# 14 News and tricks for Windows 8.1

In this chapter you learn about

- news in Windows 8.1
- chosen advanced settings and features
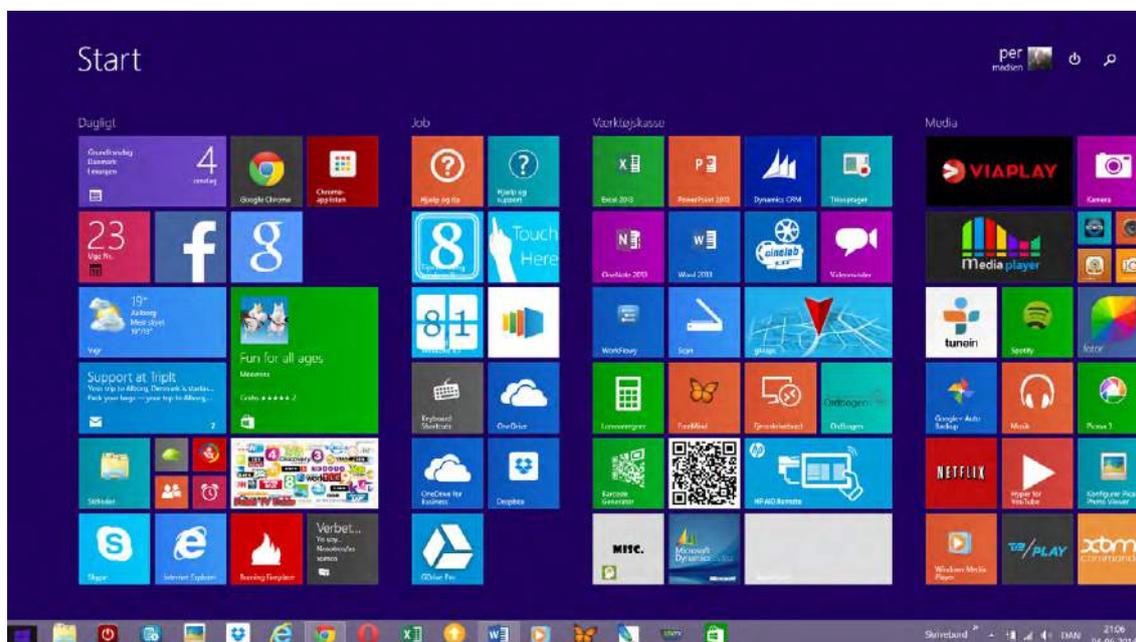- inspirational suggestions for use of apps or functions

## 14.1    News

The purpose of this section, is to give an overview of the news in Windows 8.1.1. Some of the following descriptions are repetitions, others are not.

### 14.1.1    Start button

Microsoft has removed the Start button (ORB) from Windows 8 Taskbar, and has replaced it with a new Start Screen thumbnail which appears when you move your mouse cursor to bottom-left corner of screen. The shortcut to its menu is ▦+X. It is possible to add, remove or rename the items. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.2    Power options and Search function on the Start screen

These buttons are shown in the upper right side of the Start screen, next to the User account. It is easy and quick to turn off the computer or to search from the Start screen.

### 14.1.3    Built-in apps

Windows comes with more built-in apps, such as: Alarm, Calculator, Weather, Reading List, Food and Drink, Health and Fitness and more.

### 14.1.4    Multiple apps on one screen

It is possible to arrange up to four apps side-by-side, in sizes after your choice. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.5    All apps

Installed apps can all be found in the Apps view. Choose which apps to pin to Start, and keep your Start screen organized. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.6    Right click on a tile to change settings

When you right click on a tile on the Start screen, then a menu with various choices will appear. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.7    Discover apps in new ways

Windows Store is attached to the Start screen and the Taskbar as a standard, so it is easy to find new apps. If you e.g. use the Search Charm, the Bing search engine includes apps in its search results. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.8    Remembers recently installed apps

When you have installed new apps, a message is shown in the lower left corner of the Start screen, directing you to the Apps view, to see recently installed apps. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.9    Windows Store

Store has a new layout with larger images and more information for each app. Read more by clicking here.
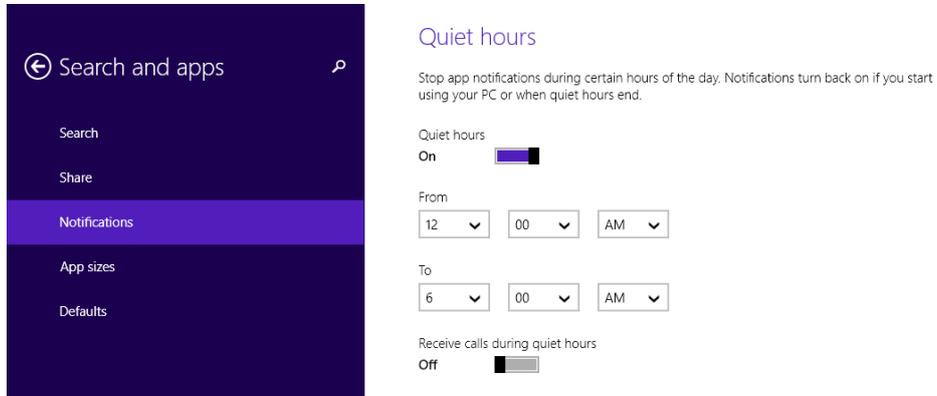
### 14.1.10    Autosave screenshots

If you press "Win+PrntScr" keys together, Windows 8.1 will automatically save the screenshot in your "Pictures" library folder. The screenshot is saved with the name "Screenshot.png". If you take more screenshots, they are saved with an added number such as "Screenshot (2).png", "Screenshot (3).png" and so on.

### 14.1.11    Personalization

More tile sizes, more colour options and animated backgrounds for Start. Read more by clicking here.

## 14.1.12   Quiet hours

If messages from your apps or alarms disturbs you, the feature Quiet hours may be something for you. Choose the *Settings Charm*, choose *Change PC-settings*, choose *Search and apps* and choose *Notifications.*



Here you can set the hours when you do not want to receive notifications.

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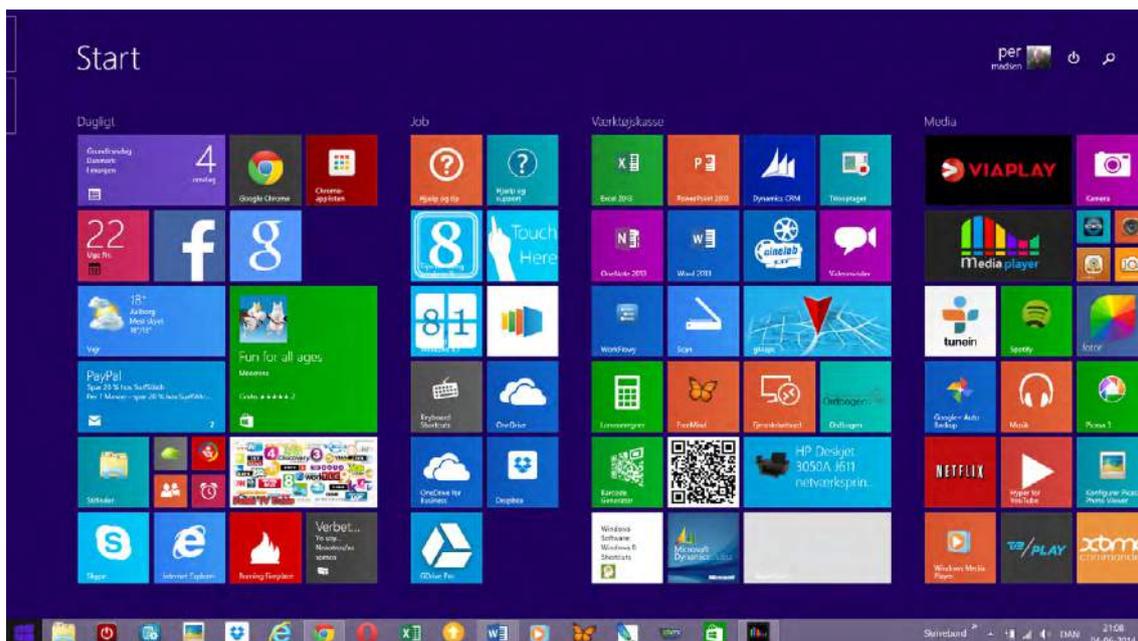
### 14.1.13   Desktop features

Start button has returned to the Taskbar – just not in the same way as in earlier versions. You can go straight to Desktop instead of Start when you sign in. You can use the same background for Desktop and Start. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.14   All open and pinned apps are shown on the Taskbar

If you use your Desktop a lot, you can have all apps from Windows Store shown on the Taskbar, when they are opened. You can also pin apps to the Taskbar, so it is easy for you to open apps from the Desktop. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.15   Access to the Taskbar from everywhere

With a mouse you can get acces the Taskbar from anywhere, including the Start screen or a Windows Store-app. If you cannot see the Taskbar, move your mouse pointer to the bottom of the screen and it will appear, and then click on an app to open or shift to it.



### 14.1.16   Start on the Desktop instead of the Start screen

If you spend the most of your time using the Desktop, you can bootstart directly on the Desktop instead of the Start screen. If you want to log in to the Start screen instead, you can change the settings to this anytime. Read more in chapter 6.11.3 Properties of the Taskbar.

### 14.1.17   Minimize, Shut down and the Taskbar are more accessable

In Windows 8.1 mouse and keyboard are more useful than in earlier versions. Move the mouse pointer to the top of the screen to show the Close and Minimize-buttons in any app. Move the mouse pointer to the bottom of the screen to see the Taskbar everywhere in Windows 8.1.

### 14.1.18   Access to Camera from Lock screen

You just need to **swipe down** (on touch enabled devices) or click and **drag the Lock Screen background image to bottom** (on laptops and Desktops) to launch Camera app.

If you want to enable access to Camera app on Windows 8.1 Lock Screen, check out following simple steps:

- Move your mouse cursor to top-right or bottom-right corner of screen to access Charms Bar and click on Settings option.
- Now click on *Change PC settings* option given at the bottom.
- Choose *PC and devices*, and click on *Lock Screen*.
- Now scroll down to bottom and you'll see *Camera* section containing following:

## Camera

Swipe down on the lock screen to use the camera

Off

- If you want to enable use of Camera on Lock Screen, set the option to "On".
- Now whenever you are on Lock Screen, swipe down or click and drag the Lock Screen background to bottom and you'll be able to use Camera app.

### 14.1.19  Lock Screen apps

It is possible to answer Skype calls, check Facebook and mail and more without having to log into your user account. Use the same steps as shown above in 14.5Access to Camera from Lock screen. In the middle of the screen you see thiese options:

## Lock screen apps

Choose apps to run in the background and show quick status and notifications, even when your screen is locked

When you click on the wanted item, you can choose it from a new menu.

### 14.1.20    OneDrive

When you choose the program command *Save as*, you can choose to store your file in the cloud for free with OneDrive, a feature that comes with your Microsoft account. Read more by clicking here.

### 14.1.21    More disc space

Windows 8.1 uses between 8 and 15% less disc space than Windows 8, according to Microsoft.

### 14.1.22    Miracast

Windows 8.1 fully supports the new *Miracast*-standard, which can be compared to Apples AirPlay-technology.

You can wirelessly project your computers screen to another screen, e.g. a TV-screen, using Miracast-technology. The Miracast-standard is very new, so your devices may not support this technology, unless they are very new.

Microsofts Xbox One fully supports Miracast, which enhances the synergy between Windows 8.1 and Xbox. Read more about Miracast by clicking here.

**Find out if your computer supports Miracast**

Choose the Devices Charm, and then choose Project. If there is an item called *Add wireless screen,* your computer supports Miracast and Windows 8.1 will find any Miracast compatible screens nearby (in the room) automatically.

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### 14.1.23 Improved printer connections

Windows 8.1 supports printer connections with Near Field Communication (NFC). If both your computer and your printer contain a NFC-chip, you can connect them, just by placing them near each other.
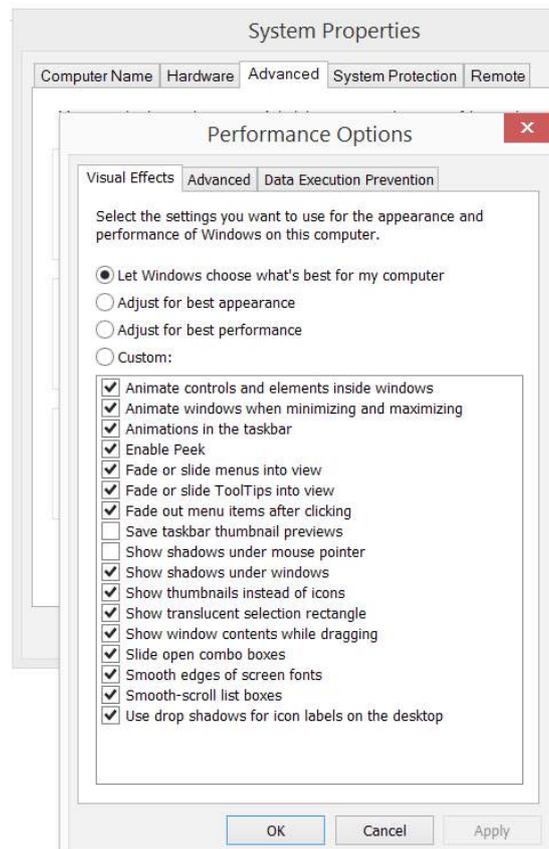
### 14.1.24 Improve computer speed

Does your computer seem slow? You can try various actions to improve your computers performance. Some of these are described in chapter 11.1.2 PC maintenance.

In Windows 8.1 there is a "hidden" menu with System properties. You open a "Run" dialog box by pressing &#9638;+R, and here you write "sysdm.cpl", and click on the OK-button. Choose the Advanced tab.

Improve the computers performance by uncheckmark features within graphics and animations[13]
- these might use a lot of your computers memory.

Which are the optimal settings is mostly a question of personal taste.

## 14.2      Tricks

### 14.2.1      God Mode

Advanced users can get access to useful stuff, by creating a God Mode shortcut:

- Copy the entire line after the colon: GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}
- The line above is now copied to your Clipboard.
- Right click on an empty spot on the Desktop.
- Choose *New*, then *Folder*. It is not necessary to name your new folder, so leave it.
- Now right click on the new folder, and choose *Rename*.
- Paste the line from your Clipboard and hit Enter.

The author can not be held responsible for use of God Mode.
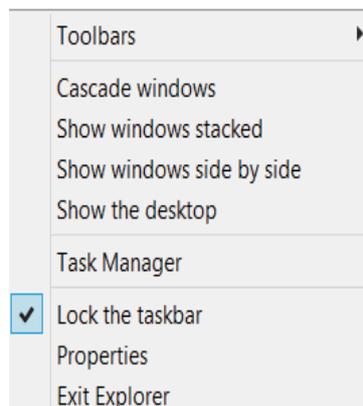
14.2.2    Exit Windows Explorer

This hidden option is for advanced users. It might come in use when you want to just end task of Explorer to apply registry changes or software settings.

- Press and hold Ctrl+Shift keys and right-click on the Taskbar.
- You'll get a new option *Exit Explorer* in the bottom of the Taskbar context menu:

| Toolbars | ▶ |
|---|---|
| Cascade windows | |
| Show windows stacked | |
| Show windows side by side | |
| Show the desktop | |
| Task Manager | |
| ✓ Lock the taskbar | |
| Properties | |
| Exit Explorer | |

- You can select this new option to immediately end task of Windows Explorer. Please keep in mind, you'll have no access to Taskbar, Start Screen, once you select this option.

To get everything back, press Ctrl+Shift+Esc keys together to launch Task Manager. If it opens in mini mode, click on More details button and then click on File -> Run new task option. Type "explorer".

14.2.3    Get the Start button back

Do you miss the Start button from Windows 7 and want it back, it is possible, to some degree. Several free programs does the trick, like e.g. ViStart. It is not an app from Store, but you can search for it on the Internet, e.g. at softpedia.com. To install the program is free, but be careful – unless you want to install other programs, e.g. **Registry Cleaner**, remember to uncheckmark it during installation. You can read about alternative options by clicking here.

14.2.4    Different types of screenshots

- Press PrtSc (PrintScreen) and the screenshot is copied to the Clipboard, ready to paste.
- Hold the Windows-key down and press PrtSc (PrintScreen). The screenshot is stored in the folder Screenshots in the folder Pictures.
- If you press Alt+PrtSc the active window, and not the whole screen, is copied to the Clipboard, ready to paste.

14.2.5     Encryption with BitLocker

If you have either Windows 8.1 Pro or Windows 8.1 Enterprise installed, you can use a special encryption feature. BitLocker is from Microsoft, that encrypts your drive and prevents unauthorized changes of your system. Computer must contain a chip called Trusted Platform Module (TPM) – BitLocker will check for this automatically. Read more by clicking here.

14.2.6     Boot a different operating system on your computer

Besides Windows 8.1 you might have Windows 7 installed on your computer, and want to use this sometimes. You do like this:

- Open the Settings Charm, and choose PC settings.
- Now choose *Update and Recovery*. Choose the item *Recovery*.
- Click on *Advanced Startup*.
- Click on *Use another operating system*.

Your computer will now restart and upon reboot it'll directly boot into other OS instead of booting into Windows 8.1. Read more about alternative ways to boot another operating system by clicking here.
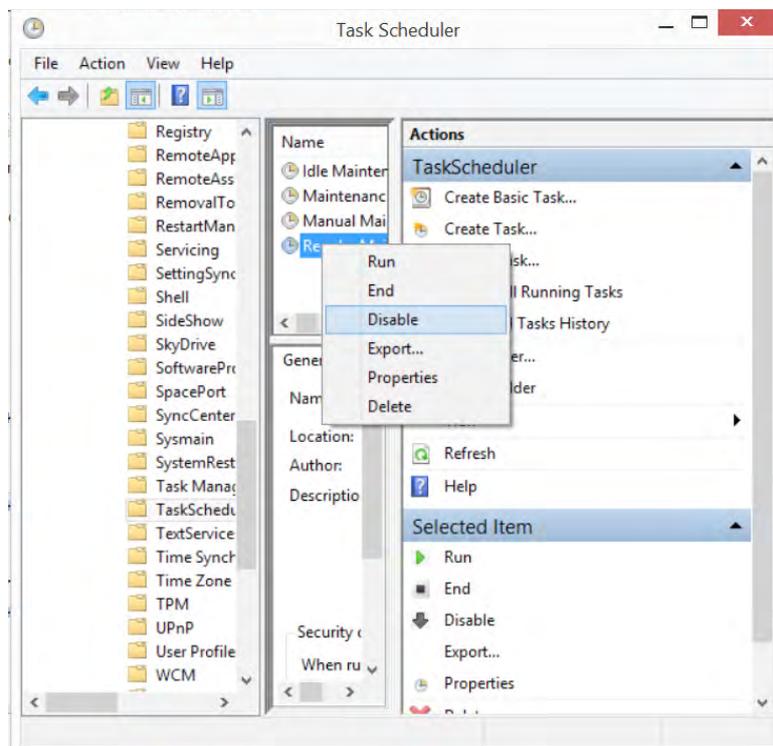
14.2.7    Disable automatic maintenance

The goal of Automatic Maintenance is to combine all background maintenance activity in Windows and help third-party developers add their maintenance activity to Windows, without negatively impacting performance and energy efficiency. Additionally, Automatic Maintenance enables users as well as enterprises to be in control of maintenance activity scheduling and configuration.

However, some users experience that Automatic Maintenance takes too long time, and causes very high CPU usage, so they prefer to do it manually.

If you want to disable automatic maintenance, do like this:

- Press Windows-key+r to open the Run dialog box.
- Type taskschd.msc and click on OK.
- In the left pane of Task Scheduler, click on to expand Task Scheduler, go to Library, Microsoft, Windows, and finally TaskScheduler.
- In the middle pane of TaskScheduler, either right click on or select the Regular Maintenance task (see also screenshot below).
- Click on Disable, and close Task scheduler.

14.2.8    Shut down a computer in "coma"

Sometimes a computer can go into "coma", which means it does not response to any action you take. If your computer is a notebook, it is not enough to remove a power chord, since the built-in battery will have the computer turned on for hours.

Using an alternative method can be necessary. Press down the button with the symbol ⏻, and keep it down, untill the computer is shut down. It is not the entirely correct way to shut it down, since it skips important processes, but it can be necessary and does not harm your computer in any way.

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