WebUser

29 June - 12 July 2016

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Homepage

400 issues isn't Bard at all

ou're no doubt aware that 23 April 2016 marked the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death - his actual birth date being disputed because he wasn't born with a quill in his tiny hand. What's for certain is that if the Bard was writing his plays today, he's be composing his tales of tormented kings, tragic love stories and feisty women disguised as men by employing the latest technology. Flash and Java would be right out - Macbeth is nasty enough without security vulnerabilities.

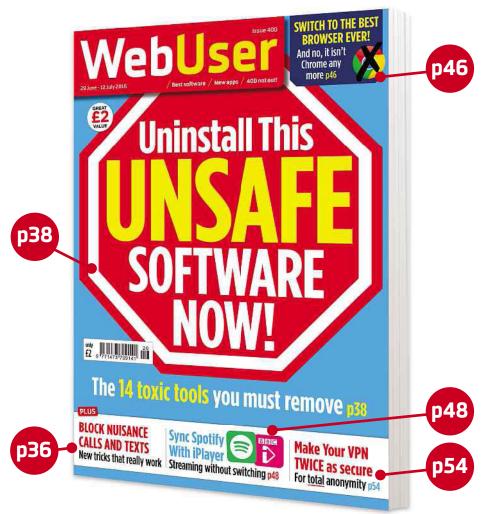
In our cover feature on page 38, we expose once-popular but now dangerous software lurking on your PC, from obvious offenders to programs you've forgotten about. But fear not, my liege, we also explain how to remove these foul tools completely or continue using them safely.

Also, it's not just Shakespeare's 400th death-day anniversary, but Web User's 400th birthday. I'd like to thank all our readers, old and new, for helping us reach this milestone.

Robert Irvine robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk #webuser



ISSUE 400 ON THE COVER



Average sales, Jan-Dec 2015, 29,463 copies per issue

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How to lock specific Android apps to prevent anyone accessing your data

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ISSUE 400

29 JUNE - 12 JULY 2016

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Get rid of 14 oncepopular programs that now do more harm than good

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Our favourite new phone and tablet apps





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What's New Online

Make pages load faster in Firefox

n Issue 398's Best New Browser Tools section, we wrote about Google's updated Data Saver extension for Chrome (bit.ly/ datasaver370), which speeds up your browsing by reducing the amount of data used by web pages. So we're delighted to report that an equivalent tool has now been released for Firefox, albeit with the more unwieldy name of Google DataSaver Proxy for Firefox.

Like the Chrome extension, this works by using Google servers to compress elements such as photos, HTML, JavaScript and CSS, without adversely affecting the layout and appearance of web pages. You can view details of the size of the page before and after its content was compressed, and the amount of data you've saved, both today and over the last month. Unlike the Chrome version, the add-on also works in private mode.

In other data-saving developments,



Mozilla has tweaked the way Firefox plays YouTube videos, so that it uses less bandwidth and laptop battery power. It has also added the ability to use multiple identities while browsing, with separate options for personal, shopping, banking and work.

Turn to page 31 for more about Firefox, and page 46 for our tribute to an even better browser.

bit.ly/datasaver400



Identify songs continuously using Shazam

www.shazam.com

When the tunerecognising app Shazam launched, it was sheer music to our ears: rarely again would you have to hum a ditty to friends while asking, "do you know what this song is?" - unless, that is, you failed to open the app before the mystery track finished. With the new Auto Shazam feature for Android (it's been available on iOS for a while), the app constantly and quietly listens out for music in the background before



listing the tracks it hears, one by one. It means you'll never again have to interrupt a conversation while Shazam works its magic. Just flick the Auto switch on the home screen to get going.

See astronaut Tim Peake's view of Earth

bit.ly/peake400

British astronaut Tim Peake returned to Earth on 18 June following a six-month mission to the International Space Station. As well as conducting important scientific experiments, performing tests devised by children on a modified Raspberry Pi and running a virtual-reality version of the London Marathon, he also took lots of amazing photos of Earth. Lots of them ended up on his Twitter feed and they have now been collated on a map by mapping service Esri. By clicking the hundreds of pins dotted around the globe, you are able to call up each picture and see what Commander Peake had to say about them at the time.



Check out the active volcanoes, dry lake beds and even the UK floods of 2015. For ease of navigation, vou can switch to a 3D view of the globe, too. We highlight 10 of the most amazing and amusing things you can do on the web this fortnight

Retweet yourself on Twitter

www.twitter.com

While it may appear rather vain, Twitter is now letting you trawl through your old tweets and share them again. This means you can retweet or quote your wittiest and most insightful posts for those who missed them the first time around. Twitter also now prevents blocked users from seeing your tweets, even if someone else retweets them.



Test your travel knowledge

bit.ly/world400

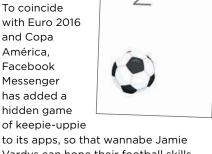
Are you a globetrotter or a globenotter? Find out using Where In the World, which tests your travel knowledge by asking you to identify popular destinations. It brings together images taken via Google Street View's cameras and asks you to identify what they are and where they might be. There are various categories to choose from, including history, transport, nature, entertainment and royal attractions, and you have just 12 seconds to choose an answer from a choice of three. Full marks earns you the status of 'Globetrotting Guru'.



Play Facebook's hidden football game

messenger.com

To coincide with Euro 2016 and Copa América, Facebook Messenger has added a hidden game



Vardys can hone their football skills. To play the game, make sure you have the latest Messenger app installed on your Android or iOS device, then send a football emoji to a friend, and tap on it. The idea is to keep the ball in the air and compete against friends, but it's not as easy as it sounds. Our best score was an unlucky 13 and even that was achieved after dozens of 'just-one-more-go' attempts.

Visit the home of Winnie the Pooh

bit.ly/winnie400

For 90 years, children have been enchanted by tales of Winnie the Pooh, Piglet and the rest, and you can now make a beeline for Hundred Acre Wood. Disney has created an interactive map that lets you click the various characters to enter and explore their homes. There are games, videos and downloads to enjoy, plus handy tips about packing a successful picnic.





@wimbledon

Follow the action at the All **England Club via the official** Wimbledon account

@scrippsbee

The National Spelling Bee account hit the news recently for cleverly beating the trolls

@Indie_RetroNEWS

One for old-skool gamers, flagging up free games and the latest news

@Detectorists

BBC 4's comedy is gaining new fans after being added to Netflix

@metoffice

Keep tabs on the changeable weather by following the Met Office on Twitter

Curate your own museum collection

learninglab.si.edu

This new tool brings together resources and images from the Smithsonian collection and lets you use them to curate your own projects. Items can be annotated, pinned and captioned.

Send texts in Messenger

www.messenger.com

Android users can now send and receive text messages from within the Facebook Messenger app. Texts, which can include audio, photos and location details are coloured purple and appear alongside Messenger chats, in blue.

See where Brits are moving

bit.ly/noplace400

This fascinating animated map from GoCompare tracks the migration of people around the UK using moving dots. You can filter these by age group and by category, for example retirement or flying the nest.

Need to Know

BT boosts internet speeds with new Smart Hub

What happened?

BT has unveiled the newest version of its router, officially known as the Smart Hub (and unofficially called the Home Hub 6) to bring better broadband to UK homes

The router offers "unbeatable wireless range", the ISP claimed, to tackle black spots in homes and businesses, and offer significantly faster speeds. The Smart Hub has seven antennae, more than any other router from a telecoms provider, BT said. These help the Smart Hub provide a Wi-Fi range of up to 500m through a wall for a laptop or 350m for a tablet.

The Smart Hub offers several innovative features, too. Interference from microwave ovens and baby monitors will be cut by Advanced Interference Filters, and AC Wi-Fi will better juggle the demands of multiple users and web-connected devices. Meanwhile, Smart Scan will keep watch on your connection to help improve it automatically.

There's another change, which isn't particularly high-tech but may be welcomed by many BT customers. The new Smart Hub has controllable lights, so you can dim them or turn them off completely. This is handy if the hub is located in a bedroom or other spot where blinking LEDs are disruptive.

The hub upgrade comes as King's College London researchers reported that people with slower broadband connections are less likely to use the web and online services. The study



Register your interest in a speedy new BT Smart Hub to get one this summer



compared broadband speeds with nationwide usage of BBC iPlayer, and found that in areas including South Avrshire. Ards in Northern Ireland and the Isle of Wight, there was a correlation between slow connections and lower use of the streaming player.

That may not sound surprising to anyone who's ever suffered from slow broadband, but it emphasises the digital divide, showing the number of people - particularly those on rural connections

- being left behind because of poor connectivity, despite public funds being spent to address the problem.

How will it affect you?

The BT Smart Hub will be available to buy for £130, but it will also be given out to some BT customers for free. If you sign up for a new contract or renew your current contract on BT Infinity 2, 3, or 4 fibre packages, you'll get a Smart Hub as part of the deal. Infinity 1 contracts will get the Smart Hub later this summer.

If you're an existing fibre customer and don't want to renew your contract, the company will let you buy the Smart Hub for £50 instead of the full-priced £130. That offer is also available for customers on copper connections. If you want a Smart Hub, you can register your interest at bit.ly/btsmarthub400.

Sadly, the Smart Hub is only available to BT customers - it won't work if your broadband is supplied by a rival ISP.

What do we think?

It's no wonder people are less likely to jump online if slow and intermittent broadband is disrupting their enjoyment of the web. Anything that helps improve that situation is welcome, so we appreciate BT's efforts to boost home Wi-Fi connections, not least as millions of Brits use the company's services and many of us now connect over Wi-Fi rather than a fixed line.

That's especially true for families or homes with many residents, and those seven antennae will mean fewer disruptions and faster speeds. We can't say whether the coverage will truly reach half a kilometre through a wall, but if it saves some of us from having to shell out for an extender, that's also welcome news.

The improvements in the Smart Hub suggest that hardware designers are thinking about real-world use of routers, something that's not considered often enough in tech design. Details such as the LED dimming will be a relief to anyone who has to sleep in a room with annoying blinking lights.

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

Microsoft buys LinkedIn for \$26bn

What happened?

We've all had an email arrive in our inbox asking us to connect with people on LinkedIn – and now Microsoft has connected with the professional social network, buying the company for an eyeopening \$26.2bn (around £17.9m). That price tag makes it the heftiest purchase in Microsoft's history, and works out to \$255 (£174) for each active LinkedIn user.

How will it affect you?

It's not yet clear exactly what Microsoft has planned for LinkedIn, but you can expect closer links between your Outlook.com contacts and the social network. The two companies said LinkedIn would "retain its distinct brand, culture and independence", so the name and website won't be disappearing.

If you use LinkedIn but not Microsoft services, your data will now end up in the Redmond giant's cloud. Imagine seeing LinkedIn profile information when you type an email to a contact, or Office 365 suggesting an expert to ask for help when you're typing a report in Word. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella called the second scenario "delightful". We'll have to wait and see if users agree.

What do we think?

It's hard to believe LinkedIn could possibly be worth so much cash, and it's value is entirely down to the data the company holds on its member. All tech companies have a lot of information about us, but the privacy concerns come to the fore when those data pieces are connected. Microsoft will hopefully ask first before hitching LinkedIn data to Outlook, Office and Bing, but if we do approve those connections, the company will hold a wealth of information about us.

It's worth remembering that the data we share on social networks can be bought, with information trading hands for billions of dollars. You may not mind independent firms such as Twitter or Snapchat holding your information, but bear in mind that they could also be bought by a tech giant in the future.



Apple drops support for old iOS devices



What happened?

Apple offered a sneak peek at the next version of iOS, revealing a focus on encryption but also cutting off older handsets. It confirmed that iOS 10 will have a new notification system with a smart lock screen, an updated Photos app similar to Google Photos and voicemail transcriptions for phone calls, among other new features.

Apple also revealed stronger encryption in the Apple File System, which should help keep data more secure on iOS - something the US governments may not appreciate, after the company refused to knock holes in its own security earlier this year to unlock encrypted data held on a terrorist's iPhone.

Aside from mobile devices, Mac OS X will be renamed macOS, with the next software update called Sierra.

How will it affect you?

The updates should roll out in September, on whatever new hardware Apple releases, but will also be available to existing iPhones and iPads.
However, Apple confirmed that older handsets and tablets running the A5 processor won't support the updated iOS. That includes the iPad 1, 2, 3 and original Mini, as well as the iPhone 4S and older, all of which were released in 2012 or earlier.

The new software for computers, macOS Sierra, won't work on hardware released before 2009. You can, of course, ignore the updates, but iOS apps will eventually only support the newer software.

What do we think?

It's never good to see hardware made obsolete by a software upgrade, but most smartphones are expected to last about two years, so if you've held on to your iPhone for four years, you've had reasonable value from it. That's less true for tablets, which should have a longer lifespan, but four years is a long time in mobile hardware. It's hard to begrudge Apple too much for this, especially when it comes alongside genuinely useful features such as enhanced encryption.

Snooper's Charter 'leaves personal data vulnerable'

What happened?

As part of a report into 2015's TalkTalk data breach, the Culture, Media and Sport (CMS) committee has issued a stark warning about the vulnerability of pooled personal data, as collected under the Investigatory Powers Bill - better known as the Snooper's Charter.

The parliamentary report draws an indirect comparison between the TalkTalk cyber-attack and the surveillance legislation that was passed by the House of Commons earlier this month. In a section dedicated to the Investigatory Powers Bill, the report claims that "the ICO [Information Commissioner's Office] issued a stark warning about the Investigatory Powers Bill" during an evidence session.

"The ICO reportedly said that the legislation creates a 'haystack of potential problems' given the huge pools of personal data that it would create," the report continues. Noting that the committee has received evidence from several academics corroborating the ICO's observations, the report concludes: "The vulnerability of additional pooled data is an important concern that needs to be addressed urgently by the government."

The Investigatory Powers Bill contains



a provision that requires internet service providers to store data about websites visited by customers for a year. The concern is that pooling this personal data would leave it vulnerable to access from unwanted parties.

In the report, the CMS committee suggests more stringent background checks for those with access to the data, although this does little to safeguard attacks from external hackers - as was the case with the TalkTalk hack.

How will it affect you?

This parliamentary report undermines the argument that if you've got nothing to hide, you've got nothing to worry about, when it comes to the collection of our data. Even if you don't mind the government knowing details of your

online activities, in the interests of national security, the notion that this data is vulnerable - especially when combined with other personal information - is a deeply troubling one.

What do we think?

The passing of the Snooper's Charter was always going to raise hackles, but it's surprising that the latest concerns have been flagged from within parliament itself. We can't help but wonder why questions about the security of pooled data weren't properly investigated and debated before the bill was passed, rather than afterwards. Feeling that you're being spied on is worrying enough without the risk that the people collecting the info can't be trusted to look after it.

JBL Charge 3 bit.ly/jblcharge400

It's festival time in the UK which is usually a signal for the heavens to open and for lovers of live music to get muddy. JBL's latest Bluetooth speaker - the Charge 3 - is designed to withstand the British weather at its worst. It's a rugged Bluetooth speaker with an IPx7 rating, which means that if you drop it in a puddle it'll still be able to blast out the tunes.

Its USB A port is located under a thick rubber flap at the rear of the speaker, next to a micro USB charging port and 3.5mm input jack, and the device comes equipped with large, internal 6,000mAh battery that doubles as a booster battery for your smartphone.

While we're not entirely convinced



that taking a shiny new £150 Bluetooth speaker to a dirty field is the wisest move, you won't be disappointed with the volume this speaker can kick out if you do decide to strap it to your

rucksack. What's more, it seems that no matter how loud you make it go, there's no danger of clipping or nasty distortion, with the twin passive-bass radiators moving in and out impressively as you ramp up the volume. Absolute sound quality, however, isn't the best; there's a hard, thin edge to the mid-range and the size of the cabinet prevents it producing a weighty bass.

Still, the speakers deliver a thump that's more solid and hefty than most units this size, and the JBL Charge 3 is certainly flexible. Its internal 6,000mAh battery will last up to 20 hours if you listen at moderate volumes, it can be fully submerged in water without damage, and JBL's Connect system is in place, too, allowing you to pair the Charge 3 with another JBL unit for extra volume.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

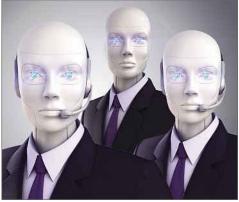
Will robots take over our lives?

Robots will soon outnumber human beings and 3D printers will be used to create human organs, according to a survey of more than 2,000 British adults. The next two decades will see technology radically impact the healthcare and automotive industries, according to YouGov research, with GP consultations available through virtual reality and driverless cars replacing traditional vehicles.

Fashion was picked out as another industry that will be significantly changed by technology in the next 20 years, while half of those surveyed predicted that the world's first cloned human will be born by 2036.

Other predictions include the first artificial-intelligence machine serving on the board of a big company (23%), avatar girlfriends and boyfriends becoming commonplace (19%) and communications devices being embedded inside the human body

Earlier this year, the World Economic Forum (WEF) predicted that around five million jobs could disappear by 2020, as advancements in artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnology and other fields impact businesses worldwide. Dubbing it the "fourth industrial revolution", the WEF said that developments in technology will "lay the foundation for a revolution more comprehensive and all-encompassing



than anything we have ever seen".

The report suggested that the casualties of this revolution will be people whose jobs can be replaced by sufficiently skilled software and hardware. Financial services were predicted to be most at risk of disruption, while low-skilled workers would face widespread redundancy.

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LIKELIHOOD RATING JJJJJ

There are arguments on both sides as to whether the rise of robots will be beneficial or detrimental to our lives, so we're going sit on the fence on this one. Nobody wants millions of redundancies (except perhaps cost-cutting bosses), but the convenience and efficiency of robots in certain roles is difficult to denv.

What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Phoenix Case

bit.ly/phoenix400 | From £29

Phones are getting smarter, but their battery life isn't improving much, which means heavy users are forced to carry around portable chargers. Phoenix Case solves the problem by offering up to 48 hours of extra battery life in the form of a slim (3.8mm) charging case that slips onto your iPhone. It's made of soft satin with brushed chrome edging, and protects your phone from the sun's UV rays and prevents overheating. The Phoenix is compatible with the iPhone 6 and 6S, and the team hopes to raise £25,000 by 16 July.



WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Google develops 'common sense' search engine

Google is dedicating a new European research centre to artificial intelligence, so that

computers and search engines can understand "some

obvious things about the world".

Facebook adds suicide prevention tools

Facebook's suicide-prevention

tools will now be available to users worldwide. These allow people to anonymously contact a Facebook friend

who has made

worrying posts, and share helpful resources such as numbers for organisations that offer suicide conselling.

WE DON'T LIKE...

New ransomware uses web code

A new type of ransomware has been discovered by security researchers. Coded entirely in

JavaScript, it could lead to an increase in people activating the malware.

Internet outage hits apps and websites

Many of the world's most popular apps and websites

including WhatsApp, Reddit and Slack suffered problems because of a fault with a

cable that transmits the internet across the Atlantic Ocean.



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Acer customers' data 'stolen in hack'

Hardware manufacturer Acer has suffered a data breach, according to reports. Unauthorised access by a third party of Acer's e-commerce platform led to customers' names, addresses, payment card numbers, card expiration dates and security codes potentially being compromised, Softpedia has reported. The news site published what it claimed was a pre-release version of a letter that

to be sent to potentially affected customers.

was due

"We took immediate steps to remediate this security issue upon identifying it, and we are being assisted by outside cybersecurity experts," the draft letter reads. "We have reported this issue to our credit card payment processor. We have also contacted and offered our full cooperation to federal law enforcement," it adds.

The only law enforcement mentioned in the letter is the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and it also makes reference to consumer rights under US law. This does not mean that only American customers have been affected, because it is possible the company may be sending out localised notifications. bit.ly/acer400

5,000 'collusion' apps discovered

McAfee's Threats Report has discovered 5,000 versions of 21 mobile applications that are being used to operate mobile 'collusion' attacks on victims. This method of attack involves using two or more apps in synchronisation to steal data, inspect files or send fake SMS messages, along with other forms of

malicious behaviour.

Video streaming, health monitoring, and travel planning were the most popular categories of app discovered for launching synchronised attacks and the method for hacks has been facilitated by customers failing to update the software on their devices to close security holes.

McAfee explained three different ways that mobile collusion could be used by hackers: information theft involves using an app that has access to sensitive data collaborating with one that can send information to others; financial theft sends information to an app that can make financial transactions; and service misuse utilises an app that can control a system service and take commands from other apps to change how the phone operates.

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Lisa Baergen, Director at NuData Security (nudatasecurity.com)



As an Acer customer, how worried should I be about the recent hack of the company's website (see story, above)?

Andrew Bull, via email



stolen and hackers were able to access the names. addresses and credit card information of Acer customers. What victims of a breach don't always recognise is that every piece of information is important, not just the credit card details. By coupling this data with details from other breaches, cybercriminals are able to build more complete identities, which sell for a higher value on the Dark Web.

These bundles, often referred to as 'fulz', contain much more comprehensive information around specific individuals, meaning there are more opportunities for fraud to take place.

Victims of a breach don't realise that every piece of information that's stolen is important, not just the credit card details -

bit.ly/collusion400

For example, with enough data collected from separate breaches, a fraudster could gain access to financial and geographical information to fill out a loan application or apply for a new credit card.

Fortunately, there is a way to stop hackers using this compiled data before catastrophic damage can be done. Companies at the forefront of protecting their brand and users are developing online frauddetection solutions that

employ behaviouralanalysis techniques.

By using a behaviouralanalysis platform, companies can protect their users and stop any deceitful transactions from taking place. Behavioural analysis serves as a means of understanding how legitimate users act in real life, thereby predicting and preventing fraud from occurring, without ever needing to interrupt the user experience.





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Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

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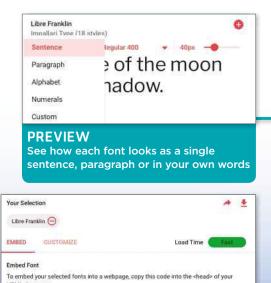
Google Fonts

fonts.google.com

If you're only familiar with Times New Roman, Helvetica and Arial, then check out Google's collection of more than 800 font families. It's been revamped with a swish new interface to make it easier than ever to find a font that works for you. Using a dynamic grid that resizes as you refine your search, you can view the various styles in each font family, alter the point size, test the fonts with your own text and find out more about their creators. All the fonts are free to download and use in documents, design projects and on websites. With this much choice, you'll never get stuck with Comic Sans again (although that's there, too!).

Our rating

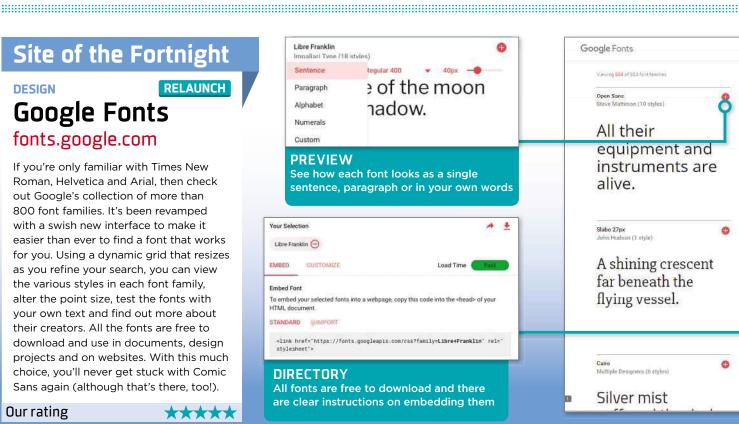


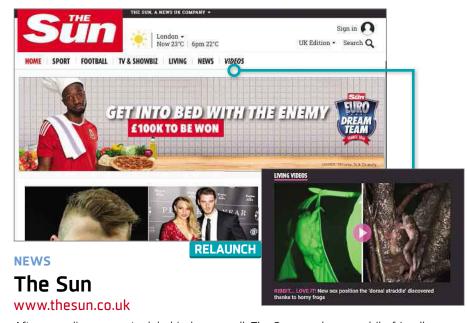


DIRECTORY

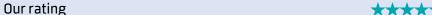
All fonts are free to download and there are clear instructions on embedding them

k href='https://fonts.googleapis.com/css?family=Libre+Franklin' rel="





After spending years stuck behind a paywall, The Sun now has a mobile-friendly website that is not only free but much improved. There are now more stories, photos and videos crammed onto the homepage, but good organisation and fluid scrolling ensures that the content never becomes overwhelming. As you would expect, most of the articles are about sport and showbiz, although the top section now has a strong focus on constantly updated hard news. On the down side, stories are too often interrupted by photos and there aren't enough reader comments, but punchy headlines, lively writing and extensive football coverage should ensure its success.





FOOD

Pizza Hut

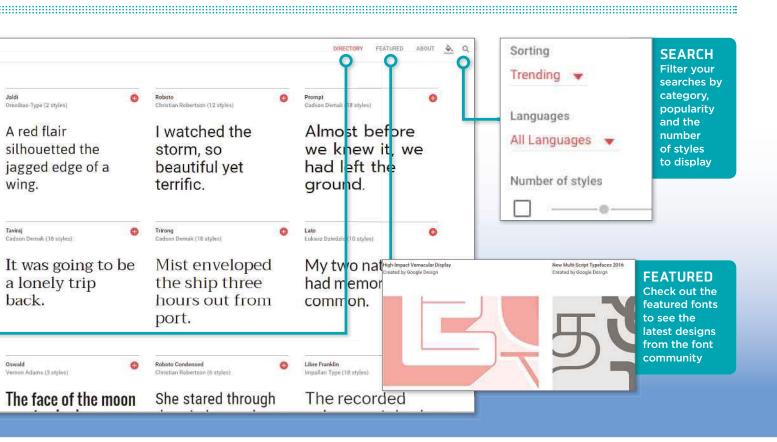
www.pizzahut.co.uk

Pizza Hut is hoping to grab an extra slice of the casual-dining market by appealing to more 'millennials'. By using stark photos of food and lots of neon text, the site certainly feels young and vibrant, although its attempts to get 'down with the kids' are cringeworthy at times. That said, we like that you can view a specific branch to see available menus and prices, and that it's easy to book a table. But the pizza-selection page needs refining: having to scroll past a large photo and a slideshow of bases before you can see what's on offer is more "d'oh!" than dough.

Our rating



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





CODING

Linux Journey

linuxjourney.com

Had enough of Windows, but can't afford a Mac? Then Linux could be the operating system for you. This site provides the perfect introduction to the open-source OS and travels with you as you unlock its secrets and functions one by one. Written in a friendly tone with everything broken down into bite-size lessons, it helps you choose a Linux distro, teaches you the basics of the command line and gradually turns you into an expert. The colourful, cartoon graphics, simple layout and clearly defined sections make the site feel inviting, even if you're a Linux newbie.







NEWS

Somerset Live

www.somersetlive.co.uk

Somerset Live brings together stories from eight local newspaper sites, including the Western Daily Press and the Frome Standard. It's a tidy, threecolumn offering, but is surprisingly non-responsive. It also lacks a distinct personality, which is not helped by uninspiring news and sport headlines ("Planning Inspectorate's approval of Aller solar farm 'disappointing'") and too wide a remit. On the plus side, we liked the ability to zoom into specific areas such as Yeovil and Glastonbury, but weren't so keen on having to complete a questionnaire to read some articles.

Our rating





South West Trains

www.southwesttrains.co.uk

South West Trains has decluttered its old website and made buying tickets and getting live travel updates much easier. Speedy drop-down menus and a mobile-friendly design suggest the company is on the right track, and we like the larger buttons, pop-up calendars and results that clearly show the cheapest tickets and direct trains. On the downside, there's no option to view earlier or later trains, and we found it hard to find a refund form. Still, we were impressed by the site's reaction to major disruption with precise details located prominently at the top of the homepage.

Our rating





WebUser

How can I overclock my PC to make it run faster than it's supposed to?

A Page 58, Issue 374



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TRAVEL

Host Unusual

hostunusual.co.uk

Would you prefer to stay in a five-star hotel or in a treehouse in the grounds of a 14th-century Scottish castle? If you're leaning towards the latter, you'll love this unique travel service, which specialises in quirky UK accommodation. There are 14 property types, from lighthouses to railway carriages, and a wildcard option if you fancy a surprise. Some categories are more packed than others but all the properties are well described with top-quality photos. Although you're taken off-site to check availability and book, the blog and inspiration sections offer great tips for finding the perfect getaway.

Our rating





Jurassic Outpost

jurassicoutpost.com

site provides information about the cast, crew and production of each of the four Jurassic Park films, as well as deleted scenes, music and photo galleries. Although some parts are underdeveloped - the encyclopedia has yet to get into full swing, there's no merchandise and there are only six videos, with the rest hosted on YouTube - it's clearly a labour of love. There are dozens of podcasts, featured articles and a news section that's updated almost daily with lots of interesting dinosaur discoveries. The forum is bustling, too, with lots of excitement building ahead of Jurassic World II.

Formerly known as Jurassic World, this

Our rating





HOSTING

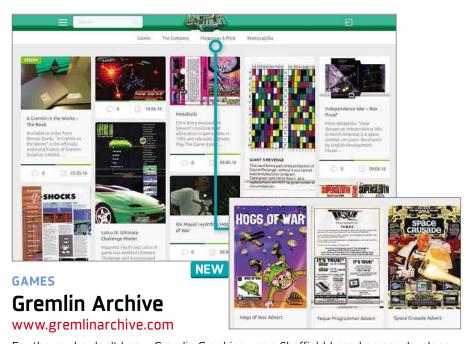
Simply Hosting & Servers

www.simplyhosting.com

For 15 years, PoundHost has specialised in cloud servers and data applications, and it has now rebranded to expand its success across Europe. Renamed Simply Hosting & Servers, its smart website showcases its services, sorting its hosting into four categories and making it easy to choose and buy a product online. Although it's primarily aimed at people involved in the business side of the internet, it doesn't bombard you with technical information and offers excellent support, with prominent phone numbers and an online chat facility. There's also a dedicated portal for customers.

Our rating





For those who don't know, Gremlin Graphics was a Sheffield-based games developer with a string of successes between 1984 and 1999, including Wanted: Monty Mole, the Lotus series and Actua Soccer. This site pays fitting homage to the company, combining artwork, source code, adverts, magazine scans and behind-the-scenes footage to build an intriguing picture of the inner workings of the software house (there are even royalty statements and contracts). Though it's difficult to know where to start with such a rich treasure trove, the excellent search engine and simple menu system make it easy to find items of interest. If only you could play the games, too.

Our rating





TRAVEL

Visit Jersey

www.jersey.com

Jersey's old website did little to promote the delights of the channel island. Recognising the need to turn the tide. the new site is a breath of fresh air, with mood-setting images, videos and guides that entice you to discover more. While there are lots of interesting articles, recommendations and interesting suggestions, more work is needed on the Stay and See & Do sections (choosing an area is pointless because you're always shown an overall map of the island and it's far too fiddly). Some of the detailed accommodation data in the downloadable PDF book could be better integrated into the site, too.

Our rating



Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Free code editor with Firefox preview

There are lots of tools that make short work of creating a website, but some of us still like to start from scratch with HTML. It can be a fiddle, though, to create your site in a text editor and have to keep reloading it in your browser to see how it looks. BlueGriffon (www.bluegriffon.org) is a new website-editing program that lets you write your code in a text editor and see how your site will look, all in the same software. It uses Mozilla's Gecko rendering engine to display the site, so you can see exactly how it will appear in Firefox.



Free SSL certificates from 181

Providing your visitors with the means to browse your site in private is becoming increasingly important, with Google arguing that all data sent and received between users and websites should be encrypted with SSL (Secure Socket Layer). 1&1 (www.landl.co.uk) has taken this on board and now offers a free security certificate to almost all its users who have hosting packages with the company. If you have a 1&1 account, you can find the option to switch on SSL from within the 1&1 control panel.

Deal of the Fortnight

For advanced users, Simply Hosting (bit.ly/ simp400) is offering Web User readers 50% off its Dedicated Server DS4.5.1 package forever, as long as you pay annually. Use the promo code DENNIS.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Nick Leech, Digital Director,



123-Reg (www.123-reg.co.uk)

I want to make my site look a bit different - what's the best way to incorporate interestinglooking fonts and typography?

Jan Fleetwood, via email



Fonts have different personalities, so your font should match the purpose of your design - a rounded,

bubbly typeface may suit a site aimed at children, but not a business one.

There's no reason to stick to just one font but we wouldn't recommend more than two. You can use them to establish a visual hierarchy, separating headlines from sub-headlines, body copy and captions. When pairing fonts, try combining serif with sans serif, which work particularly well together. Size, weight, boldness and spacing can also help visitors navigate a page.

MINI WORKSHOP | Automate all updates in WordPress

🖣 Easy Updates Manager: bit.ly/eum400 | 🕒 5 mins | Website running WordPress

Security updates are automatically applied in WordPress installations but plugins and major upgrades still have to be updated manually. This handy plugin will do it all for you



Your WordPress website can soon stack up with notices for updates. 🚺 Click Plugins, Add New 2 and type easy updates manager into the search box. B Click the Install Now button. 4 On the next page, click the Activate Plugin link.



On your Plugins page, click Configure under Easy Updates Manager (to return to this screen later, click Dashboard, then Updates Options). 1 All the possible updates for your installation are listed next to switches which show whether they're on or off. 2 By default, everything is switched on except Major Releases **3** and Development Updates. **4**



Only turn on Development Updates if you want to test new tools in pre-release versions of WordPress. You can turn on Major Releases, but make sure your site still works straight after an upgrade. You can use the switches to control Plugins and Themes, or browse through the extra detail on the tabs devoted to them. 1



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- 20MP Camera
- Octo Core Processor
- RRP £249.99



We test and compare the latest products

Android phones for less than £200

You don't have to pay much these days for a good smartphone. Andy Shaw tests seven phones that cost under £200 SIM-free

wning a decent smartphone used to mean paying a lot of money up front or tying yourself into a hefty monthly contract. But you can now get affordable SIM-free Android phones and choose the mobile deals you want, whether it's pay-as-you-go or a better-value contract you can manage more easily.

Here, we've tested seven of the most affordable Android phones, and compared performance, screen quality, camera and battery life.

HOW WE TESTED

We tested the performance of the phones using a variety of benchmarks including Geekbench (www.primatelabs.com) and Peacekeeper (peacekeeper.futuremark.com). We ran a battery-life test and also used a colorimeter to measure screen quality, comparing the brightness, contrast and the number of Microsoft's RGB standard colours it can display.

Sony Xperia M4 Aqua | £149 | www.tesco.com/direct

FEATURES $\star\star\star\star\star$ PERFORMANCE $\star\star\star\star\star$ EASE OF USE $\star\star\star\star\star$ VALUE FOR MONEY $\star\star\star\star\star$

The Xperia M4 Agua takes its name from its resistance to water (it's also dust-resistant).

It's rated IP67/68, which means it won't be damaged if you drop it in the bath and leave it there for 30 minutes. It's the only device in this Group Test that has this feature, so it's a significant bonus.

The M4 Aqua's performance compares favourably to the rest of the group. It was the fastest in our Peacekeeper test, which compares the speed with which a device displays web pages and runs web apps; and third fastest in the Geekbench test, which pushes the phone's powerful octa-core processor to its limits.

The screen is very bright, which is great for outdoor use, but this takes its toll on the depth of its black, which is more of a dark grey.

Its battery lasted for a reasonable 10 hours and 16 minutes in our rolling-video battery test, so it should easily last a full day, though the other award winners performed

better in this test. It also has a Stamina mode that prolongs the battery's life but at the cost of reduced performance.

> It's rare to find a quality camera on a budget smartphone, and most of the other models we tested here were disappointing, but the Xperia's camera provided good shots both indoors and out. We found some of Sony's picture-enhancing settings a little odd, though - the Superior Auto mode, for example, seemed to cast a blue sheen over our photos, and both Manual and HDR modes failed to improve on the test photos we took in standard mode.

The biggest disappointment is the built-in storage, which is just 8GB, with only 4GB of that available to the user. If you don't already have an additional microSD card, you'll want to budget for one - the Xperia supports cards up to 128GB.



The Xperia M4 Agua isn't going match the performance and specifications of a top-of-the-range phone but, at this price, we wouldn't expect it to. It's a good device that comes with some high-end features, including water- and dust-resistance, an octa-core processor that performs well and a decent camera. The screen isn't the best in this test because its colour range is compromised in favour of brightness, but this is a common struggle on many devices.





Motorola Moto E 2nd Gen | £70.50 |

www.amazon.co.uk

EATURES ★★★☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★☆

EASE OF USE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

In a sea of phones that cost well over £100, the latest Moto E's £70 price is remarkable enough to turn heads. It's less than half the price of our Gold Award winner and still managed to hold its own in our tests.

Most impressive is its battery life, which lasted 13 hours and 30 minutes in our tests, second only to the Samsung Galaxy J5. Its performance results fell behind the Sony model, but it still placed fourth in this group, in both our Geekbench and Peacekeeper tests.

The screen is small - just 4.5in across the diagonal - but the quality is excellent, with a good range of colours and a great contrast, particularly compared to Sony's screen. The biggest disappointment is the camera - it's fine for snaps but most shots veered between muddy and grainy, depending on the lighting conditions.



The Moto E is a brilliant budget phone, at a super-low price. The screen is small but very high quality, and it hasn't been hamstrung by cheap components. The camera isn't brilliant and is one of the phone's few disappointments.

Samsung Galaxy J5 | £149.95 |

www.johnlewis.com

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

The most amazing thing about Samsung's Galaxy J5 is its battery life. In our tests, it lasted 17 hours and 50 minutes. The only phone our sister site Expert Reviews (www

.expertreviews.co.uk) has seen that lasts longer is the vastly more expensive Galaxy S7, which only beat the J5 by a few minutes.

The phone's other highlight is its screen, which is near-perfect. Our colorimeter reported that it could display the full spectrum of our test colours, producing perfect black, with absolutely no light leaking through. It's not as bright as some screens but it's still good enough to see in most lighting conditions.

The phone's speed was disappointing, coming in the second half of this group in our Geekbench and Peacekeeper tests. Its camera is adequate in good light but it struggled with extremes of low and high lighting.

VERDICT

WebUse

BRONZE

AWARD

The Galaxy J5 is all about the battery and the screen. It isn't as fast or slick as some similarly priced phones in this Group Test, but it looks great and should last well into a second day on a single charge.

OnePlus X £189 oneplus.net | ★★★★☆

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

The OnePlus X is the most expensive phone in this test. Most of the extra cost has been pushed into performance and it's a good all-rounder, coming top of the Geekbench results and second in the Peacekeeper test. Its battery lasted third longest and its screen is almost as good as Samsung's, but the camera is disappointing.

VERDICT

This is an impressive phone that looks good and performs well, but we found its camera lacking and the price is too high.

Wileyfox Swift | £129 www.wileyfox.com | ★★★★☆

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

The Wileyfox Swift has a classy design and runs Cyanogen (cyngn.com), an alternative version of Android that has extra tools to protect you from spam calls. It performed around average in our tests, except for the battery life, which at 8 hours and 55 minutes was the shortest in this group. The camera is disappointing, even in good light, and the screen only displayed 79% of our test colour palette.

VERDICT

A nicely designed phone with an interesting alternative Android operating system, but the hardware is ultimately disappointing.

Honor 5X | £170 www.ebuyer.com | ★★★☆☆

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

The Honor 5X performed well in Geekbench compared to the other phones tested, but it felt sluggish to use. This was confirmed by our Peackeeper test, where it came second from bottom. The Gold Award-winning Sony Xperia M4 Aqua is slightly smaller and cheaper, has the same processor, takes better pictures and is also waterproof.

VERDICT

The Honor 5X is a little too expensive for what you get, which is a similar specification of phone to our Gold Award-winning Sony model but not quite as good.

HTC Desire 530 £120 www.carphonewarehouse.com

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

Unfortunately, the HTC Desire 530 came bottom of both our Geekbench and Peacekeeper tests. Its low performance didn't even help with its battery life, which ended up second from bottom, just pipping the Wileyfox Swift to the 9-hour mark. To top it off, the camera isn't that great. It's a shame, because we love the design of the phone and its HTC Sense 7 interface.

VERDICT

A great-looking phone with a well-designed interface, but its poor performance lets it down, especially at this price.





Discuss this review at forum.webuser.co.uk

Group Test Android smartphones











	_				
	Sony	Motorola	Samsung	OnePlus	Wileyfox
	Xperia M4 Aqua	Moto E 2nd Gen	Galaxy J5	Х	Swift
WEBSITE	www.sonymobile.com	www.motorola.co.uk	www.samsung.com	oneplus.net	www.wileyfox.com
SIM-FREE PRICE	£149	£70.50	£149.95	£189	£129
BUY FROM	www.tesco.com/direct	www.amazon.co.uk	www.johnlewis.com	oneplus.net	www.wileyfox.com
PROCESSOR	Octa-core 1.5GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 615	Quad-core 1.2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 410	Quad-core 1.2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 410	Quad-core 2.3GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 801	Quad-core 1.2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 410
MEMORY	2GB	1GB	1.5GB	3GB	2GB
SCREEN SIZE	5in	4.5in	5in	5in	5in
SCREEN RESOLUTION	1,280 x 720 pixels	960 x 540 pixels	1,280 x 720 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,280 x 720 pixels
SCREEN TYPE	IPS	IPS	Super AMOLED	AMOLED	IPS
FRONT CAMERA	5 megapixels	VGA	5 megapixels	8 megapixels	5 megapixels
REAR CAMERA	13 megapixels	5 megapixels	13 megapixels	13 megapixels	13 megapixels
FLASH	LED	X	LED	LED	LED
STORAGE (FREE)	8GB (4GB)	8GB	8GB (4.6GB)	16GB (11.4GB)	16GB (12GB)
MEMORY CARD SLOT	MicroSD	MicroSD	MicroSD	MicroSD	MicroSD
WI-FI	802.11n	802.11n	802.11n	802.11n	802.11n
BLUET00TH	Bluetooth 4.1	Bluetooth 4.1	Bluetooth 4.1	Bluetooth 4.0	Bluetooth 4.0
NFC	✓	X	✓	X	X
WIRELESS DATA	3G, 4G				
OPERATING SYSTEM	Android 5.0.2	Android 5.0.2	Android 5.1.1	OxygenOS (Android 5.1.1)	Cyanogen 12.1
BATTERY SIZE	2,400mAh	2,390mAh	2,600mAh	2,525mAh	2,500mAh
DIMENSIONS	146 x 73 x 7.3mm	130 x 67 x 12.3mm	142 x 72 x 7.9mm	140 x 69 x 6.9mm	141 x 72 x 9.4mm
WEIGHT	136g	145g	146g	138g	135g
WARRANTY	One-year return-to-base				

OUR VERDICT We gave our Gold Award to the Sony Xperia M4 Aqua. This brilliant phone is very competitively priced and is a great all-rounder, with decent performance (thanks in part to its octa-core processor) and a camera that's capable of taking good-quality snaps. It's waterproof, too. If you're on a tighter budget, the Motorola Moto E 2nd Gen is small but perfectly formed. It's let down a little by the camera, but you can't have everything in a phone that's half the price of our Gold Award winner, so we gave this our Silver Award. If you just want a long battery life and a great-looking screen, the Samsung Galaxy J5 is our recommended choice. It wins our Bronze Award for these fantastic features but if performance is your priority, the other award winners will serve you better. · Watch out for the Moto G4 (£169), too. We couldn't get one in time to include in this test but as our First Look in Issue 398 suggests, it has the potential to knock the Xperia off the top spot.





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HARDWARE

BUDGET SMARTPHONE

Sony Xperia M4 Aqua

£149 from www.tesco.com/direct

Date tested: June 2016

A great budget smartphone with some high-end specs, including a powerful octa-core processor, a decent camera and a reasonable battery life. It's also dust- and water-resistant, with an impressively bright screen.

KEY SPECS

5in screen ■ Octa-core 1.5GHz processor ■ 2GB of memory ■ 8GB of storage ■ 13-megapixel rear camera ■ Android 5.0.2 Lollipop ■ 1,280 x 720 pixels resolution ■ 2,400mAh battery ■ Dust- and water-resistant ■ 146 x 73 x 7.3mm ■ 136g

MULTIFUNCTION PRINTER

Canon Pixma MG5750

£65.59 from www.photospecialist.co.uk Date tested: June 2016



The MG5750 is an excellent all-rounder, producing topquality prints at a great price and a reasonable speed. It uses multiple cartridges - including a special one for black text - to reduce waste and keep running costs low.

KEY SPECS

Thermal inkjet multifunction printer with scanner/copier • 4,800 x 1,200dpi maximum print ■1,200 x 2,400dpi (24-bit) optical scan resolution ■ 5 cartridges ■ USB and 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi = 100-sheet tray = Duplex printing = 455 x 369 x 148mm

WINDOWS 10 LAPTOP

Acer Aspire One Cloudbook 14

£149.99 from www.currvs.co.uk Date tested: April 2016



KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.6GHz Intel Celeron N3050 processor ■ 2GB of memory ■ 32GB SSD ■ 14.1in non-touchscreen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 1 x USB 3, 1 x USB 2 port ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 339 x 235 x 17.9mm ■ 1.6kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

COMPACT PC

Acer Revo One RL85

£269.99 from www.ebuver.com Date tested: January 2016

The Acer Revo One RL85 has plenty of storage capacity and provides room for easy expansion at a later date. Performance is respectable and the compact PC's unorthodox design is attractive and clever.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.7GHz Intel Core i3-400SU processor ■ 4GB of memory = 500GB hard drive = 2 x USB 2 ports, 2 x USB 3 ports ■ Gigabit Ethernet, dual-band 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ Windows 8.1 ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

WIRELESS ROUTER

Netgear Nighthawk X4S

£259.99 from www.currys.co.uk Date tested: December 2015



The Netgear Nighthawk X4S will boost your network, no matter what type of web connection you have. It's expensive but built to last, and should make further upgrades unnecessary until the next 802.11 standards are launched.

Dual-band 2.4GHz, 5GHz ■ 802.11ac ■ 2.53Gbps theoretical max speed **a** ADSL2+ and VDSL **b** 5 x 10/100/1,000Mbps Gigabit Ethernet ports ■ Dual-core 1.4GHz processor ■ 285 x 185 x 50mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

BUDGET TABLET

Apple iPad Mini 2

£219 from www.apple.com/uk Date tested: November 2015

The iPad Mini 2 has a superb, slim-but-solid design and a good-quality screen. Its performance keeps up with the latest tablets, and the battery life is also impressive.

KEY SPECS

7.9in screen ■ 2,048 x 1,536 pixels resolution ■ 1.3GHz Apple A7 processor ■ 16GB storage ■ 5-megapixel rear camera, 1.2-megapixel front camera ■ 802.11n dual-band Wi-Fi ■ iOS 9 ■ 200 x 135 x 7.5mm ■ 331g

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2016

£19.95 from bit.ly/shop389 Date tested: January 2016

Kaspersky is rock solid at protecting your PC from the worst of the web, and has come top in seven of our most recent tests, blocking all viruses and malware with its robust defences. Click the link



above to save £30 on the software (normal price £49.99).

KEY FEATURES

Antivirus 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 ■ Compatible with Windows 10

ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com Date tested: January 2016

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.



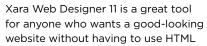
KEY FEATURES

16GB free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Works with XP, Vista, 7, 8+ and 10 ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 100GB extra storage for £1.36 per month; 1TB for £6.01 per month; 10TB for £60.16 per month

WEB DESIGN

Xara Web Designer 11 Premium

£69.99 from www.xara.com Date tested: November 2015



or CSS code. The interface is easy to use and the software includes all the tools you need to create flexible sites that change depending on the size of the screen.



KEY FEATURES

90+ templates ■ WYSIWYG design ■ Create responsive websites = Embed codes = Add HTML = Online editing = FTP uploader • Hosting (requires registration) • Browser preview (Chrome, Firefox, IE, Opera)

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 backup files easily ■ Email logs ■ Schedule backups ■ Simple and Advanced mode Runs on Windows XP, Vista, 7.8 and 10 Extensive Help documentation and support

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+ and 10 (32- and 64-bit) ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

VIDEO EDITING

Adobe Premiere Elements 13

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

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



KEY FEATURES

Automatic editing ■ Export to multiple video formats ■ Burn to DVD and Blu-ray ■ Image stabiliser ■ Stop-motion capture ■ Motion tracking ■ Musical scores and sound effects ■ Upload to YouTube and Vimeo

Best Free Software

SYSTEM TOOL

WinUtilities Free 13

bit.lv/winutilities400

Min requirements: Windows XP/

Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 6.1MB

WinUtilities is a comprehensive all-in-one cleaning and optimisation suite that includes 26 powerful system tools. These are helpfully sorted into modules such as Clean Up & Repair, Optimise & Improve, Privacy & Security, Files & Folders, Registry Tools and System Tools.

The Clean Up & Repair section includes a disk cleaner, registry cleaner, shortcuts fixer and uninstaller, while Optimise & Improve offers disk and registry defrag tools, a memory optimiser and a startup cleaner. Privacy & Security contains a history cleaner, process security, file shredder, and file undelete. Switching to Full Mode displays all the tools in a single screen.

In addition to the individual tools. there's a 1-Click Maintenance function that can perform both basic and advanced maintenance tasks at the click of a button, or on a schedule. You can choose exactly which tasks to include and exclude, and what action to take once the cleaning has completed



- such as shut down or restart your PC, or show a report.

The Scheduled Tasks tab lets you set the disk cleaner, history cleaner, registry cleaner and disk-defrag tools to run at a scheduled time, while the Status screen provides information about the various modules and whether there's an update available for the program.

Changes to the latest version include improvements to the disk-, registryand history-cleaning engines, and updates to the process-security database, which ensures that your system remains safe.

There's also a new licence-verification system for users who want to upgrade to the paid-for Pro edition for \$39.99 (about £28).

MINI WORKSHOP | Clean up your PC using WinUtilities Free 13



The Modules tab 11 gives you access to all the program's tools, and you can switch between full and classic views. 2 Select a category in the column on the left, 5 then choose a tool you want to run from the selection in the centre pane. 4 The tool will open in a new window.



Disk Cleaner, which uses a simple wizard-based interface, can remove junk files and invalid entries. Click the Scan Now button 1 or Next, 2 then select the drives to target. The progress steps are show on the left. 3 Once the scan has completed, you can view the results and choose what to clean.



The 1-Click Maintenance section 1 lets you choose the areas you want to target. 2 Click the orange Run button 3 to begin the cleaning process. Schedule Tasks lets you set when and how often certain tools should run. 4 To change the look and behaviour of the program, click the down arrow 5 and select Settings.

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



GIF COMPRESSOR

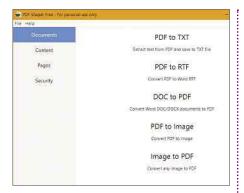
GIF Optimizer Free 2

bit.ly/gifopt400

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 2MB

.....

Animated GIFs can liven up social-media posts and make for fun avatars but sometimes their file size can be too big, which makes them more annoying than amusing. GIF Optimizer reduces the size of GIFs without affecting their image quality. Just open the GIF you want to compress and click the Optimise button to shrink it. If the result isn't small enough, you can shrink the GIF further by reducing the number of colours.



PDF TOOLKIT PDF Shaper 6

www.pdfshaper.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 10.2MB

PDF Shaper lets you perform various actions with PDF files, including splitting and merging them; extracting text and pictures; signing PDFs and encrypting or decrypting them; and creating PDFs from images. New features include an improved interface with support for high DPI monitors, and the ability to turn PDFs into TXT and RTF documents. Make sure you decline the bundled extras during installation.



SYSTEM TOOL

CoreTemp

bit.ly/coretemp400

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 1.1MB

Heat can damage sensitive computer components and if your processor (CPU) gets too hot, it could make your PC misbehave, hang or crash. CoreTemp uses your computer's built-in monitoring functions to keep tabs on the processor temperature and other vital information. Not only does it show the overall temperature, but also the heat of each separate core. An Android companion app lets you monitor your PC remotely.

New Windows Apps

Duplicate Cleaner

bit.ly/dupclean400

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 6.6MB

This Windows 10 app helps you find and remove duplicate files on your device. You can quickly search for a particular type of item (photos, for example), and there are plenty of advanced features available.



Web Tiles

bit.ly/webtile400

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 2.8MB

You can pin any website to the Windows 10 Start menu, but the result is often a bit bland. Web Tiles lets you customise the look of these site tiles, using text, logos and graphics.



Realarm Beta

bit.ly/realarm400

Min requirements: Windows 8+/10

File size: 35.2MB

This alarm clock is a work-inprogress update of a Windows Phone app. It offers multiple sounds for each alarm, and also lets you use songs from your own music library.



Best Free Software

SYSTEM TOOL GWX Stopper 3

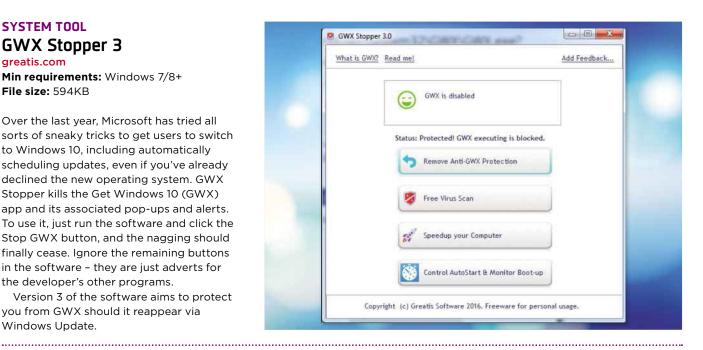
greatis.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+

File size: 594KB

Over the last year, Microsoft has tried all sorts of sneaky tricks to get users to switch to Windows 10, including automatically scheduling updates, even if you've already declined the new operating system. GWX Stopper kills the Get Windows 10 (GWX) app and its associated pop-ups and alerts. To use it, just run the software and click the Stop GWX button, and the nagging should finally cease. Ignore the remaining buttons in the software - they are just adverts for the developer's other programs.

Version 3 of the software aims to protect you from GWX should it reappear via Windows Update.





MEDIA PLAYER Zoom Player 12

bit.ly/zoom400

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

File size: 20.6MB

Zoom Player is an excellent free media player that supports most common audio and video formats, and plays DVDs. It offers a host of useful features including a file browser, playlist editor, bookmarks, play history, audio equaliser and colour controls, and can be tailored for different devices - PC, Home Theatre PC (HTPC) or Tablet.

The program's media library now has a new metadata-scraping capability that automatically downloads posters for films and TV shows, and displays them in a JukeBox mode. The full-screen navigation has been improved in the latest version, and there are various new settings and performance enhancements.

ART PROGRAM MediBang Paint Pro 8.0

medibangpaint.com/en

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10 or Mac

OS X File size: 38.7MB

MediBang Paint Pro is a painting and drawing program that offers a broad selection of brushes. These range from pens and pencils to airbrushes and watercolour, and you can fully customise each one by adjusting the width, adding a soft edge and tweaking the pressure sensitivity. The program has a wealth of useful features, including magic wand, layers, levels and free fonts, and provides cloud storage so you can save your work online. There are free iPhone, iPad and Android versions available, too. Additions to the latest version include new brushes and canvases, a watercolour-edge effect and the ability to link your social-media accounts.





GAME

Torpor

bit.ly/torpor400

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 or Mac OS X

File size: 71.9MB

The aim of this game is to "Explore the story of a soldier, his family, and the man that killed him, through the objects that shaped their lives". You move around the game environment, clicking items of interest that move you between the past and the present, to tell a poignant story of war and loss.

Don't install...

Uninstall Tool

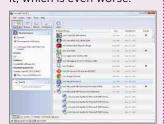
bit.ly/uninstall400

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 3.6MB

Call us stingy, but when you install software for free, we don't see why you should have to pay to uninstall it. So we think Uninstall Tool has got a nerve to charge you \$24.95 (£17.58) just to get rid of some unwanted programs and add-ons. It's also one of those tools that claims to be a free download, but charges you once you run it, which is even worse.



...Install this instead

Auslogics Browser Care

bit.ly/auslogics400

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

File size: 7.6MB

Even if you don't install browser toolbars and other add-ons, they can still be foisted on you by other programs. Auslogics Browser Care lets you manage unwanted junk in Chrome, Firefox and IE from one central location and quickly get rid of any elements you don't want, including annoying toolbars and add-ons. You can also reset your homepage and default browsers, if these settings have been changed, and clear your browsing data. Make sure you choose Custom installation and decline the option to install Auslogics BoostSpeed.





UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



PASSWORD MANAGER

KeePass 2.34

keepass info

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ File size: 1.5MB

This open-source password manager keeps all your logins safe and saves you having to remember them. The new build fixes a security issue that could have allowed attackers to compromise your PC via the application's update function. Plugins have been improved, too.



MONITOR TOOL

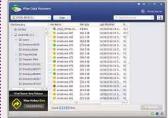
SunsetScreen 1.24

bit.ly/sunset400

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

File size: 882KB

The highly customisable SunsetScreen changes the hue of your monitor display in the evenings, reducing the harsh glare and limiting the 'blue light' it produces. The updated version gains an 'invert day/night' mode and stops showing 'Expand colour range' if it's already expanded.



UNDELETE TOOL

Wise Data Recovery

www.wisecleaner.com

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

File size: 1.2MB

This program can find and recover accidentally deleted files. It scans your system and present a colour-coded list of potentially recoverable items. The latest version adds Support Centre functions. updates various translations and introduces minor interface improvements.



IMAGE MANAGER

ImBatch 4.9

www.highmotionsoftware .com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 14.4MB

ImBatch can make multiple changes to batches of photos, such as renaming and resizing them. This version's new transparency features include a new Stroke task that outlines your image. There's also an option to mute the sound when processing finalises.

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Best New Browser Tools



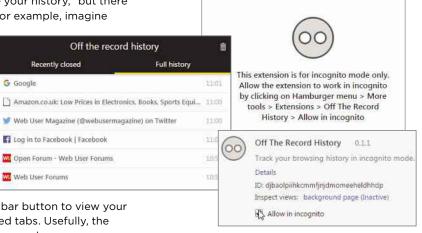
CHROME

Save your history in incognito mode

You may read the title of this tip and think: "Silly Web User, the whole point of incognito mode is that it doesn't store your history," but there are times when such a feature can be useful. For example, imagine

if you've been privately browsing for a present for a loved one, but can't remember where you spotted the perfect gift. Off The Record History (bit.ly/off400) is a new extension that temporarily stores details of your clandestine activities, so you can instantly revisit pages of interest without needing to click Back. To use the add-on in incognito mode, first click Chrome's menu button, choose 'More tools', then Extensions and tick the 'Allow in incognito mode' box below Off The Record

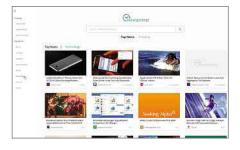
History. You can then click the extension's toolbar button to view your full incognito history and reopen recently closed tabs. Usefully, the history is automatically deleted when you close your browser.



View breaking news on your New Tab page

If you visit several news websites every day to keep up with what's happening in the world, you'll inevitably see the same stories appear, telling you things that you already know. You can save yourself time and tedium by installing Newsprompt (bit.ly/news400), which displays breaking news and 'trending' stories from around the web on your New Tab page. These are presented in a tidy, clutter-free layout as thumbnail images and headlines that you click to read the full article.

Newsprompt scours more than 1,000 sources, including popular UK sites such as Mail Online, BBC News and Sky News, and cleverly filters out duplicate items and repeated topics. It scans your Chrome history (anonymously) to show you personalised recommendations and lets you switch between content categories including Entertainment,



Technology and Health, as well as the most-read and most-shared articles.

Copy text cleanly from web pages

Have you ever copied and pasted some text from a web page into an email or document, only to find that it includes

extra waffle at the end. such as a copyright notice, an unwieldv link or even



an advert? We know we have, and it drives us barmy, but you can easily get around the annoyance using RightToCopy (bit.ly/right400).

This Chrome extension stops websites

adding unwanted junk when you copy their content - an intrusion it calls "clipboard text injection". RightToCopy also lets you select, copy and paste from pages that usually disable these functions.

For Firefox, install RightToClick (bit.ly/ righttoclick400), which works in the same way.

Add baby animals to your browser

Off the record history

Regular readers of this section will know we love tools that alter your New Tab page or feature cute and cuddly critters, so what could be better than an extension that combines the two? My Baby Animals New Tab (bit.ly/animals400) displays high-quality photos of puppies, kittens, cubs, fawns, calves and other adorable animals every time you click the 'New tab' button. But it isn't just a feast of cuteness the page also includes interesting facts about the featured beasts and you can also see the time, date and weather for your location; search the web using Google or Yahoo; and manage a to-do list.





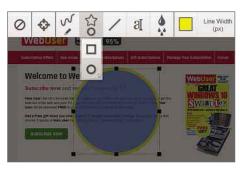
This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Opera and more



FIREFOX

Capture, edit and share screenshots from Firefox

Most screen-grabbing tools are no more sophisticated than the Print Screen key on your keyboard, but NativeShot (bit.ly/native400) is more like a program than a browser add-on. It offers an amazing set of options for capturing what's on your screen - not just in your browser but your entire monitor. You can select a rectangular or oval area to capture: annotate grabs with text, doodles



and pointers; zoom in and out; blur confidential details; and more. NativeShot lets you delay shots for five seconds, which is handy when you want to hover over something in the screenshot, and uploads what you capture to Dropbox, Google Drive, Imgur and Twitter. If you regularly need to show other people what you're doing on your computer, you'll find no better tool.

View synced Firefox tabs from other devices

Many people now use Firefox on their phones and tablets, as well as their PCs or Macs, so the browser has made it



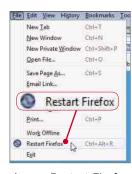
easier to sync your open tabs across devices. Firefox 47 displays synced tabs from your Android or iOS device in a

sidebar on the left, so you can easily access pages that you've been browsing on mobile. There's even a search function for locating a specific tab.

If you can't see the sidebar, either click the menu button in the top-right corner of the browser, choose Synced Tabs and select View Synced Tabs Sidebar; or click View, Sidebar, Synced Tabs. Right-click a device and choose Synchronise Now to update the list. You'll need to be signed into your Firefox account to access synced tabs.

Restart Firefox more easily

Firefox has a 'Restart with Add-ons Disabled' option in its Help menu, but if you want to relaunch it with your add-ons activated, you need to click the 'close' button in the top-right corner and start it all over again. A much easier option is to install Restart Browser



(bit.ly/ restart400), which gives you three better choices for relaunching Firefox. You can either click the File menu and

choose Restart Firefox; press Ctrl+Alt+R to relaunch it from your keyboard; or add a Restart button to your toolbar. To do the latter, first click the menu button in the top-right corner, choose Customise, then drag the Restart icon to your toolbar.

Cure your boredom instantly

We didn't expect much from an add-on called I'm Bored (bit.ly/

bored400), but it turned out to be quite amusing. When you're feeling



fed-up, just click its bored-face emoji on your toolbar to open a random site that's guaranteed to entertain you for a few seconds, at least.

OTHER BROWSERS

Try new features in Vivaldi 1.2

Since its first stable release earlier this year, Vivaldi (vivaldi.com) has come on in leaps and bounds, and version 1.2 suggests it's more than ready to give Chrome and Firefox a run for their money.

Chief among Vivaldi's new features is the ability to create your own mouse gestures to save yourself unnecessary pointing and clicking when performing everyday actions. Click the Vivaldi icon in the top-left corner and choose Tools, Settings. Click the Mouse option on the left and ensure Allow Gestures is selected. Next. click a command in the Gesture Mapping list to view the mouse

movement required to perform it. If you'd rather use one of your own.



click the edit button below the list, then hold down your right mouse button and draw your preferred gesture. Click Save Gesture and repeat for as many gestures as you want to create.

Another new feature lets you set different zoom levels for each tab. When you load a page,

click the slider in the bottomright corner of the tab and drag left to zoom out or right to zoom



in. The zoom level now ranges from 20% to 500%.

You can learn about the many other improvements and fixes in Vivaldi 1.2 at bit.ly/vivaldi400.

Web User says If you're wondering why there are no Opera tips in Best New Browser Tools this issue, it's because we've got a special feature about the brilliant browser on page 46.



Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

SCIENCE

Science Journal

bit.ly/science400

Min requirements: Android 4.4

Size: 14MB

An Android device is a pocket science lab. Your phone or tablet's assorted sound, light and motion sensors - not to mention camera and microphone - make it the ultimate tool for gathering data from the world around you.

This app, from Google's Making & Science initiative (makingscience .withgoogle.com),

reminds you that, no matter what your age, the pleasure of a good science project never goes away. We didn't

really believe this ourselves until we stopped reading about the app (boring) and actually opened it (brilliant). It opens by default on a real-time reading of the light around you, using your Android device's ambient light sensor and presenting the reading in lux units. We were instantly hooked, walking around the room (and into doors), outside

LEARN MORE

-0:20 -0:16 -0:12

and inside again, sticking our phone inside cupboards and watching the number rise and fall. We finally noticed other readings - acceleration forward, back, up and down, and sound in decibels - each just a tap away. It's like having a Science Museum exhibit in your hand.

Untitled Experiment -

8

The app comes into its own once you start recording readings and designing experiments. You could measure light pollution by taking readings over the same period each night and plotting the results on a graph, with notes, variables and photos. Or compare the decibels of your dog's bark with the

postman's increasingly tired knock on different days of the week. You can share your results with the online community and even set up your own workshop. It's a fabulous little app that promises to grow over the coming months.

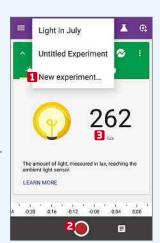


NEW

MINI WORKSHOP

Compare light levels using Science Journal

Launch Science Journal, swipe through the intro and enter your birthday (you only have to do this the first time). Tap Untitled experiment, then 'New experiment...' 11 and enter a title, such as 'Light in July', plus an optional description. Tap Save. Tap the Record button 2 to start recording with the default Ambient Light (lux) sensor. 3



Now walk around holding your device and watch the reading change. On a sunny day, you'll be amazed by the difference indoors and outdoors. Tap the graph icon to see the reading on a chart, 11 and tap 'i' 2 to go back. Tap the note icon 3 to enter a note at that point in the recording. Tap the Stop button to stop recording. 4



The Review screen opens, revealing automatically recorded data including average and maximum readings, 11 and duration of the 'trial' (recording). 2 Your notes appear under the graph. Tap the notes icon at the top to add more, including photos. Tap the three-dot icon and then Export to save, email or print the results. 4







Observe



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

INTERNET

Web Tiles bit.ly/ webtiles400

Min requirements:

Windows 10 Mobile **Size: 2.76MB**

Edge hasn't had a particularly warm welcome, but this app offers an



excellent reason to use Microsoft's new browser - assuming you own a Windows Phone. It lets you add web links to your home screen (or the Start menu on your Windows 10 PC) that have customisable Tiles instead of icons. You can even use a photo from your phone or tablet's Pictures Library as a Tile. The app works

in Edge - simply find a page to pin to Start, tap the share icon and select Web Tiles.



Our rating



TRAVEL

Festvl bit.ly/festvl400 Min

requirements:

iOS8 **Size:** 23.7MB

Big UK music festivals such as Glastonbury and Isle of Wight have their own apps, but this independent iOS tool covers

all the main events. Find out who's playing where, create a festival schedule and even make a packing checklist. Once you're on site, you can stay organised with maps, weather and line-up changes. When you're back home, use the app's links to Spotify and iTunes to listen to your

discoveries again. If only it covered the Proms and Glyndebourne, too, we'd be giving it five stars.



Our rating



NEW

Sleepcast Beta bit.ly/

sleepcast400 Min

requirements: Android 4.3 Size: 9.1MB

Get woken up by a different song or clip every day using your own



audio files. Sleepcast Beta supports Bluetooth speakers, so you can be lulled awake by music from across the room or have a recorded message ("WAKE UP!") blast you out of bed. This beta is tricky to use and needs some work but we love the idea. Here's our suggested playlist for the working week: Monday Monday,

Ruby Tuesday, Wednesday Morning 3am, Thursday's Child and Friday On My Mind.



Our rating



PHOTOS

Motion Stills

bit.ly/motion400

Min requirements: iOS 9

(iPhone only) **Size:** 22.2MB

'Motion Stills - Create with Live Photos', to give Google's new GIF-making app its full name, is a rotten tease for iPad users. The App Store says it's 'Compatible with iPhone, iPad and iPod touch', and indeed the app

installs and opens on all iOS devices. But unless you have a newer iPhone, it won't do anything else. This is because Motion Stills requires Live Photos, the iOS 9+ iPhone feature that briefly

records video and audio before and after you take a photo (www .apple.com/ios/photos). Motion Stills turns the result into a looping GIF that you can share online or in messages. It automatically chooses the best start and end points, and even separates the still background from the moving foreground. It's utterly magnificent and Google has hinted it's coming to more devices soon.





GET THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

Our updated Android MagBook is packed with 148 pages of apps, workshops and advice to unlock the full potential of your tablet and phone.



Discover how to:

- Master new tools in Lollipop and Marshmallow
- Stop apps leaking your personal data
- Record anything on your phone and tablet
- Prevent updates from wrecking your device
- Remove hidden junk so it never comes back
- Switch from iOS without losing data

Order it now from Amazon at bit.ly/defguidetoandroid





SOCIAL

Fast — FB Alternative Client

bit.ly/fastfb400

Min requirements: Android (varies with device) Size: Varies with device

Facebook lost many friends by forcing people to use its Messenger app. Fast lets you access your Facebook account and messages in a single app - and it's hugely popular. It's not only more convenient and space-saving than Facebook's official apps (Fast takes

up 4.25MB on our Android 6.0 phone, compared with 78.53MB by Messenger and a ridiculous 157MB by Facebook), it's also genuinely faster and avoids the slowdown that Facebook inflicts on your device and battery. We've knocked a star off for too many permissions and adverts.





MUSIC

Foobar2000

bit.ly/foodroid400 bit.ly/fooios400

Min requirements: Android 2.3,

iOS 6.1

Size: 25MB (Android), 15.6MB (iOS)

Foobar2000 is the long-awaited app version of one of the best free alternatives to Windows Media Center. Like the excellent free PC program (www.foobar2000.org), Foobar's app is fast and lightweight and supports any audio file format,

including Apple and Microsoft formats and MP3. You can customise its appearance, play songs in a gapless stream and use automatic volume adjustment. Fans may also like Foobar Controller (bit.ly/foocontrol400), which lets you control Foobar's PC program using your Android phone.





Our rating



Our rating

APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

SECURITY

NordVPN

nordvpn.com

Min requirements: Android 4, iOS 8.3 Size: 19MB (Android), 21.9MB (iOS) Price: From \$5.75 (£4.05) per month "The world's most advanced VPN" is new to Android, having proved itself on iOS. Like other VPNs, it lets you browse and communicate in complete privacy and access geo-blocked content.



Multi Search — Alpha

bit.ly/multi400

Min requirements: Android 4 Size: 2MB Price: £1.09

This app lets you scour multiple search engines at once. For example, you can

combine DuckDuckGo's privacyfocused search with Google results. It's still in development but is already

very impressive.

WALLPAPER

Flatland

bit.ly/flatland400

Min requirements: Android 2.3

Size: Varies by device

Price: £1.19







Flatland offers unusually beautiful live wallpaper for your Android device, featuring animated silhouettes of trees and animals against glorious desert and forest backdrops.

CAMERA

Live Focus bit.ly/live400

Min requirements: iOS 9

Size: 21.4MB Price: £1.49

This mind-blowing app lets you take a photo, then focus it afterwards. We're not talking about horrible image sharpening - instead, you adjust the focal point. Live Focus also lets you make GIFs and share them with other people.



Network Data

bit.lv/data400

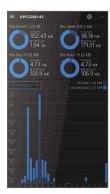
Min requirements: Windows 10 Mobile

Size: 7.37MB Price: £1.09

See exactly how much mobile data your Windows 10 phone or tablet is sending and receiving at any point, so you can keep a lid on your usage. The app supports Windows 10, so

it's ideal for laptops.





Multi Search – Alpha



Flatland



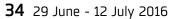
Live Focus

Network Data











Best New TV Apps

FILM

Sky Cinema

bit.ly/cinema400

Min requirements: Varies with device

Size: N/A

Sky Movies has relaunched as Sky Cinema, and promises to give film fans an even better home-entertainment experience. "Yeah, and how much is that going to cost?" you might ask, but the good news is that Sky subscribers won't pay a penny more. Sky Cinema aims to premiere a new movie every night, starting with Bond flick Spectre on 8 July, and will have a World Cinema night every Wednesday. What's more, Sky is significantly improving the sound and picture quality of its HD broadcasts to offer "33% more pixels", and will start screening 4K later this year. As before, Sky Cinema will be available via Sky set-top boxes and its mobile apps Sky Go and Now TV.



ITV Essentials

itvessentials.com

Min requirements: Android (varies with

device), iOS 7 Size: 7.6MB



If you can't bear the thought of missing Coronation Street, Loose Women or Jeremy Kyle while you're on holiday, help is at hand from ITV Essentials. This lets you watch all your favourite ITV shows, as well as classic series from its archives, in 13 European countries including France, Spain, Greece, Italy and - as of the latest update - Germany. ITV has also reduced the cost of Essentials for the summer and now offers a 15-day Holiday Pass for €3.99 (about £3.17). Alternatively, you can pay the same price for a rolling monthly subscription, which is ideal for ex-pats who want soaps as well as sun, sea and sand. ITV Essentials can be purchased in the UK, but it won't work here.

TV & FILM

Netflix for iPad

bit.ly/netflix400

Min requirements: iPad with iOS

9.3.2 **Size:** 37.2MB

Want to keep watching a show on Netflix while browsing the web, checking your email or working? Well, now you can - if you're using an iPad with the latest version of iOS. The streaming service has added a much-requested picture-inpicture feature for users who like to multi-task. Simply tap and drag the Netflix video player into a pop-out window and stick it in a corner of your screen. You can then open other apps without interrupting playback or missing a second of the programme. Picture-in-picture is one of the big new features in Android N, so we expect Netflix will update its Android app in time.



X Don't install...

Textspansion

bit.ly/texts400

We like the idea behind this app - to speed up typing on your phone by using shortcuts to enter long phrases automatically - but the execution is terrible. For a start, it doesn't



work properly and fails to expand short phrases into long ones so your messages end up reading like gibberish. The interface looks absolutely awful and it hasn't been updated since 2012, making you wonder why it's still in the Play store.

...Install this instead

Texpand

bit.ly/texpand385

Min requirements: Android 5.0

Size: 610k

Texpand saves you time by assigning text-based shortcuts to your most frequently used words and phrases. For example, you can use the shortcut 'mob' instead of having to type your phone number. The app works with most keyboard apps, including Swiftkey and Google Keyboard, and uses a suggestion bubble to help you complete your text expansions. Additionally, instead of typing a phrase manually, you can use Texpand's 'Clipboard' option to paste whatever's currently on your device's clipboard.

The app limits you 10 to phrases, unless you upgrade to its premium version for £2.34, but for most users that will be plenty.







Everything you need to know about the most interesting new technology trends and events interesting new technology trends and events

Nuisance calls and texts

Are you fed up of being bothered by cold calls and text messages? The good news is that it's getting easier to block these pests, as David Crookes explains

What are they?

We've all received nuisance calls on our landline and mobile phones. Unsolicited and very much unwanted, they come in various guises, from a real person trying to sell a product or service to a recorded message flagging up some pressing need to claim back PPI or install a new boiler under a government grant scheme. But aside from legitimate, if pushy, companies looking to drum up business, there are scammers hoping to dip into your wallet and silent calls that can be unnerving and frightening.

How big a problem is this?

According to research conducted jointly by the consumer-champion group Which and call-blocking expert trueCall (www .truecall.co.uk), 81% of us get a minimum of 11 nuisance calls each month. Even more hair-raising, 9% of people took more than 60 unwanted and annoying calls over a typical four-week period. Alarmingly, the analysis showed that 38% of all incoming calls tracked between January 2013 and February this year could be classed as a nuisance.



trueCall specialises in call-blocking products and photos of happy people on the phone

Is it just phone calls?

No, we're increasingly being bombarded with unwanted text messages, too. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO, ico.org.uk) says these texts usually refer to accident claims, debts, pensions, PPI and a host of other 'services', usually implying that you're entitled to a surprise windfall. If you respond, the company sending the texts will sell your details to claims- or debt-management firms.

Are all cold calls scams?

Not at all. Legitimate companies use calls and texts to drum up business, often with our permission. But if you've explicitly said you do not want to be approached and a company continues to do so, then it fall fouls of the law. The ICO issued a £50,000 fine to a company called Better for the Country Ltd after it sent more than 500,000 spam texts on behalf of the Leave.EU campaign without first gaining permission from the recipients.



The ICO doesn't look kindly on spam texts. as Better for the Country discovered

But are they causing real harm?

Unfortunately, a good many are. Remotebanking scams carried out by phone, text and email last year made up a shady industry worth a staggering £168.6m an increase of 72% on 2014. The successful scammers got people to divulge their bank account details or directly transfer money to them. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Fraud of all kinds is at an all-time high and is costing Brits around £9bn each year.

What kind of scams are there?

You've probably heard of the Microsoft scam (bit.ly/microsoft400), in which a caller claims that Windows has developed a problem and offers to fix it for you by taking control of your computer or requesting your payment details so you can pay for their services. In other scams, people have been called by bogus policemen and received fake texts saying they are due a council tax refund.

A widespread mobile scam doing the rounds in April this year began with a call from an unfamiliar 0845 or 0843 number that lasted a fraction of a second and was recorded as a missed call. Victims were shocked to later find that they were being billed for calling the number back and spending up to 12 hours on the line. Yet they hadn't made that call.

What's being done about these scams?

Which is running an online campaign that

Nuisance calls and texts ?





Which is spearheading the fight against nuisance phone calls and texts

calls on the government to protect people (bit.ly/which400). On its site, it lists the top 20 numbers making nuisance calls and lets you report any you receive.

There is also a lot of interest within Parliament: Mike Crockart, the Lib Dem MP for Edinburgh West, chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Nuisance Calls and is campaigning for tougher regulations. On 16 May, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport made it illegal for direct-marketing companies to hide or disquise their phone numbers, even if their call centres are based abroad. This should make it easier to spot the scammers since they are more likely to flout the law.

Will this also make it easier to report companies?

It should do, because you'll have a number you can pass to the authorities - and if they don't display that number, the fine can be as much as £500.000. In recent months, there have been some high-profile examples of nuisance callers being dealt with effectively. On 18 May, a company called Check Point Claims, whose head office is registered in Chorley, was fined £250,000 after making an incredible 17,565,690 prerecorded nuisance calls encouraging people to seek compensation for jobrelated hearing loss. In January, Swanseabased Falcon and Pointer had its licence suspended for making 40 million calls over three months about PPI.

What can I do to stop these calls?

First, sign up to the Telephone Preference Scheme, either by visiting www.tpsonline .org.uk or by texting TPS and your email address to 85095. Once you register, all pestering calls should cease after 28 days and you can complain if they don't. However, the service won't stop spam text messages.

You could also buy a BT8600 Home Phone with Advanced Call Blocker. which uses BT's Call Guardian to screen incoming calls - the caller has to say their name so you can choose whether or not to accept. You can currently get one from Amazon for £53 (bit.ly/btphone400).



But can I physically block calls?

Yes. To block unknown calls on a phone connected to a BT landline, dial *227#. If you use an iPhone with iOS 7 upwards, you can use Apple's built-in call-blocking function - just open a contact card and select Block Contact. Android has many different ways of blocking numbers, depending on the device, or you could just use a dedicated app such as Call Blocker (bit.ly/callblocker400). On a Windows Phone, press and hold a number and select Block Number. Spam texts can be forwarded to your mobile operator using the number 7726.

How are firms getting my number?

You may have provided them with it yourself. Pay particular attention to online forums that ask if you mind receiving calls from third parties. Some deliberately try to confuse you by asking you to untick a pre-ticked box if you



Look up unknown numbers on WhoCallsMe to read other people's experiences

don't want to receive promotional emails, and tick an unticked box if you don't want them to use your telephone and address details.

Can't telephone providers screen calls?

TalkTalk lets you reject all anonymous callers and also employs a team to block numbers at a network level, so it's worth reporting rogue callers if you're a customer. BT is currently studying patterns of abuse on its network and is noting numbers that it thinks are being used to make nuisance calls and diverting them to a junk voicebox.

What if all of that doesn't work?

There are online solutions you can try, such as the Truecaller website and app (truecaller.com) for iOS. Android and Windows Phone let you search for a phone number to see if it is legitimate. The excellent sites Who Called Me (who-called.co.uk) and WhoCallsMe (whocallsme.com) let you share and read other people's cold-call experiences just let unknown numbers go unanswered and check on the sites to see if they're worth calling back. If you want to go the extra mile, consider using Swytch (www.swytch.com) to set up temporary, disposable numbers for certain tasks.

MAKE A COMPLAINT

Try these websites if you have been bothered by nuisance calls

Premium-rate scams

Any scams coming from a premium rate 08 number, including nuisance automated calls, can be reported at PhonepayPlus (phonepayplus.org.uk).

TPS registration being ignored

If you are signed up to the Telephone Preference Scheme and you're still getting calls after 28 days, go to bit.ly/tps400.

Affected by a scammer

Contact your local Trading Standards Office with the details via bit.ly/tso400.

Hit by fraud

If you've been affected by fraud, go to Action Fraud (actionfraud.police .uk) and use its online reporting tool. Alternatively, call your local police.



Uninstall This COVER FEATURE

Some popular programs do more harm than good. Wayne Williams reveals 14 once useful but now unsafe programs that you need to get rid of to keep your PC running smoothly and securely

arely a week goes by without another once-essential program, add-on or plugin being deemed no longer safe to use, often by its own developer. These toxic tools include such big names as Flash, Java, QuickTime and Windows XP. However, that doesn't stop millions of people ignoring the warnings and continuing to run software that compromises the security and stability of their systems. Well, frankly, this has got to stop because

you're not just putting yourself at risk, but other people, too, and there are plenty more trustworthy and reliable alternatives available. In this feature, we name and shame the programs you need to stop using - now!

We also show you how to properly - and fully - remove Flash from your PC, and look at what you should do to keep your system safe if you decide to ignore our advice and continue using these programs.

Uninstall this unsafe software



PLUGINS

Adobe Flash Player

Why is it unsafe?

Flash is used for playing videos, games and animations but it's notoriously unsafe, and Adobe has had to release vast numbers of fixes over the years to patch a never-ending stream of vulnerabilities in the plugin. Mozilla made the decision to block Flash in Firefox last year, and Google is following suit, with plans to block it in Chrome by the end of 2016. It will still work on some sites, such as YouTube, Facebook and Amazon, for a while longer, but it will eventually be phased out entirely.

If you do need to use Flash Player (certain web elements may not work without it), make sure you keep the plugin fully up to date by downloading the latest version from bit.ly/flash400. You also prevent your browser from playing Flash content automatically. In Chrome, go to Settings, 'Show advanced', Content settings', then select 'Let me choose when to run plugin content'. When you encounter blocked Flash content that you want to see, just right-click it and choose 'Run this plug-in'. In Firefox, go to Tools, Add-ons and click the Plug-ins option on the left. Click the drop-down menu next to each plugin you want to block and choose either 'Ask to Activate' or Never Activate.

To find out how to completely uninstall Flash from your PC, see our Mini Workshop below.



Flash has had its day, so you're better off uninstalling or at least disabling the plugin

What to use instead

YouTube now uses HTML5 in place of Flash wherever possible – in fact, Google made HTML5 the default web player for YouTube last year. The beauty of HTML5 is that, unlike Flash, it's understood by all modern web browsers without the need for a plugin, so you don't need to install anything. It's also less likely to cause crashes or be exploited by hackers.

Java



Why is it unsafe?

Java suffers from the same problems as Flash – cybercriminals exploit weaknesses in the plugin to attack your browser and, from there, your PC. Java is regularly updated (the company once had to release an alarming 248 patches in one go) but new weaknesses are found all the time, and Chrome no longer supports NPAPI, the technology required for Java applets.



No sooner is Java updated than hackers discover new vulnerabilities in the plugin

What to use instead

You may find you don't need Java at all, because most browsers have either stopped supporting it or plan to do so in the future. You can remove Java from Windows by following the instructions on Oracle's website at bit.ly/javagone400. If you do need Java for some reason, perhaps to view a particularly old site or online game, always make sure that you have the most up-to-date version available from bit.ly/java400.

QuickTime for Windows



Why is it unsafe?

Once upon a time, Apple's website was one of the best places to watch movie trailers on the web, but you first needed to install the company's media-playing plugin QuickTime. Since YouTube took off, QuickTime has become redundant, especially now Apple has stopped

O

MINI WORKSHOP | Uninstall Adobe Flash Player completely



You can uninstall Flash via the Windows Control Panel. Go to Start, type Control Panel and launch the application. Go to Programs, 'Uninstall a program'. Locate any references to Adobe Flash Player, 1 then select and uninstall them. 2 The number of entries you see will depend on which browsers you have installed.



Chrome includes its own Flash plugin that you can disable through Chrome's Settings (you'll also need to uninstall Flash, as detailed in step 1). Type chrome://plugins 1 into Chrome's address bar and hit Enter. In the Plugins window, click the Disable 2 link for Adobe Flash Player which appears at the bottom of the list.



Like Chrome, Microsoft Edge in Windows 10 uses its own Flash plugin. To disable this, click the ellipsis button (...) 1 and choose Settings. Scroll down and click the 'View advanced settings' button. Find 'Use Adobe Flash Player' 2 and flick the slider to Off. The plugin will now be disabled.



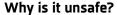
QuickTime was once an essential tool for playing web videos, but it's now obsolete

supporting the plugin, and new vulnerabilities have recently been found (bit.ly/quicktime400) that could put your system at risk.

What to use instead

You don't need to install anything to replace QuickTime on Windows. As Apple says, "New versions of Windows since 2009 have included support for the key media formats, such as H.264 and AAC, that QuickTime 7 enabled. All current Windows web browsers support video without the need for browser plug-ins". So if you still have QuickTime installed on your PC, get rid of it today.

Adobe AIR



Adobe AIR allows developers to package the same code into native applications and games for Windows, Mac OS X, iOS and Android, which saves them having to create separate versions for each platform. However, because Flash is integrated into Adobe AIR, any vulnerabilities in that plugin (and there are lots!) will also affect AIR.

What to use instead

You might be able to find alternative versions of programs that don't use AIR (some developers offer regular



Even Microsoft has abandoned support for its little-loved plugin Silverlight

Windows builds alongside AIR editions). If you can't, you'll just have to make sure you update AIR regularly - check for new versions at get.adobe.com/air. Fortunately, most developers now use HTML5 rather than AIR for creating Desktop programs.

Microsoft Silverlight



Why is it unsafe?

As with Flash, Silverlight is designed to provide engaging, interactive web experiences but, unlike Flash, it never really took off, and Microsoft has since ceased development of the plugin (although it is still releasing occasional patches and bug fixes). The company even removed support for Silverlight in its Edge browser for Windows 10, so there is really no longer any reason to have to the plugin installed. Although it's not as frequently targeted by hackers as Flash and Java, in January this year, Microsoft was forced to patch a critical vulnerability in Silverlight that could let attackers remotely execute code.

What to use instead

Microsoft has been encouraging developers to switch from Silverlight to plugin-free HTML5, so once you've uninstalled it you shouldn't need anything else.



Once touted as the future of web development, Adobe AIR now belongs in the past

SOFTWARE

RealPlayer

Why is it unsafe?

It's been a long time since RealPlayer (www.real.com) had a decent reputation and, despite numerous attempts to reclaim its popularity, that's unlikely to ever happen. The software now lets you watch, download and share videos on any device, which would be handy if you got more than the paltry 1GB of cloud storage space it offers for free, which is very stingy compared to rival services. Much worse is the fact that RealPlayer attempts to install junk on your system and make unwanted changes unless you manage to decline these options during the installation process.



RealPlayer refuses to get the message and go away, so get rid of it yourself

What to use instead

Google has you totally covered here. You can upload pictures to Google Photos (photos.google.com), which offers unlimited space if you limit your photos' resolution to 16-megapixels, and your videos can be stored on Google Drive (drive.google.com) or on YouTube. Content on the video-sharing site can be kept private so only you and/or selected friends can view it.

ImgBurn



Why is it unsafe?

This lightweight tool can produce disc images directly from CDs and DVDs, or from a collection of files on your hard drive. Unfortunately, it hasn't been updated since 2013 and now comes bundled with OpenCandy adware. AVG has this to say about the unwanted addition: "OpenCandy is a software that installs an additional program to display and/or download to your device unwanted advertisements, toolbars and may be considered privacy-invasive. These kinds of threats track your computer's web usage to feed you undesired ad pop-ups and some might

Uninstall this unsafe software





The excellent Ashampoo Burning Studio 2016 has no bundled adware

even hijack your browser start or search pages, redirecting you to a different site or search engine than the one you had originally configured".

What to use instead

OpenCandy gets installed along with a lot of free software, so it's worth using a tool such as Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www .malwarebytes.org) to check if it's on your system, and remove it if it is. See our Mini Workshop, on the right, to find out how to blitz OpenCandy completely.

Sadly, many disc-authoring tools come bundled with unwanted software. While it's possible to decline these, Ashampoo Burning Studio 2016 (bit.ly/burnstudio 400) makes life much simpler by offering a clean option. You have to register for a free activation key before installing, but it's an impressive, full-featured free program.

FreeFileSync

Why is it unsafe?

This program compares and synchronises files and folders stored on different hard drives. so you can see at a glance any discrepancies with a backed-up version. It also lets you choose which files to move or overwrite. As such, it's a very handy program but, like ImgBurn, it now comes bundled with OpenCandy, so it's best avoided.



We once recommended FreeFileSync. but now recommend removing it

What to use instead

Synkron (synkron.sourceforge.net) is an open-source alternative that's free from bundled junk and runs on Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. It includes all the functionality you are likely to need.

FlashGet



Why is it unsafe?

One of the older and better-known download managers, FlashGet's reputation suffered when it was found to have spyware bundled with it. Even more damaging, a later

version served up Trojans after the developer's server aot hacked. FlashGet (www.flashget .com) claims it's now clean and free from adware and spyware, but the program hasn't been updated since 2012. so it's

best avoided.



FlashGet now claims to be free from spyware, but why should we trust it?

What to use instead

Free Download Manager (www .freedownloadmanager.org) is safe and reliable, and accelerates downloads by splitting the target item into multiple sections and fetching each piece simultaneously. It can also handle BitTorrent files, and downloads and converts web video from sites such as YouTube.

7-Zip



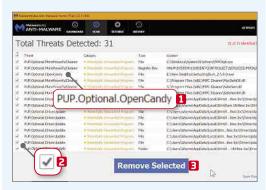
Why is it unsafe?

This is a controversial choice, not least because we gave 7-Zip (www.7-zip.org) our Silver Award in Issue 397. However, the Cisco company Talos recently uncovered multiple vulnerabilities in 7-Zip relating to "flawed input validation" that allowed attackers to execute malicious code on a user's system. To its credit, 7-Zip actually patched the flaws quite quickly and, if you're running version 16+, you should be safe. However, many third-party

MINI WORKSHOP Remove OpenCandy from vour PC



It's possible that you already have OpenCandy installed on your PC and don't even realise it. The easiest way to check is to install Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www .malwarebytes.org). Run the program, then click the big blue Start Scan button. 11 The scanning process is very thorough and will likely take quite a long time to complete.



When it's finished, a list of threats will be displayed. As you can see here, OpenCandy is one of them. 1 You can untick any items you don't want removing (if you think they're not a threat, for example), then click the Remove Selected button 1 to delete everything else.



Clearing out these files may cause your antivirus program to spring into life. If so, make sure you let Malwarebytes complete its task, then reboot your computer. Provided Anti-Malware is running in the background, it will alert you if another application tries to install OpenCandy or a similar potentially unwanted program (PUP). 1



programs use 7-Zip's libraries - even Malwarebyte programs do - so it's not just compression software that's affected. If programs that use 7-Zip haven't been updated recently (Malwarebytes has), they might be using the functions from an older version that could still be vulnerable.

What to use instead

Provided you update 7-Zip - and any other programs that use 7-Zip's libraries - you're unlikely to run into problems. Type http://7-zip.org/license. txt into Google and you'll see a lot of programs that use the 7-Zip technology. Rather than manually updating any potentially affected programs on your system, use Personal Software Inspector from bit.ly/flexpsi400 to



Ensure that software on your PC is up-to-date by using PSI

automatically identify and update all the outdated software on your PC. This was formerly called Secunia PSI but is now owned by a company called Flexera.

Accelerator



Why is it unsafe?

Chinese hardware manufacturer Lenovo bundles a lot of unwanted programs (generally referred to as bloatware) with its PCs, and has a history of including some nasty junk and software that has serious vulnerabilities. A year ago, it shipped PCs installed with an invasive adware called Superfish, which injected ads into Internet Explorer and Chrome. On top of that, its Accelerator program, which helps speed up the launch of Lenovo applications, has a serious vulnerability that could allow an attacker to intercept login details and



PC Decrapifier lets you remove built-in rubbish such as Lenovo Accelerator

other personal information. Lenovo sees no reason to fix it, so is asking users to just uninstall it. For more info, see our Readers Tip on page 69.

What to use instead

Accelerator, like the majority of the bloatware included on Lenovo computers, is superfluous, so just uninstall it and forget about it. Remove all the other bundled junk at the same time using PC Decrapifier (www .pcdecrapifier.com). Clearing out the clutter will likely speed up your computer more than Lenovo Accelerator could, anyway.

Windows XP



Why is it unsafe?

Windows XP is probably the most widely used unsafe software in world. Microsoft stopped supporting the operating system in April 2014, which means that any vulnerabilities that have surfaced in the past two years won't have been patched, leaving users seriously at risk. Good third-party security software will protect you to some extent, but if you want to make sure your system and personal data stay safe, then you really need to consider upgrading. Another consideration is that some newer software won't even run on XP.

What to use instead

The easiest way to upgrade from Windows XP is to get a newer version of Windows. Getting hold of Windows 7 has become increasingly difficult, but you'll still find it for sale on sites including Amazon and eBay for between £30 and £60. You can then upgrade it to Windows 10 for free until July 29, if you want. Alternatively, if you don't want to spend any money on a new OS, you could try the Linux-based Ubuntu (ubuntu.com) or Mint (www.linuxmint.com).



Windows XP was great in its time, but now it leaves you vulnerable to security threats

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT

Avoiding potentially unsafe software is often easier said than done and there are legitimate reasons why you may still be using a particular program or plugin, despite the risks. For example, you might occasionally need Flash to run something on a web page. And while Chrome on XP is an unsupported browser running on an unsupported operating system, if you are familiar with both and like how they work,

If you absolutely have to run unsafe software, make sure you have the most up-to-date version - use a program such as Personal Software Inspector (bit.ly/flexpsi400) to check. You can also get a second opinion on how safe something is by using VirusTotal (www.virustotal.com). This online virus scanner uses more that 50 top anti-malware engines, including AVG, BitDefender, F-Secure, Kaspersky, Malwarebytes, Panda and Sophos, to check that software is safe to use. If you're not sure whether to keep or uninstall

then nothing we say will convince you to switch.

a program, the website and free program ShouldIRemoveIt (www .shouldiremoveit.com) can tell you what other people have elected to do.

It goes without saying that you should install a good anti-malware program such as Kaspersky Internet Security (bit.ly/shop389) or Avast Free Antivirus (www.avast.com), and make sure it's always fully up to date.



Uninstall this unsafe software



BROWSERS

on XP and Vista



Why is it unsafe?

Google's Chrome is now the most popular web browser in the world, having overtaken Internet Explorer in April. However, if you're using Windows XP or Vista, or Mac OS X 10.6, 10.7 or 10.8, then you really should be using a different browser, because Google has stopped supporting Chrome on those operating systems. This means that it no longer receives any updates or security fixes, which leaves it wide open to vulnerabilities. Since most threats come from the web, having a secure, up-todate browser is - as you might imagine - rather important.

What to use instead

Provided you have XP with Service Pack 3 installed, you can use Firefox or Opera in place of Chrome. Opera uses the same engine as Google's browser and can run the same extensions, so it provides much the same functionality. The very latest version, Opera 37, officially requires Windows 7 and above, but it will work just fine on XP and Vista. If you are running one of these older operating systems, you will continue to receive security and stability updates for Opera, although you won't be able to take advantage of any new features in the browser.

Internet Explorer



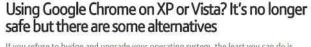
Why is it unsafe?

Internet Explorer has always been the weak point in Windows because it's inextricably fused with the operating system. Thankfully, Microsoft has been quick to patch new vulnerabilities, so this hasn't been a major issue for most

users. However, at the end of last year, the software giant announced that it would stop supporting older versions of its browser. According to Microsoft: "Beginning January 12, 2016, only the most current version of Internet Explorer available for a supported operating system will receive technical supports and security updates. Internet Explorer 11 is the last version of Internet Explorer, and will continue to receive security updates, compatibility fixes, and technical support on Windows 7, Windows 8.1, and Windows 10."

What to use instead

You could make sure that you're running IE11, but that's still a short-term fix. If you're a Windows 10 user, then Microsoft Edge is the obvious built-in option, but the smartest move would be to switch to Chrome, Firefox or Opera. all of which - in any case - are much better browsers.





Google has stopped supporting its Chrome browser on Windows XP and Vista, as this BT story reports



There's really no reason to continue using ye olde Internet Explorer in this day and age

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 13 July 2016

TAKE CONTROL OF WINDOWS 10

Whether you're planning to upgrade, have already upgraded or just want to be left alone, it's time to show Microsoft who's boss



OFIX YOUTUBE PROBLEMS

Improve streaming quality and remove annoyances

ONLINE OFFICE SUITES

We review the best free alternatives to Office 365

OEXPOSE THE FRAUDS

How to spot and avoid fake reviews, apps and emails

SUBSCRIBE TO WEB USER AT SUBSCRIBE.WEBUSER.CO.UK

Best free fitness apps

If you need to shed a few pounds or get more exercise, your smartphone can help you track your progress, reach your goals and add a bit of fun. Edward Munn tests six of the best apps for all levels of fitness



Google Fit — Fitness Tracking | bit.ly/googlefit400 | ★★★★★

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

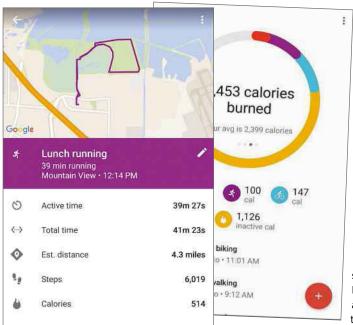
What we liked:

WebUser

We were underwhelmed by Google Fit when it launched in late 2014, but it's improved since then and now has some of the best features of all the fitness apps we tested. It's

well suited to casual users and fitness enthusiasts alike - its automatic step-counting feature is perfect if you simply want to become more active, while its live tracking provides more detailed information about any walking, running or cycling you engage in.

When you first launch the app, you're asked to enter basic information including your gender, height and weight. The app also requests permission to use your location data. Then, as you go about your everyday activities, Google Fit runs silently in the background, automatically tracking your steps using your device's motion sensors. The app detects when you start running or cycling, and activates your phone's GPS to gather more detailed information including your speed, distance and elevation. The fact that you don't need to press a single button to record any of your activity is what separates Google Fit from its competitors.



By default, the app sets a one-hour activity target but you can change this to a different time, distance, number of steps or calorie count, and you'll be notified as soon as you reach your goal. If you don't always have your phone with you when you exercise, you can log your activity manually and the app can be paired with a multitude of popular fitness apps (including both our Silver

and Bronze award winners) to offer a more detailed summary of your overall health.

How it can be improved:

Other than its simple time- and distanced-based goals. Google Fit doesn't offer much in the way of motivational tools and has no social features. Its insights are also less detailed than Strava's.

OUR VERDICT

Google Fit is an outstanding fitness app, automatically recording your daily activity and providing tools for live tracking. The option to synchronise it with many other fitness apps makes it a worthy winner of our Gold Award.

Strava Running and Cycling GPS | ★★★★★ bit.lv/strava400

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

What we liked:

Strava is the most serious of all the fitness apps we tested, and is aimed primarily at cyclists and runners.

Like MapMyFitness, it uses your device's GPS to track your workouts, then offers detailed insights to help you monitor your progress and compare your

performance to the rest of the Strava community. It automatically breaks your workouts into segments, so you can see how quickly you completed particular sections of the course, and tells you when you set a personal best for specific distances.

Strava doesn't only cater for serious athletes - you can use it to record walking and hiking - and even casual users will find its detailed insights fascinating and be encouraged by watching their performance improve



with their fitness.

The app has a beautifully straightforward interface and offers better social features than its competitors, encouraging users to follow one another and give 'kudos' for completing activities, as well as sharing information via other social channels.

How it can be improved:

Strava doesn't offer the automatic tracking and

step counting of Google Fit. Also, because it only records sessions using GPS, it consumes battery power quickly.

OUR VERDICT

Strava offers more accurate and in-depth insights than any of the other apps we tested and its social features are the best we've seen. When used in conjunction with Google Fit, it's unbeatable.

C25K - 5K Running Trainer

bit.ly/couch400 Aimed at the first-time runner, C25K's eight-week

BEST OF THE REST

plan involves 30 minutes a day, three days a week, and can transform anyone from couch potato to 5km finisher. It doesn't offer the same level of

tracking and

insights as our



award winners but it can use your device's motion sensor to measure the distance you've covered and calories burned.

Zombies, Run! bit.ly/zombies400

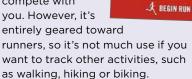
The ultimate in running gamification, Zombies, Run! launches you into a world where the undead run amok and you are the key to humanity's survival. Each run is one of 200



missions where you attempt to gather supplies for your base in a bid to rebuild civilisation. There are four missions available in the free version, plus a new free mission each week. If you can't wait that long, the premium subscription unlocks everything and costs £2.29 a month or £14.99 annually.

Nike+ Running

bit.ly/nikerun400 Nike+ Running is an excellent standalone running app, which features accurate tracking, coaching and a huge community of users ready to encourage and compete with you. However, it's



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04. A YOU

MapMyFitness Workout Trainer | ★★★★☆ bit.ly/mmfitness400

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

WebUser BRONZE WARD

What we liked:

MapMyFitness is an excellent iOS and Android app for planning and

tracking all types of outdoor activities, such as walking, running and cycling. Set up an account, tap Start Workout and the app will use your device's GPS sensor to record your route and track your time,

distance and calories burned. It offers tips on where you can walk, run or cycle via its 'nearby routes' feature, or you can plot your own course by accessing the website (www.mapmyfitness.com) from your PC.

When you complete your exercises, MapMyFitness lets you choose whether your results are visible to other users, and provides options for sharing on Facebook and Twitter.

MapMyFitness can be used in



conjunction with Google Fit and a range of other popular fitness apps. including Fitbit's step counter and calorie tracker MyFitnessPal. If you forget to take your phone with you, MapMyFitness lets you log up to 600 different types of activity manually, including everything from weight lifting to meditation.

How it can be improved:

You can log almost any

type of activity, but the interface isn't well-suited to many of them. We'd also like it to include a step counter.

OUR VERDICT

If you want to accurately track all your walks, runs and bike rides, and share the results with your friends, MapMyFitness is a versatile tool that's well-suited to the job.

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NHY OPERA IS NOW STAR BROWS

Chrome and Firefox might be more popular, but Opera's cutting-edge tools make it the best browser around now. Edward Munn reveals its best new features

ENABLE OPERA VPN

BLOCK TRACKERS

Browse privately using Opera's VPN

Opera is the first major Desktop browser to offer a free, unlimited virtual private network (VPN). This protects your privacy when you're using public Wi-Fi and means you can access content that's blocked in the UK without having to download any extensions or pay for a VPN subscription.

To use the VPN feature, you currently need to install the Opera developer browser (www.opera.com/developer). but it's also coming to the stable version soon. To activate the VPN, open the browser's Settings page, select 'Privacy & security' and tick the option to 'Enable VPN'. Now, when you load a web page, a blue VPN button appears in the address bar. Click it to see your virtual IP address and location, along with the amount of data you've used. You can toggle the VPN on and off using the switch, or choose a different location using the drop-down menu.



Recently, Opera introduced a VPN app for iOS (bit.ly/operavpn400), letting you unblock content on your iPhone or iPad. Opera VPN can be used with all your favourite apps, letting you choose a virtual location from the US, Canada, Germany, Singapore or the Netherlands.

It also includes handy features for ad and tracker blocking, which are turned on by default.

Install Opera VPN, open it and follow the onscreen instructions to

add the VPN profile to your device. You can now toggle the VPN on and off from the app or change the virtual region by tapping the lightning icon.

Improve your laptop's battery life

A recent update to the stable version of Opera introduced a new 'battery saver' feature that can extend your laptop's battery life by a whopping 50%. These savings are made possible by optimising non-essential system processes associated with background tabs and other browser activity. Not only does this feature keep your PC going for longer between charges - and for longer than other browsers - but it can also reduce its temperature by more than 3°C, which isn't to be scoffed at



if you like to use your PC on your lap.

To use Opera's battery saver, simply unplug your power cable and click the battery icon that appears alongside the address bar, then click the switch to turn on power saving.

Save mobile data Opera's mobile apps can stop you racking up expensive phone bills

from using too much mobile data, Indeed. 'Opera browser' for Android (bit .ly/opera400) comes with its own data-saving tool, which you can enable to compress both images and videos and then track the amount of data



you've saved. Opera Mini, which is available on iOS (bit.ly/minii400) and Android (bit.ly/minia400), goes one step further by offering High and Extreme data-saving modes (these are labelled Opera Mini and Opera Turbo in the iOS version). Extreme mode is enabled by default on Android and loads web pages more quickly, as well as saving you mobile data.

If you want to save data when using other apps such as Chrome, Netflix, Instagram and YouTube, you can also install Opera's dedicated data-saving app, Opera Max (bit.ly/omax400). This excellent app optimises media content and can identify apps that use lots of background data, so you can block them from doing so.



Why Opera is the best browser

Block ads on PC and mobile

Opera is the first major Desktop browser to include a built-in ad blocker, so you don't have to install a separate add-on to get rid of ads that slow down your browsing and distract you from web content. Because Opera stop ads in their tracks early, it can load contentrich pages up to 90% faster than other browser that don't have ad blockers.



To turn on ad blocking, simply load Opera's Settings page and tick the box to 'Block ads and surf the web up to three times faster'. Once you've done that, a Manage Exceptions button appears, which you can click to whitelist sites that you don't mind showing ads. Now, when you load a website, a blue shield appears in the address bar, which you can click to track the number of ads you've blocked. You can temporarily allow ads on that site by switching the 'Ads are blocked on this site' button to the off position and you can even check how much faster the page loads with the ad-blocker enabled by clicking the



Speed Test button. If you want to add your own custom ad-blocking lists to Opera, navigate to its Settings, click Browser and tick 'Show advanced settings'. Now, return to the Basic settings

page and you'll see a 'Custom block lists' button in the ad-blocking section.

To block ads in Android, install Opera Mini (bit.ly/minia400), open Settings, tap 'Data savings' and tick the boxes to 'Block ads' in each data-saving mode. There's a similar option in Opera Browser's (bit.ly/opera400) Data Saving menu. In Opera Mini for iOS, you can only activate ad blocking for 'Opera Turbo' data-saving mode. Alternatively, block ads in all apps on your iPhone or iPad by installing Opera VPN (bit.ly/ operavpn400) as described above.

Watch videos, whatever you're doing

When you play a video in Opera, a button appears that lets you open it in a separate floating video frame that can be moved and resized. This means you can keep browsing and use other programs while the video continues to play, so you don't miss any of the action.

To minimise the pop-up player and return to watching the video in the original browser window, simply click the minimise button. Or you can stop the video altogether by clicking the X button.



Manage bookmarks more easily

When you save a bookmark in Opera, you can pick from a number of thumbnails to help identify the page that you've saved. When you load the Bookmarks manager, the thumbnail for each site is shown below it, and you can toggle the view to change how large they appear (if you want them to appear at all). If you don't want to bookmark sites, but you'd like to take a snapshot of your current tabs for future reference, you can take advantage of the browser's 'Save tabs as Speed Dial folder' feature. Simply right-click any tab, select the option and the tabs will be grouped together in a folder that you can rename, load in a new window and then delete when you're finished.





Install Chrome extensions in Opera

Chrome and Opera use the same rendering engine, which makes installing Chrome extensions in Opera a very straightforward process. First, you need to install the Opera add-on Download Chrome Extension (bit.ly/ downloadchrome400). Next, visit the Chrome Web Store (bit.ly/webstore400) and select an extension that you want to install, then click the button labelled 'Add to Opera'.

If you get a pop-up warning that the extension has been disabled because it's from an unknown source, click Go to load the Extensions Manager and enable the add-on from there. You can disable and remove extensions from here at any time.

OTHER BROWSERS WORTH TRYING



Vivaldi Vivaldi.com

Vivaldi offers lots of innovative features and it is updated regularly to add more. See page 31 for details of the latest version.



Pale Moon Palemoon.org

Originally based on Firefox, Pale Moon now offers many different features and is faster and less resourcehungry.



Maxthon www.maxthon .com

Maxthon makes clever use of the cloud to store your browsing data securely, and is available for every device.



Search across every video service at once

One of the downsides to having so much choice of viewing these days is that you don't know which films and TV shows are available on which streaming services. Try searching Netflix for Game of Thrones, for example, and you'll come up blank, while classic Seventies sitcom George and Mildred is only available on The ITV Hub - all five 'seasons', if you please! Fortunately, you can save yourself time, tears and tantrums by using one of the many tools that let you look for TV series and movies to rent, buy and watch for free, across all the major streaming services.

Our favourite is JustWatch (www .justwatch.com/uk), which spans 15 providers including Amazon, BBC iPlayer, Google Play, iTunes and Sky, and lets you search by title, actor, director, genre and release date. JustWatch's free Android and iOS apps let you set up price-drop alerts for specific rentals and purchases, and compile a wish-list



JustWatch has the answer when you're eager to binge-watch George and Mildred

of shows and films to view later.

Also worth checking out is TankTopTV (tanktop.tv), which lets you rate movies and series to get personal recommendations, and search across services by mood - from 'No-brainer' to 'Intellectual', and from 'Tense' to 'Funny & feelgood'.

Compile playlists from different services

Aside from artists such as Radiohead and Taylor Swift, who deliberately withhold their albums from Spotify, most big names are available on all the major music-streaming services. However, there are plenty of smaller acts who aren't, as well as countless remixes, live performances and exclusive versions of songs that you'll only find in one place, which is where Tomahawk (www.tomahawk-player.org) comes in. This fantastic free tool, which is available for Windows, Mac OS X, Linux and Android, lets you search for and play tracks hosted on free and subscription music services including Spotify, Deezer, Google Play Music, Tidal and YouTube. You can also play songs from your own collections, whether they're stored on your hard drive or on the web.

The biggest benefits to this interoperable approach are that you have instant access to any song you can think of and can compile mega playlists of tracks from different sources, without needing to switch between services. Tomahawk also has a clever Stations feature that generates playlists based



Tomahawk lets you create mega playlists from multiple music-streaming services

on the artist, genre, mood, tempo or other criteria of your choice.

On the downside, Tomahawk doesn't work automatically with all these sources - you need to connect them using special plugins called 'resolvers'. A few of these are included with the program, while the rest can be downloaded from bit.ly/toma400, but some only work with the Android app.

Additionally, Tomahawk only integrates with the paid-for versions of certain services - including Spotify and because it's still in beta, you may experience a few bugs. Still, it's completely free to use and is a brilliant way to remove the borders between music services.

Create the ultimate media centre

Microsoft may have abandoned Windows Media Centre, but if you want to bring all your entertainment together in one place, you won't find a better free option than Kodi (kodi.tv). This fantastic software lets you manage and play all

Combine streaming services



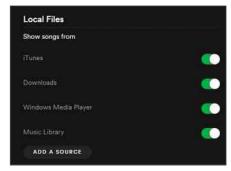
Choose from hundreds of Kodi add-ons to create the perfect entertainment hub

your music and videos in one place, and stream them from your PC or Mac to your Android or iOS device. More importantly for the purposes of this feature, it offers hundreds of add-ons for streaming services (addons.kodi.tv) so you can create a media centre that perfectly suits your tastes and needs. There are plugins for big names including BBC iPlayer, YouTube, SoundCloud, Tidal and Vevo, as well as factual sources such as The Guardian, NASA and Food Network, and plenty of esoteric choices. An unofficial Spotify add-on is currently in beta - see bit.ly/ spotify400 for details.

Switching between services is easy and help is readily available from the friendly Kodi forums (forum.kodi.tv). Some people prefer Plex (plex.tv) to Kodi because of its slicker, browserbased interface, but you have to pay £3.99 a month or £31.99 a year to enjoy its full range of features.

Sync your music libraries

One problem with switching from a music-download service such as iTunes to a streaming one such as Spotify is that you need to rebuild your music library and playlists from scratch. The easiest way to do this is to sync the old service with the new, which saves you having to add every track manually. In the Desktop version of Spotify, click Edit. Preferences, scroll down to Local Files and ensure iTunes is selected. Next, click the Local Files link on the left-hand side and select all the songs



Sync iTunes with Spotify to avoid the hassle of rebuilding your music library



Upload your entire iTunes library to Google Play Music to listen to anywhere

that you want to listen to in Spotify by holding down Ctrl as you click them (or by pressing Ctrl+A to choose them all). Drag the selection to the Songs link under My Music to import the tracks. You can also import your iTunes playlists by going to File, Import Playlists, iTunes.

Google Play Music gives you the welcome option to sync your entire iTunes library so you can stream it from anywhere. Its free 'online music locker' lets you upload 50,000 tracks and is automatically updated when a new track is added to iTunes, so you can

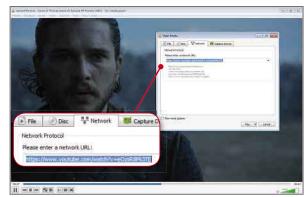
effectively rip music from CD to the cloud. To use this feature, download Google Music Manager, log into your Google account and select 'Upload songs to Google Play'. Select iTunes (or Windows Media Plaver, if that's the library you want to sync), choose 'Upload all songs and playlists' and agree to automatically upload songs that you add to iTunes in future.

The upload process may

take a while but, once complete, you'll be able to access your iTunes library via the Google Play Music app on your phone or tablet, and any web browser.

Stream everything through

Rather than opening multiple browser tabs, why not stream all your videos and music through the amazingly versatile VLC Media Player (www.videolan.org)? The simplest way to do this is to click VLC's Media menu, choose Open Network Stream, then copy and paste the URL of the video or audio file into the Network Protocol field. You can then either click Play to watch or listen to it on your Desktop; or choose Stream to enjoy it on another device on your network. VLC's streaming capabilities don't end there - you can also use add-ons to integrate the player with various music and video services. As well as those featured in the official VLC repository (addons.videolan.org), such as TuneIn Radio and YouTube, there's an unofficial plugin for Spotify (bit.ly/ spotifyvlc400) that lets you play tracks directly from the music service.

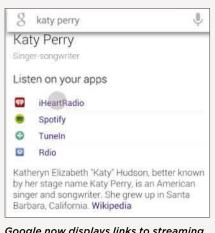


Play music and videos from streaming services in VLC rather than your browser

FIND MUSIC DIRECTLY FROM GOOGLE

A useful feature in the Google app for Android lets you find music and play it directly in your favourite streaming service. Simply search for an artist and Google will list services on which their music is available, including Deezer, TuneIn and YouTube. Tap one of these to open the relevant app on your device and start listening. To be honest, the feature doesn't work as well in the UK as it does in the US. where its results span a wider choice of music services and only include apps that you have installed. It also works when you search www.google .co.uk for an artist, with results

displayed on the right.

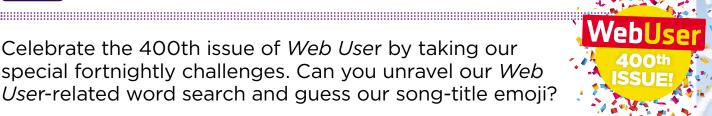


Google now displays links to streaming services when you search for an artist



Take a Screen Brea

Celebrate the 400th issue of Web User by taking our special fortnightly challenges. Can you unravel our Web User-related word search and guess our song-title emoji?



WEB USER WORD SEARCH

Can you find the following Web User sections in the grid on the right? Words may appear vertically, horizontally and diagonally, and backwards or forwards

ASK THE EXPERT BARRY COLLINS BEST BUYS BEST FREE APPS FΔQ **GROUP TEST INBOX NEED TO KNOW READERS TIPS** WORKSHOP

X E Z V S E D M Z X 0

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE SONG TITLES FROM THE EMOJI?

Get the answers online at bit.ly/quiz400

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 8 MAGIX 'Video easy'

MAGIX's new 'Video easy' software is the ideal beginner program for creating videos of family events, special occasions



and vacations in no time at all. Completed films can then be burned to DVD, saved as a file or published online. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'video' in the subject line. For more information, visit www.magix.com/gb, follow @MAGIX INT on Twitter, and 'like' www.facebook.com/MAGIX.

WIN 1 OF 6

Xara Web Designer 365

Xara Web Designer's templates make it easy to create websites - you don't need any HTML skills. The latest version contains 20 new website themes, a Photo Grids design to display your photos and more SmartShapes options to create panels and boxes. To enter,



WORTH

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email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'xara' in the subject line. For more information visit www.xara.com, follow @XaraGroup on Twitter, and 'like' www.facebook.com/XaraGroup.

Celebrating 400 ISSUES



Over the last 15 years, we've packed every issue with brilliant free software, websites and practical advice, with much more to come. Here are highlights from our first 400

ISSUE

In our very first issue, in March 2001, we tested 15 search engines, with Yahoo beating Google. We also provided tips on WAP, online shopping and downloading MP3s.



For our 100th issue, we named the 100 greatest things about the internet, including celebrity web chats, WAP, joke emails and "ordinary people finding fame".

Remember when a new version of Internet Explorer was worth getting excited about? We clearly thought so when IE7 launched in November 2006.



In March 2007, Google invited us behind the scenes at its UK headquarters to answer vour questions about its products and future plans.



For our 200th issue, we chose our 200 favourite websites, which then included Friends Reunited, **Google Lively** and Multimap - all of which we have outlasted!



Years before the revelations about the NSA and GCHQ spying on web users, we were offering expert advice about how to stay anonymous online.





In October 2012, we correctly predicted that Windows 8 was going to be a load of rubbish and advised you to stick with the far superior Windows 7.

magazine in summer 2014 to bring you even more app reviews, workshops, software hacks and opinion on the latest tech topics.



Last July, we exposed the facts behind the Windows 10 hype from upgrade problems and privacy concerns, to hidden costs and forced updates. More next issue!





Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Make professional-looking photo collages for free | www.fotor.com

Fotor 3 lets you create stylish photo collages using a selection of ready-made templates or a layout of your own choosing. Here's how to use it

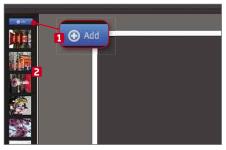
igital photos often end up stashed away and forgotten about on the computer, phone or camera they were taken with. Fotor is a powerful, free image editor that lets you breathe new life into your snaps by improving how they look, adding interesting effects and creating collages, so you're inspired to share and display them.

The software, which is available for

•••••

Windows and Mac OS X, has three different modules: Edit, for making changes and improvements to your photos; Collage, for creating a patchwork of images; and Batch, which lets you apply multiple effects and changes to a selection of images.

To create a collage, click the option on Fotor's home screen and the editor will open in a new window.



Creating a collage is very easy. Click the Add button 1 in the top-left corner and select the images you want to include. Hold down the Shift key to select multiple images. You are limited to a maximum of 30 photos per collage. The pictures appear in a strip down the side. 🔼



Drag an image from the left-hand strip into a frame in the centre of the screen. 1 You can drag it around inside the frame to get the position right. The controls at the bottom 2 let you zoom in and out of the photo, rotate it, flip it horizontally or vertically, or remove it.





The default collage style only offers two frames, which isn't very exciting, but you can select a different layout on the right. 1 You can filter the available choices by the number of frames for your images - from two to nine - 2 or opt to view all layouts. 3 Add photos to each of the windows in your chosen template.



You don't have to create a square collage - Fotor offers a choice of aspect ratios - 1:1 (square), 4:3 (horizontal) and 3:4 (vertical). Clicking the More button lets you choose your own aspect ratio, 2 which is handy if you want to create a collage for a specific shape of frame.



Fotor uses thick, white picture borders as standard. The Border option 1 lets you use the sliders 2 to adjust the corners (introduce curves), border shadow and width. Dragging all three sliders over to the left will remove the frames, so you are left with a wall of frameless photos.





To change the colour of the border, click the palette button 1 and hover the eye dropper 2 over a hue to see an immediate preview of it. 3 The Texture button 4 provides a choice of patterned designs, including flowers, tartan, gingham and animal prints.



If you find the layout of the templates too rigid, click the Freestyle button 11 and the photos you've added so far will be scattered across the screen. You can click and drag an image to another spot, and rotate it. 2 The Adjust box 3 lets you tweak its opacity, shadow, width, border colour and rotation.



You can pick a background for your freestyle collages from four different categories - Birthday, Kids, Texture and Travel. 11 Expand a category and click a background to apply it. 2 If you prefer something plain, click the Color button **B** and select a shade from the palette instead.



Chain VPNs for your most private surfing yet

VirtualBox: www.virtualbox.org | 🕒 30 mins | 🎥 Vista, 7, 8, 10 📹 10.8+ 🐧

PNs (virtual private networks) protect your privacy because they stop ISPs and websites leaking your identity while you're on the web, but your surfing data is still passing through the VPN, so it's not completely secret. Someone, somehow, could still be get their hands on this information for their own privacy-invading purposes.

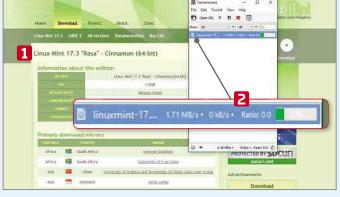
If you want a truly fail-safe route to privacy, to stop anyone snooping on your web-related activities, one option is to use two VPNs, with the anonymous information from the first passing through another before it reaches its destination. With two links in the chain, neither one gets a full picture of what you're doing.

Unfortunately, it's not as simple as setting up two VPN accounts. Instead, you have to create a virtual PC within your existing operating system, then use that to host the second VPN to carry out all your browsing. In this Workshop, we show you how to set all this up.

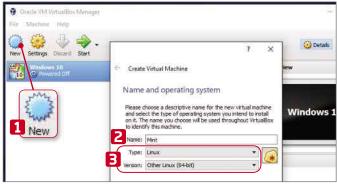




If you don't already have it installed, download and install VirtualBox from www.virtualbox.org. You'll need it to access your network, so choose Yes when asked to reset it. 1 Other than that, you can safely stick with the software's default settings.



You will need an operating system to run in VirtualBox. It doesn't much matter what it is, but we've chosen Linux Mint, 🚺 which you can download for free from linuxmint .com. We downloaded its torrent file using Transmission (bit.ly/trans400). 2



In VirtualBox, click New. 1 Name your Virtual Machine 2 and select Linux and Other Linux from the menus. 2 You can use the default options except for the virtual harddrive size, which needs to be at least 10GB to install the OS. We'd recommend doing this because it makes everything faster.



Select the new OS and click Start. You'll be asked to 'Select start-up disk' - choose the Linux Mint ISO file you downloaded in Step 2. Select Start Linux Mint 11 from the virtual machine's boot menu and wait for it to launch. If you want to install it, double-click the Desktop icon.

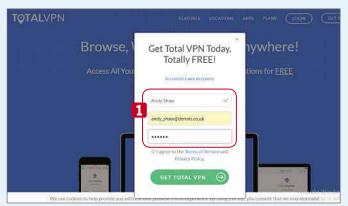




EXPERT TIP

Andy Shaw says

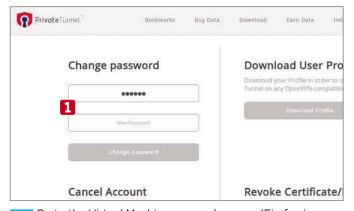
Linux Mint's OpenVPN software can be configured using either the command line or its graphical interface, but the latter is actually more complicated. You can give it a try if you're feeling brave! Create a new connection from the system tray icon and enter your VPN's connection details into that. You may need to go into the advanced settings and enable Point-to-Point encryption (MPPE).



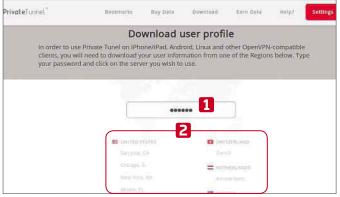
Back on the host PC, sign up for a VPN if you don't yet have one. We've used TotalVPN (www.totalvpn.com). To sign up for a free account, you have to provide your name, email address and a password. 1 You can then download the Windows software, sign in and launch the VPN.



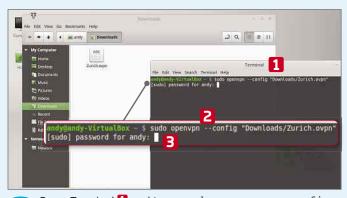
The free version of TotalVPN only gives you three countries to connect through, so most of the options are greyed-out. • Select one of the three available countries, 2 then click the Connect button. 3 We found Singapore to be the most reliable.



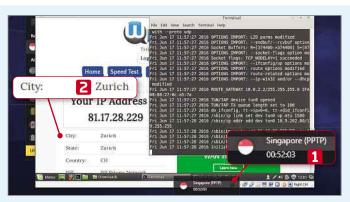
Go to the Virtual Machine, open a browser (Firefox is pre-installed) and go to your next VPN. We signed up for a Private Tunnel account from www.privatetunnel.com. 1 You only get 2GB of free bandwidth but this should be enough to get you started.



When you've signed up and logged in, click Settings, then the Download Profile button. Enter your password 1 and choose the country and city you want to appear to be browsing from in the list below. 2 Download the file and check which folder it's been saved to.



Open Terminal 1 and type: sudo openvpn --config "Downloads/Zurich.ovp" 2 but change the text in quotes to the location and name of your downloaded file. If you move the file to the Home folder, you can just use "filename.ovpn". You'll need to enter your Mint password.



The Terminal fills up with networking jargon and connects. Here, Windows is connecting via Singapore 1 but Mint thinks it's in Zurich. 2 You'll need to do all your browsing from within Mint but you'll be safer from prying eyes than you've ever been before!



Lock private apps on your Android device

vira's AppLock+ is an excellent new app that lets you PIN-protect the apps on your smartphone. This not only helps keep your information safe, should your device be lost or stolen, but also helps to protect your privacy when you

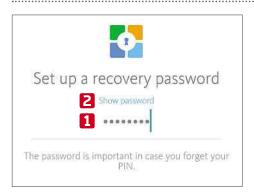
want to share your phone with friends and family. The app's premium features, Geo Lock and Schedule Lock, also let you control where and when your apps are locked.



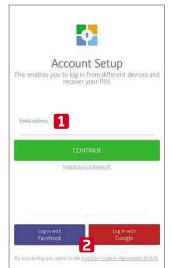
AppLock+: bit.ly/applock400 | 🕒 5 mins | 👘



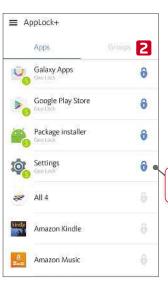
Android 4.0.3+



Install and run AppLock+ and create a PIN when prompted. Tap the Return button and you'll be asked to re-enter the PIN. Next, enter a recovery password, 🗓 which you'll need if you ever forget your PIN. You'll only be required to enter this once, so tap Show Password 2 to make sure you remember it correctly.



Enter your email address 1 or tap the Facebook or 🛮 Google login buttons 🔼 to complete your account setup. A screen loads asking you to give AppLock+ access to your app usage data. Tap Activate, select AppLock+ from the list and switch on the option for 'Allow usage tracking'.



Return to AppLock+ and a list of apps loads. Those with a blue padlock 1 belong to the 'System apps' group and are locked by default. To remove apps from this group, tap Groups, 2 'System apps' and swipe left on the apps you want to remove.





To add apps to the group, tap the blue plus icon 1 and tick the apps you want to add before selecting Back. You can determine when these apps are locked by tapping the three-dot menu button and selecting Edit Group. 2 To lock the apps at particular times, turn on Schedule Lock and configure the schedule accordingly.



If you want to lock a group of apps when you are in specific locations, turn on Geo Lock 11 and tap Allow to give AppLock+ access to your device's location. Next, either select 'Use your current location' or search for a location, before tapping Save. You can add multiple locations for each group by selecting the 'Add location' button. 2



By default, AppLock+ has groups for 'Camera & gallery apps', 1 'Messaging apps' 2 and 'Social media apps', **B** which you can customise by following the instructions above. You can also add your own groups by tapping the blue plus button and following the steps on screen.



Find files and launch programs more quickly

istary is a brilliant Windows search tool and program launcher. It's recently been updated to version 5 and lis a great alternative to Microsoft's Cortana. You can summon it simply by pressing the Ctrl key twice, or it appears browser, straight from your Desktop.

automatically if you type into an Explorer window. As well as finding files, you can also use it to launch a web search in your favourite



Listary: www.listary.com | 🕒 10 mins | 🧗 XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10



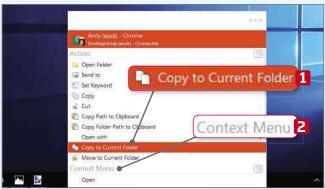
To find files, just start typing in an Explorer window. The Listary box appears **1** and, as you type, displays suggestions in a list. 2 You can move through these with the cursor keys. When the one you want is highlighted, **B** press Enter to open its folder in Explorer.



If you're not already in Explorer, summon the Listary box by pressing the Ctrl key twice. Type your search I term as in Step 1. This view also shows programs, 🚺 which you can launch by selecting them in the list and pressing Enter.



If you want to use a file that you've found in Listary in a particular program or app, just drag it from the drop-down menu 1 and drop it straight into the application. 2 Alternatively, double-click a file to open it in the default application for its file type.



When the file or program you're looking for is highlighted, press the right arrow or Ctrl+O to open the Action menu. This contains some new and unique actions, such as 'Copy to Current Folder', 1 and lets you carry out actions found in the right-click context menu. 2



Click the menu button in the search bar, then click the lightning bolt 11 to open a separate set of actions. Choose Options 2 to configure Listary's settings. You can also set up and use favourites from the heart folder button 3 and view your history from the clock button. 4



You can use Listary to search the web without having to open your browser first. Type gg 11 before your search query to search with Google. There are loads of keywords for launching other sites, and you can also set up your own shortcuts if you wish.

Weekend Project

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





Do amazing things with the £13 BBC micro:bit

The BBC's micro:bit is a tiny programmable computer. Wayne Williams explains how to get hold of one and what to do with it



he Raspberry Pi has put computer programming back on the map (and the curriculum), but as a fully fledged mini PC, it needs an operating system installed before you can do anything with it, so setting it up can be a challenge. The BBC micro:bit is another mini programmable computer, measuring just 4 x 5cm. But, unlike the Pi, it's not a full PC - more a stripped-back device designed to take simple programs created on another device and run them on its 'screen' - a bank of 25 LED lights. It's much easier to get started with, and you

can have a program running on it in just a few minutes. Like the Pi, it's been developed to capture the imaginations of schoolchildren, and a million of the devices were distributed free to Year 7 pupils. Happily, it's now been made available to the general public, so anyone can buy and play with one. No advance programming skills are required and it's easy to learn your way around the many different programming languages that the device is compatible with. There are also plenty of existing projects to help get you started.

What you'll need

The first thing you need is, of course, the micro:bit itself. If you have a child or grandchild in Year 7, they may have received one for free as part of the BBC's Make It Digital initiative. Otherwise, you can now purchase one from one of the online shops listed at bit.ly/mbit400.

A single BBC micro:bit costs £13, but

for an extra £2-£3, you can get a starter kit, which includes the device, Micro USB cable, battery pack (so you can use the programmed micro:bit away from your PC or Mac) and project ideas to get you started. This is the best option for most users.

You'll need a PC running Windows 7 or later, or a Mac running OS X 10.6 or

later. You'll also need a USB-to-Micro USB cable. This comes supplied with the Go starter kit, but if you have an Android phone, the cable you use to connect it to your PC should work.

You can also get the official app for Android or iOS and connect to the micro:bit via Bluetooth. Pairing is easy - just hold down the A and B buttons on



Visit the BBC's micro:bit website for ideas and inspiration

the device, then press and release Reset and follow the instructions, entering a pattern and code on your phone or tablet when prompted. Programs can be sent directly from your mobile device to the micro:bit via Bluetooth. We'll take you through your first steps with the device in our Mini Workshop, below, and show you how to transfer programs to the device on page 61.

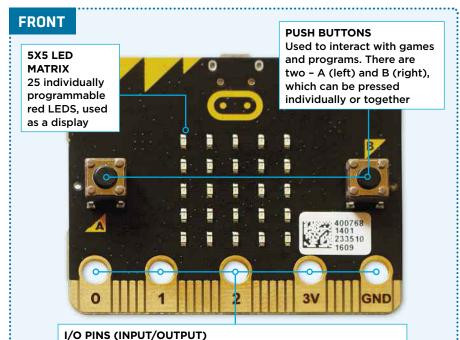
Programs to get you started

Before beginning a project of your own, it's worth seeing what other people have made so you can use them as templates. On the BBC micro:bit website, you can browse for programs by name, user or type. Here are seven of our favourite example programs.

Compass

bit.ly/bcompass400

The built-in Magnetometer makes it easy to turn the micro:bit into a functioning compass. 'B compass8' has eight positions, and an arrow that points towards north (which is what you want from a compass, obviously). You need



You can expand the micro:bit by connecting hardware add-ons

to draw a circle in LEDs by angling the micro:bit first, in order to orientate it.

Dice

bit.ly/dice400

The micro:bit's LED display means it can function as a pretty good die. Dice v2 works as you might expect - just shake the micro:bit and a random number of spots - from 1 to 6 - will be displayed.

Scroll text

bit.ly/scrolltext400

You can display your name or some other text on the micro:bit, with one letter appearing at a time. It's easy enough

to program this yourself but the Scroll Text program makes things even simpler. Just change the text in the Show String box, click Run to check it, then convert it and copy it over to the micro:bit.

Pedometer

bit.ly/steps400

The average person walks 3,000-4,000 steps per day, but the NHS has set a challenge for each person to walk 10,000 steps per day - more than double. You can measure how many steps you take using Step Counter 2. Attach the micro:bit to your shoe (or the bottom of your leg) to measure each step you take.

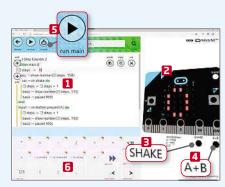
INI WORKSHOP | Get started with the BBC micro:bit



Go to the BBC micro:bit site at www.microbit.co.uk and click the Create Code button. You have the choice of starting to code with CK JavaScript, 1 Microsoft Block Editor, 2 Microsoft Touch Develop 3 or Python. 4 Scroll down to find out more about each of the editors so you can choose the one that works best for you.



You can run or alter a pre-created script. Go to the My Scripts 1 section at the top, then enter what you're looking for in the Search box 2 pedometer or compass are good first projects. If you know the ID of a script, you can enter that here, too. You can view the details [3] or just click the Edit button. 4



The script will appear on screen 1 alongside an interactive preview of the micro:bit in action. 2 Pushing the Shake button El mimics shaking the device, while A+B 4 shows what happens when you press those buttons together. Run Main 5 resets the code. You can edit the script in the window on the left. 6

WebUser Bookstore



THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

If you use an Android tablet or phone, our new 148-page book will tell you how to get the most out of your device. It explains everything you need to know about the latest versions of Android (Lollipop and Marshmallow), so you'll feel confident that you won't get left behind. We also reveal the best apps for everything you'll ever want to do, and expose the dodgy apps that make your device slow and drain the battery. And as hackers continue to switch from PCs to phones and tablets, we'll show you how to stay safe.

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Free software can be a worry. Is it as good as a paid-for package? Will it sneak junk on



to your PC? Does it nag you to update to a premium version? In our new 148-page book *The Definitive Guide to Free Software*, we recommend only the best free programs that deliver high-quality features and no nasty surprises.

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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 with, play games and learn valuable skills. We've updated this 148-page book to include instructions on mastering the new Pi models (A+ and B+).

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Use CK JavaScript to turn the micro:bit into a counting machine

Counter

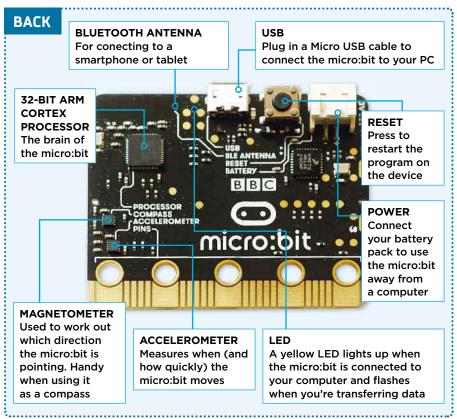
bit.ly/countdown400

You can use the micro:bit to count a number of things - the number of people passing through the entrance of an event, for example. The Counting Down program (written in CK JavaScript), is very straightforward: clicking the B button increases the count (displayed as numbers) by one and clicking the A button decreases it. Pressing A and B together resets the count to zero.

Stopwatch

bit.ly/stopwatchclock400

The micro:bit isn't sophisticated enough to accurately time a race, but you can use it to show how much time has elapsed since you started the program running. The Stopwatch & Clock app displays time in Hours (H), Minutes, (M) and Seconds



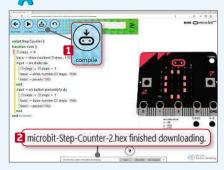
(S). You have to wait for each unit of time to take its turn to display, so it can't be used to measure elapsed time to the exact second.

Take a selfie bit.ly/selfie400

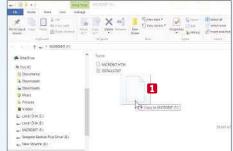
You can connect your micro:bit to your phone via Bluetooth and use it to control your handset remotely. One of the

coolest uses for the micro:bit is as a remote control for the camera. Samsung's micro:bit site (bit.ly/selfie400) has some smart projects for you to try, including 'Thank you selfie', which lets you use the micro:bit to remotely take photos or videos with your phone. We've found the Bluetooth connection sometimes drops. so make sure vou're connected to the device before trying to take a photo.

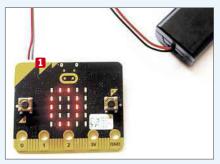
ORKSHOP | Transfer your finished code to the micro:bit



Once you've created a script or found one you like, click the Compile button. 11 It will be turned into a HEX file, ready for running on the micro:bit, and downloaded to your computer. 2 Connect the micro:bit to a spare USB port on your PC or Mac using a Micro USB cable.



Open the MICROBIT drive in Explorer (or Finder, if you're using a Mac), then drag and drop the HEX file into the window. 1 The copying process will only take a few seconds, during which time the yellow LED on the back of the device will flash to show that there's a transfer in progress.



The program will run automatically on the micro:bit. Assuming everything is fine, you can disconnect the device from your computer and connect the battery pack if you want to keep using the program. As soon as you connect the power source, 11 the code will run.

NEXT ISSUE

How To... find new uses for an old tablet

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Web User's Top Tips

Get the most from your Windows 10 apps by following these handy tips from our experts

TOP TIPS FOR WINDOWS 10 APPS

Tablet mode tricks for displaying multiple apps

ost apps from the Windows Store run in a window. Click the maximize button in the top-right corner of the window and the app fills the screen, except for a title bar across the top. If you want the app to display full screen without any title bars or buttons, click the Action Centre button in the notification area on the right of the taskbar and click 'Tablet mode'.

If you have a touchscreen, swipe in from the top and the app shrinks to a window. Drag it to the left or right side to snap it to that half of the screen. Your other apps are displayed in the other half. Tap one to select it and you now have two apps running side by side, filling the screen. This is a great way to work with several apps at once.



Run apps full screen or split the screen in half, with two apps side by side

Set up the Photos tile

You can personalise the Start menu's Photos tile so it displays an image of your choice. To do this, right-click the Photos tile and select Resize, Large. Right-click it again and select More, 'Turn live tile on'. Open the Photos app, click the gear icon in the bottom-left corner and, in the Tile section, find the menu with 'A single photo' and 'Recent photos'. Use it to choose what to display on the Start

Add more folders to Photos

The Photos app only shows images stored in your Photos folder, so if you have a large photo library on an external USB drive, you won't be able to view and edit them unless you tweak the settings. To do this, open Photos and click the gear icon. In the Sources section, click the plus button and select any disks and folders you'd like the Photos app to include. Now you can view and edit all your photos, wherever you keep them.

1

View traffic and cameras in Maps

Before setting off on a journey, open the Maps app and view your route or the area you're visiting. Click the layers button in the toolbar, turn on Traffic and tick Incidents and Cameras.

Roads with stationary traffic jams are drawn in red and should be avoided; orange roads are busy but the traffic is moving steadily; green roads have little or no traffic and no hold-ups. Accidents, breakdowns and other road problems are represented on the

Incidents Cameras

roadside traffic cameras that are no more

than a few

from

map by warning

triangles.

read a description of the problem.

Click one to

The camera

symbols on

when clicked, show pictures

the map,

See the traffic situation on the map and through live cameras before your journey

64 29 June - 12 July 2016

minutes old. You can see the traffic, the weather, road problems and so on. London has a lot of cameras, but there are also a few in other large cities.

Take a 3D tour in Maps

Click the 3D Cities button in the top-right corner of Maps and a panel opens listing cities and locations around the world. Click one and a 3D view is displayed in the window. You can change the angle of view by clicking and dragging the grid icon in the toolbar to the left or right. Spin the mouse wheel or push/pull with two fingers on a laptop touchpad to zoom in or out. Hold down the Ctrl key while clicking and dragging the mouse left or right to spin around the 3D view, so you can see it from all sides.

Stream music

You don't have to subscribe to Groove Music Pass or buy music to listen to it in Groove Music - you can play your own music and stream it from OneDrive. Open Explorer and go to the OneDrive folder on your PC's hard drive. If there isn't a Music folder, create one. Copy music files and folders to it.

Open Groove Music and click the gear icon on the left to open Settings. Under 'Music on this PC', click 'Choose where we look for music'. If the OneDrive Music folder isn't listed, click the plus button and add it. You will now be able to play your music via Groove Music on any computer, tablet or phone (iOS or Android). If your music library is on an external USB drive, add the folders in the same way. You can't stream them to other devices but you can manage and play the music on your PC.

Import iTunes playlists

If you previously used iTunes and have switched to Groove Music, you can import your playlists. Click the gear icon in Groove Music, then click 'Import iTunes playlists'. You will only be able to play tracks that are in your library. If you ripped your own CDs, add the iTunes music folder to Groove or copy the music files to the PC's Music folder. If you subscribe to Groove, you have access to millions of tracks and your playlists will work perfectly.

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.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Get all your email in one inbox

If you have more than one email account, you can access them all via the Mail app. Click Accounts in the left panel, move across to the right panel and click 'Add account'. A window opens with several quick setup options, including Google and Yahoo. Enter your email address and password, and setup is carried out automatically.

There is also an 'Other account' option, which lets you add any email account. You just need to know (or find out) the mail server address, username and password. Each new account appears in the left panel and selecting one lists the contents of its inbox, sent mail and other folders.

It is easy enough to select each email account in turn to read your messages but you may prefer to combine all the inboxes from your different accounts into one, to get a unified overview of all your email.

To set this up, click Accounts on the left and then, on the right, click 'Link inboxes'. A list of email accounts is displayed and the tick boxes let you choose the ones you want to combine. These appear in Mail's left panel as 'Linked inbox'. Select it to see all your messages.

If you reply to a message, the reply is sent from the account that received it. When you click 'New mail' to create an email message, you are asked which account you want to use.

If you decide you would rather go back to displaying your email as separate accounts, return to Accounts and click 'Linked inboxes' to unlink them again.

Define Mail Quick Actions

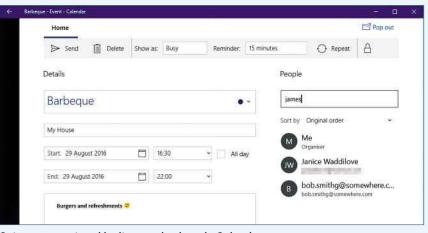
Select an email account to show the inbox. When you hover the mouse over an email in the list, two icons appear on the right. These are Quick Actions and they let you delete, flag or perform some other actions on emails without opening the message or going through menus. They are a great time saver when you're dealing with lots of messages.

You can choose which actions you want to appear when the mouse hovers over an email in the inbox. Click the gear icon at the bottom of the left panel to open settings, then select Quick Actions. Choose the two actions you want from the two menus. There is an option to apply the actions to all email accounts or to have different actions for each account.

If you have a touchscreen, switch on the 'Swipe actions' option. This lets you swipe left or right over an email in the inbox to perform the first or second 'quick action'. It's a huge timesaver and puts the touchscreen to good use, because you can quickly swipe through lots of emails to clear your inbox.

Invite people in Calendar

If you are organising a party, wedding, business meeting or other event, the Calendar app makes it easy to invite participants. Click the plus button to add a new event and enter the details, including date and location. Click in the box on the right where it says 'Invite someone'. Enter their email address, then continue by adding more people. Calendar sends your invitations and tells you who can make it and who can't.



Set up an event and invite people along in Calendar

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



NETWORKING

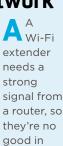
Stretch your Wi-Fi network

I am having trouble getting a strong Wi-Fi signal throughout my house. I placed my router upstairs in the middle of the house but we have a ground-floor extension that's reinforced with steel to support the roof. This just happens to be where my media-streaming Amazon Fire TV Stick is, and it struggles to maintain a reliable connection over Wi-Fi.

I have tried Wi-Fi extenders but they don't seem to work unless they're only a few metres from the router. I also considered HomePlug technology, but this provides an Ethernet connection, which is useless because the Fire Stick and other devices don't use it.

Is there a product that uses HomePlug technology to connect to the router and then produces a Wi-Fi signal that other devices can connect to? If possible, I would like the SSID and the security key to be the same as my router's so I don't have to keep changing the password when moving around the house.

Lewis, via email





Banish Wi-Fi black spots with a HomePlug extender

where Wi-Fi doesn't travel. HomePlug adapters are the right idea. You need to connect a master HomePlug to the mains socket next to the router. Then, in any room where you want to extend your signal, you can use HomePlug adapters with Wi-Fi - sometimes called Wi-Fi pass-through devices.

The base unit reads your Wi-Fi network's settings and sends them over the mains wiring to your HomePlug adapters. These then act as Wi-Fi access points, all with the same settings. An example is the TP-Link TL-WPA4530 kit (£69.91 from Kikatek at bit.ly/tpl400), which consists of one base unit and one Wi-Fi extender.

Start the virtual machine and install Windows. When that's done, go to the Devices menu and select Insert Guest Editions CD Image. Open Explorer and run VBoxWindowsAdditions.exe. Reboot Windows in the virtual machine and the scanner should work.

SECURITY

Too much security

I recently purchased an antivirus and anti-malware program from IObit (www.iobit.com) and installed it on my computer, but I think there may be more than one security program on my PC. Will they cancel each other out? Can you have two running simultaneously on a PC? If not, how do I make sure only one is running?

I also have a PC tune-up program. Are these also security-based or do they just keep your PC running optimally? Can you run them alongside security software?

Martin Gamban, via email

It is possible to install more than one security program, and the two won't cancel each other out, but there are good reasons for not doing this. Each security program uses processing power, memory and hard-drive space, and the computer slows down a bit with each one you install. Having two or more security programs has a negative effect on performance and won't be any more secure.

There are exceptions. A clean-up tool such as Emisoft Emergency Kit (free from bit.ly/emsis400) doesn't provide real-time protection so it doesn't impact the PC's performance. Instead, you run it manually when you want to check your PC for malware, such as when you



Emsisoft Emergency Kit is a good accompaniment to your security software

HARDWARE

A new driver for an old scanner

My Canon CanoScan 3200F scanner has served me well, but I now have a new Windows 10 computer, and Canon tells me it has no plans to release a driver to make my scanner work with it. When I Google my problem, I find several sites offering free drivers, but I'm worried about what I might be downloading. Can you recommend a trustworthy site where I can download a driver?

Stuart Quarmby, via email

Driver sites don't create drivers, they usually just collect and distribute them, so if there isn't one for your device, that's usually that. In this case, however, there are two possible

solutions. First, according to Canon, the Windows 7 drivers (from bit.ly/ cano400) should function in Windows 10. If your computer is running 32-bit Windows 10, the 32-bit Windows 7 driver should work. The problem is that most PCs these days run 64-bit Windows, and there isn't a 64-bit driver.

Another way to get the scanner working is to install VirtualBox (www .virtualbox.org) and run an old version of Windows in it. So, for example, you could install a copy of Windows XP, Vista or 7 in VirtualBox and run that from within Windows 10.

To do this, install VirtualBox and the extension pack. Then create a new virtual machine and select Windows XP, Vista or 7 as the operating system. In the virtual machine Settings, enable the USB controller and add a USB device.

suspect your main security software has missed something.

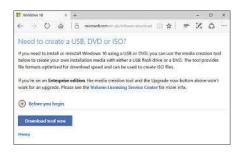
To find out if you are running more than one security program, open 'Programs and Features' in the Control Panel and look at the list of software. Also, check the notification area on the right-hand side of the taskbar. Security programs usually add a taskbar icon, sometimes hidden in the pop-up tray, so hold your mouse pointer over the icons to see the names and check if more than one security program is running there.

It's possible that PC tune-up software could contain security components, but it's unusual. Check the program's specifications to see what it contains. If you have an old PC that's running poorly, PC tune-up software might help by clearing out the junk, but you won't need it on a new PC, and you don't need to run it all the time.

GENERAL PC

Make a Windows disc

I've purchased Windows XP and Windows 7 PCs in the past, but I've never received a copy of Windows on a disc. With each of these PCs, I made a recovery DVD using tools from the PC's manufacturers and other companies, but I've never managed to make one work. My solution in times of crisis has been to make a hard-drive backup of the entire drive and copy it back to the



Download the Windows media creation tool to create a Windows DVD

PC. Is there a way of extracting just a copy of the operating system from the working hard drive to a DVD?

I still use XP for some things, but it's not connected to the internet. I have a Windows 10 PC now, but I still don't have a DVD with the operating system on it.

Malcolm Riches, via email

Operating systems and software are rarely distributed on CDs or DVDs these days. They tend to be made available on the internet instead. If you want a DVD for Windows 10, 8 or 7, you can download a disc image and write it to a DVD-R if necessary. Download Windows 10 from bit.ly/windl400. Here, you'll also find links to the download pages for Windows 8.1 and 7.

You can use any DVD-burning software to write these to a DVD. In Windows 10, you can right-click an ISO disc image and burn it without any extra software. This will result in a DVD that contains just the operating system, which is what you're looking for.

It's not possible to extract the operating system from a backup of a hard drive. Individual files or folders can be copied from a backup but you can't get the entire operating system.

BROWERS

Chrome struggles with sites

I use Chrome as my browser. Lately, I have been getting an error message showing 'page unresponsive' and asking if I want to kill the page or wait for it to respond. I have tried to rectify the problem but with no success.

Mervyn Timbers, via email

There are several possible causes. One is that a particular website or page is having problems, in which case the fault is not with Chrome or your computer but the web server. Sometimes, websites go offline because of a fault, maintenance or too many users. The solution is to try again later.

Chrome is updated every few weeks and websites are often updated, too. Sometimes an update, either to Chrome or the site, makes the two incompatible. Try a different browser, such as Firefox or Edge, for now. The next update might fix the problem so that Chrome starts working with that site again.

SECURITY

Track a lost or stolen laptop

I am very security conscious and have done my best to secure my house. However, I'm worried about losing my laptop, because it's my most valuable possession. Is there something I can install that will track it if it gets stolen or goes missing?

I've read about LoJack (www.lojack .com). Prev (prevproject.com) and GadgetTrak (gadgettrak.com) and would be interested to find out what you think of them. Can you suggest any other, possibly more UK-specific, products? Can I take the laptop to a high-street shop to buy the software and have it installed?

Peter Day, via email

LoJack and GadgetTrak are both excellent and have been around for years, but you have to pay for

them. Prev is free for up to three devices, however, and is almost as good. You simply download one of the programs to your laptop and run it, so you won't need help installing it.

All three services hide a program in Windows that calls home to report its location whenever it has an internet connection. You can also lock the PC remotely, put a message on the screen and take a photo with the webcam or a screenshot of the desktop.

These tools won't prevent the theft. though, and if a lost or stolen laptop isn't switched on or connected to the web, it can't tell you where it is. You may get lucky and receive a location report the next day, but it could be weeks.

Rather than trying to recover a stolen laptop, take measures to prevent its theft in the first place. Many laptops have a slot for a Kensington Lock - a steel cable with a special attachment that locks to your laptop. You loop the cable around a pipe or attach it to a table, then plug it into the laptop.



Use a Kensington lock to secure your laptop to something heavy

Search Google and you should find basic options for less than £10.

Laptops are small, light and portable, so they're easy to hide somewhere out of sight when you go out or on holiday. You can also buy security stickers with your name, address and phone number on them that, once stuck to the laptop's case. are almost impossible to remove. This makes your laptop harder to sell, so it might put someone off stealing it, or help you recover it if they do.



This fortnight Roland has been respraying his scuffed PC red, white and yellow to celebrate Web User's 400th issue

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. To get help or offer it to others,

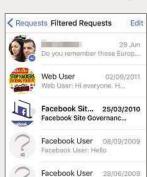
visit forum.webuser.co.uk

TOP TIP



I didn't realise that Facebook Messenger has a spam filter. When I was told about it, I checked it and found three messages: two from strangers apparently seeking friendship and one from a well-known firm informing me that I had won a competition prize. To my dismay, this was a genuine message that had been sent three months earlier.

I regularly enter competitions on Facebook and, when I have won in the



Facebook's Message Requests filter can contain genuine correspondence

past, I have been informed by Messenger. All these messages have come through safely, so I can't understand why this one fell into the spam trap.

winner WebUse

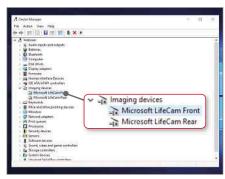
To prevent this from happening to you, check the Messenger app's spam filter by going to Messenger, tapping the Account button and selecting People. From here, select Message

Requests and all your spam messages will be revealed.

Reena. Web User Forums

privacy by switching it off altogether? To do this, search for Device Manager in the Start menu and open it. You should be able to find the webcam's driver by expanding the 'Imaging devices' option. Right-click it, select Disable and the webcam will no longer work in any software. Should you need to use the webcam at some point, you can easily reverse the action by following the same instructions but selecting Enable instead of Disable.

Frat Park, Web User Forums



You can turn off your webcam by disabling its drivers in Device Manager

SOFTWARE

How to replace Task Manager with Process Explorer

Process Explorer (bit.lv/process400) is an excellent replacement for Task Manager, but it can be tricky to get your head around. If you're struggling, there's a helpful article on the Malwarebytes blog (at bit.ly/malware400) that explains how you can set it to replace the default Windows tool. The blog also runs through some of Process Explorer's standout features, such as how to identify the processes behind a browser pop-up and how to scan processes using VirusTotal. There's also a follow-up article at bit.ly/followup400 that answers questions about the first post, so I'd recommend reading both if you're thinking about using it.

Madeline, Web User Forums

SOFTWARE

Another Dreamweaver alternative

In Issue 397, Graham Davies asked about alternatives to Dreamweaver 5, which no longer runs in Windows 10. Depending on the type of site he's using it for, can I suggest he has a look at Microsoft Expression Web 4? This is also an older program but I can confirm it works in Windows 10 and, like Dreamweaver, it has a design and code view, with a built-in site manager. Best of all, it's free to download from bit.ly/expression400. I hope this helps.

Nigel Head, via email



Microsoft Expression Web 4 is a free tool for designing and developing websites

GENERAL PC

Uninstall Windows apps

The other day, someone asked me how to uninstall apps they had downloaded from the Windows 10 Store. She was looking for them in 'Programs and Features' in the Control Panel, which is where you would normally look to uninstall software. However, Windows apps are different, so for my friend and anvone else who has not discovered how to remove them, you just right-click a Windows Store app on the Start menu and select Uninstall from the pop-up menu that appears. There is no uninstall option for bundled apps, only ones you install yourself.

Another way to uninstall them is to go to Settings (Windows+i), System, 'Apps & features', then click an app to make the Uninstall button appear below.

Paul Snowden, via email

PRIVACY

Disable your laptop webcam

If you never use your laptop's webcam, why not improve your security and



BROWSERS

Share Keep notes with others

If you use Google Keep for storing notes, you can share them with others, such as friends, family, work colleagues and so on. I have holiday lists that I share with my wife, so we can both add things we need to remember. You can share absolutely anything.

You can access your notes at keep .google.com if you have a Google account. Create a new note or edit an existing one, and you'll see a Share icon at the bottom. Click it and you can add other Google users by entering their name or email address. The note then appears in your Google Keep notes and in everyone else's Share list. You can all write on it, create checklists and so on.

Alan Dunn, via email

WINDOWS 10

Control Panel shortcuts

While the Settings screen in Windows 10 is useful, you still need to access the Control Panel to get to some essential settings. A quick way to do this is to use the keyboard shortcut Windows+X, which opens up the Administrative Menu. From here, you can select Control Panel.

Alternatively, just search for Control Panel and pin it to the Start menu. From there, you can create a Desktop shortcut by simply dragging and dropping it to the Desktop.

Frat Park, Web User Forums



To create a shortcut to Control Panel, drag it from the Start Menu to the Desktop

GENERAL PC

Set advanced power options

If you use a laptop, you can customise the power settings for when it is running on mains or batteries. This lets you set it to run flat out when plugged in or to last as long as possible away from the mains. Actually, you can set it how you like, but these are the settings I use.

Open the Control Panel and choose Power Options in the 'Large icons' or 'Small icons' view. It doesn't matter which power plan is selected, you can customise it by clicking the 'Change plan settings' link. There are options on the next screen to choose when to turn off the display or put the computer into sleep mode, but the best settings are



Set the options for working on mains power and batteries in the Power Options

hidden in the 'Change advanced power settings' link. Click this.

A long list of items is shown, including 'Hard disk', Internet Explorer, 'Wireless adapter', 'Processor power management' and so on. For each of these options, there are two settings - one for running on the battery and one for when the laptop is plugged in. I have selected the maximum performance settings for when my laptop is plugged in and minimum power consumption when on battery. This means you automatically get the best options, for either scenario.

D Moore, via email

SECURITY

Uninstall vulnerable Lenovo software

I just received an email warning me that there's a serious security vulnerability in the Lenovo application Accelerator, which comes installed on some Lenovo PCs to speed up Windows applications. If exploited, the flaw could allow someone to install a program on your computer by disguising it as an updated version of application. Lenovo recommends that you uninstall Accelerator, if it's present on your PC or laptop. You can find more information. about the computer models that are affected and how to remove Accelerator at bit.ly/lenovo400.

lan Noble, via email

WINDOWS 10

Free Microsoft tutorials

If you're the type of person who searches YouTube when you need help doing something in Windows, you'll be pleased to learn that Microsoft has published its own series of training videos about Windows 10. Subjects include 'Power Tools for Windows 10', File Explorer, the Registry Editor, Disk Management and Event Viewer. The videos run for more than three hours in total, so it's a handy

and comprehensive guide to have. Like YouTube videos, the course is completely free, but I've found the standard of the videos is much higher than the majority of home-made tutorials you find online.

Alec, via email

ANDROID

Use Facebook Messenger without the app

If, like me, you resent having to use the Facebook Messenger app on your mobile to access your messages, you can instead use the service via your browser by visiting mbasic.facebook.com/ messages. To open a message thread on the page that loads, simply tap the appropriate person's name. I use Chrome and have bookmarked the page and also added a shortcut to the home screen. so I can access it quickly.

If you're wondering why I don't like the app, it's because it sends constant notifications and takes up precious space. It's going to start showing adverts soon, too.

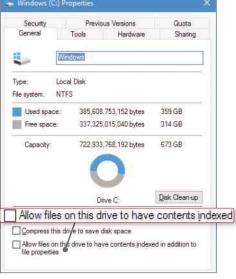
dangermouse75, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Turn off indexing to make Windows faster

Windows indexes the contents of files on your hard drive to make it easier and faster to search for them. Well, that's the theory, but I don't find Windows search to be particularly fast or efficient, and turning off indexing can speed up your system. To do this, open Explorer and select My Computer or This PC. Rightclick the hard drive and select Properties. On the General tab, clear the tick against 'Allow files on this drive to have contents indexed'. Click Apply, then 'Apply changes to drive, subfolders and files'.

James Sheehan, via email



Turn off hard drive indexing to speed up the hard drive by clearing the tick



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			£10.00	12	17Mbps	∞	
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Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 20 June 2016



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ANDROID

Can I use my smartphone without a SIM card?

Is it possible to use a smartphone without the SIM card installed? I'm thinking of things such as the camera, internet browser and other apps. I am getting a new phone so I'll transfer my SIM card to the new device, but I might still want to use the old phone now and then. Is this possible?

awam7, Web User Forums

With the exception of making calls and sending text messages, you should be able to use the smartphone as normal, although if you need internet access, you'll need to make sure you're connected to a wireless network. You're basically just using it like a tablet, albeit a small one. I have a pile of old phones at home that I use to test websites. None of them have SIMs but they all connect to Wi-Fi for testing.

TheTechGuy, Web User Forums



Most smartphones still function as Wi-Fi devices if there is no SIM card installed

EMAIL

Why am I receiving hundreds of 'undelivered' emails?

I'm getting a lot of unwanted emails in my inbox saying 'Undelivered mails returned to sender'. I have no idea where they are coming from, because I certainly haven't been sending all those emails. How do I get rid of them or stop them arriving in the first place?

awam7, Web User Forums

SECURITY

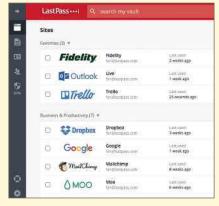
Should I change my passwords?

If I install a password manager on my Windows 10 PC, do I need to create new passwords for all the websites I use or can I keep my existing ones if I use a strong password in the manager to protect them all?

d307, Web User Forums

Using a password manager doesn't make a bad password better, it just saves you from having to remember it. So, if you save a weak password, it'll still be more easily compromised than a strong one, even when saved to your password manager. With that in mind, if you have insecure passwords, my advice would be to change them as well as putting them in a manager.

Where a password manager comes into its own is that it lets you use long. complex and unquessable passwords for all your logins, without the hassle of you having to remember them. You can avoid using the same password for more than one website because there's no risk of you forgetting it.



LastPass saves all your passwords and lets you click straight through to websites

I would suggest using LastPass (lastpass.com) and importing all your current passwords. LastPass has a tool to analyze your passwords and tell you which ones should be made more secure. Use this, then change all the ones it suggests.

If you go for LastPass Premium (which costs \$12 - around £8.30 a year), I would also thoroughly recommend the Multifactor Authentication tool, which keeps your passwords safe, even if someone discovers your master password.

TheTechGuy, Web User Forums

A spammer has spoofed your email address or your account has been hacked, and you are now receiving the notifications for all the emails that bounced. Try changing your email password to see if that helps. You should also run antivirus scans to check that you haven't picked up any malware on your PC. If you keep receiving the emails after you've secured your account, you could try setting up a rule or filter that moves all such emails to a separate folder, not vour inbox.

Ages ago, when I used Outlook Express, you could create 'Message Rules' that let you set actions for dealing with emails that contain specific words in the name, subject line and so on. I don't know if this would be useful as a temporary measure, but I've found some links that will help you achieve

a similar setup in Thunderbird (bit.ly/ thun400) and Windows Live Mail (bit.ly/ wlm400)

calimanco, Hello_There and Madeline, **Web User Forums**

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Lots of 'undelivered' emails may indicate that your email account has been hacked



Star Email

Mug/

No, Amazon isn't milking its customers

n his column in Issue 397, Barry Collins suggests that Amazon is now milking its customers for profit, but



Kindle Keyboard and Kindle Touch. I have both these models and they're still going strong. Had the Oasis offered sound, I might have been tempted to buy one.

I use my Kindle Keyboard to proofread ebooks and although it sometimes mispronounces words, like "lead mine" as "leed mine", it's useful for highlighting missing words. The Oasis is definitely overpriced, though - perhaps Amazon is trying to emulate Apple in making a luxury product for people with more money than sense.

As to Barry's assertion that "Amazon makes it nigh-on impossible to transfer books from its store to other devices", that just isn't true. You can easily convert a Kindle ebook to the EPUB file used on other devices by using a wonderful free program called Calibre (calibre-ebook

.com). If the Kindle file is DRMprotected, there's a Calibre plugin that removes the protection - provided you were the original purchaser.

Other platforms such as Kobo, Nook (in the US), iBooks and Google Play Books are still going strong. You don't even need to use a Kindle, because Amazon's software is available for most other devices.

As to Amazon Prime, if you live out in the sticks as I do, it's simply wonderful. The extras associated with it are an additional bonus and I don't blame Amazon for using them as an incentive to try the service. I'm off to buy some cat litter on Prime. It will be here tomorrow and cost a lot less than my local pet store or Tesco.

> John Chapman, Web User Forums •

The true value of the BBC licence fee

A recent news story in Web User ('Will the **BBC** launch a Netflix rival?', Issue 398) stated that the BBC licence fee



generates £5.7bn of the corporation's £7.75bn revenue. This is incorrect.

The BBC Annual Report 2014/15 lists Licence Fee income as £3.735bn for the year ending 31 March 2015 and total BBC income as £4.805bn.

I would be most grateful if you could correct this in any future printed and online versions of the piece.

Ellen Wright, TV Licensing

Bypassing restrictions is wrong

I was appalled to read your article in Issue 398, 'Beat 30-day trial restrictions', and found it highly unprofessional that a mainstream publication such as yours was encouraging readers to circumvent other companies' restrictions and providing details on how to do so. Terms such as 'loophole', 'hack' and 'dodge paywalls' should have no place in your

magazine unless they are in a news item or an article discussing how to improve security.

These media companies rely on income to

sustain their legitimate businesses, and details explaining how to bypass their payment methods are what I would



expect on dodgy forums, not from a mainstream publisher.

Adrian Gardiner, via email

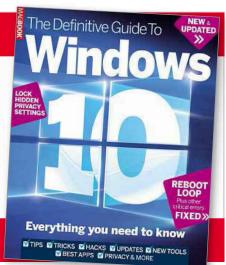
Worried about the future of Windows 10

I have fixed three friends' Windows 7 computers that were flagged as not being genuine copies after downloading a Microsoft update, even though they were. How long after the free upgrade ends will this start happening on Window 10 computers? This could result in people

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paying for a new copy, which is the same principle as ransomware.

Windows 10 is already guilty of most of the bad online practices we are warned about, such as

keylogging, controlling webcams and reversing changes you have made, along with other forms of spying. Time will tell whether something else is downloaded to our computers to change or check what is running and what we are doing with our PCs.

Paddy Monahan, via email

Which 'smart' phone should

Android or iPhone? That is the question. Following the tragic demise of my beloved Nokia, which lasted 11 years as long as the average British marriage! -I find myself faced with the daunting prospect of buying a new mobile phone.

As I understand it, BlackBerry is no longer a viable option and Windows phones are on the way out, which leaves me with two choices. I can either plump for a shiny new iPhone, which costs a fortune but is so simple that a toddler can use it (and, from what I gather, many do); or a cheaper Android handset, which isn't quite as 'smart' and will sell my soul (or at least all my personal data) to Google.

If I am to commit to a new phone partner for at least a couple of years, then I'm eager to

> make the correct choice and not rush into a proverbial 'shotgun wedding' with a network provider. I was wondering if the good people of Web

User or any of your technophile readers had any mobile recommendations for an old codger who has never owned a 'smart' phone before.

William Savage, via email

Web User says: You're in luck, William. Turn to page 20 of this issue for our comparison of the latest budget smartphones that don't sacrifice quality



ILL YOU USE THE NEW **TEXT SERVICE FOR BLOCKING NUISANCE PHONE** CALLS (see page 36)?

Absolutely! I've had several mobile calls suggesting that I've been in a car accident that wasn't my fault and would I like to claim? This is fraud! I'd love to be able to report and block these leeches that jack up our premiums!

Ian Phipps

You could just change your number every so often or use a virtual phone number instead.

Jack @imthegoldmaster

Is there really any point? We registered with something like this before and still get stupid calls for all kinds of garbage.

Gerrit Max

I have been registered with the TPS since I got my current number two years ago, and for years before that with my previous number. I still get nuisance calls.

Joanne Evans

Pointless. The original scheme was toothless, so this will be, too.

Ted Taylor

■ HAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT FACEBOOK TRACKING NON-USERS (bit.ly/ fbtracking400)?

Whether we like it or not, the list of companies tracking us is getting bigger every day.

Jedi

I'm sure we've heard this same story many times before and yet Facebook has done nothing to change its spying ways. It's about time something was done about it.

Sharon Moss

Always log out. Always clear cookies and local shared objects. Stay offline whenever possible. Get a life. Voila! No tracking or ads.

NikoBold

Facebook has no right to invade the privacy of people who have chosen not to sign over their lives to its all-seeing eyes.

The Tickler

ILL BLOCKING ADS ON MOBILE DEVICES DAMAGE THE WEB (bit.ly/blocking400)?

.....

It's a great thing, if you ask me. I'm sick of not being able to see my screen because of irritating pop-ups.

Jason Pierce

Please can all networks block ads? When you are faced with six ads on one page, they have taken it too far.

Lewis Karl Flood

Ads pay for some of the content. Can the content providers afford to do without them?

Ursula Vasey-Graham

Mobile providers should give customers discounts on their bill if they're willing to put up with ads.

Darren Flynn

/ILL MICROSOFT BUYING **LINKEDIN PUT YOU OFF USING THE SITE?**

I don't use it enough to care. You have to pay to get the properly useful features and LinkedIn still manages to get hacked.

Lee Dodason

I wouldn't use LinkedIn whether it was owned by Microsoft or not. They treat members with such contempt - how many times now have they have been hacked and passwords sold?!

Chris Cole

Windows needs a proper safe mode to block dodgy software, says Barry Collins

For Pete's sake, stop these PC conmen

t's the hottest day of the year so far and I find myself in my uncle's back bedroom, spending five (count 'em) hours rebuilding his PC. This is 49% TalkTalk's fault, 49% Microsoft's and 2%

A few weeks ago, Uncle Pete had a problem with his broadband. After the usual eight rounds with the TalkTalk call centre, the customer service team finally agreed to get BT Openreach to send out an engineer. Lo and behold, the next day an engineer from BT Openreach rings, telling Uncle Pete he's qualified for hundreds of pounds in compensation for his faulty line, but first he has to run diagnostic tests on his PC by installing some software.

It turns out, of course, that this is no BT engineer but a well-informed conman, who somehow knows that Uncle Pete is expecting a call from Openreach and has hoodwinked him into installing a Trojan that's stealing who knows what. The penny drops for Pete when our "BT engineer" completes his checks and asks him for his bank details, at which point Pete hangs up, calls me and we spend the next 10 minutes talking through how to disconnect his PC from the internet and swearing like sailors. Mainly the latter.

As I said earlier, two companies are responsible for screwing up Pete's PC and my Sunday. It might be a remarkable coincidence that the conman rang on the very day Pete was

told to expect a call from a BT engineer, but I doubt it. It's far more likely there's a mole in either the TalkTalk or BT call centres, passing on details of customers

who are expecting a call to the conmen. Given the well-publicised problems that TalkTalk's had with security in recent times, I wouldn't be surprised if it's them.

But I'm also brimming with rage at Microsoft. It's nothing short of ridiculous that, in 2016, it's even possible for someone at the other end of a telephone line to talk you into trashing

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your PC. Windows has had something called 'safe mode' for decades, but someone at the other end of now it's time for a proper Safe Mode - one that only permits the installation of software that's been

checked and approved by Microsoft.

Microsoft already has the means to do this. All the apps in the Windows 8 and 10 Stores have to be vetted by Microsoft, and the Store can cope with both 'Modern' apps and the desktop software we've been installing for years. Alas, most Desktop app makers have shunned the Store, but if Windows PCs shipped in my new Safe Mode - where only approved apps can be installed - the software makers would fall into line.

Yes, there are those advanced users who still want the ability to download any EXE file they stumble across on the internet, and Microsoft should give them the option to switch off this Safe Mode and proceed at their own risk. But most people won't need to do so. My uncle only had OpenOffice, Chrome and Windows Live Mail installed on his system - he didn't want anything more, let alone a password-stealing Trojan.

For Pete's sake, Microsoft, stop letting PCs install all and sundry. Or else my uncle's next purchase will be a Chromebook.







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