

On or Off? Are you kidding?

*Should I stay or should I go now?
If I go, there will be trouble
And if I stay it will be double
So come on and let me know
Should I stay or should I go?*
— Should I Stay or Should I Go,
Joe Strummer, Mick Jones (The Clash)

There is no more silly debate in IT circles than the ages old question: Should I ever turn off my computer, or should I leave it on indefinitely? Here's the short answer: Turn the darn thing off already. My 40+ years experience in the electronics industry leads to state emphatically, besides throwing it against the wall like a Lakers fan might have done this year, nothing will damage electronic components like heat does. You need to cool your device down.

Some might reply to the above statement by stating that putting the PC to sleep achieves the same result in reduced internal device heat. While that is true to a great extent, there other reasons to shutdown for awhile each day.

Many long time PC users consider Kim Komodo the oracle of best computing practices. [Here is her take:](#)

Rebooting your computer helps keep it running smoothly. It clears the memory, stopping any tasks that are eating up RAM. Even if you've closed an app, it could still tap your memory. A reboot can also fix peripheral and hardware issues.

Here are a few more good reasons for shutting down at night. This is according to [makeuseof.com](#) writer Sadaf Tanzeem:

If you're habitual of leaving your PC on for days or even weeks, you might have noticed it slowing down. Well, it can be due to several reasons, like random programs hogging memory or some fragmented files taking up extra processing power.

Moreover, it can also be due to the crash of your graphic card drivers, printer drivers, monitor drivers, or other drivers.

If you shut down or reboot your computer, it can stop the programs running in the background and fix the crashes while rebooting the drivers properly, helping you enhance your device's performance.

Furthermore, if you shut your computer down every night, you won't miss vital updates and upgrades, another thing that can cause performance issues.

Even the Geek Squad agrees. Here from an article for [howstuffworks.com](#):

Sleep mode puts your system into a low-power mode, but your apps and data are still in system memory," says Geek Squad agent Derek Meister. That quickness comes with some pros and cons.

"Sleep mode helps everything pop up faster when you get back to your computer, but it also increases the possibility of losing data if the system loses power unexpectedly," he says.

On the other hand, there is one entity who apparently disagrees with all of the above. That entity is Microsoft. Sometime in the last several months a Microsoft update changed the default settings for powering down a Windows PC. The default power setting is known as "Fast Startup." [Laptop magazine was rather circumspect about the utility of Fast Startup.](#)

There are plenty of reasons why you may want to turn off Fast Startup. First, it can interfere with your system's regular update process. Windows Update requires that your PC completely shut down to apply changes. Some systems will prevent you from accessing their BIOS if you use Fast Startup.

Here is [Microsoft's reasoning for making Fast Startup the default.](#)

The Fast Startup feature in Windows 10 allows your computer start up faster after a shutdown. When you shut down your computer, Fast Startup will put your computer into a hibernation state instead of a full shutdown. Fast Startup is enabled by default if your computer is capable of hibernation.

The same article referenced above warns users that Fast Startup might interfere with Automatic Updates.

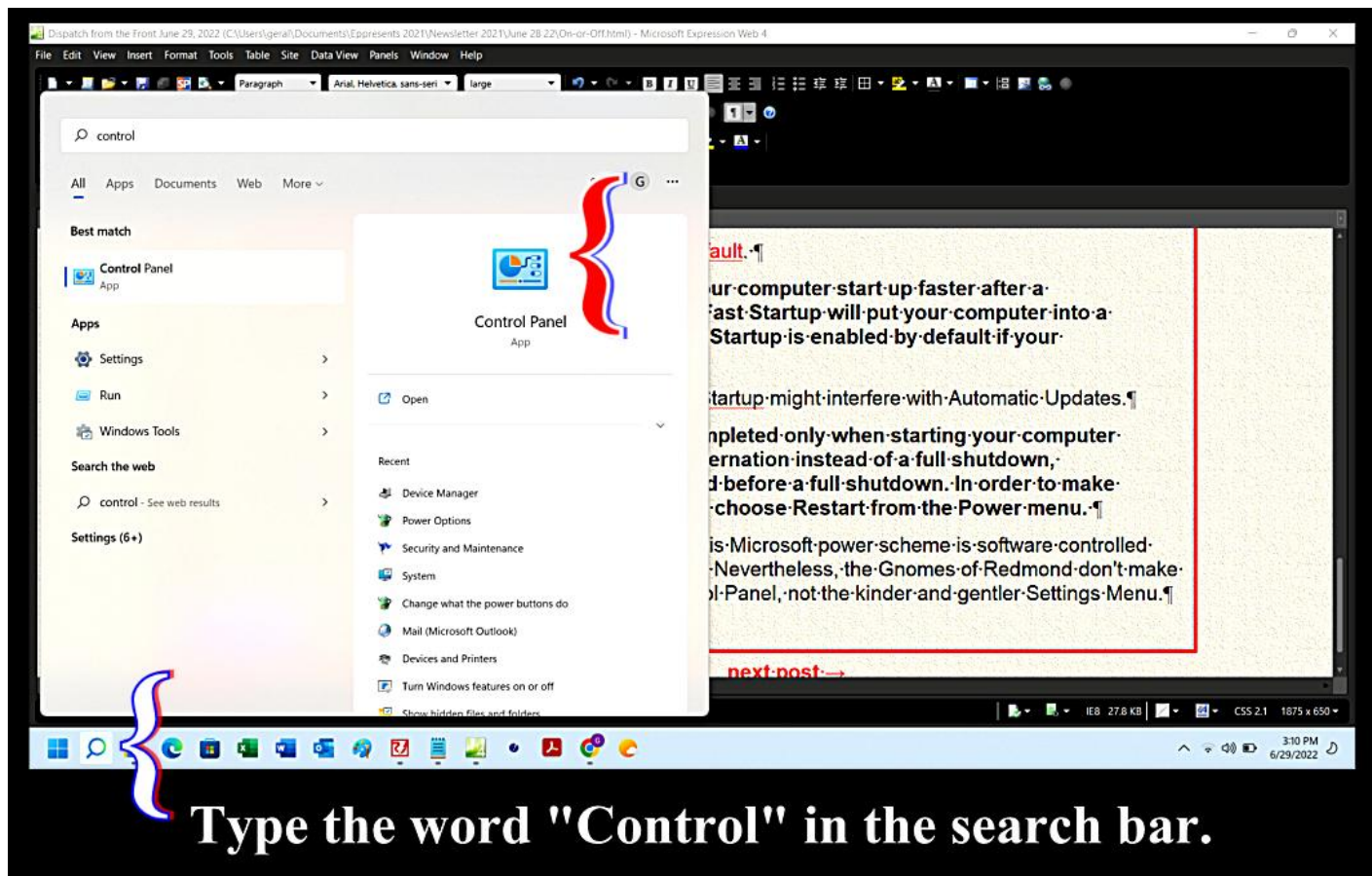
Installation of some Windows updates can be completed only when starting your computer after a full shutdown. Since Fast Startup uses hibernation instead of a full shutdown, installation of those updates will not

be completed before a full shutdown. In order to make sure pending updates are completed, you have to choose Restart from the Power menu.

Fortunately, and unlike as we have seen on the iPhone, this Microsoft power scheme is software controlled and is not solely a property of the hardware configuration. Nevertheless, the Gnomes of Redmond don't make it easy to turn off FastStartup. We need to bring up Control Panel, not the kinder and gentler Settings Menu.

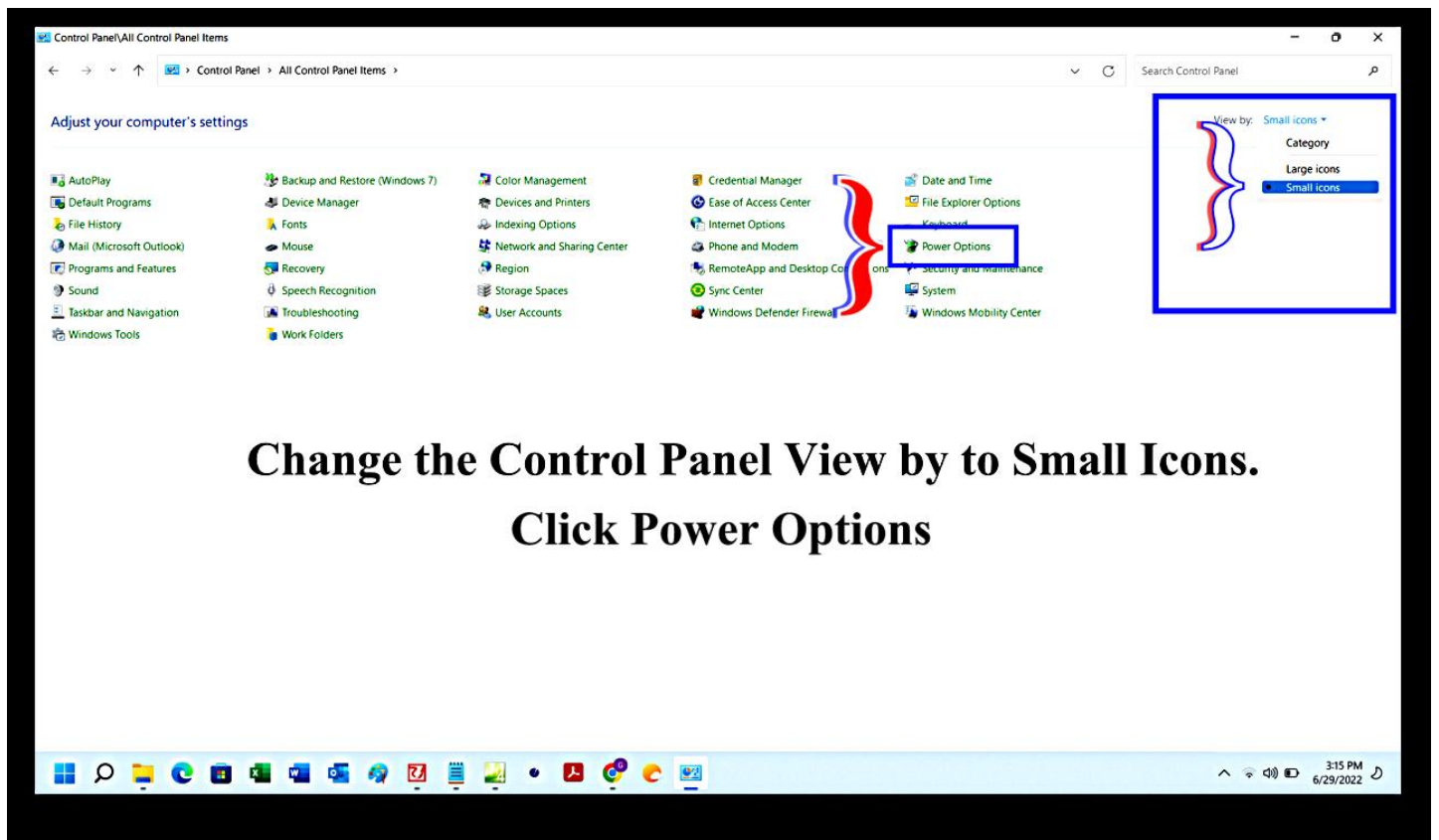
So let's dive in. What follows is pretty much the same for Windows 10 or Windows 11.

The easiest way to bring up Control Panel to simply **type the word CONTROL** in the search tool on the Taskbar.

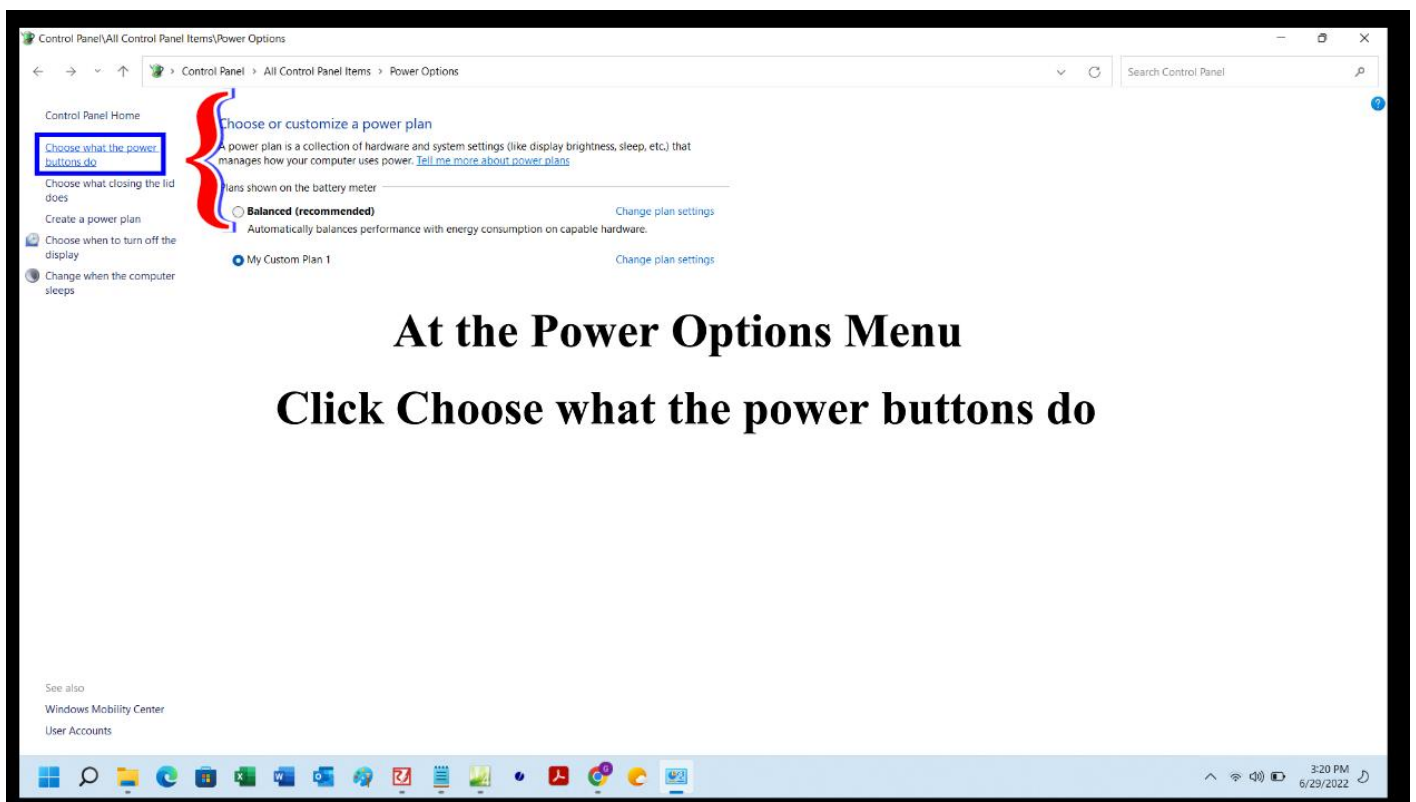


Type the word "Control" in the search bar.

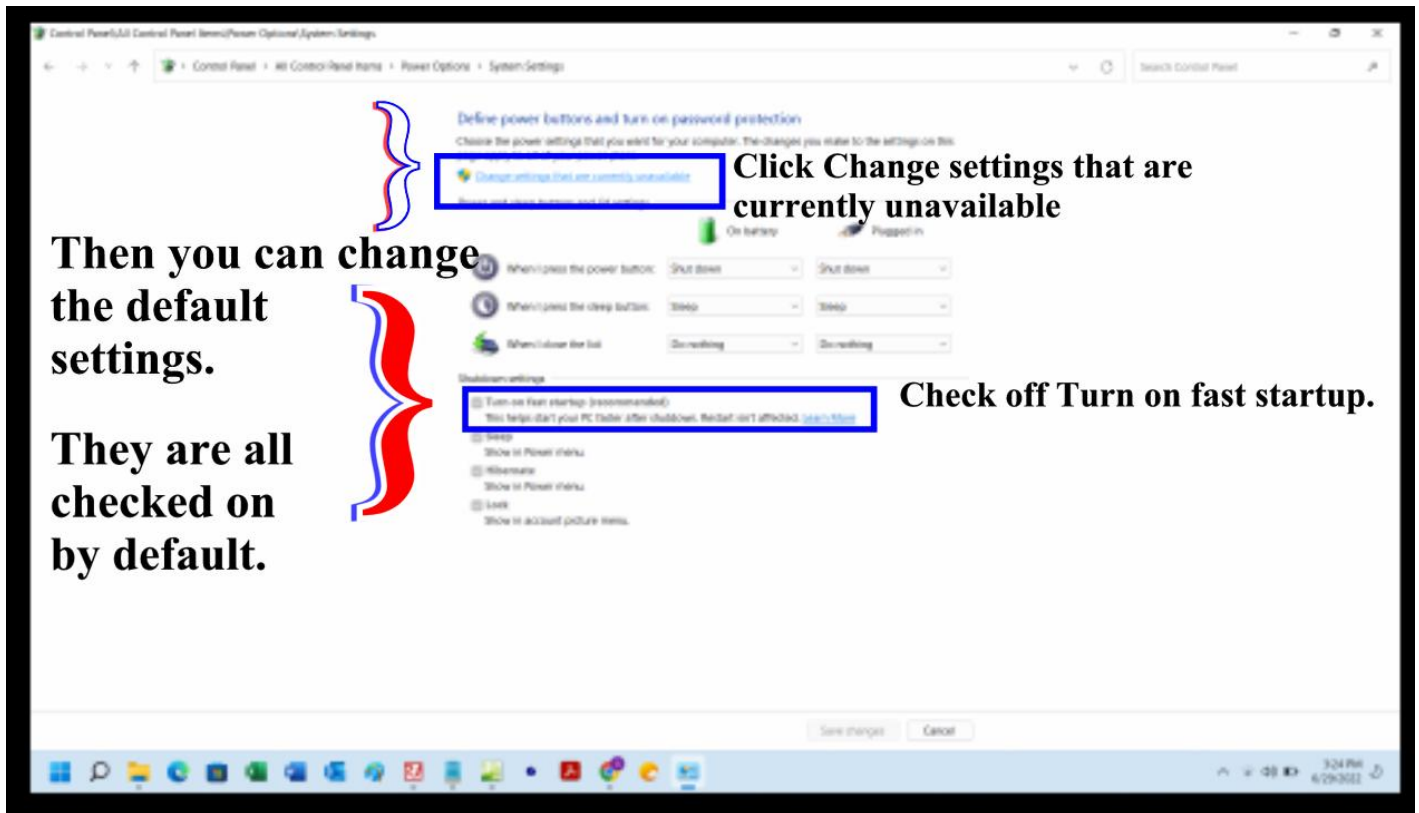
Click the Control Panel icon to open Control Panel. When Control Panel opens, change the View to "Small icons." After the Small icons is enabled, click Power Options.



No we're cookin' with gas, Brothers and Sisters. Once into the Power Options menu, we can turn on those features that Microsoft hides by default. **Don't ask me why. I just work here.** Click Choose what the power buttons do.



Now we see where they hid the control to toggle Fast Startup on and off. All the once hidden boxes are all checked on by default. Check off fast startup.



Then you can change the default settings.

They are all checked on by default.

Click Change settings that are currently unavailable

Check off Turn on fast startup.

So now, when you power off your PC, it will actually shutdown. Your memory will be flushed clean. Cranky apps that don't want to turn off will be closed. And your system fan and power supply will thank you with a longer life span.

I know. Right now your probably thinking this donkey's behind is next going to start preaching that we should all reboot our routers daily, also!

Well, yeah.

You see, a new strain of malware is exploiting vulnerabilities in a number of older and more recent routers. All one needs to do to stop the spread of this malware across networks is to simply turn off and then turn back on the router. The malware process is completely removed upon power down and power back up. On some very older routers a factory reset will be needed.

So stick a pin in your old router, and then stick a pin in me. Because I am done here.

*Turn it on,
 Turn it on, turn it on again
 Turn it on, turn it on, turn it on again
 — Turn It On Again*

MICHAEL RUTHERFORD, PHIL COLLINS, TONY BANKS (Genesis)

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