

# How to Unlock Your Windows 8 Screen

By [Andy Rathbone](#) from [Windows 8 For Dummies](#)

Starting Windows 8 is as easy as turning on your computer - Windows 8 leaps onto the screen automatically with a flourish. But before you can begin working, Windows 8 stops you cold: It displays a locked screen with no entrance key dangling nearby.

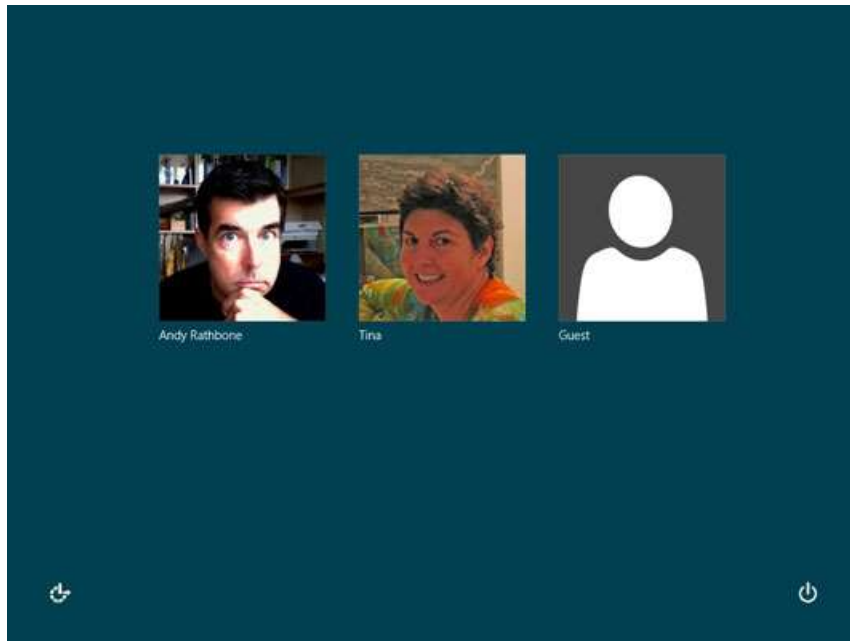


Previous versions of Windows let you sign in as soon as you turned on your computer. Windows 8, by contrast, makes you unlock a screen before moving to the sign in page, where you type in your name and password.

How do you unlock the lock screen? The answer depends on whether you're using a mouse, keyboard, or touchscreen:

- **Mouse:** On a desktop PC or laptop, click any mouse button.
- **Keyboard:** Press any key, and the lock screen slides away. Easy!
- **Touch:** Touch the screen with your finger and then slide your finger *up* the glass. A quick flick of the finger will do.

When you're in the door, Windows wants you to *sign in* by clicking your name and typing in a password.



If you don't see an account listed for you on the Sign In screen, you have several options:

- **If you see your name and e-mail address listed, type your password.** Windows 8 lets you in and displays your Start screen, just as you last left it.
- **If you don't see your name, but you have an account on the computer, click the left-pointing arrow shown in the margin.** Windows 8 displays a list of *all* the account holders. You may see the computer owner's name, as well as an account for Administrator and one for Guest.
- **If you just bought the computer, use the account named Administrator.** Designed to give the owner full power over the computer, the Administrator account user can set up new accounts for other people, install programs, start an Internet connection, and access *all* the files on the computer - even those belonging to other people. Windows 8 needs at least one person to act as administrator.
- **Use the Guest account.** Designed for household visitors, this account lets guests, such as the babysitter or visiting relatives, use the computer temporarily.
- **No Guest account?** Then find out who owns the computer and beg that person to set up an account for you or to turn on the Guest account.

Don't *want* to sign in at the Sign In screen? The screen's two bottom-corner buttons offer these other options:

- **The little wheelchair-shaped button in the screen's bottom-left corner** customizes Windows 8 for people with physical challenges in hearing, sight, or manual dexterity. If you choose this button by mistake, click or touch on a different part of the screen to avoid changing any settings.
- **The little button in the screen's bottom-right corner** lets you shut down or restart your PC. (If you've accidentally clicked it and shut down your PC, don't panic. Press your PC's power button, and your PC will return to this screen.)

Even while locked your computer's screen displays current information in its bottom-left corner. Depending on how it's configured, you can see the time and date; your wireless Internet signal strength (the more bars, the better); battery strength (the more colorful the icon, the better); your next scheduled appointment; a count of unread e-mail; and other items.