



RECORD ALL WEB RADIO

Without losing any sound quality **p64**



- **Windows 10: July launch?**
- **Run software online**
- **Make your old PC virtual**
- **Swap Spotify for Tidal?**
- **Genius Netflix hacks**

WebUser

Issue 370

GREAT
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VALUE

6 - 19 May 2015

• Best software • New apps • Expert tips

Best new apps!

WATCH ANYTHING ON YOUR TABLET

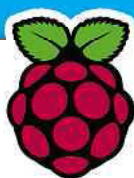
Best new tips!

▶ **Live sport**, new US TV,
YouTube, live webcams,
Sky without subscribing,
Vimeo, breaking news,
music videos, **Periscope**,
local BBC news, ITV,
Channel 4, **your DVDs**,
Meerkat, Amazon Video,
Virgin TV, new films,
free films, **classic films**,
your Blu-rays, Netflix exclusives – press play on **p36** ▶▶▶▶▶



BUILD A...

**Router-level
ad-blocker
using your Pi**



p58

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Tune in, turn on and enjoy

I'm not one of those people who grumble that there's never anything good on TV these days. Sure, we might not have series of the calibre of *I, Claudius*, *Fawlty Towers* and *On the Buses*, but among the soaps, reality shows and cooking programmes, you can still find the occasional gem. Besides, judging by the repeats of *Bullseye* and *Blankety Blank* on Challenge, mainstream telly has always been a bit rubbish. However, if you're lucky enough to have a tablet, then there's always something worth watching, from the best new US dramas to live webcams of otters enjoying their breakfast.

In this issue's cover feature (page 36), we round up our favourite new apps and websites for turning your tablet into a second TV screen. From classic films to online sitcoms, Chromecast games and music videos, there's fun for all the family!

And, if you're more sharp-eared than square-eyed, turn to page 44 to discover which music-streaming service we think offers the best variety and quality.

Robert Irvine
robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk
[#webuser](#)



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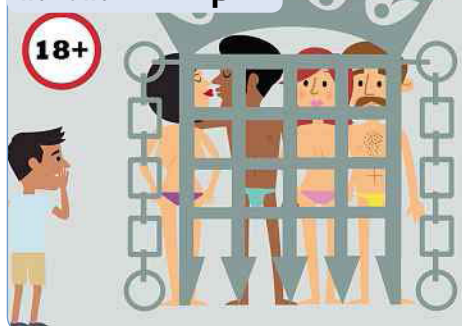
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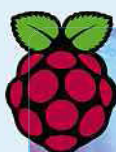
Practical WebUser

Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

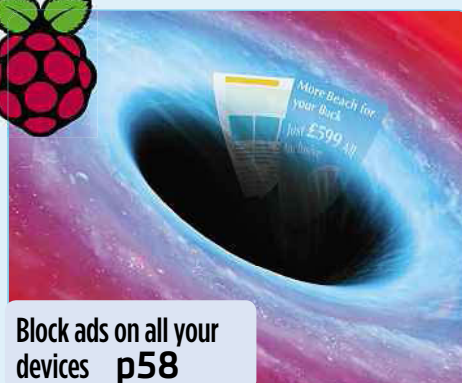
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What's New Online

Tour Abbey Road Studios online

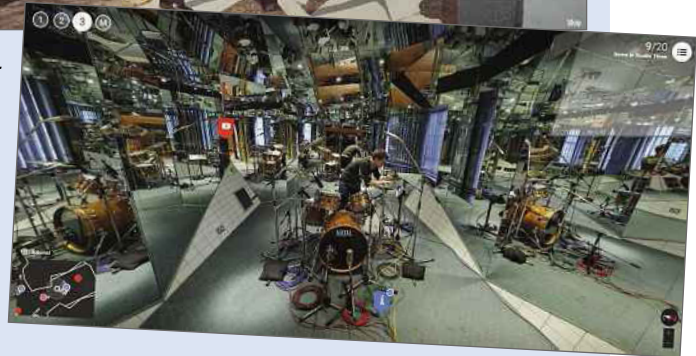
This interactive 360-degree look inside Abbey Road, jointly created by the studio and Google, is one of the best audio-visual tours the web has ever seen. You start on the most famous zebra crossing in the world (see main screengrab) in the company of the Beatles, then move inside to explore “every nook and cranny” of the three studios. Throughout the tour, you can watch videos of bands recording, listen to audio guides, read about Abbey Road’s history and play around with the equipment.

Start in Studio One, where the highlights include a 1931 video of Sir Edward Elgar conducting the London Symphony Orchestra through a performance of *Land of Hope and Glory* (the first ever recording made at Abbey Road). Move into Studio Two, and through 36 years of musical history, where you can experiment with the J37 4-track recorder that the



Beatles used to record *Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*. End your tour in Studio Three, home to the gleaming Mirror Room, where drummers can reflect on the racket they’re making (see screengrab right).

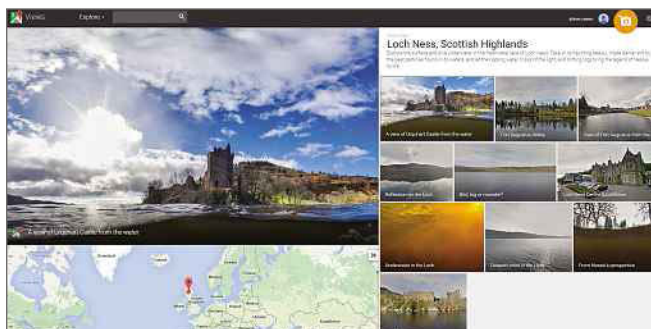
bit.ly/abbey370



Explore Loch Ness in Street View

bit.ly/ness370

If anyone can find proof of the Loch Ness Monster, it’s Google, yet there’s not a glimpse of the creature in these new images of Scotland’s most famous loch. However, you can see gorgeous views of Urquhart Castle and Fort Augustus Abbey from the water. Read Google’s Lat-Long blog for a brief history of Nessie (bit.ly/loch370), but be prepared for a torrent of drivel that’s pretentious even by Google’s standards. Nessie, they gush, “transcends the everyday and exists at the edges of possibility”. Better is Google’s Nessie Doodle, which suggests an extra-terrestrial explanation for sightings of the monster: bit.ly/doodle370.



Download free Hubble 25 ebook

bit.ly/hubble370

NASA has been celebrating 25 years of breathtaking imagery from the Hubble Space Telescope with a wealth of web activity. Your starting point should be the official Hubble 25 website (hubble25th.stsci.edu), where you’ll find loads of freebies to download in the Resources section (click the link above to go straight there). Our favourite is the 99-page ebook, which gathers 25 of the best photos taken, and explains their significance. It can be downloaded as an ePUB 3 file or as a PDF. There are also free PowerPoint presentations, which are much more interesting than any you’ve had to sit through at work.

Elsewhere on the site, you’ll find downloadable posters, interviews with Hubble scientists and instructions on how to make a spiral galaxy using cotton balls, scissors, glue and glitter. The official YouTube channel is worth visiting, too:

bit.ly/tube370.



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

Play Google's Pony Express game

bit.ly/pony370

You may have missed this game, one of the best Google Doodles of 2015 so far, because it wasn't shown on the site's UK page. It celebrates the 155th anniversary of the US Pony Express by challenging you to gallop across the country collecting letters. Look out for cacti, boulders and outlaws with lassos.



Watch classic BBC game shows on the iPlayer

bit.ly/game370

The grinning panel in this screen grab are, left to right, William Franklyn, Isobel Barnett, Nanette Newman and, of course, the great Kenneth Williams. They appear in a 1974 episode of *What's My Line?*, which is part of a new collection of classic game shows now available on the iPlayer. You can also watch *Big Break*, *Ask the Family* and *Call My Bluff*, as well as one of the Beeb's earliest game shows, *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral?*, from 1954.



Travel to the edge of the Solar System



bit.ly/space370

In this fantastic interactive cosmic journey, made by the BBC Future website (www.bbc.com/future), you scroll out of the Earth's atmosphere, past the International Space Station and satellites, then beyond comets and planets until you reach the end of the Solar System. At that point you'll see how many years of web scrolling it would take you to get to the "farthest regions of the observable universe". *Star Trek* fans should keep an eye on the bottom-right of the screen.

Use *Star Wars* emoji on Twitter

bit.ly/starwars370

Twitter has created three *Star Wars* emoji, including the new robot BB-8, which makes its debut in the forthcoming film *The Force Awakens*. Add it to your tweet by typing #bb8. You can also add C-3PO (#c3po) and a Stormtrooper (#stormtrooper). Twitter says more *Star Wars* emoji will come ahead of the film's release in December.



5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

[@BBCMIDigital](https://twitter.com/BBCMIDigital)

Updates from the BBC's Make It Digital campaign, encouraging children to learn coding skills

[@railwaymuseum](https://twitter.com/railwaymuseum)

Photos and news from York's National Railway Museum

[@Strange_Animals](https://twitter.com/Strange_Animals)

Bizarre and wonderful photos of animals, including grumpy-looking frogs and extremely hairy donkeys

[@Reddit_Tech_New](https://twitter.com/Reddit_Tech_New)

Dozens of technology stories every day from Reddit submissions

[@afneil](https://twitter.com/afneil)

Expert insights into politics and interview clips from the presenter and journalist Andrew Neil

+ Make iOS WhatsApp calls

bit.ly/whats370

iOS users can now make free voice calls on WhatsApp, following the feature's launch on Android in March. It's available in Version 2.12.1 of the iOS app, released in April.

Get daily Twitter summaries

bit.ly/twitter370

Twitter has launched Highlights, a twice-daily phone update (Android only, for now) showing a summary of tweets and topics "based on accounts and conversations that are popular among people you follow". Click the link above to read more.

Send Google directions to your phone

bit.ly/send370

You can now send directions from Google Maps to your Android phone, if you're signed into your Google account. Type 'send directions' into Google, then type your destination and press 'Send directions to my phone'.



Need to Know

Ad blocking declared legal by German court

What happened?

A German court has ruled that the popular ad-blocking tool Adblock Plus is legal to use, following a complaint from a group of publishers who want the add-on banned.

Adblock Plus does just what it says on the tin: when you install the extension in your browser, it blocks all ads from displaying on web pages and in online videos. The German publishers wanted to ban the tool from blocking ads on their websites, which are – like many other sites – partly funded by advertising. After a four-month trial, the court disagreed and said the software was indeed perfectly legal.

In a blog post about the court case, Ben Williams from Adblock Plus said it was an “obvious consumer right” to be able to control your own screen and protect your privacy from advertising platforms (bit.ly/adblock370). He also called on companies to respond to the ruling by developing “new forms of non-intrusive ads that are actually useful and welcomed by users”.

The legal dispute follows revelations that Adblock Plus allows some adverts to be shown if they meet certain standards. The “acceptable ads” program means you’ll still see some adverts if you have Adblock Plus installed, if they’ve been approved by the software maker. However, reports revealed that Adblock Plus was charging some companies, including Google and Microsoft, to be included in the list, which effectively means they have to pay for their adverts to be shown. Adblock’s parent firm Eyeo has since said that it only makes the largest, wealthiest firms pay to support the system, and doesn’t charge smaller



ad-blocking tools, it may spur publishers to use less intrusive advertising – indeed, that’s what Adblock Plus is trying to encourage with its “acceptable ads” program. Whether that will be enough to get web users to turn off the add-on remains to be seen.

Still, if you’ve ever worried that using an ad blocker is tantamount to ‘stealing’ web content, because you’re getting it for free while depriving sites of ad revenue, you can now use Adblock Plus without impunity because the German court says it’s

perfectly legal.

sites; either way, all ‘whitelisted’ ads must meet the “acceptable ads” criteria – a company can’t simply buy its way in.

If you’re a fan of Adblock Plus, or you like the sound of it, the good news is that you’ll soon be able to install it on your iPhone or iPad, as well as in your Desktop browser. The company is currently working to extend its software to Apple devices, but rather than make an add-on to install in Safari or another mobile browser, it will be launching its own browser that includes the blocking system. There’s already an Adblock Plus app for Android, but Google has banned it from the Play store.

How will it affect you?

The German court ruling sets a precedent that will make it more difficult for publishers to fight against Adblock Plus, and the company hopes it may dissuade advertisers from taking legal action. However, it still faces other legal challenges in Germany.

As more and more people use

What do we think?

We support the German court’s decision: why should publishers dictate what we see on our computers and mobile devices? Ad blockers are popular because ads have become increasingly intrusive, obstructing content on pages and unexpectedly playing loud music or videos. Of course, publishers need a way to make money online, but driving us to distraction with slow-loading pages and adverts that are difficult to close isn’t going to win them any fans.

Also, as web usage shifts to mobile devices, so too does advertising – how many times have you been unable to view a page because an ad is filling your screen? With Adblock Plus set to launch on the iPhone, here’s hoping that companies respond by making their ads less intrusive and annoying.

See our Weekend Project on page 58 to find out how to block ads using a Raspberry Pi.

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

Carphone Warehouse launches 4G network

What happened?

Carphone Warehouse has unveiled a new mobile network that it claims offers the lowest priced 4G for the "data-driven generation". Called iD, it will be available later this month. It is a

virtual network, which means Carphone Warehouse doesn't actually own the infrastructure, it merely sells access to Three's existing network.

There will be more 12-month iD contracts than 24-month options, so you're not tied to the same phone for longer than you want. Carphone Warehouse also wants to prevent "bill shock" by capping your bills so you don't get nasty surprises from out-of-contract charges and it's tackling overseas data-roaming charges by offering free web access in 22 countries, including Australia and the US.

Carphone's iD comes as Google is making a push into mobile with its own virtual network, called Project Fi. However, it's currently only available in the US and limited to Nexus 6 owners.

How will it affect you?

If you're looking for a new mobile operator, make sure you shop around to find the deal that best suits



your needs. The increasing number of options in the market means you'll not only have better prices to choose from, but other benefits, too. For example, if you frequently travel to Europe, free roaming will be a real money saver.

What do we think?

The UK mobile market has been consolidating, with T-Mobile and Orange combining to make EE, and Three buying O2. That can often lead to prices climbing as competition disappears. However, an increase in the number of virtual networks in the UK seems to be countering that risk. Although iD runs on the network owned by Three, which is already one of the most competitively priced operators, it's managing to offer more free roaming while undercutting Three's prices. That's great news for consumers, and if a major player like Google comes to the UK, the advantages may be even bigger.



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Chrome support for XP extended



What happened?

Google has extended Chrome support for users of Windows XP, the 14-year old operating system for which Microsoft stopped issuing security updates a year ago. Support for XP was due to end in April, but Google had decided to continue offering it because millions of people still use the browser on the old OS. Chrome on XP will now be supported until the end of 2015.

How will it affect you?

If you're still on Windows XP, you should upgrade to a newer OS as soon as you can; but if there's a reason why you can't – maybe so you can continue using old programs or for financial

reasons – it's best to use an updated browser such as Chrome, rather than Internet Explorer. Combined with up-to-date anti-virus, this will protect you against some of the attacks that may be targeted at your PC.

What do we think?

Well done to Google for attempting to protect its users. Hackers often use browsers to infiltrate outdated systems, so continued support for Chrome is good news for XP users. We understand why Microsoft decided to stop updating XP, but it's a shame this left its users vulnerable to attack.

Bing ads 'promote downloads containing adware'

What happened?

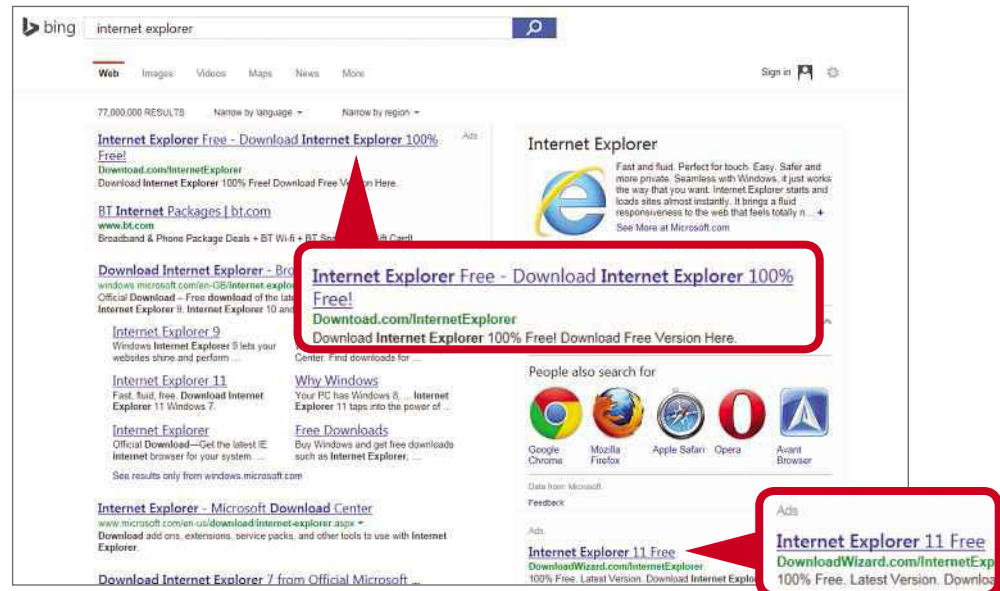
Our sister website Expert Reviews (www.expertreviews.co.uk) discovered that Microsoft's Bing search engine is displaying prominent links to versions of free software, such as its own Internet Explorer, that are loaded with 'crapware'.

The offending download sites get into search results by buying advertising based on relevant keywords. Because Bing displays advertising at the top of its results, these dodgy links appear higher than the program's official page, which could trick users into visiting the wrong site. Once you're on one of these sites, you're prompted to download a custom installer, which bundles legitimate software with additional 'offers', including adware, browser hijackers and other pests, some of which pose a real threat to your PC.

During testing, Expert Review found that one 'harmless' download opened a website with a pop-up warning that the computer had a virus. When the number on the site was called, the test PC was remote-controlled by scammers who demanded £89 to 'clean' it.

How will it affect you?

Extras bundled with installers may not always count as malware, but they can wreak havoc on your PC by changing your browser settings and adding resource-hungry software to



your system. In the worst cases, they can direct you to a site that's infected with malware.

As we explained in last issue's cover feature, 'Download free software with no catches', many download sites now bundle junk with software, so you need to be vigilant when installing programs and always untick preselected offers. Where possible, only download a program from the developer's website or use Ninite (ninite.com) to get clean, junk-free versions of popular tools.



What do we think?

We're disappointed that a company as powerful as Microsoft is allowing these ads to appear in one of its most popular services, with no regard for protecting its users. We firmly believe that search engines should clamp down on this kind of behaviour, block all adverts for

sites that deceive you into installing something you don't want and refuse to rank them in their regular search results. Otherwise, we'll reach a point where it's no longer safe to search for software online.



FIRST LOOK

Apple Watch

www.apple.com/uk/watch

Ahead of its public release on 24 April, we popped into Apple's Regent Street store to test the Apple Watch for ourselves. As you'd expect from an Apple product, its build quality is very impressive. There are three different versions of the device (Watch, Watch Sport and Watch Edition) and, depending on the model you choose, it'll cost you from £299 to £13,500.

Aside from the materials used, the watches are fundamentally similar and include the same features. The device resembles a regular wrist watch and its Digital Crown works both as a scroll wheel, to help you navigate its apps, and as a Back button. There's also a button immediately below this



that gives you direct access to the Friends app. Since the watch's screen is so small, these buttons provide much more control over the device than if it was operated by touchscreen alone. We particularly liked the Force Touch

feature, which lets you perform different actions depending on how hard you've pressed the screen.

There are smartwatch versions of many of your favourite apps, so you can check your emails and calendar, and send messages straight from your wrist. Once the Apple Watch is connected to your phone, you also have direct access to Siri. Other novel features include the shared doodle-pad Sketch; and Tap, which lets you enter a combination of taps that a recipient will feel on their wrist.

There's so much else we'd love to write about the Apple Watch that can't be squeezed into this brief First Look review. We much prefer it to the other smartwatches that have been released so far and believe it's destined to lead the way for other wearable devices.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Will Windows 10 be released in July?

Back in March, Microsoft confirmed in a blog post that Windows 10 will be "launching this summer" (bit.ly/microsoftblog370), which was welcome news, but frustratingly vague. Thanks, however, to a slip-up made by the president and CEO of processor manufacturer AMD, Lisa Su, it now seems very likely that the new operating system will be released in late July. When answering a question concerning AMD's inventory plans, Su said: "with the Windows 10 launch at the end of July, we are watching the sort of impact of that on the back-to-school season, and expect that it might have a bit of a delay to the normal back-to-school season inventory build-up".

The accidental revelation was immediately seized upon by tech websites as proof that the PC industry already knows the launch date of the new operating system, even though it hasn't yet been confirmed by Microsoft itself (at least at the time of going to press).

By our calculation, the late-July delivery will give Windows 10 the birth sign of Leo, so "blessed with many



talents, and a destiny for greatness", according to Astrology Weekly (bit.ly/leo370).

Microsoft has also released a new Technical Preview, build 10061, which includes a number of new fixes and features. You can now resize the Start menu and change its colour and transparency, and there are new Mail and Calendar apps.

LIKELIHOOD RATING



If Lisa Su is correct, and not just making mischief with the media, it's likely that Windows 10 will launch in July, giving us something to look forward to this summer aside from warmer weather and holidays.



WEBOMETER



WE LIKE...



Wimbledon bans 'selfie sticks'

The All England Lawn Tennis Club has banned 'selfie sticks', which are used to capture self-portrait photos, from this year's Wimbledon championships, because of their "nuisance value".



Three upgrades its 4G network

Three is to fix black spots in its 4G network coverage by switching on a new 800MHz spectrum. Dubbed VoLTE, the low-frequency spectrum will also improve the quality of voice calls.



WE DON'T LIKE...



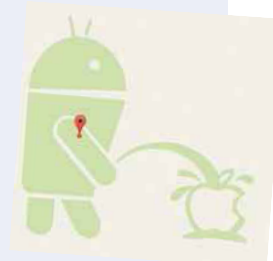
No more Nexus 7 tablets to be made

Google has stopped selling its popular Nexus 7 tablet, with the Play store saying the device is "no longer available for purchase". You may still be able to buy the tablet from other retailers.



Google censors Android Maps prank

Google was forced to apologise for and remove an image of the Android mascot urinating on the Apple logo, which briefly appeared in Google Maps near the city of Rawalpindi in Pakistan.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

FinShield

bit.ly/finshield370 | From £9

If you've ever cut yourself while chopping vegetables, you'll appreciate the idea behind FinShield. This stainless-steel protector slips onto your finger using an adjustable ring, to safeguard your hand against cuts, slices and digital dismemberment. Finshield is available individually and in packs of four and eight, so you can keep the whole family protected. Funding closes on 23 May and the project has already exceeded its £2,000 target, so get your order in soon!



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Costa Coffee Club warns of possible breach



Costa warned members of its Coffee Club loyalty scheme that it had identified unusual activity in a small percentage of accounts.

The company prevented its members from accessing Coffee Club online while it conducted a full security review, and also announced that it would be resetting all users' passwords. It's not clear how the site was compromised, but security firm Sophos recommends taking special care to use secure passwords.

bit.ly/costa370

Dropbox flaw remains unpatched

A privacy hole affecting Dropbox, which was first disclosed to the file-hosting service in November 2013, remains unpatched according to security expert Graham Cluley.

Discovered by rival cloud service IntraLinks, the vulnerability allows links to private files, including tax returns and mortgage applications, to appear in Google AdWords and other analytics reports. Cluley warns that if you use

Dropbox to store private files, the only way to ensure they're completely safe is to upgrade to the service's paid-for business version.

bit.ly/dropbox370



PATCH TUESDAY: April

Unfortunately, we were unable to cover April's Patch Tuesday in Issue 369 (bit.ly/webuser369), because the details had not yet been released when we went to press. On 14 April, Microsoft issued 11 security bulletins, four with the maximum severity of Critical, which patched vulnerabilities that could lead to remote code-execution attacks.

Two of these bulletins affected Windows, while the remaining two affected Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer. The other seven bulletins had a severity rating of Important and addressed a variety of flaws relating to

elevation of privilege, bypass of security features, information disclosure and denial of service. Affected software for these updates included Windows, Microsoft Server and the Microsoft.NET framework.

Unexpectedly, on April 21, Microsoft released a further 34 patches. All are optional and none have the highest severity rating, so it's not clear why they were released outside the usual Patch Tuesday schedule. Most relate to Windows 8.1, Windows RT 8.1 and Windows Server 2012 R2, but some of the patches also affect Windows 7.

bit.ly/patchtuesday370

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Catalin Cosoi, Chief Security Strategist at Bitdefender (www.bitdefender.co.uk)



Q Is Google's new voice-unlocking feature safe?

Aidan Fox, Facebook

A Using a voice command to unlock your phone seems just as prone to error as the face-unlocking feature Android introduced a while ago. Even Google

said that: "although Face Unlock is not very secure, it can be convenient and fun to use". Voice-unlocking isn't safe because someone can simply record your voice and replay it to get full access to your device within minutes.

Despite improvements in biometric authentication, using a strong PIN, password or pattern is the strongest security measure available.

Q Why are VPNs not included in security suites?

Jon Sinclair, Facebook

A Bitdefender added VPN technology to Bitdefender SafePay

and Bitdefender BOX as an additional privacy service. SafePay is a secure browser that shields networks from unauthorised access and ensures data safely reaches its destination. Its main goal is to keep secure Wi-Fi connections, online banking and e-shopping transactions.

Bitdefender BOX uses VPN technology to create a private line that secures designated devices even when they're outside your home network.

Q How long before malware starts infecting wearable devices?

Callum Riley, Twitter

A As Android and iOS create more wearable tech, malware is becoming increasingly common. Currently, the security risks aren't very different from those associated with smartphones and data connectivity.

The biggest threats to user security are transmission risks, such as traffic sniffing and man-in-the-middle attacks, and risks associated with smartphones such as data theft and mobile malware. However, as the Internet of Things evolves, we can definitely expect more advanced threats.

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★ Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

SPACE

NASA

www.nasa.gov

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has long struggled to make its sprawling website easy to navigate, so this relaunch is very welcome. The content is now organised into logical categories such as Missions, Galleries and NASA TV, so you can quickly jump to the stuff you're interested in, and pages have been stripped of excess clutter and irrelevant links. This more focused approach gives the site a modern feel that's complemented by videos, links to NASA's social accounts and dedicated sections for the Journey to Mars mission and International Space Station. It's a stellar improvement!

Our rating



RELAUNCH



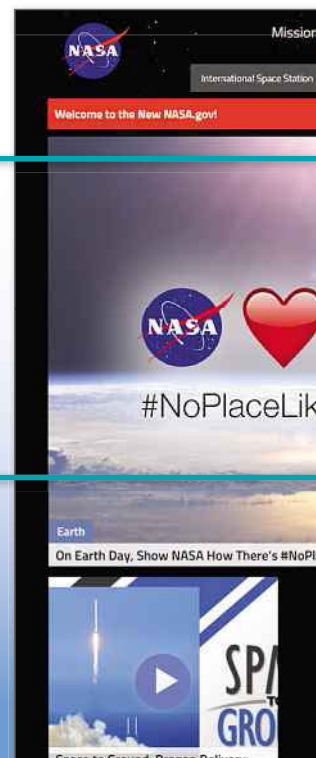
GALLERIES

Explore stunning photos of space, including NASA's image of the day



NASA TV

Stream live programmes, launches and footage from the ISS



SHOPPING

Iceland

www.iceland.co.uk

Previously as cheap and cheerful as its TV ads, Iceland's website has evolved into something much classier. It's ditched the tacky orange colour scheme in favour of subtle red and grey, and tempts you with tasty photos and special offers. Improved navigation and a more prominent search facility make it easier to find what you want, and there's clearer product information, including ingredients, cooking instructions and customer reviews. We're also pleased that the site now makes it clearer that you need to spend £35 to get free delivery. Don't worry, though, the FoodTV section features video recipes starring Peter Andre, so it's not strayed too far from its roots!

Our rating



RELAUNCH



LIFESTYLE

Hello Party

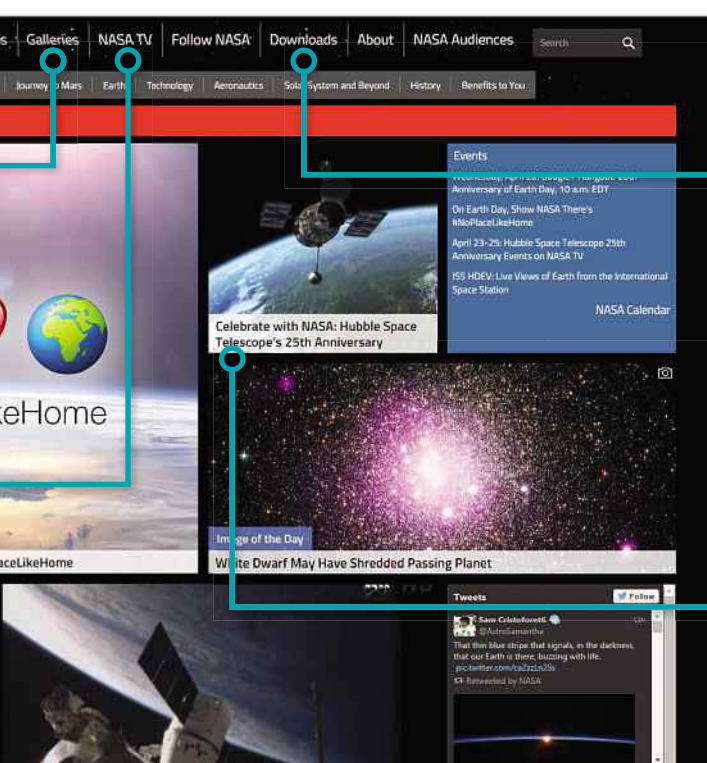
www.helloparty.com

If you want to do more for someone special than just buy them a personalised birthday card, this site lets you design posters, banners and bunting to put "the art into your party". Choose from a wide range of fun, attractive templates for every occasion; customise the design with the person's name and photo (from your PC or social accounts); and select a material, size and quantity. Hello Party's helpful and thorough tutorial video makes the ordering process very straightforward, with high-quality products, as well as a bespoke service that does everything for you.

Our rating



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



Podcasts

NASACast

Want to get every NASA podcast and vodcast? Subscribe to our NASACast audio and video feeds for the latest mission news, features and the This Week @NASA report.

NASACast Video RSS
NASACast Audio RSS

DOWNLOADS

Grab free space-themed ebooks, ringtones, apps, podcasts and more

TOPICS

Discover NASA's latest findings from the Solar System and beyond



RELAUNCH

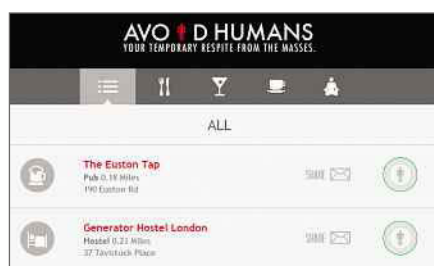
DRINK

Coca-Cola Journey

www.coca-cola.co.uk

Coca-Cola has transformed its website from a corporate hub into a digital magazine to make it more engaging. Scroll down the long homepage to browse news stories, interviews and videos; check out staff picks and popular items; and ask Coke questions of your own. Some of the content remains business-oriented, but there's also some quirky and interesting stuff, including vintage Coca-Cola adverts and a history of its bottles. The smart design and informative articles make it fun to browse, and you can get involved by taking part in the site's Kiss Happiness campaign.

Our rating



NEW

SOCIAL

Avoid Humans

avoidhumans.com

If you agree with Jean-Paul Sartre that "Hell is other people", you'll love this site, which helps you find a place to eat, drink or relax away from the crowds. Avoid Humans automatically detects where you are and lists pubs, restaurants, coffee shops and other public locations at which no one has recently 'checked in' using Foursquare or Instagram. A green circle next to an entry means 'welcome agoraphobics', while red means 'run!'. It's a great idea, but we're not convinced by its accuracy, particularly since our results showed Piccadilly Circus as a being refuge from the crowds.

Our rating



NEW

MONEY

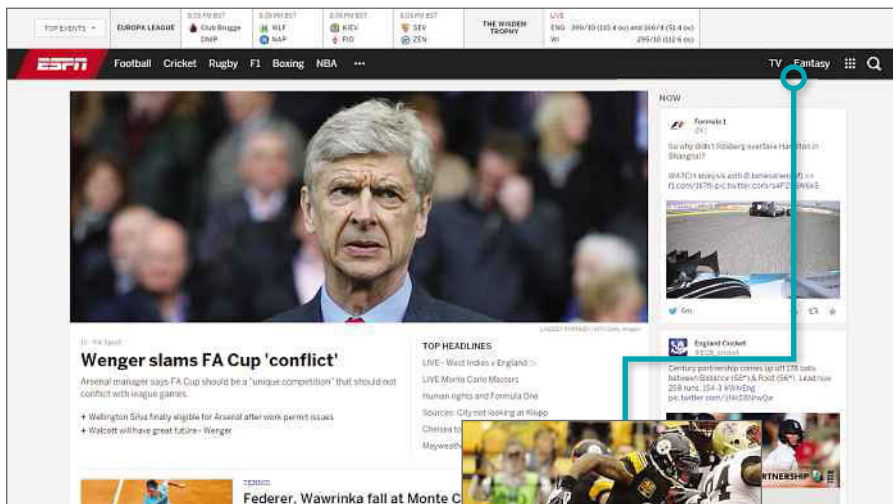
Affio

www.affio.co.uk

Making a will through a solicitor can cost £150 or more, but this service cuts the total price to £60 and lets you do everything online. Sign up for free, create a profile and tell Affio about your friends and family, assets and posthumous wishes. Don't worry that this could be an invitation to burglars; the process is secured via Norton and you only enter as much information as you want. Affio is friendly and simple to use, and you're not required to pay anything until you've downloaded your documents, with the option to change your details at any time.

Our rating





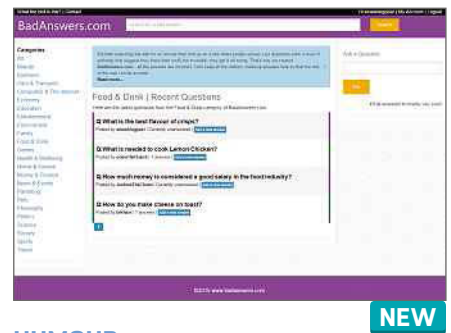
SPORT

ESPN

www.espn.co.uk

The redesigned ESPN adopts a less-is-more approach with a streamlined, mobile-friendly layout. This won't be to everyone's taste, because it looks more like a blog with a tacked-on Twitter feed than a mega-hub for sport, and finding specific content now takes longer. We like the panel at the top of each page that lets you switch between results for football, tennis, F1 and more, but it's a shame this leaves other sports relegated to an unlabelled drop-down menu. Meanwhile, the free Video section has vanished, while the paid-for ESPN Player is now listed twice, and we doubt many UK visitors want to play Fantasy American Football or Baseball. True, the new site is quicker to load, but its speed comes at the expense of substance.

Our rating



HUMOUR

Bad Answers

badanswers.com

Bad Answers differs from other Q&A communities, such as Quora and Yahoo Answers, because it deliberately provides incorrect but amusing information. For example, when one user asked "How much money is too much money?", the reply was: "Send me what you think is too much and I'll let you know if I consider it too much". The site is intended to be fun, but also aims to "cleanse other sites of the rubbish people spout on there". You need to register to ask or answer a question, but this doesn't take long and you can win Amazon vouchers for providing particularly bad answers.

Our rating



+ ALSO NEW

ACTIVITIES

Northumberland National Park

www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk
★★★★★

This marvellous site promoting the delights of Northumberland National Park provides all the maps and info you need. Discover things to do, such as the Hethpool Wild Goat Walk; places to go, including Sycamore Gap on Hadrian's Wall; and where to stay, from castles to campsites.

NEWS

BBC Newsbeat

www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat
★★★★★

The BBC has relaunched its news site for 16- to 24-year-olds with an image-led design that's unashamedly targeted at mobile devices. As well as a greater focus on entertainment news, there's a lot more video content, including short documentaries, and every story has options to share it on seven social sites.

DATING

Whovian Companions

www.whoviancompanions.co.uk
★★★★★

Doctor Who fans seeking their perfect companion can join this site to find someone to share time and space. It's really just a standard dating service with a Who theme, but there are a few fun touches and it's free. It claims there are more than four-million single Whovians in the UK, of whom 49 had signed up when we visited!

SHOPPING

Not Impossible

not.impossible.com
★★★★★

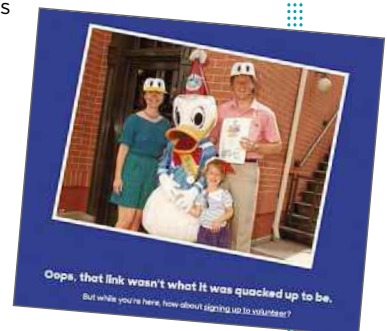
This spin-off site from the altruistic social network Impossible (impossible.com) sells a small selection of products that have "amazing stories behind them". This means that they were made using sustainable materials such as organic cotton, wild rubber and bread, and you can read and watch their stories on the product pages.



WEBSITE SECRETS

Discover what Hillary's hiding

Proving that she has a sense of fun (or at least her web developers do), Hillary Clinton's new website (www.hillaryclinton.com) has two groovy Easter Eggs. Right-click any page and choose 'View page source' to see the Presidential candidate's campaign logo (which blends an 'H' with an arrow) rendered in ASCII art. Even better is the site's 404 page, which shows an old photo of the Clinton family at Disneyland, complete with Donald Duck caps and the quackster himself. Hillary-ious! ■



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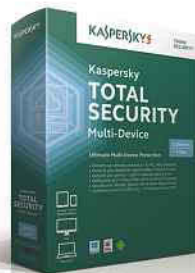
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www.GoodAnswers.co.uk

01487 710030

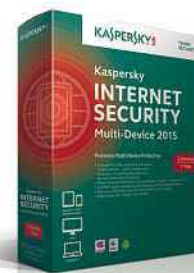


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Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Create customised pop-up messages

It's not easy to get visitors to your site to sign up for a newsletter or take part in a survey, but a new tool from AddThis (www.addthis.com) called Custom Messages will help. It lets you design a pop-up with any message you like, or you can use the available templates to perform actions such as sending visitors to a particular page or asking if they'd like to sign up for a newsletter.



The really clever bit is that you can create filters so that only a specific group of visitors gets to see the pop-up. For example, you could only show it to returning

visitors, who might be more inclined to sign up than a first-time browser.

Check your site stays online

Site Monitoring (sitemonitoring.sourceforge.net) is a simple but powerful free monitoring program that checks whether your websites stay online. The software is programmed in Java so needs the tool installed on your PC, and is a bit more complicated than usual to set up, though there's a video on its website that can help. There are lots of optional tools you can configure, such as how often the software checks up on your site.

Deal of the Fortnight

Fasthosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk) is offering three months of hosting for £1.19 per month, including a free '.co.uk' domain.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:

Alex Mace, Applications Development Manager, names.co.uk (names.co.uk)



Q Should I focus on using CSS or JavaScript to create elements such as animated drop-down menus?

Mark Bridge, via email

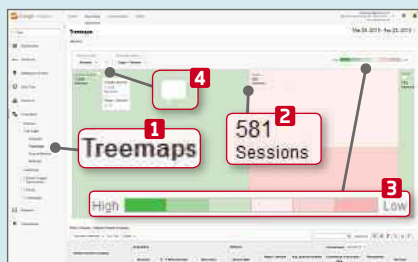
A You should focus on CSS. The same effects can be achieved with either tool, but you need to consider the range of devices your site will run on: while browsers on PCs have more than enough power for JavaScript, the same cannot be said for mobile browsers, such as those on phones or tablets. An increasing amount of web browsing is being carried out on mobile devices and, because CSS is less processor (and therefore battery) intensive, it's a better option to use.



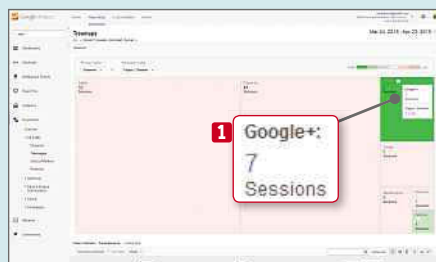
MINI WORKSHOP | Use Google Analytics Treemaps to better visualise your site's statistics

Google Analytics: www.google.com/analytics |  5 mins | Any browser

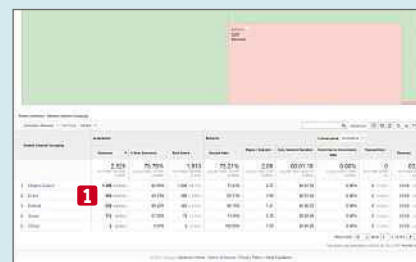
It can be difficult to work out the exact meaning of Google Analytics data, but the service's new Treemaps provides a clearer insight into your site's statistics



1 Go to the Acquisition tab, then All Traffic, then Treemaps **1** to show two sets of data. The size of each box **2** represents the primary metric (in this case, the number of visitors) while the colour key **3** shows the secondary metric (here, it's how many pages each visitor read). Click the speech bubble for the actual numbers. **4**



2 Click a block to delve deeper into its numbers. Here, we've clicked the Social sessions from the previous step, which shows how visits are broken down between different social-network services. In our case, we only had a few visitors from Google+ **1** but the colour tells us they were highly engaged, visiting a lot of pages.



3 Use the drop-down menus at the top to choose different metrics to explore. Some of them are only useful if you've set up goal and value information in Analytics. If you want to see all the figures at once, scroll down to view the table, below. **1**

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Product Test

We test and compare the latest products

Netgear D6400

Andy Shaw tests Netgear's versatile broadband modem-cum-router, which will help you share any broadband service over a super-fast network



If you want to take advantage of the latest broadband deals as soon as they become available, you need to be able to switch providers easily. Most ISPs supply you with a free router that has all the necessary connections for their particular type of service (ADSL, fibre or cable), but it's often a low-performance sub-standard device. Using a high-spec router of your own can make a huge difference, but it's likely to only work with one type of service, which means you may not be able to switch to the fastest and best deals available.

The Netgear D6400 aims to change this, and is the first modem/router we've seen that will happily work with most services from the vast majority of broadband suppliers.

Connections

At a basic level, the D6400 includes a standard broadband modem, so it operates seamlessly with any ADSL or VDSL (fibre) service that lets you use non-ISP devices. It also works with cable and Ethernet-based broadband connections, with a spare WAN port for plugging in that type of cable. This means you'll be able to use the router even if you switch from one type of service to another at some point in the future. And if you end up with an ISP that won't provide you with set-up

details, so you can't use a router of your own, you'll still be able to connect the D6400 to another modem or router via Ethernet or HomePlug, and use it as an access point.

There's no point having all these connections if the router doesn't create a fast network. The D6400 has top-speed Gigabit Ethernet ports and supports 802.11ac Wi-Fi. However it isn't the fastest Wi-Fi router on the block – for that you'd need a 802.11ac 1900 model or faster, whereas this device only uses 802.11ac 1600. The difference lies in the number and speed

of unique networks the router can spread your network traffic across. As long as you don't have too many 802.11ac Wi-Fi devices vying for bandwidth at the same time, the D6400's speeds should be sufficient.

It also uses Beamforming technology, which detects where your devices are and concentrates its signal strength in the appropriate direction.

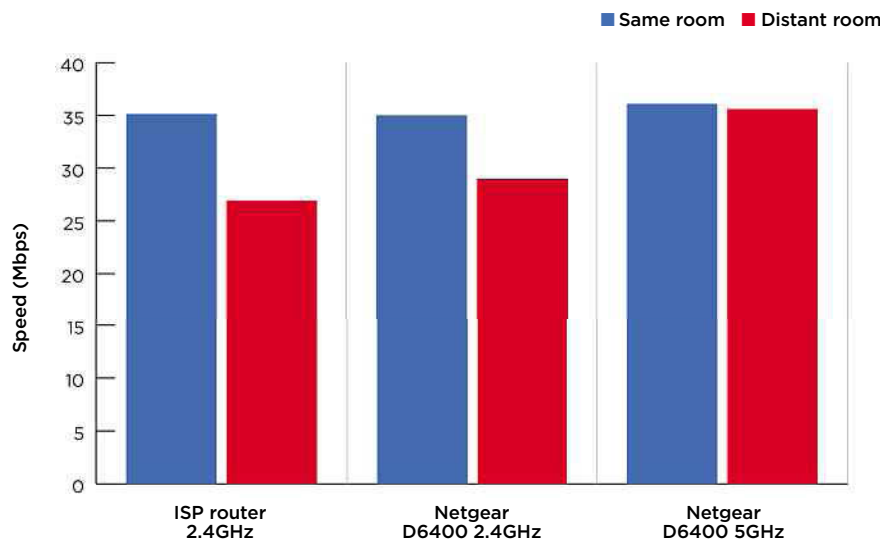
Speed and performance

We compared our existing 2.4GHz ISP router with both the 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands of the D6400, installing it in the same location and running the tests consecutively. We used Ookla's broadband speed test on an 802.11ac-compatible iPad Air 2 to measure the results, so we

“ The Netgear D6400 is the first router we've seen that will work with most services from the majority of broadband suppliers ”

Netgear D6400 Product Test

Broadband speed comparison



had an idea of what streaming from a fibre-broadband internet connection might be like when passed through the Wi-Fi of the two devices. We also ran the tests in two locations, first in the same room as the router, then in a distant room across the other side of the house and up a flight of stairs.

In the same room, the results stayed relatively constant. The original ISP router managed a download speed of 35.13Mbps. Switching to the Netgear router, we got 35Mbps on the 2.4GHz network and a marginal improvement of 36.1Mbps on the 5GHz network. We'd expect to see more of an improvement on the 5GHz network when sending standard network traffic (such as streaming files across the network, rather than from the internet), but it

didn't make a great deal of difference to our broadband speed at such a short range.

Moving the router to a distant room caused the ISP-supplied router's download speed to drop to 26.91Mbps. That's still not bad, but it represents an overall speed reduction of 25 per cent. The 2.4GHz network on the Netgear router was slightly faster, and only dropped to 28.99Mbps.

However, it was on the 5GHz network that the D6400 was most impressive. We measured download speeds of 35.6Mbps in the distant room, which means the signal only dropped by less than 2 per cent when compared to the speeds measured in the same room. This is a brilliant performance, although you will only see the benefit on devices that are compatible with 802.11ac.

Extra features

While the D6400's speed results are impressive, there are plenty of other things about the device that make it much more attractive than the free router supplied by your ISP.

The router has a mobile app that provides access to a range of standard tools which can be used to configure the router, from providing separate guest access (to protect your privacy on your network) and parental controls, through to rebooting the device. For more sophisticated control, you can connect to the device's own web-based interface. This is multi-layered, so you can stick to accessing the basics, such as configuring the Wi-Fi settings, or drill down into more advanced settings that let you tweak every aspect of your device.

OUR VERDICT

The only thing this device lacks is the very latest, fastest Wi-Fi speeds available. However, unless most of your devices already have 802.11ac adapters, the reduced breadth of bandwidth this router provides is unlikely to

cause a bottleneck.

In every other respect, this is an impressive device. It works with most UK broadband connections and, on the few it doesn't, it can be used as an access point. The router is simple to set up and is likely to

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

work with any broadband service you choose to switch to in the future.

PRODUCT INFO

Netgear D6400

www.netgear.co.uk

Price: £149.99

(Buy from

www.cclonline.com)

SPECIFICATIONS

- 802.11a/b/g/n/ac Wi-Fi (AC1600 – 300Mbps + 1,300Mbps)
- Simultaneous 2.4GHz and 5GHz
- VDSL2/ADSL2+ modem
- 5 x Ethernet ports (1 x WAN and 4 x LAN)
- 1 x VDSL/ADSL port
- 2 x USB 2 ports
- Beamforming+
- WPS
- 128MB flash memory and 128MB RAM
- Advanced Quality of Service (QoS)
- Supports IPv6
- WPA/WPA2—PSK security
- SPI and NAT firewall
- Denial-of-service (DoS) attack prevention
- 199 x 191 x 65 mm
- 422 g

FOR

- ✓ Connects easily to most broadband services of all types
- ✓ Fast 802.11ac networking
- ✓ Gigabit Ethernet for fast wired networking

AGAINST

- ✗ Less adaptable routers available for less
- ✗ There are even faster Wi-Fi routers around

FASTER WI-FI

Asus DSL-AC68U, £160
bit.ly/asus370



BUDGET BUY

TP-Link TD-W8980, £55
bit.ly/tplink370



Huawei P8

Has Huawei got an Android phone to rival Apple, HTC and Samsung? **Jonathan Bray** tests the new P8

Last year, the Huawei Ascend P7 smartphone impressed us with its slimline good looks and top-quality camera, but its sluggish performance let it down. This year, the company is aiming to improve on that with its latest flagship device, the Huawei P8.

The P8 is super-slim, measuring a mere 6.4mm. It weighs only 144g and looks great. The curved edges contrast pleasingly with the flat front and matte rear, and the bevelled edges give it an expensive look that defies its

price. Although there's no removable battery, the P8 has a microSD slot for storage expansion, and is water- and dust-resistant.

Camera and battery performance

The 13-megapixel camera is quick to launch and take pictures, and the focus is fast and sharp. Best of all, the image quality is fantastic, particularly in low light. In good light we were impressed with the camera's ability to retain detail in bright skies without losing detail in shadowy areas. Video looks just as good - crisp and rock-steady in all but the most extreme situations. Our only gripe is that, in some conditions, pictures can look slightly washed out.

The P8's core components comprise a Hisilicon Kirin 930/935 octa-core processor with twin quad-core CPUs running at frequencies of 2GHz and 1.5GHz respectively. There's 3GB of memory, a Mali T624 graphics processor (GPU), and either 16GB or 64GB of storage, depending on the model. It feels nippy to use but benchmark tests reveal that the P8 isn't in the same league as top-end phones such as the HTC One M9 and Samsung Galaxy S6, with the GPU particularly letting the device down. Pure processing power is, in fact, pretty strong, with Geekbench 3 results only a touch behind the HTC One M9, but a frame rate of 18fps (frames per second) in the GFXBench T-Rex HD test is a long way behind the M9's 49fps.

PRODUCT INFO

Huawei P8

www.huawei.com

Price: from £357
SIM-free

SPECIFICATIONS

- Kirin 930/935 2/1.5GHz octa-core processor
- Mali T624 GPU
- 5.2in Full-HD IPS display
- 3GB of memory
- 16 or 64GB storage
- 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi
- MicroUSB 2.0, 3.5mm headphone jack, MicroSD, Nano SIM ports
- 145 x 72 x 6mm
- 144g

FOR

- ✓ Cheaper than rival flagship phones
- ✓ Great design and screen

AGAINST

- ✗ Lags behind rivals in performance, particularly with games and battery



“Huawei has added some useful features, including improvements to call quality”

The battery also lags behind the best. In our tests, video playback depleted capacity at a rate of 14.9 per cent per hour and audio streaming used it up at 6.9 per cent per hour. Both these results are well below average.

Screen and call quality

The P8's 1080p screen has good brightness, reaching 419cd/m² (candles per square metre) at maximum settings. Its viewing angles are excellent and it manages a contrast ratio of 1,461:1, which

is higher than normal for this sort of display, although its colour accuracy isn't particularly great.

Huawei has added some useful features, including improvements to call quality via wind-noise reduction, automatic microphone sensitivity and earpiece volume control. We had no complaints about call quality whether indoors or outdoors, although the speakerphone had an unpleasant scratchy quality when we turned up the volume.

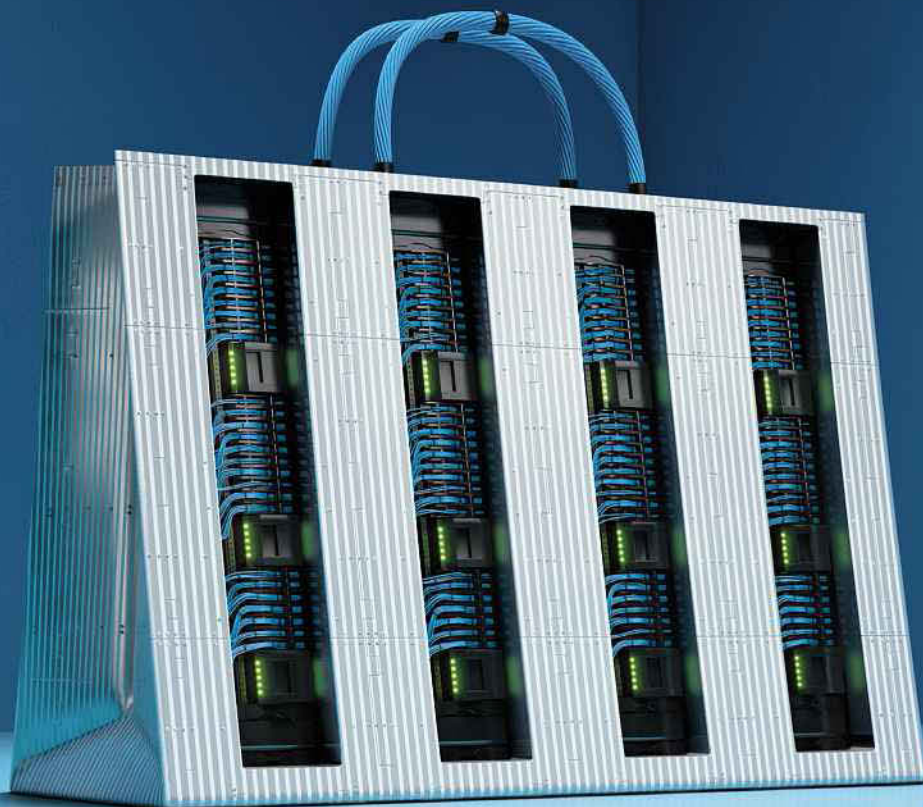
OUR VERDICT



The Huawei P8 finds itself in an awkward position. On the one hand, it's no match for top-end smartphones, such as the Samsung Galaxy S6, HTC One M9, Sony Xperia Z3, Nexus 6 and iPhone 6, which all cost significantly more than the P8 but also have superior battery life and graphics performance. On the other hand, £357 is still a

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

significant chunk of money, and the P8 just isn't cheap enough to earn our wholehearted recommendation, especially because its battery life is so disappointing.



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the last queue

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TOMORROW starts here.

Cisco UCS with
Intel® Xeon®
processors





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HARDWARE

BUDGET LAPTOP

HP Stream 11

£179.99 from store.hp.com/ukstore

Date tested: April 2015



The HP Stream 11 offers excellent performance and a respectable battery life. It's a sleek, attractive laptop, available in blue or magenta, with a good screen that offers wide viewing angles.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 2.16GHz Intel Celeron N2840 processor ■ 2GB of memory ■ 11.6in non-touchscreen ■ 32GB flash drive ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ Single-band 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 300 x 206 x 20mm ■ 1.29kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

MULTIROOM SPEAKER

Sonos Play:1

£167 from www.currys.co.uk

Date tested: March 2015



The Sonos Play:1 offers impressive audio quality and comes with excellent software and great apps that provide seamless integration with music services. It's the ideal speaker to use as a starting point for a home entertainment system.

KEY SPECS

Two speakers ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi, 1 x 10/100 Ethernet ■ Android and iOS apps ■ Compatible with UPnP and SMB servers ■ AAC, FLAC, MP3, OGG and WAV ■ 161 x 12 x 12mm ■ 1.8kg

SSD

Samsung 850 Pro 256GB

£136.03 from www.kikatek.com

Date tested: February 2015



The Samsung 850 Pro is crammed with new technology 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-year 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

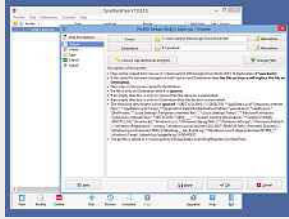
SOFTWARE & SERVICES

BACKUP AND SYNC

SyncBackFree

Free from bit.ly/syncback366
Date tested: March 2015

SyncBackFree is very capable software that gives you plenty of control over how it can be used. If you know what you need from your backups and you're prepared to spend some time configuring the options, SyncBackFree has everything you need.



KEY FEATURES

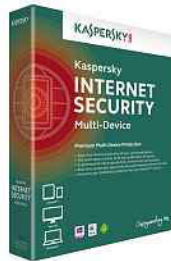
Synchronise: Copy files in both directions ■ Restore back-up files easily ■ Email logs ■ Schedule backups ■ Simple and Advanced mode ■ Runs on Windows 8, 7, Vista, and XP ■ Extensive Help documentation and support

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


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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.

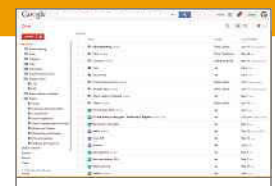
KEY FEATURES

Automatic editing ■ Export to multiple video formats ■ Burn to DVD and Blu-ray ■ Image stabiliser ■ 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

Best Free Software

SYSTEM SUITE

Synei System Utilities 3

bit.ly/synei370

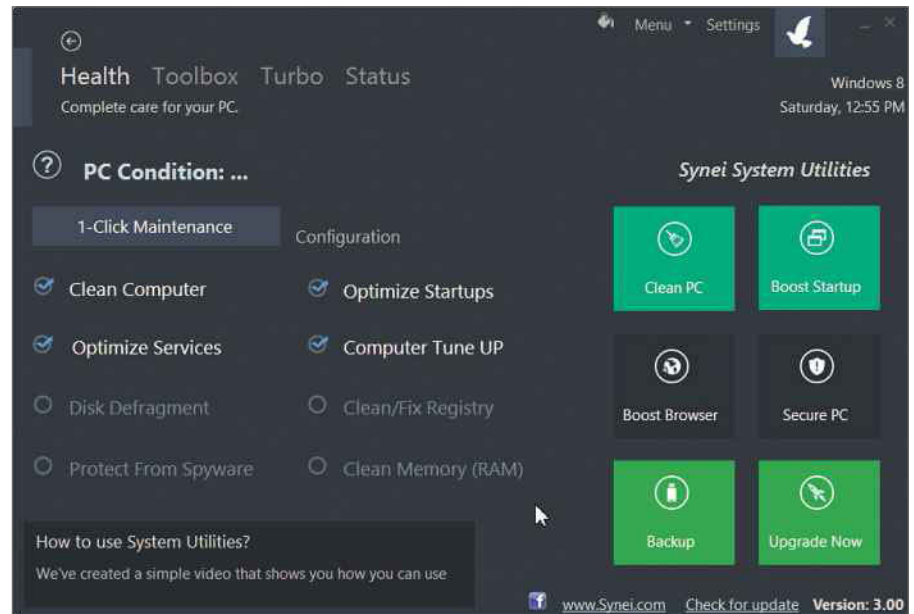
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 7MB

Performing regular maintenance on your PC keeps it running in tip-top condition. The excellent Synei System Utilities makes things easy by offering a powerful 1-Click Maintenance mode, along with a selection of tools you can use to tune up your PC, defrag your hard drive, clean memory, find and fix Registry flaws and more. There are both installer and portable versions available.

You can configure and run the 1-Click Maintenance feature from the Health screen, and also perform individual tasks including Clean PC, Boost Startup, Boost Browse, Secure PC and Backup. The Toolbox is home to the various options offered by the software, which are sorted into straightforward categories – Optimisation, Personal, Security and Other.

If you need a big speed boost (for running processor-intensive programs, for example), there's a Turbo function that can be turned on or off. Configure



it by choosing which services (Windows and third-party) and background processes you want to temporarily disable. You can also change the Windows power plan settings, and clear the clipboard and memory for an additional performance boost.

The Status screen provides you with a summary of any problems found by the program and lets you launch tools to fix them.

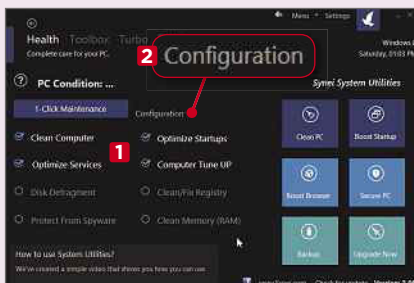
The new build of Synei System Utilities

includes an updated version of the PC Cleaner tool, improved functionality throughout and some minor interface tweaks. Windows 8 users no longer need to install .NET Framework 3.5, which makes the whole installation process much smoother than before.

If you find the program's dark design too gloomy, you can choose a different theme. Make sure you download the free version and not the paid-for edition, which costs \$19 (£12.70).



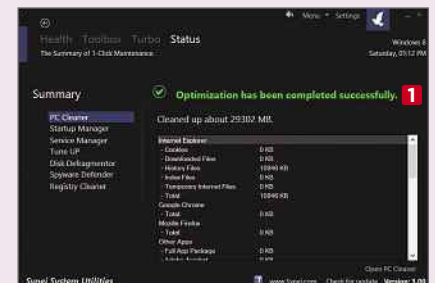
MINI WORKSHOP | Find and fix PC problems using Synei System Utilities



1 Start by running the 1-Click Maintenance scan, which you can launch directly from the Health screen. Tick the boxes for the elements you want to include **1** or accept the default suggestions. Aside from Disk Defragment, the greyed-out options are only available in the paid-for edition. Click Configuration **2** to change the settings for the various modules.

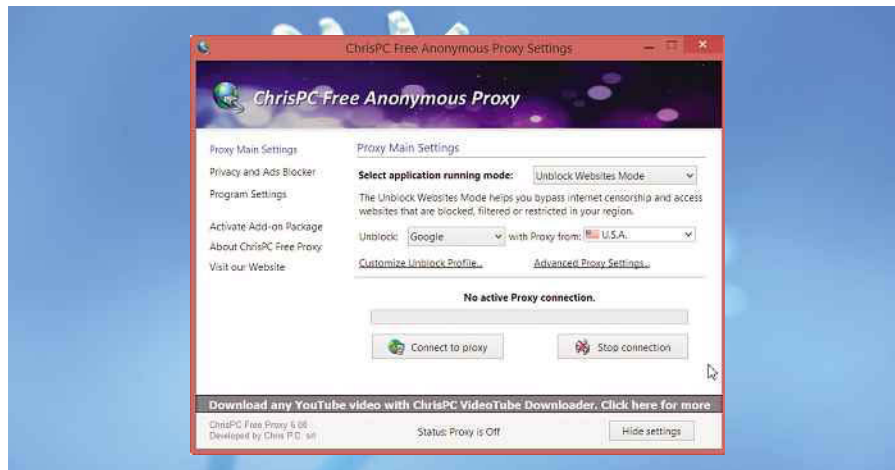


2 Hit the 1-Click Maintenance button to bring up a menu with three choices: Analyse Only, 'Analyse and Optimise', and Settings. Select the first option to make the program scan your system for problems. The results will be presented on the Status screen **1** along with a rating for your PC Condition – in this case 'Critical', which we assume means 'Critical'. **2**



3 Click through the items listed in the summary and either launch the individual tools to fix them or return to the Health screen and select 'Analyse and Optimise'. The program will perform the same check, but this time it will fix the problems. **1** You will need to reboot your PC to finalise the changes.

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



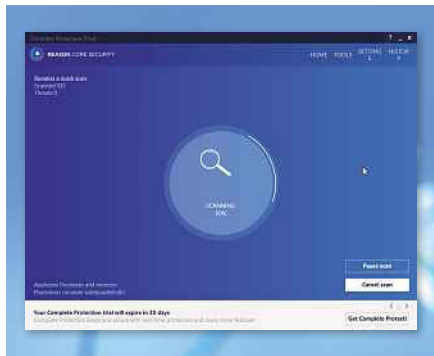
ANONYMOUS PROXY

ChrisPC Free Anonymous Proxy 6

proxy.chris-pc.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 4.3MB

This ad-supported program lets you browse the web anonymously and watch on-demand TV from any country. Anonymous Proxy mode gives you a different IP address from a country of your choosing, while Expat Internet Browsing Mode and Unblock Websites Mode allow access to geo-restricted websites. The new release has a faster and better proxy engine, and it's now easier to check if the anonymous proxy is working in your browser. Decline any bundled extras during installation.



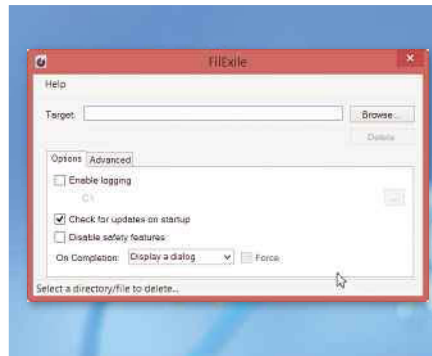
SECURITY TOOL

Reason Core Security

www.reasoncoresecurity.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 3.9MB

This all-in-one security suite doesn't offer real-time protection, but runs alongside existing anti-virus software to provide a second line of defence. It fully uninstalls unwanted junk and lets you manage startup programs and browser add-ons. Reason recently acquired the excellent Unchecky, and uses it to monitor software installs, automatically unticking unwanted 'offers' to prevent crapware from being installed.



FILE REMOVER

FilExile 2

filexile.sourceforge.net

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 1.3MB

If you want to delete a file or folder, but Windows doesn't seem able to comply with your wishes, try FilExile. Just browse for the stubborn item and click the Delete button. FilExile can't handle files that Windows has locked, but it should be able to remove anything else. The latest version has been rewritten to improve the interface. You can also add the program to your right-click context menu.

New Windows 8 Apps

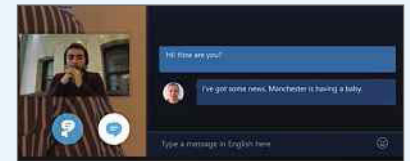
Skype Translator preview

bit.ly/skypetrans370

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 13.9MB

This app offers real-time video and audio translations in Skype, and currently supports English, Spanish, Italian and Mandarin. You can choose to hear or see the translations, but you need to register to use the app.



You-Doo

bit.ly/yoodoo370

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 5.38MB

You-Doo is a location-based to-do list, task scheduler and reminder application. It recognises where you are and gives relevant reminders based on that info (no home-related ones at work, for example).



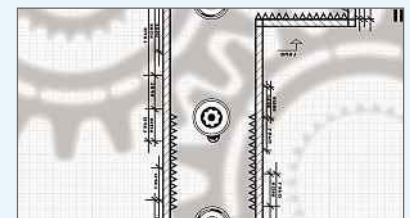
The Machine

bit.ly/machine370

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 13.4MB

In this action platform game, you control a small ink droplet as it works its way through the vast blueprints of a complex machine. It gets tricky quite quickly, but it's great fun.



DESKTOP-SEARCH TOOL

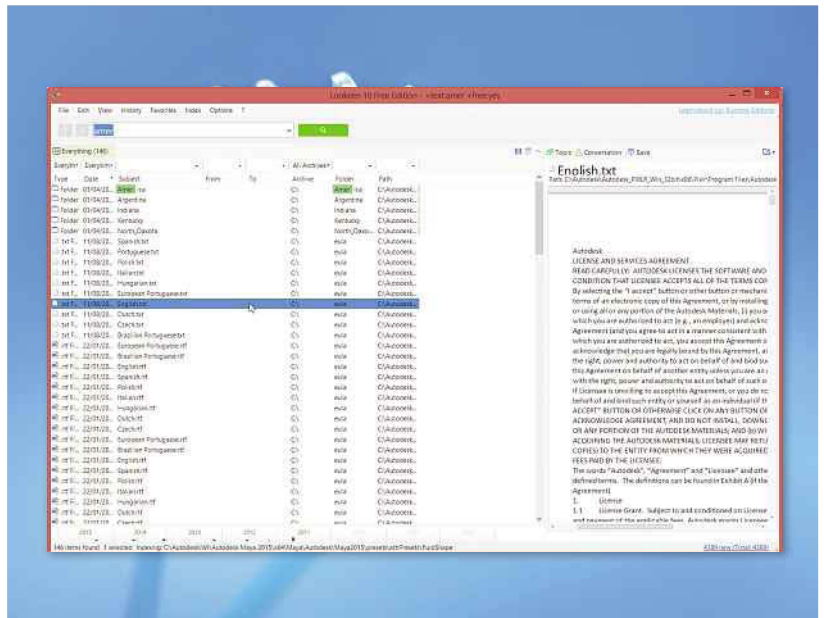
Lookeen Free

free.lookeen.com

Min requirements: Windows Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 25.2MB

Lookeen Free is a new home-user edition of Lookeen, a powerful paid-for search tool that's aimed at businesses. Although it's free, the program comes with much the same functionality as the professional Lookeen 10 edition, and has no restrictions on the number of files you can index and search for when you use it. Lookeen Free supports all the major file types, shows previews of the documents it finds and let you edit them in the same window. The program also offers advanced filters and wildcard functions, so you can search for part of a filename. Search results are displayed and updated as you type. It's a great alternative to the built-in Windows search tool.



ART PROGRAM

FotoSketcher 3

www.fotosketcher.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 5.9MB

FotoSketcher lets you transform photographs into stylish works of art. It's very easy to use; just open an image and select one of the many painting or drawing styles on offer, including pencil sketch, pen and ink, painting, stylised and miscellaneous. You can customise the various effects in different ways, adjusting options such as strength, brushstroke intensity and more. If you don't want to apply an effect, just add a frame, texture or text to your photo instead.

The new version of FotoSketcher offers a new painting effect, a function that inverts colours and various cosmetic and usability improvements.

FILE MANAGER

Konvertor

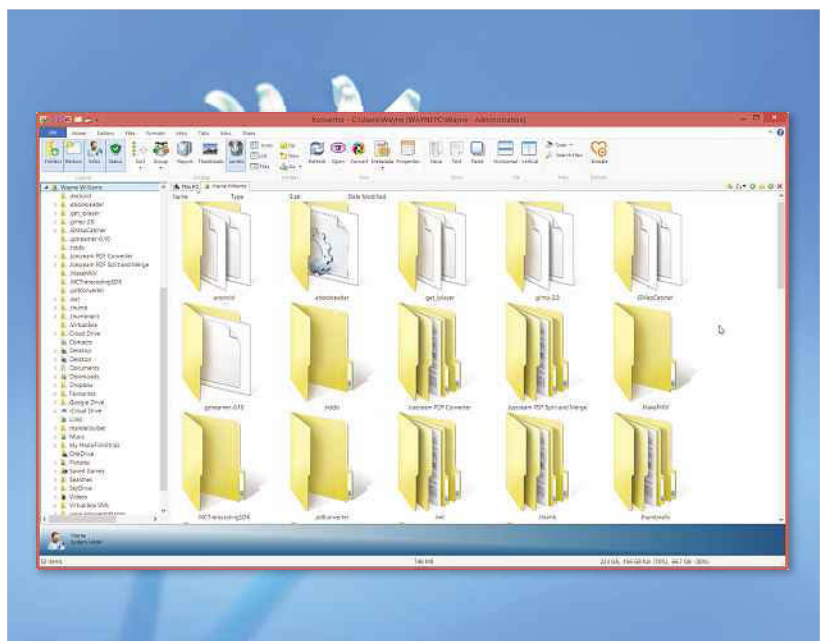
www.konvertor.net

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+

File size: 682KB

Originally a paid-for application, Konvertor is now completely free. The program is a two-panel, multi-tabbed alternative to the Windows file manager and lets you move, copy, delete, rename and search for files, and modify their attributes. It also displays the content of all major file types, including documents, images, and videos. This is arguably the program's greatest strength and it offers support for more than 4,200 different file formats. As you might expect from the name, the software can also convert one file format into another.

Konvertor uses the familiar ribbon interface that's found in a number of programs, including Microsoft Office, so it blends in well with Windows.





GAME

Pacapong

bit.ly/pacapong370

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+, Mac OS X or Linux

File size: 4.6MB

This game is a mash-up of three of the biggest arcade classics of the Eighties – Pong, Pac-Man and Space Invaders (with a bonus appearance by Donkey Kong). It's a two-player game in which you bounce Pac-Man through a maze using your Pong paddle, which can also shoot down incoming alien invaders. Genius!

Don't install...

FreeUndelete

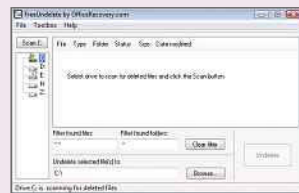
www.officerecovery.com/freeundelete

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 939KB

There are lots of free programs that promise to recover your lost files, but FreeUndelete is likely to leave you disappointed. The program is slow and doesn't let you preview the items it finds, which means you need to browse a list of results to locate the right one. Worst of all, it fails to look very deeply into your hard drive when it searches for deleted files.



...Install this instead

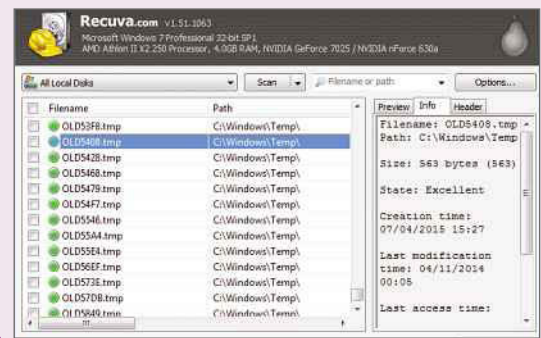
Recuva

www.piriform.com/recuva

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 4MB

No recovery program can completely guarantee to rescue files you've accidentally deleted, but Recuva gives you a fighting chance. It's very easy to use, scans your PC or memory card quickly and is capable of restoring everything from documents and emails to photos and videos. Recuva has a Wizard mode that provides a step-by-step guide and an Advanced mode that can locate a specific type of lost file. The Deep Scan option takes longer but searches more thoroughly, and it doesn't cost a thing.



UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



UNINSTALLER

IObit Uninstaller 4.3

www.iobit.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 15.2MB

This powerful uninstaller can remove several programs at once, as well as Windows apps, browser toolbars and plug-ins. You can now forcibly uninstall a program by dragging it to IObit Uninstaller's Desktop icon, and the File Shredder has been improved to shred 5,000 files at a time.



SYSTEM TOOL

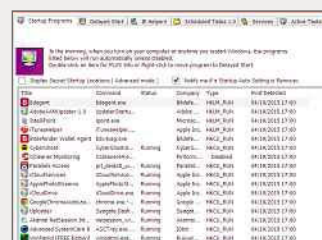
Windows Repair 3.1.3

www.tweaking.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 12.3MB

Windows Repair, which was our lead program in Issue 368's Best Free Software section, helps you fix various problems with a misbehaving PC. The latest version has an updated and improved 'Check disk at next boot' feature, and now tells you when to run repairs in Safe Mode.



SYSTEM TOOL

WinPatrol 33.5.2015.3

www.winpatrol.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 1.3MB

WinPatrol alerts you when programs try to make unauthorised changes to your system, so you can stop them messing up your settings. The new version is better at detecting problems while running in the background, and various bugs have been fixed, which makes it more reliable.



SYSTEM TOOL

Glary Utilities 5.23

www.glarysoft.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 14.4MB

Glary Utilities is a useful collection of tools that fix problems, optimise Windows and protect your privacy. The new version improves the Optimized Startup Manager and fixes problems with the Process Manager. There have been minor bug fixes and interface tweaks, too. ■

GET FREE SOFTWARE FIRST subscribe to Web User at subscribe.webuser.co.uk



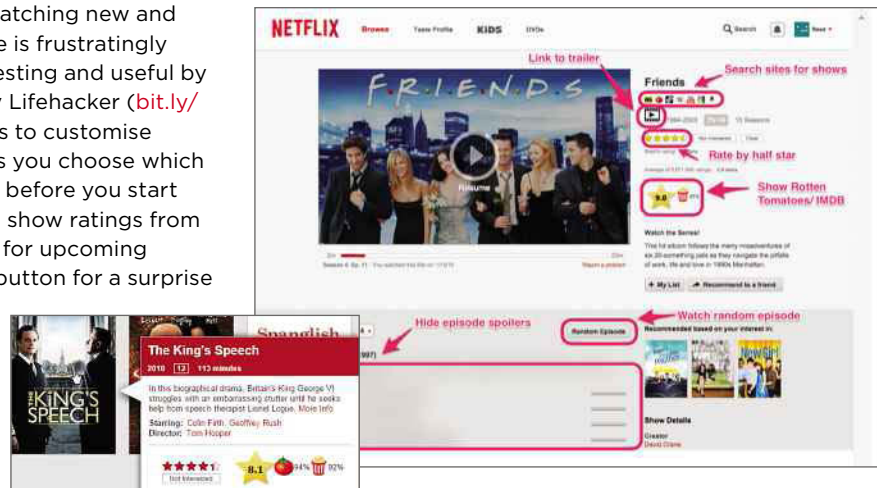
Best New Browser Tools



CHROME

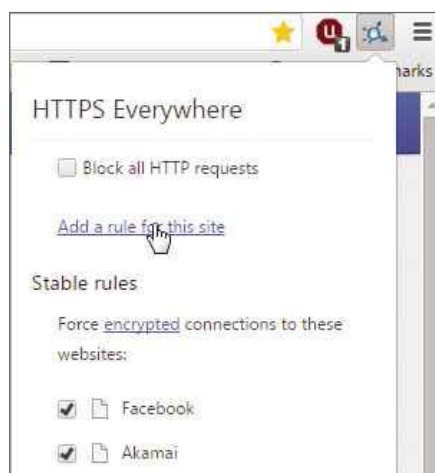
Customise Netflix with useful new features

Netflix (www.netflix.com) is brilliant for watching new and classic TV shows and films, but its website is frustratingly basic. You can make its pages more interesting and useful by installing the fantastic add-on Flix Plus by Lifehacker (bit.ly/flixplus370). This offers lots of clever ways to customise Netflix and improve your viewing, and lets you choose which ones to apply in its Options. For example, before you start watching a programme or movie, you can show ratings from IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes; hide spoilers for upcoming episodes; and click the Random Episode button for a surprise choice. Flix Plus also lets you apply a darker, smarter theme to Netflix, which fades titles you've already played and shrinks the credits box at the end of shows to provide info about the next episode. You'll wonder how you ever streamed without it!



Always switch to the secure versions of sites

We've often recommended the excellent browser tool HTTPS Everywhere (www.eff.org/https-everywhere), which protects your privacy by automatically switching you to the encrypted HTTPS versions of websites. Now the add-on, which is also available for Firefox and Opera, has added thousands of new 'rules' to keep you secure on more sites than ever. Once installed, HTTPS Everywhere starts working straightaway, with no need for you to configure any settings. However, you can manually create a rule for the site you're currently viewing, to always use its encrypted version, by



clicking the add-on's toolbar button and choosing 'Add a rule for this site'. You can also choose to block all HTTP connections so that you never use a potentially unsafe site.

Stream web videos to your Chromecast

The Google Cast extension for Chrome (bit.ly/googlecast370) makes it easy to stream YouTube videos to your television via your Chromecast. However, for videos on other sites, you need to 'cast' the whole page as

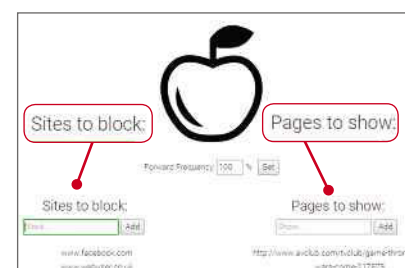


shown in your browser tab, including adverts, comments and other surplus elements. VidCast (dabble.me/cast) is a handy bookmarklet (as opposed to an add-on) that solves this problem by letting you stream just the videos from Vimeo, Facebook, Dailymotion and many other sources. Simply drag the bookmarklet to your Bookmarks bar and then click it when you're viewing a video page to add a Chromecast option

to the clips. Click this to connect with your device and watch the video on your TV.

Get redirected to pages you need to read

Page Forwarder (bit.ly/page370) is a new twist on those extensions that stop you procrastinating by blocking sites you waste too much time on. Rather than simply restricting your access to Facebook, for example, it redirects you to a page that you've been meaning to read. To use Page Forwarder, go into its Options, enter the web address of a site to block and add the URL of a page you want to read. You can also click the apple icon in your address bar to save a page to your reading list. Page Forwarder lets you add as many entries as you like and remove them with a single click. Once all the pages on your list have been read, the other site(s) will be unblocked.



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



FIREFOX

Turn back time to view old versions of websites

The Wayback Machine (archive.org/web) is an amazing tool for seeing how websites looked one month, one year or even 10 years ago, and claims to have more than 456 billion pages saved in its archive. You can now turn back time without needing to visit the site by installing the unofficial add-on Open in Wayback Machine (bit.ly/wayback370). Just click the toolbar button to open the current page in the Wayback Machine and select a date to travel back to. It's a great way to browse previous versions of a site – albeit sometimes without all images and working links – and to see an old page that's now been removed from the web. Here's how the Web User homepage looked in April 2007.

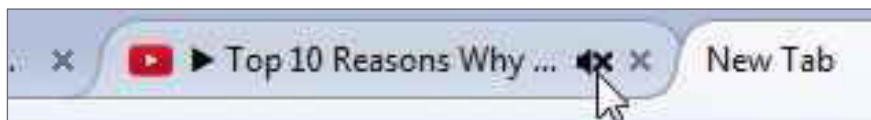


Close your browser tabs using keywords

If you often find yourself with lots of open tabs showing pages from the same website, Power Close (bit.ly/powerclose370) saves you clicking each one individually to close it. Instead, you type the domain of the site, for example `bbc.co.uk` and hit Enter to close all the



tabs that include the specified domain in their web address. This even works if you have more than one browser window open. You can also type a keyword to close all tabs that contain it in their URL – useful if you've been following a news story across several sites and have read enough about it.



Download PDFs without opening them

It's useful that browsers now have built-in PDF viewers, because it means you don't need a separate reader, but there are times when you just want to download a file without opening it first. Direct PDF Download (bit.ly/directpdf370) does exactly that and lets you bypass the Firefox viewer to download a PDF directly to your PC. It's particularly useful for grabbing files from Google search results.

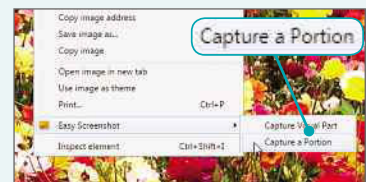
Identify and mute noisy background tabs

Chrome helpfully shows you which background tabs are making a sound and lets you silence them with a single click. Noise Control (bit.ly/noise370) brings this useful feature to Firefox by displaying a speaker icon on all tabs that are playing HTML5 audio or video. Click the icon to mute the tab and click it again to restore the sound. The add-on also shows an icon when a plug-in such as Flash is active on a page, but it can't determine whether the plug-in is making a noise.

OTHER BROWSERS

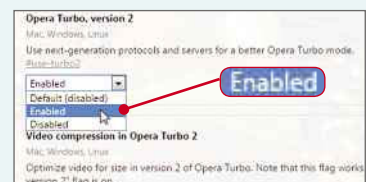
Capture screenshots of web pages

Although you can take a screen grab of a web page by pressing the Print Screen key, you need to open an image editor afterwards to paste and crop the result. A better method is to use the Easy Screenshot extension for Opera (bit.ly/screenshot370), which lets you save a precise area. Just right-click the page, choose Easy Screenshot and decide whether to Capture Visual Part (everything you can see in your browser) or 'Capture a Portion' (use the crosshairs to select the desired area). The captured image will be downloaded to your hard drive as a PNG file.



Boost video playback in Opera

If you find that videos take a few seconds to load or are often interrupted by 'buffering', there's a tweak you can try to make them play more smoothly. This uses a hidden feature in Opera called Video Boost, which is disabled by default in the Desktop version of the browser. To turn it on, type `opera:flags` into the address bar, press Enter and search the Experiments page for 'turbo'. This should find two results: 'Opera Turbo, version 2' and 'Video compression in Opera Turbo 2'. Set both to 'Enabled', restart the browser and you should notice an improvement in playback.



Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

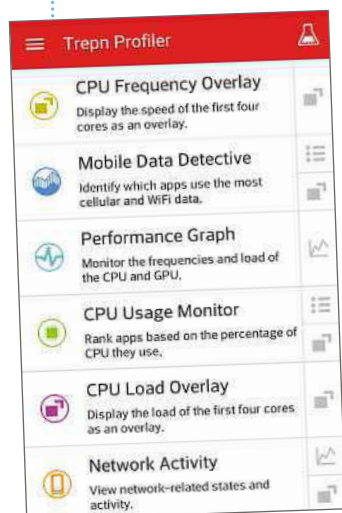
TOOLS

Trepro Profiler

bit.ly/trepro370

Min requirements: Android 4.0 **Size:** 1.9MB

This brilliant, lightweight tool shows you which apps on your phone or tablet are responsible for hogging your



device's processor and devouring mobile data and battery power. There are six different tests to choose from in its Preset Mode, of which the Mobile Data Detective and CPU Usage Monitor are our favourites. Once activated, these do exactly what they say on the tin, ranking your apps based on their average data or processor usage.

You can only run one test at a time, but Trepro Profiler can be minimised while you carry on using your phone as normal. If, when you check the results, apps you weren't using appear high on the list, you should

NEW

consider uninstalling them until they're needed again.

The CPU Frequency and CPU Load overlays are useful tools for understanding how your processors' cores operate while you carry out different tasks, and the Network Activity profiler is handy for checking the impact of mobile network, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth activity on your device's battery power. The Preset Mode provides more than enough

information for the average user, in an easy-to-understand interface, but if you feel like digging a little deeper, there's also an Advanced Mode, which lets you profile your system using up to 33 data points.

CPU Usage Monitor	
APPLICATION	CPU%
Gmail	8.6
LG MLT	7.4
System UI	2.2
Instagram	1.9
Google Contacts Sync	1.2
Nova Launcher	1.2
PhotoMath	0.9
Messaging	0.9
User Dictionary	0.6



Our rating



KEYBOARDS

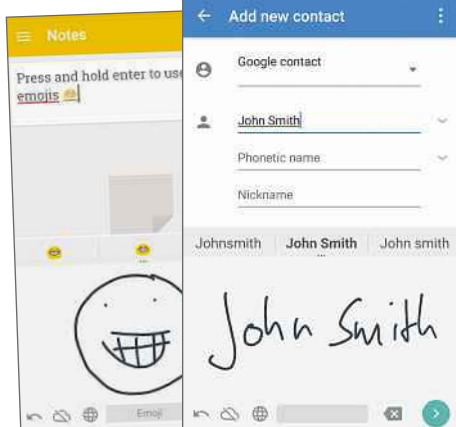
Google Handwriting Input

bit.ly/handwriting370

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3

Size: N/A

Google's new Handwriting Input app is intended as a 'complement to touchscreen typing or voice input', as opposed to a standalone tool that replaces your existing keyboard. It recognises both print and joined-up handwriting, as well as punctuation marks, and if you long-press the return key, it'll interpret the emoticons that you draw. Once you've written something, long-pressing the prediction button gives you more suggestions, but the only other keys are a Backspace button and a spacebar. Although it was good fun testing the app and we found it surprisingly accurate, its flaws quickly became apparent – accidental upper-case letters, in particular, were a cause of constant frustration. So unless you can't stand using a QWERTY keyboard, we think it's more hassle than it's worth.



Our rating



HEALTH

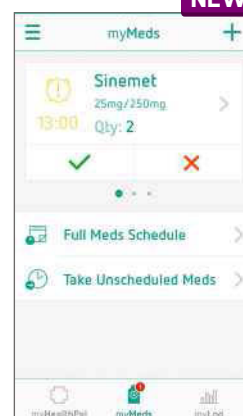
myHealthPal

bit.ly/myhealthpal370

Min requirements: iOS 7

Size: 8.6 MB

This app is designed to help those suffering from long-term illness to manage their conditions. First and foremost, myHealthPal acts as a personal assistant, reminding you to take your medicine on time, which it does after you've set the time, dosage and frequency at which you need to take each drug. The app then keeps a record of when you've successfully taken your medicine, which is very useful if you have lots of different tablets to remember every day. In addition to the medicine schedule, there are also handy built-in physical tests and questionnaires to track your symptoms and build an overall picture of your wellbeing.



Our rating



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

LANGUAGES

Tandem

bit.ly/tandem370

Min requirements: iOS 7 **Size:** 65.2MB

The best way to learn a foreign language is to speak it, and this fun app finds you people to talk to. Tandem lets you chat, in a language of your choice, with other members of its community who have similar interests to you. It's easy to set up and there's no need to schedule conversations – simply select a user and tap the green icon on their profile to start a video call. Your details are checked by the app's developers before your account is activated and you can see other users' feedback before accepting a call.

NEW



Our rating



FOOD AND DRINK

Highball

bit.ly/highball370

Min requirements: iOS 8 **Size:** 48.2MB

This app for cocktail lovers helps you discover new drinks and share them with your friends. Launch the app to get recipe cards for three classic cocktails, then tap the plus icon to browse four other recipe lists, including several from the International Bartenders Association. Simple and elegant, the app lets you switch between imperial and metric measures, and you can get creative by editing your imported cards or by starting from scratch with a new recipe. Your recipe cards can then be loaded directly to a range of social networks.

NEW



Our rating



5

NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

BOOKS

Sneakers: The Complete App

bit.ly/sneakers370

Min requirements: iOS7

Size: 1.1GB **Price:** £4.99

Based on two bestselling illustrated books from Thames & Hudson, this iPad app is the ultimate reference guide for fans of trainers, with more than 500 types from 18 different sportswear brands.



KEYBOARD

Pencilicious Doodle Message Keyboard

bit.ly/pencilicious370

Min requirements: iOS 8

Size: 37.4B **Price:** 79p

Lots of keyboard apps let you send emoji, but not many let you create your own characters. With Pencilicious Doodle Message Keyboard, you can express yourself with endless lines and shapes.



GAMES

Halo: Spartan Bundle

bit.ly/halo370

Min requirements: iOS 8

Size: 1.49GB **Price:** £7.99

Halo: Spartan Bundle



combines two games, Spartan Assault and Spartan Strike, into one package at a slightly reduced price. Both are new to iOS and are available individually for £4.49 each.

PERFORMANCE

Pixel Battery Saver

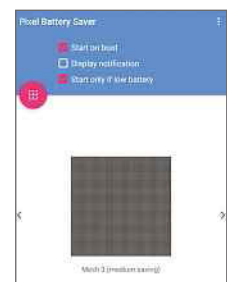
bit.ly/pixelbattery370

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3

Size: 1.5MB

Price: Free (with in-app purchases)

Designed for use with AMOLED screens, Pixel Battery Saver preserves your battery life by turning off pixels. The app is free to download, but you'll need to buy the Premium version for £1.11 to unlock the highest battery savings.



PHOTOGRAPHY

AirPano Travel Book

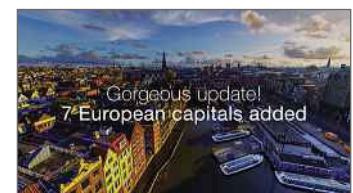
bit.ly/airpano370

Min requirements: iOS 7

Size: 230MB

Price: £2.29

AirPano lets you explore some of the world's most iconic sites from the comfort of your living room using aerial panoramic photos. Seven European capital cities have been added since we first covered the app in Issue 360 (bit.ly/webuser360).



Sneakers: The Complete App



Pencilicious Doodle Message Keyboard



Halo: Spartan Bundle



Pixel Battery Saver



AirPano Travel Book



More Free Apps

PHOTO

CamFind

camfindapp.com

Min requirements: Android (varies with device), iOS 7

Size: Varies with device

If you ever come across a strange building, picture or object and want to find out what it is, there's a good chance that CamFind can tell you. Just take a photo of the mystery item, and this innovative visual-search engine will look up information about it on the web. But the app does much more than just identify things when you snap them: it fetches trailers for movie posters, reviews for restaurant signs, the lowest prices for products, and more. The iOS version has now been updated to add social features that let other users rate and comment on your photos. We were impressed by its accuracy and speed, and liked the fact that it keeps a record of all your searches.



Our rating



WEATHER

MeteoEarth

bit.ly/meteo370

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3, iOS 7
Size: 11MB/26MB

We're often accused of being a nation obsessed with the weather, and this feature-packed app lets you indulge that obsession. With MeteoEarth you can explore the world on your mobile device; switch between climate, forecast and 3D views; and save unlimited favourite locations. The meteorological information is impressively detailed, including temperature, cloud cover, wind, pressure and tropical storms (the app assured us that none were "currently raging" over London). Our favourite option is to see webcams across the US and Europe, although these are snapshots rather than live streams. The latest update adds push notifications, and you can get even more features in the ad-free paid-for version.



Our rating



OFFICE

Microsoft PowerPoint

bit.ly/powerpoint370

Min requirements: Android 4.4, iOS 7, Windows 7.5

Size: 236MB

With the Microsoft Band now available, you might expect the company to be badmouthing its rival wearable, the Apple Watch. Instead, Microsoft has added support for Apple's device to its PowerPoint app for iOS. The new PowerPoint Remote feature lets you use the Watch to control slideshows that you're screening on your iPhone or iPad. This means you can move through slides from afar without tapping your mobile device's screen. The app now lets you see at a glance how much time has elapsed in your presentation, the current slide number and the total number of slides. The Android app has also been updated, but the changes are relatively minor.



Our rating

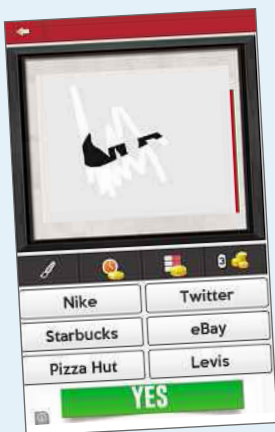


Don't install...

Scratch That Logo Quiz

bit.ly/scratch370

We like the idea behind this game, which challenges you to identify company logos by 'scratching' your screen to reveal them. In practice, however, it's swamped with ads, prone to freeze while you're rubbing the logo and plays a bleeping countdown clock that's designed to give it a sense of urgency but is just irritating. The only thing you're likely to achieve is a filthy screen from all that scratching.



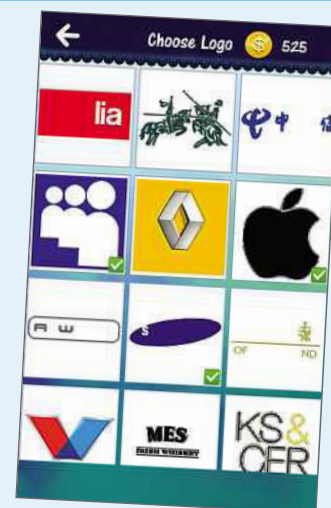
...Install this instead

Logo Quiz: Guess the Brand

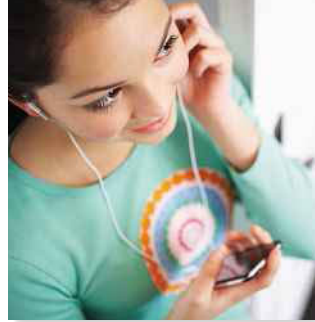
bit.ly/logoquiz370

Min requirements: Android 2.3
Size: 7.7MB

There's a surprisingly large number of guess-the-logo quizzes on the Google Play store, but having wasted a good few hours trying most of them out we think this one is probably the best. Instead of just repeating the same old brand logos (if we see Hello Kitty once more, we'll scream), it has more than 1,500 to identify, some a lot tougher than others. You collect coins for correct guesses, which can then be used to unlock clues in subsequent rounds. Yes, there are annoying ads and we don't like the fact that the app keeps nagging you to rate it, but it's suitably taxing for logo obsessives.



With APC Back-UPS, your digital life goes on...



even when the power goes off

Preserve what's most important to you

Reliable power backup for 24/7 availability

Whether DVRing your favorite show, updating your Facebook status, or playing a live network game, you depend on your home electronics every day, all day. That's why APC by Schneider Electric™ has designed battery backup solutions that protect the constant availability and connectivity you expect... and depend on.

Peace-of-mind protection on two levels

When the power goes out, our popular Back-UPS™ units go to work. They instantly switch your home technologies to emergency power, allowing you to work through brief power outages or safely shut down your systems so you won't lose valuable files — such as digital photos and media libraries. They also feature surge outlets to guard your electronics and data from 'dirty' power and damaging power surges — even lightning. So you get two levels of protection in every APC Back-UPS unit!

Energy-saving insurance for what matters most

Our Back-UPS units protect your home office, digital living and home media applications, notebook computers, DVRs, and gaming application. And since we now offer energy-efficient models that reduce electricity costs through unique power-saving outlets, you can realize true energy savings regardless of the applications you're backing up. Throughout your home, the APC Back-UPS is the cost-saving insurance you need to stay up and running and reliably safeguarded from both unpredictable power and wasteful energy drains.



Keep your electronics up and your energy use down!

ES Series

The ever-popular ES models are priced affordably yet provide enough extended runtime to allow you to work through short and medium power outages. Some power-saving models have been designed to actively reduce energy costs.

The energy-efficient ES Series

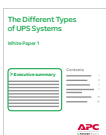
The new ES boasts innovative power-saving outlets, which automatically shut off power to unused devices when your electronics are turned off or asleep, eliminating wasteful electricity drains.

BE 700G-UK

- 8 outlets
- 405 watts/700 VA
- Up to 80 minutes runtime
- Telephone/network protection

BE 550G-UK

- 8 outlets
- 330 watts/550 VA
- Up to 55 minutes runtime
- Telephone/network protection



Find out more by downloading our UPS Selector tool or **Download our FREE White paper!**

Visit www.apc.com/promo Key Code **53659p**

APC™

by Schneider Electric

WATCH ANYTHING ON YOUR TABLET

There's lots more to watch on your tablet than just BBC shows. **Wayne Williams** reveals the best entertainment you can enjoy on your iPad or Android device

COVER
FEATURE



Many of us use our tablets as a second TV screen for enjoying our favourite shows while we're away from the sofa. But while installing BBC iPlayer on your iPad, Hudl or Nexus is a no-brainer, there's loads more great content you can access for free. Broadcasters such as Channel 4 and Sky are now offering impressive services for mobile viewers and, beyond TV, there are live video streams, archive films, webcams, web-only shows,

music videos and much more to discover.

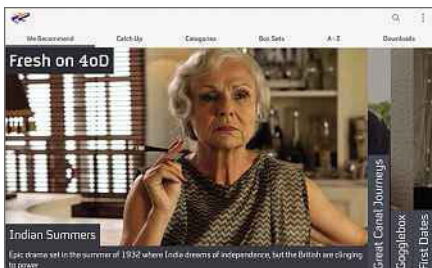
In this feature, we round up the best apps for streaming and downloading video to your tablet; reveal useful new features you might not be aware of (the ability to sync iPlayer programmes across devices, for example); and tell you how and where to find top-notch streaming content. We also introduce you to a selection of superb, must-watch shows that you won't find on regular TV.



Television

All 4

All 4 (www.all4.com) is Channel 4's replacement for 4oD, and has been designed to appeal primarily to mobile and tablet users. It's free to watch, though supported by ads, and can be installed on Android (bit.ly/all4android370), iOS (bit.ly/all4ios370) and Windows 8+ (bit.ly/all4windows370) devices. All 4 offers live streaming of Channel 4, Film 4, More 4 and E4, as well as on-demand content, clips from forthcoming shows, exclusive shorts, box sets and more. You can stream content over Wi-Fi and mobile connections, and download shows for offline (and overseas) viewing.



Now TV

If you want to watch *Game of Thrones* in the UK, you need Sky Atlantic. But if you're not a Sky subscriber, you can access the channel to enjoy the series

Amazon Prime Instant Video

Sign up for Amazon Prime (£79 a year, with a 30-day free trial) and you'll get access to the superb Prime Instant Video. Content that's available to watch includes popular TV shows such as *Downton Abbey*, *Only Fools and Horses*, and *Outnumbered* (although not all series are available); Amazon Originals, which are programmes created especially for the service (see our section on web-only shows on page 40); and popular movies.

If you've got a Kindle Fire, access to Prime Instant Video is built-in, but you can also watch the service on your iPad by installing the iOS app (bit.ly/primevid-ios370). Thanks to a recent update, it's now possible to enjoy Prime Instant Video on an Android tablet by installing the Amazon Appstore app (bit.ly/appstore370), then the separate Prime Instant Video app. You'll need to allow your tablet to install apps from 'Unknown Sources'. Full instructions are on the download page.



along with other great programmes via Now TV (www.nowtv.com). Rather than buying a Now TV Box for £19.99, you can use the free Now TV app to watch Sky Atlantic and other channels on your iPad (bit.ly/nowtv-ios370) or Android tablet (bit.ly/nowtv-android370), both live and on-demand. You will need to buy a Now TV pass to watch shows, although it's also worth looking out for free-trial offers. The Entertainment Pass

costs £6.99 a month, a Sky Sports Day Pass is £6.99 and a Week Pass is £10.99,

while access to Sky Movies costs £9.99 a month.

We've been getting the best of both worlds by using our Chromecast to stream *Game of Thrones* from our tablet to our TV!



FIND SOMETHING TO WATCH

With so much content from so many creators, there's always something to watch on your tablet, but separating the wheat from the chaff can be tricky. One way is to use TankTopTV (tanktop.tv) to find the best movies and TV shows on streaming services and add them to a watchlist. You can filter the results by the services you have access to (these are sorted into categories for Free, Pay-As-You-Go and Subscription) and by Genre, Price and Mood.

Discover TV from the Radio Times is a great new app for iOS (bit.ly/discovertv-ios370) and Android (bit.ly/discovertv-android370) that



offers daily recommendations of what to watch on regular TV, and catch-up and on-demand services. It's a useful means of discovering the best free films to watch tonight.

If you're thinking of signing up to Netflix but want to know exactly what programming the service has to offer, check out New On Netflix UK (netflix.maft.uk), which provides a comprehensive rundown of the latest additions. The new Upflix - Netflix Updates app for Android (bit.ly/upflix370) also helps you track down great things to watch.



LiveNow!TV

At the time of writing, LiveNow!TV (www.livenowtv.me) is in the process of being reinvented. The Android app is currently not available, but you can request an invite to try out the new !tv.me service. The owners promise the new incarnation will offer thousands of live channels, more than 60,000 on-demand programmes, the ability to record shows, an interactive TV guide and more. It's definitely one to keep an eye on.

YouTube

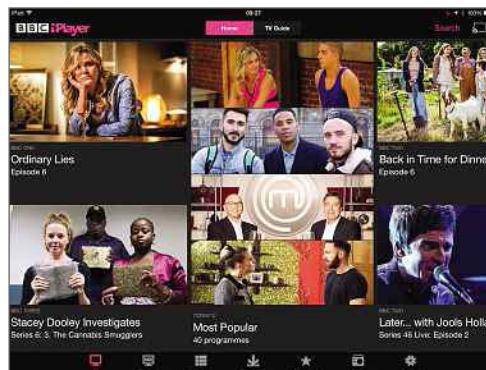
YouTube is home to lots of great television, including classic, current and original series, and some of it is even there legally! The TV Shows section (bit.ly/ytshows370) lists featured channels including Channel 4 and Channel 5, and you can browse the top free videos and explore content by category - Drama, Animation, Comedy, Documentary and



BBC iPlayer

The BBC's catch-up and on-demand service needs no introduction, but the Beeb is constantly improving its service with useful new features. The most recent addition is the ability to sync content across devices using a BBC ID, so if you've been watching a show on your PC, you can pick up where you left off on your tablet (and vice versa). The iPlayer apps now also lets you watch live regional programming based on your location, so viewers in Scotland don't have to watch the London news.

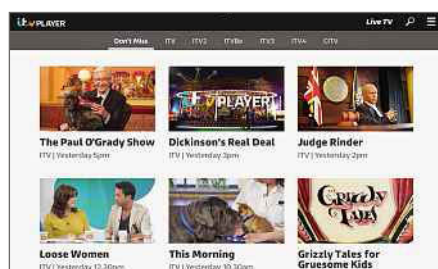
Android users can get the free app for their tablet from bit.ly/iplayer-android370, while iPad owners need to go to bit.ly/iplayer-ios370. BBC iPlayer is also available for Windows Phone tablets (bit.ly/iplayer-windows370), but without the option to download programmes.



so on. You can also stream programmes from your tablet to your TV using a Chromecast or other streaming device.

ITV Player

The ITV Player app is available for both iOS (bit.ly/itv-ios370) and Android (bit.ly/itv-android370) devices, and lets you watch shows from its six channels live (a relatively new feature) and on-demand over Wi-Fi or 3G/4G. As with ITV on your TV, programmes have ad-breaks, although you can upgrade to ITV Player Premium for £3.99 a month to watch your favourite shows without interruption. This is currently an iOS-only feature, but ITV will hopefully add the option to its Android app in the near future.



Virgin TV Anywhere

As well as watching live TV on your tablet, Virgin Media's app lets you control your TiVo box to record, play and manage content. There are Home and Away modes – Home acts like an advanced TiVo remote control, while Away can be used to watch shows on the move and remotely manage your TiVo. Cleverly, the app recognises where you are (at home or elsewhere) and switches to the relevant mode.

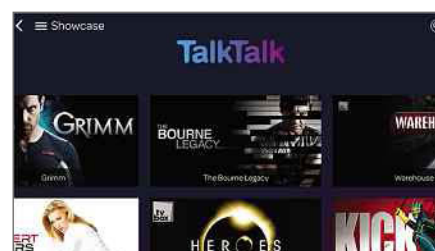
There are free TV Anywhere apps for iPad (bit.ly/virgin-ios370), Android (bit.ly/virgin-android370) and Kindle Fire (bit.ly/virgin-kindle370), and you'll obviously need to be a Virgin Media

customer with a TiVo box to use it.

Talk Talk TV2Go

If you're a Talk Talk customer you can use the free apps for iOS (bit.ly/talktalk-ios370) and Android (bit.ly/talktalk-android370) to watch live and on-demand content on your tablet. The programming that's available to view will

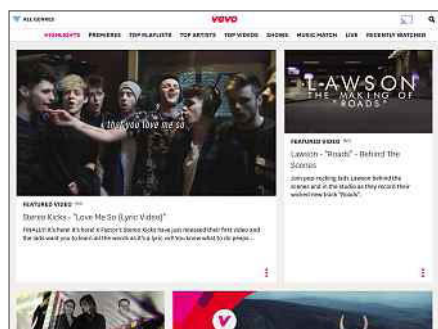
depend on the channels and Boosts (TV packages) you're subscribed to. Content can be watched on two different devices, and you need to be on your home network to use the app. It doesn't (currently) work over mobile networks, only Wi-Fi, although this may change in the future.



Music Videos

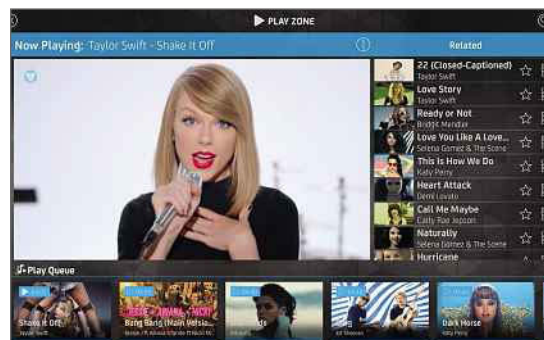
Vevo

Vevo (www.vevo.com) offers original music-based shows, premieres, live performances and – best of all – HD music videos from popular and emerging artists. There are apps for iOS (bit.ly/vevo-ios370), Android (bit.ly/vevo-android370), Kindle Fire tablets



VidZone

The VidZone app for Android (bit.ly/vidzone370) gives you instant access to more than 85,000 music videos, and 8,400 playlists. You can create a personal library in My Zone, which is like having your very own music TV channel based on the artists you like. The app comes with Chromecast support, too, in case you want to watch a music video on the big screen.



and Windows 8.1 (bit.ly/vevo-windows370), which handily

provide music recommendations based on the songs you already have stored on your device.



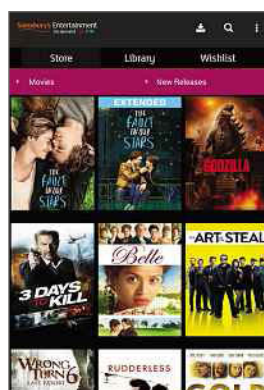
Film

Wuaki TV

As well as the latest big movies, which you can buy or rent, Wuaki TV offers a small selection of titles to watch for free (bit.ly/wuaki370). Some, like *Night of the Living Dead*, you'll have heard of, but others, such as *Tears of Steel*, you probably won't know (perhaps with good reason!). Wuaki provides free apps for iPad (bit.ly/wuaki-ios370) and Android (bit.ly/wuaki-android370).

Sainsbury's Entertainment

Supermarket giant Sainsbury's might not seem like the obvious place to go for your streaming entertainment, but its new online service (movies.sainsburysentertainment.co.uk) is worth a look. It offers a mix of movies



and TV shows although, unlike similar services, there's no free content available. You can buy or rent the latest movies and TV shows, and instantly stream your library of

BFI Player

BFI Player is a relatively new video on-demand service from the British Film Institute, which lets you watch new releases, old classic movies and TV shows. Newer content is available to rent, with reduced prices for BFI members, and lots of free archive films. You can watch BFI Player films on Android via your browser or on your iPad via the dedicated app (bit.ly/bfi-ios370). To use the app, just browse the BFI site in your browser, click something you want to watch and it will open in the player.



content to all your compatible devices, whether at home or on the go. The app is available for iOS (bit.ly/sainsbury-ios370), Android (bit.ly/sainsbury-android370) and Windows (bit.ly/sainsbury-windows370).

Blinkbox Movies

Recently bought from Tesco by TalkTalk, Blinkbox Movies (www.blinkbox.com) lets you rent or buy the latest movies and TV shows to watch wherever you want. There's no subscription: you just pay for what you want to watch and the first movie will only cost you £1. The unique UltraViolet feature (www.blinkbox.com/ultraviolet) lets you



create digital copies of selected DVDs and Blu-rays that you've bought so you can stream them online via Blinkbox. The apps for iPad (bit.ly/blinkbox-ios370) and Android (bit.ly/blinkbox-android370) also let you download content to view offline.



Webcams

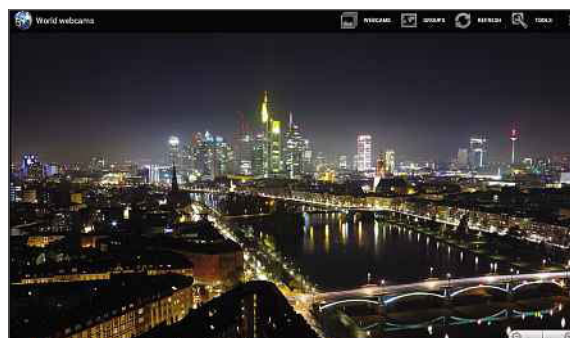
Periscope and Meerkat

If you're looking for something unusual to watch, the popular new live-streaming apps Periscope (bit.ly/periscope370) and Meerkat (meerkatapp.co) have it covered. Both are currently only available for iOS (although you can watch over the web), and both rely on Twitter to tell their followers when a stream has started. Anyone can broadcast anything – within certain boundaries, of course! See our Instant Expert on page 42 for more about Periscope and Meerkat.

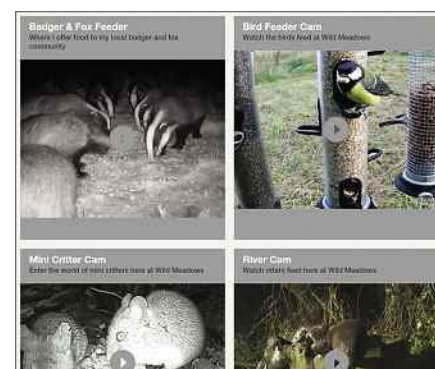


World Webcams

This Android app (bit.ly/worldwebcams370) lets you view more than 100 webcams from around the world. You can watch full screen and zoom in, and if you see an image you like, save it to your tablet and set it as wallpaper. The free app is supported by ads, but you can pay to remove these.



maybe the occasional urban fox. Simon King Wildlife (bit.ly/wildlifecam370) brings you a lot closer to nature by letting you spy on some of the UK's wild animal population via webcams. There are several live cameras to choose from, as well as video highlights from the feeds, with categories ranging from Wild Meadows to Water Cams showing footage of badgers, otters, voles, woodpeckers, heron and all manner of other creatures.



Simon King Wildlife

If you live in a city, the chances are that you probably don't get to see much actual wildlife, aside from birds and



Web-only shows

Netflix Original Series

Netflix (www.netflix.com) offers original series that easily match, and in some cases surpass, the quality of programmes produced by many traditional broadcasters. Unlike regular TV shows, where episodes air once a week, you can 'binge watch' a full season of Netflix shows as soon as they are released.

Although Netflix has so far been focusing on original drama and comedy, the company recently announced that it has greenlit a nature documentary series called *Our Planet*. This will be made by the team behind the BBC's *Planet Earth* and *Frozen Planet*, and be

BBC iPlayer Originals

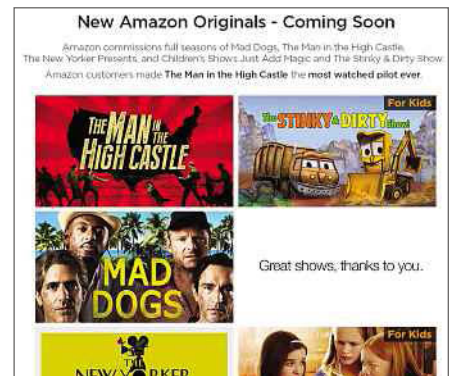
As well as its Original Drama Shorts (bit.ly/bbcdrama370) showcasing the best of new British talent, the BBC is now offering full shows on iPlayer before they are broadcast on national TV. A great example is *Peter Kay's Car Share*, a six-episode sitcom that was available on iPlayer between April 24 and 28, before appearing on BBC1. It's likely that the BBC will offer a lot more original content on iPlayer in the future.



filmed around the globe using 4K cameras, over four years.

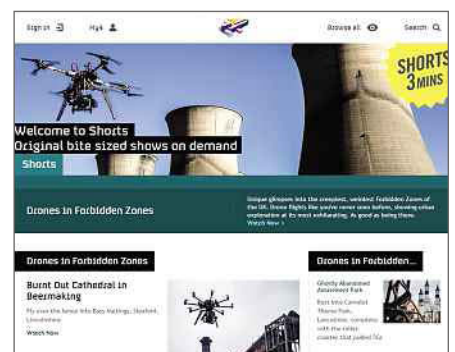
Amazon Originals

Although it lags a little behind Netflix for original content, Amazon has some great web-only shows to watch, with more in the pipeline. These are completely free for Prime members to enjoy, with a 30-day free trial for prospective binge viewers. The retail giant also releases pilot episodes of potential shows (bit.ly/amazonpilots370), and invites customers to provide feedback on those they would like to see turned into a full series.



Channel 4 Shorts

Channel 4 has an impressive collection of inventive and interesting short programmes (bit.ly/c4shorts370) that you can watch on your tablet via its new All 4 service. These include *Drones in Forbidden Zones*, which takes you into



STREAMING HIGHLIGHTS

Here are seven of the best web-only series that you can watch on your tablet

Daredevil

bit.ly/daredevil370

This new Netflix Original is a 13-part drama series based on the Marvel superhero. It follows Matt Murdock, who is an attorney by day and vigilante by night, and also happens to be blind, as a result of a childhood accident.



Bosch

bit.ly/bosch370

Based on Michael Connelly's best-selling novels, *Bosch* is an intense American crime drama. It's a 10-part Amazon Original, which is available to watch for free if you're a Prime subscriber.

Better Call Saul

bit.ly/callsaul370

This *Breaking Bad* spin-off series (a prequel of sorts) is available to watch in its entirety on Netflix in the UK. It follows a small-time lawyer hustling to make ends meet.



Transparent

bit.ly/transparent370

Winner of two Golden Globes (best TV series and best actor in a comedy TV series), this excellent 10-part Amazon Original comedy-drama is about the transgender parent Mort/

Maura and his/her three adult children. It's free to watch for Prime users.

House of Cards

bit.ly/houseofcards370

Based on the BBC mini-series of the same name, this fantastic US political drama – a Netflix Original – stars Kevin Spacey, and was the first web TV series to receive Emmy nominations. It's a must-watch.



Orange Is the New Black

bit.ly/orangeblack370

Another impressive Netflix Original, this is a comedy set in minimum-security women's prison in Connecticut. The name comes from the orange jumpsuits worn by the inmates.



The Man in the High Castle

bit.ly/highcastle370

Although the full series isn't out yet (although it has been commissioned), this pilot is Amazon's most watched to date. Based on a Philip K Dick novel, it's set in an alternative reality in which the Axis Powers triumphed in World War Two.

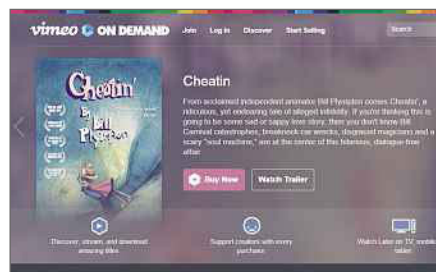
Watch Anything On Your Tablet

**COVER
FEATURE**

rarely seen urban locations in the UK, and *Total Recall*, which reimagines Hollywood blockbusters with a UK cast in locations such as Tooting, Gravesend and Basingstoke.

Vimeo

Although Vimeo (www.vimeo.com) doesn't get the same level of attention



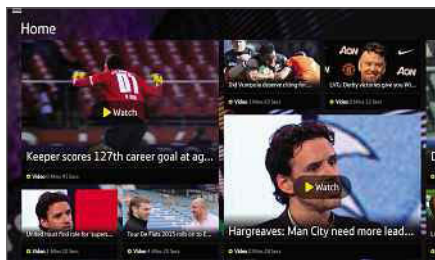
as YouTube, it's home to lots of great HD videos, and even has its own pay-to-view service called Vimeo On Demand (vimeo.com/ondemand). This allows content creators to make money from their work, and one of the original shows – *High Maintenance* – has just been picked up by the massive US TV network HBO.



Sport & Games

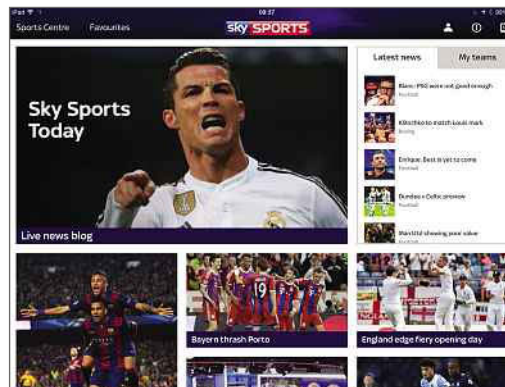
BT Sport

Provided you're a BT Sport subscriber (with a BT ID) you can watch live streams from BT Sport 1, BT Sport 2 and ESPN on your tablet via its apps for iOS (bit.ly/btsport-ios370) and Android (bit.ly/btsport-android370). You can also catch up on events you might have missed, and keep abreast of breaking sports news.



Sky Sports

Sky Sports subscribers can watch live sporting action on their iPad, with the app (bit.ly/skysports370) providing access to live coverage of hundreds of matches and events on all four Sky Sports channels, as well as the latest headlines on Sky Sports News. There's also a second screen feature which offers a selection of ways to watch and interact with sporting coverage. The Sky Sports app for Android (bit.ly/skysportsandroid370) is more about news, highlights and results, but if you sign in using your Sky or Virgin Media ID, you can watch Sky Sports channels live (assuming you're a subscriber).



Eurosport

One for Android-owning sports fans, the Eurosport app (bit.ly/eurosport370) provides live-text commentaries, daily news articles, web chats and of course plenty of videos to watch. It's just been updated with a new and supposedly faster interface, although some comments on Google Play suggest it also includes more ads than before.

Twitich

Twitich is the place to go to watch video games being played, and the app – available for both Android tablets (bit.ly/twitch-android370) and iPads (bit.ly/twitch-ios370) – means you can enjoy the action wherever you are. You can browse streams by game and channel, choose different video resolutions and chat with friends.

[twitch-ios370](http://bit.ly/twitch-ios370)) – means you can enjoy the action wherever you are. You can browse streams by game and channel, choose different video resolutions and chat with friends.

Chromecast games

If you have a Chromecast, you can now cast games to your television and use your Android tablet as the controller. There are loads of games to play, including Hasbro's Monopoly Dash, Simon Swipe, Texas Holdem, Wheel of Fortune and Connect 4 Quads. You can browse the selection at chromecast.com/apps.



NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 20 May 2015

Software you should *never* download

The 30 most overrated programs and apps, and the best free alternatives



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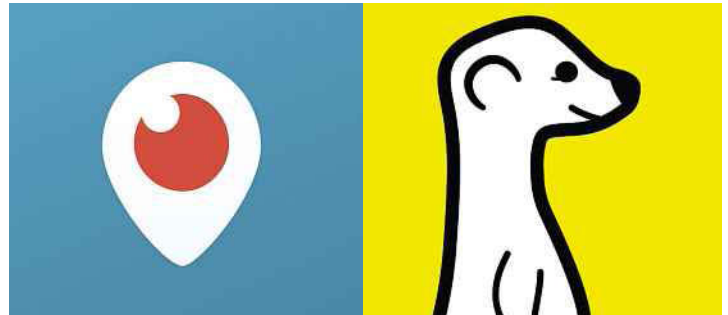


Instant Expert

Live-streaming apps

Everybody's talking about two new apps that let you stream live video of what's happening around you.

David Crookes explains what's so special about Periscope and Meerkat



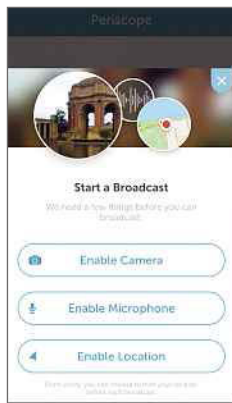
What are they?

Live-streaming apps could revolutionise how we watch videos over the web. Instead of viewing pre-recorded footage on YouTube, these apps let you enjoy continuous broadcasts being filmed by amateurs using their mobile phones. Anything picked up by the camera and microphone is shared in real time.

What are the apps called?

The two apps that are currently turning heads are Meerkat (meerkatapp.co) and Periscope (www.periscope.tv).

Meerkat was launched in March and attracted 120,000 users within a fortnight. Periscope launched last year and was bought by Twitter in January for \$100 million (£68 million). Both work in a similar way over a 3G or 4G connection and don't require any special equipment other than access to a phone's camera or microphone.



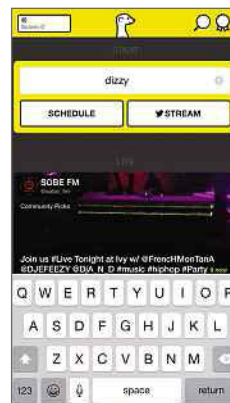
But live streaming isn't new, is it?

Not at all. Live-streaming apps have been available for some time. Early examples include Kyte, which is now called Piksel (www.piksel.com) and works primarily with media brands, and Qik, which launched in 2007 but is now a video messaging service called Skype Qik

(www.skype.com/en/qik). Ustream (www.ustream.tv), Livestream (livestream.com) and YouNow (www.younow.com) continue to prove popular on mobile devices, but none have experienced the same hype as Meerkat and Periscope.

What are Meerkat and Periscope doing differently?

The major selling points of both these apps is that they make live broadcasting – or 'scoping' – incredibly simple and work in conjunction with a user's Twitter account. It takes mere seconds to sign up using a Twitter login and start filming, and when someone begins to scope footage from either app, a link to the live stream is tweeted.



So it's an extension of social media?

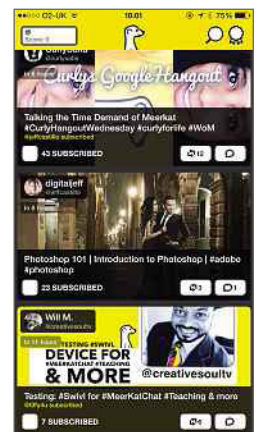
Spot on. Communication is a fundamental part of these new live-streaming apps. As the broadcasts play, viewers can engage with them by sending messages in real-



time. The comments (which only appear within the app and not on Twitter) often help to steer the broadcast, perhaps requesting that the 'scoper' films specific parts of their environment. Viewers can also 'like' videos on Meerkat and 'heart' them on Periscope. The more approvals broadcasters get, the more likely it is that others will follow them.

What are people streaming?

Anything and everything, from interviews and tutorials to product launches and demonstrations. Some people just let you watch the world go by, while others show you the contents of their fridge, film newsworthy events or just jabber into the camera.



On 26 March, tech-news site The Verge (www.theverge.com) reported dozens of people using Periscope to live-stream an explosion in New York that caused a building to partially collapse, injuring up to 30 people. They were airing footage long before professional media teams arrived with their cameras, and viewers were not just watching but asking questions and expressing concern.

So it's a citizen journalist's dream?

Absolutely. Live reporting is set to take off like never before and just as Twitter

often breaks news, we can expect Periscope and Meerkat to do the same via video. It's still early days, though, and we can only excitedly wait to see what creative uses emerge. It may well be that any event of note ends up being live-streamed, perhaps even putting an end to many written live-blogs.

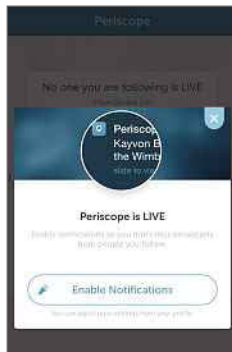
Are celebrities involved, too?

Of course. Author Tim Ferriss, chef Jamie Oliver and astronaut Chris Hadfield have live-streamed using Periscope, while footballer Rio Ferdinand and pop icon Madonna have used Meerkat.

How do I find these broadcasts?

By clicking live links within tweets or by receiving notifications.

Periscope integrates well with Twitter (unsurprising, since Twitter owns it) and lets Twitter users see which of their followers use the app. This feature was taken away from Meerkat, which now has a leaderboard that ranks the most-followed Meerkatters.



Can I create broadcasts using any phone?

Periscope and Meerkat apps are only available for iOS at the moment, but will launch on Android in the near future, which is when live-streaming should really take off. Currently, you can watch broadcasts on your Android device or computer – try onperiscope.com and www.meerkatstreams.com for aggregated streams – and there are also unofficial apps for both services available from the Play store.

Does live-streaming use a lot of data?

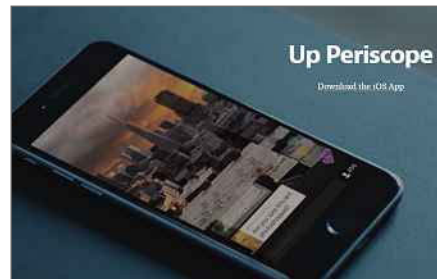
Yes, so you shouldn't stream video for long periods of time if you have a low data allowance. Some tests have shown Periscope can use as much as 250MB of data an hour, while so-called Meerkasts can eat up 400MB. Live-streaming can also drain your phone's battery life.

What happens to videos once they've been live-streamed?

Both apps let you save streams to your phone's Camera Roll, but Periscope goes further and makes videos available to viewers for 24 hours via a replay function.

Do the videos have to be public?

Meerkat is entirely about producing public broadcasts that are advertised via automatic tweets to your followers. But Periscope lets you prevent tweets from being sent out and can produce private broadcasts so that only selected users are notified.



Don't these apps threaten our privacy?

The same rules that apply to recording videos apply to live broadcasting. So if you fancy dabbling in live streaming, it's a good idea to read the BBC's guidelines on privacy and consent (bit.ly/bbcprivacy370), which explain how to stay on the right side of the law. Certainly, the instant nature of live-streaming makes it impossible to backtrack on a broadcast later, and

HOW LIVE STREAMING IS BEING USED

Leader debates

Sky News presenter Kay Burley used

Periscope to give online viewers an exclusive glimpse behind the scenes of the second set of Party Leader Debates on ITV.



Local reporting

The Oxford Mail reporter Michael Race live-streamed an old mortar shell being detonated in a family shed, commenting for 30 minutes and taking questions from viewers.



Magic shows

Magician David Blaine is among a host of celebrities to use live streaming. He's shown off a range of tricks via Periscope, apparently leaving his audience gagging for more.



members of the public will inevitably end up being unwittingly beamed across the internet without their permission.

What about copyright concerns?

Well, quite. Live-streaming apps place the responsibility for copyright in the hands of users because it would be very difficult for the apps to monitor every broadcast. So, just as some YouTube users have been sued for copyright infringement, Periscope and Meerkat broadcasters need to be careful.

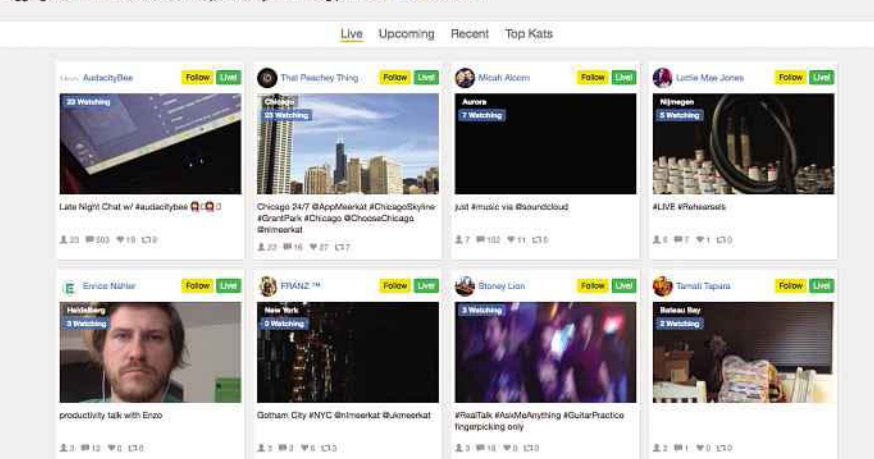
People have already used live-streaming apps to illegally film concerts and there are fears that they will be used to broadcast films being screened in cinemas and sports footage with exclusive broadcast rights.

So the Premier League will be concerned, then?

Undoubtedly. There were reports that the Premier League would use Periscope to air dressing-room team talks by Arsenal and Liverpool captains, but that was an April Fool's joke. We expect broadcasters and Premier League bosses to keep a close eye on live streaming.

Meerkat Streams

Aggregated Meerkat streams in one place for your viewing pleasure. Tweet all about it.



Best music-streaming services

Music-streaming services are now better than ever, with high-quality audio and support for multiple devices. **Edward Munn** tests six of the best to help you decide which to subscribe to



Spotify | **from free** | www.spotify.com/uk | ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

**WebUser
GOLD
AWARD**

What we liked:

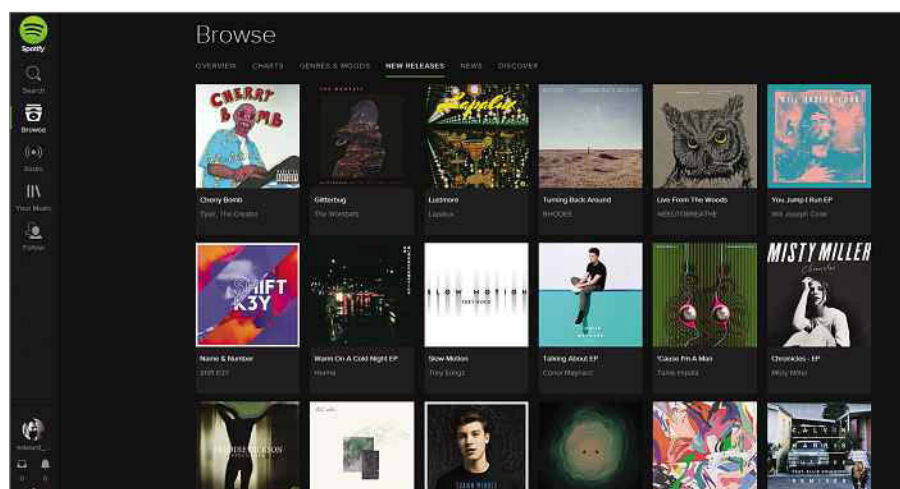
Spotify won our Gold Award when we last reviewed music-streaming services in issue 336 (bit.ly/webuser336), and it's still not budged from the top spot. For only £9.99 a

month, Spotify Premium lets you listen to any song, anytime, on almost any device, and you can also download songs to listen to offline.

The highest sound quality offered is 320kbps, which is good enough for all but the most discerning audiophiles and, on the mobile app, you can choose different sound quality settings for 3G/4G and Wi-Fi connections to avoid racking up a huge phone bill.

If you'd rather not pay to stream music, there's a 30-day free trial to Spotify Premium or you can use its free service, which is ad-supported but still lets you listen to your favourite artists and playlists (albeit on shuffle on the mobile app). The free service offered by Spotify was the best of those we tested and we really like that you can still use the app's Browse and Radio tools to discover new songs and playlists.

Spotify's social-network integration is also excellent, letting you see what your Facebook friends are listening to and



easily share music with them. If you want a streaming service that you can use to play local tracks on your PC, Spotify ticks this box, too (and you can even use it to wirelessly sync these tracks to your mobile or tablet).

Despite its public fallout with Taylor Swift, Spotify has an impressive catalogue of more than 30 million songs, and new albums are normally available on the same day as the physical release. The service is compatible with almost any multiroom speaker system and its Connect feature means that Premium users can play music through one device using another as a remote.

How it can be improved:

We were disappointed that Spotify is not available on the Google Chromecast device. In addition, its local track-syncing feature is a bit clunkier than Deezer's.

OUR VERDICT

Spotify is blissfully easy to set up and use, and we were equally impressed by both its free and Premium offerings, making it impossible not to give it our Gold Award.

Music-streaming services

Deezer | **from free** | www.deezer.com/en | ★★★★★☆

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

WebUser
SILVER
AWARD

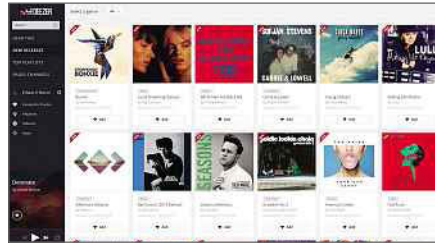
What we liked:

Founded in 2007, Deezer has more than 16 million monthly active users and its 35 million-track library is the largest of all of the streaming services we

tested. Like Spotify, it offers both free and premium subscriptions: the free service is ad-supported, while Premium+ (which costs £9.99 a month) removes all interruptions and unlocks unlimited streaming on any device, as well as the option to save music offline.

In addition to its Desktop, tablet and mobile apps, Deezer is compatible with a good range of multiroom speakers and you can download it on most smart TVs. Unlike our Gold Award winner, it's also compatible with the Chromecast, which is a big bonus if your TV is hooked up to a sound bar or hi-fi. We really like Deezer's My MP3s feature, too, which lets you import your own MP3 files and automatically makes them available to all your devices, much like Google Play Music.

Although it won't appeal to everyone,



Deezer has a great new tool that shows lyrics on screen, so you can sing along to your favourite tracks.

How it can be improved:

There was very little to separate Deezer and Spotify, but Deezer's free service is more restrictive on mobile devices and we found Spotify's interface slightly more intuitive.

OUR VERDICT

Deezer matched Spotify in almost every department, but its more restrictive free service and lack of a stand-out, killer feature prevented it from reaching the top spot.

Google Play Music | **from free** | ★★★★★☆

play.google.com/music FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
EASE OF USE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

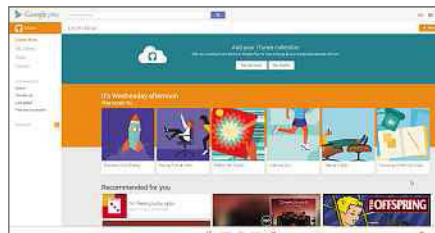
WebUser
BRONZE
AWARD

What we liked:

If you have a large music library stored on your PC, Google Play Music is the service for you. It lets you save 50,000 tracks online for free, so they are available to stream on all your devices.

Furthermore, because (where possible) it matches your songs to the files on its servers, you can stream even your oldest, lowest-quality files at a whopping 320kpbs. Our Silver Award winner, Deezer, only lets you upload MP3 files, but Google Play Music is compatible with most popular music file formats up to a size of 300MB.

For an extra £9.99 a month, you can subscribe to Google Play Music All Access, which lets you stream 30 million tracks and store them offline so you can listen without an internet connection. You'll also get YouTube Music Key Beta, which lets you watch ad-free music videos on YouTube and keeps the YouTube app playing on your mobile even when you use other apps or lock



your screen. Premium users are also treated to Google's time-of-the-day recommendations, powered by Songza.

How it can be improved:

Google Play Music's free service is unique, but it would be much better if it offered free ad-supported streaming of tracks you don't already own.

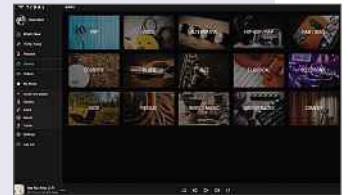
OUR VERDICT

Google Play Music All Access competes closely with Spotify and Deezer, but because the free version only lets you stream your own tracks, it's best used alongside Spotify Free.

BEST OF THE REST

Tidal | **from £9.99 per month**
tidal.com

Recently relaunched by Jay-Z, Tidal is one of few services to offer high-fidelity, lossless-audio streaming. With more than 25 million CD-quality tracks available, it's well worth considering if you've



got good enough equipment to hear the difference, but you'll have to pay £20 a month for the luxury. Tidal also offers a standard quality (320kbps) service for £9.99 a month, but with the exception of a 30-day trial, there is no free streaming option.

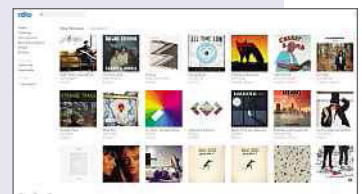
Napster | **from £4.99 per month**
www.napster.co.uk

You might still remember Napster from its days as an illegal music-sharing site, but it's now a legitimate streaming service with a catalogue of over 30 million tracks. Unfortunately, there's no free streaming option but for £4.99 a month you get unlimited streaming on your Mac or PC, and for a further £5 a month you can use Napster on your mobile and store music offline. Be aware, though, that the music quality is limited to 128kbps if you're using your browser.



Rdio | **from free**
www.rdio.com

Rdio offers a free, ad-supported streaming service, but you're limited to listening to its own radio stations rather than picking the tracks or artists you want. Paying the usual £9.99 a month gets rid of adverts and lets you store albums and playlists offline. The Rdio apps work with Chromecast, too.



Force web pages to load faster

Even with a super-speedy connection, the web can seem slow to load. Robert Irvine reveals how to beat the delays and get content instantly

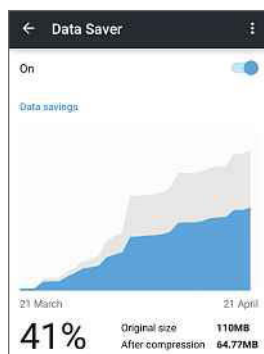
Use less data

! Reduce the amount of data used by pages

The less data a web page uses, the faster it loads in your browser, which is why Google's new Data Saver extension for Chrome (bit.ly/datasaver370) is such a good idea. It compresses content such as photos and design elements without affecting the appearance of pages. The add-on tells you the size of a page before and after compression, often reducing data by over 50 per cent. Sadly, it doesn't yet work with secure HTTPS or incognito pages, and there's

no word of a Firefox version, but we definitely noticed a small boost in loading times.

Data Saver is also available in the Chrome app for Android. You



can turn the feature on and check how much data you've saved over the last month by going to Settings, Advanced and tapping Data Saver.

! Force websites to use their mobile versions

Many sites perform a 'user agent' check when you visit them, which identifies

your browser and device so that content can be displayed accordingly. If the site detects that you're using a phone or tablet, it may load its slimmed-down mobile version, which uses much less data and therefore loads faster. The Chrome and Opera extension User-Agent Switcher (bit.ly/uaschrome370) lets you pretend you're using an Android, iOS or Windows Phone device instead of a Desktop browser. Just click its toolbar button and select a preset from the drop-down menu. You can also set Chrome or Opera to 'remember' the most recently used preset next time you launch the browser, so that you always view the mobile versions of sites. Bear in mind that although the streamlined pages may load faster, certain features may not be available.

For Firefox, there's an identically-named add-on from a different developer (bit.ly/uasfirefox370), which works in the same way and lets you choose from a variety of mobile



operating systems and browsers.

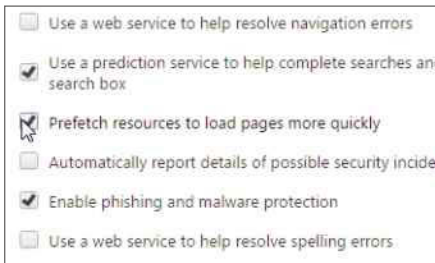
Here's how Mail Online looks when you fool the site into thinking you're using an Android phone. The quality of images is noticeably reduced, but the pages load much faster.



! Preload some content before the rest of the page

Most browsers now use 'prefetching' to store frequently loaded content from web pages in your browser. This means the page doesn't need to be completely refreshed each time you visit, so everything will load faster. Browsers can even anticipate which page you'll open next, based on your browsing history, and preload their prefetched resources (a feature called 'speculative pre-connection'). To turn on this option in Chrome, go to Settings, 'Show advanced settings' and, in the Privacy

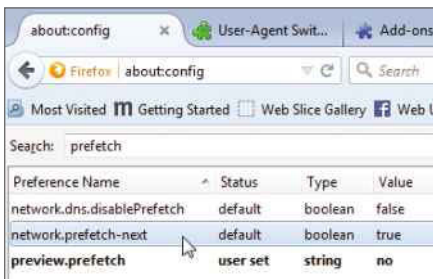
Speed up web pages



section, select 'Prefetch resources to load pages more quickly'.

In Firefox, it should be enabled by default but you can check by typing `about:config` into your address bar and pressing Enter. Search for `network.prefetch-next` and ensure that its value is set to True (if not, double-click it to change it). Microsoft added prefetching to Internet Explorer in version 11, calling the feature 'page prediction'.

There are some drawbacks to prefetching resources: for example, if your browser preloads the content, but you don't ultimately visit the page, it could actually slow you down. Also, having your browser load certain resources automatically could potentially compromise your privacy.



Block hidden trackers before they load

There's more to most websites than meets the eye, with invisible trackers for ad networks, analytic services and other third-party companies lurking on every page. Because you can't see them, these trackers slow pages more than you realise, but there are several add-ons you can use to block them. Disconnect (disconnect.me/disconnect) is still one of the best tools for blocking

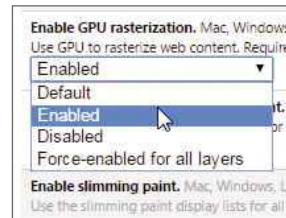


trackers, but it was recently removed from the Chrome Web Store (it's still available for Firefox, Opera and Safari). Other good options include Blur (formerly DoNoTrackMe, www.abine.com), Ghostery (www.ghostery.com) and our current favourite, Privacy Badger (www.eff.org/privacybadger).

This extension works with Chrome and Firefox, and filters a host of spying ads and hidden trackers, while allowing acceptable cookies that are necessary for websites to function. We particularly like its traffic-light colour-coding system, which lets you decide which trackers to block and allow based on the how suspicious their behaviour is.

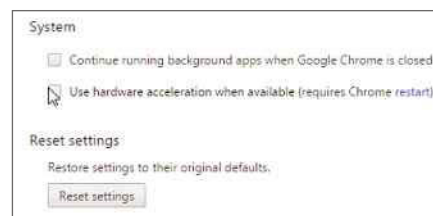
Tweak Chrome to load pages faster

Some websites (we're looking at you, Mail Online) embed lots of high-resolution images in their articles, which makes pages slower to load, especially in Chrome. The animated GIFs you see on Buzzfeed, Tumblr and similar sites also cause pages to hang. Rather than blocking such images altogether, you can turn on a Chrome feature called 'GPU rasterization', which uses a different method of rendering content. To activate it, type `chrome:flags` into your



address bar to open the 'Careful' page, then find the entry 'Enable GPU rasterization' and choose Enabled from the drop-down menu.

Some Chrome users have also experienced a performance boost by turning off the browser's hardware acceleration feature that, conversely, is supposed to load pages faster. You can try this for yourself by going to Settings, 'Show advanced settings', System and deselecting 'Use hardware acceleration when available'. Next, type



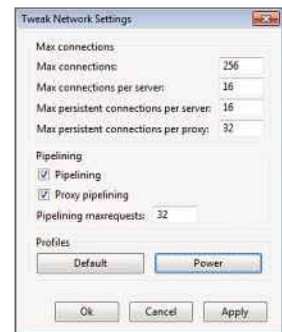
`chrome:flags` into the address bar and enable the entry 'Override software rendering list'.

Relaunch Chrome after applying these tweaks and you should hopefully notice a speed improvement.

Tweak Firefox to load pages faster

One of the most effective tricks for speeding up

Firefox is to increase the number of connections it opens to a website's server, a process known as 'pipelining'. You can tweak the browser's settings yourself through its 'about:config' page, but an easier and safer method is to use the add-on Tweak Network (bit.ly/tweak370) to adjust the page-loading



settings. Once it's installed, go to Tools, Tweak Network Settings and click the Power button. This activates pipelining

and increases the maximum number of connections. Theoretically, this means Firefox will now load content faster, although it depends on the website, which may limit the number of connections per user.

Make all web pages 'print-friendly'

Many online articles offer a Print option that removes adverts, photos, design elements and irrelevant text to save you wasting ink and paper. Stripping this superfluous content also makes pages load faster, so it's worth viewing a 'print-friendly' version even if you don't intend to print it.

The easiest way to do this is to install an add-on such as Readability (www.readability.com/addons) or Evernote Clearly (evernote.com/clearly), which both clean up pages instantly when you click their toolbar buttons. It's true that when you first visit a page, you'll need to load its full, slow version, but once the 'print-friendly' option has been activated, it will apply to subsequent pages in the article you're reading. Both Readability and Evernote Clearly also let you save the streamlined article to read later, without needing to load the excess baggage.

Here's how an article on Digital Spy looks before and after we cleaned it up using Readability. ■



Run your favourite software online

Avoid the hassle and risk of downloading and installing programs by running them in your browser instead. **Jonathan Parkyn** reveals the easiest and cleverest ways to use software online

Run programs from the cloud using Cameyo

You're probably already familiar with the concept of portable apps – programs that you can run from a USB stick, rather than having to install them on your PC. But what if the apps themselves were stored in the cloud rather than on a physical drive? That's precisely the idea behind the brilliant Cameyo (online.cameyo.com/public), which offers a massive library of apps including VLC, Foxit Reader, OpenOffice, Picasa and many more, that you can run straight from your browser.

To get started, just click an app, then click Play – there's a brief pause while the app buffers but, once it has loaded, it runs in your browser pretty smoothly.

You can use most Cameyo apps without even needing an account, although not all of them work in your browser. If you sign up with Cameyo (which is free), you'll unlock further useful features, including the ability to access your favourite apps from anywhere, connect to your Dropbox account and, as we explain in the next tip, upload your own apps to the service.



Upload any program to the cloud

If Cameyo doesn't yet have the app you want, then there are a couple of ways to manually add it to service. For example, you can sign into your Cameyo account, click Add App on the left, then select 'Create a new Cameyo package (from software installer)' and either point Cameyo directly to the URL for the program or choose 'Local machine' to upload the EXE file from your own PC. By default, Cameyo will only store your app for seven days but you can get around this by storing it permanently in your own Dropbox space instead.

Even cleverer is Cameyo's Desktop uploader (bit.ly/uploader370), which lets you turn programs into portable apps and upload them by 'recording' their installation procedure. Run the tool and choose 'Capture an installation'. The program will take a snapshot of your PC. When prompted, install your program as normal and click 'Install done' in the Cameyo window when it's complete. When the tool has finished packaging the app, use the Add App option on the Cameyo website as described above, but this time opt for 'Upload existing Cameyo package' and select the app from your PC. The downside here is that you need to

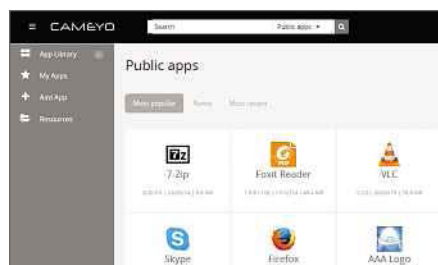
physically install the program on your PC in order to upload it.

Cameyo is based on virtualisation technology and, theoretically, this means you can use it to run any Windows program. However, several of the apps we tried to upload failed for some reason. There are also limits to the file size – 120MB if you point Cameyo to a URL and 30MB if you're uploading from your PC. Some anti-virus software wrongly flags Cameyo as a threat, rest assured that we've found it's completely safe to use.

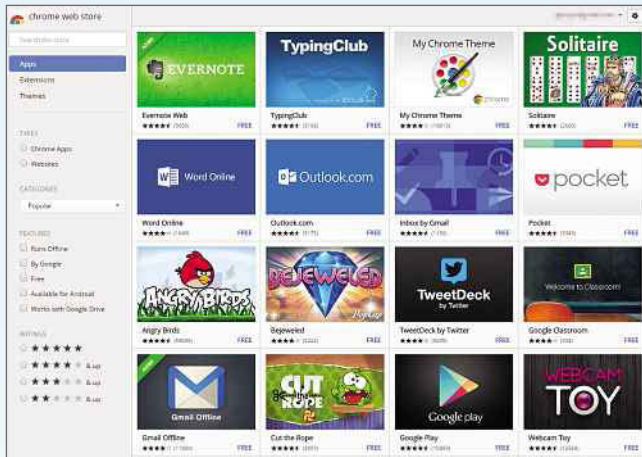


Use Chrome app versions of popular programs

Google's Chrome OS is designed for using web apps, but you don't need a Chromebook to take advantage of this approach. If you use Chrome as your browser, you can get a taste of Chrome OS on your PC by adding apps – visit



Run software online



bit.ly/chromeapps370 to see what's available.

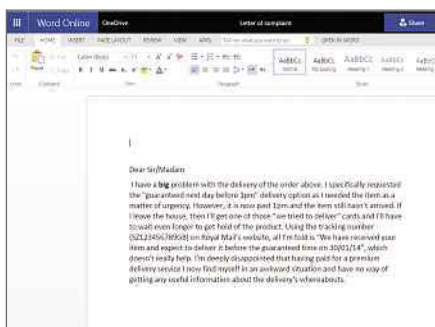
Chrome's app library is growing all the time. Most Chrome apps are free and there are browser-based equivalents for many programs. Evernote, Pixlr, Spotify, Zoho Docs and Microsoft Word Online are among the big names but there are many other great tools, including music players, file converters and more. You'll even find free browser versions of popular games, such as Cut the Rope, Angry Birds and Bejeweled.

The benefits of Chrome apps are that you can sync them between PCs just by signing in, they're always kept up to date and, because they're hosted on the web (although some also work offline), they'll never infect or crash your PC.

Switch from office software to online tools

Of all the software installed on your PC, the programs you use the most are likely to be your office applications, such as your word processor and spreadsheet program. Microsoft's Office has always been expensive, but its recent switch to annual subscription fees (up to £80 a year) means that it's now out of reach for many of us.

The good news is that, these days, it's entirely possible to avoid installing – or paying for – office tools. Microsoft's often overlooked Office Online (office.live.com) provides fully-functioning online versions of Word, Excel and PowerPoint, and lets you store all your



documents online in OneDrive, for free. The online versions don't have all the bells and whistles of their Desktop equivalents but the most useful tools and features are present, including a bucketload of free templates.

And Microsoft's web apps aren't the only good online office tools; Google Docs (drive.google.com) and Zoho (www.zoho.com) are

both great, while the popular office suite LibreOffice (www.libreoffice.org) is set to launch an online version soon.

Use web-based versions of your favourite software

It's not just office suites you'll find online. Developers of many big-name programs have started offering web-app versions of their popular tools. Why pay for and install the full version of Photoshop, for instance, when you can simply open your browser, go to www.photoshop.com/tools and upload an image to Adobe's Photoshop Express Editor instead?



In some cases, you can avoid installing an application altogether. Spotify users, for example, may assume that you need to use the Desktop application to stream music on your PC, but there's a perfectly good web player you can use via your browser at play.spotify.com. Evernote Web (www.evernote.com) and Kindle Cloud Reader (bit.ly/kindle370) are other good examples.

Run classic software and games in your browser

As well as giving you online access to all the latest web apps and programs, your browser can also act as a window to the past, thanks to the Internet Archive's amazing collection of software (bit.ly/archive370). Here, you can load and run thousands of computer applications and



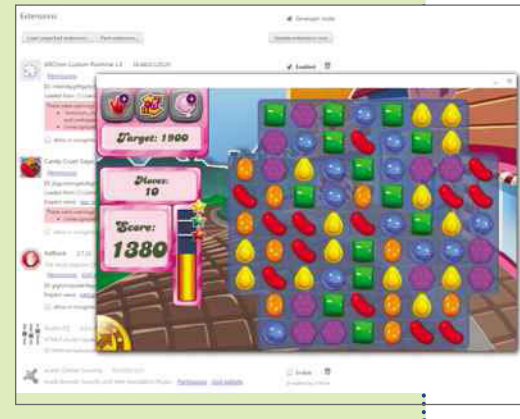
video games from yesteryear right inside your browser, including old programs for systems such as the ZX Spectrum, Atari Computer, Apple II, MS-DOS and more.

If you're anything like us, you'll immediately indulge in a little digital nostalgia, recreating your misspent youth as you replay your way through classic games such as Elite, Chuckie Egg, Jet Set Willy and many, many more.

RUN ANDROID APPS IN CHROME











Some Android apps run natively in Google's Chrome OS and, with a bit of jiggery-pokery, it's also possible to run them on your PC via the Chrome browser. You'll need to install the ARChon Custom Runtime (bit.ly/archon370) – an engine that runs Android apps on your PC – and enable Developer Mode in Chrome so you can load ARChon as an extension. You'll then be able to run some Android apps in a browser tab, just as you would on your phone or tablet.

A warning, however – this hack isn't for the faint-hearted. It comes with no guarantees and, if you decide to proceed, then you do so at your own risk. See bit.ly/androidchrome370 for full instructions and bit.ly/appslst370 for a list of apps that work with ARChon.



Broadband Deals

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	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1		TalkTalk: Broadband	£3.50 (12 months HALF PRICE)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	CHEAPEST £21.00
2		EE: Broadband & Calls	£9.95 (£2.50 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£30.00
3		Plusnet: Broadband & Calls	£9.99 (£2.50 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£30.00
4		Sky: Broadband & Calls	£7.50 (12 months HALF PRICE)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£45.00
5		Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£17.50 (12 months HALF PRICE)	18 months	50Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£105.00
6		TalkTalk Fibre Broadband	£13.50 (£5 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£111.00
7		Plusnet: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£14.99 (£3.99 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£113.88
8		EE: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£19.95 (£9.95 for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£179.40
9		Sky: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£20.00 (6 months HALF PRICE)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£180.00
10		Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£30.00 (£20 for 12 months)	18 months	152Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	FASTEST £240.00

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 21 April 2015.

Ofcom

Broadband Genie's helpline is powered by Simplify Digital, the Ofcom-accredited switching service



Take a Screen Break

Technology moves so quickly that it's easy to forget big stories from only a few years ago. This issue we're asking you to think back to **2004**



1 Which technology company entered the stock market in August 2004 valued at \$24 billion?

2 Which artist performed at the UK launch of iTunes in June 2004: Justin Timberlake, Destiny's Child or Alicia Keys?



3 The UK's Official Download Chart launched in September 2004. Which boyband scored the first number one on the chart?

4 Facebook launched for Harvard University students in February 2004. What was it originally called?



5 What web-based service did Google launch on 1 April 2004 (and no, it wasn't an April Fool's joke!)?

6 The best-selling game of the year (pictured) was the sequel to Grand Theft Auto: Vice City. But in which fictional location was it set?



7 What were Netsky and Sasser, which were created by an 18-year-old German named Sven Jaschan?

8 According to Ofcom, roughly how many UK households had a broadband internet connection by the end of 2004?

9 The iPod Mini was one of the most popular gadgets of the year. How many colours was it initially available in?



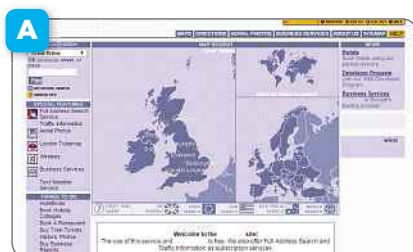
10 Who was the most searched-for person of 2004 according to Google: Paris Hilton, Britney Spears or Orlando Bloom?

11 What did the ISP Freeserve change its name to in April 2004, to match that of its parent company?

12 What was US dictionary Merriam-Webster's word of the year, which it defined as "a web site on which someone writes about personal opinions and experiences"?



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE POPULAR WEBSITES FROM 2004?



Get the answers online at www.webuser.co.uk/quiz370

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 5 Penclic Mouse B3

The Penclic Mouse B3 looks like a pen, but is really a mouse with a pen-like handgrip. It offers more precise control and movement than any standard mouse on the market. Its clever design recognises that holding a pen is a more natural position for your hand than rotating your wrist to control a mouse. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'penclic' in the subject line. For more info on Penclic visit www.penclic.se, follow @penclic on Twitter.



WORTH
£79.99
EACH

WIN 1 OF 8 OtterBox Symmetry Case for Samsung Galaxy S6

OtterBox's new Symmetry Case for the Samsung Galaxy S6 is one of the slimmest and most protective cases you can buy. The bevelled edge helps keep the touchscreen safe, while the internal material and honeycomb coring help protect the device from drops. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'otterbox' in the subject line. For more info on OtterBox visit www.otterbox.co.uk and follow @OtterBox_UK on Twitter.



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Practical WebUser

17 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Save web content with Microsoft OneNote | www.onenote.com

Microsoft's web-clipping and note-taking tool is now available free on all devices, from Windows and Mac to iOS and Android. Here's how to use it

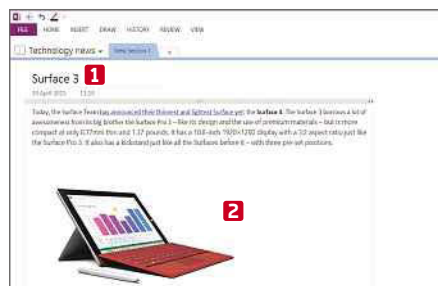
If you use the web for research or to scribble down ideas and reminders throughout the day, a note-taking tool such as OneNote is invaluable. You can clip content from web pages and store it – along with notes, photos, sketches, and more – in digital notebooks. You can create multiple notebooks for different purposes ('Home', 'Work' and 'Holidays', for example), and access stored content

on your devices, or via the web. You can also share content with friends and colleagues – which is useful if you're collaborating on a project – and they don't need to have OneNote installed to view your notes.

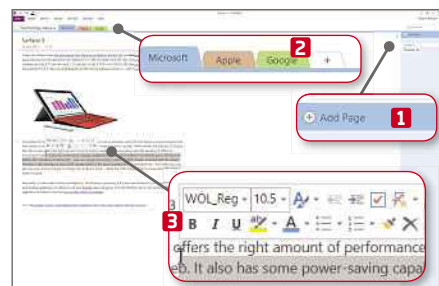
Your notebook additions are stored and synced in OneDrive, Microsoft's cloud storage service, so you don't even need to remember to save your changes.

NOTEBOOKS AND TABS

Switch to a different notebook using the drop-down menu. The colour-coded tabs link to sections within the notebook



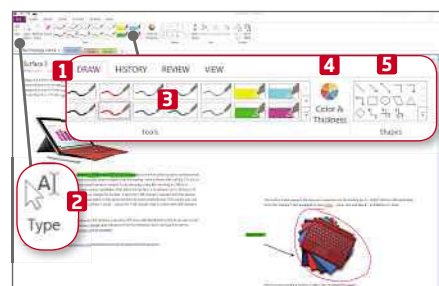
1 Create a new notebook from the File menu and give it a name. You'll be able to invite people to access the content you add or just keep it private for now. OneNote will present you with a blank page. Enter a title for this page, **1** then click anywhere to type or paste content. **2**



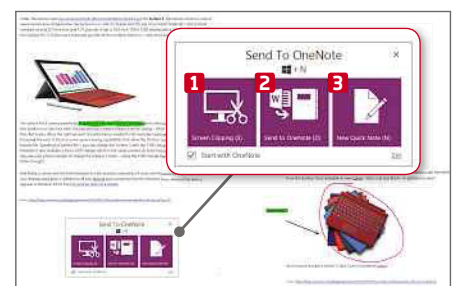
2 Notebooks can have multiple pages. Add a new page using the sidebar on the right. **1** You can also add multiple tabbed sections. **2** Double-click a tab to rename it. Right-clicking an item brings up a context menu with relevant options. To change text style, select some text and choose the formatting options. **3**



3 Items can be pulled around the page and positioned anywhere. OneNote uses Microsoft's ribbon interface but tucks it out of the way. To add content, click Insert. **1** You can use the menu to add attachments, images and spreadsheets (including ones from the web), **2** and record audio and video. **3**



4 You can sketch and add annotations in OneNote by clicking Draw. **1** The Type tool **2** lets you add text to your notebook and select items. You can choose a brush, **3** and adjust the colours and thickness. **4** You can also add shapes to the page. **5**



5 There's a handy Send To OneNote tool that starts alongside the main program. Use this to take and insert screen clippings, **1** and to send the currently selected page (in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or Internet Explorer) to OneNote. **2** You can also make a new Quick Note. **3**





HISTORY

The History menu lets you view recent edits, find or hide content from notebook collaborators, see page versions and access the notebook recycle bin

SEARCH

The search box lets you locate words on a page, in a section or a section group, in a particular notebook or across all notebooks

PAGES

Each section can have multiple pages, listed here. Click Add Page to create more

1 million in the



looks as if the tech giant
orders have already triggered
Apple knows how to play this
up the early demand for
like for interesting reading.
watch on Friday. As you might
62 percent of buyers opting
se.
ppers, **preorders** spent an
the average works
percent of Apple Watch
st two years.
as a sign of the product's



An incredibly precise timepiece.

High-quality watches have long been defined by their ability to keep unfailingly accurate time, and Apple Watch is no exception. In conjunction with your iPhone, **it keeps time within 50 milliseconds** of the definitive global time standard. It even lets you customise your watch face to present time in a meaningful, personal context that's relevant to your life and schedule.

From: <http://www.apple.com/uk/feature/>

There's already a crazy scheme to extend the Apple Watch battery



As with any new Apple product, there will soon be a robust third-party accessories market filled with cases, bands, and inexplicable gadgets built for the Apple Watch, many of which won't do what they claim or will be simply awful. The **Wipowerband** lands somewhere between the last two options. **Wipowerband** says its high-density polymer case that straps on to your Apple Watch can nearly double the battery life of your new favorite wearable, a fact seemingly not backed up by any actual tests with an actual Apple Watch, but by "estimates."

This is not to mention the fact that Apple would likely need to approve any device that uses the **MagSafe** charger on the back of the Apple Watch, and **Wipowerband's** "inductive tight couple" technology might not meet Apple's standards. There will be many more companies offering battery chargers for the Apple Watch — many of which will come from more reliable companies and will have actually been tested on the actual device — so it's probably wise to avoid this charger. But if you'd like to take a chance on the **Wipowerband**, you can pre-order the device for \$89 for the 38mm case or \$99 for the 42mm case with your choice of five different colors.

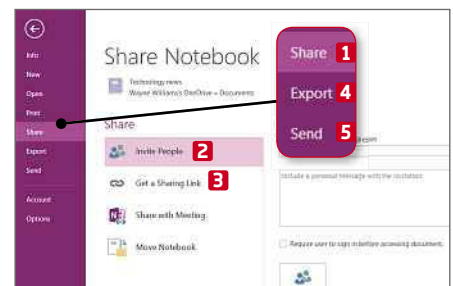
From: <http://www.theverge.com/2015/4/13/8481777/wipowerband-double-battery-apple-watch>



6 There's a free Clipper tool for your browser, available to install from the OneNote site. You'll need to sign into your Microsoft account to use it. Browse the web as normal and, when you find something you want to clip, click the button in the toolbar. **1** You can clip a full page, region or article. **2**



7 To clip a region, draw around it. **1** Use the Location drop-down menu **2** to select the notebook you want to add the clipped item to. Click the down arrows to select a section in your book. Clicking Clip **3** will add that item to OneNote. It will appear as a new page.



8 To share notebooks with someone, go to File and click Share. **1** You can invite friends **2** or get a sharing link. **3** People can view or edit your notebooks. Export **4** lets you export pages, sections or notebooks. Send **5** lets you email the current page, send it as an attachment, or a PDF, or forward it to Word or a blog.



Convert an old PC into a virtual PC

VMware vCenter Converter: bit.ly/convert370 | ⌚ 60 mins | 🖥️ XP, Vista, 7, 8.1+

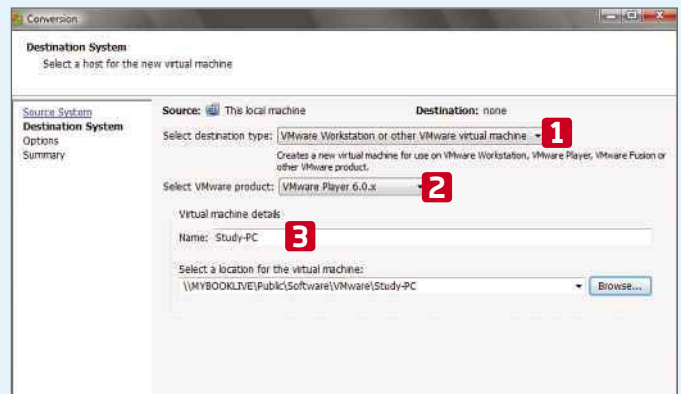
If you've got an old PC gathering dust in a corner of your house, or abandoned in the loft or garage, but you can't bring yourself to chuck it out or repurpose it for a new task because you've got a nagging feeling that you might need it again someday, then try turning it into a virtual PC.

This means that you can keep its contents on a hard drive to run whenever you need it. The virtual PC is a direct copy of the original, including the operating system, the programs and the data, so you can use it from within the virtualisation software installed on another PC as if you were accessing it remotely. You can then either ditch the old PC or use it for a new project, without worrying about any data or programs you might lose.

Previously, we've used VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org) for our virtual PC workshops, but VMware's handy free tool vCenter Converter (bit.ly/convert370) takes a lot of the hassle out of creating a virtual PC. It creates a virtual machine to run in the VMware Player software (bit.ly/player370, also free).



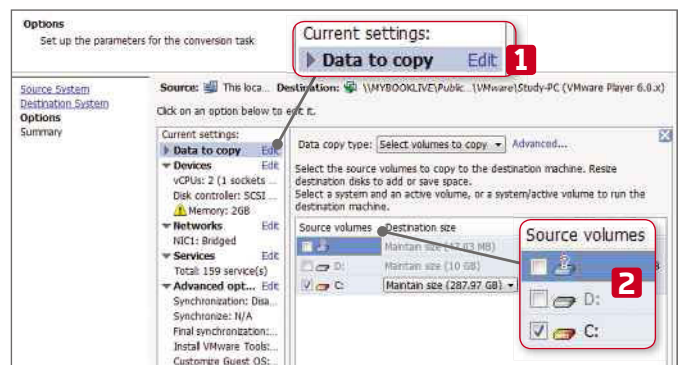
1 Download, install and run VMware vCenter Converter (bit.ly/convert370) on the PC you want to convert into a virtual PC. Click the 'Convert machine' button. This opens a new window. On the Source System tab, **1** select 'This local machine'. **2** Click Next. **3**



2 Next to 'Select destination type' choose 'VMware Workstation or other VMware virtual machine'. **1** Next to 'Select VMware product', choose VMware Player 6.0.x. **2** The PC's name **3** should already be present.



3 Click the Browse button **1** to choose a location to store the files. This could be an external hard drive or a network drive, but make sure you will be able to access it from the PC on which you'll be running the virtual PC. The process will be faster if you use a local drive. Click Next. **2**



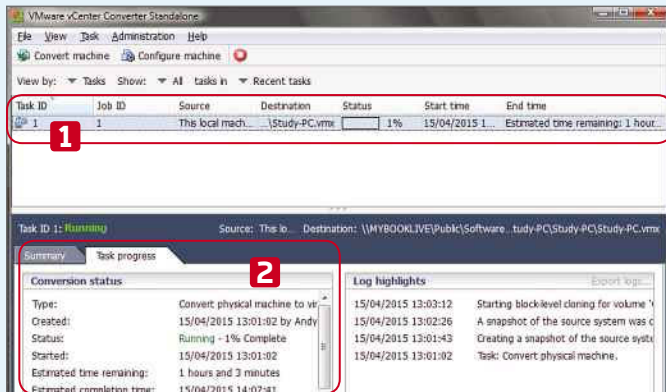
4 In the Options section, you can further configure your virtual PC. We clicked Edit next to 'Data to copy' **1** and removed unwanted drives (the recovery and DVD drive) **2** but left the other options. You might be able to improve the performance by making more tweaks.



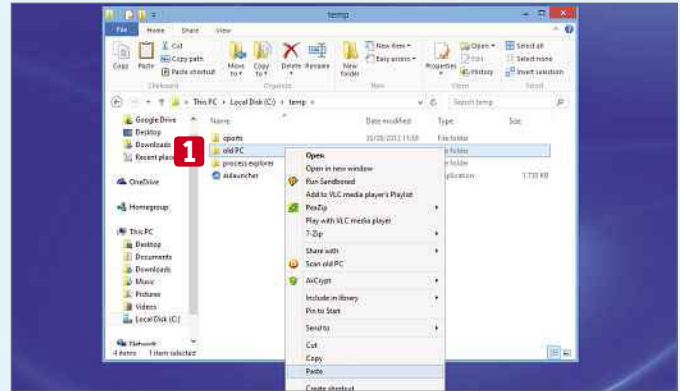
EXPERT TIP

Andy Shaw says

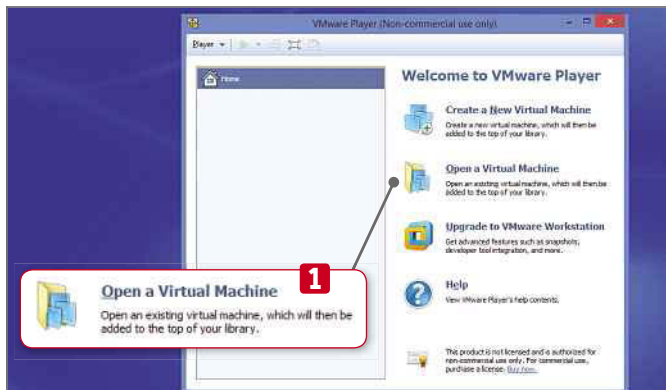
There are other ways you can use VMware Player. It's like VirtualBox, so you can use it to try out the latest version of Windows 10. Download the Preview from bit.ly/windows370 and click 'Create a New Virtual Machine'. You could also use it to run virtual Linux PCs if you want to try them without using a Live CD or dual-booting your PC. Download Linux Mint, for example, from www.linuxmint.com.



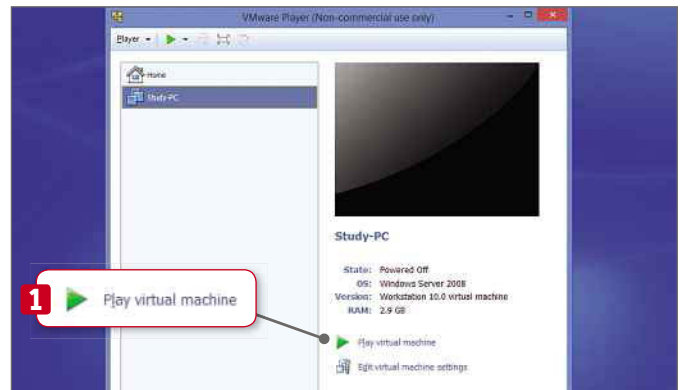
5 Click Next, then Finish to submit the job for creation. You'll see the job in progress, complete with the source, destination, status and estimate of remaining time. **1** Click it to get more information below. **2**



6 If you have the space on your current PC, transfer the folder that contains your saved file across to your hard drive. **1** It will be a large file, since it contains everything that was on your old PC, but the virtual PC will perform much better.



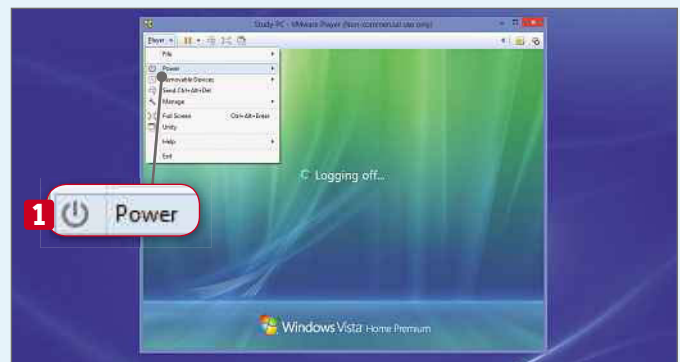
7 To run the machine, download, install and run VMware Player (bit.ly/player370, 32-bit users should select Major Version 6.0). Click 'Open a Virtual Machine' **1** and browse to the folder with the saved copy of the old PC. You're looking for the configuration file, which has the .vmx extension.



8 When the machine has loaded, click 'Play virtual machine'. **1** The old version of Windows will start. You may get asked to install tools – at the time we tested the software, the download didn't work, so you can safely run the software without it.



9 Click the virtual PC's Desktop. **1** Your mouse will start controlling the old PC's screen. To bring your mouse back to the main window, press Ctrl+Alt. To make changes to the virtual machine, shut it down (see Step 10) then choose 'Edit virtual machine settings' from the main Window.



10 To shut down the virtual PC, use the standard Shut Down option from within the virtual operating system. You can also close the program from the Player menu by selecting the Power option, **1** but you should only do this if you can't shut down the virtual PC any other way.



Stop add-ons making unwanted browser changes

Browser add-ons and plug-ins can operate behind the scenes, carrying out actions without your knowledge or control. So how can you be sure they're safe?

Chrome and Firefox have different ways of protecting your

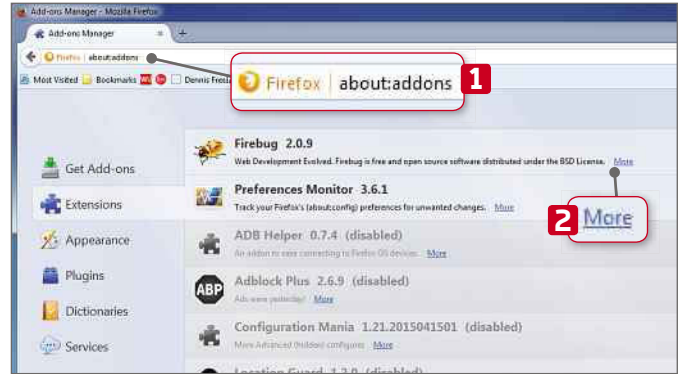
browser from unwanted changes and plug-ins that can cause problems. We'll guide you through managing both methods in this Workshop.



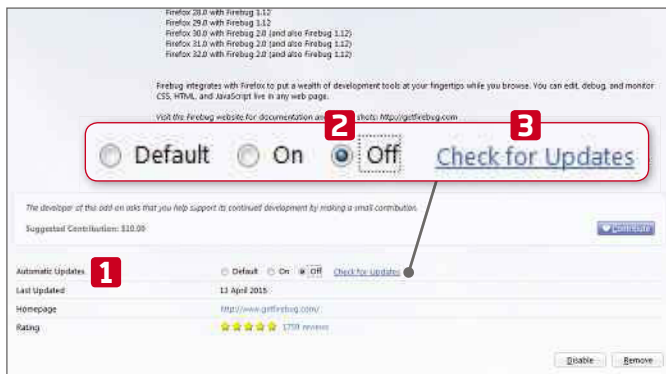
Chrome and Firefox: bit.ly/chrome370 or bit.ly/ff370 | 10 mins | Chrome, Firefox



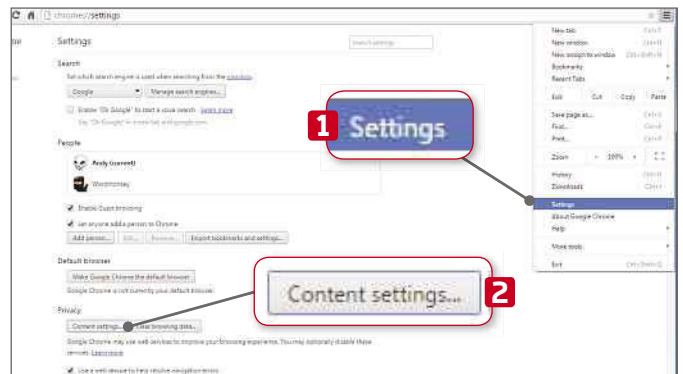
1 Chrome add-ons update automatically in the background unless they need to change your settings, in which case they'll disable until you manually re-enable them. Look out for a warning in the menu or a pop-up message. Click Re-enable **1** if you're happy with any proposed changes.



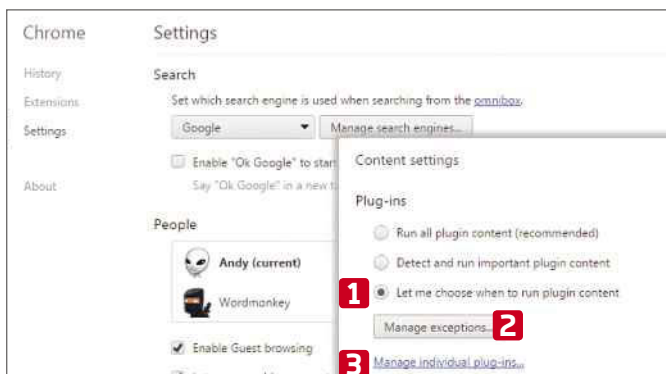
2 To stop add-ons updating automatically in Firefox, type `about:addons` into the address bar. **1** Find the add-on that you want to stop updating itself and click the More link next to its description. **2**



3 Scroll through the options to find the Automatic Updates section. **1** Click the button to switch the option off. **2** Firefox adds a manual 'Check for Updates' link, **3** which is worth using every now and again to check whether there have been any security updates.



4 There's a small selection of plug-ins that are pre-installed in Chrome. They are safe to use, but you may still prefer to control when they're deployed. Open the menu, choose Settings, **1** then scroll down and click 'Show advanced settings'. In the Privacy section click the 'Content settings' button. **2**



5 Scroll down to Plug-ins. Click 'Let me choose when to run plugin content'. **1** Click 'Manage exceptions' to create exceptions for specific websites. **2** To re-enable individual plugins, click 'Manage individual plug-ins' **3** and choose 'Always allowed to run' next to any you want to stop blocking.



6 Unlike Google, Firefox doesn't take responsibility for plug-ins and its external add-ons (such as Flash) are more dangerous if they're not kept up to date. To regularly check them, visit mozilla.org/plugincheck. If you find any Outdated Plugins, **1** click Update Now. **2**



Hack Windows with Winaero Tweaker

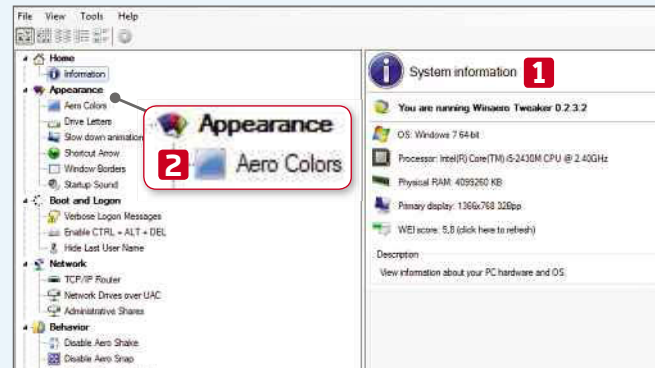
Winaero Tweaker is a lightweight application that rolls multiple Windows hacks into one tool. Some of the options vary according to the version of Windows you're running, so in this Workshop we've shown

you some of the most useful tweaks for Windows 7, including changing the default drag-and-drop action and hiding the last login username on startup.

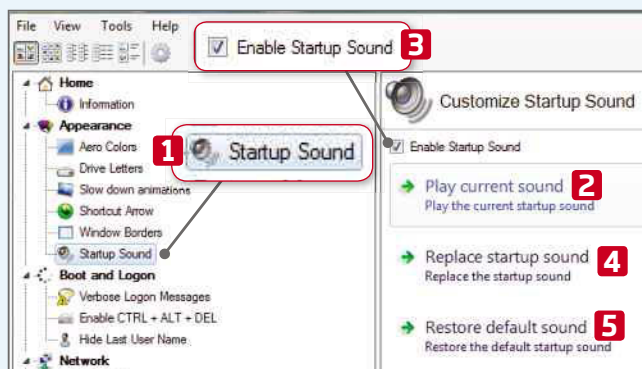
Winaero Tweaker: bit.ly/winaero370 | 10 mins | XP, Vista, 7, 8.1+



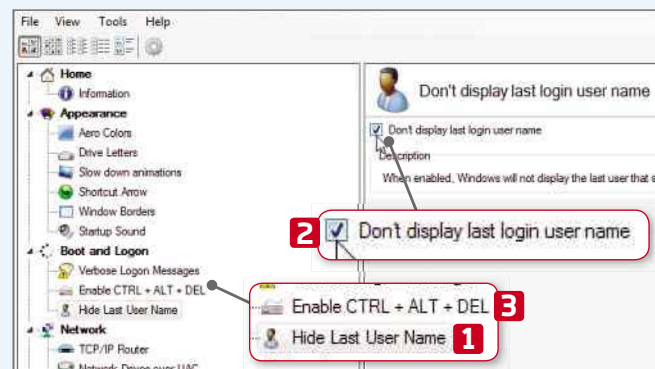
1 Download, **1** extract and run Winaero Tweaker, paying careful attention not to click any of the adverts **2** on the Winaero site. It's a portable application, so you don't need to install it, but remember to save it somewhere you can easily find it.



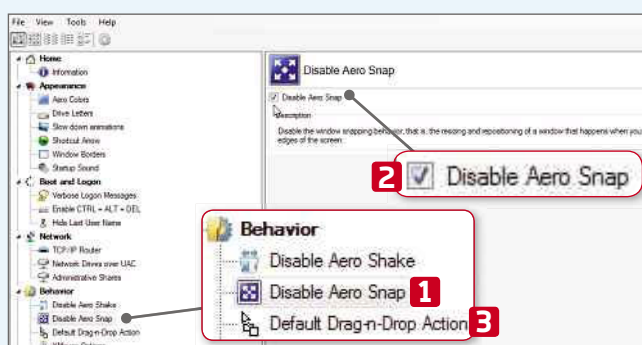
2 The application loads a page with information about your PC, including your operating system, processor and RAM. **1** Click Aero Colors **2** in the Appearance section to alter the colour and transparency of your windows, Start menu and taskbar.



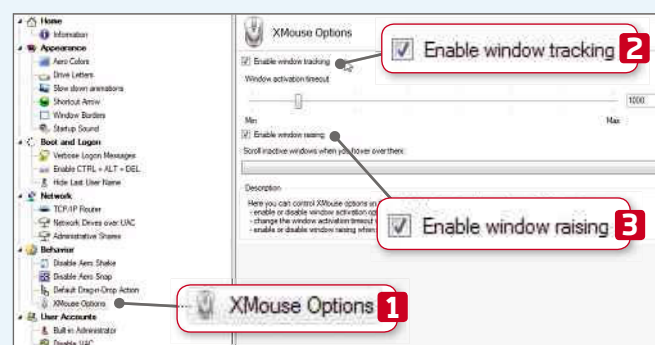
3 Select Startup Sound **1** and 'Play current sound' **2** to hear your PC's start-up tone. Untick Enable Startup Sound **3** to disable it or click 'Replace startup sound' **4** to browse your PC to select a different WAV file. The default sound can be restored by clicking the appropriate button. **5**



4 If you'd prefer Windows not to display the last user who logged in when you boot your PC, select Hide Last User Name **1** and tick 'Don't display last login user name'. **2** Click 'Enable CTRL + ALT + DEL' **3** and tick the correct box if you'd like users to press these keys before they can log in.



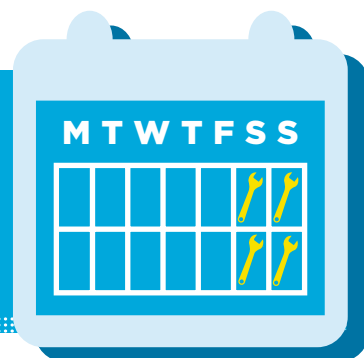
5 Windows resizes windows when you drag them to the screen's top or side edges. To disable this, click Disable Aero Snap **1** and tick the box. **2** Default Drag-n-Drop Action **3** lets you set Windows to copy or move an item, or create a shortcut to it when it's dragged and dropped.



6 When two windows are open, you need to click the inactive one to use it. Select XMouse Options **1** and click 'Enable window tracking' **2** if you want to activate windows by hovering your cursor over them. 'Enable window raising' **3** will bring the inactive window to the front.

Weekend Project

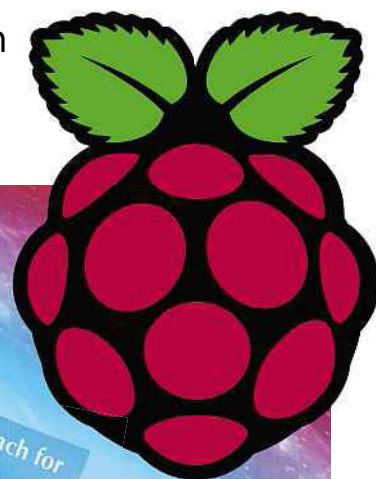
Get to grips with some serious PC DIY to boost your computer's performance



How to...

Use your Raspberry Pi to block ads on every device

Browser add-ons that block ads only work on certain devices. **Wayne Williams** shows you how to use a Raspberry Pi to block ads on *all* your devices



Advertising is the lifeblood of the web. It's what sustains a lot of sites and makes their continued presence viable. Having said that, it can sometimes feel like you're being bombarded by online advertising, and a lot of it is obtrusive and distracting. If you want to block ads, you can do so using a browser-specific add-on such as Adblock Plus (adblockplus.org) or a general-purpose tool such as Anvi AD Blocker Ultimate (www.anvisoft.com). If you can't bear any ads, you could try AdTrap (www.getadtrap.com). This ad-blocking device connects to your router to stop ads reaching any device on your network, even those that don't have their own ad blockers. It costs \$129 (about £86) plus postage and packaging, but you can use a Raspberry Pi, which cost around £25, to do the same job for free. In this Weekend Project, we'll show you how to set it up.

Why build an ad-blocker?

If you don't want to see ads while you're browsing the web, installing an add-on such as Adblock Plus seems like the simplest solution. Just download and install the software, optionally configure it to suit your specific needs, then forget about it. If an occasional ad makes it through, you can quickly block it via the right-click context menu.

There are some drawbacks to this

method, though. Adblock Plus lets through what it deems to be "acceptable ads", which you might not agree with, although it's easy to change this if you want a completely ad-free web. You also need to install the software on all your browsers, and all your devices, which is a pain. And although Adblock Plus is available for Android, you need to download the app from the Adblock Plus website and sideload it on your devices,



AdTrap plugs into your router and prevents ads from getting through to your network



because Google has banned (most) ad blockers from the Play Store. The app isn't available for iOS at all.

Most damning of all, Adblock Plus and other similar ad blockers can significantly increase the amount of memory your browser uses. You may not feel the difference on a super-speedy PC, but it'll have a noticeable effect on an underpowered laptop.

A router-level ad blocker solves all these problems by filtering out any online advertising before it can even reach your browser. You don't need to install any software on your PC, or any apps on your smartphone or tablet. Once it's up and running, it just works, with no impact at all on the speed of your browsing.

What you'll need

• A Raspberry Pi (www.raspberrypi.org)

The bare-bones, credit card-sized computer is available in a choice of models (A, A+, B, B+ and Raspberry Pi 2 Model B). If you don't already own one,

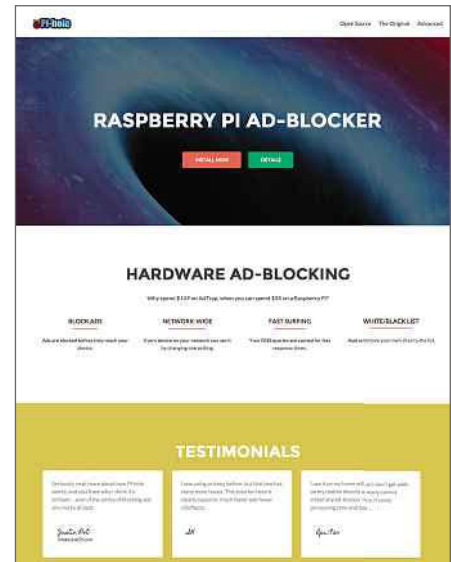
then go for the £30 Raspberry Pi 2 Model B because it's the latest version, is faster and more powerful than any of its predecessors, and will run a version of Windows 10 when Microsoft releases the new OS. That said, any version of the Pi will work fine as an ad blocker. You'll also need all the hardware required to use the Raspberry Pi, including a screen (either a TV or a computer monitor with HDMI input), an HDMI/DVI cable (to connect the Pi to the display), an Ethernet cable, a USB keyboard and mouse, and a micro USB cable or power supply to power the device. Once the ad blocker is up and running, you can disconnect the screen, keyboard and mouse, so borrow these from another device if you can.

• An SD or microSD card

Which one you need depends on the model of Pi you own (the latter is used in newer variations).

• The Raspbian 'Wheezy' OS

The most commonly used operating system on the Raspberry Pi. We'll show



Pi-Hole removes ads from websites before they reach your browser

you how to set this up in our Mini Workshop, below.

• Pi-Hole

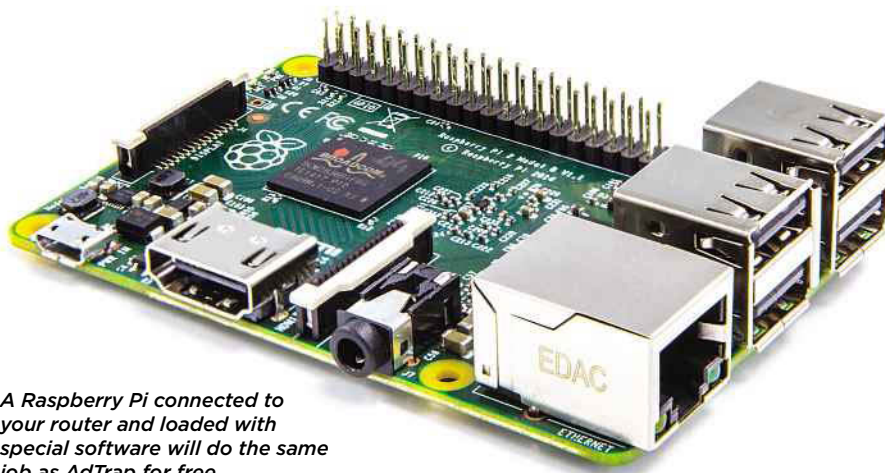
A DNS/web server for Raspberry Pi that will block the ads. You can find out more about it at pi-hole.net. We'll show you how to set it up in our Mini Workshop on page 61.

• A static IP address for the Pi

To get this, you'll need to go into your router's settings and look for something like "static DHCP reservation". The exact location and process for making a reservation will vary depending on the make and model of your router, but it's very straightforward.

Change the DNS settings in iOS and Android

You'll probably want to use your Pi-Hole-



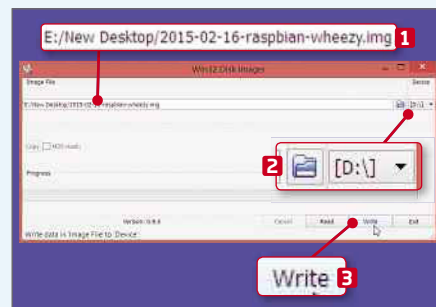
A Raspberry Pi connected to your router and loaded with special software will do the same job as AdTrap for free



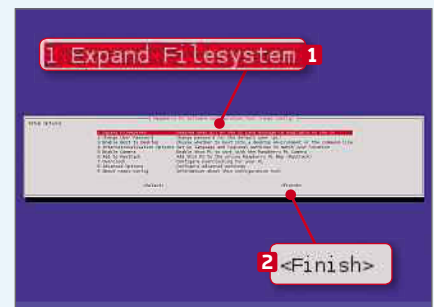
MINI WORKSHOP | Create a clean installation of the latest version of Raspbian



1 Download the Raspbian 'Wheezy' OS from www.raspberrypi.org/downloads on to your PC. You have the option of installing the OS through NOOBS **1** (a dedicated OS installer for Raspberry Pi), but it's not necessary. Choose if you want to download Raspbian via BitTorrent, **2** or as a direct download. **3** It's a 974MB file.



2 When the download has completed, unzip it to a folder on your hard drive and connect the SD card or microSD card to your PC, using an adaptor if necessary. Download and run Win32 Disk Imager (bit.ly/dskimg370). Browse to the image file that you extracted earlier, **1** then select your SD card **2** and click Write. **3**



3 Insert the SD card into your Raspberry Pi and plug it in. The Raspi-config window will open. Select Expand File System (so all the SD card's space is available to the OS), **1** then select Finish **2** and reboot. Type `pi` at the raspberrypi login and `raspberrypi` as the password. Launch the Desktop by typing `startx`.

powered Raspberry Pi ad blocker to banish adverts from other (non-Windows) devices. To do this, you'll need to change the DNS on any iOS or Android devices you use. On an Apple device, tap Settings, then tap Wi-Fi. Tap the 'i' next to your Wi-Fi connection and change the DNS settings. Enter your Pi's IP address as the first one.

In Android, go to Settings and select Wi-Fi. Press down your current wireless network, then select 'Modify network' in the options. Scroll down and tick 'Show advanced options'. You will now be able to scroll down further. Tap 'DHCP' under IPv4 Settings and switch to 'Static'. You can now change the DNS settings.

In case something goes wrong

When configuring the DNS settings on your devices, you'll be given the option of adding two addresses. The safest option is to set the first one using the address of your Raspberry Pi, then set the second one as the existing DNS IP address provided by your ISP. If you prefer, you can use Google Public DNS (8.8.8.8) or OpenDNS (208.67.222.222) as the secondary IP address instead. Make a note of the existing DNS server details before changing anything, then you can quickly switch back if you encounter any problems with your ad-blocker.

It's worth remembering that in order for your new Raspberry Pi ad blocker to work, it will need to be connected to your

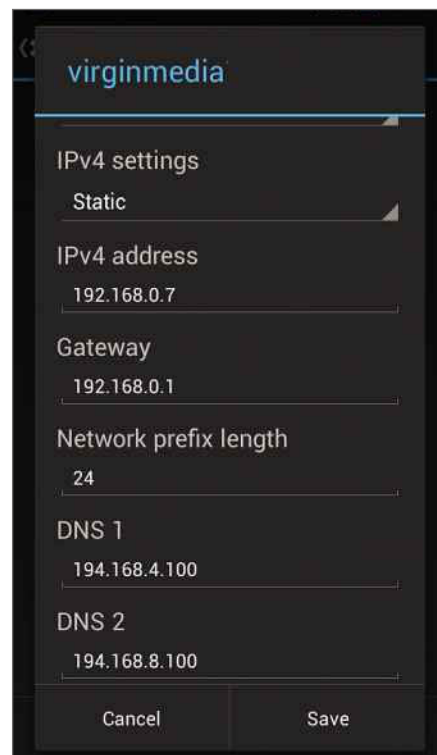


To get your mobile devices accessing the internet through the ad blocker, you'll need to change their DNS addresses

router and left running all the time. To stop blocking ads, just unplug the Pi. So long as you have the alternate DNS address in place you will still be able to connect to the internet as before.

How well does it work?

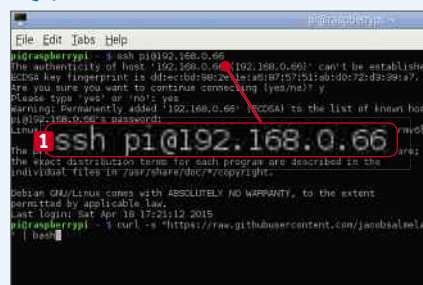
In practice, we've found it blocks most of



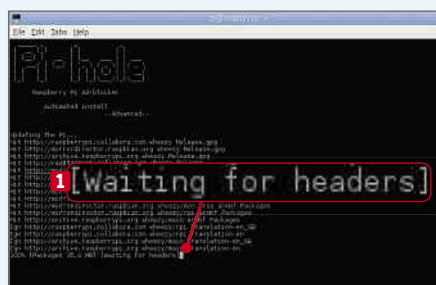
adverts you're likely to encounter on the web. It isn't foolproof – adverts still occasionally get through – but development on Pi-Hole is ongoing and the software should improve over time. It certainly works well enough for you to remove any existing ad-blocking software from your devices. ■



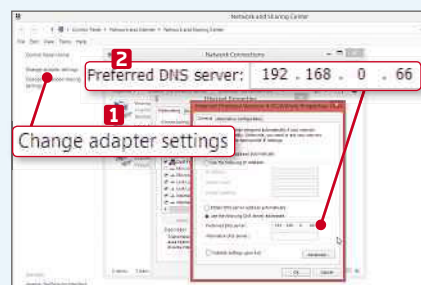
MINI WORKSHOP | Set up the Pi-Hole ad blocker



1 Once Raspbian is up and running, open LXTerminal and type `ssh pi@IP.address` (using the IP address that you assigned through your router settings) and press Enter. **1** Next, download and run the Pi-Hole installer by typing `curl -s "https://raw.githubusercontent.com/jacobsalmela/pi-hole/master/automated%20install/basic-install.sh" | bash`



2 This script sets up everything for you. It will ensure your Pi is running the latest software; install and configure the required DNS service and web server; and download a comprehensive list of adware servers. The installation process takes a while to complete, but you can view its progress in the window **1** or just leave it and come back later.



3 Next, you'll want to point your PC at the ad blocker. Go to the Control Panel, click 'Network and Internet', 'Network and Sharing Center', 'Change adapter settings'. **1** Right-click your network connection and select Properties. Click 'Internet Protocol Version 4', then Properties. Click 'Use The Following DNS Servers'. Enter your Pi's reserved IP address as the primary DNS server. **2**

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Set up multiple monitors

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Web User's Top Tips

Our experts show how to use Audacity to record anything, including streaming radio and 'live' events

TOP TIPS FOR RECORDING WITH AUDACITY

Record any sound on your PC

An easy way to record whatever audio is playing on your computer, whether the source is streaming radio, video, a DVD or anything else, is to get a cable with two 3.5in jack plugs (one on each end). These cables cost less than a pound, and you can buy them from stores such as Amazon and Maplin. Plug one end of the cable into the PC's audio out (headphones socket) and the other into the audio in (microphone socket). The output may exceed the input, so you need to set the speaker volume to the minimum before you start to avoid any distortion. In Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net), set the record volume (microphone icon) to midway and then slowly increase the speaker volume until the recorded wave looks a reasonable size. If it is too loud, the sound quality will be ruined, so take care. A few test recordings will let you learn the best settings.



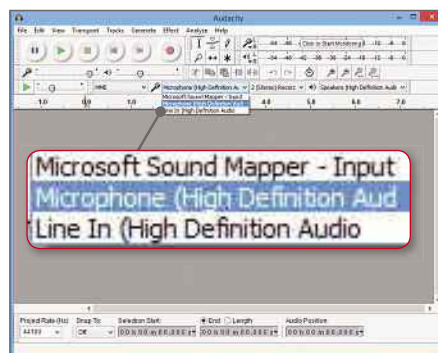
An audio cable can be used to record any sound you can hear on your PC

Record from the mic

Most laptops have a built-in microphone that's fine for making simple recordings on your computer. If your PC doesn't have a microphone, or you want better sound quality, you should buy one.

Audacity makes it very easy to create

recordings and simply clicking the red Record button will probably be sufficient. If it doesn't start recording, check the device's toolbar (the third one down). The first drop-down option on the left can usually be set to anything and MME, Windows DirectSound and Windows WASAPI all worked for us. Set the second item to Microphone or Internal Microphone; the third to 2 (Stereo) Recording Channels; and the last one to Speakers. Set the microphone slider to the minimum and gradually increase it until the recording volume is right.



If your microphone isn't recording, check that Audacity is using the right device

Avoid clipping

Clipping is an effect that occurs when the audio source is too loud. It distorts the soundwave by clipping off or flattening the peak sounds, and should be avoided. Audacity's record volume is displayed in the top-right corner. It is automatically enabled when you start recording, but it can be enabled at any time, which is useful for testing the volume before a recording takes place.

At the right side of the scale is a value of 0 dB. As the audio volume rises, green bars grow along the scale. When they come close to 0 dB, they turn yellow and then red when they exceed



This is a serious case of clipping - try not to let it get this bad

it. The best recording volume is when the green bars stretch as far as possible, occasionally peaking in the yellow, but never turning red. Adjust the volume of the source if possible (although you won't be able to do this if you're recording a live concert, for example), and adjust the recording volume slider underneath the Pause, Stop and Play buttons.

Audacity can show you when clipping has occurred in the waveform. Go to the View menu and select Show Clipping, then look for vertical red lines in the waveform display. Clipped sounds cannot be repaired so they need to be avoided at the recording stage.

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.



Preview cuts before you make them

Audacity is great for editing audio files. If there's something that you want to cut out of a recording, just click and drag over it in the waveform and press the Delete key. If you want to be more professional about your edits, select the region and then use the Cut Preview feature. Press the C key and the audio starts playing from two seconds before the cut and stops one second after it, so you can hear what the cut will sound like before committing to it.

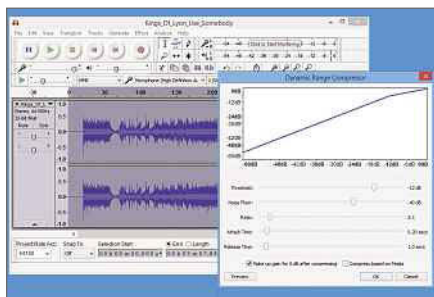
The length of the preview can be changed in the settings. Go to Edit, Preferences and select Playback. Enter the number of seconds of audio to play before and after the cut region.

Level the volume

If you are recording a podcast, voice-over or narration, you need to keep the volume steady. However, moving closer to or away from the microphone, turning your head or unconsciously speaking louder or quieter can cause fluctuations. You could select the quiet areas of your recording and use the Amplify function on the Effect menu to make them louder, but there is an alternative tool that works even better.

Select the whole track, go to the Effect menu and select Compressor. This tool makes the loud parts of your recording quieter and the quiet parts louder, levelling out the volume. Tick the boxes next to 'Make-up gain for 0 dB after compressing' and 'Compress based on Peaks'.

The Threshold setting is the point at which sounds are considered too loud, and -12 dB is a typical value. Noise Floor indicates that anything quieter than this is just background noise to be ignored. The Ratio setting is the amount by which you want to make the loud parts quieter, and values between 2:1 and 6:1 are typical. Just experiment with the settings and use the Preview button to test the volume before committing to the changes with the OK button. You can easily undo actions from the Edit menu if you don't like the way your changes have turned out.



Level your audio with the Compress tools

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Record streaming radio

Some radio programmes are available as downloadable podcasts, but most are not and it's useful to be able to record streaming radio so that you can listen again at a convenient time or on a different device. Whether you can do this depends on your PC's sound card and drivers, so it might not work for everyone.

Right-click the speaker icon in the taskbar and select 'Recording devices'. Right-click in an empty

File, Export (not the Save Project option). The audio is then saved to your hard drive.

If this doesn't work, try each of the options in the device toolbar's first menu with each of those in the second. You will find that some work better than others.

Reduce background noise

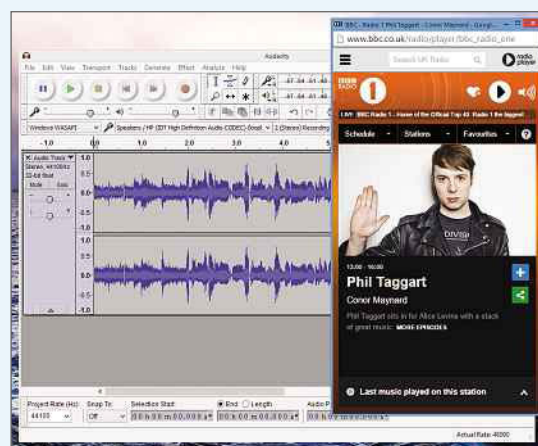
Noise reduction is a new feature in the latest version of Audacity and is useful for eliminating unwanted

background noises, such as hums, whistles, buzzes and hisses. Sometimes interference from other electrical equipment creates these noises, which can spoil recordings.

Load the recording into Audacity and use the zoom button and scrollbars to find and locate a part of the recording that contains only the sound you want to eliminate, such as a quiet part at the start, end or middle of a recording. Select a few seconds of the sound you want to remove by clicking and dragging

over the waveform, then go to Effect, Noise Reduction. Click Get Noise Profile.

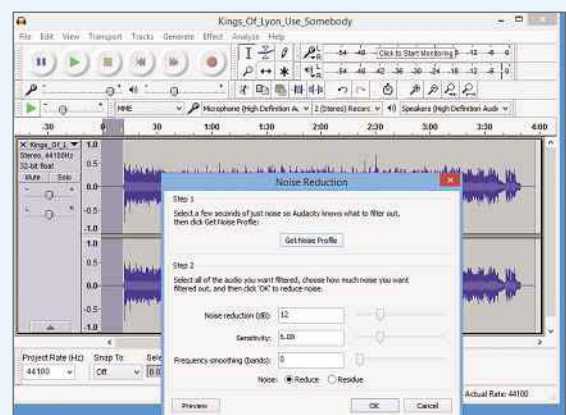
The window disappears and you can now select the whole of the audio that you want to repair. Return to Noise Reduction and experiment with the 'Noise reduction', Sensitivity and 'Frequency smoothing' sliders. Use the Preview button to listen to the results and get the most effective settings.



Audacity can record streaming radio and other internet broadcasts

space and select 'Show Disabled Devices', then right-click again and tick Show Disconnected Devices. Start Audacity and, in the (third) device toolbar, select Windows WASAPI in the first menu, Speakers (High Definition loopback) in the second menu, and 2 (Stereo) Recording Channels in the third menu. The names for these vary from one computer to the next, so yours may not be exactly the same as ours.

Go to your favourite radio station using a browser and find the button, menu or link to start playing the streaming broadcast. Return to Audacity and click the Record button. You may need to adjust the microphone volume control if the soundwave on the display looks too small (which means that it's too quiet). Click the top button when you want to end the recording, then select



Select a quiet part of your recording to help filter out unwanted background noise

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



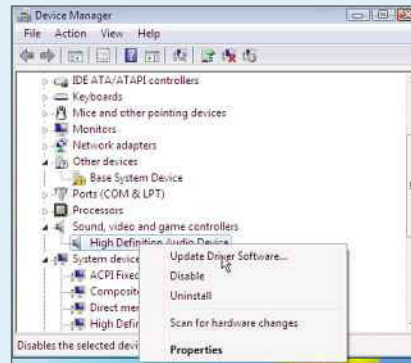
HARDWARE

No sound on laptop

Q I have a four-year-old Sony laptop running the 64-bit version of Windows 7 Home Premium. Since a Windows Update last September, the sound doesn't work. If I right-click the speaker icon in the notification area, it says "No audio device installed". I thought it might be the driver so I ran IObit Driver Booster (bit.ly/iobit370), but it didn't work.

Gwyn Jones, via email

A Driver Booster is an update tool that checks for out-of-date drivers, but it won't find missing ones. Press Windows+R, then type `devmgmt.msc` and press Enter. In the Device Manager window, expand 'Sound, video and game controllers'. There should be an entry for the audio device. Right-click it to bring up a



Find the audio device in Device Manager for update and removal options

menu. Try clicking Update Driver Software. If that doesn't work, select Uninstall, then restart Windows. The audio device should now be detected as new hardware, and Windows will either install its own driver or prompt you to install one. If you don't have the original drivers for your laptop, go to bit.ly/sony370 and download them.

HARDWARE

Printer absorbs too much ink

Q I've had a Canon iP2600 printer for just over three years and recently started to get a message on the screen saying "The ink absorber is nearly full". I've been told this can be reset but I have no idea how to do it. Can you help?

Peter Cooper, via email

A Any excess ink that comes out of the printer's nozzles is mopped up by small sponges. The printer is telling you that those sponges are nearly full of ink and the printer will soon stop working or may smear ink on prints. Some people have made the error go away by resetting the printer, but that won't empty the sponges and at best it will just buy you a bit of extra time.

Lots of Canon printers can be reset by switching off at the wall socket and opening the cover. Press and hold the power button and turn on the power at the wall. Close the lid while holding down the Power button and then release it. Turn the printer on by tapping

the power button and it should be reset and ready for use. You may have to go through this all over again if you switch off the printer at the mains plug.

The only permanent solution is to replace or clean the sponges, which you'll have to do at your own risk. If your DIY skills are up to it, switch the printer off, unplug it from the mains and open the cover. The ink cartridges should be parked at one side. Underneath you'll see the sponges, which will be attached to the mechanism. This is easy to get to on some printers, but on others you might have to disassemble quite a lot of the printer to reach them.



You can reset some printers but it may not get rid of hardware problems

TABLETS

Toshiba storage shortage

Q I am very pleased with my Toshiba Windows 8.1 tablet, but the limited internal memory is a problem. I found an article online describing a Registry change that lets you install programs on the SD card. Is this a viable option? I already have my Downloads and general storage sent direct to the SD card. What is the maximum size for an SD card in the Toshiba tablet?

Alan Farr, via email

A The install location for apps in Windows 8.1 is `C:\Program Files\WindowsApps`. You can use a Registry hack to change this, so that apps install to another drive or an SD card, but any apps you have currently installed (in the default location) will produce errors when they are updated because Windows will not be able to find them in the new location.

If you still want to go ahead, right-click the Start button on the Desktop and select Run (or type **run** on the Start screen and tap Run). Type **regedit** to run the Registry Editor and, from the left-hand pane, go to:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\
SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\
CurrentVersion\Appx
```

Find a value on the right called **PackageRoot**, which contains the folder for storing Windows apps. Double-click it and change it to another drive or folder, such as `D:\WindowsApps`.

If you are told you don't have permission to change this Registry entry, right-click the Appx key and select Permissions. Click Advanced, then click Change next to Owner. Type **administrators** in the text box, click Check Names next to it, and click OK. Tick 'Replace owner on subcontainers and objects' and click OK. Select Administrators and tick the Allow box next to Full Control. You now have permission to change the PackageRoot location and the `C:\Program Files\WindowsApps` location.

If you'd rather not risk getting unstuck in the Registry, it's best to leave the



apps in the default location and change other things to free up memory. Swipe in from the right for the Charms bar, tap Settings, 'Change PC settings', 'PCs and Devices', then Devices. Down at the bottom is an option to set the default location for music, videos and pictures to a removable drive, such as an SD card. The tablet can use SD cards up to at least 64GB and possibly 128GB, depending on the model.

GENERAL PC

Can't enlarge print size

Q Everything my new HP Envy 4504 prints comes out very small and I often can't enlarge it. Do you know of a setting that corrects this problem?

Charles Hardy, via email

A The size of text and images on screen bears no relation to the size when printed on paper, and a photo that fills your screen can look tiny printed because of the difference in resolution between print and screen. A 24in HD monitor is 1,920 pixels wide, but to a printer capable of 300dpi, a full-screen image is only 6in wide on paper.

Try experimenting with different font sizes to see how they look when printed. Open Word, WordPad or another word processor and type 10 lines of text. Use the formatting functions to set the first line to 10pt, the second to 12, the third to 14 and so on, increasing each line by 2pt. Print the page to see how print sizes relate to screen size. Programs that do not allow you to set the font size are a problem because web pages, for example, can contain text that looks fine on screen, but very small when printed.

Always make sure that you have the most up-to-date software for your printer. In your case, it can be downloaded from HP's Support site at bit.ly/envy370.

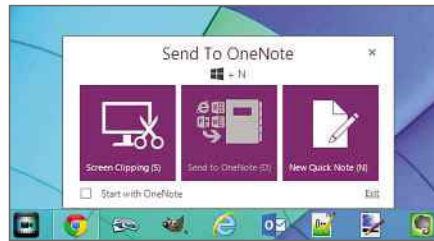
SOFTWARE

Stop a OneNote pop-up

Q I run Windows 8.1 64-bit and a minute or two after starting my PC, a small box pops up called "OneNote untitled page". I can easily get rid of it by clicking on the red cross, but why does it keep appearing and how do I stop it?

John Frankton, via email

A Microsoft OneNote is a note-taking tool that is part of Microsoft Office. It starts up with Windows and places an icon on the right side of the taskbar (click the triangle to show hidden icons). It shouldn't cause problems but



Is OneNote popping up when it is not needed? It can be disabled

if it does, then it is best to disable it.

In Windows 8, right-click the taskbar and select Task Manager. Select the Start-up tab, select 'Send to OneNote Tool' and click the Disable button. If you have an older version of Windows, press Windows+R and type `msconfig`. Select the Startup tab and clear the tick next to the OneNote Tool.

See our Workshop on page 52 for more about OneNote.

INTERNET

Navigate around geo-blocking

Q Is there a way to get round geo-blocking to take advantage of lower prices in Europe and elsewhere for Spotify and other online services?

Ian D Smith, via email

A A VPN (virtual private network) is a type of security system that masks your identity and location by routing all your internet activity through different servers. When you install VPN client software on your computer, it directs all

internet activity through a VPN server. Apart from adding extra security and privacy, your location appears to be wherever the VPN server is located, so if that location is in another country, then you appear to be a resident of that country, which can sometimes be useful.

VPN services can be free or subscription-based. Free ones can be slow, overloaded with users and have low data limits; paid-for services offer features such as malware protection, higher speeds, more data and more server locations. Popular VPNs include PrivateTunnel (www.privatetunnel.com), CyberGhost (www.cyberghostvpn.com), Hide My Ass (www.hidemymyass.com) and Hotspot Shield (www.hotspotshield.com). Be aware, though, that the terms and conditions of online media-streaming services don't allow you to use VPNs to hide your location to get around regional restrictions on content and pricing, and some go as far as to actively block known VPN servers.



VPN software can hide your location so you appear to be in a different country

GENERAL PC

XPS Writer has disappeared

Q When saving documents, I sometimes use the Microsoft XPS Document Writer to save the file to my hard drive. It saves paper and is useful for checking first drafts. However, the option has disappeared. How do I get it back? I am using Windows 8.

R Benson, via email

A Microsoft XPS documents are similar to PDF files. Lots of word processors save PDFs and there are many free PDF viewers, such as Adobe Reader (get.adobe.com/reader), so you could use PDF instead of XPS. However, Microsoft XPS Document Writer is part of Windows so it should still be there. Try reinstalling it.



Manually install a printer if it is missing - Windows has lots of basic drivers

Press Windows+S to open the search panel. Type **advanced printer setup** and click it in the results. Click 'The printer that I want isn't listed', select 'Add a local printer or network printer' and click Next. Select 'Use an existing port' and click Next. You'll see a list of printer manufacturers on the left and a list of printer models on the right. Select Microsoft on the left and Microsoft XPS Document Writer v4 on the right. Click Next and follow the prompts.



This fortnight Roland has been setting up guest accounts for other users on his Android tablet

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

WINDOWS 10

Switch on virtualisation

I downloaded Microsoft's preview of Windows 10 and tried to install it in VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org). It wouldn't install and VirtualBox said that this was because my computer did not support virtualisation, which is odd because it has a good specification. After some research, I discovered that to unlock this feature to let Windows 10 install, you need to go into the PC's BIOS set-up. Just after switching on the computer, press F10 (other PCs might use a different function key). Once in the BIOS set-up, find the screen that lists the virtualisation settings. On my PC, for some reason, virtualisation was disabled – I don't know how common this is.

After enabling it and saving the new BIOS settings, the computer restarted



Use virtualisation software to try the Windows 10 preview safely

and I was able to install Windows 10 in VirtualBox. It's a good way to test the new OS without changing anything in your current Windows set-up.

Tom Kelly, via email

£25 winner

power it off and then power it on again. It's the first thing any technical-support service will tell you to do.

Robert Keane, via email

GENERAL PC

Hide private images

I had the Photo Gallery screensaver set as the default screensaver on my new PC. This was fine at first, but then it started showing images I didn't want displayed. The problem is that it shows everything in the Pictures folder, and while I have my own photos in there, it also contains images for work projects. As the screen saver randomly put photos on the screen, it would include my work images, too!

I've found a couple of solutions. One is to store any photos you don't want included in the screensaver in a separate folder, such as Documents. Another solution, which is the one I use, is to create two subfolders in Pictures. All my digital camera photos are in Pictures/My Pics and all work images, clipart and similar items that I don't want in the screensaver are in Pictures/Work.

Right-click the Desktop and click Personalize. Click Screen Saver and then click Settings for the Photos or Photo

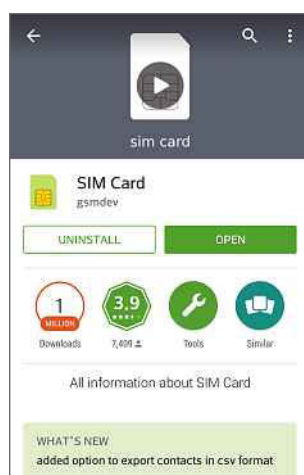


The Settings button lets you choose which folder the Photo Gallery screensaver uses

APPS

Find your SIM card number without ejecting it

Yesterday, I was trying to log into my account on Three's website, but couldn't remember the password I'd set up a



You can check your phone's SIM Card number with the Android app SIM Card

couple of years ago. I clicked the 'Forgotten your password?' link and the site asked for my mobile number, as well as the last six digits of my SIM card number before it would let

me reset it. The first bit of information was easy enough to enter, but I didn't have a drawing pin I could use to eject my SIM card and make a note of the number on it. Fortunately, a quick search revealed that you can check your SIM card information by downloading the free app SIM Card (bit.ly/sim370) which, when opened, displays your SIM serial number near the top of the screen. I copied down the last six numbers and, moments later, I'd set up a new password for my Three account.

Mary Arthur, via email

HARDWARE

Try a universal fix

The number one tip for fixing almost any piece of tech is to switch it off, wait a few seconds, then switch it back on. It sounds simple but a lot of people don't try it. So, if you have a bad internet connection, switch off the router, wait a few seconds and switch it back on. If your computer is slow and playing up, switch it off, then switch it back on. If your phone is giving you problems,



Gallery screensaver (I have both for some reason). Next to 'Use photos and videos from', click Browse and select the folder you want to use, which in my case is Pictures/My Pics. It will now only show the photos you want it to display.

Dave Whelan, via email

BROWSERS

Separate work and home bookmarks in Chrome

I recently started using Google Chrome's sync feature so that I could access my bookmarks, extensions, passwords and more on all my devices. However, since the bookmarks bar can only fit a certain number of entries on screen at once, I found that it was mostly filled by my work bookmarks, with little room for the sites that I want to access on my personal devices such as my tablet and smartphone.

I solved the problem by opening 'Bookmark manager' (Ctrl+Shift+O), right-clicking 'Bookmarks bar', selecting 'Add folder' and then creating a new folder called Work. I was then able to drag and drop all my work-related bookmarks to the new folder, which I've placed at the start of the bookmarks bar. When you click Work, its contents simply appear in a drop-down menu and you can easily add further sub-folders if you want. If you'd prefer not to sync your work bookmarks, you can open Chrome's Settings on your work PC and click 'Advanced sync settings' to choose which things you want available across all your devices.

Dominic Walby, via email



Google Chrome lets you add multiple folders to the Bookmarks bar

GOOGLE

Find your Android device

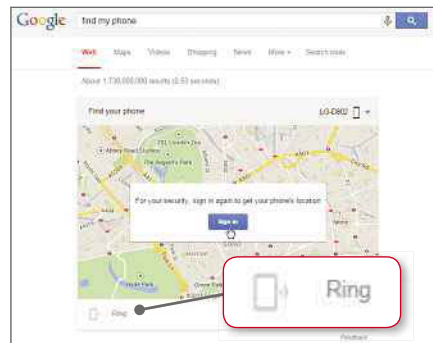
If your Android device is lost or stolen, there's now an easy way to find it. Simply type *find my phone* into Google (while logged in) and confirm your login details. Your device's location will be shown on a Google map.

Because the tool is normally only accurate to tens of metres, there's also a Ring button you can click to make your phone ring on full volume for five minutes, which is handy if it's simply

buried down the back of your sofa!

If you have more than one Android device, you can use the tool's drop-down menu to pick your other phone or tablet from the list.

Ian Templeton, via email



Typing 'find my phone' into Google can show the location of your Android devices

TELEVISION

Block adverts on All 4

Adblock Plus (ABP, adblockplus.org) does a great job of blocking annoying adverts but certain sites now restrict access if they detect that you are using an ad-blocker. In my case, Channel 4's on-demand service All 4 made me disable ABP before it would let me watch any of its shows. To watch a 23-minute show, I had to sit through 2.5 minutes of adverts before it started and five minutes mid-show – that's 7.5 minutes of adverts for 23 minutes of content!

However, I have found a workaround: simply disable ABP and start the show. As soon as the first advert begins playing, re-enable ABP. The programme plays through perfectly but you don't have to watch any more adverts. You can repeat this trick for each show, as required.

Mark Taylor, via email

ANDROID

Hide apps with Nova Launcher

I downloaded Nova Launcher for my phone when it won the Gold Award in *Web User* issue 362 (bit.ly/webuser362) and I much prefer it to my device's default launcher. However, it took me until last week to discover one of its most useful tools, which lets you hide apps that contain sensitive information.

First, you'll need to make sure that the app you want to hide doesn't have a shortcut on your home screen. Once you've done that, open Nova Settings, select Drawer, Hide Apps, then tick the apps you want to hide from the app drawer. You might wonder how you can still access the app if it's hidden, but that's easy: open the app drawer, select the menu icon, tap Search and type in the first couple of letters of its name. It's not the most secure way of protecting

your data, but it should stop opportunists from snooping and it means you don't need to enter a password every time you access an app. If you'd still like to have a shortcut for your app on the home screen, you can try disguising it by long-pressing its icon, selecting Edit and changing the shortcut name and icon so it resembles something else.

Nova Launcher lets you hide apps from the app drawer

Ed Wright, via email

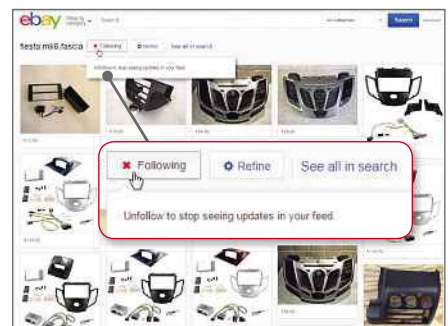
WEBSITES

Remove suggestions from eBay

Some of the suggestions that appear on eBay's homepage are for things I searched for years ago. Thankfully, you can remove these by updating your interests. On the homepage, click 'Interests you follow' in the sidebar and click the cog icon next to each interest to refine it. After selecting this, a new page loads, where you can click Following to stop following an interest. If, before that, a pop-up appears asking you to give your interest a nickname, just click Cancel to close it.

This method should suffice if there are only one or two interests that you want to delete. Otherwise, type in the URL www.ebay.com/usr/your-username/all-follows, where 'your-username' is your eBay login name, and you can unfollow all your interests with a single click from one page.

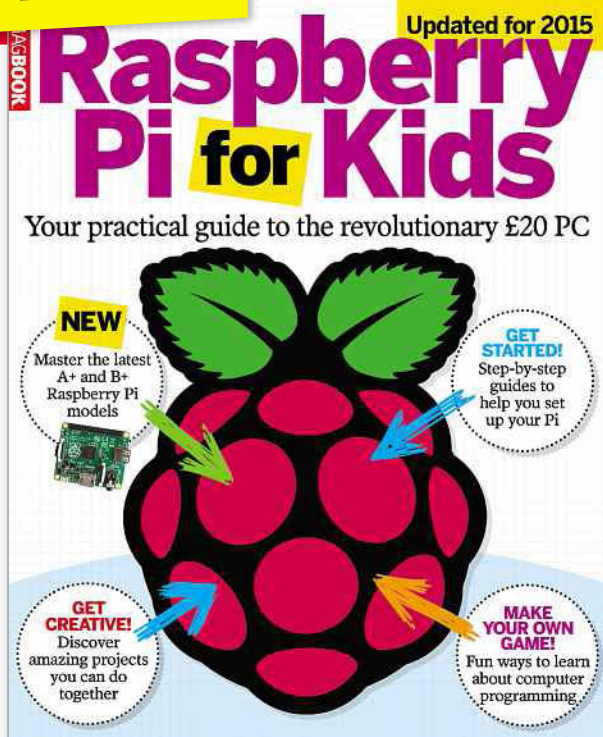
Rupert Harris, via email



Click the cog icon next to an interest to stop it appearing on your homepage

WebUser Bookstore

NEW!



RASPBERRY PI FOR KIDS

The Raspberry Pi is the incredible £20 British computer that's taking the world by storm. It's ideal for children of all ages to experiment, play games and learn valuable skills. We've updated this 148-page book for 2015 to include instructions on mastering the new Pi models (A+ and B+), helping children learn the coding skills needed to excel at the new school curriculum. We take you step by step through the basics of setting up and configuring the Pi and introduce many fun projects for families.

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Inside the 164-page *The Definitive Guide to Google Hidden Tools*, we lift the lid on Google's most popular tools to reveal more than 430 ways to make them even more efficient, useful and tailored to your needs. These include clever new add-ons for Chrome, amazing free apps for Android and stunning sights in Google Maps.



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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

Inside this 148-page book you'll find all the free apps, expert tips and easy-to-follow Workshops you need to get the most out of your phone or tablet. You'll find buying advice, including reviews of the latest tablets and phones, and everything you need to know about taking your first steps with your new device.



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Readers' Helpdesk

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

HARDWARE

Why won't my mouse and keyboard work?

Q I have an Acer PC, which runs Windows 8. It's only a couple of months old, but the keyboard and mouse don't work when I first boot the PC. I have to reboot my computer every time before I can use them.

johnny1954, Web User Forums

A If your keyboard and mouse came bundled with your PC, you need to talk to the vendor who sold it to you. If, however, you've added the keyboard from elsewhere, make sure that it's compatible with Windows 8, especially if it's a wireless model.

Are you unplugging the machine at night? There can be a difference between rebooting your PC cold (switching it on at the mains) and warm (when it's already powered and you are just pressing the power button on the front of the machine). This would explain why the keyboard and mouse work after a warm reboot, but don't function when you first switch on your PC.

izzit, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Where is Hyper-V on my Windows 8.1 PC?

Q Issue 368 of *Web User* (bit.ly/webuser368) says that in order to run Windows XP on a Windows 8.1 PC, I need to open 'Turn Windows features on or off', then select Hyper-V in the list and click OK. Unfortunately, in my case, Hyper-V is not listed in the Windows Features box. Can anyone suggest what might be wrong?

valentine, Web User Forums

A Hyper-V requires a computer with a supported 64-bit processor and is available in the Pro and Enterprise 64-bit versions of Windows 8.1. A viable alternative is to use VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org); there are some handy videos that tell you how to install

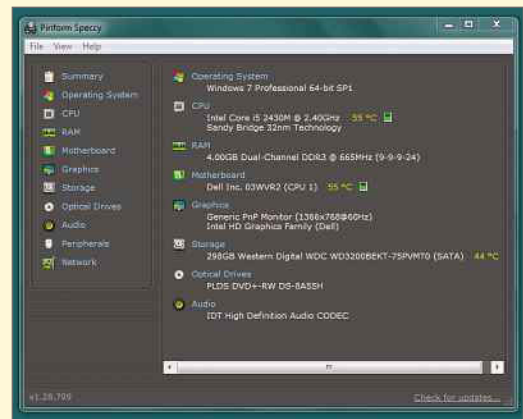
HARDWARE

How can I identify my sound card?

Q I am thinking of dual-booting Windows 7 with Windows XP Home Premium so I can play some old games that don't work with the newer OS. First, I need to know what sound card I have, but I'm not sure how to find this information. Can someone please help me?

PCWhizzKid15, Web User Forums

A You can try right-clicking Computer, selecting Properties and choosing Device Manager to see if your sound card is listed there. However, most laptops (and some desktops) have a built-in sound processor instead of a sound card, so



The free version of Speccy provides you with all manner of information about your PC

you might not see a typical sound card name listed. Belarc Advisor (bit.ly/advisor370) and Speccy (www.piriform.com/speccy) are two handy free programs that will give you a complete analysis of your system, including your sound card.

Peru, Joe_London and Bedstor, Web User Forums



Virtualbox is a free virtual machine that can run other operating systems on your PC

Windows XP using VirtualBox at bit.ly/virtualbox370.

It's a bit of a long shot, but if you've got another PC running Windows 7 Pro, you could also try XP Mode, which includes XP and a licence to use it. Note that even in a virtual environment, XP is vulnerable to security risks and viruses because it's no longer supported by Microsoft.

Moonshine, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

How do I stop my laptop overheating?

Q My laptop's fan is always running and it often shuts down due to overheating. Is my laptop on its way out or can I do something to prolong its life?

SuperMario, Web User Forums

A The laptop isn't necessarily on its way out, but it might be a bit mucky. I'd suggest using a vacuum cleaner's crevice nozzle over the exhaust vent while gently tapping around the case. While I'd never use a vacuum cleaner on an open desktop PC, it's OK on the outer case of a laptop.

Only open the laptop as a last resort and, if you do, carefully use a soft brush to remove dust but never anything damp. Laptops are notoriously difficult to open and they can be a nightmare to put back together, so I'd consider taking it to a specialist if there's no improvement after using the vacuum cleaner.

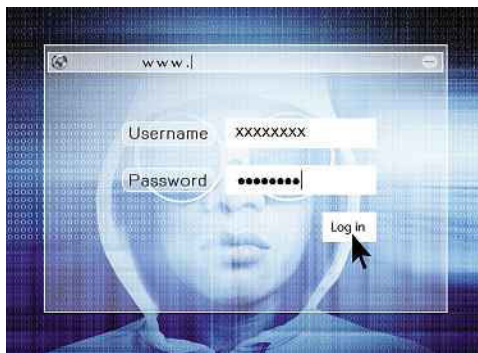
izzit, Web User Forums

Star Email

Technology makes it harder to protect your identity

When I read your Instant Expert about catfishing in Issue 368 (bit.ly/webuser368), it triggered a memory about a friend of mine. She had a number of unfortunate experiences with the law, so sought to find another way to get things done, this time under a new name and background. She posed as a leading figure in the pop-music scene and rose through the ranks of a well-known music company. So catfishing is hardly new, but it has a different, more modern method.

However, my friend could and did destroy all known records of her past, which were on paper, whereas in the computer age, this can't necessarily be



achieved. As we know, when you add your name to one social-media site, you seem to appear on all of them. If you let slip just one piece of information, it could expose you, and your IP address could easily be traced.

I am not a Luddite and I think that the computer is a great and very precious tool. But I also feel that companies who run social-media sites should control them and not let people take advantage of or hoax others. Hopefully this catfishing will eventually be stopped, but at what price? As you stated, catfishing is done by many types of people, from those who treat it as a joke, to others who want to get back at someone.

It seems to me that social media is destructive. Each day you read about someone hacking these websites. In many cases, I believe that we'd be better off if all information was back on paper.

Terry Bradley, Milton Keynes

Thanks for licking my Lollipop problem



I want to thank David Sparks for his Top Tip in issue 367 (bit.ly/webuser367). My first-generation Nexus 7 also suffered from the update to Android Lollipop, and the second update didn't improve it. The OS was sluggish to respond, kept crashing and the whole thing would freeze for no apparent reason.

David's clear advice to reset the device to factory settings has worked a treat! I've got back the very useful tablet I love to use, and it's still running Lollipop. The process was painless and it very quickly restored the apps that I still wanted to keep. So thank you, David Sparks, you are a worthy winner of the £25 prize.

Ethel Trueman, via email

Windows 10 still has a long way to go

In Issue 368, there is a Workshop explaining how to use Cortana in Windows 10. It is alleged to work on

build 10041 and, as I'm now on build 10049, I was expecting to see it. Wrong! It states quite clearly that this feature is not currently available in my location. I should make it clear that all my settings for my location (UK) are correct.

On the "plus" side (if you can call it that), it does have the Spartan browser, which I find particularly underwhelming. "Spartan" usually means lean and mean, and this browser certainly is, but more in the sense of a starving refugee. It's similar in design to Chrome but its grey-on-grey colour scheme is hardly inspiring. Currently, the History function doesn't work, so you can't find anything you've viewed previously, except as a bookmark.

However, it would be unfair to be completely critical and, even with its current faults, it's a quantum leap above Windows 8. When the bugs are ironed out, it will be a great operating system.

Peter Northrop, via email

Remind yourself to cancel free trials

Barry Collins is right to criticise the devious tricks used by companies to lock us into their services after a 30-day free trial (Page 404, Issue 368). They get you to enter your card details, even though you're supposed to be trying the thing

for "free", and hope that you'll be too stupid or absent-minded to cancel when the trial period is up. I've found the easiest way not to get trapped by these tricks is set a reminder in Google Calendar for just before the end of the trial. Then don't dither: cancel it as soon as you can, so you don't forget. I did this with Amazon Prime once it had served its purpose over Christmas, so I didn't get stung by the £79 annual fee.

Barry is right that when you're not press-ganged into providing your card details for a free trial, you're more likely to consider a subscription in the long term. Whereas if you end up paying when you don't want to, you're likely to cancel that service and never give it another look. If only companies realised this instead of deliberately trying to fool us into parting with our money.

Rebecca Stevens, via email



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



Television is a turn-off

I write in reference to the letter about Freeview in Issue 367's Inbox ('With so many repeats, who needs catch-up?'). That guy hit the nail right on the head with every word. I too have an HDD recorder and I have used it twice in three



years. It's no wonder your readers point out the lack of good programmes on TV today. If you miss something now, you

consider yourself fortunate that you did!

Almost everyone I have talked to on the subject agrees that British TV has hit rock bottom. Even a couple of the people I spoke to in Freeview's customer-services department said that they get inundated with complaints about the rubbish churned out on TV. It's like a needle stuck in a record, playing the same rubbish over and over again, and it was rubbish the first time it was shown!

I would dearly like to see more people complaining about the stuff we are expected to put up with. Perhaps there will then be a change and we might get some interesting and useful programmes.

Philip G Coggin, Kingston-upon-Hull

We should be able to use iPlayer abroad

I've just seen Barry Collins' complaint in issue 362 (bit.ly/webuser362) about BBC iPlayer deleting programmes after only 30 days, and I couldn't agree more. But what's even worse is the fact that anyone like me who spends time abroad is unable to access iPlayer at all, despite paying the licence fee for a full year in the UK. It's diabolically unfair.

Okay, I can try dodgy VPNs and proxies, and I have – about two dozen of them – but they don't work properly. One wanted more than 17,000 minutes to download a half-hour programme to my tablet! I believe that iPlayer has found a way to block these tools.

As Barry suggested, if the BBC introduced a registration system that included checking your licence fee number, this geographic restriction could be unlocked. It's surely not rocket science in this day and age?

John Perkins, via email

What you say...

A NEW SURVEY SAYS THE AVERAGE UK HOUSEHOLD OWNS 7.4 WEB DEVICES. HOW MANY DOES YOURS HAVE?

Interesting stat. I own an iPhone, iPad, TV, CCTV, PC and Western Digital My Passport drive. However the household in total has another iPad, three iPhones, two laptops and a PowerBook. You could probably microwave a pigeon flying over our house.

Ian Phipps

My house has about eight, and that's for a family of three. Some we use regularly, others not so much.

Jack @iamgoldmaster

Three laptops, two phones, three tablets, a Sky box, a PS3 and a PS4.

Joanne Evans

Two. Laptop and mobile phone, but I hardly ever use the net on the phone.

Chris Cole

DO YOU GET ANNOYED BY CONSTANT BABY UPDATES ON FACEBOOK?

I do on occasion, but also copious holiday pics or political ramblings. But then I just click the 'hide post' option.

Martin Brindley @martinbrindley

It's incredibly difficult for those of us who can't have children, and I'm at an age when all my friends seem to be posting. I'd be lying if I said it didn't bring me to tears on occasion.

Suzy Blue

I don't mind seeing lots of baby photos. Friends and family post them for people who can't see them in person.

Sam Higgins

It's a bit harsh because Facebook really isn't that important. In fact if it wasn't for babies, kittens, and people remarking on their lunch (yum), I doubt that Facebook would have got off the ground!

Richard Morgan

ARE YOU PLEASED THAT CHROME IS EXTENDING SUPPORT FOR XP?

I still have one machine running XP that I maintain. So it's good news. Firefox still supports XP, too. Microsoft stopped supporting it with IE8!

Chris Armstrong

Yes. Chrome creates the crucial path from XP PC to smartphone. I can justify a new phone, but not a new PC.

Patricia Groom @TriciaGroom

It's good news. As things stand, I don't see any evidence that XP can't or shouldn't still be used. Microsoft may have ended support, but as long as third parties – especially security software providers – continue their support, the old hardware can be allowed to soldier on.

Izzit

Good move, because a lot of people still use XP, such as via visualisation due to software requirements.

Ian Dunn @platinumshore

People still use XP?

Paul Giddings

WHAT WOULD YOU FIND IF YOU DOWNLOADED YOUR GOOGLE SEARCH HISTORY?

Questions about life, the universe and everything.

Matt McCallion

'How do you create a new line in a cell in Excel?'

Joe Cowell

BBC Football. I really should bookmark that site.

Si Mellor

! Page 404



Barry Collins loses patience with the latest plans to “protect” children from internet porn

Knock the government's blocks off

Preventing children from accessing pornography on the internet – it's the kind of “common-sense policy” that's impossible to argue against. It's like opposing a ban on drowning kittens or blocking the deportation of Katie Hopkins. No sane politician's going to stand against it, which is why the Conservatives have pledged to do it if they win the election. It will pass through the House of Commons faster than an expenses slip, even though it's a brutally stupid plan.

In a startling admission that their policy of forcing broadband providers to offer woefully ineffective porn filters hasn't worked, the Tories now want to go one step further and force all adult sites to offer age verification. Not the “tick here if you're really over 18” nonsense that's already on many sites, but an “effective” – of course, as yet unidentified – way of validating that you're not really 12 years old.

All this will be the responsibility of an unnamed “independent regulator”,

according to Culture Secretary Sajid Javid. This poor regulator will not only have the job of finding an age-control mechanism that actually works, it will also have the Herculean task of identifying which sites should implement age controls, Javid told the BBC.

Now, I dare say the Culture Secretary doesn't spend an awful lot of time searching for adult websites, but when I just chucked the phrase “porn” into Google, it returned 387 million different results. Not all of those sites will actually contain adult material, of course, but this independent regulator could have a thousand staff blacklisting porn sites for the next decade and still barely even draw a fig leaf over the pornography that's rampant across the internet.

Even if the civil service did somehow manage to identify all of the wobbly bits, many of these sites are based abroad. There's more chance of Keith Chegwin single-handedly overthrowing

“ There's more chance of Keith Chegwin single-handedly overthrowing ISIS than there is of most foreign porn sites agreeing to implement age controls ”

ISIS than there is of most foreign porn sites agreeing to implement age controls, so the government will inevitably have to force broadband providers to block *all* adult websites, bar the few that are

willing to use age verification.

That will result in ‘over-blocking’ – innocent sites being trapped in the net. The Open Rights Group runs a site called www.blocked.org.uk, which monitors sites that have already been blacklisted by the existing parental control filters used by Britain's biggest ISPs. More than a fifth of the top 100,000 most-visited sites in the UK are already blocked by these filters, which you can choose to switch off. Imagine how many will be trapped behind filters that you cannot. And not just pornography sites, but sites such as a Porsche dealership, a blog on the Syrian war and the Guido Fawkes political blog, which have already found themselves accidentally snared in the existing filters.

Nobody wants children to have easy access to pornography. Not Sajid Javid, not David Cameron, not me. But like the parental control filters that went before them, the naked truth is that these plans are so fundamentally flawed, the only thing they're going to prevent is another stinging editorial from the *Daily Mail*. Which is probably all that these half-baked proposals were intended to do in the first place.

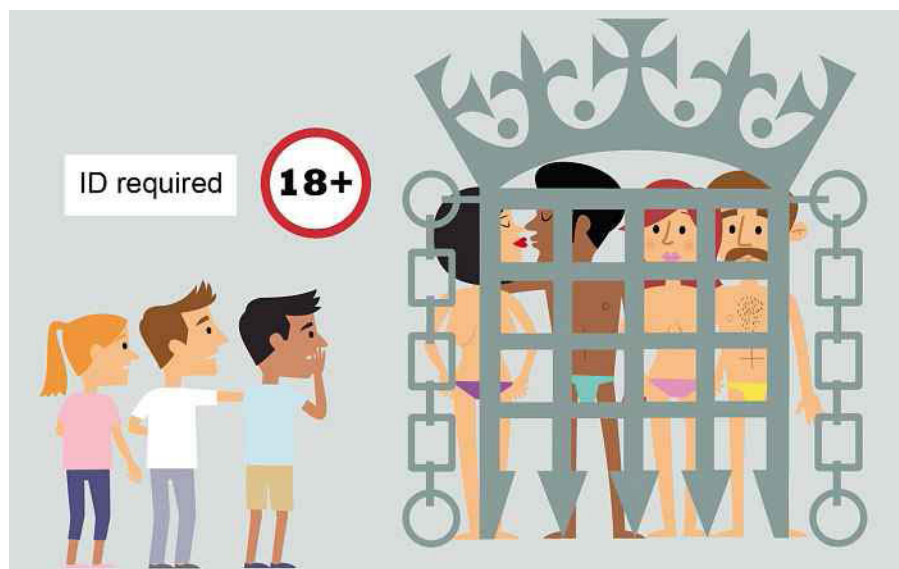


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