

1

Introducing Windows 10

7

What is Windows?	8
About Windows 10	9
Windows 10 Interface	10
The Demise of the Charms Bar	12
Obtaining Windows 10	13
Keyboard Shortcuts	14
Windows 10 for Touch	15
Using a Microsoft Account	16
Sign-in Options	18
32-Bit versus 64-Bit	20

2

Getting Started

21

The Start Button	22
The Start Menu	24
Customizing the Start Menu	26
Working with Groups	28
Resizing Tiles	30
The Desktop and Taskbar	32
Shutting Down	33
Task View	34
Adding Desktops	36
Notifications	38
Personalization	40
Lock Screen Settings	42
Settings	44
Searching	56
Setting Up Cortana	58
Using Cortana	59
Setting Reminders	62
Adding and Switching Users	64

3

Working with Apps

67

Starting with Apps	68
Windows 10 Apps	70
Using Windows 10 Apps	72
Classic Apps on the Desktop	74
Closing Apps	75
Viewing All Apps	76
Searching for Apps	77
Pin to Start Menu	78
Pin to Taskbar	79
Using the Windows Store	80
Buying Apps	83
Viewing Your Apps	84
Using Live Tiles	85
Install and Uninstall	86
Task Manager	88
Resource Monitor	90

4

Basic Controls

91

Menus	92
Dialog Boxes	93
Structure of a Window	94
Moving a Window	95
Restoring a Window	96
Resizing a Window	97
Arranging Windows	98
Snaps	100
Using Multiple Windows	102
Switching Windows	104
Arranging Icons	105
Closing a Window	106

5

Customizing Windows

107

Using Themes	108
Changing Sound	109
Screen Saver	110
Desktop Icons	111
Screen Resolution	112
Display Settings	113
Ease of Access Center	114
Date and Time Functions	116

6

File Explorer

117

Opening File Explorer	118
The Taskbar	119
Libraries	120
Scenic Ribbon	121
This PC Folder	123
Quick Access	124
Exploring Drives	126
Address Bar	128
Navigation Panes	130
Changing Views	132
Sorting	133
Filtering	134
Grouping	135
Folder Options	136

7

Managing Files and Folders

137

Select Files and Folders	138
Copy or Move Files or Folders	140
File Conflicts	144
Open Files	145

Delete Files and Folders	146
The Recycle Bin	147
Create a Folder	150
Rename a File or Folder	151
Backtrack File Operations	152
File Properties	153
Search for Files and Folders	154
Compressed Folders	155
Fonts Folder	157
Character Map	158

8

Digital Lifestyle

159

Using OneDrive	160
Using OneDrive Online	162
OneDrive Settings	163
Adding Files to OneDrive	164
Viewing Photos	166
Editing Photos	170
Groove Music App	174
Playing Music	175
Viewing Movies and TV	177
Playing Games	178

9

Microsoft Edge Browser

179

Internet Connection	180
Introducing the Edge Browser	182
Smart Address Bar	183
Setting a Homepage	184
Using Tabs	185
Bookmarking Web Pages	186
Adding Notes to Web Pages	187
Sharing Notes and Clippings	189
Organizing with the Hub	190
Reading List	192
Reading View	193
Menu Options	194

10

Keeping in Touch

195

Setting Up Mail	196
Working with Mail	198
Finding People	200
Chatting with Skype	204
Using the Calendar	206

11

Networking

209

Network Components	210
Set Up Your Network	211
Internet Connection	212
Discover Networks	214
Network and Sharing Center	215
Join the HomeGroup	216
Sharing Files and Folders	217
Sharing Settings	218
View Network Components	219
Network Troubleshooting	220

12

System and Security

221

System Properties	222
Clean Up Your Disk	224
Windows Update	226
Back Up and Recover Data	227
System Restore	228
Security and Maintenance	230
Windows Firewall	231
Malware Protection	232

Index

233

1

Introducing Windows 10

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

- 8** What is Windows?
- 9** About Windows 10
- 10** Windows 10 Interface
- 12** The Demise of the Charms Bar
- 13** Obtaining Windows 10
- 14** Keyboard Shortcuts
- 15** Windows 10 for Touch
- 16** Using a Microsoft Account
- 18** Sign-in Options
- 20** 32-Bit versus 64-Bit

What is Windows?

Windows is an operating system for PCs (personal computers). The operating system is the software that organizes and controls all of the components (hardware and software) in your computer so that they integrate and work efficiently together.

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 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. 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.

Microsoft released four versions of this interface management Windows, with numerous intermediate versions, including:

- 1985 – Windows 1.0; 1987 – Windows 2.0, 2.1 and 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 next version, Windows XP, was a full operating system in its own right. This was eventually followed by Windows Vista and then Windows 7 and 8.

- 2001 – Windows XP (eXPerience) Home and Professional.
- 2007 – Windows Vista Home, Home Premium, Ultimate etc.
- 2009 – Windows 7 Starter, Home Premium, Ultimate etc.
- 2012 – Windows 8 Starter, Pro, Enterprise and RT.
- 2013 – Windows 8.1 Starter, Pro, Enterprise and RT.



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

About Windows 10

The latest version of Windows was released in July 2015:

- 2015 – Windows 10 Home, Pro, Enterprise and Education

All major computer operating systems (OS) undergo regular upgrades and new versions. Sometimes these are a significant visual overhaul, while at others they concentrate more on the behind-the-scenes aspect of the OS. In the terms of 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 each environment completely.

With Windows 10 a lot of the problems with Windows 8 have been addressed: the familiar Start Menu has been reinstated to return to a similar UI to earlier versions of Windows; there has been greater consolidation between desktop and mobile devices running Windows 10; and the operation of apps has been standardized so that it is similar for the new Windows apps and also the more traditional ones. In a sense, this is 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 new features.

New features

Added to this are a number of new features, including a new web browser, Microsoft Edge, that allows users to draw on and annotate web pages and then send them to other people.



There is also a new personal digital assistant voice search, Cortana, to help elevate Windows 10 to be the most advanced operating system that Microsoft has produced.



Windows 10 is a free upgrade for users of most versions of Windows 7, 8 or 8.1 (excluding Enterprise).



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

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 they were using.



The Windows 10 interface has been 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).

Windows 10 will look 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 Start screen format and the Charms bar have also been replaced with more traditional elements of the Windows operating system, including the reinstated Start Menu.



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

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Start Menu

The Start Menu has been reinstated in Windows 10. This will be more familiar to pre-Windows 8 users, although it has been redesigned so that it also includes a range of colored tiles, which can be pinned to the Start Menu and are used to access the most commonly-used apps. The left-hand side of the Start Menu contains links to some of your most frequently used functions (such as the Power button) and most used apps.



The Settings app can be used to customize the Start Menu (**Settings > Personalization > Start**).

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 3) 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 15 for details).

The Demise of the Charms Bar

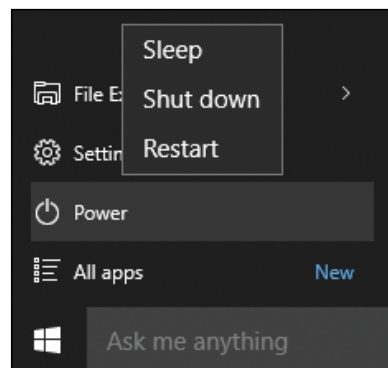
One of the features in Windows 8 and 8.1 that did not meet with universal approval was the Charms bar. This was a bar of icons that appeared at the right-hand side of the screen when the cursor was moved to certain positions. The Charms bar consisted of: a Settings Charm, which was used for quick settings, including the Power button, and the full PC Settings; a Device Charm for adding external devices; a Sharing Charm; and a Search Charm.

In Windows 10 the Charms Bar has been removed and its functionality has been incorporated into other features:

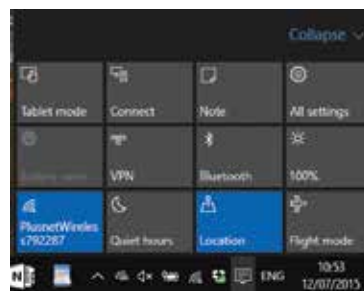


In Windows 8 and 8.1 the PC Settings were accessed from the Charms bar. The Settings in Windows 10 can be accessed from a range of locations, including the Start Menu and the Notification panel. See page 44 for details.

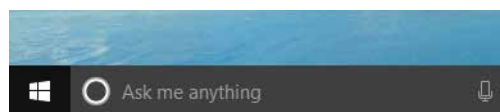
- **Power button.** This is now available on the Start Menu, which is accessed from the bottom left-hand corner of the screen.



- **Notifications and Quick access settings.** These are now available from the Notifications button at the right-hand side of the Taskbar at the bottom of the Desktop. (This is also known as the Action Center).



- **Search.** This is now incorporated into the Taskbar, to the right of the Start Button. It also includes the new Cortana search function which is accessed from the microphone icon.



- **Device and Sharing options.** These are now incorporated into the menu within some of the modern Windows 10 apps. Click on the menu to access the options.

Obtaining Windows 10

Windows 10 is a slight departure by Microsoft in that it is being 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 three main options for obtaining Windows 10 are:

- **Upgrade** – Replace an older version of Windows, retaining the installed applications and settings. This can only be done with Windows 7 and later: for earlier versions you will need to install a new, full copy of Windows 10. **If you already have Windows 7, 8 or 8.1 it is free to upgrade to Windows 10.**
- **Clean Install** – This has to be done if you have Windows XP or Windows Vista and you want to upgrade to Windows 10. (See tip).
- **Pre-install** – Buy a new PC or laptop with Windows 10 already installed, then install the required apps.

For users of Windows 7, 8, or 8.1, Windows 10 is a free upgrade (as long as you upgrade within a year of its release on 29 July 2015). Ensure Windows Update is turned on within Settings to ensure you are informed about the upgrade. When it is available you will be notified and you will be able to download and install the free upgrade (this should all be done automatically). Once it has been installed you will receive upgrades and updates as they become available. (In some cases, there may be a Get Windows 10 app located at the right-hand side of the Taskbar that can be used to obtain the upgrade to Windows 10).

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. They include the color for the Start Menu, a name for your computer and a connection to a wireless network. These settings can be selected within the Settings app once Windows 10 has been installed too.
- **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.



Windows 7 Enterprise and Windows 8/8.1 Enterprise are excluded from the free upgrade.



If you have a version of Windows that is earlier than Windows 7 (e.g. Vista or XP) you will have to pay for the upgrade to Windows 10. This will be with a DVD and costs US\$119 (£99). This requires a clean install which means that your files and settings will be removed. It is essential that these are backed up before the installation is started.



You may need your license number for the free upgrade from Windows 7, 8 or 8.1 so make sure you have this.

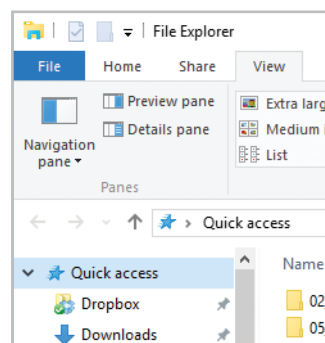
Keyboard Shortcuts

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. 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 + H** to access the Sharing options for the current items or app
- **WinKey + Q** to access the personal assistant voice search 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 Center
- **WinKey + X** to access administration tools and quick access to items including the Desktop and the Control Panel
- **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, laptops with precision touchpads and phones, 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 pick up where you left off on the Microsoft tablet, Surface 3. Continuum works between desktop computers, laptops, tablets and Windows Phones.

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 Action Center (Notification Center).
- Swipe inwards from the left-hand edge to access the Task View for currently open apps.
- 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 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.



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

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.

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.
- **The Windows 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 and can be done with an email address and, together with a password, this 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 (for more information about the Settings app see pages 44-55).

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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 18-19).



For details about personalizing the Lock screen see pages 42-43.



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



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.

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 else can gain unauthorized access to your account on your PC. This 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 Click on this button to select Power off options including Shut Down and Restart



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- 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 Users 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 with your Account.



For details about using the Settings app see pages 44-55.



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

As well as choosing your Windows 10 edition, you also need to decide between the 32-bit and the 64-bit versions of the operating system. This choice is available for all editions of Windows 10, including installation DVDs for each mode.

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 to other purposes). For 64-bit mode, the maximum may be much higher, though the Windows 10 editions do not make full use of the potential. As well as more memory, 64-bit mode will also be faster; typically about 10%.

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.

In summary, 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 large numbers of 32-bit applications.



To check whether your version of Windows 10 is 32-bit or 64-bit, right-click on the Start Button and click on the **System** link. The bit version is displayed under the **System > System type** section.