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Issue 393

23 March - 5 April 2016

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STOP WEBSITES SPYING ON YOU

Don't let them steal your personal data p38

- ✓ Disable tools that track you
- ✓ Stop adverts following you
- ✓ Secret settings to change
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You *can* beat a bit of bully

Imagine if every time you walked down the street, people started following you – watching which shops you went in, noting down who you spoke to and listening to you hum the theme tune to *Bullseye* and other classic Eighties game shows. It would be extremely creepy and unnerving, but similar examples of unauthorised surveillance occur every time we go online and, like *Bullseye* contestants who win a speedboat to take home to landlocked Derbyshire, we pretend not to mind. But we darn well should mind, because free content shouldn't come at the expense of our privacy and we shouldn't be

bullied into accepting tracking cookies that follow us around the web. In this issue's cover feature (page 38), we reveal how to stick two fingers up to internet spies and stop them knowing everything you do.

Like all bullies, web spies constantly change their tactics to keep their victims in their sights. On page 44, we explain how to combat devious ads that evade traditional ad blockers to spoil your online experience.

Robert Irvine
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[#webuser](#)



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

STOP WEBSITES SPYING ON YOU

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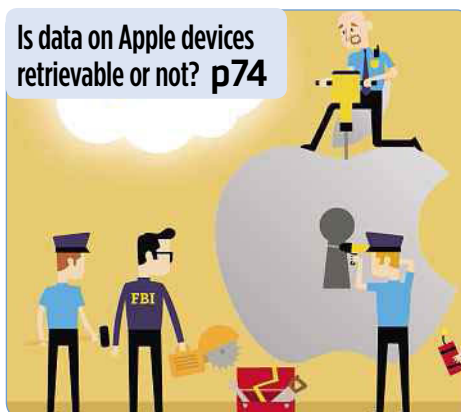
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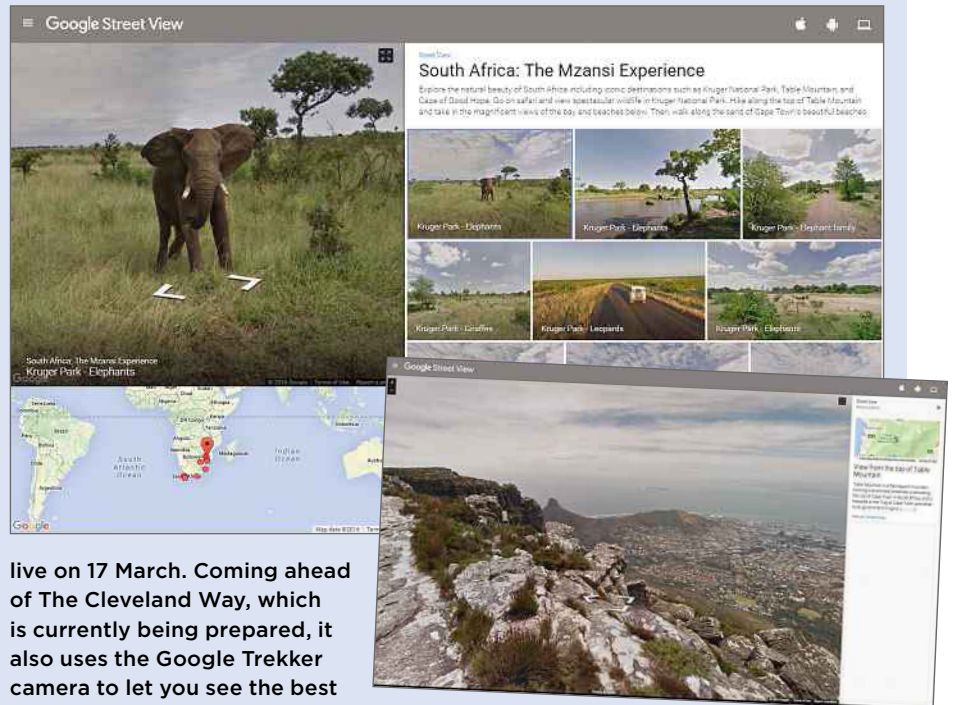
What's New Online

Go on a Street View safari

One of the best things about Google Street View – other than having a recce of an area before going there in person – is being able to visit exotic places from the comfort of your computer. That's certainly the case with the new Mzansi Experience, which shows off the natural beauty of South Africa by taking you on a journey through Kruger National Park, Cape Point, Table Mountain and Kirstenbosch Gardens.

The 19 cameras used to grab 360-degree views of each area have done a marvellous job and you'll have lots of fun spotting the animals, including elephants, rhinos, buffalo, zebras, giraffes and leopards. The view from the top of Table Mountain is breathtaking and, as always with Street View, everything is easy to navigate. To get to the different locations, simply click each of the sections on the main page.

If you want to see something closer to home, you can try the North Downs Way Street View, which went



live on 17 March. Coming ahead of The Cleveland Way, which is currently being prepared, it also uses the Google Trekker camera to let you see the best of the British countryside in Street View for the very first time. Indeed, with so much off-roading, perhaps

the service should change its name. bit.ly/safari393

Try new Google Docs templates

docs.google.com

Whether you're using a word processor, a spreadsheet or a presentation app, starting a project from scratch can be daunting. For that reason, Google introduced lots of new templates in a major overhaul of Google Docs last September and it has now added even more.



The latest templates have been created by design experts and can be used in Docs, Sheets and Slides. The US children's TV series *Reading Rainbow*, for example, has contributed a book-report and lesson-plan template for Docs while the accounting-software company QuickBooks has drawn up an annual business budget template for Sheets. With templates aimed at producing scientific presentations, business pitches and sharing big ideas, you can now add a more professional sheen to your work.

Share Spotify songs in Facebook Messenger

www.messenger.com

Over the past year, Facebook Messenger has become a strong rival to the likes of WhatsApp and the built-in messaging services on iOS and Android. And with this latest bit of fine-tuning, it is set to become even stronger. By tapping the More button when you're composing a message in the Messenger app for iOS and Android, you can now open Spotify without having to leave your conversation. It simply allows you to find a track or playlist and send a link to it. As a bonus, Spotify's own mobile app now has an option to send songs to Messenger.



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

Add more Reactions to Facebook

www.reactionpacks.com

As we reported last issue, Facebook recently introduced Reactions, which let you do more than 'like' a post. If the new Love, Haha, Wow, Sad and Angry buttons aren't enough, you can install Reaction Packs for Firefox and Chrome. These let you swap Reactions for alternative emoji submitted by users. They include Vladimir Putin and



the characters from the animated movie *Inside Out*.

5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

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

It's the Queen's 90th birthday in April so why not tweet her your best wishes?

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

Test your cultural knowledge on a daily basis with quirky quizzes from BuzzFeed

[@XboxP3](https://twitter.com/XboxP3)

The Head of Xbox Phil Spencer is a must-follow for any avid gamer

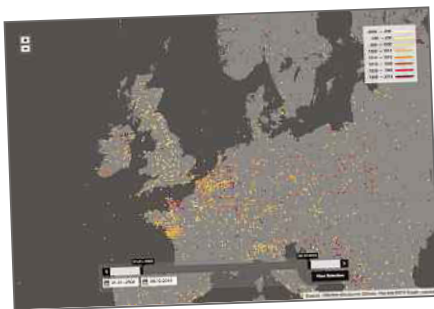
[@fullcathouse](https://twitter.com/fullcathouse)

This claims to be the first stop for cute cat pictures. What else is the web for?

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

Enjoy the hype for the new movie, which hits on 25 March

Pinpoint historic battles



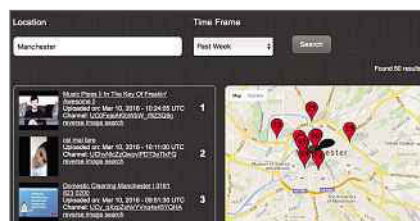
bit.ly/battles393

If it's possible to get battle fatigue just by looking at a website, this interactive map will test your endurance. It aims to pinpoint every battle ever fought using data from Wikipedia to create a 'Geography of Violence' that currently includes 12,702 references. You can see just how bloody individual countries have been, and use a slider to select a specific period of history. Each entry is colour-coded to indicate how recently a battle took place and, by clicking a location, you can discover exactly what happened and when.

See what your neighbours are uploading

bit.ly/upload393

You can't filter YouTube videos by location so if you want to have a nosy at what your neighbours are up to, you'll have to use this new tool, which seeks out any geotagged videos posted near you. By typing in a location, indicating a timeframe and deciding if you want to define the radius of your search, the site has the potential to throw up some weird and wonderful results. Thankfully, we saw nothing untoward in our searches – mainly a bunch of Minecraft videos and dogs on sledges.



Take a tour of St Paul's Cathedral

bit.ly/stpauls393

There are 259 steps up to the Whispering Gallery at St Paul's Cathedral, but you don't have to do anything more exhausting than run your finger over a mouse to get there. Google Street View has snapped away inside this architectural masterpiece, allowing you to visit most parts of it, from the stone gallery to the model room to the gardens. There are also exhibits



to explore, vintage photographs to look at and items to examine.

+ Compare historic London to today

bit.ly/london393

Expedia's Historic London site overlays old images on current street views of London for a comparison with yesteryear. Just hover over the old photos to reveal the contemporary images.

Explore how music works

bit.ly/music393

The Chrome Music Lab offers interactive experiments to make music more accessible. You can play with sound waves, create rhythm patterns, use Kandinsky's painting style to compose music and access the open-source code.

Map global internet usage

bit.ly/usage393

Nominet has created an interesting map that visualises the world in terms of the number of domain names in each country. The more domains registered, the larger the country appears on the map.

Fake online reviews could be made illegal

What happened?

Authorities are trying to clean up fake reviews on websites, to stop undeserving companies getting a good reputation online.

That practice isn't new, but the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in the UK has cracked down by rapping the knuckles of one online marketing firm, Total SEO & Marketing, which was revealed to have written 800 false reviews promoting 86 small companies, including mechanics and gardeners.

CMA hasn't fined Total SEO, but has instead forced the company to sign an undertaking promising to stop the practice and take down the fake reviews it has written. It's not the first company to be targeted by the CMA: in February, the authority took similar action against several other online businesses, including Checktrade and Care Opinion.

The government clearly thinks the problem is serious because despite the lack of fines or other punishment against companies such as Total SEO, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is reportedly considering making posting fake reviews illegal (see the *Telegraph* story at bit.ly/fake393).

This would allow the government to fine businesses under consumer-protection rules if they continue to post false reviews or refuse to take down existing ones. However, this is easier said than done because it can be difficult to establish which reviews are false and which are real. That said, if one or two high-profile cases incur tough penalties, it may be enough to dissuade the worst offenders.

The British government isn't alone in taking action. Amazon last year sued the online job site Fiverr (uk.fiverr.com) for posts that offered online reviews for products sold via Amazon, and TripAdvisor now has a dedicated team that roots out fake reviews on its site.

Additionally, the Dutch authorities recently handed a court order to Google



demanding the IP addresses behind fake reviews accusing a local nursery of child abuse. Google initially said the reviews were covered by freedom of speech laws and refused to remove them from search results or its own Google Maps. At the time of publishing, it was reviewing the court order.

How will it affect you?

Like most internet regulation, this law will be tough to enforce but, hopefully, the CMA action will discourage online marketing firms from taking such dodgy routes to promote their clients, and make their clients aware that such tactics aren't acceptable – although you'd think that marketing companies would know this already!

Either way, online reviews can never be 100% trustworthy. If you're looking for a tradesperson, product or other online service and you're suspicious of the reviews on one site, take the time to look at another or simply do a wider Google search.

It's also worth noting that negative reviews can also be false, such as in the Dutch case. It's difficult for a single web user to tell fake reviews from genuine ones, which makes it important to get support from companies such as Google when it comes to taking down abusive

comments. Hopefully, governments taking action on the issue will encourage businesses to behave more ethically.

What do we think?

It's hard to imagine why an online marketing company would think that posting false reviews was good business practice, or why their client businesses would go along with it, but such is the nature of online sales. Search engine optimisation (SEO) techniques frequently push the boundaries – they're the reason for lots of search 'terms' dumped at the bottom of pages, and why sites 'trade' links to one other.

Google frequently updates its algorithm to punish such techniques but, along with other online review sites, it needs to find a better way to check and monitor reviews, because they have the power to make or break a business.

If you're looking for a restaurant, hair salon or plumber on Google Maps or similar, you probably won't have the time to unpick all the reviews or ratings that pop up – you'll simply take one that looks good and ignore the rest. But if we can't have some trust in the validity of those reviews and ratings, the entire system is broken and, in the end, pointless. Any effort to improve online reviews is good news for web users.

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

Opera offers built-in ad blocking

What happened?

In the latest development in the online advertising battle, Norwegian software maker Opera has included an ad blocker in its browser by default, removing the need for users to install an extension.

As advertising becomes more intrusive – following users around the web or adding to download times – more people are turning to ad-blocking software, particularly since Apple allowed ad blockers on iOS devices including the iPhone last year.

Ad-blocking tools are already used by 22% of web users, but Opera believes that embedding the technology directly in the browser reduces page-load times even further. The company said that blocking ads in a browser cuts page-load times by 90% versus 40% when using ad-blocking extensions.

How will it affect you?

Firefox, Chrome and Internet Explorer are far more popular than Opera, and you can still avoid ads on these browsers by using add-ons such as Adblock Plus and uBlock.

So far, Opera's built-in ad blocker is only available in the developer version of its Desktop browser, despite its mobile version having four times as many users. However, the company

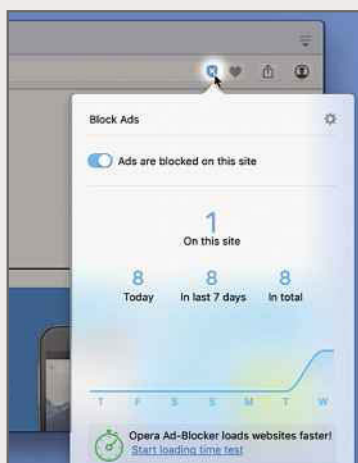
said Opera Mobile will get the system in the future.

What do we think?

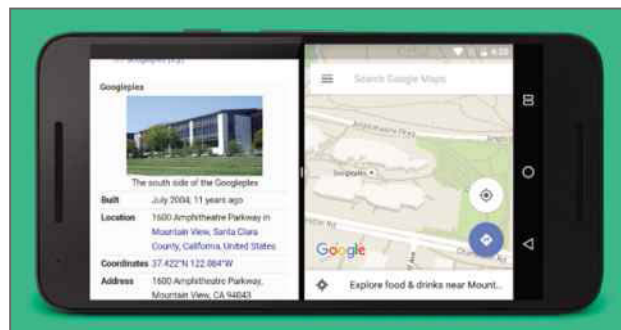
This is a bold move from Opera, but it's not a complete surprise because the Norwegian firm was the first to tackle pop-up advertising by imposing blocks. Indeed, while Opera may not have as many users as other browsers, its history of innovation is to be respected – it was the first company to introduce tabbed browsing.

It's difficult to say whether this move will encourage Chrome, Firefox and other browsers to introduce in-browser ad blocking as an in-built feature. After all, it's easy enough to use ad-blocking add-ons without taking the extra step to embed such systems and further annoy advertisers, who provide a major source of Google's income.

See our feature on page 44 for more about blocking online ads.



Android N to have split-screen apps



What happened?

Google released an early version of its latest Android operating system, codenamed N. The latest version of the mobile OS has arrived much earlier than expected – Google normally saves its release for the summer – but the company said it wanted feedback on the code as soon as possible to ensure handset manufacturers get it in good time.

There are few major changes to the software, which mostly focuses on design tweaks and improvements to battery life. The main new tool is split-screen multitasking, which lets you simultaneously run two apps side-by-side, so you can easily copy information from one open app to the other.

Although that may not sound too exciting, it's a handy feature on tablets, particularly for business use, and is already available on iPads and Windows tablets.

How will it affect you?

The early arrival of Android N doesn't mean we'll be seeing the OS any sooner

than the summer, but it should help speed up its arrival on handsets after its full launch.

The multitasking feature will let you, for example, run Facebook or Twitter alongside your email or browser. It's not a major change, but a feature that's been lacking in Android until now.

Only 3% of Android devices are running Marshmallow (the latest version) and not all smartphones or tablets will be upgradeable to N, so if you're keen on split-screen multitasking, you may need to buy a new tablet.

What do we think?

It's never bad news when a company is ahead of its deadlines on code, because it provides more opportunity to suss out bugs and make the subtle tweaks that can make all the difference to users. That said, this sounds like a fairly minor update. If the headline feature is one that's already available in other mobile operating systems, it suggests Android N won't be the game changer we hoped it would be.

Copyright-infringement complaints soar

What happened?

Google has received 77 million copyright removal requests in the past month, more than double the 34 million it received in the same period last year. Requests for the search giant to remove from its search results URLs that allegedly infringe copyright hit a record high of 21 million in the first week of March, compared to just 9.5 million in the corresponding week of 2015.

Google's transparency report (bit.ly/transparency393) provides details of some of the DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) takedown requests it has received via its web-submissions form. The data excludes other Google-owned services, such as YouTube and Blogger. Requests for removal are made most frequently by copyright holders and reporting agencies that monitor the web on their behalf, and have shot up since Google started reporting takedown requests in July 2011. That year, it received less than a million requests to pull URLs.

In a submission to the US Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator in October, Google said that the unrelenting surge in removal demands does not influence its takedown speeds. Furthermore, the company has not complied with recommendations by the US government for 'whole-site' removals, insisting that copyright



holders continue to report individual URL infringements. Google argues that the removal of entire domains would lead to greater censorship.

How will it affect you?

If your copyright has been infringed online, it's arguably never been easier to request that the offending web page be removed from Google's listings. Having this option allows you to drastically reduce the number of people seeing your content without needing to embark on a legal battle. On the other hand, if you have your own domain, it's never been more important to check that the images on it don't breach copyright,

because removal from Google could have a catastrophic impact on your site's traffic.

What do we think?

We think it's important that artists' copyright is protected, but agree with Google's stance that censoring entire domains would be a step too far in terms of censorship. Google's free image-search tools make it easier than ever to find unauthorised use of your artwork on the web and although that is a good thing, we hope the internet doesn't become so tightly moderated that nobody can share anything without fear of being sued.



FIRST LOOK

LG G5

www.lg.com/uk/G5

The LG G5 is a breath of fresh air in a world of indistinguishable smartphones. Where every other manufacturer seems content to increase the pixel count, push the processor speed and tiptoe forward with incremental improvements, LG has done something genuinely different by reinventing its flagship phone with a modular design that allows it to be upgraded and tweaked with camera add-ons, high-end audio and replaceable batteries.

On the design front, the LG G5 goes back to basics. The leather and plastic/ceramic backs of the LG G4 have been ditched in favour of an elegant and unfussy all-metal chassis. The handset still has a removable



battery and microSD slot to boost the internal storage, but it now has an expansion slot to extend its capabilities further down the line. You just press a small button on the LG G5's 'chin', pull out the old expansion and plug in a new one. It's as simple as that.

At the MWC Barcelona launch, LG announced two modules for the G5's expansion slot – aside from spare batteries. The first is a camera extension, the CAM Plus, which adds

a comfortable grip and DSLR-style controls to the phone, with physical buttons for power, shutter, zoom and record. It also adds an extra 1,200mAh battery, so you can shoot and record for longer. The second expansion module has been developed in collaboration with high-end audio specialists Bang & Olufsen, and delivers high-resolution audio playback that can either be used with the phone or as a standalone digital-to-analogue converter for your hi-fi or PC.

The LG G5 isn't particularly attractive, but its modular design exhibits careful thought and engineering nous, showing that even the staid old smartphone can offer something fresh. If LG gets the price right, it could be a contender for smartphone of the year.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Will Apple ditch the iPhone headphone jack?

One of the longest-standing and most controversial rumours surrounding the upcoming iPhone 7 is that it will have no headphone jack. If two leaked case designs for Apple's next handset are to be believed, it would appear that the company is about to get rid of the 3.5mm industry-standard port in September and encourage users to adopt Lightning-port headphones instead.

So why would the tech giant consider such a radical move? The most common explanation is that the jack takes up too much space inside the phone's chassis and is preventing delivery of thinner smartphones. Rumours suggest the iPhone 7 will only be 1mm slimmer than the iPhone 6, but removing the standard headphone port would open up sufficient scope for future devices to be ever slimmer.

However, the world's current slimmest smartphone, the Chinese-made Vivo X5 Max (which is only 4.75mm thick), continues to feature the traditional audio port, so the headphone jack doesn't seem an impediment to slimmer designs.

Another reason for phasing out the headphone jack may be because screen hardware and headphone jacks don't always mix – indeed, on most smartphones, the jack usually ends where the screen begins. Ridding the iPhone 7 of the 3.5mm port would open



the possibility of a complete end-to-end display, which could lead to removing the Home button as well.

LIKELIHOOD RATING



Although the iPhone 7 is still more than six months away, the suggestion that it will not feature a traditional headphone jack has been gathering speed for a while. The recent leaked case designs indicate that the next generation of iPhone owners will need to buy new headphones or use an adapter for their old ones.



WEBOMETER



WE LIKE...



Quitting iPhone apps won't affect battery life

Apple's head of iOS, Craig Federighi, has dispelled the myth that closing apps on your iPhone or iPad preserves its battery life, so you no longer need to waste time swiping apps off the screen.



Autonomous cars to be trialled in the UK

The government plans to trial self-driving autonomous cars on the UK's motorways from 2017, with the aim of achieving full regulatory clearance by 2020.

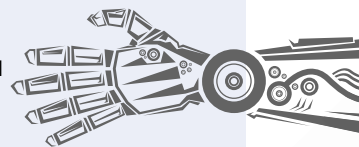


WE DON'T LIKE...



People fear robots will take their jobs

A YouGov survey found that more than 60% of people are worried that the development of robots will lead to fewer jobs in the next 10 years, while one in three said they feared that artificial intelligence will pose a significant threat to humanity within the next century.



Smartphone Wi-Fi reveal your movements

In a recent study, researchers successfully tracked the daily movements of students and staff on a college campus using Wi-Fi traces caused by devices making a connection with a hotspot.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Virtuali-Tee

bit.ly/virtuali393 | From £18

Forget X-ray specs – if you really want to see inside someone's body, you need Virtuali-Tee. This amazing T-shirt, accompanying app and optional VR headset lets you explore the human anatomy using augmented reality. Just hold your phone or tablet in front of someone wearing the Virtuali-Tee to view their ribcage and internal organs. You can then use the headset to 'go 3D' to dive into the body and have an adventure in the bloodstream. It's brilliantly done and too much fun to be merely educational. The team hopes to raise £70,000 by 31 March.



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Apple Macs hit by ransomware

The days of Mac OS being a virus-free system are over, following the discovery of the first fully operational ransomware attacking Apple's operating system. KeRanger, as the malicious program has been dubbed, encrypts users' files and demands a ransom to unlock them, according to researchers from security firm Palo Alto Networks, who discovered the malware. A blog post by researchers Claud Xiao and Jin Chen explains that version 2.90 of the Transmission BitTorrent client installer for OS X was infected with the ransomware hours after being published. A representative from the software developer has since revealed the site's main server was compromised, allowing the attackers to distribute their malware in the guise of a legitimate Transmission BitTorrent



client download. He stated that only around 6,500 Macs are likely to have been affected.

bit.ly/apple393

Brits distrust companies over data protection

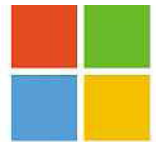
UK businesses must follow clearer standards when it comes to the collection, protection and use of customer data, MPs and business leaders have been told. A number of high-profile security failures that have raised customer concerns over data security were highlighted at a meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Customer Service (APPG). According to research published by the Institute of Customer Service, 43% of UK consumers are concerned about cyber-attacks. Many consumers believe the government should take action, with 84% wanting to see fines imposed on organisations that lack sufficient safeguards and 86% wanting a review

of data-protection legislation.

bit.ly/companies393

Microsoft fixes critical browser flaws

Microsoft released 13 bulletins for March's Patch Tuesday, five of which were critical. In total, 39 unique vulnerabilities were fixed, affecting all versions of Windows from Vista onwards. The first critical fix was MS16-023, a cumulative update for Internet Explorer addressing 13 vulnerabilities that could lead to remote-code execution. If exploited, these flaws could enable hackers to take over a victim's machine after they visit a specially crafted malicious website. Microsoft's new browser, Edge, was also affected, with MS16-024 patching 11 vulnerabilities in total, 10 of which were critical.



bit.ly/microsoft393

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

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



Q Are Macs now as likely to be infected by ransomware as PCs (see story, above)?

Owen Wells, Twitter

A The latest Mac ransomware development highlights that malware

coders are actively searching for ways to target Mac OS, in the same way that cybercriminals have for years been targeting Windows, Android and even Linux.

Considering that ransomware has been estimated to generate hundreds of millions of dollars to cybercriminals, targeting Mac OS could open up new untapped revenue streams for these nefarious organisations.

Until now, there had been very few successful malware attempts against Macs. This latest attack, however, highlights that there is now

blood in the water, and sharks will come. A recent Bitdefender study (bit.ly/bitdef393) revealed that 44% of all ransomware victims in the UK have paid to regain access to their data, and this

“ This Mac malware attack highlights that there is blood in the water and sharks will come ”

figure is set to rise. It is therefore no surprise that cybercriminals are seeking new methods to target a previously untapped market.

It's safe to assume that this incident will set a precedent for new attacks, potentially

prompting malware coders to not only build new features, such as the ability to encrypt Time Machine backups, but also to exploit system vulnerabilities that allow for the execution of such threats.

If Mac ransomware was just theoretical possibility until recently, this development shows that, under the right circumstances – vulnerable websites, stolen Mac developer certificates – Mac users could be prone to an increasing amount of dangerous ransomware attacks in the future.

TP-LINK®

YOUR UNIVERSE

COMPUTERS



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WIRELESS SPEAKERS



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uk.tp-link.com

★ Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

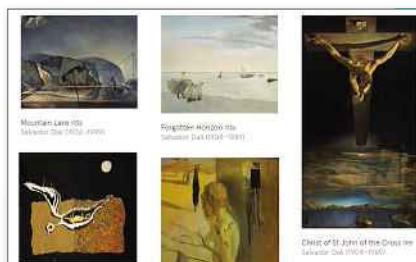
CULTURE

RELAUNCH

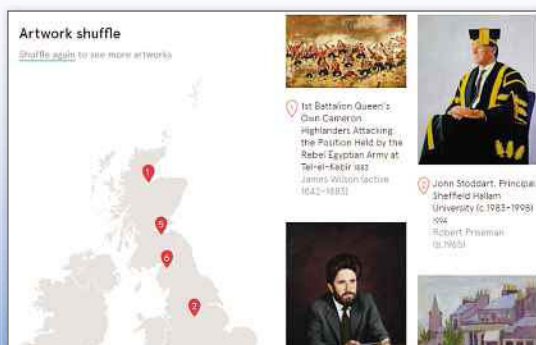
Art UK www.artuk.org

This fantastic rebrand and expansion of the BBC's Your Paintings site lets you browse more than 212,000 artworks from over 3,200 UK museums, galleries and public collections. Dominated by beautiful photos and a big search box that quickly finds specific works, artists and subjects, it does an amazing job of making art accessible to all. You can filter its immaculately presented search results by type, topic and style, and the region they're held in; save artwork to personal albums; and share them on Facebook and Twitter. You can even contribute to the project by tagging paintings with descriptive keywords. Outstanding!

Our rating



SEARCH
You can filter results by several criteria to find the piece you want



SHUFFLE
Click 'Art shuffle' to view random paintings from around the UK



Discover **212,732**
Welcome to Art UK



TELEVISION

My5 www.my5.tv

Channel 5's relaunched on-demand service wouldn't load until we turned off our ad blocker and, as with ITV Player and All4, you need to register (for free) to watch archive content and films. We were also disappointed that you can only play shows in a relatively small window or full-screen, and have to sit through loads of adverts before they start. On the plus side, we liked its streamlined, image-led design, which makes browsing shows a doddle, and found a lot more to watch than just Australian soap operas, including classic episodes of *The X-Files*, interesting documentaries and even some half-decent films. But compared to BBC iPlayer or All4, My5 is distinctly lacking.

Our rating



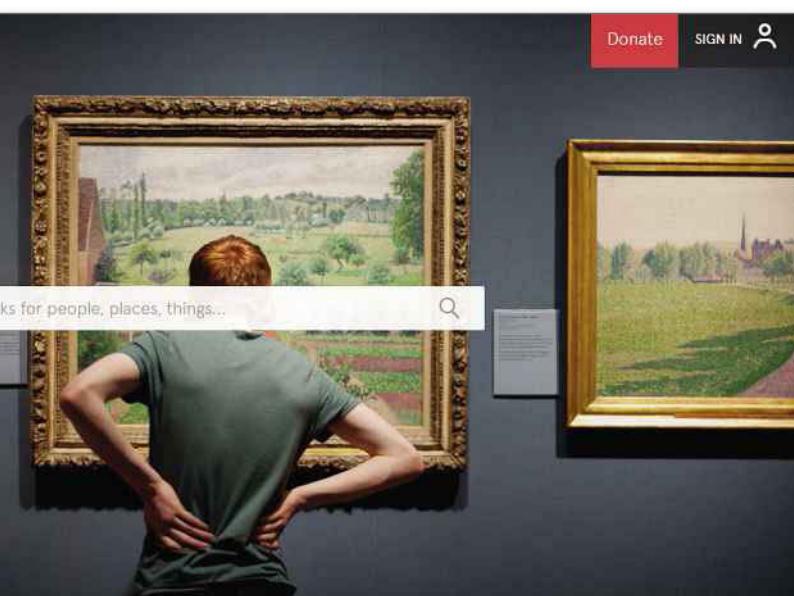
SOCIAL Grabbidit grabbidit.it

When you post a link to an article on social media, it's not always clear why you're sharing it, so your friends are forced to wade through the whole page. Grabbidit solves this problem by letting you share only the most important passage, along with a link to the source so people can read the full article. You can post to Facebook and Twitter at the same time, include your comments on the quoted content and browse what other users have shared on Grabbidit. It's an interesting idea, but the free version limits you to five posts a day for what is essentially a fancy copy-and-paste tool.

Our rating



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



Artworks. Explore **3,261 venues**. Meet **38,370 artists**.
Art UK, the online home for every public art collection in the UK.

STORIES
 Learn more about the artworks and the places that display them

TAGGER
 Help to improve Art UK by tagging pieces with relevant keywords



SEARCH

Kiddle

kiddle.co

As we reported last issue, Kiddle is a child-friendly search engine that uses Google's Safe Search technology and a team of editors to protect kids from unsuitable web content. We threw all manner of filth at the site to see if we could fool it, but almost always got the "Oops, try again" warning or no results. We like that Kiddle covers web pages, images, videos and news, but – rather hypocritically – it incorporates Google ads that lead to sites which the main results disallow. It also blocks many harmless sites and keywords, making you wonder which age group it's aimed at.

Our rating



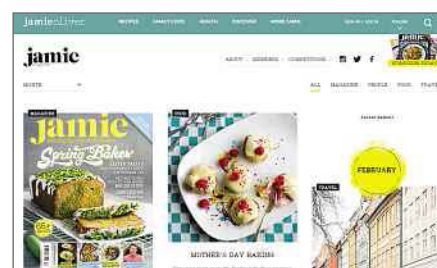
ECONOMICS

Freakonomics

freakonomics.com

Fans of the book series that revealed such info as the connection between schoolteachers and sumo wrestlers (they both cheat) will love this relaunched site, which is packed with fascinating facts about how the economy works. Most of the content is from the Freakonomics Radio podcasts, with the latest episodes on the homepage and the entire archive of weekly shows and 'question of the day?' answers now available to absorb. You can also pluck a random post from the blog – we got "Is ignorance really bliss?" – and browse Freakonomics book covers from around the world.

Our rating



FOOD & DRINK

Jamie Magazine

bit.ly/jamie393

The revamped online home of Jamie Oliver's magazine does much more than rehearse the ingredients of the crowded old site. The fresh, mobile-friendly design gives the content more space to breathe, and successfully blends lots of web-exclusive content with enticements to subscribe to the mag. As well as clearly presented recipes, you'll find travel articles about foodie hotspots, interviews with chefs and competitions to win prizes such as cooking lessons. Naturally, the site tells you what's in the latest issue, and it's also worth checking out its tasty social-media accounts.

Our rating

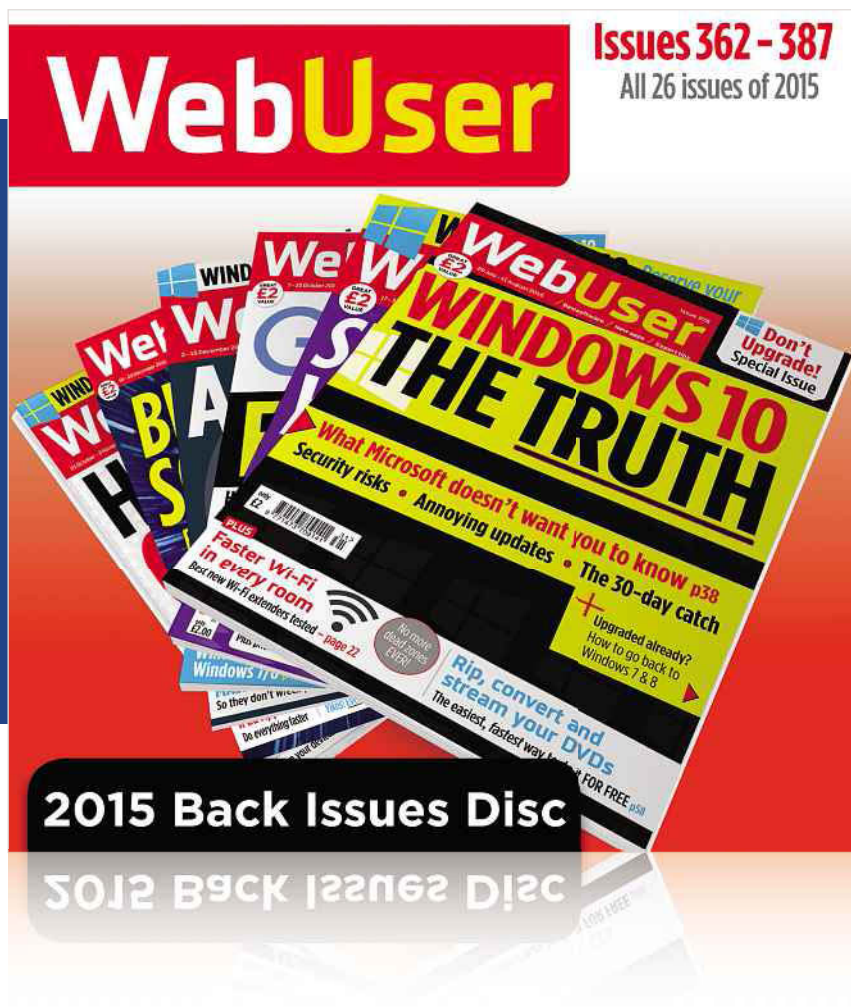


WebUser

2015 BACK ISSUES DISC

Our 2015 Back Issues Disc containing all 26 issues from last year is now on sale from Amazon.

For more information, visit bit.ly/webusercd15 or search for 'webuser disc' on Amazon



ON SALE NOW

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





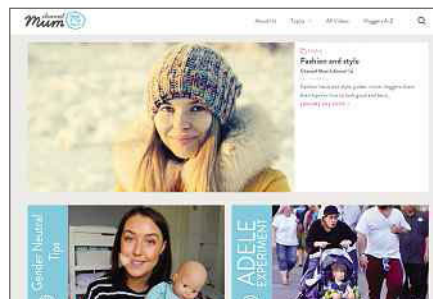
FOOD & DRINK

Top 50 Gastro Pubs 2016

www.top50gastropubs.com

Pub grub can range from incredible to inedible, but you're sure to get a decent meal with your pint through this site from *The Publican Morning Advertiser*. It rounds up the 50 best gastropubs in England and Wales, tells you what's so special about them and provides sumptuous photos of their food. Each entry includes links to the venue's website, contact details and an embedded map. You can also explore a UK map to find your nearest pub. Top of the list this year, picked by the pub industry, is The Sportsman in Whitstable, but you can't comment on the selection.

Our rating



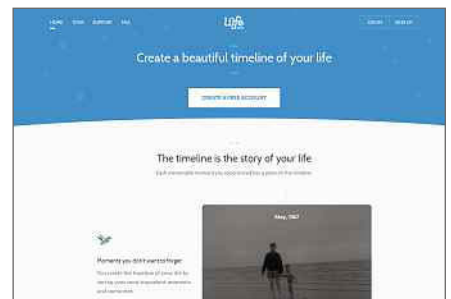
PARENTING

Channel Mum

www.channelmum.com

Now a website as well as a YouTube channel, this vlogging (video blogging) community gives 'millennial' mothers a place to share their parenting tips and pick up pointers from others. There are dozens of topics to explore, covering everything from pregnancy symptoms and labour to potty training and budgeting. The range of vloggers is impressive, and there's even some advice from (and for) dads. Although the pastel blue-and-pink colour scheme is rather clichéd, and the video titles are on the small side, Channel Mum is pleasant to browse and benefits from contributors who clearly speak from experience.

Our rating



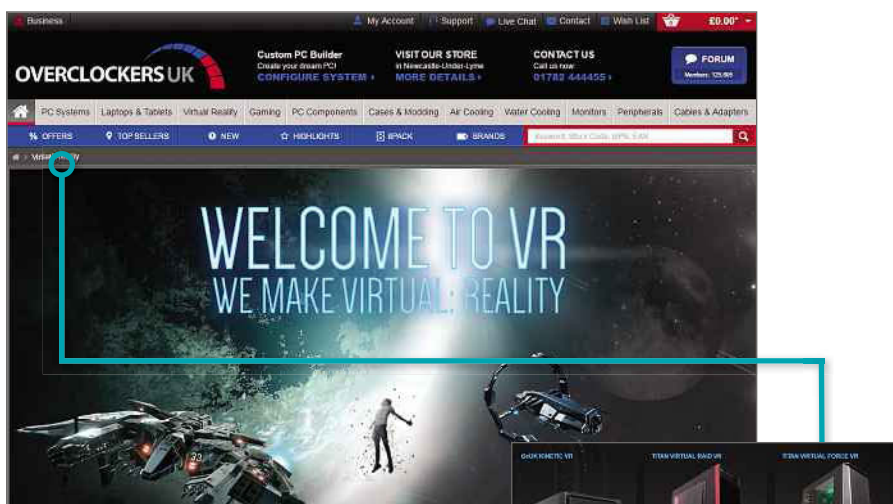
SOCIAL

Liife

liife.com

Liife has risen from the ashes of Friends Reunited to offer a place to plot and share your memories in the form of an interactive timeline. That might sound like an overwhelming task but Liife offers triggers to remember things, asking about your first holiday, car and job; whether you've met any celebrities; any embarrassing moments you've suffered; and other memory joggers. You can add photos, comments, locations and other relevant details, and decide who to share your timeline with. You can't add videos or apply different themes (other than a cover photo), but with its simple, friendly approach, Liife's what you make it.

Our rating



TECHNOLOGY

Overclockers UK

bit.ly/overclockers393

With the imminent arrival of the Oculus Rift and HTC Vive, there's a lot of buzz about virtual reality (VR) and custom-PC specialist Overclockers UK is ensuring it stays ahead of the crowd with a dedicated new VR section. This promotes the company's range of products that can be used for VR gaming, including headsets, controllers and chairs, as well as graphics cards that can cope with the extra processing power needed. Overclockers UK also has three new gaming PCs, priced from £750. The VR section looks great, with futuristic visuals and clear information about each product to help you choose the right upgrade, topped off with a palpable sense of excitement.

Our rating



WEBSITE SECRETS

Listen to Google's animal noises

Just in time for Easter, Google has added a fun Easter Egg to its search engine that lets you hear the sounds made by 19 different animals. Sure, you already know that a cow goes "moo" and a horse says "neigh", but what about a raccoon or a zebra? To find out, either type 'animal noises' into the search box, or a query such as 'what noise does a whale make?' or 'what does an elephant say?'. Click the speaker icon next to an animal



to hear its accompanying sound. All noises were apparently recorded from real creatures, rather than impersonated by Google employees. ■

Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Provide voice search for mobile visitors

Visitors who access your site on a mobile phone might appreciate being able to search by speaking rather than typing. There's a relatively simple way of enabling this option, using HTML5's Web Speech tool and some simple JavaScript. You don't even have to write the JavaScript code – it uses standard web tools, so you can simply cut and paste the code into your site. For full details, see the Digital Inspiration website at

bit.ly/speech393, which tells you everything you need to know.

Make an 'about' page

You may have overlooked making an 'about' page for your website, but it's well worth doing. You can use it to provide a range of info about your site that doesn't really fit anywhere else, such as contact details and a manifesto. However, there are a number of best practices worth taking into account to make sure that your 'about' page works well. Jimdo's blog has a good collection of tips at bit.ly/jimdo393.

Deal of the Fortnight

Planet Hippo's The One Account (www.planethippo.co.uk) charges just £1.20 per month for 1GB of storage space, an email address and a database for installing a web app, such as WordPress.

Add Voice Recognition to your Website

The HTML5 Web Speech API has been around for a few years now but it takes slightly more work now to include it in your website.

Earlier, you could add the attribute `<speech>` to any form input field and it would become voice capable. The `<speech>` attribute has however been deprecated and you are now required to use the JavaScript API to include speech recognition. Here's the updated code:

```
<script>
var speechRecognition = (function (window) {
    "use strict";
    window.speechRecognition = window.SpeechRecognition ||
        window.webkitSpeechRecognition ||
        window.mozSpeechRecognition ||
        window.msSpeechRecognition;

    if (!window.speechRecognition) {
        return null;
    }

    var recognition = new window.speechRecognition();
    return {
        start: function () {
            recognition.start();
        },
        stop: function () {
            recognition.stop();
        },
        onstart: function () {
            // Called when the browser starts recognizing speech.
        },
        onend: function () {
            // Called when the browser stops recognizing speech.
        },
        onresult: function () {
            // Called when the browser has successfully recognized a portion of the speech.
        },
        onerror: function () {
            // Called when the browser encounters a speech recognition error.
        }
    };
})(window);
```

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Jason West, Marketing
Manager, MarketHQ.com
(www.markethq.com)



Q I'm fed up with my current host. Is it difficult to move a website from one host to another?

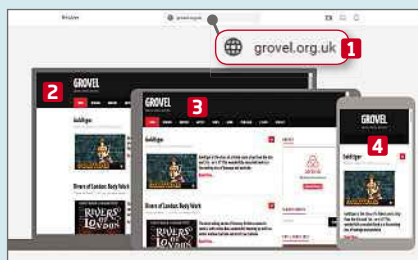
Paul Giles, via email

A If you're fed up, do not despair, because moving from one host to another is usually a pain-free process. Regardless of whether you're on shared hosting or you have your own server, it's not something you should stress over, especially because many hosting companies will help to migrate your website and other content. One tip I would offer is to find a host with similar options. If you currently have a host that uses cPanel to configure the site, try to find an equivalent hosting company that also offers cPanel hosting. This will make the transition very smooth and ensure all server settings remain intact.

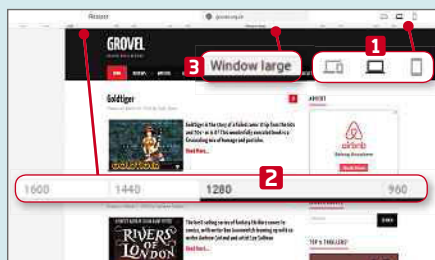


MINI WORKSHOP | Check how your site looks on different-sized devices
Resizer: design.google.com/resizer |  5 mins | Any browser

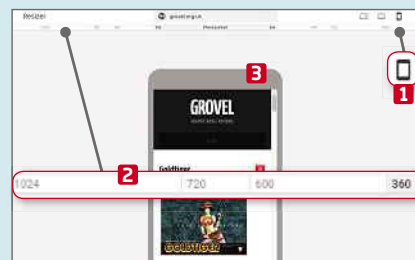
It's important to ensure your site looks good on a wide range of devices. Google's new screen emulator, Resizer, lets you preview your site on all sorts of screens, from a mobile phone through to a high-resolution PC display



1 Go to design.google.com/resizer. Type the address of the website you want to inspect into the grey bar. **1** Your site will open on all three screens, emulating a laptop, **2** tablet **3** and mobile phone. **4** You can click any links to navigate around the sites.



2 Click the laptop icon. **1** You can resize the site to different laptop and Desktop screen sizes by clicking the numbers in the width bar across the top. **2** A description of the size will give you an idea of the type of screen you're emulating. **3**



3 Click the mobile icon **1** to see the site on a mobile device. The bar across the top shows four sizes, **2** which roughly equate to a portrait phone, a landscape phone, a portrait tablet and a landscape tablet. The site shows each screen size with a grey surround **3** to give you an idea of how your site will look on the device.

When I go exploring, my mum knows I'm safe



ESET Parental Control for Android helps you guide your kids through the digital world – in an open, child-centered way.

Keep your family safer online: eset.co.uk/home/parental-control



ENJOY SAFER TECHNOLOGY™



Product Test

We test and compare the latest products

TP-Link AV500 Powerline ac Wi-Fi Kit

TP-Link's latest kit provides an effective and affordable way to boost your Wi-Fi network. **Andy Shaw** tries it out

If you want to increase the speed of your Wi-Fi, upgrading your router is a good move, particularly if you've got an older model, because the latest Wi-Fi technologies are faster and reach further into your house. However, simply plonking a new router in the same spot as your old one can only do so much – if your problems are caused by Wi-Fi-blocking obstacles such as walls, your newly

plug, designed to create a Wi-Fi hotspot in another room in your house. The Wi-Fi plug doesn't have a pass-through socket but it has three Ethernet ports, so you can connect a range of devices to it, even those that don't use Wi-Fi.

This kit uses the HomePlug AV standard and, at £69.99 for the pair of plugs from Maplin (www.maplin.co.uk), they're phenomenally good value for money. If you want

“ This new, great-value HomePlug kit from TP-Link provides a significant boost to any Wi-Fi network ”

boosted network is still going to struggle.

Units and ports

Walls don't affect HomePlug networks because they use the electrical cabling inside those same walls to send data from one power socket to another.

Most HomePlugs come with Ethernet ports built in, so you can use cables to connect compatible devices. This kit from TP-Link has a primary plug with a pass-through socket and two Ethernet ports; and a second Wi-Fi

plug, designed to create a Wi-Fi hotspot in another room in your house. The Wi-Fi plug doesn't have a pass-through socket but it has three Ethernet ports, so you can connect a range of devices to it, even those that don't use Wi-Fi.

Plug in and set up

Installing the devices is simple. Just plug in the primary plug, connect it to your router, then plug in the Wi-Fi plug close by, while you set it up. The first HomePlug



automatically picks up your internet connection via Ethernet; you then connect the Wi-Fi model by pressing the Pair button on both plugs. We found this took a couple of goes.

The Wi-Fi plug creates its own Wi-Fi networks (one each on the 2.4GHz and 5GHz frequencies), which you can connect to if you want to use it as a separate network.

However, before you move the plug to a far-flung corner of the house, you can set it up with the same network details as your existing Wi-Fi network, so you don't have to switch networks on your devices when moving around the house. TP-Link has made



this a simple process using WPS (Wi-Fi Protected Setup), so you can press the WPS button on your router and the device, and the settings will be copied across. If you don't have WPS, you can connect to the plug's settings via its web interface or configure it using a mobile app, available on Android or iOS devices.

The Wi-Fi unit is fairly bulky, because it has to house all the Wi-Fi and HomePlug technology. When we used it, the unit covered our power socket's switches, making them difficult to switch off without first unplugging the whole device. However, as long as it isn't sat next to an equally large plug for another device, it shouldn't be too obstructive. The primary plug is remarkably small, despite being a pass-through device.

Speed and reliability

To test the kit, we transferred

files from an external SSD attached to our Linksys WRT1900ACS router (reviewed in Issue 391, bit.ly/issue391) to compare speeds using the router in its standard Wi-Fi state and when connected to the TP-Link network. We used the SSD attached to a USB 3.0 port of the router to ensure that the only bottlenecks in the system would be created by the network, not by any other hardware standing in the way.

We plugged in the primary HomePlug next to the router and connected it using the supplied Ethernet cable. We then took the Wi-Fi HomePlug up a floor and across the house, to our worst Wi-Fi blackspot. This location tends to get patchy 5GHz coverage and slow 2.4GHz speeds. It's exactly the kind of situation that the TP-Link kit is intended to improve.

At the limits of its 5GHz network reach, the Linksys network still managed to copy files and was reasonably speedy, but the coverage was unreliable. We measured it working at 16.5Mbps when transferring a large video file, though it dropped to a choppy 8.2Mbps when transferring a folder of photos.

Switching to the 5GHz network on the TP-Link HomePlug, both photos and videos transferred relatively smoothly, at 32.7Mbps and 32.5Mbps respectively. It's a significant increase over the router's capability on this network and at this distance.

Both the router and the HomePlug kit also operate on the 2.4GHz frequency. This Wi-Fi network tends to be slower than 5GHz Wi-Fi at close range but has better reach, so it should provide a more reliable service at a distance. In our tests, we got much better performance when sending the individual photo files through the router, which managed 30.9Mbps. The larger video file didn't arrive as quickly, though, and was slower than on the 5GHz network, transferring at a speed of just 13.6Mbps.

As before, the TP-Link kit provided a more reliable service across both networks. It transferred the photos at 26Mbps and the video file at 24.6Mbps. So, on our network, the router was faster when transferring photos, but the HomePlug seemed to offer a more even, reliable service across the board.

PRODUCT INFO

TP-Link AV500 Powerline ac Wi-Fi Kit TL-WPA4530 KIT

Price: £69.99

uk.tp-link.com

Buy from: www.maplin.co.uk

SPECIFICATIONS

- Homeplug AV 500Mbps networking
- 802.11b/g/n compatible Wi-Fi on 2.4GHz frequency
- 802.11a/n/ac compatible Wi-Fi on 5GHz frequency
- WEP, WPA/WPA-2, WPA-PSK/WPA2-PSK Wi-Fi encryption
- 128-bit AES encryption
- 300m range over electrical circuit
- 131 x 72 x 47mm (Wi-Fi unit), 95 x 58 x 42mm (non-Wi-Fi unit)

FOR

- ✓ Superb value for money
- ✓ Significantly boosts any Wi-Fi shortfall in distant corners of your house

AGAINST

- ✗ Not top of the range
- ✗ Wi-Fi unit is particularly bulky

FASTER HOMEPLUG NETWORK

Devolo dLAN 1200+ Wi-Fi ac, £159.95
bit.ly/devolo393



A FASTER ROUTER

Netgear Nighthawk X4S, £227
bit.ly/netgear393



OUR VERDICT



If your house is large and your walls are thick, even the best routers can struggle to get a Wi-Fi signal to its furthest reaches.

Finding a solution for tackling individual Wi-Fi blackspots doesn't have to be expensive. This new, mid-range HomePlug kit from TP-Link can provide

a significant boost to any Wi-Fi network, whether you're using the puny router provided by your ISP or a faster, more modern device that's struggling to span a long distance or negotiate a set of obstacles.

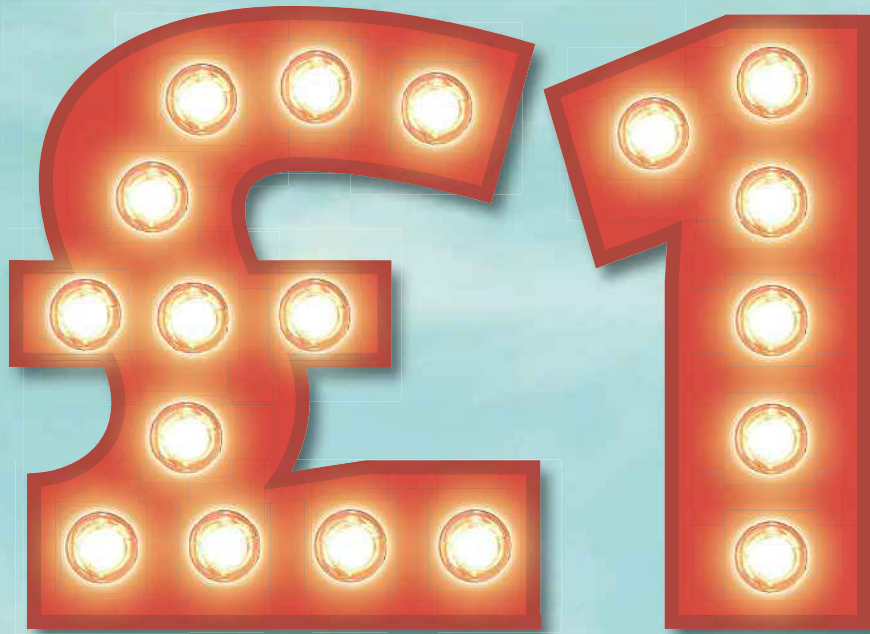
You'll get even better results from a faster-rated HomePlug kit but this will

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

cost more than double what you pay for the TP-Link AV500 kit, which is capably equipped to give your Wi-Fi a palatable boost.

The eggstra-special

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AN ISSUE

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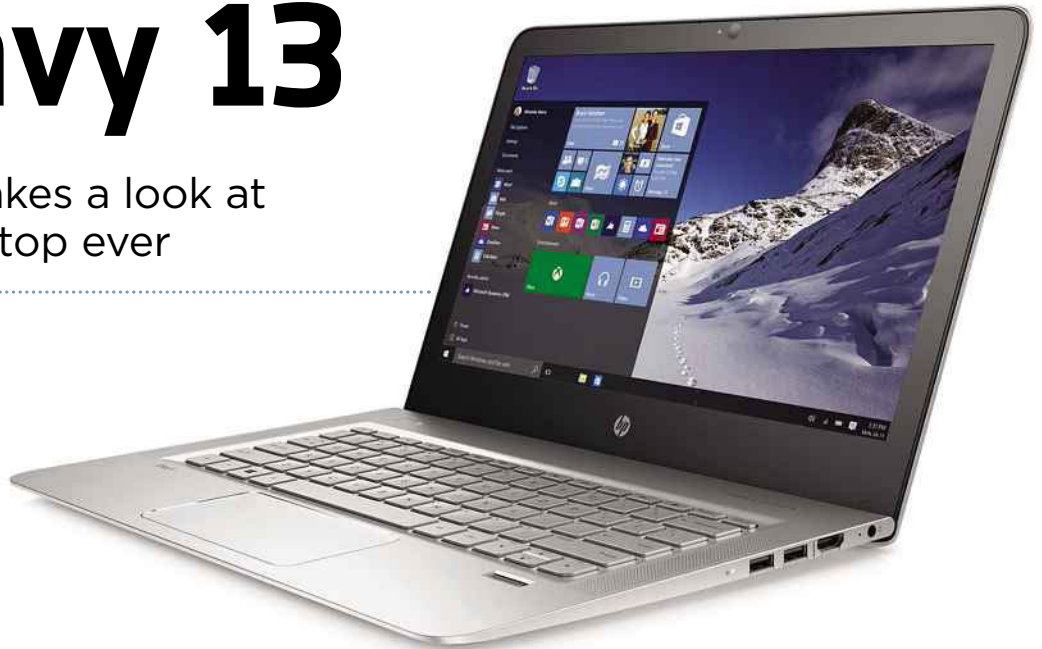


HP Envy 13

Richard Easton takes a look at HP's slimmest laptop ever

HP has billed its latest Envy 13 as its "thinnest laptop yet". Measuring just 12.9mm at its thickest point, it's slimmer than the similarly-specified Asus ZenBook UX303UA (19.2mm) and the Dell XPS 13, which is 15mm at its thickest. This is an impressive feat for a 13.3in laptop and, at 1.27kg, it's also light enough to carry around.

Its design is very classy and understated, with a silver aluminium chassis and a matt black bezel around the



screen. Along the left edge, you'll find an SD card reader, a USB 3 port and a headset jack; the right-hand side has two more USB 3 ports and a full-size HDMI port.

PRODUCT INFO

HP Envy 13

store.hp.com

Price: £649 (i5) or £730 (i7)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Dual-core 2.5GHz Intel Core i7-6500U processor
- 8GB of memory
- 256GB SSD
- 13.3in screen
- 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution display
- Intel HD Graphics 520
- 3 x USB 3 ports
- SD memory card slot
- Bluetooth 4.0
- 802.11ac Wi-Fi
- Windows 10 Home
- 325 x 226 x 12.9mm
- 1.27kg
- One-year collect-and-return warranty

FOR

- ✓ Slim and light laptop
- ✓ Affordable price

AGAINST

- ✗ Rival laptops with similar specs squeeze more performance from their hardware

Build and configuration

We found that the keyboard flexed a little under the pressure of typing, which belies its premium appearance. The touchpad is short and wide, and although it's not uncomfortably small, a little extra depth wouldn't have gone amiss, especially given the abundance of space above the keyboard.

It has two Bang & Olufsen-branded speakers but their sound quality isn't going to blow you away – you'd be better off plugging in a pair of headphones when listening to music or watching films.

The laptop is available in different configurations. At present, you can get an Intel Core i5-6200U model with a resolution of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels; or a higher-end Intel Core i7-6500U model with a resolution of 3,200 x 1,800 pixels. The model we tested had the i7 processor but the lower screen resolution, though this configuration isn't currently on sale.

Performance

The processor was paired with 8GB of memory and

a 256GB SSD. In our Windows application benchmarks it managed an overall score of 37, which was disappointing considering that it's the same processor used in the Lenovo Yoga 700 (14.1in), Asus ZenBook UX303UA and Dell XPS 13, all of which we've tested previously and logged scores of 47, 46 and 46 respectively. Despite lagging behind the competition, the Envy 13 performs adequately when handling everyday computing tasks, just not as swiftly as some of its peers.

The integrated Intel HD Graphics 520 is only capable of light gaming. When playing Dirt Showdown – at 1,280 x 720 pixels, 4x anti-aliasing and High graphics – it

produced a disappointing 22.3fps, so you'll need to reduce image quality to make it playable.

Battery life was only average at 6 hours 23 minutes. This was tested by playing a video with the display set to 170cd/m² brightness, so more general use should see the laptop getting you through an average working day. Its longevity pales in comparison to the Asus UX303UA's excellent 9 hours and 50 minutes, however.

Meanwhile, the 1,920 x 1,080 pixels IPS panel was a respectable performer and comfortable to view thanks to its matt coating and wide viewing angles.

OUR VERDICT



Overall, the HP Envy 13 is a bit of a mixed bag. Its design is great to look at, but it doesn't hold up to close scrutiny, and its performance is disappointing compared to similarly specified laptops. It's keenly priced, though. We'd expect the Core i5 version to run around 8% slower than the model we tested here, which is good

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

for the £649 price. However, we'd rather spend a little extra and get an Asus ZenBook UX303UA, which has even better build quality, screen and performance.



Web 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 ■ ADSL2+ and VDSL ■ 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 may find it a bit small and cramped because everything'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



NETWORK CAMERA

Y-cam HomeMonitor HD

£150 from www.homemonitor.me

Date tested: June 2015

This isn't the cheapest security camera, but its unique online-storage option will save you money in the long run when saving captured motion-detected footage online.

KEY SPECS

Apps for Android, iOS, Windows Phone, Roku ■ 1/4in CMOS sensor ■ Viewing angle: horizontal 80°, vertical 45°, diagonal 87° ■ 1,280 x 720 pixels resolution ■ 15fps frame rate ■ Ethernet and 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 85 x 85 x 30mm ■ 1150g



SSD

Samsung 850 Pro 256GB

£136.03 from www.kikatek.com

Date tested: February 2015

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

KEY SPECS

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



SOFTWARE & SERVICES

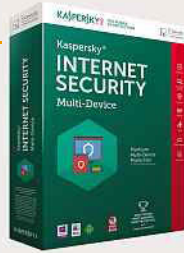
INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2016

£19.99 from bit.ly/shop389

Date tested: January 2016

Kaspersky is rock solid at protecting your PC from the worst of the web, and performed brilliantly in our tests this year, blocking all viruses and malware with its robust defences. Click the link above to save £20 on the software (normal price £39.99).



KEY FEATURES

Anti-virus and firewall tools ■ Protects online shopping and banking ■ Identity and privacy tools ■ Dangerous-website alerts ■ Advanced parental control ■ Licences for one, three and five PCs; for one or two years, or pay monthly ■ Multi-Device version ■ Compatible with Windows 10

WEB DESIGN

Xara Web Designer 11 Premium

£69.99 from www.xara.com

Date tested: November 2015

Xara Web Designer 11 is a great tool for anyone who wants a good-looking website without having to use HTML or CSS code. The interface is easy to use and the software includes all the tools you need to create flexible sites that change depending on the size of the screen.



KEY FEATURES

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

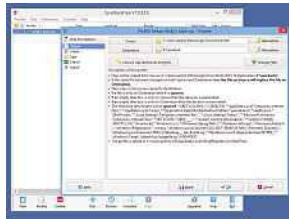
BACKUP AND SYNC

SyncBackFree

Free from bit.ly/syncback366

Date tested: March 2015

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



KEY FEATURES

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

PHOTO EDITING

Adobe Photoshop Elements 13

£81.08 from

www.adobe.com/uk

Date tested: December 2014

With its tidy interface and pop-out trays, Adobe Photoshop Elements provides everything an amateur photographer needs and helps you quickly find the right editing tools.



KEY FEATURES

Compatible with Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8+ (32- and 64-bit) ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

VIDEO EDITING

Adobe Premiere Elements 13

£81.08 from www.adobe.com/uk

Date tested: December 2014

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



KEY FEATURES

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

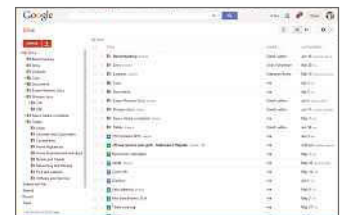
ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com

Date tested: August 2014

Google Drive is easy to use and has lots of free storage. The Windows software integrates with Explorer, so saving and syncing files is like keeping them in any other PC folder.



KEY FEATURES

15GB free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Works with Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8+ ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 100GB extra storage for £1.19 per month; 1TB for £5.97 per month; 10TB for £59.51 per month

Best Free Software

ANTI-MALWARE TOOL

IObit Malware Fighter 4

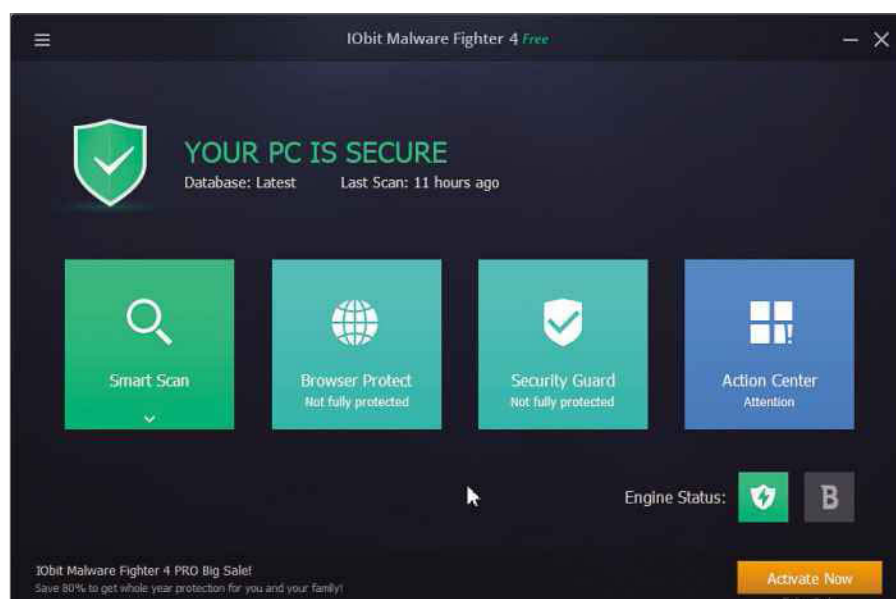
bit.ly/malware393

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

File size: 39.5MB

The number of malicious programs is on the rise – some 390,000 new threats are registered every day, according to malware statistics and trends-report firm AV-Test – and even if you use common sense when opening email and browsing the web, you're always in danger of encountering a form of malware at some point.

There are plenty of free tools available that claim to keep you safe from online threats, but not all of them live up to their promise. IObit's updated anti-malware software now offers much stronger PC protection thanks to an



enhanced scanning engine, and the database it uses to detect threats is much larger than in previous versions. IObit says Malware Fighter 4 is able to remove more than 100 million hidden pieces of malware, and can tackle bots, spyware, adware, Trojans, keyloggers, worms and hijackers more efficiently. It's also fully compatible with Windows 10.

The speed of scans has been improved in the new version, and the method of quarantining and restoring files has been overhauled. Naturally, with this being a new release, the

interface has been given a makeover as well, although it's not significantly different from Malware Fighter 3. There are some coloured tiles and tweaked icons, but that's about it. Nothing to get excited about, to be honest!

Upgrading to the full paid-for edition of Malware Fighter for £14.28 unlocks 'double protection' by adding Bitdefender's scanning engine to the software, as well as proactive real-time protection and browser anti-tracking. You also get automatic software updates.



MINI WORKSHOP | Protect your PC using Malware Fighter 4 Free



1 The home screen of Malware Fighter shows the current state of your system **1** and lets you launch a Smart, Full or Custom scan **2** that you can pause or stop at any time. You should update the database to the latest version **3** before proceeding, though. The scanning screen lets you automatically repair **4** any found problems.

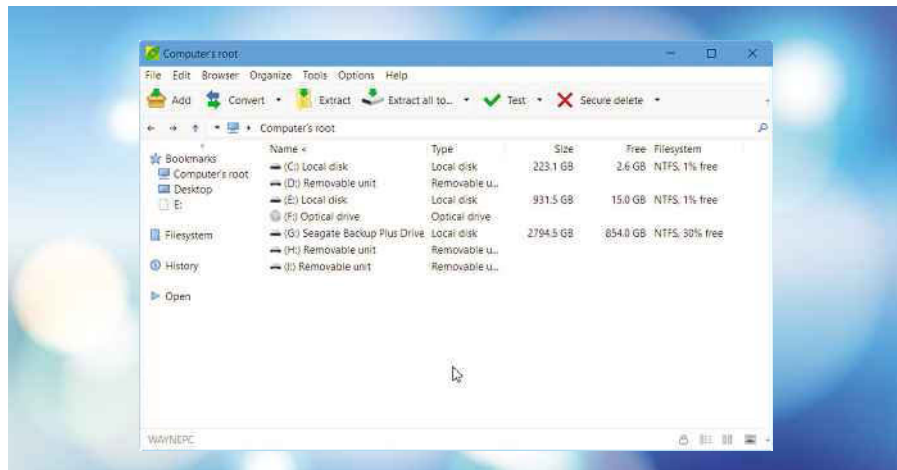


2 Browser Protect offers four tools for safeguarding your browser. Homepage Protection **1** stops malware interfering with your browser's start page, while DNS Protect **2** keeps your DNS lookup (which tells the browser where to find web pages) from being changed. Plug-in/Toolbar Cleaner **3** removes bad add-ons, while Surfing Protection **4** blocks online threats.



3 If you want to know whether a file on your PC is safe before running or opening it, you can right-click it and select 'Scan by IObit Malware Fighter'. You also upload it for analysis in the cloud. Click the three-line 'hamburger' button **1** and select Cloud Security. Click the 'Analyse a file' button **2** and select the potentially malicious item.

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



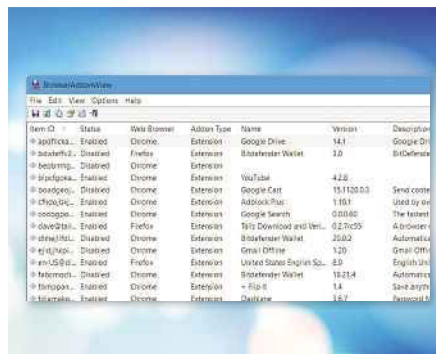
FILE-COMPRESSION TOOL

PeaZip 6

www.peazip.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 7.1MB

PeaZip is an open-source file and archive manager that lets you create, convert and extract compressed files in all the popular formats. It's particularly useful for opening RAR files for free, although it can't create them. The latest release comes with new themes, so you can change the look of the program, and the code has been cleaned up to make it more efficient. The extraction (and test) procedure now lets you import whole directories.



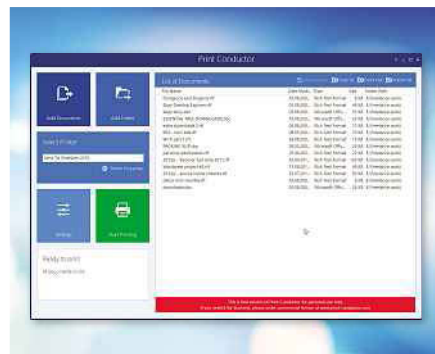
BROWSER HELPER

BrowserAddonsView

www.nirsoft.net

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 247KB

NirSoft's latest free tool scans all the browsers on your PC – Chrome, Firefox and Internet Explorer – and presents a list of all installed add-ons in a simple table. You can view their name, status (enabled or disabled), add-on type (extension, toolbar, plugin and so on), version and a description. Disabled add-ons can be hidden, but you can't actually use the program to remove or disable an add-on.



PRINTING TOOL

Print Conductor 5

www.print-conductor.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 37.8MB

This tool is handy for anyone who regularly needs to print a large number of files. All you need to do is create a list of items to print, then select the printer to use and the program will get to work. The latest version has a brand new interface and gains a selection of new features including the ability to output a list of CorelDraw files. It can also now print collections of PDFs and password-protected documents.

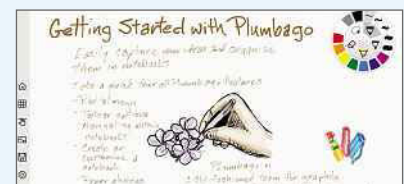
New Windows Apps

Plumbago

bit.ly/plumbago393

Min requirements: Windows 8+/10 **File size:** 40.7MB

This oddly named Microsoft Garage project is a digital notebook that offers handwriting smoothing; realistic ink and paper; and the ability to add, trace, highlight and annotate images.



Blue Skies

bit.ly/blueskies393

Min requirements: Windows 10 **File size:** 12.5MB

This weather app offers hourly and daily forecasts for multiple locations. There's live tile support and detailed weather information covering humidity, precipitation and wind speed. The app also changes colour based on the weather.



Earth View – Map 3D

bit.ly/earthview393

Min requirements: Windows 10 **File size:** 3.2MB

This mapping tool lets you explore more than 200 locations worldwide in 3D (other locations are displayed in flat 2D). You can browse the 3D areas, and there's a Bing Maps Street View option for some locations.



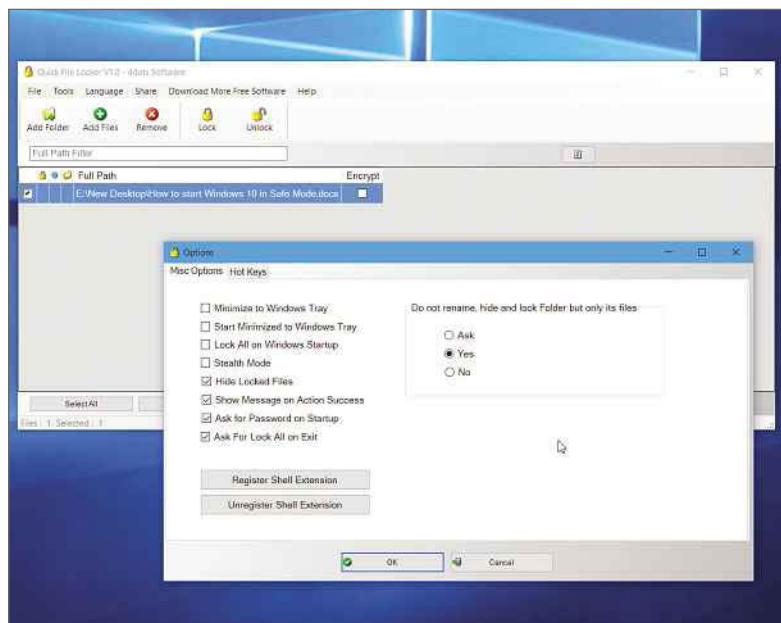
IMAGE EDITOR

Fotor 3

www.fotor.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 or Mac OS X **File size:** 110MB

Best known for its free image-editing apps for iOS and Android, Fotor is also available on Windows and Mac OS X. It provides all the tools you need to enhance your images (it supports all the major formats), create collages and edit multiple photos at the same time, applying scenes, effects and borders with a single click. This version lets you create a collage with a custom aspect ratio and introduces new packs of special effects and filters: Disposable, Cinematic, Serenity and Mono. There's new content for collages, including textures, backgrounds and borders; and the Tilt-Shift algorithm, which makes objects in photos appear miniature and toy-like, has been optimised.



SYSTEM TOOL

Quick File Locker

bit.ly/filelocker393

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 13.4MB

You probably have a lot of files stored on your computer that you'd like to keep safe and away from prying eyes – such as personal photos, videos and documents containing sensitive information. The simple but powerful Quick File Locker can lock and encrypt files, folders and even USB flash drives. Just drag the content you want to protect to the user interface, or right-click an item and secure it from the context menu.

The software has an ingenious Stealth mode to keep its existence secret from anyone else who uses your PC, and it can hide locked files, too. You can secure the program with a password, and it will protect locked data even when Windows is in Safe Mode.

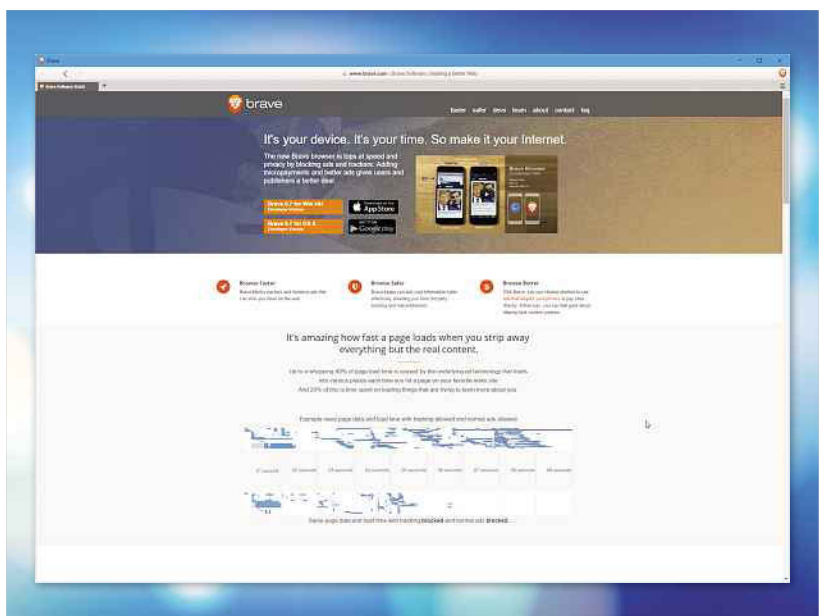
WEB BROWSER

Brave

www.brave.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 or Mac OS X **File size:** 94.3MB

Brendan Eich, the former CEO of Mozilla, is taking on his previous company with a web browser that he hopes will one day rival if not surpass Firefox, which currently claims an 11.7% market share. His new browser, Brave, is designed to be faster and safer, and comes with built-in ad blocking that's enabled by default and other privacy-focused features, including integrated HTTPS Everywhere, which automatically redirects your browsing to the securest version of a website. The current downloadable build of Brave is primarily aimed at developers so, although it's worth trying, you may not want to use it as a permanent replacement for your current browser just yet.





GAME

Two Interviewees

bit.ly/2interview393

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

File size: 11MB

In the narrative of this mini game, you take on the role of two people who are going for the same job. One is a man and one is a woman, and although the answers you give for both people are identical, the responses they receive won't be, highlighting how some employers treat people differently based on their sex.

Don't install...

Adobe Project Rome

blogs.adobe.com/rome

Min requirements:

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

File size: 6.2MB

Project Rome has been abandoned by Adobe, but is still available as a free download. It has an excellent interface that's very easy to use, but because it's no longer supported, it frequently throws up error messages. It's a shame that Adobe isn't maintaining Project Rome but if it was, it probably wouldn't be free.



...Install this instead

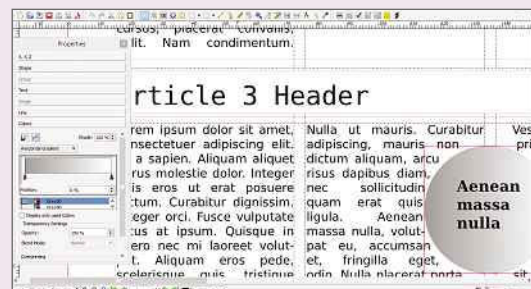
Scribus

www.scribus.net

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

File size: 82MB

Desktop-publishing software can be complex, but Scribus's refined interface offers the tools you need when you need them, without overwhelming you with options. It provides all the sophistication of paid-for software without charging you a penny. As with advanced image-editing tools, Scribus uses layers to arrange items on the page. You can move, rotate, resize and wrap all your graphics and text around each other, which makes designing even complex pages straightforward. There are also lots of tutorial videos to get you started.



UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



SYSTEM CLEANER

CCleaner 5.15

www.piriform.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 6.5MB

The hugely popular system-cleaning tool gets updated (and thus included in this section!) on a monthly basis. The latest version updates Chrome cleaning (Cache, Session and History) and improves Firefox cookie detection. It also adds Disk Analyser search feedback.



PRIVACY TOOL

PrivaZer 2.47

privazer.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 13.9MB

PrivaZer is a PC and privacy cleaner designed to remove all references to everything you've ever opened, watched, downloaded, deleted or said. The updated release improves startup speed and detection of drives, and fixes a problem on XP when cleaning the Recycle Bin.



DISC-BURNING SOFTWARE

BurnAware Free 8.9

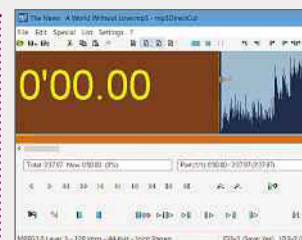
www.burnaware.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 7.4MB

BurnAware Free can write to all types of optical disc, including Blu-rays, and create and burn image files. The new version adds the option to shut down your PC once burning has completed and, thankfully, removes an advert for the highly annoying OpenCandy that used to appear during installation.



AUDIO TOOL

Mp3DirectCut 2.22

bit.ly/mp3cut393

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 286KB

Mp3DirectCut lets you cut, copy and paste parts of an MP3 file or adjust its volume, without any loss in sound quality. The latest version introduces two more 'zoom out' levels for when you're editing audio files, and fixes some major bugs reported in the previous version. ■

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Best New Browser Tools



CHROME

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Insert emoji in any online message

Smartphone keyboards now offer dozens if not hundreds of emoji to make your text messages more interesting, but in your Desktop browser you're limited to what specific websites such as Facebook and Twitter offer. Unless, that is, you install the new Chrome extension Emoji Keyboard by Emoji One (bit.ly/emoji393), which offers lots of fun faces, objects, animals, food, gestures and other icons for you to use in webmail messages, forum posts and social-media comments. These have a flatter and – in our opinion – less cheesy appearance than the emoji you find on many phones: we particularly like the 'cat face with wry smile', 'carousel horse' and 'bellhop bell', plus you get the full range of national flags, types of

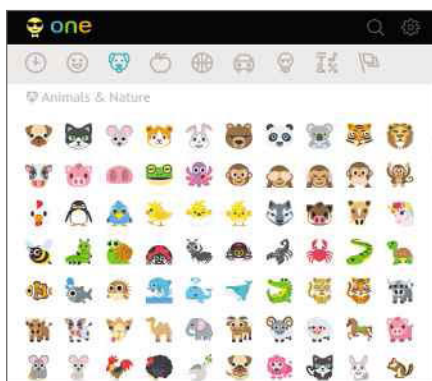
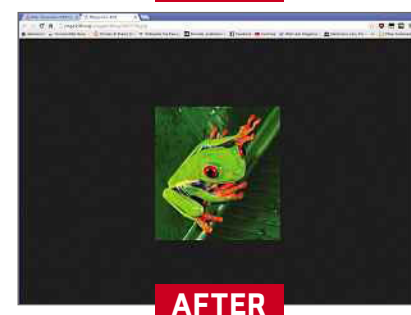
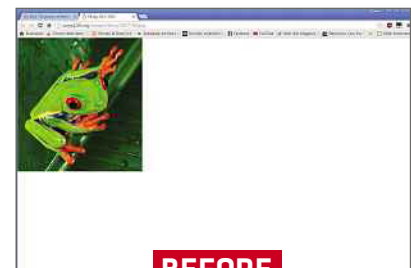
transport and heart symbols. To choose an emoji, either click the add-on's toolbar button or press Alt+Shift+E on your keyboard to browse or search the huge selection. When you click an emoji, it automatically copies to your clipboard. You can then paste it into a message by pressing Ctrl+V. You can also change the size of emoji in the extension's settings.

Get a cute cat in every tab

If you're bored of seeing the same old thumbnails when you open a new tab, purr-haps you'd prefer to be greeted by a feline friend? Tabby Cat (bit.ly/tabby393) shows a different moggy on every New Tab page, each with its own name, character and coloured background. The cute cats are animated so that they blink, sleep and (silently) purr, and their amusing monikers include Jiggly Dinker, Cozy Coconut and Petit Teaspoon.



displays images in the top-left corner of a blank white page whereas Mozilla places them centred on a black background. If you prefer the latter approach, you can make Chrome's image viewer more like Firefox's by installing 'View images centred like in Firefox' (bit.ly/centre393). As its self-explanatory name suggests, this add-on places pictures in the middle of your browser against a black background. That's all there is to it, really – but what a difference it makes!



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



FIREFOX

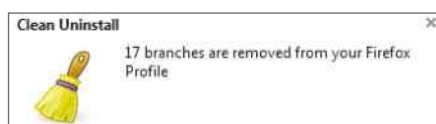
Save a web page as a PDF in one click

There are lots of online tools that convert web pages into PDF files, to make them easy to download and share. Such tools usually mean copying and pasting the relevant URL, then clicking separate buttons to convert and download the page, but a much simpler method is to install PDF Mage (bit.ly/pdffirefox393). Just click the add-on's wizard-hat toolbar button to turn the page you're currently viewing into a PDF file that you can download and print directly from the PDF viewer. Go into the add-on's Options to specify whether to save the PDF in portrait or landscape format, break it into separate pages or change its original width. PDF Mage is also available for Chrome (bit.ly/pdfchrome393).



Uninstall Firefox add-ons completely

When you remove an add-on from Firefox, it often leaves behind preferences that you no longer need and which only serve to clutter the browser's 'about:config' section. You can either delete these entries manually, if you know what you're looking for, or save yourself time and hassle by installing Clean Uninstall (bit.ly/clean393). This new tool automatically scans the 'prefs.js' file in your Profile folder when you uninstall an add-on, and tells you what (if anything) has been left behind. Select the unwanted preferences and click Remove Selected Items to tidy up your browser. You can also click Open Cleaner in Clean Uninstall's Options to review and remove all leftover traces from past uninstalls.



Preview Wikipedia articles before opening

One of the brilliant things about Wikipedia is the way its interlinked articles draw you into a voyage of discovery, which is only interrupted when you end up on an irrelevant page. You can avoid these accidental cul-de-sacs by using Wikipedia Peek (bit.ly/wiki393), which shows the title section



of an article when you hover your mouse over a link to it. The preview appears as a pop-up bubble that includes enough information to save you wasting your time on an article that doesn't interest you.

Limit your Facebook visits

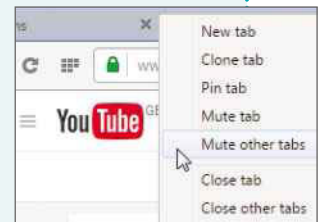
Back in Issue 390, we featured an add-on called Facebook Counter (bit.ly/facebook390) that calculates how long you spend on Facebook every day, week or month. If that sounds like too much information, you may prefer Conscious (bit.ly/conscious393), which simply tells you how many times you've visited the social network today, and lets you set up a custom message for when you exceed a daily limit, such as: "Haven't you got anything better to do?"



OTHER BROWSERS

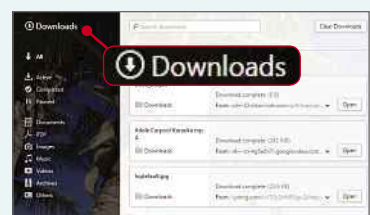
Try the new tools in Opera 35

The latest stable release of Opera (www.opera.com) introduces some welcome new features and improvements, including the ability to mute the sound from a noisy website without needing to close the offending tab. This option has been available in Chrome and Firefox since last year, but Opera goes one better by letting you mute all other tabs

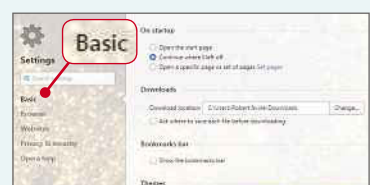


except the current one, via the tab's right-click menu.

Opera has also redesigned its downloads page, with a clearer interface that lets you jump to specific file types – for example, documents, images and videos – and active, completed and paused downloads.



The 35th version of the browser is the most customisable yet, and lets you more easily decide how your downloads, bookmarks bar and startup page are displayed; specify how cookies are handled; and change your default theme in one click. Just click the menu button, choose Settings and select the new Basic section in the left-hand panel to set your preferences.



App of the Fortnight

VOICE RECORDER

Rewind: Reverse Voice Recorder

bit.ly/rewind393

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3

Size: 3.2MB

The world isn't exactly short of voice-recording apps, so it's difficult to see why we need yet another one. Rewind doesn't even record backwards, despite its name, so what's the unique selling point?

The selling point, which isn't quite "unique" but is certainly among the best we've tested, is that it records everything your phone or tablet can hear – constantly and, if you like, surreptitiously.

You don't even need to open the app and press a button to start recording. Just swipe down from the top of your phone and tap Start Listening or Open App (see screenshot, top-right). You can also configure the app's settings to record as soon as you switch on your phone or tablet, or by shaking the device. No-one ever need know you're recording.

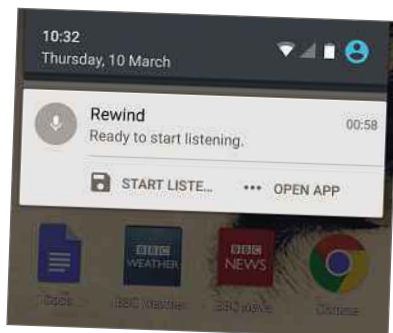
Surreptitious recording may sound dodgy, but it's no different to recording a Skype call (which is very easy to do) and has plenty of legitimate uses. The app's creator was inspired by criminal cases involving inconsistent accounts of conversations between police and citizens, but we think it's more useful as a memory backup. Sit your device on your kitchen worktop and chat to yourself about project ideas, forthcoming dates, shopping lists or even a problem you're trying to work through, for as long as you like. Many of us find it much easier to organise our thoughts by speaking aloud rather than writing things down. Rewind

will be your listening companion.

Recordings are stored automatically in your device's RAM (memory) for as long as you specify (up to 30 minutes); devices with more RAM will support longer recordings. You can then save any recording permanently, using the steps in our Mini Workshop, right, and transfer it to your PC or online storage service.

The app is completely free to use, with no adverts to clutter the screen and no pesky in-app purchases to spoil the fun.

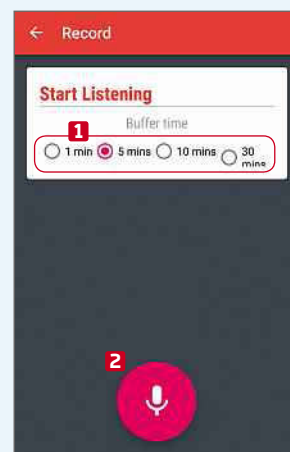
NEW



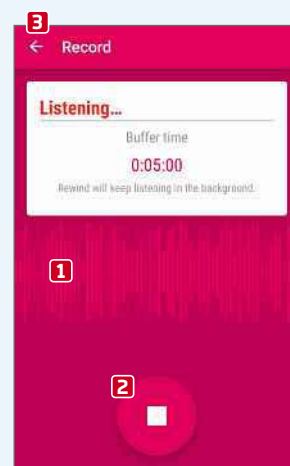
MINI WORKSHOP

Record everything you say and hear using Rewind

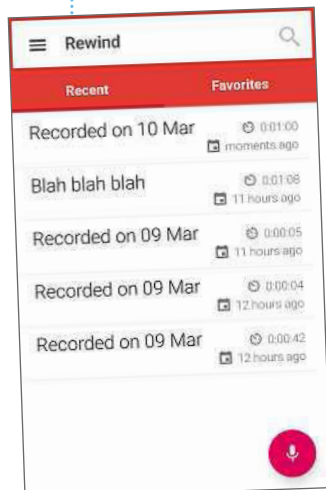
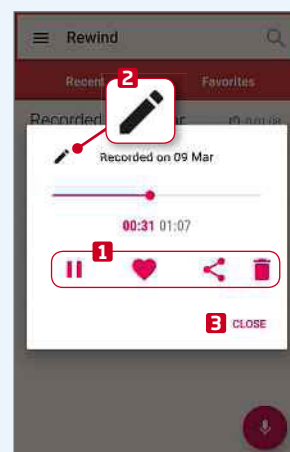
1 Download and open Rewind. Tap the Record button in the bottom-right of the display to open the Start Listening screen. Tap to choose a 'Buffer time', **1** which specifies how long the current recording is stored in your RAM until it disappears. Tap the Record button **2** and your device will start 'listening'.



2 The soundwave graphics show that your device is recording. **1** Your recording is already stored in your RAM, but it won't be saved as an audio file until you tap the Stop button. **2** Tap the arrow in the top-left corner **3** to return to the app's home screen.



3 Tap a recording in the list to play, 'favourite', share or delete it. **1** Sharing options include Bluetooth, text message and installed apps such as Gmail and Dropbox. Tap the pencil **2** to edit the audio file's name, then tap Close. **3**



Our rating



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

BROWSER

Opera Mini for Android

bit.ly/opera393

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

Opera may always be "the other browser", playing second fiddle to Chrome, Firefox and even Edge, but it has much to recommend it, especially on mobile devices that benefit from its data-saving modes, private browsing and settings that let you block all downloads until you're connected via Wi-Fi. This new version adds video compression for faster streaming and downloads, and reduced data usage; and has a handy 'Save to SD card' option (only available in Android 4.4.4 and higher).



Our rating



HEALTH

Sleepfulness

bit.ly/sleepdroid393

bit.ly/sleepios393

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 9
Size: 98MB (Android), 76.9 (iOS)

'Mindfulness' broadly means meditation, which has always been a great way to tackle sleep problems. This new app contains 10 free tracks to help you nod off, which you can listen to at different times, such as when you're going to sleep - or when you can't. All claim to improve the quality of your sleep and therefore your overall health. Sadly, some intriguing extra tracks (such as 'Relieving Stress') are only available as in-app purchases and cost a couple of quid each, so we've had to knock a star off the rating.



Our rating



SOCIAL

Facebook Lite for Android

bit.ly/fblite393

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

It's no great secret that Facebook's main Android app hogs battery power (as we explained in last issue's 'Stop Facebook draining your battery' feature). Facebook initially blamed Android, but nonetheless it has created a lightweight, battery-friendly alternative. It's not light on features, though; this latest version supports video, multiple photo uploads and the ability to pinch to zoom in and out of pages and photos. If your device, Wi-Fi or mobile signal aren't very powerful, this is the only Facebook app you need.



Our rating



MAPS

British OS Topo Maps

bit.ly/britishos393

Min requirements: Android 2.3.3
Size: 5.7MB

This is another wonderful new app that we had to dock a star in our rating for in-app purchases. Without the costly extras (up to £13.90 each for premium maps!), this might have been our 'App Of The Fortnight', but there are still enough useful free features to earn it a four-star rating. British OS Topo Maps turns your phone into a GPS device for hillwalking, cycling and driving - it even works when there's no available mobile data, because you can download the current map 'tile' to view offline. You can also create and share 'waypoints'; calculate distances, times and locations; get the elevation for your location by long-pressing the map; and search for place names, points of interest and streets.

Free content includes Ordnance Survey topological maps at 1:10,000 resolution, plus crowdsourced OpenStreetMaps and OpenCycleMaps. The ad-free premium maps are 1:25,000.



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 your device
- Remove hidden junk so it never comes back
- Switch from iOS without losing data

Order it now from Amazon at bit.ly/defguidetoandroid

PHOTOS & GIFS

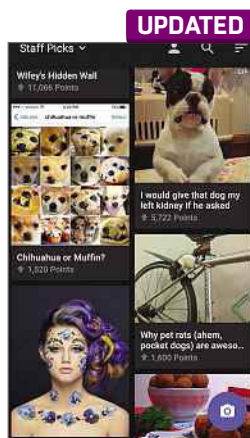
Imgur

imgur.com/apps

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 8

Size: Varies with device

If you crave being the first person to find all the best photo memes and GIFs (those silent looping videos) with which to litter everyone's Facebook pages, Imgur is your answer. Its updated apps for Android and iOS boast a redesigned layout with easier-to-find buttons for sharing content and voting for favourites. Just sit back and swipe through an endless stream of animated fun, adorable animal pics and random weirdness. Most useful of all, the Imgur app now provides a prominent camera button so you can easily add your own kitten, party trick or bizarre facial expression to the Imgur party.



Our rating



MESSAGING

Peach

bit.ly/peach393

bit.ly/peachios393

Min requirements: Android 4.4, iOS 8.3

Size: 5.1MB (Android), 9.2MB (iOS)

Peach is similar to the popular messaging apps WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger, but it has a simpler interface that's aimed at younger users. Interaction is based more on pictures than words, and the app takes up less space on your phone than most messaging tools. Peach was formerly iOS-only, but it's now available on Android, too, so you can chat to friends even if you or they don't have an iPhone. As well as swapping pictures, you can share songs, drawings, web links, GIFs, weather reports and even the number of steps you walked today, if you're really proud of your achievement.



Our rating



5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

PC REMOTE

VoiceWake

bit.ly/voicewake393

Min requirements: Windows Phone 10

Size: 8.7MB **Price:** £1.49

Finally, a reason to love Cortana! This new app harnesses Cortana to remotely control and monitor your Windows 10 PC by starting it up, shutting it down and even checking processes in real time.



Price: £4.99

Minecraft is such a phenomenon that even its Pocket Edition has its own wiki site (bit.ly/minewiki393) – which is a great place for newcomers to start. The updated app includes more Redstone components and slime blocks.

VIDEO

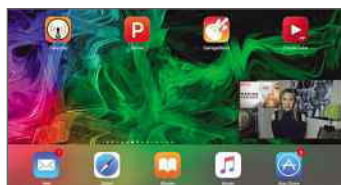
CornerTube

bit.ly/corner393

Min requirements: iOS 9 (iPad only)

Size: 4MB **Price:** £2.29

CornerTube finally brings PIP ('picture in picture') to YouTube in iOS, so you can play a video in the corner of your screen while you use other apps.



SCANNER

Quick PDF Scanner Pro

bit.ly/quickpdf393

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3

Size: 16MB **Price:** 50p

One of the best PDF scanners on the market has been updated to include batch scanning for multi-page documents, built-in OCR (optical character recognition) and many more export format options.



MESSAGING

Harvester Messenger

bit.ly/harvester393

Min requirements: Windows Phone 10

Size: 3.2MB

Price: 79p at time of writing (normally £1.19)

Turn your device into a messaging dashboard for WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Skype and more. We think it's a bit off to have an in-app purchase called 'donation' for an app that isn't even free, though.



GAME

Minecraft: Pocket Edition

bit.ly/minecraftdroid393

bit.ly/minecraftios393

Min requirements: Android (varies with device), iOS 5.1.1

Size: Varies with device (Android), 28.2MB (iOS)



VoiceWake



CornerTube



Minecraft: Pocket Edition



Quick PDF Scanner Pro



Harvester Messenger





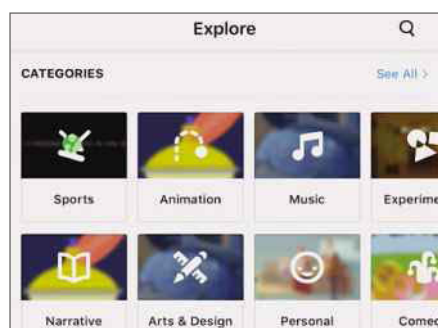
Best New TV Apps

VIDEO

Vimeo for iOS

bit.ly/vimeoios393**Min requirements:** Android 4.1, iOS 7**Size:** 37MB/28.7MB

The high-quality video-streaming service has redesigned its iOS app with a fresh design that makes it even easier to browse and watch ad-free, HD content on your iPhone or iPad. Gone is the “dreaded hamburger menu” in favour of a navigation bar along the bottom of the screen, while the new mini player lets you continue watching videos as you scroll through the app. There are now 16 video categories, which are curated by the Vimeo team and include interesting sub-categories such as ‘Drones and Aerials’. It’s also simpler to upload clips and manage your privacy settings, and you can download videos to watch offline should you lose your internet connection.



NEWS

Reuters TV: Video News for Android

bit.ly/reuters393**Min requirements:** Android 4.1**Size:** 24MB

Following a successful launch on iOS last year, the brilliant Reuters TV: Video News app has now arrived on Android. Powered by more than 2,500 journalists in 200 locations around the world, this offers a personalised news experience that saves you sitting through stories of no interest. Choose your preferred length of bulletin, from five to 30 minutes, to create a news programme that’s tailored to your interests and location. You can download the show to watch offline and, because it’s split into individual items, it’s easy to skip between stories with a single tap. The picture and sound quality are excellent, and the content is free to access without too many adverts.

MUSIC

Vevo for Android

bit.ly/vevo393**Min requirements:** Android (varies with device)**Size:** Varies with device

Vevo is best known for providing official music videos to YouTube, but it’s now seeking to become a music-discovery service in its own right. The revamped Android app introduces a feature called Vevo Spotlight (already available on iOS), which lets you specify your favourite artists to get a personalised feed of videos and playlists that suit your tastes. Just tap the ‘X’ or heart icon as you swipe through the likes of Justin Bieber, Adele and the Human League. You need to choose three to activate Spotlight. There’s also a new Favorites section for your top tracks and a weekly ‘New For You’ playlist of up-and-coming artists.



Don't install...

U Run Pro

bit.ly/urun393

An app with ‘pro’ in its title usually includes some premium features, but this fitness app for tracking your runs and walks couldn’t be

more basic. Like many other apps of this ilk, it measures the distance and time you’ve travelled, along with details such as your average pace and slope, but for £1.46 we expected a little more. The heart monitor doesn’t work and the weather information simply opens your browser. Must try harder!



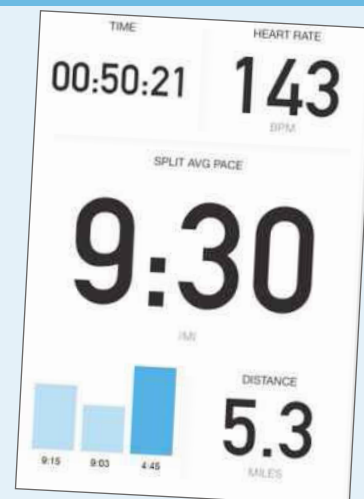
...Install this instead

Strava

www.strava.com/mobile**Min requirements:** Android 4, iOS 7**Size:** 30MB/47.2MB

Users of this cycling and running tracker covered an amazing 2.8 billion miles in 2015, and the app’s enduring popularity is down to the fact it appeals to all levels of fitness.

It’s incredibly simple to use for newcomers, yet offers plenty of depth with a huge array of data – including calories burned, average speed and heart rate – for those who enjoy analysing their exercise. Strava’s huge community of users also provides a wealth of virtual friends and rivals to compete against, with regular challenges for both running and cycling, and leaderboards for your area. It certainly puts the fun back into fitness. ■





FAQ

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

Our guide to 5G

We've only recently started using 4G but the mobile industry is already preparing for the next big speed boost, as **David Crookes** explains



What is 5G?

Take a look at the very top of your mobile phone screen and you'll probably see 3G or 4G next to the signal-strength indicator, depending on the kind of contract you're signed up to. These refer to the third- and fourth-generation stages of mobile-telecommunication technology. It follows, then, that 5G is the fifth-generation wireless system – and it promises to be much better than anything that has gone before.

Why should I care about 5G?

In the same way that 4G is significantly faster than 3G, the key advantage of 5G is that it speeds up the mobile internet. Although our phones can already connect to Wi-Fi both at home and while we're out and about, having a steady wireless signal remains crucial if we want to have widespread connectivity wherever we go. Increasingly, mobile users require near-instantaneous access to services and that demand is fuelling the desire to make things even faster than they are already.

How fast can 5G be?

The average download speed via 3G is said by Ofcom to be 6.1Mbps (megabits per second), whereas on 4G it is 15Mbps – which is faster than many people's broadband speed. By comparison, 5G is understood to be capable of between 10 and 50Gbps, although Professor Rahim Tafazolli, director of the 5G Innovation Centre at the University of Surrey (www.surrey.ac.uk/5gic) told the BBC that he believes speeds of 800Gbps are possible



The 5G Innovation Centre claims mobile speeds of 800Gbps are possible

(and no, that's not a misprint). Whatever the eventual maximum proves to be, it's sure to be jaw-dropping.

Will we really achieve those speeds?

In truth, probably not. The speeds achieved so far with 5G have been under laboratory conditions and it will, as always, be down to the various mobile networks to make the most of 5G technology and pass on the full benefits to consumers. In reality, we're likely to see speeds of around 10Gbps, which fits what we've seen with the 4G LTE standard that we use today. LTE (or Long Term Evolution) can, in theory, download at up to 300Mbps while uploading at 75Mbps, but we don't see that in practice.

Will we benefit from such speed?

You bet we will! After all, the way we use the mobile internet today is very different to how we initially used it and we need future evolution of wireless tech to unleash fresh possibilities. Imagine if we'd stuck with 1G – we'd still be making phone calls but nothing else. Text messages became popular with 2G, and smooth and reliable web browsing, emails and apps only became possible with 3G. When 4G was introduced, it coincided with our insatiable demand for video and music, and our need for faster downloading and uploading. So when 5G is eventually given the green light and starts to appear as a contract option,



5G speeds will allow us to stream ultra-high resolution 4K videos to our phones

we'll be able to stream 4K videos to our phones. What's more, should the claimed 800Gbps speed ever become a reality, we'd be in the amazing position of being able to download 33 HD videos in just one second. And that would just be the start of it.

But do we really need so much speed?

It seems crazy, but actually we do. The future of connectivity is extending beyond using mobile networks for phones and tablets. Since 5G will reduce latency to milliseconds, it starts becoming much more useful in a world blessed with the Internet of Things – one in which we connect security systems, cars, wearable devices – even umbrellas – and so much more to the web. The research firm Gartner says that 6.4 billion connected “things” will be in use in the consumer sector this year (bit.ly/gartner393) and that there will be 13.5 billion within four years. Throw in business “things” and it becomes a hectic, demanding space that only 5G can truly cope with.



5G will make Internet of Things devices such as 'smart' umbrellas more useful

But what else will 5G be useful for?

One possibility thrown up by Samsung and Deutsche Telekom at the recent Mobile World Congress Conference in Barcelona relates to advanced healthcare procedures. The companies showed how ultra-low latency technology could be used by a robot to pick up a ball in just 0.75 milliseconds, highlighting how this kind of fast-reacting network feedback would allow for the most intricate remote surgery. Antje Williams, head of Deutsche Telekom's 5G programme, said it would also prove useful with self-driving cars where fast reactions during journeys will be crucial.



Deutsche Telekom's 5G tests have proved its uses for advanced healthcare

Will I need to buy a new phone?

You will, because the handset needs to be compatible with the 5G standard. But don't worry about this too much – by the time we get to enjoy 5G, you'll be due an upgrade anyway.

Does everyone want 5G?

Yes and no. It will make life easier for consumers and the business world is spying a chance to make money – one study says the 5G wireless market could be worth \$250bn by 2025 – but there are some reservations. At Mobile World



Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg extolled 5G's benefits at Mobile World Congress

Congress, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said he wanted to make sure “we're serving everyone in the world and not just serving the people that already have internet by getting them faster internet”. Even so, he still hoped one of the “killer applications of 5G” would be virtual reality – no surprise, given that Facebook bought Oculus VR (www.oculus.com) for \$2bn in 2014.

How far away are we from a rollout of 5G?

The smart money is on 2020 but, in the meantime, a standard needs to be established and this is likely to take a while. That said, Intel is making major headway with 5G and is working with a number of networks including AT&T, Verizon, Huawei and ZTE. Intel hopes to be backing the right horse this time, having made a mistake with 4G by throwing its weight behind WiMAX, which eventually lost out to LTE. There are also limited trials of 5G taking place in labs and in the field, such as the real-world testing in Texas, Oregon and New Jersey of multi-gigabit-per-second speeds.

What is the situation in the UK?

There have been various pledges over the years. In 2014, London Mayor Boris Johnson said that he wanted the capital to have the world's first major 5G mobile network by 2020 and much work is being carried out with the University of Surrey to make this happen. EE, which introduced 4G to the UK, currently only plans to roll out 5G by 2022, but either way this fits in with successive mobile internet standards increasing every decade or so.



Mayor of London Boris Johnson wants to introduce 5G in the capital by 2020

MAKING USE OF THE SPECTRUM

The next generation of mobile communications will use a very high-frequency spectrum, which Ofcom says will be above 6GHz. Since this is largely unoccupied – certainly in comparison to most of the frequency bands that lie below – it gives 5G services free rein to use large blocks of the spectrum for the fastest speeds. At that frequency, though, the signals don't have the same travel range. A technology called Multiple



input Multiple output, or MiMo, will be employed, using lots of small antennae. This will speed up data streams, but will also mean a greater proliferation of base stations.

On ABC's *The Business* programme in Australia in 2014, the current Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said a 5G base station may have to be placed on every house and lamp post to deliver high speed internet to the whole country.

STOP WEBSITES SPYING ON YOU

**COVER
FEATURE**

Ever get the feeling you're being watched? **Wayne Williams** reveals who's snooping on your online activities and explains the best ways to protect your privacy on the web

You're never alone when you go online; there's always someone or something observing what you do, even if you're not doing anything particularly interesting. Many of these 'spies' are perfectly harmless, merely tracking your activities for analytics or advertising purposes, but others have more sinister and intrusive motives.

In this feature, we take a closer look at exactly who's watching you on the web and explain how you can use the latest tricks and tools to put a stop to this unauthorised and unwarranted spying.

Over the following six pages we'll reveal what the spies behind each of the methods want, how they spy on you, what they do with the information they collect and the best ways to thwart them. We'll also name and shame 10 of the worst offenders for spying on your online activities - the list may well surprise you.



SOCIAL NETWORKS

What do they want?

Social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Google+ want to know your likes (and dislikes), who you know and where you go on the web.

How do they spy on you?

As well as cookies (see page 41), social networks use buttons scattered across the internet to track your browsing. These function in the same way as web bugs, telling those services where you've been. Worryingly, you don't have to click a button (by 'liking' a page, for example) for it to register your arrival and report back to the network.

What do they do with it?

Social networks are forever seeking to build up a profile on you, to ensure you see content relevant to your interests and – of course – tailor their advertising accordingly. Facebook also uses various tracking methods to recommend people



You don't even need to click a social-media button for the network to steal your soul



Privacy Badger blocks social-media buttons and it has a terrific logo

you might know, but haven't yet connected with on the social network. So if you've ever wondered why someone you bumped into at an angling convention appears in your potential friend suggestions, now you know.

How you can stop them

The brilliant browser add-on Privacy Badger (bit.ly/badger393) from non-profit organisation the EFF (Electronic Frontier Foundation, www.eff.org) automatically blocks spying ads and invisible trackers. Social-networking buttons are replaced with alternative buttons that still work, but don't track you (unless you choose to click them), which means you don't get left with big empty spaces on the page. The way these replacement buttons works depends on how the original widgets were implemented. Typically, clicking them will either take you to the relevant sharing page or enable and load the original (hidden) social widget.

See our Mini Workshop below to find out how to use the latest version of Privacy Badger.

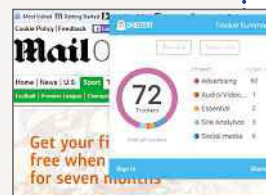
TOP 10 WORST SITES FOR TRACKERS

We visited the UK's most popular sites and, using the latest version of Ghostery (www.ghostery.com), recorded how many trackers lurked on each one



Site	Trackers
1 Mail Online	72
2 Mirror Online	61
3 Daily Star	59
4 AOL UK	58
5 The Lad Bible	52
6 Premier League	51
7 Digital Spy	40
8 The Telegraph	39
9 Very	37
10 Daily Express	36

Mail Online has more trackers than a lorry delivering a consignment of Tracker bars



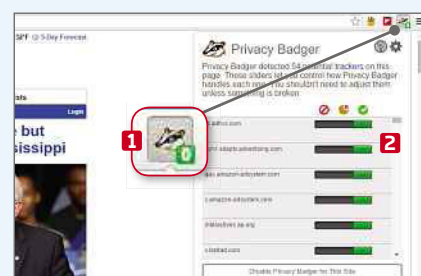
SITES WITH ZERO TRACKERS

And here are five angelic sites on which Ghostery found no trackers at all

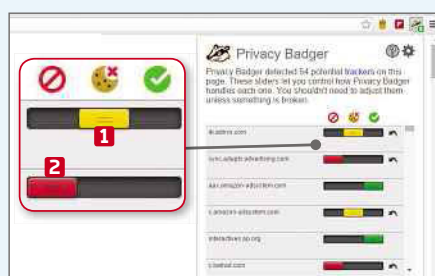
Wikipedia	en.wikipedia.org
DuckDuckGo	duckduckgo.com
Oscobo	oscobo.co.uk
IxQuick	ixquick.com
StartPage	startpage.com

Do you know of any others? Let us know at webuser@dennis.co.uk

MINI WORKSHOP | Use Privacy Badger to stop sites spying on you



1 When you install Privacy Badger, it adds an icon to the top of your browser. **1** Browse the web as normal and the add-on automatically detects all spying ads and invisible trackers found on a site. Clicking the icon displays a colour-coded list of potential trackers. **2** These are initially all green (not blocked).



2 You can manually manage each potential tracker. Drag a slider to the centre to block cookies from it (amber) **1** or slide it all the way to the left to fully block that ad domain (red). **2** Over time, Privacy Badger learns which trackers to deny and which to allow, and takes action automatically.



3 Click the Settings cog **1** to open the Filter Settings page where you can choose which action to take with trackers. **2** You can whitelist domains you trust **3** and enable or disable social-widget replacements, **4** which swap social-networking buttons with non-spying versions. Privacy Badger can be disabled on any site. **5**

ANALYTICS TOOLS

What do they want?

As Wikipedia explains: "Web analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of web data for purposes of understanding and optimising web usage". Essentially, website owners use analytics tools so they can understand more about the people visiting their website. The data collected by tools such as Google Analytics (www.google.co.uk/analytics) includes the location visitors are browsing from (and on what devices), which site they've come from, the keywords they used to find the site,

which pages are most popular, the average duration of a visit, whether they're new or returning visitors and much more.

How do they spy on you?

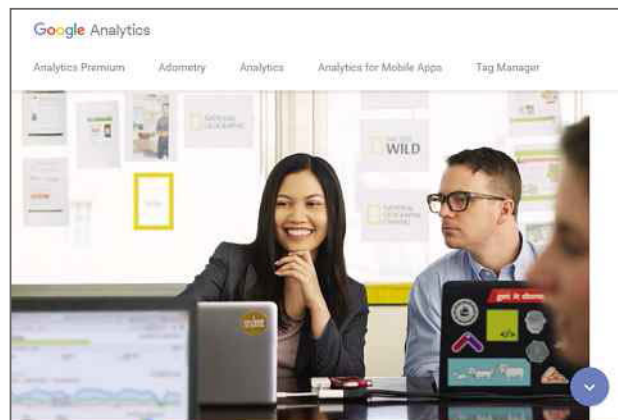
An embedded piece of JavaScript code is used to collect the information. Every time someone visits a website with this code, the data is (anonymously) recorded and passed to the collection server.

What do they do with it?

This varies depending on the site owner, but knowing which pages are most popular and getting an idea of the type of people that visit that website can help keep the content relevant and interesting. For example, if analytics reveals that a page about trout on your angling site is getting more views than any other, then it makes sense to add more content about trout.



Use Google's own opt-out tool to prevent it from collecting information about you



Google Analytics is the best-known analytics tool and gathers lots of useful visitor data

How you can stop them

Google Analytics is by far the most popular source of this kind of data collection – virtually every site you visit uses the tool. If you don't like the thought of being analysed in this way (albeit anonymously), you can use the official Google Analytics Opt-out Add-on (bit.ly/goptout393) to stop your data being collected. This works with Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Safari and Opera, and automatically blocks the Analytics JavaScript code.

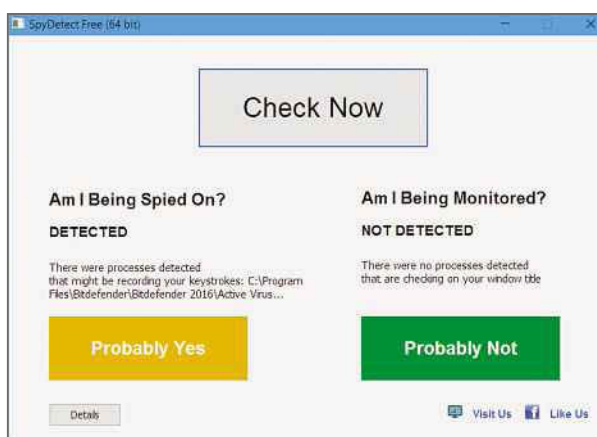
MALWARE WRITERS

What do they want?

It depends on the type of malware, but usually the people behind online threats are out to make money from you in one way or another. This could be by accessing your credit card details, or by logging into your accounts with websites such as Amazon and making purchases. If they take over your PC, they could use it as part of a botnet for criminal purposes. They might just want to spy on you because they can – malware can be used to spy through mobile phones, webcams and even baby monitors.

How do they spy on you?

There are lots of different ways. Keyloggers, for example, log your keystrokes and pass them on. This gives the hacker access to anything you've typed, including passwords, personal information and credit card details.



SpyDetect Free tells you if a hidden threat is monitoring your keystrokes

Remote Administration Tools (RATs) let a hacker control your PC remotely, which can include turning on a webcam. Android malware now exists that can make calls and take photos using your device, even if you shut it down (see bit.ly/avgmob393).

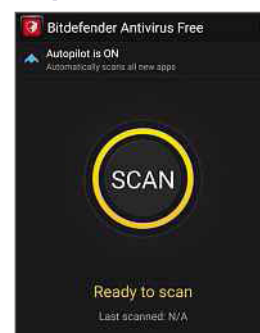
What do they do with it?

Again, it depends on the type of malware and the hackers behind it. If they can make money from you in some

way, then they will. Otherwise they will just invade your privacy and see what opportunities arise.

How you can stop them

Don't open suspect email attachments or run dubious programs. Protect your PC with strong anti-malware software, and install something similar on your phone, such as Bitdefender Antivirus Free (bit.ly/bitdefender393). If you have an Android device, avoid installing apps from questionable sources.



Install security software on your phone to protect it from online threats

SpyDetect Free (bit.ly/spydetect393) is a useful tool designed to detect processes on your computer that might be recording your keystrokes. Click the Check Now button and it will tell you if you're being spied on or monitored.

OTHER WEBSITES

What do they want?

Websites linked to the one that you're currently visiting (either visibly or invisibly) want to know more about you so they can maximise their appeal.

How do they spy on you?

Cookies are the most common method. These tiny pieces of code store information about you, which isn't a bad thing *per se* because they allow the site to recognise you, so you don't have to log in every time you visit, and your personal preferences and customised pages will be stored.

There are different types of cookie – session cookies only last for the duration of your browsing session and are cleared when you close your browser. Persistent cookies



By law, any mention of web cookies must include a picture of the biscuit variety

remain on your system after you've left the website and are sent back to the server the next time you visit. Secure cookies are served when you visit a site using an 'https://' address, while third-party cookies come from domains other than the one you're visiting. Some cookies are used across



Chrome lets you disable third-party cookies that install without you knowing

multiple sites, which allows third parties to track your browsing habits.

What do they do with it?

Behaviour tracking, which involves using cookie data to build up a profile of the sites you visit and the searches you perform, is used by websites to serve up more relevant adverts.

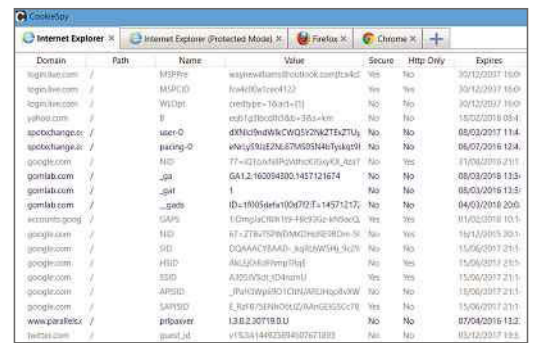
How you can stop them

You can block unwanted cookies in your browser. In Chrome, open Settings, click the 'Show advanced settings' link at the bottom and click the 'Content settings' button under Privacy. You can manage cookies there.

In Firefox, click the three-line hamburger button in the top-right corner and select Options. Click the Privacy option on the left and manage cookies there.

Cookies are, for the most part, harmless and serve a useful purpose so you don't want to block them all – only third-party ones. Very occasionally, you might find blocking cookies has an unforeseen negative consequence. If a website doesn't behave as expected, you may need to re-enable its cookies.

To save time, you can use the free program CookieSpy (www.cookiespy.com) to view all the cookies across all your browsers, and delete any you don't want.



You can use CookieSpy to manage and delete cookies from all your browsers

ISPs

What do they want?

Your internet service provider likes to keep an eye on how you're using its network, to make sure you're not abusing it in some way – whether for criminal activity or simply because you're using it "too much".

How do they spy on you?

ISPs can track which websites you visit, and they can also read anything you

send over the internet that's not encrypted, because they route you to your destination. They can identify different types of traffic, too – including BitTorrent.

What do they do with it?

Probably nothing. Just because they can spy on you, doesn't mean they are. If you do a lot of torrenting, they can impose traffic shaping (slowing down your connection), although this is less common these days. However, they can pass on information about your browsing habits to the police and the government, when requested, which is a bit of a worry if you're up to no good.

the padlock next to the browser's address bar). Installing HTTPS Everywhere (bit.ly/https393) for Chrome, Firefox, Opera or Android will automatically route you to the secure versions of the most popular sites.

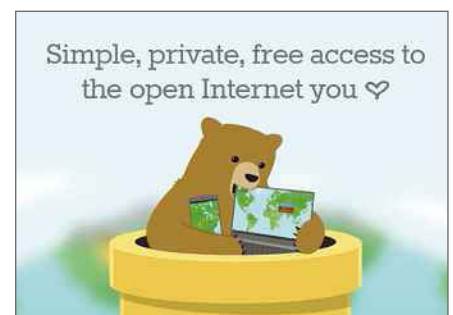
Browsing the internet via a VPN (Virtual Private Network) will keep your activity secret from your ISP, although you then have to trust the VPN itself. Some good free choices include CyberGhost (www.cyberghostvpn.com), TunnelBear (www.tunnelbear.com) and Spotflux (spotflux.com).



You can use HTTPS Everywhere to be redirected to secure versions of sites

How you can stop them

Use the secure HTTPS versions of websites where possible (look for

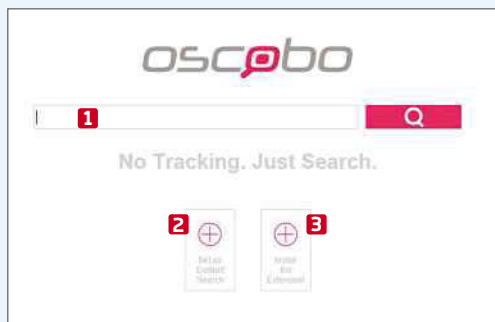


TunnelBear is one of the friendliest VPNs, but you don't get much data for free



MINI WORKSHOP

Keep your browsing private using Oscobo



1 Oscobo is a new privacy-focused search engine that's aimed at users in the UK and promises not to track you. As well as typing your query into the search box, **1** you can set Oscobo as your default search choice **2** or install the extension, **3** which adds a search box to your browser.



2 Enter some search terms and, as you would expect, Oscobo returns a list of results. **1** We found it fast and the results (from Bing/Yahoo) were pretty good. The thumbnails **2** show you previews of the sites before you visit them, and Oscobo displays the latest results from Twitter in a sidebar. **3**



3 You can switch to searching for Videos, Images or News. **1** If you've installed the extension, you can perform a search on Oscobo whenever you like by clicking the button and entering your terms. **2** Scroll to the bottom of the site and click Privacy to find out more about the search engine.

ADVERTISERS

What do they want?

They want you to buy things and click their advertising across the web. An interesting offer or flashy advert isn't always enough to draw you in, so they use all sorts of tactics to get you to click. A growing number of web users employ ad blockers these days, so advertisers have to make sure they maximise their options.

How do they spy on you?

Tracking cookies are the most common method. Advertising firms place ads across hundreds of thousands of sites. When you first visit a site containing one of these ads, a cookie from that advertiser will be saved on your PC. When you go to another site displaying an ad



This Nicorette ad has taken over the Mail Online homepage – bet that cost!

banner from the same advertiser, your browser returns the cookie and receives a new one. The advertiser can use this “breadcrumb” trail to track which of their adverts you've seen and, using this information, will know which sites you've visited. It doesn't even need to be a full, visible advert that returns a cookie – a 1x1-pixel invisible GIF (better known as a web bug) works just as well.

SEARCH ENGINES

What do they want?

Google and Bing want to get to know you, and spy on the sort of things you search for online so they can build up a user profile.

How do they spy on you?

Search engines use several methods to keep an eye on what you do, including using cookies, and they also record and store what you've searched for. If you're logged into your Google or Microsoft account, then Google or Bing can link the details directly to you.

What do they do with it?

They use the information to better target their results and advertising. You might think that two people searching for exactly the same thing on Google will see the same results but, in fact, they probably

won't. Google weights its order of results based on all sorts of factors, but it also prioritises the sites you've visited previously. If you don't believe us, try performing the same search while logged into and out of your Google account, and compare the results.

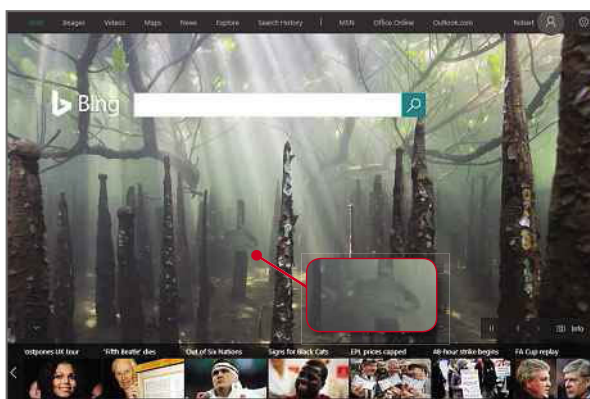


Unlike Google and Bing, DuckDuckGo doesn't store your searches or track you

How you can stop them

Disconnect Search (disconnect.me/search) anonymises your searches to prevent any connection being made to your Google (or Microsoft) account. You can also switch to using alternative, privacy-focused search engines, such as DuckDuckGo (duckduckgo.com) and the new Oscobo (oscobo.co.uk), which don't track you or store your searches.

See our Mini Workshop on the left to find out how to use Oscobo.

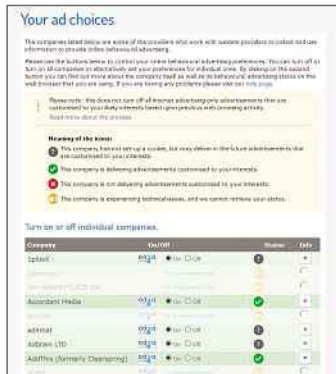


Bing may have lovely pictures, but there's something fishy lurking beneath

What do they do with it?

Advertisers spy on you so they can tailor their advertising to tempt you with relevant products and services. If you've ever visited a website and seen ads

related to an item you looked at elsewhere, you'll know you're being successfully tracked. Advertising firms may also pass your details to other advertisers and marketing companies.



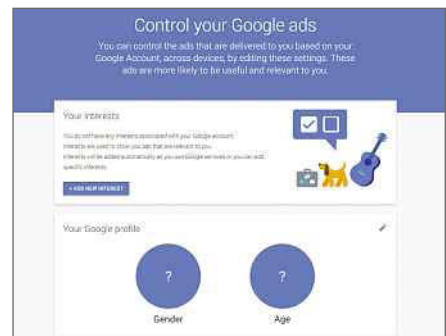
Your Online Choices lets you block and allow ads from specific advertisers

How you can stop them

Major ad providers let you opt out of behaviour tracking. Go to the 'Your ad choices' section of Your Online Choices (bit.ly/adchoices393) and choose which advertisers to block cookies from. Google's Ads Settings page (bit.ly/googleads393) shows what the search giant knows about you and lets you opt out of interest-based advertising. You can do the same kind of thing with Microsoft (choice.microsoft.com) and Yahoo (bit.ly/yahooad393).

Most web browsers have a Do Not Track option you can turn on in the settings, but this is a voluntary arrangement and websites have no obligation to honour your wishes.

Using an ad blocker such as Adblock Plus (adblockplus.org) or uBlock Origin (bit.ly/ublock393) will remove adverts



You can control the data that Google stores about you for advertising purposes

from all the web pages you visit. In addition, the software can disable tracking to make you more anonymous to advertisers.

See our feature on the next page to find out how to block ads that your ad blocker misses.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

What do they want?

They want as much data as possible about individuals and companies, which they can use to prevent crime and acts of terror (such as the 2015 Paris attacks), and potentially for other purposes, too.

How do they spy on you?

In lots of ways, including bugging phones, tracking your location via cell

towers, use of backdoors in software and services, and receiving data from ISPs and tech firms. Spying software has even been found embedded on hard drives from a number of well-known manufacturers. NSA security contractor Edward Snowden's revelations barely scratch the surface of government spying activities.

What do they do with it?

In most cases, they just hoard it, but if you use a potential trigger word in your communications – such as “bomb”, “murder”, “assassination”, “nuclear”, “infrastructure security” or “wild trout fishing” (well okay, not that one) – you may find yourself under supervision.

How you can stop them

Use encryption. As you'll have seen

from the recent FBI vs Apple row over a terrorist's iPhone, the government has problems cracking encrypted devices. You can encrypt content on your Windows PC using VeraCrypt (veracrypt.codeplex.com), which we had a Workshop about in our last issue. You can also use a VPN.

Interestingly, Facebook and Twitter now alert you if they suspect you're being spied on by a government. You can also scan your computer for signs of surveillance software using Detekt (resistsurveillance.org).



VeraCrypt allows you to encrypt content so the government can't access it



Facebook might spy on what you do, but it doesn't like the government doing it

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 6 April 2016

WINDOWS 10's Best New Tools

Beat the crowd and try the latest features and fixes in the controversial operating system



PLUS...

- ✚ **EDIT VIDEOS INSTANTLY**
YouTube's fantastic new tools for creating perfect movies
- ✚ **STOP SOFTWARE NAGS**
Prevent programs from persistently pestering you
- ✚ **DITCH YOUR KEYBOARD**
Use your voice to type, edit and format Google Docs

**SUBSCRIBE TO WEB USER AT
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BLOCK ADS that your ad blocker can't



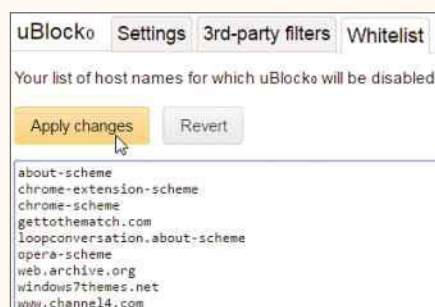
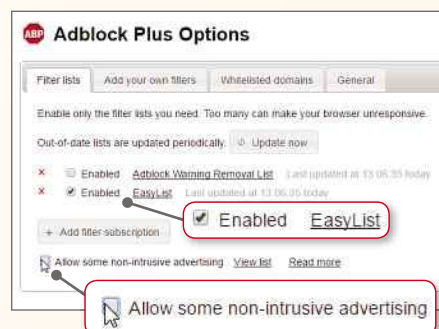
Ads keep web content free, but many are annoying, intrusive and even dangerous. **Robert Irvine** reveals how to block ads that dodge traditional filters

More than 22% of British web users now use ad-blocking tools such as Adblock Plus (adblockplus.org) and uBlock Origin (bit.ly/ublock393) - up from 15% in 2015. Rather than responding to this rising trend by making their ads less invasive, many advertisers are now employing devious methods to evade ad blockers. Here, we explain how to combat the worst offenders.

Adjust your ad blocker's settings

If your ad blocker regularly lets through adverts, it's possible that your settings aren't configured for optimum blocking. Notably, when you install Adblock Plus, the option to 'Allow some non-intrusive advertising' is pre-selected on the 'Filter lists' tab, which means the add-on won't block 'acceptable ads'. Adblock Plus says this option encourages companies to use non-intrusive forms of advertising, but it has also been accused of taking 'back-handers' to allow ads from big firms including Google and Microsoft (a method of funding it now explains on its website: bit.ly/adblockplus393).

If you'd rather not see any ads at all, and don't care about funding small websites (you heartless beast!), then untick the box.



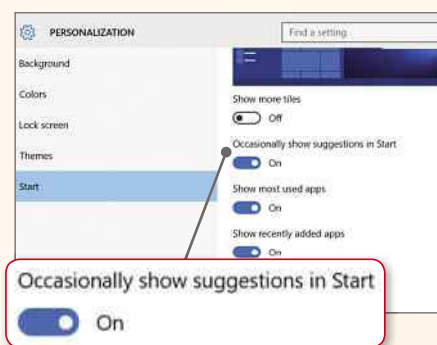
All ad blockers subscribe to constantly updated filter lists to determine which content to block. If you don't have the correct list, then you're likely to see lots of ads. To check, go into your ad blocker's settings and make sure that the EasyList filter is selected and up to date. You can also choose additional lists if you think you need them, although this may adversely affect the performance of your browser.

If ads are appearing on one website but not on others, make sure that the site hasn't been added to your whitelist. This exempts the domain from filters, and you may have inadvertently added it to your whitelist when temporarily disabling your ad blocker.

Block ads in Windows 10

One of the trade-offs for Microsoft making Windows 10 free is that the operating system pesters you with adverts, and there's nothing that your ad blocker can do about them. Fortunately, by performing a few simple tweaks, you can disable these ads yourself.

First, let's get rid of the ads for apps that recently started appearing in the Start menu. Microsoft prefers to call them 'suggestions' because developers don't actually pay for them. Open the Settings menu, click Personalisation,



then click Start at the bottom of the left-hand column. Find the option 'Occasionally show suggestions in Start' and switch it to Off.

To stop ads appearing on your Lock screen, click the 'Lock screen' option in the Personalization column and disable the option 'Get fun facts, tips, tricks and more on your lock screen'. We promise you won't miss any "fun facts"!

You should also clear the unique advertising ID, which Windows 10 uses to build a profile of you so it can target you with ads. Go to Settings, Privacy, General, and flick the slider next to 'Let apps use my advertising ID for experiences across apps' to Off. Next, open your browser and go to bit.ly/optout393. Find 'Personalised ads in this browser' and 'Personalised ads wherever I use my Microsoft account' and set them both to Off.



Mute audio adverts on Spotify

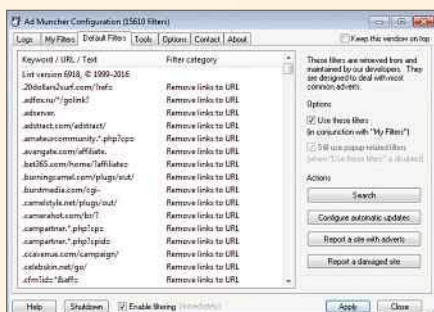
The free version of Spotify (www.spotify.com/uk) is supported by audio and banner adverts, which seems fair enough until you're subjected to the same annoying commercials over and over again. If you want some relief from these repetitive ads, but don't feel like paying £9.99 per month for Spotify Premium, there's a sneaky tool you can try called EZBlocker (bit.ly/ezblocker393). This automatically detects when an ad begins, then mutes the volume for the duration, without affecting other sound on your PC. The program can also block banner ads and mute video ads, although it can't prevent them from playing. Note that EZBlocker only works in Windows 7 and later, and that some security software wrongly flags it as a threat.



Stop adverts appearing in software

Most ad blockers run in your browser to filter adverts in web pages and online videos, but they can't prevent ads from appearing in other programs. A more versatile option is Ad Muncher (www.admuncher.com), a powerful ad and pop-up blocker that used to cost \$29.95 (£21.15), but is now completely free.

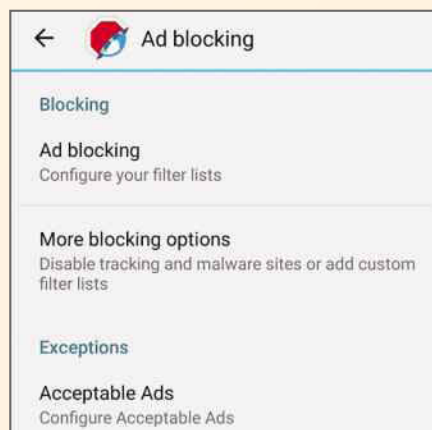
Ad Muncher is a standalone program rather than a browser add-on, which means it can block ads in other software that connects to the web. It works quietly in the background, so you don't need to worry about configuring settings or filter lists, unless you want to. For example, to block text ads as well as image-based ones, open Ad Muncher's Options panel, click Filtering and deselect 'Leave small, text-only adverts alone'.



Block all ads on your tablet

Ads on a phone or tablet are considerably worse than in a Desktop browser because they obscure the entire screen and the tiny 'x' buttons that close them can be tricky to find and tap. So we were delighted last year when Adblock Plus launched Adblock Browser (adblockbrowser.org) – a dedicated ad-blocking browser for Android and iOS – and equally pleased that Google and Apple haven't removed it from their respective stores. It works just like a normal mobile browser with the obvious exception that it blocks all ads in web pages, although – like its parent tool – it lets you allow 'acceptable' ads if you want to.

You can also configure different filter lists, which is useful if you're using your phone abroad and find yourself targeted by foreign ad servers, and use the browser to block malware domains, social-media buttons and hidden trackers. There's even an option to disable the anti-ad blocking messages you might otherwise encounter while using Adblock Browser.



Don't be forced to disable your ad blocker

Lots of websites now detect when



you're using an ad blocker and either ask you to temporarily disable it or force you to do so if you want to access their content. If you resent being bossed around in this way, you can get around the restriction by using a tool called Anti-Adblock Killer (bit.ly/anti392), which we recommended in last issue's Best New Browser Tools section. It's compatible with Chrome, Firefox, Opera and Safari, and Adblock Plus, Adblock and uBlock Origin, and works by disguising your use of an ad blocker so that sites don't refuse you entry.

For Anti-Adblock Killer to work effectively, you'll first need to install a userscript manager such as Greasemonkey for Firefox (www.greasespot.net) or Tampermonkey for other browsers (tampermonkey.net). Once this is done, go to bit.ly/adblock392 and click the Subscribe button to add Anti-Adblock Killer to your ad blocker's filter list. If you're using uBlock Origin, you'll also need to go into its Options, click the '3rd-party filters' tab and tick the box next to Anti-Adblock Killer.

The team behind Anti-Adblock Killer emphasises that it isn't a "universal solution for all anti-adblock scripts", but it works on many sites that now forbid ad blockers, although not on streaming services. ■

ONLY BLOCK ADS ON SPECIFIC SITES

If you disagree with ad blockers because they deprive the web of essential revenue, but you still find ads irritating, there are other options available. One is to only filter adverts on big sites that don't need the money. For example, Facebook Adblock for Chrome (bit.ly/facebook393) lets you use the social network without putting yet more dosh into multi-billionaire Mark Zuckerberg's overflowing bank account. Then there's Search Engine Ad Remover for Firefox (bit.ly/search385), which strips the confusing ads that surround search results in Google and Bing. Best of all is Clean YouTube (bit.ly/cleanyoutube393) for Chrome, Firefox and Opera, which ensures you never again have to sit through a 30-second commercial or annoying pop-up message when you're trying to watch a video.



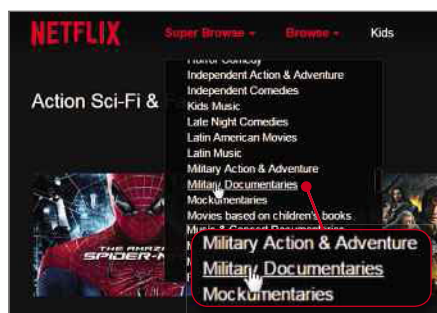
Secret new hacks for NETFLIX

With 80 million users worldwide, many of us now prefer watching Netflix to traditional TV. **Robert Irvine** explains how to get the most from your monthly subscription

Unlock hidden film and TV genres

When you click Browse in the top-left corner of the Netflix website, you can choose from familiar TV and film genres such as Action, Comedies and Romance. But if you're after something a little more specific, it's possible to jump straight to one of thousands of hidden 'micro-genres'. There are two ways to access these sub-categories, which include Action Sci-Fi & Fantasy, Military Documentaries and Steamy Romantic Movies. The first is to go to the Netflix Hacks section of the What's On Netflix blog that discovered the trick (bit.ly/netflix389) and click the link – with accompanying code – for the desired micro-genre. This will take you to the relevant section of the Netflix website – you can also just add the code to: [www.netflix.com/browse/genre/\[code\]](http://www.netflix.com/browse/genre/[code]).

Alternatively, you can install the Netflix Super Browse add-on for Chrome (bit.ly/sbchrome393) or Firefox (bit.ly/sbfirefox393), which adds a Super Browse menu to the website that includes all the secret sub-categories. You can either browse the alphabetical list of micro-genres or search their titles for particular keywords.



Jump to specific micro-genres of movies and TV shows using Netflix Super Browse

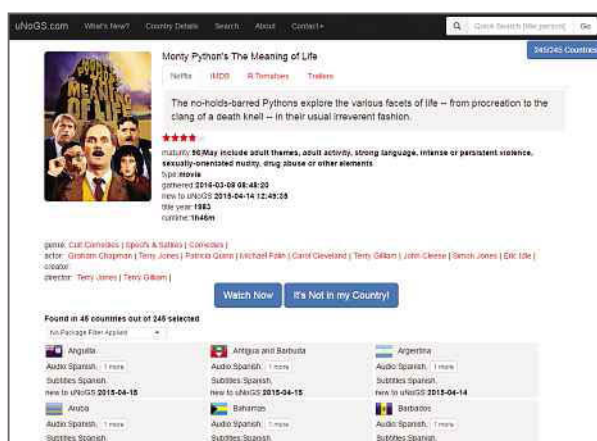
**Search the entire
global library**

Netflix is now available in 245 countries (or 'territories', to be precise), some of which have a much bigger selection than the one on offer in the UK. You can access these regional variations using a VPN (although Netflix is clamping down on such tools), so it's useful to know what's available to watch and where. To find out, head to the unofficial Netflix online Global Search Tool (uNoGs for short, unogs.com) and enter the name of a movie, TV show, actor or director to view matches from across the world. Choose a title to see which countries are currently streaming it, and which VPNs you can use to access content in that territory. Most of these require a subscription, but some – such as Unblock-US (www.unblock-us.com) – offer a free trial. However, we'd recommend using Smartflix instead – see the next tip for details.

You'll be surprised how many popular films and series, including *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter* and *Monty Python*, aren't available on our local Netflix, but can be viewed in places as far afield as Belize, Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Usefully, uNoGs tells you which language movies are subtitled in, and lets you view only those with English subtitles.

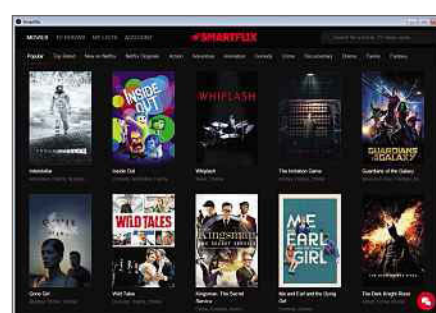
Beat regional Netflix restrictions

You can avoid the hassle and cost of using a VPN to beat regional Netflix.



uNoGs tells you which films and shows are available on regional Netflix variations

restrictions by using an amazing free program called Smartflix (www.smartflix.io). This lets you stream more than 14,000 films and TV series from around the world to your Desktop simply by signing into your Netflix account. Smartflix uses the uNoGs database mentioned in the previous tip to put the whole global Netflix catalogue at your fingertips, regardless of which country the content is licensed in (the US, Canada, Australia, Japan and the Netherlands are the most prominent



Smartflix offers an easy way to stream Netflix titles from around the world

territories). Simply search for a movie or TV show, or browse the global library by popularity, user rating or genre, then click a title to start watching it.

Smartflix is free while the service is still in beta (although obviously you need a Netflix subscription) and will only cost \$2.99 (£2.10) a month when it officially launches. We ran a Workshop about the software in Issue 389 of *Web User* (bit.ly/webuser389).

Add extra features to Netflix

Despite a smart redesign last year, the Netflix website is frustratingly basic. You can make its pages more interesting and useful by installing the excellent Chrome extension Flix Plus by Lifehacker (bit.ly/flixplus370). This offers lots of clever ways to customise Netflix and improve your viewing, and lets you choose which ones to apply in its Options menu. For example, before you start watching a film, you can view a trailer on YouTube and show ratings from IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes; while for TV shows, you can hide potential spoilers for forthcoming episodes and click the Random Episode button for a surprise choice. Flix Plus also lets you rearrange your watch list, so that titles that are set to expire soon are placed at the top.



Flix Plus shows ratings from IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes for Netflix titles

Discover what's new on Netflix

Netflix has a New Arrivals section on its website and a Recently Added strip in its mobile app, but neither is particularly reliable or up to date. When the eagerly awaited Season 4 of the Netflix-produced series *House of Cards* was released on 4 March, many viewers couldn't even find the new episodes, let alone play them. To ensure you don't miss any fresh content, check out New On Netflix UK (uk.newonnetflix.info), which – despite its scrappy design – is an invaluable resource for staying abreast of the streaming service. The site is updated every day with details of the latest additions to Netflix, and also lists the films and shows that

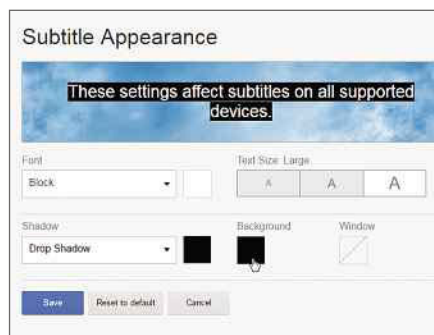


New On Netflix UK keeps you up to date with all the latest additions and removals

have been removed. You can browse by day or month, view upcoming titles, use The Randomiser tool to discover something new and follow New On Netflix UK on Facebook and Twitter for instant updates.

Make subtitles more legible

By default, subtitles for Netflix TV shows and films are displayed as yellow text with a black shadow. If you find this text difficult to read and detrimental to your viewing, it's easy to change your subtitle settings. Hover your mouse over your username in the top-right corner and choose Your Account from the drop-down menu. In the My Profile section, click 'Subtitle appearance' and choose your desired font, text size and subtitle colour, and whether to use

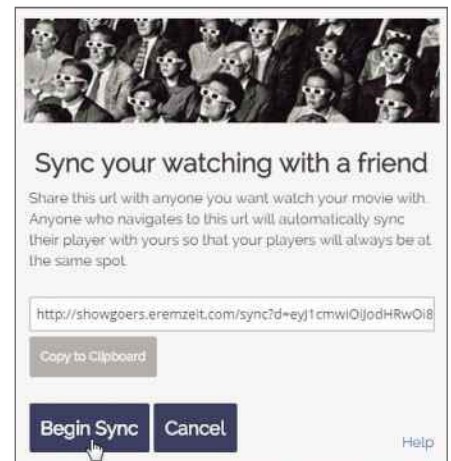


You can change the colour, size and font of subtitles to make them easier to read

a coloured background. Click Save to apply your preferences or 'Reset to default' to undo them.

Watch films and shows with friends

It's very frustrating when you have to wait for someone to catch up with a Netflix series so you can freely discuss the latest episodes without spoiling any surprises. To avoid this first-world problem, install the Chrome extension Showgoers (bit.ly/showgoers378), which lets you sync your Netflix viewing to watch TV shows and movies at the same time as friends, no matter where they are. Just start playing a film or programme, then click the 3D-glasses icon to launch Sync mode and generate a link. Share this with someone and, when they click it (they'll also need Showgoers installed), their Netflix player will open the same content at the same position as yours, so you can watch in tandem. When you play, pause, or jump to a new time in the movie or show, their Netflix player will follow suit. It certainly saves a lot of biting your tongue and "I can't believe you're only on Episode 3" grumbles! ■



Showgoers lets you watch Netflix shows at the same time as your friends

SECRET NETFLIX SHORTCUTS

Relax your mouse hand when you're watching Netflix and use these keyboard shortcuts instead

- F** – Switch to full screen (and back)
- Enter** – Pause and resume playback
- Page Up** – Play
- Page Down** – Pause
- M** – Mute (and unmute) the sound

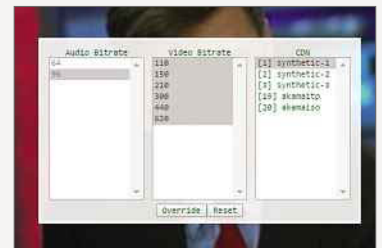
[up and down arrows] – Increase and decrease the volume

Shift + [left arrow] – Rewind by 10 seconds

Shift + [right arrow] – Fast-forward by 10 seconds

Ctrl+Alt+Shift+D – view statistics about your stream

Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S – launch the Control Panel (above) to fix buffering issues



Best free text-editing tools

Windows Notepad is a feeble text editor that doesn't deserve its place on every Windows PC. **Andy Shaw** compares a selection of alternatives that offer much more, from spellchecking to tabbed interfaces



Notepad++ | notepad-plus-plus.org | ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

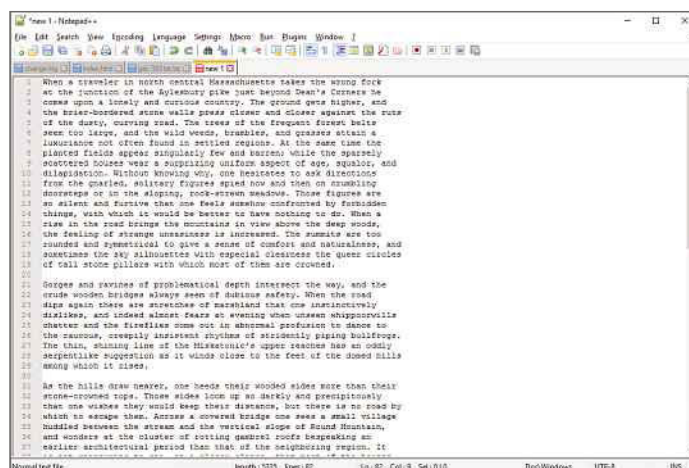
WebUser
GOLD
AWARD

What we liked:

At first glance, Notepad++ looks like an unnecessarily complicated version of the standard Windows Notepad. The menus have increased from a manageable five to an overwhelming 12, with 30 quick-access toolbar buttons below, and the numbered lines immediately make it look like it's been designed to help programmers, rather than occasional text users.

The last point is a valid assumption, because Notepad++ is a great place to write computer code. Whether you're putting together a web page or creating a more complex program, the software can recognise the file format you're creating and add an additional layer of colour-coding, to make the text file easier to read.

However, there's a lot here for casual text users, too. One of the key benefits of Notepad++ is its tabbed interface. Here, tabs operate just like in a browser, so you can have multiple text files open at any time, making it easy to switch



between two or more, for cutting, pasting and comparing.

There's a lot built into the software, from basic but essential tools that Windows Notepad lacks (such as word counting and extra search tools), through to sophisticated add-ons. This is a smart system to use, because despite all the menu options, the basic file isn't overloaded with niche tools that only a few people will ever use.

You can view a list of the available add-ons at bit.ly/npadd393. They're very simple to install thanks to a built-in plugin manager that automatically builds a list of all the available options,

so you can simply tick the ones you want and click the Install button to add them to the software.

How it can be improved:

There's a fine balance between adding too much to the standard version and leaving tools available only as optional add-ons. We think Notepad++ slightly overdoes the built-in tools by including a raft of options for programmers that basic users will end up having to ignore. If you dabble in web design or programming, however, you'll find that Notepad++ is packed with useful tools.

OUR VERDICT

As its name suggests, Notepad++ is like Windows Notepad on steroids. It keeps the familiar white screen but adds all the extra options and features you could want. It includes a stack of useful tools for coders, but this means that basic text users may find it hard to locate its most useful text-editing extras.

BowPad | bit.ly/bowpad393 | ★★★★★

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

WebUser
SILVER
AWARD

What we liked:

If you like Microsoft's ribbon interface – the oversized tabbed toolbar it uses in its Office software – then BowPad will be right up your street, because it looks reassuringly familiar and provides quick access to key tools.

When you open a file, a sidebar opens on the left showing the contents of the file's folder. Opening multiple files automatically opens them in new tabs, which are conveniently colour-coded. Files from the same folder are grouped together with the same coloured tabs, which is a brilliant touch. We also liked its drag-and-drop editing, which lets you highlight text and drag it to a new location.

Some of the tools on the ribbon bar are designed for coders but are useful if you are using the editor for this kind of work. It detects the type of code you're using from the file extension and highlights text appropriately.

How it can be improved:

We like the ribbon interface but it isn't



as coherently designed as Microsoft's and looks scrappy in places. It gives too much priority to the tools for coders, which is wasted space on the 'main' toolbar if you don't use them, and more obvious tools such as the Print button are located on the secondary 'other' toolbar. The software can use plugins but they're a fiddle to find and install.

OUR VERDICT

BowPad's ribbon toolbar is a welcome and familiar addition to this Notepad alternative but it's heavily weighted towards coders, leaving basic tools demoted to sub-menus.

Metapad | bit.ly/meta393 | ★★★★★

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

WebUser
BRONZE
AWARD

What we liked:

Metapad looks a lot like Notepad, which is a bonus if you just want some additional tools without changing the general appearance.

The only real change is the addition of a toolbar across the top, which provides quick and easy access to basic tools such as save, search, copy and even word wrap without having to open a menu.

Apart from supplementing Notepad's tools, there are few further additions. However, these are useful and thoughtfully applied, such as drag-and-drop editing and the option to save regularly accessed files as favourites.

How it can be improved:

Metapad is better than Windows Notepad but it falls short of its rivals. Most notably, it doesn't have a tabbed interface for opening more than one text document at a time. The only add-ons available are for adding foreign



languages to the software, so you can't add new tools, and it doesn't offer any extra tools for coders.

OUR VERDICT

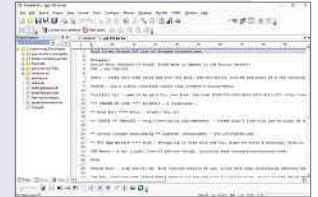
The great thing about Metapad is that it isn't crammed with an overwhelming array of tools. It keeps things simple by only offering a few basics on top of what Notepad provides, such as drag-and-drop editing, a useful toolbar and a favourites list.

BEST OF THE REST

TotalEdit Pro

bit.ly/tot393

TotalEdit Pro used to be paid-for software but it's now free. It looks the most polished of all the text editors we reviewed, and has a coherent user interface. However, there are a few niggles, including its habit of presuming that you're always going to open an HTML file rather than a text document, which means text files don't appear in the Open dialogue box unless you change the 'Files of type' drop-down box to All Files.



AkelPad

bit.ly/akel393

AkelPad is a basic Notepad replacement but its features are very limited. It can open

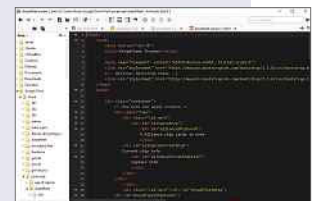


more than one document at a time but only in a separate Window. Once you've got used to the tabs in our Gold and Silver award-winners, you won't want to return to this basic system. There is a good selection of add-ons, which you only need to select from the Plugins menu to install, but it's too basic without them.

Komodo Edit

bit.ly/komo393





The fact that Komodo Edit is really a trimmed down version of Komodo's paid-for programmers' tool is given away by its dark colour scheme, though there are actually tons of skins to choose from (try Greenscreen for an Eighties terminal feel). It looks like it



has a limited number of options with a small collection of toolbar buttons but the Alt key opens up a meaty set of menu options. However, it's still geared towards coders and offers a lot of tools that basic users won't need.

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Call **FREE** on 0800 083 2357 to switch your broadband

	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1		TalkTalk: Broadband	£7.50 (FREE for 18 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	CHEAPEST £0.00
2		EE: Broadband & Calls	£9.95 (£1 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited**	£12.00
3		Plusnet: Broadband	£9.99 (£2.50 for 12 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£30.00
4		Sky: Broadband	£10.00 (HALF PRICE for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£60.00

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 11 March 2016.

Ofcom

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

**SNEAK
PREVIEW!**

Computer active

- **WINDOWS 10 FIXED!** Solve the problems that Microsoft never will
- Best apps to avoid eye strain
- Block **ALL** adverts on your tablet
- Remove PC junk - use Kaspersky's new tool
- **PLUS:** Exposed: the PCs, phones and tablets with built-in flaws

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Take a Screen Break

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

WEB USER WORD SEARCH

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

ADWARE
BACKDOOR
HIJACKER
KEYLOGGER
PHISHING
RANSOMWARE
ROOTKIT
SPYWARE
TROJAN
VIRUS

F	R	E	K	C	A	J	I	H	P	C	O
L	K	O	R	E	G	G	O	L	Y	E	K
G	R	T	O	A	X	N	A	J	O	R	T
Y	C	V	O	T	W	O	K	P	U	A	C
D	X	Z	D	U	K	M	P	H	Z	W	K
R	O	N	K	U	V	I	O	I	Q	Y	F
H	Q	F	C	I	O	J	T	S	Q	P	N
V	E	R	A	W	D	A	V	H	N	S	L
H	E	E	B	M	E	W	K	I	G	A	S
X	S	D	R	L	B	O	N	N	R	Q	R
F	X	Z	B	W	P	Q	M	G	A	U	I
A	R	M	V	Z	V	F	L	B	V	S	S

CAN YOU GUESS THESE STAGE-PLAY TITLES FROM THE EMOJI?

1



2



3



4



Get the answers online at bit.ly/quiz393

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 8 Medusa Street XE stereo headset

Speedlink's latest headset, the Medusa Street XE, is a true all-rounder that works with your laptop, tablet and smartphone. Its noise-reduction microphone ensures crystal-clear quality when you're talking in busy locations and the built-in remote makes it easy to mute the mic and control the volume. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'medusa' in the subject line. For more info visit www.speedlink.com.



WORTH
£29.99
EACH

WIN 1 OF 2 Arcam miniBlink Bluetooth receiver

The Arcam miniBlink Bluetooth receiver is the ideal way to listen to music from your smartphone, tablet or other Bluetooth-equipped device on your hi-fi. With a range of around 10 metres, the miniBlink is designed to let you select the track you want to listen to from your phone or tablet. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'miniblink' in the subject line. For more information, follow [@ArcamUK](https://twitter.com/ArcamUK) on Twitter and 'like' www.facebook.com/ArcamUK.



WORTH
£99.99
EACH



Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Make a heat map of your home's Wi-Fi networks | www.netspotapp.com

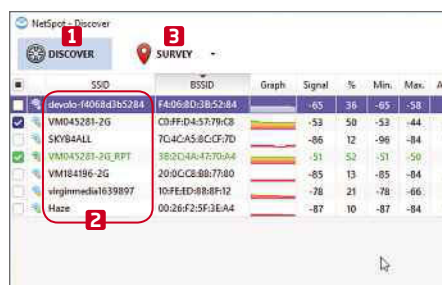
NetSpot lets you build a map of your home's wireless coverage, so you can see which networks work best throughout your property

Even if you have a top-of-the-range, cutting-edge wireless router, there's a chance that the Wi-Fi in your home will be patchy in places. That's because walls, floors, doors and solid furniture can all interfere with the strength of your wireless signal, as can cordless phones and microwave ovens.

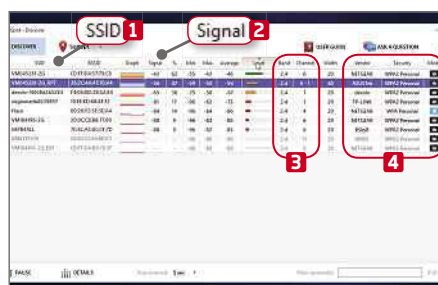
NetSpot is a network-monitoring tool that lets you create a heat map of your

Wi-Fi, so you can identify dead spots and take action to reduce them. In this Workshop, we show you how to use it to create a heat map of your home for both 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands (if you have them), so you can see which network works best in which rooms.

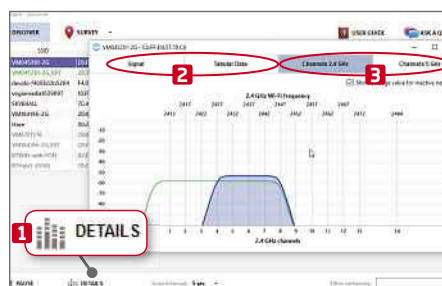
You can save and load these heat maps for future use and try your router in different places to get the best coverage.



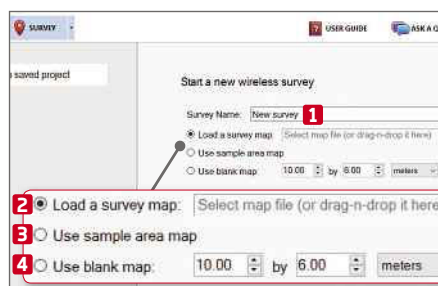
1 NetSpot needs to be installed on a PC equipped with a Wi-Fi adapter, so a laptop is ideal. There are two sections to the program: Discover, 1 which displays all the detected wireless networks in range; 2 and Survey, 3 which creates a heat map of your Wi-Fi.



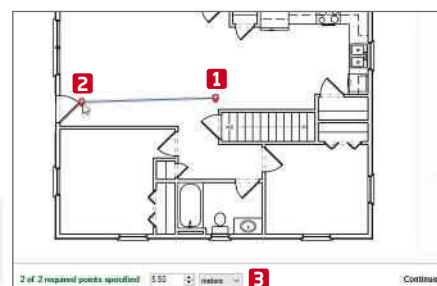
2 The Discover section shows information such as a network's SSID, 1 signal strength, 2 band (2.4GHz or 5GHz) and channel. 3 It also displays the vendor, security method and Wi-Fi mode. 4 You can sort the list by any category - just click one of the headings.



3 Select one network or more, then click the Details button. 1 A window opens and you can view network strength in signal and tabular data form, 2 as well as strength and frequency for both 2.4GHz and 5GHz channels. 3 The latter only shows details if your adapter is compatible.



4 The Survey section is where you create interactive heat maps. Give the survey a name, 1 then upload a map of your building by selecting it or dragging and dropping it to the box. 2 If you don't have a map to hand, you can use a sample one 3 or a blank one. 4



5 Click Continue and carry your laptop to a central area of your home, then click the corresponding spot on the map. 1 Move your laptop to a second location and click to mark your new position. 2 An estimated distance between the two points is displayed. 3 Change this to the actual distance.

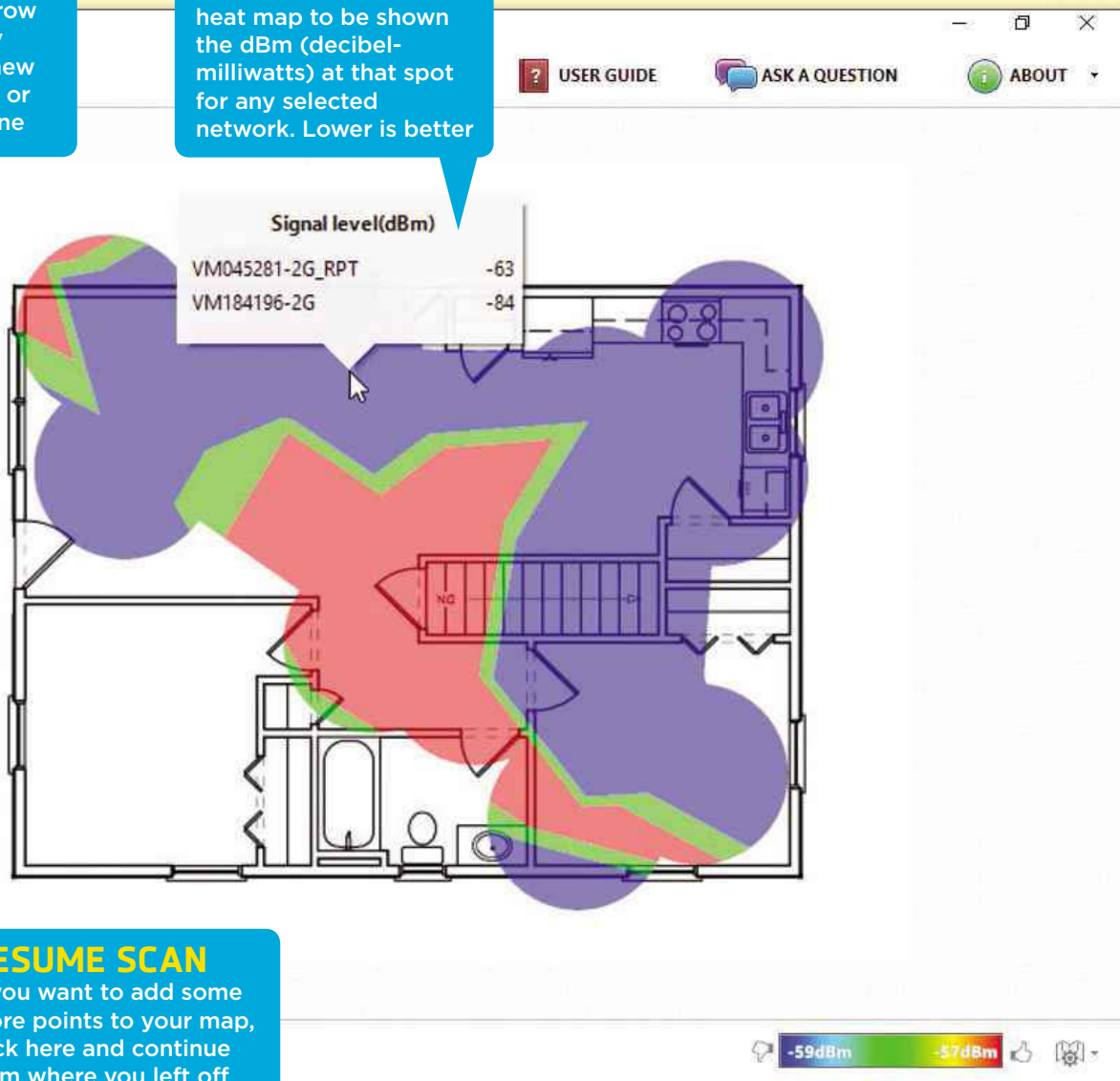


SURVEY MENU

Click the down arrow next to the Survey button to start a new survey, or to open or save an existing one

SIGNAL LEVEL

Click any part of the heat map to be shown the dBm (decibel-milliwatts) at that spot for any selected network. Lower is better



RESUME SCAN

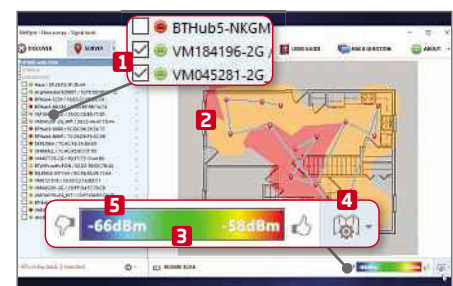
If you want to add some more points to your map, click here and continue from where you left off



6 Click Continue. You'll see a message stating that no networks have been detected yet. Click the point where you are on the map to start a scan. This might take a while to complete and you will need to stay still while it's happening. A green circle appears when the scan is complete. **1**



7 Move to another location on the map (don't go too far), and click that point. Wait until it also turns green. Ideally the circles should overlap. **1** Keep moving and repeating the process until you have covered the entire area you want to scan. Click the Stop Scan button. **2**



8 Select the networks to include **1** and your heat map appears. **2** Blue represents negative results and red shows the best areas. Refer to the gradient **3** to see what the different shades mean. Clicking the Settings icon **4** lets you adjust the minimum and maximum signal levels. **5**

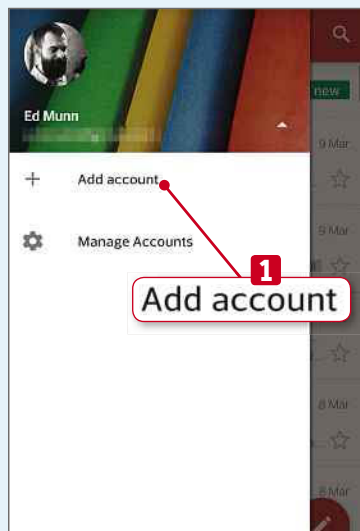


Use Gmail's best tools with Outlook and Yahoo

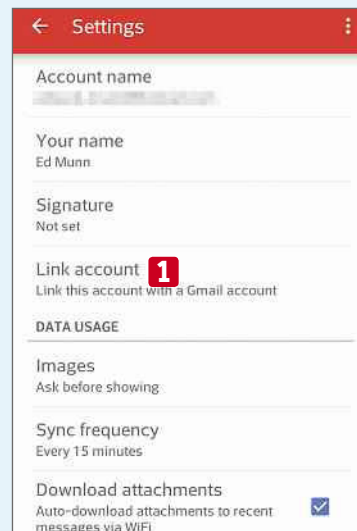
bit.ly/gmail393 | ⌚ 10 mins | 🤖 Android 4.4+

It's been possible to add another email account to Android's Gmail app for some time but this doesn't unlock all Gmail's powerful features. Now, however, the app includes the option to 'Gmailify' an Outlook or Yahoo email account, so you can take advantage of Gmail's excellent spam filtering, inbox organisation and search tools without the hassle of switching email addresses.

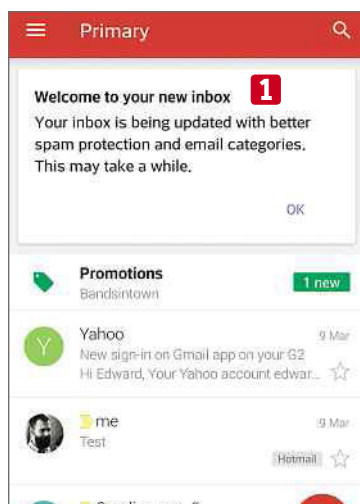
Linking an account seamlessly integrates it with your Gmail inbox, so you can find all your emails in one place and any actions (such as deleting or marking emails as read) are reflected on the email server. If you only want to view emails sent to the added account, you can quickly filter them using Gmail's powerful search tool, and even set up a permanent filter that appropriately labels these messages. One of the best things about Gmailify is that if you decide you don't like linking two accounts, you can undo the changes in a matter of seconds and both will revert to how they were.



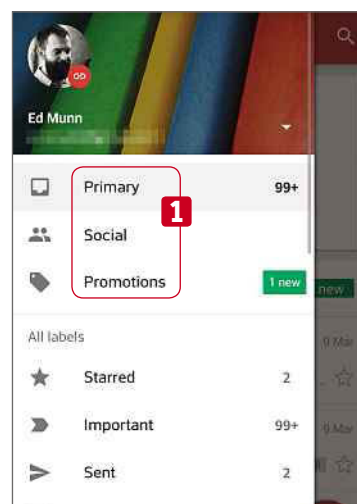
1 Open Gmail, tap the three-line menu button to open the main menu and tap your name or email address. From here, choose 'Add account' **1** and follow the instructions on screen to set up a new IMAP account.



2 Once you've added the account, open the main menu, select Settings and tap your newly added email address. Next, select 'Link account', **1** tap Get Started, then tap Next. You'll be asked to log into your email account and to give Gmail access to your information.



3 From the drop-down menu, choose the address that you want to send emails from by default, then select OK. A notification appears warning you that it might take a while for the new account to be synced to your mailbox (ours was still downloading after several hours!). **1**



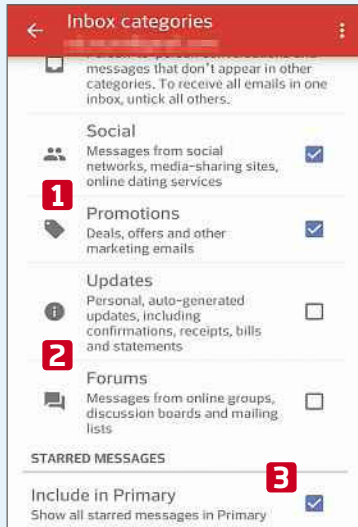
4 Emails from the new account appear in your inbox alongside your Gmail emails, sorted by the default three categories: Primary, Social and Promotions. You can switch between categories by opening the main menu and selecting the appropriate option. **1**



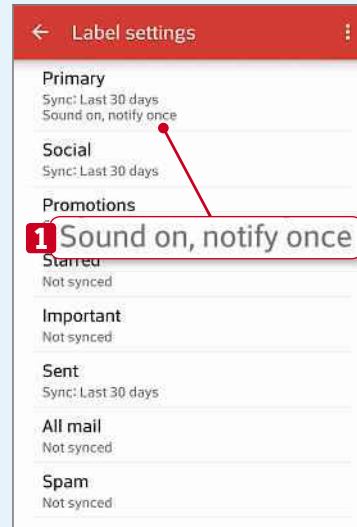
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says

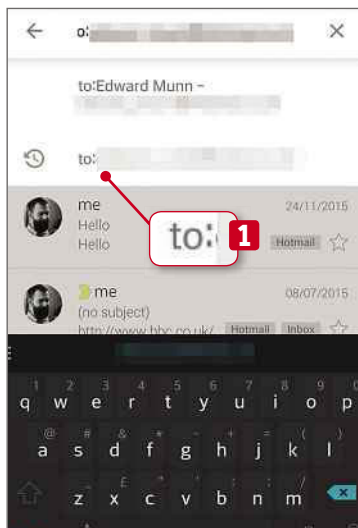
You can only 'Gmailify' when using the Gmail app on Android but, once connected, the linked account is visible both at mail.google.com and on the iOS app. If, therefore, you'd like to take advantage of this excellent new feature on an iPhone or iPad, you can do so by setting it up on an Android phone or tablet first.



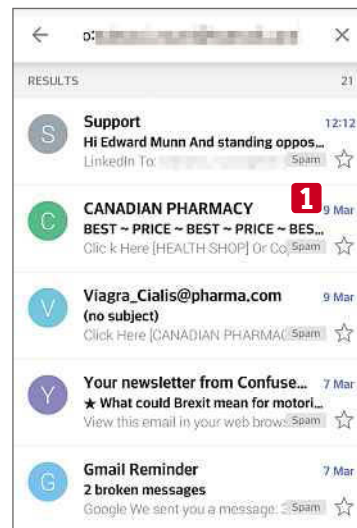
5 To customise these categories, open Settings from the menu, tap your Gmail address and then 'Inbox categories'. You can disable Social and Promotions, **1** and there are options for Updates and Forums **2** that you can activate by ticking the boxes. By default, all starred emails are shown in the Primary inbox. **3**



6 Tap Back and select 'Manage labels' to choose the notifications settings for each of your categories and labels. By default, you only receive notifications for Primary emails, **1** but you can activate other categories by tapping them and selecting 'Label notifications'.



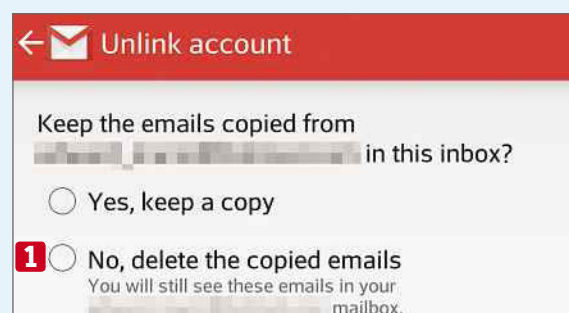
7 If you can't find an email, you can use Gmail's powerful tools to search your newly added mailbox. Operators including 'to:', 'from:', and 'subject:' **1** will help you narrow your search and find exactly what you're looking for. For a full list of the queries you can use, visit bit.ly/query393



8 When you read an email in Gmail, it's automatically marked as read in your non-Gmail inbox. Similarly, deleted emails are moved to the trash on your email provider's server. However, emails filtered to Gmail's Spam folder **1** remain in the main inbox of your email provider until they are deleted.



9 Once you've linked a non-Gmail account to Gmail, any travel and holiday reservations you made with that email address will appear in Google Now. When you compose a new message, your default email address is automatically selected but you can choose another address by tapping the 'From' drop-down menu. **1**



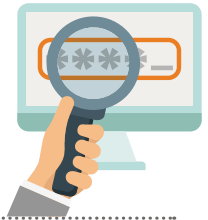
10 If you no longer want to manage your emails from one combined inbox, you can unlink your non-Gmail account by opening Settings, tapping your Gmail account, scrolling down and choosing 'Unlink account'. Selecting 'No, delete the copied emails' **1** deletes the emails from Gmail but leaves them on the original provider's servers.



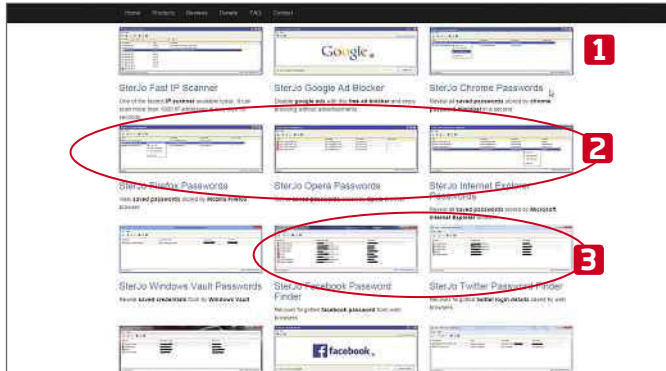
Recover all your forgotten passwords

It's easy to lose track of login details for websites and product keys for software, but it's not impossible to retrieve them – you just need to know which tools to use and where to get them from. SterJo offers a one-stop range of software for

recovering all sorts of secret information from Wi-Fi passwords to Microsoft product keys, making it easier than ever to recover your forgotten security information.



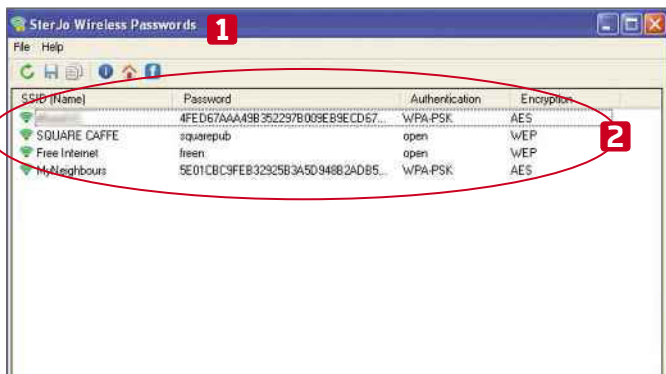
SterJo Password Finders: bit.ly/ster393 | ⌚ 10 mins | 🖥️ XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10



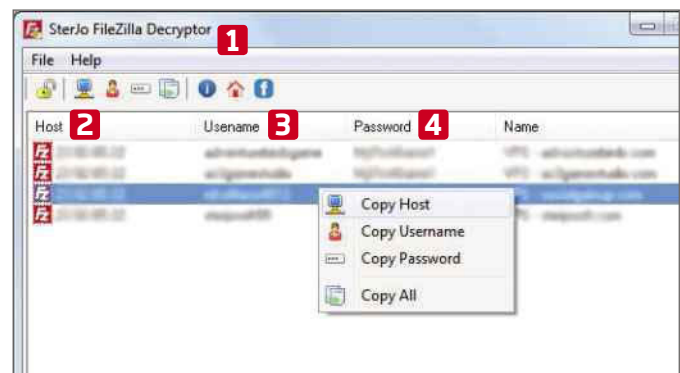
1 To retrieve website logins saved to your browser, install SterJo Chrome Passwords **1** or the appropriate tool for Firefox, Internet Explorer or Opera. **2** If you want to find saved passwords for a specific social network, you can try the password finders for Facebook, Twitter **3** and Instagram.



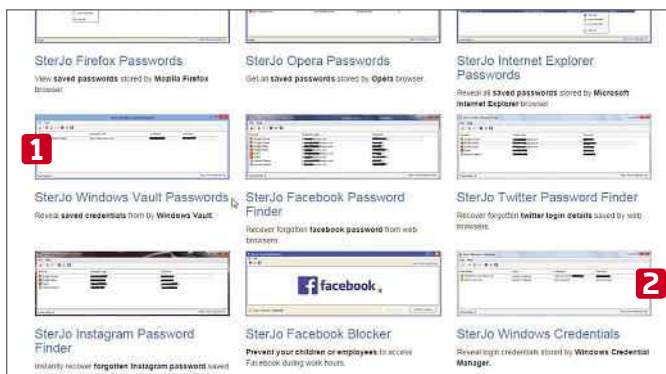
2 To recover lost keys for Microsoft products including Office and Windows XP onwards, download and install SterJo Key Finder. **1** It recovers software keys, even if the program has been uninstalled, and also works for some non-Microsoft programs including CorelDraw, Nero **2** and WinZip.



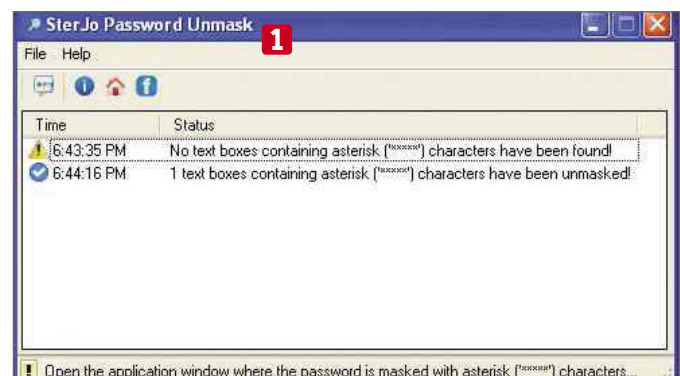
3 If you've entered a Wi-Fi password in Windows, SterJo Wireless Passwords **1** can find it again. It reveals info about any wireless networks you've previously joined including the network name, password and encryption method, **2** and you can export these details as a TXT file.



4 It's easy to forget login details for FTP sites, but if you've saved your passwords with FileZilla you can reveal them using SterJo FileZilla Decryptor. **1** The tool shows you the Host, **2** Username **3** and Password **4** for each site, so you can easily use the credentials in another FTP client.



5 If you've ever saved passwords using Windows Credentials Manager, you can unlock them using SterJo Windows Vault Passwords. **1** To reveal logins used for network authentication and remote Desktop connections, you can also try SterJo Windows Credentials. **2**



6 If you're unable to recover a password after following the above steps, you can try SterJo Password Unmask, **1** which reveals passwords hidden by asterisks in windows application forms. The tool is particularly good at revealing email account credentials in Microsoft Outlook.

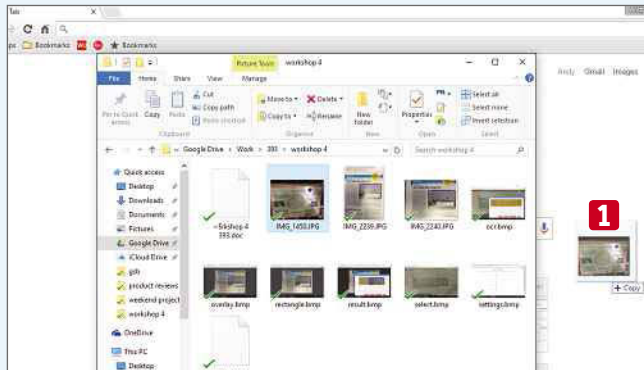
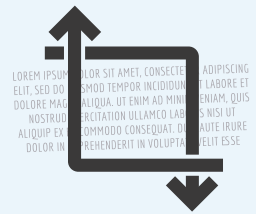


Convert words in images to editable text

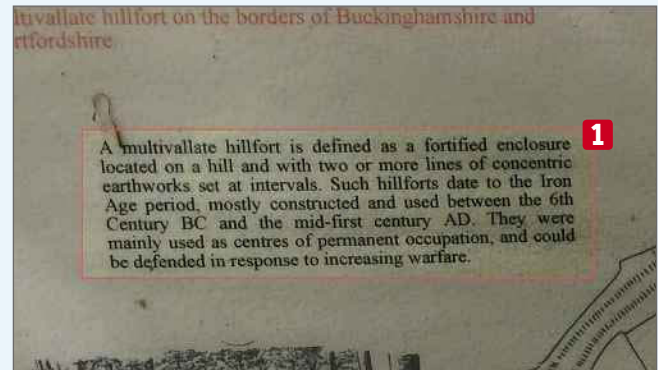
Copying text is usually a simple case of cutting and pasting, but what if the words you want are in an image, protected PDF or another type of file that you can't normally copy from?

Copyfish: bit.ly/copy393 | 10 mins | Chrome

Copyfish is a Chrome add-on that lets you grab text that normally can't be selected from your browser and other software.



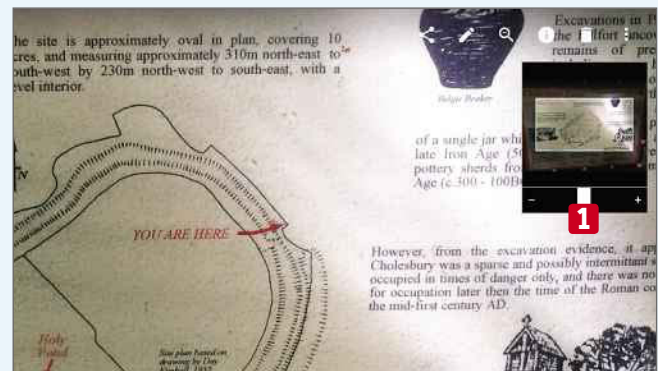
1 If the item containing the text you want to convert is already on the web, find it and open it. Or, if you're converting a file from your hard drive, try opening it in Chrome. You can drag and drop web-friendly images (JPG, GIF, PNG etc) and PDFs straight into a Chrome window. **1**



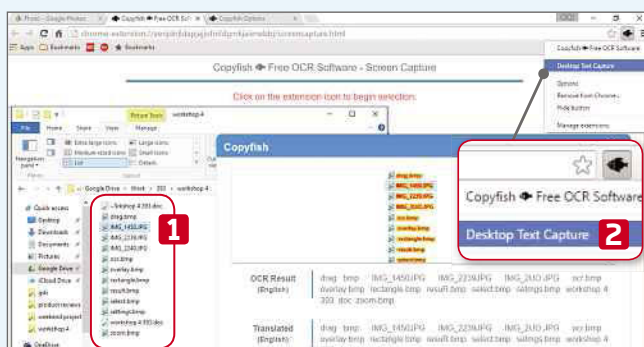
2 If you can, zoom in on the text you want to convert. If the text is unclear, try doing it in multiple parts so you can zoom in further. Click the Copyfish button. The words "Please select the text to grab" appear. Click and drag the crosshair to draw a rectangle around the text. **1**



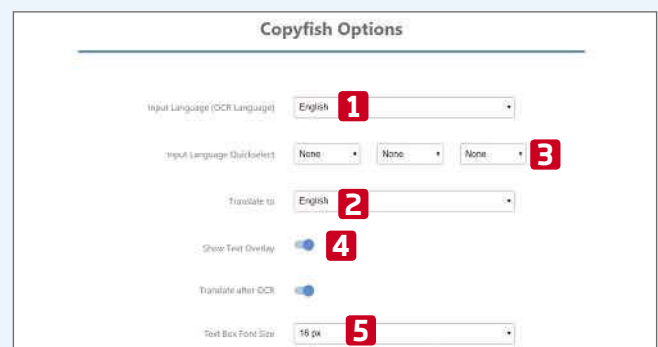
3 Copyfish looks for text in the image, highlights it **1** and prints it below. **2** It can also translate the text if you've configured the settings (see Step 6). Recapture **3** lets you draw around the text again, while 'Copy to clipboard' **4** lets you paste the text elsewhere.



4 If you're scanning a high-resolution image, try uploading it to a photo-sharing or storage service before scanning it. Sites such as Google Photos provide better zoom controls **1** than the standard image viewer in Chrome, which can help the software recognise words.



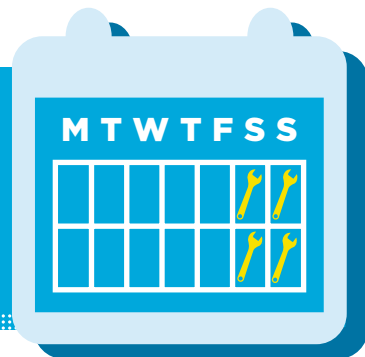
5 You can capture words from other Windows programs, though it's a bit hit and miss. It works well with Explorer, though, which is useful for grabbing lists of files in a folder. **1** Right-click the icon, choose Desktop Text Capture, **2** select the window you want, then proceed as in Step 2.



6 To change the settings, click the cog icon or select Options from the right-click menu. You can change the input **1** or translation language, **2** and use 'quickselect' settings **3** to switch between several languages. You can also choose whether to overlay text **4** and what size it will be. **5**

Weekend Project

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



How to...

Turn your old laptop into a super-speedy Chromebook

If your old PC can't handle Windows 10, install Chrome OS instead. **Wayne Williams** guides you through the process



Buying a laptop used to involve a straight choice between two operating systems – Windows or Mac OS X. But now there's Google's Chrome OS, which offers a low-cost third option. Chromebooks running the cloud-based operating system have become very popular and it's easy to see why. They are affordable because as long as you're happy to carry out most of your work on the web and in your browser, they don't require much expensive processing power.

The same principle can be applied to an old PC, so although it may not be able to run the latest version of Windows, your old computer may still have more than enough power to run the Chrome operating system. CloudReady (www.neverware.com) brings the Chromebook experience to your PC, and can either replace your existing Windows installation or run alongside it. The OS is aimed commercially at schools but is being given away free to home users.

What you'll need

In addition to the CloudReady image file, which is a 600MB download from www.neverware.com, you'll need the Chromebook Recovery Utility (bit.ly/chromebook393). This is an official Google tool that lets you create recovery drives for Chromebooks but it can also be used to install Chrome OS (via CloudReady) on your PC. It requires the Chrome browser to work. You also need

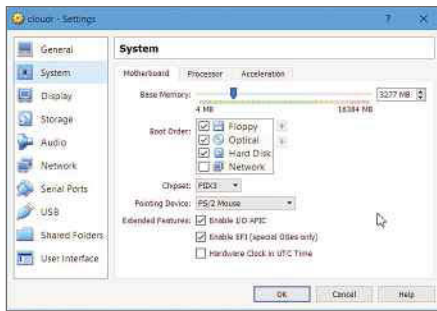
an empty USB flash drive (or SD card) to write the installer to. This should have a capacity of at least 8GB, though 16GB would be better. To find out how to install the operating system, see our Mini Workshop opposite, then set it up using our other Mini Workshop on page 61.

Run CloudReady on VirtualBox

If you want to try CloudReady without installing it on your PC, you can set it up

temporarily using VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org). This isn't as straightforward as setting up other operating systems, such as the different versions of Linux, because the download comes as a BIN image file and you'll need to convert this into a format that VirtualBox can work with before you do anything else. Fortunately, this isn't difficult to do.

Unzip the chromiumos_image.bin file,

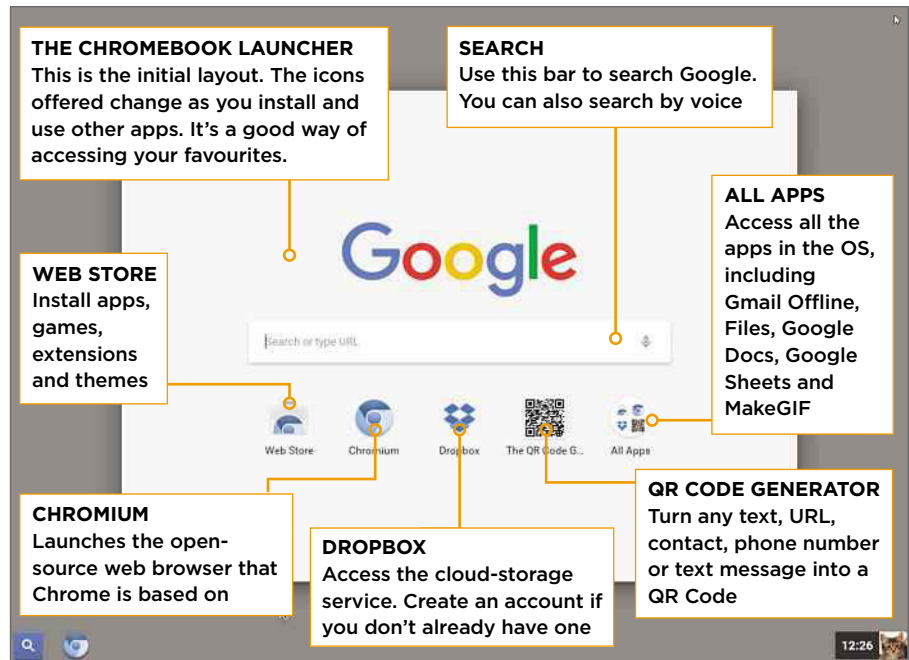


You can try CloudReady in VirtualBox if you make a few changes to its settings

click Start, type cmd and launch the Command Prompt. Inside the window, type: "c:\program files\oracle\virtualbox\VBXManage.exe" convertfromraw "C:\Users\[username]\Downloads\chromiumos_image.bin" cloudready.vdi

You'll need to add your username and the name of the location you saved the BIN file to. If for any reason you can't find the saved file, search your hard drive for cloudready.vdi and copy it to the Desktop.

Launch VirtualBox and click New. In the Name box, enter cloudready. Set the type as 'Other' and the version as 'Other/Unknown', then click Next. Assign a minimum of 2GB RAM to the OS, click Next and, in the Hard Disk box, select 'Use an existing virtual hard disk file'. Click the folder icon and browse to the cloudready.vdi file. Click Open, then click Create. Make sure the CloudReady entry is selected on the left and click Settings. Go to System, Motherboard and tick 'Enable I/O APIC' and 'Enable EFI'. Next, select the Processor tab (still under Settings) and tick 'Enable PAE/NX' next



to Extended Features. Increase the number of processors from one to two or more. Finally, click Display on the left, change video memory to 128MB and tick 'Enable 3D Acceleration'. Click OK and the changes will be applied.

With CloudReady selected in VirtualBox, click the Start button at the top. The virtual machine will start and the memory will be tested. Once that's complete, CloudReady will load and you're ready to set it up.

Master CloudReady

Navigating CloudReady is fairly simple. You access your apps through the launcher and browse the web through Chromium. The system tray icon lets you switch Google accounts, manage your

internet connection, adjust the volume and access Settings. You can also shutdown the OS or lock it.

The Settings screen lets you manage your internet connection and install and update media plug-ins such as Flash. You can also set the wallpaper, get themes, and adjust settings for the mouse, keyboard and display. The Advanced Settings screen lets you manage the date and time (you'll probably need to change this because we found CloudReady couldn't identify our location correctly, so it was displaying the wrong time), as well as privacy settings, languages and downloads.

Right-click a blank area of the Desktop to bring up a context menu that lets you autohide the shelf (the Chrome OS

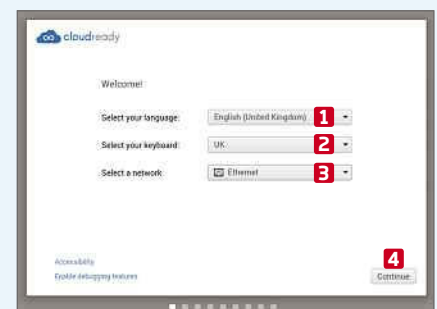
MINI WORKSHOP | Install CloudReady on your PC



1 Don't unzip the CloudReady download, because it might cause problems. Insert a blank USB flash drive (or one you don't mind losing the data on), open Chrome, then install and run the Chromebook Recovery Utility. Do not click the 'Get started' button. **1** Instead, click the gear icon **2** and choose 'Use local image'. **3**



2 Navigate to the saved file and select the media you want to use for the installation. **1** Make sure you select the correct drive. Click Continue **2** and confirm that the details on the next page are correct. Assuming they are, click 'Create now'. OK the UAC prompt that appears.



3 Creating a recovery image should only take a few minutes - don't unplug the USB drive during the process. When it's done, restart your PC and boot from the USB drive. The CloudReady installer will load. Set your language, **1** keyboard **2** and network, **3** then click Continue **4** to begin the installation process.

WebUser Bookstore

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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO WINDOWS 10

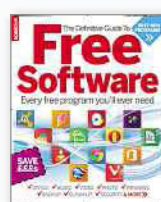
This 148-page book is the only guide you need to Microsoft's fantastic new operating system. You'll learn how to master all the new tools and software, and how to upgrade without losing anything. It has been updated to include fixes for problems that have appeared since Windows 10 launched.



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at bit.ly/guidetowindows10

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO FREE SOFTWARE

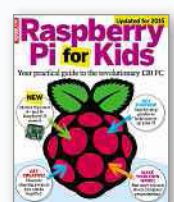
Free software can be a worry. Is it as good as a paid-for package? Will it sneak junk on to your PC? Does it nag you to update to a premium version? In our new 148-page book *The Definitive Guide to Free Software*, we recommend only the best free programs that deliver high-quality features and no nasty surprises.



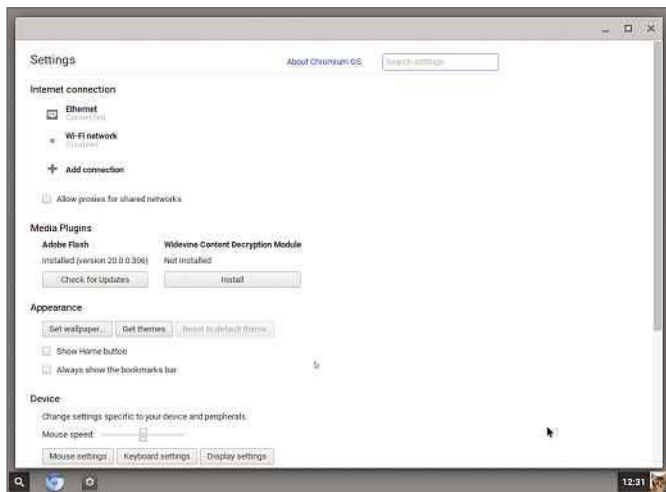
BUY IT NOW FROM AMAZON
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RASPBERRY PI FOR KIDS

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+).



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The Settings screen lets you configure the operating system and set up an internet connection

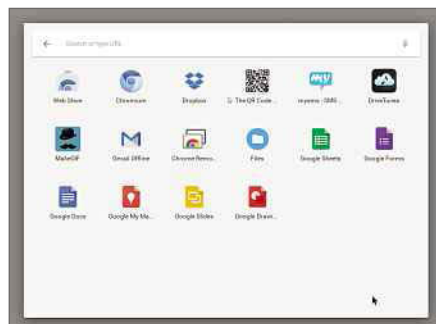
equivalent of the Windows taskbar) and change its position. By default, it sits at the bottom of the screen but it can be positioned on the left- or right-hand sides, which is useful for widescreen monitors.

Change the background

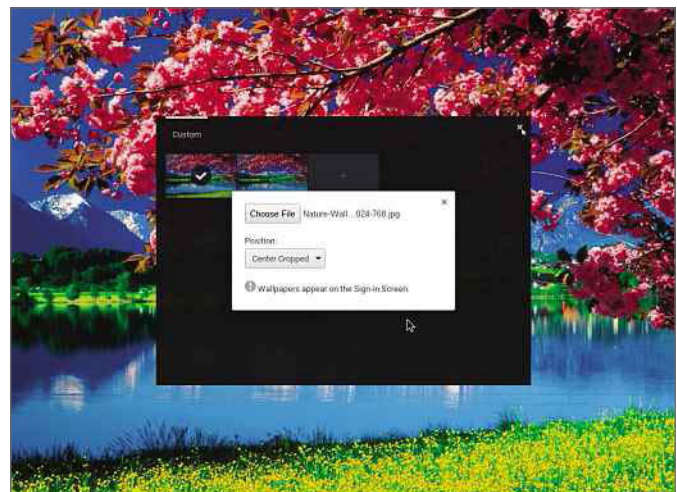
The dull, grey default background is one of the first things you'll want to change in Chrome OS. Browse the web until you find an image you'd like to use as Desktop wallpaper. You can also use a photo of your own if it's stored in Google Drive (you'll need to download the Google Drive app from the Web Store).

To change the background, right-click the Desktop and select Set Wallpaper. Click the plus symbol under Custom,

then Choose File and select the wallpaper to use from either Google Drive or Downloads. You can adjust the position of the image, which can be centred, cropped or stretched.



When you install new apps, they'll appear in the All Apps screen



You don't have to stick with the boring grey background. Find something more colourful instead

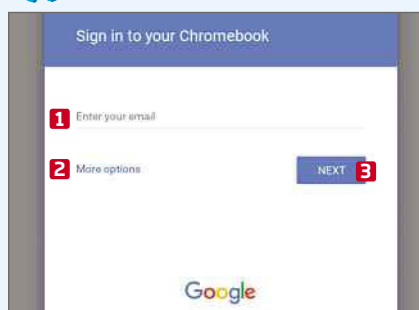
Install some apps

There are lots of apps to choose from, but we'd definitely recommend the following:

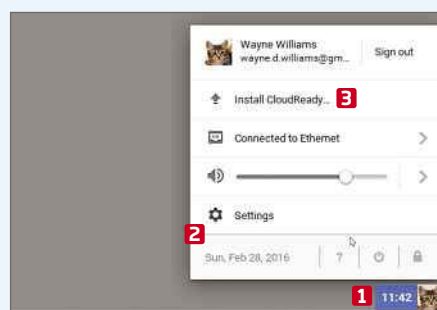
- **Google Drive** (bit.ly/gdrive393)
Store and access all your files through Google's cloud-storage service
- **VLC for Chrome OS** (bit.ly/vlc393)
An excellent media player that can handle any audio or video file
- **JSTorrent** (bit.ly/jsttorrent393)
A BitTorrent client that works very well on Chromebooks (or PCs pretending to be Chromebooks)
- **Evernote** (bit.ly/evernote393)
The popular note-taking app
- **Kindle Cloud Reader** (bit.ly/kindle393)
Read ebooks directly in the Chromium web browser. ■



MINI WORKSHOP | Get started with CloudReady



1 During installation, you'll need to agree to install Flash, then sign into your 'Chromebook' using your existing Google account. **1** If you don't have an account or want to create a new one to use with CloudReady, click 'More options' **2** and choose 'Create new account'. Click Next **3** and enter your password.



2 Choose a picture to use for your account and you'll be offered the chance to take a tour of your new device. All the apps can be accessed through the launcher in the bottom-right corner. **1** The System Tray **2** provides access to the settings, which is where you'll find the option to install CloudReady. **3**



3 Click the Install CloudReady button. You'll have the option of installing it as a standalone operating system **1** (which will completely erase anything on your hard drive) or as a dual boot alongside Windows. **2** If you select the latter, you'll be able to choose between loading Windows or CloudReady when you boot up.

NEXT ISSUE

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Web User's Top Tips

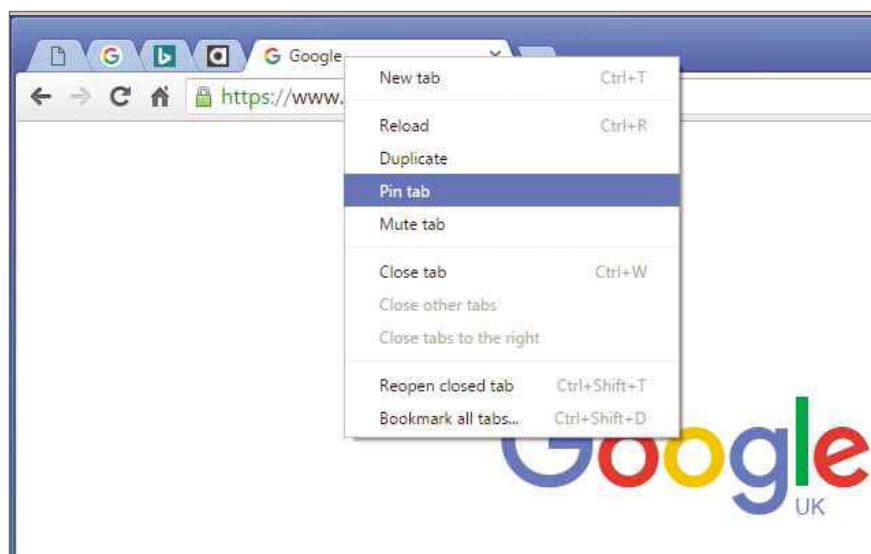
Our experts reveal their top tips for keeping your tabs tidy and organised in your web browser

TOP TIPS FOR TIDIER TABS

Shrink tabs and save them for future sessions




Tabs can take up a lot of space at the top of your browser window and they are all deleted when the browser is closed. However, you can shrink and save them, so they take up less space and reappear automatically in future sessions. Right-click a tab in Chrome or Firefox and select 'Pin tab'. This will shrink the tab to a fraction of its original size and move it to the left of any other tabs, displaying only the site's icon. Any number of sites can be pinned, but it's best to limit this to a small number of your favourites. Pinned tabs are saved when the browser is closed and they are automatically restored the next time it's opened, keeping your most used websites within easy reach. You can unpin tabs in the same way.



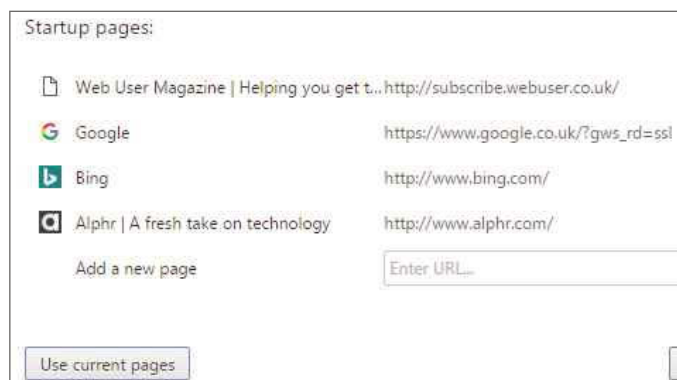
Pin tabs to shrink them and make them sticky, so they re-open next time

Start with tabs

 Browsers can open any number of tabs when they start and you can use this to instantly launch your favourite sites. In Chrome, for example, open the tabs you want, then click the menu button and choose Settings. In the 'On start-up' section, select 'Open a specific page or set of pages'. Click the 'Set pages' link and click the 'Use current pages' button.

Firefox works in a similar fashion. Open the tabs you want to see, click the menu button and choose Options. Select the General category on the left, then click the Use Current Pages button.

In Edge, click the menu button,



Click the 'Use current pages' button to start the browser with your favourite tabs open

choose Settings and, under 'Open with', select 'A specific page or pages'. Select Custom to display a box into which you can enter a URL. Click the plus button and enter the URL for the next tab and so on.

Another way to open tabs automatically is to continue your next browsing session from where you left off. Any tabs that are open when you close the browser will be opened the


next time the browser is started.

In Chrome, open the main menu, click Settings and, under 'On start-up', select 'Continue where you left off'.

In Firefox, go to the menu, Options, then General. Click

the box next to 'When Firefox starts' and select 'Show my windows and tabs from last time'.

Save groups of tabs

 Open several tabs that you frequently use, such as all the news sites you regularly visit. Right-click any tab and select 'Bookmark all tabs'. Enter a name for the bookmark folder and select the

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.



Bookmarks bar as the save location.

If the Bookmarks bar is not visible in Chrome, press Ctrl+Shift+B. In Firefox, go to the menu, Customize, then click the Show/Hide Toolbars button and select Bookmarks Toolbar.

Now, when you want to open your favourite websites, right-click the bookmark folder you created and select 'Open all bookmarks' (Chrome) or 'Open All in Tabs' (Firefox). Your favourite sites are all opened in new tabs.

View multiple tabs



Tabs are useful for browsing two or more websites or pages at the same time but you can't see them side by side when they're in the same browser window. Click and drag a tab out of the browser to open it in a separate window. Now position and resize the browser windows so you can see both.

Rearrange and reopen tabs



After opening several tabs, you might find that switching tabs is easier if the ones you're working with are next to each other. Click and drag a tab to the left or right to move it. Chrome lets you click and drag multiple tabs to rearrange them. Click the first tab, then hold down the Ctrl key as you click the others, then drag them to the new position in the tab bar.

If you close a tab and later realise you need it again, right-click any tab and select 'Reopen closed tab' (Chrome) or 'Undo close tab' (Firefox).

Silence noisy tabs



After opening several tabs, you might hear music or speech coming from your speakers, which means an ad, music clip or video is playing on one of the tabs. Look for a tab with a speaker icon, right-click it and select Mute or Mute Tab. The menu option changes to Unmute so you can switch it on again.

Use the custom Edge tab



Microsoft's latest browser has a unique New Tab page. It shows a collection of small tiles linking to websites and a news feed containing larger tiles with photos and news snippets. In the Top Feeds section, click Customise on the right. There are three options at the top and you can choose to show a blank page, a list of top sites or your top sites and news feed. There are six categories of news and each can be selected or deselected to determine which stories are shown. Choose your favourites.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Reduce tab memory usage



Is your computer running slowly? It could be because you have too many tabs open in Chrome. The latest version is more efficient than previous ones but it can still use a lot of memory and processing power. Go to the menu and select 'More tools', then 'Task manager'. A window opens that lists the tabs and extensions, along with the CPU usage, network usage and memory. If the values are high, close any tabs you're not using to free up memory and reduce the processor's workload.

Task	Memory	CPU	Network	Process ID
Browser	86,864K	1	516 B/s	11560
Extension...	40,248K	0	0	2068
Tab: Tips3...	92,320K	0	0	2908
GPU Proc...	17,284K	0	N/A	5876
Extension...	15,512K	0	0	7768
Extension...	8,280K	0	0	10976
Tab: "Wor...	129,300K	0	577 B/s	11428
Tab: Tips3...	58,008K	0	0	14024

Use Task manager to check the memory and CPU usage of Chrome tabs

Firefox tab groups



Firefox currently has the ability to save tabs as groups but this is going to be removed from the next version – it might have already gone by the time you read this. To replace the option, use a free add-on called Tab Groups (bit.ly/ffgps393). Install the add-on, open some tabs and click the new Tab Groups button to the right of the last tab. All the tabs are closed and placed into a group, with thumbnail images of the tabs.

What's clever about this add-on

is that you can click and drag a tab out of a group and use it to create a new tab group. So, if you have 10 tabs open, you can click the Tab Groups button, then click and drag one or more tabs to create a new group. Now you can switch from one set of tabs to another by clicking the Tab

Groups button and clicking a tab thumbnail in the tab group you want to open.

To name a tab group, click near the pencil in the top-left corner of a tab group. Click the cross in the top-right corner of a tab thumbnail to delete it from the group or click the group cross to delete a group of tabs.

Manage Chrome tabs



There are two problems with having lots of tabs open in a browser: one is that the tab shrinks with each new tab until the titles are

too small to be read and you can't tell what's on them; the other is that tabs use up the PC's memory and overburden the processor. You can sometimes hear the fan blowing, desperately trying to keep the PC cool.

There is a Chrome add-on that's great for managing lots of tabs in your browser. Download TooManyTabs (bit.ly/ctabs393) and an icon is added to the right of the toolbar. Click it to display

your open tabs as thumbnail images. This makes it easier to see the content of each tab.

A small yellow arrow in the top-right corner of each tab suspends it, which releases the memory and processing power it was using. With more memory and processor power, your PC will run faster and quieter. Suspended tabs are closed and moved to the panel on the right. If you want to access a suspended tab, click it in the list on the right to open it in a new tab. Just click the tab to select it.



TooManyTabs lets you easily browse and suspend tabs

Ask the Expert

Roland Waddilove, computer programmer and PC journalist since 1981, answers all your technical questions. Email us for help at webuser@dennis.co.uk



HARDWARE

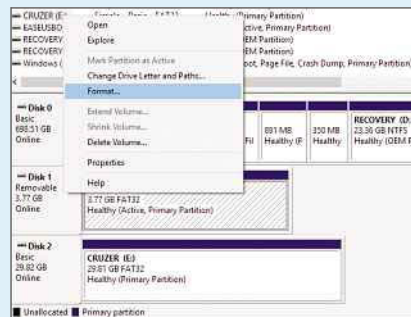
Invisible USB stick

Q I was given a USB memory stick by a friend but, when I plug it into the computer and open an Explorer window, I can't see it. Should it not appear automatically?

T Harris, via email

A The drive could be faulty, or it may just be partitioned and formatted incorrectly. Open Explorer, right-click This PC or Computer and select Manage on the menu. Select Disk Management under Storage. Drives sometimes appear here even if they don't appear in Explorer.

If you can see it, right-click the drive and select Delete Volume if the menu option is available. Right-click it and select New Simple Volume, if available. Keep clicking the Next button in the wizard to accept all the



Right-click a USB drive and delete the volume or format it to get it working

defaults, except for the step where you have the opportunity to change the volume label. It can be useful to give the drive a descriptive name.

If none of these options are available, right-click the drive and select Format. Accept the default settings and click OK. This can sometimes get a seemingly dead USB drive working again.

top-right corner and enter the username and password you use to log into Windows. You'll be given access to the PC's hard drive and you can copy files from one computer to the other. This option is faster than syncing via an online service.

GENERAL PC

Get a new Admin password

Q My wife has an HP G62 PC with Windows 7, on which she is the administrator and I am a standard user. A few days ago, she logged off in the usual way but the next time she attempted to log on with her usual password, the PC responded with "The User Profile Service failed the logon. User profile cannot be loaded."

Although she can no longer log into her account, I can still log into mine. She is the administrator, but she can't now use her administrator password. Is there any way she can reset it?

This problem may be due to Windows prompting her to update to Windows 10, which may have been preparing itself in the background. I say this because suddenly the PC cannot activate our printer via Wi-Fi and we have had to reinstall the printer driver.

James Chu, via email

A There isn't a simple way to access the computer without a password and security systems try their best to prevent it, but it is possible if you have the original Windows 7 DVD. It's complicated, but here goes.

Start the computer or restart Windows with the DVD in the drive. You might see a message asking if you want to boot from the disc. Press a key to do so. Select the language and, immediately after this, ignore the Install button at the top and click 'Repair your computer' at the bottom. Select 'Use recovery tools...' and click Next. Click 'Command prompt'. In the command prompt window, type `regedit` to load the Registry Editor.

On the left, select HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE, then go to the File menu and select Load Hive. In the Open window,

HARDWARE

PC to Mac transfer

Q I have some music, photos and video files on my old Windows PC and would like to transfer them to my new MacBook. Is this possible?

Julian King, via email

A Yes, it is possible and there are several ways to do it. Macs can read USB memory sticks, which are usually supplied formatted so they can be read on both PCs and Macs. Just plug one into a USB socket on the PC and use Explorer to drag your Pictures, Documents, Music and Videos folders to it. Now plug it into your Mac and use Finder (the equivalent of Explorer) to drag the files to the Mac's hard drive. The MacBook Pro and Air have standard USB sockets, but the MacBook does not. This will need a USB-C to USB adapter from Apple (£15, bit.ly/usbc393) to plug in a standard USB device.

Another option is to use Microsoft OneDrive (onedrive.live.com), Google Drive (drive.google.com) or Dropbox

(www.dropbox.com), all of which are available for both PC and Mac. Any file placed in the shared folder on one computer automatically appears a few seconds later in the shared folder on the other. The first sync could take a long time if you have gigabytes of files but thereafter it's very quick.

A Mac can also connect directly to a PC using the Wi-Fi network in your home. With the latest Macs and OS X, Windows PCs appear in the sidebar in Finder windows. Click the PC's name under Shared, click Connect in the



If you're on the same network, you can access a PC from your Mac's Finder



click Computer on the left, double-click the hard drive (it may be labelled D: instead of the usual C:), and go to the \Windows\system32\config folder. Select the 'sam' file and load it. You are asked for a name and any will do, such as 'xyz'. In the left pane go to:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\xyz\SAM\Domains\Account\Users\000001F4

Double-click the F Registry entry on the right, look down the first column of numbers and find 0038. The number to the right is 11. Click it and change it to 10. Click OK, then quit the Registry Editor. Type **exit** into the command prompt window and restart the computer.

At the welcome screen, you can now log into a new account called Administrator. Click it to log in. As an administrator, you can go to the Control Panel, select the small icons view, click User Accounts, then Manage another account. Select your old account, click 'Change your password' and enter a new password. You can then restart Windows and log in with your old account and the new password.

This leaves the PC in an insecure state, so you must repeat the procedure and change the 0038 number 10 back to 11 so that the Administrator account is hidden again.

VIDEO

Copy TV to DVD

Q I have a Lenovo laptop and I want to copy an episode of *Endeavour* to a DVD. I have tried downloading it into the file manager but I can't play it from there and it won't burn to a DVD.

John Arthur Lister, via email

A Episodes of *Endeavour* can be watched on the ITV Hub (www.itv.com) in a browser on your computer, or by using the app on a tablet or phone. It can also be bought and watched using iTunes on your computer, iPhone or iPad. But you can't save it to a DVD.

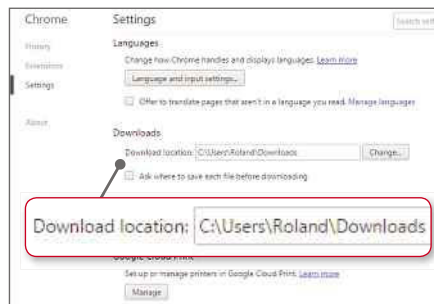
GENERAL PC

Track down lost downloads

Q When I download files from the internet, the Downloads folder remains empty. I think the files are being saved to a temporary folder, but where is this?

Harry Trotman, via email

A Web browsers can be configured to save downloads to any folder on your hard drive but, by default, they save them to Downloads in your



Select the folder to save downloads to in Chrome settings and Firefox options

personal folder (C:\Users\YourName). Let's make sure future downloads are saved to the right place. In Chrome, go to the menu button and click Settings. Click the 'Show advanced settings' link at the bottom and scroll down to the Downloads section. If it's not set to C:\Users\YourName\Downloads, click the Change button and select it.

In Firefox, click the menu button, then choose Options. In the General section under Downloads is the 'Save files to' option. It should simply say Downloads so if it doesn't, click the Browse button and select it. In Internet Explorer, click the gear, 'Internet options', select the Advanced tab and click Reset.

To find your previous downloads, open an Explorer window. Click in the path box at the top and type %temp%,

then press Enter. The folder displayed is the main temporary files folder. Your downloads might be there but it's possible that they are in another temporary folder. There's one at C:\Windows\Temp and you can sometimes find one in the root drive C:\. Check them all.

ANDROID

Get photos from your phone

Q I have been transferring photos from my Android phone to my computer by plugging it into a USB socket and running Explorer. I can open the phone like a drive and drag the photos to the computer's hard drive. Is this the only way to do it or is there a better way?

Paul Davies, via email

A You don't need cables or Explorer to transfer photos, just an online service such as OneDrive (onedrive.live.com), Google Drive (drive.google.com) or Dropbox (www.dropbox.com). Install the app on your phone from the Google Play Store. In the app's settings, choose to sync your photos and store them online. Install the app on the computer (OneDrive is already built into Windows 8 and 10) and photos appear in the synced folder on the hard drive seconds after you take them.

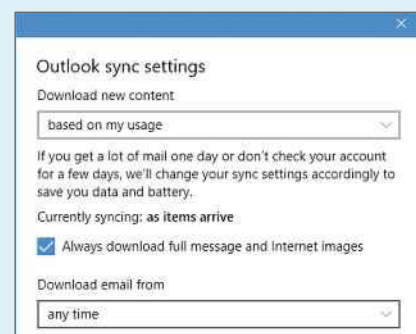
EMAIL

Mail app mystery

Q I followed your instructions in Issue 390 (bit.ly/webuser390) and added my AOL account to my Outlook mail account. However, I seem to only receive 10 new emails at a time from my AOL Account when using the Mail app. When I receive a new email, the last email I had is removed and the new one takes its place. Can I increase the number of AOL emails I can store in Mail? Also, can I change the name shown in the From box when I send messages?

Darren, via email

A The Mail app in Windows 10 is a lightweight tool for keeping up to date with the latest messages, but it's more limited than the Outlook.com website, which is accessed through a browser. The default settings only show the most recent emails. To change this, Open the Mail app, right-click your account on the left and select 'Account settings'. Click



Under 'Download email from', select a time period or choose any time

'Change mailbox sync settings' and, under 'Download email from', select 'any time'. This syncs your account and fetches all the emails that are available. This could take a long time if there are a lot of messages.

When an email account is added to the Mail app, it asks for a name to use in the From field. This appears to be your only chance to enter it and it cannot be changed afterwards. If you have multiple accounts in Mail, select the account you want before clicking the button to create a new message.



This fortnight Roland has been checking that none of the devices connected to his router belong to his neighbours

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



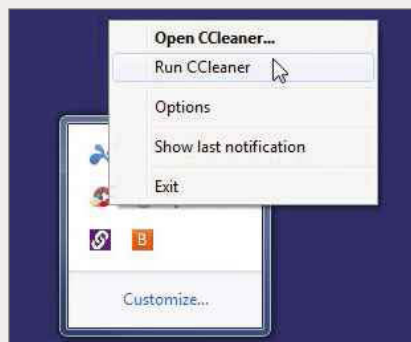
TOP TIP

SOFTWARE

Speed up CCleaner cleanup

Did you know that if you install CCleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner), you can run the application's main cleaning tool without even opening it? To do this, open the Start menu, locate CCleaner and open its jump list. From this menu, select Run CCleaner and it'll clear your temporary files and Recycle Bin in the background. If you've set CCleaner to launch on startup, you can also find its icon in the notification area, which you can right-click to select Run CCleaner.

Bedstor, Web User Forums



You can run CCleaner by right-clicking its icon in the notification area

Mug winner



Squeeze more from your battery. Adjust the saver settings to switch on sooner

activate when the level is 50% or higher instead of 20%, so you can enjoy its benefits sooner.

Dave Bass, via email

LINUX

A faster, lighter Linux

One of my favourite bits of kit is my Asus Eee PC 900, which has 2GB of memory, a 32GB SSD as the boot drive and a 802.11n Edimax Wi-Fi dongle. Over the years, I've tried nearly all the eligible Linux versions with varying success. I found Zorin (zorinos.com) and Linux Mint Cinnamon (www.linuxmint.com) the best by far.

However, while I found Linux Mint worked very well, I was still concerned that the operating temperature of my netbook was a little higher than I'd like, so I looked for a new version of Linux with a smaller operating footprint. After trying several others, I found LXLE (www.lxle.net), which is apparently an

optimised adaptation of Lubuntu (lubuntu.net). So far, I've found it very impressive and the netbook is running fast and cool, despite having lots of apps installed. The layout also looks good. I would recommend it to other readers who want to give an older PC a new lease of life.

Paul Haldenby, via email

GENERAL PC

Make your battery last longer

I never take my laptop anywhere; I just use it at home on the sofa or carry it from room to room, wherever is most convenient. Windows 10 has a battery-saver mode, which comes on automatically when the battery is low. However, I use it whether the battery is running low or not, because it makes my battery last longer. Just click the battery button in the notification area to bring up a little battery panel. You'll see a switch that you can turn on at any time.

If you like this idea, you can customise the settings so it automatically activates, even if your battery isn't running low. Click the Start button, choose Settings, click System, then 'Battery saver'. Click the 'Battery saver settings' link and drag the slider to a higher value. For example, you could set the battery saver to



LXLE is a light version of Linux that will run well even on an older PC

BROWSERS

Close tabs quickly in Chrome

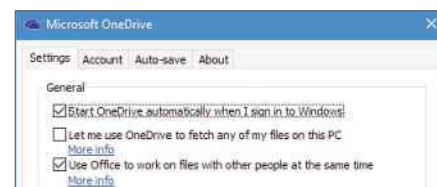
I was impressed by Madeline's tip in issue 392 about closing tabs in Firefox and Pale Moon from the right-click menu and wanted to see if I could get this option on Chrome. I searched for 'close tab' on the Chrome Web Store and there are many available extensions that do this kind of thing, including Close Tabs (bit.ly/closetabs393). Alternatively, there is a native keyboard shortcut that you can consider: to close the current tab in Chrome, simply press Ctrl+W.

FratPark, via email

GENERAL PC

Turn off OneDrive

I like OneDrive in Windows 10 and use it to store and share files but, the other day, someone asked me how to stop it from running because they didn't use it. It's actually very easy. Click the little arrow at the right of the taskbar to show the hidden icons. Right-click the



Configure OneDrive by right-clicking it and going to Settings



OneDrive icon (it looks like a cloud) and click Settings. On the General tab, there is an option to 'Start OneDrive automatically when I sign into Windows'. Clear the tick next to it.

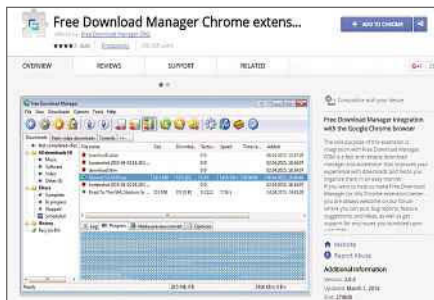
Alan Sherwood, via email

BROWSERS

Use Free Download Manager in Chrome

I recently had problems getting Free Download Manager (FDM, www.freownloadmanager.org) to work in Chrome. I tried various things to fix the problem but in the end the solution was very simple. I visited the Chrome Web Store, searched for 'download manager' and installed the FDM browser extension (bit.ly/fdm393). A few hours later, when I wanted to download some software, FDM popped up to aid the process. The add-on also works with Opera.

FratPark and Madeline, Web User Forums



The Free Download Manager add-on integrates the software with Chrome

WEBSITES

Try Apple's online office tools

I've noticed that most people are aware of Google Drive and its online office tools (Docs, Sheets and Slides) and Microsoft's office apps at OneDrive (Word, Excel and PowerPoint). However, not a lot of people know about Apple's online office suite. If you use iTunes on your PC, or own an iPad, iPhone or Mac, you have an Apple ID. You can go to www.icloud.com and sign in with your username and password.

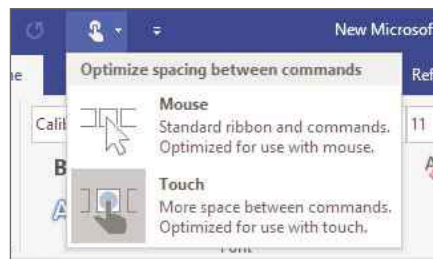
There are lots of applications at iCloud, including a word processor (Pages), a spreadsheet (Numbers) and a presentation tool (Keynote). I use them a lot and prefer them to Google and Microsoft's online apps. Few people I talk to seem to be aware of them, though.

Andrew Hales, via email

SOFTWARE

Spaced-out Word icons

If you use Microsoft Word and find the icons, menus and ribbon toolbar difficult to read because it's too densely packed, you can make everything bigger and more spaced out. Click the last button in



Choose your interface in Word: Mouse (compact) or Touch (expanded)

the Quick Access toolbar in the top-left corner and select Touch/Mouse Mode. This adds a new icon to the Quick Access toolbar. Click it for two options: Mouse and Touch. Select Touch and the icons become bigger, the menus have more space and the ribbon-bar icons are more spaced out, bigger and easier to read.

Helen Daley, via email

GENERAL PC

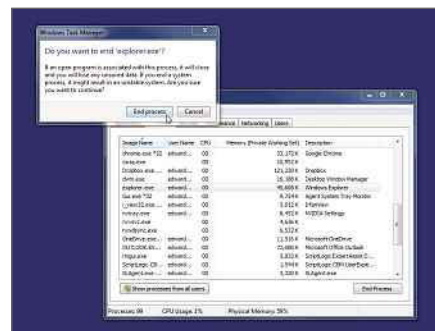
Restart Windows Explorer

Yesterday, I was trying to delete a file on my Desktop when I became caught in a repeating cycle of error messages. I was about to restart my PC when I suddenly remembered that it's possible to close and relaunch Windows Explorer without shutting down your computer.

Press Ctrl+Shift+Escape to open Task Manager, open the Processes tab and then end the explorer.exe process. Next, select File and 'New Task (Run...)' and type explorer.exe into the box before clicking OK. In a few seconds, Windows Explorer should load without any of the problems you were experiencing before.

If you're worried that ending the process suddenly could cause problems, you can hold down Control+Shift, then right-click an empty section of the taskbar and choose 'Exit Explorer'.

Bill Tandy, via email



You can stop Windows Explorer from Task Manager

SOFTWARE

Find out why your PC keeps crashing

Last week, my PC kept crashing without warning, displaying a variety of different error messages on a blue screen. I had no

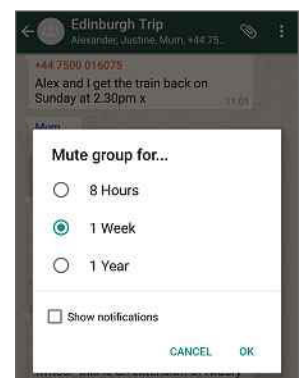
idea what was causing the problem even after searching for the errors on Google, so I decided to uninstall a few programs I'd recently downloaded to see if that would make a difference. Unfortunately, the crashes continued, so I spoke to a friend who recommended WhoCrashed (bit.ly/who393), which analyses 'crash dumps' to tell you what might be causing the problem. The program told me that the culprit was likely to be a dodgy driver rather than a hardware fault, so I uninstalled a recently installed driver and have had no problems since.

Barney, via email

ANDROID

Silence WhatsApp group chat notifications

I have a good tip for anyone who has ever used WhatsApp (www.whatsapp.com) for group chats. Sometimes, if you are part of a group with a lot of participants, you will receive what seems like an endless stream of notifications, one for each new message that's sent. Thankfully, there are a few easy ways you can stop these constant distractions. To simply mute the conversation that's bothering you, open the chat, tap the menu button and select Mute. You'll see an option that lets you mute the conversation for 8 hours, 1 week or 1 year, and you can also untick 'Show notifications'.



You can set the length of time to mute a group chat

If you don't mind notifications appearing in the notification tray but you still want to stop the app from constantly making sounds and vibrating, tap the app's menu button, then choose Settings and Notifications. From this menu, set the 'Notification tone' for 'Group notifications' to Silent and set Vibrate to Off. Alternatively, if you never use WhatsApp for urgent matters, you can just turn off notifications altogether. To do this, open the Android Settings menu, select 'Sounds and notifications', then 'App notifications'. From here, scroll down to WhatsApp, select it and choose 'Block notifications'.

Whatever method you decide to use, just remember you'll need to manually open the app to check your chats for new messages.

Ed Wright, via email



Readers' Helpdesk

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

TABLET

Microsoft Surface or iPad?

Q Should I buy an iPad or a Microsoft Surface?
Joe_London, Web User Forums

A I would lean toward the Surface, but mainly because I don't much like Apple and its walled garden of apps. I know Microsoft has also moved in that direction but I can still install just about anything I want on Windows 10, including media-server applications such as Kodi and Plex. A number of my friends have iPads and while they are fine for using within Apple's confines of simple inputs and outputs, they often wonder why my Android tablet can do everything their iPad can and more, for much less cash.

When faced with a similar decision a while ago, I opted for a Lenovo Yoga (bit.ly/yoga393) with an 11.6in screen. For me, the Yoga was just as portable but the bigger screen was better for my old eyes. It's also much more practical thanks to its 500GB hard drive and 4GB of memory. Indeed, its two USB ports, HDMI socket and full-size SD card slot mean it works like a PC when I need it to.

Which device you choose will depend almost entirely on how you intend to use it so, if you can, test each one hands-on to get a better idea of what they're like.

jak, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Why does my PC always run an error check on startup?

Q Every time I start up my PC it goes straight to an error check, even though I haven't set it to do this. How can I stop this happening?

Amason51, Web User Forums

A When the PC boots to Windows after the error check, click Start, type `eventvwr` and press Enter. When Event Viewer opens, expand Windows Logs, click Application, Action and Find, and type either `chkdsk` or `wininit` before pressing Enter. Next, cancel the Find box

MOBILE

Can I get an external keyboard for my phone?

Q I really struggle with typing on my smartphone so I'm interested in buying an external mobile keyboard, having recently found a range of them online. I imagine you probably get what you pay for but can anyone with some experience of using such things offer me some advice before I buy? It doesn't have to be wireless, if that's more expensive.

Iain006, Web User Forums

A Using an external keyboard will usually mean the loss of predictive text but I believe that the benefit of being able to type properly will outweigh that loss, especially if you find typing on a phone so bad that you want to ditch it completely. There is a bewildering array of keyboards to buy but I agree that it's likely to be a case of you get what you pay for. I have



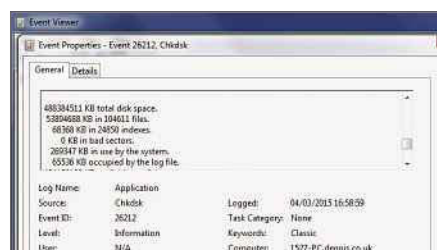
You can buy Bluetooth keyboards that work with Android and iOS smartphones

used a foldable eSYNiC model (www.esynic.com, available from Amazon for £22.95 at bit.ly/keyboard393), which has been successful for me in the past. Although it's not the cheapest, it should last longer than your phone, and it connects wirelessly via Bluetooth. Note that when you use an external keyboard, the on-screen version might still appear unless you minimise it.

TheTechGuy, Web User Forums

and read the report in the scrollable window. Look to see if it has repaired anything and, more importantly, if it finds any bad sectors. If all is clear, run a command prompt as an administrator (by clicking Start, typing `cmd` and then right-clicking it and selecting 'Run as administrator'). At the prompt, to confirm the volume is clean, type `fsutil dirty query c:`. If it says it is 'NOT Dirty', enter `chkntfs /x c:` followed by `shutdown /r /t 00`. Now boot your PC again to see if error check has stopped running.

Cantrel, Web User Forums



Event viewer shows if the error-checking process has repaired any problems

MUSIC

How do I make my music tracks play at equal volume?

Q I have used MediaHuman Audio Converter (www.mediahuman.com) to convert MP3s to WAV files, but the tracks come out at different volumes – some are quieter than others. Can somebody advise me on another program I might use?

jedcop, Web User Forums

A I'm not sure there's any point in converting an MP3 to a WAV file, because you won't get back the quality and detail that the MP3 compression removed. You're better off just ripping from CD to a WAV file if you still have the discs. To create an even volume across all audio tracks, you need to use a normaliser. Some audio-conversion software has this built in but, if not, try using MP3Gain (bit.ly/mp3gain393).

succulent95 and Dave_1, Web User Forums



Star Email

Malwarebytes shouldn't hide its free version

When I read the Star Email in Issue 392 (bit.ly/webuser392) 'Doubts about the free version of Malwarebytes', my initial reaction was: "What does he expect from a free version of a program"? As most people know, the free version of Malwarebytes Anti-Malware is basically a scanner with no 'real time' protection – it only removes 'nasties' after they've installed on your PC.

Then I went to Malwarebytes' revamped website (www.malwarebytes.org), which was reviewed in the same issue. I have to say I don't share *Web User's* enthusiasm for its 'new look'. Very smart but very unimpressive – almost uninformative.

Nowhere does it mention that a free version is available, and no comparison is given between the paid-for and free

versions. At the end of the page, you can click Buy or 'Get a free trial'. Alternatively, if you manage to get that far, you can actually click Free Download, then on the following page click Download Free Version, if that's what you want and you've realised that such a thing is actually available. This is all fine if you know what you're looking for, but it seems very much geared to getting you to pay for the Premium version.

Any company that has paid-for versions of its programs, rather than those that rely on ads or donations, should make its free versions more obvious. A lot of people will decide to pay to get the added features of the Premium version anyway following the free trial, but the available options should be clearly



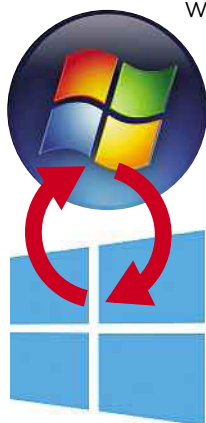
outlined so that everyone can make an informed choice.

I like Malwarebytes Anti-Malware and I'll continue to use it, but I don't like the company's new website. My apologies to the writer of the Star Email for my immediate reaction to his criticism if he saw the new site as I did.

Madeline, Web User Forums

Why I've switched back to Windows 7

I recently moved back to Windows 7 because I've had a lot of problems with Windows 10 over the last six months. It does make me wonder what I'll do when I have no option but to return to



Windows 10. Will that version of Windows 10 be any better? I'm guessing probably not.

I'm an artist and developer and have been using Windows since the beginning, as well as as Mac and Linux, too. Over the years, it always seemed that each Windows version – even Vista, which I actually didn't dislike – showed some degree of progress.

With the passing of time, people forget why things are the way they are and simply rush to embrace anything new, however poor it may be. Microsoft's design for Windows 10 was for the sake of convergence – that is, to make one thing fit all devices – and it has, in my opinion, gone terribly wrong. Windows 10 was launched to a

massive fanfare. The Start Menu has returned! Hooray! But we've also retained the App Store, with apps that nobody really wants or needs. Which apps did I end up using on a regular basis? Apps that were already available through my browser, such as BBC News and The Weather Channel. This left a lot of empty space, which made the Start Menu look stupid. Maybe if I scout around the App Store I could find something to fill it with? Or maybe I'll fill it with the

bloatware apps that Microsoft has given me, that I can't actually remove!

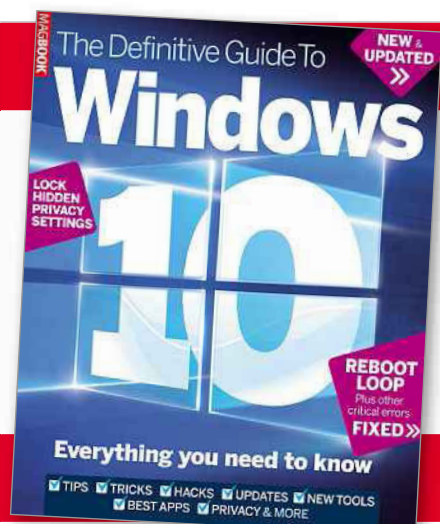
I downloaded and installed Windows 10 with an open mind. I expected a few glitches and imperfections. But Microsoft is trying to make me like something that doesn't work that well, and the implication is that I should be really grateful because it's free, albeit with advertising and poor privacy. That's why I've switched back to Windows 7.

JayH, Web User Forums

ON SALE NOW!

The
Definitive
Guide To
Windows 10

BUY IT NOW FROM AMAZON
at bit.ly/guidetowindows10



You can let us know your views and opinions via:
webuser@dennis.co.uk, www.facebook.com/webusermagazine,
www.twitter.com/webusermagazine and forum.webuser.co.uk

Don't stream music, savour it

I beg to differ with your advice, 'Don't store music, stream it' (Web User's Top Tips, Issue 391, bit.ly/webuser391). Get rid of all 6,000 tracks on my hard drive? Some of which are very rare and hard to find, especially now that most of the artists I listen to are long since dead?

No, you numps, I don't mean David Bowie (who I do have some tracks by), but most of The Band are dead, Roy Orbison is dead and Bo Diddley is dead. Etta James had to die to become famous and her fame was only boosted when one of her songs was used in an advert. Most *Web User* readers will not have heard of these artists or The Allman Brothers, Randy Bachman, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Muddy Waters, Waylon Jennings, Bobby Fuller, Bob Seger, Conway Twitty and many more. This music takes up about 10GB on my hard drive, which is nothing to worry about. If need be, I will transfer these songs and many others to a portable device.



Stream what? Millions of tracks, you say, but what of? Kids' music, rap and Goth. I wonder how much other music, except for the latest songs, these services actually stream. They do not cater for anyone over 30, do they? Spotify has the right name, for little spotties who watch the *X Factor* and *The Voice*. These listeners go by boyband looks, not talent.

Reactionary? No. I want music of my choice, not what these companies wish to throw at me. So do not make such a broad statement about streaming, which does not suit everyone. Such an attitude speaks to me of someone who does not savour music, but just has it on in the background, so that any pop stuff will do.

Martin Fletcher, Thorpe Hesley



TalkTalk should suffer for its data disaster

I would like to say well done to Barry Collins for his column in Issue 391, 'No wonder 95,000 have abandoned TalkTalk' and the debacle surrounding that company. Fortunately, I have never been a TalkTalk customer because, purely based on rumour, I have never considered them to be a good network to be with.

It really does annoy me how companies like TalkTalk seem to act with impunity, and that the British public does not 'slap' them hard enough. TalkTalk should suffer for the massive data breach and it should suffer for a long time. Having said that, such a breach could happen to any company, anywhere. I am glad that the British public has woken up to smite the giant at last and, hopefully, customers will continue to bring these companies to account.

Andre Odogwum, via email

We deserve better than BT's broadband

I disagree with Barry's column in Issue 384, 'Why BT needs a boot up the backside'. I think that another non-profit company should run the BT Openreach network like the railways and Network Rail. They should be installing fibre



cables from their exchanges to everyone's premises (FTTP), so that everyone can have superfast broadband. I do not see why we should rely on Virgin and others to provide us with a decent

service at speeds above 24Mbps because most websites these days have videos on them that rely on very fast internet connection speeds. If other countries such as Japan can cover 70% of their country, why can't we?

Joshua Welby, via email

What's the big deal with Sky Q?

I read your FAQ article in Issue 391 about the new Sky Q service and was surprised to discover that after paying as much as £299 for a Sky Q box, it's not actually mine but is 'loaned' to me.

I'm struggling with this concept. Under what consumer law is Sky allowed to operate this scheme? You pay up to £299 for the box – which, I suspect, is not any kind of 'deal price' – and yet it's not yours! Does that mean Sky will refund you if you terminate your contract? I doubt that! Does it mean we no longer have to pay Domestic & General £100 per year just in case anything goes wrong with the box? I doubt that, too! I hope Curry's don't follow the example, so that when you buy a TV from them you find a little note on your receipt saying it is only on loan to you!

So what are you left with? The ability to walk from one room to another and carry on watching the programme and being able to download a film onto your tablet. Big deal!

Ron O'Brien, Luton



In praise of speedy SSDs

Thanks for Issue 389's Weekend Project (bit.ly/webuser389) about replacing your standard hard drive with a solid-state drive (SSD).

I took the plunge and ordered one and today I have installed the drive and placed a fresh copy of Windows 10 on it. I have enclosed an image of the SSD I purchased, which has replaced my original 1TB drive. This is now an external hard drive running from USB for all my



non-essential files. The speed of the new drive is blistering. Windows 10 installed in minutes, and now boots in less than five seconds.

Thanks a lot for writing the article and let's hope that Web User readers

who aren't that confident about replacing hardware will be spurred on to have a go. Honestly, once you've done this upgrade you'll look back and think to yourself: "Well, that was easy!"

Simon Mellor, via email

What a load of pollocks

Regarding your review of the Good Fish Guide app (bit.ly/fish392) in Issue 392. Good Cod! Salmon I haddock coronary when we red (mullet) all those puns.

David Provis, via email



Stop moaning and get unlimited data

People amaze me on a daily basis. It is 2016 and yet people still have capped data usage. Be it with their broadband or mobile data, I hear people moan about the BT homepage eating their data and complain about having no free Wi-Fi so they can't use their phones.

Please tell your readers that you can get unlimited broadband and

mobile data – yes this brand new idea of unlimited (I know it's crazy!).

Three Mobile gives you unlimited data not only here in the UK but all over the world. I don't know of

any broadband providers that don't offer unlimited deals. So come on folks, wise up: what good is 20GB of mobile data or 40GB of broadband? Just go unlimited!

Stan Elliott, Belfast



What you say...

ARE YOU ANNOYED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO CLOSE THE iPLAYER LICENCE-FEE LOOPHOLE (bit.ly/iplayer393)?

No, it sounds like a good idea. We pay a licence fee to watch TV. I don't see why anyone who watches a program one hour later can claim they don't need to pay.

David Batty

Yes. We pay enough tax as it is. The money will be wasted.

Jack @imthegoldmaster

No! If something is worth watching, pay for it. Less than 40p per day per household. Bargain.

Jenny Jacks @JenJacks3

No. The programs still cost money to produce, however they are watched. Netflix and Amazon charge, why not the BBC?

Steve Ellis @gb022621

SHOULD BRITONS LIVING ABROAD BE ALLOWED TO VOTE USING SKYPE (bit.ly/skype393)?

Absolutely not. If you don't live in a country, you don't get to choose its government.

Matt Hawkins @MattScript

Not for the military - they already have a system in place that works. But UK citizens temporarily living abroad could benefit from a secure Skype voting solution.

Richard Bond

If you've left the country then, in my opinion, you lose the right to decide.

Si Mellor

No. When you leave the country you leave behind any rights to have a say.

Joanne Evans

THE LATEST FIGURES SAY 22% OF BRITS USE AD BLOCKERS (bit.ly/adblockers393). DO YOU?

Yes, Adblock Plus (adblockplus.org) in Chrome. I wouldn't be without it now.

Chris Cole

Adblock Plus. I also don't have any ads on any of the six websites I run (to do otherwise would be hypocritical).

Dave McAlister @dpmcalister

I have always used Adblock Plus in Firefox, but I am now trying Edge. The only problem is you can't use add-ons.

Jason 'Boz' Bowyer

If I cannot choose to block ads in a browser, then I don't use the browser. That's why I use Firefox with Adblock Plus.

Dean Stockton

RAY TOMLINSON, INVENTOR OF EMAIL, HAS DIED (bit.ly/email393). CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST EMAIL?

Yes. I set up a Hotmail account in my school IT class and emailed my dad. Felt pretty exclusive in 1996.

Janne Virtanen @JanneVirtanen81

I can indeed – it was so exciting! It said 'Testing, testing'. It was with AOL (aka 'A Oh Hell').

Gary Olsen @Gary_Olsen

My first email was to my friend next door thanking him for showing me how to send an email! It was sent using Hotmail.

Colin Wallace

Yes, in 1994. the only people I would have known with email were fellow students and lecturers, so I probably said the dog had eaten my homework.

Martin Brindley @martinbrindley

! Page 404



Is data stored on Apple devices retrievable or not? **Barry Collins** wants to know

Does Apple hold the key to our data?

Can the police read the data stored on your iPhone if they don't have your security passcode? In the words of Bjork: possibly maybe.

Apple, as I'm sure you've noticed, has been in a spot of bother with the US government for refusing to help the FBI break into customers' iPhones. The case centres on the iPhone of terrorist Syed Rizwan Farook, who police shot dead before they had the chance to interrogate him for his iPhone password. Now the FBI wants access to his phone data so it can attempt to trace his known associates, but they need Apple's help to break past the phone's security.

Data stored on Apple handsets is encrypted. If you don't have the correct passcode, all you can read is gibberish – instead of getting the number for the IS hotline, all you get is the equivalent of a Piers Morgan column. What's more, if certain security settings are enabled, the phone is set to wipe itself after 10 failed passcode attempts, which makes that data completely irrecoverable.

Having failed to find a way past Apple's encryption, the FBI used an arcane piece of legislation – written 60 years before the invention of the telephone, let alone the iPhone – to demand that Apple intervene. But Apple had seen such situations coming, and in 2014 redesigned iOS so that it didn't have the technical capability of recovering its own customers' data, thus avoiding such ethical dilemmas.

At least, that's what we were told. "If

“Can't do is very different to won't do, even if there is good reason for Apple's belligerence”



the government laid a subpoena to get iMessages, we can't provide it," Tim Cook said in a television interview with PBS in 2014. "It's encrypted and we don't have a key. And so it's sort of – the door is closed." And indeed, to this very day, Apple's website claims: "We can't unlock your device for anyone because you hold the key – your unique password."

Now it appears Apple wasn't giving us the full picture. The FBI basically wants Apple to create a new version of iOS that it can install solely on Farook's phone, allowing them to access the encrypted data. In an FAQ published on its site to explain

why it rebuffed the FBI's approach, Apple admits "it is certainly possible to create an entirely new operating system to undermine our security features as the government wants.

But it's something we believe is too dangerous to do."

Can't do is very different to won't do, even if there is good reason for Apple's belligerence. Cook argues that building a new version of iOS that can bypass Apple's security is the "equivalent of a master key, capable of opening hundreds of millions of locks". Compromise one iPhone and you potentially compromise them all, because hackers will be busting blood vessels to get their hands on that "master key" and no organisation – be it the FBI or Apple – is completely safe from attack.

At the time of writing, it appears the US courts are siding with Apple, ruling that the company cannot be forced to write a new version of iOS based on laws written in 1789. But if Apple wants to regain customers' trust in 2016, perhaps it should rewrite iOS to create an operating system that puts personal data beyond the reach of security forces once and for all.

Illustration: Andrew Torrens

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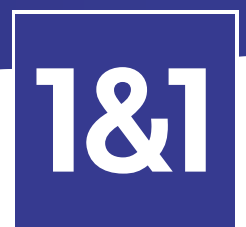
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