

# How to turn off a computer



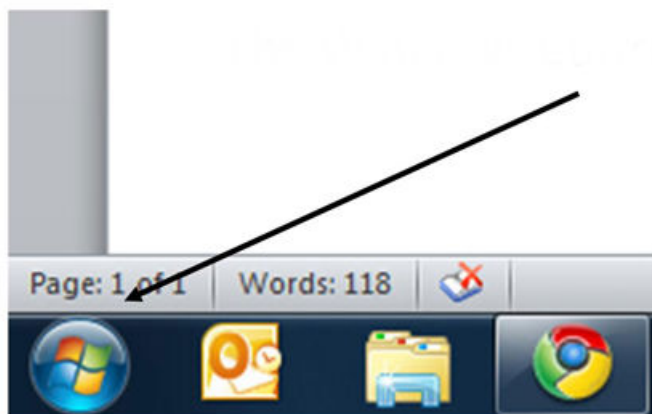
Unlike most electrical appliances, a computer shouldn't be turned off by pressing the same button that you pressed to turn it 'on'. If you do that, you can actually lose data or damage some of the processes in the machine. Think of turning off the computer properly as letting it fall asleep – just pushing the 'on' button or unplugging the computer would be like knocking it out with a punch!

## Follow these step-by-step instructions to help you turn off your computer

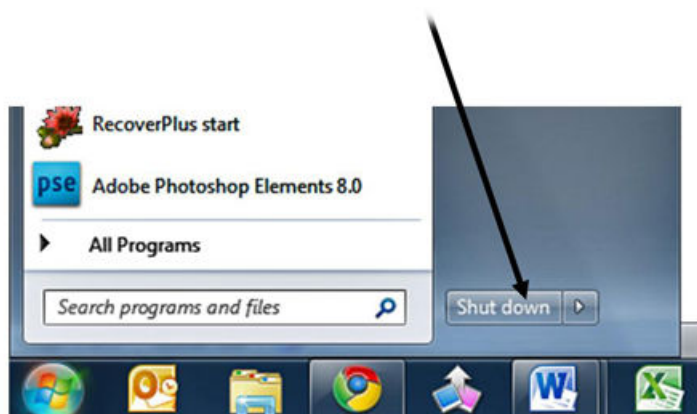
These instructions are for Windows 7, but earlier versions are very similar.

For Windows 8, see our guide ['How to shut down Windows 8'](#).

**Step 1:** Click the 'Windows' button at the bottom left-hand corner of your screen.



**Step 2:** Click **Shut down**.



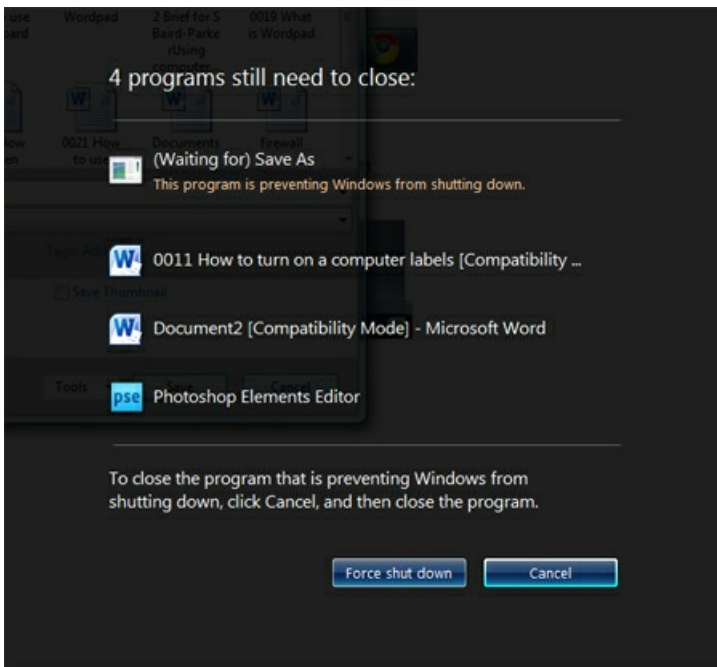
**Step 3:** If you've left any programs running or documents open, you'll get a message similar to this:

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OK, I agree

**No, thanks**



You have two options now:

- Click **Cancel** and then close everything that had been listed in the message, saving when necessary. Then try closing again.

or

- Click **Force shut down**. The computer will automatically close all your documents, programs and so on without saving anything. As a result, you may lose some data.

**Done!**

*Stephen Baird-Parker is a qualified ICT teacher.*

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