Inside
Windows 8.1

Microsoft's newest Operating System update

Onuora Amobi

Copyright Notice

Legal Notice

While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, neither the author nor the publisher assumes any responsibility for errors, omissions or contradictory interpretation of the subject matter herein.

This publication is not intended to be used as a source of binding technical, technological, legal or accounting advice.

Please remember that the information contained may be subject to varying state and/or local laws or regulations that may apply to the user's particular practice.

The purchaser or reader of this publication assumes responsibility for the use of these materials and information.

Adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, both federal, state, and local, governing professional licensing, business practices, advertising and any other aspects of doing business in the US or any other jurisdiction is the sole responsibility of the purchaser or reader.

Nnigma Inc. assumes no responsibility or liability whatsoever on behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials.

Windows 9, Windows 8.1, Windows 8.1 Update 1, Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows XP and other related terms are registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All trademarks and copyrights are freely acknowledged.

Table of Contents

BONUS CHAPTERS

- **Who is the new CEO of Microsoft?**

- **What is Windows 8.1 Update 1?**

- **What's coming in Windows 9?**

Learning About Windows 8.1

You may be reading this guide because you just purchased a new computer and found that your Windows Operating System (OS) looks different from the way it used to. Or perhaps you are just curious about the changes to Windows 8.1 and are wondering whether you should upgrade your own system.

Regardless of your reasons, you have come to the right place. The purpose of this guide is to give everyday users a look into the ever-evolving world of Windows 8.1 and provide a clear understanding of Microsoft's upgrades to their new OS.

Microsoft's mainstream OS underwent a complete overhaul with the transition from Windows 7 to Windows 8. However, the new and unfamiliar tile-based Metro interface, seemingly intimidating at first glance, left many users feeling lost and helpless.

Most users are afraid of changes when they appear suddenly, especially when it has an impact on their daily lives like a personal computer does. This need not be the case, and this e-book was created to help users like you feel at ease with whatever version of Windows 8 you may adopt.

Windows 8 was created with everyday users in mind, and many of the best features streamline tedious processes so that users can get on with their daily lives and connect with those around them. Once you understand the reasoning behind Microsoft's decision and how programs are integrated like never before, you will likely not ever want to return to the "traditional" interface.

Every element in Windows 8 has been thoughtfully designed, and users will find it easy to learn how to use the new and improved functionality. In fact, there is even a desktop similar to that in the much beloved Windows 7, making Windows 8 a most versatile platform for users of all ages and professions. Windows 8 has emerged as such a powerful system because of its versatility and adaptability to many lifestyles.

Before you can master Windows 8.1, it will be helpful to understand just how far Microsoft Windows has come, and the dramatic changes that have been implemented in the OS.

Many of the core features of Windows 8 can be found in 8.1, so understanding the preceding OS will help you ease into the newest version more seamlessly. You may even discover that you are capable of teaching your friends and coworkers about the system, making you the new tech guru.

With Windows 8.1, anything is possible.

What is Windows 8?
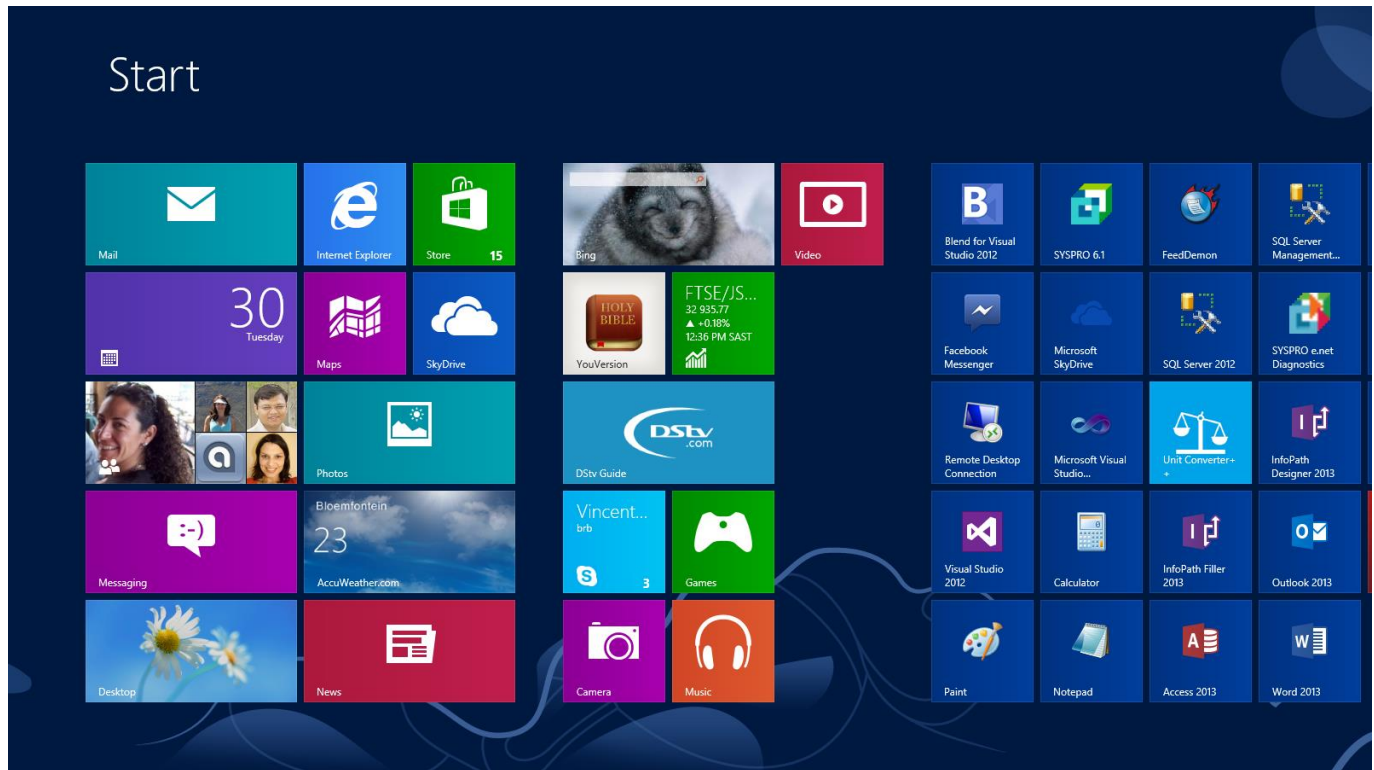
Microsoft's development of Windows 8 actually began before the release of Windows 7. The operating system was officially announced at the Computer Electronics Show (CES) in 2011. It was then released for manufacturing purposes in August of 2012 and revealed to the general public in October of that same year.

Many users wondered how the new Windows OS would work because it looked drastically different from everything that had come before it. The system mimicked the operating systems that were usually found on mobile devices such as tablets, and was optimized for touch screens.

With this new foundation, users could also install and benefit from a variety of applications, and also customize their experience on a much deeper level.

The main screen resembles a grid of tiles that can be moved and organized as the user sees fit. There is also seamless integration with the internet which allows for programs and applications to update quickly and smoothly.

While some praised the new look and design, not everyone was comfortable with the new interface. PC users with touch screens loved the ease of use while those using a traditional keyboard and mouse felt as if they were alienated.

2

The interface was difficult for many to learn and it was very easy to be confused because there was so much that was different about it.

Since the grid pattern doubled as the home screen, most users were unable to access standard options that they were accustomed to, like the home screen. The emphasis on being social was not shared by everyone, and many users felt left out because there were no applications or functions geared towards them.

Even with the rough start, Windows 8 has managed to sell over 100 million units and is now beginning to deliver the experience that that Microsoft had promised all along. In response to loud feedback from confused and alienated users, Microsoft released the Windows 8.1 update in October of 2013.

How is Windows 8.1 different?

Microsoft changed the game once again with Windows 8.1. This free update is applicable to Windows 8 and Windows RT, as well new devices that are rolled out in 2014.

You might find it curious that a new update is coming along so quickly into the lifecycle of Windows 8, but this is in fact a major release that brings a long list of improvements over the original OS.

Regardless of whether you are just starting out with Windows 8 or have been struggling to get to grips with the OS from inception, the advancements Microsoft has made with the 8.1 update will ensure that users are better able to utilize Microsoft's new OS.

Windows 8.1 takes everything that made Windows 8 great and implements some great new additions and features that users have been asking for, and the software giant has been unusually nimble to update their software in response to customer feedback, to meet the needs of their customers.

Microsoft knew that Windows 8 would be a big change for some, but also wanted customers to be assured that their concerns were acknowledged and taken care of.

The update is an important step forward for Microsoft and the future of its desktop platform. It addresses most of the user feedback with clever amendments to the OS, thereby setting it up for success in the future.

While Windows 8.1 may look the same at first glance, there have been a lot of tweaks and changes under the hood of Windows 8 to create a powerful OS packed with improved functionality for the home and business user.

Key Changes

So, what exactly has changed with Windows 8.1?

It's best to start from the very beginning. The start button is something that many users coming over from Windows 7 and earlier Microsoft OS's were used to and expected to see in the new OS.

Windows 8.1 brings the button back to the operating system, albeit with different functionality.

Many users relied on the original start button to access their documents and programs. In response to the outcry from its customers, Microsoft brought the button back.

In its present incarnation, the start button is a simple addition to the Metro screen, right where users always expected it to be: at the bottom left-hand corner of the screen.

It is possible to access this start menu on different functions as well, but it's nice to know that the button is back and that you don't have to search around for it anymore.

Another significant addition in Windows 8.1 is the "boot to desktop" feature. This means that you can boot to the desktop instead of having to navigate through the Metro screen.
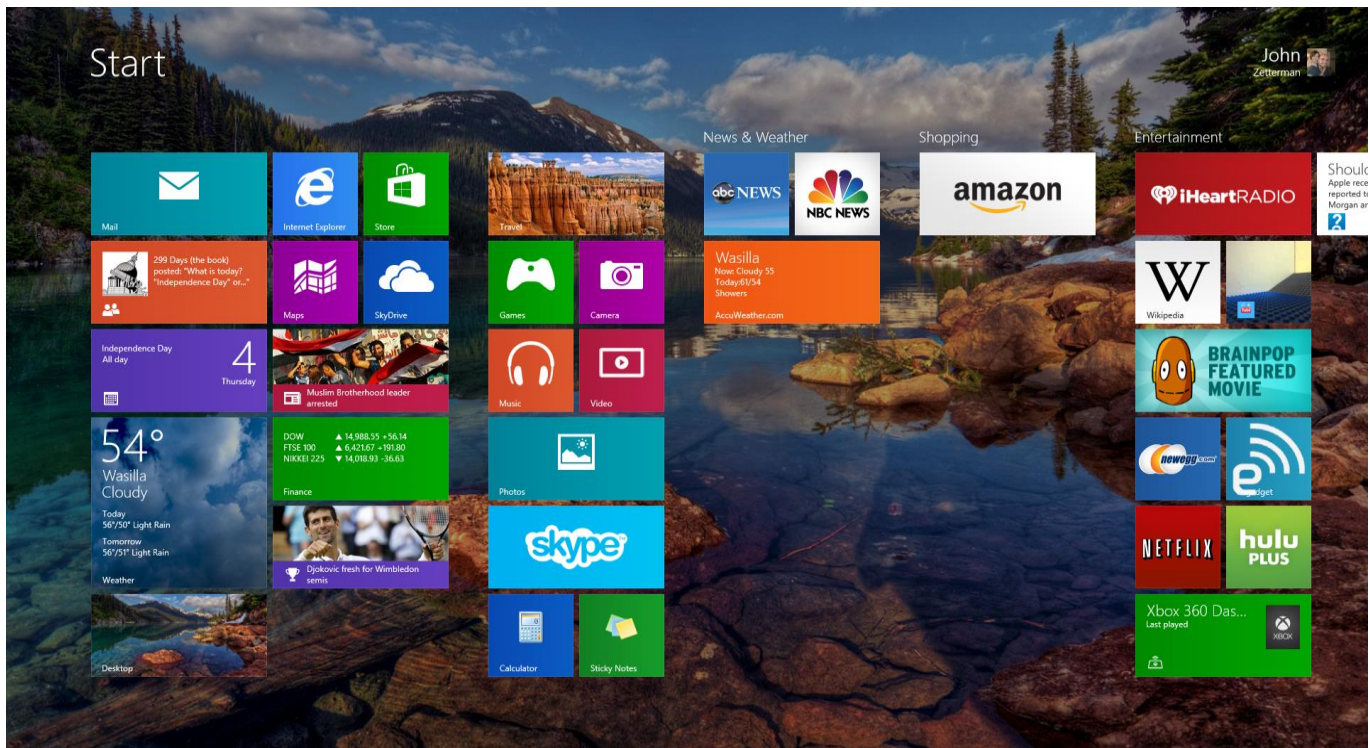
Unlike the start button where you still have to work through the Metro screen, this is a straightforward bypass of the system and lets you avoid the Metro screen altogether.

It's a great addition because there are some users that don't want to deal with the screen each and every time they start up their unit.

This bypass lets them get into the work that they need to accomplish and doesn't hold them back.

While the two features listed above are considered the biggest changes, they are not the only ones.

6

There are many other tweaks and additions that make Windows 8.1 the best Microsoft operating system today.

One of these additions is the Bing-powered search bar.

When you run a search in Windows 8.1, the system also searches for similar results on the Bing search engine.

This means that your Metro desktop can double as your search engine, letting you look for information without having to change programs or applications.

With respect to applications, the search feature will also pull up apps that are related to your search, letting you discover brand new tools to help improve your user experience.

Some other key updates revolve around the Metro apps and the options that surround them.

Previously, the apps were restricted to a 30:70 split if you wanted to use two of them as the same time. However, users are now able to choose from a variety of different screen sizes such as 50:50 or 60:40.
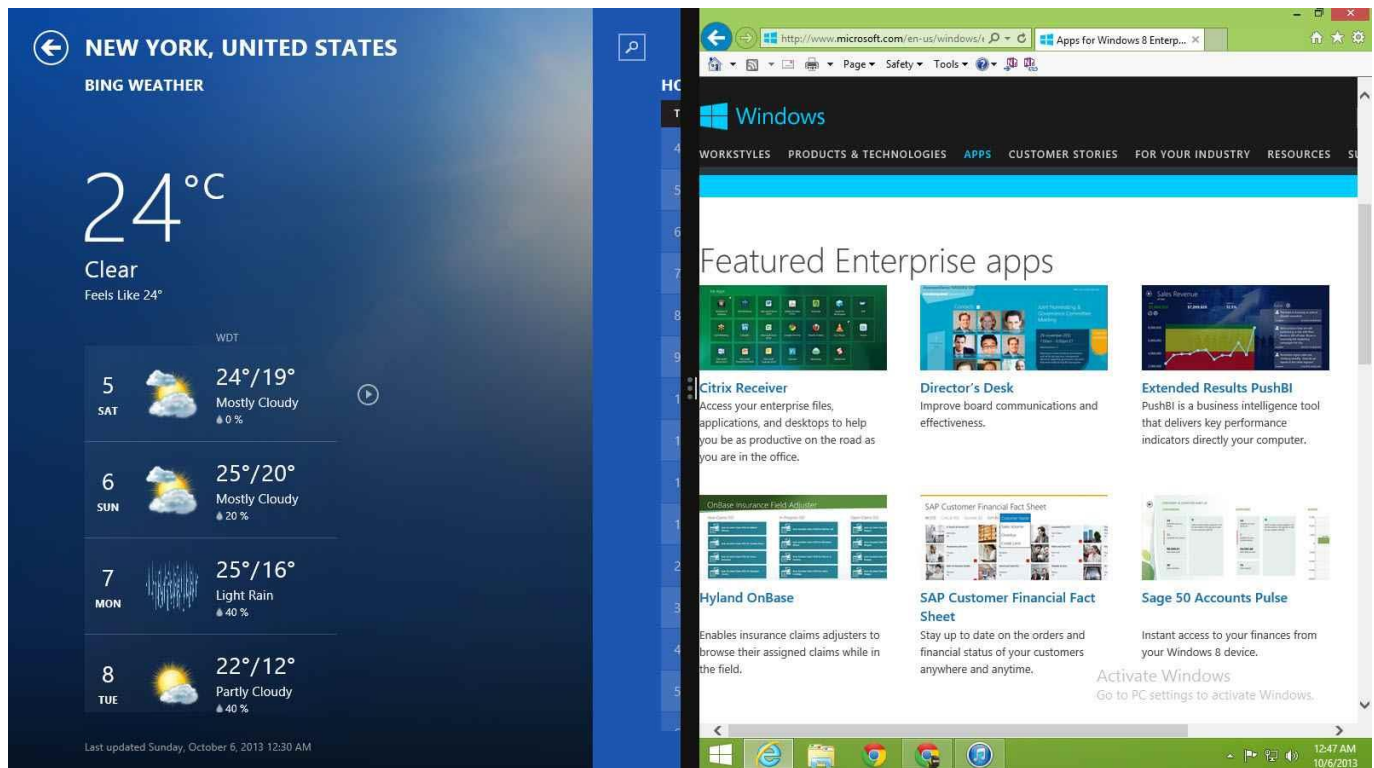
The pixel count may be a little different based on the app itself, but this gives users a lot more freedom with how they see the apps that they are using. It should be noted that it's not a one-size-fits all solution and that some apps are not able to adhere to the new size boundaries.

It is safe to say that many of the application designers are looking at their software and doing what they can to make them flexible and adjust to the new size options.

You can now surf the web while watching YouTube and not have it take over your screen, which makes this a welcome addition.

Next, you can also match your Metro background and your desktop one. This seems like a very trivial addition, but many users like to have consistency across screens, and they are more than happy to hear about this news.

It's also much easier to modify the Metro tiles and move them around to the size and location you want them to be.

You can now pack tons of apps into one screen or resize them so that they are visually appealing and easier to use. You are in control of what your desktop and Metro screen look like.

Users always want the personal touch for their personal computers or tablets, and Windows 8.1 gives them that freedom.

They can add as much or as little as they want and create content that they want to use and show off. It's the little things that make users happy, and Microsoft has continued to show everyone that they are not just listening to the bigger complaints, but also thinking about the incremental improvements to help make Windows 8.1 the best Microsoft operating system yet.

Lastly, it is important to note that the operating system itself is not the only thing that received an overhaul with Windows 8.1. The apps themselves have seen drastic adjustments that make them more user friendly and interesting to use.

For example, Xbox music has gone through a complete cosmetic change. The underlying system remains the same, but it is much more stylish and has increased functionality.

The Bing search engine has now also been integrated into the music system, letting you quickly and seamlessly search for a favorite artist while listening to some tunes in the process.

Another new favorite feature of the application system is how it can take text-based song lists and make them a playlists. It's something that makes it very easy to create playlists and even discover new favorites.

New apps also make their appearance with Windows 8.1. Some of the more prominent apps include ones that take advantage of the Bing search engine, such as Bing Food and Drink or Bing Health and Fitness.

Lastly, on the list of features that have been added, it's now possible to customize Metro a lot more as well.

Settings can be changed so that the display resolution and mouse settings are perfect for how you use the system.

Most users may not delve deeply into the added levels of customization, but the options are there for those that want to dive into the more advanced settings.

These two apps work into your daily lifestyle to give you access to information and advice that would be much harder to obtain.

For basic users, the transition is not as jarring as the move from Windows 7 to Windows 8 was, so they won't be as hesitant to explore the OS to see what else it has to offer.

There are too many updates that are hidden within Windows 8.1 to list them all, but it's easy to see that Microsoft did not take the easy way out for this update.

This isn't just something that was rushed out to quiet some loud protesters, it was crafted with the same level of care and attention as a full-fledged release.
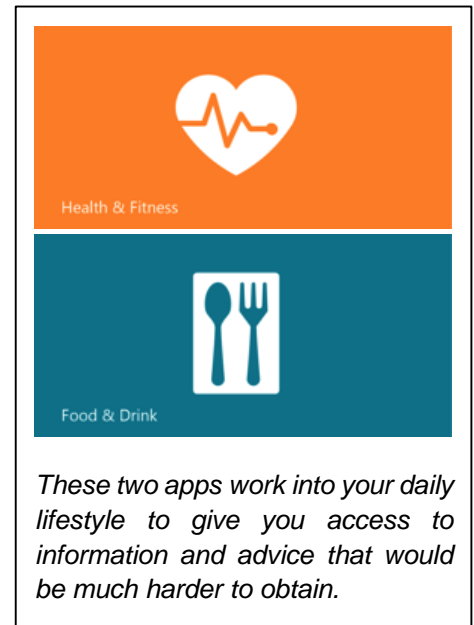
Upgrading to 8.1

Now that you've seen a few of the features in Windows 8.1 and understand how big of a difference it is, you're probably wondering how you can upgrade your system to 8.1. More importantly, how much is it going to cost you to make the jump?

While there are enough adjustments and additions to justify a full release of the software, those that already have Windows 8 can upgrade to 8.1 for free. That's right, it's absolutely free to go from Windows 8 to 8.1.

It's very easy to get Windows 8.1 on your system right now, but there are some things that you need to be aware of.

First, not all your apps will be able to make the jump to 8.1 with you, but you can re-download them after the process has completed.

Just be aware that some apps will be upgraded and others will have to be reinstalled. The system will check your apps and devices for you, so there's no worry about which ones you will need to upgrade after the system has been updated.

If you have a Microsoft account, be sure to find your username and password so that you can log back into your account.

Now, it's time to back up your PC and keep your files safe so that nothing of importance is lost.

Also, make sure that you have at least 3,850 MB of free space on your system. This will ensure that regardless of the version that you are using, you'll have ample space for the new operating system.

If you have a laptop or tablet, make sure that it is plugged in before you update because shutting down the system prematurely can result in data loss or something worse.

Once you are ready, turn off your antivirus software (if you have it) to prevent the software from stopping the download. You can then go to the Windows Store and download the Windows 8.1.

You can still use your system while the update is downloading and installing, so don't feel like you have to set aside a big block of time to upgrade your system.

11

It will let you know when you need to save your work and let it restart for the changes to take place.
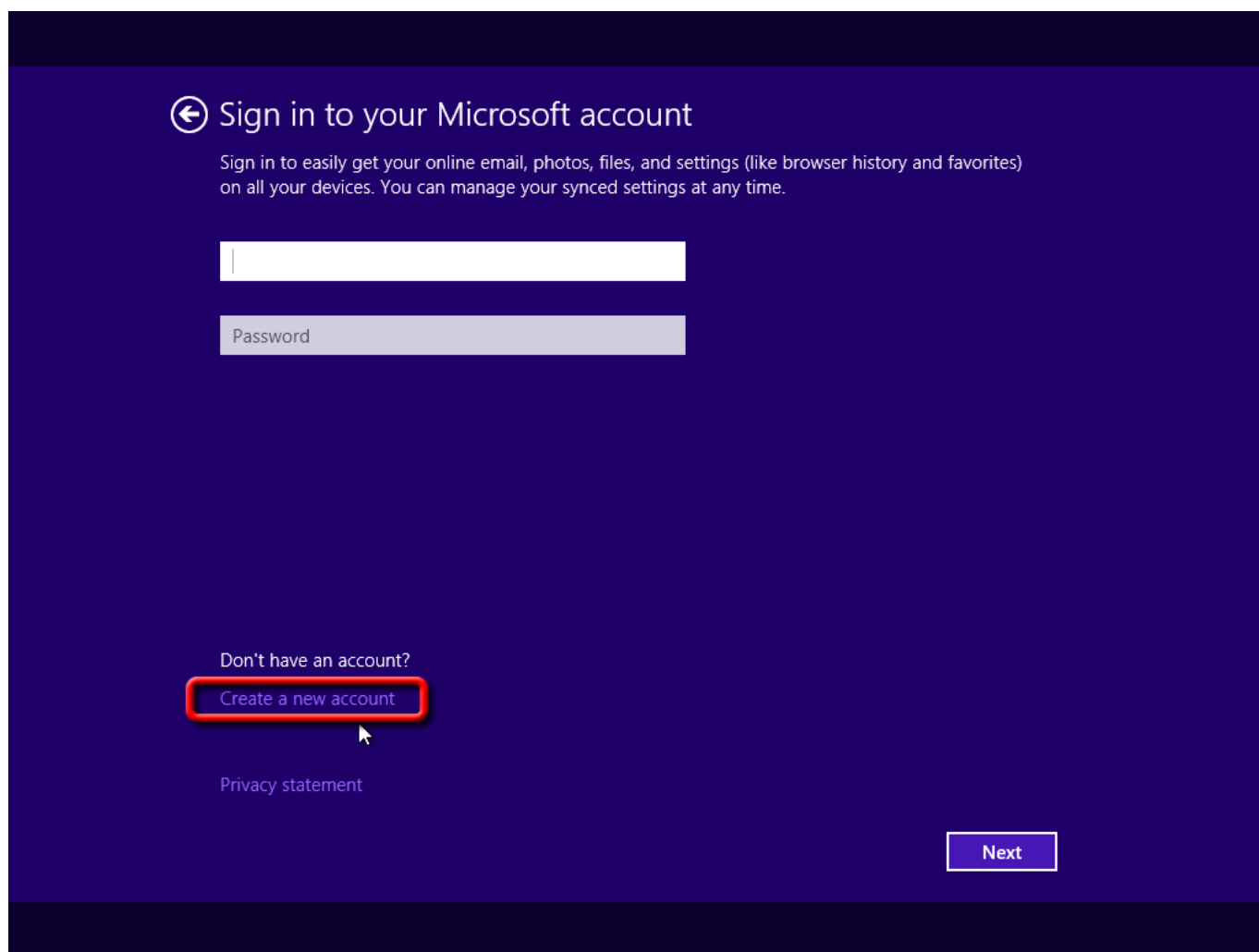
That's all there is to it. Nothing could be easier.

Getting Familiar with 8.1

Getting Started

Perhaps you are getting into Windows 8.1 for the first time or need a refresher. No matter the reason, this following section will give you a detailed look at what you need to do to get started with Windows 8.1 as well as some of the basic tips and tricks that you can use to master the system in no time.

The first thing that you have to do before anything else is create a Microsoft account and profile. The Microsoft account is an e-mail address and password combination that you use to sign into Windows. It's very easy to set up and doesn't cost a penny, but it's necessary if you want to do anything on your new unit.

You can provide any e-mail address (it doesn't matter who the provider is) and choose your password according to the given parameters.

It is possible to create more than one login if there are going to be multiple users using the device.

By letting them create a custom login, the system will adjust according to the settings of that person.

This means that two users can have completely different apps, pictures, and themes when they log in after someone else.

Furthermore, it's possible to set up a child's account and give them extra security measures (such as no e-mail access) so that they only see and access what you want them to.
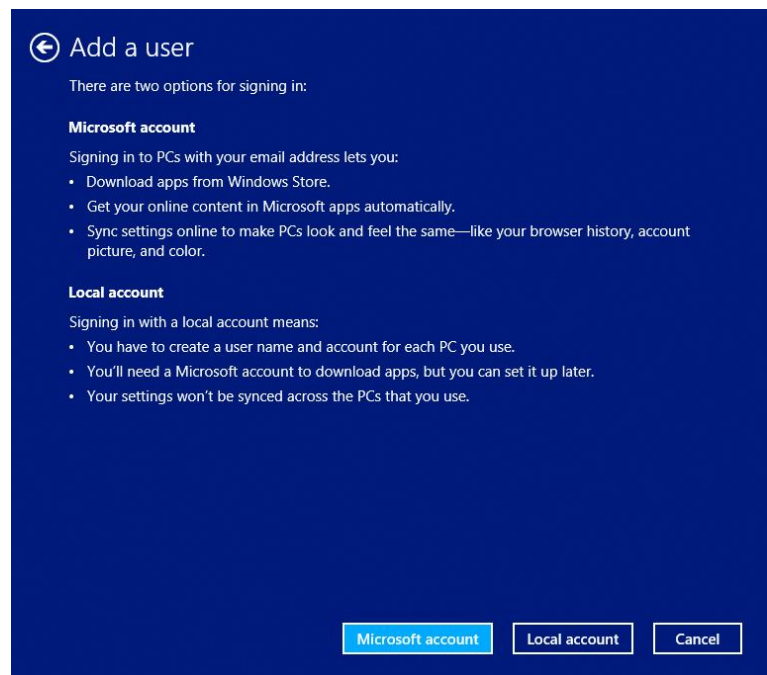
If you are updating your system and already have a Microsoft account, you will be able to log back in and access everything you need.

Also, you might have a Microsoft account because you use another Microsoft service like the Xbox system or Hotmail. In these instances, you can use the same login information so that you are no creating more than one profile for you to keep track of.

Simply put, you have three options for accessing a Microsoft account. You can use a previous account, sign up for a free and new account, or start a brand new e-mail address and use that for your profile. This versatility ensures that you are using the account that you are most comfortable with and not settling for something else. The choice is up to you.

14

Navigating the System

You might be ready to tackle the world and see what Windows 8.1 has to offer, but the basics need to be covered first. The start screen is the heart of your device. It's where your applications, programs, and settings are all stored.

It's where you can connect with the outside world through social media or the internet. It basically controls everything that you want to access and do, which is why it has to be covered before anything else. If you ever get lost or don't know what to do, you should always go back to the start menu.

You can do this in a couple of different ways, depending on what you are using the operating system on.

If you are on a PC, you can press the Windows logo on your keyboard and you'll be right there. Otherwise, you can open the charms and then click the "start" icon.
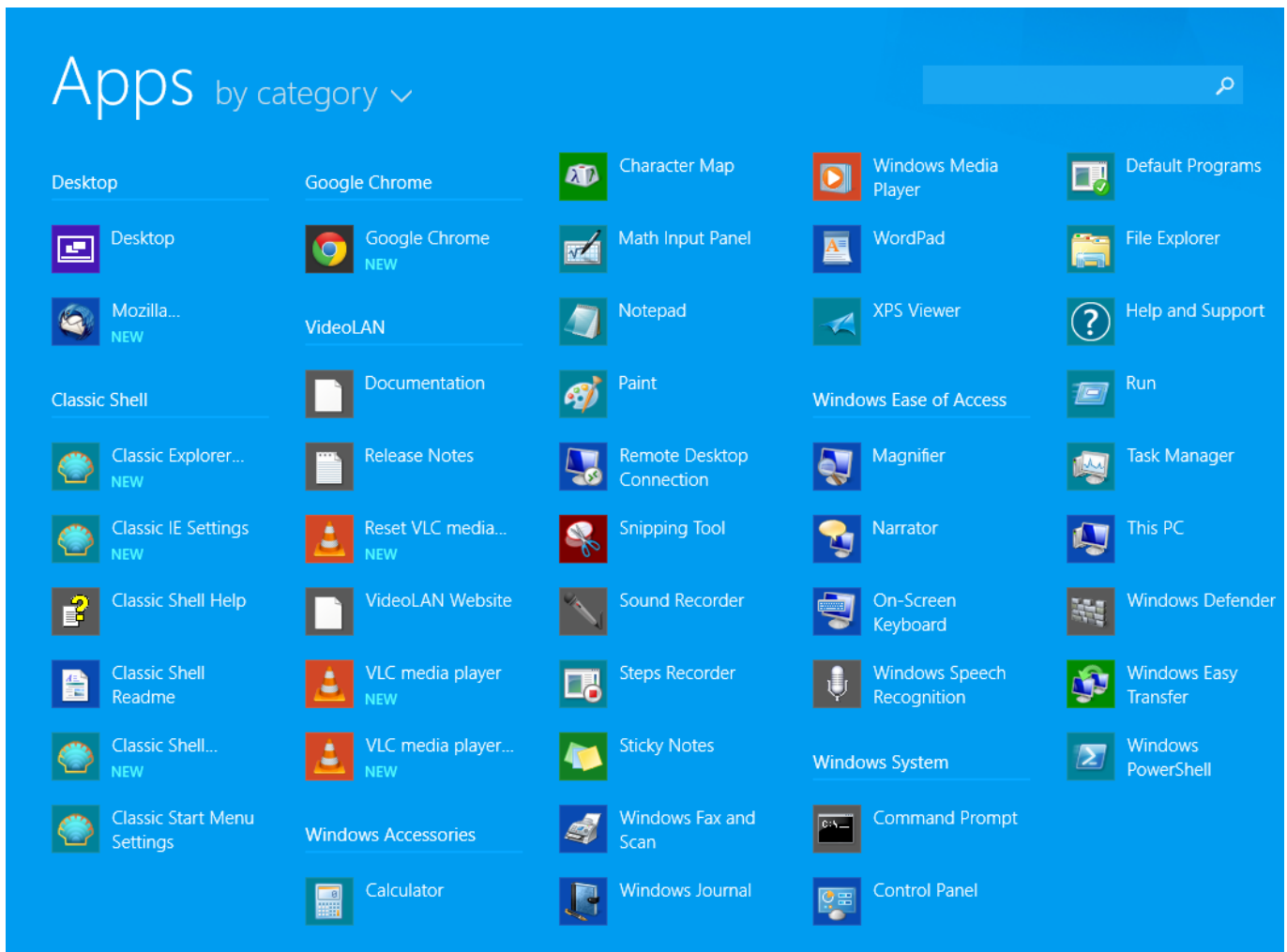
Lastly, you can also find the Windows logo in the lower left-hand side of the screen. All of these functions will give you a way to access the start menu and get to where you need to be.

You'll also probably have a lot of apps on your device, and finding the right one when you need it can be frustrating and confusing.

Thankfully, there is a very quick and easy way that you can see all of your apps in one convenient location.

The Apps view screen lets you see all of the apps that you have at the same time, and all you have to do is click the arrow that is in the lower-left corner of the Start screen.

16

Once your apps are all visible, you can pin them to the Start screen for easy access.

Pinning your apps makes them visible on the Start screen so that you never have to go too far to find them. If you want to pin an app, enter the Apps view screen and hold or right-click on the app that you want to pin.
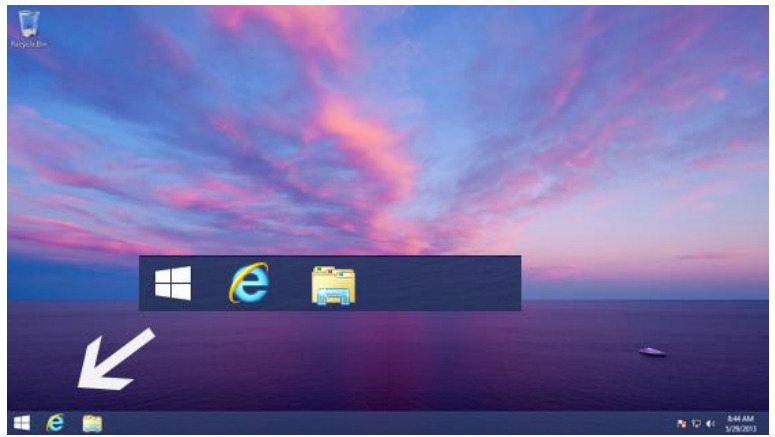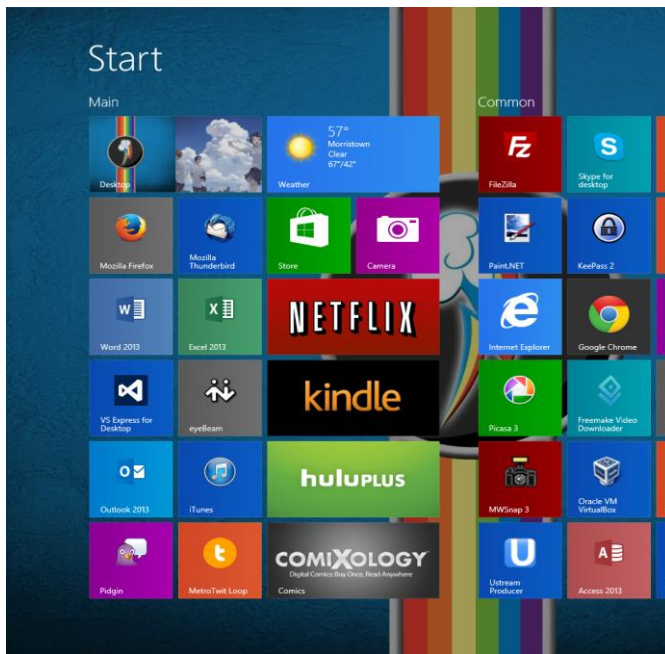
You can do more than one app at once if you prefer. Select the "Pin to Start" option and they will be set on the Start screen for you.

Organizing Your Start Screen

Your Start screen is where all of the magic happens, so you'll want it to be laid out perfectly. It's easy to move tiles around and you can also change their size so that you can make them as visible possible or vice versa.

You might even discover a little designer in you that wants to arrange the tiles in a certain way, which is completely possible. You can also group tiles together so that it's easier to find them when you are in a rush.

You can move a tile just by pressing on the tile that you are trying to relocate and dragging it to where you want it.

You can do this with your finger or a mouse, depending on what you are using at the moment. Once it's moved, hold the tile once more (or right-click it) to be able to resize the tile.

In this mode, you can alter the size of the tile itself so that it is the size that you want it to be. You can also group your tiles with some simple actions. First, press and hold (or right-click) the tiles that you want to group up.

Drag all of the tiles that you want to group into an open space and wait for the gray bar to appear behind them. When this is done, you will be able to name the group that you have created and then move the entire group of tiles at once.

17

Moving tiles is easy and painless as well. If you are on a touch screen device, pinch to zoom out (you can do this by clicking on the zoom icon with a mouse as well) and drag the group to the new location where they will be. That's all that you need to do in order to move and organize your tiles the way that you want them.

Many other systems require that you jump through several hoops just to get simple tasks like this done, but Microsoft has streamlined the process so that any can move, group, and resize tiles with a simple quick taps.

Understanding Apps

Apps have been mentioned from time to time, but they have not been described in detail until now. Apps is a term that can be used to define a number of different things, but they typically offer some type of service in a convenient package.
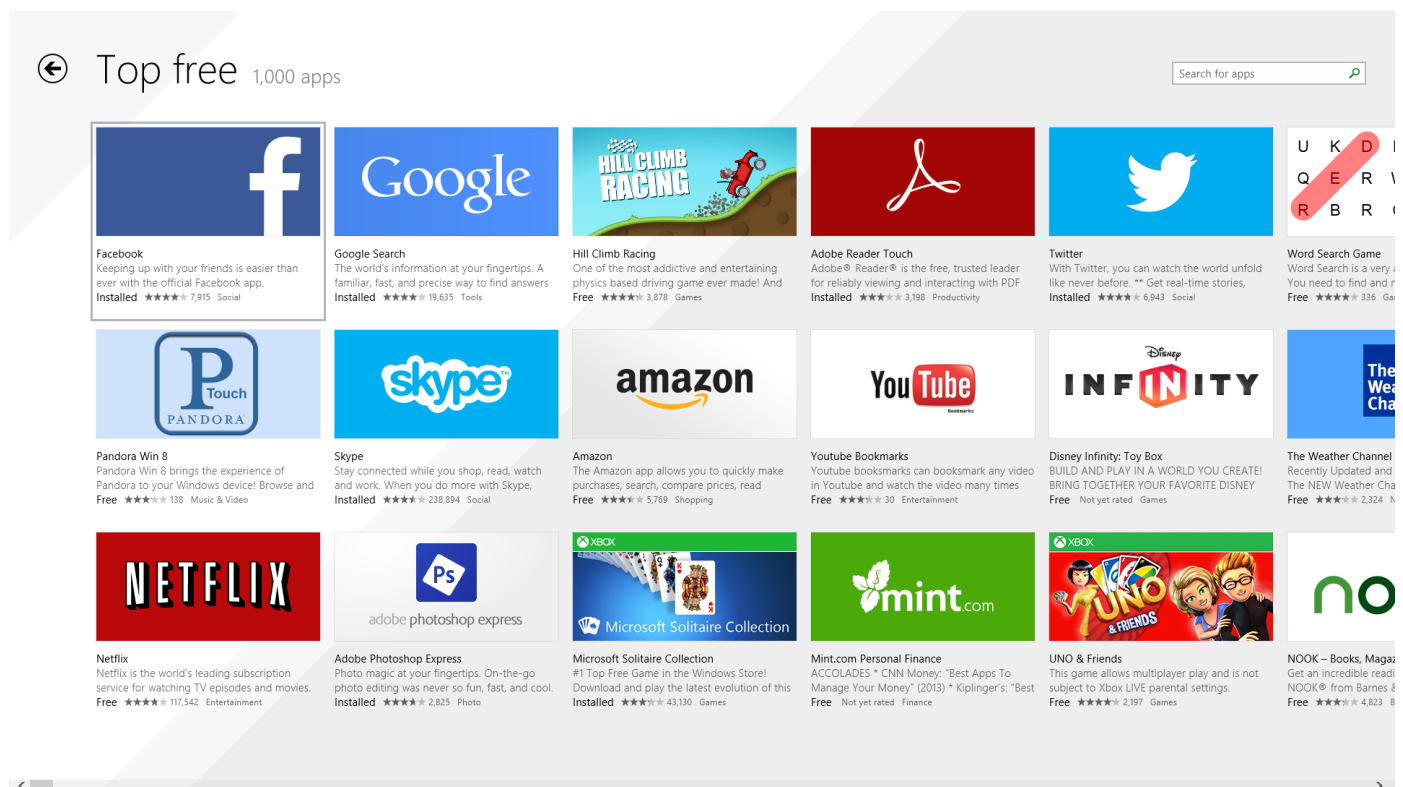
Some common apps help users track their fitness progress or follow their favorite sports team during a live game.

Other apps are streamlined versions of common services such as Skype or YouTube while others still are games that you can sink hours and hours into. It's easy to see that apps are very versatile and can provide you with a limitless amount of potential.

18

They help make your life more entertaining and manageable without adding any complicated steps or holding you back.

It's highly recommended that you set some time aside and browse through the different types of apps available to figure out what interests you the most. You might wonder where you can do this, but the answer is simple: the Windows store.

The Windows store is your gateway into the digital world and all of the apps that users are using right now.

You can see which ones are rising in popularity and quickly search for something if you are feeling adventurous.

Popular categories include music, games, movies, education, news, and much more.

If there is something that interests you, you can bet that there is an app that will help you connect with your device in a new way.

You can purchase apps with a debit or credit card as well as a Windows store card. This card can be purchased at a wide number of stores and gives you the peace of mind when shopping online without limiting your possibilities.

Some apps are even free, so don't hesitate to try them out! Find apps for your kids or for yourself and see just how versatile an app can be. Once you find the ones that click with you, you'll wonder how you ever made it through the day without them.

No matter what type of app you get, there will be different using instructions for them. You will have to learn the methods when you first start, but they are designed to be accessible and easy to use. Even if you've never used an app in your life, you'll be able to pick up the basics and master your new apps in no time.

Customizing Your PC

Moving apps on the Start screen and finding great apps are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to how you can personalize your PC.
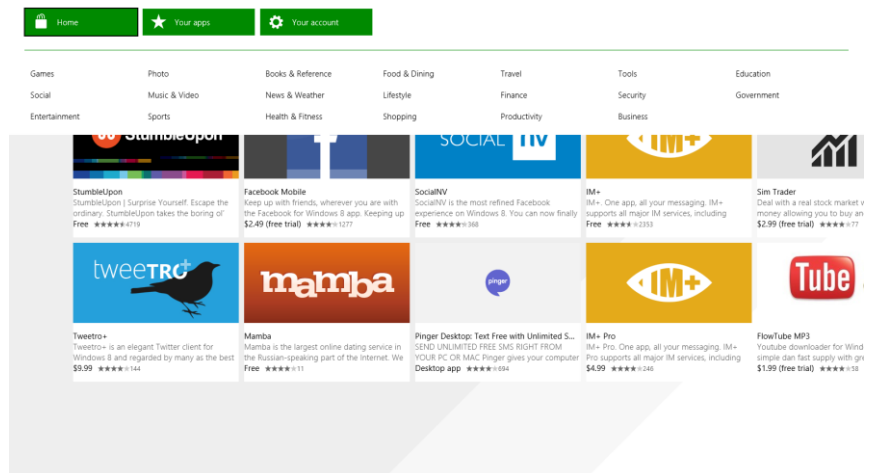
Before you can take advantage of any of the features that will be listed, you'll have to sign into your PC with a Microsoft account, so make sure that you have already created one and have logged into it.

If others use the same device, get them to log into their account before customizing the PC because all of those changes will not carry over.

With that being said, here are some of the most common and creative ways that you can customize your Window 8.1 PC.

Do you have difficulty remembering passwords?

Having a password for your PC might be one more thing that you have to remember, and it can be a real hassle to sit there and try to remember what you created as your password.
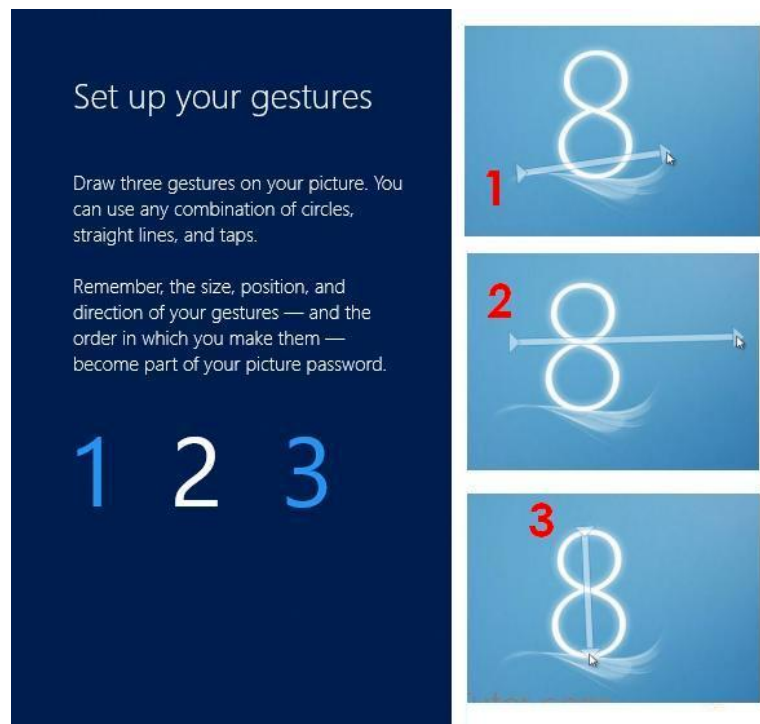
Thankfully, you can actually sign in with a picture password if you prefer.

You can choose from any photo and then determine what gestures you want to use to unlock your PC.

Mix up some circles, straight lines, and taps to create a unique password that only you can use.

Set up your gestures

Draw three gestures on your picture. You can use any combination of circles, straight lines, and taps.

Remember, the size, position, and direction of your gestures — and the order in which you make them — become part of your picture password.

1 2 3

If you have a touchscreen PC, you can draw the picture with your finger, otherwise you can do the same thing with your mouse by dragging and clicking on the image.

If you want to create a picture password, swipe inwards from the right side of the screen and choose the "settings" button. After that, click or tap on "change PC settings." Continue on to "accounts" and then "sign-in options."

Here, you'll be able to find the "picture password" option and add it. All that's needed after that is for you to enter your account information to validate the user and then choose the picture you want along with the gestures that you want to save.

Picture passwords are more entertaining to use when unlocking a PC and are much safer because users have a much harder time guessing the right image as well as the gesture. If you are looking for a unique way to sign into your PC, don't overlook the picture password function.

Managing Your Login Screen Destination

Speaking of signing in, you don't always have to go to the same screen each and every time. It's set to default to the Start screen whenever you sign into your PC, but you can customize it so that you are taken to the desktop or the Apps view screen instead.

This way, you are always on the page that you want to be on and don't have to change the screen each and every time that you sign in.

Changing your login location is very simple and can be completed in a matter of seconds. In order to do this, you want to open the charms bar, which can be done by swiping inwards from the right-side of the screen.

Tap the "search" icon and type in the word "taskbar." Once you have completed this, locate and choose the "taskbar and navigation" option in the results listed.

21

Next, tap or click on the "navigation" tab and find the "when I sign in or close all apps on a screen, go to the desktop instead of Start" option.

There will be a checkbox next to this option, and you want to click "ok" on it.

On the other hand, you may want to go the Apps view instead of the Start screen when you log in.

This gives you the ability to see all of your apps at once and lets you choose the app that you are looking for.

If you want this to be your primary screen, follow the instructions listed above up until the point where you click the "when I sign in or close all apps on a screen, go to the desktop instead of Start" option.
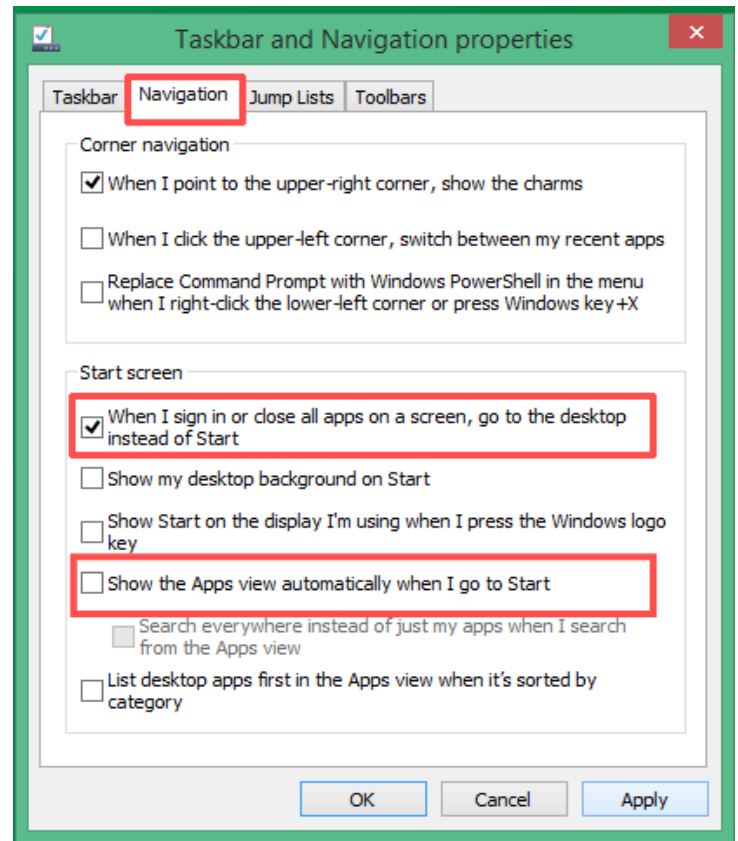
Instead of checking off this box, you want to find the one that is listed "show the Apps view automatically when I go to Start."

Tap or click on this box and save your changes. You will now be taken to the Apps view whenever you log into your PC.

In this manner, you can have more control over your PC and what you are doing with it. Don't struggle with the screens and menus any longer. Have Windows 8.1 take you right where you want to be so that you don't waste your time switching screens time and time again.

Changing Your Account Image

When you have a Microsoft account, you will be assigned an image for that profile. This may be one that you have chosen when you first created the account or something that was given to you by default.

Either way, it's possible that you want to change the image because it is what your friends and family member will see if they have you listed as a contact.

There are a few different options that you can choose from for the image, each one will let you choose or create the right picture that you want everyone to see.
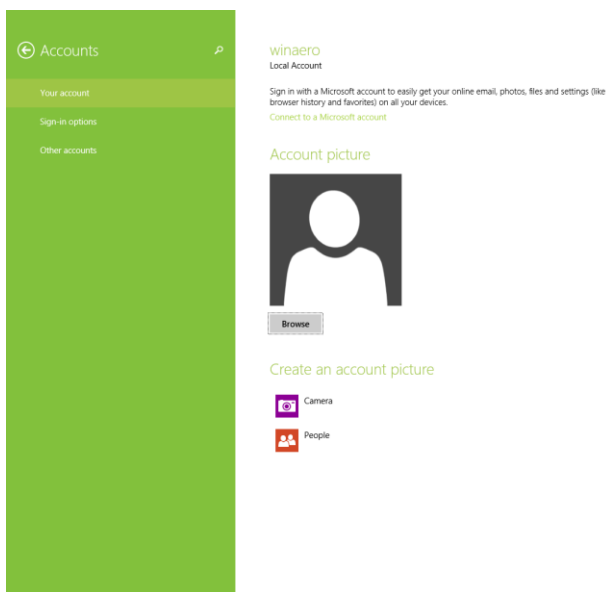
For those that just want to change their picture into a different one, simply access the settings menu and then click on "change PC settings." This will bring up several options, and the one that says "accounts" should be selected.
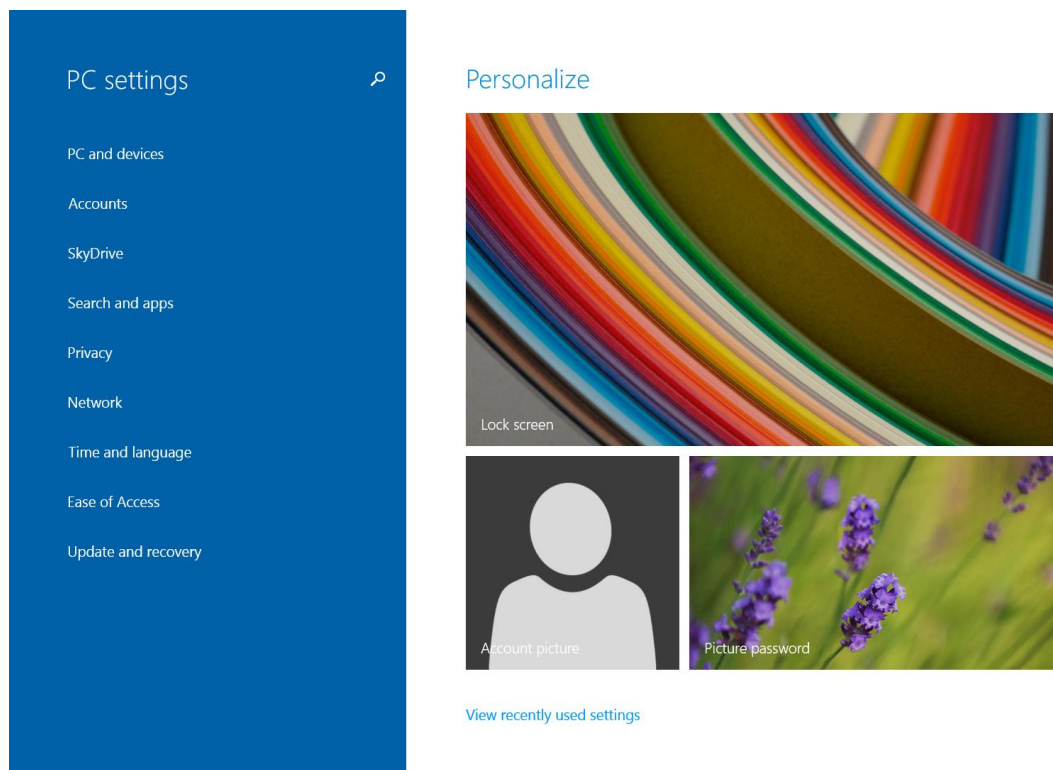
Next, click or tap on the "your account" icon and enter the menu from there. When inside your account, you will be able to choose your image from a number of different sources.

You can browse your device and navigate through the photos that are stored on the PC or even find ones that are stored on the OneDrive. Once you have found the right image, select "choose image" and save your changes.

If you are unable to find the right photograph that you want to use or need to adjust it a little bit, you will want to download or install an app that enables you to create and edit photos.

There are several different ones that you can choose from, and each one will be able to provide you with different editing tools and filter options. Make sure to look at the rating of the app before you install it to prevent any headaches later on.

Also, it's recommended that you create a copy of the photo that you are planning on editing so that you do not lose the source image during the editing process. Once you have created the image you want, choose it by following the instructions listed above.

Lastly, you can take a photo or record a video clip with the camera and take a new photo for your account there. These options ensure that you have an account image that you are happy with showing your friends and family.

Customizing the Start Screen

There is a lot more you can do on the Start screen than just move some tiles around and group them. You can also pick the pictures and colors that appear on your Start screen.

If others use the same device, they will see a different Start screen, meaning that they can alter the settings as well. This way, an entire family can share the same PC and never feel like they are actually using the same device. Windows 8.1 is designed to work with one user or multiple users, so don't hesitate to customize your Start screen and get a very personalized experience.

If you want to change the background itself, access the settings menu by going to the "start" panel. After the settings load, you want to choose the "personalize" option and click or tap on the background.
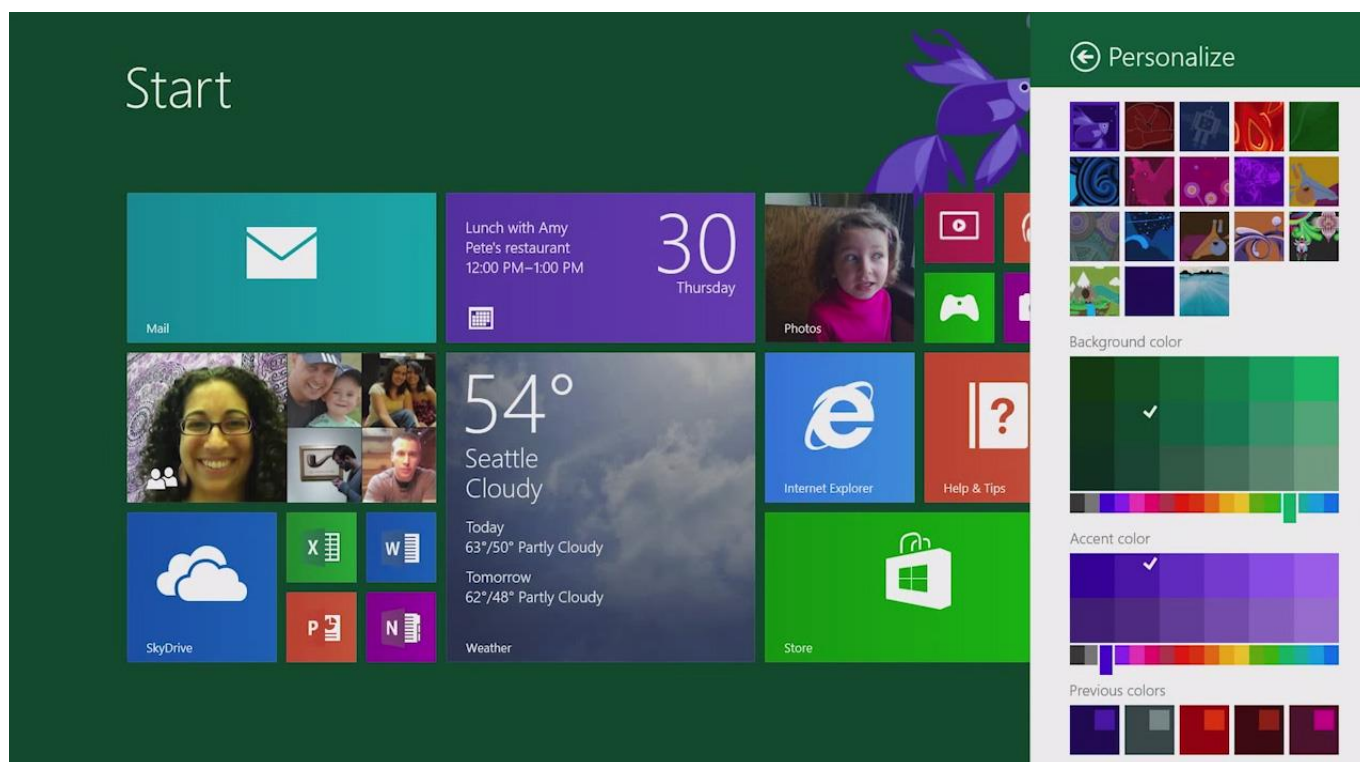
From here, you will be able to choose the background color that you want. This accent color that you choose will also appear in a couple of other areas as well, like on the sign-in screen and with the charms. It's a small touch that reminds you that you are the owner of the account and that the system is designed to meet your personal tastes.

You can also use your desktop background picture as the image for the Start screen as well. This addition means that you have a seamless transition between screens and never feel like you are taken out of your user experience.

In order to set the background image as your Start screen, follow the same directions as before, but click on "personalize" instead and see a preview of what your background will look like.
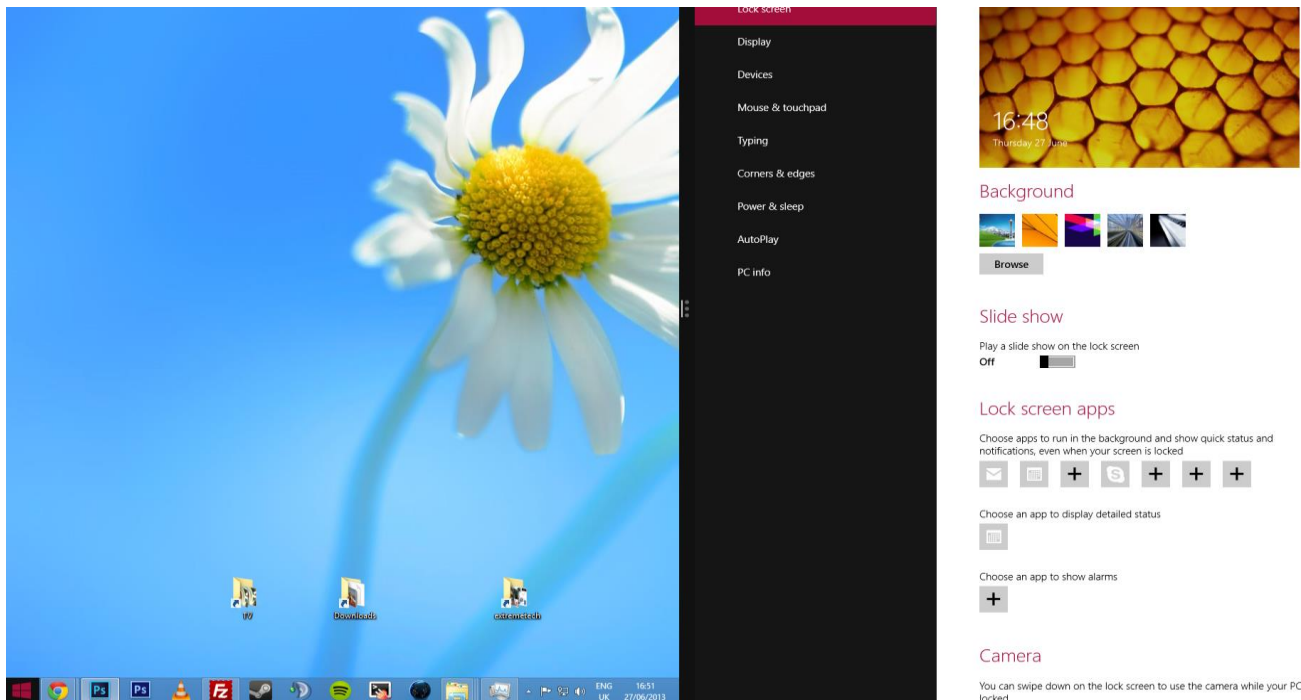
There are many different options available for the background of your Start screen, so don't be afraid to experiment and see what clicks with you.

You can always change the background if you want and no other users will be able to access your backgrounds.

Whether you want a personal image or just need to change the color scheme, it's fast and easy to do with Windows 8.1.

26

Pinning Apps

Applications are an essential part of your daily life, and you will want to have them on your Start screen so that you can utilize them quickly.

Apps that are pinned to your screen will also notify you of updates such as when someone messages you or comments on a status that you posted via social media.

You can always add or remove apps as needed because Windows 8.1 makes everything so simple and easy to do.

If you want to pin an app to Start, you just need to access the "Start" link. You want to then swipe up from the middle of the screen (or click on the downwards-facing arrow in the lower left-hand corner) until you see the Apps view.

Once you access this view, you can choose which apps you want to pin and then click on "pin to start." You can also use this same method to unpin something from the Start screen if you decide that you no longer want it on the main screen.

That's all there is to it. There are no lengthy processes that you have to follow if you want to unpin an app and you can always add it back if you decide that you want an app available on the Start screen again.

It should be noted that unpinning an app does not delete it from the system. It is still accessible from the App view and will be there for future use.

You can choose to uninstall apps from the App view screen as well, but that will delete any information that stored within the app itself. Be sure to use caution when uninstalling apps because they can still be functional if they are just not pinned to the Start screen.

Apps can be fun and exciting to use, and the freedom to add them as your tastes change means that you are never stuck looking at the same screen. Customize your screen and make sure that your life is captured on your PC in the most accurate manner possible. Let other users personalize their screens as well so that everyone can enjoy their time on Windows 8.1.

Customizing Your Lock Screen

Customization doesn't have to be limited to the screens that you see after you unlock your device. You can also create a custom lock screen that is unique and personal in a matter of seconds.

The lock screen is the screen that you see if your device has been inactive for a set period of time.

When this happens, you must unlock the device using the password or gesture that you have assigned to it. This prevents the wrong users from gaining access to your device and also your personal information.

The lock screen can be customized to feature a photo or slideshow of your choice. You can also choose some stock images if you just want something different but not personal. If you want to add photos to your lock screen, you need to access the "settings" menu and click on "change PC settings."
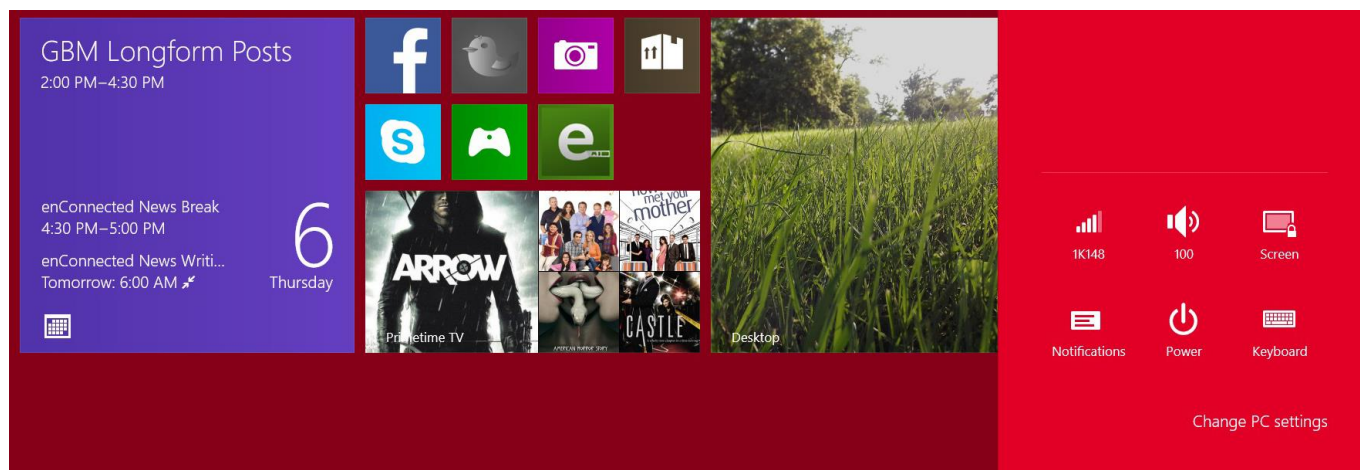
From here, you want to choose "PC and devices" followed by the option for "Lock screen." You will then be taken to a menu where you can browse for images and choose the picture that you want to have for your background.

This image can be on the device itself or on the OneDrive (if you have it synched properly.) If you want a slide show instead of a static image, click on "play a slide show on the lock screen" and turn on the feature.

28
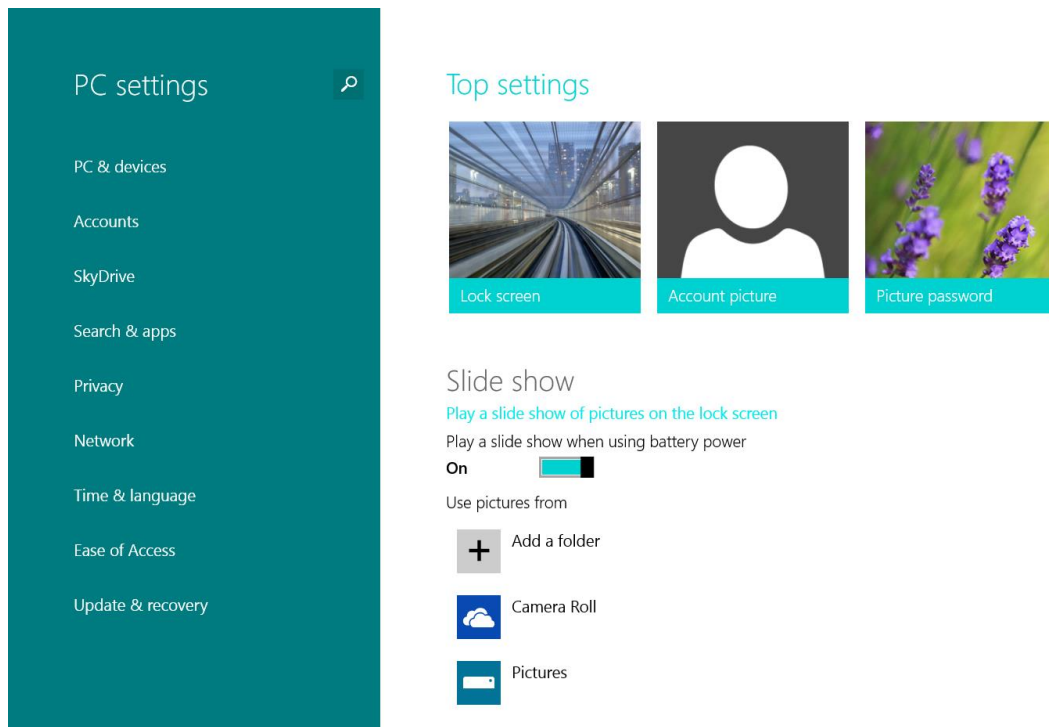
This isn't the only thing that you can do on your lock screen, though. You can also get app updates as well as detailed app information from this screen.

Access the lock screen options are instructed previously and then go to "lock screen apps."

From here, you can choose to add an app to the list and select it for use from the lock screen.

You can also obtain key information regarding an app through the lock screen. See who is calling you on Skype without having to answer, for example.
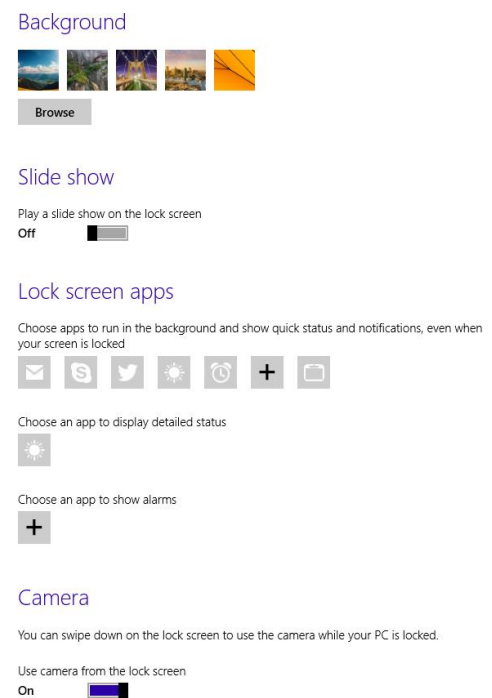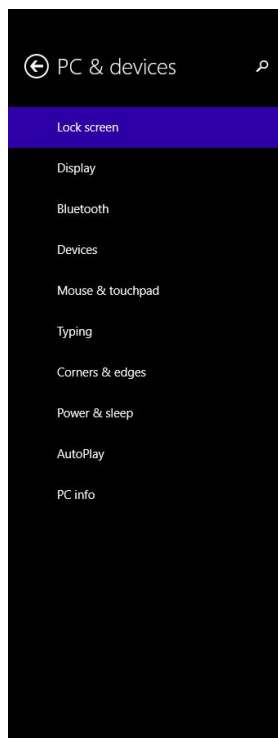
The lock screen does not have to be something that is static and boring. Be sure to customize it so that you can add even more of your personality and lifestyle to the device and gain access to the things that matter to you most.

Synchronizing Your Settings

You should consider synching your settings if you are using a Microsoft account. When you do this, you are able to sync your lock screen picture, Start screen, and desktop themes to any Microsoft device that you are using.

This means that you'll have a seamless transition from device to device and never feel like you are on a device that isn't your primary one. Use one password or gesture for your lock screens and never try to remember more than one account again. It's easy to maintain and simple to do.

If you want to sync your personal settings to your Microsoft account, go to the "settings" tab and click or tap on "change PC settings."
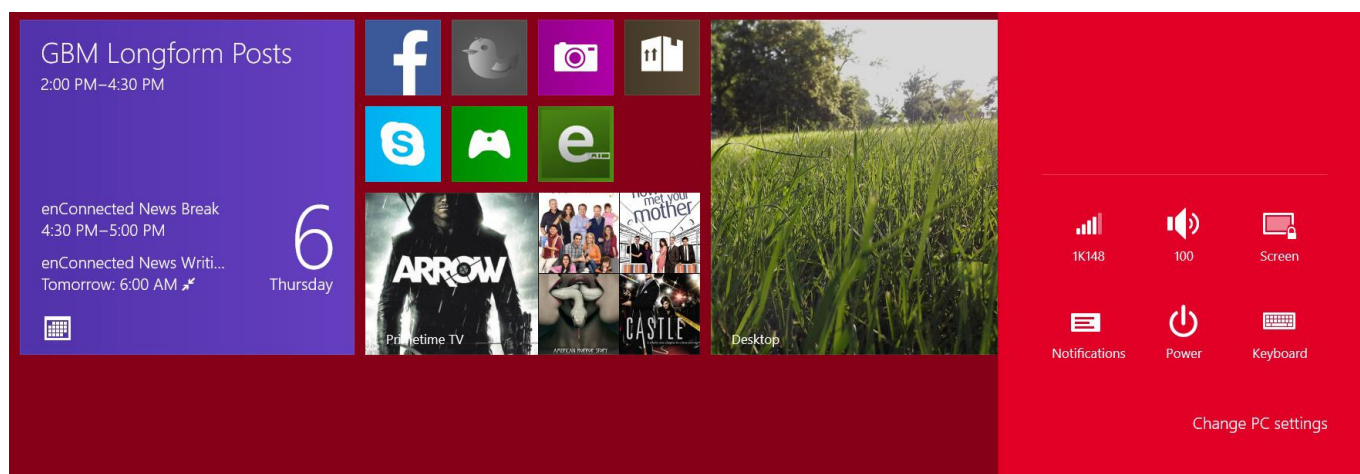
From here, you should see the "OneDrive" option. Click on this and then choose to "synch settings."

You will see an option that says "synch your settings on this PC." You will want to turn that option and choose the settings that you want to sync under the "personalization settings" for your device.

OneDrive is capable of doing many different things and ensuring that your documents and data is accessible in a number of different formats.

Even if your personal settings and images are transferred to your preferred account, be aware of the fact that your apps will not transfer over.
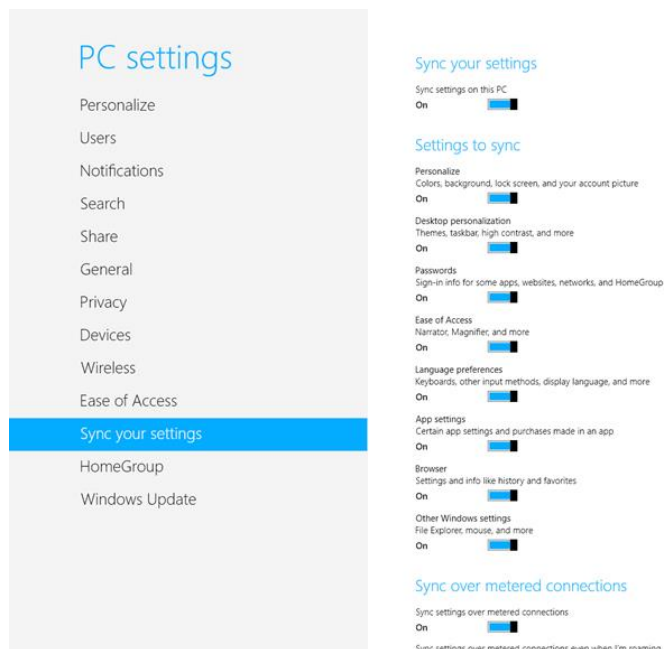
If you need to use an app that you had on another device, you will have to install it on the current device before you can use it.

There a many benefits to having an account that is synced to multiple devices. You can always feel at home on any Microsoft device and never have to struggle to get where you need to be. If you are in a hurry, knowing that your important settings will be the same when you access your account can be relieving.

Whether you only plan on having one device or already own multiple ones, consider synchronizing your settings so that you never have to play the "what if" game. Rest assured that you will have everything you need with your Microsoft login and OneDrive at your side.

Going Online

The internet is an essential part of Windows 8.1, even more than any other operating system that Microsoft has created. You will be able to connect with your friend through social media, check your e-mail, and browse your favorite sites when you are connected.

Many of the apps that you install won't be able to function without the internet. It's a very valuable aspect of Windows 8.1, and you are missing out tremendously if you don't connect your device to the internet.

There are two basic ways that you can be connected to the internet. The first is when you are at home and want to use the online connection.

If you live in a home where you have an internet service provider (ISP) you can easily connect your PC. The exact steps will vary based on what type of connection that you have, but there is a walkthrough wizard in place to guide you through the steps.

If you have an Ethernet cable with your modem, you can simply plug the cable into your PC port and be ready to go. There are a few other options available for those that use this method, such as the ability to connect multiple PC's to the same port or adding a password to the network.

If you want to do this, find the network in the "settings" charm and make the changes accordingly. You can also connect multiple devices to the same internet source by using a router and connecting each PC to it with an Ethernet cord.

Having the internet hardwired to the PC provides a much more stable connection than some wireless options out there, and may still rely on this method for their home service.

Ethernet cords are not affected by other frequencies that may be put out by household appliances, such as the microwave, and can ensure a stable and reliable connection for the user.

However, it is restrictive in terms of where you can place your device and where you will be able to use the internet in the home. Some users prefer to go wirelessly, which is the alternative method for connecting to the internet.

The other approach that you can take is adding internet to your device while you are on the go. Almost every location offers some sort of Wi-Fi connection. From bookstores and airports to fast food chains and museums; you can find Wi-Fi access anywhere.

You can set up a wireless connection at home if you have a wireless router connected to your modem. One final option for Wi-Fi is to sign up for a mobile broadband connection. This type of connection works off of certain service provider's towers and gives you internet access while you are on the go.

These plans vary based on the company and are limited in regards to how much data you can use, so they are not recommended as a primary source for internet.
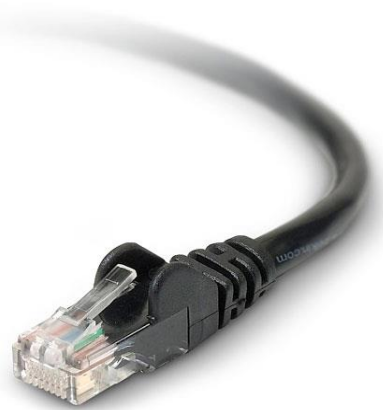
If you do choose to use a mobile broadband connection, check your usage in with the network icon on your desktop or your Settings charm to make sure that you don't get charged extra for going over your limit.

Regardless of which wireless option you choose to go with, many users prefer wireless connections over Ethernet cables because of the freedom of movement and the ability to take your device anywhere you need to go. Plus, it keeps your home much cleaner and prevents any trip hazards.

In order to connect to any wireless network, you will want to go to the "Settings" option and find the network icon.
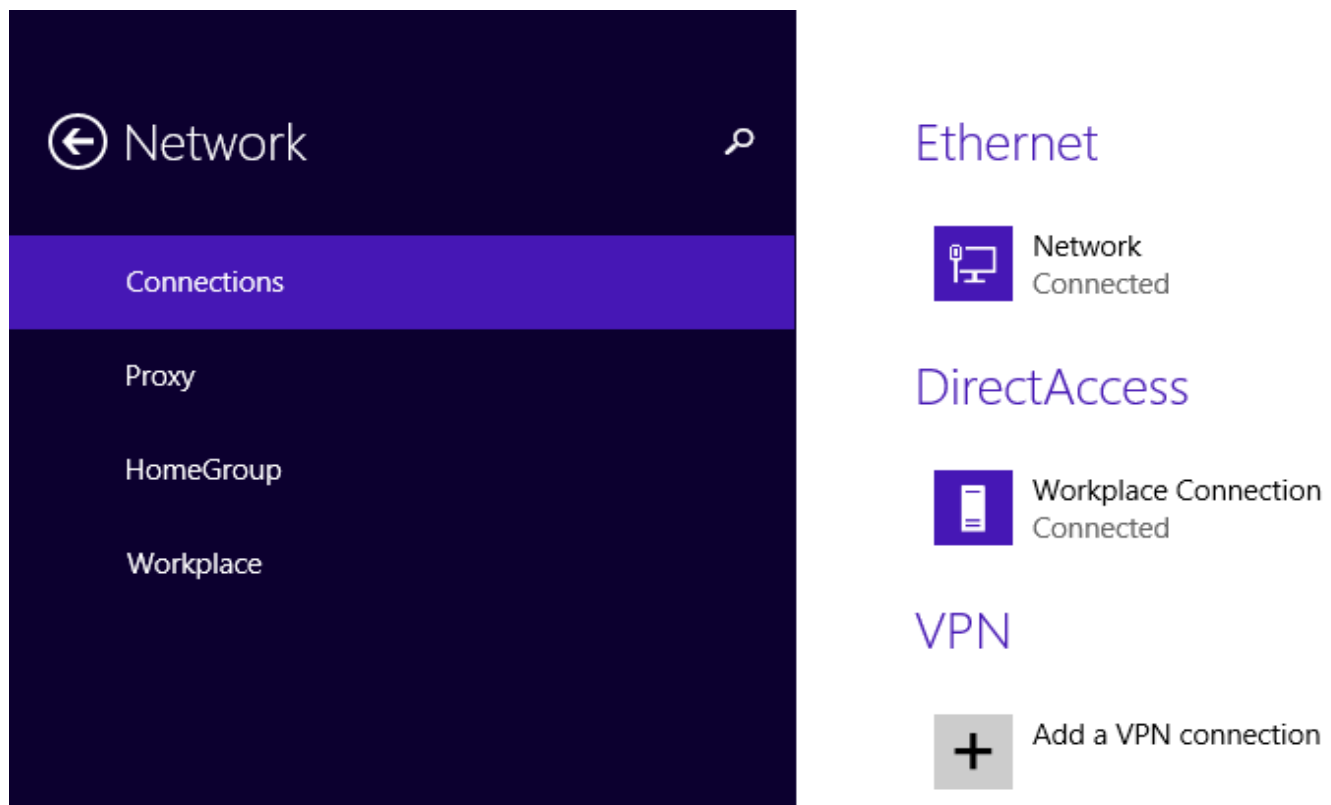
This icon will let you know if you are connected to the internet and how strong your signal is. Tap or click on the icon and you will be given a list of available networks near your location. Find the network that you have created and select it.

If you have your internet protected with a password (which is recommended) you will need to input it so that your device is given permission to access the internet. If you are in a public location, you may need to contact someone that works there to find out what the password is so that you can access the internet.

Once this has been completed, make sure that you are in range for the connection and then check the "connect automatically" option so that you will automatically be linked to this network when you are in range.

Basic Information

Now that you have everything set up and customized the way that you want, it's time to talk about the key things that you want to be aware of as a Windows 8.1 user.

The following section will give you tips and pieces of advice that will either make your life easier or safer. They are strongly suggested by Microsoft and will ensure that you are able to get the most out of your device.

You don't need to be a tech-guru to understand or master these techniques and you'll be better because of it. Whether you are using your device for personal or business purposes, you need to be aware of the following so that you are able to perform all of the necessary tasks to be successful and enjoy your device at the same time.

When you first see all of the options that are available for your Windows 8.1 device, it's very possible that you will feel a little overwhelmed.

Even if you are used different devices and computers, the setup and layout of Windows 8.1 is enough to confuse even the most seasoned user. Once you dive in and see what's beyond the surface, though, you'll quickly recognize several of the key components and how they work with one another.

Whether you are looking to sync your data to the OneDrive or want to just jam out to some music, there basic features are very easy to find and utilize. You just have to know where to look.

Whether this Windows 8 device is your first one or you have grown up with technology around you, take a moment to read through the following section and make sure that you have the basics covered.

You don't want to take any risks and lose your data or compromise your security, to say the least. You might even come across a new feature that you fall in love with or discover something unique about one that you are already using on a regular basis.

These are the basic techniques and rules that you should be aware of for your Windows 8.1 device.

Keeping Your Device Secure

It was mentioned in the previous section how important the internet is for your Windows 8.1 device.

Whether you are using a PC or portable device, you need to make sure that it is safe and secure.

There are always users out there looking to hack into the devices of unaware users, and the outcome can be disastrous.

Whether it's downloading the wrong software and letting in a virus or inputting personal information on a site that isn't secure, your safety could be at risk when you are online.

It can be scary to think about all of the cyber criminals out there looking for easy prey, but rest assured that Microsoft has worked tirelessly to prevent these individuals from gaining access to your device.

Windows 8.1 actually sees the most advanced security measures that Microsoft has implemented. Research has shown that devices that use Windows 8 are at a lower risk of malware infections than those running on Windows 7 or XP, even if the programs are identical.

The reason for hacking devices has changed over the years. It used to be done just for bragging rights between hackers, but now there are businesses out there that actually break into devices and steal information to exploit a person or company's weaknesses.

Hackers need to get a way into your computer to access your files, and they can do this through sites that look to be harmless, fake e-mails, and downloads of programs that have more than what is listed.

Your Windows 8.1 device is designed to identify and warn you when there is a possible threat to keep you and your information safe at all times.

There is nothing that you have to do on your end to keep yourself safe from hackers and other viruses, but you need to take special caution if there is any program that suggests you disable your Windows Defender or Windows Firewall.

Both of these services are in place to keep you safe and prevent any attacks on your personal information, so do not disable them unless you are 100% comfortable with the company that is suggesting it. Otherwise, you leave your computer or device open to attacks that may not be removable.

35
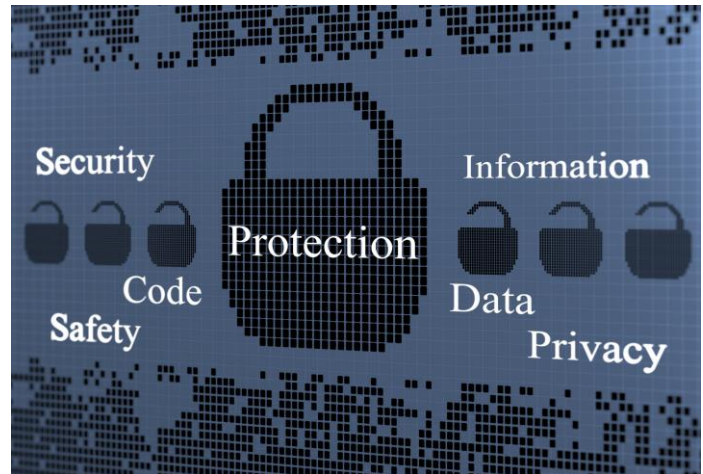
Looking Into the Safety Features

Some users want physical proof that Microsoft is taking the necessary measures to keep them safe, and justly so. Any company can simply claim to be doing these things in order to make the user feel safe, but what are they really doing?

These three features show you how Windows 8.1 and Microsoft have taken things to a whole new level and why you can rest assured that your personal life as well as your business documents will be safer than ever.

The first feature is the Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI.) The PC BIOS has officially been retired after 30 years of use, and the UEFI is the new replacement.

This new interface plays a crucial role in Windows 8.1 because it offers Secure Boot capability as well as support for self-encrypted drives.

There are a number of different devices that utilize the UEFI since it is required by Microsoft in order to receive certification through Windows 8 or 8.1. It's something that is put into place to ensure that anything designed to work with Windows 8 is safe for the users, no matter what.

Microsoft Windows 8 devices also feature a Trusted Platform Module, also known as a TPM. A TPM is a type of hardware chip that supports high-grade encryption and also prevents any type of tampering of a device.

The TPM also prevents unauthorized exporting of encryption keys or certificates over the network. Furthermore, the TPM also has a private key that isn't accessible for any software. It's a protective measure that is in place to make sure that there is no critical information leaving your device, whether you are aware of it or not.

Finally, there is an increased level of support for biometric devices. Biometric devices have been used with Windows since XP, and 8.1 takes the technology to a whole new level.

Things like fingerprint recognition can overcome the issues that are linked to passwords or other risky settings. This way, you can rest assured that the only person that has access to your device is you.

These are just some of the ways that Windows 8.1 is taking necessary measures to ensure that you are safe in this digitally connected world.

Browsing the Web with Explorer

Now that you know your device is safe and that you can connect to the internet without any fear, it's time to talk about browsing the web.

For almost two decades, there has been a new version of Internet Explorer released with Windows. Windows 8.1 also follows this trend, giving users the option to take advantage of Internet Explorer 11. Just like Windows 8.1 is an upgrade from Windows 8, Internet Explorer 11 is the next step up from Explorer 10, which was also released with Windows 8.

One of the biggest changes that Internet Explorer 11 received was the increased support and response for touch screen devices. The system is very user friendly and the speeds are unmatched when compared to other online browsers.

There are now larger tabs, easier controls, and a much more responsive reaction to gestures for touch screen users. The emphasis that Explorer has placed on the mobile platform shows that the designers understand the importance of these features for users that are on the go.

There are two different ways that you can enjoy your Internet Explorer experience. The first is to click on the Internet Explorer tile on your Start screen.
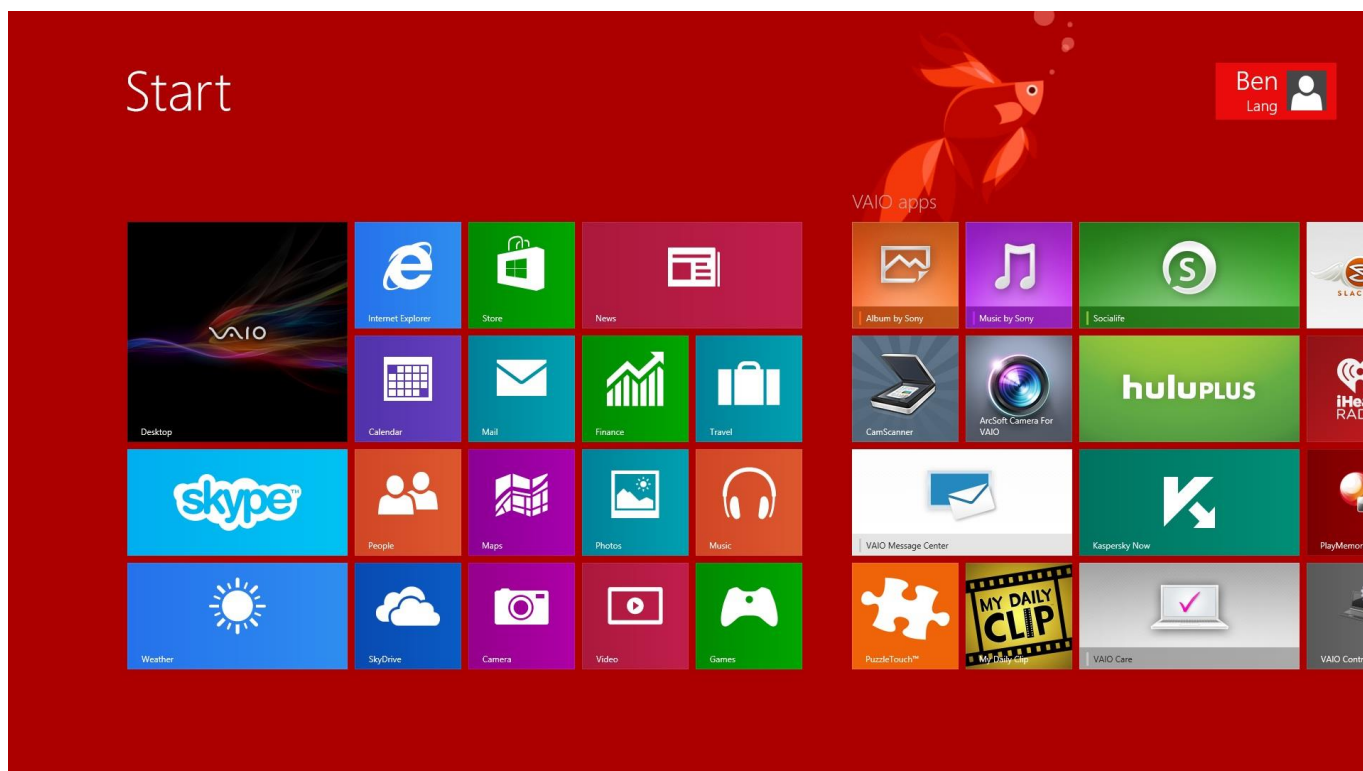
This will launch the program and gives you a wealth of features and services that are easy to utilize and are similar to what you will find in the Windows store. If you launch the software from the desktop, you will be treated to the multi-tabbed interface that will be flexible to your needs.

You can maximize, minimize, or resize the window as needed, just like any other desktop program. These two approaches for the same program ensures that you are able to use Internet Explorer 11 the way that you want and still get the fast and responsive service that you have come to expect from the brand.

With Internet Explorer on your device, you can quickly and easily browse the web and check up on your favorite sites without struggling with the interface or waiting for the pages to load.

Internet Explorer is the fastest and safest web-browser for your Windows 8.1 device. If you want to see what the internet has to offer, look no further than Explorer.

OneDrive (formerly SkyDrive)

Another often-praised service that can be found on Windows 8.1 is the OneDrive feature.

OneDrive is an online storage system that built into Windows 8.1. It allows you to save your document, photographs, and other key files and provides you with a way to access them anywhere.

39

You can use this feature to avoid sending files over and over again for a presentation or make sure that your documents are all safe in case something was to happen to your primary device.

The days of worrying about losing all of your files if your computer crashes are behind you, all thanks to OneDrive and the innovative features that it possesses.

The true beauty of OneDrive is the fact that have truly limitless freedom as to where you access your files.

Upload them from your personal computer and then save them to your tablet or laptop while on the way to the airport.

You don't have to stress and worry about missing any files or documents as you piece together a final project or prepare a key presentation.

Save all of your favorite music to the OneDrive so that you can jam out anywhere you want.

You can also use OneDrive to share and collaborate with others, letting them share and send documents to you as well.
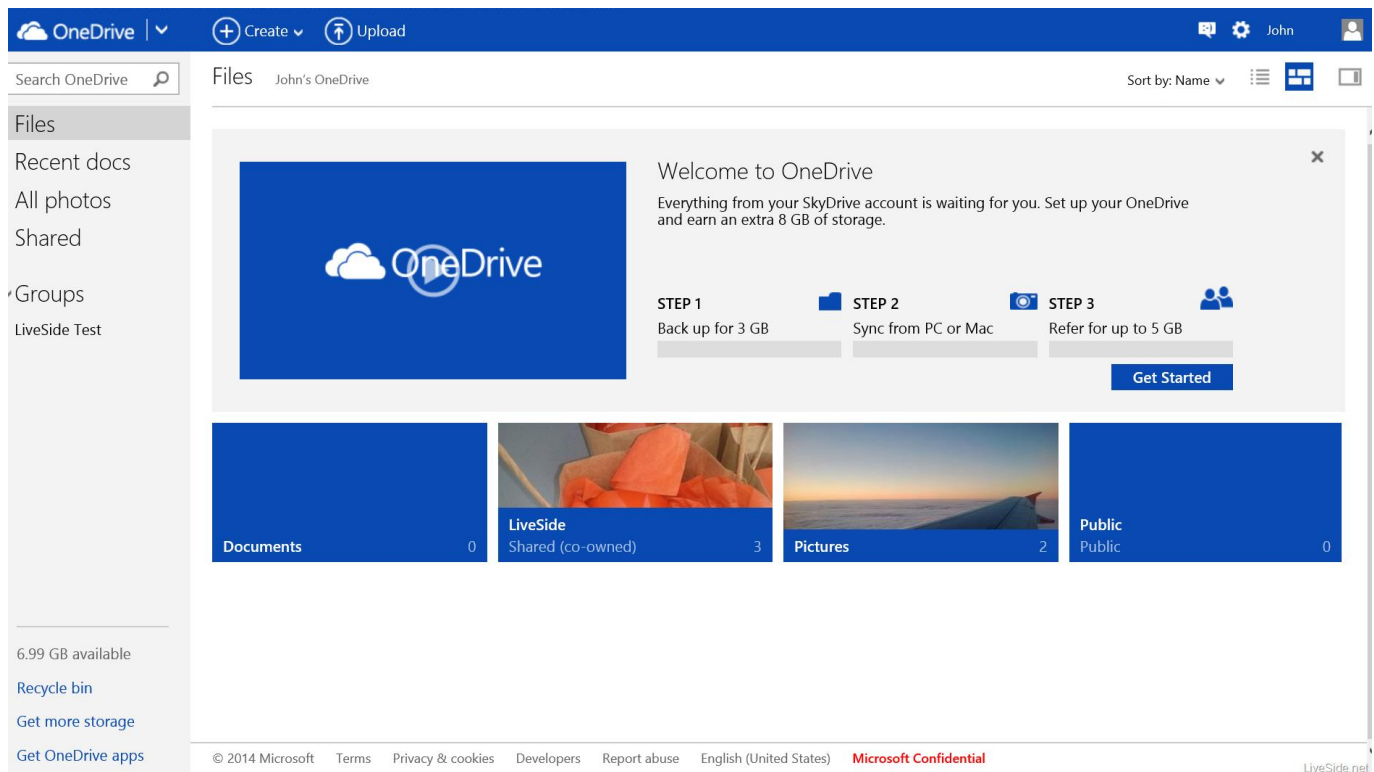
Start a document in one spot and work on it on the go before updating it and saving it for when you return home.

Why would you want to risk carrying everything on a little USB drive that can be lost or stolen when you can have the peace of mind that OneDrive gives you?

You files never leave your side and you have constant access to them, even from your phone! Take images from your phone and upload them directly to OneDrive to ensure they are there for you on any device.

OneDrive is the fast, simple, and portable solution to backing up your documents, and it comes installed with Windows 8.1. Why wait any longer to keep your files safe and secure? Keep reading to find out what you need to do to get your OneDrive set up.

Using OneDrive (formerly SkyDrive)

All you need to set up your OneDrive account is your Microsoft account login information. You must have a Microsoft account in order to use OneDrive, so make sure that if others need to access your files, you have them create an account as well. It's easy to do and doesn't cost anything to make a Microsoft account.

Chances are pretty high that users have created one for other services and haven't realized how many services are linked to the Microsoft account.

After you have created an account, there are a few different ways that you can add files to your OneDrive account. The first option is for when you want to keep the original documents or files on your PC and copy them to the OneDrive account.

You can also cut and paste them in the same manner if you desire to do so. In order to do this, you must open the OneDrive app and tap or click on folders to browser the location on OneDrive where you are looking to add the files. Choose "add files" and then select the files that you want copied to OneDrive.
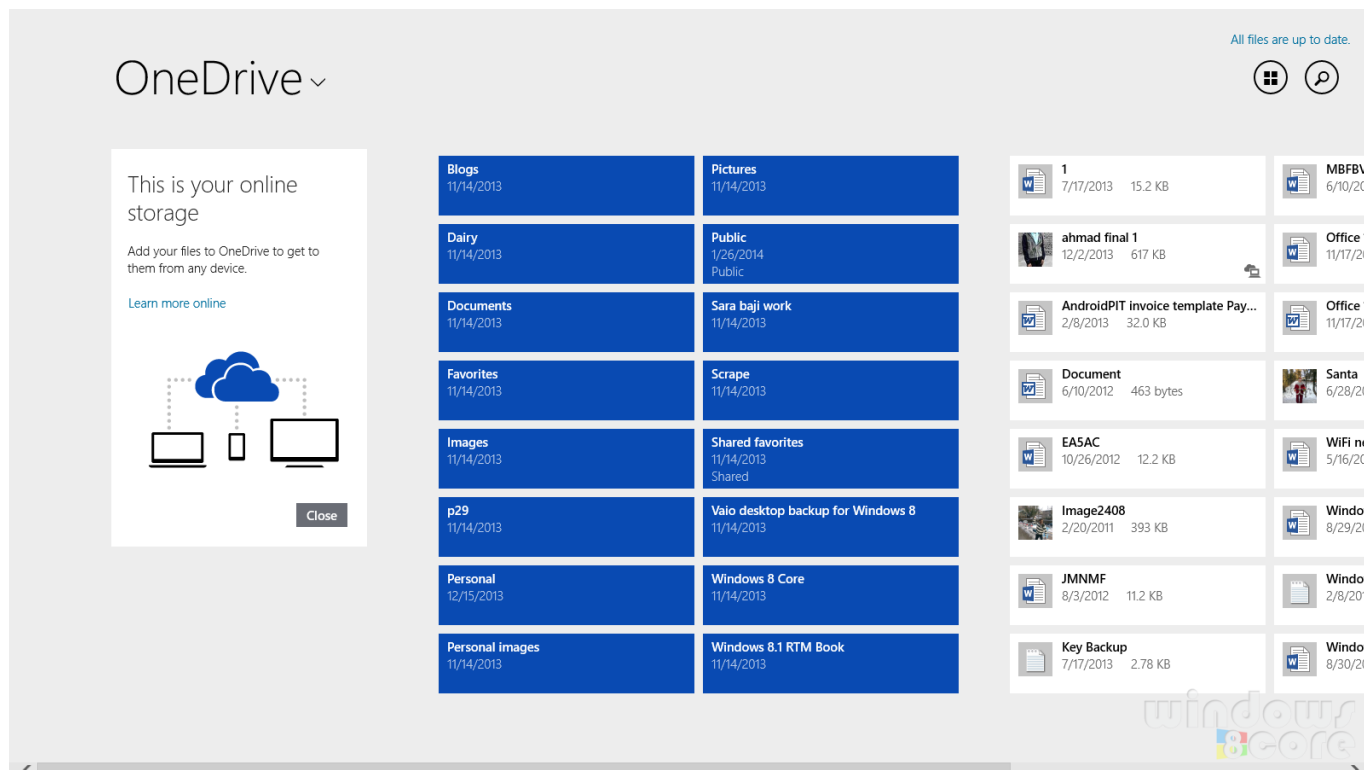
You can also move files from your PC to the OneDrive by either using the app or the file explorer.

If you are using the app, click the arrow that is next to the OneDrive and choose "this PC."

Now, you can browse the files that you have access to. Select them and choose to "cut" them before going to the OneDrive as the destination drive.

Once in the OneDrive, paste them there and you are done! If you are using the file explorer, just drag them from the file list on the right and move them to the OneDrive list that is on the left-hand side.

Keep in mind that moving files means that you will not have the original file after you transfer it to OneDrive. It's very easy to get the hang of and you'll be able to quickly move files over so that you can access them on any other supported device.

If you don't want to move the files, simply choose to copy them instead so that your original file is still where you left it.

Saving Files with OneDrive

Copying and moving files is just one of the many different things that you can do with OneDrive. It's much easier for users to start on a piece of work and then continue it from another location, and you can do that by saving files with OneDrive.

You can save files from an app as well as the desktop, but you can have the files saved to OneDrive automatically. Each method is very easy to master and you'll be able to save documents how you want them with little to no effort.

There are some apps that let you save files to the PC for future use. You can also use OneDrive and have the files from the app saved there instead.

Save my favorited SoundCloud tracks to my SkyDrive
by johnsheehan on Oct 22, 2012
used 121 times

Save Kim Kardashian's Instagrams to my SkyDrive.
by devinfoley on Oct 22, 2012
used 72 times

Every time you are tagged in a photo on Facebook, it will be sent to Skydrive
by eddij on Oct 24, 2012
used 78 times
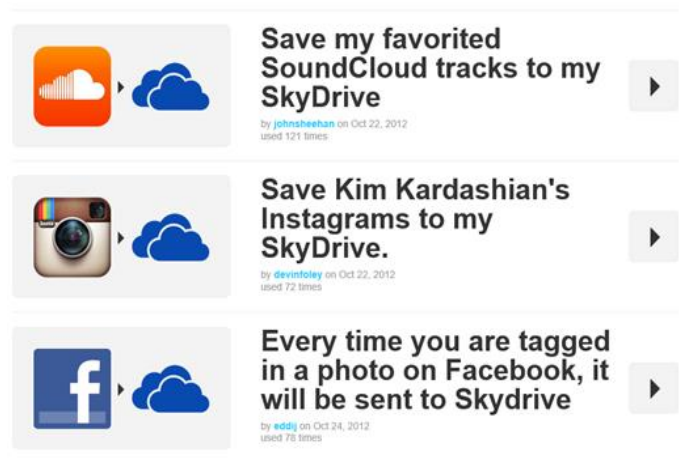
All that you have to do is change the saving location for your file (usually found in the upper left-hand corner) and choose OneDrive.

Once you do this, you'll be able to name the file and then choose the save the document. Some desktop apps, such as Office or Paint, let you save directly to the OneDrive as well. Similar to how you saved documents from the apps, you want to click the "save" option and then select OneDrive on the left panel.
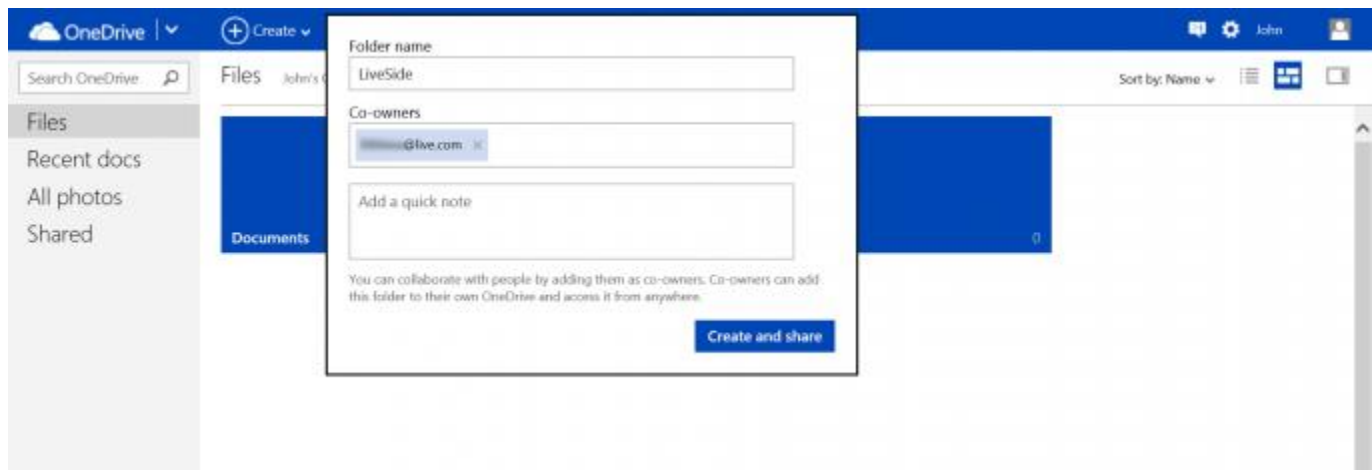
Name the file and then you will be able to save your document to OneDrive.

The third option for saving documents is to have OneDrive automatically save them. This is the most recommended feature because you will be able to retrieve your documents in the most recent version if something happens to your unit or you lose power for some reason.

By default, OneDrive is usually the recommended saving location for files.

You can even automatically save images to OneDrive that you have just taken, making sure you never lose a great picture. If you want to check where your files are being saved, go to the settings menu and choose "change PC settings."

For documents, you'll want to click on OneDrive and make sure that "save documents to OneDrive by default" is checked. You can also do the same for photos by clicking "camera roll" and then choose either "upload photos as good quality" or "upload photos at best quality."

After this has been done, you can rest assured that all of your documents will be stored safely and securely on OneDrive.

Accessing and Sharing Your Files

Now that you know how to store and save your files, it's time to explain what you can do with OneDrive.

You can access your OneDrive on any supported device, as long as you have the correct login information.

Simply visit OneDrive.com through a web browser or use one of the mobile apps that are supported for Android, iOs, or Windows Phones.
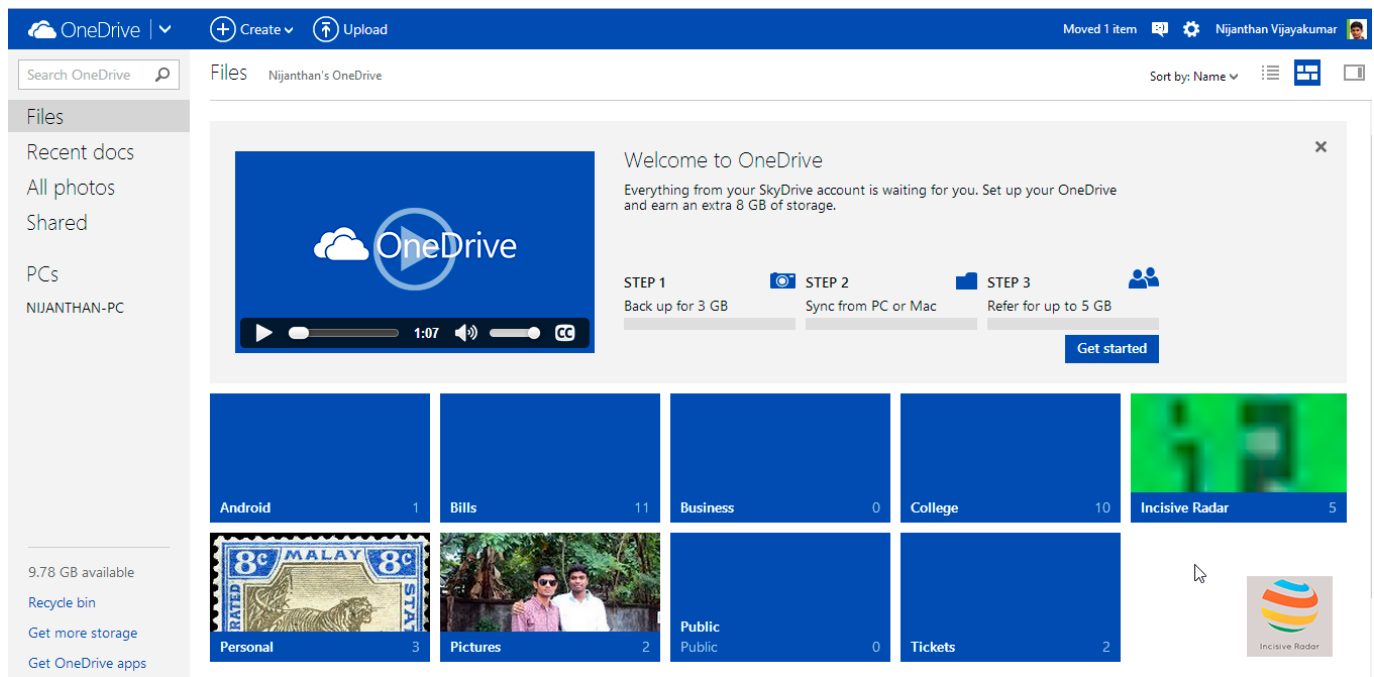
Regardless of where you are and what you are doing, you can quickly access your files and get what you need without any hassle.

It's also possible to access your files when you are offline or not connected to the internet. This is a feature for Windows 8.1 and Windows RT 8.1 devices and can be very helpful for those that absolutely need to access their documents.

In order to do this, you want to swipe downwards or right-click on the folder you are looking at and choose the "make offline" option.
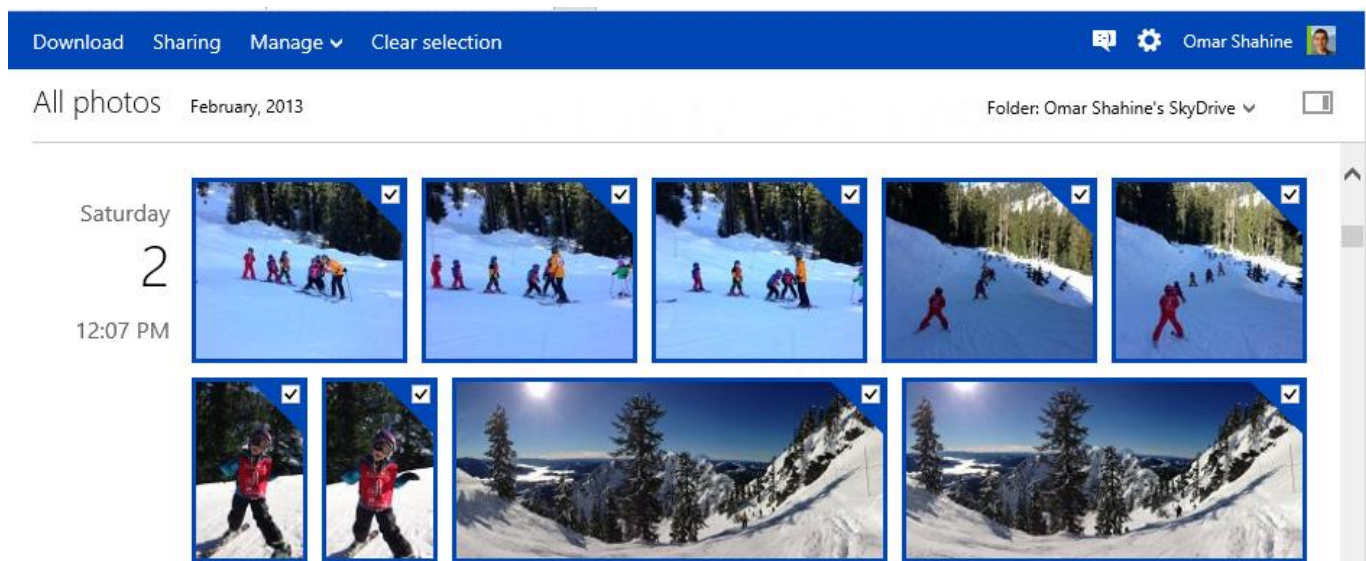
You can make each folder accessible online based on how much space you have on your drive, or you can make the entire OneDrive accessible.

45

When you are done or don't need them to be offline anymore, just change them back to "online only." This is a great alternative that lets you access your files and see your documents so that being offline won't be an issue for you.

If you want to share your files, it's easier than setting up a network and safer and more organized than having a flash drive on you. When you log into OneDrive.com, you can choose whether you want to let users see the files or allow them to edit them as well.

This means that you don't have to worry about anyone editing or deleting your content without your permission. If you have a social media account, such as Facebook or Twitter, you can also post links and share documents in text messages.

It's easy to see why there are so many users that use OneDrive for their backup services. If you do a lot of work on your PC or want to make sure that everything will be there when you need it, you need to install OneDrive and use the app.

The sooner you get the app, the more peace of mind you will have on your Microsoft devices.

Using Windows 8.1 For Entertainment

Perhaps you want to use your Windows 8.1 for fun rather than for business. Thankfully, Microsoft designed the operating system to be beneficial to any lifestyle.

The social aspect of your life will take center stage with Windows 8.1, which means that you'll be able to customize your device to meet the needs that you have and do more than you can ever imagine. Regardless of your age or interest, you can find all of the things that interest you in one simple and convenient location.

Gaming with 8.1

For most users, playing games has become synonymous with Microsoft. With devices like the Xbox One and Xbox 360, it's natural that PC users will turn to their devices for their gaming needs as well. Games have come a long way, but that doesn't mean that they have to be intimidating to play or enjoy.

There are two types of gamers out there: the casual gamer and the hardcore gamer. The casual gamer is the person who wants to enjoy a game from time to time and doesn't really need anything too extensive or demanding.

It's more about enjoying the moment than telling a story or having flashy graphics. Parents and children alike enjoy casual games because they are easy to pick up and play and can be stopped at any time as well.

Hardcore gamers, on the other hand, are ones that want the definitive experience on their PC. These individuals won't be playing games on a tablet, but they do want to know that they are able to get the most for their money.

Thankfully, Windows 8 supports a wide range of software and all game types that have been created. Gamers can play the games they love on the system that they prefer without ever having to worry about system compatibility issues.

Since hardcore gamers know what they want and how to get it, this section will focus on the casual crowd and the wide range of games that are available for users of all ages. This will be more for users that are trying games for the first time or want to know what is available so that they are aware of what their kids have access to.

Casual Games for Windows 8.1

There are literally thousands of games that you can play on Windows 8.1. Some of them are puzzle games while others are based on a popular franchise. There are games that you pay for and ones that you can download for free.

The Windows store will serve as your gateway to gaming bliss, and it's not hard to get into the gaming mindset at all. All you need to do is log into your account and access the store. From here, click on the "games" option and you will be directed to the proper page for games.

Top free in Games 1,000 apps
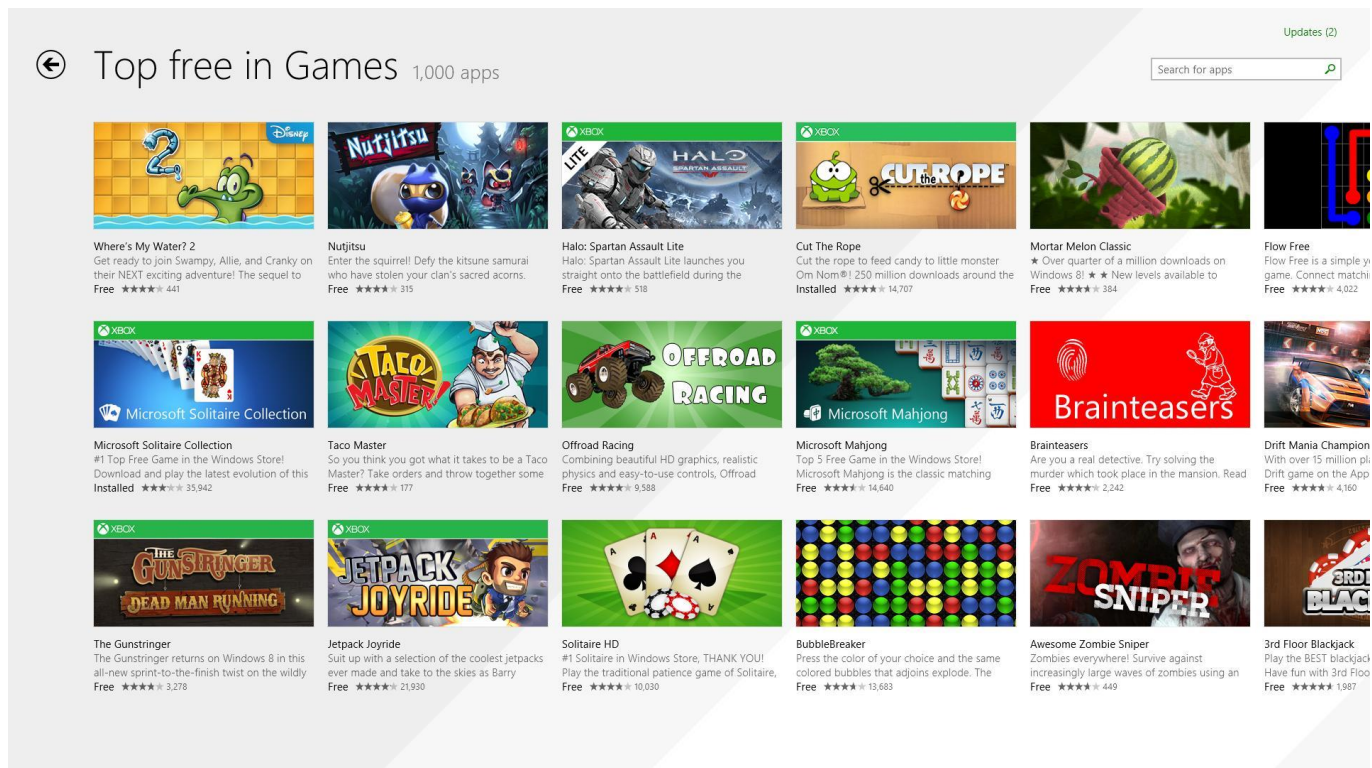
There will be a lot of options available for you, but be sure to keep some basic guidelines in your head and you'll be a gaming master in no time.

When you first access the game page, you'll be directed to a list of games that are popular right now. This gives you a glimpse at what your friends are playing and what you might enjoy.

There are games that kids enjoy as well as adults, so be sure to browse around and see what you like. Each game will be given a rating (based on a score of 5 stars) that lets you determine what games are worth your time and which ones are not.

You can also search for games if you already have on in mind that you want to play.

If you see a game that you are curious about, click or tap on the game and you will be redirected to the description page for the game.

Here, you will be able to read a basic synopsis of what the game is about, how much it costs, related games, and notes from the developer themselves.

There will also be an age rating in case you are concerned about the content that is in the game for younger children.

If you find a game that you want to try out or purchase, tap the appropriate button to download the game and add it to your device.

48

There are so many games that you might end up getting a couple of them on your first visit. Be sure to pin the ones you like to the Start screen for easy access and gaming anytime!

Listening to Music

Maybe you are more interested in getting more music added to your library than playing a game on your device. No worries, because Microsoft has you covered here as well.

There is a free music app that comes with your copy of Windows 8.1 and Windows RT 8.1, which gives you the ability to play and manage all of the music that you have.
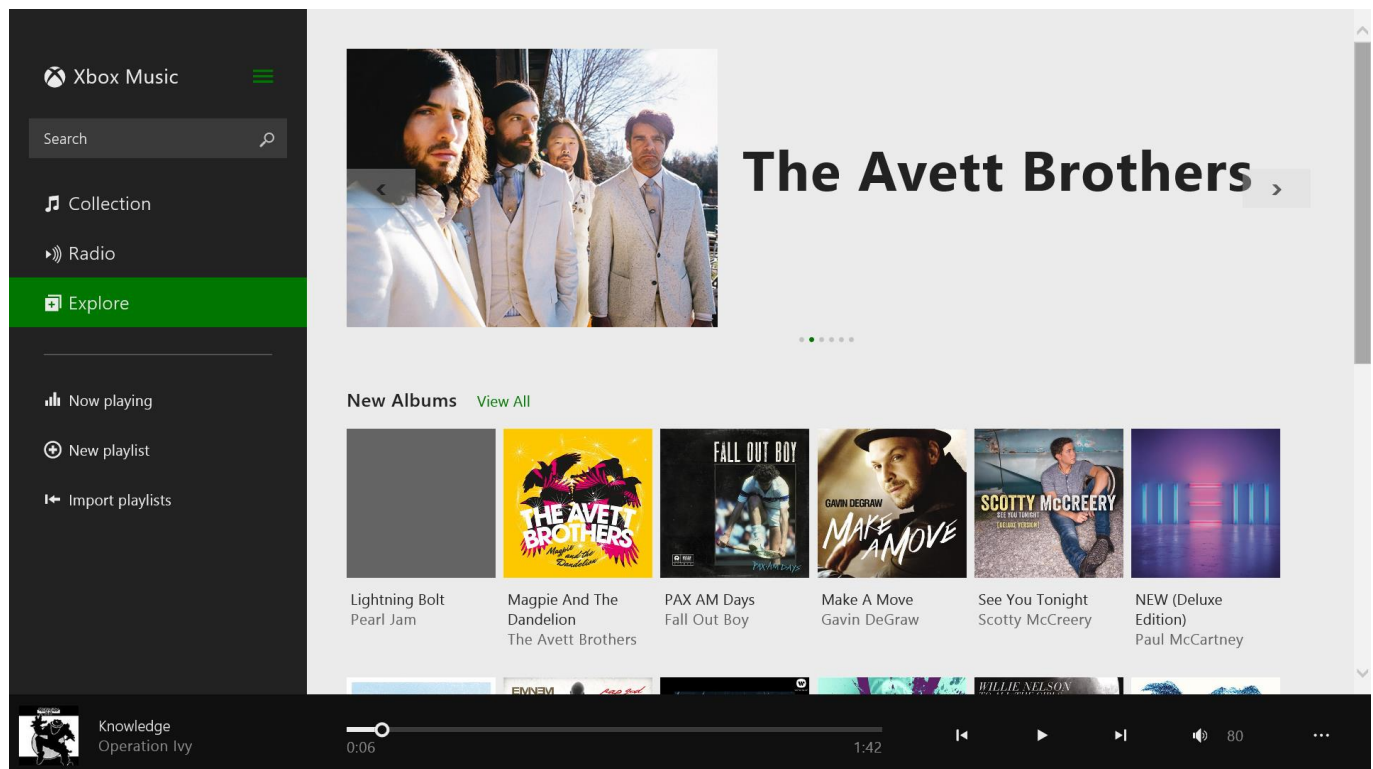
Regardless of the source you got it from, you can quickly organize and play your music as soon as you want.

Some of the supported sources for your music library include albums that are ripped from physical CDs that you have, any of the millions of songs in the Xbox Music catalog, and songs purchased through other services (such as iTunes.)

These songs can be organized by category so that it's easy to find that specific song you're looking for, even if you have thousands of songs in your library. Organize your music by genre, artist, song title, album name, and much more.

Create custom playlists so that you have the right songs for the right occasion. You can make a list to play in the morning when you are waking up and another set of songs for when you go for a quick workout.

Maybe even have a wind-down playlist that melts the stress away after a long day at work. Whether you play music on your PC or on your mobile device while you are out and about, you never have to worry about looking for that song that's stuck in your head.

If you don't have music on your device just yet, you can steam songs to your PC or tablet so that you have something to jam to while you are taking care of your tasks at hand.

There are plenty of apps that support music streaming, and you'll be able to pick from all of your favorite genres, no matter how obscure. If you love music, you'll be able to get the most out of Microsoft Windows 8.1 because you'll never have to deal with silence ever again. If you don't want to.

50

Watching TV Shows and Movies

Of course, there is one more type of person that uses Windows PC's and other devices: the videophile.

This is the type of person that can't get enough of their favorite shows and movies. They are constantly watching the latest and greatest as well as a few classics.

With the Microsoft Video app that comes on your PC, you can watch as many movies and shows to your heart's content.

For this basic section, the playback of movies and shows that you already own will be covered.
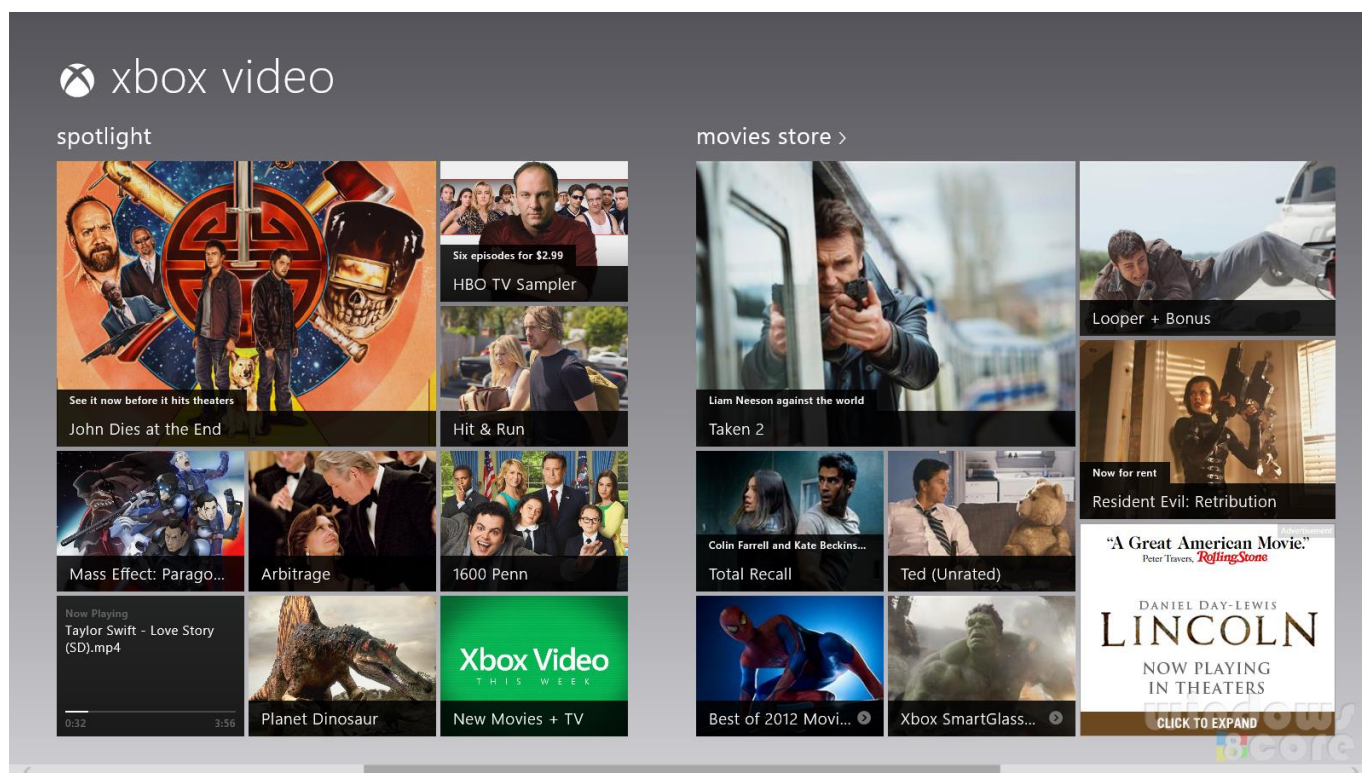
However, it is possible to also stream shows and films to your device with the right app. For now, it's time to let you see how much you can do with the app that's already loaded onto your device.

If you have videos on your PC, the Video app will let you play it without missing a beat. In order to access the app, simply pull up the search bar and look for "video."

51
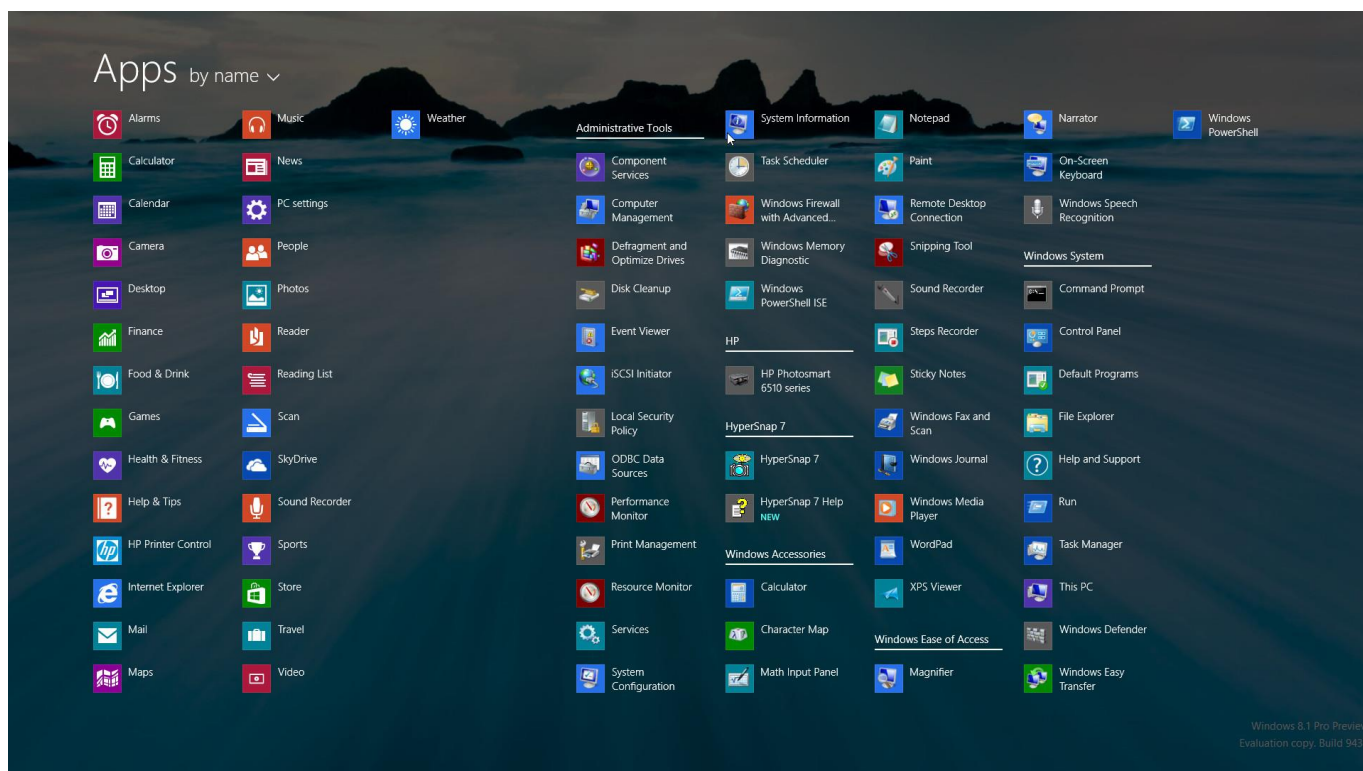
The Video app will appear in your results, so click on it and you'll see your personal collection there for your personal viewing pleasure.

You can scroll through the options and just tap or click on the video you want to watch to start it. It's that easy. If you want to search for a certain video without scrolling around, you can also search for videos or sort the videos by the date they were created to quickly find the one you want to watch or show off.

Playback is simple with the Video app, but will be different based on what type of device you are using. You can touch the screen while a video is playing to pause it or move the mouse and select the "pause" option.

Other actions can be performed to adjust the volume or alter playback options by swiping upwards from the bottom of the screen or right-clicking anywhere on the screen.

If you have a PC that have a DVD drive, you can also watch it on your device after the right app is installed.

The Windows Media Center Pro will give you access to the tools you need to watch any of your favorite films. You can do with is PCs or laptops, letting you be in control of what you want to watch and when you can watch it.

Taking Photos

While it's nice to be able to view photos and videos that have already been taken, it's very easy to take both photos and videos with your new Windows 8.1 device. Photos are very precious and capture a certain moment in time that you can treasure for the rest of your life.

With Windows 8.1, you can do much more than take a simple photo. Create photographs and albums that users will swear were shot by a professional photographer.

You can take pictures on your portable device, like a tablet, as well as on your laptop or PC if it has a webcam. The Camera app gives you the ability to take photos and save them, but you can also do much more than that. There are some tablets that will take a series of photos (called a photo loop) to ensure that capture that perfect moment each and every time.

Once you have taken your photos, it's time to see what they look like. Many of the apps in Windows 8.1 let you see images that were taken. The most common methods are the Photos, Camera, and OneDrive apps.

These images can be used for more than just viewing, as well. For example, you can make one of these images your lock screen if you want to. Of course, there is a chance that the image you have taken isn't quite ready to be shown yet.

The Photos app will automatically correct some aspects for you, but you can also play with the lighting effects as well as the color adjustments. If you are feeling very adventurous, you can also touch up your photo or crop and rotate it to get the desired effect.

Once you are ready to show off your images, you can choose to store them on OneDrive for easy storage. It is possible to link your OneDrive with your camera so that images and videos are automatically uploaded to the service, if you prefer. Otherwise, you can share your photos on social networks, e-mail them to friends, or print them out and make a scrapbook. The possibilities are endless!

Taking Videos

You can also take videos with your Windows 8.1 device as well. Your tablet will be able to do this by default, but you can also connect a webcam or have a PC with a built-in camera if you want to take videos with a computer as well.

Just like with the photos, you can edit and share your videos and create something truly memorable by having the right apps and the creative vision for it. The Movie Moments and Camera apps will let you quickly take a video and save it to your device for playback or editing purposes.

If you want to see the videos that you have already taken, you can see them in the Movie Moments, Photos, Camera, or OneDrive apps. All of these apps have the playback function available so that you can use the app that suits you best and not feel like you have to stick to one specific app.

If you are feeling creative, you can do more than just take and watch videos: you can make movies. With the Movie Moments app, you can transform any video into something much more special.

Use the tools provided to trim clips, highlight key moments, provide captions and effects, or even add music to the video for an added effect. It's easy to do and you'll be creating powerful videos in no time.

If you take videos on a camera or phone, you can use the Photos app to transfer them to your PC so that you can edit and share them much easier.

Importing videos is simple to do and you can always edit or delete the videos that you change your mind on. Create a personal library of videos on your device or upload them to the OneDrive and have them stored for safekeeping.

Don't forget that many of the apps like Photos and Movie Moments allow you to share your creations with family and friends. Post your best work on social networks or other video-enabled sites to get the most views possible. As you can see, taking videos is just the first part of the adventure.

Popular and Helpful Apps

Windows Store

If you are looking for the perfect app to use on your Windows 8.1 system, you need to look no further than the Windows store.

It has been mentioned before, but accessing the store is absolutely crucial for any features that you are trying to take advantage of.

It's not a stretch to even say that the new operating system was built with this store in mind. The store is the central hub for everything that you do and all of the apps that you can find.

You need to know how to navigate the store and what you should be looking for in order be efficient at the new operating system.

When you first access the Windows store, you'll be able to see what's trending in each category.
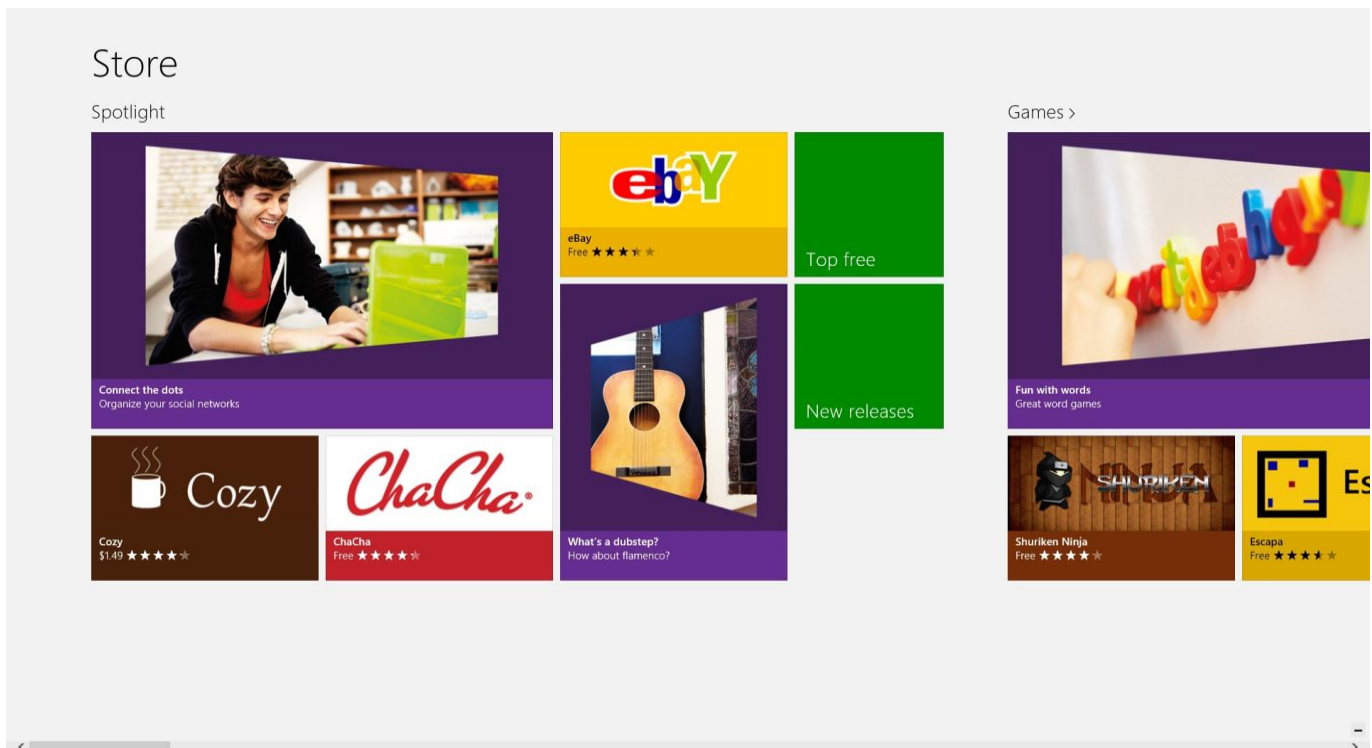
Depending on what you are looking for when you open the store, you may or may not find something of interest. You can quickly see what games are trending and what music and shows users are downloading the most.

Choose the category that you are interested in and see an even more detailed look at what's hot in that category.

Feel free to browse around and click on apps that might be interesting to you since there is no obligation of any kind when you are shopping around. Many of the apps have free versions that you can test out before committing to it.

The difference between a free version of an app and one that you pay for is that there are advertisements on the free apps.

This is how these apps still make money when you are using them. At the same time, you can opt to pay for an app in order to remove the ads and get some more features in the process.

This model is very effective because it shows users what an app has to offer while still opening the door to an actual purchase. It's like an extended trial that can be used indefinitely.

Since so much attention must go to the apps themselves, it's time to dive in and see what some of the most popular apps are and how you can get your hands on them.

Skype

One of the most commonly used apps for any service is Skype. Skype allows users from around the world to stay in contact with one another while eliminating costly fees that are linked to traditional phone services.

Skype gives users the freedom to make voice and video calls to either another Skype account or a phone. The best part is that calling another Skype user is absolutely free, so that means you can connect with friend from out of the state or even country without running up your bill in the process.

Skype allows you to send messages to other users quickly and easily with the Snap feature.

Snap Skype to either the right of the left and send a message or continue a call while working on something else at the same time.

This feature is exclusive to Windows 8.1 and lets you shop, read, work, or watch something while you Skype.

Connect with users how you want to when it's convenient for you. You can send photos and files (or even a video message!) with other users, regardless of what device they are using.

This means that you can connect with users on the PC, Mac, Android, iPad, Windows Phone, Xbox One, and much more!

With Skype for the Windows 8.1 system, you are able to make daily video calls, chat and share files or photos, run other apps while on a call, have messages delivered to your lock screen or other screen, and even make calls to users who aren't online at the moment.

It's truly a powerful app that everyone should consider having because it can do so much. Whether you want to meet up with friend and family online or need to make a business call, you can do it all with Skype.

56

You don't have to pay for the base service and you can always talk to other users. It's a great alternative to a costly phone plan and the video calling feature makes everything that much sweeter.

Try Skype and see how the Snap feature makes this version the best one you can find anywhere!

Facebook

Of course, you can't talk about being social without mentioning one of the biggest social platforms out there.

Facebook may be responsible for getting millions of users online and connected with one another, and there is an app that allows you to always be connected with your friends and loved ones.

The Facebook app for Windows 8.1 is special and unique in a number of different ways, but familiar enough to let you know exactly what you are doing. With the Facebook app, you can always see what's going on in your world and get real-time notifications, even if you are using a different app at the moment.

The Facebook app also lets you get updates on your Live Tiles and Start screen, so there's never a chance that you'll miss something important. You can share and update photos from your device and also tag friends in statuses or images.

Have group conversations or chats with your friends and carry the conversation over to any device if you are mobile. You can even add a personal touch to your chats by installing sticker packs that liven up any conversation. Security is also an important aspect of Facebook, and you'll have full access to your profile through the app.

Change your settings and update your profile instantly and securely. You can add or edit any albums that you have uploaded and can quickly remove any photos that you change your mind on. There is nothing you can't do on the Facebook app that you can't do on the site. In fact, there are some things that you can don on the app that you won't find anywhere else.

This app also has some Microsoft Windows 8.1 exclusive features as well, primarily revolve around the Snap view. You can have a 320 snap view to see the whole app or resize it accordingly so that you can do other things while you browse your Facebook.

Check your news feed live and respond to the stories that interest you the most. Windows 8.1 lets you juggle many different things at the same time without ever taking you out of the conversation. If you are a Facebook lover, the Facebook app is a no-brainer.

Twitter

Twitter is the other social media giant that users think about when they hear the phrase "social media."

However, it's important not to confuse the Facebook and Twitter because they are two very different apps with two very different objectives.

One of the main things that's different about twitter is the fact that you can only post messages that are up to 140 characters long.

You can't be too wordy with this app, but you can connect with users and interact with individuals in a way that special and different from Facebook.

There are many different users that use Twitter instead of Facebook because they are able to get less-wordy notification and connect with those that they are interested in much faster.

The Twitter app lets you get real-time stories, ideas, conversations, videos, and pictures on your timeline.

58

Everything is instant, and you might even be able to exchange words with a celebrity if you can catch their attention! Twitter gives you the ability to follow certain users, with means that you will be notified when they post something on their account so that you can join in on the conversation.

Be sure to follow users and have them follow you as well so that you can build your very own personal community. You can search for users based on what their interests are and gain access to some of the industry's most innovative minds.

You can upload photos, videos, and comments in a matter of seconds, all from your Twitter app! With the app's compatibility with Windows 8.1, you can now have multiple Twitter accounts as well as take advantage of the fast and fluid responsiveness of the operating system. Get notifications instantly on either your Start screen or your Lock screen so that you are always in the loop.

Twitter has taken the world by storm, and the number of users who have downloaded and installed the Twitter app proves that the craze won't be dying down soon. Whether you're a seasoned user or someone that sending their first tweet, try the free app and see how well Windows 8.1 and Twitter really work with one another. Once you start, you'll be hooked for sure!

Streaming Apps

Switching gears, it's time to address some apps that media lovers are dying to know about. There are dozens of different streaming services available for those that are interested in having something to entertain them while they are on the go or bored at home.

Streaming services are typically paid services that give the user access to a set type of media, such as music or movies.

These apps have been integrated into the Windows 8.1 interface to allow for a seamless transition between media and the most versatile, up-to-date content possible. Keep reading to find out what the best apps are for users that love music or movies.

59

Music

The type of music a person listens to will determine what streaming app that they will use. That being said, one of the most commonly used apps for music is the iHeartRadio app.

This app has been called the best streaming radio app by many publications and lets you listen to free music, news stations, talk radio, and even sports stations as well. What's even better is the fact that you can create your very own custom stations to ensure that you always get to hear what you want when you start the app.

iHeartRadio is always free and is supported by a wide range of platforms.

No matter what type of music you are into, you'll find the right station (or can build one) so that there is never a dull moment in your day.

Another very popular music streaming app is the TuneIn Radio app.
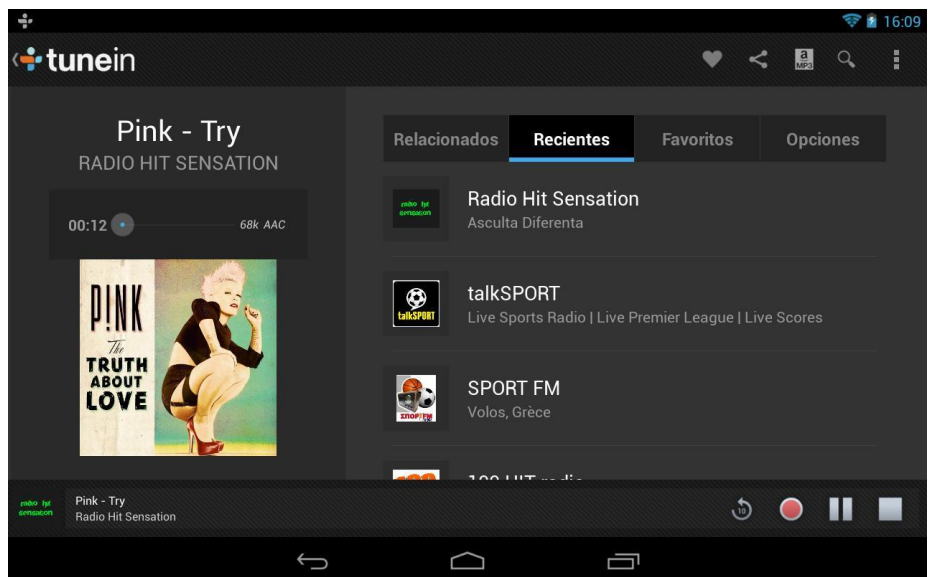
This app lets you find and listen to your favorite artists as well as teams, talk show hosts, and comedians.

You have access to radio stations from thousands of different cities and never have to settle for something obscure.

Tune in to ESPN, CBS, TEDTalks, and even the BBC! This app also lets you create custom presets so that you have a tailored experience every time you sit down for a listen.

While there are other apps out there for music lovers, these two apps demonstrate the versatility and popularity of streaming music and creating something truly special for audiophiles everywhere.

Movies and TV Shows

Since there are apps for users that love music, you can bet that there will also be some great apps for users that love movies and TV shows. Both movies and shows can be found on several different services, but the most popular two services are Netflix and Hulu.
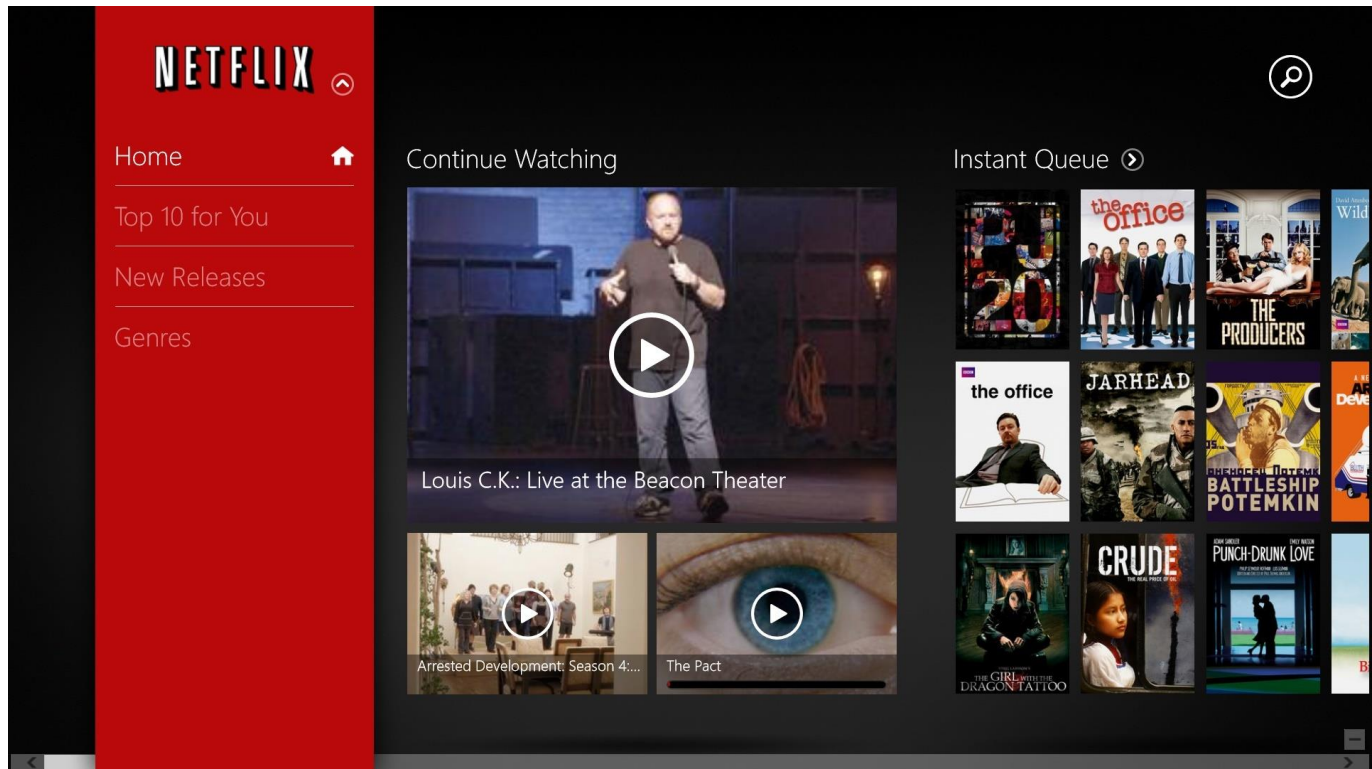
These apps are both essential to video lovers and can provide endless hours of entertainment. Discover new shows and find out what all of the buzz is by checking out both of these apps.

Netflix has become synonymous with movies and TV shows, and for a good reason. While you will be required to have a subscription to use Netflix (the app is free and you can get a free 30-day trial) you'll have access to all of the content that you'll find on the regular service.

Watch unlimited shows and movies and get recommendations on what to watch next. Browse by title and genre and rate what you watch so that Netflix can suggest more things that you might be interested in.

New content is added regularly, so there's no way that you will ever grow tired of your account.

You can even start a show or movie on one device and pick up right where you left off on a different one.

Whether you are looking for something to liven up a boring night or just want to watch an episode of your favorite show at work, you can do it with the Netflix app.

Another app that offers a similar experience is Hulu Plus.

Like Netflix, Hulu Plus requires a paid subscription but gives you a free trial period. You can see current shows and acclaimed movies on your Windows 8.1 device, no matter where you are.

Hulu Plus is even modified to let you search for content from the Charm bar and lets you pin your favorite shows to the Start screen so you can access them instantly.

Be sure to look at the content for both apps before you choose a service. When you find the shows that you want and the movies you love, you'll find it very hard to pull yourself away from the screen, which isn't a bad thing.

News Apps

Finally, there are some users out there that want to be connected with the world. There are plenty of reliable news outlets for you to use, and many of them have apps that will give you the biggest topics in the shortest amount of time.

Whether you consider your news to be who the next big pop star will be or what congress is debating right now, you'll find apps that keep you connected to the topics that matter to you most. Stay ahead of the game and never miss a beat with these great news apps for your Windows 8.1 device.

Users have a set group of users that they trust to hear from, and many of the biggest news companies out there have an app for your Windows device. Channels like Fox News, CNN, and the BBC all have apps that you can download for free and read up on.
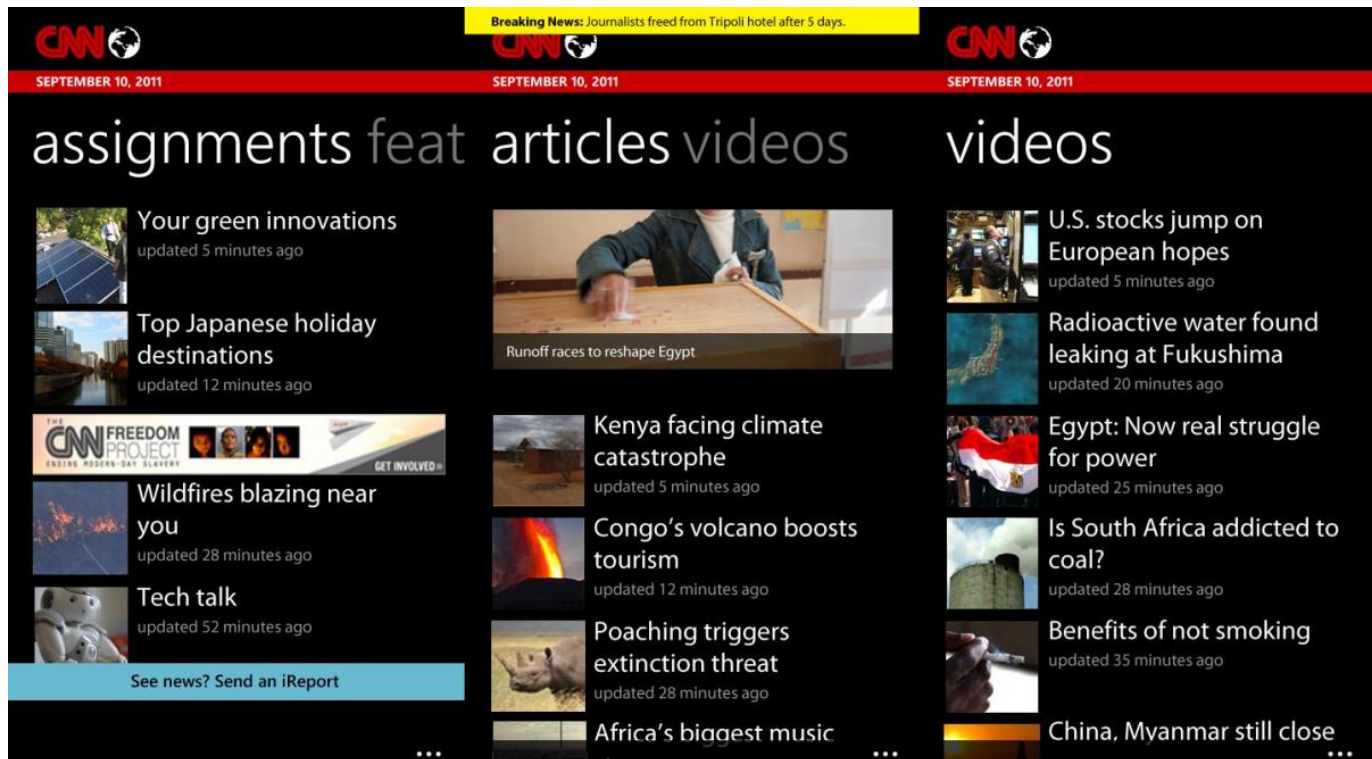
You can pick one or all of the apps to see different perspectives on what's going on in the world, and even customize your app so that you hear about what matters to you most.

Follow breaking news as it develops and get insider information about what's happening in the world right now.

You might want to get your news as you drink a hot cup of coffee in the morning or while you commute on your way home, but you can rest assured that there won't be a story that slips under your radar with these three great news apps.

News doesn't have to be linked to worldwide events, and Flipboard lets you see the news that matters to you in a very stylish and presentable manner.

Customize your board to get updates from everything you care about, from movies and fashion tips to what your friends are posting on Facebook.

You can give the app access to other apps so that you only have to go to one place to do a quick check on what's big at the moment. If you want to cover a lot of news in a short span of time, Flipbook is the app for you.

Advanced Techniques

This final section covers some of the more intricate things that you can do with the Windows 8.1 system. Most users will not be interested in the smaller things, but it's good to help out those that want to do a little something extra.

Some of these techniques may only apply to certain devices, but will be helpful nonetheless. Be sure to read through them in case you have something that you are trying to solve or if you just want to give advice to your friends and be the envy of everyone.
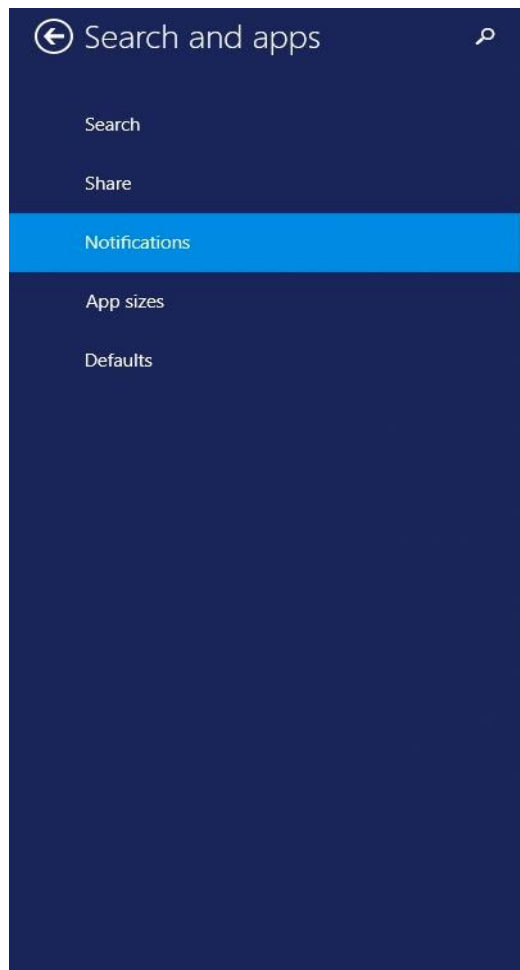
One of the most troubling things that you can encounter is having a notification go off when you are trying to get some sleep or stay quiet for someone else. While it is possible to silence a device,

That option is not always be the best, especially if you are using your device as an alarm clock. Thankfully, there is a way to turn on quiet hours for your Microsoft device to shut them off for a given amount of time or permanently.

When Quiet Hours are enabled, your device will not make any noise or light up when you are getting notifications.

65

In order to set your Quiet Hours, you want to access your "Change PC Settings" option near the bottom right-hand side of the screen. Select the "search and apps" tab that is on the left side of the screen and then "select notifications.

You will be able to scroll down to the Quiet Hours section and can choose the times that you want the function to turn on or off. Once you customize your settings, you can back out and the changes will automatically be saved. That's all there is to it.

This is a small hassle that only users that have portable Windows 8.1 devices will encounter, but it's still a headache to mess with. Don't have any more sleepless nights because of the fact that are woken up by someone's comment on a status at 3 a.m. Use the Quiet Hours setting and get the rest that you need to function the next day.

Creating Libraries

When you save documents or files to your device, it will store in a default location unless you change it. It is easy for you to set up a library so that all of your desired content is stored in one specific area of your drive.

Having your library customized also means that it's much easier to backup your critical files and check to make sure that everything is there before shutting everything down. Even if you have OneDrive, it is suggested that you have a library for your content in case there is a crash or some type of hardware failure.

If you have a PC with Windows 8.1 on it, you can create a partition for your device and create a library there. You can start the process by right-clicking on your user name in the Start Menu and choosing the "open" option.

Once this window opens, select the libraries that you want to move or copy to the new destination. Some suggested folders would be the contacts, my documents, my pictures, my videos, and downloads.

Go to the "properties" menu and click on the "location" tab. Then choose to move the files to the designated folder.

Select your folder and confirm the move to complete the process.

66
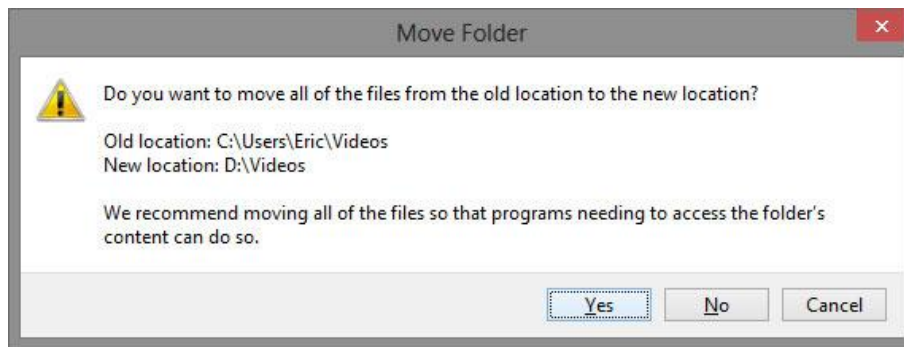
You can then view the libraries in explorer by going to "view" and then "options." Check the "show libraries" box and apply the changes to see the library back in your explorer.

This lets you see the libraries that you have created and gives you the ability to add or move documents accordingly.

It's a very helpful feature that will prevent a lot of stressful nights when you are trying to find a certain document because the libraries are hidden.

Whether you want to store all of your personal documents or business files in the library, having everything in one location (and visible) means that you never have to play a guessing game with your files.

You can also choose to show all of your folders from the options menu under "view" if you want to see everything that is stored and listed on your PC.

Keyboard Shortcuts

One little-known fact about Window 8.1 is that it still supports most of the keyboard shortcuts that have been around since anyone can remember.

Some of them have been adjusted to fit the new operating system, but you don't have to learn everything from scratch.

For example, you can hit Alt-Tab to cycle through your open applications and use F5 to refresh a window. Hitting Alt-F4 closes the current application, so be careful when you try out that combination.

As you can see, all of these instructions are exactly the same as they have been on Windows devices prior to Windows 8.

While all of these little shortcuts are great and can cut down on some time you use navigating the menu, the new Windows Key has become the hub of many more, beneficial, shortcut.

You can tap the button to switch between your current application and the Start screen, while hitting the Windows key with the D key will take you directly to the desktop.

Pressing the F key with the Windows key will open the "find" bar while you can lock your screen with a quick press of the Windows key and the L key.

Still want more shortcuts? Hit the Windows key and F1 to open Help and Support or the Windows key and C to open the Charms.

Combining the Windows Key and B will set the focus in the notification area while the Windows key and H will open the Share charm option.

You can also cycle through gadgets on the desktop by pressing the Windows key and the G key.

Lastly, it should be noted that hitting the Windows key and Enter activates a narrator that will read everything on the screen until you hit the Caps and Esc key together.

This can be very jarring and difficult to get out of, so be sure that you have the escape combination memorized in case you hit those keys by accident.

Shortcut keys are very helpful because they save time and let you focus on what you need to get done rather than navigating through endless menus.

Be sure to try the shortcut keys and see what you like the most so that you can impress your friend with how speedy you are.

Power Settings

If your Windows 8.1 device is a portable one, chances are pretty high that you don't want to drain your batter. On the other hand, there are power settings that will benefit desktop users as well.

There are three different power settings for Windows 8.1 devices, which are Balanced, Power Saver, and High Performance.

Balanced is the default setting for all devices and offers full performance when you need it and goes into a power-saving mode when you aren't using it.

Power Saver reduces the PC's performance and screen brightness in order to conserve energy.

This is beneficial for individuals that have a laptop or other portable device that needs to last as long as possible. The last option, High Performance, is the opposite and maximizes the brightness and PC performance.

This uses a considerable amount of energy, so only desktop units or laptops that are plugged in should be set on this setting.

There are also hibernate, sleep, and hybrid sleep options for devices. These are not recommended for desktops because they can end up shutting down an inactive device if you leave it alone for too long.

It has created a few issues for those that have desktops and enable the feature, but it can be disabled just as easily with the power settings.

If you want to access your power options very quickly, press the Windows key and then the R key. Type in powercfg.cpl and press enter to bring up the control panel and power options. Here, you can adjust and customize all of your power saving features. Be sure to acknowledge the changes and accept them after you have set them to what you desire.

If you ever need to adjust them again, just use the menu and restore the settings to what you need.

You can get a lot more out of the battery life for your device if you have the right power settings in place. On the other hand, using them incorrectly can drain your resources that much faster.

It's best to change the settings based on what you are doing. For example, a laptop can be adjusted to High Performance when plugged into a power source and then set on Power Saver when on the go. This way, you get the best of both worlds.

Recording Live Shows

One of the more amazing things about Windows 8.1 is the fact that you can actually record live TV and have it saved on your PC. You will need to have the right equipment and apps loaded in order to do this, but it effectively eliminates the need for a DVR or any other recording device.

It is required that you have the Windows Media Center installed, but that isn't available for Windows RT. You will also need to have a TV tuner connected to your PC. These can be found online or at electronics stores around the world, so it shouldn't be much of a hassle.

Find one that is compatible with your device and connect it accordingly. Lastly, you will need a cable connection or antenna to bring in the broadcast that you are trying to record. Once you have all of these elements in place, you will be ready to record live TV.

Start by swiping the right edge of the screen and tapping the "search" option. Type in "Windows Media Center" and click the app when it appears. Once it has opened, scroll down to the "TV" option and tap or click "record live TV."
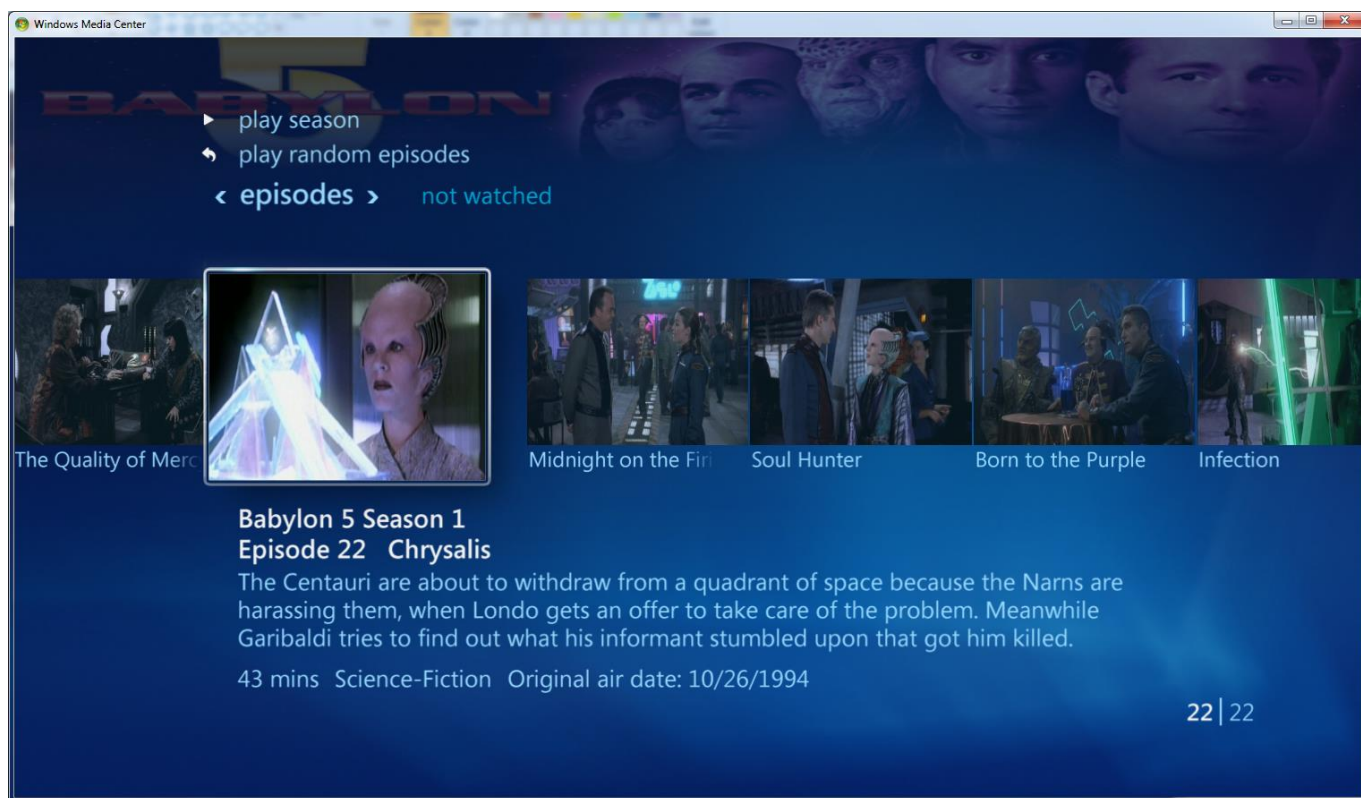
You can tap the record button to start recording and then let the app take care of the rest. It's that simple. Of course, you won't always be there to record TV shows that you are trying to watch.

You can also schedule recordings for future shows as well.

In order to do this, open the Windows media Center and scroll back to the "TV" option. Tap or click on "search" and tap or click on the TV show or movie that you are trying to record.

Once you have found it, click on "record" to schedule a recording.
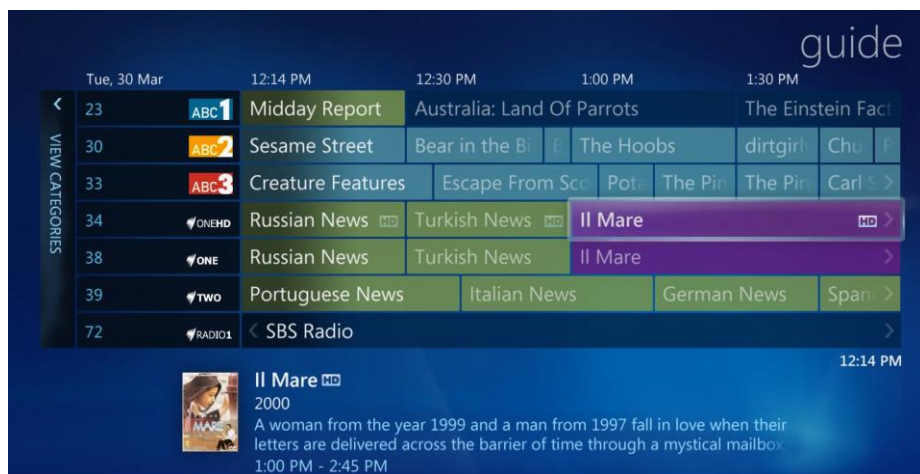
You can watch a recorded show by opening the Windows Media Center and then finding the "TV" option. Click or tap on "recorded TV" and find the show that you want to watch. Click play and your recording will start. When you have Windows 8.1 on your system, why pay extra for a DVR?

Different Versions of Windows 8.1

Lastly, it's important to cover the different types of Windows 8.1 to determine which system is best for you.

There are two variations of Windows 8.1, known as Windows 8.1 Pro and Windows RT 8.1.

Basic users will be fine with Windows 8.1, but there are specific advantages to the other versions for users with certain needs. This will help you determine which version is the best for you so that you don't discover that you needed something else after you have upgraded.

The first version of Windows 8.1 that you need to be aware of is Windows 8.1 Pro. This version is one step above the standard version and gives you some extra features.

Some of the biggest additions include the ability to protect your PC while you are on the go with Remote Desktop Connection, Using BitLocker technology for extra data protection that will ensure that your information is secure, and the ability to connect to corporate or school networks through Domain Join.

Those that will benefit the most from Windows 8.1 Pro are those that work in a business or school setting. The added encryption features and ability to protect your desktop while away from the office ensure that no key data is ever leaked or released without your knowledge.

Pairing this with the OneDrive app means that data and documents are always accessible and safe. You can connect to your company network with Domain Join and never have to struggle with the minor details.

Schools can also use the networking feature to ensure that everyone is able to access the information that they need quickly and securely. Faculty members and staff can communicate with each other in a safe and efficient manner while also getting access to key documents in order to properly perform their job.

Windows 8.1 Pro's encryption feature lets faculty know that private information about students will not be leaked and confidential information will always remain safe.

Windows 8.1 Pro isn't for everyone, and the networking and encryption features aren't enough to win standard users over. However, those that work in a business or school understand how important these additions are and it gives them an option to get the service they want with the options they need.

Windows RT 8.1

The other version of Windows 8.1 that exists is known as Windows RT 8.1. This is another variation of the Windows 8.1 system, but it is designed for something entirely different than standard use.

The main difference with Windows RT 8.1 is the fact that it is designed for thin and light PCs that utilize ARM processors. In other words, the operating system is tweaked and adjusted to perform on devices that cannot perform the same demanding functions that the standard versions does.

This does not mean that Windows RT 8.1 is a "lighter" version of the operating system, it's something that's just as powerful and even enhanced for touch-versions of software.

When you get Windows RT 8.1, you will still have access to thousands of apps, Internet Explorer 11, touch-optimized features as well as the option to use a keyboard and mouse. On top of this, you will also get some different features with Windows RT 8.1.

Windows Update and Windows Defender are always active and will ensure that your PC is secure by updating regularly. All Windows RT 8.1 PCs have InstantGo installed so that they can quickly files and other online services updated, even when the screen is turned off.

Lastly, all devices come with Office 2013 RT, which dives you touch-optimized versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and OneNote. These apps have been streamlined to work better with light PCs and take advantage of the touch screen.

Of course, there are also some features that were removed from Windows RT 8.1 as well. If you choose to use this operating system, you will not have the ability to use Remote Desktop or Domain Join.

You can join a Home Group but will not be able to create a new one. Also, media lovers need to be aware that you will not be able to use Windows Media Player or Windows Media Center.

It's very likely that users who use Windows RT 8.1 aren't switching their current version of 8.1 out, but rather getting a device with it already installed on it. As a consumer, it is important that you are aware of what features you are getting (as well as which ones are omitted) so that you can find the best device for your needs.

Exploring Windows 8.1

In the end, there is only so much that you can read about regarding Windows 8.1. It's a powerful and new operating system that opens doors for opportunities that weren't possible before.

After reading this guide, you have a much better understanding of how the system operates and how you can customize and personalize your user experience.

You'll be able to get started on the right foot and know exactly what you need to do in order to get your device functional as well as how to navigate the screens and options.

There are many other functions and features that are app-specific that you will discover as you continue to explore and try out Windows 8.1.

There will be a slight learning curve for these apps, but many of them are created to be the most user-friendly as possible and help you accomplish various tasks. Apps are the foundation of Windows 8.1 and you would be doing yourself a disservice if you don't give them a try.

It's clear that Windows 8.1 is not a step backwards, but a bold one towards a new future. While the visual changes may surprise and stun some when they first start up the system, the implementation of new apps and functions helps make Windows 8.1 one of the most powerful operating systems out there.

Connect with your world in a brand new way and see how seamlessly everything can flow together. Once you have a taste of what Windows 8.1 has to offer, you'll never want to go back to a standard operating system.

Whether you were thinking about getting a new device that uses Windows 8.1 or just wanted to understand it better, you now have the necessary tools to take your user experience to a whole new level. Don't be afraid of what Windows 8.1 has to offer, but rather be excited to see how much of a difference one upgrade can make.

Even if you struggled with Windows 8, it's clear that Microsoft heard users' voices and created the best version of Windows to date. Now is the time to take a step forward and use your new knowledge to build and shape your very own Windows 8.1 experience.

73

Even if you struggled with Windows 8, it's clear that Microsoft heard users' voices and created the best version of Windows to date. Now is the time to take a step forward and use your new knowledge to build and shape your very own Windows 8.1 experience.

Bonus Chapter – What is Windows 8.1 Update 1?

Simply put, Windows 8.1 Update 1 is an update to Windows 8.1.

Microsoft continues to rollout new fixes and refinements to the features in Windows 8.1 and that's all Windows 8.1 Update 1 is.

It's expected to be released sometime in the first quarter of 2014 and here are some of the things we know about it so far.

- Various Builds of the update have leaked and we have been able to see a lot of the features.
- You can now pin Windows Store apps by right-clicking the app or holding it down and selecting Pin to Taskbar. In fact, the Windows Store app comes pinned there by default.
- Another useful ability is the option of displaying all running apps on the taskbar, which itself is a sign of things to come.
- Now here is an addition that will please those of you that live and breathe in the Modern UI. Redmond has added in two new buttons on the Start Screen, next to the username — Search and Power. The former opens up the versatile Search charm allowing you to find anything and everything, either on your computer, device or on the web. The latter lets you shutdown, restart or put your computer to sleep.

- While users of touch based devices seemed to be the main focus of previous iterations of the modern Windows, Microsoft is now offering users of mouse and keyboard some new abilities to use the Start Screen in their chosen traditional way. This is done via a context menu when you right-click an app, allowing you access to familiar options like unpin that item from the Start Screen (or taskbar), tile resizing or plain old uninstall. Most of these were already available in scattered places, this handy new menu brings them together.
- Windows Store apps now come with a title bar that makes it easier to minimize or close these applications. There are even options to split them left or right. These are small tweaks that will, nevertheless, make a big difference to usability.
- Windows 8.1 was released via the Windows Store, but this strategy led to some users experiencing technical difficulties, connectivity issues and installation errors. Sure, many of them were taken care of in the following days, but the installation errors continued for a few weeks. This time, however, Redmond is ready to rumba with news that Update 1 will be released as part of its monthly Patch Tuesday cycle in March.
- **Windows 8.1 Update 1 will be free of charge for all Windows 8.1 users, of course.**
- Windows 8.1 Update 1 will autodetect whether you are using a laptop or tablet and will boot into the Modern Desktop or traditional desktop accordingly.'
- Users will be able to pin Modern Desktop apps to the taskbar in the traditional desktop.
- There will be a new version of Internet Explorer.
- Microsoft has confirmed in a statement that Windows 8.1 Update 1 will come with even lower hardware requirements — clearly in a bid to expand the range of devices that run the operating system.

And more…

That's what we know based on the leaks and speculation but it should be here real soon.

For more information, you should stay tuned to our Windows 8.1 Update 1 pages here.

Bonus Chapter – Who is the new CEO of Microsoft?

Satya Nadella is the new CEO of Microsoft.

Mr. Nadella holds a Master of Science degree in Computer Science from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Chicago.

In addition he also holds a Bachelor of Engineering in Electronics and Communication from the Manipal University.

He worked with Sun Microsystems before he joined Microsoft in 1992.

At Microsoft, in the beginning he worked as the senior vice president of R&D for the Online Services Division and vice president of the Microsoft Business Division.

Later, he was made the president of Microsoft's $19 billion Server and Tools Business and led the transformation of the business and technology from client-server software to cloud infrastructure and services.

- Wikipedia

Microsoft's description of the man says a lot:

> Satya Nadella is executive vice president of Microsoft's Cloud and Enterprise group, *responsible for building and running the company's computing platforms, developer tools and cloud services[Emphasis Mine]*.
>
> Nadella and his team deliver the "Cloud OS", Microsoft's next generation backend platform. Designed for modern application needs, the Cloud OS is a rich, consistent

77

platform that spans public, private and service provider clouds. The Cloud OS platform also not only powers all of Microsoft's Internet scale cloud services (including O365, Bing, SkyDrive, Xbox Live, Skype and Dynamics) but also fuels global enterprises around the world to meet their most challenging and mission-critical computing needs. Today, businesses everywhere depend on the products that make up the Cloud OS, including Windows Azure, Windows Server, SQL Server, Visual Studio and System Center.

Previously, Nadella was president of Microsoft's $19 billion Server and Tools Business and led the transformation of the business and technology from client-server software to cloud infrastructure and services. Prior roles include senior vice president of R&D for the Online Services Division and vice president of the Microsoft Business Division.

- Microsoft

If you spend any time watching Microsoft's numbers or on financial speculation and analysis sites like Seeking Alpha, you'll know that Mr. Nadella's portion of the business is ROCK SOLID.

Microsoft's back office portfolio has pretty much been the backbone of the business for a while and that is where Mr. Nadella sat successfully for a while.

He ran a huge, successful business unit, has been there for 22 years and understands cloud technology.

On February 4th 2014, Microsoft made it official.

Here was the excerpt:

> REDMOND, Wash. — Feb. 4, 2014 — Microsoft Corp. today announced that its Board of Directors has appointed Satya Nadella as Chief Executive Officer and member of the Board of Directors effective immediately. Nadella previously held the position of Executive Vice President of Microsoft's Cloud and Enterprise group.
>
> "During this time of transformation, there is no better person to lead Microsoft than Satya Nadella," said Bill Gates, Microsoft's Founder and Member of the Board of Directors. "Satya is a proven leader with hard-core engineering skills, business vision and the ability to bring people together. His vision for how technology will be used and experienced around the world is exactly what Microsoft needs as the company enters its next chapter of expanded product innovation and growth."
>
> Since joining the company in 1992, Nadella has spearheaded major strategy and technical shifts across the company's portfolio of products and services, most notably the company's move to the cloud and the development of one of the largest cloud infrastructures in the world supporting Bing, Xbox, Office and other services. During his tenure overseeing Microsoft's Server and Tools Business, the division outperformed the market and took share from competitors.
>
> "Microsoft is one of those rare companies to have truly revolutionized the world through technology, and I couldn't be more honored to have been chosen to lead the company,"

Nadella said. "The opportunity ahead for Microsoft is vast, but to seize it, we must focus clearly, move faster and continue to transform. A big part of my job is to accelerate our ability to bring innovative products to our customers more quickly."

"Having worked with him for more than 20 years, I know that Satya is the right leader at the right time for Microsoft," said Steve Ballmer, who announced on Aug. 23, 2013 that he would retire once a successor was named. "I've had the distinct privilege of working with the most talented employees and senior leadership team in the industry, and I know their passion and hunger for greatness will only grow stronger under Satya's leadership."

Microsoft also announced that Bill Gates, previously Chairman of the Board of Directors, will assume a new role on the Board as Founder and Technology Advisor, and will devote more time to the company, supporting Nadella in shaping technology and product direction. John Thompson, lead independent director for the Board of Directors, will assume the role of Chairman of the Board of Directors and remain an independent director on the Board.

"Satya is clearly the best person to lead Microsoft, and he has the unanimous support of our Board," Thompson said. "The Board took the thoughtful approach that our shareholders, customers, partners and employees expected and deserved."

With the addition of Nadella, Microsoft's Board of Directors consists of Ballmer; Dina Dublon, former Chief Financial Officer of JPMorgan Chase; Gates; Maria M. Klawe, President of Harvey Mudd College; Stephen J. Luczo, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Seagate Technology PLC; David F. Marquardt, General Partner at August Capital; Nadella; Charles H. Noski, former Vice Chairman of Bank of America Corp.; Dr. Helmut Panke, former Chairman of the Board of Management at BMW Bayerische Motoren Werke AG; and Thompson, Chief Executive Officer of Virtual Instruments. Seven of the 10 board members are independent of Microsoft, which is consistent with the requirement in the company's governance guidelines that a substantial majority be independent.

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

I'm glad that Mr. Nadella is the CEO of Microsoft.

He and Bill Gates can do a lot of cool things for the company.

Microsoft need to charge on and takes risks with the next version of Windows because being timid would be quiet suicide. The company is doing so well financially that they actually do have some leeway to take more risks with Windows 9.

Calculated risks.

I think Windows 9 could turn this whole thing around but it will take boldness and strategic vision by both Satya Nadella and Bill Gates. They will need to start from scratch and rethink the entire value proposition of the Windows Franchise. There should be painful decisions and blood, sweat and tears.

They need to push their UI designers and engineers harder than they have ever been pushed and when they are burned out, push them harder.

The bottom line is, they will need to rethink Windows from the top to bottom but in fairness, they will have a MAJOR advantage this time……they'll know what doesn't work.

Bottom line is, in my opinion, Microsoft did a great job with this pick.

So we touched on Windows 9. Let's talk a little more about that.

Bonus Chapter – What's coming in Windows 9?

So this is a really easy chapter to write. We simply don't know.

Microsoft will (hopefully) be sharing more about Windows 9 at the upcoming 2014 BUILD conference but for now the company has been very quiet about the release.

Part of the reason for that is because they are so early into the development cycle.

There are basically 2 directions that Microsoft can take with this release:

1. More of the same direction as Windows 8.1 update 1. This would mean a continual refinement of the Windows 8 paradigm.
2. Start from scratch and do something different.

I personally believe that the company will choose the former option simply because too much time and money has been spent to start over.

There has been a lot of money spent on Research and Development for Windows 8 and Window 8.1. Lots of development, training and advertising money.

It's hard for a company to just walk away from that.

As for timing, Joe Belfiore of Microsoft, talking to journalists that attended the company's gathering at MWC 2014 said that the company plans to stick to its rapid release cadence.

This express release cycle was what brought us Windows 8.1 one year after Windows 8.

So we will probably be seeing more of Windows 9 in 2015.

To learn more about Windows 9, visit our Windows 9 section at www.EyeOnWindows.com.

You can get to that here.

Well, that's it for this eBook.

I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I did writing it.

For the most comprehensive Microsoft Windows News and Updates, visit EyeOnWindows.com.

Thanks again,

Onuora Amobi.