

Computer Basics

Windows®
8.1
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ABSOLUTE BEGINNER'S GUIDE

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Seventh Edition

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Michael Miller

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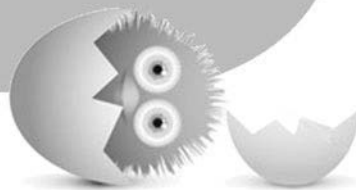
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**ABSOLUTE
BEGINNER'S
GUIDE**



Michael Miller

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800 East 96th Street,
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Seventh Edition

Computer Basics Absolute Beginner's Guide, Seventh Edition

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About the Author

Michael Miller is a successful and prolific author with a reputation for practical advice and technical accuracy and an unerring empathy for the needs of his readers.

Mr. Miller has written more than 150 best-selling books over the past two decades. His books for Que include *Easy Computer Basics*, *My Windows 8.1 Computer for Seniors*, *My Facebook for Seniors*, *Facebook for Grown-Ups*, *Easy Facebook*, *My Pinterest*, and *The Ultimate Digital Music Guide*. He is known for his casual, easy-to-read writing style and his practical, real-world advice—as well as his ability to explain a wide variety of complex topics to an everyday audience.

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Dedication

To Sherry—finally and forever.

Acknowledgments

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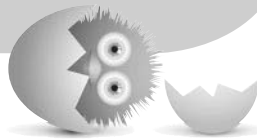
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION



Because this is the *Computer Basics Absolute Beginner's Guide*, let's start at the absolute beginning, which is this: Computers aren't supposed to be scary. Intimidating? Sometimes. Difficult to use? Perhaps. Inherently unreliable? Most definitely. (Although they're much better than they used to be.)

But scary? Definitely not.

Computers aren't scary because there's nothing they can do to hurt you (unless you drop your notebook PC on your foot, that is). And there's not much you can do to hurt them, either. It's kind of a wary coexistence between man and machine, but the relationship has the potential to be beneficial—to you, anyway.

Many people think that they're scared of computers because they're unfamiliar with them. But that isn't really true.

You see, even if you've never actually used a computer before, you've been exposed to computers and all they can do for the past three decades or so. Whenever you make a deposit at your bank, you're working with computers. Whenever you make a purchase at a retail store, you're working with computers. Whenever you watch a television show or read a newspaper article or look at a picture in a magazine, you're working with computers.

That's because computers are used in all those applications. Somebody, somewhere, is working behind the scenes with a computer to manage your bank account and monitor your credit card purchases.

In fact, it's difficult to imagine, here in the 21st century, how we ever got by without all those keyboards, mice, and monitors. (Or, for that matter, the Internet.)

However, just because computers have been around for a while doesn't mean that everyone knows how to use them. It's not unusual to feel a little trepidation the first time you sit down in front of that intimidating display and keyboard. Which keys should you press? What do people mean by double-clicking the mouse? And what are all those little pictures onscreen?

As foreign as all this might seem at first, computers really aren't that hard to understand—or use. You have to learn a few basic concepts, of course (all the pressing and clicking and whatnot), and it helps to understand exactly what part of the system does what. But once you get the hang of things, computers really are easy to use.

Which, of course, is where this book comes in.

Computer Basics Absolute Beginner's Guide, Windows 8.1 Edition, will help you figure out how to use your new computer system. You'll learn how computers work, how to connect all the pieces and parts (if your computer has pieces and parts, that is; not all do), and how to start using them. You'll learn about computer hardware and software, about the Microsoft Windows 8.1 operating system, and about the Internet. And after you're comfortable with the basic concepts (which won't take too long, trust me), you'll learn how to actually do stuff.

You'll learn how to do useful stuff, such as writing letters and scheduling appointments; fun stuff, such as listening to music, watching movies and TV shows, and viewing digital photos; online stuff, such as searching for information, sending email, and keeping up with friends and family via Facebook and other social networks; and essential stuff, such as copying files, troubleshooting problems, and protecting against malware and computer attacks.

All you have to do is sit yourself down in front of your computer, try not to be scared (there's nothing to be scared of, really), and work your way through the chapters and activities in this book. And remember that computers aren't difficult to use, they don't break easily, and they let you do all sorts of fun and useful things once you get the hang of them. Really!

How This Book Is Organized

This book is organized into eight main parts, as follows:

- **Part I, “Understanding Computers and Similar Devices,”** discusses all the different types of computers available today; describes all the pieces and parts of desktop, notebook, and tablet PCs; and talks about how to connect everything to get your new system up and running.
- **Part II, “Using Windows,”** introduces the backbone of your entire system, the Microsoft Windows operating system—in particular, Windows 8.1. You’ll learn how Windows 8.1 works, how it’s different from previous versions of Windows, and how to find things on the Start screen and beyond. You’ll also learn how to use Windows to perform basic tasks, such as copying and deleting files and folders.
- **Part III, “Setting Up the Rest of Your Computer System,”** talks about all those things you connect to your computer—printers, external hard drives, USB thumb drives, and the like. You’ll also learn how to connect your new PC to other computers and devices in a home network.
- **Part IV, “Using the Internet,”** is all about going online. You’ll discover how to connect to the Internet and surf the Web with Internet Explorer. You’ll also learn how to search for information, do research, shop, and even sell things online. This is the fun part of the book.
- **Part V, “Communicating Online,”** is all about keeping in touch. You’ll find out how to send and receive email, of course, but also how to get started with social networking, on Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, and other social networks. It’s how everyone’s keeping in touch these days.
- **Part VI, “Working with Apps,”** tells you everything you need to know about using what we used to call software programs and now call “apps.” You’ll learn how apps work, which apps are included in Windows 8.1, and where to find more apps. (This last bit covers Microsoft’s Windows Store, which is where a lot of fun apps can be had.)
- **Part VII, “Doing Fun and Useful Stuff with Your PC,”** brings more fun—and a little work. You’ll learn all about getting productive with Microsoft Office, as well as how to manage your schedule with the Windows Calendar app. You’ll also discover how to use your PC to manage, edit, and view digital photos; listen to music, both on your PC and over the Internet; and watch movies and TV shows online. Like I said, fun and useful stuff.

- **Part VIII, “Keeping Your System Up and Running,”** contains all the boring (but necessary) information you need to know to keep your new PC in tip-top shape. You’ll learn how to protect against Internet threats (including viruses, spyware, and spam), as well as how to perform routine computer maintenance. You’ll even learn how to troubleshoot problems and, if necessary, restore, refresh, or reset your entire system.

Taken together, the 30 chapters in this book will help you progress from absolute beginner to experienced computer user. Just read what you need, and before long you’ll be using your computer like a pro!

Which Version of Windows?

This edition of *Computer Basics Absolute Beginner’s Guide* is written for computers running the latest version of Microsoft’s operating system, dubbed Windows 8.1. If you’re running previous versions of Windows, you’ll be better off with previous editions of this book. There are editions out there for Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, even Windows XP. If you can’t find a particular edition at your local bookstore, look for it online.

Conventions Used in This Book

I hope that this book is easy enough to figure out on its own, without requiring its own instruction manual. As you read through the pages, however, it helps to know precisely how I’ve presented specific types of information.

Menu Commands

Most computer programs operate via a series of pull-down menus. You use your mouse to pull down a menu and then select an option from that menu. This sort of operation is indicated like this throughout the book:

Select File, Save

or

Right-click the file and select Properties from the pop-up menu.

All you have to do is follow the instructions in order, using your mouse to click each item in turn. When submenus are tacked onto the main menu, just keep clicking the selections until you come to the last one—which should open the program or activate the command you want!

By the way, because Windows 8.1 is optimized for touchscreen devices, I also include touchscreen instructions where practical. As you'll learn throughout the book, if you have a touchscreen PC, there's a whole host of screen-based gestures and commands you can use to do what you need to do.

Shortcut Key Combinations

When you're using your computer keyboard, sometimes you have to press two keys at the same time. These two-key combinations are called *shortcut keys* and are shown as the key names joined with a plus sign (+).

For example, Ctrl+W indicates that you should press the W key while holding down the Ctrl key. It's no more complex than that.

Web Page Addresses

This book contains a lot of web page addresses. (That's because you'll probably be spending a lot of time on the Internet.)

Technically, a web page address is supposed to start with `http://` (as in `http://www.molehillgroup.com`). Because Internet Explorer and other web browsers automatically insert this piece of the address, however, you don't have to type it—and I haven't included it in any of the addresses in this book.

Special Elements

This book also includes a few special elements that provide additional information not included in the basic text. These elements are designed to supplement the text to make your learning faster, easier, and more efficient.



TIP A *tip* is a piece of advice—a little trick, actually—that helps you use your computer more effectively or maneuver around problems or limitations.



NOTE A *note* is designed to provide information that is generally useful but not specifically necessary for what you're doing at the moment. Some are like extended tips—interesting, but not essential.



CAUTION A *caution* tells you to beware of a potentially dangerous act or situation. In some cases, ignoring a caution could cause you significant problems—so pay attention to them!

Let Me Know What You Think

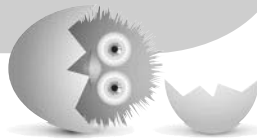
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IN THIS CHAPTER

- Introducing Microsoft Windows
- Starting and Logging into Windows
- Using Windows with a Mouse
- Using Windows with a Touchscreen Display
- Learning Important Windows Operations
- Getting Help in Windows
- Shutting Down Windows—and Your Computer

4



GETTING TO KNOW WINDOWS 8.1

As you learned in Chapter 1, “How Personal Computers Work,” the software and operating system make your hardware work. The operating system for most personal computers is Microsoft Windows, and you need to know how to use Windows to use your PC. Windows pretty much runs your computer for you; if you don’t know your way around Windows, you won’t be able to do much of anything on your new PC.

Introducing Microsoft Windows

Microsoft Windows is a type of software called an *operating system*. An operating system does what its name implies—*operates* your computer system, working in the background every time you turn on your PC.

Equally important, Windows is what you see when you first turn on your computer, after everything turns on and boots up. Windows is your gateway to every program and app you run on your computer and to all the documents and files you view and edit.

Welcome to Windows 8.1—If You've Used an Older Version of Windows

If you've recently purchased a new PC, the version of Windows on your PC is probably Windows 8.1. Microsoft has released different versions of Windows over the years, and Windows 8.1 (released in October 2013) is the latest—which is why it comes preinstalled on most new PCs.



NOTE If your computer is running an older version of Windows, you should pick up a previous edition of this book covering that operating system. There are editions that cover Windows 8, Windows 7, and Windows Vista; you should be able to find these editions at Amazon.com and other online booksellers.

If you are moving to Windows 8.1 from a version of Windows prior to Windows 8 (Windows 7, Windows Vista, or Windows XP), you're in for a big surprise—Windows 8.1 looks and acts completely different from what you're used to. Don't worry, though; everything that was in the old Windows is still in the new Windows—it's just in a slightly different place, and you have to do something different to get to it.



NOTE You can upgrade a computer running an older version of Windows to Windows 8.1—but you probably don't want to. Basic operation is so different in Windows 8.1 that you'll face significant retraining time if you move to the new version.

So what did Microsoft change in Windows 8? Lots! Here's a short list of changes from older versions of Windows:

- The Start button and Start menu were removed from the traditional desktop.

- A new Start screen was introduced to launch all applications—part of what Microsoft dubbed the “Modern” interface.
- Full-screen Modern apps were introduced, along with a new online Windows Store to purchase and download them.
- Touchscreen operation was introduced for the Modern interface (actually, Microsoft designed the Modern interface for touchscreen use).
- The desktop’s translucent “Aero” interface was changed to a flatter, nontransparent look.
- All the “gadgets” from the traditional desktop were removed.
- The concept of online user accounts was introduced, so you could log into Windows using your Microsoft account information.
- Microsoft’s SkyDrive cloud storage service was integrated into the Windows operating system.
- Internet Explorer 10 was included, in both desktop and full-screen Modern versions.
- Windows Explorer was renamed to File Explorer, with a new ribbon interface.
- The Task Manager tool was completely overhauled to make it more functional.
- The Windows Defender antivirus/antispyware tool was included, free of charge.
- Options to both refresh and reset the operating system in case of severe system problems were added.

Naturally, all these Windows 8 changes carry over to Windows 8.1.

For most users, the most different part of Windows 8/8.1 is the graphical user interface, or GUI. Where versions of Windows prior to Windows 8 operated from something called the Windows desktop, Windows 8 and Windows 8.1 hide the desktop (it’s still there, just buried) and the old Start menu and instead rely on a tile-based Start screen. The new Windows puts everything front and center; launching an app or opening a file is as easy as scrolling to the right tile and then clicking or tapping it.

The new Windows 8/8.1 interface isn’t just for computers, by the way; it looks right at home on a touchscreen device, such as a tablet PC or smartphone—in fact, it’s touch enabled. That means you can just as easily operate Windows 8.1 with a tap and a swipe of your finger (on a touchscreen device, that is) as you can with a mouse or keyboard.

If you're a brand-new computer user, you'll find the Windows 8.1 interface easy to understand and even easier to use. If you've used other versions of Windows in the past, however, you might find the Windows 8.1 interface to be a little confusing; nothing looks the same, and nothing is where you expect it to be. It requires a bit of relearning, but after you get past that, Windows 8.1 is actually quite easy to use.

Welcome to Windows 8.1—If You've Used Windows 8

If you're moving to Windows 8.1 from Windows 8, its immediate predecessor, you won't see a lot of dramatic differences between the two versions. That said, Windows 8.1 includes a number of incremental improvements that should make it a little easier to use your computer.

For those of you who were early adopters of Windows 8, you know that it represented a major change from older versions of Windows—too big a change for most people. Windows 8's new Modern interface alienated a lot of users, who resented having to change the way they worked with their computers.

Segue to Windows 8.1, which was released just about a year after Windows 8. Windows 8.1 is a minor update to the Windows 8 operating system, but one that fixes a lot of the problems that bugged people about its predecessor. The changes primarily affect the Modern interface and help users work more consistently in a single environment (either Modern or traditional desktop) without having to needlessly shift between the two.

So if you've been using Windows 8, here's what you'll find new and improved in Windows 8.1:

- The Start button is returned to the desktop, although there's still no Start menu; instead, clicking the Start button displays the Modern Start screen.
- You can now "boot" directly to the desktop on startup, bypassing the Start screen.
- The Start screen is more customizable, including the introduction of two new tile sizes.
- You can use the desktop background as the background for the Start screen, so the switch between desktop and Modern environments is less jarring.
- The Lock screen can now display a photo slideshow.
- There are more system configuration options within the Modern interface, so you don't have to open the desktop Control Panel to make most changes.
- Bing web search is added to the traditional Windows file/system search.

- Microsoft's SkyDrive cloud storage is more fully integrated throughout the operating system.
- There are additional "snap" options for displaying multiple Modern apps onscreen at the same time.
- The Windows Store is completely revamped to make it easier to use.
- The Xbox Music, Xbox Video, and Photos apps are also much improved.
- There are several new Modern apps, including Calculator, Alarm, Health & Fitness, and Food & Drink.
- Internet Explorer 11 is included, in both desktop and Modern versions—with major interface changes to the Modern version.

Some of these changes are relatively minor, some more noticeable, but all are designed to make Windows 8.1 more useable on either a touchscreen or a traditional computing device. If you've been complaining about Windows 8, you'll find that the Windows 8.1 update addresses most of your issues.

Different Versions of Windows 8.1

Not to confuse you, but there are four different versions of Windows 8.1, each with a slightly different feature set. Which version you have depends on which was installed by your PC's manufacturer.

Most consumer-oriented PCs should be running the basic version, called simply Windows 8.1. This version is designed for home use and comes with all the functionality the average user needs.

Windows 8.1 Pro is designed for professional and business users. The primary additions to this version are features for large businesses and professional IT folks, such as BitLocker drive encryption and an encrypting file system (for greater security), as well as a group policy editor (for managing multiple PCs from a single location). There's also a Windows 8.1 Enterprise edition, with even more corporate IT-oriented features.

If you're running Windows on a tablet PC, you could be running either basic Windows 8.1 or the tablet-oriented Windows 8.1 RT. This version of Windows is designed for this type of limited-functionality device, not for full-featured notebook and desktop computers. It's a lot like the basic Windows 8.1 version, but it lacks the ability to run traditional desktop computer software.

It's likely, then, that your personal computer is running the basic Windows 8.1 version. That's also the version we focus on throughout this book.



TIP You can upgrade the basic version of Windows 8.1 to the Pro version within Windows itself. Open the Control Panel, click System and Security, then System, then Get More Features with a New Edition of Windows. Select the version you want, enter your payment information (the upgrade costs \$100, sorry), and then prepare to download and install the new version.

Starting and Logging into Windows

Starting your computer and logging into Windows 8.1 is a simple affair, albeit a bit different than in older versions of Windows. It all starts when you push the power button on your PC.

Each time you turn on your computer, you see a series of short, perhaps indecipherable text messages flash across your screen. These messages are there to let you know what's going on as your computer *boots up*.



NOTE Technical types call the procedure of starting up a computer *booting* or *booting up* the system. Restarting a system (turning it off and then back on) is called *rebooting*.

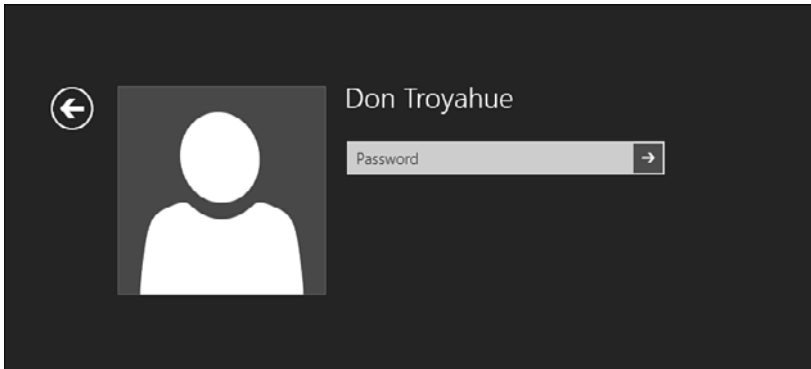
After a few seconds (during which your system unit beeps and whirrs a little bit), the Windows Lock screen appears. As you can see in Figure 4.1, the Lock screen provides some basic information—today's date and the current time, Internet connection status, and power status—against a pretty photographic background while Windows waits for you to log on.

To log onto your Windows account, all you have to do is press any key on your keyboard, click the mouse, or tap the screen. This displays your username, as shown in Figure 4.2.

Enter your password and then press the Enter key or click/tap the right-arrow button. After you're past this Lock screen, you're taken directly to the Windows Start screen, and your system is ready to use.

**FIGURE 4.1**

The first thing you see in Windows 8.1—the Lock screen.

**FIGURE 4.2**

Select your username and enter your password to proceed.



NOTE It's easy to configure Windows 8.1 for multiple users, each with their own account and settings; we'll discuss that in Chapter 5, "Using the New Windows 8.1 Interface." If you only have a single user on the machine, only one name appears from the Lock screen.

Using Windows with a Mouse

To use Windows efficiently on a desktop or notebook PC, you must master a few simple operations with your mouse or touchpad, such as pointing and clicking, dragging and dropping, and right-clicking. (If you have a touchscreen PC, you can perform many of these same operations with your finger—which we discuss later in this chapter.) When you're using your mouse or touchpad in this fashion, you're moving the onscreen *cursor*—that pointer thing that looks like a little arrow.

Pointing and Clicking

The most common mouse operation is *pointing and clicking*. Simply move your computer's mouse or, on a notebook PC, drag your finger across the touchpad or other pointing device so that the cursor is pointing to the object you want to select, and then click the left mouse button once. Pointing and clicking is an effective way to select tiles, menu items, and the like.

Double-Clicking

In some instances, single-clicking doesn't launch or open an item; it merely selects it. In these instances, you need to *double-click* an item to activate an operation. This involves pointing at something onscreen with the cursor and then clicking the left mouse button twice in rapid succession.

Right-Clicking

Here's one of the secret keys to efficient Windows operation. When you select an item and then click the *right* mouse button, you often see a pop-up menu. This menu, when available, contains commands that directly relate to the selected object. So, for example, if you right-click a file icon, you see commands related to that file—copy, move, delete, and so forth.

Refer to your individual programs to see whether and how they use the right mouse button.

Dragging and Dropping

Dragging is a variation of clicking. To drag an object, point at it with the cursor and then press and hold down the left mouse button. Move the mouse without releasing the mouse button and drag the object to a new location. When you're finished moving the object, release the mouse button to drop it onto the new location.

You can use dragging and dropping to move files from one location to another.

Mouse Over

When you position the cursor over an item without clicking your mouse, you *mouse over* that item. (This is sometimes called *hovering*.) Many operations require you to mouse over an item to display additional options or information.

Using Windows with a Touchscreen Display

If you're using Windows on a computer or tablet with a touchscreen display, you use 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.

Tapping

The touchscreen equivalent of clicking an item is tapping that item. That is, you tap a tile or button or menu item with the tip of your finger. Just tap and release to open an app or select an option.

Pressing and Holding

As you've learned, right-clicking an item with your mouse often displays additional information or options. The touchscreen equivalent of the right-click is pressing and holding an item. Simply touch an item onscreen with your finger and hold it there until a complete circle appears on the display. You can then lift your finger, and a shortcut menu appears.

Swiping

With a touchscreen display, you can perform many common tasks with a simple swipe of your finger across the screen, typically from one edge or corner into the center of the screen. For example, swiping from the right side of the screen inward to the left displays the Charms bar.

Panning

You use panning to scroll down or through a long page or series of screens. Simply touch and drag the page with one or more fingers in the direction you want to pan.

Zooming

You use two fingers to zoom into or out of a given screen—that is, to make a selection larger (zooming in) or smaller (zooming out) onscreen.

To zoom out, use two fingers (or your thumb and first finger) to touch two points on the item, and then move your fingers in toward each other, as if you're pinching the screen. To zoom in, use your fingers to touch two points on the item, and then move your fingers apart from each other, as if you're stretching the screen.

Rotating

You can use your fingers to rotate a picture or other item on the screen in a circular motion, either clockwise or counterclockwise. Simply use two fingers to touch two points on the item, and then turn your fingers in the direction you want to rotate it.

Learning Important Windows Operations

Now that you know how to use your mouse or touchscreen to get around Windows, it's time to learn some important Windows operations. Most of these actions can be initiated with either a mouse or a keyboard—or, on a touchscreen display, with your fingers—as detailed in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 Essential Windows 8.1 Operations

| Operation | Keyboard | Mouse | Touchscreen |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Close currently running app or window | None | Drag the top of the app to the bottom of the screen; for desktop apps, click the X button in the top-right corner of the window. | Touch the top edge of the screen and swipe down about halfway through the screen. |
| Display Apps screen | From Start screen, press Ctrl+Tab | From the Start screen, click the Apps (down arrow) button. | From the Start screen, swipe up from the bottom toward the middle of 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. |

| Operation | Keyboard | Mouse | Touchscreen |
|--|------------------------|--|--|
| Display Start screen | Windows key | Click the Start button. | From the Charms bar, tap Start. |
| Display two or more Modern 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 the 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 the 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, and then release. | Press and hold, drag to new location, and then release. |
| Open a program or document | Enter | Click (sometimes double-click). | Tap. |
| Open Windows Help | Windows+F1 | From the Charms bar, click Settings, Help. | From the Charms bar, tap Settings, Help. |
| Scroll down | Pg Dn or down arrow | Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel. | Swipe up. |
| Scroll left | Pg Up or left arrow | Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel. | Swipe right. |
| Scroll right | Pg Dn or right arrow | Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel. | Swipe left. |
| Scroll up | Pg Up or up arrow | Click and drag the scrollbar or click the scroll arrows; use the mouse scroll wheel. | Swipe down. |
| Search | Windows+Q or Windows+S | Display the Charms bar and click Search. | Display the Charms bar and tap Search. |

| Operation | Keyboard | Mouse | Touchscreen |
|-----------------------------------|----------|---|--|
| Shut down Windows | Alt+F4 | Right-click the Start button to display the Quick Access menu; then select Shut Down, 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 the Ctrl key and 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. |

Getting Help in Windows

When you can't figure out how to perform a particular task, it's time to ask for help. In Windows 8.1, you get help through the Help and Support Center.

To launch the Help and Support Center, follow these steps:

1. Click the Start button or press the Windows key to display the Start screen.
2. Right-click anywhere on the Start screen to display the App Bar at the bottom of the screen.
3. Click or tap All Apps.
4. When the Apps screen appears, scroll to the Windows System section and tap or click Help and Support.

A Help and Support window opens on the Windows desktop, as shown in Figure 4.3. From here you can search for specific answers to your problems, browse the table of contents, connect to another computer for remote assistance, go online for additional help, and troubleshoot any problems you might be having. Click the type of help you want, and follow the onscreen instructions from there.

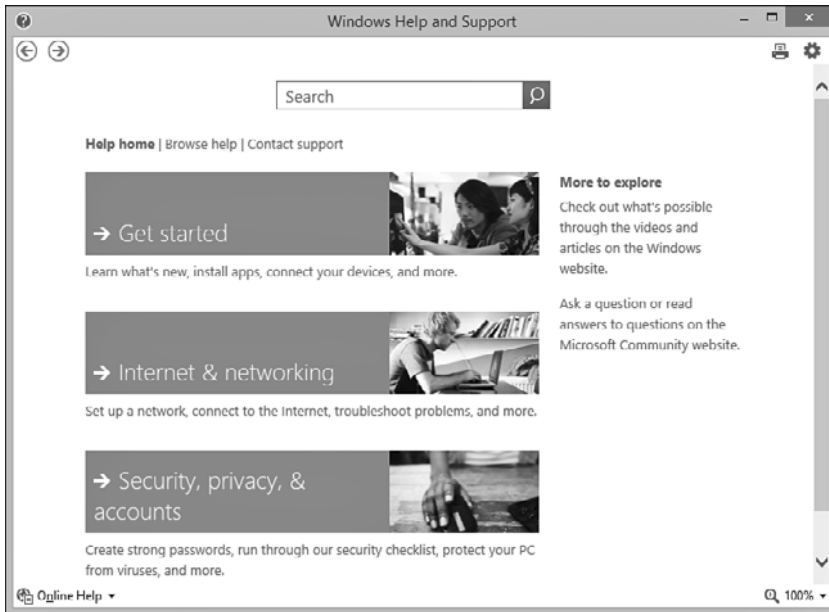


FIGURE 4.3

The Windows Help and Support Center.

Shutting Down Windows—and Your Computer

You've probably already noticed that Windows starts automatically every time you turn on your computer. Although you see lines of text flashing onscreen during the initial startup, Windows loads automatically and goes on to display the Windows desktop.



CAUTION Do *not* turn off your computer from your computer's main power button without first shutting down Windows. You could lose data and settings that are temporarily stored in your system's memory.

When you want to turn off your computer, you do it through Windows. In fact, you don't want to turn off your computer any other way—you *always* want to turn off things through the official Windows procedure.

To shut down Windows and turn off your PC, follow these steps:

1. Right-click the Start button to display the Quick Access menu, shown in Figure 4.4.
2. Select Shut Down to display all the shut down options.
3. Click Shut Down to shut down your computer.

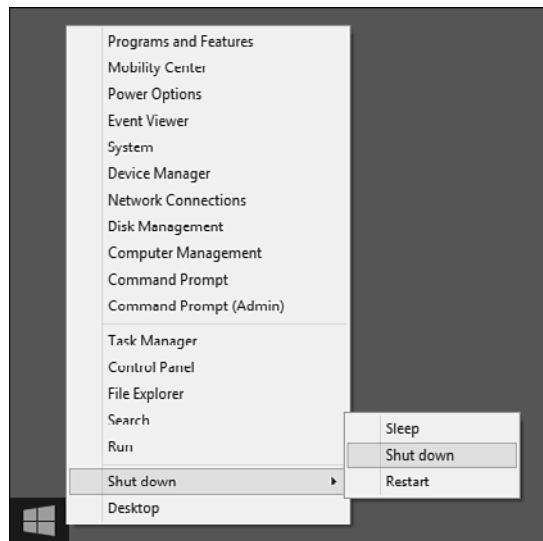


FIGURE 4.4

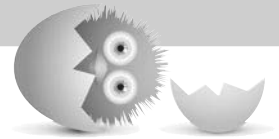
Powering off from the Quick Access menu.

That's it. If you have a desktop PC, you then need to manually turn off your monitor, printer, and other peripherals.

THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM

This chapter gave you a lot of background about Windows 8.1—your new PC's operating system. Here are the key points to remember:

- You use Windows to manage your computer system and run apps and programs.
- Windows 8.1 is a slight update to Windows 8, which itself was a major upgrade to the Windows operating system.
- When you start your computer, you see the Windows Lock screen; click or tap this screen to log into your account and enter Windows.
- You can complete most operations in Windows 8.1 using your computer keyboard, mouse, or—on touchscreen displays—a tap or swipe of your finger on the touchscreen.
- To exit Windows and turn off your computer, right-click the Start button and select Shut Down, Shut Down.



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