An Introduction to Windows 10

Contents

Windows 10

As part of this guide, you will:

- define Windows 10 as an operating system,

- identify the basic layout of the GUI (graphical User Interface) of Windows 10,

- identify the uses of the windows start menu,

- demonstrate how to locate the control panel and how to search for files/applications,

- demonstrate how to locate files and folders.

What is Windows?

Microsoft Windows is an operating system. An operating system is a collection of software that is essential to control your device and ensure it runs as expected. This software includes features such as:

- Interaction from input devices like the mouse or keyboard

- Controlling how to store a variety of file types

- Controlling the output devices connected to the device like the printer or webcam

- Allowing the opening and closing of programs on the device and allocation of memory to allow this to occur

- User security settings

- Allowing multiple programs or actions to be completed at the same time

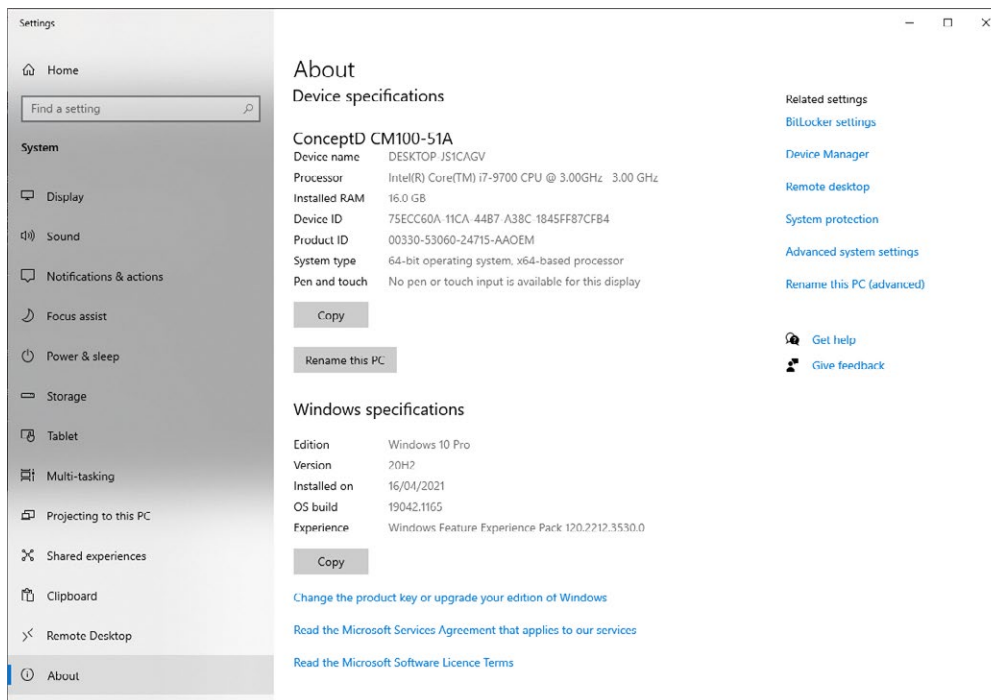- Processing the user instructions as well as any errors generated

Microsoft Windows as an operating system has been around since its first release in 1985. The latest edition, Windows 11, has just been released in October 2021.

You can find out what version you have by following these steps.

- Select Start > Settings > System > About

- Use this link to find more detailed information > click here

Under Windows specifications you can see the **Edition, Version** and **Build.** You can then see on the list of Microsoft versions where your device is within the released versions. This can then help you identify the features you have available.

On the screenshot below the version is 20H2, the first two digits (20) relate to the year of release, 2020. The second two relate to the month released or in this instance H2 means the second half of the year.

Each operating system comes with its own security concerns and as an operating system is released, older versions are retired from Microsoft support. Updating an operating system to ensure continued support is essential to a secure device as older operating systems are not fixed when a vulnerability is identified.
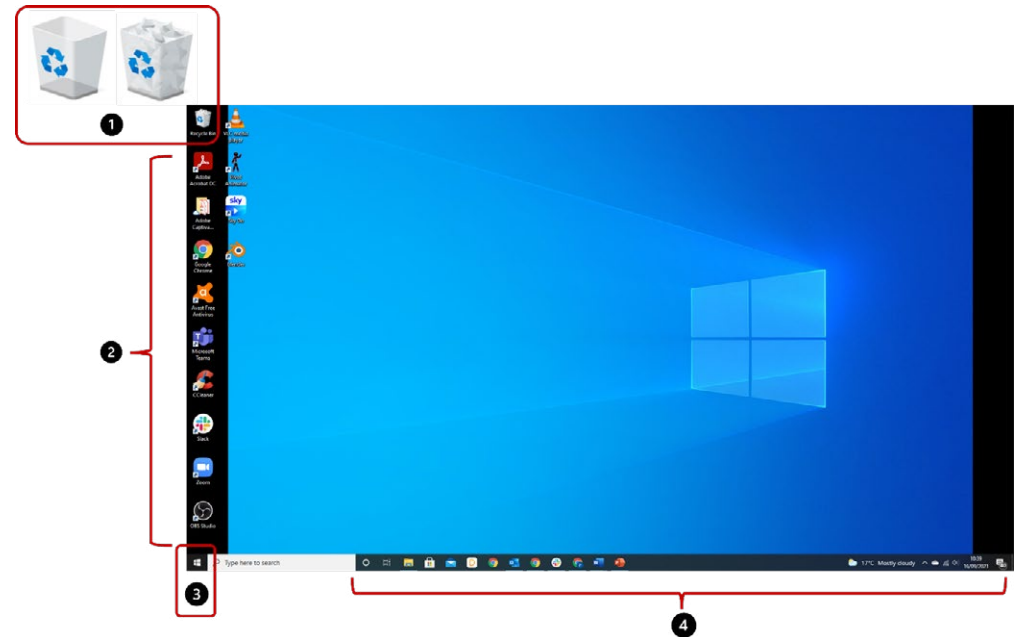

To view a full list of the different versions and builds please click here.

Windows Basics

Within this section we will look at the basics of the Windows Operating System.

When you login to your device the operating system starts, and the user sees the main user area. You can see the following:

1. Recycle bin – deleted files/folders are sent here before you empty it

2. Icons/Shortcuts – these are small thumbnails that can be used as a link to open software/files/folders quickly.

3. Start button – open the main menu system

4. Task Bar

    - Task Bar bottom left – you can see what software you have open and shortcuts to software, similar to desktop icons but always visible at the bottom.
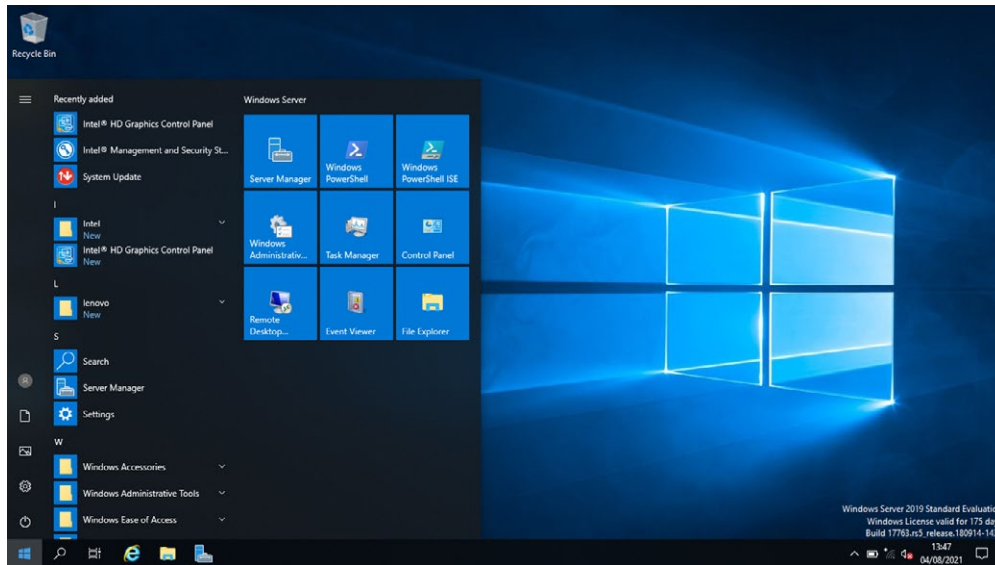   - Task Bar bottom right – notifications, settings, time/date etc

Cyber-Security Fact:
When you drag a file or folder to and empty the recycle bin, you are not completely deleting the original file/folder. You are deleting the pathway to the file/folder for the operating system to follow. The actual file/folder still exists on the hard drive and with the use of recovery software, it can be retrieved.
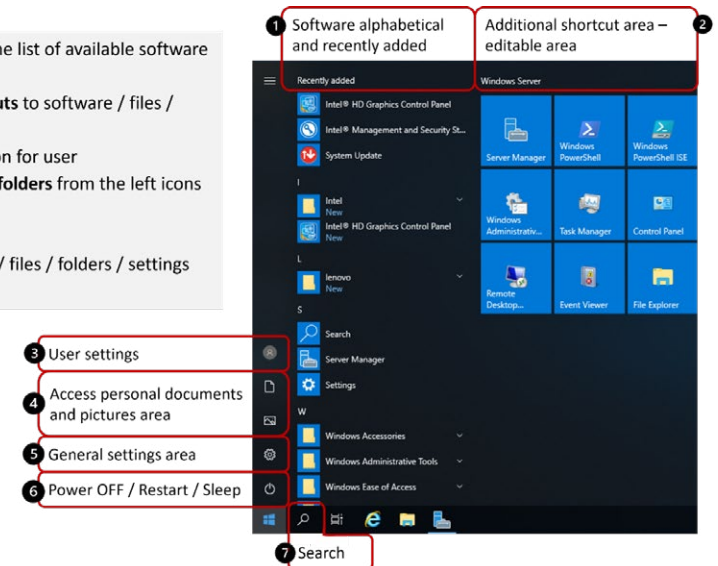
Windows Start Menu

During the changes of the Windows operating systems, there have been different styles applied to this feature. Windows 8 removed the style seen in the screenshot below and instead used a menu that relied on tiles. Windows 8.1 onwards removed this feature and reverted to the more traditional start menu.

When you click on the start button on the bottom left of the screen or the corresponding shortcut on the keyboard, the start menu appears.

1. You can **open software** from the list of available software on the device
2. User generated area of **shortcuts** to software / files / folders
3. Access **user settings** via the icon for user
4. Access **document and picture folders** from the left icons
5. Access the **Settings** area
6. Power OFF / Restart / Sleep
7. Use **Search** to locate software / files / folders / settings etc
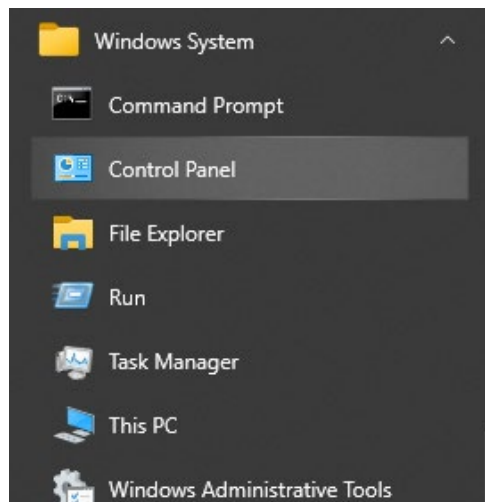
Windows Security Tools

Control Panel

The control panel is the area within the operating system for you to make basic system changes and configurations.

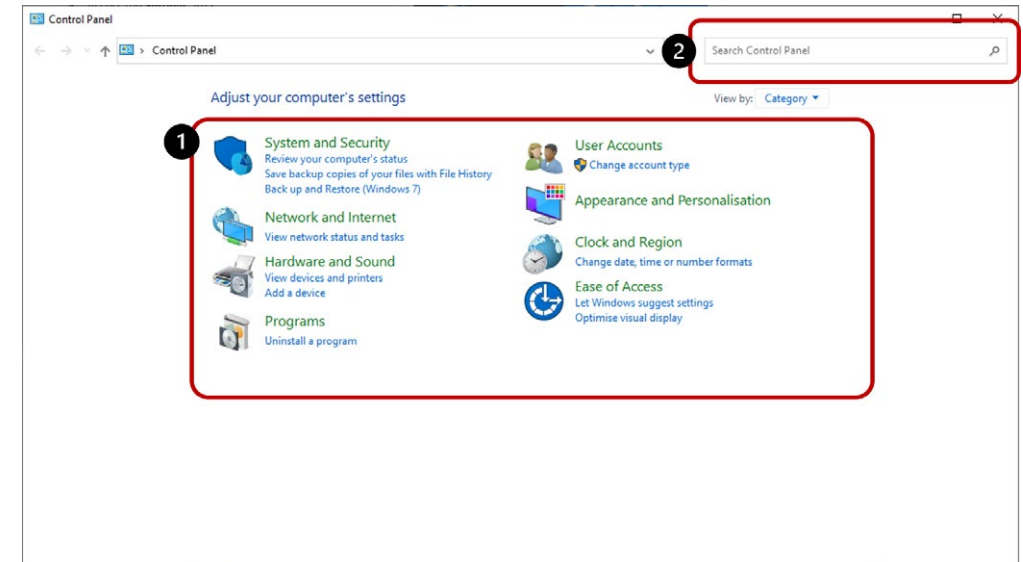The control panel is accessed by:

1. typing **control panel** in the **search** area on the taskbar

2. start menu and under **Windows System** select **Control Panel**
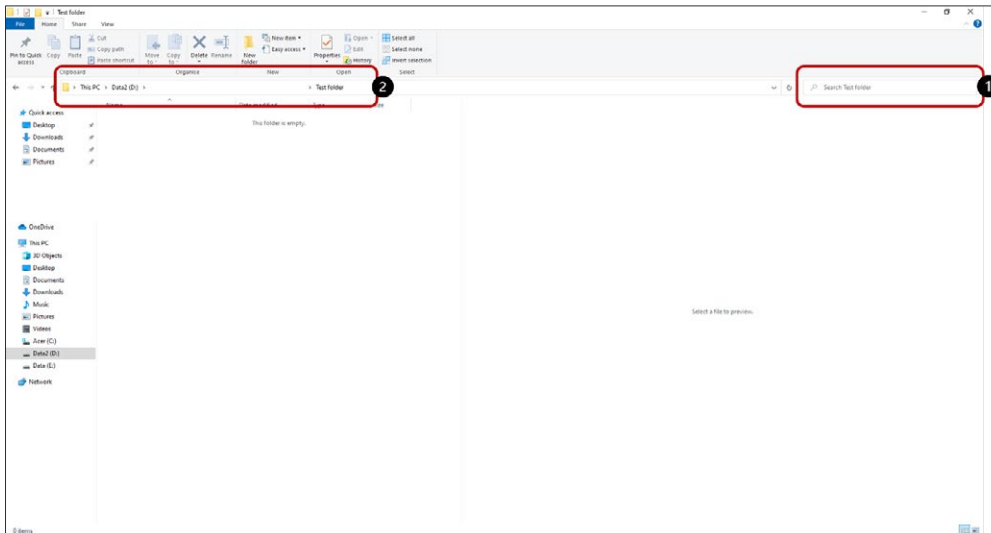

The control panel will open as below:

You can either **(1)** browse the visible menu on the control panel or **(2)** use the search box area to find the specific area.

We will look at these options in the control panel in the additional resources.

File Management

You can search for files within the **File Explorer** view.

The file directory you are in (2) defines where the search will take place as you can see in the image below, the folder I am in is labelled in the search section (1). To search the whole area, ensure you have selected the drive to search i.e. D Drive etc

Useful Resources

10 tips to protect your files on your PC and in the Cloud

https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/business-insights-ideas/resources/10-tips-to-protect-your-files-on-pc-and-the-cloud

What's changed in File Explorer

https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/windows/find-and-open-file-explorer-ef370130-1cca-9dc5-e0df-2f7416fe1cb1

10 Tricks for Managing Your Files With Windows 10's File Explorer

https://uk.pcmag.com/migrated-3765-windows-10/132908/10-tricks-for-managing-your-files-with-windows-10s-file-explorer

National Cyber Security Centre - Device Security Guidance

https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/device-security-guidance/platform-guides/windows