My Windows® 8 Computer for Seniors

Michael Miller

FREE SAMPLE CHAPTER

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My Windows® 8 Computer for Seniors

Michael Miller

que®

800 East 96th Street,
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240 USA

My Windows® 8 Computer for Seniors

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About the Author

Michael Miller is a prolific and popular writer of non-fiction books, known for his ability to explain complex topics to everyday readers. He writes about a variety of topics, including technology, business, and music. His best-selling books for Que include *Using Google Search*, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Computer Basics, Windows 7 Your Way, Your First Notebook PC,* and *Facebook for Grown-Ups*. Worldwide, his books have sold more than 1 million copies.

Find out more at the author's website: www.molehillgroup.com

Follow the author on Twitter: molehillgroup

Dedication

To my mom and dad.

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Keyboard
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In this prologue you learn how to operate Windows 8 with your mouse or keyboard, or with touch-screen gestures.

- ➔ Using Windows 8 with a Mouse or Touchpad
- ➔ Using Windows 8 with a Keyboard
- ➔ Using Windows 8 on a Touchscreen PC

P

Prologue: Basic Operations

Whether you're completely new to computers or just new to Windows 8, there are some basic operations you need to master. On any PC, you can operate Windows 8 with your keyboard or mouse (or, on a notebook PC, your touchpad). On a touchscreen PC, you can also use touch gestures for many operations. Choose whichever approach is more comfortable and convenient for you.

Using Windows 8 with a Mouse or Touchpad

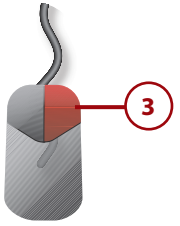
To use Windows efficiently on a desktop or notebook PC, you need to master a few simple operations with your mouse or touchpad, such as pointing and clicking, dragging and dropping, and right-clicking.

Mouse and Touchpad Operations

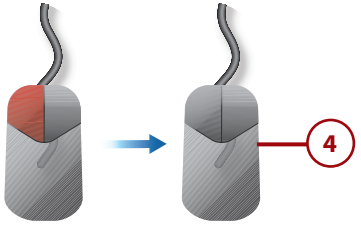
Of the various mouse and touchpad operations, the most common is pointing and clicking—that is, you point at something with the onscreen cursor, and then click the appropriate mouse or touchpad button. Normal clicking uses the left button; however, some operations require that you click the right button instead.

1. To single-click (select) an item, position the cursor over the onscreen item and click the left mouse or touchpad button.

2. To double-click (select or open) an item, position the cursor over the onscreen item and click the left mouse or touchpad button twice in rapid succession.



3. To right-click an item (to display a context-sensitive options menu), position the cursor over the onscreen item, and then click the *right* mouse button.



4. To drag and drop an item from one location to another, position the cursor over the item, click and hold the left mouse button, drag the item to a new position, and then release the mouse button.

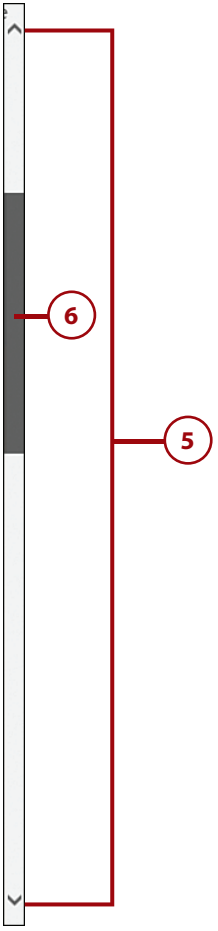
5 To scroll through a window, click the up or down arrow on the window's scrollbar.

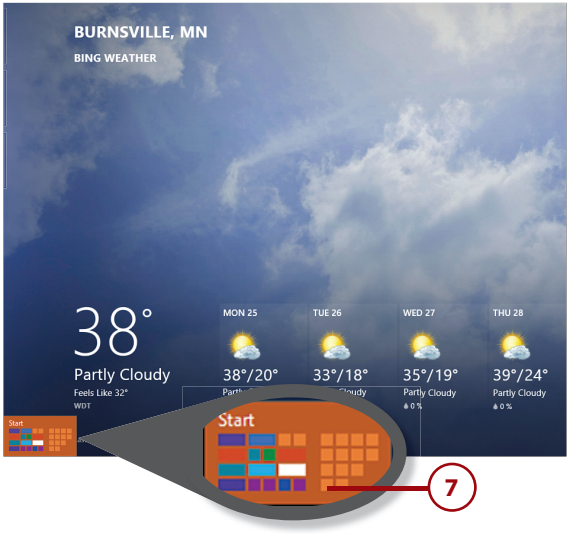
6 To move to a specific place in a long window or document, click the scroll box (between the up and down arrows) and drag it to a new position.

Scroll Wheel

If your mouse has a scroll wheel, you can use it to scroll through a long document. Just roll the wheel back or forward to scroll down or up through a window. Likewise, some notebook touchpads let you drag your finger up or down to scroll through a window.

7 To display the Start screen, mouse over the lower-left corner of the screen and click the Start thumbnail.

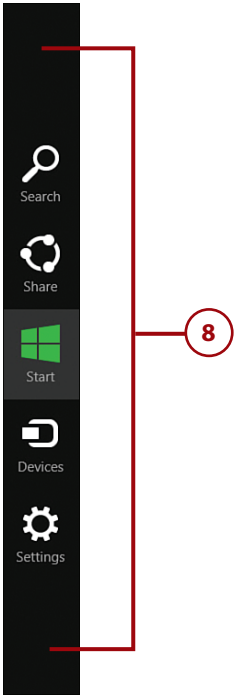




8 To open the Charms bar, mouse over the lower-right or upper-right corner of the screen.

Mouse Over

Another common mouse operation is called the *mouse over*, or *hovering*, where you hold the cursor over an onscreen item without pressing either of the mouse buttons. For example, when you mouse over an icon or menu item, Windows displays a *ToolTip* that tells you a little about the selected item.



Using Windows 8 with a Keyboard

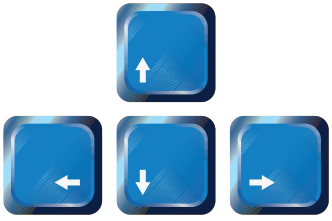
You don't have to use your mouse or touchpad to perform many operations in Windows. Many users prefer to use their keyboards, as it enables them to keep their hands in one place when they're entering text and other information.

Keyboard Operations

Many Windows operations can also be achieved from your computer keyboard, without touching your mouse or touchpad. Several of these operations use special keys that are unique to Windows PC keyboards, such as the Windows and Application keys.

To scroll down any page or screen, press the PageDown key.

To scroll up any page or screen, press the PageUp key.



To launch a program or open a file, use the keyboard's arrow keys to move to the appropriate item and then press the Enter key.

To display a context sensitive pop-up menu (the equivalent of right-clicking an item), use the keyboard's arrow keys to move to that item and then press the Application key.

To cancel or "back out" of the current operation, press the Esc key.

To rename a file, use the keyboard's arrow keys to move to that file and then press the F2 key.

To access an application's Help system, press the F1 key.

To display the Start screen, press the Windows key.

To open the Charms bar, press the Windows+C keys.

Using Windows 8 on a Touchscreen PC

If you're using Windows on a computer or tablet with a touchscreen display, you'll be using your fingers instead of a mouse to do what you need to do. To that end, it's important to learn some essential touchscreen operations.

It's Not All Good

Touchscreen PCs

Few PCs sold today have touchscreen displays, as this technology typically adds several hundred dollars to the computer's price. There's no point in touching or swiping a non-touchscreen display, as it won't do anything. Save your touch gestures for PCs with true touchscreen displays.

Touchscreen Operations

Windows 8 was designed with touchscreens in mind. Most operations can be performed without a mouse or keyboard, using simple touch gestures instead.

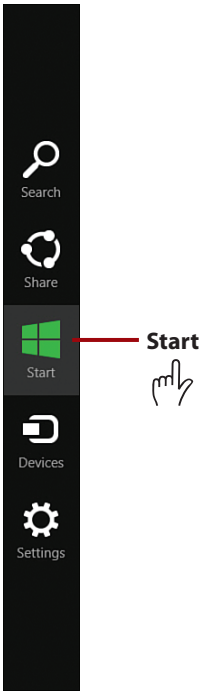
To "click" or select an item on a touchscreen display, tap the item with the tip of your finger and release.

To "right-click" an item on a touchscreen display (typically displays a context-sensitive options menu), press and hold the item with the tip of your finger.

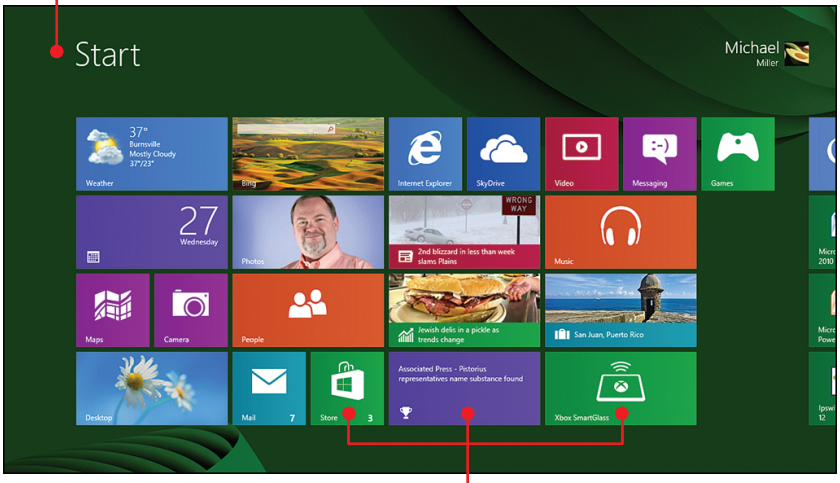
To scroll up or down a page, swipe the screen in the desired direction.

To open the Charms bar, touch the right edge of the screen and swipe to the left.

To display the Start screen, open the Charms bar and then tap Start.



Start screen



Tiles

In this chapter you find out how to do your current tasks on a new Windows 8 computer.

- ➔ Logging in with the New Lock Screen
- ➔ Launching Apps from the New Start Screen
- ➔ Using New and Traditional Apps
- ➔ Exploring Improved System Tools
- ➔ Configuring Options from the Charms Bar
- ➔ Relearning Essential Operations

3

Using Windows 8—If You've Used Windows Before

If you've used a computer before, it's likely that you find Windows 8 a tad confusing. That's natural; the Windows 8 interface is unlike anything you've seen before.

You see, Windows 8 represents a new approach to computing. Microsoft's goal was to introduce a single operating system that provides a consistent experience across different types of devices—computers, tablets, and smartphones. To that end, Windows 8 adopts many features formerly found on tablets and smartphones, such as full-screen applications and touchscreen operation, and adapts them to the computer screen.

These changes make it somewhat challenging for you to use your new Windows 8 computer to do the same tasks you did with an older version of Windows. There's a lot that's different, which means you need to relearn how to use Windows—and rediscover where Microsoft put everything.

Logging in with the New Lock Screen

On previous versions of Windows, you were used to logging into Windows from a fairly innocuous log-in screen, using your own unique username and password. (Maybe; you could have opted to log in without a password.) This sort of user-specific log-in remains in Windows 8, but is now done from what is called the Lock screen.

The Windows 8 Lock screen resembles the lock screen you find on an iPhone or iPad. The Lock screen itself consists of a background image and some key pieces of "live" information, such as current weather or how many unread email messages are waiting for you. It's also where you log into your Windows user account with your own unique password.

How you configure your user account is something else that's different in Windows 8. Unlike previous versions of Windows, you can opt to log into your computer using your Microsoft Account. This option lets you access information from other Microsoft sites (such as Hotmail and Bing) on your new computer. It also lets you keep your configuration settings when you move to another Windows 8 computer; just log in with the same Microsoft Account and the new computer will look the same as your previous one.

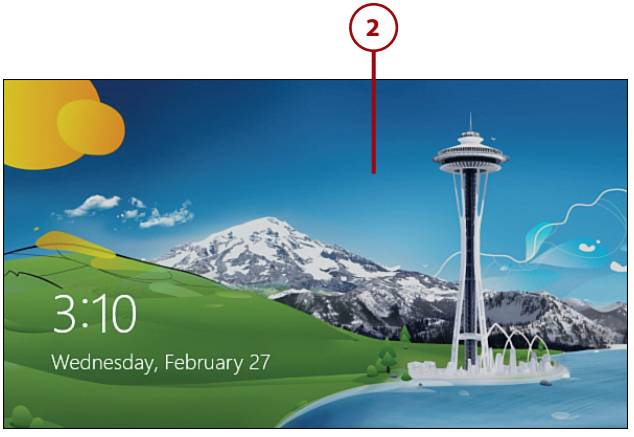
Local Account

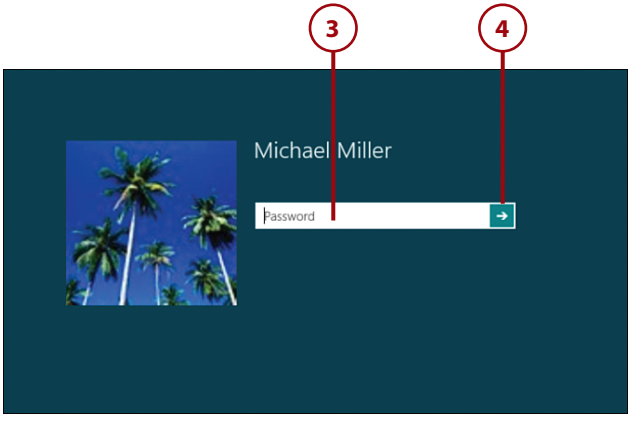
You can still opt to log into your Windows 8 computer the traditional way, using a local user account. Note that local accounts don't have the same functionality as accounts linked to your Microsoft Account online; in particular, you won't be able to share or tap into content stored online, such as your online contacts or personalized news and weather information.

Log Into Windows 8

Logging into your Windows 8 PC is a fairly straight-ahead affair. Just select your user account and enter your password.

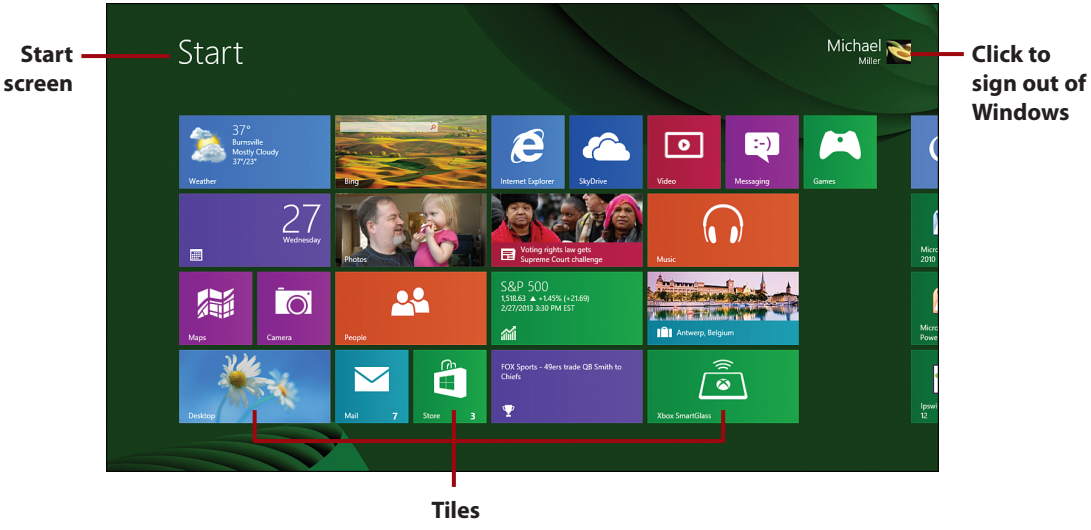
1. Power on your computer.
2. After a brief period, the Windows Lock screen displays; press any key or tap anywhere on the screen to display your username.
3. Enter your password.
4. Press Enter or click/tap the right-arrow button to display the Windows Start screen.





Launching Apps from the New Start Screen

After you log into your Windows 8 computer, you're greeted with something completely new—the Start screen. You're used to seeing the Windows desktop (which still exists; more on that later), but instead you see a collection of large, colorful, sometimes animated tiles against a colored background. This is your new home base in Windows 8.



The Start screen is where you find and launch all your programs, applications, and utilities. Instead of using a Start menu on the desktop, as was the case with all versions of Windows since Windows 95, you now find most of the same options and operations on the Start screen.

The main area of the Start screen consists of a series of tiles. Each tile represents a particular app, program, document, or function. At the top-right corner of the screen is your name and profile picture. Click or tap your name to sign out of Windows, lock the screen, or change your account picture.

Many users find the Start screen more functional than the old Start menu. Instead of displaying only the name of a program, the Start screen often displays "live" information from an application. For example, the tile for Windows 8's Weather app displays your current temperature and weather conditions; the tile for the News app displays a scrolling display of current headlines. Some tiles even

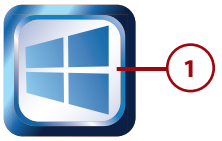
display current content—for example, the Photos tile displays your most recently viewed pictures, and the Desktop tile displays the desktop background. This lets you view some information without having to launch the actual applications.

Customizing Your Tiles

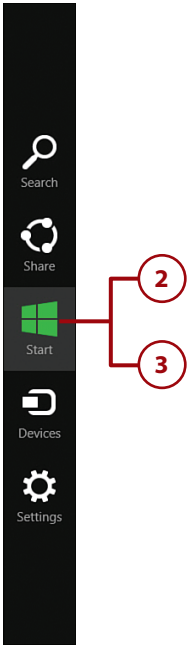
You can easily rearrange the tiles on the Start screen, as well as add new tiles and delete unused ones. Learn more in Chapter 5, "Personalizing Windows 8."

Display the Start Screen

Because there is no longer a Start menu in Windows 8, you have to return to the Start screen when you want to open a new application or document. There are three ways to do this, depending on how you like to use your computer.

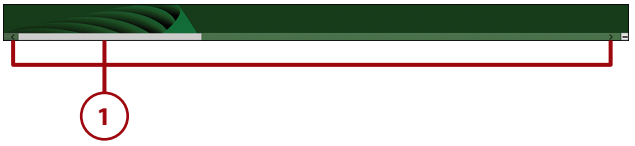


1. From your computer keyboard, press the Windows key. *Or…*
2. …with your mouse, mouse over the lower-right or upper-left corner of the screen to display the Charms bar and then click Start. *Or…*
3. …on a touchscreen device, touch the right edge of the screen and swipe left to display the Charms bar and then tap Start.



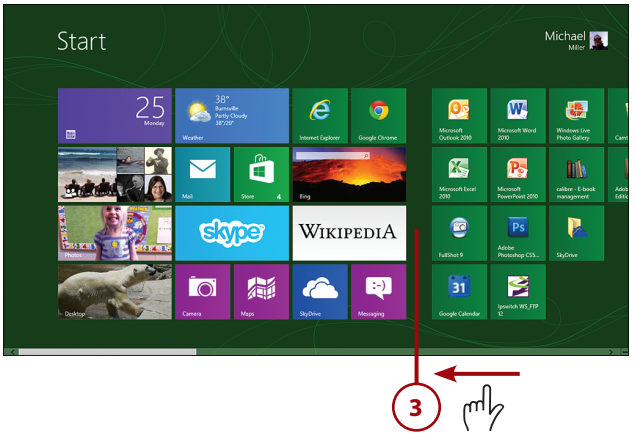
Scroll Through the Start Screen

There are probably more tiles on your Start screen than can be displayed on a single screen of your computer display. To view all your Start tiles, you need to scroll the screen left or right. There are several ways to do this.



1. To scroll with your mouse, click and drag the horizontal scrollbar at the bottom of the screen, or click the right and left scroll arrows on either side of the scrollbar. If your mouse has a scroll wheel, you can use the scroll wheel to scroll right (down) or left (up) through the tiles. *Or…*

2. …to scroll with your keyboard, one screen at a time, press the PageDown button (scrolls right) or the PageUp button (scrolls left). To scroll one tile at a time, press the left arrow or right arrow buttons. *Or…*

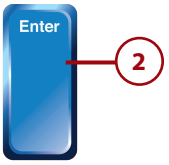


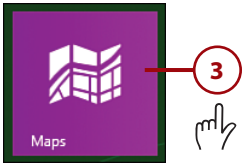
3. …to scroll with a touchscreen display, swipe the screen with your finger right to left to scroll right, or left to right to scroll left.

Open a Tile

Each tile on the Start screen represents a specific app or document. There are three ways to launch an app or open a document from these tiles.

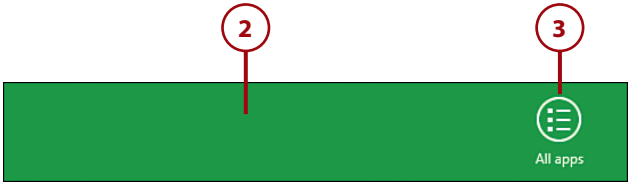
1. To open a tile with your mouse, click the tile, using the left mouse button. *Or…*
2. …to open a tile with your keyboard, use your keyboard's arrow keys to move to that tile, then press the Enter key. *Or…*
3. …to open a tile on a touch-screen display, tap the tile with your finger.

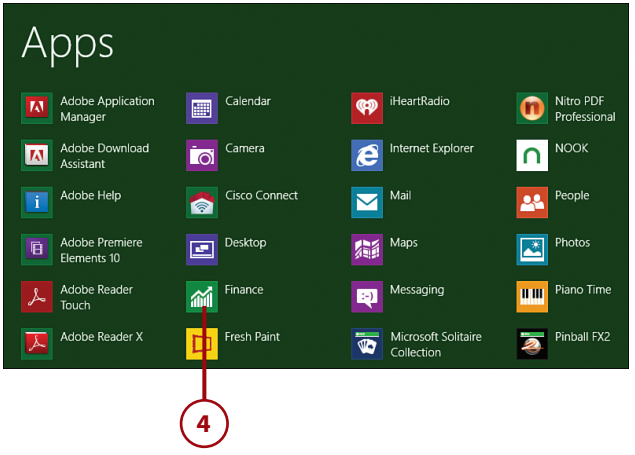




Find Additional Apps and Utilities

Most of the applications and utilities installed on your computer should automatically appear on the Start screen, just as they used to do on the old Start menu. There might be some older or lesser-used programs, however, that do not end up on the Start screen by default. For that reason, Windows 8 includes a new All Apps screen that lists all the applications and utilities installed on your computer.





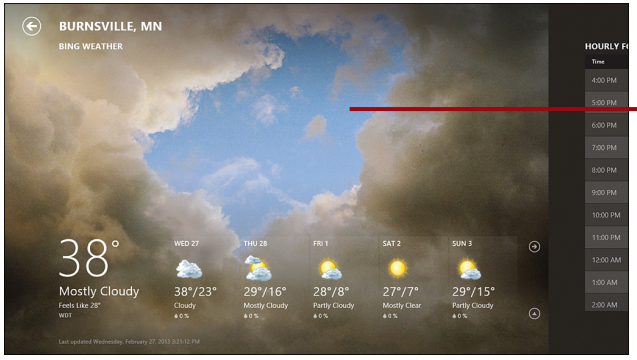
1. Press the Windows key to open the Start screen.
2. Right-click anywhere in an open area to display the Options bar.
3. Tap or click All Apps to display the All Apps screen.
4. Click or tap an app's tile to open it.

Add to the Start Screen

To add an app to the Start screen, right-click the app to display the Options bar and then click Pin to Start.

Using New and Traditional Apps

Because Windows 8 was created with the smaller screens of tablets and smartphones in mind, new applications developed for Windows 8 are designed for full-screen operation. This means that all new Windows 8 apps open to fill the entire screen; you can't display multiple Windows 8 apps in tiled or stacked windows.



Windows 8's full-screen Weather app

Open the Desktop

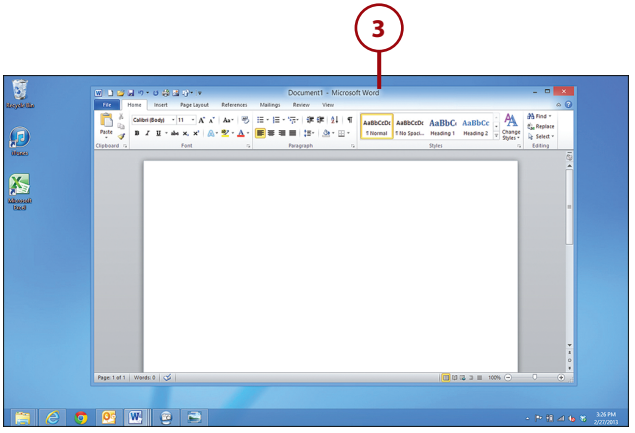
Fortunately, you're not limited to using these full-screen Windows 8 apps. You can still run traditional applications, such as Microsoft Office, in Windows 8. You do so from the Windows 8 Desktop, which is pretty much like the desktop you're used to from previous versions of Windows. In fact, if you have a lot of older programs that you like to use, it's likely that you'll spend most of your time in Windows 8's Desktop mode.

1. Press the Windows key to open the Start menu.
2. Click or tap the Desktop tile.

Open a Traditional Desktop App

The Windows 8 Desktop looks and works much the same as the traditional desktop in Windows 7 or Windows Vista. That is, applications open in separate windows that can be resized and moved around the Desktop. And you can still "pin" application shortcuts directly to the Desktop or to the Taskbar that appears at the bottom of the Desktop.

There are some changes to the Desktop, however. First, you no longer have the see-through windows found in the Aero interface of Windows 7 and Windows Vista; all window frames are solid. More important, there is no longer a Start button or Start menu on the Desktop that you use to open new programs and utilities. When you want to open a new application or utility, you have to return to the Windows 8 Start screen. You might find this more time-consuming than using the old Start menu, and I'd agree—but that's how Microsoft designed it.



1. Press the Windows key to open the Start screen.
2. Scroll to and then click or tap the tile for the application you want to open.
3. The Desktop opens, with the selected application in its own window. You can now use the application as you would normally.

>>>Go Further

REPLACING THE START MENU

If you've been using Windows for a while, it's hard to understand why Microsoft made so many changes in Windows 8—especially removing the Start menu. These changes force us to relearn how to do many tasks we've been doing the same way for years, and most people—especially seniors—don't particularly like having to relearn this sort of stuff. I know I don't.

There are, however, some options for replacing the absent Start menu in Windows 8. These options don't come from Microsoft, but rather from third parties who have created add-on utilities that return the functionality of the old Start menu to the new Windows 8 Desktop. Most of these utilities are free, and they're all relatively easy to download and install on your Windows 8 PC.

I recommend the following Start menu replacement programs:

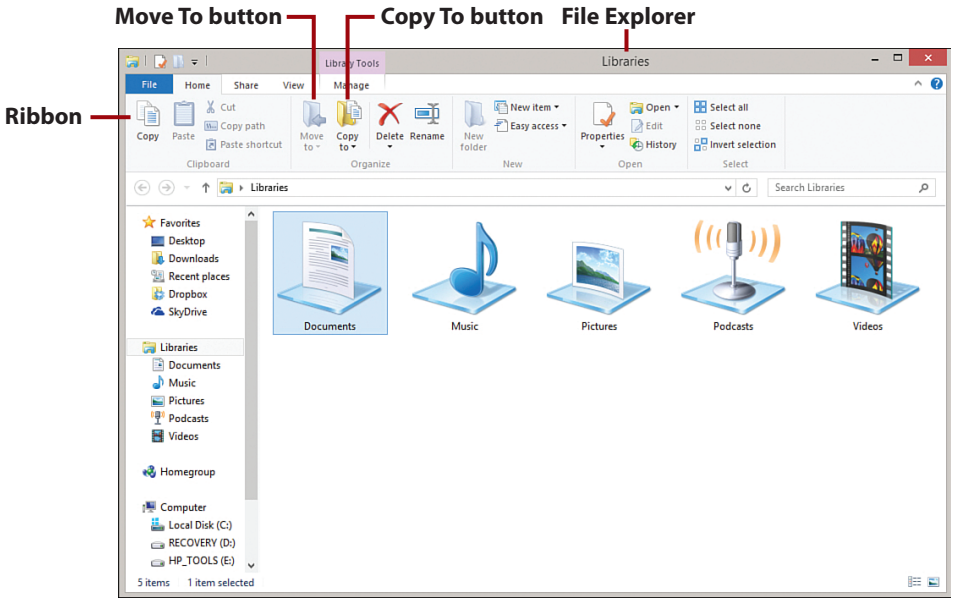
- Classic Shell (www.classicshell.net)
- IOBit StartMenu8 (www.iobit.com/iobitstartmenu8.php)
- Pokki (www.pokki.com/windows-8-start-menu)
- Start8 (www.stardock.com/products/start8/)

With one of these Start menu replacements installed, you don't ever have to back out to the Start screen to launch new programs. Just log into Windows 8, open the Desktop, and stay there—using the Start menu replacement just as you did the old Start menu before.

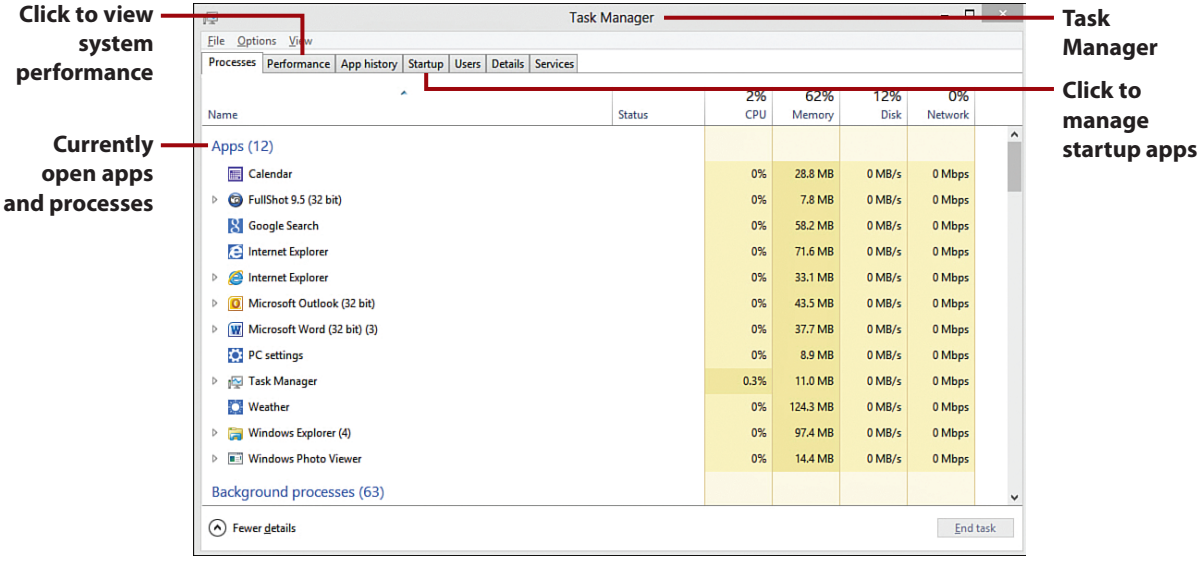
Exploring Improved System Tools

As much as there might be to complain about in Windows 8, there are also some welcome improvements. In particular, Microsoft has improved some of the most-used system utilities, to make them more intuitive and easier to use.

For example, the new File Explorer, which replaces the old Windows Explorer, features an improved ribbon interface, like the one in recent versions of Microsoft Office. Instead of using pull-down menus to access obscure file management commands, the File Explorer ribbons put the most common operations front and center, and make them easier to do, too. Instead of pulling down the File menu to cut, copy, and paste files, just use the Move To and Copy To buttons on the File Manager's Home ribbon. It's a major improvement.



In addition, the Task Manager in Windows 8 is much easier to use and more informative than the one found in previous versions of Windows. You can use the new Task Manager to close frozen applications, view system performance, and even manage which programs automatically open when Windows starts up. (To open the Task Manager, right-click the Taskbar on the Desktop and select Task Manager.)



Finally, I've found that Windows 8 runs faster and more reliably than older versions of Windows—even on older PCs. So if you upgraded an old PC to Windows 8, it should seem zippier than it did before.

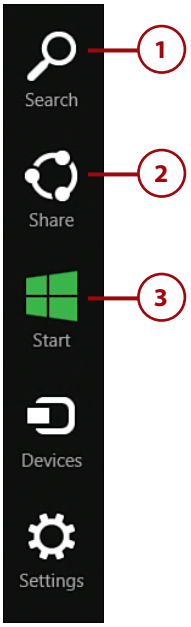
Configuring Options from the Charms Bar

In previous versions of Windows, you configured various system options from the Control Panel. Although the Control Panel still exists in Windows 8 (it's accessible from the All Apps screen), many common options are configurable from a new Charms bar.

The Charms bar slides in from the right side of the screen when you move your mouse to either the top-right or bottom-right corner of any screen. You can also open the Charms bar by pressing Windows+C.

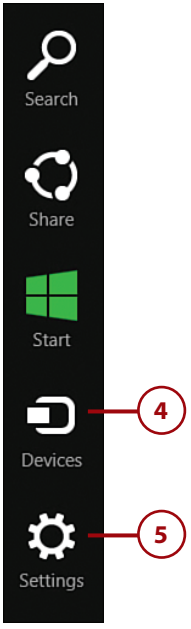
Configure Windows 8 from the Charms Bar

The Charms bar is context-sensitive. That is, the detailed options available vary from program to program. When you open the Charms bar from the Start screen, you see Windows-specific options; when you open it from other applications, you see options specific to that program.



1. To search your computer for apps and documents, click or tap Search.
2. To share the content of the current app with others, via email and other services, click or tap Share.
3. To return to the Start screen from any other location, click or tap Start.

4. To print the current document, or to configure any external devices connected to your computer, click or tap Devices.
5. To access and configure various Windows and application settings, and to shut down your computer, click or tap Settings.



Relearning Essential Operations

As previously noted, Windows 8 was designed with tablets and smartphones in mind. What these devices have in common is the touchscreen display—that is, you operate your iPad or iPhone with your fingers, not with a keyboard or mouse.

Similarly, Windows 8 can be operated with touch gestures—if your PC has a touchscreen display, that is. In fact, many operations, such as displaying the Charms bar or viewing running apps, are much easier and more intuitive on a touchscreen display.

All of these features are nice if your new PC has a touchscreen display—which few computers today do. If your PC doesn't have a touchscreen display, you have to learn the keyboard shortcuts or mouse movements necessary to replicate the touch gestures.

To ease your way into using Windows 8 on your new computer, the following table details how to perform some of the most useful operations—with a keyboard, mouse, or touchscreen display. (Note that not all operations can be performed in all three ways.)

Essential Windows 8 Operations

Operation	Keyboard	Mouse	Touchscreen
Close currently running app or window	Alt+Q	Drag the top of the app to the bottom of the screen; for Desktop apps, click the X button in top-right corner of the window.	Touch the top edge of the screen and swipe down about halfway through the screen.
Display Charms bar	Windows+C	Mouse over the upper- or lower-right corner of screen.	Touch the right edge of the screen and swipe to the left.
Display context-sensitive options menu	Application (menu) key	Right-click.	Press and hold the item with your finger.
Display Options bar	Windows+Z	Right-click anywhere on the screen.	Touch the top or bottom of the screen and swipe toward the middle.
Display two Windows 8 apps side-by-side (snap the apps)	N/A	Mouse over the top-left corner of the screen and then move the cursor down to display thumbnails of all open apps; select the app to snap and drag its (large) thumbnail to either the left or right side of the screen and then release the mouse button.	Touch the left edge of the screen, drag your finger to the right, and then quickly drag it back to the left to display the switcher panel; press and drag the app you'd like to snap to the right and then drop it on either the left or right edge of the screen.
Lock computer	Win+L	From the Start screen, click *username*, Lock (where *username* is the username you use).	From the Start screen, tap *username*, Lock (where *username* is the username you use).
Move an item to a new location	N/A	Click and drag, then release.	Press and hold, drag to new location, and then release.
Open a program or document	Enter	Click (sometimes double-click).	Tap.
Open All Apps Window	From Start screen, press Ctrl+Tab	From the Start screen, display the Options bar and click All Apps.	From the Start screen, display the Options bar and tap All Apps.
Open Windows Help	Windows+F1	From the Charms bar, click Settings, Help.	From the Charms bar, tap Settings, Help.

Operation	Keyboard	Mouse	Touchscreen
Return to Start screen	Windows key	Mouse over the lower-left corner of the screen and then click the Start screen thumbnail.	Open the Charms bar and tap Start.
Scroll down	PageDown or down arrow	Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel.	Swipe up.
Scroll left	PageUp or left arrow	Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel.	Swipe right.
Scroll right	PageDown or right arrow	Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel.	Swipe left.
Scroll up	PageUp or up arrow	Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel.	Swipe down.
Search	Windows+Q	Display the Charms bar and click Search.	Display the Charms bar and tap Search.
Shut down Windows	Alt+F4	From the Charms bar, click Settings, Power, Shut Down.	From the Charms bar, tap Settings, Power, Shut Down.
Switch to previous application	N/A	N/A	Touch the left edge of the screen and swipe rapidly to the right.
View or switch to other open apps	Alt+Tab	Mouse over the top-left corner of the screen and then move the cursor downward to display thumbnails of all open documents; click a thumbnail to switch to that item.	Touch the left edge of the screen, drag your finger to the right, and then quickly drag it back to the left; you can then tap any app thumbnail to switch to that app.
Zoom in to the Start screen	N/A	Click anywhere on the zoomed out screen; or press Ctrl key then use the mouse scroll wheel.	Use two fingers to touch two adjacent points on the screen and then move your fingers apart.
Zoom out of the Start screen	N/A	Click the – button in the lower-right corner of the Start screen; or press the Ctrl key and then use the mouse scroll wheel.	Use two fingers at two distant points on the screen and then pinch your fingers in toward each other.

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