Windows laptop: System settings

Getting Windows 10 working just the way you like.

The **Windows Settings** menu lets you change lots of things about how Windows 10 works, such as the language it uses, the date and time, screen brightness, Wi-Fi settings, and more.

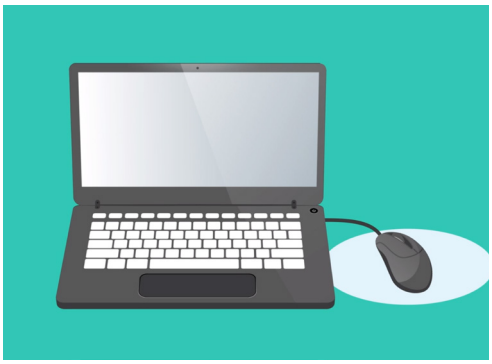
What you will need

Before you begin the course, your computer must have the latest edition of Windows, which is Windows 10. For more information about Windows 10, refer to the *Windows laptop: Security and privacy* guide. You should have the name and password of your home Wi-Fi to hand and, if you're using a mouse, make sure that it's properly connected. You should be signed into your computer, and it should be showing the desktop.

First steps

There are many ways to adjust Windows 10's settings, but the **Windows Settings** menu conveniently gathers them all into one place. To get **Windows Settings** up on the screen:

1. Click on the **Start** button in the bottom left corner of the **Desktop**. The **Start menu** will pop up.
2. On the left of the **Start menu,** find the small cog icon, and click it.
3. The **Windows Settings home panel** opens on the screen.



Windows Settings lets you adjust your computer's language, date, time, screen brightness and more

The **Windows Settings home panel** has various icons that let you access different options, grouped by topic. Click on any icon to explore the settings for that topic.

When you click an icon, **Windows Settings** shows a menu on the left, and options on the right. To get back to the **Windows Settings home panel**, click the **Home** icon in the top left of the screen.

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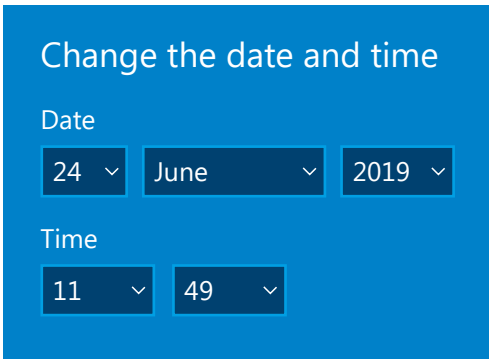
Setting the time and date

On the **Windows Settings** home panel, click on the icon labelled **Time & Language.** The screen will change to show **Date & time** options on the right, and a menu on the left.

To set the time manually:

1. Find the switch under **Set time automatically**, and click it to set it to **Off**. The switch will change from blue to white.
2. Further down, look under **Set the date and time manually** and click the **Change** button.
3. A box pops up showing the current date and time. Click in each of the day, month, and year boxes to select the date by choosing from the list that appears.
4. Click in the hour and minute boxes to select the time.
5. When you're happy with the date and time, click **Change** to set it.



Change the date and time by clicking on each of the boxes

The box will disappear and you'll be back on the **Date & time** options screen.

Setting the time zone

Your computer will also want to know what time zone you live in. To set your time zone:

1. Find the **Set time zone automatically switch** on the **Date & time** options screen. If it's set to **On**, click it to set it to **Off**. The switch will change from blue to white.
2. Look in the box under **Time zone** to see the current time zone your computer is using.
3. If it's not correct, click the box to show a list of time zones. Scroll through the list to find your time zone, and click to set it, and close the list.
4. If you don't know your time zone, just choose your nearest capital city from the list.

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Letting your computer set the date and time

Windows 10 gets the correct date and time from the internet and is good at keeping it adjusted. It will even adjust for daylight savings, so it's best to keep **Set the time automatically** and **Set the time zone automatically** switched on. Click each switch to set from **Off** to **On**. Each switch will turn from white to blue.

Setting your computer's language

You can set the language your computer uses in the menus and other information you see on the screen, as well as to check spelling, such as when you are writing an email.

In the menu on the left of **Windows Settings**, click on **Language.** The **Language** options will show on the right.

The box under **Windows display language** shows the current language your computer uses. It might say **English (Australia)** or **English (United Kingdom).**

To change it to another language:

1. Find the grey square with a plus sign, next to **Add a preferred language**, and click it.
2. A box pops up asking you to **Choose a language to install**. Scroll through the list, or type the language name, to find it in the list.
3. Click the language and then click the **Next** button.
4. In the next box, click **Set as my display language**, to make this the language for your computer. Then click **Install**.

The Language setting determines the language used in computer menus and other information on the screen

The box disappears and you can see the **Language** options again. At the top, the language in the box should now be the name of your new language.

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Checking your region is set to Australia

It's important that your computer knows you are in Australia. This will make sure you get updates and information specifically for Australia, and that the date, time, and calendar formats are Australian. This won't undo the language you just set for your computer.

To check your region is set to Australia:

1. In the menu on the left click **Region,** and the **Region** options will open on the right.
2. Check your **Country or region** is set to Australia, and your **Regional format** is set to **English (Australia)**.
3. If either of these are wrong, click each box to show a list. Scroll through the list of regions to find **Australia,** and through the region formats to find **English (Australia)**. Click to set them.

The Region setting lets the date display in Australian format

To check that your regional format is correct, look through the information under **Regional format data.** You'll see that the time and date are written the Australian way, with the day first and month second.

Changing the volume, and screen brightness

Many computers have special keys on the keyboard to quickly adjust the volume of the speakers, and the brightness of the screen. They are usually on the top row of the keyboard, above the number keys.

To adjust the volume:

1. If your keyboard has volume keys, simply press the volume up key to increase volume, and volume down to decrease it. A small window will pop up on the screen to show the volume changing.
2. If the keyboard doesn't have volume keys, you can adjust the volume with the mouse. In the bottom right of the screen, find the **speaker icon** and click it once.
3. A slider control appears. Use the mouse to slide the button on the control to the right to increase volume, and to the left to decrease it.
4. To quickly mute the speakers, click on the **speaker** next to the slider control. A cross will appear, showing that sound is now muted. To unmute, click the speaker again so the cross disappears.

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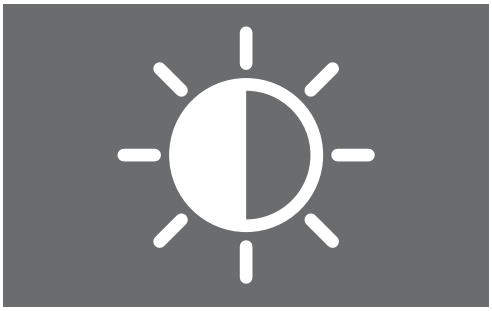
To adjust the screen brightness with the keyboard:

1. Check if your keyboard has screen brightness keys. These usually have a little sun or lightbulb symbol on them.
2. Press the larger lightbulb to increase brightness, and the smaller one to decrease it.

To adjust the screen brightness with the mouse:

You might be able to adjust screen brightness with your mouse. Since the **Windows Settings** menu is still open, click on **Home** in the top left to begin.

1. From the **Windows Settings home panel,** click on **System**.
2. The **System** menu opens and the **Display** options appear. In **Display** options, you might see a slider control with a blue button.
3. Use the mouse to slide the button to the right to increase screen brightness, and to the left to decrease it.
4. If you can't see a slider control at all, it means your computer can't adjust screen brightness using Windows 10.



You can use your keyboard or Windows Settings controls to adjust screen brightness

If this is the case, don't worry! It's just the way your computer is configured.

You'll need to use the controls that are on your monitor. These are usually a set of physical buttons. You can check in the instruction manual that came with your monitor, to find out exactly how they work.

How to check your computer is connected to Wi-Fi

Your computer remembers your home Wi-Fi and connects automatically each time you switch the computer on. To make sure it is connected and can access the internet, you can use the **Network & Internet** options.

If you know for sure your computer is connected, the following steps can help you connect to another Wi-Fi network, such as at your local library, or favourite cafe.

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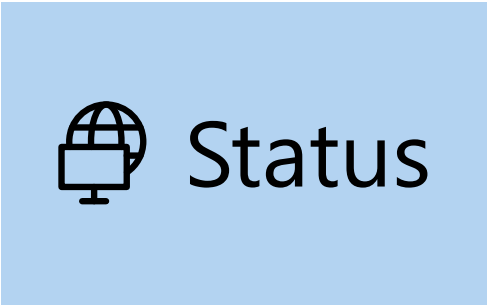
1. First click **Home** in the top left of the **Windows Settings** menu.
2. On the **Windows Settings home panel**, find and click **Network & Internet**. The menu will open and the **Status** options will appear.
3. At the top of the screen, it should say **You're connected to the internet**.
   If it does, you can keep using your computer.
4. If it says **Not connected**, you need to check your home Wi-Fi is switched on, and that you are connected to it.



If the status options are not showing, click status in the menu on the left

How to connect to a Wi-Fi network

In the menu on the left, click **Wi-Fi** to show the **Wi-Fi** options. Right at the top, check the switch is set to **On**, so your computer's Wi-Fi is ready to go.

1. Find and click on **Show available networks**.
2. A box pops up in the bottom right of the screen, showing all the nearby Wi-Fi networks your computer can detect. Even if you are at home, you might see several listed. These can include your neighbours', or nearby public networks.
   If you can see the word **Secured**, it means the network has a password.
3. Find your home Wi-Fi name in the list and click it. Then click **Connect**.
4. **Enter the network security key** in the box. This means your password. Be careful to match all capital letters and numbers. Then click **Next**.
5. The list of networks will disappear, and the **Wi-Fi** options in Windows settings will show your Wi-Fi network name, and the words **Connected, secured**.

If the Wi-Fi icon in the bottom right of the screen shows white curves, you're connected to the internet