

PRINTABLE GUIDE

Open, switch between and close Windows apps

Opening another app normally leaves the first running. Use the taskbar or a shortcut to return to its window, rather than opening repeated copies.

Windows 11 | 2 min read | 5 steps

Before you start

- ☐ A signed-in computer
- ☐ Two harmless apps such as Calculator and a browser

1. Find and open an app

Select Start and type Calculator, then select the installed app result. You can also browse the app list. Choose an app you recognise, rather than downloading unfamiliar software just to practise opening a programme.

- ☐ Done this step

2. Open a second window

Open your usual browser through Start or its taskbar icon. The first app normally remains running behind it. Bring both into view if you like by dragging their title bars or using the maximise and restore buttons.

- ☐ Done this step

3. Switch to the first app

Select Calculator's icon on the taskbar. Alternatively, hold Alt and press Tab to choose another open window, then release Alt. Check the selected window before typing so text or shortcuts go to the intended app.

- ☐ Done this step

4. Recognise minimise and close

Minimise hides a window while keeping it open. The cross closes that window and may ask you to save work. A browser tab has its own cross, which closes a page rather than the entire browser.

☐ Done this step

5. Close the practice apps

Save any work, then close each practice window. If an app offers a save prompt, read it carefully. Closing a window usually does not uninstall the app; you can open it again through Start.

☐ Done this step

Try it for yourself

Open two apps, switch with Alt + Tab and close both.

☐ I tried the task.

My notes

Why are several windows under one taskbar icon?

Windows can group windows from the same app. Hover or select the icon to choose the window you want.

Official help and the online guide

Windows 11 basics - <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/meet-windows-11-easily-switch-to-windows-11-3a2aa0a7-9559-431f-91a0-d9ca0a1eb0a5>

Windows files and apps - <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/experience/storage-filemanagement/find-your-files-and-apps-in-windows>

Windows keyboard shortcuts - <https://support.microsoft.com/en-au/windows/keyboard-shortcuts-in-windows-dcc61a57-8ff0-cffe-9796-cb9706c75eec>

Read online: <https://plaintechguides.com/guides/open-and-switch-windows-apps/>