

LEARNING MADE EASY



2nd Edition

# Windows<sup>®</sup> 11

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand



Create profiles and  
manage files and apps

Build your intelligence  
about Copilot™ AI

Correct common errors  
quickly and painlessly

**Alan Simpson**





# Windows® 11

2nd Edition

**by Alan Simpson**  
Original Edition by Andy Rathbone

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

## Windows® 11 For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

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# Introduction

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**W**elcome to *Windows 11 For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, the world's best-selling book about Windows 11!

This book's popularity probably boils down to one simple fact: Some people want to be Windows whizzes. They love interacting with dialogs. Some randomly press keys in the hope of discovering hidden, undocumented features. A few memorize long strings of computer commands while eating pizza.

And you? Well, you're no dummy, that's for sure. But when it comes to Windows and computers, the fascination isn't there. You want to do your work and then move on to something more important. You have no intention of changing, and there's nothing wrong with that.

That's where this book comes in handy. Instead of making you a whiz at Windows, it merely dishes out chunks of useful computing information when you need them. Instead of becoming a Windows expert, you'll know just enough to get by quickly and with a minimum of pain so that you can move on to the more pleasant things in life.

And you'll be able to do that whether you're dealing with a touchscreen tablet, laptop, or desktop computer.

## About This Book

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Instead of fancy computer jargon, this book uses plain English to cover subjects like the following:

- » Getting free instant tech help right from your computer
- » Keeping your computer safe and secure
- » Making sense of the Windows 11 Start menu
- » Finding, starting, and closing apps

- » Locating the file you saved or downloaded a while ago
- » Setting up a computer or tablet for the family to share
- » Copying information to and from USB drives and memory cards
- » Saving and sharing files from your smartphone or digital camera
- » Printing or scanning your work
- » Linking two or more computers with a network to share your internet connection, files, and a printer
- » Fixing Windows when it's misbehaving

There's nothing to memorize and nothing to learn. Just turn to the right page, read the brief explanation — bypassing the technical hoopla — and get back to work.

## How to Use This Book

When something in Windows 11 2024 Update leaves you stumped, use this book as a reference, paging through the table of contents or index to the spot that deals with that particular bit of computer obscurity.

If you have to type something into the computer, you'll see easy-to-follow bold text like this:

Type **Mail** in the Search box.

In the preceding example, you type the word *Mail* and then press the keyboard's Enter key.

Key combination you should press look like this:

Press Ctrl+B.

That means you should hold down your keyboard's Control key while pressing your keyboard's B key.

This book doesn't wimp out by saying, "For further information, consult your manual." Windows doesn't even come with a manual. This book also doesn't contain information about running specific Windows programs, such as Microsoft

Word or Excel. Windows is complicated enough on its own! Luckily, other *Dummies* books explain most popular programs.

Don't feel abandoned, though. This book covers Windows in enough detail for you to get the job done. Plus, thanks to built-in artificial intelligence (AI), you can get answers to your technical questions just by clicking the Copilot icon at the bottom of your screen and asking your question there.

Most modern laptops come with a trackpad, which you can use instead of a mouse. However, unlike a mouse, the trackpad might not have buttons to click. You move the mouse pointer around the screen by *tracking* (gently moving your finger, without pressing down too much) along the trackpad surface. Then translate mouse terms as follows:

- » **When told to *click*, you should *tap*.** Just one gentle tap with one finger should do the trick.
- » **When told to *double-click*, *tap twice*.** Use one finger to gently tap two times in rapid succession.
- » **When told to *right-click* something,** tap gently using two fingers rather than one finger.

Windows 11 comes preinstalled on all new Windows desktop PCs and laptops and can also be used with *touchscreens*, those tablets, laptops, and desktop monitors that have screens you can control by touching them with your fingers. If you find yourself scratching your head over explanations aimed at mouse owners, remember these three touchscreen rules:

- » **When told to *click*, you should *tap*.** Quickly touching and releasing your finger on a button is the same as clicking it with a mouse.
- » **When told to *double-click*, *tap twice*.** Two touches in rapid succession does the trick.
- » **When told to *right-click* something, *hold down your finger on the item*. Then, when an icon appears, *lift your finger*.** The right-click menu appears onscreen. (That's what would have happened if you'd right-clicked the item with a mouse.) While you're looking at the pop-up menu, tap any of its listed items to have Windows carry out your bidding.

# Foolish Assumptions

I don't assume that you're already a techie, with years of experience using older versions of Windows. I do assume that you might not be familiar with jargon such as files, folders, icons, upload, paste, and gigabytes. That's okay. I define every term when we introduce it.

Maybe you've used Mac computers in the past, but never Windows. No matter. This book takes it from the top and explains the stuff that other people assume you already know. So don't worry that you're already in over your head before you even get started.

About the only tech knowledge and experience I assume you do have is doing things online, such as using the internet for email, engaging with social media, shopping, and ordering take-out.

## Icons Used in This Book

It just takes a glance at Windows to notice its *icons*, which are little push-button pictures for starting various apps. The icons in this book fit right in. They're even a little easier to figure out.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

Watch out! This signpost warns you that pointless technical information is coming around the bend. Swerve away from this icon to stay safe from technical drift.



TIP

This icon alerts you to juicy information that makes computing easier: a new method for keeping the cat from sleeping on top of your tablet, for example.



REMEMBER

Don't forget to remember these important points (or at least dog-ear the pages so you can look them up again later).



WARNING

The computer won't explode while you're performing the delicate operations associated with this icon. Still, wearing gloves and proceeding with caution is a good idea.



NEW

This icon alerts you to things that are new in Windows 11 2024 Update, including tips for making the best use of the free AI at your fingertips.

# Beyond the Book

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Like every *Dummies* book, this one comes with a free online cheat sheet that describes what's new in Windows 11 2024 Update and provides keyboard shortcuts. To get the cheat sheet, head for [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and, using the Search box, search for **Windows 11 For Dummies Cheat Sheet**.

# Where to Go from Here

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Now you're ready for action. Give the pages a quick flip and scan a section or two that you might need later. Please remember that this is *your* book — your weapon against the computer nerds who've inflicted a complicated computer concept on you. Circle any paragraphs you find useful, highlight key concepts, add sticky notes, and doodle in the margins.



REMEMBER

The more you mark up your book, the easier it will be for you to find all the good stuff again. And the more techie buzzwords you come to understand, the easier it will be to get Copilot to answer your questions and do your work for you.



# 1 Getting Started with Windows 11 2024 Update

## **IN THIS PART . . .**

Understand the changes in Windows 11 2024 Update.

Start and use apps.

Catch up with the latest developments in AI.

Take control of your screen.

Manage your folders and files.

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Getting to know the latest version of Windows 11
- » Discovering the new features in Windows 11 2024 Update
- » Figuring out what's missing from Windows 11 2024 Update
- » Deciding whether your PC is powerful enough to run Windows 11 2024 Update
- » Knowing which version of Windows 11 you need

# Chapter **1**

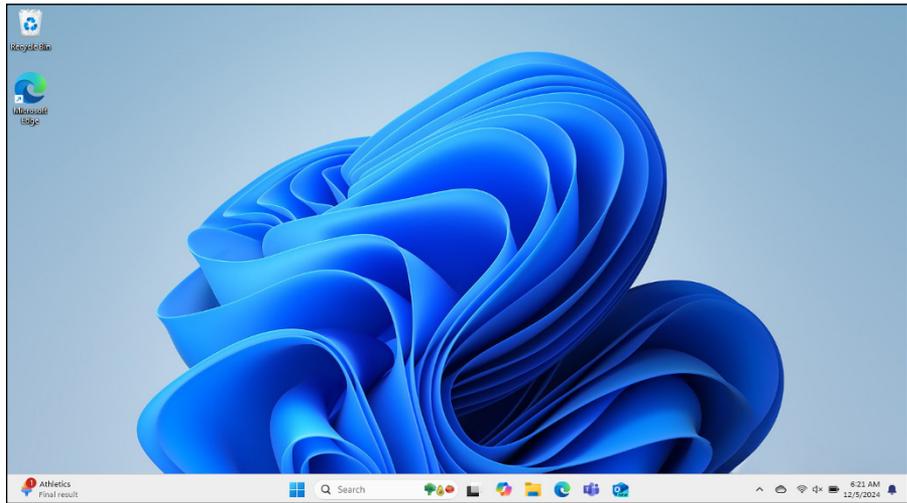
# What Is Windows 11 2024 Update?

**T**here's a good chance you've heard about Windows: the boxes and windows that greet you whenever you turn on your computer. In fact, millions of people worldwide are puzzling over Windows as you read this book. Most new computers and laptops sold today come with Windows preinstalled, ready to toss colorful boxes onto the screen.

This chapter helps you understand why Windows lives inside your computer. I also introduce Microsoft's latest Windows version, Windows 11 2024 Update, and explain how this version differs from previous Windows versions.

# What Is Windows, and Why Are You Using It?

Created and sold by a company called Microsoft, Windows isn't like your usual software that lets you calculate income taxes or send angry emails to politicians. No, Windows is an *operating system*, meaning it controls the way you work with your computer. It's been around since 1985, and the latest incarnation is called *Windows 11 2024 Update*, shown in Figure 1-1.



**FIGURE 1-1:** Windows 11 2024 Update on a typical PC — yours might look different.

The name *Windows* comes from all the windows it places on your computer screen. You can place several windows onscreen simultaneously and jump from window to window. Or you can enlarge one window to fill the entire screen.

Each window typically shows an open app. Windows comes with a bunch of free apps that let you do different things, such as write and print letters, browse the internet, play music, order takeout, and send your friends dimly lit photos of your latest meal.



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Windows isn't the only OS (operating system) in town. Macs use an operating system named macOS (previously known as OS X). Apple's iPhones use iOS, and their iPads use iPadOS. Most non-Apple smartphones use Android. Some hardcore techie developers (the people who create apps) use Linux.

## SEPARATING THE ADS FROM THE FEATURES

Microsoft touts Windows as a helpful companion that always keeps your best interests in mind, but that description isn't really true. Windows always keeps *Microsoft's* interests in mind.

For example, Microsoft uses Windows to plug its own products and services. Microsoft Edge, the Windows web browser, opens with links to Microsoft's websites. The browser's Favorites area, a place for you to add your favorite web destinations, comes stocked with Microsoft websites.

Windows 11 places a link to OneDrive, Microsoft's online storage service, in every folder. But Microsoft isn't as quick to mention that you must pay a recurring fee when you reach your storage limit.

Simply put, Windows not only controls your computer but also serves as a Microsoft advertising vehicle. Treat these built-in advertising flyers as a salesperson's knock on your door.

And why are you using Windows 11? Well, you probably didn't have much choice. If you're using a computer at work, it's probably a Windows PC. Aside from Apple's Mac computers, almost every computer, laptop, or Windows tablet sold after October 2021 comes with Windows 11 preinstalled. The 2024 Update is a free upgrade that installs automatically. So, if your computer is running Windows 11, chances are it's already using the 2024 Update version.

## What's New in Windows 11 2024 Update?

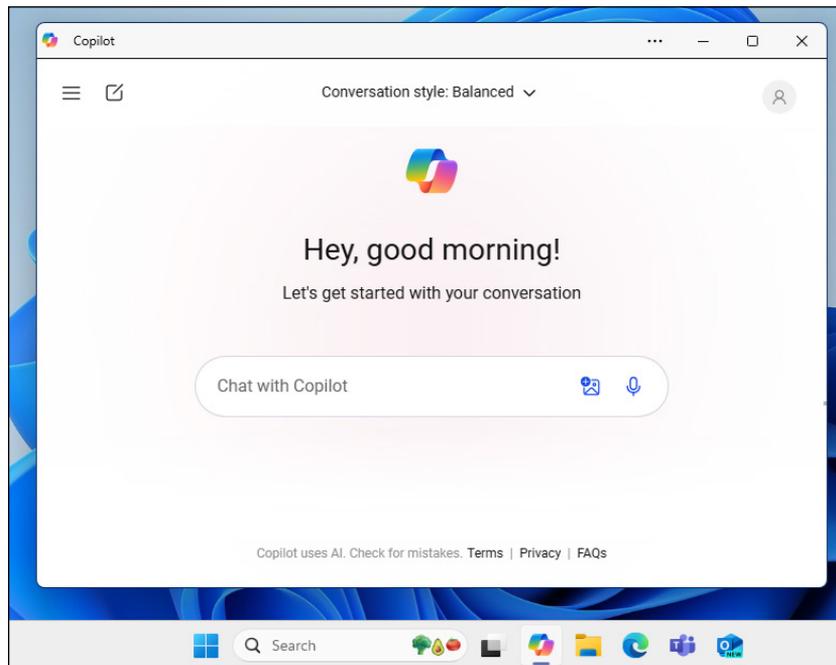
The Windows 11 2024 Update version is virtually identical to Windows 11 released in 2021, including all the updates Microsoft released since that initial release date. Your existing skills will continue to apply. This 2024 update focuses on making the power of AI (artificial intelligence) freely available to everyone. The AI in Windows 11 2024 Update is called *Copilot in Windows*, but I refer to it as *Copilot*. Here's what you can achieve with Copilot:

- » **Instant answers and clever conversations:** Engage with Copilot Chat to swiftly get answers to a wide range of questions. I get you started with that task later in the chapter.
- » **Effortless typing:** Have something typed at a remarkable speed — around 1,000 words per minute — with zero errors, even on unfamiliar topics.

- » **Visual creations:** Describe any image you envision using plain English, and Copilot Designer will bring it to life, regardless of your artistic abilities.
- » **Easy videos and slideshows:** Craft videos and slideshows without needing advanced video-editing skills.
- » **Professional-grade social media content:** Quickly produce polished posts and videos for platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.
- » **Natural language commands:** Get instant answers and boss around AI using your voice and everyday language.
- » **Quality-of-life enhancements:** Honestly, I'm not exactly sure what that means, since I never thought of the quality of my own life as being related to computers or Windows. But apparently it has to do with improvements in battery usage, seamless phone connectivity, and enhanced teleconferencing via Teams.



You can open Copilot in Windows any time by clicking its icon on the taskbar (and shown in the margin). Copilot appears, as shown in Figure 1-2. In Chapter 3, I explain how to get Copilot to answer your questions and do a lot of your typing. For now, if you want to put Copilot back into hiding, click X (close) in the top-right corner of Copilot's window.



**FIGURE 1-2:**  
Copilot icon and open pane.

# What's Missing from Windows 11 2024 Update?

If you upgraded from the original Windows 11, released in 2021, virtually nothing is missing in the 2024 update. If you instead upgraded from Windows 8 or 10, you'll find that the following features are missing:

- » **Timeline:** Windows 10 kept track of the apps and files you worked with for the past 30 days. A click of the Timeline button let you see them all, letting you quickly and easily jump back to, say, an unfinished file from last week. Windows 11 removes the feature and offers no replacement.
- » **Movable taskbar:** The Windows taskbar normally lives along the screen's bottom edge, but previous Windows versions let you move that taskbar to any edge you wanted. With Windows 11, the taskbar remains affixed to the bottom of your desktop, with no option to move it.
- » **Synced wallpaper:** In Windows 10, you could automatically sync your desktop wallpaper across multiple computers. To the dismay of computer decorators, Windows 11 killed that feature.
- » **Tablet mode:** Designed specifically for tablets with touchscreens, tablet mode quickly spaced your icons farther apart to accommodate thick fingertips. The Start screen and apps always filled the entire screen. Windows 11 dumps tablet mode because Windows 11 is automatically finger-friendly.
- » **Live tiles on the Start menu:** In Windows 10, the Start menu sometimes resembled a moving marquee, with animated tiles that changed their display. Windows 11 ditches the animated tiles in favor of a simpler menu that merely shows static icons. You also can no longer create folders on the Start menu for storing related items.
- » **Groove:** The Groove app for playing music has vanished in this version. Media Player is the preferred app for music.
- » **Internet Explorer:** Microsoft's elderly browser, Internet Explorer, disappeared from Windows 11 and has been replaced by Microsoft Edge.
- » **Cortana:** Microsoft fired its little robot that tried to help you work but mostly got in the way. You can still launch the Cortana app from the Start menu, but Cortana won't bother you otherwise.
- » **Paint 3D:** With Paint 3D, you could create three-dimensional images that rotated on the screen. Few people used it, and even fewer will notice that it's missing.

- » **Skype:** Microsoft paid billions for Skype, an app for making inexpensive (or free) phone calls using the internet, but then let the app languish. Skype has been replaced by Teams, an app for online collaboration and meetings. Microsoft added the chat portion of Teams in Windows 11 to compete with Zoom, which zoomed in popularity during the pandemic.
- » **OneNote:** Windows 10 came with free version of OneNote, an app for taking notes in a virtual school notebook. OneNote vanished from Windows 11, but compulsive note takers like me can still install it for free from the Microsoft Store.



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There never was a Windows 9 version. If you wonder why, just ask Copilot “Why did Microsoft skip a Windows 9 version?”

## Can My Current PC Run Windows 11 2024 Update?

In mid-2024, the media buzzed about the AI PC, a new computer class. These PCs resemble our current Windows 10 and 11 computers but include an NPU (neural processing unit) alongside the traditional CPU (central processing unit) and GPU (graphics processing unit). Despite the impressive name, the NPU simply manages the additional processing that some aspects of AI demand, so the CPU and GPU don't have to.

An AI PC isn't necessary for running the Windows 11 2024 update or its AI features. Most computers already running Windows 10 or 11 should be able to cope with the update without issues.



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A handful of advanced AI features in Windows 11 2024 Update require an NPU. However, they're mostly related to AI Explorer, which tracks your File Explorer actions and makes them searchable using natural speech. You can do almost everything else in this book without the need for advanced hardware.

You can get detailed hardware requirements just by asking Copilot (Chapter 3) about *hardware requirements for Windows 24H2* (Microsoft's internal number for Windows 11 2024 Update). To check your current computer's specs, click the start icon and choose System ⇄ About (in Windows 10 or 11).

# The Different Flavors of Windows 11

Microsoft offers several versions of Windows 11 2024 Update, but you'll probably want only one: the aptly titled Home version.

Small businesses will choose Windows 11 Pro, and large businesses will want Windows 11 Enterprise.

Here are some guidelines for choosing the version you need:

- » If you'll be using your PC at home or in your small business, pick up **Windows Home**.
- » If you need to connect to a domain through a work network — and you'll know if you're doing it — you want **Windows Pro**.
- » If you're a computer tech who works for businesses, go ahead and argue with your boss over whether you need **Windows Pro** or **Windows Enterprise**. The boss will make the decision based on whether the company is small (Windows Pro) or large (Windows Enterprise).
- » Progressive businesses can investigate **Windows 365**, a version of Windows that hosts *cloud PCs*, where every user can have a personalized version of Windows that runs on virtually any computer, even Mac computers.

