

You've Got The Power Master: Windows Power Options

QUICK TIPS: Michael Lasky

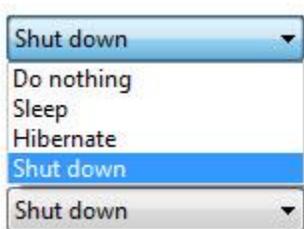
Faster boot times and power downs are yours -- and all you have to do is open the **Control Panel System and Security** menu, then configure the **Power Options** settings. Let's look at them one by one.

Turn off your PC with touch of a button, not a bunch of clicks

Pop quiz: How many clicks does it take for you to shut down Windows?

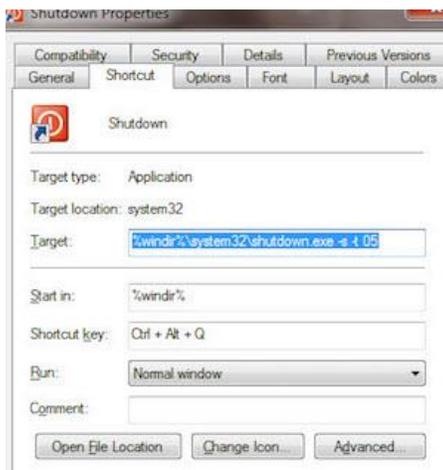
If it is any more than one, that's a waste of clicks – and your time. Whether your PC is a desktop or a laptop, Windows Shutdown default has always been a multi-click affair. In Windows 7, you had to open the Start menu by either mouse click or pressing the Windows key on your keyboard. Then you have to click the **Shutdown** button. In Windows 8 to 10, it is a three click *Cha-Cha-Cha*: click or press **Start**, click **Power**, click **Shutdown**. There are a couple of ways you can optimize your computer, no matter what the version of Windows, by changing the Power settings with **Power Options**. With a laptop, type **lid** in the Start search bar. On a desktop PC, type **power but** in the Start search bar and select *Change what the power buttons do*. In each case you will get customizable drop down menus for various power plans. By selecting **When I press power button** and selecting **Shutdown**, you can now power off by just pressing the power button on your computer. In other words, the power button is now like an on/off switch.

You will notice the other options are Sleep, Hibernate, and Do nothing.



Make your selection for each functions you want. But knowing the difference between Sleep and Hibernate can further make starting and pausing sessions time savers. By default Microsoft hides the Hibernate command in Windows 10. It will appear as a greyed out selection. But depending on the configuration of your particular system, you can activate it. I will explain just how in the Sleep versus Hibernate section below.

Power down on your desktop



This may seem a tad geeky, but it sure is convenient: I keep a Shutdown shortcut on my desktop. Using tried and true DOS commands, you can create one for yourself in a minute or less.

The command: `%windir%\system32\shutdown.exe -s -t 05`

The section `%windir%\system32` directs Windows to the directory where the shutdown command activates. The extension `-s` signals a full shutdown. The extension `-t` is for a timed shutdown followed by the number of seconds (in this case five seconds) before shutdown begins. This is handy in case you click on the shortcut accidentally and want to stop it from completing.

To create this handy shortcut, right-click on the Desktop, then select **New*Shortcut**. On the following window, cut and paste the command above, changing the number of seconds to meet your needs. Click Next,

then name the shortcut, the default, `shutdown.exe`, will appear but you can change it if you want, click Okay. Right-click the icon that appears on the Desktop, select **Properties**, then click **Change icon** and choose an icon from the window that pops up and click Apply or Okay. Move the icon to your preferred location on the Desktop.

How Sleep and Hibernate can wake your PC quickly

First of all, let's explain the difference between sleep and hibernate. Sleep combines power saving and quick re-starts. When Sleep is activated either from the Start menu, the Power button, closing a laptop lid, or from a key on some keyboards, all actions on the computer stop. Any open document or application are placed in RAM while the computer goes to "sleep."

Sleep is particularly convenient when you need to stop working for short periods of time. How much time Sleep lasts is determined by the amount of time you select from that Power Options menu noted previously. If that time reaches the set limit, the PC shuts down. Because documents and open applications were merely stored in memory, when the computer wakes up, it does so quickly, not the plodding way of a cold reboot.

Hibernate mode is like Sleep but instead of saving docs and apps to RAM like Sleep does, it saves them to your hard disk. This in turn shuts the PC off and uses no power. When you restart the computer it resumes where you left off. Because it is reloading from the hard drive, not RAM, it does take a tad longer to get going, but still much less than if you were starting the PC cold.

There is also a **Hybrid Sleep** mode that combines Sleep and Hibernate by saving open docs and apps in memory and on your hard drive while placing the PC into a low power state. Hybrid Sleep is a mode exclusive to desktop computers and is handy in case of power outages.

Say goodbye to slow Windows PC boots with Fast Startup

Windows Fast Startup for Windows 8 to 10 is sort of a mashup between a cold shutdown and hibernation. When Fast Startup is enabled – and this is the default on many new Windows 10 computers—it closes all applications and logs off all users but creates a hibernation file. So when the PC reboots, it loads much quicker than a cold start/reboot because it does not have to reload the kernel, drivers, and system state individually. It refreshes the RAM with the hibernation file and takes you directly to the login screen. The time saved by this process is palpable.

But there is a gotcha with Fast Startup. Because it relies on a hibernation file, it ties up the ability to use Hibernate like you ordinarily could. That hibernation file is saved exclusively for the Fast Startup process, so Hibernate will not appear as a choice on the Power menu and will be greyed out in the Power Options menu. If you switch Fast Startup off in that Power Options menu, Hibernate returns automatically as a power customization selection.

If at first you do not see Hibernate as a choice, click the link *Change settings that are currently unavailable* found in the Power Options menu.



To get to that menu quickly, type **power but** in the Start search bar. Check or uncheck the choices you want to see in the Shutdown settings found below the Power and sleep button settings.

Back to the basics: the three-key salute.

If you are a keyboard oriented typist you can always shut your computer off in Windows 7, 8, and 10 by pressing **CTRL+ALT+Delete** to access the Task Manager Windows and its Power button in the lower right corner. That's still multiple steps but it is yet another way to shut down.