To our many friends and colleagues from the Microsoft Press family.
Thanks for the memories.
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Introduction

We’re back! (Again.)

The three authors responsible for this edition began working together in 2001. Like many of you, we took a break a few years ago, watching from the sidelines as Microsoft released Windows 8 and Windows 8.1. We returned for Windows 10 because, quite frankly, we were excited by the possibilities of “Windows as a Service.” As we predicted in the first edition of this book, published shortly after the initial release of Windows 10 in 2015, you can expect Windows 10 to evolve rapidly.

That forecast has been borne out by our experience over the past year, as we researched and wrote what turned out to be a very significant revision to the original edition. Microsoft released two major updates to Windows 10: one in November 2015, the other (the Anniversary Update) in July 2016. This edition incorporates all of the features from both of those updates.

Much of what is in Windows 10 is familiar, especially its core features. The fundamentals of NTFS security and the registry, for example, have remained reassuringly consistent throughout many generations of Windows. But there’s also plenty that’s new in Windows 10, some of it obvious (the new Start experience) and some not so obvious (Windows Hello). The two feature updates included significant additions and helped plug gaps in the original release.

The challenge of writing a book like this one is that Microsoft plans to keep changing Windows 10, releasing new features once or twice each year instead of every few years. Fortunately, our friends at Microsoft Press have a plan for dealing with those changes. This edition is part of the brand-new Current Book Service, which means you can expect a web-based update shortly after major updates are released over the next 12 to 18 months. (Later in this chapter, we explain how to register this title with the Current Book Service program so that you can access those updates.)

Who this book is for

This book offers a well-rounded look at the features most people use in Windows. It serves as an excellent starting point for anyone who wants a better understanding of how the central features in Windows 10 work. If you’re a Windows expert-in-training, or if your day job involves IT responsibilities, or if you’re the designated computer specialist managing computers and networks in a home or small business, you’ll discover many sections we wrote just for you. And if you consider yourself a Windows enthusiast—well, we hope you’ll find enough fun and interesting tidbits to hold your attention because, after all, we’re unabashed enthusiasts ourselves.
Assumptions about you

This book was written for people who have some experience with Windows and are comfortable with and even curious about the technical details of what makes Windows work. It touches only briefly on some of the basic topics that you’ll find covered in more detail elsewhere. (For those, we recommend other Microsoft Press titles, such as *Windows 10 Step by Step* or *Windows 10 Plain & Simple*.)

Whether your experience comes from using Windows 8.1 or Windows 7, we expect that you’re comfortable finding your way around the desktop, launching programs, using copy and paste operations, and finding information in a web browser. We don’t assume that you’re a hardware tinkerer, hacker, hardcore gamer, or developer.

How this book is organized

Part 1, “Getting started with Windows 10,” offers an overview of what’s new in this version, with details on installing and configuring Windows 10, personalizing the Windows experience, connecting to the internet and local networks, and keeping your user accounts and devices secure.

Part 2, “Working and playing with Windows 10,” covers the essentials of using and managing Universal Windows Platform (UWP) apps and desktop programs, with details on built-in productivity tools (including Mail) and the entertainment apps that help you enjoy your collection of digital photos and music. This section covers Cortana, the personal assistant that’s integrated into Windows 10, as well as the occasionally complicated relationship between Microsoft Edge, the new default browser, and Internet Explorer. Finally, it explains how to organize your folders and files, on local drives or in the cloud using OneDrive, and how to find those files when you need them.

Part 3, “System maintenance and troubleshooting,” starts with a detailed guide to the different types of hardware you can use with Windows 10, with storage devices getting their own chapter. Additional chapters cover routine maintenance tasks and explore tools and techniques for measuring and improving your computer’s performance. The section closes with advice on how to back up your important files, how to recover quickly from problems, and how to troubleshoot issues when they arise.

Part 4, “Windows 10 for experts and IT pros,” goes into detail about advanced system-management tools and explains how to set up an advanced network so that you can safely share files, printers, internet connections, and other resources. Other topics include Windows PowerShell scripting and the powerful Hyper-V virtualization technology built in to the Pro, Enterprise, and Education editions of Windows 10.

Finally, we provide two appendixes of reference information: a concise look at the differences between Windows 10 editions and an overview of help and support resources.
Acknowledgments

For this edition of the book, like many before it, we’re fortunate to have an expert production team led by Curtis Philips of Publishing.com. Along with technical editor Randall Galloway, copyeditor Roger LeBlanc, and proofreader Teresa Barenfeld, our favorite team asked the right questions and made excellent suggestions to cover our lapses. And, as usual, they made it all happen quickly and efficiently, despite all the curveballs that we would throw them.

And we’ve saved a special tip of the hat to our friends and colleagues at Microsoft Press, several of whom left the company as part of a reorganization while we are in the middle of this project. This book would never have gotten into your hands without the assistance of product manager Rosemary Caperton and director of publishing Anne Hamilton, and we’re grateful to have the assistance of Kim Spilker going forward.

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This book is part of our new Current Book Service, which provides content updates for major technology changes and improvements related to Windows 10. As Microsoft releases significant updates, sections of this book will be updated or new sections will be added to address the changes. The updates will be delivered to you via a free Web Edition of this book, which can be accessed with any internet connection at MicrosoftPressStore.com.

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