

EASY-TO-APPLY STRATEGIES THAT WILL EXPAND YOUR PERSONAL COMFORT LEVEL WITH WINDOWS 10 (PART 1 of 4)

1. There's a fast way to search for an app.

The main column of the Start menu (press Windows key to access) lists all the applications that are installed on the computer. A standard strategy for searching is to use the strolling bar to move up and down the list. A faster way to search is to click on any one of the alphabet boxes to bring up the entire alphabet. If a letter is gray, no apps are housed under that letter. Click on the alpha block that houses your target app.

2. Add or remove the traditional “desktop icons”.

You can change the special icons shown on the desktop. For example, you can enable or disable any of the following icons: This PC (aka File Explorer), Recycle Bin, and Control Panel are notable.

To enable or disable a “desktop” icon on the desktop, follow these steps:

- a) Open **Settings** (Windows + I).
- b) Click **Personalization**.
- c) Click **Themes**.
- d) Click **Desktop Icon Settings**.
- e) Check the desktop icons that you want to enable.
- f) Uncheck the desktop icons that you want to disable.
- g) Click OK.
- h) Close Settings.

3. Reposition your favorite apps to the Start Screen, the Taskbar, or the Desktop.

When you open the Start menu, you'll see a small tile for every program on the computer, and you can *pin to start* or *pin to taskbar* any of them with a right-click option. The *pin to taskbar* option is partially hidden under the *More* option, however.

You can also pin any application to the Desktop where it will become a shortcut icon. It's as easy as a *left drag and drop* from its home location to the Desktop on the right.

4. To improve your computer's speed as well as system security, uninstall apps that you don't use.

To uninstall a **legacy** program (an application that was developed pre-Windows 8):

- a) Right-click on the **Start** button.
- b) Click on **Apps and Features**.
- c) On the next screen, click on **Programs and Features**, located in the far right column.
- d) Find the list of installed programs and uninstall those that you don't use and don't need. This can help speed up your PC, as those programs might include background processes, autostart entries, system services, context menu entries, and other things that can slow down your PC. It'll also save room on your hard drive and improve system security.

To uninstall a **Modern** app (designed for Windows 8/10), right-click on its Start Menu icon and select *Uninstall*. If the uninstall feature is not present, the app cannot be uninstalled by conventional means.

You can also remove the Store apps via **Settings** (Windows + I), then **Apps**, followed by **Apps and Features**.

The right panel will be populated with the list of preinstalled Windows 10 apps, some of which you can remove. Click on an app to see the options Move and Uninstall. Click on **Uninstall** to remove the application. *(The Uninstall feature is not available for many of the Windows 10 apps. Microsoft believes that some of them are essential to you, and hence the Uninstall button is greyed out).*

5. Pin a website to the Start (all apps) menu.

- a) Open Edge from the Taskbar.
- b) Click on the + tab at the top of the Edge window (or press CTRL + T).
- c) Access the target website.
- d) Click on the three horizontal dots in the upper right corner of the page.
- e) Click on **Apps**.
- f) Click on **Install this site as an app**.
- g) Give the site a new name, if desired.
- h) Click **Add**.
- i) Click on Start button (lower left corner of Taskbar).
- j) The target website is now listed in alphabetical order on the All apps list.

6. Disable programs that run at startup.

Most of us are aware that Microsoft and third-party software companies try to install their products so that they will run at Startup. As long as your computer has only one or two of these applications starting when you boot up, the boot time is indiscernible. However, over time, more and more of these programs are added to Startup without your knowledge, thus creating a noticeable slowdown at bootup. When this happens, we have learned to access the Taskbar, then the Startup tab, and then disable most of the listed programs.

- a) Right-click on the **Taskbar** and select **Task Manager**.
- b) Click on the **Startup** tab and disable startup applications you don't need. Windows will helpfully tell you which applications slow down your startup process the most.
- c) If you have a question about one of the entries, right-click on it and select *Search online*.

7. Change the desktop's background (wallpaper).

The default 3D desktop background or wallpaper in Windows 10 is impressive, but not all users want to keep the same desktop background forever, and many want to change the default desktop background to an image of their choice (including family photos).

When you right-click on the desktop and click the **Personalize** option, the *Background* link will open. From there, you can designate your desktop background as a single picture, solid color, or slideshow.

An alternative route: **Settings > Personalization > Desktop**.

If you choose a single picture, you will have access to the five most recently used photos that you have used.

If you want to choose a single picture from your pictures file, press **browse** and you will be taken to your pictures folder.

If you want to present a slideshow of a picture collection from an individual folder, press *slideshow*, then **browse**. If you want your slideshow presentation to include photos from more than one folder, you will need to create a new folder and paste your selected pictures into that folder.

8. Show Important System Icons (Clock, Volume, Network, For Example) On the Taskbar's Systray

You can easily tweak which system icons appear in the Taskbar's systray.

- a) Right-click any open area on the Taskbar and then click **Taskbar Settings**.
- b) On the taskbar settings page, scroll down toward the bottom and click the *Turn system icons on or off* link.
- c) You'll see a list of system icons. Toggle each one on or off to suit your needs. As you toggle them, the representative icons will either appear or disappear from the system tray.

9. Check folder sizes at a glance.

When you view Windows Explorer (Windows key + E) in Details view, the Size column shows the space consumed by individual files but provides no information on the size of folders.

To find the total size of any folder (or nested folder) contents, right-click on the target folder, and then click on Properties. The total size of that folder's contents will appear.

This information is especially important if you are planning to copy the entire contents of a folder to another medium, e.g., a flash drive.

10. From within the Edge browser, pin a current web page to the Taskbar.

Edge allows you to open the menu (designated by ... three dots in the upper right corner) and select *More Tools*, then *Pin to Taskbar* as an icon that's quickly accessible.