

Windows 10 Privacy Recommendations (11/19/15)

Background





One of the significant changes to the personal computer (PC) operating system introduced by Windows 10 is external access to the user's files and activities. This document provides recommendations that reduce the potential for privacy invasions enabled by Windows 10. The recommendations are intended to avoid interference with basic computer functions such as word processing, email and Internet access.

The instructions in this document are based on the user having Windows 10 installed on the PC. If Windows 10 is not installed, suggestions for installing Windows 10 may be found at <https://resident.willowvalley.org/cclub/p/win10recs.pdf>.

If following these recommendations results in unsatisfactory experiences with basic computer functions or you experience issues that indicate your privacy is not being protected, please report the experience via email to wvcomputerclub@gmail.com.

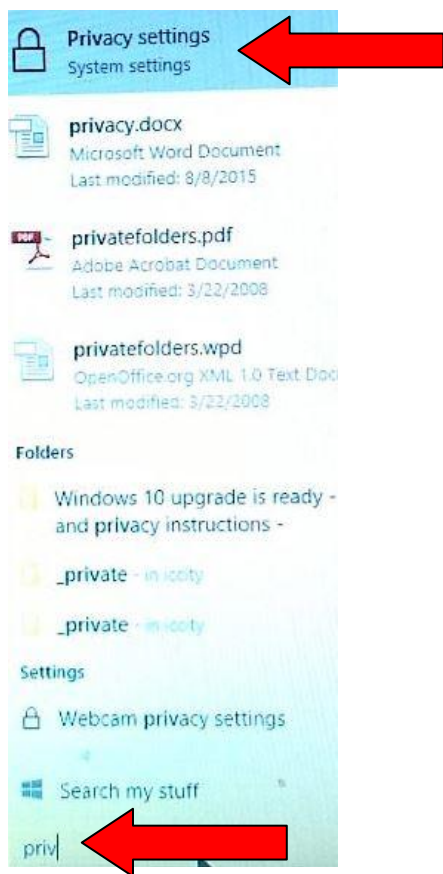
Preparations

Although Windows 10 is a single operating system, we have found that Windows 10 features can vary, possibly based on differences in computer processors, video cards, screen size, user actions during Windows 10 installation, and PC manufacturer. The following bullet notes are provided so that privacy protection recommendations can be more readily implemented.

- Taskbar. The Taskbar is a display that is normally at the bottom of the computer screen. In order to save space on the screen, the Taskbar may be hidden. The Taskbar generally displays the Windows icon () at the left end of the Taskbar and the date and time at the right end. To display a hidden Taskbar, place the cursor arrow below the bottom of the screen. If the Taskbar is hidden and you want it to display without needing to put the cursor arrow at the bottom of the screen, put the cursor arrow in a blank area of the Taskbar and right-click, then left-click on **Properties** at the bottom of the menu that pops up. This will cause a **Taskbar and Start Menu Properties** menu to display. Uncheck the box for **Auto-hide the taskbar** and click the **Apply** button and **OK**. Note that you can also use that menu to select where you want the Taskbar to display on the screen (i.e., bottom, left, right or top); however, the bottom is recommended as the more traditional location.
- Desktop vs Start Screen. The following procedure is also based on your viewing the familiar Desktop display (the one with the icons on the screen that looks like Windows XP and Windows 7) rather than the Start screen that has the large tiles that are bunched together. If your screen has the large tiles, put the cursor arrow at the far bottom left corner of the screen and left-click on the Windows icon () to get the Desktop to display.
- Search Box. If the **Search the web and Windows** box, **Search Windows box**, or magnifying glass icon does not display immediately to the right of the Windows icon () at the bottom-left corner of the screen, put the cursor arrow in a blank area of the Taskbar and right-click. Then put the cursor on the **Search** selection in the menu that pops up and then left-click to check the selection for **Show search box** or **Show Search icon**. This should cause the search box or search icon to display.
- Task View The Task View icon () may appear in the Taskbar immediately to the right of the Search Box or Search icon. Unintentional clicking on the Task View icon can cause unexpected displays, which can be restored to the desired display by clicking on the Task View icon again. The Task View icon can be added to or removed from the Taskbar by right-clicking in a blank area of the Taskbar and using a left-click to check or uncheck the **Show Task View Button** selection in the popup menu. The Task View enables multiple tasks to be accessed easily.

Procedure for Changing Privacy Settings

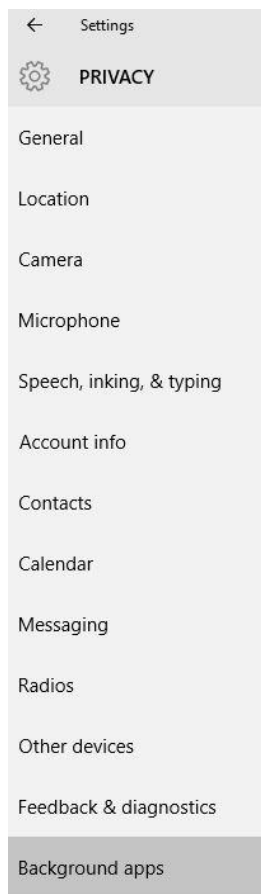
Accessing the Windows 10 privacy settings can be initiated by typing **privacy settings** in the **Search Windows** or **Search the web and Windows** box at the bottom of the desktop screen as shown next. **Privacy settings** is displayed as the top item in the selection list. Left-clicking on **Privacy settings** will result in a menu of categories that have privacy setting switches.



If only the **General** category and its switches display, left-click the left-pointing arrow to the left of **General** to get the list of privacy areas.

The following image displays links to privacy settings areas when this document was prepared. Rather than displaying the switches in each of those areas, the recommendation is to methodically go through each of those areas and click on each available switch in each area to set it to **off**. Setting switches to **off** at the top of some areas may automatically set other switches in that area to either off or inapplicable. If after setting all switches to off and you determine desired functions are not available, that area of settings can be revisited and applicable switch(es) turned on.

Note: If you turn switches off and you later try to use an application that requires one or more of those switches to be turned on, Windows 10 will display guidance for which switches to turn on. If after turning these switches on you want to restore your privacy settings, you will need to access privacy settings again and turn those switches off.



Conclusion

The Microsoft Privacy Statement can be viewed at <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/privacystatement>. Links are provided within that privacy statement to access additional information about areas where privacy issues apply.

Reminder: As is the case with anything associates with computers and the Internet, expect changes. The information in this document was accurate at the time it was prepared; however, there is no assurance it will continue to be accurate.

Please send comments or suggestions about this document to wvcomputerclub@gmail.com.