

# How to Set Default Programs in Windows 8

In Windows 8, there are three ways to set the default program used to open a specific file type. First, you can make a specific program a default program. Second, you can change the default program for a specific file type. Third, you can...

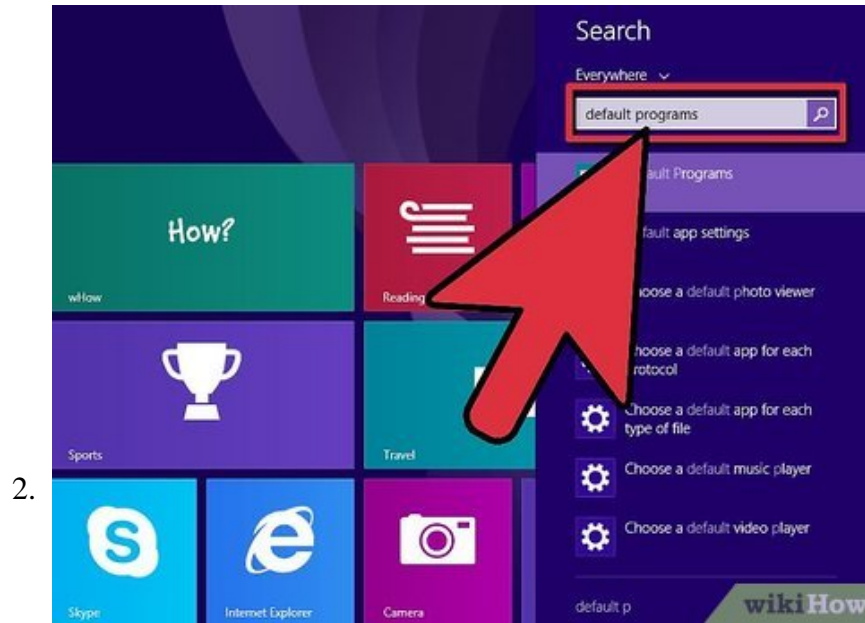
Method 1 of 4:

## Choosing a Default Program in the Control Panel

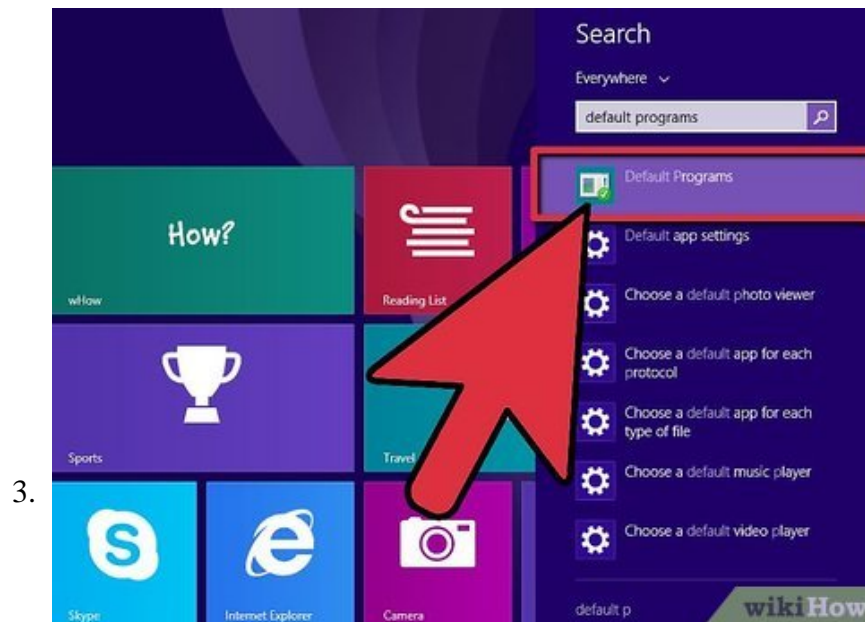


**Open the Start screen.** Press the  key on your keyboard to open the Start screen.<sup>[1]</sup>

1. If you're using a touch screen, swipe in from the right edge of the screen to open the Charms menu, and then touch Start.

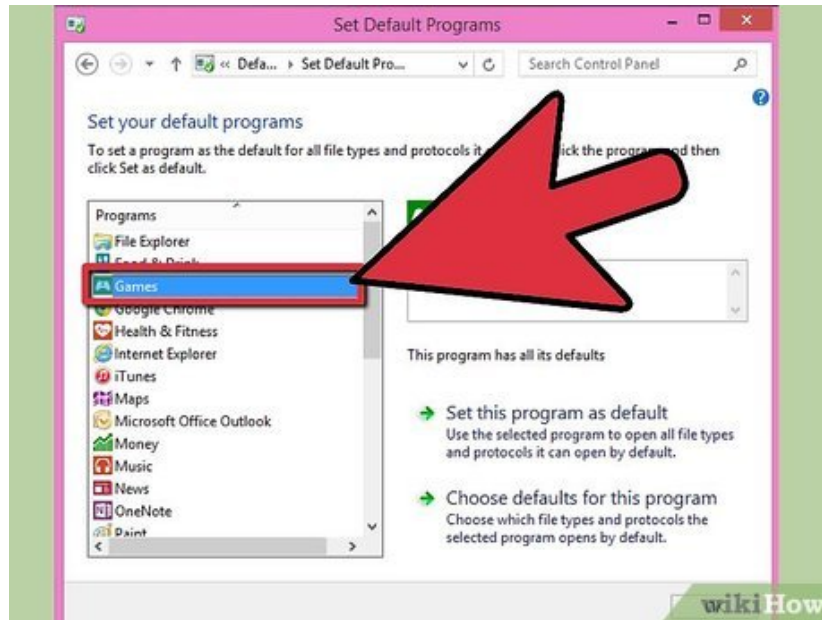


**Find the Default Programs utility.** On the Start screen, in the Search field, type `default program`, and then press `Enter`.



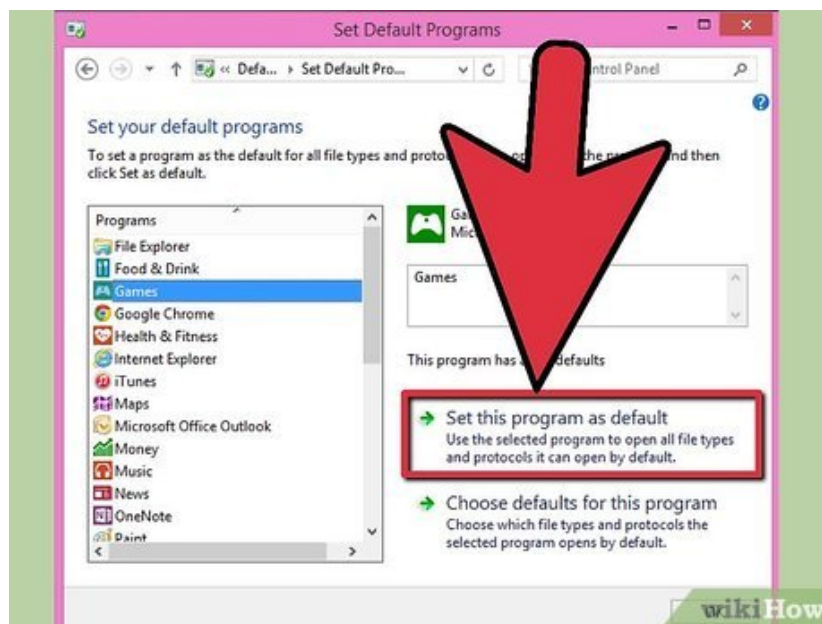
**In the search results, touch `Default Programs` to open it.**

4.



**Find a program you'd like to use as a default.** In the Set Default Programs window, in the Programs sidebar, find a program you'd like to set as a default, and then click or touch the program to select it.

5.



Click or touch **Set this program as default**. This makes the selected program the default program for all of the file types the program can open.<sup>[2]</sup><sup>[3]</sup>

1. Click here for steps on choosing specific file types for a default program.

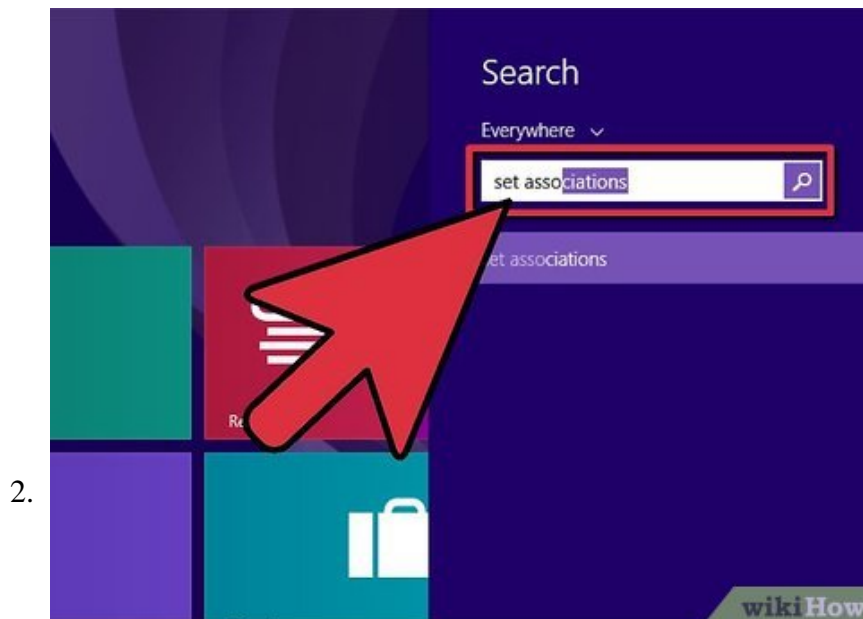
Method 2 of 4:

## Setting a Default Program by File Type



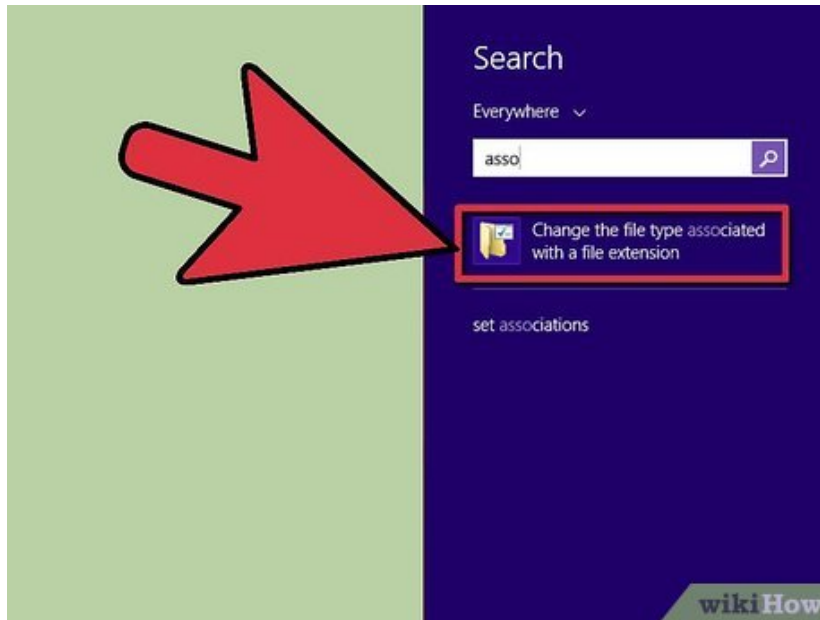
**Open the Start screen.** Press the `Windows` key on your keyboard to open the Start screen.

1. If you're using a touch screen, swipe in from the right edge of the screen to open the Charms menu, and then touch Start.



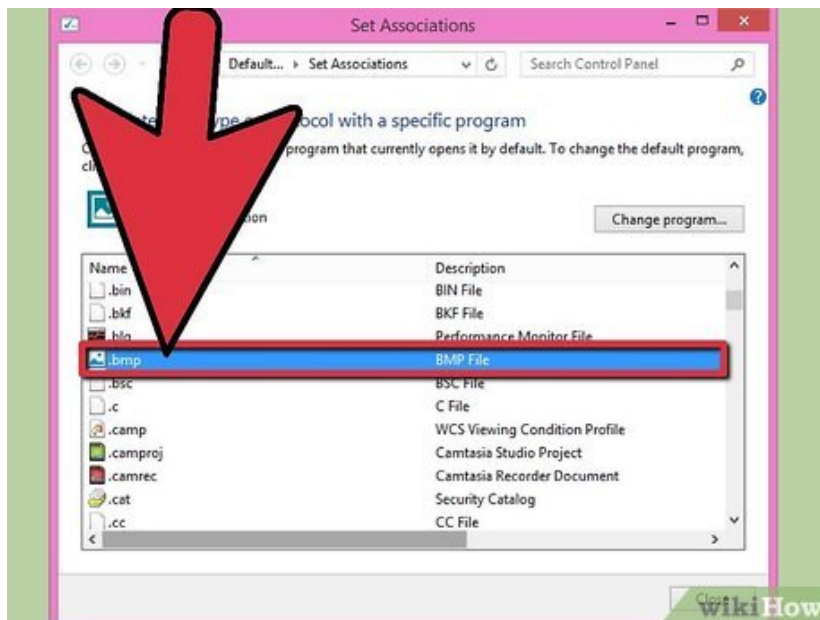
**Find the Set Associations utility.** On the Start screen, in the Search field, type `file associations`, and then press `Enter`.

3.



In the search results, touch **Make a file type always open in a specific program**.

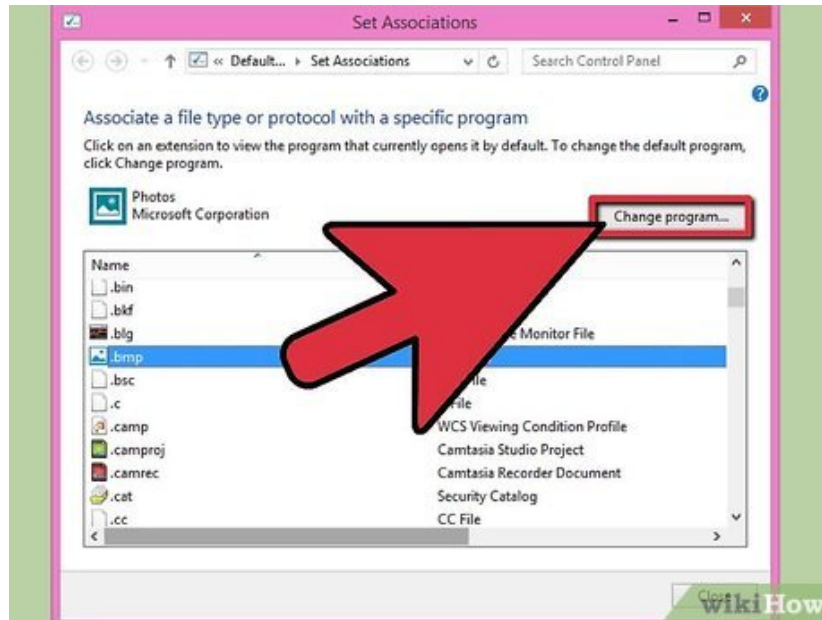
4.



**Find a file type.** In the Set Associations window, find the file extension for the file type you'd like to change the default program. Click or touch to select it.

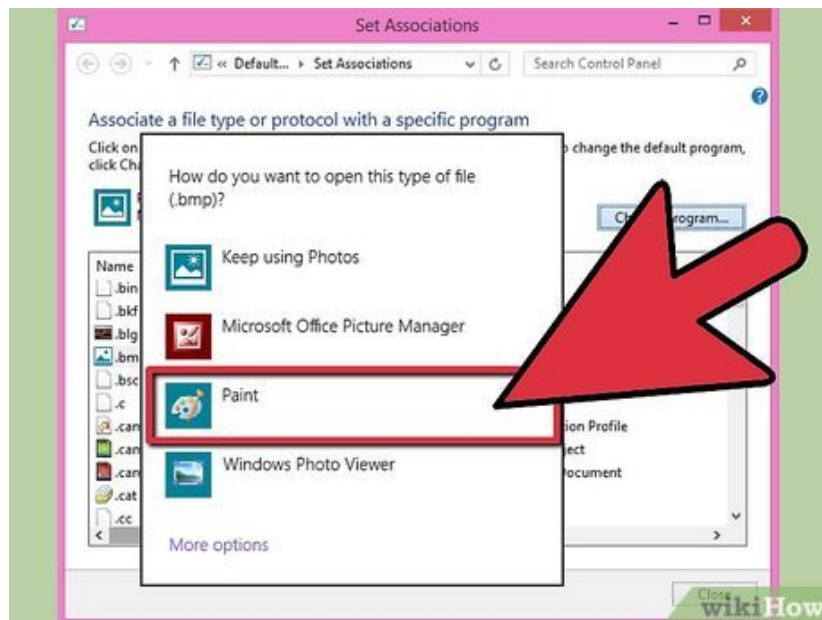
1. In the Current Default column, you can see what program is currently set as the default program for that file type.

5.



Click **Change program**.

6.



**Choose a new default program.** If you don't see the program you'd like to use, click More options to see more programs. When you're done, click **OK**.

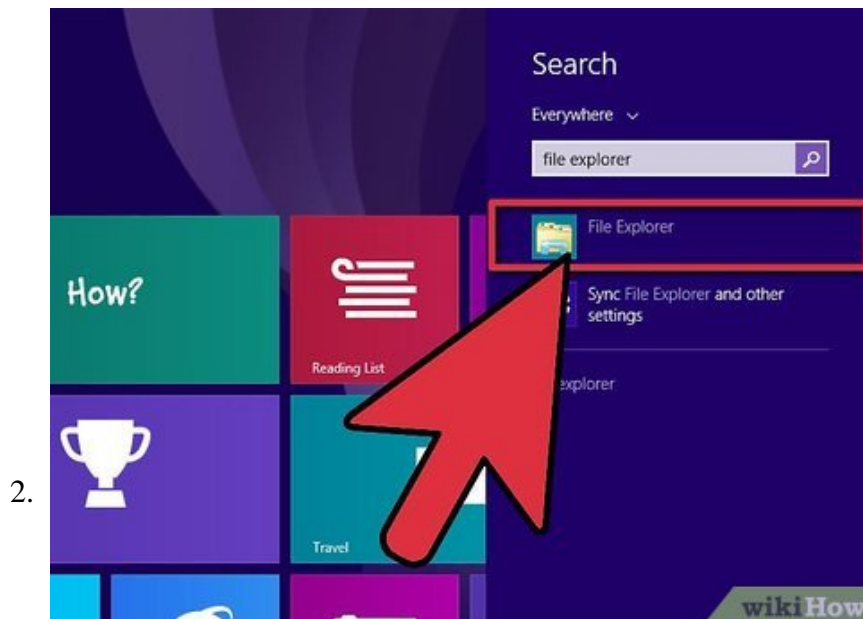
Method 3 of 4:

### Setting a Default Program in the File Context Menu



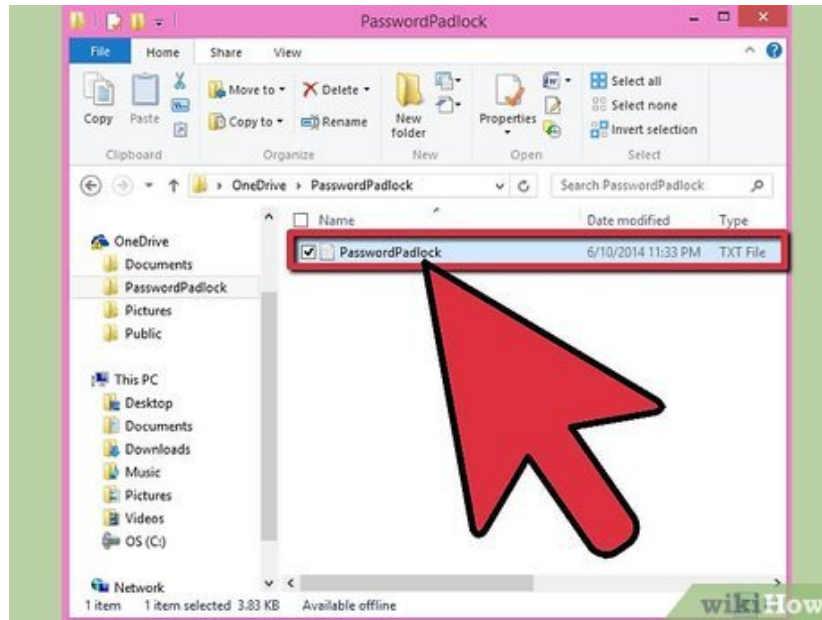
**Open the Start screen.** Press the **Windows** key on your keyboard to open the Start screen.

1. If you're using a touch screen, swipe in from the right edge of the screen to open the Charms menu, and then touch Start.



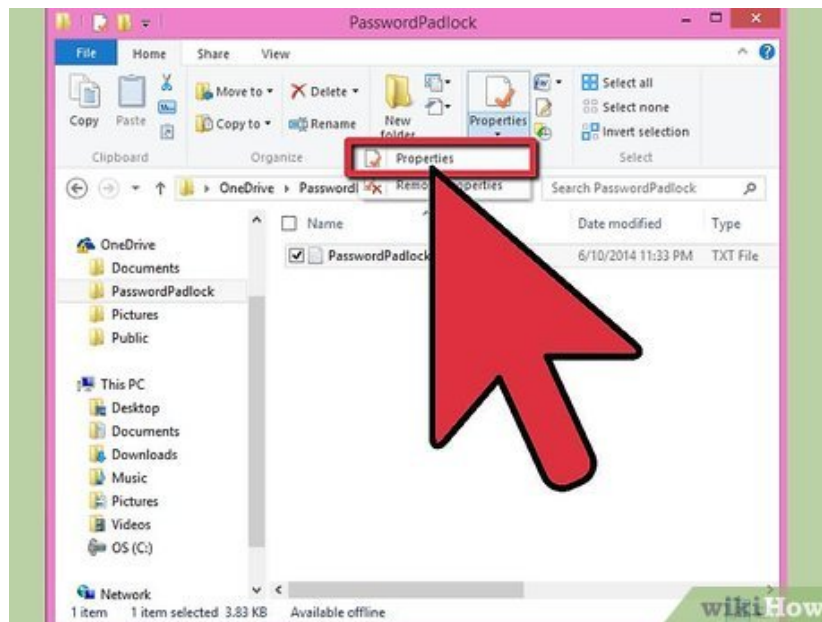
**Open File Explorer.** On the Start screen, in the Search field, type `file explorer`, and then press **Enter**. Click or touch **File Explorer** to open it.

3.



In File Explorer, find a file or file type that you'd like to change the default program.

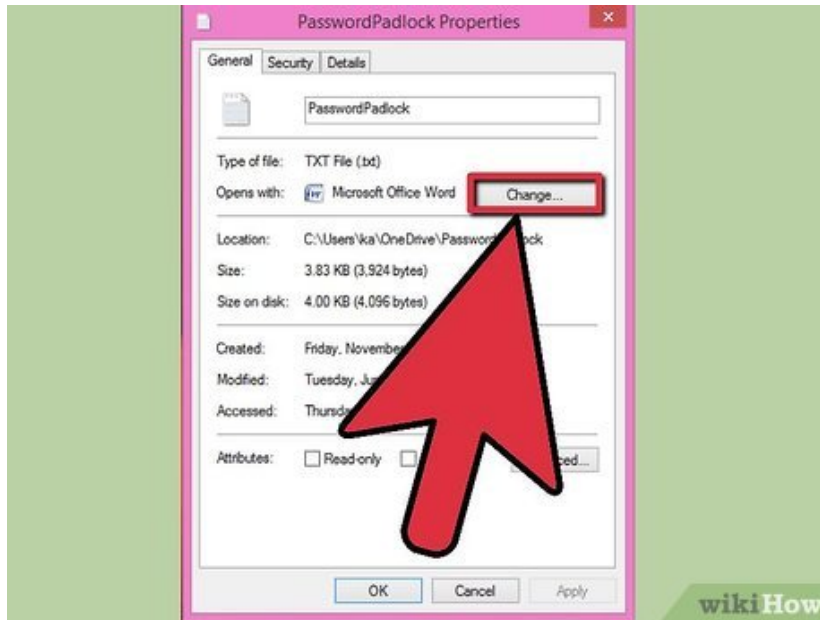
4.



Right-click the file icon, and then click **Properties**.

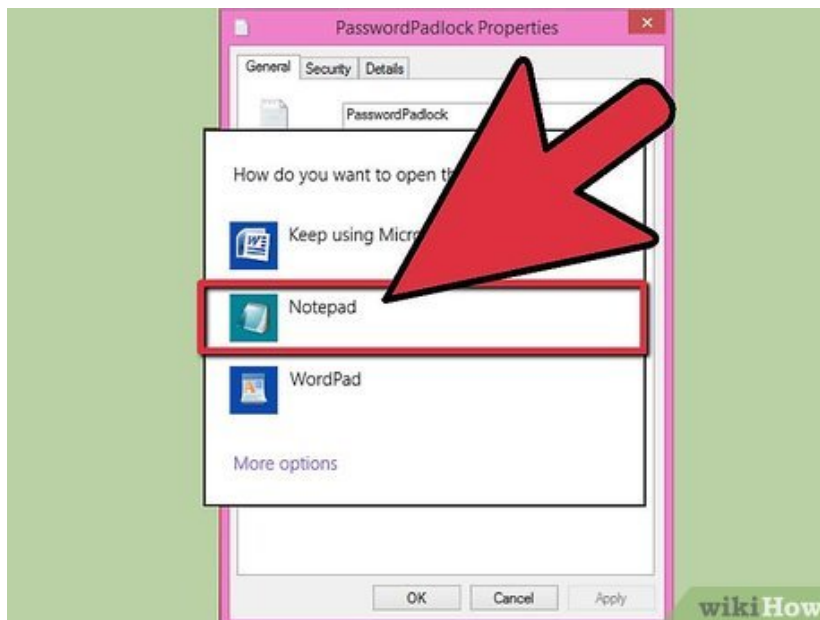
1. If you're using a touch screen, press and hold the file icon until the context menu opens.

5.



Click or touch **Open with** , and then click or touch **Choose default program** .

6.



**Choose a new default program.** If you don't see the program you'd like to use, click More options to see more programs. When you're done, click **OK** .

1. If you'd like to change the default for this specific file, but not other files of this type, uncheck the **Use this app for all** check box.

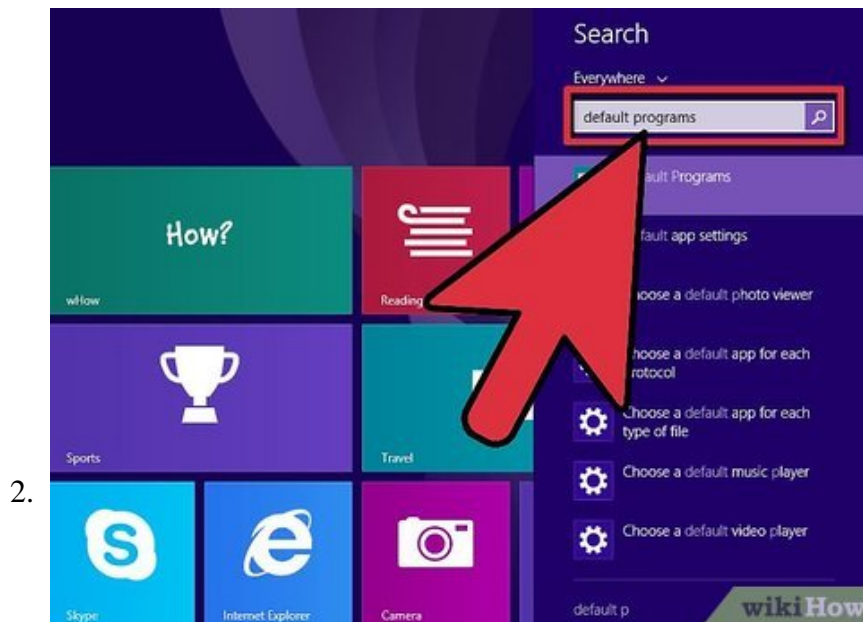
Method 4 of 4:

## Choosing Specific File Types for Default Programs

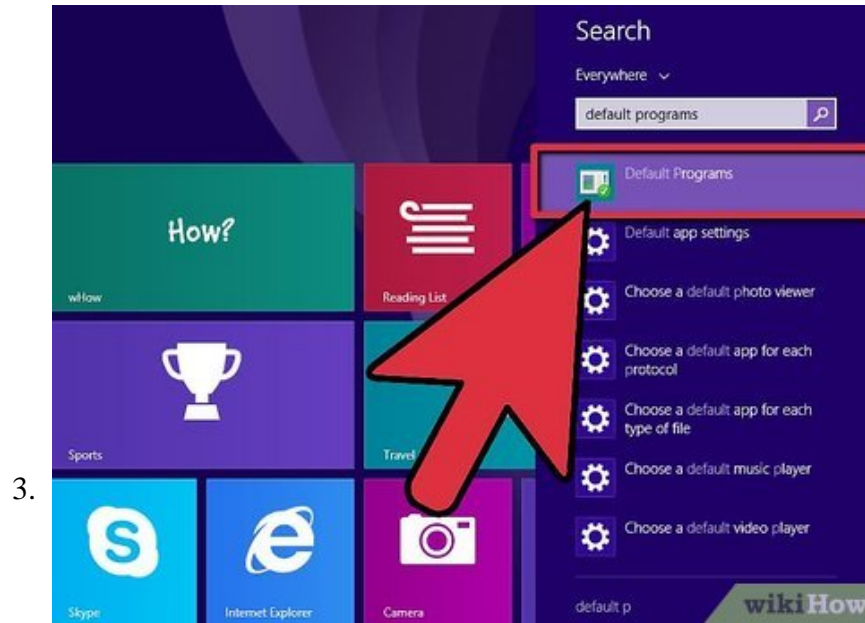


**Open the Start screen.** Press the `Windows` key on your keyboard to open the Start screen.

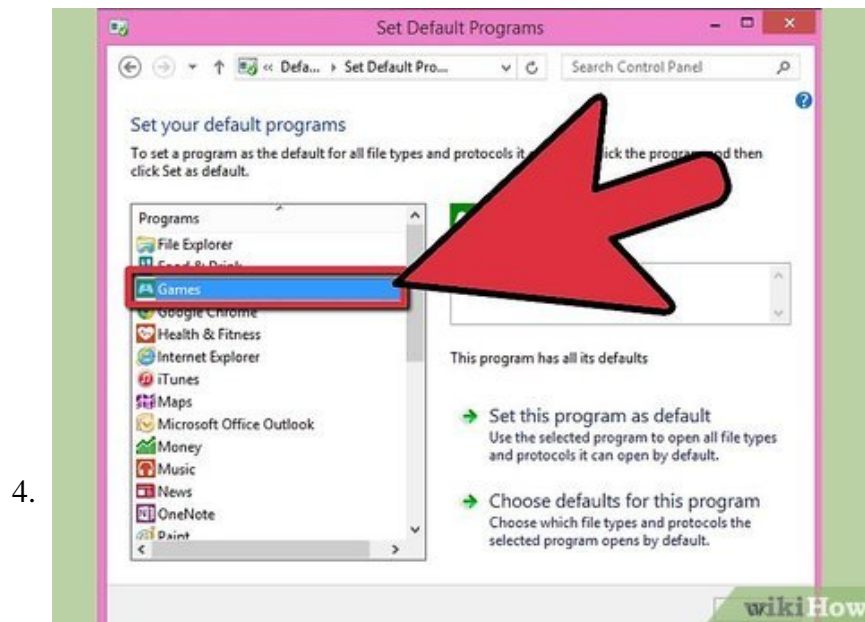
1. If you're using a touch screen, swipe in from the right edge of the screen to open the Charms menu, and then touch Start.



**Find the Default Programs utility.** On the Start screen, in the Search field, type `default program`, and then press `Enter`.

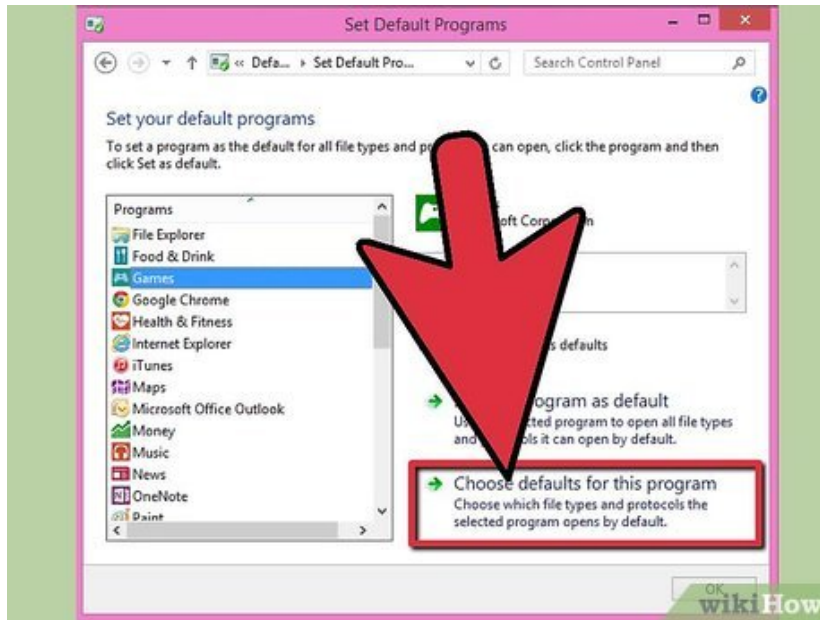


In the search results, touch **Default Programs** to open it.



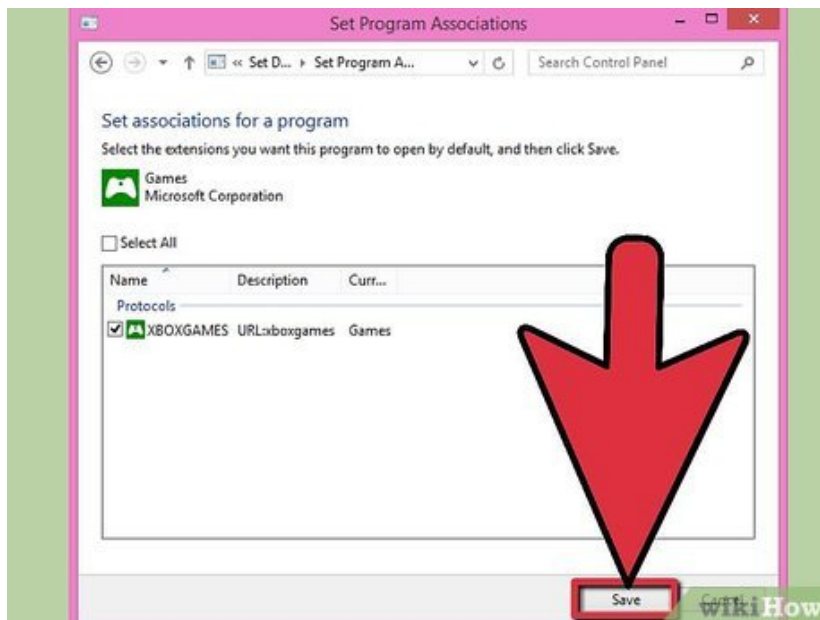
**Find a program you'd like to use as a default.** In the Set Default Programs window, in the Programs sidebar, find a program you'd like to set as a default, and then click or touch the program to select it.

5.



Click or touch **Choose defaults for this program**.

6.



**Choose specific file types for the program.** In the Set Program Associations window, find the file types you'd like to open with this program, and check the boxes for those file types. Click or touch Save.

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