

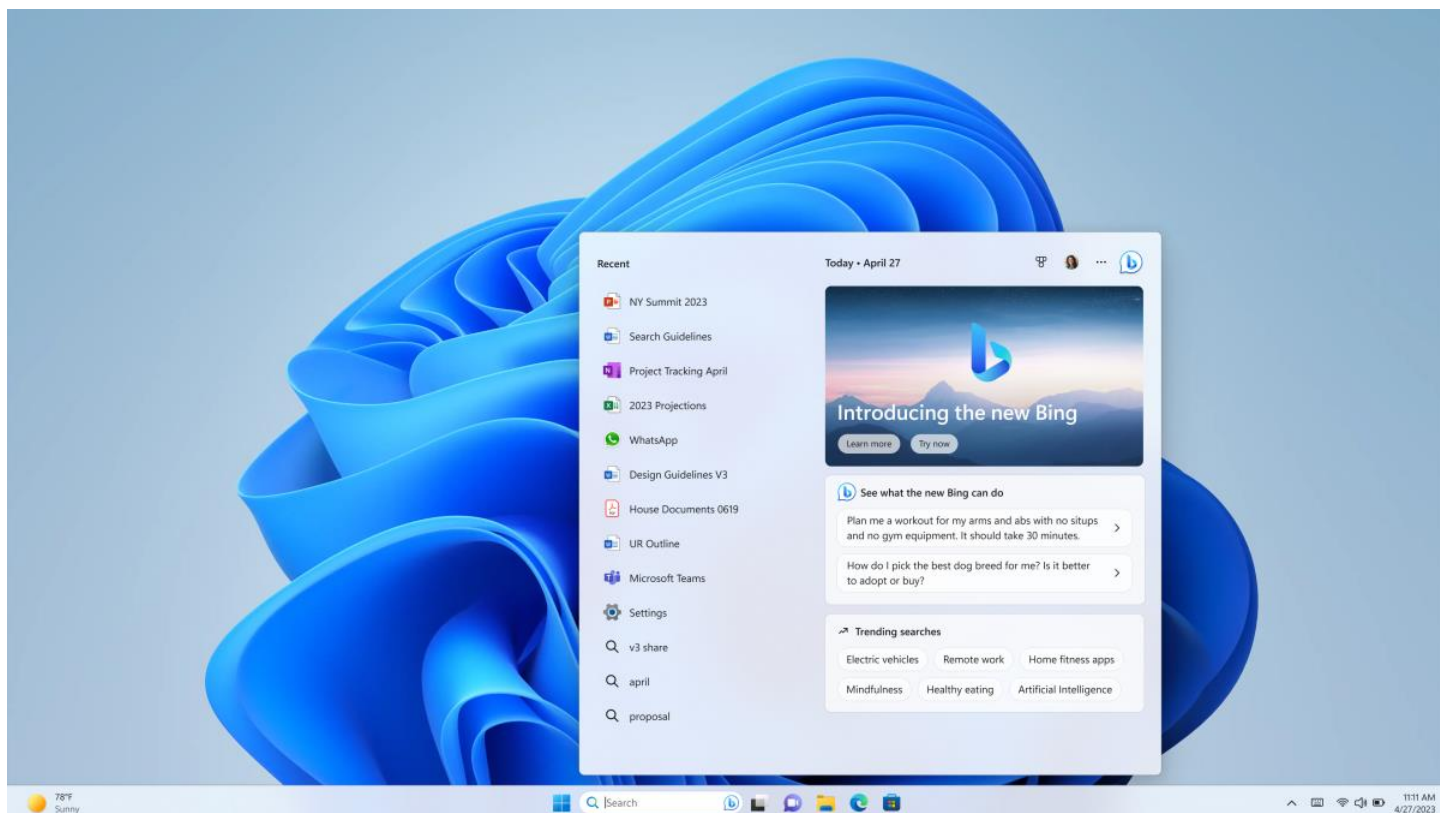
5 just-released Windows 11 features you need to try pronto

By Brad Chacos, Executive editor, PCWorld MAR 1, 2023 8

Windows 11 may have switched to once-yearly major updates, but that doesn't mean new features can't show up more often. Case in point: This week, Microsoft suddenly and surprisingly dropped a massive update for Windows 11 that's absolutely brimming with fresh goodies to play with.

My colleague Mark Hachman covered [everything new in the February 2023 Windows 11 update](#). There's a lot of stuff that simply isn't relevant to me, such as better AI tools on Qualcomm-powered PCs, tweaks to the native Teams chat experience, Facebook widgets, and so on. But there are several nifty new features with a broader appeal that I can't wait to try out—and you probably will too. Let's dig in.

AI-powered Bing Chat search box

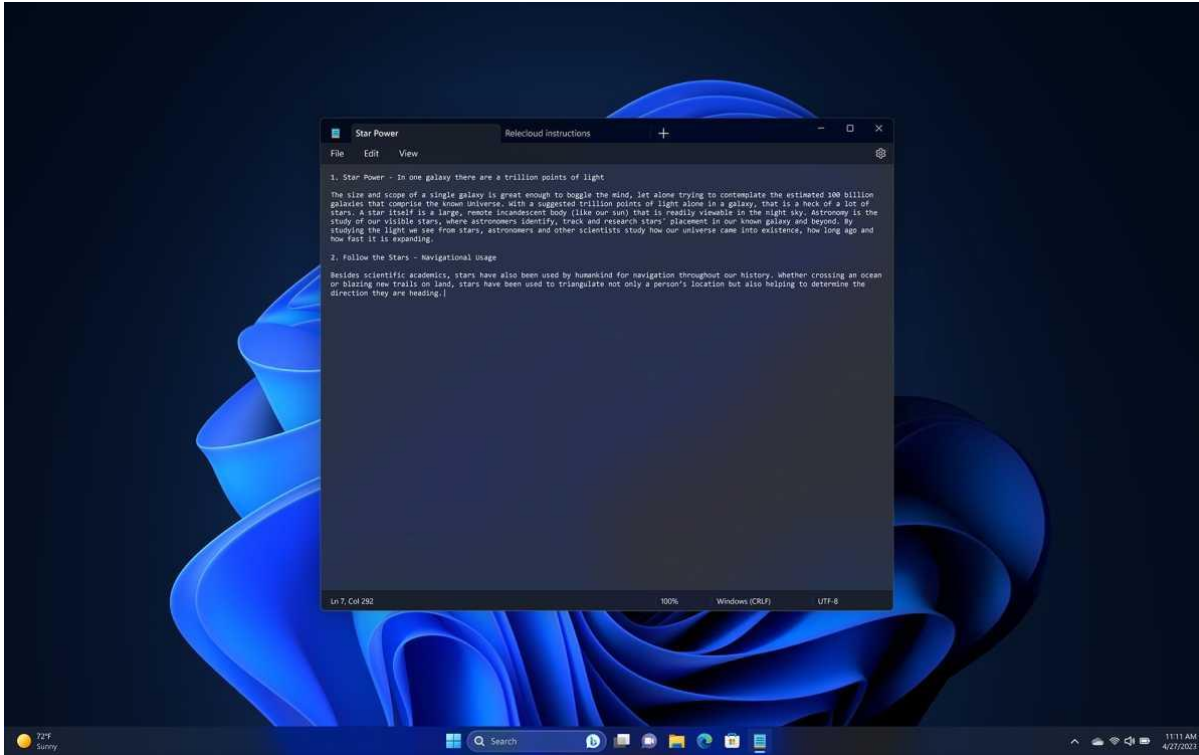


Microsoft

Microsoft certainly isn't wasting its time bringing the [new AI-powered Bing Chat](#) to the masses. The company revealed the ChatGPT-powered tool mere weeks ago, rolled it out to mobile Bing and Edge users in short order, and now it's coming right to the Windows 11 taskbar, integrated into the newly returned search box. You'll need to be enrolled in the Bing AI preview to use the chat, though. Here's [how to get started with Bing Chat in Windows 11](#).

Honestly, while asking Microsoft's AI to plan vacations and whip up meals from a list of ingredients is cool and all, I'm most excited about the simple revival of the search box. I use it all the time in Windows 10, but Windows 11 dumped it in favor of a search *button* that summons a separate window where you conduct system searches, adding significantly more clicks and headaches to the process. Even if you don't care about Bing Chat, the return of the search box is a major win for everyday Windows 11 users.

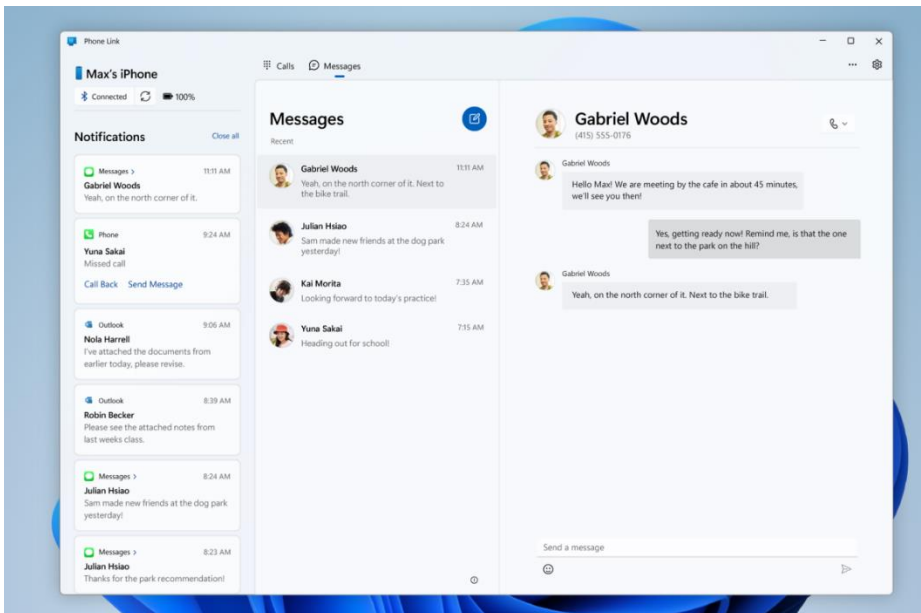
Notepad tabs



Microsoft

Tab all the things! I'm a massive fan of [Stardock's \\$5 Groupy software](#) to turn every window into a tab, but it won't be needed for much longer if Microsoft keeps this up. At the end of 2023, [Windows 11 finally added File Explorer tabs](#) after years of begging by enthusiasts, and the February 2023 update brings tabs to the venerable Notepad app. Oh, and in case you missed it, Notepad was also updated last year to support Windows 11's Dark Mode. *Chef's kiss.*

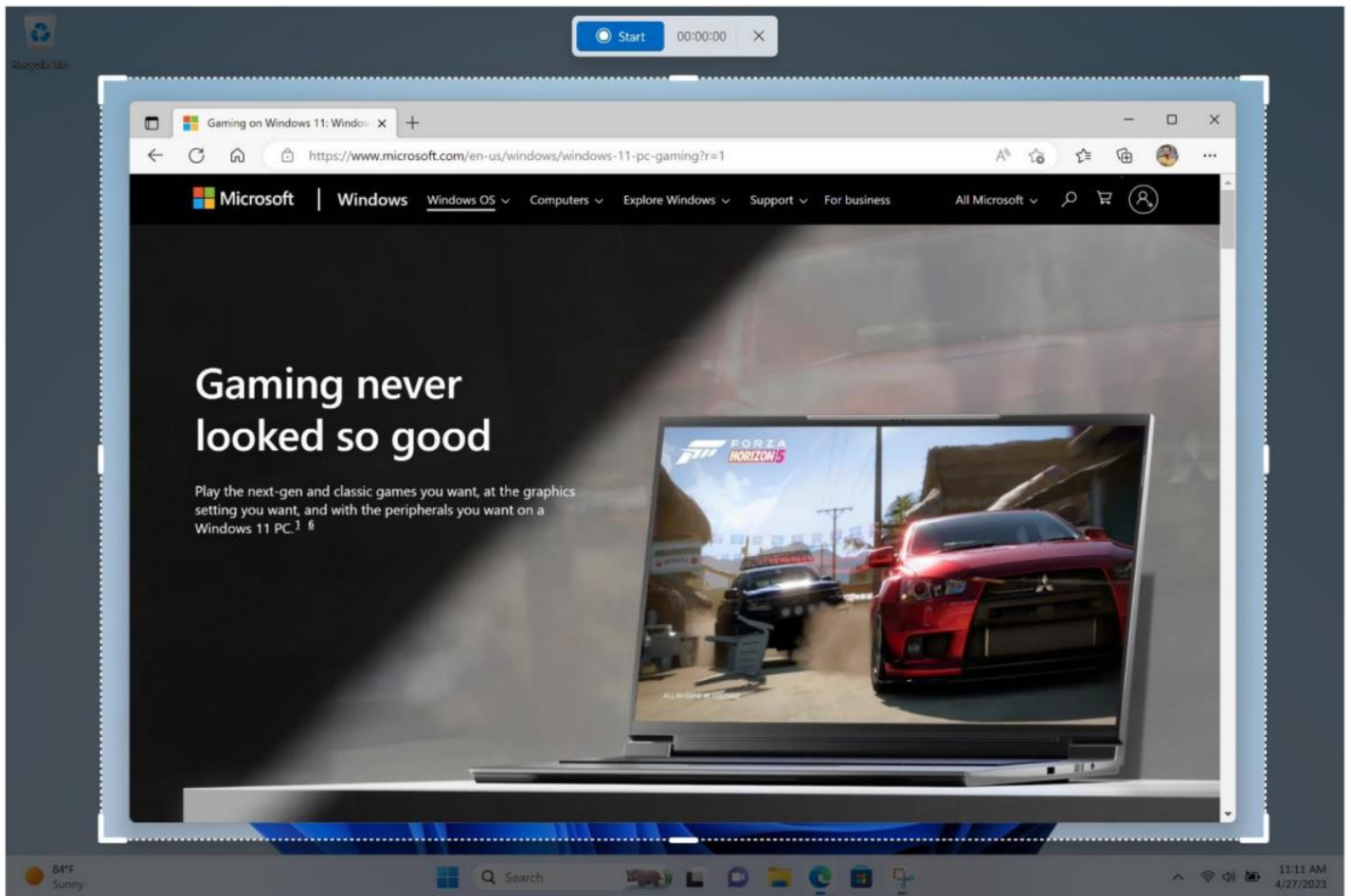
iPhone support in Phone Link



Microsoft

Android users have been able to control their phones via the Windows Phone Link app for years now, but Apple's tighter rules have prevented iPhone support. No longer. You'll need to be a Windows Insider to use it right now, but Windows 11's February Update finally adds the ability to manage iPhones from your PC. You'll be able to send and receive calls, texts, and more right on your desktop, but Apple's rules mean there are several catches involved in [Windows 11's new iPhone support](#). Because of that, you may be better off [using Intel's Unison app to get iMessage on Windows](#) instead. It ostensibly only supports Intel-based PCs though, so AMD Ryzen users (like myself) still have a lot to look forward to in Windows 11's new native iPhone capabilities.

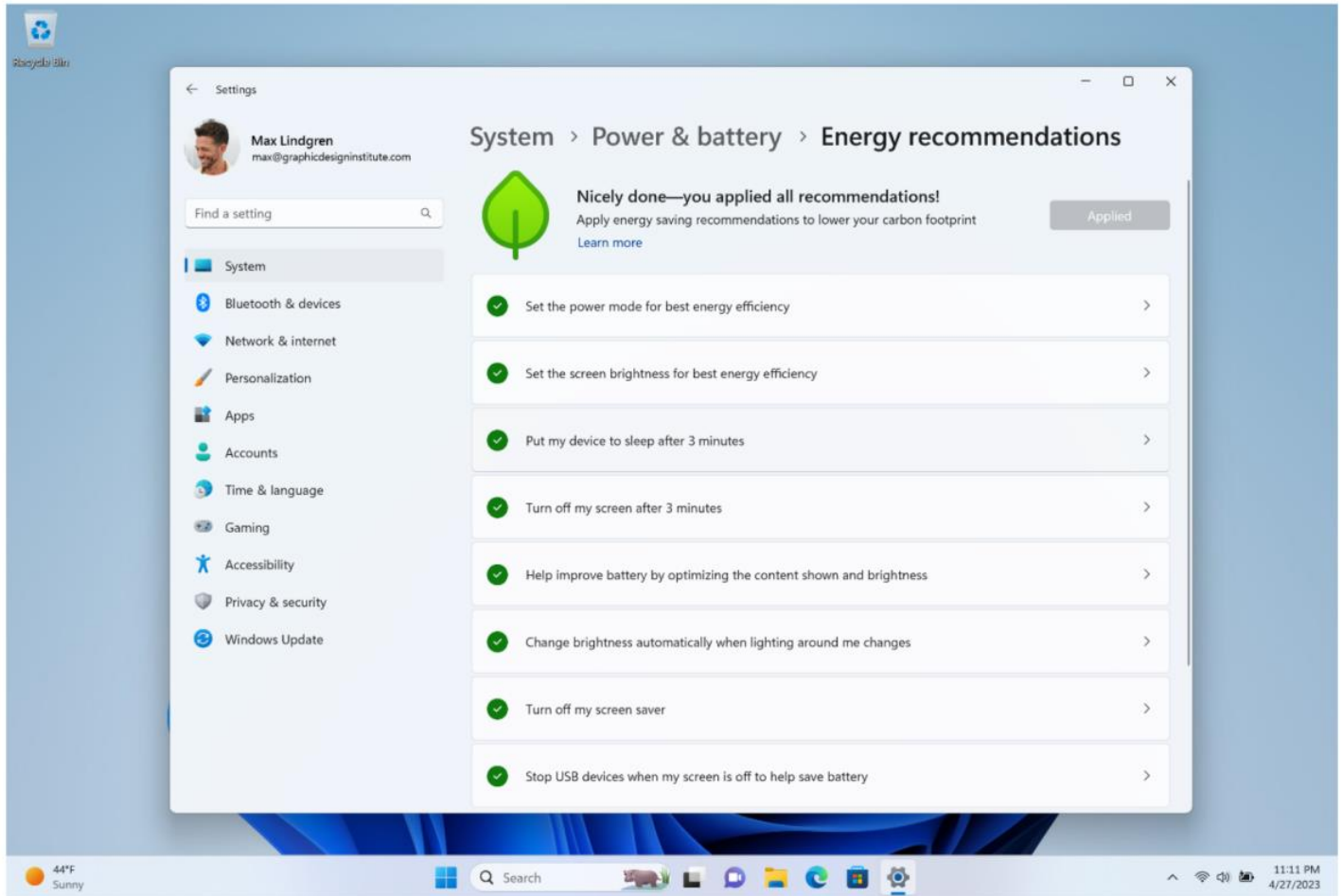
Snipping Tool screen recording



Microsoft

Windows has offered a rocking Snipping Tool for a *long* time now, but it could only be used to quickly grab screenshots. With the Windows 11 February 2023 Update, the Snipping Tool can now record videos as well. *Finally!* All you have to do is click the new record button in Snipping Tool to start capturing a video, then click it again to stop. Boom! You now have a quick clip to share with friends, helpfully saved to a default folder. This could be insanely handy while troubleshooting or explaining a process to other people.

Energy recommendations



Microsoft

Electric bills are skyrocketing, yo. Mine has almost doubled in the past year, and Europeans have it even worse. Enter the new energy recommendations in Windows 11, designed to help ease the burden on both the environment *and* your wallet.

You'll find a list of settings suggestions in Settings > *Power & battery* > *Energy recommendations*, where you can apply them piecemeal or whole-hog at the press of a single button. Even if you decide not to take every action Microsoft recommends—I *loathe* auto-adjusting brightness—every little bit helps.

But wait, there's more!

That's it for this look into five new Windows 11 features power users won't want to miss. Again, check out Mark Hachman's coverage of the February 2023 Windows 11 Update to get a glimpse at the myriad other goodies stuffed into this release, or wander over to our look at [10 obscure Windows features that will blow your mind](#) if you want to wade even deeper into other handy features already lurking deep within the operating system.