

# STARTING OFF WITH WINDOWS 8.1

An **operating system** provides a range of tools, programs and resources that help you and your computer to work together. It provides the **interface** between what your computer can do and your data.

Betting heavily on a huge increase in the use of touch devices, Microsoft released **Windows 8** in October 2012. This introduced a brand new approach to Windows which brought touch to the forefront, rather than the more traditional mouse/keyboard combination.

However, responding to vastly negative customer feedback, Microsoft released **Windows 8.1** less than a year later which enables users to easily navigate and use the interface regardless of whether they're using a touch or mouse device.

## In this session you will:

- ✓ gain an understanding of the some of the new features in **Windows 8.1**
- ✓ learn how to turn on the computer
- ✓ learn how to sign in to **Windows**
- ✓ gain an understanding of the desktop in **Windows**
- ✓ gain an understanding of the **Start Screen**
- ✓ gain an understanding of the **Apps View**
- ✓ gain an understanding of the taskbar
- ✓ gain an understanding of the **App Switcher**
- ✓ gain an understanding of **App Bars**
- ✓ gain an understanding of the **Charms Bar**
- ✓ gain an understanding of **Windows Store Apps**
- ✓ learn how to display key user interface elements
- ✓ learn how to put your computer to sleep
- ✓ learn how to shut down your computer.

# WHAT IS WINDOWS?

Windows is an **operating system** that provides an intuitive, secure interface for you and your computer. If you purchase a new PC, it will have Windows 8.1 installed. Compared to earlier

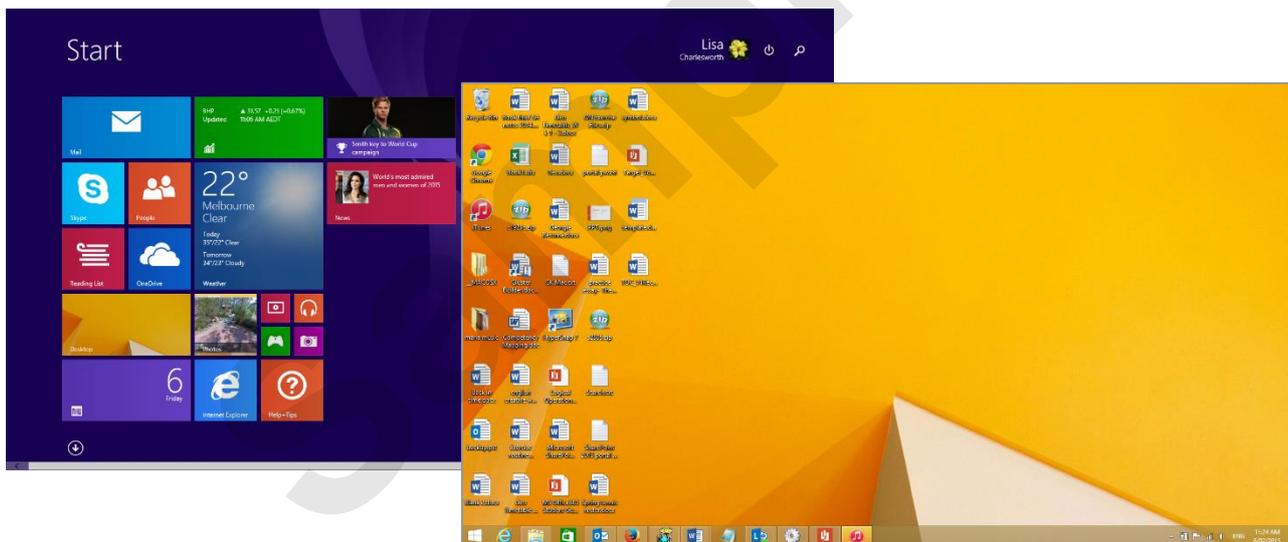
versions, Windows 8.1 provides not only new tools to help you easily manage your files, devices and information sharing, but it also comes complete with a new touch-friendly Start screen and apps.

## User Interfaces: Start screen and the Desktop

For those of you who have been using computers for a while, the new brightly coloured Windows 8.1 user interface, known as the **Start** screen (as shown below to the left), may come as a bit of a shock. Microsoft took a different approach when it designed Windows 8 (and now 8.1) compared to its previous operating systems. Instead of designing it for a desktop or laptop – which are predominantly controlled by a mouse – Windows 8 was designed primarily for a touchscreen, resulting in the big 'tappable' tiles seen on the **Start** screen. These tiles are used to access programs (like Microsoft Word) and Windows 8 apps.

One of the default tiles on the **Start** screen provides access to the traditional **Desktop** user interface (as shown below to the right) which users of previous versions of Windows will recognise. Here you can create shortcuts to and access desktop programs.

You can determine user interface will display when you start your computer. However, by default, touch devices, such as a tablet, will boot up to the **Start** screen, while desktop computers or laptops that are designed for mouse and keyboard use will boot up to the **Desktop** user interface.



## Better backup and restore facilities

The new **File History** enables you to automatically back up versions of your personal, desktop and offline OneDrive files, creating a complete history of your files over time. You can also easily restore an older version of a file (even if it wasn't deleted or corrupted) from the **File History** drive.

## Search facilities

Searching has never been easier. Fast, universal search is available on the **Start** screen. Simply press the **Windows** key  from any screen and begin typing. Search will automatically find local files, OneDrive files, apps, programs, settings and relevant internet search results.

## Security

Windows 8.1 has improved data security by enabling **BitLocker** drive encryption by default. BitLocker is a program that can help protect your files and folders from unauthorised access by encrypting your drives. To turn on BitLocker, display the **Control panel**, search on **BitLocker**, then click on **manage BitLocker**.

Windows 8.1 also includes **Secure Boot**. **Secure Boot** is a security standard designed to ensure that your PC boots using only software that is trusted by the PC manufacturer, rather than rogue malware.

## Internet Explorer 11

Windows 8.1 provides **Internet Explorer 11** to help you surf the web more easily and securely.

# TURNING ON THE COMPUTER

A computer is effectively an electronic device full of plastic, metals and other innate materials. It really is just a lump of mechanical bits and pieces sitting in your lap or on your desk. The computer

only starts working for you when the power is switched on – and this, if it hasn't already been done, is the first thing you need to do.

## Try This Yourself:

- 1 Check whether the power to the computer is already switched on – if there is nothing presently on the screen, move the mouse or press a key on the keyboard

*Sometimes computers are placed in sleep or hibernation mode, where they remain switched on but many of their components are shut down to save power. When you move the mouse or press a keyboard key, a computer in sleep or hibernation mode often resumes normal operation in a matter of seconds...*

- 2 If the computer does not respond, look for the **power switch**

*The power switch could be anywhere – on the top, at the front, on the side. It could be square, round or oval in shape. But all power switches today have the power icon  either on or near them...*

- 3 Press the power switch and wait while the computer turns on and begins its warm-up routines

*The lock screen will display*

2



*Trivia: The power on icon displayed here is an ANSI or ISO worldwide standard. The straight line indicates that power is on, while the circle indicates that power is off.*

*The circle is broken to indicate that the device can also be in standby mode – such as hibernation for computers and for use with remotes in other devices such as television sets and stereo systems. A closed circle (which is very rare) indicates that the power will go completely off.*

3

When you switch the power on, the computer will:

- perform a self-diagnostic routine known as the power-on self test (POST)
- look for the operating system on one of the drives (beginning with drive A: and progressing through until it locates it, usually on drive C:)
- start the operating system
- possibly display a prompt requiring you to press three keys simultaneously – usually  +  + 
- possibly display the sign-in screen so that you can sign in to Windows and commence to use the computer.

## For Your Reference...

To **turn a computer on**:

1. If the screen is blank press a key to ensure it is not just in sleep or hibernation mode, or  
Locate and press the power button

## Handy to Know...

- If nothing happens when the power button is pressed, chances are the computer is not plugged into an electrical power point or the power point is switched off. Check these before calling for further help.

# SIGNING IN TO WINDOWS

Once the computer has completed its **power-on self test (POST)** it will pause, waiting for you to press a key or a sequence of keys. Once you have done this you will be required to sign in to

Windows by specifying a **user name** or **email address** and a **password**. The sign-in process identifies you as a valid user and also, if connected, provides you with access to the computer network.

## Try This Yourself:

*Before starting this exercise ensure that the computer is switched on and the lock or sign-in screen is displayed...*

- 1 If the prompt **Press Ctrl + Alt + Delete to sign in** appears on the lock screen, press **Ctrl** + **Alt** + **Del**; otherwise, press any key

*One or more users will display on the screen...*

- 2 If only one user displays on the screen, go to step 3. Otherwise, click on the desired **user name** or click on **Other user**

*If you have clicked on your user name you will be prompted for the password that provides access to your computer. If you have clicked on Other user, you will be prompted for a valid user name or email address and password...*

- 3 Type a valid **user name** or **email address** (if required) and the valid **password** associated with it and press **Enter** to sign in

*If you are using a traditional PC designed for use with a mouse and keyboard, the desktop will be displayed by default. However, if you're using a touch device or you've changed the default settings, the Start screen will be displayed by default*

- 1 The **Ctrl + Alt + Delete** operation to progress to the sign-in screen has been in operation virtually since the first days of personal computing. It is a rather bizarre combination of keystrokes but has now become an accepted part of the start-up routine.

*This combination of keys can also be used after the computer has started to access a special program known as the **Task Manager** which can help you to recover from computer problems.*

- 2 The **user name** or **email address** is used to identify you on your computer.

*Multiple people can securely share a single computer as long as each person is given a user name. In this situation, the computer will store each user's computing preferences such as the colour of the screen, their favourite programs, and other special configurations.*

*If the computer is connected to a network the user name, in addition to recognising you on the computer, also identifies you to the network. Here the user name becomes part of your profile and is used to provide you with access to the parts of the network that you are permitted to use.*

*It may also be used to provide you with access to key company resources such as the email system and the internet.*

## For Your Reference...

To **sign into Windows**:

1. After switching on your computer, press any key or press **Ctrl** + **Alt** + **Del** if prompted
2. If necessary, click on your user name or **Other user**
3. Type your **user name** or **email address** (if required) and the **password**

## Handy to Know...

- User names and passwords are usually set up by the system administrator in your company. Rather than having a **local account** which requires you to sign in using a user name, you might have a **Microsoft account** that lets you sign in to Windows using an email address and password.

# THE DESKTOP

The Windows 8.1 user interface (with its **Start** screen, tiles, charms, hot corners, Windows Store apps, etc.) is very different to the previous Windows 7 **desktop** interface. But, regardless of

its new appearance and functionality, Windows 8.1 has retained the desktop as a separate interface with its own elements (except the taskbar which appears in both interfaces) as described here.



- 1 **Icons** appear on the desktop. Icons provide shortcut access to programs and documents on your computer. Shortcuts to programs installed on your computer include a launch icon . Our example above shows only the default **Recycle Bin** and **Google Chrome** icons.
- 2 The **desktop** is the background upon which shortcuts to start desktop programs and open specific documents can be placed. The desktop can be customised to appear in different colours, with different images and even with pictures from your digital camera.
- 3 By default, the **taskbar** includes the **Windows** icon (providing you quick access to the **Start** screen) and shortcuts to **Windows Explorer**, **File Explorer**, **Google Chrome** and the **Windows Store**. Users can *pin* (add) program and Windows Store app icons to the taskbar, enabling quick access to frequently-used programs and apps. Additional icons will display for all open (running) programs and apps. If you have several files open in a specific program, clicking on its taskbar program icon will display a **jump list** (a thumbnail list of files open in that program) allowing you to click on and display a specific file in the list.

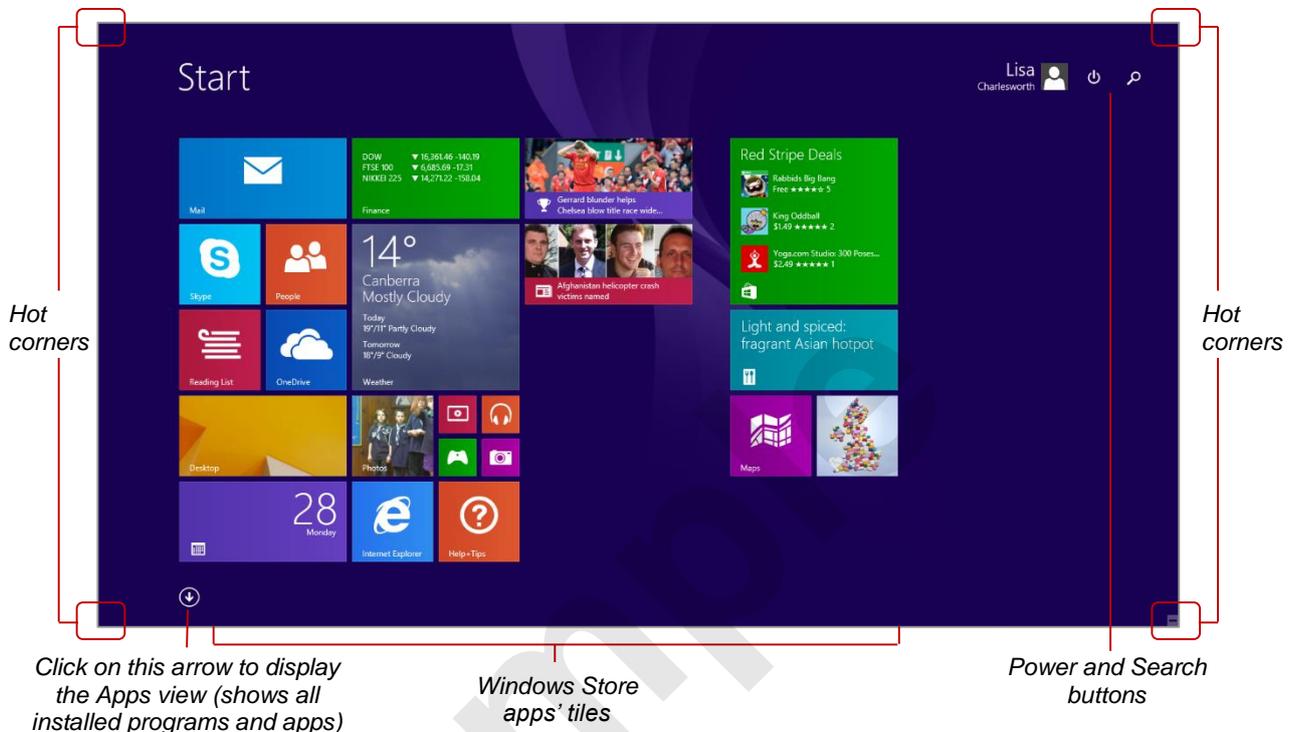
Note: You can also display the taskbar at the bottom of the **Start** screen and all Windows Store apps by moving the mouse pointer to the bottom of the screen.

- 4 The **notification** area displays icons that provide information about your computer and programs that are running in the background (such as anti-virus software). The notification area will also notify you when changes have occurred to your computer (such as new hardware installed).
- 5 If you click on the very right end of the taskbar (the blank area to the right of the system time and date), all open windows (or Windows Store app if one is currently open) will minimise allowing you to see the desktop. When you click on this blank area again, all windows will be restored to their original size and locations. This area of the taskbar is known as the **Show Desktop** button.

# THE START SCREEN

The **Start** screen, which replaces the **Start** menu in previous versions of Windows, enables you to open Windows Store apps and desktop programs and provides quick access to **Power** and **Search**

buttons. If you're using a touch device, the **Start** screen will display by default when you sign into Windows. However, if you're using a traditional PC, you'll need to navigate to this screen regularly.



## Tiles

The **Start** screen appears with a grid of colourful **tiles** that provide access to key **Windows Store apps** installed on your computer, and any **desktop programs** (such as Microsoft Word) that you have pinned there. Note: **Windows Store apps** (new to Windows 8) are the apps that you buy or download for free from the Windows **Store** which is accessed via its own tile on the **Start** screen or icon in the taskbar.

By default, numerous Windows Store apps are installed with Windows 8.1. The tiles representing some of these apps appear on the **Start** screen either with a logo and title on a colourful background or with **live** content (such as the **News** and **Sport** apps as shown in the centre of the screen above).

Tiles do not display by default for **desktop programs**, such as Microsoft Excel, that are installed on your computer. However, you can pin desktop programs (and Windows Store apps) as tiles on the **Start** screen from the **Apps** view which is accessed by clicking on the white down arrow icon in the bottom left corner of the **Start** screen. Desktop programs' tiles appear by default as plain, coloured tiles to the right of the Windows Store apps' tiles.

You can access the **desktop** from the **Start** screen by clicking on the **Desktop** tile (shown above as the second bottom large tile) or by pressing the **Windows Icon**  key on your keyboard. The **Windows Icon**  key is usually located to the left of the spacebar.

## Hot Corners

A **hot corner** is an area of the interface (in this case each of the four corners of the screen) that will trigger a system action when you hover over it. In all areas of Windows (i.e. using both Windows apps and desktop programs) pointing to the hot corners will open either the **App Switcher** or the **Charms bar**. (Note: these are described in more detail later in this chapter.)

In Windows 8.1, the left-hand hot corners will display the **App Switcher** which shows thumbnails of all open applications, enabling you to quickly switch between them. The bottom left-hand corner also displays the **Start** button which enables you to quickly switch between the desktop and the **Start** screen.

The right-hand hot corners will display the **Charms bar** which provides access to the **Search**, **Share**, **Start**, **Devices** and **Settings** charms (or functions).

# THE APPS VIEW

Every desktop program and Windows Store app installed on your computer is listed on the **Apps** view. By default, you can access the **Apps** view from the **Start** screen by clicking on the white

arrow that appears in the bottom left corner when you move your mouse. From the **Apps** view, you can start any program or app by clicking on its icon or name.



## Apps View

Every program and app installed on your computer is listed in the **Apps** view. By default, the **Apps** view is sorted alphabetically by name. However, you can also sort the apps by the date when each app was installed, frequency of use, and category by clicking on the arrow to the right of the **Apps** heading at the top of the view and selecting the desired option.

If you have a large number of apps and programs listed in the **Apps** view, you can display them all on the one screen by clicking on the **Semantic Zoom** tool in the bottom right corner of the screen. Clicking on the tool toggles back to the normal view. Alternatively, you can use the **Search** box in the top right corner of the screen to locate a desired app.

As you install additional programs or download new apps from the Windows Store, they will be added to the **Apps** view. From here, you can pin them to the **Start** screen or the taskbar, if desired, to provide you with quick access to them.

## Displaying The Apps View Instead Of The Start Screen

If you always open apps and programs from the **Apps** view, the following procedure will save you time. Rather than displaying the **Start** screen and then having to open the **Apps** view from there, you can choose to automatically open the **Apps** view whenever you click on the **Start** icon in the taskbar or press the **Windows Icon**  key (these functions normally display the **Start** screen). To alter this setting:

1. Press  to display the **Start** screen
2. Type **taskbar and navigation** to display the **Search** bar, then click on **Taskbar and Navigation** in the search results to display the **Taskbar and Navigation properties** dialog box
3. Click on the **Navigation** tab
4. Click on **Show the Apps view automatically when I go to Start**, then click on **[OK]**

# THE TASKBAR

The **taskbar** is the bar that appears at the bottom of the screen. It is always visible in desktop programs, but it only appears in the **Start** screen and Windows Store apps if you are using a

device designed to be used with a mouse and you point to the bottom of the screen. The taskbar has several functions but its main one is to let you switch to any open desktop program or Store app.



- 1 Taskbar** While all three areas make up the **taskbar**, the left-hand end is most often referred to as the taskbar as this is where all your **tasks** (open programs/apps and files) are displayed. Each open program/app is represented by a highlighted **icon** in the taskbar (such as the **Word** icon above). Other, non-highlighted icons may appear in this area of the taskbar and they show the desktop programs (such as **Internet Explorer** and **File Explorer**) and apps (such as **Store**) that have been pinned to the taskbar. This means that these icons appear permanently on the taskbar (whether or not they are open) until you unpin them. The **Start** icon, shown to the left of the taskbar, provides immediate access to the **Start** screen.
- 2 Notification area** The **notification** area displays icons that represent programs or services that are installed on your computer. You can point your mouse to any of the icons to see a description of what they do. Click on any of them to open a panel that displays their settings or a menu of options.
- 3 Show Desktop tool** The **Show Desktop** tool comprises the small, blank area at the very right end of the taskbar. It doesn't actually appear as a tool as it did in Windows 7. Clicking on this area of the taskbar will minimise all open windows and apps allowing you to see the desktop.

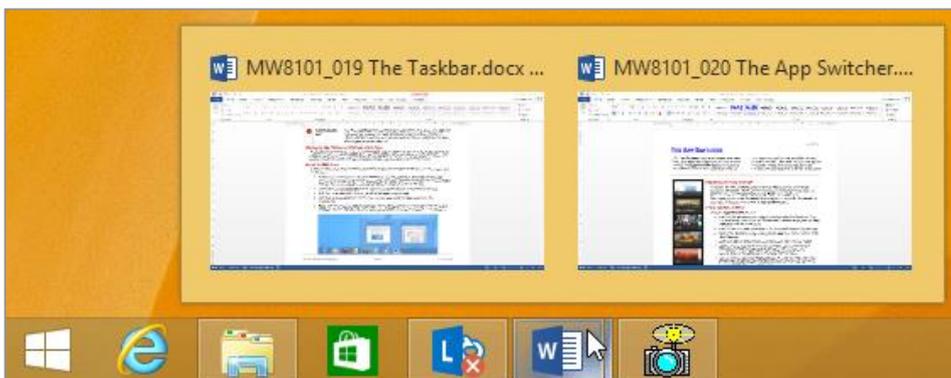
## Displaying The Taskbar In Windows Store Apps

To display the taskbar at the bottom of the **Start** screen, **Apps** view or a Windows Store app, quickly drag your mouse pointer down to an imaginary area beneath the bottom of the screen. The taskbar will remain visible until you move your mouse off the taskbar.

## About Taskbar Icons

Taskbar icons will do different things depending on whether you point to the icon, or left- or right-click on the icon.

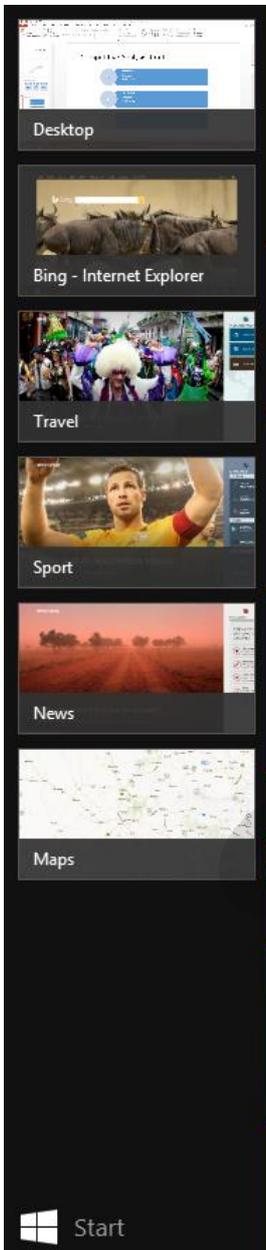
- Point to the icon to reveal a list of thumbnails of currently open files within that program (as shown below) or the name of a program/app if it is closed. Pointing to the built-in **Music** or **Video** app will allow you to pause or play the file without having to switch to the app.
- Left-click on an unhighlighted icon to open that program or Windows Store app.
- Left-click on a highlighted icon to switch to that open program or Windows Store app.
- Left-click on the highlighted icon for the currently open program/app to minimise the program/app.
- Right-click on an icon to reveal a list (also called a **jump list**) of most recently-used files in that program. This list also lets you either pin or unpin icons in the taskbar and close the window/app.



# THE APP SWITCHER

The **App Switcher** helps you navigate and work with open apps, especially if you're using a touch device. The **App Switcher** displays in a panel to the left of the screen. It includes thumbnails of

open apps (except if you have multiple desktop programs running where only the last used appears in a single desktop thumbnail), with the most recently-used app displayed at the top of the panel.



## Displaying The App Switcher

To display the **App Switcher** point to one of the **left** hot corners. Pointing to the top left corner will display the app that you were just using. Pointing to the bottom left corner will display the **Start** icon.

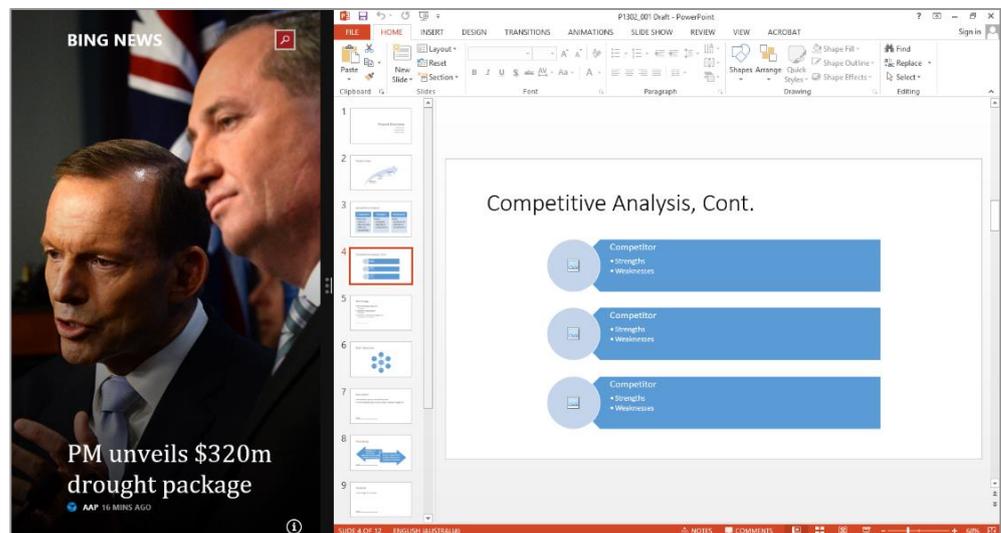
After displaying the thumbnail or icon, drag either straight down or up and the thumbnails of open apps will appear in the narrow **App Switcher** pane, as shown here to the left.

## Using The App Switcher

Using the **App Switcher** you can:

- switch to the previously-used app by clicking on the top thumbnail. You can also simply click on the top left hot corner without displaying the **App Switcher** to do the same thing.
- switch to an open app by clicking on the thumbnail representing the app.
- display the **Start** screen by clicking on the **Start** icon at the bottom of the **App Switcher**. You can also simply click on the bottom left hot corner without displaying the **App Switcher** to do the same thing.
- close any app by right-clicking on its thumbnail and selecting **Close**.
- display a menu that lets you launch common system-management functions like the **Control Panel**, **Run** dialog box and so on by right-clicking on the **Start** icon in the lower, left hot corner.
- right-click on an app in the **App Switcher** and select **Insert Left**, **Insert Centre** or **Insert Right** to display up to three apps side-by-side. For example, the **News** app and PowerPoint are shown side-by-side below.

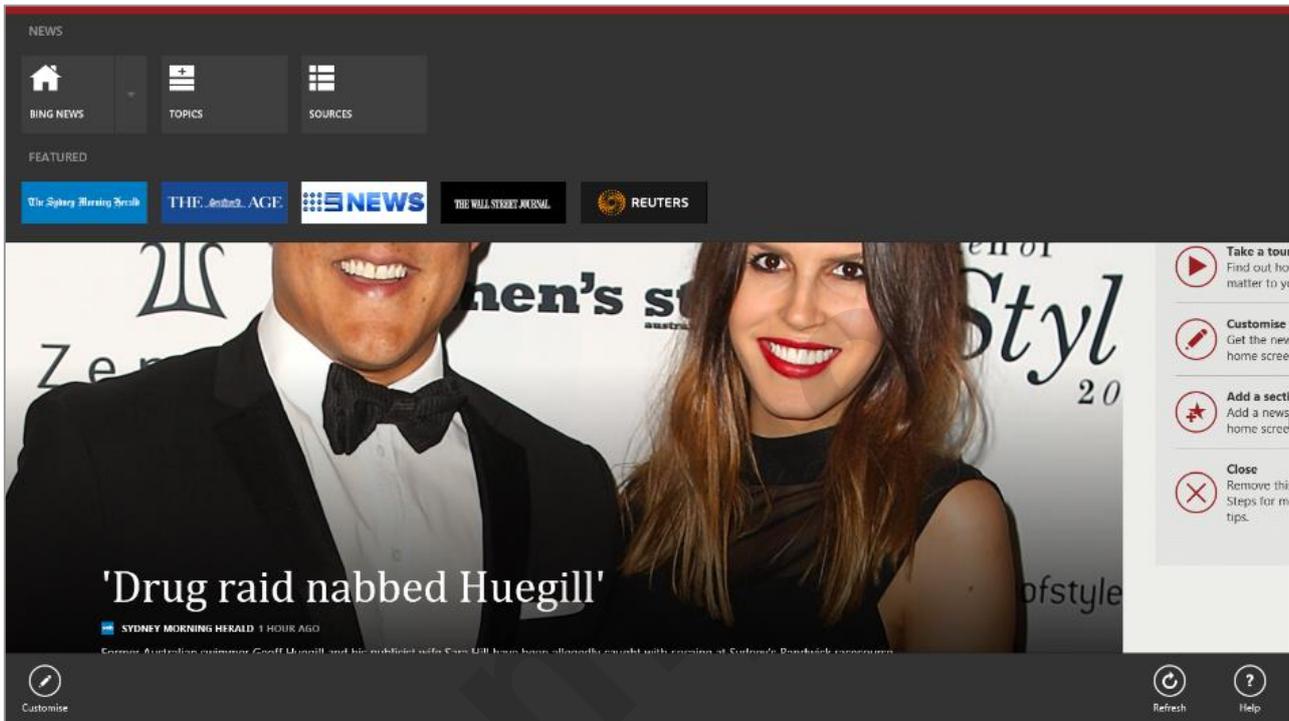
Note: If you are using a computer with a mouse, you will probably find it easier to use the **taskbar** rather than the **App Switcher** to switch from a Windows Store app or the **Start** screen to a desktop program. This will be particularly the case if you have several desktop programs open as only the most recently used desktop program appears as a thumbnail in the **App Switcher**.



# APP BARS

**App bars** are context-sensitive menus of options that display in a panel across the top and/or bottom of the screen when you right-click in a Windows Store app. Rather than displaying **App**

bars when you right-click in a desktop program, Microsoft has retained the traditional context-sensitive shortcut menus from earlier versions of Windows.



## Displaying The App Bar

Right-click anywhere in a Windows Store app to display one or more **App** bars along the top and/or bottom of the screen.

## Using The App Bar

Using an **App** bar you can access all relevant commands for the open Windows Store app. For example, with the **News** app, as shown above, you can quickly select to read a different story by choosing from a different **Source**. Notice that the **News** app has two **App** bars: one at the top of the screen and one at the bottom.

# THE CHARMS BAR

The **Charms bar** appears by default on the right side of the screen when you point to either the top or lower right hot corner and then move the mouse towards the **charms** (icons). The **Charms**

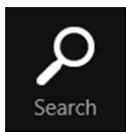
**bar** comprises five charms: **Search**, **Share**, **Start**, **Devices** and **Settings**. What you can do with the charms will depend on where you are: on the **Start** screen, using a desktop program, and so on.

## Displaying The Charms Bar

To display the **Charms bar** point and hold momentarily to one of the two **right** hot corners – the five charms will appear along the right side of the screen as white outlines. Move the mouse pointer towards the charms and the black **Charms bar** containing the charms and their titles will paint onto the screen.

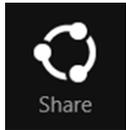
If you don't move the mouse within two to three seconds after pointing to a right hot corner, the charm outlines will disappear as Windows assumes that you didn't actually want to trigger the **Charms bar**. For example, you may have moved the mouse to the screen corner to scroll or close a window.

## Using The Charms



### Search

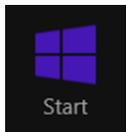
Whether you want to find a file, a program or app, an email message or a specific photograph, you can search for it wherever you are using the **Search** charm. The **Search** pane will open on the right side of the screen and you simply begin to type what you are searching for. A list of matches will be displayed.



### Share

A variety of the new Windows Store apps let you use the **Share** charm to share files and information with people you know or send information to another app without leaving the app that you're in. For example, you can email a photo to a friend or send the same photo from a viewer to an image editing app, update your Facebook status, send a link to your note-taking app, copy a figure from a web page into a calculator, and more.

You can use the **Share** charm to email a screenshot of your currently displayed screen from desktop programs.



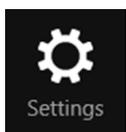
### Start

Click on this charm to display your **Start** screen or, if you're already on the **Start** screen, use this charm to switch back to the last app or program that you were in.



### Devices

This charm lets you use all of the devices that are connected to your computer, both wired and wirelessly. For example, you can print from an app, sync with your phone, or stream your latest home movie to your TV.



### Settings

Using this charm you can change the settings for your apps and PC. At the top of this panel you will see various **Settings** categories, help and information relevant to the app you are in. If you open this charm while using a desktop program, you'll see the settings **Control Panel**, **Personalisation**, **PC Info** and **Help**.

At the bottom of this panel you will see six common PC settings – network connection, volume, brightness, notifications, power and keyboard. These PC settings are the same no matter where you are in Windows, but the app settings at the top of the panel are different in every app or program.

You can also change settings for your PC when you click on **Change PC settings** at the very bottom of the panel. This is where you can change your lock screen picture, manage notifications and more.

# WINDOWS STORE APPS

Windows 8 introduced new apps designed to run in the new user interface. These apps are known as **Windows Store apps**. The default installation of Windows 8.1 includes various built-in apps and

some of these appear as tiles on the **Start** screen. However, by opening the Windows **Store** via the **Start** screen, **Apps** view or taskbar, you can download thousands of additional apps.

## Built-in Apps

The default **Start** screen includes numerous tiles. Many of these tiles are brightly coloured or include live content (such as **Photos**, **News** or **Weather**) if their **Live Tile** feature has been turned on, and may be small, medium, wide or large (as you can see in the table below). These tiles link to Windows Store apps. The smaller, plain blue tiles (if any are present) link to desktop programs, such as Microsoft Excel, which have been pinned on the **Start** screen.

Here's a quick overview of some of the preinstalled Windows Store apps.



### Mail

You can get email from your accounts including Outlook, Gmail and Yahoo!



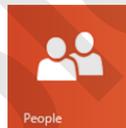
### Skype

Lets you use Skype to chat and make free audio and video calls. Messenger (Windows 8) has now moved to Skype.



### Calendar

Aggregates calendar feeds from multiple accounts such as Hotmail, Outlook and Google.



### People

Lets you aggregate contact lists from a number of services. You can also get updates from your Twitter and Facebook feeds. You can respond to individual messages, but you can't post global updates to Facebook or Twitter.



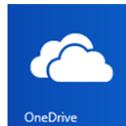
### News

You can customise your news and even pick individual topics.



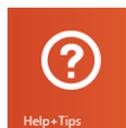
### Weather

You can see daily and hourly weather forecasts for any location you choose.



### OneDrive

Lets you work with your OneDrive content.



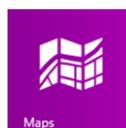
### Help + Tips

Displays Help information and links to additional online help topics.



### Store

The Windows **Store** has thousands of apps, both free and pay-for that you can download once you have logged in with your Microsoft account.



### Maps

You can display a map, change its style from road to aerial view and get directions.



### Video

Lets you browse and watch movies and shows. You can watch them on your PC or play to your TV.



### Photos

This tile shuffles through your images whether they're on Facebook, OneDrive or another PC.



### Music

Lets you download and listen to free streaming music (as well as play your own) and share your playlists.



### Internet Explorer

You can launch **Internet Explorer 11** by clicking on its tile.



### Games

Let's you download and play games.