

- » Controlling your computer with the mouse, keyboard, and touchscreen
- » Turning the computer on and off
- » Exploring the Start screen
- » Handling the Lock screen

## Chapter 1

# Getting Acquainted with Windows 11

**W**indows 11 is an *operating system* (the master program for any computer). You can use Windows 11 on a wide range of devices, from a smartphone to a big-screen TV/entertainment system: One size fits most. You can not only use the same programs with a range of hardware but also access the documents you create (such as photos and email — files and data, to nerds) from any Windows-based computer, giving you extraordinary freedom of choice and mobility.

Although countless companies create programs you may use, Microsoft attempts to make similar functions consistent across different programs. For example, opening a document or emailing a photo to a friend involves the same steps regardless of the programs you use. You don't have to learn a different way of doing common tasks in each program. This consistency will serve you well when using Windows 11 and other new programs.

In this chapter, you start your computer and work with the *Start screen*, the dashboard for Windows 11. You explore options for using the Start

screen with your *hardware* (the computer and related devices). Then you exit Windows 11 and go right back in for more.



TIP

The easiest way to get Windows 11 is preinstalled on a new computer. If your current computer runs an older version of Windows (such as Windows 10), you can upgrade to Windows 11 for free, although older machines may lack newer functions, such as a touchscreen, and may have some hardware compatibility problems with Windows 11 as well. Visit [microsoft.com](https://microsoft.com) for details about upgrading from an older operating system.

## Tell Your Computer What to Do

How do you get Windows 11 to do what you want it to do? You can command a computer in many ways, depending on your equipment (hardware). For example, a desktop computer has different options from a handheld phone. You may have any or all of these choices:

- » Mouse
- » Touchscreen
- » Keyboard

Another device for controlling Windows is a touchpad, which is commonly found on a laptop keyboard. You move your finger on the touchpad to move the pointer on the screen.



TIP

A desktop computer keyboard and mouse may be wired (they plug into the computer) or they may be wireless (no wires needed!). Don't like the keyboard or mouse that came with your desktop computer? You can purchase many different styles and connect a new one to your Windows 11 PC. Shop wherever computers and related equipment are sold.

If you have a computer with more than one of these devices, you might use one device exclusively or, more likely, vary your choice according to the task. Use whichever technique is easiest for you, but don't be afraid to experiment. In the next few sections, you discover

the ins and outs of using all these methods of controlling Windows 11. Then you're ready to turn on your computer and use these methods.



TIP

In the steps throughout this book, *choose* or *select* refers to using a mouse, the touchscreen, or a physical keyboard. *Drag* refers to using a mouse or a finger.

## Move the Mouse

A *mouse* is a soap-bar-sized device that you move across a desk with your hand. Move the mouse and note how the arrow called a *mouse pointer* moves across the computer screen. (Similar to a mouse, a *trackball* is a ball in a socket that you can rotate to move the mouse pointer.) A mouse has two or more buttons; some also have a scroll wheel between the buttons.

The following terms describe methods for using a mouse with Windows 11. In each, move the mouse first to position the pointer over a specified item before proceeding:

- » **Click:** Move the onscreen arrow-shaped mouse pointer over a specified item and press and release the left mouse button: That's a click (sometimes called a left-click to distinguish it from a right-click).
- » **Right-click:** Press and release the right mouse button to display available functions. Note that the word *click* by itself means use the left mouse button.
- » **Drag:** Press and hold down the left mouse button, and then move the mouse pointer across the screen. When you want to move an object, you drag it. Release the mouse button to release the object.



TIP

Watch for the word *click* to indicate using a mouse button and *scroll* to indicate using the mouse wheel.

# Touch the Screen

A *touchscreen*, as the name says, enables you to touch the screen to tell your computer what to do. You typically use one finger or two, although touchscreens may allow you to use all ten digits. In some cases, you can also use a special pen called a *stylus* instead of your finger. Tablet computers and some smartphones have touchscreens. Touchscreens are less common on desktop or laptop computers, but that situation is changing. Not sure what type of screen you have? When you have Windows 11 running, lightly slide your index finger up or down on the screen to see what happens.

The following terms refer to ways you interact with a touchscreen:

- » **Tap:** Briefly touch the screen. You *select* an object, such as a button, by tapping it.
- » **Drag:** Touch and hold your finger on the screen, then move your finger across the screen. You *move* an object, such as an onscreen playing card, by dragging it.
- » **Swipe:** Touch and move your finger more quickly than with drag. You can swipe your finger across the screen from any of the four sides of the screen to display options and commands. You swipe pages to move forward or back. You may see the word *flick* instead of *swipe*. Some people insist that a flick is faster or shorter than a swipe, but you don't need to get caught up in that debate.
- » **Pinch and unpinch:** Touch a finger and thumb or two fingers on the screen. Move your fingers closer to each other to *pinch* and away from each other to *unpinch*. Generally, a pinch reduces the size of something on the screen or shows more content on the screen. An unpinch (an ugly word) *zooms in*, increasing the size of something onscreen to show more detail.



TIP

Watch for the words *tap*, *swipe*, or *pinch* to indicate using your finger. Touch actions are often called *gestures*.



TIP

See the upcoming section “View the Touch Keyboard” if your computer doesn’t have a physical keyboard, as is often the case with a touchscreen.

## Use a Keyboard

A typewriter-like keyboard is a traditional device for controlling a computer and is especially useful when you must enter a lot of text. Special key combinations, called *shortcut keys*, are often the quickest way to do anything (though they require some memorization).

The following keys are particularly noteworthy. No offense intended to fans of keys not noted here. Although you won’t use all these keys immediately, you’ll find it helpful to locate each one on your keyboard.



TIP

*Press* indicates that you use the keyboard (physical or virtual) for the specified key or sequence of keys (just as *click* indicates a mouse action and *tap* indicates touching the screen). Combinations of keys are not pressed simultaneously. Instead, press and hold the first key in the specified sequence, press the second key, and then release both. (I explain exceptions to this method as necessary.)

» **⌘**: Called the Windows key, this key is usually located on either side of the spacebar, which is the largest key. ⌘ works by itself, as you’ll soon see, as well as in combination with many other keys. Throughout the book, I specify these combinations where you might use them. There will be a quiz later. (Kidding! No quizzes.)

» **Tab**: Press the Tab key to select an item on a window, dialog box, or even web page. Press Tab repeatedly to skip items you don’t intend to select.



TIP

The keyboard can be used to select objects but is less direct than using touch or a mouse.

- » **Arrow keys:** Press the arrow keys to move the cursor or selection of an object in the direction the keys point (left, right, up, or down). In some contexts, Tab and the right arrow do the same thing. Sorry to be vague, but context matters at times.
- » **Enter:** In most cases, the Enter key on the keyboard chooses a selection, much as clicking or tapping does. However, you may need to use the Tab key or an arrow key to select an item before pressing the Enter key.
- » **Ctrl, Alt, and Shift keys:** These keys are used with other keys for commands. For example, press Ctrl+C to copy selected text or an object. (That is, while pressing and holding down the Ctrl key, press the C key — no need to press Shift for an uppercase C. Then release both keys.) The Shift key is used with another key for uppercase.
- » **Backspace:** As you enter text, each press of Backspace erases the character to the left of the cursor.
- » **Delete:** As you enter text, each press of the Delete key erases the character to the right of the cursor. On some keyboards, this key is labeled Del.
- » **Function keys:** All keys function, but Function keys are labeled F1 through F12. You don't use these much in this book, but you should locate them. Laptops often have a separate Function Lock key to turn these keys on or off.
- » **Page keys:** Locate the Home, End, Page Up, and Page Down keys for future reference. Use these to move the screen, a page, or the cursor. (On some keyboards, the Home, End, Page Up, and Page Down keys work as numbers when the Num Lock key is activated.)

## View the Touch Keyboard

Windows 11 can display a touch keyboard onscreen. This feature is vital for devices that have a touchscreen and no physical keyboard. With a touchscreen, the touch keyboard appears automatically when

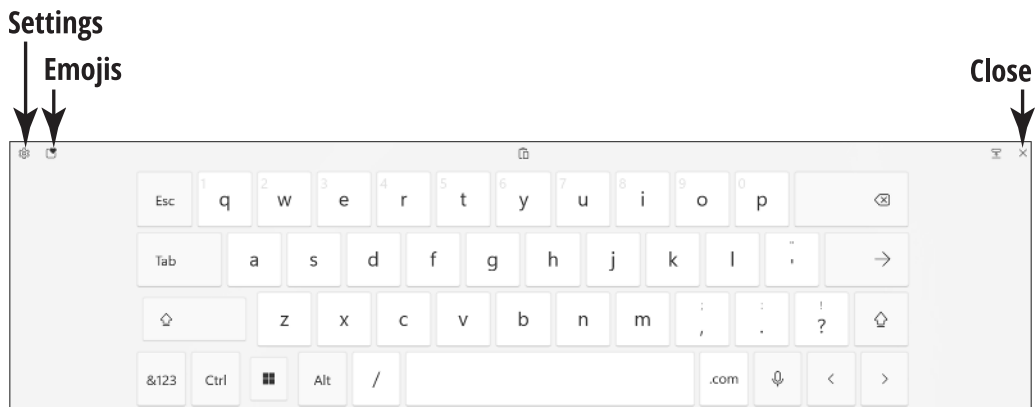
the *cursor* (a blinking vertical bar) indicates that you can enter text in a box. If the touch keyboard doesn't appear automatically, you may also see a separate box floating above or below the text box. Tap that floating box to display the keyboard. Or, if you don't see a floating keyboard, tap the keyboard icon on the taskbar to the right (it's close to the date and time). To type using the keyboard, simply tap or click a letter, number, or symbol key.



TIP

Here are the different types of touch keyboards:

- » The *standard layout* (also called QWERTY) appears automatically (see **Figure 1-1**). The Enter key changes depending on the context.
- » The *uppercase layout*, shown in **Figure 1-2, appears when you tap the Shift key on the standard layout.**

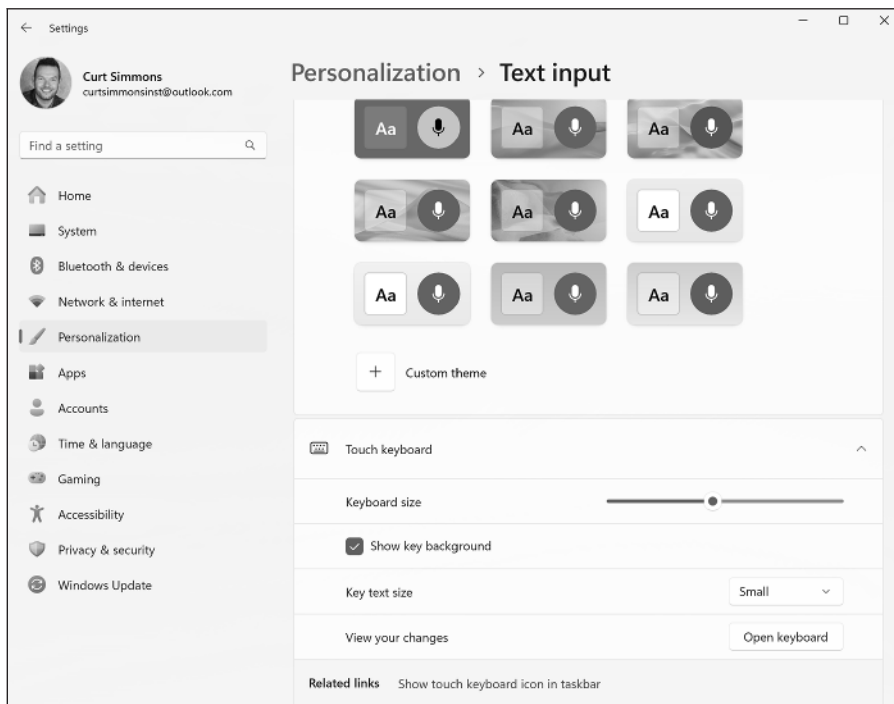


**FIGURE 1-1**



**FIGURE 1-2**

- » The *numbers and symbols layout* appears when you tap the &123 key on the standard layout. Tap the &123 key again to return to the standard layout.
- » The control keys overlay appears on five keys on the standard layout when you tap the Ctrl key. The Ctrl keys are used in common tasks, such as copying (Ctrl+C) or moving (Ctrl+X) selected text. The overlay disappears automatically after you tap one of the control keys (A, Z, X, C, or V).
- » Select the Settings button (refer to **Figure 1-1**). The Setting button appears on the top left of the touch keyboard (it looks like a gear). Here, you can select the Keyboard Layout. Default is selected automatically, but you can choose Small, Split, or Traditional. You can also choose to switch to a Handwriting option, which lets you write with your finger. Windows converts your scribbles to block text. Finally, you can also select Theme and Resize. This opens the Personalization window, where you can select different keyboard and size options, shown in **Figure 1-3**.



**FIGURE 1-3**

» Finally, you can add emoticons as you type. Select the emojis button (refer to Figure 1-1) and touch or search for the emoticon you want to use.

## Turn On Your Computer

1. Push the power button briefly and release it. Every computer has a power button. (When we can no longer turn them off, the machines win.) If you have a desktop computer tower, the power button is probably on the front of the tower. Otherwise, you may have to feel around the front and sides of the screen or near the hinges of a laptop. Typically, your computer will beep, some buttons will light, and the screen may flash a logo or message that disappears before you can read it. (Just let that go.) Soon, you will see the Windows 11 Lock screen.
2. Turn on any separate hardware (such as a monitor, speakers, or a printer), if necessary.
3. Enter your password and press Enter (or select the Submit button, the button on the right side of the password textbox). Soon the Windows 11 desktop screen appears, as shown in **Figure 1-4**.



TIP

You may be able to log in using your fingerprint or even facial recognition to sign-in, depending on your computer's features. You can check by using the Search box and taskbar. Search for Settings and then choose Accounts ⇄ Sign-in Options. If you can use a sign-in method other than a password, you'll see the options here.



TIP

If you don't see the Password text box, jiggle the mouse or press a key on the keyboard to wake up Windows 11.



TIP

The first time you turn on a new computer, a series of Windows Setup screens appears. Accept the defaults or change them appropriately and then select the button labeled Next.



**FIGURE 1-4**



**TIP**

If your computer doesn't have a keyboard, as is the case with many tablet computers, see the preceding section, "View the Touch Keyboard," for information on how to type onscreen.

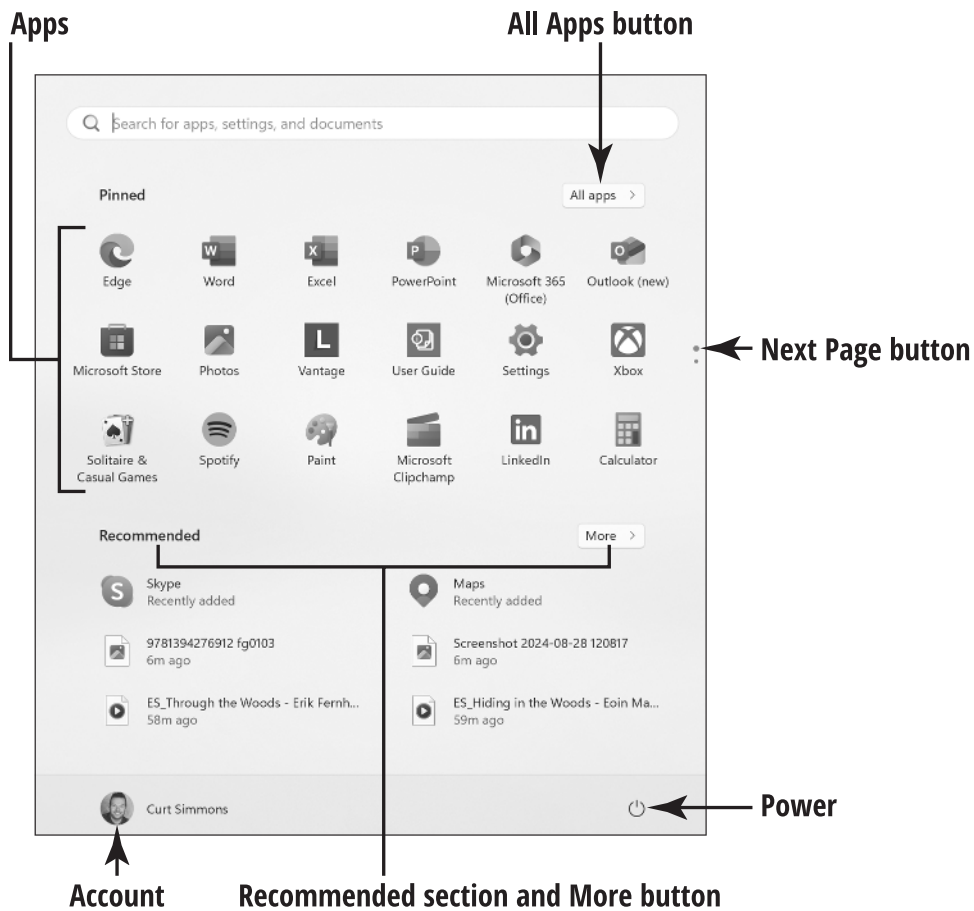


**TIP**

If this is the first time that Windows 11 has started on your computer, you must create a user account, even if no one else will use the machine. See Chapter 4 for details on creating and changing user accounts.

## Check Out the Start Screen

1. Start your computer — if it isn't started already — and sign in to your user account. You see the Windows desktop screen (refer to **Figure 1-4**).
2. Open the Start screen, as shown in **Figure 1-5**. Use one of these methods to open the Start screen:



**FIGURE 1-5**

- **Mouse:** Click the Start button (you find it on the taskbar, which is the strip across the bottom of the screen). The Start button is the leftmost icon on the taskbar; it looks like a four-pane window.
  - **Touchscreen:** Tap the Start button.
  - **Keyboard:** Press the  $\mathbb{W}$  key.
3. Examine the Start screen and note the icons. These icons represent available *apps* (short for application programs, an older term for programs or software). By clicking or tapping an app icon, you can open an app. (See Chapter 2 for information on using individual apps.)
  4. You can take a look at more apps by clicking the Next Page button (refer to **Figure 1-5**). Also, you can see an alphabetical list of all the

apps that are installed on your computer, as shown in **Figure 1-6**, by clicking the All Apps button (refer to **Figure 1-5**). By clicking or tapping an app in this list, you can open an app. Click the Back button to go back to the main Start Screen page.



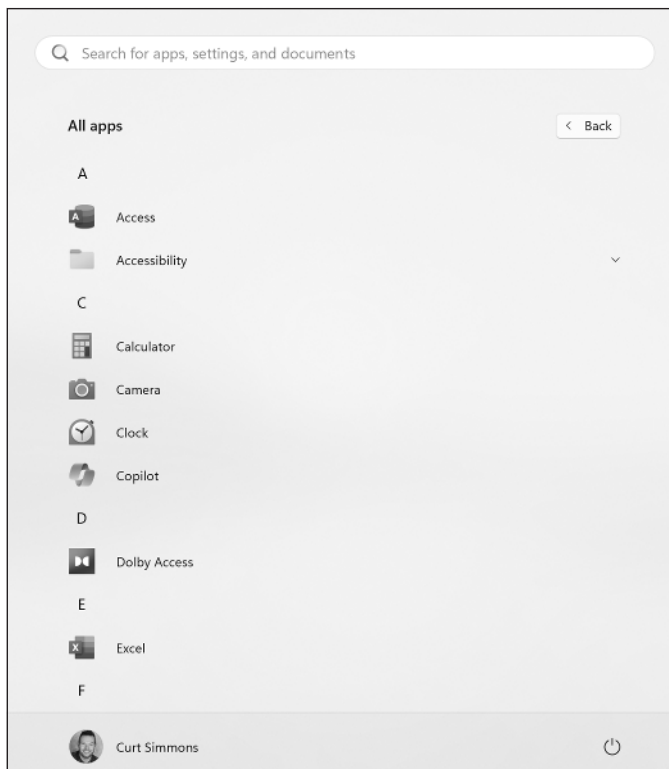
TIP

Under Recommended, you see recent files that you've opened. Click More to see a complete list. This is a handy way to find a file you recently used.



TIP

While the Start screen is open, you can type the name of an app to open it. For example, to open the Weather app, type **weather**. This automatically changes the Start screen to the Search screen, which you can also open directly by clicking the Search icon on the task-bar. Select the Weather app listing in the search results to open the Weather app.



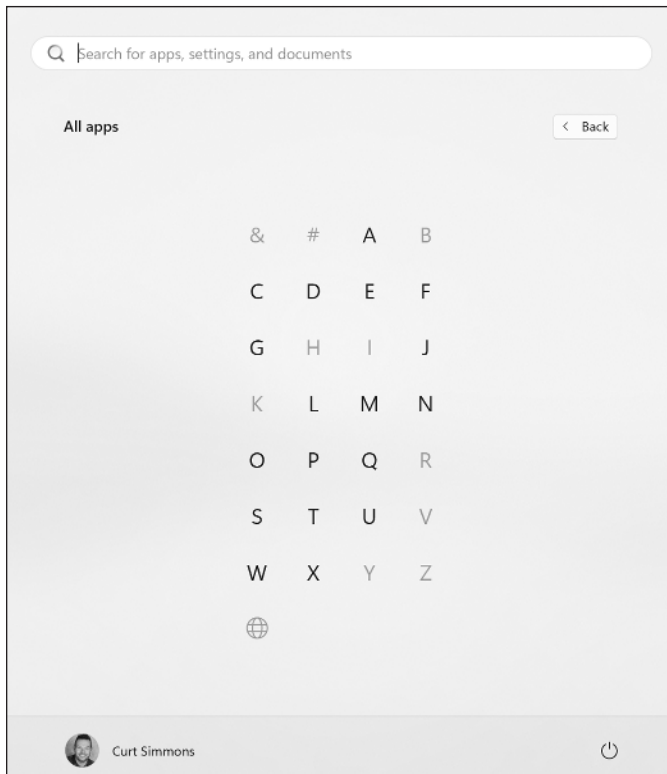
**FIGURE 1-6**



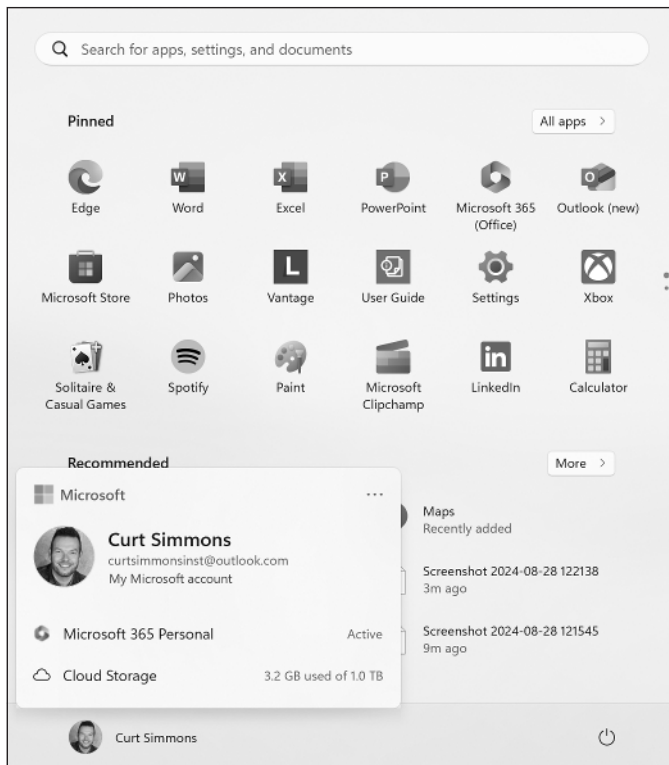
TIP

Rather than scroll through the alphabetical list to find an app, you can select a letter in the list and then select a letter in the pop-up list of letters that appears (refer to **Figure 1-7**). For example, to quickly get to the Weather app, select any letter and then select the W on the pop-up list.

5. Click or tap your image (or image and name) on the Start screen. As shown in **Figure 1-8**, you see a pop-up menu with commands for accessing your account settings (see Chapter 3) or signing out in a favor of another person who shares your computer (see Chapter 4). Who would think that clicking your name would open a pop-up menu?



**FIGURE 1-7**



**FIGURE 1-8**

6. Click or tap Power on the Start menu. As shown in **Figure 1-9**, you see a pop-up menu with commands for putting your computer to sleep, shutting down your computer, and restarting your computer. Later in this chapter, “Shut Down Your Computer” looks into the options on this pop-up menu.
7. Click or tap the Start button. Doing any of these actions when the Start screen is open closes the Start screen. You can also close the Start screen by clicking anywhere on the desktop when the Start screen is open.

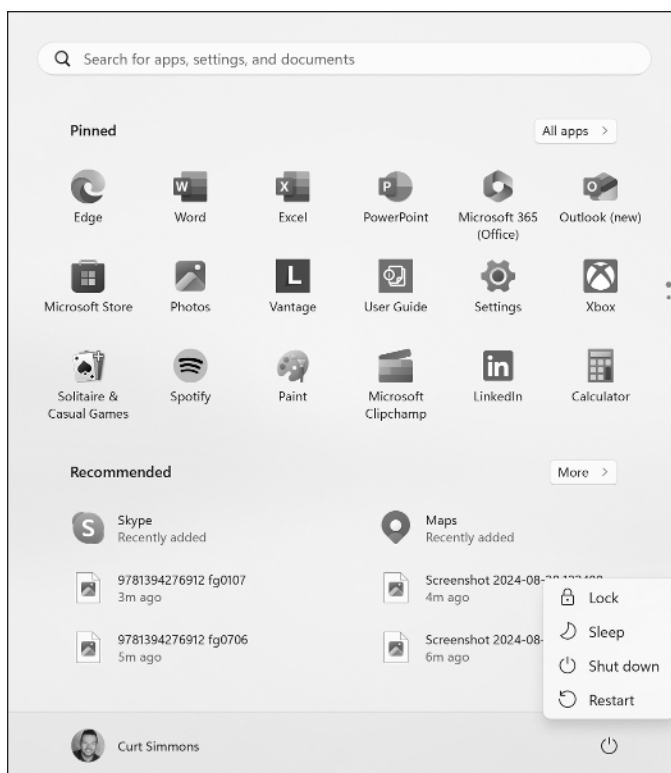


FIGURE 1-9

## Shut Down Your Computer

1. When you have finished using your computer for a while, you may want to shut down Windows 11. Begin by displaying the Start screen:
  - **Mouse:** Click the Start button on the taskbar. The Start button is the leftmost icon and looks like a four-pane window.
  - **Touchscreen:** Tap the Start button.
  - **Keyboard:** Press the  $\mathbb{W}$  key.
2. Click or tap Power on the Start menu (refer to **Figure 1-9**). The Power button is on the bottom right side of the Start menu and looks like a circle with a line through the top.

**3.** Available options appear in a pop-up box. Some or all of the following options appear:

- **Lock:** This option locks your computer and returns you to the login screen. It's a quick-to-use feature that stops anyone else from accessing your computer, which is useful when you need to step away from it for a few moments.
- **Sleep:** This option reduces the computer's power consumption without exiting Windows 11 or closing apps (some computers don't offer this option). As a result, when you wake the computer by moving the mouse or touching the screen or the keyboard, everything is exactly as you left it: Apps and documents are open, if they were open before Sleep.
- **Shut Down:** This option exits Windows 11 and saves power by turning the computer off. In exiting Windows 11, Shut Down closes any apps that are currently running.
- **Restart:** Temporarily shuts down Windows 11 and turns it on again. Use Restart when Windows 11 asks you to or when Windows 11 is misbehaving.



TIP

You can also shut down your computer by using the Start button. Move the pointer over the Start button and right-click. A pop-up menu appears. Select Shut Down or Sign Out on the pop-up menu, and then select an option (Sleep, Shut Down, or Restart).

**4.** Choose Shut Down to turn off the computer.



TIP

On most computers, pressing the power switch also shuts down the computer, though you should use the Shut Down option in Windows 11 rather than press the power switch button. On a laptop, closing the lid may shut down the laptop or put it in sleep mode. However, if you're going to store your computer in a bag or travel with it, shut it down first to make sure that it doesn't overheat inside the bag.

# Start Again on the Lock Screen

1. Turn on your computer. Every time you turn on your computer, the Lock screen appears. As shown in **Figure 1-10**, the Lock screen displays the time, day, and date along with a background image. (You discover how to change this image in Chapter 3.)
2. Dismiss the Lock screen with one of these methods:
  - **Mouse:** Click anywhere, roll the wheel toward you, or drag the entire screen up.
  - **Touchscreen:** Drag the entire screen up.
  - **Keyboard:** Press any key.
3. If you don't use a password or Windows Hello to sign in, wait briefly for the Start screen to appear. If you use a password, enter it with a physical or touch keyboard. Then press Enter or select the arrow next to the password box to display the Windows desktop screen.

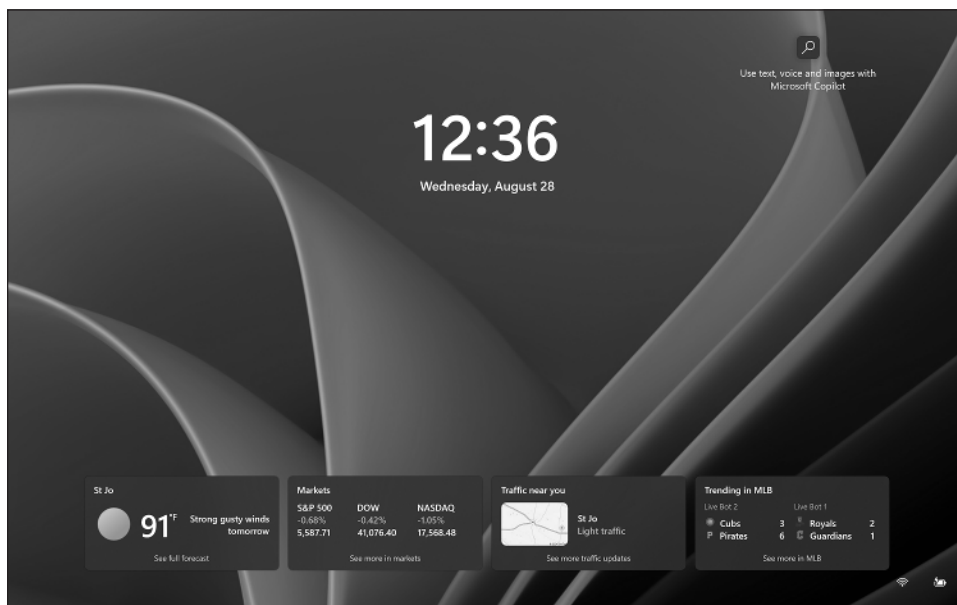


FIGURE 1-10



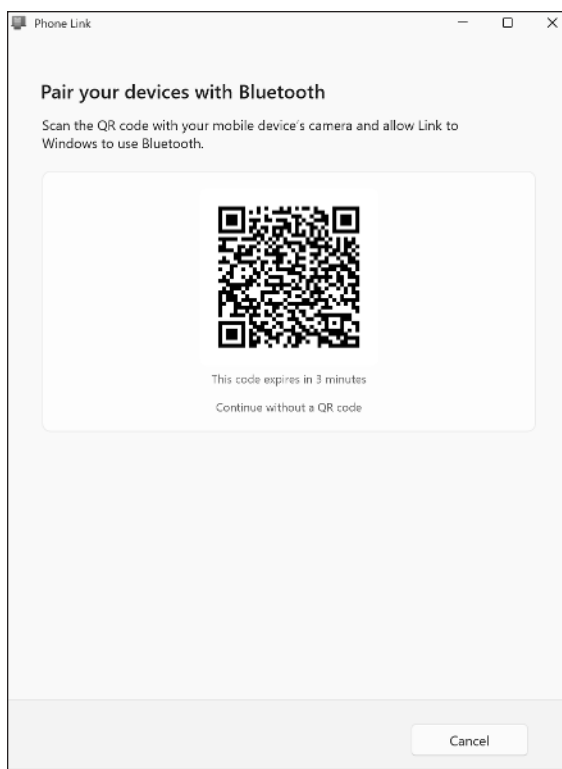
When you take a long break from your PC, it automatically goes to sleep. Windows 11 puts your computer to sleep to save battery life. To decide for yourself how much time passes before your computer goes to sleep, select the Search box on the taskbar and type **lock screen** in the Search box. Choose Lock Screen Settings in the search results. On the Personalization > Lock Screen window, scroll down the screen to the Screen Timeout and select it. You come to the Power & Sleep screen. Choose a setting from the Sleep menu. For example, choose 15 minutes to put your computer to sleep after 15 minutes of inactivity.

## Connect Your Phone to Windows 11

Windows 11 can connect with and sync with your phone. This capability means that if someone calls or texts you while you're using Windows 11, you can answer that phone call or text using your computer. You don't even have to reach for your phone to do so!

Windows 11 uses a built-in app called Phone Link to connect with your phone. Here's how you set it up:

1. In the Search box on the taskbar, type **phone link**.
2. Select Phone Link from the search results.
3. On the Phone Link screen, choose Android or iPhone (depending on what kind of phone you use). The app then asks you to sign into your Microsoft account.
4. The next screen gives you a QR code to scan with your phone's camera (shown in **Figure 1-11**). To scan the code, just open your camera app and point your camera at the code (don't take a picture of it). Then follow the instructions on your phone to complete the Phone Link setup.



**FIGURE 1-11**



**TIP**

Phone Link uses Bluetooth wireless technology to connect to your phone. Bluetooth must be enabled on your phone for the connection to work. See your phone's documentation for more information.

