

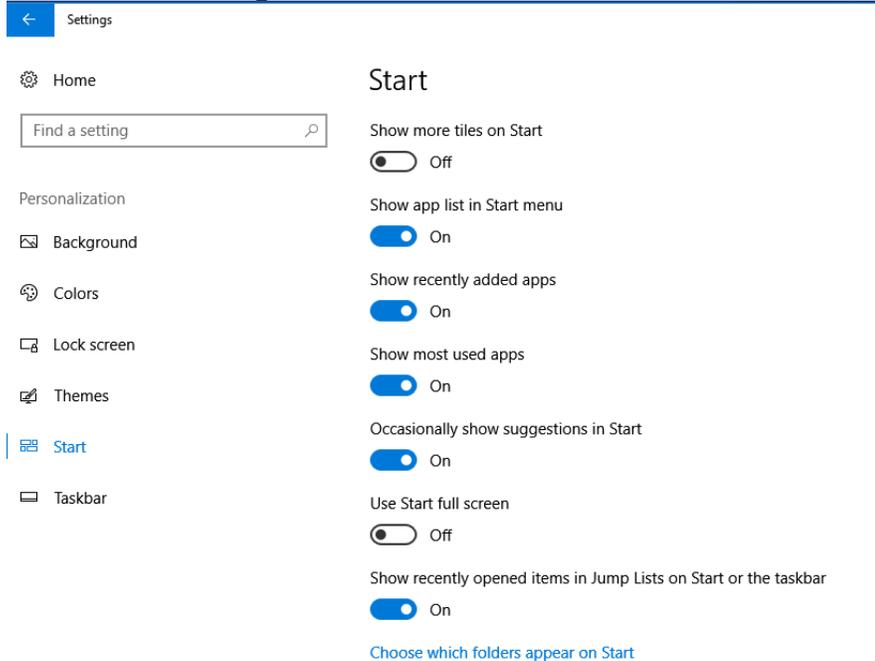
How Do I Customize the Windows 10 Start Menu?

By Richard Hay on February 7, 2018 in Ask @WinObs, Windows Secrets

Windows 10 is one of the most customizable versions of Microsoft's operating system, and it allows you to tweak things so the whole operating system best fits your usage habits.

One of the biggest areas of customization is the primary interface to the OS – the Start Menu. Let's go over the menu settings, which will show how you can make the Windows 10 Start Menu all yours.

Start Menu Settings



The options for configuring your Start Menu are located at **Windows Settings > Personalization > Start**.

From top to bottom here are what these toggle switches control:

Show more tiles on Start – This provides four tile wide sections instead of just three. This is handy for people using larger screens, as those screens can display more tiles.

Show app list in Start menu – This allows you to display or collapse a Windows 7-style hierarchical menu that shows shortcuts for all the apps and programs installed on your system.

Show recently added apps – This is a chronologically ordered list of apps and programs you have installed on your system. This is quite handy if you like pinning a tile to the Start Menu or Taskbar once the new app/program is installed.

Show most used apps – As you use the apps and programs on your system, this list will dynamically update to make the most used items available for quick access. This group of icons are located second from the top if you are also displaying the recently added apps group.

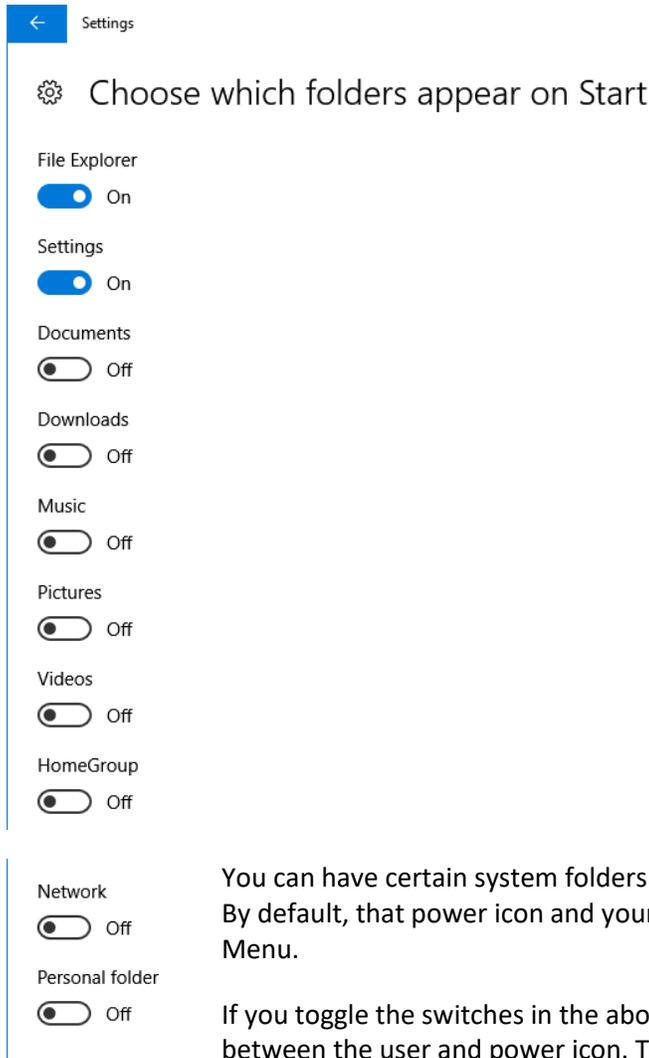
Occasionally show suggestions in Start – This group of apps will be listed third from the top if you are displaying the recently added and most used apps on your app list. These will be app suggestions from Microsoft based on your system and other apps you use. If you prefer to not see any of them then toggle this switch off because it is turned on by default.

Use Start full screen – Just like back in Windows 8 and its 8.1 Update, you can have a full screen Start Menu if you want. This is toggled off by default but if you have a convertible or 2-in-1 device you will get prompted about shifting to full screen with Start when you put the device into tablet mode. If you opt into that option then it will automatically switch between full and normal Start Menu as you use your device.

Show recently opened items in Jump Lists on Start or the Taskbar – For apps/programs that support them, Jump Lists are available when you right click on a tile or icon to show you shortcuts to certain actions that can be accomplished in that app or to files you have created with apps such as Word. This is very handy for quickly getting back to work you have previously started.

Choose what folders appear on Start – See the next image and explanation for how this link helps you customize the Start Menu.

Folders on Start Menu



Settings

Choose which folders appear on Start

File Explorer On

Settings On

Documents Off

Downloads Off

Music Off

Pictures Off

Videos Off

HomeGroup Off

Network Off

Personal folder Off

You can have certain system folders appear on the lower left side of Start where the Power button is. By default, that power icon and your user icon are the only icons that appear on this part of the Start Menu.

If you toggle the switches in the above list they will be added in order of their sequence above between the user and power icon. These shortcuts can be very handy for gaining quick access to folders you access on a regular basis. Now let's take a look at various Start menu layouts based on the settings we covered above.

Standard Start Menu Layout

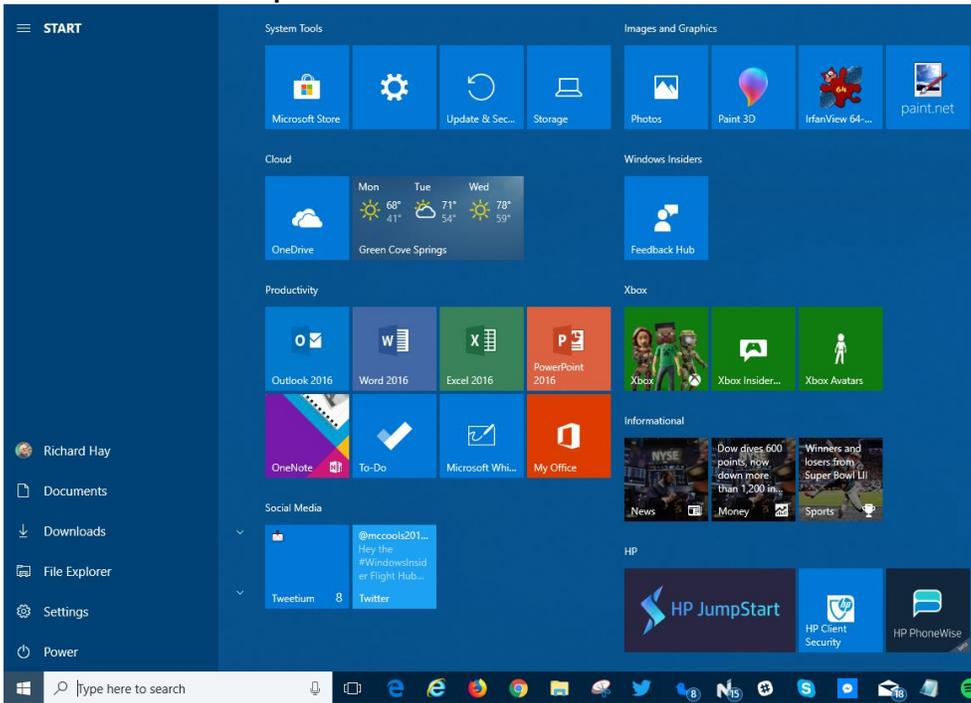


Working the columns from left to right: Start Sidebar with Expand App List button to show labels for all the icons in the sidebar.

- App List listed in alpha-numeric order from top to bottom.
- Tile Area with customized tiles 3 or 4 columns wide and tiles can be customized through a right-click context menu to be shown small, medium, wide, or large as long as the app developer supports all sizes otherwise you will see what sizes are supported through the context menu. Tiles can also be turned on as Live Tiles through that context menu to show information on the tile in near real time if the developer provided that support in their app. These tiles can be clicked on and drug around the Start Menu tile area in any configuration you choose and into groups

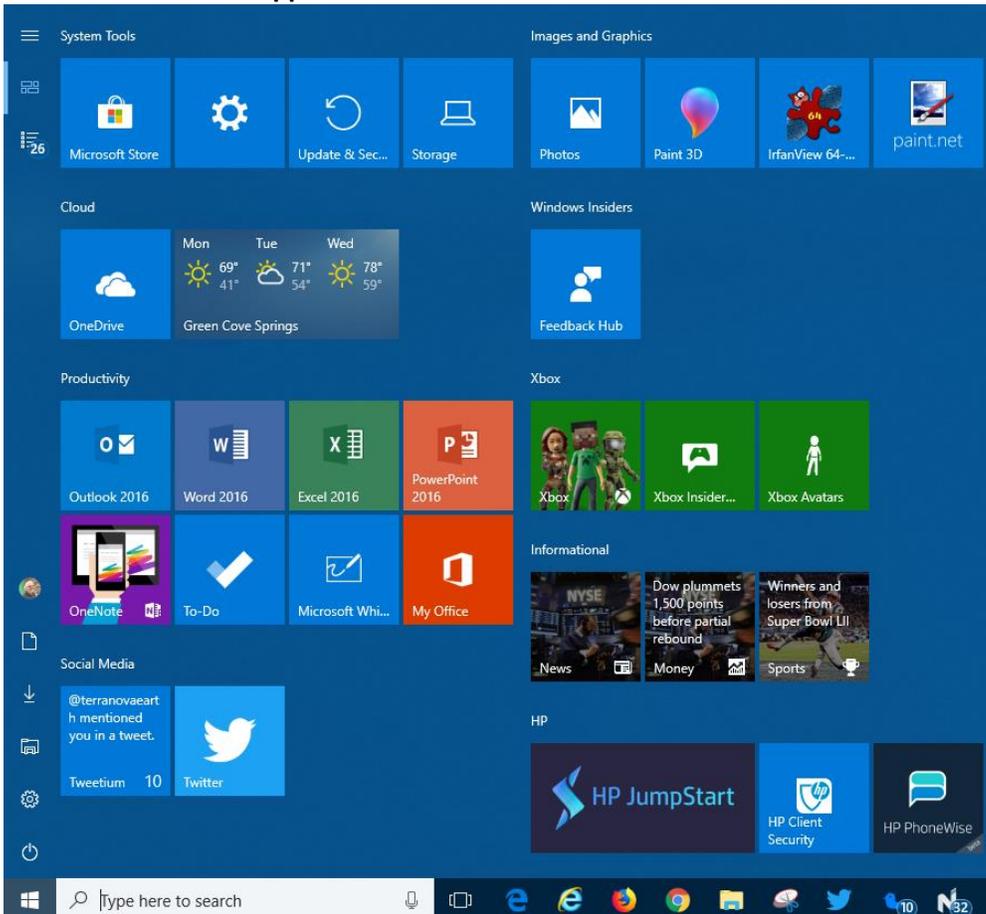
as well. On larger monitors you can continue to build groups of tiles up and across as necessary.

Start Menu Sidebar Expanded



Here is what the Start Menu looks like with the sidebar expanded. This is a temporary state and will return to a collapsed sidebar when you close the Start Menu.

Start Menu Without App List



If you toggle off the app list for Start, it will appear as shown above and you will have two new icons below the Expand icon. The first one will just show the tiles area of Start, as the image above is displaying, and the other one will show just the app list as shown below.

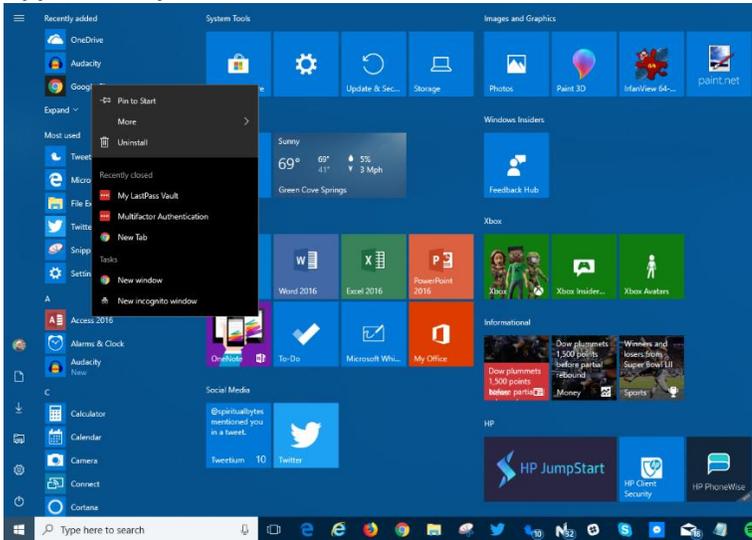
Start Menu App List Only



This is similar to the style of the Windows 7 Start Menu. This is a temporary display and will return to the tile view with a collapsed app list when you close Start.

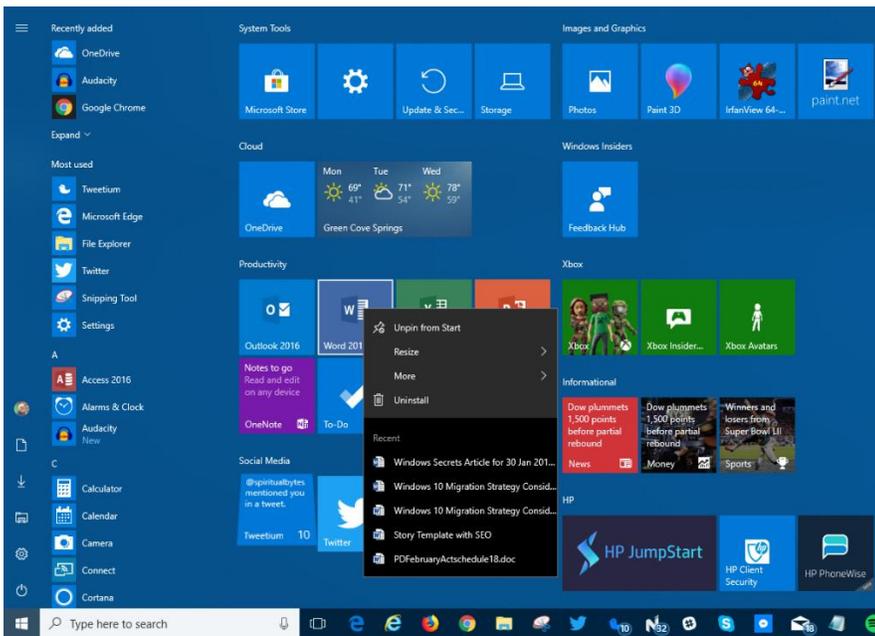
Tip: If you prefer to not have any tiles on the Start Menu just remove all of them through the right click context menu and this is what your Start Menu will look like at all times.

App List Jump List Context Menu



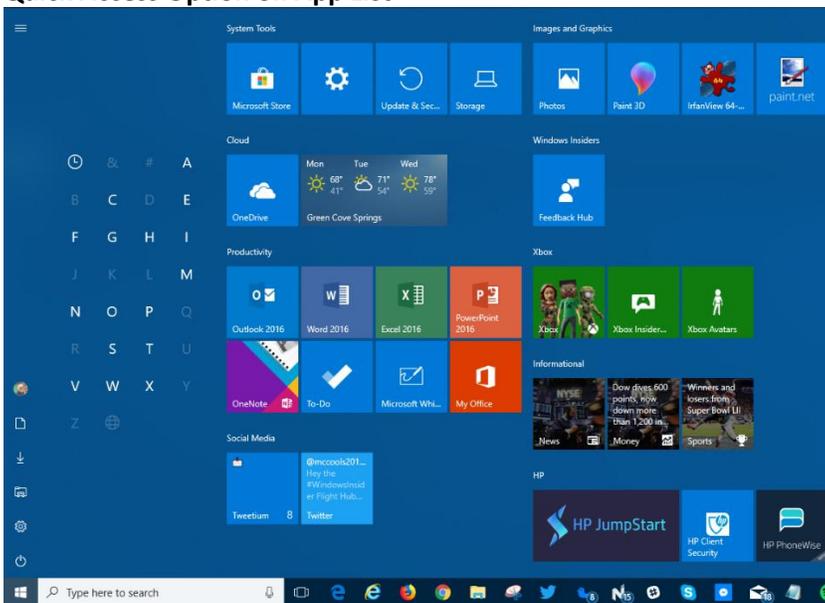
When you right click on an icon in the app list that supports Jump Lists you will see a robust menu of options to quickly access certain features of that app/program.

Start Menu Tile Jump List



This is what a Jump Lists looks like on a Start Menu tile.

Quick Access Option on App List



Before I close this out I have one last tip for you. When you are viewing the Start Menu App List, the numbers/letters in the listing for the apps/programs installed on your system are hotlinked. Just click on any app list header letter and you will see the above grid of numbers, letters, or symbols appear. Selecting any one of the other items in this grid will take you immediately to that part of the app list. This helps you avoid scrolling through long lists of apps/programs if you have a lot installed on your system. Hopefully, this has provided you with some ideas for customizing your own Windows 10 Start Menu so that things are laid out for your ease of access and quick navigation.