Updates on the Way to Your Desk

Windows 24H2 Will Begin Arriving in October

October will probably have some big updates from Microsoft. There's the unannounced but likely Office 2024. And there's probably the annual 'feature' update 24H2, for 2024 second half, for Windows 11. That update will be available on SOME computers in October, if it follows the usual pattern. That is to offer it to computers running hardware that matches trouble-free installs from the preview program first, and then gradually offer it everywhere, and then finally push it out to all users of Windows 11. 24H2 is widely expected to add mostly AI and Copilot features, much of which will exist exclusively to sell the paid service versions of Copilot.

For now, if Windows Update offers 24H2, wait. Don't install it on business

computers until it has been properly aged, and tested by technicians who have to keep it running. We have reached that point on Windows 11 23H2, and have long-ago reached it on Windows 10 22H2. There will be no more annual 'feature' updates for Windows 10. It's done.
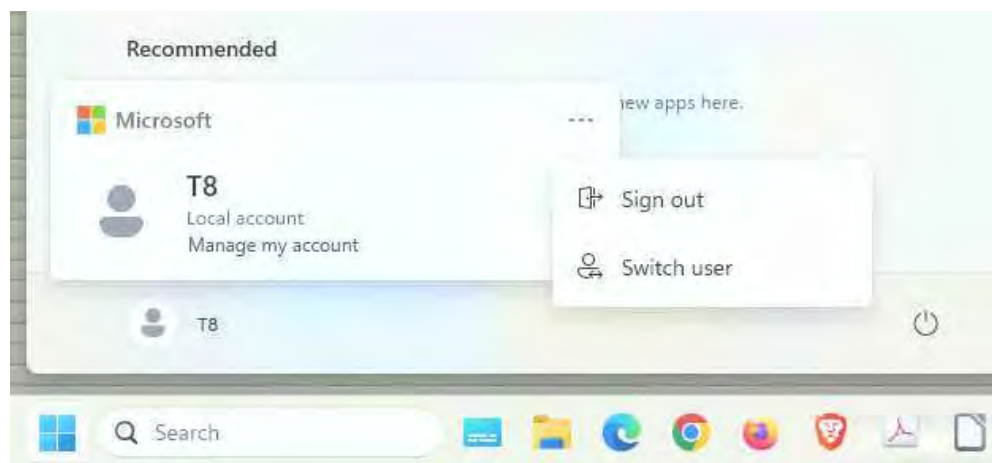
Programs Going Away

There are program removals coming; these apps will no longer be updated, and will be quietly removed at some point:

- **Cortana**: Asking a question of Cortana will probably be replaced by a speech interface for the Copilot AI, eventually.
- **Tips** app: It was a description of new Windows features, mostly unused.
- **Wordpad**: The basic word processor that's in Windows will go away. Notepad, on the other hand, is picking up some features previously found in Wordpad, such as choosing fonts. The default 'save' option in Notepad has changed from "prompt to save on close" to "quietly keep all text for next time" so instead of closing the program with the X or File, Exit, use File, Close tab to stop working with the text in Notepad and NOT save it for next time.
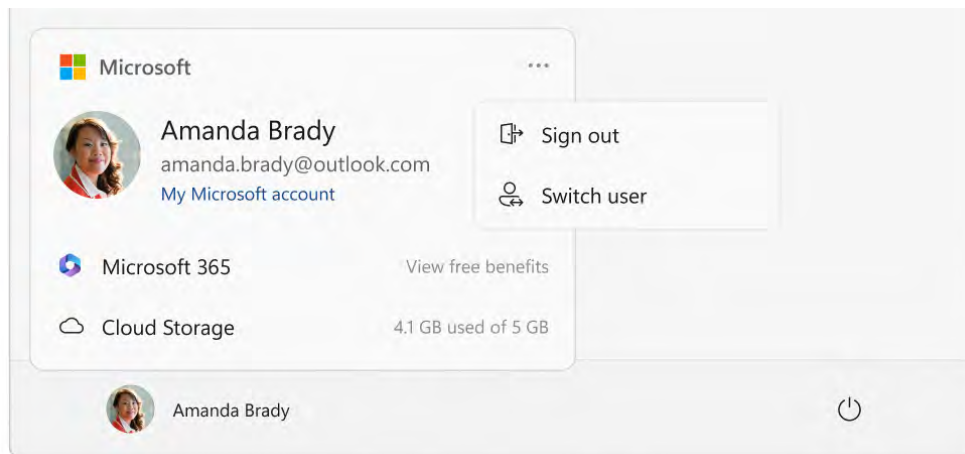
Local Accounts Menu

The new Account Manager section of the Windows 11 Start menu started showing up after the July updates. For most users, clicking start, and then your account name, previously allowed signing out of Windows. But now, it looks like this:

Click the three dots to get to the sign out option. For most users, it's an extra click with no reason.

And here is the Microsoft example, which explains why the menu is there: it's to

change your login between different Microsoft services.

But you can still skip the whole thing, and sign out with Alt-F4, which will bring up the old sign out/restart/shutdown options list, which has not changed in over twenty years.

Checking Your PC

You should check your computer for issues once a month, or any time you're suspicious of what's going on. Here's how to do it. Nothing below is do-it-yourself troubleshooting. It's do-it-yourself monitoring, so you will know when to call for help. Nothing below requires installing software or changing settings. All YES answers below should be checked out.

Windows

- In the System Tray, is there a red flag? Float the mouse over it to check for a message.
- In the System Tray, is the time set incorrectly? Right-click if it needs

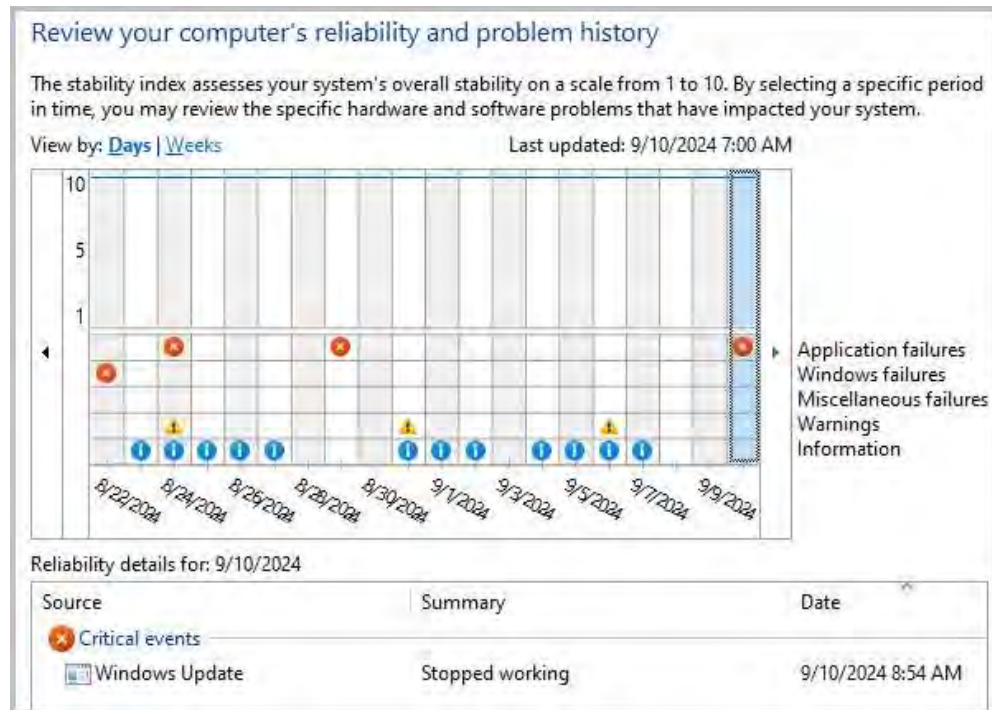setting.
- On startup, are there error messages?

Here's more on interpreting System Tray messages at a glance:
https://www.pc410.com/articles/how-to-be-a-computer-mystic/
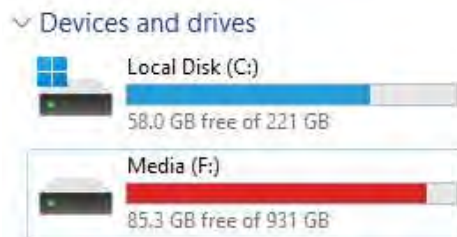
Reliability Monitor

- Are there red X marks?

Run it by clicking the Start (Windows logo) key, typing the first three letters, rei, and choosing Reliability Monitor from the list. Reliability Monitor shows the last 14 days of errors (in red), warnings (yellow), and successful updates (blue).

File Manager

- Do any drives show up in RED?

Red means "less than 10% free space" and needs fixing, or updates stop installing, and odd errors start to happen as Windows runs out of space.

Task Manager

- In the Task Manager, Processes list, is any number in the column headings above 50%?
- Does it stay that high?

Start Task Manager by right-clicking on any blank area of the task bar, and choosing it from the popup list.

USB backup drive or a NAS (network-attached storage)

- Is the drive space used above 80%?
- In each backup folder, are the backup files older than 7 or 30 days, depending on your backup schedule?
- On the most-recent backups, are the backup file sizes very tiny?

NAS Drives

On a network-attached drive, also log in and check:

- Is the time set incorrectly?
- Are there any hardware warnings?
- Is there a software update ready to install?

Intel 13th and 14th gen Desktop CPUs
Will Need BIOS Upgrades

All of the desktop computers I recommend for that Windows 11 conversion this year will be using AMD processors. They generally provide more speed, dollar

for dollar, than Intel, and they have another big advantage: Intel messed up the power settings in their 13th and 14th-generation desktop chips, or possibly the BIOS settings for them, and the result is going to be messy. If you already have desktop computers running Intel chips from this year or 2023, they probably will need BIOS upgrades in order to explain to the chips how to ask the power supply for the correct amount of power. As they are now, they're overheating and glitching because of the power mismatch. In some cases, the chips are damaged by overheating.

Contact me if you have any of these, or aren't sure how to tell, and I'll add the processor and computer model to my list to watch for the updates. Intel is extending warranties on the affected chips by two years. Dell is also extending processor warranties on these chips, and other system builders are expected to follow.

For computer help, call 410-871-2877
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