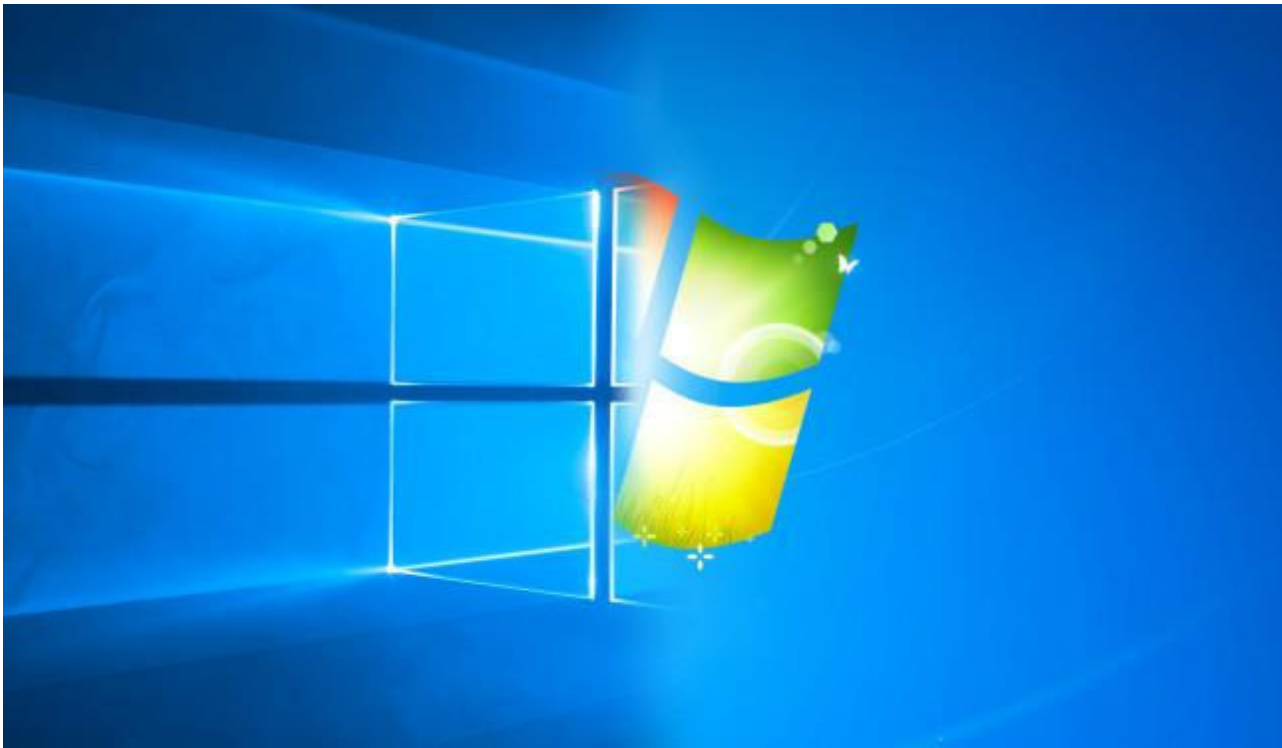


# How to Make Windows 10 Look More Like Windows 7



Joe Keeley August 21, 2015



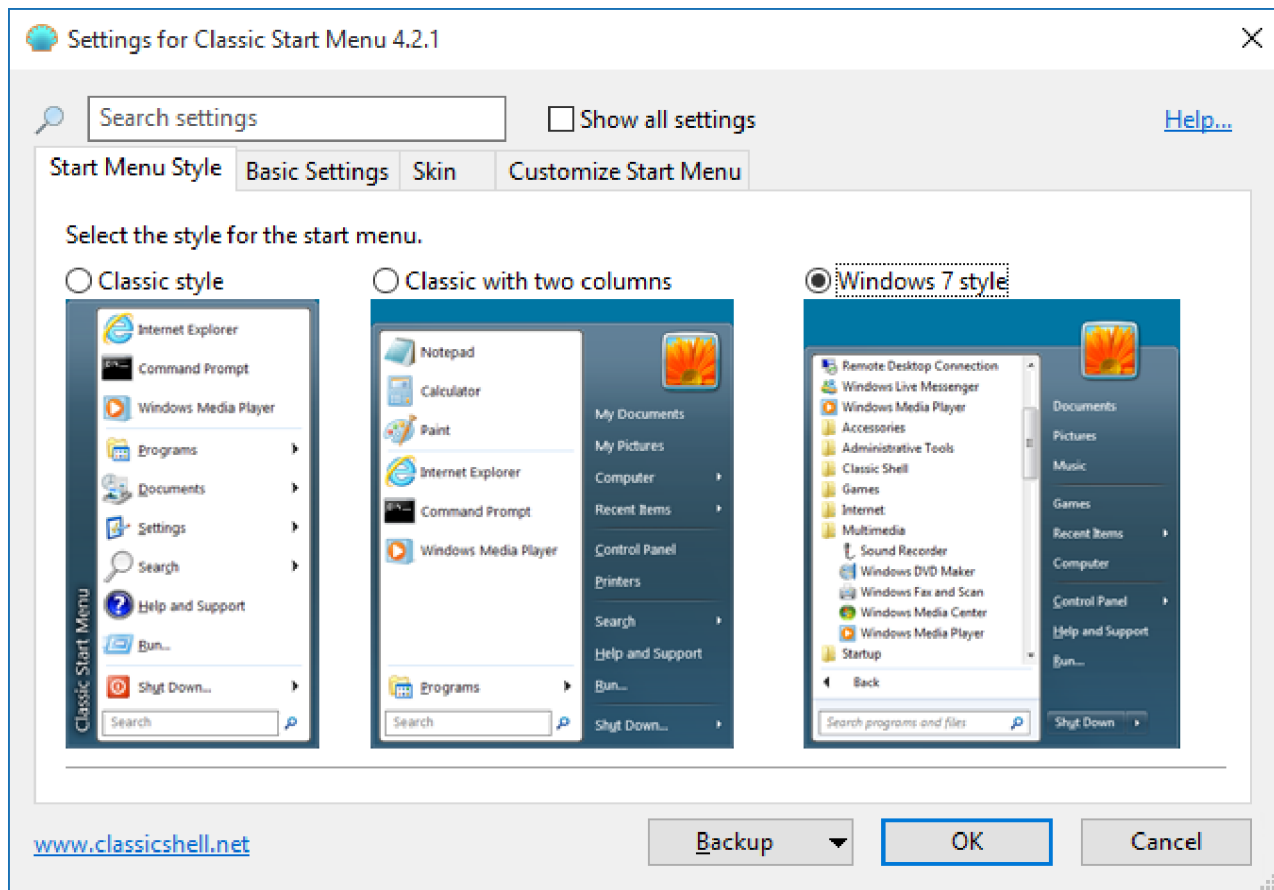
Windows 10 introduced many updates and the visual design wasn't spared. If you've [upgraded to Windows 10](#) to take advantage of this new functionality, but prefer the aesthetics of [Windows 7](#), there are steps you can take to mimic the older Windows 7 OS.

From changing the Start menu to removing the lock screen, you can get Windows 10 looking more how you want it and what you're used to. The good thing is, that the majority of these tweaks can be done without using third-party software.

## Start Menu

Windows 8 saw a big transformation to the [Start Menu](#). In fact, Menu was dropped for Screen, offering users a tiled-based approach to program access, though Microsoft back-peddled on the decision and [reintroduced the Start button come 8.1](#). With Windows 10, the more traditional styles of 7 have been combined with the tiles of 8. But for those of us who don't care for the new look, there's no in-built way to return to the classic design of the Start Menu.

That's where a program called [Classic Shell](#) comes in. Head to their website, click **Download Now** and then run the installation wizard. Once installed, perform a system search for **classic start menu** and select the relevant result.

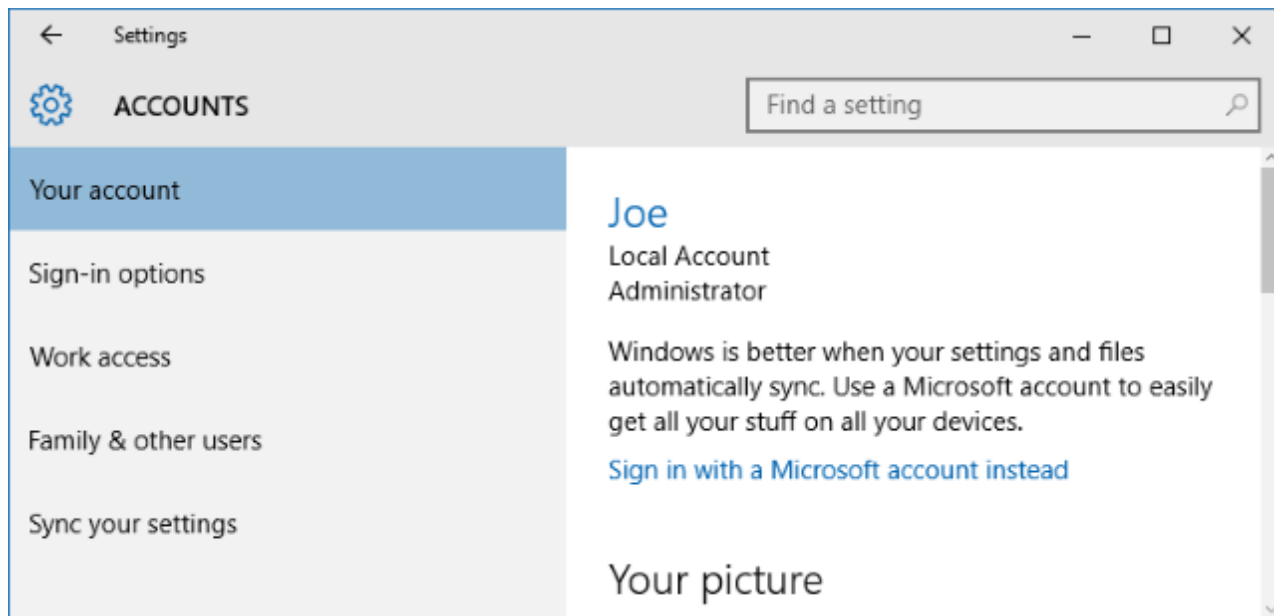


The first screen will allow you to select the style for the Start Menu, so click [Windows 7 style](#). You can then delve into the other tabs, which will let you customize the look and functionality of the Start Menu even further.

For example, click **Start Button** if you want to use a custom image in the Taskbar. Head to the **Customize Start Menu** tab to have full control over what quick links will appear on your Start Menu. You can personalize nearly everything and get it functioning and looking exactly how you had it on Windows 7.

## Login with a Local Account

Microsoft is very keen to get everyone joining their ecosystem and making full use of their services like OneDrive and Office 365. Part of that means [using a Microsoft account](#) and it's being pushed in Windows 10, too. It allows your settings and files to be synced across all Windows 10 devices, but those who don't want to have their user account always connected can opt for a local account instead, like how it was on Windows 7.



First, press **Windows Key + I** to launch Settings and click **Accounts**. If your account is a Microsoft one, you'll see **Sign in with a local account instead** near the top of this window. Click this and you'll be asked to verify your password. Do so, continuing to follow the wizard through and setting your local username and password. Everything on your account will be the same as before, except now it's entirely local.

If you want to add a new local user account, navigate back to the Accounts screen. From here, select **Family & other users** from the left menu. Then select **Add someone else to this PC**. A new window will open asking how the new user will sign in, so click **The person who I want to add doesn't have an email address** and then on the next screen click **Add a user without a Microsoft account**. It's slightly cumbersome to get here, but now you'll be able to create the new username and password as you follow the wizard through.

## Remove the Lock Screen

The Windows 10 lock screen shows things like the date, time and notifications, but it's really just an extra step before you can get to the login screen. While it might make sense on mobile devices, there's no harm getting rid of it on desktop. Doing so will require minor fiddling in the registry, so only proceed if you're confident in following the instructions.



Press **Windows Key + R**, type **regedit**, and hit **OK**. If User Account Control pops up, click **OK** again. Once the [Registry Editor](#) has opened, navigate to the following section:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows
```

Now **right click** an empty space in the right pane and select **New > Key**. The key will be highlighted automatically; rename it to **Personalization**. Select the key you just created, **right click** in the right pane again and select **New > DWORD (32-bit) Value**. Name the value **NoLockScreen**. Double click it, set the **Value data** to **1** and then click **OK**.

Your changes will take effect immediately. The lock screen will be disabled and the relevant settings within Windows will be deactivated. If you ever want to re-enable the lock screen, navigate to the NoLockScreen value again and set the value to 0.

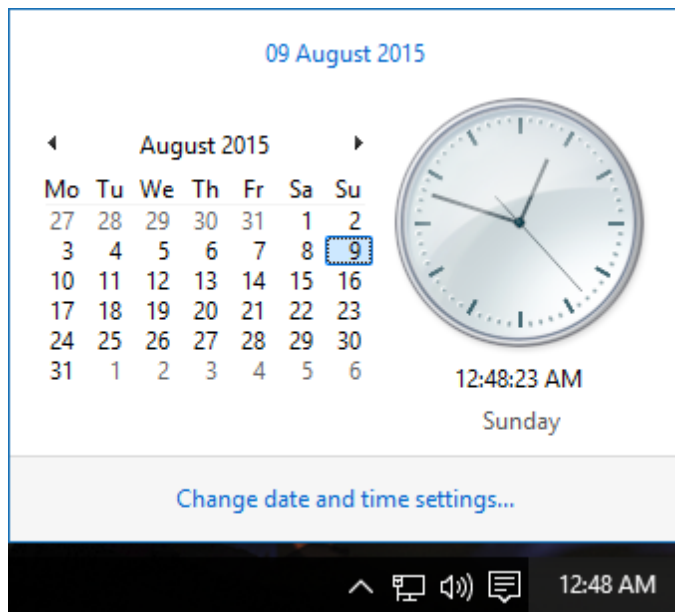
## Notification Area

Notification icons like the speaker and calendar have some visual changes in Windows 10. Using the registry we can change these back to their [Windows 7](#) designs. Again, the registry should be used with caution. Press **Windows Key + R**, type **regedit**, and press **OK** to launch it.

To bring back the old vertical volume control design, go to the following registry path:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\
```

Select **Edit > New > Key** and name it **MTCUVC**. Then select **Edit > New > DWORD (32-bit) Value** and name it **EnableMtcUvc**. Double-click the newly created DWORD, set the **Value Data** to **0** and click **OK**.



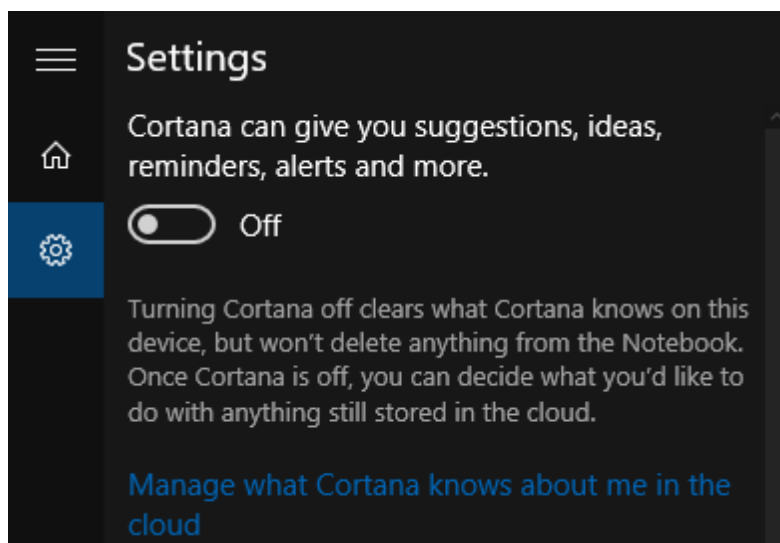
To bring back the analogue clock and smaller calendar design, navigate to the following registry path:

`HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\ImmersiveShell`

Go to **Edit > New > DWORD (32-bit) Value** and name it **UseWin32TrayClockExperience**. Next, **double-click** the DWORD, set the **Value Data** to **1**, and then click **OK**.

## Disable Cortana

Cortana has been promoted heavily with Windows 10. It's Microsoft's alternative to Siri and Google Now. A [personal assistant that will help you search](#), along with tracking packages, creating calendar events, setting alarms, and more. You might not be using it, but that doesn't mean Cortana isn't disabled completely.



Press **Windows Key + I** to launch Settings, then search for **Cortana**. Select **Cortana & Search settings** and the relevant options will open from your Taskbar. To disable Cortana, all you need to is set that top slider to **Off**.

If you want to get rid of the search bar from the Taskbar, which will still be there even if Cortana is disabled, just **right click** the Taskbar and go to **Search > Hidden**. Alternatively, you can set it to show only an icon that opens the search when clicked.

## Style like Seven

There's nothing inherently wrong with change, but some elements of [Windows 7](#) looked better than they do in Windows 10. The great thing is that you can mix and match them, picking and choosing from the best of each version.

With Windows 10 [applying forced updates](#), we could see the visual design change down the line without getting a say in it, but hopefully these tweaks will always be available to retain the classic Windows 7 look.



# How to Set Up Cortana & Remove Her in Windows 10



Christian Cawley July, 14, 2015



Cortana, Windows 10's personal digital assistant, is ready to change your life. Once you upgrade to Microsoft's new operating system, the voice-or-keyboard activated assistant will be available to help you complete tasks, ensure you don't miss appointments, and send emails and messages on your behalf.

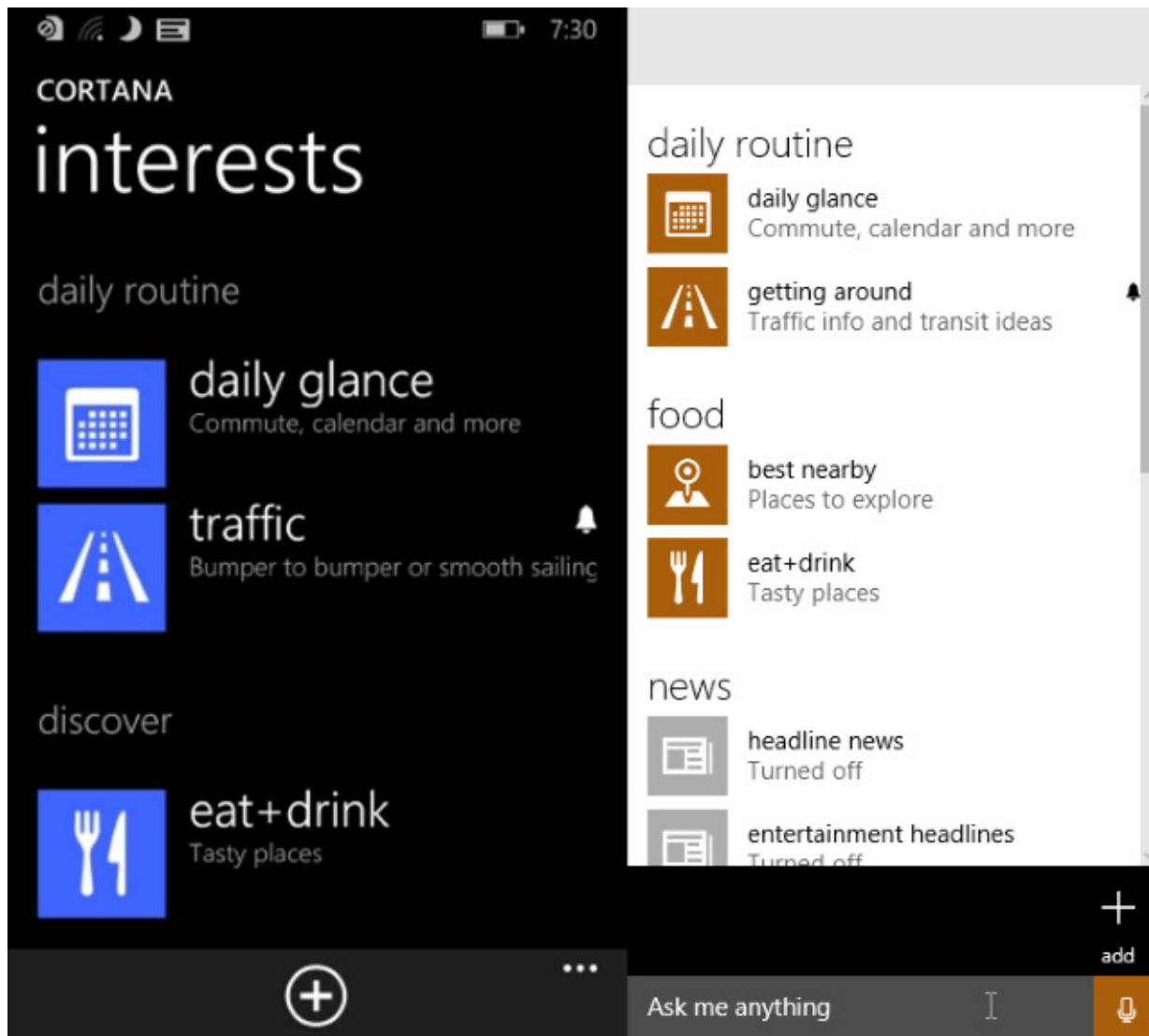
Originally released with [Windows Phone 8.1](#), Cortana—named after the AI character from Microsoft's Halo, one of [the most popular gaming series of all time](#)—is going to be a key element of Windows 10. Let's take a look at how to enable, configure, train, and (if necessary) remove or disable Cortana on your Windows 10 device.

## What Cortana Can Do For You

With Cortana activated, many tasks that would normally take a few moments with your keyboard and mouse can be easily uttered, your intonation detected by microphone, and acted upon by the digital assistant.

To get a good idea of what Cortana can do, see the earlier posts looking at the system on [Windows Phone 8.1](#), where it was first introduced—and Cortana is just one of several [Windows Phone features included in Windows 10](#).

In particular, take a look at [Cortana as a digital assistant](#); Cortana has proved so popular on Windows Phone that Microsoft has plans to roll [Cortana out to iOS and Android](#) as well! In short, Cortana adds appointments and reminders to your calendar, takes dictation for sending messages, does any research for you on the web, and even launches apps.



Although you can use your keyboard, the best results with Cortana are achieved by using a microphone. If your PC doesn't have one already, [dig out a mic](#) and plug it in before getting started.


## Setting Up Cortana on Windows 10

Unlike early [preview builds of Windows 10](#), Cortana is front and center in the final (and late previews) release of Windows 10.


Instead, all you need to do is click or tap the microphone icon in the search bar or say “Hey Cortana” (if listening was enabled), followed by your search term or question, such as “what time is it?” or “what is today’s date?”

For a genuinely powerful digital assistant, you'll need to set things up properly. Begin by clicking into the Cortana search box, and waiting for the results pane to appear. In the top-left corner of this, click the “hamburger” menu and then open Notebook. This tool allows you to determine what information Cortana can gather about you, and the more data she has, the more she can do.







# Notebook




About Me




Connected Accounts




Settings







Eat & Drink




Events




Finance




Getting around




Movies & TV




Music




News



Sports




Travel




Weather


Ask me anything




# Settings




Cortana can give you suggestions, ideas, reminders, alerts and more.



☒ On




Turning Cortana off clears what Cortana knows on this device, but won't delete anything from the Notebook. After Cortana is off, you can decide what you'd like to do with anything still stored in the cloud.




[Manage what Cortana knows about me in the cloud](#)

## Hey Cortana

Let Cortana respond to "Hey Cortana."



☒ On




Cortana is always ready when this is on, which uses more battery.

### Respond best:

☐ To anyone

☒ To me




For Cortana to respond only to you she needs to learn your voice first.

Relearn my voice

### Find flights and more


Detect tracking info, such as flights, in messages on my device.



☒ On

### Taskbar tidbits

Let Cortana pipe up from time to time with thoughts and greetings in the Search box.



☒ On

[Bing SafeSearch settings](#)

Change how Bing filters adult content from your search results.

Ask me anything

Cortana will have already asked you to input your name, but you can change this and more by opening **About Me**. Here, set the name you want her to use. Under Settings you can enable tracking info by switching on **Find flights and more**, which analyses your emails for such details.

The **Settings** screen also enables you to toggle whether Cortana responds to “Hey, Cortana” which is very similar to Android’s “OK, Google”—the system will constantly be on the look-out for you saying this phrase, and will open Cortana when it is detected. You can let Cortana respond **To anyone** uttering the phrase or train her to recognize your voice and respond **To you** only.

For instance, you can provide information about what news topics you’re interested in, perhaps surrounding a TV show, political movement, or sports team. You can specify favorite places which can be used to calculate distance and routes for driving (particularly suited to Windows 10 mobile and tablet devices) and set reminders based on your location (such as “remind me to borrow that chair from mum’s house.”)

## Using Cortana in Unsupported Territories

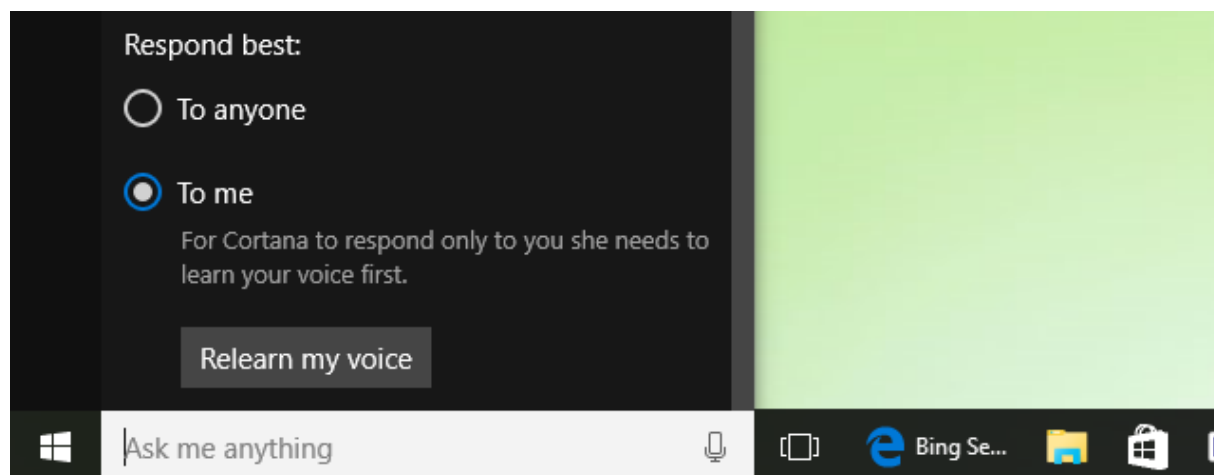
In many cases, if you’re not in a region with a supported Cortana language, you can still activate the service by adjusting your regional settings. Ensure you have the [English \(United States\) language pack installed](#); if not, **Add a language**.

Do this by opening **Start > Settings** and selecting **Time & Language**. From here, open **Region & language**. Under *Country or region* select **United States** and if you cannot see **English (United States)** under *Languages*, click **Add a language** and select the respective one. Finally, select **English (United States)** and click **Set as default**.

But what if Cortana doesn’t understand a word you’re saying? Well, you can open **Settings > Time & language > Speech** and look for the box labelled **Recognize non-native accents for this language**. This should help in most international cases, although regional accents might be harder for Cortana to discern.

## Cortana and Your Unusual Accent

While it’s fair to say that there are a handful of accents that Cortana has difficulty with, the vast majority are easily understood, and those that are not can be added to her database with some training.



To train Cortana, open the menu and go to **Notebook > Settings**, scroll down and click or tap **Learn my voice**. You'll then be prompted to start talking to Cortana, so that she can get an idea of how you pronounce and intone particular words. In the majority of cases, she'll be able to detect your commands within a few minutes of training.

## Three Great Cortana Commands to Get Started

Once you've trained Cortana to hear your voice accurately, get started with these three commands, which will give you a good idea of what she can do.

1. Create a meeting with Tyrion Lannister at noon tomorrow.
2. When Rose calls, remind me to ask her to pick up something for the BBQ.
3. Wake me up at 5 am tomorrow morning.

When Cortana was first released on Windows Phone 8.1, she didn't have the same depth of questioning and functionality that she has now. It is safe to say that Microsoft will be adding more to Cortana in future Windows 10 updates. Already, you can request information about topical news, stocks and shares, have Cortana play tunes, get information on flights and weather, connect her to Office 365, and much more.

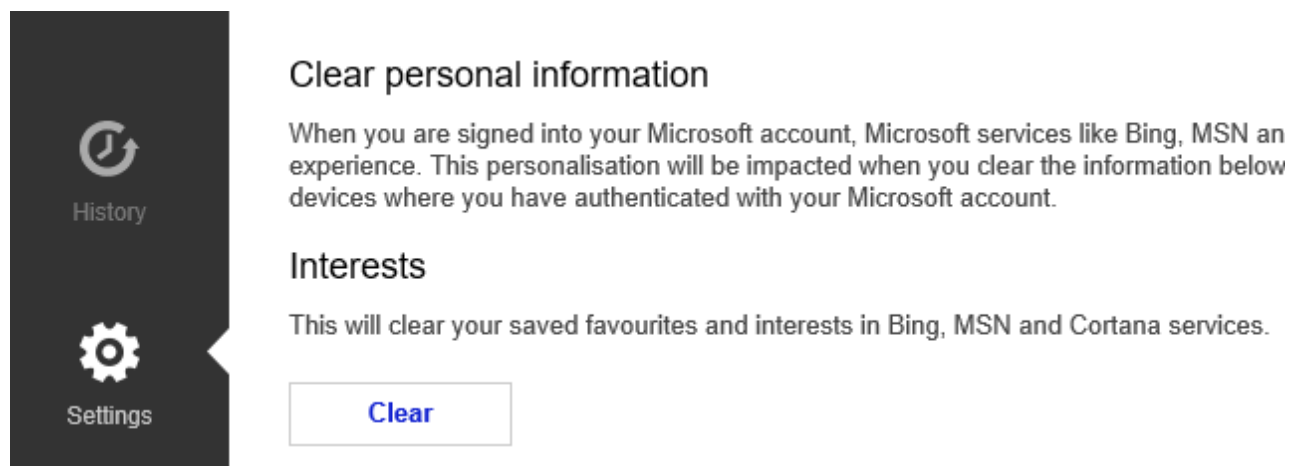
If you want to have a chuckle, Cortana on the desktop is just as [amusing as Cortana on Windows Phone...](#)

Our previous look at [Cortana on the desktop](#) shows you how to do much more with Microsoft's digital assistant.

## Cortana and Your Privacy

Cortana knows a lot about you; perhaps even more than your partner. What she knows is stored in a secure online database attached to [your OneDrive cloud](#), but if you're concerned about this, you can visit an online settings page and adjust how much information is stored, or even delete it entirely.

To make changes, open **Start > Settings** and select **Privacy**. Then, find **Speech, inking & typing** and look for *Manage cloud info*. Use the **Go to Bing and manage personal info for all your choices** link to change what Cortana searches for and keeps.



**Clear personal information**

When you are signed into your Microsoft account, Microsoft services like Bing, MSN and Cortana will personalize your experience. This personalisation will be impacted when you clear the information below on devices where you have authenticated with your Microsoft account.

**Interests**

This will clear your saved favourites and interests in Bing, MSN and Cortana services.

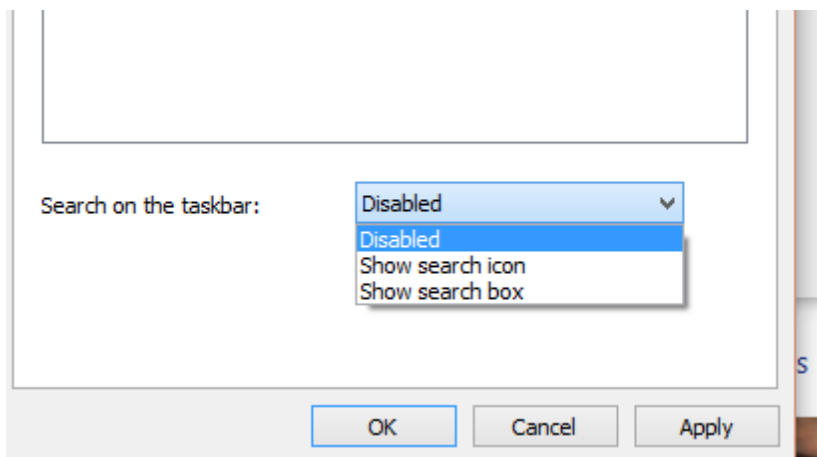
[Clear](#)

In the **Personalization** tab you have the option to **Clear** favorites and interests in Cortana, which for privacy you should do if you want to keep Cortana's data collection under control. You can also use this button to tidy up if you decide to disable Cortana.

## Cortana Not For You? Disable Her!

Cortana is probably [Microsoft's greatest productivity tool](#) since it released Microsoft Office. However, if Cortana is something you won't use, you can disable the digital assistant. This is done by opening **Cortana > Notebook > Settings** and switching Cortana to **Off**.

If you never plan to use Cortana then you might like to stop her from collecting information on you. Return to **Start > Settings > Privacy > Speech, inking & typing**, and select **Stop getting to know me** to completely disable Cortana, confirming your action by clicking **Turn off**.



(If you like Cortana, but are more concerned about the amount of space the search box takes up, right-click on the task bar, select **Cortana** and select **Hidden** to remove the search box completely, or **Show Cortana icon** to reduce the search box down to an icon. If you have disabled the search box, but want to run a search, press **Windows key** and simply start typing.)

## Cortana on the Desktop - What Can She Do for You

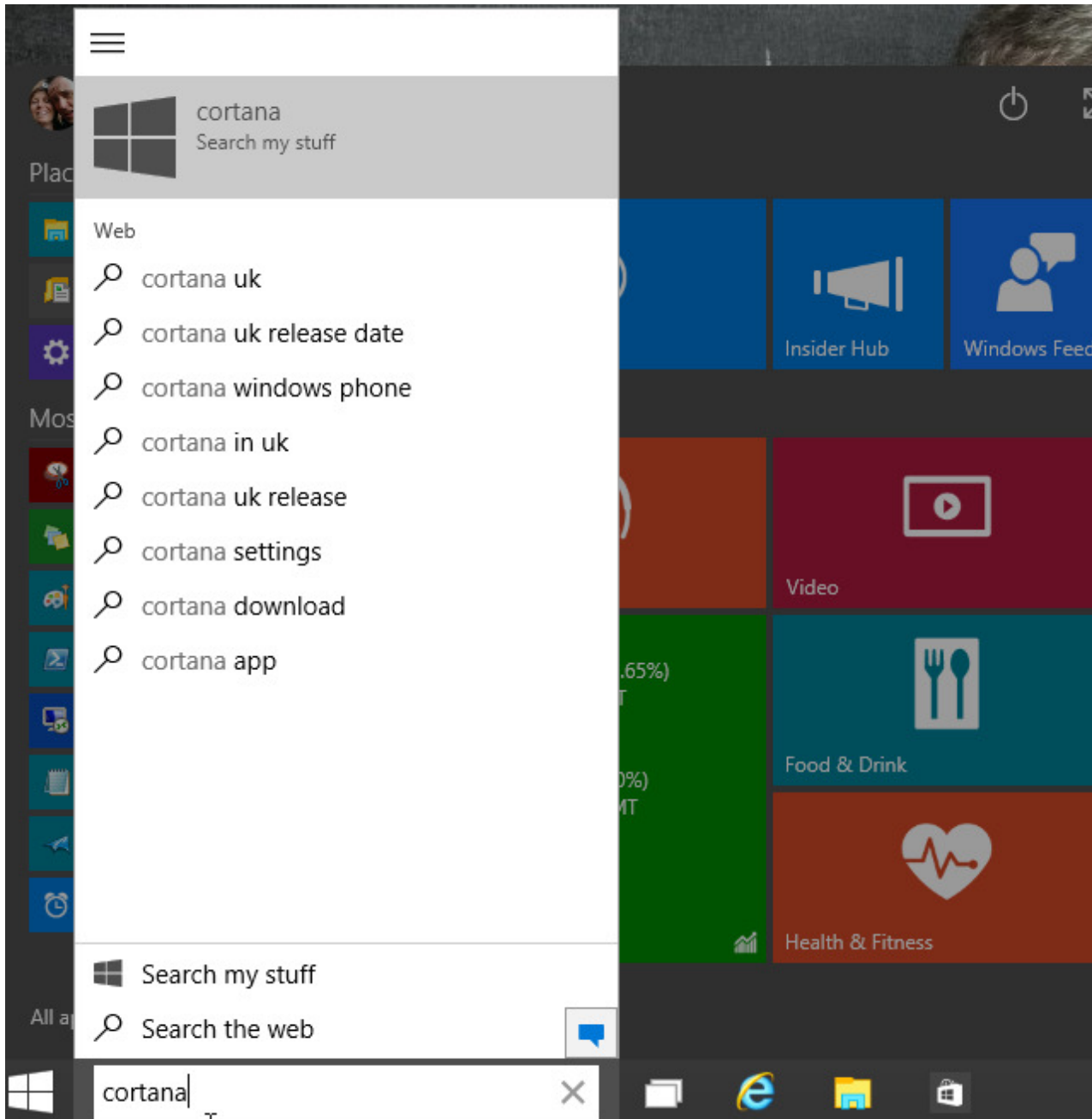


*Christian Cawley January, 30, 2015*

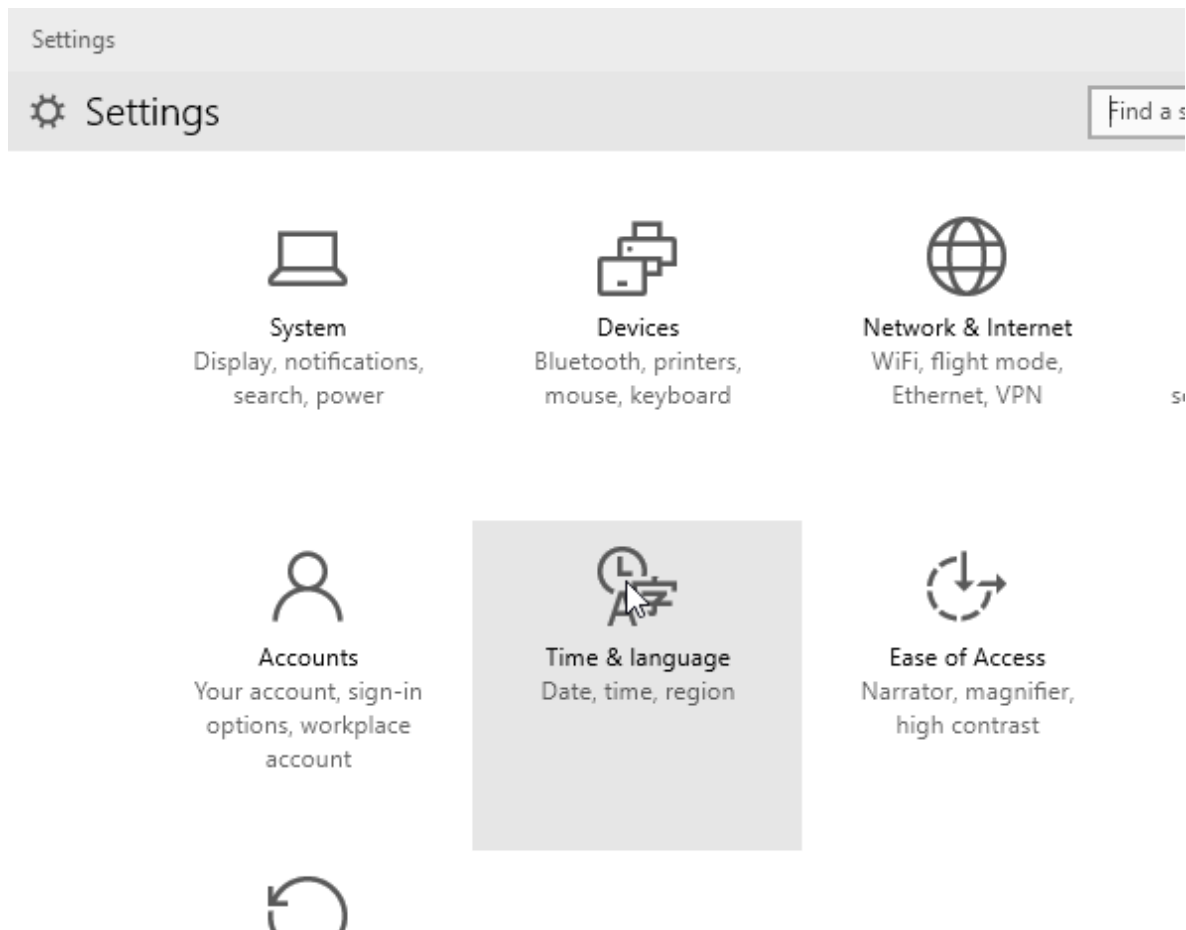


## Activating Cortana on Windows 10

In order to use Cortana on your Windows 10 preview, click into the Search bar, situated beside the Start button on the desktop Taskbar, type “Cortana” and click the first result. That’s right – [no more hiding for Cortana](#), she’s now ready for the big time on desktop!



Based in the USA? Cortana should be enabled almost instantly. If you’re based outside of the USA, however, you’ll need to change your regional settings and primary language to trick Windows 10 into thinking you’re in the Land of the Free.



In the Start menu, click **Settings**, then **Time & language** where you will be able to set your location as the United States, and your language as English (United States). Both changes are saved by click the back arrow.

You'll then be able to start using Cortana, beginning by telling her your name.

## Cortana's Desktop Dwelling

Popping up on the Windows 10 desktop, right next to the Start button, Cortana takes over the newly situated Windows search box. At this stage, her appearance is a little muted, a mix of main and accent colors based on those chosen for Windows 10.

Appearing as a Windows Phone-style column, Cortana seems to be pretty much the same app as you may have seen on a Nokia or HTC device. It's almost as if the app has been transposed from Windows Phone 8.1 into Windows 10 lock stock and barrel, so while there might have been some expectation that the intelligent digital assistant would appear across the top of the UI, OK Google-style, or perhaps replace the charms bar, in actual fact Cortana is permanently present on the taskbar.



What would you like me to call you?

Christian

Great, thanks Christian! Now that I've got your name, you can see what I've got to show you at Home.

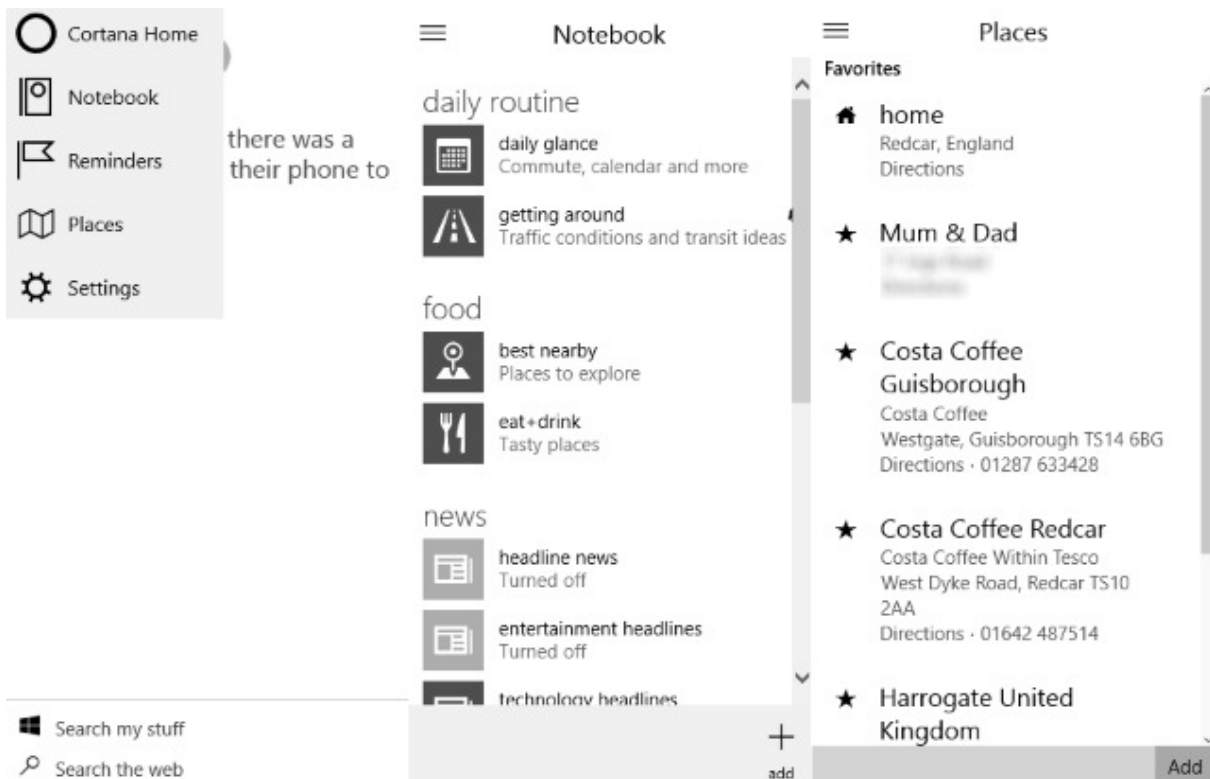
Skip

Enter

Done

## Tell Her about Yourself

One key similarity with Cortana on Windows 10 with the current mobile version on Windows 8.1 is the notebook, a tool that you can edit which is used by Cortana to store useful information about you.



News that is of interest, local places to eat, items from your daily routine (from your Outlook calendar) and traffic details can all be specified or collected by Cortana during transit, and favorite places can also be specified to assist with this.

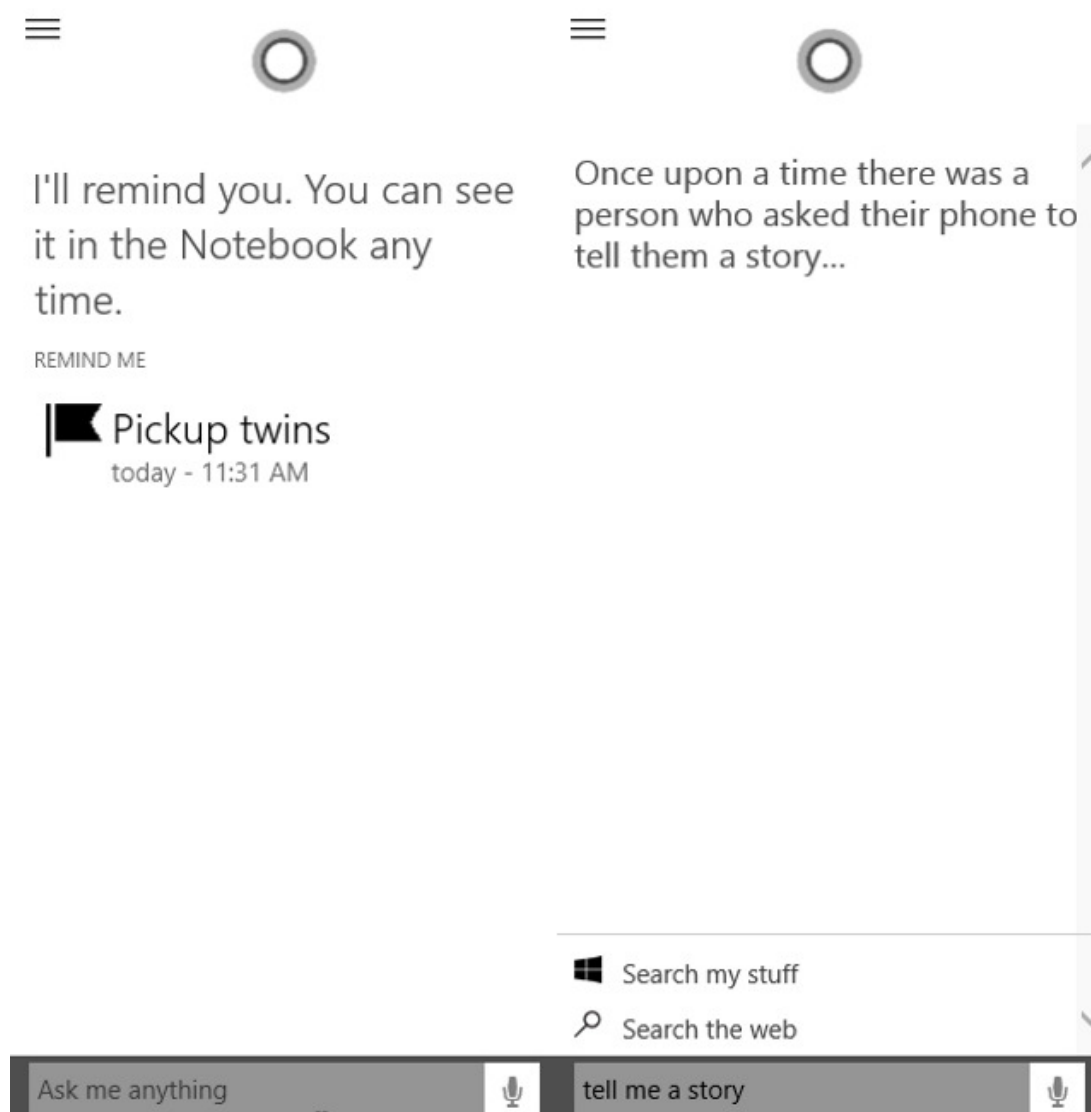
Meanwhile, Cortana's settings screen features an option that can be used to collect tracking information for flights and any parcels that you might have ordered, based on emails you may have received from airlines or couriers. When activated, this information is used to update you as to the progress of the flight or package

Incidentally, if you have a Windows Phone with Cortana set up already, your notebook will be imported into the Windows 10 Cortana.

## Things You Can Ask Cortana on Windows 10

Cortana can respond to questions, either spoken or typed; the flexibility with which she responds will depend partially on your notebook and on Bing results.

For instance, you can start simple and ask Cortana to "tell me a story"; the assistant will reply in her [typically dry manner](#), and this is just one of the [many amazing responses that she will give](#) to questions on many different subjects.



Meanwhile, you can use Cortana to enhance productivity. Perhaps the most common task is to request a reminder. As long as the notebook and places have been set up correctly, you'll be able to tell Cortana to remind you to pick up a book next time you're at your parents. She also can search Bing for important information such as weather reports (although she will display these by default whenever summoned) and news. Following future updates, you will be able to add an appointment into your calendar and use Cortana to send emails messages.

It seems likely that in her final incarnation in the general release version of Windows 10, Cortana will be able to make calls through Skype, as well as launch and perhaps even close applications.

Will Cortana be able to react to dictated notes in OneNote or full documents in Word? The smart money says yes, which could be a massive blow for Dragon Naturally Speaking.

## **Cortana on Windows 10 vs Windows Phone 8.1**

Cortana will of course be available on Windows 10 on mobile devices, but at present this isn't available. As such, we're looking at a future version of Cortana in a brand new setting, and comparing it to the current version.

However, the results are extremely encouraging. While there are updates still to come to get Cortana up to speed – and compatible with territories around the world – it's clear that in her current form, the intelligent personal assistant is already geared up to provide a revolutionary new interface for desktop users.