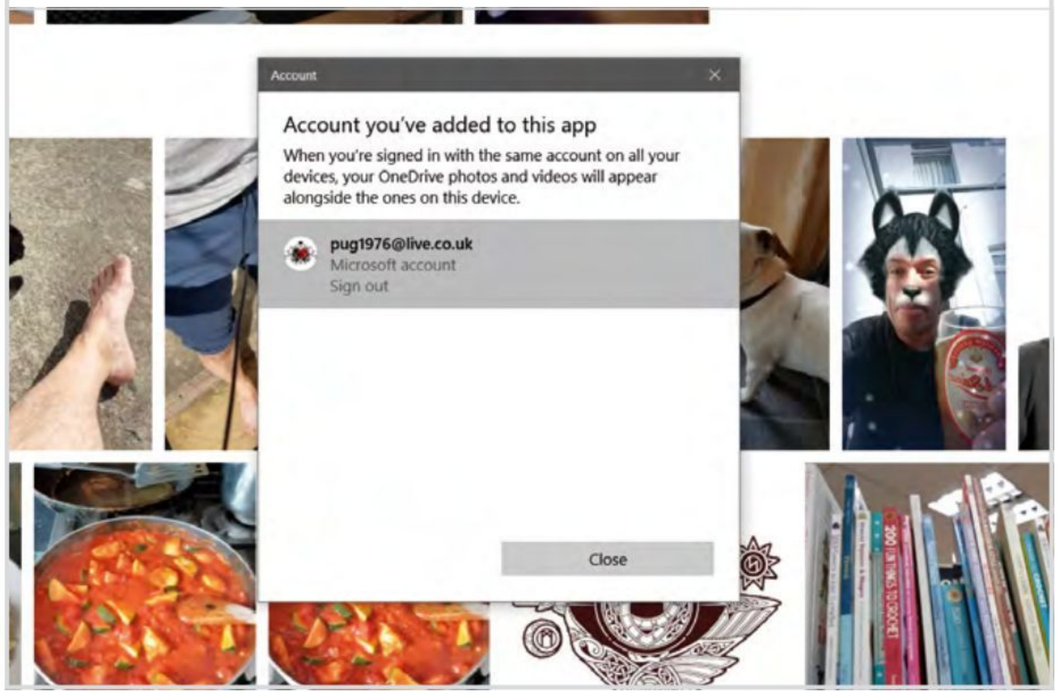
Step 1 Photos shows all of your images in a scrolling timeline of images, like we're now used to seeing on many smartphones or tablets. This is called your photos Collection. You can click on any image to get a full-window view and then click the Back arrow in the top left corner to return to the main list.



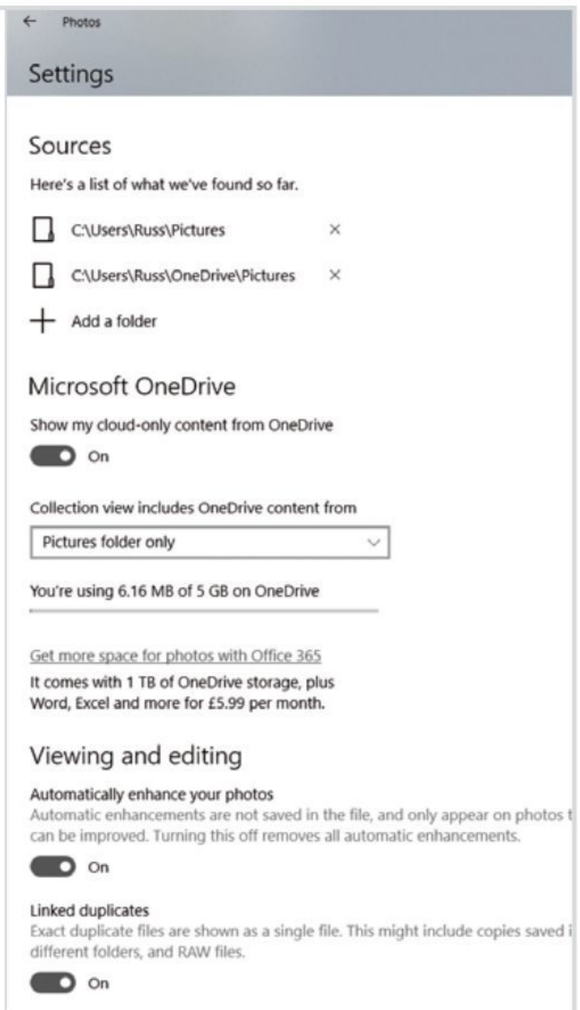
Step 2 Albums is a completely automated feature. If you have an iPhone or iPad, you may have seen Apple's Moments feature; this works in much the same way. Albums gathers together groups of photos you took around the same time, so you can easily look back through them later.



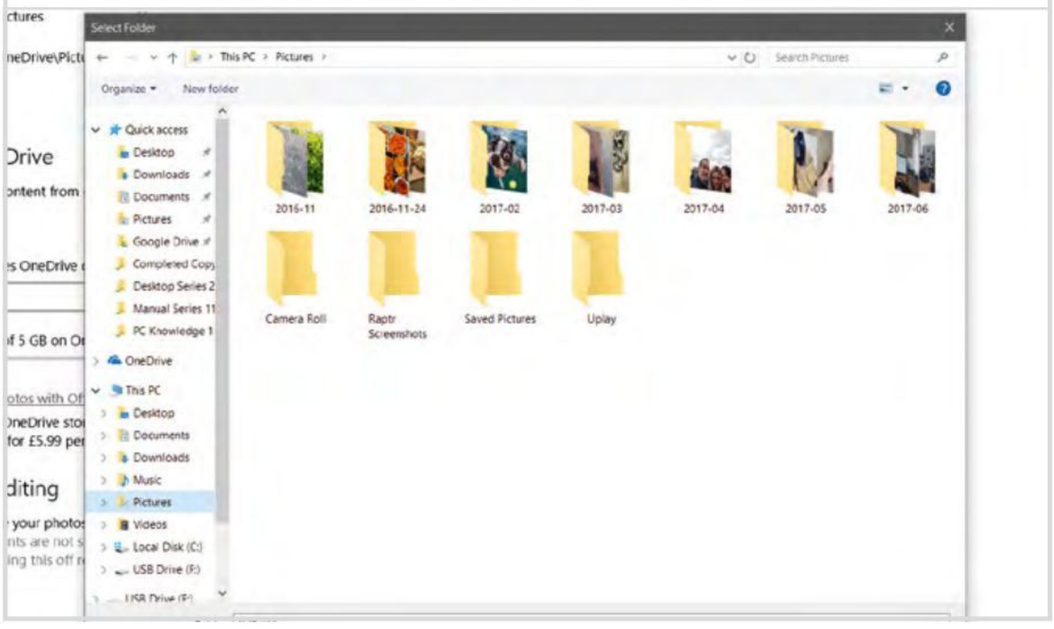
Step 3 If you're signed into Windows 10 with your Microsoft account, you'll also be signed in automatically to the Photos app. The benefit of this is that photos stored on OneDrive also appear in Photos. You can auto-upload photos from the OneDrive app for your phone as you take them.



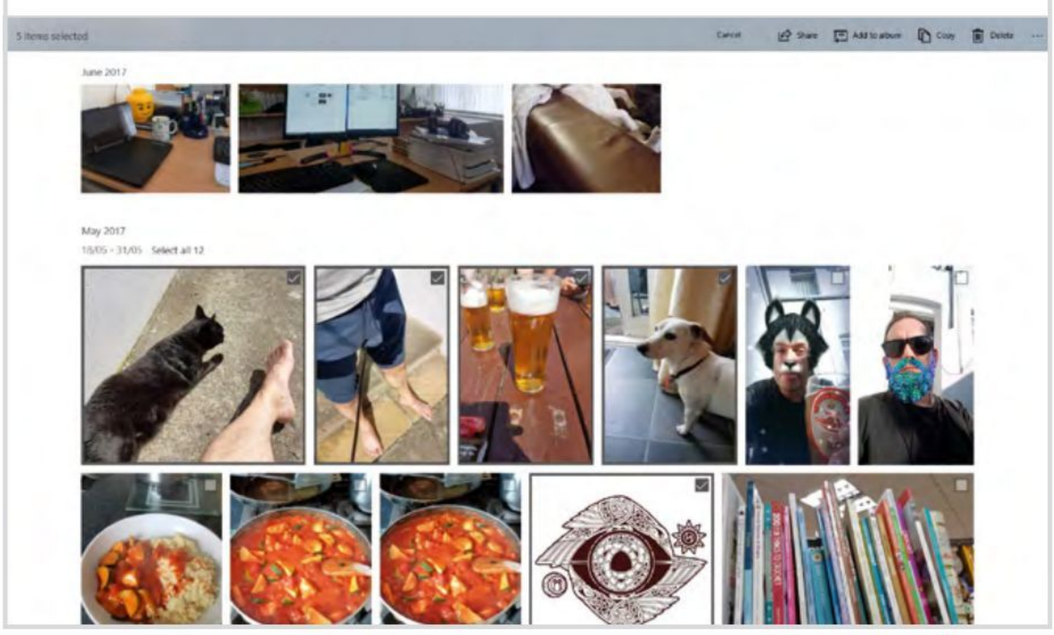
Step 4 Photos settings, click the More button at the top right, lets you choose whether the Photos app automatically enhances badly exposed photos as well as whether you want the app to show duplicate images as one file; say you saved a photo twice or imported it twice without realising.



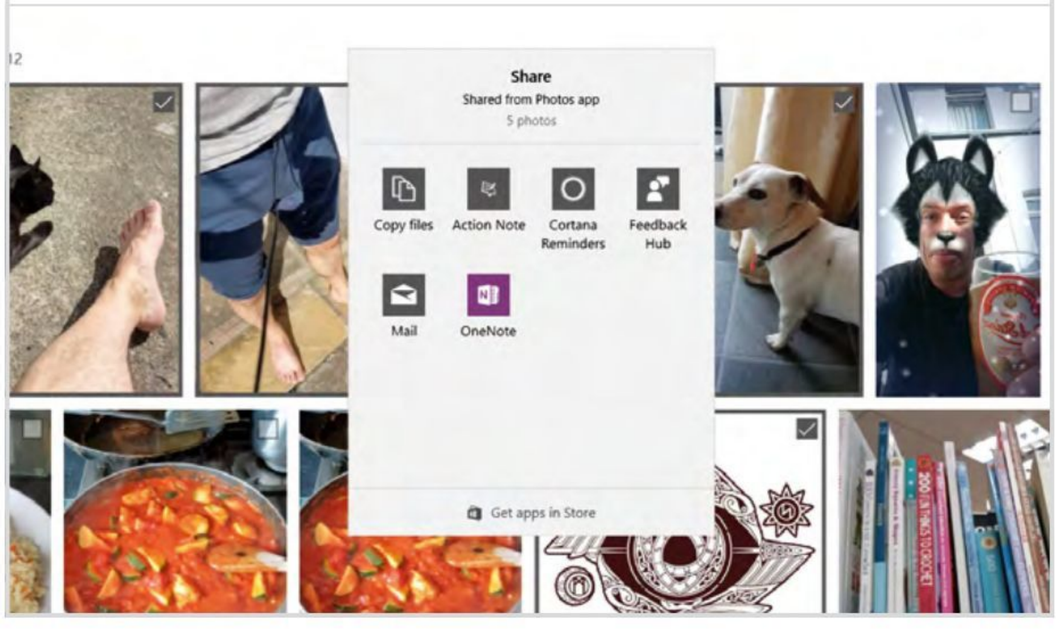
Step 5 You can also choose where Photos should look for images here. Your own Pictures folder, plus Windows' public Photos folder are automatically included; but it's really useful to be able to change this if you store your images somewhere else, perhaps an external hard drive you always use.



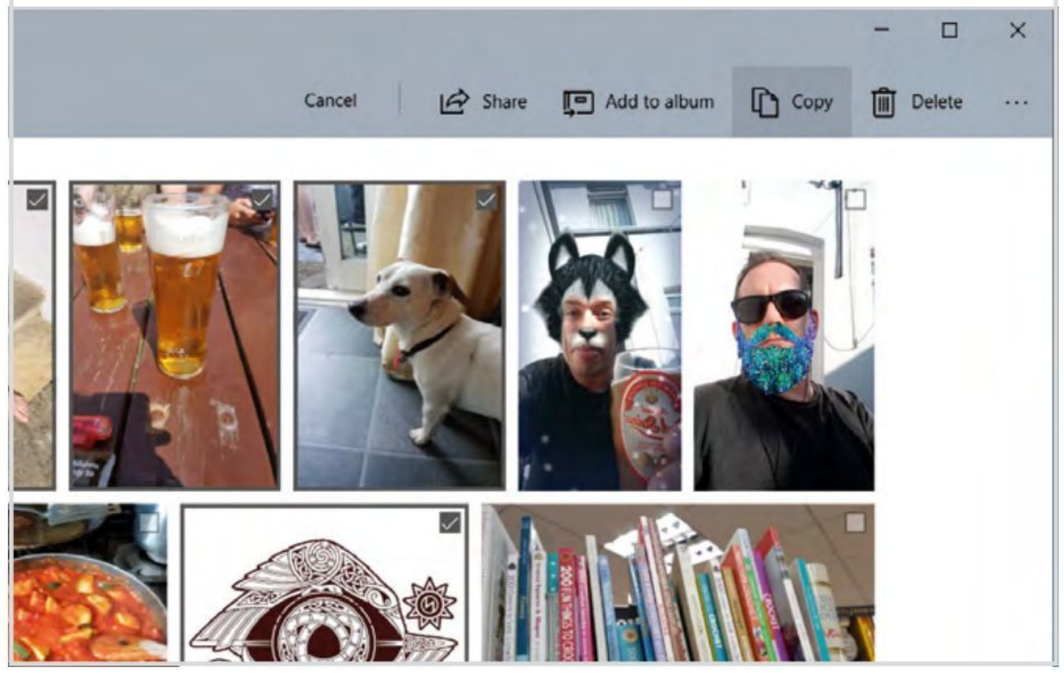
Step 6 Back to the Photos Collection. You're now going to use the Select feature, found in the menu at the top right. This enables you to select individual or multiple images. You'll see the top menu bar has now changed, while each image has a tick box appear on it. Click it to choose the images you want.



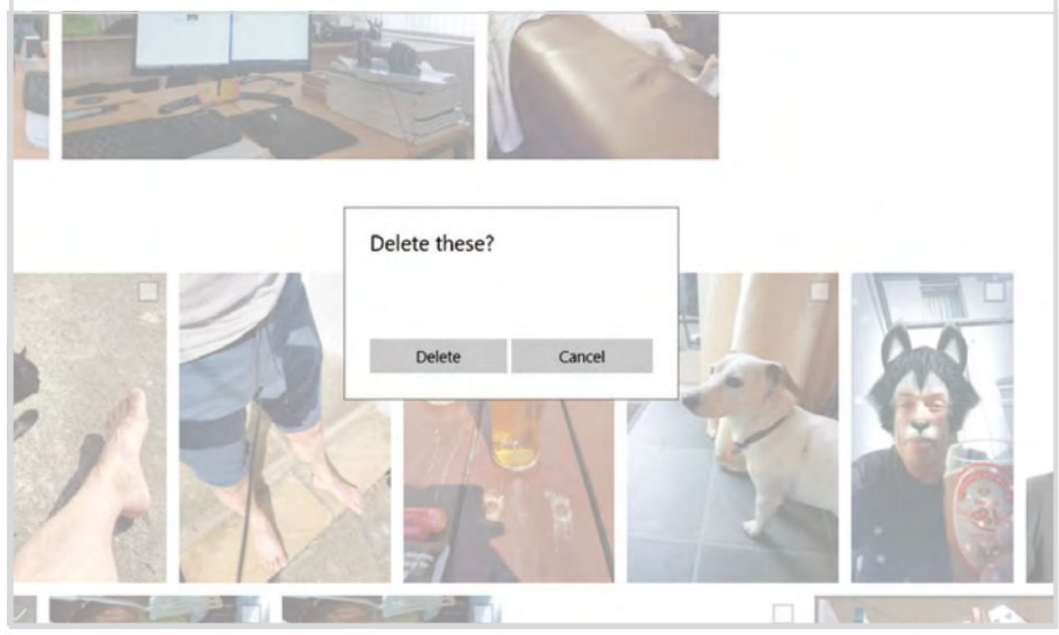
Step 7 The Photos app allows you to do several things with your photos and images. The first is to email them. Select the images you want to send and click the Share button in the toolbar. The share options window will open, allowing you to choose how to share the images, including Mail.



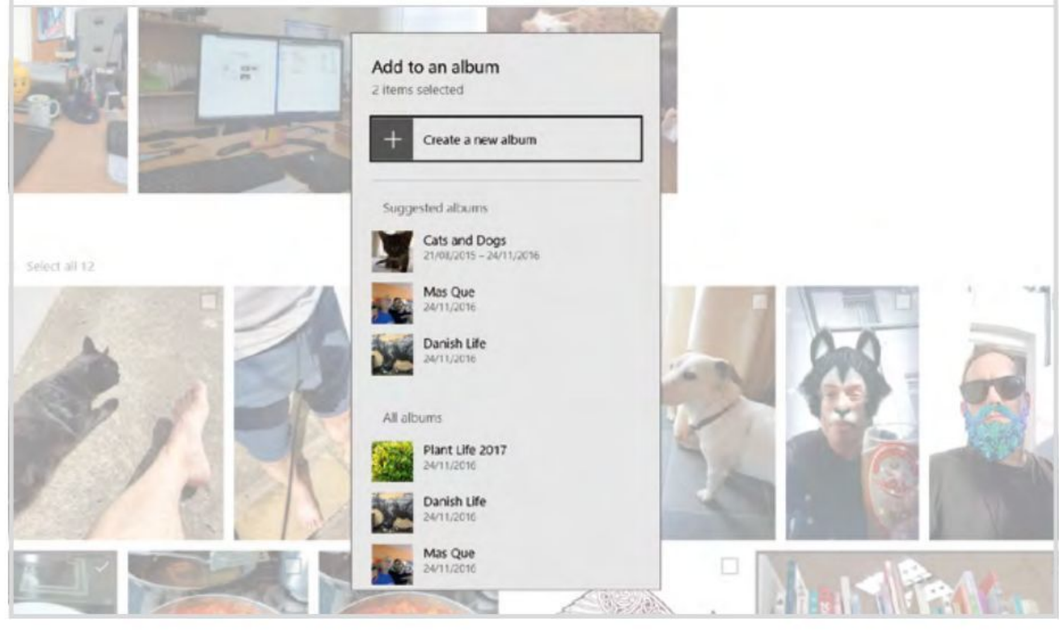
Step 8 You can also copy your photos and images into another app or File Explorer window. To do this, select the photos you want, then click the Copy button in the toolbar (the old Ctrl-C keyboard shortcut works too). You can then paste the photos wherever you want on your computer.



Step 9 To delete photos, select them as detailed previously and click the Delete button in the Toolbar. You will see a pop-up to confirm you want to continue with the action. Deleted photos are moved to the recycle bin anyway, so you have a chance to retrieve photos deleted in error.



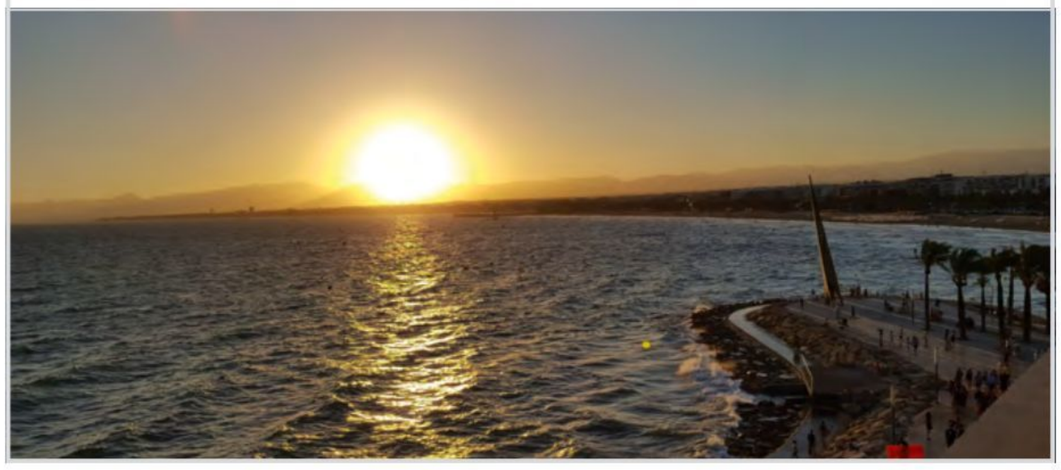
Step 10 The final tool in the Select toolbar is the Add to Album button. This adds any images you have selected to either one of the auto-created albums, or to an album you create for the purpose. Click 'Create new album' in the popup window, give it a name and then click 'Create album'.



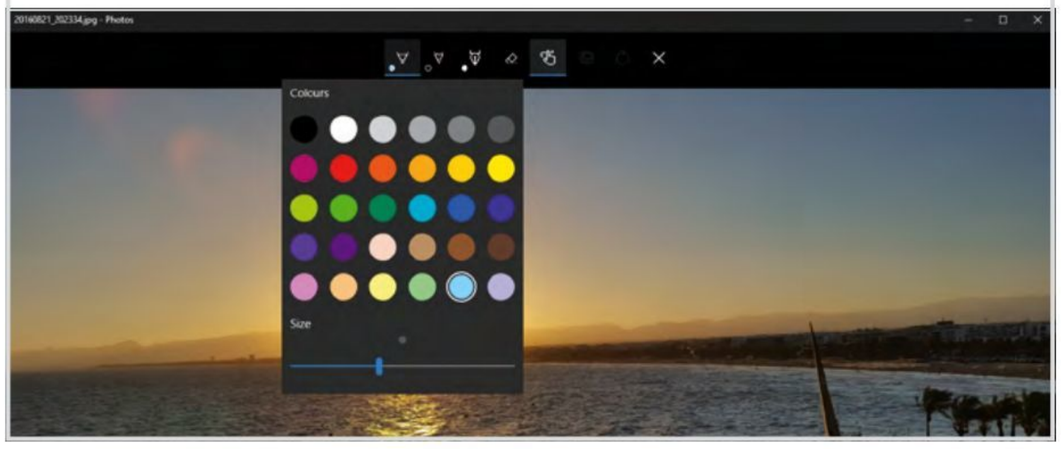
Drawing on Images

The Photos app in Windows 10 allows you to draw or write on top of your images, as long as you have installed the Anniversary update, and then save them as a completely new file.

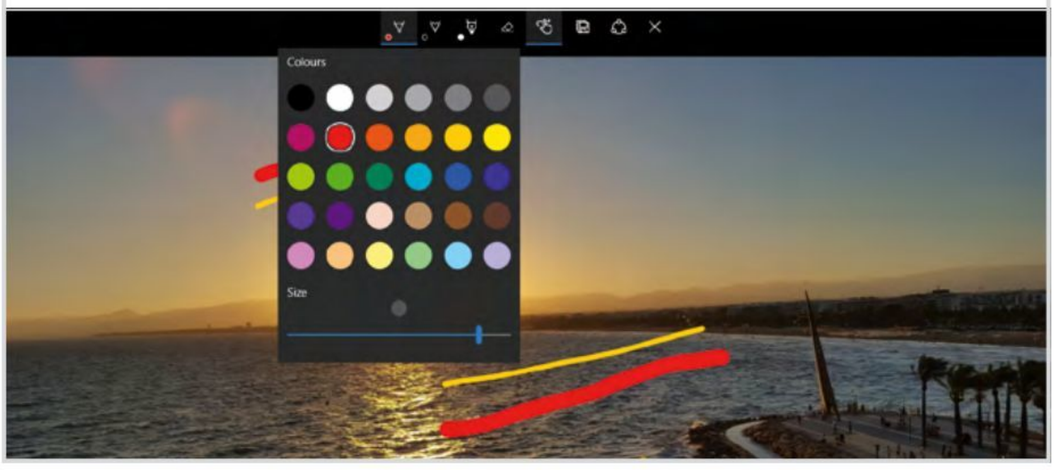
Step 1 Open the Photos app and select your image (or double click an image to open it in Photos if that is the default app). Along the top of the image are several buttons, click the Draw button to begin editing your image. You will see a new set of buttons and controls appear at the top.



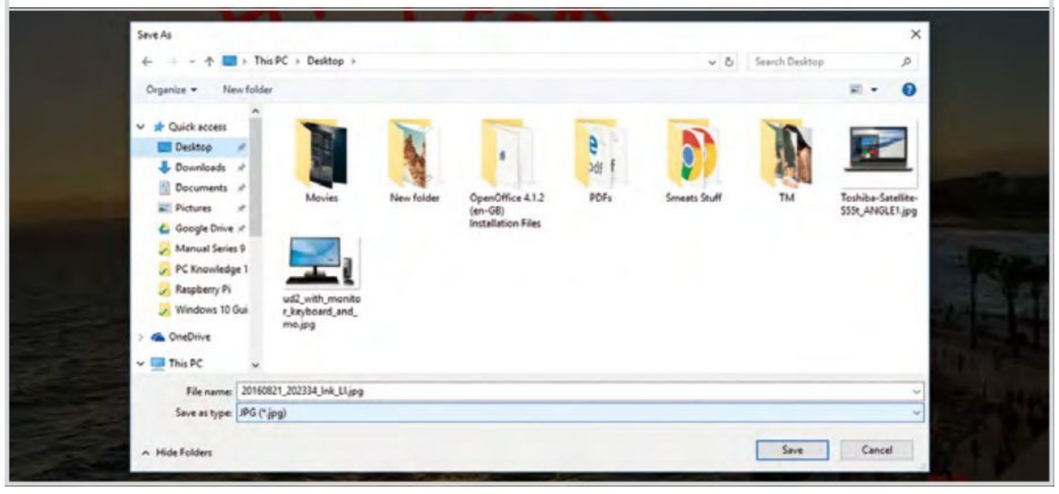
Step 2 From left to right, these buttons allow you to draw/write in pen style, pencil style, calligraphy style, erase, switch out of touch writing mode, save your file, share your file, and exit drawing mode. If you click on any button and see a small arrow, click again to open a contextual menu for it.



Step 3 The contextual menus allow you to change the colour and the thickness of the pen or pencil tools. When you have picked a style, colour and size, you can begin to draw or write over the top of your image. The drawing tool in Photos works best with a touchscreen PC, of course.



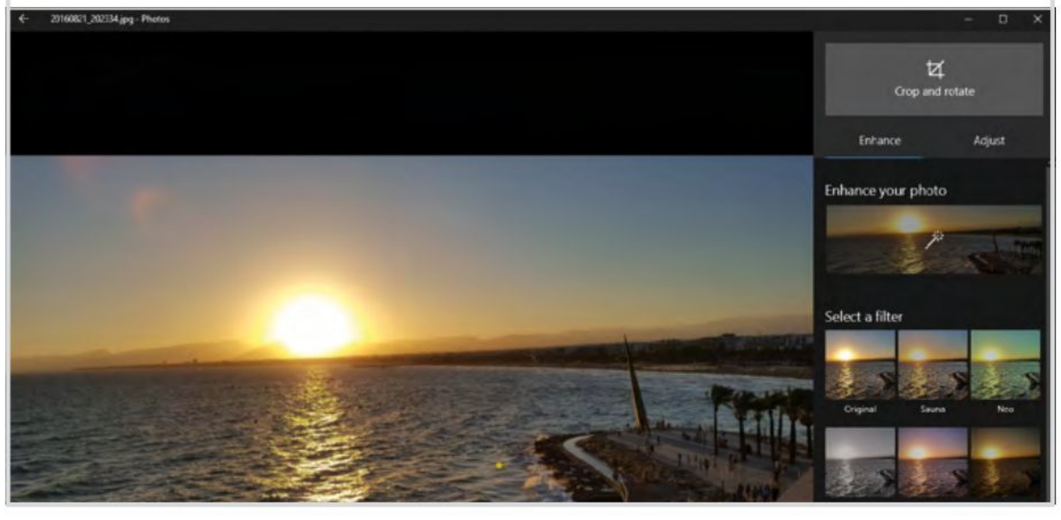
Step 4 Once you have completed drawing or writing on your image, you can save it. If you want to retain the original image, change the name of the edited image in the save dialogue box before you finish. If you click on Share, a list of sharing possibilities will appear to choose from.



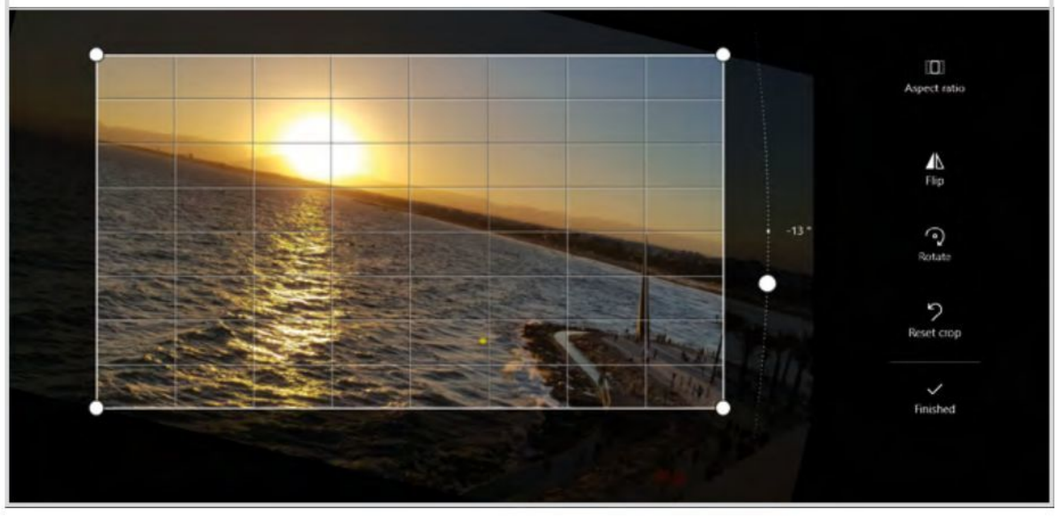
Editing Images

The image editing tools in the Photos app have been improved and added to in the Anniversary update, including the addition of preset filters and effects.

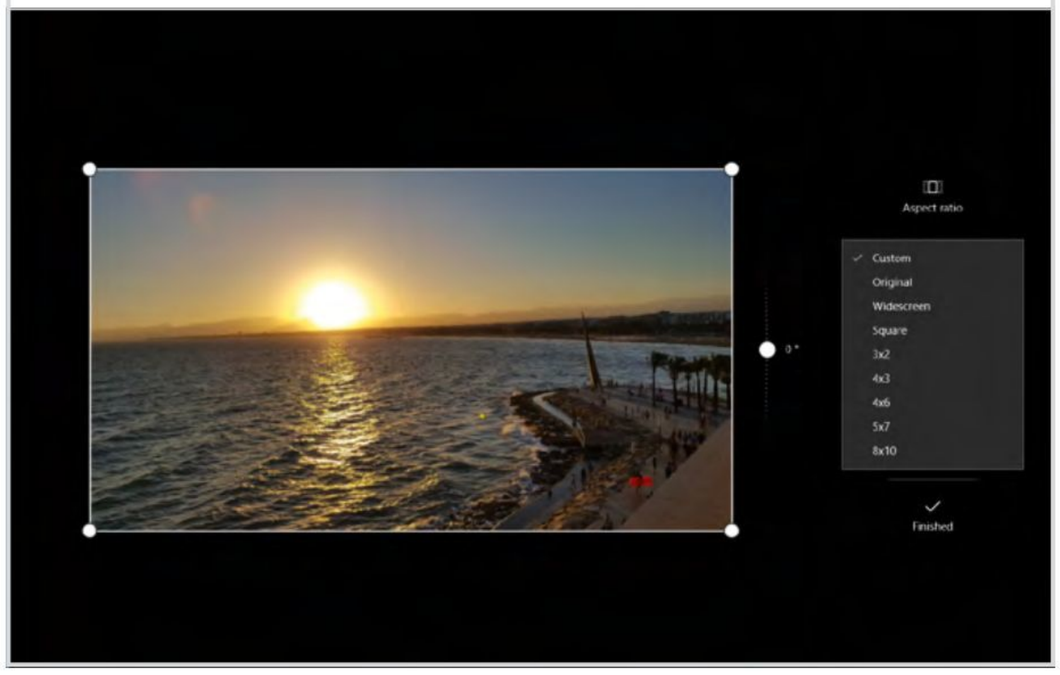
Step 1 Open your image in Photos and click on the Edit button at the top right of the screen. If you had the Photos app running in full screen, the image will be shrunk down slightly to fit the new toolbar, down the right of the of the editing window.



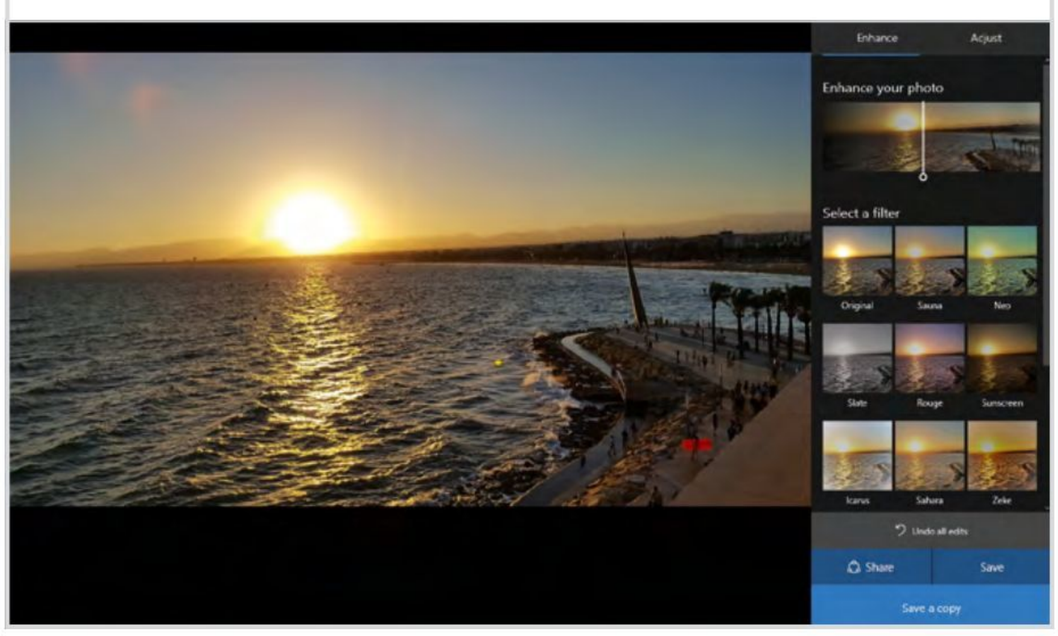
Step 2 Starting at the top of the editing toolbar, you have the Crop and Rotate button. Click this to see further options for managing the aspect of your image. You can choose a preset aspect ratio, or drag the handles at the corners to crop to a custom shape.



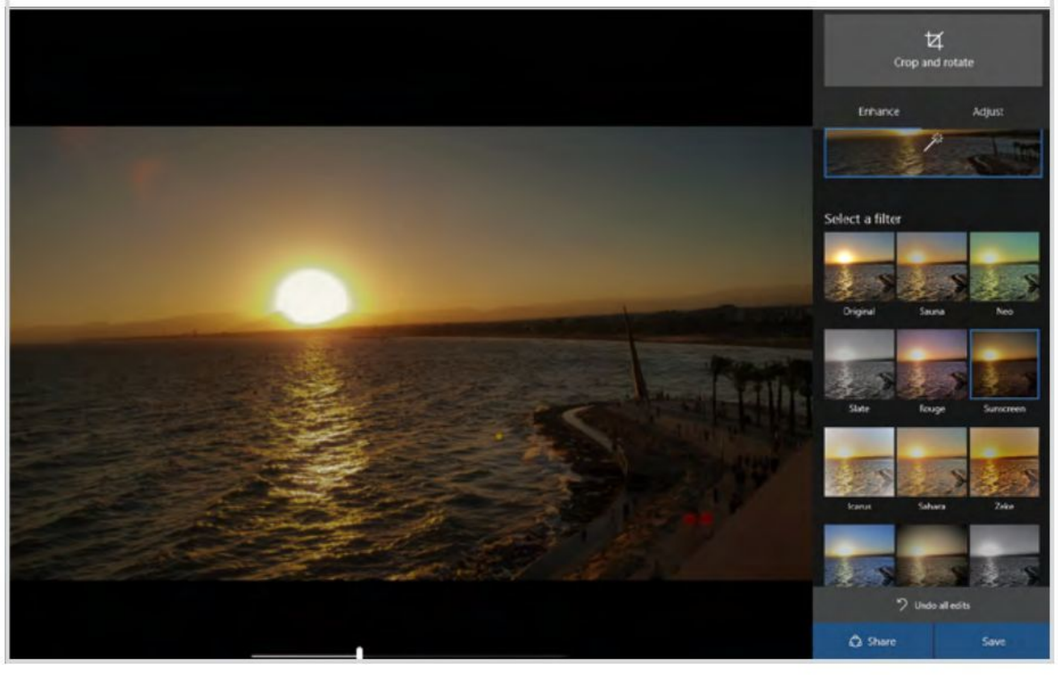
Step 3 If you need to straighten the image, you can do so using the handle to the right of the photo. Click on this and move your mouse up or down to carefully rotate the image in small amounts. As you do this, a grid appears to help you line up the photo. Click Finished when done.



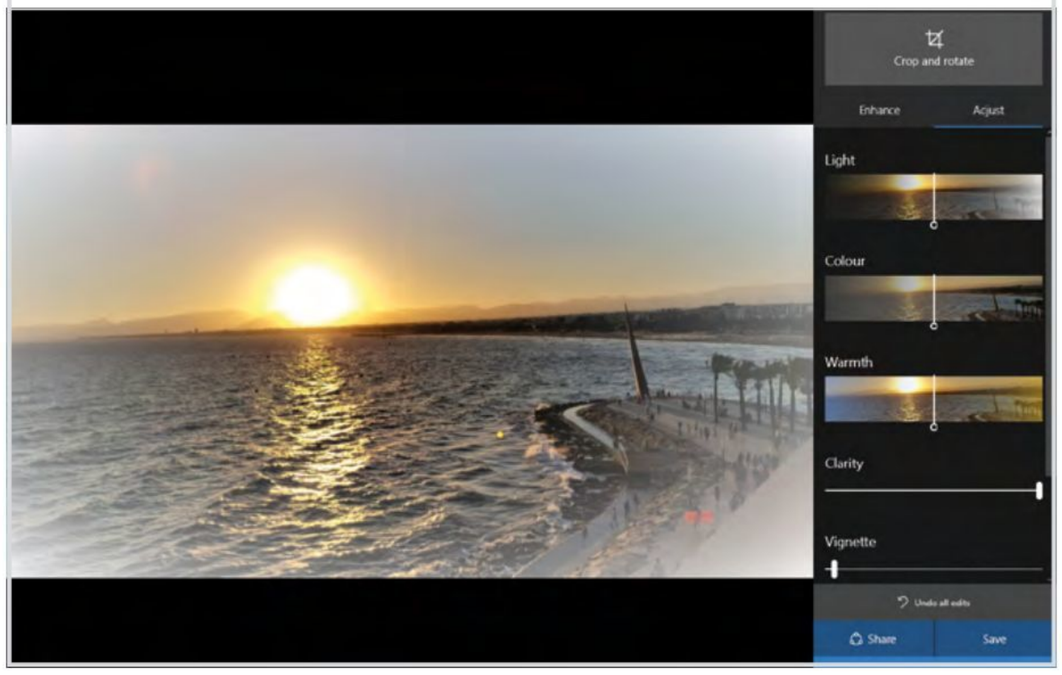
Step 4 Moving down the main edit toolbar you will see the Enhance button. You can click this to let the software make changes and improvements to the image automatically. You will see the image change slightly, and you can then use the slider on the button to increase or decrease those changes.



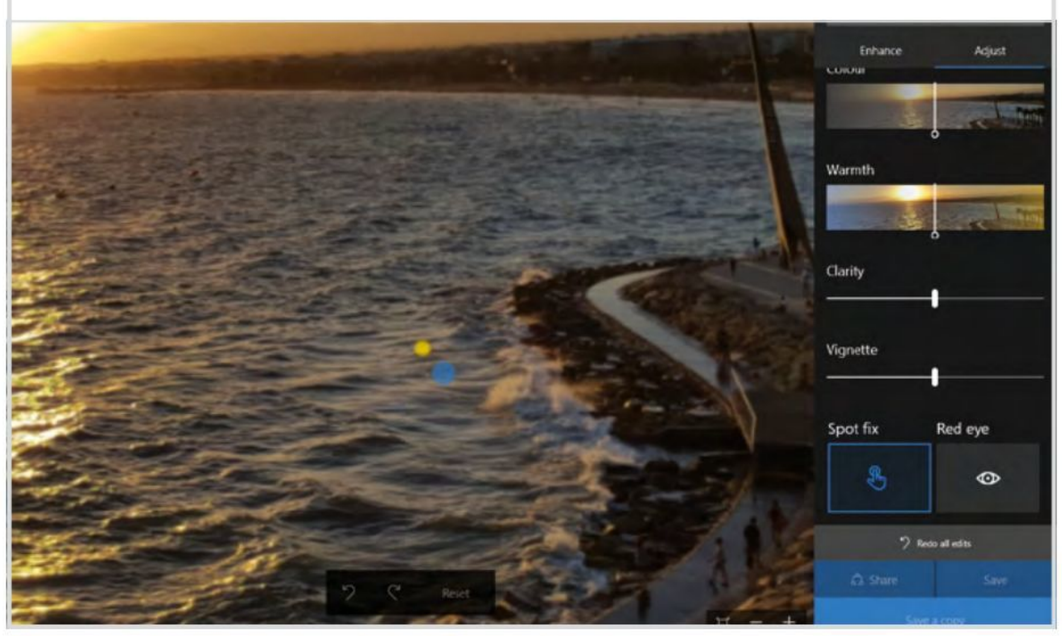
Step 5 You can, of course, apply enhancements yourself. Below the Auto-enhance button are the photo filters. Click on any of these to see the changes applied to your image. You can apply a filter and then adjust its effects by clicking on the Adjust tab at the top of the toolbar.



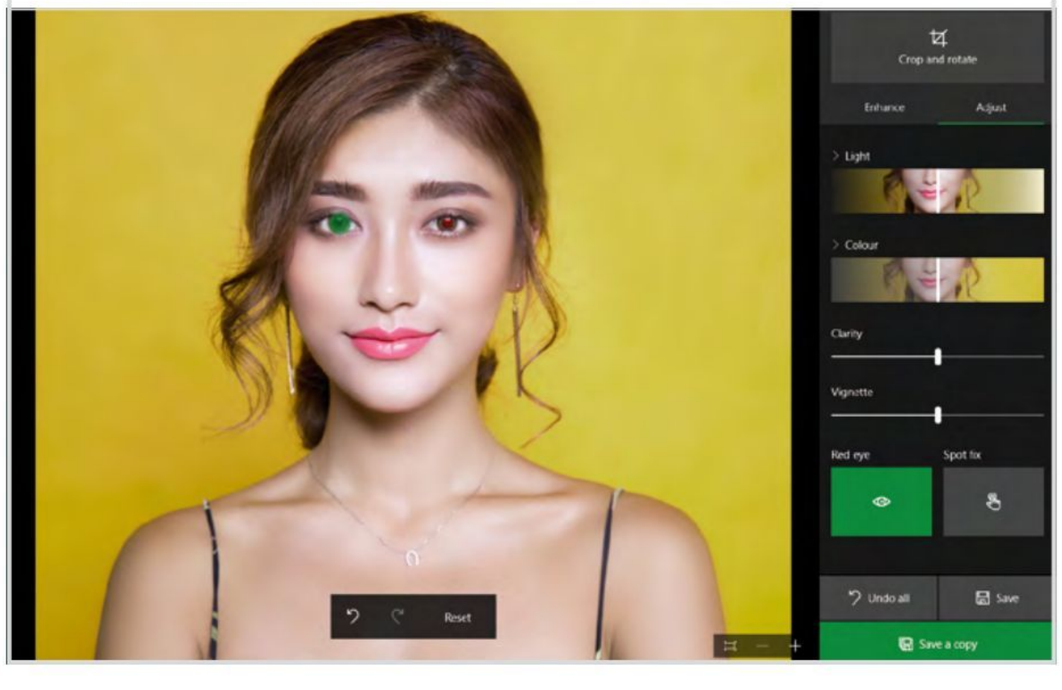
Step 6 The tools in the Adjust tab allow you to tweak the Light, Colour, Warmth and Clarity of an image. You can also use a slider to apply a Vignette (lighten or darken the edges of an image). Just use the sliders to adjust any of these effects until you are happy with your image.



Step 7 At the bottom of the Adjust tab are Spot Fix and Red Eye tools. Click Spot Fix and the cursor will change to a blue circle. Place this over the part of the image you want to fix and click. The software will try to match the location of the spot to the scenery or colour around it, hopefully removing it.



Step 8 The Red Eye tool works in a similar way. Click the tool and move the circle cursor over the red part of your subject's eye and zoom in if you need to. The tool will try to take the red out of the image and match it to the surrounding colour. The results are usually very good.



Skype

Exploring the Skype App

Skype is a great way of keeping in contact with friends and family in faraway places, without running up huge phone bills. It allows you to phone, video chat and instant message, all from within the same easy-to-use interface. It can even be installed on a mobile device so you'll never miss a Skype call while away from your PC.

Skype Controls

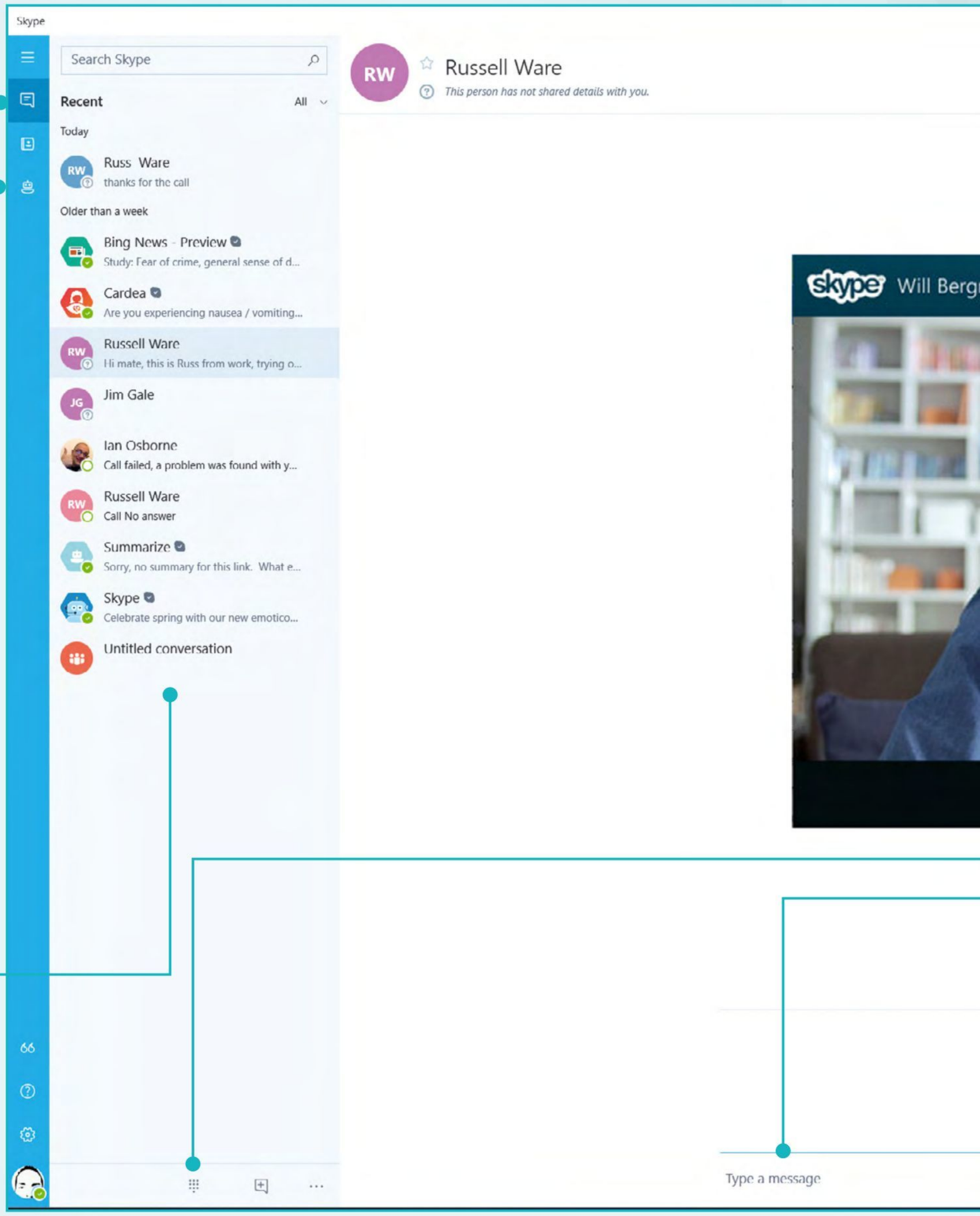
Most of the Skype controls are now arranged along the left-hand edge. From top to bottom: Recent conversations, Contacts, Bots, Help, Settings and Account info. The default view should normally be the Recent conversations panel and the default theme is the dark one shown here. You can change this by clicking the Settings button at the bottom.

Bots

Bots are artificially intelligent programs that can do many useful things like search for news, summarise webpages, play games and more. You can start chatting with a bot just like you chat with friends. For example, add the Bing News bot and start a conversation. Type a word such as "finances" and the bot will return news stories into the feed.

Call/Message Log

You will see all of your recent calls and messages listed here, both in and out. Click on any of the logs to see the conversation or details about the call. The log is split up into days, with a larger Older then a week section at the bottom of the list. At the top is a search bar, allowing you to search for contacts or specific conversations.

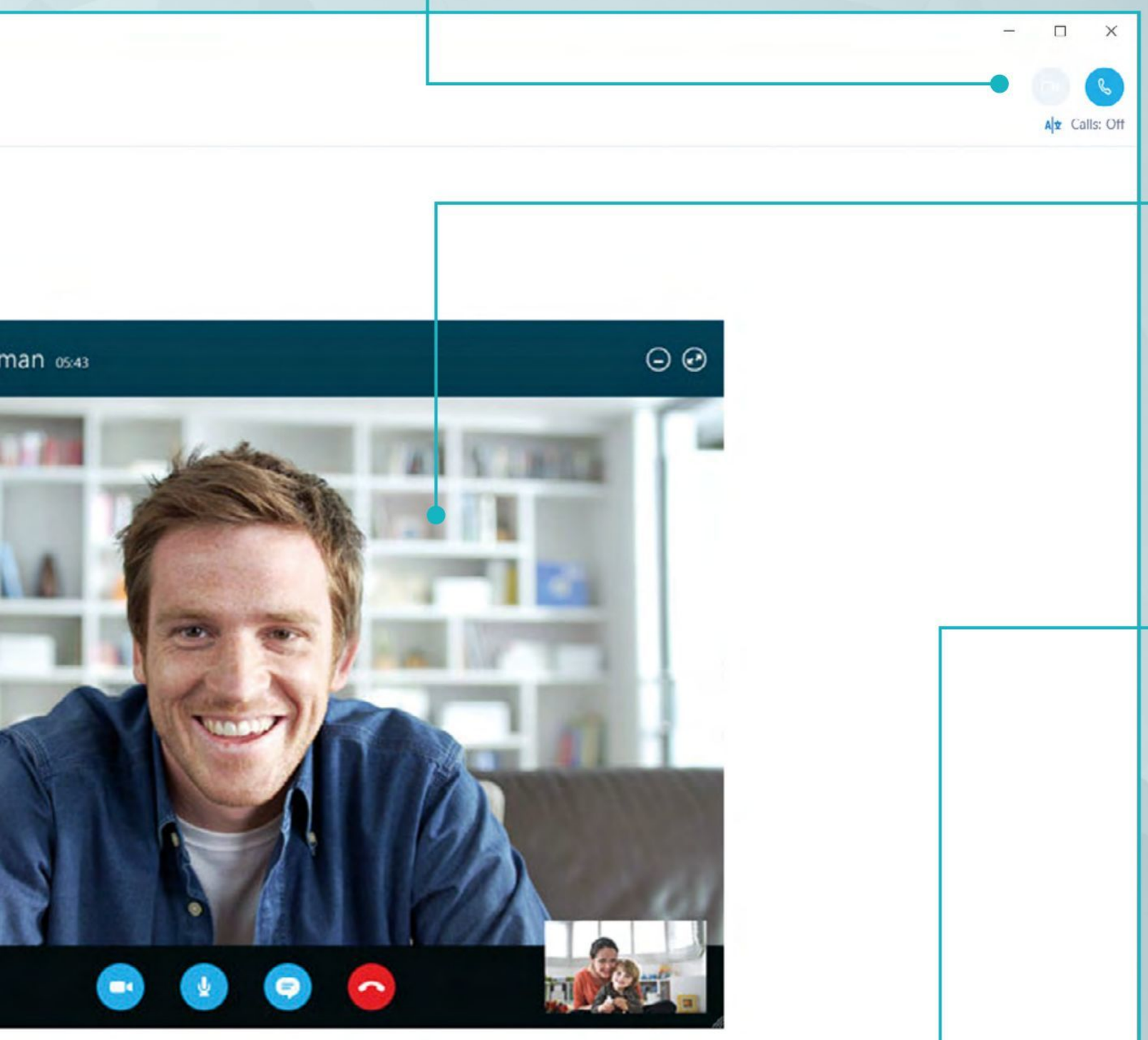


SKYPE REQUIREMENTS

All you need to get up and running with Skype is an Internet connection, broadband is best. You don't even need to download the Skype app, you can get started using https://web.skype.com/ Skype for Web directly in your browser. Now you're all set up to start instant messaging with your friends. If you want to make voice calls, you'll need speakers and a microphone. If you want to make video calls, you'll also need a camera.

Call Controls

If a contact (or conversation with a contact) who uses Skype is selected, you will see the call controls in the top right corner. This may only be a Voice-call button or it may also show a Video-call button. The third icon is a Group call button, allowing you to add contacts to a group call or message.



Main Video/Chat Panel

This is where the video will appear when you start a video call with Skype, or where the chat conversation will be displayed if instant messaging. If no conversations are selected in the recent panel, it will display your avatar (the image you use for your account) and a prompt to start a conversation. Clicking this opens your contacts list.

Dialler Keypad

Clicking this button (or pressing Ctrl + D) will open the dialler on the right-hand side of the screen and allow you to enter a phone number to call. If you are making calls to non-skype contacts, you will need to have Skype credit in your account. If you need to add credit, click the Add credit link and follow the instructions.

Instant Message

In addition to being able to make calls, Skype also allows you to send instant messages, just like in apps like MSN and Facebook chat. Click inside the text field and type your message to the contact that is currently selected. You can add emoticons to a message by clicking the smiley face at the end of the text field. Click Send to send your message. If the contact is offline, they will receive the message the next time they log in to Skype.

Skype

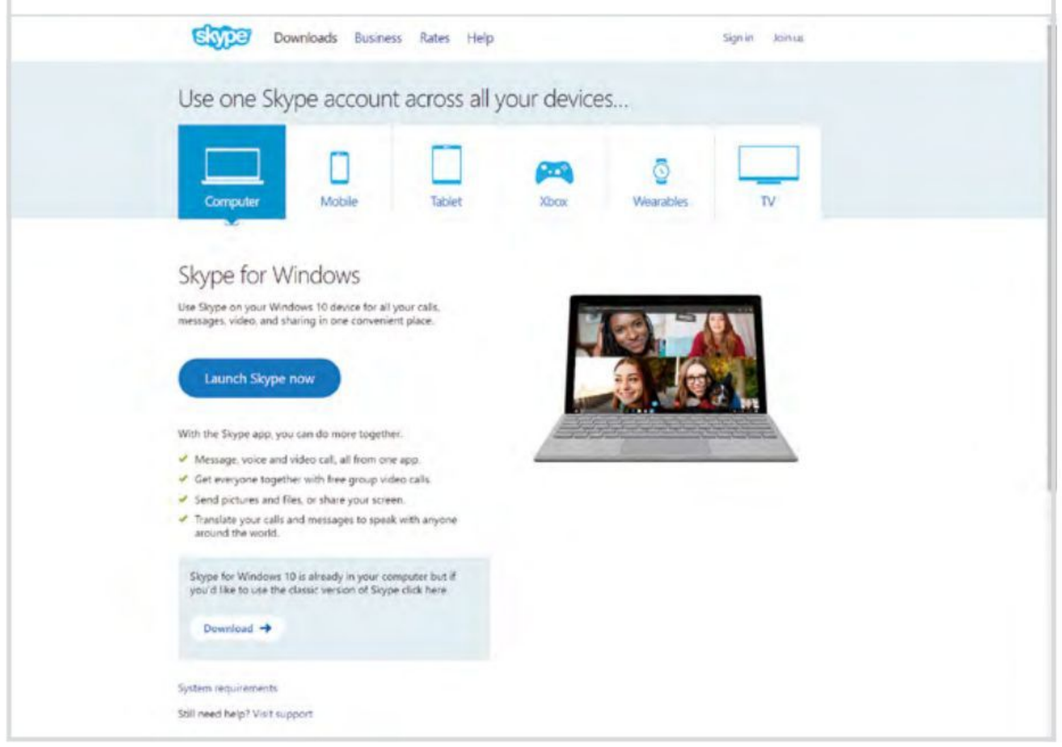
Making Calls with the Skype App

Skype is now a much bigger part of Windows 10 than it once was, and has its own app that comes pre-installed with the OS. Getting to grips with the different tools in Skype is fairly simple but learning how to use it more efficiently and easily takes a little more time.

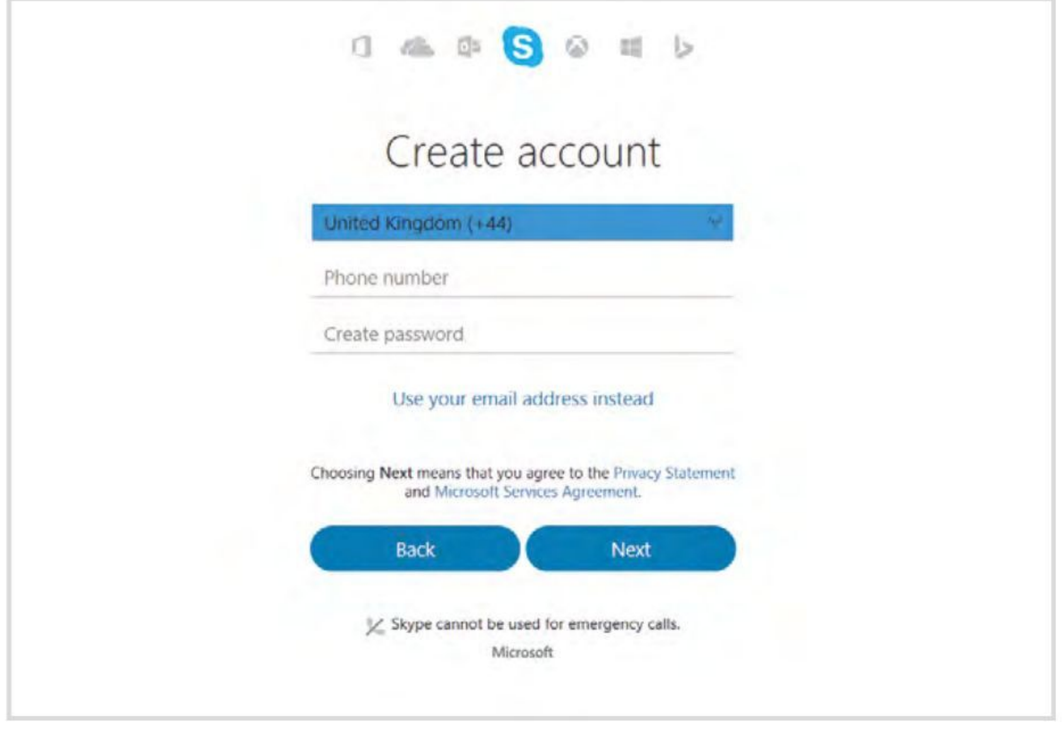
Install and Use Skype

Recently updated, Skype has now been turned into a proper Windows 10 app and follows the Windows design style more closely.

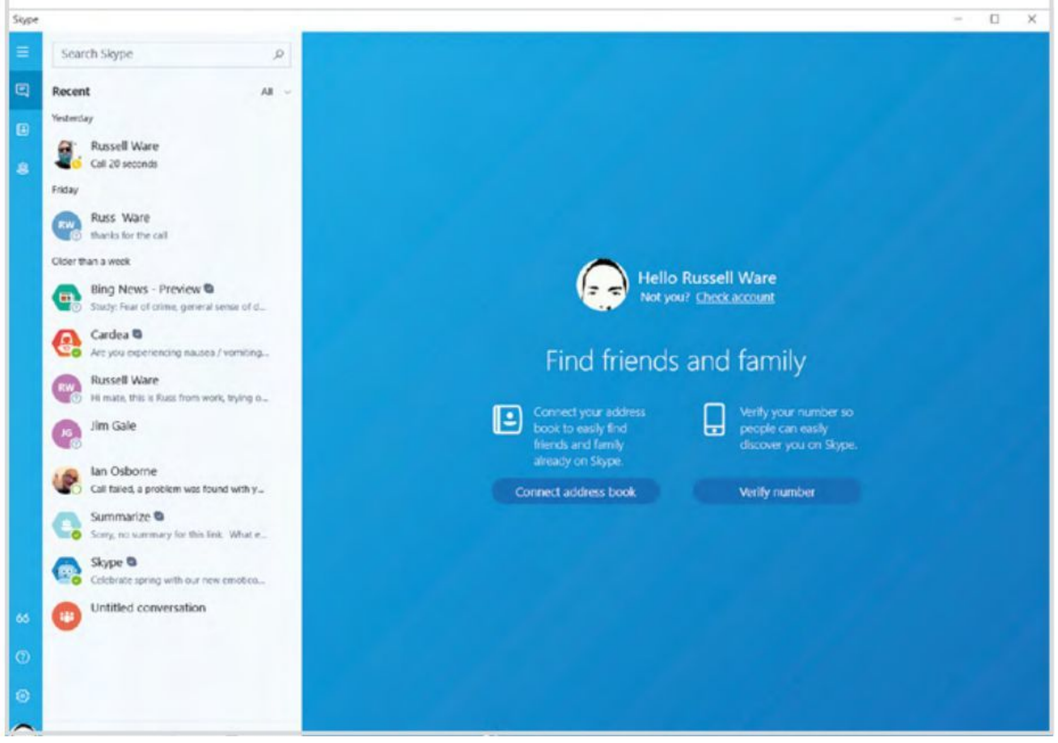
Step 1 Skype has a dedicated Windows 10 app and this may be preinstalled on your Windows PC but you might need to download it from the Windows store. You can also download Skype directly from www.skype.com as well as check that you have the latest version available.



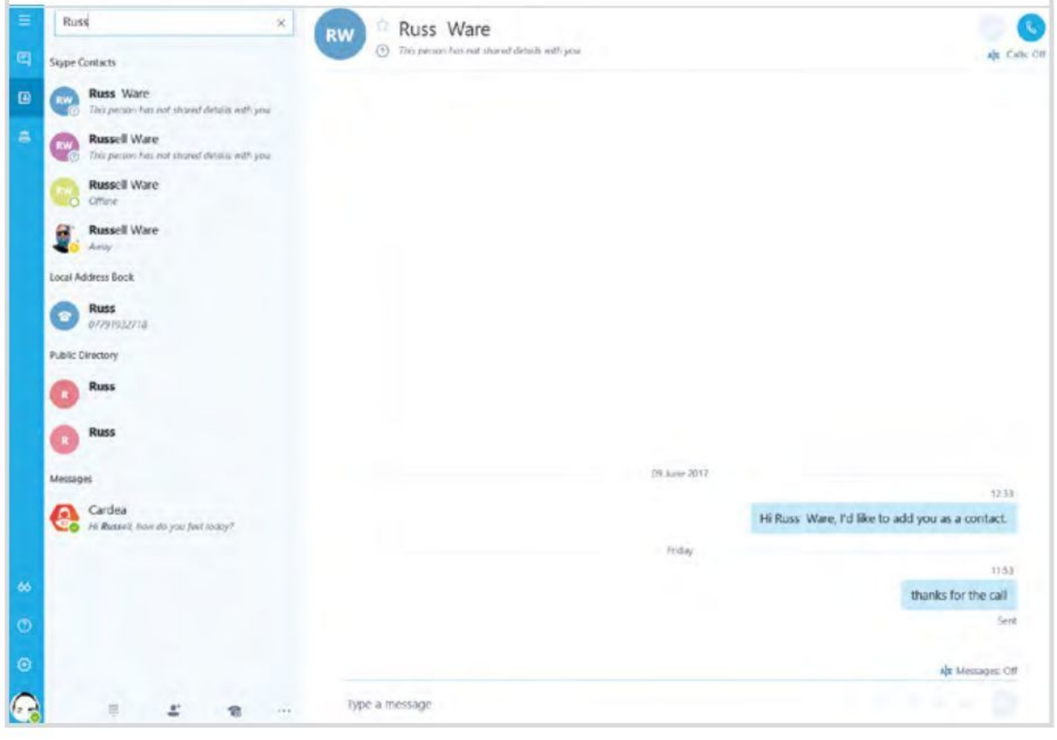
Step 2 Once installed, you will need to sign in to the Skype app. If you already have a Skype account, which is completely free to set up, just enter your login details when prompted. If not, you can go to www.login.skype.com and create a new account in just a few minutes.



Step 3 The Skype window should now be open on screen. The default view is the Recent conversations screen but this may be completely empty if you are new to Skype. The first thing you need to do as a fresh user, is to begin adding contacts.

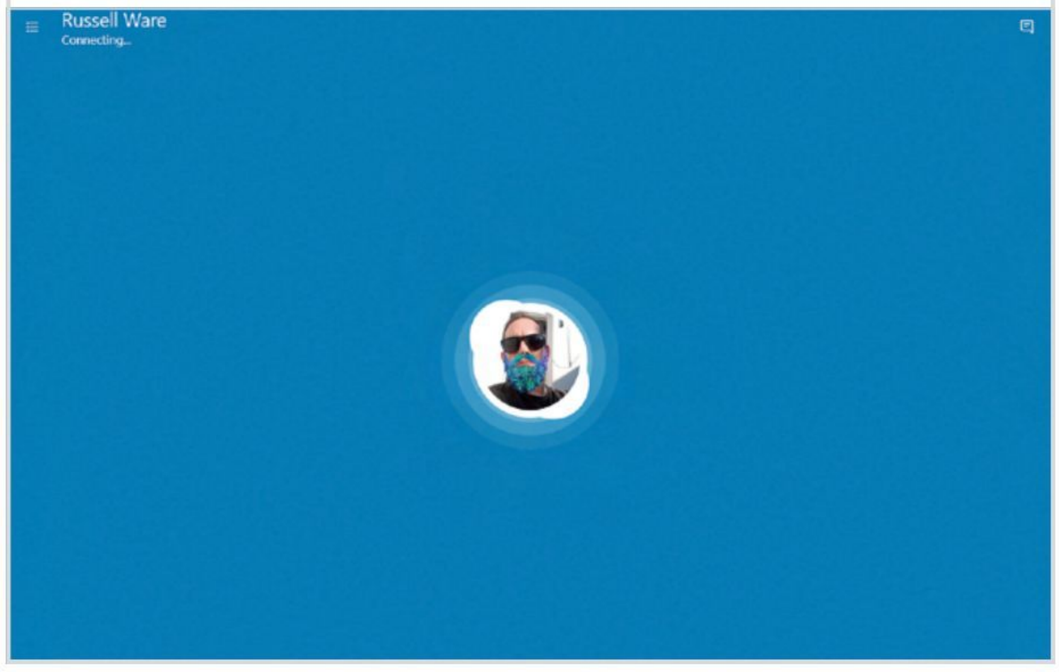


Step 4 Click the Contacts button (2nd button down from the top) and either select the add contact icon at the bottom of the sidebar or click directly in the search text box and type the name, Skype name or email of the person you want to add. Click Search Skype.

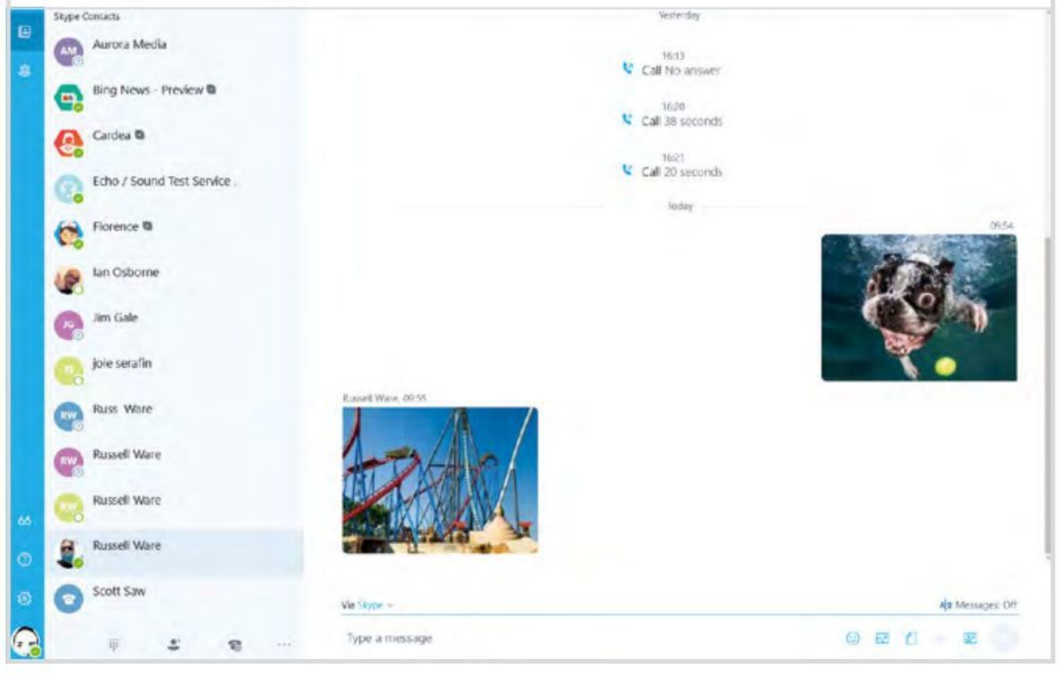


Step 5 Select your friend from the search results, assuming you can see them in the list, and click Add to Contacts. Type a quick note to introduce yourself and then click Send. They will receive a request from you, along with the message and can choose whether to accept you or not.

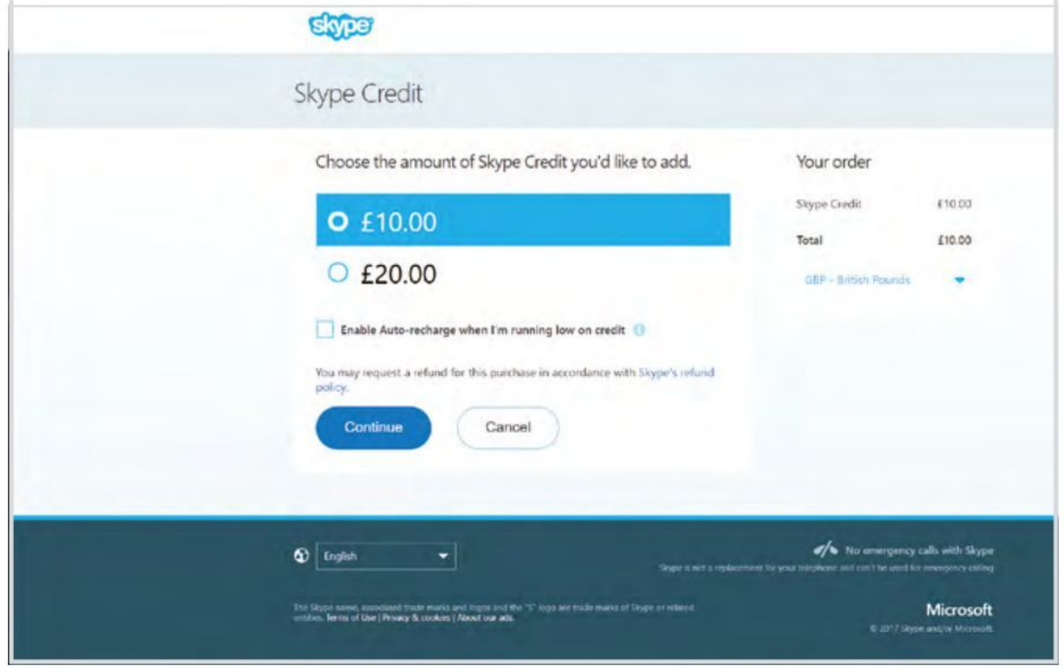
Step 6 You can select any contact from your contacts list and then either instant message them or start a voice or video call. If the contact you click on has Skype, the call option buttons will appear in the top right corner of the window. Click the relevant button to start a call.



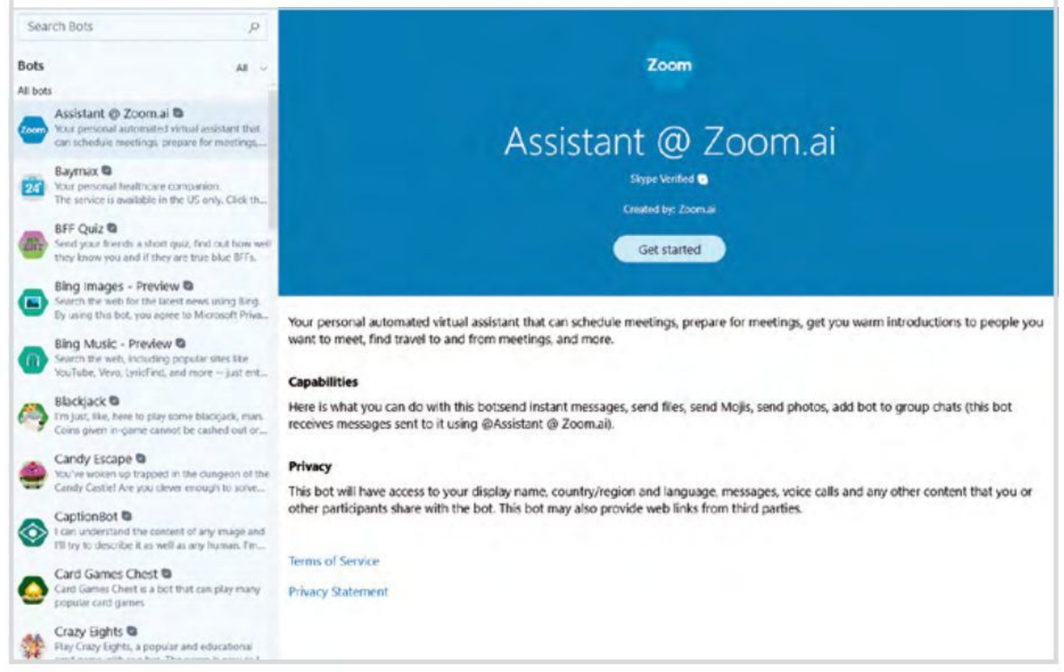
Step 7 Skype instant messaging makes it easy to keep in touch with your contacts and groups wherever they are. You can share files, photos and contacts. To instant message one of your contacts, select their name and start typing at the bottom of the main window.



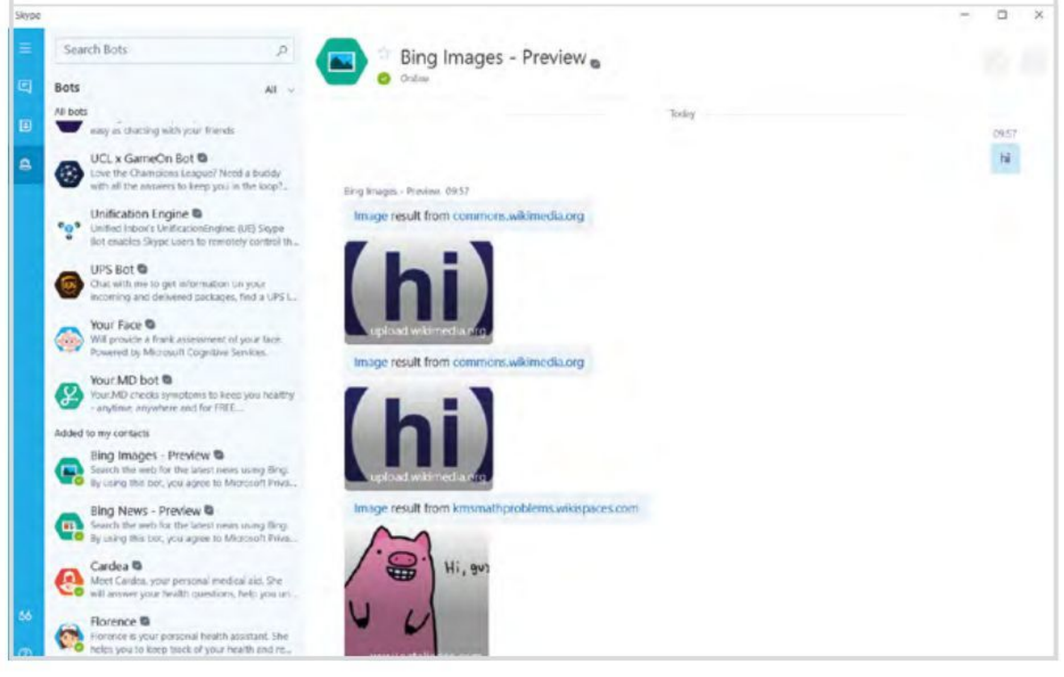
Step 8 If you want to make calls to contacts not using Skype (you can make calls to mobiles and landlines too), you will need to add some Skype credit. To do this, click on your profile picture in the bottom left and click the 'Add Skype credit' link.



Step 9 Skype also now includes Bots. Bots are artificially intelligent programs that can do many useful things like search for news, summarise webpages, play games and more. You can start chatting with a bot just like you chat with friends, just choose a bot and click Get started.



Step 10 Bots vary in how useful they are but some are well worth taking a look at. Take the Bing News bot for example. Add this and then type a word ("Crime" for example) in the conversation window. The bot will return news stories based on that subject.



OneDrive

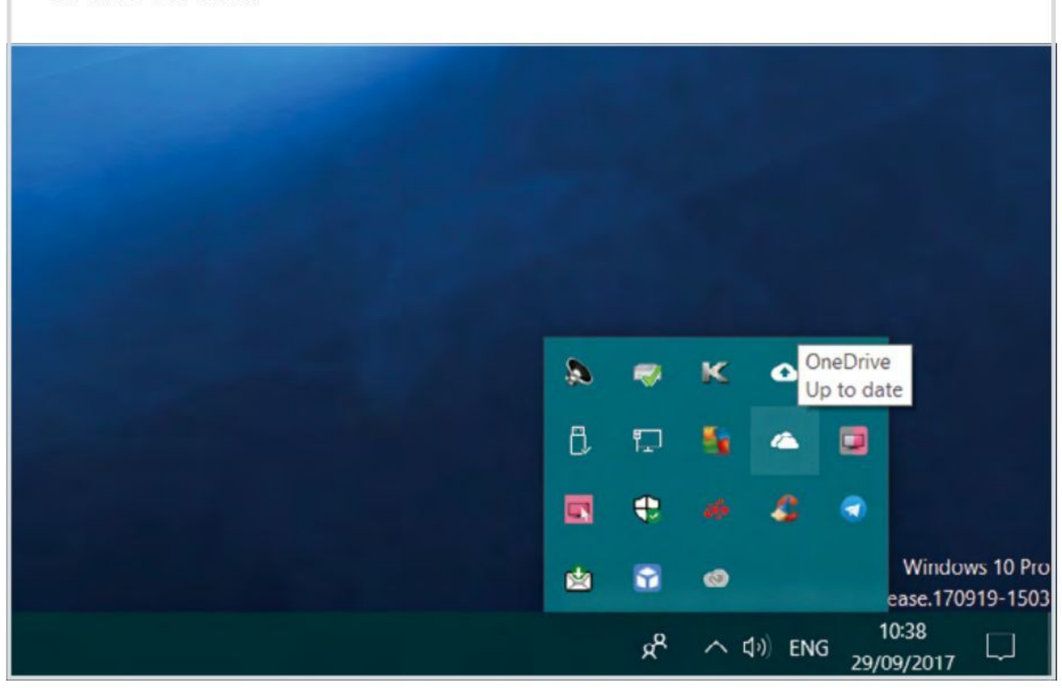
Using the Files On-Demand Tools

With Files On-Demand, you can access all your files in the cloud without having to download them and use storage space on your device. All your files, even online-only files, can be seen in File Explorer and work just like every other file on your device.

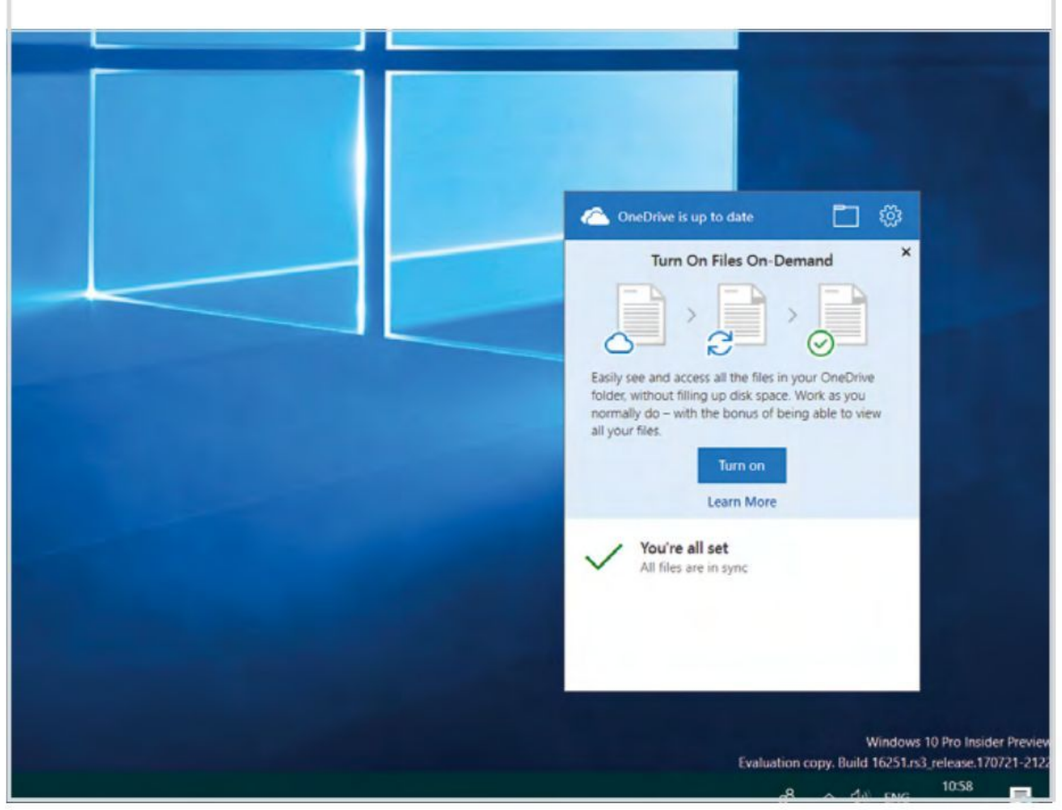
Using Files On-Demand

Files On-Demand allows you to access your storage in a much easier and more efficient way, treating cloud-based files as if they are on your PC.

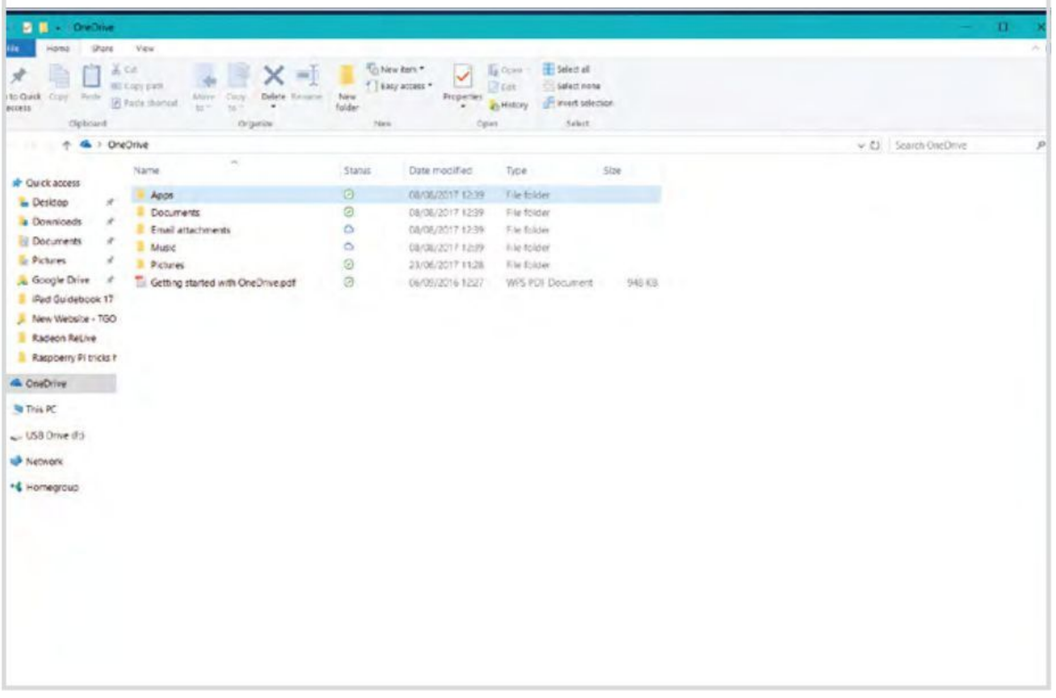
Step 1 First, make sure you are signed in to OneDrive on your computer. Right-click the white OneDrive cloud icon in the notification area, at the far right of the taskbar. If you don't see the OneDrive icon on the taskbar, click the 'Show hidden icons' arrow, also at the bottom right of the screen.



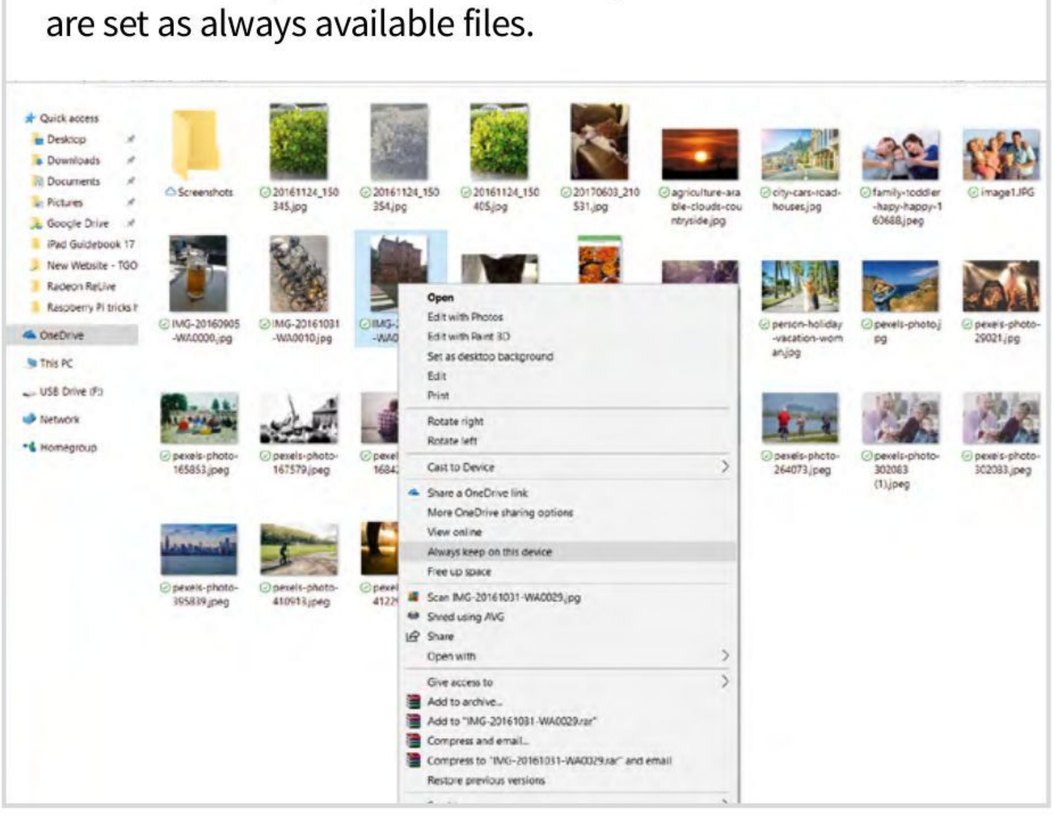
Step 2 You should see a panel pop-up asking if you want to turn on Files On-Demand. If so, click the blue button and wait whilst OneDrive sets this up. If you don't see this panel, click Settings from the OneDrive action menu, click the Settings tab and then check 'Save space and download files…'.



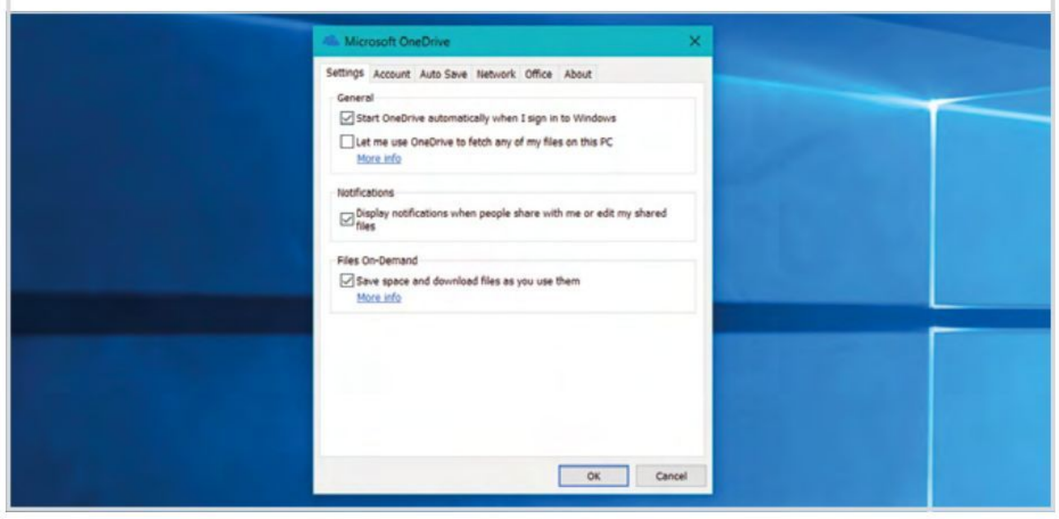
Step 3 You can now open your OneDrive folder to begin checking how your files are currently stored, and to change the status of any you want to move offline or online. You will see the files and folders on OneDrive now have symbols attached to them, showing you their current status.



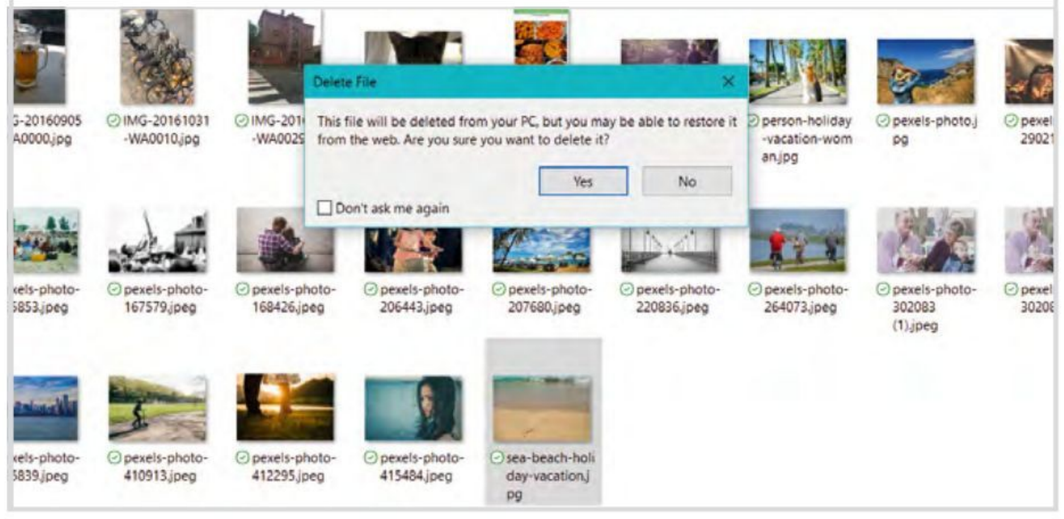
Step 4 To mark a file or folder for offline use or as online-only, right-click on it and look in the action menu for 'Always keep on this device' or 'Free up space' depending on what you wish to do. If you mark a folder as 'Always keep on this device', new files in that folder are set as always available files.



Step 5 Sometimes you might want to make sure a folder doesn't show up on a device for privacy reasons. In the OneDrive Activity Center, select the Settings gear. Next to the location where you want to choose folders, click Choose folders. Clear the check box next to the folder you want to keep off this device.



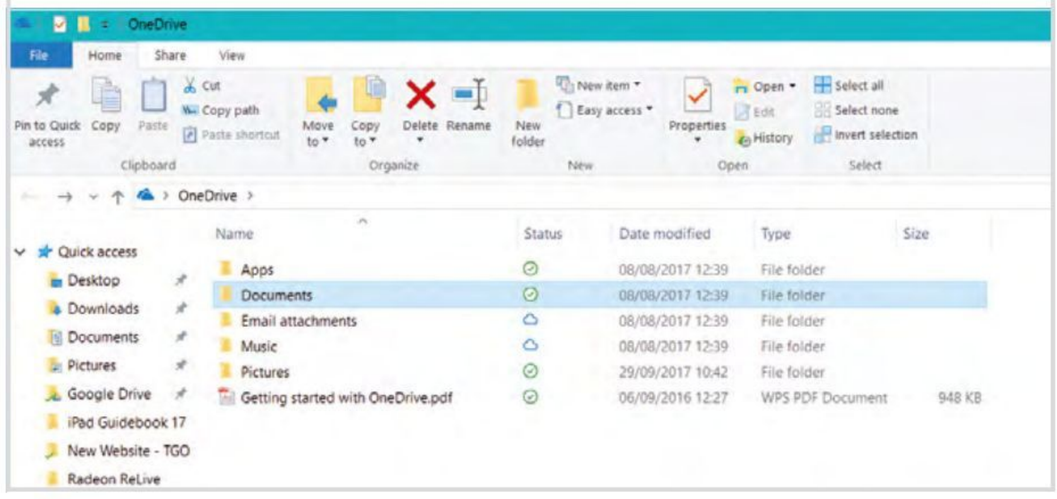
Step 6 When you delete an online-only file from your device, you delete it from your OneDrive on all devices and online. You can restore deleted files and folders from your OneDrive recycle bin on the web for up to 30 days. If you delete a locally available file, it also appears in your device recycle bin.



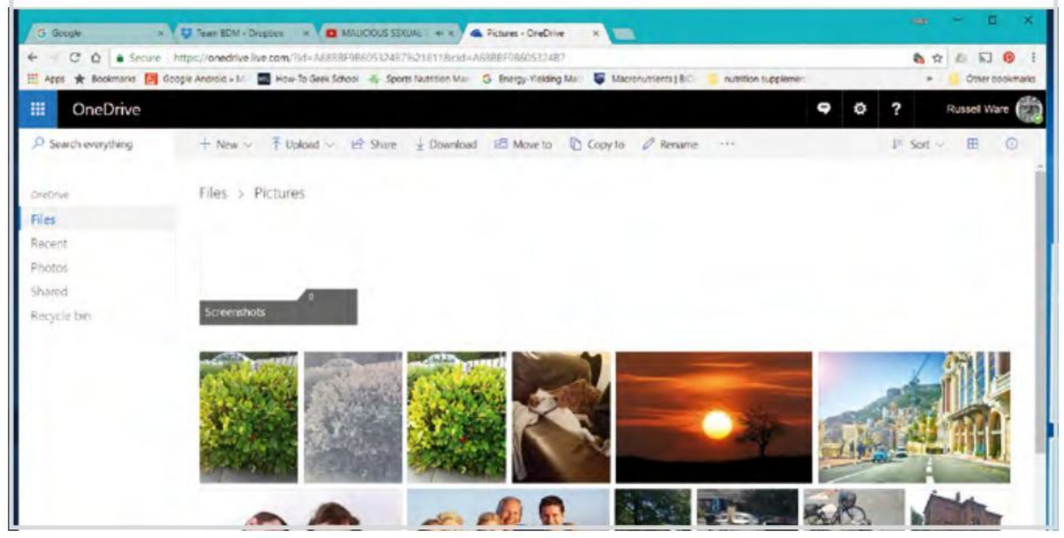
On-Demand Files

Once the Files On-Demand is set up, you can access everything from within the File Explorer in Windows 10. You can also access them through the OneDrive taskbar icon.

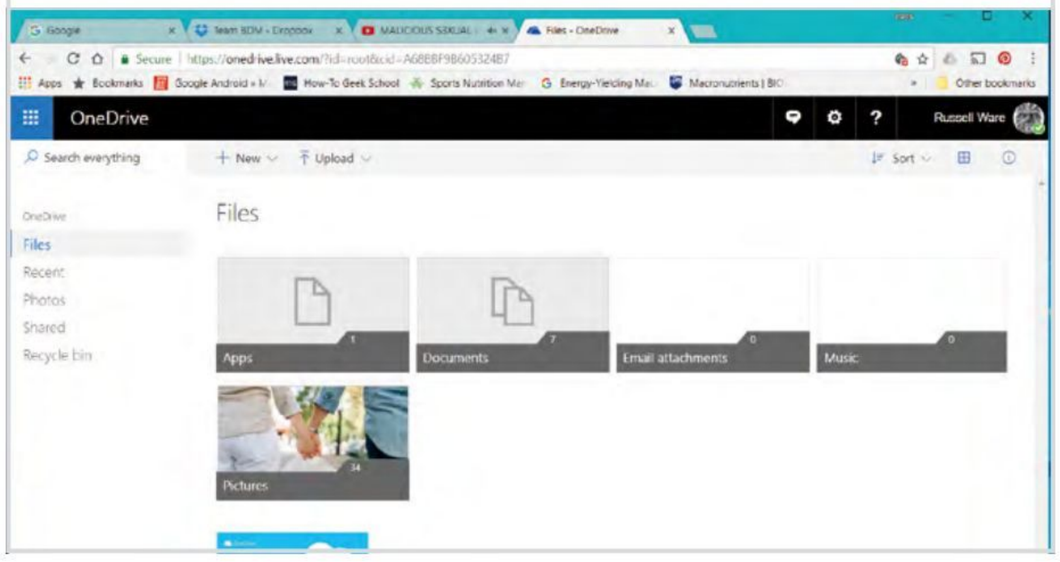
Viewing Files When you turn on Files On-Demand, you see all your files in File Explorer and get new information about each file. New files created online or on another device appear as online-only files, which don't take up space on your device. When you're connected to the Internet, you'll be able to use the files like every other file on your device.



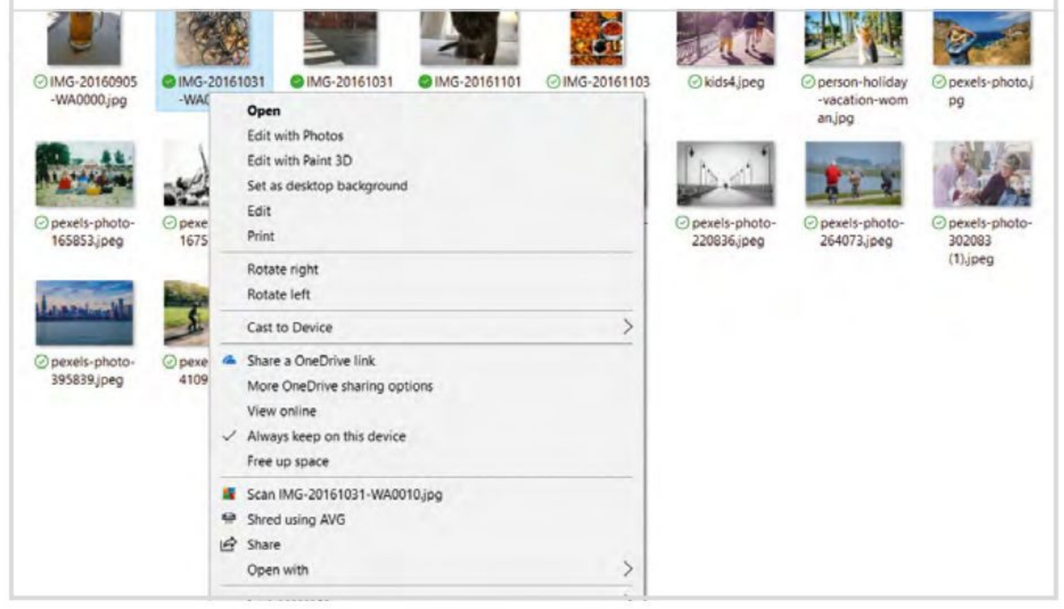
Locally Available Files When you open an online-only file, it downloads to your device and becomes a locally available file. You can open a locally available file anytime, even without Internet access. If you need more space, you can change the file back to online-only.



Online-only Files Online-only files don't take up space on your computer. You see a cloud icon for each online-only file in File Explorer but the file doesn't download to your device until you open it. You can only open online-only files when your device is connected to the Internet.



Always Available Files Only files that you mark as 'Always keep on this device' have the green circle with the white check mark. These files will always be available even when you're offline. They are downloaded to your device and take up space.



Cloud Storage

How to Get Free Cloud Storage

Online, or Cloud, storage has been around for a while, but there has never been a better time than now to get yourself some for free. There are many cloud storage providers, offering both free and paid storage plans, meaning with a little bit of work and some organisation, you can get more than 100GB of free cloud storage, in a matter of minutes.

What is Cloud Storage?

Cloud storage, or online storage, simply means a file storage space remote from your device, i.e. the files you save are not physically kept on the device from which you save them. Typically, Cloud storage services are banks of huge servers that allow the transfer and storage of massive amounts of data, often spread across multiple machines and locations.

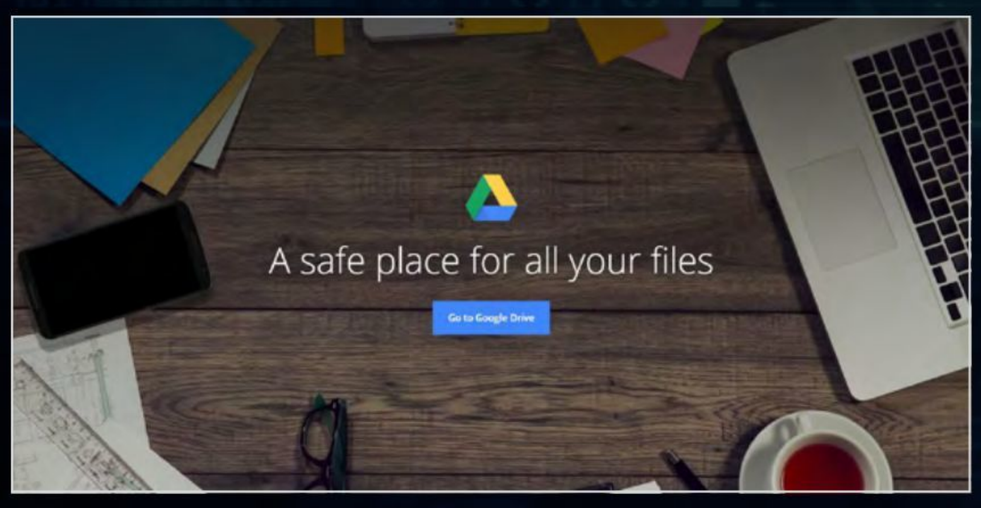
Because your files are not stored remotely, they can be accessed by you from multiple devices, or locations, without having to copy files from device to device, as long as you have the software needed to access your storage. Although, in many cases you don't even need that, just access to an Internet browser.

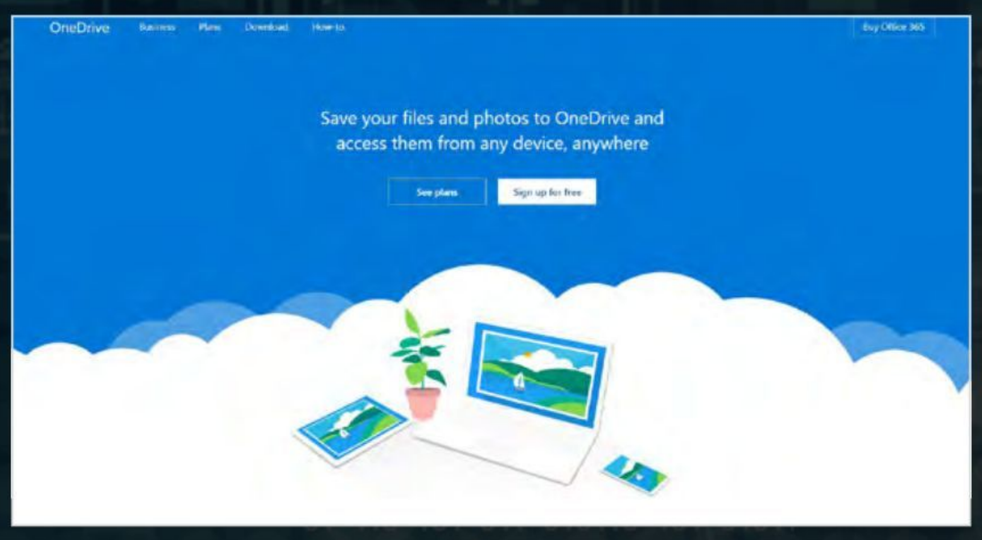
Google Drive – 15GB Free

https://www.google.co.uk/drive/

If you have a Google account, you already have access to 15GB of free storage space. This 15GB is divided between Drive, Gmail and Google Photos (for hi-res photos – you get unlimited storage for photos of less than 16MP), so you might not have the whole 15GB available for additional documents, images, etc.

Google drive syncs perfectly with an Android phone, but can also be accessed through iOS apps, or on a computer (either through a small bit of file management software, or through your browser). Google occasionally allows you to add an additional 2GB of free space for completing certain account tasks.





OneDrive Basic – 5GB Free

https://onedrive.live.com

Previously known as SkyDrive, OneDrive is Microsoft's free cloud storage option, available to anyone (not just those using Windows). You will need a Hotmail, or Live mail, email account to take advantage of the free 5GB, but as these are also free to set up, it is worth doing just to get access to the storage offer.

If you are a student (or work in education) and have a school or university email address, you can get a whopping 1TB of storage completely free! You also get access to the entire Microsoft Office suite on up to five devices.

NOTE

Getting your free 100GB+ of storage will require you to spread your photos, emails and documents over multiple storage providers. Of course, you could simply pay £15.99 a year and get 100GB simply from Google Drive (or a similar amount from one of several other storage providers), but nothing feels as good as free feels, right?

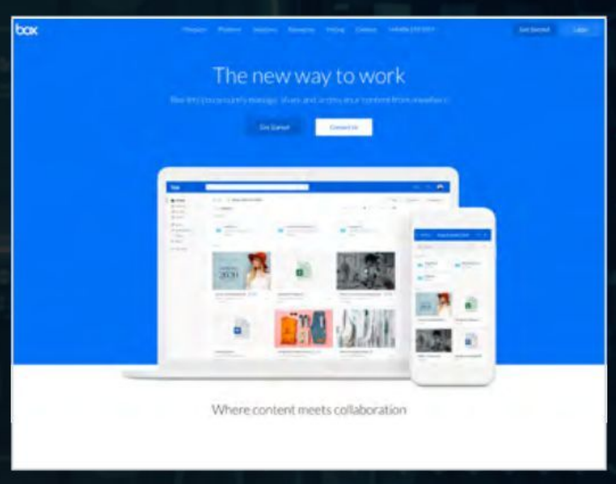
Box – 10GB Free

https://www.box.com

Box cloud storage is aimed more at business users, however they do still offer a free individual 10GB plan. There is a 250MB limit to the size of any single file uploaded, but this shouldn't be a problem for most of the normal things you will want to store.

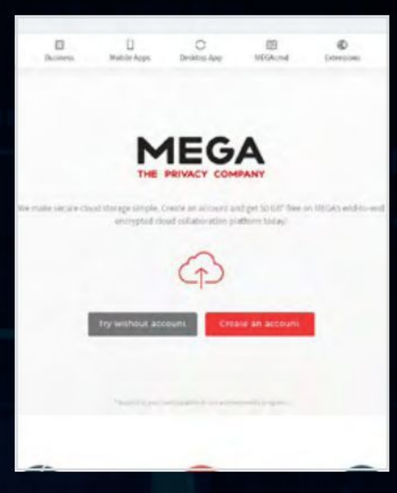
As you might expect from a business-class storage service, Box works pretty seamlessly with apps such as Office 365, Slack, Salesforce, Netsuite and Docusign and it also works very well as a simple cloud storage solution.

There are apps available for both iOS and Android, allowing you to store photos alongside other files directly from your phone or tablet and it has a desktop app for syncing files from your computer.



MEGA – 50GB

https://www.mega.nz



MEGA is a file sharing and cloud storage service based in New Zealand (not that location really matters for cloud storage…) that offers a huge 50GB free account, but with some conditions.
When you set up a free account, you will have access to your 50GB for one month, after that time, the free storage space reduces to 15GB. This can be boosted back up to 50GB again by completing achievements such as installing the MEGA app, using MEGAsync and referring a friend. However, even these free boosts expire after 180 or 365 days, taking you back down to the (actually) free 15GB.

Despite all of the conditions, MEGA is still a good option, even if you only stick with the 15GB you get without completing the achievements. One of the key features it boasts is the level of encryption offered, with files encoded by a client-side encryption system called AES. This system means, in theory, that not even MEGA can view the files you store online.

WHAT CAN YOU STORE WITH 100GB?

Not sure if you need 1GB, 10GB or 100GB? Let's take a look at just how much stuff you can store* with your free 100GB of cloud storage.

*approximate figures, based on average file sizes

Microsoft Word Documents = 1887400
PDF Documents = 314600
Photos (1.5MB each) = 61400
Full Length Movies (1.5GB each) = 66
Full Length Songs (4MB each) = 23000

Dropbox – Up to 16GB

https://www.dropbox.com

Dropbox is easily one of the biggest and best-known names in cloud storage, being one of the first to offer a free account when the service launched in 2008. The individual free accounts only offer an initial 2GB of storage, however, by referring others to sign up, you can quickly bump that amount up to a huge 16GB, as each person who signs up for a free account using your link, adds 500MB to your storage total.

Dropbox can be used either in a browser, or downloaded and installed on multiple devices, including Windows, Android, iOS and MacOS machines. Dropbox makes it very easy to share files with others by sending them a simple link to click, which takes them to the folder/file you have shared.

We use Dropbox a lot here at BDM and have found that when syncing lots of files in the desktop app, it can slow down our computers a bit. Because of this, we tend to use the browser version, which is just as easy to get on with.

Sync – Up to 20GB+

https://www.sync.com

Sync is probably not a name that trips off the tongue when talking about cloud storage, but this relatively new company is really starting to make waves in the world of online storage.

The offer starts at 5GB and is completely free forever (really, it never expires) and the free account offers almost exactly the same features the paid accounts do (just with less space). You can expand your storage by referring others, getting an additional 1GB of storage for each person that signs up. The maximum is supposed to be 20GB, but Sync itself has said that anyone wanting to refer beyond this can email the company to request to have the cap removed.

As you would expect, Sync offers desktop and mobile apps for managing file storage wherever you are and has the sort of security you would expect, including two-factor authentication, remote device lockout and 2048-bit encryption for files.

Clipboard

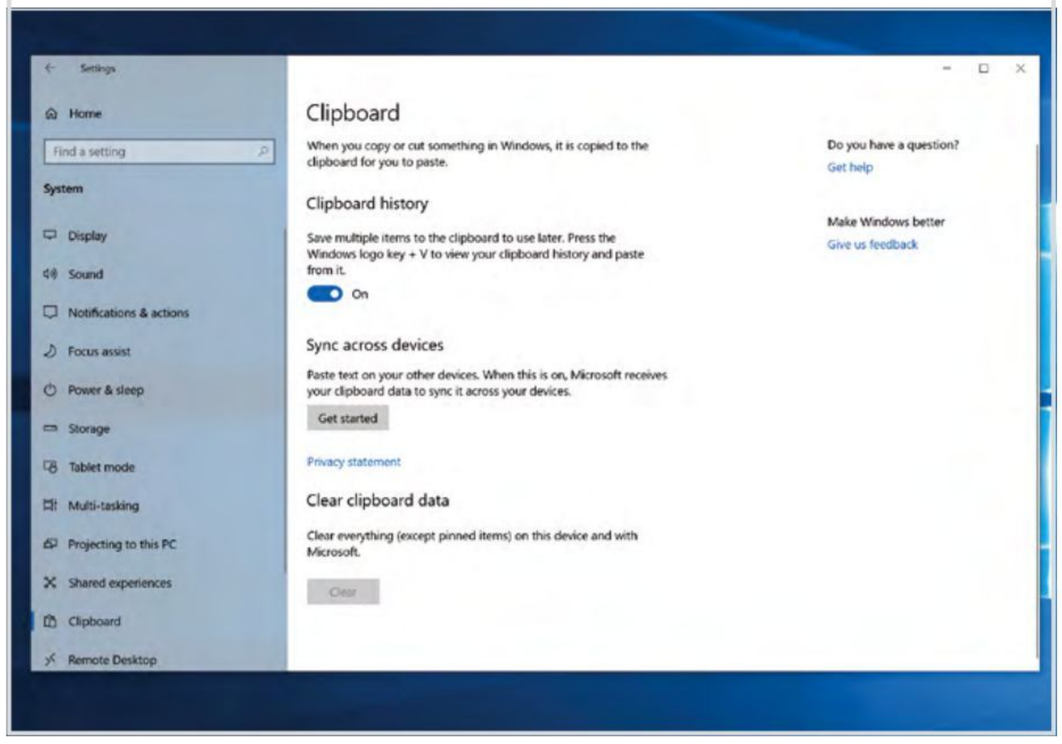
How to Use the Cloud Clipboard

Copying and pasting is something we all do. However, what do you do if you need to copy the same few things again and again and how do you copy content across your devices? The new Cloud Clipboard solves both of those problems in a single, simple interface.

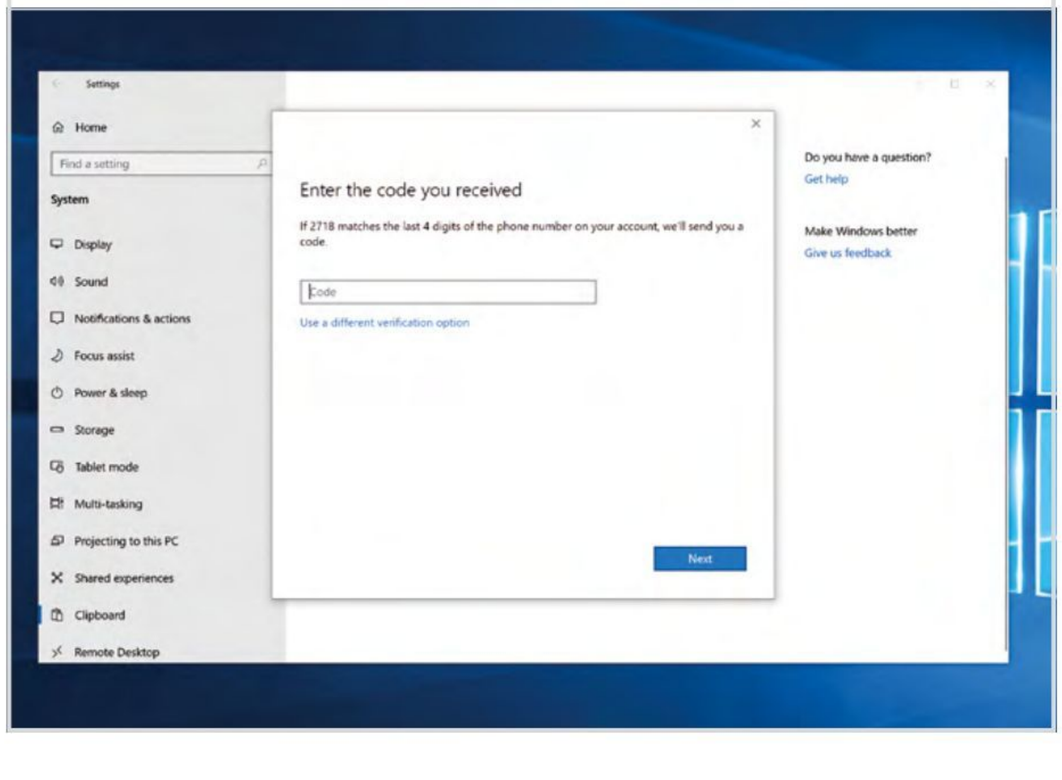
A New Way to Copy + Paste

The Cloud Clipboard gives you a new way to cut and paste. Simply press the Windows key + V at any time and you'll see the Cloud Clipboard panel appear in the bottom corner of the screen.

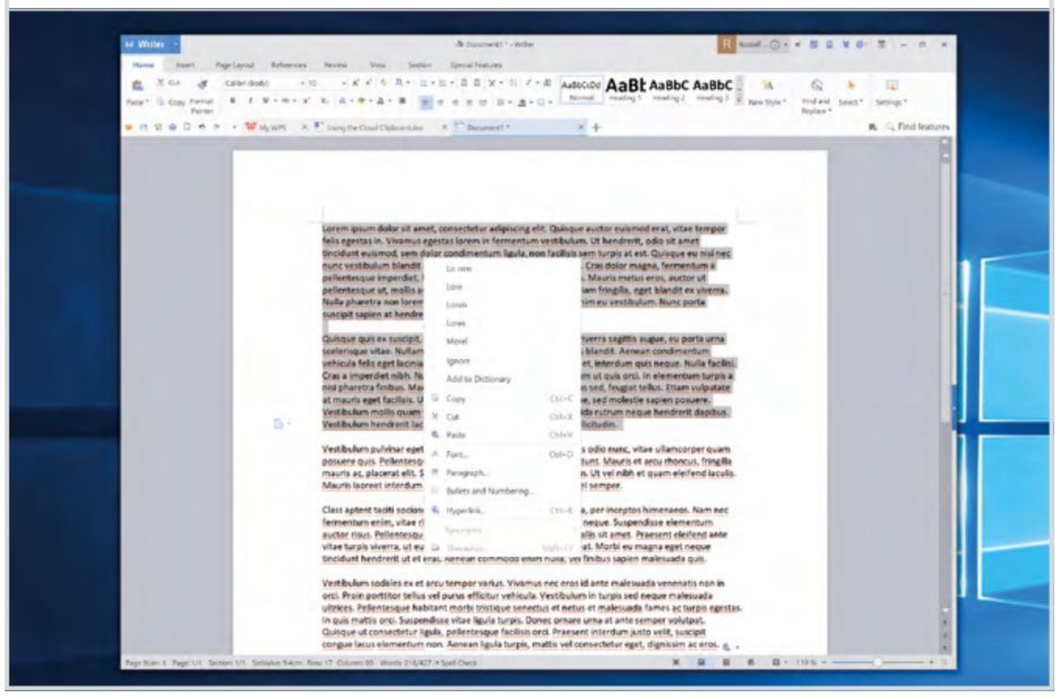
Step 1 Before you can use all the features of the Cloud Clipboard in Windows 10, you will need to enable them in the settings. Go to Settings > System and look for the Clipboard section. You can turn on the clipboard history using the slider toggle. To sync across devices, click 'Get started'.



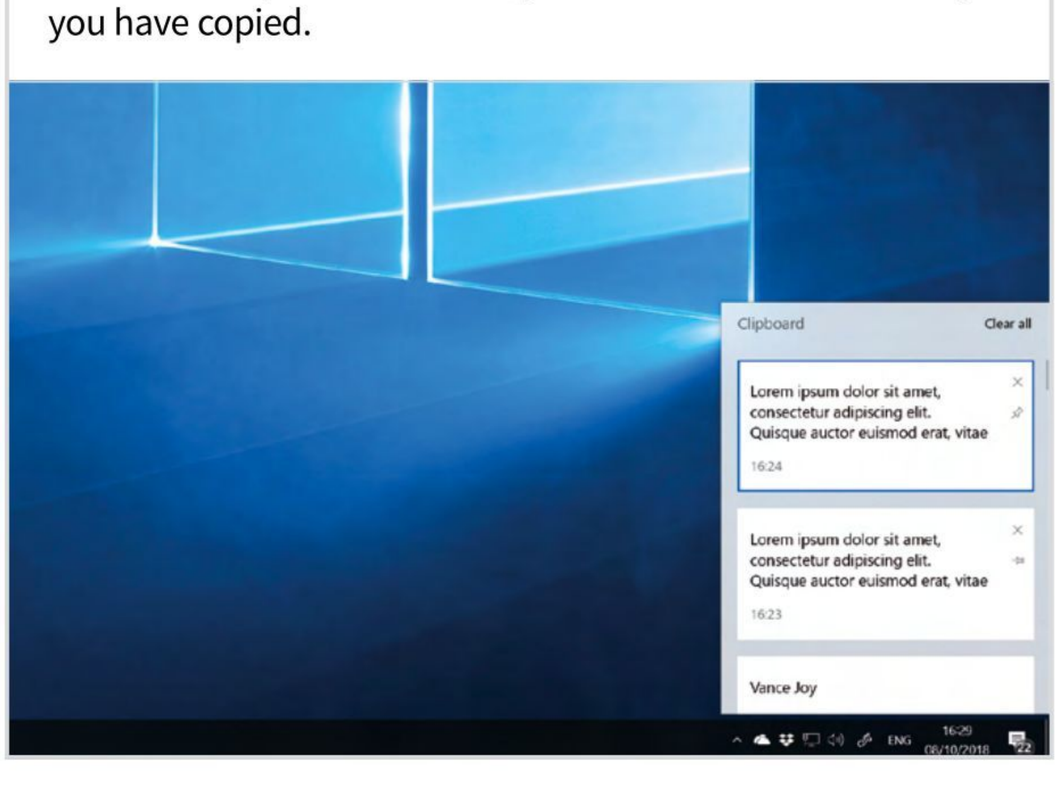
Step 2 Follow the instructions to confirm your Microsoft account (if this is requested) and then choose whether you want to enable automatic syncing across devices or not. If you want to be able to sync the clipboard to your phone, you will also need to download and install an app on that device.



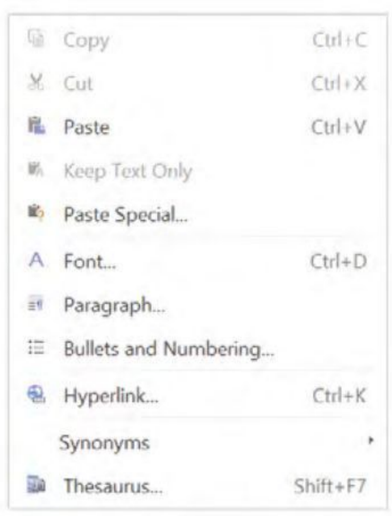
Step 3 With the Cloud Clipboard settings configured to how you want, you can start using the feature. Just like the old clipboard, things are added to it when you copy something. This can either be by pressing Ctrl + C with some text highlighted or right-clicking on an image or file and selecting Copy.



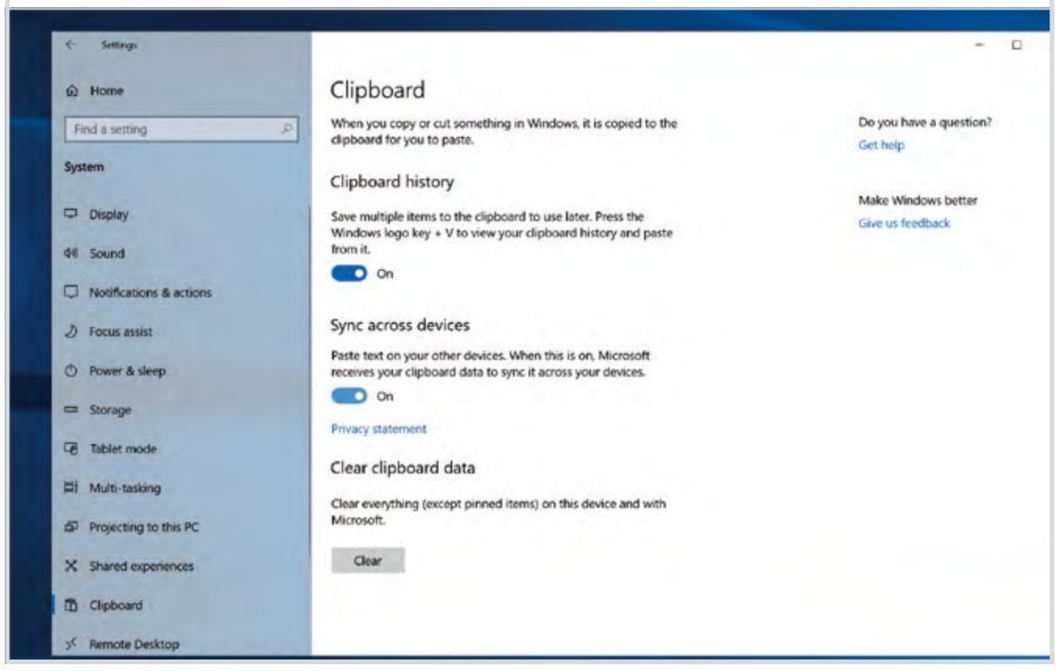
Step 4 The difference now is each thing you copy is stored in the clipboard, rather than being overwritten by the next thing you copy. To see the things stored in the Cloud Clipboard, press Windows Key + V. In the new Cloud Clipboard window, you will see a list of the things you have copied.



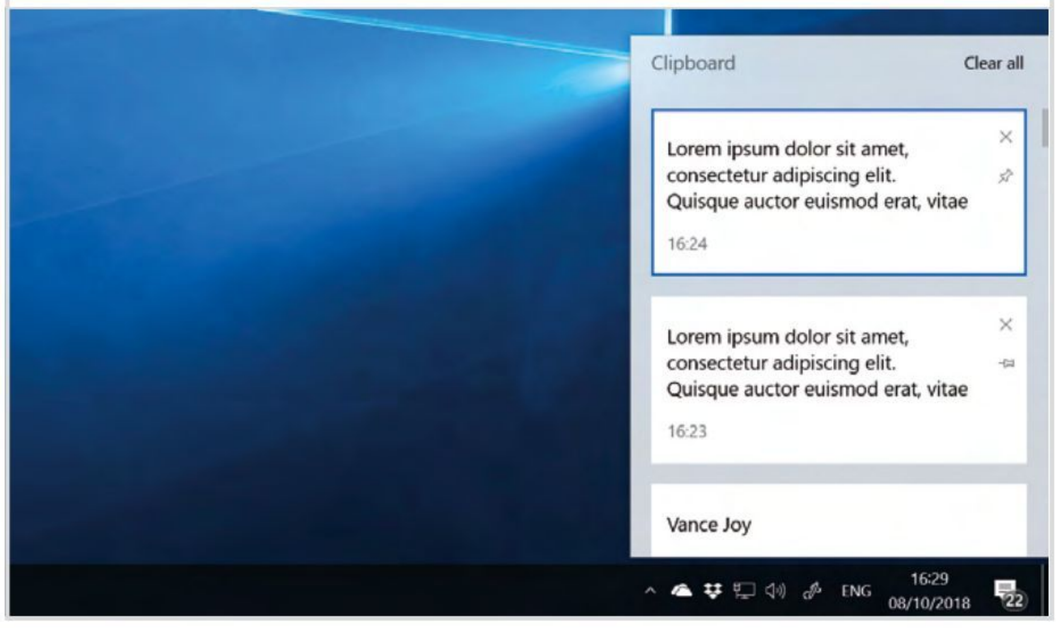
Step 5 The things you have copied can be made ready to paste by selecting them in the Cloud Clipboard. You can then use Ctrl + V to paste or right-click and select Paste from the menu. When you select something in the Cloud Clipboard, it remains there to be pasted again.



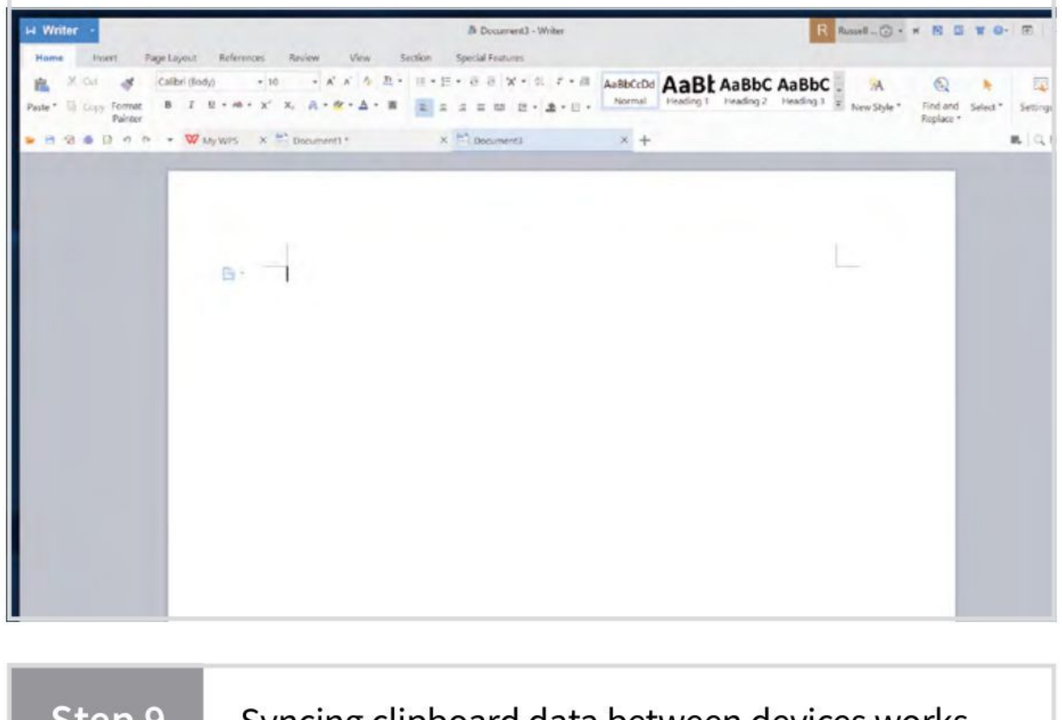
Step 6 You can clear the items from the clipboard easily, either by opening settings > System > Clipboard and clicking on 'Clear clipboard data' or by opening the clipboard window and clicking the 'Clear all' button. Once the clipboard is cleared, you cannot recover the copied data.



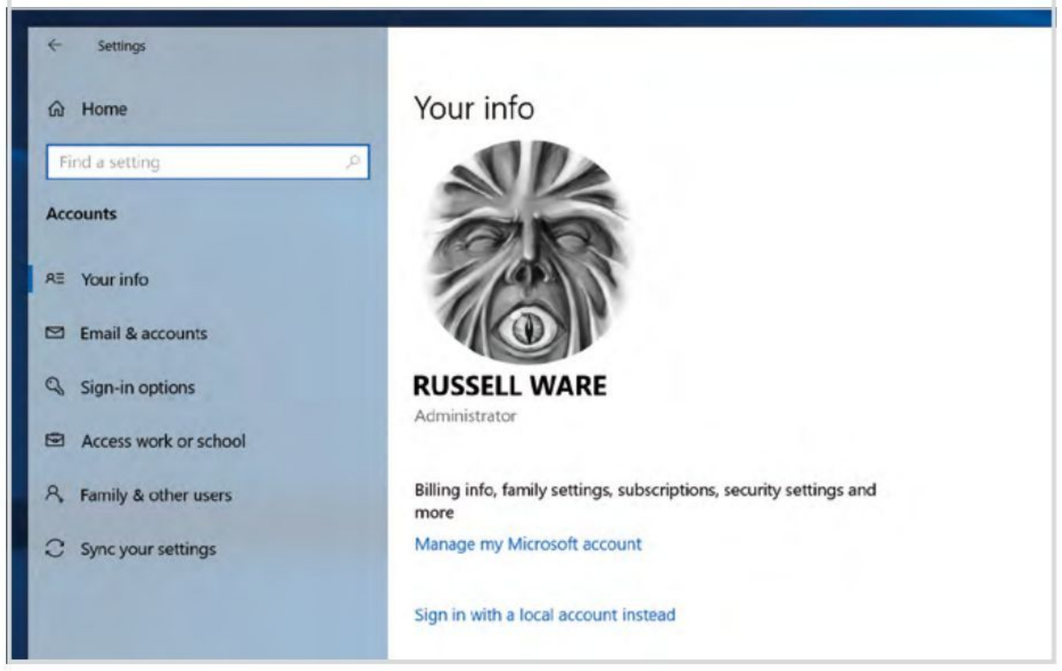
Step 7 If there is copied data in the Cloud Clipboard that you think you will always need to keep, you can pin it. Pinned items in the clipboard do not get cleared when using the methods described in the previous step. To pin something, move your mouse over the item and then click the pin icon that appears.



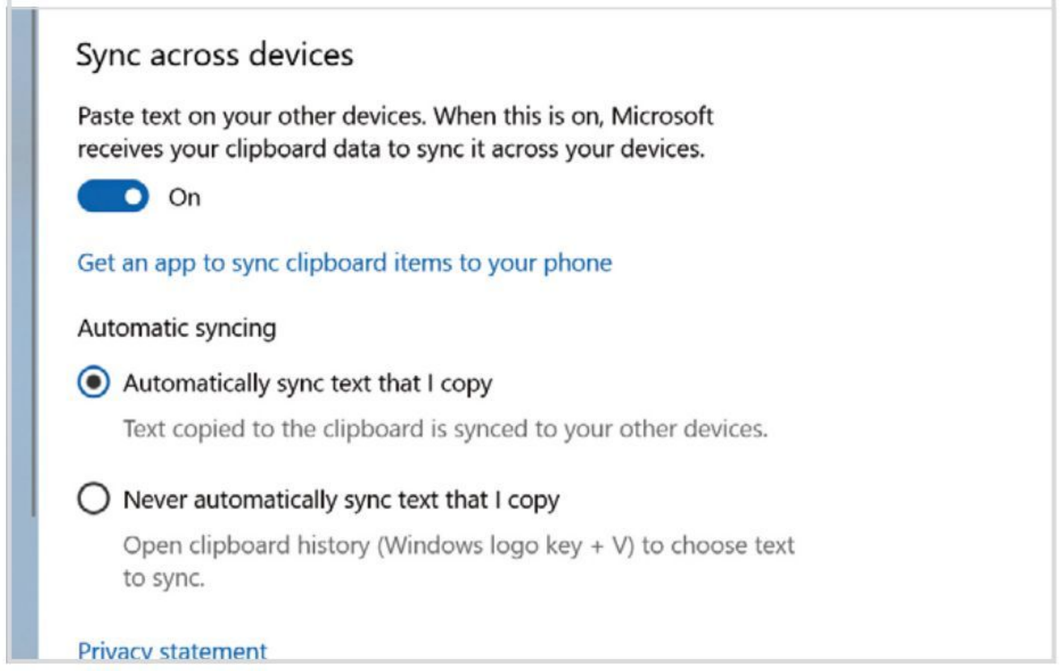
Step 8 Pinned items even remain in the Cloud Clipboard when you restart your computer. The only way to remove them now is to unpin them from the clipboard. To do this, highlight the item again and click the pinned icon. Copying something that is already saved in the clipboard doesn't overwrite it.



Step 9 Syncing clipboard data between devices works using the same Microsoft Graph technology that powers the Timeline, introduced in Windows 10's April 2018 Update. You need to be signed into both devices with the same Microsoft account for this feature to work.



Step 10 If you select 'Never automatically sync text that I copy', you'll have to manually choose what you want to copy. To do so, open your Clipboard history with Windows+V, hover over an item in your Clipboard history and click the cloud-shaped Sync to Other Devices icon.



Games

The New Windows 10 Game Bar

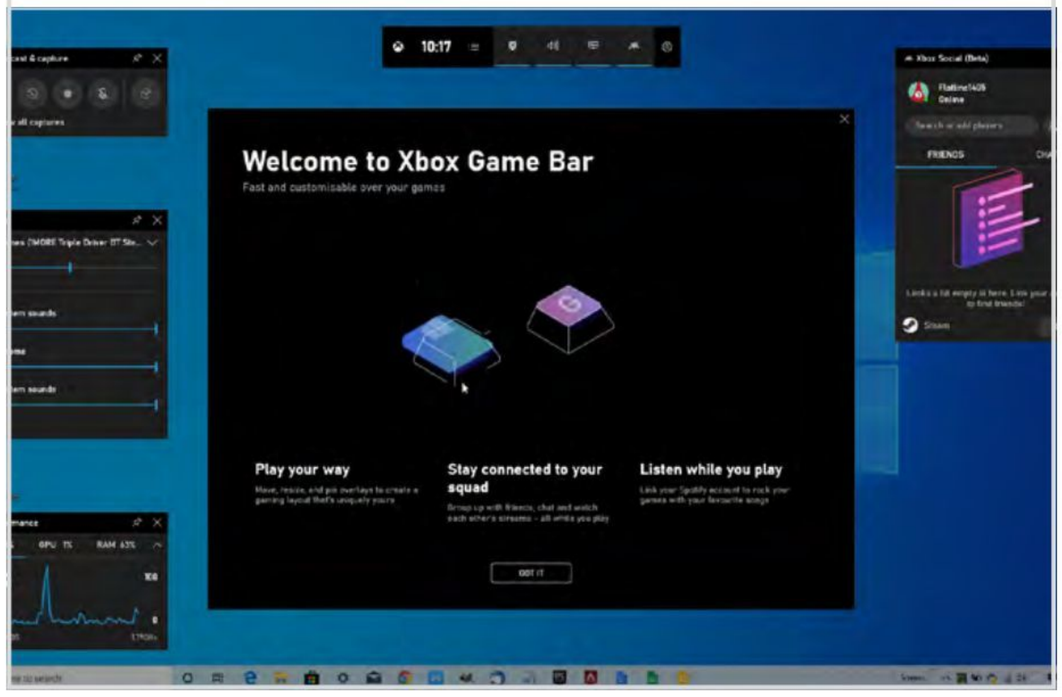
Windows 10 hasn't seen many new features recently but one area that did have a major upgrade was the Game Bar tool. Even if you have never played a single game on your Windows PC, the Game Bar can still be useful.

Using the Game Bar

No longer solely about gaming tools, the Game Bar now includes quick panels for volume control, resource usage and even playing music.

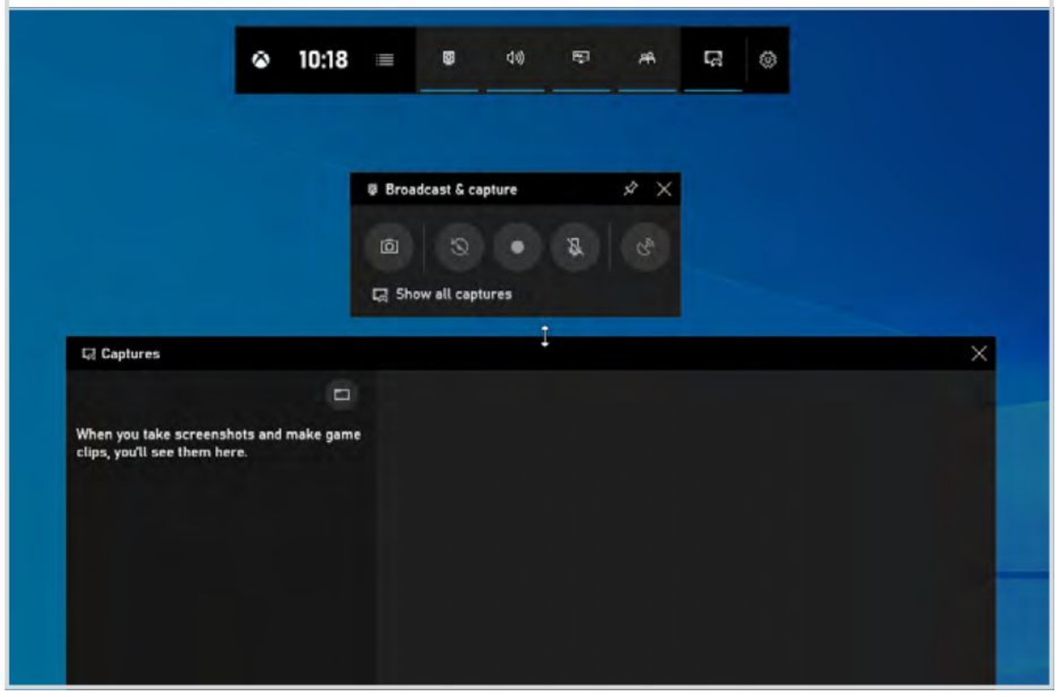
Open the Game Bar

You open the Game Bar in the same way as previously, by pressing Windows Key + G, or by opening the Start menu and scrolling down to the bottom where you will see "Xbox Game Bar". The new Game Bar will open, dimming the screen slightly and displaying a number of overlays.



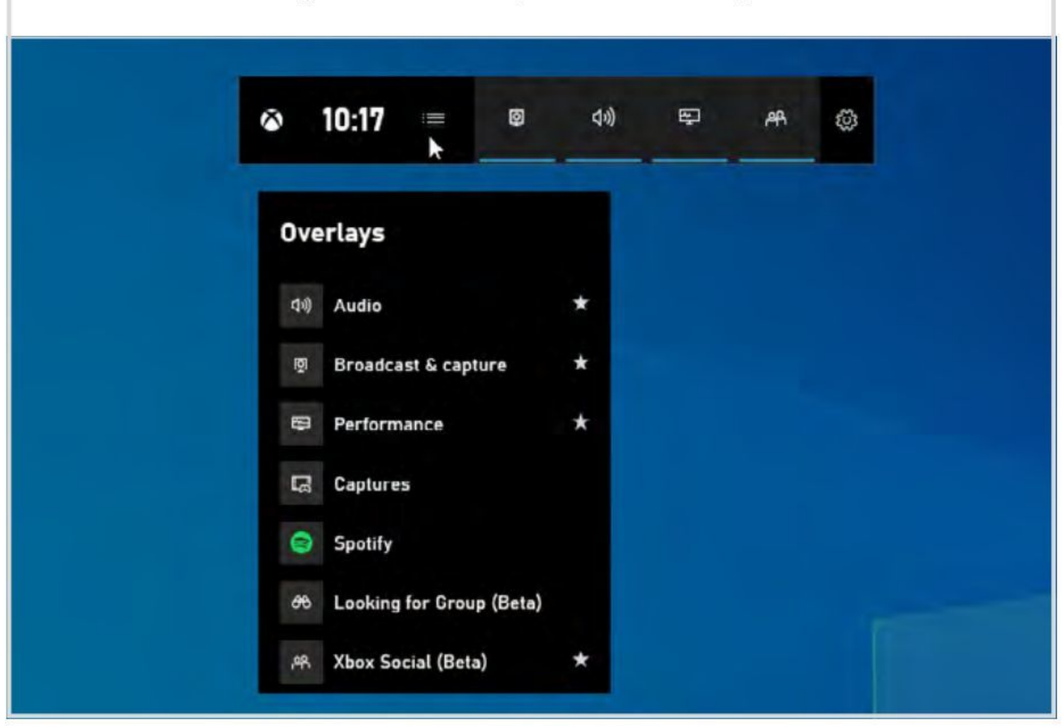
Broadcast & Capture

These are the controls that were previously in the Game Bar, allowing you to take screen captures, record on-screen action, control an in-game microphone, and broadcast your game to Mixer, Microsoft's gaming broadcast service (similar to Twitch). You can also view previous captures.



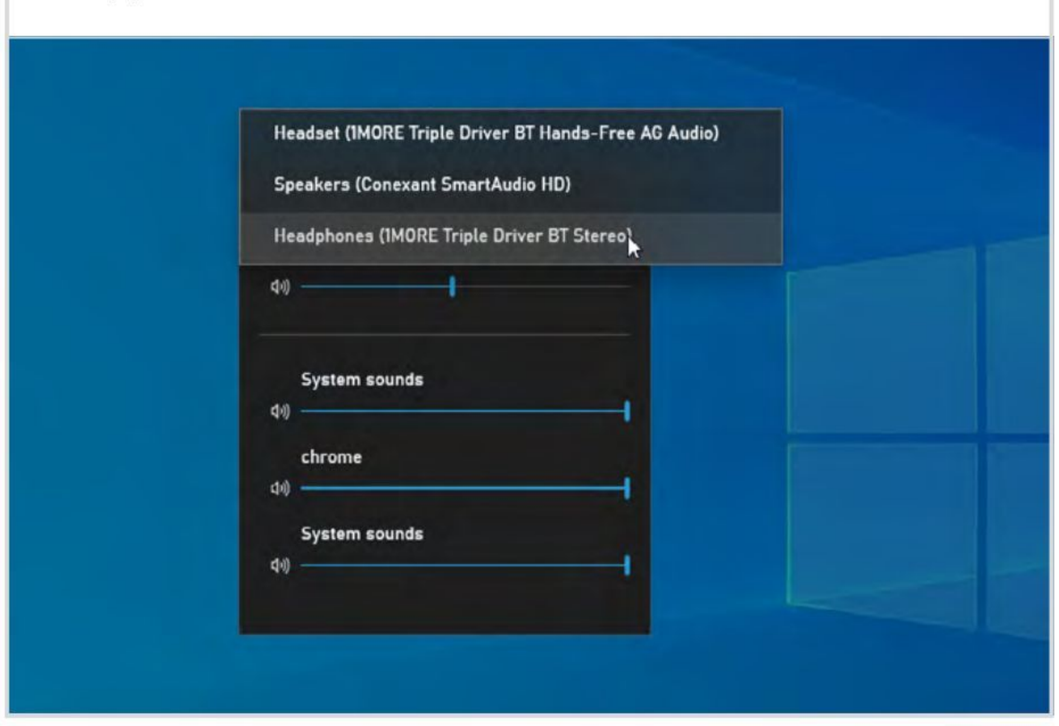
Adding Overlays

By default, four or five overlays and controls will be active. You can choose to show several more by clicking the Menu button, on the thin panel with the time displayed in the middle of the screen at the top, adding the Overlay buttons to this panel, and then clicking on each to open the overlay.



Audio Controls

As in many Windows 10 apps, there's a search box in the top right. The search will pick up results from across the Store, whatever you search for. Here we've found a film we'd like to see. This page is roughly the same whether you're looking at a game, movie or app.

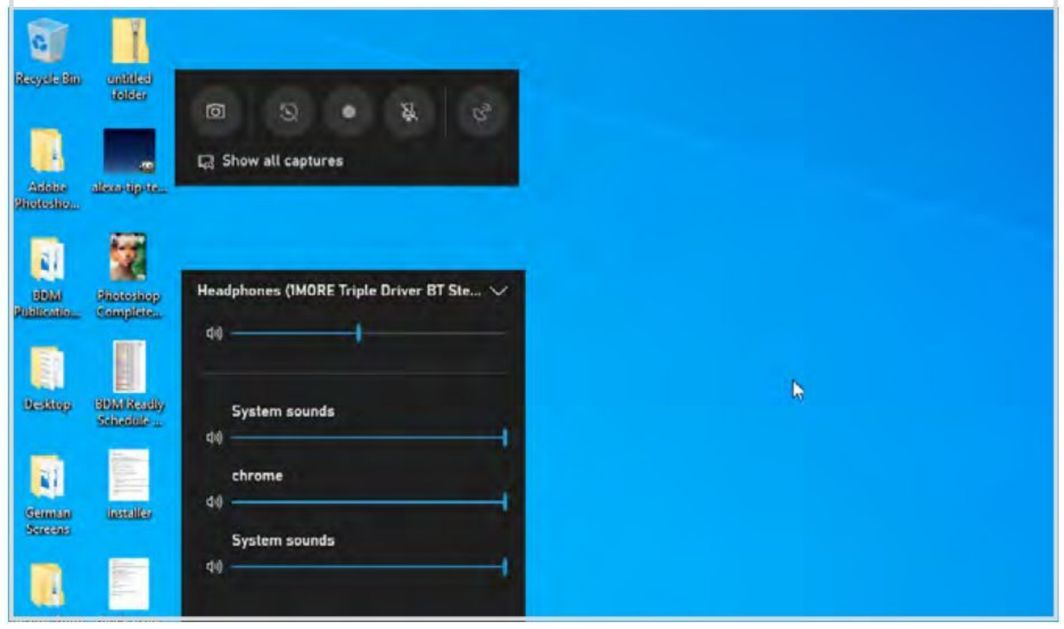


Performance Display

The performance overlay shows you a real-time snapshot of how much strain is being put on the processor (CPU), graphic card/chip (GPU) and the internal memory (RAM). It allows you to monitor how much power a game is using, but also works for any action you are performing (watching videos, etc.).

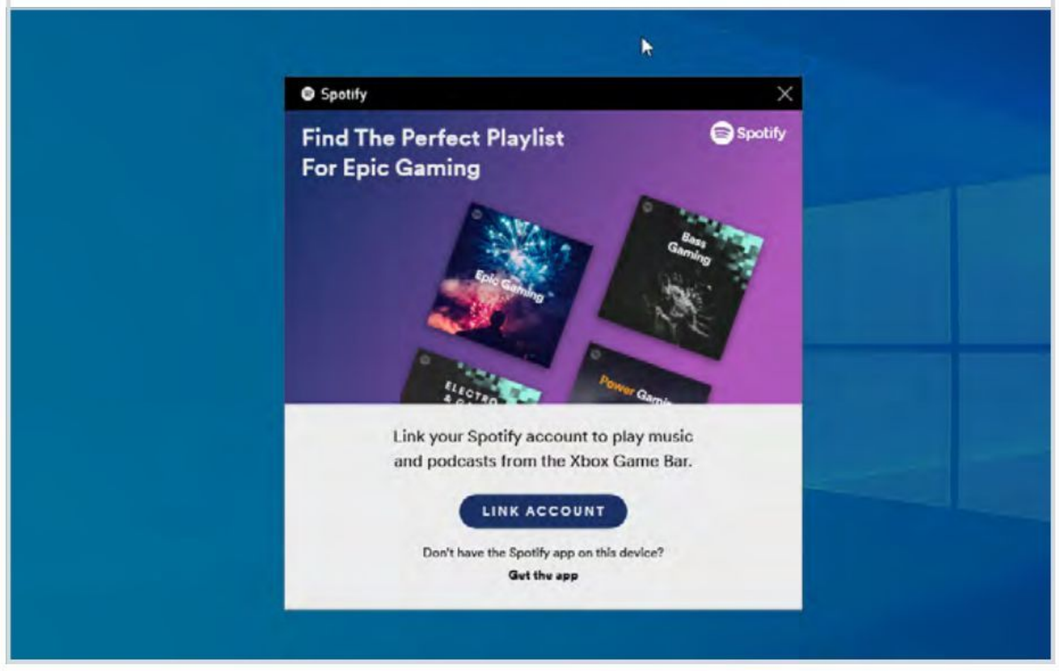
Manage Overlays

You can rearrange the position of all of the overlay panels by clicking on their top bars and dragging them into the desired position. Several of the panels can be pinned, meaning that they will remain visible on screen even after the Game Bar is hidden. Just click the Pin icon in the top bar.



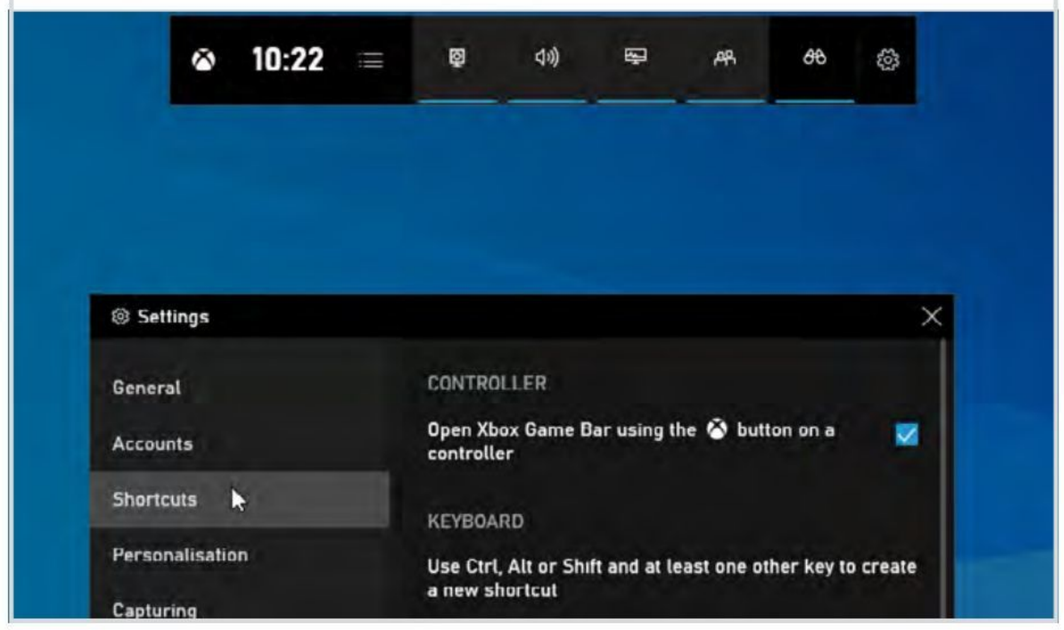
Spotify Music

The Game Bar now features Spotify integration. You can sign into your Spotify account and use the Spotify widget to play music and control playback. This is more convenient than Alt+Tabbing out of full-screen games to manage the background music.



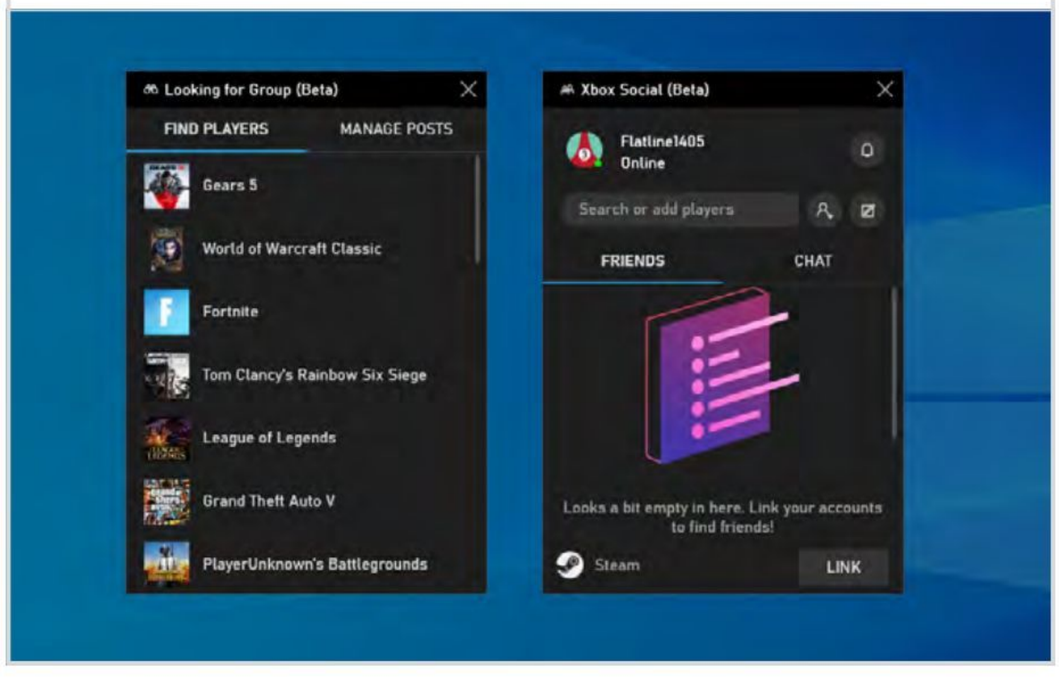
Game Bar Settings

You can access the settings for the Game Bar via the Main settings app in Windows 10, or you can click the Gear icon in the top middle panel of the Game Bar itself. This top middle panel also gives you access to the folder containing any previous captures you have taken of the screen.



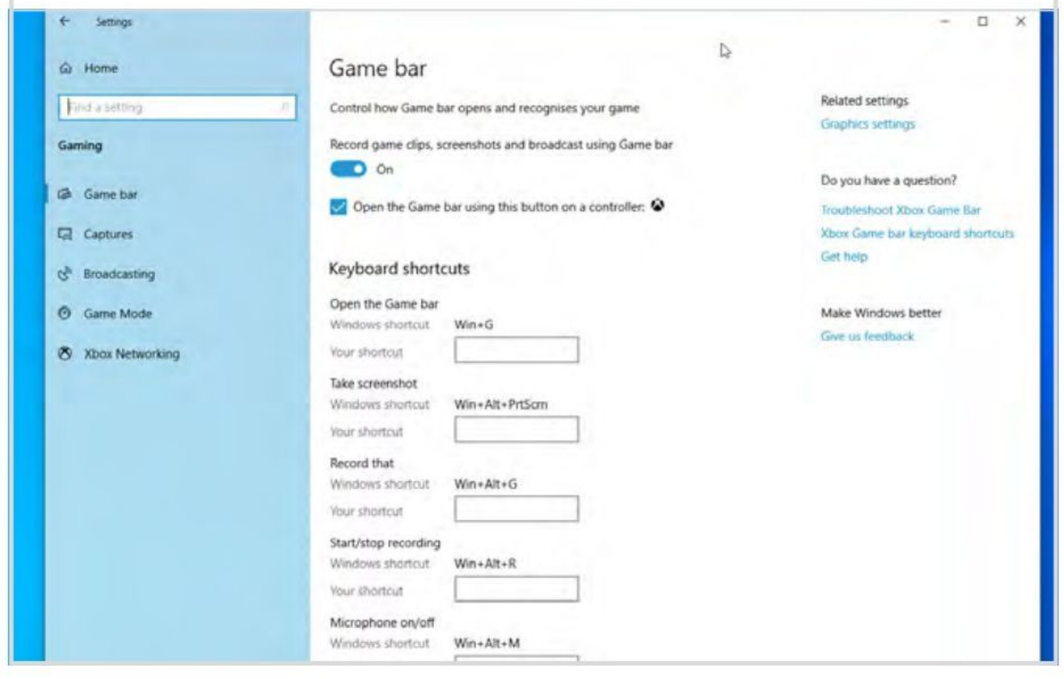
Xbox Panels

There are also two (currently in Beta testing) panels for chatting to others using the Xbox network, and finding groups of like-minded gamers. To use these two additional panels, you will need to be signed in with the Microsoft account associated with Xbox Live.



Close Game Bar

You can close the Game Bar overlay screen by clicking anywhere else on the screen, or by pressing Windows Key + G again. If you want to disable the Game Bar completely, open the Main settings, go to the Gaming section, and use the slider to disable the tool.



Screenshots

Using the Snip & Sketch Tool

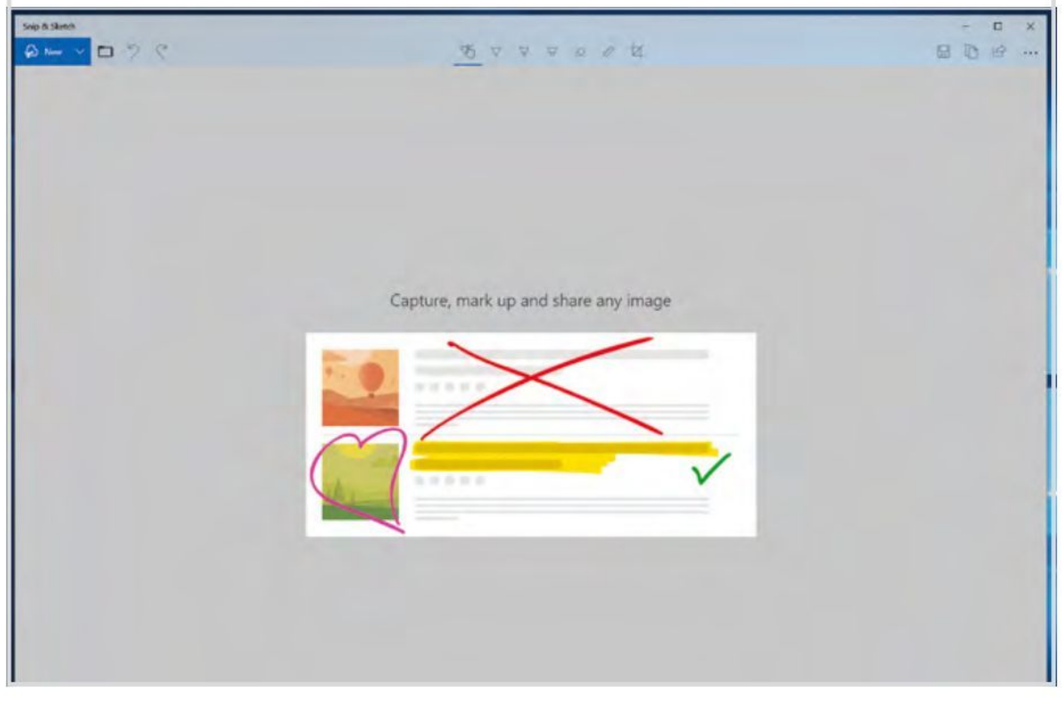
The new Snip & Sketch tool, which will eventually completely replace the old Windows snipping tool, includes a few extra features that help you to easily capture and annotate screenshots on your computer, and then save them or share them with others.

Taking Screenshots with Snip & Sketch

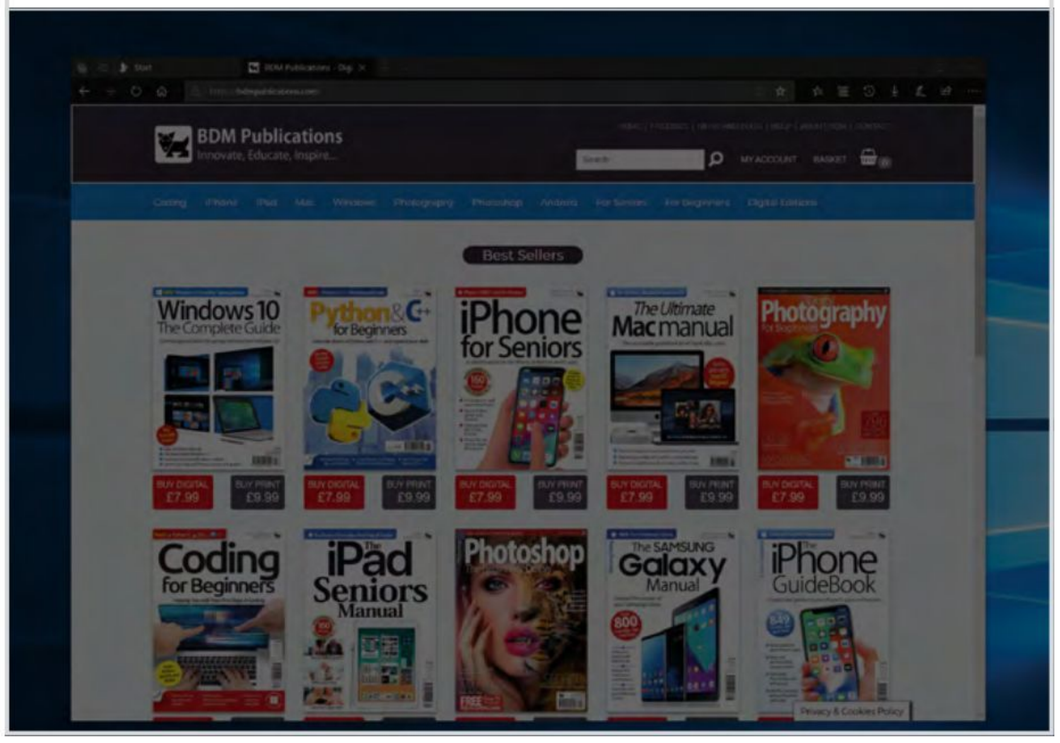
There are many reasons why you might need to capture an image of your screen, but whatever the reason, the new snipping tool allows you to do exactly that, and much more.

Step 1 There are a couple of different ways to open the Snip & Sketch tool but there's no dedicated keyboard shortcut at this time. You can open the app by clicking on it in the Start menu apps list, by searching for it in the search box or by clicking the Screen snip button in the Quick Actions panel.

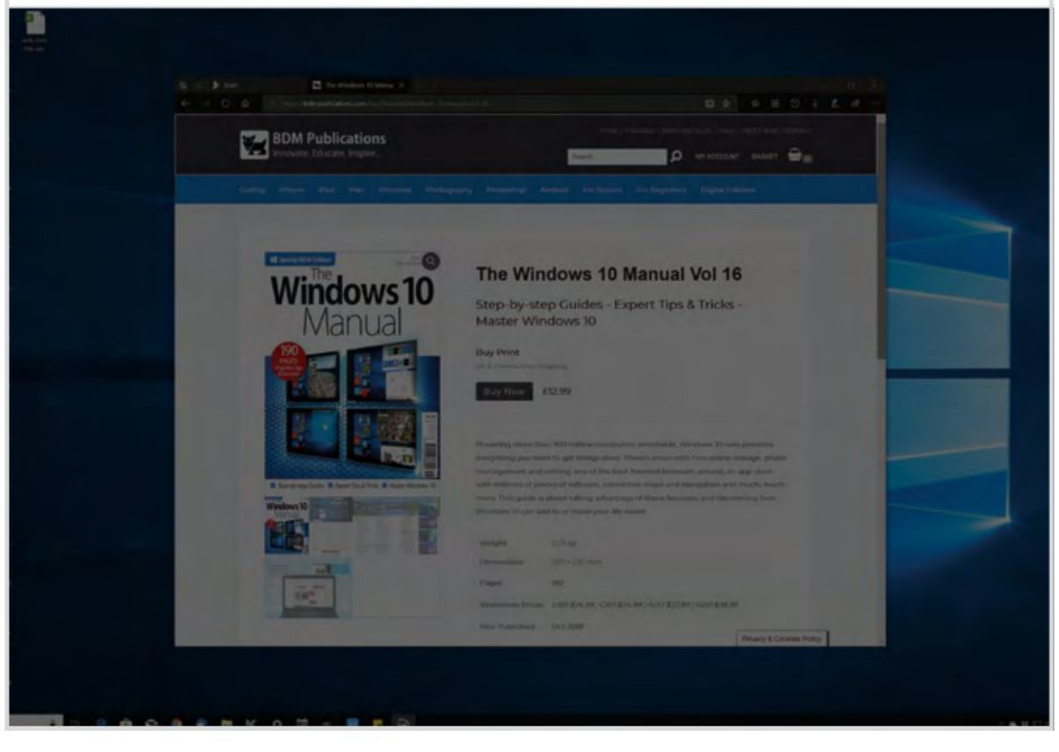
Step 2 If you open the tool using either of the first two methods, it will open as a blank window with a variety of buttons along the top for editing or writing on captured images. The New button takes you to snipping mode. If you open the tool using Quick actions, it goes straight to the snipping mode.



Step 3 Click the New button to begin snipping. The screen will darken and you will see a small toolbar appear at the top. From left to right, the tools here are Rectangular clip, Freeform clip and Fullscreen clip. Let's start with the most useful of the three, the Rectangular clip tool.



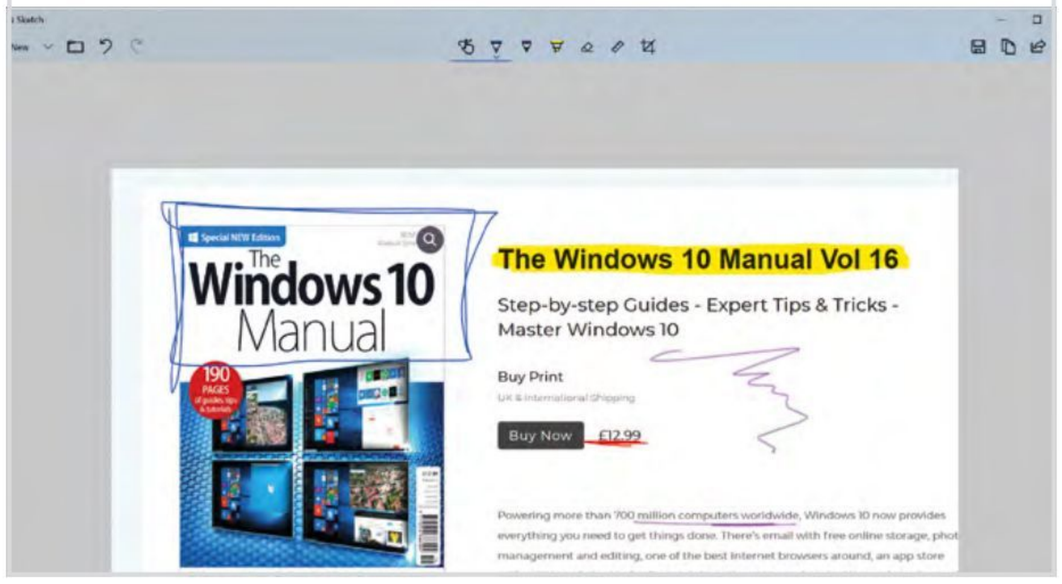
Step 4 Move the + cursor to the corner of the area you want to capture and click and hold the left Mouse or Trackpad button. Drag the cursor down and you will see the capture area highlighted. When you have the correct area of the screen highlighted, release the Mouse button to snip.



Step 5 The captured image will now appear in the previously blank Snip & Sketch window. If the image is all you need, you can simply click the Save button in the top right and choose where you want to store the image. You can also make a copy of the image here, as well as share the image via email.

Step 6 To capture a freeform screenshot, open the snipping mode again and click the second of the tools at the top. You can now use the mouse to draw around the area you want to capture, cutting out any shape you want. When complete, the freeform screenshot will open in the window as before.

Step 7 In the top middle of the Snip & Sketch window, is a set of editing tools that you can use to alter the captured image. These give you the ability to write or draw on the screenshot, adding annotations or highlighting areas. You can also crop the image down to size.

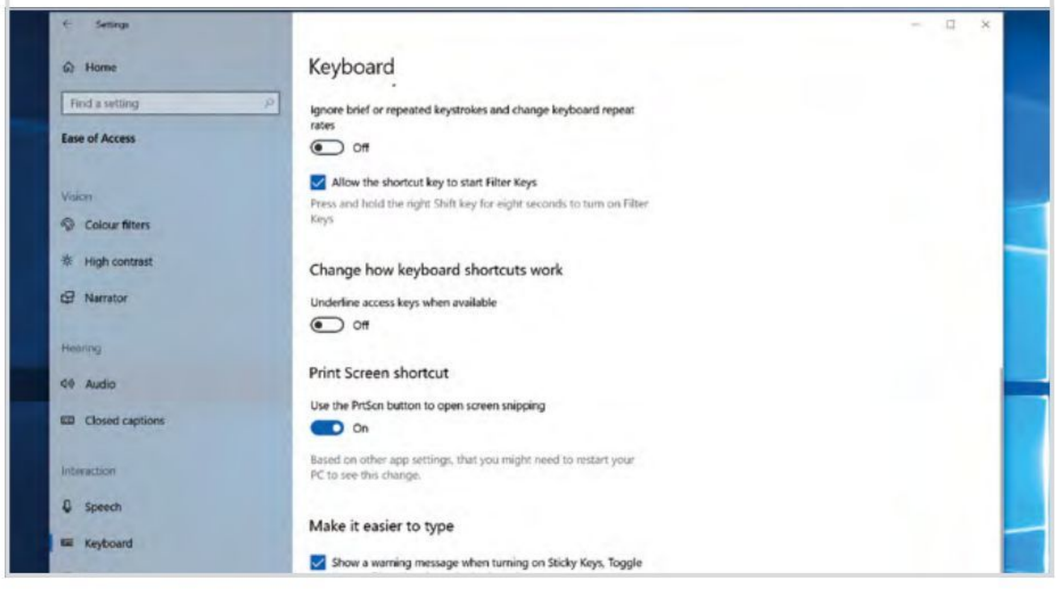


Step 8 Click on any of the pen or pencil tools to select them and then click again to open an additional tools menu. This menu will let you change the colour of the pen or pencil, as well as change the thickness of the line that is drawn, using the slider at the bottom of the menu panel.

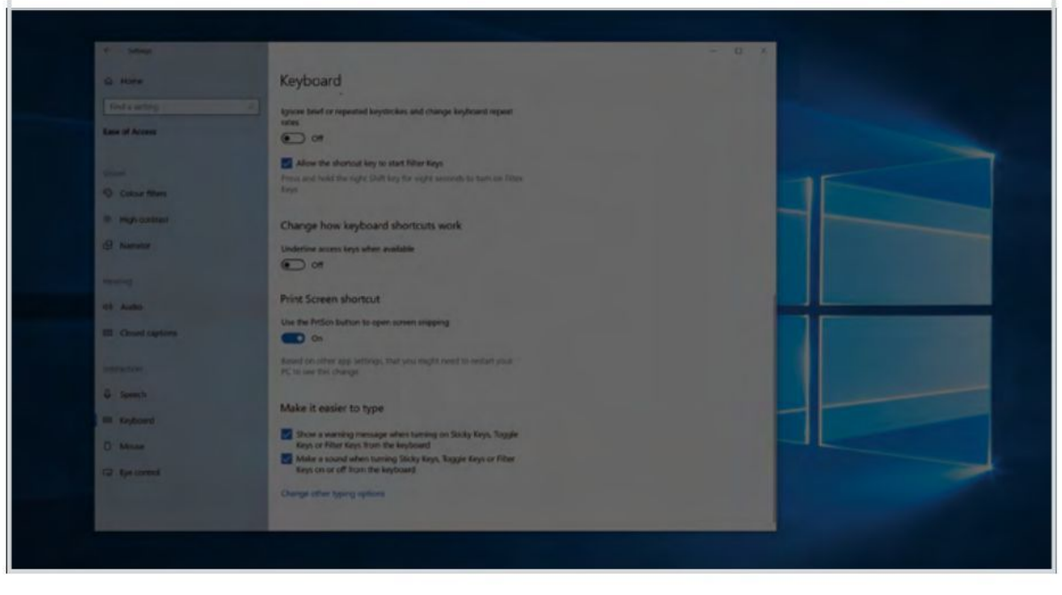
Open the Snipping Mode with PrtScn

Although there is no dedicated keyboard shortcut using the Windows key, you can set the PrtScn button to open the snipping tool when pressed.

Step 1 Until Microsoft decides to give it a dedicated keyboard shortcut, you will need to take advantage of the Ease of Access options to create a quicker way to open the snipping tool. Head into Settings > Ease of Access > Interaction section and look for the Keyboard options.



Step 2 Scroll down to the 'Print Screen shortcut' heading and use the slider to turn the shortcut on. You may need to restart your computer before the shortcut will work. You can now press the PrtScn button (usually in the top right of your keyboard) at any time to open snipping mode.



Printing

How to Install a Printer in Windows 10

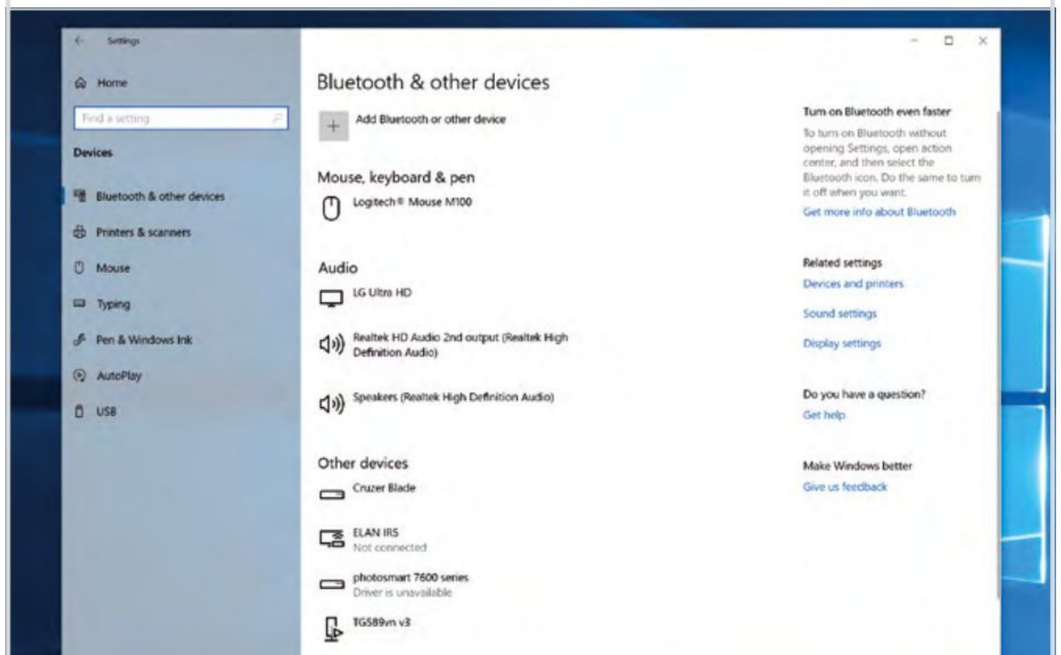
When you connect a printer to your PC or add a new one to your home network, you can usually start printing straight away. Windows 10 supports most printers, so you probably won't have to install special software. Here's how to install printers in Windows 10.

Install a Local Printer

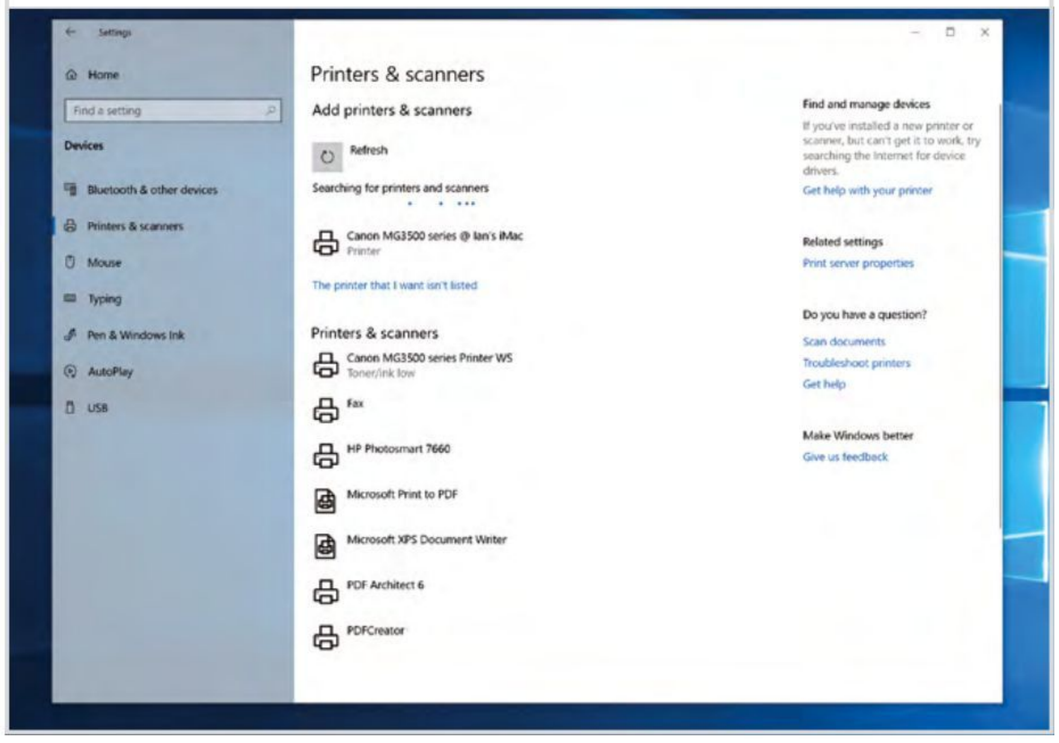
A local printer simply means one that is physically connected to your laptop or desktop computer via a USB data cable, rather than being connected wirelessly.

Step 1 In most cases, all you have to do to set up a printer is to connect it to your PC and let the plug and play software do its work. Plug the USB cable from your printer into an available USB port on your PC and turn the printer on. If nothing happens, try restarting your PC with the printer connected.

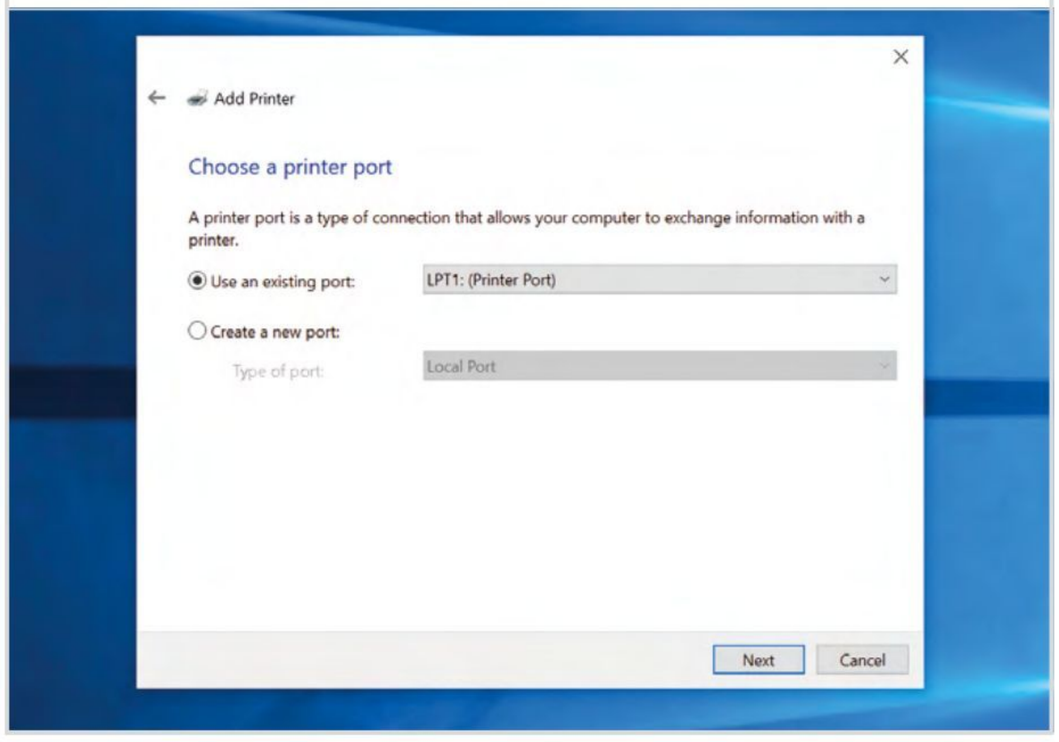
Step 2 If the printer does not set up automatically, you will need to do it yourself. Click the Start menu button and head into Settings. Here you need to look for Devices and then Printers & Scanners. You should see a list of available devices, hopefully with your printer's name shown.



Step 3 If so, click on it and then click Add Printer. The printer should then be installed and ready to use. If you don't see your device in the list, click 'Add printer or scanner' and see if the scan finds it. If it still does not appear, click the link that appears: 'The printer I want isn't listed'.



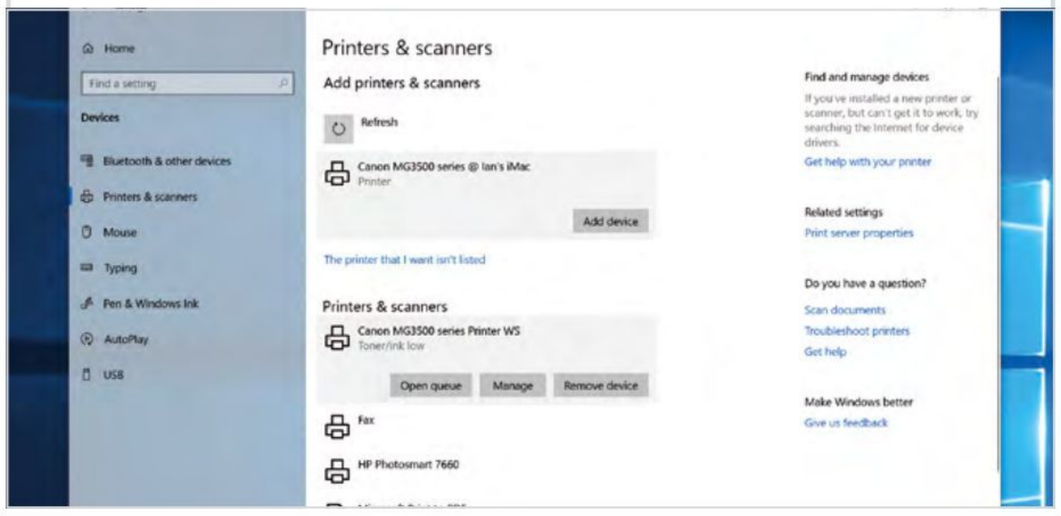
Step 4 This opens a step-by-step tool that will show you how to find and install software for an older printer, or one which is not supported by drivers pre-installed with Windows 10. If that still fails, try going to the printer manufacturer's website and download an installer or drivers.



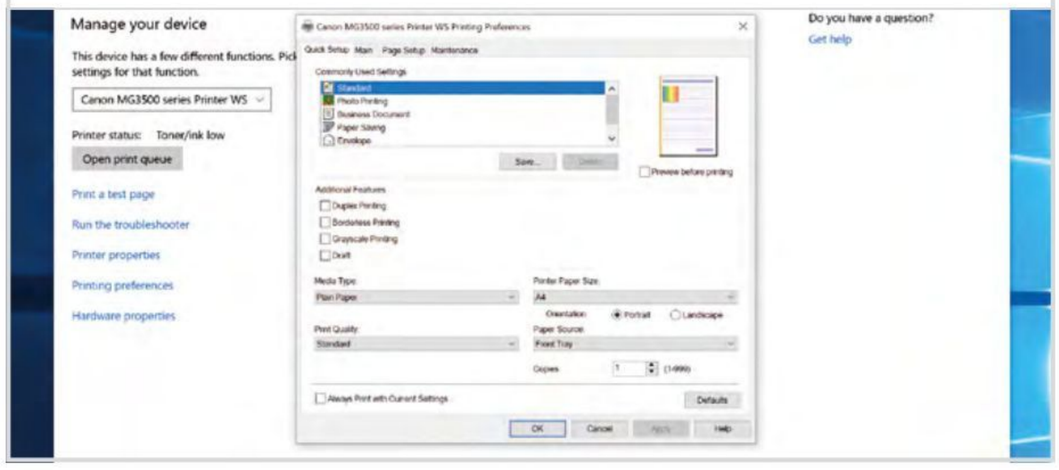
Install a Wireless Printer

A wireless printer is one that is connected via Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or by means other than a USB data cable. This can also include a printer connected to another PC on the network.

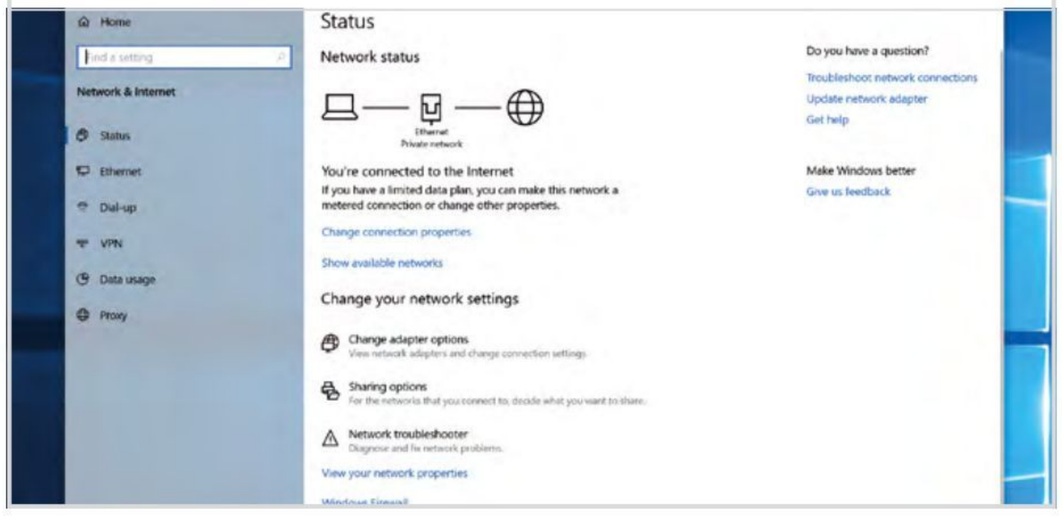
Step 1 Open the settings and head in to Devices and then Printer & Scanners. Look for your printer in the list of available devices and if it is there, click on it and then click 'Add printer'. If your printer is switched on and connected to the network, Windows 10 should find it easily.



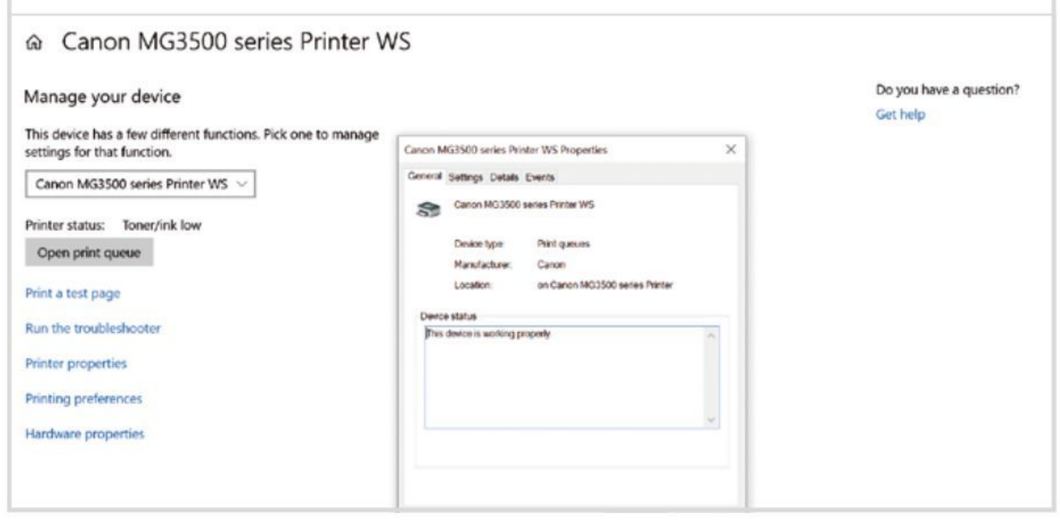
Step 2 Available printers can include all such devices on a network, such as Bluetooth and wireless printers or those that are plugged into another computer and shared on the network. You might need permission to install some printers, depending on the type of network you are connected to.



Step 3 If you use wireless access points, extenders or multiple wireless routers with separate SSIDs, you'll need to ensure that you're connected to the same network as the printer for your PC to find and install it. If the printer does not appear in the list you may need to add it manually.



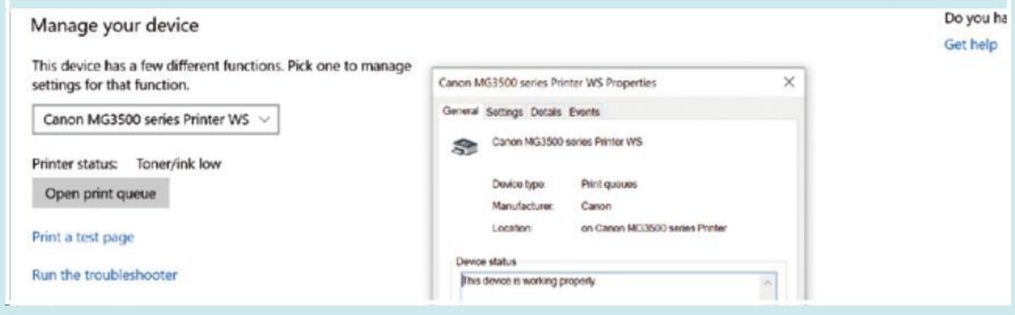
Step 4 Click on 'The printer I want isn't listed' when it appears. This opens a tool that will show you, step-by-step, how to find and install software for an older printer, or one which is not supported by Windows 10 drivers. If this fails, try looking for the software on the manufacturer's website.



COMMON PRINTER PROBLEMS

Printers are getting easier and easier to install, thanks to plug and play software, but if you are having problems do these two things first.

Check for Old Drivers Most printers require driver software to work properly. If you recently upgraded from one version of Windows to another, it's possible that the current printer driver is for the previous version of Windows and may not work (or work well) with Windows 10. Check Windows Update for new drivers.



Run the Troubleshooter Head in to settings > Update & Security > Troubleshoot and run the Printer Troubleshooter. You can also type 'Printing problem' into the search box, select the search result labelled 'Help from Microsoft' and then select the troubleshooter to download it.

Sticky Notes

Using the On-screen Sticky Notes

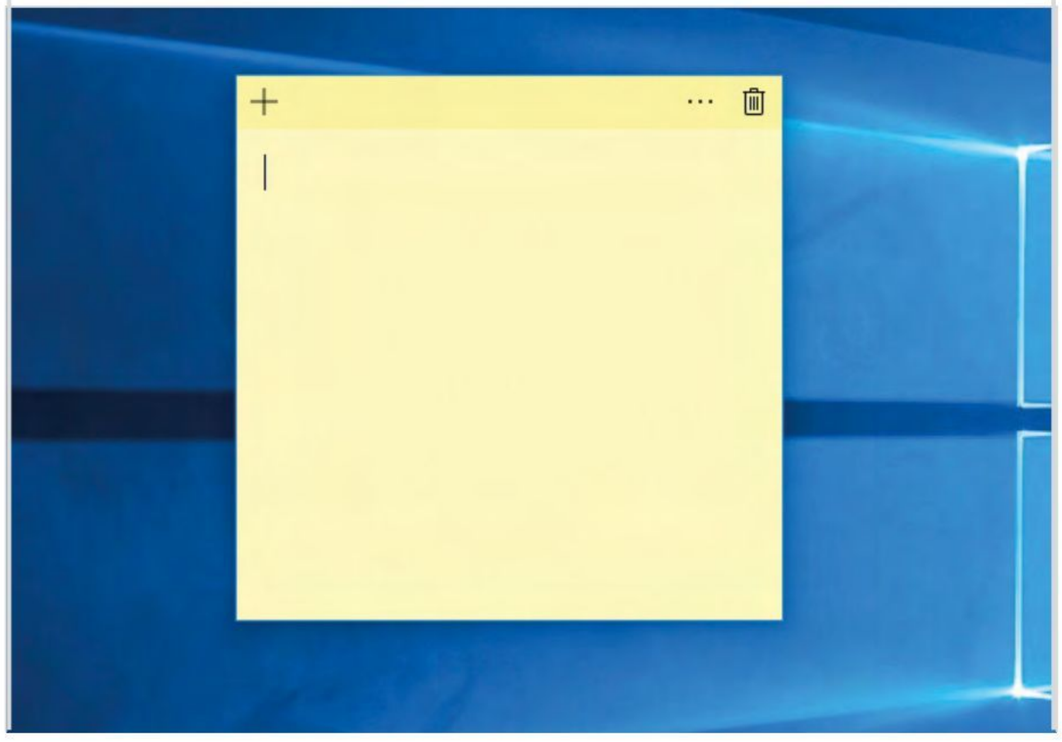
There are lots of Windows 10 apps for making reminder lists but sometimes you just need a simple note to jog your memory. There is a simple and often overlooked bit of software in Windows, that allows you to add sticky notes to your screen quickly and easily.

Adding Sticky Notes

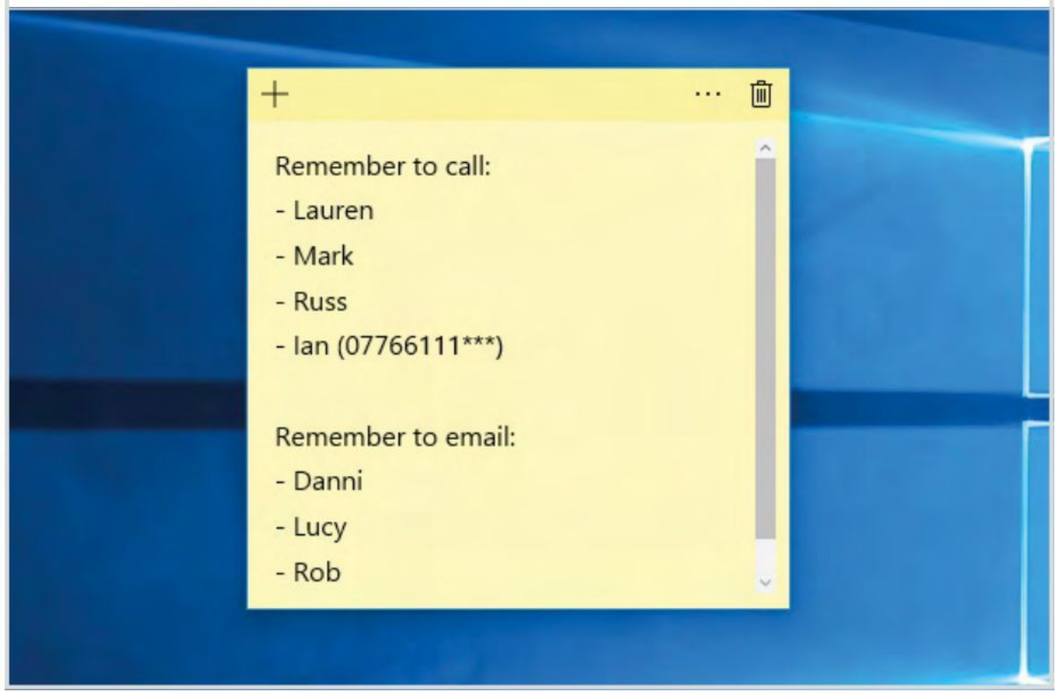
The Sticky Notes software comes preinstalled with every version of Windows since Vista, although it has been improved slightly with each new release.

Step 1 You can find the Sticky Notes software in the All Apps menu of Windows 10 or you can search for "Sticky Notes" using the search field in the taskbar. If you can't find it under S in the main All Apps menu, it might be within the Windows Accessories folder instead. Click to open the first note.

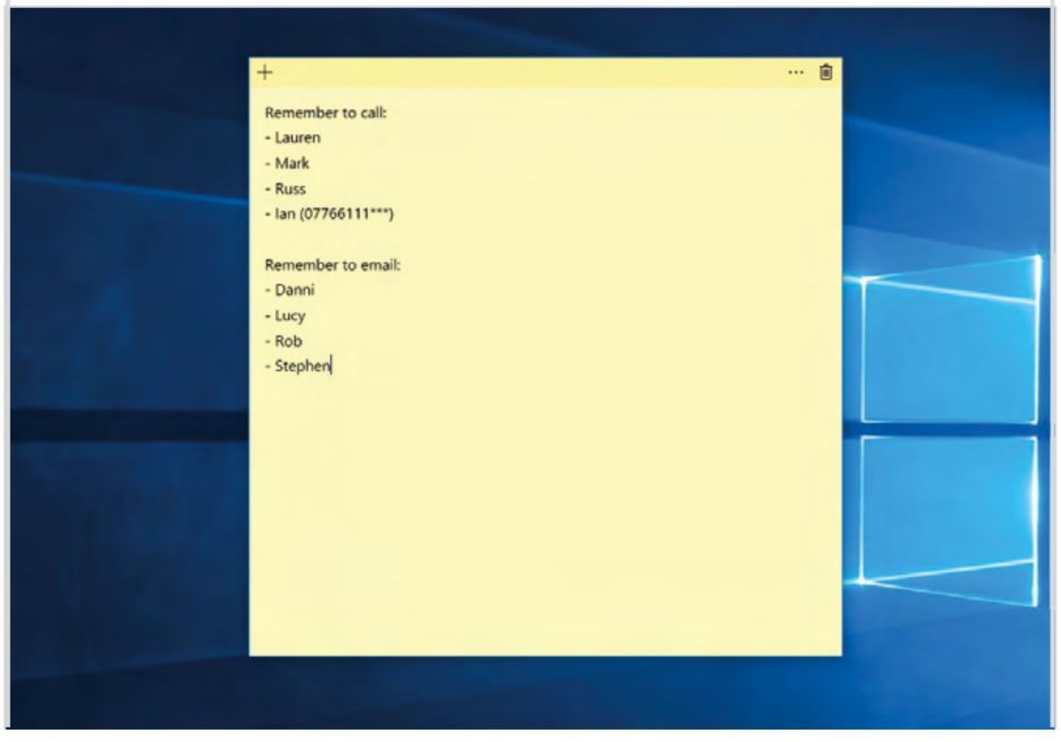
Step 2 A blank Sticky Note will now appear on your screen. You will see that it looks just like a real Post-it Note, except the corners won't curl up and the glue won't fail. Click anywhere on the body of the note to make the cursor appear, if it isn't visible to begin with.



Step 3 You can now type out your note. This can be a simple "Remember to call Ian", a shopping list (with the formatting added yourself) or any other simple note you might need. The note is not confined to the size of the original sticky note, with a scroll handle appearing if you reach the bottom.

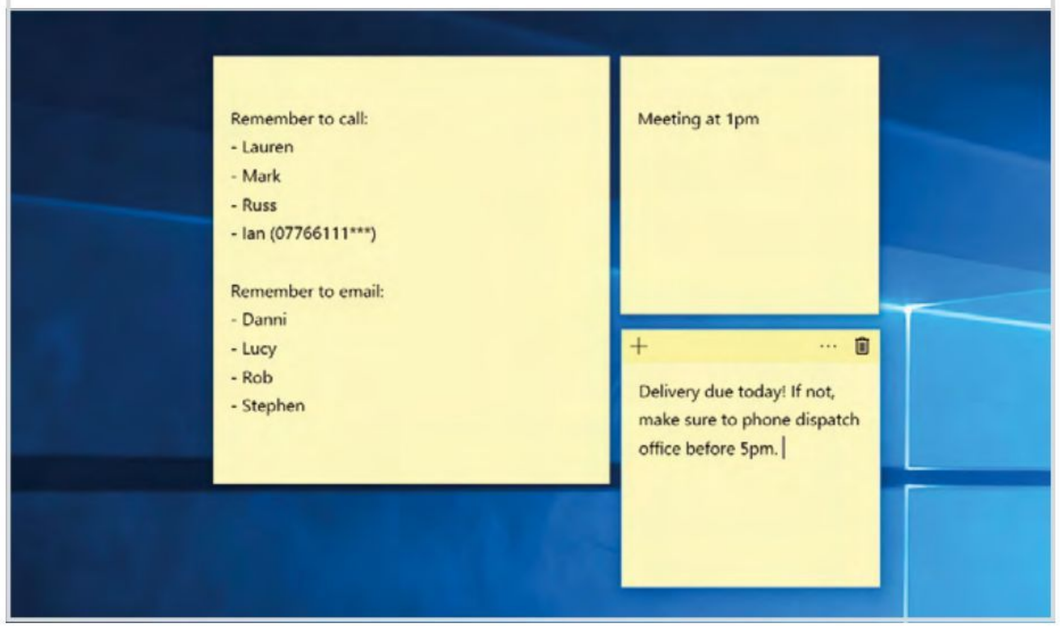


Step 4 You can resize the sticky notes, to make them slightly smaller or quite a bit larger, by moving the mouse pointer over the corner or edge until a handle icon appears and then clicking and dragging to the required size. This is useful if you don't want to scroll to see a longer note.

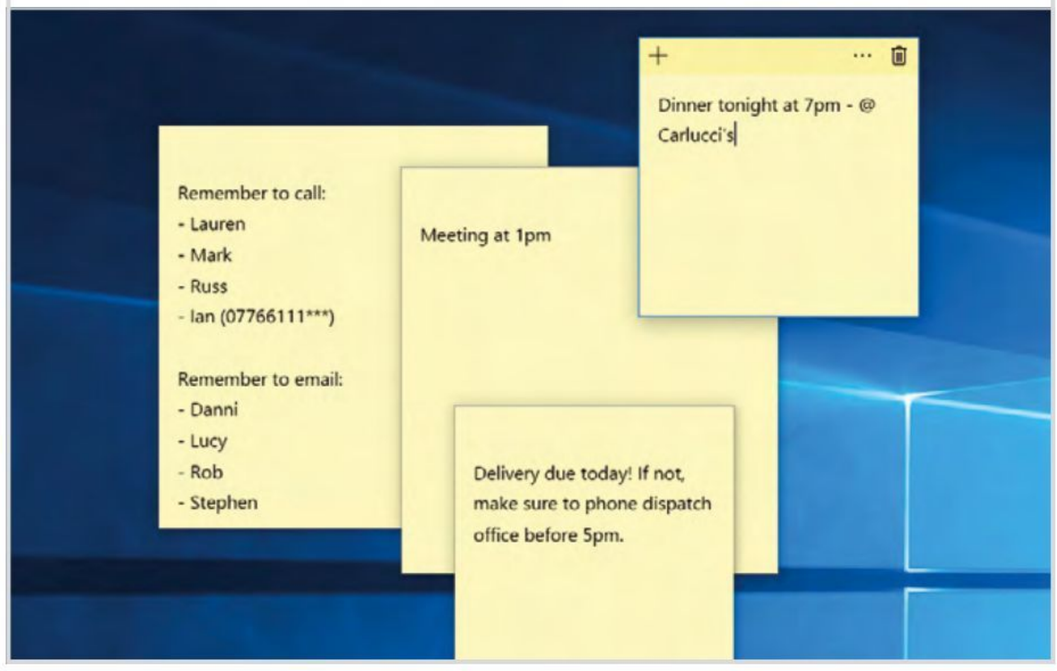


Sticky Notes

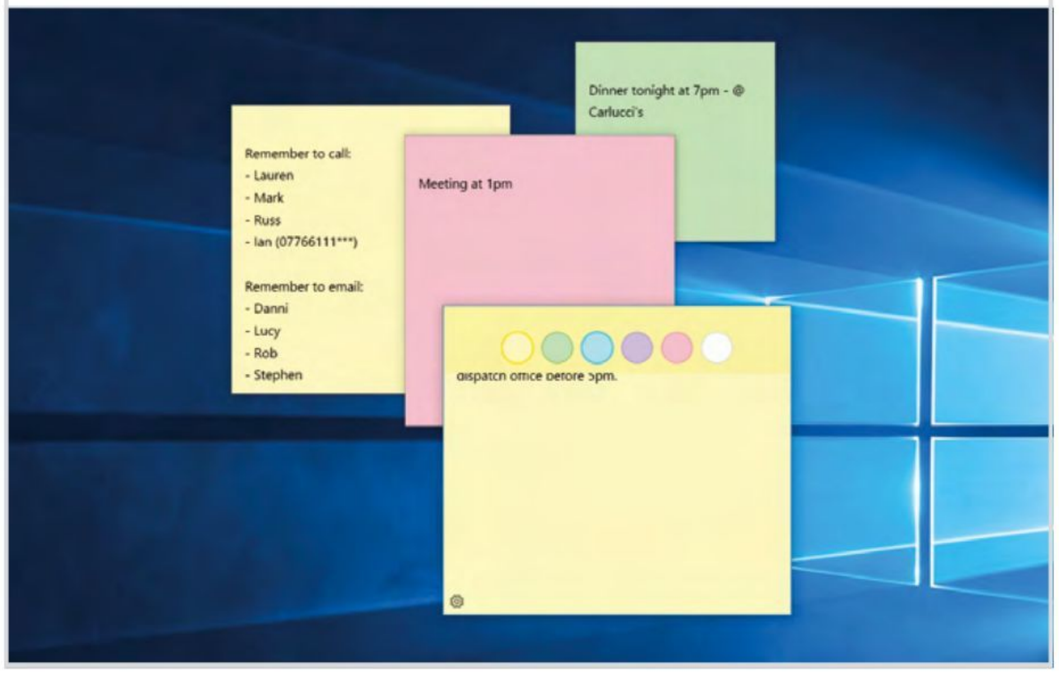
Step 5 Once you have created one note, adding another is easy. Click the + button in the top left and another yellow blank note will appear. Repeat until you have enough notes. You can also right click on the icon in the taskbar and then New Note or use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl + N.



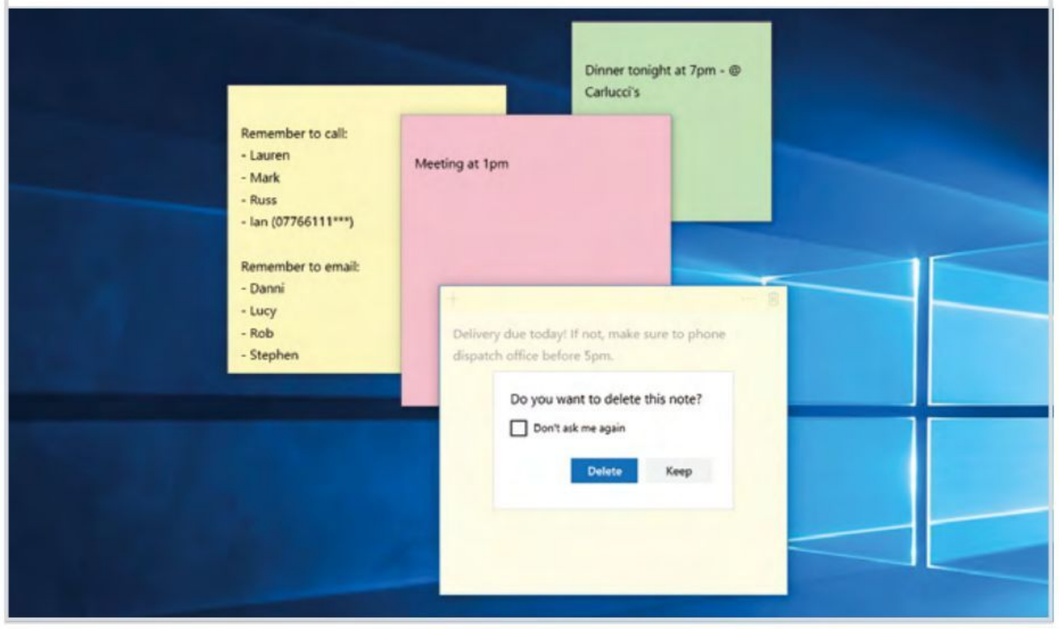
Step 6 You can move the notes around the desktop however you wish, even overlapping them if required. Your sticky notes will stay in the position you put them in, even when you shut down and restart your computer, as long as you don't close the software manually.



Step 7 You don't have to stick to the default yellow colour note that you start with. Right click on any of your notes and then click the menu icon at the top and you can change the colour to a variety of presets. This is particularly handy if you want to make certain notes stand out.



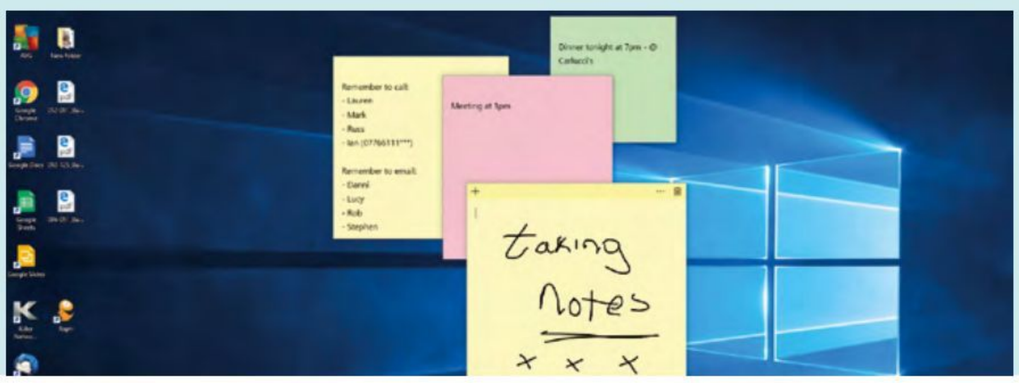
Step 8 You need to keep the app open for your notes to remain on the screen but as long as it is, you can shut down and reboot and the notes will remain on the desktop. To close notes, you simply need to click on the trash icon in the top right corner. Close the last note and the software closes too.



WINDOWS 10 ANNIVERSARY STICKY NOTES

Windows Ink, available for the first time in the Anniversary update, brings the writing you do every day into your digital world. Now, using a Windows 10 device, graphic designers can be more creative, musicians can write digital music, lawyers can edit documents with the power of the pen and students can make mathematical equations and learn by writing. All of this is available to any Windows 10 user, but even more useful for those with a touchscreen PC.

- Quickly and easily take a note, sketch on a screenshot or draw an idea.
- Smart Sticky Notes help you remember common tasks like reminding you of flight times or offering directions using Maps.
- Key apps have new Ink-specific features, like using handwriting in Office, Ink annotations in Microsoft Edge or drawing custom routes in Maps.



Apps

10 Essential Windows 10 Apps

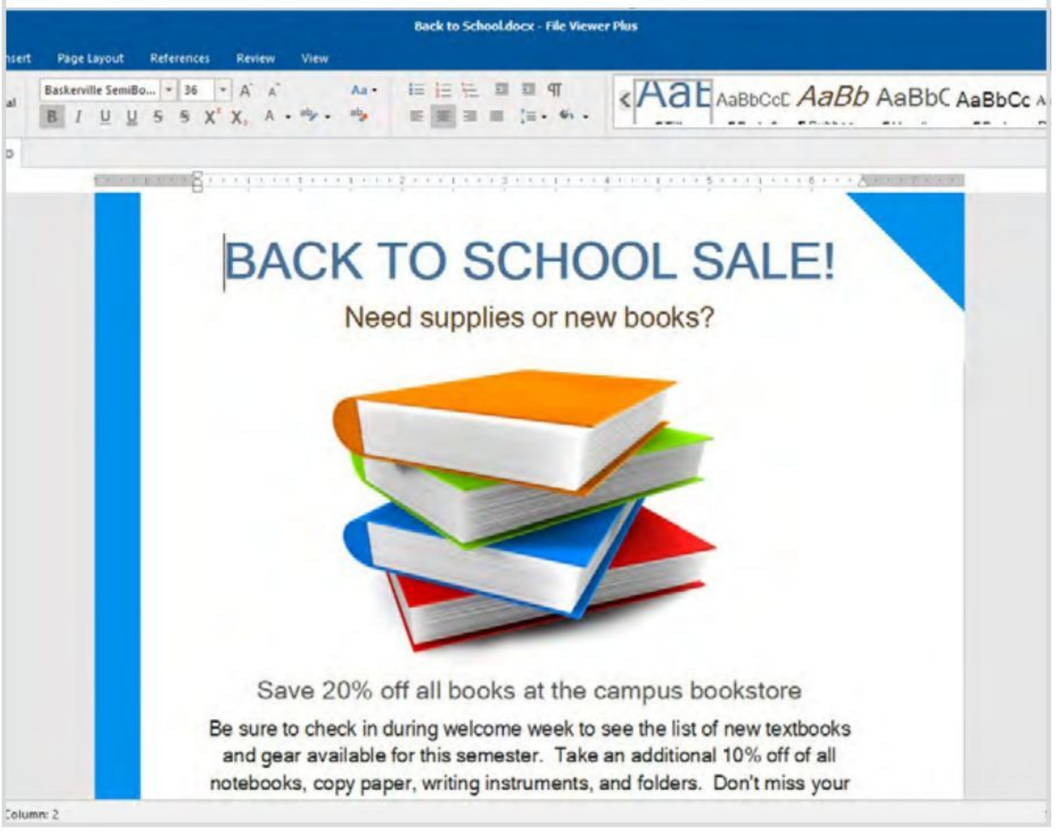
The Windows Store is crammed full of useful apps for your computer, from well-known names like Spotify to little-known but useful apps like Pin More. Here, we will take a look at some of the best, most useful, or just unique apps available to download right now.

Netflix

Netflix is the world's leading subscription service for watching TV episodes and movies. Netflix membership gives you access to unlimited TV programmes and films for one low monthly price. - With the Netflix app, you can instantly watch as many TV episodes and films as you want, as often as you want, any time you want.

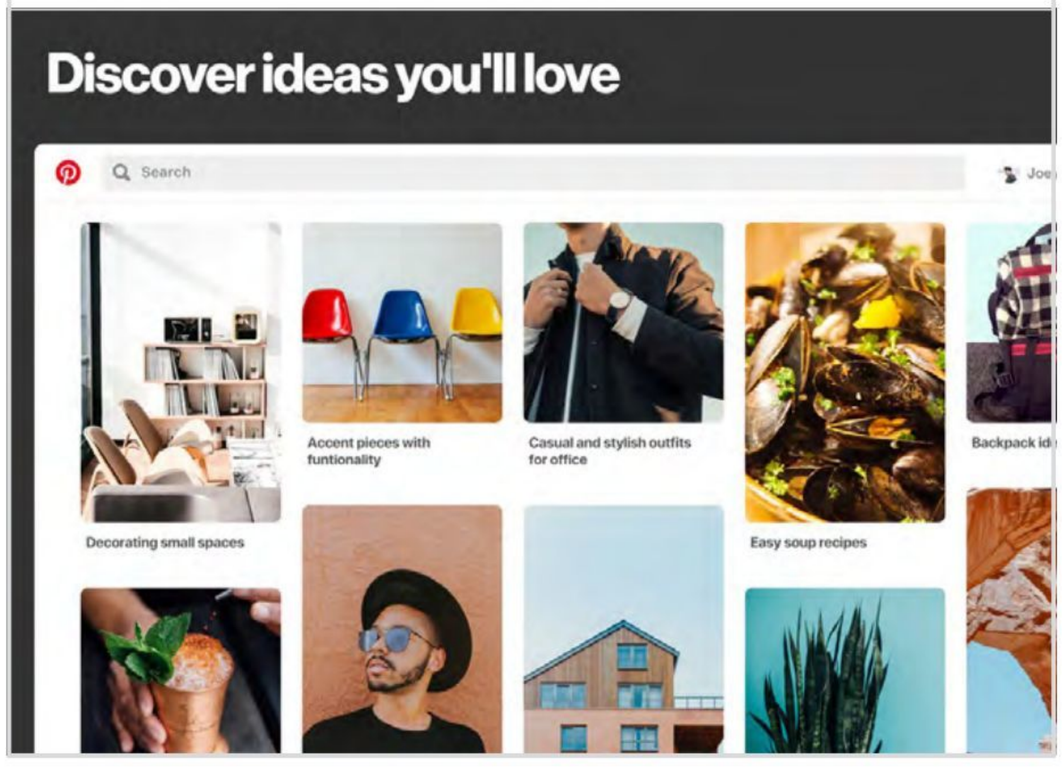
File Viewer Plus

Are you tired of cluttering your PC with dozens of apps? The free version of File Viewer Plus allows you to open over 150 different file types with one, simple app. Open documents, spreadsheets, presentations, images, audio files, video files, archives, and much more. Save both time and money with File Viewer Plus.



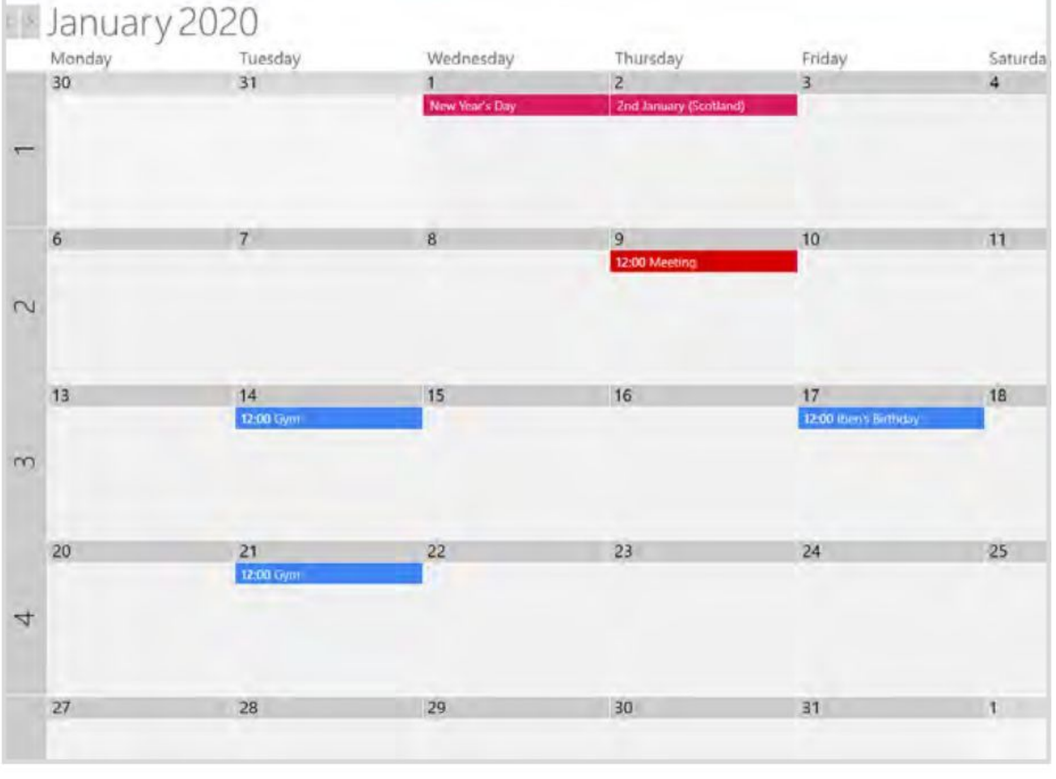
Pinterest

Looking for creative ideas? Whether you're planning your next big travel adventure, searching for home design concepts, or looking for fashion & fitness tips; check out new recipes, or explore lifestyle inspiration, on Pinterest. Discover billions of possibilities for every part of your life, from new recipes to creative home design ideas.



One Calendar

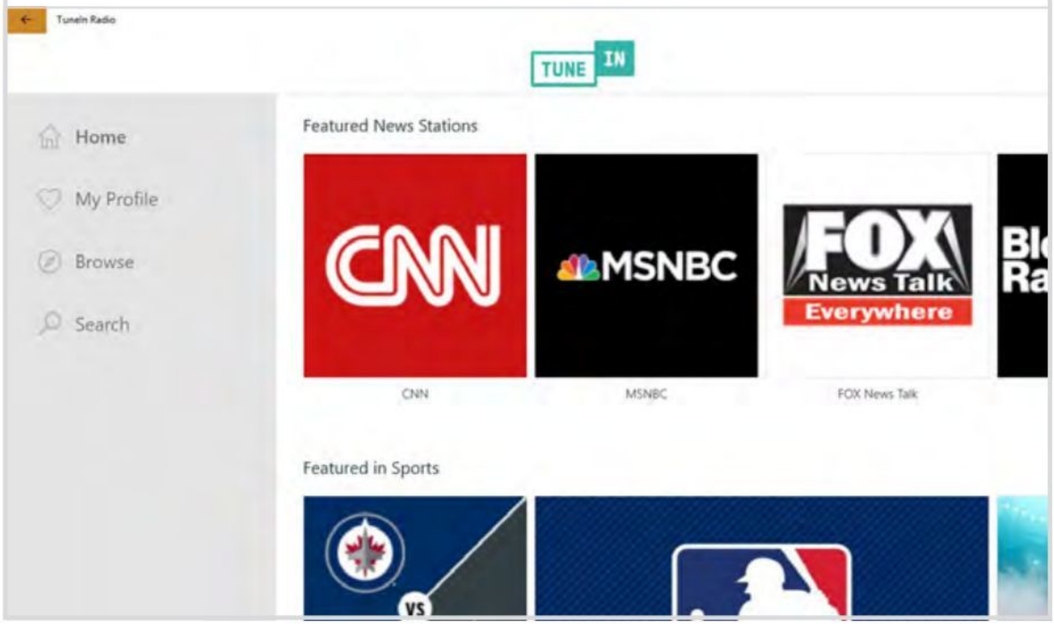
The most popular all-in-one app for viewing all your calendars including Google, Live, Outlook, iCloud, Exchange, Office365 and Facebook. It integrates all your calendars into an easy-to-read overview. View and manage all your appointments, events and birthdays. Easily filter the appointments you would like to see.



Apps

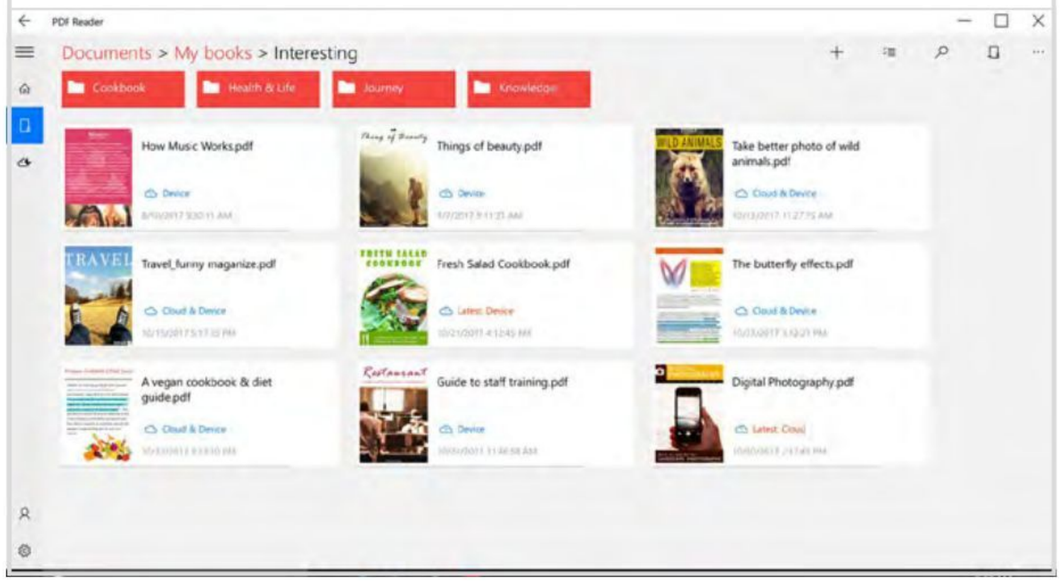
TuneIn Radio

TuneIn brings you sports, music, news, podcasts, and radio live from around the world. Listen to the audio you love and let the moments move you. Listen to commercial-free music curated by leading-edge DJs, live mixes and special guests, coverage from the news sources you trust like CNN, BBC, NPR, Fox, MSNBC & more.



PDF Reader - View, Edit, Share

PDF Reader by Kdan Mobile, a PDF expert for Windows platform, not only enables you to read, annotate, and share Adobe Acrobat PDF documents on your computers and smartphones, it also provides a brand new free-hand drawing and writing experience! Enterprise solution is also available. For more details, check our website.

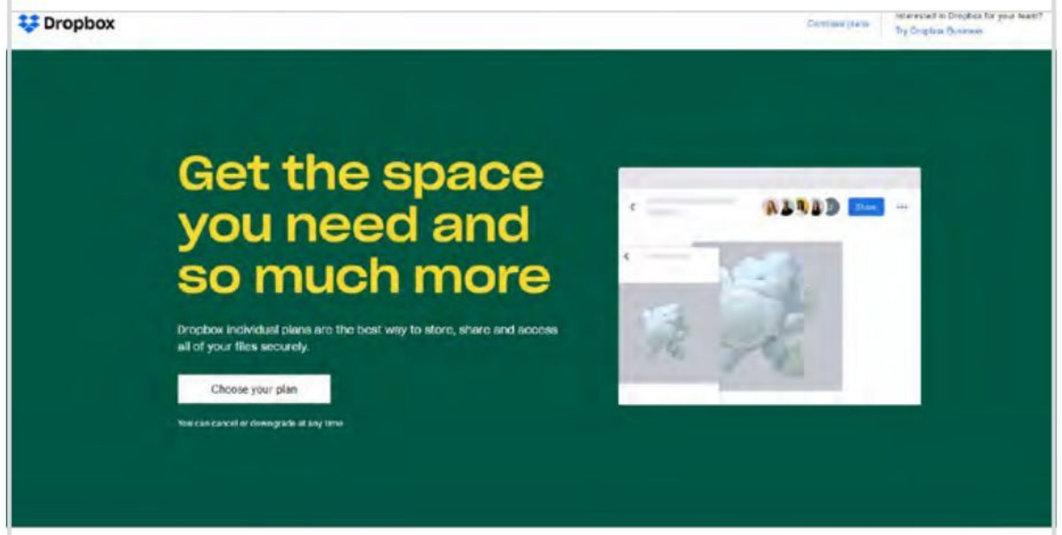


Audiobooks from Audible

Not enough time for all the books you want to enjoy? Download the app by Audible, an Amazon company, and access 200,000+ titles including bestsellers, classics and everything in between. Immerse yourself in a great story anytime, anywhere, by downloading a great story today.

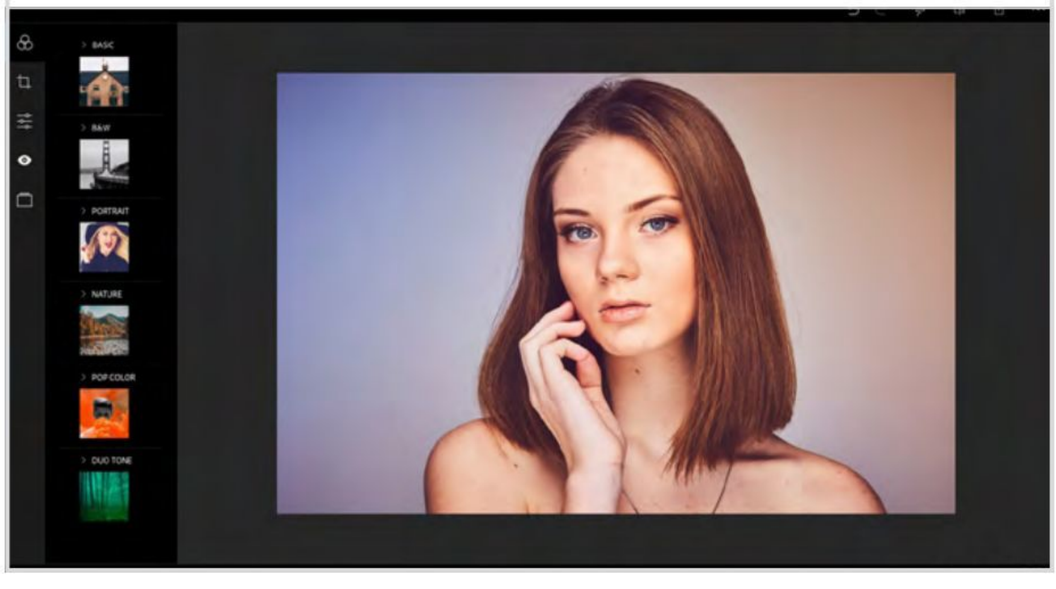
Dropbox

Dropbox brings your cloud content and traditional files together with the tools you love—so you can be organized, stay focused and get in sync with your team. With all your files organized in one central place, you can safely sync them across all your devices and access them anytime, anywhere. Free or paid accounts available.



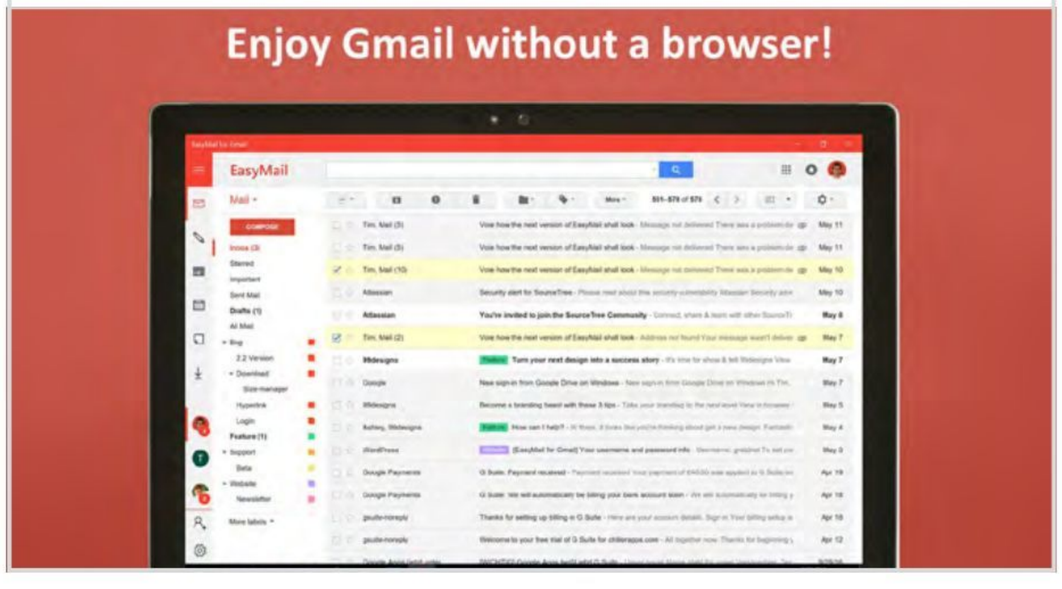
Adobe Photoshop Express

Snap. Edit. Share. Smile. The free Adobe Photoshop Express app provides photo magic at your fingertips. Join millions of creative folks who trust and use Adobe Photoshop Express for fast, powerful, and easy editing. It's the one-stop-shop for your quick and fabulous photo editing needs.



EasyMail for Gmail

Easily access your Google emails, notes and calendar in a standalone app. EasyMail allows you to switch between different accounts with just one click. Benefit from the seamless integration into your operating system and receive native mail notifications. With EasyMail, you always stay up to date without needing to keep your web browser open.



Contents

130 Desktop
Personalise and Customise the Desktop
130 Change the Desktop Background
131 Choose Accent Colours
132 Lock Screen Customisation
133 Disable the Lock Screen
133 Adding New Themes
134 Applying a Theme
135 Change Your Desktop Icons

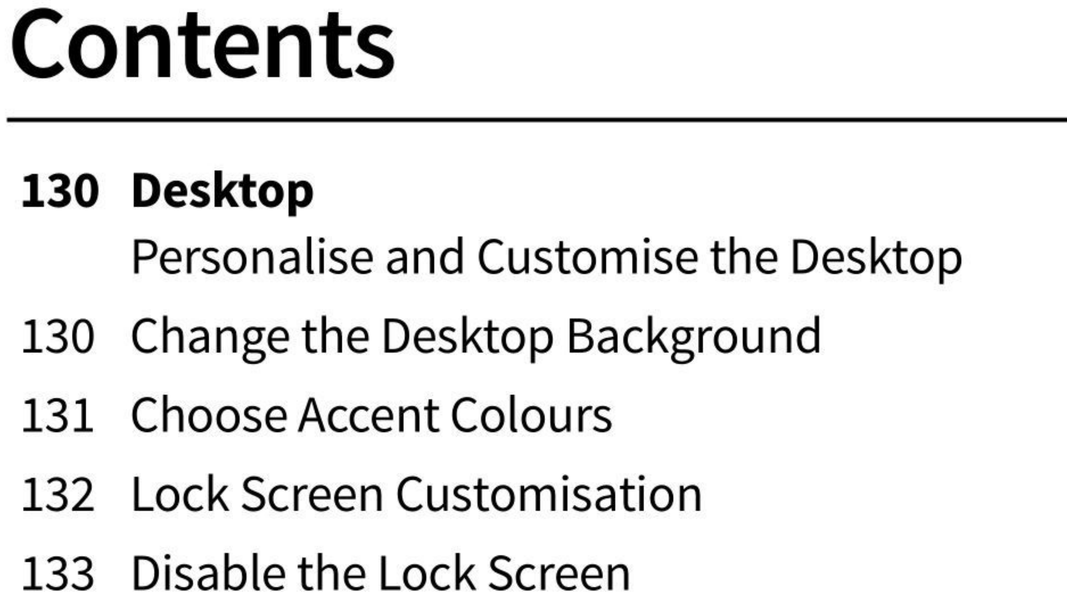
136 Recovery
How to Create a Recovery Drive
136 Protecting Your PC and Files

138 Power
Windows 10 Power Options
138 View, Switch, and Create Power Plans
139 Use Your Laptop with the Lid Closed

140 Task Manager
Explore the Windows 10 Task Manager

142 Memory
Check and Manage RAM Usage
142 Checking Memory and Memory Usage
143 Using Windows ReadyBoost

144 Updating
How to Keep Windows Up-to-date
144 Checking for Updates
145 Windows Update Settings



Learn how to personalise the desktop

Manage and Maintain Windows 10

While it's a brilliant operating system, Windows 10 still requires some housekeeping to help maintain its performance and stability. In this section, we look at how you can keep Windows 10 in tip-top condition, free up some space on your hard drive by removing unwanted apps and keep it speeding along nicely.

146 Updates
What to Keep Updated in Windows 10
146 Keeping Up-to-date

148 Cache
Clear Windows Update Cache
148 How to Clear the Cache

149 Libraries
Manage Libraries in Windows 10
149 Find and Manage Libraries

150 Maintenance
Using the Built-in Maintenance Tools
150 Maintaining Windows 10

152 Laptops
Care and Maintenance Tips

154 Performance
Six Steps to a Faster PC

156 Troubleshooting
Using Windows 10 Troubleshooting Tools
156 How to Use Advanced Start-up Options

158 Troubleshooting
Diagnosing Windows Problems
158 First Things to Check
159 Fresh Installation Tool

160 Glossary
Our Essential Windows Jargon Buster

Desktop

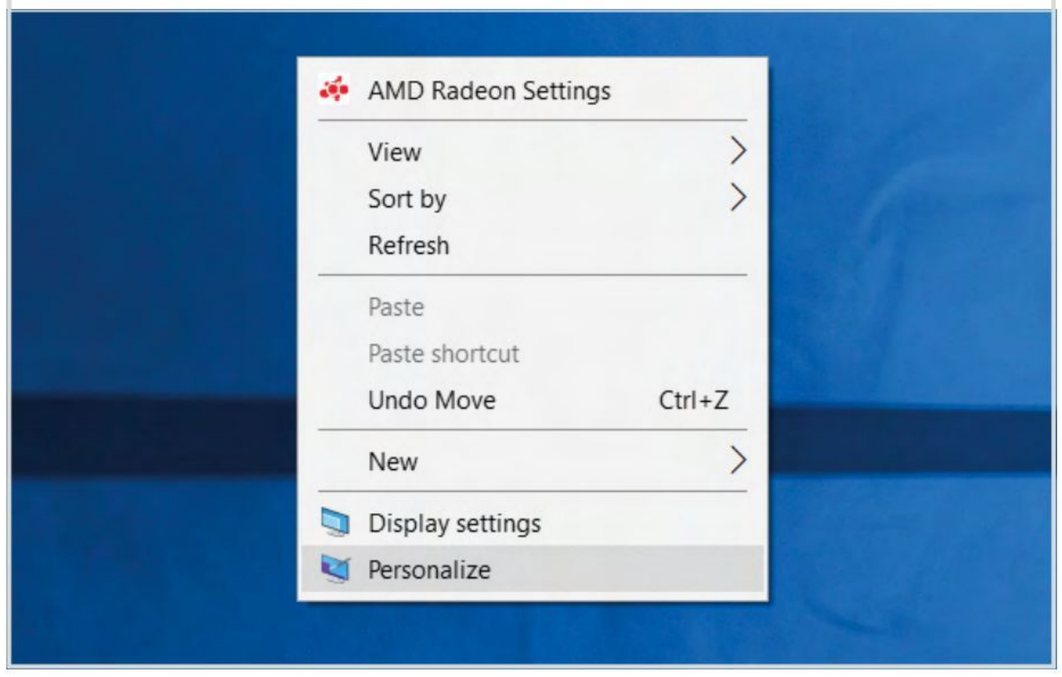
Personalise and Customise the Desktop

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.

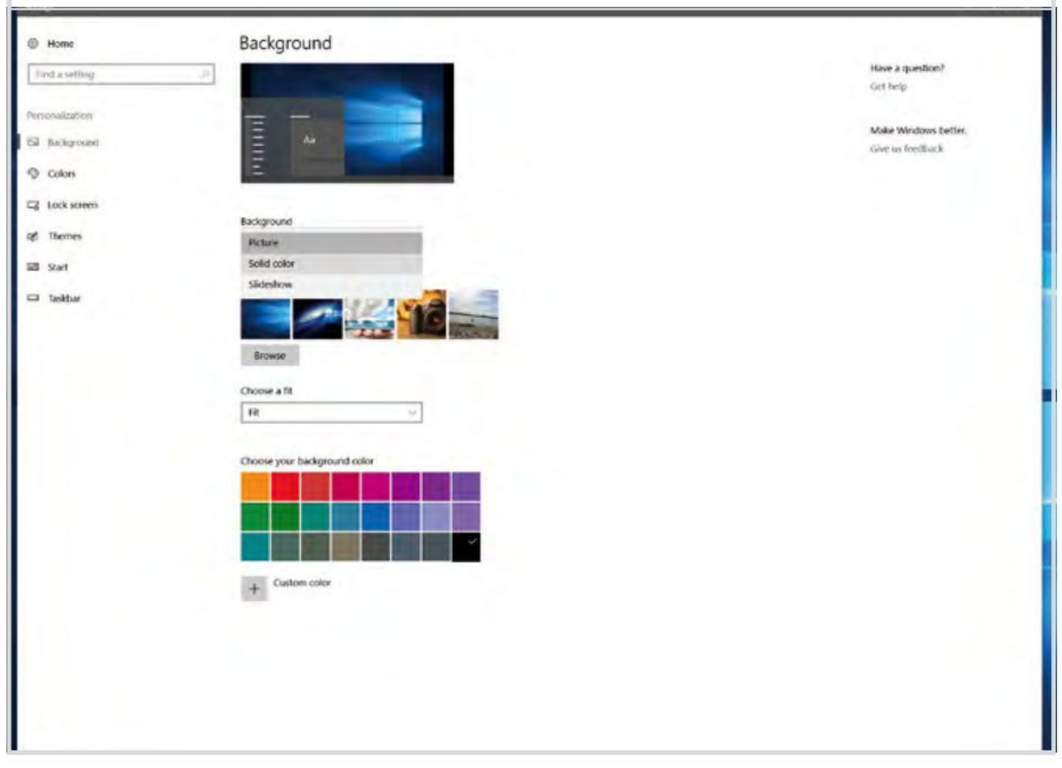
Change the Desktop Background

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

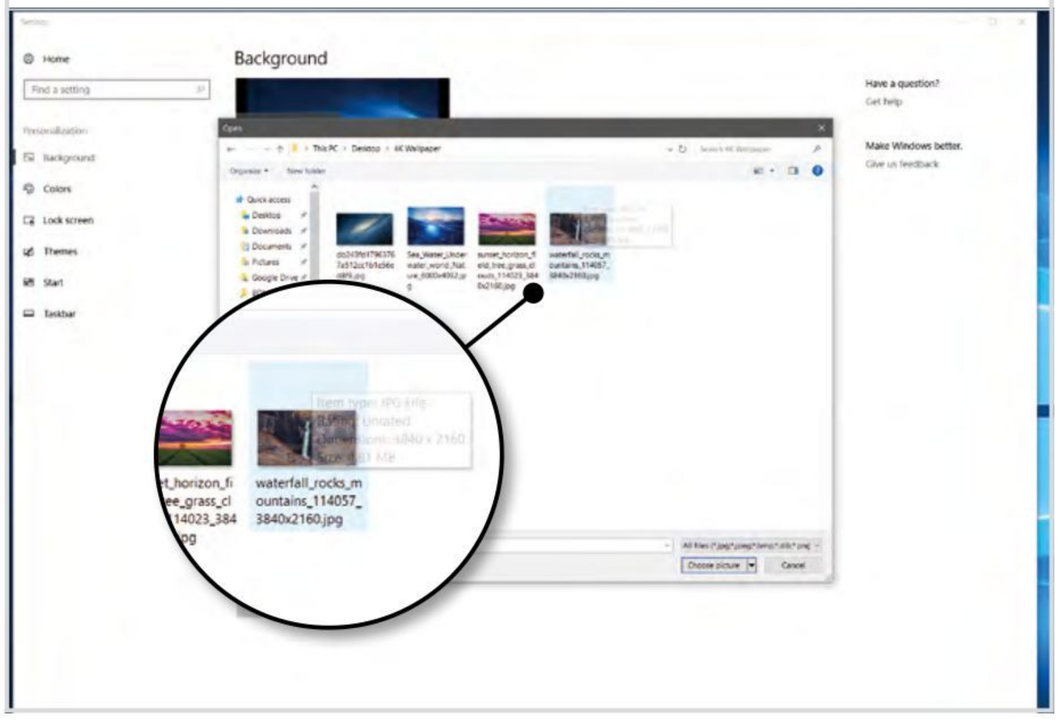
Step 1 You can get started with personalising the Windows 10 Desktop in exactly the same way as you did with Windows 7. For anyone completely new to Windows, that means right-clicking anywhere on the Desktop screen and selecting Personalise from the action menu that appears.



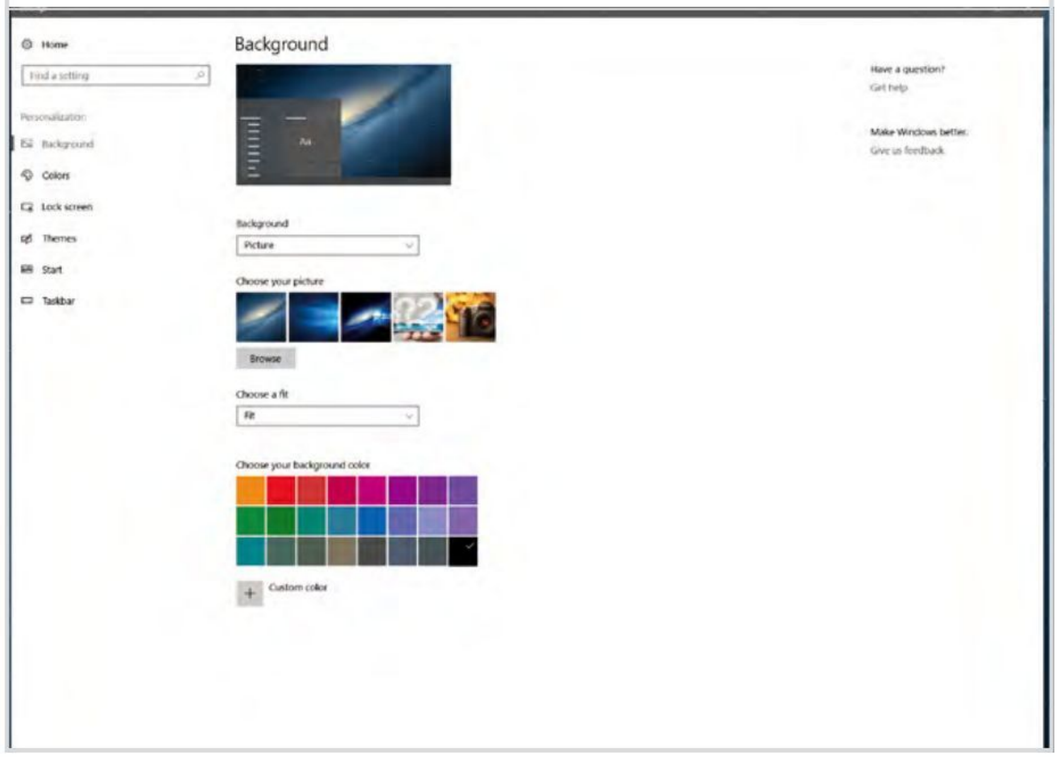
Step 2 The Background settings will be displayed first by default. Click the first drop-down menu to select whether to use the default backgrounds, solid colours or choose to display folders of your own images. Your choices here changes what is displayed in the background settings.



Step 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.

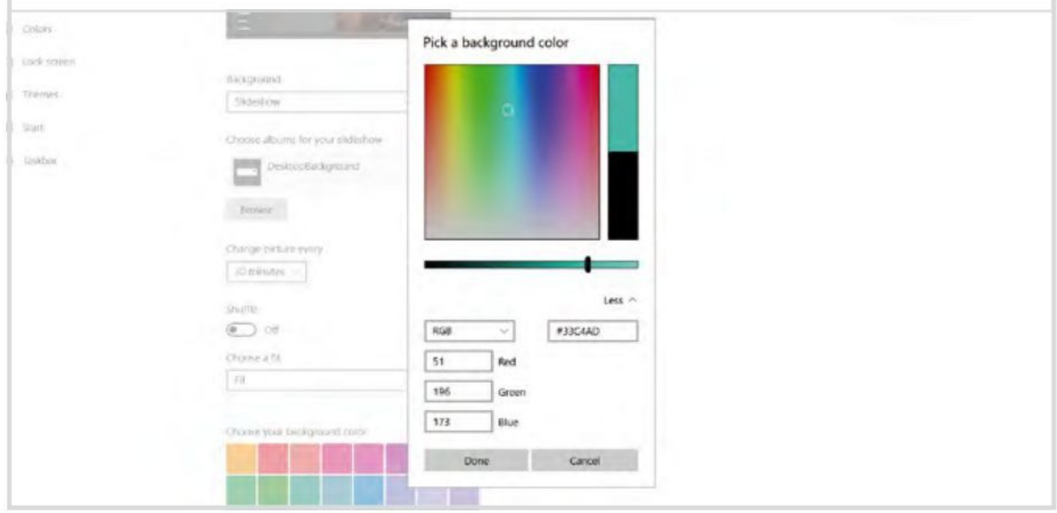


Step 4 To set a picture as your Desktop background, simply click on it. It will instantly be set as your new Desktop background image (a preview will display). The screen shows you the last five images used or you can click the Browse button to choose a new one from your folders.



Step 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.

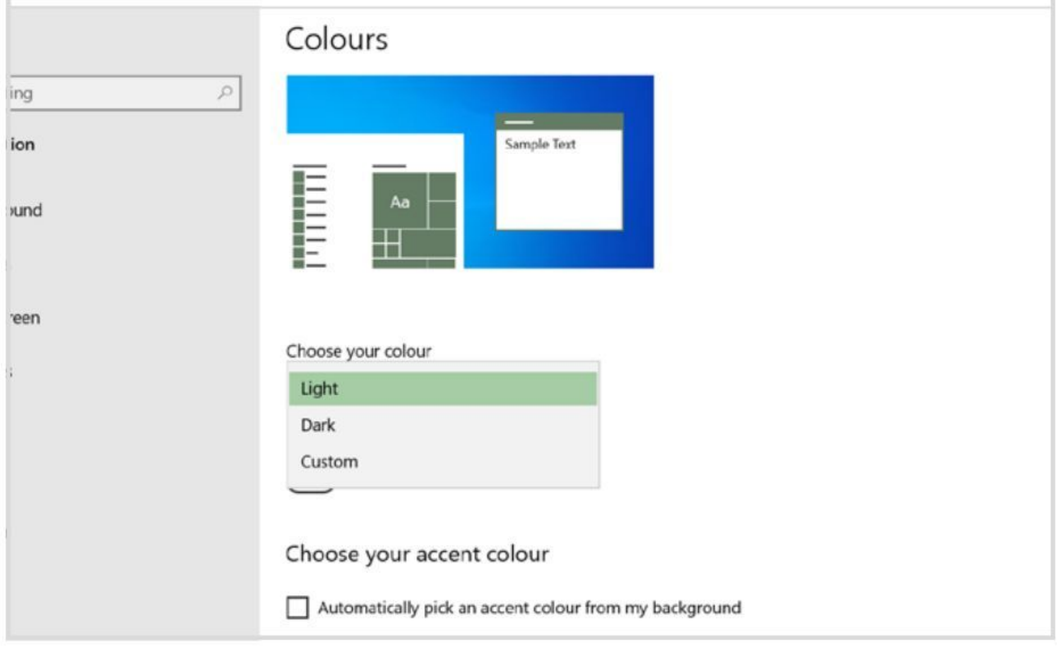
Step 6 Even if you set a background image, you can also change the colour of the actual desktop. Click on the Colours option at the bottom and choose a background colour. You can also choose a custom colour from a more detailed hexadecimal colour selector.



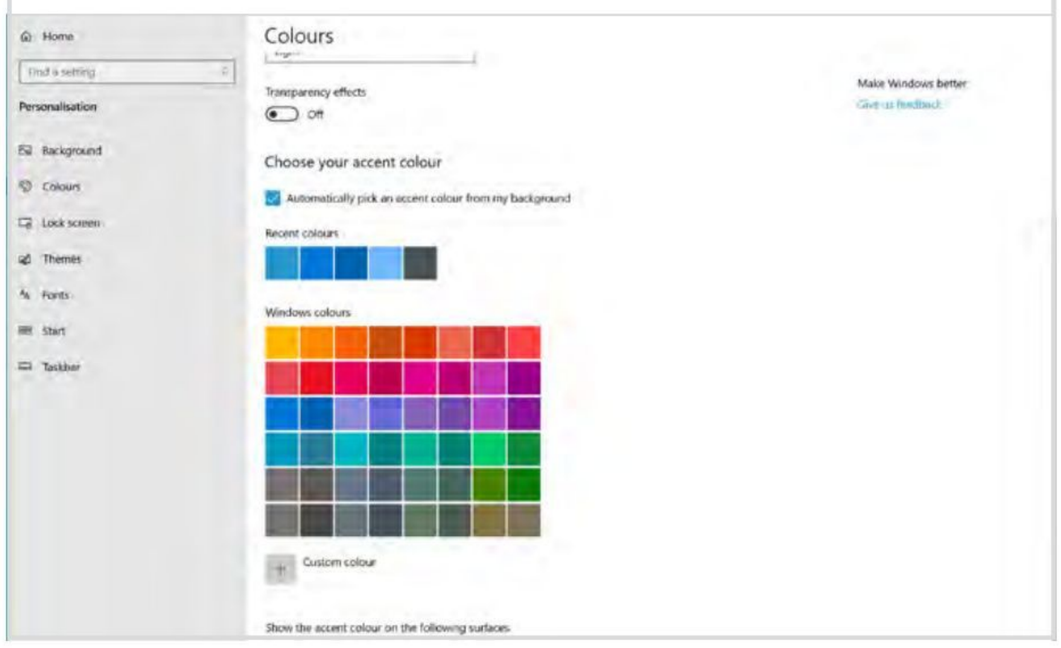
Choose Accent Colours

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.

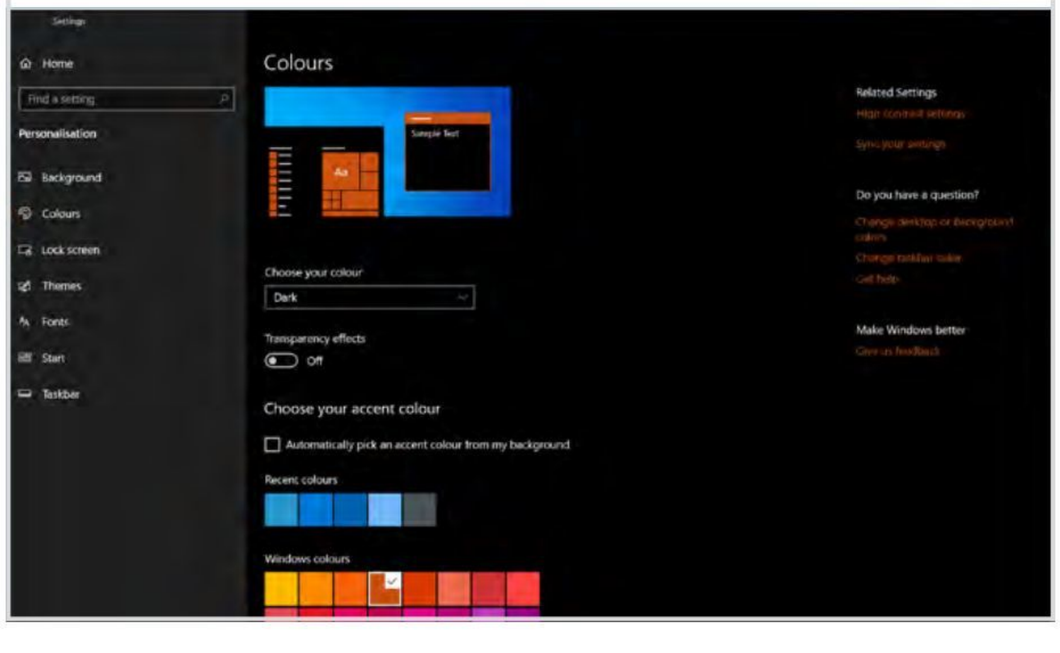
Step 1 Windows 10 now allows you to change the default Windows colour mode from light to dark. You can also choose custom colour mode, which will give you the option to choose light Windows and dark apps, or vice versa. Use the drop-down meu to select the mode.



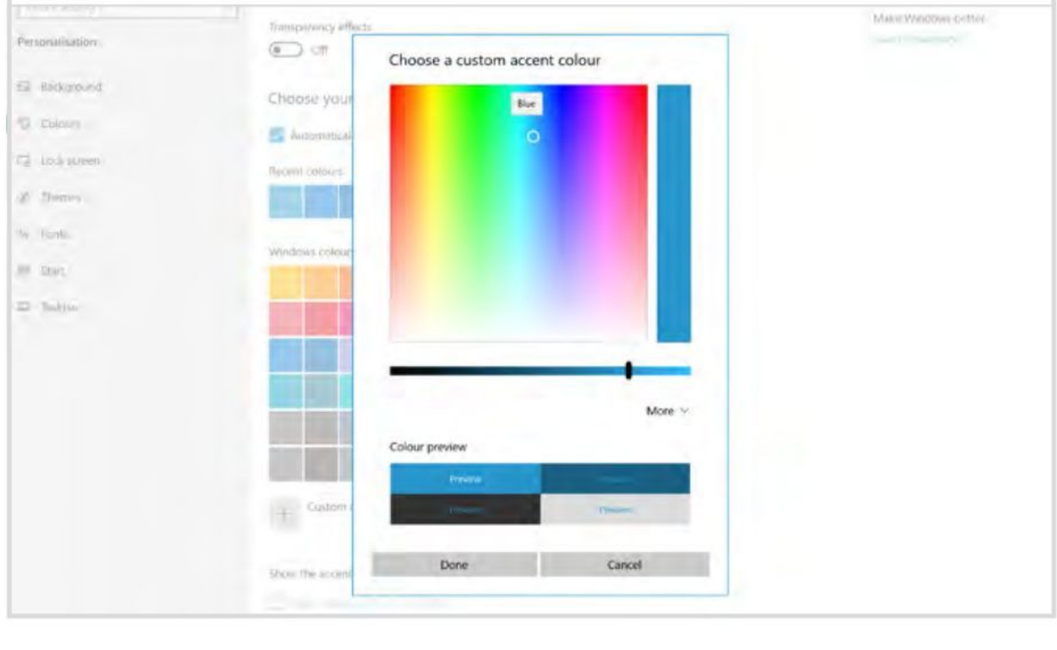
Step 3 If you prefer, you can also let Windows automatically match the accent colour to the current desktop image. This isn't a perfect solution and works best if the desktop background image you are using is predominantly one colour. To do this, just tick the checkbox.



Step 2 In both light or dark mode, you can further customise how Windows 10 looks by changing accent colours. This affects things like the toolbar of open windows, the tiles in the start menu and various other accents. Just choose from the colour swatch.



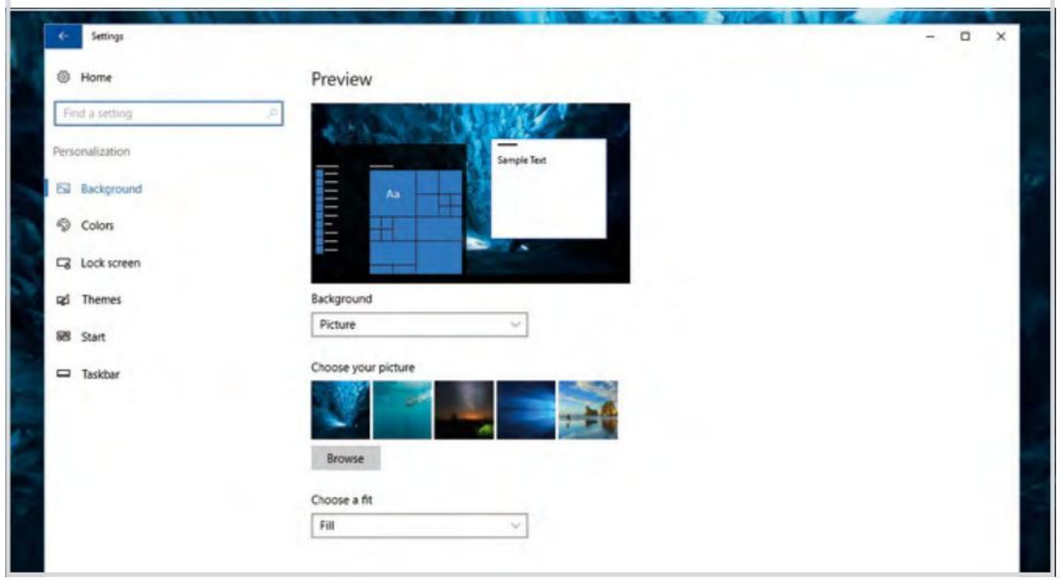
Step 4 You can choose where your new colour accent is applied. You can set it so it changes the Start, taskbar and Action Center and the Title bars of windows. You can also pick one or the other, or a combination of all options. You can also make these elements semi-transparent.



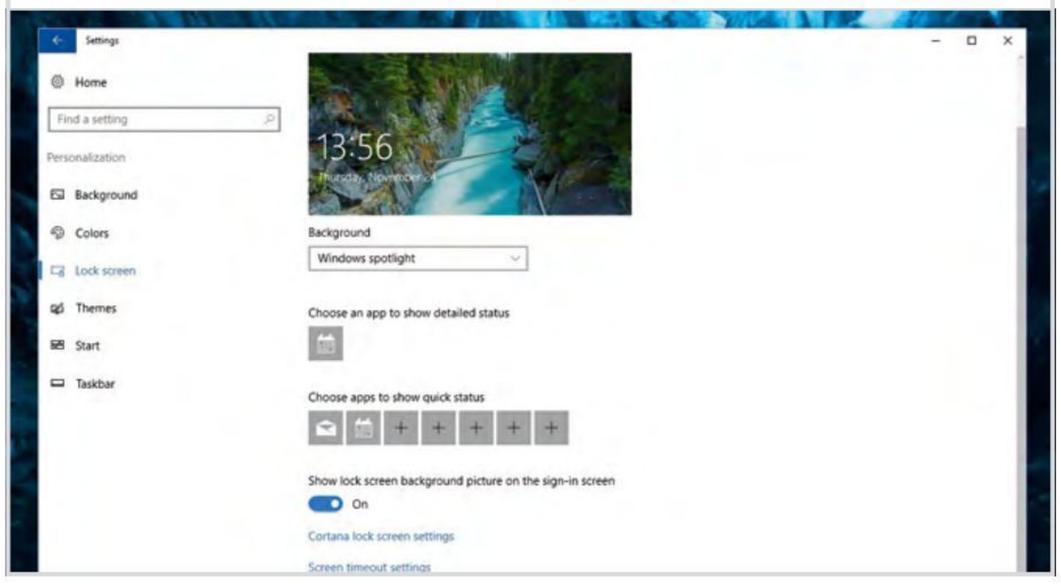
Lock Screen Customisation

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

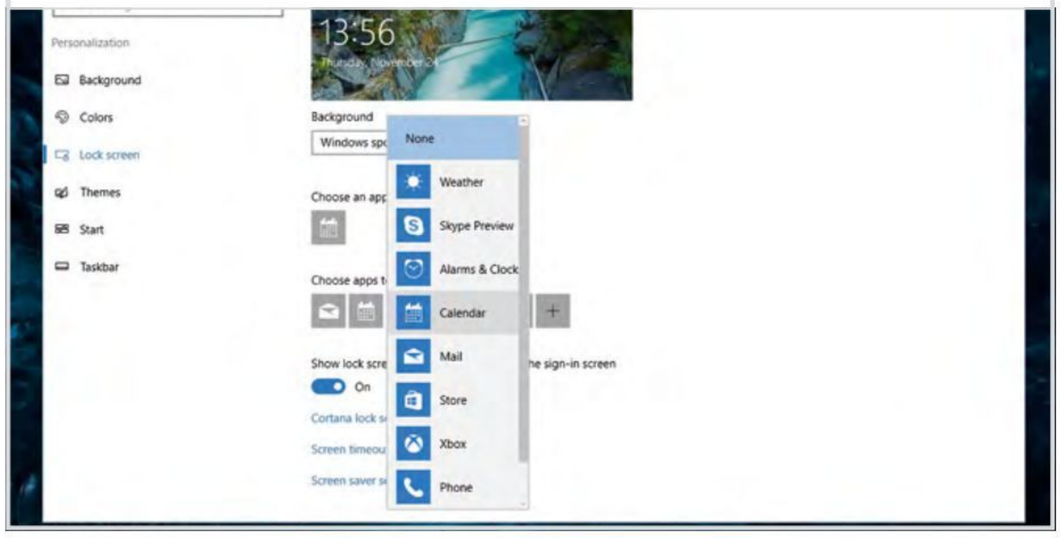
Step 1 The first thing to choose is whether to display one of your own images, a slideshow of images or something from Windows Spotlight. If you choose either of the first two of these, more options will appear to select the images you want to use (single or multiple).



Step 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.

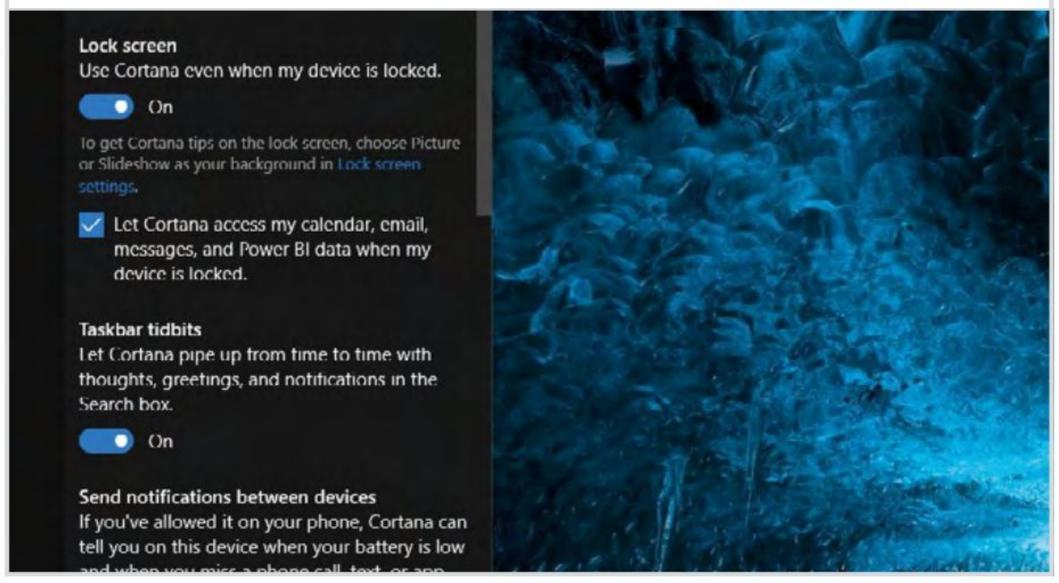


Step 3 You can add as many apps as you wish here, up to the maximum of eight. To choose which apps have statuses displayed, click on one of the spaces and choose from the pop-up menu that appears. The menu for the detailed information space will be slightly shorter than for quick statuses.

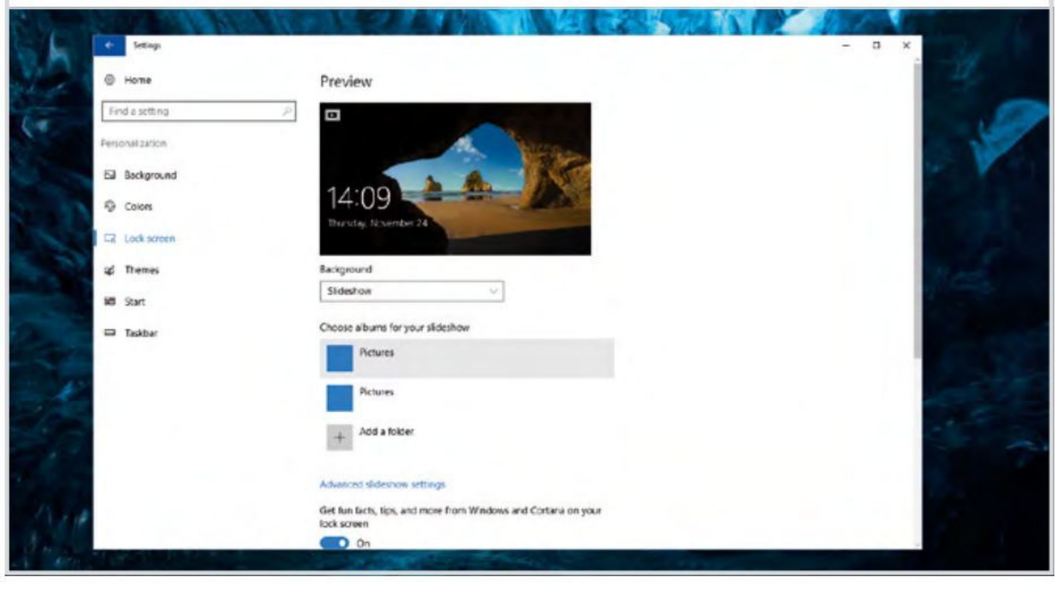


Step 4 You can check how the detailed and quick statuses are displayed on your lock screen by letting your PC sleep or by pressing the Windows Key and choosing Sleep. Be aware however, that statuses may not show up straight away for things like Messages and Email.

Step 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.



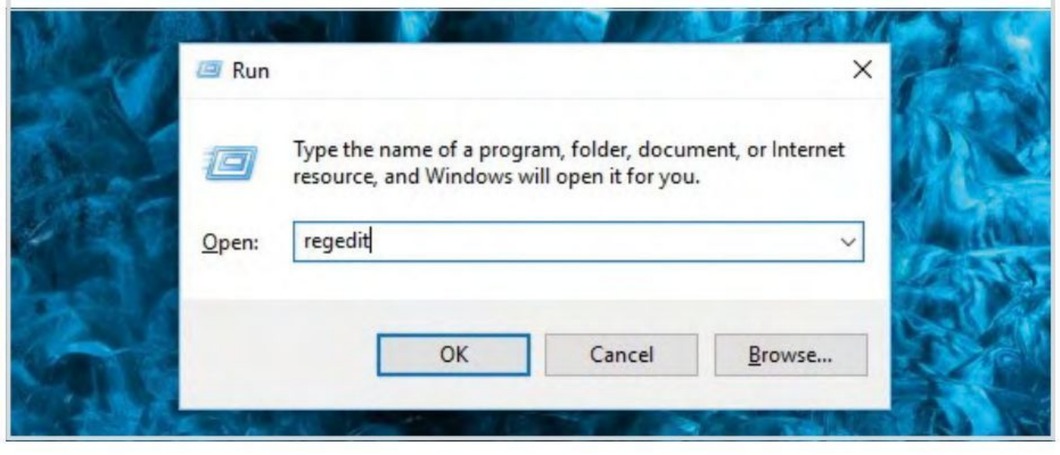
Step 6 The final two links take you to screen timeout and screen saver settings. The settings you choose there will depend on your personal preference and also on your computer location. Setting a shorter timeout means that your computer will be secure if you have to leave it.



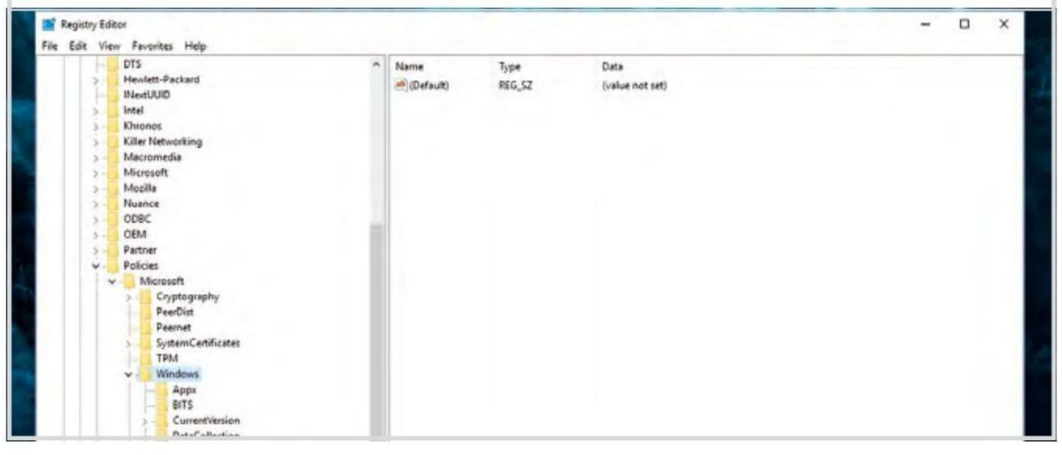
Disable the Lock Screen

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.

Step 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.



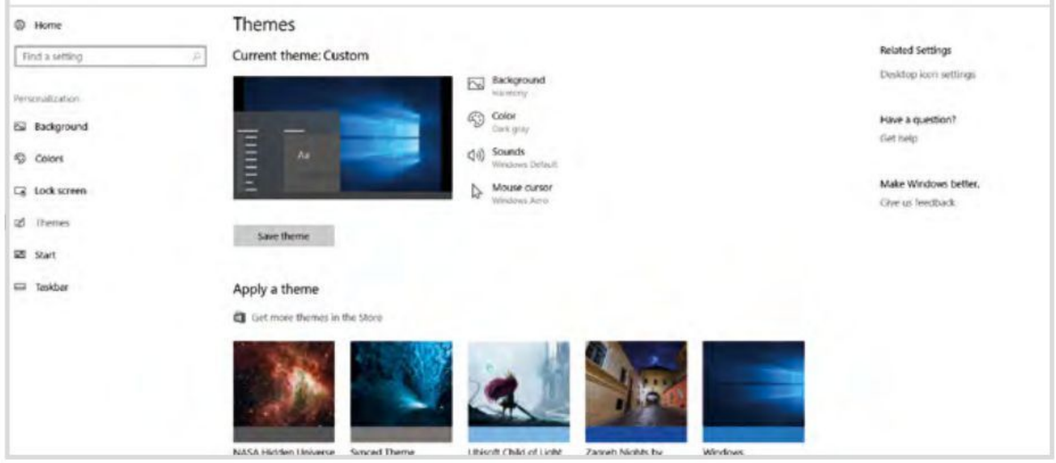
Step 2 Name this new key “Personalisation” and then navigate inside it. Right-click inside the right-hand pane and select New > DWORD (32-bit) Value. Name it “NoLockScreen”. Then double click this new value and change the Value data to 1. Then click OK and exit the Registry Editor.



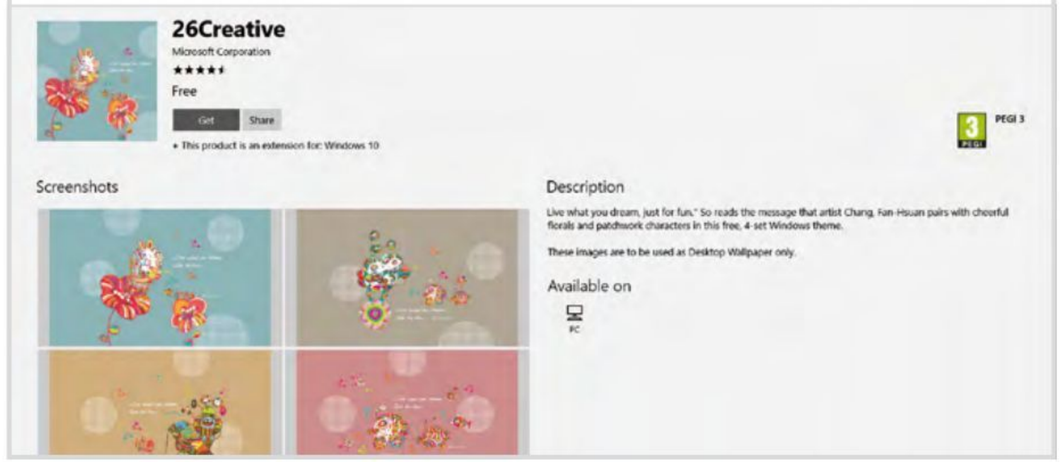
Adding New Themes

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.

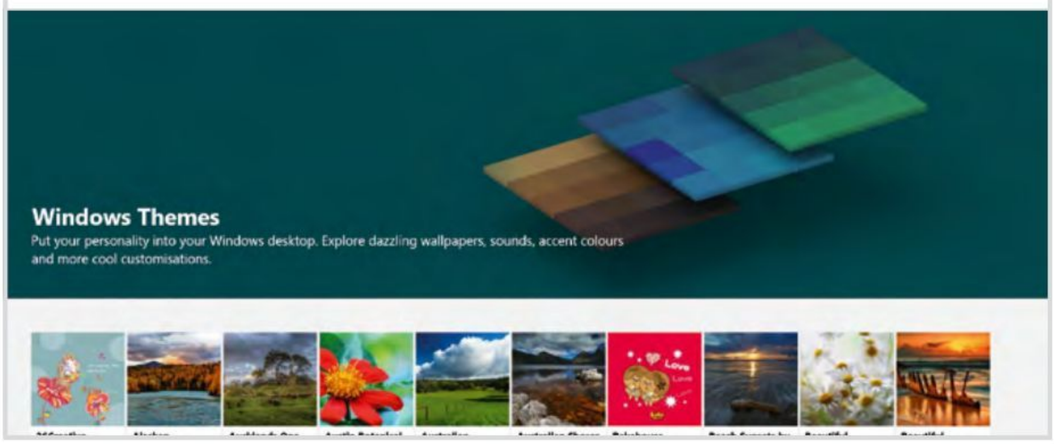
Step 1 You can access the current theme page in a couple of different ways. You can open the web browser and navigate to www.support.microsoft.com/en-gb/themes, or Google “Windows 10 themes”. Alternatively, open Settings > Personalisation > Themes and click ‘Get more themes in the store’.



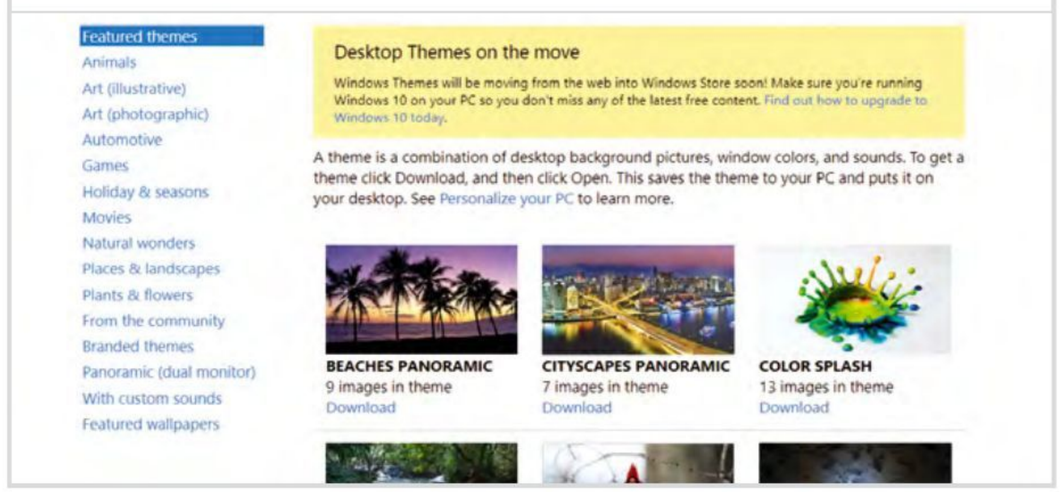
Step 3 Each theme is displayed with a thumbnail and the number of images supplied shown. The Microsoft theme page doesn’t allow you to view all of these images before you download, you just have to base your choice on the title and thumbnail. Click Download on any you like the look of.



Step 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.



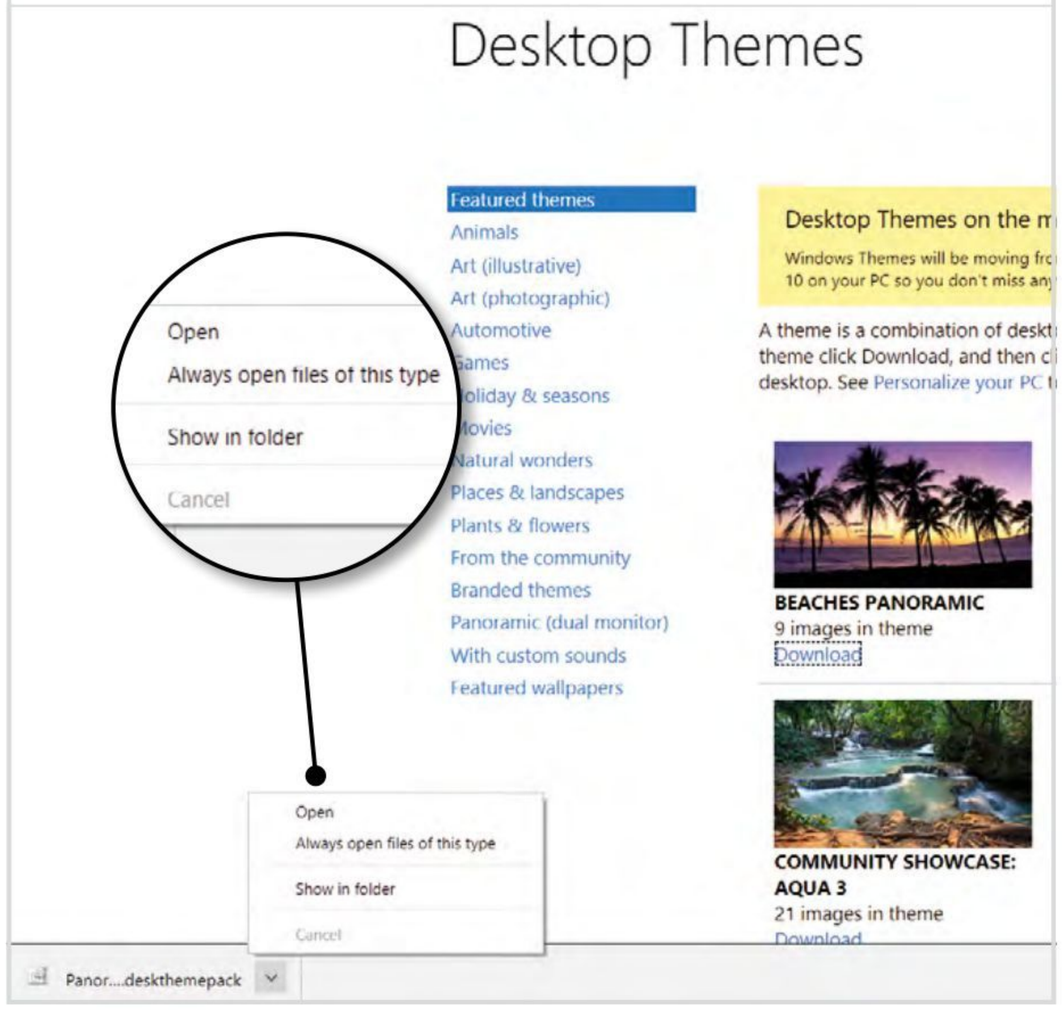
Step 4 Different themes will contain different amounts of content. Some might only have a colour profile and a few desktop wallpapers; others might contain icons, colours, wallpapers and sounds. Even the simplest of themes is likely to be more than just changing the desktop wallpaper.



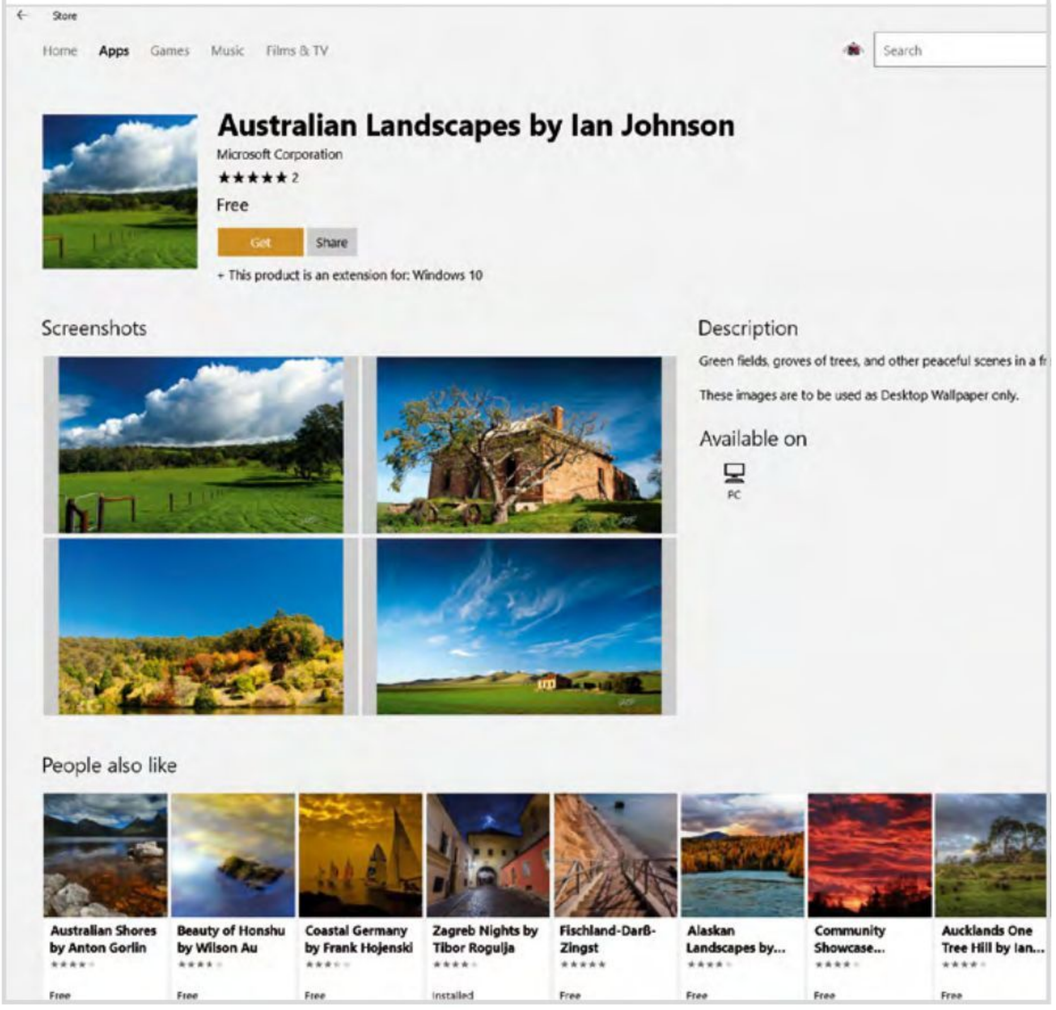
Applying a Theme

A theme can spice up your desktop significantly, adding animations, custom icons and mouse pointers. Here's how to apply a desktop theme.

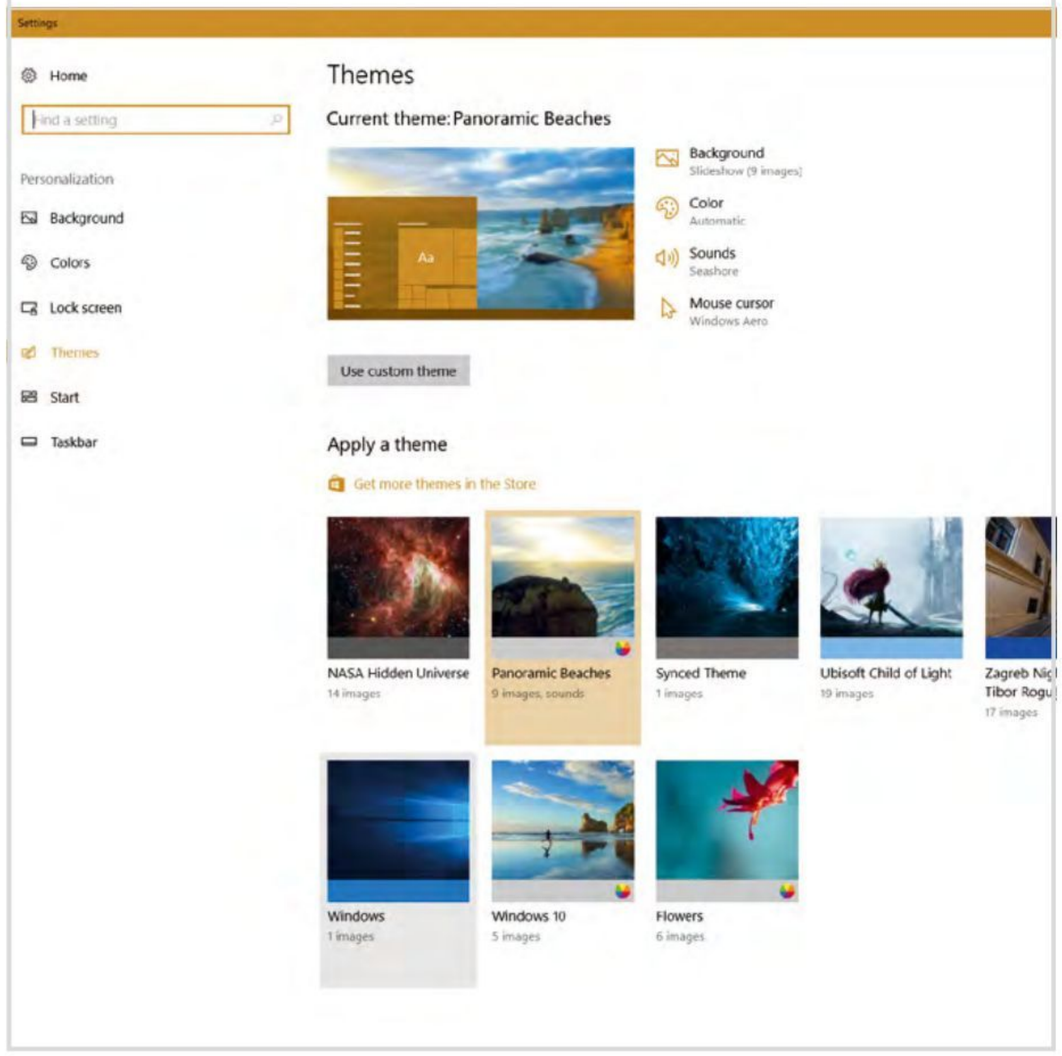
Step 1 Once a theme is downloaded, you may need to open it to activate it. You can do this directly from the download interface that appears at the bottom of the browser window (showing download progress) or you can go to your Downloads folder, right-click on the file and click Open.



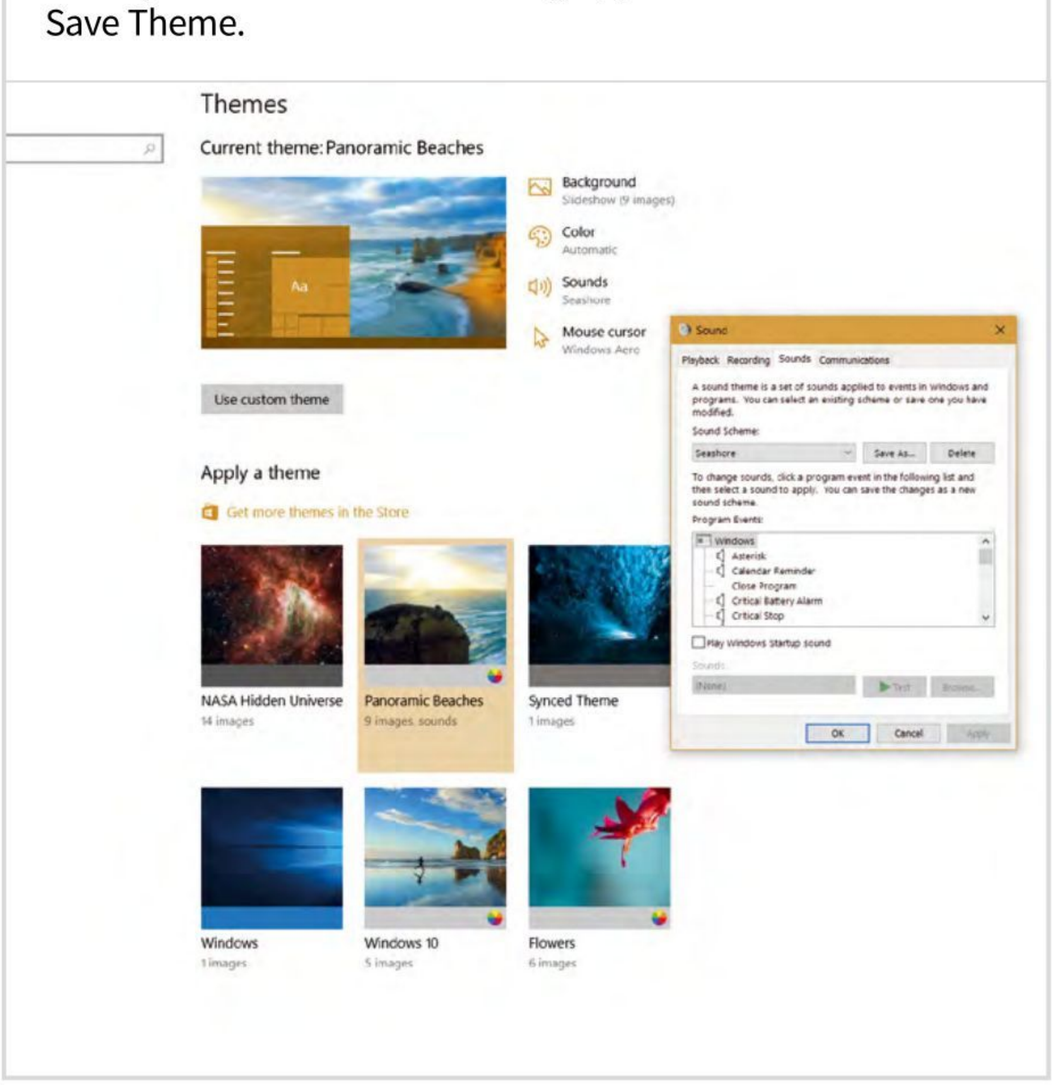
Step 3 Themes downloaded from the Windows Store won't need to be activated in this way. You can just click the Get button on the theme page in the store and then view the theme in settings > personalisation > themes. You can switch between themes here just by clicking the thumbnail.



Step 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.



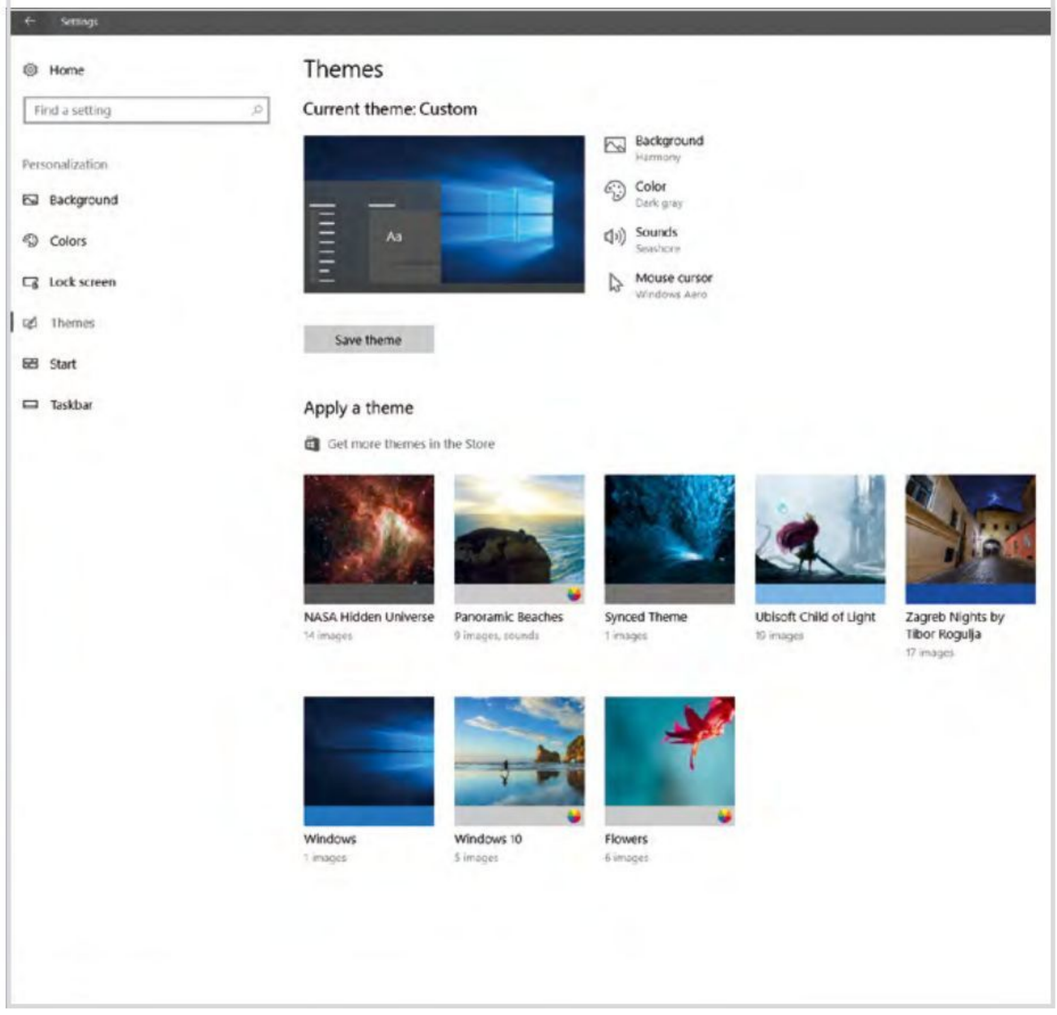
Step 4 Each theme applied can be customised further using the options in the Themes section. You can alter the background, colour, sounds and even the mouse cursor of any theme, making it completely unique to you. When you have chosen the changes, you will need to click Save Theme.



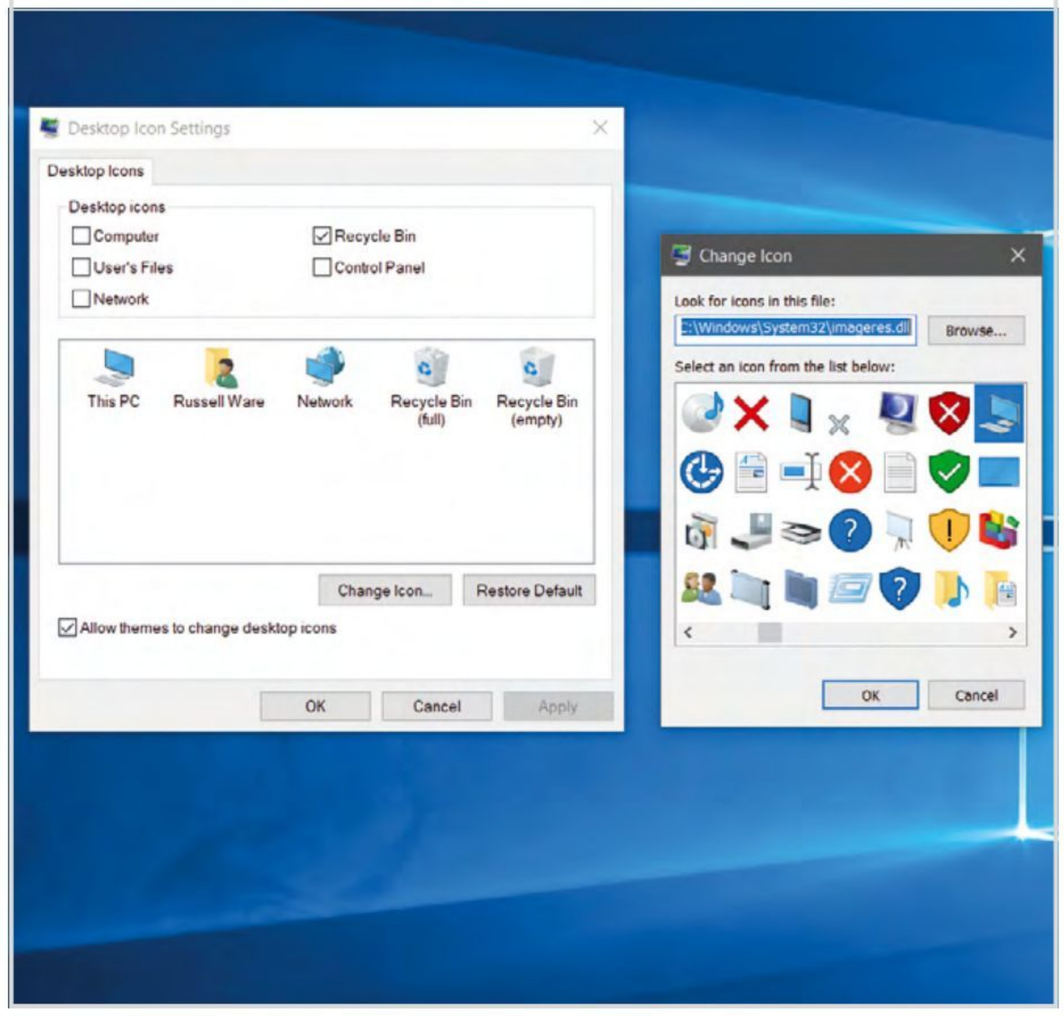
Change Your Desktop Icons

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.

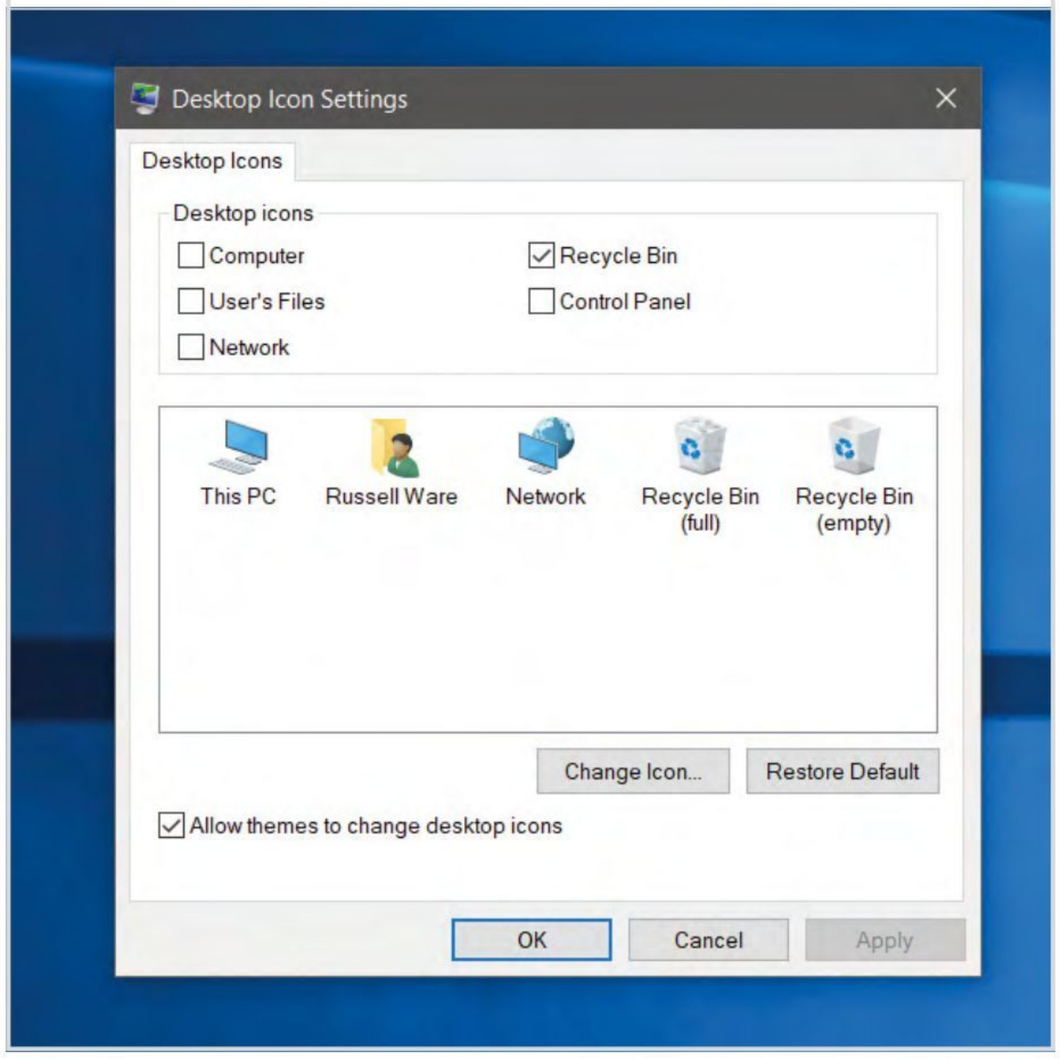
Step 1 Open the Personalisation screen of the Settings menu and select Themes from the sidebar menu. You now need to look for the Related Settings option. In the Related Settings section, click on the link to Desktop icon settings.



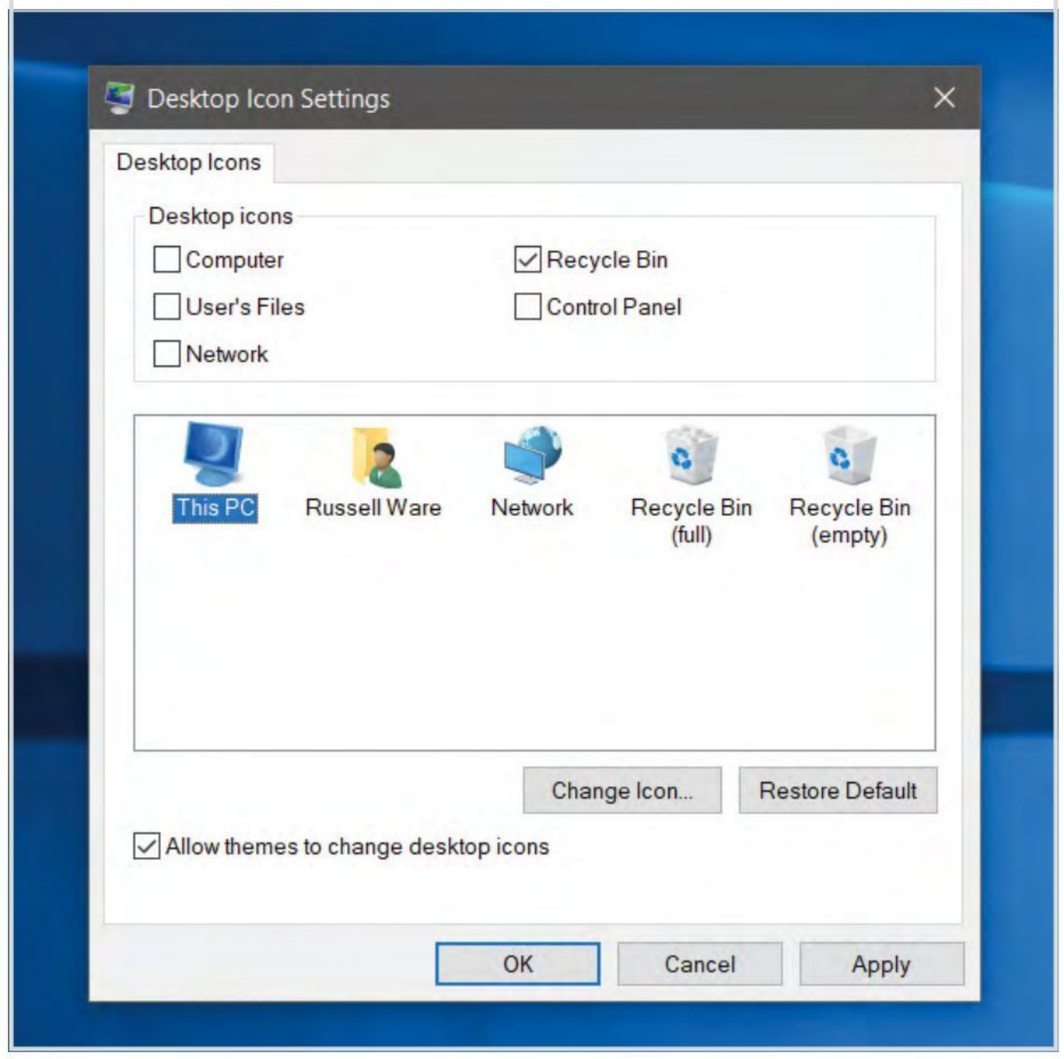
Step 3 If you wish to do so, it is possible to choose different icons for these system tools and you can even download custom icons online. To change the appearance of the desktop icons, click on the icon you want to change and then click the Change Icon button.



Step 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.



Step 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.



Recovery

How to Create a Recovery Drive

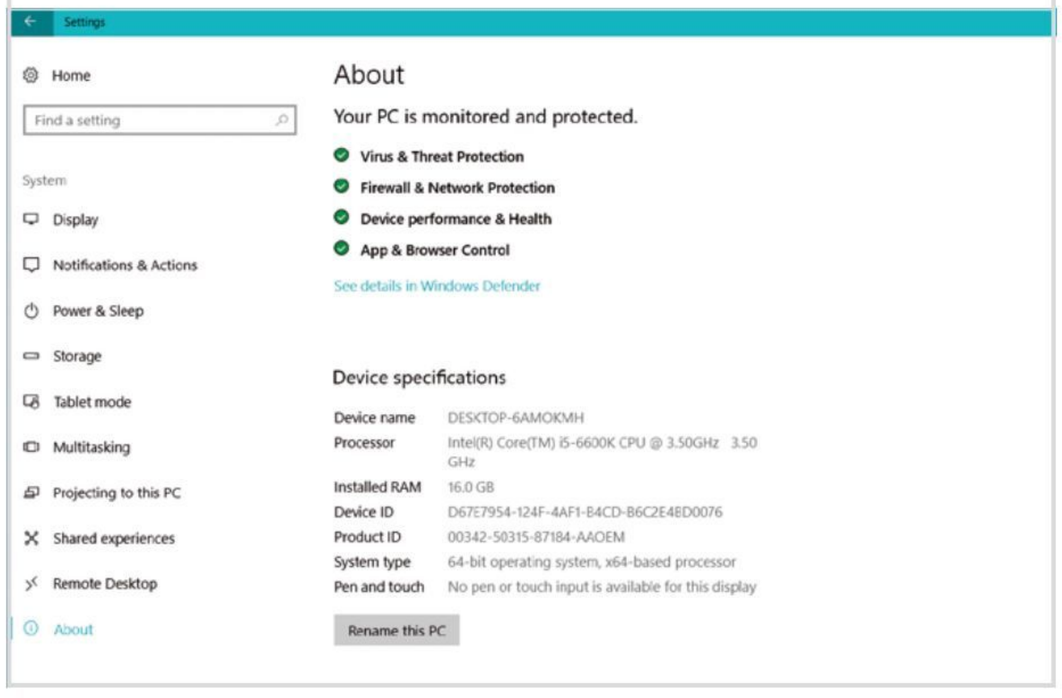
A recovery drive is a useful way to ensure that you don't lose everything on your PC in the event of a critical malfunction. It can help you both troubleshoot and fix problems, even if the PC won't start as it normally would. All you need is a blank, formatted USB flash drive.

Protecting Your PC and Files

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.

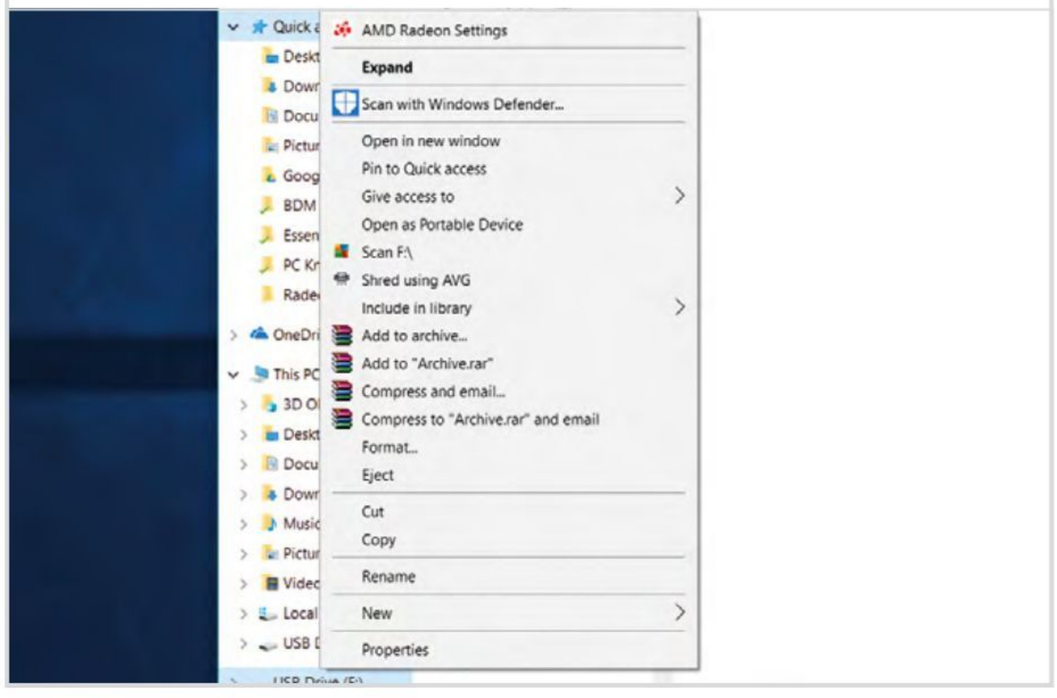
Step 1 The first thing you need to do is find a USB drive that is large enough and then make sure it is ready to be used. The USB drive you decide to use won't be able to be used for anything else like storing other files, etc. so make sure it is a spare, or bought specifically for the task.

Step 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.

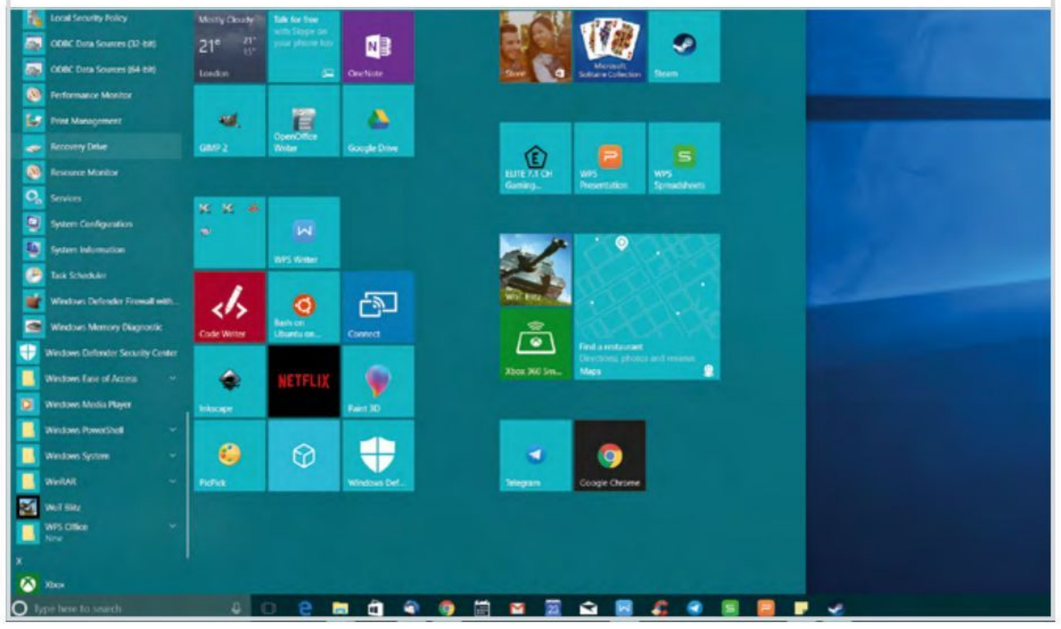


Step 3 Your USB drive needs to be wiped of everything currently on it before the recovery drive is created. You can do this during the set up process later or you can format it yourself right now: a useful thing to know how to do. Insert your USB drive into a free USB slot on in your computer.

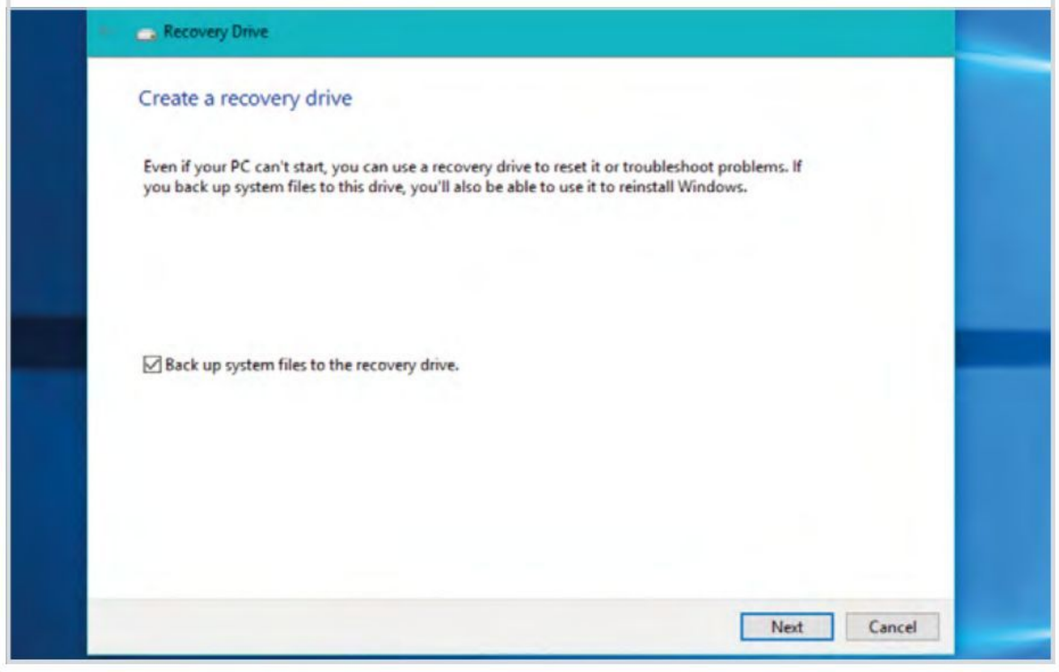
Step 4 Open the File Explorer on your computer and you should see the USB flash drive listed in the sidebar. It will probably be labelled as the (E:) or (F:) drive. Right-click on the drive label and select Format from the action menu. Leave the settings as default (should be FAT32) and then click Start.



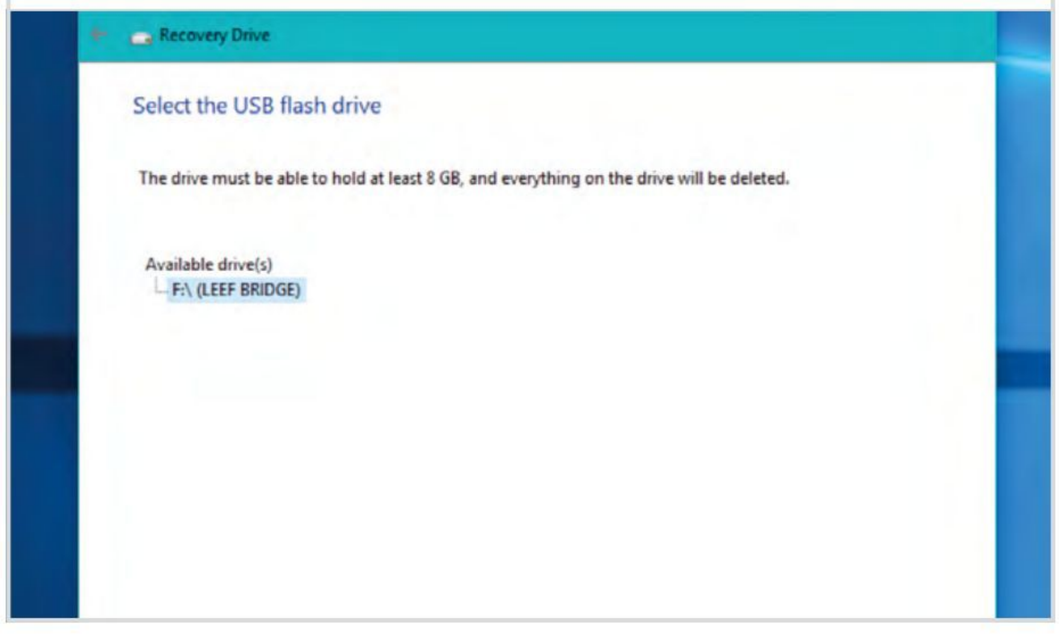
Step 5 You should now be ready to create your recovery drive. In the search field, type “Recovery Drive” and select the Create a Recovery Drive result. In newer versions of Windows 10, you might also be able to find the Recovery Drive in the main apps list, opened by clicking the Start menu button.



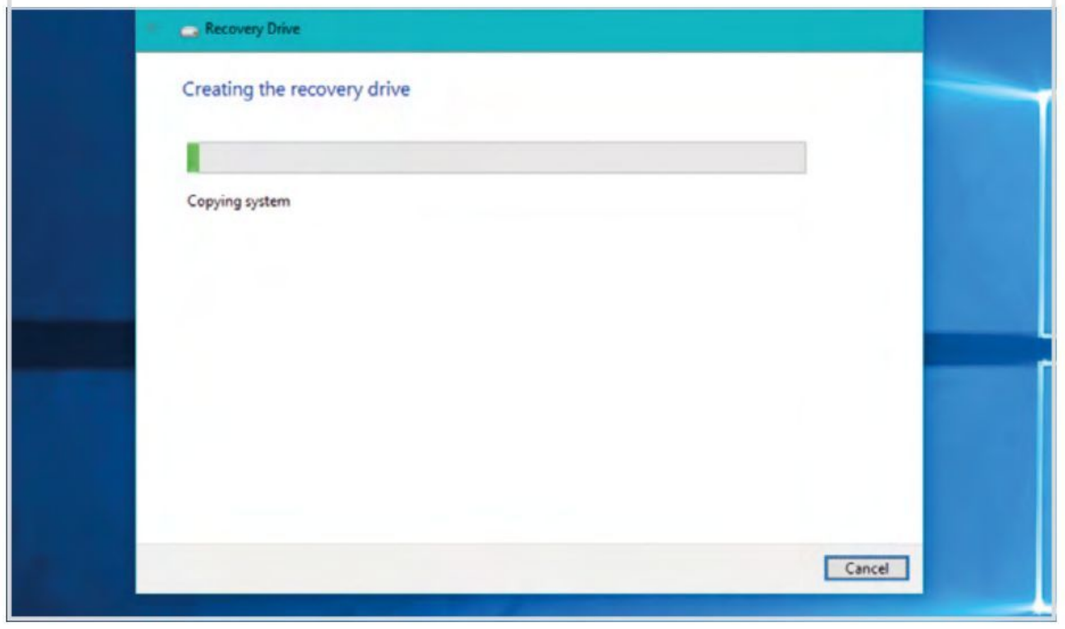
Step 6 Allow the software to “make changes to this PC” and the setup wizard will open. This first screen is where you choose whether you want to back up system files with the recovery drive, so you can use it to reinstall Windows 10. If you do, tick the checkbox and then click Next.



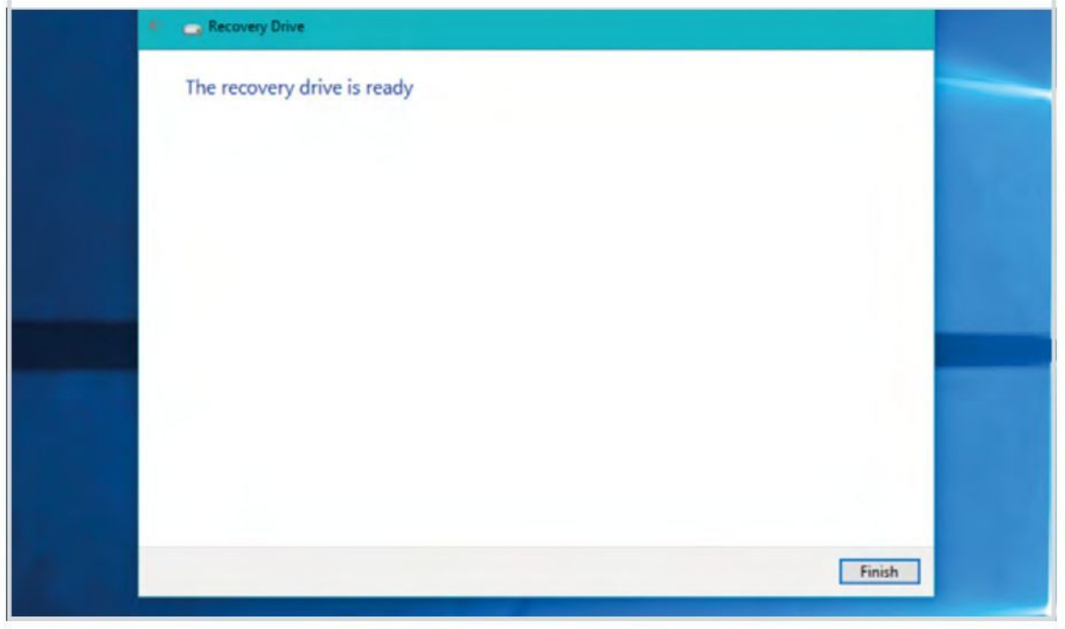
Step 7 After a few moments, you will be asked to select the USB flash drive you wish to use. If you only have one USB drive inserted, it will be the only one shown and will be automatically selected. You are reminded again how much storage space the drive needs, and that all existing data will be wiped.



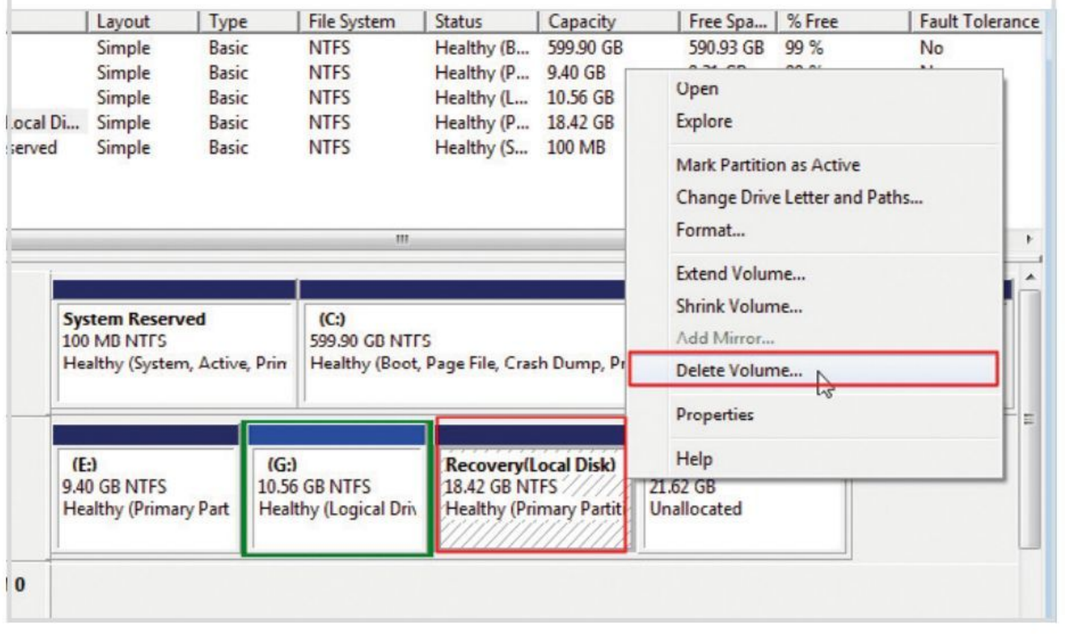
Step 8 Click Create on the next screen and the process will begin. This may take a while to complete, so go make a coffee and leave it to run. A progress bar shows how far along it is, should you need to check. Do not remove the USB drive, or turn off your computer, before the process finishes.



Step 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.



Step 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.



Power

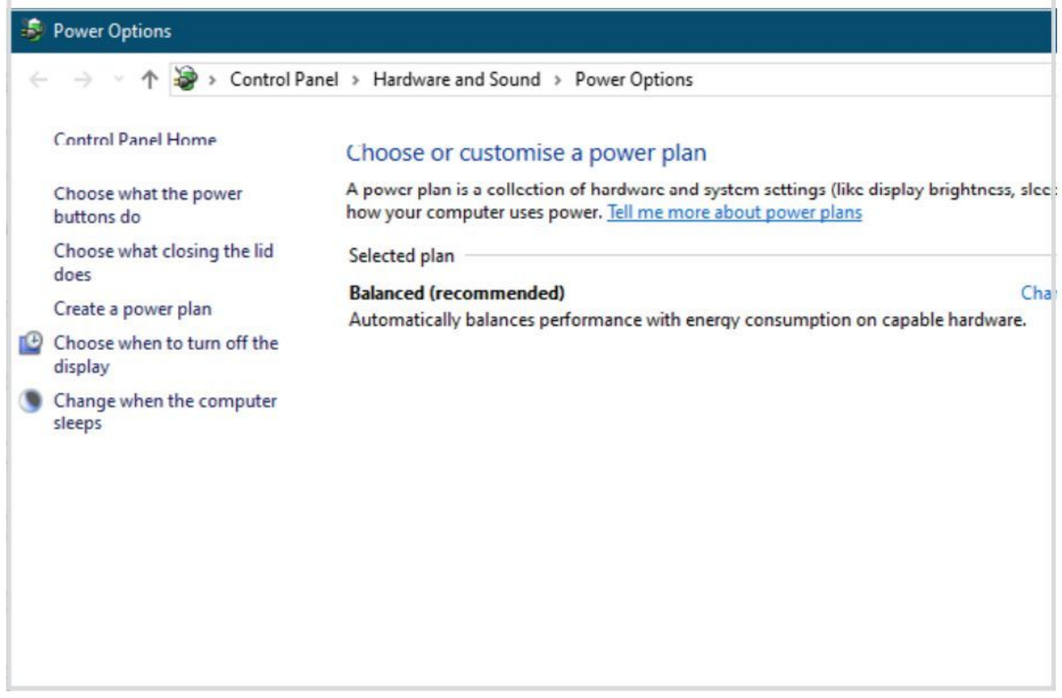
Windows 10 Power Options

If you use Windows 10 on a desktop PC, you might adjust the power options for how long the PC sleeps or when the display turns off when inactive. With a laptop, the Windows 10 power options should definitely be something with which you are more familiar with.

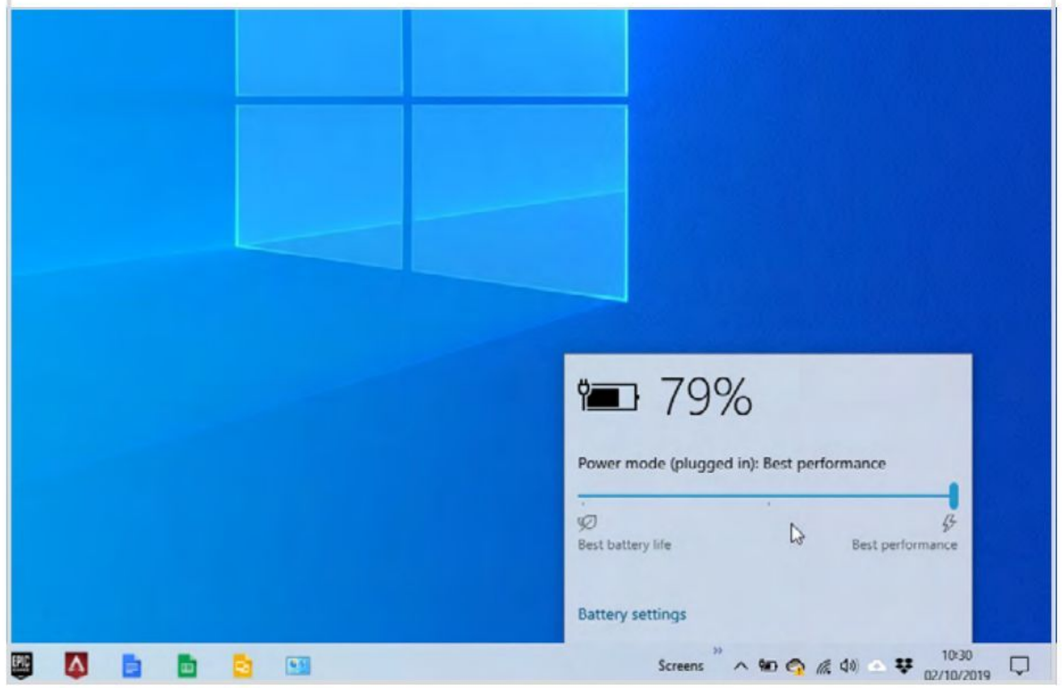
View, Switch, and Create Power Plans

Within the Power Options panel you can choose from preset Windows 10 power plans, or you can create your own based on your computers' power requirements.

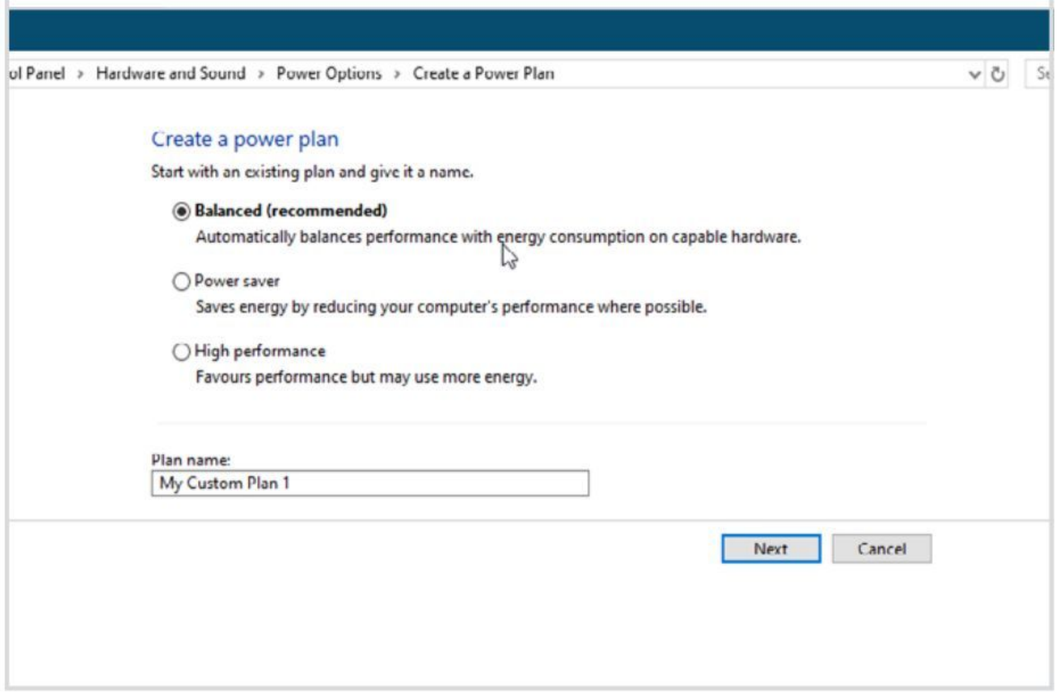
Step 1 Open the main Windows 10 settings app, then click System > Power & Sleep > Additional Power Settings. Windows 10 will, by default, have selected the Balanced power plan. This is designed to balance performance and energy consumption, and is best for PC's that are connected to the mains.



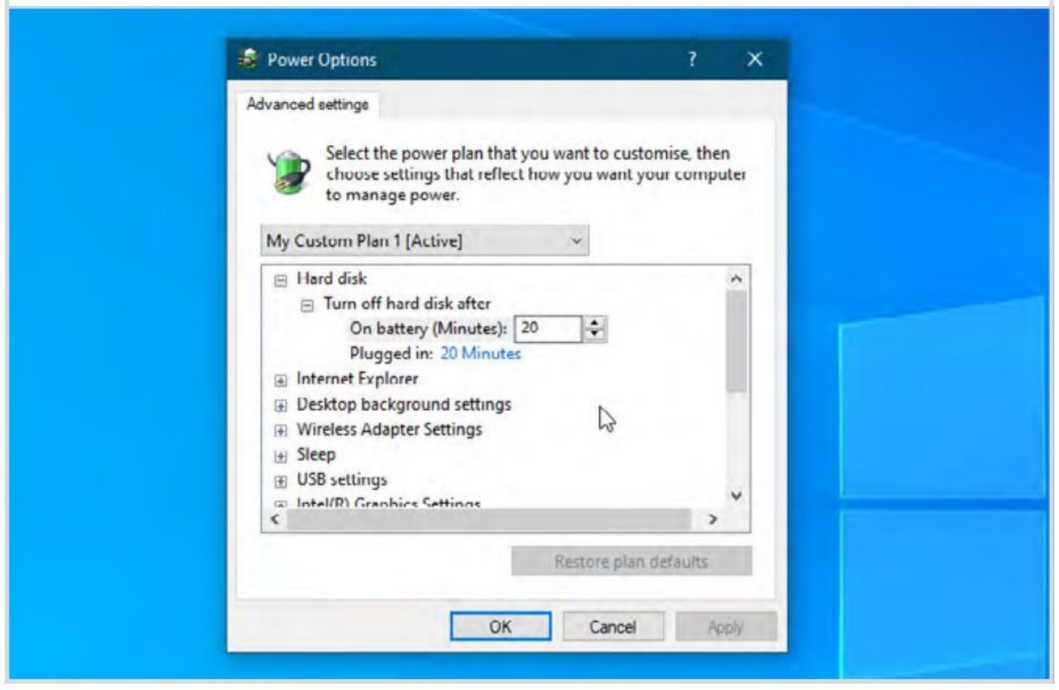
Step 2 On a laptop, you can access the power options by right-clicking on battery indicator in the taskbar tools. There are two other, default power plans alongside Balanced; Power Saver is designed to reduce energy use by scaling back performance when possible. Good for laptops using battery power.



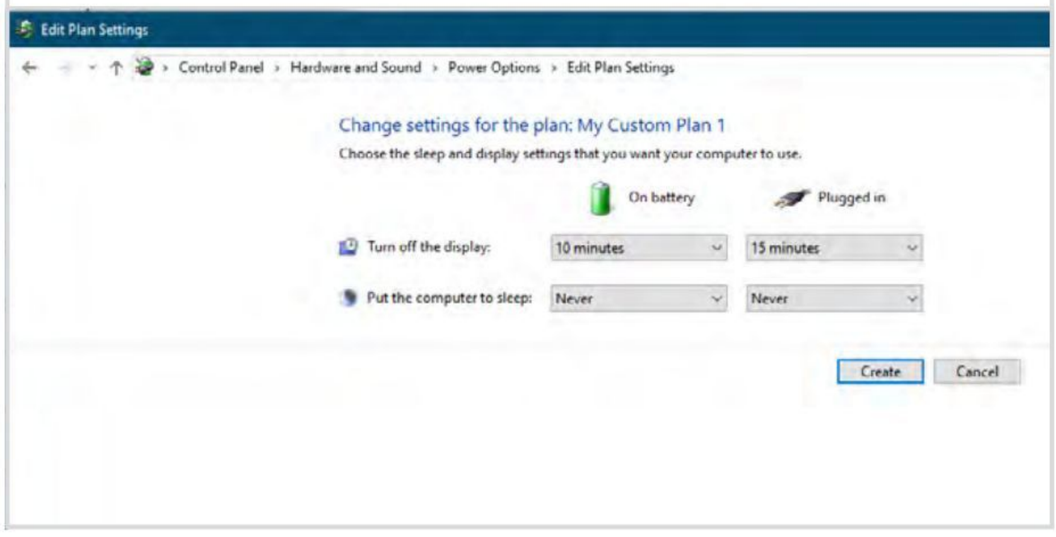
Step 3 The High Performance power plan is, as the name suggests, best for overall performance, but will use more power and is unsuitable for use on a laptop using battery power. To switch between power plans, simply select the one you want to use. For many users, this is all you will need to do.



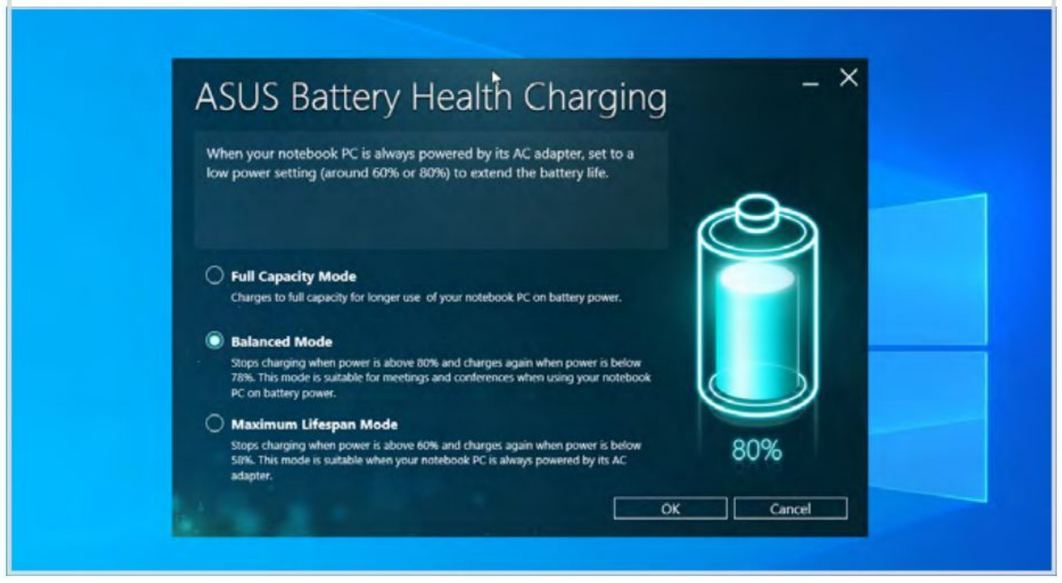
Step 4 To customise any of the power plans, click the link next to the relevant one. The next screen will let you set when the display turns off and when the computer sleeps after inactivity. You can also click "Change Advanced Power Settings" to see settings for the hard disk, desktop, USB and processor and more.



Step 5 You should be fairly careful when changing these advanced settings, especially for things like the processor (although Windows should prevent you from making a damaging change). It is best to make small changes, and then test to see if the change has had the desired effect, before making more.



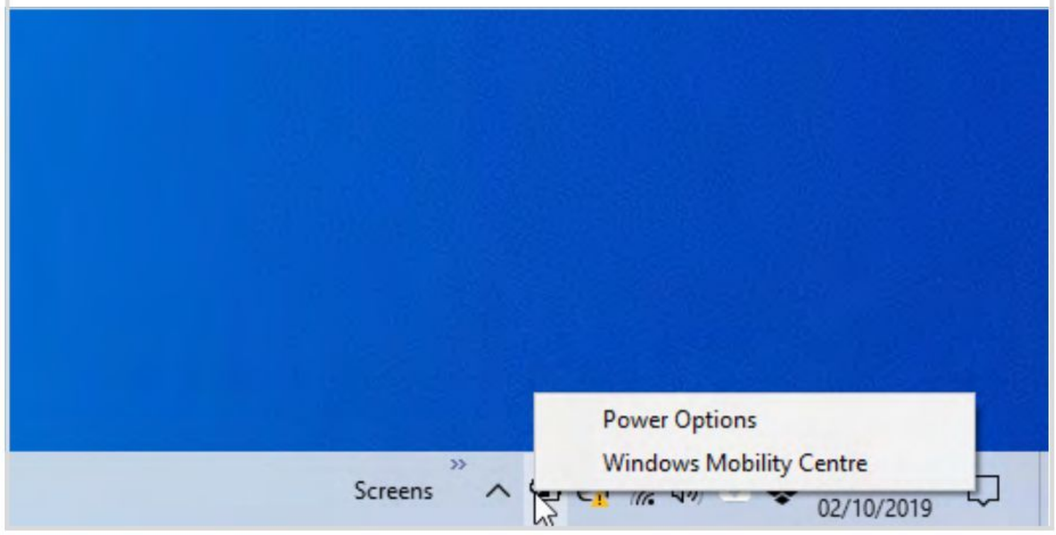
Step 6 Your laptop might have software installed that automatically switches power plans, depending on whether it is working on battery power or plugged into the mains. The settings for this can usually be found in the taskbar tools panel at the bottom right of the screen.



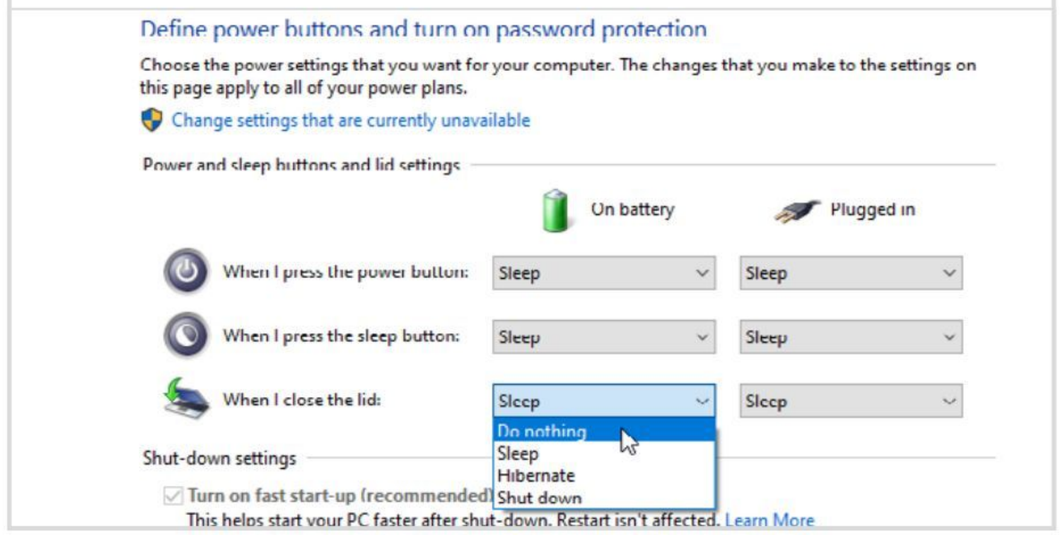
Use Your Laptop with the Lid Closed

If you want to be able to use your laptop with an external keyboard, mouse and monitor, without having the keep it on your desk and switched on, you need to change some power settings.

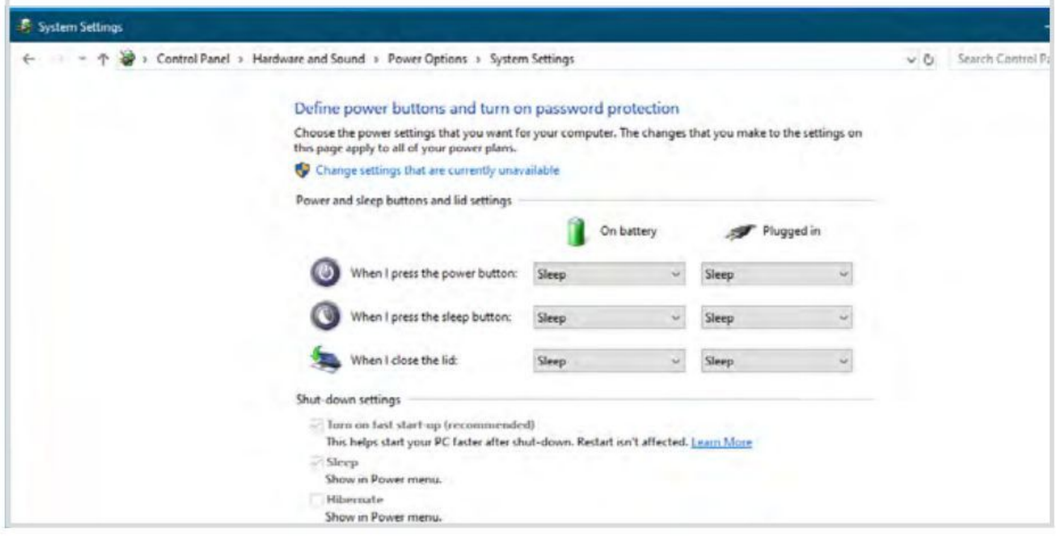
Step 1 When you close your laptop lid, the default setting will be for Windows 10 to go into low power sleep mode. This is obviously no good if you are using your laptop with an external monitor, as it will make the laptop unusable. To solve this problem, click on the Battery icon > power settings in the taskbar.



Step 3 Use the drop-down menus to select what happens when you close the lid, both when on battery and when the laptop is plugged into the mains. When you are happy with your settings, click the Save the changes button and you will be able to use the laptop as a desktop replacement with the lid closed.



Step 2 In the Power Options panel, look in the left sidebar for the option to “Choose what closing the lid does”. Click this and you will see the Power button, Sleep button, and lid closing settings. You can change the settings for each individually. Settings include: Do Nothing, Sleep, Hibernate and Shut Down.



Step 4 If you also take your laptop to different locations out of the house, it is a good idea to revert these changes. If you don’t, you run the risk of having the laptop continue to run while in a bag, etc., which, if the cooling vents are covered, can be damaging to the hardware.

Task Manager

Explore the Windows 10 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

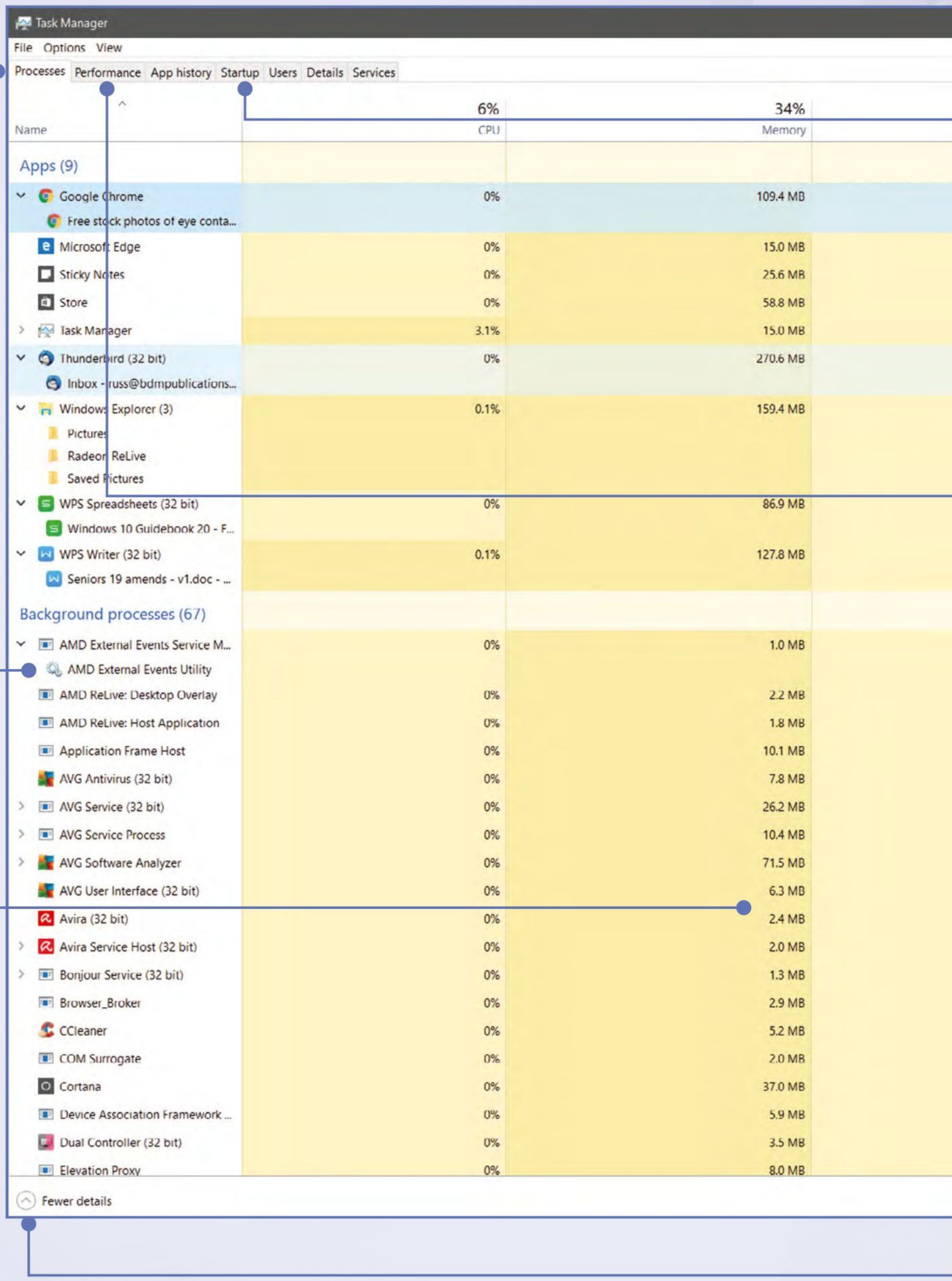
The Processes tab is the default tab when the Task Manager is opened. You can open the task manager by simply searching for it in the main search panel. Just as with any other app or piece of software in Windows 10, you can pin a shortcut to the Task Manager, to the taskbar or as a desktop icon.

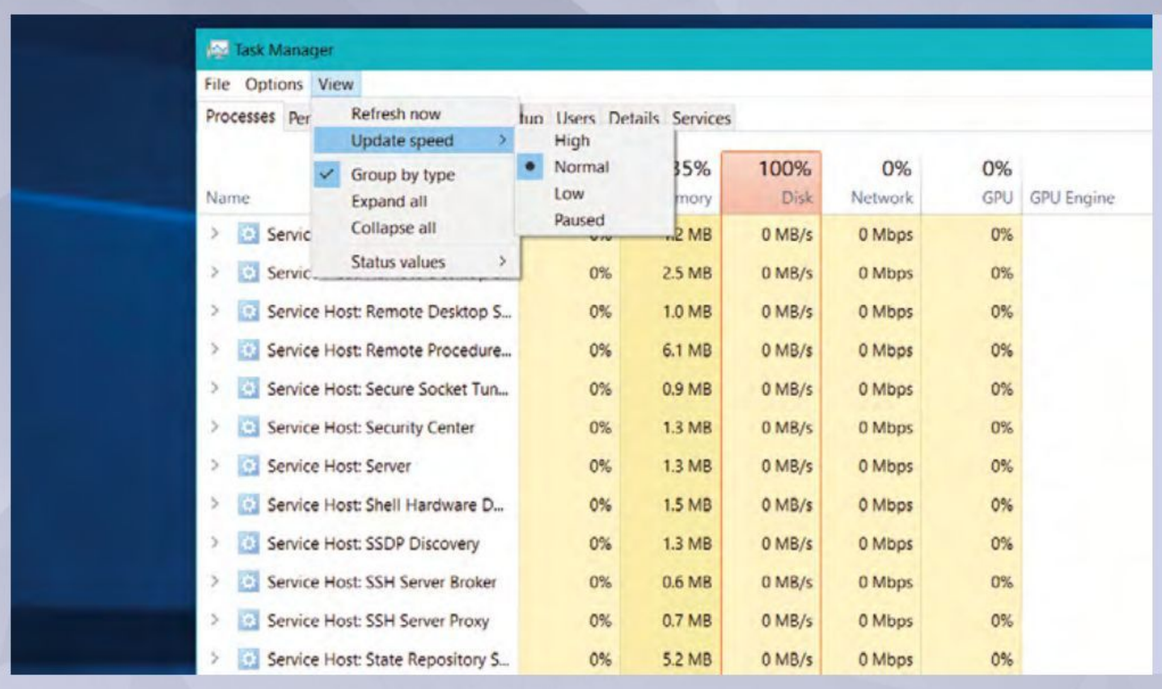
Process List

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

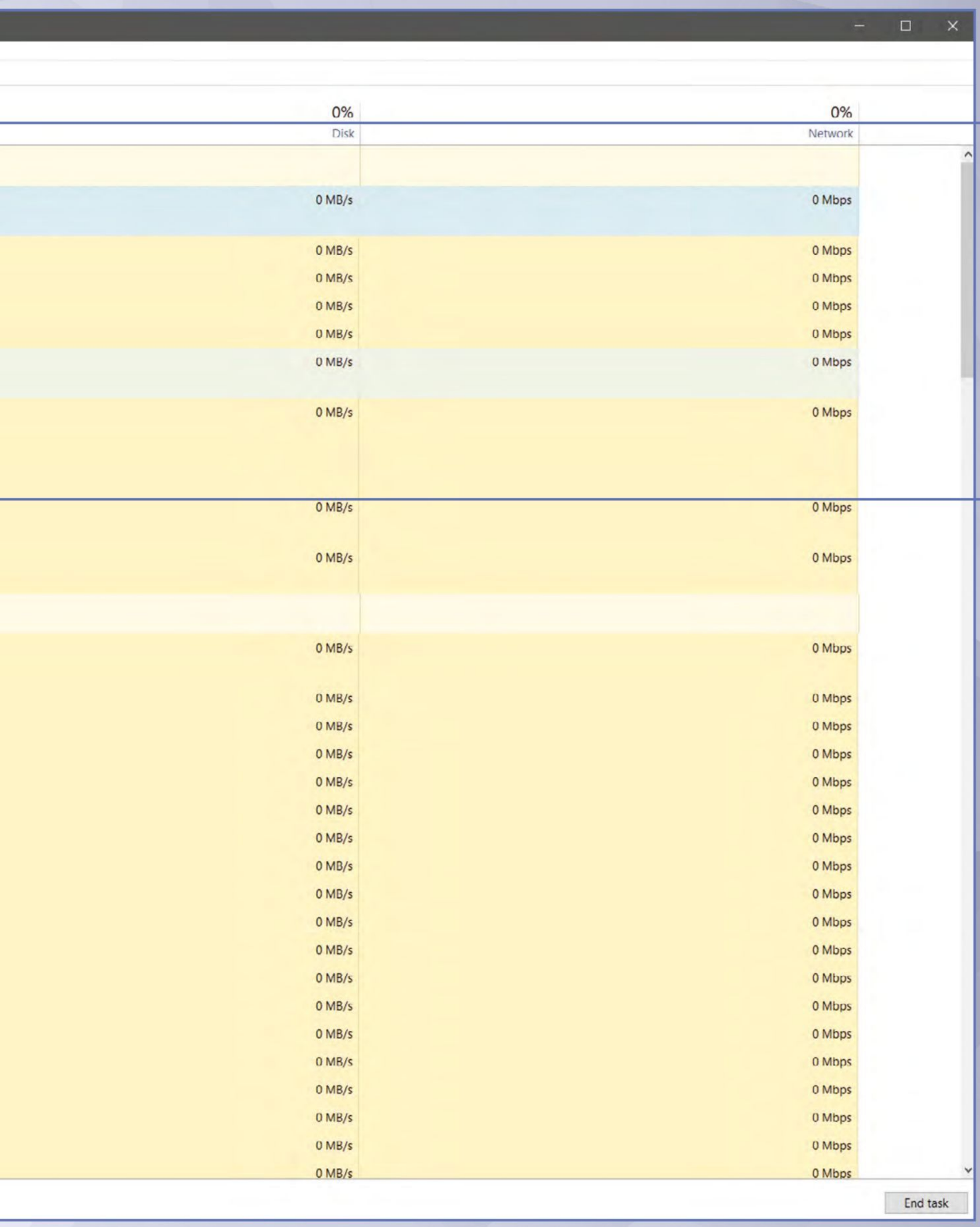
If you find your PC becoming slow and sluggish during normal use, you may have too many processes running. By looking at the resource usage chart, you can see exactly which apps are taking up the most processing power, physical memory, disk space and even network bandwidth. If something is particularly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

Memory

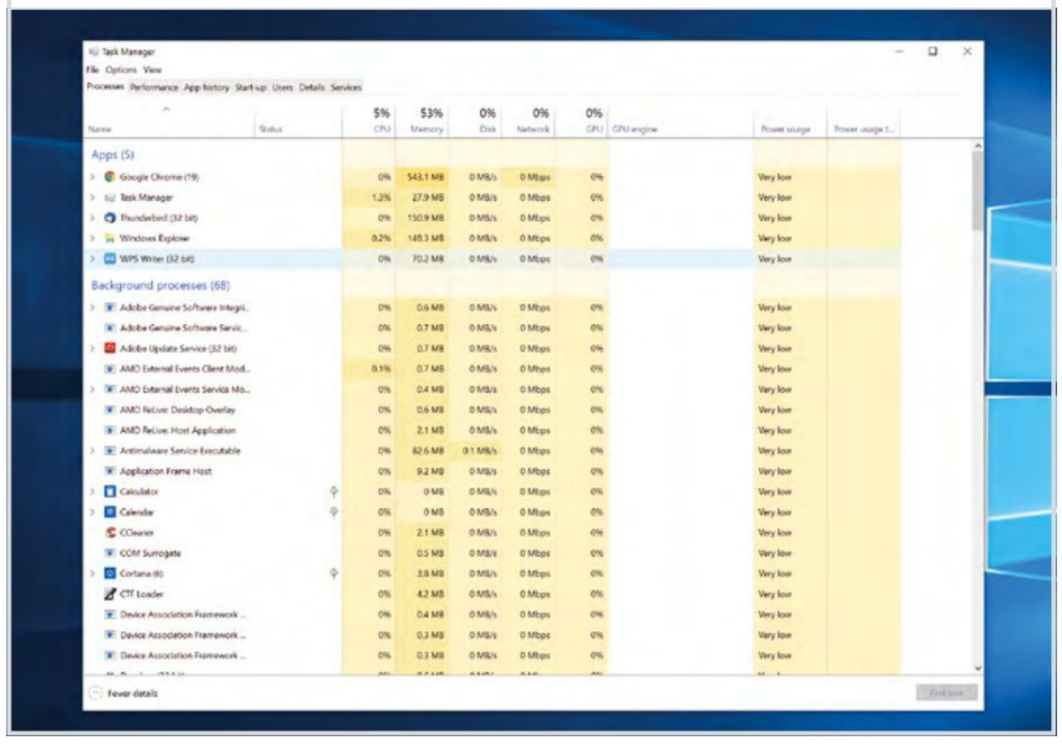
Check and Manage RAM Usage

Adding RAM, or Random Access Memory, is a good way to give your PC an instant boost but before you go to the expense and trouble of installing new RAM modules, it is worth checking what is using your existing RAM and whether it can be optimised.

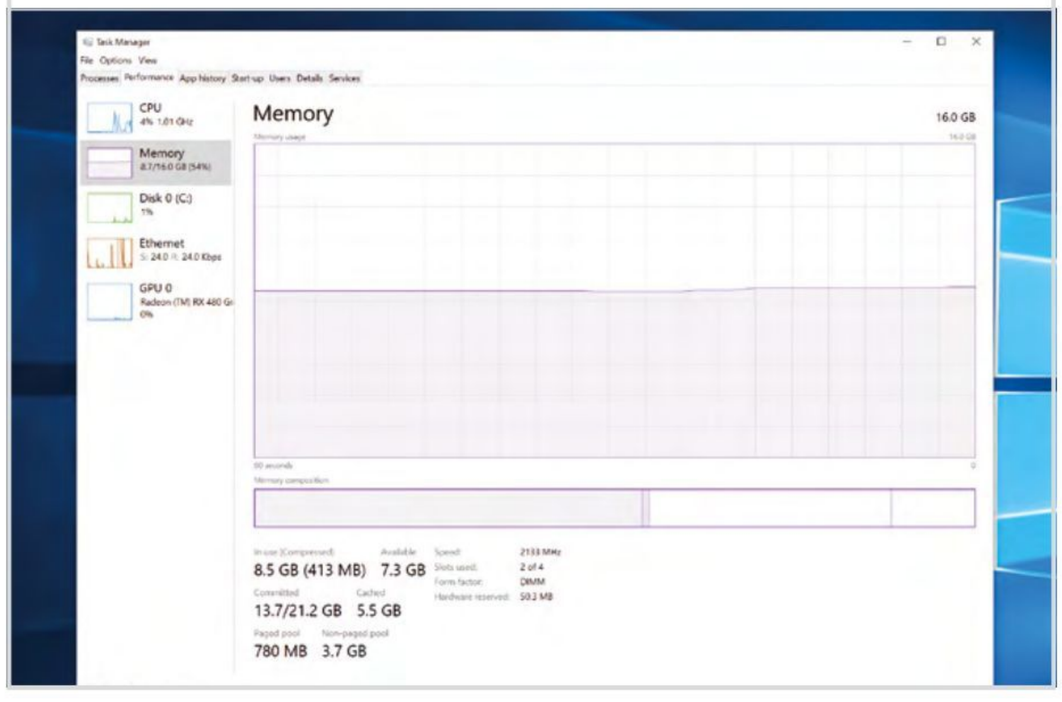
Checking Memory and Memory Usage

The first thing you need to do, when trying to optimise RAM usage and performance, is check how much you have and how it is used.

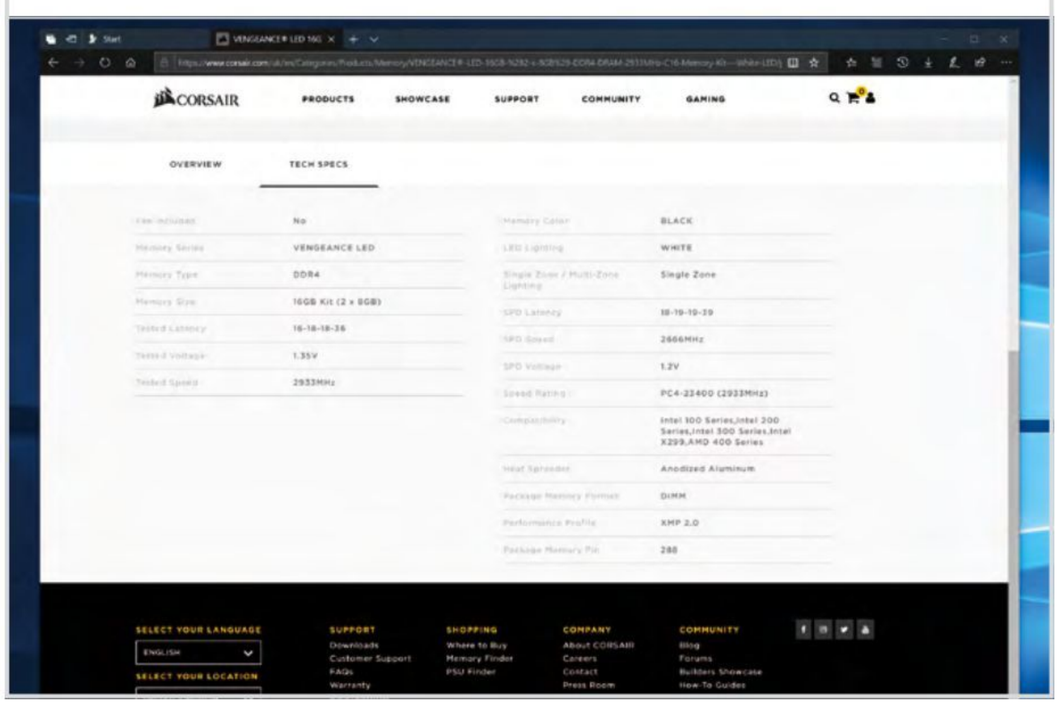
Step 1 To check up on your RAM, you need to open the Task Manager. Press Ctrl + Alt + Delete on the keyboard and then select Task Manager from the list that appears. If Task Manager opens showing just a simple list of tasks, click the More details button to see a more advanced view.



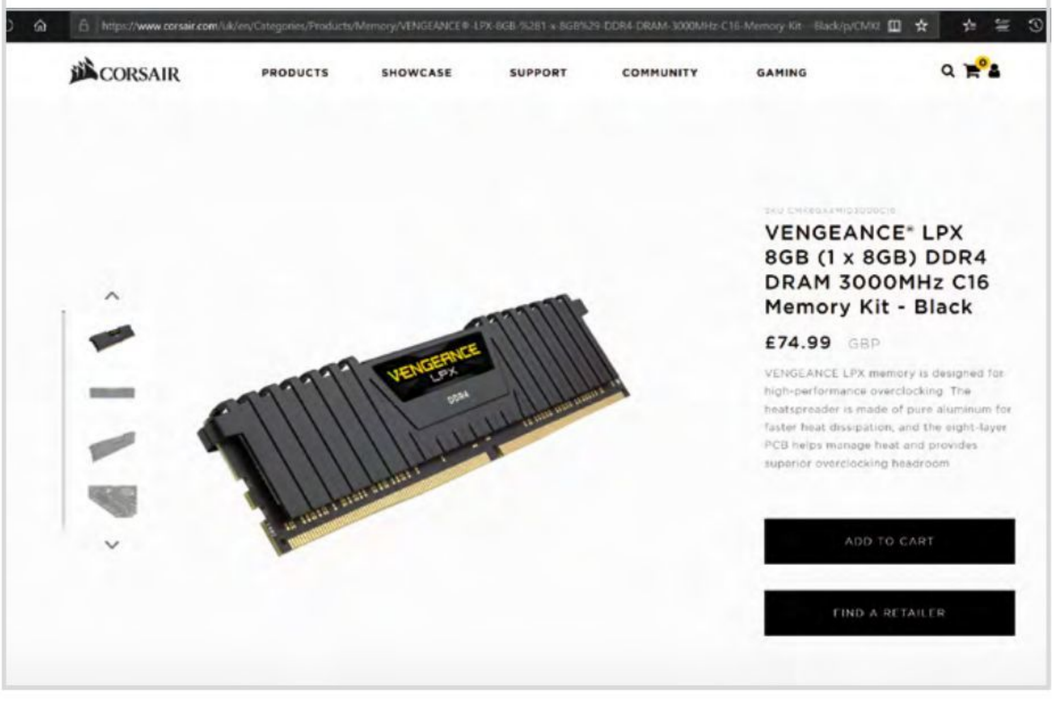
Step 2 Click the Performance tab at the top and then the Memory tab on the left side. You can now see how much you have in total and then check the graph to see how much RAM is being used. Try opening a few different apps while Task Manager is open, to see RAM usage increase or change.



Step 3 If it seems like most of your available RAM is regularly being used, and if less than 4GB is installed, consider adding more RAM. You can find out what kind of RAM your PC model uses by looking at the memory info in Task Manager. Then visit the PC manufacturer's website for more specific info.



Step 4 In theory, Windows 10 (64-bit) can run on a PC with just 2 GB of RAM but in reality you will want at least 4 GB if you plan regular use. If you can afford to double this to 8 GB, you will not only instantly improve performance but also add some time to the long term lifespan of your computer.

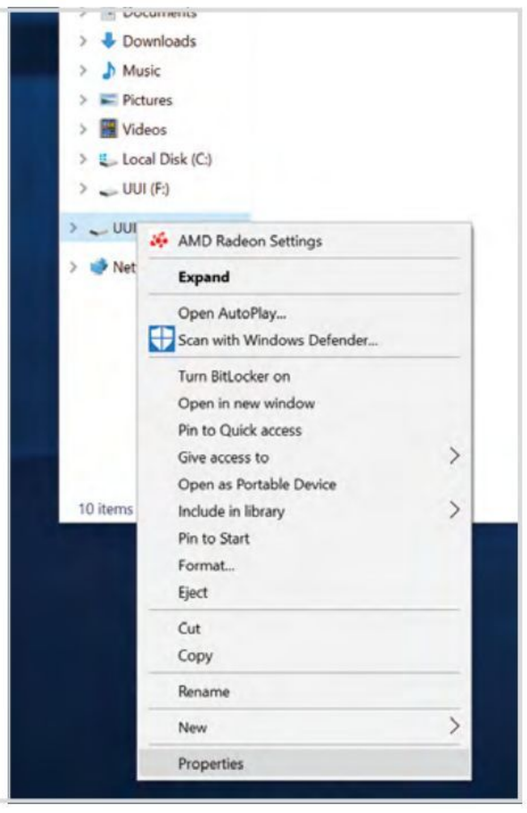


Using Windows ReadyBoost

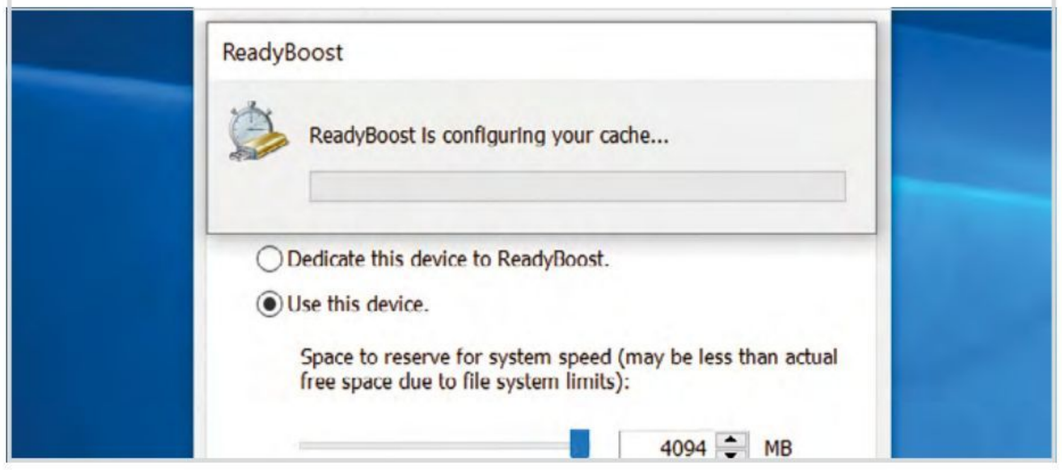
If you don't want to spend out on more RAM right now, there are ways you can attempt to optimise your existing memory performance. One way is to use ReadyBoost.

Step 1 ReadyBoost is a way to boost memory performance by creating an extra memory cache on an external USB-connected drive, such as a flash drive. You will need a USB drive with at least 500MB of free space and a high data transfer rate. A USB 3.0 drive can peak at a data rate of 600MB/s.

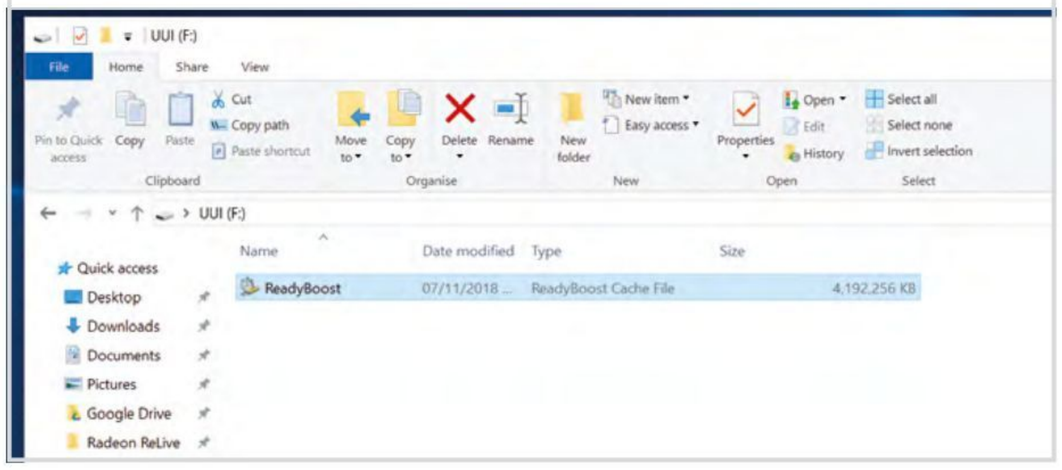
Step 2 Insert the drive into a free USB port on your PC and then open the File Explorer. Right-click on the name of the drive in the left-hand sidebar and select Properties from the action menu. Be aware that computers with a solid-state drive (SSD) installed, will not be able to take advantage of ReadyBoost.



Step 3 Select the ReadyBoost tab, then select 'Use this device'. Windows 10 determines if the device can use ReadyBoost. If it is not able to use the feature, it will let you know. Windows will then determine how much free space to assign to memory. Click Ok to reserve this space on the connected drive.



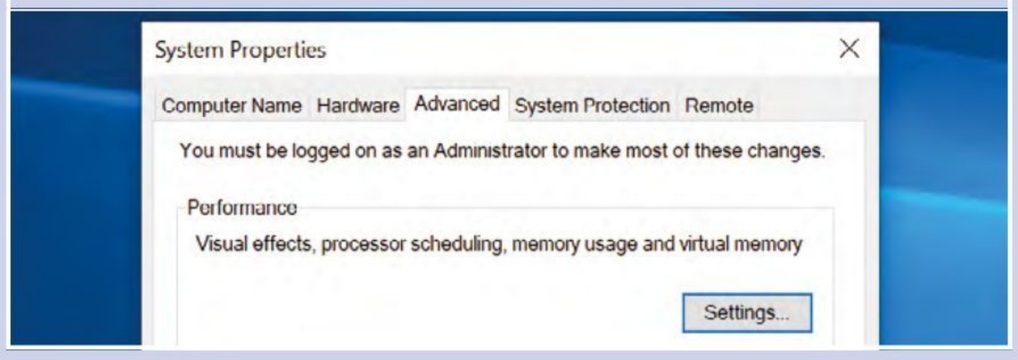
Step 4 If you look at the contents of the drive in File Explorer, you will see a file called ReadyBoost.sfcache. This file shows how much space is reserved for ReadyBoost. If you don't have a USB flash drive handy, you can sometimes use a smartphone, connected via USB, as a temporary ReadyBoost drive



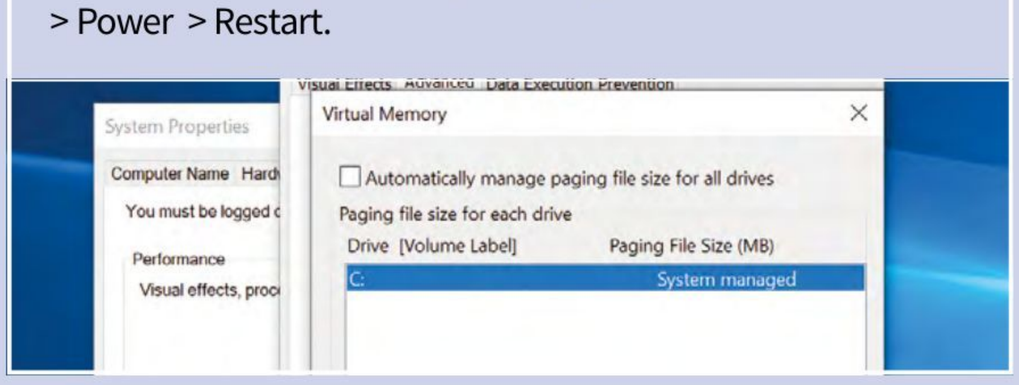
CHANGE PAGING FILE SIZE

The paging file is an area on your hard disk that Windows uses like memory. Increasing the paging file size can help improve your PC's performance.

Step 1 In the search box on the taskbar, type 'advanced system' and then select 'View advanced system settings'. In System Properties, on the Advanced tab, select Settings in the Performance area, and then select the Advanced tab > Change in the Virtual memory area.



Step 2 In Performance Options, Clear the 'Automatically manage paging file size for all drives' check box. Select Custom size, then enter an initial size (in MB) and maximum size in the corresponding boxes. Select Set > OK and then restart your PC by selecting the Start button > Power > Restart.



Updating

How to Keep Windows Up-to-date

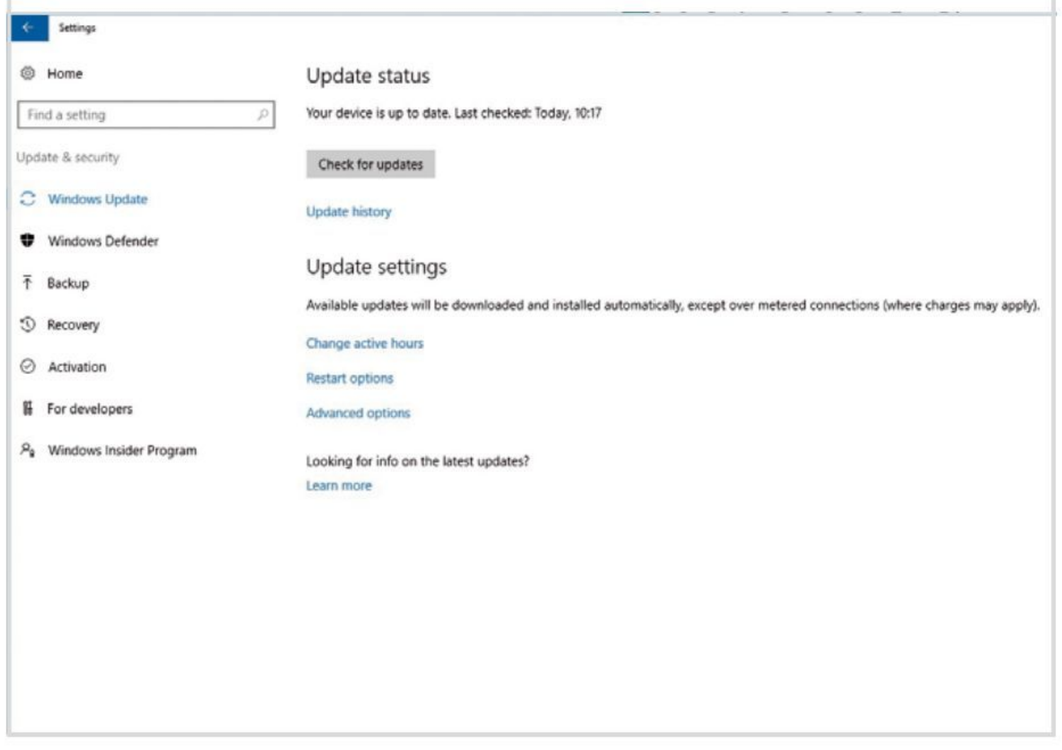
Keeping your Windows 10 computer up-to-date is important for two reasons. First, major updates such as the Anniversary update, will add new features and second, smaller updates usually fix problems, close security holes and add improvements.

Checking for Updates

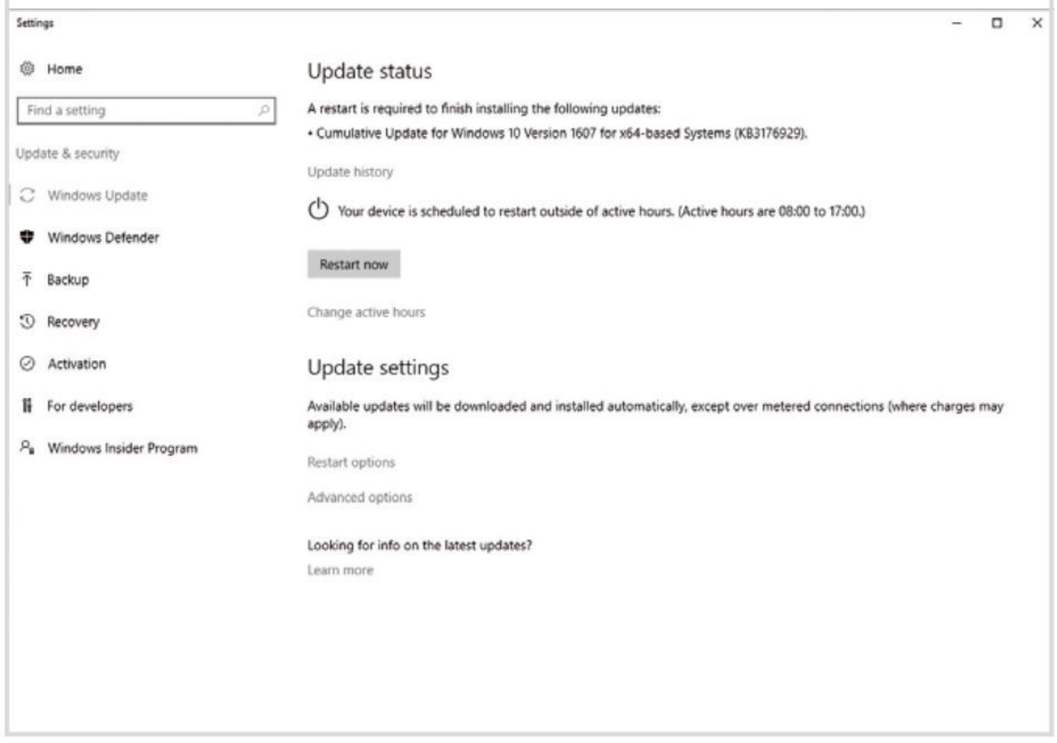
If you think that your PC needs to be updated, you don't need to wait for the automatic update process to kick in. You can quite easily check for updates yourself.

Step 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.

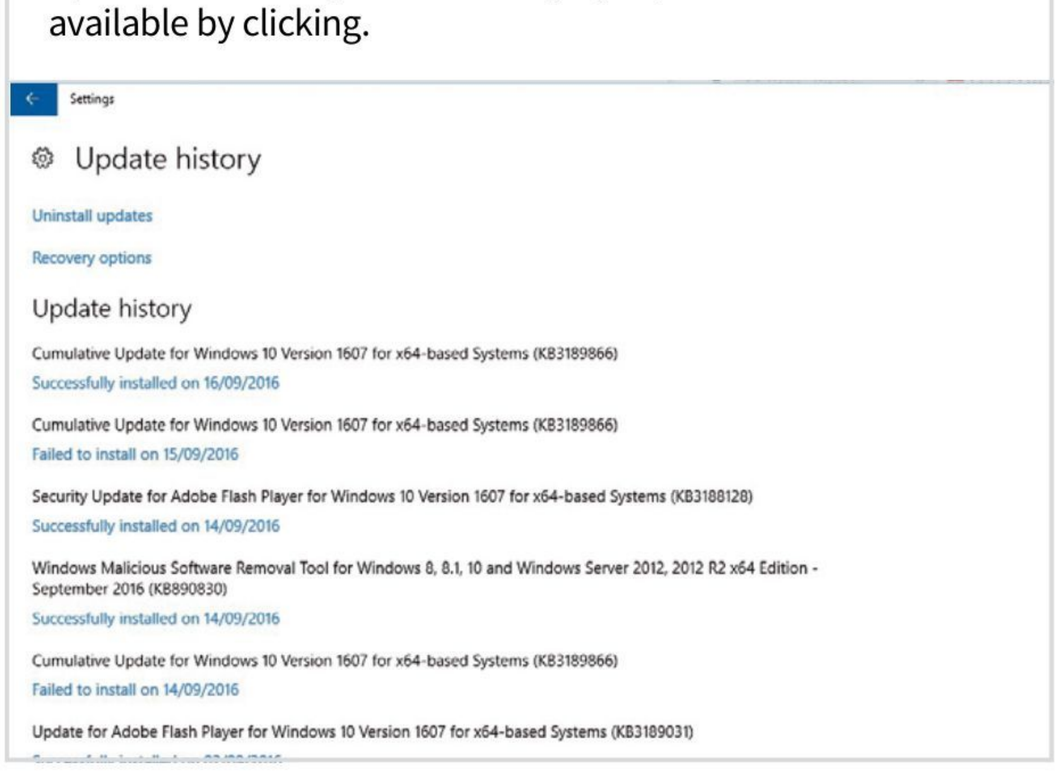
Step 2 At the top of the window you should immediately see a message telling you whether Windows 10 is up-to-date or if updates are currently available. Directly below this message is a button labelled "Check for updates". Even if the message says up-to-date, it is worth clicking this button.



Step 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.



Step 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.

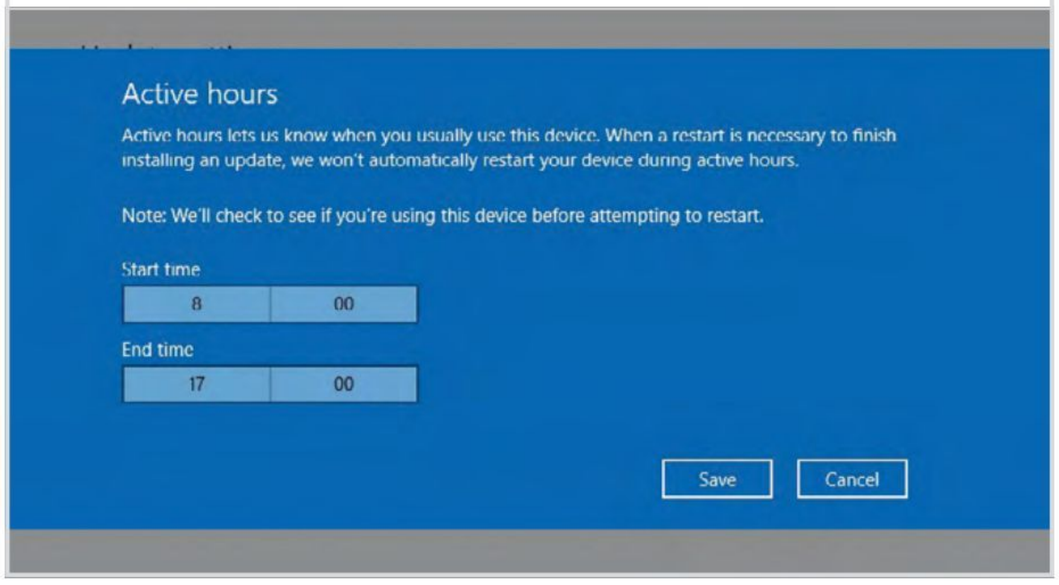


Windows Update Settings

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.

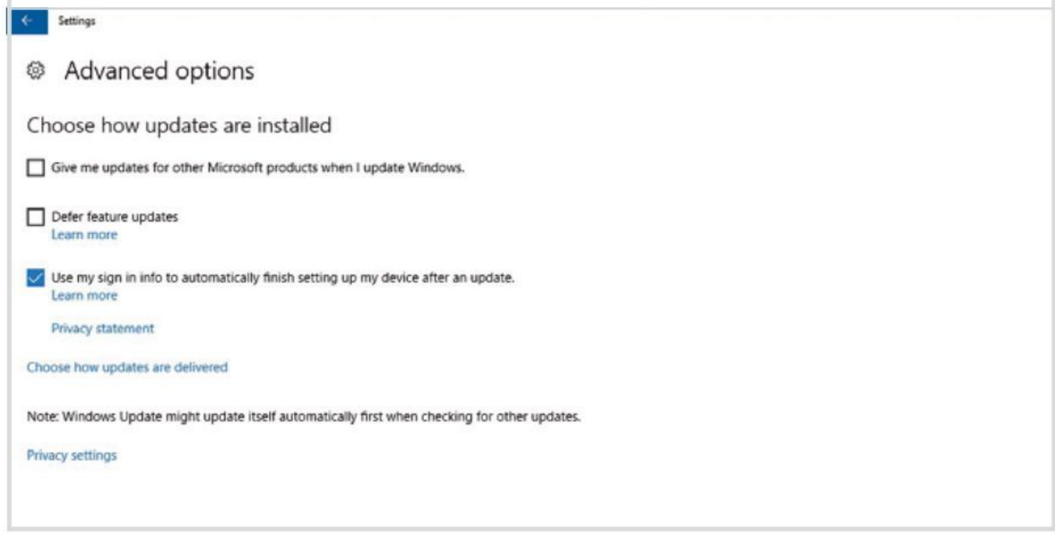
Active Hours

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.



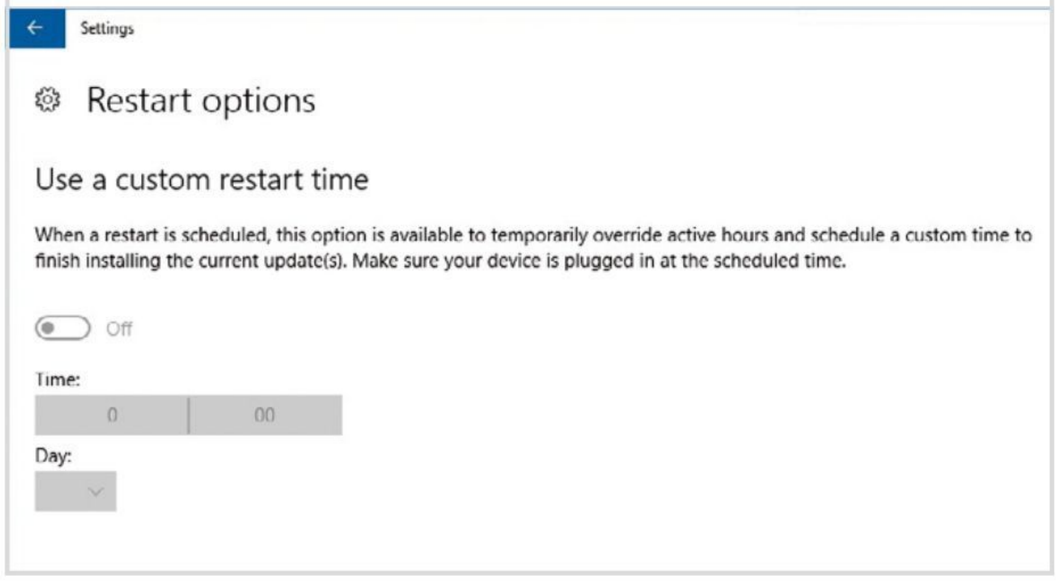
Automatic Set Up

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...



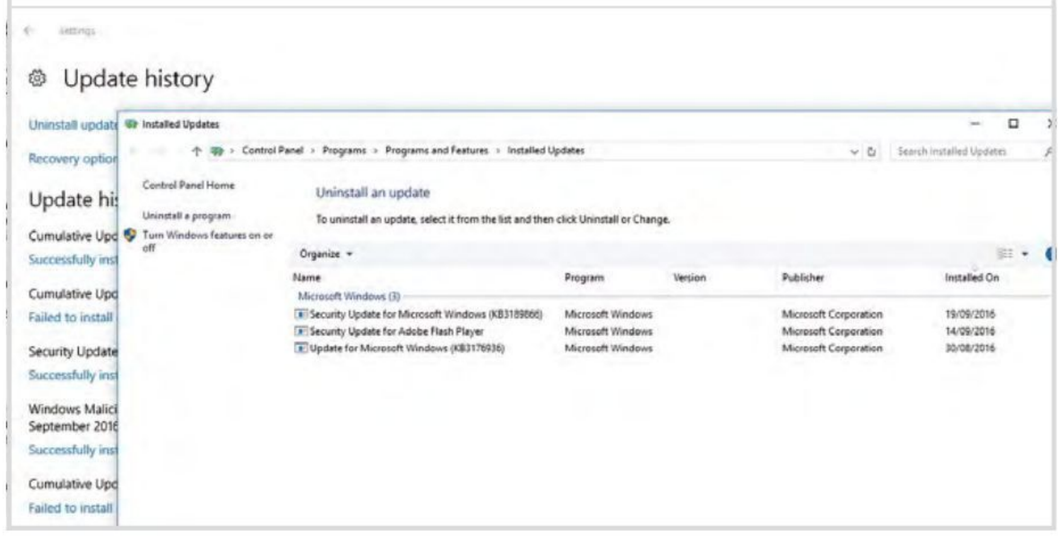
Custom Restart Time

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.



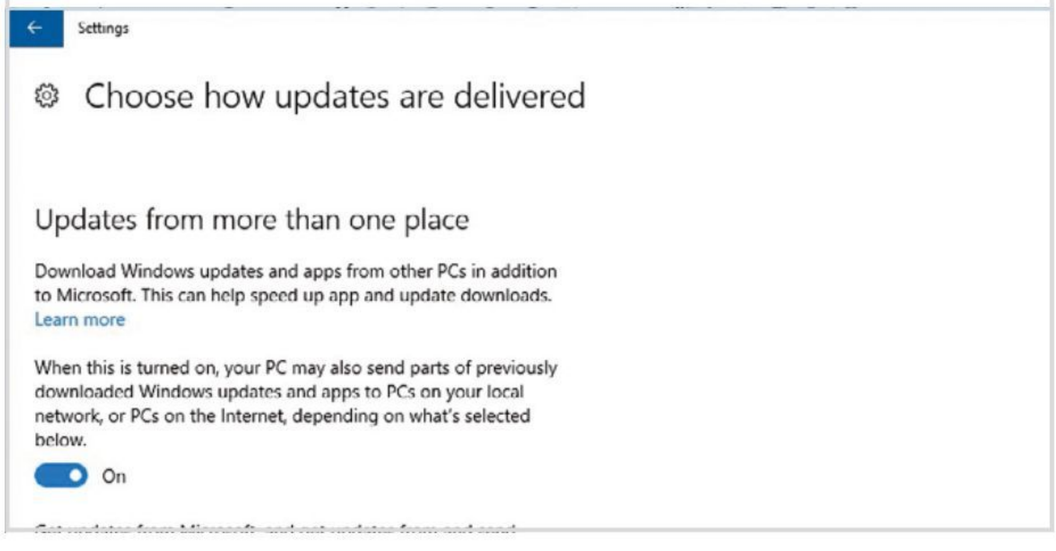
Uninstall Updates

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.



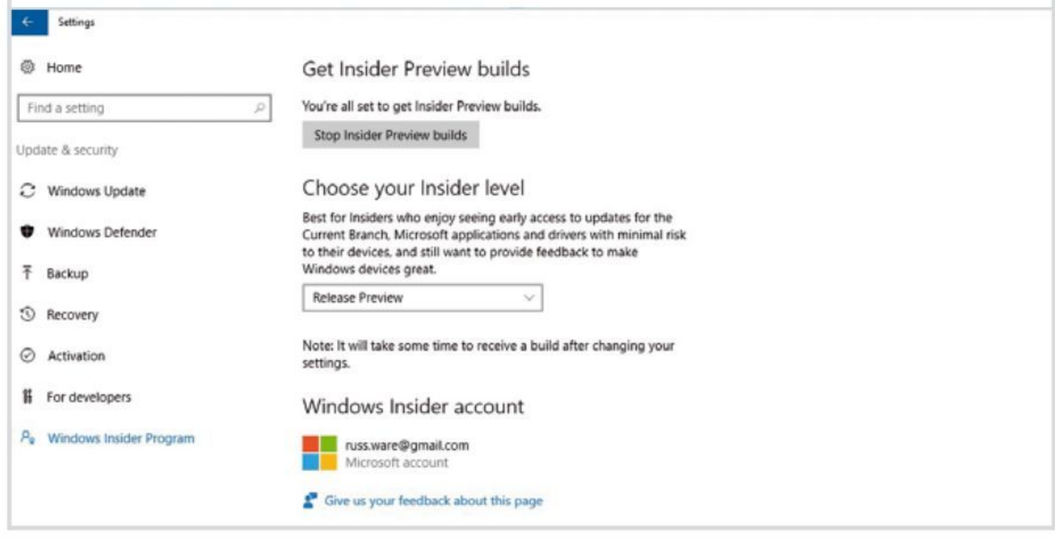
Update Delivery

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.



Updates

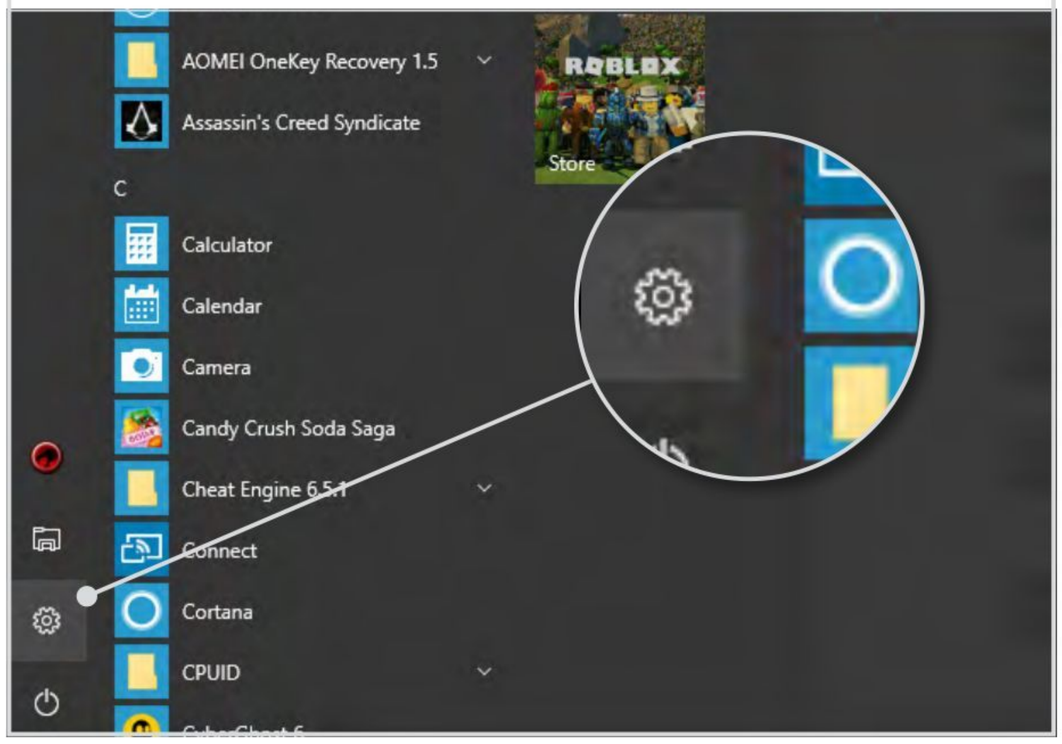
What to Keep Updated in Windows 10

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.

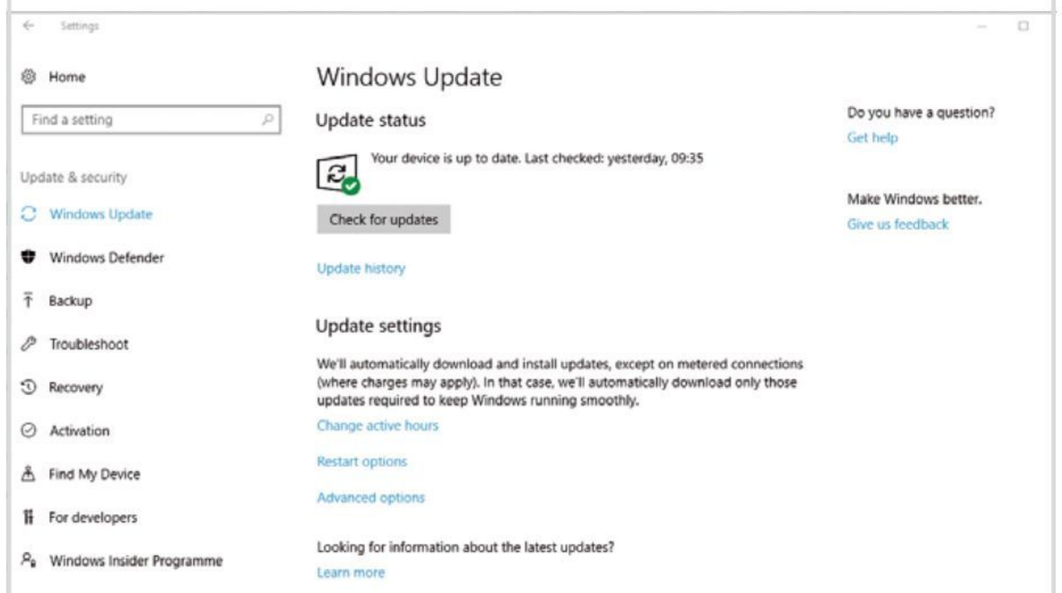
Keeping Up-to-date

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.

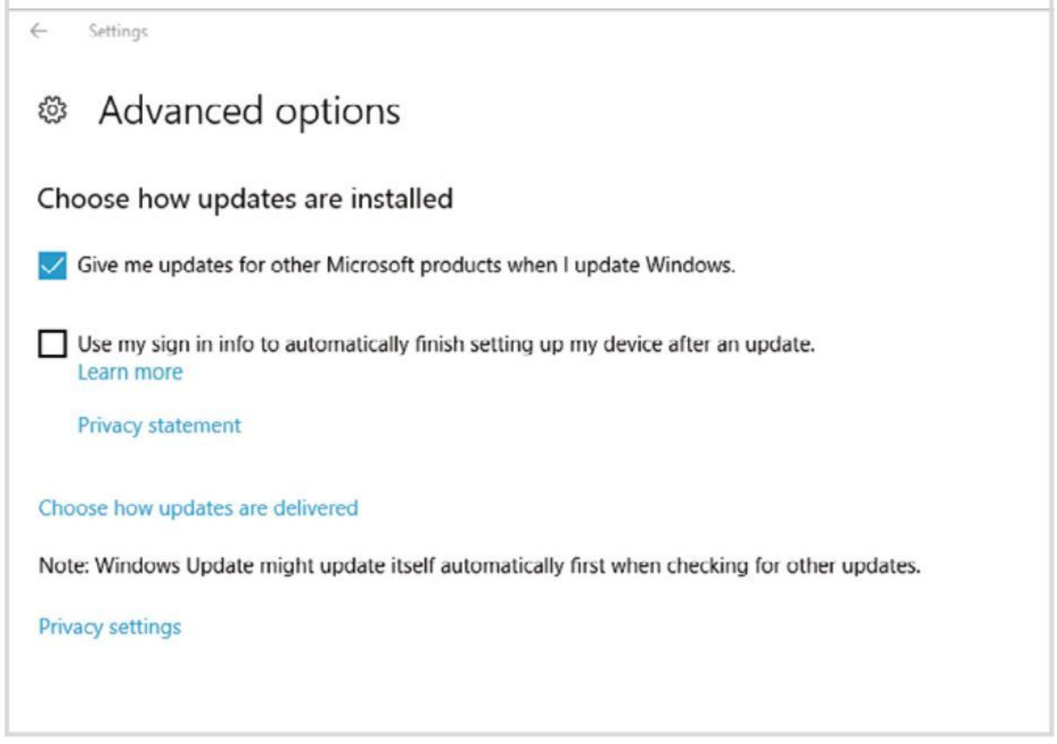
Step 1 The first port of call is undoubtedly Windows Update. Click on the Windows Start button followed by Settings, the cog icon just above the power icon on the strip to the side. This will open the Windows Settings interface; locate the last entry, Update & Security and click it.



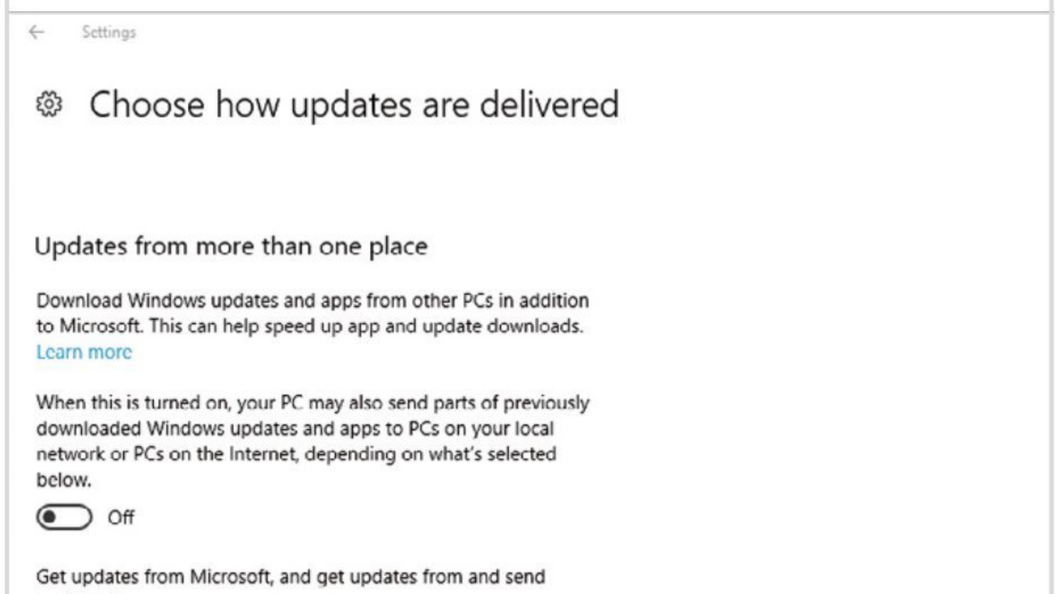
Step 2 By default, Windows Update will automatically check for, download and install updates for the core Windows 10 files. You can check for any on the spot by clicking the Check for updates button and you can see what's already been updated by clicking the Update history link, under the Update button.



Step 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. It's recommended to make sure the box is ticked, for better security and protection.

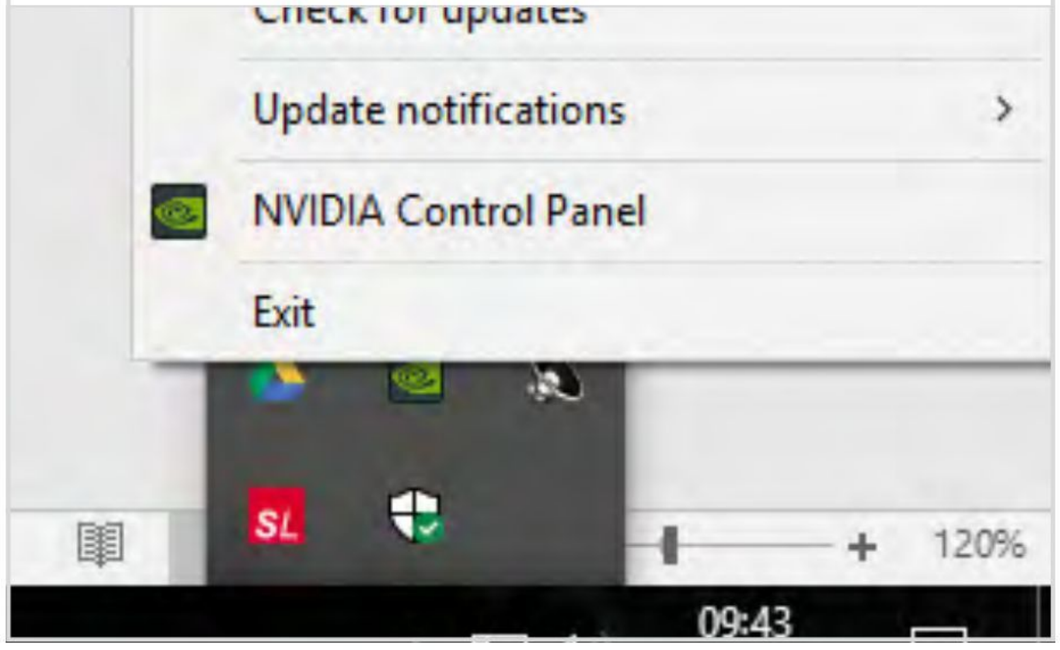


Step 4 Within the Advanced Options page click the link for Choose how updates are delivered. This page details the way Windows updates can be pushed to other computers on your network, or even the Internet. Whilst it's a grand idea, there are concerns over privacy from some factors of the community.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

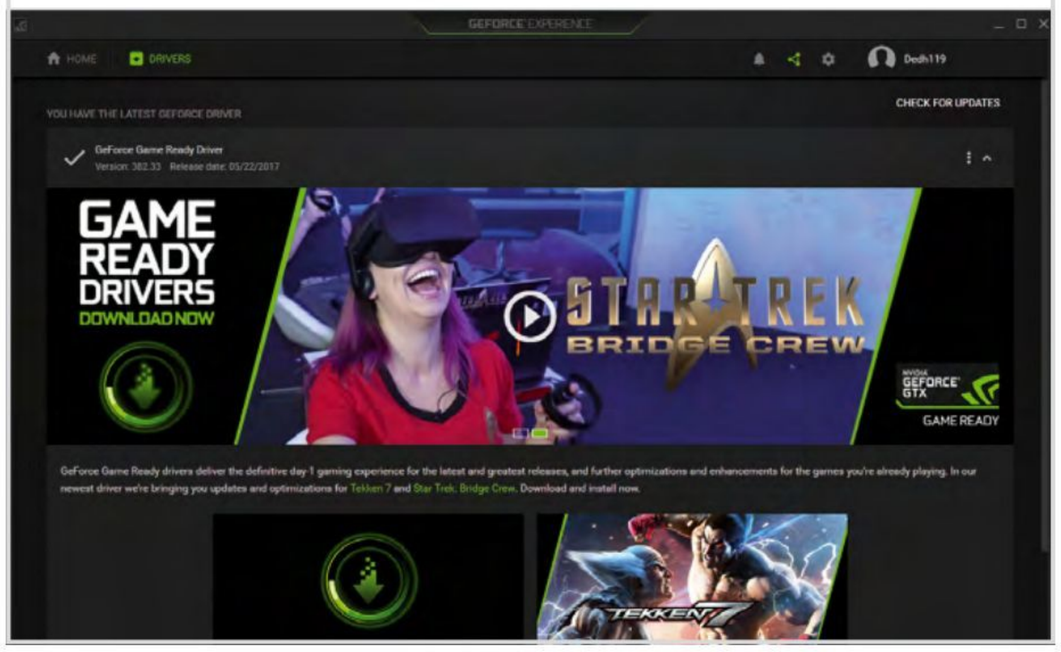


Step 5 Hardware drivers are usually automatically updated by Windows Update but whilst signed by Microsoft the drivers themselves aren't always the latest versions. Therein lies a problem: even though signed, the MS drivers won't utilise the hardware as well as the driver developed by the hardware manufacturer.

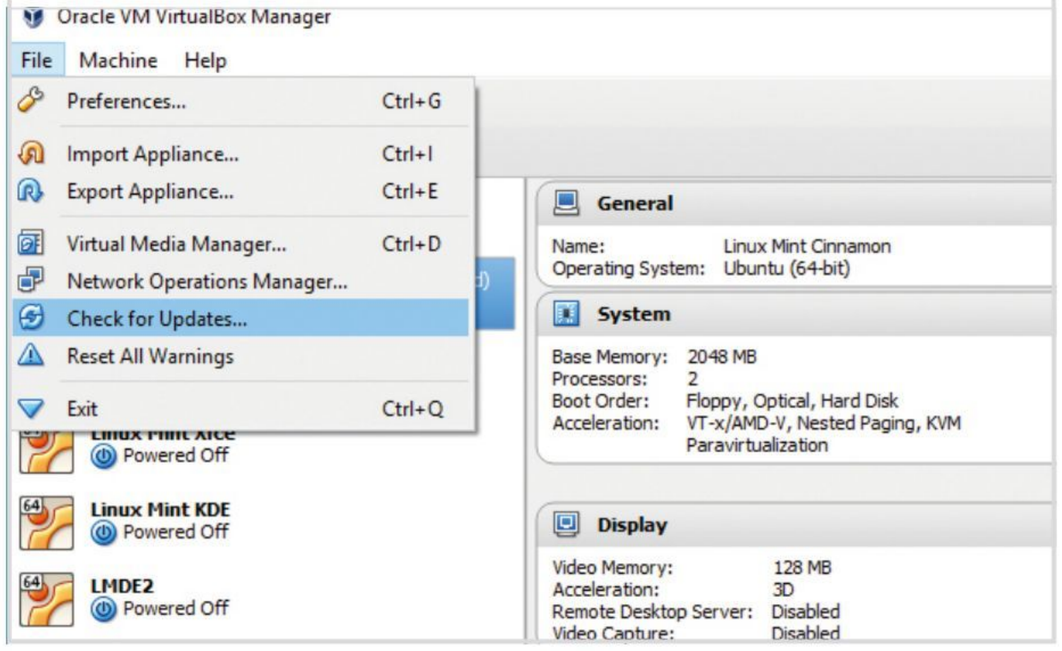
Step 6 In such cases it's often best to use the hardware manufacturer's driver, as this is more up-to-date and features security patches as well as performance updates. For example, if you own an Nvidia graphics card right-click the Nvidia icon in the taskbar and select Open Nvidia GeForce Experience.



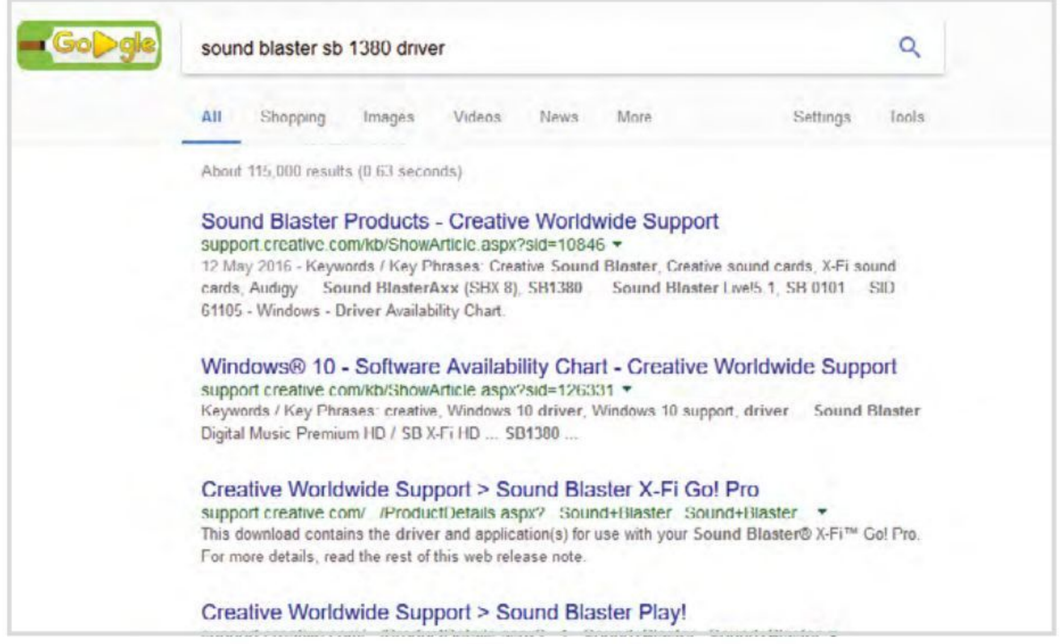
Step 7 The Nvidia GeForce Experience allows you to improve in-game graphics and check for the latest drivers. Usually this is done automatically and you are notified of any available drivers. However, If you want to check manually, click on the Drivers tab followed by Check for Updates.



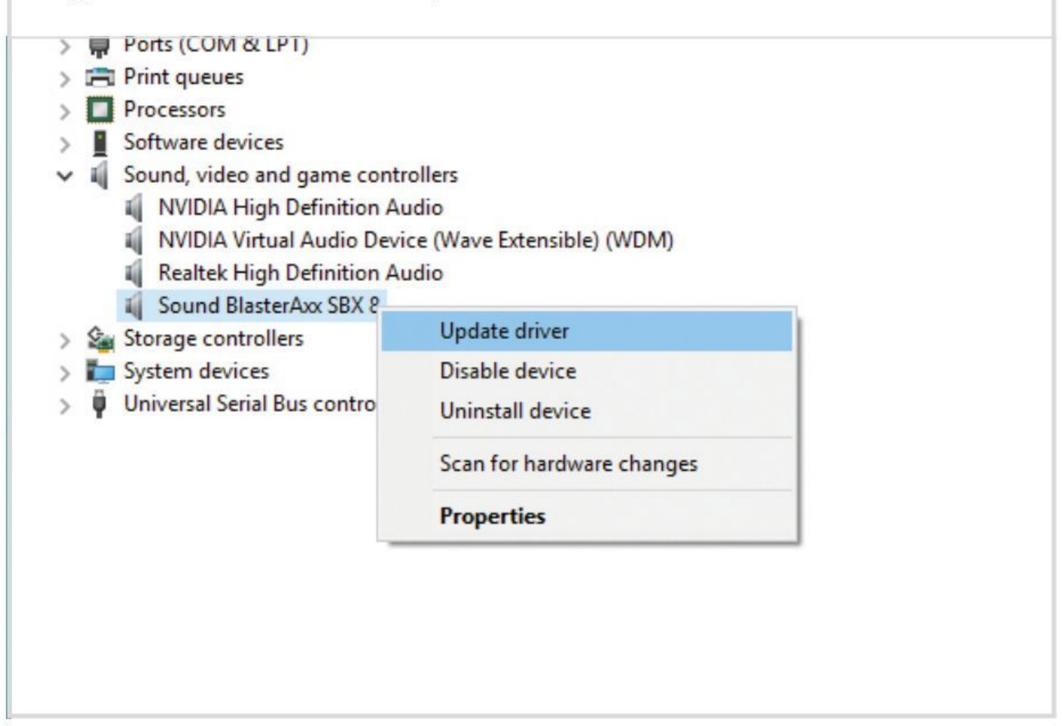
Step 8 Third-party programs and applications also require regular update checks. Again, this is usually done automatically; when you launch the program in question it often checks for the latest version. If not, look for links such as Check for Updates or similar, usually in the Help, About or even under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



Step 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 etc.), then you'll need to hunt one down. Start by locating the device's product name and number and entering it into a search engine.



Step 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.



Cache

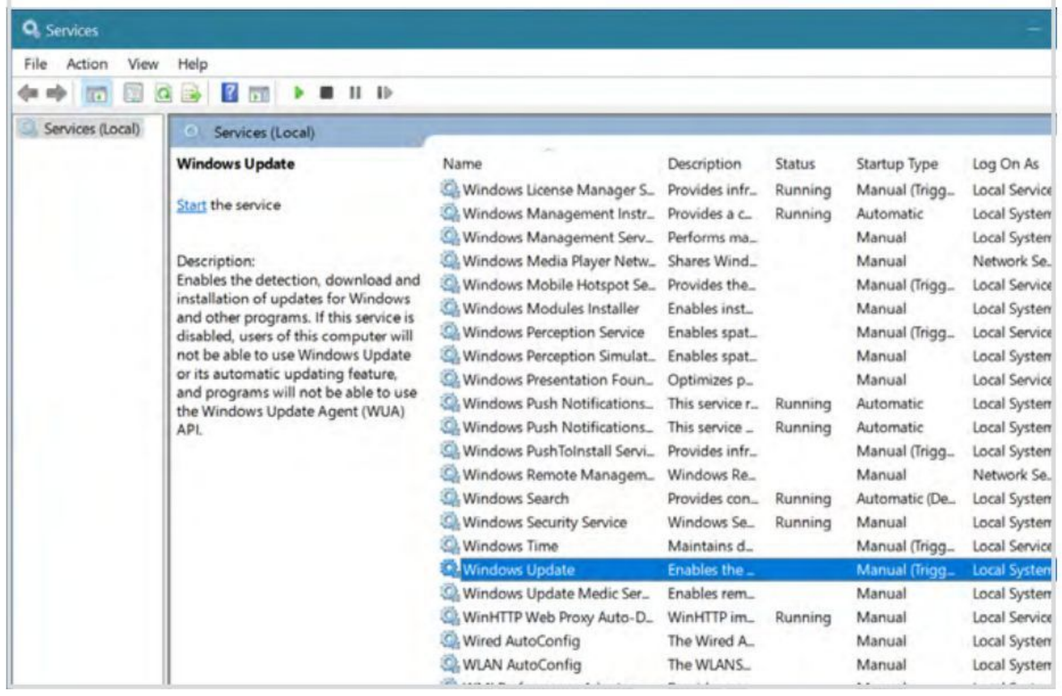
Clear Windows Update Cache

While some users can run through the update process without a hitch, others only appear to get so far before the PC reboots and rolls back the changes. Clearing the update cache allows your PC to begin the process again from scratch, with a fresh update.

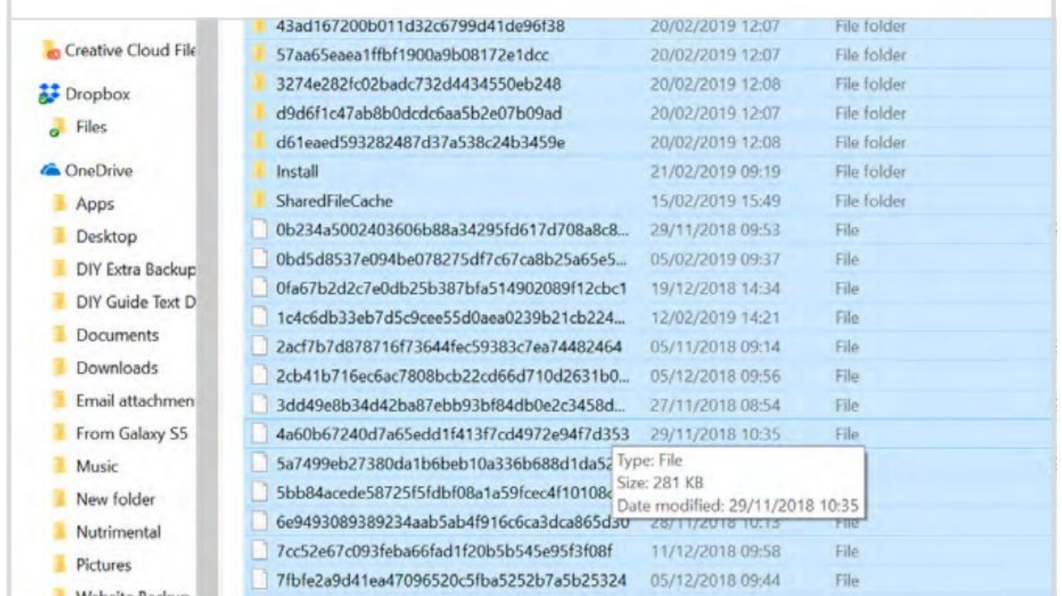
How to Clear the Cache

It's often necessary to clear the update cache – all the files that Windows has downloaded in order to apply the update – and start re-downloading afresh.

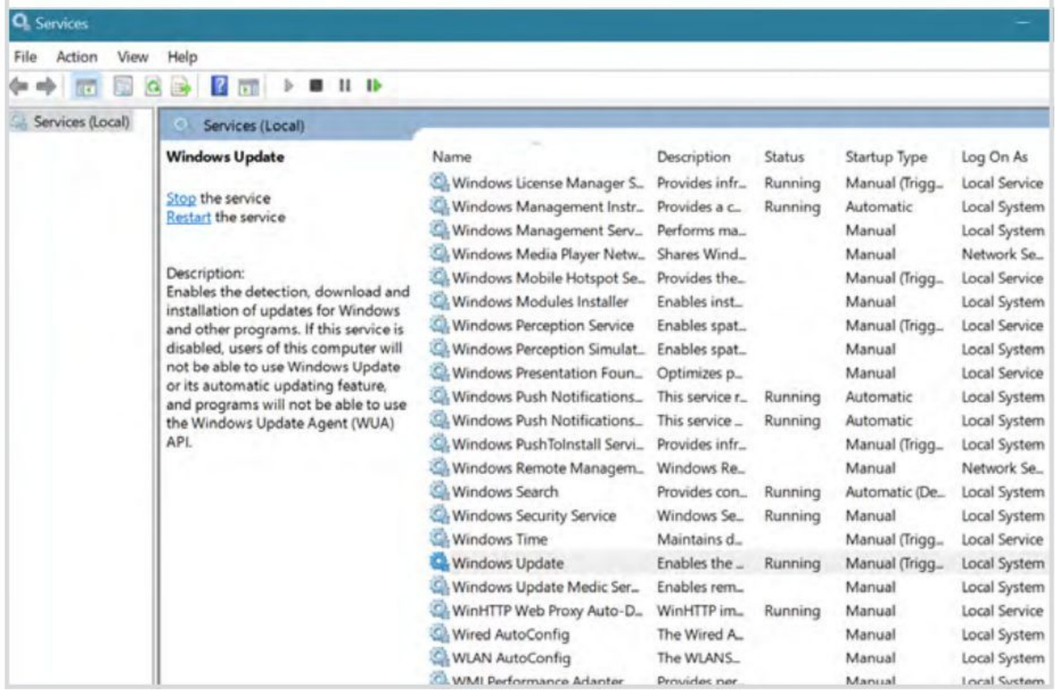
Step 1 Begin by clicking on the Windows Start button and typing 'services'. Click on the Services (Desktop App) link in the search results. This will launch the Services Management Console. Scroll down until you come to Windows Update. This is the service that controls the entire Windows Update process.



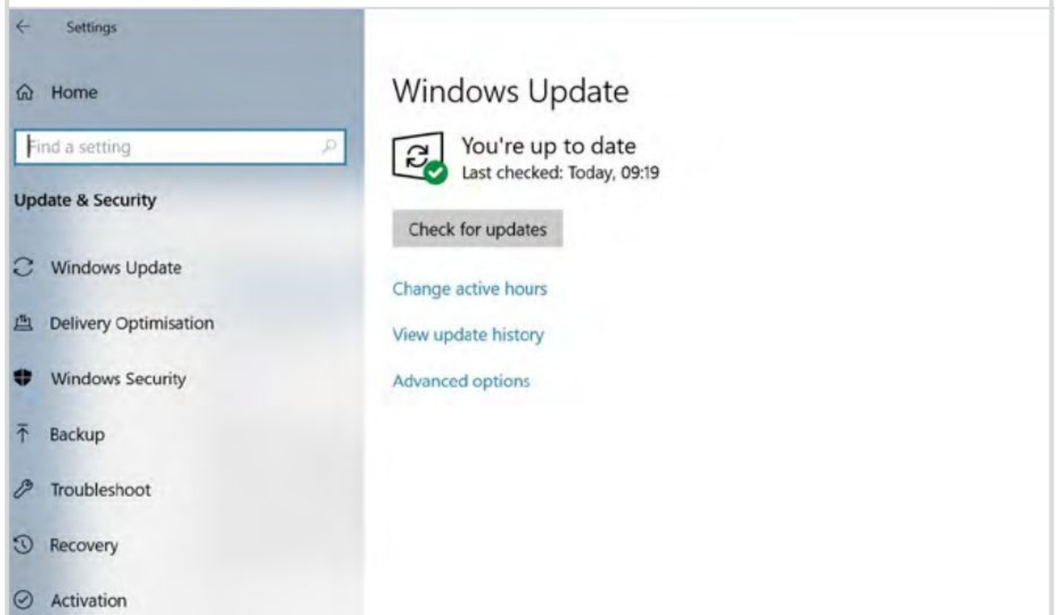
Step 2 Click the entry and then click on Stop the service, located in the upper left of the Services console window. Keep the Services console window open, click on the File Explorer and navigate to C:\Windows\SoftwareDistribution\Download. Highlight all the files and folders within this directory, use CTRL+A to select all and hit the Delete key.



Step 3 Close File Explorer and click back to the Services console window. Make sure the Windows Update service is highlighted and click on Start the service. Wait for the service's status to say Running, then close the Services console window. Now open the Windows Update and Security window and click Check for updates.



Step 4 Windows should now start to download a fresh copy of the update and, with luck, it will work for you this time, if not, then the problem is likely deeper into the system. Make a note of the error code and check out the Microsoft TechNet Blog pages (https://blogs.technet.microsoft.com/) to see if there are any solutions available.



Libraries

Manage Libraries in Windows 10

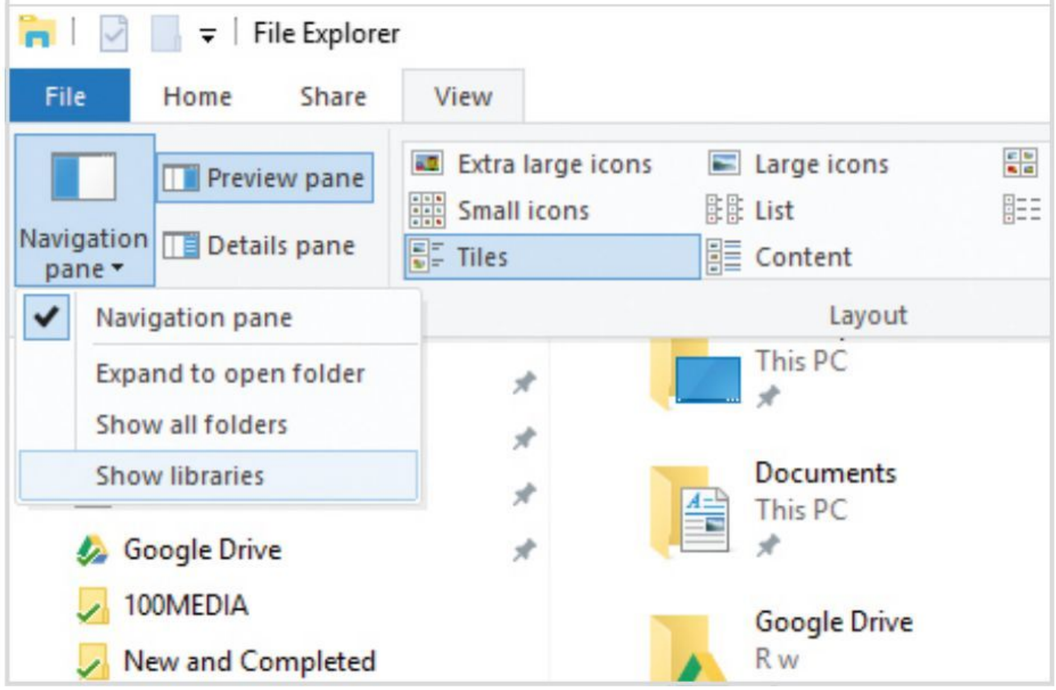
Libraries in Windows have long been used as a central place for bringing together related files. They differ from file folders in that they contain links to a collection of folders, either locally or across a shared network, rather than the actual files themselves.

Find and Manage Libraries

Libraries are very useful tools for finding and organising files, even if they have been slightly sidelined in Windows 10. Let's take a look at using your libraries effectively.

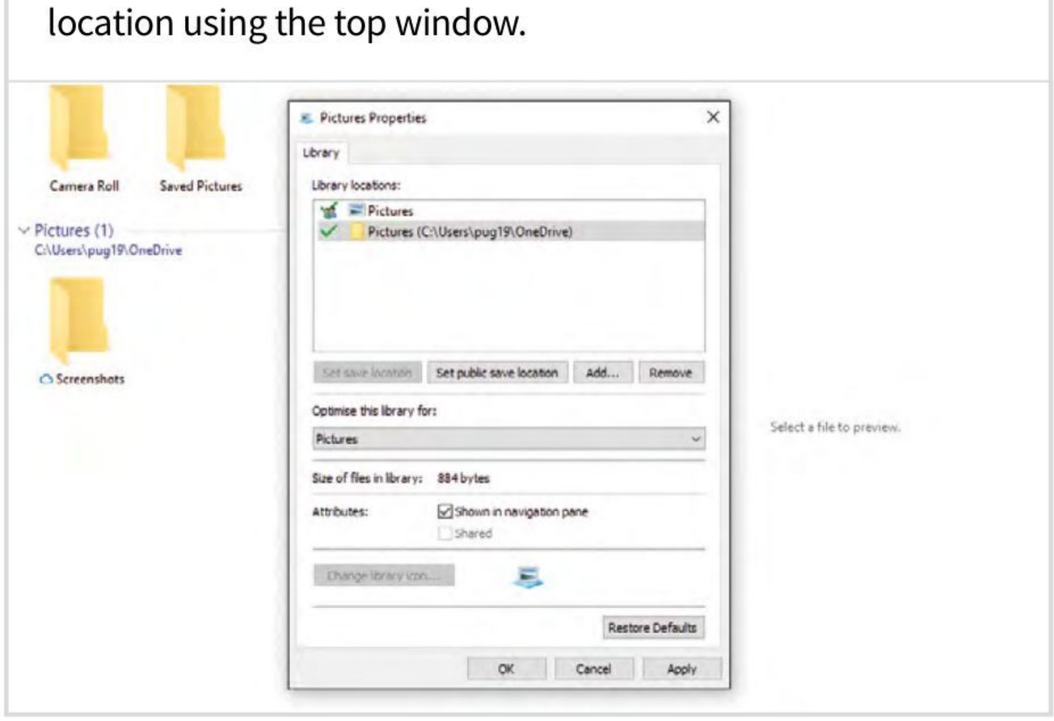
Displaying the Libraries

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.



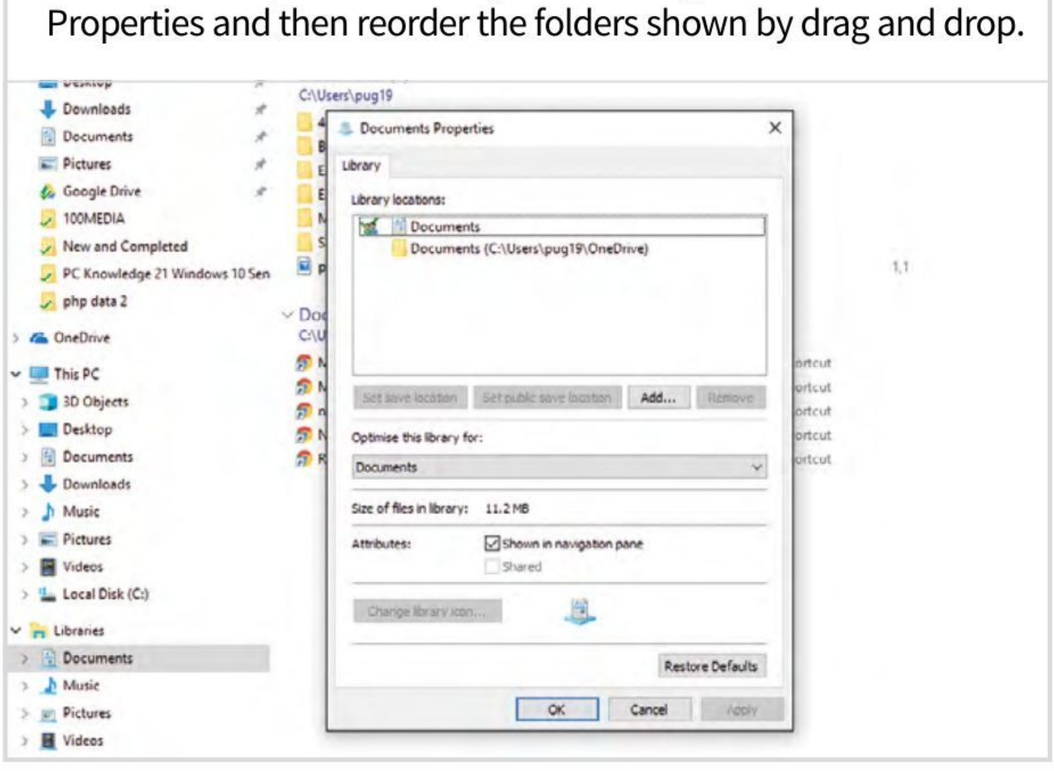
Change Default Save Location

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.



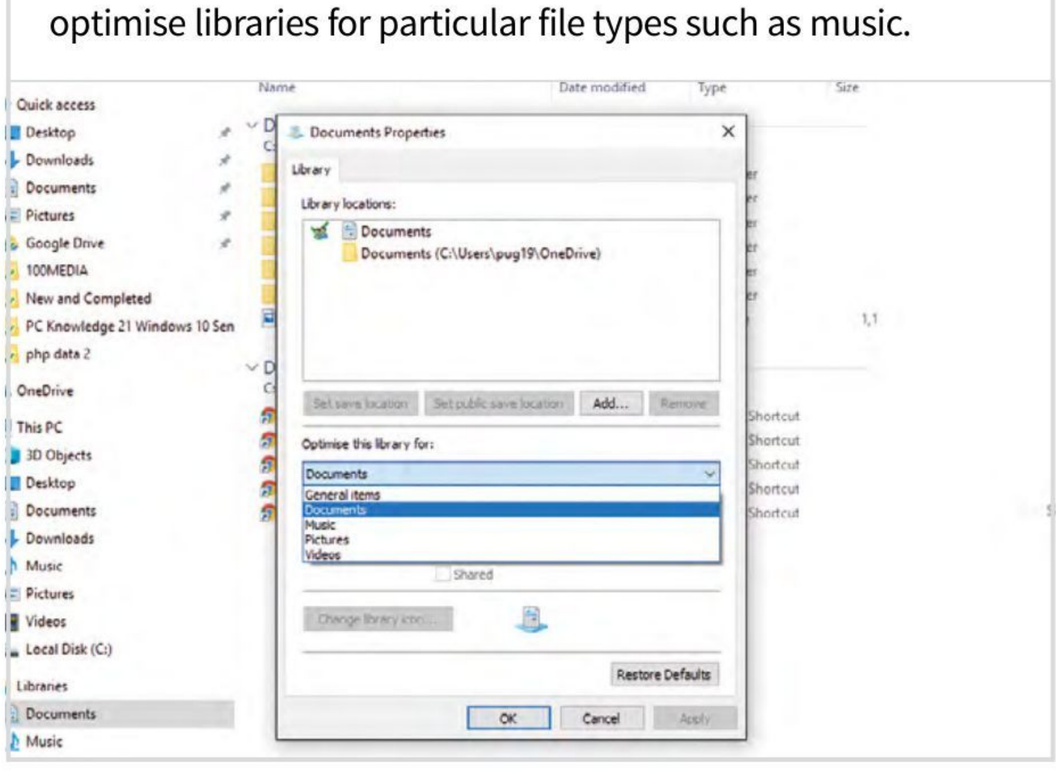
Reordering Files in Libraries

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.



Maintenance

Using the Built-in Maintenance Tools

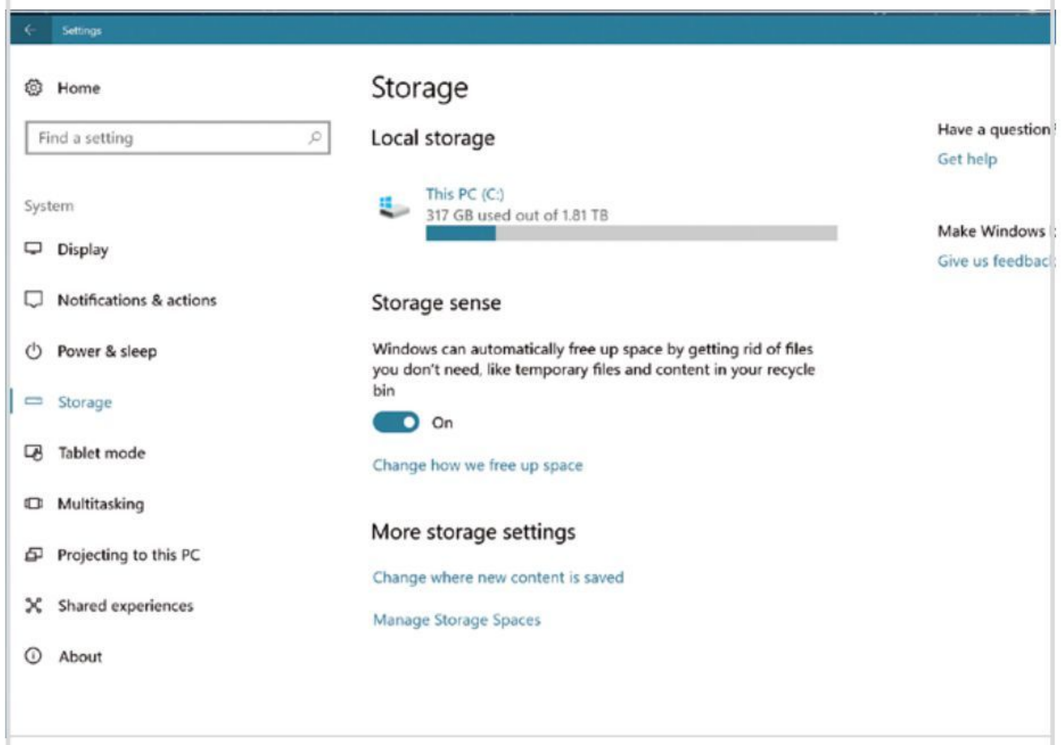
Before you start to add software to help with maintenance, it is worth checking out the numerous tools included with the OS. These are spread out over several menus but once you find them you will see that they can really help with security and performance.

Maintaining Windows 10

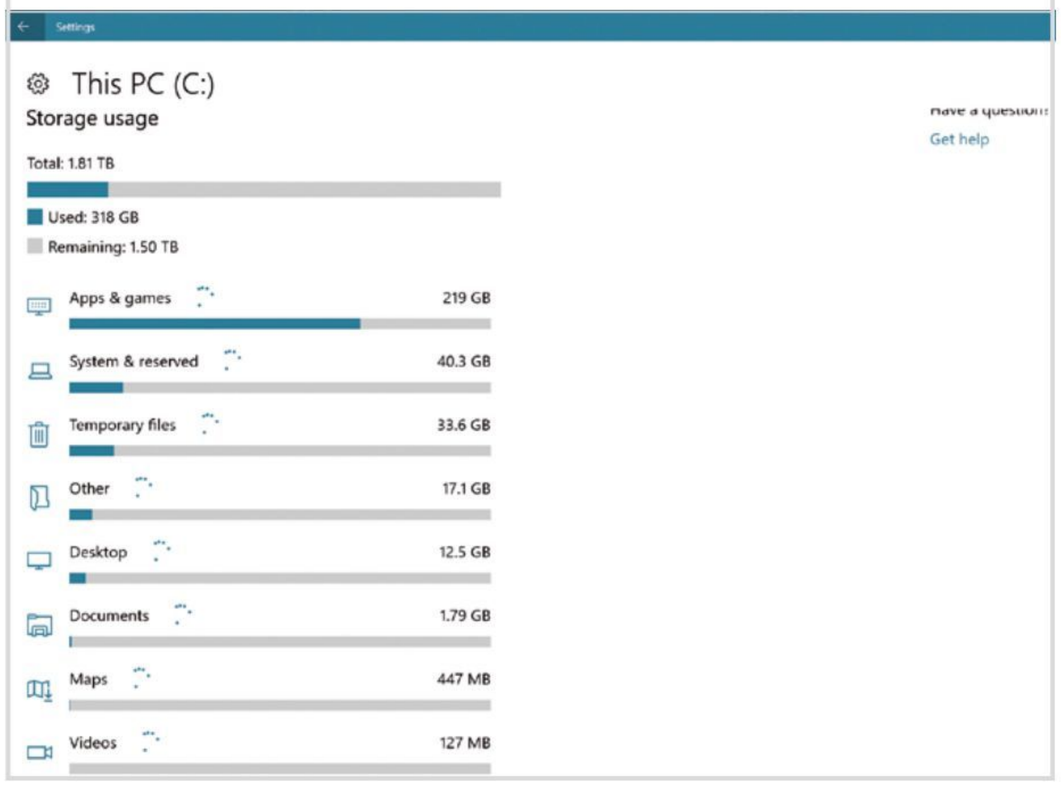
Windows 10 is a lot better at keeping you informed of problems than previous versions were. It is, however, up to you to keep on top of maintaining the OS if you want the best experience.

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.

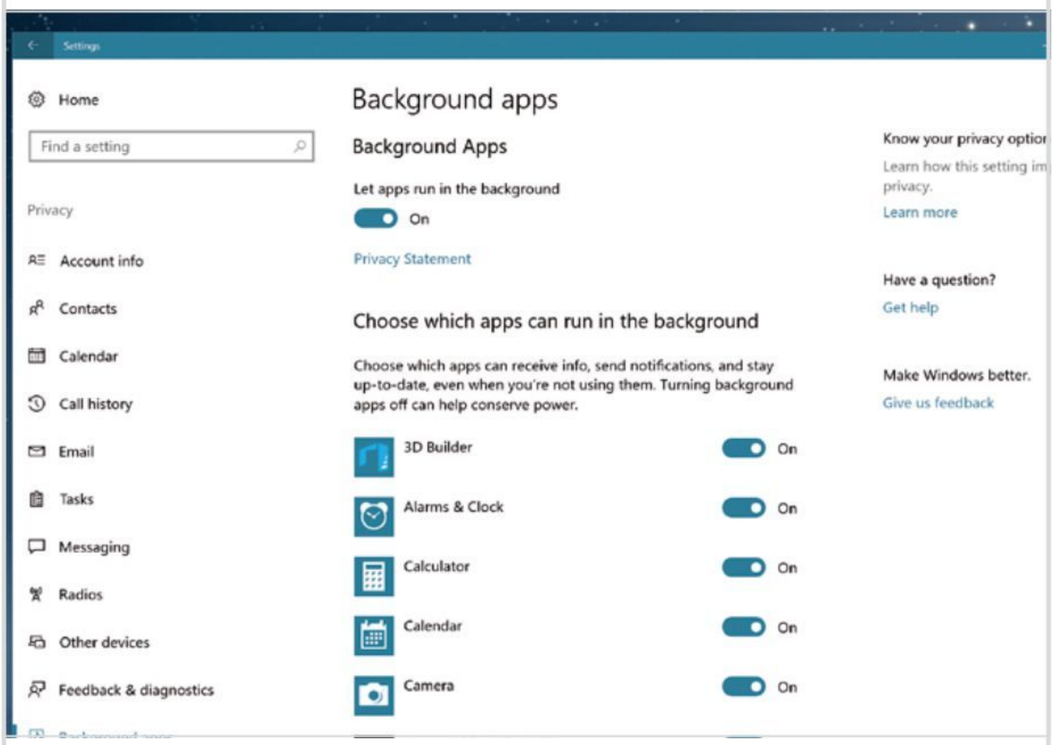


You can choose when files are deleted, e.g. after 30 days in the Recycle Bin or if apps don't use them for a certain amount of time. Alternatively you can simply click a button to Clean Now rather than setting automatic cleaning. You can find the Storage Sense option in Settings > System > Storage.

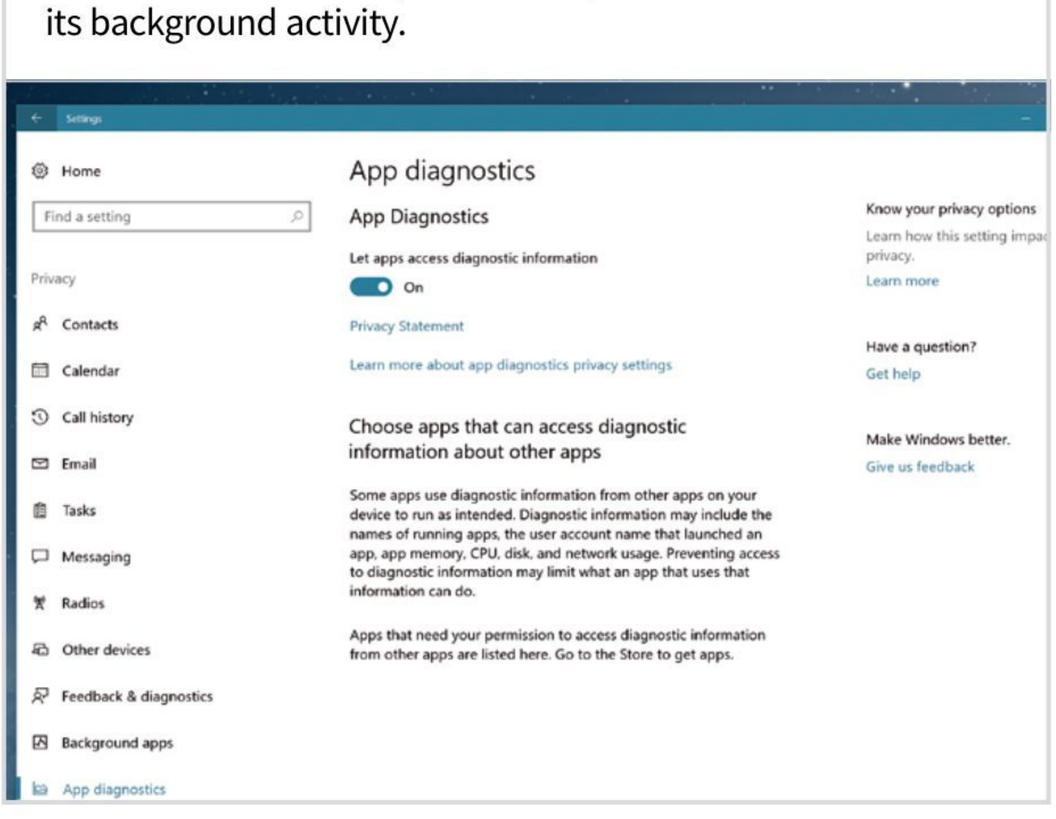


Background Apps

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.

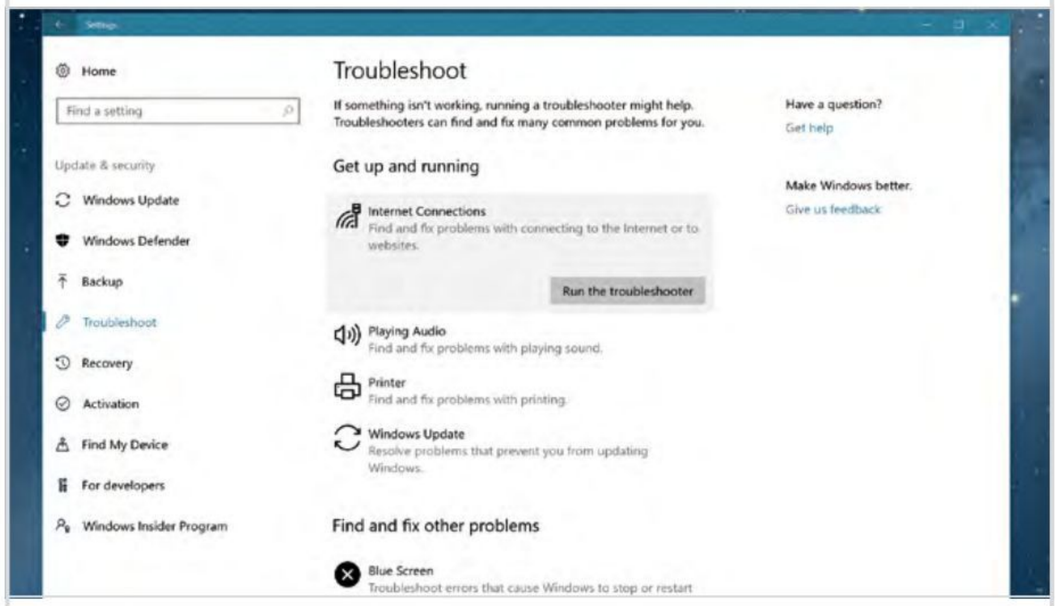


You can either stop all background apps with a single slider click or you can prevent individual apps from running in the background. Go to Settings > Privacy > Background Apps and look through the apps listed. If you see apps that you don't need notifications or updates from, click the slider to disable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

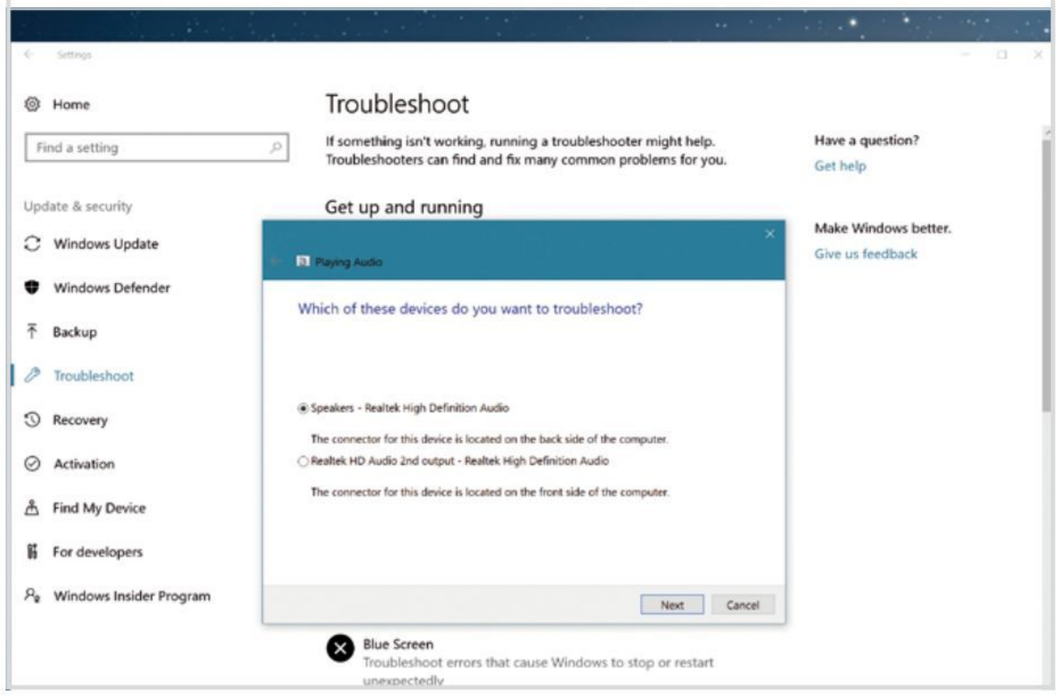


Troubleshooters

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.

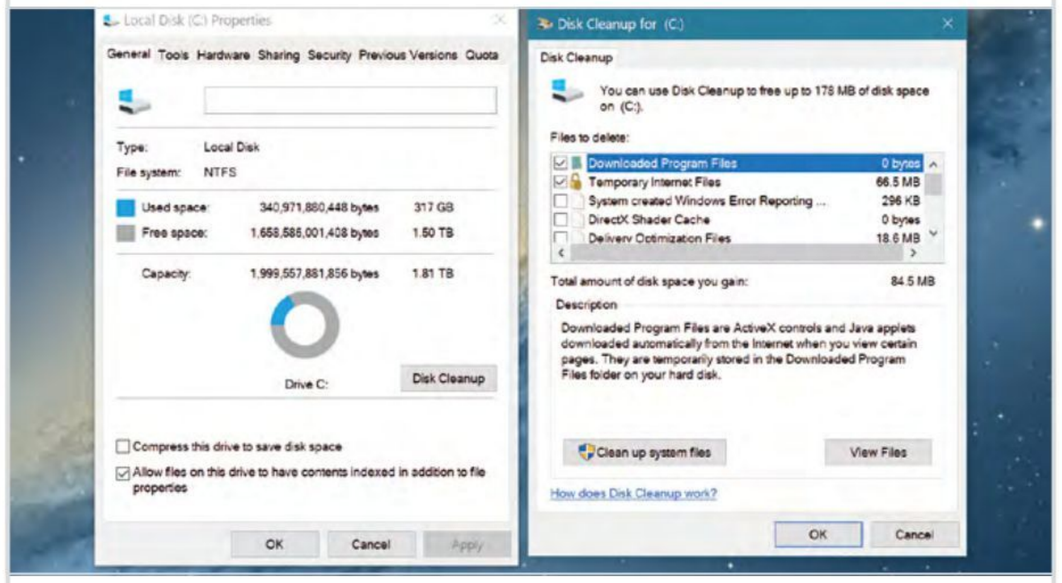


You simply look through the list of troubleshooters and click on the one which applies. Choose Run the Troubleshooter and then follow the instructions to try and solve the problem. You can find the troubleshooters in Settings > Update & Security > Troubleshoot.

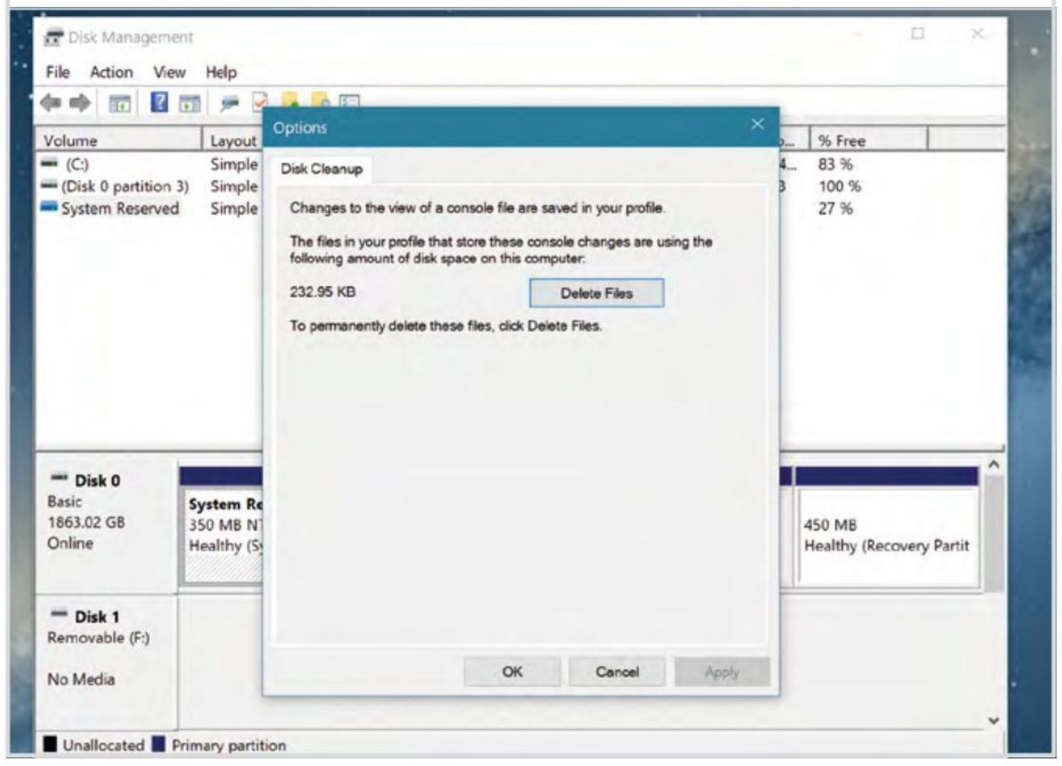


Disk Tools

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.



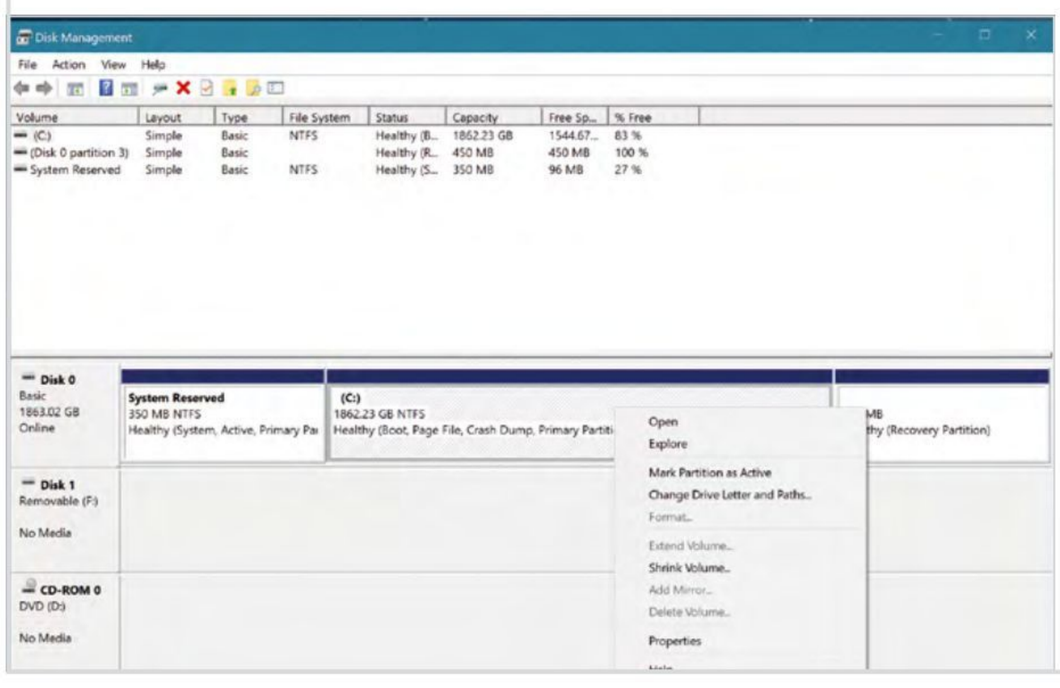
If you click the Tools tab, you can use the Error Checking tool and the Disk Defragment tool. Both of these tools can help your hard disk run more efficiently. Click on either button and follow the instructions for each.

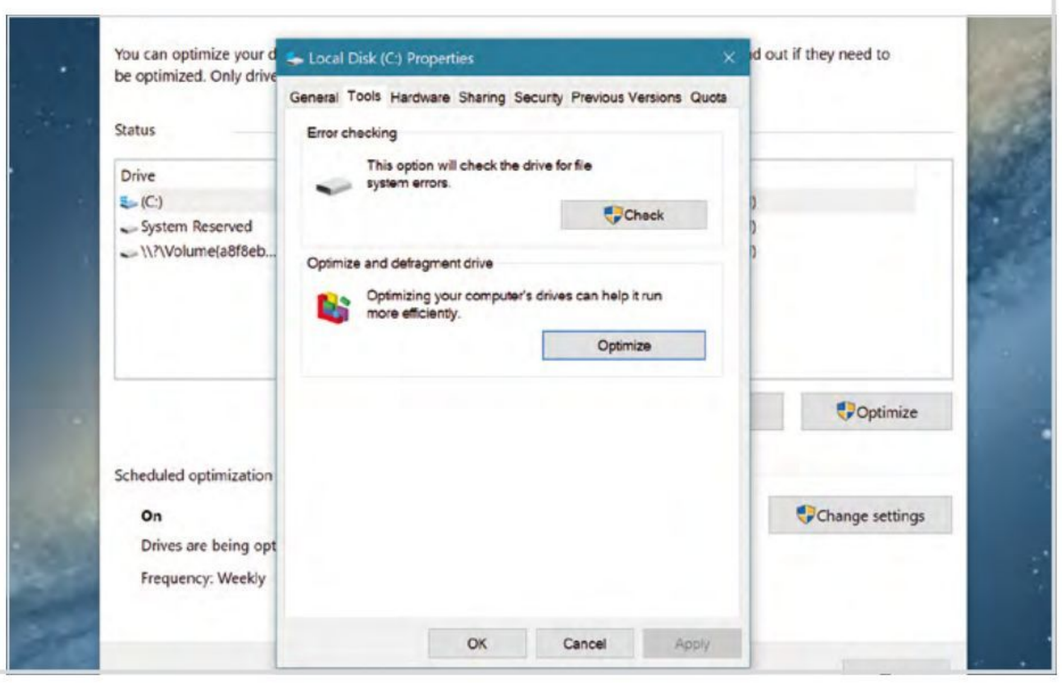


Disk Management

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.

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.





Laptops

Care and Maintenance Tips

Laptops are great! They are small, portable and can be easily put away when not in use. They are also increasingly powerful, although they still lag behind a good desktop system unless you pay huge sums of money for them. They are not, however, as robust as a desktop, so good care and maintenance is a must if you want your laptop to last.

Caring for Your Laptop

Some of these tips may seem obvious, and some might not apply to you, but even following a few of these suggestions will help keep your laptop in good shape.

Keep Food and Drink Away

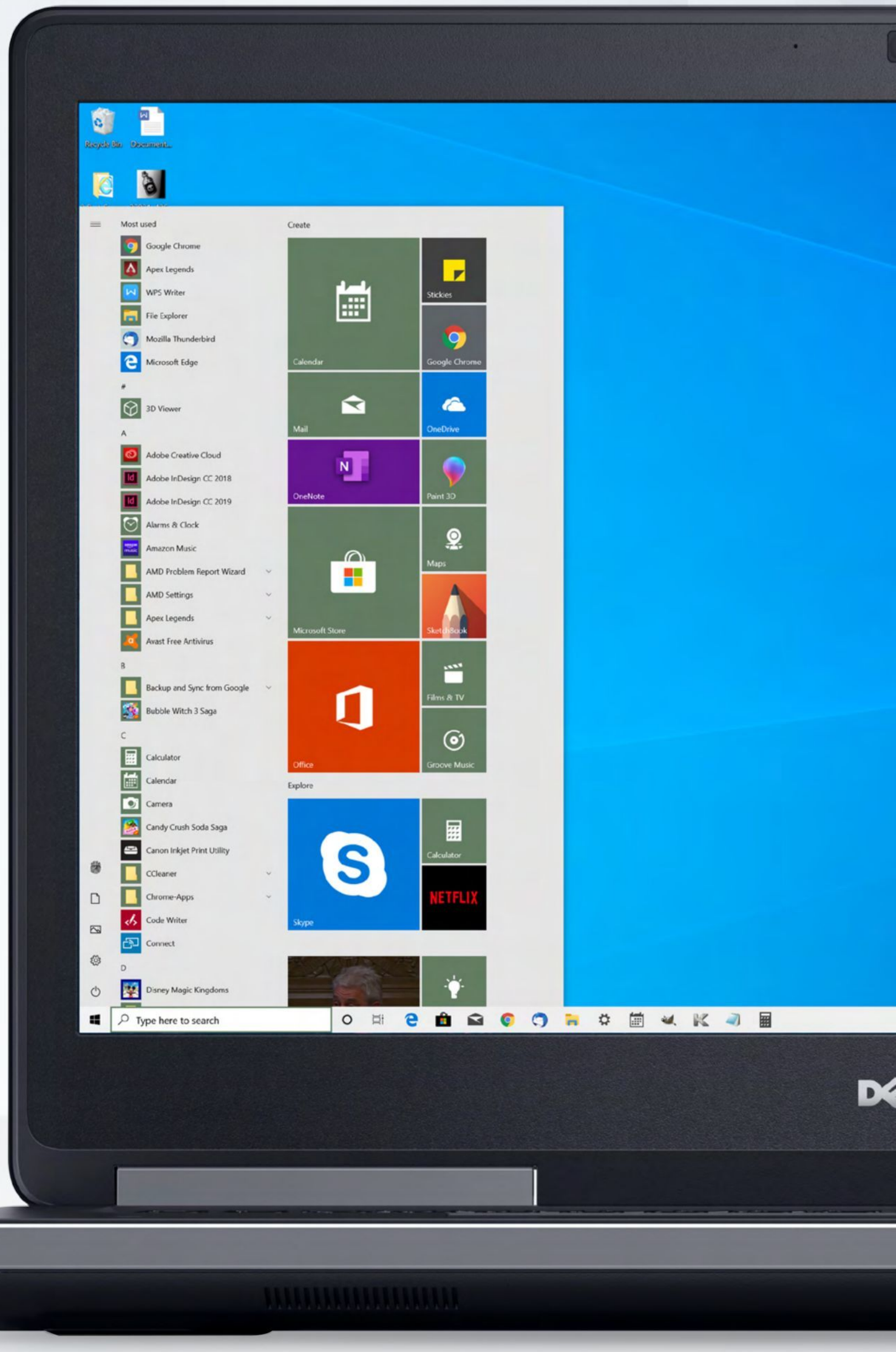
However careful you are when eating and drinking, if you do it while using your laptop it is inevitable that at some point, crumbs and splashes will hit the screen, keyboard, etc. Unlike a desktop, replacing a crumb-filled keyboard on a laptop is not just a case of buying a new one.

Wipe the Screen Carefully

Laptop screens are generally not as clear or bright as a desktop monitor screen, so keeping them clean is important. Use a lint-free cloth regularly to gently wipe away dust and dirt. If there are more stubborn marks, buy and use an LCD screen cleaner. These are cheap to buy online.

Clean the Keys and Ports Regularly

Laptop keyboards are hard to replace, so keep yours clean and free from dust. You can buy small USB keyboard vacuums fairly cheaply, and these can help keep dust from building up. You can also buy keyboard cleaner putty very cheaply online. The same rule applies to the various ports on your laptop.



Laptops

Don’t Block Vents

Despite the name, few laptops are actually designed to be used on your lap (or on any soft surface). This is because the heat vents of many laptops are on the bottom, and soft surfaces will often block them. if it happens regularly, this can cause lasting heat damage to the laptop.

Buy a Laptop Stand

If your laptop sits in one place and is rarely moved around, consider buying a laptop stand. These not only help to give you a better screen viewing angle, but they also give the laptop vents some extra clearance and, therefore, better airflow. You can even buy stands with built-in cooling fans.

Don’t Overcharge the Battery

Try not to keep your laptop plugged into the mains all the time. Charge it, and then use the battery power until you need to charge it again. This helps to keep the battery in good condition. If you only ever use your laptop at home on a desk, keep it plugged in, but remove the battery.

Close the Lid

When you have finished using your laptop for the day, close the lid. When you are moving your laptop, close the lid. When you leave your laptop for any length of time, close the lid. This not only protects the screen from accidental damage, but it will also help keep your laptop running between charges.

Buy a Good Laptop Bag

If you ever take your laptop with you out of the house, make sure buy and use a decent laptop bag. Go for one that is at least water resistant, if not waterproof, to protect your laptop from rain. Try to buy one that is padded, or even better, has a floating laptop “sling” for better impact protection.

Performance

Six Steps to a Faster PC

A slow computer is both inconvenient and frustrating. When everything you try to do takes twice as long as it should, you might be tempted to think about buying a new PC; before you do, there are several things you can try to make your Windows 10 PC run faster and smoother.

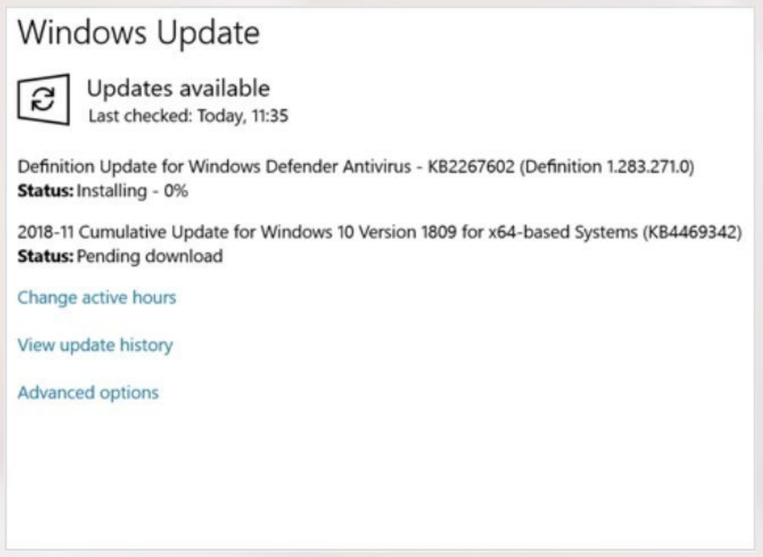
1 UPDATE WINDOWS 10 AND DRIVERS

The first step along your path to a faster computer is making sure that the Windows OS and all of the various drivers installed are up to date. Simply updating drivers to the latest versions can have a noticeable effect on the overall loading speed of any PC and fortunately, this is very easy to do.

Open Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update and click “Check for updates”. Windows 10 will scan for available updates (to both the OS and drivers), before displaying all those available as a list.

If no updates are available, it will say “Your device is up to date” and you can move on to the next tip.

If updates are available, select those you want to download and install, then click “Install”. When installation is complete, restart your PC.

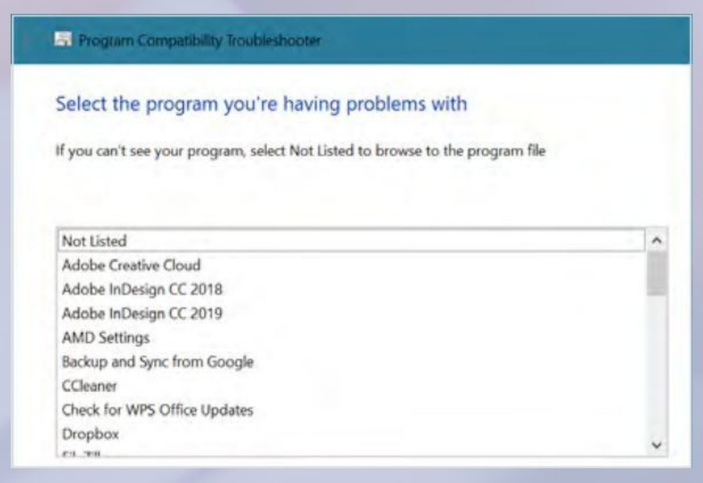


2 CHECK PROGRAM COMPATIBILITY

Software that is designed to run on older versions of Windows can sometimes cause Windows 10 to slow down as it struggles to manage this incompatibility issue. To find out if this is a potential problem, run the Program Compatibility Troubleshooter.

In the Taskbar search field, type “program compatibility troubleshooter” and click the first result in the search panel. Run the troubleshooter; testing any software you think is causing problems.

The troubleshooter will offer you various ways to test and fix software compatibility issues.



3 CHECK AND CLEAR DISK SPACE

If your hard drive is very full, it can affect performance. To check: open Settings > System > Storage and see how much space you have left. If your storage is looking full, try the following options to make some space:

Delete Temporary Files – Click the “This PC” bar and then click the “Temporary files” bar. Select everything you want to delete, click the “Remove Files” button and then restart your PC.

Remove Unwanted Apps – Open Settings > Apps > Apps & Features, click on any app you want to remove and then click “uninstall”. Repeat this for all unwanted or unused apps before restarting.

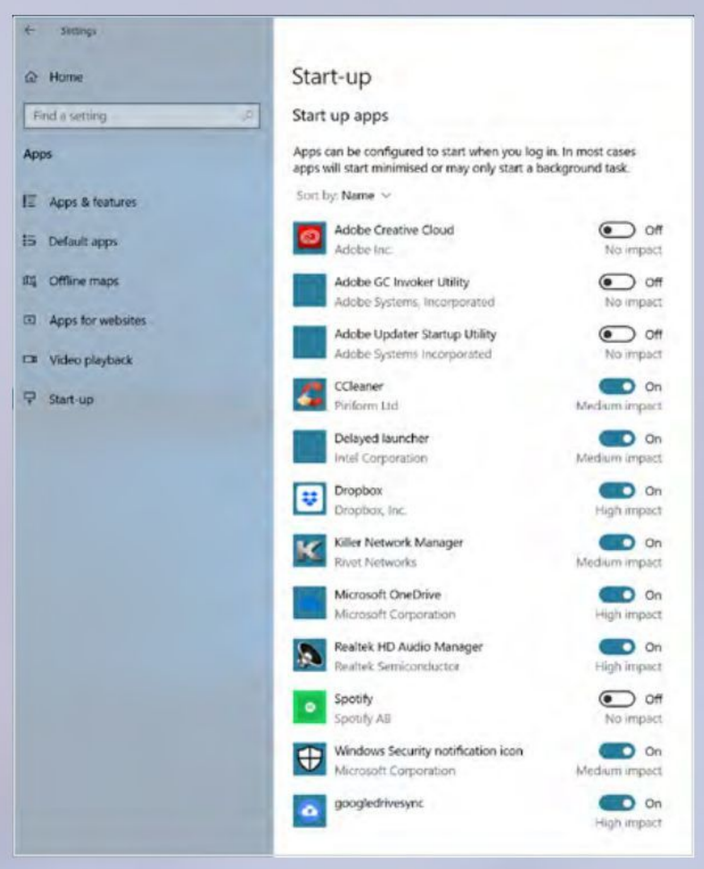
Move Files to an External Drive – Connect a removable hard drive to your PC (a small USB flash drive for example) and open the File Explorer. Select the files you want to move, click “Move to” in the Home tab at the top and select the external drive. Files will still be instantly accessible as long as the drive is still connected.

4 DISABLE UNNEEDED STARTUP PROGRAMS

Now that you have removed any unwanted apps and software, it is time to check if any remaining apps are running unnecessarily at startup. Many software manufacturers will set their programs to start-up in the background when Windows 10 starts up. This helps the programs to open more quickly and makes sense for software you frequently use, but not for software you only use occasionally.

A quick way to see what software is running in the background is to look at the icons on the right side of the Taskbar and open the hidden icons panel by clicking the small arrow. You can hover the mouse over icons to see what they are.

If you want to have a deeper look at which software initiates during startup, open Settings > Apps > Start-up. Here you will see a list of all startup apps, along with an estimation of their performance/speed impact and a slider to prevent each one from starting automatically.

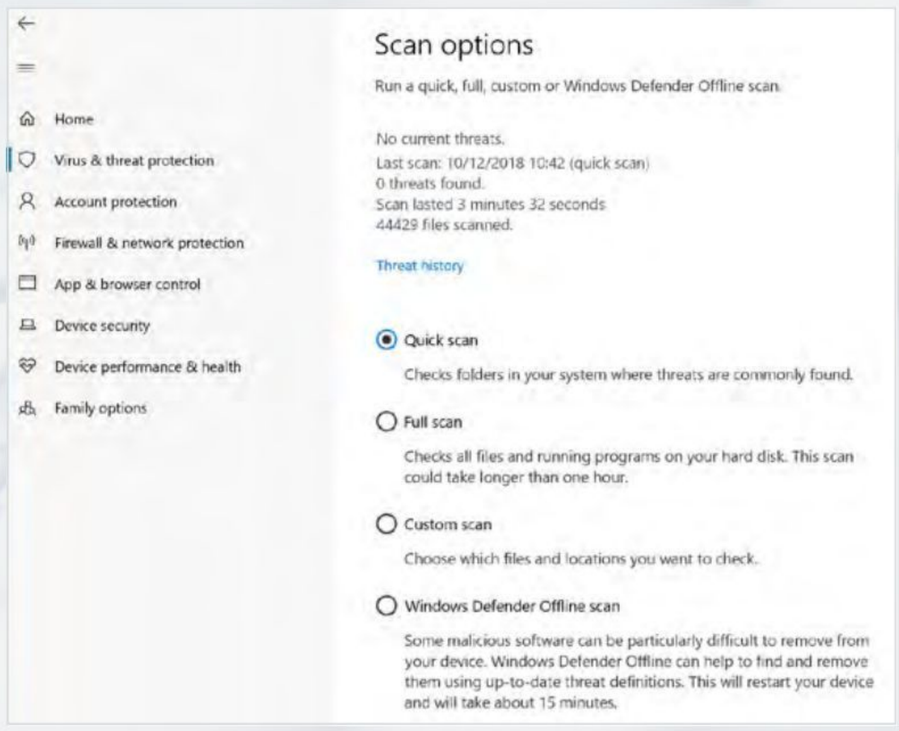


5 SCAN FOR VIRUSES AND MALWARE

Viruses, malware and other malicious software could cause your computer to run slowly or behave strangely. Things to look out for include: unexpected pop-up messages, programs that suddenly start or stop, or the sound of your hard disk constantly working.

To scan for and remove viruses, open Settings > Update & Security > Windows Security (previously Windows Defender) > Open Windows Security, click on “Virus Threats & Protection” and then click the “Quick Scan” button.

You can do a more advanced scan by clicking “Scan options” and choosing which you want to perform. If viruses or malware are found, you will be given options to quarantine and remove them.



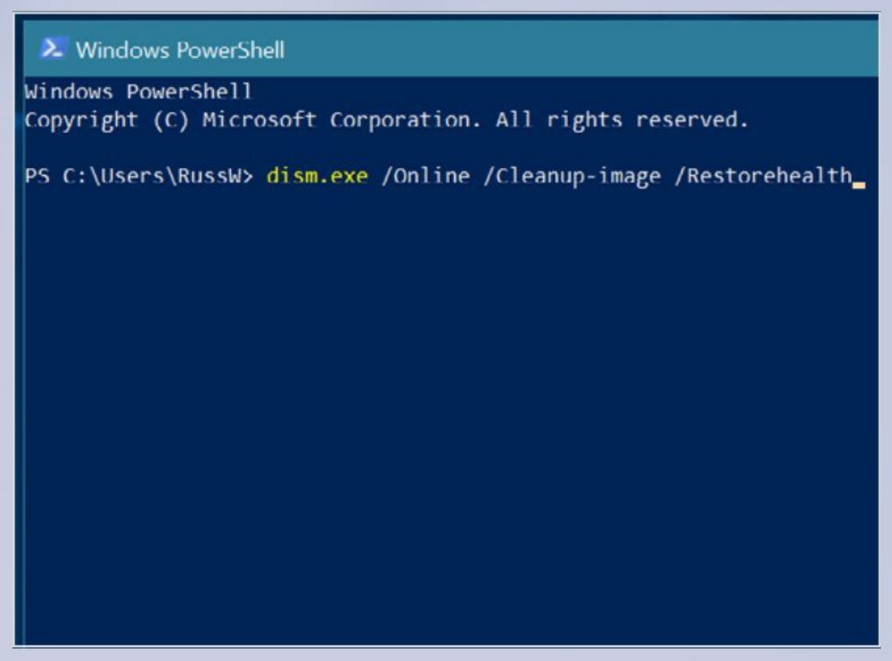
6 CHECK FOR CORRUPTED SYSTEM FILES

Occasionally, the core system files in Windows can become corrupted (for a variety of reasons) and cause performance problems. Windows 10 includes a tool: the Deployment Image Service and Management Tool, that will check for such files and automatically replace them, either with a cached version or by downloading a new version.

Use the DISM Tool – In the Search box in the Taskbar, type “powershell”. Right-click on “Windows Powershell” in the results and choose “Run as Administrator” from the menu.

At the Command prompt, that opens in the blue Powershell window, type “dism.exe /Online /Cleanup-image /Restorehealth” without the quotation marks (note the space between “dism.exe” and “/” and each switch (/)).

If the tool finds and replaces any corrupted files, restart your computer and see if it has helped with your performance issues.



Troubleshooting

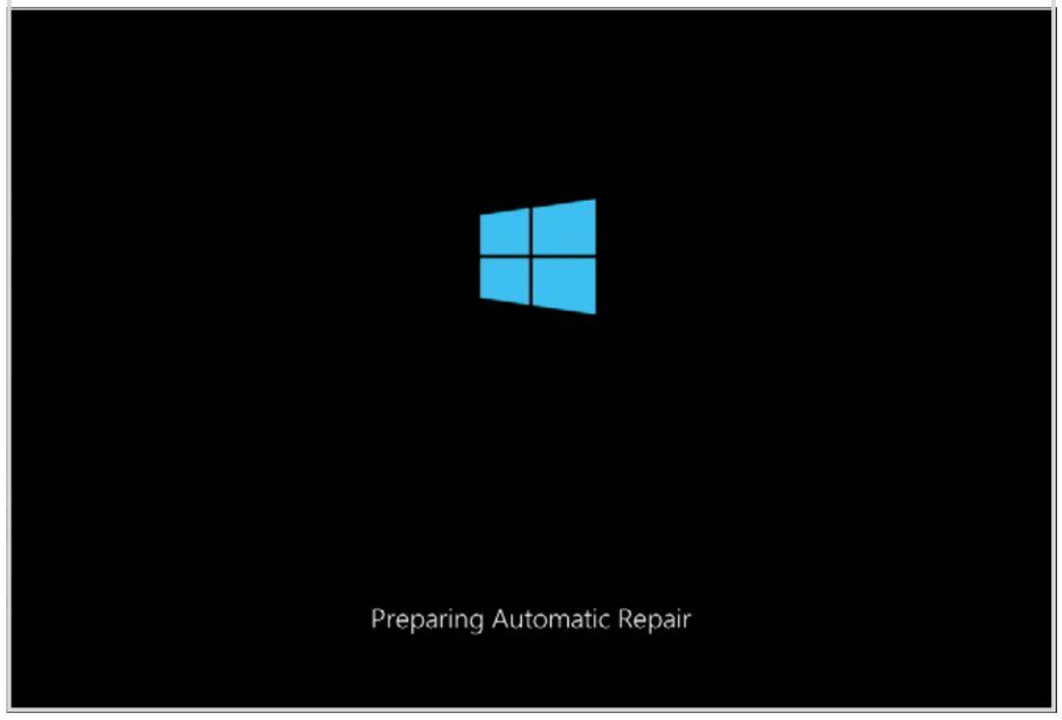
Using Windows 10 Troubleshooting Tools

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.

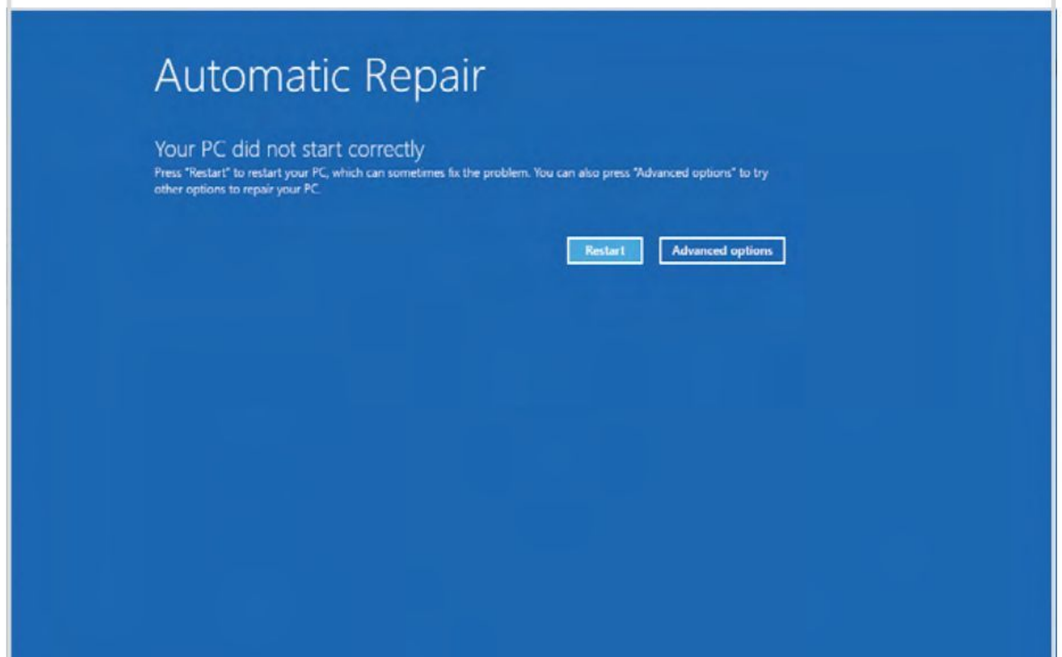
How to Use Advanced Start-up Options

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.

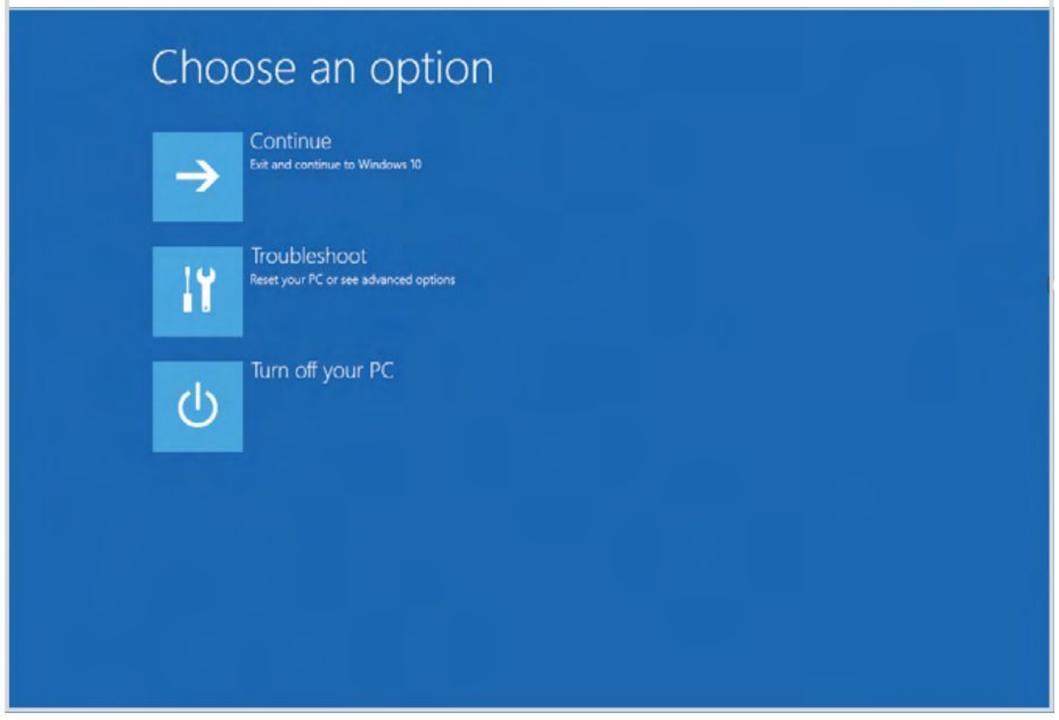
Step 1 You may be taken to the Advanced Start-up Options menu. It will appear automatically if you have two consecutive start-up errors on your PC. But you can get to it manually from inside Windows 10 by going to the Settings app > Update & Security, clicking on Recovery and selecting Restart Now underneath Advanced Start-up.



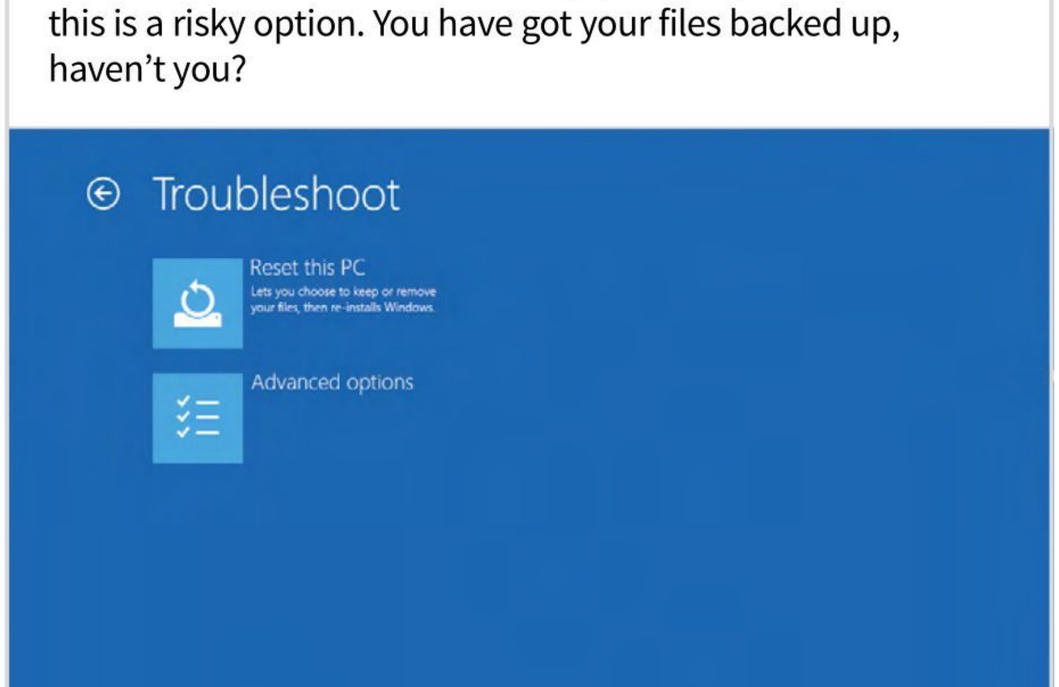
Step 2 If your PC didn't start correctly, you'll see this screen. It gives you the option of restarting and trying again, or clicking on Advanced Options. We're going to run you through what happens if you click on this second button – various options are available to you.



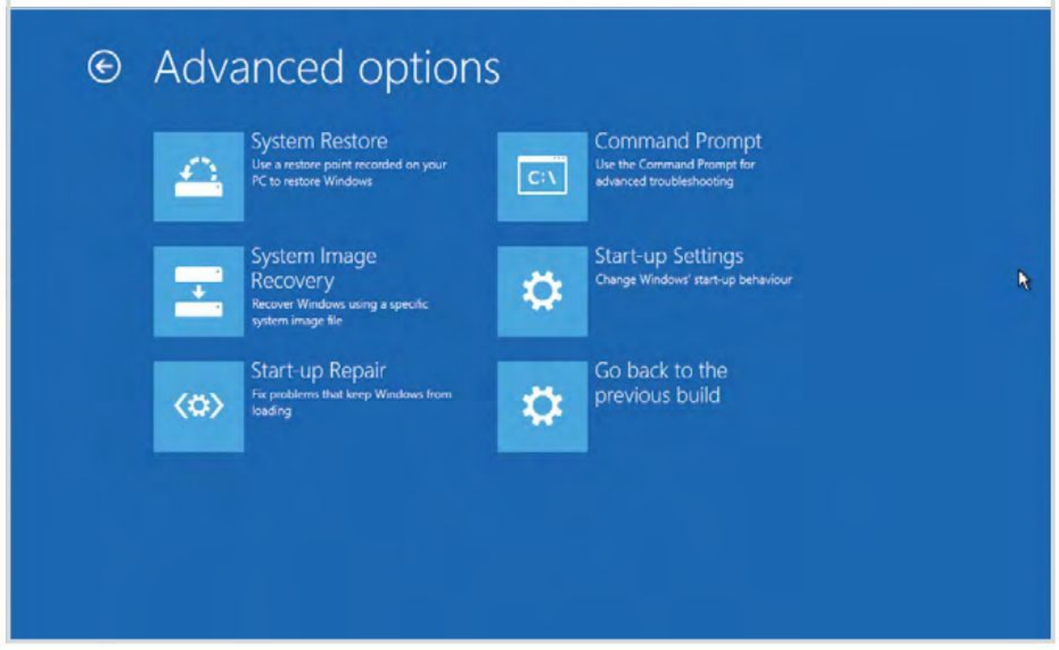
Step 3 You'll then see this menu, which is a little transitional for our liking – we're not sure why these options aren't on the screen you get after this in Step 4 (by clicking Troubleshoot). From here, you can also continue to boot up Windows 10 or you can decide to turn off your PC if you are going to take it to a repair shop, for example.



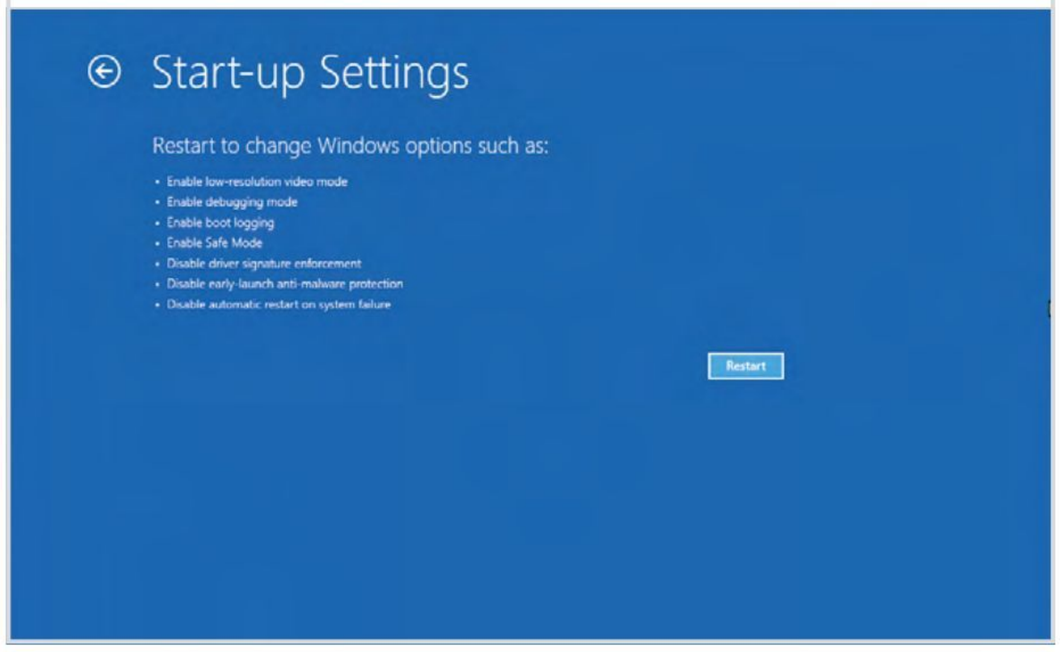
Step 4 If you selected Troubleshoot, you get the option to Reset this PC. This is a little confusing in name, because it doesn't mean restart! It means resetting Windows to its factory settings (it reinstalls Windows, effectively). You can choose whether or not to keep your files, but we think this is a risky option. You have got your files backed up, haven't you?



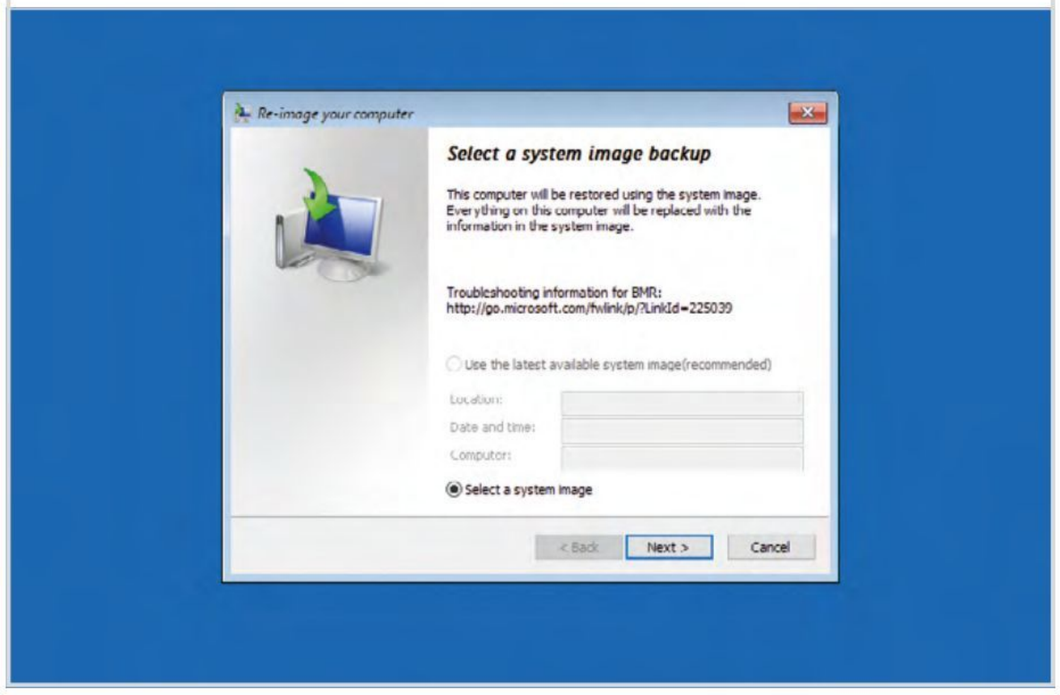
Step 5 Advanced Options is actually the menu that we want, and you probably will do, too, if there's something seriously wrong with your PC. It's almost like the previous steps were tests to see if you really did want to get here. You can try and repair the start-up, or roll back using System Restore.



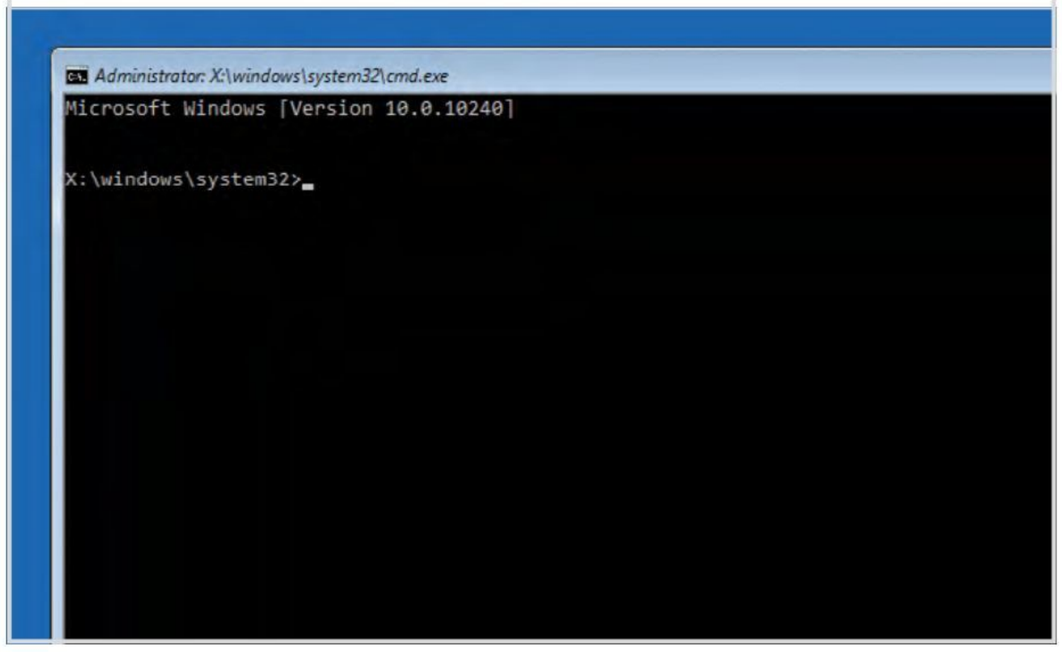
Step 6 If you select Start-up Settings, you'll be shown this screen to ensure it is actually what you want (you can always go back using the Back button of course). From this you can instigate Safe Mode with or without networking access, as well as a low resolution video mode if you're having display problems.



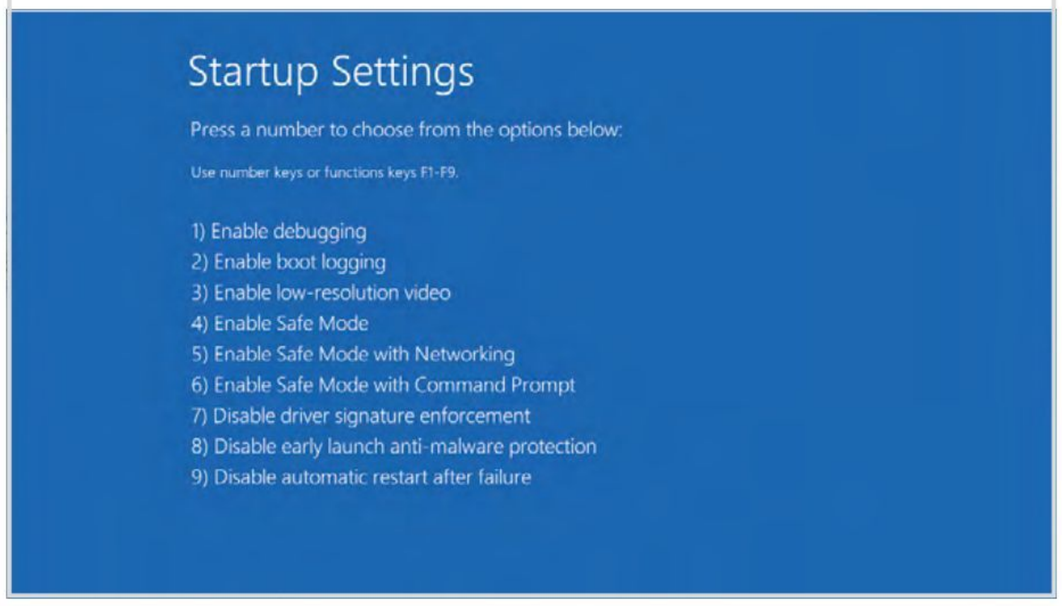
Step 7 If you have a system image handy (a complete backup of your PC in a system image file) you can also restore it at this point. Anything you've created since the system image was made will be lost, so again it's a reason why you should back up your files.



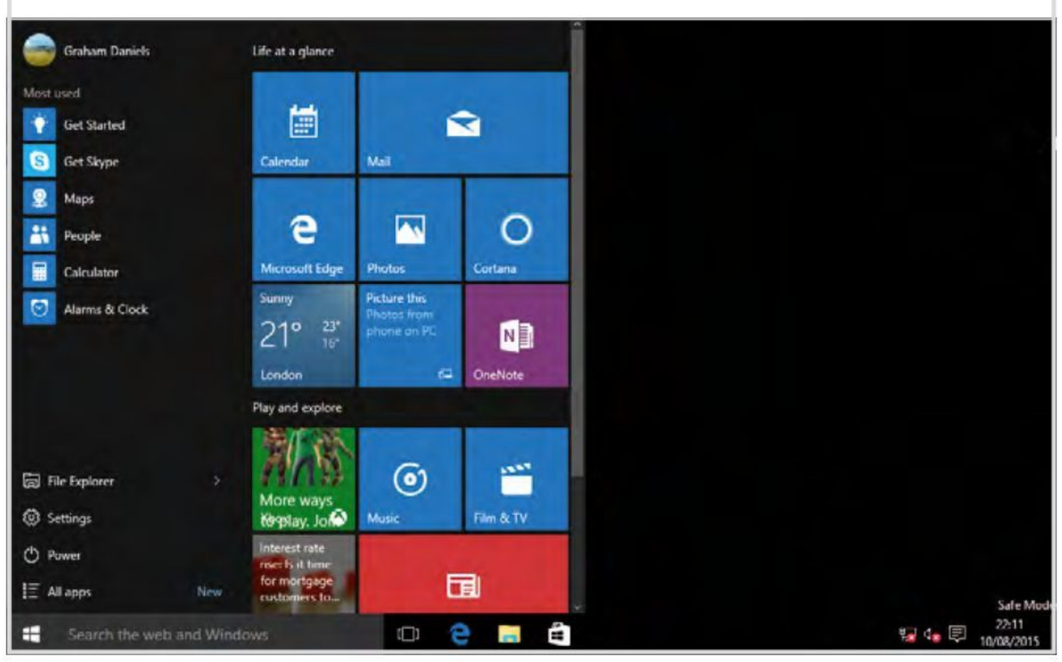
Step 8 If you need to boot from a particular drive, such as USB, you can do so by starting from it using the boot options in the Advanced Options menu. You can also access the command prompt should you need to do any diagnostic checks of your files, though this isn't a common thing to have to do.



Step 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.



Step 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.



Troubleshooting

Diagnosing Windows Problems

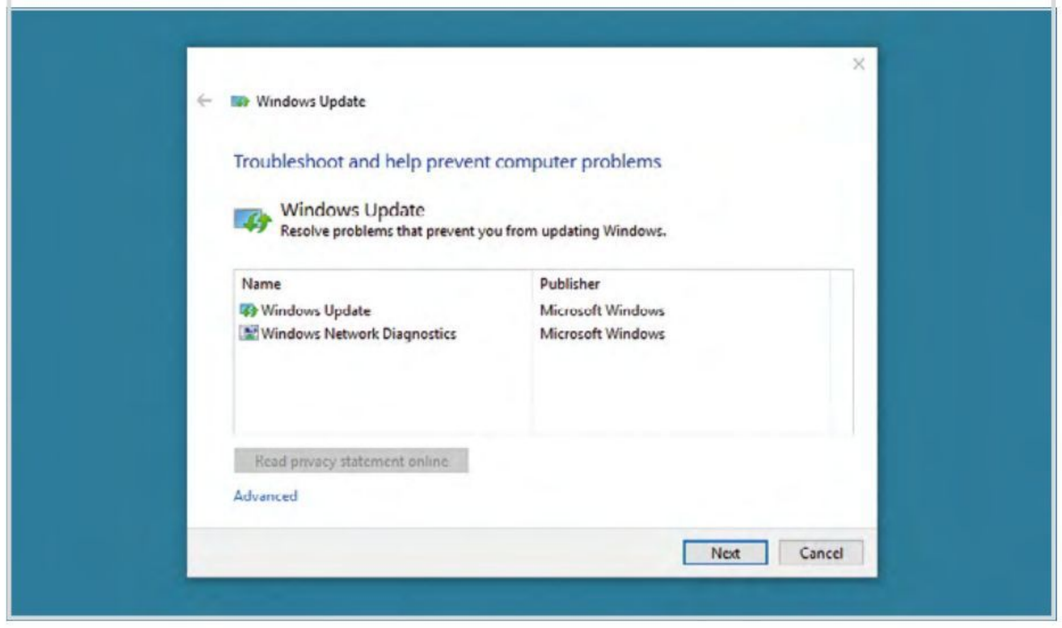
Windows 10 includes some useful tools for checking on and solving problems but sometimes you need to look a bit further and deeper. Occasionally you just need to go back to basics. These tips will help you solve some common problems encountered in Windows 10.

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.

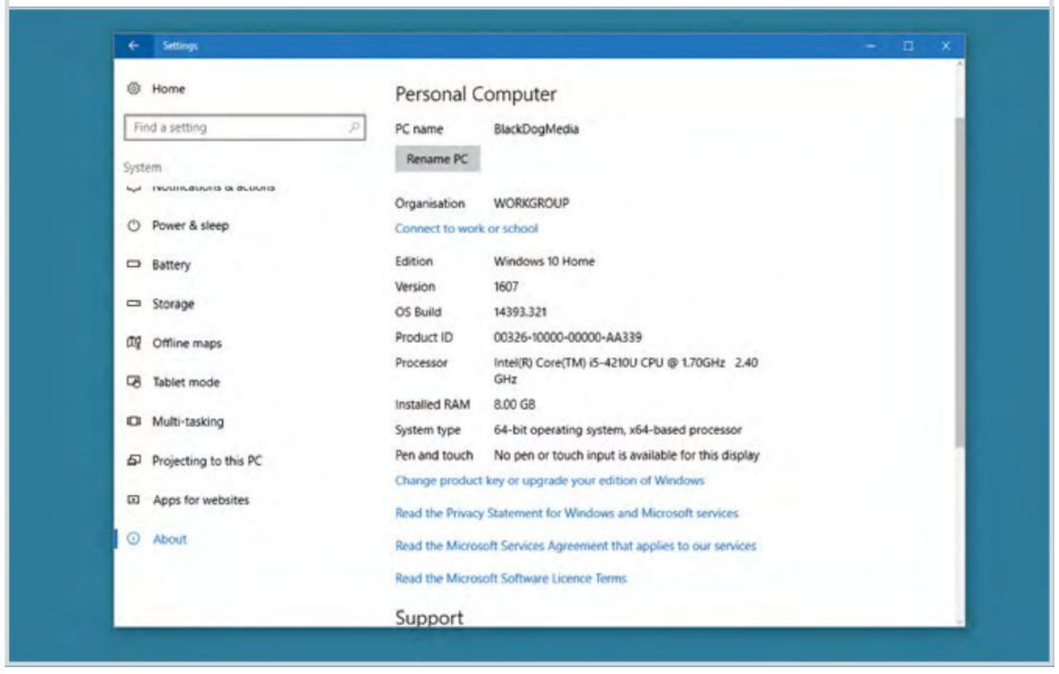
Windows Update Troubleshooter

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.



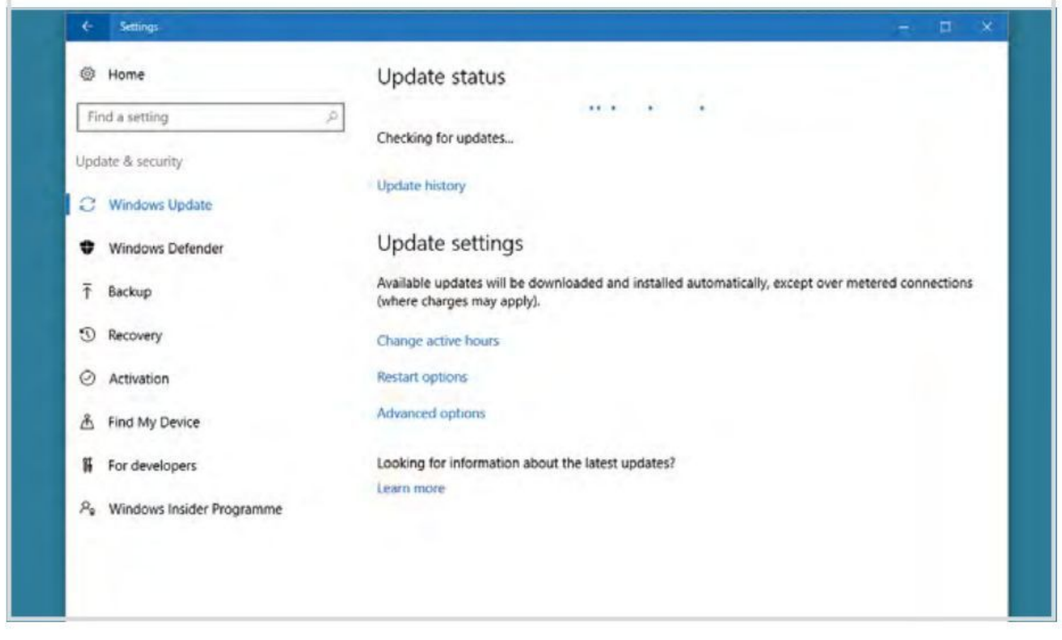
Checking System Spec

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.



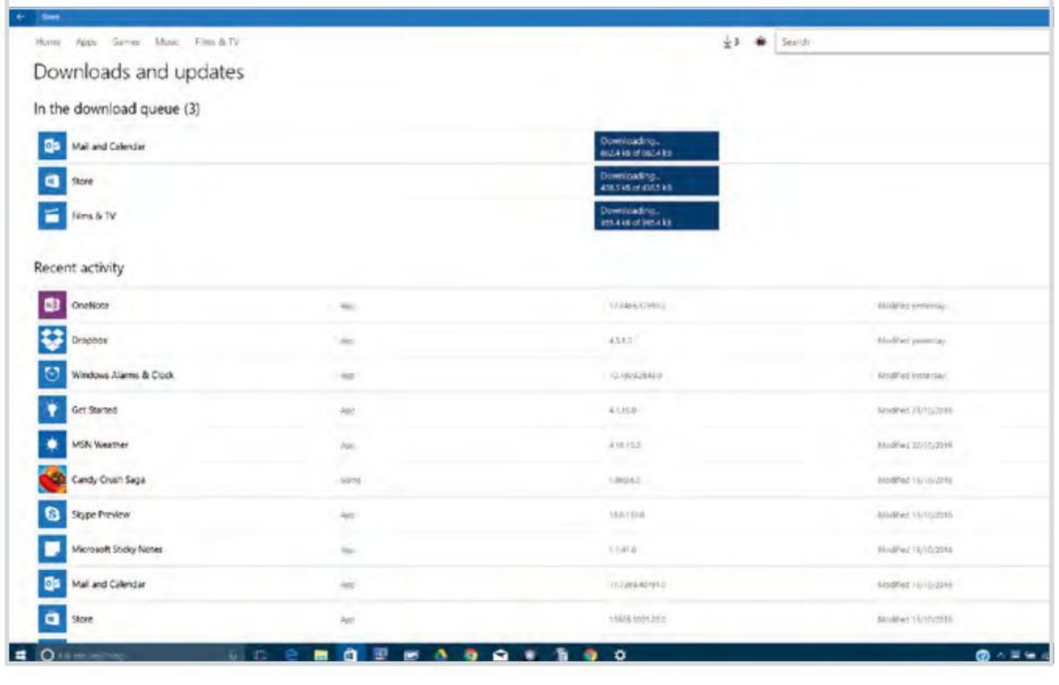
Check for Updates

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.



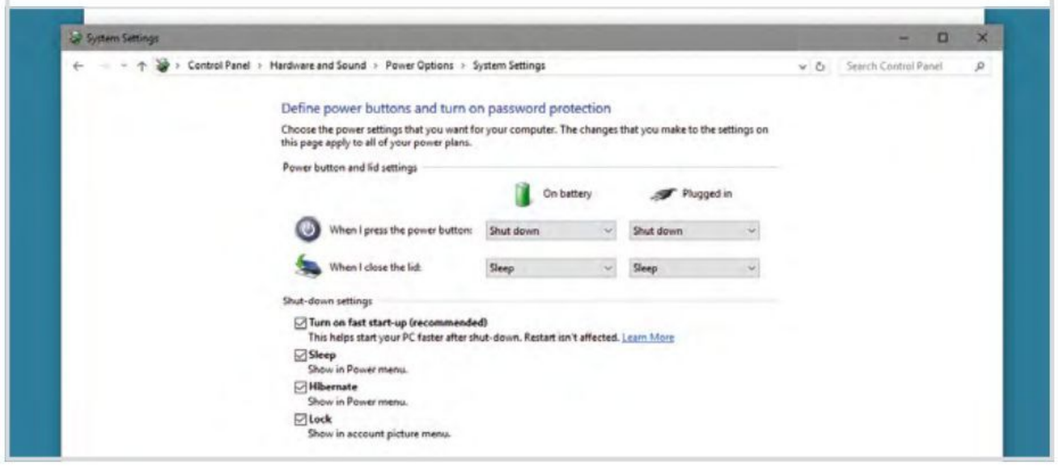
App Updates

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.



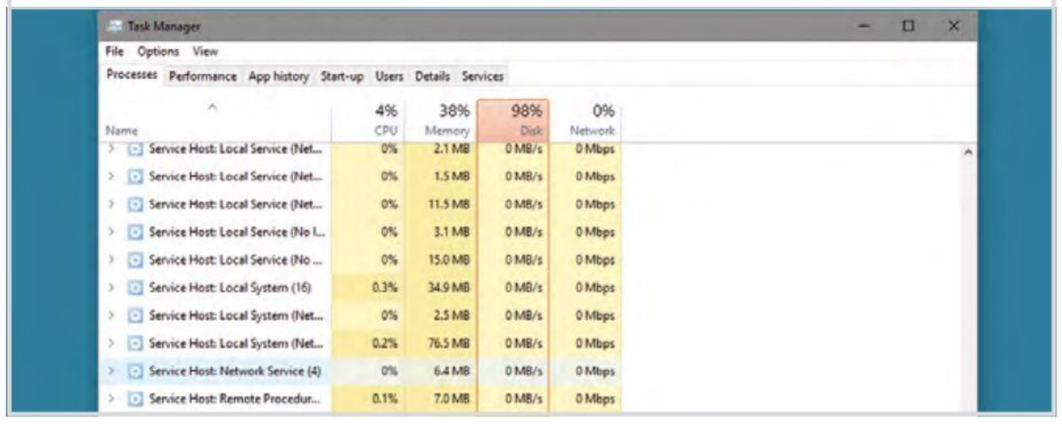
Slow Boot Fix

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.

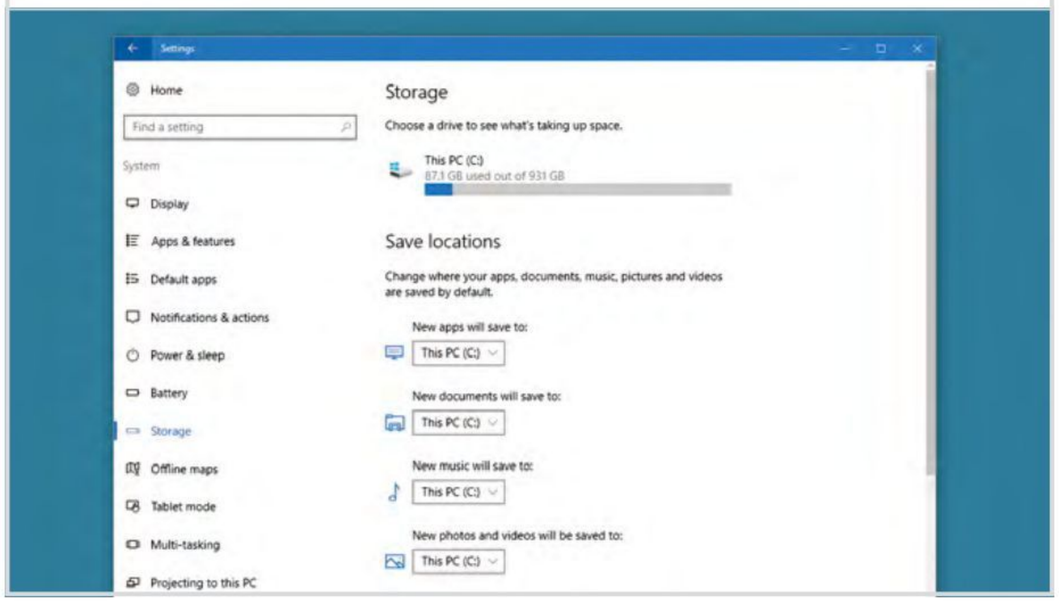


Fresh Installation Tool

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.

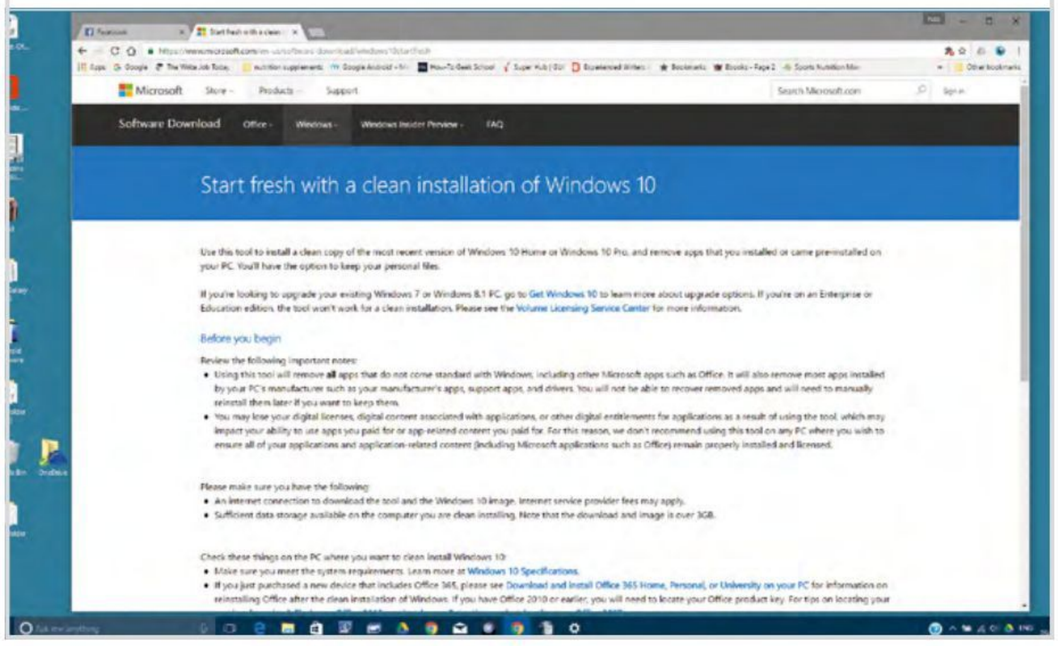
Step 1

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.



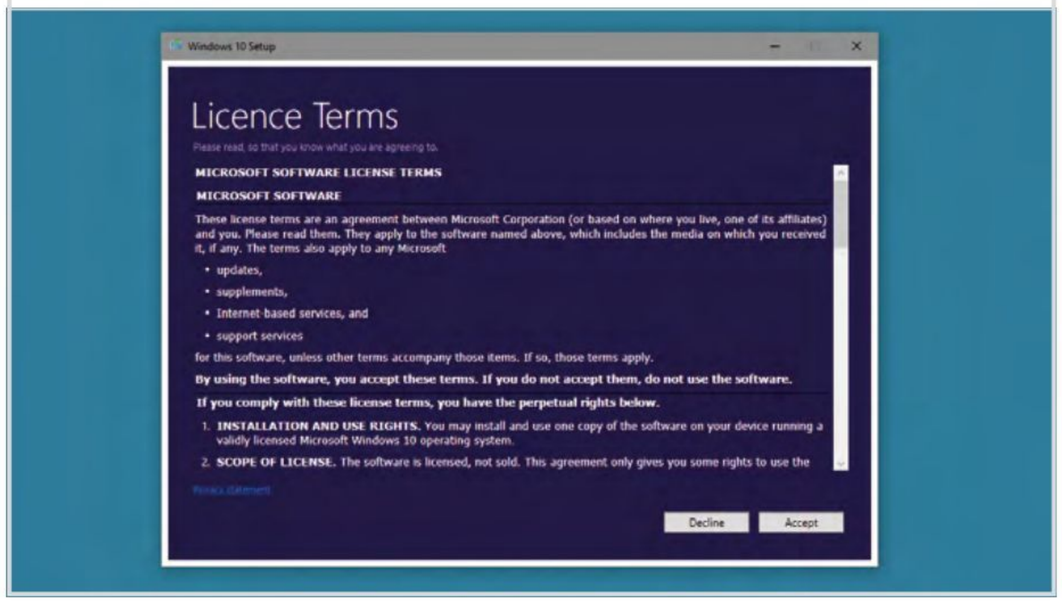
Step 2

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.



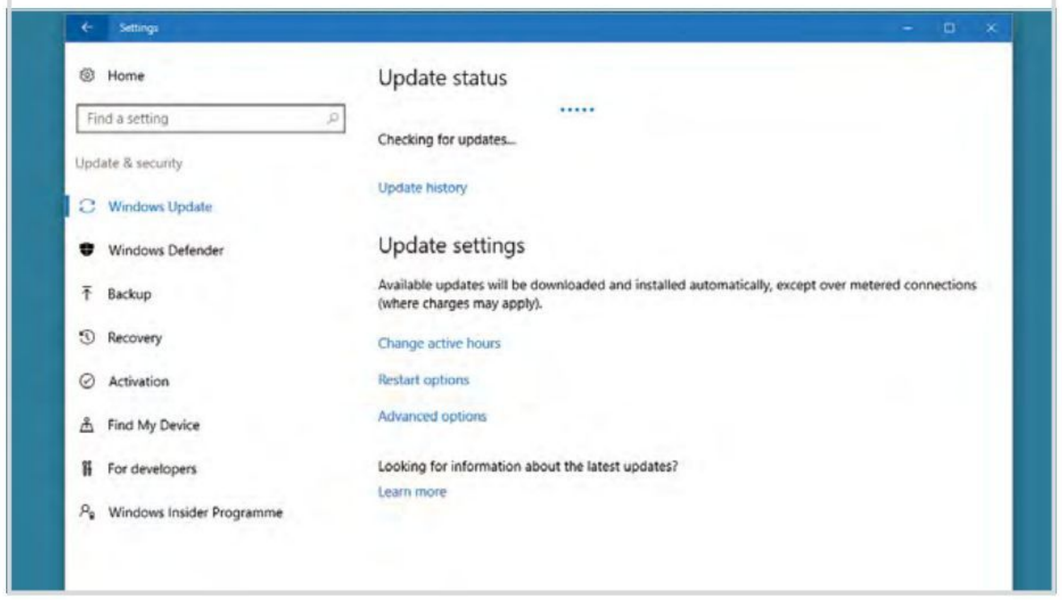
Step 3

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.



Step 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.



Glossary

Our Essential Windows Jargon Buster

If you have been puzzled by the terminology in this guide, we've added this jargon buster to help; so if you don't know your OneDrive from your Store or your taskbar from your notifications area, then read on.

A Glossary of Commonly Used Windows Terms

Action Center
The new area in Windows 10 that contains all your notifications. It also allows you to access quick functions such as Tablet mode and the Connect menu, which enables you to scan for media devices, such as wireless headphones.

Add-in or Extension
A small application that integrates into another program. Often the context is within web browsers where they add extra functions – such as screenshot sharing or note-taking.

App
Short for "application"; another name for a computer program. An app is a program that has been downloaded and installed on to your computer from the Internet, a CD or DVD or from the Windows Store.

Attachment
A file sent with an email, hence it is 'attached'. The file can then be opened at the other end. It remains self-contained, and is unaffected by the contents of the email itself.

Bluetooth
Bluetooth is a wireless technology used to link and exchange data with another compatible device, and many laptops, tablets and phones have it built-in. Bluetooth devices include headphones, keyboards and speakers.

Broadband
An always-on connection to the Internet via your phone line. If you are served by cable, you can get broadband through this.

Clipboard
The clipboard is an area of your computer's memory that saves items you have previously cut or copied (see Cut and Paste below) ready for you to use them again.

Cloud
The cloud is basically another word for the Internet. It's often referred to in the context of "storing something in the cloud" – this essentially means storing your data on servers that are connected to the Internet. Cloud-based storage (or cloud storage) services include Dropbox and Microsoft's own OneDrive.

Cookie
A small data file that's stored on your computer by websites you visit. Next time you visit the website, the cookie means the site can 'remember' who you are. This is useful for shopping sites, such as Amazon, as they can remember which items you had in your shopping basket.

Cut and Paste
You can move something in a document such as a Microsoft Word file by 'cutting' it, then pasting it elsewhere. The common shortcuts for this are Ctrl-X to cut and Ctrl-V to paste (you can also copy using Ctrl-C). You can also do this to complete files using the same shortcuts.

Desktop
The Windows 10 screen that everything takes place within. The taskbar is at the bottom of the desktop, with the Start button on the left. The desktop is also a place you can store files, in the large area above the taskbar. You can also have a desktop background.

Desktop App
The name for 'traditional' apps in Windows 10. These are applications that you downloaded from the Internet or installed another way rather than obtained from the Windows Store.

Download
When you copy a file from the Internet, it's called 'downloading'. You will have had to have requested the download, for example when you click a document to save it to your own computer.

Driver
A small piece of software that makes a piece of hardware work. Windows 10 includes a lot of drivers as standard (and can download others from the Internet) so common items of hardware, such as digital cameras or phones, can simply be plugged directly in.

Email
Messages sent between computers over the Internet. Mostly they will be text, but can also include attachments. Email is the app that receives and sends these messages in Windows 10 via your email account.

File Explorer
Known as Windows Explorer in earlier versions of Windows, it's the window where you browse through your files and folders. You can also copy, delete, move and create files here.

Folder
A folder icon can store documents, applications, files or even folders and they're stored on your hard drive. Your Documents folder is your default save location in Windows 10.

Glossary

Gestures
These are finger movements that are used to interact with touchscreen devices, whether it is a phone, tablet or touchscreen laptop.

Icon
A small graphic that represents an application, file or folder on your computer. It can also represent an action within an application, such as Save.

Live Tiles
The large app icons that are 'pinned' to the Start menu. You can remove, resize or add to these. They are 'live' because they continually update with new information.

Microsoft Account
The email address and password you registered with Microsoft. It's needed to buy new applications and entertainment from the Windows Store and is also used by Xbox and Outlook.com and Skype plus other Microsoft services.

Microsoft Edge
The new web browser within Windows 10 that replaces Internet Explorer. It's an app that enables you to view web pages.

Network
A link between two or more computers meaning they can share resources and files. It is also referred to as an LAN (Local Area Network). Most home networks today are wireless (Wi-Fi) networks.

Notifications
Small messages that apps send you to let you know that something has happened – such as an email arriving or that an update is available to download.

Notifications Area
Called the system tray in much older versions of Windows, it's the area of the taskbar to the left of the clock where some utility apps reside (such as OneDrive), as well as key system functions such as Wi-Fi, the battery icon, sound and the Action Center.

OneDrive
Microsoft's own cloud storage service that can be accessed from any device. If you have a Microsoft account, you get OneDrive for free. See 'Cloud' on the previous page.

Peripheral
Any device that is connected externally to your computer. This includes items such as keyboards and mice, as well as printers or digital cameras..

Search Engine
A website, such as google.co.uk or Bing.com, which enables you to find sites and specific information on the web by entering search terms or keywords related to the subject you wish to find out more about.

Shortcut
A File Explorer icon that points towards an application, file or folder elsewhere on your computer, the idea being that you have easy access to something. All the icons on the Start menu are, in fact, shortcuts to the various operations elsewhere on your computer.

Spyware
Malicious software that seeks to gain information about you without your knowledge. Security applications such as Windows Defender hunt down and remove spyware.

Start Menu
The main graphical interface element within Windows 10 – you get to it by clicking the Start button in the bottom left corner of the Windows desktop, at the left end of the taskbar. From here you can access all the apps on your PC as well as your files, folders and settings.

Tablet Mode
A screen display mode, added in Windows 10, which converts the desktop for easier use with touchscreen devices, rather than a keyboard and mouse. Activate from the Quick Actions menu.

Taskbar
The bar along the bottom of the Windows desktop. It's where all the key functions are and where you can view all your open apps and open the Start menu too.

Toolbar
A block of icons or buttons that carry out certain functions within an application, such as Save or Zoom. In an application such as Microsoft Word, the toolbar is located along the top of the window.

Universal App
A new type of Windows app from the Windows Store. These apps can run on all new Windows devices including Windows 10 mobile phones and the Xbox One.

URL
Standing for Uniform Resource Locator, URL is an Internet address including the 'http://' part. A web address is often referred to as a URL.

Virus
A small program or piece of computer code that ends up on your system without your knowledge. Viruses are created by those with malicious intent and can cause problems with your system. Windows Defender protects you against such threats.

VPN
A VPN (or Virtual Private Network) provides secure access over the Internet to private networks, such as the network at your company or school.

What is Wi-Fi?
Wi-Fi enables devices to connect wirelessly, and if you have a wireless router at home with broadband, you have Wi-Fi. It's also available in many public places such as coffee shops.

Window
The standard term used to describe an area of screen space used to run an application. You can work within this space. Characterised by a title at the top and buttons to close and re-size the window.

Windows Store
The Windows Store is where you can download free and paid-for programs as well as music and video (rented or bought) using your Microsoft account (you need to specify a credit card for paid apps). Access it through the Store icon on the Windows 10 taskbar.

Wizard
A utility that takes you gradually through a complex task on your computer. Each screen displays a different step in order to guide you through a particular process, such as installing an application.

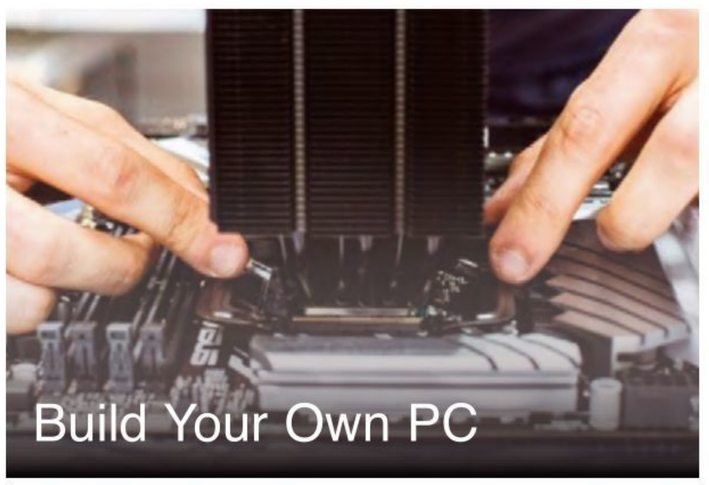
Black Dog Media

Master Your Tech From Beginner to Expert

To continue learning more about Your PC & Windows 10 visit us at:

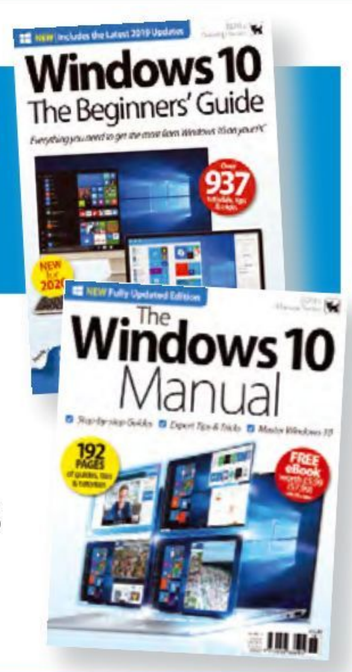
www.bdmpublications.com

FREE Tech Guides



EXCLUSIVE OFFERS on Tech Guidebooks

- Print & digital editions
- Featuring the latest updates
- Step-by-step tutorials & guides
- Created by BDM experts



bdmpublications.com/ultimate-photoshop
Buy our Photoshop guides and download tutorial images for free! *Simply sign up and get creative.*

PLUS SPECIAL DEALS and Bonus Content When you sign up to our monthly newsletter!

BDM's PC Knowledge Series
The Windows 10 Seniors Manual
Volume 29 - ISSN 2050-9871

Published by: Black Dog Media Limited (BDM)
Editor: Russ Ware
Art Director & Production: Mark Ayshford
Production Manager: Karl Linstead
Design: Lena Whitaker, Martin Smith
Editorial: Graham Daniels, Russ Ware
Sub Editor: Alison Drew

Printed and bound in Great Britain by:
Acorn Web Offset Ltd
Print Services supplied by: Media First (International) Ltd

Newsstand distribution by:
Seymour Distribution Limited
2, East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT

International distribution by:
Pineapple Media Limited
www.pineapple-media.com

International Licensing:
Black Dog Media has many great publications and all are available for licensing worldwide. For more information go to: www.brucesawfordlicensing.com; email: bruce@brucesawfordlicensing.com telephone: 0044 7831 567372.

2020 © copyright Black Dog Media Ltd. All rights reserved. Editorial and design are copyright © Papercut Limited and is reproduced under licence to Black Dog Media Limited.

Notice: Before purchasing this publication please read and ensure that you fully understand the following guidelines, if you are in any doubt please don't buy.

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form, stored in a retrieval system or integrated into any other publication, database or commercial programs without the express written permission of the publisher.
Under no circumstances should this publication and its contents be resold, lent, loaned out or used in any form by way of trade without the publisher's written permission.

While we pride ourselves on the quality of the information we provide, Black Dog Media Limited reserves the right not to be held responsible for any mistakes or inaccuracies found within the text of this publication.
Due to the nature of the software industry, the publisher cannot guarantee that all software and/or tutorials, tips, guides will work on every version of the required hardware. It remains the purchaser's sole responsibility to determine the suitability of this book and its content for whatever purpose. Any images reproduced on the front and back cover are solely for design purposes and are not representative of content. We advise all potential buyers to check listing prior to purchase for confirmation of actual content.

All editorial opinion herein is that of the writer as an individual and is not representative of the publisher or any of its affiliates. Therefore the publisher holds no responsibility in regard to editorial opinion and content.

Black Dog Media Limited reserves the right not to be held responsible for any mistakes or inaccuracies found within the text of this publication. Therefore the publisher, editor and their respective employees or affiliates will not accept responsibility for loss, damage, injury occasioned to any persons acting or refraining from action as a result of the content with this publication whether or not any such action is due to any error, negligent omission or act on the part of the publisher, editor and their respective employees or affiliates.

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 PC Knowledge Series: The Windows 10 Seniors Manual is an independent publication and as such does not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the producers of software, applications or products contained within. This publication is not endorsed or associated in any way with Microsoft or any associate or affiliate company. Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation, registered in the US and other countries. Windows ©2020 Microsoft Corporation.

All copyrights, trademarks and registered trademarks for the respective computer software and hardware companies are acknowledged.

Assorted images used within this publication are reproduced under licence from Shutterstock.com

Some content may have been published in previous volumes or BDM titles. We advise potential buyers to check the suitability of content prior to purchase. Prices, international availability, ratings, titles and content are subject to change.

All information was correct at time of print.

For all advertising and promotional opportunities please contact: **enquiries@bdmpublications.com**

Black Dog Media Limited (BDM)
Registered in England & Wales No: 5311511