

Changing Windows Settings

New to Windows 7? Even though there's a lot in common with the version of Windows that you had before, you might still need a hand getting up to speed. This guide is filled with useful info about changing settings in Windows so it works the way you want it to, and info about tools you can use to keep Windows running smoothly.

It covers the topics that Charlene Shepard showed you in her video, *Changing Windows Settings*: <http://windows.microsoft.com/get-started>

Use this guide as a reference while exploring what you can do with Windows 7.

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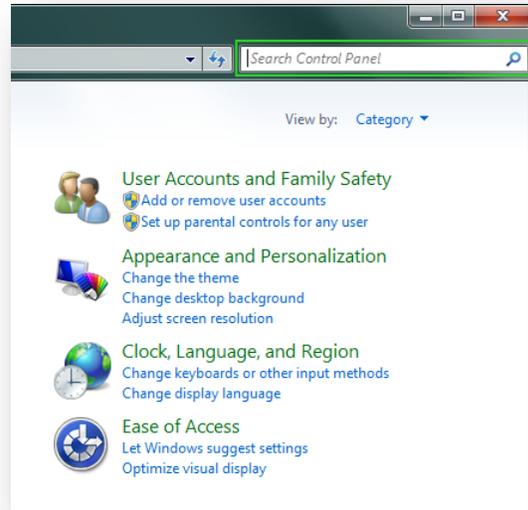
Use Control Panel to change settings

Control Panel is the main place to change settings. You can use these settings to control nearly everything about how Windows looks and works, so that it's just right for you. Here's how:

1. Click the **Start** button, and then click **Control Panel**.

There are two ways to find Control Panel items:

- **Use search.** To find a setting you're interested in or a task you want to perform, type a word or phrase in the search box. For example, type "sound" to find specific settings for your sound card, system sounds, and the volume on your PC.
- **Browse.** You can explore Control Panel by clicking different categories (for example, System and Security, Programs, or Ease of Access), and viewing the tasks listed under each category. Or, under **View by**, click either **Large icons** or **Small icons** to view a list of all Control Panel items.



Search for Control Panel items from the Start menu

You can also search for Control Panel items in the Start menu. Here's how:

- Click the **Start** button, and then type a search term in the search box. Click a result to go straight to the setting you're looking for.

Control Panel items that have been renamed

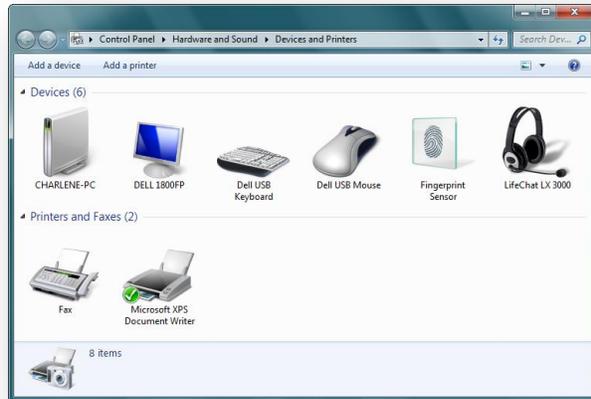
Some Control Panel items have been renamed, divided into separate items, or combined into one. To find them, type the new name in the search box in the Start menu or in Control Panel. Here's the list:

Old name (or names)	New name (or names)
Add or Remove Programs	Programs and Features
Appearance and Themes	Appearance and Personalization
Display	Personalize Display
Sounds, Speech, and Audio	Hardware and Sound
Printers and Other Hardware	
System and Maintenance	System and Security
Security Center	Action Center
Accessibility Options	Ease of Access

Install, view, and manage devices

To see all the devices connected to your computer, use one of them, or troubleshoot one that isn't working properly, open the Devices and Printers folder. Here's how:

- Click the **Start** button, and then click **Devices and Printers**.



Master your devices with Device Stage

A new feature in Windows 7 called Device Stage takes device management a step further. Device Stage is a simple way to view the status of compatible mobile phones, music players, and other devices. Here's how to use a device with Device Stage:

1. Turn on your device and connect it to your computer using a using a USB cable or a wireless connection.
2. Click the **Start** button, and then click **Devices and Printers**.
3. In Devices and Printers, double-click the device.

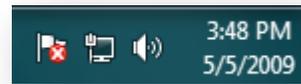
If Device Stage doesn't open, then your device isn't compatible with Device Stage. If your device is compatible with Device Stage, you'll see a list of tasks that you can do. For example, if you have a compatible smartphone, you can use Device Stage to transfer music, videos, contacts, and appointments from your computer to your phone and keep them in sync.



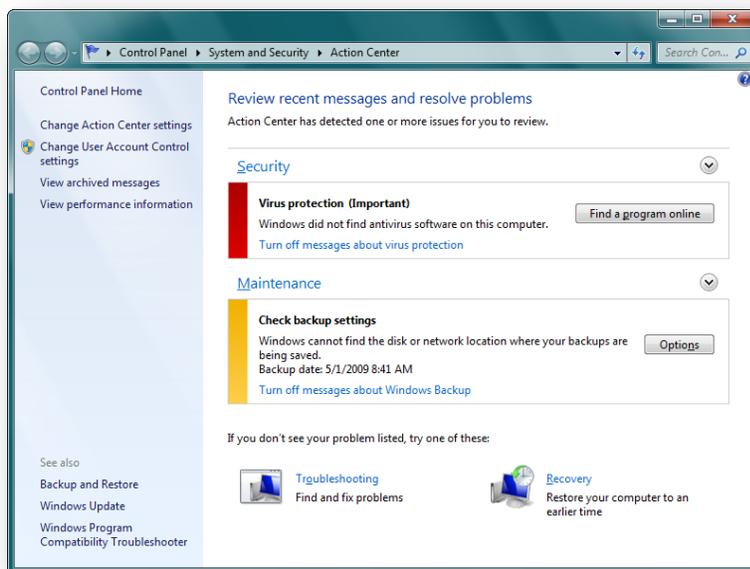
Use Action Center to keep your PC running smoothly

Action Center is a central place to view alerts and take actions that can help keep Windows running smoothly. Here's how to open Action Center:

- Click the flag icon, and then click **Open Action Center**.



Action Center displays messages about security and maintenance settings that need your attention. Items with a red marker are labeled **Important**, and indicate significant issues that should be addressed soon, such as an outdated antivirus program that needs updating. Items with a yellow marker are issues that you should consider addressing, like recommended maintenance tasks.



To view details about issues in either the Security or Maintenance section, click the heading or the chevron next to the heading to expand the section.

You can quickly see whether there are any new messages in Action Center by pointing to the flag icon.

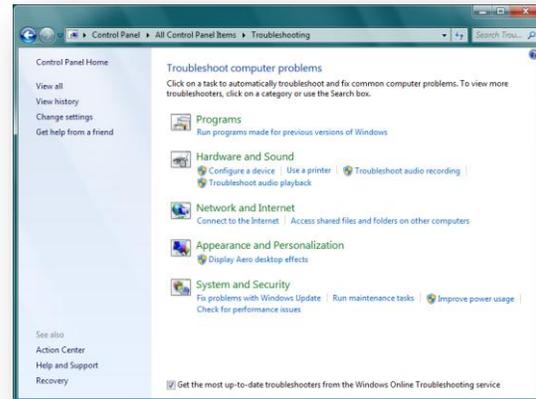
If you're having a problem with your computer, check Action Center to see if the issue has been identified. If it hasn't, you can also find links to troubleshooters and other tools that can help fix problems.

Find and fix problems on your PC

Troubleshooting in Control Panel contains several programs that can automatically fix some common problems, such as problems with networking, hardware and devices, using the web, and program compatibility. Although troubleshooters aren't designed to fix every problem, they're a useful thing to try first, as they can often save you time and effort. Here's how to use them:

1. Click the **Start** button, type "troubleshoot" in the search box, and then click **Troubleshooting**.
2. Click the troubleshooter that you want to run.

To see all troubleshooters, click **View all**.



Back up your PC

By turning on automatic backups, you don't have to worry about losing documents, pictures, music, videos, and other files on your PC. Here's how to get started:

1. Click the **Start** button, type "backup" in the search box, and then click **Backup and Restore**.
2. Click **Set up backup**, and then follow the steps in the wizard.

Your backup will automatically include files in common locations such as the desktop and libraries that contain your pictures, documents, music, and videos. Or you can customize your backup by selecting the individual drives and folders that you want to back up.

You can also schedule an automatic system image backup—which is basically a snapshot of your entire computer. If your hard drive or computer fails, you can restore your files, settings, and programs on a new computer or hard drive.

