## Kick Your Neighbours Off Your Wi-Fi

## Vebusies and state of the state

Software that catches them in the act p56

SPECIAL

Ditch the

Downloads!

ISSUE

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# Why You Don't Need SOFTWARE

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And learn the secrets of ISO files

## **Syno**logy\*



Events 6017 O Update

SRM 1.1



3G/4G hotspot



Beamforming technology



Downloads & multimedia hub

Synology Router

RT1900ac



Install DS router to find and complete setup using your Android or iOS device.

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Designed for homes and offices, Synology Router RT1900ac broadcasts both 2.4 and 5 GHz spectrums for combined data transfer speeds of up to 1900 Mbps. Fine-tune traffic flow with advanced network tools like Application Layer QoS and Parental Controls. Do more with full-fledged Synology software packages, and get a revolutionary user experience with Synology Router Manager (SRM).















### Save yourself time — do it online!

hen did you last download a program from the internet?
A: less than a week ago, B: within the past month, C: earlier this year or D: I'm downloading a program as I read this waffle. If you answered with any of the above, well, you needn't have bothered (answering the question or downloading the program) because you can now do virtually everything you can do on your PC on the web.

In this special 'Ditch the Downloads' issue, we round up the best online tools for performing everyday PC tasks. Our cover feature on page 38 explains how to convert

files, remove junk from your hard drive, scan for malware and much more in your browser, while on page 44 we review the best free online photo editors and on page 52 we show you how to use online video editor WeVideo. No downloads, no installation, no fuss.

Of course, we're not suggesting you abandon software altogether, but you'll be surprised by how much you can do online.

#### **Robert Irvine**

robert\_irvine@dennis.co.uk #webuser



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**ISSUE 406** 

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# Why You Don't Need SOFTWARE

We reveal the apps and websites that do everything you need for free



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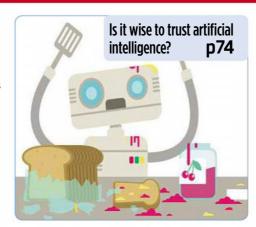
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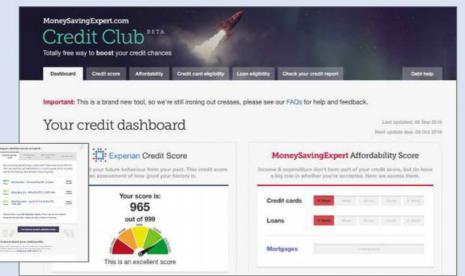
## What's New Online

## Get a free credit score and report

t's no secret that money lenders check your credit score when you apply for a loan, mortgage or credit card, but it's not the only factor they take into account. MoneySavingExpert.com's new Credit Club service hopes to demystify the process and help you keep an eye on your financial health.

Enter a few personal details, ranging from your date of birth to your income, and you'll gain access to a dashboard that not only gives you a free credit score but also rates other aspects of your finances. The

Affordability Score, for example, takes into account your income, debt and estimated expenditure. There's also a comprehensive assessment of your credit profile that uses red, amber and green faces to show you



where you have cause for celebration or concern, and a list of companies that are likely to take you on.

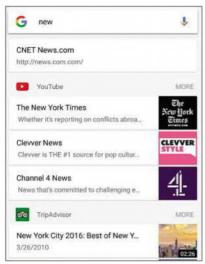
If nothing else, it's a great way to get a free credit score from Experian without signing up for a trial or having

to enter any card details. With further useful features to come, including a tool that compares your credit status with other people's, Credit Club is already an attractive proposition. bit.ly/credit406

#### Search for items in Android apps

#### bit.ly/inapps406

A new feature in Android lets you use Google's search engine to find content within the apps on your phone. Simply open the Google app, perform a search and then tap the Phone or In Apps tab at the top of the screen. Google will then switch its attention from the web to your handset,



helping you find what you're looking for in a jiffy. At the moment, the In Apps feature works with only a few apps, including Gmail, Spotify and YouTube, but Google promises to add more over the coming months. If you feel overwhelmed by the number of results you're getting, just head to Settings and tell Google which apps you want it to search.

Share video moments in Messenger

#### messenger.com

Messenger has been making a lot of noise about its chatbots recently, but it hasn't forgotten that we like to engage with real people too. Now Facebook has added a new instant video feature to its messaging service, which lets you share real-time video moments during a conversation by tapping



a new camera icon. While you're capturing your footage, the video hovers over the top right-hand part of the screen, so you and your friend can continue messaging as before. It's different to a normal voice chat (especially as the audio is switched off by default) but Facebook says the idea of the feature is to let you quickly show someone something rather than trying to explain it. The social-media giant also hopes the feature will be useful in situations where you're unable to talk live to the other person.

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

#### Explore Google's take-down data

#### bit.ly/data406

Google is regularly approached by copyright holders asking for their material to be removed from its search results. Google's updated Transparency Repost lists the offending domains and the organisations reporting problems. You can dig deeper by clicking 'Explore the data' and learn about Google's decision-making process.



#### Unravel the mysteries of the Mary Rose



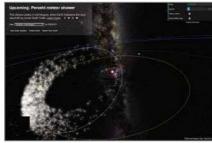
#### www.virtualtudors.org

The Mary Rose sank during the Battle of the Solent in 1545, killing all but 35 of the 500 people on board. The ship was raised in 1982, and now you can examine detailed 3D models of the remains on the Men of the Mary Rose website. This site presents 10 artefacts, including the skull of a carpenter, a leather shoe, a wooden spoon and some rigging. Use your mouse to zoom in or rotate the models, clicking the annotations to discover more.

## shower online

#### bit.ly/meteor406

stargazers will love this site.



## Watch a meteor

This amazing 3D visualisation uses orbital dynamics to show you what 11 upcoming meteor showers will look like from space. You can select one of three viewpoints, so you can see the shower from Earth, follow Earth as it orbits the Sun and view the entire Solar System. Click and drag to move around the model. You can also turn the orbits and the Milky Way on or off, and alter the speed of the animations. Playing with these controls slowed our computer down a touch, but

#### Let Amazon deliver your next meal

#### www.amazon.co.uk/restaurants

Lots of delivery companies are competing to fill your belly, and now Amazon is promising to have delicious hot food at your doorstep within an hour. So far it's limited to central London, allowing residents to use the Prime Now app to choose from up to 180 eateries including Michelin-starred restaurants.



## TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

#### @apple

This account looks empty, but it sends out sporadic, promoted tweets to followers

#### @dancingpmkin

Watch a man dancing to popular songs with a pumpkin on his face

#### @PlayStation

Read about the 4K PlayStation Pro, which is released on 10 November

#### @KathrynParsons

The Decoded co-founder has been named one of the UK's most influential people

#### @CommonsSTC

See what the Science and Tech committee has to say about the likely effects of Brexit

#### Track your Pokémon

#### www.google.co.uk/maps

A new feature in Google Maps for Android lets Pokémon Go players map their travels in search of the virtual beasts. To see the data, open the main menu, tap 'Your timeline' and select Edit, Catching Pokémon.

#### Discover how local you are

#### named.publicprofiler.org

Ever wondered whether your surname is synonymous with your local area? Enter it into this website and a colour-coded map will quickly show you where in the country your name is most popular.

#### Access your bank account with a selfie

#### www.hsbc.co.uk

Business customers at HSBC can now verify their identity using a selfie. The feature, which matches your face with the photo in your ID document, is likely to roll out to all customers in due course.

## Need to Know

## Apple launches iPhone 7 without headphone jack

#### What happened?

Apple showed off the latest versions of its smartphone, the iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus, to fans and journalists at a glitzy event in San Francisco.

Both handsets offer a host of updates and longawaited features, but much of the focus was on the disappearance of the 3.5mm headphone jack in favour of a wireless headphone connection. Apple's head of marketing, Phil Schiller, said the move showed the company's "courage to move on, to do something new, that betters all of us".

Those are strong words for a mere headphone jack, not least because owners of the new iPhone can still use wired earbuds thanks to an included adapter that plugs into the Lightning port. For those who are happy to cut the cord, Apple also announced its own set of wireless headphones, called AirPods. As well as letting you listen to music without a tanglesome cable, AirPods have a few clever features, such as an accelerometer that uses vibrations to sense when you're speaking. They can also detect when you've inserted them in your ears, and let you access Siri with a tap. Their battery life of five hours may not sound like much but it's good for a wireless headphones, and they come with a charging

case, so you can top them up on the go. At £160, however, they're not cheap.

Aside from the headphone controversy, the new iPhones have a few notable new features. The handsets look largely the same as the iPhone 6S and 6S Plus, but one worthwhile improvement is that the new models are dust- and waterresistant. What's more, the iPhone 7 comes with an improved

camera that offers image stabilisation and a wider aperture, while the iPhone 7 Plus is equipped with two lenses to improve zoom and depth of field. This means you can give portraits the lovely blurred 'bokeh' effect that was once the preserve of high-end cameras.

Apple has also upgraded the processor to a faster model, released a new operating system (iOS 10), extended battery life and dispensed with the 16GB option - the cheapest iPhone in the range now comes with 32GB of storage, while the top-end model gives you 256GB.

A new version of the Apple Watch, the Series 2, was also announced. As with the new iPhones, it looks similar to its predecessor but includes a faster processor, waterproofing and GPS. making it useful for athletes.

How will it affect you?

Apple's tweaks don't come cheap. The least expensive iPhone 7 comes with 32GB of storage and costs £599, while the iPhone 7 Plus is £719. You'll pay a further £100 for 128GB of storage, or £200 for 256GB. The new phones are more expensive than

Apple wants us to ditch wired headphones in favour of its Airpods

last year's, too, when the cheapest iPhone 6S cost £539. Apple hasn't explained the price increase, but many blame post-Brexit currency fluctuations.

Apple hopes to encourage those of us who are tangled up in headphone cables to embrace a wireless future, but we'll have to wait and see whether the public has the "courage" to ditch wired headphones. As long as they remain so expensive - and even at £160, Apple's AirPods aren't at the high end of the price range - we don't think cables will disappear any time soon.

#### What do we think?

Apple continues to make welcome, if incremental, upgrades to the iPhone. If you asked most smartphone users what they'd like, longer battery life, more built-in storage and a better camera would be top of the list, as would waterproofing for anyone who's lost a phone to an unfortunate plunge.

We're not convinced by the push towards wireless earbuds, and the £160 price is hardly an invitation to jump in and try them, but at least Apple's inclusion of an adapter means we can continue to use our wired headphones.

We're less enthused by the price, and by Apple's continued use of storage capacity to gouge more money from customers. While the increase to 32GB seems sensible, it simply doesn't cost £100 to jump up to 128GB. It's not a new complaint, but it's one we'll continue to make until Apple changes its ways.



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

#### Samsung recalls exploding Galaxy 7

#### What happened?

Samsung warned owners of its Galaxy Note 7 'phablet' to power down their devices after reports of the battery overheating and even exploding. According to Samsung, there have been "only" 35 incidents, but although the reports are relatively few and far between, they're extreme: in one case, a gadget that had been left charging in a family's Jeep completely incinerated the vehicle.

There have even been suggestions that airlines and air authorities are asking passengers not to bring the troubled Galaxy Note 7 on flights, and definitely not to charge it on the plane.

#### How will it affect you?

If you own a Galaxy Note 7, turn it off and take it back to the retailer you bought it from to exchange it. Sadly, you'll probably have to wait until the end of September to receive a replacement, as the company has to replace some 2.5 million devices, and it simply doesn't have enough at the moment. Samsung hasn't

yet revealed full details of the recall, stating only that it would honour all replacements globally, so keep an eye on its website for information about getting a replacement device. In the meantime, make sure any Galaxy Note 7 owners you know have heard the warning.

#### What do we think?

Lithium-ion batteries - the sort found in most of our mobile gadgets - are notoriously finicky, and there are stories of devices from many manufacturers becoming hot or going up in flames. This is the first case where the problem appears to lie with one specific model of phone, however, and that's bad news for Samsung. Responsibility may lie with a poorly made batch of batteries from a supplier or a fault in the phone's design, but whatever the cause, consumers are likely to remember that it was Samsung's phablet that needed to be recalled so dramatically. That's a tough message for the company's marketing department to



#### Facebook backs down over 'Napalm Girl' ban

#### happened?

Critics called on Facebook to be thoughtful in its censoring of images and other content after it took down posts containing the

photo of the 'Napalm Girl' - a famous Vietnam War photo of a young girl running after her clothing had been burned off saying it contravened its rules on child nudity.

The social network caused outrage when it deleted posts by a Norwegian newspaper editor and even the country's prime minister, with the former calling the move an "abuse of power". Facebook stood its ground, saying the picture hadn't been censored by a faulty algorithm but by a human moderator after it had been reported by a user.

#### How will it affect you?

Facebook has since reinstated the image, admitting that it's clearly of "historical importance", so if you've shared it in the past, your post should be reinstated automatically.

The site attracted criticism recently after laying off its team of 'editors', who selected trending stories and wrote headlines describing the articles, in favour of using algorithms to highlight

trending content. This caused immediate chaos as the trending list was flooded with gossip and

conspiracy theories.

These scandals may lead Facebook to take greater responsibility for its editorial decisions. Founder Mark Zuckerberg has said that Facebook is a "tech company, not a media company", but such controversy may force him to rethink this view.

#### What do we think?

It's incredible not only that Facebook staff made this decision, but that the company stuck stubbornly by it for so long. The image is so well known that we're surprised the deletion wasn't overturned quickly and quietly. If Facebook can't get that right, how can we trust it to decide what other information we're allowed to see. whether it's from friends and family or international news organisations? It's a guestion Facebook users should keep in mind as the site becomes more important as



#### EE boosts 4G speed — but only for new phones

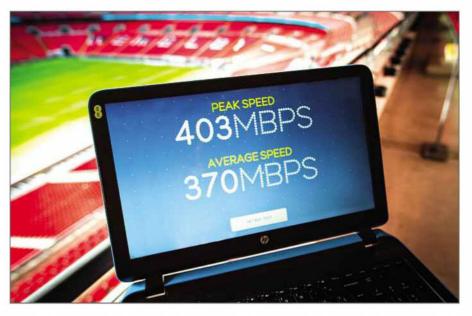
#### What happened?

EE has upgraded its 4G network to offer much faster speeds - but only for some smartphone users. Its new Cat 9 network should provide a speed bump for all devices that connect to its service, but only customers with an HTC M10, Samsung Galaxy S7 or S7 Edge or a Samsung Galaxy Note 7 (see story on page 9) will receive the full benefit.

"We've invested in our network to ensure that all our customers get the most out of the amazing smartphones they have, and can keep up with the highest speeds that the latest devices offer," said EE CEO Marc Allera.

The maximum speed for a Cat 9 device is 450Mbps, according to EE, and the HTC M10 recently achieved a real-world speed of over 360Mbps on the EE network at Wembley Stadium. HTC claimed this was the fastest speed customers could achieve in the UK, and the equal of anywhere else in the world.

EE switched on its '4G+' network a couple of years ago to support Cat 6 devices. This uses two blocks of the mobile spectrum, and is available in more than 150 towns and cities across the UK. The next phase will add support for Cat 9 devices by enabling access to a third block of spectrum for high-speed 4G services. The upgrade will roll out to more than 500 sites across these towns and cities by the end of 2017.



#### How will it affect you?

The upgraded network is currently available in the area around Wembley Stadium, and more sites in central and east London are expected to go live later this year, including Tech City in east London. The high-speed network should reach Manchester and Birmingham some time in 2017. This means that if you live outside the capital, you'll have to wait a bit longer for super-fast 4G, assuming it reaches vou at all - some rural areas still aren't covered by EE's network.

#### What do we think?

A mobile speed of 450Mbps sounds amazing, even if you're unlikely to reach anywhere near that speed in practice. Still, it's good that EE is continuing to develop its technology to give customers a faster online experience, even if it's currently limited to parts of London and the latest phones. In related news, EE has outlined an 'action plan' to improve its customer service, which we think is probably more important to most of its users than incredible but unattainable data speeds.



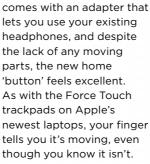
#### FIRST LOOK

#### iPhone 7 bit.ly/iphone406

After months of rumours, the iPhone 7 has finally arrived - see our lead news story on page 8. This time, Apple has been surprisingly bold with the design, doing away with both the iPhone's 3.5mm headphone jack and its physical home button. We're still a little shocked that Apple has removed the headphone socket, but there are some benefits to its absence, such as freeing up

space for an additional loudspeaker on the bottom of the device.

Fear not, though, because the device



High-end Android phones have been crowing about their waterproofing for a few years, but the iPhone 7 is Apple's first device that is waterproof to IP67 standard. That's not as good as the latest Sonv

Xperia XZ, which achieved the impressive ranking of IP68, but it's still good enough to stop your phone getting damaged if it gets wet, which is very welcome news.

The cameras on both the iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus are big steps forward. The iPhone 7 now offers optical image stablisation, which was previously available only on the Plus version. The iPhone 7 Plus, meanwhile, is equipped with two lenses: a wide-angle lens and a 56mm telephoto lens. Outwardly, the design hasn't changed much since the iPhone 6S and 6S Plus, but the antennas are much less obvious in the new models. Prices start at £599 for a 32GB iPhone 7 and £719 for an iPhone 7 Plus. Apple has finally dropped the 16GB model from the flagship iPhone range.





#### WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

#### Is Google going to shame unsecure websites?

From next year, Google Chrome will start warning web users that sites they visit are "not secure" if they don't use HTTPS encryption. Websites that transmit passwords or credit card details have until 2017 to make the move to the secure protocol, which encrypts communications between vour browser and internet sites.



"Beginning in January 2017 (Chrome 56), we'll mark HTTP sites that transmit passwords or credit cards as nonsecure, as part of a long-term plan to mark all HTTP sites as non-secure," noted Emily Schechter of the Chrome security team, in a blog post (bit.ly/ secure 406).

However, security analyst Graham Cluley said that not only could the increased warnings cause trouble, the terminology could too. "In its warning it says "Not secure'," he wrote in a blog post (bit.ly/cluley406). "That's not really the right terminology. What they really mean is 'Not encrypted'."

The use of HTTPS doesn't mean the site is secure in other ways, he noted. "It would be a mistake, for instance, to find ourselves back in the bad old days when some users believed that the mere existence of a padlock in the browser

bar meant that the site could be trusted and considered legitimate, when it was perfectly possible for criminals to set up a website with HTTPS if they wished to compromise a legitimate website that was using web encryption properly."

.....

#### LIKELIHOOD RATING **JJJJ**

We welcome Google's focus on web security, although - as Graham Cluley points out - the use of HTTPS doesn't mean a site is completely safe to use. Websites clearly have a lot of work to do before the 2017 deadline - indeed, Google's own Chromium blog, which it used to make the announcement, is currently unencrypted!

#### What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

#### Shake me like a Polaroid dice kit bit.ly/shake406 | From £8

Whether you're playing Monopoly or trying to make a decision about your life, you no longer need to throw a real dice and risk it bouncing off the table and on to



the floor. This easy-to-assemble kit lets you create your own electronic dice that generates a random number in lights when you shake it. You'll need a soldering iron to put it together but, once you've done that, you can slip the dice into your pocket to take with you everywhere. The project's creator has already quadrupled his funding target of £100.

## WEBOMETER

#### **WE LIKE...**

#### Three expands its free-roaming service

Three has added 24 destinations to its Feel at Home service, which lets you make calls, send

texts and use the web on your phone at no extra cost while abroad. New countries include Croatia, Germany and Portugal, bringing the total to 42.



#### Airbnb introduces anti-racism policy

Online accommodation site Airbnb has introduced an anti-discrimination policy after reports that black people are less likely to be offered rooms through the service. The policy reduces the prominence of



photos and asks hosts to sign an agreement.

#### WE DON'T LIKE...

#### Social media makes children feel ugly

A government study has found that children who use social media are unhappier with their appearance than those who don't. The survey of 10- to 15-year-olds found that only 53% of young Facebook and Twitter users were



#### Twitter turns on read receipts by default

Twitter has annoyed users by introducing read receipts for direct messages, making it hard to pretend you haven't seen unwelcome communications. You can turn the feature off on the 'Security and privacy' page in

your Settings.



## Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

#### Mac spyware uncovered and patched

Apple has issued an urgent security update for Mac computers and laptops running OS X El Capitan and Yosemite after the discovery of a vulnerability that could transform devices into spying tools.

The hack has been described as the "most sophisticated spyware" ever seen and is activated when a user clicks on a malicious link in the Safari web browser. This link triggers spyware called Pegasus to start running, which in turn uses a flaw in the machine's OS X software to run two other exploits. These allow access to the computer's kernel. which lets the criminal view everything, from the user's bank details to their location and more.

Apple recommends that all users of Macs running on El Capitan or Yosemite install the update - Security Update 2016-001 for El Capitan and Security Update 2016-005 for Yosemite - as soon as they can. The Safari browser has also been patched to stop criminals using it as a means of instigating the hack. The flaw was discovered by Lookout and Citizen Lab. bit.ly/apple406

#### **68 million Dropbox logins** leaked online

The usernames and passwords of more than 68 million Dropbox customers have been leaked after a four-yearold hack, it has emerged. The stolen credentials date back to mid-2012, and Dropbox acknowledged last week that it was forcing some

customers to reset their passwords if they haven't changed them since then.

Data-breach notification service Leakbase told tech news website Motherboard (motherboard.vice.com) that it had obtained four 5GB files filled with 68,680,741 Dropbox users' credentials. Dropbox confirmed to our sister website IT Pro (www.itpro.co.uk) that more than 60 million accounts have been affected - around twothirds of the company's total users in 2012. "We can confirm that the scope of the password reset we completed last week did protect all impacted users," said Dropbox's head of trust and security, Patrick Heim, in a statement. "Our analysis confirms that the credentials are user email addresses with hashed and salted [encrypted] passwords that were obtained prior to mid-2012."

bit.ly/dropbox406

#### Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Richard Lack, **Director of Sales at** identity-management firm Gigya (www.gigya.com)



Is it really safe to use a selfie instead of a password, as HSBC is doing (see What's New Online, page 7)? Rachel Lyons, Twitter

UK banks have seen some extraordinary tech developments in the past two years, and HSBC has

been in the vanguard. It seems that the penny has finally dropped, and banks are now competing to find ways of identifying their customers securely without the frustration of complicated passwords and secret answers.

Biometric identification is seen as a higher standard for verifying identity. Not only does it get round the problem of forgetfulness, which plagues passwords, it's more secure too. Users seem to agree: 80% of consumers believe biometric authentication is more secure than usernames and passwords, which often end up on Post-It notes.

Critics argue, wrongly, that authentication using selfies

Not only does biometric identification get round the problem of forgetfulness, it's more secure too 🥊

is a gimmick and somehow less secure. In fact, it's a brilliant application of wellproven facial-recognition technology that has been around for decades.

Nevertheless, no form of biometric security is foolproof and each has its weaknesses. Iris scanning, which Samsung recently announced would be built into new devices, can be fooled simply by holding up a photo of the user, which is why Samsung asks users to blink when signing in. Fingerprint verification

has been hacked using Play-Doh, and there have been numerous accounts of phones being unlocked while their owners are asleep or incapacitated by alcohol.

Over the next few years we can expect to see this technology creep into all handsets, laptops, desktop PCs and even vehicles, but although biometrics offer a powerful form of authentication, it's essential that people understand the importance of protecting their biometric credentials.



3 year warranty



just gaming.











## Best New Websites

#### Site of the Fortnight

RELAUNCH

#### Lego Shop

#### shop.lego.com

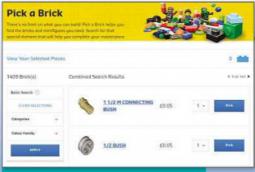
Lego has rebuilt its online store brick by brick to make it easier to browse and buy its ever-expanding range of products, and the result is as friendly, fun and colourful as you'd expect. You can now type an asterisk (\*) in the search box to see everything Lego has to offer; refine the results using attributes including theme, interest, price and piece count; and look up exclusive and hard-to-find sets. The product pages provide plenty of info, images and reviews, and we like that you can click a link to find and download building instructions. Throw in PayPal payments for faster purchases and you have a perfectly constructed site.

**Our rating** 





**SETS** Browse sets by theme and interest, from **Angry Birds to Technic and** hard-to-find



#### **BRICKS**

You can browse new bricks, buy individual pieces and see the latest special offers







At the beginning of the year, a newspaper photo of a drunken New Year's Eve in Manchester attracted comparisons to a work of art (bit.ly/manc406). This new website has a similar concept, using artificial intelligence to pair contemporary news images with paintings from the Tate's extensive archive. Linked live to a current Tate exhibit, it looks for objects, faces, composition and context in the photos to show one suggested match after another. Visit the gallery to see the best matches it's found, providing information about the images and showing the data the AI has used to draw its conclusions. It's an ingenious and fascinating project.

**Our rating** 





**LOTTERY** 

#### Freemoji Lottery

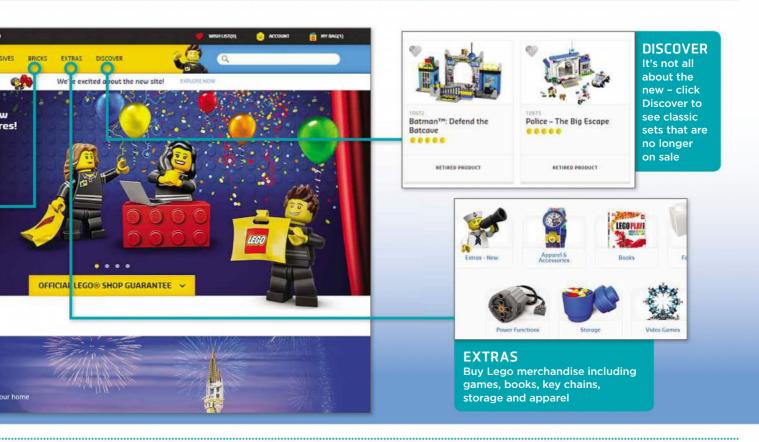
#### freemojilottery.com

Since the National Lottery made it harder to hit the jackpot (and began charging more for a ticket), we've been looking elsewhere for a shortcut to easy money. Freemoji has been created by the team behind Free Postcode Lottery, and although the prize pot can be as small as \$20 (about £15), it costs nothing to enter and requires only that you select a combination of five emoji and check the daily draws to see if you've won. It's a form of gambling we can approve of, given the winnings are paid for by advertisers. The site promises the pot of cash will grow as more people sign up.

Our rating



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





HISTORY

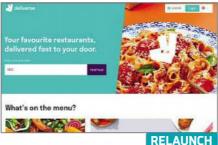
#### **Great Fire of London**

#### www.fireoflondon.org.uk

Launched to coincide with the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London, this site takes you on a fact-packed journey through each stage of the blaze, starting with the capital's fire-prone past and ending with the lessons learned. Interactive maps let you flip from the past to the present day to see how the fire spread while reading interesting articles on topics such as the methods of tackling the inferno and the locations of 'fire posts'. To engage youngsters, there's a beautifully illustrated and narrated game, which brings the fire to life, as well as maps that can be used in Minecraft.

Our rating





**FOOD** 

#### Deliveroo

#### deliveroo.co.uk

When you're hungry, the last thing you want is to waste eating time arranging a takeaway, so Deliveroo has streamlined its ordering process so you can enter your postcode, choose a local restaurant and select the dishes you want in a few quick clicks. All the ordering takes place on a single page that lets you easily build up your basket, remove items and add a driver tip. Checkout is also a breeze, with Deliveroo promising to deliver within around half an hour. We particularly like that you can refine your search by criteria such as healthy eateries and those that deliver beer.

Our rating





CINEMA

#### **Vue Cinemas**

#### www.myvue.com

Many movie goers love getting straight to the action yet Vue Cinemas appears to prefer the build-up. Rather than providing an at-a-glance view of the day's film times for a chosen cinema, its revamped site forces you to click individual movies, making it more difficult to see what's on during a specific period. The designers have also left you in the dark by stripping away user ratings and reviews, although film pages include trailers, interviews, clips and reviews. On the plus side, buying tickets is now easier using the handy Quick Book facility and the site is simpler to use on mobile.

Our rating







## WebUser

How can I mute the annoying adverts when listening to music on Spotify?

A Page 46, Issue 368



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NEW

## 學經別因 Pyongyang NEW

**BOOKS** 



#### **Cycle Republic**

**CYCLING** 

Whether you've been inspired by the great buyer's guides and how-tos.

#### www.cyclerepublic.com

success of Team GB's cyclists or you're just looking to shed a few pounds, this new website from the high-street bike specialist should steer you in the right direction. It offers a huge range of cycles from names including Basso and Wiggins, which you can filter by brand, category, price, gender and more. The product pages offer detailed overviews and specifications and, depending on the bike, you may be able to see a 360-degree photo. The site is on board with the cycle-to-work scheme and we like that the blog is building nicely with

#### Zed

#### www.zedbooks.net

Zed was established in 1976 as the largest publishing collective in the world. It releases books written by marginalised groups and individuals, and its seriousminded website gives you a strong flavour of what's on offer. Extracts from Zed's titles take centre stage, making the shop almost feel secondary, but this is no bad thing given the quality of the posts, which range from the attempted Turkish coup to life in North Korea. The words do the talking on the simply laid-out pages and if you're interested in buying books, you'll like the thorough explanations that include an overview, author biog, table of contents, reviews and more.

Our rating

#### Malt Whisky Trail maltwhiskytrail.com

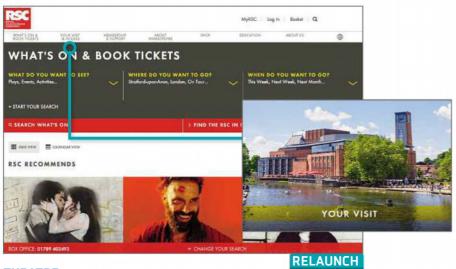
As if to prove Scotch whisky isn't all tartan and bagpipes, the Malt Whisky Trail is encouraging drinkers to raise their glass to all that Speyside has to offer. Aside from detailing the seven distilleries forming the area's beating heart, the site asks what you're hoping to get from your trip and recommends venues and activities. There are nice touches such as a full history of malt whisky production and the ability to create an itinerary, but it's all a bit confusing. Navigation is poor so you stumble across features rather than being pointed to them and the pages force you to read lots of text to find out what the trail has to offer.

Our rating



Our rating





#### Royal Shakespeare Company

#### www.rsc.org.uk

The RSC's revamped site looks more impressive than ever. For the past two years, the theatre company has been hauling its digital offering into the modern age, unveiling a smart, image-led design that works perfectly on both desktop and mobile. Its excellent search engine lets you input the name of a play, and where and when you'd like to see it. You can then click an entry in the results to discover more about the production and book tickets. There's lots of information about the main venue in Stratford-upon-Avon, including advice about planning your visit, together with an overview of the Bard and his plays, and behind-the-scenes blogs.

Our rating





MUSIC

#### **Orchestras Live**

#### www.orchestraslive.org.uk

Orchestras Live aims to fill a musical gap by promoting classical concerts outside London, "particularly in culturally underserved areas of England". Its website gets the message across by clearly showcasing where events are taking place. You can search for concerts by region, venue and orchestra, and there's a handy calendar with key dates highlighted. The entries give you all the details you need, although you can't book directly - you have to follow the link to the venue's website. Still, there are clear explanations about the work the charity carries out and lots of up-to-date news about its latest initiatives.

Our rating



## **Build a Better Site**

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

#### Top Tips of the Fortnight

#### Keep up with your AdSense earnings

It's easy to place AdSense (bit.ly/ adsense406) adverts on your site to help cover the cost of hosting but keeping track of your earnings on the AdSense website can be frustrating. It takes several clicks to get past all the login screens and this can feel like a waste of time if you're not earning very much. Instead, you can keep a constant eye on your earnings with Auburn (bit.ly/auburn406). This handy tool pops up every time you earn some money, and shows you how much you've earned over the previous 28 days.

#### Build a mobile app

Creating a mobile app sounds like a daunting prospect but Yappi (yappi.me) has developed a way of making it simple. Its drag-anddrop app-building tool lets you build a mobile app without any



knowledge of coding, and comes with a broad range of plug-in tools you can add, from guizzes and galleries to shops and appointment-booking systems. You can develop and preview your app for free and only need to pay when you publish it. Prices start from £5 per year for an Android app.

#### **Deal of the Fortnight**

123 Reg (www.123-reg.co.uk) is offering '.online' domain names for £1.19 for the first year, which is 96% off its usual price.

#### Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Eugene Molari, Project Manager, Wholegrain Digital (www.wholegraindigital.com)



What's the best way to learn WordPress? Should I use WordPress.com, just plunge in with a web host or run it on my own PC?

David Stevens, via email

WordPress.com offers a free plan and it gets you up and running in no time, but you're limited to its selection of themes and plugins. Running WordPress on your PC is awesome because it's super fast, the code is very easy to access and you can set up any theme and plugins you like, but it is offline so no-one will see it. Plunging in with a webhost is the real McCoy and you'll have to learn how to deal with all aspects of your website: design, functionality, SEO, security, cache, backups and maintenance. Have fun!

MINI WORKSHOP | Create temporary WordPress logins

Temporary Login Without Password: bit.ly/login406 | 🕒 5 mins | Hosted WordPress

Sometimes you need to give someone access to the Admin area of your WordPress site so they can make adjustments and fixes. Temporary Login Without Password is a handy plugin for password-free limited access



From your WordPress Dashboard, click Plugins, then Add New. 🚹 Type temporary login into the search box 2 and click the Install Now button when the add-on appears. Once it's installed, click the Activate button 13 to finish the process.



To add a new temporary login, click users, Temporary Logins, 🗓 then the Create New button. 2 Fill in the email address (which will be the username), Role (depending on what level of access you want to give them) and Expiry length, B which can range from one hour to one month. Click Submit. 4



A temporary link that you can send to the user is displayed. I If you need to, you can either disable 2 or delete 3 an account. If you need to send the link again at a later date, click the link icon. 4







We test and compare the latest products

## Huawei MediaPad M3

Alan Martin takes a look at Huawei's rival to the iPad Mini



uawei, it may surprise you to discover, is not only a smartphone manufacturer; it also makes Windows and Android tablets. However, with such stiff competition from market leaders, including Apple and Amazon, it has never managed to break into the big time. But if any product deserved to break that cycle, it's this one.

#### **Build and screen**

The MediaPad 3 certainly looks the part and it bears

more than a passing resemblance to the iPad Mini 4. If it weren't for the small Huawei logo in the top-left corner and the oval Home button, you'd be hard pushed to tell them apart. While this loses the MediaPad 3 points for originality, it's far from a

major drawback.

Turning over the device reveals a gently curved metal back that feels great to hold. It's smooth without being slippery and weighs just 320g, so it's comfortable for one-handed browsing.

Huawei has squeezed in

It's great to handle, small enough to carry around and its premium features make it stand out from the crowd

more than the average selection of features, including 4G internet connectivity and the ability to make phone calls. All you need to do is add a SIM card.

While even mid-range smartphones routinely offer vibrant, bright screens with near-perfect colour accuracy, tablets have been known to lag behind in this regard. But that's not the case with the Huawei MediaPad 3. It has a 2,560 x 1,600 pixels LED LCD display, which is clear and sharp, and its brightness rivals the best smartphones and is capable of covering 94% of the colours in the sRGB standard, which means that photographs, websites, games and movies all look incredibly vibrant. The contrast ratio is as good as it gets on this type of screen and ensures that visuals have plenty of impact and punch.

In fact, the only tablet we've seen with notably better screen quality is Samsung's Galaxy Tab S2, which uses AMOLED technology.

#### Performance and features

Behind the excellent screen, there's plenty of grunt, with a 2.3GHz octa-core Kirin 950 processor running the show (the same chipset that powers the 6in Huawei Mate 8 smartphone) and 4GB of RAM. There's a generous 32GB of internal storage for your apps and games, and a microSD slot for expanding this further.



This is a strong set of specifications and, in day-today use (reading, web browsing and streaming video), the MediaPad 3 performs like a dream.

It feels extremely speedy and responsive, and is easily capable of multitasking and switching between apps at breakneck speed. To be fair, that's the case with most Android devices when they're new out of the box, but the qualities on show here should offer some good padding from the eventual and inevitable slowdown that occurs over time and use.

All this makes for a tablet that's a delight to use: it's great to handle, small enough to carry around and has premium features that make it stand out from the crowd.

In addition to 4G capability, there's a fingerprint reader beneath the home button, and the Harman Kardon speakers on both the top and bottom edges provide a surprisingly good sound, offering a richer tone and more bass than you'd expect from such a tiny frame.

#### The bad news

To say that nothing fazes the MediaPad M3, however, wouldn't be true, and it falls noticeably short when playing games. It's the high resolution of the screen that's to blame, because it won't allow the most demanding games to play entirely smoothly.

Huawei's tablet achieved only 6.4fps in the GFXBench GL 3 Manhattan onscreen benchmark, which is run at



f If you use the device as a phone, it's unlikely to last a full day unless you're extremely frugal with it

the screen's native resolution. This test is deliberately intense and the MediaPad 3 isn't sold primarily as a gaming device, but it still trails a long way behind the Galaxy Tab S2 8.0, which achieved 10fps in this benchmark.

The camera is something of a weak spot, too. Both the front and back cameras are 8-megapixel affairs, and although the photographs they capture are acceptable, you'd almost certainly be better off using your phone or a dedicated camera. That said, who buys a tablet for its photographic capabilities?

A much more important consideration is the battery life but, sadly, this was also disappointing. Despite packing a large 5,100mAhcapacity battery, the M3 lasted only 8hrs 48mins in our standard tests, carried out in Airplane mode and with the

screen set to a standard brightness. If you use the device as a phone, it's unlikely to last a full day unless you're extremely frugal with it.

In the context of other tablets, the battery life isn't that terrible. It has more staying power than the now-discontinued but much-loved Hudl 2 (6hrs 58mins) and the Acer Iconia Tab 10 (6hrs 26mins).

Compared with the very best on the market, however, such as the iPad mini 4 and the Samsung Galaxy Tab S2 8.0, which both lasted considerably longer than ten hours in this test, it's more than a little disappointing.

We'd be more forgiving if the M3 was significantly cheaper than its rivals, but we'd rather pay a bit more for the iPad Mini 4. and the Galaxy Tab S2 8.0 is a better performer for less money.

#### PRODUCT INFO

#### Huawei MediaPad M3

Price: £292, Wi-Fi version; £334, 4G version Buy from: www.vmall.eu

#### **SPECIFICATIONS**

- 8.4in touchscreen
- = 2,560 x 1,600 pixels resolution
- 2.3GHz octa-core Kirin processor
- 32GB-capacity flash drive
- microSD expansion slot
- = 8MP rear camera
- = 8MP front camera
- 4G (optional)
- 802.11ac Wi-Fi
- Stereo speakers
- 5,100mAh battery
- 123 x 123 x 5mm
- = 320g

#### FOR

- ✓ Beautifully made
- ✓ Superb screen
- ✓ Surprisingly good speakers

#### AGAINST

X Struggles with demanding games X Battery life only mediocre

#### **BEST ALL-ROUNDER**

Apple iPad Mini 4, from £319 bit.ly/ipad406



#### **FASTER, AND BETTER VALUE**

Samsung Galaxy Tab S2 8.0, from £269 bit.ly/samsung406



#### OUR VERDICT

The Huawei MediaPad 3 has a lot going for it. It looks stylish, it's comfortable to hold, it has a superb screen and it provides decent performance.

But it's not good enough to justify its comparatively high price of £292, which is only slightly cheaper than the iPad Mini 4 and pricier than the Samsung Galaxy

Tab S2 8.0. And that's just the cost of the most basic model in the range. The 4G 32GB version costs £334, as does the 64GB Wi-Fi model. while the 64GB LTE will set vou back £376.

While the speaker quality is surprisingly pleasing, the cameras and battery life are nothing special. No matter how good the MediaPad 3's

......

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

plus points - and they certainly are good - it can't match the iPad Mini 4's overall performance and it doesn't beat the Samsung model for outright value.

## Kobo Aura One

Nathan Spendelow looks at one of the strongest Kindle rivals we've seen in years

mazon's new Kindles might not command the headlines as they once did, but the retailer continues to sell e-readers by the bucketload and is more dominant in the sector than ever

Kobo, however, is keeping up the fight and its latest offering, the Aura One, is a premium device with a generous 7.8in screen that has its sights set firmly on Amazon's Kindle Voyage and Kindle Oasis.

With such a large screen, the Kobo is closer in size to a small tablet like the iPad Mini 4 than a standard e-reader. This has the advantage of fitting more words per page, providing a less cramped read. On the other hand, it's

#### PRODUCT INFO

#### Kobo Aura One

Price: £190 Buy from: store.kobobooks.com

#### **SPECIFICATIONS**

- 7.8in E-Ink Carta screen
- **1,872i** x 1,404 resolution (300ppi)
- 8GB storage
- = 802.11n Wi-Fi
- Micro USB
- Up to one month battery life
- 195 x 139 x 6.9mm
- = 230g

#### FOR

- Great for reading in bed
- ✓ Waterproof
- Supports many file formats

#### **AGAINST**

- X Not as many books as Amazon X No microSD slot
- **X** Expensive

significantly more cumbersome than the smaller 6in Kindles and is heavy for an e-reader at 230g.

#### Display and features

There's no debating the quality of the Aura One's 1,872 x 1,404 resolution display. With a pixel density of 300ppi (pixels per inch), it matches the Kindle Voyage and Oasis, which is as sharp as E Ink displays get.

It holds some key advantages over its rivals, too. For starters, it has an ambient light sensor that automatically tunes the light's brightness to match your current lighting conditions. In Amazon's range of e-readers, only the Kindle Voyage has this feature, but the Aura One goes one better with its "ComfortLight Pro" filter, which gets rid of blue light in a bid to improve sleep quality for anyone who likes a good read just before bed.

If that wasn't enough, the device is also waterproof, so you can read in the bath and not worry about it suffering a dunking.

The Aura One's only major shortcoming is that it doesn't have a microSD card slot. However, its 8GB of internal storage should be enough for all but the most ardent of ebook hoarders.

Battery life, meanwhile, is rated at "up to one month" a figure that will vary depending on how long you spend reading each day and the brightness setting used for the front light.

#### User interface and content

Much like Amazon's devices, the Kobo's interface is



extremely easy to use. The homepage does a great job of displaying recent activity and providing access to the Kobo book store, and the Aura One gives you plenty of choice when it comes to font types and sizes when you're reading.

Kobo's bookstore doesn't have the breadth of choice

that Amazon's does, but the Aura One supports a greater variety of file formats. What's more, Kobo's library lending programme means you can also use your Aura One to borrow ebooks straight from your own public library for free, as long as you have a library card.

#### **OUR VERDICT**

The Kobo Aura One may have its downsides but it's still one of the best Kindle competitors we've come across in recent years. Its ComfortLight Pro option goes one better than the Kindle Voyage's ambient light sensor, while its waterproof protection means you can read in more places without risking damage to the unit.

Its broad file support makes it more flexible than



a Kindle, although Amazon still has the edge when it comes to pricing and overall range.

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★☆☆

At £190, the Kobo Aura One isn't cheap, but if you want a book-sized e-reader for reading at night, it's worth the extra investment.

......





## THIN STEALTH TECHNOLOGY

SLIMMEST 17" GAMING NOTEBOOK

## 4572 Stealth Pro



WINDOWS 10 HOME / WINDOWS 10 PRO | GTX 970M / GTX 965M / GTX 960M 4K BUILT-IN +100% ADOBE RGB (OPTIONAL) | IPS LEVEL PANEL (OPTIONAL) NVMe M.2 SSD by PCIe GEN3 X4 | SHIFT TECHNOLOGY | COOLER BOOST 3 ESS SABRE HIFI | NAHIMIC | DYNAUDIO | TRUE COLOR TECHNOLOGY | STEELSERIES KEYBOARD | SILVER LINING PRINT | KILLER DOUBLESHOT PRO KILLER SHIELD | XSPLIT GAMECASTER | USB3.1

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#### **HARDWARE**

#### **E-READER**

#### Amazon Kindle (2016)

£69.99 from www.amazon.co.uk Date tested: August 2016

The highly capable Kindle is lightweight, great for reading and matches its rivals for usability and content. Despite the lack of a front light, it remains the best e-reader you can buy for less than £100.

#### **KEY SPECS**

6in E Ink Pearl screen ■ 800 x 600 pixels resolution, 167 ppi ■ Optical touchscreen ■ 4GB storage ■ 160 x 115 x 9.1mm ■ 161g ■ No front light ■ £10 less with Amazon Special Offers ■ Up to four weeks battery life (if used 30 minutes per day)

#### **BUDGET SMARTPHONE**

#### **Motorola Moto G4**

£159 from www.amazon.co.uk Date tested: August 2016

This fantastic smartphone offers better features and performance than any other phone of this price. Its screen is sharp and bright, and its cameras are excellent. Battery life is well above average, too.

#### **KEY SPECS**

5.5in screen ■ Octa-core 1.5GHz processor ■ 16GB of storage. expandable by 128GB ■ Android 6.0.1 Marshmallow ■ 13-megapixel rear camera, 5-megapixel front camera ■ 1,980 x 1,080 pixels resolution = 3,000mAh battery = 155g

#### **MEDIA STREAMER**

#### Roku 3

£83.98 from www.very.co.uk Date tested: August 2016



The Roku 3 has all the best elements of the previous models and is as close to a perfect TV-streaming device as you'll find. It offers all the terrestrial catch-up services and a choice of Netflix, Amazon Video, Google Play and Sky services.

#### **KEY SPECS**

HDMI video output ■ 1 X USB 3 port ■ 512MB internal storage with microSD slot ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi and Ethernet connectivity

- Plex and UPnP streaming servers 89 x 89 x 25mm 142g
- One-year return-to-base warranty

#### **WINDOWS 10 PC**

#### Palicomp AMD Avenger

£500 from www.palicomp.co.uk Date tested: June 2016

The Palicomp AMD Avenger's mediumsized case still provides plenty of room to upgrade. Its carefully chosen components provide good performance, especially when playing games.

#### **KEY SPECS**

Quad-core 4.5GHz AMD Athlon X4 880K processor ■ 8GB of memory ■ 1TB hard drive, 240GB SSD ■ 2 X USB 2 ports, 3 x USB 3 ports = Ethernet = 485 x 420 x 235mm = Threeyears return-to-base warranty

#### **MULTIFUNCTION PRINTER**

#### Canon Pixma MG5750

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



The MG5750 is an excellent all-rounder, producing top-quality 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.

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.currys.co.uk Date tested: April 2016



The Cloudbook 14 is as good a laptop as you'll get for less than £200. It's not particularly fast and doesn't have a brilliant display, but it's fantastic value, especially because it includes a year's subscription to Office 365 Personal.

#### **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

#### **SOFTWARE & SERVICES**

#### **INTERNET SECURITY**

#### Kaspersky Internet Security 2017

£19.95 from bit.ly/kaspersky2017 Date tested: August 2016

Kaspersky is rock solid at protecting your PC from the worst of the web, and has come top in eight of our most recent tests, blocking all malware with its robust defences. Click the link above to save £15.04 on the software (normal price £34.99).



#### **KEY FEATURES**

Antivirus and firewall tools ■ Protects online shopping and banking ■ Identity and privacy tools ■ Dangerous-website alerts ■ New software updater ■ Secure-connection VPN ■ Advanced ad-blocking system ■ 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

Xara Web Designer 11 is a great tool for anyone who wants a good-looking website without having to use HTML

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**

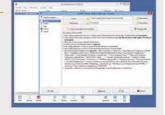
90+ templates ■ WYSIWYG design ■ Create responsive websites = Embed codes = Add HTML = Online editing = FTP uploader ■ Hosting (requires registration) ■ Browser preview (Chrome, Firefox, IE, Opera)

#### **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**

£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**

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

Premiere Elements' 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**

#### **DATA RECOVERY**

## Disk Drill 2 for Windows

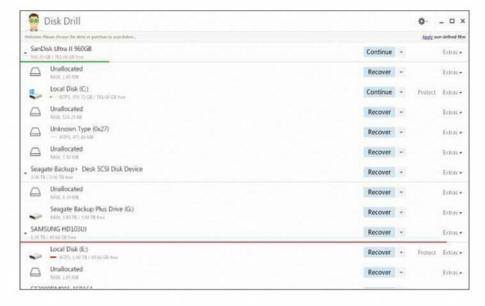
#### bit.ly/dd406

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 15.7MB

If you accidentally delete a file or folder from your PC, it should end up in the Recycle Bin where it can be quickly fished out. But if it doesn't, or if you have emptied the bin without realising it contained something important, you may still be able to rescue the file using Disk Drill.

Best known as a data-recovery tool for Macs, this relatively new free Windows version rescues deleted files from internal and external hard drives, USB sticks and memory cards. It works with all the major file systems, including FAT, exFAT, EXT4 and NTFS.





Disk Drill provides an intuitive interface with no advanced or complicated options to worry about, which makes it very easy to use. You can run a quick or a deep scan, undelete protected data and perform a universal partition search. Disk Drill's recovery vault keeps a record of all found files, so you can quickly recover any of them in the future.

The latest version of the program expands the range of files that you can recover using a deep scan, and offers more choices when you're restoring lost

partitions. The speed of the software has been improved (although it's still quite slow) and a new Hex preview mode does a better job of verifying recoverable data.

However, you should note that the free version of Disk Drill does have one major restriction, which is that it can only recover a maximum of two gigabytes (2GB) worth of files. That should suffice in an emergency, but it won't be enough for regular use. Upgrading to the Pro version currently costs \$49 (£37.40).

#### Ö

#### MINI WORKSHOP | Recover lost data using Disk Drill



Disk Drill's interface displays all the drives contained in or connected to your PC, along with the size and amount of available space for each one. Click the small arrow to the left of a drive to reveal its partitions and file format. Click the Recover button for a drive to search for any recoverable content on it.



The arrow next to the Recover button lets you choose a specific recovery method (quick or full, for example). The Extras menu lets you back up a drive to a recoverable disk image and detach an existing image. Scanning a chosen drive takes a while, but you can cancel or pause the process at any time.



Recoverable items are displayed in the main window. You can filter the results by type 2 or search for something by name. Click the magnifying glass icon 4 next to an item to preview it. Select the items you want to restore, then click the Recover button and Disk Drill will retrieve your lost files.

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



#### **INSTALLER HELPER**

#### Unchecky

unchecky.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 1.4MB

Unchecky has been around for a while, but this is its first full, stable release. This useful program stops you accidentally installing the bundled adware and toolbars often included with free software. It runs silently in the background and automatically deselects junk and unwanted 'offers' in installers. Unchecky isn't perfect, but it mostly does a very good job. This build gains support for more programs, improves support for other applications and fixes known bugs.



#### **BACKUP TOOL**

#### Paragon Backup and Recovery 16

bit.ly/paragon406

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 92MB

This commercial backup program usually costs \$39.95 (£29.90), but is entirely free if you download it before 1 November, Create an account and you'll be emailed a free licence. The easy-to-use software backs up files and folders, partitions or entire systems; offers lots of advanced features that you wouldn't normally get for free; and can create full, incremental or differential backups.



#### **PAINT TOOL MediBang Paint Pro 9**

medibangpaint.com/en

Min requirements: Windows XP/

Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 38.9MB

MediBang Paint Pro is a powerful painting and drawing program. It comes with more than 50 pressure-sensitive brushes - ranging from pens and pencils to airbrushes and watercolour - and includes advanced tools such as a magic wand, layers and levels. It also comes with free cloud storage so you can save your work online. The latest version adds halftone layers and a new 'Reverse colours' option.

#### **New Windows Apps**

#### Matissa

#### bit.ly/matissa406

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 20.5MB

Similar to the popular mobile app Prisma, Matissa applies artistic techniques to your photos to turn them into works of art. There's a good selection of filters with more promised on a weekly basis.



#### Perfect Flicker

#### bit.ly/pf406

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 8 8MB

This unofficial app for Flickr lets you manage your account, and upload and download images. You can also browse photos shared by other users and view them full screen.



#### Mahjong Journey

#### bit.ly/mj406

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 75.4MB

Play 655 levels of the tile-matching game by completing this adventure story that takes in exotic locations including the Forbidden City, Taj Mahal and Mount Fuji.



#### Best Free Software

#### **VIDEO CONVERTER**

#### Any Video Converter Free 6

bit.ly/anyvc406

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 or Mac OS X File size: 42.2MB

This free program converts video from one format to another. It supports all the major file types, and can rip and extract audio from CDs and videos, download clips from YouTube and other sites, and burn discs. You can sharpen a video and apply several effects, too.

The latest version of Any Video Converter improves hardware acceleration to speed up the conversion process, and fixes various problems, such as a bug that caused fullscreen videos to crash.

Be sure to click the links in both panes during installation to avoid the bundled junk and prevent unwanted changes being made to vour browser.





#### **FAMILY TREE CREATOR** My Family Tree 6

chronoplexsoftware.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 4.1MB

Compiling a family tree is not something you can rattle off in a few spare moments on a rainy Sunday afternoon - it takes effort, planning and commitment. My Family Tree simplifies the process and lets you quickly build a tree, adding relatives as you find them. The program doesn't offer any research tools (you can use Ancestry.co.uk for that), but it does provide everything you need to

manage and expand your tree, and add details and

media content to individual entries.

The latest release introduces a wealth of additions and improvements, including new formatting options for names; support for multiple notes; and improved calculations for age, and birth and death years.

#### **RANSOMWARE UNLOCKER**

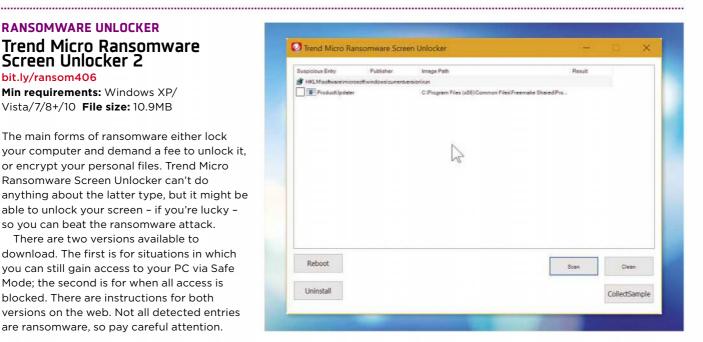
#### Trend Micro Ransomware Screen Unlocker 2

bit.ly/ransom406

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 10.9MB

The main forms of ransomware either lock your computer and demand a fee to unlock it, or encrypt your personal files. Trend Micro Ransomware Screen Unlocker can't do anything about the latter type, but it might be able to unlock your screen - if you're lucky so you can beat the ransomware attack.

There are two versions available to download. The first is for situations in which you can still gain access to your PC via Safe Mode; the second is for when all access is blocked. There are instructions for both versions on the web. Not all detected entries are ransomware, so pay careful attention.





#### **GAME**

#### Nongon

bit.ly/nongon406

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

File size: 105MB

Nongon is a first-person platform game with 'parkour' elements, such as ledge climbing and wall running. The aim is to find and collect the four 'nongon shards' on a level and return them to the altars within the cathedral. You can fall any distance onto platforms without dying, but if you fall off the world you'll need to respawn.

#### Don't install...

#### SpeedUpMyPC

bit.ly/speedup406

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 1.3MB

SpeedUpMyPC is a great-looking program for detecting performance problems on your PC and fixing them in a couple of clicks. It offers several useful features including a junk-file cleaner and a startup-optimiser, and is very straightforward to use. However, it costs £19.95 and there are plenty of similar tools you can get for free.



#### ...Install this instead

#### Autoruns

bit.ly/autoruns406

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

File size: 1.2MB

Autoruns is a tiny, free, portable tool that reveals everything that's going on in your PC from the moment it boots. A tick indicates that an item runs automatically when you start your PC; simply untick it to stop it running. Autoruns is designed to give you control without letting you mess up your PC and once you start disabling unnecessary items, you'll notice an immediate performance boost. It also protects your system by preventing potential harmful processes from running in the background. The only thing we'd change is its confusing interface.





#### **UPDATED** | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



#### **DISC WRITER**

#### CDBurnerXP 4.5.7

#### cdburnerxp.se

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 5.9MB

This free disc-burning software can create CDs, DVDs and Blu-ray discs. Despite its name, it can run on any version of Windows. This new build gains keyboard shortcuts for the audio player and can show the duration of any audio files you burn to disc on a printed cover.



#### **VIDEO CONVERTER**

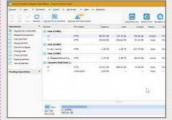
#### Freemake Video Converter 4.1.9

www.freemake.com

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

File size: 1.8MB

This program converts one video format to another. It recognises more than 500 formats, and can download and convert streaming video from sites including YouTube and Vimeo. This version fixes a problem with Vimeo downloading, and adds drag-and-drop support.



#### **PARTITION MANAGER**

#### **EaseUS Partition Master** Free 11.8

www.easeus.com

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

File size: 47.3MB

Partition Master can create, resize, format and delete drive partitions, copy disks, wipe drives, recover data and rebuild a damaged or missing master-boot record. The latest version adds resizing and optimising features for GPT drives, and improves the cloning of system drives.



#### **VIRTUAL GLOBE**

#### Google Earth 7.1.7 www.google.co.uk/earth

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 1MB (installer)

The latest update to Google's virtual globe adds new logos and removes menu items for Google Maps Engine and the Google Earth Community. It loses the registration screen from Google Earth Pro because that version is now free and no longer requires a licence.

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## **Best New Browser Tools**



#### **CHROME**

#### Create fake registration details for any site

Entering your name, address and contact details when you register with a website not only takes time but also compromises your privacy and could lead to you being spammed and scammed. You can prevent this from happening by installing the brilliant new Chrome extension Fake Data (bit.ly/ fake406), which fills in registration forms with random but real-looking info. Simply right-click a form field and choose the bogus details you want to enter - be it a first or last name, email or postal

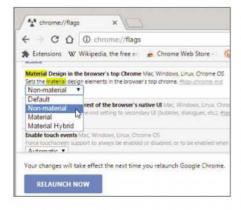
address, phone number, company name or location. Fake Data even generates Lorem Ipsum dummy text, for example "Amet iure rerum rerum reiciendis optio", which is handy for online surveys that insist you answer every question.

By default, the add-on is set to use US data, but if you go into to its Options, you can change its language to 'en\_GB' and get UK phone numbers, British names and places, and postcodes rather than zip codes. You can also save custom data to enter automatically.



#### Disable Chrome's new Material Design look

If you've noticed that Chrome is looking different these days, you're not going barmy - version 53 of the browser has updated its interface to use Google's Material Design language. The search giant has already applied this 'smarter' and 'more modern' look to several of its products, including Android, Gmail, Drive and Docs, but if you preferred Chrome the way it was, you can change it back using the following secret tweak. Type chrome: flags into the address bar, press Enter and find the entry 'Material Design in the browser's top Chrome'. Click the drop-down menu, select 'Non-material' and restart your browser to restore Chrome's former appearance.





#### Set specific zoom levels for different tabs

Chrome's zoom controls usefully let you increase and decrease the size of text on websites without affecting the rest of the content. The downside is that the setting you choose applies to every page on that site until you change it again. If you'd prefer to zoom in and out on a tab-by-tab basis, you need a Chrome extension called WZoom (bit.ly/wzoom406), which gives you greater flexibility over how you zoom pages in Chrome. Click its toolbar button and use the plus and minus buttons to zoom in and out of the page, then decide whether to apply your choice to the current tab only or all tabs showing pages from the site you're viewing. You can zoom in to a maximum of 500% and enter

a URL 'path' to always zoom that page a specific amount. WZoom

also lets you disable Chrome's built-in option to resize pages when you hold down Ctrl and scroll your mouse wheel, to stop you zooming in or out accidentally.

#### Festoon your New Tab page with flowers

We've often recommended Chrome extensions that display photos of cute animals on your New Tab page, but if your tastes are more flora than fauna, check out My Flowers New Tab (bit.ly/flowers406). This add-on decorates your new tabs with beautiful pictures of roses, violets, lilacs, orchids, tulips and stinkhorns (okay, not that one), as well as the current time, date and weather for your location. You can also upload up to 20 of your own floral images to use as Chrome wallpaper.





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

#### **FIREFOX**

#### Block 'clickbait' videos on YouTube

There are loads of great things to watch on YouTube, but there's also plenty of poor quality and offensive rubbish, not to mention videos that trick you into clicking them using hyperbolic titles such as 'Top 10 Most Shocking Peppa Pig Moments Ever!'. You can save yourself time and disappointment by using a new Firefox add-on called YT Clickbait Blocker (bit.ly/

ytclickbait406) to filter the worst of YouTube from your browser. This fades the thumbnail images of videos it detects to be substandard, so you aren't tempted to play them and lose valuable minutes of your life. We suspect it works by comparing the ratio of 'likes' to 'dislikes' rather than using subjective preferences to judge

everything on YouTube, but it's still a handy tool and lets you adjust its filter strength to obscure more or fewer videos. We tested it on the official YouTube channel for reality TV show Big Brother and it blocked nearly every clip!



#### Copy text from the web instantly

Even a Big Brother contestant (probably) knows how to copy text from web pages to paste elsewhere - you simply highlight the bit you want, then either press Ctrl+C or right-click and choose Copy from the context menu.



now there's an even easier wav. thanks to the handv Firefox

Well.

add-on AutocopySelection2clipboard (bit.ly/autocopy406). Don't be put off by the clunky name - this browser tool automatically copies text from the web to your clipboard as soon as you select it, with no need for Ctrl+C or any right-clicking, so you can paste it wherever you want. Content can be copied as plain text or HTML, and you can automatically capture text from online forms, so if your browser crashes you won't lose what you've written.

#### Mute noisy websites permanently

Back in Issue 404, we recommended the Chrome extension MuteTab (bit.ly/ mute404) as a means of silencing notoriously noisy websites by default, while allowing sound from others. MuteLinks (bit.ly/mutelinks406) performs a similar function in Firefox, so you can prevent sites with autoplaying videos, loud adverts and other audio annoyances from offending your ears (or making you jump). It works by letting you create a blacklist of links you want to mute automatically - these can either be the full URLs or you can enter, for example, facebook.com to silence all pages on Facebook. Just go into MuteLinks' Options page in the Add-ons Manager and type the URLs to mute, separated by commas.



#### OTHER BROWSERS

#### **Block hidden** trackers in web pages

We've long raved about the Chrome and Firefox extension Privacy Badger (bit.ly/ badger406), which got several mentions in last issue's cover feature: 'What you must block on the web'. So we're delighted to report that this brilliant tool for blocking the invisible trackers that lurk on web pages is now available for Opera (bit.ly/pbopera406). Unlike

similar extensions, Privacy Badger recognises that not all third-party trackers are intrusive and uses a colour-coded

system to differentiate between 'acceptable' trackers (which are shown as green) and nefarious ones (which are shown as red). Privacy Badger also gives you precise control over which domains are blocked and allowed using its sliders. Plus it has a fantastic logo!

#### Use Opera on XP and Vista

Although we don't encourage readers to keep running outdated software, we realise that many people still use Windows XP or Vista on a second computer, even though Microsoft, Google and Mozilla have stopped

supporting their browsers on those operating systems. The good news is that Opera hasn't yet given up on them and has just

released an update to version 36 of its browser that provides security updates and crash fixes for XP and Vista. Opera 36 users should receive this update automatically but if not, you can get it from www.opera.com/ download.



## 🗾 Best Free Apps 🚔 📹

#### App of the Fortnight

#### **SYSTEM TOOL**

#### Geekbench 4

bit.ly/geekbench406

Min requirements: Android 5

Size: 91MB

How fast is your phone or tablet compared with everyone else's? Geekbench ranks the speed of your Android device by testing its CPU (processor) and now, in version 4, its GPU (graphics processor), too. It's a timely update, because GPUs are now as important as CPUs for



powering devices, even if they aren't used for playing video or games.

The app measures your processors using tests collectively known as benchmarks. The tests involve typical processes such as rendering PDFs and loading web pages. They're thorough, too: the CPU benchmark took just under 10 minutes on our Motorola phone; and the GPU benchmark took three minutes. Results are presented quickly and clearly, and the new Material Design layout makes the app very easy to navigate.

Geekbench is less easy to understand than it is to use. It doesn't explain what the results mean (in short, the higher the scores, the faster the processors), but it does let you compare them with other devices. Our 'single-core score' of 627 was pretty low - we wish you better luck with yours. The UserBenchmark site has detailed information about scores (bit.ly/userbench406).

Our main complaint about Geekbench is that you need to be online throughout the tests. If you lose connection for even a moment, you'll have to start again. Some users have reported inconsistent results, but we didn't find this - at

8 September 2016 15:34 1667 HTC Nexus 9 3689 Motorola Nexus 6 3482 Samsung Galaxy S7 2766

least over the course of one day. Judge for yourself by tracking your benchmarks in the app's History, where you can watch your device's performance wane as it gets old or fills up with apps.

Geekbench 4 is also available for iOS (bit.ly/geekios406), but it's not free and it doesn't include the new GPU test. There's also a free version

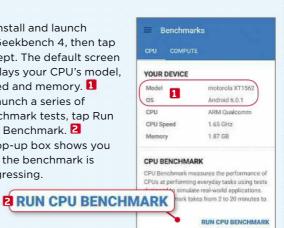
of Geekbench 4 for Windows 7 (geekbench.com).



#### MINI WORKSHOP

#### Test your Android device's speed using Geekbench 4

Install and launch Geekbench 4, then tap Accept. The default screen displays your CPU's model, speed and memory. 11 To launch a series of benchmark tests, tap Run CPU Benchmark. 2 A pop-up box shows you how the benchmark is progressing.

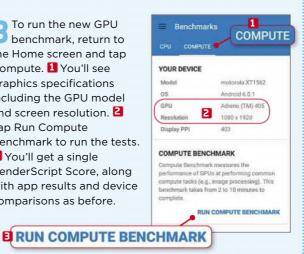


SINGLE-CORE MULTI-CORE

When the benchmark has finished, you'll see two figures: a Single-Core Score **1** and a Multi-Core Score. 2 To see speed results from specific app processes, swipe up from the bottom of the screen. To compare your scores with other devices, tap the Single-Core and Multi-Core tabs.



To run the new GPU benchmark, return to the Home screen and tap Compute. 1 You'll see graphics specifications including the GPU model and screen resolution. 2 Tap Run Compute Benchmark to run the tests. 1 You'll get a single RenderScript Score, along with app results and device comparisons as before.



Our rating

**NEW** 

**MUS** 

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

#### **FITNESS**

#### RunGo

www.rungoapp .com

Min

requirements:

Android 4.1, iOS 8 Size: 4.8MB (Android). 35.4MB (iOS)

Get turn-by-turn directions while vou run (or drag

yourself red-faced and sweaty) around your local streets or one of thousands of cities worldwide. Alternatively, use RunGo as a guided tour - the app's audio and on-screen navigation gives details of landmarks as you pass. You can create your own routes in advance or save a route you've just run, then get stats on your distance and speed. It costs extra to download

city routes for offline use, but the in-app purchase (from 56p per route) is signposted clearly.



Our rating



#### **TEXT EDITOR**

#### Simplenote simplenote.com

Min

**NEW** 

requirements:

Android 4.0.3, iOS 9 Size: Varies with

device (Android), 21.3MB (iOS)

The text editor that prides itself

on ease of use is now open-source, so you can actually edit the app's code if you're that way inclined (bit.ly/ simplecode406). The new version uses Google's now-familiar Material Design layout, so it's even faster and sleeker than before. As ever, Simplenote saves automatically as you write a note or list, even when you're offline, and lets you tag and search the contents of notes. Then, when you're

online, it syncs across all devices you've installed it on, including PC.



ES. CHEF!



#### **SOCIAL**

#### Candid becandid.com

Min

UPDATED

requirements:

Android 4.1, iOS 8 Size: 7.1MB (Android), 14MB (iOS)

An anonymous social network sounds like a

dreadful idea, but Candid's users are surprisingly polite. Choose at least 10 groups (Technology, Books, Music and so on) to get a constantly updated feed of posts from people with similar interests. Our selection included Instagram-style photos, quotes from books and songs, and complaints about awful bosses. You need to choose a pseudonym if you want to post content.

Trolls are bound to take advantage of the anonymity, but abuse is policed pretty successfully.

Our rating



#### COOKERY

#### Yes Chef

#### bit.ly/chef406

Min requirements: iOS 8

**Size:** 66.6MB

We wish we'd thought of this idea: a voice-controlled cooking app that obeys your instructions and speaks recipes out loud, so you don't have to touch your iPhone or iPad with messy hands. Brilliant - it's just a shame there's no Android version yet.

You can also access the

350,000-strong recipe collection by tapping your touchscreen, but then you'd risk getting cake mixture on your iPad. So, instead, start by telling it what you want (say, "Chef, how do I make paella?")

and then move through its audio steps by saying "next step". The app can even respond to verbal questions such as: "How long should I let this simmer for?" - so you can interrupt it to ask for help.

Recipes are searchable by popularity and food type as well as by keyword, and they cover a big enough range to keep all cooks happy, from beginners to specialists.



#### Our rating



#### **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.

## ndroid

#### 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 vour device
- Remove hidden junk so it never comes back
- Switch from iOS without

Order it now from Amazon at bit.ly/defguidetoandroid



#### **INTERNET**

#### Crowdsource

bit.ly/crowd406

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3

Size: 4.5MB

Google has long relied on algorithms to carry out tasks such as translating text. These algorithms are clever enough, but they're not as well-tuned as a human brain, which is where Crowdsource

means you're working unpaid for Google.

comes in. The app lets you contribute to five Google services including handwriting recognition and image transcription (recognising things in photos), then gets you to complete tasks such as typing a description of a photo. These tasks can be tricky, which is why algorithms often struggle to get them right. Like Google's new video calling app Duo (see our review in Issue 405 bit.ly/webuser405), Crowdsource has had a great response from users, although it essentially





Our rating



8

#### MUSIC

#### N Music

#### bit.ly/nmusic406

Min requirements: Android 4.2

Size: 2.8MB

N Music is completely free and contains no ads, but it manages to pack in more features than some paid-for rivals. For example, there's a 10-band EQ (equaliser) with a superb bass booster; a global search tool that covers albums, artists and songs; a brilliant Tag Editor



Our rating

running Android Nougat.





#### NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

< B

#### **EDUCATION**

#### **Phonics Spelling Dictionary**

bit.ly/phonics406

Min requirements: Android 4.4 Size: 296MB Price: £4.99

Help children learn to read and spell using synthetic phonics, the system that presents words as sounds. The app uses cartoon characters, tests and audio to help children engage in learning.

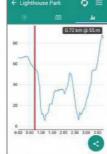
#### **NAVIGATION**

#### Retrace

#### bit.ly/retrace406

Min requirements: Android 5 Size: 60MB Price: £3.49

Retrace lets you record and export a GPS log of your walk, run, cycle, drive or other physical activities. The app tracks your distance, speed and elevation, and supports offline maps at no extra cost.



Size: 13.3MB Price: £2.29 This new app from former Facebook designer Andy Chung lets you create illustrations, floorplans and even website designs on your iPad.

#### **PODCASTS**

#### Castro

#### bit.ly/castro406

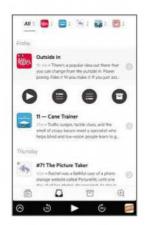
Min requirements: iOS 9.3 Size: 8.1MB Price: £3.99 Find and download individual episodes of podcasts without having to subscribe to the whole series. You can create playlists of episodes and get recommendations from friends.

#### **NATURE**

#### **Fungi of Britain**

#### bit.ly/fungi406

Min requirements: Android 4 Size: 79MB Price: 96p Identify and learn about 220 British mushrooms and other fungi. NatureBritain's app offers plenty of detail including mycological data and crossreferences with similar species.





#### **DESIGN**

#### **Pattern**

#### pattern.is

Min requirements:





Phonics Spelling Dictionary





Retrace



Pattern



Fungi of Britain





#### **Best New TV Apps**

#### **BBC** iPlayer

bit.ly/ipandroid406 bit.ly/ipios406

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 7

Size: 34MB

The Desktop version of BBC iPlayer has long offered the option to 'rewind' live TV channels, so you never miss a moment of your favourite shows, and now the Live Restart feature is (finally) available on mobile devices. Just start streaming an 'On Now' programme as you would normally, then tap 'Restart this programme' to replay the bits you missed: the handy recap, the resolution of last week's cliff-hanger, that first early goal and so on. Remember that vou now need a TV licence to watch iPlayer, whether you're viewing shows live or on catch-up. The BBC also says that Android 7 (Nougat) users may be experiencing problems with downloaded programmes, which it hopes to fix soon.



#### **TRAVEL**

#### On the Beach

www.onthebeach.co.uk

Min requirements: Apple TV

Size: N/A



Searching for a holiday on your phone or tablet can be a fiddly business, so online travel agent On the Beach is making things easier by letting you browse for a vacation on your television so you can view destinations on a big screen. Using its new app for Apple TV, you can plan your holiday from the comfort of your sofa, then select 'book now' to switch to your iPhone or iPad to complete the booking. The 'On the Beach' app lets you search by month of departure or airport, check flight details, view hotel descriptions including photos and read customer reviews. You can also add extras such as baggage and transfers. If you don't have an Apple TV, you can still use On the Beach's app on your iOS or Android device, as well as in your browser.

#### TV & FILM

#### FilmOn Free Live TV

bit.ly/filmon406

Min requirements: Android 2.3 iOS 7

Size: 11MB

Want to watch live TV from all over the world without needing to travel or install a VPN? FilmOn Free Live TV offers instant access to more than 600 live TV channels, which you can browse by country or by categories including Sports, Food & Wine and Science & Technology. It also lets you watch more than 45,000 short films and TV shows on-demand, and 'record' (but not download) content to view later. FilmOn has just updated its Android app with a new Premium section that offers the latest Hollywood movies and TV series. Prices are around \$1.99 (£1.50) per episode, \$15.99 (£12) for blockbusters and \$3.99 (£3) for lesser-known titles.



#### X Don't install...

#### MySurvey

bit.ly/mysurvey406

This app claims to reward you for participating in surveys, but you only need to glance at the user reviews to realise that it's not worth bothering with. One reviewer complains that



the surveys suffer "technical errors" on the final page, while others report login problems. performance issues and a complete lack of surveys since they signed up. It's no wonder that MySurvey has accumulated more than 1,900 one-star reviews.

#### ...Install this instead

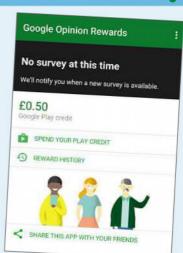
#### **Google Opinion Rewards**

bit.lv/rewards406

Min requirements: Android 4.1

Size: 2.8MB

Want to earn some Google Play credit for doing next to nothing? Then install Google Opinion Rewards, which pays you to complete short surveys so you can save money on Android apps, games and other goodies from the Play store. The questions are usually simple, for example 'Do you approve or disapprove of the United Nations?' or 'Which logo is best?', and your answers are collected anonymously. You can earn up to 60p per survey, although some pay much less, and once you've earned a reasonable amount of credit, you just tap the link to spend it on Google Play.







Everything you need to know about the most interesting new technology troods and are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods and are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods and are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods and are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology troods are to be a second and the most interesting new technology. interesting new technology trends and events

## Amazon Dash

Need extra household items in a hurry? David Crookes looks at Amazon's new way of getting them to you at the push of a button

#### What is it?

Amazon Dash lets you instantly order essential household goods at the touch of a button. By placing the Wi-Ficonnected device near an item you don't want to run short of, you can simply push the button to have another one delivered. Dash is, in many ways, a physical extension of Amazon's 1-Click ordering system, and eliminates the need to order through the Amazon website or app.

#### How does it know what I want?

Each Dash button is dedicated to a single product so Amazon knows instantly what you're trying to order. This means you'll need a different button for every item, be it toilet paper, cat food or dishwasher tablets, but it makes for a foolproof system. When you set up a Dash device, you determine the specific item you want in terms of volume, size or quantity. You'll also know what each button does because it has the brand's logo emblazoned on it.

#### Where do I get one?

The buttons are available to order from www.amazon.co.uk/dashbutton but you need to be a subscriber to Amazon Prime, which currently costs £79 per year. Each Dash costs £4.99, but you get the full amount of the device refunded when you place your first order, effectively making it free. This applies to every Dash you buy, even if you're getting two or more for the same product.

You could, for example, buy three toilet



Prime members can now buy a variety of Dash buttons from the Amazon store



If the Andrex puppy has

eaten all your toilet paper, you can instantly order more

roll buttons - one for the family bathroom, one for the en suite and another for the downstairs lav and get your trio of £4.99 refunds the first time you press any one.

#### What if someone thinks it's the flusher?

Thankfully, repeated presses of a Dash button won't send multiple packs your way. Amazon has

thought of this scenario so a Dash will only respond to the first press on each occasion. At this point, you'll get a notification of the order and a chance to cancel but if you let it go through then no more items can be bought using that button until the delivery has arrived.

#### So I won't end up with a mountain of loo roll?

Well, it's possible you could, which is why you should check the volume of the product you're buying before you

commit yourself to a Dash button. It's all very well having a toilet roll button next to your loo but you may not necessarily want a 45-roll pack every time vou press it. However. it's easy to find out what you're committing to by going to the device's page and clicking the link 'see what you can order with

#### How long will my order take to arrive?

this Dash button'.

As with any Amazon Prime order, you'll benefit from unlimited next-day delivery so if you're canny and don't wait until you've run out completely, you should be able to keep key items replenished.

#### Which brands can I choose from?

There are currently buttons for 48 popular household brands ranging from Ariel, Fairy and Vanish to Dettol, Dolce











Amazon hopes that Dash buttons will change the way we do our weekly shop

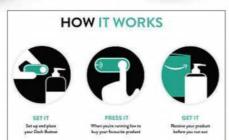
Gusto and Pedigree, although there are also some odd inclusions such as Plav-Doh and Nerf foam darts! Most Dashes are available for immediate dispatch, but some popular devices including Whiskas cat food and Finish dishwasher tablets have waits of a few weeks. At the time of writing there was a five-week delay for the Durex Dash, which could prove very frustrating for randy customers!

#### What if I need two products from one company?

Suppose you like to buy Kleenex pocket packs for work and Kleenex balsam tissues for home. If you want to order both at the push of a button, you'll need to have two separate Dashes. Alternatively, you could use one Dash and reset it each time you wanted to switch products but that rather defeats the convenience of the device. Ultimately, you just want to push the Wi-Ficonnected button, have your Amazon account charged and the item sent out with the minimum of fuss.

#### Why is Amazon doing this?

The online retailer is keen to get you to buy products with the minimum of fuss and by having a button in close proximity to regularly purchased items, Amazon can virtually eliminate any thinking time. Under normal circumstances, you'd run low on bin bags and make a mental note to add them to your shopping list. But there's no real certainty over where you may buy them from. Perhaps you'll get them during your 'big shop' or pick them up as you're buying a chocolate bar at the local grocery store. Maybe you'll head online or forget altogether. Dash is a sales tactic that uses the lure of convenience to encourage brand loyalty and make you always buy certain products through Amazon.



Dash is so simple that a two-year-old child could - and probably will - use it to shop

#### Will there be more brands in the

It's very likely, although it depends on how frequently the Dash buttons are used. So far, only Amazon customers in the US - where Dash launched last March - have tried them, but Amazon says they have gone from strength to strength. There are now more than 150 brands

involved, which isn't bad for a service that people initially thought was an April Fool's joke. Indeed, Amazon says that orders placed via Dashes have tripled in recent months.

#### But won't we end up drowned in buttons?

In the short term perhaps, but Amazon is already thinking ahead. It plans to place the technology inside gadgets and appliances using a new service called Dash Replenishment. Sensors integrated into printers made by Samsung and washing machines manufactured by Grundig, Siemens, Bosch and Whirlpool will figure when new ink or detergent is required, prompting the ordering of new supplies. This cloud-based platform is another step towards the much talked about Internet of Things.

#### What about the environmental costs?

Well, it's certainly a concern that drivers are going to be taking to the road to deliver small packages that would normally form part of a weekly bulk shop. But there is also a danger that appliances will automatically order items that you

> don't urgently need, and a worry that we're giving Amazon yet more information about our buying habits. With initiatives such as this. the company will know more about your usage patterns and the devices you own. But instant gratification and convenience will always be an enticing prospect for consumers.



Dash buttons on washing machines could eventually be replaced by built-in sensors

#### **HACK YOUR DASH**

Once you've placed your first order using a Dash button, it effectively becomes a free device, which means you can play around

with it however you want. There are lots of projects online to get your teeth into and they're all relatively straightforward.

The hacks are made possible because of the way the Dash operates. When you press the button, the device wakes, connects to Wi-Fi and then turns off again to save the battery. By watching out for the moment the connection is made, the software can



be developed to perform new tasks. For example, Ted Bensen used a Dash to track the number of times he changed

(bit.ly/benson406), while Daniel Gallo activates Dash to control his Philips Hue lights (bit.ly/hue406).

For more inspiration, check out Dash **Button Dudes (www.dashbuttondudes** .com) or simply search online for "dash button hacks". With a bit of coding and some IFTTT recipes (ifttt .com), you'll be producing shopping lists, silent doorbells, panic buttons and more in next to no time.

## Why You Don't Need SPECIAL Ditch the



Wayne Williams reveals the best websites and apps that save you the time and hassle of downloading software. and let you access your files from anywhere

#### >>> SYSTEM & SECURITY

#### **SCAN FOR MALWARE** FROM ANYWHERE

There's no substitute for installing a reliable, up-to-date security program to protect your PC from viruses, Trojans and other malware, but free antivirus software also has its downsides. It can hog system resources, slow down your PC and tease you with powerful features that are only available in the paid-for version, which is why it's sometimes preferable to use an online scanner instead. The best of these is VirusTotal (www.virustotal.com), which analyses suspicious files and web addresses using 56 different antivirus engines including Avast, Bitdefender and Sophos. It's ideal for times when you only need to check a specific file or website rather than run a full scan of your PC, and if you want to get a second opinion about a possible malware infection without having to download a separate security tool.



Also worth a look is ESET Online Scanner (bit.ly/eset406), which offers a free one-time scan to detect and remove malware from your browser.

See our Mini Workshop on the opposite page to find out how to use it.



Software you no longer need:

AVG Free AntiVirus (www.avg.com)

#### **SPEED UP YOUR PC OVER THE WEB**

A spot of regular maintenance keeps your PC running smoothly and CCleaner is one of the best free system-cleaning tools around, but you no longer need to download it because it's available to use on the web. CCleaner Cloud (formerly called Project Agomo) lets you remotely manage and maintain your PC - as well as PCs belonging to friends and family. It can quickly remove junk and disable unnecessary startup programs, defragment drives and repair Registry



issues. The free version of CCleaner Cloud lets you manage up to three computers, which should be plenty for most people, and view 100 'events' (notifications of actions and changes) per day. You can sign up for CCleaner Cloud at www.ccleanercloud.com.



CCleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner)

#### **CONVERT FILES** WITHOUT USING SOFTWARE

There are so many different file formats around, it's almost a given that you'll need to convert a file from one type to another at some point, just so you can open it. You may need to convert a video in MP4 format to AVI, or a photo from BMP to JPEG. Most conversion software only handles a particular type of file: for example, Any Video Converter Free - as its name suggests - only converts videos. This is where online converters really shine, because they're less likely to have these restrictions and you don't have to download or install anything.

ZamZar (www.zamzar.com) has been around for years and it's still the most versatile web-based converter. supporting more than 1,200 different conversions including video, audio, ebook, image and documents. Upload a file to the site, choose the format to convert to, enter your email address and

#### Why you don't need software





e all love software the fun of discovering a new program, the satisfaction of a successful installation, the excitement of turning to the Best Free Software section in every issue of Web User - but that doesn't mean we should rely on it completely.

Thanks to faster broadband connections, clever web technology such as HTML5 and ever more sophisticated apps (both web-based and mobile), it's now possible to perform an increasing number of previously PC-based tasks without downloading and installing slow, bloated Desktop programs. In this feature, we look at the latest free alternatives to traditional

software that let you do everything in the cloud or on your mobile device.

Over the following six pages, we show you how to stream music via your browser, download videos, scan for malware without using antivirus software, speed up your PC over the web and convert audio and video files. We also look at how to create and edit documents online, and manage your finances.

Additionally, on page 44, we take a look at the best tools for editing your photos online and. on page 52, you can follow our step-by-step instructions on using the web-based video editor, WeVideo.

you'll be sent a link to the converted result. If you can't wait that long, CloudConvert (cloudconvert.com) supports conversion between more than 200 different formats. The free version limits you to 25 conversion minutes a day, five concurrent conversions and a 1GB maximum file size, but that should be plenty for most people's needs.

CloudConvert also offers pre-paid packages priced at \$8 (£6) for 500 conversion minutes and subscriptions at

\$8 a month for 1,000 conversion minutes. These include access to some useful advanced features, such as folder monitoring, where you use pre-selected options to create special folders in Google Drive or Dropbox. Add a file to one of these folders and it automatically converts it to your chosen format.



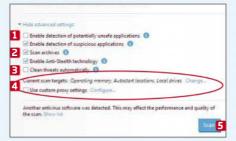
**Prism Video Converter** (www.nchsoftware.com)



#### MINI WORKSHOP | Remove malware using ESET Online Scanner



Open your browser, go to bit.ly/ eset406 and click the Scan Now button. 1 A small application will install. Launch this, accept the terms of use and choose whether you want the scanner to detect potentially unwanted programs (PUPs). 2 There are also advanced settings available. Click the link B to view them.



The Advanced features allow the tool to detect potentially unsafe applications 11 and scan archives. 2 It can also clean found threats automatically. 2 You can change which areas of your system you want the scanner to target. 4 When you've chosen all the options, click the Scan 5 button to look for malware.



The tool will download the required virus signature database. This may take a while, so be patient. Once that's done, the scan will start. You can view the progress 11 and any found threats. 2 Click Stop 1 to end the scan at any time. If the scanner finds any malware, it will attempt to remove it.

#### >>> PHOTO & VIDEO

#### **EDIT VIDEOS FROM ANY DEVICE**

Mobile phones give us the ability to record video at any time and in (nearly) any place. However, you don't always want to share the recorded video as it is - perhaps there's a really long intro that needs trimming or some sounds in the background you want to get rid of. Rather than downloading a videoediting tool to perfect your clips, you can edit your videos directly in YouTube (www.youtube.com/editor), which is particularly handy if you plan to share them on the site later. The editor lets you combine multiple videos into a movie, trim your clips to specific lengths, apply effects and add music from a library of copyright-free tracks.

Alternatively, you can use a dedicated online editor such as WeVideo (www .wevideo.com), which we cover in our Workshop 1 on page 52. If you don't want to do all the hard work yourself, the excellent web tool Magisto (www .magisto.com) can create sophisticated movies from your video clips and photos. It's free to use for finished movies of less than 1.15 minutes, or you can pay from \$2.49 (about £1.88) per month for more features and flexibility.





Windows Movie Maker (bit.ly/movie406)

#### **EDIT YOUR PHOTOS** ON THE MOVE

Just as you might not want to share 'raw' video, there's a good chance you'll want to make a few changes to your photos before posting them on



Facebook or Instagram. If you're looking to turn a selfie into a work of art, Prisma (prisma-ai.com) for Android or iOS is fantastic. Snapseed for Android (bit.ly/ snapandroid406) and iOS (bit.ly/ snapios406) is a more advanced editor which lets you improve, transform and

share your images, and offers a range of editing tools, filters and effects. Adobe Lightroom (bit.ly/lightroom406) for iOS and Android is also very good, and offers more than 40 presets to apply to your images.

If you prefer to edit photos in your browser rather than using an app on your mobile device, there are lots of great web-based options, including PixIr (pixIr.com/web), BeFunky (www .befunky.com) and Aviary (www.aviary .com). See our feature on page 44 to discover our favourite free online photo editors.





GIMP (www.gimp.org)

#### **DOWNLOAD ANY WEB VIDEO**

You can download videos from sites like YouTube and Vimeo using programs such as Freemake Video Downloader. but there's really no need to install any software for the task. The free online tool ClipConverter (www.clipconverter .cc) can download videos from YouTube and convert them into a choice of video and audio-only formats. Just paste in the video URL, select the format and click Download.

SaveFrom.net (en.savefrom.net) can download videos from all the major video services, including YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo and Twitch. There's also a SaveFrom.net Helper for your browser which lets you download videos from sites with a single click.





#### **CREATE PHOTO COLLAGES ONLINE**

If you have a lot of photos you want to display, turning them into a collage makes a lot of sense, and makes it easier to share your pictures. Fotojet (www .fotojet.com) is a excellent online collage maker that has more than 600 designs to choose from. Just click 'Create a Collage', select a theme from one of the attractive templates and add your photos - either from your hard drive, Facebook or another source. A new editing feature lets you tweak your images before you add them to the collage: you can auto-enhance, crop, rotate and resize them, and apply various filters. Fotojet is entirely free, but you need to sign up to use it.





Fotor (www.fotor.com)

#### MAKE FREE VOICE AND VIDEO **CALLS**

There are lots of ways to make free voice and video calls, including wellknown services such as Skype. But for speed and simplicity, even Microsoft's

VoIP tool pales in comparison to Google's Duo app (duo.google.com). Available for iOS and Android, Duo offers free, high quality, one-tap video calling and can be used over Wi-Fi or a mobile connection. We particularly like its

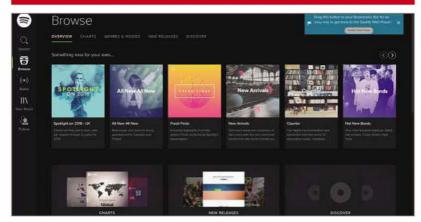


Knock Knock feature, which lets you preview a call before you answer.

Line (line.me) is a similar tool for iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, BlackBerry (voice only) and Windows and Mac, offering all kinds of choices for how you conduct online conversations.



#### >>> MUSIC



#### STREAM MUSIC VIA YOUR BROWSER

These days music consumption is all about streaming. People don't buy - or even download - songs and albums as they once did, which means that Desktop music stores such as iTunes are starting to look dated. One of the best online options is Spotify Web Player (play .spotify.com), which lets you listen to millions of songs for free through your web browser. You need to sign up for an account but once you've done that, you can search for music to listen to and tune into Spotify Radio, where you might discover new favourite artists.



Apple iTunes

(www.apple.com/uk/itunes)

#### **SAVE MUSIC FROM YOUTUBE**

There are lots of programs that let you download and convert songs on YouTube into MP3 format, but there are also plenty of great websites that do the same thing, without the need to install any software. Enter a video URL into FullRip.net (www.fullrip.net) and click the Convert button to save it as an MP3 (you can also download it in various video formats). The site lets you choose the quality of the MP3 (from 32kbps to 256kbps)

and provides an advanced ID3 tag editor for filling in details such as the song title, artist, genre, album, year and track number.

Another site that's worth a look is TheYouMp3 (www .theyoump3.com). Enter the video URL, click Convert,



then click the Download button. The site displays a handy QR code you can use to download the converted track directly to your phone or tablet.



Freemake YouTube to MP3 Boom (www.freemake.com)

#### EDIT YOUR MP3 FILES ONLINE

Even if you stream most of your music, it's likely that you still have hundreds - if not thousands - of MP3s on your hard drive, many of which may need tidying up. Traditionally, *Web User* has recommended Audacity as the best program for trimming your audio files down to size, but there's now an even easier option in the form of Online MP3 Cutter (mp3cut.net). This amazing web-based tool lets you open tracks from your hard



## MINI WORKSHOP Create documents with Microsoft Office Online



Go to the Office Online site (bit.ly/ms406) and click a tile to launch the app you want to use. There are other apps available beyond Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote. Click the 'See more' link to view the others, which include Sway, Calendar, OneDrive and Docs.com.



The Office app you chose - Word, in this case - will open in a new tab. You can create a new blank document or choose from any of the ready-made templates. You can also open existing documents stored in OneDrive. Any previously accessed items will appear in the sidebar on the left.



A web version of your application will load, which you can use as you would the Desktop software. Switch between the tabs and access the tools you require from the ribbon interface. 2 You can save the document to OneDrive, or download a copy. There's an offline extension available for Chrome.

drive, Google Drive or Dropbox and edit them in your browser, chopping out gaps, crackles and unwanted noises; applying fade-ins and fade-outs; and then saving the edited file. The site supports all the major audio formats and is free to use. There's also a version for video (online-video-cutter.com).

Software you no longer need:

Audacity (www.audacityteam.org)

#### MAKE MUSIC IN YOUR BROWSER

If you'd rather make your own music than listen to other people's, there are lots of online tools you can use to produce and remix tracks. Our favourite is the fantastic Audiotool (www .audiotool.com), which places a virtual music studio in your browser. Play around with instruments, which include synthesisers, drum machines and beat boxes; use samples from the library of more than 250,000 sounds; try different effects and filters; and twiddle around with the mixing controls until you achieve your perfect sound. Audiotool is completely free to use, and you don't even need to sign up to start making music. There are helpful video tutorials



to show you the ropes, and examples of tracks from other users to inspire you.



Magix Music Maker (www.magix.com)

#### >>> OFFICE

#### **CREATE AND EDIT DOCUMENTS ONLINE**

There's no need to fire up Microsoft Word on your PC to create or edit documents because there are now plenty of online services you can use. Google Docs (docs.google.com) is undoubtedly the best known, and its apps were recently redesigned to make them much slicker. If you prefer using Microsoft's suite, then Office Online (bit.ly/ms406) is the best solution. It lets you create, share and collaborate in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote and more - just choose the product you require and you're ready to start work.

See our Mini Workshop on page 41 to find out how to use Office Online.

LibreOffice (www.libreoffice.org), the leading open-source alternative to Microsoft Office, is also available to use in the cloud through its new Open365 service (open365.io). This lets you edit documents, spreadsheets and presentations via your browser and access them from anywhere.



Software you no longer need:

Microsoft Office (bit.ly/office406)

#### TWEAK BADLY FORMATTED **TEXT**

If someone has sent you a document with annoying formatting issues - such as double-spacing or upper-case letters throughout - you don't need to open it in Word to fix the problems. Goformat



(www.goformat.com) is a simple online formatting service that quickly identifies and resolves typographical problems. Paste your text into the box and Goformat will tell you how many lines, words and characters the selection contains, and let you change the colour, typeface and size, and spellcheck it. The Tools menu lets you change the capitalisation, remove blank lines. spaces and carriage returns, and find and replace words.

Software you no longer need:

Microsoft Word (bit.ly/word406)

#### **CREATE AND EDIT PDFs IN YOUR BROWSER**

PDF (Portable Document Format) is useful because it lets you present a document exactly the way it's supposed to appear - unlike, say, Word files. You used to need expensive programs such as Adobe Acrobat to work with PDFs but thanks to web-based tools, you longer have to download any software, let alone pay for it.

Online PDF Converter (online2pdf .com) is a particularly good tool for creating your own PDF documents. It lets you edit, merge, unlock and convert documents between formats. However, there is a maximum size restriction of 50MB per file and although you can select up to 20 files in one go, they mustn't exceed 100MB in total.

If you need to do more with your PDF files, try ILovePDF (www.ilovepdf.com), which provides a suite of tools for splitting and merging PDFs, compressing, rotating or adding a



watermark to them, and converting to Word, Excel and PowerPoint formats.



Adobe Acrobat (bit.ly/adobe406)

#### **CREATE NEWSLETTERS, FLYERS** AND REPORTS

Although you can use Microsoft Publisher to create your own DTP projects, Lucidpress (www.lucidpress .com) provides all the tools you need to carry out the process online. Your works can be printed, published on the web or shared on social media. Just choose what you want to create (brochures, leaflets, flyers, invitations, stationery, newsletters, posters, and so on) and pick a template. The free service restricts you to three pages per document, a specific selection of templates and 25MB of storage. If you need more, you can upgrade to the



#### Why you don't need software



paid-for version for \$5.95 (about £4.50) per month - there's a free trial available to help you decide.

Software you no longer need:

Microsoft Publisher (bit.ly/publisher406)

#### **MANAGE YOUR FINANCES ONLINE**

It's useful to know exactly where you stand financially at any moment, and these days banks offer mobile apps that you can use to check your balance, pay bills and send money from anywhere. OnTrees (www.ontrees.com) is something money doesn't grow on, but its app - from MoneySuperMarket and available for Android and iOS - is all you need to keep on top of your finances, across all your current and savings accounts and credit cards.



Money Dashboard (www

.moneydashboard.com) provides a similar service and can be used on the web or via its free Android or iOS apps. Easy-to-understand visuals help you to see exactly where all your money is going each month, so you can work out how to make savings.



Money Manager Ex

(www.moneymanagerex.org)

#### **COMPRESS FILES ONLINE**

If you want to send someone a selection of files, you should zip them up first to



reduce their size. Instead of installing a dedicated compression tool such as WinZip or 7-Zip, you can package them up online using the free service ezyZip (www.ezyzip.com). Enter a name for your compressed file and select the files to archive. You can also use it to open existing Zip files. If you're running an ad blocker, you'll need to disable it to use the service.

Alternatively, there's Wobzip (wobzip .org) which can compress and open archives online. It supports a range of file formats including Zip, 7z, RAR and ISO. The maximum file size allowed



WinZip (www.winzip.com)

#### **EXTRACT TEXT FROM IMAGES**

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) pulls words from pictures such as documents or photographs you've scanned. You used to need an installed program to perform this complex task, but the excellent Free-OCR (www.



free-ocr.com) does the job in vour browser. Upload an image in JPEG, GIF, TIFF, BMP or PDF format (maximum size of 6MB)

and Free-OCR will turn the picture into editable and extractable text. It recognises numerous languages.

There are also OCR apps available for mobile devices so you can scan and convert images without needing to use Desktop software. Our favourites are Mobile OCR for Android (bit.ly/ mobileocr406) and CamScanner Free (bit.ly/camscanner406) for iOS.



(www.abbyy.com/finereader)

#### **GIVE YOUR HOME A MAKEOVER**

Redesigning your home is stressful enough without having to download and master complex 3D-modelling software. If you want to make changes quickly and easily, try Autodesk Homestyler (www.homestyler.com). This useful online floor planner is an impressively stylish tool that's extremely easy to use. Homestyler lets you create rooms in 2D, furnish the space and then view the results in 3D.

It offers a catalogue of real-world items that you can add to your space to see how they'll look, and you can render, explore and take screenshots of the finished design. Your creations can be made public, if you're especially pleased with them, or you can keep them private.



Plan3D (www.plan3d.com)



#### **NEXT ISSUE**

#### on sale Wednesday 5 October 2016

### **HOW TO HACK WINDOWS 10**

Change the way Microsoft's operating system looks and works - without touching the Registry



#### **OSET UP MULTIPLE LOGINS**

Switch between two user accounts with the same site

#### **OSEARCH BEYOND THE WEB**

Find info that doesn't appear in Google search results

#### **OSPEED UP YOUR WI-FI**

Boost your signal without buying a wireless repeater

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



It's time to ditch your bloated old image-editing software, because the best tools for perfecting your photos are online - and they're free.

Jane Hoskyn puts

#### PixIr Editor | pixIr.com/editor | ★★★★★

FEATURES \*\*\*\* PERFORMANCE \*\*\*\* EASE OF USE \*\*\*\*

#### What we liked:

six to the test

WebUser GOLD AWARD If you're familiar with
Photoshop Elements,
you'll be right at home
using Pixlr Editor. It offers
similar features to Adobe's
market-leading program

but takes up no space on your PC and it won't cost you a penny because, unlike our Silver Award-winner BeFunky, it doesn't lock its best features behind a paywall.

The site's opening screen invites you to create a design or open a photo from your PC. You can also select from your cloud-based PixIr Library, if you log in using a free PixIr account or Google.

The excellent selection of tools for adjusting, retouching and transforming images can be accessed via a sidebar of icons or through the menus. PixIr Editor supports layers for making finely tuned adjustments and lets you save the files, which are often huge, for returning to later. Every step is recorded in the History box: just click a step to revert to it instantly and click 'Open image' to undo all changes.

Output formats include highresolution TIFF and PNG, as well as layered PXD, and the quality is superb, even in web-friendly JPEG format. There's no Save As option, but you can



export multiple versions by changing the file name when you save.

Despite its impressive power, Pixlr Editor is very fast. There was no delay when making adjustments, even on our laptop with temperamental Wi-Fi. The software offers several one-click presets but if you're after Instagramstyle effects, you're better off using sister site Pixlr Express (pixlr.com/express) or Pixlr's Android and iOS apps (pixlr.com/mobile).

#### How it can be improved:

A big advert hogs nearly a quarter of the browser window and it can only be removed by switching to full-screen mode. We couldn't get PixIr to share via social sites, and PixIr Library is confusing – even PixIr's support site won't say how much space you get (bit.ly/pixIr406).

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SPECIAL

Ditch the Downloads!

#### **OUR VERDICT**

PixIr Editor is a superb tool and, frankly, we're staggered that it's free. Enthusiastic photographers need look no further for Photoshop-quality results without the hefty price tag.

#### **Best online photo editors**

#### **BeFunky** | www.befunky.com/create | ★★★★☆ FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★☆ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

#### What we liked:

BeFunky is much happier in the cloud than Pixlr Editor. The fast. coollooking site

makes it just as easy to load a photo directly from Facebook,

Dropbox or Google Drive as from your webcam or PC. You have to be logged into the relevant external site to do this, but you don't need a BeFunky account.

Photos open very quickly and the pop-out sidebar of basic adjustment options includes an Auto Enhance button. Adjustments have a strength slider and a Paint tool for applying effects to certain areas. These features are fast and intuitive, but less finely tuned than PixIr Editor's tools.

BeFunky has many more Instagramstyle filters and Snapchat-style graphics than our Gold Award-winner. They're organised via icons and can be adjusted and combined to dramatic effect. You can share on Facebook, Pinterest,



Tumblr and Twitter as well as to PC. The free tool offers low-resolution output only, and BeFunky's apps for Android and iOS (www.befunky.com/ mobile) are almost but not quite - a match for Pixlr's.

#### How it can be improved:

Many of the retouching tools and fun effects are locked unless you upgrade to BeFunky Plus, which costs \$2.91 (£2.22) per month if you pay annually, or roughly double that if you pay monthly. That's not extortionate, but it's a pain to open a selection of effects and find more than half of them locked.

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#### **OUR VERDICT**

BeFunky is a brilliant all-rounder that lets you have fun with your photos as well as fine-tune them. If its best features weren't locked behind an upgrade, BeFunky might have snatched Gold.

#### LunaPic | bit.ly/lunapic406 | ★★★★☆

FEATURES \*\*\*\* PERFORMANCE \*\*\*\* EASE OF USE \*\*\*\*

#### What we liked:



LunaPic offers a huge selection of adjustment tools, from advanced retouching to cat stickers. It has more formats. output presets and sharing options than BeFunky or

PixIr Editor, and it's completely free. So why only Bronze? Because it's about as slick as an old shed.

Tools are organised into intuitive menus (Adjust, Draw, Animation and so on) with a sidebar of icons for quick access to popular tools such as crop, text, gradient, save and undo. Sliders let you tweak adjustments in combination before clicking Apply, and a set of 'Undo History' thumbnails under the photo makes retracing steps easy. Output quality is very good and there are dozens of adjustable effects, animation tools and even Prisma-style art filters albeit in a workspace that looks like it was designed for a school project.

#### How it can be improved:

LunaPic is far too slow for serious



editing and you can often only see half your photo while you're working on it, especially with adjustment sliders hogging screen space. We couldn't get LunaPic to open a photo from Facebook, but it had no problem sharing photos to Facebook and other sites.

#### **OUR VERDICT**

If you want speed and panache, go elsewhere, but if you're seduced by the huge array of free tools and sharing options, then persevere with rough 'n' ready LunaPic.

......

#### **BEST OF THE REST**

#### **PicMonkey**

#### bit.ly/picmonkey406

PicMonkey is as slick and selfconsciously cool as LunaPic isn't and you'll love it or loathe it as a result. Tools and effects lurch out from every corner of the busy site, which is more of a design tool than a photo editor. Basic adjustments, effects and borders are free, but for the full range and an ad-free workspace, you need to stump up for Royale membership (£5 per month or £45 per year).



#### Aviary

#### www.aviary.com

Adobe-owned Aviary is a fun, fashionable design tool in the mould of BeFunky and PicMonkey, but with a less busy layout. It lets you jazz up your photos until they're barely recognisable, and there's

even a Meme tool for creating slogans for posting online or for printing out as greetings cards. Aviary is free, but includes support for the paid-for Adobe Creative Cloud.



#### Polarr

#### bit.ly/polarr406

Probably the most processor-heavy tool we tested. Polarr is slower to load than PixIr Editor and BeFunky, and harder to navigate, but it's still faster than many Desktop photo editors. Polarr lets you mix filters and enhancements until you achieve fine-tuned perfection. Newcomers will welcome the extensive support guide, including video tutorials. It's certainly not a tool for quick novelty effects.



## Expand your screen space on any device

Don't be limited by the amount of screen space on your monitor or mobile device. Robert Irvine reveals how to increase the size of your display without buying new hardware





#### **Expand your Desktop using** virtual Desktops

One of the most useful features in Windows 10 is the ability to create and switch between multiple 'virtual' Desktops. Not only does this prevent your main Desktop from becoming crowded with icons and windows but, because there's no limit on the number of Desktops, you can increase your screen space two-fold, ten-fold or even a hundred-fold (although that might get confusing). If you're very organised, you could give each Desktop a different purpose, so you have one for work, another for editing photos, one for web browsing and so on.

To create a virtual Desktop in Windows 10, click the Task View button on the taskbar and select 'Add a desktop'. To switch between Desktops, press Ctrl+Windows key and the left or right arrow key; to move programs from one Desktop to another, right-click them and choose 'Move to [Desktop number]'. If you close a Desktop containing open programs, they'll be transferred to the next Desktop on the left.

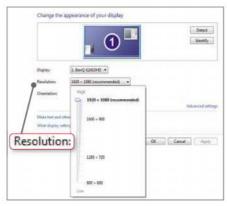


You can get more screen space in Windows 10 by adding virtual Desktops

You can add virtual Desktops in older versions of Windows using the free tool Dexpot (dexpot.de). This lets you switch between multiple Desktops from your taskbar, drag and drop items from one Desktop to another and permanently bind programs to a specific Desktop, along with many other useful features.

#### Increase your screen resolution in Windows

Even if you have a massive monitor, you can soon find yourself running out of screen space as your Desktop fills up with files, folders, programs, photos and other junk you keep forgetting to delete. The lower your screen resolution, the quicker this will happen, so it's worth experimenting to see if you can work with a higher one. In theory, Windows should automatically set your resolution to the maximum supported by your monitor, but this doesn't always happen - or someone may have fiddled with



Try increasing your screen resolution to fit more items on your Desktop

your settings. To boost your resolution in Windows 7 or 8.1, right-click your Desktop and choose 'Screen resolution'. Click the drop-down Resolution menu, select a higher-res option (if available) then click Apply. If you like what you see, click 'Keep changes'; if not, let Windows revert to the previous setting.

In Windows 10, open the Settings app, go to System, Display, 'Advanced display settings' and adjust it to a higher

#### Turn your tablet into a second screen

The most obvious way to double your screen space is to connect a second monitor to your PC or Mac, but this also increases the amount of desk space you'll need - and potentially doubles your expenditure. A better solution is to use an old Android tablet or iPad as a second screen, so you can shift some of the content from your computer Desktop to a portable device that won't overcrowd your desk space.

The best tool for this job is Splashtop Wired XDisplay (www.splashtop.com/ wiredxdisplay), which is available for Windows, Mac OS X, Android (including Kindle Fire) and iOS. Install the XDisplay Agent software on your computer and the Splashtop app on your mobile device, then connect the two using a USB cable and your tablet will instantly transform into a second monitor. You can use your mouse to drag and drop items between the two displays and change the screen resolution as required.

#### **Expand your screen space**





Splashtop Wired XDisplay turns an iPad or Android device into a second screen

Unfortunately, there's a catch with using this otherwise marvellous tool because although Splashtop Wired XDisplay is free, you're limited to six-minute sessions on iOS and 10 minutes on Android. If you need more than that, you'll have to buy the full version for £3.99 or £5.74 respectively. Still, if you plan to use Splashtop a lot, this is a worthwhile investment.

#### Use your laptop as a second screen

You can easily add a second screen to your laptop by plugging a monitor into the display port on your device and turning it on. Windows should automatically identify the new screen and let you configure the settings.

If you want to use your laptop's screen as a spare display for another PC, install the remote-access software TeamViewer (www.teamviewer.com) on both devices and perform the following tweak (note that this only works in Windows 7 and 8.1). Right-click your Desktop, choose 'Screen resolution' and click the Detect button. You should see one or more blank displays (a ghost

#### View Android apps in full-screen mode

The status bar along the top of your Android device is useful for checking the time, new notifications and how much battery life you have left, but it also takes up screen space and can prove distracting when you're reading a web page, watching a video or playing a game. The same goes for the navigation bar at the bottom that takes you 'back' or 'home'.

Some Android apps use a fullscreen feature called 'immersive mode' that automatically hides these bars, but you're still stuck with the clutter in other apps. Unless, that is, you install GMD Full Screen Immersive Mode (bit.ly/immersive406), which lets you maximise your screen space in any app or game without needing to root your Android phone or tablet.

To use GMD, tap or swipe the red 'trigger' line at the bottom of your screen to switch instantly to immersive mode. Alternatively, swipe down from the top of your screen, tap the app's icon and either choose the option on the right to go full screen or the one in the middle to hide only the navigation bar. You may find that immersive



GMD Full Screen Immersive Mode hides toolbars until you need them

mode disables the onscreen keyboard in certain apps, so tap or swipe the trigger to revert to 'normal' mode.

That's all there is to GMD, really, although you can adjust the app's settings to turn off immersive mode when your screen is locked, and change the position and appearance of the trigger. Other features, such as setting specific screen sizes for different apps, are available in the Pro version for £2.72.

#### Reduce the size of Android app icons

How many apps can you fit on your phone's screen? We can manage 20 on our 5.5in monster, but you can make better use of your available space by shrinking the app icons. Sadly, Google won't let you do this and we wouldn't recommend 'rooting' vour device, but Apex Launcher (bit.ly/apex406) offers a solution. This fantastic free app provides an alternative interface for your Android home screen that can be customised in dozens of appealing ways, such as reducing the size of app icons so you can fit more of them onscreen. Install the app and go to 'Apex settings', 'Advanced settings', then tap the 'Icon size' option. Drag the slider to the left to make your icons up to 50% smaller. On the same screen, you can change the text size below app icons and

> resize your widgets.



Make your screen seem larger by shrinking app icons using Apex Launcher

monitor) with the message 'Another display not detected'. Select a blank display and, under 'Multiple displays', select 'Try to connect anyway on: VGA'. Click Apply and with the ghost display

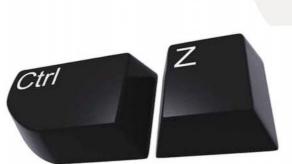


TeamViewer lets you extend the screen of your desktop PC to your laptop

selected and choose 'Extend desktop to this display'. Launch TeamViewer on your laptop and, under Control Remote Computer, enter the TeamViewer login details for your desktop PC to make the connection. When you see a message informing you that the remote computer has multiple monitors, click the button to select the ghost one. Return to your main PC and you'll be able to drag items to the ghost display so they appear on your laptop screen. Under the View menu on your laptop, enable the option to show the remote cursor so you can see what you're doing. When you no longer need the second screen, simply disconnect TeamViewer.

## Recover instantly from PC mistakes

Most PC mistakes are easy to undo if you know how. Edward Munn reveals quick, reliable fixes for six of the most common blunders



#### Instantly undo your last mistake

Ctrl+Z is one of the most useful keyboard shortcuts you can ever learn. In Microsoft Office programs, such as Word and Excel, it can be used not only to quickly undo your last mistake but also to jump back an almost unlimited number of steps to restore anything you've recently edited. In fact, when you make a change anywhere in Windows, such as renaming or deleting a file, pressing Ctrl+Z is normally the quickest way of restoring it to its previous state.

This life-saving keyboard shortcut isn't exclusive to Microsoft tools and should always be the first thing you try when you make any mistake that you're desperate to undo. In most cases, Ctrl+Y performs the reverse action, letting you redo steps that you've just undone. Beware of being too enthusiastic with Ctrl+Z, though, because not all programs offer the redo function, so you could end up inadvertently deleting your work!

#### Reopen accidentally closed tabs

When you close lots of browser tabs at once, it's easy to shut one down by mistake. There are a couple of ways you can restore tabs you've accidently closed in both Google Chrome and Firefox, the quickest of which is to simply press Ctrl+Shift+T. This keyboard shortcut isn't limited to only

reopening the last tab you shut, so you can keep pressing it to restore each successive closed page.

If you've shut a lot of tabs and only

want to open one specific web page, open vour



browser's main menu and click History to display a summary of recently closed web pages. Simply click the one you want to reopen.

You can find your recently closed tabs in Firefox by selecting History from the main menu. There's also an option to

Restore Closed Tabs, which retrieves all your recently closed tabs in one click.

Restore

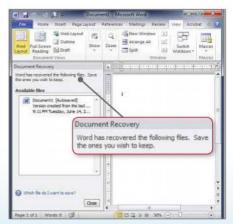
Unfortunately, when you accidently close a page containing a half-filled form, your browser won't remember what was typed when the tab is restored, but by installing Lazarus for Chrome (bit.ly/lazchrome406) or Firefox (bit.ly/lazfirefox406), you can recover whatever you've typed in a single click.

#### **Recover Office documents** you didn't save

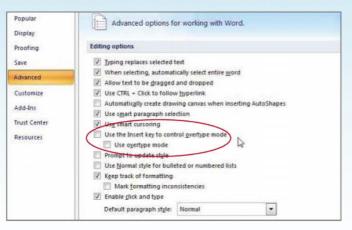
If your PC has ever crashed while you were using Microsoft Word, Excel or indeed any Office program, you'll be familiar with the dread of not knowing how much of your work has (or hasn't!) been saved. In Office 2007 onwards, there's a handy feature you can enable to make sure your files are frequently auto-saved so they're always protected in case of a technical malfunction.

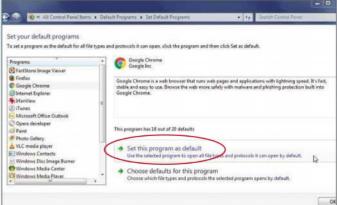
To check if the feature is activated.





#### **Recover from PC mistakes**





click File (or the Microsoft Office button) in the appropriate program and select Options and Save. From this menu, make sure that the box to 'Save AutoRecover information every X minutes' is ticked. You can then set how frequently your files are saved.

In Word, Excel and PowerPoint, you should also select the box to 'Keep the last autosaved version if I close without saving'. Now, when an Office application closes without you saving the file, the Document Recovery task pane will appear the next time the program is opened. The time of the last auto-save is displayed alongside the file name and, by clicking the down arrow, you can opt to Open, Save As or Delete the file.

#### Stop typing over text

Have you ever started typing in a document or email, only to see the characters after the cursor disappear with each key press? If so, the chances are that you've accidently pressed the Insert key, which activates overwrite mode. It's one of the most frustrating mistakes you can make, but it's also one of the easiest to fix, because in most cases all you need to do is press the Insert key again to deactivate the feature.

'Overtype' has thankfully been completely disabled in recent versions of Microsoft Word because it's so frequently activated in error but if, for some strange reason, you want to enable it, you can do so by clicking File, Options and then selecting the box to 'Use the Insert key to control overtype mode'.

#### Restore your default browser

It's easy to press Enter or click OK in haste when a new browser asks if you want to set it as the default program, but how do you restore your favourite browser as the default if the same message doesn't appear when you next open it? Thankfully, there's an easy fix. Type default into the Start menu, click Default Programs and select 'Set your default programs'. Find your favourite browser in the list, select it and then click 'Set this program as default'.

If you already have Chrome open and want to set it as your default browser, you might find it quicker to click Settings from its main menu and then select the option to 'Make Chrome my default browser'. In Firefox, you can do the same by opening the main menu, clicking Options and selecting Make Default under General. In Opera, click the Menu button, choose Settings, then Browser and click 'Make Opera my default browser'.

#### Cancel an email you've just

Have you spotted a mistake in an email you've sent when it's too late to do anything about it? With Gmail's excellent Undo Send feature, you can buy yourself a little more time to remember to attach an all-important document or change your mind about an angry rant, even after you've clicked Send. To activate the feature, click Gmail's cog icon, select Settings and under General, tick the box to Enable Undo Send. Below, you can set the send-cancellation period to anything from 5 to 30 seconds (remember to click Save Changes afterwards). Now, when you send an email, a notification appears - for the time you specified - showing the option to 'Undo' your email as well as the usual 'View message' button.

Note that if you click View Message or navigate away from the inbox, the Undo button will disappear immediately, so if you have any doubts about what you've just sent, click Undo straight away and you'll return to the Compose view, where you can edit your message, then resend the corrected version.



#### **NEVER LOSE A FILE AGAIN**

If you use the Desktop app for a cloud service such as Google Drive or Dropbox, it's a good idea to save your important files to a folder that's automatically synced to the cloud, so you can recover your work if your PC suffers a disaster and you can't use it. Many cloud services also include the option to recover previous versions of your files, which means you can view your documents as they appeared a few weeks ago. To view the previous versions of a file in Dropbox, right-click it on www.dropbox.com and select 'Previous versions'. You can do the same in the web version of Google Drive, by right-clicking a file and selecting 'Manage versions...'.





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	Idikidik	Tanki and Broadana	12 months)	monuis	max speeu	unimited	20100
2	sky	Sky: Broadband	£10.00 (FREE for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	on unlimited	£0.00
			040.00	40	47841		
3	8	EE: Broadband	£10.00 (£1.00 for 18 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	unlimited	£12.00
4	Virgin modia	Virgin: Broadband	£26.00 (£12.00 for 12 months)	12 months	50Mbps max speed	wnlimited	£144.00

#### Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

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

\*\* Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.

Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 6 September 2016.



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

## In the next issue of our sister title Computeractive... SNEAK

# computer Je

#### WHY YOUR PC KEEPS CRASHING -

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## Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest from your computer by taking our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you unravel our hardware-themed word search and guess our film-title emoji?

#### **WEB USER WORD SEARCH**

Can you find the following PC hardware in the grid on the right? Names may appear vertically, horizontally and diagonally, and backwards or forwards

**COMPUTER HARD DRIVE KEYBOARD LAPTOP MONITOR MOTHERBOARD MOUSE PRINTER SCANNER WEBCAM** 

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#### COMPETITIONS

#### **WIN 1 OF 6 MAGIX Movie Edit Pro** 2017

The 2017 version of MAGIX Movie Edit Pro makes it easier than ever to edit videos, add superb effects

and burn to DVD or upload online. It supports 4K video, and offers a choice of 32 music tracks. To run the program, you need a 64-bit version of Windows 7, 8 or 10. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'movie' in the subject line. For more information visit www.magix.com/gb and follow @MAGIX\_INT on Twitter.

#### **WIN 1 OF 5** Roku 3

Bringing together the best elements of its previous models, the Roku 3 came top (beating Apple,

Amazon and Google) in Issue 403's media streamers Group Test. It's as close to a perfect TV-streaming device as you're likely to find, providing every terrestrial catchup service plus Netflix, Amazon Video and Sky. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'roku' in the subject line. For more information visit www.roku.com and follow @RokuUK on Twitter.





## Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

### Edit your videos online

#### SPECIAL Ditch the Downloads! ISSUF

#### www.wevideo.com

WeVideo is an online video editor that has recently been redesigned to offer a better editing experience. Here's how to use it

eVideo has been rewritten in HTML5, making it faster, smoother and more secure than the Flash version. The excellent online video editor offers all the features you'd expect from a similar Desktop tool in your browser. It currently only works in Chrome and Opera, and the free version limits you to 1GB of online storage and five minutes of video - a time limit that

resets at the start of each month.

Upgrading to a paid-for plan - which costs from \$20 (£15) - gets you more storage and longer videos, and the unlimited plan is currently \$69 (£52) a year, down from the usual \$159 (£120). For that you get unlimited storage and publish time, two licences and various premium features. There are free apps available for iOS and Android, too.



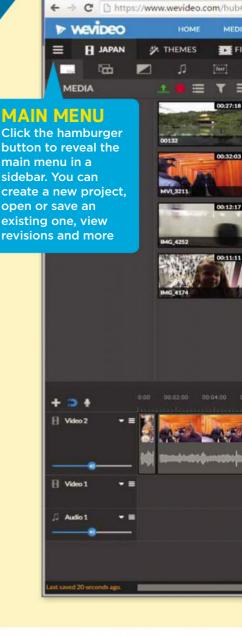
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Start by logging in with your Google, Facebook or Office 365 credentials, or create an account by entering some details and a password. The Hub will load, displaying the amount of storage 11 and time 2 currently being used. Click Create New 3 to load the editor. You may be prompted to activate WebGL.



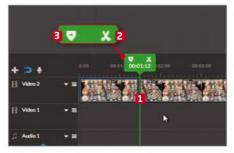
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Click the 'Add a few clips' link 11 to choose the videos you want to use in your production. You can also load videos into the editor by clicking Upload. Videos can be uploaded from your hard drive or imported from sites including Google Drive, OneDrive, Facebook, Instagram and Dropbox.





Your files will be uploaded or imported, then converted and added to the 'My media' folder. 11 Thumbnails of the clips are displayed, along with their name and duration. 2 Drag the first clip to the timeline below **B** - you can place it at any point. Press Play 4 to preview the video in the window. 5



To split a clip, drag the green slider into position, 🚹 then click the button on the right. 2 Click the button on the left to add a marker. 3 In the window that opens, enter a title. You can link a marker to a specific clip (moving the clip will move the marker).



Click a section and a small toolbar will appear 🗓 showing options to delete the clip or open the editor, fade options or effects menus. The fade option opens above the bar 2 and lets you set the fade-in and fade-out points for your video and/or audio.





A range of effects including Sharpen, Sepia, Black and White, Blur, Dream and Image Stabilisation (Beta) open in a new window. The Clip Editor provides various transformation tools. 11 Use the tabs at the top 2 to make changes to the volume, add animations and tweak the colours. Click Done Editing. 3



The tabbed toolbar lets you add graphics 11 (backgrounds, solids, overlays and frames), introduce transitions, 2 add audio 3 (free music, sound effects or premium music) and drop in text graphics or annotations. 4 There's a surprisingly large collection of options to choose from.



A selection of ready-made styles can be applied to your video. Click the Themes button 1 and pick one you like. When you've finished editing your movie, click the Finish button. 2 Enter a title for it, select the quality (480p or 720p) and download it or publish it directly on a site such as YouTube or Vimeo.



## Shrink your files without losing quality

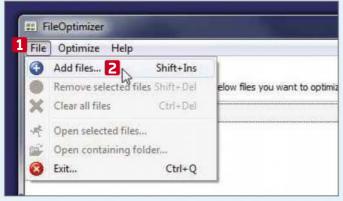
FileOptimizer: bit.ly/optimizer406 | 🕒 15 mins | 🧗 XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10

ileOptimizer is a simple but powerful tool that can compress more than 275 different file types. It automatically recognises file extensions, so all you need to do is drag and drop your documents, music, video and image files into the software. Then, with a single click of a button, FileOptimizer takes care of the rest.

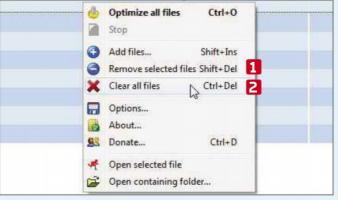
Normally, compressing a file reduces its quality, but the program's special technology offers lossless file compression, so your optimised files look exactly the same as the originals.

In this Workshop, we show you how to use keyboard shortcuts to optimise files quickly and easily, where to find your processed files and how to restore your original files if you need to. We also explore the Options menu to show you how to keep the original file attributes (including date stamps and read-only tags) on your optimised files and tweak the compression levels. To compress files in bulk, you can use FileOptimizer's 'Exclude mask' to filter files by keyword.





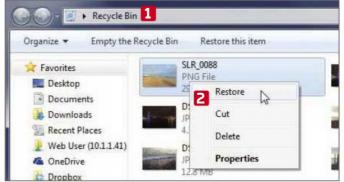
Download and install the latest version of FileOptimizer from bit.ly/fileo406 and run the application. Click File 1 and 'Add files' 2 to browse for the files you want to optimise, or simply drag and drop them to the program window.



You can optimise different file formats at the same time. To preview a file, double-click it. To remove a file from the list, select it, right-click and choose 'Remove selected files' (or press Shift+Delete). 1 Alternatively, choose 'Clear all files' (Ctrl+Delete) 2 to clear the list and start again.



To browse the folder a file is saved in, right-click it and select 'Open containing folder'. After making your selection, click Optimize, then 'Optimize all files' (Ctrl +O). Progress is displayed in the Status column along with the files' 'Optimized size' 1 and size as a percentage of the original. 2



In general, quality is not affected by FileOptimizer's compression. A processed file can be opened from the location where the original was saved and original files are moved to the Recycle Bin, 1 where you can restore them 2 if you want.





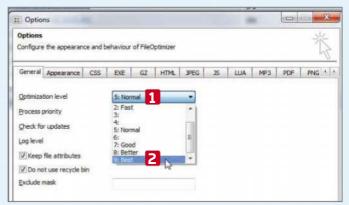
#### **EXPERT TIP**

#### **Edward Munn says**

To use as much compression as possible on JPEG files while still maintaining their quality, tick the 'User arithmetic' option from the JPEG tab in FileOptimizer's Options menu. Note that enabling this option may mean you can only open the files with certain image viewers.



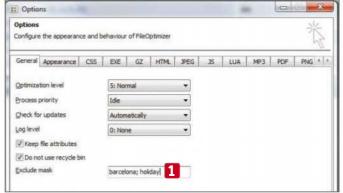
To stop FileOptimizer keeping copies of your original files, click Optimize and Options. Under the General tab, 1 tick 'Do not use recycle bin'. 2 FileOptimizer deletes attributes including 'Created' and 'Modified' timestamps, but you can stop this by ticking the box to 'Keep file attributes'. 3



The Optimization level is set to '5: Normal' 1 by default to offer the best combination of compression and speed. To achieve the maximum levels of compression, click the drop-down menu and select '9: Best'.



FileOptimizer's process priority is set to Idle 1 by default, but you can adjust this according to how much of your PC's resources you'd like the program to be able to use. Available options include 'Below normal', Normal, 'Above normal', High and Realtime. 2



If you're processing files in bulk, you can use FileOptimizer's 'Exclude mask' feature to filter files by keyword. Enter one or more masks (separated by semicolons), 1 and files with a name or file path that contains any of these keywords will be excluded.



FileOptimizer lets you change the compression configuration for some formats. Click PDF, 1 for example, and you can set the downsampling resolution for images in PDF files. 2 For MP3, JPEG and PNG, you can opt to 'copy metadata' when you compress those files.



The program is set to use a standard Windows theme by default. 1 You can change to a Windows 10, Luna or Metropolis UI Black theme from the Appearance tab 2 in Options. A tickbox lets you activate a ribbon interface.

To reset the options menu, click 'Restore defaults'. 4



See who's connected to your wireless network

f you suspect that someone is using your wireless network without permission - a neighbour, for example - you can check using NirSoft's Wireless Network Watcher. This tiny free program doesn't require installation and displays a list of all connected devices, such as computers, tablets and phones. The program has just been updated with new features and now lets you delete devices from the list.

Wireless Network Watcher 2: www.nirsoft.net/utils | 🕒 10 mins | ಶ Windows

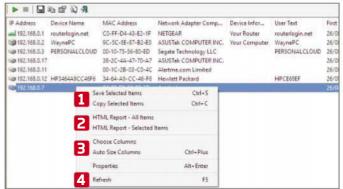




Run the program and it will display a list of devices connected to your wireless network. You can order the results by IP address, device name, MAC address, network adapter and user text by clicking the relevant heading. 11 will also show you when a device was first and last detected. 2

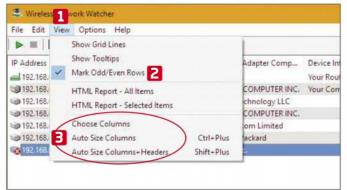
If you're not sure about a device on the list, you can take a closer look. Double-click an item to open its properties in a separate window. 💶 This contains the same information offered in the main interface, but you can select and copy the text in any of the boxes.

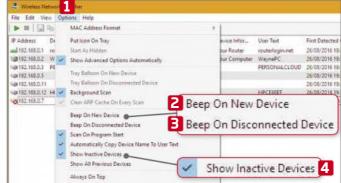




Run a network scan at any time by clicking the green Play button. 1 Press the Stop button 2 to end the scan. Select items in the list by clicking them (hold down Shift or Ctrl while you do this if you want to select multiple entries), then click the disk icon 3 to save the information.

Right-clicking items in the main interface also lets you save or copy the details. 11 You can generate a report in HTML format listing all - or just selected - devices, 🔼 and choose the columns to show and auto-size them. BRefresh the results 4 to make sure all connected devices are listed.





A new feature lets you remove items - just select them and press Ctrl+Del. Click the View tab 11 and select Mark Odd/ Even Rows 2 to see the different devices more clearly. You can also choose columns and 'auto-size' them. 뒬 If you've resized the interface, this ensures everything fits properly.

Click Options 11 to display the available settings. You can set the software to alert you when a new device connects to your network 2 or an existing device disconnects. 3 You can also have the program show all detected devices, including ones not currently connected. 4

### Unlock restricted content with Opera VPN

pera VPN has only been available to Android users for a unlimited free VPN access, which not only few weeks (it's been on iOS since May), but that didn't stop it winning an award in our recent round-up of free Android VPNs (bit.ly/webuser405). The app offers totally

allows you to protect your privacy at all times, but also to unlock geographically restricted content on the web.



Opera VPN: bit.ly/opera406 | 🕒 5 mins | 💼



Android 4.0.3



Install and run Opera VPN and tap Get Started. Select Skip and Got It to jump past the intro screens, or swipe left to learn more about the app.

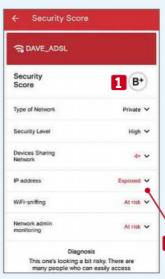
A warning appears asking you to allow Opera VPN to set up a VPN connection. 1 Tap OK 2 and select Connect to join a VPN.



You can use Opera VPN while on Wi-Fi or a mobile data connection. The app connects to the closest region by default, which will probably be the fastest. Tap Change Region 1 and you can choose from VPN servers in Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Singapore and the US.

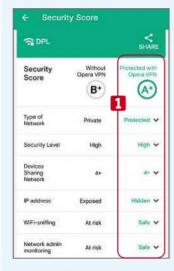


A key symbol in the notification bar indicates when you're connected to Opera VPN. Swipe down to open the notification tray, then tap 'VPN is activated by Opera VPN' to view how long you've been connected 11 and amount of data sent and received. 2



To understand how Opera VPN protects your privacy while using Wi-Fi, tap the app's Wi-Fi button and select 'Connect to WiFi'. The network shows as 'unprotected' when you're not on a VPN. Select Test WiFi Security and Opera VPN shows a security score for the network 1 and identifies any potential risks. 2





Swipe up and tap Protect WiFi to re-enable the VPN. The app gives the network a new security rating and identifies the ways in which it's improved your safety online. 11 Tap the Back button and select the crossed-out eye symbol to access Opera VPN's Guardian feature.



Tap Activate Guardian 1 to block ad trackers from stalking you online. If you haven't already turned it on, the VPN will now be activated. You can deactivate Guardian from here or revisit the page to see the threats the app has blocked. When you've finished using Opera VPN, tap the switch in its main menu to deactivate it.

## **Weekend Project**

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





## Back up anything to an ISO file

ISO files provide a useful means of backing up discs and distributing software. **Wayne Williams** explains how to use them

e regularly mention ISO files in Web User, usually when referring to disc-burning software, but we rarely get the opportunity to go into much detail about the format. ISOs are typically a single compressed image of a CD or DVD, and the name derives from the ISO 9660 file system that's used with CD-ROM media. You can burn an ISO to disc, or explore its contents on your computer, much as you would a Zip file. You can also mount and access

an ISO like a virtual drive.

ISOs are commonly used for packaging and distributing operating systems – if you download a copy of Windows or a Linux-based OS such as Ubuntu, it will be in this format. However, you can also use ISOs to back up anything you are likely to want to copy to disc in the future, including DVDs and Blu-rays.

In this Weekend Project, we explain how to create ISO files and get the most from them.



#### Write an ISO to disc

The most common use for an ISO file is to create a physical backup on a CD or DVD. You can't write the ISO to a disc as you would a regular file – such as a video – so you need to use a discauthoring tool, such as the excellent CDBurnerXP (cdburnerxp.se). This expands the contents of the ISO while writing it to disc, putting everything in the correct position and naming the

media accordingly. Take a look at our Mini Workshop on the opposite page to find out how to use CDBurnerXP.

#### Write an ISO to a USB flash drive

Many of the latest PCs don't have a disc drive, so you may prefer to write your file to a USB flash drive instead, particularly if it's for an operating system that you want to install on different computers. The process of writing the ISO to a memory stick isn't as straightforward as writing it to a disc, and you'll need to use a third-party program such as Rufus (bit.ly/rufus406).

Insert a blank USB memory drive into your PC, launch the program and select your USB drive in the drop-down menu. Click the disc button to the right of the ISO Image box and point it in the direction of your file. Click Start to format



Rufus is a useful program for writing ISO files to flash drives

the drive and write the ISO to it.

You can use Rufus to create a bootable Windows installer or a Windows To Go drive, which lets you install and run Windows directly from the memory stick, like a portable PC. However, you'll need a very fast drive for this option.

#### Browse the contents of an ISO file

An ISO file is similar to any compressed archive, and you can browse its contents just as you would a Zip file. Built-in support for the format was introduced in Windows 8 so, if you're using that operating system or later, you can just browse an ISO by right-clicking it and

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E:\New Des	ktop\Window	vs10_InsiderF	review_Clien	t_x64_en-gb_1-	4372.iso\	
Name	Size	Packed Si	Modified	Accessed	Folders	Files
boot	17 992 1	18 016 2	2016-06	2016-06	3	28
efi	20 598 9	20 623 3	2016-06	2016-06	5	28
sources	4 179 52	4 180 35	2016-06	2016-06	82	892
support	298 764	333 824	2016-06	2016-06	2	31
autorun.inf	128	2 048	2016-06	2016-06		
bootmgr	384 760	385 024	2016-06	2016-06		
] bootmgr.efi	1 164 560	1 165 312	2016-06	2016-06		
setup.exe	69 408	69 632	2016-06	2016-06		

Browse the contents of an ISO file using 7-Zip

going to 'Open with', 'Windows Explorer'. If you're using an older version of Microsoft's operating system, such as Windows 7, you can use a third-party compression tool, such as 7-Zip (www.7zip.org) to open and browse the ISO.

If you're after a particular file or folder, extract it just as you would when accessing the contents of a Zip file.

#### Mount an ISO image

You can also 'mount' an ISO image - that is, make it appear as a virtual drive that

can be accessed in File Explorer. Provided that ISO images aren't associated with a program you've installed (such as 7-Zip), right-clicking an ISO in Windows 8 or 10 will give you the option to mount the file directly from the context menu.

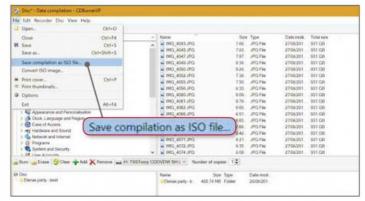
Virtual CloneDrive (www.redfox.bz) works with all versions of Windows, including Windows 7, and lets you create up to eight virtual drives at the same time. See our Mini Workshop on page 61 to find out how to use Virtual CloneDrive.

#### Make your own ISOs

CDBurnerXP can rip discs to ISO format or create

an ISO from a collection of files. For the first task, you need to insert the disc you want to rip and select 'Copy or grab disc' from the front screen. Select the source drive, then select 'Hard disk' as the destination. Finally, click 'Copy disc' to write the ISO.

To turn a collection of files into a disc image, select 'Data disc' in the menu and add all the files you want to include. When you've done that, instead of writing a disc, go to File, then 'Save compilation as ISO file'.



Turn a compilation of files into an ISO using the free CDBurnerXP

#### MINI WORKSHOP | Write an ISO to disc using CDBurnerXP



CDBurnerXP is a lightweight tool that can be used to create and write disc images. The authoring options are all presented on a single screen. To write a saved disc image to CD or DVD, select 'Burn ISO image' 11 from the main menu and click OK. 2 The Burn ISO image module will open in a new window.

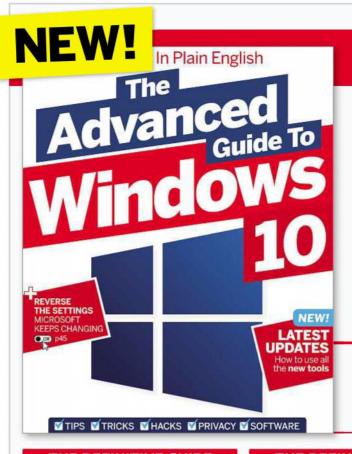


Click the Browse button 🗓 and locate the file you want to write to disc. Make sure the Target device 2 is your CD/DVD writer, and pick the speed at which you want to burn the disc. [3] Leave the burn method as 'Choose automatically'. 4 There are some additional authoring options available. 5 Just tick the boxes to select them.



If you have an image file in a format other than ISO - BIN, for example - vou can convert it here. 11 Just browse for the image and choose a save directory. When you are ready to start writing the contents to CD or DVD, click Burn disc. 2 The Burn ISO Progress tab B will show you what's happening.

## WebUser Bookstore



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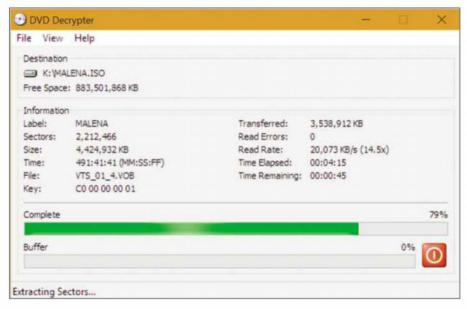
Free software can be a worry. Is it as good as a paid-for package? Will it sneak junk on



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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It might be ancient in software terms, but DVD Decrypter is still the best tool for ripping DVDs to ISO files

#### Rip DVDs to ISOs

Ripping a DVD or Blu-ray to an ISO file means you won't need the physical disc if you want to watch the movie or burn a copy. There are several tools you can use for the task, but DVD Decrypter is one of the simplest. The program was shut down and work on it discontinued 11 years ago, but you can still download the installer from the unofficial mirror at www.dvddecrypter.org.uk. DVD Decrypter works with all versions of Windows, including (rather surprisingly) Windows 10. To use it, just Insert the DVD you want to rip, then run the

program and select your destination to start the process.

What made DVD Decrypter so contentious (and got it shut down) is that it cracks the CSS (Content Scrambling System) copyright protection on DVDs. These days, other forms of protection are used, so the software might not be able to write certain discs. You could also try using ImgBurn (www.imgburn.com) which replaced DVD Decrypter. It hasn't been updated in three years, but it still works fine - just make sure you deselect any bundled junk during installation.



ISO Workshop offers a selection of useful tools for creating and working with ISO files

#### Create images using ISO Workshop

ISO Workshop (www.glorylogic.com) is a useful free program that offers five tools: Make ISO (from files on your hard drive), Burn Image (to CD, DVD or Blu-ray), Extract Files (from a disc image), Backup Disc (as an ISO or CUE image file) and Convert Image (which converts various disc-image formats to ISO). Select the option you require from the main screen and the relevant module will open. It's very easy to use and works quickly. For example, if you want to make an ISO, just choose a Standard or Bootable file, add the contents and click Save.

Make sure you click the links (in both panels) to customise the installation to avoid installing junk and allowing unwanted changes to your browser.



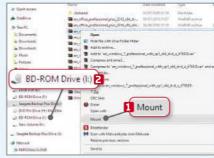
#### MINI WORKSHOP | Mount an ISO image using Virtual CloneDrive



Virtual CloneDrive can handle all popular image formats, not just ISO files. During installation, you'll be able to select the formats you want to associate with the program. [1] ISO is ticked by default, but you can also add IMG, UDF and BIN if you plan to use the program with these formats.



Launch the software to bring up the Settings screen. From here, you can select the number of virtual drives you want. 1 You can keep the history of recently mapped images, 2 to make it easier to reopen them, and also automatically automount the last image B when you reboot your PC or restart the program.



🔁 To use the software, right-click an ISO file on your Desktop or through File Explorer, and select Mount. 1 The ISO will be mounted and appear as a drive in File Explorer, 2 ready for you to browse. Right-click the drive entry to unmount it, clear the history and access other options.

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## Web User's Top Tips

Our experts provide tips for Android 7 (Nougat), the latest version of Google's mobile operating system

#### **TOP TIPS FOR USING NEW FEATURES IN ANDROID 7**

#### **Upgrade to Android Nougat**

f you already own an Android device, you're probably wondering how and when you will get Android 7, the latest version of Google's mobile operating system also known by its sweet-themed nickname, Nougat.

Unlike Microsoft, which has dished out Windows 10 to anyone that wants it, Google doesn't control the distribution of its OS upgrades and instead, the latest version of Android will be supplied exclusively by your phone's manufacturer who decides which phones get it and when. The good news is that if you own a top-end Android phone, bought in the last two years, you'll probably get the upgrade sooner or later.

Go to Settings on your phone, scroll down to the bottom and tap About. Press System Updates or 'Download updates manually' to make your phone check for new OS versions and updates. You should do this every week until you get Android 7 aka Nougat.

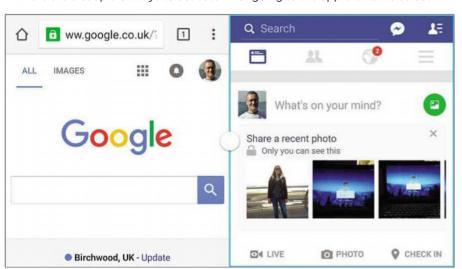
#### Use split-screen mode

There is a new way of working in Android 7 that is especially useful for tablets and phones with large screens. You can simultaneously display and use two apps on your screen, which is great if, for example, you are working in one app and want to jot down any thoughts and observations in a notes app; or if you want to look up something and display a map of where it is at the same time. Split-screen works in both portrait and landscape modes.

There are a couple of ways to activate

split-screen mode: you can either long-press the app-switcher button while an app is running on your screen; or tap the app-switcher button to show all the running apps as cards, then long-press the app you want and drag it to the top of the screen.

In each case, once the first app has been selected and is running in one half of the screen, you can then choose another app to run alongside it by simply pressing the home-screen button or going to the app drawer to select



Split-screen functionality will soon be available to all Android users, not just those who own Samsung devices



Is that Android Nougat downloading? We wish! Keep trying

the second app.

As useful as this function is, not all apps are compatible with split-screen mode. Certain games, for example, need to run full screen, whereas apps including your browser, notepad, to-do list and others are usually more flexible and can adapt to different screen sizes. If you are struggling to get split-screen to work, try using it with different apps and make sure you pick ones with flexible screen layouts.

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.

#### Use Android 7 split-screen now

Some phone manufacturers - such as Samsung - have already implemented the split-screen feature and you might not need to wait for Nougat to use it on your phone. Just open an app - Chrome, for example - and hold down the app switcher. Chrome will shrink to the top half of the screen and any apps you can run alongside it are displayed below. Tap one to open it. You can also tap the app-switcher button to display a special icon in the top-right corner of each app card next to the cross. Tap this to run the app in split-screen mode.

#### **Use Screen Zoom**

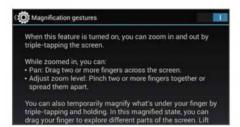
Some apps and web pages use very small fonts that are hard to read. Android 7 has a Screen Zoom feature. which magnifies everything by emulating a lower-resolution screen, so everything including text, icons and the contents of apps looks larger. Screen Zoom has been added to Settings, Accessibility and can also be found on the Welcome screen when the phone or tablet is first used.

#### Use Screen Zoom now

You might already have a zoom feature on your phone, depending on the make and model of your device. On some Samsung Galaxy models, including the S6 and S7, go to Settings, Accessibility, Vision, 'Magnification gestures'.

Enable it and you can tap three times in quick succession to zoom into any screen and any app. When the screen is magnified, press with two fingers to drag the screen around to view different areas. Triple-tap to return to normal display mode. It isn't quite the same as Nougat's Screen Zoom, but it is a good substitute while you are waiting for your phone company to provide the update.

Another way to use this feature after enabling it - at least on Samsung phones - is to triple-tap but press and hold your finger on the screen on the last tap. The screen zooms in and can be panned around by dragging your finger up, down, left and right. The screen returns to normal magnification when you release your finger.



With Magnification gestures enabled you can zoom in and out by triple-tapping

#### TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

#### Doze your apps

Doze mode is a feature in Android that is designed to increase your device's battery life. When the screen is off and apps are not being used, they are 'suspended' so that they run in the background and use less battery power. This feature was introduced in Android 6 and it's been improved in Android 7 to work automatically.

You may already have a battery saver on your Android phone that works in a similar

fashion. On a Samsung, for example, go to the apps drawer and run Smart Manager. Press the battery icon and press the Detail button in the 'App power saving' section on the next screen. Turn on 'App power saving'.

Apps that have not been used for three days are automatically set to save power. This can reduce or stop any notifications, so if you rely on the app, tap it and set 'App power saving' to Disabled. You can also set it to always save power, so you don't have to wait for three days of inactivity. This can extend the battery life even more.

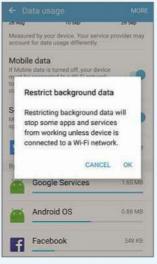
#### **Use Data Saver**

Data Saver is a new feature in Nougat that reduces the amount of data apps

use when you're not connected to Wi-Fi. This is good news if you frequently reach your phone contract's data limit. Go to Settings, Data and turn on 'Data saver'. It may also be in the Quick Settings, which can be accessed by pulling down from the top.

#### **Use Data Saver**

Why wait for Nougat when you may be able to use Data Saver right now? Some phones have a very similar feature for cutting



Stop background apps using up all your mobile data when you are near your limit

down on data usage. On Samsung phones, go to Settings, 'Data usage' and press the More button. A menu appears with 'Restrict background data'. Press OK in the notification.

#### Respond to notifications

Notifications have been improved in Nougat and many apps have had action buttons added that let you perform tasks without having to switch to the notifying app or leave the current one. If a text message arrives,

for example, just pull down from the top to see the notification with a Reply button. You can tap this to respond with a message, without interrupting what you are doing.

#### Respond to notifications now

Some phones have had this feature for a while and you may already be able to use it. Just look for a button within any notifications you receive that lets you perform certain actions, such as Reply.

#### **Block nuisance callers**

Call blocking is another new addition to Android 7, but some phones already have it. If someone keeps calling and you don't want to talk to them - for

> example, a cold caller trying to sell you something - you can block them. A blocked callers' list is created and used by your phone and textmessaging apps to filter and block people you want to avoid.

To set this up on a Samsung phone, go to the Phone app and press More, then Settings, Call Blocking, 'Block list'. You can select numbers to block from the call log, your contacts or 'anonymous callers'.



such as messages - without leaving the current app

## 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



#### **WINDOWS**

#### Norton Internet Security pop-ups

I recently upgraded to Windows 10 and am now constantly being bombarded with a message from Norton Internet Security (NIS) saying that my copy of NIS is not compatible with Windows 10 and needs updating. I haven't had NIS on my system for many years and I don't want it now, but having searched high and low for the files responsible for initiating this nag, I can find absolutely nothing from Norton or for its publisher, Symantec. I even turned off the 'hide system files' option in Search, but I still can't find NIS, which means I can't uninstall it.

I use Avast Free, and have no intention of changing. I can only assume Microsoft has an arrangement with Symantec and downloaded NIS when I upgraded. How do I totally get rid of it, please?

#### Rod Livesey, via email

This is nothing to do with Microsoft. When Windows 10 was in development, some companies worried that their software might be accidentally uninstalled or disabled by the upgrade process. If this happened with security software, users might assume they are protected when they aren't. The solution from companies

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Use Autoruns to track down programs that automatically start with Windows

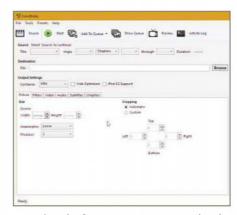
like Symantec was to hide a program on the PC to check the software is still installed when Windows 10 is running. If it isn't, a message on the screen tells you to download or update your software. Uninstalling the security software sometimes leaves this tool behind, hence the pop-up message appearing even though you no longer have the program.

NortonRemidiationRemover (bit.ly/nrr406) should get rid of this message but if not, look in C:\Program Files and C:\Program Files (x86) for Norton or Symantec folders and delete them. Each of those folders has a Common Files subfolder. Look in there for any Norton software folders and delete them.

Autoruns (bit.ly/autoruns406) is a great tool that lists every program that runs on startup. Use the search facility to find Norton or Symantec entries and remove them.

#### for example, go to the menu, 'More tools', Extensions and click the trash icon next to an extension to remove it. Then use an uninstaller such as IObit Uninstaller (iobit.com) to remove all traces of the software and Registry entries. Reboot the PC and try installing Freemake Video Converter again.

HandBrake (handbrake.fr) is a very popular video-conversion tool that is free and open source. Like Freemake. it can convert video from almost any source, so try that if Freemake still won't work. In last issue's Expert Tips we looked at VLC (videolan.org), which can play and convert almost any type of video. Select Convert/Save in the VLC File menu.



Try using the free, open-source HandBrake instead of Freemake Video Converter

#### **WINDOWS**

#### Still using Windows 10 beta

I installed the Windows 10 Insider Preview over a year ago and it is still running. Will I eventually have to pay for the full version?

Mike James, via email

We've heard nothing from Microsoft to suggest that Insider Previews will stop working, so long as you remain in the programme. Insiders will continue to receive upcoming Windows 10 updates for free, so you can carry on using it.

#### **SOFTWARE**

#### Freemake Video Converter won't run in Windows 7

I used Freemake Video Converter (freemake.com) in Windows Vista but since I upgraded to Windows 7, it no longer works. I have tried other video converters, but they aren't as good as Freemake and often aren't free.

M Murrell, via email

Open Chrome and Firefox, if you have them, and delete any Freemake extensions that are installed. In Chrome,

#### Move my address book

My PC's hard drive was beginning to fail so I decided to rebuild it by keeping my two operating systems -Windows 10 and XP - on one drive and my data on another. I am now at the stage where I want to move Thunderbird's default folders for email and my address book (stored in C:\ Users...) to my data hard drive, where I would like all additions, deletions and alterations to automatically be saved.

I've managed to divert my email and folders storage, simply by modifying the Local Directory within Thunderbird's Local Folder section under Account Settings, but I cannot find an option to do the same with the address book.

Its current location is:

C: \Users \.... \AppData \Roaming \ Thunderbird \Profiles \b48f9gic.default It is called 'abook' and has a MAB extension.

#### Graham DA Hefferman, via email

You have Thunderbird installed on XP and Windows 10, and you want them to access the same emails and address book stored on a data drive? Sometimes you can change where applications store their data, but they usually aren't designed to do this.

Having two separate hard drives is like having two PCs and you are effectively trying to run the same application on both. What you need is a portable app, which needs no installation, runs from wherever you place its folder and also stores its data in its folder.

Create a Programs folder on your data drive, get Thunderbird from portableapps.com/apps and move it to this folder. You can now open the folder in Explorer and double-click the program to run it, whether you are in Windows 10 or XP. To make it even easier to run, create a shortcut by right-clicking the program and selecting Send to, Desktop.

To move your contacts, open the address book in Thunderbird and use the export and import options: Export contacts from the old Thunderbird and import them into the portable version.

For any readers that don't know how to move their emails, just right-click your email account and select Settings, then Local Folders on the left. The 'Local directory' setting on the right shows where your email is stored. Copy the folder elsewhere and change the path. There's a Browse button to select the new location.

#### **HARDWARE**

#### Missing Bluetooth

I upgraded my Dell Latitude E6400 to Windows 10 Pro 64-bit some months ago and everything worked fine. The laptop has a Dell 370 Bluetooth card installed but, for no apparent reason, Bluetooth suddenly stopped working. There is no Bluetooth device showing in Device Manager.

When I reinstall the drivers (Dell R235898), I get the message: "This app can't run on this PC". Research on the web indicates that the Widcomm drivers issued by Lenovo are Windows 10 compatible and will work, but when I try to install the drivers, I get the message: "The wizard was interrupted before

Bluetooth Software could be completely installed". I have run the program a number of times and get the same message.

Finally, I went to the Widcomm site and downloaded drivers that I believe are suitable for the 370 card. The drivers

failed to install and I got the message: "Please uninstall current Bluetooth installation before continuing". Using Revo Uninstaller, I have uninstalled anything that looks like Bluetooth software so I don't understand what else needs to be removed.

Others have had this problem but no one seems to have come up with the answer. I don't want to do a fresh install with Windows 10 because, despite what Microsoft says, Windows 10 installs and upgrades are not without problems.

Paul Jones, via email

Bluetooth

not working?

Get a USB adapter

like this from Amazon

Dell says that the Latitude E6400 has not been tested with Windows 10 and so features and devices may or may not work. There isn't a specific

fix for Bluetooth so you'll have to try several things to solve the problem.

Type Device Manager in the search box in the taskbar and click Device Manager. Select 'Show hidden devices' on the View tab and see if Bluetooth is now visible. If it is, expand it, rightclick each item and select Uninstall.

Restart Windows and Bluetooth should be detected and drivers installed. If not, open Device Manager again, right-click the top item and select 'Scan for hardware changes'.

If that doesn't solve the problem, try running IObit Driver Booster Free (avoid installing the optional extras) and update any drivers related to Bluetooth, while ignoring the rest. If the problem still persists, try using the Windows 10 Bluetooth driver (bit.ly/bluetooth406. Failing that, try Broadcom's support page at bit.ly/support406.

We've found USB Bluetooth dongles for under £5 on eBay, Amazon and other places, so if everything else has failed, just plug in one of those and see if that solves the problem.

#### **HARDWARE**

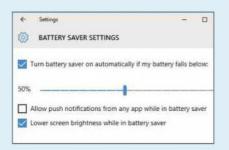
#### Better battery app

Can you suggest any software that will improve the battery life of my laptop? I can only get between one and two hours of use from a charge. The battery app on my Android phone works brilliantly - is there a similar tool available for PC?

Paul Johnson, via email

There are lots of Android apps that extend battery life, but we struggled to find any for Windows. Try running the free trial of Battery Life Maximizer (luculentsystems.com) to see if it makes a difference.

There are several tweaks you can make to increase battery life, such as reducing the screen brightness and changing to a more economic power option. Open the Control Panel, click Power Options and select the 'Power saver' plan. Click 'Change plan settings' and 'Change advanced power settings' on the next screen. The Power Options window shows a list of items. Expand each one and make sure 'On battery' is set to the



Go to Settings, System, Battery Saver, 'Battery saver settings' in Windows 10

maximum power saving. In Windows 10, click the battery icon in the taskbar and click Battery Saver to increase the battery life.

If your security software has a game -mode setting, selecting it will prevent scans, updates and other powerhungry tasks from running. Make sure you only run programs that use a lot of power, such as games and defragmenters, when your laptop is connected to the mains.

Over time, batteries lose their ability to charge so a new battery will last longer than one that's a couple of years old. If your laptop is three or more years old, it might be worth getting a new battery.



This fortnight Roland has been using the new Parallels Desktop to run Windows on his Mac

## **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

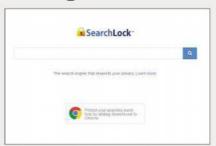
#### **TOP TIP**

#### **BROWSERS**

#### Search privately from Google

You may have noticed that Disconnect Search (search.disconnect.me) doesn't use Google's search engine, but I have found a good alternative called SearchLock (www.searchlock.com) that lets you perform private searches with Google or practically any other search engine. Install the SearchLock Chrome add-on (bit.ly/search406) and it detects any searches you make that could be tracked, then re-directs them to a private, anonymous results page at www.searchlock.com.

In other words, it prevents popular search engines (including Google and Bing) from tracking you with cookies



winner WebU:

SearchLock can be used as a standalone search engine to make private searches

and building a profile on you that can then be used for targeted ads.

Jack Gold, Web User Forums

#### **WINDOWS 10**

#### Silence Cortana

One day we might live in a world like Star Trek where we can just talk to our computer and it understands us perfectly, but we aren't there yet. Because of this, I don't use Cortana in Windows 10 and I think it has a long way



If you don't use Cortana, turn off its features in the settings

to go before it becomes useful.

Here are some tweaks that will make Cortana less intrusive and less likely to bother you. Click in the search box in the taskbar and click the gear icon at the bottom. Under 'Lock screen', turn off 'Use Cortana even when my device is locked'. This removes the messages that appear on the lock screen. Also, turn off the switch under 'Taskbar titbits' to stop seeing Cortana's thoughts, greetings and notifications.

You can also turn off Hey Cortana. There's no point in having it if you don't use it, and turning it off will make your laptop's battery last longer.

Brian Eaves, via email

#### **SOFTWARE**

#### Test older versions of Windows

I recently discovered VMWare Player (bit.ly/vmp406), a superb free tool that lets you download and play with older versions of Windows, right back to Windows 3.1, all in the safety of a virtual machine. It's great for testing but it's also just a good bit of nostalgic fun.

The VMWare images come from WinWorld, a fantastic Microsoft abandonware website (winworldpc.com)



and it's very straightforward to use, meaning you can run old operating systems without needing any technical knowledge.

Right now, I am trying to remember the world of DOS and find my way around Windows 3.11. It's fascinating stuff and shows how far operating systems have come from the old days of DOS commands.

Simon Mellor, via email

#### **SECURITY**

#### Check if your router has been

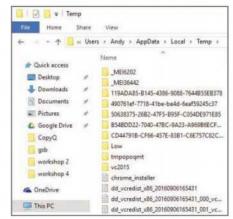
Here's a quick tip to check your router to make sure it hasn't been hijacked by malware or hackers. Go to the F-Secure router checker (bit.ly/router406) and click the 'Check your router' button. Mine was fine.

J Quinn, via email

#### WINDOWS 10

#### Automatically empty the Temp folder

There's a folder in Windows called Temp, where Windows often dumps things that it needs for a while but doesn't have to save. The Temp folder should get cleared intermittently but this often doesn't happen. You can safely remove the files



Use a simple batch file to regularly clear unwanted junk from your PC's Temp folder



in a Temp folder but most people don't bother, which can lead to a build-up of unnecessary files cluttering your hard drive. I found a brilliant tip on the Winaero website (bit.ly/temp406) that shows you how to regularly empty your Windows 10 Temp folder automatically. You need to create a batch file (a simple script of commands that run in the Command Prompt window) but all the instructions are on the site.

Tony Westall, via email

#### **EMAIL**

#### Filter spam in Yahoo Mail

Spam filters for email services aren't perfect and sometimes junk emails get through. Here's a quick tip for Yahoo Mail users to target the occasional message that is not automatically sent to the Spam folder. Select the message so it displays the preview. Click the More menu and select Filter Emails Like This. It automatically fills in the From and Subject boxes, but you can tweak them if necessary. You can choose where to automatically move the message to, such as the Trash folder, or you can create a special folder where suspected junk is held. Then you can check the email before deleting it.

Tom Doyle, via email



Create filters in Yahoo Mail to automatically deal with incoming messages

#### **HARDWARE**

#### Remove pet hair from your laptop

With all the hot weather this summer, my laptop overheated on a few occasions. The problem is that the cooling fan sucks in dust, which blocks the fins of the heatpipe carrying heat away from the processor. It's normally possible to use a vacuum cleaner hose to suck the dust out of the vents. Just switch off your laptop first and, if you want to clean the keyboard too, just be careful that the suction doesn't hoover up the keys.

If your family owns a cat, the solution is not so simple. Cat hair gets sucked in by your laptop's fan and lodges between the fins of the heat exchanger and the fan. Normally, fixing the problem involves dismantling your laptop, but I have discovered an alternative fix. Using a sharp knife, cut a 15cm length of thick

fishing line or thin grass-strimmer cable; it needs to be stiff but thin enough to go between the fins in your laptop's outlet vent. Cut one end of the line at an angle to make a sharp point. A little way behind it, make a second cut but not all the way through. Twist the blade of your knife to make a hook in the wire. Now. push the hook you've created through the laptop outlet vent far enough to get into the fan, remove it and it will pull out a little of the cat hair wad. Keep doing more of the same and, once you're satisfied you've removed enough, finish off by vacuuming the outlet vent.

John Chapman, Web User Forums

#### **GENERAL PC**

#### Change between keyboard layouts quickly

When I use Windows 10, I find I need to have the language set to US English a lot of the time, otherwise some of the keys on my keyboard don't work properly. For this reason, I only use UK English when I need to insert a '£' symbol, then I switch back again to US English.

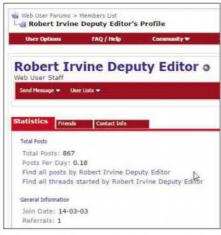
Fortunately, I discovered a really quick way of doing this without having to open the Language settings from the Control Panel. Provided you have two or more keyboard layouts installed, you can cycle between them using the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Space. In fact, the same shortcut works in Android when I'm using a Bluetooth keyboard.

claytoWU, Web User Forums

#### **FORUMS**

#### Find all your previous forum posts

To see all your previous posts on the Web User Forums, click your username when you're logged in to open your profile. Select the Statistics tab and 'Find all posts by X'. All your posts will be listed in chronological order. Clicking an entry's title link will take you to the start of the thread it appears in, while



View all your Web User forum posts from the Statistics tab on your profile

clicking the link that starts 'Re:' will take you directly to your reply. To view only threads that you've started, click the 'Find all threads started by X' link on the Statistics tab. You can find a chronological timeline of other users' posts in exactly the same way, by clicking their username anywhere on the site, then selecting View Public Profile.

> Hello\_There and Cantrel, Web User Forums

#### **GAMES**

#### Play classic games in Google

If you love playing either solitaire or noughts and crosses, you'll be delighted to learn that you can now play either game directly from Google. Simply search for 'solitaire' or 'tic tac toe', and a web app appears that lets you start the games in your browser.

For solitaire, you can choose from two difficulty levels. The game lets you see your score and how long you've been playing for. In noughts and crosses, you can choose to play the computer with three different difficulty levels or select 'Play against a friend' to play against someone who's with you.

Ed Wright, via email



Google's solitaire and tic-tac-toe games provide hours of entertainment

#### **BROWSERS**

#### Strip adverts instead of blocking them

I understand why many people use ad blockers when browsing the web because some sites are over-stuffed with advertising and pop-ups. However, ads are necessary to keep sites free.

I use an add-on called Readability for Chrome (bit.ly/readability406), which doesn't block adverts but strips them from pages after they've loaded. This feels like a better compromise. When there is an article on a web page that you want to read, you click the Readability button and it strips out everything but the article text and images. You get a clean web page that's easy to read and free from ads but because you've already seen the adverts, you're not depriving the website of support.

Keith Allan, via email



## Readers' Helpdesk

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

#### **WINDOWS 10**

#### **How do I stop Windows 10** spying on me?

Can anyone recommend a comprehensive tool for curbing Windows 10's worst spying behaviour? I understand that the various privacy opt-outs are scattered throughout the system, making it easy to miss some. I have no use for apps (including Cortana) and I don't use social media. I value privacy and security even over usability.

I'd also welcome any recommendations for third-party software that makes Windows 10 look and feel like Windows 7.

Finally, are there any genuinely useful improvements in Window 10, or is it all just gimmicks and data-gathering for Microsoft's benefit?

#### steve2003, Web User Forums

Select 'Custom' when setting up Windows 10 for the first time and you should be able to customise the majority of its privacy settings right away. Alternatively, type 'privacy settings' in the Start menu to access all these options at any time.

When I upgraded to Windows 10 last year, I systematically scrutinised every privacy option one by one. I now have virtually every function switched to Off. I don't use any of Windows 10's bundled apps and have disabled Cortana. I also looked closely at the settings in Edge (including its Advanced Settings) and



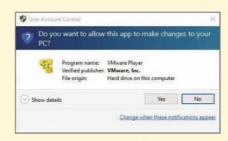
Most Windows 10 privacy settings can be changed from its dedicated menu

#### **SECURITY**

#### Should I let a program make changes to my PC?

I've just bought a new laptop with Windows 10 installed and want to burn a copy of the operating system to DVD to use as a recovery disk in case of any problems. I watched some tutorials on YouTube but there was a discrepancy that worried me. After downloading the software and clicking Run, it asked "Do you want to allow this app to make changes to your PC?". This did not appear in the tutorials, so I clicked No and haven't done anything else. I downloaded Windows 10 from bit.ly/ten406. Can anyone tell me if this message is normal?

Flower, Web User Forums



This generic Window message appears when you install or run new software

The message, "Do you want to allow this app to make changes to your PC?" is basically a 'catch-all' from UAC (User Account Control) to give you the choice of whether or not to allow a program to run. It does not imply anything about the safety of the program and, since you've downloaded the file from a trusted source, there shouldn't be a problem.

Stewart40, Web User Forums

any areas I thought might compromise my privacy, I have disabled.

I loved Windows 7, but I don't really see much difference between the two operating systems and I think you'll quickly adapt to Windows 10. Everything I did in Windows 7, I can do in Windows 10 and all my programs, including some really old ones, work just as they did before. I can't name a significant advantage that 10 has over 7 except that it keeps your PC up to date with the latest and most supported OS. However, I do really like Edge and have made it my default browser after importing my Favorites from Internet Explorer 11.

scrimper and tornado, Web User Forums

#### **GENERAL PC**

#### How do I change the font size in Windows Live Mail?

I use Windows Live Mail 2012 on a Windows 8.1 laptop. The text size seems much smaller than on my Windows 7 machine, but I can't alter it. Does anyone know how to do this? The screen is set to its maximum resolution.

rufford155, Web User Forums

If you just want to set the default font size for any emails you compose, you can do this by clicking File, Options, Mail and Compose. You can also alter the font size of emails you're reading by pressing Ctrl and scrolling the mouse wheel while the email is open (or by pressing Ctrl and the +/- Keys).

To change the size of any other text on screen, you'll need to have a look at the Display Settings in the Control Panel. Bear in mind that choosing the Medium (125%) or Larger (150%) settings in this menu will make everything in Windows appear larger on screen, including your Desktop icons.

mikec1 and Helmut, Web User Forums



Changing Windows' Display Settings alters the size of text throughout your OS









#### **Star Email**

## Mug/

#### Don't put all your eggs in one mapping app

y family and I recently returned from our summer holidays on the lovely island of Jamaica. The resort we were staying in was on the northern coast of the island, but we flew into Kingston on the south coast, so we needed to hire a car to make the journey. While in the UK, I used Google Maps to plan my drive across Jamaica, printing maps and directions. I also installed the Navmii sat-nav app on my iPhone.

Thinking I was fully prepared for my journey, I duly arrived in Kingston and set off on the journey from south to north on the route that both Google Maps and Navmii generated, using the A1 road that links the two coasts.

However, the A1 is an absolute pig of a road and bends and winds its way



across the island; in some places there is no tarmac! During this transit - which, incidentally, was in the dark - I kept fleetingly seeing another road that was fully illuminated and appeared to be a dual carriageway. However, nothing was showing on my maps and my sat-nav app said this mystery road

didn't exist.

When I arrived at my destination after a tortuous five-hour drive, my hosts asked why I was so late. I outlined the perilous journey I had just undertaken on the A1 and a look of horror came to my hosts' faces as they asked why I hadn't driven up the brand new T3 Toll Road highway! This was opened on 5 Aug 2014 (bit.ly/jamaica406), but it still does not feature on Google Maps or Navmii.

Needless to say, I installed a different sat-nav app - Maps.me - for the return journey to Kingston, which was extremely pleasant on a main highway. The lesson I've learned is that Google is not the answer to all our needs!

Dave Alderman, via email

#### Going modern puts police data at risk

I read with interest your news story in Issue 404 (bit.ly/webuser404), 'Police slammed for still using Windows XP'. This article gave the impression that the Metropolitan Police should upgrade to Windows 10, but it did not give the true facts as to why Windows XP is still being used.

As a former Police Officer and Digital Media Investigator (although not with the Met), I can assure the public that their data is very safe and that this is not just down to the operating system.

First, most police forces in the UK have



just upgraded to Windows 7 and, while we talk about using Windows 10 in Government and Law Enforcement, the new operating system is not secure enough and has not been tested to the extent that would guarantee it to be a stable platform for sensitive data.

Second, hardware has nothing to do with it - the issue is the software. Most of the programs that are being run by the police are tried and tested to work on older operating systems such as Windows XP. Going modern puts the data at risk. Additionally, the Police National Computer does not have a graphical user interface - it looks better on a monochrome monitor and was originally designed for 286 and 386 systems, so it runs best on consoles that date back to 1990.

Third, the data is stored in the Police National Network, a secure and encrypted system that is not operated over a public network. When data is sent to other computers, it is encrypted.

I think the writer of the article needs to understand why older systems are being used by the police and should provide better information to your

readers, instead of giving opinions that are not accurate.

Shaun Rowley, via email

#### Worst customer service ever

After six weeks of fobbing off, excuses, promises, delays, hold music and pointless trips to its stores, Vodafone still can't get one of its SIM cards to work

in my daughter's Vodafone handset, meaning she had her first day back at school with no way of contacting us if something went wrong.

We're locked into a contract that can't be cancelled and every time I contact Vodafone, I end up waiting another seven days for nothing to happen. If I ask to speak to a manager, it's a three-day wait for that, followed by another seven days of nothing happening. It is the single worst customer service experience of my life, by far. Has anyone else had a similar problem?

Keith Meldrum, via email 🔁



odafone



#### You can let us know your views and opinions via:

webuser@dennis.co.uk, www.facebook.com/webusermagazine, www.twitter.com/webusermagazine and forum.webuser.co.uk

#### We can't get by without Flash

I know there has been other correspondence about the oft-repeated advice to dump Flash



but to emphasise the problems that this would generate, here are just a few of the websites that have recently requested Flash to be activated: Kaspersky, Microsoft Store, Tesco Direct, National Lottery, Gov.uk, Lloyds Bank, Halifax, Trainline, Amazon and Dropbox.

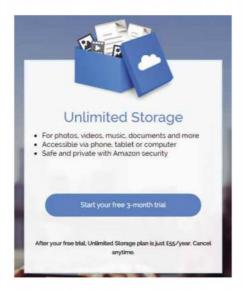
So I fail to see how online life can possibly continue without Flash because there appears to be no alternative.

John Perkins, via email

#### Amazon's greed over online storage

Generally, I have had no problems with Amazon in 14 years of use. A couple of minor issues, but nothing major, and I understand their delivery pricing and how to look for the charges, and so should all the whingers as well.

This morning, however, at about 7.45am, I got a rude awakening. I have paid £23 to Amazon for cloud storage of my music for about two years and my annual payment was due to come up this



month. I received an email saying that Amazon had cancelled all the tiers of payments and it was now unlimited. I have about 6GB - maybe even 7.2GB - above the 5GB free allowance, but this will only increase very slowly so I don't need much more.

Amazon now wants a whopping £55 a year for this. That may not seem a lot but I only have my music on there and nothing else. I looked for the Cancel button on my account - I know Prime has one, although I'm not a subscriber but I could not find one. Instead, I had to cancel my payment method on the Amazon site to make sure I do not pay the £55. Yes, there was a three-month free trial but, ultimately, my annual payment has just gone up about 150%.

It is Amazon's loss overall. No one stitches me up more than once.

Martin Fletcher, Thorpe Hesley

#### Are scammers targeting BT customers?

I've just read Barry's column in Issue 400 (bit.ly/issue400) regarding Uncle Pete and his PC. I can fully sympathise because I know my elderly parents would have reacted in exactly the same way had their computer not been replaced by an iPad, and my Dad not been totally deaf.

Your comment regarding BT having a leak in its security at the call centre struck a nerve with me; this exact same thing happened to me several times after I had contacted BT about its (even worse than usual) broadband service. I received a series of calls purporting to be from BT's technical department, but I quickly got wind of them and they'd usually hang up, although one young lady called me several rude names first, even though I had been uncharacteristically polite throughout!

Anyway, I concluded that the BT call centre must have somehow passed on my details, given how much these callers knew about my situation. My suspicions were heightened further when I visited

the BT customer forum - it seems that there are many people have experienced the same "coincidence" after contacting BT themselves.

I, like others, have tried to report these attempted



scams to Action Fraud, the ICO and BT, but I suspect it will only be when journalists such as Barry raise these issues more widely that notice will be taken.

So well done Barry on your column, and keep up the good work.

Nick Hawksworth, via email

#### TalkTalk is failing to deliver customer emails

We write regarding TalkTalk's failure to deliver a large number of important emails. We believe this to be widespread and it has been going on for years, judging by our own experiences and posts on the TalkTalk Community forum.

Emails are randomly not being delivered, even if they come from the same sender, and nothing is ever in the customer's Spam folder. This is because TalkTalk filters out what it considers to be spam rather than putting the messages into a Spam folder for the customer to make up their own mind.

This is certainly not an acceptable practice. Most customers will not realise that this is happening and just assume that an email they haven't received hasn't been sent correctly. We have set up and been using a parallel email system to prove that this is occurring.

TalkTalk's network team and managers seem incapable of resolving the issue so maybe Web User could consider giving this problem a wider airing. TalkTalk is blaming 1&1 Internet for the problem, saying that its redirects are changing the header information so that the authentication details are no longer valid and therefore aren't being accepted on

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## TalkTalk

TalkTalk's network. However, these same redirected emails are accepted by Gmail and Mail.com, or at least end up in the Spam folder.

It is like Royal Mail throwing away any letters that it considers to be unsuitable for delivery to a customer.

> John Smith and Jill K Bunting, Joint Editors of AV News

#### Let's hang error messages out to dry

I completely agree with Barry Collins over the pathetic error messages we get on our PCs. I've had the 'Keyboard not detected. Press F1 to continue' error. Personally, I'd like to see something more akin to the John Cleese apology in A Fish Called Wanda (bit.ly/wanda406) when a programmer fails to "trap a division by zero mistake".

John Chapman, Web User Forums



#### Windows 10 works perfectly for me too

I couldn't agree more with Ray Pearce's letter in Issue 405, 'Windows 10 works perfectly for me'. I have been using Windows 10 for more than a year and I have



never had any problems with it. All my old software works perfectly, updates download and install automatically, and my PC still runs as fast as it ever has. Even better - Windows 10 didn't cost me a thing. I don't know how people can grumble when they were offered this smooth, modern operating system for free, and blame Microsoft for trouble they have probably caused themselves!

Colin Browning, via email

### What you say...

#### ILL YOU STOP USING WHATSAPP NOW THAT IT'S ALLOWING ADVERTS?

Bit too early to make any firm decision yet. Let's see how bad they are first and whether they can be blocked.

Gary Olsen @Gary\_Olsen

Probably not. Adverts are a necessary evil. In the long term, it will depend on the frequency and annoyance.

Harvey @haskipsey

I've already jumped ship and am using Signal (whispersystems.org).

Paul @abertawejack

Never used it anyhow. For me. it's Signal all the way.

Shaun Aubert

#### **ICROSOFT IS BUILDING A** 'SMART' FRIDGE THAT CAN **RUN WINDOWS 10 (bit.ly/** winfridge406). WOULD YOU **BUY ONE?**

......

I'm not sure. The whole 'computer in a fridge' thing hasn't really taken off so far, has it?

J\_mes @jameseonline

Because we're no longer capable of looking in the fridge and seeing we need milk?

Joanne Evans

Until it breaks down because it's crashed while trying to update!

Steve Hamilton

No, it will 'blue screen' when it gets too cold!

Steve Ellis @gb022621

No. A fridge is for storing food. Why would I need one with Windows 10?

Marg @x\_\_marg

As long as the Start button works, I'm in!

Chris Armstrona

#### AVE YOU GOT ANDROID NOUGAT ON YOUR DEVICE YET?

......

I joined the beta program (bit.ly/ nougat406) and installed the official version of Nougat on my Nexus 6P in seconds, then unenrolled.

Paul Wallace

No. and I have a Nexus 5X and haven't received the update yet.

Alix Rossington

Don't care. I still have KitKat. I hope that Google will stop bloating our phones.

Jack @imthegoldmaster

No, I'm stuck with KitKat and Marshmallow on my Sony Xperia E1 and Motorola Moto E.

Martin Phillp

No, and no matter what the flavour of Android is, I like my Samsung Galaxy Note 3 as it is. Half the stuff built into Android I don't use.

Gerrit Max

#### ILL THE LEAKING OF 68 MILLION DROPBOX PASSWORDS PUT YOU OFF **USING THE SITE?**

It does not put me off using cloud storage, but I won't be using Dropbox.

Lewis Karl Flood @LewisKFlood

It won't stop me, but the failure to inform its users for four years is making me have second thoughts.

Rich Grove @Rich\_Grove

Any hack is worrying, but I have never used the cloud. If I needed to, I would use Dropbox.

Colin Wallace

I prefer to back up via USB. Luckily, I haven't signed up to Dropbox.

David Robinson

## A Page 404

We're still a long way from artificial intelligence outsmarting us, says Barry Collins

## Relying on robots will land us in a mess

f you're reading this while tucking into your mid-morning Danish or over a ham roll on your lunch break, you'd best put this column down now. Flick back a few pages, read a couple of features and come back when your food is comfortably digested and your stomach won't flip more somersaults than a gold-medal gymnast. For what I'm about to relay is a horrific example of why 'artificial intelligence' is a misnomer, some much-needed reassurance that we're still a long way from being slaves to our robot overlords.

In the middle of August, Jesse Newton from Little Rock, Arkansas, went to bed safe in the knowledge that his Roomba robot vacuum cleaner would be doing its nightly sweep of the living room at 1:30am while his family were comfortably tucked up in bed. Naturally, then, Jesse was a little startled to be woken up at 3am by his four-year-old son crawling into his bed, smelling of dog's droppings.

What on Earth had happened? Well, Jesse had forgotten to let the family dog out for her regular late-night toilet break before he went to bed that evening. The dog couldn't hold it in and left Jesse a little present on the rug in the living room. Bang on cue, the robot

cleaner starts its shift at 1:30am and proceeded to trundle over the turd, spreading the mess over "every conceivable surface within its reach,

resulting in a home that closely resembled a Jackson Pollock poop painting", according to Jesse's hilarious Facebook post on proceedings (bit.ly/ jesse406).

Jesse thus ended up with a sleepwalking son covered in dog faeces, a "war zone of poop in the living room",

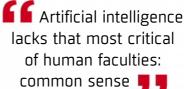
a ruined robot and the mother of all clean-up jobs in the middle of the night. All because a robot doesn't have the intelligence to realise that running over a pile of poo is going to cause infinitely more damage than good.

This boils down to one inarguable fact: computers are only as intelligent as

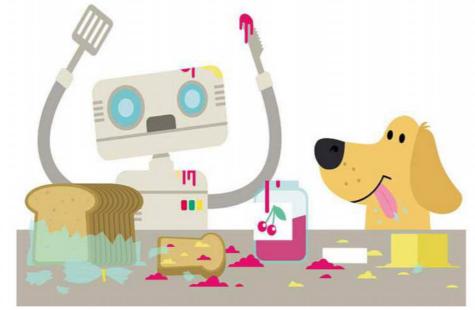
> the programs they are obliged to obey. And programming a computer to do even the most menial task, such as vacuuming a floor, is far from simple.

This is beautifully demonstrated by Harvard computing lecturer David J Malan when he asked some of the smartest students on the planet to write step-by-step instructions for making a sandwich, which were carried out to the letter by his 'human robots' on stage (skip to 13 mins of the video at goo.gl/ zilfao). The task fell apart at step one, "open the bag of bread", when the 'robots' rip open the bag and leave a pile of sliced white scattered across the table. Computers demand precision, and instructions on what they mustn't do (like savagely tear apart bags or spread poo around a living room) as well as what they should.

Artificial intelligence lacks that most critical of human faculties: common sense. And we'll probably have this demonstrated all too vividly when self-driving cars arrive on our roads. Just what do you think will happen when they first come across a police officer directing traffic past an obstruction using hand signals, or when someone flashes their lights to let a Google car turn into a side road? The ensuing chaos will make Jesse's living room look the picture of serenity.









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