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Make Your Tablet DO ANYTHING

The best 48 apps revealed
(394 tested!)

Turn it into a...

...security camera, telescope, e-reader, hi-fi, egg timer, digital photo frame, sat-nav, lightshow, sketch pad, torch, piano, music studio, spirit level, pedometer, calorie counter, brain trainer, paintbox, laptop, flight simulator, compass, tape measure, TV remote (swipe to page 38)

PLUS

Don't pay for back-up
Save everything for nothing

Paid-for software that's now free
Which will you download first? p46

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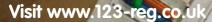
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123-reg.co.uk

Transform your tablet today

'Are tablets falling out of favour?' asked a recent BBC News article, which blamed their premature demise on the rise of phablets (phones with oversized screens) and a resurgence in PC sales. But from what I see on trains and in cafés (okay, pubs), tablets are as popular as ever – it's just that we aren't upgrading them as fast as manufacturers would like.

Part of the reason we hang onto tablets for longer is that they are so versatile; we're constantly discovering new things to do with them. In this issue's cover feature (page 38), we reveal how to turn your tablet into all manner of other useful and entertaining devices, from an e-reader to an egg timer. If you can think of anything better than reading a good book while enjoying a perfect soft-boiled egg, please let me know.

Meanwhile, we haven't forgotten PCs – also in this issue we explain how to back up files for free (page 44), capture screen grabs (page 48), and create beautiful panoramas from your photos (page 52).

Robert Irvine
robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk
#webuser

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3 How to mute noisy tabs in Chrome without installing an extension **page 30**

4 How to create a portable Start menu for programs on a USB drive **page 57**

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ⓐⓑⓒ Average sales, Jan-Dec 2014, 29,057 copies per issue

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What's New Online

Try the 1,000th Chrome experiment

The thousandth Chrome experiment has just arrived, and it's one of the most visually stunning yet. It's a pulsating mass of coloured balls, each representing one of the previous 999 experiments. Move your cursor over a ball and it bulges towards you, displaying the name of the experiment. Click this to open it. You can also see the balls in a grid and in a timeline by clicking the top-right options.

In 2009, Google launched its Chrome Experiments website (**www.chromeexperiments.com**) to showcase how imaginative coders have used HTML5 and JavaScript to make Chrome do interesting, fun and quirky things – or, as Valdean Klump says on the official Chrome Blog (**bit.ly/chrome366**), "build beautiful, unique web experiences".

The experiments have come a long way since the first batch of 19 arrived. One of these was Ball Pool, which Klump calls a "classic". He's not wrong. Click **bit.ly/pool366** to try the experiment. With a few clicks and shakes of your mouse, coloured balls will rain down on your screen.

We'll reveal our favourite Chrome experiments in a forthcoming issue. **1000.chromeexperiments.com**

Explore Greenland in Street View

bit.ly/green366
You're looking at the beautiful Ilulissat Icefjord, Greenland's most popular tourist destination and a UNESCO World Heritage site. The image is part of Google's new Street View collection of the world's largest island. Other highlights include Brattahlid, where Erik the Red established Greenland's first Viking colony, and the remains of the Hvalsey Church, built in the early 14th century. You can also explore the fjords and monuments of Nuuk, the island's capital. Begin your journey from Google's Lat-Long blog by clicking the link above.
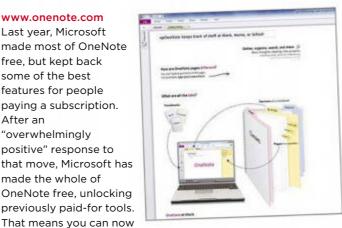
Use all of OneNote for free

www.onenote.com
Last year, Microsoft made most of OneNote free, but kept back some of the best features for people paying a subscription. After an "overwhelmingly positive" response to that move, Microsoft has made the whole of OneNote free, unlocking previously paid-for tools. That means you can now insert Office documents, add passwords to protect sections of your notebooks and take notes while making audio and video recordings. A few days after announcing this, Microsoft added new features to OneNote, including optical character recognition (OCR), which lets you search for text within images (read more at **bit.ly/ocr366**). OneNote comes with 15GB of free storage for Microsoft's OneDrive, where you can save your notes.

Read Microsoft's Office blog to find out what else is now free (**bit.ly/note366**), and turn to page 46 to discover more paid-for software and apps that now cost nothing.

We highlight 10 of the most amazing and amusing things you can do on the web this fortnight

Get directions in OpenStreetMap

www.openstreetmap.org
If you want a break from Google Maps, try OpenStreetMap, which has added directions for car, bicycle and walking. The site launched in 2004, aiming to be a Wikipedia for maps by letting registered users contribute to and edit a worldwide map. Type your starting point into the top-left search box, click the arrow icon, then type the destination in the blank box and click Go. You'll see the distance in kilometres and the time it will take.

Race a Russian tiger

run4tiger.com
To help publicise the plight of the Amur Tiger in Russia, of which only 450 remain in the wild, the World Wildlife Fund is tracking the daily movement of one using GPS, then challenging you to run further. You can connect several apps and fitness trackers, including Adidas miCoach, Fitbit, RunKeeper and Nike+, then try to beat the tiger's distance and average speed. The smartly designed site is worth visiting even if you don't want to get your running shoes on.

See the time on Big Ben online

mapsconnect.apple.com
Looking at your wristwatch is the easiest way to find out the time, but it's not as cool as seeing Big Ben move in real time online. To see that, you'll have to use the 3D Flyover of London in the updated Apple Maps. It also shows the London Eye moving.

Watch the world's flight paths

bit.ly/flight366
This rotatable Earth shows flight paths as pulsating dots, like hundreds and thousands sprinkled on to the planet. The developer, Callum Prentice, says it "blurs into a mess", but he's being too hard on himself – we think it's oddly beautiful. Check out his other work at bit.ly/callum366.

5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@oculus
News and videos from the creators of the VR headset Oculus Rift

@monstroso
Amusing thoughts on writing, TV and comedy from *The Fast Show*'s Charlie Higson

@trendinaliaGB
Regular 'top tens' of the most popular trending topics in the UK

@petregister
Information on lost and found cats and dogs from the UK National Missing Pet Register

@LatestFreeStuff
Brilliant new freebies and online competitions from the UK website of the same name

Use Google Play Music on your iPad
bit.ly/play366
Google has released an iPad version of its Play Music app, 16 months after it arrived on the iPhone. It lets you listen to music stored on your devices or saved in the cloud.

Edit Android videos within YouTube app
bit.ly/youtube366
When you upload a video to YouTube through its Android app, you can now remove parts you don't want using a timeline. Before, you had to upload a video in its entirety.

Choose your own Facebook gender
www.facebook.com
You can choose from an astonishing 58 genders on Facebook, including Two-Spirit and Non-binary. But the site clearly thinks that's not enough because it now offers a 59th option – make up your own. Just fill in the blank space under 'Gender'.

Lenovo website hacked after Superfish malware scandal

What happened?

Lenovo's website was hacked and defaced following the 'Superfish scandal', in which it emerged that the company's PCs and laptops came with malware pre-installed that hackers could exploit to see what users were doing online.

The 'hacktivist' group LizardSquad claimed responsibility for the attack, which redirected anyone who visited the Lenovo website to a slideshow of bored-looking teenagers (said to be members of LizardSquad). When clicked, the photos sent users to the LizardSquad Twitter account.

The hack rounded off a troubled month for Lenovo, after visual-search software called Superfish Visual Discover, which was installed on some Lenovo machines, was found to be forcing advertising into Google searches and displaying them in Internet Explorer and Chrome, either embedded in websites or as pop-up windows.

Security experts have also said that the 'man-in-the-middle' technique Superfish uses to intercept ads could leave users' data vulnerable to snooping. Although Superfish and Lenovo may not be peeking at your data, there's nothing to stop hackers taking advantage of the flaw to do so.

Software developers often pay PC manufacturers to pre-install software on their computers, and this money is then used to bulk up slim sales margins, but this is the first time such software has been exposed as potentially dangerous. Lenovo now faces a class-action lawsuit in the US, while the Information

Check if your PC has been infected by Superfish or PrivDog using this tool

Commissioner's Office (ICO) investigates the incident here in the UK.

But this isn't the only incident of pre-installed malware that's been discovered. PrivDog, a tool that's bundled with Comodo products, blocks ads by replacing them with "trusted" ones, but the way it intercepts those ads could compromise SSL – the security layer that protects banking and ecommerce transactions online. PrivDog has admitted the flaw, but said it's already been corrected and has likely only affected 57,000 users.

How will it affect you?

You can find out if your PC is infected using the online tool at filippo.io/Badfish, which checks for both the Superfish and PrivDog malware, and gives you a clear, easy-to-understand response (so it's worth sharing with friends and family).

If you've bought a Lenovo laptop recently and find that it's affected by the malware, you can download the company's Superfish removal tool (bit.ly/superfish366). If you don't trust Lenovo, you can type `certmgr.msc` into the Windows search box and delete any Superfish results that come up.

Lenovo says it deactivated Superfish in January, so it should no longer be affecting users, but considering the seriousness of the flaws in the system, it's not wise to leave it on your machine. If you've been using PrivDog, make sure you've updated it recently to ensure you're using a patched version, or remove the tool altogether.

If you've just bought a new PC, it's a good idea to strip it of pre-installed bloatware using a program such as

Decrap (www.decrap.org), because such programs are often annoying and invasive.

What do we think?

We're quite amused by the LizardSquad hack, which was more mischievous than malicious, and no-one can say Lenovo didn't deserve it. But on a more serious note, the company should be ashamed to have sold out its customers in this way. Tight margins are a problem for most PC manufacturers, but nobody wants to buy a computer that instantly compromises their security and any company that can only survive by putting customers at risk doesn't deserve to stay in business.

We can only imagine the impact on sales that this loss of trust will cause, though it's worth remembering Lenovo isn't the only PC maker that pre-installs crapware. Other computer manufacturers bundle programs and trial versions such as photo-editing suites and games, but at least there's a chance someone might find these programs useful, no matter how annoying they are to uninstall. Superfish Visual Discover has a very narrow appeal and its ad injection is just plain creepy.

But the most serious point is that both the Superfish developers and Lenovo's security team should have done a better job making sure the system wasn't so vulnerable to hackers. What a disappointment.

What we think of this fortnight's top tech stories and rumours

Scammers steal TalkTalk customers' data

TalkTalk

What happened?

TalkTalk admitted that its customers' data had been stolen, allowing fraudsters to access their bank accounts. The ISP emailed customers to warn them it had noticed an increase in scammers masquerading as representatives from TalkTalk, and that it had realised after an investigation that users' names, home addresses, account and telephone numbers had been leaked. That data was then used by scammers to trick unsuspecting TalkTalk customers into giving out their bank details and other financial information. The company said a "small but nonetheless significant number of customers" were affected.

How will it affect you?

If you're a TalkTalk customer, your data may have been leaked, so be wary of any calls or emails purporting to be from the

ISP. If you have spotted suspicious transactions in your bank account, call your bank immediately. However, as some victims have found out, banks may not be willing to reimburse scammed funds if you gave any key password or PIN details to scammers. *The Guardian* reported that one victim had £2,500 stolen after scammers combined data from the TalkTalk leak with information he divulged on the phone to transfer money to a wire service. His bank, Santander, won't refund the money, but TalkTalk said it was helping him via its dedicated fraud team. It's certainly worth contacting your ISP if your own bank is being unhelpful.

What do we think?

Leaks like this are always alarming. ISPs hold a huge amount of information about their customers, and should be protecting this data with the highest possible level of security. That said, there is no foolproof way to protect against attacks, and reports suggest this leak may have been the fault of a third-party supplier that works for TalkTalk, rather than the ISP itself. It's good to see TalkTalk offering support to victims, especially if their banks are refusing to refund them.

INTERNET FRAUD ALERT

Spy agencies 'hacked SIM cards'

What happened?

Gemalto, a Dutch company that makes SIM cards, said it was hacked in 2010 and 2011 by the NSA and its British equivalent GCHQ. Gemalto said the hack wasn't as bad as first thought, claiming they didn't get access to the cryptographic keys used to encrypt communications, but only breached office networks. However, security experts suggested the hack potentially affected billions of people.

How will it affect you?

If the keys *were* stolen, the security agencies could use them to tap into private phone calls. Attacks using the cryptographic information have been

spotted, but not so far in the UK, instead focusing on countries including Afghanistan, Iceland and Yemen. It's as yet unclear who the attackers were, but the only safeguard is to replace your SIM.

What do we think?

If this hack really was by the NSA and GCHQ, and other accusations levelled against the spying agencies are true, it's terrifying to imagine their reach. We hope Gemalto hires an external security expert to investigate the attack and takes the time to find out what really happened because mobile users deserve to know the truth.

Tougher regulations may curb cold calling

What happened?
The number of cold calls could fall as a result of new rules that make it easier to make complaints against persistent offenders and could lead to the imposition of fines. At the moment, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) can only take action against companies using cold calling if they cause "substantial" damage or distress, which is unlikely given most cold calls are merely irritating. However, that's set to change after more than 175,000 people complained to the ICO about spam calls and text messages last year. From April 6, complaints no longer need to meet the "substantial distress" threshold, which makes it easier for the data watchdog to fine companies if they break the rules.

How will it affect you?
Previously, if you complained to the ICO about persistent direct-marketing calls, not much happened unless the regulator could show that the calls had caused substantial distress to you alone. With this legal threshold gone, the hundreds of thousands of complaints the ICO receives will collectively carry more weight, and the regulator will be able to do more to stop the worst offenders.

However, the ICO has noted that it believes there are valid reasons for a company to call you to sell something, saying it only wants to target those who abuse the system. That means cold calls and spam texts will continue, but the most aggressive companies should hopefully be forced to curb their irritating behaviour.

What do we think?
We find it hard to believe that many people buy a product or service from an unsolicited phone call or text, especially from a company they've never heard of. It's one thing for a firm you've dealt with before to make contact, but another entirely for one that's bought your details from a list or is simply trawling through a phone book. These calls and texts shouldn't be allowed at all – they're nothing more than spam and hamper our use of phones. We hope the ICO makes full use of its new powers to crack down on these pests.

FIRST LOOK

Samsung Galaxy S6/ S6 Edge
www.samsung.com/ uk/galaxys6

Samsung announced not one but two flagship phones at this year's Mobile World Congress: the Galaxy S6 and the S6 Edge. The two handsets have almost identical specifications, including a 5.1in screen, except the S6 Edge has a curved display that falls away at the edges to meet the back of the phone. Since it's acquired so much attention, we've covered the S6 Edge in this review, but the two devices are so similar that most of our observations also apply to the S6.

You can tell at a glance that the S6 Edge is a truly stunning phone. Gone is the plastic casing of Samsung's Galaxy S5; the S6 Edge sports an entirely metal body with Gorilla Glass 4 coating on the front and back. There are a few changes that die-hard Samsung fans might not be so pleased about though: namely, there's no support for microSD expansion, the handset's battery is not removable and the device isn't waterproof.

However, there's a good reason for at least one of these decisions, because the S6 and S6 Edge both support wireless charging and are thinner than the S5, too. With short battery life representing such a problem for smartphone users, Samsung's claims that a 10-minute charge can produce 4 hours of battery life should certainly appease any disgruntled fanboys.

The S6 Edge sports a staggering octa-core processor (one quad-core 2.1GHz and one 1.5GHz), which should contribute to more efficient running and better battery life. Elsewhere, it has improved front and back cameras, which both now feature f/1.9 aperture lenses, allowing them to perform much better in low-light conditions. These offer resolutions of 5 megapixels and 16 megapixels respectively.

On first viewing, both of Samsung's new handsets look highly impressive – we only wish we had more time to test them!

WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Google+ going to be broken up?

Google+ will split into three parts, as the search giant attempts to breathe life into its ailing social network. Google+ launched in 2011 and is the company's fourth stab at cracking the social-networking market, having previously failed with Buzz (closed in 2011), Friend Connect (2012) and Orkut (2014). While this incarnation has arguably fared better than any of its predecessors, it has nowhere near as many users as Twitter or Facebook. In an effort to reboot the brand, it appears Google is set to break the service into three areas: Photos, Streams and Hangouts.

Google+ chief David Besbris has been replaced after less than a year in his job by his colleague Bradley Horowitz, who helped set up Google+ in 2011. Posting on his own Google+ account (plus .google.com/+BradleyHorowitz), Horowitz said: "Just wanted to confirm that the rumours are true - I'm excited to be running Google's Photos and Streams products! It's important to me that these changes are properly understood to be positive improvements to both our products and how they reach users."

Horowitz's comments echo those of Sundar Pichai, Google's senior vice president, who also said that Google+ was set for a revamp. "Increasingly you'll see us focus on communications, photos and the Google+ Stream as three important areas, rather than being thought of as one," he said in an interview with Forbes.

The "communications" element of the three new areas likely refers to Google Hangouts, the video and instant-messaging service that is both available as a separate app and as part of Google+. That could now be repositioned as a direct rival to Skype, while Streams is left to fight it out with Twitter and Facebook. Photo sharing could be subsumed back into the Picasa brand, leaving Google with three distinct products instead of one all-encompassing social network.

LIKELIHOOD RATING
✓✓✓✓✓

Splitting Google+ into different services is a logical and welcome move. The Photos component of Google+ has always been its biggest strength, so it's great that we'll be able to use it without being distracted by the social-networking stuff. And we doubt many tears will be shed over the splitting of Google+.

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

Get WWI aircraft airborne
bit.ly/aircraft366 | **From £15**

Here's a Kickstarter project with a difference from the WW1 Aviation Heritage Trust, which is raising money to get two BE2 planes from World War One back in the sky. The aircraft require reassembling as well as fuel, oil, licensing and exemption certificates, to participate in fly-ins, open days and briefings at the trust's bases in Bicester Heritage and Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome. The project aims to raise £11,200 by 17 March, and is offering a range of appealing options to prospective backers, including a VIP flight in formation with a BE2 when you pledge £750.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

⬆ **SanDisk unveils 200GB microSD Card**
SanDisk has announced a microSD card with 200GB of storage at the Mobile World Congress. The card, which has transfer speeds of 90MB per second, will sell for $200 (approx £130).

⬆ **Google introduces Android for work**
Google has launched Android for Work, which lets you create a second profile on your Android device to keep your personal and work content separate. It's available on devices running Ice Cream sandwich and newer.

WE DON'T LIKE...

⬇ **Apple's operating systems have most bugs**
Apple's OS X and iOS contained more vulnerabilities than either Windows or Linux last year, according to GFI Software's Product Manager, Christian Florian.

⬇ **Twitter threatened by ISIS**
Twitter employees, including co-founder Jack Dorsey, have been threatened by ISIS for blocking Islamic State activity on the social network. It's not clear who wrote the posts, but Twitter said it is investigating their veracity.

Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Aggressive adware in Google Play apps

Ten Google Play apps containing aggressive adware have been discovered, according to security firm Bitdefender. The apps use scareware to encourage you to call premium-rate numbers and invite you to download more advert-riddled apps, and can be easily removed. However, they have been designed to appear under the disguise of System Manager on affected devices, which makes them difficult to spot for the unsuspecting victim.

bit.ly/playstore366

Netgear routers hit by serious security flaw

A vulnerability affecting more than eight types of Netgear router could enable hackers to steal sensitive information such as admin passwords and wireless keys, according to security researcher Peter Adkins. The flaw is found in the SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) service used by the Netgear Genie desktop application that lets users set up parental controls and change their wireless credentials, among other functions. Until a security patch is released, it is recommended that you only let trusted users connect to your wireless network.

bit.ly/netgear366

Word users targeted with banking malware

Security firm Trend Micro has reported that spammers are using Word documents containing malicious macros to distribute VAWTRAK, a virus that has been used to steal victims' online banking details. The spam emails, which claim to have been sent by FedEx or American Airlines, contain a Word file that, when opened, asks you to enable macros. If you accept, the VAWTRAK Trojan, which targets banks including Barclays, HSBC and Lloyds, is then downloaded to your PC.

bit.ly/vawtrak366

UK driver details leaked by parking site

Thousands of UK drivers have had their personal details leaked after parking site PaymyPCN.net mistakenly published a database containing information about nearly 10,000 motorists. The data, which included names, addresses, photographs and emails, was encrypted when it was input on the site, but a backdoor link left it publicly accessible. Following the breach, the PaymyPCN site was taken offline, but it has since reappeared.

bit.ly/parking366

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Yuval Ben-Itzhak, Chief Technology Officer of AVG (www.avg.com)

Q **Will more companies be exposed for including malware in their products, such as Lenovo with Superfish [see story on page 8]?**
Sophie Marsh, Facebook

A As prices for PC hardware have fallen, the number of companies supplementing their profit margin with additional software and services has increased. Some hardware manufacturers have not been stringent enough when vetting the third parties they partner with to deliver these software add-ons, and they run the risk of facing a similar fate to Lenovo. These companies should remember that brand reputation is far more important than short term profit gain.

Q **Are cybercriminals now targeting mobile devices more than PCs?**
Sam Law, Twitter
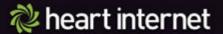
A In short, the answer is yes. PC malware has existed for over 25 years and the mobile equivalent has existed for around seven, but it's growing fast. This increase in mobile malware makes complete sense. As consumers spend more time on mobile devices (leaving PCs behind) and carry out activities related to banking and personal data, it's likely that more and more hackers will write malware for mobile to target these users. Logically, hackers follow in consumers' footsteps – after all, there's no point writing malware for PCs if most users are on mobile.

Q **Are most PUPs (potentially unwanted programs) annoying rather than dangerous?**
Morgan Webster, Facebook

A This really depends on how a security company defines PUPs. At AVG, we consider PUPs as non-malicious but annoying software that you should avoid installing. Because all software is potentially vulnerable – given that humans write the code – both malware and PUPs are open to being exploited.

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

Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

MUSIC **RELAUNCH**

Official Charts
www.officialcharts.com
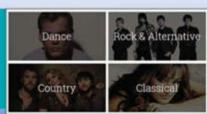
Even if you no longer care who's topping the hit parade, the Official Charts website will draw you in with its vibrant, mobile-friendly design and comprehensive content. Want to find out who was number one 37 years ago? Then head to the Archive section and choose a date to view a weekly singles chart for every year since 1952. You can also switch between physical sales, streaming and downloads; and view separate album charts for compilations and soundtracks. We love how random charts appear as you browse the site and that you can look up the chart history of any artist. Prepare to lose an afternoon or two.

Our rating ★★★★★

NEWS
Read exclusive artist interviews, news and trivia

CHARTS
Browse charts across different genres and categories

Official Charts

NOW LIVE!

Welcome to the

Blur announce first album in 12 years

BOOKS

Waterstones
www.waterstones.com

RELAUNCH

The high-street bookstore has relaunched its website to make it simpler, faster and easier to use, especially on phones and tablets. The site now sells more than 250,000 physical titles and lets you set a preferred Waterstones branch to 'click and collect' from. Other improvements include a speedier checkout process; the option to create and share multiple wish lists; and a more community-oriented reviews system. Our main niggles are that you can't easily switch between book formats and the (non-Kindle) ebooks section is unhelpfully tucked away. We were also alarmed by a security warning saying that the site's encryption was obsolete – hopefully, this is now fixed!

Our rating ★★★★☆

MONEY **NEW**
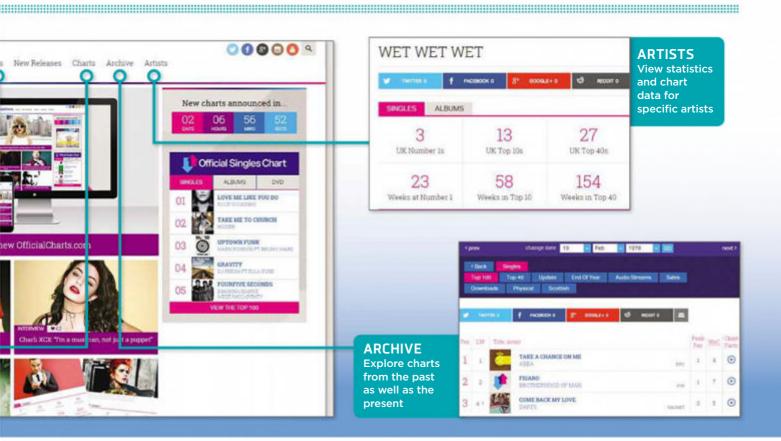
Pension Wise
www.pensionwise.gov.uk

This government site provides "free and impartial advice" about its new pension rules, which come into effect on 6 April. It looks rather dull, and there are no photos of smiling over-55 year olds, but it presents lots of important information in concise, easily digestible chunks. The handy '6 steps you need to take' guide covers everything from checking the value of your pension pot to managing your money, and you can register your interest for phone and face-to-face guidance. However we'd also recommend visiting other financial-advice sites for an unofficial take on the radical new rules.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

Reviews by Robert Irvine

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

ARTISTS
View statistics and chart data for specific artists

ARCHIVE
Explore charts from the past as well as the present

RELAUNCH

ENTERTAINMENT

Internet Archive beta

archive.org

The Internet Archive is one of our favourite websites, but its dated design fails to convey the variety of amazing free content it hosts. The redesigned beta site changes that with an attractive, tiled layout that gives you one-click access to the archive's extensive collections of audiobooks, ebooks, old radio shows, concerts, films, retro games and much more. Click Web to open the brilliant Wayback Machine, which lets you view archived versions of websites, and quickly find specific content using the speedy search tool and filters. We eagerly await the full relaunch!

Our rating ★★★★★

RELAUNCH

INFORMATION

Office of National Statistics

alpha.ons.gov.uk

This 'experimental prototype' of the new ONS site is much smarter than the current one (www.ons.gov.uk). From the homepage, you can click 'statistical highlights' to view and download graphs of data and explore info from the 2011 census on a map. Clear categories and an improved search facility make browsing content much easier, and the overall feel is fresh and friendly. Because the site is in alpha, you may spot some errors – one set of stats was dated January 3000! – but the final site should prove fascinating for data hounds.

Our rating ★★★★☆

NEW

FOOD

Burger King Delivers

burgerkingdelivers.co.uk

Whopper fans rejoice: Burger King has launched a delivery service to bring its meaty delights directly to your door or desk. It's currently a limited trial in towns including Romford, Truro and Northampton, but you can still browse the website, which is cleaner and better organised than some BK branches we've visited. As well as the usual fare, such as combo and children's meals, there are special delivery deals that combine burgers, fries, onion rings and more, and cost from £15. Aside from photos, there's little info about the food, but Burger King customers know what to expect.

Our rating ★★★☆☆ ➡

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

⭐ Best New Websites

ENERGY
Be an Energy Shopper
www.goenergyshopping.co.uk

This site from energy regulator Ofgem encourages you to save money on your gas and electricity by switching energy supplier. It's been updated since we reviewed it in Issue 345 (bit.ly/webuser345) to coincide with the government's new 'Power to Switch' campaign, but don't expect a breakdown of the best current deals – the nearest you get is a set of links to price-comparison sites. Instead, the site uses a bold, colourful design to present helpful advice about reading your meter and shopping around, and includes detailed explanations of baffling energy tariffs and understanding your rights.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

RELAUNCH

NEWS
Newsround
www.bbc.co.uk/newsround

Acknowledging that most children now browse the web on phones and tablets, the Newsround website has relaunched with a streamlined, mobile-friendly design. The tidier layout and more sedate colour scheme make it look closer to its parent site, BBC News, although the latter probably wouldn't lead on a story about giraffes' tongues. The latest bulletin is now more clearly flagged in the top-right corner, and you can see at a glance how long individual story videos last for. We also like that content is now cross-referenced across the site, to help children discover more about specific topics related to stories.

Our rating ★★★★☆

NEW

FOOD
The Food Allergy Hub
www.thefoodallergyhub.co.uk

If you're allergic to nuts, wheat, eggs, seafood or milk, be warned that this site may greet you with a huge photo of your nemesis. Get past that and you'll find lots of useful information about food allergies, from recognising their symptoms to what happens after diagnosis. There are also suggestions for what you can eat or drink instead; specific tips on, for example, eating out with a nut allergy; and general advice on surviving daily life. However, the best section is undoubtedly the blog, which shares personal insights and experiences in a warm, witty way. We look forward to seeing how the site grows.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

RELAUNCH
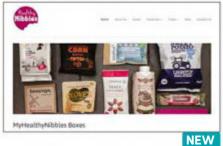
CULTURE
Royal Society of Arts
www.thersa.org

Now in its 261st year, the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) has revamped its website to make it more modern and engaging. It makes effective use of colour and photos to bring pages to life and draw you into the content, which is now helpfully tagged with keywords such as 'creativity', 'philosophy' and 'climate change', so you can browse by topic. You can also delve into the new Discover section to learn more about the RSA through blogs, articles and videos, with the latter including speeches from past events, animations and short films. You don't need to be an RSA member to use the site but if you register, you'll be able to post comments and save interesting content for later.

Our rating ★★★★★

NEW

FOOD
MyHealthyNibbles
www.myhealthynibbles.co.uk

If you're too easily distracted by junk food to trust yourself shopping for snacks, why not get MyHealthyNibbles to deliver a box of healthy bites to your door? The treats inside include flapjacks, tea and olives, with prices ranging from £9.45 per week for a Mini box to £69.95 for a hamper, including delivery. You can either subscribe or make a one-off purchase, and although you can't handpick the contents of the box, you can choose between vegan, gluten-free and the ultra-healthy 'paleo'. We'd like to see more nutritional info and a bit more variety, but otherwise MyHealthyNibbles looks promising.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

BOOKS

Dick King-Smith

www.dickkingsmith.com

This charming website celebrates the work of children's author Dick King-Smith, best known for *The Sheep Pig*, which was adapted into the hit film *Babe*. Beautifully illustrated, it provides a detailed biography of King-Smith, who died in 2011, and fascinating facts such as "Dick didn't like: flying, pineapple, nuts and turnips". There's also a touching article in which the author's daughter describes a typical day in his life, and a fun quiz hosted by his "small, very determined" character Sophie. But the main focus is on the 130+ books written by King-Smith, from *The Queen's Nose* to *The Water Horse*, which you can explore by category and cover, and buy directly from Amazon. It's a fitting tribute to an inspirational man.

Our rating	★★★★★

RELAUNCH

FOOD

JamJar Shop

jamjarshop.com

From catching tadpoles to collecting pennies, jam jars have many uses other than storing jam, and we've yet to see a more extensive selection than at JamJar Shop. It sells jars of all shapes and sizes, each with a free spotty lid (reflecting the site's design), as well as labels, bottles, packaging and jam-making equipment, including starter kits. The jars are sold in bulk, with the price working out to as little as 39p per item, while delivery costs from £1.99 for a small Jiffy bag to £8.99 for a large parcel. There are also dozens of recipes for jams, preserves and sauces, including several videos. What more could a jamophile ask for?

Our rating	★★★★☆

➕ ALSO NEW

KIDS TV

CBBC

www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc

★★★★☆

Relaunched alongside the Newsround site (see separate review), CBBC's online home now packs even more fun and games into a much livelier design. The huge video player lets kids watch clips from their favourite shows online, or click through to the CBBC iPlayer for full episodes. The cleaner layout is easier to browse and there's loads of great content.

SOCIAL

PreTweet

www.pretweet.co.uk

★★★☆☆

If you cringe at the banal language used on Twitter, use this site to strip your tweets of hackneyed words and phrases. These include "cheeky pint", "epic fail", "must-read" and, our pet hate, "Wow. Just wow". Type your tweet into the box and click PreTweet to cut the crap and to get 'twaddle' and 'cringe factor' ratings.

FASHION

Very Exclusive

www.veryexclusive.co.uk

★★★★☆

Despite its name, Very Exclusive isn't one of those members-only ladies clothes stores, but a 'one-stop shop' for more than 100 fashion and beauty labels, from Alexander McQueen to Zoe Karssen. We like its flexible delivery options (including Collect+ to pick up your gear from a local store), free returns policy and minimalist design. It's not cheap, though!

SPORT

Golf Tourism England

www.golftourismengland.com

★★★☆☆

England may not have Scotland's clout as a golfing destination, but this site aims to make its merits known. You can explore the country's best courses via its 'Where to Play' map; view galleries of gorgeous greens; and read reviews from *Golf Monthly* magazine. There's also a directory of golf tour operators to organise your trip.

👆 WEBSITE SECRETS

Uncover Google's Bletchley Park Easter Egg

We're always delighted when Google adds another quirky trick to its search results, such as what happens when you search for 'tilt', 'do a barrel roll' or 'Atari breakout'. Perhaps inspired by the Alan Turing biopic *The Imitation Game*, it

recently added a new Easter Egg you can uncover by searching for 'Bletchley Park'. This places an Enigma machine-type image next to a map of the famous home of the World War Two code breakers, below which you'll see a series of letters that scramble and eventually stop to spell out the name 'Bletchley Park', as if you've decoded it yourself. ■

Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

New domain names increase in value

The new domain extensions have really taken off, with nearly 4.5 million registered since they launched a year ago. You can see live statistics for yourself at nTLDStats (ntldstats.com), and also find out which domains are the most popular.

A report on the Names.co.uk blog (bit.ly/names366) suggests that getting in early is extremely important, as wine.club has already been resold for $140,000 (around £91,000), and coffee.club and vegas.club have each sold for around $100,000 (£65,000). Keep an eye out for existing domains that might fit your website and any new ones that are coming soon. There's a comprehensive list at bit.ly/domain366.

Update WordPress plugins

Alert Logic (www.alertlogic.com) has discovered a security loophole in some older versions of a WordPress plug-in called WP Slimstat (bit.ly/slim366), which leaves open a back door to your website that hackers could use to steal passwords and tamper with your site. The latest version of the plug-in has been fixed so you should, as with all plug-ins, make sure the one on your site is updated to the latest version.

Deal of the Fortnight

GoDaddy is offering .com domains for £1.10 for the first year, down from the usual price of £6.99. Find out more at uk.godaddy.com.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Nick Leech, Digital Director, 123-reg (www.123-reg.co.uk)

Q What advice would you give to a beginner who wants to create a site that's easily accessible and social media-friendly?
Phil Bowers, via Facebook

A The easiest way to make a site accessible is to use a website builder tool (such as bit.ly/web366), which automatically creates a mobile version with no extra effort. When building your site, keep checking how it looks on your phone and use Google's Mobile-Friendly Test at bit.ly/googmob366. This is also important because most people use Twitter and Facebook on their mobiles. Make sure your content is easy to share by placing sharing buttons in obvious locations. Also, link to your social profiles from your website and update them with links to any new content you create.

⚙ MINI WORKSHOP | Manage a newsletter in WordPress
Email Subscribers: bit.ly/email366 | 🕘 10 mins | Ⓦ WordPress

Sending out a regular newsletter reminds people to return to your site. WordPress helps you manage the whole process with a simple add-on called Email Subscribers

1 Download and install the plug-in from within WordPress. Add a 'subscribe to our newletter' widget to your sidebar so it's always accessible. Click Appearance, then Widgets. **1** Drag Email Subscribers **2** from Available Widgets **3** into the Widget area, so it appears among your other widgets. **4**

2 To construct a regular newsletter, click Email Subscriber, **1** Compose, **2** then the Add New button. Under 'Mail type', choose Static Template. **3** Create the newsletter as you would a WordPress page. Scroll down and click Submit. Click Send Email, **4** choose who to send it to, then click the Send Email button.

3 To send alerts when your site has new content, go to Compose **1** and choose Dynamic Template under 'Mail type'. You can use keywords such as ###POSTTITLE### **2** to automatically insert text from the database. Click Notification **3** and Add New to choose categories **4** that trigger a notification to be sent when a new post is created.

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

THE INTERNET OF EVERYTHING
presents

the last queue

We're building the Internet of Everything for business. With UCS Server solutions providing data centre performance everywhere, mobile applications and analytics keep queues short and customers happy. Let's confine queueing to yesterday.
See how at cisco.co.uk/thelastqueue

CISCO
TOMORROW starts here.

Cisco UCS with
Intel® Xeon®
processors

intel
inside™
XEON®

Raspberry Pi 2

The latest version of the £30 computer has had a significant power boost. **Andy Shaw** takes it for a test drive

The original Raspberry Pi enjoyed phenomenal success, with over 4.5 million of the diminutive, bare-bones PCs sold worldwide. Originally intended as a cheap way of getting computers into classrooms, the device has stolen the hearts of computer tinkerers and tweakers everywhere.

The Pi has been through a number of upgrades since it was launched, but the Raspberry Pi 2 includes a major step up for the processor, which is now a 900MHz quad-core chip with

1GB of RAM memory to accompany it. This means the Pi 2 can run more complex operating systems, such as a stripped-back version of Ubuntu that's already available and a version of Windows 10 that Microsoft has promised in the near future.

In every other way, it's the same as the recently launched

Model B+, with four USB ports and a microSD slot to hold a memory card loaded with your chosen operating system. It has a Fast Ethernet port (10/100Mbps) for wired networking (it would have been nice to see this upgraded to Gigabit Ethernet) and if you want Wi-Fi, you can add it on – a

USB Wi-Fi adapter is just one of the many peripherals available for the device.

Extra hardware
As with previous models, your £30 will only cover the bare-bones computer, so you need to supply your own keyboard, mouse, power supply (standard mini USB), microSD card, screen (HDMI, so it'll plug into modern TVs) and cables. We'd also recommend getting a case, though this is entirely optional. You may have a lot of this stuff lying around already, but if you don't have

> **"**You'll never know what you can do with one of these brilliant little computers until you try **"**

a monitor, you can plug the Pi 2 into a TV, and the other components don't cost much. CPC has Pi 2 starter kits from £41.99 (bit.ly/starter366), or you could go for a case like the Fuze (www.fuze.co.uk/products) which has a keyboard and other useful elements built-in for £69.99.

Operating system

You can download your choice of operating system and write it to any microSD card for running on the Pi 2, though an 8GB Class 10 card is recommended. Or you can buy a ready-made NOOBS (New Out Of Box Software) card from CPC for £9.92 (bit.ly/noobs366).

With NOOBS, installing the OS is relatively straightforward. You simply choose the operating system you want to install from the list of options. Raspbian is recommended and is a great place to start. The chosen operating system is then installed onto the card, erasing everything else on it.

Raspbian recently had some improvements to its interface and if you've used a previous Pi, you might not recognise it. The taskbar has moved to the top of the screen, giving it a more Mac-like look, while the Start menu is located top-left with a collection of icons pinned next to it, so you can start browsing immediately or explore the file system. Generally, it's easier to find your way around.

Improved performance

You can tell just from using the Pi 2 that it's faster than

You can buy a range of peripherals for the Pi from cameras to cases. This Fuze case has a built-in keyboard and open top that makes it well suited to carrying out electronics projects

previous versions. It's not as slick as a more expensive PC running Windows, and it would be unfair to compare a £30 no-frills device with a fully equipped desktop computer, but the feeling you previously had of waiting for the operating system to catch up, which was palpable when using the Raspberry Pi Model B, is no longer there.

To test the speed, we ran the SunSpider benchmark on it, which shows how quickly devices can run programs in their browsers. The Pi 2 completed the test in 4,567.5 milliseconds (ms). We also ran it on a Pi 1 Model B, which completed the test in 21,743.8ms, and a Model B+, which ran it in 14,491ms. You can see the improvement that the upgraded hardware brings, but it's still a long way off more expensive devices. Our iPad Air 2, for example, can complete SunSpider in 290.2ms.

In our tests, the Pi 2 managed to surf the web perfectly well until we asked it to carry out more resource-

hungry tasks, such as opening large Google Docs files. At this point the browser would slow to a crawl and take a long time to load and scroll around the document. We had no problems running LibreOffice when we downloaded if from the Pi Store, so the device seems to be better at creating and editing office documents itself than in its browser.

Value for money

The Pi's performance is increasing exponentially, and at £30 it offers terrific value for money, but if you're hoping it can replace your current PC, we think you'll be disappointed. But you should buy one anyway, have a play around with the operating system, give programming a try, or have a go at one of the masses of well-documented projects that other people have created from their Pis, from media centres to bird-box cameras. You'll never know what you can do with one of these brilliant little computers until you try.

SPECIFICATIONS

- Quad-core, 900MHz Broadcom BCM2836 processor
- 1GB of SDRAM memory
- 4 x USB 2 ports
- HDMI port
- 10/100 Fast Ethernet port
- microSD memory card reader
- Broadcom VideoCore IV graphics
- 3.5mm analogue sound output or digital via HDMI

FOR

✓ The cheapest computer you can buy
✓ Significant performance boost over previous versions
✓ Learn more about computers by tinkering with one

AGAINST

✗ Still not powerful enough to replace your £500 PC
✗ Needs lots of extras (including an HDMI TV or monitor) to get started

EVEN CHEAPER

Raspberry Pi Model A+, £16.84
bit.ly/piaplus366

FASTER PROCESSOR

Imagination Technologies MIPS Creator CI20, £50
store.imgtec.com

OUR VERDICT

★★★★★

The Pi has always been a miniature marvel, but the Pi 2 is even more impressive. Not only do you get a noticeable performance boost from its quad-core processor and extra memory but, remarkably, these components come at no extra cost.

The Pi 2 isn't going to replace your main PC, and perhaps it never will, but for £30 you get an incredibly affordable little PC. It's been designed with programming and building things in mind, and is certainly more fiddly to set up and operate than your standard PC, but you'll

FEATURES	★★★★★
PERFORMANCE	★★★☆☆
EASE OF USE	★★★☆☆
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★

get to know a lot more about computers just by having one of these devices in your home.

Doro EasyPC

Andy Shaw tests a computer adapted for people who find Windows PCs too complicated

Most *Web User* readers can confidently find their way around a Windows PC, but many of us have older or less tech-savvy friends and relatives who struggle with the technology.

Doro has been manufacturing smartphones aimed at older people for the past few years. The devices are designed with larger, clearer buttons and a simplified interface. The company has used these same features in the EasyPC to help make computing more accessible to older people.

PRODUCT INFO

Doro EasyPC
www.doro.co.uk
**(Buy from
bit.ly/maxwells366)**
Price: £649

SPECIFICATIONS

- Intel Celeron N2840
- 4GB of memory
- 500GB hard drive
- Integrated webcam
- 15.6in multi-point touchscreen
- Doro software running within Windows 8.1
- 2.35kg
- 380 x 260 x 24.5mm

FOR

✔ Easier to use for someone who finds Windows too complicated
✔ Printed manual and telephone support included

AGAINST

✗ Windows 8.1 pops up before software has loaded
✗ Trackpad's click is stiff
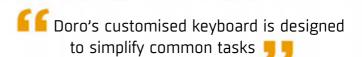✗ Some important information missing, such as battery life

Build and appearance

The laptop is a beautiful white Toshiba Satellite L50t model, with a generous 15.6in touchscreen. Doro has customised the keyboard with a rubbery, high-contrast overlay that's designed to simplify common tasks, replacing key combinations with single buttons to copy, paste, and zoom in and out. While this makes performing these functions more straightforward, typing on the overlay is slightly more awkward, although this will only affect fast typists, who are less likely to be using this model. We also found the mousepad was tough to click, and would recommend getting a separate mouse to use instead.

Simplified software

The EasyPC's unique selling point is its alternative software, which simplifies key computing tasks such as browsing, email and video calls. The PC still requires some set-up, such as adding a printer and connecting it to Wi-Fi, and while Doro's interface makes these tasks less complicated, it still requires a basic understanding of the processes involved. However, there's a printed manual in the box, which gives a good introduction to what the PC is capable of, and will be welcomed by the EasyPC's target user over the online manuals favoured by so many current devices.

The EasyPC's software sits on top of Windows 8.1, and you can switch between the two. However, the operating system has to load before the software can kick in, and there's a lag before Doro's loading screen appears, so an eager user could start clicking around Windows before the simpler interface is ready.

Creating this kind of software overlay has both good and bad points. It's great that programs and functions can be presented in a clear and logical way, so you don't have to navigate confusing menu options to perform basic tasks. However, reducing the on-screen information means some key elements, such as a battery-life indicator, are missing, and because there's no way to customise the display to show the tools you want, you either have to switch to the Windows view to see them or do without.

Ultimately, the EasyPC is a Windows computer with extra functions added, and the price reflects this; you could buy a similarly specified PC for significantly less. However, the Doro software can't be bought separately and installed on another Windows PC, so the only way to get it is to buy the EasyPC.

> " Doro's customised keyboard is designed to simplify common tasks "

OUR VERDICT ★★★★☆

This is an interesting attempt to create a PC that's specifically targeted at older computer users. We don't think it's likely to be the laptop of choice for most *Web User* readers, but if you find yourself regularly providing technical support to an older friend or relative, you could try recommending the EasyPC. You may have to help set it up, though.

FEATURES	★★★☆☆
PERFORMANCE	★★★★☆
EASE OF USE	★★★★☆
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★☆☆

🛒 Web User's Best Buys

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

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HARDWARE

SSD

Samsung 850 Pro 256GB

£136.03 from **www.kikatek.com**
Date tested: February 2015

The Samsung 850 Pro is crammed with new technololgy that makes it faster and more durable than its competitors. You could buy a similarly sized SSD for much less, but in our tests the cheaper models weren't as fast and they don't come with the 850 Pro's generous 10-year warranty.

KEY SPECS
256GB (also available in 128GB, 512GB & 1TB) ■ 53p per GB ■ SATA III interface ■ 2.5in drive case ■ 10 years warranty ■ 100 x 70 x 7mm ■ 66g

TABLET

Google Nexus 9

£319 from **play.google.com**
Date tested: February 2015

The Nexus 9 is our favourite Android tablet. It has a fantastic screen, even better than the iPad Air 2's, and superb battery life, lasting over 15 hours in our tests. It's cheaper than the latest iPad and comes in 16GB and 32GB capacities.

KEY SPECS
8.9in screen ■ 2,048 x 1,536 pixels resolution ■ Dual-core 2.3GHz 64-bit Nvidia Tegra K1 Denver processor ■ 16/32GB storage ■ 4G option costs £60 extra (32GB models only) ■ Android 5.0 ■ 228 x 154 x 8mm ■ 425g

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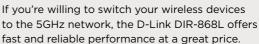
KEY SPECS
Dual-core 1.9GHz Intel Core i3-4030U processor ■ 4GB of memory ■ 13.3in touchscreen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 500GB hard drive ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ 326 x 232 x 22mm ■ 1.75kg ■ One-year collect-and-return warranty

WIRELESS 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

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

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

All prices correct at time of review

Web User's Best Buys

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

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

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 ■ Three-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
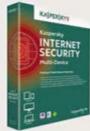
SOFTWARE & SERVICES

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2015

£17.99 from bit.ly/kaspoffer
Date tested: January 2015

Kaspersky Internet Security performed near-perfectly throughout our tests last year, with only one unwanted program slipping through. Our sister title *Computeractive* is selling it at the reader-offer price of £17.99 (full price £39.99). Click the link above.

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 STORAGE

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

Lazesoft Recovery Suite 4 Home Edition

bit.ly/laze365
Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+
File size: 27.3MB

Trying to fix a malfunctioning PC can be daunting, but Lazesoft Recovery Suite makes the task more manageable with its collection of easy-to-use tools. It can repair some of the most common annoyances by fixing boot and crash problems, recovering deleted data (individual files or entire partitions) and resetting your Windows password if you can't log in. It can also back up and clone your hard drive and create a bootable recovery tool on a CD, DVD or USB drive that you can use to rescue your PC if disaster strikes. Version 4 is a major new release and comes packed with new features and options.

The main menu presents you with five modules and it's wise to start with the top one, which launches the Recovery Suite Media Builder. Creating a recovery disk is just a matter of clicking through the wizard, but there are plenty of advanced settings available.

The Windows Recovery module can only be run from the recovery disk (which makes sense, because you'll only want to run it if you can't get into Windows), and the same is true for the Windows Password Recovery module.

The Data Recovery module gives you a choice of four rescue modes – Fast Scan, Undelete, Unformat and Deep Scan. If you've just accidentally deleted some files from a drive or memory card,

the Fast Scan should be able to restore them for you.

Finally, the Disk Image & Clone module can create a back-up image of your drive, restore your system from a previously created image, clone a drive, clone a partition and more.

All the tools in Lazesoft Recovery Suite guide you through each task, which makes this potentially complex software very easy to use.

⚙ MINI WORKSHOP | Create a rescue disk using Lazesoft Recovery Suite

1 Launch Lazesoft Recovery Suite and click the Burn CD/USB Disk button in the main menu to launch the Media Builder wizard. A drop-down menu **1** lets you specify the version of Windows running on the target computer (from XP to Windows 8.1), although you can leave this blank. Click Options **2** to access some advanced settings. **3**
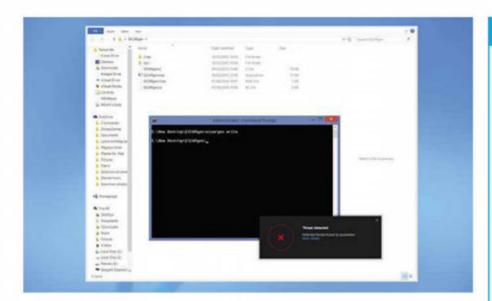
2 Click Next to choose the type of bootable device to create – CD/DVD, **1** USB Flash **2** or ISO Image. **3** You can specify the destination in the drop-down menu under the selected option. **4** If you can't see the drive you want, try clicking Refresh. **5** Click Start **6** to begin the creation process.

3 Once the recovery drive is built, keep it somewhere safe so you can boot into it if you encounter major problems with your PC. You can launch either the Live CD or Windows Memory Diagnostic. The Live CD lets you launch the different modules, **1** access Windows File Manager **2** and reboot or shut down your PC. **3**

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

New Windows 8 Apps

Autodesk Pixlr
bit.ly/pixlr366
Min requirements: Windows 8+
File size: 28MB
This photo editor lets you apply quick fixes to your images, balance colours, improve lighting, merge images and more. Extra features can be unlocked by creating a free account.

Breakout
bit.ly/breakout366
Min requirements: Windows 8+
File size: 6.79MB
In this Windows app version of the classic arcade game Breakout, the aim is to smash your way through a brick wall by bouncing a ball off the paddle that you control.
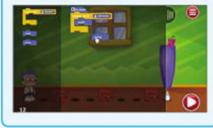
Cody's App Academy
bit.ly/codyapp366
Min requirements: Windows 8+
File size: 18.9MB
Cody's App Academy is designed to teach children (and adults) how to program. There's a Mission Mode with 20 levels to work through, and more levels and modes are planned.

ANTI-VIRUS TESTER
EICARgen
bit.ly/eicargen366
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 1.2MB
You rely on your anti-virus program to keep you safe from malware on the web, but how can you be certain it's actually working as intended? Deliberately infecting your PC with a virus is one way to find out for sure, but it's hardly a smart move. EICARgen is a tiny program that's assuredly free from viruses but can generate a file that should trigger an alert in your security software. You need to run it in the Windows Command Prompt – see the website for instructions.

MEMORY TOOL
Memtest86 for Windows 6
www.memtest86.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 3.9MB

Problems with your PC's memory can cause freezes and crashes. PassMark's memory-diagnostic tool boots from a CD or USB drive and runs tests looking for faults. The latest version of the program, which has been around for over 20 years, adds support for DDR4 memory and a new benchmarking feature that displays results on a graph.

MEDIA PLAYER
Leawo Blu-ray Player
www.leawo.org/blu-ray-player
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 38.6MB

Previously priced at $50 (£32.30), Leawo's Blu-ray Player is now entirely free. As you'd expect from the name, the software plays Blu-ray discs, but if you don't have a Blu-ray drive in your PC it can also handle DVDs, CDs and audio and video files. It offers all the usual playback options, but it only plays basic Blu-rays and not 3D movies.

Recommend free downloads at www.facebook.com/webusermagazine

DUPLICATE FILE FINDER
Duplicate & Same Files Searcher 3
bit.ly/duplicate366
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 437KB
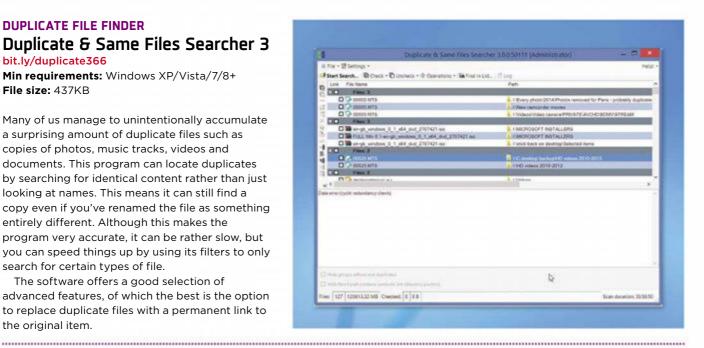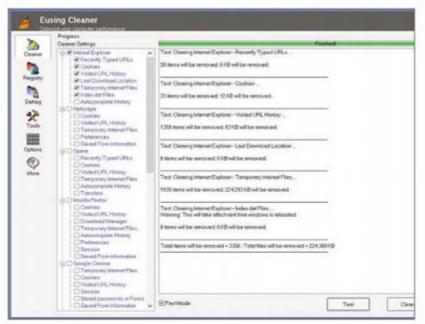
Many of us manage to unintentionally accumulate a surprising amount of duplicate files such as copies of photos, music tracks, videos and documents. This program can locate duplicates by searching for identical content rather than just looking at names. This means it can still find a copy even if you've renamed the file as something entirely different. Although this makes the program very accurate, it can be rather slow, but you can speed things up by using its filters to only search for certain types of file.

The software offers a good selection of advanced features, of which the best is the option to replace duplicate files with a permanent link to the original item.

SYSTEM CLEANER
Eusing Cleaner 4
bit.ly/eusingcleaner366
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 1.5MB

If your PC is operating a little sluggishly, running a system cleaner might help. Eusing Cleaner can remove junk files, and repair and defrag the Registry. It also offers tools for managing Windows Startup, backing up the Registry and backing up Windows.

The cleaner lets you choose which areas to target, and you can run scans when you like or schedule regular automatic cleans (time intervals range from every 15 minutes to every eight hours, or when Windows starts or shuts down).

The latest version improves the Registry cleaner, ensuring it won't delete any entries it shouldn't, and also fixes various bugs.

BROWSER
SlimJet 3
www.slimjet.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ or Linux **File size:** 39.4MB
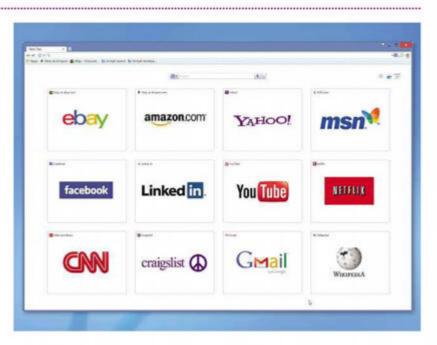
SlimJet is a fast browser that's built on the same Blink engine used by Chrome. It loads web pages very quickly and has an impressive selection of built-in features that you can only get in other browsers by installing add-ons. These include Facebook integration, which lets you share links, sections of text and images with a single click; photo enhancement and framing; a YouTube downloader; a customisable New Tab page and a fully customisable toolbar.

This latest build supports the most recent version of the Blink engine, fixes bugs and improves compatibility with the Google Cast extension (used by Chromecast). There are installer and portable versions available.

GAME
Troll Song Verse One
www.troll-song.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+
File size: 27.1MB

Troll Song is a point-and-click adventure starring a group of surprisingly sensitive trolls. You play as Clod, a captured troll, and your first challenge is to escape from a cage. You can kick, bite, roar and interact with items, and eating gives you the power to smash objects. Unfortunately, the playing window is very small.

X Don't install...
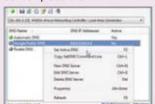
QuickSetDNS
www.nirsoft.net
Min requirements:
Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 88KB

There's nothing really wrong with this tool for switching your DNS server to speed up your internet. It's just rather basic and there are better programs available for free. It's very easy to use, but only lets you switch to the Google Public DNS server whereas other, similar tools give you greater choice and offer advanced options to ensure you find the fastest server possible.

...Install this instead ✓
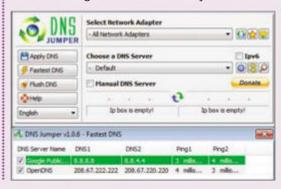
DNS Jumper
bit.ly/dnsjumper366
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 545KB

Switching your DNS server can boost the speed of your web connection and let you access blocked websites, and DNS Jumper makes the process very quick and easy. Just run the program, click the Fastest DNS button and it will check your network card to find the most suitable servers for your set-up. In the results window, click Find Fastest DNS to compare the speeds of the servers, then click the one with the lowest 'ping' and click Apply Fastest DNS. You can also configure a server manually.

UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs

SYSTEM CLEANER
Wise Disk Cleaner Free 8.42
www.wisecleaner.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 2.4MB

This cleaner removes junk files, cleans up after Windows and web browsing and has a System Slimming option to remove unwanted elements. The latest update makes minor interface improvements, fixes bugs and optimises Windows Update cleaning.

IMAGE VIEWER
XnView 2.31
www.xnview.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 4.8MB

Photo viewer and converter XnView handles most image types (it supports more than 500 formats) and has a wealth of tools for fixing and enhancing photos. Version 2.31 of XnView only enlarges zoom quality, but 2.30 (released days before) offers loads of new features and fixes.

VIDEO SUITE
Free Studio 6.5.0
www.dvdvideosoft.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 3.2MB

This suite contains a collection of free video and audio tools sorted into categories such as YouTube, Downloaders, Converters, Recorders and Editors. The latest release can download all YouTube videos regardless of format. Take care to avoid the bundled junk during installation.

SYSTEM CLEANER
CCleaner 5.03
www.piriform.com
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 5.1MB

Piriform updates its popular system-cleaning tool on a monthly basis. This minor release improves CCleaner's Windows 10 support and Firefox and Chrome session cleaning, and includes bug fixes and minor interface tweaks. It also adds Chrome Indexed Database cleaning. ■

Best New Browser Tools

CHROME

Protect your passwords, payments and privacy

We've often recommended the tools DoNotTrackMe and MaskMe from security company Abine, as an effective way to protect your privacy online. Now they've been combined into one extension and rebranded Blur (dnt.abine.com/#blur), and added some new features, too. You need to register to use it, but this doesn't take long. Blur prevents your personal details from being stolen by storing your account details securely and 'masking' your email address when you sign into sites so that no-one can see it. You can also generate strong passwords to protect your accounts. The DoNotTrackMe element still blocks trackers in web pages, but blocking statistics are now provided on a web page rather than the drop-down panel, to make space for Blur's other options. Some users may miss DoNotTrackMe's simplicity, but others may appreciate having so many useful features in one place.

Stop YouTube videos buffering and crashing

Although YouTube has ditched Flash in favour of HTML5, you may still experience problems when playing videos, such as buffering, stuttering, excessive memory usage or the site crashing altogether. The snappily named Chrome extension h264ify (bit.ly/h264ify366) promises to improve YouTube playback by switching videos from their default coding format (VP8 or VP9) to the more advanced format H.264. This uses hardware acceleration that draws power from your graphics processor (GPU) rather than your central processor (CPU) to play videos, resulting in smoother playback and less drain on your system memory. That may sound rather technical, but once installed the add-on works automatically, without you needing to adjust anything. There's no guarantee the add-on, which is also available for

Firefox (bit.ly/h264ifyfire366), will solve all your YouTube problems, but you should notice an improvement.

Add web content to your Flipboard magazine

If you like the new web version of Flipboard (flipboard.com), which was our 'Site of the Fortnight' in Issue 365 (bit.ly/webuser365), then Flip It (bit.ly/flipit366) is a must. It lets you easily save articles to your personalised Flipboard magazines by clicking the 'F' button on your toolbar, choosing a mag and clicking Add. You can also enter a 'What's interesting about this?' summary, in case you later forget why you bothered saving the item.

Any content that you add using the

extension also appears in the free Flipboard mobile app, which is available for Android, iOS and Windows Phone.

Mute noisy tabs without using an add-on

Chrome uses a speaker icon to indicate which tabs sound is coming from, but to silence the noisy offender you either need to switch to that tab or use an extension such as Mute Inactive Tabs, which we wrote about in Issue 355 (bit.ly/mute355). However, a new experimental feature in Chrome lets you mute tabs directly from the browser with no need to install an add-on. To try this hack, type `chrome:flags` into your address bar, press Enter and find the entry 'Enable tab audio muting UI control'. Click the Enable button to turn on the feature and relaunch Chrome. You'll now be able to mute (and un-mute) tabs instantly by clicking their speaker icon, whether they're in the background or at the front.

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

FIREFOX

Improve your typing as you browse the web

There are lots of online tools that teach you to type more quickly and accurately, but if you'd prefer to learn at your own pace, install the new add-on Type The Web (bit.ly/type366). This simple but effective tool lets you practise typing sections of text from web pages to improve your typing speed and precision. To use it, open a site with a good amount of textual content, for example Wikipedia or BBC News, then click Type The Web's toolbar button and highlight a block of text. Start typing as fast as you can and the add-on will estimate your words-per-minute speed and count the number of mistakes you make. To skip to the next block of text, press the Tab button on your keyboard. Keep practising to improve your scores.

Remove annoying adverts from Gmail

If you're annoyed by adverts in Gmail, but you don't want to use a web-wide ad blocker, give AdBlock for Gmail (bit.ly/adblock366) a go. This removes all the ads from above and below your Inbox, as well as from the right-hand side of individual messages. It works automatically and uses very little memory.

If you only want to get rid of the text snippets that appear at the top of your Inbox, you can do so without an add-on. Click the cog icon in Gmail, choose Settings and click Web Clips. Deselect the option 'Show my web clips above the Inbox'.

Look up addresses on pages in Google Maps

Usually, if you want to check the location of somewhere mentioned on a web page, you need to open Google Maps and copy and paste the address into the search box. Map With Google (bit.ly/mapwith366) makes things much easier by letting you highlight the street address and postcode, right-click and choose 'Search Google Maps for [address]'. A new tab will then open showing the relevant location in Google Maps.

Get international weather forecasts in Firefox

The popular Firefox add-on Forecastfox Weather was sadly abandoned in 2012, so it won't work with newer versions of the browser. Happily, it's now been revived as Forecastfox (fix version) (bit.ly/forecast366), so former and new users can enjoy its accurate forecasts, which are taken from www.accuweather.com. Information is displayed on a toolbar at the top or bottom of your browser and includes current conditions, temperature, a satellite map and the option to view a five-day forecast.

OTHER BROWSERS

Block ads in Maxthon using Adblock Plus

Considering how many people use Adblock Plus, it's surprising that more browsers don't come with it built-in. One browser that does is the new Maxthon with Adblock Plus (bit.ly/maxthon366), which integrates the ad blocker and turns it on by default, so you won't see any pop-ups, banners, video ads and other annoyances from the moment you install it. Click the AdblockPlus icon on the Status bar to access its Options panel, where you can configure the blocker to use more (or fewer) filter lists, add sites on which to allow ads to a white list and create your own filters. You can also turn off Adblock Plus altogether.

Learn facts and figures with Wolfram Alpha

The 'computational knowledge engine' Wolfram Alpha (www.wolframalpha.com) doesn't have an official Opera add-on, but there's now a handy, unofficial one of the same name (bit.ly/wolfram366). This lets you highlight and right-click a name, place or other text on a web page to search for it using Wolfram Alpha. Rather than a list of results, you'll get a page resembling an encyclopedia entry, which is packed with useful statistics, maps, charts and other data.

Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

TOOL

NEW

Ashampoo Droid Optimizer
bit.ly/droid366
Min requirements: Android 2.3
Size: 4.5MB

Ashampoo Droid Optimizer lets you speed up your Android smartphone or tablet at the touch of a button. It does this by terminating foreground and background apps, as well as by clearing the system and application caches. We immediately noticed our device running faster after using the 1-Touch Speed Up tool and were impressed by its white-list feature, which lets you exempt selected programs so Droid Optimizer doesn't close them.

Because it's easy to forget to perform maintenance on your operating system, even when it's as simple as this, the app also has an Auto Clean Up feature that closes your apps and clears your cache at regular intervals, keeping your handset running fast at all times. The Good Night Scheduler, which conserves power by automatically disabling Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and background apps, is useful if you don't have access to a charger. If you're concerned about privacy, Droid Optimizer has a Privacy Advisor tool that lets you check the critical permissions of all the apps installed on your device. There's also a Junk Finder tool that lets you quickly identify large files on your device that can be deleted to free up space.

Our rating ★★★★★

PROPERTY

NEW
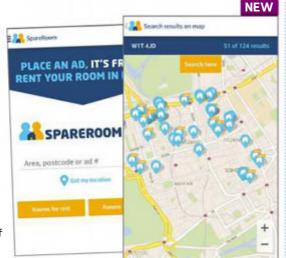
SpareRoom
bit.ly/spareroom366
Min requirements: Android 2.3
Size: 5.2MB

SpareRoom.co.uk is the UK's number one flat-share website, listing thousands of rooms to rent across London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Edinburgh, Glasgow and the rest of the UK. Until recently, the SpareRoom app was only available on iOS, but you can now download it on Android phones and tablets, too. The app lets you search for rooms by area or postcode, and there's even a handy 'Get my location' option, so that you can find nearby accommodation. There's no need to set up an account if you only want to browse the listings and save your favourites, but if you decide you want to contact an advertiser, you can sign up quickly by logging in with Facebook.

Our rating ★★★★☆

TOOL

UPDATED

Tally 2
bit.ly/tally366
Min requirements: iOS 8.1
Size: 1.8MB

If you need to keep tally of something but have no paper and pen to hand, this app is perfect for the job. You can tap anywhere on your screen to increase the counter, which makes it easy to add to your tally without having to look at your screen. A downward swipe decreases the count. If you're tracking a game that requires you to keep score for more than one player, the app lets you create and manage multiple tallies by swiping to the right. You can also configure increments of your choice to count in twos, fives, tens or any other number greater than one.

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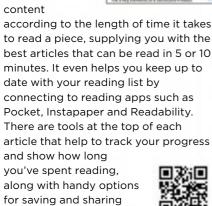
This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android, iOS and Windows phones and tablets, and smart TVs

READING

NEW

Short
bit.ly/short366
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 13.5MB

Do you struggle to find time to read interesting articles online? This app filters content according to the length of time it takes to read a piece, supplying you with the best articles that can be read in 5 or 10 minutes. It even helps you keep up to date with your reading list by connecting to reading apps such as Pocket, Instapaper and Readability. There are tools at the top of each article that help to track your progress and show how long you've spent reading, along with handy options for saving and sharing your favourite articles.

Our rating	★★★★☆

SELF IMPROVEMENT

NEW

No More! Quit Your Addictions
bit.ly/nomore366
Min requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 4MB

No More helps you beat your addictions and bad habits. After telling it the vice you're trying to conquer, it immediately starts tracking your progress, marking each milestone with rewards and achievements. After five days, for example, you unlock the 'Steady Progress' award; after two weeks you receive an encouraging 'The Worst is Behind' accolade. To help keep you on track, the app also provides motivational quotes, which you can set to appear as notifications throughout the day. No More also lets you add shortcuts to helpful web addresses, so that the best advice and information is only ever a few seconds away.

Our rating	★★★☆☆

CAMERA

NEW

Do Camera by IFTTT
bit.ly/docamera366
Min requirements: Android 4.0, iOS 7
Size: 8.8MB

The automation tool IFTTT, which uses 'recipes' to carry out everyday tasks, was recently rebranded as IF when its developers released three new apps: Do Button, Do Note and Do Camera. Do Button gives you more control over your recipes by letting you create buttons that perform pre-defined actions such as emailing a loved one when you're heading home. Do Camera takes this idea a step further by providing a camera that can instantly upload your pictures to Facebook, Twitter and Dropbox (as well as many other services) with a single tap. Just pick three recipes from a range of categories when you set up the app, then choose one of them by swiping left or right through your options before you take a photo. We like Do Camera and think it might change the way images are shared.

Our rating	★★★★★

ROUND UP | Quick bites

Royal Bank of Scotland
bit.ly/rbs366
Min requirements: iOS 6
Size: 27.6MB

The Royal Bank of Scotland app for iPad has received a major update, with a new home screen that's been redesigned to provide easier navigation, and interactive graphs that give a clearer understanding of your accounts. If you use the app on an iPhone 5S, 6 or 6 Plus, you can now log in using Touch ID instead of the usual passcode. These improvements have also been applied to the Natwest banking app.

Microsoft Word
bit.ly/word366
Min requirements: iOS 7.1
Size: 264MB

In late 2014, Microsoft made the core features of its iOS Word app free to all users, which meant you could view, edit and create documents on your iPhone and iPad without an Office 365 subscription. However, the app only offered OneDrive and Dropbox integration, so you couldn't save your work to Apple's iCloud Drive (which had only recently been introduced with iOS 8). This has now been rectified with the app's latest update, which also introduces some bug fixes.

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

Best Free Apps

TOOL

Next Lock Screen
bit.ly/next366
Min requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 6.7MB

UPDATED

Produced by Microsoft, Next Lock Screen puts a wealth of information at the fingertips of the busy professional. You can see imminent calendar events, missed call and messaging notifications and the weather forecast. There's even a handy quick app launch tool that displays your most used apps, according to your location. This feature lets you toggle your device's Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and torch directly from the lock screen as well as providing one-touch access to your favourite apps. The settings menu lets you set up a Pattern or PIN screen lock to secure your device, and there's an option to set different wallpapers for when you're 'At Home', 'On the Go' and 'At Work'.

Our rating ★★★★☆

TOOL

Pushbullet
bit.ly/push366
Min requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 5.9MB

UPDATED

Pushbullet connects your smartphone to your PC, so you can see incoming calls and text messages on your PC and transfer files between devices quickly and easily. Once you've set up Pushbullet on your desktop computer, the app lets you read all your mobile notifications from your PC screen. It's also a great for sharing links from smartphone to PC, and vice versa. It's been available on Android for a while, but the latest update lets you reply from your PC to Whatsapp, Facebook and Hangouts messages, as well as texts. The app includes a new widget to toggle notification forwarding on and off directly from your Android home screen.

Our rating ★★★★☆

5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

TOOL

deGeo
bit.ly/geo366
Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 4.7MB **Price:** £1.49
DeGeo helps to protect your privacy by removing the invisible, uneditable GPS location data automatically stored within each photo you take. You can then use it to share images to Dropbox, Facebook and Twitter, as well as other services.

FILM

Movist
bit.ly/movist366
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 21.3MB **Price:** £1.49
Movist is a simple, elegant way to keep track of your movie watchlist. You can also use it create a record of films you own or have seen by adding them to your Collection or marking them as watched.

DESIGN

AstroPad
bit.ly/astro366
Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 11.9MB **Price:** Free (with in-app purchases)
AstroPad turns your iPad into a

professional graphics tablet for your Mac. It's free to download but you'll need to buy a licence for £34.08 before you can start using it for illustration, sketching and photo editing.

KEYBOARDS

Fleksy
bit.ly/fleksy366
Min requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 33MB **Price:** £1.32
Fleksy made it into our 'Best of the Rest' list when we reviewed Android keyboards in issue 348 (bit.ly/webuser348). It's since been updated to introduce hotkey functionality and is now cheaper than ever.

GAME

Heads Up!
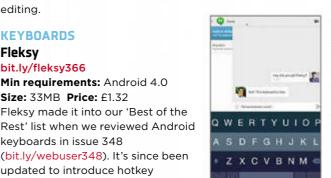bit.ly/headsup366
Min requirements: iOS 6.0
Size: 80MB **Price:** 79p
This brilliant app requires you to hold your phone to your forehead, then guess the words that appear on screen, based on clues provided by your friends. It's great for game nights,and has been updated to include two new decks of cards.

deGeo   Movist   AstroPad   Fleksy   Heads Up!

Best New TV Apps

TV
BBC iPlayer
bit.ly/iplayerandroid366
bit.ly/iplayerios366
Min requirements: Android 2.3.3, iOS 5.1
Size: 23MB (Android)/16.6MB (iOS)

The latest update to the iPlayer app for Android and iOS will be a welcome one for viewers who reside in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. It now lets you watch live TV for your home nation, rather than restricting you to the BBC's English programming. To change the default setting to your country, tap the three-dot icon in the top-right corner of the app, choose Settings and tap Current Region under Location. In the Nations section, select Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. On the same screen, English viewers can switch to a different region to watch live local news from around the country.

TV
Saturday Night Takeaway
bit.ly/satandroid366
bit.ly/satios366
Min requirements: Android 4
Size: 15.2MB

If you're a fan of cheeky Geordies Ant and Dec, you'll like ITV's tie-in app for the new series of *Saturday Night Takeaway*. It lets you watch highlights from the programme and exclusive behind-the-scenes footage; answer questions in the weekly End of Show quiz; and browse content from the programme's Twitter feed, including Saturday Night Selfies. You can also join in with the Supercomputer and Ant vs Dec segments as they're broadcast. Though the app is thankfully free of ads, like the show it's "proudly sponsored" by Morrisons, so you have to suffer the supermarket's logo and rubbish game promoting its Match & More loyalty card.

FILM, MUSIC & TV
Plex for Roku
bit.ly/roku366
Min requirements: Roku stick, player or smart TV
Size: N/A

Media-streaming service Plex has revamped its app for Roku devices to make it easier to browse the films, TV shows and music in your library. The streamlined app has clearer categories, a carousel-style layout that scrolls content horizontally and a 'discovery' interface that highlights new releases and lets you watch trailers. As well as streaming movies, TV shows and music videos to your television, Plex also plans to add support for photos, playlists and web-TV channels. The updated app is currently available as a preview. To try it, log into your Plex account, select 'Yes, Add Channel', return to your Roku and go to Settings, System, System Update. Choose Check Now to apply the update.

✗ Don't install...

Calculator
bit.ly/calculator366

When the reviews of a calculator app include "first calculation is always incorrect" and "I could not do anything", it doesn't inspire much confidence. Indeed, this is one of the shoddiest products ever to bear the name 'calculator', especially the way that numbers disappear as soon as you press a function key. It also has an awful interface, with a big black space beneath the keys that shows just how little thought has gone into the app.

...Install this instead ✓

Calculator Plus Free
bit.ly/calcplus366
bit.ly/calcplusios366
Min requirements: Android 2.3.3
Size: Varies with device

Android's own Calculator app works fine for simple sums, but Calculator Plus Free provides a smarter alternative. It's especially useful on a Kindle Fire, which doesn't have a calculator pre-installed.

The app isn't crammed with confusing maths functions, but its big keys, clear display and attractive interface make it very easy to use. Helpfully, it tracks and saves every calculation on your screen, and has an optional vibrate function to confirm you're pressing the keys. If you find the adverts annoying, you can upgrade to the ad-free version of Calculator Plus for £1.31.

See our cover feature on page 38 for more ways to turn your tablet into something else. ■

Our guide to Anonymous

As Anonymous embarks on a cyberwar against terrorism, **David Crookes** looks behind the mask of the controversial hacktivist group

What is Anonymous?

Anonymous is one of a number of high-profile, headline-grabbing, online activist groups. It uses computers and the internet for anti-authoritarian purposes as it seeks to affect social and economic change, raise awareness of specific issues and oppose particular ideologies. Since it carries out its actions by breaking – or hacking – into computer systems, the word "hacktivism" has been coined to describe such behaviour.

What is it doing now?

The group is taking down the websites and social-media accounts of those acting on behalf of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (or Isis, as it is otherwise known). Anonymous has helped to remove more than 1,000 recruitment sites and deactivate 8,000 Twitter and Facebook accounts that spread Isis propaganda, and has become engaged in a cyberwar. As quickly as Anonymous has been taking down these Arabic-language accounts, Isis members

Anonymous prides itself on bringing down Isis social-media accounts

have been reinstating them. But given that Isis relies heavily on the internet to share videos of killings and to spread its message, Anonymous has caused it a lot of disruption.

Who is behind Anonymous?

As the name suggests, members of Anonymous do not readily identify themselves. They sit behind their computers in locations around the world, often leading an online double life that even friends and family are unaware of. Since Anonymous isn't actually one organisation but a global collective of hacktivist groups, it does not have a single leader or a hierarchal structure.

How many members does it have?

Anyone can use the name Anonymous if they want to, which makes it difficult to estimate numbers. But there are understood to be tens of thousands of members, each of whom is called an Anon. When a social or political situation arises, these individuals prepare for a virtual battle. The cumulative effect of so many people acting for a common cause can be devastating for the "victim", hence the early slogan "none of us are as cruel as all of us".

When did Anonymous form?

Anonymous arose from discussions in 2003 on the message board 4chan (www.4chan.org), which was originally launched for fans of anime and manga to post pictures. Most 4chan users do not

The seeds of Anonymous were planted on message board 4chan

change their usernames from the default 'anonymous' to their own, giving the hacktivist group a natural name because it's rooted in internet subculture. After members engaged in pranks, threatened violence and cyber-attacked each other, a collective attitude emerged. The group then began to take on global problems.

When did it become properly active?

The group's first act was to target the Church of Scientology in 2008. Anonymous was annoyed that the Scientologists had asked YouTube to remove a copyrighted video featuring Hollywood actor Tom Cruise. This led to accusations of internet censorship and, as well as releasing sensitive data into the public domain and bombarding the church with prank phone calls and faxes, Anonymous defaced the sites of

The Church of Scientology was the first target for Anonymous

local chapters and blocked access to them. It dubbed the attack 'Project Chanology.

What else has it done?

In 2010, Anonymous launched a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack against Aiplex Software, which itself was launching DDoS attacks against sites that were providing pirated software. This morphed into Operation Avenge Assange, a retaliatory campaign against the freezing of donations to WikiLeaks following the high-profile leak of documents regarding the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Avenge Assange attacked MasterCard and Visa, but it did not put customer data at risk. Since then, Anonymous has supported the Arab Spring movements (going as far as hacking the website of Tunisia's Prime Minister) and led an offensive against the US Department of Justice for closing the file-sharing site Megaupload. It has also targeted websites hosting child pornography, hit out against homophobic organisations and recently threatened to expose paedophiles.

Anonymous retaliated against the freezing of donations to WikiLeaks

Does it ever draw the line?

Sometimes Anonymous states its hacktivist intentions; other times it denies accusations levelled against it. For example, Anons said "online thieves" were behind the attack on Sony's PlayStation Network in 2011, adding: "No-one who is actually associated with our movement would do something that would prompt a massive law enforcement response".

So are Anons ethical hackers or cybercriminals?

The answer very much depends on which side of the fence you sit on and, indeed, the question has been raised umpteen times over the years. Some people firmly believe Anonymous to be ethical hackers, but many governments and corporations regard them as cybercriminals. Numerous members have appeared in court, charged with attacks on computer systems, and both GCHQ and the US National Security Agency have considered members to be a potential threat. Commander X, real name Christopher Doyon, went on the run after bringing down a Californian county website over a law to target homeless sleepers, and fled to Canada. He quit Anonymous in September 2013, but not before saying the group should work non-violently for internet freedom and refrain from attacking media and infrastructure.

So what does Anonymous really stand for?

In an interview with Voice of Russia (which has since been rebranded 'Sputnik news agency and radio', uk.sputniknews.com/voiceofrussia), a group spokesman said the organisation was for freedom of speech and information, protecting the internet and exposing corruption. Its tagline is: "Knowledge is free. We are Anonymous. We are Legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us."

But are there rogue factions?

Groups which call themselves Anonymous and do not ally themselves with the collective's ethics are swiftly tackled by the most stringent members but, as with any organisation of this kind, egos will surely reign and run riot from time-to-time. Those who have no ethical problem with destroying networks for personal gain are dubbed 'black hat hacktivists'. Anonymous likes to position itself as a group of white hat hacktivists, but it still operates outside the law to a large degree.

What's with the mask?

When Anonymous attacked the Church of Scientology, there were real-life demonstrations by hacktivists, too. Protestors wore a white Guy Fawkes mask, made popular in Alan Moore's 1982 graphic novel *V for Vendetta*. WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange was seen wearing the distinctive mask during Occupy

London Stock Exchange (occupylondon .org.uk) and it has become not only a symbol of rebellion, but also of the Anonymous movement, given that it hides the wearer's identity.

The Guy Fawkes mask has become synonymous with Anonymous

OTHER HACKTIVIST GROUPS

LulzSec
Formed in 2011 but since disbanded, this black hat hacker group, which had broken away from Anonymous, was responsible for taking the CIA's website offline as well as targeting Sony Pictures, News International and games publisher Electronic Arts. It pulled off a string of email, credit-card and password thefts, too. Several members were jailed in 2013.

Lizard Squad
Lizard Squad tends to target systems linked to video games, carrying out Distributed Denial of Service attacks against the servers for League of Legends and Destiny while gunning for the PlayStation Network and Xbox Live. It also claimed to have taken North Korea's internet offline in December 2014 and to have hacked Malaysia Airlines in January.

TeslaTeam
Based in Serbia, TeslaTeam is a virtual army that targets political groups, but has also been blamed for attacking high-profile websites as diverse as online celebrity bible E! and the music-video service Vevo. The group has also targeted Albania and Croatia, but does not appear to have been very active in the last year.

Make your tablet DO ANYTHING

You can do so much more with your tablet than just browse the web and play games. **Jonathan Parkyn** has tested 394 iOS and Android apps to pick the 48 best free ways to transform your tablet into an astonishing array of useful devices

Whether you own an iPad, a Kindle Fire, a Tesco Hudl or one of the many other devices now available, your tablet is a hugely versatile piece of equipment. You can, of course, just use it to browse the web, send emails and play games, but it's capable of much, much more. By installing a few additional apps – most of which are free – you can turn it into the ultimate do-everything device.

Apps can imbue your Apple or Android tablet with the power to perform the functions of other devices, so you can use your tablet as almost anything, from a simple spirit level to a TV remote control to a fully-functioning sat-nav. In this feature, we reveal how to get the most from your device and maximise its usefulness. Read on to discover 20 brilliant ways you can transform your tablet and unlock its full potential.

Replace your household tools

Torch

If you often find yourself illuminating dark corners or searching for coins under the sofa using your tablet screen's brightest setting, then a dedicated torch tool will prove even more useful. Not all tablets have an LED flash for their camera (iPads don't have one), but if yours does, the flash can be set to constant beam and used as a very powerful torch. Many free Android torch apps include this ability, though there's been some controversy recently about some asking for unnecessary permissions to track call logs, check messages or monitor your location, so make sure you read the list carefully before installing the app. Our current favourite free torch app is Color Torch HD (bit.ly/ torchdroid366), which keeps permissions to a minimum and features a range of useful screen-illumination options and effects, including police light, disco light and – rather wonderfully – candle.
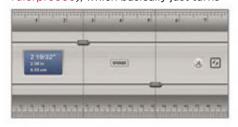
For iPads, there's a similarly expansive selection of torch apps to choose from. Our favourite is the simple yet effective (and free) Torch by MobileTrends (bit.ly/torchios366), which powers on instantly and includes a nifty strobe effect.

Tape measure

In case you suddenly find yourself needing to size up an item of furniture or work out how many tiles you need to buy for the bathroom, it's worth installing a measuring app on your tablet. This could be something simple, such as Ruler Pro (free from bit.ly/ rulerpro366), which basically just turns

Spirit level

Suspect your shelves are wonky? Want to line up an exact, straight camera shot? With the right app on your tablet, you'll never need to squint at a bubble on a 'real' spirit level again. Spirit-level apps make clever use of your tablet's accelerometer and other internal sensors to measure horizontal and vertical levels. A basic option is Spirit Level Made Simple Free for iPad (free, bit.ly/ spiritlevel366), which provides a virtual level, complete with on-screen bubble tubes in traditional yellow. Other apps combine levelling functions with other positional abilities. Compass Level (bit.ly/ compasslevel366) for Android devices, for example, adds a compass to your tablet and – if you pay £1.50 for the premium version – GPS abilities. This makes it a powerful navigational tool when you're out rambling or hiking, as well as an accurate measure for helping you get your tent exactly straight.

your iPad into an old fashioned metal ruler you can hold against whatever you want to measure; or something more hi-tech, such as Smart Measure (free, bit.ly/smartmeasure366), which uses your Android tablet's camera (although only the back-facing one) and a bit of trigonometry to calculate distance, width and height with surprising accuracy. Smart Easy Measure (free, bit.ly/easymeasure366) performs similar measuring tasks for the iPad, and has a flashlight for taking measurements in the dark.

Egg timer

Your tablet can be a great help in the kitchen, giving you instant access to an endless supply of recipes, but it can also replace some of your kitchen gadgets. Egg Timer is an egg-cellent (sorry) app that's available for both iOS (bit.ly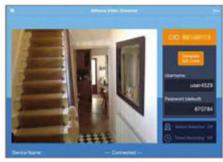/ eggsapple366) and Android (bit .ly/eggsandroid366). As the name suggests, it lets you time how long to cook eggs, with options for boiled, poached or scrambled, and it provides set times depending on the size of the eggs and how hard or runny you want them. As a bonus, it also features lots of egg-related recipes, tips and information and – because the app is completely free – you won't need to shell out (sorry again) a penny.

Security camera

Instead of paying for an expensive home surveillance system, you could use your tablet as a free wireless security camera. First, download the free app AtHome Video Streamer for your iPad (bit.ly/securityapple366) or Android (bit.ly/securityandroid366) tablet. Run through the set-up procedure, create a username and password and make a note of the CID security code. Next, find a way to prop up your tablet so its camera is pointing at the location you want to monitor. Finally, download the free AtHome Camera Free app (bit.ly/ camapple366 or bit.ly/camandroid366) for your phone (or the equivalent PC program from www .ichano.com) and log in using your credentials and CID code. This set-up will work over Wi-Fi and mobile networks, so you can monitor your home while you're out and about. Motion detection is also supported.

Remote control for your TV

These days, most manufacturers of smart TVs develop accompanying mobile apps for their products, so if you own a newer LG, Panasonic, Samsung, Sony or Toshiba set, check your tablet's app store for a compatible remote-control app. If you have a set-top box from Sky, Virgin, YouView or another TV service, you'll also be able to browse, play, pause and even record programmes using the relevant app. You may even be able to transform your tablet into a remote control for all your entertainment devices in one, using an app such as Galaxy Universal Remote for Android (£2.39, bit.ly/ remote366), though this requires a device with a built-in infrared (IR) blaster. If your tablet doesn't support IR (sadly, this includes most Android tablets and all iPads), then it's sometimes possible to buy a hardware add-on, but this is a clumsy and expensive route so we wouldn't recommend it.

Remote control for your PC

Your tablet can provide a window to your PC, which is particularly useful if you own a desktop computer and need access to it from the sofa, kitchen, bedroom or even further afield – from work, for example. Remote-desktop apps effectively mirror your PC screen and allow you to have complete control over the files and programs on the computer as if you were sitting in front of it. The best free option is TeamViewer, available for both iPads (bit.ly/teamapple366) and Android tablets (bit.ly/teamandroid366). It works with PCs and Macs, though you'll need to install a small tool on your computer from www.teamviewer.com. The latest version of TeamViewer is packed with useful features, including the ability to 'wake' your PC from afar, so you don't need to leave it switched on all the time.

A simpler option is Chrome Remote Desktop which uses a browser add-on and a free iPad (bit.ly/chromeapple366) or Android (bit.ly/chromeandroid366) app to provide remote access to your PC. Chrome Remote Desktop is also free, though it offers fewer features than TeamViewer.

Digital photo frame

Most Android devices have a simple built-in picture frame mode – tap Settings, Display, Daydream and select Google Photos. Tap the three-dot icon to start the slideshow or set your tablet to switch to photo-frame mode automatically when it's charging. There used to be a similar feature on iPads but, bizarrely, Apple scrapped this in iOS 7 onwards. Instead you can use a dedicated app, such as Digital Photo Frame (free, bit.ly/photoframe366), which provides the ability to add effects and stream photos from Flickr.

Dayframe (free, bit.ly/dayframe366) adds advanced features for Android users, such as support for all the major social networks and the ability to stream slideshows to your TV via Chromecast. To complete the picture, you can pick up a basic stand for about £3.50 online (bit.ly/ tabletstand366) or make one yourself for free out of cardboard (bit.ly/ diystand366).

E-reader

Android tablets have the Play Books e-reader app built-in, while iPads come with iBooks, which means your device is practically an e-reader as soon as it's out of the box. However, if you'd rather not be restricted by Google's and Apple's own services, you'll find all the major e-readers have apps – just search your app store to get options for Kindle, Kobo and Nook, among others.

If you install them all, you can check across a wide range of ebook stores for the best prices, rather than being tied to a specific platform. And if you want to save even more money, you could download an app called Wattpad (free

from bit.ly/wattpaddroid366 or bit.ly/wattpadapple366), which provides instant access to an entire library of free ebooks – mostly classics and works from emerging writers, but also free titles from big name authors such as Margaret Atwood, Paulo Coelho and RL Stine. Wattpad even lets you write and publish your own ebooks.

Wireless music player

Tablets can be used to enhance other devices as well as replace them. Take your faithful old kitchen or living-room stereo. If it dates from a time before Spotify, streaming or even iPod docks, then plugging your tablet into it is a quick and easy way to bring it bang up to date. Assuming your stereo has an

aux-in socket, hooking up your tablet is as cheap and simple as connecting a £1 male-to-male 3.5mm minijack cable (bit.ly/minijack366) to its headphone socket. Now, instantly, your old hi-fi has the power to stream music from Spotify; download tracks from iTunes or Google Play; tune into any digital radio station via Tunein (free, bit.ly/tunedroid366 or bit.ly/tuneapple366); or play music

wirelessly from your PC using BubbleUPnP UPnP/DLNA (free, bit.ly/bubble366) for Android tablets, or the brilliant Plex (£3.99) for both Android (bit.ly/plexdroid366) and iPad (bit.ly/plexapple366). You'll be able to discover new songs and listen to your own MP3 collection, and it's certainly much cheaper than buying a new stereo.
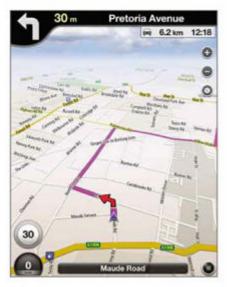
Explore the world and beyond

Sat-nav

Your tablet comes with map apps pre-installed – Google Maps on Android and Apple Maps on iPad – but if you want a complete in-car navigation system, then there are a few considerations to make beforehand. Firstly, you'll need an app that offers turn-by-turn directions. And, unless your device has built-in 3G/4G mobile internet access, the app will have to include offline maps, so you don't reach the end of the road as soon as you're out of Wi-Fi range.

There are lots of apps from big-name sat-nav companies, such as TomTom and CoPilot, but these can cost between £20-40. Instead, you could use the brilliant Navfree (bit.ly/navfree352 for iOS or bit.ly/navdroid366 for Android). It's a bit basic compared to premium options but, as the name suggests, it won't cost a penny and provides maps and voice-guided navigation for the whole of the UK and Ireland. You can

buy maps for other countries as well as different voices, including Stephen Fry and Homer Simpson, as in-app purchases. And with the money you save by using Navfree, you could buy a car cradle for your tablet (£8, bit.ly/carcradle366).

Flight simulator

Why stick to the roads when your tablet

Telescope

Explore beyond the Earth using the amazing Star Chart (bit.ly/starios366 for iPad, bit.ly/stardroid366 for Android), a free app that puts the heavens at your fingertips – quite literally. Usefully, the default mode doesn't even require you to tap anything. Just hold your tablet up to the night sky and Star Chart will dynamically orientate itself and give you an accurate augmented-reality 3D view of what you're looking at. You'll

need a device with a built-in compass for this, otherwise you can just swipe your way through the stars. In-app purchases let you add extra packs such as meteor showers, comets and an extended star catalogue, but the main app offers an astonishing amount of information for free, including details on planets, distances and other characteristics. You can even take a virtual journey around the solar system, next time you're stuck in a 12-mile tailback on the M25!

will let you soar through the skies? There are lots of realistic flight simulators available, including Flight Simulator Online 2014 for iOS (bit.ly/flightios366) and Android (bit.ly/flightdroid366). In both cases, the base game is free, and you can make in-app purchases to gradually build up your fleet of aircraft (around 80p a pop) and pay to remove adverts.
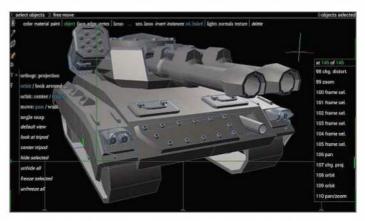
If you're prepared to pay up front for the experience of flying a virtual plane, our recommendation would be Infinite Flight Simulator (bit.ly/infinios366 for iOS, bit.ly/infindroid366 for Android). It costs £4 and comes with a selection of 17 planes (you can buy more through in-app purchases), 14 different regions, some handy tutorials, multiplayer options and other advanced features.

Indulge your creative side

Sketch pad

Large touchscreens make tablets ideal for a spot of finger painting. Unsurprisingly, there are dozens of drawing and art apps available but our favourite by a long chalk (pardon the pun), is Autodesk's new Sketchbook app. Not only is it free (with an optional £3 to unlock its Pro tools), but it's also easy to use and deceptively powerful.

There are loads of different customisable pens, pencils and brushes to choose from, all of which cleverly emulate pressure sensitivity. The interface takes full advantage of larger tablet screens, offering the ability to pinch-zoom into your image to make fine adjustments. Autodesk Sketchbook is available for both iPad (bit.ly/sketchios366) and Android tablets (bit.ly/sketchdroid366).

3D modelling

3D modelling is a fascinating way to design and create objects in a virtual space, rather than getting your hands dirty sculpting a real model. If you've never tried 3D-modelling software before, or have been put off by the steep learning curve, try Forger for iPad (£2.29, bit.ly/forger366), which provides a great introduction to many of the basic concepts. Android users could give Spacedraw (bit.ly/spacedraw366) a go. It's not as easy to use as Forger and the free version only lets you export or save very simple models (the full version costs £7.50), but it's a good way to see whether 3D modelling is something you might be interested in.

Music studio

It's not just famous musicians, such as Blur's Damon Albarn, who are turning to their tablets when their muse strikes. Anyone with musical aspirations can use their tablet as a mini, multi-touch studio to compose, record and mix tracks. If you've recently bought a new iPad, you'll find Apple's Garageband pre-installed for free (owners of older iPads will need to pay £4 for the app).

Garageband is still widely recognised as one of the best all-rounders for playing, arranging and sharing songs but it's by no means the only option. Caustic, which emulates old-school rack-mounted synths and samplers, is free to try on Android (bit.ly/caustic366), though you'll need to pay £5.99 for the full app if you want to

export your finished work. The iOS version (bit.ly/causticios366) costs £7.99.

If you just want to tinkle the virtual ivories, try Virtuoso Piano Free (bit.ly/virtuoso366) for iPad or Perfect Piano (bit.ly/piano366) for Android – both are free and work wonderfully well.

Get fitter and smarter

Pedometer

Fitness trackers are big business, but if you've got a tablet, you don't really need a separate device to monitor your health and exercise. Admittedly, you're unlikely to want to go jogging with a tablet in tow, but for walking, cycling and other healthy activities, tablets are ideal – particularly if you take your device wherever you go. Oddly, Apple has decided to exclude its much-vaunted new Health app from iPads – it's only available for iPhone users running iOS8 – but Walkmeter (free, bit.ly/

walkmeter366) is a great alternative that syncs with iCloud and integrates with social networks, as well as recording your steps and providing tools to manage your exercise calendar.

On Android tablets, Google Fit (bit.ly/goooglefit366) is a good, basic free option, letting you set goals based on previous performance measured in duration or number of steps.

Calorie counter

Counting calories is a feature that's often included in a broader fitness app,

but there are plenty of dedicated tools for tracking your diet if that's all you want. MyPlate Calorie Tracker (bit.ly/myplate366) for iOS is free (with ads) and has a simple, elegant interface with lots of charts for viewing your progress and a large database of foods. For Android, Calorie Counter by FatSecret (bit.ly/calorie366) is also free and has a similarly well-designed interface for tracking what you eat.

Brain trainer

It's not just the body that needs to keep fit, you should exercise your grey matter, too. There's no shortage of apps, puzzles and tools geared to improving memory, attention and problem solving, but Lumosity (bit.ly/lumosios366 for iOS, bit.ly/Lumosdroid366 for Android) is easily one of the best. It presents you with a personalised training programme based on neurological research, which sounds ultra-boring on paper but, in practice, means playing 15 minutes of fun, engaging mini-games every day. Free users get a limited set of daily exercises, while subscribers who pay around £10 a month get a larger selection of puzzles and tools to make their brain power even more impressive. ■

PUT YOUR LAPTOP OUT OF A JOB

If you're tired of carting your laptop around, you could try leaving it at home and letting your tablet take over all portable computing duties. The chances are there's very little that your laptop can do that your tablet can't.

Need an office suite? If you're signed up to Microsoft Office 365 for your PC, then you get great free Word, Excel and PowerPoint apps for your tablet. Or you could install WPS Office (formerly Kingsoft Office), which is a brilliant free alternative for iOS (bit.ly/wpsios366) and Android (bit.ly/wpsdroid366). Need access to all your data? Simply migrate it to a cloud service such as iCloud, Google Drive or SkyDrive and you'll be able to get at your files from anywhere via the relevant app. Need a keyboard? An ultra-thin Bluetooth model won't add much weight and shouldn't cost more than a tenner online.

Best free back-up software

Backing-up your documents, photos and videos is a vital task, yet most of us still can't be bothered to do it. **Andy Shaw** looks at five of the best free back-up tools to find out which one you should use

SyncBackFree | bit.ly/syncback366 | ★★★★★

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

What we like

Most free back-up software creates and keeps copies of your files and folders in a specified location, but SyncBackFree is the only one we reviewed that syncs back-ups so any changes made to either folder are mirrored in the other.

Its range of tools puts it head and shoulders above other free back-up programs and it's one of the few we reviewed to offer scheduling tools in its free version, by linking directly into the Windows Scheduling tool. This means you can set up regular back-ups from within the program and still be sure that the back-up will run, as long as your computer is switched on and running Windows.

When you start SyncBack, an icon appears in the notification area. However, it doesn't remain in place when you reboot Windows. If you want SyncBack to launch with Windows, you have to go into the Preferences menu, choose Settings and tick the 'Start with Windows' box. We like that the software doesn't presume you're going to want to do this, yet makes the option easily accessible in case you do.
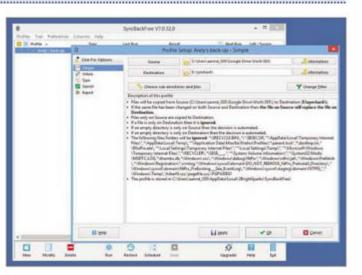
SyncBack looks a little overwhelming at first but it is mostly configured through a relatively simple step-by-step interface. When you're configuring a back-up, there is a lot of text displayed on screen that tells you exactly how your back-up will run, so you can tweak the settings if you want to. While this might be a bit overwhelming for beginners, anyone who wants more control over their back-ups than simply clicking and hoping should relish the chance to get into the nitty-gritty detail.

How it can be improved

SyncBackFree's main weakness is its interface. The program isn't difficult to use, because you are essentially guided through a wizard-style series of steps to create or update a back-up, or sync your files between two folders. However, being faced with a screen crammed full of text can be confusing. Stick with it, though, because it's worth the extra effort.

OUR VERDICT

SyncBackFree is a very capable program that gives you plenty of control over how it can be used. Its text-heavy interface may put off novices, but if you know what you need from your back-ups and you're prepared to spend time configuring the options, SyncBackFree has everything you need.

EaseUS Todo Backup Free 8.0

www.easeus.com | ★★★★☆

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

What we like

WebUser SILVER AWARD

EaseUS Todo Backup's interface is much simpler and clearer than SyncBack's, which makes it a lot easier to use, but it doesn't have the same breadth of tools as our Gold Award-winner.

Todo Backup's different options can be easily accessed from the bar across the top. You can back-up entire drives or partitions; clone a drive if it needs replacing; make a system back-up in case your PC breaks down; and create standard back-ups of any files and folders of your choosing. Each process is broken down into simple steps, clearly presented. Even the option to restore a back-up only appears once you've created one, which keeps the interface uncluttered and tidy.

The software has a Smart Backup option, which performs a quick, regular scan of your selected folders and backs up any changes it finds. This is a great way to keep important folders regularly backed up.

How it can be improved

Todo Backup's sync tool is only available in the paid-for version, which means it's missing a vital tool that SyncBackFree manages to include.

OUR VERDICT

We love the way EaseUS Todo Backup Free is organised. Its interface is clear and easy to use, and includes lots of large icons that don't overcomplicate the process of getting the back-ups you want. It doesn't have as many options as SyncBack, though.

BEST OF THE REST

Paragon Backup & Recovery 14 Free
bit.ly/paragon366

Paragon's Backup & Recovery software only works with entire drives, but it's a good option if you want to create a complete back-up. The lack of extras keeps things simple, but the program's more complex mode is barely worth it, because most of the options need the paid-for upgrade to activate them.

AOMEI Backupper Standard
www.aomeitech.com

AOMEI Backupper Standard has an attractive interface that's easy to use. It offers a good range of options and tools that let you perform actions such as spanning discs and shutting down your PC when back-ups have finished. However, it saves back-ups in its own format so you can't explore them without installing the software.

Iperius Backup Free

www.iperiusbackup.co.uk | ★★★★☆

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

What we like

WebUser BRONZE AWARD

Creating a back-up with Iperius is easy – just choose your folders and files, and set filters for file extension or size to exclude anything you don't want. You can then perform either a full or incremental back-up, or use Iperius's handy best-of-both-worlds option, which saves a full back-up alongside versions of files that have changed. Once you've created a back-up, you can use the software to schedule it. Iperius launches with Windows by default, which is a bit presumptuous, but means you don't have to set it up yourself.

How it can be improved

The free version of Imperius only lets you back up to a local drive. There are online back-up tools linked to from the software but they all lead to screens nagging you to upgrade.

OUR VERDICT

Iperius Backup Free is a simple back-up tool with some interesting options. Its ability to run incremental back-ups alongside the standard ones is very handy.

✚ Discuss free back-up software at **forum.webuser.co.uk**

Get paid-for software for FREE

Several generous developers have recently made their commercial products free, with no catches. **Rob Beattie** picks 10 of the best converts, which will save you over £600 a year

Tonido Pro

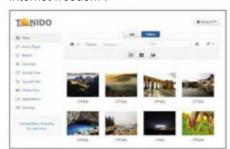www.tonido.com

What did it cost?

$29 (£19) a year

Why should I care?

Because Tonido software usefully turns your PC into a personal cloud computing server, allowing you to access and control it when you're away from home. This gives you a wealth of options including streaming music and video that's stored on your hard drive; backing up photos as you take them; keeping files in a specific folder synced between devices; and setting up guest accounts for temporary access by others. It supports unlimited remote access and works with iOS and Android devices as well as Windows Phone 7 and even BlackBerry handsets.

Why is it now free?

Tonido says it wants to make its server software the most popular way to "safeguard your data privacy and internet freedom".

Google Earth Pro

bit.ly/earth366

What did it cost?

$399 (£270) a year

Why should I care?

Remember the first time you saw Google Earth – how extraordinary it felt to zoom into your town, your street, your house? Running the Pro version is like having that experience all over

again. True, you'll need to be a bit of a map nerd to enjoy some of the advanced features on offer, such as the ability to import GIS (geographic information system) data for displaying multiple layers of information including pollution and congestion on a map, but there's plenty for casual users, too. We particularly like the ability to print images at a resolution of up to 4,800 x 3,200 pixels, as well as the option to export movies in HD.

Why is it now free?

It's not entirely clear, although rumours that Google will sell adverts on the sides of these new high-resolution virtual buildings have yet to be confirmed (or denied). Note that to use the Pro version for free, you need to set your email address as your username and enter the licence key GEPFREE.

Imgur Pro

imgur.com

What did it cost?

$2.95 (£2) a month

Why should I care?

Because Imgur is a popular photo-sharing service that lets you upload, share, rate and comment on other members' photos; think of it as a light-hearted version of Flickr where people are less concerned about the quality of an image than its entertainment value. It's not all good news, though – Imgur used to be ad-free for Pro users but now everyone will have

to put up with them; and while Pro users were able to upload images as large as 10MB, now everyone's capped at 5MB.

Why is it now free?

Pro subscriptions were decreasing while ad revenue was increasing, so a new advert-based model made good business sense.

Ad Muncher

www.admuncher.com

What did it cost?

$29.95 (£19), plus $19.95 (£13) a year after that

Why should I care?

Because it's a powerful ad-blocking tool that's updated every day and works across all popular browsers. This means you now get all the great benefits of ad blocking – faster page loading, less distractions and increased privacy – for free, and without the memory drain of Adblock Plus. Ad Muncher also block spyware, adware, diallers, browser hijackers and other threats.

Why is it now free?

It sounds as though charging for Ad Muncher sat uneasily with its developers. Now, "with the financial support provided by over 100,000 people", they've decided to make it free, although you can still donate if you value the product.

Anvi Ultimate Defrag

www.anvisoft.com/ultimate-defrag.html

What did it cost?

$29.98 (£19.40)

Why should I care?

Because it gives you access to Windows' own CHKDSK disk tool via a rather fetching Windows 8 Metro-style interface. Anything that helps you keep your hard drive in good working order is to be encouraged.

Why is it now free?
Sadly, it looks like an attempt to foist more products on us through the ever-present advertisement for Slim Toolbar: a tool that, with gob-smacking irony, is designed to prevent you from installing annoying toolbars.

APPS

Paper for iPad
www.fiftythree.com/paper
What did it cost?
From 99 cents (69p) per tool
Why should I care?
Because Paper has always been a special app, one of the select few that accurately captures the sensation of drawing on real paper with a real pen or pencil. So it's marvellous news that you can now get all the app's original tools including Draw, Sketch, Outline, Write and Color, without having to spend a

single penny; and it's all wrapped up in a beautiful, innovative interface.
Why is it now free?
It's no coincidence that the free version came at the same time Paper's developers launched Pencil Gold, the latest in its line of premium digital stylus pens (£49.99), which has been warmly received and is selling well.

Maps.me
maps.me
What did it cost?
$4.99 (£3.49)
Why should I care?
Because Maps.me is an impressively comprehensive mapping and navigation app. Its downloadable maps can be used offline, which makes them ideal if you're travelling somewhere that

charges a fortune for mobile data. Maps.me is available for BlackBerry handsets as well as iOS and Android devices, and although its routing features are a bit primitive (no turn-by-turn voice navigation and you can only use your current location as a starting point), they're improving with every release.
Why is it now free?
It's an attempt by the app's new Russian owners to extend its My.com brand (my.com) by adding mapping to existing mail and gaming services. The company also plans to turn Maps.me into an open-source project.

AlertsPro
www.weatherpro.eu
What did it cost?
£1.99
Why should I care?
Because you get almost the exactly the same version of this iOS weather app as before – for nothing. It's still a 'freemium' app, so you have to subscribe to

customise alert levels, get access to animated radar and satellite maps, and remove the adverts; but the severe weather warnings are included and that's what people bought the app for in the first place.

Why is it now free?
It's only free for iOS users – on Windows Phone, Android and BlackBerry, it's still a couple of quid. According to the company, the move comes as the result of "user feedback".

Office for iOS and Android
bit.ly/office366
What did it cost?
Between $69.99 (£45) and $99.99 (£65) a year

Why should I care?
Instead of only being able to view existing Word, Excel and PowerPoint files (and copy and paste between them), you can now create and edit them as well, without having to buy a subscription to Microsoft's Office 365 online service. This instantly gives you free access on your mobile device to the world's most popular office software.
Why is it now free?
Microsoft is desperate to make its mark in the mobile market and has kept back a few advanced features (such as pivot tables in Excel and some fancy PowerPoint stuff) for Office 365 subscribers, but most people won't notice or miss these omissions.

CloudPlayer Pro
bit.ly/cloud366
What did it cost?
$4.99 (£3.49)
Why should I care?
If you're a music lover, you've probably had to save tracks unavailable through iTunes to your online storage accounts. This iOS app lets you listen to those songs by streaming them directly from Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive and other cloud services to your iPhone or iPad, and download them to listen to offline. In truth, CloudPlayer Pro was probably overpriced before, so the fact that it's now free is music to our ears.
Why is it now free?
It's not entirely clear because the developer's website is in Russian. Just make sure you don't install the still available non-Pro version, which uses in-app purchases to make you pay for many features you can now get for free.

Capture screen grabs
on any device

Taking a snapshot of what's on your screen lets you save the content for future reference and share it with other people. **Robert Irvine** explains the easiest ways to capture and edit screenshots

WINDOWS

There are lots of ways you can capture what's currently displayed on your monitor. The simplest and best known method is to press the Print Screen (or Prt Scr) key on your keyboard to grab the whole screen, or Alt+Print Screen to capture only the active window. Note that on some laptop keyboards, you may need to hold down the Fn key before pressing Print Screen.

Using this shortcut gives no indication that you've taken a screenshot, but if you open an image editor, such as the built-in Windows tool Paint (in All Programs, Accessories), you can paste the captured image into it by going to Edit, Paste or pressing Ctrl+V. In Windows 8+, just press the Windows key and Print Screen to save the grab as a PNG file without needing to paste it into another program first.

If Print Screen isn't refined enough for your purposes, you can use the more sophisticated Snipping Tool, which is in every version of Windows from Vista to 8.1, except Basic and Starter editions. It lets you capture a snapshot of your whole screen, or just a selected area or window, and share the result directly from the program, either in an email or as an attachment. There's even a Free-form Snip option, which lets you draw a shape around an object using your mouse.

To launch the tool, click Start, type `snipping` and press Enter or, in Windows 8+, type `Snipping Tool` on

the Start screen, then click or tap Apps. To keep the Snipping Tool handy after you close its window, right-click it and choose 'Pin this program to taskbar'.

If your screen-grabbing needs go beyond what's offered by Snipping Tool (or you don't have it), there are several free programs with more advanced options. Our favourite, which we use for taking most of the screenshots in *Web User* (no, the company isn't paying us to say that!), is the image editor IrfanView (www.irfanview.com). To use its screenshot function, either click the Options menu and select Capture/Screenshot or just press C to open the Capture Setup box. You can then choose what to capture, from a specific object to the foreground window or your whole screen, and whether to include the mouse cursor. There are also options to grab the Desktops of multiple monitors at once, and to scroll down a window to

capture its entire contents, which is useful for long web pages. You can either use a keyboard shortcut to take screenshots (by default this is Ctrl+F11) or use IrfanView's timer to delay grabs for a specified number of seconds.
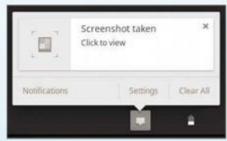
MAC OS X

To capture your entire screen on a Mac, press Command+Shift+3 on your keyboard and the image will be saved to your Desktop. To grab a specific area, press Command+Shift+4 and use the crosshairs to set the boundaries. If you just want to capture the active window, press Command+Shift+4, then the spacebar.

CHROME OS

Chromebooks don't have a Print Screen key so, to take a grab of your whole screen, you should press Ctrl and the Windows Switcher key (next to the Reload key). To capture a specific area, press Ctrl+Shift+Window Switcher. Click the confirmation message that appears in the bottom-right corner of your

screen to open the image, or retrieve it later from the Downloads folder in Chrome OS.

ANDROID

It's very easy to capture what's on the screen of your Android phone or tablet, if you're using version 4.0 of the OS or later (and on certain handsets running earlier versions). Simply press the power button and the volume-down button on your device to take a snapshot. The screen will flash and make a camera-shutter noise to confirm. Swipe down from the top of your screen and tap the 'Screenshot captured' message to open the grab in your default photo app, so you can crop, rotate, apply effects to, share or delete it.

Power button

Volume down

On older Android devices, the manufacturer may have set its own shortcut for capturing screen grabs. For example, on many of Samsung's pre-Ice Cream Sandwich phones and tablets, you should press and hold the Home button, then press the Power button. Try Googling the model along with 'take a screenshot' to find out.

You can also take Android screenshots by wirelessly connecting your device to your PC using the brilliant free tool AirDroid (www.airdroid.com). Its Screenshot feature lets you capture grabs of your phone or tablet either through AirDroid's web interface (web .airdroid.com) or its Desktop program.

iPHONE & iPAD

Taking a screenshot in iOS is just as easy as in Android. On your iPhone or iPad, press and hold the power button on top of the device, then press and release the Home button. The grab will be saved to your Camera Roll in the Photos app for you to edit and share.
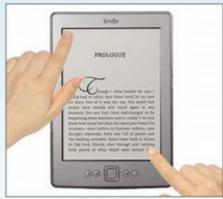
The main drawback to this trick is that

it requires both hands (unless you have exceptionally long fingers), so if you've only got one hand free, try the following method: go to Settings, General, Accessibility and turn on Assistive Touch. Tap the floating menu button that appears, then choose Device, More and select Screenshot to capture what's onscreen (the image will exclude the Assistive Touch options).

Gestures

Shake

Screenshot

Multitasking

KINDLE

On a Kindle Fire, you can take screenshot in the same way as on other Android tablets, by pressing the power and volume-down buttons. On touchscreen Kindle e-readers such as the Paperwhite, you need to simultaneously press down on opposing corners of your Kindle's screen, for

example top-left and bottom-right. The Kindle will flash to confirm the grab has been captured. However, image files are saved to the root folder, which can't be accessed from the device. To retrieve the grab, you'll need to connect your Kindle to your PC via USB and copy the image to your hard drive.

WINDOWS PHONE

Capturing grabs on Windows Phones, such as the Nokia Lumia series and HTC's 8S and 8X handsets, is also very straightforward. In Windows Phone 8, you hold down the power button and press the Windows touch key below the screen; in 8.1, you press the power and volume-up buttons. Unlike Android and iOS, Windows Phone helpfully saves the image to a dedicated Screenshots folder on your phone, which you can find in Photos, Albums.

screenshots
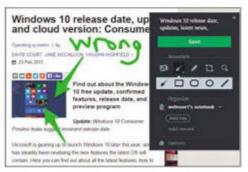
SAVE AND SHARE SCREENSHOTS FROM THE WEB

If most of the content you capture is from web pages, it's worth installing the excellent Evernote Web Clipper add-on for Firefox and Chrome (evernote.com/webclipper). This lets you capture entire pages or just selected areas; annotate them using text, arrows and coloured highlights; add comments and keyword tags to grabs; and save the result to your Evernote notebook. You can then share the 'clip' with

other people directly from your browser.

Broadband Deals

Call FREE on 0800 083 2357 to switch your broadband

	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1	sky	Sky: Broadband & Calls	£7.50 (12 months FREE)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	**CHEAPEST** £0.00
2	EE	EE: Broadband & Calls	£9.95 (£2.50 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£30.00
3	plusnet	Plusnet: Broadband & Calls	£9.99 (£2.50 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£30.00
4	TalkTalk	TalkTalk: Broadband	£3.50 (6 months HALF PRICE)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£31.50
5	TalkTalk	TalkTalk Fibre Broadband	£13.50 (6 months FREE)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£81.00
6	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£17.50 (12 months HALF PRICE)	18 months	50Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£105.00
7	plusnet	Plusnet: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£14.99 (£3.75 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£112.44
8	sky	Sky: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£20.00 (6 months FREE)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£120.00
9	EE	EE: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£19.95 (£9.95 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£179.40
10	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£30.00 (£24.50 for 12 months)	18 months	152Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	**FASTEST** £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 24 February 2015.

Find broadband help at forum.webuser.co.uk

Take a Screen Break

Give your fingers a rest and try our fiendish fortnightly challenge. This issue we're asking: how well do you know the **Internet Movie Database**?

1 In which year was the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) launched by British computer programmer Col Needham (pictured)?

2 Roughly how many films and TV shows (including individual episodes) does the IMDb have in its database?

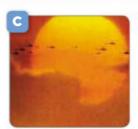**3** Which company bought the IMDb in 1998, and still owns it today?

4 Which of these countries does *not* have a version of the IMDb in its own language: France, Hungary, Portugal, Denmark or Poland?

5 Which film currently tops the IMDb's Top 250 chart of the best movies ever, as voted by users?

6 Approximately how many cast and crew members does the IMDb have entries for?

7 What's the name of the IMDb's subscription service for "entertainment professionals"?

8 The IMDb uses customised movie quotes on its 404 error pages. Can you name the film that inspired this one?

> **404 ERROR** Webpages? Where we're going, we don't need webpages.

9 Which country blocked IMDb in 2010, then lifted the ban in 2013, without explaining its reasons?

10 Only one film from the last five years appears in the Top 30 of the IMDb Top 250. Can you name it?

11 What does VG in brackets after a title on IMDb signify?

12 What's notable about the IMDb entry 'The Transit of Venus'?

13 Which film's entry includes this trivia: "There are approximately 61 scenes in the film that feature people eating or drinking, or just food"?

14 What's the only film on IMDb to have a rating out of 11?

15 What's the current user rating out of 10 for *Carry on Camping*?

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE FILMS FROM IMDb'S TOP 100?

A B C D E

Get the answers online at www.webuser.co.uk/quiz366

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 2
AVM FRITZ!Box 3490 router

WORTH £130 EACH

The AVM FRITZ!Box 3490 router uses two Wi-Fi networks at the same time. You have both 5GHz and 2.4GHz frequencies available for your computers, smartphones and tablets, giving you faster speeds and an increased range. For more information, visit en.avm.de, 'like' AVM's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fritzboxinternational) and watch its YouTube channel (bit.ly/fritz366).

WIN 1 OF 3
Crucial MX200 250GB solid-state drives

WORTH £107.99 EACH

Crucial's new MX200 range contains some of the fastest SSDs available, delivering read and write speeds of up to 555MB/s and 500MB/s respectively. We're giving away three 250GB drives, but it's also available in 500GB (£191.99) and 1TB capacities (£360.99). For more information, visit uk.crucial.com, 'like' Crucial's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CrucialMemory) and follow Crucial on Twitter @crucialmemory.

Create advanced panoramas from your photos | bit.ly/ice366

Microsoft Research's free panorama creator has been updated with some powerful new features. Here's how to use it

Image Composite Editor (ICE), originally released back in 2008, is an image stitcher that lets you build panoramas from two or more overlapping photos taken from the same spot. The software is very easy to use; all you have to do is provide the photos and it will automatically piece them together to produce a single high-resolution image.

Among the improvements in the newly released 2.0 version of the software are an auto-completion tool, which can intelligently fill missing pixels in your creations, and new projections that let you modify the style of your panoramas.

The software can handle the RAW image format and has no size restrictions, so the size of a panorama is only limited by the number of pictures you take.
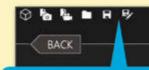
QUICK MENU
The icons let you quickly create panoramas from images or video; open an existing creation; or save a work in progress

1 The main screen lets you view popular panoramas from Microsoft Photosynth (photosynth.net) **1** or create your own from photos **2** or videos. **3** You can also open any panoramas you've previously made. **4** Click the Images option and select the photos you want to use by holding down Shift or Ctrl as you click.
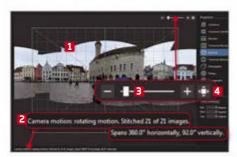
2 Your added photos appear in a strip. **1** You can add more images, **2** remove any you don't want **3** or drag and drop additional images to the window. Photos can be sorted by the file name or capture time. **4** To create a simple panorama, select the camera motion **5** (Auto-detect is fine) and click Next.

3 The software aligns and synthesises your images to produce a panorama. **1** Information about the result (including the number of stitched images) is displayed below. **2** Use the slider **3** to zoom in and out of the picture. You can also click the 'Fit to window' button to return to the default view. **4**
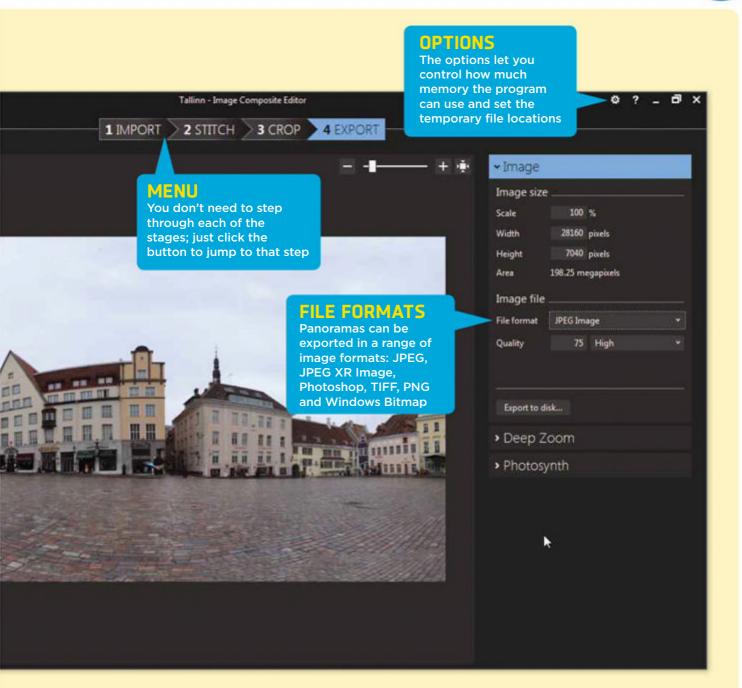
4 Click and drag the image to adjust the angle. You can see the Roll, Pitch and Yaw changes. **1** Click 'Auto orientation' **2** to revert to the original version. The software offers ten different Projection types **3** which change how the panorama looks. When you're happy with your choice, click Next to move on.

5 The software 'projects' the panorama and displays the results. Unless you were very careful when taking your photos, you'll probably have gaps in the resulting picture. **1** To get the software to fill these in for you, click the 'Auto complete' button. **2** It may take a while to work its magic.

OPTIONS
The options let you control how much memory the program can use and set the temporary file locations

Tallinn - Image Composite Editor

1 IMPORT   **2** STITCH   **3** CROP   **4** EXPORT

MENU
You don't need to step through each of the stages; just click the button to jump to that step

FILE FORMATS
Panoramas can be exported in a range of image formats: JPEG, JPEG XR Image, Photoshop, TIFF, PNG and Windows Bitmap

Image

Image size

Scale	100	%
Width	28160	pixels
Height	7040	pixels
Area	198.25 megapixels	

Image file

| File format | JPEG Image |
| Quality | 75 | High |

Export to disk...

> Deep Zoom

> Photosynth

6 Crop your image to remove unwanted parts from the top and bottom. Select 'Auto crop' **1** to let the program automatically trim the panorama. You can select 'No crop' **2** if you like the image as it is, or drag the handles **3** of the crop box if you prefer to perform the trim manually.

7 You can now export your panorama. Set the image size including scale, width and height. The area size is displayed in megapixels. **1** Choose the image format and quality you require. **2** Finally, click 'Export to disk' to save a copy to your PC.

8 Deep Zoom, **1** lets you turn your panorama into an interactive high-res image for the web that visitors can pan around and zoom in and out of. If you don't have a website but would still like people to explore your panorama online, you can save it to Photosynth. **2** You'll need a Microsoft account. **3**
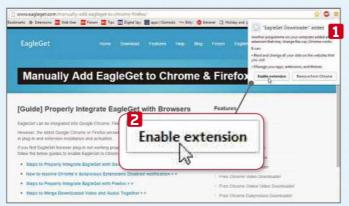
✚ Get more tips in our newsletter at www.webuser.co.uk/newsletter

Download audio and video from any website

EagleGet: www.eagleget.com | 🕐 **20 mins** | 🌐 **Chrome,** 🦊 **Firefox,** 🌐 **Internet Explorer**

EagleGet is a brilliant tool that lets you download ad-free video and audio directly from the web. Compatible with most browsers including Chrome, Firefox and Internet Explorer, it also doubles as a general purpose download manager.

In this Workshop, we show you how to manually add EagleGet to Chrome, so you can rip files directly from any video site, including popular services such as YouTube and Vimeo. The process of adding EagleGet to Firefox is very similar, but if you get stuck you can find detailed, step-by-step instructions at bit.ly/eagleget366.

When using the EagleGet browser extension, the highest resolution versions of YouTube's videos are sometimes listed as 'hidden formats', which require you to download the video and audio files separately. To get around this, we'll show you how to combine these two files into one fully functional video using the command-line tool FFmpeg (www.ffmpeg.org). To install FFmpeg, you'll need an extraction tool such as 7-Zip (www.7-zip.org) and to be logged into a user account with administrator rights.

1 Download, install and run EagleGet. When Chrome launches, a pop-up appears saying that EagleGet Downloader has been added. **1** Read the information about what the extension can do, then click 'Enable extension' **2** to approve it.

2 Type `chrome://plugins` into the address bar. **1** Find the EagleGet plug-in and make sure that it's enabled, and check that the 'Always allowed?' box is ticked. **2** Close your browser and restart your PC to complete the installation.

3 Visit YouTube and open a video you want to save. A Download button **1** appears above it. Click it to see a list of different files you can download. Each file's resolution is shown at the end of the title **2** with the file type in square brackets. **3**

4 If you select an MP4 file from the top half of the list, the file will contain both video and sound. If, however, you select a 'hidden format' file, such as the 1080p MP4, **1** you'll need to separately download the audio file, **2** then merge the two together.
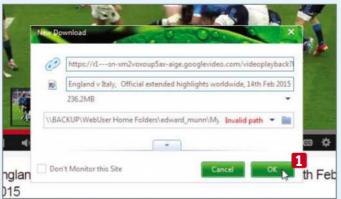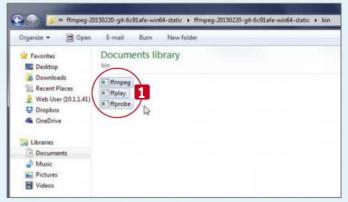
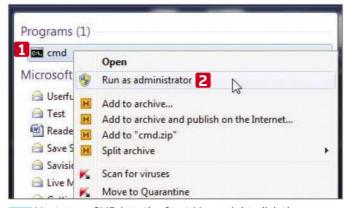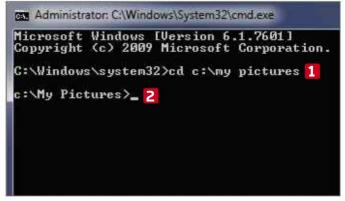**5** Click the file you want to save and a pop-up window appears. Choose a name for the file and the location you want to save it to, then click OK. **1** If you're downloading a 'hidden' format, repeat this step for the audio file.
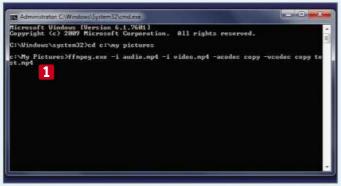
6 To merge the video and audio files, you first need to install FFmpeg (bit.ly/ffmpeg366). After downloading the correct version for your PC, extract the files using 7-Zip, locate the 'bin' folder and copy all its contents **1** to C:/Windows/System32.

7 Next, type CMD into the Start Menu, right-click the program **1** and select 'Run as administrator'. **2** Your audio and video files must be saved to the same folder before you merge them and it's best if they have short, simple names.

8 To tell Command Prompt where your files are saved, use the 'change drive' command `cd` followed by the file path of the folder the files are saved to, including the drive letter, for example `cd c:\my pictures`. **1** Press Enter and Command Prompt shows the new drive location. **2**

9 Next, type `ffmpeg.exe –i audio.mp4 –i video .mp4 –acodec copy –vcodec copy test.mp4` **1** where 'audio.mp4' is the name of the audio file, 'video.mp4' is the name of the video file and 'test.mp4' is the name you want to give the merged file. Press Return.

10 FFmpeg merges your files. If the process has been successful, no error messages will appear in the Command Prompt. Your merged file can be found in the same directory as the original video and audio clips. **1**

Combine your bookmarks with your homepage

O penoox lets you create a browser homepage that includes a selection of search engines and turns your speed-dial thumbnails into a sophisticated bookmarking system. In this Workshop, we've shown you how to set it up so you can quickly add website links to your homepage and organise your bookmarks into folders. We've used Chrome, but Openoox works well with all modern browsers.

Openoox: openoox.com | 🕐 10 mins | Any browser

1 During set-up, you're asked to pick some sites that interest you. These appear as thumbnails when you first log in. **1** To visit one of these 'Oox', click its icon. You can rearrange the sites by dragging and dropping them or add a new site by clicking the 'Add an Oox' button. **2**
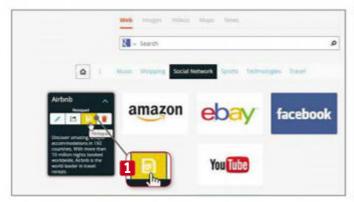
2 The Openoox add-on lets you add websites more quickly. Click your profile picture, **1** then 'My Openoox button', **2** then 'Install the Openoox button' **3** and 'Add to Chrome'. When you visit a site you want to save, select the Openoox Bookmarklet in the address bar and select 'Add an Oox'.

3 You can search the web from the search bar. **1** Click the down arrow to use a different search engine. **2** Your bookmarks can be organised into folders. **3** To delete a website from a folder, hover over a thumbnail, select the Options cog, then click the trash icon.

4 To move a website from the homepage to a folder, drag and drop its icon to the folder name. **1** You can also drag an Oox to the avatar in the bottom right corner **2** to get website recommendations based on similar bookmarks that others have saved.

5 To add notes to an Oox you've saved, click the Options cog and select Notepad. **1** You can password protect your notes by clicking the padlock icon, entering a password (which is specific to that website) and clicking Save.

6 To set Openoox as your homepage, click your profile picture, then My Homepage. **1** Add the Chrome extension or open Chrome's settings, select 'Open a specific page or set of pages' on start up and set https://openoox.com as the URL. This method may differ slightly for other browsers.

Create a Start menu for your portable software

The beauty of portable software is that it can be copied to a USB drive and run on any PC, without needing to be installed. However, if you have a lot of portable programs installed on a single USB stick, they can be tricky to navigate and launch. SyMenu is a handy Start menu for your portable software that can help you find, download, organise and run your programs.

SyMenu: www.ugmfree.it | ⏱ **10 mins** | 🪟 **XP, Vista, 7, 8+**
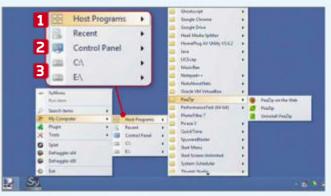

1 Download SyMenu, unzip it to a new folder on your USB, double-click SyMenu.exe and right-click the icon in the notification area. **1** Choose Tools, Configuration. **2** In Item Manager, click Add Program. **3** Click the 'Browse for System' button **4** to add portable files already on your USB.

2 You can also download more portable programs. In Item Manager, click 'Get new apps'. SyMenu Suite **1** has many popular programs; NirSoft Suite **2** has downloads from www.nirsoft.net. Click 'Get apps online', **3** select a program you want and click Add **4** to install it.

3 Click the taskbar icon **1** to view the Start menu. Portable programs you've added are at the bottom. **2** Click one to launch it. If a lot of your programs require admin privileges, launch SyMenu.Admin.exe, which automatically elevates everything it runs to admin status.

4 The menu also launches programs and tools installed on your PC. Select My Computer and hover over Host Programs **1** to bring up a list. You can access the Control Panel **2** and open Explorer to see what's installed on your attached drives. **3**

5 To search for a specific program, select 'Search items' **1** and start typing into the box. **2** Results are shown from your portable programs, the software installed on your PC and the Control Panel tools. The menu is the same whether it's accessed from the taskbar or the notification area. **3**

6 To fine-tune the settings, click Tools, then Configuration. Select a program **1** to change its options, such as whether it launches with SyMenu. **2** Go to Options in the Advanced menu to switch off the splash screen, **3** assign keyboard shortcuts **4** and change the menu's colours. **5**
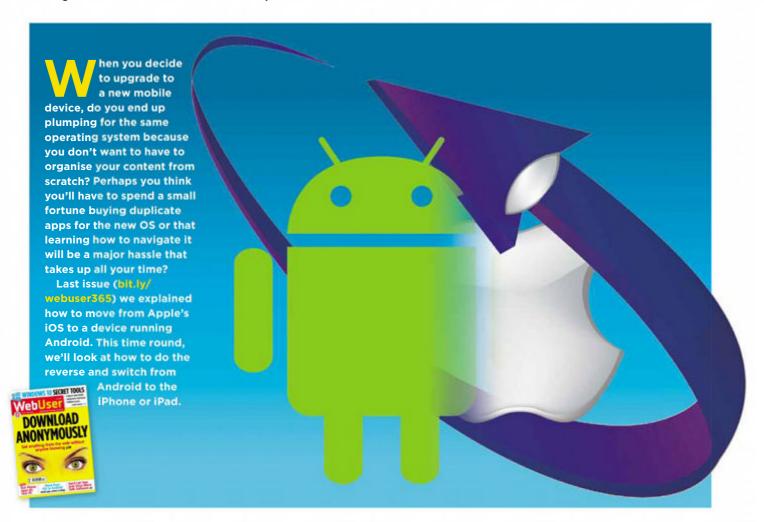
How to... Move from Android to iOS

Don't be worried about switching to your dream phone or tablet, just because it runs a different operating system to your current model. **Wayne Williams** can help ease the move from Android to iOS

When you decide to upgrade to a new mobile device, do you end up plumping for the same operating system because you don't want to have to organise your content from scratch? Perhaps you think you'll have to spend a small fortune buying duplicate apps for the new OS or that learning how to navigate it will be a major hassle that takes up all your time?

Last issue (**bit.ly/ webuser365**) we explained how to move from Apple's iOS to a device running Android. This time round, we'll look at how to do the reverse and switch from Android to the iPhone or iPad.
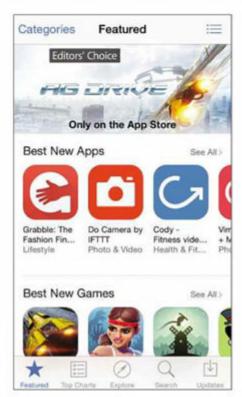
Install your favourite apps

The Apple App Store has the largest selection of apps bar none, so you should have no problems finding iOS versions of your favourite Android apps. However, prices of paid-for apps may vary; Google currently has a minimum app price of 59p, whereas Apple apps now cost from 79p, and some apps that are free but supported by adverts on Android may have to be paid for on iOS.

On top of this, the approval procedure is very different between the two operating systems. Google weeds out malware and has a blanket ban on certain types of app (including truly offensive products and ad-blockers), but has no limitations beyond these restrictions. Apple, however, is very strict and will scrutinise each app and update before allowing it into the App Store, which often causes long delays. For this reason,

apps that Google lets into its Play store or that you can get by sideloading may be banned from the Apple App Store for one reason or another. Ultimately, this means that the overall quality of apps is better on iOS because Apple will block an app if it doesn't work as it should or the quality is not deemed to be good enough.

If you find that an app isn't available in the App Store, you can't simply go

Most popular Android apps are also available through the Apple App Store

elsewhere to look for it. The App Store is your only source of apps, unless you jailbreak your device (free it from limitations imposed by Apple and your network), which carries various risks, including 'bricking' the device (rendering it useless).

Another big difference to be aware of is how permissions are handled between the two operating systems. Android lists everything the app wants to access, and you have to agree to these conditions if you want to install it. Under iOS, every app gets basic permission rights, such as

the ability to access the internet. If the app needs more advanced permissions (access to your photos, for example), a pop up will ask your consent and you can choose whether to allow this or not. Denying a permission won't stop the app from the working, but it may stop it functioning properly.

Start by searching the App Store for any apps you currently have on your Android device. If you can't find one of them, the chances are that there are equally good or better alternatives available, so browse the categories.

If you're looking to replace a game that you had on Android, any progress or saved games will be lost and you'll have to start afresh on iOS.

Transfer data

If you want a simple way of copying data – including contacts, calendars and photos – from your Android device to the iPhone, the best option is to use a free app. There are lots of choices available, but one of the best is Copy My Data from Media Mushroom. It's free and available for both iOS (bit.ly/copyios366) and Android (bit.ly/copyand366). We explain how to use this handy software in our Mini Workshop, below. Alternatively there's Send Anywhere (send-anywhere.com), which we covered in a Mini Workshop for last issue's Weekend Project.

Transfer photos and videos

Copy My Data and Send Anywhere can be used to copy various types of media from your Android phone, but if you only want to copy photos and/or video, then PhotoSync (www.photosync-app.com) is a good alternative. It lets you share

PhotoSync can transfer your photos and videos between operating systems

photos and videos between PCs, Macs, smartphones and tablets. However, while it's free on Android (with in-app purchases), the iOS version costs £2.49.

If you don't want to spend any money or use an app, you can simply connect your Android device to your PC via a USB cable and copy the photos from the phone to your hard drive. Then connect your iOS device to the PC and copy the photos over to the internal storage on the new device.

As we explained last issue, you can also use cloud storage to act as a bridge for

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⚙️ MINI WORKSHOP | Transfer personal content between devices using Copy My Data

1 Install the app on both devices. Open it on your Android phone and tap Next. You'll be presented with two choices: to copy data 'To or From Another Device over Wi-Fi' **1** or 'Backup or Restore from Google Drive'. **2** Assuming you're not storing all your content on Google Drive, select the first option.

2 Launch the app on your iOS device and give it permission to access your data. Your iOS device **1** should appear as a destination on your Android screen, as long as both phones are connected to the same wireless network. Select it and you'll be taken to the Copy screen. There's no need to click Next.

3 As we're moving from Android to iOS and not the other way around, tap 'Copy data to selected device'. **1** A PIN w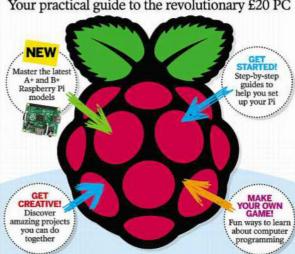ill appear on screen. Enter this into the box that appears on the iOS screen and tap Next. Choose the data to transfer from Contacts, Calendar, Photos and Videos, then tap Next to copy it.

WebUser
Bookstore

Store up to 1TB of photos online for free with Flickr

transferring your photos between phones. Google+ is a good option for storing photos, and you may already be using it on Android. If not, consider using Flickr (flickr.com), which gives you a whopping 1TB of free space – more than enough to hold all your photos.

Transfer music
There are lots of options for buying and

Google has software to help Mac users transfer files to and from Android devices

managing your music (and other media), but the best choice for iOS is iTunes. Importing music into iTunes, for syncing on your iPhone, is very easy. If the songs are on your PC, you can just add them to Apple's media manager. If they are stored on your Android device, just connect your old device to your PC, then navigate to the music folder and copy the tracks from there to your hard drive. Mac users can use the free Android File Transfer program (www.android.com/filetransfer).

Transfer your email
iOS comes with its own mail app that supports multiple accounts. Just add your existing email provider's details to get instant access to all your old messages. When adding the accounts, you can choose to also include your

contacts and calendars.

If you don't like the iOS mail app, you can install the official apps for email services such as Gmail, Yahoo Mail, and Outlook.com instead.

Back up to iTunes
When iTunes is running, connect your iOS device to your PC or Mac and it will be backed-up automatically. Should your phone get lost or stolen, its contents will be safe and can be restored to a replacement device. However, this means you need to regularly plug your phone into your PC, which is a bit of a nuisance. Fortunately, you can avoid any hassle by setting up iTunes to sync automatically over Wi-Fi. It takes seconds to set up and you'll find full instructions on how to do it at bit.ly/itunesbackup366. ■
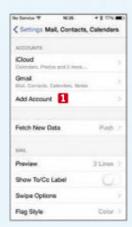
Plug your iOS device into iTunes to back up everything that's on it

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MINI WORKSHOP | Add email accounts to iOS

1 Tap the Settings app, which will be on the first screen (unless you've moved it). Scroll down and tap 'Mail, Contacts, Calendars'. Tap Add Account. **1** If you have more than one email account, you'll be able to add each one in turn.
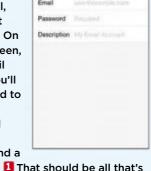
2 The next screen will display a list of popular email providers including Apple's iCloud (you can set up a free iCloud email address by following the instructions at bit.ly/icloudemail366), **1** Google (Gmail), **2** Yahoo **3** and Outlook.com. **4** Just tap the one you want and fill in the requested details, such as your email address and password.

3 If the service you use isn't listed or you don't use webmail, tap Other at the bottom. On the next screen, tap Add Mail Account. You'll be prompted to enter your name, email address, password and a description. **1** That should be all that's required, although you may be asked for your incoming and outgoing mail server settings.

NEXT ISSUE **How To...** Turn your computer into the ultimate gaming PC

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Web User's Top Tips

Our experts help you avoid the recent spate of Flash security problems

TOP TIPS FOR AVOIDING FLASH EXPLOITS

Install the latest version of Flash Player

In the past few weeks, Adobe has had to update its Flash Player software at least three times. Flash is a popular target for hackers because the software is installed on most PCs, so if cybercriminals find a way to exploit its vulnerabilities, they can reach a vast number of potential victims. Internet security companies have detected an increasing number of hackers exploiting loopholes in Flash's software, luring unsuspecting web users into clicking malicious adverts that can compromise your computer.

The best way to stay safe while using Flash is to make sure you're up to date. You can quickly check whether you've got the latest version in the browser you're using by going to Adobe's website (bit.ly/chkflash366). Visit this site in all the browsers you regularly use to access the web. If you don't have the latest version, see our 'Keep Flash updated' tip, below, to update the software.

The Adobe website is the best place to find out whether your browser has the latest version of Flash installed

Ignore pop-up messages

While you're browsing the web, you may sometimes see a pop-up message stating that Flash Player is out of date and you should install the latest version. The message may display a link or button to do this, and might even auto-download the Flash installer for you. You should be wary of these pop-up Flash messages and avoid clicking the links because they may be a trick to get you to install malware or adware on your computer. If you discover any Flash Installer files in your Downloads folder, they should be deleted.

When you get one of these pop-up

Flash messages, ignore it, close your browser, open a new browser window and check you've got the latest version as described in the tip above. If your software is out of date, download the latest version from www.adobe.com.

Keep Flash updated

In order to play video, music and games created with the latest version of Flash, your PC must have the most recent version of Flash Player installed. This means that the messages telling you to upgrade are sometimes genuine. There are several ways to get Flash updates, depending on which operating system and browsers you use.

Flash is built into Chrome, so whenever you update the browser, you will also get the latest Flash Player plug-in. To check you've got the latest version of Chrome installed, go to the menu button and select About Google Chrome. This checks for an update and installs it automatically if one is available.

Windows 8.1 has Flash built in, so that

Internet Explorer can access Flash content on websites. Updates are installed through Windows Update, so go to the Control Panel and click Windows Update. Click 'Check for updates' and look for Flash in both the 'important' and 'optional' updates. If it is listed, make sure it is selected and then update Windows.

For every other operating system and browser (Windows XP, Vista, 7, Firefox and Opera), you should manually check for upgrades by going to the Flash Player page on www.adobe.com (and nowhere else). The site downloads an installer that you run from the Downloads folder, but make sure you clear out any fake installers before you start.

Flash adds an automatic updater when it's installed. However, if it's been disabled, your version of Flash may be out of date. To check that the updater is enabled, open the Control Panel and click Flash Player. Select the Advanced tab and, in the Updates section, make sure 'Allow Adobe to

---

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.

Make sure your Control Panel settings allow Flash to be updated automatically

install updates' is selected. If it is not, click the Change Update Settings button, return to the Advanced tab and select it.

Private browsing is more secure

Having the latest browser, whether it's Chrome, Firefox or Internet Explorer, along with the latest version of Flash, means that you can use private browsing to stay safe. To enable this in Internet Explorer, click the gear and select Safety, InPrivate Browsing; in Chrome click the menu and select 'New incognito window'; and in Firefox click the menu button and select New Private Window.

If you use Flash in this mode, two things will happen: first, Flash will not be able to access any previously stored information and the website will respond as if you are a new anonymous visitor. Second, all information stored by Flash in private browsing mode is erased when the browser window is closed. This maintains your privacy.

An old version of Flash on an old browser won't work in private mode, so if you are using a Windows XP PC with Internet Explorer and an outdated version of Flash, you may think you're browsing anonymously and privately, but you are not. Switch to the latest version of Chrome instead, which has the most up-to-date version of Flash built in.

Using the latest version of Chrome means Flash is automatically up to date

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

Set Flash permissions

Flash is able to store information, and can access your PC's webcam and microphone, which makes it attractive to malicious hackers.

There is an easy way to improve the security of Flash to prevent websites from exploiting it. Go to the Control Panel and open Flash Player. On each of the Storage, 'Camera and Mic' and Playback tabs is an Ask option, such as 'Ask me when a site wants to use the camera or microphone'. This forces websites to display a pop-up message requesting permission before using your equipment, so you can allow or deny access.

Open Flash in the Control Panel and set the options to ask permission

Click to play

There's no way to remove Flash from Chrome because it's built into the browser. If you're worried about its security vulnerabilities, you can turn off Flash and only enable it when it's needed. Go to the menu button, then Settings and click 'Show advanced settings' at the bottom. In the Privacy section, click 'Content settings'. Scroll down to Plug-ins and select 'Click to play'.

With this setting, any Flash on a web page is displayed as a static grey box. If you want Flash to run, just click the box. An icon with a red cross appears at the right side of the address box. Click it to see an option to 'Run all plug-ins this time', which is a once-only permission, and 'Always allow plug-ins on...' if you want Flash to run every time you visit that particular website.

It's tempting to add well-known websites to the 'Always allow plug-ins...' white list, but they don't always check every Flash advert and it's possible for a rogue ad to slip through. This would leave you just one click away from a malware infection.

Non-Flash browsers

As we've explained, Flash can't be avoided in Chrome, Windows 8.1 and

Use Chrome's 'Click to play' option to stop plug-ins running automatically

Internet Explorer because it is built in, but it won't appear in Firefox unless you deliberately download it. You could use Firefox to completely avoid Flash altogether, and only use Chrome or IE on sites where Flash is essential. The internet without Flash is not as bad as you might think, with sites such as YouTube now defaulting to HTML5 instead.

Android and iOS tablets don't have Flash and it can't be installed, so you're always safe from Flash-related problems on these devices. It's also forced many websites to adapt and avoid Flash on their mobile sites.

Uninstall Flash

Flash-based malware and security problems can't affect you if you remove Flash from your computer. Obviously, this means that some elements on websites that use Flash won't work, but you're no worse off than if you were using a tablet or phone because these devices don't have Flash either.

To remove Flash, download the Flash Uninstaller utility from Adobe (bit.ly/unflash366) and restart your computer. Right-click any program icons in the taskbar's notification area and select Quit or Exit to close them. Open the Downloads folder in Explorer and run the Flash Uninstaller. Press Windows+R to open the Run box. Type `C:\Windows\system32\Macromed\Flash` and delete all the files in the folder. Repeat this for the following folders:

`C:\Windows\SysWOW64\Macromed\Flash`
`%appdata%\Adobe\Flash Player`
`%appdata%\Macromedia\Flash Player`

Restart the computer and Flash will no longer be there. To confirm this, go to bit.ly/checkf366 and click the Check Now button.

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

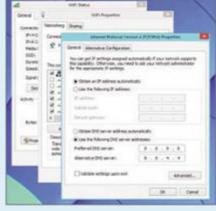## INTERNET
No web connection

Q My laptop won't connect to the internet, either on Wi-Fi or Ethernet. It's running AVG 2014 and System Mechanic, which completed all repairs and has identified the internet connection as broken.

The laptop is a Medion P6620, which I've had from new and otherwise works well. All the other equipment I have in the house works perfectly on the internet. I've read advice that says to disconnect the modem router, but why should I do this if everything else is working? The scans I've run show no threats, just that the laptop is not connected to the internet.

John Chilver, via email

A Something is preventing the laptop from connecting to the web. Try eliminating all the possibilities by turning off all devices that access the internet, such as computers, mobile phones and tablets. Switch off your router and switch it back on. Now turn on the laptop and see if it works. If it does, then there is a clash with another device. There may be a Reset button on the router to restore the factory settings, which may solve the problem.

If it still won't connect to the internet, uninstall all security

Set the laptop to automatically obtain an IP address in the network settings

software, open Windows Firewall in the Control Panel and disable it. Restart Windows and see if it connects. If it doesn't, open Internet Explorer, click the gear icon and select Internet Options. Click Default Level on the Security tab, Default on the Privacy tab, remove any items on the Connections tab, then click 'LAN settings' and tick only the top option, 'Automatically detect settings'. Select the Advanced tab and click 'Restore advanced settings', then Reset.

Open Network and Sharing Center in the Control Panel, click Connection (Wi-Fi), click Properties, double-click Internet Protocol Version 4 and set the two options to automatically obtain addresses. Restart the laptop and it should be OK.

SHOPPING
Providing proof of purchase

Q A young friend who is a student bought a Hudl from Tesco three months ago and now it has died. She took it to Tesco, but because she has lost the receipt, which is easy to do, Tesco will not help. We took the tablet to a good repairer, but it could not be fixed. This student can't really afford the loss. Is there anything we can do or is this just a warning to all purchasers to safeguard their receipts?

Ron Dickson, via email

A If something you purchase develops a fault soon after you buy it, you are entitled to take it back and have it repaired or replaced. However, you need to be able to prove when and where you bought it. A receipt is the best way to do this, but it is not the only way. Most large purchases are made with credit cards and a printed statement is sufficient to prove the purchase. In addition to this, credit-card companies offer purchase-protection schemes, so as a last resort you could contact them and ask for help, but it probably won't be necessary as

Tesco should accept the statement as proof of purchase.

MOBILE
Copying files from phones

Q If I copy a file from one smartphone to another, can I copy that copy to yet another smartphone and then that copy to yet another, and so on?

Kevin Scanlan, via email

A Yes. Copying files is not like making a photocopy where each copy becomes progressively worse. A digital copy is an exact duplicate of the original. Rather than passing files down a chain of people, you might find it easier to save any files you want to share using online storage, like Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive or Dropbox. All have apps for both iOS and Android, and it's easy to select a file and then use one of the sharing options to send a link. You can share it with a few people or make it public, so anyone can access it.

TABLETS
Non-existent Android upgrade

Q I purchased a Samsung Tab 2 10.1 Wi-Fi model PT5100 through Amazon in January 2013. It has Android version 4.04. As new Android versions have come out, I have contacted Samsung a few times to find out why there are no upgrades available for this tablet. They took the tablet back in 2013, but it came back with the same version on it. The last few times I contacted them, they would only say that the upgrade will be rolled out in the UK in the next few months, but that has never happened.

I now see that there is a bug in Android versions older than 4.4 that Google is refusing to fix. This leaves me and other Tab 2 owners in a poor position, so why is Samsung not issuing an upgrade in the UK? According to my internet research, other countries have received them.

I have never used the tablet for calls, but if I purchased a data SIM, would that generate an upgrade that I could do over Wi-Fi?

Ian Sheppard, via email

A If Samsung will not produce an Android update for the Tab 2, there is nothing you can do about it. If it hasn't happened yet, it probably never will. You will see a notification if an update is available, but you can also manually check. Go to Settings, 'About device', 'Software update', Update to see if an update can be downloaded.

Although there is a security bug in versions of Android older than 4.4, security researchers tell us that there are bugs in the latest version, too. On the one hand, older unpatched bugs are more likely to be exploited than newer ones, so updating is recommended; but on the other hand the latest Android on old devices can make them slow and unresponsive. You're stuck between a rock and hard place.

There are several options and one is to add free security software to the tablet, such as 360 Security (bit.ly/security366), AVG AntiVirus Security (bit.ly/avgapp366) or Avast Antivirus & Security (bit.ly/avast366), to mention

Check for updates to Android in the Settings on your tablet or phone

just three. You could sell the Samsung Tab 2 on eBay, where we saw several with Buy It Now buttons for up to £145. You could then put the money towards a new tablet with the latest version of Android. Google Nexus branded tablets and phones always receive the latest Android updates as soon as they are released. If you want to keep abreast of developments, then get a Google Nexus 9, which costs £319, from the Devices section of the Google Play Store (play.google.com).
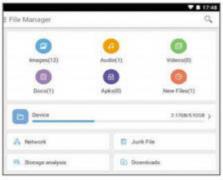
TABLETS
How to use Hudl's extra memory

Q I have a long-standing problem trying to understand the use of external memory on my Tesco Hudl. Even Hudl technical support seems stumped and I was told nobody had asked the question I am about to ask.

We were on the phone last month for 37 minutes. No joy. I have a 32GB microSD card and I cannot find a way to transfer apps, docs or videos, either to or from it.

I have a Hudl manual that is helpful in almost every way, I have a book on the Android operating system which tells me a great deal, I even have *Hudl For Dummies*, but nowhere do I find instructions on how to use that extra memory I bought. What do I do to save things to it? The only reference I see in all my books is the fact that I can increase my storage so as not to load up my internal memory. But how does it work? Hope someone can educate me on this.
J Diamond, via email

A Connect your tablet to a PC using a USB cable. Open Explorer in Windows and the Hudl should appear when This PC or Computer is selected. There will be two folders or drives, one for the internal storage on the tablet and another for the microSD card. Photos, music and videos can be copied direct to the microSD card, and they'll be automatically detected by the device. This lets you have large media collections on the device without using

File Manager (Explorer) provides easy access to media files on Android devices

up all the internal storage, which is needed for apps.

You can also use a file manager on the tablet to move media files from its internal storage to the microSD card. Go to the Google Play Store and search for 'file manager'. There are lots of them and File Manager (Explorer) (bit.ly/fileman366), ES File Explorer File Manager (bit.ly/esfile366), and File Manager HD (Explorer) (bit.ly/filehd366) are good ones. Find the folder where music, movies and photos are stored and move the files to the microSD card. Long pressing on a file displays a menu with copy, move, delete and so on.

MOBILE
Sending photos from iOS to TV

Q I am hoping to send photos to the TV from an iPhone and iPad. In issue 362 (bit.ly/webuser362) on page 43, it says you can use the iOS Photo Cast app to stream photos from your iOS phone or tablet to your TV. Does this mean that I could use Chromecast to do this? The assistant in Currys said that Chromecast won't work with Apple devices. Could you clarify this?
Ricardo Canitia Silito, via email

A To view iPhone or iPad photos on a TV you need a hardware device that bridges the two. Chromecast is a £30 dongle from Google that plugs into any TV with an HDMI socket.

The Photo Cast app (bit.ly/photoios366) for iPhone and iPad will do the job, but you really need to buy all the in-app purchases to fully unlock it. Google's Chromecast app (bit.ly/ccast366) for iOS is free and it lets compatible apps transmit music, video and photos to the TV. Apps

Apple TV mirrors the screen on the iPhone and iPad on your television

include Google Play Movies & TV, Google Play Music, Google+ and YouTube. Google+ can be set to backup all your photos online and, using the Chromecast app, you could then select and play any Google+ photo album.

A better device for iPhone and iPad users is Apple TV, which costs more at £79. Anything you see or hear on the iPhone or iPad can be mirrored on the TV. It does a lot more besides mirror the screen on your iPhone and iPad. Any music, movie or TV show you buy on iTunes can be watched on your TV because it can access your iTunes Store account. It also provides direct access to Netflix and many other movie and music sources.

This fortnight Roland has been deleting unused apps from his Android phone to make his battery last longer

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
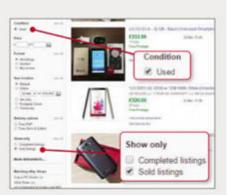
TOP TIP

WEBSITES

See how much eBay items sell for

If you're selling (or buying) an item on eBay and you want to know how much it might fetch, it's a good idea to check how much similar listings have sold for. There's a very easy way to do this: just search for the item you're selling and then tick 'Sold listings' from the 'Show only' menu in the sidebar. You'll see a list of items that have successfully sold, both through buy-it-now and auction, which can be sorted according to a number of criteria including price, location and end date.

If you're selling something second-hand, it's especially important to tick the Used box under Condition, or you'll be comparing new items to used ones. All this should give you a rough idea of how much an item might fetch, but

Ebay lets you browse items that have already sold on the auction site

remember there's no guarantee you'll get the same sum because lots of factors can affect the final sale price.

Ed Wright, via email

EMAIL
Multiple inbox views

If you use Gmail, you might mark your important messages with a star so you can find them later. You may also have draft messages saved. There is a useful Labs tool called Multiple Inboxes that lets you view starred, draft and normal emails, all on one screen. To enable it, click the gear icon at the top-right in Gmail, select Settings, then the Labs tab. Look for Multiple Inboxes and select the Enable option. Click Save Changes at the bottom and then view your inbox, which should now be split into different areas but all on one screen. It is an interesting idea and worth trying.

Mike Newton, via email

SOFTWARE
Brighten up LibreOffice

LibreOffice (www.libreoffice.org) does everything I want for free, so I am not at all tempted to pay for Microsoft's office programs. One of the LibreOffice features I really like is its ability to use Firefox graphical themes. It sounds like a

strange idea, but it works well and means that you can use the same theme on Firefox and LibreOffice, so your browser and your office suite match.

Open the word processor, go to the Tools menu and select Options. Expand the LibreOffice section and select Personalisation, then Own Theme on the right. If you haven't used it previously, a little window pops up with a Visit Firefox Themes button. If the window doesn't appear, click the Select Theme button.

The browser opens showing the collection of themes. When you find one you like, copy the address of the web page (highlight it and click Ctrl+C).

Brighten up your LibreOffice software with Firefox themes

Return to the LibreOffice window and paste (Ctrl+V) the URL into the box. Click OK and, after a few seconds, the theme is applied. Close the Options window to see the theme.

Alan Kirby, via email

SOCIAL NETWORKING
Google+ formatting

I learned something new on Google+ today and I would like to share it. Did you know that you can format the text in a Google+ posting? If you want to make text bold, then place it within asterisks, for example `*bold text*`. To make text italic, use underscore characters before and after: `_italic text_`. And to create strike-through text, use a minus sign: `-strikethrough-`.

The effect will only be applied after you click the Share button. Using interesting formatting is a good way to make your posts stand out.

Steve Gray, via email

EMAIL
Quicker attachments in Outlook

Until recently, if I wanted to attach a file to an email in Outlook, I would click Attach File, navigate to and select it using the pop-up window, then click Insert. This is fine, but if you've already got Explorer open and are looking at the file, there's a much quicker way of attaching it. You need to make sure you've got the New Mail Message or Reply window open, and then simply drag and drop the file from Explorer to the area where you type your message. If it's successful, you'll see the file appear in the Attached field.

As long as Outlook is your default email software, you can also attach files by right-clicking them and selecting 'Send to' then 'Mail recipient', even if the program isn't open. Bear in mind, however, that this will always open a New Mail Message window, which is no good if

The 'Send to' menu provides a quick way to create email attachments

you're replying to or forwarding an email.

Jordan Higgins, via email

SOFTWARE
Remove hyperlinks in Word

When you copy or type a web address into Microsoft Word and press the space bar or Enter, it automatically turns into an active hyperlink. This can slow you down if you accidentally click it while you're typing your document, and the blue and underlined URL can look messy. To remove the formatting, you can right-click the URL and select Remove Hyperlink, but there's a quicker way that uses a keyboard shortcut, so you don't have to disrupt your typing by reaching for your mouse. Just press Ctrl+Z after the hyperlink is created to automatically remove the formatting while keeping your space or line break intact.

Lucas Waters, via email

WEBSITES
Control Google Calendar reminders

Until recently, if you created an all-day event in Google Calendar, the reminders were automatically sent at 5pm the day before, so choosing 10 minutes before the event would create a reminder at 16.50 on the preceding day. Now, however, Google has updated its system so that when you tick the 'All day' box, you can choose how many days in advance you'll receive a notification, as well as being able to change the time. By default, the pop-up reminder is set for one day before at 11.30pm, while the email notification is still set for 4.50pm. You can change both defaults by

You can change Google Calendar's default all-day event notifications

opening Settings, then clicking Calendars and 'Edit notifications'. If you'd like the reminders to be set for 8am on the morning of the event, for example, you can set them to 0 days before at 08.00. You can even delete them altogether by clicking the Remove button.

Tony, via email

SOFTWARE
Discover what's hogging your hard drive

Ashley Cooper wrote a tip for *Web User* Issue 365 (bit.ly/webuser365) explaining how you can use a new command-line tool in Windows 8 to find out what's taking up space on your hard drive. If, however, you don't have Windows 8 or you're not comfortable fiddling around with Command Prompt, you could try using an alternative program. The Disk Analyzer tool in CCleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner) is one option (*Web User* ran a Workshop on this in Issue 363 – bit.ly/webuser363) but my preferred tool is WinDirStat (windirstat.info), which is completely free. This software scans through your hard drive, collecting data on all your files and folders, listing them in size order. Once it's finished the scan, you get a visual representation of your hard drive, with each block representing a single file, so you can easily spot the biggest ones. The different colours represent different types of file.

I found this really handy recently, when it uncovered some very large files that I'd completely forgotten about.

Joe Reynolds, via email

WinDirStat shows you the files that take up the most space on your hard drive

WEBSITES
Keep YouTube videos private

If you've uploaded videos to YouTube, you might not want everyone to be able to find and watch them. Fortunately, you can stop your files from being publicly visible by changing their privacy settings. The default setting is Public, but you can change this to Private or Unlisted (which hides your videos from view but still gives you the option to share them).

To change a video's privacy settings, click the YouTube menu button, select

My Channel, then Video Manager. The blue globe icon next to your video shows that it is Public. Click this icon and, on the drop-down menu in the 'Basic info' section, choose Unlisted or Private, then click 'Save changes'.

If you choose Unlisted, you can copy the video's URL from this page to share it with anyone you're happy to let watch the video. This is my favourite option, because in every other sense the video remains private and cannot be seen, even by those visiting your profile.

Jamie Arnold, via email

YouTube lets you change your video's privacy settings to Private or Unlisted

WEBSITES
Create a font from your own handwriting

Last week I discovered a really cool website that lets you create fonts from your own handwriting, for free. It's called PaintFont.com (www.paintfont.com) and looks really simple to use (although I must confess I haven't got round to testing it yet). To make your font, you need to choose which characters to include and then print off a template before drawing in your characters. Once you've finished, scan the template and upload it to the website; your handwriting will be converted into a fully functional OTF or TTF font file. If you're unsure about anything, the website has a FAQ page and a Tutorial section.

Alexander Thomson, via email

SOFTWARE
Change PC volume quickly

I've just found a handy program that lets you change the volume on your PC using your mouse's scroll wheel. It's called Volumouse (bit.ly/volumouse366) and it can be configured so the wheel only changes the computer's volume when you want it to. For example, you can set it to only work when you're holding the Alt key, or to be activated when you hover your cursor over the taskbar.

It's an incredibly versatile tool and I find it very handy for quickly adjusting the volume on my PC without having to open the Sound icon in the notification area and fiddle with the settings.

John R, 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!

SOFTWARE
Why does Adobe Reader open files zoomed in?
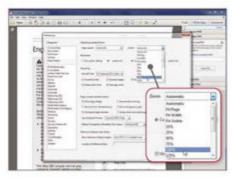
Q Whenever I open a PDF with Adobe Reader, the page is zoomed to about 200 per cent. This is far too big and I have to zoom out every time to be able to read the files. Can anyone tell me how I can make the PDF files open at 100 per cent every time?

Scooby, Web User Forums

A When you open Adobe Reader, click Edit, Preferences, Categories, Page Display, Default Layout, then Zoom. Here, you can select your desired default zoom level before clicking OK to save. Unless you need to open special protected PDFs, you could ditch Adobe and use Windows 8.1's built-in PDF reader. For more information about it, have a look at this article on the 7Tutorials website (bit.ly/pdf366).

Sumatra (bit.ly/sumat366) is also a good, basic PDF reader that's much smaller than Adobe Reader and shouldn't carry as many security bugs.

Moonshine, Izzit, Web User Forums

Adobe Reader lets you choose the default zoom level when you open PDFs

EMAIL
Why is Outlook so slow?

Q I am using Outlook 2007 SP3 on a Windows 8 laptop and it has become painfully slow. I have fibre broadband from Sky, so there's no reason for it to take 17 minutes to download 5.22Kb worth of new emails.

MUSIC
How do I rip music from old cassettes?

Q I have a large collection of cassette tapes. What is the best and easiest way of converting them to MP3 so I can play them on my laptop?

Teddyboy, Web User Forums

A After finding an appropriate cable to connect your tape player to the line-in socket on your PC, download a sound-recording program such as Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net). When you play the tape, you'll be able to use Audacity to record the player's

Use an audio-recording program such as Audacity to convert cassettes to MP3

I've tried restarting the laptop twice, but it hasn't helped. Does anyone have any idea what the problem might be?

Castman, Web User Forums

A I use Gmail and its web interface now does almost everything that Outlook does, except it doesn't rely on a massive PST file to act as a container. It's hard to say what the problem is, but if your PST file is getting too big or, indeed, if your hard drive is getting too full, Outlook will grind to a snail's pace.

Another thing that could slow things down is leaving all your emails on the server, because the program has to compare all the emails on your PC to

Vinyl to Digital offers discounted rates when you convert more than 10 casettes

output in MP3 format. There are instructions on how to do this on Audacity's site, and you can also get some pointers using methods 1 and 2 of the WikiHow page at bit.ly/audacity366. It's worth noting that this method will only work in real time, so if you've got a lot of tapes, it will take a very long time.

You can find cassette converters on Amazon and eBay that will do the job or, since it's such a time-consuming task, you could pay a company such as Vinyl to Digital (bit.ly/vinyltodigital366) to convert the tapes for you. Bear in mind, though, that you might get very mixed results depending on the quality and condition of your cassettes. Don't overlook the likes of YouTube and Spotify if you simply want to rediscover some old tracks.

Calimanco, Stewart40, Peru and Difarn, Web User Forums

If you find your email software is slow, you could try a webmail service such as Gmail

those online. Most email providers have a web access page, so log in using that, then see how it's working and how many emails it's holding. That might help you identify the cause of the problem.

izzit, Web User Forums

WEB BUILDING

How do I optimise my website for mobile devices?

Q My website looks perfect on a PC but when I view it on a mobile device, everything is out of place. Is this because something's not right with my CSS files?

samwatts, Web User Forums

A I had the same problem with my website. I was told by RVSiteBuilder support that I needed to change my template from a 'non responsive' one to a 'responsive' one. I did this and it now looks fine on a mobile device. You don't mention how you built your website, but if you used WordPress or something similar, have a look on its support pages.

SECURITY

Should I have so many versions of Java installed?

Q I seem to have multiple versions of Java installed on my Windows 7 PC. Do I need all of them or can I remove some?

cnmayne5, Web User Forums

A When I used to have Java installed, I also found that it would keep installing new versions of the program without removing old ones. However, the program now removes previous versions when it updates itself, and has done for several years, so you shouldn't have more than one version installed. You could try using the Java Uninstall Tool at bit.ly/java366 to see if that gets rid of them.

Because Java has failed to do this automatically on your computer, my feeling is that you might have downloaded Java from a dubious source, so you should also run your anti-virus software and an anti-malware program such as Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org) as a precautionary measure.

A good way to check the security of the multiple Java versions is to use the free Secunia Personal Software Inspector (bit.ly/secunia366), which tells you if you have insecure versions that should be removed.

The chances are that you'll hardly ever

The Java Uninstall Tool removes out-of-date versions of Java from your PC

need Java, so you could even try disabling it in your browsers and see if you notice its absence. If you want to try this, go to Control Panel, Java, Security and untick 'Enable Java content in the browser'. Next, click Apply and OK, and Java will be disabled in all your browsers. I keep Java installed in case I need it, but that's only happened once or twice in several years.

Kremmen, Stewart40, Cantrel and Madeline, Web User Forums

MUSIC

Why do my iTunes files sound distorted?

Q When I play tracks through iTunes, the music sounds distorted. Does anybody know what's causing this?

mr2rob, Web User Forums

A Is the sound distorted when you play music through other applications, too? If so, it could be that a sound effect is enabled in your audio set-up. Open Control Panel, choose 'Hardware and Sound' and 'Manage audio devices', then double-click your speakers to see if any settings have been changed.

If the preamp level is set very high in iTunes, it could cause your music to distort

If the distortion is only affecting iTunes, you can try fixing it by changing the program's equaliser settings. To do this, select your entire library, right-click and choose Get Info, Options, Equaliser and set it to Flat. Alternatively, in the latest version of iTunes, open the View menu and click Show Equaliser to see if any unusual settings have been applied. You can also look at Edit, Preferences and Playback to see if anything has been changed there.

Stewart 40, difarn, Web User Forums

SECURITY

Why do my browsers keep crashing?

Q I woke my laptop from Hibernate mode and everything seemed OK until I opened Internet Explorer, which flashed white and then closed. I used System Restore to revert to a previous configuration from a few days ago (for some reason all the older restore points had disappeared). This helped for a short time, but the browser seemed slow and soon the problem reappeared. I repeated the process and ran Chrome instead of IE, but my PC eventually crashed and I had to force it to shut down.

I'm worried that I must have some kind of virus but I've tried scanning with Malwarebytes Anti-Malware and Norton, and neither found anything untoward. Can anyone help me, please?

Bazz_j, Web User Forums

A Since you're still having problems after scanning your PC with anti-virus software, you should boot into 'Safe Mode with Networking' and see how your PC performs then. If it runs okay, then the cause of the problem is likely to be an infection and you should create a new thread in the Malware Removal Help & Analysis section of the Web User Forum.

Try running IE with no add-ons to see if they are causing browser problems

If, however, IE still exhibits problems when your PC is in Safe Mode, then you should try running it without any add-ons by searching for the browser in the Start menu and selecting Internet Explorer (No add-ons). If, after this, IE works properly, download AdwCleaner (bit.ly/adwcleaner366) followed by Junkware Removal Tool (which can be found on the same page as AdwCleaner). These should identify whatever is causing the problem.

Cantrel, Web User Forums

Star Email

£25 winner

Adblock Plus shouldn't take advertisers' money

Barry Collins speaks the truth in his column in Issue 365 (bit.ly/ webuser365) when he criticises the "protection racket" practices of Adblock Plus. Many of us depend on the money earned through adverts to keep our websites running, and ad blockers deprive us of this.

The fact that Adblock Plus takes money from big companies such as Google and Amazon to allow their adverts to be displayed makes me extremely annoyed. I've no idea how much it charges for this service and nor do I intend to find out, not only because I can't afford to pay to ensure ads are seen on my site but because I don't see why I should have to. As Barry points out, content doesn't just appear from nowhere; it takes time

and effort to create, and on top of this you also have to pay for web hosting.

Adblock Plus would probably say that its 'Acceptable Ads' policy is a fair compromise between allowing and blocking online ads, but it clearly isn't when 'acceptable' actually means 'paid for by companies who can afford it'. So if

Microsoft wants to plaster a massive video ad across your screen, then Adblock Plus says: "Fine, go ahead", because the money has already changed hands. But if a small website wants to include a few ads down the side of the page to help fund its monthly outlay, then Adblock Plus says: "Tough luck".

Yes, some adverts are annoying and intrusive in their attempts to get your attention, but most are designed not to interfere with your browsing and are essential to the existence of the web. Blocking all ads other than Adblock Plus-endorsed ones will only encourage advertisers to use devious methods such as adware to get their message across.

Jon Faulkner, via email

Don't assume Windows 10 will run on your PC

With reference to your 'Windows 10: 5 things we still don't know' article on page 41 of Issue 364 (bit.ly/webuser364), I feel I should warn your readers that they must be careful of your assumption in the last sentence of point 4: "but if you can run Windows 7 or later on your current PC, then you should be able to run Windows 10". The operative word is "should"!

I have been trying to upgrade a four-year-old Dell laptop, which came with 64-bit Windows 7 Home Premium installed. I've tried various configurations – dual boot, install over Windows 7 and so on – but after about five minutes of the installation process, the screen goes blank – never to return. Various builds of Windows 10 from November 2014 to the

latest Technical Preview (9926) all produce the same results. There is obviously a problem with a display driver, but Microsoft feedback and its forums do not seem to be concerned.

I also have a six-year-old Toshiba laptop that also runs 64-bit Windows 7 Home Premium, which I had no problem upgrading to dual boot with Windows 10 Technical Preview.

Therefore, readers should be warned, if you have a Windows 7 (or possibly Windows 8+) system, it does not necessarily follow that it can be upgraded to Windows 10. Unless, of course, Microsoft takes note of the feedback and ensures that all Windows 7 Home Premium systems (or at least the 64-bit ones) can be upgraded.

Gareth Williams, via email

Why you shouldn't delete your downloads

I spotted a tip in Issue 363 (bit.ly/webuser363) suggesting that downloads should be deleted after a set period of time. I see it differently. On those rare occasions when you need to perform a System Restore on your PC, those old downloads of useful programs that worked without any problems will still be there waiting for you. It's also worth

creating a little readme.txt file in Notepad to remind yourself of all the PUPs (potentially unwanted programs) that you managed to avoid.

Bernard Feay, via email

Watch out for Apple ID email scam

I have had a number of emails ostensibly from the 'Apple/iCloud Help team' (signed Apple Support), telling me that under Know Your Customer legislation: "Apple Inc is required to perform a validation of your Apple ID. Failure to do so will result in deletion of your account".

Thereafter, the "review" asks for many personal details such as my credit card information, including the full number and the three-figure security number on the reverse of the card.

I have ignored the emails to date because I assume this is yet another scam, but it is presented in a very professional manner and some readers may well think it is genuine. However, Apple states in its support page 'Identifying a genuine email from the iTunes store' that it will "never ask you to provide personal information or sensitive

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

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account information (such as passwords or credit card numbers) via email".

Charles Kelso, via email

Take a holiday with Google Earth Pro

I thought that the now-free software Google Earth Pro wasn't available for Windows 8 and 8.1 users because it wouldn't download the first time I tried. However, after seeing it again in the latest issue of *Web User* and reading that it's available for Windows 8+, I gave it another go and, to my delight, it downloaded.

So thanks *Web User* for that. Using Google Earth Pro, I've just been on the beach at my favourite spot on the Costa del Sol, imagining the warmth, the glass of Shiraz and the tapas. I am trying hard(ish) to learn Spanish during these dark dismal days, but at least the snowdrops and daffs mean our good old English spring is on its way.

fossewayfella, Web User Forums

Create white lists to avoid false positives

I was interested to read your article about false positives in Issue 365, 'Stop your anti-virus blocking safe software', which contained some sound advice. However, there was one tip that you didn't include that I think is worth mentioning to your readers, which is to use a 'white list' to mark files as safe that are wrongly flagged as risky. Most security software includes a white-list feature you can use to do this, which will help you avoid false positives. If you use Malwarebytes Anti-Malware, for example, there's a Malware Exclusions option in Settings that lets you exclude specific files and folders from your future scans. I think it's definitely worth doing if a file keeps getting flagged as malware and you're sure it's completely safe.

Laura Shaw, via email

What you say...

SHOULD PEOPLE WHO SPREAD RACIAL HATRED BE BANNED FROM FACEBOOK AND TWITTER (bit.ly/race366)?

No, it's freedom of speech being removed yet again.

Peter Duffy

They should be fined and banned. They are committing an offence, so clamp down hard on these animals.

Jason 'Boz' Bowyer

No, it's best to leave them out in the open so we can get at these poisonous ticks. To ban them is to protect them.

Richard Morgan

Absolutely – they are causing offence to others.

David Locke

It's kind of pointless to ban them. They can simply register as a new user, use a proxy or use a virtual private network, etc. I wouldn't bother.

James McGinnis

So presumably those who preach racial hatred on the street will be banned from the streets, will they?

Ian Langford

HOW EXCITED ARE YOU ABOUT THE NEW VIEW-MASTER (www.view-master.co.uk)?

I loved my View-Master as a kid. Even though I'm a 'grown up', I'm tempted to buy this new one. It looks great.

David Pawley-Smith @david_p_s

It's a nice gimmick and looks pretty cool, but don't think I'll buy one. I want to upgrade other things first.

Ady Colclough @Adycolclough

I'm underwhelmed. I didn't have one as a kid. I had a kaleidoscope and a Post Office set.

MD @MartinD56

I have to say I'm impressed. I had an Android app for Google Cardboard called Orbulus (bit.ly/orb366) that was similar to this.

Matt McCallion

SHOULD REVENGE PORN BE A CRIMINAL OFFENCE?

Yes. The only answer is this: never allow anybody (regardless of how much you love them at the time) to take photos or videos of you in compromising situations. That way, you will have nothing to worry about if you split up.

Steve Hamilton

Absolutely. What gives someone the right to broadcast private moments out of spite?

Joanne Evans

Yeah, but why take photos and videos in the first place?

David Robinson

Yes. It's downright evil to post private moments. They should stay private.

Shawn Adams

Definitely. People who do it are just bitter and twisted.

Dale Taylor @SocialMediaDale

WOULD YOU PAY TO WATCH YOUTUBE WITHOUT ADVERTS (bit.ly/tube366)?

Using an ad blocker is cheaper. There are enough of them available.

Klaus Ko

No, you have to let someone make money from advertising, surely.

Richard Bond

Not really. The adverts are annoying, but it's not worth paying money to remove them.

Si Mellor

+ Air your views, write to us at webuser@dennis.co.uk

⚠️ Page 404

Barry Collins is fed up with eBay's lax attitude to non-payment for goods

eBay should shame time-wasting bidders

"**B**uyer beware" is a phrase often bandied about in the anodyne advice offered to eBay shoppers, but in my experience it's more often the sellers who get a raw deal from the site. Twice in the past month I've tried to sell an old PlayStation Portable (PSP) console on eBay, and twice the winning bidder has failed to cough up. What does eBay do to deter these time wasters? Diddly squat.

The site's regulations say buyers should settle a payment within 48 hours of winning an auction. Being the relaxed kind of fella that I am (ahem), I waited four days before sending my first reluctant buyer a polite reminder that he owed me £36.50 for my console. I received a reply that was as short on logic as it was punctuation: "Bidded in error please cancel bid thank you".

It really isn't possible to bid "in error" on eBay. You enter your bid, press a button and are then asked if you're really sure you want to do it. It's not like sneezing at Sotheby's and accidentally buying a Monet. And even if you did get a bit trigger happy, you can apply to retract the bid, which the King of Grammar most certainly did not.

Fuelled by righteous indignation, I went to leave my hit-and-run bidder some particularly snarky feedback to warn off fellow sellers, but it turned out I couldn't. The only options are to leave positive feedback or report the buyer, via what eBay calls

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an "unpaid item case". This basically gives the buyer another four days to pay up. If they don't, eBay "may" decide to refund the seller's fees and "may" record the unpaid item on the buyer's account.

Eventually, eBay closed the case, refunded my fees and told me an "unpaid item has been recorded on the buyer's account". Yet, when I looked at the user's profile some three weeks later, it displayed "100% positive feedback", with 110 positive reviews and not a single negative. To all appearances, the guy is Mother Teresa and Gandhi rolled into one.

I relisted the item, and this time it went for £47 - £11 more than the original winning bid. But it might as well have sold for £47,000, because it went to another non-payer with a perfect eBay history, who ignored all reminders to pay. So I'm left with an unsold PSP, another four days waiting for eBay to resolve the case, and an email from the site to "keep your account in good standing" and pay the fees I apparently owe them for an item that didn't sell.

Why is eBay portraying these phantom bidders as model buyers? Why isn't it doing more to keep them off its site? I don't know, because eBay declined to comment on this article. The only thing you can do is delve deep into the settings and refuse bids from anyone who has a history of non-payment. But since eBay doesn't make that information public, I've no idea if it works or not. In the meantime, if anyone wants a mint condition PSP with six games, get in touch: £40 ono. No time wasters.

Illustration: Andrew Torrens

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