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WebUser

2015 BACK ISSUES DISC

COMING SOON!



Our 2015 Back Issues Disc containing all 26 issues from last year will be on sale soon from Amazon. For more information, visit bit.ly/webusercd15

You can still buy our 2014 Back Issues Disc from bit.ly/webusercd





Minimise your messaging mistakes

was once waiting in a pub for an acquaintance who was already over an hour late. "Why do I waste my time on this useless idiot?", I grumpily messaged my partner. "Well at least this useless idiot knows how to text the right person", snapped my tardy (and now former) friend.

Since then, I've learned to be more careful when sending messages, so only the intended recipient gets to read them. At least I hope that's the case, since electronic communication is easier to intercept than the postman's trolley. In this issue's cover feature, we explain how to stop personal

emails, texts and chats being accessed by government snoopers, teenage hackers, nosy bosses and suspicious spouses. Encrypting messages needn't mean you've got something to hide, merely that you want some conversations to remain private.

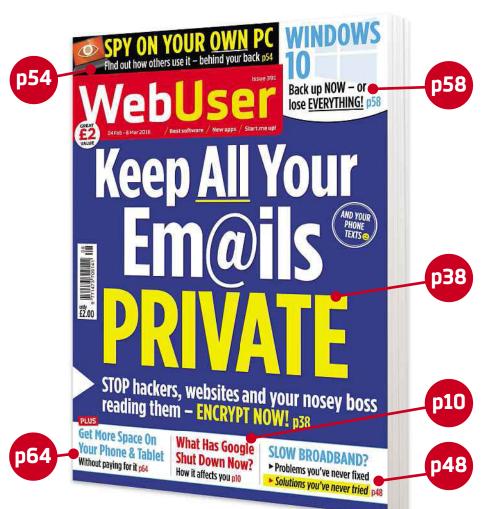
As you can see to my left, our 2015 Back Issues Disc will soon be available to buy from Amazon. Thanks again to everyone who bought the 2014 edition!

Robert Irvine

robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk #webuser



ISSUE 391 ON THE COVER



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

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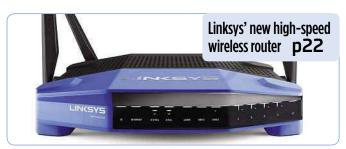
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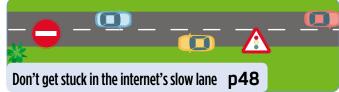
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We show you how to secure all your electronic communications

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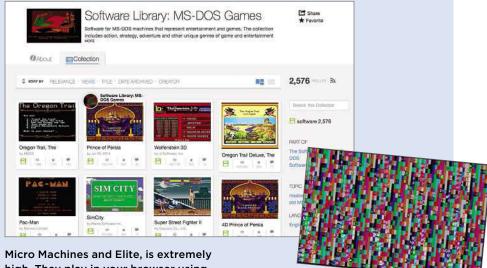


Explore retro games and malware

ownloading old games for free to play on an emulator has long been something of a legal grey area. Copyright problems mean that the creators are not recompensed, and there's also the risk of downloading the games from a dubious website and inadvertently introducing a virus.

A big welcome, then, to two of the Internet Archive's latest collections. one of which offers a legitimate way to enjoy old games, while the other illustrates just how troublesome malware has been over the years. As well as offering a vault of more than 2,500 legally playable MS-DOS games (bit.ly/games391), the amazing free archive is now home to a mammoth collection of historical malware (bit.ly/virus391) distributed in the Eighties and Nineties.

For nostalgic PC users, the games will be of particular interest. The quality of some of the titles, which include Prince of Persia, Wolfenstein 3D, Golden Axe, Street Fighter, Lotus,



high. They play in your browser using the popular emulator DOSBox and we're happy to report that they work perfectly, with no noticeable problems.

Just as fascinating to explore are the 'classic' viruses and the effects they had on latter-day computers. As nasty as they are, some of these threats were motivated by politics rather than

teenage boredom, and there is even evidence of creative genius among the collection - check out the scary but strangely hypnotic Crash.com, above. We're just thankful that all the viruses here have been pruned of their sting.

Find answers faster with Inbox by Gmail

www.google.co.uk/inbox

Google's Inbox app has for a while made Gmail easier to use by bundling similar emails together and providing reminders to help you organise the flurry of daily messages. With it's



two latest features, Google has gone back to its roots to make searching through your emails even easier. By placing your email search results in order of relevance, Inbox now saves you having to scroll through them by date. It also gives you speedier access to important pieces of information. If you search for a membership number in your emails, for example, the detail will appear at the top of your results page "at a glance", so you don't need to open the message itself to find the info you're looking for.

Learn to code with classic **Eighties books**

archive.org

bit.ly/usborne391

Back in the day, computer magazines were full of code for readers to type in. and many books were also produced to teach people how to program. Usborne was among the most prolific publishers, and it



has now re-released 15 of its listings books from the Eighties, which catered for some of the world's most iconic 8-bit computers, from the ZX Spectrum to the Commodore 64. Available as free PDF downloads, the books include introductions to machine code and BASIC, as well as titles dedicated to gaming genres such as horror, space, spy and adventure. Grab an old computer from eBay or download an emulator to make the most of the books.

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

Guess where the accent comes from

accent-map.expedia.co.uk

"Can you get us a bevy, like? I'm proper brassic". If you guessed that this thirsty request was from a Scouser, you've correctly answered one question in Expedia's Accent Map of the British Isles quiz. This plays you 10 phrases and asks you to identify where the speaker is from. Alternatively, you can explore dialects from around the UK and Ireland.



Run Windows 95 in a browser

win95.aif.me

This site opens with a legal copyright warning, but the treat if you continue is a fully functioning Windows 95 operating system that runs in your web browser. It's an astonishing feat from 19-year-old Scottish developer Andrea Faulds (especially given that the OS is actually older than she is)



and it's sure to send all but the hardest hearts aflutter. Sure, it

loads and runs rather slowly, but that's to be expected. Enjoy the nostalgic pleasures of Minesweeper and Solitaire, and play around with the retro menus. Avoid the temptation to open Internet Explorer, however, as it causes the emulator to crash.

Match quotes to Simpsons

frinkiac.com

Named after Springfield's goofy scientist Professor Frink, Frinkiac serves up 15 seasons' worth of screen grabs from The Simpsons, paired with the guotes that accompanied them. Search for a word or two to find an which you can edit to make unique. Cue lots of Simpsons content heading for social media - although there's no easy way to share your meme. D'oh!



screenshots

image, then produce an instant meme,

Discover which dog you look like

www.what-dog.net

Microsoft's latest inventive use for its facialrecognition technology is to identify breeds of dog, but What-Dog.net also allows humans to find out which canine they most resemble. Click 'Use your own photo' to upload an image from your computer, and the site will scan your features and suggest a similar pooch. Apparently, we look like an Irish Setter: "eager and a bit stubborn". There's also a free iPhone app called Fetch (bit.ly/fetch391).



TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@HPPlayLDN

Keep up with news of the forthcoming West End production Harry Potter and the Cursed Child

@dog rates

This feed rates dogs for behaviour and demeanour from photos

@garylineker

Match of the Day's Gary Lineker delivers some wry observations

@indyvoices

The Independent's Voices section provides intelligent and often controversial insights into news

@teslamotors

Electric vehicle manufacturer Tesla Motors is about to reveal its mass-market Model 3

Unlock Facebook Messenger's chess game

en-gb.messenger.com

Type @fbchess play into a Messenger chat window to challenge your friends to a game of chess, using K for King, Q for queen, B for Bishop, N for knight, R for rook and P for pawn, and stating the square you wish to move to (such as @fbchess Bc7).

Download NASA posters

bit.ly/nasa391

Sadly, space tourism isn't with us yet but NASA's range of amazing downloadable posters showcases the beautiful diversity of space.

Compare your salary

bit.ly/wage391

Want to know how long it takes you to earn the UK's average wage, and how your salary compares with those of your neighbours? Find out by typing your postcode and annual earnings into the Mirror's Wage Gauge.



Google shuts Picasa in favour of Google Photos

What happened?

Google is closing down its free photoorganising tool Picasa, pushing users to switch to Google Photos, instead.

Google bought Picasa in 2004, offering it as a free download. The service lets you manage images stored across your PC, search for shots using facial recognition, perform basic edits and apply various effects. However, Picasa hasn't changed much in recent years, with Google instead focusing on Google Photos, its online photo service that offers clever automated editing tools and free web-based backup.

It's not surprising, then, that Google is closing down Picasa in favour of Photos, which is not only more up to date but fits better with the company's online business model.

How will it affect you?

Google will no longer support the Picasa Desktop tool from 15 March. However, that doesn't mean the software will instantly stop working, only that Google will stop providing updates and support. You'll still be able to use Picasa, but it's probably best to start looking for alternatives. If you have any photos uploaded to Picasa's website, you'll need to find them a new home by May.

Google is obviously hoping Picasa fans will switch to Google Photos to organise and edit their photos. Google Photos stores everything in the cloud, which, on the positive side, means you can keep all your images in one place, whether they're from mobile devices or scattered across multiple PCs, and access them anywhere with an internet connection. It also means free backup.

Plus, Google Photos' editing and organisational tools are much better than Picasa's. You can search for images by date or by content, for example, which means you can find pictures of documents by looking for text, or look at every photo you've taken of breakfast. Google will automatically touch up your photos and it can turn

multiple shots taken in succession into clever animated GIFs, while still leaving the original image intact.

The drawback to Google Photos' cloud storage is that all your family photos are kept on the company's servers, so if you're not keen on handing over your personal data to the tech giant, you'll want to consider a different option.

Adobe Lightroom is perhaps the best known and is much more powerful than either Picasa or Google Photos, although it's also more challenging to use. You can buy it outright for £103 inc VAT or get a Creative Cloud subscription including Photoshop editing software for £9 a month. Free alternatives include Magix Photo Manager, which, like Picasa, scans your entire PC for photo

files; and Microsoft's own Windows Photo Gallery.

If you choose to switch to Google Photos, any images stored in Picasa Web Albums will already be there as long as you log in with the same credentials. If you decide not to, Google said it would be "creating a new place" for users to access Web Albums data.

What do we think?

It's always irritating when software you know and love is mothballed (meaning you need to seek out a new tool and learn how to use it). Google often kills off its services but not usually ones as popular as Picasa. We would have preferred to see Picasa and Google Photos merge into one rather than see the former simply abandoned.

Google Photos is excellent if you're blessed with a steady internet connection and don't mind Google having access to your photos. If you don't have reliable broadband, a Desktop-based photography tool is a better option, even you have to pay for it. For this reason alone, it would have been better to overhaul Picasa using Google Photos as a base, perhaps even dumping the brand name, keeping the offline Desktop option and using Google Photos for online backup and sharing.

Alas, we're not surprised that Google wants to push more content online that's its business, after all. See our feature on page 46 to find out how to make the most of Google Photos.

NEWSFLASH!

In light of the closure of Picasa, we've decided to postpone our planned cover feature for next issue in favour of a special in-depth look at how you can ensure you don't lose your files when your favourite online services shut

down.



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

'Right to be forgotten' expands globally



What happened?

Google said that links it has removed under the 'Right to be forgotten' ruling in Europe will also disappear in results across the rest of the world for European users.

The so-called 'Right to be forgotten' means that search engines, including Google and Bing, must remove from their results links to web pages that hold inaccurate or out-of-date information about a person, if requested. It was reinforced following a court ruling in 2014, and Google has been removing links it believes fit the criteria ever since.

Because the 'Right to be forgotten' is an EU law, Google has only been stripping links from results in its European sites, such as www.google.co.uk, but not the US-based www .google.com. Following the threat of a fine by French data protection for not extending the removals globally, Google has given in - but only if the search giant detects the user has a European IP address. Those who appear to be browsing outside the EU will see the full results.

How will it affect you?

This change means
European users can no
longer get full Google
results simply by visiting
google.com. If you're
especially keen on seeing
Google's results without
the 'Right to be forgotten'
changes applied, you can
still easily do so by using a
VPN or proxy, to make it
appear as though you're in
a country outside the EU.

What do we think?

The French authorities are right that the "forgotten" right has no teeth unless it's applied globally but, even with this extension, you can still see the full results without the omissions if you use a VPN or proxy server.

Regardless of whether you think the law is an affront to freedom of speech or a necessary mitigation, it's hard to believe this small change was worth the effort from the French. For most of us, little will change – but it could be a small step toward trying to force Google to implement the EU law globally, across all search results, regardless of a web user's location.

BT cracks down on cold callers

What happened?

BT hopes to reduce the number of nuisance calls its customers receive by diverting them to a junk voicemail box. The telecoms company will look for patterns in cold calls to its 10 million customers, including automated sales and PPI messages. As well as analysing its own networks to look for such time wasters, customers will also be able to set up a 'blacklist' banning specific callers from contacting them. If enough people ban the same number, BT will block it from calling its customers.

BT said most Brits receive at least one such call a month, if not more, and it hopes to block 25 million a week. Ofcom has also set out plans to reduce nuisance calls, which BT, Sky, TalkTalk and others have agreed to. This will see the companies sharing data to cut back the irritating interruptions.

How will it affect you?

Hopefully, the efforts by BT will mean its customers receive fewer such calls,

but the new service doesn't kick in until the end of this year. If you're a BT customer, you can sign up for more details ahead of the launch by visiting www.bt.com/nuisancecalls.

If you're not a BT customer, you can still benefit from Ofcom's plans to get phone providers to collect and share cold-callers' numbers. That said, BT isn't the only phone company to offer such protection. TalkTalk was quick to point out that it has offered nuisance-call blocking for the past two years, protecting its customers from 70 million spam calls every month.

What do we think?

Spam calls are even worse than spam email. Whereas tech companies have spent lots of money on battling the latter, phone companies have, for the most part, left us defenceless against marketing messages, scammers and constant PPI calls. It's high time BT tackled this irritation, and here's hoping the other providers follow it and TalkTalk's lead in addressing the issue. If they don't, it may be high time for Ofcom to take more drastic action to force a solution.



Flash adverts to vanish from the web by June

What happened?

Google is to ban the use of Flash in the ads it carries from June this year. The search giant announced in a post on its AdWords blog (bit.ly/adwords391) that display ads on its network will all be HTML5 from 30 June.

It said that over the last few years, it had "rolled out tools to encourage advertisers to use HTML5, so you can reach the widest possible audience across screens. To enhance the browsing experience for more people on more devices, the Google Display Network and DoubleClick Digital Marketing are now going 100 per cent HTML5".

Google has urged advertisers to update their display ads to HTML5 before June, but it also said that video ads using Flash will continue to work.

The banning of Flash by Google's ad network is the latest in a line of setbacks for the technology. Last December, Adobe took the step of renaming its Flash Professional product Adobe Animate CC in a bid to distance the software from its Flash origins.

Firefox now automatically blocks Adobe Flash Player following the discovery of various security issues inherent in the software.

How will it affect you?

Considering the many security risks

posed by Flash, this is great news for web users and could help to combat 'malvertising', which often uses Flash to infect browsers with malware. Flash is also notorious for causing Chrome and Firefox to crash, whereas HTML5 is generally more reliable. Of course, if you use an ad blocker to filter adverts from web pages, then the news won't make much difference to your online experience.

If you own a website that currently uses Flash advertising, you can find advice for converting the ads to HTML5 at bit.ly/flash391, although this process should happen automatically.

What do we think?

HTML5 has already replaced Flash as the default for YouTube videos, so it was only a matter of time before Google applied the change to its other services.

We've already predicted that 2016 will be the year that Flash finally bites the dust, and this latest announcement is yet another nail in the outdated plugin's coffin. Of course, from Google's point of view, using HTML5 rather than Flash means it will be easier to display adverts

on mobile devices, which is one potential downside for users who would rather not have their screens populated by advertising of any kind.



Honor 7 bit.ly/honor391

Honor may not be a household name in the UK but if you're looking for a smartphone that won't make a huge dent in your bank balance, the company's new Honor 7 could be a tempting option. Available for £250, it has a 5.2in 1080p LCD screen, a 20-megapixel rear camera and an 8-megapixel snapper at the front. There's also a fingerprint reader beneath the rear camera. The phone doesn't have NFC (near field communication), so you can't use it to make wireless payments, but it pretty much covers all other bases. You get 4G and 802.11ac Wi-Fi connectivity, dual-SIM and microSD storage expansion and an infrared transmitter to use the phone as a universal





remote control.

The Honor 7's metallic finish and ultra-slim bezels make it look thoroughly modern from the front although, at 8.5mm thick, it isn't quite as sleek as premium phones such as the iPhone 6 or Samsung Galaxy S6. That said, the extra girth allows for a large, 3,100mAh battery.

The phone's performance and

software, however, were less impressive. The Honor 7 is powered by an octa-core HiSilicon Kirin 935 processor running at up to 2.2GHz, which is the same processor used in the Huawei P8. Despite its 3GB of RAM, we witnessed a fair amount of juddering during the demo's simple screen transitions. And although the phone runs Android 5 (Lollipop), it's overlaid by Honor's Emotion UI software, which won't be to everyone's taste.

The Honor 7 isn't likely to push the Moto G (2015) off the top spot for the title of best budget smartphone, but it does provide better specifications. The inclusion of a fingerprint reader, 20-megapixel camera and an infrared transmitter is unheard of at this price. and it has a higher resolution screen than the Moto G, too.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Apple about to release a budget iPhone?

Logic would dictate that the next phone from Apple should be the iPhone 7, but the latest rumours suggest the company is gearing up instead to release the iPhone 5se, a smartphone equipped with all the technology of the company's most recent handsets but, at 4in, smaller in size than its current 4.7in and 5.5in models. If reports are correct, this new compact iPhone will sit at the very bottom of the iPhone range, with Apple hoping to appeal to customers who prefer a smaller screen.

According to Apple news site 9to5mac (bit.ly/9to5mac391), the iPhone 5se could be announced at an Apple event on 15 March, alongside a brand new iPad Air 3. Apple tends to take around a fortnight to get its new products launched and into shops, meaning we could see the new iPhone 5se on sale by April.

We still don't know that much about the iPhone 5se's design, but we're pretty sure it will feature a 4in screen so that Apple can offer customers a choice of sizes. We also predict that the 5se will be available in a range of colours, have an 8-megapixel camera and use Apple's new A9 processor.

Since Apple wants the iPhone 5se to be both small and affordable, we'd expect it to be priced at around £350, at least £100 less than the 16GB iPhone 6S that went on sale last September. This will pitch it to compete with mid-range Android phones.



LIKELIHOOD RATING 11111

We've long been expecting Apple to launch a more affordable iPhone, to lure dissatisfied Android users who have only resisted switching to iOS because of the high price. However, a 4in screen does seem a bit stingy in this day and age, so it will be interesting to see how popular it proves.

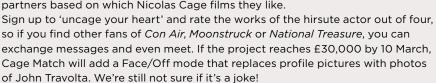
What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Cage Match

bit.ly/cagematch391 | From £5

We've heard some bizarre ideas for dating services but this one is really strange. It matches potential partners based on which Nicolas Cage films they like.



CAGEMATCH



WE LIKE...

Broadband gets 50,000 times faster

Scientists at University College London have developed fibre-optic technology that can send data at 1.125 Tbps (terabits per



second), which is 50,000 times faster than the average broadband speed in the UK.

Mobile customers can roll over data

Carphone Warehouse's own-brand mobile network, iD, now offers rollover data on a range of new tariffs including its



monthly GoTo SIM-only plans.

WE DON'T LIKE...

Airbnb delists hosts without explanation

In recent weeks, the accommodation website has removed a number of UK listings, many of which had no negative reviews. Airbnb said it routinely carries out such



initiatives for "quality purposes".

iOS software update kills iPhones

Thousands of iPhone 6 owners who had repairs carried out by non-Apple technicians have complained that the latest version of iOS 9 has stopped



their phones functioning altogether.

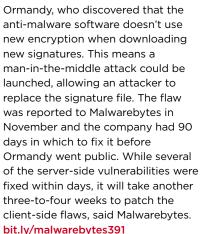
Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Malwarebytes suffers anti-malware flaw

Malwarebytes has disclosed a vulnerability in its popular Anti-Malware software. The problem was found by Google researcher Tavis



Twitter bans 125,000 **IS-related accounts**

Since mid-2015, Twitter has shut down more than 125,000 accounts that threatened or promoted terrorism as part of its "ongoing work" to combat extremism. "We condemn the use of Twitter to promote terrorism and the Twitter rules make it clear that this type of behavior, or any violent threat, is not permitted on our service," said the social-networking site in a blog post describing its efforts to counter extremist content. It said

most of the accounts suspended were related to extremist group IS. Representatives of Twitter, Facebook and Google have been asked by MPs to do more to remove extremist content hosted on their respective platforms using dedicated 'hit squads'. bit.ly/twitter391

Ashley Madison adds masks to protect privacy

Adultery website Ashley Madison has countered privacy concerns by letting its users mask their profile pictures. After the company was hit by a catastrophic hack last summer, it has taken new steps to prevent users from being identified. "We respect your need for discretion." the site says, "so we've added some tools to keep your identity a secret". Users can add a Zorro-style 'domino' mask in either black or brown, or blur the photo. They can also add a black bar over the eyes to 'redact' their identity. The new feature has attracted criticism, not only because it makes users look like criminals but also because it does nothing to address the more pressing concern that the site may be hacked again. bit.ly/ashleymadison391

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

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







When banks started

offering telephone services, fraudsters began calling customers to get their account details. As banks developed online services and apps, fake banking

websites The abundance of popped up and stolen data makes it phishing easy for fraudsters to emails access identities making

the rounds. These SMS smishing scams take advantage of customers' desire for mobile-friendly ways to communicate with their banks. With the latest wave of smishing attacks, hackers fool customers into downloading malware through a legitimate,

unrelated app. The malware then takes over a legitimate SMS communication between the customer and their bank to trick the customer into

giving away their personal information.

> Fraudsters know that it is generally easier to take over an account by phishing, spear

phishing (targeting an individual) or smishing, rather than opening a new account using real or stolen credentials, which is why 'account takeover' has become a favourite tactic of fraudsters. It's time for banks to move away from using personally identifiable info

for authentication, because the abundance of stolen data has made full identities cheap and easy for fraudsters to access.

The best alternative is behavioural analytics. which observes and understands how individual users behave and looks beyond matching usernames, passwords and other means of authentication such as text messages. Behaviour patterns reveal details that fraudsters can't fake despite their best efforts.

Web User says: We'll have an FAQ about smishing in the next issue of Web User, on sale 9 March.

WARNING: MORE THAN JUST A PHONE CASE



THE SHIELDX2 REPAIR & REPLACEMENT PROMISE

If your phone breaks whilst in your ShieldX2 case, we will repair or replace your phone!*

Thin, sleek and transparent, you can barely tell that it is on the phone. We have cases available for new and old phones from all major brands. Our 12 month Repair or Replacement Promise combined with the shock absorbing ShieldX2 case means that your phone is protected from things such as:

- Cracked screen
- Water damage
- Mechanical failures

MORE THAN JUST A PHONE CASE. We have you covered!!!



DROP IT!



BANG IT!



SPLASH IT!



SMASH IT!



^{**}Source: 1227 Quite Interesting Facts to Blow Your Socks Off



^{*}Terms and Conditions apply



Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

RELAUNCH

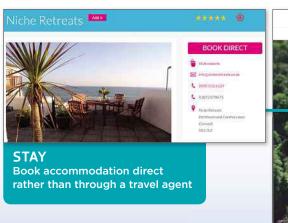
Visit Cornwall

www.visitcornwall.com

The revamped Visit Cornwall is a brilliant example of how a tourist website should be done. Beautifully shot aerial videos greet you on the homepage, with a map below showing Cornwall's best beaches and places to visit that you can click to view for information. Improved navigation and a more modern design are complemented by an excellent insiders' blog and clear activity categories with fun icons. We also like the 'book direct' option for accommodation that saves you paying commission to a travel agent and potentially earns you discounts and room upgrades. A trip to Cornwall has never looked so tempting!

Our rating



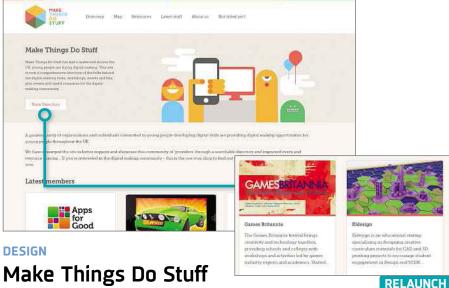




THINGS TO DO

You can filter the site's suggestions by various useful criteria





www.makethingsdostuff.co.uk

This hub for helping young people develop their digital skills was our 'Site of the Fortnight' in Issue 321 (bit.ly/webuser321). The relaunched site focuses more on its comprehensive directory, which provides information about all the members of the Make Things Do Stuff community, including Code Club, Games Britannia and the Raspberry Pi Foundation. The listings can be filtered by technology type and age range, so educators can quickly find relevant organisations. There's also news of upcoming events and links to useful resources although, sadly, much of the fun advice for getting started with projects seems to have been removed.

Our rating





HEALTH

MedNexus for Patients

www.mednexus.io

Medical advice on the web can be confusing and contradictory, but MedNexus hopes to provide "greater accuracy and clarity" to anyone worried about their health. Search for a symptom or click one of the topics on the homepage, such as 'chronic pain' or 'sore throat', to view online resources, which can be sorted by relevance and most recent. These include published research, articles by medical experts and forum discussions. We like MedNexus' sparse, attractive design and speedy autocomplete function, but we wish it drew on more sites from outside the US.



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





SHOPPING

Notifyy notifyy.co.uk

Want to buy something online but can't quite afford it? This handy site will tell you when the price drops to a more reasonable amount. Simply paste the URL of the product into the box on the Notifyy homepage, click Track Now and you'll be notified by email as soon as a discount becomes available. It works with 250 stores including Argos, M&S and Amazon (where prices constantly fluctuate), and recommends related items to buy. Notifyy is very easy to use and you can track as many products as you want. There's also a Chrome extension (bit.ly/notifyy391).

Our rating





FLOWERS

World Love Flowers

worldloveflowers.com

If there's such a thing as 'flower porn', this site brazenly revels in it, gathering gorgeous photos from around the web to fill your browser with colour and culture. These are presented in a grid on the homepage - just click to view the articles they appeared in, which cover everything from shops and festivals to advice for flower arrangements. When we visited, topics included the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, Tulips in Holland and the Top 10 Edible Flowers ("roses offer a sweet flavor with a slight spice"). World of Flowers doesn't offer any original content, but it handpicks like an expert.

Our rating





SPORT

GetToTheMatch.com

gettothematch.com

This site helps you save money when travelling to football and rugby matches by sharing your ride - be it in a car, taxi, minibus or rickshaw. Sign up and complete your profile with details such as whether you like to go to the pub before the match, listen to music during the journey or arrive with a couple of hours to spare. You can then select your team and the fixture you plan to attend, and either offer travel or request it, making arrangements via private message. It's a great idea with a lively design, but it cheekily builds ads into its layout so they can't be blocked.





Best New Websites



SOCIAL

EUROPE'S MOST WANTED FUGITIVES

Europe's Most Wanted Fugitives

eumostwanted.eu

Could that shifty man on the bus be wanted for drug trafficking by the Slovenian police? Obviously, don't ask him, but you can check if his mugshot appears on this site - a joint project from 28 EU police forces that's enlisting the public's help to trace criminals convicted of (or suspected of committing) serious offences or terrorist acts in Europe. There are currently details of 47 fugitives on the site, with personal data and the nature of their crimes. If you have any info, you can submit it directly through the site to the relevant police force anonymously, if you prefer.

Our rating





EDUCATION

Pindex

www.pindex.com

Said to be "founded" (we're guessing endorsed) by Stephen Fry, this Pintereststyle educational tool gives teachers, students and anyone who likes imparting and learning stuff a place to revel in knowledge. As with Pinterest, you create boards of content such as photos, videos and documents for other people to browse, share and save, while you explore the boards they've created. Users can tick off items they've viewed to earn 'awards' and subscribe to specific boards. Pindex already covers an interesting mix of topics including the Large Hadron Collider and robots, but we'd like to see more than two categories.

Our rating



HEALTH

Is the Water Safe to

isthewatersafetodrink.com

We always like web tools that answer one simple question, and the one that this site addresses could prevent you from becoming ill on holiday: is it safe to drink water from the tap? Search for any city in the world to view the verdict on its H₂O from the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers (the non-profit organisation behind this site). Alternatively, look up a country to compare the water quality in different cities. If it's safe, you can fill your glass and brush your teeth without hesitation but, if it's contaminated, then you'd better stick to the bottled stuff.

Our rating



NEW

Heartmob

iheartmob.org

This simple but admirable site is leading the fight against online harassment. You can report any abuse you've experienced and request support, and help others by reading their stories and offering advice. There are also safety guides for all the main social networks, outlining each site's policy on harassment and explaining what actions you can take if you've been targeted. Signing up may seem like a hassle because you need to verify your 'online identity' or get recommended by another user but, along with vigilant moderators, such measures are necessary to stop trolls from infiltrating this friendly international community.

Our rating







www.telegraph.co.uk/technology

Previously a cramped mess of headlines, multimedia and ads, the Telegraph has now, thankfully, streamlined its Technology section. The cleaner layout, larger photos and more focused selection of stories makes it less of a headache to browse, and the responsive design means it works perfectly on any screen. There are welcome new categories for social media, internet security and opinion - "Is Apple losing its touch?" - but you can't comment on articles anymore, probably because the arguments were too much hassle to moderate. We also like the 'most viewed' list, though we're not sure why poodle rockers Def Leppard were the subject of the third most-read tech story!







We don't usually review promotional websites for films, but this one for Ghostbusters works like gangbusters! It seamlessly combines information about the forthcoming, female-led 'reboot' with nostalgia for the classic original (and its so-so sequel). This includes trailers, photo galleries and Ghostbusters games you can download to your phone or tablet. The homepage gathers Ghostbusters content from social media and there's an online store selling everything from DVDs and Blu-rays to T-shirts and collectibles (including a Slimer piggy bank). A warning, though: it's impossible to visit without that theme tune worming its way into your head. Who you gonna call?

Our rating





Turn Facebook photos into ASCII art

Facebook has quietly introduced a clever new feature that transforms photos posted on the site into ASCII code. To see an image as a string of characters, click it to open the picture in Facebook's viewer,

then right-click and choose 'Open image in new tab'. In the address bar, after the '.jpg' suffix, type .txt to turn the image into black-andwhite ASCII art or



.html for colour art, then press Enter. Note that this trick only works with publicly shared images that have no extra characters after the '.jpg'.

Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Google updates its Webmasters website

Google has updated its website for webmasters (www.google .com/webmasters) with a new look and a selection of useful tools. Navigation tabs across the top get you to the topics you



need quickly, such as the Support section, which is ready to help in an emergency. The Learn tools provide courses and guides to broaden your knowledge and find out how to get the most from your site's relationship with Google, Scroll down to the bottom of the Learn section and you'll find a very handy set of

links to Google's most popular YouTube videos, blog posts and forum categories.

Capture your colour ideas

Inspiration for a new colour scheme for your website can strike at any time, so make sure you've always got the right tools at hand to capture your ideas. Picklor (bit.ly/pic391) is a useful Android app that can help. Simply start the app, take photos of any coloured objects you like and save them for later. The app then provides the codes you'll need to add those colours to your CSS or HTML files.

Deal of the Fortnight

Easyspace (www.easyspace.com) is offering 50% off '.me' domain names until 31 March, dropping its price from £19.20 per year to £9.60.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Jonathan Cannovan, Affiliates Manager,



Easyspace (www.easyspace.com)



What's the best way to make a website pay for itself? Adverts or something else?

David Watts, via email

A great way to make money from your website is with affiliate marketing, where you promote

other people's products and services in exchange for a commission on any sales you generate. Adding affiliate links to your website is quick and easy. Start by joining an affiliate network, such as Commission Junction (www.uk.cj.com). Best of all, you won't have the worry or hassle of having to deal with products or customer complaints. You can quickly start, stop and change any affiliate promotions on your site, and experiment to find out what best suits your audience.



MINI WORKSHOP | Remove ghost visits from your website's analytics Google Analytics: www.google.com/analytics | 🕒 10 mins | Requires Google account

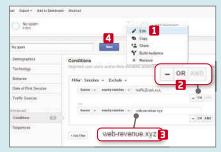
Google Analytics provides an insight into your visitors' browsing habits, but your figures might be skewed by ghost visits - strange page views with lots of hits that appear in your results. Here's how to filter them out



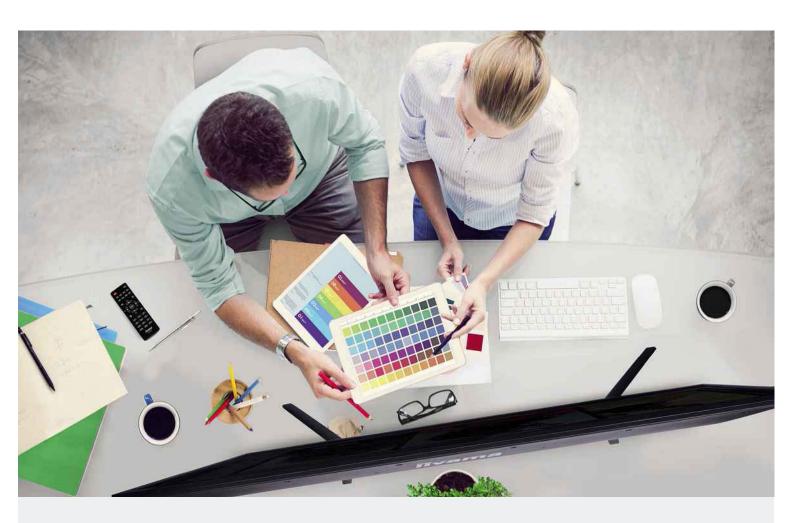
Sign into Analytics and click Behaviour in the left-hand panel, then Site Content and All Pages. 1 Watch out for unusual-looking 'pages' that don't seem to belong. 2 They usually include a web address. Make a note of the address so you can use it to create the filter.



Click inside the All Sessions box 🗓 and click the New Segment button. Select the Conditions tab. 2 Set the Filter to Sessions and Exclude, Below that, set the drop-down menus to Source and 'exactly matches'. Paste the address you want to block into the third box. 3 Give the filter a name and click Save. 4



To filter more pages from your results, click Edit 🚺 from the drop-down arrow in the Segment box. Click the Or button 2 and add the next address to remove. 2 Click Save. 4 To go back to seeing all your results, click the Segment box, untick the filter you created and click the Apply button.



IIYAMA X4071UHSU

ENDLESS DISPLAY POSSIBILITIES AT 4K



ProLite X4071UHSU

Impressive 40" 4K monitor offering a gigantic viewable area. Suits a massive range of applications like desktop publishing, CAD/CAM drawing, gaming, photographic and web design..























We test and compare the latest products

Linksys WRT1900ACS

Linksys has updated its popular WRT router range with a new 802.11ac model. Andy Shaw finds out whether it speeds up his home network

he iconic blue and black case of the Linksys WRT1900ACS is something of a design classic from the early Noughties, when the similar-looking Linksys WRT54G was at the top of every router-upgrader's Christmas list. This latest model is actually an upgrade of the WRT1900AC and WRT1200AC models. It has an almost identical case but the internal hardware. including the processor and memory, has been upgraded.



As with a computer, the better the hardware inside a router, the better its installed software will run and the more room there is for future improvement. If it's anything like its predecessors, the WRT1900ACS will make good use of its high-performance components. The original WRT54G, which launched in 2002, made it easy to install open-source software, so it was usable way beyond its shelf-life thanks to enthusiasts upgrading its tools and features. Similarly, the WRT1900ACS has been designed specifically to give you the option of running the open-source OpenWrt (openwrt.org) router software, so you can benefit from future upgrades.

If you don't care for such



tinkering, you can just as easily use the built-in software. The WRT1900ACS requires an Ethernet connection to your broadband service, so it needs an existing cable connection, an Ethernet modem or to be passed through another gateway device, such as the router supplied by your ISP. The setup is relatively simple, because you don't need to worry about internet connection settings - it should just work.

The WRT1900ACS has a sensible assortment of tools available through its webbased interface and most settings are no more than a click or two away. There are plenty of options, from

setting up the names and passwords of your networks, through to advanced tools such as parental controls. quest networks traffic prioritisation and more.

Extras and add-ons

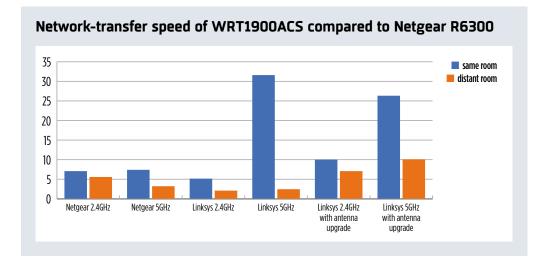
Like most modern routers, the WRT1900ACS comes with a mobile app that lets you control the router from your phone or tablet. This essentially includes the same tools as the browser-based configuration, but is arranged in a way that's easier to use on a touchscreen.

The router also comes with some useful extra add-ons to further enhance your device, such as a media player and internet filter. Making these

optional means that they won't clutter your interface if you don't need them but, if you do, they are easily installed and integrated among the other tools.

The back of the router houses five Ethernet ports, one for the incoming internet connection and another four for connecting wired devices. There's also a USB 3 and a joint USB 2/eSATA port, for connecting devices such as printers or external storage for sharing.

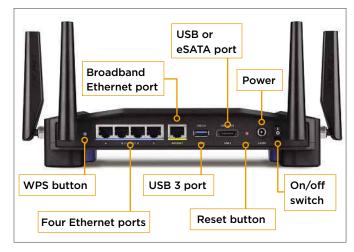
There are four external antennae supplied with the device, which look impressive enough, but you can also upgrade them with 'high-gain' alternatives at a cost of £82 for a pack of four from



Amazon (WRT004ANT, bit.ly/ antenna391). In our tests, we ran the router both with its original antennae and with the upgraded versions, to see how much of a difference it made to the speed of the network.

Performance

We compared the WRT1900ACS with a Netgear R6300, which has been supplying Wi-Fi to our test house for the last year. To see how fast the network performed, we tested both routers by attaching a USB 3 external SSD (solid-state drive) to the USB 3 port on the back of the router, then transferred files to an 802.11ac laptop fitted with an internal SSD. This should remove the effects of any drive slowdown from the transfer process and provide a clear picture of how fast the actual network is running. We tested both the 2.4GHz and the 5GHz networks on both routers, then tested the Linksys router a second time



with its optional high-gain antennae fitted.

At close range, the 5GHz network on the Linksys router was phenomenal. Without the signal-boosting antennae, it hit a top speed of 31MB/s (transferring the 474MB of video files in just 15 seconds), although this dropped off at a longer range where it was slower than our current Netgear router. With the high-gain antennae attached. the excellent performance on

the 5GHz network extended much further into the house. providing transfer speeds of more than 10MB/s at its furthest reaches.

Speeds on the 2.4GHz network, however, were disappointing. Without the optional antennae installed, this frequency couldn't keep up with the Netgear router's performance, though adding the extra aerial power provided the boost it needed to get ahead.

PRODUCT INFO

Linksys WRT1900ACS

www.linksys.com Price: £179.99 Buy from: Amazon (bit.ly/wrtacs391)

SPECIFICATIONS

- AC1900 dual-band Wi-Fi (600+1,300Mbps)
- 802.11a/b/g/n/ac compatible
- 2.4GHz and 5GHz simultaneous
- 1 x USB 3 port; 1 x USB 2/eSATA port; 1 x Gigabit WAN port;
- 4 x Gigabit LAN ports
- 4 x external, dual-band, detachable antennae
- 1.6GHz dual-core ARM-based processor
- 128MB flash memory, 512MB DDR3 **RAM** memory
- 64/128-bit WEP, WPA2 Personal, WPA2 Enterprise encryption
- 121 x 75 x 26mm
- 722g

FOR

- ✓ Very fast 802.11ac network on 5GHz channel
- Network reach increased with optional antenna upgrade ✓ Built for tinkering

AGAINST

X Disappointing 2.4GHz network without upgraded antennae

EVEN FASTER

Netgear Nighthawk X4S, £259.99 bit.lv/netgear391



MORE AFFORDABLE

Synology RT1900ac, £115.62 bit.ly/synology391



OUR VERDICT

The performance of the WRT1900ACS was a bit of a mixed bag. On the 5GHz network, the router's results went through the roof, but it didn't surpass our current Netgear router on the 2.4GHz network.

The reach was good, particularly with the optional signal-boosting antennae attached. At £82, they cost more than a Wi-Fi extender but they're a better option for extending the range of your signal because your devices won't have to swap between the different devices' networks.

It's tweakers and tinkerers, though, who will have the most fun with this Linksys router, because the hardware makes it more

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

than ready for future upgrades. But with these likely to come through open-source software, it's best tackled by those who enjoy a technical challenge.



Andy Shaw tests an external SSD drive that you can use with your PC, tablet and phone

t's difficult to predict how much storage space you need on a mobile device - too little and you're constantly having to shuffle apps and data around to make room for new things. But not everyone can justify spending hundreds of extra pounds to get their devices with the maximum amount of memory installed.

Some Android devices are built with memory-card slots that make adding extra storage much simpler but if

PRODUCT INFO

Freecom Tablet Mini SSD

www.freecom.com Price: £77.38 (from www.kikatek.com)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Integrated USB 3 and USB 2 OTG cables
- Shock resistant to 4m drop
- Supports USB recording from some
- Bundled Nero Backup software
- 2-vears warrantv
- 92 x 58 x 15mm
- 58g

FOR

- ✓ Simple way to transfer files from PC to mobile device
- ✓ Works with USB OTG
- ✓ Fast performance in our tests

AGAINST

X Expensive way to buy 128GB of storage

your device doesn't have this, the Freecom Tablet Mini SSD provides a convenient solution.

It's a small, light, and extremely portable external SSD (solid-state drive) that has two built-in connectors: one is a standard USB plug for transferring files to and from a PC; the other is a USB Micro B plug. Both connectors are securely attached with a short, flexible rubber cable that stows away into the casing when not in use.

The Micro B plug is USB OTG (On The Go) compatible, so you can connect it to any suitable Android device. There's a list of devices that have been tested with the drive on the Freecom website at bit.ly/compat391 (scroll down and select the Technical Specs tab), although any model with a Micro B shaped USB OTG port should be compatible.

Performance and pricing

Freecom quotes the drive as having a maximum speed of 430MB/s (megabytes per second). We tested this with a number of different file types and managed an impressive 440MB/s when transferring a 4.2GB ISO file from the SSD to a PC via a USB 3 port.

Transferring large groups of smaller files slowed the process down somewhat, with a folder of photos transferring at 120MB/s. However, there's

Everything is built-in so you'll never misplace or damage the cable

no arguing that the device is fast, so you won't be left waiting too long, even if you're planning to entirely fill its 128GB of storage space (a 256GB version is due later in the year).

Plugging the Tablet Mini SSD into a compatible Android device is as simple as plugging it into a PC. The drive pops up as a selectable storage device and you can move or copy files back and forth between the two.

We found the SSD on sale at Kikatek (www.kikatek.com) for £77.38. There are cheaper ways to get 128GB of fast storage - for example, USB memory sticks are available for half the price, which can plug into OTG cables that cost around a fiver. However, this device has everything built in so you'll never misplace or damage the cable. It's also a very pocketable shape and size, and it performed well in our tests.

OUR VERDICT

This small, pocketable external SSD drive has been designed to provide convenient connection to your phone, tablet or a standard PC without the need for any extra cables. It's an excellent device for storing music and movies, because you can refresh them easily from your PC and don't have to transfer

FEATURES

PERFORMANCE

EASE OF USE

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★☆☆

them to your device. It's not the cheapest way to buy 128GB of storage but it partly makes up for this by being so convenient to use.

₩eb User's Best Buys

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

HARDWARE

COMPACT PC

Acer Revo One RL85

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

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

KEY SPECS

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

WIRELESS ROUTER

Netgear Nighthawk X4S

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



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

KEY SPECS

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

BUDGET TABLET

Apple iPad Mini 2

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

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



KEY SPECS

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

WINDOWS 10 LAPTOP

Asus EeeBook X205TA

£201 from www.tesco.com Date tested: October 2015



The Asus EeeBook X205TA is a netbook-style laptop with a great build quality and battery life. The price is terrific, too, but you might find it a bit small and cramped because it's been squeezed into such a tiny case.

KEY SPECS

Quad-core 1.33GHz Intel Atom Z3735F processor ■ 2GB of memory = 32GB eMMC storage = 11.6in non-touchscreen = 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 2 x USB 2 ports ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 286 x 193 x 18mm ■ 980g ■ One-year collect and return

WINDOWS 10 PC

Chillblast Fusion Centurion

£699 from www.chillblast.com Date tested: September 2015

The Chillblast Fusion Centurion provides the latest, most powerful components for a reasonable price. It was the fastest PC we tested and can be easily upgraded.



KEY SPECS

Quad-core 3.5GHz i5-6600K processor ■ 8GB of memory ■ 1TB hard drive = 120GB SSD = 1 x USB 3.1, 1 x USB 3 Type-C, 3 x USB 4, 4 x USB 2 ■ Gigabit Ethernet ■ 465 x 430 x 192mm ■ Three-year collect-and-return warranty inc 2-years parts

SMARTWATCH

LG Watch Urbane

£224 from www.amazon.co.uk Date tested: November 2015



The LG Watch Urbane looks good, is simple to operate and has a great screen (if you stay out of direct sunlight). It doesn't have the full range of fitness tools, but it's ideal as a smartphone companion. It won't pair with an iPhone, though.

KEY SPECS

Android Wear 5.1 ■ Gorilla Glass 3 ■ 1.3in circular display ■ 320 x 320 pixels resolution ■ 512MB memory ■ 4GB storage ■ Bluetooth ■ 52 x 46 x 11mm ■ 67g ■ One-year return-tobase warranty

Best Free Software

PRIVACY TOOL

Tails 2

tails.boum.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10, Mac OS X or Linux, DVD writer or two USB memory sticks

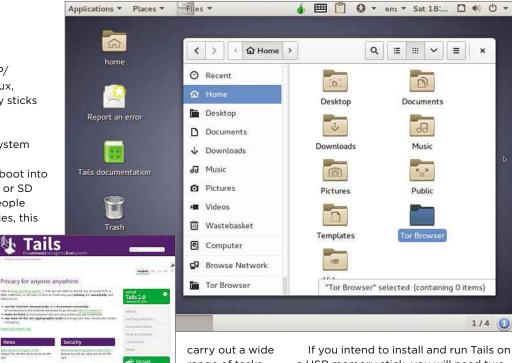
File size: 1.05GB

The Amnesiac Incognito Live System - Tails for short - is a live Linux operating system that you can boot into from a DVD, USB memory stick or SD card. If you're worried about people snooping on your online activities, this

is a great solution because it makes you pretty much anonymous. The NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden uses Tails, but you don't need to be revealing highly classified government secrets to benefit from the security it offers.

As well as hiding your

identity and location, you can use the software to encrypt your files, emails and instant-messaging chats, and it will keep you entirely safe from malware, too. It comes with a good selection of additional tools, including LibreOffice (office suite), GIMP (image editor) and Audacity (sound editor), so you can



range of tasks without ever

losing the privacy afforded by the OS.

The latest version of Tails is based on Debian 8 (Jessie) Linux, so the system and all the included software is now much more up to date. It uses the GNOME Shell in Classic mode, which provides a modern but simplified desktop environment.

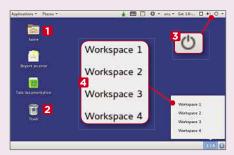
a USB memory stick, you will need two flash drives - the first is used to set up an intermediary Tails version that installs the full OS on the second drive. Alternatively, you can download and burn the OS to DVD if you prefer to boot from disc.

See our cover feature on page 38 for more advice about encrypting your emails and chats.

MINI WORKSHOP | Get started with Tails



First, download the Tails ISO file and either save it to disc or write it to a USB flash drive, then boot into it. You may need to change the boot order by going into Settings when you turn on your PC. Launch Tails and change the language settings. 11 'More options' 2 provides some advanced security settings you can configure.

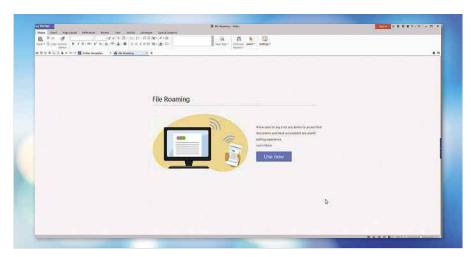


operating system looks similar to Windows and provides icons for Home (the file manager) and Trash. 2 The equivalent of the Start menu is at the top. 3 You are given four workspaces 4 you can work in and switch between.



B Launch the programs directly from Applications. Launch the programs you want These are sorted into categories -Favourites, Accessories, Graphics, Internet, Office, Programming, Sound & Video, System Tools, Tails (settings), and so on. Places 2 gives you access to folders and search. Right-clicking the Desktop brings up some other options, including changing the Desktop background.

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



OFFICE SUITE

WPS Office 2016 Beta

bit.ly/wpsoffice391

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 76.9MB

Formerly Kingsoft Office, this lightweight alternative to Microsoft Office includes WPS Writer (word processor), WPS Spreadsheets (spreadsheet tool) and WPS Presentations (presentation creator). It offers all the features you'd expect from an office suite, and opens and saves files in all the major office formats. It's only free during the beta testing stage but a cut-down, free version will be offered afterwards. Be sure to reject the bundled SpyHunter software during installation.



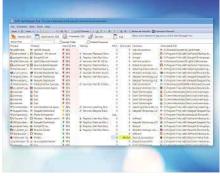
SYSTEM TOOL Edge Blocker

www.sordum.org

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 486KB

You can change the default browser in Windows 10 from Edge to Firefox or Chrome, but the setting doesn't always stick and some apps continue to launch Microsoft's browser. The tiny Edge Blocker prevents the browser from loading, and once you change the browser defaults, they stay changed. The program is very easy to use because there are just two buttons on the interface: Block and Unblock.



TASK MANAGER

AnVir Task Manager Free 8

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 1.5MB

AnVir is a powerful alternative to the Windows task manager that displays all running applications, processes and services in tabs across the top of the interface. It lists all the items that start alongside Windows and allows you to easily disable or delay unimportant ones. It also lets you monitor your hardware, including processor usage, and logs every program or action that's launched on your system.

New Windows Apps

Gym Radio

bit.ly/gymradio391

Min requirements: Windows 8+/10

File size: 21.3MB

This app plays music designed to motivate your workouts. You can switch between Cardio, Gym and Hardcore modes. You need to link the app to your Facebook or Google+ account to get the most from it.



Join by joaoapps

bit.ly/join391

Min requirements:

Windows 10 File size: 8MB The aim of this app (currently in beta) is to "bring your devices together". It can mirror Android notifications on

screen and send files to other devices. You can also use it to reply to SMS messages.

Boards by Todoist

Min requirements: Windows 10

bit.ly/boards391 File size: 13.9MB

This app for Todoist (en.todoist .com) displays your tasks on Kanban boards. You can track projects and change the status of a task by dragging it to the relevant column: To-Do, In-Progress or Completed.



Nexus 7 (2013) LG G4

(9)

Best Free Software

ANTI-MALWARE TOOL

Malwarebytes Anti-Ransomware

bit.lv/antiransom391

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 35.8MB

Ransomware is one of the nastiest forms of malware around. As its name suggests, it encrypts your personal data and holds it for ransom until you pay up, but this tool from Malwarebytes can keep you safe from this scary threat. The program is currently only available as a beta, so you may encounter a few bugs with it but, for the most part, it seems pretty stable. All you need to do is install the software and your system will be immediately secured against ransomware. You can stop the protection at any time; view and manage quarantined files; and exclude items that you know to be safe.





BROWSER

Pale Moon 26

www.palemoon.org

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

or Linux

File size: 23.5MB

The Firefox-based browser Pale Moon was last updated in 2014, so this new release brings quite a lot of changes. These include the introduction of a dedicated 64-bit build of the program. There's a new browser rendering engine - called Goanna - which marks Pale Moon's efforts to move away a little from Firefox, and the interface now adjusts its appearance based on the operating system it's running on. Graphics and media support has been enhanced, and general performance has been improved, too. The browser comes with numerous security updates, which make it safer, more secure and faster than Firefox.

BACKUP SOFTWARE

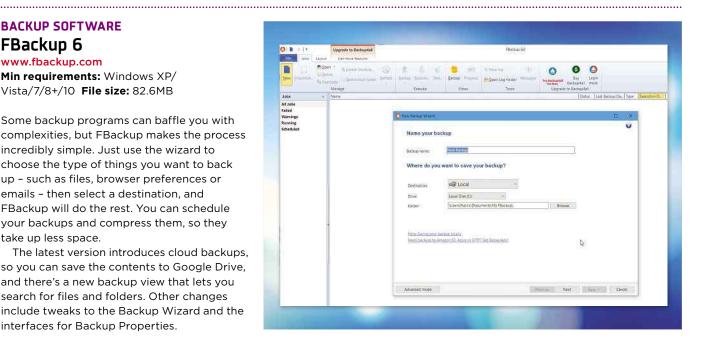
FBackup 6

www.fbackup.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 82.6MB

Some backup programs can baffle you with complexities, but FBackup makes the process incredibly simple. Just use the wizard to choose the type of things you want to back up - such as files, browser preferences or emails - then select a destination, and FBackup will do the rest. You can schedule your backups and compress them, so they take up less space.

The latest version introduces cloud backups. so you can save the contents to Google Drive, and there's a new backup view that lets you search for files and folders. Other changes include tweaks to the Backup Wizard and the interfaces for Backup Properties.





GAME Le Petit Architecte

bit.ly/lepetit391

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

File size: 46.5MB

The aim of this game is to create a really tall tower by chucking various items including toilets, grand pianos, ladders, shelves and cats - on top of one another. The height of your tower is shown at the top of the screen, and you'll have to scramble up your creation as you continue to build it.

Don't install...

FireAlpaca

firealpaca.com

Min requirements:

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

File size: 24.2MB

The website for this oddly named image editor doesn't exactly fill you with confidence, with its poorly translated English and insistence that: "it's free, but great!". Although it offers plenty of tools, it's a bit buggy and is baffling to use at first. Worst of all, it displays pop-up ads (in Japanese) every time you open it.



...Install this instead

Paint.NET

www.getpaint.net

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

File size: 6.6MB

It's remarkable that a program as sophisticated as Paint.NET is free. It offers a huge number of image-editing features, including a superlative magic-wand tool that easily removes unwanted elements from pictures, and a fuss-free clone tool for blending problem areas. The program also offers support for layers, so you can make adjustments to a separate version of an image without having to make permanent changes to the original image file. An absolute must-install.





UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



SYSTEM CLEANER

CCleaner 5.14

www.piriform.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 6.5MB

The hugely popular system cleaning tool gets updated on a monthly basis. The latest version adds a new Browser PlugIns section for managing browser add-ons, and improves Chrome and Opera session cleaning. It also improves the Disk Analyser file scanning process.



FILE-SHARING TOOL BitTorrent Sync 2.3.1

getsync.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+10,

Mac OS X, or Linux

File size: 9.7MB

Based on the BitTorrent protocol, this program lets you share and sync folders securely and speedily between your devices. The new version can be run as a background service in Windows and also gains support for accessing data that's saved to an SD card.



DISC-AUTHORING SOFTWARE

BurnAware Free 8.8

www.burnaware.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 7.6MB

BurnAware Free can write data to all types of optical disc, including Blu-rays, and make and burn image files. This latest version adds support for different bit-rate types to the Audio Grabber feature, and the option to use the old MS-DOS date and time format.



SYSTEM CLEANER

WinUtilities Free 12.3

hi.ylcomputing.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 6.1MB

WinUtilities is a comprehensive, all-in-one system-cleaning and optimisation suite that offers a large collection of powerful and useful tools. This updated version fixes a problem with file signatures on Windows 10 and makes improvements to the program's modules.

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Best New Browser Tools

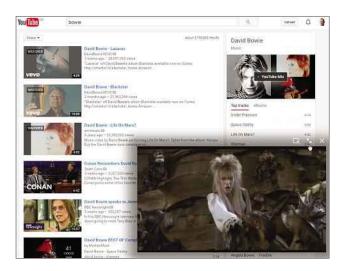


CHROME

Watch YouTube videos in a separate player

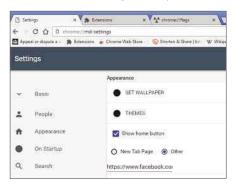
One of the best things about YouTube's mobile apps is that you can continue watching a video in a small window while you search for something else. The new Chrome extension YouTube Picture in Picture (bit.ly/youtube391) adds this useful feature to the YouTube website to give you uninterrupted playback even when you navigate away from the page. When you return to your search results or look for something else to watch, the video will keep playing automatically in a 'picture in picture' window in the bottom-right corner of your browser. With a single click, you can enlarge this mini player, close it or return to the original page (without pausing), and also right-click thumbnails for videos and choose to play them picture-in-picture.

With the latter option, videos don't play automatically in the small window, so you'll need to click the button to start them. This is a known bug that the developers are aware of and hope to fix before the extension comes out of beta.



Get Chrome's Material Design makeover

Google has been applying its Material Design to many of its most popular products - including Gmail, Android and the Play Store - since 2014, and Chrome is next in line for the flatter, bolder and brighter look. The changes are due to be applied in version 50 of the browser, which is released on 19 April, but if you can't wait until then, you can preview



them in the current version. Type chrome: flags into your address bar, press Enter and enable all the entries labelled 'Material design' (use Ctrl+F to find them). These include options for Chrome's top toolbar and its downloads, history and extension pages. Click Relaunch Now to perform the Material Design tweaks and be dazzled by the transformation. To be honest, the revamped Chrome doesn't look radically

different, but you'll notice the more angular tabs and smarter icons. There's also a new Settings page that you can preview by typing chrome://mdsettings into your address bar.

Open documents without downloading them

Chrome lets you view PDFs directly in your browser, but office files such as Word documents, Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations need to be downloaded and opened in a separate program. Save yourself time and hassle by installing Docs Online Viewer (bit.ly/docs391), which opens most major file formats including DOC, DOCX, PPT, RTF and XLS in Chrome without the need for any other software. Just click the icon that appears next to a file link to view its contents instantly using Google Docs or another available service. Go into the extension's Options panel to choose which file types to



include and exclude, and whether files should open in the current tab or a new one.

Ensure that a website is secure

If you ever worry that a site that's asking for your credit-card details might not be as safe as it seems, you'll appreciate Chrome's new Security Overview feature. Although it's aimed at web designers who want to check that their pages are secure, it also provides useful at-a-glance information for everyone else. When you're viewing a site, press Ctrl+Shift+I (capital 'i') to open the Developer Tools panel, then click Security. This will bring up details of whether the site uses HTTPS encryption and has a valid trusted server certificate, as well as the URLs of its secure (and non-secure) connections. If anything on the site seems suspicious, you'll know not to trust it.





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



FIREFOX

Tour the world from your **New Tab page**

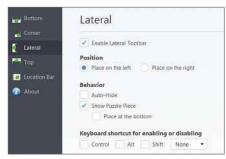
We often recommend add-ons for Chrome that make your New Tab page more attractive, and there's now a great one for Firefox called TabTrekker (bit.ly/trekker391). Similar to the Chrome extension Dream Afar New Tab (bit.ly/ dream390), which we covered in these pages last issue, this shows you gorgeous landscape photos from around the world every time



you open a new tab. The images are augmented by the current time, weather and temperature for your location; a pop-up panel showing your most-visited websites; and a search box. You can customise these options to, for example, get readings in Celsius rather than Fahrenheit, or use DuckDuckGo instead of Google; and refresh the page to change the image. A lot of shots seem to be of Austria, but then it is a very picturesque country!

Place icons wherever you

The more streamlined Firefox becomes, the less scope for customisation it offers, which means the shortcut buttons for add-ons and the browser's built-in tools can't be moved from the top-right corner. Unless, that is, you install the brilliant Puzzle Bars (bit.ly/ puzzle391), which lets you arrange your

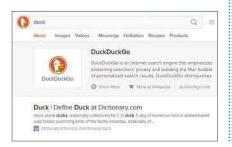


icons in whatever way you want. It adds four optional toolbars to Firefox: one down the left-hand side, one in a corner, one integrated with the address bar and another along the bottom like the old status bar. Each of these can be customised to include the shortcuts of your choice to give you instant access to your favourite tools - just click the three-line menu button, select Customise and drag your icons to the desired bars. You can open and close these toolbars by clicking their jigsaw

icons, and set up keyboard shortcuts to show or hide each one.

Redirect your searches to DuckDuckGo

Setting DuckDuckGo (duckduckgo .com) as your default search engine in Firefox stops your web searches being tracked and stored. Go to Tools, Options, Search and select DuckDuckGo from the drop-down menu. If you find yourself unthinkingly using Google and compromising your privacy again, it's worth installing Redirect to DuckDuckGo (bit.ly/ duckduckgo391), which automatically redirects your searches from Google, Bing and Yahoo to the more secure search engine. It works from wherever you search in Firefox, be it the address bar, search box or from within a web page, and stops you being targeted by ads and 'suggestions' based on your search terms.



OTHER BROWSERS

Paste and submit in

one click Filling in online forms can be a tedious chore; even after you've entered your details, you still have to scroll around to find the Submit button. The new Opera extension 'Paste and go' (bit.ly/psste391) makes things easier by letting you copy your info to your clipboard, then paste it into a text box and submit the form in one go. Just right-click the box and choose 'Paste and go' or press Ctrl+B on your keyboard to perform both tasks simultaneously. It also works for pasting queries into search engines.



Change the colour of your tabs

Our favourite new browser, Vivaldi, offers lots of ways to adjust how it looks and works, and it's now added an option to change the colour of your tabs. If you find the standard grey too dull, click the cog icon in the bottom-left corner to open the Settings panel, click Appearance and switch the interface colour from light to dark. Below this setting. you can decide whether to make your tabs dark and the tab bar behind them red, or vice versa. Other updates to Vivaldi include dozens of bug fixes and changes to the way tabs open and close.





Best Free Apps

NEW

App of the Fortnight

PHONE CALLS

MyState

bit.ly/mystate391 bit.ly/mystateios391

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 8

Size: 22MB

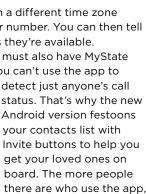
Trying to reach friends and family by phone can be a stressful business, especially now that most calls seem to go straight to voicemail. MyState aims to end this bane of modern life by letting you know if someone is free before you try calling them.

It works by automatically detecting your contact's phone status, so you can see straight away if their phone is switched off, the battery is low.

they're on another call or even in a different time zone - all without needing to dial their number. You can then tell MyState to notify you as soon as they're available.

The catch is that your contact must also have MyState installed. For privacy reasons, you can't use the app to

Kuba Wilczyński 4:36 РМ Hello everybody! I'm here Invite Don Hoskyn Invited! Kuba Wilczyński Matt Chanman



What's your state?

Phone me any time!

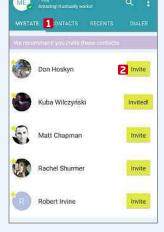
Even so, MyState is still handy if none of your friends are signed up. It integrates with your phone's contacts and lets you text, email, call and chat with them from one screen, making it a useful communication hub.

the more useful it is.

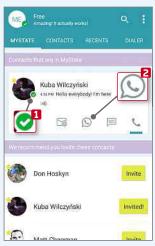


MINI WORKSHOP Phone a friend using MyState

Download and open MyState, then enter your mobile number. You'll receive a text message with a verification code. Your phone reads this automatically and launches the app on the MyState tab. 11 Tap a contact's Invite button 2 to send a text message asking them to download MyState.



When your friend or family member has downloaded MyState, you'll see their current status: green 11 if they're available and red if they're not. Tap the grey icons to call, text or email them. If both of you use WhatsApp, you can tap its icon to go straight to your conversation. 2



Tap 'ME' in the top-left corner to change your availability status. 11 Tap the red icon if you want to appear unavailable, or orange if you only want to be contacted by text. You'll find more privacy options in Settings, which you can reach by tapping the three-dot icon. 2





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

ACCESSIBILITY

BlindTool

bit.ly/ blindtool391 Min

requirements: Android 3.1

Size: 8MB

Turn your phone's camera into a second pair of eyes with this app created by a



PhD student to help blind and partially sighted people. Simply open the app, hold up your phone and a friendly female voice will announce what you're looking at. It's blissfully easy to use, with no menus or buttons to worry about, and its accuracy has improved since we reviewed it in Issue 389. The app's

powers of recognition are mostly reliable, although at first it thought our cat was a skunk.



Our rating



TRAVEL

Moovit moovitapp

.com Min

requirements:

Android, iOS 8, Windows Phone 7

Size: Varies with device

You wait ages for a bus and then five



come along at once. Unless, that is, you're using the new version of Moovit, which has been updated to track your local public transport in real time in most major cities across England and Wales. Tell Moovit where you want to go, and it'll keep you updated minute by minute with bus and train times. It'll even alert you when you're nearing your destination,

so you can relax on the bus rather than worrying that you'll miss your stop.



Our rating



UPDATED

WEATHER

Met Office Weather

bit.lv/ metandroid391 bit.ly/metios391

Min requirements:

Android 4.1, iOS

Size: 24MB (Android), 23.2MB (iOS)



See at a glance how much worse the weather is - and will be for the next week - in locations around the UK and beyond, thanks to the much-improved official Met Office app. Search for a place and tap Save, then compare seven-day forecasts for all your saved places on one screen. To prevent the app from draining your battery by using your phone's GPS,

you can get the same result by switching off location access and searching for your postcode instead.



Our rating

PHOTO & VIDEO

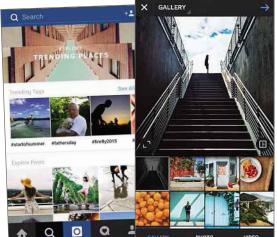
Instagram

www.instagram.com

Min requirements:

Android (varies with device), iOS 7. Windows Phone 7 Size: Varies with device

You can juggle up to five Instagram accounts on one device in the latest version of the popular photo-editing and sharing app. That's unlikely to lure you in if you're not already an Instagram user, but if you are, you may find that having multiple accounts is handy. You could, for example, use one



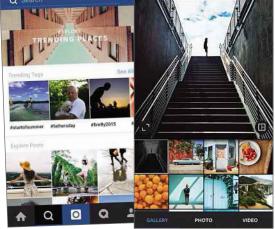
account for family snapshots, another for videos and a third for those all-important selfies taken in front of historic monuments.

To create additional accounts, simply go to your profile settings and tap Add Account to set up an alias. You can then toggle between accounts by tapping the usernames at the top of the screen.

With Instagram already claiming to have more than 400 million users worldwide, this new multi-account feature could in effect quintuple that number!



Our rating



GET THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

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



Discover how to:

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

Order it now from Amazon at bit.ly/defguidetoandroid





SPORT

RBS Six Nations Rugby

bit.ly/rugby391

Min requirements: Android 2.2,

iOS 8.2

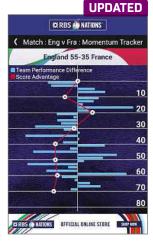
Size: 16MB (Android),

28.4MB (iOS)

The Six Nations rugby championship is being broadcast by both the BBC and ITV for the first time this year - but if that's still not enough action for you, this official app will help quench your thirst between matches by providing video highlights,

detailed stats and integration with

Twitter. There's also detailed real-time text commentary, along with live scores and fixtures, to keep you informed in case you're not able to watch a match live on TV.







Our rating



PRODUCTIVITY

Sloth

bit.ly/sloth391

Min requirements: iOS 8.4

Size: 17.6MB

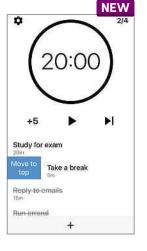
Stop dithering and set some deadlines for your chores with this simple but effective productivity tool. When the deadline for an item on your to-do list has elapsed, the Sloth app - which is available for Apple Watch as well as iPhone and iPad - will send you a notification to make you feel either guilty or triumphant, as appropriate. That's all there

is to it, really. There are no gimmicks, such as making you clap to stop an alarm, just the peerless pressure of a countdown. Coming soon to Android (getsloth.com).

Stream video, music and photos from your

Windows device to your TV, PC or Xbox. Playcast

now lets you 'cast' media straight from Google





Our rating



APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

NATURE

Warblr

warblr.net

Min requirements: Android 4, iOS 7 Size: 18MB (Android), 20.9MB (iOS)

Price: £3.99

Discover which bird is chirping from the rooftops with this wonderful app - a birdsong version of Shazam. Tap your screen and wait for Warblr to identify the bird and tell you more about it. New to Android and updated for iOS.

Results 5 Give feedback?

Drive and Dropbox as well as saved files. **VOICE CONTROL**

Cortana Triggers bit.ly/triggers391

Min requirements: Windows Phone

Size: 17.08MB Price: £3.89 Set Cortana to work on your household chores. Cortana Triggers gives you voice control over web-connected devices such as thermostats and even Wi-Fi coffee makers, using supported services such as IFTTT ('if this, then that').

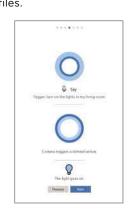


PHOTO DESIGN

LetterGlow

bit.ly/letterglow391

Min requirements: iOS 8.1 Size: 79.9MB Price: £2.29 Turn your photos into professional-looking graphic designs by adding graphics and fonts from LetterGlow's extensive library, or by creating and adding your own elements.



such as Productivity and News. Swipe in

VIDEO & AUDIO

CUSTOMISATION

Launcher For Me

bit.ly/launcher391

Size: 7.4MB Price: 99p

Min requirements: Android 4.1

Launcher For Me puts all your apps on

to open an All Apps-style side menu.

your home screen by shrinking their icons and organising them into 'smart' folders

Playcast

bit.ly/playcast391

Min requirements: Windows Phone 10 **Size:** 3.88-4.23MB

Price: £3.09







Cortana Triggers



Playcast





Best New TV Apps

VIDEO

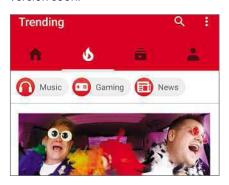
YouTube for Android

bit.ly/ytandroid391

Min requirements: Android (varies with device)

Size: Varies with device

This update to the YouTube app for Android makes it even easier to watch videos on the move. The smarter, more streamlined interface provides instant access to your subscriptions, playlists and recommendations, as well as your viewing history, uploads and any videos you've 'liked'. Usefully, once you've played a video, the app now marks it with a 'Watched' tag, just like the YouTube website, so you needn't waste time viewing it again. When videos are uploaded to your favourite channels, you can save them to watch later with one tap. Hopefully, the latest improvements will come to the iOS version soon.

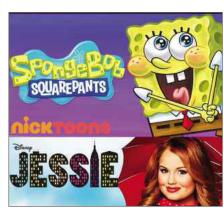


BT TV

bit.ly/btandroid391 bit.ly/btios391

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 7

Size: 35MB/39.6MB



BT has expanded its TV app with a Kids section that offers on-demand content from 14 channels, so younger viewers can enjoy such delights as SpongeBob SquarePants on Nickelodeon and Doc McStuffins on Disney Junior. The app also adds seven entertainment channels for adults, including Alibi, Eden and Gold, as well as a subscription catch-up service for 20 premium entertainment channels. All BT TV customers can use the app, but only those on Entertainment Plus, Max and Total Entertainment packages can access the premium and children's channels.

TV & FILM

Now TV

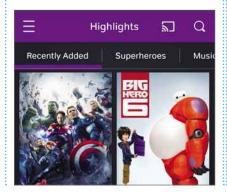
www.nowtv.com

Min requirements: Android 4, iOS 7, PS4, PS3, Xbox

One, Xbox 360, Roku, Chromecast YouView, LG Smart TV

Size: Varies with device

If you can't afford Sky Q (see FAQ on the next page), Sky's Now TV app is a good alternative. Available on multiple platforms, it costs £6.99 per month for 13 TV channels you won't find on Freeview, or £9.99 for access to more than 1,000 movies on demand. The mobile app has been updated with a progress bar that displays how much of a show or film you've watched, and to fix several bugs. There are also great deals on the Now TV box, including a four-month free Movies Pass.



X Don't install...

FindToilet

bit.ly/find391

There are loads of apps that help you find the nearest toilet, and they tend to work in much the same way. Although FindToilet certainly



isn't useless, it doesn't make clear in its name that it only covers conveniences in Denmark, which isn't much use if you need to spend a penny anywhere else in the world. Still, if you're planning a trip to Copenhagen, it could certainly prove handy!

...Install this instead

Toilet Finder

bit.ly/tfandroid391 bit.ly/tfios391

bit.ly/tfwindows391

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3, iOS 6,

Windows Phone 7

Size: Varies with device

Finding a public convenience when you're caught short can strain both your patience and your bladder, which is why Toilet Finder is such a brilliant app. It automatically detects your location and shows you nearby toilets on a map. Tap one to find out whether it's free and offers disabled access, as

well as the type of place it's in: for example, a shopping centre or restaurant. You can also help keep it up to date by confirming that the toilet exists or reporting if it doesn't. The app claims to cover more than 70,000 facilities worldwide.







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



Sky

Sky Q sounds very James Bond, but will the TV industry be shaken or stirred by it? David Crookes gets the lowdown

What is Sky Q?

Sky Q (www.sky.com/skya) is the broadcaster's first major overhaul of its product line for 10 years, the last being Sky+HD in 2006. Comprising a set-top box, a mobile app and a broadband hub, Q is being promoted as a "super premium" product that promises to change the way you watch your favourite shows by combining satellite and internet television viewing.

How does it work?

As with Sky+HD, the Sky Q set-top box sits beneath your main television and connects to a satellite dish. The added magic comes in the guise of a feature called Fluid Viewing that seamlessly beams programmes from the set-top box to other TVs and devices around your home.

Does it look different?

Very much so. Sky Q is much smaller than the bulky boxes of old (just 330mm x 210mm x 43mm) and has a more sleek and modern design. Indeed, aside from the Sky logo, the only noticeable feature on the front is the Q logo that lights up when media is playing.

Is there a new remote control?

Yes, although we're actually rather sad that Sky Q has ditched the iconic Sky Remote because, at first glance, the Bluetooth-enabled Q Remote looks like any old generic zapper. However, on closer inspection, you'll find a touchpad that operates an on-screen cursor and useful new functions such as a dedicated search button and improved navigation. You can also find the remote when it vanishes down the side of the sofa by

pressing Q on the box to make it beep.

sky The Sky Q box has a sleek, streamlined

design with few external features

The Sky Q Remote features a touchpad that operates an on-screen cursor

Has the interface been redesigned?

It's still blue, but it's been streamlined to make it easier to find the shows you want. Searching is vastly improved and you can now filter searches by title or actor. Perhaps the most important new development is the My Q section, which makes smart recommendations based on your previous 30 days of viewing and the time of day. My Q is also where synced programmes are stored, allowing for that all-important Fluid Viewing.

What's so special about Fluid Viewing?

Anyone familiar with Sky+ will know it lets you effectively create your own schedule by pausing live TV, quickly recording programmes and 'series linking' your favourite shows. What it doesn't let you do is watch your recordings on other devices. With Fluid Viewing, you can beam live, recorded or on-demand shows from the set-top box to another television, phone, tablet or games console. You can also pause a show on your TV screen in the living room and pick up from where you left off on another screen in the bedroom.



Sky Q's Fluid Viewing feature lets you watch recorded shows wherever you are

Doesn't Sky+HD's Multiroom already do this?

Sort of. With Sky+HD Multiroom, you can have multiple boxes connected to various televisions in different rooms, but each one needs to be physically wired to your satellite dish. You still need a Sky Q Mini box to get Sky Q running on a secondary TV, but it pairs and communicates wirelessly with the main one.

How many screens can I connect?

You can watch programmes and films simultaneously on up to five screens, but there are a few limitations. Although Sky Q Minis are portable, you can only connect a maximum of two to your Sky set-up, which is annoying if you have lots of TVs around your home (say, one in the



Sky Q lets you use your phone or tablet as one of your allocated screens

kitchen and more in the bedrooms). To make the most of all the possible available screens, two of your household would have to be watching on a phone or tablet.

Will it make my Wi-Fi faster?

Sky's broadband customers will receive the Sky Q Hub, which has Powerline networking

technology built-in to use your home's electrical wiring for a better connection. It also turns Sky Q boxes into Wi-Fi hotspots, providing a boost to your overall wireless network.

Does it have any apps?

It does. There are Sky apps for news, sports and weather; Vevo and YouTube for entertainment; and you can also browse Facebook. You probably won't be surprised to hear that Q doesn't include Sky's close rival Netflix!

Can I run Sky+HD and Sky Q side-by-side?

No. Sky Q is designed as a complete replacement for your existing Sky setup so the old one will be removed when the engineer comes to install it. It's worth noting that unlike Sky+HD boxes, which are yours to keep, the Sky Q kit is loaned to customers and needs to be returned at the end of the subscription.



Sky Q offers built-in apps, including Vevo, so you can watch music videos

The Sky Q Silver box offers more storage for recording shows and costs £50 more

If you decide to stick with Sky+HD, you'll soon benefit from a refreshed menu and new homepage via a forthcoming software update.

Will Sky Q let me record more shows?

There are two Sky Q boxes. The core system has a 1TB hard drive, of which 700GB can be used by viewers, while the more expansive Sky Q Silver has 2TB (the same as the best Sky+HD box), of which 1.7TB can be used. The standard box lets you record three shows and watch a fourth whereas, on Silver, it is possible to record four shows and watch a fifth. This is not only better than the "record one, watch another" of Sky+HD, but it also surpasses rival Virgin Media, which lets you record two shows while watching a third. As a bonus, viewers can download content to a tablet to watch on the go.

Does Sky Q support Ultra-HD?

The Sky Q Silver has HDMI 2.0 hardware installed that delivers Ultra-HD video at 50fps (frames per second). This service is not available at launch, which means it's lagging behind rivals such as BT Sport which has the Ultra-HD Humax box. But Sky says it will launch later this year and, as it stands, both the Silver and standard boxes support video resolutions of 1080p, 1080i, 720p and 576p.

When is it available?

You can register now, with installations due to begin at the end of February for Sky Broadband customers first.

WILL YOU JOIN THE QUEUE FOR Q?

How much does Sky Q cost to set up?

Well, it ain't cheap! A standalone Sky Q box on the Sky Q Bundle tariff costs £249 for new customers, while a Sky Q Silver Box costs £299. Subscribe to a Sky Broadband, Sky Sports or Sky Movies package and the price drops to £99 and £149. Customers on the Sky Q Silver Bundle tariff get a Sky Q Mini thrown in and pay either £99 or £299 depending on whether Broadband, Sports and Movies are added, then £54 per month.



Don't throw paint over your Sky Q box, as they've done in this promotional picture

How much is the standard Sky Q **Bundle?**

New customers pay a whopping £42 a month for a 1TB Sky Q box. As well as recording three shows while watching a fourth, you get more than 300 channels, including 50 HD, more than 300 box

sets, 3D-on-demand, service visits and viewing on the move via Sky Go Extra. Existing Sky+HD customers will pay an extra £12 per month to upgrade to Q.

What about Sky Movies and Sky Sports?

Sky Movies costs an extra £17 a month, Sports £25.50 or you can pay £34.50 for both. For the top-tier package with an extra Sky Q Mini, Sports and Movies, you will pay £1,260 each year - not including broadband and line rental. Which is rather a lot!

Keep All Your Emails PRIVATE



Do you ever worry that strangers are reading your emails? **Wayne Williams** explains how to stop the contents of your messages being accessed by anyone other than the intended recipient

ollowing a recent European Court of Human Rights ruling, the press widely reported that "your boss can now read your personal emails" (bit.ly/bossemails - see Need to Know, Issue 389). Although the court later denied this interpretation of its ruling, the decision could still set a precedent for cases of this kind and the panicked public response to the news suggests many of us worry about people intercepting our emails, texts and web chats.

Whether it's GCHQ and the NSA, Facebook and Google, hackers and other cybercriminals, or nosy

bosses and work colleagues, there's something decidedly unsettling about the idea of other people reading our private messages, no matter how trivial their contents. In this feature, we reveal the most effective ways to prevent this snooping.

Over the following six pages, we explain how you can encrypt your email, disguise your real email address, secure your text messages, ensure that your chats remain private and much more. We also look at who might potentially be reading your messages, and why.

SAFEGUARD YOUR EMAILS

Get more security from Gmail

Although Gmail uses encryption to make sure the messages you store and send are safe from prying eyes (aside from Google's own!), you may still be compromising your privacy when you converse with anyone whose email service isn't secure. To combat this, Google has introduced a new feature that warns you when you're communicating with someone who isn't using TLS (Total Layer Security) encryption. When you receive a message from, or are about to send a message to, someone whose email service doesn't support TLS encryption, you'll see a red open-padlock icon in the message, indicating that its contents could be intercepted. What's more, if you receive a message that can't be authenticated, a question mark will appear in place of the sender's profile photo or avatar. Google stresses that not all such emails are dangerous, but it encourages you "to be extra careful about replying to or clicking on links in messages you're not sure about".

See the 'Making email safer for you' post in the Gmail blog (gmailblog .blogspot.co.uk) for more information.



Encrypt your email using PGP

Gpg4win (www.gpg4win.org) is a free Windows tool that uses the OpenPGP (Pretty Good Privacy) cryptography standard to prevent anyone apart from the intended recipient from reading an email. It works by creating two digital keys, one private and the other public. The private key stays with you but the public one you share freely - you can attach it to an



Use Hushmail for enhanced security

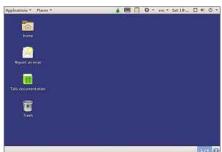


Hushmail (www.hushmail.com) is a web-based email service like Gmail, but it offers encrypted communication to keep the contents of your messages completely private. There are no ads, and (unlike Gmail) the service won't scan your messages either. Sadly, there's no longer a free version of Hushmail, so you'll have to choose either the Premium option for \$34.99 (£24.15) a year or Premium+Desktop for \$49.98 (£35) a year. You get 1GB or 10GB of storage for your messages respectively.

email, post it online or pass it on in a more secure way. The person you're communicating with encrypts their message using your public key and then you decrypt it using your private key.

Encrypt communication using Tails

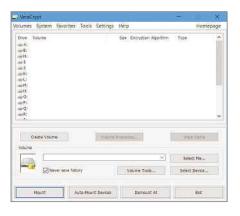
Tails (tails.boum.org), otherwise known as The Amnesiac Incognito Live System, is a live Linux operating system that you can boot into on any PC. Once it's up and running, you can use it to encrypt files, emails and instant-messaging chats. It's easy to set up and there are full instructions on the website. The software was recently updated, and you can find out more about what it does and how to use it in our Best Free Software section on page 26.



Send messages as encrypted attachments

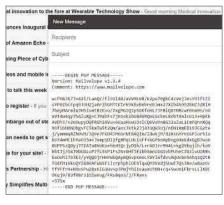
One of the easiest ways to keep what you have to say secure is to write the message in a document, then encrypt this file and attach it to an innocuous email. There are quite a few free tools that can do this, including archiving programs such as 7-Zip (www.7-zip .org). One of the best new options is VeraCrypt (veracrypt.codeplex.com) which is available for Windows, OS X and Linux and makes it surprisingly

easy to encrypt your files. The program is an off-shoot of the popular but discontinued tool TrueCrypt. We'll have a full Workshop about VeraCrypt in our next issue.



Encrypt your personal webmail messages

Although PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) is the most popular option for encrypting emails, it can be difficult to set up and use. Fortunately, there's a handy open-source tool called Mailvelope (www.mailvelope.com) that simplifies the process and integrates seamlessly with popular webmail services including Gmail, Outlook.com and Yahoo Mail





(you can configure it to work with almost any others). It is available as an extension for Chrome and Firefox, and you configure and use it directly through the webmail interface, which makes it very convenient. The person you exchange emails with will also need to have Mailvelope installed.

See our Mini Workshop below to find out how to use Mailvelope.

Stop Google scanning your **Gmail messages**

Annoyingly, you can't prevent the search giant from scanning your messages, but you can change how it uses this information. First, it's important to understand what Google does. Software (not people) scans your messages, looking for keywords that can be used to tailor the advertising Google shows you. It also helps Google better identify spam messages, so this snooping actually has a beneficial side.

You can change which ads are delivered to you as a result of the messages you send and receive (as well as other actions you take while logged into your Google account). To do this,



go to Google's ad management page at bit.ly/googleads391 and toggle 'Ads based on your interests' to off. You can also control adverts shown on other sites by clicking the 'Control Signed Out Ads' button and toggling off the settings for ads based on your interests.

Note that although you can hide and block adverts in Gmail, the scanning will continue in the background regardless of your choice. Such is the trade-off for using Google's free, full-featured webmail service.

Use a temporary email address

If you don't want messages to be delivered to your regular email account, you can use a temporary email address from Mailinator (www.mailinator.com) to prevent nosy parkers from reading messages that are none of their business. Hundreds of different domains point to Mailinator, and the free service allows you to use any of them.

You can also create your own prefix so the fake address doesn't look suspicious. You can check incoming messages on the site, and emails are deleted automatically after a few hours as a further security measure.

Disguise your email address in Outlook.com

Microsoft's webmail service offers a handy

feature called email aliases, which lets you create unique addresses that are linked to your main account. You'll receive messages in your inbox as normal, but the people you're communicating with won't know your real address, and you'll be protected from spammers, phishers and hackers who harvest email addresses. You can delete the alias at any time, without ever compromising your true identity.

To set up an alias, log into Outlook.com and click the cog icon in the top-right corner. Click Options, then create and manage your aliases under 'Managing your account'.





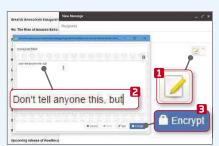
MINI WORKSHOP | Encrypt your webmail using Mailvelope



Install the Mailvelope extension in Firefox or Chrome, then open it by clicking the button in your browser. 11 To share secure messages, you will need public and private keys. Click Options 2 and, under Setup, 5 click Generate Key. 4 Enter your name, email address and a password.



Click Display Keys 1 to view your key. You'll need to share the public one with anyone you want to share secure messages with. Hover your mouse pointer over the key and click the 'i' icon. In the Key Details box, click the Export tab 2 and select Public. El Click Save. 4



When someone sends you their public key, click Import Keys to add it. To send a secure message, go to your webmail service. Click the icon in the new message window 11 and a secure compose window will open. Write your message 2 and click Encrypt. El Select the person to share with, then click Transfer.

PROTECT YOUR TEXT MESSAGES

Send self-destructing messages

Kaboom (www.kaboomit.com) lets you send messages and photos that vanish after a set period of time. It's available for iOS and Android, and you can choose how long messages remain visible (starting at just one second) or how many times they can be viewed before they disappear. You don't need to set up an account, and it works with any service, including SMS, email and WhatsApp. Best of all, the recipient doesn't need to install Kaboom because messages are displayed via a secure web address.

See our Mini Workshop (right) to find out how to use Kaboom.



Use iMessage for secure texts

Apple has famously annoyed governments with its iMessage encryption, because it's very hard to crack. While regular text messages are still easy to intercept and read, iMessages sent between Apple devices, including iPhones, iPads and Macs through OS X, are secured automatically using super-strength encryption. If you and your friends use iMessage to communicate, you should be



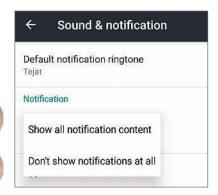
Encrypt your text messages

Android users don't have the same level of protection that iOS users do, but you can protect your text messages using the free Signal Private Messenger app from Open Whisper Systems (bit.ly/signal391). This uses an advanced end-to-end encryption protocol that provides privacy for every message you send and receive (provided the other person has the app installed, too). Signal Private Messenger uses your existing phone number and address book, and you can create groups of friends and talk to several people privately at the same time. It also saves you money on SMS charges.



Turn off pop-up notifications

When you receive an email or a message on your phone, the screen lights up (perhaps accompanied by a sound to alert you) and displays a notification showing who it's from, along with a preview snippet of the content. Although this saves you having to pick up your phone to see



MINI WORKSHOP Send self-destructing messages using Kaboom



When you launch the app, it will open with the camera view and you can take a photo to share by clicking the button. 1 You can toggle the flash on or off, and switch cameras. 2 You can also select an image from your Camera Roll, 5 or compose a text message. 4



If sending a text, type your message, then click the stopwatch button to choose how long (or for how many views) the message should stay visible. Next, click Send 1 and choose how to send the secret text - you can choose from Facebook, Messenger, Messages, Email or Copy. 2



Your message (or photo) will be added as a secure link. The recipient will need to click this to open it. You can also add Kaboom as a keyboard, so you can use the service in any platform. Click the hamburger menu at the top left and select Keyboard. Click the Add Keyboard button 1 and follow the instructions.

who's bothering you, it also means anyone else who is near the device can read at least some of the message'. If you're worried about this happening, you can turn off these alerts in iOS by going to Settings and switching off notifications for messages and mail. In Android, either go to Settings, Display and untick 'Lock screen notifications'; or go to Settings, 'Sound & notification and, under 'When device is locked', select 'Don't show notifications at all'.

Use Knox messaging on Samsung

If you have a Samsung device, such as a Galaxy S6 phone or Note 10.1 tablet,

you'll be able to use the Knox messaging platform. This uses a cryptography chip on your phone or tablet to secure your emails, messages and phone calls. To benefit



from the security it offers, however, you need to be communicating with another Samsung owner who uses Knox.

If you don't have My Knox installed (it should appear in your apps tray), you can get it through the Galaxy Apps store on your phone. You can see a list of supported devices at bit.ly/knox391.

KEEP ONLINE CHATS PRIVATE

Chat privately using Cryptocat

Cryptocat (crypto.cat) is an instantmessaging platform that lets you engage in private chats with one or more friends. Just add it to your web browser, launch it and enter a nickname for yourself and the name of a conversation to start or join. You can send private files and photos to friends and, if you connect it to Facebook Messenger, it will show you which (if any) of your connections has Cryptocat, so you can start an encrypted chat.



Use Line's Letter Sealing

Line (linecorp.com) is a global messaging service for Windows, Mac OS X, iOS, Android and Windows Phone that lets you send messages and engage in free voice and video chats. Late last year, the service added a new security feature called Letter Sealing, which uses end-to-end encryption to protect messages from any

unauthorised access during delivery. Other security features in the Line service include Hidden Chat, timelimited messaging and a four-digit security pin Passcode Lock.

Send encrypted messages using Bitmessage

Bitmessage (bitmessage.org) provides a quick and easy way of sending encrypted messages to individuals or groups. It's available for Windows and OS X and doesn't require installation just download and run it. The program hasn't been updated since October 2014 but it runs perfectly well (including on Windows 10) and the website provides plenty of information to help you get the program set up.



Encrypt mobile chats using Wickr

Wickr (www.mywickr.com) is a wonderful messaging platform for iOS, Android, Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. It secures communications using military-grade encryption (the person you're chatting with will need to have Wickr installed, too) and removes all trackable metadata. You can set Wickr

WHO'S READING YOUR MESSAGES AND WHY?



The government

If passed, the British government's Investigatory Powers Bill (aka the Snooper's Charter) will give the UK security services permission to spy on anyone's communications and internet

usage. The government says this will allow them to better protect people from the bad guys, but it will also give them the right to spy on anyone, including you. Not that the spies don't already snoop on email, of course. Among whistleblower Edward Snowden's revelations was the news that GCHQ unlawfully accessed millions of private communications prior to December 2014, so who can say what the government already knows about you?



Google

As we've already mentioned, Google and other companies scan your messages to learn about your interests in order to target you with relevant advertising. There's a saying that 'if you're not paying for a

product, you are the product', and free services such as Gmail are a shining example of what that means.



Suspicious partners and family members

It's not just external snoopers you have to worry about: people closer to you might be interested in what you have to say, especially if they're the subject of your

messages. You can stop them reading your private messages by setting up separate user accounts for everyone who uses your PC or tablet, although that may only arouse more suspicion.



.....

Your boss

The company you work for is likely to have an interest in what you say using your company email address (or even on your own webmail during company time). You may be utterly professional,

but not everyone is and some employees foolishly apply for new jobs using their work email, or disparage their employer or colleagues through non-private forms of electronic communication. If you don't want your boss to know what you're saying, wait until you get home (or use your phone) to send personal messages.

to erase messages, documents, images and videos securely after a predetermined time (five days by default). Wickr is currently free, although there are plans to introduce in-app purchases in the future.

Chat with friends in Tor Messenger Beta

Tor Messenger (bit.ly/tor391) is a secure chat tool based on Mozilla's Instabird, and you can use it with various networks such as Jabber (XMPP), Google Talk, Facebook Chat, Twitter, Yahoo, and IRC. Your conversations are both encrypted and anonymous (Tor routes them through a network of volunteer computers around the world). It's available for Windows, Mac OS X and Linux, but because it's quite an early beta, you might find it a little buggy on occasion. Also, some services may block your connections because they're routed from around the world, which looks suspicious!



Save and encrypt your chats

Shryne (www.shryne.com) is an iOS app that lets you download your "digital history", including text messages, iMessage chats, Hangouts, Facebook Messenger conversations and more. Once you've downloaded your conversations, you can encrypt them to keep them safe from prying eyes. The free version limits you to 10 archives and 250MB of space but there's a paid Premium version available for £14.99 a

Use Pidgin for private messaging

Pidgin (pidgin.im) is an instant messaging tool that works with all the major chat services, including AIM, Google, IRC, Yahoo and ICQ. It supports plug-ins, so you can bolster its features using Pidgin-Encryption (pidgin-encrypt.sourceforge .net) to encrypt off the record chats and general conversations so no-one can intercept them.



year that offers unlimited archives and 20GB of space.

Don't give apps permission to access your messages

Some mobile apps on Android (and occasionally iOS) ask for permission to access your messages. That's fair enough if it's a messaging app or email client. but if there's no obvious reason why it should



need access - if it's a game, for example - then decline it. Blocking permissions can stop some apps working entirely as intended, but that's a small price to pay for privacy.

Turn chats to Cyber Dust

Available for iOS, Android and Windows Phone, Cyber Dust (www.cyberdust .com) is a secure messaging platform that lets you send and receive text

messages, stickers, links, photos and videos. Messages are encrypted end-to-end and disappear as soon as they have been opened and read (as with Snapchat). It also blocks screenshots from being taken. The company claims the messages



never touch its servers, so they can't be recovered once deleted.

Encrypt Messenger chats with Crypter (maybe)

Crypter (crypter.co.uk) is a third-party plug-in for Chrome and Firefox that was designed to secure chats on Facebook Messenger. Facebook has taken a dim view of its existence, however, and shortly before we went to press the company took action to stop it working. The creators are looking for a way around this block and the plugins are still available to download. An update will be pushed out automatically if the developers find a solution.



Best PDF viewers

Adobe Reader is still the go-to program for viewing PDF files, but it's not the only PDF reader in town. Andy Shaw has been weighing up the alternatives, to see what else is out there. If you're fed up with Adobe Reader, try one of these instead.



Microsoft Reader | bit.ly/msread391 | ★★

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

What we liked:

Microsoft's Windows Store apps, which run on Windows 8 and 10, are often more hassle than

> the original Desktop programs they were designed to replace, but Microsoft's free Reader app has grown on us enormously. When it first came out on Windows 8, it was designed exclusively for use with touchscreens, which was fine if you had one but made it torturously difficult to control with a

mouse. However, a number of incremental developments have turned the software around and we now think it provides a good balance between size, tools, looks and usability.

The software is quick to launch and automatically opens the last PDF you were looking at. You can use the mouse wheel to scroll through pages, and hold down the Ctrl button while wheeling to zoom in and out. If you zoom far enough out, the screen changes from a page-bypage view to a two-row set of thumbnails, so you can easily scroll through documents with lots of pages.

The interface remains hidden most of



the time, but pops up with a right-click. Here, you can access PDFs that are open in other tabs, change the view, and access the Save As and Print buttons. There's also a search tool, which can be used to move between instances of a searched-for word by highlighting them

on the PDF itself, or create a handy list of the found search term, surrounded by a snippet of text to provide some context.

Our favourite thing about Reader is the way it looks. It presents your PDF on a dark background, which makes it much easier to read than the grey, toolbar-ridden views you get on its rivals.

How it can be improved:

Microsoft Reader doesn't have all the extra tools you

get with the other readers we've reviewed here, such as annotations and PDF editing, which you may miss. We also found the thumbnail arrangement a bit odd, because the order of pages goes from top-to-bottom before going left-to-right.

OUR VERDICT

If you regularly edit and annotate PDFs, you might find Microsoft Reader's lack of tools limiting. However, most of us spend the majority of our time in PDF readers just reading PDFs, to which Reader is perfectly suited. With a well thought-out interface, a colour scheme that's easy on the eye and a layout that makes the PDF document the star, we think Reader is one of the Windows apps that Microsoft has got right.

Foxit Reader | bit.ly/foxit391 | ★★★★★

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

What we liked:

Foxit Reader's name is a total understatement. Although you can certainly use it to read PDFs, it can also do lots of other things, from

annotating PDFs right through to creating one from scratch.

The software is modern-looking and attractive, with an Office-style ribbon toolbar. This is stuffed with icons so takes a bit of getting used to, because you have to work out where the tools you need are located. Once you're used to it, though, it's simple and straightforward. The tabs below the ribbon make it easy to have multiple PDFs open and switch between them. If you want to get rid of all this clutter, there's a reading mode, which displays your PDF on a plain, grey background.

Adding annotations is simple and effective but the PDF creation wouldn't impress a professional designer. However, as long as your requirements aren't too sophisticated, it's perfectly adequate for creating a basic document.



How it can be improved:

Next to the user-friendly interface of Microsoft Reader, Foxit Reader feels more like a tool than a viewer, and it isn't as good for simply reading PDFs. The free version also has adverts in the toolbar, which are a bit annoying.

OUR VERDICT

Most people just use a PDF reader to read PDFs but, if you want more, Foxit Reader is our software of choice. It's not as good a viewer as Microsoft Reader, but its wealth of available extras make it the best program in this group if you need to tinker with your PDFs.

BEST OF THE REST

PDF-XChange Editor

bit.ly/xchange391

PDF-XChange Editor is even more powerful than Foxit Reader, with an interface that's similar but better designed. However, not all its features are available in the free version, particularly if you want to

create your own PDFs. This can be frustrating when you try to perform an action but find it



blocked by a nag screen. You'll end up getting more done in Foxit Reader or, if you just want a viewer, Microsoft Reader is better.

Sumatra PDF

www.sumatrapdfreader.org

Sumatra's interface is a mix between the new and the old. It's embraced some of the trappings of the modern browser, with a menu

button instead of a menu bar and a tabbed interface for easily working with



more than one PDF at a time. Under that, however, are a row of oldfashioned icons. It's simple enough to use but feels pedestrian compared to Microsoft Reader's super-slick interface.

Cool PDF Reader

bit.ly/cool391

This program claims to be the smallest PDF reader in the world,

and it's certainly the smallest standalone viewer we've reviewed here - the portable



version is a mere 3.54MB. However, its dated blue interface makes it look like something that was designed for Windows XP and never moved on. It's also clunky, with full-screen pages appearing stuck to the left side of the window, and the zoom button failing to zoom out on some of our test PDFs.

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

Google Chrome | bit.ly/chrome391 | ★★★★☆



WebUser BRONZE AWARD

The complaint about most PDF readers is that they are unnecessarily bulky, but Chrome's built-in PDF Viewer doesn't suffer from this because it's built

directly into the browser, ready to be called upon whenever you need it.

It's become slightly less convenient and quick to use because all Chrome plug-ins are now set to require a right-click to open files - a safety feature that stops unwanted files from opening without permission. However, you can turn this off by typing chrome://plugins into the address bar and, under Chrome PDF Viewer, ticking the 'Always allowed to run' box.

The viewer is very basic and pared back to its absolute minimum. To open a file, you just drag and drop it into the browser. From there, you can zoom in and out, save it, print it and rotate it. There are no other view options, but because it's built into the browser, scrolling through a document is as easy as browsing a website.



How it can be improved:

The beauty of Chrome's viewer is in its lack of features, but it would be good to be able to get a side-by side view of two pages, so you could see magazine-style spreads as they're supposed to look.

OUR VERDICT

If your PDF-reading requirements are simple, then you may feel that the best kind of PDF reader is an invisible one, which has no impact on your PC's resources. Chrome's plug-in PDF reader is as simple as it gets, providing a low-impact way to view your PDFs.



Last issue, Google Photos won our Gold Award in our round-up of photo-storage services. Edward Munn reveals 10 handy hacks to help you get the most from it

Preserve battery life when backing up

Google Photos has a useful 'Backup & sync' feature, which - once activated - automatically backs up your snaps when your phone or tablet has a Wi-Fi connection. If you notice your battery life suffering as a result of backups running in the background, you can



easily fix the problem by setting Photos to only back up your pictures when your device is charging. To do this, open the main Photos menu, tap Settings and choose

'Backup & Sync'. Scroll down and switch the option 'While charging only' to the On position.

Back up photos from other

Photos taken with the default Android camera app are backed up automatically, but you can also upload images from other apps, such as



Instagram. From the 'Backup & sync' Settings menu, select 'Choose folders to back up...' and

Just visit

.google .com

select the directories containing the images you want to save to Google Photos. To check the progress of the upload, make sure you're connected to a Wi-Fi network, then open Assistant from the main menu.

Upload photos from your PC

Google Photos lets you back up pictures from your PC as well as your phone or

tablet. the website at photos in anv browser and drag

files to the Photos timeline. Alternatively, install the Desktop uploader (photos

.google.com/apps) and select specific devices and folders to sync with the service. When you first run Google Photos Backup, you can tick boxes for Cameras & Storage Cards, Desktop and My Pictures. There's also an Add button that lets you select other folders you want to back up. Further down the page, you'll find the usual options to upload your photos in either 'High' or 'Original' quality.

View your photos in Google

Google Drive and Photos are separate tools, but you can store your snaps in both without taking up any extra storage. Open Drive's Settings and tick the box to 'Automatically put your Google Photos into a folder in My Drive'. Your photos are sorted into folders numbered according to the year and



Secret Tips for Google Photos

month they were taken. By also downloading the Drive Desktop app, you can sync copies of all your smartphone snaps to your PC.

Select multiple images with a swipe

When you view your Photos timeline on your phone or tablet, you can quickly



change the number of images on a page by pinching to zoom in and out. The app also lets you use a simple swipe gesture to select multiple images. To do this, tap and hold a thumbnail until

the blue status bar appears, then simply swipe your finger in the direction of the photos you want to highlight. The status bar shows the total number of images you've selected and you can fine-tune your selection by choosing more photos individually or use the shortcut buttons to delete or share the images.

Search for anything

The search function in Google Photos intelligently sorts your snaps into Places (where they've been taken), Things (the subjects you've captured including sky,



cars, concerts and so on), and Types of file (videos and creations, for example). You're not limited to its suggestions and can try searching for any place that vou might have taken a photo or anything you

might have taken a photo of. You can even combine the two elements and search for a thing and a place, for example, 'cars in Paris'. Alternatively, you can narrow your search by entering a date, such as 'Paris February 2016'.

Collaborate with shared albums

If you've been on holiday with a group of friends, Photos' Shared Albums option provides an excellent platform for instantly swapping photos without having to upload them for the whole



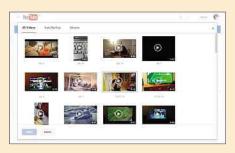
world to see. To create a new shared album. tap the '+' icon on the Photos timeline and select Shared Album, Choose at least one image you want to add (don't worry, you can

add more later), name the album and select Share to copy its link or share it via email. Next, tap the three-dot icon, select Sharing Options and make sure that Collaborate is activated, so that other people can add photos.

All your photos will be shown in a chronological timeline along with the names of the users who captured them. To save another user's image to your library, select it and tap the cloud icon. To avoid sharing information about where your photographs were taken in shared albums, switch on 'Remove geo-location' from the Settings menu.

Import your videos to YouTube

You can add videos to YouTube directly from Google Photos, which saves you having to upload large files twice. Simply visit youtube.com/upload and click the Import button in the sidebar to make a pop-up appear that lets you browse all the videos you've uploaded to Google Photos. Click a video, then click the Select button and YouTube lets

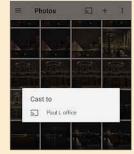


you choose a name and description for the listing. Choose an appropriate Privacy setting from the drop-down menu, then click Publish.

Cast photos to your TV

If you have a Chromecast, you can use

the Google Photos app to display your entire photo library on a TV screen. To take advantage of this feature, open the app, tap the Chromecast



icon and select your Chromecast. Now, when you open a photo or video, it'll be displayed on the big screen. To change the image, simply swipe through your library. To stop casting, tap the Chromecast button again and select Disconnect.

Download all your photos

You can download all the files in your Google Photos library at once, using just a few clicks. Visit bit.ly/takeout391, click 'Select none' and tick the box next to Google Photos. A drop-down menu lets you choose to download all photo

albums or vou can choose 'Select photo albums' to pick the images you want to download based on the dates they were



taken. Click Next and choose a file format for the archive. Note that archives larger than 2GB will be split into multiple ZIP files.

GET GOOGLE PHOTOS HELP VIA TWITTER

Google Photos recently introduced live Twitter support via the @googlephotos handle and #googlephotos hashtag, which offers users around the world free support between 8am and 5pm Pacific Time (4pm and 1am GMT) on all days except for (US) holidays. If you need advice with something related to Google Photos, we recommend following its Twitter account before sending your tweet, because it will allow the team to contact you via



direct message and offer more detailed, step-by-step guidance.



Your connection may offer you dozens of megabits per second, but it's unlikely that you'll ever touch that target. Robert Irvine explains why and how to fix it

recent 'State of the internet' report by content-delivery network Akamai (bit.ly/ akamai392) ranked the UK thirteenth in the world for internetconnection speeds, with an average of 13Mbps. That sounds pretty respectable (hey, we beat Belgium!), but many of those surveyed pay for "up to" 17Mbps, 38Mbps and even 76Mbps, and rarely if ever - come close to that figure. This discrepancy in the speed you pay for and the one you get is often blamed on your distance from the broadband exchange, but there are other factors involved, too. So you can either move your house closer to the exchange (not easy unless you live in a motorhome) or you can try our secret tricks to tackle the causes of your slow connection.

LOCAL INTERFERENCE

You may get on like a house on fire with your neighbours, but if they are insatiable internet guzzlers, their powerful Wi-Fi signals may be weakening yours. We're sure they're not doing it deliberately, but if lots of people in the same area are using the same wireless channel on the same frequency, then speeds will inevitably suffer. For

File Edit View Options Help									
RETER									
Group Name : #	Counter	Percent	Signal Quality	Min Signal Qu.	Max Signal				
"Channel 1 (2412 MHz)	14	13,7%	49.2	28	79				
"Channel 3 (2422 MHz)	5	2.0%	26.5	22	31				
T Channel 4 (2427 MHz)	5	4.9%	38.2	25	59				
al Chennel 6 (2437 MHz)	17	16,7%	49.7	30	79				
(2412 MHz)	1	1.0%	37.0	37	37				
"Channel 11 (2462 MHz)	20	19.5%	39.8	25	74				
T Channel 13 (2472 MHz)	9	8.8%	32.7	11	70				
"Channel 44 (5220 MHz)	5	4.9%	61.4	60	65				
(\$240 MHz)	9	8.8%	15.7	7	65 65				
"Channel 52 (5260 MHz)	2	2.0%	13.0	13	13				

Use WifiInfoView to finds out which Wi-Fi channels your neighbours are using

this reason, it's worth switching your router to the 5GHz band, which offers up to 23 non-overlapping channels and is less prone to interference from other wireless networks, so your neighbours are less likely to slow you down.

Alternatively, you can change to a less busy channel. To find the quietest option, run the tiny free tool WifilnfoView (www.nirsoft.net), click Options and select Channels Mode to find out which channels nearby networks are broadcasting on. The most commonly used channels are 1, 6 and 11, so, if you're sharing one of these with lots of other people, it's a good idea to switch to another channel via your router settings - see boxout on the opposite page to find out how.

DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE

Last December, Ofcom warned that Christmas tree lights could potentially slow your Wi-Fi through electromagnetic interference. Experts later refuted this claim - "you would have to be lighting up your tree like a small sun" (bit.ly/tree391) - but agreed that other electronic equipment including microwaves, baby monitors and security cameras can adversely affect wireless signals. For this reason, you should place your router away from these devices or - if that's not possible - change the Wi-Fi band to 5GHz.

Interior walls also pose a problem, especially in older properties where they tend to be thicker. Before you start knocking them down with a sledgehammer, consider investing in a Wi-Fi extender, which should solve the

Use a Wi-Fi extender to fix signal problems posed by walls

problem. Netgear, TP-Link and Linksys are the most reliable and respected brands.



TRAFFIC SHAPING

Also known as bandwidth throttling, traffic shaping involves your ISP slowing your connection speed during peak times or prioritising certain types of traffic over others. Some ISPs believe that traffic shaping is a fair way to combat a minority of customers who constantly upload or download large files, and hog the available bandwidth. It's also because internet providers don't actually have enough capacity for every customer to reach their maximum possible speed at the same time.

Among UK ISPs, Sky has never throttled its customers' bandwidth and BT and TalkTalk have abandoned the practice in recent years. However, Virgin Media applies traffic management to a "small minority of customers during



Virgin Media slows your connection when you upload too much data

peak times" (www.virginmedia.co.uk/ traffic). If you're on a 30Mbps or higher package, your upload speed will be restricted when you exceed a specific data threshold during peak hours. If you're on a 20Mbps or lower tier, both download and upload speeds are shaped, for a maximum of five hours, seven days a week. However, Virgin says that 95% of its customers will never be affected by its bandwidth throttling.

EE also shapes traffic for activities including music and video streaming, file downloads and web browsing, between 4.30pm and 1am on weekdays, and from 1.30pm to 1am at weekends. See bit.ly/eetraffic391 for more info.

If you're unhappy with the limits imposed by your ISP, consider upgrading to a more flexible package or switching to a less restrictive provider. On the whole, though, unless you're a very heavy downloader or are only paying for the cheapest broadband option, you shouldn't really notice that you're being shaped. If you do, try scheduling large downloads and uploads for less busy times.

If you suspect that your ISP may be secretly throttling your bandwidth because, for example, you're using peer-to-peer software such as BitTorrent, download the free tool Neubot (www.neubot.org). This runs in the background and runs periodic checks to determine whether your connection is being slowed, displaying the results online. There's also a popular



Neubot runs in the background to check if vour connection is being slowed

web-based tool called Glasnost (bit.ly/ glasnost391), which checks whether specific applications are being restricted by your ISP, but you need to use the outdated Java plugin for it to work.

BLOATED BROWSER

ISPs aren't always to blame for sluggish streaming and page-loading times; sometimes the cause is your browser. Resource-hogging add-ons such as Adblock Plus and problematic plugins such as Flash can significantly slow you down, so it's worth disabling any that you don't need. In Chrome, you can uncover the greediest tools that are running in the background by pressing

Task		Memory ▼	CPU
. 0	Browser	160,884K	4
. *	Plug-in: Shockwave Flash	96,504K	24
U	Tab: How to check if exten	73,132K	3
• *	Background App: Google	44,012K	0
. 0	Extension: uBlack Origin	41,956K	0
· LI	Tab: Broadband Speed Tes	41,264K	0
. (A)	Tab: Bitly. The power of th	31.152K	0

Chrome's Task Manager tells you which tools are slowing you down

Shift+Esc to open the Task Manager, then clicking the Memory column. Entries at the top are the ones most likely to be causing problems.

In Firefox, you can type about: memory into the address bar and press Enter to find out what's going on in the background, although the info isn't presented clearly as in Chrome.

IT'S NOT JUST YOU

If your connection has slowed to a crawl, it's highly likely that there other people in your area who are also suffering from slow speeds, especially if they use the same ISP. You can find out your current download and upload speeds by running Ookla's brilliant free tool

Speedtest (www.speedtest.net), which

is available both as a website and as a mobile app for Android, iOS and Windows Phone, Perform the test at different times of the day to get a fair average and, once you've got the results, visit



Speedtest is the fastest and most accurate tool for measuring your connection

uSwitch's StreetStats site (bit.ly/ streetstats391) and enter your postcode to view recent speeds measured in your area. This will give you some indication as to whether you're getting better or worse performance than your neighbours, although you should bear in mind that they may be paying more for their broadband than you are!



StreetStats shows you the speeds that other people in your area are achieving

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR ROUTER SETTINGS

Tweaking the options on your wireless router's configuration page, such as the wireless channel you're using, is often the best way to improve your connection speed. To



do this, open the browser on your computer and go to the URL provided by your router manufacturer: this is usually 192.168.0.1 or 192.168.1.1. The username and password should either both be admin or the password should be password or blank - check the label on your router for details. Once the page has loaded, click Wireless Network Settings or similar to access the required options (note down the original settings if you're worried about making things worse).



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	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
		£7.50	18	17Mbps	∞	CHEAPEST	
1	1 TalkTalk	TalkTalk: Broadband	(FREE for 12 months)	months	max speed	unlimited	£0.00
2	² plusnet	Plusnet: Broadband	£9.99 (FREE for 12 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£0.00
							20.00
•	3 SKY	Sky: Broadband	£10.00 (FREE for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	○○ unlimited	00.00
3							£0.00
4	, E	EE: Broadband	£9.95	12	17Mbps	∞ unlimited	040.00
4	& Calls	(£1 for 12 months)	months	max speed	uniimitea **	£12.00	

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 15 February 2016.



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

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

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

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M 0 U D G Z A S Н C X Q 0 C K D C Z

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COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 3 KitSound Flair speakers

Available in blue, green, grey and red, the new KitSound Flair couldn't be easier to use. Simply connect it to your device through Bluetooth using the touch controls or use the included 3.5mm aux-in cable. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk

with 'flair' in the subject line. For more information visit www.kitsound.co.uk, 'like' KitSound at www.facebook .com/KitSoundUK and follow @KitSoundUK on Twitter.

WIN 1 OF 5

ShieldX2 Plus case for the Samsung Galaxy S6

The ShieldX2 Plus case protects your Galaxy S6 from everyday drops and damage. Its transparent case preserves the original design of your phone, and it's so thin that you'll barely notice it's there. Cases are also available for Sony and HTC phones, and iPhones. To enter, email your

address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'shield' in the subject line. For more info visit shieldx2.co.uk.



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Get widgets on your browser's start page | start.me

Start.me puts widgets back on your start page. There are thousands available and you can tailor them to suit your needs. Here's how to use it

ersonalised browser start pages that combine your favourite web feeds with useful widgets fell out of fashion when browsers started adding their own quick-dial pages with links to your most visited pages. Once-popular websites such as Netvibes, Pageflakes and YourMinis no longer exist or they have transformed into something different. But we think widget-based

start pages are still useful, because they provide an at-a-glance dashboard of everything you need when you launch your browser or open a new tab, including news headlines, sports results, weather updates and email. They also offer quick access to your favourite sites.

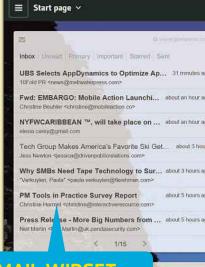
Start.me is an excellent example of a modern start page done right, with new features being added all the time.



Go to the Start.me website, click the 'Get started' button and sign up. You can also try start.me anonymously. A default Start page will load, with a selection of widgets containing site links, 1 news and sports headlines.



You can reorder the widgets by Clicking and dragging them at the top. Clicking the arrow 11 reveals a menu 2 that lets you add bookmarks or feeds (depending on the widget type), edit the content, copy it, sort bookmarks, open settings or just delete the whole widget.



EMAIL WIDGET

Open the Browse Widgets sidebar and select Email. You can connect your email account and view your messages

Labour seeks details of UK role in Saudi-led airstri

There's nothing here for me': transgender and trapped li Fox News accuses Donald Trump of 'terrorizing' network 'I was lucky all my life' - death camp survivors speak on I Human Rights Watch criticises Qatar on changes to its la Calling Megyn Kelly a 'bimbo' is sexist, but so is calling I Raffaele Sollecito sues for wrongful imprisonment

Bernie Sanders; meeting with Obama was 'productive'

- Marie-Hélène Estienne: the powerhouse behind Peter Br Al Weiwei shuts Danish show in protest at asylum seeke Don't Hug Me I'm Scared: the puppets who sing, dance a Jeepers Creepers review - who was the real Marty Feldr
- Remaining members of Oregon militia standoff debating Cecil Parkinson proved that Thatcherism had nothing to Kinship carers exempt from two-child benefit limits after



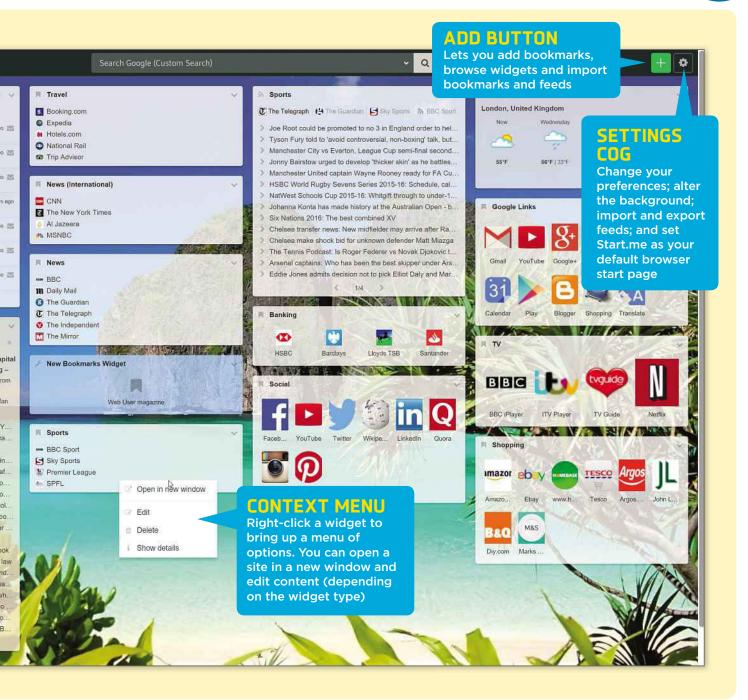
To add new widgets, hover your mouse over any of the four columns and click the plus sign that appears. Click it to browse the list of widgets. 11 By default, it shows popular UK options, but you can change the subject 2 and location. 3 You can also search for widgets by name. 4



To add favourite sites for easy access, select the Bookmarks widget and enter the web addresses 1 one at a time. The 'Add to' drop-down menu 2 lets you save the bookmark in another widget of your choice. When you've added all your URLs, click the Add Bookmarks button 3 to finish.



To customise your new widget, click its drop-down arrow and select Settings. The sidebar will let you change the widget name 🗓 and switch the view to List, Icons or Detailed List. 2 You can choose the number of sites to display, B change the icon 4 and alter the widget's background colour. 5





To change the page background and further customise Start.me, click the drop-down arrow next to 'Start page'. 1 The menu lets you change the number of columns, widget transparency and background. 2 You can search for an image by subject, 3 filter the list 4 or upload your own background. 5



The menu button 11 lets you manage your pages. You can add additional pages for different purposes, such as Home, Work and Hobbies. 2 Click the Edit button next to a page to change its title and add a description. 3 You can browse news channels and popular sites.



The first time you run a web search, 🖸 🚺 you're prompted to install a Start.me search add-on, but can you reject this (and probably should, because it's not required). By default, searches are made using a custom version of Google, but you can click the down arrow 2 to choose an alternative.



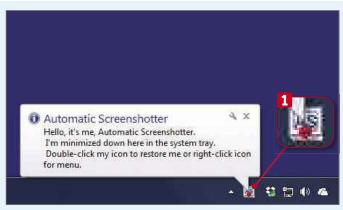
Spy on your own PC

Automatic Screenshotter: bit.ly/shot391 | 🕒 10 mins | 🦉 XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10

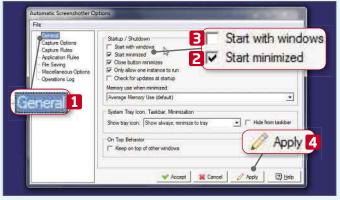
utomatic Screenshotter lets you check what other people get up to on your PC by taking secret screenshots at frequent, preset intervals. It also captures images whenever the active program changes, so you won't miss a colleague taking a sneaky peek at your emails or fail to notice your children visiting inappropriate websites. The drawback to most such programs is that they leave you with hundreds of images to sort through, but Automatic Screenshotter solves this by ignoring small changes so you don't end up with loads of screenshots of the same thing. What's more, it names the files according to time and date (as well as the application being accessed), making it easy to find exactly what you're looking for.

The tool's advanced rules let you tweak the settings to capture specific applications, so you get screenshots of the activity you're interested in and nothing else. If you're away for days or even weeks at a time, the application can also be set to upload images to the cloud, so you can track what others are doing on your PC from anywhere in the world, in

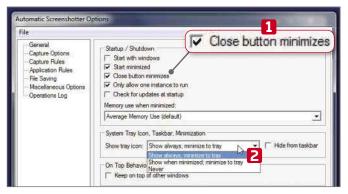




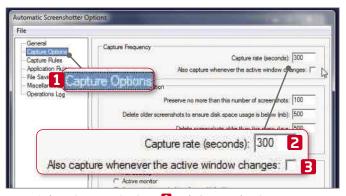
Download Automatic Screenshotter, extract its contents and run the application. When first launched, it's automatically minimised to the Windows notification area. 1 Double-click the icon to open its interface and display the main log screen.



Click Edit, then Edit Options to access the settings. On the General page, 11 you can deactivate the option that makes the application 'Start minimized'. 🔁 You can also set it to start with Windows by ticking the appropriate box. Click Apply. 4



By default, the software minimises when the Close button is selected so you don't accidentally quit the program without realising. 1 On the General settings page, you can choose whether it's minimised to the tray using the 'Show tray icon' 2 drop-down menu.



Select Capture Options 11 to bring up the Capture Frequency section, which lets you choose the number of seconds between screen shots 2 and gives you the option to capture a screenshot whenever the active window changes. **B**

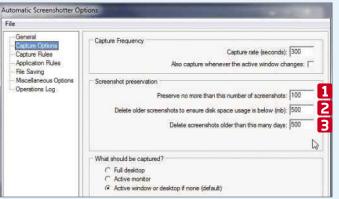




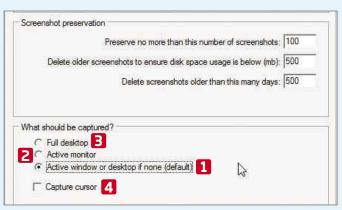
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says

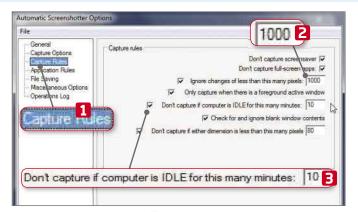
If you want to monitor your PC remotely, you can do so by setting Automatic Screenshotter to save its images to a folder in Dropbox, Google Drive or OneDrive. You'll need to install the Desktop version of the cloud-storage service you use, then add the new custom file location in Automatic Screenshotter's File Saving menu.



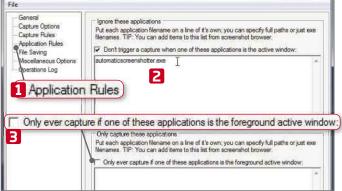
'Screenshot preservation' includes options to ensure that your screenshots don't take up too much space. Choose the maximum number of shots to store 1 and the total file-size limit. 2 You can also automatically delete shots after a specified number of days.



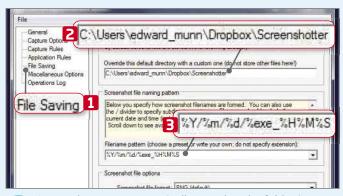
The 'What should be captured?' section lets you choose a target area for the screenshots. It's set to 'Active window or desktop if none' by default, 11 but we preferred 'Active monitor'. 2 If you have more than one monitor, choose 'Full desktop'. 3 You can also include the cursor in screenshots. 4



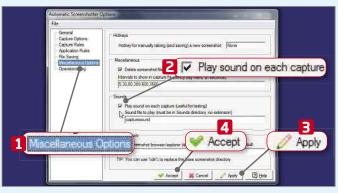
Select Capture Rules 11 to see advanced rules for tweaking how Automatic Screenshotter works. You can change the number of pixels that must differ for a screenshot to be taken 2 and you can stop screenshots being captured when the mouse and keyboard are idle.



To set which programs are captured, select Application Rules 1 and, in the box, 2 add the EXE filenames of programs you never want to capture. To create a whitelist, tick the appropriate box **3** and add the filenames as before screenshots will only be taken when these programs are in use.



Screenshots are automatically saved to the folder in which the software is stored. To choose a different location, click File Saving 1 and type the filepath into the box. 2 You can change how the screenshots are named using the 'Filename pattern' 🖪 drop-down menu.



By default, the software makes a sound every time it captures a screenshot. To deactivate this, click Miscellaneous Options 11 and untick the Sounds box. 2 After changing any settings, be sure to click Apply, 1 then Accept. 4 To stop Automatic Screenshotter, click File and Exit.

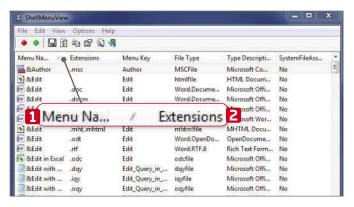


Declutter your right-click menu

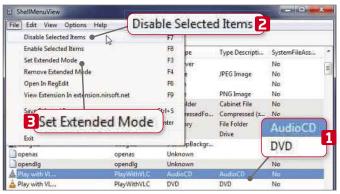
ome programs add new options to your right-click menu to make them more easily accessible. But if you have a lot of programs installed, your context menu can get crowded with options, many of which you hardly ever use.

Nirsoft's ShellMenuView and ShellExView are free, portable applications that remove and reinstate these add-ons, and they can also remove the Windows right-click tools you never use.

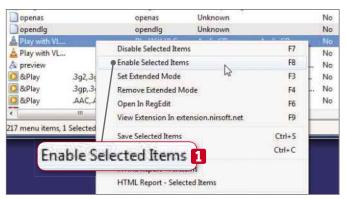
NirSoft: www.nirsoft.net/utils | 🕒 10 mins | 🐉 XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10



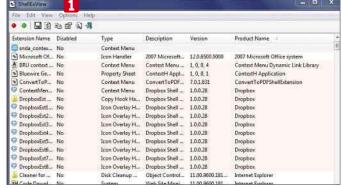
Download, extract and run ShellMenuView. The application lists right-click menu items associated with different file types. By default, the entries are sorted by name, 11 but you can click Extensions 2 to sort them according to the file extensions they're associated with.



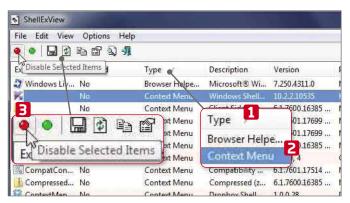
If an entry has no extension, find out what it is by looking at the File Type and Type Description fields. 11 To disable a context-menu option, select it and click File, 'Disable Selected Items' (or press F7). Or, to make the option appear only when Shift is pressed, click Set Extended Mode (F3).



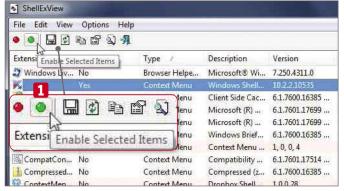
Restart your PC to allow changes to take effect. If you want to reactivate a context-menu item, find it in ShellMenuView again, select it and click File and 'Enable selected items' (F8). The same options are also available by right-clicking. 11



If you can't find the option you want to disable in ShellMenuView, try downloading and running ShellExView, which shows all the Shell Extensions installed on your PC and lets you enable and disable them.



To view the shell extensions that affect the options in right-click menus, sort the list by Type 11 and scroll down until you see the entries for Context Menu. 2 To disable a shell extension, select it and click the red button to Disable Selected Items, E then click Yes.



As with ShellMenuView, you need to restart your PC for any changes to take effect. If you want to reinstate an option, select it and use the green Enable Selected Items 1 button to restore it.



Customise any Windows icon

veryone likes to stamp their personality on their possessions, so why should Windows be any different? CustomizerGod is a free program that can replace standard Windows icons for any image of your choosing.

CustomizerGod works on all the recent Windows versions but you can currently change more icons in Windows 7 and 8 than you can in Windows 10.

CustomizerGod: bit.ly/cust391 | 🕒 10 mins | ಿ XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10



Run the software and click the headings on the left 🛚 to explore the available options in each category. This will differ depending on your version of Windows. Find the icon you want to change, hover over it and note down its ID number. 2



Before you make the switch, rename the image you want to replace the icon with to # followed by the ID number of the icon. So, to replace the empty Recycle Bin (ID #55), **1** change your image's name to #55. **2** You can use PNG, JPG, ICO, GIF or BMP files of any size.



Highlight the icon you want to change by clicking it. 11 Click the Change button 2 and select the replacement file in the Open window. 3 Click the Open button. 4 The image is appropriately resized and appears in place of the old icon.



As long as your replacement icons are all in the same folder, you can change more than one at a time. Use the Control or Shift key as you click to select the icons in CustomizerGod, 1 click Change, then find the folder in the Select Folder window 2 and click the Select Folder button. 3



CustomizerGod automatically creates the different icon sizes that it needs. 1 You can check it's done this by double-clicking the changed icon. 2 To restore an icon to its original picture, select it and click the Restore button.



Some animated icons, such as the Start menu button, need the replacement icons in the same location as the originals. Use an image editor such as Paint.NET to grab the old icon, crop it to size, then layer your new icons over the top, 1 before erasing the original from the background. 2

Weekend Project

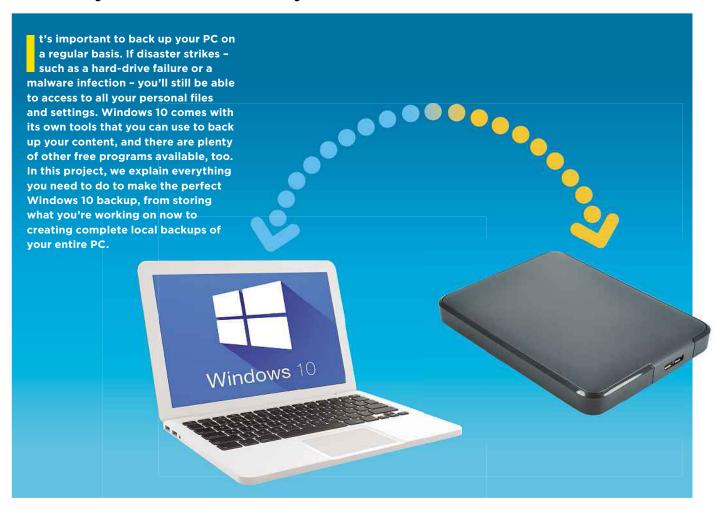
Get to grips with some serious PC DIY to boost your computer's performance





Back up everything in Windows 10

Windows 10 has its own backup tools for keeping your PC and files safe. Wayne Williams shows you how to use them



Keep old versions of files

File History is an incremental backup tool that was originally introduced in Windows 8. It saves multiple copies of your personal files to an external or networked hard drive, so if you accidentally delete a file - a document, photo or video, say - from your PC, you can use this tool to recover the missing item. More importantly, if you make a change to a file that you later regret, and

need to revert to a previous version, you can use File History to restore it.

The tool is disabled by default in Windows 10, so you'll have to turn it on before you can use it. There are some limitations to be aware of, too. By default, File History only backs up copies of files that are in the Documents, Music, Pictures, Videos, Desktop and OneDrive folders. The OneDrive option only backs up the files that are synced locally, not

everything that's saved in your cloud storage. If you want to back up files that are kept in a different location, you'll need add that folder yourself. We'll show you how to set up File History in our Mini Workshop, opposite.

Restore a previous version from File History

Once you've set up File History and it's backing up your files, there are a couple



Once you've got File History set up, you can access previous versions of your files

of ways you can restore them. From the Backup Settings menu, click 'More options' under File History and scroll down to the bottom of the screen. Click the link to 'Restore files from a current backup' and select the items to restore.

Another option is to right-click the file you want to access a previous version of, then select Properties from the menu. Click the Previous Versions tab at the top, then select the version you want. You can either open the file or restore it. There are down arrows next to both buttons that let you 'Open in File History' or 'Restore To...' The latter lets you select a custom location.

Create a backup of your files

File History is the primary way to back up and restore files in Windows 10, but it's not your only option. The backup tool that Microsoft introduced in Windows 7 is still available in Windows 10. and it's a capable option that works well. You can use this to back up your files to a local or networked drive, and choose exactly what to include.

The tool, called 'Back up and Restore (Windows 7)', is tucked away in the Windows Control Panel. Press



Create a shortcut to get quick access to your backup tools

Windows+X, choose Control Panel. 'System and Security', then 'Back up and Restore'. Once the tool is configured, you can use it to create new backups and restore files from previous ones. We show you how to use it in our Mini Workshop on page 61.

Creating a Desktop shortcut provides quick and convenient access to the tool.

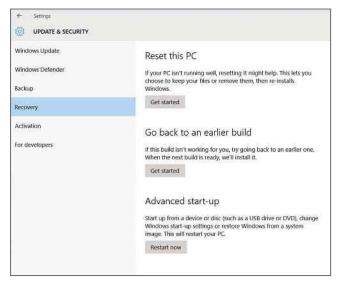
Click 'System and Security' and rightclick 'Back up and Restore (Windows 7)'. Select the option at the bottom to 'Create shortcut'. A message pops up announcing that Windows can't create a shortcut there, and offers you the chance to place it on the Desktop instead. Click Yes. You can now launch the tool whenever you need to. Rightclicking the new shortcut will let you pin a copy to the Quick Access and

Start menus.

Launching the 'Back up and Restore (Windows 7)' tool displays an option on the left to 'Create a system image'. To create a shortcut to this option, right-click the Desktop and select New, Shortcut. The Create Shortcut wizard will launch. In the 'Type the location of the item' box, enter sdclt.exe /BLBBACKUPWIZARD. Click Next and name the shortcut 'Create System Image'. Click Finish to complete the wizard and the shortcut will appear on your Desktop.

Make a Windows 10 system image

You can create a backup image (an exact copy of everything on your drive) using the 'Back up and Restore (Windows 7)' tool. Open it and click the 'Create a



With a System Image, you can use Windows' own tools to restore your PC back to a time when it was working properly

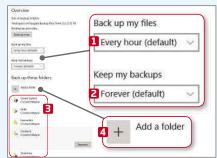
WORKSHOP | Set up and use File History



Click Start and open Settings. Click the 'Update and security' option and click Backup 11 in the left-hand panel. This brings up an entry for File History. Click the 'Add a drive' button. Windows will now scan your computer for local and network drives where you can store your backups. Select one from the list.



File History is shown as On 1 and it will now back up all the files stored in the default folders to the File History folder on the target drive. You can toggle the tool on or off at any time. Click 'More options' 2 to configure the settinas.



You can run a manual backup and choose how often your files are automatically backed up. 11 'Every hour' is the default, but you can set this to anything from every 10 minutes to daily. You can also choose how long to keep backups for. 2 The folders being backed up are listed [3] and you can add more. 4

WebUser Bookstore



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RASPBERRY PI FOR KIDS

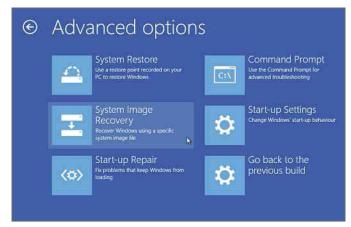
The Raspberry
Pi is the
incredible
£20 British
computer
that's taking



the world by storm. It's ideal for children of all ages to experiment with, play games and learn valuable skills. We've updated this 148-page book for 2015 to include instructions on mastering the new Pi models (A+ and B+).

BUY IT NOW FROM AMAZON

at bit.ly/raspbook





If you need to restore a system image, reboot through Windows' 'Advanced start-up' tool

EaseUS's Todo Backup can perform every type of backup you could ever need

system image' link on the left or use the Desktop shortcut you created earlier. Choose a location to save the image to. This can be an external hard drive, multiple DVDs or a networked drive. Choose which drive(s) to include in the image, then click Start Backup to begin

You can restore the image from within Windows 10. Open Settings and select 'Update and security', then click Recovery and choose 'Advanced start-up'. Your PC will reboot and load the menu. Select Troubleshoot and click 'Advanced options' to bring up a menu of choices. Select 'System Image Recovery' and follow the instructions.

If you can't get into Windows, because the operating system won't load, the PC should automatically boot into the Advanced start-up menu. If this doesn't

happen, because it hasn't worked out that you've got a problem, try rebooting the PC several times.

Try other backup tools

There's no shortage of free backup programs available for Windows 10, such as FBackup 6 (www.fbackup.com), which



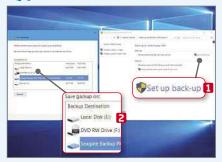
AOMEI's Backupper can back up everything and clone drives and partitions

we cover in this issue's Best Free Software section, and AOMEI Backupper Standard (bit.ly/aomei391), which can back up everything and also clone drives and partitions.

Our favourite free backup tool is EaseUS Todo Backup Free 9 (www. todo-backup.com). It backs up hard drives, partitions, your operating system and individual files or folders, and runs full, incremental or differential backups. Incremental backup saves only the files that have changed since the last backup, while differential backups target files that have changed since the last full backup.

To clone a hard drive, try using Macrium Reflect Free 6 (bit.ly/ macrium391). It offers both drive imaging and cloning, and will let you reorder and resize partitions, and schedule, compress and browse backups.

MINI WORKSHOP | Use Back up and Restore (Windows 7)



Launch the tool and a message will appear informing you that 'Windows Back-up has not been set up.' Click the 'Set up back-up' link 1 to launch Windows Backup. It may take a little while, so be patient. Choose the location to save your backup to. 2



To select a location on your network, click the 'Save on a network' button, then enter the path and your network credentials. Once you've chosen your target location, click Next and either allow Windows to choose what to back up [1] (it will also create a system image) or make your own selection. 2



If you opt to customise your backup, the next window will let you browse your drives and select the folders you want to include. You can also add a system image. The final step is to review your settings. The backup will run at a set day and time but you can change the schedule. 11 Click 'Save settings and run backup' 2 to finish.

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Upgrade your Windows 10 PC

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Web User's Top Tips

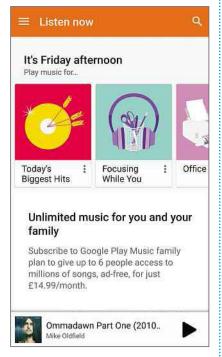
Are you short of storage space on your phone? Our experts show how to make the most of what you've got

TOP TIPS FOR MAXIMISING STORAGE

Don't store music, stream it

usic can take up a lot of space on your phone or tablet, and a complete music library is likely to exceed the capacity of 8GB or even 16GB devices. Streaming solves this problem. Sign up to Google Play Music (play.google.com/music), Apple Music (www.apple.com/uk/music), Microsoft Groove (music.microsoft .com), Spotify (www.spotify.com/uk) or Deezer (www.deezer.com) and, for less than the price of one CD per month, you can play unlimited music from a library of millions of tracks. Streaming tracks over the internet means you can delete the music on your device and free up many gigabytes of storage space, and the cost can be further reduced if you sign up to a family plan.

> The whole family can stream music to free up space on phones and tablets



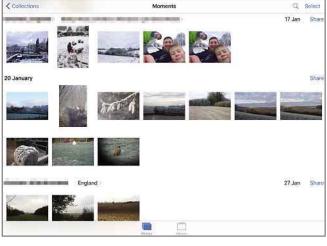
Switch to online storage

Photos and videos take up a lot of space, and will sooner or later fill your device's storage. At this point, you won't be able to add any more apps, photos or videos until you create more room. Storing your photos online lets you delete them off your phone, which can release gigabytes of space. Apps such as OneDrive and Dropbox automatically ask if you want to back up your photos to their online storage services. If you've declined the offer previously, just go to the app's settings and turn it back on.

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.

Get more space from iCloud Photo Library

If you use Apple devices, you can use the iCloud Photo Library to store all your photos online. Go to Settings,



Apple's photo app can store your original images online and keep compressed versions on your devices

iCloud, Photos and turn it on. There is an option to Optimise Storage, which saves space by replacing any full-sized photos on your phone with smaller versions. Your original images are saved safely online and can also be accessed online at www.icloud.com.

If you have more than one Apple device, Photo Stream syncs photos across them all, which is handy but uses up extra space. Go to Settings, Photos & Camera and turn off My Photo Stream. You should also turn off Photo Sharing.

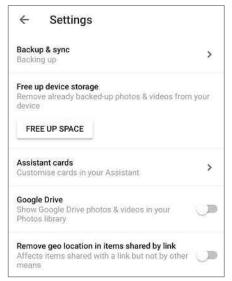
Store photos online with Google

Google Photos backs up all the photos and videos on your iOS or Android device. On Android, open the app, tap the menu button, then tap Settings. Tap Backup and Sync, then switch it on.

Tap 'Upload size' and you'll see two options: Original and High quality. Selecting Original saves an exact copy of each photo to your free 15GB of Google Drive storage. Once this is full, you'll have to pay to get more space. Selecting High quality means there's no limit to the number of photos you can store online. However, photos larger than 16 megapixels are resized. Not many phones shoot photos larger

than this, so it's likely that you can take advantage of Google Photo's unlimited photo storage without compromising the quality of your original photos.

There is a useful feature in the iOS Google Photos app for recovering space used by photos and videos. Go to Settings and tap Free Up Space. This deletes any photos on your



Back up your photos online, then delete them from your phone with Google Photos

phone that have been backed up online. To access your photos, go to photos .google.com in a browser; or go to drive .google.com, click the gear icon and download the Google Drive app. You can then view your photos on your PC.

For more Google Photos tips, see our feature on page 46.

Delete apps

Apps can take up a lot of space, so it's worth deleting any you don't use. Some games, for example, are hundreds of megabytes in size, so if you're no longer playing them on a daily basis, you may be wasting precious space. You also need to take into account the temporary files and caches that apps create. Facebook, for example, isn't that big, but it stores a lot of recently viewed content and can use up as much as 500MB of storage.

Before deleting apps, you should find out how much space they take up. On Android, go to Settings, Application Manager to see a list of all the apps installed on your device along with the amount of space they occupy. On iOS, go to Settings, General, Storage & iCloud Usage, Manage Storage. Your installed apps are sorted by size with the largest at the top, so these are the ones you should remove first.

If you don't have sufficient space for an operating-system upgrade, such as the latest version of Android or iOS, delete apps such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and any other app that stores its data online. You can reinstall them after the OS update and nothing will be lost.

On iOS, long-press an app, then tap the cross to delete it. On Android go to Settings, Application Manager, tap an app, tap 'Force stop', 'Clear cache', 'Clear data' and Uninstall.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Stream your own music for free

Instead of ripping your CDs and storing the MP3 files on your device, you can store them online. Microsoft Groove and Google Play Music let you stream your own music library.

Open an Explorer window on your PC and find the OneDrive folder on the hard drive (if you don't have it, get OneDrive from onedrive.live.com).

Create a Music folder with subfolders named after artists and

albums, then copy your music tracks into them. When OneDrive has finished syncing, install Microsoft Groove on your phone or tablet. You'll now be able to stream any music stored in your OneDrive account for free. Your computer doesn't need to be switched on.

You can upload 50,000 music tracks to Google Play Music and stream them to any phone or tablet for free. Go to play, google, com in a browser and select Music on the left. Click My Music, click the menu button to open the side panel and click 'Upload music'. Click and drag tracks or folders of tracks from the PC's hard drive to the browser window to upload them. When it's finished, run Google Play Music on your device to stream your music.

Clear the cache

Some apps store temporary information on your device, which takes up space. Google Play Music, for example, saves streamed tracks. Go to the menu, Settings and tap 'Clear cache' to free up to 1GB of space. Turn off caching in the settings but watch your data usage if you stream music when you are out and using the phone's mobile data. Wi-Fi streaming is



Use a clean-up tool to clear caches and temporary files

unlimited. Spotify has a similar option in Settings and tapping 'Delete cache and saved data' frees up space.

There are lots of free clean-up and tune-up apps for Android phones that clear the caches of many apps. Good ones include Clean Master (bit.ly/ clean391), CCleaner (bit.ly/cclean391), Avast Cleanup (bit.ly/ avast391), and The Cleaner (bit.ly/ theclean 391). They provide one-tap cleaning and can recover several

gigabytes of space. Caches fill up again as they are rebuilt, but clearing them temporarily increases free space, which is useful when you need to install a new app or an update.

Delete books, magazines and videos

If you use Amazon Kindle, iBooks or Google Play Books to read ebooks on your phone or tablet, you should delete all the books on the device except the one you are reading. Books are stored online in your account and only need to be on your device when they are being read. In iBooks on the iPhone for example, list the books by title and delete them by swiping over them to the left.

Magazine apps often store old

issues, which can occupy lots of storage space. Open the apps. look for past issues and delete them.

You should also delete any downloaded movies and TV shows you are not watching from iPhone's Videos app and Google Play Movies & TV. They can be download again for free if you need them. In Movies & TV, go to the menu, Settings, Manage Downloads, In Videos on the iPhone. tap Edit and tap the cross on an item.



Only store movies and TV shows that you're watching

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



SEARCH

Turn off Google's search history

When I use Google to search, I get a drop-down menu with a record of all the things I've searched for in the past. How do I delete items from this record?

Jacksheila, via email

When you type into the search box on the Google homepage, a list of suggestions appears, based partly on what other people have searched for but also on your own previous searches and browsing history. The former can't be disabled but you can clear the latter items so you only get suggestions based on other people's searches.

Go to www.google.co.uk and sign in. Click your profile photo, then click My Account. In the 'Personal info &



Stop Google storing your searches and browsing activity

privacy' section, click 'Activity controls'. Use the switch to turn off 'Your searches and browsing activity'.

Another way to stop searches and browsing being stored and used in the search suggestions is to open a private window ('New incognito window' in Chrome, New Private Window in Firefox or InPrivate Browsing from the Safety menu in Internet Explorer). The search suggestions that appear in this mode are only based on popular terms searched by other people.

Use IObit's Driver Booster Free (bit.ly/ booster391) to update old drivers but do them one at a time and check that everything works before moving on to the next one. Update any software you have to the latest version. Uninstall any security programs and then upgrade to Windows 10 again. Hopefully, it will be OK this time.

BROWSERS

Set your default browser and Start page

I've just bought a new PC running Windows 8.1. The browser has Yahoo as its homepage, but I want to change this to Chrome. Try as I might, I have been unable to get rid of Yahoo. Is this due to malware or is it built into 8.1, whether I like it or not? The browser settings do not seem to have any effect. How do I get rid of this annoyance?

John W Jones, via email

Yahoo is a website and search engine and Chrome is a browser, so they are different. Let's look at how to change both the default homepage and browser in Windows 8.1.

Press Windows+X and click Control Panel to open it. Choose 'Small icons' from the drop-down menu next to 'View by', then click 'Programs and Features'. If there are any toolbars or other items, particularly ones that mention Yahoo, then uninstall them

Afterwards, run Internet Explorer. click the gear icon in the top-right corner and select 'Internet options'. On the General tab, delete everything in the 'Home page' box and enter the address of your preferred search engine, such as www.google.co.uk. It's useful to have a search engine as the homepage but you can choose a different page if you prefer. Click OK to close the window.

Most browsers, when you run them, will ask if you want to set them as the default option, and this is an easy way to make Chrome your default browser. If this option doesn't appear, press Windows+C to open the Charms bar, then click Settings, then PC Settings at the bottom. Click 'Search and apps',

WINDOWS 10

Make the Windows 10 update more stable

My HP Pavilion desktop PC, which came with Windows 8.1 pre-installed, has never suffered any problems. Microsoft badgered me to download Windows 10, which I did in the end, but having used it on many occasions I find it unstable, especially when using Microsoft Edge. Before I go back to Windows 8.1, is it my computer that is at fault or the Windows 10 download?

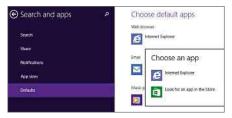
J Rosamond, via email



Microsoft's troubleshooter can fix some problems with Windows 10 upgrades

Windows 10 is designed to support as wide a range of computers as possible, but a few people have had problems. Some faults, such as incompatible drivers or software, only show up when you upgrade so it's best to get your PC in the best possible shape before you start. Check it for errors, update the drivers and software. back it up and then upgrade.

Open Explorer, go to This PC or Computer, right-click the hard drive and select Properties. Select the Tools tab, look for the 'Error checking' section and click the Check button to scan for errors. Download and run the Windows Update Troubleshooter from bit.ly/reset391. Press Windows+S to open the search panel and type command prompt. Right-click Command Prompt in the results and select 'Run as administrator'. Type sfc /scannow and press Enter to check and fix errors. Afterwards, type dism.exe /Online /Cleanupimage /Restorehealth and press Enter to perform more checks.



Go to PC Settings in Windows 8.1 to set the default applications

then Defaults. If the default browser is not the one you want, click it and select an alternative in the list that's displayed.

To change your homepage in Chrome, click the menu button and choose Settings. Under 'On startup', select 'Open a specific page or set of pages' and click 'Set pages' to add a new page and remove any you don't want.

MOBILE

CCleaner app is reporting the wrong OS

The Android version of the clean-up tool CCleaner is telling me that my operating system is Android 5.1.1, when I know my operating system is Fire OS 5.1.1. Is this normal?

Patrick Ryan-O'Brien, via email

Yes. Amazon takes Android, customises it with its own menus, icons and interface, puts it on its Fire tablets and calls it Fire OS. What you have is basically Android 5.1.1 running Amazon's Fire interface over the top.

SECURITY

Remove malware from a new laptop

I've had very little trouble with malware over the last few years. My security software has picked up the odd cookie and low-threat PUP (Potentially Unwanted Program), but that's about all. Recently, I replaced my old laptop with a new Hewlett Packard Pavilion Gaming 15 from PC World.

The set-up went smoothly but the problems started when I began using Chrome (which I downloaded using Edge). I was inundated with adverts and pop-ups which made it virtually impossible to use the internet. A toolbar at the top of the screen, when rightclicked, revealed itself as Web Bar.

The only security software on the laptop was the preinstalled McAfee LiveSafe. I used Ninite to download some of the security tools that I normally use: Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www .malwarebytes.org), Ad-Aware Free Antivirus (www.lavasoft.com) and AdwCleaner (bit.ly/adwclean391). Neither Malwarebytes nor Ad-Aware detected anything of significance. AdwareCleaner found and removed Web Bar 2, Royal Raid, Search Quick Know and Inetstat.

Where did all this malware come from? Did it all get on my laptop when I downloaded Chrome? I find it difficult to believe that it was already on the laptop. A friend of mine had a similar experience with a new computer but it wasn't a Hewlett Packard model.

Keith Burr, via email

PC suppliers often pre-install free trials of software on their computers, but these don't inundate you with ads that make it impossible to use the internet, and are easy to uninstall or disable. Chrome does not contain malware or adware.

It's more likely that adware has been sneaked onto your PC via a software download. During installation, you often get tick boxes asking you to accept extras such as toolbars and other items. They are often pre-selected or presented in a confusing way and it is easy to accidentally install adware. Take care, do not accept the default settings and always opt out of any extra items.

BROWSERS

Search unseen website text

I often use Ctrl+F to search websites. Some web pages can be long, with as much as 90% hidden off screen until I scroll down. Sometimes my search only covers text that is visible on my screen and matches that are further down do not show up. How do I guarantee that the search will scan the entire page?

Bernard Feay, via email

Pressing Ctrl+F in a browser opens a small search box so you can search the contents of the current page. The search stops at the first match found and the text is highlighted. Next to the search box are up and down buttons or Next and Previous buttons. Click them to go to the location of the next match. The page automatically scrolls to show the highlighted text. If the page is not too long, you may be able to see all the highlighted matches if you zoom out. Hold down the Ctrl key and spin the mouse wheel to zoom in and out. Also, if a page is slow to load, the out-of-sight sections might not have loaded yet, so wait until the page has fully loaded before performing a search.

DIGITAL PHOTOS

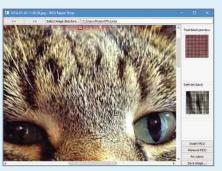
Restore corrupted pictures

I have lots of files and photos on my computer. When I click them, I can see them but, if I click them again, they turn white and a message says "Not responding". When I tried scanning them, the security program said I have corrupt files. How can I recover the photos?

Dave, via email

The first task is to repair any hard-drive problems and then try to fix the corrupt images. Open an Explorer window and select This PC or Computer. Right-click the hard drive and select Properties. Select the Tools tab and click Check. In Windows 10. click 'Scan drive' and in Windows 7 click Start. If errors are found, you may need to restart Windows to repair them.

Open the Control Panel and click Default Programs. Click 'Set your default programs', select Windows Photo Viewer in the list and click 'Set this program as default'. Now double-



JPEG Repair Shop can fix some faults in corrupted photo files

click the photos to view them.

If this doesn't work, try running a photo editor such as Paint.NET (www .getpaint.net) or GIMP (www.gimp .org), and load the images into the program. If you still can't view them, the files may be corrupt. Try downloading and running the PixRecovery tool from bit.ly/pixrec391. JPEG Repair Shop (bit.ly/jpg391) is a free tool that's also worth trying.

One of the best image tools is Stellar Phoenix JPEG Repair (bit.ly/ stel391). It costs £32 but may be worth it if your photos are valuable. Download the free trial to first check that it's able to recover your photos.



This fortnight Roland has been boosting the security of his online accounts using two-factor authentication

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

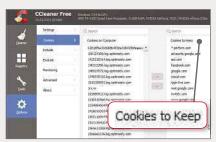
TOP TIP

BROWSERS

Keep the cookies you trust

Cookies can clog up your computer and cause it to slow down but some, such as those that log you into websites you use regularly, are useful. CCleaner (www.piriform.com) has a tool that lets you control which cookies you save and which you delete.

To use it, select Options, then click the Cookies button. The list (which can take a while to appear) shows all the cookies on your PC in the left column. If you want to keep a cookie, simply drag and drop it from the left column to the 'Cookies to Keep' column. You can move several cookies at once by clicking them individually while holding down the Ctrl key, then using the rightarrow button. If you have hundreds of cookies to sort through, you can automate the process by right-clicking anywhere in the left column, then



CCleaner lets you keep useful cookies when you use it to delete internet files

selecting Intelligent Scan and Yes. This automatically preserves cookies for trusted sites including Google, Facebook and iCloud. Now, when you run CCleaner and set it to clear the cookies for any of your browsers, it will save the ones you've added to 'Cookies to Keep'.

FratPark, Web User Forums

BROWSER

Close tabs even faster

I was very pleased with the CloseTab extension for Opera (bit.ly/closetab391), which lets you close a web page by right-clicking it and selecting 'Close tab', and am happy to discover that there is also a CloseTab add-on (bit.ly/close391) for Firefox and Pale Moon. It adds three options to the right-click menu, which appear when you click anywhere on a



CloseTab lets you close and open tabs by right-clicking anywhere on a web page

web page: Close This Tab; Open New Tab; and Un-Close Tab. I find it makes closing and opening new tabs much faster and easier, because I don't have to move my cursor to the top of the window.

Madeline, Web User Forums

WINDOWS 10

Reclaim drive space from File History

I wanted to download some files from the internet and save them to a USB hard drive that I use for backups but, when I opened the drive in Explorer, I found it had very little space left. I soon worked out that most of the space was being used by the File History feature in Windows 10, which makes backups by storing copies of your files on a USB drive. It stores multiple versions of files and saves a new version every time a file is changed.

To clear out the old versions of files and keep your backups, open the Control Panel, open File History, click 'Advanced



settings', then click 'Clean up versions'. You can choose to remove old versions of files and keep the latest. You still have all your files backed up but, if there are 10 versions of a file, the nine oldest are deleted leaving just the latest. When the process had finished, I had around 200GB of extra space on my USB drive.

Frank Bernard, via email

Web User says: If you have a big enough hard drive, File History is a very useful way to back up your files. For more information, see our Weekend Project on page 58.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Use Facebook without apps

I tried the Facebook app on my Windows 10 PC and, although it looks nice, it doesn't actually do anything more than the website. If you just want an easy way to access Facebook, drag the URL out of the browser and drop it on the Desktop. This creates a shortcut that opens the browser and goes straight to the website.

There isn't a Facebook Messenger app for Windows 10 but, again, you can just use the website. Go to www.messenger .com and you can send and receive messages from there. Drag the URL to the Desktop to create another shortcut.

You don't even need the Facebook and Messenger apps on your tablet or phone - just go to the website in a browser. It works just as well.

Mike Riley, via email

Web User says: Running out of space on your phone? We've got more spacesaving tips on page 64.

GENERAL PC

Speed up screenshots

I was recently told about a useful Windows tool that even our IT guy at work wasn't aware of. Previously, when I wanted to take a screen shot, I just pressed the Print Screen button, pasted

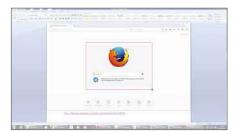
the image to an application such as Paint, then cropped it according to my requirements. The new method I've learned uses Windows' built-in Snipping Tool.

If you click Start, type snipping and open the program, you can choose whether you want to capture a free-form image, a selected area, a window or the entire screen. The first three options require you, in different ways, to select the area you want to capture, while the final mode is activated with a single click. Once you've taken your screenshot, the image appears within Snipping Tool for you to copy, save or share via email. You can also highlight any elements you want to stand out and even draw on it before you save it

I use Windows 7 at work but the method also worked on my Vista PC at home. If you take a lot of screen shots, you can pin the tool to your taskbar by right-clicking it and selecting the appropriate option.

Rob1955 and Stewart40, Web User **Forums**

Web User says: You can also capture a screenshot of an active window by pressing Alt + Print Screen.



Microsoft's Snipping Tool makes it easier to take screenshots of specific areas

PHOTOS

Use Google Photos to stitch panoramas

Some digital cameras and mobile phones have a panorama setting that lets you take extra-wide photos. Some can cover a 180- or even 360-degree view. But you can take panoramic photos on any phone or digital camera, even if there is no built-in panorama feature.

If you shoot photos on your phone, install the Google Photos app and set it to back up your photos. To create a panorama, shoot a photo, swivel yourself round to the left or right and take another shot slightly overlapping the first. Repeat this and take a third slightly overlapping the second shot.

Google Photos uploads the images from your phone automatically, but if you're using a digital camera, go to photos.google.com and upload them



Google Photos automatically turns overlapping photos

from your PC. The next day, you'll get a notification on your Google account that the panorama has been created.

Open Google Photos on your phone or go to photos.google.com in a browser on your PC, then select the Assistant. The panorama is displayed along with an option to save it. Do this to add it to your photo collection. It can then be viewed in a browser or on your phone, printed from your PC and so on.

Tom Parker, via email

Web User says: For secret Google Photos tips, see our feature on page 46.

GENERAL PC

Deactivate the Insert key

If, like me, you frequently press the Insert key by accident and find it frustrating that it overwrites letters when you type, you can deactivate it by making a simple change to the Registry. Type regedit into the Start menu and run the program, then navigate to:

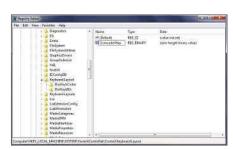
HKEY LOCAL MACHINE\System\ CurrentControlSet\Control\Keyboard

Right-click in a space on the righthand side of the screen and select New and Binary Value. Name the Value Scancode Map, double-click it and enter the following value, ignoring the numbers that already exist (and those that are generated when you type):

00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 52 E0 00 00

Finally, exit Regedit, restart your PC and the button will be deactivated.

If you prefer, you can make the Insert button open the Windows Calculator



The Registry can be used to change the function of kevs

instead of having no function at all. To do this, simply enter the following Binary value instead of the one described above:

00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 02 00 00 00 21 E0 52 E0 00 00 00 00

You can restore the Insert button to its original function by simply deleting the value but remember to back up your Registry before you make any changes.

jason.smith.uk, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Stop uninstalled apps from downloading data

You'd be amazed by the number of programs that try to 'phone home' when you attempt to uninstall them. You can see what I mean by installing Zone Alarm's free firewall (bit.ly/firewall391) and monitoring the data sent and received when you uninstall an application. That's why I always recommend disconnecting from the internet when uninstalling software. It not only stops the program from relaying information but also saves your bandwidth.

NikoBold, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Get notifications about software updates

FileHorse (www.filehorse.com) is a free software download website that you can use to receive alerts about new software releases and updates. To sign up for email alerts, visit the site, scroll to the bottom and click the envelope icon. Next, enter your email address and the captcha, then click Complete Subscription Request.

When you receive an update for a program you have or want, you can just click the link to take you to the FileHorse website to download it. I find the service useful for notifications of Chrome updates though, in this case, I update it manually using the browser.

FratPark, Web User Forums



FileHorse offers notifications for software releases and updates



Readers' Helpdesk

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

SOFTWARE

How can I keep my PC running

Is there a free optimisation tool that will speed up my Windows 7 laptop? I'm using CCleaner (www.piriform.com) to get rid of the rubbish, but that's it.

Bald Eagle, Web User Forums

I honestly think that adding more tools to a PC in the hope of speeding it up has the opposite effect and only serves to bog it down even more. There's no substitute for intuitive, careful, well-balanced use - keeping the number of programs to a minimum, maintaining a tight control on startup objects and regularly cleaning up the hard drive.

Windows often seems to keep a residue of rubbish that requires careful handling, which is where CCleaner comes into its own. Don't bother with the Registry cleaner, though. Such tools don't have much of an idea what needs to be there and what doesn't, and the Registry is immensely complex so extreme caution should be exercised when meddling with it.

I saw a program called Advanced SystemCare 9 Free (bit.ly/advanced391) recommended in an article a while back, so you may want to try it in place of CCleaner as your PC 'housekeeping' tool. I've heard that it can appear a bit daunting at first but apparently it's worth persevering with.

succulent95 and rogerman40, **Web User Forums**



Advanced SystemCare helps speed up your PC by clearing out junk files

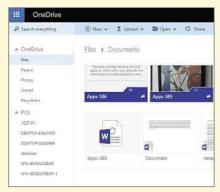
SOFTWARE

Can I open a DOC file without Word?

I cannot open a DOC file that was attached to an email I received in Windows 10. Can someone recommend a safe application I can download to open it, please?

mal23, Web User Forums

I would not open any DOC file attachment unless you are 100% sure of the source, because it could contain malware. WordPad, which comes installed on most versions of Windows, should be able to open the file but if that doesn't work, try OpenOffice (www.openoffice.org) or LibreOffice (www.libreoffice.org).



A Microsoft account lets you access Word Online, which opens DOC files

Alternatively, if you'd rather not download additional software, you can upload the file to OneDrive (onedrive .live.com) and open it with Microsoft Word Online.

Helmut, Web User Forums

GENERAL

Should I leave my laptop plugged in?

I usually connect my laptop to the mains when I'm using it and then unplug it when I'm finished. Can you tell me if this is a good idea? Or should I run it off the battery until it needs charging?

AuraTodd, Web User Forums

I've been using laptops for over 20 years and have always left them connected to the mains (with the battery still installed), unplugging them at night when the laptop is turned off. Once a month, I run my laptops on battery power until the low battery warning appears (5% remaining). My batteries have always lasted well, some as long as

My current Toshiba laptop has an eco charge utility, which only charges the battery to 80%. The idea is that although the usage time on a single charge is less, the overall lifetime of the battery is extended. In other words, fully charging and discharging a battery can shorten its life. Read the article at bit.ly/battery391 (especially about halfway down the page), for more information.

rogerman40, Web User Forums

SOFTWARE

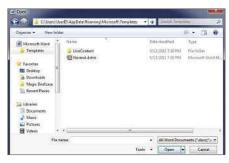
Why does Word always open a blank document?

When I open a document in Word, it also opens a separate blank document. Can anyone tell me why?

TheClash, Web User Forums

Many problems in Word are caused by the Normal.dot file becoming corrupted. If you locate the file when Word is closed and delete it, a new one will be generated automatically the next time you launch the software. The Wordfast Wiki's info at bit.ly/normal391 tells you where to find the Normal.dot file on different operating systems.

Moonshine, Web User Forums



Some Microsoft Word problems can be fixed by deleting the Normal.dot file





Star Email

Mug/

Amazon is responsible for Marketplace sales

ecently, there has been a lot of discussion about whether Amazon is responsible for goods and services offered by its Marketplace traders. I would argue that yes, it is responsible. My rule of thumb is: "Who did I pay? And from whose shop or website did I order".

The assertion seems to be that Amazon simply acts like an agent, but even agents have responsibilities. Surely if Amazon is processing your card, your card company must consider your contract to be with Amazon, and if Amazon says it has nothing to do with the transaction, then it could be guilty of money laundering.

I do not buy very much from Amazon these days, because I can easily find cheaper alternatives, but I



have noticed that it is becoming less and less obvious that you are dealing with a third party. This isn't helped by the indication that your order is "fulfilled" by Amazon, which to the layman means that Amazon holds the goods in its warehouses, takes your money and posts your order to you.

I'd love someone to challenge Amazon

in the small claims court over this matter. I certainly would, but as I've made the effort to steer away from Amazon if I can, I doubt I'll get the opportunity.

In my opinion, this issue needs to be seriously looked into. I am disappointed that there is nothing in the new Sale of Goods Act to specifically target this type of trading, which is becoming more and more popular under a little known (to the average

punter) practice called 'drop shipping'. Although drop shipping is slightly different to Amazons trading practice, I believe drop shippers should be made to state that's what they are in their adverts, because they do not even own the goods they sell, so they are 'trading without effects'.

Castman, Web User Forums

Unfair geo-blocking has cost me Lottery money

I have a problem with geo-blocking, specifically as imposed by the National Lottery. While I was staying at my house abroad, the Lottery sent me three emails saying that my registered credit card was about to expire and that I needed to register my new one in order to "keep playing". However, I was unable to access their website due to geo-blocking.

I took their conditions for me to "keep playing" to mean that my Direct Debit setup in the UK would be terminated and my regular purchase of Lotto tickets would cease. Consequently, I got my daughter to purchase tickets, at a cost of

£12, to cover the three weeks until my return.

> Back in the UK, it turned out that my Direct Debit and regular purchase were, in fact, not affected at all so my £12 was completely wasted on duplicate tickets! I have attempted to claim the money back from

the National Lottery, and I am still pursuing them. I am so incensed that I have even written to my MP about the unfairness of it all.

.....

My complaint has two main points. Firstly, the National Lottery's emails were extremely confusing and misleading through use of the loose term "keep playing". This apparently refers only to

the possible purchase of extra one-off tickets to other draws. All they needed to do was add one short sentence to the effect that 'your direct debit and regular purchases are unaffected', but they are resisting even this simple change.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, is the question of geoblocking. Although I have cash lodged in

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my Lottery account, I am denied access to it if I am abroad should I wish to withdraw it to my bank account. Why are they allowed to do this when I can access and manage my bank account and any other of my investments from anywhere in the world? Can this be legal since it is my money, after all?

While I fully understand that the Lottery has to disallow purchase of lottery tickets from abroad, surely it's not rocket science to allow registered users access for other purposes, especially to their own cash. It's ridiculous - you can't even check your numbers if you've forgotten them!

Similar arguments apply to BBC iPlayer. Why can't genuine licence payers simply register to watch it from anywhere? Both of these organisations argue that it is simpler for them to apply a blanket geo-block. So their customers can just lump it? It's disgusting.

John Perkins, via email

Speaking the truth about Windows XP

Well done to David Danson (Star Email, Issue 389) for stating the obvious about Windows XP.

Many years

ago, when I took a class on Photoshop, the instructor said that we would never use the entire program, because it was so powerful. That was Photoshop 7. I was using Windows XP at the time, and I still use XP and Photoshop 7. Like many others, I have several thousand pounds of additional software that will not work on Windows 10 or 7. If I upgrade to 10, I will spend a lot of money upgrading, buying or renting compatible software. Then what happens when the next generation of Windows gets shoved down my throat?

I realise that computer geeks in these corporations say they need new software because the current stuff doesn't deliver. So management goes out and pays for more gongs and whistles. Tell me which corporation in the world (outside of government agencies) cannot function iust fine on Windows 7?

Microsoft said that all XP programs would work on Windows 7 with a simple tweak. I beg to differ. I found that a lot of the XP programs just didn't transfer over

to Windows 7. I paid for my own copy of XP, which does the job for my graphics programs, and I run Windows 7 for my normal day-to-day computing. So well done, David Danson. Sometimes the obvious has to be stated.

Norm Hill, via email

The internet isn't the problem or the solution

In response to Adrian Bonnington's comments on my letter, 'Would we be better off without the internet?'. I do understand that many occupations use the internet for their work and sharing their data on the web, and that people use the web to renew magazine subscriptions and update prescriptions.

But we have many police agencies already watching and listening to us, and there will soon be many more. This is why I believe that the so-called 'dark web' is now creeping into the 'legitimate internet', as Adrian Bonnington calls it.

So what can we class as the legitimate internet? There are so many ways that a person or organisation can post material that is socially or politically opposing a civilised way of life. But whether it is the legitimate internet or the dark web. people are using it for more than sociable reasons, and we would all be fools to ignore the facts.

What I meant in my original email is that perhaps computers and the internet are bringing down the human race rather than helping it progress. Overpopulation, as Adrian quite rightly pointed, is a problem, but he is wrong about welfare aid and social housing being taken advantage of.

But, and this is the best bit, myself and Adrian Bonnington can and I hope always will be able to share our views like this in a free land. I, for one, want the best for our children, so some time away from the net might help?

Terry Bradley, Milton Keynes



Pernicious views have no place in Web User

I found myself nodding in agreement with every point made by Adrian Bonnington in Issue 389 (bit.ly/ webuser389) about the exaggerated importance of the internet, until I stubbed my toe on his final, completely unrelated paragraph. A more rancid right-wing rant I have not read in many a long year. The idea that over-breeding is encouraged by welfare would be laughable were it not so pernicious.

Has Mr Bonnington read no news outlet for the past six years? Is he not aware how badly those on welfare have been squeezed and how little regard any political party has for their problems? I assume he is in comfortable circumstances - perhaps he is even the recipient of some of the huge and continuing largesse awarded to the elderly.

Mr Bonnington seems completely unaware that his standard of living is maintained by money taken from the poor - Robin Hood in reverse. Basically, what he says does not deserve an airing in any publication, much less a respected computer magazine. This was poisonous rubbish, and I could not leave it unchallenged.

James Gourley, Faversham

Three things I hate about the

Some things on the internet just don't make sense to me and I have a feeling that they never will. For example, why do people - especially young people, but also many adults who should know better - assume that the world is fascinated with seeing photos of them posing for snaps on their phones? Do they really have nothing better to do with their time than record themselves making stupid faces and then upload the result to the web for other people to 'heart' and comment on? The sheer vanity of it never ceases to amaze me!

Secondly, I still fail to understand the appeal of Twitter. Believe me, I've tried, but it just seems like a never-ending stream of gibberish and navel-gazing. Even when you do come across an interesting 'tweet', it's too short to give you any real information other than directing you to a website other than Twitter. So what's the point?

Last but not least, I am constantly









bothered by emails from websites that I have never used, that threaten to terminate my account if I don't log in within the next 48 hours. If I've never had an account, then how I am supposed to log into it and why should I care if they terminate it?

I'm sure I'm not the only one who gets confused and annoyed by these things, but I'd be interested to read about other Web User readers' pet peeves!

Reece Naylor, via email

Watch out for Apple ID scam

I would like to draw your readers' attention to a scam email I received this week, just in case they are targeted by the same scammers but aren't as cautious as I am about such things. The email, which I enclose a picture of (below) was sent to my Yahoo Mail address, although nowhere in the message did it actually include my name. The subject line was simply an Apple ID, which immediately rang alarm bells because I haven't used iTunes or any other Apple service for many years, and I'm sure that I no longer have an active Apple account. The email wanted me to keep my account secure by clicking a link to 'Begin Unlock Process'. Obviously I didn't do this, especially when I spotted the spelling errors: "failure to unlock your sccount [sic] can lead to permenant [sic] suspension". The email was sent from the address 'source@apple.com' rather than an official Apple address. I'd advise your readers to be vigilant and delete this scam email on receipt.

Joseph Reade, via email





IX MONTHS ON FROM THE WINDOWS 10 LAUNCH, WHAT'S YOUR VERDICT?

I like it - very pleased with it. Best operating system to date. Just purchased a Windows 10 tablet and that's very good too.

Jason Cooper

It's OK, except for when you carry out a big update and get those scary Windows messages that resemble ransomware.

Lynn Sharpe

It's an awful, buggy system, released too early, as per usual with Windows. Chris Cole

I think it's dead ace. I loved XP and 7.

Adam Francis

HY DO YOU THINK IPHONE **SALES ARE FALLING?**

.....

but 10 is the winner for me so far.

Because everyone who wants one, has one? I have two iPhones, which are more than enough - a 5C at work and a 6S of my own. Trying an Android phone next.

AF @FazzaGBR

The iPhone 6S was the 12th generation of iPhone. Why do people always want the latest version? Prestige? Features? There comes a time when you are happy to stick with the 5S for a wee while longer and go SIM only. It's almost as good as the 6S and saves a bunch of money.

Chris Armstrona

Apple is far too restrictive about what it lets you do. I had to jailbreak my iPhone to do anything of note. Only when you use an Android phone do

you see how much better they are. Paul Murray

People are getting wise to the fact that there are alternative products. Android phones are better and cheaper.

Darren Branagh

O YOU LIKE TWITTER'S NEW HOMEPAGE?

•••••

Couldn't care less. I very rarely use the web interface. Tweetdeck (tweetdeck .twitter.com) or Fenix (bit.ly/fenix391) are my gateways.

Dave McAlister @dpmcalister

Everything needs freshening up now and then. I'm sure there will be just as many who like it as don't.

Derek @dlee1

It looks very generic. Since Twitter got rid of everyone's background images, it has become a very boring webpage to have open.

Peter Fitzsimmons

Just scrolled down it. Won't be doing so again. I'll just log in from now on.

.....

Andrew Jackson @aj44brown

ALKTALK LOST 95,000 **CUSTOMERS AS A RESULT** OF LAST OCTOBER'S HACK. DID YOU LEAVE?

Yes. I felt that I couldn't trust TalkTalk with my details anymore.

Michael Bradbrook

No, I renewed my contract just before the hack. I was lucky not to be one of the affected users, but did get plenty of chancers on the phone during that period.

Martin Philip

I left, and they never charged me for leaving. I'm now with Sky.

Daniel Panton

Never been a customer, and never will after all their problems.

Simon Mellor @Simon9Hops

A Page 404

Barry Collins rejoices over businesses finally being hit for lax handling of customer data

No wonder 95,000 have abandoned TalkTalk

'm not a man renowned for elaborate shows of affection. When I hug my kids, they look at me with suspicion and ask who's died. But right now, I could kiss 95,000 perfect strangers. Yes, even you, Dave from Didcot.

For far too long, companies have gotten away with being cavalier with our data. Barely a month seems to pass without reports of hundreds of thousands of customers being affected by a breach here, a hack there. Yet, rarely do these companies seem to suffer any great punishment for their failures: a few outraged headlines, a mock-sincere apology from the CEO, then it's business as normal.

Not so for TalkTalk. According to the company's latest earnings report, 95,000 customers decided that enough was enough when the broadband provider confessed to a massive data breach late last year - even if it wasn't quite as serious as was first reported. Despite TalkTalk bribing customers to stay with free sports channels, phone calls and extra data, almost 100,000 customers decided their loyalty couldn't be bought - that potentially coughing up their bank details to a 16-year-old hacker wasn't on - and they've deserted the sinking ship. I'd like to shake the

hand of every last one of them, because it's high time data breach bunglers got their comeuppance, TalkTalk in particular.

TalkTalk cutomers' loyalty couldn't be bought and they've deserted the sinking ship | |

TalkTalk's handling of the data breach was not so much a car crash as a 15-car motorway pile-up. The alarm was raised when several of TalkTalk's websites went down on 21 October, although it wasn't until late evening of the following day



that the company owned up to the data breach, and set about informing all four million of its customers that their bank and credit card details may now be sitting on a teenager's hard drive.

While TalkTalk's helplines went into meltdown, the company's CEO was shoved into the news studios, where she reassured customers by admitting she didn't have a clue how much data had

> been stolen, what type of data had been swiped or whether it had even been encrypted. "The awful truth is that I don't know," she told the BBC.

Why would she? She's only in charge of the company.

It later transpired that the bank account data wasn't encrypted. "It wasn't encrypted, nor are you legally required to encrypt it," she told the

Sunday Times, before presumably going home to open the back door for the burglars, because she's not legally required to lock that either.

It eventually transpired that the breach wasn't quite as bad as first feared: only 157,000 customers had their personal details accessed and 15,656 had their bank account numbers and sort codes exposed. And despite TalkTalk refusing to free customers from their contracts unless they were directly affected by the attack, 95,000 have decided to take their business elsewhere specifically because of this incident, at a cost of around £60m.

Those tens of thousands of people have done us all a huge favour, because the CEOs of BT, Virgin Media, Sky and the like now have 60 million reasons not to be as blasé about the security of their customers' data. You never know, some of them might even check if their customers' data is encrypted.

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



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