

A new Window.

The next version of Windows is on the horizon, and it's called Windows 10. Not sure what happened to Windows 9 – perhaps Microsoft lost it somewhere???

It should be a free upgrade for Windows 7, Windows 8/8.1 users during the first year. If you don't upgrade in the first year, you will then have to pay the cost, which hasn't been announced but Windows 8 is currently around £60-£80 depending on version and where you buy it. Although Microsoft are referring to it as a Licence, there should be no additional subscription fees attached to Windows 10, whenever you buy it. It is scheduled for release in late 2015, but cynics might well expect it to be early 2016!!

The general layout and usage will be very similar to Windows 8 and although mostly targeted at touchscreens, it will be suitable for laptops, desktops etc., as well as tablets, hybrids (tablets you can dock to a keyboard) and phones.

There are still tweaks to be made, no doubt, but the task bar appears streamlined on Windows 10, and the Start Menu can be made full screen with a touch/click. Settings has also reverted back to look like the traditional Control Panel of old.

The Charms Bar (bit that appears on the right when you move your mouse over or swipe from the right) also has a new look, with users able to swipe from the right to find a notifications panel. Swiping down will close all apps.

When the keyboard is removed from a device which can be undocked from a keyboard, the user will be asked whether they want to enter tablet mode, after which apps switch to full screen.

There will also be Windows 10 for Phones.

This will be best for screens that are 8in or below.

Devices with screens below 8in will have to do without the traditional desktop view, however, and will instead, have the phone version of the operating system.

(Mainstream support for Vista has already ended, and extended support will end on April 11, 2017, with obvious implications for security.)

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