BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Windows 10
Your Options Through 2027

Extended Security Updates, Windows 11, a new PC —
and staying safe — explained in plain English

A plain-English guide for every Windows 10 owner

Take your time — you have choices, and time to make them

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For Windows 10 Home and Pro, version 22H2 · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to life after Windows 10's end of support: what it means, how to keep your PC protected through October 12, 2027, whether it can move to Windows 11, and what to do if it can't. Read it in any order and at your own pace. If a screen looks a little different on your computer, the idea is still the same.

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PART 1

Start Here

What "end of support" really means, the four choices you have, how to find out what your PC is running, and the dates that matter through 2027.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you have a Windows 10 computer and you've been hearing worried talk about "end of support," this guide is for **you**. Maybe a message popped up on your screen, maybe a family member mentioned it, or maybe someone on the phone told you your computer was about to stop working. Let's clear the air together, calmly and in plain English.

I'm Bill. I've spent 30+ years helping people with their technology, and these days I do it for folks right here in Portage County, Ohio. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain things sitting next to you at the kitchen table: one step at a time, no jargon, no rushing.

The short version

Your Windows 10 computer still turns on and still works. What changed is that Microsoft stopped sending regular safety fixes for it on **October 14, 2025**. You have good choices: keep it safe for now with a program called **Extended Security Updates**, which now runs through **October 12, 2027**; move it up to Windows 11 for free if it qualifies; or replace it when the time is right. This guide walks through each one, so you can pick what fits your life and budget.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this guide does for you

It turns one confusing announcement into a short list of clear decisions. By the end you'll know exactly what your computer is running, whether it can move to Windows 11, how to keep it protected until you're ready, and how to spot the scammers who use all of this to frighten people.

Read it in any order

You don't have to read this guide front to back. If you just want the answer, start with Chapter 3, *Your Four Choices at a Glance* and then the Chapter 25, *Decision Guide: Which Path Is Right for You?*. If you already know you want the extra year of security updates, jump straight to Chapter 11, *Enrolling, Step by Step*. Everything else is here when you need it.

The big promise: looking around won't hurt

Opening **Settings**, reading what's there, and checking which version you have can't harm your computer. I'll tell you plainly where a step really matters, such as wiping a PC before

you give it away, and I'll warn you before you get there. Everywhere else, take your time and explore.

You're never stuck alone

If you get partway through and feel unsure, stop and call me at **(330) 200-8042**. There's no such thing as a silly question about this, and it's far better to ask first than to guess.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What "End of Support" Really Means

"End of support" sounds like your computer is about to shut off. It isn't. It means Microsoft stopped looking after Windows 10 the way it used to. Think of it like a car model the manufacturer no longer issues recall fixes for: it still drives, but if a new problem turns up, nobody is coming to fix it.

What stopped on October 14, 2025

- **Security fixes.** These are the quiet updates that patch holes criminals could use to get into your computer. This is the one that matters most.
- **New features and other fixes.** Windows 10 won't get new abilities or repairs for everyday bugs.
- **Technical support.** Microsoft no longer helps people with Windows 10 problems.

What did NOT stop

- Your computer still turns on, and your files, photos and programs are all still there.
- Your internet, email and favorite websites still work.
- Some important pieces still get updates on their own, including the Microsoft Edge web browser and the Microsoft 365 apps. Chapter 26, *What Still Gets Updates on Windows 10* covers exactly what and for how long.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why the safety fixes matter

Criminals keep finding new weak spots in software. On a supported computer, Microsoft patches them, usually through an automatic update. On an unprotected Windows 10 PC, those weak spots stay open. Using an unprotected PC for email and banking is a bit like leaving a window unlocked: nothing may happen, but the risk keeps growing.

The good news

Microsoft offers a bridge for home users called **Extended Security Updates** (ESU). It keeps the important security fixes coming to your Windows 10 PC, and Microsoft has now stretched it to **October 12, 2027**. For many people, it can be free. Part 2 of this guide covers it step by step.

SCAM ALERT

Nobody is going to "turn off" your Windows

Scammers use end of support to frighten people with calls and pop-ups that say "your Windows has expired" or "your license is being shut down." Microsoft does not call people about this. If anyone contacts you out of the blue about your computer, hang up. See Chapter 29, *Scam Calls & Pop-ups: "Your Windows Has Expired"*.

CHAPTER 3

Your Four Choices at a Glance

Almost everyone with a Windows 10 computer ends up doing one of four things. None of them is wrong. The right one depends on how old your computer is, how you use it, and what you're comfortable spending.

Choice	What it means	Cost	Good fit if…
1. Extended Security Updates	Keep Windows 10 and keep getting security fixes through October 12, 2027	Free with settings backup, or 1,000 Rewards points, or $30 one time	Your PC works fine and you want time
2. Upgrade to Windows 11	Move this same PC up to Windows 11	Free, if your PC qualifies	Your PC passes the Windows 11 check
3. Replace the PC	Buy a new Windows 11 computer	Varies; you choose	Your PC is old, slow or can't run Windows 11
4. Switch to something else	Chromebook, Mac, or a different system on the old PC	Varies	You mostly browse, email and video-call

You can combine them

These choices aren't either-or. A very common, sensible plan is to **enroll in Extended Security Updates now** so you're protected, and then upgrade or replace the computer whenever it suits you before October 2027. Enrolling doesn't stop you from upgrading to Windows 11 later.

TIP

If you only do one thing this week

Find out whether your PC can run Windows 11 (Chapter 14, *Can My PC Run Windows 11?*). That one answer tells you which of the four choices are really on the table.

HEADS UP

Doing nothing is a choice too, but a risky one

If you neither enroll nor upgrade, your PC keeps working but stays unprotected. That matters most if you bank, shop or read email on it. If you truly only use the computer offline, for example to look at old photos, the risk is much smaller.

CHAPTER 4

Find Out What Your PC Is Running

Before you choose anything, take two minutes to learn three facts about your computer: which **edition** of Windows 10 it has, which **version** number, and what kind of **account** you sign in with. You'll need all three for the extra security updates.

Check the edition and version

1. Select the **Start** button (the Windows logo at the bottom left of the screen).
2. Select **Settings** (the little gear).
3. Select **System**, then scroll down the left side and select **About**.
4. Scroll down to **Windows specifications**. Look at **Edition** (for example, Windows 10 Home or Windows 10 Pro) and **Version** (for example, 22H2).
5. Write both down in the "Keep this handy" table in Chapter 35, *Your Windows 10 Cheat-Sheet*.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **What "22H2" means**
>
> Windows versions are named by year and half: 22H2 means the second half of 2022. 22H2 is the last version of Windows 10, and it's the version the extra security updates require. If yours says something older, like 21H2, Windows Update needs to bring it up to 22H2 first.

Check your account type

1. Open **Settings** and select **Accounts**, then **Your info**.
2. Under your name, look for an email address. If you see one (often ending in @outlook.com, @hotmail.com or @live.com, but it can be any email), you sign in with a **Microsoft account**.
3. If you see **Sign in with a Microsoft account instead**, you're using a **local account** that lives only on this computer. That's fine; Chapter 8, *Switching from a Local Account to a Microsoft Account* explains what to do.
4. Also check that it says **Administrator** under your name. Enrolling in the extra updates needs an administrator account.

What you saw	What it means for you
Windows 10 Home or Pro, Version 22H2	Good. You can likely enroll in Extended Security Updates.

What you saw	What it means for you
Version older than 22H2	Run Windows Update first (Chapter 13, *When "Enroll Now" Doesn't Appear*).
Windows 10 in S mode	Upgrading works a little differently (Chapter 17, *Upgrading for Free, Step by Step*).
Work or school computer	The home program doesn't apply. Ask the employer's IT department.

CHAPTER 5

The Key Dates, 2025 to 2028

A lot of different dates get thrown around, and some of the older news stories have dates that have since changed. Here are the ones that matter for a home Windows 10 computer, as of November 2026.

Date	What happens
October 14, 2025	Windows 10 end of support. Regular free security fixes stopped.
October 12, 2027	Extended Security Updates for home users end. Last day to be protected on Windows 10.
At least October 2028	Microsoft Edge keeps getting updates on Windows 10 version 22H2.
October 10, 2028	Security updates end for Microsoft 365 apps (Word, Excel, Outlook) on Windows 10.

Why you may have heard "October 2026"

When Microsoft first announced the home program, it ran for one year, to October 2026. In June 2026 Microsoft changed its pages to extend the program by another year, to **October 12, 2027**. If you already enrolled, your coverage carries on automatically. There's nothing to redo and nothing more to pay.

HEADS UP

Old articles, old dates

If a website, newspaper clipping or video says the extra updates end in October 2026, it was written before the extension. Microsoft's own Windows 10 Extended Security Updates page is the one to trust.

TIP

Put October 12, 2027 on your calendar

Add a reminder for early 2027 that says "Decide on new computer or Windows 11." That gives you months to shop calmly instead of rushing at the last minute.

PART 2

Extended Security Updates

The bridge that keeps your Windows 10 PC protected through October 12, 2027: what it is, the three ways to get it, and how to enroll step by step.

CHAPTER 6

What Extended Security Updates Are (and Aren't)

Extended Security Updates, or **ESU**, is a program from Microsoft that keeps sending the most important security fixes to Windows 10 computers after end of support. It's meant as a bridge, giving you time to move to Windows 11 or a new computer without being unprotected in the meantime.

What you get

- **Critical and important security updates**, delivered through Windows Update the same way updates always came.
- Coverage through **October 12, 2027**, no matter when you enroll.
- Every update released since end of support on October 14, 2025, so enrolling late still catches you up.
- One license covers **up to 10 computers** signed in with the same Microsoft account.
- Once one person on a PC enrolls it, **everyone who uses that PC** is covered.

What you don't get

- No new features or design changes.
- No fixes for everyday bugs that aren't security problems.
- No technical support from Microsoft, except help getting ESU itself activated and installed.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why it's worth doing

ESU keeps the locks on your doors while you decide what's next. If your PC works well and you're not ready to shop, it's the simplest way to keep banking, email and shopping on that PC reasonably safe through 2027.

GOOD TO KNOW

It's for home computers only

The consumer program is for personal-use PCs. Computers managed by a workplace (joined to a company domain or managed by company software) and computers set up as kiosks can't use it. Businesses have their own separate, paid program.

CHAPTER 7

Before You Enroll: The Checklist

Microsoft lists a few things your computer needs before the **Enroll now** link will appear. Most home computers already meet them, but it's worth checking each one. If you skip ahead and the link isn't there, this list is the reason.

Requirement	How to check
Windows 10 version 22H2: Home, Pro, Pro Education or Workstations	Settings > System > About (Chapter 4, *Find Out What Your PC Is Running*)
The latest Windows update installed	Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update > Check for updates
The ESU Licensing Preparation Package (KB5126256)	Installed through Windows Update; see Chapter 13, *When "Enroll Now" Doesn't Appear*
Signed in with a Microsoft account that is an administrator	Settings > Accounts > Your info (Chapter 8, *Switching from a Local Account to a Microsoft Account*)
Not a child account	The account can't be a child in a Microsoft family group

Bring everything up to date first

1. Plug in your laptop, or make sure your desktop won't be switched off for a while.
2. Open **Settings** and select **Update & Security**.
3. Select **Windows Update** on the left, then **Check for updates**.
4. Install anything it offers. If it asks you to restart, save your work and restart.
5. Come back and select **Check for updates** again. Repeat until it says you're up to date.

GOOD TO KNOW

About KB5126256

That's the name of a small preparation package Microsoft published in September 2026. It gets your PC ready to accept an ESU license; it doesn't enroll you by itself. After it installs, your PC restarts on its own, which is normal. Each new preparation package replaces the earlier ones.

TIP

Know your Microsoft account password

Enrollment asks you to sign in to your Microsoft account. Before you start, make sure you know the password and can get a code on your phone or email if Microsoft asks for one.

CHAPTER 8

Switching from a Local Account to a Microsoft Account

Some Windows 10 computers were set up years ago with a **local account**, which is just a name and maybe a password that live only on that one computer. The ESU license is tied to a **Microsoft account**, so enrollment will ask you to sign in with one.

What a Microsoft account is

A Microsoft account is a free sign-in from Microsoft, built around an email address and password. If you've ever used Outlook.com or Hotmail email, OneDrive or an Xbox, you probably already have one. Your backed-up settings and your ESU license are stored with it.

Switch this PC to your Microsoft account

1. Open **Settings** and select **Accounts**, then **Your info**.
2. Select **Sign in with a Microsoft account instead**. (If you see **Sign in with a local account instead**, you're already using a Microsoft account and can stop here.)
3. Type your Microsoft account email address and password, or choose the option to create a new account if you don't have one.
4. Follow the prompts. Windows may ask for your current local password one last time.
5. When you're finished, you'll sign in to the computer with your Microsoft account from now on.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may not have to switch for good

Microsoft's enrollment screen will prompt you to sign in to a Microsoft account if you normally use a local account. The license is linked to that Microsoft account. If you'd rather keep signing in to Windows locally afterward, ask me first, because the free enrollment path depends on backing up your settings to that account.

STAY SAFE

Protect that account

Your Microsoft account now matters more. Use a strong password you don't use anywhere else, and keep your recovery phone number and email up to date at account.microsoft.com. Never give a sign-in code to anyone who calls you.

HEADS UP

Work and school accounts don't count

A work or school sign-in won't work for the home program or for Windows Backup. Use a personal Microsoft account.

CHAPTER 9

The Free Way: Back Up Your PC Settings

Microsoft offers Extended Security Updates **at no additional cost** if you're backing up your PC settings to your Microsoft account with **Windows Backup**. For most people, this is the best choice. It costs nothing and it gives you a head start on moving to a new PC later.

What gets backed up

- Your list of installed apps, so a new PC can offer to put them back.
- Accessibility settings, like larger text or a high-contrast screen.
- Accounts, Wi-Fi networks and Wi-Fi passwords.
- Personalization, such as your wallpaper and colors.
- Language preferences and other Windows settings.

Turn on settings backup

1. Make sure you're signed in with your Microsoft account (Chapter 8, *Switching from a Local Account to a Microsoft Account*).
2. Select **Start**, type **backup**, and select **Windows Backup** from the results.
3. Look at the sections for apps and preferences. Turn on the ones you want to back up. Items already backed up will say so.
4. Select **Back up**.
5. You can check on it later in **Settings > Accounts > Windows backup**.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can also start from the enrollment screen

If you aren't backing up your settings yet, the ESU enrollment screen itself offers to start backing them up for you. Either way works.

TIP

Settings are small; folders are big

Backing up *settings* uses very little space. Windows Backup can also copy your *folders* (Documents, Pictures and so on) to OneDrive, which comes with 5 GB free. That's optional and isn't needed for ESU. See Chapter 28, *Back Up Now, Whatever You Decide* before you turn folder backup on.

CHAPTER 10

The Other Two Ways: Rewards Points or $30

If you'd rather not back up your settings to Microsoft, there are two other ways to enroll. All three give you exactly the same updates through the same date.

Way to enroll	What it costs
Back up PC settings	No additional cost. Microsoft's recommended path for most people.
Microsoft Rewards	Redeem 1,000 Microsoft Rewards points.
One-time purchase	$30 plus tax, paid once. Covers up to 10 PCs on the same Microsoft account.

Microsoft Rewards points

Microsoft Rewards is Microsoft's loyalty program. If you've been collecting points, you can check your balance by signing in at microsoft.com/rewards. If you have 1,000 or more, you can spend them on ESU during enrollment.

The one-time purchase

This is a single payment of **$30** plus tax, made to Microsoft inside the enrollment screen on your own PC. It is **not** a monthly subscription, and you can use that one license on up to 10 Windows 10 computers signed in to the same Microsoft account.

GOOD TO KNOW

About refunds

If you enrolled free by backing up your settings, there's nothing to refund. Rewards orders are final. A purchase follows Microsoft's normal refund policy for digital purchases.

SCAM ALERT

Only pay inside Windows Update

The only real place to buy ESU is the enrollment screen in **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update** on your own PC. Anyone who calls, emails or texts offering to "renew your Windows" or sell you security updates, especially for gift cards, is a scammer.

CHAPTER 11

Enrolling, Step by Step

Once your PC is up to date and you're ready with your Microsoft account, enrolling takes only a few minutes. Here's the whole thing, slowly.

1. Select **Start**, then **Settings** (the gear).
2. Select **Update & Security**.
3. Select **Windows Update** on the left. If your PC meets the requirements, you'll see a link to enroll in Extended Security Updates.
4. Select **Enroll now**.
5. If you sign in to Windows with a local account, you'll be asked to sign in to your Microsoft account. Type your email address and password.
6. If you already back up your PC settings, you'll simply be asked to confirm enrolling this device.
7. If you don't, choose one: start backing up your settings (free), redeem 1,000 Rewards points, or make the one-time purchase.
8. Follow the last few prompts. When it's done, the Windows Update page will show that you're enrolled.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What happens next

Nothing you have to do. Security updates arrive through Windows Update as Microsoft releases them, the same way updates always have, through October 12, 2027.

TIP

Take a photo of the screen

When you see the message that you're enrolled, take a picture of the screen with your phone. If you ever wonder later, you'll have proof of the date and the account you used.

HEADS UP

Keep restarting when asked

Updates only finish installing after a restart. If your PC asks you to restart for updates, do it within a day or two rather than putting it off for weeks.

CHAPTER 12

Checking It Worked and Adding More PCs

It's reassuring to confirm your PC is really enrolled, and if you have a second Windows 10 computer in the house, it can share the same license.

Check your enrollment

1. Open **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update**.
2. Look near the top of the page for the Extended Security Updates status. It should show that this PC is enrolled.
3. If you made the one-time purchase, you can also find it in your Microsoft account's **Order history**.

Add another Windows 10 PC

1. On the second computer, make sure it meets the same checklist (Chapter 7, *Before You Enroll: The Checklist*).
2. Open **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update** and select **Enroll now**.
3. If you're already signed in to that PC with the same Microsoft account, select **Add device**.
4. If not, sign in to the Microsoft account you used on the first PC when it asks.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **Up to 10 computers**
>
> One ESU license covers up to 10 eligible Windows 10 PCs. You don't pay again for each one.

A grandchild's or relative's PC

If a child's Windows 10 PC says it can't be enrolled, it usually means their account doesn't have permission. A parent or another adult with an administrator account on that PC can sign in as themselves and enroll it. Microsoft's ESU page has a short walkthrough for this.

CHAPTER 13

When "Enroll Now" Doesn't Appear

If you open Windows Update and there's no enrollment link, don't worry. It almost always comes down to one of the requirements not being met yet. Work through this list in order.

Possible reason	What to try
Updates aren't finished	Check for updates, install everything, restart, and check again.
Not on version 22H2	Windows Update should offer the 22H2 update; install it, then check again.
Preparation package missing	Look for KB5126256 in Windows Update and install it. The PC restarts on its own.
Not an administrator	Sign in with an administrator account, or ask whoever set up the PC.
Child account	An adult with an administrator account on that PC needs to enroll it.
Work or school PC	The home program doesn't apply. Ask the employer or school.
Already enrolled	Check the status on the Windows Update page (Chapter 12, *Checking It Worked and Adding More PCs*).

See your update history

1. Open **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update**.
2. Select **View update history**.
3. Look through the list for recent security updates and for KB5126256.

TIP

Give it a day

Sometimes the enrollment link shows up only after the latest updates and a restart or two. If you've done everything on the list, wait a day and look again.

FROM BILL

When to hand it to me

If you've been through this list and the link still won't appear, that's a perfect job for my **Windows 10 Safety Check**. I can usually sort it out remotely. Call **(330) 200-8042**.

PART 3

Windows 11 on the PC You Already Have

How to find out whether your computer can run Windows 11, what the requirements mean in plain words, and how to upgrade for free if it qualifies.

CHAPTER 14

Can My PC Run Windows 11?

Windows 11 is free for Windows 10 computers that meet its requirements. The catch is that the requirements are stricter than Windows 10's, so many older computers don't qualify, even if they still run perfectly well.

The requirements, in plain words

Requirement	Windows 11 needs	What it means
Processor	1 GHz or faster, 2 or more cores, on Microsoft's approved list	The "brain" of the PC. This is the one most older PCs fail, and it can't be upgraded.
Memory (RAM)	4 GB	Sometimes more can be added to a desktop or some laptops.
Storage	64 GB or larger	Most PCs have far more than this.
System firmware	UEFI, Secure Boot capable	A modern startup system. Often present but switched off.
TPM	Version 2.0	A small security chip. Often present but switched off.
Graphics	DirectX 12 compatible, WDDM 2.0 driver	Nearly all PCs from recent years pass.
Display	720p, larger than 9 inches	Any normal laptop or monitor passes.

GOOD TO KNOW

The processor is the deciding factor

Microsoft itself says the processor will be a main deciding factor. Speed and number of cores are built into the chip when it's made, so they can't be changed. If your processor isn't on the list, Windows 11 is not an official option for that PC.

Two ways to find out

- **Windows Update**: open **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update**. Eligible PCs usually show a Windows 11 upgrade offer or an eligibility message there.
- **PC Health Check**: a free Microsoft app that runs a full check and tells you exactly which requirement, if any, your PC misses. See Chapter 15, *PC Health Check, Explained*.

TIP

Also needed for setup

Windows 11 Home needs an internet connection and a Microsoft account during setup. If you already set up a Microsoft account for ESU (Chapter 8, *Switching from a Local Account to a Microsoft Account*), you're ready.

CHAPTER 15

PC Health Check, Explained

PC Health Check is a free app made by Microsoft for Windows 10 computers. Its main job here is a simple push-button test: can this PC run Windows 11, and if not, why not?

Run the check

1. Select **Start** and look for **PC Health Check** in the list of apps. Many Windows 10 PCs already have it.
2. If it isn't there, get it only from Microsoft's own Windows 11 page at microsoft.com. Don't download "checker" tools from other websites.
3. Open PC Health Check.
4. Near the top, find the Windows 11 section and select the button to check now.
5. Read the result. It will either say the PC meets the Windows 11 requirements, or list what doesn't.

Reading the results

What it says	What it usually means	What to do
Meets all requirements	Your PC can have Windows 11 for free	Go to Chapter 16, *Getting Ready to Upgrade*
Processor isn't supported	The chip is too old	Consider ESU now, replace later (Chapter 20, *Replacing the PC: The Short Version*)
TPM 2.0 or Secure Boot not found	May just be switched off	Ask for help before changing settings
Not enough memory or storage	Sometimes upgradable	Ask whether an upgrade is worth it

HEADS UP

Don't change startup settings on your own

Turning on TPM or Secure Boot means going into the PC's startup settings (the firmware), which differ from one manufacturer to another. A wrong change there can stop the PC from starting. This is one place where it really pays to get help.

GOOD TO KNOW

After any hardware change, wait

If you or a technician changes something to meet the requirements, Microsoft advises waiting until Windows Update tells you Windows 11 is ready for your device before you upgrade.

CHAPTER 16

Getting Ready to Upgrade

Upgrading to Windows 11 keeps your files and most of your programs. Still, it's a big change, and a little preparation makes it go smoothly. Do these things first.

1. **Back up your important files.** Copy your photos and documents to an external drive or OneDrive (Chapter 28, *Back Up Now, Whatever You Decide*). Upgrades usually go fine; a backup means you never have to worry.
2. **Plug in.** Laptops should be plugged into power for the whole upgrade.
3. **Check your free space.** Open File Explorer and look at your C: drive. If it's nearly full, clear out old downloads first.
4. **Gather your passwords.** Have your Microsoft account password, your email password, and your Wi-Fi password written down.
5. **Pick a quiet time.** The upgrade can take an hour or more, and the PC restarts several times. Don't start it right before you need the computer.

GOOD TO KNOW

Windows 10 in S mode

If your PC runs Windows 10 Home in S mode, it can move to Windows 11 Home in S mode. Windows 10 Pro in S mode has to switch out of S mode first, because Windows 11 Pro doesn't come in S mode. Microsoft's Windows 11 requirements page explains the switch.

TIP

Your edition carries over

The free upgrade keeps your edition: Windows 10 Home becomes Windows 11 Home, and Windows 10 Pro becomes Windows 11 Pro.

HEADS UP

Older printers and special programs

Very old printers, scanners or specialty programs sometimes need new drivers on Windows 11. If you rely on something like that, check the maker's website for Windows 11 support before you upgrade.

CHAPTER 17

Upgrading for Free, Step by Step

If your PC qualifies, the upgrade comes right through Windows Update. There is nothing to buy, and you should never pay anyone for the Windows 11 upgrade itself.

1. Open **Settings** and select **Update & Security**.
2. Select **Windows Update**.
3. If your PC is eligible, you'll see an offer to upgrade to Windows 11. Select the button to download and install it.
4. Read and accept the license terms when they appear.
5. Let the download finish. You can keep using the PC while it downloads.
6. When it asks to restart, save your work and choose to restart.
7. Your screen will show progress and restart a few times. Don't turn the PC off during this part.
8. When you see the Windows 11 sign-in screen, sign in as usual.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your PC needs to be fairly current

To upgrade through Windows Update, your PC must already be on Windows 10 version 2004 or later. If you followed Chapter 7, *Before You Enroll: The Checklist* and you're on 22H2, you're fine.

SCAM ALERT

The real upgrade is free

Microsoft's upgrade from Windows 10 to Windows 11 costs nothing on an eligible PC. If a caller, pop-up or website wants money, gift cards or remote access to "install Windows 11" for you, it's a scam.

TIP

If you don't see the offer

Run **Check for updates** a couple more times and restart. If PC Health Check says you qualify but the offer still doesn't appear after a few days, that's a good time to call.

CHAPTER 18

After the Upgrade: Finding Your Way

Windows 11 looks a little different at first, but everything you used is still there. Give yourself a few days of normal use and it will start to feel familiar.

What looks different

- The **Start** button and taskbar icons sit in the **center** of the bottom of the screen instead of the left.
- The Start menu shows pinned apps in a grid, with your recent files below.
- Settings has a new layout. Windows Update now has its own spot in the left-hand list of Settings.
- Menus have rounded corners and a cleaner look.

First things to check

1. Open your email, browser and photos to make sure they all work.
2. Print a test page if you use a printer.
3. Open **Settings**, then **Windows Update**, and select **Check for updates** to pick up the latest fixes.
4. Make sure your files are where you expect: open File Explorer and look in Documents and Pictures.

TIP

Prefer the Start button on the left?

Windows 11 lets you move the taskbar items back to the left. In Settings, look under **Personalization**, then **Taskbar**, then **Taskbar behaviors**, and change the alignment.

GOOD TO KNOW

You don't need ESU anymore

Once you're on Windows 11, you get regular security updates again. Extended Security Updates only apply to Windows 10.

FROM BILL

A short lesson helps

If the new layout throws you, a half-hour walk-through makes a big difference. I'm happy to do that remotely or at your kitchen table.

CHAPTER 19

About "Workarounds" for Unsupported PCs

If you search online, you'll find videos and tools that claim to force Windows 11 onto computers that don't meet the requirements. I understand the appeal, especially when your old PC still runs well. Here's my honest take.

Why I don't recommend them for most people

- Microsoft built the requirements around reliability and security. An unsupported install is outside what Microsoft designed and tested for.
- Microsoft's official free upgrade path is only offered to PCs that meet the minimum requirements.
- Tools from unfamiliar websites are a common way for malware to get onto a computer.
- If something goes wrong, there's no official support to fall back on.

STAY SAFE

Downloads are the real danger

The biggest risk isn't Windows 11 itself; it's downloading a "free upgrade tool" from a site you don't know. Many of those are made to look helpful and carry something harmful.

Better options for an older PC

- Enroll in Extended Security Updates and keep using it safely through October 12, 2027 (Chapter 11, *Enrolling, Step by Step*).
- Use that time to shop calmly for a replacement (Chapter 20, *Replacing the PC: The Short Version*).
- Give the old PC a second life with a different system, such as ChromeOS Flex (Chapter 22, *Chromebooks and ChromeOS Flex*).

FROM BILL

Ask before you try

If you're curious whether anything can be done for a particular PC, call me first. A quick look can save you a lot of trouble.

PART 4

A New Computer, or a Different Kind

Replacing the PC in brief, moving your files and settings, and an honest look at Chromebooks, ChromeOS Flex, Macs and Linux for everyday home use.

CHAPTER 20

Replacing the PC: The Short Version

If your computer can't run Windows 11, or it's simply slow and tired, a new Windows 11 PC is the most straightforward long-term answer. Bill's Home Tech has a separate guide on buying a computer; here are just the essentials for someone leaving Windows 10.

Before you shop

- **Enroll in ESU first.** It keeps your current PC protected while you shop, so you aren't rushed.
- **Make a short list of what you do.** Email, photos, video calls, banking, printing, a special program? That list decides what you need far better than any spec sheet.
- **Turn on Windows Backup.** It makes moving to the new PC much easier (Chapter 21, *Moving Your Files and Settings*).

What to look for, in plain words

Thing	What to choose
Comes with	Windows 11 already installed
Memory (RAM)	8 GB or more is comfortable for everyday use; 4 GB is the bare minimum
Storage	An SSD (solid-state drive) for speed; 256 GB or more for photos
Screen	Big enough to read comfortably. Larger laptop screens and desktop monitors help tired eyes
Where to buy	A store or website you know, with an easy return policy

HEADS UP

Skip the add-ons you didn't ask for

Stores sometimes offer paid "setup," extra antivirus subscriptions or long service plans at checkout. Windows 11 already includes Microsoft Defender antivirus. Take your time and decide later about anything extra.

TIP

Trade in or recycle the old one

Microsoft and stores such as Best Buy and Staples have trade-in programs, and there are responsible recycling options too. Wipe the old PC first (Chapter 32, *Wiping the Old PC Before It Leaves*, Chapter 33, *Recycling, Trading In or Donating*).

CHAPTER 21

Moving Your Files and Settings

The worry I hear most about a new computer is "Will I lose my photos?" You won't, if you plan a little. Here are the three main ways to bring your things along, from easiest to most hands-on.

Way 1: Windows Backup and your Microsoft account

If you back up with **Windows Backup** on the old PC, then when you set up the new Windows 11 PC and sign in with the **same Microsoft account**, Windows notices your backup and offers to restore it. Your settings come back, your app pins return to the Start menu, and files you backed up to OneDrive appear when you sign in to OneDrive.

Way 2: OneDrive

Every Microsoft account comes with 5 GB of free OneDrive storage, and more can be bought. Files saved in OneDrive are available on any computer where you sign in to that account. For a big photo collection, 5 GB may not be enough, which is where Way 3 helps.

Way 3: An external drive

1. Plug a USB drive or external hard drive into the old PC.
2. Open **File Explorer** (the yellow folder on the taskbar).
3. Copy your **Documents**, **Pictures**, **Desktop**, **Music** and **Videos** folders onto the drive.
4. Safely eject the drive, plug it into the new PC, and copy the folders back.

TIP

Don't forget the hidden extras

Make a list of things that aren't ordinary files: saved passwords in your browser, email accounts set up in a desktop email program, and programs you'd need to reinstall. Signing in to your browser's sync feature carries favorites and passwords along.

HEADS UP

Keep the old PC until you're sure

Don't wipe or recycle the old computer until you've used the new one for a couple of weeks and confirmed everything made it over.

CHAPTER 22

Chromebooks and ChromeOS Flex

A **Chromebook** is a laptop made to run Google's ChromeOS instead of Windows. Almost everything happens in the Chrome web browser: email, video calls, shopping, banking, photos and news. For many people, that's everything they do on a computer anyway.

Honest pros and cons

Good things	Things to know
Simple: fewer settings and fewer things to go wrong	Doesn't run Windows programs, such as older desktop software
Updates itself automatically in the background	Works best with a good internet connection
Often less expensive than a Windows laptop	Each model gets updates only for a set number of years
Starts up quickly	Some printers and special devices may not work
Works well with a Google account and Gmail	You'll learn a few new ways of doing things

TIP

Check the update date before you buy

Every Chromebook model has a date when Google's automatic updates end. Before you buy, look up that date for the exact model, and favor one with many years left.

ChromeOS Flex: a new life for your old PC

ChromeOS Flex is Google's version of ChromeOS made to install on existing Windows PCs and Macs. It replaces Windows entirely, so it's an option for a PC that can't run Windows 11 but still works well. Google tests and certifies specific models; it may work on others, but Google doesn't guarantee it.

Needs	Minimum
Processor	Intel or AMD 64-bit; chips from 2012 and earlier aren't supported
Memory	4 GB
Storage	16 GB inside the PC
Installer	A USB drive of 16 GB or larger (everything on it is erased)
Startup	The PC must be able to start from a USB drive

HEADS UP

Installing Flex erases Windows

Installing ChromeOS Flex wipes the PC's drive, including all your files and programs. Back up everything first. Google does let you run Flex from the USB drive temporarily to try it before installing. Because this involves startup settings, it's a good job to do with help.

CHAPTER 23

Switching to a Mac

If you already have an iPhone or iPad, a Mac computer can feel surprisingly familiar. Apple's laptops include the **MacBook Air**, and in 2026 Apple also sells the **MacBook Neo**. Check apple.com for current models and prices, which change often.

Honest pros and cons

Good things	Things to know
Works smoothly with an iPhone: messages, photos and passwords	Usually costs more than a basic Windows laptop or Chromebook
Comes with good built-in apps for photos, mail and video calls	Doesn't run Windows programs
Apple Stores and Apple Support for help	Menus and keyboard shortcuts work differently
Setup can bring things over from your iPhone	Some older printers may need new drivers

Moving from your Windows PC

Every Mac includes **Migration Assistant**, which can transfer documents, accounts and settings from a Windows PC. If you have an iPhone, setting up the Mac near it can sign you in to Wi-Fi and your Apple Account and bring over items stored in iCloud.

TIP

Free setup help from Apple

When you buy directly from Apple, you can book free online **Personal Setup** sessions with an Apple Specialist, who walks you through setup and moving your data.

HEADS UP

Learning curve

A Mac is a great computer, but it's a change. If you've used Windows for decades, plan on a few weeks of getting used to it, and consider whether you'd rather stay with Windows on a new PC.

CHAPTER 24

Linux: Honest Pros and Cons

Linux is a family of free computer systems that can replace Windows on an older PC. You may hear names like Linux Mint or Ubuntu. They're made by communities and companies around the world, and many people use them happily every day.

Why some people like it

- It can run well on older computers that can't take Windows 11.
- It gets regular security updates from its makers.
- The common versions cost nothing to download and use.
- A web browser works just as it does on Windows, so email and websites feel normal.

Why I'm cautious about it for most seniors

- Installing it means erasing Windows and working in startup settings.
- Windows programs, some printers and some scanners may not work.
- When something goes wrong, help usually comes from online forums that assume technical knowledge.
- Family members who know Windows may not be able to help over the phone.

GOOD TO KNOW

Who it suits

Linux can be a fine fit if a tech-comfortable family member will set it up and look after it, and you mainly browse the web and do email. If you'd be on your own with it, a Chromebook or a new Windows PC is usually a gentler path.

HEADS UP

Only download from the official site

If you or a helper try Linux, download it only from the project's official website. Look-alike download sites exist for nearly every free program.

CHAPTER 25

Decision Guide: Which Path Is Right for You?

Here's the whole guide boiled down into a few questions. Answer them in order, and you'll land on a sensible plan.

Question 1: Does your PC pass the Windows 11 check?

- **Yes:** Upgrade for free when you're ready (Chapter 17, *Upgrading for Free, Step by Step*). If you're not ready yet, enroll in ESU now and upgrade later.
- **No:** Go to Question 2.

Question 2: Is the PC still working well for you?

- **Yes:** Enroll in ESU (Chapter 11, *Enrolling, Step by Step*) and plan a replacement before October 12, 2027.
- **No, it's slow or failing:** Back up now (Chapter 28, *Back Up Now, Whatever You Decide*) and replace it sooner (Chapter 20, *Replacing the PC: The Short Version*).

Question 3: What do you actually use a computer for?

If you mostly…	Consider
Browse, email, video-call and look at photos	A Chromebook, or ChromeOS Flex on the old PC
Use an iPhone and want everything to work together	A Mac
Use Windows programs, Word and Excel, or special software	A new Windows 11 PC
Have a tech-savvy helper and an older PC	Possibly Linux

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

The safest plan for almost everyone

Enroll in ESU today so you're protected, keep your files backed up, and make your bigger decision calmly sometime before the fall of 2027.

FROM BILL

Talk it through

If you'd like a second opinion on your particular computer, my **Windows 10 Safety Check** looks at your PC and gives you a straight answer about which path makes sense.

PART 5

Staying Safe in the Meantime

Which programs still get updates on Windows 10, keeping your browser current, backing up, and the scams that use "end of support" to frighten people.

CHAPTER 26

What Still Gets Updates on Windows 10

Windows itself and the programs you run on it are updated separately. Even though Windows 10 has reached end of support, several important Microsoft programs keep getting their own updates for longer. Here's where things stand.

Program	Updates on Windows 10 until	Needs ESU?
Windows 10 itself (security fixes)	October 12, 2027, with ESU	Yes
Microsoft Edge web browser	At least October 2028 (version 22H2)	No
Microsoft 365 apps (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint)	Security updates until October 10, 2028	No
Office 2016 and Office 2019	Support has ended; they still run, unsupported	Not applicable

Microsoft Defender antivirus

Windows 10 includes **Microsoft Defender Antivirus**, and it's turned on by default. Microsoft has said it will keep sending Defender's virus-definition updates to Windows 10 through October 2028. That helps, but Microsoft is also clear that antivirus alone doesn't replace the security fixes for Windows itself.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why the browser and apps still matter

Most of what you do online happens in your web browser, so a current browser covers a lot of risk. But it's not a substitute for Windows security updates. Think of it as a good front door on a house whose windows still need locks: you want both, which is why ESU matters.

HEADS UP

Very old Office

If you use Office 2016 or Office 2019, it will keep opening your documents, but it no longer gets security fixes. Be extra careful opening attachments in it, and consider Microsoft 365 or another up-to-date program.

CHAPTER 27

Keeping Your Web Browser Up to Date

Your web browser is the program you use to visit websites: Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome or Firefox. It's your first line of defense online, and it's the easiest thing to keep current.

Edge on Windows 10

Microsoft Edge will keep getting updates on Windows 10 version 22H2 until at least October 2028, whether or not you enroll in ESU. Edge usually updates itself quietly in the background.

Make any browser check for updates

On all the major browsers, opening the **Help** and then **About** page makes the browser check for real updates right then. It's the safe way to update.

1. Open your browser.
2. Select the menu button at the top right (three dots in Edge and Chrome, three lines in Firefox).
3. Choose **Help** (in Edge it's **Help and feedback**), then the **About** item.
4. Wait while it checks. If an update downloads, select the button to restart the browser.

SCAM ALERT

Fake "update your browser" messages

Criminals disguise harmful software as a browser update. If a website suddenly tells you your browser needs updating, close that message and use the Help and About steps above instead. Never download an "update" from a pop-up.

GOOD TO KNOW

What about Google Chrome?

As of November 2026, Google hadn't published an end date for Chrome on home Windows 10 PCs. Keep it updated with the Help and About steps, and check again in 2027.

TIP

Use SmartScreen in Edge

Microsoft recommends using SmartScreen in Microsoft Edge, which can help block known phishing websites. If it's on, leave it on.

CHAPTER 28

Back Up Now, Whatever You Decide

No matter which path you choose, back up your photos and documents now. A backup protects you from a failing hard drive, a spilled cup of coffee, ransomware, and a botched upgrade, all at once.

Two good ways to back up

Way	Good things	Things to know
OneDrive (with Windows Backup)	Automatic; files follow you to a new PC; 5 GB free	Big photo collections may need paid storage
External drive	One-time purchase; holds a lot; no internet needed	You have to remember to do it; keep it unplugged between backups

Back up your folders to OneDrive

1. Make sure you're signed in to Windows with your Microsoft account.
2. Select **Start**, type **backup**, and open **Windows Backup**.
3. Open the **Folders** section and turn on the folders you want: Desktop, Documents, Pictures, Videos and Music.
4. Select **Back up**.
5. If OneDrive says you're out of space, either choose fewer folders or use an external drive instead.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why it's worth an afternoon

Once your files are backed up, every other decision in this guide gets less stressful. Upgrade, replace, wipe or recycle: your memories are safe either way.

TIP

The two-copy rule

For irreplaceable photos, keep two copies in two places, for example OneDrive plus an external drive kept in a drawer.

GOOD TO KNOW

OneDrive can help after ransomware

OneDrive has built-in tools to help detect ransomware and recover your files from it. That's one more reason to keep important folders there.

CHAPTER 29

Scam Calls & Pop-ups: "Your Windows Has Expired"

Scammers love big news like end of support because it gives them a believable story. They count on you feeling worried and in a hurry. Once you know their tricks, they're easy to spot.

What these scams look like

- A phone call from "Microsoft" or "Windows Support" saying your computer is sending out errors or your Windows license has expired.
- A pop-up that fills the screen, maybe with a loud voice or alarm, saying your PC is infected or "Windows is locked," with a phone number to call.
- An email offering to "renew" or "extend" Windows 10, or to sell you security updates.
- A website or caller asking for gift cards, payment apps or bank transfers to "fix" or "renew" your computer.

The rules that never change

- **Real Microsoft error messages never include a phone number to call.**
- **Microsoft won't call you out of the blue** to offer tech support or say there's a problem with your device.
- Real tech support never needs your Social Security number.
- The only place to enroll in ESU or upgrade to Windows 11 is **Settings** on your own computer.

SCAM ALERT

If a scary pop-up appears

Don't call the number. Close the browser. If the mouse won't do it, press and hold the **Alt** key and press **F4**. If even that doesn't work, restart the computer. The pop-up is just a web page pretending to be an emergency.

SCAM ALERT

If someone calls you

Hang up. Don't let them connect to your computer, don't install anything they ask for, and don't give them a sign-in code or card number. If you're worried your PC really has a problem, call someone you already trust.

TIP

Report it

You can report a tech support scam to Microsoft at microsoft.com/reportascam. Warning friends and family helps too.

CHAPTER 30

If You Already Called or Let Someone In

If you've already called a pop-up number, let a caller connect to your computer, or paid someone, please don't be embarrassed. These people are professionals, and they fool smart, careful people every day. What matters now is acting quickly.

Do these things right away

1. **Disconnect from the internet.** Unplug the network cable or turn off Wi-Fi on the PC. That cuts off any remote connection.
2. **Call your bank or card company** using the number on the back of your card. Tell them what happened and ask them to watch for or block charges.
3. **Change your passwords** from a different device you trust, starting with email and banking.
4. **Don't pay again.** Scammers often call back offering a "refund" that's really another scam.
5. **Have the computer checked** by someone you trust before you use it for banking again.

HEADS UP

The "refund" call

A common follow-up is a call saying they owe you a refund and accidentally sent too much, so you need to send the difference back. There's no refund. Hang up.

TIP

Report it

Report the scam to Microsoft at microsoft.com/reportascam. If money was lost, report it to your local police as well, and keep any notes, numbers and receipts.

FROM BILL

This is exactly what I'm here for

If someone has been in your computer, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. I'll look for anything they left behind, check your settings, and help you lock things back down.

CHAPTER 31

A Simple Monthly Safety Routine

Between now and October 2027, a few minutes once a month keeps a Windows 10 PC in good shape. Pick an easy day to remember, like the first of the month.

1. Open **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update** and select **Check for updates**. Install everything and restart if asked.
2. On the same page, confirm the ESU status still shows that this PC is enrolled.
3. Open your web browser's **Help** and **About** page to make sure it's current (Chapter 27, *Keeping Your Web Browser Up to Date*).
4. Open **Windows Backup** and check that it shows your backup is up to date, or copy new photos to your external drive.
5. Glance at **Windows Security** (type it into Start) and make sure there are no warnings.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why it's worth ten minutes

Updates only protect you once they're installed. A regular check catches any that got stuck and reminds you to keep your backups fresh.

TIP

Write it down

Use the checklist in Chapter 35, *Your Windows 10 Cheat-Sheet* and put a check mark next to each month as you go.

GOOD TO KNOW

Start planning in early 2027

Add one more step to your routine starting in January 2027: decide what you'll do when ESU ends on October 12, 2027. See Chapter 25, *Decision Guide: Which Path Is Right for You?*.

PART 6

Retiring the Old PC & Getting Help

Wiping your personal information before a computer leaves the house, recycling or trading it in, and how to reach Bill.

CHAPTER 32

Wiping the Old PC Before It Leaves

Before you give away, sell, donate or recycle a computer, erase your personal information from it. Windows has a built-in way to do this called **Reset this PC**. This is one of the few steps in this guide where you really do need to be careful, because it can't be undone.

HEADS UP

Back up first, and confirm it

Resetting with **Remove everything** deletes all your files, programs and settings. Make sure your photos and documents are safely on the new computer, OneDrive or an external drive first (Chapter 28, *Back Up Now, Whatever You Decide*).

Reset and clean a Windows 10 PC

1. Open **Settings** and select **Update & Security**.
2. Select **Recovery** on the left.
3. Under **Reset this PC**, select **Get started**.
4. Choose **Remove everything**.
5. When offered, turn on **Clean data**. Microsoft recommends this option if you plan to donate, recycle or sell the PC. It takes longer but makes your old files much harder to recover.
6. Choose **Cloud download** or **Local reinstall**; either is fine for a PC that's leaving.
7. Follow the prompts to start. Plug in a laptop and leave it alone until it finishes.

GOOD TO KNOW

A black screen is normal

During a reset, the screen may go black for a long time, sometimes more than 15 minutes, and the PC may restart itself. Don't restart it yourself during this time, or the reset could fail.

TIP

Sign out of things too

Before resetting, sign out of your browser and any music or photo apps. Afterward, visit account.microsoft.com and remove the old PC from your list of devices.

STAY SAFE

For very sensitive information

Microsoft notes that the built-in erase is meant for consumers and doesn't meet government or industry data-erasure standards. If the PC held especially sensitive records, ask about removing and physically destroying the drive.

CHAPTER 33

Recycling, Trading In or Donating

Old computers shouldn't go in the household trash. They contain materials that should be recycled properly, and some still have value. Here are your main options once the PC has been wiped.

Option	What it involves
Trade in	Microsoft's trade-in program, and stores such as Best Buy, Staples and Micro Center, may give you credit for an eligible PC.
Recycle	Microsoft lists approved recycling programs; many electronics stores also accept old computers.
Donate	A working, wiped PC may be welcome at a local charity, school or senior center. Ask first.
Keep for offline use	An unprotected PC can still show old photos or play music without the internet.

TIP

Call ahead

Trade-in values, accepted items and any fees change from time to time. Call the store or check its website before you load up the car.

HEADS UP

Wipe first, every time

Never hand over a computer, even to a recycler, until you've backed up and reset it (Chapter 32, *Wiping the Old PC Before It Leaves*).

GOOD TO KNOW

Keeping it offline

If you keep an old Windows 10 PC for something like a photo slideshow, disconnect it from the internet and don't use it for email, shopping or banking.

FROM BILL

I can help with the whole move

If you'd like help moving to a new computer and wiping the old one, I can do both in one visit.

CHAPTER 34

When to Call Bill

This guide is meant to help you handle Windows 10's end of support confidently on your own. But you should never feel you have to puzzle through something worrying by yourself. Here's when a call makes especially good sense.

Good reasons to call

- The **Enroll now** link won't appear, or enrollment gives you an error.
- PC Health Check says your PC fails because of TPM or Secure Boot, and you'd like to know whether it can be fixed safely.
- You want help upgrading to Windows 11, or a calm walk-through of the new layout afterward.
- You're buying a new computer and want help moving your photos, email and passwords over.
- You want the old PC wiped properly before it goes to a recycler or a relative.
- A pop-up, call or email about "expired Windows" has you worried, or you already called the number.

My Windows 10 Safety Check

My **Windows 10 Safety Check** is made for exactly this moment. I look at your computer, check whether it can run Windows 11, confirm your updates and Extended Security Updates enrollment, check your backups and antivirus, and give you a plain-English recommendation for what to do next.

SCAM ALERT

A two-minute call beats hours of regret

If anything about your computer ever pressures you to pay, buy gift cards, give out a code, or let a stranger connect to your PC, stop and call me *first* at **(330) 200-8042**. I'd much rather spend two minutes reassuring you than help pick up the pieces afterward.

How to reach me

Call or text **(330) 200-8042**, or book a time online at **billshometech.com/book**. Bill's Home Tech serves **Portage County, Ohio**. If you reach my assistant **Sophie** on the main line, she can answer simple questions and get you on my schedule. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in**

your home. With 30+ years of professional experience, I promise there's no question too basic and no worry too small to bring to me.

— Bill

CHAPTER 35

Your Windows 10 Cheat-Sheet

Here's the whole guide on one page: the steps you'll use most, the safety rules, and a place to write down your own details.

Where things are

I want to…	Do this
Check version and edition	Settings > System > About > Windows specifications
Check for updates	Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update > Check for updates
Enroll in ESU	Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update > Enroll now
Check ESU status	Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update
Back up settings and folders	Start, type backup, open Windows Backup
Switch to a Microsoft account	Settings > Accounts > Your info
Upgrade to Windows 11	Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update (if offered)
Wipe before giving away	Settings > Update & Security > Recovery > Reset this PC

Key dates

Date	What happens
October 14, 2025	Windows 10 end of support
October 12, 2027	Extended Security Updates end
October 10, 2028	Microsoft 365 app security updates on Windows 10 end

Staying safe: the short list

1. Microsoft will never call you out of the blue about your computer.
2. Real error messages never include a phone number.
3. Only enroll or upgrade in Settings on your own PC. Never pay a caller.
4. Close scary pop-ups with Alt and F4, or restart.
5. Keep two copies of your photos.
6. Wipe any PC before it leaves your home.
7. When unsure, call Bill.

Keep this handy

Keep handy	Fill in
My Windows edition and version	_____
Microsoft account email	_____
Date I enrolled in ESU	_____
PC Health Check result	_____
Backup drive or OneDrive?	_____
Monthly check done (months)	_____
Bill's Home Tech	(330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book

FROM BILL

You've got this

You now know more about Windows 10's end of support than most people. Protect your PC, back up your photos, ignore the scare calls, and make your bigger decision in your own time before October 2027. And if you'd like a hand, I'm only a phone call away. — Bill, (330) 200-8042