**Turning off your computer properly**

In this article

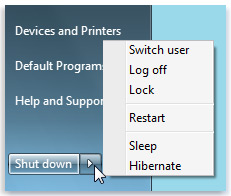
* [Use the Shut down button on the Start menu](mshelp://windows/?id=6e68c6a2-8de9-4a89-831a-109b3d3fff91#DAFEFBAFEAO_7)
* [Using sleep](mshelp://windows/?id=6e68c6a2-8de9-4a89-831a-109b3d3fff91#DAFEFBAFEAO_83)
* [When to shut down](mshelp://windows/?id=6e68c6a2-8de9-4a89-831a-109b3d3fff91#DAFEFBAFEAO_98)
* [Laptop users: Close the lid](mshelp://windows/?id=6e68c6a2-8de9-4a89-831a-109b3d3fff91#DAFEFBAFEAO_139)

When you're finished using your computer, it's important to turn it off properly—not only to save energy, but also to help keep your computer more secure and to ensure that your data is saved. There are three ways to turn off your computer: pressing your computer's power button, using the Shut down button (sometimes called the Power button) on the Start menu, and, if you have a laptop, closing the lid.

**Use the Shut down button on the Start menu**

To turn off your computer using the Start menu, click the Start button Picture of the Start button, and then, in the lower-right corner of the Start menu, click Shut down.

When you click Shut down, your computer closes all open [programs](mshelp://windows/?id=9ada1558-de2c-46fa-b6f3-5330af66ac9b#gtmt_gls_application_def), along with Windows itself, and then completely turns off your computer and display. Shutting down doesn't save your work, so you must save your [files](mshelp://windows/?id=4c7a98ab-e99e-485d-ae81-28110bfe3b9c#gtmt_file_def) first.

Click the arrow next to the Shut down button for more options.

[**To change the Shut down button settings**](NULL)

By default, the Shut down button shuts down your computer. But you can change what happens when you click that button.

1. [Click to open Taskbar and Start Menu Properties.](shortcut:%25systemroot%25\system32\control.exe%20/name%20Microsoft.TaskbarAndStartMenu)
2. Click the Start Menu tab.
3. In the Power button action list, click an item, and then click OK.

* If you're connected to a network [domain](mshelp://windows/?id=d373ac43-ecac-43bb-884a-e78e6e2c7b7a#gtmt_domain_def), it's possible that settings made by your network administrator ([Group Policy](mshelp://windows/?id=c74bf553-c4f6-4b2b-9116-d31378da525b#gtmt_group_policy_def) settings) will prevent you from completing the previous steps.

There's one other form that the Shut down button can take. If you've set your computer to receive automatic [updates](mshelp://windows/?id=b9adfabd-022f-4f4a-808d-f5e14e171f3f#gtmt_update_def), and the updates are ready to be installed, the Shut down button will look like this:

Picture of the Shut down button when it's ready to install updates and shut down your computerThe Shut down button (install updates and shut down)

In this case, when you click the Shut down button, Windows installs the updates and then shuts down your computer.

**Note**

* Starting your computer after it has been shut down takes longer than waking your computer from sleep.

**Using sleep**

You can put your computer into sleep mode instead of shutting it down. When your computer is asleep, the display turns off and often the computer's fan stops. Usually, a light on the outside of your computer case blinks or turns yellow to indicate that the computer is asleep. The whole process takes only a few seconds.

Because Windows will remember what you were doing, there's no need to close your programs and files before putting your computer into sleep mode. But it's always a good idea to save your work before putting the computer into any low-power mode. The next time you turn on your computer (and enter your password, if required), the screen will look exactly as it did when you turned off your computer.

To wake your computer, press the power button on your computer case. Because you don't have to wait for Windows to start, your computer wakes within seconds and you can resume work almost immediately.

**Note**

* When your computer is asleep, it uses a very small amount of power to maintain your work in its memory. If you're using a laptop, don't worry—the battery won't be drained. After the computer has been sleeping for several hours, or if the battery is running low, your work is saved to the [hard disk](mshelp://windows/?id=5a2fccaa-2424-4646-b571-97b557e2c87b#gtmt_hard_disk_def), and then your computer turns off completely, drawing no power.

**When to shut down**

Even though putting your computer into sleep mode is the fastest way to turn it off and the best option for resuming work quickly, there are certain times when you need to shut down:

* When you're adding or upgrading the hardware inside your computer—such as installing [memory](mshelp://windows/?id=3ae4adb8-c25b-492d-9ba6-6e3f3cb1e796#gtmt_memory_def_def), a disk drive, a [sound card](mshelp://windows/?id=51291ed3-9aba-4136-a27d-e63e6f98a040#gtmt_sound_card_def), or a [video card](mshelp://windows/?id=11d8fdb5-acfe-4a5f-81d4-f4a4d7b2a7d9#gtmt_video_card_def). Shut down the computer, and then disconnect it from its power source before proceeding with the upgrade.
* When you're adding a printer, monitor, external drive, or other hardware device that doesn't connect to a [USB](mshelp://windows/?id=600d2758-2686-4fec-8af6-7f9aabbe777c#gtmt_universal_serial_bus__usb__def) or IEEE 1394 [port](mshelp://windows/?id=8800062b-5df3-4655-adba-b209821d6185#gtmt_port_def) on your computer. Shut down the computer before connecting the device.

**Note**

* When adding hardware that uses a USB cable, you don't need to turn off the computer first. Most newer devices use USB cables. A USB cable looks like this:

USB cable

**Laptop users: Close the lid**

If you have a laptop, there's an even easier way to turn off your computer: Close the lid. You can choose whether your computer sleeps, shuts down, or enters another power-saving state. See [Change what happens when you close your laptop](mshelp://windows/?id=0bd37789-cb50-4ca6-9976-0774e44ffcea).

If you prefer, you can turn off your laptop by pressing the power button on its case. See [Change what happens when you press the power button on your computer](mshelp://windows/?id=0490729c-26fa-499c-9df6-e672afc3f251).