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Steps to Safely Upgrade from Windows 7 or Windows 8/8.1 to Windows 10

Warning: It's become pretty obvious that the performance of systems that had been Windows 7 systems is more problematic on the whole than those that started out with Windows 8/8.1. I had one computer, a Dell Inspiron 1720, that while it upgraded just fine, had no driver compatible with Windows 10 for the touch pad, and extensive searching found nothing that could be made to work, so that computer was a loss and converted to a Linux box. The older your machine is, the more critical it will be to do some research into whether its manufacturer has "certified" it's OK for upgrade to Windows 10 or to do some web research on what's happened to others with your make and model of machine when they did the upgrade before you do yours. Presuming that your research gives you the green light to proceed, here are my recommendations on how to proceed.

1. Run the System File Checker (SFC) and, possibly, the Deployment Image Servicing and Management (DISM) tool. When you see the phrase, "elevated command prompt" pretty much anywhere that means you need to open the command prompt window using the "Run as Administrator" option or create a shortcut for Command Prompt on your desktop where you edit the advanced options and check the "Run as Administrator" checkbox, which will always open that shortcut with administrator privileges.

Open an elevated command prompt and enter: **SFC /scannow**

When it's finished look at its output to see if it found any corrupt files and whether it was able to fix them.

If SFC reports that it was unable to fix something, on Windows 8 and Windows 8.1 systems it's also worth running the following command, also in an elevated command prompt:

DISM /Online /Cleanup-Image /RestoreHealth

2. Make a full backup of your existing user data **and** full OS system image of your Windows 7 or Windows 8 system using the backup software of your choice. In the event of something catastrophic occurring, which is unlikely, this is the easiest way to recover your existing system. Make certain you've also created the bootable media, typically a DVD or bootable USB, that your backup software of choice would need to use to start your recovery in the event of a catastrophic event during upgrade. It does you no good to have the backups if you can't get at them if you happen to need them and your computer won't boot up from the hard drive.

3. Run the Windows 10 Upgrade process. I suggest doing it either from GWX (what's probably been popping up on occasion telling you to update now that resides in the system tray) or from the "Upgrade Now" button on the [Media Creation Tool](#) webpage if your intention is to upgrade the PC you're currently on. If you really must have the Win10 ISO burned to disc or on USB, then follow the

instructions regarding downloading it for upgrading PCs other than the one you're on. If you go that route you'll also need to go into UEFI or BIOS or use the Boot Order feature, if your machine has that, to make your computer boot from the media you created to do the upgrade.

a. If your system was a "well used" system, and particularly a well-used Windows 7 system (or even just a Windows 7 system, if you want to be anal-retentive about it) then immediately go to the Update & Security Settings, Recovery Pane and do a "Reset this PC" via the button. This forces a full refresh of the Win10 operating system. Use the "Keep my files" option, at least initially OR if you are certain you have a full backup copy of your user data you can elect to do a full reset, which wipes your existing user data, and get it back from your backup afterward.

b. If you have a Win8.1 system, you can probably skip what was done in step 'a' for a Windows 7 system. If you notice that you're having irregularities within the first couple of days I'd give a Reset install a try then, but only if something weird appears to be happening.

4. Take the time to go through the Privacy Settings, **all panes**, to set things up as you'd like as far as device access and data gathering. I have shut down a lot of default access, but left system health reporting at "full" and there is not much traffic from that.

5. Set up Cortana to your liking. I absolutely hate having Web results returned as parts of a Windows search, so I turned the "Search Online and include Web Results" setting off. I had no intention of using the digital assistant feature to interact with Cortana verbally, so I turned off the "Cortana can give you suggestions, reminders, ideas, alerts, and more" setting OFF, too. The digital assistant feature is quite remarkable, and I've played with it when setting up machines for others, but I know I won't use it. Cortana is "strapped to" Bing for web search results in the default configuration, which uses MS-Edge as the web browser. I have been told if you change both your default web browser and the default search engine in your newly chosen default web browser that Cortana is then forced to use the search engine you've chosen. I have not tested this out. If you are blind or visually impaired and using a screen reader, be aware that as of the writing of these instructions MS-Edge is NOT accessible. You will need to change your default browser to IE, Firefox, or Chrome if you want an accessible web browser.

6. If you are on an internet connection that has data caps and/or peak and off peak usage periods and billing, definitely take the time open the Network & Internet Settings, WiFi Pane (which happens to be the default when N&I Settings open), then click on the WiFi connection (probably that you're currently connected to). Then scroll down below the list of WiFi connections to find the "Advanced Options" link. Be certain to throw the Metered Connections switch/toggle (I can't remember how JAWS announces it, because it's a new concept, maybe as a checkbox. It behaves the same way) to "ON." This prevents Windows Updates from automatically downloading via this particular internet connection without your express permission to do so. Otherwise, leave this set to "OFF" so that Windows Updates remain fully automatic. Also, in the Advanced Options is a switch/toggle entitled "Make this PC Discoverable." This serves the same purpose as the old "What type of network is this? Home/Work/Public" stuff did in Windows 7. Since both Home and Work networks in the old system

made the computer discoverable by other Windows machines on the same network, that split has been eliminated. If you switch Discoverable to ON your computer is visible to others on the network and can share like you may have done in the past. If it's OFF it's the same as the former "Public" choice, and your machine is visible via Windows to no other machine on the network.