

Windows 10 Privacy

With many of our clients working from home, and using home computers for work, we thought it might be helpful to show you how you can protect your privacy when using Windows 10.

[Source for this article](#)

Microsoft wants to know all about you: the products you purchase, your web-surfing history, the books you read, who you talk to online and much more. To obtain that information Windows 10 keeps track of all these things and reports them back to Microsoft where the information is stored on Microsoft servers and then used for Microsoft purposes (whatever they may be). Thankfully, Windows 10 allows us to disable the operating system's tracking and includes other settings to beef up your privacy.

All Windows 10 users who are concerned about privacy and how their data is being used, should make the below changes to increase their privacy in Windows 10.

Turn off advertising, suggested content, and app launch tracking

By default, Windows 10 Home and Pro version shows ads and Microsoft automatically associates an advertising ID to the user account. The advertising ID is linked to your Microsoft account and the company also uses this ID to tailor ads for Bing and other web services.

In the General privacy settings, Windows 10 allows you to turn off that advertising ID and also the ads that you see in the Start menu and other places.

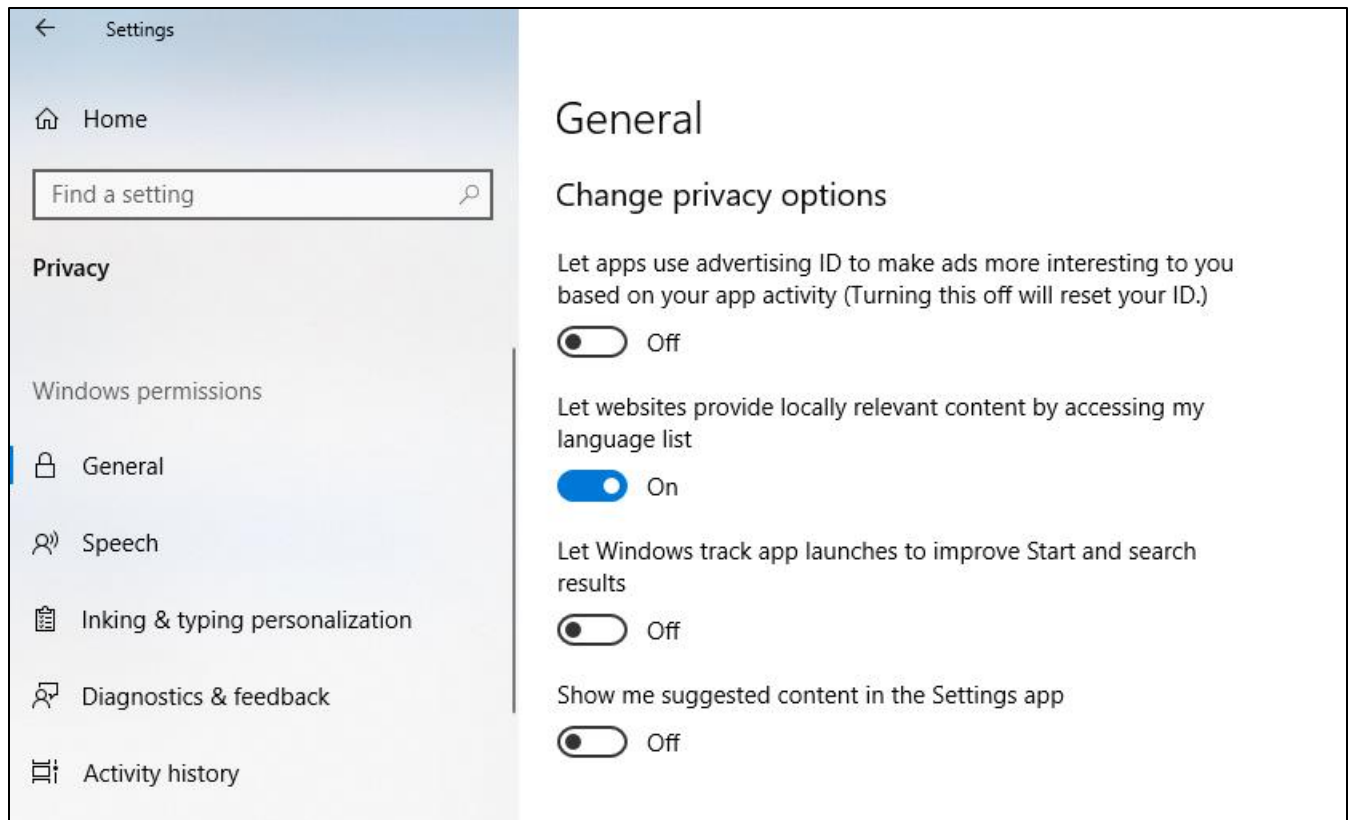
Also in this section is the ability to disable app launch tracking and suggested content in Settings.

To turn off the settings, follow these steps:

1. Launch **Settings**.
2. Go to **Privacy > General**.
3. Under the "**Change privacy options**" section, toggle **Off** the following options:
 1. "**Let apps use advertising ID to make ads more interesting ...**"
 2. "**Let Windows track app launches to improve Start and search results**"
 3. "**Show me suggested content in the Settings app**".

When done, your General settings should look like the following image.

After following these steps, your advertising ID including your web browsing activities and behavior will be reset to default. You'll still get generic ads/promotions in the Start Menu, which we'll disable in the next section.

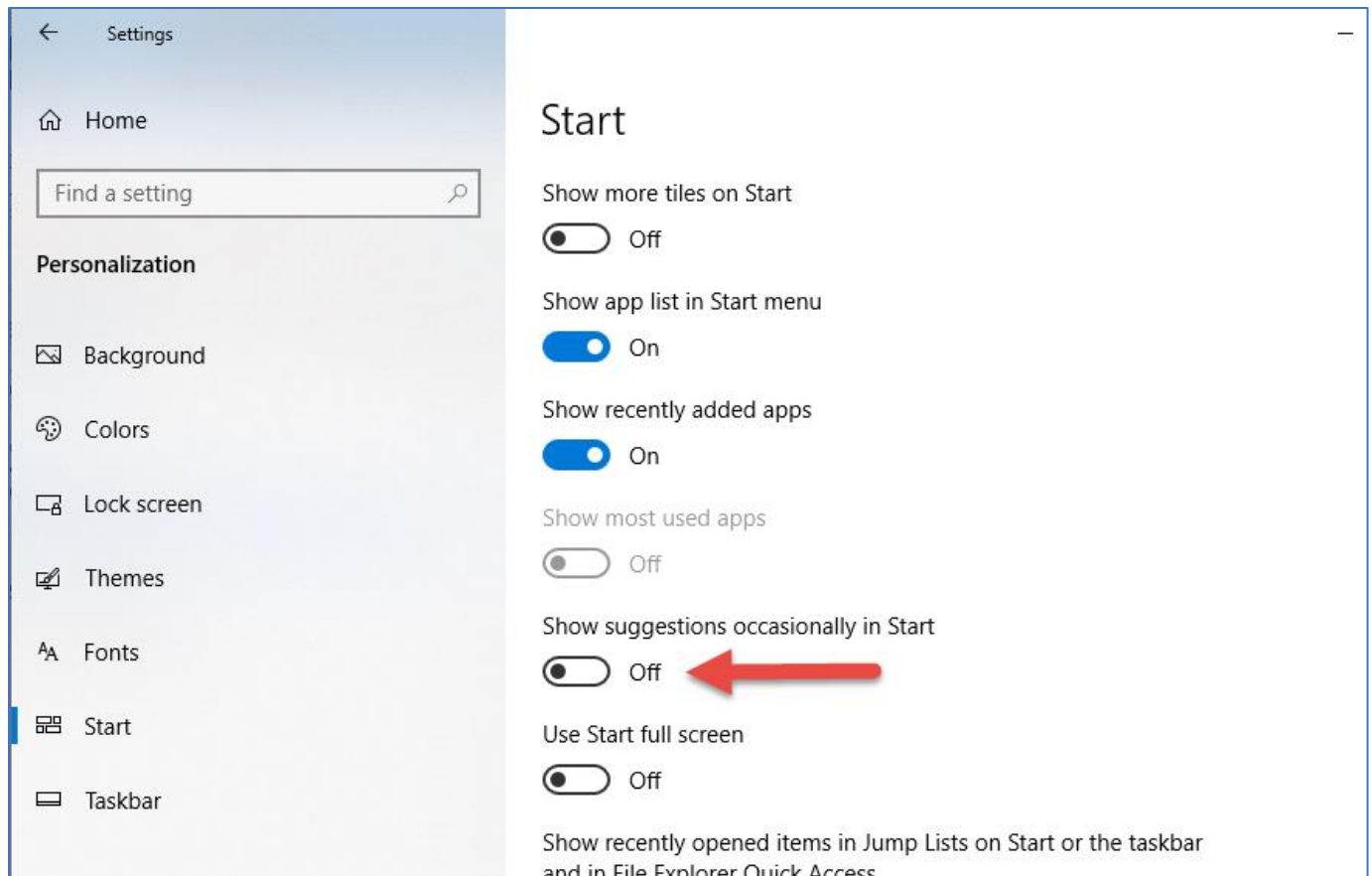


Disable Start Menu suggestions and promotions

Microsoft will occasionally display suggestions/ads/promotions in the Windows Start menu for new apps or products that they have released.

To disable these suggestions, go to Settings > Start and disable 'Show suggestions occasionally in Start' as shown below.

To disable these suggestions, go to **Settings > Personalization > Start** and disable '**Show suggestions occasionally in Start**' as shown below.



Disable the Windows Timeline

Windows 10 comes with 'Timeline', a very handy feature for power users. As the name suggests, Timeline allows you to go back in time to see and resume your work activities.

It logs and organizes the activities that you do on your PC, Microsoft Edge and Android phone with Microsoft Launcher.

With Timeline, you can start a task on one device (for example a PowerPoint presentation), and switch devices midstream and continue your project from where you left off.

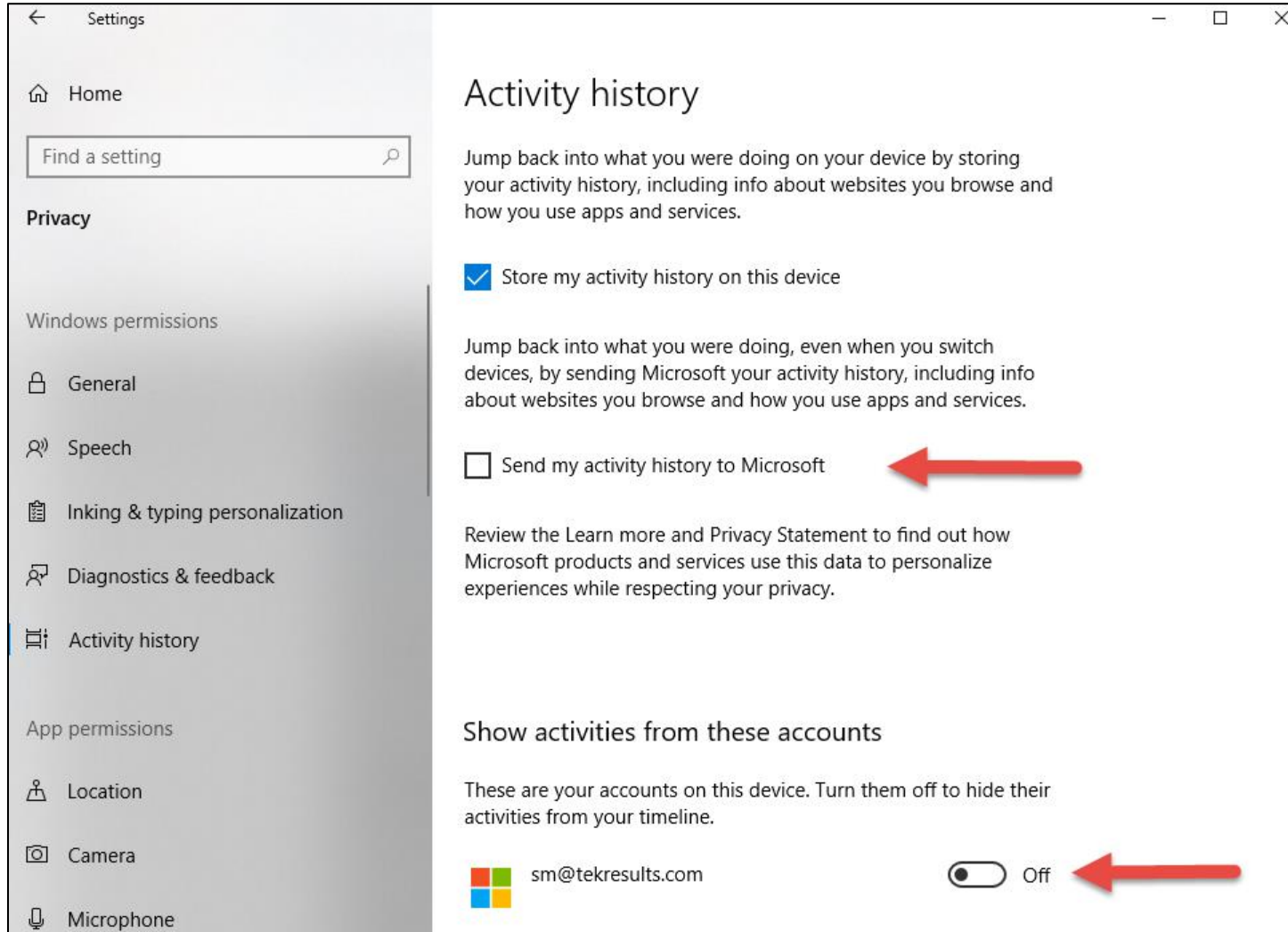
Timeline works surprisingly well because it gathers your data including the information that you would prefer to keep private.

Unfortunately, for Timeline to work between devices, Microsoft has to collect your activity data, which for many is too much of a privacy risk.

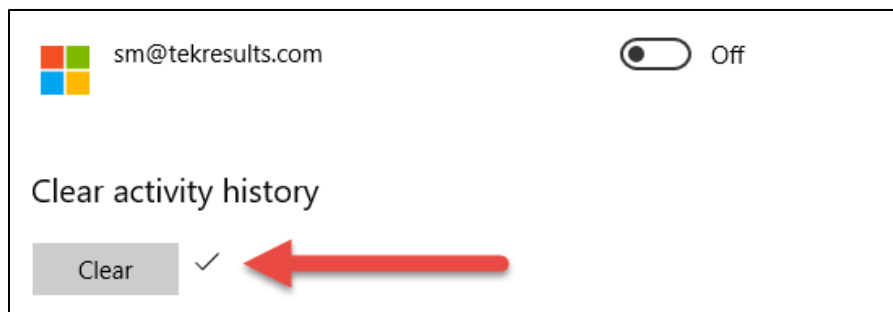
Fortunately, Microsoft allows us to disable sending our activity up to Microsoft's servers and keep it local by following these steps:

1. Open **Settings**.
2. Click **Privacy**.
3. Open **Activity History**.

4. Uncheck the “Send my activity to Microsoft” checkbox and Timeline will not send your history to Microsoft.
5. Toggle Microsoft account under “Show activities from accounts” to Off.



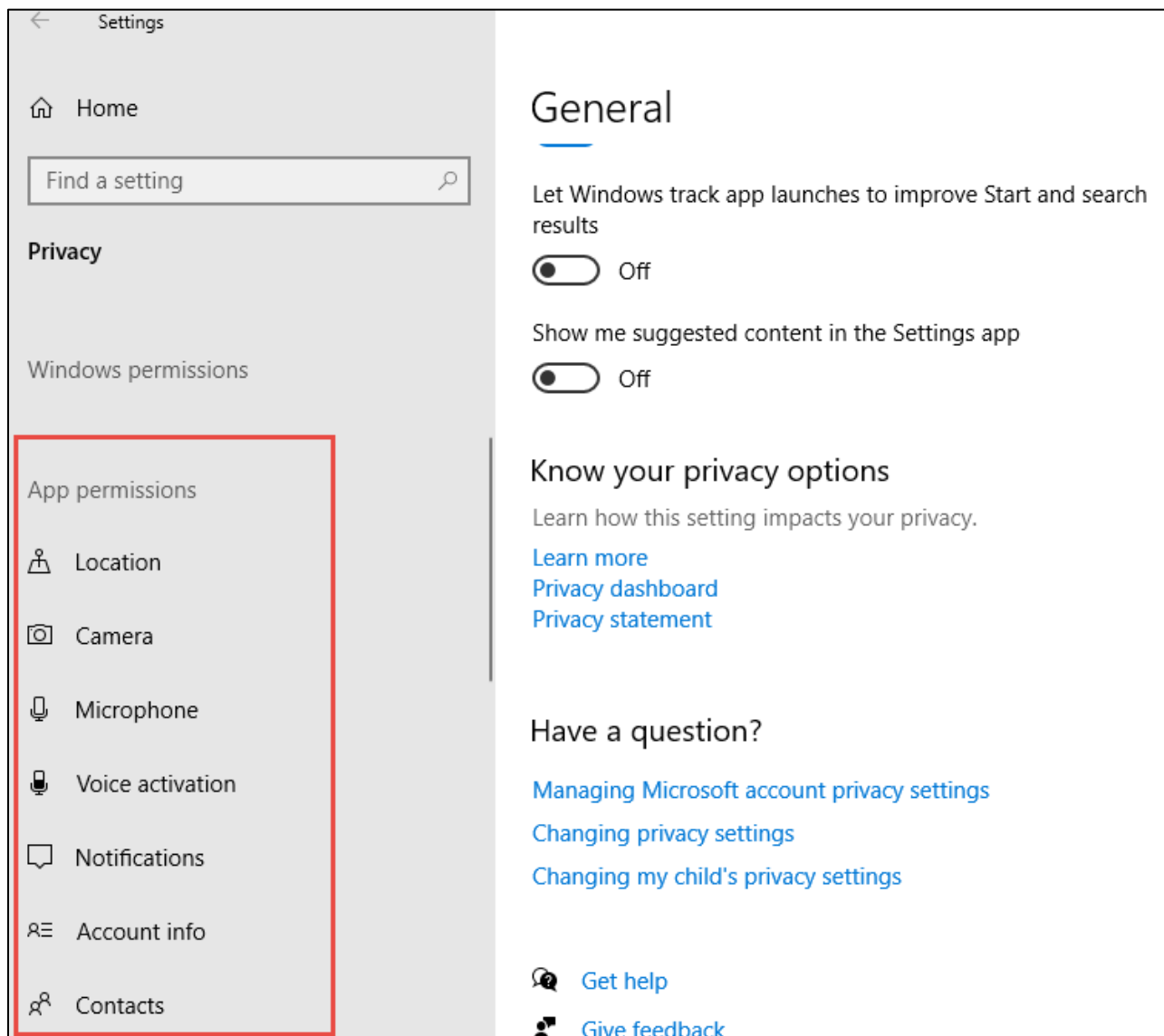
Finally, you need to click on the **Clear** option to clear your activity history.



Restrict App permissions

Windows 10 apps that come from the Microsoft Store and some preinstalled apps will share your location data or give access to your microphone or camera. You can turn data sharing off for each of these apps. Go to **Settings > Privacy**. In the left column, scroll down to **App Permissions**.

You can decide what kind of access each app can have by clicking on the app (eg Camera) whose permissions you want to limit.



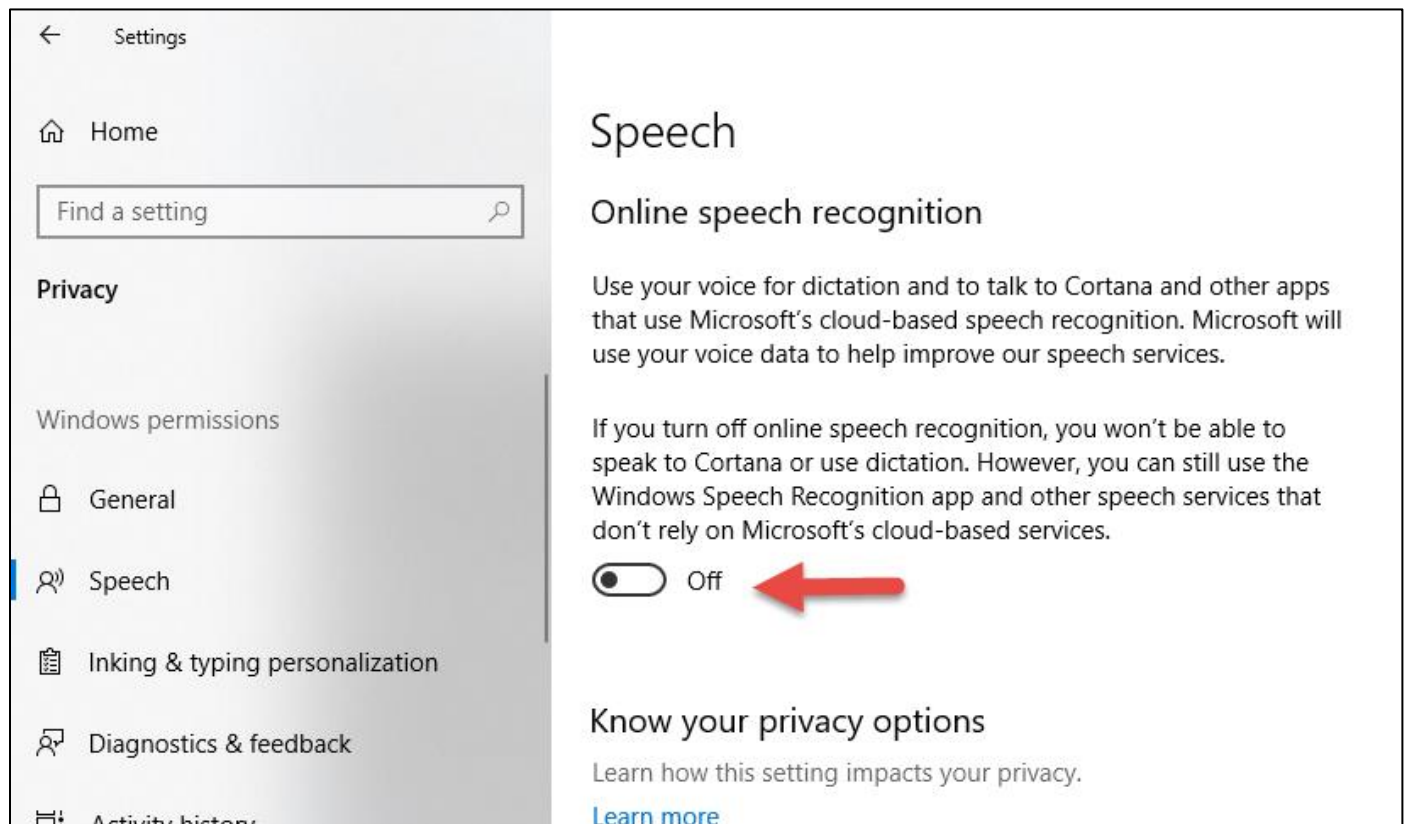
Restrict Online Speech recognition

Microsoft supports speech recognition to speak to Cortana or use dictation. When this feature is enabled, though, Windows will be actively listening through your Microphone for voice commands such as 'Hey Cortana'.

Microsoft also admits in their [privacy policy](#) that they manually review short amounts of voice data to improve their speech service.

"For example, we manually review short snippets of a small sampling of voice data we have taken steps to de-identify to improve our speech services, such as recognition and translation."

For this reason, it is strongly advised that you disable the online speech recognition feature by going into **Settings > Privacy > Speech** and toggling it **Off** as shown below.

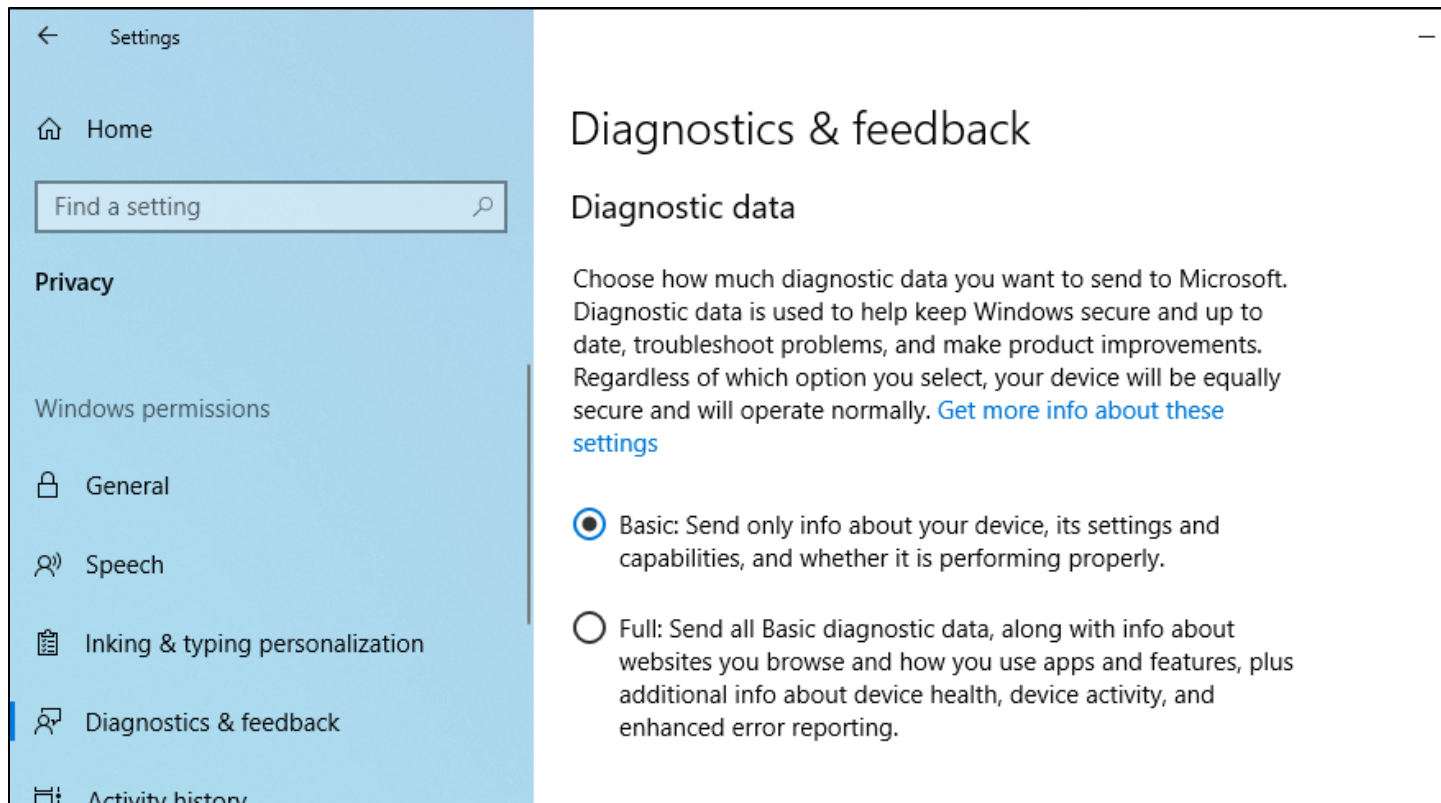


Restrict Diagnostic data

Hardware and software diagnostic data is collected to improve Windows experience on your device, according to Microsoft. Windows 10 allows you to control what kind of diagnostic data is gathered about you, your applications, and your device.

To manage your diagnostic data, head to **Settings > Privacy > Diagnostics & Feedback**.

You'll see two options—Basic and Full. We recommend you select the first option (**Basic**) to reduce data collection. When the Basic option is selected, only your device's basic information including settings, features, and performance data are collected. On the same page, you should also turn off '**Tailored experiences**'.



Turn off location, microphone, camera

To disable location access for apps and Windows, launch the Settings app and go to **Privacy > Location**, and turn off the location access option. Similarly, head to Microphone and camera privacy pages, and turn off the access. This will block all apps from using location, microphone or camera. For example, the voice recording option will disappear in apps like Telegram when microphone accessed is disabled

Disable inking & typing personalization

By default, Windows 10 will send your keystrokes and handwriting patterns to the Microsoft cloud to make a personalized dictionary that Windows uses to make suggestions. As this feature sends a lot of information about what you type to the cloud, we suggest you turn this off unless you need it.

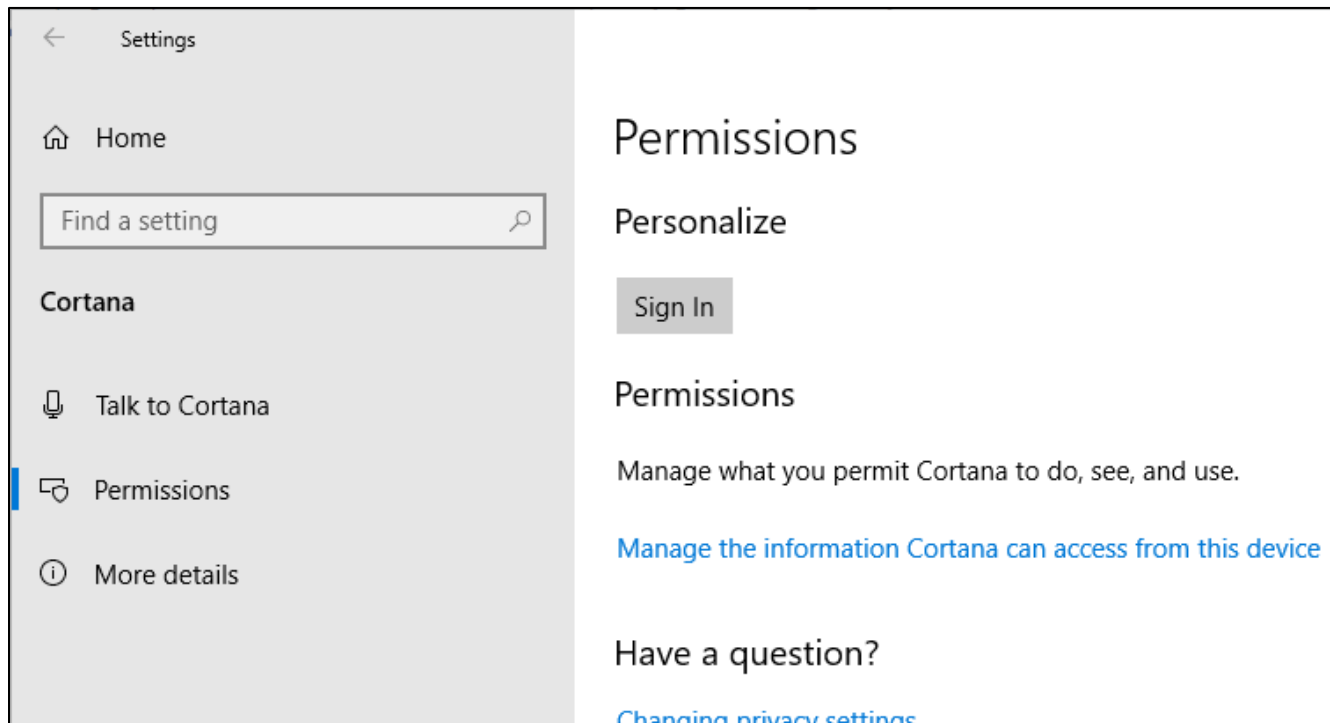
To turn off this feature, go to **Settings > Privacy > Inking and typing personalization** and set the toggle to **Off**.

Disable Cortana

Cortana is Windows 10's default digital assistant and Microsoft allows it to collect your basic information such as home location to improve its performance. You can also limit the information Cortana gathers about you.

To manage Cortana settings go to **Settings > Cortana > Permissions > Manage what you permit Cortana to do, see, and use**.

You can also manage the information Cortana has collected about you from [Microsoft's Privacy dashboard](#).



As with all our recommendations, TekResults is eager to assist you with answers to your questions or to help you engage any of these privacy settings. Just call or email.

Referrals

TekResults owes much of our success to our loyal and enthusiastic clients. It's those of you who tell your friends about us that keep our company growing, and we'd like to say thanks. Just telling someone about us is all it takes. Just let us know you dropped our name and we'll drop a gift card in the mail for you to enjoy a great meal at a [Dante's restaurant](#). See... who said talk is cheap!

The TekResults Team
support@tekresults.com
814-206-0000 Option 1

To unsubscribe send an email to UnsubscribeNewsletter@tekresults.com with unsubscribe to Newsletter in the subject line or click here UnsubscribeNewsletter@tekresults.com

Our Services and Products

- IT problem solving
- Office 365 sales and support
- Network administration
- Network troubleshooting
- Business consulting software testing and service

- Business phone systems (Comcast, VoIPly, Vonage, Fortinet)
- Infrastructure design and implementation
- Pre-Sales consulting
- Capacity planning/ system design
- Network cabling
- Security compliance review HIPAA
- Security compliance review PCI
- System installations
- System upgrades
- System auditing / documentation
- Desktop, laptop and monitor and other sales
- 3rd party software setup and support
- Computer security solutions (including PGP, encrypted mail, secured transactions)
- Custom application development
- Legacy system migration and rewrites
- System integration
- Application integration
- Network installation and integration
- Training and staff development