

11 ways to open the Recycle Bin on Windows

This guide will help you answer the question: Where is the Recycle Bin in Windows 10? and allow you to choose the most convenient way to access the Windows 10 Recycle Bin location:

Whether you're using Windows 10 or Windows 11, finding items you've deleted starts with opening the Recycle Bin. That's because the Recycle Bin in Windows acts like a safety net that you can use to recover files or folders you previously deleted from your computer or device.

So, if you're wondering "Where is the Recycle Bin in Windows?" or "Where to find the Recycle Bin on a laptop?", this guide will give you the answer.

What is a recycle bin and how does it work?

The Recycle Bin in Windows is a special folder that stores your deleted files and folders. When you delete items from your PC, they end up in the Recycle Bin instead of being permanently deleted. This is always useful if you accidentally delete your files.

The basic features of a Recycle Bin include:

1. **Restore** : When you delete a file, you have the option to restore it via the Recycle Bin; otherwise, the file will be permanently deleted and cannot be recovered. They can be restored directly to their original location with just one click. This allows users to delete unnecessary files without worry.
2. **Customization** : We can easily customize the features of the Recycle Bin by right-clicking the Recycle Bin icon and then clicking on Recycle Bin Properties. This allows us to choose whether to use the Recycle Bin or permanently delete files. We can also decide the maximum size of the Recycle Bin for each drive.
3. **Automatic deletion** : When the Recycle Bin reaches its predetermined size or your hard drive is running low on space, files will begin to be deleted from the Recycle Bin. This helps prevent the Recycle Bin from filling up or slowing down your hard drive.
4. **Restore all items** : The Recycle Bin also gives us the option to restore all files directly with just one click. You don't need to restore each file individually; you can do it directly with a single click.

An easy way to move an item to the Recycle Bin is to click on the item and press the **Delete** key . Alternatively, you can right-click on the item and select **Delete** from the menu that appears.

While this is a convenient feature, your deleted files will still take up space on your hard drive until you permanently delete them. However, depending on your Recycle Bin settings, the Recycle Bin may permanently delete some items after a period of time.

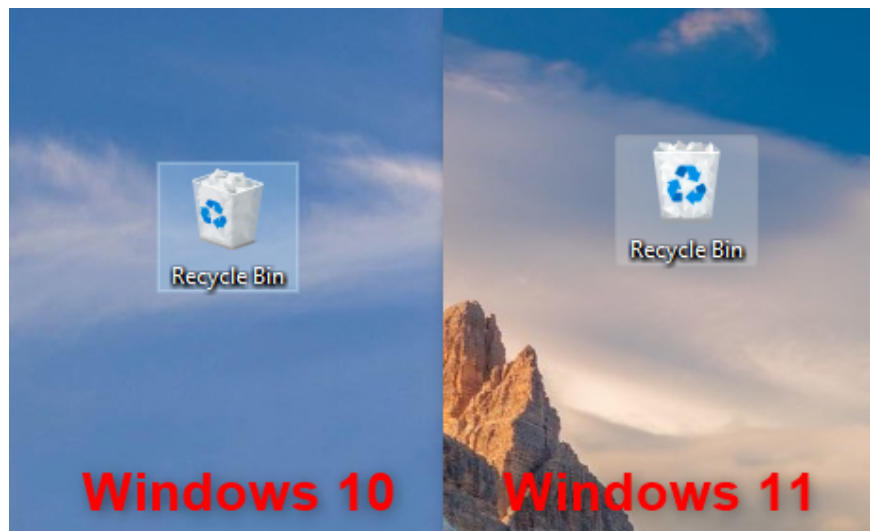
Now, let's look at the different ways to open the Recycle Bin.

Ways to open the Recycle Bin on Windows 11

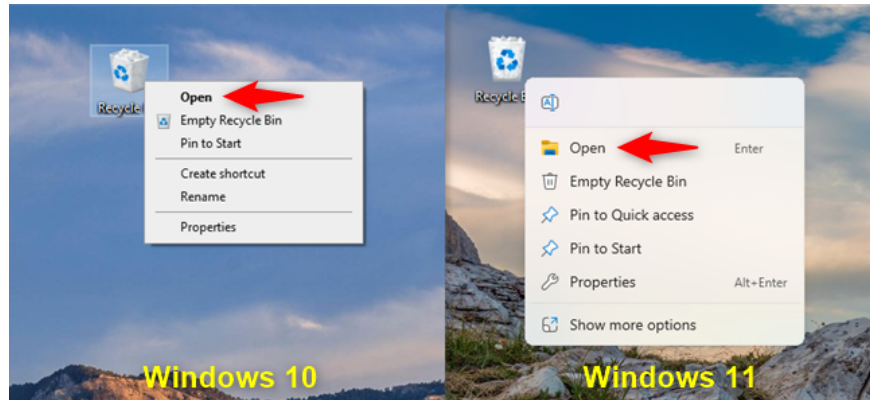
How to display the Recycle Bin icon on the desktop.

1. Use the Recycle Bin desktop shortcut in Windows 10 and Windows 11.

By default, the Recycle Bin is located in the upper left corner of the desktop. This is the easiest way to access the Recycle Bin, as all you have to do is find the icon on the desktop. In case you need to see what this icon looks like again, here is what it looks like in Windows 10 and Windows 11:



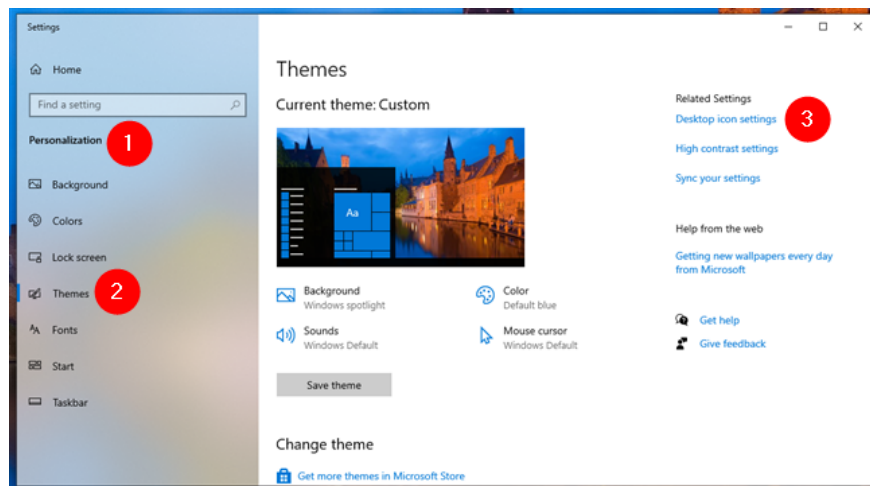
When you find the Recycle Bin on your desktop, select its icon and press **Enter** on your keyboard or double-click it to open the folder. Alternatively, you can right-click or press and hold the icon to open the context menu. Then, click **Open** .



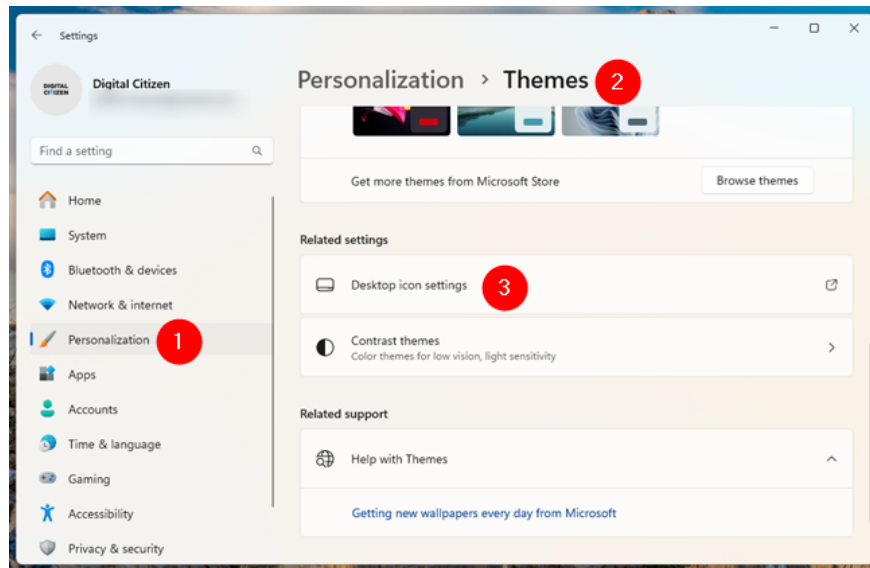
2. How to add the Recycle Bin icon to your desktop

If the Recycle Bin isn't on your desktop, the guide to restoring desktop icons in Windows 10 and Windows 11 might help you get it back. If you don't have time to read the guide, here are the basic steps you need to follow:

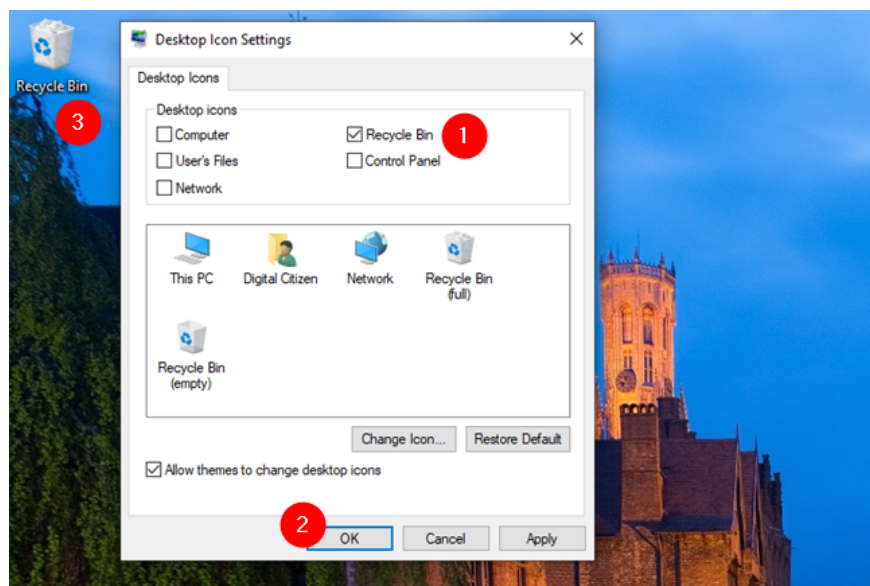
Regardless of whether you're using Windows 10 or Windows 11, open the Settings app (**Win + I**) and go to **Personalization > Themes** . Then, click the **Desktop icon settings** link under **Related Settings** . Here's how to find it in Windows 10:



And this is the interface in Windows 11:



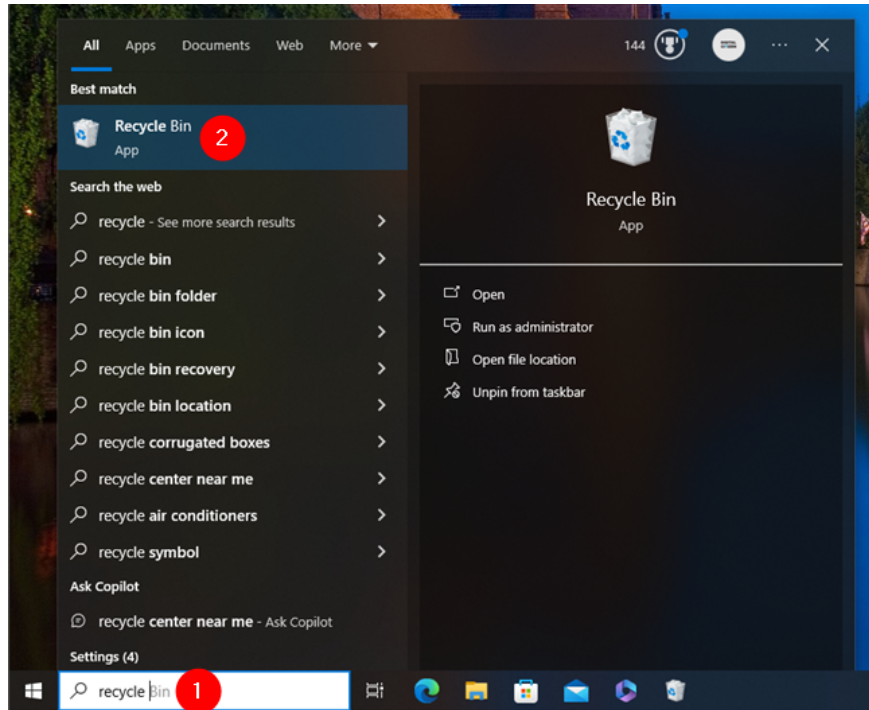
After you click the Desktop icon settings link, a new window with the same name will open. This doesn't matter whether you have Windows 10 or Windows 11. In this window, check the box next to Recycle Bin, then click **OK** . As soon as you do that, the Recycle Bin icon will be added to your desktop.



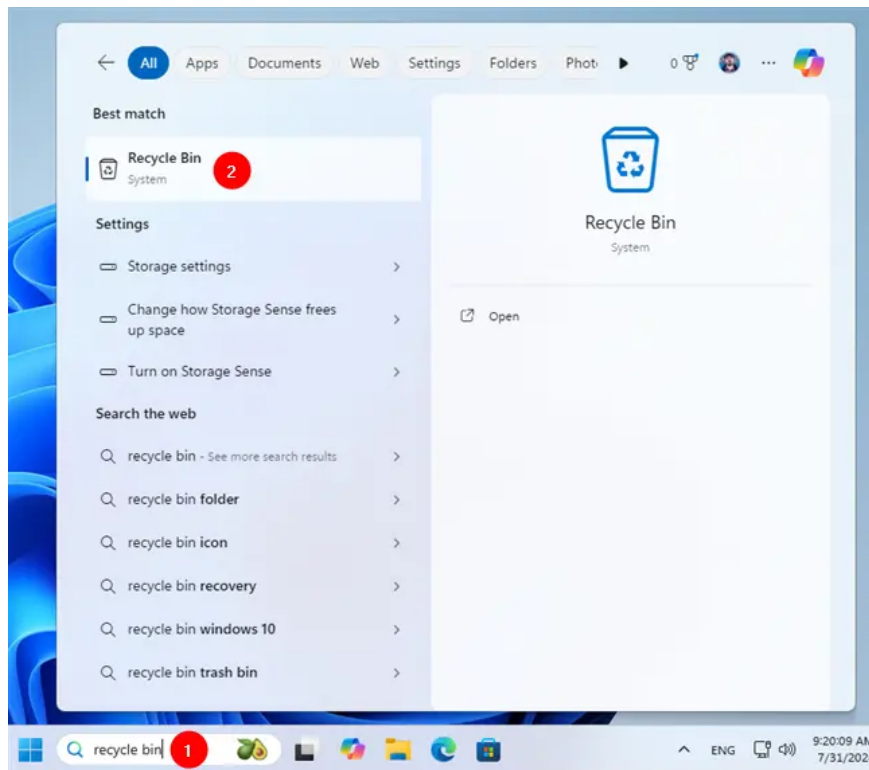
Now that you've set up Windows to display the Recycle Bin on the desktop, you'll always know where it is, right?

3. How to find the Recycle Bin in Windows using Search

You can always rely on Windows 10's Search function to find what you're looking for. Simply type "**Recycle Bin**" into the search field, then click on the relevant result.



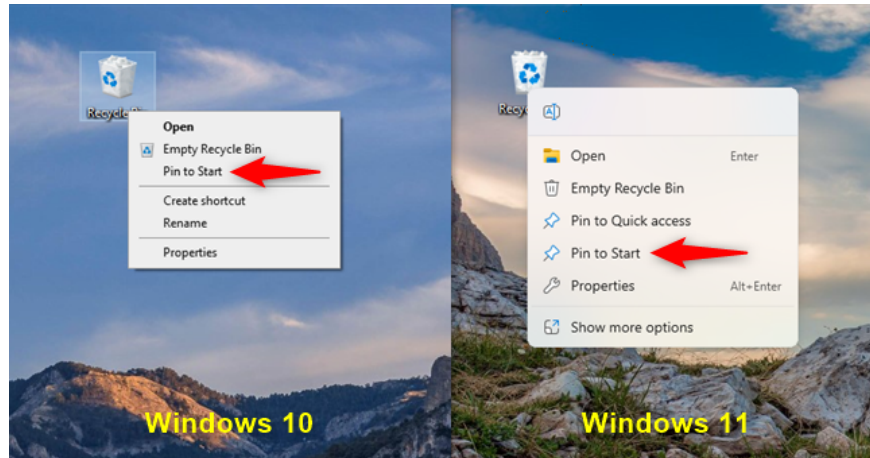
The same applies to Windows 11: type **"recycle bin"** into the taskbar search box and click on the Recycle Bin result.



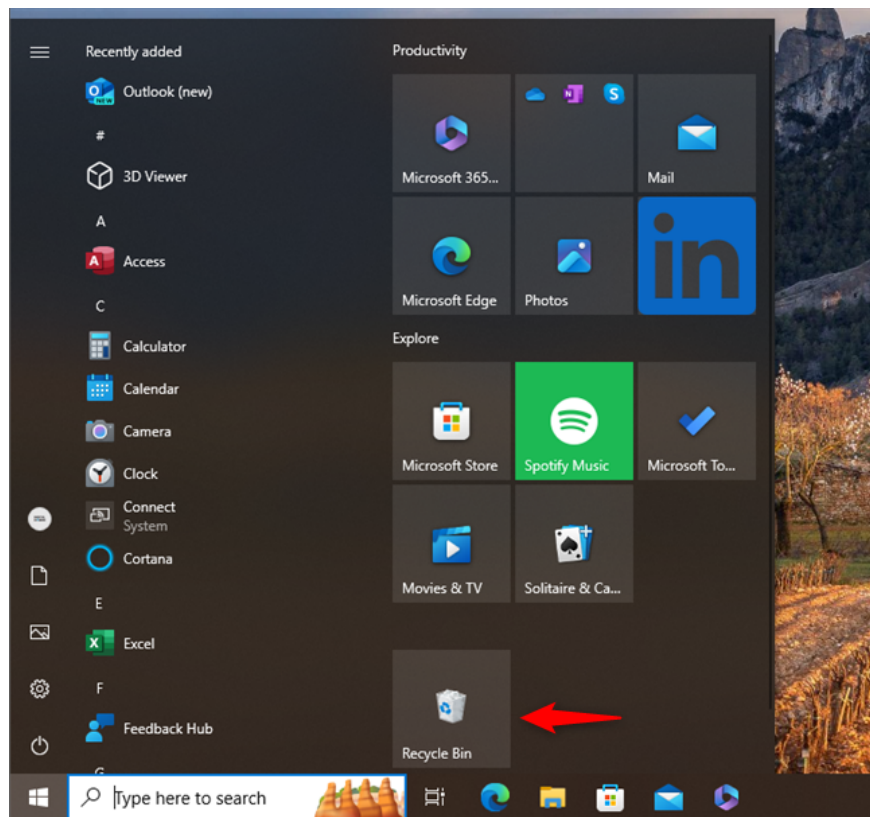
In both operating systems, the Recycle Bin will open as soon as you click on a search result.

4. How to pin the Recycle Bin to the Start menu

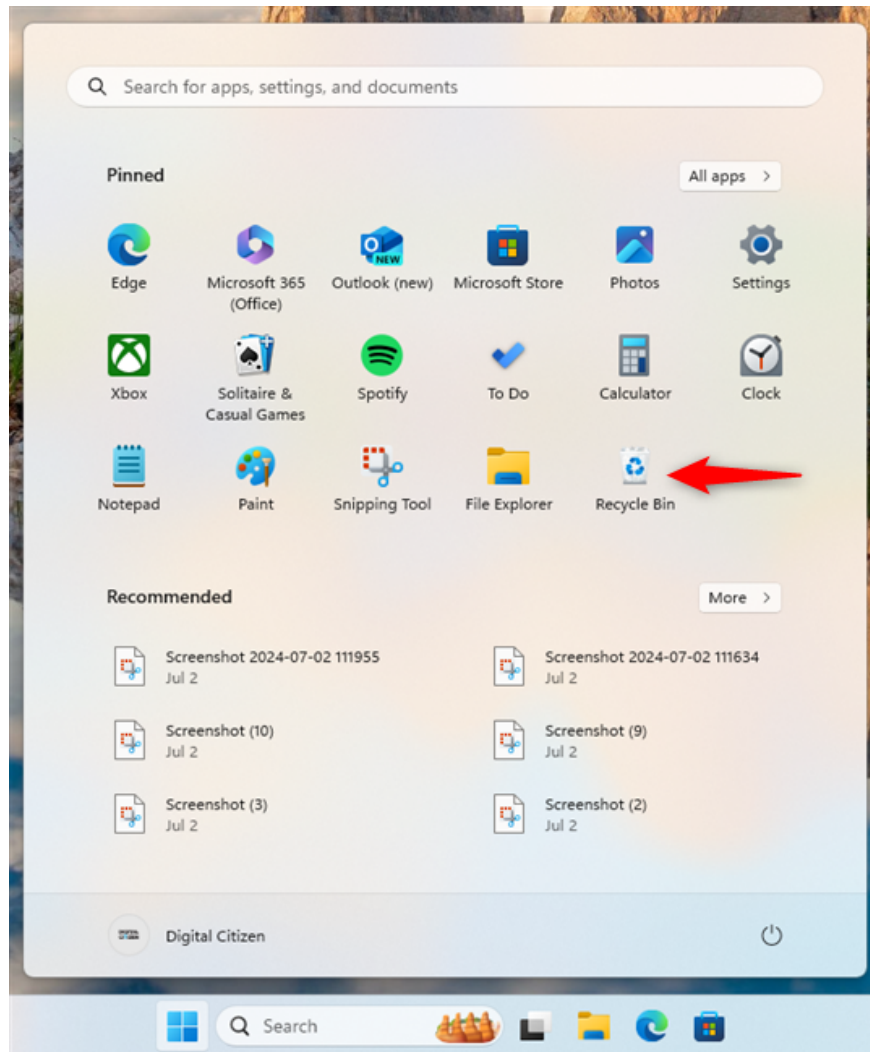
Although the Recycle Bin doesn't have a Start menu icon by default, you can pin it there just like any other shortcut in Windows 11 or Windows 10. Right-click or press and hold the Recycle Bin icon on the desktop, then click **Pin to Start**.



If you are using Windows 10, the Recycle Bin icon will be added to the Start menu tile.

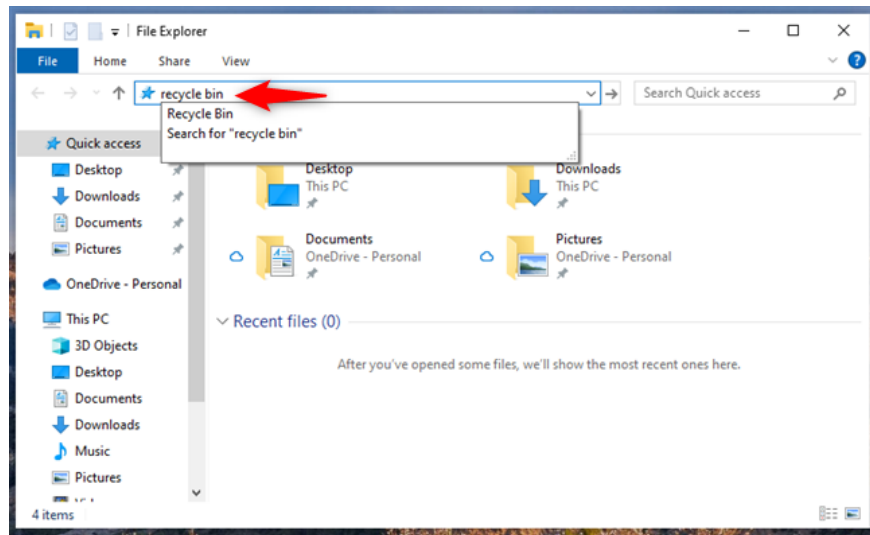


In Windows 11, the Recycle Bin will be added to the **Pinned** section of the Start menu.

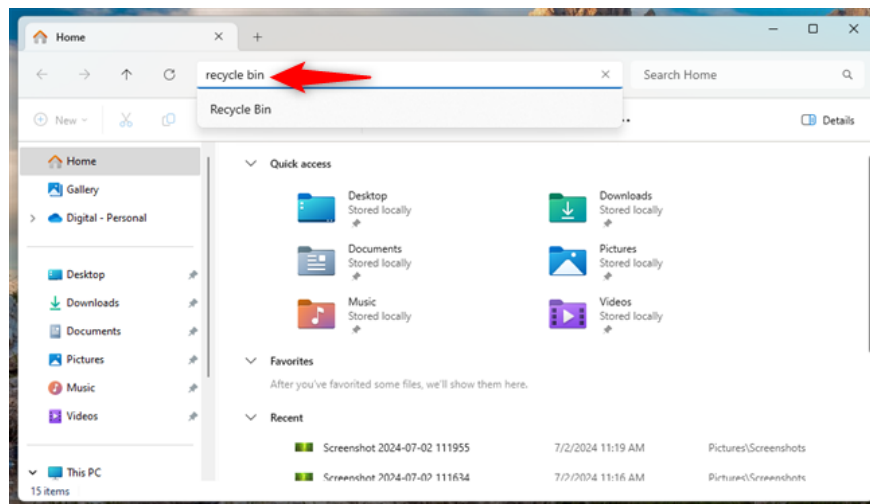


5. How to find the Recycle Bin in File Explorer

You can also access the Recycle Bin location using File Explorer. First, open File Explorer and click on an empty area in the address bar to edit it. Type "**recycle bin**" into the address bar, then press **Enter** on your keyboard or click on the Recycle Bin result shown below to access the folder. The whole process looks like this in Windows 10:

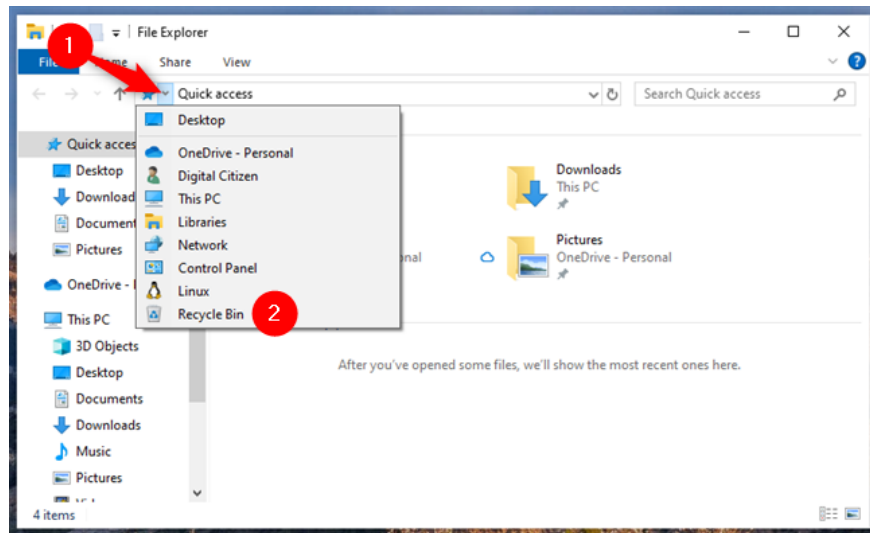


And the same applies in Windows 11:

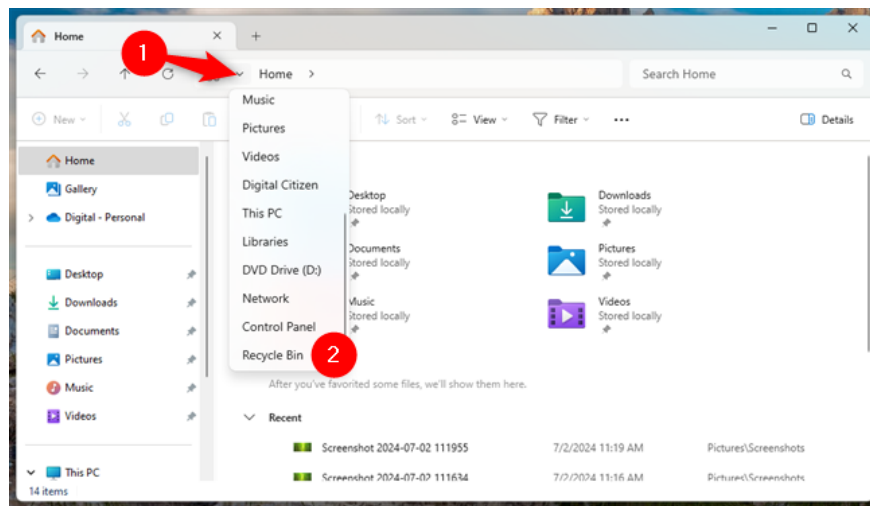


6. How to access the Recycle Bin using the > menu in File Explorer

You can also open the Recycle Bin by clicking the first ">" (greater than) sign in the File Explorer address bar, then selecting Recycle Bin from the menu that appears. Here's how it works in Windows 10:



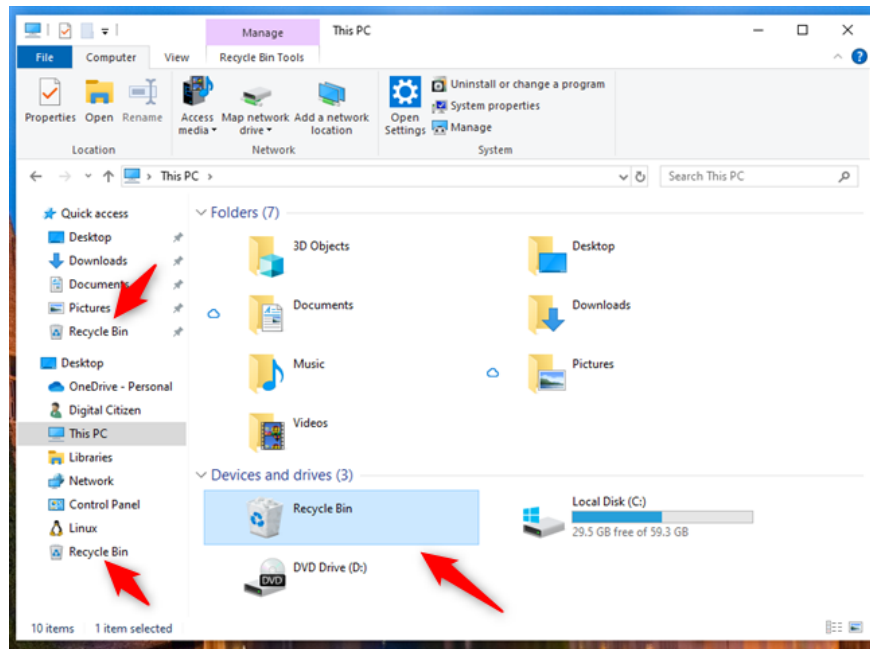
And this is what it looks like in Windows 11:



In both operating systems, you can access the Recycle Bin directly.

7. How to add the Recycle Bin to File Explorer

If you frequently use File Explorer, you might want a quicker way to access the Recycle Bin from there. Luckily, you can create a Recycle Bin shortcut in File Explorer's Quick Access, add the Recycle Bin to your folder list, and even set the Recycle Bin to appear as a drive in **This PC** .



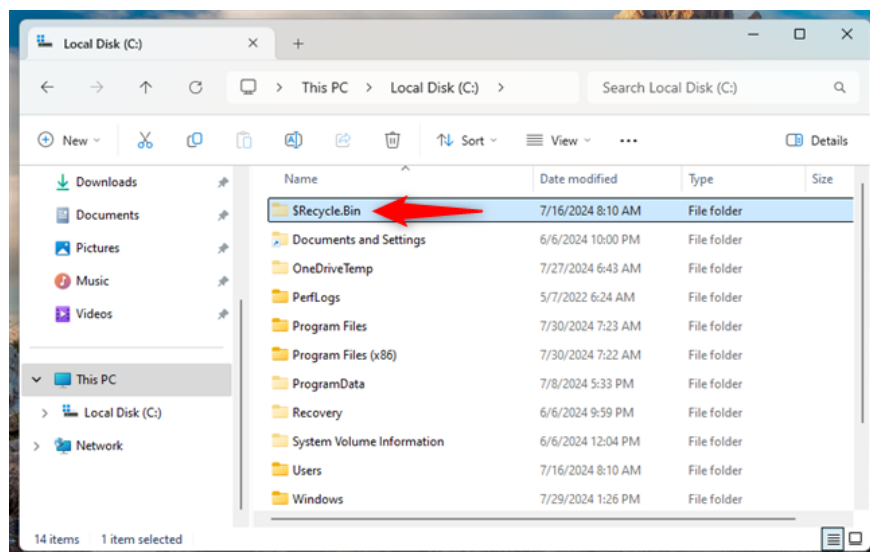
If any of that sounds good, check out the guide on how to add the Recycle Bin to File Explorer . By following the steps in that guide, you can quickly and easily access the Recycle Bin from all the important parts of File Explorer.

8. What is the Recycle Bin location in File Explorer?

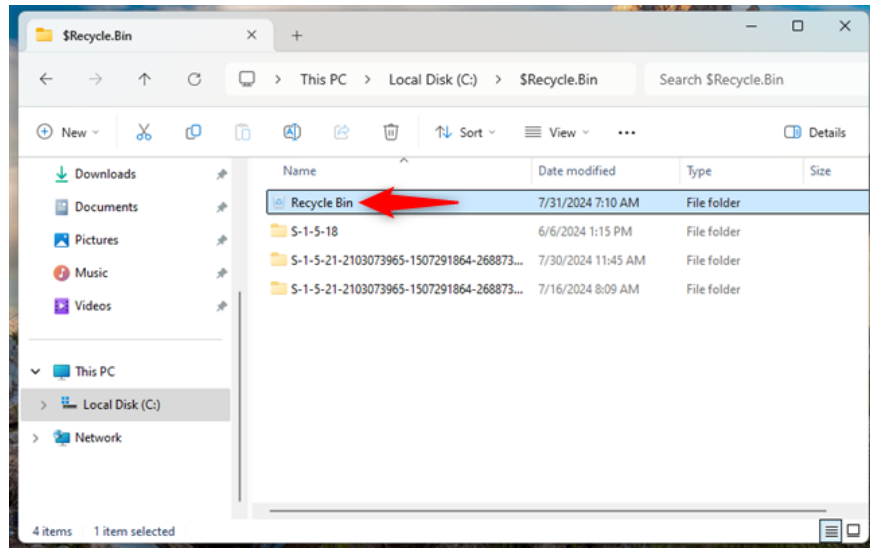
All the files you delete are displayed in the main Recycle Bin folder, but each hard drive partition has its own Recycle Bin. You can use this folder to access the Recycle Bin, but the process is more complicated.

Regardless of whether you're using Windows 10 or Windows 11, make sure you see hidden and system-protected files on your computer and use File Explorer to access **This PC > C:.** There, you'll find a folder named:

`$Recycle.Bin`



Open the folder and you will find the Recycle Bin inside.

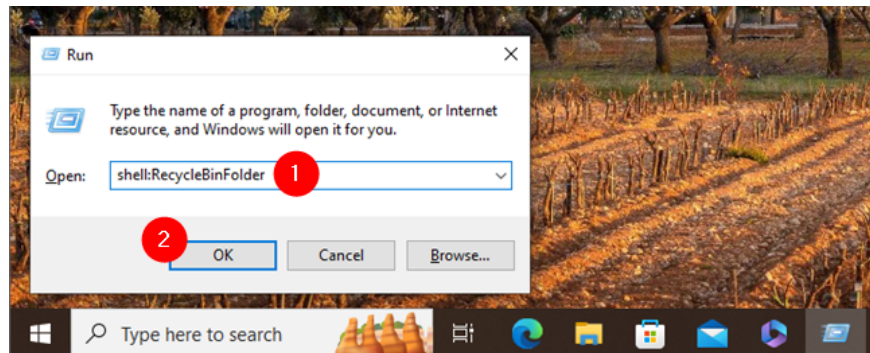


NOTE : The Recycle Bin is displayed on all drives of your PC, not just C:, so the path used could easily become **This PC > D:** or some other drive letter.

9. How to access the Recycle Bin using the Run window

You can also use the Run window to access the Recycle Bin. First, use the **Win + R** shortcut or another method to open Run . Then, enter the following command:

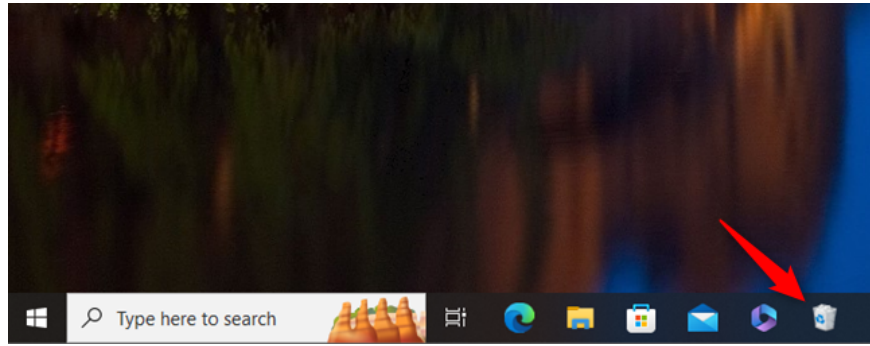
```
shell:RecycleBinFolder
```



Finally, press the **Enter** key or **OK** , and the Recycle Bin will open immediately.

10. How to open the Recycle Bin using the Taskbar shortcut

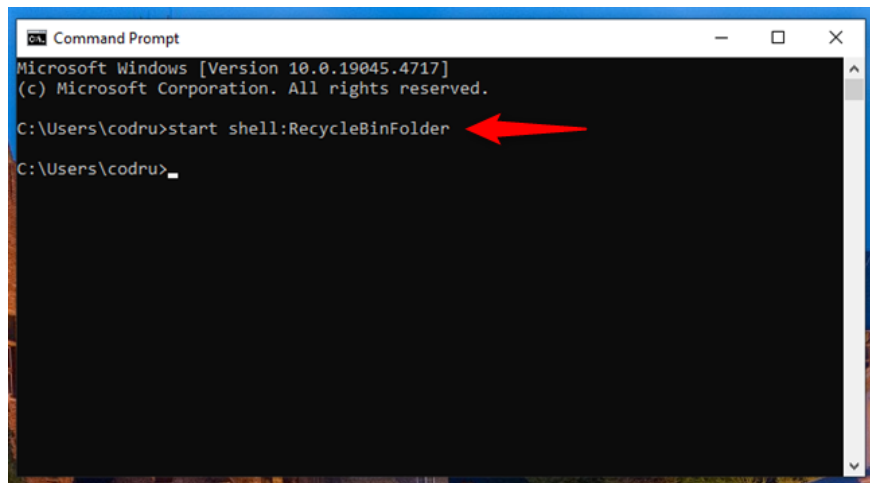
You can also create a shortcut for the Recycle Bin and pin it to the Taskbar in both Windows 10 and Windows 11. This process is a bit more complex and will be explained in detail in [How to pin applications to the Taskbar for faster access](#) .



11. How to open the Recycle Bin using CMD or PowerShell

You can also launch PowerShell or Command Prompt , or even launch Windows Terminal if you prefer. In any of these command-line applications, type:

```
start shell:RecycleBinFolder
```



Press **Enter** on your keyboard and the Recycle Bin will open in File Explorer.

The Windows Recycle Bin is a handy feature that makes file recovery easy. If the Recycle Bin icon isn't on your desktop, you can still open it using the methods in this article. But if you still want to open the Recycle Bin from your desktop, there are ways to restore it.

You finished reading the article "**11 ways to open the Recycle Bin on Windows**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.