

Windows 11

What is the difference?

When can I get it?

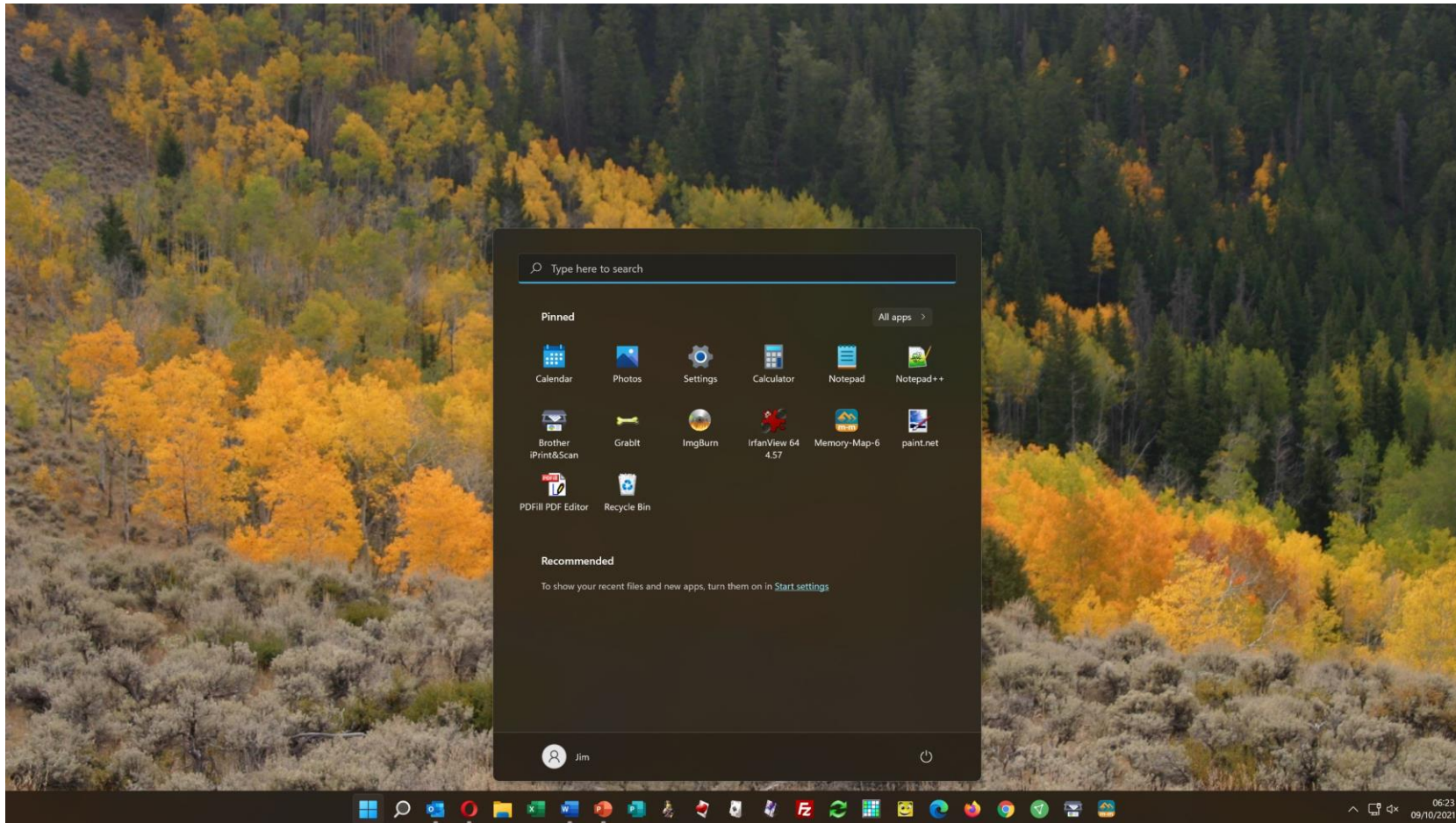
Do I need it?

Should I upgrade?

What's the difference between Windows 10 and Windows 11, anyway?

Windows 11 includes a new design and several new features compared to Windows 10 that aim to make navigating your computer easier, whether you're using it for personal use, work or both. Let's have a quick look at some of the changes in Windows 11 so that you can decide whether to bother upgrading or to stick with Windows 10 for the time being.

The first difference you will notice is the design of the interface.



Windows 11 features a clean design with rounded corners, pastel shades and a centred Start menu and Taskbar.

The remaining changes are in the background, and may or may not be relevant to you depending on the way you use your computer.

- Integrated Android apps: Android apps will be coming to Windows 11 and installable from within the new Microsoft Store via the Amazon Appstore (but not yet).

If you like to keep your phone and computer separate this may not be very relevant to you, although there are some useful Android apps without a Windows equivalent.

- Microsoft Teams integration: Teams is getting a face-lift and will be integrated directly into the Windows 11 Taskbar, making it easier to access (and a bit more like Apple's FaceTime). You'll be able to access Teams from Windows, Mac, Android or iOS.

Teams is the successor to Skype, Microsoft's equivalent of FaceTime.

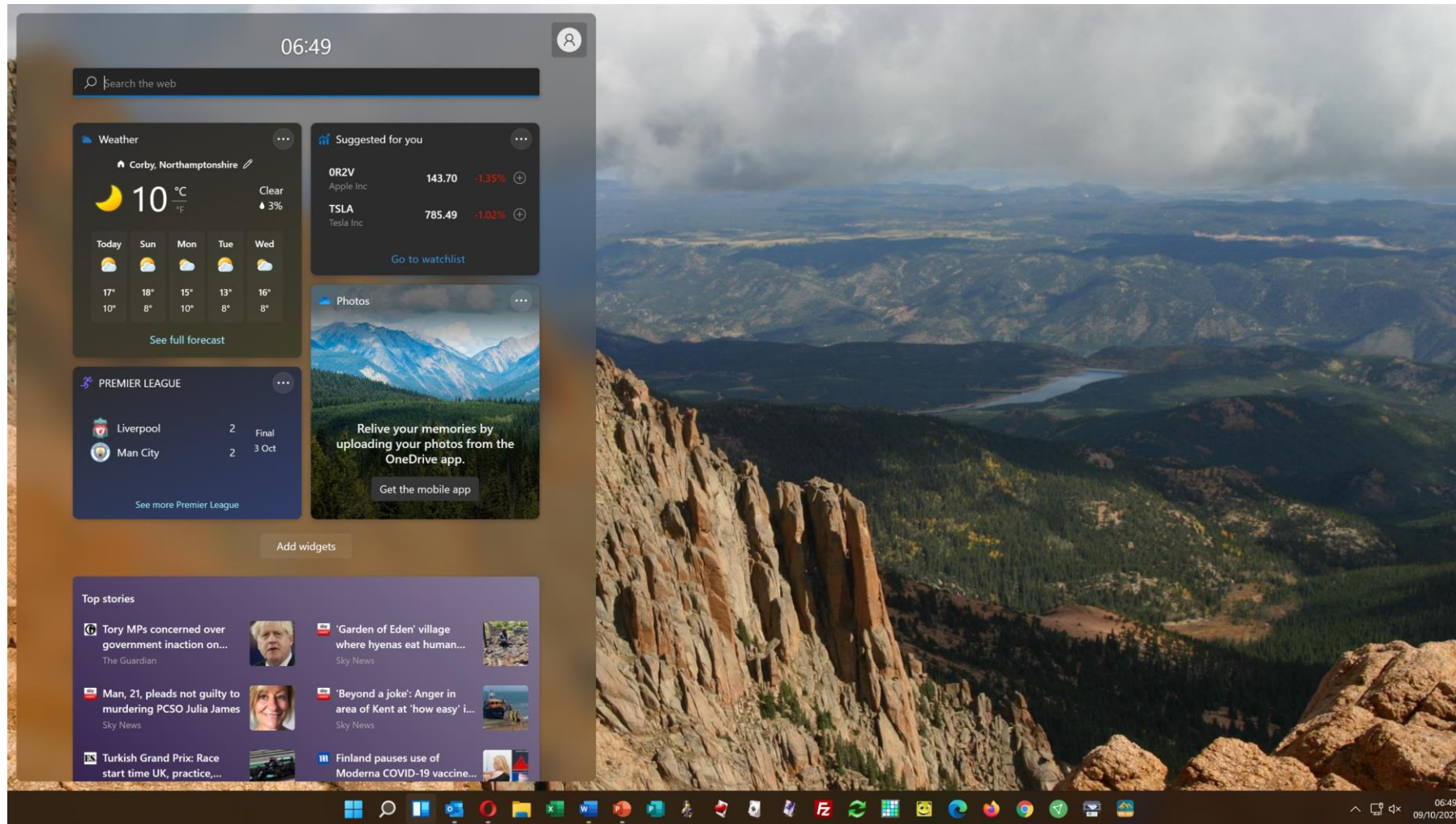
- Better virtual desktop support: Windows 11 will let you set up virtual desktops in a way that's more similar to MacOS, toggling between multiple desktops for personal, work, school or gaming use.

This is only likely to be of use to you if you regularly use your device with different sets of programs.

- Easier transition from monitor to laptop, and better multitasking: The new OS includes features called Snap Groups and Snap Layouts -- collections of the apps you're using at once that sit in the Taskbar, and can come up or be minimized at the same time for easier task switching. They also let you plug and unplug from a monitor more easily without losing where your open windows are located.

The first of these is really only relevant if you have both a laptop and a docking station with a monitor, but the Snap features may be helpful on any device.

- Widgets: the Widgets pane is like a mini Start screen which pops out from the left when you click its icon on the taskbar. The actual widgets can be customised.



And the final difference:

- Xbox tech for better gaming: Windows 11 will get certain features found in Xbox consoles, like Auto HDR and DirectStorage, to improve gaming on your Windows PC.

As I do not have an Xbox and have never used the Xbox program in Windows 10, I am really underwhelmed by this and cannot imagine that this “upgrade” will make a significant difference to my life. Some of you, however, may feel that this is the greatest thing since sliced bread.

Will my computer be able to upgrade?

There are certain hardware requirements for Windows 11, and every computer is different. As a general rule the more recent your device the more likely it is to be compatible although you may need to update drivers.

Unless you are desperately anxious to upgrade it is probably better to wait until Windows 11 appears in the “Update” section of your computer, when it will probably also tell you whether it is compatible.

The release will be staggered, and some PC users will not be offered Windows 11 until mid-2022.

How long can I keep using Windows 10?

Until October 2025, when Microsoft will no longer support Windows 10.

You can even continue after that, but as there will be no more security updates this is **not a good idea**.

THE END