

Ungrouping the Taskbar in Windows 11

Microsoft has unveiled several new features that are currently in the works for Windows 11 which are planned to ship later in 2023 as part of the 23H2 release in the fall. One such feature includes a classic Taskbar feature, making an official comeback but with a smart new twist.

Previous versions of Windows had the ability to "ungroup" app icons and show labels on the Taskbar. This was handy for "old school" Windows users who preferred the pre-Windows 7 era Taskbar that didn't hide multiple instances of an app under a single icon. This ability was removed when Windows 11 first launched, as the company wanted to rebuild the Taskbar from the ground up.

Apps on the Taskbar will now be able to show labels and ungroup. But now, Microsoft says it's coming back, with a smarter implementation. The company says that users will be able to manually ungroup and show app icon labels with "just one click," which will reveal all instances of an app on the Taskbar quickly, without needing to turn the feature on permanently.

This will be useful for users who don't mind grouping app icons when not hunting for an app, but would like to have the apps ungrouped when interacting with the Taskbar. This implementation of an old feature should enable that.

Microsoft doesn't say if users will be able to turn off app grouping and enable app labels permanently, but we'll find out soon enough as the company plans to begin flighting this new feature in preview in the coming weeks.