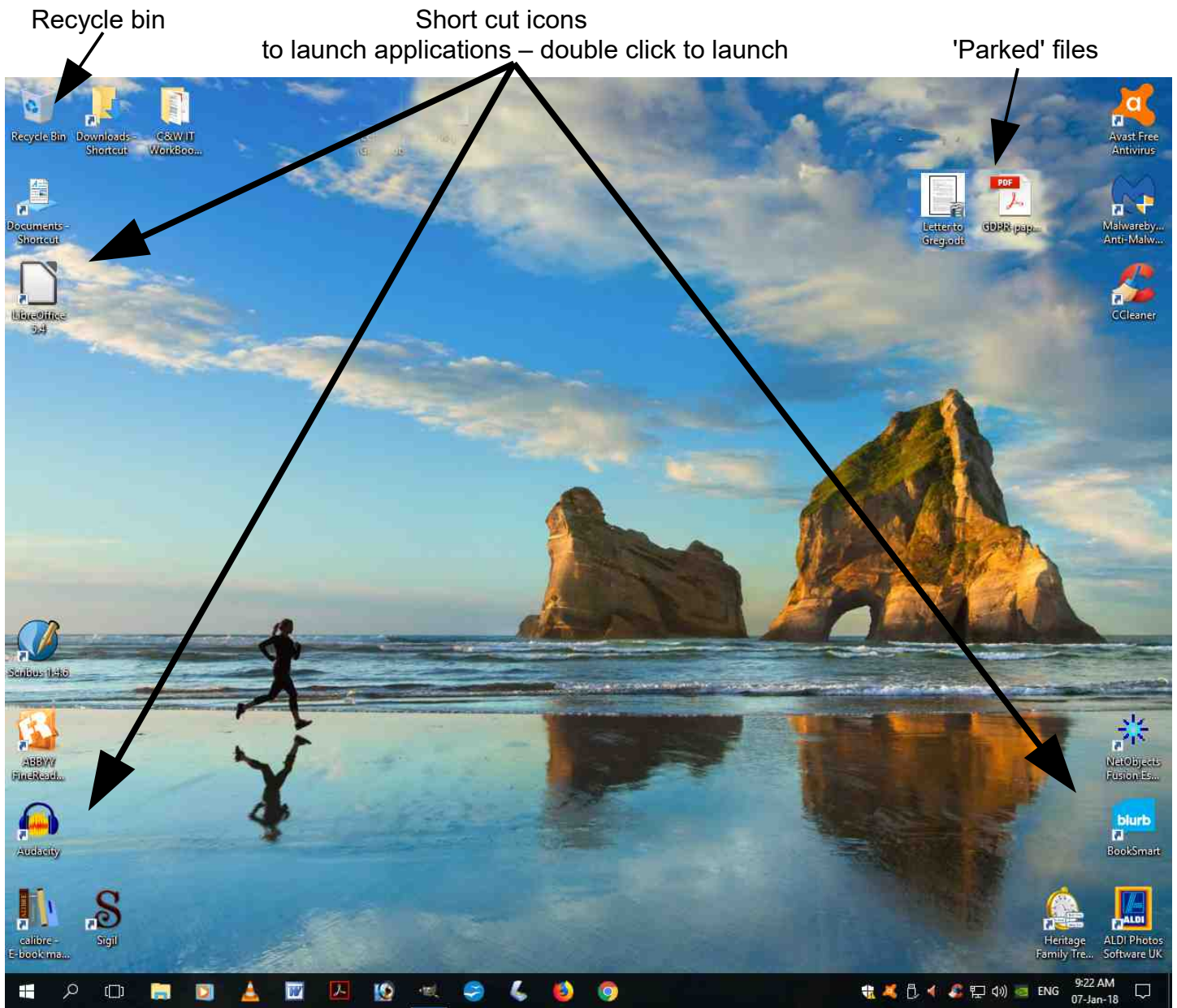


Windows 10 Desktop

Your computer's **desktop** is intended to mimic a real desktop in the sense that just like a real desktop, it has often-used facilities like telephone, writing equipment, calendar, etc. ready-to-hand. It also has a comfortable working space as well as easy access to your oft-used resources.

Your computer's desktop is designed in the same way but is more sophisticated, more like a personal assistant. Microsoft's Windows desktop has evolved somewhat over time but remains essentially the same (if we ignore Windows 8 !) and Windows 7 users should quickly feel at home. So, let's explore.

This is a typical – and fairly 'busy' Windows 10 desktop:



Shortcut application icons can be easily recognised by their superimposed arrow :
A double-click will launch or open the short cut's target.



Changing the way that your desktop looks. Two particularly easy adjustments are:

1. **Changing the desktop's background image.** To do this, simply right-click anywhere on the desktop's background. Select Personalise from the pop-up menu. This takes you to part of **Settings** to choose either one of five backgrounds or to **browse** your filing system to find an image of your choice. One piece of advice – keep the image fairly plain or you'll have difficulty seeing icons against the background.
2. **Changing how the desktop displays icons.** Straight-out-of-the-box, Windows has always displayed desktop icons in vertical lists down the left-hand side of the screen, usually in alphabetical order. For many people they prefer icons in different parts of the desktop (see overleaf image), so how do we change this? Again, right click on the desktop background. The menu that pops up has **View** at the top with an arrow > indicating a sub-menu. Following the arrow reveals a sub-menu which has choices of icon sizes at the top – experiment if you wish. However, the lower half of the menu has a number of ticked options – clicking on Auto arrange icons results in the tick disappearing (this is a 'radio button' – another click replaces the tick). When this is done you can drag desktop icons to new positions – again, experiment. The author uses different corners of the desktop (only use the edges or windows will often cover your icons) for applications of different varieties.

File Explorer as it's name suggests, provides a quick jump to your computer's full filing system. Here you will find *Documents, Pictures, Music, Games*, etc. as well as quick access to the hard drive(s), any external devices connected such as USB Flash drives, printers, etc. For those coming from Windows 7 or earlier versions, this is *the* first stop instead of the Start button. We will explore *File Explorer* in much more detail over coming sessions.

Start button is your access to three immediately useful facilities:

Power button – your computer shut down.

Settings which includes a vast array of tweaks to your system's behaviour

Applications – an alphabetical list of all of the apps installed on your computer.

Start can also be accessed by tapping the Windows key at bottom left of your keyboard:



Task bar displays icons (one click to launch) of your most commonly used applications. Note that these do not have names on the task bar, unlike the same icons on the desktop, so you need to recognise these! The task bar helps to reduce the clutter on your desktop.

Recycle bin is the first stop for anything that you **delete** on your computer.

The bin offers a 'get-out-of-jail-card' if you have a sudden doubt about a recent delete; you still have the option of **restoring** the deleted item(s) just as you would have retrieved that important piece of paper from your waste bin – before the caretaker got to it!

When you look in the Recycle Bin and find your document, right clicking over it yields a short menu with **Restore**, clicking on this returns your file **to its original location** in your computer's filing system.

So, don't be too quick to empty your recycle bin – you might regret it if your deleted something in error.

However, do empty the bin fairly regularly, otherwise it can become overloaded which may be a factor in slowing your computer down. To do this, right click over the bin and choose **Empty Recycle Bin** from the menu. **A word of caution – if you use the likes of CCleaner this will automatically empty your Recycle bin !**

Notification area (sometimes called the *System Tray*) is part of the task bar containing some important system functions such as network access, speaker volume, time/date, etc

You will find in this area a very useful icon that is your route to safely removing external memory devices such as flash drives or external hard drives. Just click on it and select the drive/device to disconnect and wait for the pop out notification that it is now safe to remove.

