Lecture 5: Windows 8.1 (Cont’d.): More Top Tips for Using Windows 8.1

Start Your PC Directly to the Desktop:

If you want to primarily use desktop programs with Windows 8.1, you can bypass the start screen when the operating system starts and go straight to the desktop instead. To activate this, on the desktop, right-click anywhere in a blank space on the taskbar and from the options that appear click properties.

In the options window that appears, click the navigation tab, and check the box go to the desktop instead of start when I sign in. Optionally you can also force the all apps view to display automatically when you click the windows key (this turns off the start screen), and you can tell the all apps view to display your desktop programs first (the standard view is to display your apps first). If you check this option, you will also need to go into the all apps view, click by name at the top left of the screen, and change it to by category.

Using the Calendar and Clocks on the Desktop Taskbar:

If you use your computer for work and use the desktop a lot of the time, there are powerful calendar tools you can access and you can set clocks for different time zones from your taskbar.

To access the time and date functions in Windows 8.1, click the time and date on the far right side of the taskbar, and a date and time panel will open. Here’s how you control it.

You can control the date panel by clicking the small left and right arrows above the calendar. These will move the calendar backward or forward a month. You can also click on the month and year between the arrows to switch to different calendar views. This allows you to quickly move to different months and years.
You can add additional clocks for different time zones to this panel by clicking the change date and time settings link at the bottom of the panel. In the window that appears, click the additional clocks tab and you can add up to two more clocks, specifying the time zone you want for each one.

**Managing Your Default Sound Devices:**

If you find that sound on your computer isn’t working correctly—for example, if you’ve plugged in headphones but the sound is still coming out of your speakers—it’s easy to change the default sound device. To do this, go to the desktop and right-click with your mouse on the speaker icon next to the time and date on the taskbar.

From the options that appear, click playback devices and this will open a new panel showing all the sound playback devices in or attached to your computer. To change the default sound device, click the device you want to use for sound and then click the set default button at the bottom of the panel.
When you have finished, you may need to set the *default playback* device back to what it was originally so that you can continue to listen to sound and music (e.g., if you switched temporarily from speakers to headphones)