

# InfoWorld DeepDive

## THE **ULTIMATE** **Windows 10** **SURVIVAL KIT**

*12 things every  
Windows 10  
upgrader must do*



## Deep Dive

# Windows 10

## The “last” version of Windows

AS SOON AS YOU INSTALL WINDOWS 10, MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW THESE 12 STEPS TO ENSURE EVERYTHING IS IN WORKING ORDER.

BY WOODY LEONHARD

**With more than a** hundred million Windows 10 users settling in on the so-called Fall Update – Version 1511, Build 10586 – now would be an excellent time to make sure all’s well in Windows land.

If you upgraded from Windows 7 or 8.1 to Win10, several confounding settings may have made the leap. If you upgraded from the original July 29 version of Windows 10 – RTM, or Build 10240 – some things that changed in the Fall Update may not be reflected on your machine. And if you installed Win10 as clean as a breeze on a baby’s butt, some of Microsoft’s choices may not be the best ones for you.

Adding injury to insult, depending on which Cumulative Updates you’ve installed, your Privacy settings may have been changed. Microsoft has full details in KB [3121244](#).

Here are the steps I take every time I look at a new Windows 10 Fall Update machine:

### Fix features broken by the update

Moving to the latest version of Windows 10 from any other version of Windows (7, 8.1, 10 Build 10240) may have broken your machine, and you may not realize it unless you know where to look.



## Tip #1

*Look for programs removed by the installer*

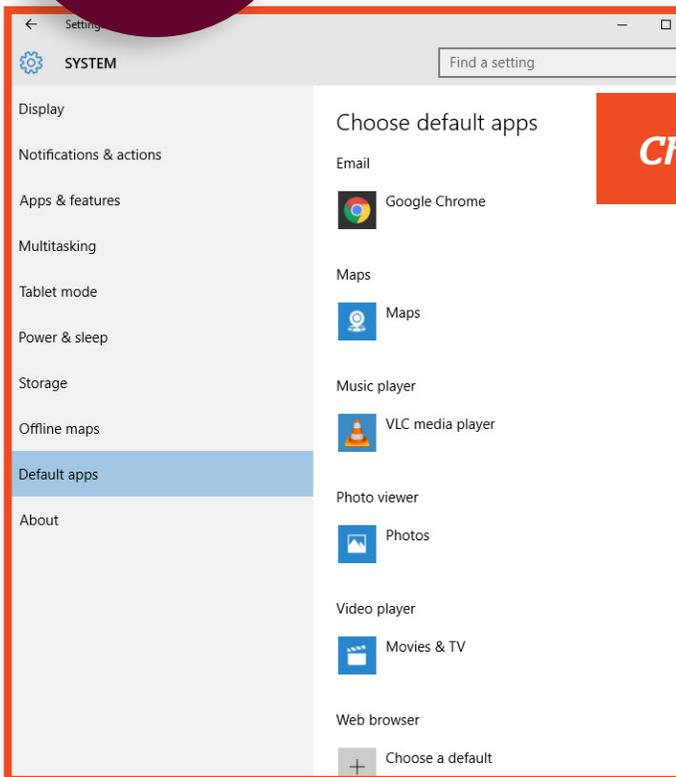
IF THE UPGRADE routine took out any programs, there will be a list of the zapped apps at the top of your Notification area (the bar on the right that you can bring up by clicking the icon next to the time in the lower right corner). Some programs, such as speccy, get removed by the Win10 upgrade, even though they work fine with Win10 V.1511. Simply download the program to make sure you have the latest version and reinstall it.

## Tip #2

*Check your antivirus*

MANY PEOPLE REPORT that their old antivirus program was removed, replaced by Microsoft Defender, Windows 10’s default antivirus program. I’ve heard from folks who use AVG and ESET, in particular. My personal bias is to use Microsoft’s antivirus, but if you’re insistent, download the latest version of your antivirus program and install it. To see if Defender is working, type **Defender** in the Cortana search box next to Start, and press Enter.

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## Tip #3

*Check your default programs*

THE WINDOWS 10 Fall Update installer has a horrible habit of resetting default programs. Many people report that Firefox was knocked out of the box as the default Web browser in the transition to Win10 V.1511. I had problems with video files being shifted from my beloved VLC Media Player to Microsoft's money-grubbing Windows 10 Movies & TV app (see screenshot). To examine defaults and change them, click Start > Settings > System, then on the left Default apps. Look at the list and if you want to change anything, way at the bottom of the right side, click Set Defaults by app.

**Set your defensive perimeter**

Depending on how and when you upgraded to the Win10 Fall Update, some of the settings that are key to keeping your computer protected may have been changed. Here are the trouble spots I've found.

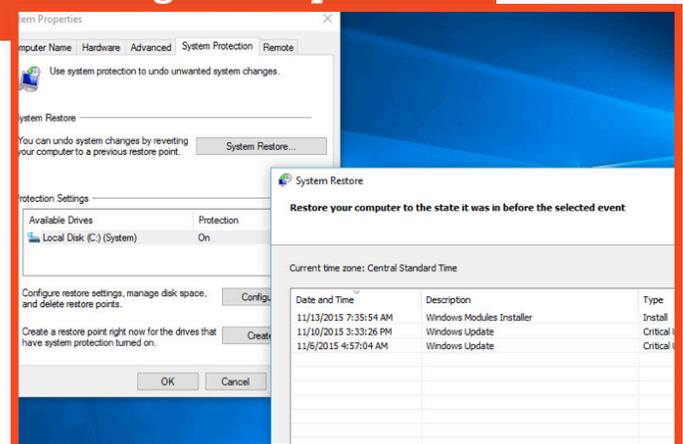
## Tip #4

*Make sure you're saving restore points*

IF YOU'VE ENABLED System Protection, Windows takes snapshots of its settings, or restore points, before you make any major changes to your computer — install a new hardware driver, perhaps, or a new program, or (frequently) install the latest Windows update. You can roll back your system settings to any of the restore points.

A restore point contains Registry entries and copies of certain critical programs, including, notably, drivers and key system files: a snapshot of crucial system settings and programs. When you roll back or, simply restore to a restore point, you replace the current settings and programs with the earlier versions.

Windows 7 created restore points for your system drive (usually C:) by default. Restore points take up space on your hard drive, and Microsoft would rather you just trust in their cloud-based recovery options. But restore points can change a gut-wrenching Refresh or Remove into a relatively easy rollback to an earlier restore point. Windows 10 has full support for System Restore and restore points. Depending on how you installed your copy of Win10, System Protection may or may not be turned on.



To enable System Protection and start taking restore points automatically, type **restore point** in the Cortana search box. Click Create a Restore Point. In the Protection Settings box, look for your important hard drives and make sure they're set to Protection On. If any aren't set up, click on the drive, click the box marked Configure... and in the following dialog box, click Turn On System Protection.

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# Tip #5

## Consider blocking forced Windows updates

I CAN HEAR the howls all the way from Redmond. Microsoft wants all Windows 10 Home users (and any Win10 Pro users who aren't connected to a corporate Windows Update server) to accept all of the Microsoft-approved updates, as soon as they're available. Fortunately, as of this writing (late 2015), Microsoft hasn't had any major screw-ups in its Windows 10 cumulative updates. We've seen some minor problems – the update won't install, a few things go bump in the night – but by and large, the forced Windows 10 patches haven't caused the kind of mayhem that accompanies Automatic Update in all previous versions of Windows.

If you think that trend will continue, I salute your loyalty, and there's nothing you need to do.

On the other hand, if Microsoft's truly [abysmal record with bad patches](#) has you quaking in your boot partitions, you might try deferring updates. That way, you can wait a day or a week or a month, and see if the forced patches are causing more mayhem than they're worth. Or you can wait for Microsoft to rerelease its bad patches, a common occurrence. (I cover the current patching condition fastidiously on my [AskWoody.com](#) website.)

Unfortunately, blocking the forced Windows patches is by no means easy. If your computer is attached to the Internet via Wi-Fi, you can tell Win10 that you're using a "metered connection," one that charges you by the bit. Usually that'll keep the patches from coming down the wire. You can find full instructions in the InfoWorld post "[Block forced Windows 10 updates using a metered connection](#)".

If you don't have a WiFi connection, but you are using Windows 10 Pro, Gregg Keizer at Computerworld has a [method involving the Group Policy Editor](#) that may work.

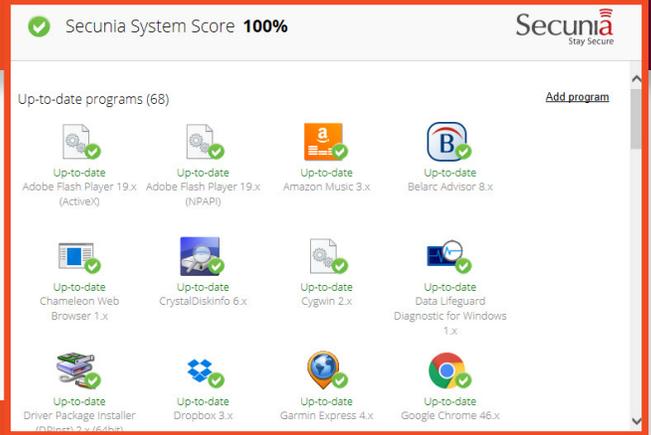


**On the other hand, if Microsoft's truly abysmal record with bad patches has you quaking in your boot partitions, you might try deferring updates.**

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# Tip #6

## Install Secunia PSI to make sure all of your programs are up to date



YOU HAVE WINDOWS Update, forced or not, to keep your copy of Windows up to date. What about all of your other programs? That's where Secunia Personal Software Inspector, Secunia PSI to its friends, comes into play.



Secunia PSI keeps tabs on every program in your computer (well, some really weird programs may not make the cut). Secunia PSI keeps on top of the latest patches for every single program and warns you if your software is out of date. It's free for personal use, inexpensive for organizations.

If you use the PSI Automatic Update features, which I recommend, Secunia PSI will even install updates for you as they become available.

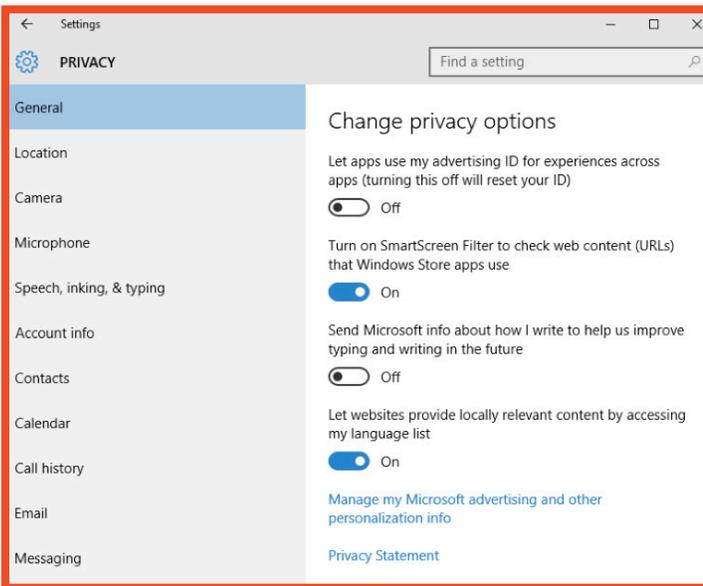
To get the free version of PSI, go to the [download page](#). Fill out the form, click Download Now. Run PSISetup.exe, take all

of the defaults, click Yes to run it for the first time, click Scan Now, and stand back. Don't be too surprised if you find a minefield of old programs hanging around.

### Check your privacy settings

Microsoft recently updated its privacy statement, finally addressing some of the issues we've had with Windows 10 for ages. If you haven't yet read [Ed Bott's report](#) on ZDNet, do so before you start getting bent out of shape with the privacy settings.

That said, there's no question that Windows 10 does more snooping than any Windows version before. Most of the snooping goes through Bing – much of it via Cortana, which feeds Bing everything under the sun – and Bing uses it to dish up advertising that Microsoft hopes you'll click. If you've ever used the Chrome browser, or the Google search engine, you've seen the same technique in action.



# Tip #7

## Check your default programs

Click Start > Settings, choose Privacy, and you see an overwhelming bunch of settings (see screenshot) that let you control much of what Microsoft learns about you. There's a very detailed list of all of the settings and subsettings in [Whitson Gordon's detailed piece "What Windows 10's 'Privacy Nightmare' Settings Actually Do"](#) on the Lifehacker Australia blog. You can spend a leisurely afternoon perusing those settings or you can use the setting shown here, which should substantially stem the flow of information into Microsoft's coffers, although the SmartScreen Filter setting does allow Windows to send all of your URLs to Microsoft's blacklist in the sky.

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## Tame Cortana

## Tip #8

Hi. I'm Cortana.  
Ask me a question!

CORTANA'S A SPECIAL privacy case. Once you've set up Cortana, using the default settings, information about any search you may perform is sent to Bing, where it's added to your personal bit bucket.

The problem is pretty simple: If Cortana's going to do a lot of work for you (watch for appointments, respond to voice commands, send messages or mail, or any of a dozen other tasks) she has to have enough information to do the job. That means Cortana has to scan your email,

listen to your voice, track your location, watch as you type or trace, dig into your contacts, and watch your calendar. For good measure, she stores away what she finds on Microsoft's servers, in something called (confusingly) a "Notebook."

That's a rich data mine for Bing advertising, eh?

Only you can decide if Cortana's advantages outweigh her nosiness. If you decide to turn off Cortana completely, which can be done in the Cortana search

bar's Setting icon, be intensely aware of the fact that turning off Cortana doesn't necessarily turn off the Getting to Know You setting. In order to keep Microsoft from watching and listening, you have to go into the Settings panel (see screenshot), click Speech, Inking & Typing on the left, then click the button marked Stop Getting to Know Me.

**Make your life easier**

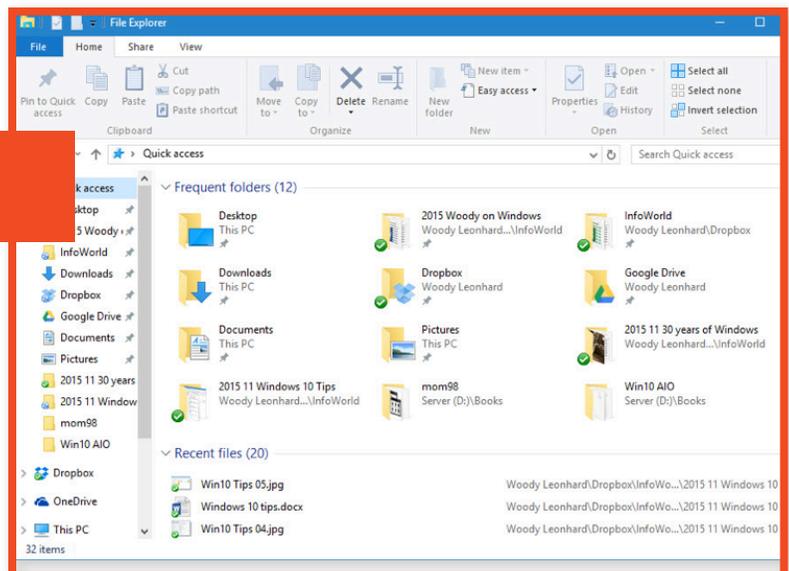
Windows 10 isn't all hassles and tar pits. No doubt you can wade through the settings for the Start menu (Start > Settings > Personalization > Start), and figure out resizing and moving icons if you feel so inclined (just click and drag or right-click). But a couple of items that aren't so easily discoverable can make your Windows life a little easier.

## Tip #9

## Customize File Explorer

YOU'RE PROBABLY TIRED of futzing around with File Explorer, but Windows 10 teaches a couple of new tricks to the old dog. Take a minute to scope out the Quick Access list, shown in the screenshot. When you start File Explorer, it opens up to the Quick Access list. Pin folders with a right-click and choose Pin to Quick Access. Rearrange them by dragging and dropping. Unpin them with a right-click and Unpin from Quick Access. It may not be immediately obvious, but it's easy to add folders to the Quick Access list: just drag them over to the left. Remove them with a right click and Unpin from Quick Access.

It's a very simple, very powerful tool. I don't understand how File Explorer adds recently used folders to the Quick Access list, but they're



easy to delete.

If you'd rather have File Manager open to This PC, the way it used to, just click View > Options. Under the General tab, change the value for Open File Explorer from Quick Access to This PC.

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**Tip #10***Simplify your logo*

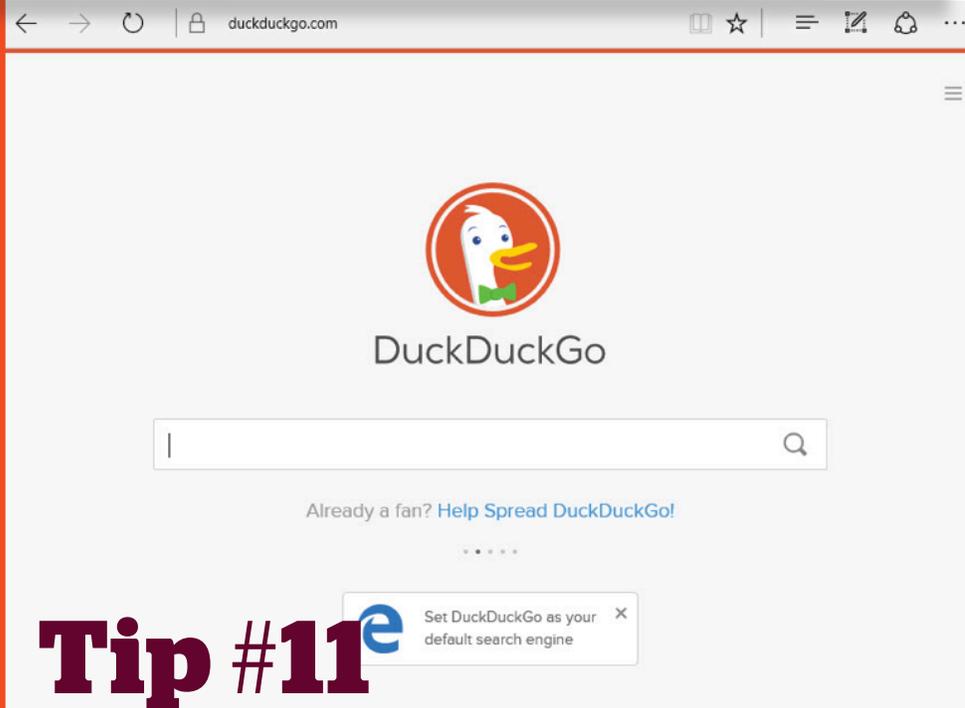
Hello

ONE MORE BIG timesaver: Windows 10 Fall Update added a lot of “Windows Hello” options to the login routines. If you have a fancy Hello-capable camera or fingerprint reader, by all means, dig in. But even if your hardware isn’t Hello-ready, you can start using a simple numeric PIN to log in, or convert to a picture login. Both have advantages over typed passwords, but I find the PIN to be very convenient.

To set a PIN, click Start > Settings > Accounts. On the left, choose Sign-in Options. Under PIN, click the box marked Add. Windows will verify that you know your current password, then prompt you for a four- to six-digit PIN.

**Quick bonus tips**

Here are a couple of obscure tips that are well worth tucking in your bag of tricks.

**Tip #11***Set search engine in Edge*

WHILE THE METHOD for changing search engines in the July 29 version of Windows 10 was obscenely complicated, the method in the Win10 Fall Update V.1511 is merely obscure. If you want to ditch Bing and use a search engine you know and love, here’s how.

Crank up Edge. Go to the site you want to use for searching (google.com and duckduckgo.com being two obvious choices). At the bottom of the page (see screenshot) you see a button marked “Set XXX as your default search engine.” Click on it, and you’ll be using that search engine as the default in the future.

**Tip #11***Turn off gratuitous advertising*

WINDOWS 10 IS going to start sprouting ads all over the place. During the beta we saw ads briefly on the Weather app. With Windows 10 Version 1511, we now have ads on the Start menu. Don’t be too surprised if ads start appearing [on the “Spotlight” lock screen](#) as well.

To get rid of the ads on the Start screen – less room for Microsoft, more room for you – click Start > Settings > Personalization. On the left, pick Start. On the right, turn off the slider marked Occasionally Show Suggestions on Start.