(Approx. 758 words)

# Tom’s Tech-Notes

Windows 10 May Update

Coming Soon to *Your* PC
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April 2019 issue, Gigabyte Gazette

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The technical pundits are in full rhapsody over the upcoming release of the “first-half” 2019 releasee of Windows 10. The official version number is V1903. Most of our Windows 10 Home users will get this release when Microsoft decides to push it out to their PCs via Windows Update. That will likely be sometime in April, possibly early May, especially for newer PCs.

As in the past, once it’s available, if you just can’t wait to get V1903, you can download and run the latest Windows Media Creation tool to update your Windows 10 PC or create installation media.

**Chris Hoffman** of **How-To-Geek** writes that Windows 10 will no longer automatically install those big feature updates every six months. Home users can pause smaller updates, too. In fact, Windows will even let you pause updates after checking for them! <http://bit.ly/2VvDJMh>

**Ed Bott** of **ZD-Net.com** has written an excellent article summarizing all of the important new features of the V1903 update, including screen shots and brief descriptions. You can read Ed’s article at: <https://zd.net/2uUPSP9>

**Mauro Huculak** at **PureInfotech** has also written a comprehensive, illustrated review of V1903 new features at: <http://bit.ly/2G2RHOU>

I won’t try to duplicate what Ed or Mauro have written, but I’ll mention a few of the new features. Many of these new “features” are enhancements to the Settings interface to reduce lingering dependence on the old “Desktop Control Panel.”

* The Start panel, by default, now has fewer tiles and has automatically grouped some into folders. This affords a less cluttered view and more room for adding your own tiles.
* The Windows Search has been nicely enhanced and also decoupled from Cortana. You can now use icons at the top of the search window to filter the scope of the search.
* Windows Hello (biometric sign-in) has been cleaned up and enhanced. To use this, your PC needs a camera or a USB security key. Laptop users may find this especially useful.
* The Settings system for preferences has an updated, improved font manager / installer that makes installing new fonts an easy drag and drop action.
* The Windows Print dialog has been enhanced and cleaned up.
* The Settings > System > Storage screen has been reworked to give more useful information for each drive known to the system.
* The Snip and Sketch tool (new in Win 10 V1809) has been enhanced to take a snapshot of a specific Window as well as of the entire screen or an arbitrary rectangle on the screen.

The “Patch Tuesday” date in May is May 14. That’s the earliest likely date V1903 will start being delivered to PCs. This presumes that there are no last-minute stability issues with the release. Microsoft presumably doesn’t want to repeat the experience from the last update (V1809) when they had to pull the update and spend a month dealing with reliability issues.

## Preparing for V1903

In anticipation of the V1903 update, I recommend that Windows 10 users make an image or clone backup of their C: drive. Use your favorite backup imaging tool: Acronis True Image, Casper, Macrium Reflect or the Windows internal backup imaging tool. You will need an external hard drive with enough space to hold the image or clone. The Computer Club’s Hardware / Software Repair Lab team can help you with this if you’ve never done it.

I also recommend that Windows 10 users make a named Restore Point. This will allow you to easily revert your PC back to a known good state in case your PC’s V1903 update runs into problems. While this is uncommon, taking precautions pre-update is good insurance.

A final recommendation is that when Windows Update indicates it is planning to deliver the update, if you are running a third-party anti-virus program (Avast, McAfee, Malware Bytes, Norton, …) you should disable the anti-virus program before the update begins installing. Many updating problems have been caused by conflicts between the third-party anti-virus program and Windows Update.

I saw a statistic recently that Windows 10 is now installed on 800 million devices. Even if this is somewhat overstated, updating such a huge number of PCs is a truly enormous undertaking. There are bound to be unforeseen hardware / software configurations that have issues with the upgrade.

Here’s hoping your own upgrade experience is smooth and trouble free and that the end-result is an improved experience using Windows 10.

