

# My Windows 10 Experience



Lewis Graham  
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Several months ago I signed up for the automatic update to Windows 10 that was to occur on July 29 (2015). Sure enough, early in the morning on July 29, my Windows Updates interface informed me that I could download the 2.5 GB Windows 10 update.

I was pretty excited about this. Like many folks, my reading machine is an iPad but my workhorse computer is a laptop running Windows. At the office, I am connected to a dual monitor docking station, making my laptop indistinguishable from a workstation. I even have NVidia K1000 graphics! I have been running Windows 8.1 with an open source shell program ("Open Shell") to make the 8.1 experience bearable.

After a long download of the 10.1 package, I eagerly "applied" the update. Immediately I was presented with an error message complaining about my disk partition. Now I am wondering just how many folks not in our computing and processing industry would have a clue as to the meaning of "partition?" After digging around a bit, I found a smoking gun. Seems Windows 8 shrinks the primary partition on your disk but Windows 10 does not know how to grow it back to the needed size! OK, this is obviously not going to be a smooth experience.

After a bit more searching, I found an article by Microsoft explaining what needed to be done to fix this particular problem. I just needed to move a few partitions on my C: drive, expand one of them, jiggle the others and ... well, you get the idea. Microsoft allowed that while it knew how to fix the problem, it did not offer the partition repair tool. They suggested I try a piece of free ware. Now I might expect this from a two person shop making a utility but Microsoft??

I used MiniTool Partition Wizard to fix my partition problem. Once this was corrected, Windows 10 began what would be a 3.5 hour installation process. Things went relatively smoothly but with very poor feedback. My screen would sit for periods of up to 15 minutes with a display reading "41% Complete" and a spinning wait motif. It finally did complete with no further serious hiccups.

Windows 10 has fixed a lot of the issues with Windows 8.1. For example, it has a new Start menu that is actually better than the Start of Windows 7. Unfortunately, Microsoft is still trying to get us to run tablet applications on our desktops. Both my pdf and photo viewers were disabled and replaced with the Windows "Metro" Photo and Reader applications. These may be good on a tablet but they are just terrible on a desktop. Their biggest defect is that our familiar "right click" menu is gone (one presumes because tablets just have fat finger push). Thus one has to go navigate menus to do simple things such as "copy." Finding how to change file associations to get back to the useable applications is not a task for one who easily declares defeat!

Internet Explorer has been replaced with a new browser called "Edge." Again, this may be great for a tablet but it contains many annoyances when used on a workstation. Incredibly, it does not work smoothly with Microsoft SharePoint (no drag and drop from Explorer, for example). Edge is definitely not yet ready for prime time.

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Windows Explorer has some very nice additional features such as a useable Favorites section. It is definitely tailored for the workstation experience which is a welcome relief from the tablet Metro interfaces.

The good news is that our GeoCue applications work just fine in Windows 10. I have been running GeoCue, LP360 and ArcGIS with no problems. My suggestion is that you look toward migrating to Windows 10 by the spring of 2016. Microsoft's current program gives you one year (we assume from 29 July 2015) to upgrade from 7 or 8.x for free so don't delay too long!

The bottom line:

- Windows 10 is not quite as good as Windows 7 for the desktop but orders of magnitude better than Windows 8 or 8.1
- I experienced a show-stopping problem with the update that Microsoft has no tools to correct
- GeoCue software such as LP360 and GeoCue run fine under Windows 10