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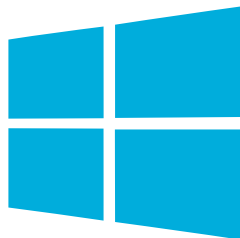
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1

Windows 10 Interface

Windows 10 provides a user interface designed for both touchscreen devices and standard screens. Here, we explore its main features.

- 8** Device Modes
- 9** Signing In
- 10** Start Screens
- 12** More Menus
- 13** Navigation
- 15** Organization
- 16** Apps



Windows 10 is one operating system with two interfaces – courtesy of **Continuum**.



The **New** icon pictured above indicates a new or enhanced feature introduced with the latest version of Windows. The **Continuum** feature is new in Windows 10.

Device Modes

With Windows 10, Microsoft has created an operating system designed to be compatible with a range of different devices. To make this possible, Windows 10 has a new feature called “Continuum” that helps the operating system work better with devices that support both a mouse and keyboard, and touch input. Continuum offers two interface modes for each type of device:

Desktop mode

When a device is in Desktop mode, the layout of the interface is appropriate for mouse and keyboard input. This interface provides a Start menu containing an A-Z list that you can click to launch applications (“apps”). The apps appear in windows, and you can navigate using the mouse buttons or keyboard shortcuts. When you disconnect a mouse and keyboard, or flip your laptop around, you are prompted to change into Tablet mode.

Tablet mode

When a device is in Tablet mode, the layout of the interface is appropriate for touchscreen input. This interface provides a Start screen containing tiles that you can tap to launch apps. The apps appear full-screen, and you can navigate using touch gestures. When you connect a mouse and keyboard, or flip your laptop around, you are prompted to change into Desktop mode.

Tablet mode is less demanding of system resources, and its introduction in Windows 10 clearly indicates that Microsoft considers mobile devices to be where the future lies.

Windows 10 shares its styling and kernel code across multiple devices including smartphones, tablets, PCs and the Xbox console. Also, Windows 10 provides many Universal Windows App programs that are designed for both Desktop and Tablet modes. This move towards cross-device compatibility is one which is intended to firmly establish Microsoft in the mobile market.

A key element in this is the OneDrive app, which enables users to store all their data online and synchronize that data across all their devices. As a result, they will be able to log in to OneDrive on any Windows 10 device and immediately access their data, preference settings, and media, on whatever or whoever’s device they are using. So Windows 10 revolves around convergence for all devices, but let’s start by taking a look at the various elements that comprise the Windows 10 interface.

Signing in

Lock screen

The first thing you'll see when you start up is the Lock screen, which by default shows the time/date, power, and network status.



The Lock screen is necessary because Windows 10 is a touch-supportive operating system that requires a protective barrier to prevent accidental input. Microsoft has evolved this basic function by enabling users to customize the screen by changing its background and by specifying various notifications to be displayed.

Log on screen

Tap or click anywhere on the Lock screen to reveal the Log on screen, where you can enter your user password or PIN to sign in.



Many Windows 10 apps can be configured to display live real-time data on the **Lock screen**.



Although a **Lock screen** is not strictly necessary when Windows 10 is used with a non-touchscreen device, it is useful as a means of displaying information.




Windows Hello has sign-in options for face, fingerprint, or iris – if your PC has a fingerprint reader or camera that supports these options.

Start Screens

After signing in to a Windows 10 system you will see the Start screen in Desktop or Tablet mode, appropriate for the device:

Start screen in Desktop mode



Click the  **Start** button, then **All apps** – to see the A-Z apps list appear on the **Start menu** in Desktop mode.





The customizable **Start menu** and **Taskbar Search box** are new features in Windows 10.



Start menu Search box Tiles Taskbar Desktop System tray

Start screen in Tablet mode



Tap the  **Start menu** button to see the A-Z apps list, or tap the  button to open the **Search box** in Tablet mode.



Start menu Search button Tiles Desktop System tray

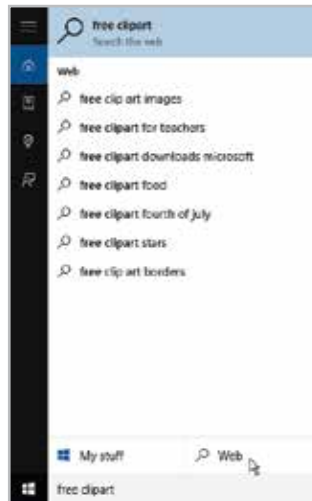
Each Start menu contains an A-Z list of “All apps” that launch within a window in Desktop mode, or full-screen in Tablet mode.

...cont'd

Any app in the All apps list can be added to the array of tiles by right-clicking on the listed app and choosing **Pin to Start** from the context menu. This allows you to populate the tiles with your favorite apps so you can quickly launch them by clicking, or tapping, on a tile. Apps can also be pinned to the Taskbar in Desktop mode.

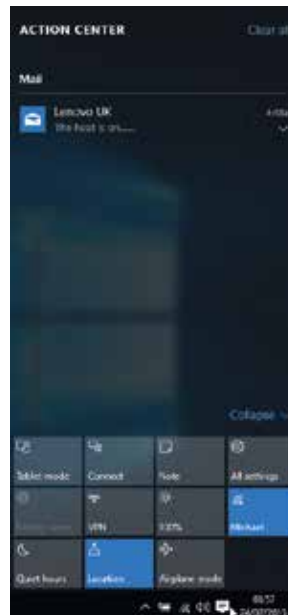
The **Search box** lets you easily locate anything you need on your system or on the web. The icons down the side of the open Search box give access to:

- **Cortana** Personal Digital Assistant
- **Home** for news, etc.
- **Notebook** for events, etc.
- **Reminders** for appointments, etc.
- **Feedback** to Microsoft



The **System tray** notification area contains icons that give access to:

- **Show hidden icons** such as “Safely Remove Hardware”
- **Battery** status and power settings
- **Network** status and settings
- **Volume** level control
- **Action Center** for notification messages and system settings
- **Clock** date and time settings



Icons of open or minimized apps appear on the Taskbar. Right-click on the Taskbar to see its options.



Action Center has been completely redesigned to be more easily accessible in Windows 10.



You can click the **Tablet mode** button in the **Action Center** to manually switch between Desktop mode and Tablet mode.



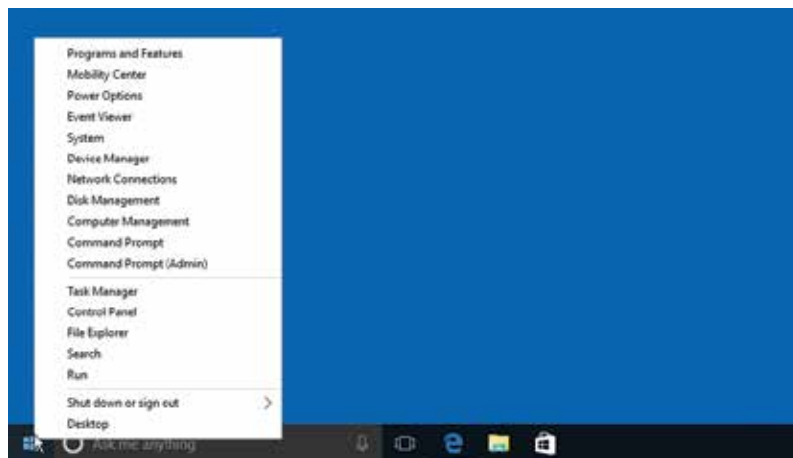
You can also open the **Power User Menu** by pressing **WinKey + X**.




More Menus

Power User Menu

In Desktop mode right-click on the Start button, or in Tablet mode tap and hold the Start button, to open the Power User Menu; a menu of options likely to be of interest to advanced users:

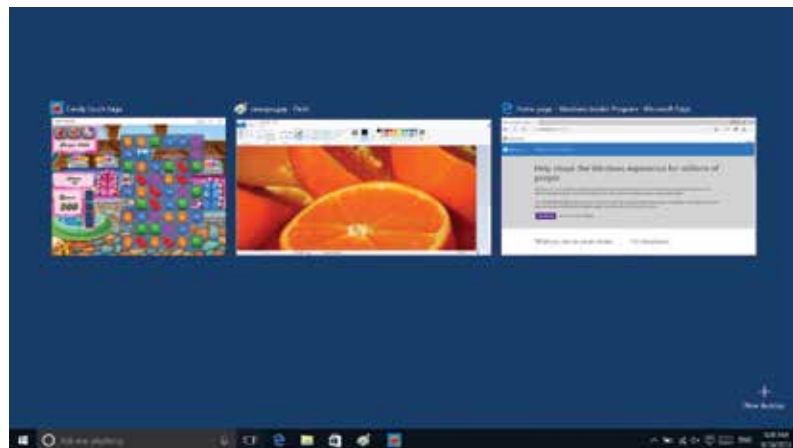


Task View

Click or tap the  Task View button to reveal a thumbnail of each open app on the Start screen:



You can also open the **Task View** by pressing **WinKey + Tab**.



Windows **Task List** can also be used to show open apps by holding down the **Alt** key then pressing the **Tab** key.

Tap or click to select the app you want to work with, or press **WinKey + Tab** again to close Task View.

Navigation

In its drive for Windows 10 to be all-encompassing, Microsoft has made it possible to navigate the interface in three different ways: by touch, the mouse, and the keyboard.

Touch

Touch gestures include swiping, sliding, tapping, and pinching. The best way to get to grips with these is to experiment. The following, however, will get you off to a good start:

Tap – opens, selects, or activates whatever you tap (similar to clicking with a mouse).

Tap and hold – shows further information about the item or opens a context menu (similar to right-clicking with a mouse).

Pinch or stretch – visually zooms in or out, like on a website, map, or picture.

Rotate – some items can be rotated by placing your fingers on them and turning your hand.

Slide to scroll – dragging your finger across the screen scrolls through the items (similar to scrolling a mouse wheel).

Slide to arrange – dragging an item around the screen with your finger to position it (similar to dragging with a mouse).

Swipe to select – a short, quick movement will select an item and often bring up app commands.

Swipe or slide from right edge – opens the Action Center.

Swipe or slide from left edge – opens the Task View feature.

Swipe or slide from top edge – enables you to view the title bar in full-screen apps.

Swipe or slide from bottom edge – enables you to view the Taskbar in full-screen apps.

In many cases, the touch commands available are dependent on the application in use. For example, various rotational commands can be used to manipulate objects in drawing and layout applications such as Microsoft PowerPoint.





Spinning the mouse wheel while on the **Lock screen** will open the **Log on screen**. When on the **Start screen**, it scrolls the app window.



In previous versions of Windows, **WinKey + Tab** opened “App Switcher” – which has now become **Task View**.



The **Alt + Tab** shortcut dates back decades but was retroactively named “Windows Flip” in Windows Vista – it has now become **Task List**.

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Mouse

Using the mouse to get around in Windows 10 is no different to any other operating system. The trick is knowing where to position the mouse to reveal the menus and features provided by the interface. See pages 10-12.

Keyboard

Those of you who use the Start screen without the benefit of a touchscreen are well advised to get acquainted with the various keyboard commands relevant to it. In many cases, just as with keyboard commands and shortcuts in general, they are often quicker than using the mouse.

There are actually a whole bunch of these commands and a full list is shown on pages 144-146. The following are some of the more useful ones:

The most important key is the Windows key, also called **WinKey** – see page 146. Pressing this key instantly returns the user to the Start screen menu regardless of where they are. It can also be used in conjunction with other keys to perform other actions. For example, **WinKey + X** opens the **Power User Menu** as mentioned on page 12, while **WinKey + C** opens the Taskbar **Search box**.

The **Home** and **End** keys jump from one end of the Start menu **All apps A-Z** list to the other, while the arrow keys can be used to select a tile. The **Enter** key opens an app.

WinKey + Tab opens the **Task View** list that allows the user to switch to a different app – by scrolling through thumbnails using the arrow keys, then pressing the **Enter** key to select an open app.

Holding down the **Alt** key then pressing **Tab** opens a horizontal **Task List**. You can move between thumbnails by pressing **Tab** then release **Alt** to open the selected app. Note you must have at least two apps running for **WinKey + Tab** and **Alt + Tab** to work.

A rarely-used key known as the **Context Menu** key (usually located close to the space bar) brings up a menu of related options when pressed in an open app. The context menu typically appears at the top of the app window.



Organization

App tiles on the right of the Start menu are much larger than the listed items under All apps. The more congested the Start menu becomes, the more scrolling will be necessary to get to a particular app.

Organizing Start screen tiles

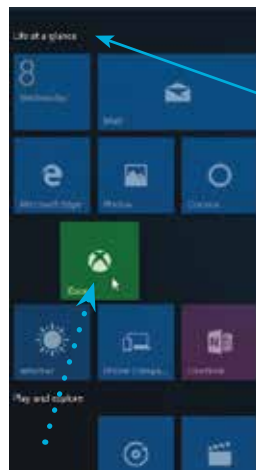
So, perhaps one of the first things a user new to Windows 10 will do is to introduce some organization into how the Start menu tiles are presented.

The most important thing is to place your most frequently accessed apps at the top of the Start menu tiles where they will be on view by default. Do this by left-clicking on the tile, dragging it to where you want it and then releasing it.

Create and organize groups

However, the method described above will be a laborious way of moving large numbers of app tiles. The answer is to place your app tiles in groups, which can then be moved about the Start menu in blocks. Apart from making it easier to arrange your Start menu, having your apps in specific and related groups will make it much easier to locate them as and when required.

So how's it done? If you take a tile and drag it across the Start menu, you'll see the other tiles move to accommodate that tile within the group (as shown below). Similarly, if you take a heading group bar and drag it across the Start menu you'll see other groups move to accommodate that group.



Group bar



An important aspect of organizing the Start menu is placing app tiles in related groups.



The customizable Start menu is a great new feature in Windows 10.



Another thing you can do is to reduce the size of the large tiles. This will create more space on the Start menu, which reduces the amount of scrolling necessary. Just right-click on a tile, select **Resize** and choose from the available options.



Universal Windows Apps are developed for use across PC, tablet, and phone devices.



Unless explicitly closed by the user, Windows 10 apps are always open – but, unlike with previous Windows versions, this has a negligible effect on system performance.



It is possible to install third-party apps on Windows 10 – see page 67.

Apps

In keeping with Microsoft's intention of making inroads into the mobile market, the Universal Windows Apps created for Windows 10 are designed for both desktop and tablet screens.

Many of these apps display content in real time. For example, there is a **Weather** app that shows a constantly-updated ten-day forecast and a **News** app that displays current stories and images.

These apps are user friendly and simple. As with the Windows 10 interface itself, Microsoft has designed the apps to be clean and straightforward with the minimum of extraneous clutter – the app's content is intended to dominate. A consequence of this is that the traditional navigational aids such as toolbars, menus, and preview panes, are in evidence to a much lesser degree.

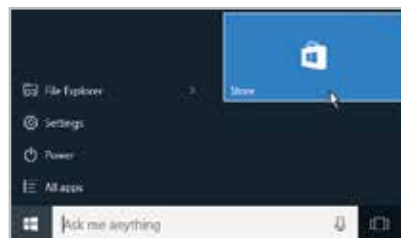
To use Microsoft terminology, the Universal Windows Apps are “immersive applications” – which basically means they run best in full-screen mode. For users with a large, wide-screen monitor this is definitely a restriction. However, this is mitigated to a certain extent by a feature called **Snap**. This makes it possible to have up to four apps running side-by-side – we explain how to set this up on page 69.

Traditional Windows programs, such as **Notepad**, will still work in Windows 10. These will appear in their own window when run in Desktop mode but will appear full-screen when run in Tablet mode. It's important to be aware that Universal Windows Apps are different to their traditional Windows equivalents.

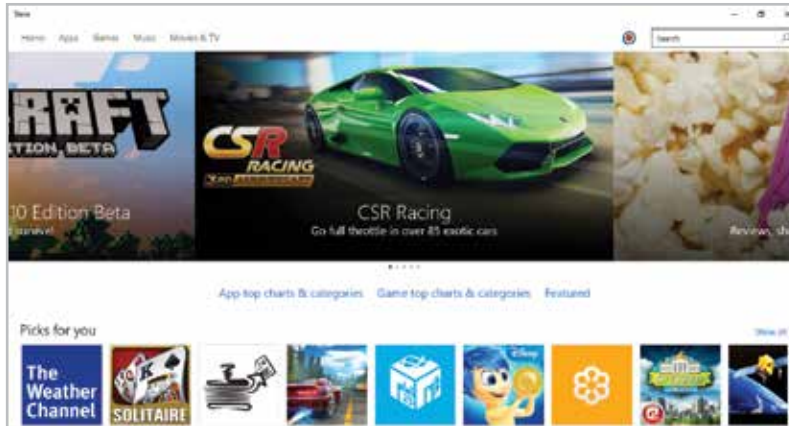
Sourcing and Installing Apps

In order to provide as secure a computing environment as possible, official Windows 10 apps are only available from the Windows Store. This effectively “sandboxes” them and, as a result, users are much less likely to introduce viruses and malware to their computers via downloaded software.

To access the Windows Store, click the **Store** tile on the Start screen. You will then be asked to sign in with your Microsoft Account.



...cont'd



The **Windows Store** may hold less content than other app stores, but it is growing rapidly – check back here often.

The first thing you'll see is a carousel showing large images of five featured apps. Below this is a list of top categories followed by a section called **Picks for you**, which shows a number of apps of the type often used by the user. For example, if you play a lot of card games, this section will feature card game apps. Moving down, there are sections showing **Top free apps**, **Top free games**, **New music**, **New movies**, **Top-selling TV shows**, and **Collections**.

At the top of the screen is a Search box. Using it produces a list of results and a **Refine** menu of filters to narrow the search by type – **Apps**, **Games**, **Albums**, **Songs**, **Movies**, or **TV Shows**.

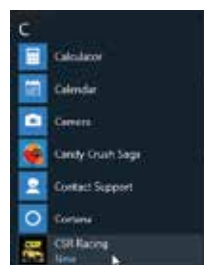
On each app's page, there is typically a summary description followed by **Ratings and reviews**, **Screenshots**, **Features**, and **Additional information**. Below the summary description is an install button labeled "Free", for free apps, or an install button labeled with the purchase price for apps you can buy. Once you've chosen an app, and paid for it, if required, just click the install button to download the app. Once installed, the app will appear on the Start menu's A-Z **All apps** list.



Check out its **Ratings and reviews** before choosing an app.



By using the same Microsoft Account, all official apps installed on your PC will also be available on any other Windows 10 devices you may have.





Windows 10 minimizes system resource usage – so a whole bunch of apps can be open at the same time without performance loss.



You can also use **Task Manager** to troubleshoot startup problems and identify memory-hogging apps.




If your Taskbar and Desktop disappear unexpectedly, Windows Explorer may have crashed. Press **Ctrl + Shift + Esc**, to open **Task Manager**, then click **File, New Task** and type **Explorer.exe** – then click **OK** to restart Windows Explorer.

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Closing apps

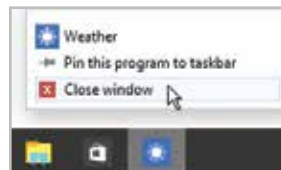
Closing an app is very simple to do but it must be pointed out that usually it is not actually necessary to close apps. This is because when a new app is opened, other running apps are switched to a state of suspension in which they use very little in the way of system resources.

However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or even necessary to close down an app. Here are five ways to do this:

- Simply press **Alt + F4** – this kills the app instantly
- Click the Close button on the window bar 
- Right-click the app in **App Switcher** and select **Close**



- Hover over the app icon on the Taskbar and select **Close window** in the pop-up context menu that appears



- Press **Ctrl + Shift + Esc**, to open the **Task Manager**, then select the app on the Processes tab and click the **End task** button

