

GET PERSONAL: SEVENTY-FIVE WAYS TO GIVE A WINDOWS 10 COMPUTER YOUR PERSONAL TOUCH

1. Place your favorite website on your Desktop for quick access.

As a matter of convenience, you may wish to place an icon for your favorite website on your Desktop. To do this, follow these steps:

- a) Right-click on a blank space on your Desktop.
- b) Move to NEW, then over to SHORTCUT.
- c) Within the box that appears, type: www.yourfavoritesite.com and press next.
- d) Name the shortcut: (*myfavorite*), then click Finish.
- e) To access the website, double-click on the newly created shortcut icon.

2. Remove the Clutter from your computer automatically.

Windows can automatically free up space by getting rid of files you don't need, like temporary files and the content of the recycle bin that are over 30 days old.

- a) Go to **Settings** >
- b) **System** >
- c) **Storage**.
- d) Under **Storage Sense**, click on *Change how we free up space*.
- e) Under **Temporary Files**, select the three boxes.
- f) Finally, click **Clean now** and close the window.

3. Access 20 special controls with just two keystrokes.

Right-click the Start button to produce an expanded and specialized set of 20 menu items. (Another way to access the same set of specialized options: press Windows + X.)

4. The hidden "Contact Support" app can place you in contact with a Microsoft Answer Tech.

You can open a text chat session with a Microsoft "Answer Tech" if you need help. There's also an option to supply your phone number and have a tech support person call you at a time you specify.

To open the app, type *Support* in the search box and click on the Get help result that appears at the top of the column. (You must be signed in to a Microsoft account.)

5. There is a Handy Emoji keyboard built into the 2017 Fall Creators Update!

Many people have used those little icons when texting on their mobile devices, but now there's a handy emoji keyboard built into Windows 10. When your cursor is in a text field, press WIN+. (the Windows key and the period key) to pop up a selection of smiley-faces, hearts, food, and other icons that you can paste into your messages. 🍌

6. Choose which folders appear on the Start Menu.

The extreme left column of the Start menu (press Windows key) features the options that are available to you by default. Each can be turned on or off, depending upon which options you wish to use.

To control the options:

- a) Use **Windows key + I** to go to **Settings**.
- b) Then **Personalization**.
- c) Then **Start**.
- d) Generally, you will want to make sure six of the seven options listed are turned off. Confirm that the option *Show app list in Start menu* is **On**.
- e) Now click on *choose which folders appear on start* and select from the 10 folders listed.

7. 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 scrolling 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.

8. A Different Way to view all the apps on your computer (Tablet Mode)

Although the special Tablet Mode menu was designed for use with a Windows Tablet, some Windows computer users (especially those who have touch screens) may like to have all their apps spread out on a matrix with rows and columns.

- a) Click on the **Action Center** icon (Windows + A) on the far right side of the Taskbar.
- b) Click on the **Tablet Mode** tile.
- c) Click on the **Windows** key in order to view the Tablet Mode screen.
- d) In the uppermost left corner of the screen, click on the third symbol down from the top.
- e) This view shows large tiles that can be accessed conventionally with a left-click or a right-click.
- f) Exit the Tablet Mode by returning to the Action Center icon and clicking the Tablet Mode tile.

9. Give your computer a new name.

When you first installed the operating system, you may have been assigned a name for your computer. If you want to give it a new name, follow these steps.

- a) Go to **Settings** (Windows + I).
- b) Click on **System**.
- c) Click on **About**.
- d) Click on **Rename this PC**. (Your new name may not have spaces.)
- e) The new name will be applied once you reboot.

10. Bump up the size of text, apps, and other items as viewed on your monitor.

- a) Go to **Settings** (Windows + I).
- b) Click on **System**.
- c) Click on **Display**.
- d) Under *Change the size of text, apps, and other items*, increase the scale to 125% or 150%.
- e) Click on *sign out now*.

11. Remove multiple shortcuts from the Desktop in one motion.

While on the Desktop (Windows key + D), click on each of the shortcut icons you wish to remove while holding down on the Control key. This action will

highlight all that you have selected. Finally, press the Delete key on your keyboard. (Only the Recycle Bin cannot be deleted by using this method.) The deleted items will be sent to the Recycle Bin where they can be “restored” or dragged back to the Desktop. Unfortunately, Microsoft has not provided a way to remove tiles from the Start Screen except one-at-a-time.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. Place GodMode on Your Desktop as a Super Control Panel.

GodMode provides a unified, categorized view of all of Windows' far flung features, commands, settings, and functions, all in one place that you can open with a single click.

To activate GodMode:

- a) Right-click on your Desktop.
- b) Select New > Folder to create a new empty folder on your desktop.
- c) Then copy this string of characters below to your clipboard:
GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}
- d) Right-click on the new folder and select "Rename."
- e) Paste the string into the space for the folder's name and press Enter.
- f) Now, whenever you open that folder, up will pop the super menu of options that is GodMode.
- g) If you are offended by the name, change the name to BillMode, or whatever suits you.

15. Enable Sideload apps.

In Windows 8, Microsoft allowed only apps from its Windows Store to be installed. This move mimicked Apple, which allows only Apple Store apps on its devices. Security is the reason for this restriction, but the general population of Windows users doesn't want to be deprived of all the good, perfectly safe apps written by third-parties. In Win 10, you can "sideload" apps - that is, load them from a source other than the Windows Store.

But you have to enable this feature:

- a) Go to **Settings** (Windows + I).
- b) **Update & security**
- c) **For developers.**
- d) Then click the button next to "sideload apps." A warning about dangers of sideloading will appear and you'll be asked to confirm that you wish to enable sideloading; answer "yes" and it's done.
- e) It's best that you turn this feature off again, after loading the desired app.

16. Unpinning a tile from the Start Screen or the Taskbar is not uninstalling it.

Unpinning tiles means that they will be hidden from the Start screen or the Taskbar but will still be accessible in the Start Menu (Apps) view. Uninstalling them, however, will remove them from your computer completely. The good news is that many of these apps can simply be re-downloaded from the Windows Store if you ever change your mind later on.

If you uninstall a legacy program (a program that predates Windows 8 or Windows 10), you will need to reinstall it from the Internet or a disk just like in previous editions of Windows.

17. To keep things tidy, 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 programs 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*).

18. If you have a file folder that you go to frequently, you may wish to pin it to the Desktop for quick access.

You can right-click on any folder (generally accessed via File Explorer), and then *send to: desktop (shortcut)*. This action will place a shortcut to the target folder on your Desktop.

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

Using Internet Explorer:

- a) Open Internet Explorer.
- b) Press CTRL + T to access a new tab.
- c) Access the target website.
- d) Click on the Cog Wheel in the upper right corner of the window.
- e) Click **Add site to apps**.
- f) Click **Add**.
- g) Click on Start button (lower left corner of Taskbar).
- h) The target website is now listed in alphabetical order on the All apps list.

Using Microsoft Edge:

- a) Open Edge from the Taskbar.
- b) Click on the X 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 **Open with Internet Explorer**.
- f) Click **Add site to apps**.
- g) Click **Add**.
- h) Click on Start button (lower left corner of Taskbar).
- i) The target website is now listed in alphabetical order on the All apps list.

Using Google Chrome: (this action will place the icon only on the Taskbar)

- a) Open Google Chrome.
- b) From within the search bar, access the target website.
- c) Click on the three horizontal bars in the upper right corner of the page.
- d) Click on **More tools**.
- e) Click on **Add to Desktop**.
- f) Click **Add**.
- g) Click **Windows + D** to return to the Desktop.
- h) Left drag the new target icon to the Taskbar. You can now delete the shortcut icon from the Desktop if you wish.

20. Customize the Links Bar to show your favorite websites

You can customize the Links bar in all versions of Windows. You can add, remove, or rearrange shortcuts to your Favorites and folders of Favorites.

Customizing the Links bar gives you one-click access to your favorite folders and webpages. To manage the Links Bar:

- a) Right-click on the **Taskbar**.
- b) Click on **Toolbars**,
- c) then click **Links** to select it (a checkmark will be displayed beside it).
- d) You will now see "Links" added to the left of the system tray (Action Center) on the taskbar. A double-chevron button provides access to the contents of the Links Bar.

To add a website shortcut to the Links bar:

- a. Access the target website from within **Internet Explorer**.
- b. Click on the Favorites tab on the Menu bar.
- c. Click the *Add to Favorites Bar*. NOTE: If you are using a browser other than Internet Explorer, this feature may not be implemented, or may work differently.
- b) To remove a shortcut from the Links bar: Right-click the shortcut in the Links bar, and then click Delete
- c) To rearrange how your Favorites show on the Links bar: on the Links bar, drag a shortcut to a new location.

21. 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*.

22. Stop background apps from running.

In Windows 10, you have access to another group of programs that are called Background apps. These apps, especially ones that you are not using, can be turned “off” in order to conserve power, especially important in a laptop running on battery.

To control these background apps:

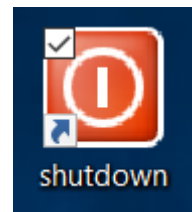
- a) Select **Settings** (Windows + I)
- b) Click on **Privacy**.
- c) Click on **Background Apps** near the bottom of the list.
- d) Toggle the button to “off” for the apps that you don't use often.

Please note there is a reason for these background apps to run continuously on your system even when you don't use them. The apps listed in this page receive information, send notifications, and stay up-to-date.

23. Place a shortcut for shutdown on your desktop

To create a shortcut icon for Shutdown:

- a) Right-click on an open area of the Desktop.
- b) Go to New, then Shortcut.
- c) Enter **shutdown /p** as the location of the item and press Next. (Note the space between shutdown and /p.)
- d) Now name the shortcut *Shutdown* and press Finish.
- e) Right-click the shortcut that now appears on your Desktop and navigate to Properties.
- f) Choose Change Icon in the Shortcut tab and then OK to leave the warning box.
- g) Choose (click) an icon of your choice from the list.
- h) Finally, click OK.



24. Customize the taskbar.

Just as in older versions of Windows, you can customize the taskbar in Windows 10 in the following ways:

- Lock the taskbar so that other users can't change it.
- Set the taskbar to auto-hide.
- Set the taskbar to use small buttons.
- Change the taskbar's location on the screen from the bottom to the top, or to the left or right of the screen.
- Set how taskbar buttons appear (either always combined with the labels hidden, or combined only when the taskbar is full, or never combined).
- Set whether to use the Peek feature to preview the desktop when you move your mouse to the Show Desktop button at the extreme right end of the taskbar.

To customize the taskbar, follow these steps:

- a) Click **Settings**. (Windows + I).
- b) Click **Personalization**.
- c) Click **Taskbar**.
- d) Set how you want the taskbar to behave by checking the available settings.
- e) Close the Taskbar dialogue screen.

25. Add a splash of color to Start Menu, the Taskbar, and the Action Center.

By default, the Start Menu is set to ignore the color you chose when you set up your Windows 10 user account, so the first priority is to amend that option.

To do so:

- a) Go to **Settings**
- b) **Personalization**
- c) **Colors**
- d) First, turn off the *Automatically pick an accent color from my background*.
- e) Now, scroll down to the toggle switch marked *Show color on Start, taskbar and action center* and make sure that it's set to On.
- f) You'll then be able to select from a variety of different swatches.
- g) You can also opt to make Start, taskbar and action center transparent with the appropriate toggle switch.

These options cater to form, rather than function, so feel free to mix and match as you please until you find a setup that appeals to you.

26. Don't have the Taskbar's Search box add to the clutter.

The Search box that appears by default on the left side of the Taskbar consumes a large amount of territory, thus limiting the amount of room for important icons that you have selected for quick access. Follow these steps to replace the search box with a small icon:

- a) Right-click on the Search box.
- b) Move up to Cortana, then over and click on *Show Cortana icon*. This action will cause the search box to be replaced by a small circle.
- c) By clicking on the small circle, the search box will reappear, but will be repositioned on the line immediately above of Taskbar.
- d) Once you make this selection, the small circle will remain, even after future boots.

27. Disable the Task View: another way to reduce the clutter on the Taskbar.

There is a **Task View** button that provides an overview of all your open windows and virtual desktop features. When it is enabled, the Task View button will always appear to the immediate right of the search bar/icon.

This feature is enabled by default. If you'd like to disable it:

- a) Right-click on a blank area of the taskbar.
- b) Deselect the *Show Task View button*.

28. Choose your app mode to combat eye strain

People who work at a computer tend to blink only five times per minute, which is ten fewer blinks per minute than normal. The result tends to be dry eye and eye strain. If you are concerned about eye strain while looking at a computer screen, consider using the **Dark App Mode**.

Find and try the *dark app mode* while you are at the bottom of the Colors page. **Settings > Personalization > Colors.**

The Settings application itself will immediately turn dark, as will many other Modern applications. However, it's up to each software developer to support the dark theme, and some applications will continue using their normal colors.

Unfortunately, this option doesn't affect desktop (legacy) applications, including Windows 10's File Explorer or Microsoft Office, both of which will remain white.

29. Users with limited vision have access to special screen settings.

Some users with vision issues have discovered one of the four high-contrast settings. These settings are available at: **Settings > Ease of Access > Color & high contrast > High Contrast: choose a theme.**

While you are on the Color & high contrast page, note that you can turn **on** the **Apply color filter** button. Select the *Gray scale inverted* filter and test by pressing the Windows + Ctrl + C toggle. (These three keys will act as an on/off toggle.)

30. 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.

31. Change the windows theme. (dozens are available from the Store)

A Windows theme includes the wallpaper used on the desktop as well as settings such as the standard desktop icons (for example, This PC, Network, and Recycle

Bin), the visual styles applied to Windows and apps, the mouse cursors, the screensaver that runs when the computer isn't in use, and the sound scheme applied to the operating system. If you get bored with any of the items that are included in the theme, you can change the theme and freshen things up a bit.

To change the Windows theme, follow these steps:

- a) Open Settings (Windows + I).
- b) Click **Personalization**.
- c) Click **Themes**.
- d) Under **Apply a theme**, click the new theme that you want to apply.
- e) If you want more choices, click *Get more themes from the store*.
- f) Select from dozens of choices from the Windows Store.
- g) Close the Personalization window.
- h) Close Settings.

32. Adjust the sounds that you want to play for different events.

Go to **Settings**, then **Personalization**, then **Themes**. Clicking the *Sounds* link in the Themes dialog box takes you to a dialog box where you can modify what sounds Windows plays for different events. When you are satisfied with your settings (you can hear the selected sound by clicking the **Test** button), clicking **Save As** saves the settings as a new sound scheme and **OK** closes the dialog box.

33. Use the Dynamic Theme app.

The **Dynamic Theme app**, a free download from the Microsoft Store, will have your desktop background and lock screen images get changed regularly with stunning images. You will get to see images from **Bing daily** and **Windows Spotlight**. Although Bing provides an option to save the image of the day, for Windows Spotlight images you must do it manually.

Once you have the Dynamic Theme app installed from the Microsoft Store, open the app from the Start Menu, just like you would any other app. By right-clicking on the app and moving down to *more*, you will have the option of *pin to Taskbar*.

Setting Background using the Dynamic Theme app: The Background image can be set by opening the Dynamic Theme app from the Start menu. In addition to having access to conventional background images, four special categories are available:

- Bing: Use this option to set the daily Bing picture as desktop background.

- **Windows Spotlight:** Use this option to set the Windows Spotlight image as desktop background.
- **One Bing image:** Any one particular Bing image can be set as background.
- **One Windows Spotlight image:** Any one particular Windows Spotlight image can be set as background.

One can also Preview the Bing image of the day.

Daily Bing Image: In this option (available in left column of Dynamic Theme window), one can Preview the Daily image. Also one can set a notification to alert when a new Bing image is available with preview.

If you have a Tile of a Dynamic Theme app on the Start screen, you can set it as a Live tile showing the Bing image of the day.

Another nice feature is that you can save the daily Bing image in the folder of your choice.

Another feature is the choice of the region from which you want to get the daily Bing images. It provides a list of countries from which to choose.

Daily Windows Spotlight image: The various options provided for setting Daily Windows Spotlight images are the same as for setting the Daily Bing images.

Note that the Windows Spotlight images can be saved to a folder of your choice.

34. Change the Picture Shown on the Lock Screen

The **lock screen** is a feature introduced with Windows 8 and also available in Windows 8.1 and Windows 10. It displays an image, the time and date, and can even show your preferred apps such as your calendar, messages, and mail, all while your computer is locked. To lock the computer and show the lock screen, press the **Windows key+L**.

If you're bored with the picture used for the Lock Screen, you can change it. Follow these steps:

- a) Open **Settings**.
- b) Click **Personalization**.
- c) Click **Lock screen**. The lock screen-related settings are shown.

- d) In the Choose Your Picture section, select another picture from those that are included in Windows 10, by clicking on it.
- e) Close Settings.

If you want to use your own picture, at Step 4, click Browse, navigate to the picture that you want to use, click on the picture, then Choose Picture.

35. Set which application icons appear on the Taskbar's far right side (previously known as the Systray).

You can customize the settings to show more or fewer icons on the right side of the taskbar. (In the past, this area was called the System Tray or Systray.) Here's how:

- a) Open **Settings**.
- b) Click **System**.
- c) Click **Notifications & Actions**. The settings for notifications and quick actions are shown.
- d) In the Quick Actions section on the Taskbar, click *Select Which Icons Appear*. A long list of icons is shown. Each has a switch to turn it On or Off.
- e) In the list of icons that appears, set the icons you want displayed to On and the icons you don't want displayed to Off. The icons that you set to On are immediately shown along the right side of the Taskbar.
- f) Click the left-pointing arrow (the Back arrow) to go back. The settings for notifications and quick actions are shown.
- g) Click Turn System Icons On or Off in the Quick Actions section. A list of system icons is shown.
- h) In the list of icons that appear, set the icons you want displayed to On and the icons you don't want displayed to Off. The icons that you set to On are immediately shown in the Taskbar.
- i) Close the Settings window.

36. 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.

37. Notifications in the Action Center advise you of important issues at a glance. You decide which ones to allow.

When an important notification appears on your desktop (generally, in the lower right corner of the screen) or when you view it in the Action Center (**Windows key + A**), you can expand it to take action without having to open the related app. If you don't want to take any action, just clear the notification by pressing the X button that appears to the right of the notification.

The Action Center puts important notifications—from your applications and from Windows—right on the taskbar, along with new quick actions, which get you to your most-used settings and applications instantly.

- a) To display the Action Center, click on its taskbar icon or use Windows + A.
- b) The taskbar icon shows a white background when you have a new notification waiting. The icon is by default black when there are no new notifications waiting.
- c) In the *Notifications and Action* section (go to **Settings**, then **System**), you can choose which apps are allowed to provide notifications.

If you want a break from being pestered by notifications, the **Quiet Hours** tile in the Quick Actions area is available. You can also silence the Action Center by right-clicking on its taskbar icon and choosing "Turn on quiet hours." Note that this is an option that can be toggled on or off.

38. Alter your power options for energy savings and convenience

Press **Windows + X**, then *Power Options*. Through this screen, you can alter the time for your display to switch off when not being used, while advanced options will enable you to alter power settings for your computer. (From the left column, select *Choose what the power buttons do* and *Create a power plan*.)

Why should you be concerned about Power Options? Here are some considerations:

- a) If you have finished using your computer for the day, do you shut it down (turn it off), power it down into a Sleep mode, put it into hibernation, or just leave it on? All the evidence suggests that you will save wear-and-tear on your computer as well as save on your electrical costs by not keeping it on 24/7.
- b) Factoring in both energy savings and convenience, experts suggest that you turn off both your computer and monitor if you don't plan to use your computer within the next two hours.
- c) If you don't plan to use your computer within 20-30 minutes, you should place it into sleep mode immediately upon leaving and return from sleep mode with no delay at the touch of a key or a shake of the mouse.
- d) It is also a good plan to set up your Display to turn off after 10 minutes of not being used and have your computer go into sleep mode after 15 minutes.

39. Customize your privacy.

Windows 10 and your apps can get access to lots of personal data and use that information to show personalized information and notifications. For example, apps can access your name, picture, advertising ID, location, contacts, calendar, and more. Luckily, Windows 10 gives you the tools you need to control which personal information is accessed and by which apps.

Here's how to customize several general privacy related settings:

- a) Open **Settings**.
- b) Click **Privacy**. The list of privacy-related settings appears.
- c) Click **General**.
- d) Set the privacy settings that you want to disable to **Off**.
- e) Under *Know your privacy options*, click **Learn more**.

40. How to Enable Windows Defender's Limited Periodic Scanning.

(this is necessary only if you have installed another antivirus program)

This option is named "limited periodic scanning," to be activated after you have installed a third-party antivirus product. Enable it and Windows Defender will occasionally perform a scan to check for any malware that your primary antivirus product may have missed. However, it's not enabled by default. You will want to enable it.

To access it:

- a) Go to **Settings** (Windows key + I).

- b) Click on **Update & Security**, then **Windows Defender**.
- c) Click on the *Open Windows Defender Security Center* box. Also note that a white shield representing the Windows Defender Security Center is located on the Taskbar, just to the left of the time/calendar.
- d) This action will take you to the Security Center where your computer's protection is being monitored.

You can only enable this feature if you're using another antivirus program. If you haven't installed another antivirus program, Windows Defender is already enabled and helping protect your computer with both real-time and scheduled system scans.

Windows Defender will automatically be updated with the latest antivirus applications through regular Windows Update.

41. Don't let Adobe Reader spoil your day. Have PDF (portable document format) files open safely in Microsoft Edge.

For a quicker and safer access to any of the PDF files on any website, you may wish to confirm that the default for all PDF files is WINDOWS EDGE and not ADOBE READER.

To confirm the default, follow these steps:

- a) Go to **Settings** (Windows + I)
- b) Click on **Apps**.
- c) Click on **Default Apps**.
- d) From the right column, scroll down to and click on *Choose default apps by file type*.
- e) In the left column, scroll down to find **pdf**.
- f) From the right column, confirm that Microsoft Edge is the default. If it is not, click on the tile that lists a different default and click on Edge from the list that appears.
- g) Once you have made the change, close the window. Note that the change will be permanent. You will only need to do this procedure once.

For good riddance, you may wish to completely uninstall Adobe Reader and Adobe Flash Player from your system. By default, both are present initially.

- a) Right-click on the Start button.
- b) Click on **Apps and Features**.
- c) On the next screen, move over to the far right column and click on **Programs and Features**.

- d) This action will take you to the screen that houses the legacy apps installed on your computer.
- e) Click on the program(s) you want to uninstall and click on the uninstall button that appears at the top of the list.

42. Move from one of your accounts to the other with just two clicks.

From the Start menu (press Windows key), select your user name/photo (represented by a small orb) in the far left side of the menu. From there, choose: *Change account settings*.

43. Don't go overboard with live tiles*. They consume system resources.

If an app has the option to be a live tile, it means that it can display pertinent information on the face of the tile rather than just a logo. For apps such as Weather or News, this could actually be useful and provide up-to-date information. Most apps, though, don't support any live tile function, and those that do provide very little useful information. (Note that the more live tiles you have running, the more system resources that are being consumed in accessing the Internet.

*a live tile is an application that has access to the Internet and provides up-to-date data on the face of the tile *as long as it is located in the Start Screen*. Examples of live tiles: weather, news, maps, messaging, and Movies & TV.

44. Cortana is a resource hog. You may wish to disable it.

Cortana always launches the Microsoft Edge browser and uses only Bing when you search. That's the good news. The bad news is that Cortana is a resource hog that may slow you down. If that sounds like something you wouldn't want to use, here's how to turn it off.

TURN OFF CORTANA BY SAFELY MODIFYING THE REGISTRY

As mentioned earlier, many Windows 10 laptop and desktop computer users have found it to be a nuisance that consumes an inordinate amount of memory, thus slowing down other aspects of the operating system.

By following these steps, you will be able to safely turn off Cortana. It will remain disabled until you turn it on.

The Quick access page is the shortest route to files you've been working on and folders you often use.

To make sure an important folder shows up in Quick access, right-click the target folder and then select **Pin to Quick access**. A pin icon shows you which folders you've pinned, so it's easy to tell them apart from the rest. They will be prominently clustered at the top of the navigation (left) column.

47. Enable and use the File Explorer's preview pane to preview individual documents, images, and videos.

In File Explorer, you can enable a Preview pane that is shown on the right side of the window. As the name implies, you can use it to preview the contents of certain types of files (text, images, and videos). For example, if you select an image file in File Explorer, you can see a preview of it; if you select a text file, you can preview its contents.

To enable the Preview pane, Open File Explorer (Windows +E) and follow these steps:

- a) In the File Explorer window, click the **View** tab.
- b) In the Panes section, click the **Preview Pane** button. The Preview pane is added to the right side of the File Explorer window.
- c) Select several files one by one. You can preview their contents in the Preview Pane if they are text, images, or videos.

To disable the Preview pane, just follow steps 1 and 2 above. The Preview Pane button is a toggle on/off switch.

48. Always show the menu bar in all your windows

A feature that Microsoft left out of Windows 7-10 that was in previous versions of Windows going way back to Windows 95 was the Menu Bar with "File, Edit, View, etc." options that appeared at the top of each window. Apparently, the Microsoft engineers didn't think we would want to use it. They were wrong!

Fortunately, there are a couple ways to recover the Menu Bar in all your windows and make it stick.

Just click the Taskbar's Search Box and type **Folder Options** and then press <Enter>. Click on File Explorer options at the top of the column and then click on

the **View** tab if it's not already selected. Now under the Advanced Settings area, check "**Always show Menus**". Click **OK**.

You only have to make this adjustment once. From that point on, the change will "stick."

49. It's easy to sort files and folders in File Explorer.

File Explorer offers the Sort tool for sorting the files and folders that you're viewing based on criteria such as their name, type, size, authors, and date. To sort the files within a folder, Open File Explorer (Windows +E) and follow these steps:

- a) Navigate to the folder that you want to sort and open it.
- b) Click the **View** tab on the Ribbon and select **Details**.
- c) Click on the column heading that you want to use as your sort routine.

50. Use check boxes to identify the files and folders that you have selected.

You can set File Explorer to display check boxes near the name of each file and folder. You can then use these check boxes to select files and folders. It is considerably more accurate than clicking directly on each file and risking making duplicate files with a slight mouse movement.

To enable check boxes in File Explorer, follow these steps:

- a) Open File Explorer (Windows +E).
- b) Click the **View** tab on the Ribbon.
- c) In the **Show/Hide** section, click **Item Check Boxes**. Check boxes are now shown each time you move your cursor on top of a file or folder. Click the check box to select that item.
- d) To disable the check boxes, retrace the preceding steps.
- e) The Item Check Boxes will be either On or Off, depending upon how you have set it.
- f) Close File Explorer.

51. Maximize the ribbon in File Explorer.

By default, the Ribbon is minimized in File Explorer. If you find it useful and you want to have it available, you may want to maximize it all the time.

Here's how to maximize the Ribbon in File Explorer:

- a) Open File Explorer.

- b) Right-click on the Menu bar. Deselect the *minimize the ribbon* box.
- c) Close File Explorer.
- d) Open File Explorer again. Now the Ribbon is maximized. File Explorer remembers that the Ribbon was maximized the last time you closed it and will open it that way the next time you open File Explorer.

52. Select multiple files or folders in File Explorer.

When you are working with files and folders in File Explorer, sometimes you may want to select more than one item. For example, you may want to select a group of files and delete them or select multiple folders and move them to another location. Here's the quickest way to select items in File Explorer:

- a) Click the first file or folder that you want to select.
- b) Press and hold the Ctrl key on your keyboard.
- c) With the Ctrl key still pressed, click each file or folder that you want to select.
- d) Release the Ctrl key after you have selected the items. Each of the selected items is highlighted with a blue bar in File Explorer. Now you can apply commands (via right-click on one of them) like Cut, Copy, or Delete to all selected items.

53. 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.

54. 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 *Pin this Page to the Taskbar* as an icon that's quickly accessible.

55. Turn Flash Player on or off as needed.

Microsoft Edge includes an integrated Flash Player, just as Google Chrome does. If you'd like to disable it for security reasons, you can do so by opening the settings menu (three dots in the upper right corner), clicking *View advanced settings*, and setting "Use Adobe Flash Player" to "Off."

56. Change your default search engine in Microsoft Edge.

To change your search provider:

- a) Open Microsoft Edge and click the menu button (that's the button with three horizontal dots at the top-right corner of the Edge window). Select "Settings" in the menu. It is located at the bottom of the list.
- b) Scroll down in the Settings panel and click the "View advanced settings" button near the bottom.
- c) Scroll down again in the Advanced settings list and you'll see the "Search in the address bar with" box. Click it and select "Add new."
- d) You'll see a list of available search providers. Select the search engine you want to use and click "Add as default."
- e) If the search engine you want to use doesn't appear here, be sure you've visited the preferred search engine's homepage first. If you have and it still doesn't appear, that search engine doesn't support OpenSearch yet.

57. Change Edge's homepage(s); you can have more than one.

The homepage in Windows Edge is the page that loads automatically each time you start this browser. You can easily change the homepage and make it anything you want. It can be any web page on the Internet. It can be the default page provided by Edge when you installed Windows 10, the current page that's loaded in the active tab, or a new, empty tab.

To change the Edge homepage, follow these steps:

- a) Open Edge.
- b) Click on the three horizontal dots that appear near the upper right corner.
- c) Move down to **Settings**.
- d) Click on *Open with a specific page or pages*.
- e) Select *Custom* from the list that appears immediately below.
- f) In the *Enter a Web Address box*, type the address of your target homepage.

- g) Finally, click the + sign to the right of the homepage you just selected.
- h) When you close and then reopen the Edge browser, you will be taken to your preferred homepage.

58. From within the Edge browser, turn on autocomplete.

From within your Edge browser, AutoComplete makes suggestions in a pull-down menu as you type information into your search bar. If this feature has been disabled in your Edge browser, you will certainly want to turn it back on. Follow these steps to do so:

- a) Open Microsoft Edge.
- b) Click on the Menu icon (three horizontal dots near the upper right corner).
- c) Click on **Settings**.
- d) Click on **View Advanced Settings**.
- e) Turn on the toggle switch to **Show search and site suggestions as I type**.

59. Add frequently used web pages to your Edge favorites.

When you find a Web page that you would like to add to your Favorites for quick access later on, follow these steps.

- a) Open the Edge browser.
- b) Display the page that you would like to store as a Favorite.
- c) Click on the **STAR** on the menu bar.
- d) Assign a name to the favorite.
- e) Click on either **Favorites** or **Favorites Bar**.
- f) Favorites that you pin to the Favorites Bar will appear on a bar near the top of the browser.
- g) Click on the Hub tab (three horizontal lines) on the browser's menu bar to view all the webpages in the Favorites list.

60. How to Sign in to your Microsoft Account.

A Microsoft account is an email address and password that you use to sign in to the Windows Store. It's free and easy to set up, and you can do so with any email address you choose, or get a new email address. (For example, you can use your Cox username and password or your Gmail username and password to access your Microsoft account.)

Important note: If you boot to your Microsoft account, you will need to have your password (or pin) to access the account. There are four purposes for having a

Microsoft account: shopping in the Microsoft Store, access to OneDrive and its 5 GB of cloud storage, access to free Microsoft Office online apps, and synching files between computers.

To check whether you're already signed in with a Microsoft account (your first clue will be if you need to sign-in with a password or 4-digit pin):

- a) Press Windows + I,
- b) then click Accounts.
- c) If you're already signed in with a Microsoft account, your name and email address will appear above your account picture.
- d) If you're signed in with a local account, you'll see the words Local Account below your name, along with the Connect to a Microsoft account link.

61. How to sign in to a Microsoft Account from a Local Account.

If you're signed in to Windows 10 with a local account, it's easy to switch to a Microsoft account on your PC.

- a) Press Windows + I,
- b) then Settings.
- c) Click Accounts
- d) click *Sign in with a Microsoft account instead*. You will be asked for your email address and password that you used to establish your Microsoft account.
- e) If you don't have a Microsoft account, you can use any email address that you already have. It can be your email address from Cox, CenturyLink, Gmail, Yahoo, AOL, or any others. In any case, you should enter the password for your chosen email address.

If you haven't accessed your Microsoft account recently, you will be asked to verify your identity by inserting a seven digit numeric code. You can have the code sent to you in one of several ways:

- a) To the inbox of your email address.
- b) To your home telephone number, or
- c) To your cell phone.

You will determine your choices when you set up your Microsoft account the first time.

62. How to remove your Microsoft account if you want to do so.

If you've already set up Windows 10 with a Microsoft account, you can still undo it. Here's how:

- a) Go to **Settings** (Windows + I) > **Accounts** > **Email and app accounts**
- b) Click **Sign in with a local account instead** if you are not already there.
- c) Follow the steps to set up a local account. Sign out to reboot.
- d) At reboot, you will be logged in with your local account, go back to **Settings** (Windows + I) > **Accounts** > **Email and app accounts**
- e) In the *Accounts used by other apps* section, click on your Microsoft account (it will be labeled as such), Click on *Remove*.

63. Set up a pin for your Microsoft account.

To simplify how you log on to your computer via your Microsoft account, Windows 10 allows you to create a four-digit PIN associated with your Microsoft account. After you create a PIN, you can use it to log on quickly to your account.

Here's how to set up a pin for your Microsoft account:

- a) Open Settings (Windows + I).
- b) Click Accounts and confirm that you are on your Microsoft account.
- c) Click Sign-In Options.
- d) Click the Add button in the PIN section. You're asked to verify your account.
- e) Enter your user account password.
- f) Click Sign In. The Set Up a PIN window opens.
- g) Type the PIN that you want in the New PIN and Confirm PIN boxes.
- h) Click OK.
- i) Close Settings.

64. Windows 10's Reliability Monitor: to Fix and Fine-Tune your PC

Reliability Monitor is a built-in part of Windows that's been around since the introduction of Windows Vista back in January 2007. It's always been a somewhat hidden feature of the Windows operating system, and therefore easy for users to overlook. Nevertheless, it's a great tool that provides all kinds of interesting insight into system history and stability. Reliability Monitor is particularly useful when

troubleshooting glitchy systems, and can provide insights into possible causes as well as important clues to fixing things.

Type “reliability” in the search box, and let Windows produce the “View reliability history” prompt that launches this console in response.

65. Change or delete your password(s) for your accounts

NOTE: YOUR MICROSOFT ACCOUNT REQUIRES A PASSWORD; YOUR LOCAL ACCOUNTS DO NOT REQUIRE A PASSWORD.

- a) Go to **Settings** (Winkey + I).
- b) Click on **Accounts**.
- c) Click on **Your info** to verify your current active account.
- d) Click **Sign-in options** in the left column.
- e) If your Local account has a password, it can be removed here.

If your Local account has no password, it can be added here.

Your Microsoft account must have a password. However, it can be changed here; you can also add, change, or remove the four-digit pin here.

66. Automatically sign in to your local account and avoid needing a Lock Screen and a login screen.

Initially, Windows 10 throws up both a Lock screen and a login screen before you can access the Desktop in your local account, but if you don’t need to shield your Windows account from prying eyes, you can bypass both the Lock screen and the login screen entirely. Follow these steps. You only need to do this function once:

- a) Press Windows + R.
- b) Type **netplwiz** at the search bar.
- c) In the User Accounts Control Panel, deselect the checkbox that says “Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer.”
- d) Click OK.
- e) Type your password once and then again to confirm it.
- f) Click OK again to close the User Accounts tool.
- g) When you restart Windows, you’ll now bypass the Lock screen and login screen and move straight to the Desktop screen.

67. Add or delete the pictures that identify your accounts

To add a picture (photo) as a unique identifier of your account:

- a) Open your Local Account.
- b) Under **Create your picture**, click on Browse for one.
- c) You will be taken to your picture folder where you can select a picture.
- d) Windows 10 allows you to have up to three pictures. One will be your primary picture (larger) and two will be secondary (smaller). In addition, the three pictures are interchangeable.

To delete an identifying picture from your account.

- a) Open File Explorer (Windows + E).
- b) Expand C drive in the Navigation (left) pane.
- c) Expand the Users folder.
- d) Expand the Username (your name) folder.
- e) Expand the AppData folder.
- f) Expand the Roaming folder.
- g) Expand the Microsoft folder.
- h) Expand the Windows folder.
- i) Click on the Account Pictures folder. This action will show your account pictures. They can be removed (deleted) from this folder which will cause them to disappear from the account page. The last picture you delete will remain as a default.

68. Install Apps from the Windows Store

Installing an app from the Windows Store involves just a few steps:

1. Open the Windows Store.
2. Browse the Windows Store until you find the app that you're looking for or search for that app, using the search box in the upper right corner.
3. Click the app that you want to install.
4. Read the app's description to confirm it's the one you want.
5. Click the Install button to install the app. A progress bar appears below the app's name and description.
6. When the app is installed, close the Windows Store. If an app is a paid app, you don't see an Install button. Instead, you see a button with the app's price on it. Click it to purchase and install that app. Some apps offer a free trial so

you can test them before purchasing. If you want to try an app before buying it, click Free Trial to install it.

69. Back up your important files with File History (a second drive is required)

File History automatically backs up files that are in your Documents, Pictures, Music, Videos, email contacts, web favorites, Microsoft OneDrive files and files on your desktop. If the originals are lost, damaged, or deleted, you can restore all of them. You can also find different versions of your files from a specific point in time. Over time, you'll have a complete history of your files. If you have files or folders elsewhere that you want backed up, you can add them to one of your existing Documents, Pictures, Music, or Videos folders.

With File History turned on, you will be able to archive copies of older versions of your files and do so automatically and in the background while you work. It is, for all intents and purposes, a real-time backup tool.

By default it preserves only those files in your Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos folders. You can add other folders if you wish, but only by adding them to one of the major folders listed here. (You can also exclude folders that you don't want, for example, your videos, to be backed up.)

File History requires an extra internal hard drive or some kind of external storage: a large-capacity USB flash drive, USB hard drive, or network drive. The more space you devote to File History, the deeper your backup will go.

Here's how to get started with it:

- a) Type **file history** from the Start box.
- b) Click the *File History* link that appears in the search results.
- c) By default, the feature is turned off. Have ready whatever storage device you intend to use (an internal hard drive, an external hard drive or a large capacity flash drive).
- d) Then click the *Refresh* icon next to the address bar. If you're using network storage, click *Use network location* instead, then choose your desired drive.
- e) Click the button marked *Turn on*.

- f) File History will make an initial backup of your folders, then scan those folders once per hour and make additional backups of any new or changed files it finds.

If you need to recover your files, just return to the File History window and click *Restore personal files*. (You can also manually navigate into the File History folder created on your storage drive, but you'll have to click through numerous sub-folders to find your data.)

This is a decidedly handy feature that's worth devoting a large-capacity flash drive to, if only to preserve your most precious documents.

70. How to change your default apps

Just because you installed your favorite application on your computer doesn't mean Microsoft will turn it into the default app for a certain type of file. For example, if you would like Google Chrome to be your default browser (rather than Microsoft Edge), here's how to do it:

- a) Go to **Start > Settings > System** (or use the keyboard shortcut **Windows key + I** and choose **System**).
- b) Click **Default apps** in the pane on the left.
- c) You can set defaults for certain types of files right here, like photos, music, videos, documents, and so on.

The app you want to set as Default should ideally already be installed on your computer, but if it isn't, you can find apps directly in the Windows Store or download them from the Internet.

Scroll down in that list and you will get advanced controls to set apps as default based on the file type, or check an app's settings to find which file types it opens by default.

Note that you can **reset** all of your defaults to the Microsoft recommendations with a click on the button at the bottom of the list.

71. Capture custom screenshots with the snipping tool

The best tool for taking screenshots is the Snipping Tool. With the Snipping Tool, you can take full-screen screenshots, screenshots of a specific window, and

rectangular or free-form screenshots. Once you've taken a screenshot, you can edit it and use tools such as pens, highlighters, and erasers.

Here's how to use the Snipping Tool to take a screenshot of a specific app window:

- a) Open the app for which you want to take a screenshot.
- b) In the search box on the taskbar, type the words *snipping tool*. A list with search results appears.
- c) Click the Snipping Tool search result. The Snipping Tool desktop app opens.
- d) In the Snipping Tool window, click the downward-pointing arrow located to the right of the New button.
- e) In the menu that appears, click Window Snip (or the rectangular snip).
- f) Click the app window that you want to capture (or draw a rectangular box around the part of the window that you wish to capture). The screenshot is loaded into the Snipping Tool's clipboard, from where it can be transferred to a separate document.

72. Scrub Your Prefetch Folder

One of Microsoft's big advances associated with the development of Windows 10 was that it loads applications much faster than its predecessors. To accomplish this feat, the operating system gathers information about each program that you launch and stores that information in the Prefetch folder. Then on subsequent restarts, Windows uses the information in the Prefetch folder to essentially preload (fetch) parts of those programs at boot time. Thus, when you launch your application, it appears to load really fast.

However, the Prefetch folder can accumulate too much information over time. This makes the operating system so busy loading bits and pieces of lots of applications into memory that it ends up slowing down the boot process. Fortunately, you can clean out the Prefetch folder at any time. Follow these steps:

- a) Click on **Start** >>
- b) type **Run** >>
- c) type **Prefetch** in the Open text box and click **OK** >>
- d) click on any one of the files >>
- e) press **[Ctrl] + A** to select all files >>
- f) Press **Delete** >>
- g) close the folder.

As you use your system, Windows will rebuild the contents of the Prefetch folder. *You will want to empty the Prefetch folder periodically.*

73. Turn Autoplay off

When you insert a removable device such as a CD, DVD, flash drive or memory card into your computer, you'll often see Windows' "AutoPlay" popup.

AutoPlay detects the kind of disc or media you have inserted and automatically starts loading the data. But if you find the feature annoying or risky, you can disable AutoPlay very easily in Windows 10.

- a) Go to Settings (Windows + I)
- b) Click on Devices.
- c) Click on Autoplay.
- d) In the middle column, turn Autoplay off.

74. Personalize your live tiles (examples: weather, news, movies & tv)

Live Tiles can display information tailored to your own interests. For example, you can set up Live Tiles that show the latest breaking news, the current weather and forecasts for any spot in the world, plus cuttings from current movies and TV shows.

To find out whether or not an application is "live", right-click on its icon in the Start Menu, then click *pin to start*. After the tile arrives on the Start Screen, right-click on it, then click on more. Finally, click *turn live tile on*. Be patient, for it may take several seconds for the live tile to receive information from the Internet.

75. Place an Internet Explorer icon on the taskbar

If you want Internet Explorer to be placed on the Taskbar:

- a) Click on the Start Menu.
- b) Click on the All Apps folder.
- c) Find and click on Windows Accessories.
- d) Right-click on Windows Explorer.
- e) Click on *More*, then on *Pin to Taskbar*.
- f) You may wish to reposition the Internet Explorer icon so that it is in close proximity to the Edge browser. (Any Taskbar icon can be dragged and dropped to another position on the Taskbar.)