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How to Use Nearby Sharing in Windows 10

Nearby Sharing in the Windows 10 April 2018 update sends files with minimum hassle. No emailing, message attachments, or plugging and unplugging USB drives.



By [Michael Muchmore](#) May 4, 2018

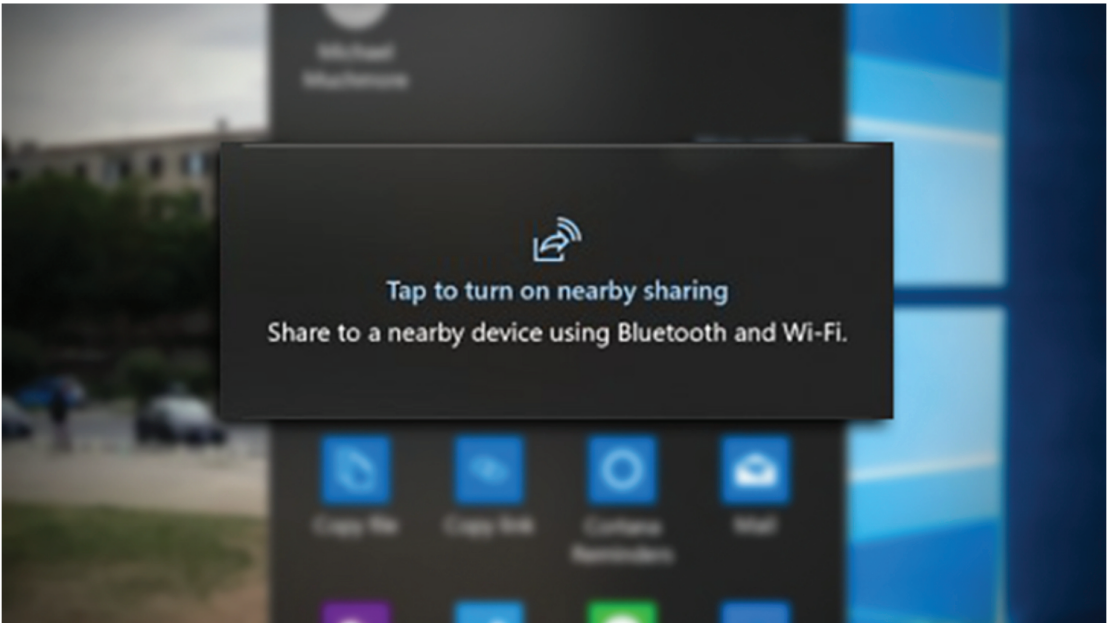


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I've long been a fan of Apple's AirDrop feature, which lets you send a photo, file, or website address to anyone nearby, even if you're not connected to the internet. Now Windows users can enjoy the same convenience, with the [April 2018 update's](#) Nearby sharing capability.

The feature uses Bluetooth and peer-to-peer Wi-Fi, meaning you don't even need to be connected to a Wi-Fi router, let alone to the internet, to transfer files. As you'll see below, Nearby sharing isn't a separate feature but an option on the share panel, just like Apple.

Setup is easy, so if you have some files you want to share to a nearby PC, do yourself a favor and give Nearby sharing a try. Here's how.

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1. Start the Process

The simplest way to get started with Nearby sharing is to tap on the Share icon in a Universal Windows Platform (UWP) app like Microsoft Photos or the Edge browser. If you've updated to the Windows 10 April 2018 Update and are logged into a Microsoft account, you'll see a "Tap to turn on nearby sharing" option. Tap it and meet me at the next slide.

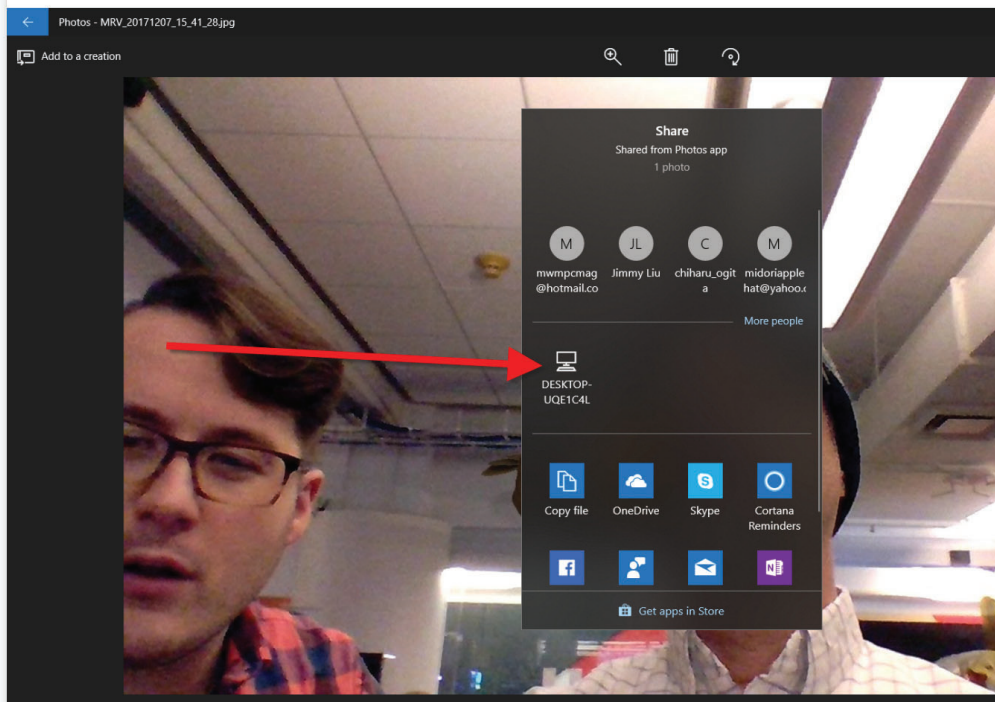
2. Looking for Nearby Devices

After you've enabled the feature, its spot in the share dialog will say "Looking for nearby devices," along with "Make sure the other device has nearby sharing turned on in Action Center."

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3. Nearby Desktop Found

3. Nearby Desktop Found

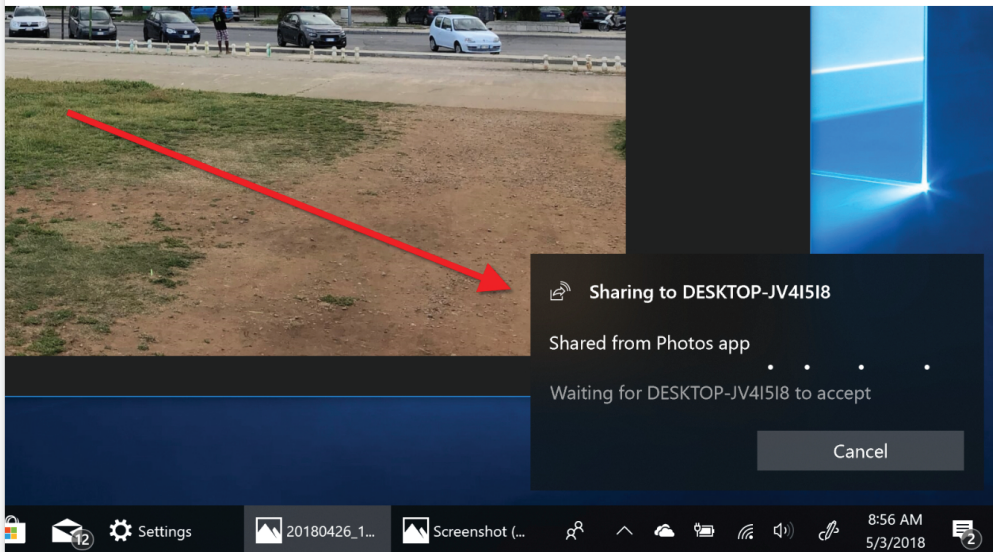


Here you can see that the "Looking for..." message has been replaced with the device name of a nearby PC. When another device with nearby sharing enabled is found, you'll see its computer name in the share dialog. This could be a weird name like "LAPTOP-DG435GF" generated by your computer manufacturer.

You can find your PC's name in Settings > System > About in the Device name section. That Settings page includes a button at the bottom for renaming the PC to something that better identifies the machine, such as Tom-Den-Desktop. (Note that you can't have

spaces in the name.)

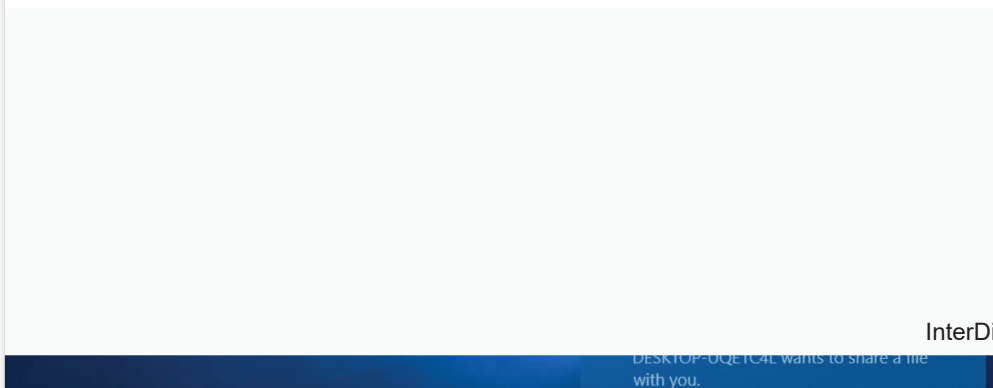
4. Sending Nearby

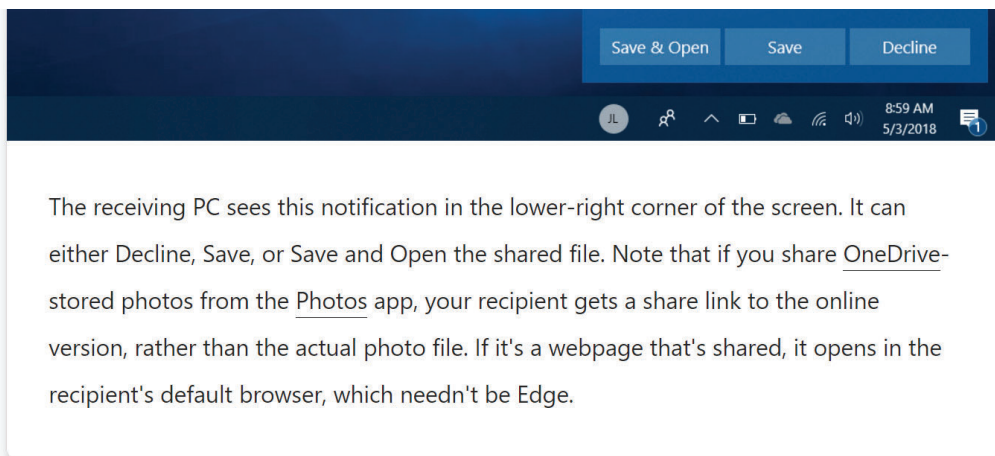


When you send something, you'll see this notification in the lower-right corner of the screen. Send by accident? You can cancel the operation if you do so before the recipient accepts the share.

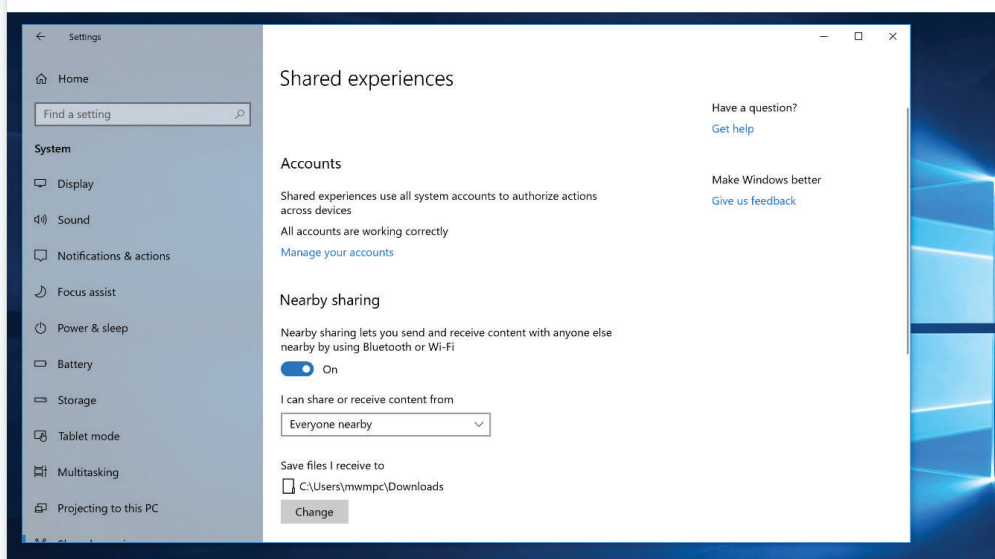
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5. Receiving PC





6. Shared Settings



For the true Nearby Sharing mavens out there, you can tinker with settings for the feature, in the Settings > System > Shared experiences page. Here, you can decide whether you want to receive items only from your own devices or from anyone nearby. For me, the feature only worked best when I allowed everyone to share; not really a problem since you have to approve what's sent. Finally, you can choose which folder files land in when you accept them.

Further Reading

- [How to View Files in Windows 10 Without Opening Them](#)
- [How to Search in Windows 10](#)
- [How to Make Windows 10 Feel More Like Windows 7](#)
- [How to Take Screenshots in Windows 10](#)
- [More in Windows 10](#)

- [Microsoft Windows 10](#)
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About Michael Muchmore



Michael Muchmore is PC Magazine's lead analyst for software and web applications. A native New Yorker, he has at various times headed up PC Magazine's coverage of Web development, enterprise software, and display technologies. Michael cowrote one of the first overviews of web services for a general audience. Before that he worked on PC Magazine's Solutions section, which covered programming techniques as well as tips on using popular office software. He previously covered services and software for ExtremeTech.com.

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