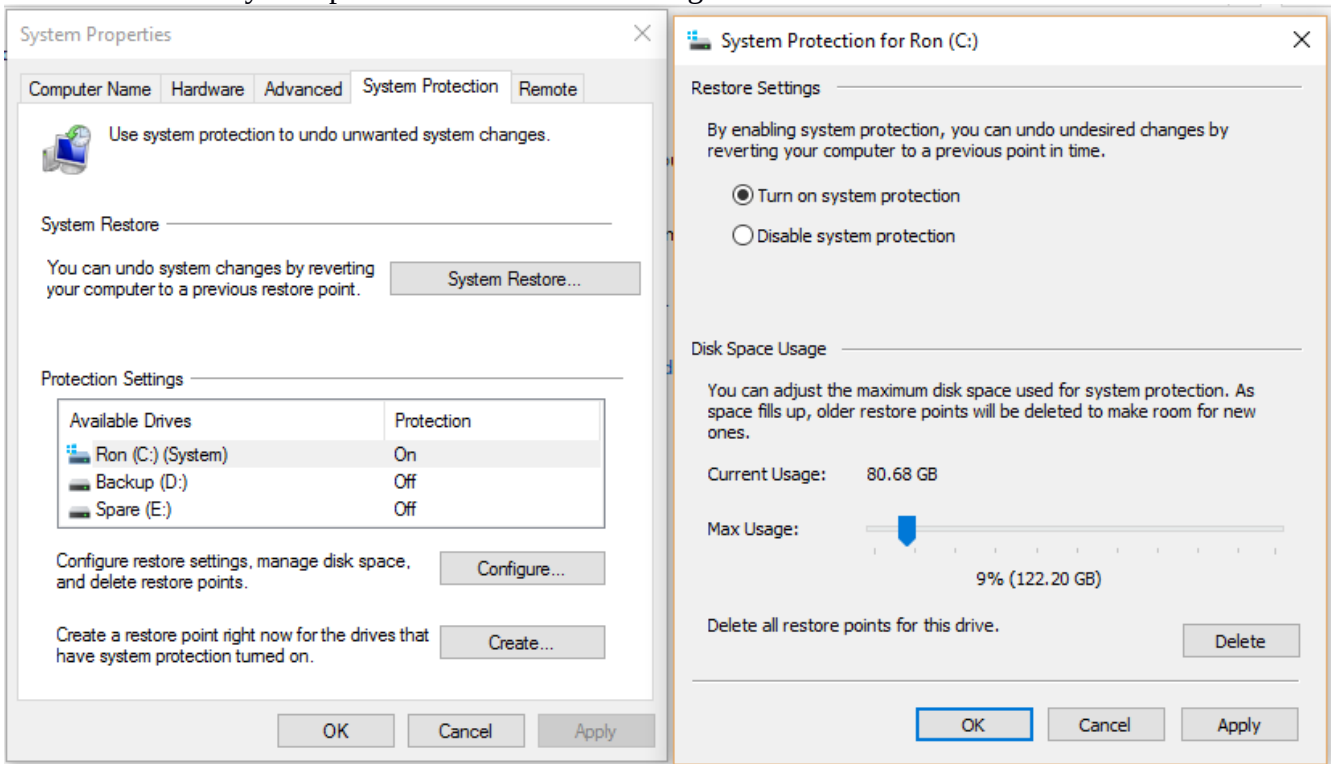


Windows 10 Essential Settings  
By Ron Mettler  
December 6, 2015, Revised January 7, 2116

While working with Windows 10, I have discovered that there are numerous settings that need to be considered, I will try to address some of those over a period of time with short articles. Three very essential ones are detailed below.

### A. System Recovery settings

1. Right click on Start icon, select Control Panel, then Recovery, then Configure System Restore.
2. In the System Protection Tab, highlight the C: drive, then click Configure.
3. Check Turn on system protection. Set the Max Usage slider to about 10% and click OK.



4. Close everything and you will be set to create system restore points in the future when you add new software or do Windows updates. Do some research on using System Restore so you can be prepared to use it when needed. Note that Windows 10 on some systems comes with System Restore turned off. For more information see:

<http://www.howtogeek.com/237230/how-to-enable-system-restore-and-repair-system-problems-on-windows-10/>

### B. Install or use an existing backup drive

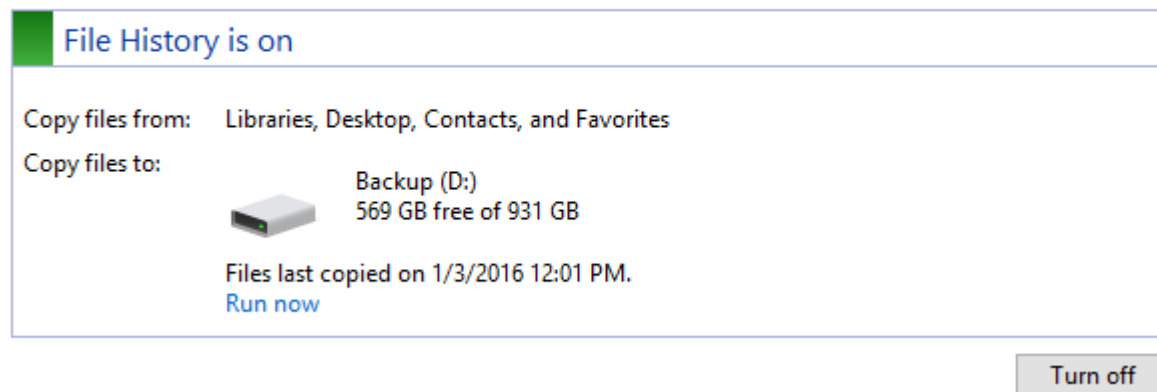
1. Seriously consider adding a second drive to your system to be used for backing up your files.
2. A number of options to consider include the following:
  - Add an internal second hard drive to a desktop computer to be used for backup. This is a least cost option.
  - Replace your C: drive with a new SSD drive and use the old drive for files backup.
  - Purchase an external USB connected hard drive to use for backups. This is a suitable option for either a laptop or desktop computer.
3. There are other options such a network drive (NAS), eSata drive, USB jump drive, etc. The pros and cons of the options are left to you to decide.

### C. File History Settings for backups

1. Windows 10 uses a continuous backup system to create backup copies of your documents, pictures and other folders that you select to be included in the backups. I understand that Windows 8.1 had a similar system although I was never an 8.1 user and do not know those particulars.
2. Left click the Start icon, select Settings, Update and security, then Backup.
3. Turn on Automatically backup my files.
4. Just below where you turned on Automatically backup my files, click More options.
5. Set the “Back up my files” to a suitable interval that fits your needs. I set mine to “Every hour (default)”.
6. Under Back up these folders, add folders to the selection that you wish to backup. To remove a folder, select it, then click on remove. Below Related settings, click on “See advanced settings” to view the status.

#### Keep a history of your files

File History saves copies of your files so you can get them back if they're lost or damaged.



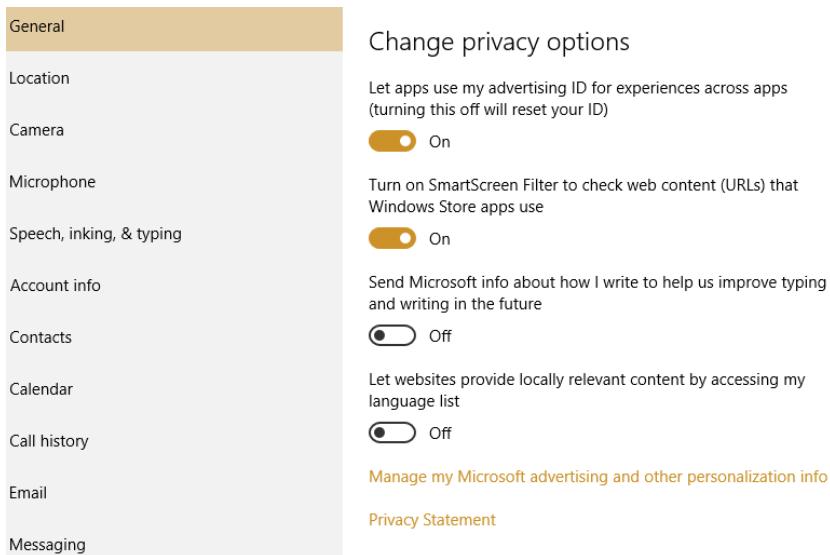
The screenshot shows the Windows File History settings window. At the top, a green bar indicates "File History is on". Below this, the settings are as follows:

- Copy files from:** Libraries, Desktop, Contacts, and Favorites
- Copy files to:** Backup (D:) with 569 GB free of 931 GB. A small icon of a drive is shown next to the text.
- Files last copied on:** 1/3/2016 12:01 PM.
- Run now** (a blue link)

At the bottom right of the window, there is a "Turn off" button.

### D. Security and Privacy

1. Windows 10 provides a means of turning on or off various Privacy related settings. The settings are a new option in Windows which appears to be a welcome addition. I am not providing an opinion as to the level of privacy protection that the settings provide. That is left to each individual to decide what is appropriate for their use. Remember there is not much privacy using the Internet.
1. Left click the Start icon, select Settings, then Privacy.
2. For each category on the left, set the privacy items On or Off as desired. Note that some default setting appear to be overly nosy such as in the General section



3, You may search and obtain suggestions from various on-line resources for opinions of suitable settings.

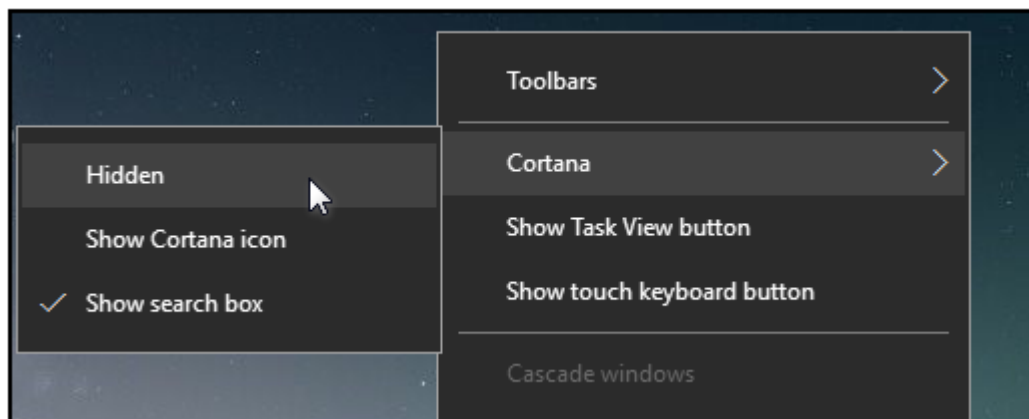
### E. Customize the Taskbar

1. Remove the Task View Button – A nice new feature in Windows 10 provides a means of viewing thumbnails of all open applications and windows. The button is located just to the right of the Cortana bar:



I find it to be handy, but if you never use it, you can get rid of it by right-click the taskbar then uncheck Show Taskbar button.

2. Cortana is the search bar at the left of the Taskbar. You can change it to an icon only, hide it if you like, or show it as a search box. Right-click on the taskbar, select Cortana, then check the desired option.



If you check “Hidden” you can still access the Cortana voice search by pressing Win key plus C.

### F. Customize the Notifications

1. Go to Settings by pressing Win plus I, then select System, then Notifications & actions. Review each item and turn them on or off as desired.

### **G. Set Default Applications**

1. You may prefer to not use the applications that Windows 10 defaults to when opening a file such as for Music, Pictures, Videos, Web Browser etc. Go to Settings (Win plus I), then System, then Default apps. If you have downloaded an alternate preferred browser such as Chrome or Firefox, click on Microsoft Edge under Web browser, then select your preferred browser. Do likewise for other default apps.

### **H. View System Information**

1. Go to Settings, System, then About. The window displays the edition and version of Windows that is installed, the build number etc. Scrolling to the bottom shows additional settings. If you have Windows 10 Pro, you can turn on Bitlocker, or you can access Administrative tools, Device manager. And System info.

### **I. How to add a Pin Number to your Account in Windows 10**

1. To use a 4 digit numeric pin number to log on to Windows 10 instead of a password, go to Settings (Win I), Accounts, then Sign-in options. Then under PIN, click Add. Then verify your account password by typing it in the blank space. In the next windows create a pin number by typing the number into the blanks and click OK. The pin must be at least 4 numeric digits long but it can be longer. When logging on with a pin and if it does not work, you can still use your password by selecting “Sign-in options” on the log on screen and typing your password.

### **J. Customize the Start Menu and Tiles**

1. Windows 10 finally gives us back the Start Menu, and it's much more customizable than it ever has been before. The How-To Geek Web site has numerous articles related to Windows 10. Go to the below link for an excellent article on how to customize the Start Menu.

<http://www.howtogeek.com/197836/8-ways-to-customize-the-windows-10-start-menu/>