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1 Introducing Windows 10

This chapter explains what Windows is, and shows how to get started with the operating system, including the changes in the Windows 10 April 2018 Update and its interface, keyboard shortcuts, creating a Microsoft Account, and signing in.

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What is Windows?

Windows is an operating system made by Microsoft, for PCs (personal computers), laptops and tablets. The operating system is the software that organizes and controls all of the components (hardware and software) in your computer.

The first operating system from Microsoft was known as MS-DOS (Microsoft Disk Operating System). This was a non-graphical, line-oriented, command-driven operating system, able to run only one application at a time. The original Windows system was an interface manager that ran on top of the MS-DOS system, providing a graphical user interface (GUI) and using clever processor and memory management to allow it to run more than one application or function at a time.

The basic element of Windows was its "windowing" capability. A window (with a lower-case w) is a rectangular area used to display information or to run a program or app. Several windows can be opened at the same time so that you can work with multiple applications. This provided a dramatic increase in productivity, in comparison with the original MS-DOS.

Between 1985-2000 Microsoft released six versions of this interface management Windows, with numerous intermediate versions.

- 1985 – Windows 1.0.
- 1987 – Windows 2.0, 2.1 & 2.11.
- 1990 – Windows 3.0, 3.1, 3.11 (Windows for Workgroups).
- 1995 – Windows 95.
- 1998 – Windows 98, 98 SE.
- 2000 – Windows Me (Millennium Edition).

The New icon pictured above indicates a new or enhanced feature introduced with the Windows 10 April 2018 Update.

In 2001 Windows XP was introduced, which was a full operating system in its own right. This was followed by Windows Vista and then Windows 7, 8, 8.1 and 10 (there was no Windows 9). Although Windows 10 is now in its fourth edition, there has been no numerical update to the operating system. Instead of releasing Windows 11, 12, etc., each new version has been given a Windows 10 title, e.g. the Windows 10 Anniversary Update, the Windows 10 Creators Update. The latest version, the Windows 10 April 2018 Update, is the first to contain a date in the title of the operating system, thus making it easier to identify which version of the software you are using – the Windows 10 April 2018 Update is more time-specific than the Windows 10 Creators Update. Ideally, this naming convention will continue with future releases.

About Windows 10

The latest version of Windows was released in April 2018:

- 2018 – Windows 10 April 2018 Update, which can be used to upgrade any existing version of Windows 10.

All major computer operating systems (OS) undergo regular upgrades and new versions. Sometimes these are a significant visual overhaul, while others concentrate more on the behind-the-scenes aspect of the OS. In terms of Microsoft Windows, Windows 8 was one of the most radical updates to the User Interface (UI), and introduced a number of new features for both desktop and mobile versions of Windows. However, it was not met with universal approval, as it was perceived that it was two separate operating systems (desktop and mobile) bolted together, and not satisfying either environment completely.

With Windows 10, a lot of the problems with Windows 8 were addressed: the familiar Start menu was reinstated to return to a UI similar to earlier versions of Windows; there was a greater consolidation between desktop and mobile devices running Windows 10; and the operation of apps was standardized so that it is similar for the new Windows apps as well as the more traditional ones. In a sense, this was a case of going back one step in order to go forwards two steps, and Windows 10 has succeeded in creating a familiar environment, coupled with a range of innovative and useful features.

Windows 10 April 2018 Update

The intention for Windows 10 has always been to produce incremental updates, rather than waiting a period of time for the next major update. This is the reason why it is unlikely that there will be a Windows 11; instead, there will be regular online updates to Windows 10. The Windows 10 April 2018 Update marks the fourth update to the operating system. It contains a number of improvements and refinements but, in keeping with the Windows 10 ethos, it is an incremental update rather than a major new operating system, although it contains a comprehensive range of new features. The April 2018 Update is delivered online through the Windows Update function in the Settings app.
A registered version of Windows 10 has to be installed in order for the April 2018 Update to be downloaded (or a license can be bought when downloading the Windows 10 April 2018 Update).

If you are upgrading to Windows 10 from Windows 7, 8 or 8.1, you will be able to keep all of your settings, files and apps.

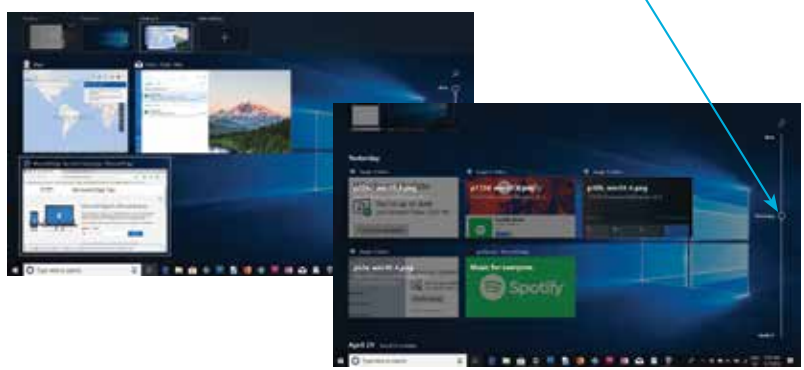
The functionality of the April 2018 Update is generally the same as for the original Windows 10, and it will, in general, be referred to as Windows 10 throughout the book.

About the April 2018 Update

Although the April 2018 Update is still under the Windows 10 banner, there are a range of significant additions and enhancements from the earlier versions of the operating system. Some of these include:

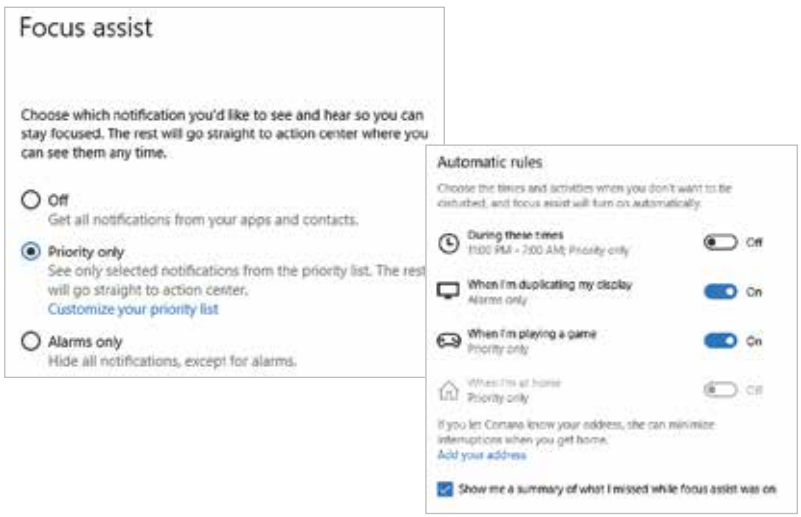
These features are new or updated in the Windows 10 April 2018 Update.

- **Enhanced Settings**. The Settings app has been updated with more options, including an increased range of Ease of Access settings and enhanced Privacy settings.
- **Timeline**. The Timeline is a new feature that can be accessed from Task View. It displays thumbnails of the items that have been opened or accessed for the past 30 days. Drag on the slider at the right-hand side of the screen to scroll through the dates for the Timeline.

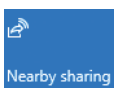


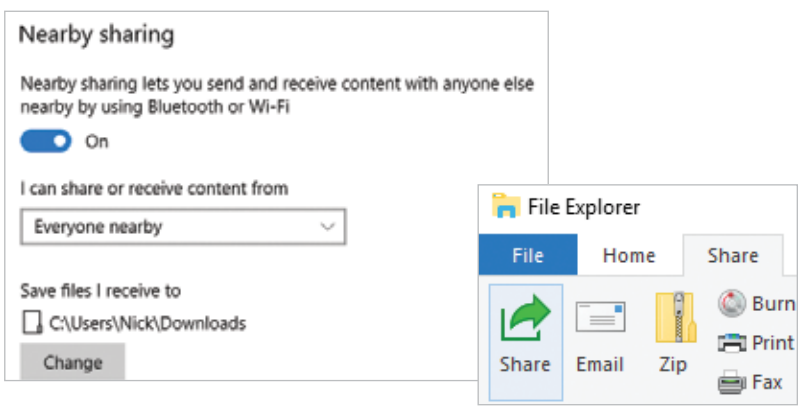
- **Adding a phone**. A smartphone can now be linked to a Windows 10 PC, and compatible apps on a phone can be used to send content to the PC. This will be displayed by the relevant app on the PC and also in the Timeline.

- **Focus assist**. Notifications can now be managed with more control in Windows 10, using the Focus assist feature. This enables you to customize a range of rules for when notifications will appear. For instance, you can create a priority list and set times during which you do not want any notifications to appear.



- **Nearby sharing**. The Nearby sharing feature can be used to share files with other nearby compatible devices, using Wi-Fi or Bluetooth. Nearby sharing can be set up in the Settings app and activated in the Action Center. Files can then be shared using the **Share** button in File Explorer.





For the Nearby sharing function to work, both devices have to be running the Windows 10 April 2018 Update.

Windows 10 Interface

Windows 8 was one of the most significant changes to the Windows operating system since Windows 95 helped redefine the way that we look at personal computers. It aimed to bring the desktop and mobile computing environments together, principally with the brightly colored Start screen and Charms bar. However, this proved to be awkward for a lot of users, with Windows 8 not fully meeting the needs of the device being used.

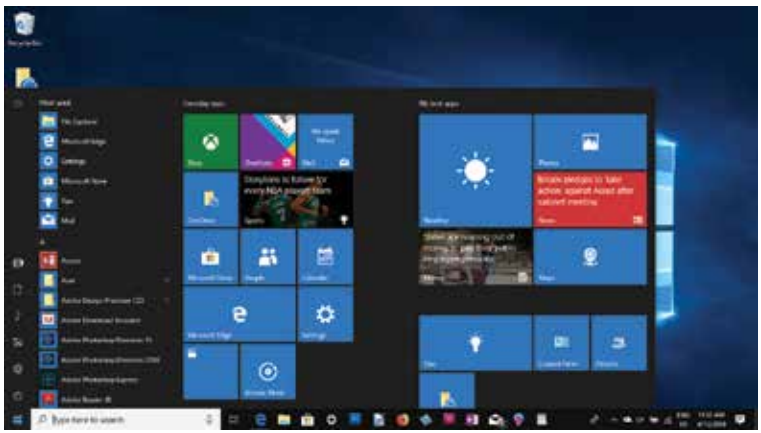
The original Windows 10 interface was redesigned so that it looks as similar as possible, regardless of whether it is being used on a desktop computer with a mouse and keyboard, or on a mobile or touchscreen device (and most of the underlying functionality is still the same). The first major upgrade of Windows 10, the Anniversary Update, saw one significant change, in that the operating system recognized the type of device being used and amended the interface accordingly. This was followed by the Creators Update. The Windows 10 April 2018 Update keeps the same interface as the Creators Update, while adding some updates, such as the Timeline, Focus assist and Nearby sharing, and some internal improvements to ensure that Windows 10 runs more efficiently.

As with the original Windows 10, the April 2018 Update looks more familiar to users of pre-Windows 8 versions of Windows. It opens at the Desktop, where shortcuts to items can be placed, and the Taskbar is at the bottom of the screen.

The main recommended specifications for PCs and laptops running the Windows 10 April 2018 Update are: 1GHz processor; 1GB RAM (32-bit Windows) or 2GB RAM (64-bit Windows); and 16GB (32-bit Windows) or 20GB (64-bit Windows) of free disk space for installation.

Start menu

The Start menu was reinstated in the original version of Windows 10, although it has been redesigned so that it also includes a range of colored tiles that can be pinned to the Start menu and are used to access the most commonly used or favorite apps. The left-hand side of the Start menu contains links to some of your most frequently used functions, such as the Power button, the Settings app, the File Explorer, the Most used apps and the alphabetic list of all of the apps on the PC.



The Settings app can be used to customize the Start menu (**Settings** > **Personalization** > **Start**). See page 51 for more details.

Windows 10 for touchscreen

The Windows 10 version that is optimized for touchscreen use is designed for using with a tablet (such as the Microsoft Surface Pro), where all of the screen navigation can be done by tapping, swiping and pinching on the screen. These features can also be used on touchscreen desktops and laptops that have this functionality (see page 16 for details). Some tablets also have a detachable keyboard that can be used with standard controls.

Obtaining Windows 10

Windows 10 is a slight departure by Microsoft in that it is promoted as an online service, rather than just a standalone operating system. This means that by default, Windows 10 is obtained and downloaded online, with subsequent updates and upgrades provided on a regular basis.

The original version of Windows 10 was a free upgrade if it was downloaded and installed by July 2016. Windows 10 can now be bought from the Microsoft website, or through software retailers. A registered version of Windows 10 has to been installed before the free April 2018 Update can be downloaded, unless a PC is running Windows 7 or 8, in which case it can be upgraded to the April 2018 Update if a license is bought.

For more information about the Settings app, see pages 46-59.

The three main options for obtaining the Windows 10 April 2018 Update are:

- **Use Windows Update** – Replace an older version of Windows 10, retaining the installed applications and settings. This can be done through the **Settings** app (select **Update & security** > **Windows Update** and click on the **Check for updates** button).
- **Microsoft website** – visit the software download page on the Microsoft website (**microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10**) to use the **Update Assistant** to download the Windows 10 April 2018 Update.
- **Pre-install** – Buy a new PC or laptop with the Windows 10 April 2018 Update already installed.

Some of the steps that the installation will go through are:

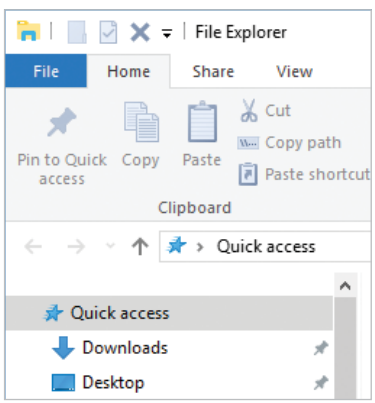
- **Personalize**. These are settings that will be applied to your version of Windows 10. These settings can also be selected within the Settings app once Windows 10 has been installed.
- **Settings**. You can choose to have express settings applied, or customize them.
- **Microsoft Account**. You can set up a Microsoft Account during installation, or once you have started Windows 10.
- **Privacy**. Certain privacy settings can be applied during the setup process for the Windows 10 April 2018 Update.

Keyboard Shortcuts

As you become more confident using Windows 10 you may want to access certain items more quickly. There is a range of keyboard shortcuts that can be used to access some of the items you use most frequently.

The majority of the shortcuts are accessed together with the WinKey (Windows key) on the keyboard. To use the keyboard shortcuts press:

- **WinKey** to access the Start menu at any time.
- **WinKey** + **L** to lock the computer and display the Lock screen.
- **WinKey** + **I** to access the Settings app.
- **WinKey** + **K** to connect new devices.
- **WinKey** + **Q** to access the personal digital assistant voice function, Cortana.
- **WinKey** + **D** to access the Desktop.
- **WinKey** + **M** to access the Desktop with the active window minimized.
- **WinKey** + **E** to access File Explorer, displaying the Quick access section.



- **WinKey** + **T** to display the thumbnails on the Desktop Taskbar.
- **WinKey** + **U** to access the Ease of Access options in the Settings app.
- **WinKey** + **X** to access the Power User menu, which gives you quick access to items including the Desktop and File Explorer.
- **Alt** + **F4** to close a Windows 10 app.
- **Ctrl** + **Shift** + **Esc** to access the Task Manager.

Windows 10 for Touch

One of the aims of Windows 10 is to make the operating system more familiar again to users with a keyboard and mouse. This has been done by reverting back to a more traditional look and feel than that of Windows 8 and 8.1. For touchscreen devices such as tablets and laptops with precision touchpads, the same overall operation of Windows 10 has been maintained so that users can feel comfortable with the operating system regardless of the device on which they are using it.

Continuum

Continuum refers to the function of Windows 10 where you can start something on one Windows 10 device and then continue working on it on another. For instance, you could start a letter in Word on a desktop computer, save it, and then pick up where you left off on the Microsoft tablet, Surface. Continuum works between desktop computers, laptops and tablets.

Using touch

Touchscreen devices and those with precision touchpads can be used with Windows 10 to navigate through a number of gestures, swipes and taps on the screen or touchpad. The range of these gestures has been consolidated from Windows 8 and 8.1, since these included a number of options for accessing the Charms that are no longer available with Windows 10. Some of the gestures that can be used with touchscreen or touchpad devices using Windows 10 are:

- Swipe inwards from the right-hand edge to access the Notification panel (Action Center).
- Swipe inwards from the left-hand edge to access the Task View for currently open apps, and the Timeline.
- In an open Windows 10 app, swipe downwards from the top of the screen to access the app's toolbar.
- In an open Windows 10 app, use a long swipe downwards from the top of the screen to close the app.
- Swipe upwards from the bottom of the screen to access the Taskbar (when an app is at full screen).
- Tap with three fingers on a touchpad to bring up the personal digital assistant, Cortana.

Aside from the gestures used on a touchscreen device, much of the operation of Windows 10 has been consolidated between computers with a mouse and keyboard, and mobile devices.

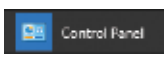
Control Panel and Settings

In previous versions of Windows, the Control Panel played an important role in applying settings for a number of different functions. Because of this, it could be accessed in several different ways. However, in the Windows 10 April 2018 Update, more of the Control Panel functionality has been moved to the Settings app, and there are fewer methods for accessing the Control Panel. Despite this, it can still be used to access a variety of settings:

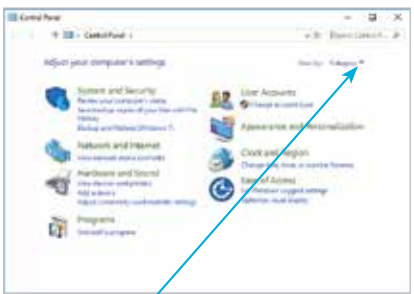
1. Click on the **Start** button to access the **Start** menu for accessing apps

2. Click on the **Windows System** button

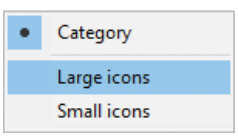
3. Click on the **Control Panel** button



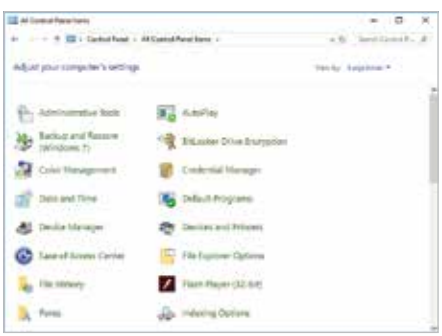
4. Click on the **Control Panel** categories to view the content within them



5. Click here to access options for viewing the Control Panel layout



6. Icons views display a wider range of options from within the Control Panel than Category view



For more information about the Start menu and the Start button, see pages 24-27.

More functions from the Control Panel are being migrated to the Settings app with each new version of Windows 10. However, some remain in the Control Panel and will be opened here, even if the link to it is physically located in the Settings app.

If you still use the Control Panel regularly, pin it to either the Start menu or the Taskbar, or both. For details about pinning items, see pages 82-83.

Using a Microsoft Account

We live in a world of ever-increasing computer connectivity, where users expect to be able to access their content wherever they are and share it with their friends and family in a variety of ways, whether it is by email, messaging or photo sharing. This is known as Cloud computing, with content being stored on online servers, from where it can be accessed by authorized users.

Without a Microsoft Account you will not be able to access the full functionality of the apps listed here.

In Windows 10, this type of connectivity is achieved with a Microsoft Account. This is a registration system (which can be set up with most email addresses and a password) that provides access to a number of services via the Windows 10 apps. These include:

- **Mail**. This is the Windows 10 email app that can be used to access and manage your different email accounts.
- **Skype**. This is the text messaging and video chatting app.
- **People**. This is the address book app.
- **Calendar**. This is the calendar and organizer app.
- **Microsoft Store**. This is the online store for previewing and downloading additional apps.
- **OneDrive**. This is the online backup and sharing service.

Creating a Microsoft Account

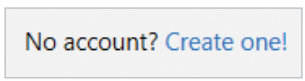
It is free to create a Microsoft Account. This can be done with an email address and, together with a password, provides a unique identifier for logging into your Microsoft Account and the related apps. There are several ways in which you can create and set up a Microsoft Account:

- During the initial setup process when you install Windows 10. You will be asked if you want to create a Microsoft Account at this point. If you do not, you can always do so at a later time.
- When you first open an app that requires access to a Microsoft Account. When you do this you will be prompted to create a new account.
- From the **Accounts** section of the **Settings** app (see page 53).

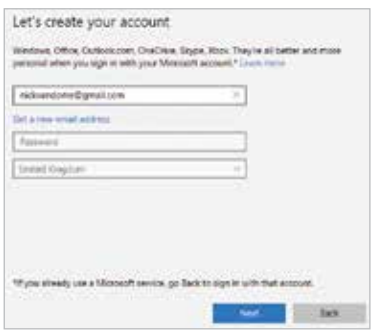
Whichever way you use to create a Microsoft Account, the process is similar:

1. When you are first prompted to sign in with a Microsoft Account you can enter your account details, if you have one, or

2. Click on the **No account? Create one!** link



3. Enter your name, an email address and a password for your Microsoft Account



4. Click on the **Next** button to move through the registration process

5. Enter your password again to confirm your account

6. Click on the **Finish** button in the final window to complete setting up your Microsoft Account

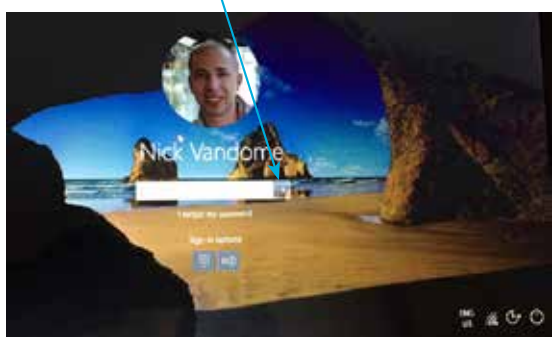
Microsoft Account details can also be used as your sign-in for Windows 10 (see pages 20-21).

Sign-in Options

Each time you start up your computer you will need to sign in. This is a security feature so that no-one can gain unauthorized access to your account on your PC. The sign-in process starts with the Lock screen and then you have to enter your sign-in password.

1 When you start your PC the Lock screen will be showing. This is linked to the sign-in screen

2 Click on the **Lock screen**, or press any key to move to the sign-in screen. Enter your password and press **Enter,** or click on this arrow



3 On the sign-in screen, click on this button to select Ease of Access options

4 On the sign-in screen, click on this button to select Power off options including Shut down and Restart

Don't forget

For details about personalizing the Lock screen see page 51.

Hot tip

You can lock your PC at any time by pressing **WinKey** + **L**.

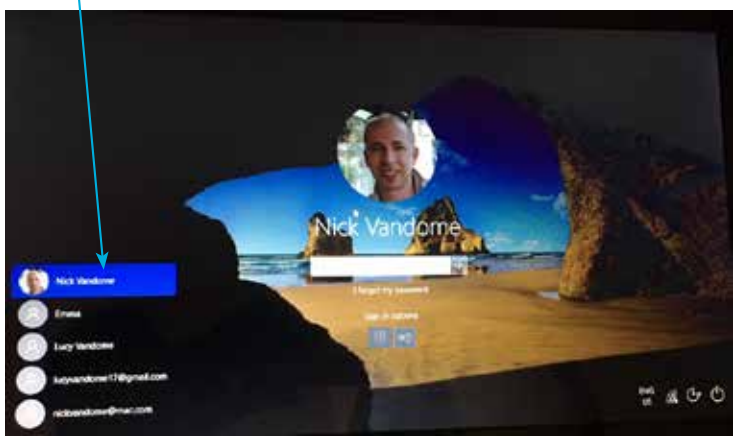
Don't forget

You will get an error message if you enter the wrong password or if you simply mis-key and cause an incorrect character to be added.

NEW

If you forget your password for your Microsoft Account, click on the **I forgot my password** link on the sign-in screen to reset it. This is a new feature in the Windows 10 April 2018 Update.

5 If there are other users with an account on the same PC, their names will be displayed here



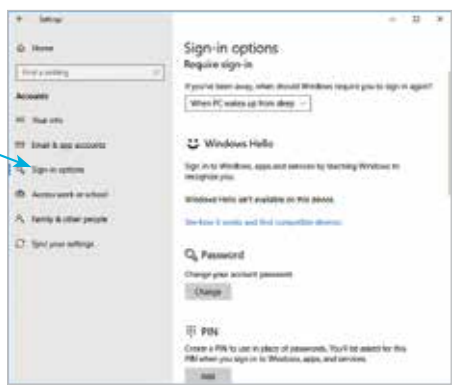
6 Click on another user to access their own sign-in screen

Sign-in settings

Settings for how you sign in can be accessed from the Accounts section in the Settings app:

1 Access the **Settings** app and click on the **Accounts** button

2 Under **Sign-in options**, select options to change your password, create a picture password or create a PIN instead of a password



3 If you want to create a picture password you must have a touchscreen device. Select a picture and draw a pattern to use as your sign-in

You can sign in with a Local account or a Microsoft Account. If you sign in with the latter, you will have access to the related services, such as Mail and People. Also, you will be able to sync your settings and use them on another computer when you log in with your account.

For details about using the Settings app see pages 46-59.

Windows Hello is a function that uses biometric authentication for signing in to Windows 10. This is either done by scanning your face, or with a fingerprint reader. However, specialist hardware is required and this is not available on many devices at present.

32-Bit versus 64-Bit

When installing Windows 10, you may need to decide between the 32-bit and the 64-bit versions of the operating system. When the Windows 10 April 2018 Update is downloaded, it should match the version that is already installed, in terms of 32- or 64-bit.

The 32-bit or 64-bit nomenclature refers to the memory address length which the processor can reference. This dictates the maximum amount of memory, which is 4GB for 32-bit mode (or more accurately 3.4GB, since some memory needs to be allocated for other purposes). For 64-bit mode, the maximum may be much higher, and as well as more memory, 64-bit mode will also be faster; typically about 10%.

To check whether your version of Windows 10 is 32-bit or 64-bit, click on the **Settings** app. Select **System** > **About** and look under the **System type** heading.

However, you need applications that are specifically optimized for 64-bit processing to take advantage of the speed improvements and memory increase. Many games, for example, include the necessary enhancements.

Remember that choosing a 64-bit system means that you can no longer run 16-bit applications. This is only a problem if you use very old software (from the Windows 3.1 days).

More importantly, existing 32-bit drivers for your devices will not operate in 64-bit mode, so you will have to locate 64-bit versions of the drivers. You may have problems with some devices, particularly the older ones.

You may also find that running 32-bit applications in a 64-bit operating system might actually be slower, due to the additional overheads imposed by conversion between the address systems.

If you have a 64-bit-capable computer but use older hardware or 32-bit applications, you might do better to stay with the 32-bit version of Windows 10. With the latest hardware and drivers, and applications that are 64-bit optimized, for especially demanding applications such as video editing or image packages, the switch to 64-bit and higher memory would offer significant improvements.

It will not be long before 64-bit computing becomes the standard, and 32-bit operation becomes an optional extra, but for the present there are still some 32-bit applications.