HACK YOUR BROWSER

Secret tricks to improve Chrome, Firefox, IE & Opera page 40

PLUS

Which Anti-Virus Should You Now Use?

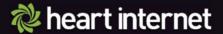## What to switch to and what to avoid p20

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AND...

Transform your Start menu
Make Windows easier

Update old drivers in one click
Best free program to use

New CCleaner tool your PC needs now! p57

A better browser for everyone

We all use web browsers. From their humble beginnings, when they did little more than show you the words and pictures that people left on their websites, they've grown into sophisticated tools capable of all sorts of wonderful things, such as playing videos, running complex computer programs and keeping us safe from hackers and snoops.
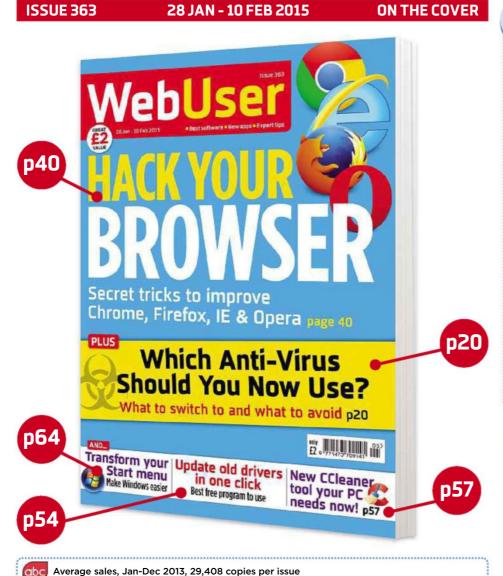
However, there's always room for improvement. Our cover feature (page 40) shows you some new tricks that will surprise even the experts. Whether you're using Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Opera, Pale Moon or Maxthon, our advanced tricks and tips will make your browser better than ever.

Once you've got your browser into shape, we'll help you sort out the rest of your PC, including a new way to update your drivers (page 54); a guide to CCleaner's new Disk Analyzer (page 57); and tips for silencing the annoying beeps and pings that plague your devices (page 48).

Andy Shaw
andy_shaw@dennis.co.uk
#webuser

ISSUE 363   **28 JAN - 10 FEB 2015**   **ON THE COVER**

p40
p20
p64
p54
p57

5 Things you'll learn this issue

1 How to find out how well your tweets are performing
page 14

2 How to automatically convert units and currencies in Chrome
page 32

3 How to track Amazon prices so you can buy items when they are cheapest
page 56

4 How to turn your Raspberry Pi into a music-streaming jukebox
page 58

5 How to add an XP-style Start menu to Windows 7 and 8
page 64

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Contents

FREE
TOUCHSCREEN
GLOVES!

SUBSCRIPTIONS

COVER FEATURE

HACK YOUR BROWSER
Secret tricks to improve Chrome, Internet Explorer, Firefox and more!

p40

Which anti-virus software offers the best protection? **p20**

Put a stop to buzzes, beeps and not-so-good vibrations **p48**

Contents

WU www.webuser.co.uk
f www.facebook.com/webusermagazine
www.twitter.com/webusermagazine

FAVOURITES Must-read regulars

When it comes to storage, why is Apple's core so small? **p74**

Practical WebUser
Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

17 pages

Update your hardware drivers with IObit **p54**

Turn your Raspberry Pi into a streaming jukebox **p58**
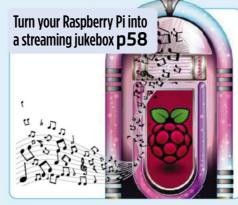
What's New Online

Start live video chats using Firefox Hello

Mozilla has launched a simplified version of Firefox Hello, its free, live video-chat service that lets you talk to anyone via the browser. In the previous version – released as a beta in October – you couldn't browse the web while waiting for your contact to join the chat. Now, however, a small window pops up, letting you visit websites as you wait.

Whoever starts the chat has to do so in Firefox, but the person responding can use Chrome, Opera or Firefox. All three browsers use the WebRTC technology (www.webrtc.org) that allows live video chats without the need to install plug-ins. In October last year, Microsoft said it was backing WebRTC, but the company hasn't yet added support to Internet Explorer, which is why it's still incompatible with Firefox Hello.

To start a chat, click the smiley-face icon in the menu bar. If you can't see it, click the menu button, then click Customise at the bottom of the window and drag the Hello icon up to the top bar. Firefox Hello is very easy to use, though it lacks some of Skype's more advanced features. Click the link below for full instructions.

This new version of Firefox Hello is built into Firefox 35, which launched in mid January. Read Mozilla's blog for more info: bit.ly/mozblog363. bit.ly/hello363

Discover the most popular dog breeds near you

bit.ly/dogs363
Do you live in an area of Border Collies, Shih Tzus or Cocker Spaniels? This interactive BBC map uses 10 years of micro-chipping data to work out the most popular breeds in specific areas of the UK. It shows that Staffordshire bull terriers dominate Sunderland, jack russell terriers rule Bristol, and Halifax is home to greyhounds. But the UK's most popular dog overall is the labrador retriever – more than 509,000 were tagged in the past 10 years, followed by 376,000 jack russells and 356,000 staffies.

The data comes from pet-registration companies Petlog and Animalcare, covering around 60 per cent of the country's canine population, but excluding crossbreeds.

Play 2,300 MS-DOS games

bit.ly/msdos363
The Internet Archive has expanded its collection of retro games you can play online, adding 2,300 MS-DOS titles to join the site's 900 arcade (bit.ly/arcade363) and console games (bit.ly/console363). Some games you may have heard of, such as Wolfenstein 3D, Frogger, Pole Position, Street Fighter and Ms Pac-Man (see screengrab). Others are more obscure – for example, do you remember Captain Bible in the Dome of Darkness? The EM-DOSBOX browser emulator in which the games run is still in beta, so if you experience any problems, get help from the Internet Archive's FAQ page: bit.ly/faqdos363.
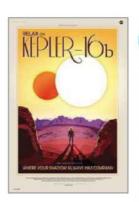
We highlight 10 of the most amazing and amusing things you can do on the web this fortnight

Download Nasa's exoplanet posters

bit.ly/kepler363

Nasa has designed stunning retro-style holiday posters for three exoplanets (which orbit stars outside the Solar System) discovered by its Kepler telescope. Our favourite is this one for Kepler 16-b, which has two suns, and looks remarkably similar to Tatooine from *Star Wars*. They make for wonderful Desktop wallpapers – just download them from the link above.

Use Office apps on Android

bit.ly/android363

You can now use the preview versions of the Word, PowerPoint and Excel apps on your Android tablet since Microsoft made them available to anyone. Until now, you had to sign up to betas through Microsoft's Google+ page. However, you'll need an Android tablet running KitKat or Lollipop that's powered by an ARM processor (all Nexus tablets are) and has a screen size between 7 and 10.1 inches. Click the link to find out more on Microsoft's Office blog, and for links to the apps.

See Northern Lights in Street View

bit.ly/lights363

Looking at the Northern Lights in Street View may not be as spectacular as witnessing the phenomena in real life, but at least you won't need to wear thermal underwear. The stunning images in this new gallery were captured in the middle of a frozen lake in the north of Finland. Click the link above to start exploring the images, which are part of Google's Special Collections. To see other collections, including around 50 in the UK, visit bit.ly/view363 and zoom into the map.

Explore London as it was in 1561

bit.ly/map363

In this map of London, made by cartographer Ralph Agas (1540-1621), Islington is a remote village, there's only one bridge over the Thames and the South Bank's main attraction is a bear-baiting pit. You can zoom into this interactive version, which lets you highlight streets, churches, buildings and more, then click through for more information.

5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@sway
Tips and news about Sway, the new web-based presentation tool from Microsoft

@FUKPnews
Follow Al Murray Pub Landlord as he takes on Farage at the polls

@23andMe
Official site of the new Google-backed company selling do-it-yourself DNA kits

@RetailOmbudsman
Updates from the new consumer watchdog

@joancollinsobe
Photos of "wintry Manhattan mornings" and celebrity events from the English actress

See 2014's most-viewed Wikipedia pages

bit.ly/wiki363

The pages for 'Robin Williams' and 'Ice Bucket Challenge' were two of the most visited on Wikipedia last year. News website Quartz's interactive graphic shows the most popular page for every day of 2014.

Watch Netflix on YouView

bit.ly/talk363

TalkTalk has added Netflix to its YouView boxes. It will be available first to those who pre-registered for Netflix, but anyone should be able to watch it by the end of January.

Save Outlook attachments to OneDrive
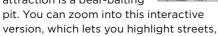
bit.ly/drive363

You can now save attachments in Outlook to OneDrive in one click. When an attachment arrives, click 'Save to OneDrive' to save the file to a new OneDrive 'Email attachments' folder. Click the link above to read more on Microsoft's Office blog.

Google refuses Android patch for bug hitting a billion devices

What happened?

Google has said it won't fix a bug in Android, despite the fact that it will leave a billion phones and tablets vulnerable worldwide.

The bug, discovered by researchers at security firm Rapid7, is in a component called WebView, which Android uses to show web pages in apps that aren't browsers, such as when you click a link in Twitter. It affects versions of Android older than KitKat (4.4) which, Google claims, is now too old for the company to invest time and resources to fix.

"If the affected version is before 4.4, we generally do not develop the patches ourselves, but welcome patches with the report for consideration," Google told Rapid7.

This means that unless a security firm releases a fix approved by Google, any device running Android Jelly Bean (4.1 to 4.3) or a previous version will be at risk of being hacked. According to Google's statistics, around two-thirds of Android phones and tablets run Jelly Bean or earlier. Jelly Bean was released in mid-2012 and is used on more devices than its successor KitKat.

Google isn't just being difficult or trying to force users to buy newer devices. The affected part of WebView, the WebKit rendering engine, was replaced by a new system called Blink in Android 4.4 and 5. This makes it difficult for Google to update, because the company would have to issue an update via manufacturers and mobile operators. It has done this in the past, such as for last year's Heartbleed flaw, but it is a rare occurrence.

Devices running Android KitKat and Lollipop aren't vulnerable to the flaw

How will it affect you?

If you use a device that runs Jelly Bean or earlier, don't panic. Hackers haven't yet exploited the flaw, and it's unclear whether it is serious enough to let them infiltrate a device. However, with so many phones and tablets vulnerable, you can bet they will be trying to. If you were considering buying an Android 4.3 device, no matter how cheap it may now be, you should certainly think twice.

Because WebKit isn't being updated in older phones, it's a good move to download and use an alternative browser that will receive updates, rather than sticking with the standard Android one. However, this flaw is in WebView, which is also used by apps that aren't browsers. This means that you should follow safe web-surfing advice by being extra cautious when clicking a link you're unsure about.

It's also worth keeping an eye out for a security fix. Perhaps a company out there will see it is a smart way of winning the hearts and minds of a billion Android users.

What do we think?

What a disappointing response from Google. The tech giant seems to be telling us that devices a mere two years old are too ancient to be fixed, yet its own numbers show that despite new smartphones selling in their millions every year, most of us are on older handsets. Maybe we just want to stick with what's familiar, or have inherited a handset when a friend or family member upgraded, or are waiting for an upgrade of our own. Either way, the onus is on Google to issue key updates. How did it manage to design a system that was so difficult to maintain?

Imagine the backlash if a major flaw were to hit Windows and Microsoft refused to update it. Indeed, last year Microsoft said it would stop issuing security updates for Windows XP – which came out in 2001 – but when a major flaw was found soon afterwards, the company relented and released a patch to help protect users.

It's fair to point out that the problem isn't only with Google: manufacturers and mobile operators aren't very good at pushing out updates that are issued. But rather than give up, Google could use its considerable power to implement a better system. We think the company should be working harder to keep its many users safe.

What we think of this fortnight's top tech news stories and rumours, and how they affect you

David Cameron calls for ban on online encryption

What happened?

Prime Minister David Cameron called for a ban on encrypted online communication services. He said the UK can't "allow a means of communications which it simply isn't possible to read". His call followed the British government's initial response to the murders at the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, which was to renew calls for the so-called Snooper's Charter, giving security forces greater access to our digital communications.

In response to Cameron's statement, many experts said that such a move would be impossible, and would affect more websites than just communications services. Banks, online shops and even Cameron's own government websites all use encryption.

While we're likely to get a clearer view of the Prime Minister's plans ahead of the upcoming election, many assume his target is messaging services such as Apple's iMessage, Snapchat and WhatsApp. Security forces find it hard to crack messages sent on these services because they are protected by end-to-end encryption. This protects the message from when it's sent to when it's received.

How will it affect you?

As Cameron and his party have given so little detail on these plans, it's impossible to know what it means for users. It's hard to believe the UK would really ban a particular messaging app because security services couldn't access the data – it's the sort of thing that happens in China or Iran. It's also hard to imagine Cameron going up against the biggest US tech firms. Time will tell if this pledge dies following the negative reaction, or survives to find a place in the Tory election campaign.

What do we think?

Banning encryption is simply daft. It's on a par with saying we can't have sturdy locks on our doors because it makes it harder for police to kick them in. The murders in Paris were horrific, but could a ban on encrypted messaging services have prevented them? We realise that security services should have a reasonable amount of freedom to monitor suspected terrorists online, but banning WhatsApp and other sites is as technologically difficult as it is morally wrong.

Google updates Translate app with real-time tools

What happened?

Google updated its translation tools, adding voice-to-text and sign reading to its app. This means you can now speak into the app and it will turn what you say into written text in a different language. You can also now point your phone's camera at a foreign-language sign and use the Word Lens tool to see the translation on screen. The tools come as part of an update to the Google Translate app, which is free for Android (bit.ly/transand363) and iOS (bit.ly/transios363).

The new features arrive a month or so after Microsoft released the beta version of its Skype Translator (bit.ly/skype363), which translates speech as you talk to someone, with only a few seconds delay. Currently it only translates between English and Spanish, but Microsoft intends it to work with 40 languages in all, including Klingon from *Star Trek*.
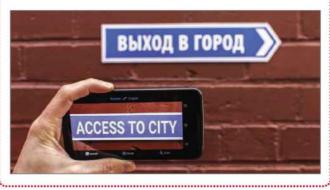
How will it affect you?

If you already have Google Translate on your smartphone, it should automatically update to the latest version featuring the new tools. To use the voice tool, tap the mic icon and start speaking. Google Translate will automatically recognise what language you're speaking. To access the Word Lens tool in the app, tap the camera icon and point your phone's lens at the text you want to translate. Google will translate the text directly on the image, so you'll see how the words fit into the context on a sign or menu, making it easier to read. Best of all, you don't need a data connection for the tool to work.

What do we think?

The computing power in our phones continues to astound. Making on-the-go translations from a hand-held device is a ridiculously powerful tool – one that makes wandering a foreign city and ordering from a local menu so much easier. With such tools, it's easy to imagine a world where differences in language no longer matter. Not bad for a free app!

BT faces pricing test from Ofcom

What happened?

BT's broadband prices could be forced up after the telecommunications watchdog Ofcom revealed a new test designed to ensure fair competition among ISPs. BT sells access to its network infrastructure to rival broadband providers, some of which have complained that it is charging too much, making it impossible for them to make enough profit. In response, Ofcom has come up with a new margin-pricing formula: if the difference between what BT charges its competitors for access to its network and what it charges its own customers is too small, the regulator will force it to change its pricing.

The test still has to be approved by the EU, but BT's pricing models would currently pass the existing criteria. That could change in the future, not least because broadband pricing isn't as simple as merely paying for a connection. Many customers bundle television services and mobile contracts, both of which raise issues for BT, which offers BT Sport television for free to its broadband customers and is in talks to buy mobile operator EE.

How will it affect you?

If BT fails the margin-pricing test, it will be forced to raise its own prices, cut what it charges rivals or perform a combination of both. Given the competitive pricing in the UK broadband market, it seems unlikely that BT would want to raise its own prices in the short term, and it wouldn't be able to make changes to existing contracts without risking losing customers. Indeed, if any communications provider raises prices mid-contract, you are allowed to cancel your contract without paying a penalty.

However, if BT cuts prices for rival ISPs, that doesn't mean you will pay less for broadband. This test is about protecting margins for ISPs using BT's network, so retail prices will probably stay the same in the short term.

What seems more likely to change is BT's ability to bundle freebies such as BT Sport and offer discounts on mobile contracts, so we may see fewer compelling offers from the company.

What do we think?

Ofcom is right to keep watch over the broadband market, because BT holds significant power thanks to its infrastructure. However, this test seems designed to ensure ISPs make enough money, rather than keep prices low for customers. Surely Ofcom's job is to protect consumers, not increase the profits of massive corporations.

FIRST LOOK

Asus EeeBook X205TA
bit.ly/asus363

We published a Group Test of Windows 8.1 laptops in Issue 362 of *Web User* (bit.ly/webuser362) and while the Asus EeeBook X205TA doesn't rival any of our award winners, it's a good Windows laptop for such a low price (£179).

The first thing that impressed us was the laptop's build quality. It doesn't feel cheap and nasty, like some budget models, and we liked its rounded corners and squared edges. Weighing in at 908g, it's also one of the lightest laptops we've ever tested. The screen isn't particularly brilliant, but its 1,366 x 768-pixel display is no worse than those found on other cheap laptops.

The keyboard is surprisingly capable and the keys feel light, responsive and not at all spongy. The touchpad is good, too, and makes navigating Windows and using multi-touch gestures easy.

The laptop has an impressive range of connections, with two USB ports, a microSD slot, a headphone jack and micro HDMI port, as well as Bluetooth and 802.11n Wi-Fi.

Inside, the laptop has a 1.3GHz Intel Atom Z3735F processor, which is more common in cheap Windows tablets. This caused us some initial concern, but the EeeBook X205TA performed fairly well in our multimedia tests, considering its low price. Despite having just 2GB of memory, it'll run a browser with plenty of tabs open and handle all the Microsoft Office programs without any fuss. However, it doesn't cope well with more challenging tasks such as video and photo editing.

The biggest problem for us was that installing Chrome and Microsoft Office on its 32GB eMMC drive left only about 10GB free. Thankfully, you get a year's free subscription to Office 365 and 1TB of OneDrive storage (worth £60), so there's plenty of space in the cloud to store your files.
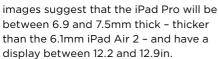
WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Apple set to release a larger iPad?

There's always an iPad rumour kicking around, and the latest one claims that Apple may be working on a larger, 12in model to release in the spring of this year.

Reports of the Apple iPad Pro or iPad Air Plus have popped up on lots of websites, with leaked photos of the exterior posted on nowhereelse.fr. The images suggest that the iPad Pro will be between 6.9 and 7.5mm thick – thicker than the 6.1mm iPad Air 2 – and have a display between 12.2 and 12.9in.

Other reports suggest Apple may be trying to compete with Microsoft's Surface tablets by having the iPad Pro run OS X Yosemite, the operating system that runs on Apple's Mac computers, rather than iOS, which normally runs on its tablets and smartphones. While that seems unlikely, the Macotakara website (www .macotakara.jp) put forward another rumour – that the 12in tablet will have a detachable keyboard, like the Surface Pro.

Industry analyst Ming-Chi Kuo of KGI Securities suggested that a larger iPad might come with a stylus, despite Steve

Jobs' previous assertion that a tablet which requires a pen is a sign that the manufacturer "blew it". That said, an iPad with a stylus would be handy for designers and business users. Last year, Apple signed a deal with IBM to help push its tablet to the corporate market.

We'll have to wait until at least April to find out if any of these rumours are correct, because that's the earliest release date mentioned in the reports.

LIKELIHOOD RATING
✓✓✓✓✓

A larger iPad with a stylus would be a major departure for Apple, but the number of rumours and leaks suggest it could be a real possibility. And it's worth remembering that the rumours of Apple messing with the size of its best-selling smartphone seemed very unlikely, until the company unveiled the larger iPhone 6.

Nowhereelse.fr
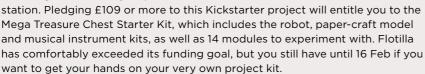
What's new on Kickstarter
Our favourite new project on the crowd-funding site

Flotilla for Raspberry Pi
bit.ly/flotilla363 | **From £1**

Powered by Raspberry Pi, Flotilla is a "tinkering kit" that lets you make "reactive and interactive projects" including a robot, a digital pet and even a weather station. Pledging £109 or more to this Kickstarter project will entitle you to the Mega Treasure Chest Starter Kit, which includes the robot, paper-craft model and musical instrument kits, as well as 14 modules to experiment with. Flotilla has comfortably exceeded its funding goal, but you still have until 16 Feb if you want to get your hands on your very own project kit.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Play classic games on the new ZX Spectrum
A new gaming console based on the ZX Spectrum is due to go on sale in April. The ZX Spectrum Vega (bit .ly/vega363) will contain 1,000 classic Spectrum games.

Charge devices wirelessly at McDonald's
McDonald's is to offer wireless charging spots at 50 restaurants in the UK, letting you power up your phone and tablets without having to plug them in.

WE DON'T LIKE...

Islamists attack French media websites
Islamist cyber-terrorists hacked the websites of many of France's biggest newspapers a week after the attack on the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*.

UK has a north-south broadband divide
A new report revealed the extent of the north-south broadband divide (bit.ly/ report363). None of the 10 cities or towns with the fastest speeds is north of Nottingham. Luton has the widest super-fast broadband coverage.

Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

SECURITY ALERT! | What's been bothering us this fortnight

Apple laptops vulnerable to 'undetectable' virus

A researcher in the US has discovered a way to install a virus on Apple laptops that cannot be detected or removed. For the Thunderstrike virus to install, an attacker needs access to the MacBook's Thunderbolt port, which at least means you can't catch it from the internet. The virus is then transferred onto the boot ROM (the chip that contains the information the computer needs to start up), where it can't be detected by regular security software. Even removing the hard drive won't clean it up.
bit.ly/thunder363

iPod Nano steals PIN numbers

Police have found an iPod Nano strapped to a cash machine in

PATCH TUESDAY: January

Microsoft's Patch Tuesday update for January included eight updates: one Critical and seven Important. The Critical update secures a problem with Microsoft's Telnet software, which is a command-line tool for controlling PCs remotely. A hacker could have used this exploit to gain access to any PC with Telnet installed.

Four of the seven Important patches are related to a problem with the elevation of privileges, whereby a rogue program could put itself into Administrator mode without notifying the user. If this happened, the program could make potentially harmful changes to the PC without issuing the usual warnings.

The other three updates fix security flaws that could have been used to bypass some of Windows' built-in security tools or used in denial-of-service attacks.
bit.ly/patch363

Manchester. Thieves were using the camera on a discontinued version of Apple's portable music player to film people entering their PIN codes. A fake front attached to the card slot trapped victims' cards so that only the thieves could retrieve them. Once the customer gave up trying to get their card back, the robbers would retrieve it and use it with the iPod-captured PIN to make purchases.
bit.ly/nano363

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

David Emm, Principal Security Researcher at Kaspersky Lab (www.kaspersky.co.uk)

Q Will we ever see another global security crisis like the Millennium bug?
David Goldfarb, via email

A There's something called the 'year 2038 problem' or 'Unix millennium bug', but I don't believe it's likely to be any more of a global security crisis than the Y2K bug turned out to be. Given our society's increasing dependence on connected systems, I think that attacks on 'critical infrastructure' in a particular country are more likely – which could then lead to knock-on effects.

Q With the US suggesting that North Korea was behind the attack on Sony, is there anything different we should do to protect our PCs against attacks from foreign governments?
Richard Howe, via email

A It is very difficult to identify those responsible for targeted attacks because the hackers can cover their tracks and deliberately mislead investigators.

To avoid becoming victims of these attacks, we should all be careful about what we do online and take steps to stay secure. This may mean using technology, such as internet security software and file encryption; changing how we operate online, by using unique, complex passwords for all our online accounts; and limiting what we post on social networks.

Q Does the end of Windows 7 support mean I have to upgrade my PC?
Jacob Jones, via email

A No. Microsoft has moved Windows 7 from 'mainstream support' to 'extended support'. This means that there will be no new features added to Windows 7, and you can no longer get free support. However, Microsoft will continue to provide critical security patches for the operating system until January 2020.

Email us your security questions at webuser@dennis.co.uk

Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

MUSEUM   RELAUNCH

Natural History Museum

www.nhm.ac.uk

London's most lavish home to dinosaurs, animals and the best wildlife photography has a new website that makes it easier to find out when to visit and what's on at the Natural History Museum. The updated modern look makes navigation easy, with large text and bold photos that work across Desktop browsers and mobile devices. Aside from the revamped main site, there's also a data portal that lets you search for information and data sets covering 2.5 million of the museum's 80 million specimens.
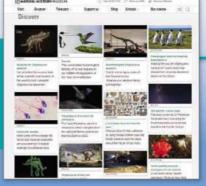
TAKE PART
Explore the entire collection of images from Wildlife Photographer of the Year

DISCOVER
Click the Discover tab to explore the museum's videos, photos and features

Our rating ★★★★★

MUSIC

Elvis The Music

www.elvisthemusic.com

Elvis Presley fans will know that 8 January marked what would have been the American icon's 80th birthday. This new website celebrating the event features lots of beautiful, bold images from the peak of Presley's career, but the site is short on content. There's a detailed discography, links to download stores, and a "news" section (though we wonder what's new with a man who died in 1977) and links to Spotify playlists – but that's it. Helpfully, the site provides an embedded music player so you can listen even if you're not a Spotify subscriber; annoyingly, you'll have to go to the What's New section to find it, rather than Playlists, which is a bit confusing.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

TRAVEL
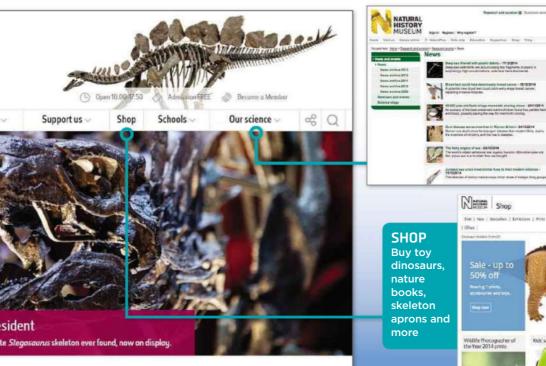
Skiplagged
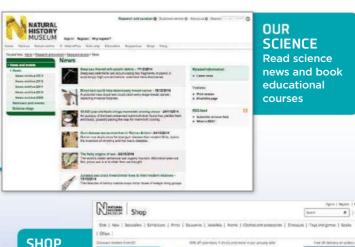
https://skiplagged.com

There's no shortage of sites offering discount-flight searches, but Skiplagged is different because it looks for flights within multi-leg trips. For example, a flight from Jacksonville, Florida to Chicago normally costs £100 or more, but booking a flight from Jacksonville to Edmonton, Canada, that stops over in Chicago, costs £82. Skiplagged lets you book the latter and simply abandon the trip in Chicago. The site is currently being sued by airlines, so book now while you have the chance. A bigger challenge may be the fiddly search tool, which sometimes brings up no results at all.

Our rating ★★★★☆

Reviews by Nicole Kobie

We review this fortnight's best new and relaunched websites and rate them for content, design and features

OUR SCIENCE
Read science news and book educational courses

SHOP
Buy toy dinosaurs, nature books, skeleton aprons and more

JOB SEARCH — NEW

Jobspotting
https://jobspotting.com/en

Looking for employment can be a full-time job in itself, and while the web has made it easier to browse advertised positions from different sources, it can be overwhelming. Jobspotting looks to simplify your search by pulling in posted jobs from a variety of sites into an easy-to-read feed. You can sign up via a LinkedIn account to make setting up a profile even quicker. If a job listing isn't right for you, click the thumbs-down icon, and the system will learn what you're looking for. At the moment, the site focuses on IT and marketing, but more areas are set to be added soon.

Our rating ★★★★★

VOLUNTEERING — RELAUNCH

Do-it
https://do-it.org

Have some spare time on your hands and want to do some good? Volunteering site Do-it has relaunched with a clean, new look designed for mobile devices, and better tools for logging in and sharing via social networks. You can set up a personalised search, picking from a list of options to find volunteering opportunities in your area, or browse by organisation or topic. Volunteer pages have full details of the help required, including schedules of when assistance is needed and maps to help you find the organisations. There's also a job search if you'd like to work for a charitable organisation.

Our rating ★★★★★

TECHNOLOGY — NEW

Demo Apple Watch
www.demoapplewatch.com

The Apple Watch isn't expected to arrive for another few months, but if you're desperate to find out more about the much-anticipated smartwatch, check out the online demo from app developer Pipes, which shows how the device will work. Click through the different options to see what the main display, push notifications and, of course, the Pipes app will look like on an Apple Watch. You can even upload a logo to see it on the display. If you're not sold on the idea of apps on a watch, this site won't convince you, but it's a clever sneak peek at the future of wearable devices.

Our rating ★★★☆☆ ➡

✚ Tell us about your website via webuser@dennis.co.uk

⭐ Best New Websites

NEW

TRAVEL
Single Holidays 101
www.101holidays.co.uk/singles

As many as a third of travellers go on holiday alone, according to Holidays 101, which has launched a website dedicated to solo travel. The site lists different tours suitable for single travellers, with details such as whether you'll have to pay extra for a single room, as well as links through to trusted operators to make your booking. There's a search tool to help narrow the options by price, destination and the type of holiday, but this site is best used as inspiration for more interesting travel ideas: the whale-watching page, for example, includes destinations as disparate as Iceland and Australia.

Our rating ★★★★☆

NEW

TECHNOLOGY
Lumia Conversations UK
lumiaconversationsuk.microsoft.com

Fans of Lumia phones – made by Nokia before it was bought by Microsoft – can visit Lumia Conversations UK for news on the latest devices, software updates and discounts, as well as app reviews and tutorials for getting the best out of your Lumia smartphone. Bookmark this site if you want to find out the cheapest place to buy a Lumia 735, how to set up email on your Windows Phone and which games you should install on your handset. But don't forget it's run by Microsoft, so it may be a bit one-sided.

Our rating ★★★★☆

RELAUNCH
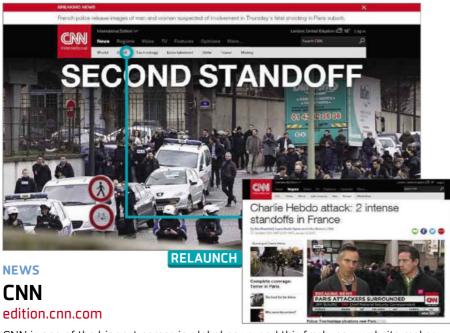
CYCLING
Cyclehack
www.cyclehack.com

Cycling can be surprisingly controversial in many cities, and this site looks to address the various challenges that stop people from getting on their bikes. Its founders, who are based in Beruit, Melbourne and Glasgow, share "cyclehacks" – solutions to everyday cycling problems – such as how to ride with a handbag, making skirts bikeable and wider issues around infrastructure. It's a great place to start if you're running a cycling campaign or just want tips on how to improve your ride. If you have an idea for a "hack" that you want help make happen, you can submit your suggestions via the website.

Our rating ★★★★☆

RELAUNCH

NEWS
CNN
edition.cnn.com

CNN is one of the biggest names in global news, and this fresh, new website makes its reports easier to access on tablets and smartphones. The new-look CNN features bolder images, larger headlines, cleaner design and makes more use of video and other interactive elements. Video clips are embedded directly in news stories and links to more information are easy to find along the left-hand side. For big, breaking news – such as the French shootings that are dominating the headlines at the time of writing – CNN puts a single image on the front page to highlight the importance of the story. It's a fresh, bold take for online news, and CNN was long due an update.

Our rating ★★★★☆

RELAUNCH

CHARITY
Traidcraft
www.traidcraft.co.uk

It's not easy to find fairly traded products in larger stores, so where should you shop? That's the question Tradefair's newly updated website sets out to answer, offering a wide selection of fair-trade products to buy, and providing information on finding various products, including tea, chocolate, jewellery and clothing. The site is a one-stop shop for anyone wanting to buy or sell fair-trade products. The updated site also features a Producer Map, highlighting where Traidcraft's partners are located around the world, with olive oil from Palestine, cotton toys from Sri Lanka and sugar from Mauritius.

Our rating ★★★★☆

➕ ALSO NEW

TRAVEL
Trip4Real
www.trip4real.com

★★★☆☆

The best tour guides are locals: that's the premise behind Trip4Real, which helps tourists find activities run by people who live in the area rather than global travel companies. In London, for example, there's a cycle tour of East London and a noodle-eating tour of Soho. So far, Trip4Real features only London and three cities in Spain; hopefully, more will be added soon.

CONSUMER RIGHTS
A Spokesman Said
www.aspokesmansaid.com

★★★★☆

If you're riled by a company's customer service, this site makes your complaint public, putting pressure on the firm to fix the problem quickly. File a complaint to start a countdown that gives the company two days to react. Responses are made public and companies are scored on how quickly and thoroughly they answer. Scores are totted up and published, so you can see which energy, property or other type of firm get the best and worst ratings.

FOOD
Lucky Peach
luckypeach.com

★★★★★

Quarterly magazine Lucky Peach has at long last created an online home for its clever and quirky food writers, with articles that include a feature on ramen noodles and a tour of Vegas' all-you-can-eat buffets. There's also a science section that provides an academic take on how cooking works.

POLITICS
2015 General Election Analysis
election2015.ifs.org.uk

★★★★☆

With campaigning already in full swing, the Institute for Financial Studies has set up a microsite to analyse the main parties' claims and policies. Funded by the Nuffield Foundation, it reveals the true effects of policy over the past five years and what each party's promises actually mean.

WEBSITE SECRETS

Google Now's secret voice commands

what is Johnny Depp's bacon number

2

Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter appeared in Dark Shadows. Helena Bonham Carter and Kevin Bacon appeared in Novocaine.

Most of the time you'll want to ask Google Now sensible questions, such as "is it raining outside?". But it also responds to quirkier enquiries, like "who are you?" – the answer to which will amuse fans of a certain English rock group. If you want to hear Google Now's endearingly awful attempt at a Scottish accent, say "Beam me up Scotty". Also try "What is the Bacon number of…" followed by the name of an actor. Find more at bit.ly/now363. ∎

➕ Tell us about your website via webuser@dennis.co.uk

</> Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Back up your website

Backing up your site is crucial, whether you run it manually or use a content-management system such as WordPress. CodeGuard (www.codeguard.com) takes regular snapshots of your site, saving any changes as it goes, so if something goes wrong, you can roll back your site to an earlier time. It can also be set to

warn you if changes are made, so you can check no-one else is editing your content.

CodeGuard's single-site Ninja plan costs $5 per month (£3.30), but you can try it free for 14 days before you make up your mind.

Site building with Fasthosts

Web-hosting company Fasthosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk) has a new online web-building tool to create professional-looking sites faster and more easily. It comes with 25 customisable templates that work as well on narrow mobile screens as they do on computer monitors.

Prices start from £5.99 a month for the basic Website Builder Essential package, which includes a free .uk or .co.uk domain name. The £11.99-per-month Complete package offers a wider choice of free domain names and tools to create an online shop, complete with a checkout that accepts credit card payments.

Deal of the Fortnight

1&1 is offering .com web addresses at £1.19 for the first year, down from £13.19. Find out more at www.1and1.co.uk/domain-names.

Web-building Helpdesk

This issue's expert: **OVH.co.uk** Innovation is Freedom

Neil Mundy, Technical Support Advisor, OVH (www.ovh.co.uk)

Q **What's the easiest way to transfer a domain from one host to another?**
Kev Hopwood, via Facebook

A Most hosting companies let you transfer domains using their control panel, without having to contact the support team. Transfer rules vary depending on the extension. With .com, for example, you usually just need to unlock the domain in the control panel to get an authorisation code. It can take up to 10 days to transfer. For .uk domains, however, you just need to update your Internet Provider Security (IPS) tag and your domain will be transferred immediately. Don't forget to make sure that your hosting provider supports the domain extension you want to transfer. At OVH, for instance, we support more than 500.

⚙ MINI WORKSHOP | Track your tweets with the Twitter Analytics dashboard
Twitter Analytics: ads.twitter.com | 🕐 **10 mins** | **Any browser**

Twitter is one of the most powerful tools we have for engaging visitors to our sites and persuading them to come back to see new content. Find out how your tweets perform using Twitter's built-in Analytics tool.

1 Go to ads.twitter.com and sign into your Twitter account. From the Analytics drop-down menu, choose 'Tweet activity'. **1** Click the calendar button to select the period to look at. **2** You can also export the data **3** if you want to save it to a spreadsheet.

2 The chart **1** shows you how much exposure your tweets have had. Hover over a bar for more information. Below, you can see your tweets from the period in date order. **2** Impressions **3** shows you how many people saw a tweet and Engagements **4** is the number of click-throughs. Click a tweet for more information.

3 Choose Followers from the drop-down menu **1** to see how your follower numbers have grown over time. **2** You can see where your followers are, **3** what other topics they're interested in, **4** get a breakdown of the male-female split and see who else they're following. **5**

➕ Email us your website building questions at webuser@dennis.co.uk

Group Test

We test and compare the latest products

Anti-virus software

Andy Shaw analyses all the anti-virus tests conducted by Dennis Technology Labs in 2014 to find out which security software gave the best year-round protection

Most anti-virus tests aren't accurate enough because they only show how good a program is at stopping viruses from getting through to a PC on the specific occasion when the test takes place. Our own anti-virus testing facility (Dennis Technology Labs, www.dennistechnologylabs .com) carries out tests throughout the year, exposing anti-virus programs to new threats found on dodgy websites as they appear.

The results of these tests are published quarterly. But a product that does well in one set of tests may not necessarily excel in another, so we've taken all four test results from 2014 and brought them together, to give you an idea of which products offered the best year-round protection. The award winners of this Group Test aren't one-off wonders, specially built to blitz a particular test, but solid, reliable security programs that provide a consistent level of PC protection.

HOW WE TESTED

Dennis Technology Labs carries out a cycle of three-month tests, every quarter. These tests are split into two areas: the first examines the quality of protection provided by each security product when faced with the kind of malware you might normally encounter while browsing the web; the second tests the security software for false positives, which is when a security program mistakenly prevents your PC from installing safe software.

We installed each security product on an identical PC running Windows 7. We then used each PC to visit 100 websites, all of which have been found to contain live malware. These are real sites with real malware, not sites we've mocked up ourselves. We recorded how each product reacted to the malware it found, logging any changes made to the PC's Registry and file system. We also downloaded a suite of 100 legitimate programs to test how good the security programs were at allowing safe software to install unhindered.

For more info on our testing process, visit the Dennis Technology Labs site (www.dennistechnologylabs.com).
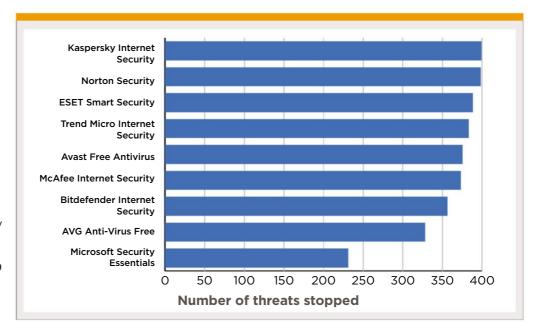
Anti-malware protection scores

The chart on the right shows the overall level of malware protection provided by each anti-virus product when exposed to the 400 compromised websites (100 sites in each of the quarterly tests). This result combines defended and neutralised results (which we look at more closely in the section below), showing the general level of protection recorded for each product.

Kaspersky Internet Security came top with a phenomenal performance. In the four tests, it defended against 399 of the 400 threats discovered, letting through just one malicious program during our July-September 2014 test.

Norton Security came a remarkably close second, letting through just two malicious files – one between January and March, and the

Number of threats stopped

other in the same July-September test as Kaspersky's.

Third place went to ESET Smart Security, which only missed 12 of the malicious

programs it was exposed to. The best performing free program was Avast, which came fifth behind Trend Micro Internet Security, letting through 25 threats
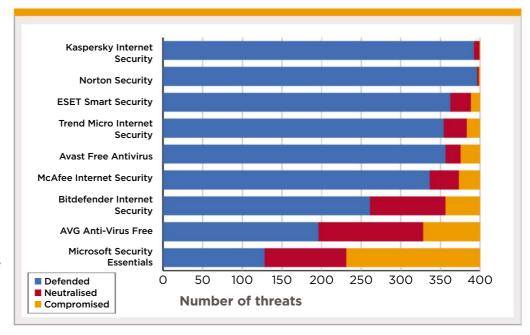
over the course of the year. The worst performer in our group was Microsoft Security Essentials, which only protected against 231 of the 400 threats.

Anti-malware protection details

Even if a security program let through a malicious program onto the test computer, its protection scores weren't affected as long as the threat was then neutralised by a scan. It's worth making a detailed analysis of these results, particularly at the top of the group.

Although Kaspersky managed to protect the test PC from more threats than Norton overall, the latter offers a better front-line defence, because only four malicious programs got past its barriers. Two of these were neutralised afterwards by a scan. Kaspersky, on the other hand, let eight malicious programs through its first line of defence, but then redeemed itself by removing seven of them through scanning.

Trend Micro and Avast have a similar tale to tell in the fight for fourth and fifth place. Avast reached its total score by initially blocking 356 malicious programs, but

■ Defended
■ Neutralised
■ Compromised

Number of threats

neutralised another 19 on scanning. Trend Micro's blocks weren't as strong, stopping 354 malicious programs, but it then removed 29 with its scanner.

At the bottom of the group, the number of threats defended against drops

significantly, with the software relying on scanners to sweep up more of the problems. Microsoft Security Essentials only blocked 128 of the 400 malicious programs, going on to remove another 103 when scanning, but still remained compromised by

169 programs.

AVG Anti-Virus Free performed better but remained second from bottom. It blocked 196 threats outright and removed another 132 on scanning. However, this still left 72 threats on the test PC.
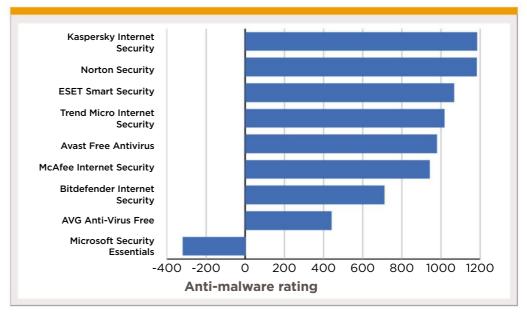
Overall anti-malware ratings

The speed with which an anti-virus program detects and removes a threat affects its overall ratings in our tests. If the software completely defended against a threat, we award it three points; if the threat was neutralised and the PC was returned to the exact state it was in before the infection occurred, we award two points; and for stopping a threat from running but not returning the PC back to its previous state, we give 1 point. We take five points away from any product for each threat it fails to detect.

This means that a security program can score a maximum of 1,200 to a minimum of -2,000 points across the four tests.

The faster a product is at stopping threats, the higher it scores, and our test results are presented in the protection-ratings chart,

Anti-malware rating

Kaspersky Internet Security
Norton Security
ESET Smart Security
Trend Micro Internet Security
Avast Free Antivirus
McAfee Internet Security
Bitdefender Internet Security
AVG Anti-Virus Free
Microsoft Security Essentials

above.

Kaspersky and Norton came top with 1,183 and 1,182 points respectively. The former edged ahead because it only let through one malicious program, rather than two, but the latter

fought back because its first line of defence put in the best performance.

ESET and Trend Micro remain in third (1,066) and fourth (1,018) place, with Avast putting in the best results for free software in
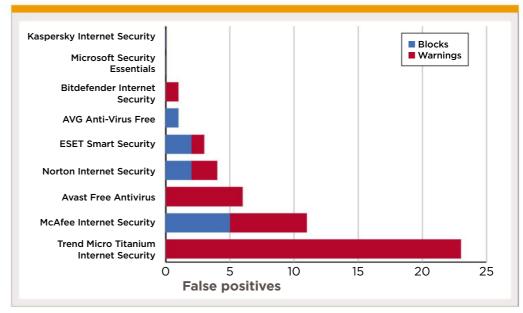
fifth place with 978 points. AVG Free came second from last with 441 points. At the bottom again was Microsoft Security Essentials, which ended up with -318 points because of the number of threats it failed to spot.

False positives

The aim of anti-virus is to stop malware getting onto your PC, but that's no good if it also blocks everything else. Your PC still has to download and run safe software, so we submit each security program to a false-positive test to check that safe software is allowed to install and run, and the program doesn't blanket-block everything it comes across.

Security software either blocks software outright or warns you of potential risks: the former makes the program unobtrusive, but doesn't give you a chance to override its decisions; while the latter gives you more control but may become annoying if there are constant requests to grant permission. Over the four tests, we attempted to install 400 safe programs (100 in each test) and our chart, above right, makes a distinction between the two levels of blocking.

Kaspersky and Microsoft

False positives

Legend: ■ Blocks ■ Warnings

Kaspersky Internet Security
Microsoft Security Essentials
Bitdefender Internet Security
AVG Anti-Virus Free
ESET Smart Security
Norton Internet Security
Avast Free Antivirus
McAfee Internet Security
Trend Micro Titanium Internet Security

got the best results by letting all our legitimate software through without a single block, all year. For Kaspersky, with its top results in blocking malicious software, this gave proof of an efficient and accurate security program. Microsoft's result is less impressive because its lax performance in our anti-

malware tests show it will let almost anything through.

AVG is the best free program for avoiding unnecessary alarms. It blocked just one legitimate program over the course of the year, though it did this without warning. Bitdefender also blocked just one program, but it warned us

that it was doing so. ESET and Norton blocked fewer than five programs, while Avast slipped to six, though all were warnings rather than unannounced blocks. The worst performers were McAfee with 11 false positives and Trend Micro with 23, though these were all warnings rather than blocks.

False-positive results

When testing security programs for false positives, it's important to note that not all software is equal, so we further analyse our scores to take into account the type of software that's blocked.

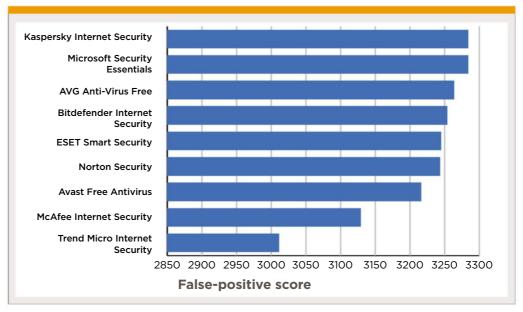We add modifiers to the score based on how well-known the blocked program is, by checking the number of weekly downloads it has on Download.com. Most of the legitimate programs we used for our false-positives test had been downloaded more than 20,000 times that week, so the software should have had no problems recognising them. For this reason, these popular programs are given a high weighting in our scores, so any security program that blocks one will be docked maximum points.

At the other end of the scale, we also use a handful of programs that have rarely been downloaded – less than

25 times that week. The punishment for blocking one of these lesser-known programs isn't so harsh. We also use a spread of programs between these two extremes, and weight the results depending on the method by

which the legitimate program was blocked.

Our rating system didn't change the order of the results, with Kaspersky and Microsoft again topping the chart. Because they let all our software through, they
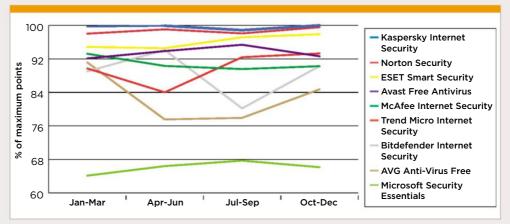
received maximum points (3284). AVG remains the best free program in third place, with Trend Micro's software at the bottom of the chart, because it put up the most warnings about legitimate software.

False-positive score

PROTECTION OVER THE YEAR

This test set out to show which products produced the best, most consistent protection over 2014. The chart on the right shows the overall ratings for each quarter, taking into account both malware protection and false-positive scores, so you can see how they fluctuated over time. The chart's vertical axis represents a percentage score, showing how close each product came to a perfect performance in each of the four tests.

Kaspersky and Norton both sit at the top of the chart, barely dropping below the maximum ratings, though Kaspersky always performed a little better. ESET is also impressive, climbing above 95 per cent after the first half of the year.

For a free program, Avast does very well. It peaked in our Jul-Sept test and was beaten by McAfee,

Bitdefender and Trend Micro in individual tests, but it didn't experience the significant slumps that these three paid-for programs suffered.

AVG Anti-Virus Free started the year better than it ended it, but a poor mid-year slump affected its overall score, while Microsoft Security Essentials languished at the bottom of the chart throughout.

Overall anti-malware ratings

Our rating for an anti-virus program's overall accuracy is based on the software's performance in all the other tests, brought together in the chart on the right. The maximum score possible is 4,484, spread across the four tests, and the points here represent the total results for the year in one convenient rating. This takes into account how good each program is at blocking malware and recognising legitimate software.

Top of the chart is Kaspersky, with 4,467 points. This product did so well in all our tests that it's no surprise to see it come first in our overall results. It achieved a superb record of protection, letting through just one piece of malware during all four tests. Its ability to recognise legitimate software and allow it to run was perfect.

Norton comes a very close second, proving almost as reliable as Kaspersky. It let through two malicious programs, and stumbled over four that were legitimate, but

this is still an excellent score, and demonstrates how high expectations are at the top. Our third-place slot is taken by ESET Smart Security, which also put in a great performance with a score of 4,311 points.

The best free product is Avast, which beat several

paid-for security programs to come fifth, accruing 4,194 points in our tests. Although it only managed to rank in the bottom half of the group for false-positive tests, it's a testament to its excellent performance in the anti-malware tests that it came so high in the overall results.

The other free products in our tests – AVG Anti-Virus Free and Microsoft Security Essentials – didn't fare so well, taking the bottom two places in this group. AVG only managed 3,705 points over all the tests, while Microsoft performed terribly overall, with 2,966 points.

	Avast Free Antivirus	AVG Anti-Virus Free	Bitdefender Internet Security	ESET Smarter Security	Kaspersky Internet Security	McAfee Internet Security	Microsoft Security Essentials	Norton Security	Trend Micro Internet Security
PRICE	Free	Free	£39.95 (1 PC)	£39.99 (1 PC)	£39.99 (1 PC)	£57.99 (1 PC)	Free	£49.99 (1 PC)	£49.95 (1 PC)
WEBSITE	www.avast.com	www.avg.com	www.bitdefender.co.uk	www.eset.co.uk	www.kaspersky.co.uk	www.mcafee.com/uk	bit.ly/mse363	uk.norton.com	www.trendmicro.co.uk

Conclusion

It's no surprise that, for its 2014 performance in our tests, our Gold Award goes to Kaspersky Internet Security. Kaspersky came top of all four of the quarterly tests, providing a level of security that's simply unprecedented. With that kind of performance in 2014, there's nothing to stand in the way of us recommending it for 2015.

Norton Security comes a very close second to Kaspersky, and fully deserves our Silver Award. If Kaspersky wasn't in the running, we'd have no hesitation in recommending Norton, because it still did a brilliant job of protecting our PC during our tests.

We're awarding our Bronze Award to Avast Free Antivirus. Although ESET Smart Security performed better over the year, it's another paid-for product, while Avast costs nothing. If you're happy to part with your money, one

of the paid-for options should offer you the best protection over the coming year, but if you're after a free product, opt for Avast, which performed significantly better than AVG and Microsoft's free software. ◼

🛒 Web User's Best Buys

Web User and its sister titles test over 2,500 products every year

HARDWARE

WINDOWS 8.1 LAPTOP

Asus Transformer Book Flip TP300LA

£449.95 from **www.johnlewis.com**
Date tested: January 2015

This touchscreen laptop folds over into a chunky tablet. It's well built, did well in our performance tests and has a fantastic battery life.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.9GHz Intel Core i3-4030U processor ▪ 4GB of memory ▪ 13.3in touchscreen ▪ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ▪ 500GB hard drive ▪ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ▪ 326 x 232 x 22mm ▪ 1.75kg ▪ One-year collect-and-return warranty

DESKTOP PC

Chillblast Fusion Obelisk

£699.98 from **www.chillblast.com**
Date tested: November 2014

This great all-round desktop PC achieved a good overall performance in both our Windows and gaming tests. It runs quietly, has a good-quality monitor and is packed with great components, including a fast SSD and a generous hard drive.

KEY SPECS

Quad-core 4.2GHz Intel Core i5-4690K processor (overclocked) ▪ 8GB of memory ▪ 5 x USB3, 5 x USB2 ports ▪ Gigabit Ethernet ▪ 120GB SSD ▪ 1TB hard drive ▪ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ▪ Windows 8.1 ▪ 465 x 430 x 192mm

BUDGET LAPTOP

Asus X200MA

£175.55 from **www.amazon.co.uk**
Date tested: October 2014

This is a compact, portable laptop at a great price that will manage the latest version of Windows and provide more than four hours of battery life.

KEY SPECS

2.16GHz Intel Celeron N2830 dual-core processor ▪ 500GB hard drive ▪ 2GB memory ▪ 11.6in (non-touch) screen ▪ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ▪ 1 x USB 3 port, 2 x USB 2 ports ▪ 1 x 10/100 Ethernet, 802.11n dual-band Wi-Fi ▪ 302 x 200 x 26mm ▪ 1.2kg ▪ One-year return-to-base warranty

ROUTER

D-Link DIR-868L

£65.97 from **www.dabs.com**
Date tested: December 2014

If you're willing to switch your wireless devices to the 5GHz network, the D-Link DIR-868L offers fast and reliable performance at a great price.

KEY SPECS

Dual-band 2.4GHz and 5GHz ▪ 802.11b/g/n ▪ 1,300Mbps theoretical maximum speed ▪ Six internal antennas ▪ 4 x 10/100/1000Mbps Ethernet ports ▪ WPA and WPA2 encryption ▪ 1 x USB 3 port ▪ 217 x 123 x 102mm ▪ One-year return-to-base warranty

KEYBOARD

Cherry MX-Board 3.0

£55 from **www.kikatek.com**
Date tested: November 2014

The Cherry MX-Board 3.0 is a hard-wearing mechanical keyboard that's a pleasure to type on. It doesn't have lots of features, but it's ideal if you're looking for a standard, good-quality keyboard.

KEY SPECS

104 keys ▪ 1 X USB port ▪ 1.8m detachable cable ▪ 2 non-slip surfaces ▪ 2 rubber caps for adjustable feet ▪ 44.6 x 15.8 x 2.8cm ▪ 0.83kg ▪ Win-Key lock

NAS DRIVE

Asustor AS-202TE

£199.66 from **www.scan.co.uk**
Date tested: September 2014

This NAS drive put in an excellent performance in our tests, transferring files over our network faster than any of the other devices we tested. It has an impressive range of tools, including an HDMI output for streaming to TV.

KEY SPECS

EXT4 file system ▪ SATA3 hard drive ▪ 2 x 3.5in bays ▪ 1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet ▪ 2 x USB 2 ports, 2 x USB 3 ports ▪ 1 x HDMI (1.4a) ▪ 1 x 3.5mm mini-jack ▪ 230 x 164 x 108mm ▪ 1.87kg ▪ Two-year return-to-base warranty

All prices correct at time of review

🛒 Web User's Best Buys

WQHD MONITOR

AOC q2770Pqu

£367.96 from **www.dabs.com**
Date tested: August 2014

The AOC q2770Pqu has an exceptional, high-quality screen and is very reasonably priced. Its settings are preconfigured, so you don't need to tweak them to improve the display, and it has all the ports you'll ever need.

KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 2,560 x 1,440 pixels resolution ■ Portrait mode ■ Adjustable stand ■ 2 x 2W speakers ■ DisplayPort, DVI, HDMI, VGA, 2 x USB 3.0 and 2 x USB 2.0 ports ■ 642 x 428 x 245mm ■ 8kg ■ 3-years return-to-base warranty

HD MONITOR

BenQ EW2740L

£194 from **www.ebuyer.com**
Date tested: July 2014

The BenQ EW2740L is an excellent-value 27in monitor with good image quality. It supports MHL, so you can connect a compatible mobile device to it, and has two HDMI ports and one VGA port.

KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 2W stereo speakers ■ MHL support ■ 2 x HDMI and 1 x VGA ports ■ 320 x 115 x 95mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

CHROMEBOOK

Acer C720P Chromebook

£244.81 from **www.ilgs.net**
Date tested: June 2014

This fantastic Chromebook provides excellent overall performance, respectable battery life and a good collection of ports. It's got a smart touchscreen, comfy keyboard and touchpad, and starts up in no time at all.

KEY SPECS

1.4GHz Intel Celeron 2955U processor ■ 16GB storage ■ 2GB memory ■ 11.6in screen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 7.5 hours battery life ■ USB 3, USB 2 and HDMI ports ■ 288 x 204 x 20mm ■ 1.35kg

BUDGET SMARTPHONE

Motorola Moto G

£99.99 (PAYG) from **www.argos.co.uk**
Date tested: April 2014

The excellent Moto G has set a new standard in affordable smartphones. A 4G model is now available, as well as an updated version with a 5in screen and a microSD card slot to expand its storage. The phone's beautiful screen and good performance make it fantastic value for money.

KEY SPECS

1.2GHz quad-core processor ■ 8GB storage ■ 1,280 x 720 pixels resolution ■ 4.5in screen ■ 1GB memory ■ Android 4.4 (KitKat) ■ 5-megapixel and 1.3-megapixel cameras ■ 3G/GPS/Bluetooth/802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 130 x 66 x 12mm ■ 143g

BASE UNIT PC

Chillblast Fusion Quasar

£600 from **www.chillblast.com**
Date tested: March 2014

The Chillblast Fusion Quasar is a great all-round PC offering superb performance and plenty of room for expansion. It's expensive compared to other base unit PCs, but comes with a five-year warranty and a high-performing SSHD hard drive.

KEY SPECS

3.4GHz Intel Core i5-4670K processor ■ 8GB DDR3 memory ■ Gigabyte GA-Z87-HD3 motherboard ■ 1TB hybrid HD/SSD hard drive ■ Windows 8.1 64-bit ■ Five-year return-to-base warranty ■ 465 x 430 x 192mm

BLUETOOTH SPEAKER
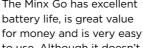
Cambridge Audio Minx Go

£99.95 from
www.richersounds.com
Date tested: January 2014

The Minx Go has excellent battery life, is great value for money and is very easy to use. Although it doesn't have the extra features of other, more expensive speakers, its sound quality is excellent, producing powerful volume with no distortion.

KEY SPECS

Two speakers ■ 3.5mm stereo ■ Bluetooth (SBC) input ■ 3.5mm headphone input ■ 237 x 123 x 60mm ■ 1.1kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2015

£39.99 from **www.kaspersky.co.uk**
Date tested: January 2015

NEW!

Kaspersky Internet Security performed near-perfectly throughout Dennis Security Labs' tests last year, with only one unwanted program slipping through. It also knows when software is safe, so won't stop you installing the programs you want.

KEY FEATURES

Anti-virus and firewall tools ■ Protects online shopping and banking ■ Identity and privacy tools ■ Dangerous-website alerts ■ Advanced parental control ■ Licences for one, three, and five PCs; for one or two years, or pay monthly ■ Multi-Device version for Mac and Android protection

PHOTO EDITING

Adobe Photoshop Elements 13

£81.08 from **www.adobe.com/uk**
Date tested: December 2014

With its tidy interface and pop-out trays, Adobe Photoshop Elements provides everything an amateur photographer needs and helps you quickly find the right editing tools.

KEY FEATURES

Compatible with Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8+ (32- and 64-bit) ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

VIDEO EDITING

Adobe Premiere Elements 13

£81.08 from **www.adobe.com/uk**
Date tested: December 2014

Premiere Elements 13's superb interface makes its many features neat but accessible. You won't find better video-editing software for the price.

KEY FEATURES

Automatic editing ■ Export to multiple video formats ■ Image stabiliser ■ DVD and Blu-ray disc-burning ■ Unlimited timelines ■ Stop-motion capture

ONLINE SITE BUILDER

Google Drive

From free from **drive.google.com**
Date tested: August 2014

Google Drive is easy to use and has lots of free storage. The Windows software integrates with Explorer, so saving and syncing files is like keeping them in any other PC folder.

KEY FEATURES

15GB free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Works with Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8+ ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 100GB extra storage for £1.19 per month; 1TB for £5.97 per month; 10TB for £59.51 per month

ONLINE SITE BUILDER

Weebly

From free from **www.weebly.com**
Date tested: May 2014

Weebly's drag-and-drop interface makes it extremely easy to use. Its templates are a little restrictive, but there are still plenty of options to choose from and the results look great. It also has free Android and iOS apps.

KEY FEATURES

115 templates ■ Unlimited storage ■ SEO tools ■ Meta tags ■ Password protection ■ E-commerce tools ■ Ad-free Starter edition ■ Android and iOS apps ■ RSS ■ Site stats

⬇ Best Free Software
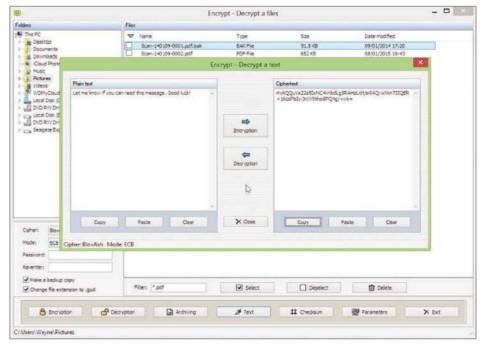
SECURITY TOOL

GuardAxon

bit.ly/guardaxon363
Min requirements: Windows 7 or 8+
File size: 1.9MB

Most of us have personal files and data stored on PCs, USB drives and mobile devices that we wouldn't want falling into the wrong hands. This might include bank or credit card details, confidential business reports and private photos. GuardAxon is a powerful program that lets you encrypt and decrypt files using state-of-the-art algorithms. Once your files are secured, you can share them or carry them around, safe in the knowledge that thieves or snoopers won't be able to access the contents, even if they get hold of the files.
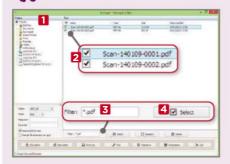
The software might seem

intimidatingly advanced, with talk of checksums and hash algorithms, but it's actually very straightforward to use and doesn't require any technical knowledge. You just select the files you want to secure in the file manager-style interface, then choose a cipher method in the drop-down box; options include Blowfish, Twofish, DES and three levels of AES. It doesn't matter if you don't know what these are – just be safe in the
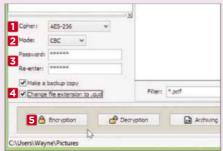
knowledge that they are extremely secure. You can always use Google to research the algorithms if you want a better understanding of the differences between them.

As well as protecting your files, GuardAxon can encrypt text, letting you pass on secret coded messages to friends – provided they have a copy of the software and know the cipher version and mode you're using.

⚙ MINI WORKSHOP | Secure your files using GuardAxon

1 Use the Folders panel on the left **1** to navigate to a file or folder you want to encrypt, then tick the boxes to select items in the Files window. **2** If the chosen folder contains a mix of different file types, you can use the Filter box **3** to narrow the selection to one type of file. Enter the file extension ('*.pdf', for example), then click Select. **4**
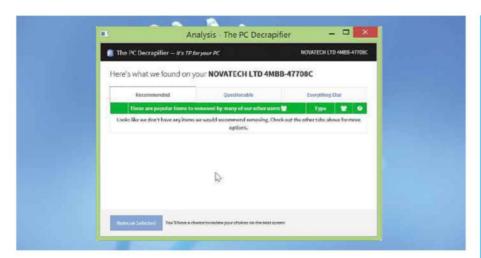
2 Next, pick a cipher type in the drop-down box **1** and, optionally, a mode. **2** You can choose between ECB (Electronic Code Book) and CBC (Cipher Block Chaining). CBC is more secure. Enter a password twice, **3** opt to make a back-up copy, and change the file extension to '.gud'. **4** Click Encryption. **5**

3 And that's all there is to it – your files will now be encrypted. To open them, just repeat the process, but click Decryption **1** instead. If you want to make sure a file you send or receive hasn't been tampered with, you can generate a checksum **2** that will be unique to that file. Any change to the checksum indicates that the contents have been altered.

This fortnight's top new software downloads to help you make the most of your PC, and they're all FREE

SYSTEM CLEANER
PC Decrapifier 3
www.pcdecrapifier.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 1.90MB

New PCs often come bundled with unwanted software (trials, toolbars and other clutter), and old PCs can accrue these junk programs over time. PC Decrapifier scans your system and displays any questionable applications that are recommended for removal. Choose what you want to get rid of and click Remove Selected. You'll be able to review your choices one final time. Version 3 is a major rewrite of the program and has a more modern interface.

FILE CLEANER
Delete After Days
bit.ly/deldays363
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 271KB

The aim of this simple tool, created for DonationCoder.com's 2015 NANY event (New Apps for the New Year), is to free up disk space by automatically deleting downloaded files after a set period. Just drag the downloaded files onto the Desktop icon and tell the software how long you want access to the items for – one month, six months or a year. After the set time limit is reached, the files will be deleted.

CUSTOMISATION TOOL
CustomizerGod
bit.ly/customizergod363
Min requirements: Windows 7/8+ **File size:** 438KB

CustomizerGod lets you make changes to Windows without fear of accidentally messing something up (just roll back the changes afterwards if you run into problems). You can change the look of the icons and login screen, and click the down arrow at the bottom to bring up a selection of advanced tools.
• Only download CustomizerGod (not the freeware collection) and avoid installing any extra software.

New Windows 8 Apps

Mini-soko
bit.ly/minisoko363
Min requirements: Windows 8+
File size: 10.3MB
Based on the popular puzzle game Sokoban, this game challenges you to guide all the trolleys on a level to the target. There are 120 levels to play through.

Rosetta Stone Fit Brains Trainer
bit.ly/fitbrains363
Min requirements: Windows 8+
File size: 438KB
This brain-training app has over 360 mental games and workout sessions designed to help improve your memory, concentration, problem-solving skills and visual-spatial ability.

Monster Trucks Unleashed
bit.ly/monstertrucks363
Min requirements: Windows 8+
File size: 33.2MB
The aim of this physics-based driving game is to steer monster cars through various environments including forest, desert and Wonderland. There are only two buttons – accelerate and brake.

⬇ Best Free Software
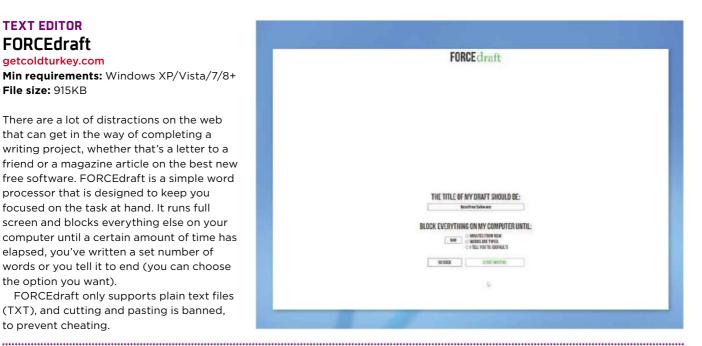
TEXT EDITOR
FORCEdraft
getcoldturkey.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 915KB

There are a lot of distractions on the web that can get in the way of completing a writing project, whether that's a letter to a friend or a magazine article on the best new free software. FORCEdraft is a simple word processor that is designed to keep you focused on the task at hand. It runs full screen and blocks everything else on your computer until a certain amount of time has elapsed, you've written a set number of words or you tell it to end (you can choose the option you want).

FORCEdraft only supports plain text files (TXT), and cutting and pasting is banned, to prevent cheating.

FILE ERASER
BitKiller 2
bit.ly/bitkiller363
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 32.2KB

When you delete a file, only the reference to it is removed; the data itself remains on your hard drive (until it eventually gets overwritten), which means it's easy to recover. BitKiller securely shreds files and directories, overwriting them with zeroes or random data, so there's no chance of the content being restored. It also changes filenames to make them harder to find.

To use BitKiller, just pick an overwrite method, then add the files or folders you want to destroy. The new version has improved performance and adds a Cancel button in case you change your mind while securely erasing content.

AD BLOCKER
Anvi AD Blocker Ultimate
www.anvisoft.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 7.9MB
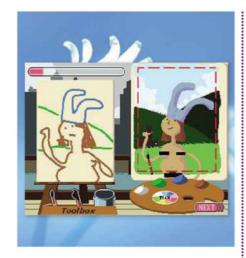
Adverts are a necessary evil because they keep many websites in business, but if you're determined to block them, there are several options available, including Anvi AD Blocker Ultimate. Launch the software and it will run in the background, automatically removing web ads, irrespective of your choice of browser. You can see how many adverts have been blocked to date, and temporarily turn off ad-blocking.

Anvisoft used to sell its program for $17 dollars, but it's now entirely free (even if the download page currently suggests otherwise). You can make a donation if you feel the software is worthy of your money.

GAME
90 Second Portraits
bit.ly/90sec363
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 8.6MB

The aim of this game is to make enough money to pay your bills by speed-painting portraits of people as they pass by. You have just 90 seconds to complete each painting, and you're graded on customer satisfaction. You are provided with a selection of paints and tools to complete your task.

There is an Android version but it is described as "highly experimental".

✗ Don't install...

Easy Disk Drive Repair
www.zeatron.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 0.6MB

A tool that can rescue your hard drive in an emergency is a useful thing to have, but despite claiming a million downloads and quoting happy customers on its site, investigation by Softwarecrew has shown that Easy Disk Drive Repair makes unnecessary changes to Chrome and Firefox. Read the full report at bit.ly/easy363.

...Install this instead ✓

CrystalDiskInfo
bit.ly/crystal363
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 2.7MB
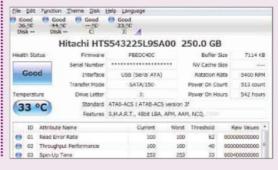
You can scan your hard drive using Windows' own error-checking software by right-clicking it in Explorer and clicking Properties, the Tools tab, then 'Check now'. An even better option is to use a disk-monitoring tool to warn you when your hard drive starts to deteriorate. CrystalDiskInfo is a good example. This handy portable software records, charts and displays your drive's SMART information (the diagnostic information built into most hard drives) and will alert you if it deteriorates beyond a certain point. This is usually a sure-fire sign that your drive is about to expire.

🔄 UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs

SYSTEM TOOL
Speccy 1.27
www.piriform.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 4.9MB

Piriform's excellent system-information tool has been updated to be compatible with Windows 10. CPU detection for the latest processors has also been updated and the search function has been improved. Several minor bugs have also been fixed.

SYSTEM TOOL
Glary Utilities 5.16
www.glarysoft.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 14.2MB

Glary Utilities is a collection of tools you can use to fix PC problems, optimise Windows and protect your privacy. The new release improves how the Quick Search and Registry Cleaner functions work. It also fixes various bugs and boosts overall performance.

ANTI-MALWARE
Anvi Smart Defender 2.4
www.anvisoft.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 34.3MB

Anvi's anti-malware software offers real-time and on-demand protection from most threats, along with a selection of useful tools. The latest release fixes some bugs and optimises the scanning engine to improve stability.

EBOOK MANAGER
calibre 2.16
calibre-ebook.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 60.6MB

The latest version of the popular ebook manager and viewer adds various features to the Edit Book function, including auto-completion for links and support for snippets (small pieces of reused text). The update also fixes several bugs. ■
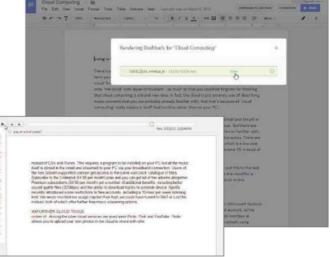
Best New Browser Tools

CHROME

View Google Docs revision history with Draftback

Whether you're typing a letter, writing your life story or trying to produce your first novel, it can be useful – and fascinating – to find out more about how you write. Draftback (bit.ly/draft363) uses Google Docs' revision history data to build a video showing all the changes you made as you produced the document. It can be a bit eerie – it's almost as if somebody was filming over your shoulder as you worked. But it can help you gain valuable insight into the decisions and problems you face when you write.

Once the add-on has installed, open a document in Google Drive and you'll see a Draftback button on the top toolbar. Click this and Draftback will begin rendering the revisions. Once it has finished, click View and watch as the writing process is magically recreated on-screen. The only hitch is that it doesn't work as well with documents that haven't been composed in Google Docs, such as those written in Word.

Fix Chrome with Google's Software Removal Tool

If Chrome has started behaving oddly or you suspect that spyware may have wormed its way into your browser, then try running Google's new Software Removal Tool (www.google.com/chrome/srt). It searches your browser for suspicious software and removes any it finds. When you run the tool, you're also offered the option to reset Chrome's settings. This will return everything, including your homepage and search engine, to their defaults and disable all your extensions, but it's a good way to troubleshoot any problems you've been experiencing.

Search your open tabs

If you often have a lot of tabs open at the same time, it can be difficult to find a specific page among all the others. Chrome Tab Search (bit.ly/tab363) provides a quick and easy way to search your browser tabs and locate the one you want. Press Ctrl+O on your keyboard to bring up a search box, then type the name of the page you're looking for. Any relevant results will

appear, and you simply click the one you want to switch to it.

Hide tabs until you need them

Another way to deal with an overload of tabs is to install Tab Snooze (bit.ly/snooze363). This extension lets you put tabs you're not using to 'sleep' until they're needed again – at which point they'll magically reappear. Installing Tab Snooze puts a crescent-moon icon on your toolbar. Click this (or use the keyboard shortcut Alt+S) while you're on a tab to send it to sleep until a time of your choosing. You can change the snooze times by right-clicking the moon icon, selecting Options and

picking one of the choices. You can also review any snoozed tabs.

Automatically convert units and currencies

There's no shortage of online unit- and currency-conversion sites, but this tool goes one step further by automatically converting units on web pages to your preferred values. Install AutoConvert (bit.ly/convert363) and select your preferred units and currencies (you can change these at any time by right-clicking the AutoConvert toolbar icon and selecting Options). When you visit a page displaying foreign currencies or units, roll your mouse over the prices to see them instantly converted to your chosen currency. AutoConvert doesn't work with every website but, when it does, it's a great time-saver.

This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer and more

FIREFOX

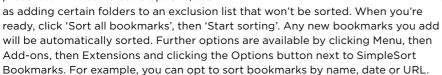# Automatically organise your favourites

Bookmarking websites can be a pointless exercise if your bookmarks are so badly organised that you can never find what you want. However, keeping them in good order manually can be a pain. Instead, you could let SimpleSort Bookmarks (bit.ly/simple363) do all the hard work for you. It's worth making a back-up of your bookmarks first, just in case you want to revert back to your original set-up.

Install the extension and you'll be presented with some basic options, such as adding certain folders to an exclusion list that won't be sorted. When you're ready, click 'Sort all bookmarks', then 'Start sorting'. Any new bookmarks you add will be automatically sorted. Further options are available by clicking Menu, then Add-ons, then Extensions and clicking the Options button next to SimpleSort Bookmarks. For example, you can opt to sort bookmarks by name, date or URL.
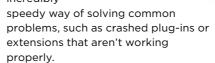
Quickly encrypt and decrypt data

If you use webmail, messaging and other types of online communication, but you're worried about prying eyes, use the CryptoData extension (bit.ly/crypto363). It provides a fast, simple way to scramble text with military-grade AES encryption. Install the add-on and, next time you're typing something, right-click it and select Encrypt from the context menu. Text can be decrypted from the same menu with a quick right-click. Alternatively, you can set the tool to decrypt automatically by right-clicking its toolbar icon and selecting Settings, then clicking the Decrypt tab. CryptoData also works with Thunderbird.

Instantly restart Firefox

Sometimes the simplest tools are the most useful. Fox Restart (bit.ly/fox363) adds a toolbar (and menu) button that restarts the browser whenever you click it. This might not sound like the most earth-shattering innovation, but it's an incredibly speedy way of solving common problems, such as crashed plug-ins or extensions that aren't working properly.

Convert links into text with Link Stun

Another simple tool that's highly effective is Link Stun (bit.ly/stun363), which lets you temporarily disable links on web pages with a quick right-click. This stops you accidentally activating a link or copying a whole URL when you're selecting a section of text on a web page. Link Stun converts links to plain text, letting you highlight and copy, drag and drop, or translate the words you need without getting caught up in a tangle of hypertext.

OTHER BROWSERS

Sandbox your cookies in Opera

If you're concerned about your favourite websites sharing your information with third-parties, such as advertisers and social networks, try installing Cookie Jar (bit.ly/cookie363). This Opera extension lets you block all cookies apart from those hosted on the root domain of the page you're on at the time, so information about your browsing can't be sent to other sites and services. It's easy to use, too – just click the Cookie Jar toolbar icon.

Sync files with Maxthon Cloud Browser

You could be forgiven for assuming that the competition among browsers is a three-horse race between Chrome, Firefox and IE, with Opera and Safari as rank outsiders. But there are several other contenders worth keeping an eye on, including Maxthon Cloud Browser. The latest version (4.4) is fast – in our tests, it loaded several pages more quickly than Chrome. It also has a number of enticing built-in features, including multi-language support and pop-up filters. It works across all platforms, so you can share or push text, images, sites, tabs, links, notes and files between PCs, Macs and Android devices, and there's integrated online storage for your downloads. It also benefits from an attractive minimal design and a handy 'night' mode to reduce eye-strain in low light.

✚ Tell us your favourite add-ons at www.facebook.com/webusermagazine

Best Free Apps

PRICE COMPARISON
Voltz
NEW

bit.ly/voltz363
Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 7.8MB

Voltz helps you save money by advising you when to switch energy suppliers. It's the first mobile app of its kind in the UK and, unlike many switching sites, it's completely impartial and takes no commission from the energy suppliers. Signing up takes only a few minutes. Once you've done that, the app shows you details of every available tariff from the UK's suppliers, so you can quickly see if you're overpaying.

If you find a better deal than the one offered by your current supplier, you can switch directly from the app simply by entering your personal details. Voltz then notifies you automatically if any cheaper offers come along.

If you're one of the 60 per cent of Brits who has never switched energy supplier, Voltz makes the process simpler and easier than ever; the app even includes its own step-by-step tutorial to get you started.

Furthermore, the Department of Energy and Climate Change recently announced that switching times will be cut to only 17 days, so there's never been a better time to change.

At the time of writing, Voltz was only available on iOS, but an Android version is due to be released in February.
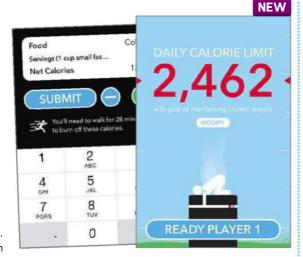
Our rating ★★★★★

HEALTH
Carrot Hunger
NEW

bit.ly/hunger363
Min requirements: iOS 8 **Size:** 18.3MB

From the makers of Carrot Fit, this app aims to help you lose weight by tracking what you eat. The app's barcode scanner makes it quick and easy to identify food items and log your calories. Alternatively, you can search its enormous database. Carrot Hunger then actively discourages you from eating anything too indulgent by listing food in terms of the amount of exercise you'll need to do to burn it off – for example, it takes a 90-minute walk to shift the calories in a single slice of pizza.

There's an element of dark humour, too, as your avatar grows with everything you eat and the app punishes you with full-page ads and bribe requests when you've exceeded your calorie limit.

Our rating ★★★★☆

FILE RECOVERY
Dumpster
UPDATED

bit.ly/dumpster363
Min requirements: Android (varies with device)
Size: Varies with device

Described by its developers as "just like the Recycle Bin on your Mac, Linux or Windows computer", Dumpster lets you recover accidently deleted music, images and other files before they're erased forever. After you've installed Dumpster, you'll be asked to choose which types of deleted file you want it to store. They will be kept (at full size) until you restore them or delete them permanently. You can set the app to automatically clean itself every week, month or three months, so that it doesn't take up too much storage space.

Note that this app can only be used to recover files you've deleted after it was installed!

Our rating ★★★★★

This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android, iOS and Windows phones and tablets, and smart TVs

FITNESS

UPDATED

Freeletics
bit.ly/freeletics363
Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 43.8MB

Whether you're a complete novice or a pro athlete, Freeletics claims to be able to help you achieve your fitness goals. The app contains video tutorials showing you how to perform a variety of bodyweight exercises, so that you can work out anywhere, anytime and for free. You can also track your progress by timing your workouts or competing with your best performances using the Freeletics Ghost feature. The app's main features are free to use, but to receive a personalised training plan, you'll need to subscribe to Freeletics Coach for a minimum of three months, which costs £25.99.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

REMOTE DESKTOP

NEW

Chrome Remote Desktop
bit.ly/remote363
Min requirements: iOS 7 **Size:** 9MB

Google's Chrome Remote Desktop app was released on Android last spring and now it's available on iOS, too. This means that you can access your home PC or Mac via your iPhone or iPad, as long as you've installed the Remote Desktop app in Chrome and left the browser running on your computer.

It's incredibly quick and easy to set up, and it's secure, too, because you need to enter your PIN each time you connect to your PC.

For instructions on how to use Chrome Remote Desktop, see the Mini Workshop in our cover feature on page 42.

Our rating ★★★★★

TOOL

UPDATED

Simpler Contacts & Dialer
bit.ly/simpler363
Min requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 8.3MB

If you haven't installed Android Lollipop, this Material Design-inspired app is a great alternative to the default Phone and Contacts apps. It's split into three main pages – All Contacts, Recents and Favourites – and you can quickly launch the dialler from any screen by selecting its floating blue icon. As in Google's Phone app, you use a T-9 keypad to dial, meaning you can tap a phone number or enter the name of one of your contacts if you already have their number saved. When you first run Simpler Contacts & Dialer, it offers to clear up your contacts list by merging any duplicates, which makes light work of an otherwise tedious task. The app's standout feature, however, is Backup, which lets you email a file containing your entire contacts list, or export it to Dropbox or Google Drive.

Our rating ★★★★☆

ROUND UP | Quick bites

MUSIC

PLAYER
bit.ly/player363
Min requirements: iOS 7.1
Size: 20.9MB

Player helps you learn to play your favourite songs on a musical instrument by analysing the tracks on your phone or tablet and showing you their chords in real time. Perfect for budding musicians, the app means you don't have to search for sheet music online, and even shows you the correct finger placement for guitar, ukulele and piano. The app's 'Discover' section also provides a fun way of finding popular new songs to play.

TOOL

Power Button Torch
bit.ly/torch363
Min requirements: Android 2.3
Size: 2.7MB

This handy app lets you activate the torch on your Android phone or tablet by simply pressing its power button three times. This saves you from browsing your home screens for a torch app when you need it urgently, although you'll need to upgrade to the premium version of Power Button Torch if you also want to turn the flashlight off without opening the app.

📱 Best Free Apps

TOOL
Evernote Scannable
bit.ly/scannable363
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 30.9MB

NEW

Evernote's newest app makes it easy for you to save contracts, receipts, business cards and other printed documents to the cloud, where they can be securely stored or shared. The app uses your device's camera to scan the document (which can consist of multiple pages), before giving you the option to upload it to Evernote or send it to your contacts via email or message. With a steady hand and good lighting conditions, Evernote Scannable is effective, producing neatly cropped scans with automatically adjusted perspective. If you're not happy with the result, though, you can use the app's basic built-in crop-and-rotate tools to adjust the scans, or simply start again.

Our rating	★★★★☆

DESIGN
123D Sculpt+
bit.ly/sculpt363
Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 488MB

UPDATED

This brilliant app from Autodesk lets you create or sculpt anything in 3D directly from your iPad. Despite being an extremely powerful skeleton builder, 123D Sculpt+ is also very easy to use, with its developer claiming that building creatures, spaceships, vehicles and other 3D objects is "as easy as drawing a stick figure". After creating your model, the app's 3D-texturing tool lets you add skin, fur and feathers, or you can apply your own photos to the surface of the model. Once you're happy with the sculpture, you can export it as an image or 3D model. The app also lets you order a 3D print and have a physical version of your creation delivered to your door.

Our rating	★★★★★

5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

SOCIAL
Contact Pics+
bit.ly/contacts363
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 25.8MB
Price: £1.49
Contact Pics+ brings some colour to your contacts list by letting you import profile pictures from Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Google+.

FOOD
Pizza Navigator
bit.ly/pizzafinder363
Min requirements: Android 4.1
Size: 3.1MB **Price:** £0.62
If you fancy a pizza, look no further. This quirky and amusing app directs you to the nearest pizzeria using a pizza-shaped compass, and it's even compatible with Android Wear smartwatches.

PRODUCTIVITY
PDF Office
bit.ly/pdfoffice363
Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 58.7MB
Price: Free (with in-app purchases)
PDF Office is a PDF editor for

iPad with the power to rival PC software such as Adobe Acrobat. It is free to download but you'll need to buy a monthly (£3.99) or annual (£29.99) subscription before you can take full advantage of its tools.

PHOTOGRAPHY
Burstio
bit.ly/burstio363
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 4.2MB
Price: £0.79
Burstio lets you convert the burst photos you've taken on your iPhone into animated GIFs and videos. Note that you'll need an iPhone 5s or later to take advantage of this feature.

SLEEP
Power Nap HQ
bit.ly/powernap363
Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 83MB
Price: £0.79
Power Nap HQ helps you feel more refreshed by monitoring your naps and waking you once you've had a specified amount of sleep. The app also captures the loudest sound during your nap, so you can find out if you snore or talk in your sleep!

Contact Pics+	Pizza Navigator	PDF Office	Burstio	Power Nap HQ

Best New TV Apps

VIDEO CHAT
Skype on Samsung TVs
www.skype.com/en
Min requirements: Skype 4.0 on a Samsung TV
Size: N/A

Skype has revamped its TV app to include free group calling, although it's currently only available on 2014 Samsung TVs that have a built-in camera. What that actually means is you can only get it on the HU9000 series of curved 4K Ultra HD TVs (bit .ly/9000363), which cost several thousand pounds. If you're one of the few to own one, you can update it by pressing the Menu button on your remote, clicking Support, Software Update, then Update Now. It may not specifically mention Skype, but you should get the newest version, and you'll then be able to see your loved ones on the biggest screen in your house. Read more on the Skype blog: bit.ly/skypeblog363.

STREAMING
AllCast
www.allcast.io
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 17.8MB

The AllCast streaming app, which has been available on Android for well over a year, has now arrived on iOS for iPhone and iPad owners. It lets you easily send photos, music and video to your TV for free. And the content you stream doesn't have to come from your iPhone, where it would be clogging up your storage space; AllCast can stream directly from Dropbox, Google+, Google Drive and Instagram, and works with smart-TV hardware including Amazon Fire TV, Chromecast, Roku, and Xbox, as well as the Apple TV. You can also play local files, which means you can use AllCast to show off your best photos from the iPhone's Camera Roll on your living-room TV.

VIDEO
GoPro on LG Smart TV
gopro.com
Min requirements: LG smart TV running webOS from 2014 and 2015
Size: N/A

Want some adventure, but don't want to leave the sofa? GoPro's channel has 400 hours of action videos captured by people wearing the strap-on camera, and it's now available for LG Smart TVs. There are clips of wild animals and pets, and extreme sports and stunts made by GoPro users. You can also see the company's own original productions, all organised by topic to make it easier to find what you're looking for, and create back-to-back videos as a playlist. So far, all the videos are high-definition, with GoPro promising 4K footage in the future. Those without an LG Smart TV can check out what's on offer on GoPro's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/gopro.
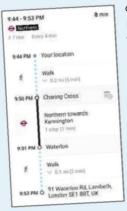

✗ Don't install...

Google Maps
www.google.co.uk/mobile/maps

Google Maps is certainly a handy tool and, conveniently, it's probably already on your phone. However, when it offers to direct you from A to B, it forces you to pick a single mode of travel from driving, public transport, cycling or walking. If you happen to own a car, a bus pass, a bike *and* pair of shoes, you'll have to click through each tab to compare the results. We can't fault Google Maps' extensive coverage, but its tools could do with a refresh.

...Install this instead ✓
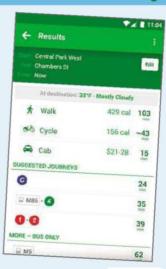
Citymapper
https://citymapper.com
Min requirements: Android 2.3, iOS 6
Size: 6.1MB (Android), 30.6MB (iOS)

First off, we have to warn you that in the UK, Citymapper only works in London. However, when you are visiting the capital, this free app is a much better option than Google Maps. It estimates how long each form of transport will take, along with how much money each public transport option costs (very important, given how expensive London transport is). Drivers should tap the traffic-light icon on the map to see which roads are busiest. Plus, you can save default routes for home and work, which lets you find your way to and from those locations with a single click. It also works in other major capitals, including Paris, Barcelona, New York and Rome.

✚ Recommend free phone apps at www.facebook.com/webusermagazine

Best of the Consumer Electronics Show 2015

Want a glimpse of technology's immediate and long-term future? **David Crookes** rounds up some of the most interesting devices showcased at the annual gathering in Las Vegas

SONY WALKMAN NW-ZX2
bit.ly/walk363

Why is it interesting?
The instantly recognisable name suggests that Sony hopes the NW-ZX2 will be as revolutionary as its portable cassette-player was in the Eighties. Aimed at serious audiophiles, it offers hi-res sound that retains more detail during the analogue-to-digital conversion process and supports digital music files up to 192Khz/24 bits. It provides high-quality wireless audio via Bluetooth, along with at least 128GB of storage space and a battery that lasts for 60 hours.

When's it out?
The new Walkman is out now.

How much will it cost?
A staggering £949.

Do I really need one?
If you really love your music, then yes. Bear in mind that it doesn't come with head- or earphones, though.

STOREDOT BATTERY
www.store-dot.com

Why is it interesting?
It's a fast battery charger that can power up a mobile phone from empty to full in 30 seconds and charge an electric car in a blistering three minutes. The technology uses naturally occurring organic compounds called peptides.

When's it out?
StoreDot expects the chargers to be on sale in 2017.

How much will it cost?
Indications are that it will cost as little as £20.

Do I really need it?
Yes. One of the main problems with smartphones is their tendency to lose power quickly and then take too long to charge.

SONY BRAVIA 4K ULTRA HD TV bit.ly/brav363

Why is it interesting?
Since 3D televisions failed to catch on, manufacturers are once again focused on picture quality, which means affordable, cutting-edge 4K displays with a resolution four times higher than Full HD. Sony unveiled 12 Ultra HD TVs at CES and claims that the 55in and 65in X90C series are the world's thinnest, measuring just 4.9mm in depth.

The TVs are powered by a new chip called the 4K Processor X1, which Sony says offers the "best-ever" clarity, colour and contrast. They also come with Android TV built-in, so they are ready to beam films, shows and photos from your smartphone or laptop via Google Cast. It also means you can use content from Google Play, which gives access to films, music and apps. In future, the televisions will be able to stream PlayStation 3 games from the cloud in the UK, thanks to a new service called PlayStation Now.

When's it out?
Sony launched its new range in February 2015.

How much will it cost?
Sony didn't announce the pricing at CES, but expect to pay a few thousand for the top-end model.

Do I really need one?
The image quality of 4K TVs is amazingly sharp, so if you are ready to upgrade your television, then 4K will future-proof your set. While no TV channels currently broadcast in 4K, these televisions make 1080p content shine. Netflix offers 4K content for an extra £2 per month for new customers (and inclusive for existing ones). You will need a good broadband connection, though. Blu-rays are coming soon (see Panasonic's announcement, opposite page, top-left).

PANASONIC 4K BLU-RAY PLAYER
panasonicces2015.com

Why is it interesting?
Panasonic has made the world's first 4K Blu-ray player. It can reproduce moving images at a resolution of 3,840 x 2,160 pixels and supports High Dynamic Range, which improves an image's brightness peak.

When's it out?
Panasonic didn't specify a date but, given that Ultra HD Blu-ray discs are promised by Christmas, we would expect to see the player later this year.

How much will it cost?
Again, no details were forthcoming on price.

Do I really need it?
Yes - if you have a 4K TV, love movies and want to see them in the very best quality. Dual- or triple-layer Ultra HD discs play at 60fps (frames per second), as opposed to 40fps on standard Blu-rays, and will look astounding.

AUDI/LG SMARTWATCH
www.audi.co.uk and www.lg.com/uk

Why is it interesting?
Think back to the the most compelling reason for watching the Eighties' TV show *Knight Rider*, which was Michael Knight (David Hasselhoff) controlling his car, KITT, using nothing more than a smartwatch. Taking inspiration from that, LG has worked with Audi to produce an NFC-compatible watch that can unlock a vehicle's doors, start its engine and drive it – as was shown in a startling demonstration of an Audi Prologue. The project is still very much at the prototype stage with both LG and Audi being vague about the specifics, but two things are certain: it looks beautiful and it runs webOS, which gives it a very clear, user-friendly interface.

How much will it cost?
There has been no indication of price, but perhaps it will be bundled with a car.

When's it out?
Again, details are very sketchy, with no official release information from either LG or Audi.

Do I really need one?
Yes, if only for the novelty factor. Then again, as smartwatches become more popular, car-control apps could become available for all kinds of different devices.

AUGUST CONNECT
www.august.com

Why is it interesting?
Last October, August released Smart Lock – a device that allows you to use a Bluetooth-enabled smartphone to unlock the door of your home. At CES, it announced that the device will now connect to the internet using an add-on called Connect. This lets users unlock doors remotely, perhaps to let someone in while you are at work or away on holiday. More interestingly, Smart Lock now works with Nest. It can pair up with a Nest Learning Thermometer so that, when you lock or unlock the doors of your home, the house can automatically cool down or warm up.

When's it out?
August Connect will be available from February.

How much will it cost?
Smart Lock costs $249.99 with Connect costing $49.99.

Do I really need one?
If you have the right kind of door, then this system has the potential to make life much easier when you're away from home. Note that Smart Lock only works on doors with single-cylinder deadbolts (common in North America); it doesn't work with mortise or Euro-style cylinders. A list of compatible deadbolts can be found at bit.ly/bolt363.

SEER HEADSET
www.caputer.com

Why is it interesting?
Billed as the "world's first truly immersive augmented-reality helmet", Seer may exist only as a 3D-printed prototype right now but it promises much – not least the ability to make the wearer look like Marvel's Iron Man.

By inserting a 6in smartphone into a slot (which, incidentally, just edges out the iPhone 6 Plus), the headset uses mirrors and a heads-up display to overlay images onto a visor. You control it by clenching your jaw and it also responds to head movements. Caputer, the company that makes it, says Seer can mimic a 200in screen and give a 100-degree field of vision.

When's it out?
Seer will be launched as a Kickstarter project.

How much will it cost?
It is not known at this stage but "early bird" special offers are promised.

Do I really need one?
Maybe not, but it does offer many exciting possibilities, with Caputer claiming it will benefit navigation and have applications within medicine and engineering.

The Verge

HACK YOUR BROWSER

You use a browser every time you go online, but are you getting the most out of it? **Wayne Williams** presents 27 top tips, tricks and add-ons to improve Chrome, Firefox, IE, Opera, and more.

Most people browse the web without giving too much thought to the software that makes it possible. Web browsers are designed to display content and let you navigate a site as quickly and seamlessly as possible. You can customise your browser by installing add-ons to provide extra tools and features, and improve performance, but there are also lots of hidden and little-known tweaks you can use to tailor the software further.

Over the following five pages, we'll show you the best ways to get the most from your browser, including adding a superior bookmarks manager to Chrome, checking for malicious web links in Firefox, accessing experimental features in the next version of Internet Explorer and blocking adverts in Opera. We'll also throw in a few tricks for the Pale Moon and Maxthon browsers.

HACK CHROME

Access experimental features

Google groups all its experimental features in a single page. To view them, type `chrome:flags` into the address bar and hit Enter. Google warns that these experiments "may bite" and also change, break, or disappear at any time. Current experiments include enabling fast closing of tabs and windows, forcing hardware acceleration, displaying a frame-rate counter and turning on automatic spelling correction.

Get a better bookmarks manager

Chrome's bookmarks manager is a little on the basic side, so if you want a better way to manage your favourite sites, try Google's Bookmark Manager (bit.ly/googlebm363). The add-on displays your bookmarks as colourful tiles, and you can add an image and a note when you bookmark future sites. You can also organise bookmarks by topic, and share collections with friends.

Launch Chrome in Incognito mode

Chrome's Incognito mode can come in handy if you don't want your browsing history recorded for certain sites. You can create a shortcut for Incognito mode on your Desktop. Navigate to Chrome's installation directory
C:\Program Files (x86)\Google\Chrome\Application
then right-click Chrome.exe and select

Send To, Desktop. Right-click the new shortcut on the Desktop and select Properties. At the end of the Target field, add a space after the quote and type `–incognito`. Apply and OK it.

Re-enable plug-ins blocked by Google

Last year, Google began blocking most NPAPI (Netscape Plugin Application Programming Interface) plug-ins in Chrome. It's doing this for stability and security reasons, but it's frustrating if you want to run a plug-in such as Silverlight, Java, or Unity, and are happy to take responsibility for your actions. Until September 2015, you can still activate these plug-ins via the address bar, and Google plans to add an override that will let you re-enable NPAPI support. You'll be able to access it by typing `chrome:flags/#enable-npapi` into the address bar, and hitting Enter (it's not currently there, but is coming soon). After September, NPAPI plug-ins will be permanently blocked.
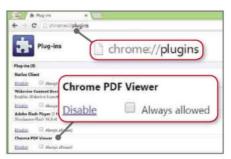
Use Chrome for notes

If you want to copy content from one or more websites to use later, you don't need to open another application such as Notepad or Word – you can just use Chrome. Type `data:text/html, <html contenteditable>` into the address bar and hit Enter. You can now type and paste whatever you like in that tab. To save the contents, press Ctrl+S. In the Save dialogue box, replace the

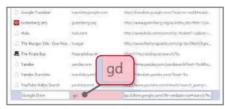file's '.html' extension with '.txt'. This trick also works in Firefox.

Download PDF files directly

When you click a PDF link in Chrome, the file will display in your browser. If you'd rather download the PDF – so you can view it in a different program or share it – just disable the built-in viewer. Type `chrome:plugins` into the address bar and hit Enter. Find the entry for the Chrome PDF Viewer and disable it.

Search Google Drive in Chrome

You can use Chrome to search for files stored in Google Drive by adding a dedicated search engine to the browser. Click the menu button and go to Settings. Under Search, click 'Manage search engines', scroll down and type `Google Drive` in the 'Add a new search engine' box. Enter a keyword, such as 'gd' and in the URL box, type `http://drive.google.com/?hl=en&tab=bo#search/%s`. Click Done. When you want to look for files in Google Drive, type gd into the search bar and hit the Tab key. Then type some or all of the filename to find an item.

Print wirelessly

You can use Chrome to send content to any printer wirelessly, including non-wireless models. Click the Menu button in the browser and select Settings. Click
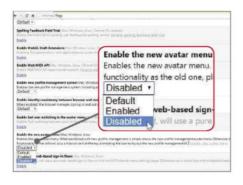
the 'Show advanced settings' link at the bottom, then scroll down to Google Cloud Print. Click the Manage button, then click 'Add printers' on the Devices screen to display a list of all the available printers on your network. Select the one you want and click 'Add printer(s)'. Now, open a web page or Google Doc in any Chrome browser on any device on your network (you'll need to be signed into your Google account). When you hit Print, your printer should be listed.

Disable Chrome's New User menu

Chrome lets you create profiles for multiple users, which is handy if you share your

computers and browsers. However, Chrome lets you manage these profiles

by adding a menu in the top-right corner, which may not be to everyone's taste. Fortunately, it's easily disabled. Type chrome:flags into the address bar, hit Enter and locate 'Enable new profile management system'. Change this to Disabled, then restart Chrome.

If you still want to be able to switch between users, you may prefer the old version of the New User menu. Search for 'Enable the new avatar menu' on the chrome:flags page and disable that instead, then restart Chrome.

Add a Home button to Chrome

Clicking the Home button in your browser takes you straight to the default homepage. It's a useful feature, but Chrome has it disabled by default. To reinstate the Home button (it appears

between Reload and the address bar), click the Menu button, open Settings and, under Appearance, tick

'Show Home button'. This brings up an option to change your homepage; just click the Change link and choose either 'Use the New Tab page' or enter the URL of the homepage you want in the 'Open this page:' box.

Speed up browsing with Data Compression Proxy

Chrome on Android lets you use a data-compression proxy to save bandwidth and speed up browsing. The recently updated Data Compression Proxy (bit.ly/chromedcp363) add-on for Chrome also offers ad-blocking; statistics that show what difference the add-on is making (if any); and the ability to add sites to a bypass list, so they load as normal without using the proxy.

Use Chrome to remotely access your home PC

Chrome Remote Desktop (bit.ly/chromerd363) offers a simple way of accessing another computer over the internet – useful if you need to securely copy files between home and work machines, for example. There are apps available for Android (bit.ly/chromerdandroid363) and iOS (bit.ly/chromerdios363), which launched in January. Install the add-on in Chrome on your devices and follow our Mini Workshop, below.

 MINI WORKSHOP | Remotely access your PC from an iPad

1 Install the Chrome Remote Desktop add-on (bit.ly/chromerd363) on your desktop PC and launch it. You'll be prompted to grant extended access permissions to your computer. Once that's done, you'll be given the option of connecting to someone else's computer (to provide remote support) **1** or your own, from anywhere. **2**

2 Select the option to access your computers and click 'Enable remote connections'. The Host installer will download. Run this and click OK. You will now need to enter a PIN **1** of at least six digits. Once you've confirmed your account and PIN, you're all set. Install the Chrome Remote Desktop app on your iPad (bit.ly/chromerdios363).

3 Launch the app and sign in with the same Google account you used on your PC. Tap your computer name and enter the PIN you set up earlier. Click Connect, and you'll be able to see and control your PC. Click the mouse button **1** to toggle the cursor on or off. Tap the button for the virtual keyboard **2** to open it.
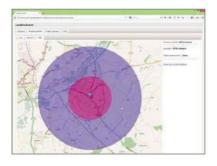
HACK FIREFOX

Hide your location

Websites sometimes want to know where you're browsing from, which is fine for certain sites – Google Maps, for example – but you probably don't want to share your exact location with every site you visit. The Location Guard add-on for Firefox (bit.ly/locguard363) disguises your location by adding confusing information (called "noise"). When you visit a site that wants to know where you are, the Location Guard button appears. Just click it to set one of three privacy levels, or to turn it off.

Get alerted when web pages update

Not all websites offer an RSS feed and it can be tiresome to have to keep refreshing a page if you're waiting for new content to appear. Install the Update Scanner (bit.ly/updatescan363) add-on, tell it which websites to monitor and it will run in the background, checking for updates. When it detects a change, it will notify you in a pop-up. Our Mini Workshop on the right shows you how to use it.

Move the toolbar to the bottom

Browsers place the menu bar at the top of the screen, but you can move it to the bottom if you want to. Install the Bottom UI extension in Firefox (bit.ly/bottomui363) and the top section of the browser, complete with address bar and open tabs, will appear at the bottom. It takes a while to get used to, but it works well. You don't have to restart Firefox for it to take effect.
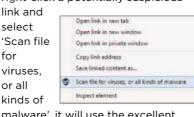
Protect your settings

Firefox is highly configurable but once you've got it set up exactly how you want it, the last thing you need is an extension or toolbar making unexpected changes. Preferences Monitor (bit.ly/prefmon363) keeps an eye on any changes that occur to browser settings, and can undo them. If you're happy with the changes being made, you can tell the add-on to allow them.
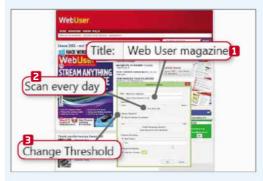
Check links for malware

If you're worried that a link on a web page might lead to a malicious site, install the Security Plus (bit.ly/secplus363) add-on. When you right-click a potentially suspicious link and select 'Scan file for viruses, or all kinds of malware', it will use the excellent VirusTotal service to check the link using 64 different anti-virus products. It then displays the results of the scan at the bottom of the page.

MINI WORKSHOP
Get website update alerts from Firefox

1 Install the Update Scanner (bit.ly/updatescan363) and go to one of your favourite sites. Right-click it and select 'Scan Page for Updates'. In the window that opens, enter a name for the site, **1** then set how often to check for changes **2** and how major you want the changes to be. **3** Click OK.

2 Click the Update Scanner button in the browser **1** to open the sidebar. This shows the sites you're watching. **2** The buttons along the top **3** let you create a new entry, show all changed pages in new tabs, delete entries and update preferences. Click Scan **4** to check for updates now. Changes on a page are highlighted. **5**

3 When a page is updated, a notification will pop up near the System Tray. Right-click the browser button and select Preferences to configure the settings. You can change how long the pop-up alert is shown for **1** and whether you want the add-on to play a sound. **2** There are also settings for Scanning and Toolbar. **3**

HACK INTERNET EXPLORER

Hide the address bar

The Modern UI version of Internet Explorer in Windows 8 displays the address bar at the bottom of the screen. You can hide this if you wish, so it only pops into view when required. Go to Settings, Options and set the address bar visibility to Off. You can view the bar by moving your mouse to the bottom of the browser or swiping upwards on a touchscreen.

Enable experimental features

Chrome, Firefox and Opera all offer the ability to turn on experimental features. However, with Internet Explorer, you need to be running the future version found in the most recent preview build of Windows 10. If you are, just type `about:flags` into the address bar, hit enter and an Experimental Features page will open in a new tab.

There are currently three features being offered – Custom User Agent, which lets IE pretend to websites it's a

different browser; Enable Experimental Web Platforms Features, which activates the new browser engine; and Standard Document Scroll Properties, which changes the behaviour of scroll functions. You'll need to restart Internet

Explorer before the changes will be applied.

Get back the Modern UI version of Internet Explorer

Windows 8 offers two versions of Internet Explorer – full-screen Modern UI and Desktop. If the Modern UI version vanishes, it's because another browser has been set as the default. To undo this change, go to the Start screen and type `PC Settings`. Launch PC Settings from the results on the right, and click 'Search and apps'. Click Defaults and change the browser to Internet Explorer. IE will now open in full-screen mode again.

HACK OPERA

Install Chrome extensions in Opera

There are thousands of add-ons for Google's Chrome browser, and any of the ones available from the Chrome Web Store can be directly installed in Opera using the Download Chrome Extension (bit.ly/downchromeex363). However, this only works with Chrome extensions, not web apps.

Block adverts

If you find your browsing experience is being ruined by adverts, you could use

Adguard (bit.ly/adguard363) to remove them. It's an excellent ad blocker for Opera that can remove all types of advertising from the web. It can sometimes be a little too aggressive with what it removes, but you can easily tweak the settings to stop it blocking specific items.

Stop web pages automatically playing content

Websites that automatically start playing audio or video when you visit them can be really annoying, especially if you have a lot of tabs open and can't tell which one is the source of the racket. Most browsers now add a

speaker symbol to indicate a tab that's making noise (see our feature on page 48 about turning off annoying sounds on your computer), so you can at least quickly locate and close the offending page. To stop the content from even starting to play automatically in Opera, press Ctrl+F12 to open the Settings and click the Websites link. Under Plug-ins, tick the 'Click to play' option. This means that content will only start playing when you click it. You can set exceptions for any sites you want to exempt from this rule.

HACK OTHER BROWSERS
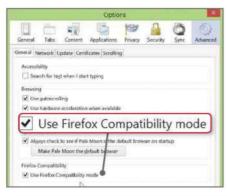
Speed up browsing in Pale Moon

The Pale Moon browser, which is based on Firefox, offers prefetching. This means that the browser predicts web pages that you may want to click, and prepares cached pages in readiness. The result is that pages load more quickly, although you should be aware that it will also increase bandwidth usage. Prefetching is not enabled by default, so if you want to enable it, type `about:config` into the address bar and hit Enter. Search for 'network.prefetch-next' and set the parameter to 'true'. To disable prefetching, repeat the process but set the parameter to False.

Use Firefox Compatibility Mode in Pale Moon

Pale Moon used to identify itself to websites as Firefox, which meant that any pages you visited would appear as they do in Mozilla's browser. That's no longer the case in the latest version, and this can cause problems on some websites that don't recognise Pale Moon, but the browser's Firefox Compatibility Mode solves the problem. You can access it by going to Options, and clicking the Advanced button. Firefox Compatibility will be listed at the bottom of the General tab. It should be enabled by default.

Install user scripts in Maxthon

Greasemonkey (bit.ly/greasemonkey363) is a powerful add-on for Firefox that lets you customise web pages as you browse by installing scripts that change how your favourite sites look and behave. You can get the same functionality and benefits in Maxthon by installing Violentmonkey (bit.ly/violentmonkey363). Once it's installed you'll need to add some scripts. ■

NEXT ISSUE — on sale Wednesday 11 February 2015

Windows 10 uncovered
Everything you need to know – and how to download it now

PLUS...
- **BEST OFFLINE MAPS** See where you're going when there's no web connection
- **RUN OLD COMPUTERS** Emulate the ZX Spectrum, Commodore 64 and BBC Micro
- **DUAL-BOOT YOUR PC** Step-by-step guide that makes it easy

Supercharged alternatives to the Windows Clipboard

The Windows Clipboard is OK for basic tasks but there are much better alternatives available. **Rob Beattie** rounds up the best free contenders

Ditto | ditto-cp.sourceforge.net | ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★☆

WebUser GOLD AWARD

What we liked:

When downloading Ditto, you can choose between the standard 64-bit version or a portable one. The latter runs from a USB stick and means you can carry around your clipboard manager and plug it into whatever computer you happen to be using.

Like our other award-winners, Save.Me and Shapeshifter, Ditto runs alongside the Windows Clipboard and uses the same Ctrl+C (cut) and Ctrl +V (paste) key combinations. This means you can start using it right away and only dabble with Ditto's extra tools when you want to.

The program captures and stores text, images and web addresses, and you can set the number of items it stores (the default is 500), after which the oldest item will be deleted as you add new ones. Alternatively, you can mark individual clips as 'Never Delete' and they'll always stay in the Ditto database. The amount of storage space for your clippings is similar to Save.Me, and it works better with large clip collections than Shapeshifter. Clipped items are searchable and easily inserted into the document of your choice.
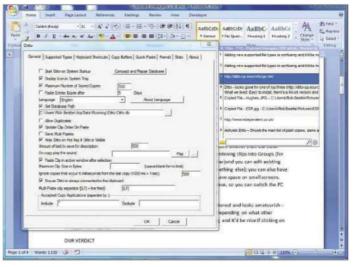
The Ditto window is much smaller than that of our other award-winning clipboards, but it has options galore for combining clips into Groups (such as salutations, sign-offs and signatures for writing letters and emails), and lets you edit existing text clips or create new ones from scratch. You can also have Ditto sit on top of other programs and keep it rolled up next to the menu bar to save space on small screens. Like Save.Me, everything is stored in a database, so you can switch off the PC knowing that your clips will be saved.

How it can be improved:

Ditto's interface looks amateurish and unloved, and could do with some care and attention. Its always-on-top mode doesn't always work, depending on what other programs you are running. Adding new supported file types is confusing and it would be helpful if clicking a clipped URL opened it in a web browser.

OUR VERDICT
Despite its dated look, Ditto does the business. It works alongside the existing Windows Clipboard and hides away when you don't need it, but it still packs plenty of power when you do.

Save.Me | www.aiclipboard.com/save.me | ★★★★☆

FEATURES ★★★★☆ **PERFORMANCE** ★★★☆☆ **EASE OF USE** ★★★★☆
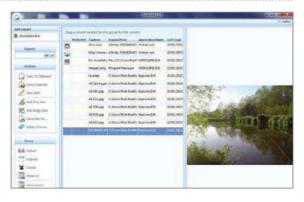
WebUser SILVER AWARD

What we liked:

Save.Me comes as a single executable file, so you don't need to install it on your PC. Its interface is better looking than Ditto's and it has a good Default View, which lists commands on the left, clips in the middle and a preview of the currently selected clip on the right.

Save.Me's window takes up more space than Ditto's, but is better suited to storing photos and website URLs, because it previews them live and in full. Like the other clipboard managers here, it can clip text, graphics and web addresses, and you can also create new text snippets and save them for later. Save.Me also has a unique Logbook View, which organises clips by date, as well as a useful Research View with customisable columns displaying headings such as Topic, Date, Content and more. Like Ditto, it stores clips even after you turn off your PC.

How it can be improved:

It's easy to miss some of Save.Me's best features, such as the ability to customise the columns in Research View. The Search facility sometimes produces inconsistent results, finding words in some text clips but not others.

OUR VERDICT
Save.Me is better than Ditto at storing visual information, but there's no documentation to guide you around its features and its web previews can slow things down.

Shapeshifter | bit.ly/shape363 | ★★★☆☆

FEATURES ★★★☆☆ **PERFORMANCE** ★★★★☆ **EASE OF USE** ★★★★☆

WebUser BRONZE AWARD

What we liked:

At last, a clipboard manager that doesn't look like it was designed in 1995. Shapeshifter's clean interface is more edgy than the others and although that's due in part to having fewer features, it's noticeably more refreshing than its staid rivals.

Like the other clipboard managers in this round-up, it uses the same Copy and Paste commands as Windows, but holding down Ctrl+V displays its main window in Integrated Mode, so you can select the item you want to paste into whatever it is you're working on. Shapeshifter is the easiest of our award-winners to master because there are so few options and its use of large thumbnails makes it well suited to working with graphics.

How it can be improved:

We would have liked a better explanation about how the three different modes work and the advantages of each. In Integrated Mode, you can't open the viewer and close it again if you don't paste anything. It doesn't store clips when you exit or shut down your PC.

OUR VERDICT
Shapeshifter is a good choice if you want more power than the standard Windows Clipboard, but don't need to store items permanently or use Ditto and Save.Me's more complex tools.

BEST OF THE REST

OrangeNote
www.orangenote.littlesoftware.ca
Something of an unusual entry, this free program combines attractive sticky notes with a simple clipboard manager for text snippets. It has an appealing interface; plenty of hotkeys for fast access; and taggable and searchable notes. Although there's no support for any other data types, the program is neat, effective and fun to use.

xNeat
www.xneat.com/clipboard-manager
This unobtrusive, low-powered clipboard manager hasn't been updated for a while and lacks any database-style features. However, if all you want is access to a simple pop-up list of recently clipped items (text, URLs and images) that you can access via a hotkey and paste into an open application, it's definitely worth a look. You can also choose the number of items stored in the clipboard at any one time.

Clipboard History
bit.ly/clip363
Clipboard History is another text-only clipboard manager that uses the same simple approach as xNeat but adds some extra features. These include inserting the date and time at the current cursor position; the ability to delete all clipboard entries from a pop-up menu; and a clever tool to set exclusions, so that text containing specific keywords will never be copied to the clipboard. It also lets you edit items and set them as 'sticky', so they won't be deleted.

Turn off annoying sounds and vibrations

PCs, tablets and smartphones make sounds to get your attention, but while some are helpful, others are just annoying. **Edward Munn** shows you how to switch off these irritating noises and unnecessary distractions

Windows

PCs make a lot of irritating noises, most of which you can switch off. Open Control Panel, click 'Hardware and Sound' in Category, then 'Change system sounds'. From here, you can configure all the noises that Windows makes. At the top of the menu, there's an option to change the Sound Scheme from Windows Default to a number of alternatives, including No Sounds. Below this, you can alter the sounds for different Program Events or turn them off altogether. Click Windows Logon, for example, and you'll see that this event is accompanied by the Windows Logon Sound. To turn this off, click the drop-down menu, scroll to the top and select (None).

From this menu you can also silence a number of other irritating noises, including Windows' Default Beep, which sounds when you press the wrong key or change the volume on your PC; and the New Mail Notification, which gets tiresome if you receive a lot of emails.

Make sure to click Apply after you've made any changes to the Windows Default theme. You can then select Save As to give your configuration a memorable name. Note that there's also an option to untick 'Play Windows Start-up sound' on this page.

iOS

One of the most infuriating sounds on an iPad or iPhone is the clicking noise the keyboard makes as you type. To turn this off, tap Settings and Sounds, scroll down to Keyboard Clicks and switch it off. Directly above this, you'll see Lock Sounds, which controls the sound your device makes when it's locked. Also on this page, you can switch off any of the system sounds that irritate you, from the sent mail Swoosh to Apple's familiar Tri-tone, which sounds when you receive a text message. You can use the options listed under the Vibrate sub-heading on this screen to stop your phone from vibrating on Silent or when it rings. If you want the ringer and all alerts to be silenced when you mute your device using the volume keys, you must switch on the 'Change with Buttons' option.

One complaint that many iPhone

Turn off annoying sounds and vibrations

users have is that the message alert sounds twice if you don't respond to it within two minutes. You can turn this feature off by opening Settings, then Notifications, selecting Messages and setting Repeat Alerts to Never. If you want to stop an app you've installed from making sounds when you get a notification, select it from the Notifications menu and switch Sounds to Off. You can also turn Notifications for the app off altogether from this screen.

If you set your device's volume to loud, so you don't miss important calls and alerts, but want to avoid being disturbed at particular times of the day, you should use Apple's Do Not Disturb feature. To turn it on, open Control Centre by swiping up from the bottom of the screen and tapping the moon icon. By default, the feature will only silence calls and alerts when your device is locked. You can change this by opening Settings, then Do Not Disturb, and selecting Always under Silence.

You can also set a scheduled time period when your iPhone or iPad will enter Do Not Disturb automatically, and you can choose whether to allow single or repeated calls from specific contacts.

Android

Like iOS, Android 5.0 Lollipop has a new feature that lets you silence reminders, calls and messages. To choose whether to allow interruptions, use the volume keys to select None, Priority or All. If you select None, it mutes even your alarms, so be careful when deciding for how long to activate this mode. If you choose Priority, on the other hand, you can tap the Settings cog to pick which interruptions have priority. For example, you can choose to be notified of incoming calls, but not messages,
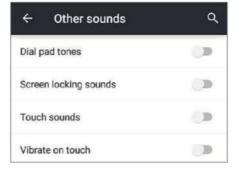
events or other reminders.

As with iOS, you can also decide to be disturbed only when calls are from your favourite contacts, which is very handy if you're frequently targeted by cold callers. This menu also lets you set your Downtime, during which you'll be disturbed only by priority interruptions.

To stop other sounds in Android Lollipop, open Settings and then 'Sound & notification'. You can choose your 'Ring volume', 'Default notification ringtone' and 'Phone ringtone' here, and you can also decide whether your device should vibrate. Tapping 'Other sounds' lets you switch off common bugbears such as 'Dial pad tones', 'Screen locking sounds', 'Touch Sounds' and 'Vibrate on touch'.

By selecting 'App notifications' from the previous screen, you can also choose to block notifications from specific apps that you find irritating. Alternatively, setting them as Priority means that they'll jump to the top of your notifications list when you're not blocking interruptions (ie, when you've selected 'All'), and they'll still appear even in Priority mode. If you're distracted by your device's 'Pulse
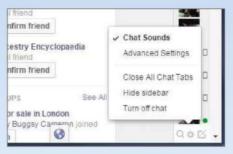
notification light', you can also switch that off here, and there's an option to choose whether or not app notifications are shown on your lock screen.
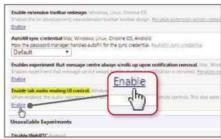
On the web

Built-in messaging tools on sites such as Facebook can produce annoying sounds. If you want to silence Facebook Chat, click the Settings icon on the chat sidebar and untick Chat Sounds. You can also turn off Facebook Chat altogether, or click Advanced Settings and choose to turn it on only for the friends that you specify.

If a particular group conversation irritates you, click the Settings icon on that conversation's window and select Mute Conversation. You'll be asked whether you want to silence it for one hour, until 8am or until you turn it back on again. Choose an option, click Mute and the window will remain closed. Also, you won't receive any push notifications on your phone or tablet.

There's nothing more frustrating than video adverts on a website blasting unwanted sound out of your speakers. If you've got multiple tabs open, it can take a while before you even identify the offending website. Thankfully, Google Chrome makes it much easier to locate the source of sound by showing a speaker icon on those tabs that have sound playing.

A new developer feature takes this one step further, letting you mute all sound from the tab by selecting the speaker icon. To activate it, type `chrome://flags/#enable-tab-audio-muting` into the browser's address bar and enable the highlighted setting. You might need to restart your browser or your PC for the feature to work, but it makes controlling sounds on the web much easier.

Broadband Deals

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	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
							CHEAPEST
1	TalkTalk	TalkTalk: Broadband	£3.50 (12 months FREE)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£0.00
2	sky	Sky: Broadband & Calls	£7.50 (12 months FREE)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£0.00
3	EE	EE: Broadband & Calls	£9.95 (£1.95 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£23.40
4	plusnet	Plusnet: Broadband & Calls	£9.99 (£2.50 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£30.00
5	TalkTalk	TalkTalk Fibre Broadband	£13.50 (£5 for 12 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£60.00
6	plusnet	Plusnet: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£14.99 (£3.75 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£112.44
7	sky	Sky: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£20.00 (6 months FREE)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£120.00
8	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£17.50 (£12 for 12 months)	18 months	50Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£144.00
9	EE	EE: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£19.95 (£9.98 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£179.58
							FASTEST
10	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£30.00 (£24.50 for 12 months)	18 months	152Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£294.00

Call 0800 083 2357 or visit www.broadbandgenie.co.uk/webuser

Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

*First-year cost does not include line rental. Cost is calculated at monthly price x12 with all introductory offers subtracted. Additional charges incurred outside of free inclusive calls not included in first-year cost.

** Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.

Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 13 January 2015.

Find broadband help at forum.webuser.co.uk

Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest from your PC, phone or tablet, and try our fiendish fortnightly challenge. This issue we're asking: How well do you know **the history of gaming**?

1 Which company released the 2600 gaming console in 1977?

2 In which country was the arcade game Pac-Man first released (right)?

3 In 1981, Labour MP George Foulkes tried to get which game banned because of its "addictive qualities"?
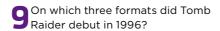
4 Which film's title music would play when you completed Daley Thompson's Decathlon?

5 Which famous game was created in 1984 by Alexey Pajitnov while working for the Soviet Academy of Sciences at their Computer Center in Moscow?

6 In which series of games does Doctor Eggman appear (right)?

7 In which version of Windows did Solitaire first appear?

8 What is the name of Super Mario's brother?

9 On which three formats did Tomb Raider debut in 1996?

10 Which games console was discontinued in March 2001, less than three years after launching (right)?

11 What was the best-selling Nintendo DS game of all time?

12 Minecraft was launched by which Swedish company in 2009?

13 Crush The Castle has been cited as the inspiration for which massively popular contemporary game?

14 Bubblegum Troll, Mr Yeti, Mr Toffee and Odus are characters in which modern game?

15 Which game was the most popular on Facebook between 2009 and 2011, but had fallen to 73rd by 2014?

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE THREE CLASSIC EIGHTIES GAMES?

A

B

C

Get the answers online at www.webuser.co.uk/quiz363

Avoid traffic fines with TomTom Speed Cameras | bit.ly/tomtom363

TomTom Speed Cameras for Android flags up fixed and mobile speed cameras to prevent you from speeding. Here's what you need to know

When a motorist spots a speed camera, they're likely to slow down, so there's an argument that cameras obscured by foliage or hidden behind signs don't actually make our roads safer by making us drive more carefully, but are there purely to score fines and generate revenue.

TomTom's Android app alerts you to the position of fixed and mobile cameras on the roads ahead to help you avoid speeding fines. It also provides you with other helpful information, such as the local speed limit, and can monitor how fast you're travelling.

The app is available to download for free, with a three-month trial. To continue using the app after the trial period is up, you'll need to purchase a subscription at £1.99 per month or £15.49 per year.

1 TomTom Speed Cameras is very easy to use. You'll need to make sure both the mobile data (cellular) connection and GPS are on, otherwise it can't function properly. To do this, pull down the top bar or access Phone Settings. Start the app to get your current position and plot it on a map. **1**
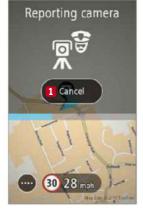
2 As you drive around, the map updates and displays the name of the road you're on. **1** It also shows the speed limit for that area and how fast you're travelling. **2** This isn't a completely accurate speed reading and we've found it can be out by quite a few MPH, but it's a useful guide.

3 The app warns you when you approach a camera, but if you find one (fixed or mobile) that doesn't appear on the map, you can alert TomTom to its existence by tapping the Report Camera button at the top of the app. The report will take a few seconds to be sent, and you can cancel it **1** if you need to.

4 Speed cameras appear on the map as icons. **1** If you enter an average speed zone (an area where multiple cameras measure the average speed at which you're travelling) a banner telling you the speed and distance will appear at the bottom of the app. **2**

5 The road name and speed limit indicators that appear on screen can get in the way, especially if you have a smartphone with a small display and are zoomed in on the map. Tapping the screen hides these, giving you a cleaner view of the roads and cameras.
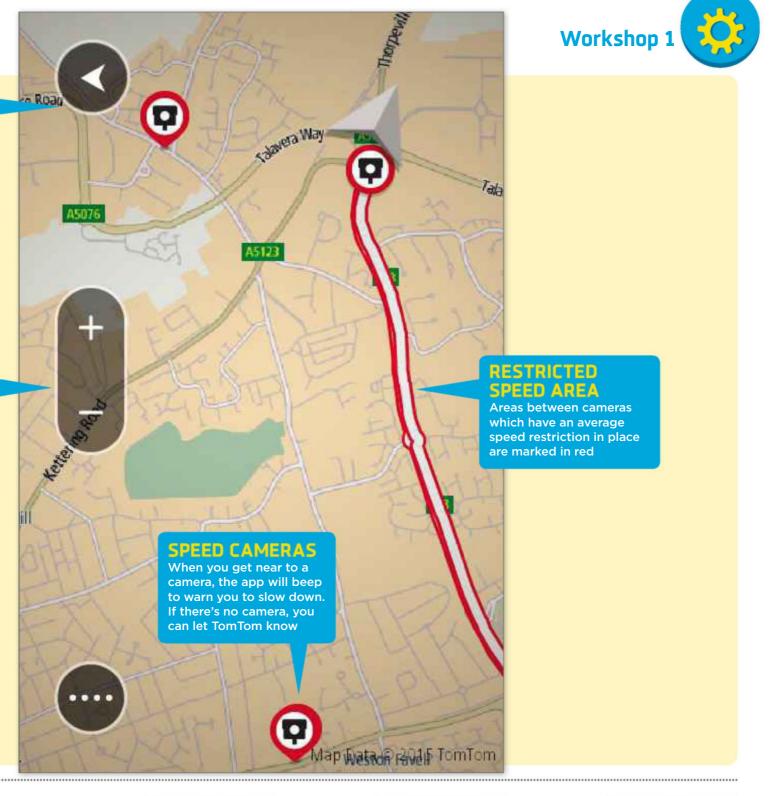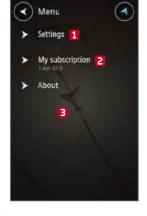
RESTRICTED SPEED AREA
Areas between cameras which have an average speed restriction in place are marked in red

SPEED CAMERAS
When you get near to a camera, the app will beep to warn you to slow down. If there's no camera, you can let TomTom know

6 Tap the circle with four dots to open the menu screen. From here, you can access the settings and configure the app to suit your needs. **1** You can also check on the state of your free trial or subscription. **2** The map continues to display and update in the background. **3**

7 The Settings screen lets you choose whether or not you want a warning to sound when you get in range of a camera. **1** You can also opt to show traffic on the map. **2** The warning time can be adjusted **3** and you can change the distance measurements **4** – automatic, kilometres or miles.

8 Use the three-month trial to decide whether you like the app. The My Subscription screen shows how long you currently have remaining **1** and will give you the opportunity to extend your subscription. **2** One month costs £1.99, while a full year will set you back £15.49, which represents a saving of £8.39.
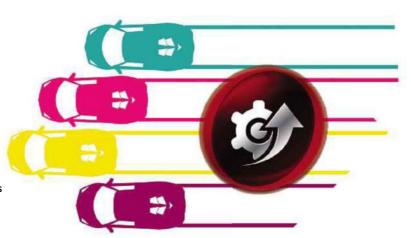
Take control of your hardware drivers

IObit Driver Booster: bit.ly/driver363 | ⏱ **10 mins** | 🏁 **XP, Vista, 7, 8+**
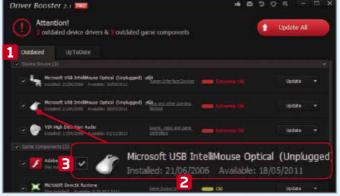
Out-of-date drivers can slow your PC's performance and even stop your hardware from working properly. The free version of IObit Driver Booster 2 identifies old drivers and lets you update them with a single click so that your PC keeps running smoothly. The program can be set to perform scans on a daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis. It detects newly installed devices, scanning them to make sure that you're using the most up-to-date drivers. It's also handy for browsing or exporting a comprehensive list of your installed drivers.

The program automatically creates a system-restore point when you update your drivers, which means you can return to the previous configuration if anything goes wrong. There's also a handy option that lets you set the program to ignore any out-of-date drivers that you don't want to update.

1 Download and install IObit Driver Booster, taking care to untick the box that installs Advanced SystemCare Free, **1** unless you want it. When you run the program, it performs a scan before showing the number of outdated drivers and game components on your PC.

2 Check the names of the outdated drivers **1** and the dates that they were installed. **2** If a driver is required for a device you no longer use, you can untick the box next to it **3** to exclude it from the update.

3 For more information about a driver, click the drop-down menu alongside it and select Details. Here you can see its Type, **1** Vendor **2** and Provider, **3** as well as the latest version available. **4** To hide it from future scans, click Ignore **5** and then Yes.

4 Unless you require Game Components, untick the relevant box to avoid installing them. Next, click Update Selected and OK to update your chosen drivers. A progress bar will appear. **1** Tick 'Automatically reboot PC' **2** if you want your computer to restart once the drivers have been installed.
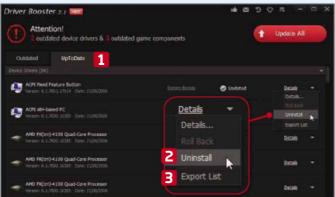
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says
In order to back up your drivers so that they can be restored without having to perform a more drastic system restore, you'll need to buy Driver Booster Pro, which costs $22.95 (around £15). This also unlocks a range of other premium features, including tools to further enhance your hardware's performance.
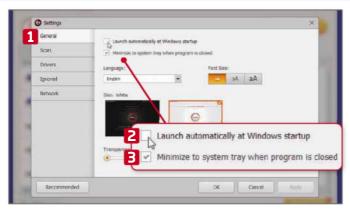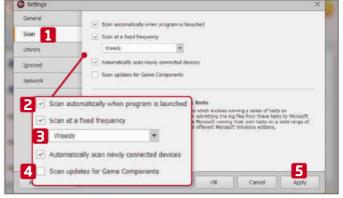
5 Select the UpToDate tab **1** to see a comprehensive list of all your up-to-date drivers. Click the drop-down menu next to a driver and select Uninstall **2** to remove it, or click Export List **3** to save the list of drivers as a text file.

6 You can change the appearance of Driver Booster by selecting the T-shirt icon **1** in its toolbar. A pop-up appears, letting you choose an alternative white skin. **2** You can also adjust the program's transparency **3** and font size. **4**
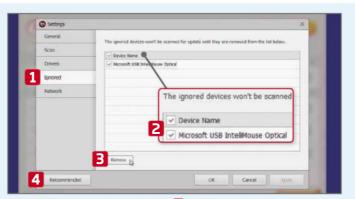
7 For more settings, click the three-line icon, then click Settings. On the General tab, **1** you can choose to launch the program on start-up. **2** By default, it is set to minimise to the taskbar's notification area when closed. **3**

8 Click Scan **1** to see the settings related to scanning for new drivers. By default, the program scans when it's launched **2** and will also carry out a weekly scan. **3** You can turn off scans for game components by unticking the box. **4** Click Apply to save any changes. **5**

9 The Drivers tab **1** lets you choose where to save downloaded drivers. Click Browse **2** and select a new folder. By default, the program automatically creates a restore point before drivers are installed **3** and deletes the driver packages afterwards. **4**

10 Click the Ignored tab **1** to see a list of drivers that you've set Driver Booster to ignore. You can remove items from the list by selecting them **2** and clicking Remove. **3** To restore the program's settings to the recommended configuration, click Recommended. **4**

Buy Amazon products at their lowest prices

The Camelizer extension for Chrome lets you track price changes of products on Amazon.co.uk so that you can buy them at their cheapest. It's very easy use, letting you see at a glance a product's highest and lowest prices of all time, and has a Price Watch feature you can set to notify you when a product becomes available for an amount you're happy to pay.
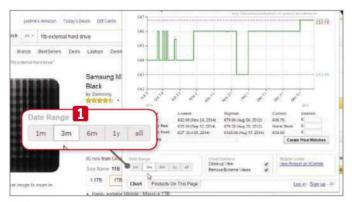
The Camelizer: bit.ly/camelizer363 | 🕐 **10 mins** | 🌐 **Chrome**

1 Download and install The Camelizer for Chrome, visit www.amazon.co.uk and find an item you're interested in. Open its product page and click the extension's icon, **1** which appears in the address bar. A pop-up opens charting the item's price fluctuations **2** since it first became available.

2 Below the graph, you can see the product's lowest and highest prices of all time **1** (both date stamped) as well as its current price. You can untick the boxes next to Amazon, 3rd Party New or 3rd Party Used **2** to show only the information you're interested in viewing on the graph.
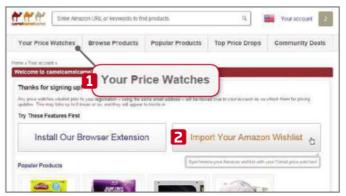
3 You can also alter the date range to get a clearer impression of the price changes over the past month, three months, six months or year. **1** The extension cannot predict when a price will drop again, but you can use its Price Watch feature to notify you if it does.

4 Enter your desired price **1** and email address **2** in the appropriate boxes and click Create Price Watches. **3** You'll receive an email confirming that you've set up a Price Watch, and will be notified as soon as the price drops to the figure you've specified.

5 Setting up an account with Camelcamelcamel isn't compulsory, but doing so will unlock The Camelizer's handy extra features. Click 'Sign up' from the extension's pop-up window and enter the required information. **1** You can also log in with Google, Facebook or Twitter. **2**

6 Once you've signed up, you can manage your price watches from one place **1** and the add-on can also automatically track your Amazon wishlist. **2** Signing up also means you can use Camelcamelcamel without having to put up with any adverts.

Find out what's filling up your hard drive

The latest version of CCleaner (5.01) has a great new tool that can tell you how much space each file is using up on your hard drive. Although you can do this with other programs, having this tool at your fingertips while using CCleaner's other junk-removing elements is extremely handy. And it is also very quick at scanning your hard drive.
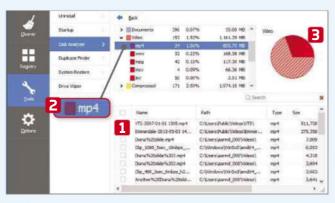
CCleaner: bit.ly/cclean363 | 🕐 10 mins | 🪟 XP, Vista, 7, 8+
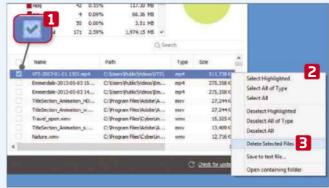
1 Click Tools, **1** then Disk Analyzer. **2** Select the drive you want to analyse **3** and tick any categories **4** that you want to view separately. The first time you carry out this procedure, you may as well tick them all. Click the Analyze button. **5**
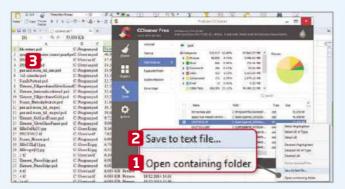
2 The box at the top shows the categories selected in Step 1. Click a category's arrow **1** to show the types of files included, listed in order of space used. You can see the number of files, **2** the percentage of your hard drive they take up **3** and the number of MBs used. **4**

3 The box at the bottom shows a list of all the files found in your selection, **1** with the largest at the top. This will help you locate the worst space hogs. Selecting a file type **2** changes the pie chart to show how much of the category's total space is taken up by that type of file. **3**

4 Tick the boxes to select individual files **1** or highlight one (use Shift+Ctrl to choose more than one) and right-click for more options. **2** Select the files you don't want, then right-click to 'Delete Selected Files'. **3** This is a permanent delete so no copy is saved to the Recycle Bin.

5 If you'd rather deal with the files in Explorer, right-click and choose 'Open containing folder'. **1** You can also choose to save the list as a text file, **2** though it's easier to view as a spreadsheet. To separate the elements into the spreadsheet's columns, **3** import it as 'tab delimited'.

6 Use the search box **1** to filter your results further. You can use wild cards, as you would in Windows searches, to refine your results, but you can only search for the names of files. To make it easier to find files from their path or size, click the relevant heading **2** to reorder them.
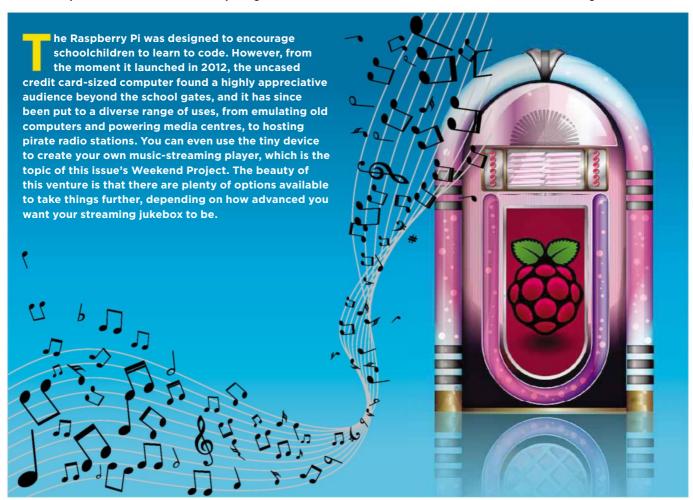
How to... Turn your Raspberry Pi into a music-streaming jukebox

Wayne Williams demonstrates how to turn a humble Raspberry Pi
into a powerful music player that can stream music from anywhere

The Raspberry Pi was designed to encourage
schoolchildren to learn to code. However, from
the moment it launched in 2012, the uncased
credit card-sized computer found a highly appreciative
audience beyond the school gates, and it has since
been put to a diverse range of uses, from emulating old
computers and powering media centres, to hosting
pirate radio stations. You can even use the tiny device
to create your own music-streaming player, which is the
topic of this issue's Weekend Project. The beauty of
this venture is that there are plenty of options available
to take things further, depending on how advanced you
want your streaming jukebox to be.

What you'll need

This project will work with any of the four
models of Raspberry Pi: A, A+, B and B+.
If you don't currently own a Pi, you can
find out more at the Raspberry Pi
Foundation (www.raspberrypi.org). The
Model A has 256MB of memory, one USB
port and no Ethernet (network
connection), and will set you back
around £20. The A+ also has 256MB of
memory, but is smaller, supports micro

SD cards and is cheaper (around £15.50).
    The Model B costs around £28 and has
512MB of memory, two USB ports and an
Ethernet connection. The B+ costs
approximately £24, supports micro SD,
and has four USB ports.
    We'd recommend you go for the Model
B+ because it's the best version and is
still very affordable. It also has a new
low-noise power supply, which means it
delivers better audio quality than the

older Pi models.
    You can buy a Pi from RS Components
(bit.ly/rspi363), Farnell element14 (bit.ly/
farnell363) and Amazon (www.amazon.
co.uk). You get only the uncased,
bare-bones Pi for your money, so you'll
have to budget for the other components
unless you have them lying around at
home. To use the Pi, you'll need:
    • An **Ethernet cable** to connect the Pi
      to your network and the internet

The new Raspberry Pi Model B+ has more USB ports and better sound than its predecessors

You can configure music-streaming services such as Spotify and Google Music from the MusicBox settings

- A **USB Wi-Fi dongle** (optional)
- An **SD card** for the operating system. The A+ and B+ models use micro SD cards (the same as those used in mobile phones). This project will work on a 1GB card, but we'd recommend at least a 4GB card – more, if you want to store music on it
- **A micro USB cable or power supply** to power the device

Some of these items can bought directly from RS Components, Farnell element14 and most other computer accessories retailers.

You'll also need speakers, an amplifier or headphones (either analogue or USB) so you can hear the music being played, and access to either a computer, a tablet or a phone with a modern browser – Chrome, Firefox, Safari on iOS and IE10 will all work just fine, although older versions of Internet Explorer aren't compatible with the Pi operating system we'll be using.

You would normally need a screen – either a TV or a computer monitor – and an HDMI/DVI cable to connect the Pi to the display, but it isn't necessary for this project. You don't need a USB keyboard or mouse either, which is fortunate because it frees up the USB sockets for speakers.

Pi MusicBox

There are several operating systems available for the Raspberry Pi, but for this project we'll be using Pi MusicBox (bit.ly/musicbox363), which is designed to make it easy to stream music on the Raspberry Pi and even has support for Apple AirPlay and DLNA (Digital Living Network Alliance) streaming. Its features

include the ability to stream music from services such as Spotify Premium, SoundCloud, Google Music, TuneIn and Last. FM, and it offers support for playing local and networked audio tracks.

Find out how to install Pi Music Box in our Mini Workshop, below. Once you've got it going, we'll show you how to configure it in the Mini Workshop on page 61.

Go wireless

If you're using a Pi that doesn't have an Ethernet connection, you'll need to configure the Pi Music Box to run with Wi-Fi before you start. Once you've written it to the memory card in Step 2 of our installation Mini Workshop, don't remove the card from your computer. Browse to the 'config' folder, open 'settings.ini' and add the details there – you'll find instructions on what to add and where to add it in the file itself. Once this is done, finish Step 2 by removing the card and inserting it in the Pi.

If you've set up the device using

MINI WORKSHOP | Install Pi MusicBox

1 Connect your Pi to both an Ethernet network **1** and some speakers. **2** You don't need to connect a monitor, keyboard or mouse, because MusicBox is controlled through a web interface, but a monitor will help you find the Pi's IP address in Step 3. Before plugging the Pi into a power socket, you'll need to install the Pi MusicBox OS on the SD card.

2 Download Pi MusicBox on a PC and unzip it. Connect an SD card to your PC (using an adapter, if necessary). Install and run Win32 Disk Imager (bit.ly/win32disk363). Browse to the Pi MusicBox image file, **1** select the SD card **2** and click Write. **3** When it's done, insert the SD card into your Pi and power it up.
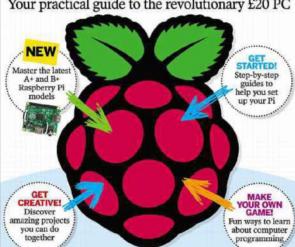
3 If you have a monitor attached to your Pi, wait for it to boot, then make a note of the IP address. Open a browser on your PC or mobile device and enter the IP address in the address box. If you don't know it, http://musicbox.local should also work. This opens the MusicBox web interface where you can access the settings and set up the OS as required. **1**

Ethernet, you can still switch to Wi-Fi later by returning the SD card to your computer and changing the files as above, or editing the settings using the web interface while still connected to Ethernet, then switching to a Wi-Fi network afterwards. Go to Settings, Network and fill in the Wireless Network name (SSID) and password. Scroll down and click 'Update settings (reboot)'. The Pi will restart.

Music sources

Pi MusicBox can play tracks from several sources including a shared folder on the local network; a USB drive connected directly to the Raspberry Pi; and the SD card. You can copy songs onto the card when it's attached to your PC, before you insert it into the Pi.

The OS can also stream songs that are stored on a mobile phone or tablet. Anyone with access to your wireless network will be able to connect to the jukebox and start streaming their music.

Use AirPlay streaming

If you have an Apple device, turn on AirPlay streaming in MusicBox and reboot the Pi. Start a song playing on

MusicBox is AirPlay compatible, so you can easily stream music from an iPhone, iPod or iPad
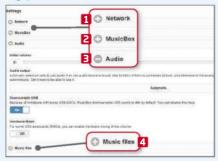
your iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch, then swipe up from the bottom of the device. Tap the AirPlay option, then select the MusicBox entry and the song you're playing will start streaming to your jukebox.

Improve the audio

The default audio quality isn't amazing, but it's good enough, especially if you are using the Model B+. However, you can make a big improvement by adding a USB sound card to the Pi. There are lots of very affordable models to be found on

Boost the sound quality of your Raspberry Pi with a sound card, which can connect directly to the I/O pins or via USB

Amazon. However, you get what you pay for, so while options for less than a fiver might sound tempting, a soundcard such as the Creative Sound Blaster Play (£16, bit.ly/soundblaster363) will deliver better results. Audiophiles may want to consider the HiFiBerry (£33, www.hifiberry.com) or Wolfson (£29, bit.ly/wolfson363) audio cards, which are designed specifically for use with the Raspberry Pi. If you buy a HiFiBerry card, you'll be able to select it under Audio Out in MusicBox's Audio settings. Choose from HiFiBerry Dac, HiFiBerry Digi and HiFiBerry Digi+. ∎

MINI WORKSHOP | Configure the Raspberry Pi MusicBox

1 Click Settings in the web interface. Network **1** lets you connect to a wireless network; MusicBox **2** offers various options for configuring the OS; and Audio **3** lets you set the initial volume and choose an audio output method: automatic, USB, HDMI or analogue. Settings for local or network songs are found under 'Music files'. **4**

2 The MusicBox section lets you rename the device **1** and set a streaming radio station that will play at start-up. **2** You can change the device password **3** and turn on AirPlay streaming if you have an iPhone or iPad. **4** You can also enable DLNA/uPnP/OpenHome streaming **5** to stream songs from compatible devices.

3 Whenever you make any changes, scroll down and click 'Update settings (reboot)'. Services such as Spotify Premium can also be configured in Settings. From the Home screen, you can browse for music to listen to, **1** find Streams **2** (a selection of pre-sets are available), and search for songs and artists. **3**

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STEP 3 Choose whether to create an optional PixelMags account

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STEP 3 Tap 'Subscribe'

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STEP 3 Choose whether to create an optional ▮▮▮ account

STEP 4 Enter your Apple ID password to confirm

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TOP TIPS FOR THE START MENU

XP-style Start menu

Using the oddly named Spencer (bit .ly/spen363) is the easiest way to install an XP-style Start button in later versions of Windows. Simply unzip the file and drag the Spencer.exe icon to the taskbar to pin it. This adds the program icon, which can then be dragged to the left-hand side of the taskbar, where the Start button is usually located.

When you click the Spencer icon in the taskbar, a simple Classic menu appears containing all your programs. If there are too many to fit on the screen, you can use the arrows at the top and the bottom to scroll through the list. And that's it – there are no other features; it's just a straightforward, classic menu button that requires no installation or configuration.

Use Spencer to add a simple Start menu to Windows 7 and 8

Start screen in a menu

Start Menu Reviver (www.reviversoft .com) adds a much-needed Start menu to Windows 8 and transforms the existing one in Windows 7. It displays a panel of icons down the left-hand side and a collection of tiles on the right. The top four icons on the left open different Explorer windows, with icons for the Control Panel, Task Manager and other useful items further down the list. If you want to know what an icon does, hover your mouse over it to make its functions appear in a pop-up tooltip box.

The tiled area on the right looks like the Windows 8 Start Screen and is designed to provide quick access to

your most used programs. To add a program, right-click an empty tile and select Add Tile from the menu. Enter a name and click the magnifying glass to browse for the program you want to add. Most of your PC's installed software can be found in the C:\Program Files folder. If you want to replace or clear a program, right-click a tile and select Reset Tile or Edit Tile. Add all your favourite programs in this way so you have quick access to them. You can also drag a tile and drop it on

Add a unique and powerful Start menu to Windows 7 and 8 with Start Menu Reviver

another to shrink it to a group of four smaller tiles; and if you decide you want to make a quarter-sized tile full-size again, just drag and drop it onto a large empty tile.

To access all your programs, type a word into the search box, such as `WordPad`, `Paint` or `Firefox`. To browse the installed programs, click in the search box, press Tab and click the folder icon on the right.

Choose your menu design

Classic Shell (classicshell.net) is a free tool with a wide range of customisation options for the Start menu in Windows 7 and 8. Run Classic Start Menu Settings from the Start menu. On the Start Menu Style tab, you'll find three different menus to choose from. You can pick one of the two types of Start button, or select and use an image of your own.

Each menu style offers a selection of skins, so once you've decided on the type of menu, click the Skin tab to pick a colour scheme and apply

If you see words that `look like they've been` **typed in a** `typewriter`**, follow the instructions and type them exactly as they appear, paying close attention to spaces and punctuation.**

Classic Shell provides three different Start menu designs with multiple skins
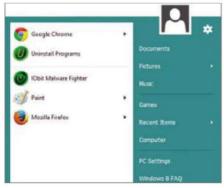
effects such as transparency. The changes are instantaneous so, once you've made your customisations, just click the Start button to see the effect. It makes exploring the different options very quick and easy.

The Basic Settings tab contains some useful shortcuts. For example, clicking the Start button displays your new Start menu, but if you hold down the Shift key at the same time, the standard Windows Start menu will be displayed. This means you have instant access to two types of menu and can easily choose between them.

Bring Windows 7's menu to 8

Start Menu 8 (www.iobit.com) is designed to add the missing Windows 7-style Start menu to Windows 8, but it can also be used to replace the one in Windows 7. Run the program and the settings window appears, which lets you configure your new Start menu. There's a variety of styles to choose from, including both flat and Windows 7-style menu designs, with customisable transparency.

In the General section, you can set Start Menu 8 to auto-load with Windows; enable or disable the highlighting of new programs; set the number of recent programs to display; select the action you want the power button to perform; and more. You can also customise the font size and colour in the User Interface section.

Start Menu 8 has loads of options to configure the way your Start menu works

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TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL
More advanced tips for if you're feeling brave

Software-free menu

When you install software on your PC, a shortcut is added to the folder
C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\ Windows\Start menu\Programs
and also the folder
C:\Users\YourName\AppData\ Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs.

The Start menu is essentially just a list of these shortcuts. The first folder contains public items for all users and the second contains menu items only you can see. If you can't find these folders, go to Folder Options in the Control Panel, select the View tab and select 'Show hidden files, folders or drives'.

Right-click an empty part of the taskbar, select Toolbars, New Toolbar and you'll be prompted to select a folder on the hard drive. Select the first of the two folders listed above to add a Programs item to the taskbar at the right. Click the little double arrow to display a Start-like menu. Add another toolbar in the same way for your private menu items, or move all the private menu shortcuts (C:\Users...) into the public menu shortcuts folder (C:\ProgramData...).

This is a simple and clever way to add a Start menu to Windows 8 that requires no software to be installed. The menu is at the right side of the taskbar rather than the left, but this isn't much of an inconvenience.

Add a Start menu to Windows 8 without having to install any extra software

Reorganise your menu

Handy Start Menu (www .handystartmenu.com) is a clever tool that works on any version of Windows. If your computer is running Windows 8, the tool adds a Start menu to the taskbar, but if you have an earlier version of Windows, it adds other new tools to the existing menu. Clear the

Handy Start Menu provides a list of categories but you can add your own

tickbox for the Registry tool during installation because you don't need it.

If you are running the program in Windows 7, it may look like nothing has changed when you click the Start button. However, if you select All Programs, you'll see a new menu that has all the same items as before, but presented in a different way.

Run Handy Start Menu from the Desktop shortcut and click the option to change the menu settings. The menu has two panes and the left-hand one contains a list of categories. Several are created for you, but more can be added. Click the little arrow next to a category to expand it and see the programs it contains. Click a program, then click a category on the right to move a program to it. By creating and editing categories, you can create a Start menu that organises the items in a way that suits you, rather than having to use the Windows default settings.

The Menu Look tab lets you set the text size. Values greater than 100 per cent make it larger, which is useful if you struggle to read the menu text on a small laptop screen; less than 100 per cent make it smaller, which you could use if you have a large monitor and want to squeeze in more content.

Start menu configurations can be loaded and saved, so you can have several different ones. For example, you could create a menu for work that has all your office tools easily accessible and another one for photo editing or music, that puts all the necessary tools at your fingertips.

Ask the Expert

Roland Waddilove, computer programmer and PC journalist since 1981, answers all your technical questions. Email us for help at webuser@dennis.co.uk

GENERAL PC

Defragmenting an SSD

Q I was always given to understand that it's best not to defrag an SSD (solid-state drive). However, in Issue 361 (bit.ly/webuser361) of *Web User*, your review of Auslogics Disk Defrag Free 5.1 says that it improves the efficiency with which Windows handles SSDs. Does this mean that it is safe to use this particular program to defrag an SSD? And how often would you recommend this should be done?
Trevor Bunce, via email

Occasionally defragging an SSD won't damage it, but don't do it as often as you would a regular drive

A The traditional advice is that old-style mechanical drives need to be frequently defragmented to maintain performance, while SSDs should not, because it wears them out. However, modern SSDs have proved to be more robust than expected and don't wear out as fast as was originally thought, so defragmenting does not damage them any more than traditional drives, which also wear out
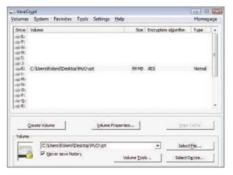
over time. The question is, is it necessary?

A file can be broken into fragments and stored on various parts of a hard drive, but eventually no more fragments can be created and an error will occur when writing to it. An SSD needs to be defragmented to stop this happening, but only about once every month or two, whereas you should defrag a traditional drive weekly. With a traditional hard drive, some parts can be read faster than others, so placing frequently accessed files in these locations boosts performance; with an SSD, the location of files makes no difference to the speed with which they are accessed.

The bottom line is that defragmenting an SSD does not offer any speed benefits, but it's a good idea to defrag every couple of months to prevent files from being split into too many parts.

SECURITY
Hide my photos

Q Do you know of any free software that can encrypt images?
Pankaj Kumar, via email

A There are many ways to hide files such as images to prevent them from being accessed by other people. A tool such as Boxcryptor (www.boxcryptor.com) works with Google Drive, OneDrive, Dropbox and other cloud services, so that when you save a file, it is automatically encrypted. The encrypted file is synced with your online storage, so it can't be accessed by hackers or even the online-storage services themselves. However, the files remain unencrypted on your hard drive, so anyone with access to your computer

can still see them.

Drag'n'Crypt Ultra (bitcore.de/dcu) can solve this. The website is in German, so just follow the download link and select English when you run the program. It adds a target icon to the Desktop to which you drag and drop files and folders to encrypt them. They are decrypted in the same way, by dragging and dropping. The original files can be securely and automatically erased by right-clicking the target and selecting Settings from the menu. It is simple, but effective.

VeraCrypt (veracrypt.codeplex.com) lets you create a password-protected and encrypted virtual drive. Use the Volume Creation Wizard on the Tools menu to create a file of 2GB, for example. Exit the wizard and return to

the main program. You can now select and mount the file to make it appear as a separate hard drive in Explorer. It can be used like any other drive and can store any file type. When it is unmounted, the contents are inaccessible.

VeraCrypt creates encrypted virtual drives that securely hide private files

HARDWARE
Speed up my PC

Q My laptop is only two years old, yet it is already running very slowly. What can I do to restore it to its original speed? I do not have a Windows 7 CD to reinstall it.
Paul Baker, via email

A Windows 7 needs 4GB to run properly and adding more memory can make a significant difference. However, some laptops are easier to upgrade than others. Turn your laptop over and see if it has an easily removable cover over the memory sockets.

If the hard drive is easily accessible, you could replace it with an SSD, which will make the computer more responsive. Use a USB-to-SATA cable to connect an SSD to your laptop and copy across the old drive's contents; then the old and new drives can be swapped.

Cleaning and tuning Windows also boosts performance. Tools such as IObit Uninstaller (www.iobit.com) and Wise Program Uninstaller (wisecleaner.com) can thoroughly remove any software you don't need. Meanwhile, switching to portable software means you can continue to enjoy your favourite programs without filling your hard drive. Go to PortableApps.com (portableapps

Clean up your hard drive and defragment it to improve your PC's performance

.com), for example, and browse the apps. If you use LibreOffice or OpenOffice, you could uninstall it and use the portable version instead. GIMP, a popular photo editor, is available in a portable version, as is VLC video player, and there are many others.

Cleaning the hard drive and defragmenting it may also boost your PC's performance, and there are some great free tools that can do this, such as IObit SmartDefrag (bit.ly/smart363) and Wise Disk Cleaner (bit.ly/wise363). IObit's tool can clean junk files before defragmenting and optimises the order of programs to make them load faster. Wise's tool has a slimming system that removes unnecessary files such as wallpapers, help files, installation files and other junk, and then defragments the drive.

WINDOWS 10
Windows 10 upgrade is failing

Q I 've been reading about the Technical Preview version of Windows 10 and was looking forward to trying it, but I'm having problems attempting the upgrade from Windows 7 Home Premium on my Dell Inspiron M5030 laptop. It has a 64-bit AMD V120 2.2GHz processor, 2GB of memory and over 70GB of hard drive space left alongside Windows 7 on the C: drive. The D: partition contains some personal files and photos. Although this is not my main computer, everything is backed up and it has all the latest drivers, including the latest BIOS.

I downloaded the latest technical preview 64-bit ISO file, installed CloneDrive and used it to mount the ISO file to a USB drive. I created a bootable USB drive and set the laptop order to boot from the USB drive first, and selected the option to completely replace everything on the C: drive. I have tried two different ways of installing it but both end with a blank screen. The installation may be running in the background, but the screen is blank, so I

can't do anything except a hard reboot, which simply returns me to the original Windows 7 installation. On one occasion I had to reinstall Windows 7.

I haven't tried a virtual machine option because I don't believe I have enough memory.

Gareth Williams, via email

A Your laptop is old and the specifications are poor compared to a modern PC – even a budget model. The processor is only a single-core model and is very underpowered, while 2GB of memory is barely sufficient to run Windows these days. You're correct to assume that software such as VirtualBox won't work because your laptop doesn't have enough free memory. It looks like Windows 10 isn't compatible with your hardware anyway, but even if it could be installed on this computer, it would perform very poorly and probably isn't worth trying.

A modern operating system needs modern hardware. You say this is not your main laptop, so presumably you have a more powerful one. If it has a modern processor, a minimum of 4GB of memory and 40GB of free drive space, you could install VirtualBox and run Windows 10. It will not affect the current installation of Windows in any way.

EMAIL
Changing from POP3 to IMAP

Q A few months ago I changed my email settings from POP3 to IMAP so I could sync my iPad and iPhone with

my PC's email. This has led to a few anomalies that I can't understand. When I open Microsoft Outlook, it defaults to the list of emails that were downloaded using the old POP3 setting. When I then click the IMAP inbox, the PC updates many thousands of cached messages before listing the new headers. This doesn't happen on the iPad. How do I correct the problem?

Jeff Wolfe, via email

A It sounds like you have two email accounts set up in Outlook; one using POP3 and the other using IMAP, but both accessing the same online account. This is bound to cause confusion and you should delete the POP3 account so that it can no longer be used.

To set up your POP3 and IMAP email accounts, go to File, Info, Account Settings, Account Settings. On older versions of Outlook, you might find Account Settings in the Tools menu. Double-click each account on the 'E-mail' tab and write down all the settings. Afterwards, select the POP3 account and click Remove to delete it. Close the Account Settings window, quit Outlook, then restart it. Hopefully, it will now work properly, but if not, delete the IMAP account, restart Outlook and add the account again.

There is a website at bit.ly/imap363 which contains some useful step-by-step guides for converting from POP3 to IMAP. It covers a range of services and different versions of Outlook.

MEDIA
Easy superimpose

Q I like to edit my photos by putting people's heads onto other bodies. I used to use PhotoSuite for this, but the software doesn't work with Windows 8.1, and other programs I've tried are too complicated. Can you recommend a simple program for manipulating photos?

Brian Cave, via email

A To make a composite photo realistic, you need a free selection tool (or 'lasso'), which lets you trace around an irregular object. The edges of the selection need to be merged into the new image to make a seamless blend.

Most basic photo editors provide a selection tool that lets you take an

Free image editor GIMP can be used for all sorts of photo-editing work

area of one photo and paste it into another, but free-form selection with blending is often only available in more advanced tools. Our favourites are Paint.net (www.getpaint.net) and GIMP (www.gimp.org). They look difficult to use at first, but it's easy to produce the effect you want with a bit of practise.

This fortnight Roland has been filling his PC, tablet and phone with free ebooks. He now has more than he can read!

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. To get help or offer it to others, visit forum.webuser.co.uk
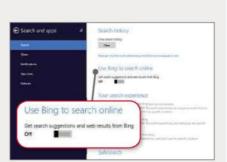
TOP TIP

£25 winner

GENERAL PC

Stop internet searches

To open Windows 8's search facility, press Windows+S. It's very handy for locating programs and settings on your PC, but it also shows internet search results, which are less useful. To turn this off and limit searches to your PC, go to the Charms bar on the right and click Settings, 'Change PC settings', 'Search and apps', then Search. Turn off 'Use Bing to search online'.

Neil Kelly, via email

Switching off Bing removes clutter from Windows 8's search results

SOFTWARE

Photos in WordPad

I've tried free office suites but I find them unwieldy and WordPad is a good enough word processor for my needs. It's on the Start menu in Windows 7, but Windows 8 users should start it by typing wordpad in the Start screen and clicking it.

The obvious way to insert a photo or image into a WordPad document is to click the Picture button in the ribbon at the top of the window, then browse the drive and select a JPEG or other image file. This lets you insert an image, but you can't edit it. If you want to do this, click 'Paint drawing' instead. There's no option on the File menu to open an image, but if you click the arrow under the Paste button and select 'Paste from', you can select an image, such as a photo.

Select File, Exit and return to your WordPad document. The image will be inserted, but when you double-click it, it opens in Paint so you can edit it by adding borders, captions and more.

David Fox, via email

Insert pictures in WordPad using Paint instead of the toolbar Picture button

MUSIC

Download iTunes tracks again

One of my Christmas presents was a 12-track album from iTunes, which I downloaded and played, but when I got to track 11, it stopped part of the way through and skipped to the final track. In the iTunes Store, the album was listed as purchased, but the option to download it again was greyed out.

I searched for the problem on Apple's support website and found other people have had similar complaints. Apparently it's caused by the track not downloading completely and the solution posted suggested that I try deleting the song and downloading it again using the Purchased link in the iTunes Store.

While I normally have iCloud Download ticked in my column options of iTunes (as it was in this case), there was no cloud icon giving me the option to download the song again. I fixed this by ticking 'Show iTunes in the Cloud purchases' (from iTunes Preferences, select Store Preferences) and was then able to download the offending track.

Spiraleye, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Task Manager details

The Task Manager in Windows 8 is much better than older versions and provides a lot more information about running programs, CPU activity, and network and drive activity. It also has some less obvious features that are equally useful.

Right-click the taskbar and select Task Manager. On the Processes tab, you can right-click the Name heading at the top of the processes list to add more columns of information, such as Type, Process Name, Publisher and several more.

Go to the Performance tab and select CPU to view the processor activity. Most processors these days are multi-core models and the Task Manager lets you view each core separately. Right-click the CPU chart and select 'Change graph to', then 'Logical processors'. If it looks like you have too many processors, it's because hyperthreading makes a processor core appear as two virtual processors, so a four-core CPU can have eight scrolling CPU charts.

Brian Harding, via email

Switch between a single CPU and multiple CPU charts by right-clicking them

VIDEO

Playback and sharing tips for YouTube

I've been using YouTube a lot recently and have a few handy tips that I'd like to share with other readers. Firstly, the

speed function is really useful if you want to make a video run faster or slower. There are six options from quarter-speed up to double-speed. It affects the audio track as well, which is handy if you want to make fast commentary clearer by slowing it down. To use the feature, select the Settings cog on the video and click the Speed drop-down menu.

The 'Start at' option is very useful if you want to share a video. By pausing the video and ticking this box, the URL is updated so that the shared clip starts from this point. This is very handy if the relevant part of the clip you want to share is a long way into a lengthy clip.

By dragging the playback marker upwards, you can also see a zoomed view of your position, making it easier to browse from one frame to the next.

Bedstor and succulent95, Web User Forums

Use YouTube's 'Start at' tickbox to choose a video's starting point

MUSIC
Move your iTunes library to an external drive

I have a lot of files on my built-in hard drive, so I decided to use a Western Digital My Passport 1TB portable drive to increase my storage space. I moved all my music over to it, including associated iTunes files and folders, but iTunes couldn't recognise the new location. The solution was to open Advanced Preferences in Preferences and to click Change, so I could navigate to the new 'iTunes Media folder location'.

Spiraleye, Web User Forums

INTERNET
Resize images on Web User forums

Before Christmas, there was a spate of massive pictures posted to the Web User forums that pushed the posts off the edge of the screen. When you click the picture icon to share an image on the forum, it asks you to enter its URL. By clicking OK and adding `?w=100` to the end of the URL (inside the image tags), you can resize the image to a width of

Changing the value after the equals sign lets you resize an image on our forums

100 pixels, or any value of your choice. This may not be possible with all images, so it's a good idea to preview the post to see if it works. If it doesn't, try uploading the image to Photobucket (photobucket. com) first and resizing it there.

Izzit, Web User Forums

BACK-UP
Back up your Windows 7 PC

I received an email recently that included a link to a helpful tutorial at Windows Secrets (bit.ly/backup363) that gives comprehensive instructions on how to back up a Windows 7 PC. Vista and XP are also mentioned, with links to useful information, but unfortunately there is nothing about Windows 8.

Madeline, Web User Forums

VIDEO
Out-of-sync audio in VLC

I was playing a music video the other day and my pet hate happened: the sound and picture went out of sync. In VLC Player, you can adjust this using the J and K keys. There are dozens of other handy keyboard shortcuts for VLC – I found a comprehensive list at ShortcutWorld.com (bit.ly/shortcuts363).

Spiraleye, Web User Forums

VLC Player lets you adjust a video's audio delay if the sound is out of sync

PRINTING
Print more cheaply

In Issue 361's Ask the Expert (bit.ly/webuser361), Paul Walmsley wanted a recommendation for an affordable inkjet printer that also has inexpensive cartridges. I, like Paul, had problems with the cartridges in the Kodak ESP 3.2s continually drying up and refusing to print, which happens however recently the printer has been used.

In desperation, I reconnected my old Epson Stylus Color 440. Although it's ancient and sits under my desk gathering dust, it produced prints of an acceptable standard with cartridges that are years old. It is slow to print, but it does the job and you can still get cheap replacement inkjet cartridges for it. The Kodak ESP 3.2s is fast by comparison but perhaps this is why its ink has to dry more quickly. Perhaps Paul should think about getting an older second-hand printer and buying cheap replacement cartridges for it.

Clifford Evans, via email

SOCIAL NETWORKING
Schedule future tweets

If you want to tweet something at a specific time in the future, you can do so using FutureTweets (futuretweets.com). Sign up with your Twitter account, select your time zone and type in what you want to tweet, paying close attention to hashtags and 'mentions' (references to a person using the format '@username'). Choose the date and time you want the tweet to be posted and click Schedule. If you change your mind, you can delete or edit a tweet at any point before it is sent.

Jack Gold, Web User Forums

FutureTweets posts tweets for you at the date and time of your choice

GENERAL PC
Fix Windows Update

I've not had any problems with Windows Update myself, but I know others have. There is a built-in tool for fixing Windows Update and although it probably isn't capable of fixing every problem, it's worth trying. Open the Control Panel and, in the Small Icons view, click Troubleshooting. Under 'System and Security', click 'Fix problems with Windows Update'. This opens a new window that checks for problems and automatically fixes them.

Craig Hughes, via email

Readers' Helpdesk

Our pick of the best solutions posted on our reader forums. Visit forum.webuser.co.uk – it's friendly and free!

Can I avoid downloading McAfee with Flash Player?

Q I just received a notification telling me I need to update Flash Player, but there was no option to opt out of installing McAfee, so I decided not to proceed. Can I download the latest version without this irritating add-on?
Peru, Web User Forums

A Are you sure it was a genuine notification? Adobe Flash Player was updated to v16.0.0.235 on 9 December 2014 (it may have had another update since). You should verify which version you are running, then go to its download page (get.adobe.com/flashplayer) if you think you need the update.

You should always be able to untick the option to install McAfee Security Scan Plus, but it's a good idea to install Unchecky (unchecky.com) so that you don't get caught out by PUPs (potentially unwanted programs). If you use Google Chrome as your primary browser, its Flash Player plug-in should be updated automatically. You can check this by visiting chrome://plugins and seeing if the version of Flash Player on your Chrome browser matches the latest one.
Cantrel, Calimanco and Madeline, Web User Forums

Chrome has a built-in Flash Player plug-in that is updated automatically

MUSIC

Why won't Windows Media Player rip CDs?

Q On my PC, Windows Media Player doesn't have a folder set up to rip

SECURITY

Can I run Malwarebytes Anti-Malware on Mac OS X?

Q Can I use (and do I need) Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org) on my MacBook Pro?
Dave1510, Web User Forums

A Anti-Malware is a Windows program, so you can't use it on a Mac. However, there are some alternatives available, which are listed on the AlternativeTo website (bit.ly/mbam363).

I've read an article suggesting that Mac users don't need to bother installing anti-virus. However, Apple's computers are not completely invulnerable and some of the operating

Sophos protects Mac users from viruses, Trojans and worms

system's weaknesses are discussed in a thread on the Web User Forums at bit.ly/forum363. Should you decide that you want to install anti-virus on your MacBook, Sophos (www.sophos.com) offers a full-featured program for free.
Cantrel and Madeline, Web User Forums

files to, which means I can't rip music from my CDs. I've tried choosing a new folder, but the program won't allow it unless there's an existing folder to change it from. How can I fix this?
isambardcat, Web User Forums

A As you've said, you should be able to change the location that ripped files are saved to by clicking Tools, Options, Rip Music and then Change. However, if something in Media Player has become corrupt, then you should try running the Fix WMP Utility from The Windows Club at bit.ly/fixit363. If this doesn't work, try the Advanced Troubleshooting section at bit.ly/troubleshoot363.
Stewart40 and Cantrel, Web User Forums

SOFTWARE

Why doesn't iTunes recognise my iPod Nano?

Q My wife's once-trusty first-generation iPod Nano is not working as it used to. When she first bought it, we had a laptop running Windows XP and it worked perfectly. Now we have Windows 7 Home Premium and, when you connect the iPod to the PC, it appears in My

Computer but doesn't launch iTunes automatically, as it used to. I've tried opening it manually, but the iPod is still not recognised, even though the software is up to date.
daddybear, Web User Forums

A I don't know which fixes you have tried but I wonder if you've seen Apple's support page at bit.ly/itunes363? Having read through a few articles and forums about similar problems, it seems many people have rolled back to a previous version of iTunes so they can use their iPods normally again.

However, iTunes is not the only way to manage content on an iPad or iPod. I use Sharepod (www.getsharepod.com), which is very good but costs $20

Sharepod lets you transfer music from your PC or Mac to an iPhone, iPod and iPad

(around £13). There are also some good free alternatives, such as YamiPod (www.yamipod.com).

Difarn and Spiraleye, Web User Forums

INTERNET
How do I know if a website is safe?

Q I found a web address on Google when searching for Adobe Flash, but I'm not convinced it's genuine. Web Of Trust (mywot.com) says it's safe, but is there any way I can be sure?

fossywellaway, Web User Forums

A I always go to a company's main page, then follow the necessary in-page links to find the product I want. In this case, go to www.adobe.com and follow the links for Flash Player in the bottom-right corner. This leads you to get.adobe.com/flashplayer.

There are sites you can use to find out the owner of a domain, such as TCPIPUTILS (www.tcpiputils.com/whois-lookup). You can also install a VirusTotal (www.virustotal.com) add-on for your browser to look up addresses with a single-click. Use VTzilla (bit.ly/vtzilla363) for Firefox and Pale Moon, and VTchromizer (bit.ly/vtchromizer363) for Chrome

Caliope, Izzit, Madeline, Web User Forums

You can use the TCPIPUTILS' look-up tool to verify the owner of a domain

WINDOWS 8
Is there another alternative to the taskbar volume control?

Q Can anyone tell me if I can control the volume on a Windows 8 PC without using the taskbar?

um_please, Web User Forums

A You might have volume controls on your keyboard, especially if it's a laptop. On mine, I can use F6 to mute, F7 to turn the volume down and F8 to turn it up. There's also a volume control in the Charms bar's Settings. To access it, swipe in from the edge of your screen; move your mouse into one of the corners and move it up or down the edge; or press Windows+I.

You could create a Desktop shortcut to the volume slider by right-clicking the

You can create a Desktop shortcut for opening the volume slider

Desktop, choosing New, Shortcut and typing `%windir%\System32\SndVol.exe –f 49825268` (see screengrab, above). Click Next, enter a name for the shortcut and click Finish. Double-clicking this shortcut will open the same window as the icon in the taskbar. From there, you can open the Volume Mixer and see all the options for your sound card.

mikec1, succulent95 and Moonshine, Web User Forums

SOFTWARE
How do I back up to an external drive?

Q I want to save my programs and documents to an external hard drive in case my computer malfunctions. What is the best way to do this? I've heard that the Windows back-up tools aren't reliable, so is there a free program out there that's better? Any advice would be appreciated.

scuba, Web User Forums

A I've not had any problems using the built-in System Image tool with Windows 7, 8 or 8.1. I use it regularly to create a back-up image of each of my computers and it has worked perfectly at restoring a PC on the three occasions that I've needed it. I've even used it to

move a disc image to a new hard drive.

If you want a list of good, free alternatives, check the Web User Forum thread at bit.ly/backupsoftware363. Macrium Reflect (www.macrium.com) and EaseUS Todo Backup (www.todo-backup.com) seem to be the most popular. I have used Todo, and Tornado has posted a tutorial for using Easeus at bit.ly/easeus363.

Sneakybeaky, mikec1 and Tornado, Web User Forums

SECURITY
Do I need anti-virus for my Android device?

Q Is anti-virus software required on Android? I've read a range of opinions on the matter and I'd prefer to have some protection than none at all.

seanoc, Web User Forums

A I've been told you don't need anti-virus on Android, but I would also rather be safe than sorry. Have a look at these articles from Graham Cluley (bit.ly/cluely363) and How-To Geek (bit.ly/howto363), then see what you think.

The end of How-To Geek's article says that as long as you stick to apps from the Google Play Store, you shouldn't need anti-virus, especially if you're running Android 4.2 or later. Apparently, most Android malware comes from apps downloaded from suspicious app stores, so you should only download apps you trust and make sure you check their permissions before you install them.

It's worth noting that Android's operating system doesn't let apps change your system files, so you can't be infected in the same way as on a PC. However, you still won't be immune to Trojans, phishing and other scams.

Madeline and Izzit, Web User Forums

WINDOWS 8
Why does my Desktop keep appearing?

Q The Desktop on my Windows 8 PC pops up every now and then for no apparent reason. It's not a major problem but it can be quite irritating. Does anyone know how I can fix this?

extractor, Web User Forums

Hover your cursor over the rectangular icon on the taskbar to see the Desktop

A In Windows 7, at the right-hand end of the taskbar, there's a little transparent 'show desktop' icon, which brings up the Desktop when you hover your mouse pointer over it. Moving your cursor away again returns the

screen to the program you were using. I've never used Windows 8, but it sounds like it's probably something similar. In Windows 7, you can disable the feature by right-clicking the icon and unticking 'Peek at desktop'.
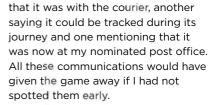
Madeline, Web User Forums

✉ Inbox

Emails almost gave away my Christmas surprise

I figured out many years ago how to keep my browsing history secret. I'm not looking at rude pictures – my problem is keeping my shopping habits secret! My wife hinted before Christmas that she would like the complete DVD set of *Breaking Bad*, so I looked up a copy on the internet and placed my order.

I knew that I would need to keep a careful eye on my email inbox so that I could move the incriminating evidence out of sight. Little did I realise just how eager my supplier was to break my confidence. Of course, I got the email thanking me for my order (mentioning *Breaking Bad*); this was followed by confirmations that it had been dispatched. Then another telling me

that it was with the courier, another saying it could be tracked during its journey and one mentioning that it was now at my nominated post office. All these communications would have given the game away if I had not spotted them early.

I really did think I was in the clear when I collected the box set and hid it in the house. Little did I realise that the courier would send one more email informing me that I had not collected the parcel. My reply saying that I had indeed collected it was met with yet more correspondence telling me that they did not monitor that particular email inbox. Can we go back to the days when things came in plain brown envelopes?

Bernard Feay

Facebook shows signs of growing up

It looks like Facebook may finally be growing up and developing a conscience. There are two things that made me think this: first, following the *Charlie Hebdo* attack, Mark Zuckerberg stood up for freedom of speech on his Facebook page (bit.ly/zuck363). Secondly, and probably more important in the long-term, the site has started displaying warnings over videos that might "shock, offend and upset" (bit.ly/face363), such as videos depicting violence. This is not a contradiction: the site has finally acknowledged that as a major source of news (especially to young people) it has to behave responsibly, but won't censor

what is shown. It is now acting more like the BBC or a newspaper would act. I applaud Facebook's new maturity, and hope it lasts.

Frank Wilmslow

I like the idea of a dislike button

My oh my, there are some delicate souls reading *Web User*. In Issue 362 (What You Say), Emmy UpTo-NoGood says that Facebook shouldn't add a dislike button because it would encourage negativity. Well, so what? Isn't that the point? Facebook should be a place for healthy debate, where people can tell you that you're talking rubbish, if that's what you're doing. Also, I think a dislike button will make people think more carefully about what they write, because they won't want to get too many thumbs down. So we may get fewer posts, but hopefully of a better quality. If it means less 'here's a photo my cat' posts, then please bring on the dislike button!

David UpTo-EvenWorse

Microsoft would be right to kill off IE

Does anyone at *Web User* have a hotline to Microsoft's Internet Explorer department? If so, could I ask you to tell them that I fully support their alleged plans to kill the browser (Need To Know, Issue 362). I gave up regularly using IE about six years ago, when it became obvious that first Firefox and then Chrome were faster and crashed less. I've tried IE a few times since, just to see if it has improved, but it only takes me 20 minutes of browsing to realise it hasn't. So here's an opportunity for Microsoft to make a new start. It should kill the name 'Internet Explorer', which is tainted, go back to basics, copy what Chrome does, and then improve upon it. When that happens, I'll give it another go, without prejudice.

Stephen Harriman

Plagued by Indian 'tech support' phone scammers

For many months now, my pet hate has been the almost daily calls from abroad

You can let us know your views and opinions via:
webuser@dennis.co.uk, www.facebook.com/webusermagazine,
www.twitter.com/webusermagazine and forum.webuser.co.uk

(presumably India) claiming to be from PC technical support, wanting to discuss the "many problems" I have with my PC. I get several a week, then they stop for some weeks, and then they resume for another burst.

I sometimes engage them in friendly banter and let them lead me down the path of doom, only to dash their hopes by cutting them off. Sometimes I try preaching to them about the error of their ways, or even shout abuse and call them all the names under the sun.

However, most of the time I block their calls using a call-blocking device, or tell them I am a computer engineer and they instantly hang up.

The question is, how on earth can we stop them calling in such numbers to vulnerable people who may fork out the dosh? I have 50 numbers on my blocked list, the majority of which are from India. Is it not time for the Indian government to step in and close these rogue companies? Or is that a forlorn hope?
Richard Bond

Learn to count, *Web User*

Oops, *Web User*, looks like you need to go back to school. In your 'Take a Screen Break' quiz in Issue 362 on Street View, question 9 followed question 5. I'm not great at maths, but I do know that the number 6 comes after 5. The questions were hard enough anyway, without you trying to bamboozle us with numerical mistakes!
Will Armstrong

Web User replies: Sorry about that, Will. We've taken a crash course on YouTube taught by The Count from *Sesame Street* (bit.ly/sesame363), so we shouldn't have any more problems. You'll find this issue's quiz on page 51, which comes straight after page 44.

What you say...

HAS YOUR ANDROID DEVICE RECEIVED THE LOLLIPOP UPGRADE?

Yes, but my Nexus 7 doesn't work as well as it did before the update. It freezes and is not as responsive. I hate it and am thinking of reverting back to an earlier version.
Lisa Oldham-Sear

My Nexus 7 is Android 5.0.2 now, I believe, and it works fine. My HTC One (M8) is only on 4.4.4. I'm waiting impatiently for the new HTC Sense with Android 5.
Stuart A Hordern

My Galaxy Tab is still running Froyo (2.2), but my Tab 4 is on Lollipop. However, I'm not able to install Adobe Flash Player, so I can't watch any videos online.
Gabriel Da Silva

Yes, I'm on Lollipop, and I'm convinced it's not great for battery life. Also, some apps aren't yet compatible.
Jo Davies

HAS THE EXPOSURE OF THE MOONPIG SECURITY FLAW PUT YOU OFF USING THE SITE?

I used it recently and was not impressed with their delivery. In the light of their apparent complacency, I'll be deleting my account.
Ian Phipps

I'm shocked about the time they're taking to fix the flaw. I certainly wouldn't use them now.
Emmy UpTo-NoGood

It does put me off. It also makes you think how many other sites are slacking on the security front.
Derek Murray

I used it in December and haven't come across any problems. But I used the website, not the app.
Joanne Evans

I never use the site because it's far cheaper to buy cards in your local shops.
Gwyn Griffiths

WHAT WAS THE LAST SUBJECT YOU LOOKED UP ON WIKIPEDIA?

Febian Brandy (bit.ly/brandy363), because he has signed for my football team – Rochdale.
David Muncaster

Starship Troopers (bit.ly/star363), because it was on TV last night. I wanted to know about the book it was based on.
Peter Fitzsimmons

Mount Rainier (bit.ly/mount363), to see how high it is.
Colin Wallace

Retail Price Index (bit.ly/price363), to see if it included bird seed.
Patricia Groom @TriciaGroom

WILL YOU USE BEBO NOW THAT IT HAS RELAUNCHED AS A MESSAGING APP (www.bebo.com)?

No, it's bad enough having Facebook, without there being more online trash from people who think saying "look at me!" gives them an evolutionary advantage. They need to get a grip – or get a life.
Shawn Adams

Nope! Facebook is so much better, and more modern and up to date. Not only that, but Facebook is better for adults. Bebo ain't for adults – it's child's play.
Edward Manning

OMG no thanks! Social networking in the bad old days.
Chris Cole @41cmcon

⚠️ Page 404

Barry Collins bristles at the meagre storage provision on entry-level iPhones and iPads

Apple is too tight-fisted with storage

"The iPhone 6 isn't simply bigger – it's better in every way." So says the blurb on Apple's website, which is a shameless whopper because there's one big way in which it's no better than its predecessor, nor many other vastly cheaper phones on the market: storage.

Apple is phenomenally tight when it comes to the storage it provides on iPhones and iPads. So tight, that it's now on the thick end of a lawsuit in the US (where else?), because the latest version of its iOS operating system gobbles up a full 25 per cent of the entry-level device's 16GB of storage, which is infuriating for customers who now find they've got even less room for their music, photos and apps.

12GB of free storage space simply isn't fit for purpose on a device that Apple sells as an all-in-one MP3 player, camera, video camera and games console. My relatively modest MP3 music collection (around 200 albums) takes up 18GB by itself. A single, chart-topping game such as FIFA 15 consumes more than 1GB of storage. Use the iPhone's video camera to shoot full HD footage, and the free storage space will disappear faster than an expenses form in the MPs' lobby.

Worse still, when Apple beams down a major upgrade to the operating system, you practically have to wipe the device clean to install it. The upgrade to iOS 8 required 6.9GB of free space on my iPad Air before it would even consider installing. That's more than half of the available space!

The way Apple treats storage, you'd think it was made out of unicorn's ivory rather than silicon. You're charged a lawyer's overtime bill for the device in the first place, and then stuck with a ridiculous premium on storage upgrades. You can't buy an iPhone 6 Plus from Apple for anything less than £619, and that comes with only 16GB, the same amount of storage Apple offered on one of its original iPhone models, back in the ancient days of 2007.

The next model up, which is identical apart from the amount of storage, is the 64GB version, costing £699. That's £80 extra for 48GB more memory. You can go online and buy a 64GB microSD card for not much more than £20. I know the storage inside Apple's phones is of a higher grade than your cheapo memory cards, but there's no doubt in my mind that Apple is still making a stonking profit on those upgrades. And let's not forget that, unlike many Android phones, Apple doesn't offer a memory card slot to let customers boost storage themselves. What you buy is what you're stuck with.
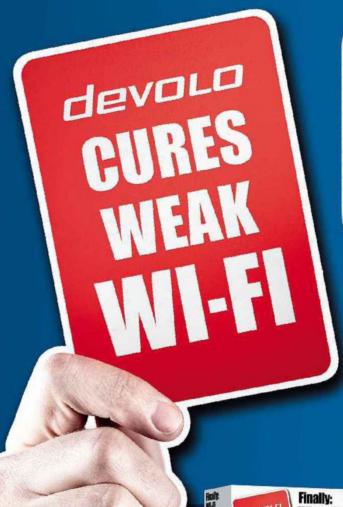
Apple's storage hobbles way behind its rivals: both the Samsung Galaxy S5 and HTC One M8 start at 16GB, but they can be boosted with a further 128GB via their microSD slots at a cost of around £80 (the same price Apple charges for 48GB, remember). Indeed, 16GB is now the standard for budget smartphones that cost £100, such as the Lumia 800.

Better in every way? To paraphrase Harrison Ford: you can write that cobblers, Apple, but you sure as hell can't say it. At least, not with a straight face.

> ❝ The way Apple treats storage, you'd think it was made out of unicorn's ivory ❞

➕ Do you agree? Let us know at webuser@dennis.co.uk

Your new data centre is everywhere.

The Internet of Everything will transform every aspect of every business. It means a flood of data-hungry applications. But big data doesn't just need big answers. It needs smart ones. Fast. And we can get you there. With our most powerful, flexible UCS server solutions ever. With the intelligence and speed to power applications at every scale.

Talk to us.

Contact an expert at cisco.com/go/uk/ucs

CISCO™
TOMORROW starts here.

Cisco UCS with Intel® Xeon® processors