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Introducing Windows 11

This chapter shows how to get up and running with Windows 11, including its new features and its interface, keyboard shortcuts, and creating and using a Microsoft Account.

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The NEW icon pictured above indicates a new or enhanced feature introduced with the Windows 11 2024 Update (also known as 24H2).



Copilot+ refers to additional functionality provided on the very latest versions of Windows 11 computers (known as Copilot+ PCs, using the Snapdragon X processor). Much of this functionality relates to the performance of these devices, and there are also some additional Copilot features such as the Recall feature described in the second tip on the next page. The standard Copilot app is provided on all devices that can run the Windows 11 2024 Update.

About 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 lowercase w) is a rectangular area used to display information or to run a program or an 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 and 2015, Microsoft released numerous versions of the operating system. These versions of Windows included Windows 95, Windows XP, Windows 8, and Windows 10 (there was no Windows 9).

For several years, Microsoft stated that there would not be a full naming update to Windows 10; instead, it would continue with incremental updates, usually on an annual basis. However, nothing stays still in the world of technology, and Windows 11 was released in October 2021, recognizing the fact that the operating system required a major overhaul to keep it at the forefront of the evolution of PCs and laptops, and also mobile devices such as the Surface tablet.

There have been two main upgrades to Windows 11, with the latest one being the Windows 11 2024 Update. This has been released in stages, with higher specification desktop PCs and laptops (using the Snapdragon X processor) getting the update first, followed by a version for the rest of the compatible Windows computers. Although the versions are slightly different, due to the capability of the Snapdragon X processor, the overall functionality is the same for any device running the Windows 11 2024 Update.

New Features in Windows 11

Copilot

The main innovation in the Windows 11 2024 Update is an overhaul of Copilot, the digital assistant that is powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI). Introduced in 2023, Copilot is now a standalone app, which appears as an icon on the Taskbar. It can be resized and moved around the screen, and also pinned to the Start menu and the Taskbar in the same way as any other app. The Copilot app can be used to answer a huge range of voice and text queries by harnessing the power of AI and the internet.



Teams and Chat

The Teams app now incorporates the chat function, which was previously included as a separate app. This means that text and video chats can be made directly from the Teams app, while also being able to use its range of other functions.



Quick Settings

The Quick Settings panel has been updated, so you can now move through all of the options without having to access different panels. This is done by using the navigation buttons at the right-hand side of the Quick Settings panel.



Energy Saver

One new option that is included in the Quick Settings panel is the Energy Saver function. This can be used on desktop PCs and laptops to reduce power consumption. It can be turned on or off in the Quick Settings panel, and its individual settings can be accessed in **Settings > System > Power (Power & battery on laptops) > Energy Saver**.



These features are new or updated in the Windows 11 2024 Update. These new features are available on all devices that can run the Windows 11 2024 Update.



On some of the most recent Windows 11 devices that use the Snapdragon X processor, there is a function known as **Windows Recall**. This captures screenshots of your current screen every five seconds and stores them locally on your computer. This function can then be used to retrace your steps of whatever you have been working on. However, this feature is not available on all Windows 11 devices.

Obtaining Windows 11

Windows 11 is an online service, rather than just a stand-alone operating system. This means that by default, Windows 11 is obtained and downloaded online, with subsequent updates and upgrades also provided online on a regular basis.

The main ways of installing Windows 11 are:

- **Use Windows Update** – Replace an older version of Windows, retaining the installed applications and settings. This can be done through the **Settings** app (select **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/windows11) to use the **Windows 11 Installation Assistant** to download Windows 11.



For more information about the Settings app, see pages 40-55.



- **Pre-installed** – Buy a new PC or laptop with Windows 11 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 11. These settings can also be selected within the Settings app once Windows 11 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 11.
- **Privacy.** Certain privacy settings can be applied during the setup process for Windows 11.

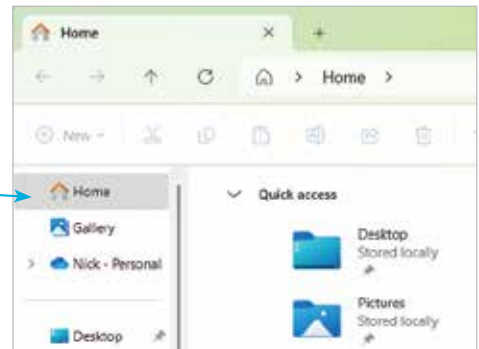
Keyboard Shortcuts

As you become more confident using Windows 11, you may want to access certain items more quickly. There are 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 + Q** to access the Search window.
- **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 Home folder by default.
- **WinKey + T** to display thumbnails on the Desktop Taskbar.
- **WinKey + K** to connect new devices.
- **WinKey + U** to access the Accessibility options in the Settings app.
- **WinKey + W** to access the Widgets panel.
- **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 11 app.
- **Ctrl + Shift + Esc** to access Task Manager.



The options on the Power User menu (see page 21) are also known as the administration tools.

Windows 11 for Touch

One of the aims of Windows 11 is to make the operating system familiar to users with a keyboard and mouse. For touchscreen devices such as tablets and laptops with precision touchpads, the same overall operation of Windows 11 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 11 where you can start something on one Windows 11 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 11 to navigate through a number of gestures, swipes, and taps on the screen or touchpad. Some of the gestures that can be used with touchscreen or touchpad devices using Windows 11 are:

- Swipe inward from the right-hand edge to access the Notification panel.
- Swipe inward from the left-hand edge to access Task View for currently open apps, and the Timeline.
- In an open Windows 11 app, swipe downward from the top of the screen to access the app's toolbar.
- In an open Windows 11 app, use a long swipe downward from the top of the screen to close the app.
- Swipe upward 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 Search functionality.



Aside from the gestures used on a touchscreen device, much of the operation of Windows 11 has been consolidated between computers with a mouse and keyboard, and mobile devices.

Control Panel and Categories

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 Windows 11, more of the Control Panel functionality has been moved to the Settings app, and there are less obvious 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 bring up the **Start** menu for accessing apps



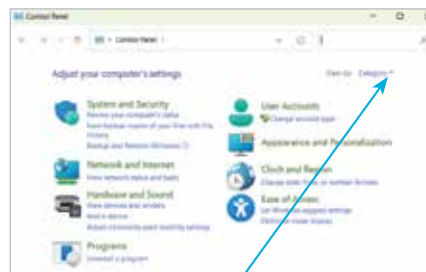
- 2 Click **All apps** and then click on the **Windows Tools** button



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



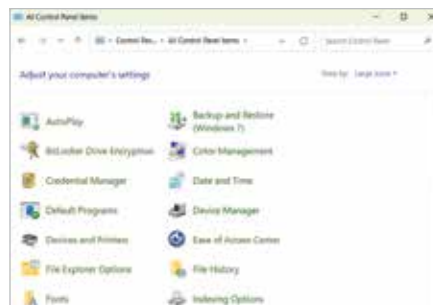
- 4 Click on the **Control Panel** categories to view the content within them



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



- 6 The 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 20-27.



More functions from the Control Panel are being migrated to the Settings app with each new version of Windows 11. 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 77-78.



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



Another option that can be accessed with a Microsoft Account is the Microsoft 365 suite of apps. This is a subscription service that has replaced Microsoft Office. It offers a range of productivity apps, such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint, and also a range of options for backing up and sharing your important documents and files.

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 11, 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 11 apps. These include:

- **Outlook.** This is the Windows 11 app that can be used to access and manage your different email accounts, and also your calendar and address book.
- **Teams.** This is the collaboration and communication 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

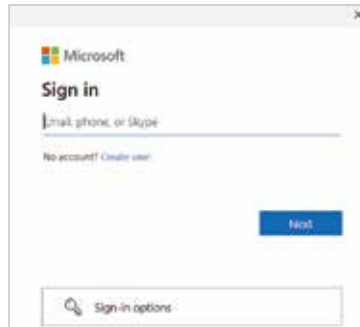
It is free to create a Microsoft Account. This can be done with an email address and, together with a password, provides a unique identifier for logging in to your Microsoft Account and related apps. There are several ways in which you can create and set up a Microsoft Account:

- During the initial setup process when you install Windows 11. 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 47).

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

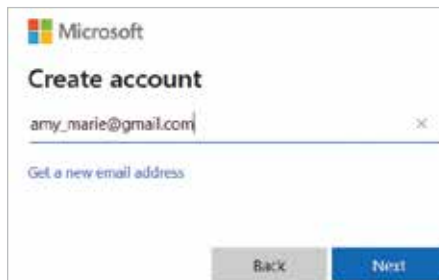
- 1 When you are first prompted to sign in with a Microsoft Account you can enter your account details, if you have one; or



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

No account? [Create one!](#)

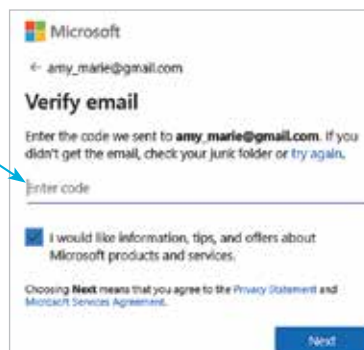
- 3 Enter your name, an email address and a password (on the next screen) for your Microsoft Account



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

Next

- 5 A verification code is required to finish setting up the Microsoft Account. This will be sent to the email address entered in Step 3. Click on the **Next** button to complete the Microsoft Account setup



Microsoft Account details can also be used as your sign-in for Windows 11 (see pages 17-18).



For details about personalizing the Lock screen, see page 45.



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



If you forget your PIN for your Microsoft Account, click on the **I forgot my PIN** link on the sign-in screen to reset it.

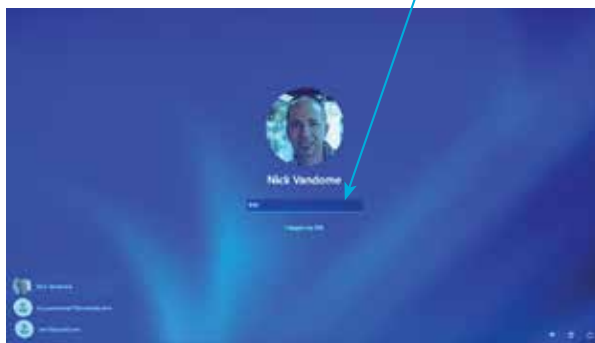
Sign-in Options

Each time you start up your computer using Windows 11 with a Microsoft Account, you will need to sign in. This is a security feature so that no one can gain unauthorized access to your account on your computer. The sign-in process starts with the Lock screen and then you have to enter your sign-in details.

- 1 When you start your computer, 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 sign-in details and press **Enter** on your keyboard



- 3 On the sign-in screen, click on this button to select **Accessibility** options

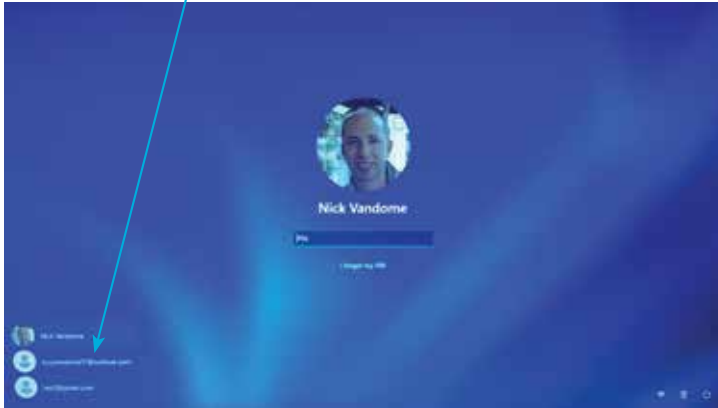


- 4 On the sign-in screen, click on this button to select **Power off** options including **Shut down**, **Sleep** and **Restart**



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

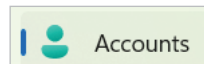


- 6 Click on another user to access their own sign-in screen

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 for how you sign in from the Lock screen



You can sign in with a Local account or a Microsoft Account. If you sign in with the latter, you will have access to related services, such as Outlook. 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 40-55.



Facial recognition and **Fingerprint recognition** are functions that use biometric authentication for signing in to Windows 11. This is either done by scanning your face or with a fingerprint reader. However, specialist hardware is required for this to operate.

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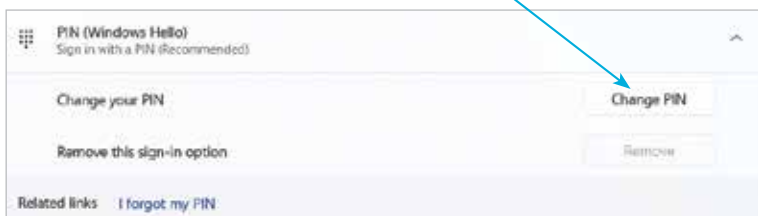
Using a PIN to sign in

Using a PIN to sign in to your Windows 11 computer can be a more convenient option than remembering a long password each time (although a password still has to be used when an account is created). To use a PIN to sign in:

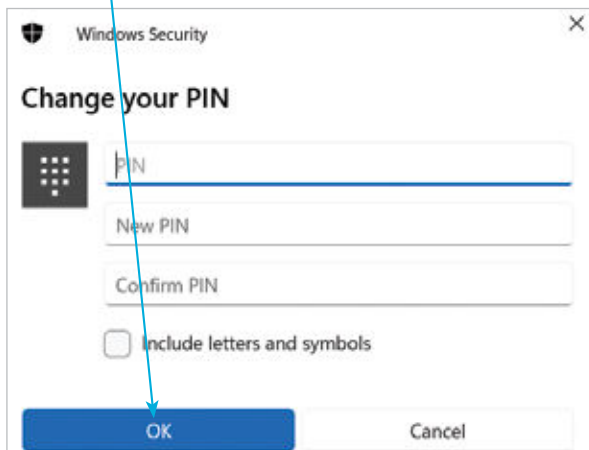
- 1 Access the **Sign-in options** section of the Settings app, as shown on page 17, and click on the **PIN (Windows Hello)** option



- 2 Click on the **Change PIN** button to change an existing PIN



- 3 Enter the new PIN and enter it again to confirm it. Click on the **OK** button to finish setting the PIN



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