

# **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:

1. Right-click on a blank space on your Desktop.
2. Move to NEW, then over to SHORTCUT.
3. Within the box that appears, type: [www.yourfavoritesite.com](http://www.yourfavoritesite.com) and press next.
4. Name the shortcut: (myfavorite), then click Finish.
5. To access the website, double-click on the newly created shortcut icon.

## **2. Remove multiple shortcuts from the desktop in one motion.**

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”. Unfortunately, Microsoft has not provided a way to remove tiles from the Start Screen except one-at-a-time.

## **3. Add or remove the traditional “desktop icons”.**

You can change the icons shown on the desktop. For example, you can enable or disable any of the following icons: This PC, Users’ Files, Network, Recycle Bin, and Control Panel.

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

1. Open **Settings** (Windows + I).
2. Click **Personalization**.
3. Click **Themes**.
4. Click **Desktop Icon Settings**.
5. Check the desktop icons that you want to enable.
6. Uncheck the desktop icons that you want to disable.
7. Click OK.
8. Close Settings.

## **4. Don’t let Adobe Reader spoil your day. Default PDF files to 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:

1. Go to Settings (Windows + I)
2. Click on System.
3. Click on Default Apps.
4. From the right column, scroll down to and click on *Choose default apps by file type*.
5. In the left column, scroll down to find **pdf**.
6. 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.
7. 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.

#### **5. 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 this string.

1. Go to Settings (Windows + I).
2. Click on System.
3. Click on About.
4. Click on Rename PC. (Your new name may not have spaces.)

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

1. Go to Settings (Windows + I).
2. Click on System.
3. Click on Display.
4. Move the slider to a larger percentage.
5. Click on *sign out now*.

#### **7. How to Enable Windows Defender's Limited Periodic Scanning.**

This option is named "limited periodic scanning". Enable it and Windows Defender will occasionally perform a scan to check for any malware that your primary antivirus product missed. However, it's not enabled by default.

To access it:

1. Go to **Settings** (Windows key + I).
2. Click on **Update & Security**, then **Windows Defender**.

3. From there, enable the “Limited Periodic Scanning” feature.

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 Windows Update.

## **8. 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:

1. Open Settings.
2. Click Privacy. The list of privacy-related settings appears.
3. Click General.
4. Set the privacy settings that you want to disable to Off.
5. Click on “Manage my Microsoft advertising and other personalization info.
6. Turn off the two items that appear (for your browser and Microsoft account).
7. Close Settings.

## **9. Clear your location data and disable location services.**

By default, Windows 10 apps as well as the operating system can request your location and location history. If you don’t want them to access your location, follow these steps to disable location services:

1. Open Settings.
2. Click Privacy. The list of privacy-related settings appears.
3. Click Location.
4. Click the Change button under *Location for this device is on*.
5. Set the *Location for This Device* switch to Off.
6. Close Settings.

If you want your location history cleared, in the Location window, click the Clear button (it’s below Clear history of this device).

## **10. Control apps that access your contacts.**

By default, Windows 10 apps can access your contacts when they need to. You can block some apps from accessing your contacts as well as all the apps you install.

Here's how:

1. Open Settings.
2. Click Privacy. The list of privacy-related settings appears.
3. Click Contacts and a list of apps that need access to your contacts is shown.
4. If you want to disable access to your contacts for all apps, set the available switch to Off for all apps in the list.
5. If you want to block only one app from accessing your contacts, set its switch to Off.
6. Close Settings.

## **11. Control which apps can access your calendar**

By default, Windows 10 apps can access your calendar when they need to. You can block some apps from accessing your calendar as well as all the apps you install. Here's how:

1. Open Settings.
2. Click Privacy. The list of privacy-related settings appears.
3. Click Calendar and a list of apps that need access to your calendar is shown.
4. If you want to disable access to your calendar for all apps, set the Calendar switch to Off.
5. If you want to block only one app from accessing your calendar, set the App's switch to Off.
6. Close Settings.

## **12. 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, use **Windows key + I**, then **Personalization**, then **Start**. Generally, you will want to make sure the six options listed are turned off. Now click on *choose which folders appear on start* and select from the 10 folders listed.

## **13. There's a fast way to search for an app.**

The main column of the Start menu lists all the applications, listed alphabetically, 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. Simply click on the alpha block that houses your target app. If a letter is not highlighted, it simply means that no app is housed under that particular letter.

#### **14. Move from one of your accounts to the other with just two clicks.**

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

#### **15. Access 20 special controls with just two keystrokes.**

Previously, when you right-clicked on an object on the Desktop, a vertical context menu would appear which gave you a choice of actions to take. In Windows 10, right-clicking the Start button produces an expanded and specialized set of 20 menu items. (To access the same set of specialized options, press Windows + X.)

#### **16. 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. Click on *More* to access the *pin to taskbar* option.

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.

#### **17. Use Tablet Mode to easily adjust your start screen tiles.**

The easiest way to maneuver, reorganize and resize the tiles on your Start screen is to switch to Tablet Mode. Tablet Mode will give you an uninterrupted full screen with which to work. Once you have made your adjustments, you can return to a standard Start screen by turning off Tablet Mode.

The quickest way to get to Tablet Mode is to click on the Action Center icon located in the extreme right side of the Taskbar and then click on the Tablet Mode icon. Reverse the process to turn Tablet Mode off.

#### **18. Organize your Start Screen tiles into groups.**

While using the Start Screen, you can organize your tiles by creating groups. Having your apps contained in groups makes it easier for you to quickly find your favorite apps all in one place.

To create a new group, all you have to do is left drag and drop your chosen tiles to the far right (or left) side of the screen, just until a gray vertical bar appears. After you finish moving your chosen tiles, you should have them clustered into a new group.

### **19. Give each Start Screen tile group a name for easy organization.**

To make it easier to organize and view your groups, you can give each group a name. In the end, every group you create will have its name displayed on top of a cluster if you so choose. Naming a group is a simple task. Simply click on a blank space immediately above the target cluster and then enter a name for the group in the name bar that will appear. Now click on any blank space on the Start screen and you will be taken back to the normal screen. If you want to move the entire group to another location on the Start screen, drag the cluster by its name bar and move it to a new location.

### **20. 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. Some apps, though, don't support any live tile function. (Note that the more live tiles you have running, the longer it will take your computer to boot since a live tile consumes system resources and takes time to access the Internet.)

### **21. Unpinning a tile from the Start Screen or the Taskbar is not uninstalling it.**

Unpinning tiles means that they'll be hidden from the Start screen or the Taskbar but will still be accessible in the 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.

## **22. To keep things tidy, uninstall apps that you don't use.**

To uninstall a legacy program, right-click on the Start button, then left-click on Programs and Features. 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 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 **System**, 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*).

## **23. If you have a file folder that you go to frequently, you may wish to pin it to the Start Screen for quick access.**

You can right-click on any folder, and *pin to start*. This action will place the target folder on your Start screen!

## **24. Add a splash of color to Start, the Taskbar, and the Action Center.**

Live Tiles bring the Start Menu to life, but it might not feel personalized to your tastes until you've given it a fresh coat of paint. 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, navigate to **Settings > Personalization > Colors**. First, turn off the *Automatically pick an accent color from my background*. 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. You'll then be able to select from a variety of different swatches.

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 works for you.

## **25. Choose your app mode to combat eye strain**

If you are concerned about eye strain while looking at a computer screen, consider using the Dark App Mode. Find and try it 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.

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

## **26. Enable the Dark Theme in Microsoft Edge**

The Edge web browser included with Windows 10 also has a dark theme. However, its dark theme option is entirely separate from the main option in Settings.

To activate a dark theme in Edge, open the Microsoft Edge web browser, open the menu (three dots near the upper right corner), and select "Settings". Select "Dark" under "Choose a theme".

## **27. Don't have the Taskbar's Search box add to the clutter.**

To change the Search tool from one option to the other, right-click on the Search tool that is showing, move up to Search (or Cortana), then over to *Show search (or Cortana) icon* or *Show search box*.

If neither the search box nor search icon is showing, right-click on the Taskbar area immediately to the right of the Start button, move up to Search (or Cortana), and select either the search box or the search icon.

If Cortana is enabled (which is the default), both the search box and the small circle will state either: *Ask me anything*. The small circle icon is replaced by a small magnifying glass icon when Cortana is disabled.

If Cortana is disabled, both the search box and the magnifying glass will state: *Search Windows*. Internet searches will be handled by your favorite browser and search engine.

## **28. 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.

1. Click on this link: [turn-off-cortana.reg](http://turn-off-cortana.reg)
2. At the bottom of the screen, click *Save as* and send to Desktop.
3. Go to the Desktop (Windows + D).
4. Double-click on "turn off Cortana" icon.
5. At the Open File – Security Warning window, click Run.
6. At the User Account Control window, click Yes.
7. At the Registry Editor, click Yes.
8. At the Registry Editor, click OK.
9. Remove the Turn-off Cortana icon from the desktop.
10. Reboot the computer.
11. Cortana is now turned off.

If you want to turn on Cortana, follow the eleven steps above, except in step 1 use [turn-on-cortana.reg](http://turn-on-cortana.reg).

In either case, this change applies to all user accounts on the PC you're configuring. Sign out and sign back in and you'll notice that the text in the search box has changed from "Ask me anything" to "Search Windows." Clicking in the search box displays only a simple prompt. In addition, Cortana's Notebook is unavailable, only a few settings are available when you click the gear icon, and there's no option to search the Web from the search box.

#### **29. The best way to conduct a search of data files on your hard drive is via File Explorer, not the Taskbar's Search icon.**

The File Explorer (Windows + E) search bar which is located in the upper-right corner of the File Explorer window, always starts with "Search," followed by your

current location in File Explorer. This search bar functions differently from the search bar found on the taskbar. First, you can use File Explorer's search bar only to search for files and folders on your computer. Also, the search is performed only in your current location. For example, if you're in Documents and you type the name of a file, Windows 10 searches for it only in the locations found in Documents. Similarly, if you go to the Pictures folder and you type the name of a file, Windows 10 searches for it only in the Pictures folder.

### **30. 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, just right-click on a blank area of the taskbar and deselect the *Show Task View button*.

### **31. Create quick access to the files that matter most.**

The age-old shortcut for accessing File Explorer is Windows key + E. An alternative is to have a **This PC** shortcut posted on your Desktop. Double-click on the icon to open the Explorer.

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.

### **32. 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:

1. In the File Explorer window, click the View tab.

2. In the Panes section, click the Preview Pane button. The Preview pane is added to the right side of the File Explorer window.
3. 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.

### **33. 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.”

### **34. 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:

1. Navigate to the folder that you want to sort.
2. Click the View tab on the Ribbon and select Details.
3. Click on the column heading that you want to use as your sort routine.

### **35. 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.

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

1. Open File Explorer (Windows +E).
2. Click the View tab on the Ribbon.
3. 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.

4. To disable the check boxes, follow the preceding steps.
5. The Item Check Boxes will be either On or Off, depending upon how you have set it.
6. Close File Explorer.

### **36. 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:

1. Open File Explorer.
2. Right-click on the Menu bar. Deselect the *minimize the ribbon* box.
3. Close File Explorer.
4. 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.

### **37. 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 folder.

Here's the quickest way to select items in File Explorer:

1. Click the first file or folder that you want to select.
2. Press and hold the Ctrl key on your keyboard.
3. With the Ctrl key still pressed, click each file and folder that you want to select.
4. Release the Ctrl key after you select 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.


### **38. 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.

### **39. The Edge browser offers a clean and simple read in the font size you prefer.**

For a clean and simple layout, select  in the address bar to turn on reading view. This will bring whatever you're reading front-and-center. You can even change the reading view style and font size to suit your mood—select (...) identified by three dots in upper right corner of the window, followed by **Settings**. From there, scroll down to Reading section.

### **40. From within Edge, pin a current web page to the Start Screen.**

Edge allows you to open the menu (designated by ... three dots in the upper right corner) and select Pin to Start to pin the current web page to the Start screen as a tile, allowing you to open it quickly in Edge.

### **41. 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."

### **42. Change your default search engine in Microsoft Edge.**

To change your search provider:

1. 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.
2. Scroll down in the Settings panel and click the "View advanced settings" button near the bottom.
3. 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."
4. You'll see a list of available search providers. Select the search engine you want to use and click "Add as default."
5. 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.

### **43. Set the home button in Edge.**

You'll find a variety of other ways to customize Edge's interface in its Settings menu. For example, **you can enable a Home button to quickly take you back to your preferred home page.**

#### **44. 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:

1. Open Edge.
2. Click on the three horizontal dots that appear near the upper right corner.
3. Move down to **Settings**.
4. Click on *Open with a specific page or pages*.
5. Select *Custom* from the list that appears immediately below.
6. In the *Enter a Web Address box*, type the address of your target homepage.
7. Finally, click the + sign to the right of the homepage you just selected.
8. When you close and then reopen the Edge browser, you will be taken to your preferred homepage.

#### **45. 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:

1. Open Microsoft Edge.
2. Click on the Menu icon (three horizontal dots near the upper right corner).
3. Click on **Settings**.
4. Click on **View Advanced Settings**.
5. Turn on the toggle switch to **Show search and site suggestions as I type**.

#### **46. 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.

1. Open the Edge browser.
2. Display the page that you would like to store as a Favorite.
3. Click on the **STAR** on the menu bar.

4. Assign a name to the favorite.
5. Click on either **Favorites** or **Favorites Bar**.
6. Favorites that you pin to the Favorites Bar will appear on a bar near the top of the browser.
7. Click on the Hub tab (three horizontal lines) on the browser's menu bar to view all the webpages in the Favorites list.

#### **47. Pin a website to the apps menu.**

##### **Using Internet Explorer:**

1. Open Internet Explorer.
2. Press CTRL + T to access a new tab.
3. Access the target website.
4. Click on the Cog Wheel in the upper right corner of the window.
5. Click **Add site to apps**.
6. Click **Add**.
7. Click on Start button (lower left corner of Taskbar).
8. The target website is now listed in alphabetical order on the All apps list.

##### **Using Microsoft Edge:**

1. Open Edge from the Taskbar.
2. Click on the X tab at the top of the Edge window (or press CTRL + T).
3. Access the target website.
4. Click on the three horizontal dots in the upper right corner of the page.
5. Click on **Open with Internet Explorer**.
6. Click **Add site to apps**.
7. Click **Add**.
8. Click on Start button (lower left corner of Taskbar).
9. 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)

1. Open Google Chrome.
2. From within the search bar, access the target website.
3. Click on the three horizontal bars in the upper right corner of the page.
4. Click on **More tools**.
5. Click on **Add to Desktop**.
6. Click **Add**.
7. Click **Windows + D** to return to the Desktop.
8. Left drag the new target icon to the Taskbar. You can now delete the shortcut icon from the Desktop if you wish.

#### **48. 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 syncing 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): Press Windows + I, then click Accounts. If you're already signed in with a Microsoft account, your name and email address will appear above your account picture. 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.

#### **49. 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. Press Windows + I, then Settings. Click Accounts and then 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.

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:

1. To the inbox of your email address.
2. To your home telephone number, or
3. To your cell phone.

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



## **50. Reasons why you will want a Microsoft Account.**

When you sign in to your PC with a Microsoft account, you can obtain apps from the Windows Store, access free online Microsoft Office products, back up your important data and files (up to 5 GB) using OneDrive cloud storage, and keep all your favorite stuff—devices, photos, friends, games, settings, music, and so on—up to date and in sync.

## **51. Reasons why you will want a local account.**

The advantage of having a local account is that a username and password/pin are not needed to sign in. Although you do not have total access to the Windows Store, nor can you use Microsoft's OneDrive cloud storage, you do enjoy all the other advantages of the Windows 10 operating system. Everything else is identical for both accounts—the desktop wallpaper, all the apps, the taskbar icons, the email account, Internet favorites, the data files—everything!

To check whether you're signed in with a Microsoft account or a local account:

1. Press Windows + I.
2. Click **Accounts**. This action will take you to **Your info**.
3. If you're already signed in with a Microsoft account, your name and email address will appear above your account picture.

## **52. 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:

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

## **53. Set up additional local user accounts.**

*If more than one person uses your PC, each person should have his own **local account**. Each can sign in and personalize the PC with their own background colors, favorite apps, account picture, a separate email inbox, and more.*

Local user accounts make it possible for more than one person to share a computer, with each person having a private Documents folder, apps, email inbox, and other Windows settings. When you have your own account, you can do all the customization you want to your Windows environment without affecting other user accounts. Other users will have their own visual customization, their own app settings, and so forth.

To add other accounts, go to **Settings**, then **Accounts**, and finally **Family and Other People**.

#### **54. Switch from one account to another on the fly.**

If you are signed on to a Local Account and want to convert to your Microsoft Account (or vice-versa), click the *Start* button, then click your avatar at the top of the Start menu's left column. Select *Change account settings*.

This will bring up the Accounts window in Settings. In the *Your info* tab, click *Sign in with a Microsoft account instead/ or Sign in with a Local account instead*.

#### **55. 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:

1. Open Settings (Windows + I).
2. Click Accounts and confirm that you are on your Microsoft account.
3. Click Sign-In Options.
4. Click the Add button in the PIN section. You're asked to verify your account.
5. Enter your user account password.
6. Click Sign In. The Set Up a PIN window opens.
7. Type the PIN that you want in the New PIN and Confirm PIN boxes.
8. Click OK.
9. Close Settings.

#### **56. Turn the keyboard number lock on**

If you access your Microsoft account by using a four-digit pin, you probably know that it's best to have the NumLock turned on. Otherwise, you will need to remember to tap the NumLock key every time you want to access your pin

number. This procedure requires that you hack the Registry Editor. You only need to make this change one time.

Follow these steps to open the Registry Editor:

1. Press Windows+R on your keyboard.
2. Type *regedit* in the search box and press Enter.
3. Click *yes* at User Account Control.

Navigate to the following key in the left column:

Expand **HKEY\_USERS**

1. Go down the list to find and Expand **DEFAULT**
2. Go down the list to find and Expand **CONTROL PANEL**
3. Go down the list to find and Expand **KEYBOARD**
4. Go down the list to find and open **InitialKeyboardIndicators**
5. Set the value to **2**.

Close regedit and reboot the computer to have this change take place.

## **57. Change or delete your password(s) for your accounts**

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

1. Go to **Settings** (Winkey + I).
2. Click on **Accounts**.
3. Click on **Your info** to verify your current active account.
4. Click **Sign-in options** in the left column.
5. 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.

## **58. 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:

1. Type **netplwiz** at the search bar.
2. From the search results in the column above, click on netplwiz.

3. In the User Accounts Control Panel, deselect the checkbox that says “Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer.”
4. Click OK.
5. Type your password once and then again to confirm it.
6. Click OK again to close the User Accounts tool.
7. When you restart Windows, you’ll now bypass the Lock screen and login screen and move straight to the Desktop screen.

## **59. Add or delete the pictures that identify your accounts**

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

1. Open your Local Account.
2. Under **Create your picture**, click on Browse for one.
3. You will be taken to your picture folder where you can select a picture.
4. 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.

1. Open File Explorer (Windows + E).
2. Expand C drive in the Navigation (left) pane.
3. Expand the Users folder.
4. Expand the Username (your name) folder.
5. Expand the AppData folder.
6. Expand the Roaming folder.
7. Expand the Microsoft folder.
8. Expand the Windows folder.
9. 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.

## **60. How to change the desktop’s background (wallpaper).**

The default 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.

### **61. How to change the windows theme. (dozens are available online)**

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:

1. Open Settings (Windows + I).
2. Click **Personalization**.
3. Click **Themes**.
4. Click **Theme Settings**. The Personalization window opens.
5. In the Personalization window, click the new theme that you want to apply.
6. If you want more choices, click *Get more choices online*.
7. Select from dozens of choices.
8. Close the Personalization window.
9. Close Settings.

### **62. Adjust the sounds that you want to play for different events.**

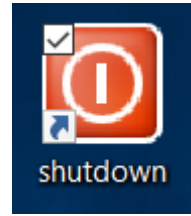
Go to **Settings** (Windows + I), then **Personalization**, then **Themes**. Clicking the *Advanced Sounds Settings* link in the Themes dialog box takes you to a dialog box where you can modify what sounds Windows plays for different events. When you are satisfied with your settings (you can hear the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

### **63. Place a shortcut for shutdown on your desktop**

To create a shortcut icon for Shutdown:

1. Right-click on an open area of the Desktop.
2. Go to New, then Shortcut.
3. Enter **shutdown /p** as the location of the item and press Next. (Note the space between shutdown and /p.)
4. Now name the shortcut *Shutdown* and press Finish.

5. Right-click the shortcut that now appears on your Desktop and navigate to Properties.
6. Choose Change Icon in the Shortcut tab and then OK to leave the warning box.
7. Choose (click) an icon of your choice from the list.
8. Finally, click OK.



#### **64. 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:

1. Click **Settings**. (Windows + I).
2. Click **Personalization**.
3. Click **Taskbar**.
4. Set how you want the taskbar to behave by checking the available settings.
5. Close the Taskbar dialogue screen.

#### **65. Set which 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:

1. Open **Settings**.
2. Click **System**.
3. Click **Notifications & Actions**. The settings for notifications and quick actions are shown.
4. 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.

5. 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.
6. Click the left-pointing arrow (the Back arrow) to go back. The settings for notifications and quick actions are shown.
7. Click Turn System Icons On or Off in the Quick Actions section. A list of system icons is shown.
8. 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 in the Taskbar.
9. Close the Settings window.

## **66. Checking the Calendar.**

Together with the time and date listed near the right side of the Taskbar, you will see a calendar for the current month with the current date highlighted simply by clicking on the time and date box. If you want to see a monthly calendar for a future month, simply click on the right arrow at the top of the calendar to move forward to the future, month by month.

Here's another trick: click on the current month and you will be able to scan through entire years, one at a time, through the next one hundred years.


## **67. 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.

## **68. Notifications in the Action Center advise you of important issues at a glance.**

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  icon itself is located immediately to the right of time and date on the Taskbar and is a brand new feature of Windows 10. The Action Center is where you will receive notifications concerning various programs. Click the icon to open (or press Windows + A). The icon lights up white when you have a new notification waiting. The icon is by default black, and active tiles on it take their color from your system color choices.

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.

Select the action center icon  to see your notifications. Quick actions are also located in the Action Center but they are not directly related to the notifications.

### **YOU DECIDE WHICH APPS ARE ALLOWED TO PROVIDE NOTIFICATIONS**

1. To display the Action Center, click on its taskbar icon or use Windows + A:
2. 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.
3. 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.

## **69. 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:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

## **70. Change the Picture Shown on the Lock Screen**

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

Follow these steps:

1. Open Settings.
2. Click Personalization. All the available personalization settings are shown.
3. Click Lock screen. The lock screen-related settings are shown.
4. In the Choose Your Picture section, select another picture from those that are included in Windows 10, by clicking on it.
5. 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.

## **71. Disable programs that run at startup.**

Windows 10 offers a startup application manager that practically any Windows user can use. It's integrated into the operating system.

Better yet, you can prevent those applications from launching at startup to save memory and CPU cycles, as well as speed up the login process.

There's now a startup manager in the Task Manager you can use to manage your startup programs. Right-click the taskbar and select "Task Manager." 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.

## **72. Stop background apps from running.**

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.

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:

1. Select Settings (Windows + I)
2. Click on Privacy.
3. Click on Background Apps near the bottom of the list.
4. 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.

## **73. 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 it installed from the Microsoft Store, open the Dynamic Theme app from the Start Menu.

**Setting Background:** The Background image can be set by opening the Dynamic Theme app from the Start menu.

- Photo: choose the photo of your choice.
- 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.
- Slideshow: You can choose the Photo album folder containing pictures which will be shown as Slideshow. Multiple folders can be chosen, also. It provides an option to set the timing for how often the picture changes.
- Other System settings

One can also Preview the Bing image of the day. And these settings can be Synchronized across all your devices.

**Setting Lock Screen:** The Lock Screen image can be set by opening the Dynamic Theme app from the Start menu.

The options provided are – System settings, Photo, Bing, Windows Spotlight, One Bing image, One Windows Spotlight image, Slideshow. You can also preview the daily image.

**Daily Bing Image:** In this option 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.

And these settings can be synchronized across devices.

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

The choice of region for Windows Spotlight is not available as the Spotlight image is the same across regions. However, the Windows Spotlight images can be saved to a folder of your choice.

Finally, after you click on *preview of the daily image* and are taken to the Desktop, you can go back to Settings by clicking on the left-pointing arrow in the upper left corner of the desktop window.

#### **74. Customizing 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:

1. Right-click on the Windows Taskbar. Click on Toolbars, and then click Links to select it (a checkmark will be displayed beside it).
2. You will now see "Links" added just to the left of the system tray (Action Center) on the taskbar.
3. To add a website shortcut to the Links bar:
  - a. Access the target website from within Edge.
  - b. Click on the Favorites tab on the Menu bar.
  - c. Click the Add to Favorites Bar. NOTE: If you are using a different browser this feature may not be implemented, or may work differently.
4. To remove a shortcut from the Links bar: Right-click the shortcut in the Links bar, and then click Delete
5. To rearrange how your Favorites show on the Links bar: on the Links bar, drag a shortcut to a new location.

#### **75. Access any of the fifty control panel items.**

Press Windows + X and then press P. (Note that Control Panel has the P underlined.) An alternative method is to right-click on the Windows icon on the left side of the Taskbar and then left-click on the control panel.