

WRITTEN BY

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# Windows® 8

# BIBLE

**THE COMPREHENSIVE, TUTORIAL RESOURCE**

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TOOLS AND FEATURES

MASTER INSIDE TRICKS  
AND BEST PRACTICES

DISCOVER WHAT YOU  
NEED, WHEN YOU NEED IT



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# **Part I**

## **Getting Started, Getting Secure**

### **IN THIS PART**

**Chapter 1** What's New in Windows 8

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# **Chapter 1**

## **What's New in Windows 8**

### **IN THIS CHAPTER**

**New platforms**

**The Windows 8 Interface**

**The Windows store**

**Cloud synchronization**

**Messaging**

**Other new features**

In some ways, Windows 8 is a radical departure from Windows 7, as well as the other versions of Windows that preceded it. In other ways, Windows 8 isn't much different from Windows 7. Both possibilities are good ones, both from a technology standpoint and for the user. The differences mean an expanded set of features, richer experience, broader platform support, performance improvements, and much more. The similarities mean that if you are familiar with previous versions of Windows, you can put Windows 8 to work right away without a steep learning curve.

In this chapter, we focus not on those familiar features, but rather on many of the new and changed features in Windows 8. You'll find an overview here of those features, with deeper explanation in other chapters. We can't cover every new feature here, but we hope to give you a good overview of the key features and conceptual changes introduced in Windows 8.

So, whip out that new Windows 8 tablet or PC, start reading, and start taking advantage of the great new features that Windows 8 has to offer.

# New Platforms

One of the most significant additions to Windows 8 is its support for platforms other than the traditional PC. Windows 8 moves beyond the Intel and AMD x86 processor family to support System on a Chip (SoC) devices from both the x86 and ARM architectures. ARM, which stands for Advanced RISC Machine, was developed by the company now known as ARM Holdings. Although you might never have heard of them, ARM processors are found extensively in consumer electronics devices, including tablets, cell phones, MP3 players, gaming consoles, computer peripherals, and much more.

While the traditional PC portable form factor continues to shrink with ultra-light tablets and notebooks, SoC support for Windows 8 generally means the capability to provide a Windows experience on small form-factor tablets, cell phones, and smaller handheld devices, in addition to the generally larger (albeit typically more powerful) traditional PC platforms. For ARM devices, the result is a new opportunity for device manufacturers to provide a new selection of handheld devices running a Windows operating system (dubbed Windows on ARM, or WOA) with support for applications like those in the Microsoft Office suite.

For users, it means a consistency of user experience across a broad range of devices. For example, your experience could be largely the same between your notebook, your tablet, and your cell phone. Support for ARM also opens up some interesting possibilities for embedding Windows in a vast array of consumer electronic devices. It's quite likely that someday soon your TV will be running Windows and give you, for example, the same, consistent experience streaming movies on your TV as on your PC.

An important distinction to understand about the ARM platform, however, is that applications written for your

desktop PC or notebook won't necessarily run on an ARM device. For example, none of the applications in existence today, built for the x86 Windows 7 and earlier operating systems, will work on ARM-based devices. However, that roadblock doesn't exist for Windows 8-specific applications.

Microsoft's Visual Studio development environment makes it relatively easy to compile an ARM version of an application at the same time you compile one for the x86 platform. This means that developers can create one code set for their application and publish it for both platforms. When you download an application from the Windows Store, that app will run on the Windows 8 "traditional" devices as well as ARM-based Windows 8 devices. You can install the app on up to five devices in any mix of x86- and ARM-based devices. The app will provide the same experience on all of them.

What about Office applications, you ask? Excellent question! Microsoft includes four Office applications with WOA devices, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote. These versions of the Office applications do not provide the same level of features as the regular version, but provide a means for users to work with their data across multiple types of devices. For example, if you sync your OneNote notebooks to SkyDrive, you can view them in OneNote on your WOA device. Or, when someone e-mails you a spreadsheet as an attachment, you can view it in Excel on the WOA device.

## **The Windows 8 Interface**

As with many previous versions of Windows, Windows 8 introduces a new user interface. Unlike previous versions, however, Windows 8's new interface is radically different from what we've come to know as the "traditional" Windows user interface. Clearly designed with the tablet and

handheld market in mind — at least in large part — Windows 8 gives you a simplified, clean user experience with tiles providing access to applications.

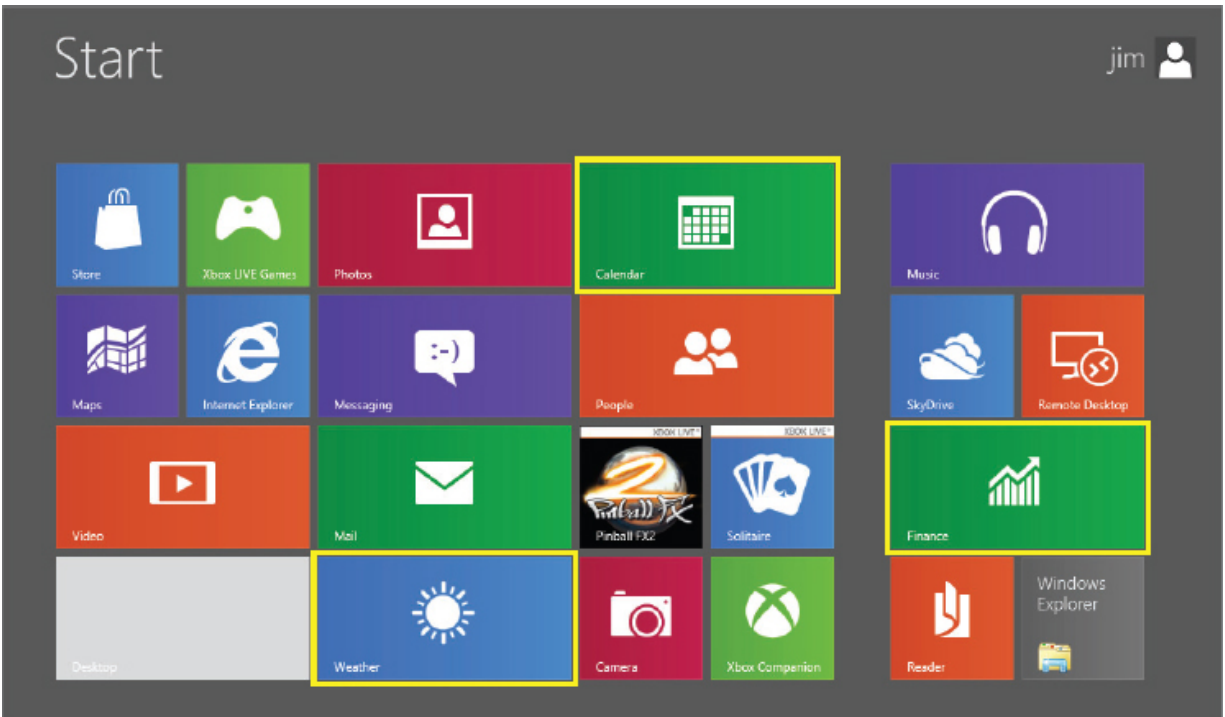
## Note

The Windows 8 UI look isn't just about tablets and small form-factor devices. To Microsoft, the new UI is really as much an aesthetic concept as it is a user interface. It's about uncluttering the desktop, websites, and PowerPoint decks almost as much as it's about uncluttering the Windows user interface.

## The Start screen

[Figure 1.1](#) shows the Windows 8 Start screen, a key component of the new Windows 8 interface. You'll learn how to navigate the new Windows 8 interface in Chapter 2. For now, understand that the tiles on the Start page, like icons on the traditional Windows desktop, give you quick access to your programs and documents. Tap the Internet Explorer tile, for example, and Internet Explorer opens. Likewise, click or tap the Photos tile, and the Photos app opens, enabling you to view the photos stored on your computer, or in SkyDrive, Facebook, Flickr, and other locations.

**[FIGURE 1.1](#)** The Windows 8 Start screen



A key difference between Windows 8 tiles and desktop icons, however, is that tiles can be live, showing data that changes dynamically. The Mail tile, for example, shows a preview of new messages in your Inbox (see [Figure 1.2](#)). The Calendar tile shows a preview of meetings and events in your Calendar, the Finance tab shows stock prices, and so on. The advantage is that the tiles can give you information at a glance that you would otherwise have to open a program to view.

**[FIGURE 1.2](#)** Live tiles show dynamic data.



The Windows 8 UI isn't just about the Start page or its tiles, however. Windows 8 apps generally follow the same clean, streamlined look as the Windows 8 interface itself. For example, [Figure 1.3](#) shows the Finance application. There is no window border, no controls in the title bar, and no visible menu. While a Windows 8 app can include any number of interface features specific to the application, in general the interface will be simple and streamlined like the Finance app, if not more so.

**[FIGURE 1.3](#)** A Windows 8 app typically has a clean, simplified interface.





Although the Windows 8 interface is a departure from the traditional Windows desktop, the combination of live tiles, clean look, and capability to put your most frequently used apps and documents in one area for quick access makes Windows 8 a winner, particularly for tablets and handheld devices.

# The Lock Screen

The Windows 8 Lock Screen appears when the computer is locked (see [Figure 1.4](#)). The Lock Screen shows the current day and time, battery status, and network status, all on a photo background. The Lock Screen can also display notifications from applications. To display the logon screen, slide the Lock Screen up.

**FIGURE 1.4** The Lock Screen



## The Charms Bar

The Charms Bar appears at the right edge of the display (see [Figure 1.5](#)) when you move the mouse to the bottom-right or upper-right corner of the display. You can also display the Charms Bar by swiping in from the right edge of the display.

**[FIGURE 1.5](#)** The Charms Bar

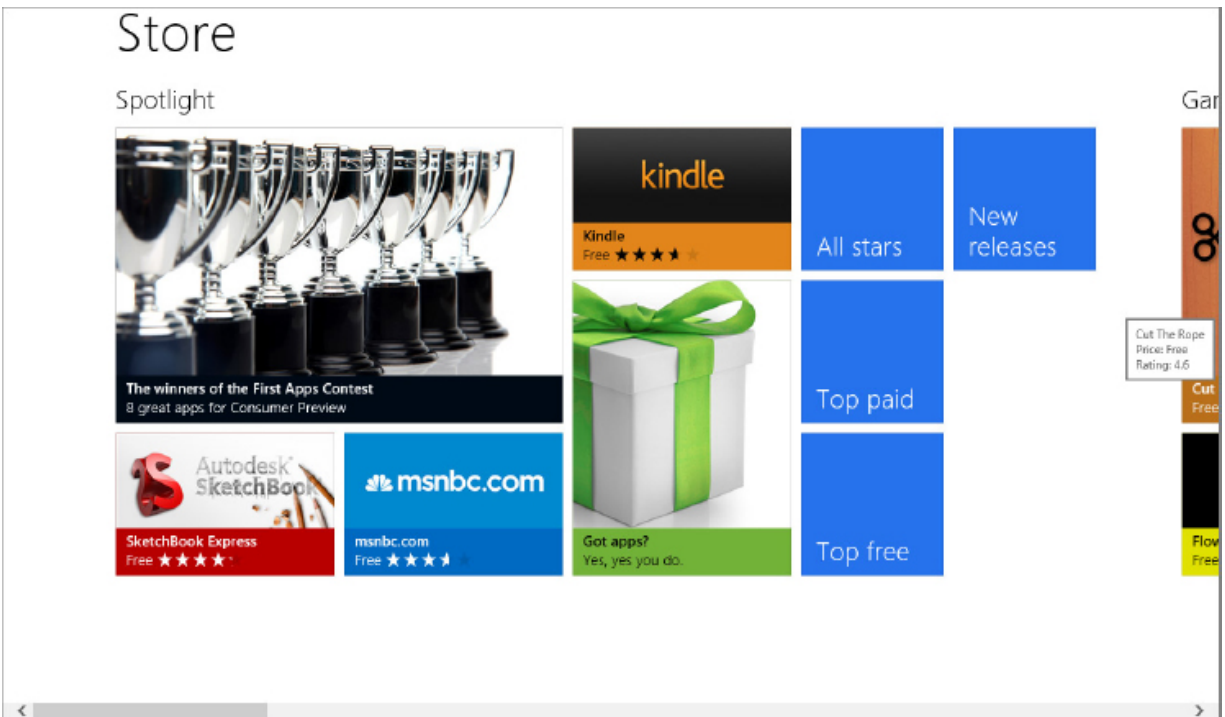


The Charms Bar gives you quick access to Search, Settings, and other options and features.

## The Windows Store

If you're familiar with the iPad, iPod, or Android devices (not to mention a handful of other types), you're familiar with the concept of an app (application) store. As you might expect, given Windows 8's expansion in the tablet and handheld market, Windows 8 adds its own app store, called the Windows Store, shown in [Figure 1.6](#).

**[FIGURE 1.6](#)** The Windows Store



The great thing about the Windows Store, like its counterparts for other devices and platforms, is quick access to a vast collection of applications from games to productivity tools to multimedia apps. As long as your device is connected to the Internet, you can open the Windows Store, browse for and quickly locate the app you need, and typically, in less than a minute, have the app installed and running on your device. Many apps are free; others have some cost. Many give you the capability to try the app for free before you buy it.

## Cloud Synchronization

With the likelihood that many people will have multiple Windows 8 devices, it's no surprise that Windows 8 introduces some great cloud-synchronization features. For example, Windows 8 can integrate with your Windows account (formerly called Windows Live accounts) and SkyDrive to give you access to documents and photos from multiple devices. You can save, open, and view files from