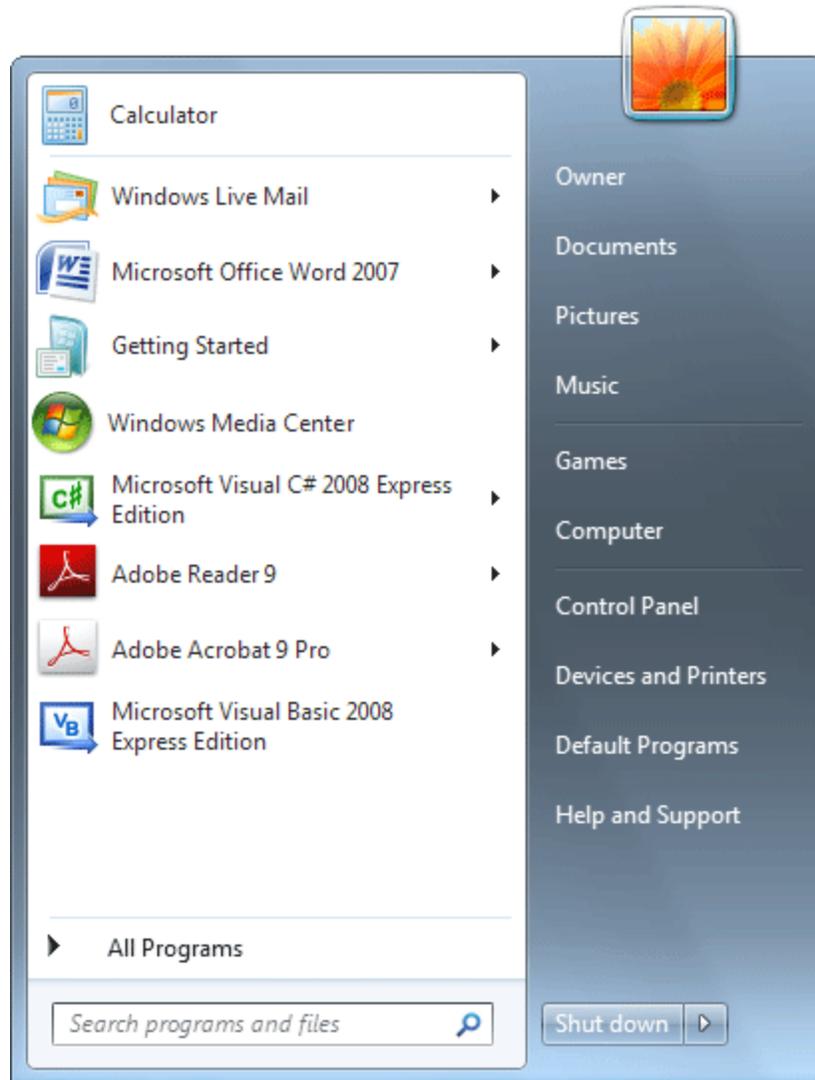


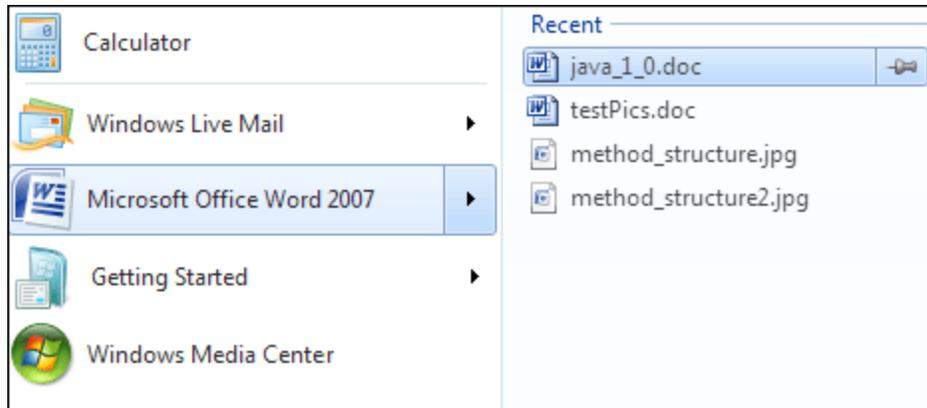
Arguably, the most important part of the Taskbar is the Start button. The Start button is where a lot of the action takes place in Windows 7. The Start button can be found in the bottom left of your screen, and looks like this:



Click the Start button once with your left mouse button and you'll see a menu appear:



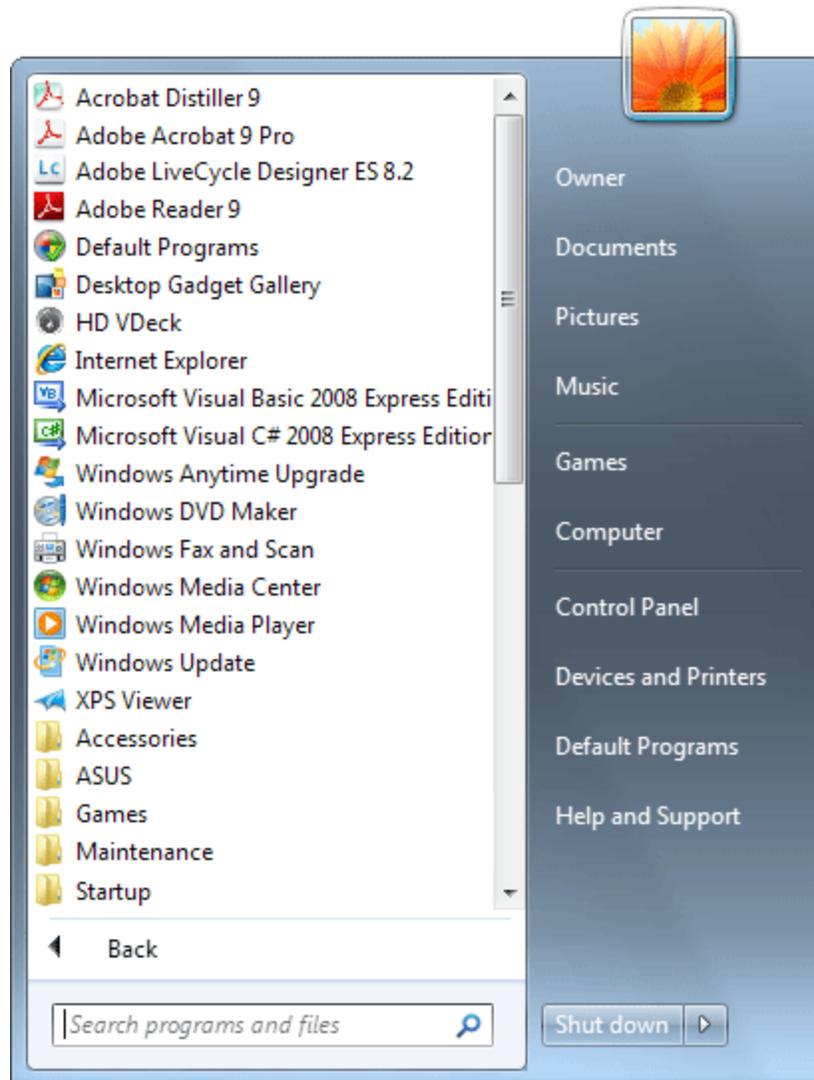
The Start menu is split into two different areas. The white area on the left is for software programs that you have installed on your computer. But these are the programs you have recently used. If an entry has a black arrow it means that documents can be opened by clicking the shortcut. For example, here's what happens when we click our Microsoft Word entry above:



We have four recently opened documents that we can click on. These will then open in Word.

Notice the small pin icon to the right of the Recent list. Clicking the icon will pin that document to the Word shortcut menu. This is useful if you open one particular document all the time.

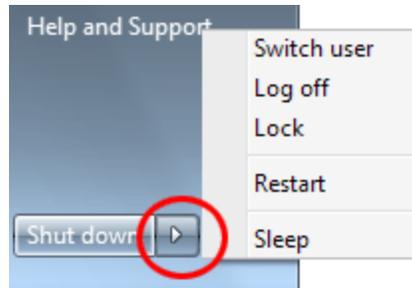
You can see more software by clicking on "All Programs" at the bottom of the Start menu. The area on the left will be replaced by a list of programs available to you:



Software can be launched by clicking on an icon with the left mouse button. However, the yellow folders will expand when you click on them, revealing more options available to you.

To start the program, click once with your left mouse button on your chosen item. To return to the first list of programs, click < Back at the bottom of the menu.

The other area is the darker strip on the right. These are shortcuts for locations on your computer. One more thing to notice in the dark area on the right of the Start menu is the Shut down button. Clicking this will obviously shut down your computer, but click the arrow to the right of the Shutdown button to see the following options:



As you can see, there are five options on the menu. The first is useful if you share your computer with others, and have set up multiple accounts. Click Switch user to see other account names. A user can then enter login details without the need to shutdown the computer and start again. The Log Off option logs you out of your account. Again, the computer doesn't shut down. Instead, you'll see a screen where you or others can log back in again. The Lock option prevents others from using the computer until you enter your password again.

The final two options are Restart and Sleep. The Restart is self-explanatory. But the Sleep option is useful if you're not going to be using the computer for a while. It powers down the hardware, saving you energy.