Getting started with Windows 10

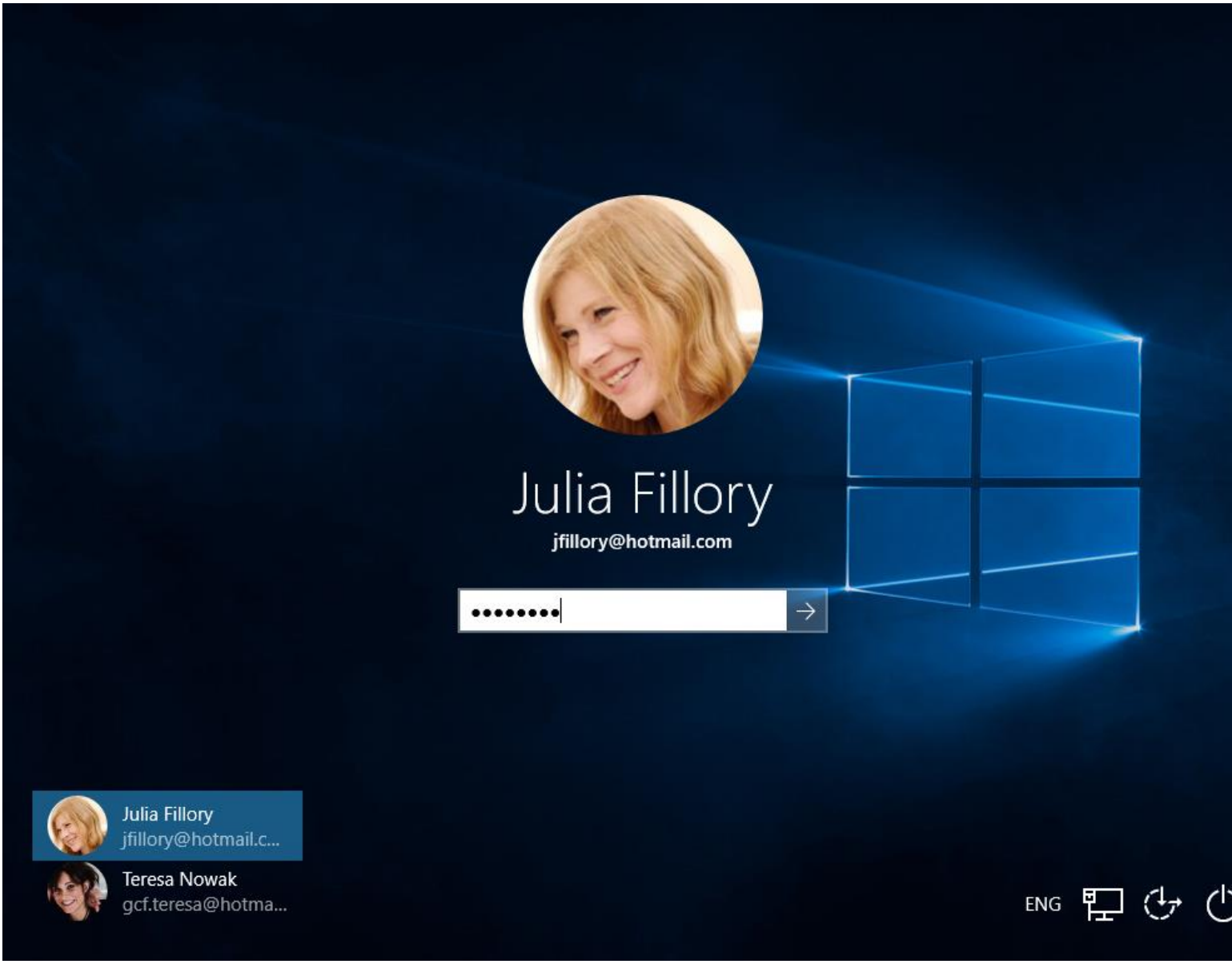
Whether you're using a new computer with Windows 10 or an older machine that was recently upgraded, this lesson will show you the basics of using this version of Windows.

Watch the video below to learn how to get started with Windows 10.

Note: This lesson will focus on using Windows 10 with a desktop or laptop computer. If you're using a tablet computer with a touchscreen, some of the instructions below will work a bit differently; check out our lesson on **Using Windows 10 on a Tablet** to learn more.

Signing in to Windows 10

You'll probably be asked to **create a Microsoft account** the very time you use Windows 10 (if you don't have one already). From this point on, whenever you turn on the computer you'll need to **sign in** to that account. To do this, **type your password** into the box and press **Enter**.

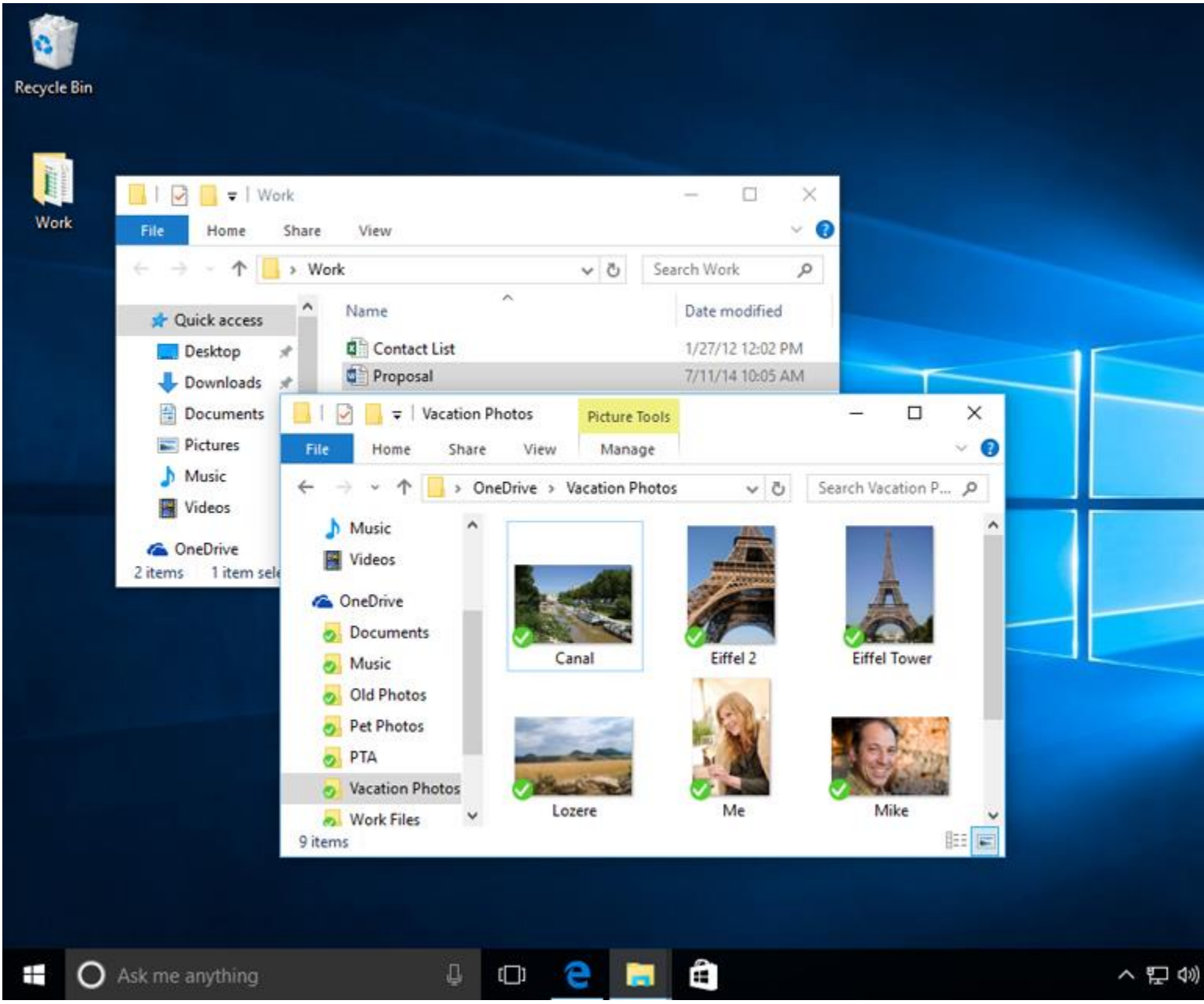


To learn more, you can review our lessons on **Creating a Microsoft Account**and **Managing User Accounts and Parental Controls**.

Navigating the desktop

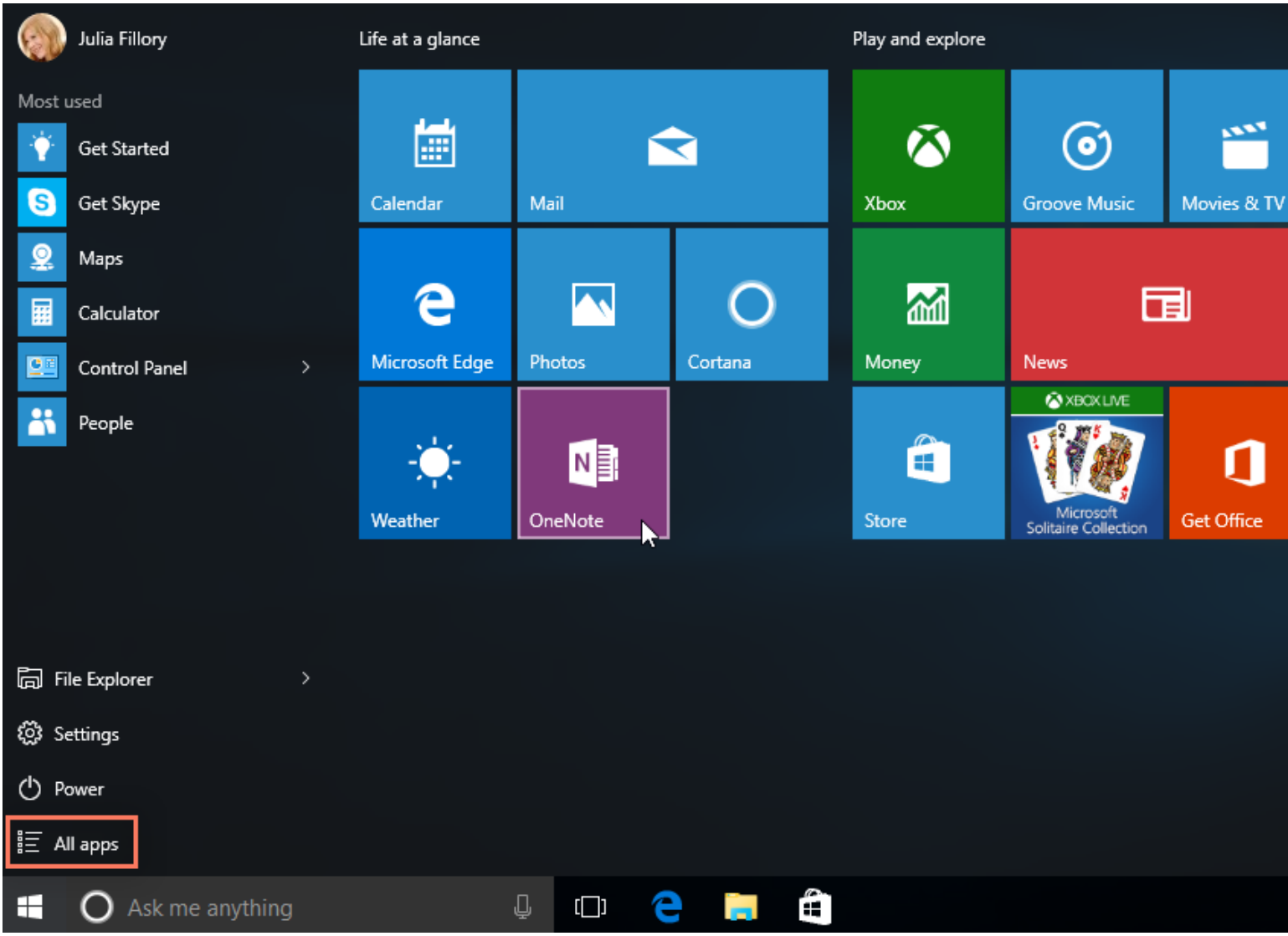
Once you've signed in, the first thing you'll see is the **desktop**. You can think of the desktop as the main workspace for your computer. From here, you can view and manage your files, open applications, access the Internet, and much more.

Click the buttons in the interactive below to become more familiar with the Windows 10 desktop:



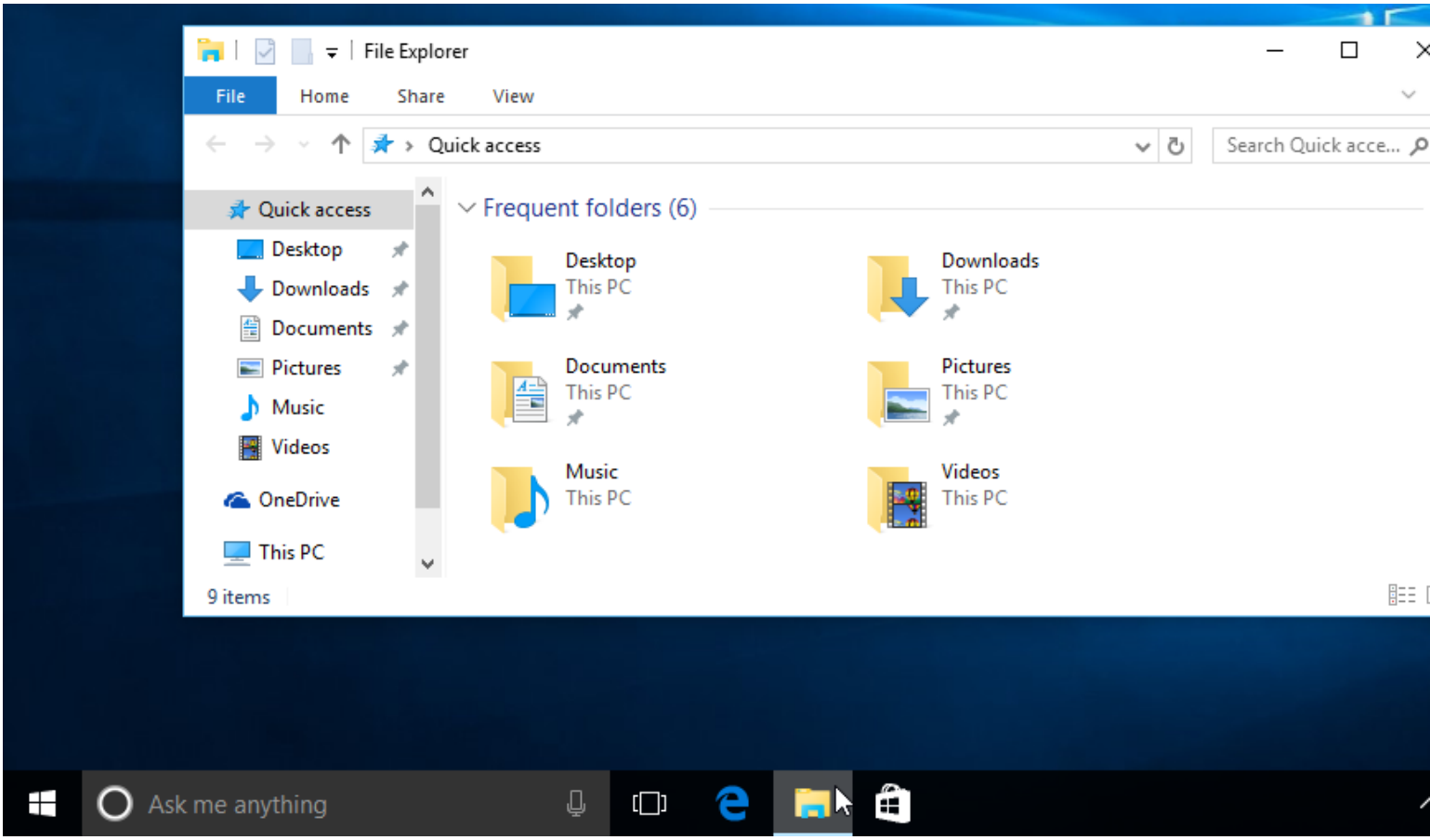
Opening applications

You'll use the **Start menu** to open programs on your computer, just like with previous versions of Windows. To do this, click the **Start** button in the bottom-left corner, then choose the desired application. If you don't see the one you want, select **All apps** to see a full list of applications. In the example below, we're opening **OneNote**.



Working with files

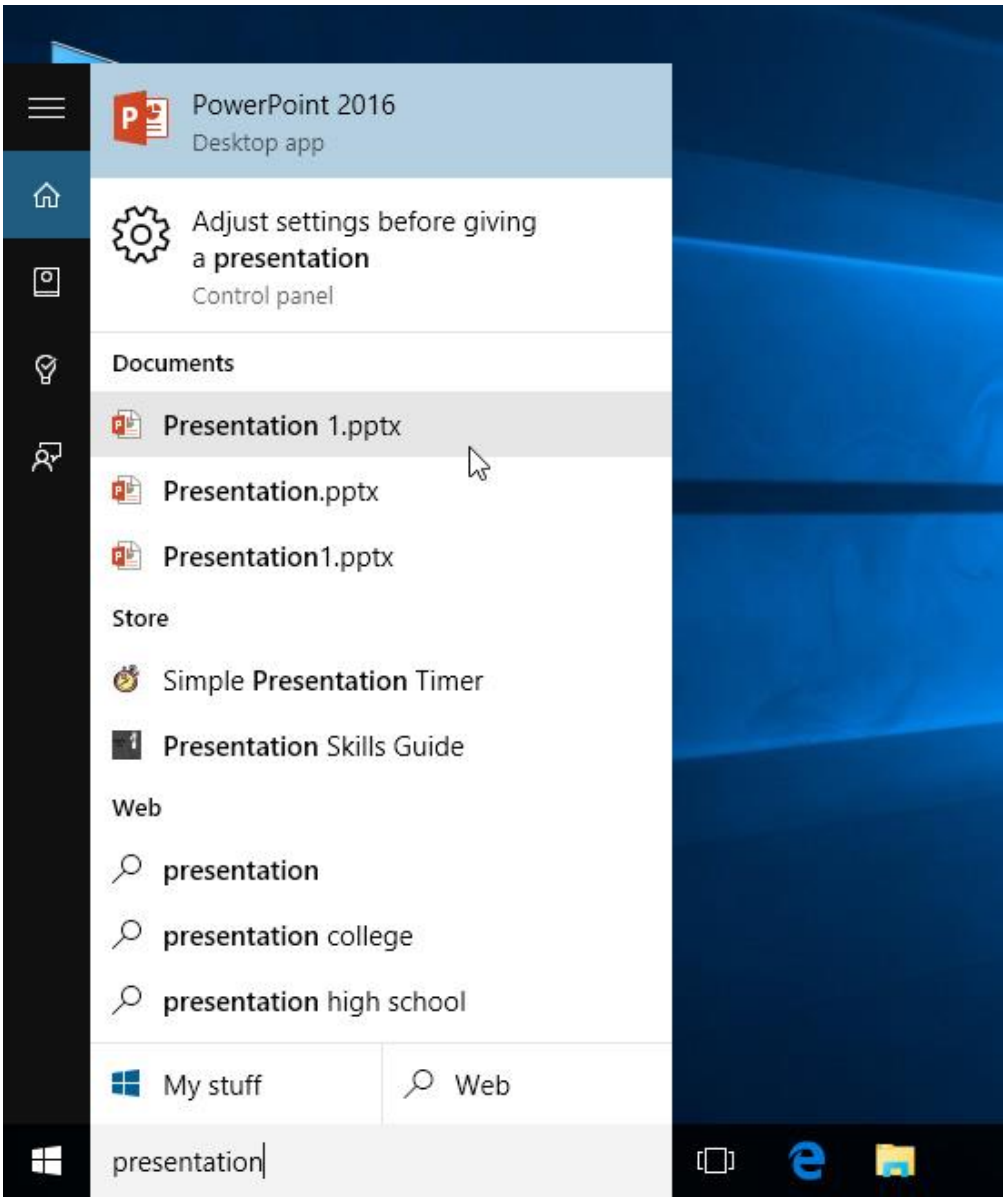
You'll use the **File Explorer** to manage your files and folders. To open File Explorer, click the File Explorer icon on the taskbar or double-click any folder on your desktop.



If you're new to Windows, check out this lesson on **Working with Files** from our **Windows Basics** tutorial to learn more about file management.

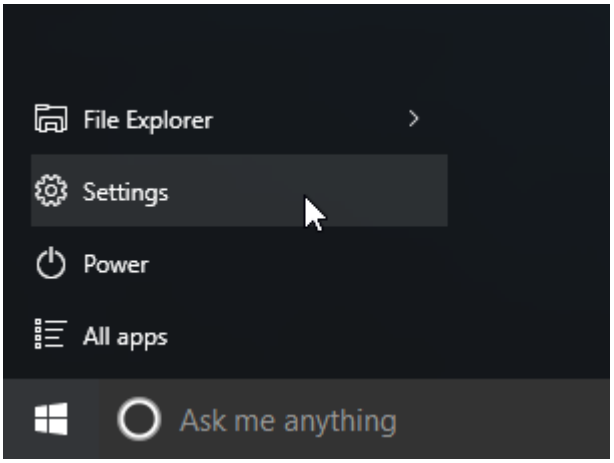
Searching for files and apps

To search for something on your computer—like a specific file or application—click the **Start** button, then start typing. Alternatively, you can press the **Windows** key on the keyboard to begin a search. In the example below, we're searching for a presentation file.

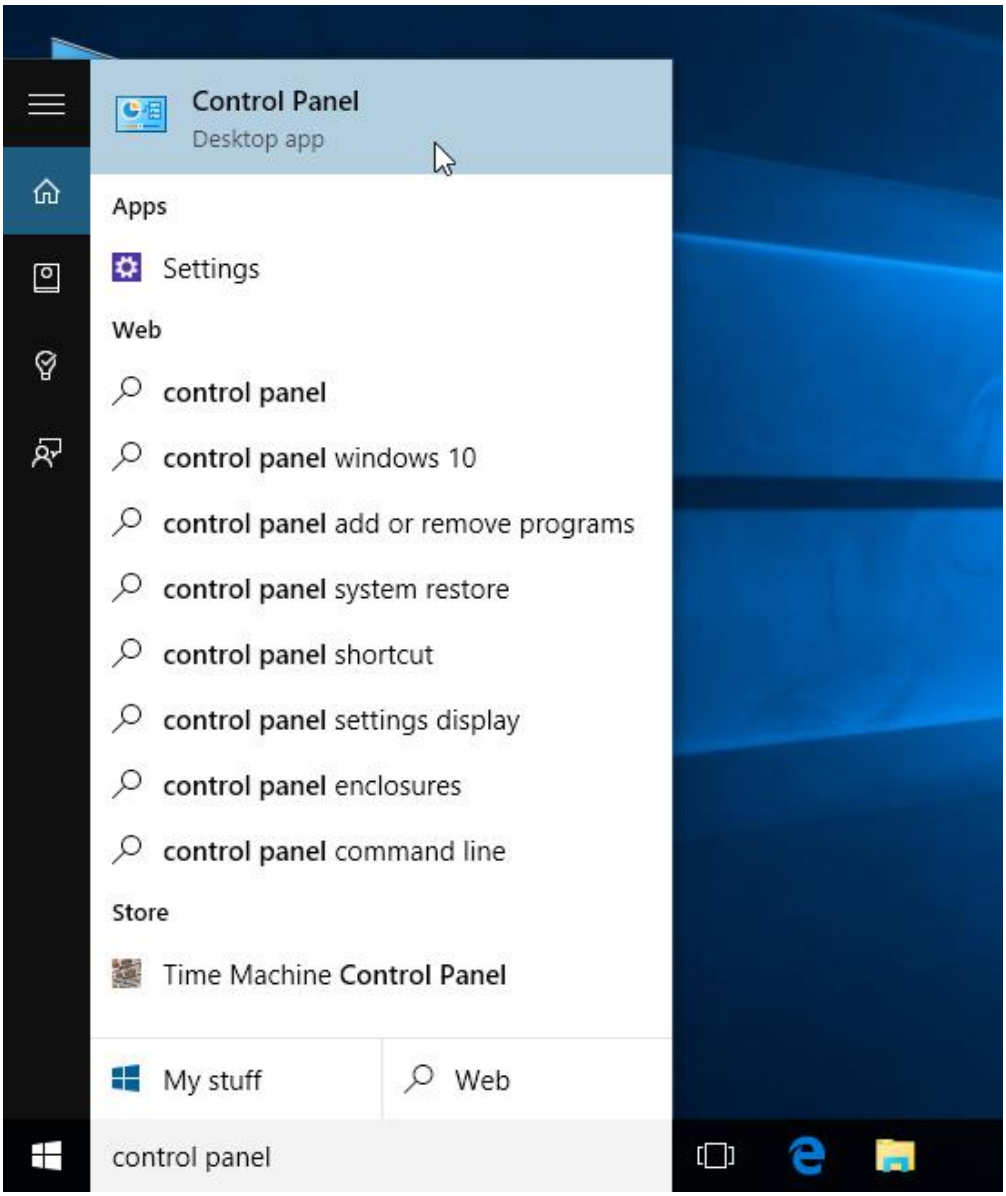


Adjusting your settings

You'll use the Settings app to change the most important settings on your computer, like your network and display options. To open the app, click the Start menu, then select **Settings**.

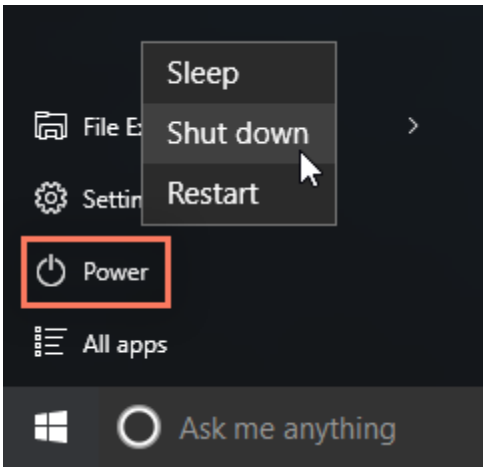


You can also use the **Control Panel** to adjust your settings, just like in earlier versions of Windows. However, there are some options that can only be accessed from the Settings app, like adding a new user. Because of this, you'll probably use the Settings app more often.



Shutting down your computer

When you're done using your computer, it's important to **shut it down properly**. To do this, click the **Start** button, then choose **Power > Shut Down**.


Sleep
File E
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All apps
Ask me anything