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x Find & Remove...

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**Why Your Anti-Virus Is
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Always run this software too p56



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Beat unfair download restrictions

One of the less lavatorial definitions of 'download' on Urban Dictionary (I won't link to the site – it can get a little blue) is: "A term used by computer-illiterate people to describe every action they do on the computer, for example *I downloaded a report to my boss*". Now, I'm sure *Web User* readers know what download means, but that makes it all the more frustrating when your downloading is obstructed by an irritating barrier. Perhaps a video you want to download is "not available in this country" or a favourite program has been replaced by an inferior version.

In this issue's cover feature (page 38), we explain how to get around the most common download restrictions, be they geographical, functional or just plain unreasonable, so you can get anything you want from the web for free and never have your downloads blocked again.

Thanks to everyone who has emailed me their anagrams for 'Windows Ten'. We'll print our favourites in the next issue.

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



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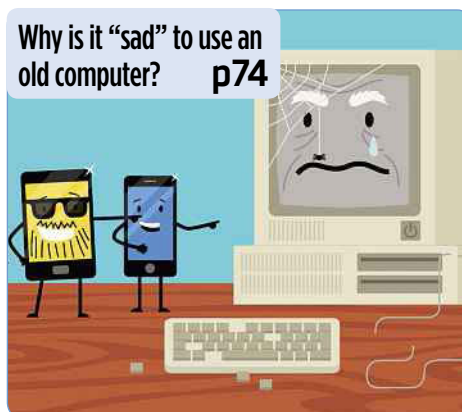
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A DENNIS PUBLICATION

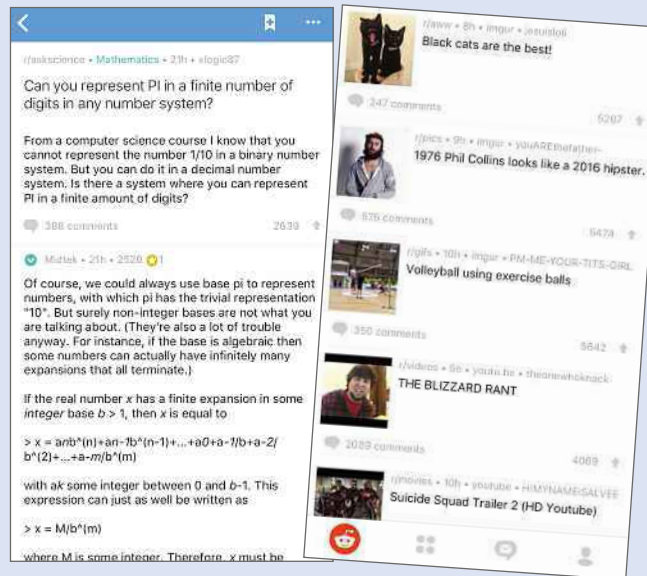
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What's New Online

Download Reddit's new mobile apps

Reddit continues to be a controversial and yet hugely influential social media site. Images, videos and stories posted by its users regularly form the basis of stories in the national press, which means Reddit's boast of being "the front page of the internet" has more than a grain of truth to it. Now, with new apps for iOS and Android, it has the potential to be your first port of call on mobile phones.

This is the first time Reddit has released its own apps, having bought a third-party app called Alien Blue in 2014. The new offerings split the content into four sections. There's the timeline, where you can preview articles via the homepage cards, and subscriptions, which let



you delve into the Reddit communities – or subreddits. A handy 'speed read' button lets you jump from comment to comment with ease. When you press and hold this button in iOS, you can

move it to wherever you find it's easiest to use – a brilliant design feature that we'd love to see more often.

There is also an inbox for private messages and replies to comments, and a tab for your profile. As you'd expect, the apps retain the search, comment and 'upvoting' features associated with the service, and if you're a moderator, you can also customise the subreddits to alter their look and feel.

As well as launching the app, Reddit has improved its anti-bullying measures with a broad but private Block User feature. This will prevent annoying and unpleasant people making contact with you and hide their activities from your view. bit.ly/reddit395

Listen to descriptions of Facebook photos

facebook.com/accessibility

The millions of photos that are shared every day on social media can't be enjoyed by people who are severely visually impaired or blind. Until now, that is, because Facebook accessibility specialist Matt King has been working on object-recognition technology that automatically describes images for those who can't see them.

Called automatic alternative text, the system – which is based on an advanced neural network and deep learning

– lets people who use screen readers hear a summarised list of items contained in a photo. It's currently iOS-only but Facebook says it will reach other platforms soon.



Swap people's faces using Project Murphy

www.projectmurphy.net

Microsoft continues to experiment with machine learning and intelligence capabilities. Last year, we loved its clever age-predictor, which scans a picture of your face to reveal the awful truth. Now there's a new experimental bot in town called Murphy and he has an even neater party trick – the ability to swap and combine faces.

Murphy works his magic through Skype, and draws on the power of Bing to answer your pressing hypothetical questions by combining images. Ask "what if Boris Johnson was Donald Trump", for example, and you get a disturbing visual mash-up of the two personalities. You can also experiment on yourself and your friends, ask "What if I were a superhero?" or try to become a well-known star. Murphy can be slow – typing the same question twice results in a plea for patience – but he's a lot of fun.



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

Relive your Facebook memories

www.lifeislife.xyz

Life In Review lets you relive memorable moments by creating a collage of your Facebook statuses and photos, and presenting years of posts that flow down from the top of the screen. It was designed as an art project, and it's akin to seeing your recent life flash before your eyes. If your ego is solid, you can share the results, too.



Privately share tweets more easily

twitter.com

The latest update to Twitter on Android and iOS adds a simpler way to share tweets privately. Next to the 'heart' icon alongside tweets in your

feed, you will now see an envelope or Message button. Tapping this lets you select the person you want to send the tweet to and add a comment. You can

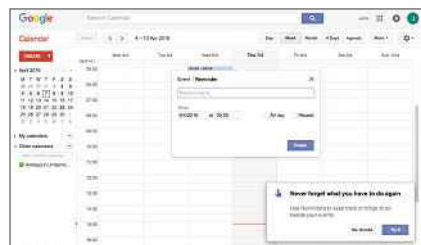
share a tweet with an entire group too. Twitter says it's the next step towards making direct-message conversations "richer".



Add reminders to Google Calendar

calendar.google.com/calendar

Back in December, Google added reminders to Google Calendar on Android and iOS, and the feature is now available in the web version, too. Right-click a slot on your calendar, tap the Reminder option, then specify a time and day, and whether you want to repeat the prompt. The feature is better than tying a piece of string around your finger because it keeps reminders at the top of your calendar until you've completed the task and syncs with your mobile calendar. Any reminders you add to Google Keep and Inbox also appear here.



Stream PS4 games to your PC

bit.ly/stream395

Sony is clearly thinking outside the box when it comes to gaming on the PlayStation 4. The console's latest update - which is codenamed Musashi - is setting its games free by allowing gamers to enjoy Remote Play on a PC or Mac, and avoid arguments about hogging the television. You can play streamed games using a DualShock 4 controller



connected to your computer using the USB cable.

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This account for the band has already been slammed by Morrissey

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

We all need to know things - but what about the unimportant stuff tweeted here?

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A host of amazing pictures from history appear in your Twitter feed

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The big day at Wembley is almost upon us, so follow who will be there next month

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

Get the latest news about the biggest tax scandal for years before everyone else

+ Spot the ISS

spotthestation.nasa.gov

The International Space Station is the third brightest object in the sky but unless you know where to look, you'll strain your neck trying to see it. This NASA tool tells you the best time to gaze up from your location.

Help fix a library's transcriptions

bit.ly/nyp1395

The New York Public Library's Community Oral History Project has been collecting stories of the city's past, but the transcripts are not entirely accurate. It's asking the internet to help crowd-fix them.

Write like William Shakespeare

bit.ly/shake395

Download ShakeSpeak - the new limited-edition keyboard by SwiftKey - and you'll be writing like the Bard in no time. Its predictive text feature draws on verses pulled from Shakespeare's plays.

Need to Know

Yahoo could be sold to the Daily Mail

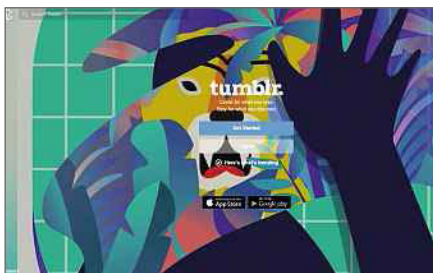
What happened?

Troubled tech firm Yahoo may finally have found a buyer: the owner of the *Daily Mail* newspaper, known as the Daily Mail and General Trust or DMGT.

Yahoo has been on and off the market ever since a failed deal with Microsoft in 2008, which was worth \$45 billion. That later evolved into a search partnership between the two. A few years later, Yahoo landed a new CEO, Marissa Mayer. She tried to reverse the fortunes of the ailing company, which has struggled to stay relevant in the modern age of the web, but in February, Mayer announced that it was cutting 15% of Yahoo's global workforce.

Now Yahoo is back on the market and soliciting bids. The company has a current market value of \$38 billion. One potential buyer is DMGT, which has confirmed that it's been in discussions about making a bid for Yahoo, alongside other interested parties. That could mean DMGT takes Yahoo's news sites, splitting the rest of its sites and services with a private equity firm. Alternatively, DMGT could sell off other parts of the company, in effect dismantling the once-mighty web giant.

The *Daily Mail*'s parent company isn't the only bidder, of course. US mobile operator Verizon said it plans to make a first-round bid for Yahoo's online businesses, while Google's parent firm Alphabet is believed to be considering a bid for Yahoo's core businesses, such as its search and advertising. Magazine publisher Time Inc is also believed to be planning a bid,



Despite Yahoo's financial woes, sites such as Tumblr are still very popular with users

and private equity funds are looking at picking up a few pieces, as are CBS and ad giant InterActiveCorp. Microsoft has said it won't make an offer but, not surprisingly, rumours suggest otherwise.

All we do know is that Yahoo will soon look very different.

How will it affect you?

It's impossible to say exactly how a takeover will affect users of Yahoo's various divisions, which include its webmail service, Flickr photo-sharing site and Tumblr blogging platform. Whatever happens to those sites depends on the buyer or buyers.

If Yahoo is bought by the *Daily Mail*, its news properties could take on a tabloid bent, although the newspaper already has a strong presence in the US and so needn't mimic it completely. The other sites may be spun out or held separately, or DMGT could hang onto them to try to gain a younger audience from the popular blogging site Tumblr.

If a tech firm such as Verizon or Google were to make a bid, the outcome could be quite different. Google could try to roll Flickr and Yahoo Mail into its own services, for example, although competition regulators and users may well protest.



Users of Yahoo's various sites needn't panic. Flickr and Tumblr were both independent before Yahoo bought them out, and both have a large number of users, so they're unlikely to be shut down any time soon.

What do we think?

We'll be watching this story very closely. Yahoo may be seen as a bit of a joke among the web savvy, but its Mail service alone still has hundreds of millions of users, and a billion people visit its sites monthly. It has, of course, fallen behind Google and even Microsoft's Bing, but its various sites are still worth something – and we don't mean only to bidders such as the *Daily Mail* but to the communities that use them. Flickr is home to photo groups that are a decade or more old, while Tumblr is the origin of many of the memes and stories that go viral across the rest of the web.

The Yahoo brand may feel tired, but its myriad sites are important to the internet. Even if Yahoo turns into little more than a new tabloid news service, here's hoping that Flickr, Tumblr and the rest get the love they deserve, with their new owners putting in the investment to keep them running for years to come.

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

WhatsApp turns on end-to-end security

What happened?

The Facebook-owned messaging service WhatsApp was the latest tech company to take extra steps to protect privacy by activating end-to-end encryption for its billion users.

The messaging service will now encrypt all messages and attached files that are sent between users on its network, regardless of the type of device they use. WhatsApp has been offering encryption as an option since 2014, but this is the first time the company has implemented such protection for all users automatically.

How will it affect you?

If you use WhatsApp, encryption will be turned on by default the next time the app is updated. By the time you read this, you're already likely to be using the encrypted version of the service. There's nothing you need to do

to benefit from this extra layer of security. It's worth noting, however, that if you back up your messages to Google or your iPhone, those messages will no longer be encrypted, because you will have moved them outside WhatsApp's own system.

The encryption means that not even WhatsApp can read your messages, and so can't pass your personal communications on to spies or the police. However, the messaging company still keeps track of the names and numbers of the people you're messaging, so it's not completely private.

What do we think?

There's been a lot of talk about encryption recently, because the authorities in the UK and US want to prevent criminals and terrorists using it, while the rest of us rely on it to provide security against surveillance and online crime. WhatsApp is clearly siding with its users, as it should. Whether you're a whistleblower or you're just talking to a friend about something personal, privacy should be a human right. Well done to WhatsApp for offering such protection to everyone, and making it truly mainstream and easy to use.



Microsoft halts Flash in its Edge browser

What happened?

Microsoft became the latest browser maker to block Flash, meaning that it will no longer allow Adobe's troubled ad and

animation plugin to play content automatically.

Edge is the successor to Microsoft's Internet Explorer, and its latest update – dubbed the Windows 10 Anniversary Update – will give users greater control over how Flash plays – or doesn't play – in the browser.

Edge will automatically pause Flash content that's "not central" to the web page you're viewing, Microsoft said. So, for example, Flash ads won't be displayed, but a Flash game you're playing will still work.

Chrome and Firefox have taken similar measures against Flash, and with good reason. Flash has been criticised for making pages load slowly and draining the batteries of mobile devices. What's more, Adobe had to issue yet another emergency patch recently to prevent hackers using the player to attack users (see story on page 12).

How will it affect you?

If you use Edge, you may find that you have to click



play to see Flash ads or animations. This should help your pages load more quickly, and will hopefully prevent crashes, but if you need Flash for a specific application, you can still use it.

Microsoft's aim is to move away from Flash, which is a wise move for everyone. Modern browsers let you turn Flash off or uninstall it completely, and most content has alternative players that work without any further intervention – or major security flaws.

What do we think?

This is great news from Microsoft because it will make browsing easier, faster and safer for Edge users, while helping us move away from Flash without breaking everything on the web. The fact that Chrome, Firefox and now Edge all pause Flash content by default should discourage advertisers and developers from using it in the first place. The sooner that shift happens, the better for everyone.

Tesco lets shoppers buy groceries using IFTTT

What happened?

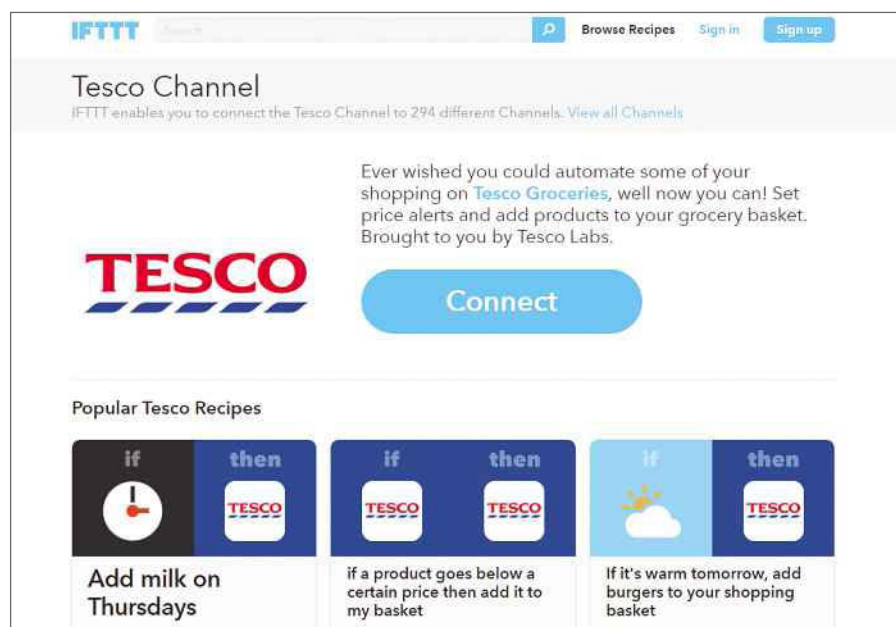
For most of us, grocery shopping is something of an inexact science. A Tesco 'Buy One Get One Free' promotion on asparagus has a knack of appealing to people's emotions, no matter how they actually feel about asparagus. Likewise, if the weather's nice, barbecue food is suddenly more appealing, but having some to hand at the right time requires planning.

Tesco has come up with a way to take the chance out of your online grocery order by harnessing the power of IFTTT (ifttt.com), or If This Then That, to give its full title. The basic premise of IFTTT is that it lets you link separate functions on your phone or tablet, so for example you could set it to send an email automatically to your partner when you leave the office, or make your lights change colour when it's raining.

Now Tesco has opened an IFTTT channel that lets you change your online grocery list automatically based on factors that your devices detect. The channel currently integrates with email, weather reports, Twitter and Evernote, as well as the rather obscure Wink Egg Minder – an 'Internet of Things' device that keeps an eye on your eggs.

How will it affect you?

So what does this mean in a real-world scenario? Let's say you like smoked



salmon, but it's an expensive treat that you can't justify buying every week. Tesco's IFTTT channel will add it to your basket automatically, but only when its price drops to below a certain level of your choosing. Or you could get the IFTTT channel to add burgers to your basket when it detects that the weather will be perfect for a barbecue the next day, or buy you a treat as a reward for going to the gym. Or maybe your Wink Egg Minder is worried that you're dangerously

low on protein, so it's probably best to add a dozen to the basket.

What do we think?

Whether or not Tesco customers embrace the service, it's impressive to see a huge company like Tesco taking a chance on a relatively new web technology such as IFTTT. The channel certainly saves a lot of manual clicking when you're compiling your weekly shop. And who knows – maybe we'll see an increase in Wink Egg Minder sales?



FIRST LOOK

Huawei P9 and P9 Plus bit.ly/p9huawei395

Huawei is taking no prisoners with its latest pair of flagship Android phones – the 5.2in Huawei P9 and its big brother, the 5.5in Huawei P9 Plus. You'd expect nothing less than gorgeously crafted metal and glass on a flagship phone today, and the P9 and P9 Plus don't disappoint. Both have full aluminium bodies, fronted with a layer of glass that curves gently towards the edges, and Huawei claims that each is a dainty 6.95mm thick. On the front, the P9 has a 5.2in Full HD display, while the P9 Plus ups the screen size to 5.5in, swaps the P9's IPS panel for a Super AMOLED one and adds Huawei's own take on Apple's pressure-sensitive 3D Touch technology.

Battery life promises to be pretty special, too. The P9 has a 3,000mAh battery, while the P9 Plus contains a larger 3,400mAh power pack. Huawei claims up to a day and half of battery life for the P9. Both phones have USB-C ports for charging and data transfer and support up to 128GB of storage expansion via micro SD card. Huawei's octa-core Kirin 955 processor takes centre stage in both handsets, but while the P9 pairs this with 3GB of RAM, the P9 Plus boosts this to 4GB of RAM. The result is a very, very fast phone.



The big news is that each model has two cameras on the back, both 'endorsed' by Leica. The P9 lashes together a pair of 12-megapixel cameras – a colour sensor and a dedicated black-and-white sensor. Unlike other phones with twin cameras, however, these work in tandem to produce a more refined image with better contrast. Huawei is confident that the P9 will appear in shops later this month, and prices are looking pretty reasonable. The P9 will cost £449 SIM-free and the P9 Plus £549, including VAT.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Apple killing off the iPad Air?

Suspicions of a new addition to Apple's iPad range were confirmed at the company's keynote event in March, when it unveiled a 9.7in iPad Pro, but the device's debut also suggested the passing of the iPad Air range. By making one of the iPad Pros a 9.7in device, Apple has raised questions about what it hopes to achieve with its tablets now that sales are falling. Forbes says Apple's target market for the product is a peculiar niche – the firm is aiming squarely at the 200 million people who have already bought a 9.7in iPad, as well as 600 million PC users who have computers that are more than five years old (see Barry's column on page 74).

The new iPad Pro packs all the power and functions of the larger 12.9in model into a device that's a more typical size for an iPad. It's equipped with the 64-bit A9X chip, as well as a 2,048x1,536-pixel retina display, 12-megapixel iSight camera with LED flash and 4K video-recording abilities, a five-megapixel front-facing FaceTime camera and a quad-speaker system. It also comes with the same accessories as the 12.9in version. A smaller Smart Keyboard has been developed that connects via the



Smart Connector, and the stylus-friendly pressure-sensitive display can be used with the Apple Pencil.

LIKELIHOOD RATING



According to one source, it's now 'certain' that we won't see an iPad Air 3, as Apple 'doubles down on the iPad Pro range', and we can't help but see this as the right decision. With the 9.7in iPad Pro available from £499, there's no place for another iPad Air unless it goes on sale at a much lower price.



WEBOMETER



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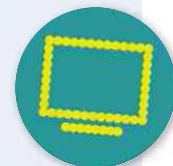
Barclays joins Apple Pay

Nine months after its launch, Apple Pay is available to Barclays customers, who can now pay for items using their iPhone, Apple Watch or iPad at over 400,000 contactless points across the UK.



EE app lets you record TV

The most recent update to EE TV lets you save programmes from all free broadcast channels to your phone or tablet as soon as they've aired. 'Recordings To Go' imposes no content restrictions, so you can download anything, including movies and football highlights.



WE DON'T LIKE...



Netflix hikes up prices for US customers

Netflix's price freeze for original customers ends next month, meaning its standard HD subscription will cost \$9.99 instead of \$7.99. Similar price rises are expected to hit UK customers, too.



Vodafone complaints doubled in the past year

Ofcom's latest figures show that 32 complaints were made about the mobile network operator for every 100,000 customers during the last three months of 2015. Vodafone said the increase was the result of problems with a new billing system.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Opto

bit.ly/opto395 | From £50

Portable virtual-reality headsets are everywhere this year, but Opto claims to be the first to offer built-in audio. Remove its front cover, slip your phone into the device and you can enjoy immersive photos, videos and games wherever you go, including apps designed for Google Cardboard and online content from YouTube 360. Opto is lightweight and comfortable, with extra-large lenses, and will be available in three colours. The team hopes to raise £40,000 by 29 April.





Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Adobe fixes Windows 10's ransomware flaw

Adobe has rushed out a patch for a zero-day vulnerability in Flash that left Windows 10 users at risk of ransomware, saying the flaw is being 'actively exploited'. "Adobe has released security updates for Adobe Flash Player for Windows, Macintosh, Linux and Chrome OS," the company said in a security bulletin. "These updates address critical vulnerabilities that could potentially allow an attacker to take control of the affected system."

It advised anyone without automatic updates to install the patch manually. Paul Ducklin, a security analyst at Sophos, explained in a blog post why the vulnerability was so dangerous. "The bug allows an attacker to send booby-trapped content to your browser's Flash plugin in such a way that your



browser will not only crash but also hand over control to the attacker," he said. bit.ly/adobe395

Millions of Firefox users face new attack

Firefox extensions are exposing millions of users to a new bug capable of stealing sensitive data, it has been claimed. An attacker can create a malicious add-on for Mozilla's web browser, which can then disguise its nature by forcing a legitimate, existing add-on to do its dirty work for it, according to Ars Technica. The flaw, dubbed an 'extension reuse vulnerability' by the researchers at the Black Hat security conference in Singapore, can do this because Mozilla has not isolated add-ons in its browser. The bug can exploit vulnerabilities in other add-ons a user has enabled, and route its attacks through them instead. These buggy add-ons include NoScript, Video DownloadHelper, FlashGot and



Firebug, the researchers wrote in their paper.

bit.ly/addons395

National Childbirth Trust loses parents' data

The data of more than 15,000 new and expecting parents was compromised after a hack on the National Childbirth Trust (NCT). Details including the email addresses, usernames and encrypted versions of the 15,085 users' registration passwords were accessed, a spokesman for the trust confirmed.



No financial or personal details were part of the leak, however, said the UK's largest charity for new and expectant parents. The trust contacted all affected users after discovering the hack, advising them to change their usernames and passwords following the breach.

bit.ly/leak395

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Aleks Gostev, Chief Security Expert at Kaspersky Lab
(www.kaspersky.co.uk)



Q Is encryption the best way to keep our messages private (see news story on page 9)?
Nicholas Courtney, via email

A There has always been a tension between the individual's right to data

privacy and wider security concerns. This is unlikely to change, although the priority may shift depending on the political or security context.

The important thing is to strike the right balance. As the recent news shows, the debate about encryption is a heated one.

Can anyone doubt that ensuring products are secure makes the world safer? I don't think so. And we can applaud the efforts of Apple and WhatsApp to protect their users' privacy by introducing end-to-end encryption in their instant-messaging services.

Their actions mean email is now the most insecure form of digital communication. Free email services transmit messages across networks in

“Free email services transmit messages in plain text and users have no guarantee that their data is stored safely”

plain text, which is easy to read if intercepted, and users have no guarantee that their data is stored safely.

End-to-end encryption prevents attacks in which a malicious actor intercepts a message between the user and a server. But that level of protection is rarely provided.

Having email encrypted by default is hard. Tools and plugins are available, but you need some knowledge to install and

use encrypted mail properly, and most internet users don't have such skills.

Email is the communication method most in need of encryption, and the sooner it happens, the better. The solution must come from the top email software developers, such as Microsoft. WhatsApp got it right by encrypting everything for one billion users in one go. Now it's email's turn.



3G/4G
hotspot



Beamforming
technology



Downloads &
multimedia hub

Synology Router RT1900ac



Manage and setup your Synology router
with our DS router app available on
Android or iOS devices.

Making your network smarter and faster

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

★ Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

ROYALTY

NEW

The Royal Family

www.royal.uk

The Royal family's old site was rather dull, but this marvellous new one is far more engaging. Instead of droning on about constitutional roles, it uses photos, videos and social media to put a friendly face on the Royals. There are plenty of smiles (even from Princess Anne) and shots of Royals looking delighted to meet the public. The modern, mobile-friendly layout makes the content easy to dip into, and each family member has a page presenting details of their life and work in a visual, interactive way. There's interesting info about royal residences and collections, history and traditions, and much more. Full marks, Ma'am.

Our rating



HISTORY

Delve into centuries of history and traditions, including swan upping



PROFILES

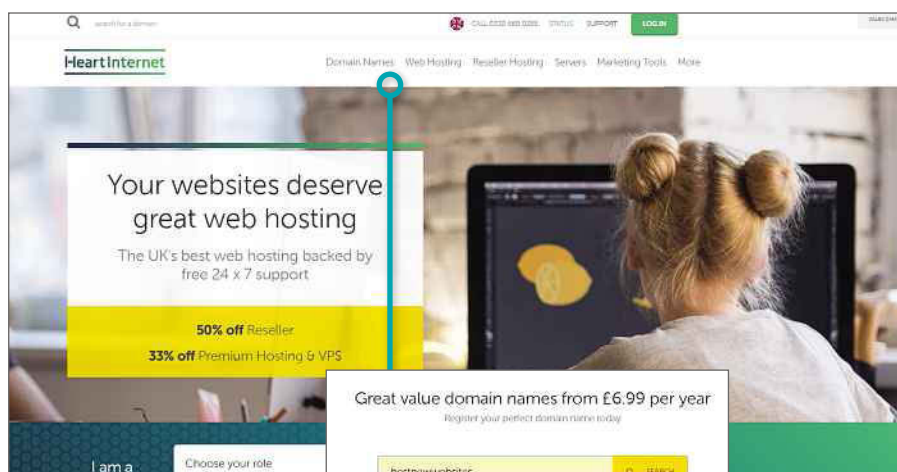
Browse photos, videos, news stories, tweets and facts about each Royal



The Prince of Wales's website

View >

“Prince Philip and I have been deeply shocked and saddened by the loss of life and injuries after the terrorist attack in Brussels.”



WEB HOSTING

Heart Internet

www.heartinternet.uk

It's all change at Heart Internet, with a new website that focuses on helping customers find the perfect web-hosting package quickly. Two handy drop-down menus on the home page let you specify your role – be it personal user, blogger, web designer or business – and your goal, such as creating your own site, selling online or showcasing your work. This simple approach is complemented by clearer pricing information and details of why you should choose Heart Internet, which include speed, reliability and 24/7 UK-based support. We're pleased that the company has retained its excellent blog, and the site feels faster, fresher and friendlier.

Our rating



NEW

TECHNOLOGY

Huawei

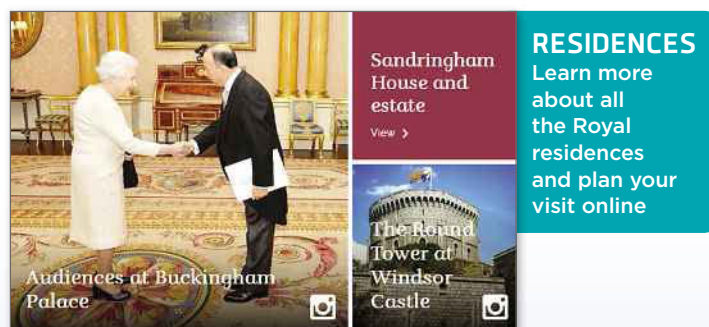
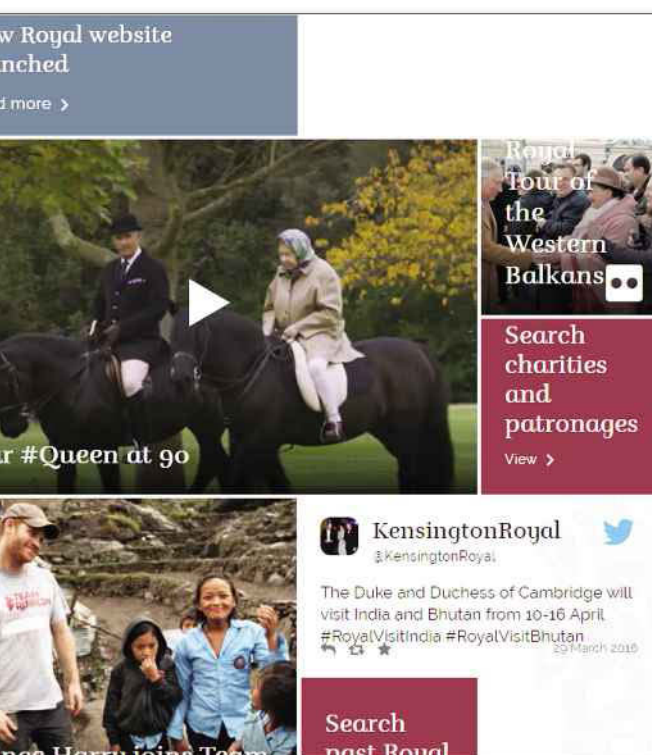
bit.ly/huawei395

The Huawei P9 and P9 Plus are the most hyped phones of the year so far (see our First Look on page 10), and the Chinese company has updated its website to promote them. Not surprisingly, it features actors Scarlett Johansson and Henry 'Superman' Cavill, who appear in the ad campaign, but even they can't equal the gorgeousness of the phones – at least judging by the photos and videos here. There are also tantalising descriptions of the phones' features and the capabilities of their built-in dual Leica cameras, but you can't pre-order online yet.

Our rating



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



RESIDENCES

Learn more about all the Royal residences and plan your visit online

SOCIAL

The site offers lots of social-media content, including Flickr and Instagram photos



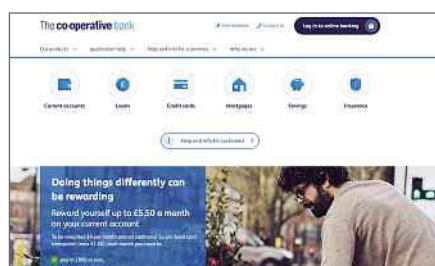
TECHNOLOGY

Reichelt

www.reichelt.com

This UK arm of the German electronics retailer is taking on the likes of Maplin by offering many products for 20% less than you'll find elsewhere. Reichelt caters to both business and 'private' customers and the site's crowded design belies its wholesaler origins, with the emphasis on packing as much as possible into each page. Still, you can't argue with the massive range, which takes in all manner of components, batteries, measuring devices, computing accessories and much more. Prices are low, too, although the ordering process could be smoother, and delivery starts at a steep £5.95.

Our rating



BANKING

The Co-operative Bank

www.co-operativebank.co.uk

The Co-operative Bank is living up to its aim to be "an alternative to the UK's big banks" with this much-improved website that works well on any device. Its bold design puts the focus firmly on simplicity, presenting details of current accounts, loans, mortgages and other products in a concise manner that makes the options easy to compare. The streamlined menus make for smoother navigation and the button to log into online banking is hard to miss. We're not sure why the branch locator is tucked away at the foot of the page, but otherwise the site looks great.

Our rating



SPORT

British Swimming

www.britishswimming.org

Water fantastic site this is from British Swimming, which tells you everything you need to know about the teams across all five aquatic disciplines. Against huge, high-quality photos of pools and swimming action, you'll find in-depth athlete profiles that include personal stats, news stories and social-media content. You can buy tickets for future events, and view rankings, records and results from past ones. We particularly liked the Performance section, which reveals how the athletes train to achieve Olympic and Paralympic success, in case you're tempted to hit the pool yourself.

Our rating



Q How can I perform a clean install of Windows 10 without losing any files?

A Page 58, Issue 378



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Issues Disc from bit.ly/webusercd**




RELAUNCH

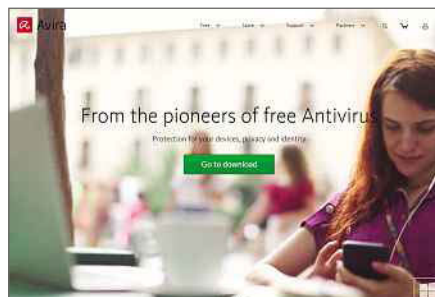
NEWS

The Telegraph

www.telegraph.co.uk

Website redesigns usually affect the homepage first, then spread to other sections, but *The Telegraph* has taken the opposite approach and its revamp, which started last autumn, has only now reached the front page. It's certainly an improvement, with larger photos, fewer headlines, streamlined navigation and a layout that resizes to fit any screen. Columnists are more prominent on the homepage, along with a constantly updated feed of the latest news and a list of the most-read articles. However, it's a shame the site has decided to drop user comments (other than reader letters), as they led to lively debates in the past.

Our rating


RELAUNCH

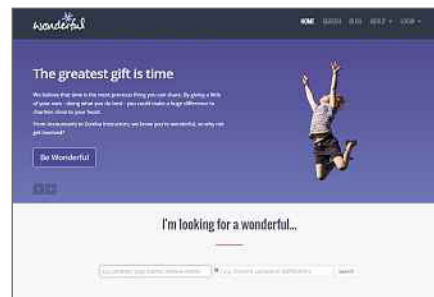
SECURITY

Avira

www.avira.com

This new site for the security-software company recognises that most visitors won't hang around for long and simply want an overview of its products and clear Download buttons. That's not to say Avira skimps on detail: all the info you need is here, from a comparison of its free and paid-for antivirus software to independent reviews and rankings. You can also learn more about Avira's Phantom VPN and new browser, Scout, which offers enhanced security and privacy. Existing users can browse the Support section for help and threat updates, and a live ticker shows the number of Avira installations worldwide.

Our rating


NEW

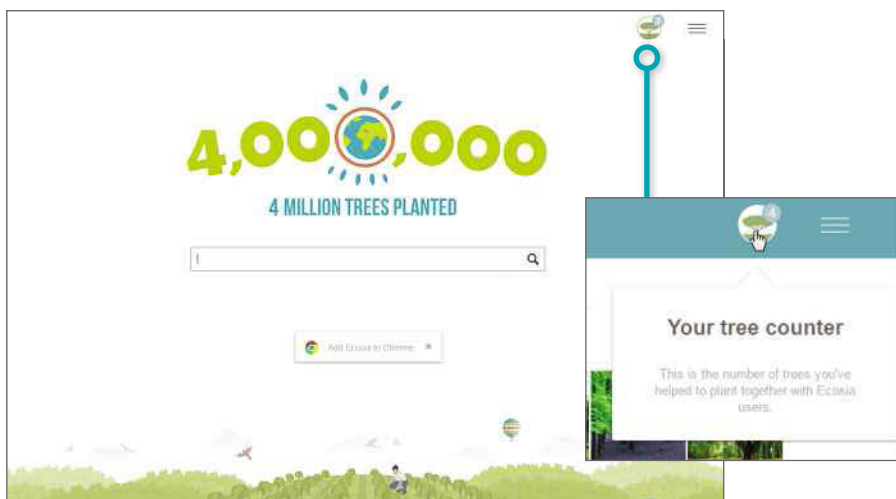
CHARITY

Wonderful

wonderful.org

Charity begins at work with this philanthropic classifieds site, which lets you get a job done while helping good causes. Search for a service you require, such as gardening, plumbing or hairdressing, to find businesses and individuals in your area who will donate their fees – 50% of your payment – to one of the partnered charities. You can choose a charity of your own to receive the other 50%, and sign up to offer your own free services. Wonderful is easy to use, and its intentions are admirable, but because it's early days for the site, it badly needs more listings – we couldn't find *any* that matched our search criteria.

Our rating


RELAUNCH

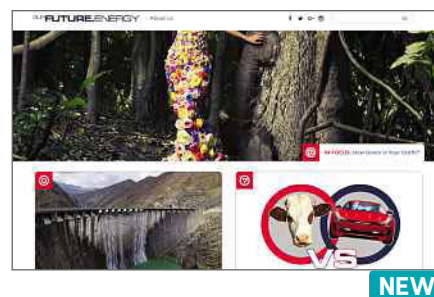
SEARCH

Ecosia

www.ecosia.org

Online adverts needn't be annoying, as this search engine proves by using its ad revenue to plant trees in drought-ridden areas. So far, it has planted more than four million trees – most recently in Burkina Faso in Africa – and hopes to reach one billion by 2020. To use Ecosia, turn off your ad blocker and search as usual, either via the site or its browser extension. As well as presenting results from web pages and Google, Ecosia finds matching images, videos, maps and news stories. The number of trees you've helped pay for appears in the top-right corner, and the revamped site provides a map of planting locations and info about Ecosia's work. It's a brilliant idea.

Our rating


NEW

ENVIRONMENT

OurFuture.Energy

ourfuture.energy

This splendid site is intended to teach 11- to 16-year olds about renewable energy, but it has plenty to enlighten adults, too – and why should kids have all the fun? Rather than dull statistics and scientific waffle, Our Future Energy engages visitors using quizzes, surveys and quirky how-it-works articles. We particularly like the one that explains how toy dinosaurs are (partially) made from real ones. Beautifully illustrated and comprehensive, it encourages children to make up their own minds about economic and environmental issues. It's also the first website we've seen to use the new 'energy' domain. Very trendy!

Our rating



Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Make forms on your mobile

Web forms are a great way to get feedback from your audience. Typeform's fantastic free web-form service has just launched on mobile, with an Android app called Typeform Lite (free from bit.ly/form395, iOS version



coming soon). This lets you create attractive forms on your mobile device, so you don't have to log in to the full website to set up a quick

survey or other type of form.

Master your YouTube channel

If you can create simple videos, a YouTube channel is a great way to widen your website's audience. Because YouTube is

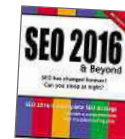
designed for watching rather than making videos, however, it doesn't make managing a channel particularly easy. If you're a Chrome user, you can get help from the brilliant TubeBuddy add-on (www.tubebuddy.com). This provides lots of useful tools, from a page of quick links that take you to your editing and publishing pages, to advanced video-embedding tools that help you configure your video before publishing it to your website. The basic service is free, or you can pay for an account with more options. Prices start from \$9 (around £6.34) per month.

Deal of the Fortnight

Crazy Domains (www.crazydomains.co.uk) is offering its Economy hosting package for £1.80 per month, which includes 150GB of webspace and 10 databases.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Dr Andy Williams,
author and SEO expert
(ezseonews.com)



Q My previously successful site is disappearing from Google's results because the topic I write about is receiving more coverage from mainstream sites. Should I compete with them or quit and find a new topic?

Mike Francis, via email

A Building and ranking a new site from scratch takes months of hard work, with no guarantees. I recommend working to restore your existing site to its former glory. The site will have age and authority on its side, both of which will help your ranking for your chosen phrases. Give your visitors exciting new content that will attract natural backlinks, and ask your mainstream competitors if they will accept articles from you, with a backlink to your site. These backlinks will help you compete.



MINI WORKSHOP | Use OneNote Online to create a collaborative website

OneNote Online: www.onenote.com | 10 mins | Any browser

If you're organising a big event, such as a family party, you need a website that other people can view and contribute to. You could use a blog or wiki, but a better option is to make a simple site with OneNote Online



1 Go to www.onenote.com, create a new Notebook and give it a name. **1** Start by making a front page for the site, which people will see when they first log in. The site can be a single page or have several pages if you have lots of different areas you want people to collaborate on.



2 You can make links to other pages of the Notebook. Create a new page **1** and give it a title. From the page where you want the link to appear, right-click the title of the page you want to link to ('Menu', in our example) and select 'Copy Link to this Page'. **2** Use Ctrl+V to paste the link into the text. The name of the page will appear as a blue hyperlink. **3**



3 When you're ready to publish the Notebook, click the Share button. **1** Click 'Get a link'. **2** You can create different links depending on whether you want the recipient to be able to edit **3** or just view **4** the Notebook. Shorten the links to make them less cumbersome. **5**

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Sync

Panel	LED 1920 x 1080
Response time	1 ms, 144Hz, FreeSync™
Features	OverDrive, Black Tuner, Blue Light Reducer, Predefined and Custom Gaming Modes
Inputs	DisplayPort, HDMI, DVI
Audio	speakers and headphone connector
Height adjustment	13 cm



gmaster.iiyama.com

Product Test

We test and compare the latest products

Acer Aspire One Cloudbook 14

Richard Easton tests a Windows 10 laptop that's as inexpensive as a Chromebook

Google's Chromebooks have helped create a whole new type of entry-level, budget-friendly laptop – ignoring the few pricier exceptions, such as the £800 Google Chromebook Pixel and the £1,095 Dell Chromebook 13. With their focus on web-based tasks and storing most of your files online, Chromebooks have become a great low-cost option for anyone who spends most of their computing time in a web browser.

Not all good, cheap laptops are Chromebooks, however, and plenty of Windows-based alternatives have been popping up lately, including Acer's Aspire One Cloudbook 14. This 14.1in laptop costs just £150, making it around £20 cheaper than the smaller Dell Inspiron 11, and it manages to tick all the right boxes.

Admittedly, the laptop's rather bland, utilitarian design is unlikely to get your pulse racing. While the outer lid's textured finish feels great to the touch, it's a far cry from the bright, vibrant colours of the Inspiron 11. It doesn't help that Acer has chosen a

matt-grey interior, but at least the laptop is reasonably portable, as it weighs just 1.6kg and is 17.9mm thick.

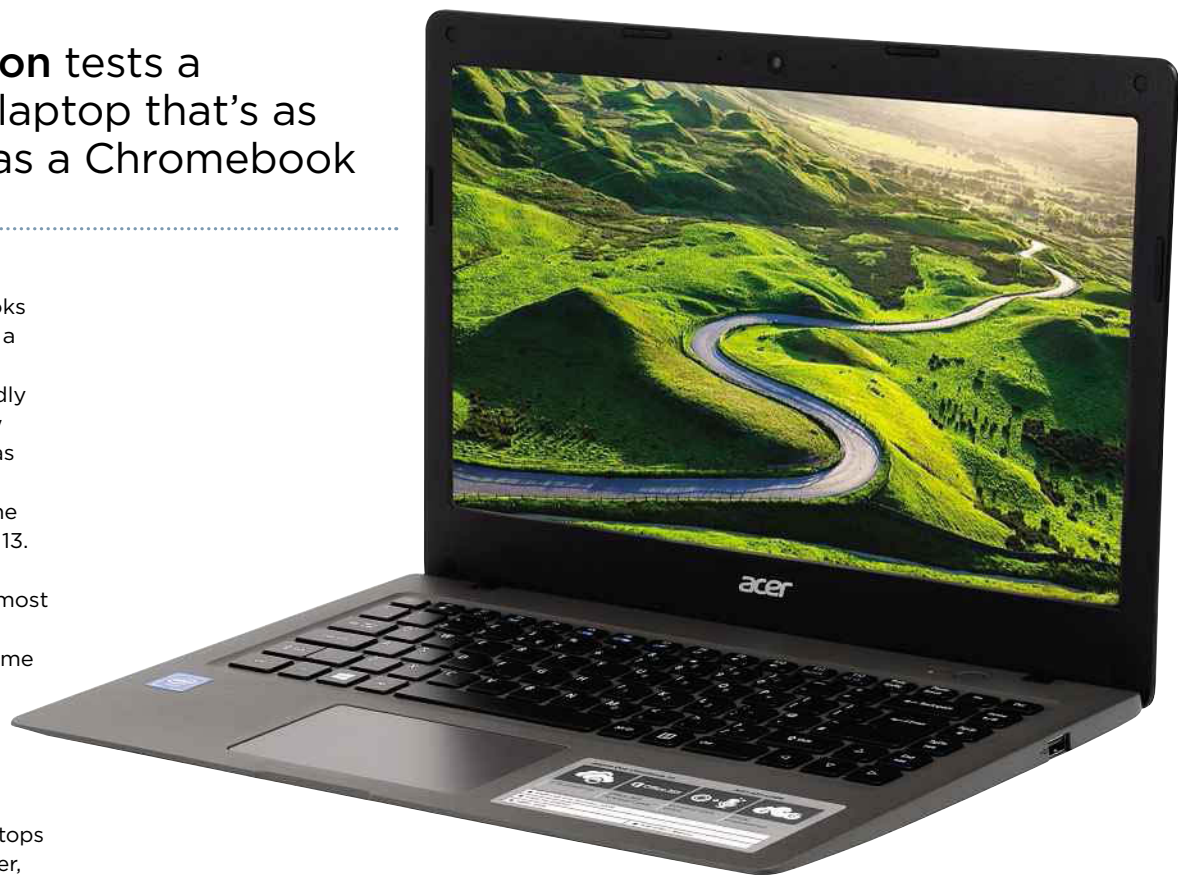
With a 14.1in screen, it also has enough space for a decent-sized keyboard. Sadly, it's not particularly comfortable to type on. The

tray doesn't flex as much as those of other inexpensive laptops we've seen, but the keys don't move very far and they make a relatively loud noise when you tap them. As a result, we found that we made more typos than we would have liked but, as with

most keyboards, you get used to it after a while.

The touchpad, on the other hand, is surprisingly good. It's a generous size and very responsive, with a coating that allows your swipes and gestures to glide effortlessly over its surface. The integrated mouse buttons have a distinct click action, too, making them very easy to use.

The Aspire One Cloudbook 14 is equipped with a good set of ports. It provides two USB ports, one of which is the



“ The Cloudbook 14 is around £20 cheaper than the smaller Dell Inspiron 11, and it manages to tick all the right boxes ”



faster USB3 type, as well as a full-size HDMI output and headset jack. More importantly, it has an SD card reader, which is an essential addition in a device that comes with just 32GB of eMMC storage. Once you've taken into account Windows 10 and Acer's preinstalled software, that only leaves you with approximately 10GB of spare hard drive space.

Storage options

Of course, given that the laptop has 'Cloudbook' in its name, it's clear that Acer intends its users to rely on online storage rather than keeping the vast majority of their files on the laptop's hard drive. It even comes with 1TB of free Microsoft OneDrive space for this purpose, as well as a year's subscription to Office 365 Personal, which usually costs £60. This makes the Cloudbook 14 even more of a bargain, but it's still useful to have an SD card reader on hand if you need to add extra storage capacity locally.

You probably won't want to leave an SD card in the laptop permanently, because standard-size cards protrude from the edge of the Cloudbook 14 by about a centimetre. Still, you can always buy a reduced-size SD card if this is going to be a problem. MacBook owners have been using this workaround for years.

As you would expect of an inexpensive Windows laptop, the Cloudbook 14 is powered by an Intel Celeron processor, rather than one of the company's more powerful Core models. In this case, it's a dual-core 1.6GHz Intel Celeron N3050 processor, as also seen in the Dell Inspiron 11.

With this and 2GB of memory, the Cloudbook 14 performs as well as you would expect for a laptop with such a low-end specification. If all you'll be using it for is editing documents and browsing the web, it will perform just fine. Anything more taxing, however, and it will start to struggle.

It couldn't complete our 4K benchmarks, for instance, and when we ran our tests again using 1080p video instead, it managed a benchmark score of just 30 overall. For comparison, that's only two points behind

the Dell Inspiron 11's score, but neither laptop is going to set a speed record.

Battery life

Thankfully, the Cloudbook 14 more than makes up for this performance shortfall with its excellent battery life. With 11 hours and 20 minutes of continuous video playback in our battery life test, the Cloudbook 14 easily matches Toshiba's equally inexpensive Satellite C40-C, and you should be able to get even more battery life out of it under more general use.

The 14.1in display has a resolution of 1,366 x 768 pixels, which is pretty standard for budget laptops. Its viewing angles are rather narrow, especially on the horizontal plane, but it's perfectly usable. We've certainly seen far worse screens for the money, and it definitely beats the Inspiron 11's display.

It's still not brilliant, though, and its colour coverage of just 61.8% of the sRGB standard means it's not ideal for colour-sensitive work such as photo editing. Combined with its low contrast ratio of 423:1 and mediocre black levels of 0.56cd/m², everything ends up looking a little washed out and uninspiring. This won't be a problem if you spend most of your time looking at text documents, but nevertheless it leaves something to be desired. It's not particularly bright, either, reaching just 241.2cd/m² at its maximum settings.

OUR VERDICT



It may not be particularly fast or have the best display, but the Cloudbook 14 is as good a laptop as you'll get for less than £200 if you can work within its limitations. You need to make allowances for its low price but it's compelling when compared with similarly priced

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

alternatives, particularly when you take into account the year's free subscription to Office 365 Personal and 1TB of OneDrive storage.

PRODUCT INFO

Acer Aspire One Cloudbook 14

www.acer.com

Price: £149.99

Buy from:

www.currys.co.uk

SPECIFICATIONS

- Dual-core 1.6GHz Intel Celeron N3050 processor
- 2GB of memory
- 32GB SSD
- 14.1in 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution display
- Intel HD Graphics
- Touchpad controller
- 1 x USB3, 1x USB2 ports
- SD memory card reader
- 802.11n Wi-Fi
- Bluetooth 4.0
- Windows 10
- 339 x 235 x 17.9mm
- 1.6kg
- One-year return-to-base warranty

FOR

- ✓ Fantastic value for money
- ✓ Good Windows alternative to a Chromebook

AGAINST

- ✗ Limited built-in storage
- ✗ Performance comprised by price

BETTER PERFORMANCE

Dell Inspiron 11 3000,
 £170
bit.ly/dell395



BETTER SCREEN

Toshiba Satellite C40-C,
 £200
bit.ly/tosh395



Ricoh SP C250DN

Simon Handby tests the cheapest colour laser printer we've ever seen to find out whether it's a bargain or a disappointment

It would be hard to spend less on a colour laser printer than the £80 that Ricoh's SP C250DN costs. Given such a low price, you might expect it to be rubbish, but with both wired and wireless network connections and automatic double-sided (duplex) printing, it looks very promising. Its 250-sheet paper tray is enough for most home users, and there's a single-page bypass feed for when you need to print on envelopes or headed letter paper.

It isn't the smallest colour laser printer we've seen, and it weighs around 24kg, so you may need a friend to help unpack it. Despite its bulk, however, the design is pleasant enough, with nice touches such as vents over its

two cooling fans that can be rotated to blow hot air to the front or back. It's not perfect, though. While the display is backlit, it's a basic two-line LCD. There are no orientation markings in the main paper tray, which is a pain if you want to print on the back of an already printed page.

In our tests, the printer was some way off Ricoh's claimed speed of 20 pages per minute (ppm). It produced a first page of black text in 23 seconds, then went on to deliver 25 pages at 16ppm. Like most printers, it was slower when printing the complex graphics in our 24-page colour test. It completed the entire test at 5.8ppm. Timed over just the last 10 pages, which represent the printing of typical web pages, it reached 10.5ppm, which is much faster than a similarly priced inkjet could manage. Duplex-printing ten sides of colour graphics took the best part of three minutes, but repeating this test with less complex pages took just 70 seconds.

Print quality

Happily, print quality is very high. Photos look natural, and the toner produces an even satin finish. Those with sharp eyes might detect some patterns among subtly different colours, and on thin paper we saw some bleed through in double-sided pages. Text quality was exemplary, though, as you might expect from a laser printer.

It's a loud device, particularly given its modest print speeds. While there isn't much clattering from the



“Photos look natural, and the toner produces an even satin finish”

paper-feed mechanism, the fans are noisy.

Page costs work out at a steep 12.6p for a page of mixed text and graphics, although that's only around 35% higher than some similarly priced inkjet

multifunction devices and isn't untypical for a laser printer. If you'll be printing in moderate volumes, we'd still recommend an inkjet, but for occasional use, this is a cheap printer that's well specified and produces great results.

PRODUCT INFO

Ricoh SP C250DN

www.ricoh.co.uk

Price: £79.98

Buy from:

www.ebuyer.com

SPECIFICATIONS

- 2,400 x 600dpi print resolution
- 4 colour cartridges
- USB, Ethernet, 802.11b/g/n wireless connections
- 450 x 400 x 320mm
- 23.8kg

FOR

- ✓ Great value for money
- ✓ Good quality prints

AGAINST

- ✗ Slow to print
- ✗ More expensive to run than an inkjet

OUR VERDICT



We weren't sure that an £80 colour printer could be any good, but Ricoh's SP C250DN shattered our expectations. Its print quality is high and it doesn't skimp on any essential features, with both wired and wireless connections, a decent sheet-feeder and duplex

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

printing. It's not as fast as more expensive rivals but we can forgive it for that when it's such tremendous value for money.

The Best Things Come in Small Packages



expertreviews
RECOMMENDED

Fusion Nano 970
From £1000

For full specs please visit:
www.chillblast.com/Nano

"You'll find nothing more powerful at this size and price"

Michael Passingham, Computer Shopper

Chillblast

www.chillblast.com/Nano

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Web User's Best Buys

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

HARDWARE

WINDOWS 10 LAPTOP

Acer Aspire One Cloudbook 14

NEW!

£149.99 from www.currys.co.uk

Date tested: April 2016



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

KEY SPECS

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

SMARTPHONE

Samsung Galaxy S7

£569 from www.samsung.com/uk

Date tested: March 2016



The Samsung Galaxy S7 is a better phone than the S6 – its camera and performance are improved and it adds storage expansion and disaster-proofing. Fast, sleek and capable – it's a beautiful handset that's a delight to own.

KEY SPECS

5.1in screen ■ Octa-core 2.3GHz processor ■ Quad HD resolution ■ 32GB of storage ■ microSD slot for up to 200GB expansion ■ Android 6.01 Marshmallow ■ 12-megapixel rear camera ■ 3,000mAh battery ■ Dust- and water-resistant

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

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

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

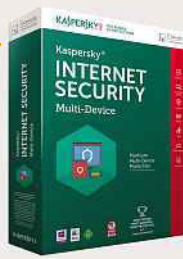
INTERNET SECURITY

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

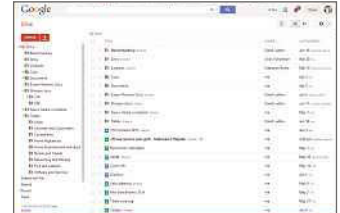
ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com

Date tested: January 2016

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



KEY FEATURES

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

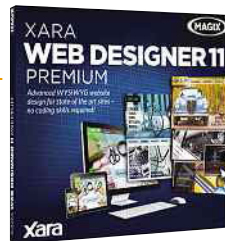
WEB DESIGN

Xara Web Designer 11 Premium

£69.99 from www.xara.com

Date tested: November 2015

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



KEY FEATURES

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

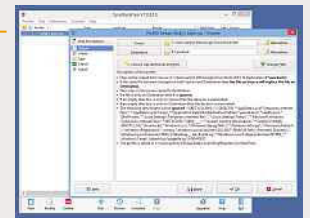
BACKUP AND SYNC

SyncBackFree

Free from bit.ly/syncback366

Date tested: March 2015

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



KEY FEATURES

Synchronise: Copy files in both directions ■ Restore back-up files easily ■ Email logs ■ Schedule backups ■ Simple and Advanced mode ■ Runs on Windows 10, 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+ and 10 (32- and 64-bit) ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

VIDEO EDITING

Adobe Premiere Elements 13

£81.08 from www.adobe.com/uk

Date tested: December 2014

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



KEY FEATURES

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

Best Free Software

DRIVER UPDATER

SnailDriver

snailsuite.com

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

File size: 14.5MB

It's important to keep your system drivers up to date if you want to avoid problems with your PC. Drivers are pieces of software that enable your computer to control all the hardware that's connected to it. If any are broken or missing, the related components and peripherals are unlikely to function as intended, if at all.

You can download new drivers manually from the hardware manufacturer's website, but that can be a long-winded and frustrating process, and there's always the risk that you might install the wrong drivers and break something that was working fine before you started.

That's why it's easier to let a tool such as SnailDriver handle the process for you automatically. This new program checks all the drivers on your system – including some you probably weren't even aware of – and identifies any old, outdated or broken versions that could adversely affect your PC's performance.



Scanning your PC with SnailDriver usually takes a matter of seconds and, once complete, it presents you with a list of new drivers to download and install. You can choose exactly which drivers you want and which you don't, which is handy because brand new driver releases can sometimes be a little buggy.

Although this is quite an early version of the program, we've found that it

works very well. While other, similar updaters charge you to download and install new versions of drivers, SnailDriver's developers promise that this program will be free forever and won't include any nasty bundled junk.

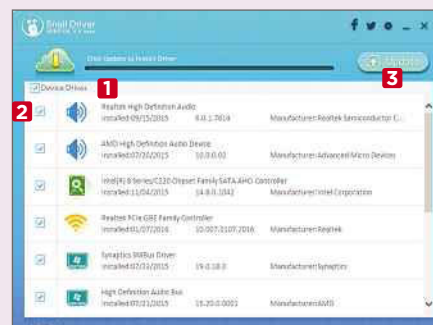
If you haven't updated your drivers in a while (or ever), SnailDriver is well worth trying out, and – despite its invertebrate-inspired name – it actually runs quickly and smoothly.



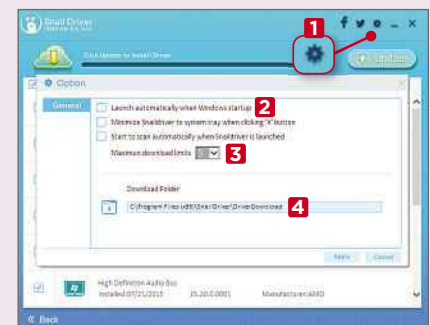
MINI WORKSHOP | Keep your PC up to date using SnailDriver



1 To use SnailDriver, simply click the large Scan button on the home screen **1** and the program will get to work looking for outdated and missing drivers. If this isn't the first time you've run the software, it will display the findings of its previous scan below. **2** You can use the social media buttons to promote the software on Facebook and Twitter. **3**

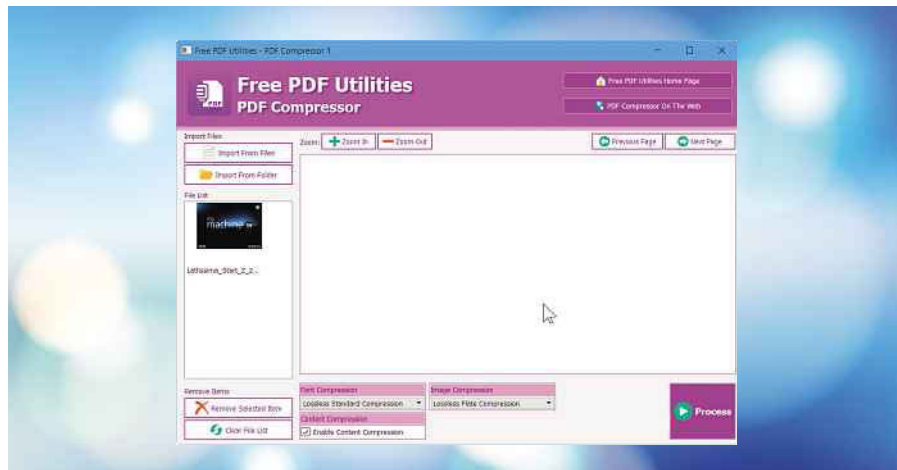


2 The next screen displays a list of drivers that have newer versions available. **1** You can untick any items you don't want to update. **2** The software doesn't provide much information on each item, aside from the version number and manufacturer name, so you may need to do some research before you decide. Click Update **3** to download the newest drivers.



3 Click the cog icon **1** to open the Options screen. You can choose to have SnailDriver load automatically when Windows starts up, and set it to scan your system as soon as it launches. **2** You can also set maximum download limits **3** and change which folder the program uses to store the downloaded drivers. **4**

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



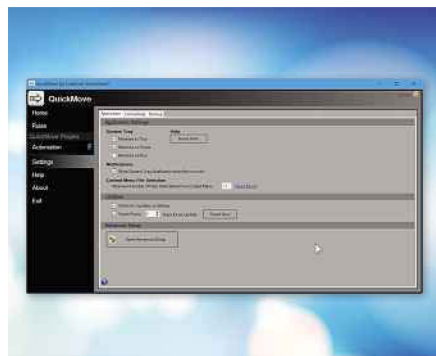
PDF TOOL PDF Compressor

bit.ly/pdfcompress395

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 17.4MB

This new tool promises to slim down bulky PDF files. It offers a choice of compression methods: Font Compression (none, lossless and lossy), Content Compression (enabled or disabled) and Image Compression (none or lossless). Click the Process button, specify where you want to save the new files and the software will compress them.

Pay close attention during installation to make sure you decline the bundled junk.

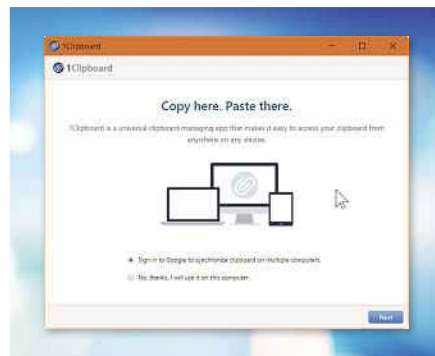


SYSTEM TOOL QuickMove 3

www.thecodeline.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 4.9MB

QuickMove speeds up the process of sorting files into folders. You start by choosing where you want to store files of a certain type (JPEGs in the Pictures folder, for example). Then when you right-click files of that type, select QuickMove to move them to the specified location. You can also send any file directly to a favourite folder. The new version improves security and waits for large or locked files to be ready.



UNIVERSAL CLIPBOARD 1Clipboard

1clipboard.io

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10 or Mac OS X **File size:** 49.7MB

1Clipboard lets you access clipboard contents across multiple Desktops and, eventually, mobile devices. You can copy something on a PC, for example, and then paste it on a Mac – provided the software is running on both systems. The program synchronises data via Google Drive and works with both text and images. Most recent items appear at the top of the clipboard, and you can also search for older content.

New Windows Apps

Disney Magic Kingdoms

bit.ly/disney395

Min requirements: Windows 8+/10
File size: 64.1MB

The aim of this game, set in Disney's famous theme parks, is to bring back the magic stolen by evil fairy Maleficent. It features a selection of Disney's most popular characters and has you following leads and undertaking quests.



Draw-A-Way

bit.ly/drawaway395

Min requirements: Windows 8+/10
File size: 37.4MB

Draw-A-Way is a fun physics-based game in which you draw the path a ball must take to get home. There are 85 levels to play through – and, sadly, the occasional annoying video ad, too.



MediaFire

bit.ly/mediafire395

Min requirements: Windows 8+/10
File size: 2.1MB

This official MediaFire online-storage service lets you upload photos, videos, music and documents to your account and access them from anywhere.



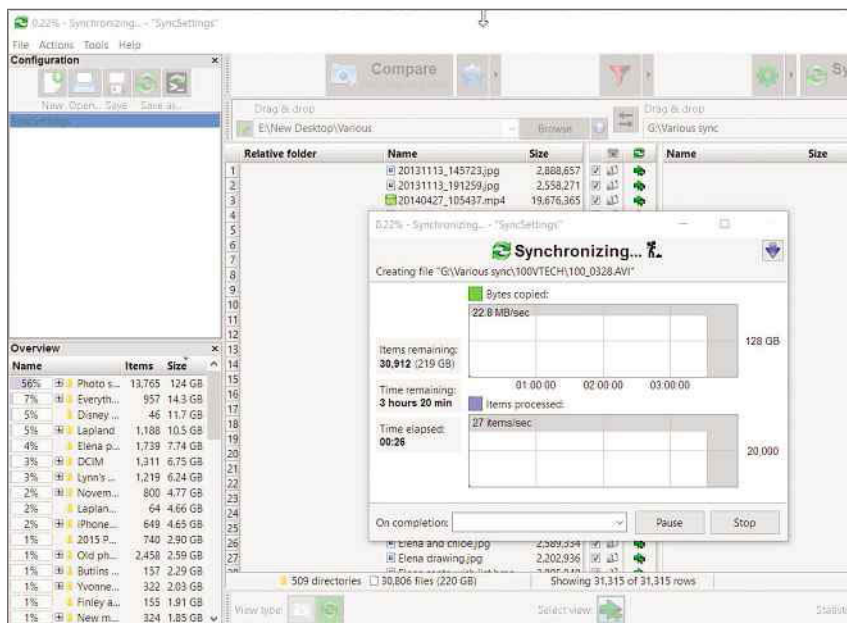
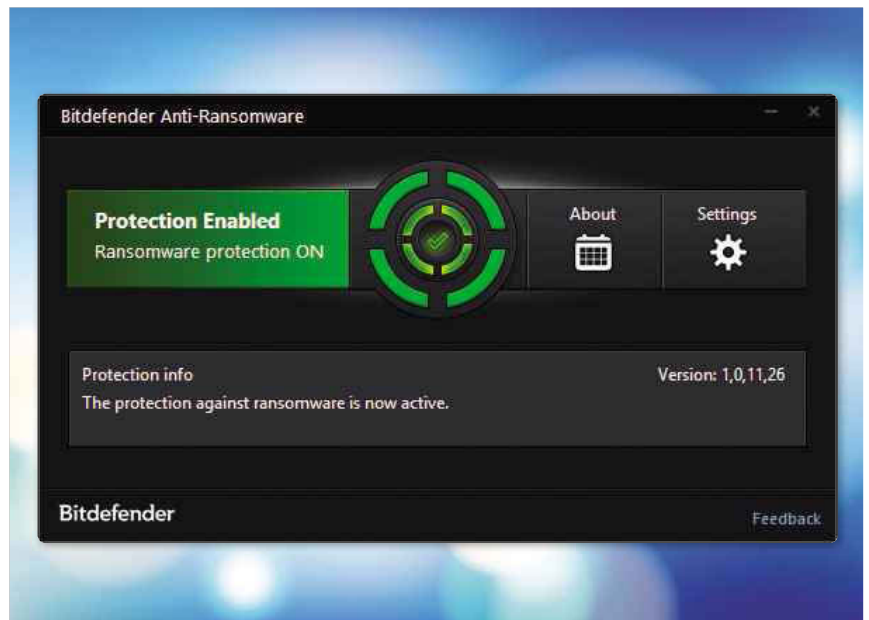
ANTI-MALWARE TOOL

Bitdefender Anti-Ransomware

bit.ly/bdransom395

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 4.5MB

Ransomware is a particularly nasty form of malware, which encrypts data on your hard drive and then demands that you pay a ransom to unlock your files again. This free tool from Bitdefender can protect your PC and data from three of the worst ransomware families – CTB-Locker, Locky and Teslacrypt. Install the program and it will start protecting your PC instantly. You can set it to start up with Windows, and change what the minimise button does, but that's pretty much all the configuration options there are. If you want to disable protection, you need to close the program from the system tray.



SYNC TOOL

FreeFileSync 8

www.freefilesync.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10, Mac OS X or Linux **File size:** 10.4MB

FreeFileSync makes it easy to synchronise files and folders so you can be sure you always have the latest versions to hand wherever you are. You have a choice of synchronisation settings (two-way, mirror, update and custom), and the new version makes various performance improvements to SFTP (Secure File Transfer Protocol) transfers, as well as fixing numerous bugs.

The simple interface makes setting up new folder pairs a breeze, and there's no limit to the number of files you can include in a synchronisation task. This means you can back up even the largest of folders, and the sync process can be entirely automated.

DATA RECOVERY TOOL

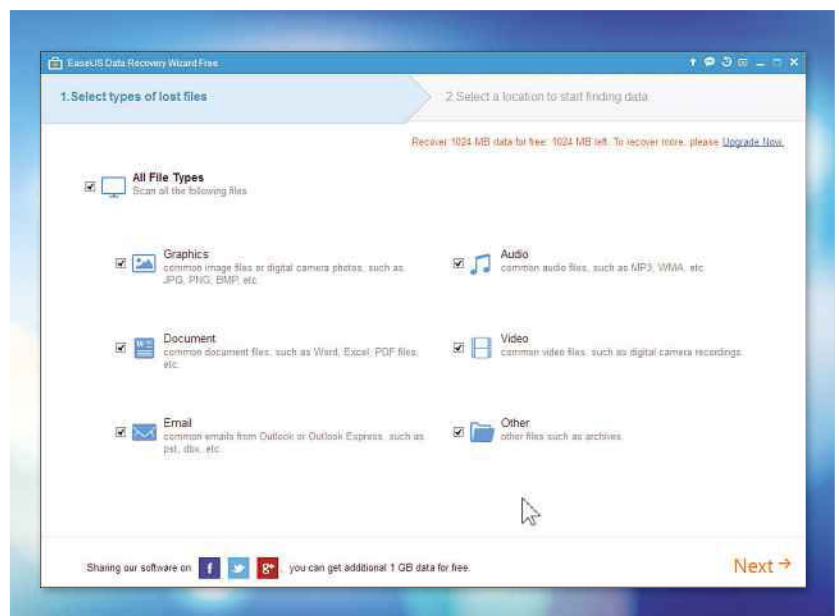
EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free 10

bit.ly/easeus395

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 or Mac OS X **File size:** 14.2MB

If you accidentally delete a file or folder on your PC, there's a fair chance you'll be able to recover it. EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free can rescue deleted content on hard drives, USB drives, memory cards, digital cameras, mobile phones and other forms of storage media, and you can filter searches by file name, type and date to help narrow down the results. The new release makes it easier to recover Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents, and speeds up the scanning process.

This free version limits you to recovering 2GB of data, but that's probably fine if you're only missing a few photos or documents.





GAME

Cold Email

bit.ly/coldemail395

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

File size: 66.6MB

You've just finished writing a new game and now you need to promote it by sending out emails to games journalists. Unfortunately, popup windows keep appearing and getting in the way, as do the objects littering your desk. Sending emails while removing desk clutter is surprisingly difficult, but it's entertaining fun.

Don't install...

Reg

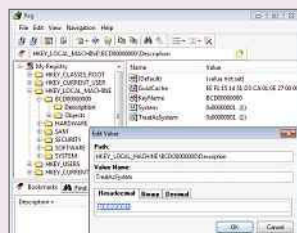
bit.ly/reg395

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 1.1MB

Reg looks like a promising free alternative to Windows' own Registry Editor, but it's been around for years and is still only on version 1.0. As a result, it didn't work well on our Windows 10 test machine and threw up an error as soon as we launched it. With better-supported and fuller-featured alternatives available, we'd recommend giving Reg a miss.



...Install this instead

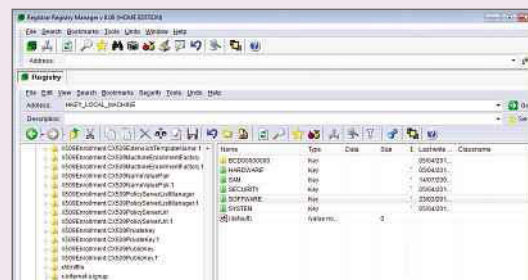
Registrar Registry Manager

www.resplendence.com

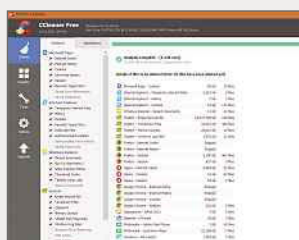
Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 2.2MB

Registrar Registry Manager is a much more sophisticated tool than the basic built-in Windows Registry Editor. Navigating to a specific key is a lot easier because you can search for part of its name rather than needing to know the whole thing, and the tabbed interface lets you keep different views open at the same time. Once you've found the key and value you want, simply double-click it to perform a range of useful tweaks. You can even add notes to highlight any changes you make. The software was recently updated to offer full compatibility with Windows 10.



UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



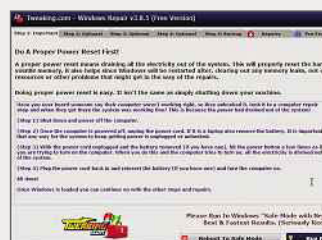
SYSTEM CLEANER

CCleaner 5.16

www.piriform.com/ccleaner

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10
File size: 6.6MB

The latest version of this popular system-cleaning tool adds Opera GPU and Application cache cleaning, and improves Chrome and Microsoft Edge support. It also updates Chrome plugin management and enhances keyboard navigation.



REPAIR TOOL

Windows Repair 3.8.5

www.tweaking.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 20.1MB

Windows Repair can help you fix problems with a misbehaving PC. The new version of this powerful program features updated permissions for Windows 7, 8+ and 10, and improves the Registry backup feature. The developers have made multiple code changes and tweaks, too.



SYSTEM TOOL

WinUtilities Free 12.42

hi.ylcomputing.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 6.1MB

WinUtilities is a comprehensive system-cleaning and optimisation suite that offers a large collection of tools, including a disk cleaner, Registry cleaner, shortcuts fixer and uninstaller. The program database has been updated and performance optimised for this latest version.

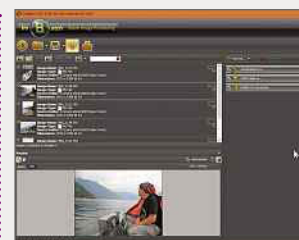


IMAGE MANAGER

ImBatch 4.8

www.highmotionsoftware.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 14.4MB

ImBatch lets you adjust groups of photos in one go, so you can rename and resize them, add filters, and so on. The latest version adds support for the DDS (DirectDraw Surface) format and improves the handling of command-line parameters.

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

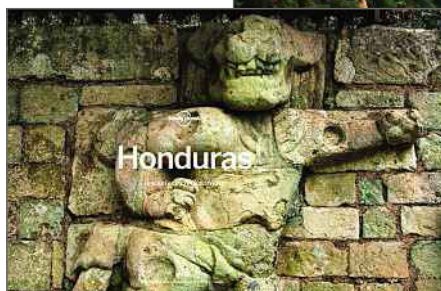
Best New Browser Tools



CHROME

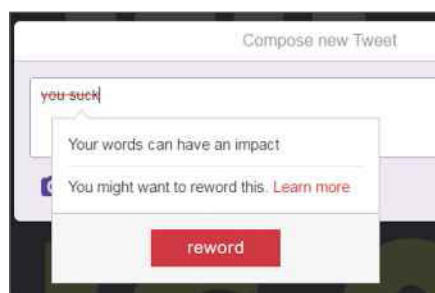
Get travel inspiration from your New Tab page

As regular readers of this section will know, we love tools that make your New Tab page more useful and visually appealing, so we were instantly smitten with the new Lonely Planet extension (bit.ly/lonely395). This displays gorgeous photos handpicked by the creators of the travel guide that will inspire you to discover new destinations while sitting at your computer in Blighty. The picture changes automatically every hour, or you can refresh the image manually by right-clicking and choosing Reload. As well as draping your browser in holiday inspiration, the add-on lets you search Lonely Planet's website from your address bar. Simply type `lp`, press Tab and enter the name of a destination to view recommended hotels, activities, tours and sights from Lonely Planet's team of travel experts.



Watch Netflix series without interruption

One of the best things about Netflix is the ability to 'binge watch' multiple episodes – and even entire series – of a programme in one sitting, turning your back on friends, family, fresh air and daylight. But when you're halfway through *House of Cards* or *Making a Murderer*, the last thing you want is to have Netflix patronising you by asking: "Are you still there?" and making you sit through patience-testing credits and countdowns between episodes. A new Chrome extension called Flix Plus (bit.ly/flix395) solves these problems by selecting the "Continue watching" option automatically when Netflix prompts you, and skipping the 30-second wait before the next episode starts playing. So now you won't have to move at all for hours at a time, and Netflix won't judge you!



Avoid offending people online

We're sure that *Web User* readers don't bully people online, but there's always a risk that words you post on the web could be misconstrued as hurtful or offensive. A new tool called Reword (bit.ly/reword395), from the Australian mental-health charity Headspace (headspace.org.au) aims to prevent abusive behaviour on the web (be it intentional or otherwise) by identifying potentially insulting statements as you write them. Similar to a spellchecker, it puts a red line through the offending phrase and cajoles you to reconsider, asking 'would you say this to a friend?' and 'would you want the world to know you said this?', as well as pointing out that "your words can have an impact" and "you are writing to a person". It's

a nice idea, which works on social-media sites, forums and webmail services, but sadly the types of people who most need to install the extension are those least likely to.

Close multiple tabs in one go

It's easy to end up with lots of tabs showing pages from the same website, forcing you to do a lot of clicking to close them all. You can speed things up using a handy new add-on called Bulky Close Tabs (bit.ly/bulky395), which lets you reclaim memory by closing multiple tabs in one go. Click its toolbar button, type in a domain name such as 'google', 'facebook' or 'amazon' and click Close to offload all the tabs that contain pages from that site. Alternatively, you can enter `l` or `r` to close all the tabs to the left or right of the tab you currently have open.



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



FIREFOX

Add Internet Explorer Favorites to Firefox

Do you remember Internet Explorer? It was quite a popular browser for a while, before most people switched to better options such as Firefox and Chrome. We're being facetious, of course, because we're sure you've used IE at some point, and you may even have lots of Favorites [sic] stored in the browser. Rather than importing them into Firefox, which can lead to a messy Bookmarks menu, you can use Windows Favorites (bit.ly/favorites395) to transfer saved sites from Internet Explorer. Simply install the add-on, and a Favorites menu will appear on your menu bar containing all your IE bookmarks. Now you'll never need to use Microsoft's outdated browser again (unless you want to, of course).



Browse the web with other people

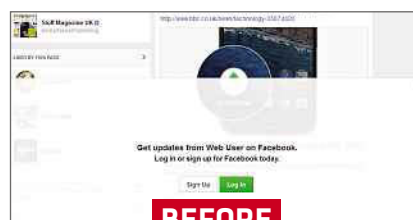
Firefox Hello was originally a Skype-like tool for text, voice and video chats, but Mozilla has clearly had a rethink because, as of Firefox 45, it's now a built-in way to browse web pages with a friend. The idea is that when you come across a page that might be of interest to someone you know, you can invite them to view it with you and use Hello's

chat function to "plan together, work together and laugh together". It certainly saves a lot of back-and-forth messaging, and it's very easy to use: just click the Hello button on the toolbar to create a link to the current tab,

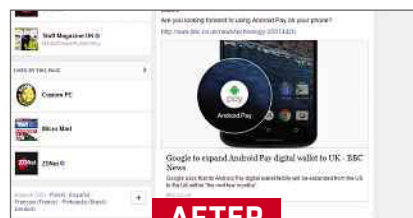
which you can share with a friend via email or Facebook. Clicking this link takes them to the relevant page, where you can have a nice chinwag. You don't need to install anything or sign in, and the other person doesn't even need to be using Firefox to browse with you. Hopefully, this new page-sharing focus will encourage more people to try Hello.

Access Facebook pages without signing in

Facebook recently started blocking access to the official pages of companies, celebrities, films and so on for visitors who aren't signed into the social network. Try to look at one and your view is obstructed by a large white box instructing you to log in or sign up for Facebook. You can get around this block using a new add-on called Facebook Page Reveal (bit.ly/facebook395), which removes the white box and login nag so you can browse official Facebook pages without needing to sign in. It doesn't offer unlimited access to personal profiles, though – you'll still need to log in for that.



BEFORE



AFTER

OTHER BROWSERS

Copy text from images and videos

One of our Workshops in Issue 393 (bit.ly/webuser393) explained how to use the Chrome extension Copyfish (bit.ly/copy393) to convert words that appear in online images into editable text. We're delighted to report that this add-on is now available for Opera (bit.ly/copyopera395), allowing you to copy text from pictures, PDFs and even YouTube videos with ease. As if that wasn't clever enough, Copyfish also translates from 20

languages into English, which is useful for grabbing subtitles from



foreign films. To use the add-on, simply click the Copyfish toolbar button and select the desired text to copy and convert it.

Speed up page-loading times

We're always sceptical of add-ons that claim to make web pages load faster because they usually achieve this by scaling back the content and reducing image and video quality. So imagine our delight when we discovered Web Boost (bit.ly/webboost395), which does neither of those things, yet succeeds in reducing page-loading times significantly. It works in two ways: first by blocking web trackers and ad servers so they can't slow you down; and second, by storing the 'building blocks' of web pages (scripts, fonts and so on) in your browser, so you don't need to download them from every site you visit.



Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

HOME SERVER

Younity

bit.ly/youcitydroid395

bit.ly/youcityios395

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 9

Size: 6.4MB (Android), 23.1MB (iOS)

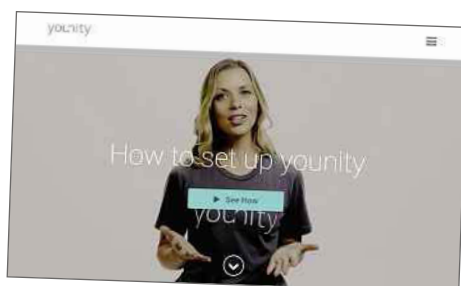
This new app connects your phone, tablet and computer (Windows or Mac) as if they were attached to your own private server. It's free, too, so you can banish

any thoughts of forking out for an expensive NAS (network-attached storage) drive.

First, download the PC program and install the app on one or more of your devices by following the steps in our Mini Workshop (right). You'll then be able to access your videos, songs, playlists – the entire contents of your computer's hard drive, in fact – from your phone or tablet.

By "access", we don't just mean looking at documents and moving around a few files in Explorer, either. You can stream or download video to your tablet or phone, view photos and play music. If you want, you can even sync all the content on your computers and mobile devices into one organised menu.

You don't need a smartphone or tablet to use Younity. If you have a PC and laptop, you can use the free computer version of the software alone to connect the two securely, and even use it as cloud storage if you're running low on space in Dropbox, Google Drive or OneDrive.



NEW

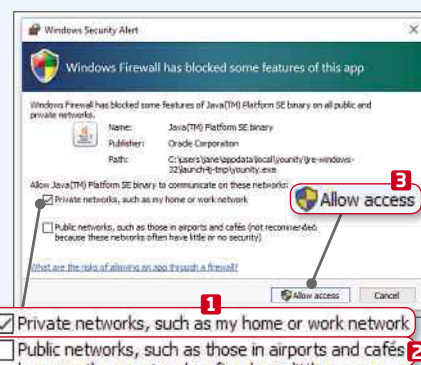


MINI WORKSHOP

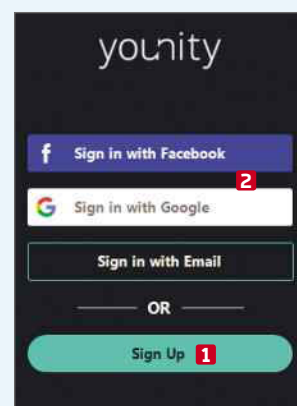
Create a free home storage network using Younity

1 Go to getyounity.com on your PC, click 'Download younity' and install the free software. When Windows Firewall opens, tick private

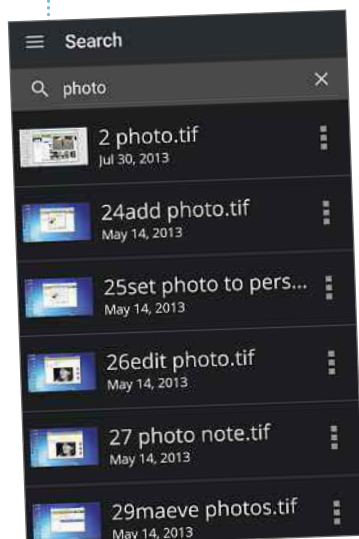
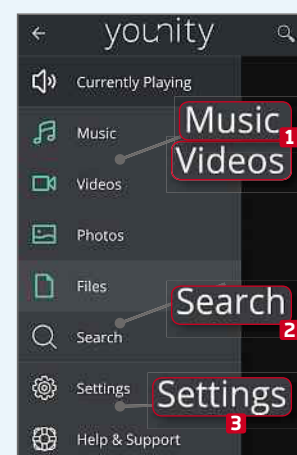
network access **1** and untick public access. **2** Click 'Allow access'. **3**



2 Download and open Younity on your tablet or phone. You can create a Younity account **1** or, if you'd rather avoid having to remember yet another username and password, log in securely using Google or Facebook. **2** Tap Allow. Sign in using the same method in the window that opens on your Desktop.



3 Younity will now index files on your PC and mobile device automatically, which may take an hour or more. On your phone or tablet, tap the three lines to access content such as Music and Videos in all connected devices, **1** perform a file Search **2** and other options. If you want to 'unregister' any device, you can do so easily in Settings. **3**



Other potential uses include merging media libraries from all your devices (such as multiple iTunes and Lightroom libraries, for example); streaming music from iTunes on your iPad or computer to your Android phone; streaming music from any PC or device to speakers via Bluetooth; and downloading videos, photos and music from one device to another for offline access.

Younity provides a detailed but easy-to-follow 'how to' guide on its website at bit.ly/youhow395.



Our rating



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

PRIVACY

MyPermissions Privacy Cleaner

bit.ly/mypermissions395

Min requirements:
Android 4
Size: 10MB

Find out what all your apps know about you with this simple permissions scanner. You can't use it to revoke permissions, but you can instantly uninstall apps that compromise your privacy. MyPermissions then suggests safer alternatives. This new version adds a community element so you can flag apps that others should avoid.

We're not happy about its lack of transparency over in-app purchases, and there's a clause in the T&Cs that says a free feature may become a paid-for one at any time. To avoid being charged, don't register with the app.



Our rating



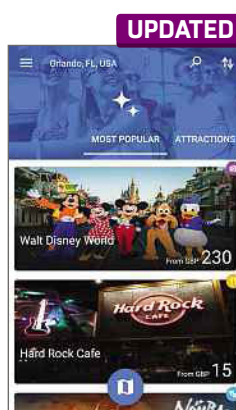
TRAVEL

WhaToDo

bit.ly/what395

Min requirements:
Android 4.1
Size: 28MB

Plan every step of your next holiday with this newish app that's aimed at those of you who like to organise your trips in advance rather than winging it when you get there. Book theatre tickets, bus tours, concert seats and more through the app, which offers special discounts and lets you pay for events securely in euros, US dollars or British pounds. The app covers more than 1,000 destinations around the world, with a 24-hour service line and no in-app purchases. Version 1.1 now lets you save potential must-do activities to a favourites folder.



Our rating



PHOTOS

Shorts

bit.ly/shorts395

Min requirements:
iOS 8.1
Size: 36.5MB

You're either going to love this idea or hate it. Install Shorts, and you share your entire iPhone or iPad Camera Roll with a friend in real time. In other words, they can see every photo and video you take, instantly – including the accidental ones you take in the bathroom when you meant to put the phone down. Luckily, you can limit such disasters in the Settings. It's potentially useful if you're fed up with manually sending your partner every photo you take of your cat.



Our rating



GEOGRAPHY

Flyover Country

bit.ly/flyover395

Min requirements: iOS 8.3
Size: 13.5MB

Fire up this free app while you're travelling or hiking, and it'll teach you about the geography, geology and history of the area you're passing through.

The app, which is currently iOS-only, has been cleverly designed to save mobile data by letting you load and store your route's information before you set off. Then, when you're travelling, it uses your device's GPS to reveal the stored information for the spot you're in or passing through (or even flying over).

Before you set off, tap two or more points on the map to specify your route or area, then click 'Load path' to view all available data. This may include interactive geological maps, Wikipedia articles and even nearby fossil discoveries. Select 'Save for offline' to store the data for when you're on the plane, train, road or footpath.



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

BOOKS

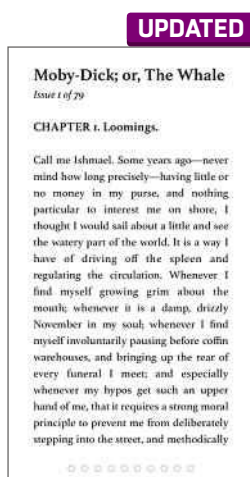
Serial Reader

bit.ly/serial395

Min requirements: iOS 8

Size: 18.4MB

Subscribe to classic books with Serial Reader and have a new instalment sent to your iPad or iPhone every morning. This app is perfect for commuters or those of us who like to start our day with a chapter and a coffee. Each instalment is designed to take around 20 minutes to read, and dozens of books in a range of genres are available to read for free – from *Anna Karenina* to *War of the Worlds* – with more added every day. The app is relatively new, but has received a recent update (v1.02) to iron out bugs.



UPDATED



Our rating



PRIVATE MESSAGING

WhatsApp

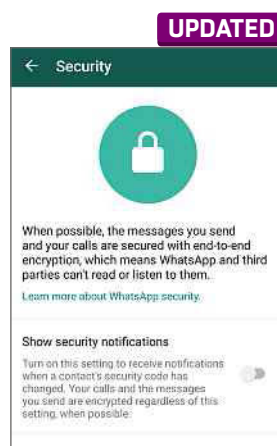
bit.ly/whatsappdroid395

bit.ly/whatsappios395

Min requirements: Android 2.1, iOS 6

Size: Varies by device (Android), 59.1MB (iOS)

Regular users of popular free messaging tool WhatsApp may already know that the app underwent a significant update on 6 April to add end-to-end encryption to all messages – including photos, videos and calls. An onscreen alert informed users that all their communications were now impossible for anyone other than the intended recipient to read. To check that you received the update, go to your WhatsApp Settings, then tap Security (see screenshot).



UPDATED



Our rating



5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

CLOCK

Evo Night Clock

bit.ly/evonight395

Min requirements: Android 4

Size: 1.9MB **Price:** £1

Use your phone as a night-time clock without draining the battery. It adapts to the brightness of your room, so the light won't keep you awake. Ten per cent of the app's revenue goes to charity.



HEALTH & FITNESS

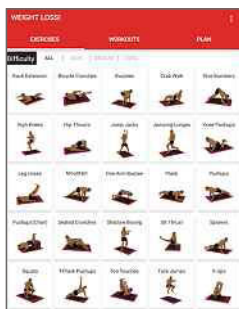
Weight Loss Workouts At Home

bit.ly/weightloss395

Min requirements: Android 4.1

Size: 14MB **Price:** £3.14

There's an awful lot of rubbish masquerading as weight-loss magic in the apps world, but this one genuinely impressed us. Its focus is on exercise and toning – and these workouts really mean business.



GAME

Lego Jurassic World

bit.ly/lego395

bit.ly/legoios395

Min requirements: Android 4.2

Size: Varies with device

Price: £4.16 (Android), £3.99 (iOS)



Relive some of the excitement of all four *Jurassic Park* films in Lego form by choosing from 16 dinosaurs to fight or befriend, and experimenting with DNA.

SPACE

Prof Astro Cat's Solar System

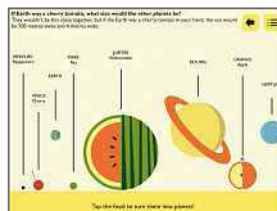
bit.ly/astrodroid395

bit.ly/astroios395

Min requirements: Android 2.3, iOS 7

Size: 59MB (Android), 81.2MB (iOS) **Price:** £2.29 (Android), 79p (iOS)

Space. Cats. Animation. What more do you want from an app? This educational app is aimed at youngsters, so don't expect cutting-edge astrophysics, but it's a wonderful learning tool.



UNINSTALLER

EZ Package Disabler for Samsung

bit.ly/e395

Min requirements: Android 4.4 (Samsung devices only)

Size: Varies with device **Price:** £1.49 Pre-installed apps are often unwanted junk that waste your phone's memory and battery as well as taking up storage space. This new app lets you remove them safely, without having to root your Samsung device.



Evo Night Clock



Weight Loss Workouts At Home



Lego Jurassic World



Prof Astro Cat's Solar System



EZ Package Disabler for Samsung





Best New TV Apps

KIDS TV

Sky Kids

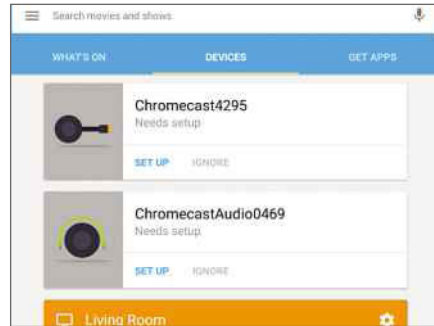
bit.ly/skyandroid395bit.ly/skykidsios395**Min requirements:** Android 4.1, iOS 8**Size:** 28MB (Android), 47MB (iOS)

Sky has long offered kids' TV shows through its Sky Go and Now TV apps, but there was always the risk that your children would stumble across *The Walking Dead*, *Game of Thrones* or something equally unsuitable. The new Sky Kids app solves this problem by letting children watch thousands of episodes of their favourite shows safely on mum or dad's tablet. Programmes include *Peppa Pig*, *In The Night Garden* and *The Scooby Doo Show*, from channels such as CBeebies, Nick Jr and Disney Channel. Sky Kids is free with a Sky Family or Sky Q subscription, and children can set up separate accounts with their own Sky Buddy avatars.



STREAMING

Google Cast

bit.ly/castandroid395bit.ly/castios395**Min requirements:** Android 4.0.3, iOS 7**Size:** 10MB (Android), 23.4MB (iOS)

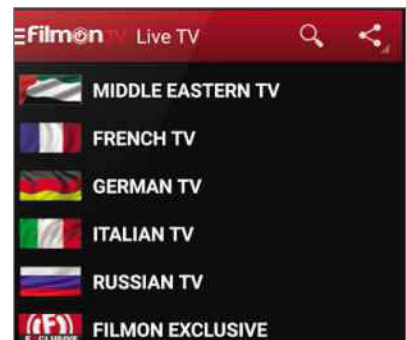
Google has renamed its Chromecast app for Android to reflect that it now works with devices other than the Chromecast, including TVs and speakers that offer built-in support for Cast technology. This now lets you stream – sorry, ‘cast’ – from more than 1,000 apps, including Netflix, Spotify, BBC iPlayer, Now TV and BT Sport, as well as many of Google's own services, such as Photos, YouTube and Google Play Music. Aside from the name change and a few bug fixes and improvements, Google Cast is much the same, and we still love the way it turns your TV into a digital photo frame by displaying lovely pictures when you're not casting. Turn to page 64 for more Chromecast tips.

TV

FilmOn Free Live TV

bit.ly/filmonandroid395bit.ly/filmonios395**Min requirements:** Android 2.3, iOS 7**Size:** 24.4MB

We're all for beating pointless geographical restrictions – indeed, it's the subject of our cover feature on page 38 – so we're pleased that FilmOn has updated its excellent app for streaming TV from around the world. There are hundreds of live TV and video-on-demand channels to choose from, and FilmOn also streams UK channels, so you needn't miss *Bargain Hunt* while travelling abroad. If you upgrade to the paid-for version, you can also record shows and stream in HD. This update adds support for 360-degree videos and fixes minor bugs that were affecting the app's performance.

 Don't install...

Emergency First Aid

bit.ly/emergency395

Regardless of whether acupressure has proven medical benefits or is merely quackery, it's surely irresponsible to use it as the basis of an app called Emergency First Aid. Fair enough, the app doesn't claim to help you deal with the



most serious incidents, but we're not convinced that to “massage the Point Shui gou” when someone is experiencing muscle spasms is a sensible substitute for real first-aid techniques.

...Install this instead

St John Ambulance First Aid

bit.ly/stjohnandroid395bit.ly/stjohnios395**Min requirements:** Android 1.6, iOS 7.1**Size:** 9.2MB (Android), 11.9MB (iOS)

St John Ambulance's (literally) life-saving app offers illustrated first-aid guides and step-by-step audio instructions for dealing with medical emergencies. These include everything from treating insect bites, sprains and head injuries to dealing with choking, drowning and resuscitation. The guides are listed in alphabetical lists of Major and Minor situations. The app also includes advice about common first-aid techniques such as treating shock, opening airways and placing someone in the recovery position. However, St John Ambulance stresses that the app is no replacement for learning first aid on one of its courses. ■



FAQ

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

Our guide to the **BBC Micro Bit**

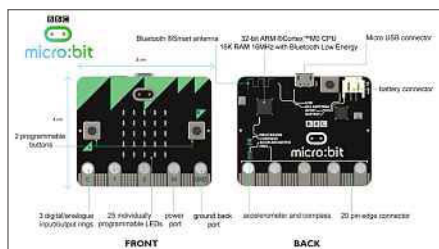
The BBC hopes that distributing its tiny barebones computer to schoolchildren will kickstart a new coding revolution. **David Crookes** explains all

What is it?

The BBC Micro Bit (www.microbit.co.uk) is a pocket-sized computer that has been developed with the aim of inspiring children to learn to code. It comes in the form of a barebones programming board that's designed to work with mobile devices. The idea is that it taps into the Internet of Things while allowing young minds to produce fun devices such as robots and musical instruments.

How powerful is it?

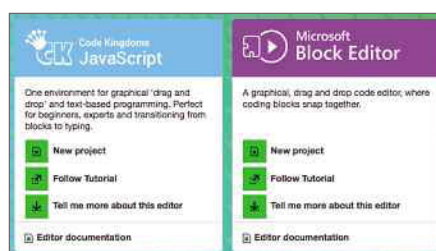
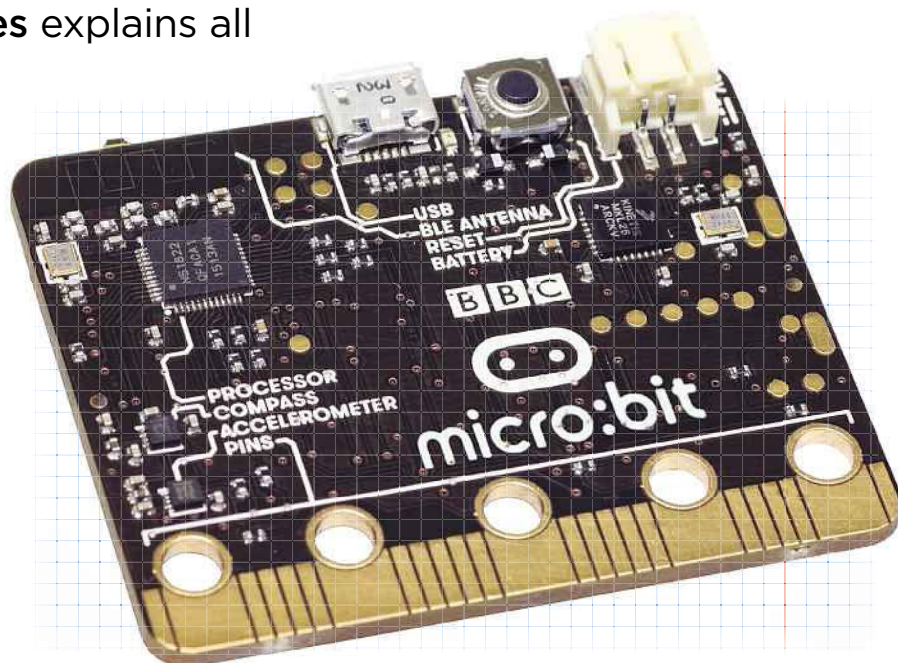
Don't be fooled by its size: the Micro Bit may be just 52mm by 42mm but it packs quite a punch. It's powered by a 32-bit ARM Cortex M0 microprocessor running at 16MHz with 16KB of RAM. At the very least, that makes it the smallest ARM-equipped device available. The board also has 25 individually programmable LEDs, three digital/analogue input/output rings, a couple of programmable buttons, a Bluetooth Smart antenna, a 20-pin edge connector and an accelerometer and compass. The accelerometer can detect changes in speed, shakes, tilts and free-falls.



The BBC Micro Bit may be tiny, but it has lots to offer prospective programmers

Where's the keyboard?

It doesn't come with one. In fact, you don't actually program the Micro Bit directly, so it doesn't require a keyboard or even a screen. Instead, users write code for it through a website developed by Microsoft (www.microbit.co.uk/create-code), which lets you program in JavaScript, Python, Microsoft's



Online editors allow children to program their Micro Bits over the web

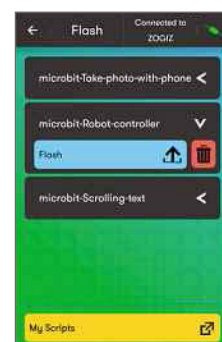
own Touch Develop language and Blocks. Each of the four languages is presented with a tutorial and documentation, but although children are encouraged to experiment with the Micro Bit, it's really intended for use in the classroom or at home with support from a parent or teacher.

How does the Micro Bit connect to a computer?

A micro-USB connector on the board allows you to hook up the Micro Bit to your PC or Mac. When plugged in, the device appears to your computer as MICROBIT and draws power through the USB port. It needs its own batteries (two AAAs) when unplugged.

Can it be connected to a phone or tablet?

It certainly can. There is a Micro Bit Android app that incorporates the code editors and allows users to pair a phone or tablet with the device over Bluetooth. This means it is possible to program the Micro Bit on a mobile and see the results in an instant. Code files (in HEX format) are sent to the Micro Bit using the Flash area of the app. The designers say this can be used to create games, snap selfies (using the Micro Bit as a remote control) and send alerts to the Micro Bit whenever a call or text is received.



The Micro Bit app lets you control the device using your phone or tablet

What are the LED lights, buttons and rings for?

The red LED lights can flash messages, while the programmable buttons have

many uses – to control a game or make a robot perform a certain function, for example. Both buttons complete electrical circuits when pressed, and this information can be sent to other devices via Bluetooth. The rings can be used with crocodile clips or banana plugs to attach more sensors.

Hasn't the BBC been here before?

Indeed it has. Way back in February 1981, the broadcaster struck a deal with Acorn Computers to create a series of machines to coincide with the BBC Computer Literacy Project. The first BBC Micro was released in December that year, and proved so popular among educators that it eventually made its way into 80 per cent of British schools. The computer could be programmed using a language called BASIC, and it helped to inspire a whole generation of future coders.



Anyone who went to school in the Eighties should remember the BBC Micro

So what's motivating the BBC today?

The coding scene of the 1980s was incredibly vibrant. The likes of the BBC Micro, ZX Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amstrad CPC allowed users to get under the hood and experiment with programming techniques. Some of those coders went on to have glittering careers in computing, but somewhere along the line, the home computing phenomenon lost its way. The Livingstone-Hope Skills Review (bit.ly/liv395) published in February 2011 found that ICT (information and communications technology) lessons were failing to teach valuable computer programming knowledge and were instead concentrating on everyday applications such as word processors. The BBC Micro Bit is one of a growing number of devices looking to turn the situation around.

Just like the Raspberry Pi?

Yes, exactly like the Raspberry Pi, which was also created to address this skills shortfall. The Pi has proved very popular, and the Pi Zero – a Linux-compatible micro-computer that can be fitted with a screen and keyboard – could be considered the Micro Bit's closest rival. It costs just £4, and

The Raspberry Pi proved that barebones computers could be popular

100,000 units have been sold. While the Zero has the more advanced ARM 11 processor, however, the Micro Bit actually complements it, as it can be connected to a Pi and other bare-bones devices, such as Arduino, Kano or Galileo.

How much do they cost?

This may be the most interesting aspect. Unlike the BBC Micro, which initially sold for £235 (and rose in price as costs soared), this time every child in Year 7 (or equivalent) will be handed a Micro Bit for free. A million devices will be dished out in total. The BBC says the hardware and much of the software will become open-source and will also be available to buy in due course, although, the price is not yet known.

When will they be handed out?

They're being distributed right now, although not without controversy. When the Micro Bit was announced in 2015 as part of the BBC's Make It Digital season, it was envisaged that children would receive them towards the start of the school year. Refining the technology and producing the devices took longer than expected, though, so Year 7 pupils are receiving their Micro Bits closer to their end-of-term exams and the summer holidays. That means they will really only benefit from the devices during Year 8.

What about September's Year 7 intake?

This is where things get tricky. It's likely that those who start Year 7 in September won't get a Micro Bit unless schools are allowed to buy them. The crucial aspect of the Micro Bit initiative is that the



Could these children be any more excited to be receiving their Micro Bits?

computers are supposed to be the property of the children, not the school, and they are free to do what they want with them. Some schools are looking to keep them on site, however, which means they may get passed down.

Will they form part of IT lessons?

They might, or they might not. Again, their late delivery has made it hard for teachers to incorporate them in their plans. Still, with 29 companies and organisations involved in the project, including ARM, Barclays, element 14, Samsung, Microsoft and The Wellcome Trust, there is no shortage of support, so momentum can easily build. There are also plans to create a not-for-profit company to drive the Micro Bit's legacy.



The Micro Bit offers plenty of fun and useful lessons to teach children to code

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH BBC MICRO BIT?



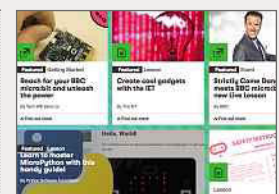
Send it into space

Some pupils received Micro Bits early as a test, and students from Rishworth School, West Yorkshire, sent theirs 20 miles up in a helium balloon, along with two Raspberry Pi computers and a Lego astronaut. The device took a photo before floating back to Earth by parachute.



Create games

The Micro Bit website includes tutorials showing users how to produce games for the BBC device. One of the simplest but most effective games for the tiny computer is the early bat and ball title, Pong, which can be played on the 5x5 array of LEDs.



Teach children

Visit the Teachers and Parents section of the Micro Bit website (bit.ly/teachers395) to tap into a host of resources that will inspire young minds (and prove fun for you, too). It's also worth visiting the Safety section, where you can download a PDF safety guide document.

DOWNLOAD ANYTHING!

COVER
FEATURE

Want to knock the internet's blocks off?
Wayne Williams reveals how to beat unfair restrictions so you can download anything you want from the web and keep it forever

There's so much great stuff available to download for free from the web that it's very frustrating when you come across something you can't actually save. This might be due to a geographical licensing barrier or because you're not registered with the website, or there may simply be no download option available. Fortunately, there are ways to get around most (if not all) common download restrictions to grab anything you want from the web for free.

Over the following six pages, we explain how to download protected photos from websites for your own personal use, rip the audio from YouTube videos, save Snapchat images to keep after they disappear, download music from the free version of Spotify, capture Google maps to browse offline, and much more.

We also look at whether it's worth paying for a VPN (Virtual Private Network) to get around certain download restrictions, including geographic and legal blocks.



MUSIC & VIDEO

Audio from YouTube videos

YouTube hosts millions of music videos, many of which are for songs you won't find on other streaming services, such as Spotify and Deezer. If you're more interested in the audio than the visuals, which is often the case when the latter consists solely of a static image, you can save the song in MP3 format to listen to anywhere, on any device. Copy the



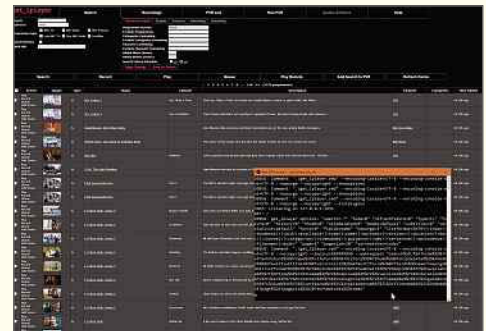
URL of the video from YouTube, and paste it in the box on YouTube mp3 (www.youtube-mp3.org). Click the Convert Video button, wait a few seconds, then click the Download link to save the music file to your hard drive to keep forever.

YouTube videos without the junk

You can also download videos from YouTube to watch offline in any media player or on your TV. In the past, we've recommended Freemake Video Downloader (www.freemake.com) for this task, but we're annoyed with the amount of junk that's now bundled with the software – some of which it's hard to avoid installing. Instead, we'd suggest you use the brilliant 4K Video Downloader (bit.ly/4kvideo395), which is free to use, free of junk and packed with useful features. You can download videos in most popular formats, in HD

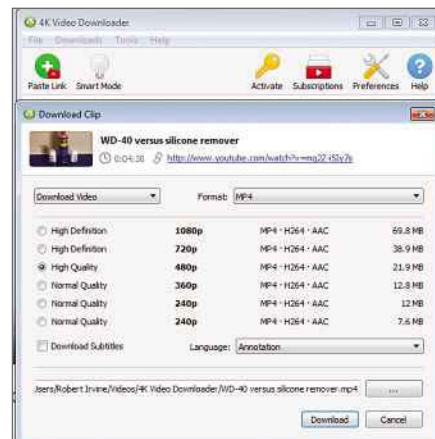
BBC iPlayer shows for more than 30 days

BBC iPlayer lets you download programmes to watch offline on your computer, phone or tablet, but limits how long you have to view them – usually up to 30 days, but sometimes less. This can be frustrating if you don't get around to playing the download in time. Get iPlayer (bit.ly/iplayer395) has been available for years, but it still works well and remains the best way to download and save iPlayer content for watching whenever and wherever you like. You can use the software to download individual programmes or entire series, and the videos will never expire.



Using Get iPlayer can be a little complicated at first, but follow our Mini Workshop at the bottom of the page and you'll be fine.

and 4K quality, and not only from YouTube but also Facebook, Flickr and Vimeo. The program, which is available



for Windows, Mac OS X and Linux, also lets you grab embedded videos from web pages, include subtitles with your downloads and subscribe to YouTube channels and playlists. The developers ask you to donate towards the upkeep of 4K Video Downloader, but this is entirely optional.

Music to keep from Spotify

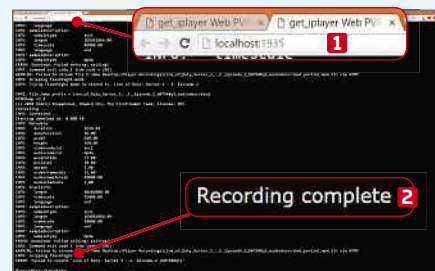
The Premium version of the popular music streaming service lets you save up to 3,330 songs to listen to offline on up to three different devices, which is pretty generous but still costs £9.99 per month. If you're not a Premium subscriber but a budget-conscious free one, you can locate and save MP3 versions of songs using a clever online



MINI WORKSHOP | Save iPlayer videos using Get iPlayer



1 Download the Windows version of Get iPlayer from bit.ly/iplayer395, install it and launch the Web PRV Manager from the Start menu. This will open in a new browser window. Search for the name of the programme you want **1** and a list of potential matches will appear, **2** along with a description **3** and channel. **4**

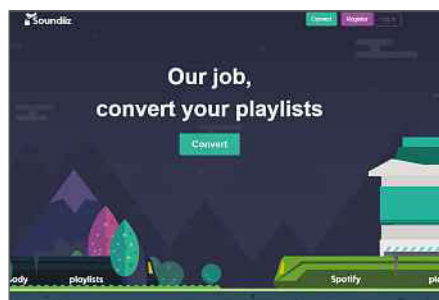


2 To download an episode, select it and click the Record button. A new tab will open and the recording process will begin. **1** Leave the page open and wait until a 'Recording complete' message appears at the bottom. **2** This will take a while and you might see some error messages, but it's safe to ignore them.



3 Switch back to the first tab and click on the Recordings tab. **1** You should see your saved program here. **2** To watch the downloaded file, either select the programme and click the Play button **3** or open it directly in the iPlayer Recordings folder on your desktop. Files are recorded in DRM-free MP4 format.

tool called Soundiiz (soundiiz.com). This converts your Spotify playlists to YouTube ones, so you can save the different songs to MP3 format using YouTubeMP3 (see earlier tip in this section). You might not be able to grab every track, because the feature requires songs to be available on YouTube, but it's a fairly simple process.



Alternatively, you can try a new program called Spotify Web Recorder (bit.ly/spotifyrecord395), which records songs from Spotify Web Player and saves them to your hard drive in MP3 format.

Save songs from SoundCloud

SoundCloud (soundcloud.com) has lots of great songs to stream, including tracks from well-known artists. Downloading music to listen to offline at your convenience is actually very easy, even if SoundCloud doesn't provide a dedicated Download button. All you need to do is click the Share button next to the song you want and copy its URL (making sure it's set to play from the beginning). Next, go to SoundDrain (sounddrain.com), paste in the URL and click the Download button. Wait a few seconds, then right-click the Download button and save the song in MP3 format.



Download geo-restricted videos from YouTube

It's easy to understand why certain videos aren't available to watch in the UK – the rights holders probably have permission only for a certain territory, for example – but that doesn't make it any less annoying. You can get around geographic restrictions by using a VPN, such as CyberGhost (www.cyberghostvpn.com), to fool the host website into thinking you're based in another country, often the US. See the box on page 43 for our views on whether it's worth paying for a VPN.

Access banned download sites

The UK courts have banned access to a large number of websites that offer illegal access to copyrighted



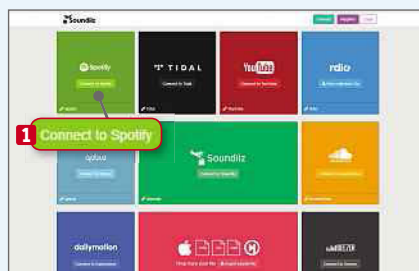
content. Blocked sites include The Pirate Bay, KickassTorrents and RapidMoviez. Getting around this ban is incredibly easy, however. In many cases, all you need to do is visit the secure HTTPS version of the site – yes, sticking an extra 'S' in the URL or using the browser extension HTTPS Everywhere (bit.ly/https395) might be enough to circumvent the ISP block (although it doesn't seem to work with Sky broadband).



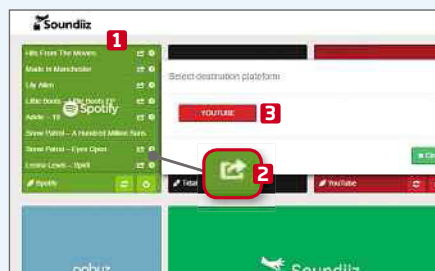
If that doesn't do the trick, or you want a little extra anonymity when accessing such sites, use a VPN with your browser. TunnelBear (www.tunnelbear.com) is perfect for this. It's very easy to use, and you can toggle its protection on and off as and when required. You get only 500MB of data for free each month, but paid-for plans offering unlimited data begin at a very reasonable \$4.16 (£2.95) per month.



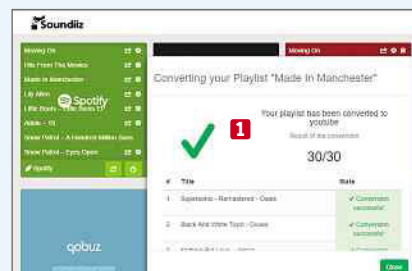
MINI WORKSHOP | Save your favourite Spotify songs using Soundiiz



1 To get started, go to the Soundiiz converter (soundiiz.com/converter) and click the button to 'Connect to Spotify'. **1** On the next page, click the button to 'Log in to Spotify' and enter your username and password when prompted. If you don't have a Spotify account you can sign up for one from here.



2 Your playlists will appear in the Spotify tile. **1** Now click the 'Connect to YouTube' button and log in or allow Soundiiz access to your account. Click the Share button next to a Spotify playlist **2** and, in the window that opens, select YouTube as the destination platform. **3** A new window will open. Click the Convert button.



3 The conversion may take several minutes as Soundiiz searches for matching tracks on YouTube. It will then show the result of the conversion, **1** including details of any songs it couldn't find. Click the playlist name in the YouTube tile to open it in YouTube. You'll now be able to download each song using YouTubeMP3.



PHOTOS

Protected photos from websites

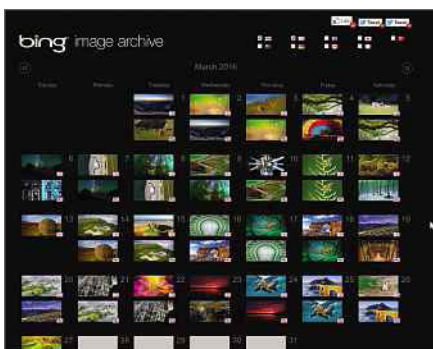
Some websites disable the ability to save images, to prevent unauthorised reuse. Go to SmugMug (www.smugmug.com/browse), for example, and browse the popular photos on display. Right-click one you like, and instead of the usual menu allowing you to save the image, you might see a copyright message instead. You may be able to download a copy of the image by left-clicking it and, with the mouse button still held down, dragging and dropping the picture on your Desktop, but most sites, including SmugMug, now block this method too.



If you're determined to save the image for your own personal use, you could take a screenshot of the picture, but if you're using Chrome there's another option. Right-click the page on which the photo appears and select Inspect. Click the Resources tab, then click the arrow to expand Frames and any sub-directories. Expand Images and find the largest version of the photo you want. Right-click it and choose 'Open link in new tab'. You'll then be able to right-click and save this version as usual, but don't be tempted to reuse it for your own gain or you'll be in breach of copyright and thrown to the lions.

Bing's daily background images

Microsoft's search engine displays an attractive full-screen image, which changes daily. If you want to use one as your Desktop wallpaper, you can usually do so by hovering your mouse over the Info button and



Other people's Facebook photos

If you can see someone's photos in Facebook, you can download them. Open a photo, right-click it and you'll be able to save it from the context menu. If you want to save multiple

images in one go, you can save time by using the PhotoLive browser extension or bookmarklet (getphotolive.com). We've found that the tool can be a little hit and miss (sometimes only certain photos in an album appear), but it might work well for you.



clicking 'Download today's image', but not every photo can be saved in this way. Although there are various downloaders you can use to grab these images, such as Bing Downloader (bing.codeplex.com), a much simpler solution is to go to the Bing Image Archive at bit.ly/bingimages395, select the region or regions you want (USA and UK, for example), then browse the calendar and download the photos you like.

Images from Snapchat

Snapchat photos are designed to display for only a matter of seconds, but you can save an image to keep by taking a screenshot. The process for doing this varies depending on your



particular phone or tablet, but on an iOS device it just means pressing the power and Home buttons simultaneously, while in Android it's the power and volume-down buttons. It's worth noting, however, that sharing any screenshots could get you into trouble. According to Ed Vaizey, the UK culture minister, "Under UK copyright law, it would be unlawful for a Snapchat user to copy an image

and make it available to the public without the consent of the image owner. The image owner would be able to sue anyone who does this for copyright infringement" (bit.ly/snapchatcopy395). Of course, many of the other download methods we've detailed in this article could potentially land you in hot water too, but use common sense and you'll be fine.

Photos from Flickr

With rumours flying around that cash-strapped Yahoo might be about to sell off Flickr, now might be a good time to download any images you have stored on the image-sharing site. Apps such as Bulkr (clipyourphotos.com/bulkr) let you back up, browse and batch-download all your photos and videos on Flickr (as well as download photos and videos from other users, provided they are shared under a creative commons licence). You can also batch-download your images directly through Flickr by opening your Camera Roll (www.flickr.com/cameraroll) and selecting the photos you want. Click the Download arrow at the bottom, then click the 'Download zip' button.





BOOKS & MAPS

Websites as PDF 'books'

It's easy enough to save individual web pages as PDF files – there are plenty of tools you can use for this, including Save as PDF for Chrome (bit.ly/saveaspdf395), but you can also export an entire website to the popular format



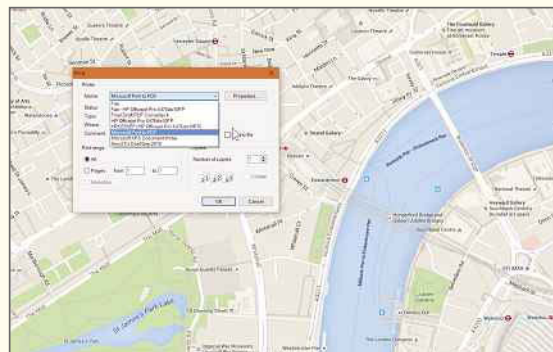
using PDFmyURL (pdfmyurl.com). You need to pay for a licence to use it (£19 a month) but a free trial is available. This works in the same way, but adds a watermark to PDFs.

In iOS 9, you can tap

Google Maps to your Desktop

You can save any Google Map to view offline on your phone or tablet. On Android or iOS, browse to the area you want to save, and type ok maps into the search box. Pan and zoom around to make sure the area you want is covered, and click the Save button.

On your Desktop, the process of downloading Google Maps is different but still straightforward. Load the map, right-click and select Print. Click the Print button and choose a PDF printer. You may need to install a PDF-printing program such as Bullzip PDF Printer (www.bullzip.com) if you don't have one. Windows 10 users can select the native Microsoft Print to PDF option.



the Share button in Safari and choose to 'Save PDF to iBooks'. Open iBooks and

you'll find the content waiting for you in the PDFs category.



MOBILE APPS & CONTENT

Download YouTube videos

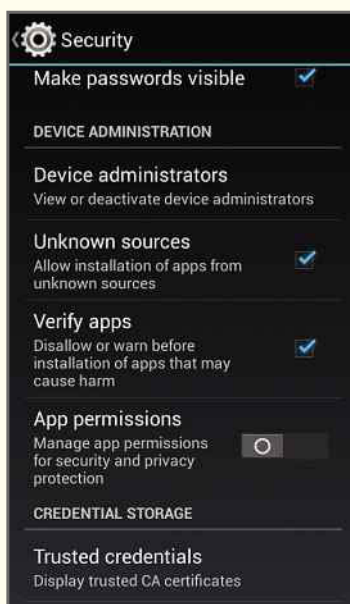
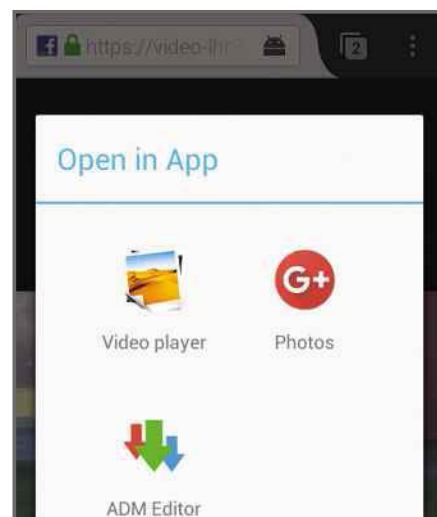
Google doesn't like people being able to download videos from YouTube – and certainly not using an Android phone. However, you can download videos on your handset using TubeMate (tubemate.net). Naturally, you can't get the app through Google Play so you'll need to download the APK and sideload it using the steps in the box below. There are lots of rogue versions of the app on the web, so it's worth grabbing



it from a more reputable source, such as Mobango (bit.ly/mobango395).

Facebook videos on Android

There are various tricks for downloading Facebook videos to watch offline, but we've found that combining Advanced Download Manager (bit.ly/adman395) and Firefox (bit.ly/firefox395) works best for us. Install both apps, then access Facebook through Firefox (not the Facebook app). Tap a video to start it playing, then tap on the Android icon in the address bar. In the window that opens, select ADM Editor and tap OK. Give the video a name, and click Start (or Add) to save it.



Apps that are 'incompatible' with your device

When you're browsing for Android apps on Google Play, the store tells you which are compatible with your devices. If an app is deemed incompatible (because it's only available to users in a certain country, or your device is running an unsupported version of Android, for example) you won't be able to download it, even though it might work. If you can find the app elsewhere in APK format, you can sideload it. First, you'll need to open Settings on your Android phone and look under Applications or Security for the Unknown Sources option, then tick it. Once you've done that, download the APK to your phone and follow the installation instructions.

Using a VPN such as TunnelBear (which has its own free Android app) may also allow you to bypass geographical restrictions on apps in the Play store.



SOFTWARE

Software that's no longer available

If a program you like has been removed from the developer's website or replaced with a newer version that's simply not as good, you might be able to download an earlier copy from a software repository such as OldVersion (oldversion.com) or OldApps (oldapps.com). These sites have thousands of versions of hundreds of programs for Windows, Mac and Linux stretching right back in time, "because newer is not always better". The software is helpfully organised into categories, such as Image Editing, Multimedia and Communication – just click the name of an application to see which versions are available, then pick the one you want.

Remember, though, that you could be putting your PC and personal info at risk if you use outdated security software, file-sharing tools, browsers and plug-ins such as Adobe Flash, so old releases of these (and anything else you're not sure about) are best avoided.



Chrome extensions removed from the Web Store

Google closely monitors the Web Store, occasionally removing extensions it deems unacceptable for one reason or another – for example, because they break Google's own restrictions, contain malware or pose a threat to Google's business model. If you find a banned

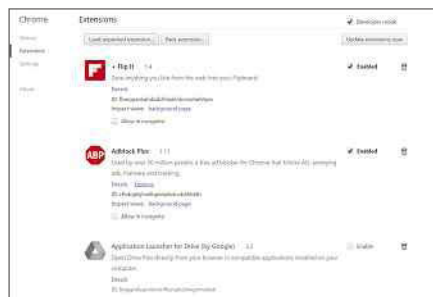
SHOULD I PAY FOR A VPN?

While there are plenty of excellent VPNs and proxies available to use for free – including our personal favourites TunnelBear (www.tunnelbear.com) and CyberGhost (www.cyberghostvpn.com) – they often come with restrictions, such as download limits and reduced speeds, that can prove annoying and curb the benefits of the service. Paying for a VPN removes these limitations and delivers numerous

benefits, including rapid download speeds (which should be on a par with those you enjoy outside the VPN), a greater choice of locations from which you can appear to be browsing and cross-platform support.

Whether or not you should pay for a VPN really depends on one thing – how much use you'll get out of it. If you're likely to use it only occasionally, the free edition will probably suffice. On the other hand, if you plan to do a lot of downloading (and streaming) over a VPN, paying to upgrade your service is a no brainer. You usually get offered a choice of plans – for example, CyberGhost offers Premium and Premium Plus accounts for £3.99 and £6.99 a month respectively, and allows you to use it on up to five devices simultaneously. If speed is an issue for you, check out VPNify (www.vpnify.me), which highlights the fastest VPNs in different regions – we ran a Workshop about the site in Issue 392 (bit.ly/webuser392).

One more factor to take into account is that certain services, including Hulu, Netflix and BBC iPlayer, have started to crack down on VPN use, so check whether the VPN you're considering is likely to be affected by this.



extension on another site, you can download and install this in Chrome by

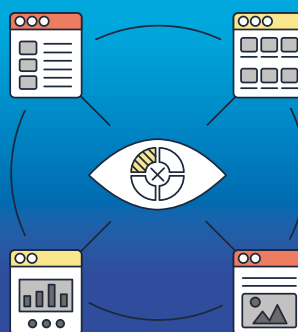
switching to Developer mode. To do this, first save the extension to your computer in CRX (Chrome extension) format, scan it with VirusTotal to make sure it's safe (see our Workshop on page 56), then open Chrome. Click the menu button in the top-right corner and select 'More tools', Extensions. Tick the 'Developer mode' option at the top and drag and drop the CRX file onto the extensions page. Confirm the installation and the extension will be ready to use. ■

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 4 May 2016

Stop the web STALKING YOU

We reveal the creepiest things the web knows about you, and explain how you can delete your personal info



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Best tools to speed up your startup

Solutio used to be the go-to program for boosting your boot time. **Jane Hoskyn** tests the best alternatives for managing your startup and finding out what's slowing down your PC



Autoruns | Free | bit.ly/autoruns395 | ★★★★★

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

WebUser
GOLD
AWARD

What we liked:

Autoruns is a free portable tool that shows you exactly what's going on in your computer from the moment it boots. If an item is ticked in the

Autoruns list, that means it runs automatically when you start your PC. Untick an item to stop it running in future. The fewer items you have ticked, the faster your PC will boot.

If that were all it did, we could wrap up and go home, but there's much more to Autoruns. The program window is baffling at first, presenting a huge multicoloured list of everything that's running or installed on your PC, including processes, drivers, services and so on. Tabs at the top break up the information into smaller batches.

Click the Services tab, for example, and you'll see a list that includes your antivirus software and processor, complete with descriptions and file locations. You should definitely leave those ticked. If you're not sure whether an item needs to run at startup or not, right-click it and select Search Online.

Autoruns has been carefully designed to give you control without letting you mess up the operating system. For that reason, it doesn't show built-in Windows

processes by default. To reveal them, open the Options menu and untick Hide Windows Entries. We wouldn't recommend unticking any of these, however, as Windows might not boot without them.

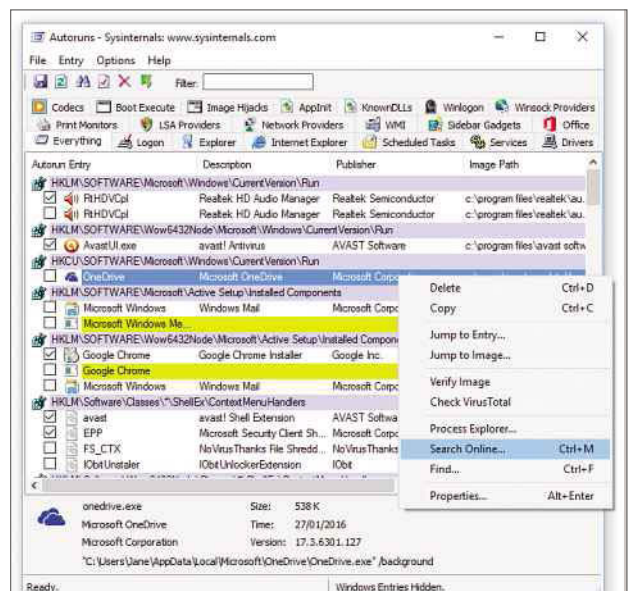
The Options menu also lets you Hide VirusTotal Clean Entries. Click this to narrow the list to dodgy files that may harm your PC.

Autoruns has been updated for Windows 10 and works on versions going back to Vista. The portable EXE file runs from a USB stick.

How it can be improved:

If we could add one feature, it would be the ability to order items by their impact

on boot time. The lack of XP support is also a shame for those of us who still have XP laptops that take longer to boot than our laundry takes to dry.



OUR VERDICT

Autoruns isn't a carbon copy of our old favourite, Solutio, which showed you at a glance what was slowing down your startup, but you can use it to achieve the same benefit and more. If you want a tool that tells you what's affecting your PC from boot to shutdown, and lets you change it, Autoruns is essential.

Chameleon Startup Manager | From free | ★★★★★

bit.ly/chameleon395 | FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
EASE OF USE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

WebUser
SILVER
AWARD

What we liked:

Chameleon comes in two colours. The free version is like a simplified Autoruns, with a shorter list of processes that run automatically. Unlike

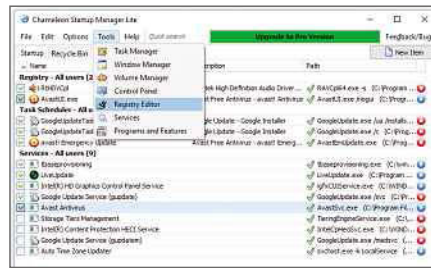
Autoruns, Chameleon lets you configure the settings of processes and create shortcuts, while a Tools menu gives you quick access to Registry Editor, Task Manager and more.

Chameleon Startup Manager Pro (\$29.95, or around £21, for a lifetime licence for three PCs) is the F1 car of boot boosters. It lets you set up a list of delayed starts, so each program or process begins as soon as the previous one has finished. You can set items to run at specific times or on certain days, and specify the conditions under which a process can start, such as when you're online or your PC is idle.

Both versions run in Windows 10 and as far back as XP.

How it can be improved:

As with Autoruns, we'd like to be able to



see at a glance which items are adding the most time to our startup. Unlike our Gold and Bronze award winners, Chameleon needs to be installed, and the installer tries to trick you into installing the paid-for Pro version, which is very bad form.

OUR VERDICT

Chameleon Startup Manager's paid-for version is like a turbo Autoruns, giving you full control over which processes can start and when. Using it requires some patience and confidence, but once you've mastered it, this tool will make your PC boot like new.

WhatInStartup | Free | ★★★★★

www.nirsoft.net | FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
EASE OF USE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

WebUser
BRONZE
AWARD

What we liked:

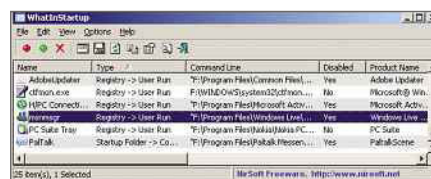
If you have an old PC that's stuffed with programs but takes so long to start up that you can't even be bothered to switch it on, this is the tool you need.

WhatInStartup is one of hundreds of no-nonsense system tools created by Nir Sofer for his site NirSoft (www.nirsoft.net).

Although the program works in Windows 10 and 8.1, there's little point in running it on new PCs because it doesn't list services, codecs and other advanced boot junk. It just targets auto-running programs and drivers, of which there may be many on older PCs.

To use WhatInStartup, simply copy it to a USB stick, insert it in the port of any PC running Windows 2000 or later, and run the program. Select multiple auto-running items, then click the red dot to disable them.

The program includes a clever Permanent Disable Mode, which detects programs that re-enable



themselves after you've disabled them, and blocks them forever.

How it can be improved:

We'd love a Windows 10-appropriate version with a comprehensive list of boot processes and start-up junk that deserves the Permanent Disable Mode treatment. But we'll let it pass, because Nir Sofer is hard at work on other ingenious ways to speed up your PC.

OUR VERDICT

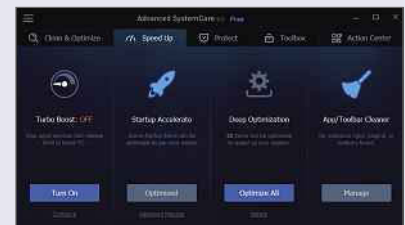
An efficient tool that could revive old PCs by blitzing the junk that stops them booting properly. What it lacks in sophistication it makes up for in ease of use and support for much older systems.

BEST OF THE REST

IObit Advanced SystemCare

From Free | bit.ly/systemcare395

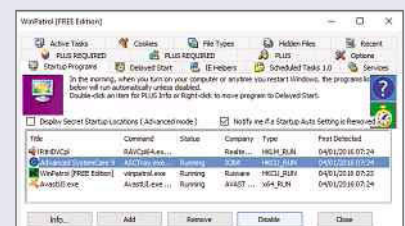
We had high hopes for this Windows 10-ready suite from system-boosting specialist IObit. However, it hogs space and memory – and runs automatically at startup! It's not worth installing for the Startup Manager, but it has other tools designed to keep a new PC fast and safe. Make sure you untick the bundled extras in the installer.



WinPatrol | From free

bit.ly/patrol395

WinPatrol comes in free and paid-for ('Plus') versions. The free program looks like a mini-Autoruns and has a brilliant Delayed Startup List feature. Certain items, such as Registry files, are marked 'Plus Required'. A lifetime licence costs \$29.95 (£21) for up to five PCs, and is easy to activate in the Plus tab.



Malwarebytes StartUpLite | Free

malwarebytes.org/startuplite

This free, portable program instantly reveals what's slowing your startup. Great! But it found no boot baddies on our Windows 10 PC, even though Autoruns and Chameleon found plenty. This is because StartUpLite identifies start-up slots from a limited list (bit.ly/startuplite395), which focuses on security. Keep it on the same USB stick as WhatInStartup for boosting older PCs.



Free tools that save you TYPING

Typing the same things every day in emails, documents and on the web can feel like a waste of time. **Edward Munn** looks at nine ways to take the strain off your fingers

Reply to emails faster

Replying to emails can be a slow and tedious task, but some email services provide built-in tools that make it less of a chore. Gmail (mail.google.com), for example, offers a Canned Responses feature that lets you save (and then insert) the replies you use most frequently with only a couple of clicks.

To activate Canned Responses, open Gmail's settings, click Labs and select Enable next to Canned Responses, then click the Save Changes button. When you're next about to type a quick, simple reply, click the down arrow next to the Trash button and choose 'Canned responses', then 'New canned response'. Enter your frequently used reply, click OK and it will be saved to the 'Canned responses' menu for you to insert whenever you need it.

Enabling this feature also lets you set 'Send canned response' as an action for Gmail filters, choosing a specific reply for each one. Note that doing this adds a suffix to your

email address, so recipients will see that your replies are automated.

Unfortunately, canned responses are not available in the mobile version of Gmail, but TypeApp (bit.ly/typeapp394), winner of last issue's roundup of email apps (bit.ly/webuser394), offers a similar feature called Quick Replies. Simply tap the three-dot button next to an email, scroll down and select

Quick Reply to choose from a number of message templates including 'Yes', 'No', 'I'm running a little late' and 'I will get back to you later'. You can customise these responses according to your tastes and, in the app's 'Configure Action Buttons' menu, you can add a Quick Reply shortcut to make the whole process even quicker. TypeApp supports all popular email providers and is available on iOS as well as Android.

Google's new email service, Inbox (inbox.google.com – available to all Gmail users), goes one step further than user-defined canned responses with its useful Smart Reply feature. When you open an email in Inbox, it analyses the contact and suggests three possible



quick replies that you can send with a single click. It's a really useful feature, especially when you simply want to acknowledge a message with a one-liner that appears authentically human, and it's now available in the Inbox apps for iOS (bit.ly/inboxios395) and Android (bit.ly/inbox395), too.

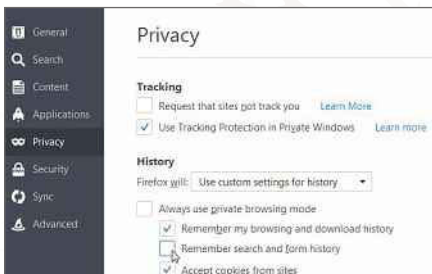
Auto-fill web forms

Google Chrome has a feature that helps you fill in web forms quickly by saving personal details including your name, phone number, address and email address. It should be enabled by

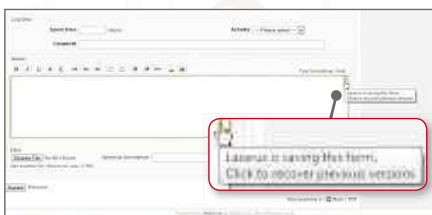


default, but if you want to reactivate Auto-fill, open the Settings menu, click 'Show advanced settings' and tick the box to 'Enable Auto-fill to fill in web forms in a single click'. Clicking 'Manage Auto-fill settings' lets you add, edit and delete addresses, and you can also store credit card information. To activate Auto-fill in Chrome for iOS and Android, open Settings, tap 'Auto-fill forms' and make sure its slider is switched to On. Autofill form information can be synced between your devices using Chrome's Sync feature.

Firefox also helps you fill in forms quickly by displaying a list of information you've entered in the past when you start typing in a particular field. You can see all entries for a particular field by pressing the down arrow when the text box is empty, and each suggestion can be deleted by highlighting it and pressing Delete. To stop Firefox saving form information, click its menu button, choose Options and Privacy and, in the drop-down menu for 'Firefox will...', select 'Use custom settings for history'. Untick the box for 'Remember search and form history' and your changes will be saved when you close the settings page.



If you've ever finished filling in a long form only to lose all your entries because the internet connection timed out, you may be interested in the browser extension Lazarus: Form Recovery for Chrome (bit.ly/lazarus395) and Firefox (bit.ly/lazarusf395). This handy browser add-on auto-saves everything you type so that you never need to enter the same information twice. The data is encrypted and stored on your own PC so there's no risk of it ending up in the wrong hands.



Type less on your phone

Your phone's default keyboard app probably offers predictive text, but by downloading the third-party keyboard

SwiftKey (bit.ly/swiftkey395), you can benefit from far more sophisticated suggestions and type entire sentences using only a few taps. To take advantage of the app's excellent Personalization feature, you need to sign in with a Gmail, Facebook or Twitter account, after which it starts learning the words and phrases you use most often, so you need never type your address or phone number

in full again. The app also has a feature called Flow, which lets you simply swipe your finger or thumb between letters rather than tapping the keys. This makes one-handed text input much more straightforward. The same feature is available with Google Keyboard and Swype, among other apps, so you might have it already and just not know it.

Use shorthand to type full sentences

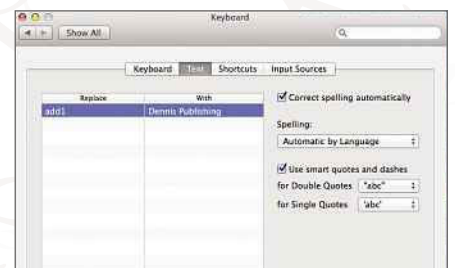
Android text-expansion app Texpand (bit.ly/texpand395) saves you a lot of typing by letting you create text-based shortcuts for your most frequently used words and phrases. By assigning your address the shortcut 'addy', for example, you can enter your address in full simply by typing the four-letter word followed by the app's floating tick. Unless you want it to, Texpand won't expand shortcuts when they're typed within other words, and you can use its floating button to undo unwanted expansions, as well as for browsing suggestions. Most impressively, the app lets you create shortcuts for phrases containing dynamic values, which



mentioned in the previous tip. The app's free version only lets you create 10 shortcuts, but if you want more, the premium version represents good value for money at £2.34.

Similar tools to Texpand are available for Windows and OS X, too. In fact, if you're using a Mac, a simple text-expansion function is built into the operating system. From System Preferences, choose Keyboard and Text and you can create your own shortcuts using the Replace and With columns. When a shortcut is typed in an Apple program, it displays a suggestion box, which you can approve by tapping the Space bar or cancel using the right arrow key.

Phrase Express Text Expander (www.phraseexpress.com) is an excellent Windows text expander tool that's free for personal use. Unlike the Mac OS X feature, it works in all programs and can also be used to sync phrases to your Android device. ■



PLAY GAMES TO SPEED UP YOUR TYPING

If you think you could benefit from learning to type faster, there are plenty of free tools that can help you do so. Web application Keybr.com uses sophisticated algorithms to create tailored lessons that help you learn to touch type. Once you've honed your skills on the website, click its Multiplayer option to test your typing against others. Alternatively, visit Typeracer.com, which challenges you to type passages from books, movies and songs as quickly as possible and also lets you take on other users from around the world.





What are your neighbours doing online?

Forget twitching the curtains – if you really want to know what people in your area are up to, you can find out on the web. **Robert Irvine** heads the neighbourhood watch

Are your neighbours hacking your Wi-Fi?

When you search for available wireless networks from home, you're invariably presented with a list that includes your neighbours' Wi-Fi, sometimes with amusing names such as 'ItHurtsWhenIP' or 'TellMyWi-FiLoveHer'. However, that means your network also shows up in *their* lists, and if you haven't secured it properly using a strong password and encryption, unscrupulous types may try to 'piggyback' on your connection.

You can find out if your neighbours are stealing your Wi-Fi by using a free tool called Wireless Network Watcher (www.nirsoft.net/utils). This tiny program scans your Wi-Fi and lists all the computers and devices that are currently connected to it, including their names, IP addresses, MAC addresses and network adapters. If you spot a suspicious entry, it's time to change

your security settings (and have a word). Turning on MAC filtering for your router adds a second layer of defence, because you can specify exactly which devices are allowed to connect to your router and network, although it doesn't make your Wi-Fi impervious.

Are your neighbours getting faster broadband than you?

It's bad enough if the people next door have a bigger garden and a better car than you, but if they're downloading films faster, too, maybe it's time to sell up and move on. You can find out if your broadband speeds are below or above average for your street using Ofcom's new 'Mobile coverage and fixed broadband checker' (bit.ly/checker395). Enter your postcode to view a map showing the quality of 3G and 4G internet in your area, as well as the average speeds of



StreetStats tells you if your neighbours are getting faster speeds from your ISP

standard and super-fast broadband. If you don't know your own mobile or home broadband speeds, visit Speedtest.net (www.speedtest.net).

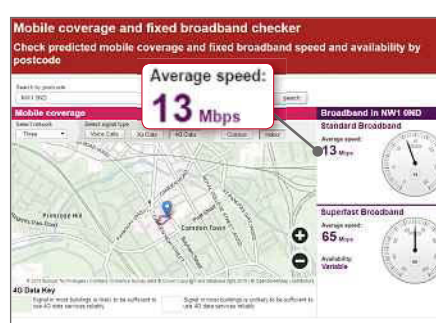
You can find out even more about your neighbours' internet connections, including which ISPs they use, by visiting uSwitch.com's StreetStats site (bit.ly/streetstats391). The information is shown on a map, with markers pinpointing the places where broadband speed readings have been taken within the past six months. To help you compare like for like, you can filter the results by internet provider and telephone exchange.

What are your neighbours uploading to YouTube?

Have you ever seen a video on YouTube and thought, "hang on, I recognise that man falling over/dog on a skateboard/

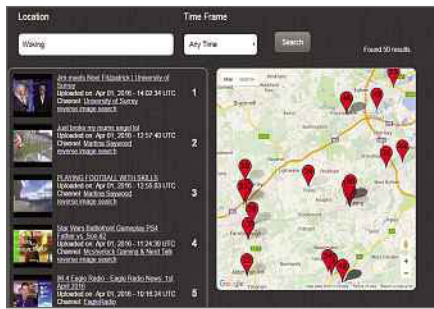
IP Address	Device Name	MAC Address	Network Adapter Company	First Detected On
192.168.1.1	Apple, Inc.	08:00:27:08:12:34	Synology Incorporated	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.2	100% - i.dennis.co.uk	08:00:27:08:12:34	Fujitsu Technology Solutions	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.3	WINDOWS-PHOTO	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.4	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	CANON INC.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.5	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.6	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Bullitt (Kangaroo) Co., Ltd.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.7	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.8	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.9	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.10	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.11	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.12	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
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192.168.1.14	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.15	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.16	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.17	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.18	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.19	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.20	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.21	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.22	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.23	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.24	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.25	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.26	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.27	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.28	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.29	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17
192.168.1.30	192.168.1.100	08:00:27:08:12:34	Apple, Inc.	01/04/2016 16:28:17

Make sure your neighbours aren't using your Wi-Fi without permission



Ofcom's tool lets you check broadband speeds and mobile coverage in your area

What are your neighbours doing online?

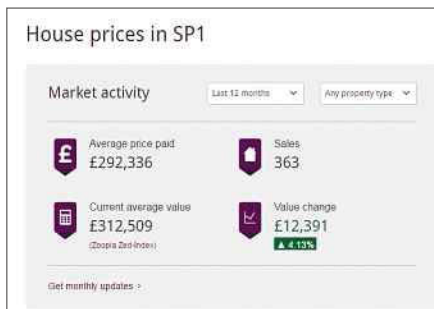


Watch the videos that people who live near you have been uploading to YouTube

car crashing into a convenience store”? If so, you’ll love the unofficial YouTube Geo Search Tool (bit.ly/upload393), which shows you videos that people in your area have uploaded to the site. Search for a location to view a list and a map of local clips uploaded within the past hour, day, week, month or year. Only videos that have been geotagged will appear in the results, but you might still discover something illuminating about your neighbours, such as which football team they support, or if they’ve been stealing your milk and posting the evidence online.

How much is your neighbour's house worth?

Recent research found that around 10 million Britons have used the web to check the value of their neighbours’ homes, even if they had no intention of buying or selling. If you’re tempted to do the same, there are several sites that

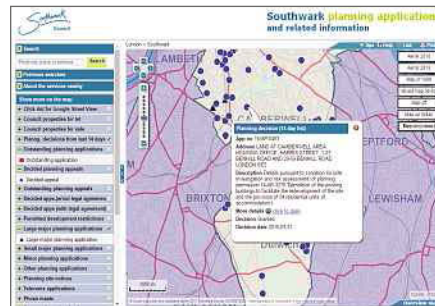


Zoopla tells you how much your neighbours are selling their homes for

tell you how much people have paid for properties in your area recently. Our favourite is the comprehensive tool from leading online property website Zoopla (bit.ly/zoopla395), which lets you enter a postcode to view current and past sale prices going back 20 years. You can filter the results by property type and street; view the average current and paid price for the postcode; and see the total number of sales, as well as changes in value. Zoopla provides full details of each property, including a breakdown of its monthly running costs. Rival property site Rightmove offers a similar tool at bit.ly/rightmove395.

What are your neighbours doing to their homes?

Barely a week goes by without a story appearing in the papers about someone upsetting their neighbours by building a kitchen extension, children’s playroom or underground swimming pool that will cause “years of untold dirt, noise and disruption”. You can find out if anyone in your street is intending to foist unwelcome construction work on the community by searching your local council’s online database of planning applications. The quickest way to do this is to visit Gov.uk’s ‘Search the register of planning decisions’ page (bit.ly/planning395) and enter your postcode. This will give you a link to the

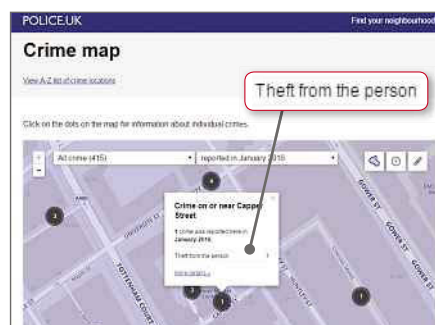


Some council websites provide maps of recent planning applications made online

relevant planning-applications page of your council’s website (England and Wales only). Click through and enter as much information as you can to discover who’s up to what, and to lodge any objections you might have before it’s too late. Some councils helpfully provide a map showing all planning applications made in your area in the past 14 days, so you can quickly pinpoint how close to your home the potential disruption will be. With most residents and businesses now submitting their applications online, it’s an easy way to keep abreast of local developments.

What crimes are your neighbours committing?

Everyone has a right to respect for his or her private life, both online and off, but it’s still useful to know about the



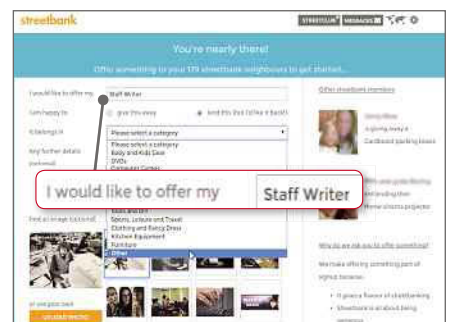
Discover the most prevalent crime in your area using the Police.uk crime map

number and type of criminal offences that have been committed near you.

If you live in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, the most reliable and up-to-date source of such information is Police.uk (www.police.uk). Click the ‘Find Your Neighbourhood’ button on the homepage, then either enter your postcode or click ‘Use this location’ to view how many crimes were reported in the vicinity in the most recent monthly figures. Click ‘Explore the crime map’ and you can find out exactly what your neighbours have been up to and where (anonymously, of course) – whether it’s antisocial behaviour, bicycle theft or shoplifting. There’s even a nifty tool that lets you draw a specific area on the map to confirm your suspicions about that crack den at number 22.

What are your neighbours giving away online?

If the previous tips in this feature seem rather nosy and suspicious, here’s a friendlier one to finish. Suppose you need a drill to do some DIY or some cardboard boxes to clear out old copies of *Computeractive* – who can you turn to? Why, your neighbours, of course (when you’re not accusing them of stealing your Wi-Fi or uploading dodgy videos). This is where Streetbank (www.streetbank.com) comes in handy. It allows you to borrow or acquire items from your neighbours for free, arranged in categories that include Gardening Equipment, Electrical, Furniture, Tools & DIY, and Kitchenware. You can also give or lend your own stuff to your neighbours. It’s this latter aspect that gives Streetbank more of a community feel than Freecycle (www.freecycle.org), as does the fact that it means neighbours in the real sense, rather than ‘local’ people who live on the other side of town. You can’t use the site unless you offer something of your own when you sign up, which deters freeloaders and means you actually meet some decent, generous people. And that, as the cheesy song goes, is when good neighbours become good friends! ■



Streetbank lets you offer neighbours your old junk to get something good in return

Broadband Deals

Call FREE on 0800 083 2357 to switch your broadband

	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
							CHEAPEST
1		Plusnet: Broadband	£9.99 (FREE for 12 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£0.00
2		EE: Broadband & Calls	£9.95 (£1 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£12.00
3		TalkTalk: Broadband	£7.50 (HALF PRICE for 18 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£45.00
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 5 April 2016.

Ofcom

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

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

**SNEAK
PREVIEW!**

Computer active

WINDOWS 10: The best things you can do in it - that you *can't* do in 7 and 8.1

- Get alerts when software slows your PC
- Block dangerous ads on your iPad

• Software and devices you must stop using

• **PLUS:** Discover which add-ons crash your browser

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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 search-themed word search and guess our proverb emoji?

WEB USER WORD SEARCH

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

ASK JEEVES
BAIDU
BING
DUCKDUCKGO
GOOGLE
LYCOS
STARTPAGE
WOLFRAM ALPHA
YAHOO
YANDEX

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

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE PROVERBS FROM THE EMOJI?

1



2



3



4



Get the answers online at bit.ly/quiz395

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 3 Arcam MusicBoost for iPhone 6s

Available now for the iPhone 6S, the Arcam MusicBoost is a combined headphone amplifier and battery pack housed in a soft-touch sleeve. As well as boosting the battery life of iPhones, it greatly improves the audio quality of attached headphones. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'boost' in the subject line. For more information, visit www.arcam.co.uk, follow [@ArcamUK](https://twitter.com/ArcamUK) on Twitter and 'like' www.facebook.com/ArcamUK.



WORTH
£120
EACH

WIN 1 OF 5 Revell Control Nano Hex Multicopter

Thanks to its six rotors and the six-axis gyro, Revell Control's Nano Hex is very stable in flight and especially well-suited for beginners, while advanced pilots will enjoy getting to grips with its three speeds and flip function. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'hex' in the subject line. You can buy the Nano Hex from Argos. For more information, visit www.revell.de/en.



WORTH
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Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Forget Microsoft Edge: browse the web with Opera 36 | www.opera.com

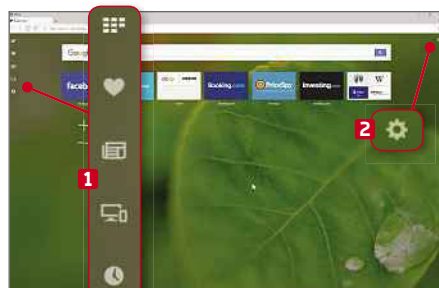
Opera has released a new version of its popular web browser that firmly targets Windows 10 users. Here's what you need to know

Windows 10 comes with two web browsers – the popular but aging Internet Explorer, and the new Microsoft Edge. However, Edge lacks features compared with the likes of Firefox and Chrome. Microsoft is working to improve its tools and will debut Edge's extension support, among other features, in the Windows 10 Anniversary Update, expected this summer.

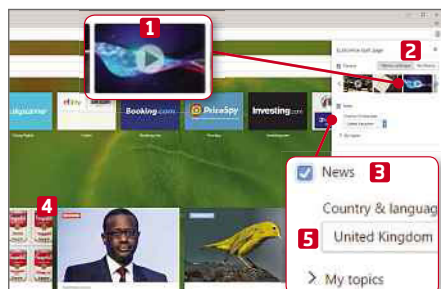
But that could turn out to be too little, too late. Norwegian developer Opera thinks Windows 10 users deserve better right now and has updated its own browser with the aim of making it the perfect Edge replacement. Opera 36 is a major update and includes a new Windows 10-style interface and full notification support, as well as other features not found in Microsoft's browser.



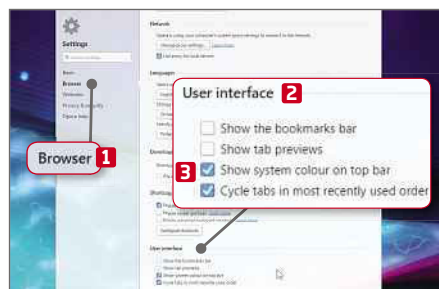
1 The first big change to be found in Opera 36 is a redesigned Speed Dial start page. This includes a Google Search bar **1** and thumbnails of popular sites. **2** You can add new sites by clicking the plus symbol, **3** and group sites in folders **4** by clicking and dragging thumbnails on top of one another.



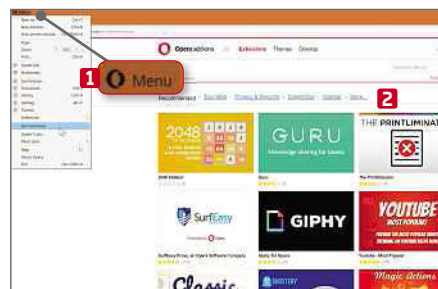
2 The browser's layout has been tweaked to better fit widescreen displays, with the navigation panel moved over to the left. **1** From here you can access Speed Dial, Bookmarks, News, Tabs and History. The Settings button **2** lets you customise themes and add news content you're interested in.



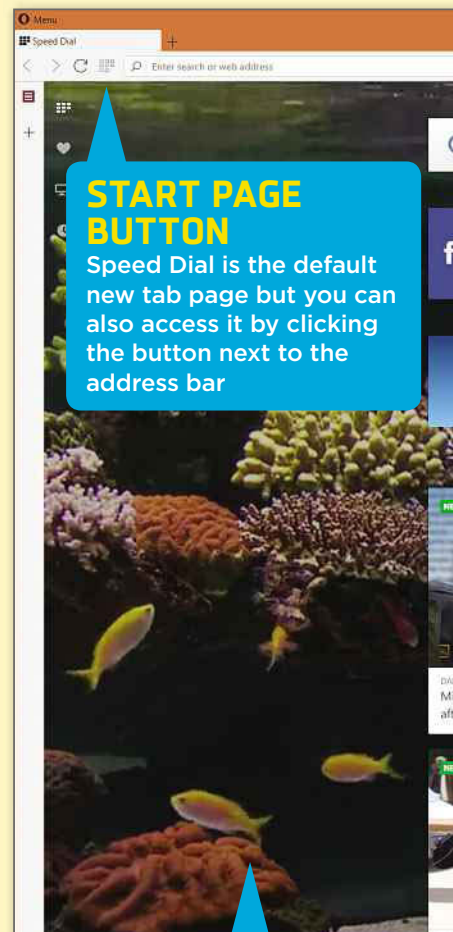
3 There's a selection of themes to choose from. Any that have a play button are animated. **1** Switch between the Themes Catalogue and My Themes, **2** and scroll right to reveal more. Tick News **3** if you want to see news content on the page. **4** You can also change the 'Country & language' and topics. **5**



4 One new option sets Opera to match the colour scheme of your Windows 10 installation, but this is disabled by default. To turn it on, click the Settings button, then click 'Go to browser settings' at the bottom. Click Browser **1** and scroll down to 'User interface'. **2** Tick 'Show system colour on top bar'. **3**



5 Microsoft Edge doesn't support add-ons yet (although Windows Insiders can try a few early examples). Opera does, however. To see what's available, click the Opera button **1** and select 'Get extensions'. Browse the selection **2** and click 'Add to Opera' to install any you want.



START PAGE BUTTON

Speed Dial is the default new tab page but you can also access it by clicking the button next to the address bar

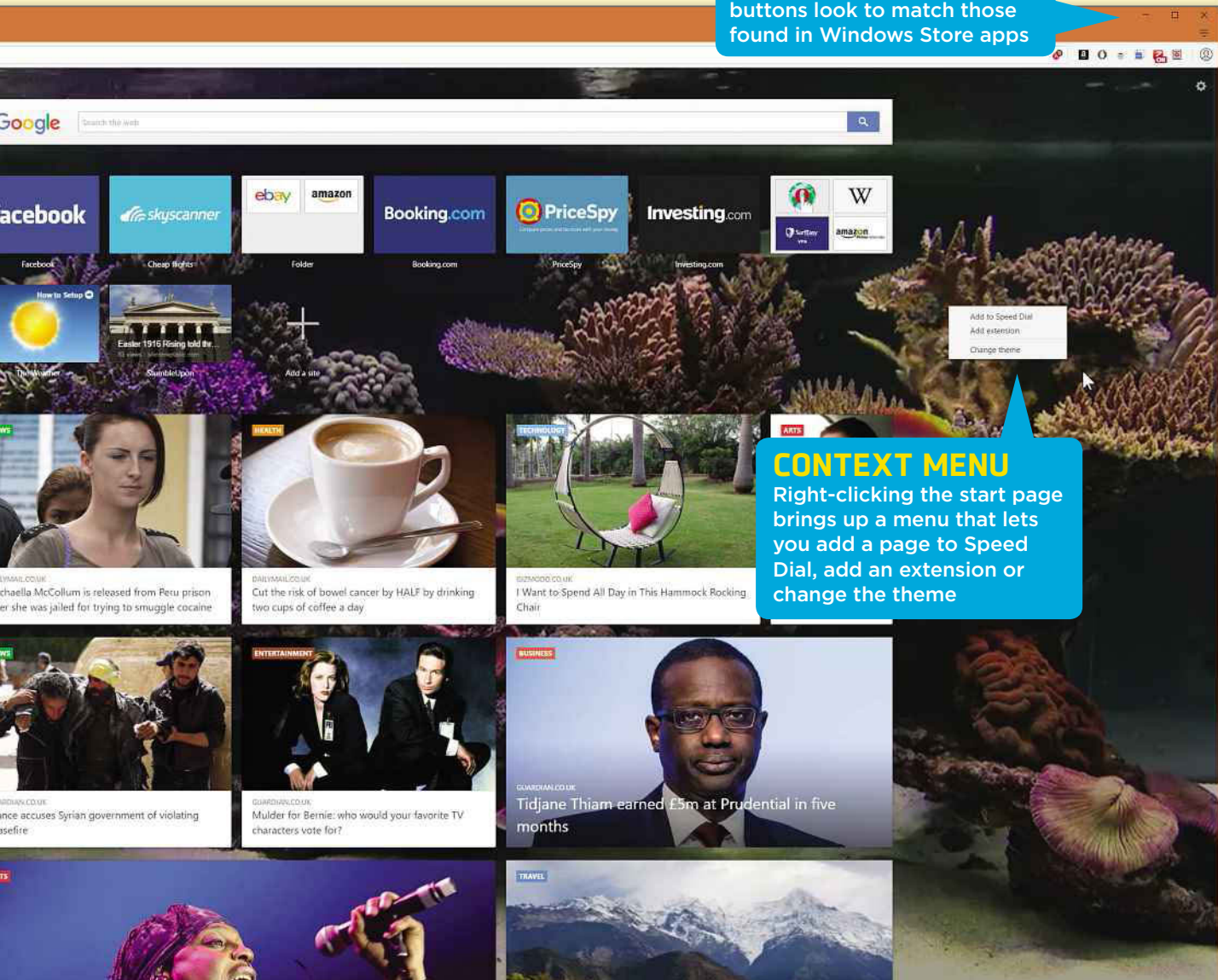
ANIMATED BACKGROUND

Animated themes use hardware acceleration where available. You can configure this under Settings, Browser



MINIMISE/MAXIMISE

It's a minor tweak, but Opera has changed the way the buttons look to match those found in Windows Store apps

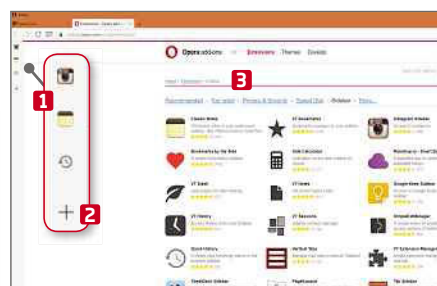


CONTEXT MENU

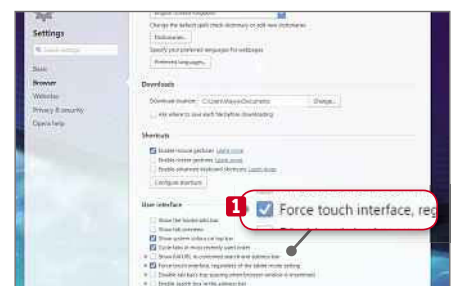
Right-clicking the start page brings up a menu that lets you add a page to Speed Dial, add an extension or change the theme



6 Buttons for installed add-ons appear in the browser's top-right corner. **1** You can manage and remove add-ons by clicking the Opera button and going to Extensions, 'Extensions manager'. Here you can disable an add-on, **2** access its options, **3** hide it from the toolbar **4** and make it available in private mode. **5**



7 You can also add extensions and themes through the sidebar. Click the Opera button and go to Extensions, Sidebar. This opens a thin strip on the left-hand side. **1** Clicking the plus symbol **2** opens the extensions page for the sidebar. Add-ons you install here will appear in the bar. **3**



8 Other tools for Windows 10 include notification support and the ability to adapt to your input method. So if you use a touchscreen, for example, it increases the size of toolbar items and menus automatically. You can set this style as the default by going to Settings, Browser and ticking 'Force touch interface'. **1**



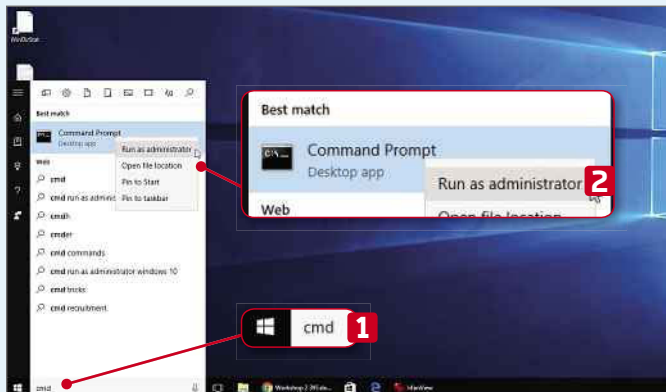
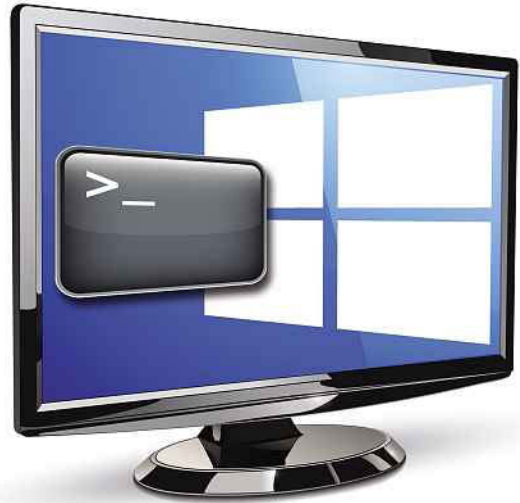
Restore Safe Mode to Windows 10's boot menu

🕒 10 mins | 🖥️ Windows 10

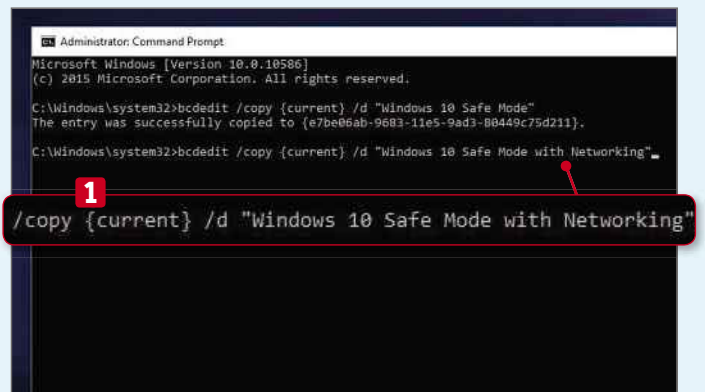
Windows 10 starts up so much more quickly than older versions of Windows that tapping F8 is no longer a reliable way to access Safe Mode. You can still launch Safe Mode in a number of other ways, but they're clunky and, more importantly, are performed once Windows has already loaded, which isn't helpful if your PC won't start.

In this Workshop, we show you how to configure your boot menu so that options for Safe Mode (or indeed 'Safe Mode with Networking' or 'Safe Mode with Command Prompt') are available whenever you start your PC. You add each boot entry using a simple command line in Command Prompt, then configure it using System Configuration. By default, your PC gives you 30 seconds to choose a boot option, but you can make it shorter to avoid slowing your PC's boot time.

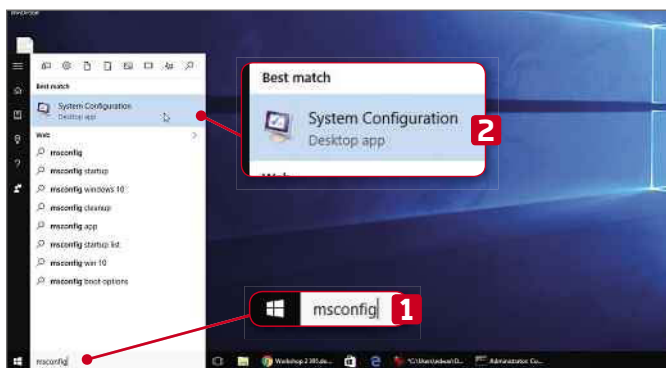
If you have only one operating system installed, adding a Safe Mode option also lets you access advanced tools such as Windows 10's troubleshooting menu when you start your PC.



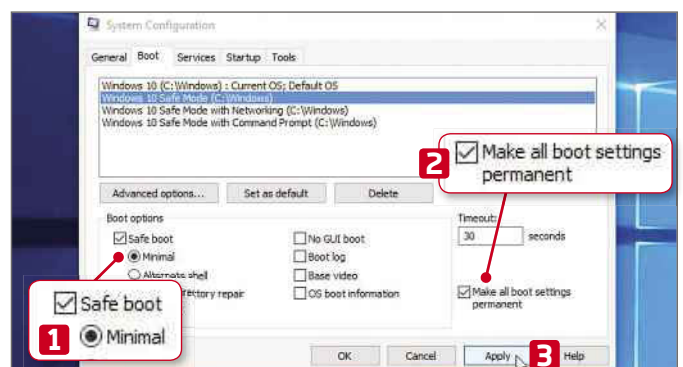
1 Click the Start button and type cmd. **1** Right-click Command Prompt and select 'Run as administrator' **2** and Yes. In the console, type `bcdedit /copy {current} /d "Windows 10 Safe Mode"`, where "Windows 10 Safe Mode" is the name of your new boot entry. Then press Enter.



2 To add entries for 'Safe Mode with Networking' or 'Safe Mode with Command Prompt', repeat Step 1, changing only the title to describe these functions – so, for example: `bcdedit /copy {current} /d "Windows 10 Safe Mode with Networking"` **1**



3 To alter your new boot entries so they perform the appropriate function (instead of the standard boot procedure), click Start, type `msconfig` **1** and open System Configuration. **2** From the Boot tab, select the entry for 'Windows 10 Safe Mode' and tick the box for 'Safe boot'.



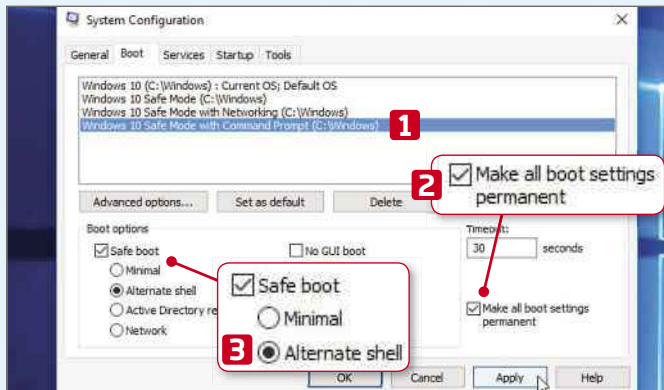
4 Leave the Minimal option selected for this entry **1** and tick the box for 'Make all boot settings permanent' **2** before clicking Apply **3** and Yes. Windows will warn you that the changes are permanent, but don't worry about this, because we show you how to undo them in Step 8.



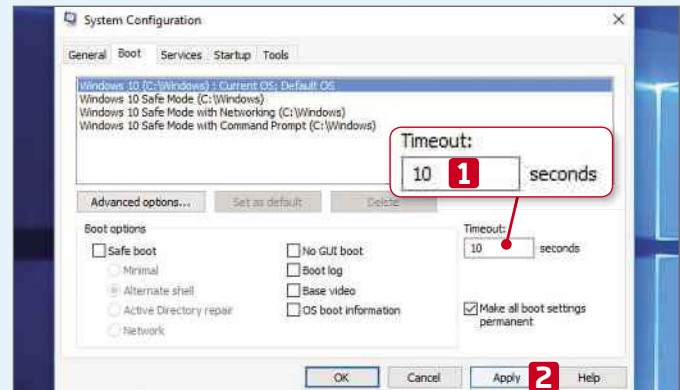
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says

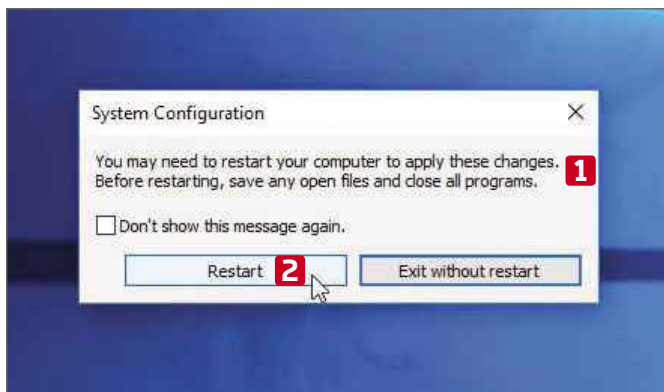
If you run more than one operating system on your PC, you can access Safe Mode by reinstating the Windows 'legacy boot menu' (and tapping F8 when it loads). To do this, run the following command line in an elevated command prompt: `bcdedit /set {default} bootmenupolicy legacy`. To undo the change, enter: `bcdedit /set {default} bootmenupolicy standard`



5 To set 'Safe Mode with Networking', follow the same steps, choosing Network instead of Minimal. To configure 'Safe Mode with Command Prompt', select its entry, **1** tick the box to 'Make all boot settings permanent' **2** and then select 'Safe boot' and 'Alternate shell' **3** before clicking Apply.



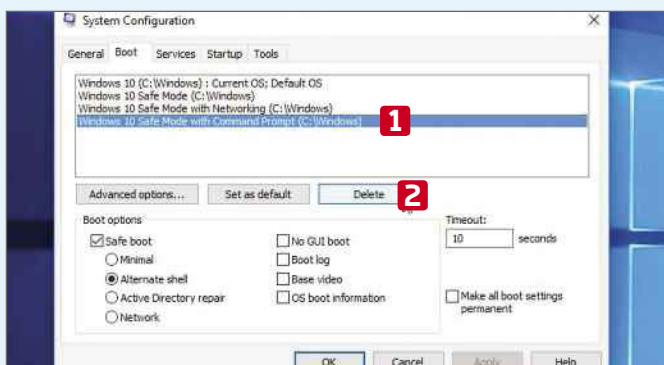
6 By default, you're given 30 seconds to choose one of your boot entries on startup. You can change this to a time of your choice by changing the Timeout figure **1** and then clicking Apply. **2** Setting Timeout to -1 keeps all the options on screen until you pick one.



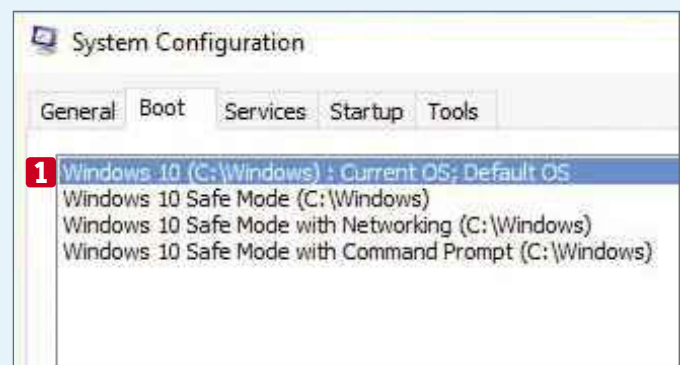
7 Once you've completed your configuration, click OK and you'll be asked if you're happy to Restart your PC. **1** Select Restart **2** and your new boot menu will appear on screen. Use your mouse or the Tab key to select the option you want, then press Enter to proceed.



8 From the same menu, you can choose 'Change defaults or choose other options'. **1** Selecting this lets you change the timeout length and default boot entry. Clicking the 'Choose other options' button lets you access Windows 10's troubleshooting tools or boot from a USB device or DVD.



9 If you decide you want to delete your boot entries, type `msconfig` into the Start menu and run System Configuration again. From the boot menu, select the boot entry you want to remove **1** and click Delete. **2** When you click Apply and OK, Windows invites you to restart your PC again.



10 If you delete all your custom boot entries, your computer will boot straight to Windows 10, as before. Make sure you never delete the option marked 'Current OS' **1** because that would render your PC unable to boot into Windows.



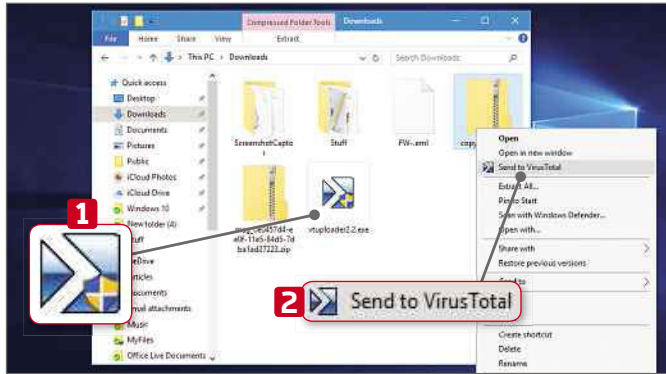
Scan for malware with a quick right-click

Security software is good at protecting PCs from malware such as viruses, but individual programs can sometimes get things wrong and allow harmful programs to slip through. One solution is to use VirusTotal, which provides 57

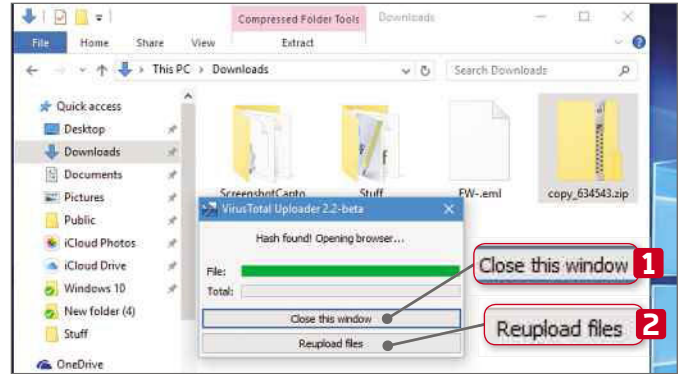
tools to scan any suspicious file you send it. We've been able to use it on the web for a while, but now its updated Uploader makes it even easier to use from your Desktop.



VirusTotal Uploader: bit.ly/vtup395 | 10 mins | XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10, OS X



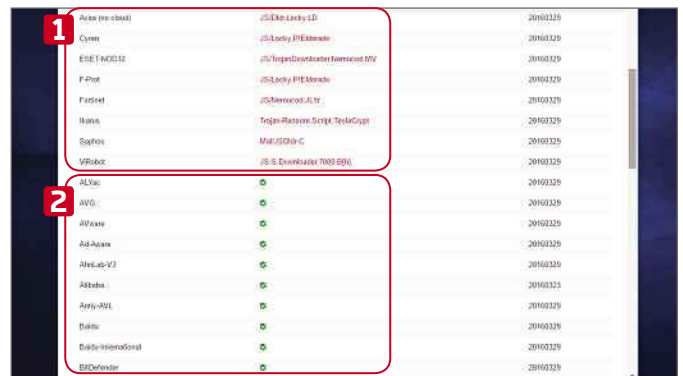
1 Download VirusTotal Uploader and double-click it to install the program. **1** This adds an extra item to the menu that appears when you right-click a file in an Explorer window. To use it, right-click a file, such as one in the Downloads folder, and select 'Send to VirusTotal' from the menu. **2**



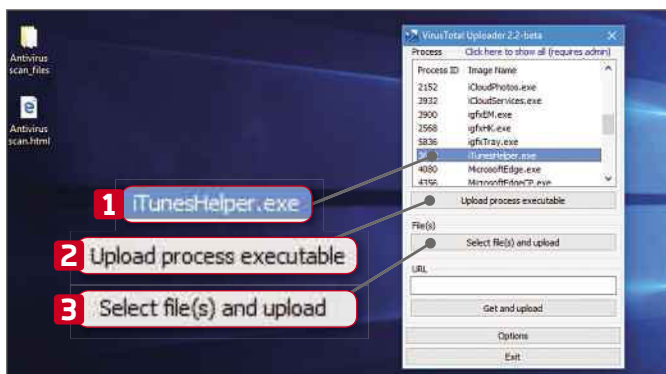
2 Small files upload quickly, but files of several megabytes could take a few minutes. The maximum size allowed is 32MB. If you have a problem uploading a file, click 'Close this window' **1** (sometimes it says Cancel), then click the 'Reupload files' button below. **2**



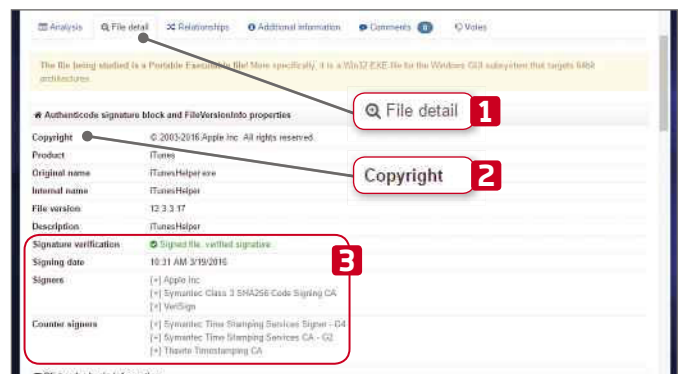
3 Your default browser opens to display the results. The 'Detection ratio' **1** is the number of security programs that report the file as malware – in this case, 11 of the 57 programs. The image on the right of the screen shows whether any people have reported the file as safe or malware. **2**



4 Scroll down to see more results. In this case, popular programs like Avira, **1** ESET and Sophos report our file as malware, but AVG, Ad-Aware and BitDefender **2** don't. Often the results indicate clearly that a file is malware or safe, but not always. Treat files with mixed results as malware.



5 Double-click the VirusTotal Upload icon on the desktop to see a list of programs running in the background. Select an unknown or suspicious file, **1** then click 'Upload process executable'. **2** You can also select files on the hard drive and upload those. **3**



6 This file received a clean report from all 57 security programs. Select the 'File detail' tab **1** to find out more about it. The Copyright entry **2** shows that it is from a reputable company. The 'Signature verification' **3** and signers confirm that this is a safe file from a trusted source.



Get Android N's best tools today

Android N is due later this year, but you can enjoy some of its best new features today without having to suffer bugs in the developer preview (bit.ly/androidl395) or wait months for a stable release. In this Workshop, we bring

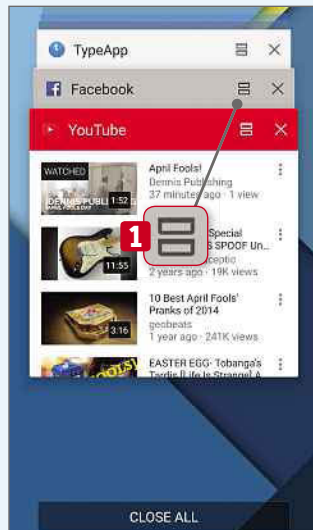


10 mins |

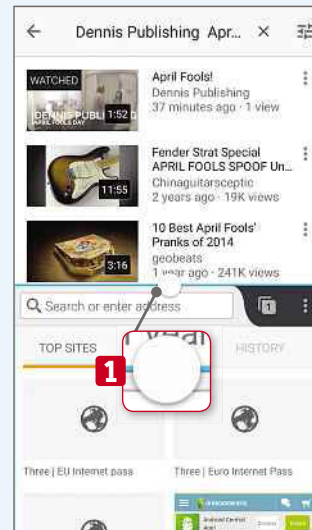


Android (varies with device)

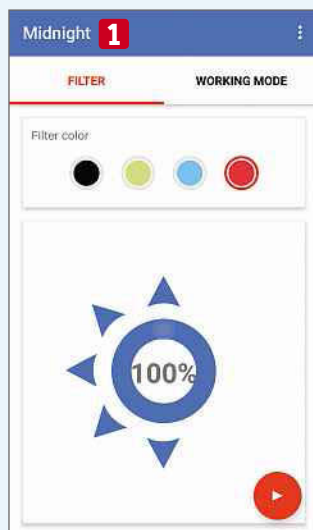
you a selection of third-party apps that help you save data, improve battery life and block nuisance calls, among other useful new Android N features.



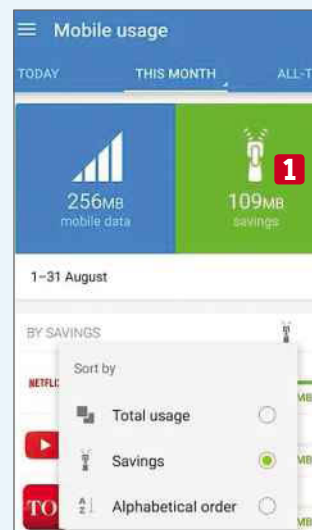
1 One of Android N's most highly anticipated features is split-screen multitasking. If you have a Samsung device, however, you probably already have this feature (even if you didn't know it). Tap the recent apps button. Any app that's compatible with split-screen mode has a two-rectangle icon in its title bar. **1** Tap this to open the app in the top half of your screen.



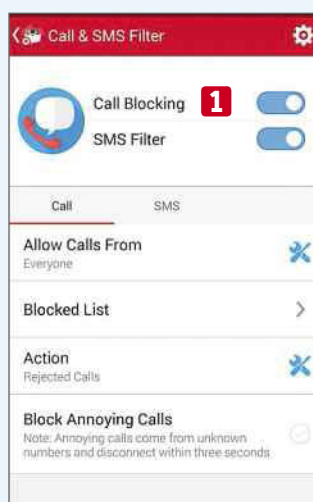
2 Choose the second app you want to open from the list that appears below. You can give one app more space than the other by long-pressing and dragging the circular button. **1** Tapping this opens a range of options, including minimising and maximising your current window or swapping the windows' positions.



3 Android N includes a Night Mode that automatically adjusts your screen's brightness and hue to reduce the strain on your eyes in the evening hours. Install Midnight (Night Mode) (bit.ly/night395) to take advantage of this feature now. If your device has an AMOLED screen, you'll also benefit from improved battery life.



4 Android N's new Data Saver mode blocks background data usage and instructs apps to use less data in the foreground whenever possible. Opera Max (bit.ly/opera395) works in a similar way, allowing you to stop apps using background data and helping you make significant savings **1** while using popular apps, including Chrome, Instagram, YouTube and Netflix.



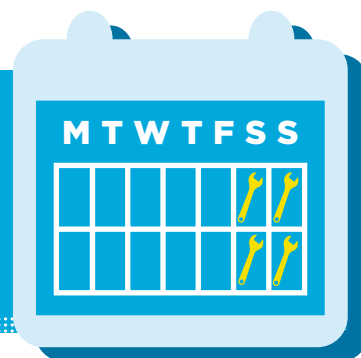
5 Some Android devices already let you block nuisance callers, and this feature will become standard in Android N. If you don't want to wait, install one of the many antivirus apps that already support call blocking, such as Avast's Antivirus & Security (bit.ly/avast395), AVG AntiVirus Free (bit.ly/avgmobil395) and Trend Micro's Dr Safety (bit.ly/safety395). **1**



6 Android Marshmallow's battery-saving feature, Doze, is helpful but it only kicks in when your device has been sitting still for half an hour. This third-party app, also called Doze (bit.ly/dozeapp395), **1** helps extend your battery life even further by preventing apps from sending and receiving data when your screen is turned off.

Weekend Project

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



How to...

Run Windows software without Microsoft spying

If you like Windows but hate Microsoft's increasing interference, why not try an alternative? **Wayne Williams** explains how to use ReactOS

Windows 10 is undoubtedly a good operating system, but there are elements of it that you might not be so keen on. The fact that it spies on you and makes updates mandatory, for example, may leave you feeling less comfortable than you did with previous versions. If you don't want to upgrade to Windows 10, and Microsoft's constant nagging to do so is beginning to grate, perhaps it's time to consider switching to a brand new operating system.

Although Linux, Mac OS X and Chrome OS are great alternatives to Windows, they all have downsides – not least of which is that you might need to shell out for new hardware to use some of them. ReactOS (www.reactos.org) is potentially a better solution – it's fully compatible with Windows, which means it will run all your favourite programs, but at the same time it *isn't* Windows, and Microsoft has nothing to do with it.



What is ReactOS?

ReactOS is an entirely free open-source operating system that has been written from scratch. It's based on Windows, looks and behaves like Microsoft's OS, and can run Windows software and use Windows drivers, so all your hardware should work as intended. Because it's open-source (unlike Windows, which is closed source), you don't have to worry about spying or privacy issues. Anyone

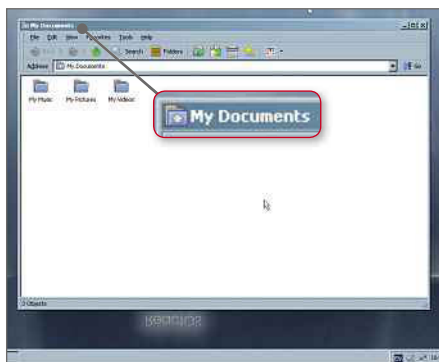
who has enough technical knowledge can look at the source code and see how it works, report and fix bugs, and even spin off their own version of the OS.

ReactOS has been in development for around 20 years, and a new version has just been released. You should be able to run your favourite programs on it, although there's no guarantee that everything will function perfectly. That said, new builds are released daily, so if

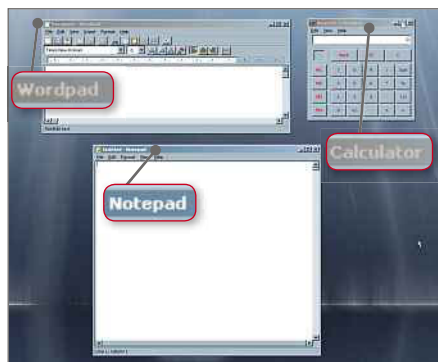
you encounter a problem, it could well be fixed in a day or two – especially if you report the issue.

Download ReactOS

There are two main versions of ReactOS to choose from: a BootCD and a LiveCD. The former lets you install ReactOS on your PC, while the latter gives you a way of testing the operating system without installing it. This is the same approach



ReactOS has a My Documents folder with sub-folders for music, images and music



You can access familiar built-in tools such as Notepad, WordPad and a Calculator



There's even a selection of built-in games, including two versions of Solitaire

you'll find with Linux-based operating systems like Ubuntu. We'd recommend you start with the LiveCD, so you can see whether or not you like it. Despite its long development history, ReactOS is still at the alpha testing stage, which means it is not yet feature-complete and so not recommended for everyday use. You can install it on a PC without any problems, but it probably shouldn't replace Windows on your main system just yet.

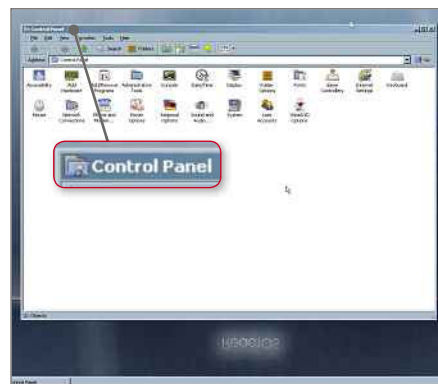
Three 'advanced downloads' are also available. These are versions of the OS that have already been set up and are designed to run using virtualisation software (programs that emulate PC hardware and can run as separate systems inside Windows). To try ReactOS with QEMU, VMware, or VirtualBox, just download the relevant version. Finally, if you want to try the very latest releases, you can download the nightly builds.

Although ReactOS is free, you will be asked to contribute a small fee towards its continuing development, but there's no obligation to do so, and you can just proceed straight to the downloads.

Unlike many Linux operating systems, ReactOS isn't a particularly large download. The LiveCD version is just 65.7MB, and the BootCD version is only marginally larger at 93.8MB.



Your favourite software will work as usual in ReactOS including browsers such as Firefox



Anyone who has ever used Windows will recognise the ReactOS Control Panel

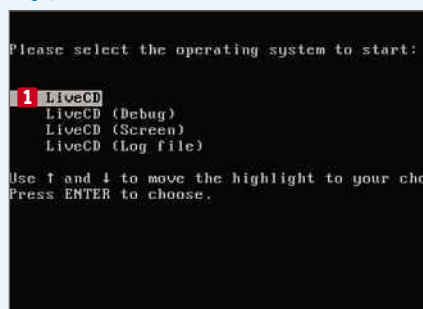
System requirements

ReactOS has very modest hardware needs, so it should run on older computers provided they meet the following requirements:

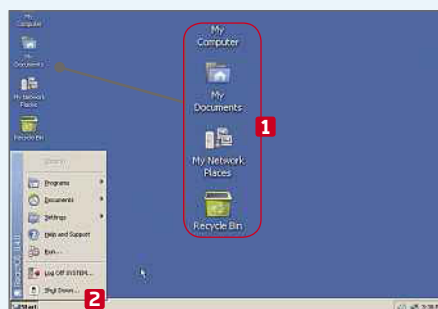
- **RAM:** A minimum of 96MB; 256MB is recommended.
- **Processor:** x86 or x64 architecture, Pentium or later, and equivalents.
- **Hard drive:** An IDE or SATA drive with at least 450MB of free space on the primary partition (not all SATA controllers will work with ReactOS).
- **FAT16 or FAT32** primary boot partition.
- **Video:** A VGA-compatible video card (VESA BIOS version 2.0 or later).



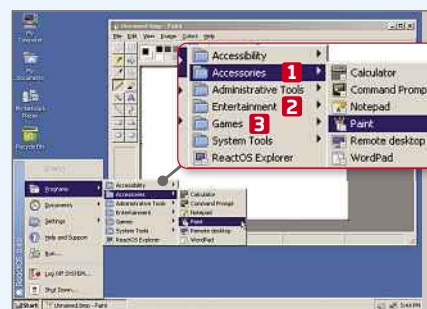
MINI WORKSHOP | Run ReactOS from a LiveCD



1 Unzip the LiveCD download and save the ReactOS-0.4.0-Live.iso to your desktop. You can copy this disk image to a CD or DVD or install it on a USB flash drive using Rufus (rufus.akeo.ie). You'll find instructions for both on the ReactOS website. Boot from your choice of installation media, and select LiveCD **1** in the menu.



2 Your computer will load any drivers it needs and then present you with the ReactOS desktop. You can now start using it. As you can see, ReactOS isn't the most modern-looking operating system around, with a design that's reminiscent of Windows 98. You'll find shortcuts to popular features on the desktop **1** and also a Start menu. **2**



3 Using ReactOS is like going back in time to a simpler Windows era. Click the Start button to access various apps, sorted into categories. Accessories **1** includes Calculator, Paint and WordPad. Entertainment **2** offers a Multimedia Player and Sound Recorder, while Games **3** includes Solitaire and WineMine.

WebUser Bookstore

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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

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

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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO WINDOWS 10

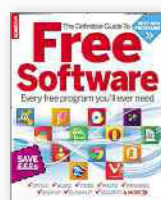
This 148-page book is the only guide you need to Microsoft's fantastic new operating system. You'll learn how to master all the new tools and software, and how to upgrade without losing anything. It has been updated to include fixes for problems that have appeared since Windows 10 launched.



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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO FREE SOFTWARE

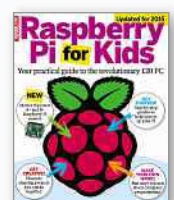
Free software can be a worry. Is it as good as a paid-for package? Will it sneak junk on to your PC? Does it nag you to update to a premium version? In our new 148-page book *The Definitive Guide to Free Software*, we recommend only the best free programs that deliver high-quality features and no nasty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



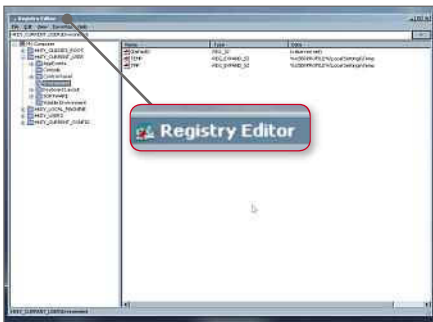
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RASPBERRY PI FOR KIDS

The Raspberry Pi is the incredible £20 British computer that's taking the world by storm. It's ideal for children of all ages to experiment with, play games and learn valuable skills. We've updated this 148-page book for 2015 to include instructions on mastering the new Pi models (A+ and B+).



BUY IT NOW FROM AMAZON
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There's even a Registry Editor in ReactOS for tweaking the operating system



Personalise ReactOS with your choice of wallpaper, screensaver and colour scheme



You shut down your PC in ReactOS the same way you would in Windows

Run ReactOS on VirtualBox

If you want to get started as quickly as possible, the best option is to run ReactOS in a virtualised environment using Oracle VM VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org). Download and install VirtualBox, then download the preloaded VirtualBox version of ReactOS from the Advanced Downloads section of the website. Unzip the contents of the download to your Windows Desktop. It contains two files: ReactOS 0.4.0.vbox and ReactOS.vhd. Double-click the former and ReactOS will be added to VirtualBox. Select it, and click Start. It should begin to load, but you may encounter an error message stating that VirtualBox failed to open a session. This problem occurs when the program can't find a USB 2.0 controller in VirtualBox. To get around it, you can either install the Oracle VM VirtualBox Extension Pack or disable USB 2.0 support. To disable

USB 2.0, click Settings, select USB in the sidebar and untick 'Enable USB Controller'. Click OK, then try launching ReactOS again. It should start without a problem this time, allowing you to install ReactOS in the virtual machine.

If you've never used VirtualBox before, there are some things you need to know. First, your mouse pointer will appear to be trapped inside the virtual OS. To release it and switch to using Windows, simply press Right Arrow+Ctrl. If you want to change the size of the operating system window, go to the View menu and select Scaled mode. Drag on the corner of the window until it's the size you want. You can also switch to full screen here.

You might also want to adjust the display resolution of the operating

system. If so, right-click the ReactOS Desktop and select Properties. Click the Settings tab, and use the slider to change the size of the screen area.

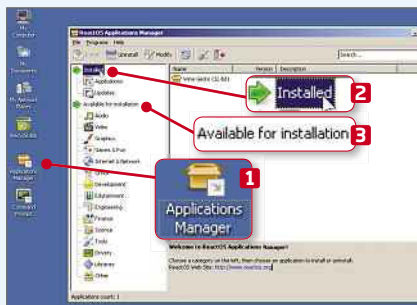
Give ReactOS a makeover

In its default state, ReactOS looks rather bland – like an old version of Windows, in fact – but you can easily spice it up. Right-click the Desktop and select Properties. In the Background tab, select the Angelus image to use as wallpaper (or click Browse and find an image of your own) and click Apply. Click the Screensaver tab to set up a screensaver, and the Appearance tab to change the default visual style and colour scheme. You can also apply various effects and access the advanced appearance options.

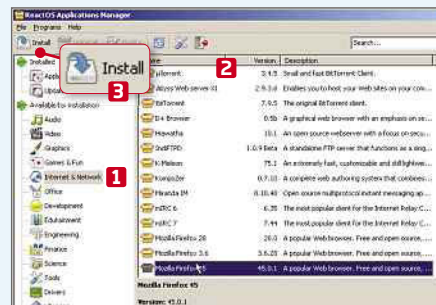
If you want to improve the look of ReactOS further, you can install themes. You'll find instructions for doing this at bit.ly/reactostheme395. ■



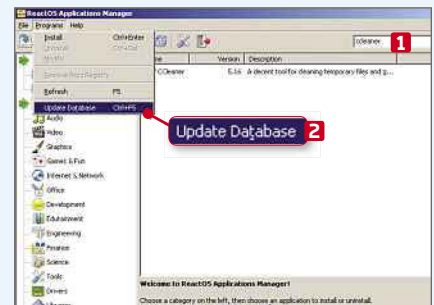
MINI WORKSHOP | Install and run Windows software



1 Although ReactOS comes with some basic programs to get you started, you'll no doubt want to start using your own applications before long. The BootCD and virtual machine editions come with an Applications Manager shortcut on the desktop. **1** Double-click this and you'll see a selection of programs that are installed **2** or available for installation. **3**



2 It's a good idea to start by installing a web browser, as ReactOS doesn't provide one by default. Click on Internet & Network **1** and wait for the list of available programs to appear. **2** You have a choice of browsers, including K-Meleon, Opera and Firefox. Select the one you want and click the Install button at the top of the screen. **3**



3 Your chosen browser will be downloaded and installed. You can then access it through the Start menu. Other applications available for installation include Audacity, VLC Media Player, GIMP, LibreOffice, 7-Zip, and CCleaner. You can also search for specific programs by name. **1** Refresh the software list at any time by going to Programs, Update Database. **2**

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Web User's Top Tips

Master the Roku and Chromecast streaming devices with these tips from our experts

TOP TIPS FOR CHROMECAST AND ROKU



Chromecast vs Roku

The Chromecast (£30, bit.ly/cast395) and the Roku (from £49.99, www.roku.com) both stream TV programmes, movies, music and photos to your TV, so what is the difference? A Roku is similar to a Sky box or a digital TV box. You plug it into your TV and use a supplied remote control to select channels, which include Netflix, YouTube and all the mainstream UK catch-up services. Roku offers a range of models, with better features the more you spend.

A Chromecast is like a wireless dongle for your TV that you can use to connect a computer, phone or tablet. You can then mirror the screen or stream from a selection of apps, including Netflix and iPlayer.

Go for the Roku if you want a standalone TV box that requires nothing else, but choose Chromecast if you'd like to send movies, photos and music to your TV from apps on your PC, tablet or phone.



Chromecast and Roku work in different ways, but both stream online TV programmes and movies to your television

Get the apps



Chromecast doesn't have a remote – instead, you control it using an Android (bit.ly/castand395) or iOS (bit.ly/castios395) app on a phone or tablet. Use the Get Apps tab to find apps that can stream media to your TV.

The Roku comes with its own remote control but it's also worth downloading the optional iOS (bit.ly/rokuios395) and Android (bit.ly/rokuand395) apps, because they make it easier to enter text when searching and customising the Roku. They also let you view photos and videos stored on your phone through your TV screen. Select Play on

the Roku app and choose the appropriate media type.

Speak and search



Using the Roku's remote to search for items is a pain because it's not a convenient input device. Fortunately, you can also speak your searches. To do this, you need the Roku app for iOS or Android, and a recent Roku device, not

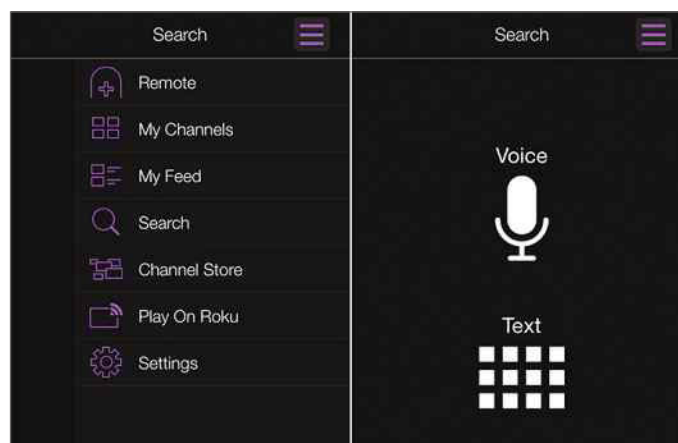
an old model. Select Search in the Roku app on your phone, tap Voice and say what you want to find.

Change the Chromecast backdrop



When the Chromecast isn't streaming videos, it displays a slideshow of photos like a screensaver. Load the Chromecast

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.



The Roku app lets you use your device's microphone to speak your search queries instead of typing them



app on your phone and select Devices to see the current image. To change it, tap Edit Backdrop, allow it to access your location, then choose the source of the images you want to display on the TV while the Chromecast is idle.

There are many different categories and Featured photos: the default categories are Art, Weather and 'Earth and Space', and these contain fantastic photos sourced by Google. Other options include Play Newsstand (the news app) or your own Google Photos, Facebook or Flickr images. You can customise the slideshow by turning on the categories you want to see and turning off those you don't. For example, you could set it to show only your holiday snapshots.

Stream from USB

 Some Roku models have a USB port, which you can plug a USB memory stick into. Select the Roku Media Player channel on the home screen, choose the type of media you want to play (video, music or photos), select the source (the USB drive) and use the arrow keys to navigate the folders and files.

Customise Roku channels

 There are so many channels on Roku that it can be hard to find the one you want. The secret is to customise the display. To move a channel, select it in My Channels, press the star button on the remote and select Move. Use the arrow buttons to move the channel, then press OK on the remote. To remove a channel, select it in My Channels, press star and select Remove.

Change Roku's theme

 Roku's background, graphics and colour scheme are not fixed and, as with the Windows Desktop, you can choose a new theme. Go to Themes in the Roku channel store to select a new one. Some are free for a limited time, sometimes to coincide with the launch of a new TV series, so check the Themes section occasionally to see what's new.

Receive Roku weather reports

 New channels are regularly added to the Roku but you might not always notice. For example, there's a new Weather Network channel in the News & Weather category, which offers streaming local weather reports.

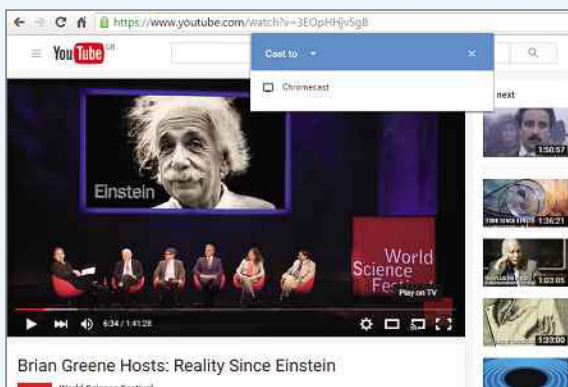
Music-streaming service Deezer (available from the Music category) is also relatively new to Roku. If you have an account, you can play music through your TV as well as on your mobile device or PC.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Cast YouTube videos

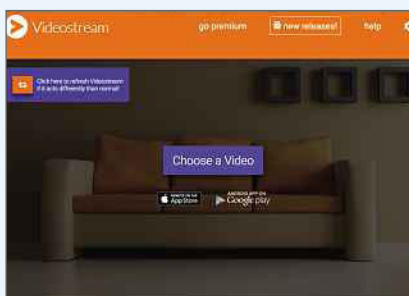
 If you find a YouTube video on your PC and you decide you would rather watch it on your TV, you can easily send the video across to your Chromecast. Start Chrome on your PC, type `chrome://flags` into the address box and look down the list of items for Media Router. Set it to Enabled, then restart Chrome. Go to YouTube. Select a video, and in the toolbar with the play buttons you'll find a Cast icon. Click it and a panel will appear at the top of the browser asking you to select a Chromecast (in case you have more than one). Click the Chromecast and the video will stop playing on the PC and appear on the TV. Use the play controls on the PC to control video playback.



Send YouTube videos from a PC to your TV using Chrome and a Chromecast

Cast your videos

 If you want to watch other videos on your TV, go to the Chrome Web Store and get Videostream (bit.ly/video395). This extension lets you play any video in Chrome and send it to a Chromecast connected to the TV. Once you have installed the extension, the Videostream page is displayed and you are prompted to select a video on the PC's hard drive. Choose



Use the Videostream Chrome extension to view your own videos on the TV

one and open it. Click the Chromecast toolbar button or select Cast on Chrome's menu. Select the Chromecast and the video begins playing on the television. A toolbar in Chrome allows you to play, pause, rewind and so on.

Create a Desktop shortcut to make starting Videostream easier. Go to the Chrome menu and select 'More tools', Extensions. Click the Details link under the Videostream extension and click 'Create shortcuts'. You can now click the Desktop shortcut to select and play a video on the TV.

Mirror your PC

 Casting videos from YouTube and your hard drive is useful, but there are many other video websites, such as Vimeo (vimeo.com), that don't offer Chromecast support. You might also want to show off the photos on your PC, demonstrate an application, browse the web on the TV, or even play games.

To view all these things on your TV, you can use the Chromecast to mirror what's happening on your PC screen. Click the Chromecast icon in Chrome or go to the

menu and select Cast. In the panel that appears at the top of the browser, click the arrow next to 'Cast to'. There you will now see an option to cast the Desktop. Click it, then select the Chromecast. Give it permission and, after a second or two, your Windows Desktop should appear on the TV.

Whatever appears on the computer is mirrored, so you can play your own videos with Media Player, go to a video site like Vimeo, load up a game or application and so on. The frame rate is quite low, so fast action games will stutter, but board games and other things that don't require fast screen updates are fine. The frame rate for videos is just about acceptable and the resolution is HD, as long as your PC is also HD.

When you want to stop mirroring the computer's screen, click 'Stop sharing' in the toolbar at the bottom.

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



SECURITY

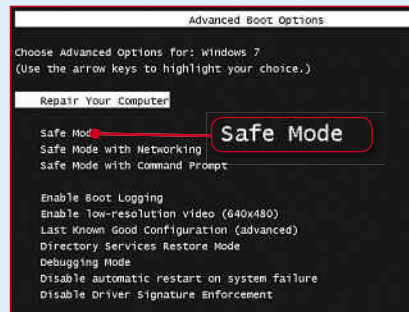
Remove stubborn malware

Q I ran Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org) and found a threat identified as 'Hacktool.autoKMS C:\ProgramData\KMSAutoS\KMSAuto Net.exe'. I removed it using Anti-Malware's removal tool, which confirmed that it was successful, then rebooted my PC. I then repeated the scan three times but the same threat kept coming up, which again I tried to remove. How do I get rid of it for good?

Peter Wilkinson, via email

A According to VirusTotal (www.virustotal.com), only 18 out of the 56 anti-virus tools detect this item as malware and many well-known security programs report no problems. Opinion on the site is that it is mostly harmless, with 188 users voting that it is OK and only 49 that it is not. It's a controversial program that appears to be part of a toolkit that gets around Windows and software activation, probably to avoid paying for software. Other than that, it doesn't appear to be harmful.

Software that is actively running in the background can monitor its own status and actually replace any of its files if they're deleted. This is probably what is happening. One solution with software like this is to right-click the taskbar and select Task Manager.



Start the computer in safe mode if there are problems removing malware

Look down the list of items on the Processes tab for the program or anything with a similar name. Right-click it and select End Task. Run Malwarebytes Anti-Malware again to scan and remove 'KMSAuto Net.exe'.

Another possible solution is to start Windows in Safe Mode. In Windows 7, switch on the PC and press F8 a couple of times just before Windows starts to load. A menu appears from which you can select Safe Mode.

Getting into Safe Mode in Windows 10 is more complicated: Start the computer and, when you get to the login screen, hold down the Shift key, click the power button, then click Restart. When Windows restarts, click Troubleshoot, Advanced options, Startup settings, Restart and select 'Safe mode' on the menu. When the Desktop appears, run Malwarebytes Anti-Malware. We've also got a workshop on how to bring Safe Mode back to the Windows 10 boot menu on page 54.

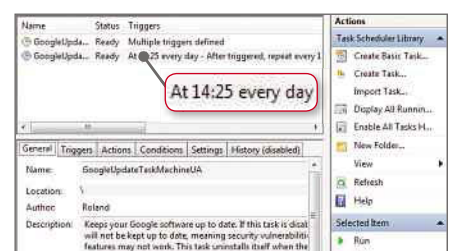
above, when it appears. In the lower part of the middle pane is a section called Active Tasks. Look down the column labelled Next Run Time and see if there is anything set to run at 21.05. If there is, look at the Task Name and Location columns for some indication of what it is.

To disable a scheduled task, double-click it to switch to a new view. Select the task in the list at the top and click Disable in the Actions panel on the right. There are many scheduled tasks and some are important, so don't disable any others.

Parental controls either in Windows or in your security software could also be responsible for the problem. This kind of software can be programmed to set the hours that a PC can be used, to stop children playing games or surreptitiously surfing.

In Windows 7, go to the Control Panel and click Parental Controls. The user accounts on your computer are listed and you can see if parental controls are switched on. If they are on, click the account and turn them off.

In Windows 10 go to account.microsoft.com/family in a browser and sign into your Microsoft account. Select a user, click Screen time and find the time restrictions. If this is enabled, turn it off. Check your security software for similar parental-control features.



Programs that are set to run at specific times can be modified in Task Scheduler

WEB

Avoid reading Google's privacy policy

Q When I log into YouTube, I receive the message: "YouTube is a Google Company. Before you continue, to be consistent with data laws we're asking

GENERAL PC

Stop regular computer shutdowns

Q For the past three weeks, my laptop has shut itself down every night at 21.05. I'm usually in the middle of something and have to restart it again. I have checked everything I can think of that might cause this problem and cannot find an answer.

Tom Kilgannon, via email

A If the computer had shut down at random times, then a fault would be suspected, but the precise and regular timing indicates that it's a scheduled event. A program is running at 21.05 and its task, or part of it, is to shut down the computer. There are several possibilities and one is a scheduled task.

Click Start or press Windows+S and start typing **task scheduler**. Click Task Scheduler in the search results,



you to take a moment to review key points of Google's Privacy Policy. This isn't about a change that we've made – it's just a chance to review some key points. We'll need you to do this in order to continue using Google Services."

Do I answer this or is it a scam ?

Darren, via email

A Changes to data laws mean that we get messages like this and the increasingly annoying cookie pop-up. Websites are compelled to show them but you aren't forced to read them. Ignore the message when it appears. To dismiss it, scroll down and click 'agree'.



Websites are required by law to display messages about their privacy policy

GENERAL PC

Can't upgrade Windows 7 to 10

Q Having read lots about upgrading from Windows 7 to 10, I felt I was ready to take the plunge. After backing up, signing in as an administrator and pausing my security software, I began the process. On completion, I was left with a black screen and was told my PC was stuck because it couldn't find a drive. Thankfully, I managed to return to Windows 7 and tried again, twice, only to have the same result.

Microsoft technical support said that because I have upgraded my motherboard and processor, my PC is a 'custom build' and I cannot upgrade. Is this correct?

Nick, via email

A The OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) Windows licence that comes with a new computer is linked to the hardware and can't be used on a different computer. A small change to the hardware – such as adding memory or replacing the hard drive – is usually fine because it is not classed as a new PC, just an upgraded or repaired one.

When you carry out a major upgrade, such as replacing the motherboard and processor, Windows regards this as a new computer. It is similar to removing the hard drive from one PC and putting it in a new one. It is not allowed, and Windows becomes 'non-genuine' as a result. You might even be required to

activate or validate it again.

Go to the Control Panel, select System and see what it says about the license and activation. It might indicate a problem. If Windows is not activated, click Start, right-click Computer, select Properties and click Activate Windows Now. Click 'Show me other ways to activate', enter your Windows 7 product key (which will probably be found on a sticker on the PC), click Next, then click 'Use the automated phone system'. Follow the instructions.

If it fails, there is an opportunity to speak to someone, but whether they will allow Windows to be activated and validated is a different matter. Your PC might still be regarded as new and therefore unlicensed.

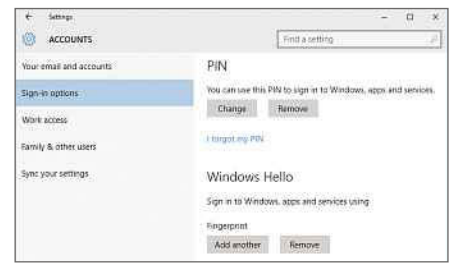
WINDOWS 10

Reset a forgotten PIN

Q I own a Linx 1010B tablet and an HP Touchsmart 300 All in One PC. I have lost the PINs on both devices for my Windows 10 accounts. Can I get them back? The HP was installed by Currys and the Linx was installed by me. Would both accounts use the same PIN?

Darren, via email

A Windows 10 requires you to sign in with a Microsoft ID, such as an



A PIN makes logging in easier and can be set up or changed in Settings

Outlook.com email address and password. This is a pain so to make it quicker and easier, you can create a short PIN (don't use 123456 or anything obvious). This isn't compulsory and the Windows login screen shows a small link you can use to choose an alternative to entering the PIN, such as your Microsoft ID or a fingerprint if your device has a reader. Use it to bypass the PIN request.

Once you have logged in to the tablet or computer, go to Start, Settings, Accounts. Select 'Sign-in options' on the left and find the button on the right to remove the current PIN. Under this button is an 'I forgot my PIN' link. Use either of these and follow the instructions. You will need to verify your identity by entering your Microsoft ID. You cannot use the Change option because it asks for your current PIN.

GENERAL PC

Windows Update won't update

Q To give my Dell Inspiron Mini 1012 a speed boost, I fitted a 250GB SSD and clean installed Windows 7. Then I began the mammoth task of downloading all the Windows Patch Tuesday bug fixes. Things went brilliantly until it was time to install SP1, because a new version of Windows Update was required.

Once the required restart was completed, I opened Windows Update to get the next load of bug fixes. No matter how long I waited, it wouldn't download anything. I could manually download things myself, but Windows Update seemed to be forever searching for updates.

Thinking SP1 was the problem, I did another install – this time, from a Windows 7 SP1 Pro disc – but that would not download any updates at all. What is wrong?

Jonathan N Palmer, via email



Don't manually update Windows – switch on Windows Update instead

A Windows Update is the method Microsoft recommends for bringing Windows up to date. Some updates rely on previous updates and if you manually download patches and bug fixes, you can run into problems. This may be because updates haven't been installed in the correct order, or you have missing components or the wrong version.

Try downloading Windows 7 SP1 (bit.ly/update395) and running it from the hard drive. If this doesn't solve the problem, reinstall Windows and restrict yourself to only using Windows Update. Don't download and install anything manually.



This fortnight Roland has been inspired by Google's AlphaGo program to load his PC and mobile phone with Go games

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



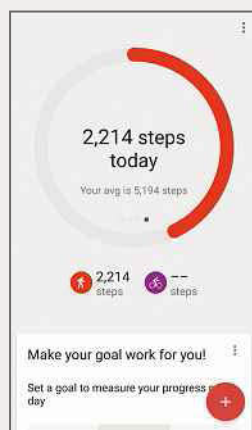
TOP TIP

APPS

Track your activity using your phone

At a recent check-up, my GP told me I need to be more active: walking to the shops instead of driving, taking the stairs instead of the lift at work and so on. I was about to order myself a Fitbit – a fitness tracker that tells you how many steps you’ve taken each day – when my son told me that my Android smartphone will do the same thing at no extra cost if I download the Google Fit app (bit.ly/goofit395). I couldn’t believe I hadn’t heard of it before, but he was right.

The app tracks my daily step count and gives me a summary of the distance I’ve covered and the number of calories I’ve burned. By default, the app set me the target of one hour of active time per day, so I’ve been aiming to reach that goal as often as possible. For fitness enthusiasts, the app can



Google Fit counts how many steps you take

track walks, runs and bike rides in real time, recording your route and offering detailed stats, including speed, pace and elevation. If you’re thinking of buying a wearable fitness

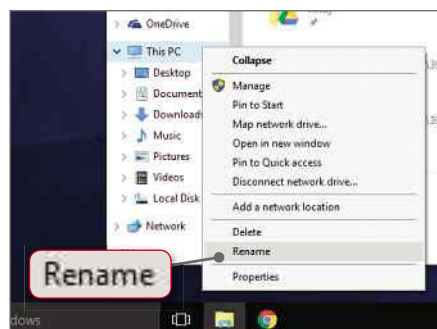
tracker, you should definitely give Google Fit a try first!

William Cooper, via email

GENERAL PC

Rename your computer

Almost every version of Windows calls your computer something different in Explorer. In Windows XP it’s called My Computer. I can’t remember what Vista called it, but Windows 7 changed it to Computer. Then Windows 8 changed it to This PC. Thankfully, it’s still called This PC in Windows 10. If you are fed up with these pointless name changes, open



You don’t have to accept Microsoft’s name for your PC – just right-click to change it

Explorer (which used to be called Windows Explorer but is now File Explorer), right-click Computer (or This PC) and select the Rename option. You can change it to anything you like.

Mike Power, via email

SOFTWARE

Avoid monitor glare at night

If you ever use a computer at night, especially in a dark room, you’ll probably have noticed that your screen can be very bright. This can make it harder for you to sleep when you eventually turn off your PC and go to bed, because your brain thinks it’s still daytime. I’ve discovered a program called Flux (justgetflux.com), which adds a yellow hue to your screen to counter the blue light, so it’s less harsh on your eyes. The program detects your location and applies the filter at night. You can turn it off manually for colour-sensitive work such as photo-editing.

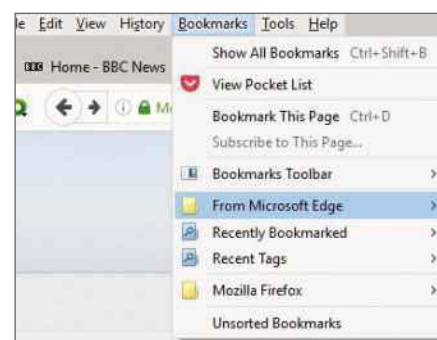
Jack Gold, Web User Forums

BROWSERS

Import Edge bookmarks to Firefox

I have Edge as the default browser on all my PCs but I use Firefox, too. When I installed Windows 10, I imported my Internet Explorer Favorites to Edge, spending a little time organising them into new folders, deleting outdated items and adding new ones. This left my Favourites out of date in Internet Explorer and Firefox, but I’ve since discovered that Firefox allows you to import favourites from the Edge browser. I duly did this by pressing Ctrl+Shift+B, clicking ‘Import and Backup’ then ‘Import Data from Another Browser’. I then deleted the now-redundant From Internet Explorer folder.

tornado, Web User Forums

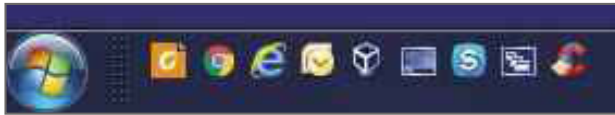


Firefox lets you import your Favorites from Edge

GENERAL PC

Pin more applications to the taskbar

For years, I’ve been using Windows’ Quick Launch toolbar as an alternative to the taskbar, which doesn’t give you much space to pin icons. I have a lot of software that I like to be able to access quickly, and Quick Launch gives me room to pin it all and open it with one click. You can drag any shortcut to it, including drives, folders and browser bookmarks, and it’s available in all versions of Windows from Vista to 10.



Windows' Quick Launch toolbar lets you fit more applications on the taskbar

To activate the Quick Launch toolbar on your PC, right-click the taskbar, untick 'Lock the taskbar', then choose Toolbars and New Toolbar. In the dialogue box that appears, type the following location into the Folder box: %UserProfile%\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\

Press Enter, then click Quick Launch and Select Folder. By default, the Quick Launch Toolbar appears on the far-right of the Taskbar, but you can change this by dragging its slider towards the Start button. You can also resize it using the other slider in the middle of the right side of the taskbar. If you want to hide the toolbar's title and the names of all the shortcut buttons, right-click Quick Launch and untick the two relevant options. You can rearrange the icons and add more to the toolbar as you please. Once you're happy with its configuration, right-click the taskbar and choose 'Lock the taskbar'.

If, after using it for a while, you decide you don't like the Quick Launch toolbar, you can switch it off by right-clicking the taskbar, selecting Toolbars and then unticking Quick Launch.

JayH, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Decorative themes for dual monitors

Your Windows Desktop background, colour scheme, icons and sounds are all part of a theme. If you are bored with the way Windows looks and sounds, you can change it all by downloading and installing a completely different theme. Microsoft offers a wide choice of free themes at bit.ly/themes395.

New themes are added from time to time, so it's worth returning for a look occasionally, even if you've been to the website before. There's a Windows 7 section, and one that's described as 'Compatible with the new Windows', which appears to cover Windows 8 and 10.



If you use two monitors, try installing one of Microsoft's panoramic Desktop themes

The one that caught my eye was the 'Panoramic (dual monitor)' category. If

you have a two-monitor setup, the Desktop wallpaper stretches across both monitors to give you a seamless panoramic view. It works brilliantly, making the two monitors look like a single extra-wide Desktop instead of two separate Desktops on two screens.

F Probert, via email

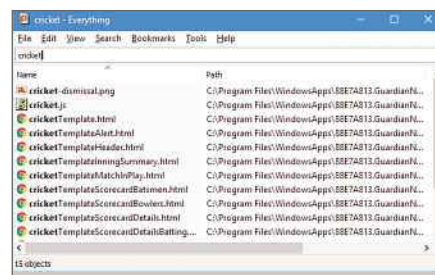
GENERAL PC

Faster searching with Everything

Windows search isn't particularly helpful when you've lost a file and can't remember where you saved it. Searching the entire hard drive takes a long time, and in my experience it rarely locates the file I'm looking for. However, I recently installed Everything Search Engine (voidtools.com) and have found it really useful.

It creates a database of all the files on the hard drive, so that when you type in the name of the file you're looking for, it instantly shows you where it is. It starts showing results as soon as you enter the first letters of your search. You can use an asterisk (Shift+8) as a wildcard, so typing ho* shows files and folders named house, horse, hot and so on. It's a brilliant search tool.

John Lane, via email



Find files quickly with Everything, a free search tool for Windows

BROWSERS

Get back Firefox's menus

Firefox did away with its menu bar some time ago, replacing it with a Chrome-like menu button in the top-right corner that reveals a drop-down panel of icons. This is useful for accessing Firefox's common tools, but you won't find all the options in this menu. For less commonly used features, you can access the old-style menu bar by pressing the Alt key. It disappears again once you have selected a menu option. The Tools menu, for example, has a Web Developer submenu that contains useful tools for expert users who want to explore the way websites and web pages work.

Gary Elliott, via email

SOFTWARE

Add unusual characters to your documents

Windows Character Map is a really useful tool for enhancing text documents. When I had to produce a questionnaire where the choice of answer was either Yes or N/A (No wasn't an option), I used Windows Character Map to add tick marks instead of 35 instances of Yes, and it looked much better. On another occasion, while creating a newsletter, I placed an interesting character at the start of each section. I was surprised at what I could achieve just by changing the colour and font size, and my colleagues were very satisfied with my efforts. As well as various fonts, you can use Wingdings, Wingdings 2 and Wingdings 3 for a wide choice of characters. Search for 'Character Map' on your computer to find this handy tool.

FratPark, Web User Forums

WEBSITES

Look at old versions of web pages

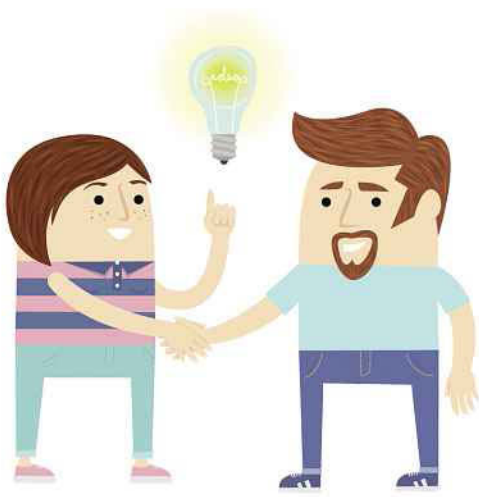
I recently had a dispute with my host on the accommodation website Airbnb (www.airbnb.co.uk) because the apartment was situated directly above a noisy music venue, and there had been nothing to warn me about this when I made the booking. Not long after I'd complained, however, I checked the listing again, only to see that it said the flat was in a 'lively' part of town and to expect 'some noise' at night. I started to doubt myself and wondered if this information had been there all along. Then my son suggested I try checking Google's cache, which is where the search engine keeps snapshots of web pages, marking them with a time stamp. Sure enough, I checked Google's cached page for the listing, and none of the information regarding noise had been there the week before!

To check Google's cache, search for the site using the search engine, then click the down arrow next to a page's URL and select Cached. Alternatively, a handy website called CachedView (www.cachedview.com), lets you find cached pages simply by entering the appropriate URL.

Wendy, via email



Google's cache tells you when its site snapshots were taken



Readers' Helpdesk

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

SOFTWARE

How do I delete empty pages from my document?

Q I'm having trouble removing a spare blank sheet from the end of my Word document. The method given in Word 2010 doesn't appear to work.

ERICG, Web User Forums

A When a page is full, Word generates a new one automatically. If I need to delete unnecessary pages, I click on the Show/Hide icon (¶) in the Home ribbon to display hidden characters such as spaces and returns. Then I place my cursor on the last ¶ symbol on the extra page and press the Backspace button on my keyboard until it disappears. I hope it's as simple as that for you!

tornado, Web User Forums

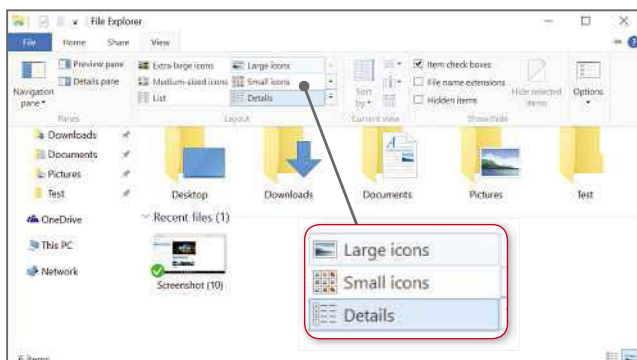
WINDOWS 10

Can I change the way files appear in File Explorer?

Q Previously, when I opened File Explorer and then Downloads, I could see the details of each file. Today, all I can see is a large icon for each file or application. How do I restore the original settings?

barbatul, Web User Forums

A This is very easy to fix. Simply open Downloads as usual, select the View tab and then hover your cursor over the various options, which include 'Large icons', 'Small icons', Details, List



Change how files appear in File Explorer using its View options

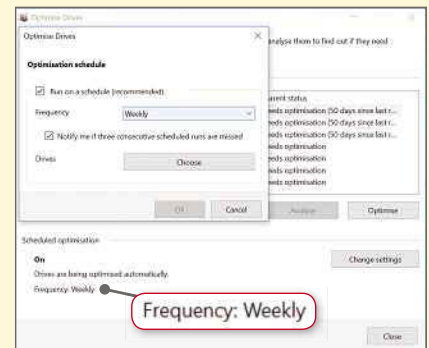
SOFTWARE

Should I download new defragging software?

Q Is Windows 10's built-in defragger good enough, or should I be using a different one? In the past I have used MyDefrag but it's been discontinued.

johnmail, Web User Forums

A No, third-party defraggers are unnecessary because modern disk filing systems don't suffer from defragmentation. All you need to do is open the Optimise Drives app in Windows 10, and check that scheduled optimisation is turned on. Defragging then runs as a low priority task in the background (so it doesn't affect your PC's performance). I have left one of my Windows 10 PCs set to the default



By default, Windows 10 is set to optimise your drives weekly

Weekly setting, but my other PCs are set to defrag Monthly. It's not good practice to obsess about defragging, as overdoing it puts unnecessary pressure on your drives. If you've got an SSD, Windows 10 should detect it and run the TRIM procedure instead of defragging the drive.

Helmut, Dave_1, mart and tornado, Web User Forums

and Tiles. Once you've found a view you like, click it and Windows will alter the settings for that folder only. The view you want is probably Details.

Bedstor, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Why is my taskbar so big?

Q I have an Acer laptop, and for no apparent reason the taskbar has grown from about a centimetre to almost three centimetres. I didn't ask it to do this and I can't think of anything I've done to make it happen. At this size it has

become intrusive and annoying. I've tried right-clicking it and choosing Properties, but I can't see anything obvious that may have caused it or that might put it back to the way it was. Does anyone know how I can restore it to its former state?

easyrideruk49, Web User Forums



To resize the taskbar, you must unlock it first

A If the taskbar wasn't locked, it's possible that you inadvertently resized it. To change it back, right-click the taskbar and untick 'Lock the taskbar' (if it's ticked). Next, move your mouse pointer to the top of the taskbar until it turns into a two-headed arrow and simply click and drag the arrow down to make the taskbar smaller. Once you're happy with the size, click on the taskbar again and place a tick next to 'Lock the taskbar' to stop it happening again.

Madeline and rogerman40, Web User Forums

**Mug
winner**



Star Email

Don't knock Spotify until you've tried it

I must take issue with Martin Fletcher in Issue 393 (bit.ly/webuser393), who I feel is missing the point with his dismissal of Spotify and similar on-demand music services. The 'to stream or not to stream' argument is really a red herring when these days you can buy a 64GB SD card for less than £20. All music on these services can be downloaded over Wi-Fi to play back offline if streaming isn't your thing or you don't have unlimited 4G.

For me, the whole point of such services is to discover new music as well as lost treasures. Martin may be surprised to find that all the artists he mentions are readily available on Spotify, and apparently are hugely popular. I'm fast approaching 50 and have a diverse love of music, from

punk, early rap and 80s cheese to modern music and "club bangers" that keep me motivated at the gym.

What I love about Spotify is that I can easily dip into music I may never have tried before, such as punk-forerunners MC5, Creedence Clearwater Revival and the New York Dolls, as well as the latest club hits from Riton and Martin Solveig. It also offers a Discover Weekly

playlist every Monday with 30 songs to try based on playlists you've previously made. If you like them, you can download them, which often leads you to discover new or old artists worthy of further investigation. On top of all that, you can listen to radio channels based on your preferences, which is great.

As Martin says, the service also caters for kids' music (and why shouldn't it?) but, based on his musical tastes, I doubt Spotify would be pushing Justin Bieber or Katy Perry to his Discover Weekly list any time soon. So, give it a go, Martin – you might find more to savour than you expected.

Simon McEwen, Bristol



Spotify has older music than you think

Martin Fletcher said in Issue 393 that he begged to differ with *Web User's* advice to stream music instead of filling your hard drive because he believes that streaming sites only cater for young kids

I'd like to know where he's been looking, because Spotify offers a tremendous amount of all types of music, including all the artists he mentions (and even older). I've even searched for music from the First World War era and have been amazed with the results.

Streaming broadens your musical horizons

I must object to Martin's Fletcher's letter criticising music streaming – and Spotify in particular. He obviously hasn't done his homework because all the artists he mentions have a selection of tracks on Spotify. It's not just for teens who want a constant stream of pop music. The range of genres is hugely diverse, and Spotify is ideal for discovering new music with its 'related music' feature, which suggests other musicians you might like.

I, too, have a huge collection of treasured vinyl and digital music but Spotify and similar services have introduced me to so much more. Some I hate, some I love, but I appreciate the chance to listen to music I would never have listened to otherwise.

I recommend that Martin listens to the wonderful Desmond Carrington (pictured) on his programme *The Music Goes*



I agree that it's nice to have your own music on your hard drive, and like him I have thousands of tracks on mine – but it's also great to be able to look

for music you don't already have.

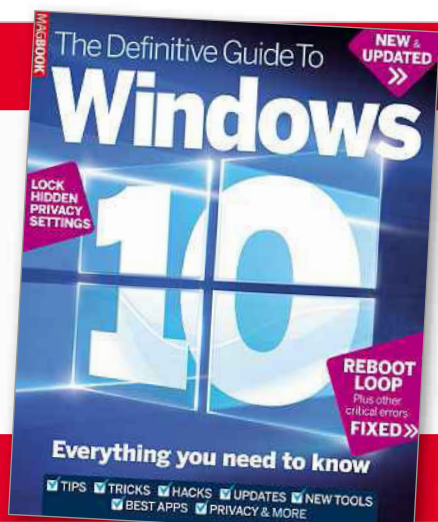
Martin says that kids have never heard of the tunes he listens to, but why should they have? He probably hasn't heard of Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* – which is on Spotify, by the way, along with lots of other classical music for anyone who wishes to hear it.

David Harrison, Sedgwick

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

Round on Radio 2 for a wide variety of popular music from seven decades. It can be streamed through the iPlayer website (bit.ly/desmond395) and app.

Ethel, Dudley

Why Google Play Music beats Spotify

I was interested in Martin Fletcher's letter about his resistance to streaming, and I do have some sympathy. Like Martin, I don't think Spotify has a particularly wide choice of music, and I prefer to own my music instead of renting it. So instead I uploaded my eclectic music collection to Google Play Music. I can now stream my choice of music via my Android phone to my car, or to my smart TV (with surround sound) using my Chromecast. If you buy a track from another MP3 outlet, such as Amazon, you can set up Google Play Music to upload your new music purchases automatically.

Streaming your own music collection gives you the best of both worlds, and you can store up to 50,000 tracks on Google Play Music. I bet your hard drive would be glad to have some of those 6,000 tracks moved somewhere else! Perhaps *Web User* could do a how-to about Google Play.

Lynn Sharpe, via email



Forced upgrades will backfire on Microsoft

Regarding Barry Collins' column in Issue 394, Microsoft will surely rue the day it forced users to upgrade to Windows 10.

I've been using two computers with Windows 7 Home 64-bit for many years without any problem, but the free upgrade to Windows 10 was a disaster. This was further compounded when I restored Windows 7 to my PCs, as some of the applications from my original installation failed to work, although I was able to restore them eventually.

Microsoft says you can uninstall any unwanted apps successfully, but don't

believe it. The worst thing anyone can do is to right-click the app icon and select Uninstall. Doing so disables the app but triggers a cascade of Windows Update errors. Even after I'd supposedly uninstalled all my unwanted apps, I was receiving some 400 event viewer errors per day for failed Updates. Some of the update failures were for apps I had never installed in the first place.

After several months of trying to get the Windows 10 upgrades to work on both PCs, I gave up and bought two new computers with Windows 10 pre-installed. I now have two computers that work correctly without any update errors.

I hope the following guidelines, based on my experiences, will help your readers:



- 1 Do not attempt to upgrade a Windows 7 or 8 PC to Windows 10.
- 2 Either buy a new computer with Windows 10 pre-installed or purchase a Windows 10 installation disc.
- 3 Do not uninstall any Windows or Microsoft apps (except Get Office – see point 5). Leave them in place with their default settings.
- 4 Use only the Windows Firewall, and disable any antivirus firewalls.
- 5 Make sure you uninstall Get Office completely. If you wish to use Microsoft Office, purchase an installation disc and install it that way, or use one of the many freeware office suites that are available. Make sure Windows Defender is not running.

I was only able to run Windows 10 successfully once I'd carried out all of the above. Forcing upgrades will backfire on Microsoft. I have no doubts about this.

Rodney Coleman, via email

Are Microsoft updates breaking the law?

I agree with Barry Collins' rant in *Web User* 394 concerning Microsoft's conduct. With a little research, I identified the annoying 'important' update and eliminated it from the list of past updates. However, I can't update my computer now because deselecting this update in the list of 'important' updates also deselects all those I do want. This makes my computer increasingly unsafe.

Has anyone considered that Microsoft is committing criminal offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (CMA, bit.ly/misuse395)? Apologies in advance for the legalese, but if a computer user doesn't wish to install this update, Microsoft might be guilty under Section 1(a) of the CMA. As it is being forced on users – essentially giving them no choice, Microsoft is also guilty under Section 1(b). Again, because this update is in fact unauthorised, so is Microsoft's access for these purposes, and it is clearly done with the intent (unless the company is stupid) of facilitating further offences of the same sort. Microsoft is, therefore, also guilty of offences under several other sections insofar as it intends to (or is reckless as to whether it appears to):

- a) impair the operation of any computer;
- b) prevent or hinder access to any program or data held in any computer;
- c) impair the operation of any such program or the reliability of any such data;

It is also, therefore, guilty of 'Unauthorised acts causing, or creating risk of, serious damage' offences under Section 3 ZA of the Serious Crime Act. Food for thought?

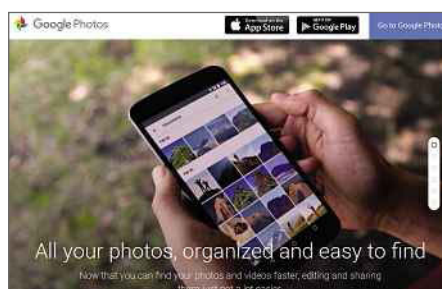
John Lockett, via email

Google Photos should spare a thought for pre-millennials

Like many other people my age, I have accumulated thousands of

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photos during my lifetime. These range from grainy black-and-white pictures of my childhood right up to recent snaps taken on my tablet. I've scanned in all my pre-digital photos, which make up the vast majority of my collection, and now they're all safely saved on my storage devices.

I've always preferred to order my photos by the date they were taken, so they appear as a calendar of events, similar to the timeline feature in Facebook. For this reason, I name my scanned photos with the date and time they were taken, such as '1982-07-15 2153', and a simple alphabetical sort then places them all in the right order.

But alas, when I tried using the Google Photos storage service, I discovered that it ignores the filenames completely and drops all the uploaded images into one huge virtual bin, tagging them by their upload date or possibly their EXIF creation date - I'm still not sure which date it uses. In any event, it's useless for scanned-in photos. To make matters worse, the filenames the images had when they were uploaded are removed and never seen again. Thanks for that, Google.

Most photos taken on mobile devices and modern cameras are geo-tagged and date stamped, so you can simply throw them into online album collections and expect them to appear in the correct chronological order.

That's great if you're a lucky millennial and all your photos have come from smartphones and digital cameras, but non-digital images that have been scanned in don't have the correct EXIF data or file date, and as a result, your school pictures appear shoulder-to-shoulder with your retirement party snaps in Google Photos.

My mother used to say this sort of behaviour was "spoiling the ship for a ha'penny worth of tar". Maybe she could have taught Google a thing or two.

Dennis Ellis, via email

What you say...

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE WINDOWS 10 'ANNIVERSARY UPDATE', DUE THIS SUMMER?

Remove apps from the Start menu, get rid of all the pre-loaded junk and make the interface look more like Windows 7's.

Jack @imthegoldmaster

More backwards compatibility for older games and programs.

Simon Mellor @Simon9Hops

I would like to see the ability to turn off automatic updates so that they remain off until I say otherwise.

NikoBold

Bring back Minesweeper. Why did you remove it, Microsoft? Why? All those hours spent pointlessly placing meaningless flags only to get blown up. The memories!

Derek @dlee1

OFCom SAYS THE AVERAGE UK BROADBAND SPEED HAS RISEN TO 28.9MBPS. WHAT DO YOU GET?

I get 49Mbps, but I think that's a con because with two computers streaming films it still judders and freezes.

Dean Stockton

5Mbps on a (very) good day. It's fast enough for streaming and everyday internet tasks.

Peter Fitzsimmons

When the wind is blowing in the right direction, about 16Mbps with Sky.

Kenny Hutchison

I actually get the advertised 17Mbps ADSL2+ speed from TalkTalk.

Martin Phillp

106Mbps on a 100Mbps Virgin fibre connection.

Adam Francis

APPLE SAYS IT'S 'REALLY SAD' TO USE A FIVE-YEAR-OLD PC. DO YOU AGREE?

No - I'm sitting at my sad 30-year-old desk, using my really sad old desktop PC, which is running sad old Windows 7. I couldn't care less what Apple says.

Gill Hodson

Nope. Mine is a fair few years old and works perfectly, so I don't see the point in buying a new one. And I'll never buy anything from Apple. Overpriced rubbish, if you ask me.

Gerrit Max

No. If it's not broke, why fix (or replace) it?

Ady Colclough

I have five PCs in the house, both old and new, and I enjoy using them all. They all have different uses.

Daniel Panton

ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO ANDROID PAY ARRIVING IN THE UK?

Yes. No. Yes. Erm, why do I really need it? I have contactless cards, so what's the difference?

Gary Olsen @Gary_Olsen

I'm curious to see how it works, but I'm unlikely to be an early adopter. Security is an issue, as is how useful it will be. Once it's everywhere, it'll inevitably become habit.

Jason Jones @Jason___Jones

Yes - it's about time! My heart says I'll use it to buy an Aston Martin, but the reality is that I'll use it for trains, the Tube and my morning coffee.

Joey Lopes @djJoeyLopes

Yes, but only if it's quicker than getting my bank card out of my pocket and my wallet. My phone is usually in my hand already.

Ross MacGillivray @rossmacgill

! Page 404



Since when is it “sad” for PCs to last longer than a couple of years? asks **Barry Collins**

No, Apple, an old PC is not a sad PC

When was the last time you upgraded your computer? This year? A couple of years back? Five years ago? Five years! What are you, some kind of charity case? Well, that's what senior executives at Apple think of you.

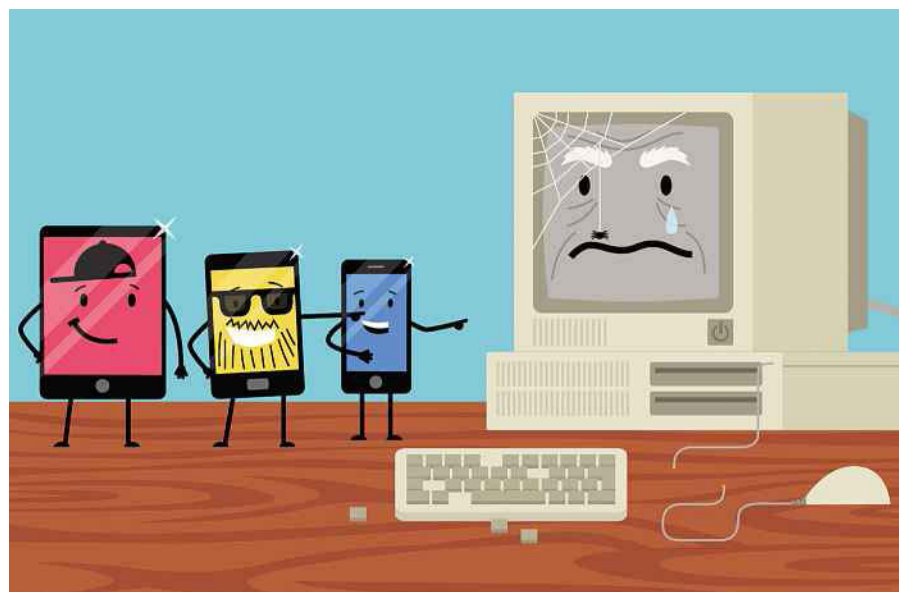
Speaking at the latest Apple launch – where the company “revolutionised” the iPhone by returning it to the size it was five years ago – chief marketing guru Phil Schiller issued a withering put-down to anyone who refuses to chuck out their hardware every couple of years. “There are over 600 million PCs in use today that are over five years old,” Schiller told the audience. “This is really sad. It really is.”

No, Phil, it's not. It's a sign that most people either don't have the money or the will to adhere to Apple's relentless upgrade cycle, where anything more than a couple of years old is instantly deemed obsolete.

When did making hardware that's built to last become “sad”? Manufacturers used to take pride in the longevity of their products, as did the customers who bought them. Nowadays, technology is so disposable that even an iPhone costing the thick end of £800 comes with only a “one-year limited warranty” – half the duration of the mobile contract that you typically take out alongside it.

Apple likes to portray itself as the world's greenest tech company, producing environmental reports for every product it makes to show how much it cares about the planet, and then it lets rip at 600 million people who are

“Manufacturers used to take pride in the longevity of their products, as did their customers”



preserving the Earth's resources by refusing to replace perfectly functional hardware. And before you try to argue that modern hardware is more energy efficient and better for the environment than a clunking five-year old PC, take a look at Apple's environmental report on its MacBook: 84% of the greenhouse

gas emissions created during the product's entire lifecycle come from the manufacture of the laptop, with a further 3% in transporting it to the customer and 1%

from recycling. Only 12% comes from the customer's usage of the device. Unless your old computer requires its own petrol-powered generator, sticking with what you've got is almost certainly better for the environment.

There are many things wrong with Windows 10, but arguably the best thing

about it is that it has exactly the same system requirements as Windows 7, which was launched in 2009. That £500 PC you bought back when Gordon Brown was prime minister should still be able to run the very latest Windows operating system today. That's not something to be ashamed of – it's a massive improvement over the days when a new version of Windows meant another trip to PC World to pick up another beige box.

And while Apple's latest version of OS X is technically supported on Macs stretching as far back as 2007, if you want to take advantage of its best new features – such as the ability to take calls on your computer or share files via AirDrop – you basically need a Mac that was bought from mid-2012 onwards. That “free” upgrade to the latest version of OS X comes at quite a cost if you need to buy a new Mac to take advantage of its bells and whistles. That is sad. It really is.

Illustration: Andrew Torrens

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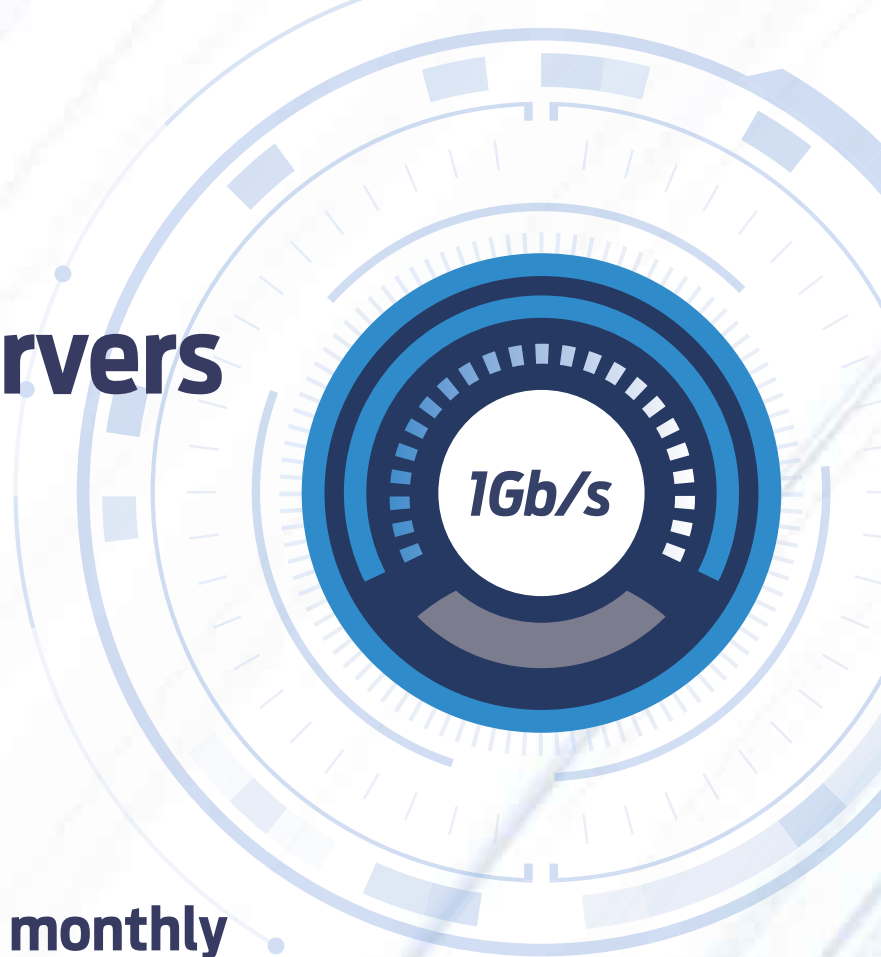
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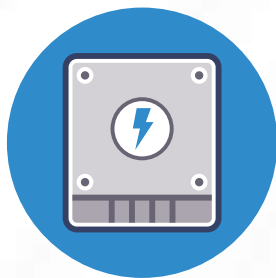
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