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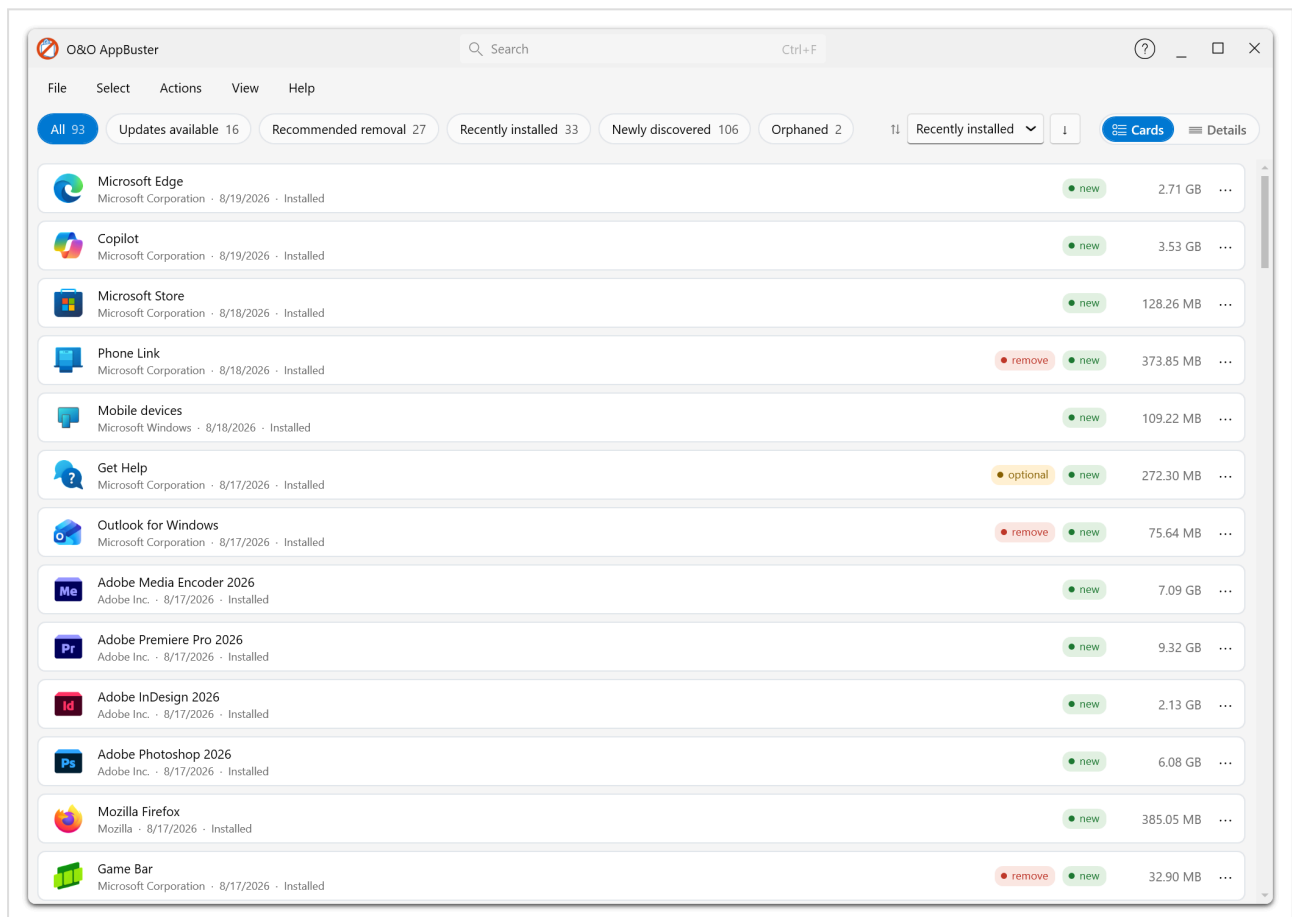
O&O AppBuster Documentation

Welcome to the user guide for **O&O AppBuster**, the free app manager for Windows 10 and Windows 11 from O&O Software GmbH.

What is O&O AppBuster?

Windows includes many apps that you may never use. Installers, updates, and incomplete uninstallations can also leave entries and files behind. O&O AppBuster brings Windows apps, desktop programs, system components, and software remnants together in one clear list, so you can decide what stays on your PC.

Unlike the Windows *Apps & features* page, O&O AppBuster also finds hidden and incomplete app registrations. It groups the results into useful categories and provides a recommendation for each app.



The main window shows the app list. Use the Smart View buttons above it to display the apps you need.

Key Benefits

- **Everything in one list** — View Windows apps, desktop programs, hidden apps, and remnants together.

- **Clear recommendations** — Use the *keep*, *optional*, and *remove* labels to help you decide.
- **Remove what Windows will not** — Preinstalled apps that have no *Uninstall* button in Windows can be removed here.
- **Reversible** — Removed Windows apps can be reinstalled from O&O AppBuster at any time, and a system restore point can be created before you begin.
- **Cleans up leftovers** — Orphaned registrations and broken installer entries that block reinstallation can be cleared away.
- **Completely free** — O&O AppBuster is freeware. There is no paid edition, no trial period and no feature that is held back.

What You Can Do

Remove and reinstall

O&O AppBuster removes apps for the current user, for every user on the PC, or from the machine as a whole — including the files left on disk. Windows apps that are still available on the computer can be reinstalled later, so a removal is not a one-way street.

 [Removing apps](#) · [Installing apps](#)

Find what is hidden

Smart Views narrow the list down to what you are looking for with a single click: apps recommended for removal, apps installed in the last 30 days, apps that appeared since your last session, available updates, and the leftovers of previous uninstallations.

 [Smart Views](#) · [App categories](#)

Understand before you act

Every app can be inspected before you touch it: publisher, version, install date, last use, size on disk, install location, and who the app is installed for. Recommendations and category labels put that information into context.

 [Recommendations](#) · [The app list](#)

Clean up app remnants

Orphaned entries left behind by earlier uninstallations and defective installer registrations that make an app impossible to remove or reinstall are detected and can be cleaned up — including the registry keys and folders they left behind.

 [Orphaned apps](#) · [Defect apps](#)

Freeware

O&O AppBuster is **freeware**. You may use it on as many PCs as you like and pass it on unchanged. There is no Professional, Premium or Enterprise edition of O&O AppBuster to upgrade to — the program you download is the complete program.

It also needs no installation: download the single executable, run it, and delete it again when you are done.

tip Discover other O&O tools When you close O&O AppBuster, you can explore other O&O products and subscribe to the free O&O newsletter. You can also open this window at any time from **Help** → **Explore more O&O products....** See More O&O products.

How to Use This Documentation

Use the sidebar navigation to explore the program:

- **Getting Started** explains what O&O AppBuster does, what "freeware" means in practice, what your PC needs, and how to get through your first session.
- **Features** describes the working parts of the program: the app list, Smart Views, recommendations, removing and installing apps, updates, system restore points and the settings.
- **App Categories** covers each kind of app O&O AppBuster distinguishes — and what you should know before removing one.
- **More from O&O** explains the product and newsletter window shown when you close the program.
- **FAQ** answers the questions that come up most often.

Feature Overview

This page summarises everything O&O AppBuster can do, so you can see at a glance whether the program covers what you need.

What O&O AppBuster manages

O&O AppBuster does not limit itself to a single kind of software. It enumerates the app registrations of Windows itself and presents them as one list.

Kind of app	Examples	Can be removed
Windows apps (Store / UWP)	Weather, News, Clipchamp, Copilot, Solitaire Collection	Yes
Desktop apps (Win32 / MSI)	Classic programs installed by a setup file	Yes, via their own uninstaller
Hidden apps	Windows apps that are on the PC but not registered for your account	Yes — or install them for your account
System apps	Components Windows needs in order to run	No, shown for information only
Framework apps	Runtimes other apps depend on (e.g. VCLibs, .NET Native)	No, shown for information only
Orphaned apps	Leftovers of software that was already uninstalled	Yes, cleaned up
Defect apps	MSI apps whose installer package is missing, so Windows cannot uninstall them	Yes, cleaned up

Each category is described in detail in the App Categories section.

Core features

Removal

- Remove one app or a whole selection in a single operation.
- Choose the **removal scope**: only your account, every account on the PC, or the entire PC including the app's files on disk.
- Desktop apps are removed by their own uninstaller, so nothing is bypassed.

- Files that are locked by a running program can be released, scheduled for removal on the next restart, or skipped.
- Apps that could not be removed are listed separately and can be retried.
- A removal report can be saved to a file.

➔ Removing apps

Installation

Windows apps that are available on the computer but not registered for your account can be installed for your account from within O&O AppBuster. This is also how you get an app back that you removed earlier.

➔ Installing apps

Recommendations

Every app is assigned one of three recommendations:

Recommendation	Meaning
keep	Leave this app alone. This is the default for anything not explicitly classified.
optional	Removing it is safe; whether you want it is a matter of taste.
remove	Typical bloatware — nothing depends on it.

➔ Recommendations

Smart Views

A row of filter chips above the list jumps straight to the apps you care about: *All*, *Updates available*, *Recommended removal*, *Recently installed*, *Newly discovered*, *Hidden*, *Orphaned*, *Defect*, *System* and *Framework*. Chips whose category is empty are hidden automatically.

➔ Smart Views

Two views of the same list

- **Cards** — a roomy layout with icon, name, subline and the most important facts per app.
- **Details** — the classic sortable table with configurable columns.

Your choice is remembered between sessions.

➔ The app list

Updates via winget

If the Windows Package Manager (`winget`) is available on your PC, O&O AppBuster checks in the background whether newer versions of your desktop apps exist and can install them for you.

 Updates

Change tracking

O&O AppBuster remembers which apps were present the last time you used it. Apps that appeared since then show up in the **Newly discovered** Smart View, which is a quick way to spot software that arrived with a Windows update or was bundled with another installation.

 Newly discovered apps

Safety net

A system restore point can be created before you make any changes — either on demand or when O&O AppBuster offers it before your first change of a session.

 System restore point

Details and properties

For every app you can view all collected information, copy it to the clipboard, and open the app's install folder in Windows Explorer.

 The app list

What O&O AppBuster deliberately does not do

Being clear about the limits is part of the picture:

- **It does not change Windows privacy or telemetry settings.** O&O ShutUp10 is available separately; see [More O&O products](#).
- **It does not defragment, optimise or "tune" your PC.**
- **It does not run in the background.** O&O AppBuster does its work while it is open and leaves nothing running behind.
- **It cannot uninstall system and framework apps.** Windows depends on them; they are shown for information only.
- **It does not undo a removal by itself.** Windows apps can be reinstalled, and a system restore point can bring the system back — but there is no per-app "undo" button.

Available languages

The program interface is available in English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Japanese and Chinese. The language can be changed at any time in the settings.

This documentation is available in English, German, and French.

O&O AppBuster is Freeware

O&O AppBuster is **freeware**: free of charge, complete, and with no strings attached. This page explains exactly what that means, because "free" software comes in many flavours and not all of them are pleasant.

What "freeware" means here

Price	Free of charge.
Editions	One. There is no Free/Pro split — the program you download is the complete program.
Time limit	None. It does not expire and it does not stop working.
Number of PCs	Unlimited. You may use it on as many computers as you like.
Passing it on	Allowed, as long as the program is passed on unchanged.
Registration	None. No account, no licence key, no e-mail address.
Bundled software	None. O&O AppBuster installs nothing besides itself.
Advertising inside the program	None while you work. When you close the program, you may see a window where you can explore other O&O products and subscribe to the O&O newsletter. You can permanently disable this automatic display.

!!!info No paid edition Some documentation you may have seen for other O&O products distinguishes between a *Free Edition* and a *Premium Edition*. **O&O AppBuster has no Premium Edition.** Every feature described in this documentation is part of the freeware version. If a website offers you a "Pro version of O&O AppBuster", it is not from us. !!!

No installation required

O&O AppBuster is a single executable file. There is nothing to install:

1. Download the program from the O&O AppBuster product page.
2. Run it.
3. Delete the file again when you no longer need it.

The program keeps its configuration in your user profile under:

```
%LocalAppData%\00 Software\00 AppBuster\00AppBuster.cfg
```


If logging is switched on, the log file sits next to it as `00AppBuster.log`. Both files can be deleted at any time; O&O AppBuster simply starts with its defaults the next time.

Because it needs no installation, O&O AppBuster is well suited to a USB stick — useful when you set up new PCs or help other people clean up theirs.

Beware of unwanted extras

O&O AppBuster is distributed **without** any additional software. The program's own About dialog states this explicitly:

This program is FREEWARE and free of charge. You can use it on any number of PCs or pass it on. This program does not need an installation and does not come with other software.

If you ever obtain O&O AppBuster from a download portal and its installer offers you toolbars, "PC optimisers" or other extras, then that package was repackaged by a third party and violates our user agreement.

⚠ Always download from the source Get O&O AppBuster from www.oo-software.com. If you received a bundled version somewhere else, please let us know where, so we can take steps. ⚠

Why is it free?

O&O Software has been developing Windows system software in Berlin since 1997. Programs such as O&O Defrag, O&O DiskImage and O&O ShutUp10 are the commercial side of that work. O&O AppBuster is a smaller, focused tool that we give away — it is a good introduction to how we build software, and we would rather you got to know us this way than not at all.

If you find O&O AppBuster useful, you can use the product window to learn about other O&O tools.

💡 Explore more O&O products When you close O&O AppBuster, a separate window can show other O&O products for backup, system optimization, data recovery, privacy, secure deletion, and remote administration. The same window also lets you subscribe to the free O&O newsletter. See [More O&O products](#). 💡

Licence

Use of O&O AppBuster is subject to the O&O Software End User Licence Agreement, which you can read from the program's **Help** → **About** dialog or on the O&O Software website.

O&O AppBuster changes your system: it removes apps, and it deletes registry entries and files. Please read the notes on removing apps and use the system restore point before your first larger clean-up.

System Requirements

O&O AppBuster is a small program, but it works closely with Windows itself. The requirements below are what it needs in order to see and change everything it is supposed to.

Operating system

Supported	Windows 10 and Windows 11 (all editions)
Architecture	64-bit (x64) and ARM64
Not supported	Windows 8.1 and earlier, Windows Server

Earlier Windows versions do not have the modern app platform that O&O AppBuster is built around, so there would be little for the program to manage.

Runtime

O&O AppBuster is a .NET 8 desktop application. The required runtime components are supplied with the program, so you do not need to install anything separately.

Administrator rights

O&O AppBuster requires administrator rights. When you start the program, Windows shows a **User Account Control (UAC)** prompt, which you confirm with **Yes**.

This is deliberate. Every meaningful action in O&O AppBuster needs elevated rights:

- uninstalling Windows apps for all users or from the whole machine,
- uninstalling desktop apps,
- deleting the registry entries and folders of orphaned and defect apps,
- creating a system restore point.

Asking once at startup means you get **a single UAC prompt per session** instead of one prompt for every single action.

:::info If you do not have administrator rights O&O AppBuster cannot start without administrator rights. On a managed work PC, contact your administrator before removing software. :::

Disk space

The program itself is a single executable of a few megabytes. It writes only its configuration and, if you switch logging on, a log file into your user profile:

```
%LocalAppData%\00 Software\00 AppBuster\
```

Removing apps *free*s disk space rather than using it. How much you can reclaim is shown per app in the **Storage** column of the app list.

Optional: Windows Package Manager (winget)

The update feature uses the **Windows Package Manager** (`winget`), which is part of the *App Installer* package from the Microsoft Store. It is preinstalled on current Windows 11 systems.

- If `winget` is present, O&O AppBuster can find and install updates for your desktop apps.
- If it is not present, the update feature is switched off. Everything else works normally, and the settings dialog tells you why the option is unavailable.

To add it, install **App Installer** from the Microsoft Store.

 Updates

Optional: System protection

To create a system restore point, Windows **System Protection** must be switched on for your system drive. If it is switched off, O&O AppBuster tells you and explains where to enable it:

Control Panel → **System and Security** → **System** → **System Protection** → **Configure...** for drive `C:` .

You can continue without a restore point, but we recommend against it for a first larger clean-up.

 System restore point

First Steps

Follow these steps to download O&O AppBuster, review the apps on your PC, and remove your first app. Allow about ten minutes.

1. Download and start

1. Download O&O AppBuster from the O&O Software website.
2. Run the downloaded file. There is no installation.
3. Windows shows a **User Account Control (UAC)** prompt. Confirm it with **Yes**.

:::info Why administrator rights? Removing apps, cleaning up leftovers and creating a system restore point all require elevated rights. O&O AppBuster asks once at startup so that it does not have to ask again for every action. See System requirements. :::

2. Let the scan finish

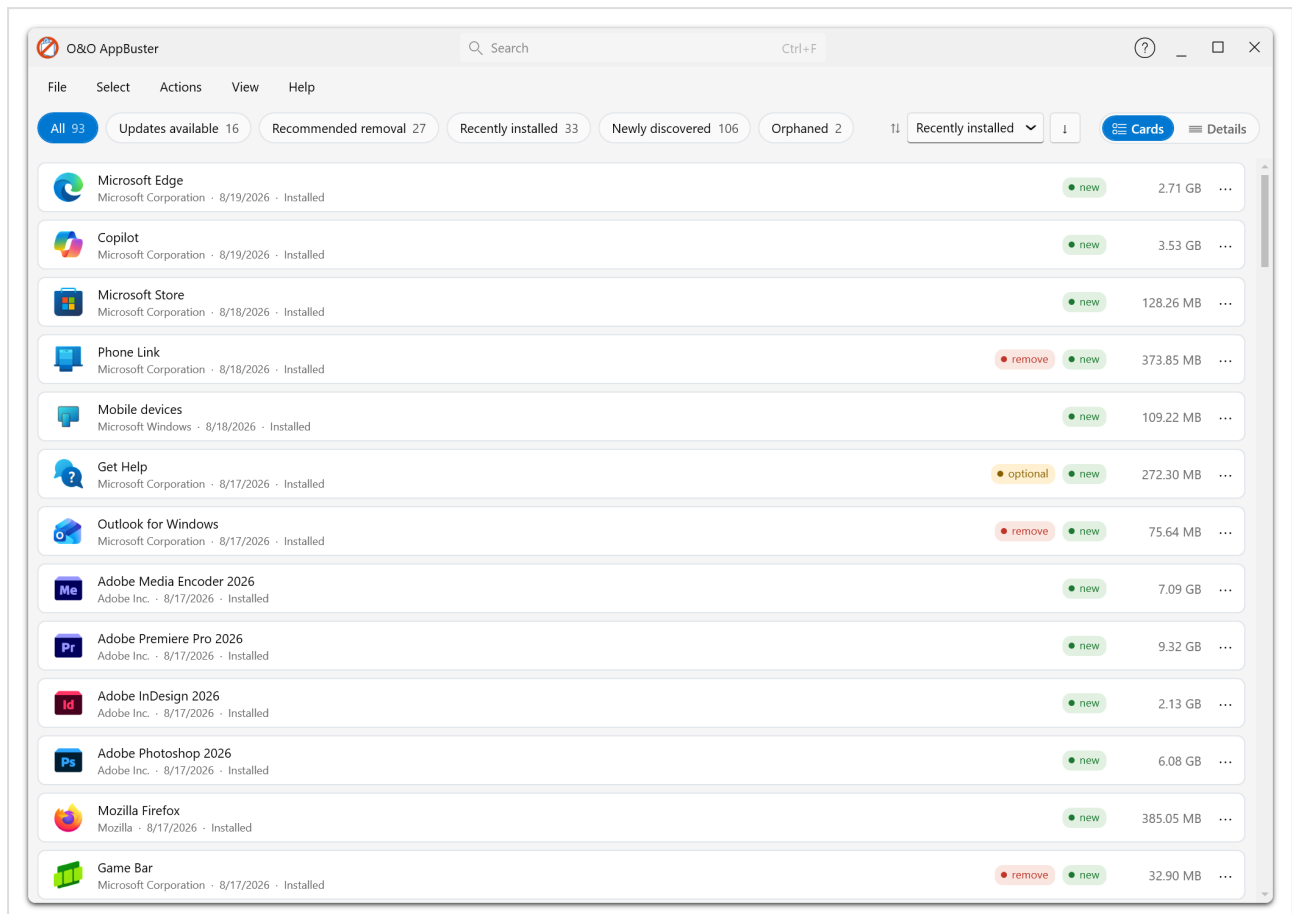
O&O AppBuster immediately begins to enumerate the apps on your PC. While it works, a counter above the list shows how many apps have been found so far.

On a normal PC this takes a few seconds; on a machine with many desktop programs it can take longer. Sizes on disk are calculated in the background and keep filling in after the list has appeared, so the **Storage** figures may still change for a moment.

3. Get an overview

When the scan finishes, the main window displays the app list:

- The **filter chips** above the list are the Smart Views. Each one narrows the list to a category, and its number tells you how many apps are in it.
- The **Cards / Details** switch on the right changes how the list is drawn. Cards are easier to read; Details gives you a sortable table with columns.
- The **sort** control next to it orders the list — by name, size, install date and so on.
- **View** → **App information** decides which facts are shown per app.



After the scan: the Smart View chips with their counts, the sort control, and the Cards / Details switch, all above the app list.

→ The app list

4. Create a system restore point

Before your first change, create a restore point. It is the fastest way back if something turns out to be needed after all.

1. Open **Actions** → **Create a system restore point**.
2. Confirm the prompt.
3. Wait until the message *System Restore Point being created...* disappears.

O&O AppBuster also offers to create one by itself before the first change of a session.

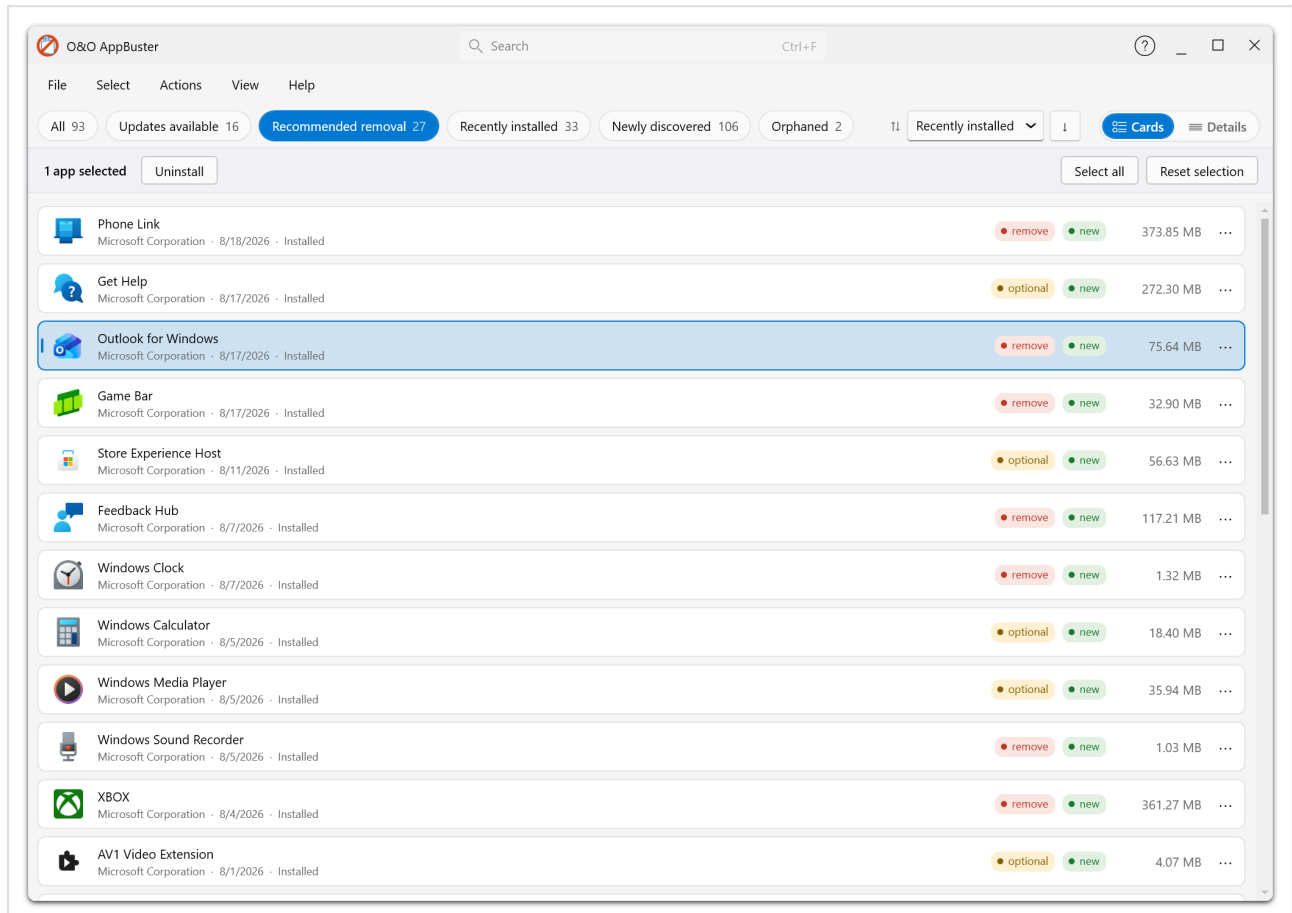
:::warning Strongly recommended If Windows System Protection is switched off, O&O AppBuster tells you and explains how to switch it on. You can proceed without a restore point, but on a first clean-up we would not. :::

→ System restore point

5. Start with the recommendations

The safest way to begin is to let O&O AppBuster suggest what to remove.

1. Click the **Recommended removal** chip above the list. Only apps carrying a *remove* recommendation are shown now.
2. Review the list. O&O has marked these apps as candidates for removal, typically preinstalled games, news and weather apps, and similar extras.
3. If you want everything in the list: **Select** → **Select all apps recommended for removal**.
4. Untick anything you would like to keep after all.



The Recommended removal view contains apps marked remove or optional. Review each app before selecting it.

tip Recommendations are a suggestion, not an order *remove* means "nothing depends on this app". It does not mean you do not want it. If you use the Weather app every morning, keep it. tip

→ Recommendations

6. Remove the selected apps

As soon as at least one app is selected, an action bar appears above the list showing how many apps are selected.

1. Click **Uninstall**.
2. The removal dialog opens. Check the list of apps it is about to remove — click **Review all** to see every entry.

3. Choose the **removal scope**:

Scope	What happens
Current user	The app is removed from your account only.
All users	The app is removed from every account on this PC.
Entire PC — including files	The app is removed everywhere and its leftover files are deleted from disk. The most thorough option.

4. Click **Remove apps**.

A progress dialog shows which app is currently being processed. When it has finished, you get a result summary: how many apps were removed and, if applicable, which ones were skipped and why.

Desktop apps behave differently The removal scope applies to Windows apps. Desktop apps are always removed by **their own uninstaller** — you may see its window and have to confirm its dialogs. Some uninstallers ask questions; O&O AppBuster cannot answer them for you.

➡ Removing apps

7. Deal with what was skipped

Occasionally an app cannot be removed straight away, usually because one of its files is in use.

The result dialog lists these apps separately and offers:

- **Close these programs and remove** — O&O AppBuster releases the file and retries.
- **Remove on next restart** — Windows deletes the files during the next boot.
- **Skip this app** — leave it alone for now.
- **Retry skipped** — try the skipped apps again.
- **Save log...** — write a removal report to a file.

8. Optional: clean up leftovers

If earlier uninstallations left traces on your PC, O&O AppBuster shows two more chips:

- **Orphaned** — registrations and data folders of apps that are no longer installed.
- **Defect** — apps whose installer package is missing, so Windows can neither uninstall nor repair them.

You can clean up both categories in the same way as a normal removal. Before deleting an entry, review the notes for that category and check its properties.

➡ Orphaned apps · Defect apps

9. Optional: install updates

If the Windows Package Manager is available, the **Updates available** chip shows the apps for which a newer version exists. Select them and click **Update**.



10. Finish up

Refresh the list with **F5** to see the result of your work, then close the program.

O&O AppBuster leaves nothing running in the background. It remembers which apps were on the PC, so the next time you start it, anything new will appear in the **Newly discovered** Smart View.

:::tip Come back after Windows updates Feature updates to Windows like to reinstall apps you removed. Starting O&O AppBuster once after a big update and checking **Newly discovered** takes half a minute. :::

What next?

- Want to know what each category means before you delete anything? → App categories
- Want to change the language, colour scheme or logging? → Settings
- Something did not work as expected? → FAQ

The App List

The main window displays the apps detected on your PC. Use its filters, sorting controls, and menus to find apps and perform actions on them.

The scan

O&O AppBuster starts scanning as soon as it opens. Apps stream into the list as they are found, and a counter above the list shows the progress (*N apps found ...*). When the scan is complete, the counter is replaced by the Smart View filter chips.

Sizes on disk are calculated afterwards in the background, so **Storage** values keep filling in for a few seconds after the list is otherwise ready.

To scan again, press **F5** or use **File** → **Refresh**. O&O AppBuster also notices installations that happen while it is open and refreshes by itself.

Cards or Details

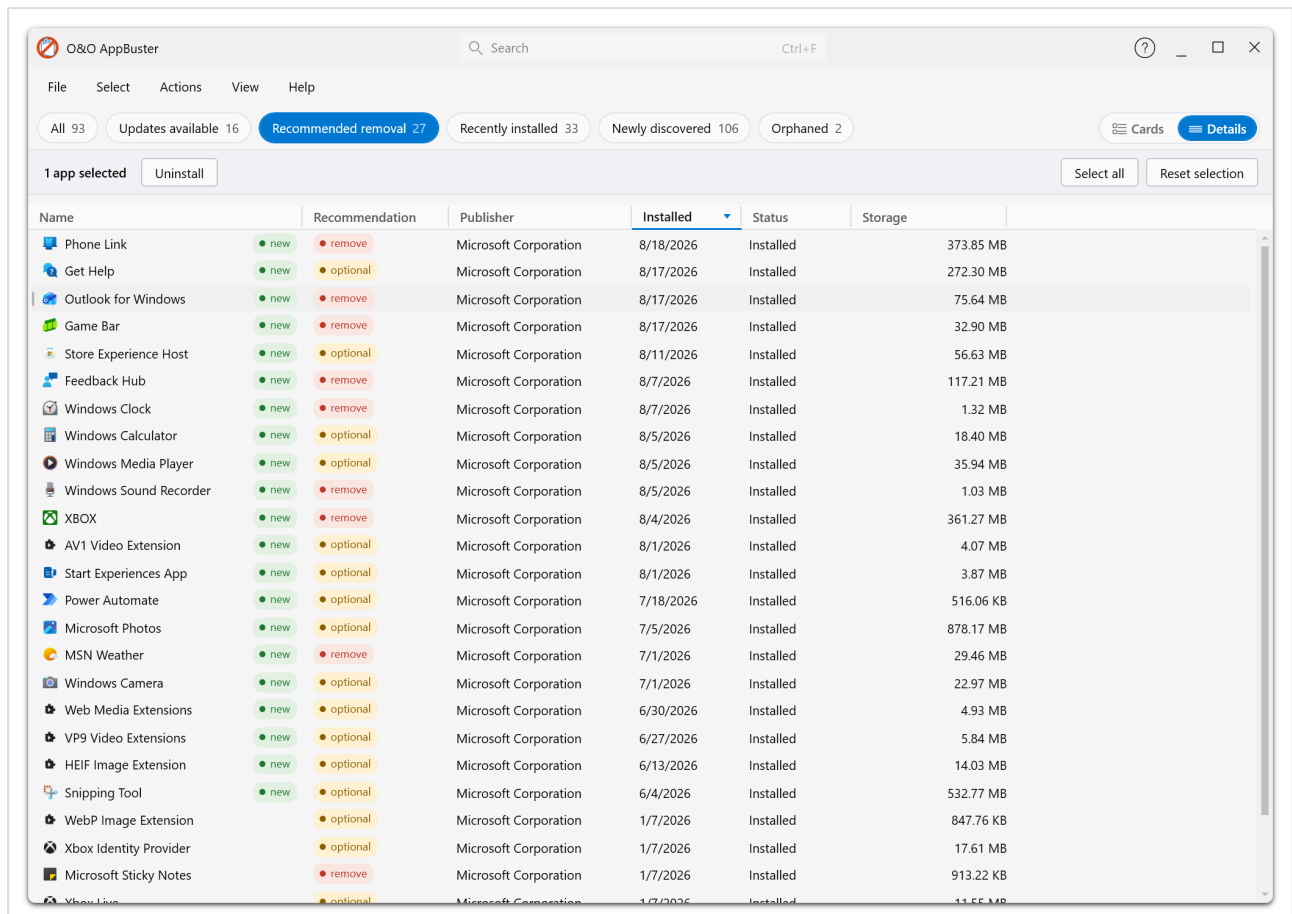
The switch at the top right of the list toggles between two layouts. Your choice is saved and used again next time.

Cards

Each app is a wide row with its icon, its name, and a subline of the facts you chose under **View** → **App information**. This is the more readable layout and the default.

Details

This layout presents app information in sortable columns. Use it to compare several apps, for example by their storage use.



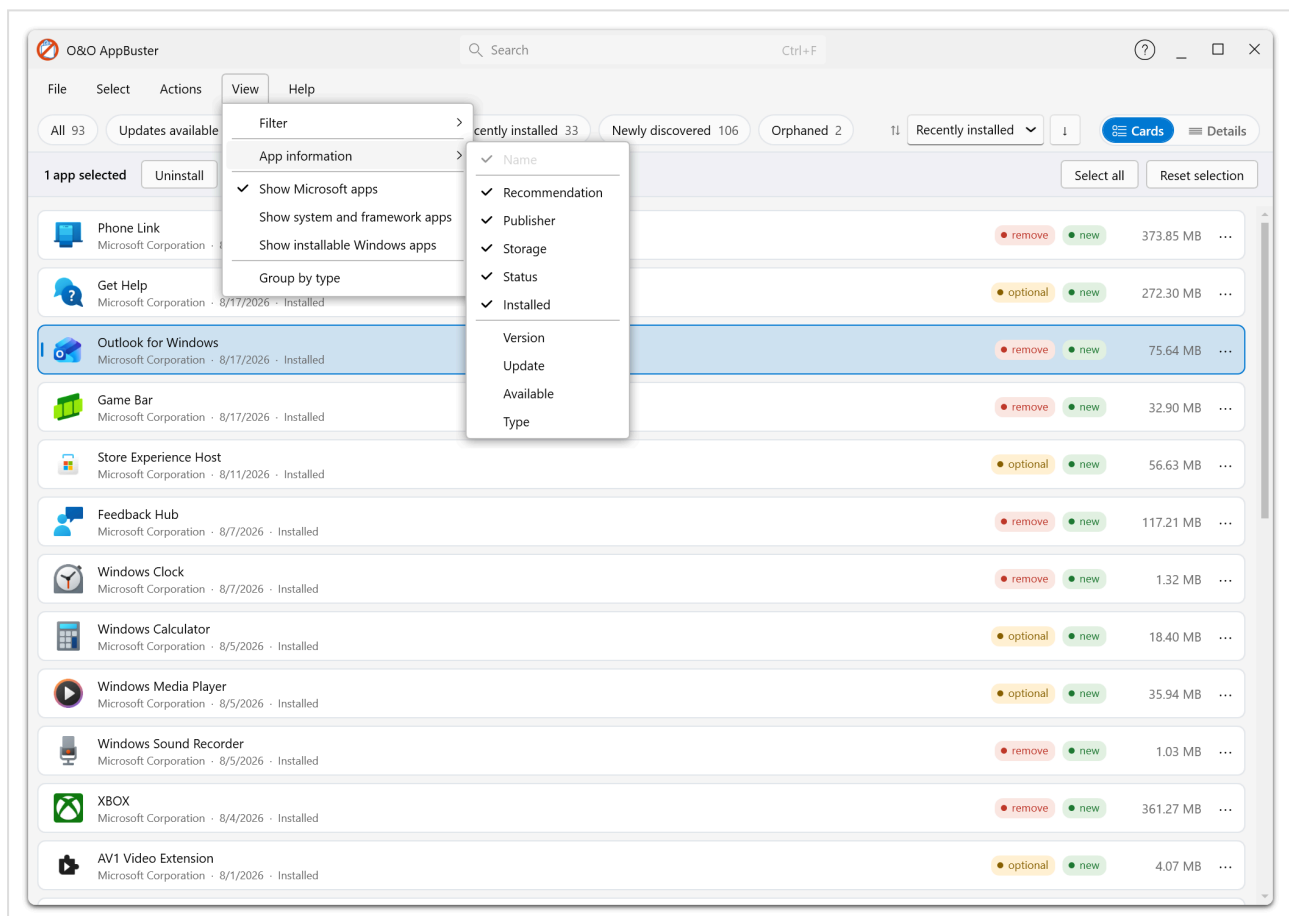
The Details layout puts every piece of information into its own sortable column.

Both layouts show the same apps and offer the same actions.

Choosing what is shown per app

View → **App information** controls which facts appear — as columns in the Details layout and in the card subtitle in the Cards layout. One setting drives both.

Information	Meaning
Name	The app's display name. Always shown.
Recommendation	<i>keep</i> , <i>optional</i> or <i>remove</i> — see Recommendations.
Publisher	Who publishes the app.
Storage	Space used on disk — app files and app data.
Status	<i>Installed</i> , <i>Installable</i> , <i>Staged (not installed)</i> or <i>Unremovable</i> .
Installed	The date the app was installed.
Version	The installed version number.
Update	Whether a newer version is available via winget — see Updates.
Available	Who the app is installed for: your user account, a number of users, or the whole computer.
Type	The app category — see App categories.



View → App information decides which facts are shown per app — as columns in the Details layout and in the card subline in the Cards layout.

Sorting

The sort control next to the view switch orders the list. The available criteria are:

Recently installed (the default, newest first) · *Name* · *Storage* · *Publisher* · *Recommendation* · *Version* · *Status* · *Available* · *Type* · *Updates available*

The button beside it reverses the direction. In the Details layout you can also click a column header, and the sort control follows along.

:::tip Find the big ones Sort by **Storage** to see immediately where your disk space went. Combined with the **Recommended removal** chip, this is the fastest way to free up a noticeable amount of space. :::

Searching

The search box sits in the window's title bar. Type a few characters and the list is filtered as you type; the search covers the app **name** and its **description**.

If the current Smart View has no match but another one does, O&O AppBuster switches to the first view that has results, so you are not left looking at an empty list. If nothing matches anywhere, it tells you so.

Clear the search box to see the full list again.

Group by type

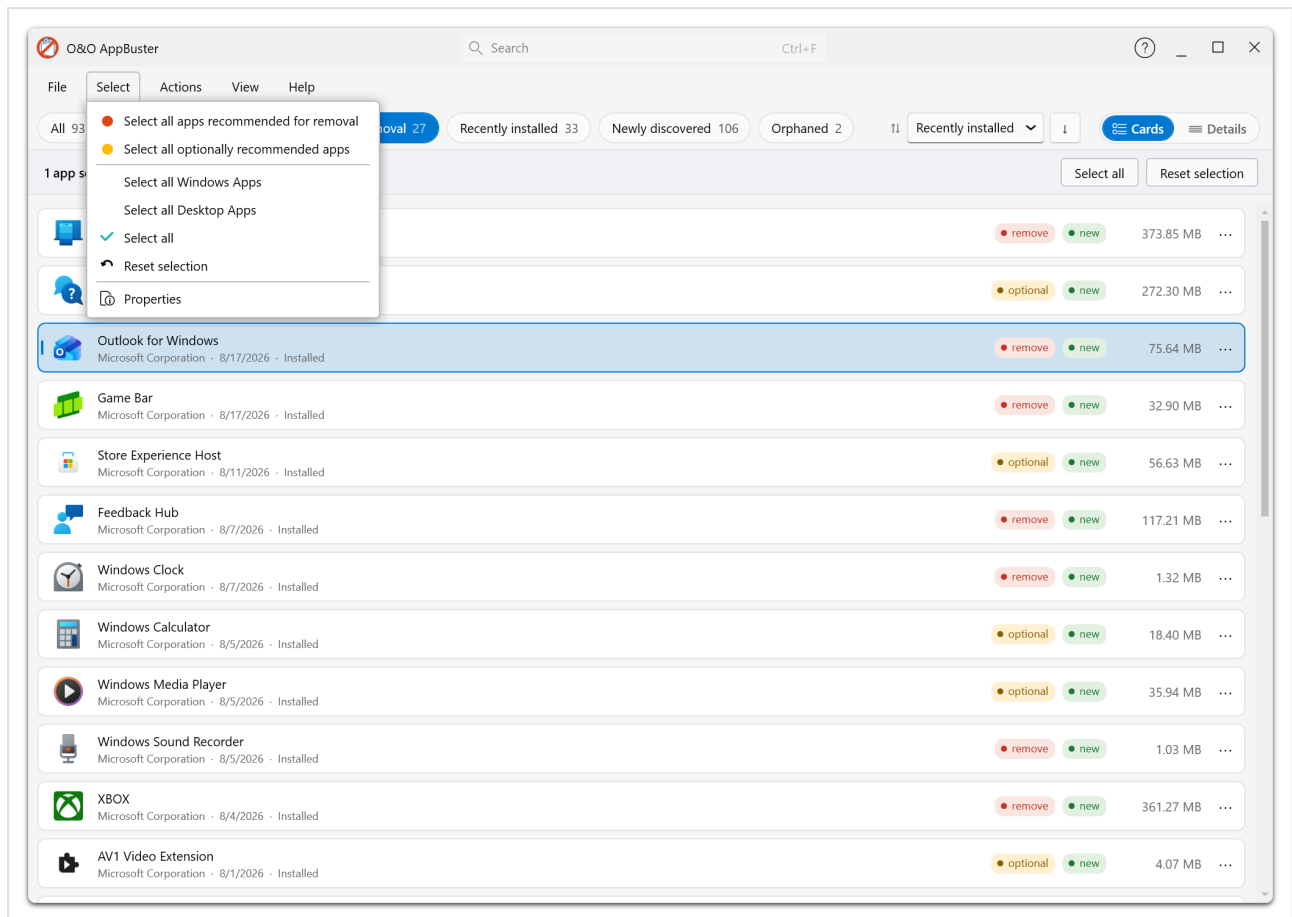
View → **Group by type** adds one tab above the list for each app category in the current view. Select a tab to limit the list to that category without changing your other filters.

Selecting apps

Tick the checkbox of an app to select it. As soon as at least one app is selected, an **action bar** appears above the list showing how many apps are selected, together with the actions that apply to them (**Uninstall**, and **Update** when relevant), plus **Select all** and **Reset selection**.

The **Select** menu offers bulk selections:

- Select all apps recommended for removal
- Select all optionally recommended apps
- Select all Windows apps
- Select all desktop apps
- Select all
- Reset selection



The Select menu turns recommendations and app categories directly into a selection.

Acting on a single app

Right-click an app (or use the button on its row) for the actions that apply to it:

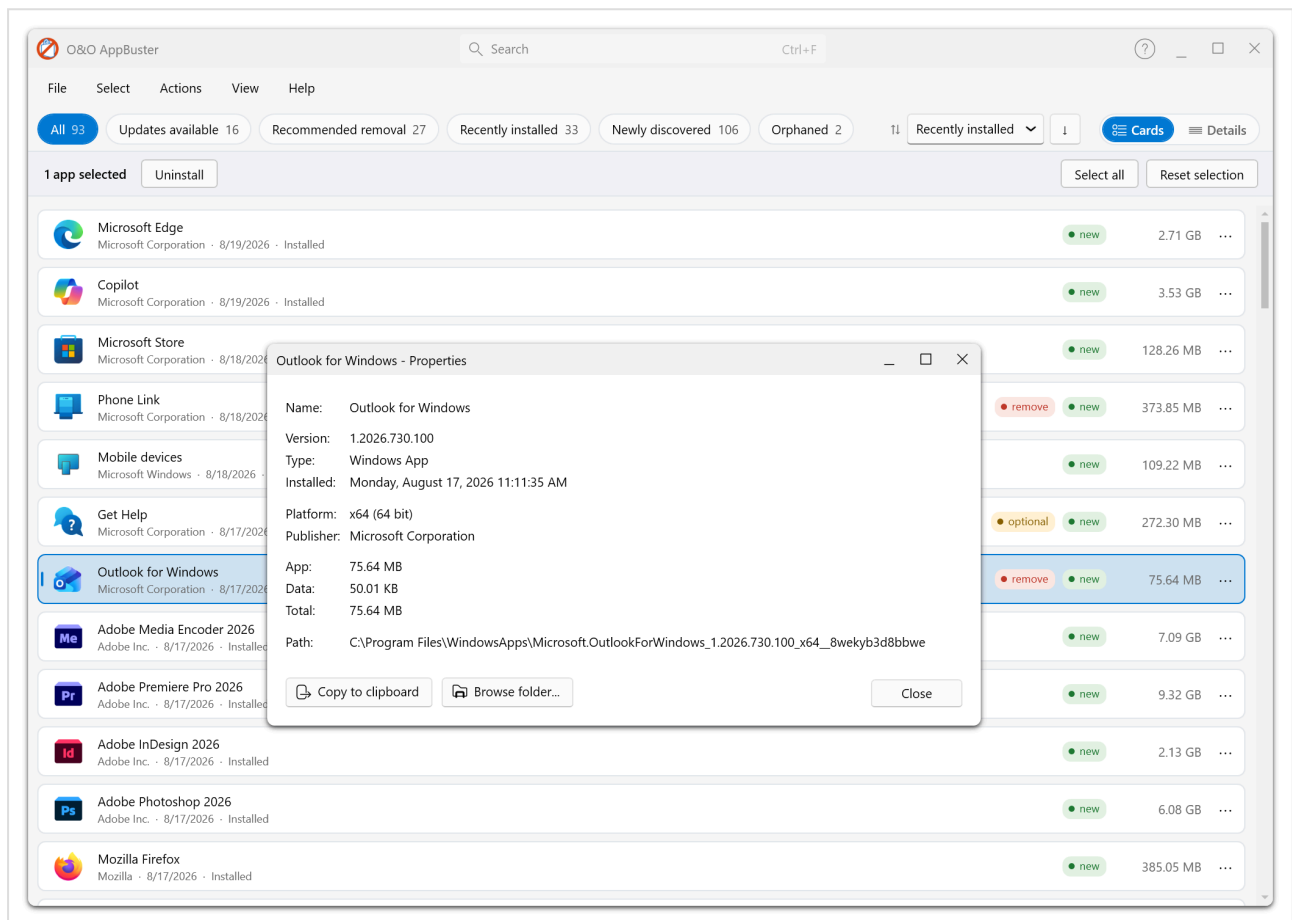
Action	Applies to
Uninstall	Apps that can be removed
Install	Windows apps that are available on the PC but not installed for you
Update	Apps for which winget reports a newer version
Modify	Desktop apps whose installer offers a repair or change option
Properties	Any app

The **Actions** menu additionally offers **Copy to clipboard** (all collected information about the selected app) and **Browse folder...** (opens the app's install location in Windows Explorer).

Properties and details

Properties opens a dialog with everything O&O AppBuster knows about the app:

- Name, type and install date
- Version and platform (x86, x64, ARM, ARM64, neutral)
- Publisher
- Size — split into app files and app data, with a total
- Install location



The Properties dialog: version, type, install date, platform, publisher, size split into app files and app data, and the install location — all copyable to the clipboard.

For orphaned apps this dialog additionally shows the interpretation of the leftover: a readable name, the original identifier, the presumed vendor and product family, the likely purpose, and how confident O&O AppBuster is about that interpretation. See Orphaned apps.

The information can be copied to the clipboard — useful when you want to look something up or send it to support.

The "apps are hidden" notice

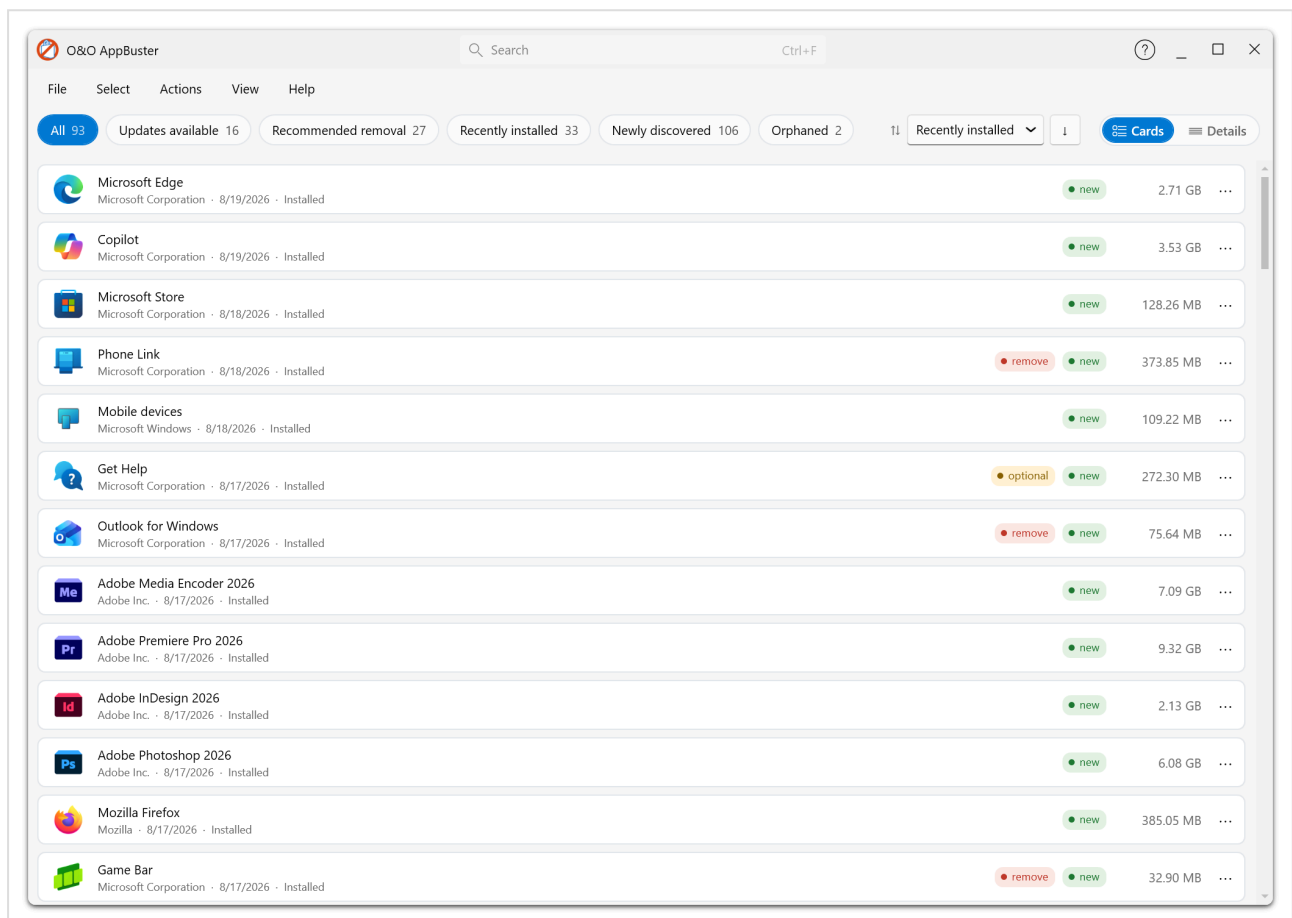
Some **View** menu options hide apps permanently rather than just filtering the current view — for instance *Show Microsoft apps* when switched off. Whenever such a setting is actually removing apps from the list, a thin notice appears above the list telling you how many are hidden, with a **Show all** button that clears those settings in one click.

This exists so that a list which is quietly shorter than expected always explains itself.

Smart Views

A Smart View is a ready-made filter for the app list. The row of chips above the list holds the common ones, and each chip carries the number of apps it would show. Clicking a chip narrows the list; clicking **All** brings everything back.

Smart Views filter the app list by category or status. For example, select **Newly discovered** to see apps that appeared since your previous session.



The chip row above the list. Each chip carries the number of apps it would show; All brings the complete list back.

The Smart Views

Smart View	Shows
All	Every app in the list. The starting point.
Updates available	Apps for which the Windows Package Manager reports a newer version.
Recommended removal	Apps carrying a <i>remove</i> recommendation.
Recently installed	Apps installed within the last 30 days.
Newly discovered	Apps that were not present the last time you used O&O AppBuster.
Hidden	Windows apps that exist on the PC but are not registered for your account.
Orphaned	Leftovers of apps that were already uninstalled.
Defect	MSI apps whose installer package is missing, so Windows cannot remove them.
System	Windows components. Information only — they cannot be removed.
Framework	Runtimes other apps depend on. Information only.

The full set is also available under **View** → **Filter**, which is useful when the window is narrow and not every chip fits.

Chips appear only when they are relevant

A button appears only when its category contains at least one app. If O&O AppBuster finds no orphaned or defective entries, the corresponding buttons are not shown.

Likewise, **Updates available** only appears when the update feature is switched on and the Windows Package Manager is present on your system. See Updates.

How Smart Views interact with the rest

- **Search** works inside the current view. If your search term has no hit in the current view but does elsewhere, O&O AppBuster switches to the first view that has results.
- **Sorting** and the **Cards / Details** choice are independent of the selected view.
- **Selection** is kept when you switch views. If you select five apps in one view and then switch, those five are still selected — the action bar keeps telling you how many.

⚠ Check your selection before removing Because a selection survives a view change, it is worth glancing at the count in the action bar before clicking **Uninstall**. If it says more than you expect, use **Reset selection** and start again. ⚠

Suggested workflows

A quick clean-up

1. **Recommended removal** → **Select** → **Select all apps recommended for removal**
2. Untick what you actually use
3. **Uninstall**

Free up disk space

1. **All**, sort by **Storage** descending
2. Work down from the top and decide app by app

Find out what Windows just installed

1. **Newly discovered** — everything that appeared since your last session
2. When you have looked at them, they stop being "new" once you mark them as viewed

Clean up after old uninstallations

1. **Orphaned** — leftover registrations and data folders
2. **Defect** — apps Windows can no longer uninstall on its own

Keep your software current

1. **Updates available**
2. Select the apps you want to update and click **Update**

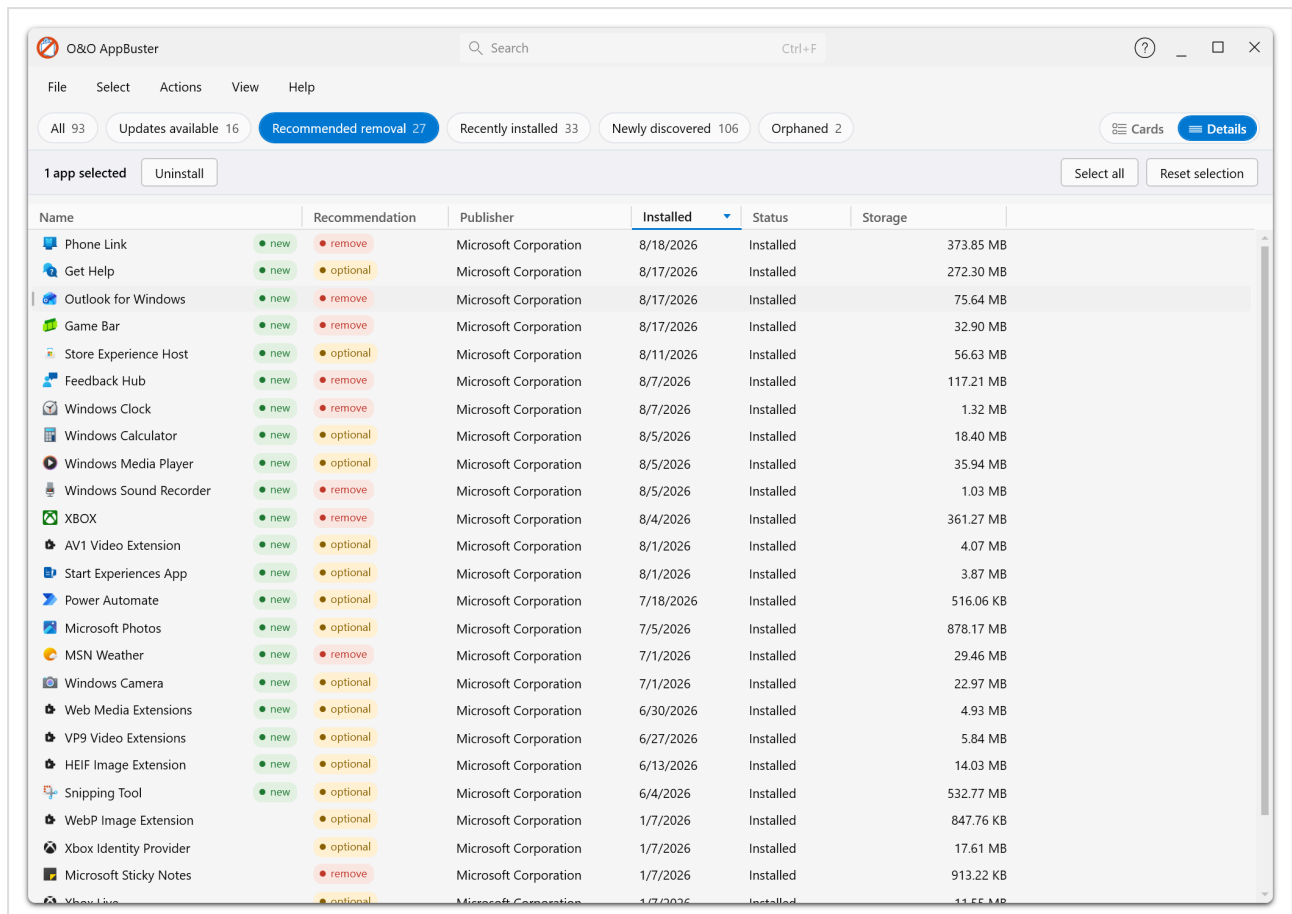
Recommendations

Before removing an app, you need to know whether Windows or another program may depend on it. O&O AppBuster provides a recommendation for every app in the list to help you decide.

The three levels

Recommendation	Tooltip in the program	What it means
keep	<i>Keep application</i>	Leave this alone. Either Windows or another app depends on it, or O&O AppBuster has no reason to consider it disposable.
optional	<i>Keep or remove application</i>	Removing it is safe. Whether you want it is up to you.
remove	<i>Remove application</i>	Typical bloatware. Nothing depends on it, and removing it has no side effects.

The recommendation is shown in the **Recommendation** column (Details layout) or in the card subline (Cards layout), provided that piece of information is switched on under **View** → **App information**.



The Recommendation column next to each app, showing remove and optional at a glance.

How a recommendation is determined

O&O AppBuster uses a **curated list** of known apps, maintained by O&O and matched on the app's package identity together with its publisher ID. That means the recommendation for *Microsoft.BingWeather* published by Microsoft is a deliberate decision, not a guess based on the name.

The important consequence:

Default is "keep" Any app that is **not** on the curated list receives the **keep** recommendation. This does not necessarily mean the app is required; it means O&O AppBuster does not have enough information to recommend its removal.

This is a fail-safe design. A wrong *keep* costs you some disk space; a wrong *remove* could break something.

What is typically recommended for removal

Without being an exhaustive list, apps classified as *remove* are usually:

- Preinstalled Microsoft extras: news, weather, finance, sports and travel apps, 3D Builder, the Cortana app, video editors, and similar
- Games and game hubs shipped with Windows

- Manufacturer add-ons that duplicate functionality Windows already has
- Companion apps that only make sense together with hardware you do not own

System apps and framework apps are **never** recommended for removal — they cannot be removed at all.

Working with recommendations

The **Select** menu turns recommendations directly into a selection:

- **Select all apps recommended for removal** — everything marked *remove*
- **Select all optionally recommended apps** — everything marked *optional*

Combined with the **Recommended removal** Smart View, this gives you the shortest possible path to a cleaner PC:

1. Click the **Recommended removal** chip
2. **Select** → **Select all apps recommended for removal**
3. Untick the ones you use
4. **Uninstall**

Recommendations are advice

A recommendation describes **technical consequences**, not your preferences. O&O AppBuster does not know that you check the Weather app every morning, or that the Xbox app matters to you.

Always review the selected apps before you confirm a removal. Recommendations provide guidance, but the final choice remains yours.

:::tip When in doubt Look at the **Installed** date and the app's Properties. An app that has been sitting on the PC since the day it was set up and that you cannot even place is a safer candidate than something you installed last week. :::

Sorting and filtering by recommendation

- **Sort** → **Recommendation** groups the list by recommendation level.
- **View** → **Group by type** additionally splits the list by app category, which makes it easy to see, for example, which *Windows apps* are recommended for removal while ignoring desktop programs entirely.

Removing Apps

This page explains how to select and remove apps, choose the removal scope, and handle files that are still in use.

Starting a removal

There are three ways to begin:

- Select one or more apps and click **Uninstall** in the action bar above the list.
- Right-click a single app and choose **Uninstall**.
- Use **Actions** → **Uninstall**.

⚠ Check the count first A selection survives a change of Smart View. Before you confirm, glance at the number in the action bar — if it is higher than you expect, use **Reset selection** and start again. ⚠

The removal dialog

Before anything is touched, O&O AppBuster shows you what it is about to do.

The list of apps

The dialog names the app (or the number of apps) you selected. Long selections are shown as a short list with a **Review all** › link that expands the complete set, so you can check every entry before confirming.

The removal scope

For Windows apps you choose how far the removal should reach:

Scope	Effect	Notes
Current user	Removes the app from your account only. Other accounts keep it.	The least invasive option.
All users	Removes the app from every account on this PC.	Requires administrator rights.
Entire PC — including files	Removes the app everywhere and deletes its leftover files from disk.	Marked <i>Most thorough</i> . Choose this when you want the space back.

ℹ Desktop apps ignore the scope The scope applies to Windows (Store) apps. **Desktop apps are always removed by their own uninstaller**, because that is the only correct way to remove them. Desktop apps have

no concept of per-user removal, so you may see the uninstaller's own window and have to confirm its dialogs. The dialog tells you when your selection contains desktop apps. :::

Confirming

Remove apps starts the removal. **Cancel** aborts it and leaves the system unchanged.

The dialog also reminds you that a removal **cannot be undone from within O&O AppBuster**. Windows apps can be reinstalled afterwards, and a system restore point can take the whole system back — but there is no per-app undo button.

While the removal runs

A progress dialog shows:

- the action being performed and the chosen scope,
- how many apps have been processed (*3 of 12*),
- which app is currently being worked on.

You can cancel at any time. Cancelling stops before the next app; apps already removed stay removed.

Desktop apps are processed **one after another**, because each one runs its own uninstaller. If several of those uninstallers ask questions, you will be answering them in sequence.

The result

When the run finishes, the dialog turns into a report:

- **App removed / All N apps removed** when everything worked,
- **N removed · M skipped** when some apps could not be processed.

Removed apps are listed, and skipped apps are listed separately together with the reason — most often *A file is in use by another process*.

Two buttons help you finish the job:

Button	Effect
Retry skipped	Attempts the skipped apps again — useful after you have closed the program that was holding a file.
Save log...	Writes a removal report to a text file, including scope, removed apps, skipped apps and reasons.

When files are in use

If an app's files are locked by a running program, O&O AppBuster tells you which programs are holding them and offers three ways forward:

Option	What happens
Close these programs and remove	The blocking programs are ended and the removal continues.
Remove on next restart	Windows deletes the files during the next boot. The app is listed under <i>Will be removed after restart</i> .
Skip this app	Nothing is done to this app; the run continues with the next one.

If anything was deferred to the next boot, the result dialog reminds you to **restart your PC to finish removing** those apps.

:::tip Save your work first "Close these programs and remove" ends the blocking programs without asking them to save. If one of them is an editor with unsaved changes, save first. :::

What exactly gets removed

Windows apps (Store / UWP)

The app package is deregistered for the chosen scope. With **Entire PC — including files**, the app's data folder is deleted as well, which is where most of the reclaimable space usually sits.

Desktop apps (Win32 / MSI)

The app's own uninstaller is run — `msiexec` for MSI-based installations, or the uninstall program the app registered. O&O AppBuster then clears the uninstall registration if the uninstaller left it behind.

Orphaned apps

There is no app left to uninstall, so the leftover itself is removed: the data folder, the ghost installer registration, or the stale uninstall entry. See Orphaned apps.

Defect apps

Windows cannot uninstall these because the cached installer package is gone. O&O AppBuster removes the Windows Installer product registration, the uninstall registry entries, and the app's remaining files directly. See Defect apps.

What cannot be removed

System apps and **framework apps** are shown for information only. Windows and other apps depend on them, so O&O AppBuster does not offer to remove them; their status reads *Unremovable*.

Individual apps may also refuse removal because Windows itself protects them. In that case they appear among the skipped apps with the reason *Couldn't be removed*.

Before a larger clean-up

1. **Create a system restore point.** It is the one step that makes everything else reversible.
2. **Start with the recommendations.** They are the apps with the lowest risk.
3. **Work in batches.** Removing twenty apps at once and finding a problem afterwards is harder to untangle than removing five at a time.
4. **Save the log** if you are cleaning up someone else's PC. It is a record of exactly what you did.

Installing Apps

Removing a Windows app is not necessarily final. O&O AppBuster can install Windows apps that are present on the computer but not registered for your user account — which is exactly the state an app is in after you removed it for your account only.

This is the closest thing to an undo function for Windows apps.

What can be installed

Only **Windows apps** (Store / UWP) can be installed by O&O AppBuster, and only when the app's files are still on the computer. Two situations produce that state:

1. **You removed the app for your account.** The package stays on the machine and is available again for your account.
2. **Windows shipped the app but did not register it for you.** These are the hidden apps — provisioned on the PC but not active in your profile.

Such apps carry the status **Installable**, and their tooltip reads *App is available for install on computer*.

Desktop apps cannot be installed O&O AppBuster manages desktop programs, but it is not a software repository. Once a desktop app has been uninstalled, it must be installed again from its own setup file. O&O AppBuster can, however, update desktop apps that are installed.

Making installable apps visible

Installable apps are hidden by default, because most people are looking at their PC to remove things, not to add them.

To show them, switch on **View → Show installable Windows apps**. The list then also contains apps with the status *Installable*, and the **Hidden** Smart View becomes a convenient way to look at nothing else.

Installing

1. Switch on **View → Show installable Windows apps**.
2. Select the apps you want back.
3. Click **Install** — from the row's context menu, or via **Actions → Install apps**.
4. Confirm the dialog.

A progress dialog reports which app is being installed and how far the run has got. Apps are always installed **for the current user**; O&O AppBuster does not provision apps for other accounts.

When the run finishes you get a summary: *One app was installed successfully, N apps were installed successfully, or No apps were installed.*

After installing

The app appears in the Start menu as usual. Its status in O&O AppBuster changes from *Installable* to *Installed* after the next refresh (**F5**).

Reinstalled Windows apps start with a clean slate — settings and data that belonged to the previous installation are gone if you removed the app with the **Entire PC — including files** scope.

When installation fails

If an app cannot be installed, O&O AppBuster reports an error for that app and continues with the rest of the selection. The usual causes are:

- **The package is no longer on the PC.** A removal with the *Entire PC* scope can delete the source files, in which case the app has to come from the Microsoft Store instead.
- **Insufficient rights.** O&O AppBuster requires administrator rights anyway, but a policy on a managed PC may still block app installation.
- **The package is damaged.** Reinstall the app from the Microsoft Store.

:::tip When O&O AppBuster cannot bring an app back Open the Microsoft Store and search for the app there. Everything Windows ships as a Store app is available from the Store, and O&O AppBuster does not need to be involved. :::

Updates

While it is scanning, O&O AppBuster can also check whether newer versions of your apps exist — and install them for you. The check uses the **Windows Package Manager** (`winget`), the update mechanism that comes with Windows.

Requirements

The update feature needs `winget` on your system. It is part of the **App Installer** package and is preinstalled on current Windows 11 systems.

- If `winget` is present, the feature is available and switched on by default.
- If it is not, the option in the settings is disabled and explains why: *The Windows Package Manager (winget) is not installed on this system, so app updates are unavailable. Install "App Installer" from the Microsoft Store to enable this feature.*

Everything else in O&O AppBuster works regardless.

Switching the feature on or off

Settings → **Winget Updates** → **Search for updates with Winget**

Changing this setting requires a restart of O&O AppBuster; you are asked whether to restart immediately. The restart avoids a half-updated interface and stops background checks cleanly.

Reasons you might switch it off:

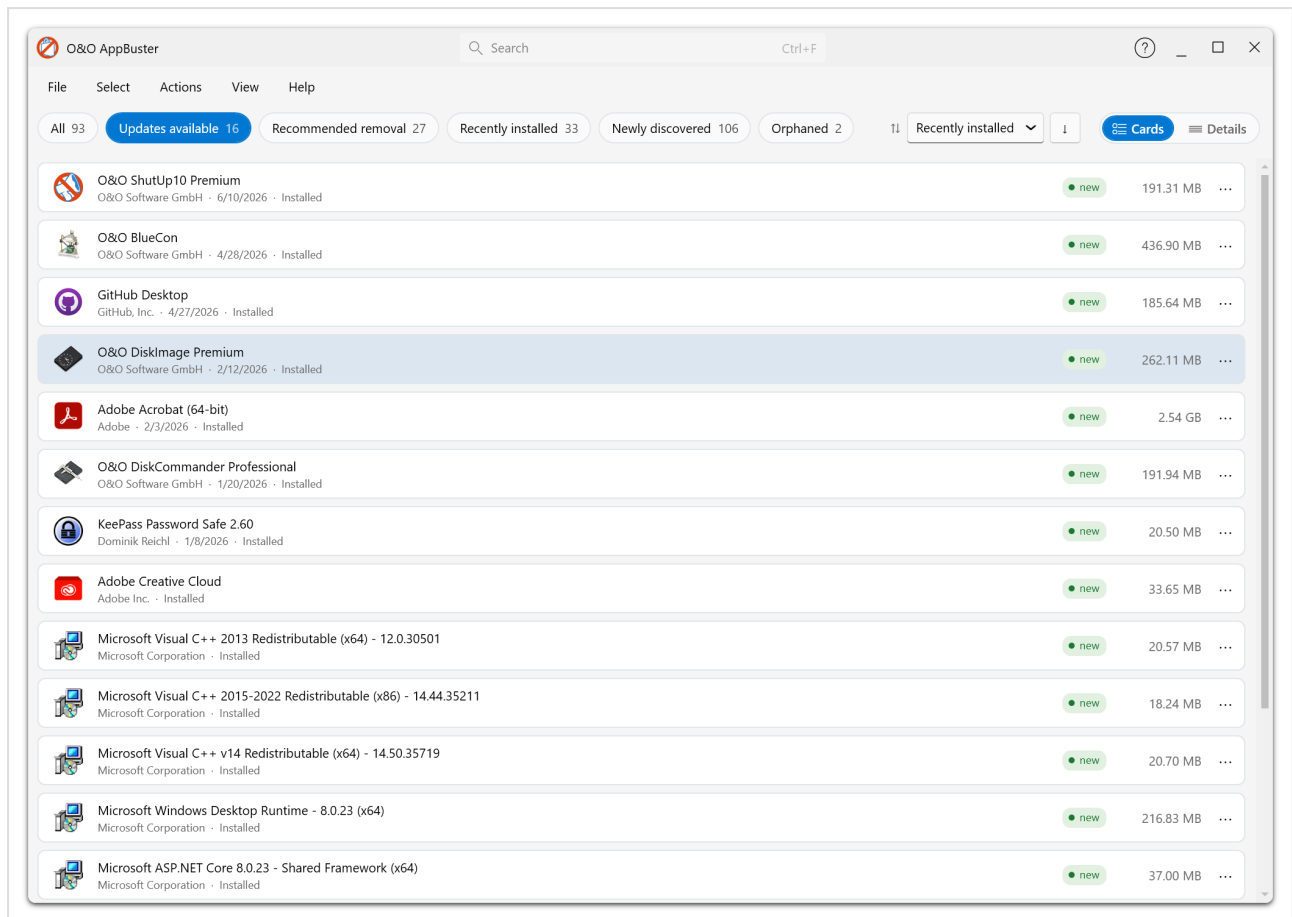
- You manage updates yourself and do not want the extra background work.
- The check makes the initial scan take longer than you like on a slow PC.
- Your organisation deploys software centrally and updates are not your call.

Finding updates

The update check runs in the background after the app list has been built, so the list is usable while it works.

When it finds something:

- The affected apps get an entry in the **Update** column (*An update is available via winget*).
- The **Updates available** Smart View chip appears with the number of apps concerned.
- The action bar offers an **Update** button when at least one selected app has an update.



The Updates available view lists exactly those apps for which the Windows Package Manager reports a newer version.

Installing updates

1. Click the **Updates available** chip.
2. Select the apps you want to update.
3. Click **Update**, or use **Actions** → **Update selected apps via winget**.
4. Confirm the dialog.

A progress dialog shows which app is being updated. Afterwards each app is marked **Updated** or **Update failed**.

What to expect during an update Updates are carried out by the Windows Package Manager, not by O&O AppBuster itself. That means:

- A console window may briefly appear.
- An individual app's installer may ask you a question that you have to answer.
- An individual update may fail without the rest of the run being affected.

The confirmation dialog says as much before you start. ...

Results

The run ends with one of:

Result	Meaning
Update completed.	Everything selected was updated.
Update completed with errors.	Some apps were updated, others were not.
An error occurred during the update.	The run could not be carried out.
Update cancelled by user.	You stopped the run.

Failed updates are reported per app. The most common reasons are that the app is running, that the publisher's download is temporarily unavailable, or that the app is not in the winget catalogue under the name Windows registered for it.

What is *not* updated

- **Windows apps from the Microsoft Store** are updated by the Store itself, not by O&O AppBuster.
- **Windows itself** is updated by Windows Update. O&O AppBuster does not touch it.
- **Apps installed outside the package manager's knowledge** — portable programs, in-house tools, anything without a winget entry — cannot be updated this way. They still appear in the list; they just never show an available update.

Automation

O&O AppBuster updates apps when you tell it to. There is no scheduled or automatic update mode, and it does not run in the background when you close it.

If you want updates to happen without your involvement, `winget upgrade --all` in a scheduled task is the Windows-native way to do it.

System Restore Point

O&O AppBuster can delete apps, registry entries, and files. Create a system restore point before making changes so that Windows can restore system settings if a removal causes a problem.

Creating one on demand

Actions → **Create a system restore point**

Confirm the prompt and wait for the message *System Restore Point being created...* to disappear. The restore point is named after O&O AppBuster, so you can recognise it later in the Windows restore dialog.

The automatic prompt

Before the first change of a session, O&O AppBuster offers to create a restore point by itself:

Do you want to create a system restore point?

NOTE: Before the first change, you should create a system restore point. It will secure your system and enable you to return to the state you were in originally if a setting is not rendering results as desired.

THIS STEP IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED!

Answer **Yes** unless you have a good reason not to.

When system protection is switched off

Windows can only create restore points if **System Protection** is enabled for the system drive. Many PCs — especially ones set up by a manufacturer — have it switched off.

If that is the case, O&O AppBuster tells you and explains where to change it:

Control Panel → **System and Security** → **System** → **System Protection**, then **Configure...** for drive **C:**.

You can continue without a restore point (**OK**) or discard the pending change (**Cancel**). For a first larger clean-up, we would switch protection on first.

If creating the restore point fails

O&O AppBuster reports an error and explains what to check:

- **Rights** — administrator rights are required. O&O AppBuster runs elevated, so this is rarely the cause.
- **Free disk space** — Windows reserves a share of the drive for restore points. If there is nothing left, no point can be created.

- **The service** — the *Volume Shadow Copy / System Restore* service must be running.

Windows also limits how often restore points are created automatically; if you have just created one, a second one moments later may be silently skipped by Windows.

Using a restore point

Restoring is done by Windows, not by O&O AppBuster:

1. Open **System Protection** (search for *Create a restore point* in the Start menu).
2. Click **System Restore...**
3. Choose the restore point named after O&O AppBuster.
4. Follow the wizard.

:::info What a restore point does and does not do A restore point brings back system files, installed programs, registry settings and drivers. It does **not** touch your personal documents. If an app kept its data in your user profile, a restore does not necessarily bring that data back. :::

Alternatives and complements

A restore point is a safety net, not a backup. For the removals O&O AppBuster performs it is proportionate; for anything more far-reaching, a proper image backup is the better tool.

Other ways back, depending on what you removed:

What you removed	How to get it back
Windows app, current user	Install it again from O&O AppBuster
Windows app, entire PC	Microsoft Store
Desktop app	Its own setup file
Orphaned or defect leftovers	Nothing to bring back — there was no working app there

Skipping the prompt

If you start O&O AppBuster with the command-line parameter `/nosrp`, the restore point prompt is suppressed. This exists for unattended use on machines that are backed up by other means. Use it deliberately.

Settings

Open the settings dialog with **File** → **Settings**. Display options that affect the app list directly are available from the View menu.

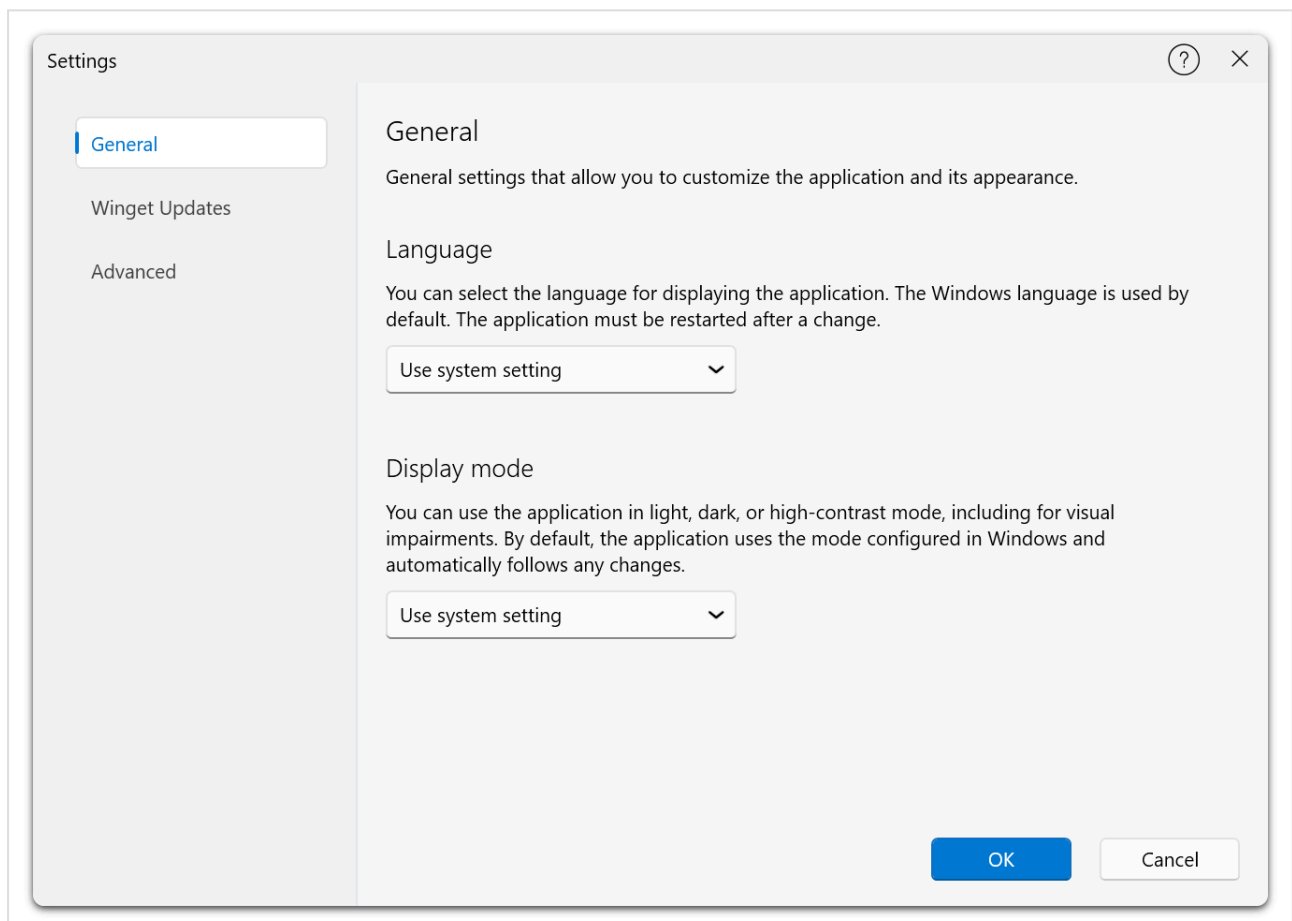
General

Language

O&O AppBuster is available in:

English · German · French · Spanish · Italian · Russian · Japanese · Chinese

By default it follows your Windows display language. Changing the language requires a restart of the program; you are asked whether to restart immediately.



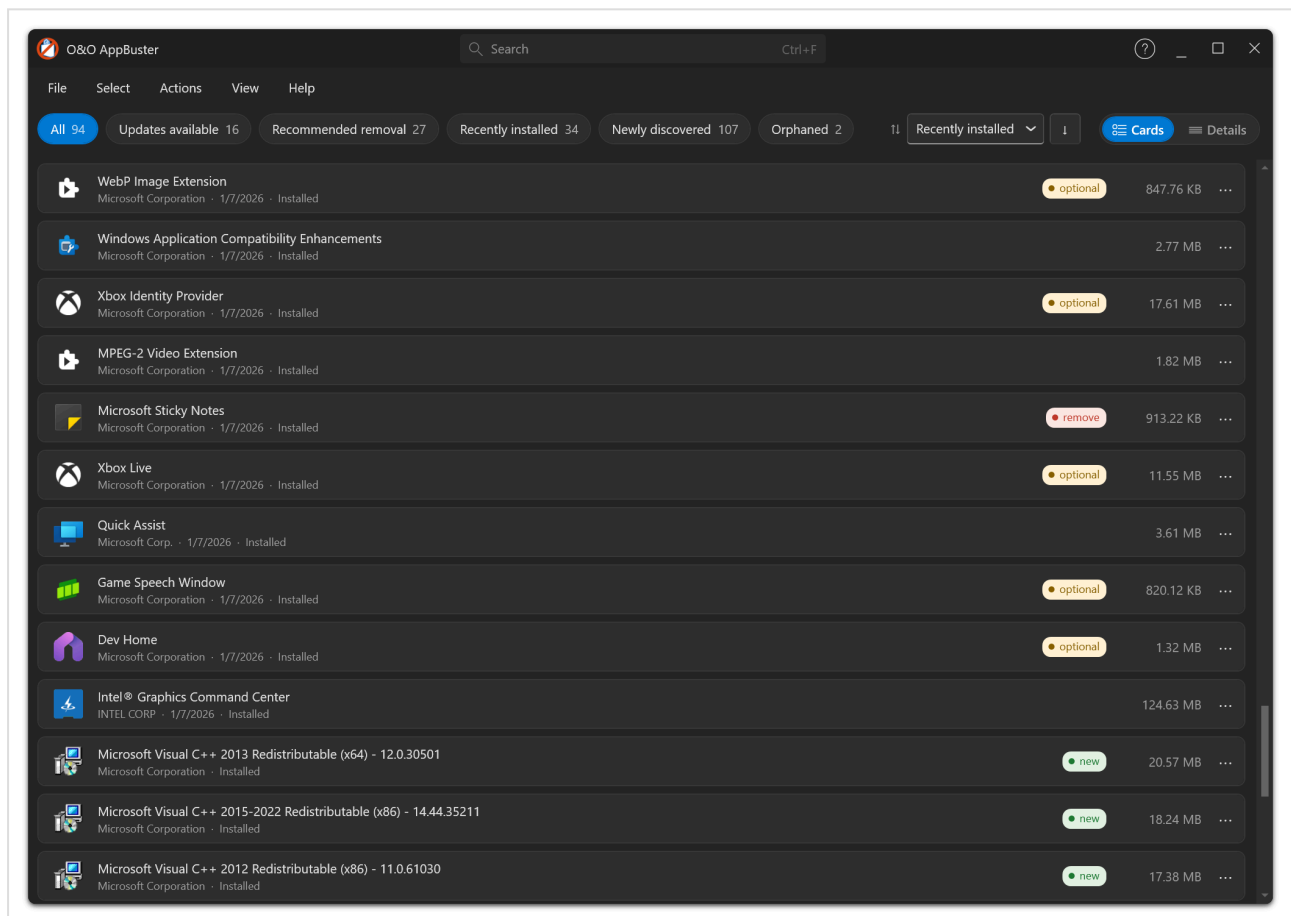
Settings → General holds the display language and the colour scheme. Both follow Windows unless you choose otherwise.

Display mode

The colour scheme of the program window:

Option	Effect
Use system setting	Follows the Windows light/dark setting. The default.
Light	Always light.
Dark	Always dark.
High contrast black	High-contrast theme on a dark background.
High contrast white	High-contrast theme on a light background.

The change takes effect at once.



O&O AppBuster in dark mode. Set it explicitly here, or leave it to follow the Windows light/dark setting.

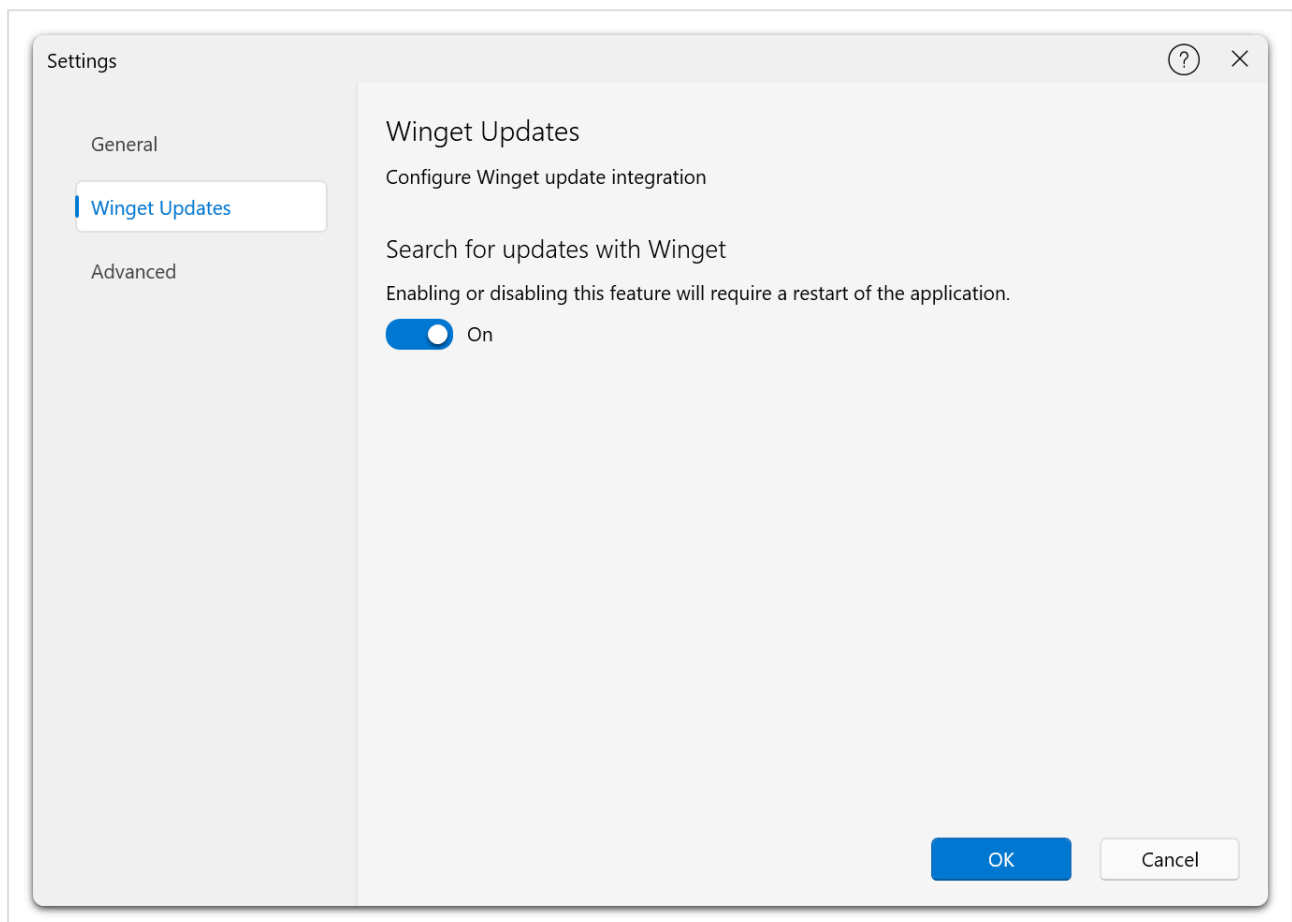
Winget Updates

Search for updates with Winget

Switches the update feature on or off. When it is on, O&O AppBuster asks the Windows Package Manager in the background whether newer versions of your apps exist.

Changing this setting requires a restart, which O&O AppBuster offers to perform for you.

If `winget` is not installed on the system, the option is disabled and a note explains how to add it (install **App Installer** from the Microsoft Store).



Settings → Winget Updates switches the background update check on or off. The change takes effect after a restart.

→ Updates

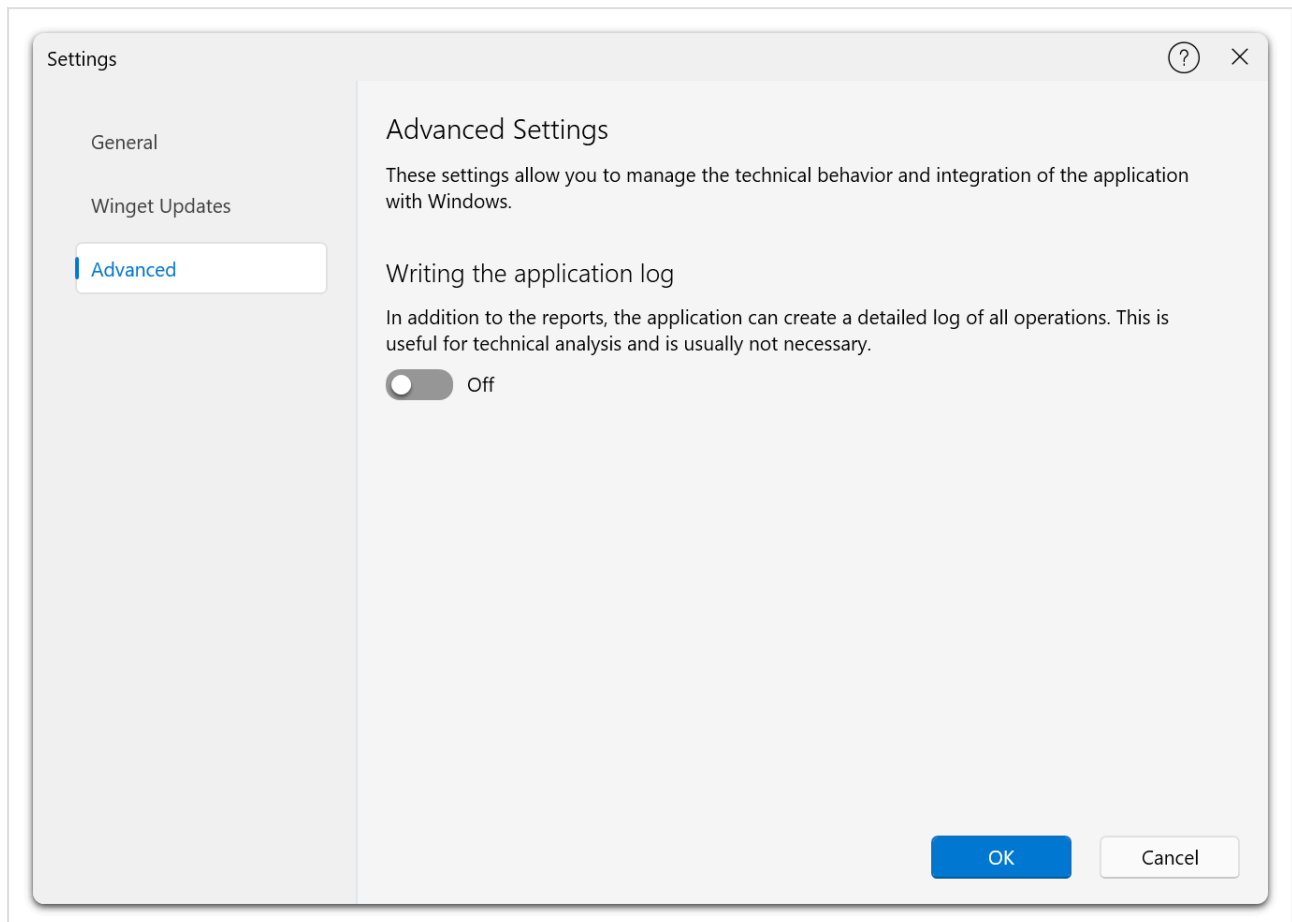
Advanced

Writing the application log

O&O AppBuster can record a detailed log of everything it does. This is switched off by default, because it is only useful for technical analysis.

The log is written next to the configuration file:

```
%LocalAppData%\Software\O&O AppBuster\O&OAppBuster.log
```



Settings → Advanced holds the single switch for the application log. It is off by default and only needed for technical analysis.

:::tip When support asks for a log Switch logging on, restart O&O AppBuster, reproduce the problem, then send the log file to O&O support. Switch it off again afterwards — there is no reason to keep writing it during normal use. :::

Where settings are stored

Everything you configure — language, colour scheme, view mode, chosen columns, window position, and whether the product window should appear when you close the program — is stored in one file in your user profile:

```
%LocalAppData%\Software\O&O AppBuster\O&OAppBuster.cfg
```

Because O&O AppBuster needs no installation, deleting this file is all it takes to reset the program to its defaults. Nothing else is left behind on the system.

Command-line parameters

For unattended and scripted use, O&O AppBuster accepts a few parameters:

Parameter	Effect
<code>/lang:<code></code>	Starts in the given language, e.g. <code>/lang:de</code> .
<code>/quiet</code>	Unattended run. Also suppresses the product window when the program closes.
<code>/nosrp</code>	Does not prompt for a system restore point.
<code>/force</code>	Starts even when a start condition would normally prevent it.
<code>/ignoreos</code>	Skips the operating-system check.
<code>/exportlng</code>	Exports the language resources.

Parameters are a convenience for administrators, not the primary way to use the program.

Product suggestions when you close the program

When you close O&O AppBuster, it may open **O&O Tools for Windows**. This window contains links to several other O&O products and an optional newsletter sign-up form. It does not install or download a product automatically.

Select **Do not show this message again** to prevent the window from opening automatically in future. You can still open it whenever you want from **Help** → **Explore more O&O products...**

The window is not shown during a `/quiet` run or if you have already opened it during the current session. Your choice and newsletter subscription status are stored in the configuration file described above.

[!\[\]\(6bb0e4f14c4133b37d2887cb37e67ddd_img.jpg\) More O&O products](#)

App Categories

Windows uses the term "app" for several types of software. Store apps, desktop programs, runtime libraries, and remnants of removed software require different handling. O&O AppBuster identifies each type so that you can choose the appropriate action.

O&O AppBuster sorts everything it finds into categories and shows the category in the **Type** column and in each app's properties. This page is the map; the following pages describe each category in detail.

The categories at a glance

Category	What it is	Removable	Page
Windows App	Modern app from the Microsoft Store (UWP / MSIX)	Yes	Windows apps
Store	A Store app that is registered on the PC but not installed for you	Install it	Windows apps
Staged app	Package files are on the PC but no user has it installed	Yes	Windows apps
Desktop App	Classic Windows program (Win32 / MSI)	Yes, by its own uninstaller	Desktop apps
Windows App (hidden)	Provisioned on the PC but not visible in your Start menu	Yes, or install it	Hidden apps
System App	A component Windows itself needs	No	System and framework apps
Framework App	A runtime that other apps depend on	No	System and framework apps
Orphaned App	Leftover data folder of an uninstalled Windows app	Yes, cleaned up	Orphaned apps
Orphaned Desktop App	Registration of a desktop app whose files are gone	Yes, cleaned up	Orphaned apps
Defect App	Still installed, but Windows can no longer uninstall it	Yes, cleaned up	Defect apps

Two dimensions: what it is, and what state it is in

It helps to read the categories as two questions.

What kind of software is it?

- A **Windows app** is managed by the Windows package system. It can be removed per user, for all users, or from the machine, and it can be brought back.
- A **desktop app** is managed by its own installer. Removing it means running that installer's uninstall routine. There is no per-user removal and no way to bring it back except its setup file.

What state is it in?

- **Installed** — normal. It is there, it works.
- **Installable / Staged** — the files are on the PC, but nobody is using them.
- **Orphaned** — the app is gone; only traces remain.
- **Defect** — the app is there, but its installer infrastructure is broken, so Windows cannot remove or repair it.
- **Unremovable** — Windows depends on it.

How the categories are found

O&O AppBuster does not simply read the Windows *Apps & features* list. It enumerates several sources and reconciles them:

Source	What it contributes
Windows package manager	Windows apps for the current user and for the machine
HKLM\...\CurrentVersion\Uninstall (64-bit and 32-bit views)	Machine-wide desktop apps
HKU\<SID>\...\CurrentVersion\Uninstall for every loaded profile	Per-user desktop apps of all logged-on users
HKCR\Installer\Products	Windows Installer product registrations, including ghost entries
%LocalAppData%\Packages	Data folders of Windows apps, including leftovers

Desktop apps are enumerated **before** Windows apps on purpose. Some programs — Visual Studio Code and TortoiseGit are typical examples — are installed by an MSI but also register as a Windows package. Scanning the registry first means such an app is classified as the **desktop app** it really is, and the package information is merged into that one entry instead of producing a duplicate.

Registry access during the scan is read-only. Only a removal writes to the registry.

Newly discovered apps

Independently of these categories, O&O AppBuster remembers which apps were on the PC the last time you used it. Anything that has appeared since is flagged as **newly discovered** — a category of *time*, not of *kind*.



Newly discovered apps

Where to start

If you just want a tidier PC, you only need two categories:

1. **Windows apps** with a *remove* recommendation — preinstalled extras, safe to go.
2. **Desktop apps** you no longer recognise — check them individually, then remove them.

The remaining categories are for specific situations: hidden apps when you want an app back, orphaned and defect apps when an earlier uninstallation left a mess, and system and framework apps purely for information.

Windows Apps

Windows apps — also called Store apps, UWP apps or MSIX packages — are the modern app format of Windows 10 and 11. They are what you get from the Microsoft Store, and they are also what Microsoft and PC manufacturers preinstall on new machines.

They are shown in the list with the type **Windows App**.

Why they matter for a clean-up

Windows 11 includes a number of preinstalled apps, such as news, weather, games, and companion apps for Microsoft services. You can use O&O AppBuster to review these apps and remove the ones you do not need.

Many of them have no **Uninstall** entry in the *Windows Apps & features* page at all. O&O AppBuster can remove them anyway.

Removing Windows apps

Windows apps are the one category where you get a real choice of how far the removal reaches:

Scope	Effect
Current user	Removed from your account. Other accounts keep it, and you can reinstall it.
All users	Removed from every account on this PC.
Entire PC — including files	Removed everywhere and the app's data folder is deleted from disk.

Choose **Entire PC** when your goal is disk space, and **Current user** when you just do not want to see the app any more.

 Removing apps

Getting them back

Because Windows keeps the package on the machine, removing a Windows app for your account is reversible. Switch on **View** → **Show installable Windows apps** and the app reappears with the status **Installable** — select it and click **Install**.

If you removed it with the **Entire PC** scope, the package may be gone from the machine as well. In that case, install it again from the Microsoft Store.

 Installing apps

Related states

Windows apps can appear in the list in states other than plain *installed*:

Store

Type **Store**, status **Installable**. The app is registered on the computer but is not installed for your account. This is the normal state after you removed it for your account only.

Windows App (hidden)

Provisioned on the PC but never registered for your profile — Windows does not show these in the Start menu. See Hidden apps.

Staged app

Type **Staged app**, status **Staged (not installed)**. The package files were unpacked onto the PC but no user account has the app installed. Staged packages are typically left behind by Windows updates or by manufacturer images. They occupy disk space and do nothing, so they are safe candidates for removal.

Microsoft apps

Many Windows apps are published by Microsoft, and on most PCs they make up the majority of the list. If you want to concentrate on third-party software, switch **View** → **Show Microsoft apps** off — the notice above the list will tell you how many apps are being hidden and let you bring them back with one click.

Note that "published by Microsoft" says nothing about whether an app is important. The Weather app and a core Windows component are both Microsoft apps; only the recommendation and the category tell you which is which.

What to be careful about

Most Windows apps are harmless to remove, but a few are more entangled with Windows than their name suggests:

- **The Microsoft Store itself.** Remove it and you have no straightforward way to install Store apps again.
- **App Installer.** This is what provides `winget`. Removing it switches off O&O AppBuster's update feature.
- **Windows Terminal, Photos, Camera, Notepad.** Technically Store apps, but part of how Windows is expected to behave. Removing them works; getting used to their absence may not.
- **Manufacturer control apps.** On laptops, the app that controls the keyboard backlight or a special key is often a Store app. Removing it can cost you hardware functionality.

O&O AppBuster recommends **keep** for anything it does not explicitly classify as disposable, which covers most of these cases. Read the recommendation before you confirm.

:::tip Try one account first If you are unsure about an app, remove it with the **Current user** scope. If you miss it, install it again from O&O AppBuster — no Store visit needed. :::

Desktop Apps

Desktop apps are the classic Windows programs: installed from a setup file, listed under *Programs and Features*, and removed by their own uninstaller. In O&O AppBuster they carry the type **Desktop App**.

How O&O AppBuster finds them

O&O AppBuster reads the Windows uninstall registrations directly, in more places than the Windows *Apps & features* page looks at:

Location	What is found there
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Uninstall	Machine-wide installations (64-bit)
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Wow6432Node\...\Uninstall	32-bit installations on a 64-bit Windows
HKU\<SID>\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\...\Uninstall	Per-user installations of every logged-on profile
HKCR\Installer\Products	Windows Installer product registrations

That last point is what makes O&O AppBuster more thorough than the Windows dialog: a program can be registered as an installed Windows Installer product without having a visible uninstall entry, and those registrations are exactly what blocks a later reinstallation.

...info Profiles that are not logged on Per-user installations are read for **loaded** user profiles — accounts that are logged on. Software that another user installed only for themselves while they are logged off is not visible.
...

Removing desktop apps

Desktop apps are removed by **their own uninstaller**. O&O AppBuster starts it and waits for it to finish. This is deliberate: the uninstaller knows about services, drivers, scheduled tasks and file associations that a generic remover would leave behind.

What that means for you:

- **You may see the uninstaller's own window** and have to confirm its dialogs. Some ask whether to keep settings, or want you to close the program first. O&O AppBuster cannot answer those questions for you.
- **There is no removal scope.** Desktop apps have no concept of per-user removal, so the scope choice in the removal dialog does not apply to them. The dialog tells you this when your selection contains desktop

apps.

- **Selections are processed one after another.** If you remove ten desktop apps, ten uninstallers run in sequence, and you may be clicking through ten sets of dialogs.

➡ Removing apps

After the uninstaller has run

If an uninstaller leaves its registration behind, O&O AppBuster removes that registration from the relevant 64-bit, 32-bit, or current-user registry location. This prevents the removed app from remaining in *Programs and Features*.

Modify

Some desktop apps register a *modify* or *repair* option in addition to their uninstaller. Where that exists, the app's context menu offers **Modify**, which starts the installer in its change mode. Use it when a program is misbehaving and you would rather repair it than remove and reinstall it.

Getting them back

O&O AppBuster cannot reinstall a desktop app. Once its uninstaller has run, you need the program's own setup file again.

What O&O AppBuster *can* do for installed desktop apps is update them, if the Windows Package Manager knows them.

:::warning No undo This is the category where a system restore point earns its keep. Removing a Windows app is reversible; removing a desktop app whose installer you no longer have is not. :::

Bridge apps: desktop apps that look like Store apps

Some programs are installed by an MSI but also register themselves as a Windows package — Visual Studio Code and TortoiseGit are common examples. These "bridge" apps would otherwise show up twice, or be misclassified as Store apps that could be removed per user.

O&O AppBuster scans the registry **before** the package manager for exactly this reason. Such an app is classified as the **desktop app** it really is, and the package information is merged into that single entry.

The practical consequence: a bridge app is removed by its MSI uninstaller, which is the only way that actually works for it.

Things worth checking before you remove

- **Drivers and hardware utilities.** Removing the manufacturer's tool can cost you functionality that Windows does not replace.

- **Runtimes** such as Visual C++ Redistributables and .NET runtimes. They look like disposable clutter and are not: other programs depend on them, often silently.
- **Components installed by a larger suite.** An entry named like an add-in or a plugin service usually belongs to a parent program. Removing it breaks the parent, not just itself.
- **Apps whose entry you cannot place.** Look at the properties first — publisher, install location and install date usually identify it.

O&O AppBuster recommends **keep** for anything it does not explicitly classify as disposable, which covers most of these cases.

Hidden Apps

Hidden apps are Windows apps that exist on your PC but do not appear in the Start menu or on the Windows *Apps & features* page. O&O AppBuster hides them by default and identifies them as **Windows App (hidden)** when you display them.

Why an app is hidden

Windows distinguishes between an app being *present on the machine* and an app being *installed for a user account*. An app can be the first without being the second. That happens when:

- Windows or the PC manufacturer **provisioned** the app on the machine but the provisioning never applied to your account.
- The app was installed for a **different user account** on the same PC.
- **You removed it** for your account only, which leaves the package on the machine.
- The app is a component that Windows keeps on hand without exposing it in the Start menu.

These states do not indicate a problem. The app package is available but is not registered for your user account.

Making them visible

Hidden apps are not shown by default, because most people open O&O AppBuster to remove things rather than to inspect standby packages.

To see them:

- Click the **Hidden** Smart View chip, if it is present, or
- switch on **View** → **Show installable Windows apps** to include apps that are available for installation in the normal list.

Hidden apps that are in the list stay visible regardless of other filters — including **Show Microsoft apps** — so a hidden app never disappears on you unexpectedly once you have gone looking for it.

What you can do with them

Install for your account

This is the main reason to look at hidden apps: it is how you get an app back that you removed earlier, and how you activate an app that Windows shipped but never enabled for you.

Select the app and click **Install**. It is installed for the **current user** only.

 Installing apps

Remove from the PC

If you are certain no account needs the app, you can remove it. Since it is not installed for you, the meaningful scope is **All users** or **Entire PC — including files**, which also frees the disk space its package occupies.

 Removing apps

Hidden apps and disk space

A hidden app costs disk space even though nobody uses it. On a manufacturer-imaged laptop, the provisioned-but-unused apps can add up to a noticeable amount.

Sort by **Storage** while the **Hidden** Smart View is active to see which of them are worth removing.

:::tip Removing the provisioning Removing a hidden app with the **Entire PC** scope also removes it from the machine's provisioning, which means new user accounts created afterwards will not get it either. That is usually what you want when setting up a PC for someone else. :::

Hidden apps are not malware

The word "hidden" invites suspicion, so to be explicit: a hidden app in this sense is a perfectly ordinary Windows app in an ordinary state. O&O AppBuster shows them because Windows does not, not because there is anything wrong with them.

If an entry in this category genuinely puzzles you, open its properties — publisher, version, install location and size will usually identify it in a few seconds.

System and Framework Apps

These two categories are the ones you cannot remove. O&O AppBuster shows them anyway, because knowing what is on your PC is worth something even when there is nothing to decide.

Both have the status **Unremovable**, and neither is ever recommended for removal.

System apps

Type: **System App**

System apps are components of Windows itself. The shell, the settings interface, the security prompts, the account infrastructure — much of what you experience as "Windows" is delivered as system apps.

System apps are important components for running Windows itself and other apps. They are displayed for information only and can not be uninstalled.

Removing one would not tidy up your PC; it would break it. So O&O AppBuster does not offer to.

Framework apps

Type: **Framework App**

Framework apps are runtime libraries that other apps depend on. Typical examples are the Visual C++ runtime packages (`Microsoft.VCLibs.*`), the .NET Native framework, and the UI framework packages that Store apps build on.

Framework apps are the basis for the executability of all Windows apps. They are displayed for information only and can not be uninstalled.

A framework app usually has no user interface at all. It is there so that other apps can run, and several versions of the same framework can be installed side by side because different apps need different versions.

Why show them at all?

Three reasons:

1. **Completeness.** A list of "the apps on this PC" that quietly omits a third of them is misleading. O&O AppBuster shows you what is actually there.
2. **Disk space.** Frameworks in particular accumulate. Seeing that five versions of the same runtime take up a noticeable amount of space explains where your disk went, even if the answer is "and that is fine".
3. **Diagnosis.** When an app refuses to start, being able to check whether the framework it needs is present — and in which version — is genuinely useful.

Hiding them

On most PCs these two categories together are a large part of the list, and they are the part you can do nothing about. To get them out of the way, switch off:

View → **Show system and framework apps**

The notice above the list will tell you how many apps are being hidden, and **Show all** brings them back with one click.

Alternatively, use the **System** and **Framework** Smart Views to look at nothing else when you specifically want to.

If Windows lets you remove one and O&O AppBuster does not

Occasionally Windows itself offers an uninstall option for something O&O AppBuster classifies as a system app. That difference is intentional: O&O AppBuster errs on the side of not offering removals whose consequences it cannot judge.

If you are certain you want to remove such a component, use the Windows mechanism for it — and create a system restore point first.

Orphaned Apps

An orphaned app is what is left over when software was uninstalled but did not clean up after itself. The program is gone; its traces are not.

O&O AppBuster finds these traces and can remove them. Two types are distinguished: **Orphaned App** for leftovers of Windows apps, and **Orphaned Desktop App** for leftovers of classic programs.

Why leftovers matter

They are not merely untidy:

- **They take up disk space.** An app data folder can hold hundreds of megabytes of caches that nothing will ever read again.
- **They can block a reinstallation.** A Windows Installer product registration without a matching program makes Windows believe the software is already installed, so a new setup refuses to run or fails with an unhelpful error.
- **They keep an entry in your program list.** A *Programs and Features* entry pointing at an uninstaller that no longer exists cannot be removed by Windows itself.

The third case in particular is the classic "I cannot get rid of this entry" problem.

What O&O AppBuster looks for

Orphaned Windows apps

A data folder exists under `%LocalAppData%\Packages` whose package family does not belong to any installed Windows app. The app is gone; its settings, caches and saved state are still on disk.

Orphaned desktop apps

Either of the following:

- The app's registered **install location** exists in the registry but the directory is not on disk any more.
- The app has **no install location** and none of the files it points to — its icon, its uninstall program — can be found.

Ghost installer registrations

A Windows Installer product is registered under `HKCR\Installer\Products`, but there is no matching uninstall entry, and the product is not among the installed apps. These are the registrations that block reinstallations.

:::info Registration present, files present → not orphaned If a ghost registration is found but the program's files are **still on disk**, the app is not orphaned — it is defect. The app still works; only its installer metadata is broken. O&O AppBuster reclassifies these so they are not treated as harmless leftovers. :::

Understanding a leftover before removing it

Leftovers rarely have friendly names. What Windows keeps is a technical identifier, so a leftover may appear as something like `Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe` or a bare GUID.

For orphaned apps, O&O AppBuster therefore tries to interpret the identifier, and shows the result in the app's properties:

Field	Meaning
Friendly Name	A readable name for what this leftover belonged to
Original Identifier	The raw identifier as Windows stored it
Original Name	The name recorded in the registration, where one exists
Vendor / Product Family	Which manufacturer and product family it appears to come from
Likely Purpose	What the component was probably for — a browser sandbox, an Office add-in, a sync component
Confidence	High , Medium or Low — how reliable the interpretation is
Description	A longer explanation of the interpretation

If the identifier cannot be interpreted, the friendly name reads *Unknown orphaned application entry* and the description says that no reliable product mapping could be determined.

:::warning Confidence matters A **High** confidence entry has been recognised as a known leftover. An unknown entry has not — it just looks like one. Read the identifier and the install location before removing anything you cannot place. :::

Components that belong to a program that is still installed

Some entries look orphaned but are not: they are **supplementary components** installed by a larger program. A plugin service, an Office add-in, a device-communication helper. They often have no install location of their own, because they install into their parent program's directory — which is exactly the signal O&O AppBuster uses to detect an orphan.

Removing such a component does not clean anything up; it breaks the parent program. Typical examples are a manufacturer's device plugin service, or a meeting add-in for Office.

O&O AppBuster carries a safeguard for known supplementary components and does not classify them as orphaned while their parent is still installed. It cannot know every such component, though, so if an entry's name mentions an *add-in*, a *plugin*, a *service* or a *helper* for a program you still use, leave it alone.

Cleaning up

Orphaned entries are removed like any other app: select them and click **Uninstall**. Since there is no program left to uninstall, O&O AppBuster removes the leftover itself:

Type	What is removed
Orphaned Windows app	The data folder under <code>%LocalAppData%\Packages</code>
Orphaned desktop app	The stale uninstall entries in the registry (64-bit view, 32-bit view and the current user's hive) and any remaining install directory
Ghost installer registration	The Windows Installer product registration and the installer's user-data entries

If files are locked by a running program, you are offered the same choices as for a normal removal: close the blocking programs, defer the deletion to the next restart, or skip the item.

Removing apps

:::warning This deletes files and registry keys Removing orphaned entries requires care because no uninstaller is available to verify the cleanup. Create a system restore point first and review the entries one at a time. :::

When the Orphaned chip does not appear

The **Orphaned** Smart View chip is only shown when there is something in it. On a PC that has not had much software come and go, you may never see it — which is the good case.

Defect Apps

A defective app is still installed and may continue to work, but Windows can no longer uninstall, repair, or update it. O&O AppBuster can detect these entries and remove them without requiring manual registry edits.

Defect apps are shown with the type **Defect App**.

What is broken

Programs installed by the Windows Installer (MSI) do not carry their uninstaller inside the program folder. Windows keeps a **cached copy of the installer package** in its own storage and uses that copy whenever the app is to be uninstalled, repaired or updated.

If that cached `.msi` file disappears — because a disk cleanup tool deleted it, a drive error damaged it, or a migration left it behind — then:

- **Uninstalling fails.** `msiexec` cannot find the package it needs.
- **Repair fails**, for the same reason.
- **Updates fail**, because an MSI update is applied against the cached package.
- **The entry stays in *Programs and Features* forever.**

The program itself often continues to work. It is simply no longer manageable.

How O&O AppBuster detects it

For every MSI-based app, O&O AppBuster:

1. reads the uninstall command Windows recorded for it and confirms that it uses `msiexec`,
2. extracts the product GUID from that command,
3. looks up the cached package path (`LocalPackage`) in the Windows Installer user data — across all user profiles, not just yours,
4. checks whether that file actually exists.

If the recorded package is missing, the app is marked as defect. If no package path is recorded at all but the product is still registered under `HKCR\Installer\Products`, that also counts as defect.

Apps whose uninstall command is a normal program rather than `msiexec` are never classified as defect — they carry their own uninstaller and are unaffected by this problem. Apps without a valid product GUID are skipped rather than guessed at.

:::info Bridge apps are included Programs that are installed by an MSI but also register as a Windows package — Visual Studio Code and TortoiseGit are typical — are checked too. For those, O&O AppBuster looks up the matching MSI registration by display name. :::

Removing a defect app

This is the one case where O&O AppBuster deliberately does **not** use the app's own uninstaller — because that uninstaller cannot work. Instead it removes the app directly:

1. The **Windows Installer product registration** is removed, including the installer's user-data entries.
2. The **uninstall registry entries** are removed — from the 64-bit registry view, the 32-bit view and the current user's hive.
3. The app's **remaining files** are deleted, if its install directory still exists.

No external installer process is started, so nothing can fail halfway through waiting for a package that is not there.

Select the app and click **Uninstall**, exactly as for any other app. After the next refresh (**F5**) it is gone from the list.

Removing apps

:::warning The app is still installed This is the important difference from an orphaned app. An orphaned entry is a leftover — there is no working program behind it. A defect app **is** a working program with a broken installer. Removing it removes real software.

So decide first: do you want to keep using the program, or get rid of it?

- **Get rid of it** → remove it here. This is the only way that works.
- **Keep it** → leave it alone, or reinstall it over the top from the manufacturer's current setup file. A fresh installation writes a fresh cached package and makes the app manageable again. :::

When files are in use

Because a defect app is usually still in use, it is more likely than average that some of its files are locked. O&O AppBuster offers the usual options: close the blocking programs and continue, schedule the deletion for the next restart, or skip the app.

Restart the PC when asked to — otherwise part of the program stays behind.

Preventing it

Defective app entries are often caused when a cleanup tool removes files from the Windows Installer cache. Do not delete files manually from `%WINDIR%\Installer` ; Windows needs this cache to repair, update, and uninstall software.

Do not let a cleaner delete `%WINDIR%\Installer` . Space saved there is paid for later.

When the Defect chip does not appear

The **Defect** Smart View chip is only shown when defect apps were actually found. On a healthy system it is not there at all.

Newly Discovered Apps

Software has a way of appearing on a Windows PC without anyone asking for it. A feature update reinstalls apps you removed, an installer brings a companion tool along, a program adds a helper service during its own update.

O&O AppBuster remembers what was on your PC the last time you used it, and shows you what has changed since.

How it works

At the end of a session, O&O AppBuster stores a fingerprint of the apps that were present. At the start of the next session it compares the new scan against that record. Anything not in the record is flagged as new or changed.

Those apps:

- appear in the **Newly discovered** Smart View,
- are highlighted in the list with a small **new** marker.

The chip is only shown when there is something new to see, and only once a previous session's record exists — so it will not appear the very first time you run the program.

Why it is useful

- **After a Windows feature update.** Windows likes to bring back apps you deliberately removed. This is the fastest way to spot them.
- **After installing something.** Many installers add more than the program you asked for. Here you see exactly what arrived.
- **On a PC you look after for someone else.** "What has changed since I last cleaned this up?" answered in one click.
- **As a habit.** Starting O&O AppBuster occasionally and glancing at this view takes half a minute and keeps surprises small.

Marking them as viewed

When you have looked at the new apps, click **Mark all as viewed**.

This saves the current state as the new baseline and clears the *new* markers. The chip disappears, and the next time you start O&O AppBuster only apps that appeared *after* this point will be flagged.

If you do not mark them, they stay flagged as new — useful if you want to come back to them later, but it also means the view slowly stops being informative.

:::tip The rhythm that works Open O&O AppBuster after every larger Windows update, look at **Newly discovered**, remove what you do not want, then **Mark all as viewed**. Your baseline is current again, and the next check is just as quick. :::

What counts as "new"

The comparison is based on which apps are present, so:

- A **newly installed app** shows up as new.
- An **app that was reinstalled** by Windows after you removed it shows up as new — which is exactly the point.
- An **app that only received an update** may show up as changed if its registration changed.
- An **app you removed yourself** simply disappears from the list; removals are not flagged.

Relationship to "Recently installed"

The two views answer different questions and often disagree, which is intended:

Smart View	Question it answers	Based on
Recently installed	What has been installed in the last 30 days?	The app's install date as recorded by Windows
Newly discovered	What has appeared since I last used O&O AppBuster?	O&O AppBuster's own record from your last session

An app can be *recently installed* without being *newly discovered* — you already saw it last week. And an app can be *newly discovered* while carrying an old install date, because Windows sometimes restores an app with its original date. In that case **Newly discovered** is the more truthful of the two.

More O&O Products

O&O AppBuster is freeware and includes all of its features at no charge. When you close the program, it may open a separate **O&O Tools for Windows** window where you can discover other O&O products or subscribe to the free O&O newsletter.

:::info Separate products The products shown in this window are not part of O&O AppBuster. Selecting a product opens its website; O&O AppBuster does not download or install it automatically. :::

Open the product window

The window can open automatically when you close O&O AppBuster. You can also open it at any time from **Help → Explore more O&O products....**

It appears no more than once during a session. It is not shown automatically when:

- you have already opened it during the current session,
- you selected **Do not show this message again** previously, or
- O&O AppBuster was started with the `/quiet` parameter.

Selecting **Do not show this message again** only disables the automatic display when you close O&O AppBuster. The Help-menu command remains available.

Explore O&O products

The window presents products that cover several common Windows tasks:

Product	Purpose
O&O Syspectr	Remote monitoring and management of PCs and servers
O&O DiskImage	Backup and recovery of drives and complete systems
O&O Defrag	Storage optimization for PCs and servers
O&O DiskRecovery	Recovery of deleted files and data from damaged file systems
O&O ShutUp10	Control of Windows privacy settings
O&O SafeErase	Secure, unrecoverable deletion of files and free space

Select a product card to open the corresponding O&O website in your browser. You can also browse all O&O products.

Subscribe to the O&O newsletter

The lower part of the window contains an optional newsletter form:

1. Enter your email address.
2. Select **Subscribe**.
3. Open the confirmation email and follow its instructions to complete the double opt-in.

The form validates the email address before it can be submitted. A confirmation message appears after a successful request. O&O AppBuster then remembers that you subscribed and shows the newsletter section in its subscribed state the next time you open the product window.

The privacy notice in the window explains how O&O Software processes the email address. You can manage or cancel the subscription at any time from the O&O newsletter page.

Newsletter registration is optional and does not affect O&O AppBuster.

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Is O&O AppBuster really free?

Yes. O&O AppBuster is freeware: free of charge, without a time limit, without registration, and usable on as many PCs as you like. See Freeware.

Is there a Pro, Premium or Enterprise version of O&O AppBuster?

No. There is exactly one version, and it is the one described in this documentation. If a website offers you a paid "Pro version of O&O AppBuster", it is not from us.

When you close O&O AppBuster, it may show links to other O&O products and an optional newsletter form. See [More O&O products](#).

Do I have to install it?

No. O&O AppBuster is a single executable. Download it, run it, delete it again when you are done. Its only footprint is a configuration file in your user profile.

Which Windows versions are supported?

Windows 10 and Windows 11, on x64 and ARM64. Earlier Windows versions are not supported — they do not have the modern app platform O&O AppBuster is built around. See [System requirements](#).

Does it install any additional software?

No. O&O AppBuster comes on its own. If you obtained a version whose installer offers toolbars or "optimisers", it was repackaged by a third party — please let us know where you found it.

Does it run in the background?

No. O&O AppBuster works while it is open and leaves nothing behind when you close it. There is no service, no scheduled task and no autostart entry.

Starting the program

Why does it require administrator rights?

Because everything it does needs them: uninstalling apps, deleting registry entries and files, and creating a system restore point. Asking once at startup means you get a **single UAC prompt per session** instead of one for every action.

Can I use it without administrator rights?

No. Without them the program cannot start.

The scan takes a long time. Is something wrong?

Probably not. The scan enumerates the Windows package system and several registry locations; on a PC with many desktop programs this takes longer. Sizes on disk are calculated in the background afterwards, which is why the **Storage** column keeps filling in after the list has appeared.

Which languages does the interface support?

English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Japanese and Chinese. Change it under **File** → **Settings** → **General**; the program restarts to apply it.

The app list

Why do I see far more apps than in the Windows Apps & features page?

Because Windows only shows you part of the picture. O&O AppBuster additionally lists system apps, framework apps, hidden apps, staged packages and the leftovers of earlier uninstallations, and it reads registry locations the Windows dialog ignores. See App categories.

The list is shorter than I expected. Where did the rest go?

One of the **View** menu options is hiding them — most likely *Show Microsoft apps* or *Show system and framework apps*. Whenever that is the case, a notice above the list says how many apps are hidden and offers **Show all**.

Why can I not uninstall some apps?

They are system apps or framework apps. Windows and other programs depend on them, so they are shown for information only, with the status *Unremovable*. See System and framework apps.

What do "keep", "optional" and "remove" mean?

They are O&O AppBuster's recommendations. *remove* means nothing depends on the app; *optional* means removing it is safe but it is a matter of taste; *keep* means leave it alone. Anything O&O AppBuster does not explicitly classify defaults to *keep*. See Recommendations.

An app I never use says "keep". Why?

Because O&O AppBuster does not recognise it and will not guess. A wrong *keep* costs you some disk space; a wrong *remove* could break something. Decide for yourself using the app's properties.

How do I find the apps that use the most space?

Sort by **Storage** in descending order. Combined with the **Recommended removal** chip, this is the quickest route to a noticeable amount of free space.

Removing apps

Can I undo a removal?

Not from within O&O AppBuster directly. Your options are:

- **Windows apps** — install them again from O&O AppBuster, or get them from the Microsoft Store.
- **Desktop apps** — reinstall from their own setup file.
- **Everything** — restore a system restore point created beforehand.

What is the difference between the three removal scopes?

Current user removes the app from your account only. **All users** removes it from every account on the PC. **Entire PC — including files** removes it everywhere and deletes its leftover files from disk. The last one is the most thorough and frees the most space. See Removing apps.

Why can I not choose a scope for some apps?

Because they are desktop apps. Desktop apps are removed by their own uninstaller and have no concept of per-user removal. The removal dialog tells you when your selection contains desktop apps.

Why does another window open during a removal?

That is the desktop app's own uninstaller. O&O AppBuster starts it and waits for it to finish, because the uninstaller knows about services, drivers and file associations a generic remover would miss. You may have to confirm its dialogs.

An app was skipped because a file is in use. What now?

The result dialog offers three ways forward: **Close these programs and remove**, **Remove on next restart**, or **Skip this app**. If you choose the second one, restart your PC to complete the removal.

Can I get a record of what was removed?

Yes. The result dialog has a **Save log...** button which writes a report with the scope, the apps removed, and the apps skipped along with the reasons.

I removed an app and it came back after a Windows update.

That happens — feature updates reinstall apps that Windows considers part of the experience. Start O&O AppBuster after a big update and check the **Newly discovered** Smart View; anything that reappeared will be there.

Leftovers, orphaned and defect apps

What is an "orphaned" app?

A leftover: the program was uninstalled but its data folder, registry entries or installer registration are still there. They take up space and can block a later reinstallation. See Orphaned apps.

What is a "defect" app?

An MSI-installed program whose cached installer package has gone missing. Windows can no longer uninstall, repair or update it, although the program itself often still works. See Defect apps.

Is it safe to remove orphaned entries?

Usually, but this is the most invasive thing O&O AppBuster does — there is no uninstaller involved that could know better. Create a system restore point first, check the **Confidence** field in each entry's properties, and work through them one at a time rather than selecting all of them at once.

Be especially careful with entries that look like an *add-in*, a *plugin*, a *service* or a *helper* for a program you still use — those may be components of a program that is still installed.

The Orphaned or Defect chip is not there.

Then nothing was found in that category. That is the good case.

Why does a program refuse to reinstall even though I uninstalled it?

Very often because a ghost Windows Installer registration is left behind: Windows still believes the software is installed. Look at the **Orphaned** Smart View — removing that registration usually solves it.

Updates

Why is the update feature not available?

It needs the **Windows Package Manager** (`winget`), which comes with the *App Installer* package from the Microsoft Store. If it is not present, the setting is disabled and says so. Install **App Installer** from the Store to enable it.

Why did an individual update fail?

Updates are carried out by the Windows Package Manager, not by O&O AppBuster. An update can fail because the app is running, because the publisher's download is temporarily unavailable, or because the app is not in the winget catalogue under the name Windows recorded for it.

Can O&O AppBuster install updates automatically?

No. It updates apps when you ask it to and does not run in the background. If you want that, `winget upgrade --all` in a scheduled task is the Windows-native way.

Does it also update Windows apps from the Store?

No. Those are updated by the Microsoft Store itself.

Data and privacy

Where does O&O AppBuster store its settings?

In one file in your user profile:

```
%LocalAppData%\00 Software\00 AppBuster\00AppBuster.cfg
```

Delete it to reset the program to its defaults.

Where is the log file?

Next to the configuration file, as `00AppBuster.log` — but only if you switched logging on under **File** → **Settings** → **Advanced**. It is off by default.

Does O&O AppBuster send data anywhere?

The program checks for new versions online when you ask it to. The product window opens product pages in your browser, and the newsletter form sends the email address you enter only after you select **Subscribe**. O&O AppBuster does not transmit an inventory of your apps.

Does O&O AppBuster change my privacy settings?

No. O&O AppBuster only manages apps. O&O ShutUp10 is available separately for Windows privacy settings; see [More O&O products](#).

Support

How do I stop the product window from appearing when I close AppBuster?

Select **Do not show this message again** in the product window. This disables its automatic display, but you can still open it from **Help** → **Explore more O&O products....**

Where do I get help?

- This documentation — reachable from the program via **Help** → **Online help** or the **F1** key.
- The O&O support pages.

If you contact support about a problem, switch logging on first (**File** → **Settings** → **Advanced**), reproduce the problem, and attach `00AppBuster.log`.

How do I know which version I have?

Help → **About**. The dialog also shows system information about your Windows installation, and offers **Check online for new version**.