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HOW-TO

## Who needs Gmail? 5 built-in Windows 10 apps that do the job (with video)

Mail, Calendar, Maps, People and OneNote have grown into useful and feature-filled apps.

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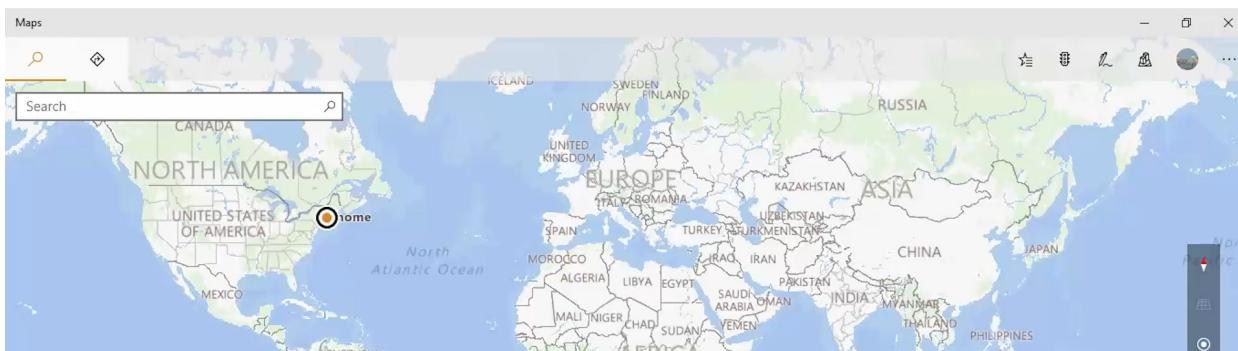


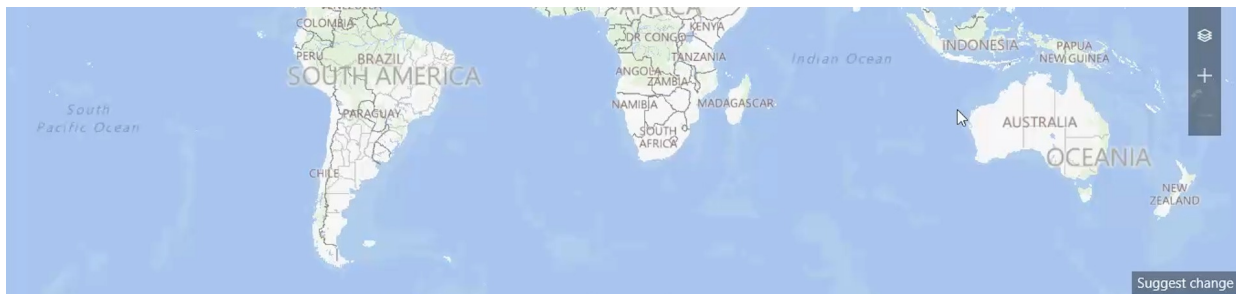
Table of Contents



The touch-friendly apps built into Windows 8 and Windows 10 (originally called Metro apps and now just called Windows apps) were, for a long time, roundly denounced by many reviewers as being underpowered -- and justifiably so. The first release of Mail in Windows 8, for example, didn't have threaded messaging, and the first release of Calendar made it confusing to do something as simple as changing the view to a day, week or month.

But over time, something surprising happened. After several updates -- and the merging of the touch-friendly and keyboard-based interfaces in Windows 10 -- some of Microsoft's built-in apps have become well worth using. If you tried and abandoned them in the past, and haven't bothered to check back, it's time to give them another try.





Here are five solid apps that ship with Windows 10, along with tips on how to use them. As a bonus, I've listed three special-purpose apps built into Windows you might want to try as well.

## Mail

If you took one look at Mail in Windows 8 and immediately turned away, no one would blame you. It was poorly designed, couldn't handle POP3 mail accounts and had poor text-handling features, among other drawbacks.

All that has changed. Mail has gotten a big rewrite that includes a better design and some worthwhile new features, such as being able to use it as a unified inbox for multiple main accounts (including POP3), and the addition of threaded messaging.

### Follow threaded messages

Mail includes a very useful feature that makes it easy to follow threaded email conversations:

- Any mail that is part of a conversation has a small rightward-pointing arrow next to it. Click the arrow to see each message in the conversation.
- Then click any individual message to go to it.

### Get alerts

Mail integrates nicely with Windows 10, so you can get alerts whenever any of your accounts receives new mail:

- In Mail select Settings -> Notifications.
- Select the account for which you want to receive notifications, and turn the slider to On.
- If you want to do it for all accounts, click the "Apply to all accounts" box.

From now on, you'll get alerts in the lower-right of your Windows screen when you get mail. A small icon shows the number of new messages you've received. To read them, just click the icon to launch the Action Center on the right-side of the screen. Click any mail message displayed there to read it.

## **Combine multiple mail accounts**

While many email clients, such as Gmail, have allowed users to include multiple email accounts in a single interface, this was not something you could do in Mail -- until recently. Now you can read the mail from all your accounts using just one Mail inbox. Here's how you do it:

- Select Settings -> Manage Accounts -> Add account.
- From the screen that appears, select the kind of account you want to create. You can choose from several types, including Outlook.com, Exchange, Google, Yahoo Mail, iCloud or POP3 and IMAP accounts. (If you're going to set up a POP or IMAP account, you'll need information from your ISP, such as the name or address of your inbound and outbound mail servers.)

Once you do that, you'll see each of your separate accounts listed under the Accounts icon on the left part of the screen in Mail. Click any to read mail, manage mail, create mail, and so on.

## **Create a unified inbox**

If you've set up Mail with multiple accounts, you can take things a step further and create a unified inbox showing all the mail you've sent and received from several accounts. It's simple to do:

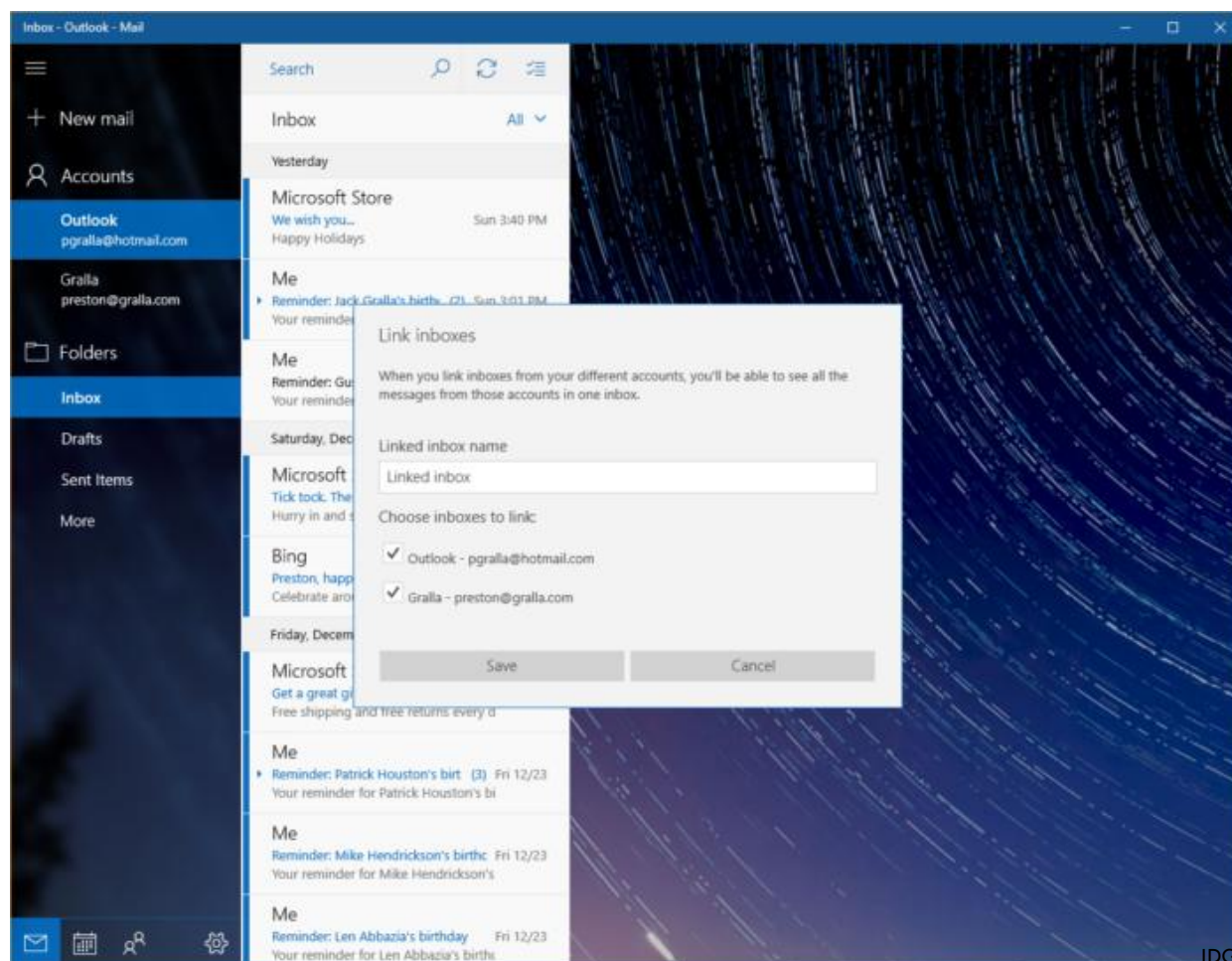
- In Mail, select Settings -> Manage accounts -> Link inboxes.

- From the screen that appears, check the boxes next to the mail accounts you want to link into a single account.
- If you want to change the default name of the unified inbox (the default is "Linked inbox"), type the new name in the box underneath "Linked inbox name."
- Click Save.

You'll now see all mail from the linked accounts in a single new account under the name you chose. The new account will include received mail, sent mail and drafts.

Note that when you do this, each of the accounts you've linked together (for example Outlook.com and Gmail), won't show up separately in Mail. Instead, they will all be combined in the new account.

When you've created a unified inbox in this way, you'll get a choice of which account to use whenever you create and send an email.



*Using Mail, you can now create a unified inbox.*

If you want to unlink the accounts, it's easy to do:

- Right-click the unified account you created and select Account settings. You'll see a list of all the accounts you've linked.
- Click the Linked inbox icon and uncheck the boxes of each account that you no longer want linked.
- Click Save.

Each of the unlinked accounts will now appear as individual accounts again.

## Calendar

If you remember Calendar from the Windows 8 days -- when doing as something as simple as changing the view to a day, week or month was a confusing task -- you owe it to yourself to check out the latest version. Like Mail, it's gotten a big overhaul. And, as with Mail, you can use it as a unified application, so that if you have multiple calendars you can see all your appointments in one place.

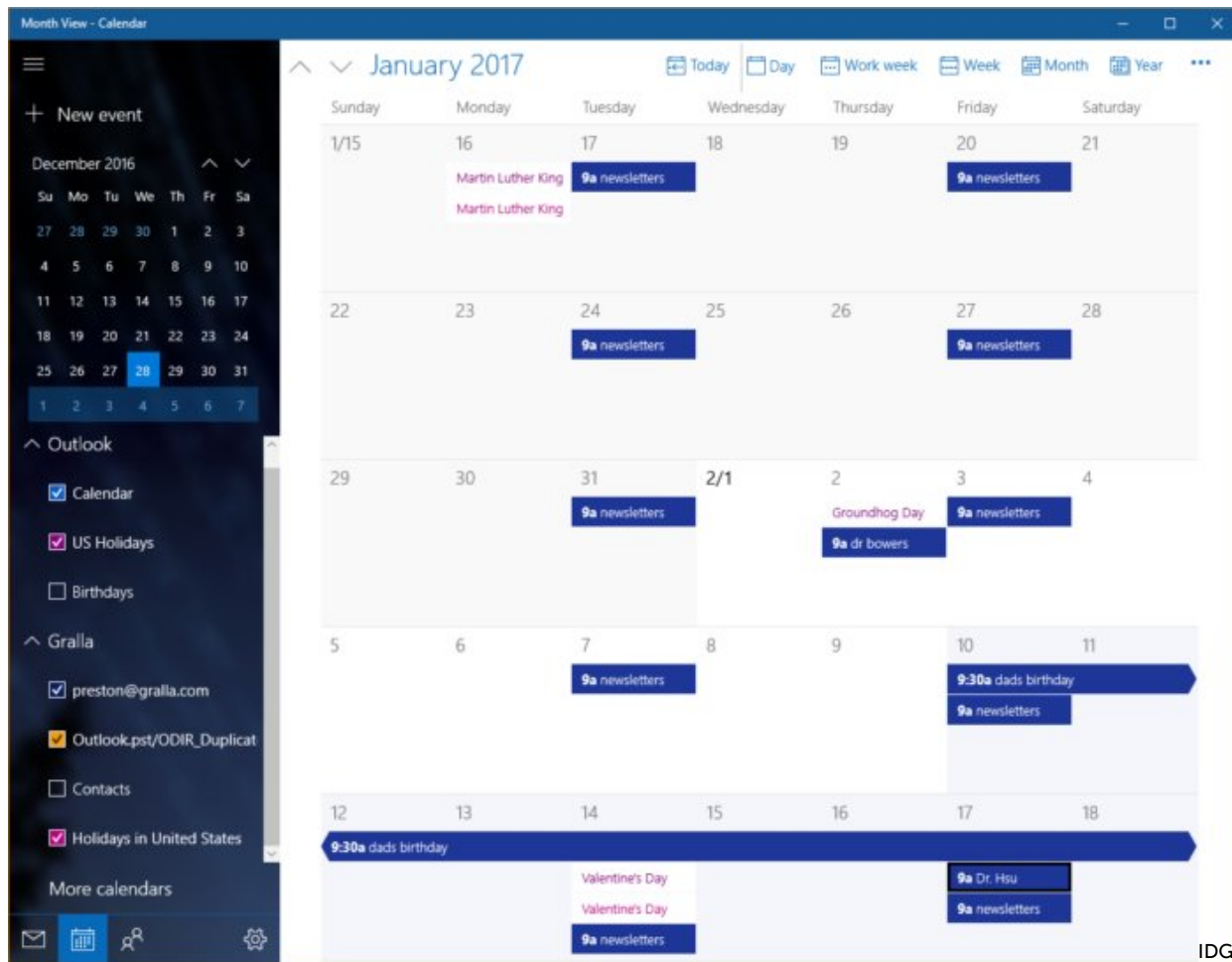
### **[ Related: Fix Windows 10 problems with these free Microsoft tools ]**

Using Calendar is simple and straightforward: Click the day and time you want to add an event, then fill out the form. Change your view (day, month, and so on) from the icons at the top. Here are a few tips if you want to do more than that.

### **Add a new calendar**

You can use Calendar to view and manage multiple calendars, including Google Calendar, iCloud Calendar, Outlook.com or Exchange Calendar:

- Launch the Calendar app and select Settings -> Manage Accounts -> Add account.
- Select the kind of account (Google, Outlook, etc.) you want to add and follow the screen prompts.



Windows 10's Calendar app lets you view all of your calendars in a single location.

Now you can see all your meetings and events from all your calendars in the Calendar app. If you want to remove a calendar, it's easy to do:

- Select Settings -> Manage Accounts.
- Click the account you want to remove.
- Click Delete account.

## Filtering out events

Seeing all your events from several calendars on one unified calendar can also be confusing. For example, the Calendar app by default shows the birthdays of your contacts in all your calendars. If you've got multiple calendars, each with lots of associated contacts, your calendar could become littered with way too many birthday listings -- some of them repeated.

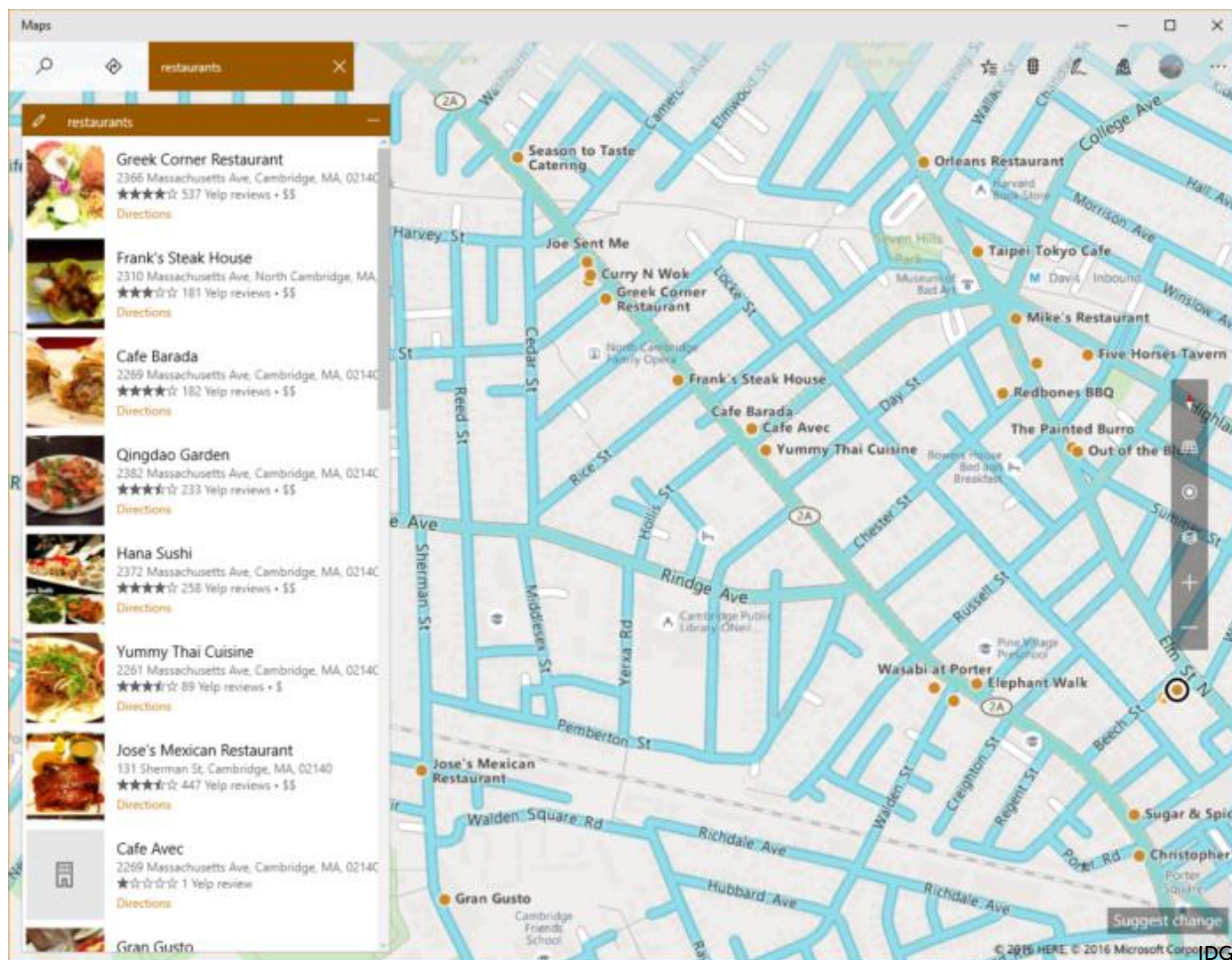
There's a simple fix that will clean up your calendar considerably:

- Click the so-called "hamburger button" (the three horizontal lines) at the top left of the screen.
- A new pane will appear on the left; at the bottom, you'll see all your calendars. Click the down arrow next to each calendar to see what types of information it shows -- U.S. holidays or birthdays, for example.
- Uncheck the boxes next to the information you don't want displayed.

## Maps

Maps has also been improved considerably over its initial release, including the introduction of a Street View-like feature, the ability to download maps for use offline and a much-improved interface.

Maps is simple to use. You just need to type in a location and you will see a map of it; you can then use the search bar to find nearby places of interest. On the right side of the app are buttons for zooming in and out, tilting the map, changing the orientation and adding overlays for traffic and other tools.



*The Maps app has improved so much that it now rivals Google Maps for usefulness.*

If you're a Cortana user, you'll be pleased to know that Cortana integrates with Maps. Ask it, "Give me directions to Ithaca, New York," and the Map app will launch, complete with directions. Or ask Cortana to see a map of a city and Maps launches and shows it.

There's more to Maps than that, though.

## **Download maps for offline use**

If you travel overseas and don't want to have to pay data charges for using maps, you'll find the offline maps feature a big money-saver. Just download maps to your laptop or tablet before you go, and you'll be able to use them at your destination without using data. It's also a great idea if you're in the U.S. and traveling somewhere not in reach of Wi-Fi.

Here's the best way to download offline maps:

- Quit the Maps app (you won't be able to download maps while the app is running).
- On Windows' main screen, select Settings -> System -> Offline Maps -> Download maps. You'll come to a screen that lets you browse through all the continents of the world.
- Click the continent that has the location of the map you want to download.
- From the screen that appears, click the country with the location of the map you want to download. In some instances, the entire map of the country will be downloaded (for, example, Nepal). In others, after you select a country you'll then select a region for the map you want to download -- for example, if I wanted a map of a place in Massachusetts, I would select North and Central America, then USA, then Massachusetts.

From now on, if you're in that location without a Wi-Fi connection, you'll be able to access the map offline. If you're connected to a Wi-Fi network, Windows will use the online version of the map, and automatically update for any changes in that map.

Offline maps take up storage space, so you might want to delete any maps you won't be using anymore:



- Go to Settings -> System -> Offline Maps -> Download maps. You'll find a list of all the maps you've downloaded. Click on any you want to delete.
- If you want to delete all of them, click the Delete all maps button. The map will be immediately deleted if you're not currently using the Maps app. If you are using the Maps app, it will be deleted the next time you exit the Maps app.

## **Use Streetside view**

Maps' Streetside view is the Microsoft equivalent of Google Maps' Street View.

Unfortunately, it won't feel particularly intuitive the first time you use it:

- First, turn on the feature. Click the Layers icon from the toolbar on the right of the screen.
- Under the Streetside subhead, move the slider to On.

Now, when you're using a map and want to use Streetside, click on a street you want to see, and you will be launched into that view. Look around the location by dragging with a mouse. Move around by clicking where you want to go.

You can exit Streetside by clicking the X button on the upper right of the screen.

## **Save favorite places and visit 3D cities**

When you're in Maps, pay attention to the small icon bar at the top right of the screen -- it has some very useful features:

- The small star icon on the far left lets you save favorite places. Click it and you'll be able to save your home and work locations.
- To save any other place, click Add a place, and type in a location.
- You can then jump right to any of them by clicking the favorite places icon and clicking the location.

It's also worthwhile checking out the 3D cities, which is accessed via the icon on the far right. Select any of the listed cities or browse to others, and you'll get a high-resolution bird's-eye view that you can navigate. The only drawback is the selection of cities

available, which seems weird to me -- for example, it includes London, Ontario, but not London, England, and Rennes in France, but not Paris.

1 | 2 | **NEXT >**

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