Teach Yourself VISUALLY™ Windows® 11

Paul McFedries

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Windows® 11

by Paul McFedries

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About the Author

Paul McFedries is a full-time technical writer. Paul has been authoring computer books since 1991 and has more than 100 books to his credit. Paul's books have sold more than four million copies worldwide. These books include the Wiley titles *Teach Yourself VISUALLY Zoom*, *Windows 10 Portable Genius*, *Excel 365 All-in-One For Dummies*, *Excel Data Analysis For Dummies*, *Amazon Fire TV For Dummies*, *Alexa For Dummies*, and *Cord Cutting For Dummies*. Paul invites you to drop by his personal website at www.mcfedries.com or follow him on Twitter @paulmcf.

Author's Acknowledgments

It goes without saying that writers focus on text, and I certainly enjoyed focusing on the text that you'll read in this book. However, this book is more than just the usual collection of words and phrases. A quick thumb-through the pages will show you that this book is also chock-full of images, from sharp screenshots to fun and informative illustrations. Those colorful images sure make for a beautiful book, and that beauty comes from a lot of hard work by Wiley's immensely talented group of designers and layout artists. I thank them for creating another gem. Of course, what you read in this book must also be accurate, logically presented, and free of errors. Ensuring all of this was an excellent group of editors that included project editor Sarah Hellert, technical editor Doug Holland, copy editor Kim Wimpsett, and content refinement specialist Barath Kumar Rajasekaran. Thanks to all of you for your exceptional competence and hard work. Thanks, as well, to acquisitions editor Devon Lewis for asking me to write this book.

How to Use This Book

Who This Book Is For

This book is for the reader who has never used this particular technology or software application. It is also for readers who want to expand their knowledge.

The Conventions in This Book

1 Steps

This book uses a step-by-step format to guide you easily through each task. Numbered steps are actions you must do; bulleted steps clarify a point, step, or optional feature; and indented steps give you the result.

2 Notes

Notes give additional information — special conditions that may occur during an operation, a situation that you want to avoid, or a cross reference to a related area of the book.

3 Icons and Buttons

Icons and buttons show you exactly what you need to click to perform a step.

4 Tips

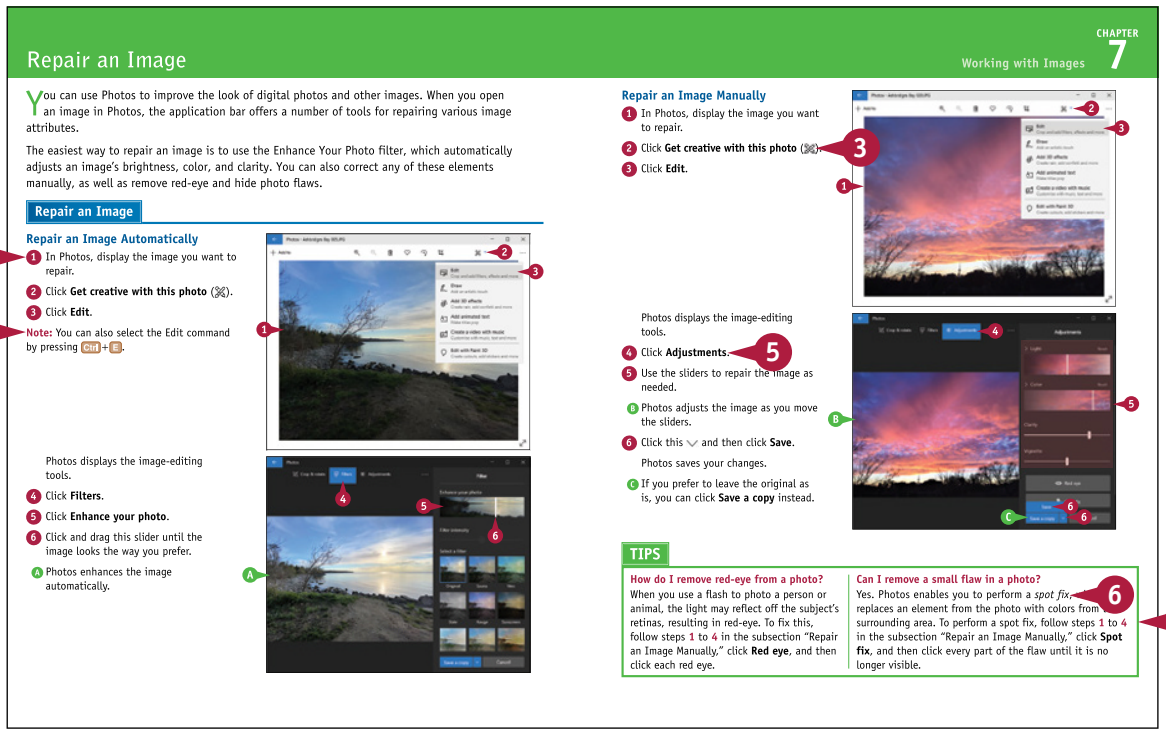
Tips offer additional information, including warnings and shortcuts.

5 Bold

Bold type shows command names, options, and text or numbers you must type.

6 Italics

Italic type introduces and defines a new term.



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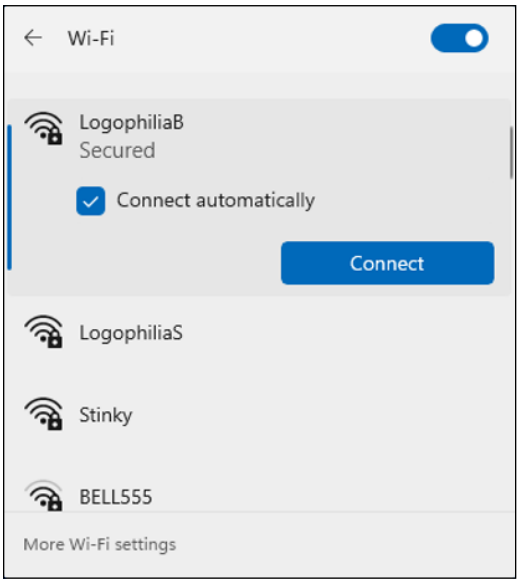

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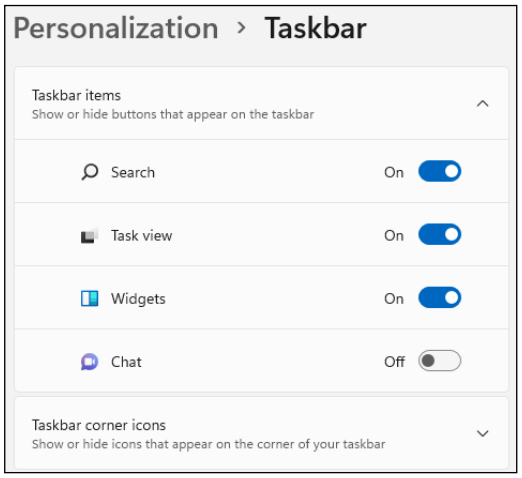

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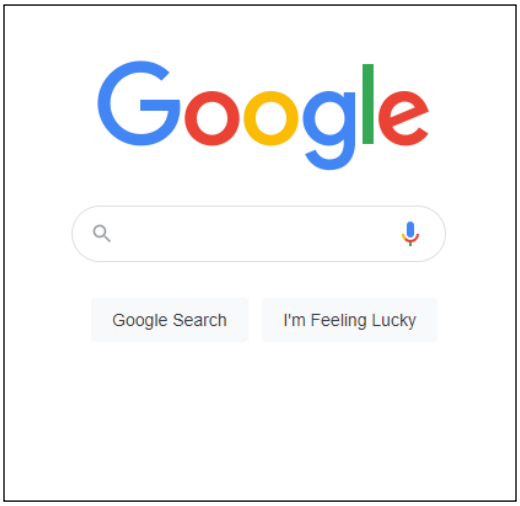

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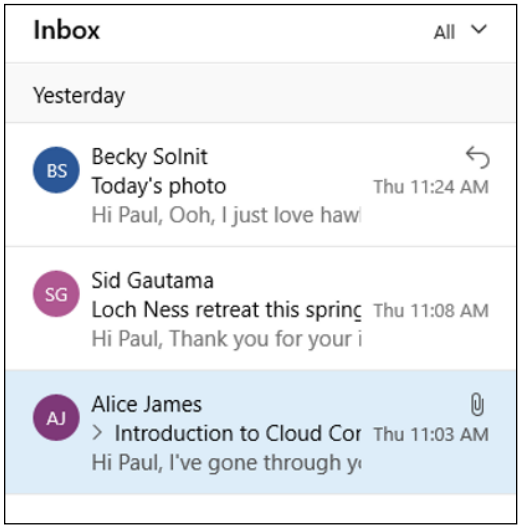

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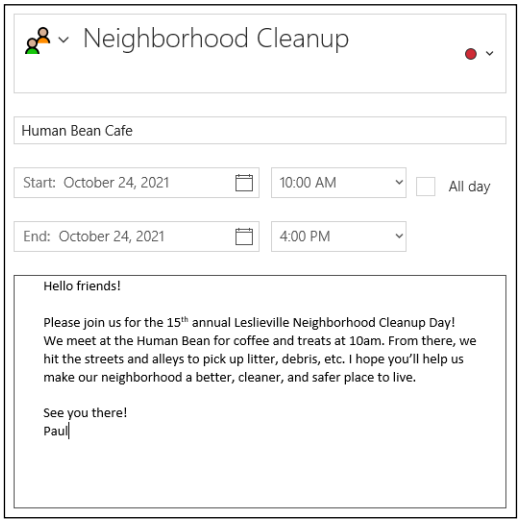

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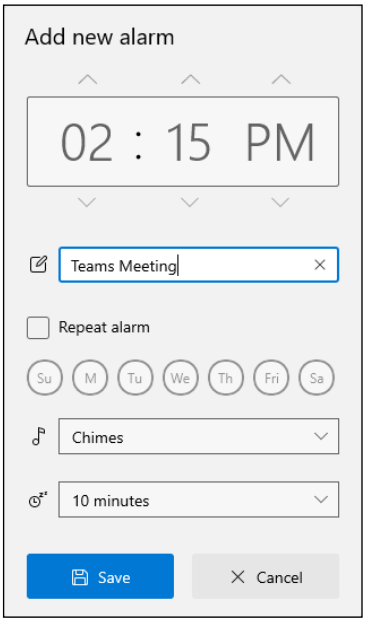

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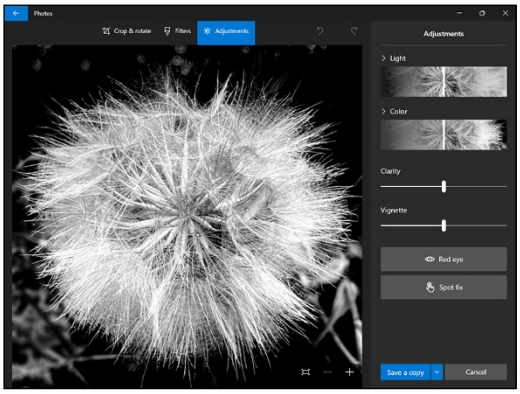

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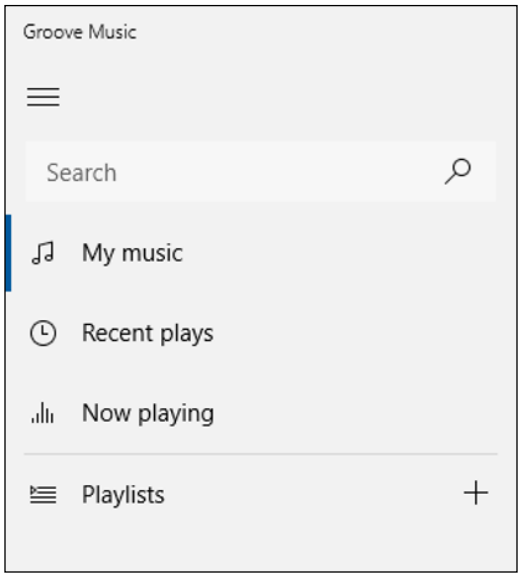

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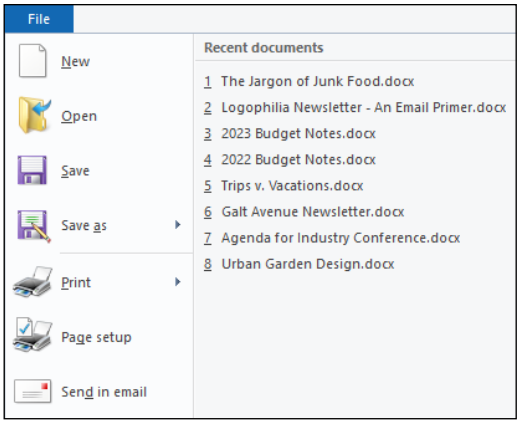

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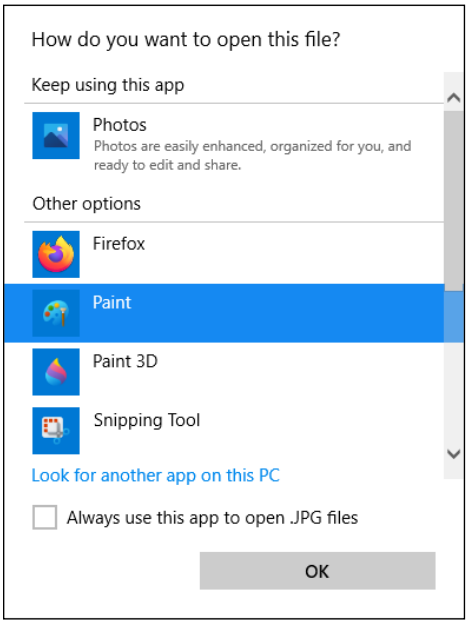

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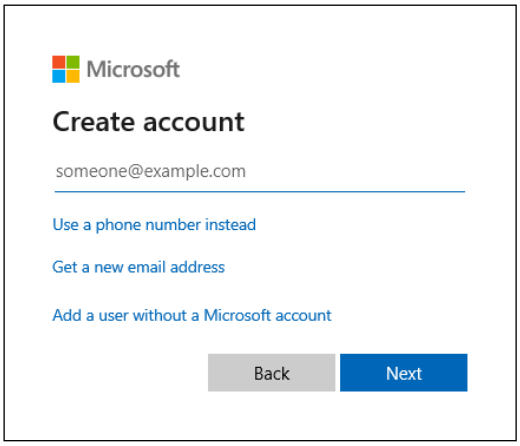

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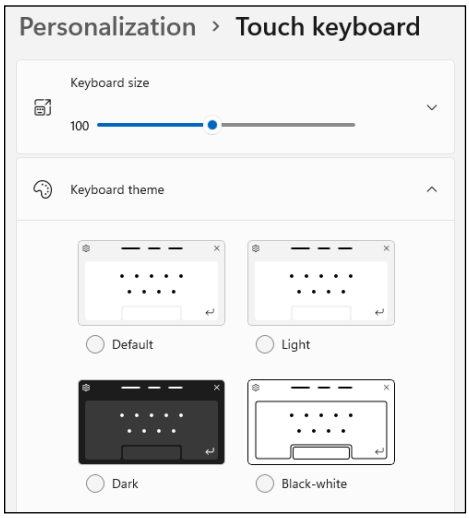

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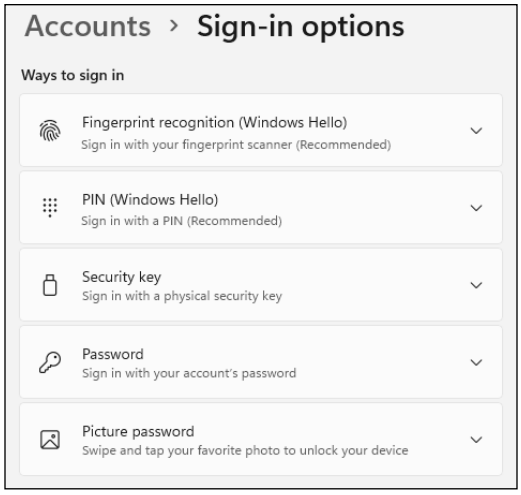

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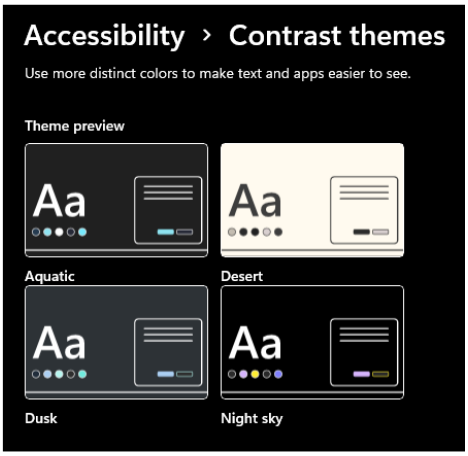
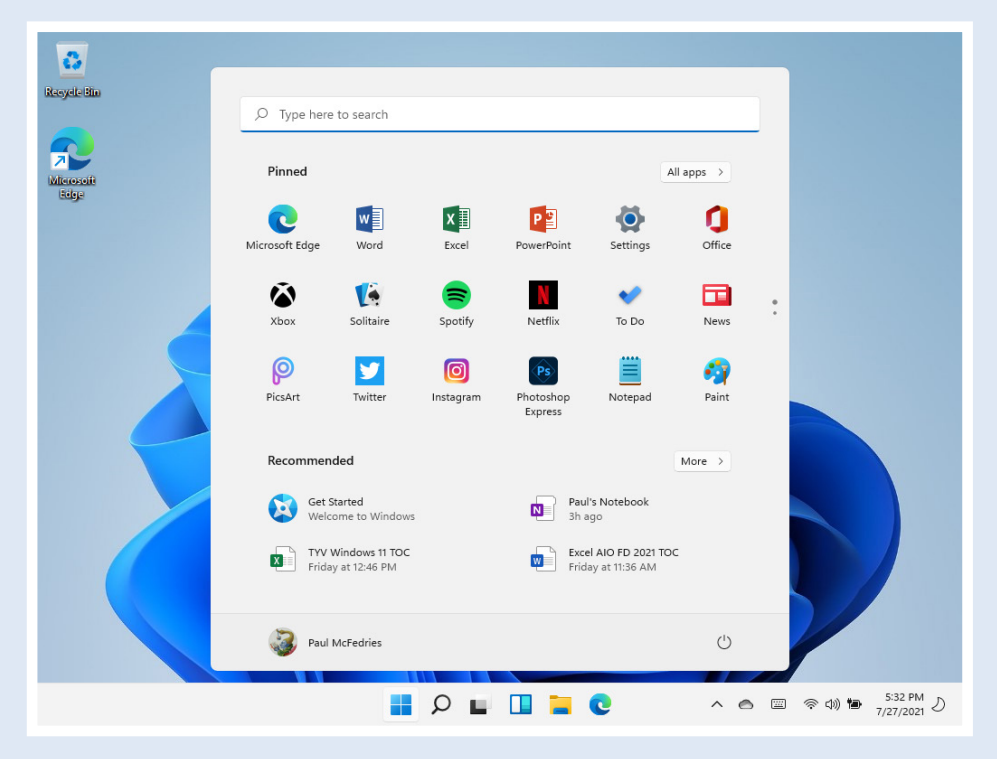


CHAPTER 1

Getting Started with Windows

To do something useful with your computer and with Windows, you need to explore the screen, connect to your network, and learn how to work with apps.



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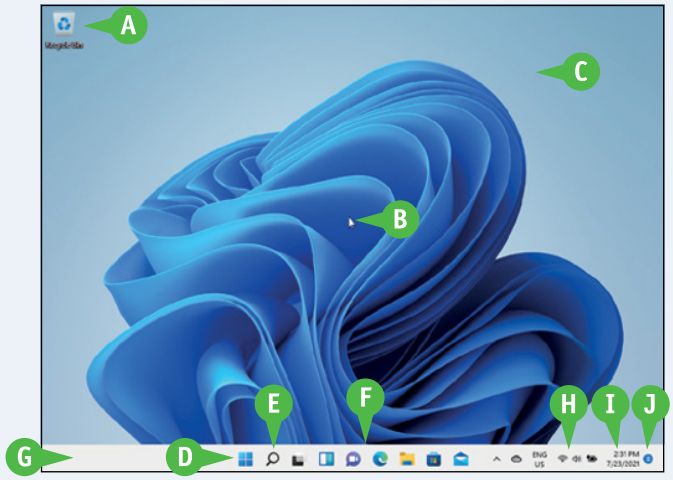
Explore the PC Screen

Before getting to the specifics of working with Windows, take a few seconds to familiarize yourself with the basic elements of the screen. These include the desktop, the Start button, and the taskbar. In most cases, the Start button and the taskbar are always visible. If you do not see them, move the mouse pointer to the bottom of the screen.



A Desktop Icon

An icon on the desktop represents a program or Windows feature. A program you install often adds its own icon on the desktop.

B Mouse Pointer

When you move your mouse, this pointer ( ) moves along with it.

C Desktop

This is the Windows "work area," meaning that it is where you work with your programs and documents.

D Start Button

Click **Start** ( ) to start programs and launch many of the Windows features.

E Search Icon

Click **Search** ( ) to search for items on your PC or on the Internet.

F Taskbar Icons

You use these icons to launch some Windows features with just a mouse click.

G Taskbar

The programs you have open appear in the taskbar. You use this area to switch between programs if you have more than one running at a time.

H Notification Area

This area displays small icons that notify you about things that are happening on your computer. For example, you see notifications if your printer runs out of paper or if an update to Windows is available over the Internet.

I Time and Date

This is the current time and date on your computer. To see the full date, position the mouse pointer ( ) over the time. To change the date or time, click the time.

J Notifications

This icon tells you the number of notifications that you have yet to view. Notifications give you information about what your computer and its apps are doing.

Explore the Start Menu

To get the most out of Windows, you need to know the layout of the Start menu. As its name implies, the Start menu is your main Windows starting point. Most of the tasks you perform with Windows — such as running apps, searching your PC, working with your Microsoft account, and restarting or shutting down your PC — are launched via the Start menu.

This section gives you an overview of the Start menu. The tasks you can run via the Start menu are covered in the rest of this chapter and throughout this book.

A Start Menu

Click **Start** ( ) or press to open the Start menu on the Windows desktop.

B User Account

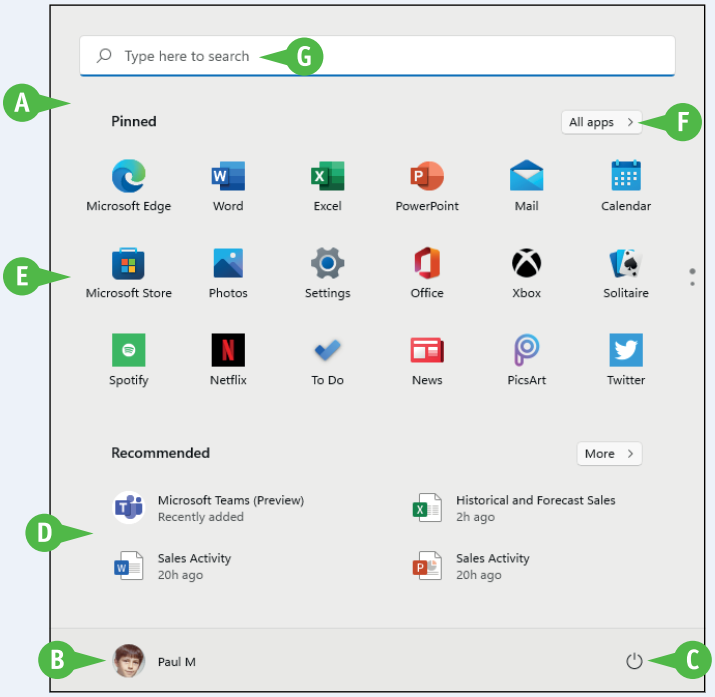
This icon represents your Windows user account. Clicking this icon displays a menu of user account–related tasks.

C Power Icon

Click **Power** ( ) to restart, shut down, or sleep your computer.

D Recommended

This area displays recently added apps as well as documents you have worked with recently. Click an item to launch the app or open the document. You can also click **More** to see a longer list of recent apps and documents.



E Pinned

This area displays apps that have been given a fixed position on the Start menu. Click an app's icon to launch the app. You learn how to pin apps to the Start menu in Chapter 2.

F All Apps

Click **All apps** to see the full list of apps on your computer.

G Search Box

You use this text box to search for items on your PC or on the Internet.

Start and Close an App

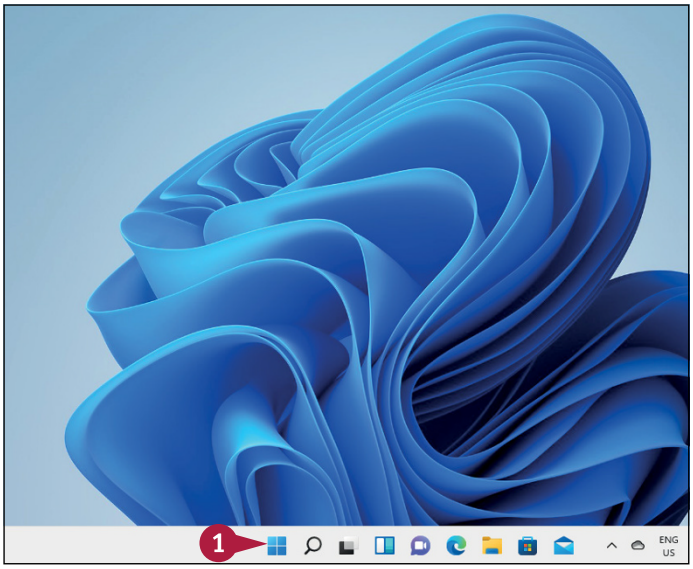
To perform tasks of any kind in Windows, you can use one of the apps installed on your computer. The application you use depends on the task you want to perform. For example, to surf the World Wide Web, you use a web browser application, such as the Microsoft Edge app that comes with Windows. To use an app, you select the one you want to run from the Start menu.

When you are done with an app, you should close it to reduce resources and keep the desktop uncluttered.

Start and Close an App

Start an App

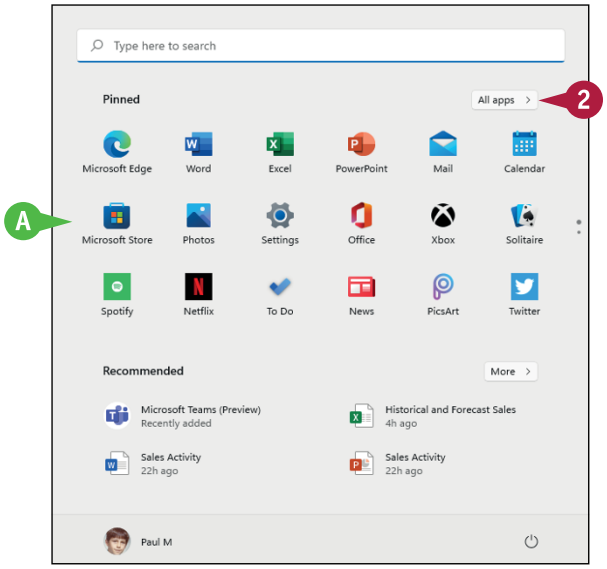
1 Click **Start** ( ).



The Start menu appears.

A If you see the app you want on the main Start menu, you can click the app icon and then skip the rest of these steps.

2 Click **All apps**.

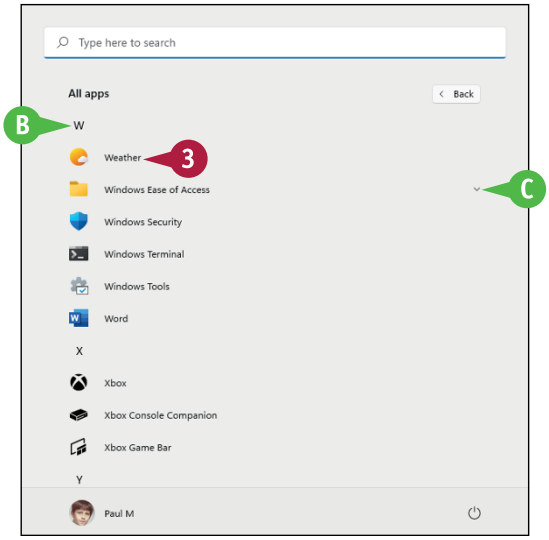


The All Apps list appears.

3 Click the app you want.

B To quickly navigate apps alphabetically, you can click any letter and then click the letter that contains the app you want.

C If the app is in a submenu, you can click the submenu and then click the app icon.



The app runs.

Close an App

1 Click **Close** ( ) or press Alt + F4.

Note: If the app asks if you want to save changes, click **Yes** to ensure you do not lose any work.

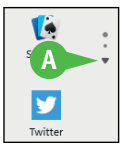
Windows closes the app.

TIPS

Is there an easier way to locate an app?

Yes, you can perform a search to locate it. Click **Search** ( ) on the taskbar and then begin typing the name of the app. As you type, Windows displays a list of apps and other items that match the characters. When you see the app you want, click it to run the program.

How do I navigate the pinned apps?



The default Start menu has two pages of pinned apps. To navigate the pages, click **Next Page** ( ) (A) and **Previous Page** ( ) (not shown), which appear to the right of the pinned apps. See Chapter 2 to learn how to add your own pinned apps to the Start menu.

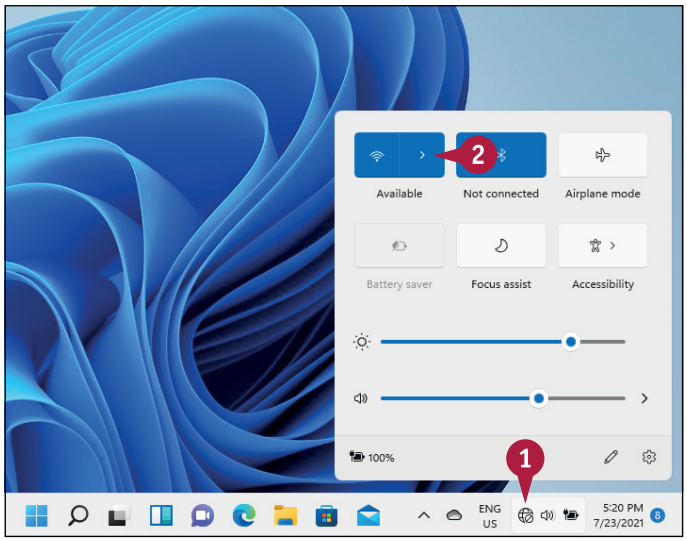
Connect to Your Wireless Network

If you have a wireless access point and your computer supports wireless networking, you can connect to the device to access your network. If the access point is also a router that is connected to the Internet, then connecting to the wireless network gives your computer Internet access, as well.

Most wireless networks are protected with a security key, which is a kind of password. To connect, you need to provide Windows with the key. However, after you connect to the network once, Windows remembers the key and connects again automatically whenever your computer is within range of the network.

Connect to Your Wireless Network

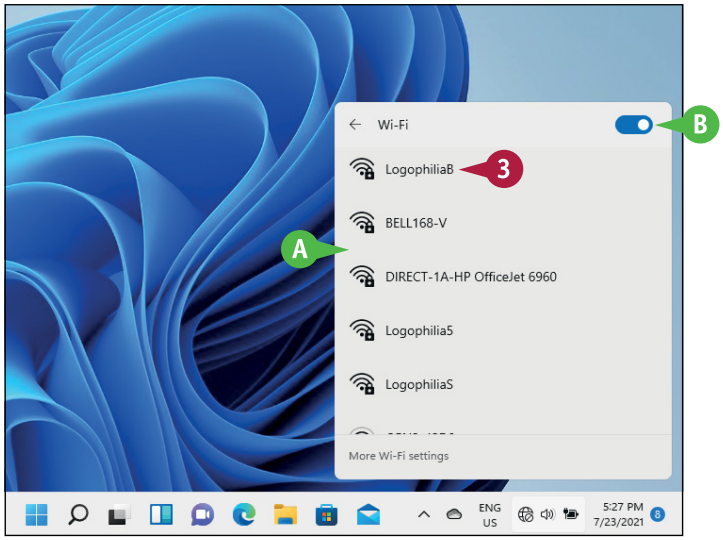
1. Click **Network** ( ).
2. Click **Manage Wi-Fi Connections** ( ).



A Windows displays a list of wireless networks in your area.

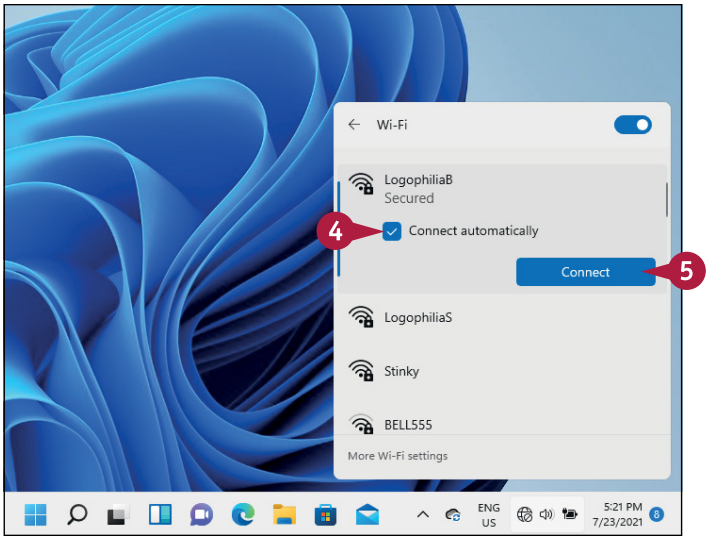
3. Click your network.

B If you do not see the list of wireless networks, you can click the **Wi-Fi** switch to **On** (changes to) to turn on your computer's wireless capability.



Note: For home use, the terms *wireless* and *Wi-Fi* are synonymous.

4. To have Windows connect to your network automatically in the future, click **Connect automatically** (☐ changes to ☑).
5. Click **Connect**.



If the network is protected by a security key, Windows prompts you to enter it.

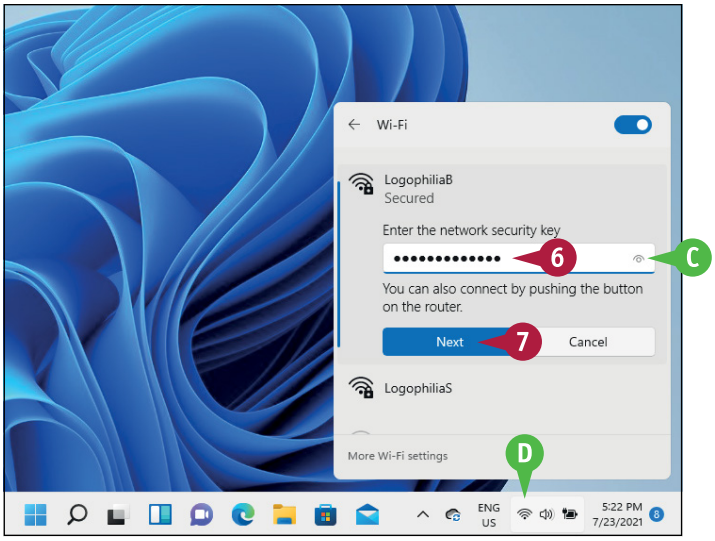
6. Type the security key.

C. If you want to be certain that you typed the security key correctly, you can temporarily click and hold **Display Password Characters** (👁).

7. Click **Next**.

Windows connects to the network.

D. The network icon changes from Disconnected (🌐) to Connected (📶) to indicate that you now have a wireless network connection.

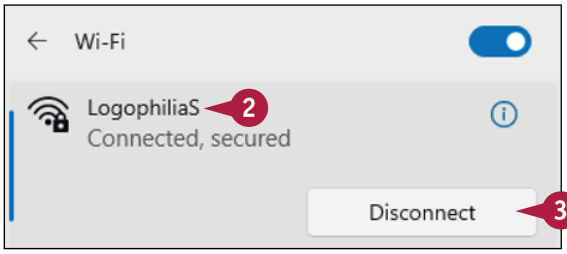


TIP

How do I disconnect from my wireless network?

To disconnect from the network, follow these steps:

1. Click **Network** (📶).
2. Click your network.
3. Click **Disconnect**. Windows disconnects from the wireless network.



Put Windows to Sleep

You can make your computer more energy efficient by putting Windows into sleep mode when you are not using the computer. *Sleep mode* means that your computer is in a temporary low-power mode. This saves electricity when your computer is plugged in, and it saves battery power when your computer is unplugged.

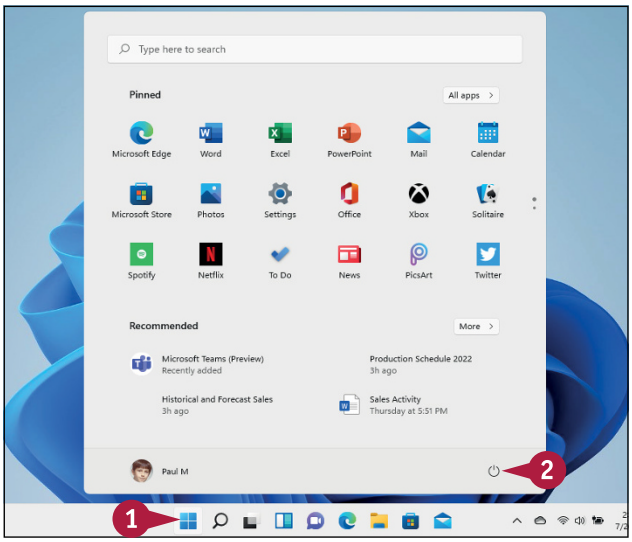
In sleep mode, Windows keeps your apps open. This is handy because it means that when you return from sleep mode, after you sign in to Windows again, you can immediately get back to what you were doing.

Put Windows to Sleep

1. Click **Start** ( ).

   The Start menu appears.

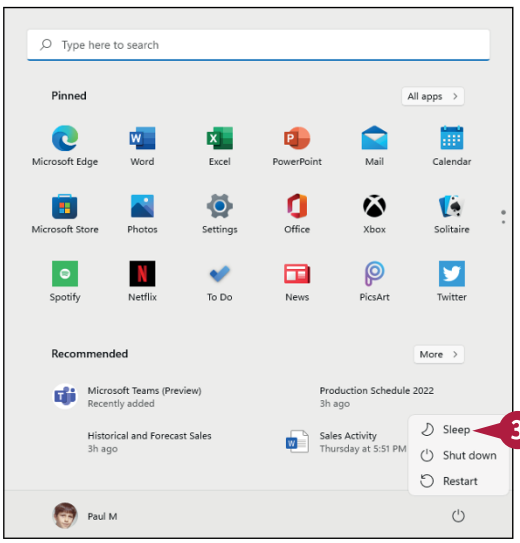
2. Click **Power** ( ).



   The Power options appear.

3. Click **Sleep**.

   Windows activates sleep mode.



Note: To return from sleep mode, press your computer's power button.

Restart or Shut Down Windows

You can restart Windows, which means that it shuts down and starts up again immediately. This is useful if your computer is running slowly or acting odd. Sometimes a restart solves the problem.

Alternatively, when you complete your work, you could shut down Windows. However, do not just shut off your computer's power because doing so can cause problems: If you have documents with unsaved changes, you may lose those changes; you also could damage one or more Windows system files, which could make your system unstable. Therefore, you should always follow the proper steps when shutting down your PC.

Restart or Shut Down Windows

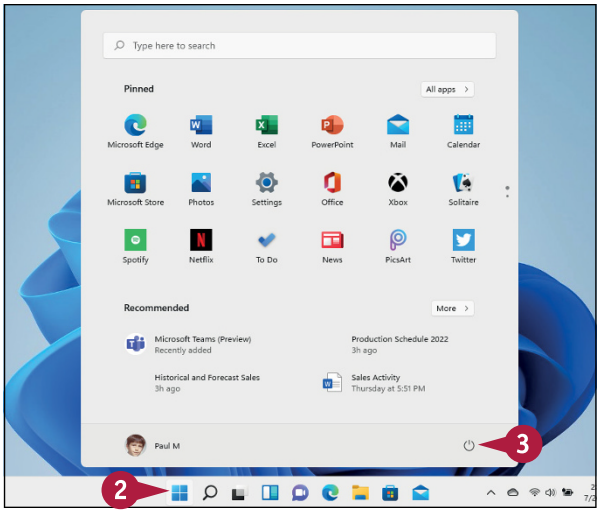
1. Shut down all your running programs.

Note: Be sure to save your work as you close your programs.

2. Click **Start** ( ).

   The Start menu appears.

3. Click **Power** ( ).

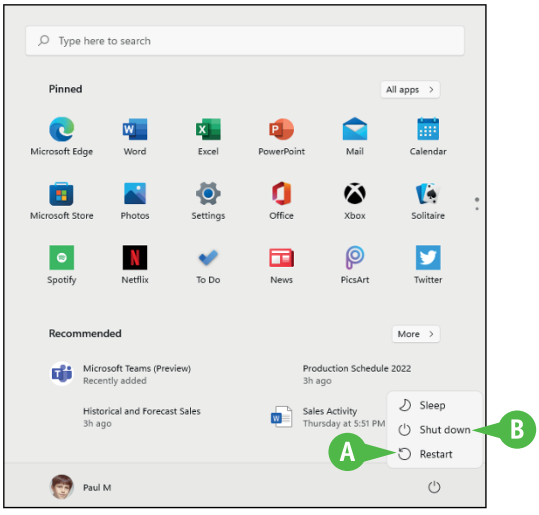


   The Power options appear.

4. Click one of these commands:

   A. You can click **Restart** to shut down and then start your computer.

   B. You can click **Shut down** to turn off your computer.

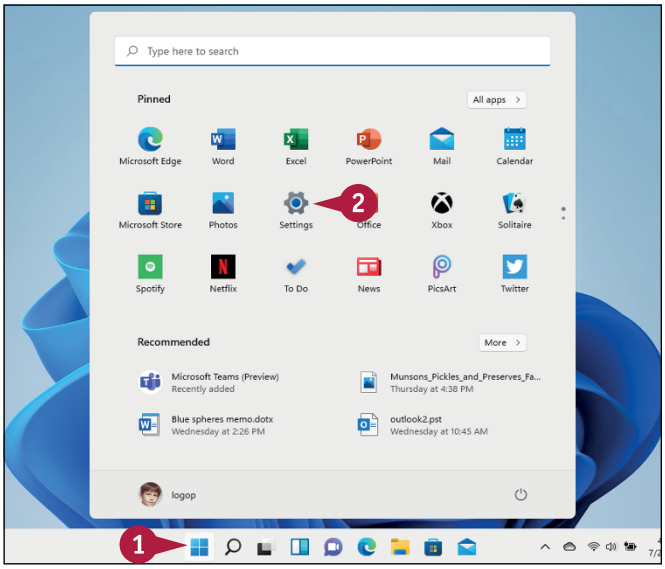


Switch to a Microsoft Account

You can get much more out of Windows by using a Microsoft account. When you connect a Microsoft account to your Windows user account, many previously inaccessible Windows features become immediately available. For example, you can use the Mail app to access your email and the OneDrive app to store documents online. You can also download apps from the Microsoft Store, access your photos and documents anywhere online, and even sync your settings with other PCs for which you use the same account.

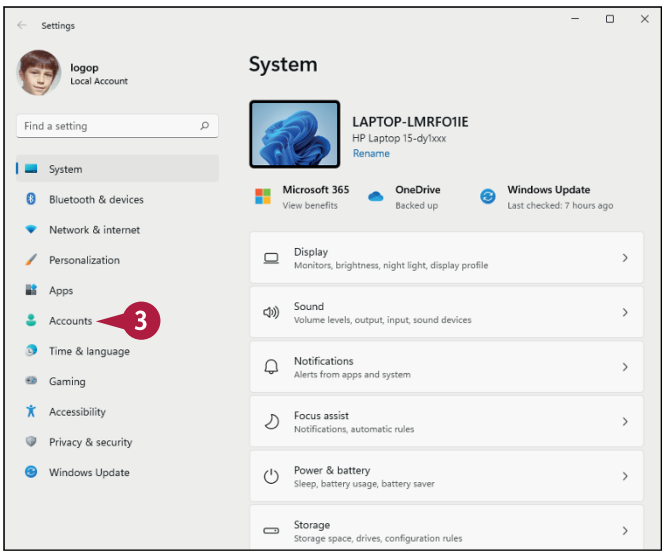
Switch to a Microsoft Account

1. Click **Start** ( ).
2. Click **Settings**.



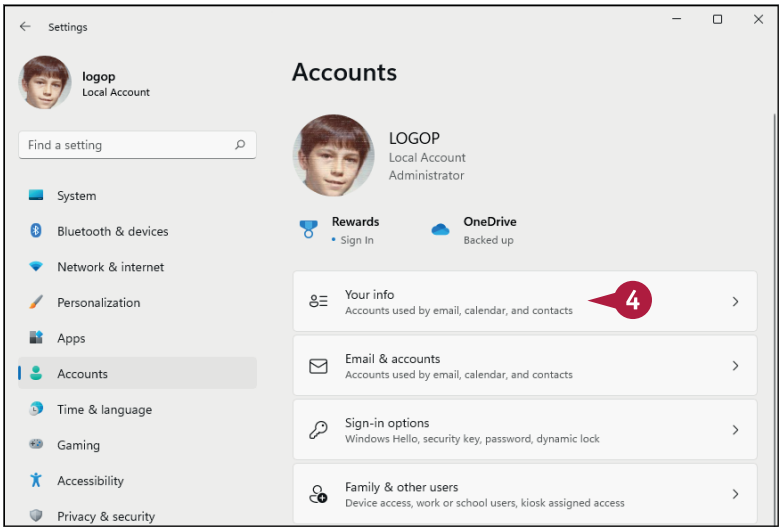
Windows opens the Settings app.

3. Click **Accounts**.



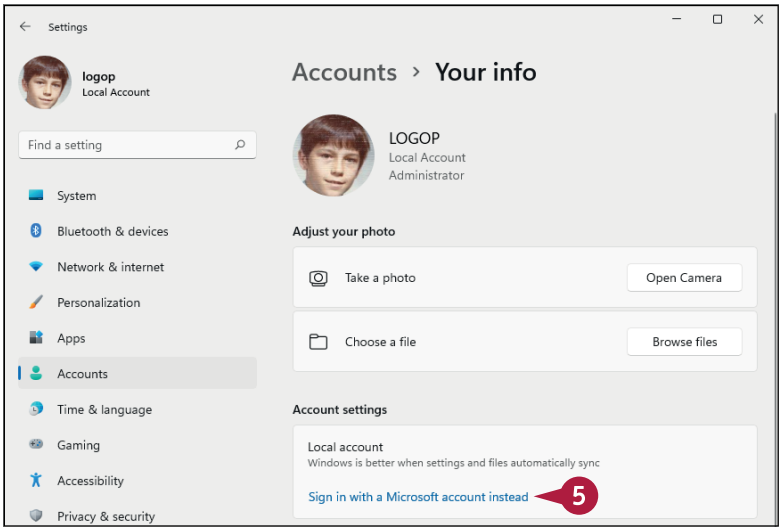
The Accounts window appears.

4 Click **Your info**.



The Your Info window appears.

5 Click **Sign in with a Microsoft account instead**.



TIPS

Can I create a Microsoft account if I do not already have one?

Yes. When you get to the Sign In screen (shown later in this section), click **Create one** to open the Create Account window, type your email address, click **Next**, type a password, click **Next**, follow the prompts to complete the account, and then continue with step **10** later in this section.

Can I use a new email address for my new Microsoft account?

Yes, you can. In the Create Account window, click **Get a new email address** and then type the username you want to use with https://outlook.live.com. Your new address will be *username*@outlook.com.

continued ►

Switch to a Microsoft Account (continued)

You do not need to use a Microsoft account to use Windows. Instead, you can use a *local account*, which allows you to log in to your PC, personalize settings, and use most Windows features. With a local account, you cannot install programs from the Microsoft Store if you are using Windows 11 Home. If you are using Windows 11 Pro, you can install only free programs from the Microsoft Store. To install any program from the Microsoft Store and to synchronize your settings across other Windows devices, you need to switch to a Microsoft account.

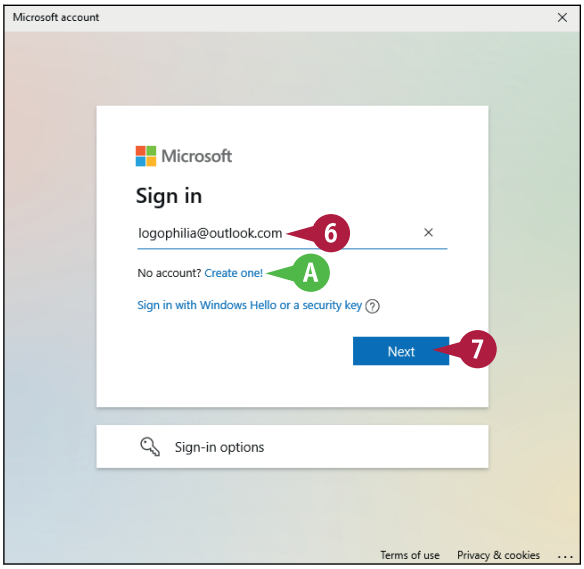
Switch to a Microsoft Account (continued)

The Sign In window appears.

A To create a new Microsoft account, you can click **Create one** and then follow the instructions in the first tip earlier in this section.

6 Type your email address.

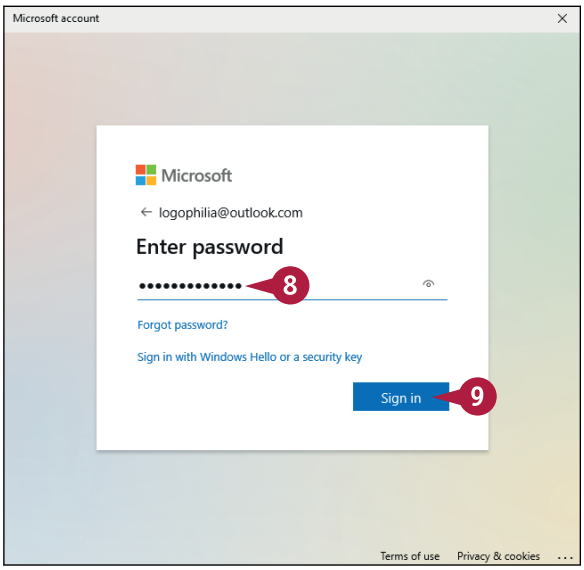
7 Click **Next**.



The Enter Password window appears.

8 Type your password.

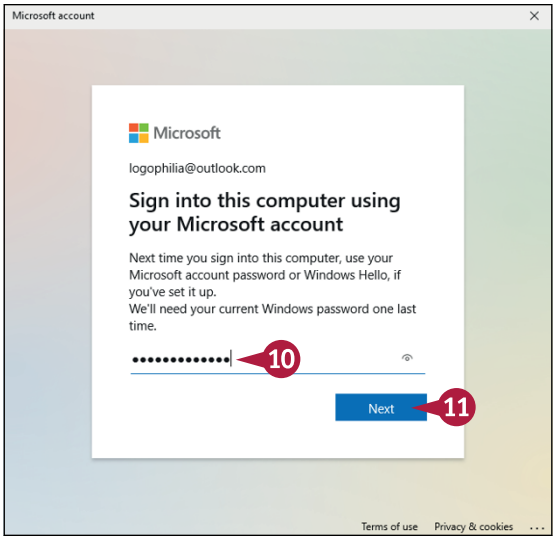
9 Click **Sign in**.



Windows asks you to verify your current account password.

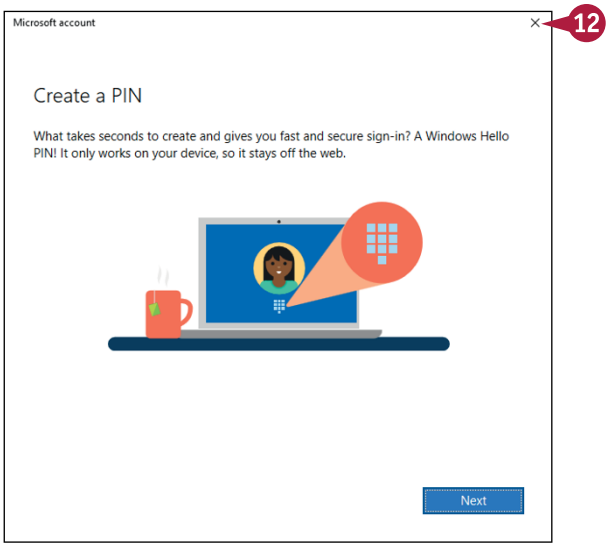
10 Type your password.

11 Click **Next**.



Windows asks if you want to use a PIN with your account.

12 Click **Close** ( ).



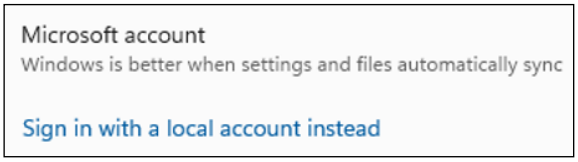
Note: See Chapter 13 to learn how to add a PIN to your account.

Windows connects the Microsoft account to your user account.

The next time you start Windows, you can use your Microsoft account email address and password to sign in.

TIP

If I no longer want to use a Microsoft account with Windows, can I remove it?



Yes, but you will no longer see any personal data on the Start screen, you will not be able to access your files online, and your settings will no longer sync between PCs. To remove the Microsoft account, click **Start** ( ), click your username in the lower-left corner and then click **Change account settings**. In the Accounts window, click **Your info** and then click **Sign in with a local account instead**.

Install an App

If Windows does not have an app that you need, you can obtain the app and then install it on your computer. You usually obtain apps from the Microsoft Store, which is an app that is preinstalled with Windows. Many Microsoft Store apps are free, but some require a payment using the credit card you have on file with your Microsoft account.

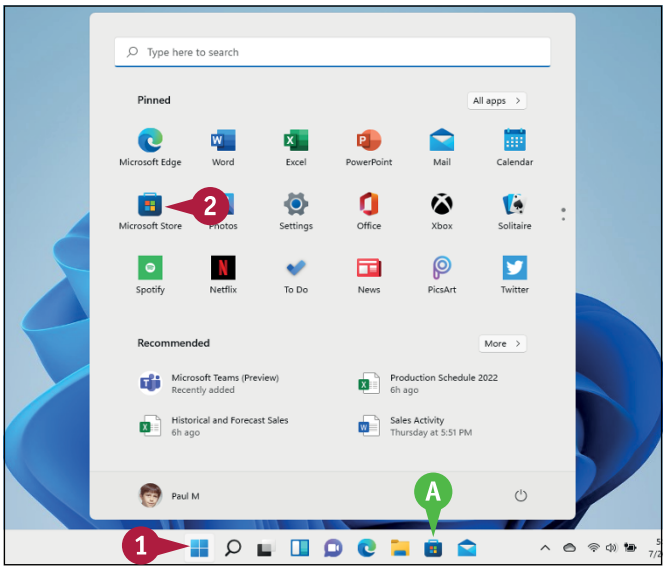
You can also install apps that are not available via the Microsoft Store. In this case, you obtain (and usually pay for) the app on the web and then download the app to your computer. However, it is important to only install apps that you obtained from a reputable and secure site.

Install an App

1. Click **Start** ( ).
2. Click **Microsoft Store**.

   A You can also click **Microsoft Store** ( ).

Note: You need a Microsoft account to install from the Microsoft Store, as described in the previous section, "Switch to a Microsoft Account."

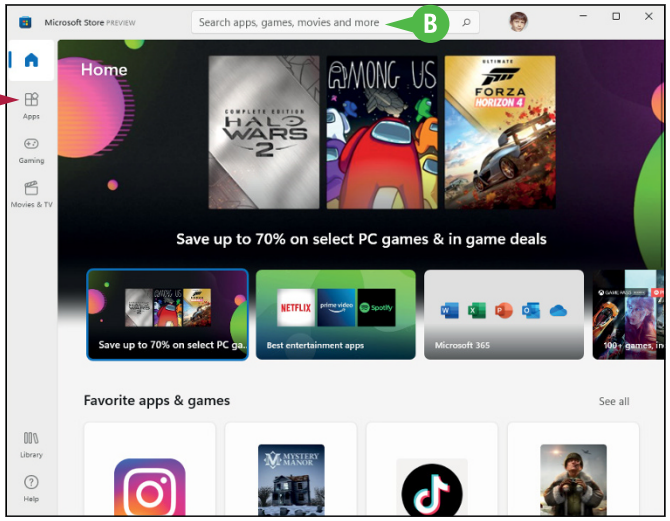


The Microsoft Store app appears.

3. Click **Apps**.

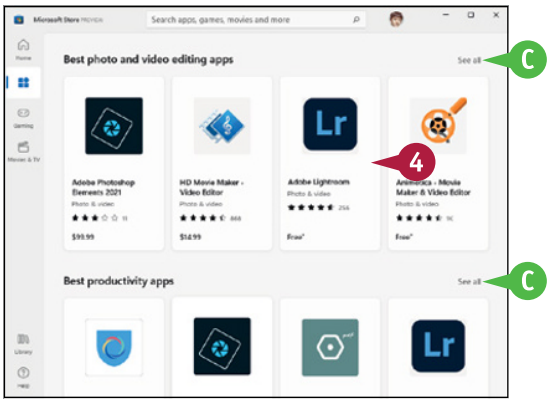
   Microsoft Store displays the Apps screen, which enables you to browse apps by category.

B Alternatively, if you know the name of the app you want to install, you can use the Search box to locate the app.



C For each category, you can click **See all** to view all the apps in the category.

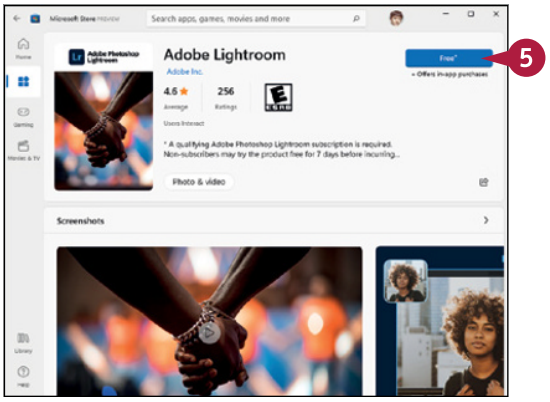
4 Click the app you want to install.



5 Click **Free**.

Alternatively, if the app is not free, you can click the price button, type your Microsoft account password, click **Sign in**, and then follow the prompts to complete the purchase.

Windows installs the app.



TIP

How do I install software downloaded from the Internet?

Follow these steps:

1 Click **File Explorer** ( ).

2 Open your **Downloads** folder.

Note: If you saved the downloaded file in a folder other than Downloads, use File Explorer to find the downloaded file. To view a file with File Explorer, see Chapter 10.

The Downloads folder appears.

3 Double-click the file.

The software's installation app begins.

Note: For compressed files, extract the files and then double-click the setup file. See Chapter 10 for more information.

4 Follow the installation instructions the app provides.

Switch Between Running Apps

If you plan on running multiple apps at the same time, you need to know how to easily switch from one application to another. In Windows, after you start one application, you do not need to close that application before you open another one. Windows supports a feature called *multitasking*, which means running two or more applications simultaneously. You can switch from one program to another using the taskbar, the Task View feature, or the keyboard.

Switch Between Running Apps

Switch Apps Using the Taskbar

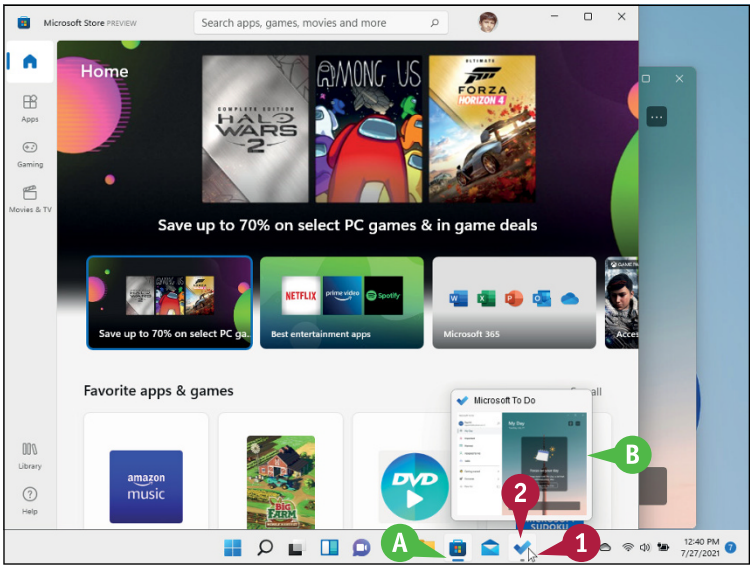
A Windows displays a line under the icon of the current app.

1 Position the mouse pointer (↖) over the taskbar icon of the app you want to switch to.

B Windows displays a thumbnail version of the app window.

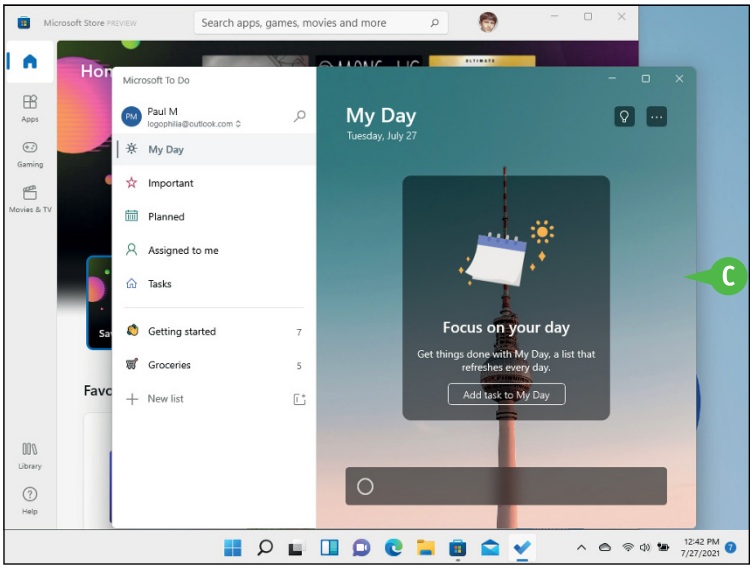
2 Click the app's taskbar icon.

Note: An app does not have to be minimized to the taskbar for you to use the app's taskbar icon.



C Windows brings the app's window to the foreground.

Note: If you can see part of the app's window, you can also switch to the app by clicking its window, even if the window is in the background.

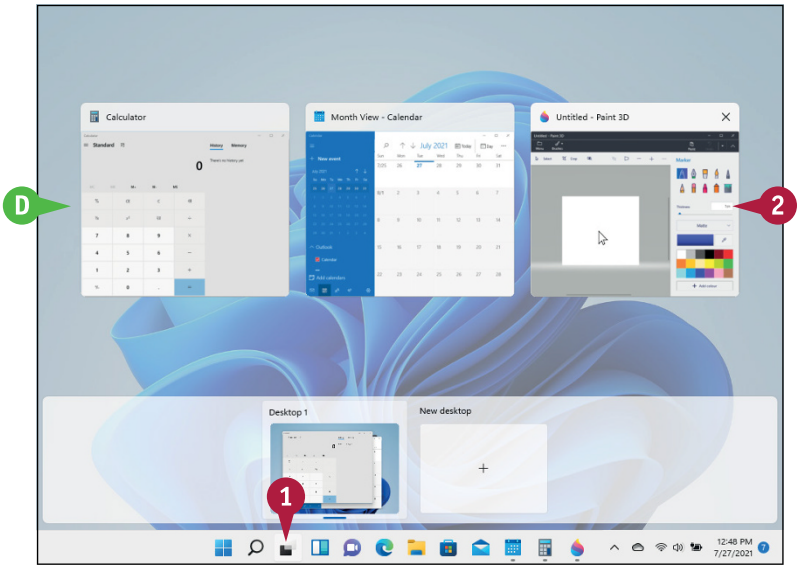


Switch Apps Using Task View

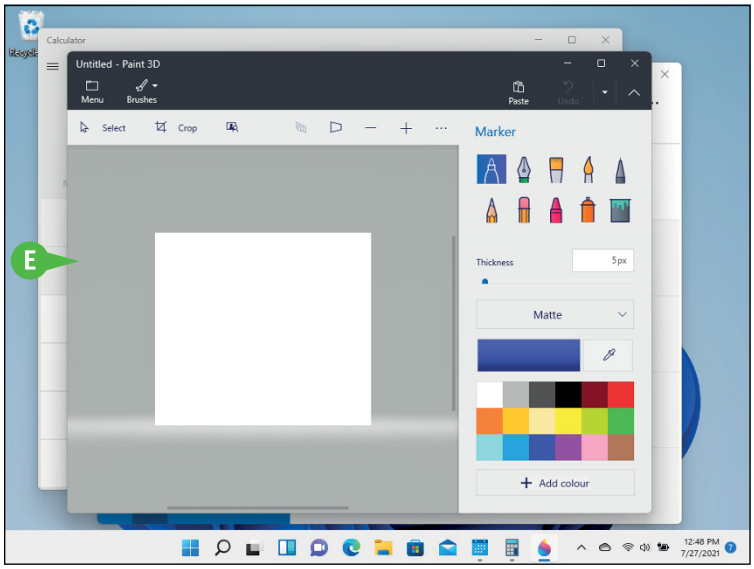
1. In the taskbar, click **Task View** ( ) or press + Tab.

D Windows displays thumbnails for each running app.

2. Click the thumbnail of the app you want to switch to.



E Windows switches to the app.



TIP

How can I switch between apps using the keyboard?

There are two methods you can use to switch between apps using the keyboard:

- The first method is to press and hold Alt and then press Tab to see thumbnail versions of the open windows. Press Tab until the window you want to work in is selected and then release Alt.
- The second method is to press + Tab to open Task View. Use the arrow keys — particularly ← and → — to select the thumbnail of the app you want to work with and then press Enter.

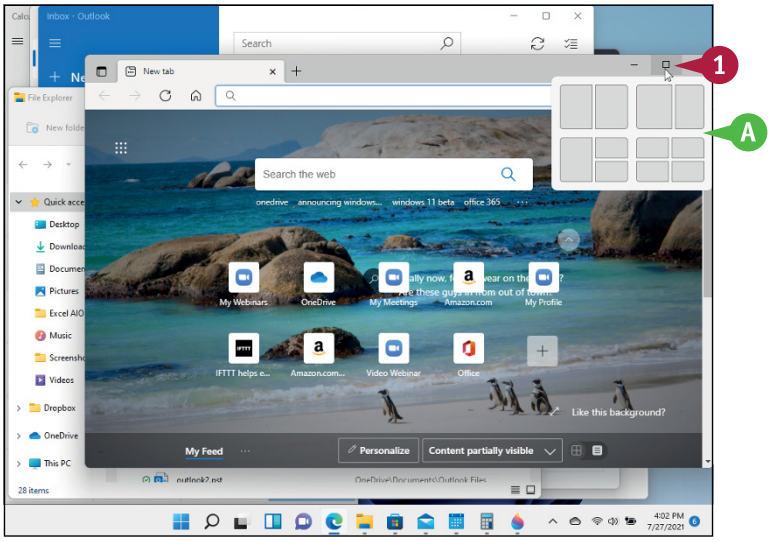
Arrange Running Apps

You can make it more efficient to multitask apps by arranging the app windows on the desktop. There will be times when you want to view the content of multiple windows at the same time. For example, you might be surfing the web using Microsoft Edge in one window but also want to watch the Mail window for incoming email. Rather than constantly switching between the apps, you can select a snap layout that makes both apps visible on the desktop. A *snap layout* is a predefined arrangement of two or more app windows.

Arrange Running Apps

1. Position the mouse pointer (↖) over **Maximize** (□) in the upper-right corner of an app you want to arrange.

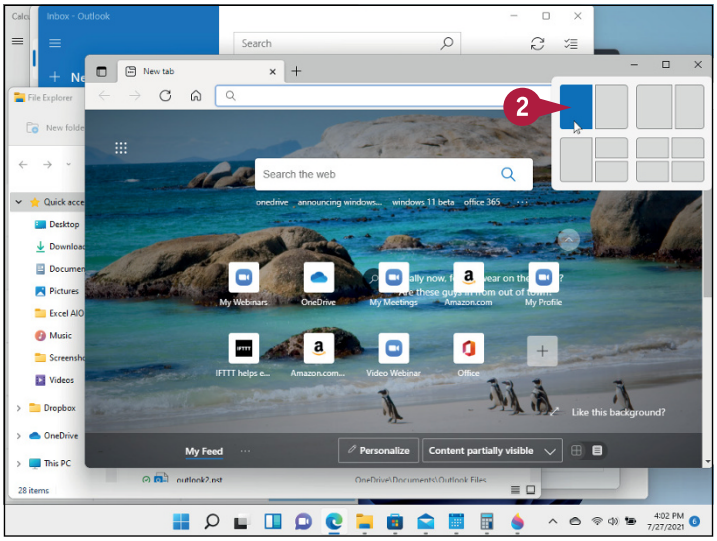
Note: If the app window is already maximized, hover ↖ over **Restore** (❐) instead.



A Windows displays a gallery of snap layouts. In this case, Windows is showing four different layouts. Depending on your screen size, you might see more layouts.

Note: The blank boxes in each layout show you how the app windows will be arranged on the desktop.

2. In the snap layout you want to use, click the box that represents the position you want to use for the current app.



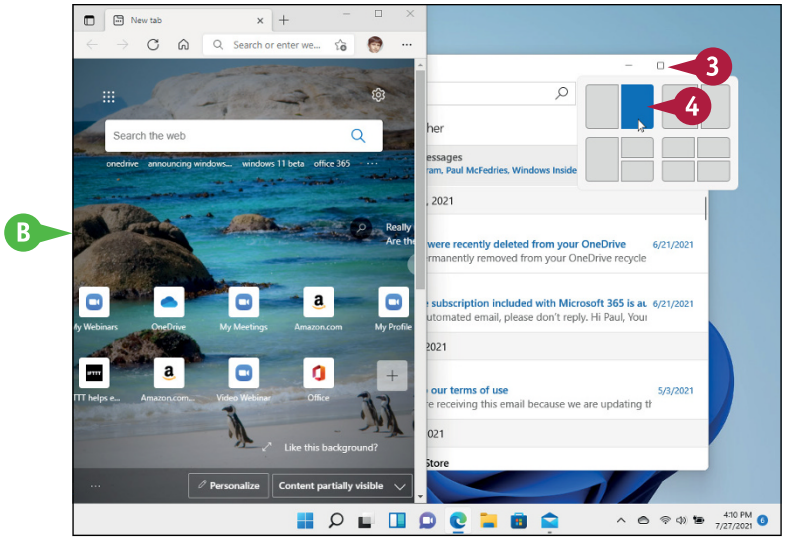
B Windows arranges the app window in the position you specified.

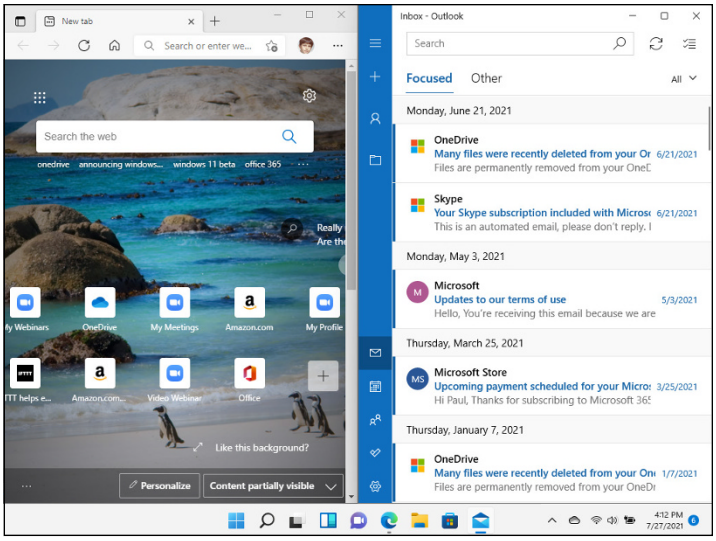
3 Position the mouse pointer (↖) over **Maximize** (□) in the upper-right corner of another app you want to arrange.

Note: If the app window is already maximized, hover the mouse pointer (↖) over **Restore** (❐) instead.

4 In the snap layout you want to use, click the box that represents the position you want to use for the app.

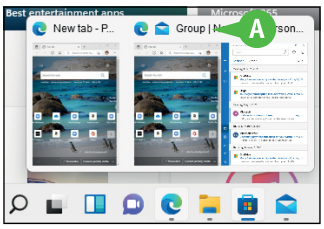
Windows arranges the app windows in the snap layout you selected.





TIP

Is there an easy way to switch to all the apps in an existing snap layout?

Yes. While the snap layout is in place, Windows groups the applications together. If you want to display the apps in that layout all at once, you can select the group.

To select an app layout group, hover the mouse pointer (↖) over the taskbar icon of any app in the snap layout. In the thumbnail windows that appear, click the one labeled **Group** (A).