

VISUAL **QUICKSTART** GUIDE



Windows 8

A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey sleeveless top, sitting in a white chair. She is smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The background shows a window with green foliage outside.

BARRIE SOSINSKY

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Dedication

To Allie and Joe, the lights of my life

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the many people who contributed to the making of this book. The first is my literary agent and long-time friend, Matt Wagner of Fresh Books (www.fresh-books.com), for keeping me in mind for this project and pitching me to Peachpit. Thanks also to Cliff Colby, who as the acquisition editor, has the ultimate responsibility for delivering a quality product; I appreciate his taking a chance on me and his professionalism all the way through.

The editorial team I worked with was really first class. Robyn Thomas and Scout Festa were the two editors responsible for keeping the content on track and accurate. Countless times they made suggestions that improved the quality of the book. They made sure that the book you are holding is appropriately *Peachpit wacky*, and not *Barrie wacky*, something I'm sure I'll be happy about as this book ages. I also want to thank my friend Marcus Perry for serving as tech editor on this project. Marcus and I share a love of building computers and putting new operating systems through their paces.

As with most projects, there were countless behind-the-scenes people who worked silently to bring this book from concept to reality: Danielle Foster, compositor; Valerie Perry, indexer; and many more. I thank you for doing what you do with the devotion you do it.

As always, I learned a lot while writing this book. Windows 8 will keep Microsoft humming along and relevant in the years to come. With this book to press, I'm looking forward to more long runs, some extra time at the gym, playing with my cats (Stormy, Shadow, Smokey, Scamper, Slate, and Spats), and—oh yes, more sleep!

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Introduction

Windows 8 represents the most radical departure from previous versions of Windows since the introduction of Windows 95. Windows 95 made Windows come alive by adding the Internet. Windows 8 pays homage to an increasingly mobile world by adding a new application model and a touch-oriented interface. This might come as a shock to many users of previous Windows versions, but Windows 8 is easy to use, and in many ways it is a more refined version of what has gone before. Gone is the Start menu; enter the Start screen **A**.

The new Windows 8-style apps have no windowing system, run in a much smaller memory footprint, and save their contents from memory when you are not using them. Thus, your laptop, tablet, and cell phone will have longer battery life, be more stable, and be less susceptible to crashes. And a lot of behind-the-scenes work has gone into making connecting to networks seamless and pervasive.

When you think about it, an operating system that can use the same basic code to run on devices as diverse as PCs and cell phones is a considerable achievement. No other vendor offers such an operating system. What this means to you is that your applications will be available on—and will behave nearly identically on—all of your devices. When a device doesn't have a particular feature, the application simply doesn't implement it. For developers, this means that the expensive up-front development costs of a Windows application may be amortized by having their application run across the entire Windows 8 universe.

The Windows 7-style Desktop has not gone away in Windows 8 **B**. You can access the Desktop from a tile on the Start screen, and you can move from the Start screen to the Desktop by pressing the  key. Little of the functionality found in Windows 7's Desktop and its related management applications and control panels has been removed, but Microsoft has duplicated control panel functionality in new, touch-enabled panes called *bars*.

C is an example of how a touch-oriented interface is implemented. Compare Internet Explorer running in the new, tile-based style **C** to the same browser on the Desktop **B**. Gone are complex menus; they are replaced by buttons, bars, and very simple pop-up menus. This new type of application, which we will refer to in this book as an app, is simple to learn and simple to use. It will take you a little while to learn all the ins and outs of these apps, but hopefully this book will help you get up and running quickly.

In the new, touch-oriented interface, corners and edges have actions associated with them. Swipe in from the right and you see the Charms bar **D**, another of Windows 8's most notable new features. If you select the Settings charm and then click the *Change PC settings* link, you display the touch-oriented version of the Control Panel. This gives you some idea of how these new features are implemented. But if you don't have a phone, tablet, or touch

screen and want to work with Windows 8 on a PC, don't worry. Everything you can do with touch gestures, you can do with a mouse and keyboard. This book will show you how.

Is This Book for You?

This book assumes no prior knowledge of the Windows operating system. Perhaps this is your first Windows book—if so, you will learn enough about Windows 8 to perform the most important operations that users must perform in their daily work.

As a Visual QuickStart Guide, this book is meant to help you learn about a feature quickly and perform the task you need with minimum effort. This book doesn't tell you everything there is to know about a topic and doesn't delve much into theory, but it does tell you a lot.

What's in a Name?

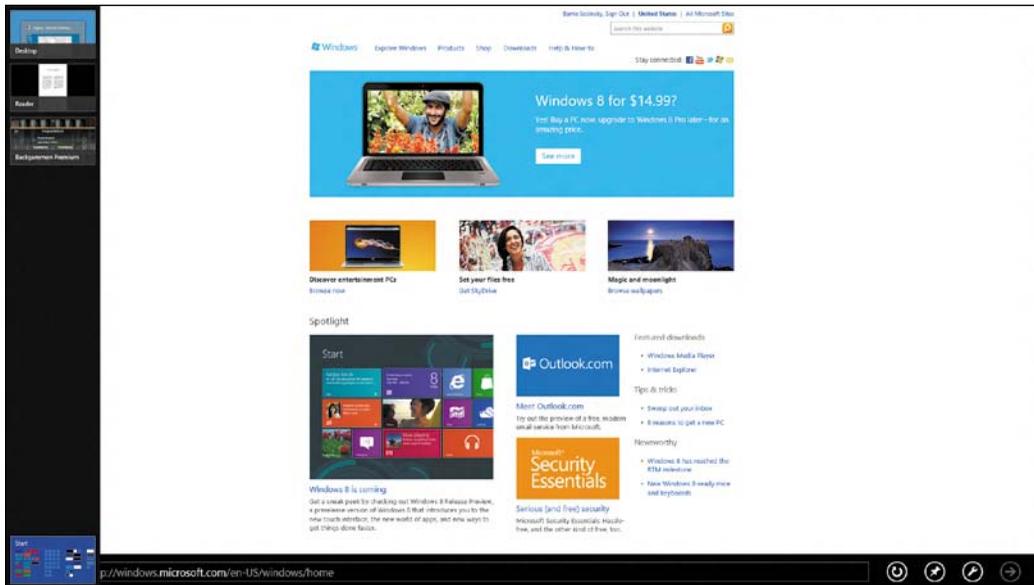
These new apps and the tile-based Start screen interface were developed under the code name "Metro." Unfortunately, just as Windows 8 was coming to market Microsoft learned that the name Metro is the trademarked property of Metro AG, a giant wholesale/retail chain with properties across Europe and Asia. To avoid a costly lawsuit, Microsoft dropped the name Metro from its product literature and website.

The *Windows 8 styled* name for the Start screen interface itself is still unclear. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, this book calls the new Windows 8 Start screen interface *the tiled-based interface* and the new style of apps *tile-based apps*.

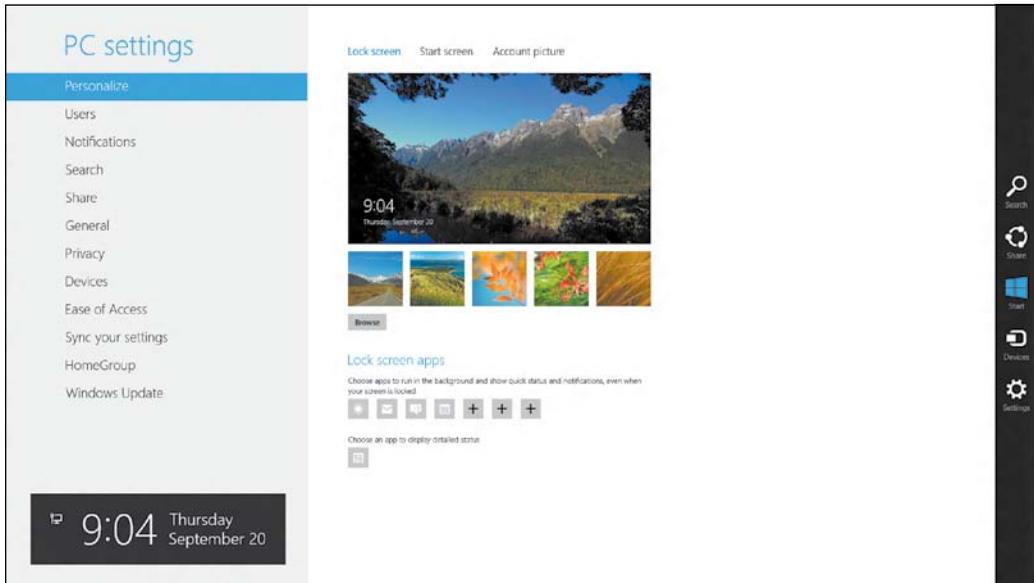
The older desktop interface that Windows 7 users are accustomed to is referred to as the Desktop, and the applications built to run in a windowed environment—such as Quicken, Adobe Photoshop, and the Microsoft Office suite—are referred to as legacy applications or Desktop applications.

It's not pretty folks—but I'm sure you will find that Windows 8 *is* pretty.

Indeed, the Desktop cannot go away any time soon because billions of dollars of applications run in that environment. But over time, many of these applications will be rebuilt as smaller, more modular apps.



C The tile-based Internet Explorer app consumes the entire screen. A bar on the left shows open apps, but this sliding feature isn't usually shown.



D The Charms bar (on the right) and the PC settings screen

It would be nice if you had the time to read this book sequentially from cover to cover, but it isn't essential. Some chapters build on earlier chapters, but most chapters and many of the topics are self-contained. You can jump into this book wherever you need to.

What This Book Will Teach You

There are 17 chapters in this book, each on a separate topic. Here's a short summary of what you will find in each chapter:

- **Chapter 1**, “Getting Started,” tells you about the different versions of Windows 8, the features they contain, and how to install and upgrade the operating system.
- **Chapter 2**, “The Start Screen,” introduces you to the Start screen, Live Tiles, the Charms bar, the Apps bar, and the other touch-based interface features you need to know to work with the new apps.
- **Chapter 3**, “Touch and Gestures,” tells you how to navigate using touch and, when touch isn't available, with a mouse and keyboard.
- **Chapter 4**, “The Classic Interface,” is an introduction to the Desktop interface. You will learn about personalizing the screen, using the taskbar, and how windowed applications work.
- **Chapter 5**, “Settings and Customization,” explains how to use control panels and settings to manage your computing environment. This chapter also describes the powerful new search function and the options available to you from the Charms bar.
- **Chapter 6**, “Applications,” describes how to open applications, switch between applications, and organize and modify apps in both Windows 8 interfaces.
- **Chapter 7**, “Windows 8 Tile-Based Apps,” describes the new apps that ship with Windows 8. These apps are cloud-connected to web services and include all manner of people, places, and things. You'll find a calendar, an address book, media content organizers, and many more apps that have many unique features.
- **Chapter 8**, “Managing Content,” contains an introduction to how data is stored and accessed on your computer. You'll learn here about file types, the Clipboard, drag and drop, libraries, media lists, and many other topics.
- **Chapter 9**, “Printers and Devices,” describes the different devices that you can connect to a Windows 8 system, and how to configure them so that they work properly. The tile-based interface has a simplified print routine that is described in this chapter.
- **Chapter 10**, “Windows Explorer,” tells you about the main tool that you use to manage files in the file system. Windows Explorer has long been a mainstay in Windows, and Windows 8 makes it more powerful and adds a ribbon interface and some interesting new tools to it.
- **Chapter 11**, “Diagnosis and Recovery,” describes how to solve problems and learn more about how your system is working. This chapter contains information about troubleshooting Windows 8 with new Refresh and Restart commands, how to use the new, much more powerful Task Manager, and much more.

- **Chapter 12**, “Disks and Storage Devices,” tells you about the different types of disks and storage types you can use with Windows 8 and how to prepare them for use. You will learn about disks, volumes, partitions, and more. New features such as Storage Spaces are described in this chapter.
- **Chapter 13**, “Networking,” describes how to connect to networks of all types. Windows 8 relies very heavily on an Internet connection, and a lot of work has gone into making connectivity easier, faster, and more reliable. This is plumbing, but it’s an essential topic. You’ll learn about what’s new in networking in this chapter.
- **Chapter 14**, “Internet Explorer 10,” describes Microsoft’s new web browser. IE10 is one application, but it comes in two forms: one on the Desktop (windowed), and the second in the tile-based interface (where it is full screen). There are many new features in IE10 that enhance security, make browsing easier, and provide faster and smoother performance.
- **Chapter 15**, “Mobile Computing,” describes the features in Windows 8 that support tablets and cell phones. Windows Phone 8 is a significant phone operating system. Some Windows 8 tablets are full-fledged Windows 8 computers, while others—running Windows RT—use only the new, tile-based apps.
- **Chapter 16**, “Security,” is an important chapter because with an Internet-connected device you are always vulnerable. This chapter describes the basic rules you need to follow to be secure, presents Windows 8’s built-in security tools, and explains how you should use them. Read this chapter and you will find out what you can do to avoid intrusions.
- **Chapter 17**, “Cloud Connections,” rounds out this book by describing how Windows 8 leverages a wide variety of Microsoft services on the Internet to add great power to your Windows 8 device. Through the cloud, you can back up your data and settings and synchronize them across many devices. You’ll want to know more about these services, because they make Windows 8 much more powerful and fun to work with. This chapter also presents the new Windows Store, which is where you will get your new-styled apps.

What’s Not in This Book

Windows 8 is a consumer-based operating system in which you start up in the Start screen and the new tile-based interface. That’s fine for devices built for Windows 8, but it presents an issue for Windows 8’s adoption into the corporate world. Windows 8 contains all of the corporate features found in Windows 7; that is, you can join a domain, have domain security, and use group policies. This book does not address Windows 8 in a business context. There’s little discussion of how Windows 8 will be used in a corporate setting. The rationale for this omission is that Windows 8 is built for a world based on BYOD, or Bring Your Own Device, and the corporate world is not there yet.

You also won’t find a lot of computer theory in this book. We don’t tell you about how the Windows 8 operating system runs on hardware and operating system modules, how CPUs operate, or how software instructions are processed through threading.

Virtual machine technology is an advanced topic and is not included in this book, but it

is an important new feature in Windows 8 that many advanced users will find useful.

It would really take two books to explain how to use Windows 8 as well as how Windows 8 works (its internals).

There are other worthy topics that didn't make it into this edition of the book. Some of them aren't yet fully developed in Windows 8; this is a new operating system, after all. Other topics, such as gaming, Xbox integration, and in-depth descriptions of individual apps, were dropped to keep the book length reasonable. Applications that are central to Windows 8, such as Internet Explorer and Windows Explorer, are included.

How This Book Works

Each chapter is organized around a topic, and each section is generally organized around a task or related set of tasks. In a section, you get a short introduction to the topic, followed by step-by-step instructions on how to perform the tasks. This book tries to cherry-pick the most important task, and when there is a large set of related tasks, the task that is either most important or most representative of the set is included.

You'll find that the instructions come with graphic icons, screens, and operations that are keyed with circled letters, such as **A**, **B**, **C**, and so on. These figures allow you to stay oriented as you perform these operations, which will allow you to be more successful and accurate.

This version of Windows contains two different interfaces, so as a general rule there is always more than one way to perform an action. Whenever possible, this book tells you how to do things in multiple ways. It's our belief that the more ways you learn

how to perform an action, the greater the chances are that you will remember one of them and get your task done successfully.

Finally, each section ends with a tip that will expand your knowledge of the topic. We hope you will find these tips useful and that your curiosity will lead you to use them to learn more about Windows 8.

Conventions Used in This Book

In this book we make it a point to describe a feature not only by its name but by its type as well. For example, a control panel called Devices and Printers is referred to as the Devices and Printers control panel. For menus and commands, we will tell you to, for example, "select the Exit command from the File menu."

This isn't a programming book, so there isn't a lot of code, but when it does appear, it's in a **unique font**. When you have to enter text into a field or dialog box, you will see it displayed in **bold**. The names of links appear in *italics*.

Acronyms and initialisms—such as PnP, which stands for Plug and Play—are defined when they first appear. Most terms are in the index, if you need to look them up.

One more thing—if you purchased this book, you are entitled to download its electronic version. Peachpit has also recorded to video many of the common operations described in this book for you to use as you need them. People learn in many different ways. A book is one way, but demonstrations in the form of videos are also a powerful way to learn. So please make use of these resources.

4

The Classic Interface

For most users, Windows is defined by the Desktop, the Start menu, and the windowing system (I always look at a window to see what operating system a device is running). In the tile-based interface, there's no Start menu and there are no windows.

The Start menu, which was introduced in Windows 95 to the strains of the Rolling Stones' "Start Me Up," is gone. But pretty much everything else you've grown accustomed to about the Desktop is still there, with a few improvements. It's a good thing too, because the tens of thousands of applications that depend on the Microsoft windowing system—such as Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, and Intuit Quicken—still require the Desktop to run correctly.

If you long for the days of yesteryear and want to live on the Desktop, this chapter tells you how. For this chapter at least, bid the tile-based interface adieu, don your Mouseketeer hat, and whip out your clicky keyboard.

In This Chapter

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Start Me Up

The tile-based interface starts by default when you install Windows 8. This is by design, because the tile-based interface works best on mobile devices, and the world of computing looks increasingly mobile. But the Desktop, which is the classic Windows interface, is only a click or two away.

To launch the Desktop:

- If there are open windows, press +D (for Desktop) to close the windows and show only the Desktop. Press +D a second time to see the Desktop with all open windows restored.
Press  to toggle between the Start screen interface and the Desktop.
- On the Start screen, tap or click the Desktop tile .
- On the Start screen, tap or click a tile for a legacy application or web page; that item opens on the Desktop.
- On the Start screen, tap or click the lower-left corner of the screen to toggle between the tile-based interface and the Desktop.
- On the Start screen, tap or click the upper-left corner of the display, and cycle through the icons until you can tap or click the Desktop icon.

You might think that the Desktop is an application, because it launches from a tile in the tile-based interface, but it is not. The Desktop is a shell—specifically, a graphical user interface (GUI). In that regard, it is the same thing that the tile-based interface is.

When you install Windows 8, the Desktop tile is placed in another group lower down the screen than is shown in **A**. In **A**, the tile has been moved to the upper-left position, which leads me to one of my favorite tips: To move a tile, tap and hold it, and then drag it to a new position; or with the mouse, just drag it.

TIP Press Enter in the tile-based interface to open the upper-left tile **A**.

Tap or click here to toggle through open apps to reach the Desktop.

Tap or click the Desktop tile to go directly to the Desktop.



Tap or click here to toggle between the Desktop and tile-based interfaces.

A Places in the tile-based interface that take you to the Desktop

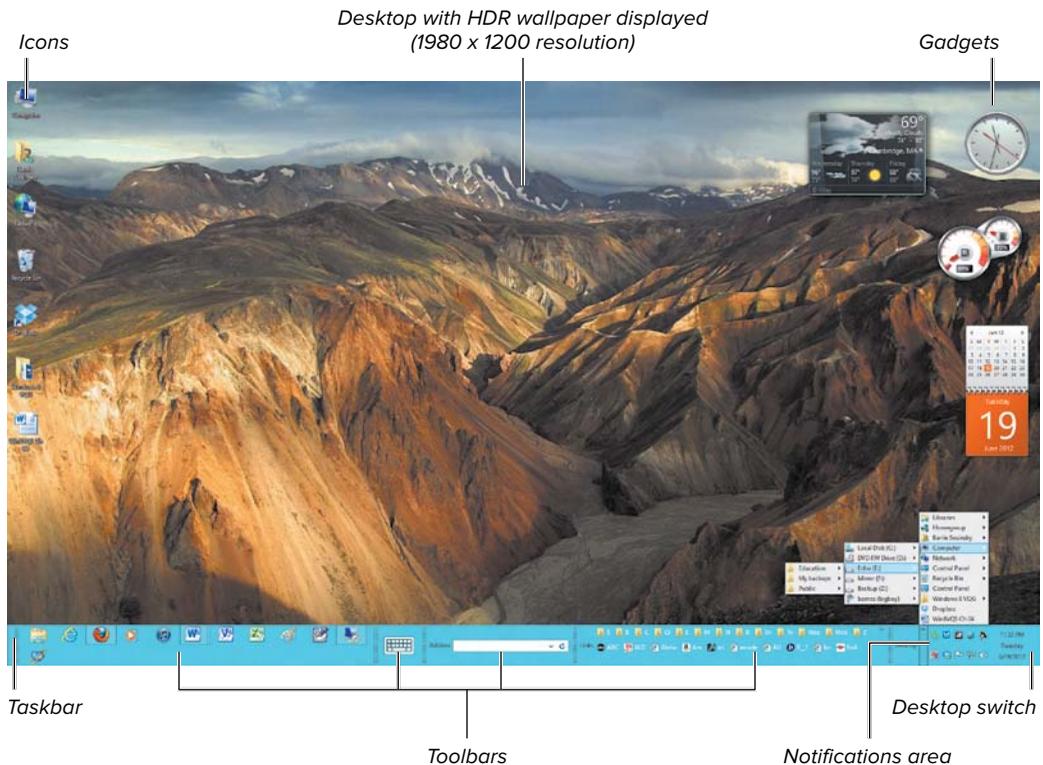
Desktop Elements

The Desktop contains many of the common elements that you've grown to know and love: a taskbar, viewable toolbars, icons, and so on **A**. Let's take a look at what these features do.

- **Icons** represent objects in the file system; you will generally put special folders or program icons on the Desktop.
- **Desktop wallpaper** is a graphic—for show, of course.
- **Gadgets** are little tools or utilities that you add to the Desktop for additional functionality.
- **The Desktop switch** is a button in the lower-right corner that switches from the tile-based interface to the Desktop. (You see the button only when your mouse button is down.)
- **The Notification area** shows icons of various utilities (usually system utilities); it was once called the Status tray.
- **Toolbars** contain related commands or objects that you can place on the taskbar.
- **The taskbar** is a container for toolbars and the Notifications area.

TIP In **A**, you see that the taskbar can be minimized into a hierarchical menu display. This mode mimics a lot of what the Start menu did.

TIP Most desktop elements are turned on using the context menu that appears when you either right-click or tap and hold an object.



A The Desktop

The Desktop Management Menu

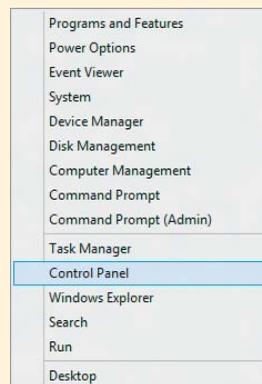
Although the Start menu is gone (sigh), Windows 8 does come with the Desktop Management menu **B**.

To open the Desktop Management menu:

- Right-click the lower-right corner of the Desktop.

The top section of this menu is a list of a few important control panels you will want to open frequently: Programs and Features, Power Options, and Systems—as well as Control Panel itself, which lists the control panels by type.

Other choices open dialog boxes based on an extensible framework called the Microsoft Management Console (MMC), including Device Manager, Disk Management, and Computer Management. Toss in a few important commands like Run (⊞+R), Search (⊞+F), and Windows Explorer (⊞+E), and you have what is essentially a stripped-down Start menu.



B The Desktop Management menu contains many of the important commands once found on the Start menu in Windows 7.

The Taskbar

The taskbar offers many shortcuts that can greatly speed up your work. Let's start by exploring the taskbar's context menu, because you can use that to open the various toolbars and options.

To view toolbars:

1. Right-click, or tap and hold, the taskbar to view the Taskbar menu **A**.
2. Select from the Toolbars submenu to display one or all of the toolbars.

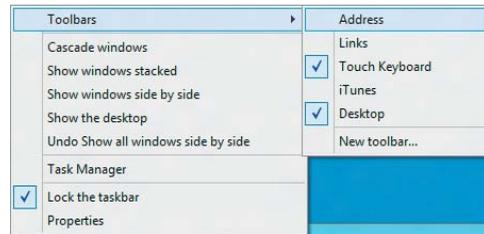
To change the height of the taskbar:

1. Deselect the Lock The Taskbar command **A** to disable it (remove its check mark).
2. Drag the top edge of the taskbar up or down as desired.

Notice that with the taskbar unlocked, each toolbar has a resize edge that you can drag. When you lock the taskbar, toolbars are frozen in position. **A** in the “Desktop Elements” section shows the toolbars with the taskbar unlocked.

To pin a program icon, folder, or other object to the taskbar:

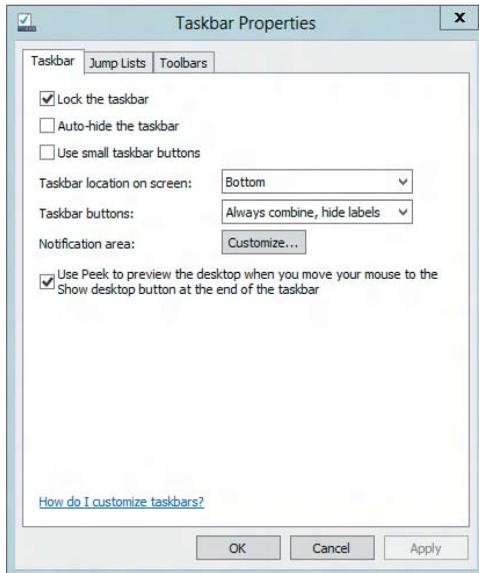
- Tap and hold, or right-click, the tile for the object in the tile-based interface, and then tap or click the Pin To Taskbar button in the bottom bar **B**.
- You can also drag an object from the Desktop—a program, a folder, a drive, and so on—onto the taskbar to anchor it there.



A The Taskbar menu



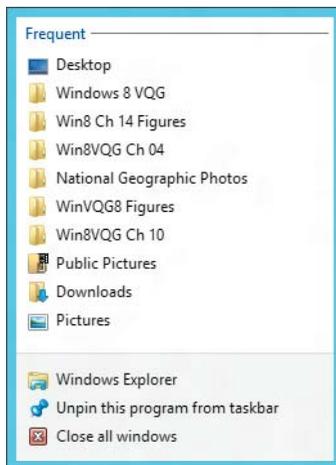
B The Pin To Taskbar button in the tile-based interface



C The Taskbar Properties dialog box



D Three Windows Explorer windows in thumbnail view



E The jump menu for Frequent items

To set taskbar options:

Several important options for taskbar icons are set in the Taskbar Properties dialog box **C**. Its command is the bottommost one in the menu shown in **A**.

- Select the Auto-hide The Taskbar check box to hide the taskbar automatically when it is not in use; tap or click the bottom edge of the screen to restore the taskbar.
- Select the Use Small Taskbar Buttons check box to reduce the size of the icons, which is valuable for work on a smaller screen.
- Select an option from the Taskbar Location On Screen drop-down menu to move the taskbar to different edges of your display.
- Select an option from the Taskbar Buttons drop-down menu to control how multiple instances of open like objects are displayed. (I like to combine them.)
- Select the Use Peek To check box to show a Desktop thumbnail on the Show Desktop button.
- Click the Apply button to enforce the settings you select but continue working in the dialog box.
- Click the OK button to enforce the settings you select and close the dialog box.

Experiment with these options to find the ones you like.

When you hover your cursor over a taskbar icon, it will display thumbnails of windows that you can switch to or close (click the X)

D. When you right-click a taskbar icon, the context menu offers you several options, including a jump list of Frequent items **E**.

TIP To create a new instance of a program or window, hold the Shift key and click its taskbar icon.

Notifications

The Customize button in the Taskbar tab of the Taskbar Properties dialog box opens the Notification Area Icons dialog box **A**, which allows you to modify the Notification area. You can choose to do the following for all or some tools:

- Show icons and notifications
- Hide icons and notifications
- Show only notifications

The Only Show Notifications option displays the status icon only when there is a message or condition that the program wants you to know about.

The Notification Area Icons dialog box is a control panel. Notification area icon menus typically contain commands that open utilities and control panels. The Date/Time icon is a good example of this behavior.

To change the date or time:

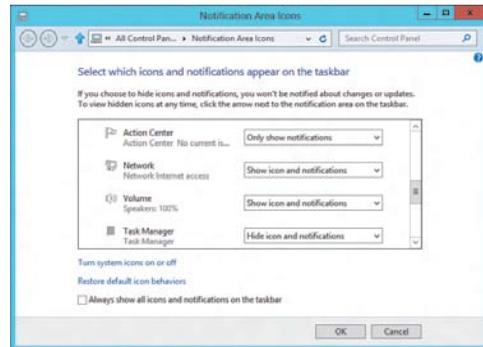
1. Tap, or move your cursor over, the Date/Time icon (at the far right of the taskbar).
2. In the Date/Time pop-up window that appears **B**, click the *Change date and time settings* link.

This opens the Date And Time control panel.

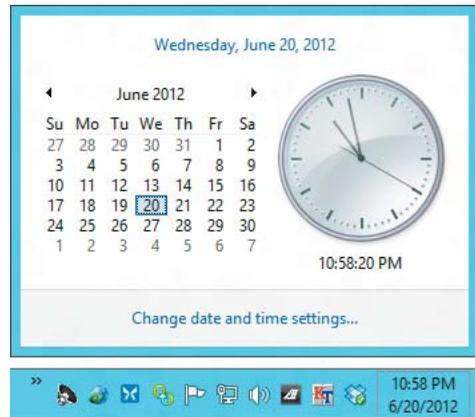
3. Make your changes, and then close the control panel.

There are many other ways to get to control panels. For example, you can use the search function in Windows 8 to find a control panel by its name. But using a Notification area icon to launch control panels is one of the easiest methods.

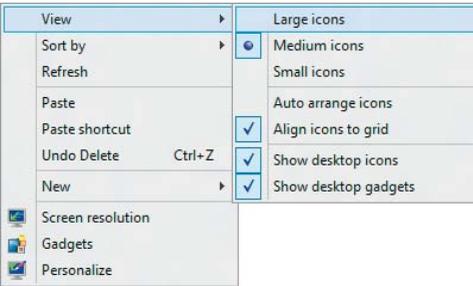
TIP Press **Win+X** to open the Desktop Management menu.



A The Notification Area Icons dialog box allows you to alter the behavior of Notification icons on the taskbar.



B The Date/Time icon can be used to view and modify the system date and time.



A The top three commands in the Desktop context menu demonstrate its container nature.

Desktop Operations

The Desktop survives. Once it was plain; for a while, it was “active.” It has been adorned by screen savers, gadget bars, picture shows, themes, and wallpapers—things that were pretty, things that were mesmerizing, things that were useful, and things that went bump in the night. But the Desktop remains.

The Desktop is a container object, just as a folder is. However, the Desktop is a special container because it can not only show files, folders, and object icons, it can contain the taskbar, which you have just seen.

But by far the Desktop’s most important function is as a container of “windows.” Windows are content containers that are controlled by a piece of system software called the Window Manager. Windows are the whole point of the Desktop’s existence. Without windows (lowercase, please), Windows is just another tile-based life form. Let’s start by looking at the Desktop context menu.

To view the Desktop context menu:

Right-click an empty area of the Desktop **A**.

The View and Sort By submenus contain commands that are typical of folders.

Refresh (F5) updates the Desktop manually.

To select something on the Desktop (or in a window):

- Click the object.
- Drag a selection area around a contiguous range of objects.
- Click at the beginning of a contiguous range of objects, hold the Shift key, and click the end of the range.
- Click the first object in a noncontiguous range, hold the Ctrl key, and click the other objects you want in the range.

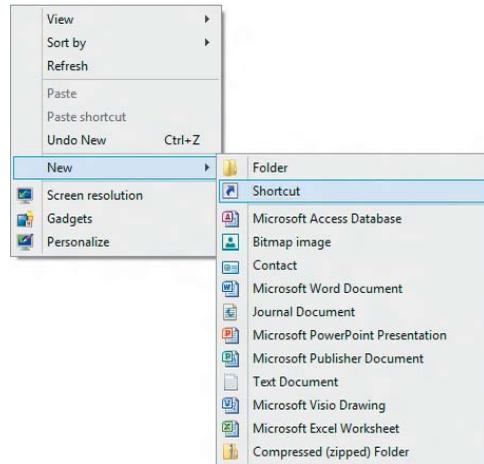
To perform window actions on a selection using the Clipboard:

- Press Ctrl+X to delete the object and copy it to the Clipboard system memory.
- Press Ctrl+C to leave the object but place a copy on the Clipboard.
- Press Ctrl+V to paste a copy of the object at your current location.

To perform window actions on a selection using drag and drop:

- Drag selected objects to move them from folder to folder.
- Drag selected objects from one disk to another to make a copy of your selection.
- Hold the Ctrl key while dragging selected objects to make a copy of the objects even if the default action is to move them.
- Hold the Alt key while dragging selected objects to create a shortcut to the objects.
- Press the Delete key to remove any selections and place them in the Recycle bin.
- Drag and drop items into the Recycle bin to delete them.
- Press Ctrl+Z to undo the last action if you make a mistake.

The expanded New command for the Desktop context menu **B** allows you to create files and shortcuts of various types. As you install programs in Windows, additional file types are added. The New Shortcut command opens a wizard that lets you create a shortcut or pointer (what Unix and Linux call a symbolic link) to objects in other locations.



B Use the New command to create objects and files quickly.

TIP When you delete something, it is not dead. That is, in Windows there are different levels of dead. You can double-click the Recycle bin and use the Restore command to return items to their previous locations. If you've emptied the Recycle bin, then you will need a special third-party undelete program to restore that object. Even then, the object is still on disk until Windows needs to overwrite its location on disk, after which its return is beyond the reach of mere mortals.

TIP Windows gives you visual indicators during the operation to keep you informed.

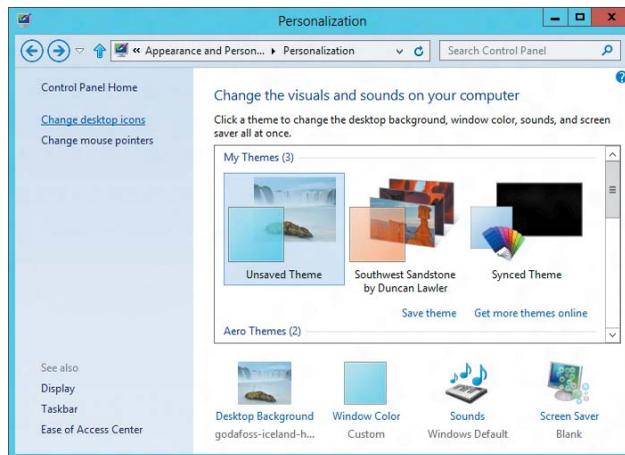
Personalization

There are many things to play with in the Personalization control panel, and you can have hours of self-indulgent fun there. But let's highlight a few of its more practical features.

To add Desktop icons:

1. Right-click the Desktop and select Personalize from the context menu to view the Personalization control panel **A**.

continues on next page



A The Personalization control panel allows you to change the appearance of the Desktop.

2. Click the *Change desktop icons* link to view the Desktop Icon Settings dialog box **B**.

3. Make your selections, and then click OK.

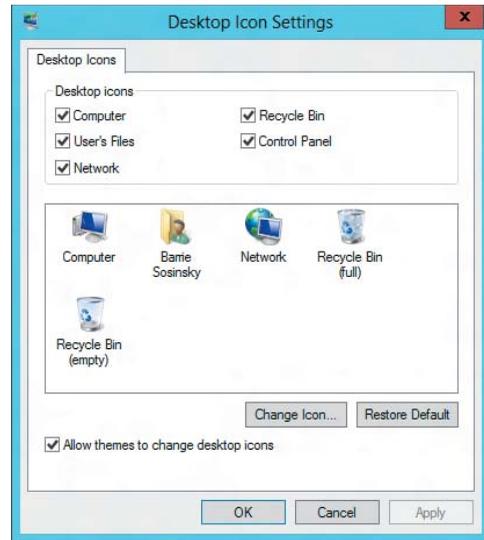
Desktop backgrounds are more commonly known as “wallpapers,” and for reasons that escape me, people are truly passionate about them.

To change the Desktop background:

1. In the Personalization dialog box, click the Desktop Background icon to view the Desktop Background dialog box **C**.

2. Click the Picture Location drop-down menu, and make a selection from a solid color palette, your Pictures library, or another folder that you designate.

3. Select an option from the Picture Position drop-down menu to fill, fit, stretch, tile, or center the picture.



B In the Desktop Icon Settings control panel, you can add special folders and places to the Desktop.



C The Desktop Background dialog box

4. For a slideshow, select a time period from the Change Picture Every drop-down menu. Select the Shuffle check box, if desired.
5. Click the Save Changes button to display your new background.

To change your theme:

A theme is a collection of Desktop backgrounds, Windows color and font styles, system sounds, and other elements all bundled up as a package and applied at once.

- Scroll the central window (marked My Themes in **A**) and select a new theme.
- Click the *Get more themes online* link, and find one on Microsoft's website.

You may want to explore the Change Mouse Pointers and Sound dialog boxes. Click the *Change mouse pointers* link **A** to open that dialog box. The Sounds dialog box is opened with the Sounds icon **A**. Sounds and mouse pointers are part of a theme, along with fonts, window styles, and colors. Mouse pointers are cursor sets that you can apply; several cursor sets are good for the visually impaired, some are helpful on laptops, and a few are simply amusing. Sounds are short clips that play after various window events; changing sound sets has never appealed much to me, but other people like customized sounds.

Themes can apply sets of cursors and sounds, but you can also do this independently, and it does add personality to a system. You can download many more themes from the Microsoft website.

To add a gadget:

Gadgets used to be constained to the Gadget bar, but now they have been set free to float above your desktop.

1. Right-click the Desktop and select the Gadgets command from the context menu.

The Gadget gallery appears **D**.

2. Drag a gadget to your desktop.

TIP Visually impaired users can use the Ease of Access Center to turn on a magnifier, have the Desktop narrated, turn on an onscreen keyboard, and set up a high-contrast display. Click the *Ease of Access Center* link on the Personalization control panel.

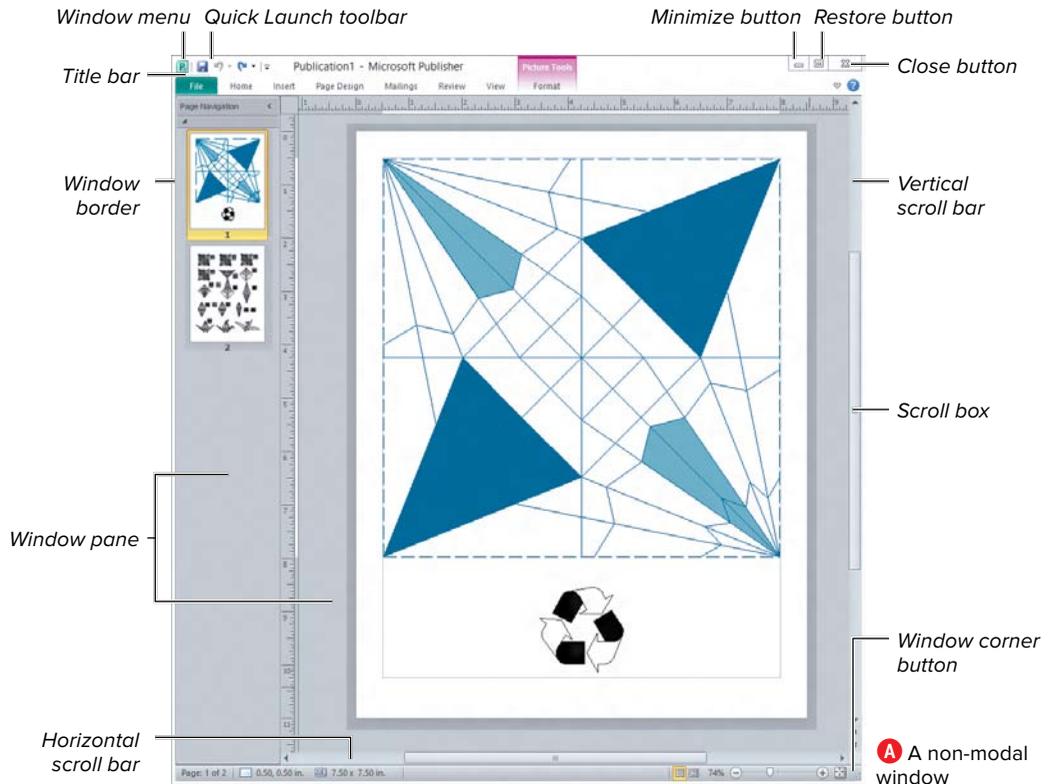


D The Gadget gallery

Windowing

As noted, a window is a content container. Desktop windows are of two basic types: modal and non-modal. A non-modal window is one that you can switch out of and then switch back to. A modal window is one that requires you to perform an action before it allows you to do something else. An alert box is an example of a modal window something you must deal with before you can do other work.

In **A**, a non-modal application window is shown with some of its window interface elements identified. Here you can work in more than one window at the same time. The application is Microsoft Publisher, and the document is an origami crane.



Windows were designed to work with both your mouse and your keyboard. You won't use touch to use windows of this type.

Here's a brief description of the important window elements:

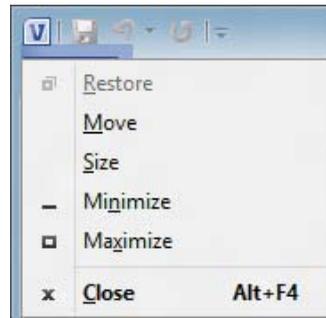
- **Title bar.** This bar contains the window name and, usually, the name of the application that is responsible for it. Drag the title bar to move the window from place to place.

When a title bar has focus, its window is the active window and can be acted upon.

- **Window menu.** The application icon is actually the Window menu, put there to allow you to perform window actions with your keyboard. Click the icon or press Alt+spacebar to reveal commands that allow you to restore, move, size, minimize, maximize, and close (Alt+F4) the window **B**.

Note that the Window menu and the Quick Launch toolbar shown in **A** are application-specific features (Microsoft Office). Here the application is Publisher, so that icon shows.

- **Restore command.** This command **B** toggles a maximized window back to its previous size.
- **Move command.** This command **B** selects the window and allows you to use the arrow keys or your mouse cursor to move the window in any direction.
- **Size command.** This command **B** allows you to use the arrow keys or your mouse cursor to resize your window.
- **Minimize.** Click this button on the toolbar or select this command **B** to reduce a window to an icon.



B Window commands

- **Maximize.** Click this button on the toolbar or select this command **M** to display a window full screen.
- **Restore.** Click this button on the toolbar or select this command **R** to return the window to its former size (before you minimized or maximized it).
- **Close button.** Click this button or press Alt+F4 to close a window. The application should prompt you to save any changes, if necessary.

Note that you can press Alt+spacebar to open the Window menu, and then press the underlined key to execute the command. This is a general Windows feature. For example, Alt+N minimizes the window.

- **Window border.** Drag a window border to resize the window in one direction. Use the window corner to resize the window in two directions.
- **Scroll bars.** The scroll bars are used as a visual indicator for your horizontal or vertical position inside the window. Click a scroll bar arrow to move one increment in that direction. Click the scroll bar to move one screen page in that direction. Drag the scroll box (slider) to move the view of the window contents as far as you like.

There are many keystrokes that move your window view. Use Home to move to the top of the window; End to move to the bottom; and Page Up or Page Down to move up or down one full page or screen. These keystrokes support the vertical toolbar.

To switch between windows on the Desktop, click a window to make it active or use the Task Switcher.

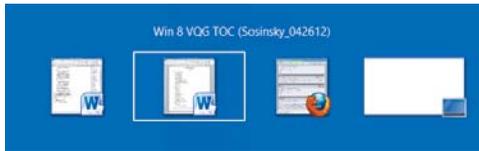
Sometimes a window can be both modal and non-modal. A modal window is one that requires an action before you can close it or that forces you to act before you can do anything else. Modal windows illustrate some important general window navigation features. **C** shows a Save dialog box. It is both non-modal and modal at the same time. You can do things in programs other than Word; but it is a modal window for Word because you can't do anything else in Word until you dismiss it.

Non-modal windows have the following features:

- **A Default action.** This button is usually drawn with a bold button frame and can be activated by pressing Enter. **D** shows the Save button bordered with a blue dotted frame.
- **A Cancel or Escape action.** This removes the dialog box without making changes. Press the Esc key or click the Cancel button to perform this action.
- **A Tab order.** Press the Tab key to move from button to button in the tab order, or press Alt+Tab to move backward in that order.
- **Shortcuts.** Dialog boxes and alert boxes have keystroke equivalents for buttons, fields, and other items. They are usually indicated by underlined letters. Here, you press the S key to perform the Save action.



C A Save dialog box



D The Task Switcher lets you switch quickly between open windows. It also works in Metro.

To use the Task Switcher:

1. Press Alt+Tab to view the Task Switcher **D**.
2. Hold the Alt key down and press the Tab key repeatedly to cycle through all the open windows until the one you want is highlighted.
3. Release the Alt key. You can use Shift+Alt+Tab to move backward through the Tab order.

TIP Devices such as the Microsoft Intelli-Mouse and apps such as Move Mouse provide options for manipulating windows—even the elusive scroll right and left functionality.

Putting It All Together

- The Windows Desktop is a graphical user interface required by legacy programs.
- There are many ways to switch between the tile-based interface and the classic Windows Desktop interface.
- The Desktop is a container for various objects, including file system objects, devices, and utilities such as the taskbar and gadgets.
- The taskbar is highly configurable through its Properties dialog box, and you can add toolbars and Notification area icons to it.
- Many Desktop icons provide customization through control panels. A few are found on the Desktop Management menu.
- The Desktop supports standard window-selection techniques, as well as drag-and-drop technology and the Clipboard.
- Among the many personalization features that the Desktop supports are Desktop icons, backgrounds, themes, cursor sets, and system sound sets.
- The Desktop is a container for windows, and windows are a container for content.
- A window contains standard interface elements controlled by the Windows Manager software.
- Non-modal windows allow you to switch out of and then back into them and can be moved or resized.
- Modal windows force you to perform an action before you can close them, or they force you to close them before you can do anything else.

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