9 - Touch Multitasking

Windows has always been about multitasking and productivity and even on touch only devices that’s still the case. Working with multiple apps works slightly differently when Windows 10 is in Tablet mode. In this lesson we will see how Windows handles multitasking on a touch device.

9.1 – Task View

In the last lesson we told you that you can switch between apps by first opening one app and then pressing the Start button, or the Windows button on your device and going back to the Start screen. This is the simplest way to work with apps on your device and is similar to how most popular touch-based operating systems work.

There is another way to switch between apps that you may find very convenient when you become more proficient with your tablet and that is to use Task view. Task view shows all your currently running apps. There are two ways to access Task view. Firstly, you can tap the Task view button on the taskbar, as seen in figure 2.3. Secondly, you can swipe your finger in from the left of the screen. Figure 9.1 shows Task view open on a PC in Tablet mode.

Using Task view is faster than going back to the Start screen. To switch to any app shown in Task view, just tap on it. You can also use the back button on the taskbar to jump directly to the previously used app.
You can also close apps from the Task view by tapping the cross icon in the top right hand corner of the apps picture. The close button for Microsoft Edge is circled in figure 9.1. If an app won’t close when you tap its close button in Task view, it may need your attention. Tap on it and check that it is not notifying you to save your work before you close it, for instance.

9.2 – Touch Multitasking

Just like in Windows 8, we can work with multiple apps on a touch screen device. To do this, swipe your finger down from the top of the screen, keeping it held to the screen. The currently running app will then shrink down and follow your finger. Figure 9.2 shows an example of this.

![Figure 9.2 – Moving an app in Tablet mode](image)

If you move (drag) the app right to the bottom of the screen now, you will close it. If you want to multitask with the app, drag it instead to the left or right of the screen. A dividing bar will appear in the middle of the screen when you have moved the app far enough. Take your finger off the screen now and the app will snap to the side of the screen. Windows will then open Task view on the other side of the screen. Figure 9.3 illustrates this.
Figure 9.3 – Selecting an app to multitask with

To open an app in the opposite side of the screen, simply tap on the other app you want to work with. Figure 9.4 shows Microsoft Edge and the Music App (Groove Music) running side by side.
9.3 – Resizing apps

When you use Task view to multitask two apps together, they will usually take up exactly half of the screen each when you first set them out. In some instances you might want to resize one of the apps. One typical situation where you might want to do this is using the Groove Music app. If you were working or surfing on the web and wanted some tunes while you worked, you can shrink the Groove Music app down so that it is only a quarter of the screen. At this size, the app still lets you change tracks and pause your music, while the rest of the screen can be used for your browser or other apps.

To resize an app, you need to drag the dividing bar by tapping and holding your finger on it. The bar is a little small so catching it with your finger might take a couple of tries. Once you have hold of the bar you can resize your app. Keep your finger on the screen and drag the bar to the left or right. Your app will then resize itself. Let go of the screen once your app is the desired size. If it disappears from the screen entirely while you are resizing, you have resized it too far. Drag the bar back again and the app will re-appear. If you shrink an app down too far and then let go of the screen, it will disappear from your screen but won’t be closed and you can still access it in Task view. Figure 9.5 shows the Groove Music app running quarter screen size next to the Microsoft Edge web browser. Make sure you set up your playlists (see lesson 27.3) before resizing it like this.

Figure 9.4 – Using two apps at once
That’s all you need to know to work with multiple apps in Tablet mode. For all the criticism Windows 8 got, it’s powerful multitasking capabilities, which Windows 10 builds on, are more advanced than any other tablet PC operating system on the market and Microsoft’s competitors are scrambling to catch up with this awesome feature.