

## BUSINESS COLUMNS &amp; BLOGS

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# Opening Windows the way you like it

BY J. D. BIERSDORFER

*The New York Times*

***Q: In Windows 10, is it possible to get the screen where the apps are displayed as they were in Windows 8?***

A: The “Start screen” introduced with Windows 8 in 2012 was such a departure from the traditional Windows desktop interface that many users complained — which led to the return of the more traditional Start button and its expanding menu in later updates of the system. If you prefer the Start screen view that shows your pinned tiles or apps all at once, you can return to it.

In Windows 10, go to the Start menu and select the gear-shaped Settings icon (or press the Windows and I keys as a shortcut). In the Settings window, choose Personalization and then Start. Next, turn on the option for “Use Start full screen.” When you click the Start button now, the full Start screen appears, with icons to click for opening menus and for seeing your pinned tiles or the screen of all your apps. (Having the full Start screen in place can also make the Windows 10 Tablet mode easier to use.)

If you want to stick with the Smart menu but see more tiles on it, you can resize it. Just open it and drag the top or side of the menu to adjust the size to your liking.

Mac users who would like to see all their installed programs at once can do so by pressing the Launchpad key on the keyboard; the key is not included on every Apple compatible keyboard, but it is often on the F4 key — and can be added to a shortcut key in the Mac’s Keyboard system preferences. A Launchpad icon is usually available by default in the Mac’s desktop dock, and you can also open the Applications folder right from the Go menu in the Finder.

## Virtual private networks for travel

***Q: What do you think about virtual private networks? Do they really work to keep your information secure? I’m going on vacation to Alaska and I bought a VPN package, but I’m still not sure if it’s OK for me to check my bank account or use the Wi-Fi in Starbucks.***

A: Virtual private networks (also known as VPNs) are designed to shield personal information going back and forth over your internet connection by creating an encrypted “tunnel” for the data to pass through between your computer (or device) and the VPN server. If you do not have a secure connection — especially on a public wireless network that anyone could use — online intruders could spy on the websites you visit and even steal passwords and other credentials. Using a VPN while connected to any unprotected public access network is generally advised for information safety.

Reputable VPN services from a trusted company let you bring your own security to unsecure networks; F-Secure’s Freedom VPN, Private Internet Access and TunnelBear are among the apps with generally positive reviews. Not all VPN services are the same, though, and some may be weaker than others.

Certain apps may offer ad-blocking or location-hiding, so if you decide to permanently add a VPN app to your system, make sure it does what you want. You should also read the company’s privacy policy to see how it intends to use the data it gets from you while you use the service.

Browsing the web over a VPN can be slow, and not all services work through the connection. Using a virtual private network on a cruise ship — which typically uses a satellite internet connection at sea — can be frustrating because some cruise lines do not support VPN services or allow only certain types of connections. Banking sites tend to have their own security and using a VPN connection may require you to re-enter your bank login credentials.



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