

COMPUTER GURU

By Don Benjamin

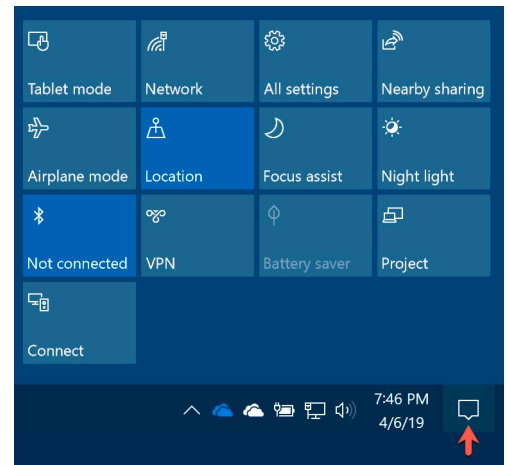
Windows 10 Spring 2019 Update

Microsoft inaugurated Windows 10 in July 2015 and issues updates each spring and fall. Most of these updates are evolutionary rather than revolutionary, such as improvements in file handling and graphics, enhancements to web browser Edge, and the “dark” theme.

The Spring 2019 update will be “pushed” to computers in May and includes:

- A new “light” theme with a flatter aesthetic (from the department of “look and feel.”)
- Simplified Start menu and new features on the Action Center (see screenshot at right)
- Better “Settings” app and new font management.
- Quicker response to the Start button.
- Separation of the search and Cortana (voice assistant) functions.
- RAW support for photos (if you’re a photographer, you’ll understand this).
- Various security patches and upgrades.

In-between these semi-annual releases, Microsoft updates Windows 10 with security and “bug” fixes every month.



Windows Action Center includes the most-used settings.

Should You Update Windows 10?



Yes. The new features include subtle aesthetics, easier-to-use menus, and “under-the-hood” improvements. Plus, all Windows updates include critical security patches. Your desktop and taskbar icons won’t change, and all your Windows 10 programs will run fine.

Microsoft extensively tests its Windows updates before deployment by enticing millions of software developers to run “beta” versions of the upcoming release. Software developers love trying new stuff and are quick to point out glitches. By the time the update arrives on your computer, it’s solid.

End of Life for Earlier Versions of Windows

The table on the right lists the date beyond which Microsoft will no longer support Windows 7 and 8.1. This means Microsoft will no longer send updates—either bug fixes or security enhancements—beyond these dates. Support of Windows XP ended in 2014.

Version	End of support
Windows 8.1	January 10, 2023
Windows 7	January 14, 2020

Other Software Updates

In addition to the updates to Windows (and MacOS), you need to keep your other applications, such as Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and Java (used by some websites) up to date. Some of these updates occur automatically (such as those bought from Apple’s App store). But if you’re unsure, you can visit our Technology Lab on Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. or Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and we’ll help you.