

PROLITE XUB2792QSU NEED MORE SPACE?



PROLITE XUB2792QSU

Do you spend most of your workday joggling between multiple applications and windows? Don't get stuck in Full HD. Choose iiyama XUB2792QSU and open up to WQHD resolution accomodating almost 77% more information on the screen.

























11 Homepage

Download 'til you drop!

side from eating, sleeping and of course - reading Web User, downloading is one of the most rewarding activities you can indulge in on your own, so it seems a shame to limit the pastime to software and apps. There's tonnes of amazing free stuff on the web, which you can grab in a couple of clicks to keep forever.

To prove our point, we've devoted no less than 11 pages of this issue to rounding up our favourite 100 things you can download for free, from familiar content such as podcasts, ebooks and hi-res photos to

quirky delights including birdsong, pub guizzes and ancient artefacts. We think you'll be impressed by the volume and variety of downloads we've delivered, even if not all of them are to your taste.

Thanks to everyone who has bought our new Complete Guide to Kodi, which has become our fastest-selling book ever. If you don't yet have a copy, you can order it from Amazon at bit.ly/completekodi.

Robert Irvine robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk #webuser





Things you'll learn this issue How to test the new version of YouTube before everyone else page 6 How to generate and store secure passwords of up to 30 characters Page 26 How to rearrange your Google search results into two columns page 31 How to make your phone sound an alarm when someone tries to steal it page 33 How to prevent the Creators Update from freezing your page 70

Subscribe to Web User!

Never miss another issue — subscribe at subscribe.webuser.co.uk





ISSUE 423 17 - 30 MAY 2017







IN DEPTH Articles on the latest tech topics

36 FA0 Amazon Go

38 COVER FEATURE

100 BEST FREE DOWNLOADS

The internet is bursting with freebies if you know where to find them. We point the way

50 Private browsers

Protect your privacy as you explore the web with our pick of the most secure browsers



REVIEWS Apps, sites and products on test

14 Best New Websites

Huffington Post's new site (and a shorter name)

- 20 Product Test
 - Google Wifi
 - Moto G5 Plus
- 26 Best Free Software

Improve your security with stronger passwords

30 Best New Browser Tools

Keep your Chrome tabs under control

32 Best Free Apps

Stream radio and podcasts with CastBox









FAVOURITES Must-read regulars

What's New Online Follow the General Election online

Need to Know This fortnight's top tech news stories

12 Stay Safe Online Security advice for PC and mobile

18 Build a Better Site Expert tips, tools and practical help

23 Best Buvs Our pick of the best new products

49 Take a Screen Break Guess the emoji towns and cities

60 Broadband Deals Find the best-value package for you



71 Inbox Tell us your views and opinions

74 Page 404 Learn the art of the broadband deal

FDITORIAL

Group Editor Daniel Booth Deputy Editor Robert Irvine Technical & Reviews Editor Andy Shaw Staff Writer Edward Munn Art Editor Laurence Hallam Production Editor Miki Bereny Editorial Tel: 020 7907 6000 Visit forum.webuser.co.uk for technical and buying advice

ADVERTISING

Tel: 020 7907 6799 Group Advertising Manager Charlotte Milligan Deputy Advertising Manager Alexa Dracos

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

Group Production Manage Stephen Catherall, 020 7907 6054 Production Executive Lawrence Brookes, 020 7907 6062

Marketing Manager Rachel Hare Marketing Production Manager Gemma Hills

MANAGEMENT

Tel: 020 7907 6000 Managing Director John Garewal MD of Advertising Julian Lloyd-Evans Commercial and Retail Director David Barker CFO/COO Brett Revnolds Chief Executive James Tye Company Founder Felix Dennis

SYNDICATION AND LISE OF LOGOS

Syndication Senior Manager Anj Dosaj-Halai Tel: +44 (0)20 7907 6132 Email: anj_dosaj-halai@dennis.co.uk

INTERNATIONAL LICENSING

Web User is available for licensing overseas. Licensing & Syndication Assistant Nicole Adams Tel: +44 (0)20 7907 6134 Email: nicole adams@dennis.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Tel: 0844 322 1289

Email: webuser@servicehelpline.co.uk You can manage your existing subscription through www.subsinfo.co.uk. This should be your first port of call if you have any queries about your subscription. Fax: 01795 414555. A subscription to Web User for one year costs £52 for UK subscribers, £90 for Europe and £146 for the rest of the world. Call 0844 322 1289 to get the next issue, delivered free to your door.

Printed by Wyndeham Bicester, Oxon Distributors Seymour 020 7396 4000

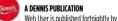
PERMISSIONS

Material may not be reproduced in any form without the written consent of the publisher. Please address such requests to: John Garewal, Dennis Publishing, 31-32 Alfred Place, WCIE 7DP

LIABILITY

While every care was taken preparing this magazine, the publishers cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the information or any consequence arising from it. All judgments are based on equipment available to Web User at the time of review. 'Value for money' comments are based on UK prices at time of review. Web User takes no responsibility for the content of external websites whose addresses are published in the magazine.

© Copyright Dennis Publishing Limited. Web User is a trademark of Felix Dennis.



Dennis Publishing Ltd, 31-32 Alfred Place, WCIE 7DP. Company registered in England. Material may not be reproduced in whole or part without the consent of the publishers, ISSN 1473-7094



Practical WebUser

Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

52 Workshop 1

Share photos as video animations with Apple Clips for iOS

54 Workshop 2

Keep up to date with your top sites

56 Workshop 3

Create a cinemagraph

57 Workshop 4

Manage your Chrome extensions

58 Weekend Project

Control your PC with your voice

64 Web User Masterclass

Top tips for Windows shutdown

66 Ask the Expert

All your technical questions answered

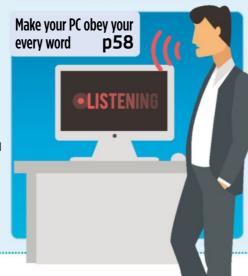
68 Readers' Tips

The best tips from our readers

70 Readers' Helpdesk

Answers from our reader forums



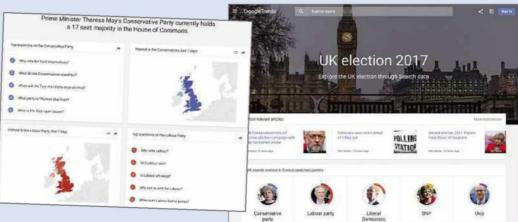


What's New Online

Explore Google's Election data

ots of questions are being asked ahead of the General Election on 8 June and, according to a new site from Google, the most common include: "What party is Theresa May from?", "Who is the Lib Dem Leader?" and "Who should I vote for?". Compiling data from Google Trends, it makes for enlightening reading.

Aside from learning how much interest there is in the five most searched-for parties and their leaders, you can track the nation's general mood and view trending queries. You can also see how many people are considering joining a particular party and the specific questions being asked about them,



and view facts including the current majority held by the Conservatives and regional election trends. Clicking the various elements lets you explore the information in greater detail.

However, it's not all about the stats and there are relevant articles from sources such as the BBC, Reuters, The Guardian, Financial Times and local and foreign press. Google doesn't bother with polls or attempts at analysis (potentially a good thing), but there is certainly plenty to ponder as you make up your mind over where to place that cross. bit.ly/election423

Play Tomb Raider in your browser

bit.ly/tomb423

When Tomb Raider was released in 1996, the internet was still in its infancy, so seeing a 3D version of the iconic action-adventure game running in your browser shows how far the web has come, especially when you see how fluid and faithful it looks. OpenLara has been rewritten from scratch by European and Russian enthusiasts without access to any source code. It requires no installation and lets you play the whole second area of the original game. You control the iconic main character, Lara Croft, using your keyboard,

blast away at any enemies you encounter by tapping the E key or Control, and switch between first- and third-person view by hitting V. Press Alt+Enter to enjoy the experience full screen.

Check out YouTube's new design

www.youtube.com/new

YouTube has been experimenting with a clean new look for more than

a year but, until now, it has been keeping the redesign largely under wraps. With this sneak peek, however, you can find out what's changed and give your feedback on the new features, which include a simple-to-activate dark mode for better viewing at

| Transport | Property | Property

night, infinite scrolling and a style consistent across any device you view the video service on.

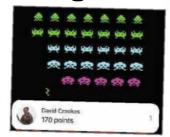
YouTube is promising more features over the coming weeks and months, but if you don't like what you see, you can switch back to the current YouTube version at any time via an option in the Account menu. But with a reduction in visual clutter and the videos now more prominent than ever, there's a good chance you'll want to stick with it and take the opportunity to influence its future direction.

We pick the 10 best things you must do on the web this fortnight

Play instant games in Messenger

www.messenger.com

If you want a break from chatting with friends on Messenger, you can challenge them to one of 50 games including Pac-Man, Space Invaders and Snake. To encourage competition, Facebook has added turn-based play, leaderboards, tournaments and bots. To play, click the '+' icon next the text box, tap Games, then make your selection and enjoy.



Help Doctor Who save Time

bit.ly/doctor423

Fans of Doctor Who will love the Time Lord's latest regeneration in a six-part adventure on Skype. Connect with The Doctor by searching for Doctor Who Bot in the Skype Bot Director and clicking Add to Contacts, then start a conversation. This launches an interactive game called The Saviour of Time and, by responding to text, images, videos and voiceovers by the Twelfth Doctor, Peter Capaldi, you'll be asked to complete challenges, solve logic puzzles and answer quizzes to help find a mysterious artefact called the Key of Time. New chapters will be released every Sunday at 6pm.



See the spread of street lights



bit.ly/lights423

NASA's cloud-free satellite map of our planet shows the distribution of artificial light around the globe in 2016, taking data from the clearest night views for each month. By doing so, the map highlights patterns of human settlement. The idea is that the map will be updated regularly so it can eventually plot significant future changes. Use the slider at the bottom of the page to view various dates and zoom in and out to see light coverage in specific areas. You can also compare the 2016 map with 2012's to see the differences by visiting bit.ly/2012map423.

Get Morph stickers for iOS bit.ly/morph423

Animation studio Aardman has launched a free emoji sticker pack based on its beloved clay character Morph to celebrate his 40th birthday. The various facial expressions and slogans can be used within the Messages app on the iPhone or iPad.

Play with vocal sounds

bit.ly/sounds423

Play around with the tongue and lower lip of this ingenious animated representation of a vocal tract, and the online voice synthesizer will produce some fun (if slightly annoying) tunes. Control the voicebox, pitch and wobble for more results.

Find out how adventurous you are

bit.ly/travel423

If you ever look at a map of the world to point out where you've been, you can use this tool to compare your globe-trotting expeditions with others. Click the countries you've visited, see where your fellow Brits have travelled and compare your trips with the likes of The Queen, Karl Pilkington and Joey Essex(!) by overlaying their destinations on yours.



Check for Instagram bans

bit.ly/bans423

Instagram has been blocking some posts from tagged pages, perhaps because the hashtag has been banned or is overused. Enter your username or the URL of your photo or video into this site and it'll explain any problem.

TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@electionuk17

Vote in regular snap political polls ahead of the General Election

@NOAASatellites

View amazing satellite images of storms and other extreme weather

@BBCR1

BBC Radio 1 celebrates its 50th anniversary this year

@BeanoOfficial

Kids stuff, for sure, but it's great at highlighting the wacky side of life

@StarWarsCount

This account counts down the days to the next Star Wars film

Need to Know

Kodi fights piracy by adding "low-level" DRM support

What happened?

The popular media-centre software Kodi has hit back at criticism of its new policy of supporting DRM, explaining in a blog post (bit.ly/kodi423) that this is only to allow restricted content to play on its own system.

DRM (digital-rights management) is a euphemism for technology and standards that lock down who can view copyrighted content, to ensure it's only seen by those who have paid for it and not pirates. Kodi doesn't have a DRM system built in because the open-source licence it's released under forbids such a restriction. "Kodi will never, ever require DRM to work, nor will it ever be a locked software", said the Kodi team.

However, Kodi wants to be able to play Netflix and other paid-for content directly through its software, so you don't have to switch between apps to watch films and TV shows on your television. To do that, Kodi uses the DRM tools in Android and Chrome, which allow it to stream content without offering its own DRM support. Kodi's developers argue that supporting DRM in this limited, "low-level" way will change negative perceptions about their software.

The move comes as the Digital Economy Act comes into force. The much-debated legislation includes an increase in the potential prison time faced by pirates for illegally streaming copyrighted content, from two years to



Kodi clarified its position on DRM in a rather defensive blog post



10. So far, the authorities and rights holders such as the film industry have targeted people selling set-top boxes preloaded with Kodi, as well as the websites making the streams available. However, the legal change means that anyone streaming pirated content – via Kodi, a browser or any other method – is technically at risk of up to 10 years in prison.

How will it affect you?

Here's how Kodi's DRM system works: Android has its own software to play DRM content, so Kodi simply uses that - as the user, you don't need to do anything. In Windows, it's more complex because the Kodi software can't connect to Netflix or other paid-for streaming providers. However, Chrome can do this, so Kodi uses the browser to handle the DRM while streaming continues inside the Kodi software. If you don't have Chrome on your system, you presumably won't be able to play Netflix. Kodi doesn't come with the DRM bits and pieces itself, but borrows them from Google.

The Digital Economy Act probably won't be used to target individuals with legal action for using Kodi to stream pirated content - but if it does happen, the risks are huge. You could be jailed for up to 10 years for illegal streaming,

but the authorities are more likely to go after those making the streams available or selling preloaded boxes.

What do we think?

The makers of Kodi are right to offer support for DRM, for two reasons. First, many Kodi users rely on its simplicity, and DRM means you don't have to keep switching between apps. Supporting paid-for subscriptions means Kodi can remain your one-stop shop for streaming video and make watching TV shows and films as easy as possible.

Second, it's true that Kodi is seen as linked to piracy, and offering support for paid-for streams such as Netflix could help change that reputation. If Kodi is only used for pirated content, it's hard to argue that it's not facilitating dodgy streaming, but if it's also used for watching paid-for, legal content, the case against it becomes weaker.

And that's key with the Digital Economy Act coming into force. The developers behind Kodi argue their system is no different than Firefox or Chrome – either of which can be used for piracy, but weren't designed for it. Adding support for paid-for content, even if it requires this light, low-level support for DRM, helps Kodi make its case that it's a legitimate piece of software, not a piracy platform.

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

Microsoft launches Windows 10 S

What happened?

Microsoft has unveiled a new version of Windows, called Windows 10 S, which is designed to compete with Google's Chrome OS and the Chromebook laptops that run the cut-down operating system.

Windows 10 S is designed for education markets, and will only run apps from its own online store. It's also locked down for browsing, which means you'll only be able to use Microsoft's Edge browser and search using Bing.

Other than those restrictions, Windows 10 S is the full-fat version of the OS, and comes with security and administration tools that are available in Windows 10 Pro but not Windows 10 Home. It will arrive 15 June on the Microsoft Surface laptop.

How will it affect you?

Windows 10 S is currently limited to laptops for schools and universities, who will be able to switch to the new OS for free. It will eventually extend to

other budget devices (as Chrome OS has), with HP and Acer set to launch laptops running the OS this summer for \$299 (£230) and other PC makers expected to pitch in, too.

The main restriction is the apps. Many popular Desktop apps, including Chrome, aren't yet available in the Windows Store. If you buy a laptop running the restricted OS, you'll be able to upgrade to Windows 10 Pro for \$49 (£38).

What do we think?

There's value in locking down the OS, particularly for students or users who aren't security-savvy. This could make Windows 10 S devices ideal for young children, or PC users who need Word and Edge and little else. However, anyone who uses more advanced software should wait before switching to Windows 10 S. Windows 10 laptops are already available at budget prices, so there's no need to lock yourself into the restricted OS without good reason.



Phishing scam hits Google Docs

Google Docs @ @googledocs - May 3.

What happened?

A phishing attack hit Google's authentication system by sending users an email containing a fake Google Docs sharing link. If victims

clicked the link, the attacker installed a web app via Google's authentication system, which asked for permissions such as reading your email and managing your contacts. The dodgy app could then grab data including your contacts list, which could be exploited to further spread the attack.

In response, Google blocked the dodgy app and revealed a new warning tool that displays a message to Gmail users on Android smartphones when they're about to click a link that goes to a known malicious site.

How will it affect you?

Although Google acted quickly to halt the phishing scam, more such ploys are bound to follow because the technique behind the attack remains open to abuse. That means you should be careful when opening links purporting to share Google Docs, and only click them if you're sure they are safe. Because the link may appear to be coming from a known contact, it would be worth

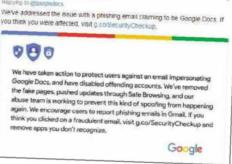
checking with that person first before clicking to open the link.

You should also check to see whether you have any unexpected apps authorised in Google. To do this, head to the My Account section of your Google profile and, under Sign-in & Security, click 'Connected apps & sites'. You can then view the apps that are connected to your account, and remove any you no longer need or don't recognise.

What do we think?

Google needs to do more than take out this specific attack, it needs to prevent similar ones from happening in the future. The warning message is a useful tool, but past performance shows that many people will likely ignore it and click through to the dodgy site anyway.

In the meantime, as usual, make sure anyone you know who isn't as tech savvy as you is aware of this type of attack. You can also run a security check of your Google accounts at g.co/SecurityCheckup.



Facebook denies exploiting unhappy teens

What happened?

Facebook has refuted claims that it helps advertisers target young users who may be feeling "overwhelmed and anxious". An internal Facebook research paper, seen by The Australian newspaper, allegedly details how the company can monitor the activity of users as young as 14 years old to work out when they are feeling "useless", "nervous", "defeated", "stressed", "overwhelmed", "silly", "anxious", and "stupid". It also said Facebook can tell when teenagers are happy or excited.

A Facebook spokesperson called the accusations "misleading", telling Web *User*'s sister site IT Pro: "We do not offer tools to target people based on their emotional state. The analysis done by an Australian researcher was intended to help marketers understand how people express themselves on Facebook. It was never used to target ads and was based on data that was anonymous."

The technology used by Facebook to gather this data, known as 'sentiment analysis', is common throughout the advertising and marketing industries. It's often used by companies to determine how certain demographics feel about a particular product, brand or event, using social-media tools such as trending topics and hashtags.

In a separate statement, Facebook told The Australian that "Facebook has



an established process to review the research we perform. This research did not follow that process, and we are reviewing the details to correct the oversight," the company added.

How will it affect you?

It's a horrifying thought that advertisers are exploiting teenagers' negative emotions to push products at them. It's already a concern for parents that their children 'over share' on Facebook. let alone that the content and comments they post may be used for financial gain. Although Facebook says such data is collected anonymously, this revelation still serves as a reminder that the site is

a monetised public arena, not a private communication tool.

What do we think?

It's no secret that Facebook shares its users' data with advertisers, but the shock of this particular story - at least as initially reported - was that vulnerable teenagers were being targeted as well as over-sharing adults. We're not totally convinced by Facebook's denial - after all, personalised advertising is how the social network makes its billions - but at least in this instance it appears to admit that exploiting unhappy young users is inappropriate, or an "oversight" to use the company's own term.

FIRST LOOK

Acer Leap Ware

www.acer.com

The Acer Leap Ware is the company's first smartwatch that's been designed with the fashion-conscious in mind. It's set to cost €139 (approx £118) and will launch later this year. We got to try it out on a rooftop at Acer's Global Press Conference in New York City and our initial impressions were mostly positive.

Its most impressive feature is its fitness monitor. The Leap Ware uses a MediaTek MT2523 chipset and MT2511 bio-sensing chip to calculate how hard you're training. The technology involved is actually quite simple - you just need a heart-rate monitor, the wearer's age and a simple calculation - but a surprising number of smartphones still do not offer this

functionality.

Another standout feature is the Leap Ware's five-day battery life. How is the battery performance so good? It's all down to its e-Ink display. e-Ink doesn't make for the most attractive display, but it's great for increasing a device's battery life and can also work in harshly lit environments.

However, where the device really excels is in its looks. Eye-catching design is not something you would normally associate with Acer - just take a glance at its previous



wearable, the Liquid Leap. But the Leap Ware's smart circular face, made from Corning Gorilla Glass SR+, and choice of a sporty rubber or more formal leather strap, means it looks stylish on vour wrist.

On the downside, we were disappointed with the Leap's performance. Swiping around the Android Wear screen was a pretty laggy affair. So although we can't see

the Acer Leap Ware electrifying the wearables market from its slumber, we do think it's a solid effort that offers pretty good value for money.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Will the iPhone 8 be delayed until 2018?

According to multiple sources, Apple will not release the iPhone 8 in 2017 - just the boring old iPhone 7S. The sources say Apple is experiencing a lot of problems with getting the iPhone 8 built in the desired numbers.

Production woes had already pushed back the release of the handset by a couple of months to around November, according to tech-news site BGR, but that date has now been further delayed with the news that it might not even get a release until next year.

"Report suggests no new iPhone 8 this calendar year," wrote analysts at Deutsche Bank. "As we have written in previous [research notes], several supply chain reports have suggested that key component shortages and technical challenges could delay the release of a highend iPhone 8 device this fall."

The iPhone 7S and iPhone 7S Plus are apparently on track for a release at Apple's usual time of around September, although we can't see too many people getting excited by these handsets when the prospect of the radically redesigned iPhone 8 has been dangled in front of their noses.

It was recently revealed that in the first three months of the year, iPhone sales dipped for the first time, a decline that Apple CEO Tim Cook blamed on leaks about the iPhone 8.



LIKELIHOOD RATING 11111

Hype around the iPhone 8 is at an all-time high, so we're not convinced that Apple would purposely delay the handset in favour of the underwhelming iPhone 7S range. We reckon the latter two will be released at budget prices (by Apple's standards) alongside the iPhone 8, come September.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Stare Off

bit.ly/stareoff423 | From £5

This quirky app lets you take on people across the world at staring competitions. Players upload videos of their longest staring attempts and you then gaze intently at your phone or

tablet screen to see which of you blinks first. As you progress through the levels, the contenders get tougher and try to distract you with random movements and background activity, but keep your eyes fixed and open and you stand a chance of emerging triumphant. The idea came to the creator in a dream, and had yet to raise any money at the time of writing, but it's certainly worth a look!



WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Facebook cracks down on fake news accounts

Facebook's latest effort to tackle fake news has led it to ban some accounts and run 'educational adverts'. The adverts, which appeared in newspapers such as The Guardian and The Times include the same tips that were recently published at the top of users' news feeds

ISPs' dubious speed claims set to end

The days of ISPs claiming broadband speeds that customers can never hope to achieve might finally be coming to an end, after the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) issued proposals to crack down

WE DON'T LIKE...

on misleading claims.

Debenhams Flowers suffers data breach

The personal data of 26,000 Debenhams Flowers customers has been compromised following a cyberattack. The site is operated by a third-party supplier so other Debenhams customers have not been affected.

WhatsApp suffers major 🧡 global outage

WhatsApp recently suffered a significant outage in Western Europe, Asia and America. The problem was first seen in the UK when users were unable to access the service for several hours. The messaging service gave no explanation for the problem.



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Botnet malware infects millions of Android devices

A new strain of malware hidden inside apps on the Google Play store has



infected close to two million Android devices over the past year, according to security experts monitoring the spread.

The recently discovered malware, known as 'FalseGuide', has been found in more than 45 Google Play store apps that provide guides and walkthroughs for mobile games. Some of these apps have been installed 50,000 times, according to security researchers at Check Point, who first discovered the strain.

Once installed, the FalseGuide malware is able to hijack a device and add it to a larger botnet. The device is then used to display pop-up ads containing malicious code, conduct

DDoS attacks against other targets and even compromise private networks.

Check Point alerted Google to the infected apps in March, and they were removed from the Play store, but since then other apps laden with malware have been added, Check Point said.

bit.ly/checkpoint423

Weak passwords are behind most security breaches

A new report has found that the majority of security breaches take advantage of simple passwords. Verizon's

annual Data Breach Investigations Report revealed that of the 2,000 breaches and security incidents it analysed, a whopping 81% used easily-guessed or stolen passwords. Furthermore, over 65% of malware infections were delivered via email attachments a technique that has been around for decades.

Pretexting - where a hacker pretends to be someone else to obtain private information - is also on the rise, while ransomware has increased by 50% compared to last year's report.

Verizon revealed that organised crime gangs were behind more than half of all security breaches, while almost 70% of all threats to healthcare companies come from within and around 50% of attacks on educational institutions were perpetrated by state-affiliated hackers.

bit.ly/databreach423

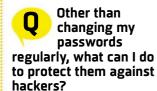


Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

David Emm, principal security researcher at Kaspersky Lab

(www.kaspersky.co.uk)





Sam Donnelly, Facebook



You should follow these guidelines to keep your

password security watertight:

- Make every password at least 15 characters long - the longer the better - and combine letters (including uppercase letters), numbers and symbols.
- · Don't make them easily guessable. There's a good chance that personal details such as your date of birth, place of birth, partner's name and so on can be found online - maybe even on your Facebook wall.
- Don't use real words. They are open to 'dictionary attacks', where someone uses a program to quickly try a huge list of possible words

until they find one that matches your password.

- Make passwords unique for every account: don't 'recycle' them, for example 'david1', 'david2' and 'david3'.
- Use a password manager that encrypts and stores unique passwords for all your accounts in one consolidated and protected location.
- · Consider a tiered approach to password management instead of a one-size-fits-all strategy. Create strong, unique passwords for important online accounts, where a compromise would have serious consequences:

for example, those linked to credit cards. But use a simpler password for accounts where no sensitive personal data is stored.

- Don't continually change your password. There's no need to change it just for the sake of it, and it's difficult to remember a new one every few weeks.
- Don't save your password - the "save your password" option offered by browsers may be convenient, but it's not as secure as using a password manager.

SON CONTRACTOR

WebUser



2016 BACK ISSUES DISC

Our **2016 Back Issues Disc** containing all 26 issues from last year is now on sale from Amazon

For more information, visit **bit.ly/wudisc16** or search for 'webuser disc' on Amazon

You can still buy our 2015 Back Issues Disc from bit.ly/wudisc15





Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

RELAUNCH

HuffPost

www.huffpost.com

The Huffington Post has been making headlines of its own, thanks to its first ever redesign and the surprise decision to adopt its snappier nickname as a new brand. Although most of the changes are currently confined to the US version, the site provides a foretaste of what's set to come in its UK offering. Aside from the new logo, pages now look bolder and make more creative use of photos. Its use of video helps drive the day's news agenda and there is clearer highlighting of the top stories together with more space for the articles. Less chock-a-block and relentless, it makes for a much more readable and easy-to-browse offering.

Our rating





NEW MENU

Gone are the top-of-the-page links, replaced by a more comprehensive drop-down menu

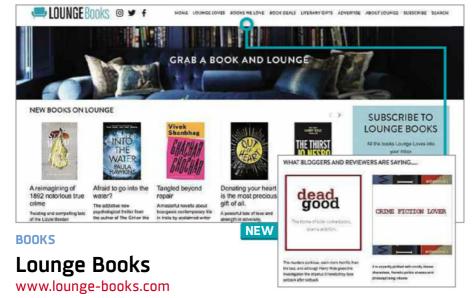


HIGHLIGHTED CONTENT

The content is now more clearly highlighted and the articles make better use of vour screen







As if to prove that you should never judge a book by its cover, this cleanly presented site is run on a shoestring budget of £2,000 yet looks a million dollars. Curated by a former project manager at publisher HarperCollins, as well as authors and bloggers, it helps readers discover new books and covers a host of searchable genres, from sci-fi and kids' books to romance and book porn (by which we mean beautifully designed special editions!). In doing so, it feels fresh and non-elitist, with a selection of exciting, low-cost ebooks and multiple reviews of each tome. The latest books are flagged on the homepage and the email newsletter keeps you up to date with additions. There's

Our rating

a good range of literary gifts, too, including mugs, cushions and pencils.





RETAIL

Flubit

flubit.com

Flubit is a shopbot that lets you enter links from Amazon to find alternative UK-based online retailers offering discounted deals. It used to take hours to get a price but now the costs for millions of products are displayed instantly. What's more, when our searches matched an item (not all of them did), they tended to be cheaper. We like the new, clear product pages detailing the delivery slot and company together with stock availability. But we were disappointed by the small images and dull descriptions accompanying items.

Our rating



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





SOCIAL MEDIA

HuffPost has added Snapchat and Instagram to its social accounts, and dropped Google+



When you click a video, it remains open and appears at the bottom of the homepage

NEW

VIDEOS



Watch Past Presidents Rip The Media At The White House Correspondents' Dinner



· CORONATION STREET: A COLLECTION · Step into the Corrie Collection a virtual tour through the studios **RELAUNCH**

Living Legacies

www.livinglegacies1914-18.ac.uk

If you're interested in the legacy and impact of World War One and want to share your passion with the wider community, this website is packed with information aimed at community researchers, including workshops, projects, a downloadable toolkit and booklet, and a digital archive of objects such as medals, postcards and service records. The site hopes to link you with academics working on the same subject, but it looks a bit old-fashioned and could do with more concise writing and clearer bullet points of its main benefits.

Our rating



Corrie Collection

corriecollection.co.uk

Despite a revamp, this website dedicated to all things Coronation Street still looks as old as the show's cobbled sets. However, despite its use of Comic Sans - a font choice that some will see as a crime against good design - this virtual tour of props, costumes and beer mats is a must for fans of the soap. Brimming with enthusiasm, it illustrates the show's history with off-beat items accompanied by clear explanations. You can browse scripts, nose around the old Granada Studios and buy merchandise. There are even character masks to print.

Our rating



House of Memories www.houseofmemories.co.uk

This inspiring project by National Museums Liverpool encourages the carers of people living with dementia to spark conversations using everyday items as memory prompts. Aside from telling you about dementia, the site suggests things to do at home and at the museum, such as creating a memory tree. There's a shop selling items evoking the past and lots of useful contacts, all presented in clear language. We love how you can alter the font size, contrast and images, too - a good lesson for other developers.

Our rating





Best New Websites



EQUESTRIAN

Horse of the Year Show

hoys.co.uk

Whether you're looking to compete or visit, the new site for the "world's most famous horse show" is furlongs ahead of its previous incarnation. Its tidier design makes navigation much easier, while the ticket-booking page better illustrates the varied packages on offer. With a clearer timetable ensuring you immediately see each day's schedule, and detailed visitor and travel information, it's much more user-friendly. But even if you don't intend to go to the show, there's lots to do, from reading a potted history of the event to browsing blogs, photos and videos.

Our rating





PARENTING

VIP Mums

www.vipmums.co.uk

Many mothers make a daily stop at Mumsnet, but there's always room for another parenting site. VIP Mums connects mothers, businesses and support professionals, letting users search for services and products in their area. Members can add blogs, articles and events, but although it's free to join, there are fees if you want to move up the membership ladder and enjoy certain benefits such as setting up your own groups. Like all such communities, VIP Mums stands or falls on the strength of its members, but it's certainly worth checking out.

Our rating





WAR

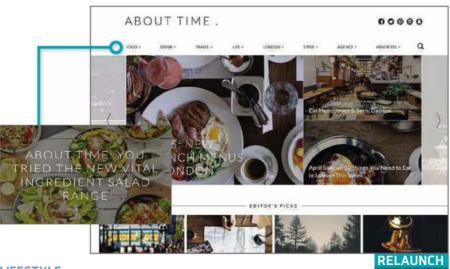
World At War

www.world-at-war.co.uk

Launched and edited by military historian Paul Reed, this promising site targets the second global conflict, bombarding you with numerous interesting blog posts, interspersed with fascinating images. It attempts to showcase never-before-seen material and aims to build a strong community of enthusiasts. As such, you can leave comments, share posts on social media and use the tags at the bottom of every page to jump to different subjects. We like the carousel of highlighted content but a menu alongside the search facility would be a welcome addition.

Our rating





LIFESTYLE

About Time Magazine

www.abouttimemagazine.co.uk

Aimed at Londoners, About Time is a richly populated online magazine jam-packed with lifestyle recommendations about enjoying life to the full. You can use it to discover places to eat and drink; read interviews with the owners of shops and businesses; browse a variety of opinions; and try recipes and health and fitness tips. In each case, you won't be disappointed: there's much to read on each of its well-written and presented pages, which make effective use of photography. Our only negative is that the staid, box-driven design lets it down, jarring against an otherwise inspirational (and aspirational) package.

Our rating





WikiTribune

www.wikitribune.com

Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia, is launching his next ad-free venture that aims to combat fake news with what he terms "evidence-based journalism" - entirely transparent news written with the sources in full view. Community volunteers will aid professional journalists in factchecking global news stories and readers will then be asked to make up their own minds. All this is expensive, so the site is seeking both one-off and regular donations. It currently includes an explanatory video, rolling updates and a simple, single pledge page. All being well, it'll launch in September.

YOUR PERFECT DOMAIN



Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Bring visitors back to your site

Zotabox (bit.ly/zot423) is an all-inone WordPress add-on containing lots of free tools that you can use to engage with your visitors and inform them of updates to your site. The free tools include social share buttons, a promo bar for highlighting new features, a contact form, fade-in notification



buttons and more. You can even set up live chats with visitors using Facebook. There's also a range of paid-for options but the free version has more than enough to keep your site fresh and interesting.

15 spam-free ways to publish your email address

Putting your email address on your website is essential if you want your visitors to be able to contact you easily, but it can attract a lot of spam. There are various ways to hide your email address, from using contact forms (such as the one in the Zotabox plug-in) to including special characters, which trick the robots spammers use to harvest addresses from the web. Heart Internet's Kate Bolin has a brilliant list covering 15 such techniques, with explanations of the pros and cons of each. Read it in full at bit.ly/hide423.

Deal of the Fortnight

Tsohost (www.tsohost.com) is having its biggest ever sale of domain names, with over 80 domains on offer at up to 80% off.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: NUBLUE This issue's expert: Raoul Martin, Hosting and Support at Nublue (www.nublue.co.uk)

Will external links on my website stop working if the target site moves from 'http' to 'https'?

The Clash, Web User forums

The external links shouldn't stop working but if you want your site to utilise 'https' and not 'http' ('https' being the more secure of the two), you would need to instruct any traffic coming to the website to redirect any requests for 'http' to 'https' - therefore ending up at the same place. For example, if an external link is http://www.nublue.co .uk, it can be forwarded to https://www .nublue.co.uk. This can be handled with a rewrite condition within your website's '.htaccess' file. If you're not sure where this is, contact your web host's support.

MINI WORKSHOP | Host better-looking video with Wix Wix Video: www.wix.com | 10 mins | Wix website

You can use YouTube's webmaster tools to embed its standard video player in your site but Wix Video's results are much more attractive, whether you upload films direct to your site or link to existing YouTube videos



If you don't already have a Wix site, create a new one but don't choose the ADI option because the video tool can only be used with a standard site. Click the Add button 11 and choose the type of video to insert. You can drop in a YouTube or Vimeo video in a traditional-looking player 2 or use Wix's lovely Strip 3 or Classic layouts. 4



Choose one of Wix's layouts and drag it to your site design. Hover over it and click the Manage Videos button. You can upload up to 15GB of video straight to Wix by dragging it to the window 11 or link to videos already hosted on YouTube, Vimeo or Facebook. 2 Even videos hosted elsewhere will be presented in Wix's attractive interface.



If you're adding a video from another service, click the 'Add to Library' button. Here, you can create channels, 1 which display on different sections of your site; view stats 2 about how your videos are being played; add more videos; **3** and even set pricing, **4** so you can charge people to watch your videos.

STELOCK.COM

python

SECURE.

NEW! A STANK TORMAN TO STANK T

NEW: Full performance scalability! Customise your web project's performance level yourself, according to your own needs. Easily adjust your website's performance levels to match increasing traffic from, for example, newsletters, blogs, adding an online shop or resource intensive applications.

√ Next Level Performance

- **NEW**: 2.5 GB RAM
- **NEW**: Simple scalability with up to 19 GB RAM in just a few clicks
- Performance monitoring in the 1&1 Control Panel
- Change your performance level with no downtime

✓ Next Level Speed

- NEW: Faster load times with HTTP/2
- NEW: PHP 7.1 + OPcache
- 1&1 CDN
- 24/7 Support

✓ Next Level Security

- SSL certificate included
- DDoS protection
- Geo-redundancy







C 0333 336 5509

Starting at
£ 0 99

/month*
Excl. 20% VAT

1&1

PHP//

1and1.co.uk



We test and compare the latest products

Google Wifi

Google adds its name to the roster of manufacturers making mesh Wi-Fi routers. **Jonathan Bray** compares Wifi to its rivals



f you've been following our reviews in recent issues of Web User, you'll have noticed the arrival of 'mesh' Wi-Fi routers, which use two or more devices to create a better spread of coverage around your home - and it looks like they're here to stay. We reviewed Netgear's Orbi in Issue 415 (bit.ly/issue415), Devolo's GigaGate in Issue 417 (bit.ly/webuser417) and BT Whole Home Wi-Fi in Issue 419 (bit.ly/issue419). All these devices use multiple base stations to create better Wi-Fi where you need it.

Google Wifi, however, is different for a number of key reasons. First, it uses the 802.11s mesh Wi-Fi standard, which Google says isn't being used by any of the other residential mesh routers. This is something Google has been working on with the IEEE standards body since it began the Google Wifi project some four years ago, and it brings with it a number of benefits over the proprietary systems employed by other vendors.

The most important advantage is interoperability.
As yet, no other manufacturer

is using the 802.11s standard, so only Google's Wifi boxes work with the system, which means they include a degree of future-proofing: if you buy Google Wifi now, you may be able to upgrade your network by adding less expensive devices later on.

Further advantages come from Google's machinelearning, which it incorporates into its units. By using a dedicated sensing radio to

The app is brilliant and takes you step by step through the setup — the entire process should take less than 15 minutes

scan your local network environment, Google Wifi can send information about signal strength and congestion back to Google's servers, which in turn analyse the data and send back information to the units about how and when to hop channels to maintain a strong signal.

This is all very clever but on a more fundamental level, if you want the best coverage, you need to have the right number of devices. On that front, Google Wifi offers good value for money, costing £229 for a twin pack and £129 for each single box thereafter. That may seem expensive in comparison to regular routers, but it's competitive with its





rivals, being a slightly cheaper starter option than the BT Whole Home Wi-Fi, which is £250 for a three-pack on Amazon, and better value than the Netgear system (£369 for two).

You also need to bear in mind that each of the units in a Google Wifi system is a fully fledged router in its own right. They don't have a broadband gateway built in so you'll still need a modem or router to bring your connection from the wall socket, but you get dual-band 802.11ac connectivity with theoretical speeds of up to 1,200Mbps over 5GHz, along with a pair of Gigabit Ethernet ports built into the base of each cylindrical unit.

Setup and app

Unlike regular routers, Google Wifi can't be administered or set up via your browser; you have to use either the Android or the iOS app. Fortunately, the app is brilliant and takes you step by step through the setup, starting with connecting the first unit to your existing router or modem, through to setting up any additional devices.

You may find that you have to restart your modem or router but the entire process should take less than 15 minutes. The setup analyses your network as you go to

make sure you've placed the devices in the best possible position, and uses the status LEDs wrapped around each unit's circumference to indicate the strength of the connection to the rest of the network.

After setting up your mesh, you only need to open the app if you want to use the additional tools. Parental controls, or "Family WiFi" as Google calls it, lets you block devices or groups of devices on a schedule. It's also possible to pause internet access manually if you want to immediately cut someone's connection.

By default, guest networks are kept completely separate from your main network, so visitors can't access file shares or network storage, but Google's clever system can provide access to devices such as Chromecasts and wireless speakers with a single click.

You can also use the app to access more advanced settings such as portforwarding, custom DNS (Domain Name System) and setting the network mode. although there's no way to separate the 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands, with Google Wifi taking control of connecting your devices to the most appropriate one. It also uses another technique called

"client steering" to ensure laptops, phones and tablets connect to the unit with the strongest signal.

The most important thing to recognise about Google Wifi is that if you have enough units, you'll always get a strong Wi-Fi signal, no matter where you are in your home.

Signal strength and speed

We tested Google Wifi in a narrow Victorian terraced house that spans three storeys and has rooms divided by thick brick walls. Two units were enough to provide a solid signal in all parts of the house at the full 38Mbps offered by the existing Sky Broadband connection.

However, this isn't the fastest mesh Wi-Fi system around. The BT Whole Home Wi-Fi system, for instance, has faster speeds at both close and long range, as does the Netgear Orbi. That's not surprising, though, as those systems offer tri-band connectivity and are able to transfer data at higher rates between devices.

One thing we should point out, though: don't just buy a single Google Wifi unit with a view to adding more later because you'll almost certainly suffer a downgrade in long-range connectivity and throughput. We tested a single unit from a kitchen extension at the rear of the house and it provided a usable but slow 5Mbps download throughput to our test laptop.

PRODUCT INFO

Google Wifi

Price: £129 each or £229 for two Buy from John Lewis: bit.ly/googwifi423

SPECIFICATIONS

- Simultaneous dual-band Wi-Fi
- = 802.11a/b/g/n/ac Wi-Fi standards
- 2 x Gigabit Ethernet ports per unit
- WPA2-PSK security
- = 512MB RAM
- 4GB eMMC flash
- 106 x 69mm
- **=** 340g

FOR

- Easy to set up and use
- ✓ Better Wi-Fi coverage than
- a single router

AGAINST

X Not as fast as BT or Netgear rivals More expensive system than single router

EVEN FASTER

Netgear Orbi, £369 bit.ly/orbi423



MORE UNITS IN STARTER PACK

BT Whole Home Wi-Fi, £299 bit.ly/btwhw423



OUR VERDICT

Google Wifi is an impressive device for a company making its first foravs into wireless networking. Not only is it competitively priced but it offers impressive coverage and is stacked with clever technology to make your life easier.

We particularly like the app-based configuration tool, which feels like a step **FEATURES** PERFORMANCE

EASE OF USE VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★

forward compared to the browser tools that most routers still use.

However, it isn't the fastest system around - BT Whole Home Wi-Fi holds

Moto G5 Plus

Jonathan Bray reviews a mid-priced phone with a fantastic camera

ith previous versions of the Moto G range, we've recommended the basic smartphone rather than the Plus edition, because they were better value for money. However, this year we're going with the Moto G5 Plus because it's faster, has a better camera, looks nicer and is only £80 more than the standard G5.

It's a smaller phone than last year's model, with a 5.2in, 1,080 x 1,920 pixels resolution IPS screen. It doesn't have a removable battery like its cheaper sibling, but every other major feature is present and correct, including expandable storage (up to 128GB), splash resistance, NFC for mobile payments and a fingerprint reader.

Performance is good for the price. In our benchmark tests, it was significantly faster than the basic G5 and slightly ahead of the similarly priced Lenovo P2 and Honor 6X. It lasted for 13 hours and 13 minutes in our looping video test, which isn't remarkable but will get you through a day on one charge.

The screen is nothing to write home about, and is the same resolution as last year's G4 Plus. Its viewing angles are great but it's not bright enough (only 401cd/m²

beautifully vivid and sharp, and performance was equally good in low light.

The G5 Plus runs with standard Android 7 with a few

through, especially the gesture shortcuts.

The new version of the Moto app lets you use the rectangular fingerprint reader on the front of the phone as a navigation key. However, we found it awkward to use and it's the first thing we'd turn off, except that without it, tapping the reader with your thumb doesn't take you to the home screen – instead, it switches off the phone, which is something we've done by accident more than once.



PRODUCT INFO

Moto G5 Plus

Price: £249
Buy from: bit.ly/
moto423

SPECIFICATIONS

- Octa-core 2GHz Qualcomm
 Snapdragon 625 processor
- = 3GB of RAM
- = 5.2in 1,080 x 1,920 pixels IPS screen
- 5 megapixels front camera,
 12 megapixels rear camera
- 3,000mAh battery (nonremovable)
- 32GB of storage
- microSD slot
- 802.11n Wi-Fi
- Bluetooth 4.2
- **=** 4G
- Android 7.0 (Nougat)
- 150 x 74 x 7.7mm
- 155g

FOR

- ✓ Great camera
- ✓ Sleek design

AGAINST

Average battery lifeNon-removable battery

Images look beautifully vivid and sharp, and it performed equally well in low light

at maximum brightness) and the colours look a little murky. According to our colorimeter, it only reproduces 73.4% of the sRGB colour standard, though the contrast is good at 1,149:1.

A common complaint about most mid-priced phones is that their cameras tend to be disappointing, but the rear camera on the Moto G5 Plus bucks this trend. It uses the same camera module as the Samsung Galaxy S7, which the imaging experts at DxOMark (www.dxomark.com) believe to be the second best smartphone camera available, behind Google's Pixel phones.

We were taken aback by the impressive quality of the photos: in daylight, they look typical Moto embellishments. It's not weighed down with preloaded guff, and the extras you get are sensibly thought

OUR VERDICT

The Moto G5 Plus is a great handset, but it isn't the all-rounder we were hoping for. However, it looks good, is reasonably responsive and the camera is superb. If you're a keen photographer, there's nothing else at this price that comes close.

However, if you're after something more practical, there are better handsets out there. Our current FEATURES
PERFORMANCE
EASE OF USE

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★☆

favourite is the Lenovo P2. It has a better-quality AMOLED screen, a stupendously good battery life and although its camera doesn't compare with the Moto G5 Plus, it's adequate in good light.

₩eb User's Best Buys

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

HARDWARE

SMART ASSISTANT

NEW!

Google Home

£129 from bit.ly/home422

Tested: Issue 422

Google Home is a remarkable home helper and we can't recommend it more highly. It can already control a variety of apps and services, with more to come, and has a good-quality speaker. It's simply designed to enrich your life.

KEY SPECS

High-excursion speaker ■ Supports HE-AAC, LC-AAC, MP3, Vorbis, WAV, FLAC and Opus ■ Far-field voice recognition ■ microUSB, DC power ports Android 4.2+ and iOS 8+ 477g ■ 142.8 x 96.4mm ■ 802.11b/g/n/ac Wi-Fi (2.4GHz/5GHz)

GRAPHICS CARD

Asus AMD Radeon R7 250

£78.59 from bit.ly/250amd416 Tested: Issue 416



This graphics card provides enough power to make less challenging games run smoothly in 1080p resolution with high-detail settings enabled. It's very cheap and benefits from plenty of speedy stream processors.

KEY SPECS

2,048 stream processors ■ 128 texture-mapping units ■ 32 render-output units ■ 926MHz GPU frequency ■ 4GB RAM Supports up to six displays 4,096 x 2,160 pixels resolution ■ DisplayPort, DVI-D and HDMI video connectors

WI-FI REPEATER

TP-Link RE450

£44.99 from bit.ly/tpl414

Tested: Issue 414

The TP-Link RE450 provides a strong signal at a price that's hard to resist. It's better at extending the 5GHz network than the 2.4GHz, but it also acts as a bridge to transfer older devices to the newer network.

KEY SPECS

2 x 60mm, 1 x 42mm antennae ■ 3.8W power consumption ■ 2.4GHz (450Mbps) and 5GHz (1,300Mbps) ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ WPS button ■ Repeater and access point modes

■ 163 x 76 x 37mm ■ Three-year return-to-base warranty

MONITOR

AOC Q2781PQ

£299.99 from bit.ly/aoc412

Tested: Issue 412



This good-value monitor offers impressive image quality, a lovely design and 178-degree horizontal and vertical viewing angles. You won't need to calibrate it, either. If you're after a monitor with a resolution of 2,560 x 1,440 pixels, buy this.

KEY SPECS

27in flat screen ■ 2,560 x 1,440 pixels resolution ■ 1,000:1 contrast ratio = 350cd/m² brightness = 60Hz refresh rate ■ DisplayPort, HDMI, VGA inputs ■ 330 x 180mm base ■ Three-year collect-and-return warranty

BUDGET TABLET

Amazon Fire HD 8

£89.99 from bit.ly/8hd410 Tested: Issue 410



For its low price, Amazon's Fire HD 8 is a pleasant surprise: it's great for media streaming and web browsing, its battery life is exceptional and it's easy to use. Once it's integrated with Amazon's Alexa voice assistant, it will be even better.

Quad-core 1.3GHz processor ■ 8in 1,280 x 800 pixels resolution screen ■ 2-megapixels rear camera ■ 16GB storage (12.09GB free) ■ MicroSD memory card slot ■ Fire OS operating system ■ 214 x 128 x 9.2mm ■ 341g

CHROMEBOOK

Acer Chromebook R11

£229.99 from www.amazon.co.uk Tested: Issue 409

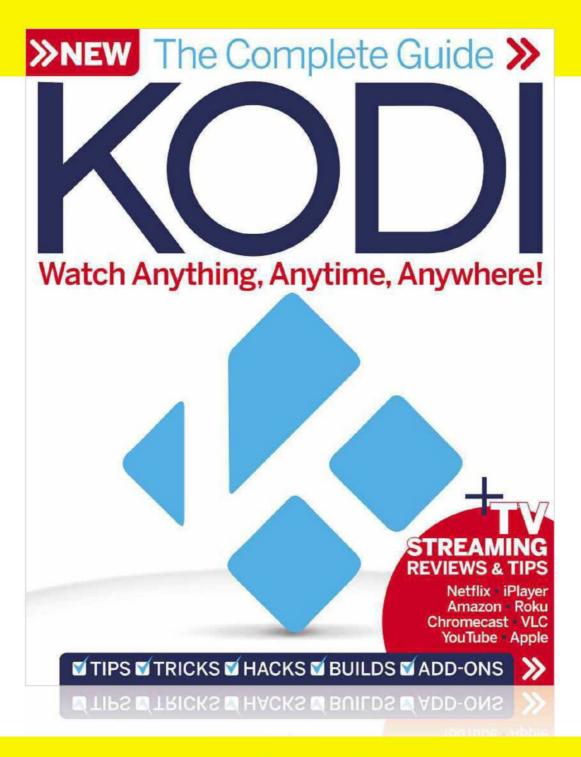


The Acer Chromebook R11 laptop has a keyboard that flips behind its touchscreen, so it can also be used as a tablet. It's not hugely powerful but it runs all the web apps you might need and its battery lasted over eight hours in our tests.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.6GHz Intel Celeron N3050 processor ■ 2GB of memory ■ 11.6in touchscreen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 16GB eMMC drive ■ 1 x USB 2, 1 x USB 3 ports ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi = SD card reader = 295 x 203 x 20mm = 1.2kg

ON SALE NOW!



Buy now from Amazon:

bit.ly/completekodi

(or search for 'Kodi guide' on Amazon)

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

CLOUD BACKUP

CrashPlan

£49 per year from www.crashplan.com Tested: Issue 420

If you've got a

substantial archive of data, CrashPlan is an impressively versatile and costeffective way to keep it safe. It performed well in our tests and has plenty of options, giving you full control over what's backed up and when.

KEY FEATURES

\$59.99 (around £49) per year for 1 PC I Unlimited storage I Back up external drives ■ Adaptive versioning ■ Continuous and daily backup schedules ■ Compatible with Windows 7/8+/10, MacOS 10.9+, Linux, Android 3.2+ and iOS 7+

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2017

£19.95 from bit.ly/kaspersky2017 Tested: Computeractive Issue 493

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

KEY FEATURES

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

- Advanced ad-blocking system Multi-device version
- Compatible with Windows 10

ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com

Tested: Issue 389

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 User Gold Award winners

VIDEO-CALLING APPS

Google Duo

Free from duo.google.com

Tested: Issue 422

Google Duo is designed to put you at your ease. Calls are smooth and it's easy to set up and use.



REMOTE-DESKTOP SOFTWARE

TeamViewer

Free from www.teamviewer.com

Tested: Issue 420

This powerful free remote-desktop program has an impressive array of features that raises it well above its rivals.

SCREEN RECORDER

oCam

Free from bit.ly/ocam419

Tested: Issue 419

With oCam, you can record for as long as you like, in any format, and use great extras such as picture-in-picture video.

MUSIC PLAYER

MusicBee

Free from getmusicbee.com

Tested: Issue 418

MusicBee offers everything you need from a music player. It's fast, easy to use and can be customised to your tastes.

SAFER-BROWSING TOOL

Webutation

Free from www.webutation.net

Tested: Issue 417

The excellent Webutation combines a reliable blocker with a database built on trusted services and users' experiences.

ANDROID KEYBOARD

SwiftKey

Free from bit.ly/swiftkey416

Tested: Issue 416

SwiftKey is the king of Android keyboards, with an unmatched combination of features, usability and performance.

STICKY-NOTES TOOL

Stickies

Free from bit.ly/stickies415

Tested: Issue 415

Stickies is simple to use, lets you display

almost anything in its notes and has lots of useful options.



Best Free Software

PASSWORD MANAGER

Dalenryder **Password** Generator 4

bit.ly/password423

Min requirements: Windows

XP/Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 1.3MB

Despite its name, Dalenryder Password Generator does a lot more than just come up with new passwords. It's a handy collection of security tools packaged in a smart, intuitive interface. The front screen gives you access to all the available features, which include a Quick Password

creator, Password Safe, Encryption Tool, PIN generator, Password Lab, Check tool and Add Symbol function.

Quick Password can generate passwords of between four and 30 characters. The Password Safe stores all your generated passwords in an encrypted vault, and the Encryption Tool offers a simple way to encrypt plain text so it can be shared safely. The PIN generator can create PINs of varying lengths - from four numbers right up to 100, depending on your needs.

The Password Lab is for when you need a stronger password than one



produced by the Quick Password option. You can specify its length, and whether to include numbers, lower and/ or upper case letters, special characters, umlaut marks, brackets, mathematical symbols and even custom symbols of your own choosing. Passwords you create here are saved in a list and can be exported as a TXT or HTML file.

If you're not sure how secure an existing login is, open the Check Password tool, type or paste it in and its strength will be displayed below.

Finally, the Add Symbol tool lets you construct a password simply by clicking



the elements to include - uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers and characters - to make your logins impossible to guess.

MINI WORKSHOP | Generate secure logins with Dalenryder Password Generator



To create a password you can use immediately, choose the character length in the drop-down menu 🚺 and click the Quick Password tile. 2 This produces a password that you can copy to your clipboard, or you can generate a different one. 4 You can include symbols if you want to make the password even more secure. 5



The Password Lab 11 takes things a step further. It creates a password that's ready to use but if you click the 'Show more' link, you can change the length 2 and specify which characters and symbols to include by clicking through the tabs. 3 You can view previously created logins in the Password list. 4



Settings lets you configure the program, including colouring the tiles (tick 'Make me happy'). 2 You can set up a master password 3 and encryption key. 4 The More menu 5 has tools for generating usernames and making existing ones harder to guess by swapping certain letters with numbers (W3b U5er, for example).

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



BENCHMARKING TOOL

Unigine Superposition Benchmark

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10 or Linux File size: 1.2GB

If you want to know exactly how well your PC hardware is performing, you can benchmark it using this tool, which tests your video card, power supply and cooling system. Set in a virtual laboratory environment, you can explore and interact with everything around you, and there are over 900 interactive objects and mini games on offer - who said benchmarking has to be boring? You can see how your system compares with others on the global leaderboard.



SCREEN-CAPTURE TOOL Omnicode Snatch

www.omnicode.com

Min requirements: Windows Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 24.5MB

Omnicode Snatch has an odd name and a cluttered interface, but don't let that put you off. It's a useful tool that captures everything happening on your Desktop, including any playing audio or video. To use it, click the Position button, drag your mouse around the screen area you want to capture and click the 'Start capture' button. You can adjust the quality level, frame rate and save format.



IMAGE BURNER

Etcher

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10, MacOS or Linux File size: 70.2MB

It's easy to burn disc images - such as ISO or IMG files - to CD or DVD, but it gets a little trickier if you try to write them to USB drives or SD cards. This is where Etcher comes in. It simplifies the process to a few mouse clicks - just load your image, select the target drive and click the 'Flash' button. Etcher supports all the main image formats and protects you against accidentally overwriting a fixed drive.

New Windows Apps

Fast Player for DVD

bit.ly/fastplay423

Min requirements: Windows 10 File size: 149.9MB

Microsoft's official DVD player app for Windows 10 costs £11.59. This alternative is free, and can play any DVD, as well as handle all popular audio and video file formats.



Live Home 3D

bit.ly/livehome423

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 370.6MB

Live Home 3D, a successor to Live Interior 3D. is an intuitive homedesign app. You can create 2D floor plans, then view them in 3D and decorate the interior.



Greater File Share

bit.ly/gfshare423

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 71.6MB

Greater File Share is a mini file server that can share files and folders from your PC over a network using a QR Code. You can also use it to explore hard-drive locations on your computer.



Best Free Software

VIDEO EDITOR

Aiseesoft Free Video Editor

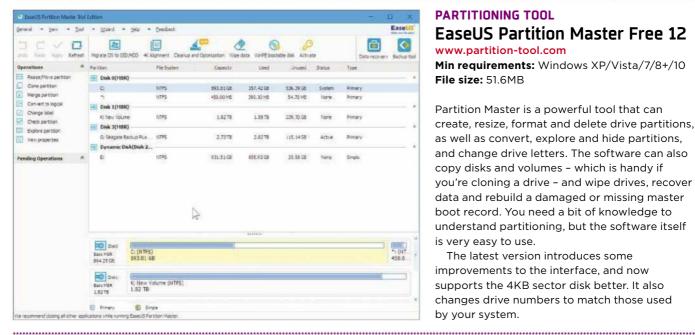
bit.ly/afve423

Min requirements: Windows XP/

Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 39MB

If you're looking for a simple video editor to perform tasks such as rotating, cropping, clipping, enhancing and joining videos, then Aiseesoft's free tool is definitely worth a look. It can also add a watermark to your videos and apply effects. The front screen displays eight tiles covering all the features. Select one, add your video and choose the actions to take. The enhance feature can upscale a video's resolution, optimise the brightness and contrast, remove video noise and reduce video shaking. There are lots of options available and you can save your finished file in a choice of formats.





PARTITIONING TOOL

EaseUS Partition Master Free 12

www.partition-tool.com

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

File size: 51.6MB

Partition Master is a powerful tool that can create, resize, format and delete drive partitions, as well as convert, explore and hide partitions, and change drive letters. The software can also copy disks and volumes - which is handy if you're cloning a drive - and wipe drives, recover data and rebuild a damaged or missing master boot record. You need a bit of knowledge to understand partitioning, but the software itself is very easy to use.

The latest version introduces some improvements to the interface, and now supports the 4KB sector disk better. It also changes drive numbers to match those used by your system.

SYSTEM TOOL

TC4Shell

www.tc4shell.com

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

File size: 6.8MB

TC4Shell integrates with Windows File Explorer and lets you interact with archived files - such as ZIP, RAR, ISO, 7Z, TAR and CAB - as you would with regular folders. You can copy, delete, edit and even execute files directly from archives without going to the trouble of unpacking them first. TC4Shell supports over 40 file formats, including some older, lesserknown ones, and offers plenty of useful features, including quick preview of archived contents; the ability to work with passwordprotected files; and the option to send compressed files by email.

You'll need to choose which files to associate with TC4Shell when you install the program.





GAME I'm Still Here

bit.ly/here423

Min requirements: Windows XP/

Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 53.6MB

You've moved into a new apartment, but something spooky appears to be going on in this entertaining first-person game. So what do you do? Nope, you're not going to call Ghostbusters - instead, you ask the internet for advice or, more specifically, turn to the font of all knowledge that is Wahoo Answers. This bizarre game will quickly draw you in.

Don't install...

Ultra VNC

www.uvnc.com

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

File size: 3.2MB

Ultra VNC is a powerful, open-source remote-Desktop tool that supports file transfers and textbased chat. However, it's aimed at advanced users. not those looking to help less-than-tech-savvy friends and family. Even setting up the tool requires an understanding of port forwarding, so we'd steer clear unless you're a networking expert.



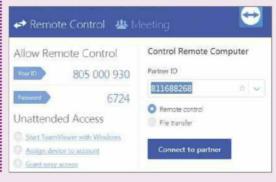
TeamViewer

www.teamviewer.com

...Install this instead

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10, MacOS, Linux or Chrome OS File size: 14MB

TeamViewer's impressive array of features elevates it above its rivals. It's not just a powerful remote-Desktop program, but also supports file transfers, remote presentations and video calls, so it's great for accessing your own PC remotely and offering tech support to friends and family. Setup is very straightforward and initiating a remote connection is as easy as typing the remote PC's ID and password into the PC you're working from. It's so fast and seamless, you'll feel like you're sitting in front of the remote PC.





UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



SLIDESHOW CREATOR

Icecream Slideshow Maker 2.5

bit.ly/issm423

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 18.5MB

Slideshow Maker lets you create a video slideshow from your photos, with transitions and background audio. This new version is smaller, and includes optimised preview generation and upgraded audio quality. Several bugs have been fixed, too.



DATA-RECOVERY TOOL

EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free 11.5

bit.ly/datarw423

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

File size: 17MB

The free version of EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard can restore up to 2GB of data that's been lost as a result of accidental deletion. hardware failure or formatting. You can now filter results by file extension and recover data deleted from your iPhone or iPad.



PDF TOOLKIT

PDF Shaper 7.3

www.pdfshaper.com

Min requirements: Windows

XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 8.3MB

PDF Shaper gathers together a selection of useful PDF tools in one program. The latest version has an updated interface and lets you view items in a list. PDF-to-text conversion has been improved and memory handling optimised. Make sure you decline the bundled junk during installation.



IMAGE EDITOR

A Sharper Scaling 1.2

a-sharper-scaling.com

Min requirements:

Windows 7/8+/10 File size: 650KB

A Sharper Scaling enlarges photos without introducing the most common problems, such as blurring, loss of sharpness and jagged edges. This latest version includes an explanation of the sizing modes and fixes a bug that would occur when overwriting image files.

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



Best New Browser Tools

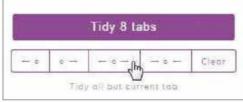


CHROME

Save memory by keeping your tabs tidy

As we explained in our 'What's secretly killing your PC' feature last issue, Chrome opens a separate background process for every tab, which gobbles system resources like a ravenous turkey. There are several extensions that combat this problem, including *Web User* favourites OneTab and The Great Suspender, and now there's another called TidyTab (bit.ly/tidy423), which combines the best of both those tools.

At the click of a button, this add-on 'tidies' all tabs except the current one by unloading them to free up memory. When you need to view



those pages again, just go to TidyTab's dashboard and click Restore. Usefully, you can choose to tidy only tabs to the left TidyTab 1 window Type to filter

Export Import Night

5 tabs Mon 04/24 at 11:29:05am Restore Restore in new Remove

Enhanced Image Viewer - Chrome Web Store chrome google com

Google Chrome News and extension reviews www.ghacks.net

About help

Chrome - Search - Page 4 - The Verge www.theverge.cam

Bitly | Bitlink Management app bitly.com

or right of the current one; remove individual entries from the group of tabs to restore; and export a list of tabs to reopen at a later date.

Improve your imageviewing options

When you open an image in a Chrome tab, the picture is shown against a boring black background. To get more from the images you see online, you need Enhanced Image Viewer (bit.ly/enhanced423), which gives you lots of useful features to play around with. For example, you can change the background colour, make the picture fill the entire window, zoom in and out using your mouse's scroll wheel, rotate and flip the image using keyboard shortcuts and set the default position of pictures on the page. To use Enhanced Image Viewer, right-click an image and

choose 'View image in current tab'. Click its toolbar button and choose Options to set your preferences and discover everything the extension can do.

Let Pipey the Piper lead the way

Two issues ago, on this very page, we revealed how to bring Microsoft's old virtual assistant Clippy to Chrome (bit.ly/clippy421). Now there's a 2017 equivalent called Pipey the Piper (bit.ly/pipey423), who will be familiar to viewers of the HBO/Sky Atlantic series Silicon Valley. Designed to answer the question "Is there more to this website?", Pipey offers advice and

insight as you browse the web, proving he's more than "just a flute with a hat". He pops up in the bottomright corner of your browser to deliver tips about the site you're viewing for example. on Facebook: "Adding an extra exclamation point to a "happy birthday" post really sets it apart!".

Pipey can be a bit



annoying, but his enthusiasm makes him an entertaining online pal.

View analogies for technical terms

The problem with technical jargon is that it often requires further technical jargon to explain it. A new extension from the Washington Post called Sideways Dictionary (bit.ly/ sideways423) solves this dilemma by using analogies rather than definitions to tell you what technical terms mean. It automatically detects such terms on web pages and displays its analogies in a sidebar on the right. For example, BitTorrent is "like photocopying a book", while Open Source is "like baking a cake for a friend, then giving them the recipe". It's an interesting idea, although some terms it covers, such as 'browser', don't really need explaining.





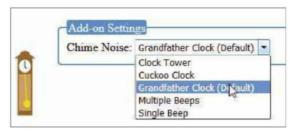
This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Opera and more



FIREFOX

Get a Firefox clock to strike the hour

Despite the little clock sitting in your taskbar, it's easy to lose track of time when you're browsing the web, so why not have Firefox remind you of the hour, every hour? That's the idea behind Grandfather Fox (bit.ly/grand423),



which chimes like the titular classic clock at the top of each hour. If you're not a fan of "bing bong, bing bong", you can go into the add-on's Options to choose another audio alert, including cuckoo clock, single beep and multiple progressive beeps. The developer of Grandfather Fox claims that it "promotes time awareness, while also giving your home office a touch of class". We wouldn't go quite that far but it's certainly a fun little audio enhancement.

Switch to the mobile version of Wikipedia

You may not regard Wikipedia as a particularly data-heavy site, but all those links to other articles and external sites combined with photos, footnotes and often very long pages of text can make for slow loading times. A new add-on called Mobile Wikipedia (bit.ly/ mobile423) speeds things up by forcing Wikipedia to display the mobile site used by phones and tablets rather than the standard desktop version. All excess content is stripped out to leave you with just the main article, which is cleaner and easier to read. The developer





reckons the extension cuts Wikipedia loading times by more than half without sacrificing important content.

Split Google results into two columns

Is your monitor so wide that you get a big empty area on the right of results when you search Google? Ours is, and we're often left reflecting on all that wasted browser space, which is where 2-Column Google Results comes in (bit.ly/2column423). As its name suggests, this add-on splits your Google search results into twin columns, maximising available space and saving you having to click to scroll down to see more results.

Change the colour of your scroll bars

If you're bored of Firefox's looks, you can add a touch of class to the browser using the fantastic add-on NewScrollbars (bit.ly/scroll423). This makes the dull rectangular scrollbars down the right-hand side and along the bottom of the window appear much more appealing. You can change their colour, width and shape, render them transparent or remove them altogether, with plenty of customisation options to play around with. It's even possible to have a different scrollbar style every day, to make life really interesting!

OTHER BROWSERS

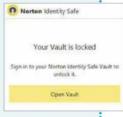
Stop websites tracking you In Issue 421, we wrote about a Firefox add-on called UntrackMe, which removes information from URLs that allows companies to track you when you click those links. We're happy to report that the extension is now available for Opera (bit.ly/untrack423), too, allowing you to protect your privacy by giving those pesky trackers the slip. UntrackMe works automatically, stripping the gobbledygook from the end of web addresses. You can pause its blocking when required, and it also keeps count of how many times tracking has been blocked.



Try new Edge

extensions A new Edge extension is always cause for celebration, so crack open the champagne because two have just been added to the Windows Store! The first, Norton Identity Safe (bit.ly/safe423), is a cloud-based password manager that stores your logins and other personal details securely, so you can enter them in a couple of clicks. Note that it only works on PCs running the Windows 10 Creators Update. The second is Zoom for Microsoft Edge (bit .ly/zoom423), which lets you use

a slider bar to magnify the content of web pages to make them easier to read. Both should prove very useful.





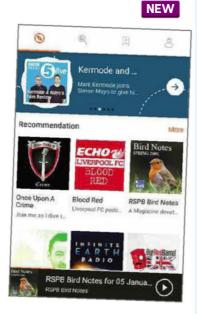
Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

AUDIO CastBox

castbox.fm

'YouTube for audio' is how CastBox describes itself. Irresistible shorthand, but actually a bit of an undersell. This free app, new to Android after several months on iOS and Amazon Fire, is much more than an audiostreaming service. It's also a podcasting tool that lets you download unlimited numbers of files, drawing from a library of millions - including many of the audiobooks, radio



channels and podcasts we mention in our cover feature on page 38. You can play, bookmark and even subscribe to content without creating an account.

In addition, it's a radio-hosting tool that lets you record and upload your own audio files for other users to stream and download (see our Mini Workshop on the right). CastBox offers all manner of ways to help you find an audience, including an 'advanced recommendation algorithm' that pushes your uploads to people with similar interests. In turn, you get personalised recommendations, trending lists and a superb search tool that offers one-tap popular results and supports voice search. Unlike most

podcasting apps, CastBox is completely free with no hidden charges at all.

Sadly, the Android version suffers a few bugs, notably with downloads that refuse to play, but CastBox says it's working to fix the problem. Streaming – including continuous playback and customised playlists – worked perfectly when we tried, although the app didn't seem to remember which items we'd already played.

The audio-hosting element of CastBox is a legal grey area at best. The app places no limit on the content you upload, so there's

obvious scope for

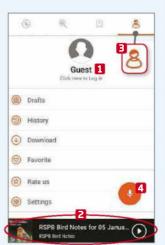
copyright infringement, just as with YouTube. We'll leave that one to the lawyers!

17

MINI WORKSHOP

Record your own audio broadcast using CastBox

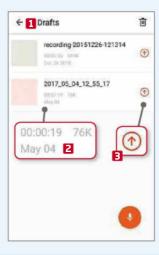
Install and launch
CastBox. You can
search, play, subscribe and
even upload audio as
Guest, without creating
an account. Any content
you stream continues to
play while you browse the
app. To quickly record
and upload an audio file,
tap the person icon,
then the microphone
button. Tap Allow to
permit media access, then
again to permit recording.



On the Record screen that opens, tap Record and start talking, singing, recording the birds in your garden or capturing whatever audio you want. The screen displays the destination of your audio file, 1 volume soundwaves 2 and recording time. 5 Press Pause, then press it again, to stop and start. 4 Tap Listen to play back. 5 Finally, tap Save. 6



To add an audio file from your device or Google Drive, tap 'File name' on the Record screen. All files you add and record are saved in Drafts, 11 which opens automatically after you tap Save, and reveals details such as file sizes and dates. To upload any file for public consumption, tap its red arrow. **3** You can then give it a name and set an accompanying photo before publishing it.





Our rating



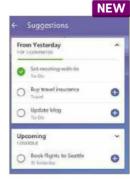
This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android, iOS and Windows phones and tablets

TO-DO LISTS

Microsoft To-Do

bit.ly/ tododroid423 bit.ly/ todoios423 bit.ly/ todowin423 **4.4 9**

📕 10 Mobile



The big names are out in force this fortnight, starting with Microsoft and its successor to Wunderlist (www .wunderlist.com), which it bought in 2015. Wunderlist will be discontinued soon, leaving 13 million users having to switch to To-Do, and they're not all happy about it. To-Do lets you create 'intelligent' lists, notes and schedules that sync across your devices, but ditches certain Wunderlist features such as shared lists, although we found it quicker and easier to use. Look out for a comparison of to-do-list

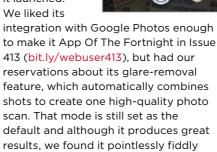
PHOTO SCANNER

PhotoScan

bit.ly/ photoscan423



Like Microsoft To-Do, Google's app didn't meet with universal approval when it launched.



document scan. So hooray! - you can now disable glare removal with one tap of the wand icon.

if all you need is a quick



UPDATED

FILM & TV

Sky Go bit.ly/ skvdroid423 bit.ly/ skyios422

🖷 (varies with device 8.1

And now to Sky's big update, which adds a batch of



headline-grabbing new features to its on-demand app for Sky TV customers. You can now record shows remotely and even download recordings to watch on your phone and tablet, as well as streaming live TV and browsing a full seven-day TV guide. Just make sure you stick to Wi-Fi for downloading and streaming, unless you've got unlimited mobile data. As with all

Sky's on-demand services, the range of content you can access depends on your subscription level.



Our rating

apps in our next issue.



Our rating



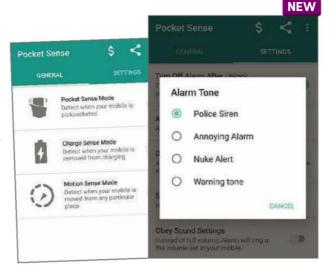
Our rating

SECURITY

Pocket Sense

bit.ly/psense423 4.0.3

Pickpockets love people who keep their phones in their trouser pockets. They're also fond of people who charge their devices in public. To make yourself less attractive to thieves, enable one or more of this app's alarm modes: Pocket Sense Mode, which sounds an alarm if someone grabs your



phone out of your pocket; Charge Sense Mode, which detects when your device is unplugged; and Motion Sense Mode, which springs into action when it's moved. The only way to silence the alarm is to unlock the phone. You wouldn't want it enabled all the time, or you'd be setting off alarms (Police Siren, Annoying Alarm or Nuke Alert - the choice is yours) every time you pick up your phone. But it's a quick and easy way to set a security alarm while you're standing in a crowd or on public transport.



Our rating



GET THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

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



Discover how to:

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

Order it now from Amazon at bit.ly/androidbook2016

Best Free Apps

SECURITY

The Learning Lock

bit.ly/lock423



If an Artful Dodger nicks your device, a lock pattern locks them out. But what if your thief knows (or guesses) your pattern? The Learning Lock can even lock out trespassers who know you really well or have psychic skills. This new app uses machine learning to get accustomed to the way you enter your pattern. If it detects that someone else is having a go, it'll

demand a backup PIN. It's a great idea but the setup process will test your patience: after wading through a

series of unnecessary permissions and the more plausible 'draw over other apps' setting, you have to set a background photo then enter your lock pattern 10 times to 'teach' the app your style.



Our rating

GAME

NEW

Pictionary

pictionary.etermax.com

4.0.3 8

Eagle-eyed readers may wonder if this issue is a Pictionary special. We mention the classic drawing game on page 47, and here it is again, this time in the form of its first official app. It looks fantastic and is fun to play - but we've got a couple of big criticisms. First, there's no solo mode. The best mobile games have an option to play against the app, but Pictionary requires that you play

against at least one other person, with a gallery of real-life strangers to choose from. Worse, and unforgivably, its in-app purchases climb to £95.99 for 'gems'. In a game that kids will love?

Its makers should be ashamed.



NEW

MARKET

Our rating



NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

REFERENCE

V For Wikipedia

bit.ly/vwiki423

Price: £4.99

9.3

This third-party app makes Wikipedia an even greater joy by optimising the open-source encyclopedia for iOS. See 'most read' articles, add bookmarks and read about places nearby.



Audiobus 3

bit.ly/audiobus423

Price: £9.99 10.2

Your tenner buys you a powerful sound-effects studio that incorporates features from dozens of audio programs, including Garageband and Korg Gadget. Version 3 adds a MIDI routing system and built-in mixer.

PHOTOGRAPHY

ArtGrid by Jackson's

bit.ly/artgrid423

Price: £1.99

1991 4

Import or shoot a photo using the new Android version of



Friedrich Schiller



ArtGrid, then scale, compose and enhance it before printing. The iOS version hasn't been updated in a couple of years.

EDUCATION

Flocabulary

bit.ly/flodroid423 bit.ly/floios423

Price: £4.89 per month

4.1 8

The service that uses 'educational hip-hop' to engage kids has been a huge success on Android, so it's now launched on iOS. Its 800 teaching videos cover a wide range of subjects but, annoyingly, they're all delivered in a US accent.

NEWS RADIO

Funnel

bit.ly/funnel423

Price: £1.99

0 9

Hear the latest hourly news summaries from broadcasters including the BBC and NBC. Most are US channels, so you may want to cough up an extra 99p to customise your AutoPlay feed for maximum Beeb.





V For Wikipedia

Audiobus 3

ArtGrid by Jackson's

Flocabulary

Funnel



NEW



Best New Mobile Games

NEW

PUZZLE

Word Connect

wordblocks.strikingly.com





How many words can you make out of the letters MSPAW? If you found 10 or more - we'll give you 'swamp', 'wasp' and 'maps' - then Word Connect will be right up your street. This simple but addictive game turns you into Dictionary Corner on Countdown by challenging you to build as many words as possible out of a jumbled set of letters. There are no time limits, so you can take as long as you like,

and the wooden letter blocks and word board are designed to "bring back nostalgic

childhood memories!".

Our rating



SIMULATION

Cat Sim Online

bit.ly/catsim423

19 4



If you've always envied the laidback. carefree life of a cat, then think again - this role-playing game shows that being a moggy is harder work than you'd imagine. Live like a cat or kitten of your favourite breed, exploring the world, raising a family and protecting them from danger. There are mice to catch, enemies to fight and, if you're a female ('queen'), you can even become pregnant and give birth (not as graphic as it

sounds!). Cat Sim also connects you with other feline pretenders across the world.

Our rating



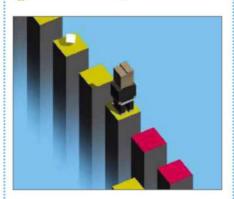
ACTION NEW :

> Jump bit.ly/jump423

4.1

bit.ly/iosjump423

49



Jump is one of those games that sounds easy, but proves to be frustrating and addictive in equal measure. Guide the bearded character across a series of coloured platforms, tapping left when the next platform is yellow and red when it's right. If you don't choose correctly in time, he fails to jump, dies and you have to start again. As you progress, you collect cubes to unlock further characters. We scored a rather

feeble 57. Make sure you deny the unnecessary permissions when you first run the app.



Our rating



X Don't install...

Simple Dice

bit.ly/simple423



To be fair, you probably wouldn't expect a great deal from an app called Simple Dice



but, even so, this is distinctly disappointing. It consists solely of a single die on a green background tap your screen to throw it and see what number it lands on. That's really all there is to Simple Dice - it doesn't even amount to seconds of fun, and it's certainly not much of a game on its own.

...Install this instead

Dice 3D

bit.ly/dice423

1 2.3

From playing board games and gambling to making life decisions, there are lots of uses for dice but few of us are likely to carry them around. Thanks to Dice 3D, you don't have to because this excellent ad-free app puts all the dice you'll ever need on your phone or tablet screen. Tap your screen to throw your dice, or swipe one to toss it individually, and long-press to customise it in numerous ways. You can change the number of sides (up to 100), alter the texture and colour, and play with as many dice as you want.





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

Our guide to Amazon Go

Amazon Go banishes queues, cash and checkouts from the shopping experience. David Crookes explains how it works

What is it?

Amazon Go (bit.ly/amazongo423) is a real-life grocery store that allows you to walk in, take any item you want from the shelves and then leave without passing through a checkout. It sounds worryingly akin to shoplifting, but the idea is that you pay for your goods via an app on your phone. This speeds up the shopping process by eliminating queues and freeing you from the usual faff of placing your goods into a basket, taking them out again to be scanned and repacking them into shopping bags.

What does Amazon Go sell?

Anything from staples such as bread, milk and cheese to drinks, easy-to-prepare meals and treats such as pastries and chocolates. The first Go store in Seattle has been trading solely to Amazon employees since December, with items stocked in a 1,800ft2 (167m2) space. But it's still in a beta-testing phase and the public opening - originally pencilled in for the end of March - has been delayed.



This customer has clearly nailed how to use the Amazon Go app

Why does Amazon want a slice of the grocery market?

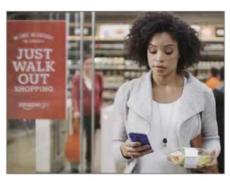
Analysts are unsure why Amazon wants to enter an industry in which many established companies are making a loss. They are just as baffled about why it wants a bricks-and-mortar presence when it has spent years undermining the high street with its successful online business. Yet the expansion of its brand



and desire to reach into all aspects of our spending is hard for Amazon to resist.

How does Amazon Go work?

As a customer, the first thing you need to do is install the free Amazon Go app, which is linked with your Amazon account. As you walk into the store, you'll be asked to open the app to call up a QR code and hold your phone next to a scanning device. This tells Amazon that you are in the shop and ready to browse the aisles. You can then grab items and carry them or place them in your own bag. Amazon works out what you've



You can buy all manner of exciting items with Amazon Go, such as salad

taken and adds it to your virtual shopping basket. Once you've walked out of the store, it will create the overall bill, debit your account and send you a receipt.

What's the technology behind it?

Amazon hasn't divulged the exact details of how it works out what you're buying. It does, however, say it uses a combination of advanced machine learning, computer vision and artificial intelligence, similar to the tech found in self-driving cars. As such, experts suggest Amazon's computers are hooked up to a series of cameras around the store. These make a note of two things in particular: the items being taken off the shelves and the person doing the taking. This is a complicated process since the system needs to distinguish between a cheap bottle of water and an expensive bottle of Champagne, for example. But that's where AI and deep learning come into play, looking for particular image features and correcting errors so that the right items at the correct prices are added to your bill.

But how does Go know it's you doing the buying?

Again, it is likely to be down to the cameras. Presumably, Amazon Go is using a system of facial recognition, perhaps allied with a photographic scan of your body and a study of the way you move. This links you to your account and allows you to be tracked as you walk around the store and interact with the items. In order to do this, your picture would have to be taken multiple times and on a continuous basis.



Put items straight in your bag without getting nabbed by security

Would it know if I put something

Yes. In fact, a video created to promote Amazon Go (bit.ly/agvideo423) highlights that very scenario. It shows a customer removing a cheesecake cupcake from the shelf and putting it back. In doing so, the item is added to the customer's bill and then removed. Amazon Go wants you to be oblivious to the technology and just get on with your shopping in the same way you would in any supermarket or grocery store.

Self-scanning checkouts often fail, so is this tech foolproof?

No, not at all. Just as we've all been frustrated by items that don't scan and goods not registering in the bagging area of self-service checkouts, so Amazon's developers have encountered problems with Go. According to the Wall Street Journal, the system currently struggles to cope with more than 20 customers at a time and it throws a wobbly if people move too quickly. There are also issues when items are moved from their usual spot on the shelves and placed elsewhere.



OTHER QUEUE-CUTTING TECHNOLOGY

Other retailers are also working on ways of reducing queues and waiting times

Scan as you shop

Some Tesco supermarkets offer a portable scanner that you use to scan barcodes of items as you shop. You can then head to the till, pay, pack your shopping and leave.



Using your mobile

A company called Diebold Nixdorf, which provides self-service products to retailers, is looking at ways for customers to use their phones to scan items as they shop. Sainsbury's has

.....



trialled a similar system called Mobile Scan & Go.

Pay a virtual waiter

When you get your restaurant bill, you can pay without flagging down a waiter. Apps such as Flypay and Cake let you pay on your phone, while

Your Order	
La Reine Gerlic Bread (V)	£8.95
Total Amount:	£12.25
Restaurant Details	
Durham 64 Saddler Street	
Tel: 01013832661	
Time	
19:00	
Pay Now	

restaurants including Pizza Express have bill-settling features in their apps.

.....

So when will Amazon Go be open to everyone?

It may be a while before Amazon is entirely happy that its store is working in the way it intends, and some sceptics in the retail industry think the technology is nowhere near ready yet. Mike McNamara, the chief information and digital officer at the American discount retailer Target, thinks "we're probably 14 years away!". Amazon hopes not, since it eventually wants to have 2,000 Amazon Go stores across America; it has yet to confirm when UK shops will open.

What else is Amazon considering for the high street?

It already has physical book shops called, unsurprisingly, Amazon Books in cities such as Chicago and New York, and these may soon adopt the same Just Walk Out shopping technology as Amazon Go. It is also looking at creating drive-throughs



Amazon Books looks just like any other high-street book store

and larger 40,000ft² (3,716m²) stores in America as it continues its attempt to revolutionise the high street in the same way it has transformed online retail.

Won't Amazon Go put shop assistants out of work?

Any initiative which looks to replace a role traditionally carried out by humans is bound to be controversial and there has already been talk of some customers potentially boycotting such stores in the future, should they become commonplace. Yet there are academics who argue that computer automation creates job growth. James Bessen, an economist at the Boston University School of Law, says cutting checkout queues makes shopping less stressful, which could encourage people to shop more frequently and buy more items. This would then lead to more people being employed in different, humanreliant parts of the business.

Amazon will have an awful lot of info about us, won't it?

If you do a load of your shopping online at Amazon.co.uk, then pop into its Amazon Go and Amazon Books stores, use Amazon Echo and watch lots of content through Amazon Prime, to name but a few of the giant's services, then yes, it will. But there seems to be no stopping Amazon's ambition as it continues to reach its fingers into multiple pies.

It's amazing how many great freebies you can get from the web, and not just software and apps. **Jane Hoskyn** and **Robert Irvine** present the ultimate guide to fantastic free downloads

n every issue of *Web User*, we round up the latest and greatest programs and mobile apps that you can download for free - they are, you might say, our 'bread and butter'. But there's so much more you can get from the web, to keep for as long as you want and use however you wish, without having to pay a penny.

For this special, extended cover feature, we've assembled our biggest ever collection of free downloads to cater to every interest and need.

From classic TV shows and films through podcasts and books to creative tools and educational resources, we've chosen the very best free stuff you can find on the web, as downloaded and tested by us.

Over the following 11 pages, you'll uncover all manner of downloadable delights that you never realised were there, and they won't cost you a thing. Please let us know if we've overlooked any of your favourite freebies and we'll feature them in a future issue.

- **39 MAPS & TRAVEL**
- 40 TV & FILM
- 41 AUDIO & RADIO
- 43 EBOOKS & AUDIOBOOKS
- **44 PHOTOS & ARTWORK**
- **45 HOBBIES & INTERESTS**
- **46 CREATIVE & DESIGN**
- 47 FUN & GAMES
- **48 WEBSITES & DATA**

MAPS & TRAVEL

Historical maps

The National Archives charges £38.75 per download for its historical maps, but there are plenty of other places where you can get your cartography for free. For example, A Vision of Britain Through Time (www.visionofbritain.org.uk) has a downloadable collection of British topographic, boundary and land-use maps dating back to 1803. Even better is the amazing OldMapsOnline (www .oldmapsonline.org), which lets you search map collections from around the world - including the David Rumsey Collection, the New York Public Library and The British Library - and download their content for free.

Local maps

In recent years, Ordnance Survey has really raised its game to compete with Google Maps and no more so than with its OS OpenMap Local maps (bit.ly/ opendata423). These provide detailed street-level data including road and building names, crime hotspots and electric-vehicle charging points. The Great Britain download is a whopping 2.2GB in size, so it's best to choose individual local maps - each spanning an area of 100km² - by clicking the relevant tiles. You need to register with the site to receive your download links via email.

World maps

If you're looking for a map of the whole world rather than a specific area, perhaps for educational or creative purposes, Freepik (bit.ly/worldmaps423) offers more than 1,800 in varying styles, colours and themes - for example, politics or population. The free vector maps are provided in JPEG and EPS format, but you must credit the author if you reuse them commercially.



Sky maps

Google makes a decent stab at mapping the universe with Google Sky (www.google.com/sky) but when you print its maps, the results are almost entirely black. Save your ink and use Skymaps Evening Sky Map (www .skymaps.com) instead. This free

two-page star-gazers' guide is free to download as a PDF and designed to print clearly. There's a new issue every two months that's packed with detail to help you identify planets, constellations and distant galaxies - it even tracks comets.



GPS routes

A GPX file (GPS Exchange Format) contains all the coordinates that make up a route (bit.ly/gpxfile423) - most GPS devices and apps support GPX. Walking Britain lets you download these files for free for many walks, but the links are well hidden - you have to click the route number and Walk Description, then scroll down to Download GPX File. If there's no file for your favourite route, create one using the free new online tool Hikideas (bit.ly/hikideas423). Draw your map, then print it or click 'Export (GPX)'.



Cycle routes

The GPS Cycle and Walking Routes website lets you print routes from the UK National Cycle Network (www.gpsroutes.co.uk). It's a great place to start, but serious cyclists should head for JustGoRide (www.justgoride.co.uk). This free tool offers more than 2,500 cycle routes, from purpose-built mountainbiking trails to road loops hundreds of miles long, all over the world. Along with a Google Map, you get elevation details, current weather and user reviews. Routes are free to download as GPX files, but you'll need to create a free account first.

Walking routes

Google Maps is comprehensive but it doesn't tell you where you can legally

walk - unlike the new Footpath Maps site (footpathmaps.com). Search for any UK location mapped by Ordnance Survey, then choose 'Save as PDF' when printing to download maps for free.

John Harris's Walking In England (www.walkinginengland.co.uk) offers a more personal approach. Choose a county and click Download Free Walks to browse printable PDFs, each with a detailed description. Walking Britain (www.walkingbritain.co.uk) has thousands of routes to print for free, and now includes selected routes in Europe.



🔼 Travel guides

lt's easy to find travel info online, but

connecting to the web every five minutes while you're abroad can be fiddly and costly, which is why it's better to download destination guides. TripAdvisor's mobile app (www .tripadvisor.co.uk/



apps) gives you offline access to hotel and restaurant reviews, activity and attraction recommendations, and maps and photos in one handy download. We also like ArrivalGuides (www .arrivalguides.com), which lets you download and print free PDF travel guides for thousands of destinations.

Train timetable With so much information packed

into them, train timetables can be baffling little booklets. To make things simpler, National Rail now lets you create your own personalised



schedule. Using its Pocket Timetable tool (bit.ly/pocket423), you can choose up to three departure or arrival stations; select the days, dates and travel times that suit you; and download the resulting timetable as a PDF to print and keep.



TV & FILM

Classic cartoons From Popeye the Sailor and Felix the Cat to Betty Boop and Mighty Mouse, the Internet Archive has an amazing array of classic cartoons from the first half of the 20th century. Download them for free (bit.ly/ cartoons423) in MPEG4 and Ogg Video format, as well as (legal) torrent files. Uck uck uck, indeed!



Stock footage

Want to spice up your home movies by cutting in vintage clips of sunrises, air battles and rattling old automobiles? Then feast your eyes on the Internet Archive's fascinating Stock Footage section (bit.ly/stock423), which offers more than 1,600 copyrightfree clips for you to download and use as you please.

Silent movies

They don't make films like they used to - without colour, sound and CGI - and many silent movies are just as impressive today as they were 100 years ago. At the Internet Archive (bit.ly/silent423), you can download many classics for free, including The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Nosferatu and dozens of Charlie Chaplin shorts.



Classic TV shows You don't need to resort to piracy or paying the high prices of the BBC Store to download classic British TV. The Internet Archive's Classic TV section (bit.ly/classictv423) has thousands of programmes from the Fifties and Sixties that you can save to your PC or Mac for free. Most of the

Netflix TV shows & films

Netflix once said that it had no plans to let its users download content as well as stream it, so we were delighted when it changed its mind at the end of last year. Not only can you now save many TV shows and films to your Android or iOS phone or tablet to watch offline whenever you want, but you can even store them on your SD card so they don't use up valuable space. Last month, Netflix expanded its download



capabilities further by letting you save videos to view offline in its Windows 10 app (bit.ly/netflix423), in both standard and high quality. Naturally, there are a few limitations - not all Netflix titles are available to download, and the files expire after 30 days - but it's still a very welcome addition.



content is American but there are lots of BBC and ITV shows to download, too. Highlights include Quatermass and the Pit, The Army Game and episodes of The Avengers, Emergency Ward 10 and Steptoe and Son

BBC iPlayer box sets

One annoyance with BBC iPlayer is that if you catch the end of a series, then go back to watch earlier episodes, you often find they've disappeared because of the 30-day streaming download limit. The Beeb has addressed this complaint by making some series available as box sets, in which every instalment is available simultaneously for at least one month. Recent box-set downloads include Peter Kay's Car Share and the Tom Hardy drama Taboo, while the current series of Doctor Who will be available for three months.

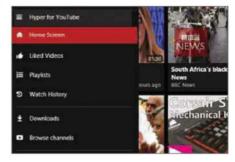


Channel 4 programmes To download ITV shows, you need to pay £3.99 per month for its ITV Hub+ subscription service, but Channel 4's All 4 hub (bit.ly/all4423) gives you both catch-up and archive content for free. Downloads are only available via the Android and iOS apps, and you need to put up with ads before and during programmes, but Chromecast compatibility means you can stream downloads to your TV. Box sets include the complete series of Father Ted, The IT Crowd and Shameless.



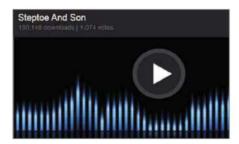
YouTube videos in Window

Considering that you're not really supposed to download videos from YouTube, there are a surprising number of downloaders for the video-sharing site in the Windows 10 app store. Our favourite is Hyper for YouTube (bit.ly/ hyper423), which makes it easy to search, play and download videos, so you can watch them whenever you want.



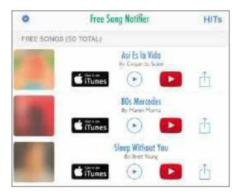
AUDIO & RADIO

Phone ringtones
The days of novelty ringtones
such as Crazy Frog are thankfully long
gone, but many people still like to make
their calls sound more exciting with
a personalised tune. To cut through the
minefield of dodgy sources, head to
Zedge (www.zedge.net), where you'll
find thousands of free, good quality
ringtones to download via its website or
app, as created and shared by the
Zedge community. It's not all current
pop hits, either – we found such delights
as a hooting owl, some ear-splitting
bagpipes and the theme tune from
Steptoe and Son.



NASA ringtones
If you've ever
wanted to hear Neil
Armstrong announcing
"The Eagle has landed"
when you receive a
phone call, you're in luck because NASA
has an archive of audio clips from its
space missions (bit.ly/nasaring423) that
you can use as ringtones. These are
available to download for free in MP3
and M4R format.

Free songs from iTunes
Apple used to give away a free
song on iTunes every week, but quietly
dropped the 'Single of the Week'
promotion two years ago when it moved
its focus to its streaming service Apple
Music. However, the occasional freebie
still appears, so it's worth installing the
Free Song Notifier (bit.ly/freesong423)
app on your iPhone or iPad to be alerted
when a free track becomes available.



21 SoundCloud tracks
Many musicians, DJs and
producers now use SoundCloud
(soundcloud.com) to share their work
online, but often only as streaming
audio with no option to download the
track. SoundCloud Downloader
(scdownloader.net) beats this restriction
by converting SoundCloud URLs into
downloadable MP3s. Alternatively, you
can subscribe to SoundCloud Go for
£9.99 per month to enjoy its entire
catalogue offline and ad-free.

Sound effects
ZapSplat (www.zapslat.com)
has an enormous collection of sound
effects you can download for free,
once you've registered with the site.
The names are as vivid and amusing as
the noises: 'Firework, faulty, fizzle then
extinguishes', 'Spoon into glass bowl
containing soggy cereal' and – our
personal favourite – 'Male sigh, unhappy,
fed up (37 years old)'.



Audio samples
If you like the free Magix Music
Maker software featured in Issue 421's
Best Free Software, why not grab some
more samples to enhance your tunes?
MusicRadar offers more than 10,000
free audio samples (bit.ly/samples423),
spanning genres including classic synth,

heavy metal and Parisian-style.



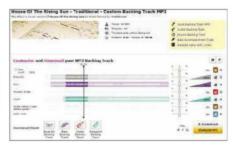
Famous speeches
From Edward VIII's abdication to Churchill's "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few", there are some speeches you can listen to again and again. The Internet Archive has kindly rounded up the 56 greatest speeches of the 20th century in one handy MP3



(bit.ly/speeches423), while hundreds more are available from the Free Information Society (bit.ly/society423).

Archive audio recordings
Turn off Spotify for an hour or
two and immerse yourself in some audio
history, courtesy of the Internet
Archive's 78 RPMs and Cylinder
Recordings collection (bit.ly/78rpm423).
This goes right back to a spoken-word
recording made by Thomas Edison in
1888, and takes in old blues standards,
classical performances, traditional folk
songs and much, much more.

Raraoke backing tracks
Fancy entertaining your house
guests with a stirring rendition of
'La Bamba' or 'House of the Rising Sun'?
Then download a free instrumental
backing track from Karaoke Version
(bit.ly/karaoke423) and let rip. The site
also has a free selection of customisable
backing tracks that let you adjust the
volume of individual instruments to suit
your needs.



27 Vintage radio showsRevisit radio's golden age at
Zoot Radio (www.zootradio.com), host
to thousands of classic episodes
featuring the likes of Glenn Miller,
Abbott and Costello, and Mel Blanc.
Right-click an episode, then select
'Save link as' to download a free MP3.
The Internet Archive's Old Time Radio
selection (bit.ly/oldtime423) has a few
home-grown gems such as Orson
Welles as Harry Lime and vintage audio
recordings from the Theatre Royal
(bit.ly/theatre423). Download links are
below each list of episodes.

Desert Island DiscsGot a theme tune going round in your head? Great, let's begin. Every episode of the BBC's long-running radio programme is free to download from bit.ly/desert423. To help you wade through the 1,500-show archive, you can search by name, music choice, presenter and even luxury items. Did you know that only five castaways - including actress Wendy Craig and athlete Tessa Sanderson - chose to take a toothbrush?



BBC Radio documentaries Every day, BBC World Service producers hand-pick a documentary to download for free (bit.ly/thedoc423). There are now almost 400 to choose from, covering subjects from Donald Trump and Real Madrid to the longevity secrets of a 117-year-old Kenyan woman. To download future episodes automatically, you can subscribe to The Documentary podcast at bit.ly/docpod423.



Health and fitness podcasts Download dozens of doctorly TED Talks on subjects ranging from bone density to antibiotics via oodles of medical-science lectures from the excellent audio library Podbay.fm (bit.ly/ ted423). The site also has hundreds of ways to help you lose weight and get fit, notably the Half Size Me podcast (bit.ly/ half423) - US-accented but genuinely inspiring - and the Human Race podcast



BEST BBC PODCASTS

News bit.ly/bbcnews423

Catch up with Yesterday in Parliament, subscribe to The World at One and explore many more news round-ups and insights. As with all BBC podcasts, you can listen online or save individual episodes if you'd rather not subject your hard drive to automatic downloads.

Sport bit.ly/bbcsport423

Radio 5 Live and local stations provide most of the content in this category, with podcasts including Football Daily, Fighting Talk and 5 Live Sport Specials.

Comedy bit.ly/bbccomedy423

Radio 4's Friday Night Comedy and News Quiz Extra podcasts are enduringly popular, but follow the links to find some amazing archive gems, including dozens of Adam and Joe Shows from BBC 6 Music - all free to download (bit.ly/adamjoe423).

\$.....



Science bit.ly/bbcsci423

There's tech aplenty here, with podcasts including Click, Digital Human and Professor Brian Cox's brilliant science show The Infinite Monkey Cage.

Music bit.ly/bbcmusic423

The Beeb's music podcast offerings are relatively sparse, but there are huge archives of free downloads, including all 50 episodes of Radio 3's classic series The Story of Music in 50 Pieces. See the full selection of BBC podcasts at www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts.

.....

from Runner's World magazine (bit.ly/ race423). To download any episode from Podbay.fm, click it, right-click the Download button and select 'Save link as'.

Sleep sounds

Jim Butler makes music to nod off to (www.jimbutlermusic.com), and it's all free to download, again from iTunes and Podbay.fm (bit.ly/jim423). You could always try The Shipping Forecast, but the BBC's guaranteed kip-inducer is only available to stream (bit.ly/shipping423). You can download all episodes of Wireless Nights, an intriguing Radio 4 series about nocturnal habits hosted by

singer Jarvis Cocker (bit.ly/nights423).

even if it doesn't actually cure it.

It'll make your insomnia more interesting,

Meditation podcasts The Daily Meditation Podcast from Sip & Om (www.sipandom.com) dishes out some really annoying phrases, but there's solid advice here on breathing and stress management - and tea. You have to pay to subscribe via the site, but all past episodes are free from iTunes and Podbay.fm (bit.ly/meditation423). For everyday tips on willpower and relaxation, try The One You Feed (www .oneyoufeed.net) - it's a daft name but has good talks from guest experts, and all for free. Episodes are much easier to browse on Podbay.fm (bit.ly/feed423).

Gardening podcasts The Royal Horticultural Society's half-hour RHS Gardening Podcast (bit.ly/ rhs423) is now in its fourth year and has more than 100 episodes to download free from its content-packed site. Episodes offer seasonal advice and chats with experts and veg-growers, including Raymond Blanc and Mary Berry. Stick on your headphones and listen while you weed, seed and sow.



EBOOKS & AUDIOBOOKS

Classic literature ebooks
Project Gutenberg (www .gutenberg.org) is the ultimate free resource for classic literature. This excellent site offers more than 53,000 out-of-copyright books to download in all the main digital formats, including Kindle, EPUB, PDF and plain text. The best place to get started is the Top 100 Books list (bit.ly/topbooks423), which provides direct downloads to the most popular titles. When we visited, these included Pride and Prejudice, The Importance of Being Earnest, Great Expectations and The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. You can also download books to your phone by scanning their QR codes, or save them to Google Drive, Dropbox or OneDrive.

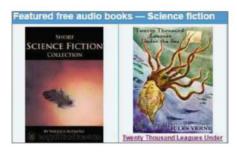
Classic literature audiobooks

LibriVox (librivox.org) offers more than 10,000 free public-domain audiobooks, including stories by Charles Dickens, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Rudyard Kipling - all read and recorded by volunteers. Project Gutenberg's Audio Books Project (bit.ly/gutenaudio423) offers free, downloadable texts read



by real-life humans and (less fluently) by computers, while Audible gives you one free audiobook before you commit to a monthly subscription (bit.ly/ audible423).

Science-fiction audiobooks If your reading-listening tastes veer more towards sci-fi than real life, Loyal Books (bit.ly/scifi423) has plenty of classic tales to entertain you, from authors including HG Wells, Jules Verne and Philip K Dick. You can either download the free audiobooks as MP3s (handily divided into chapters) or as iTunes podcasts.



Tech manuals If you can't figure out how to use a camera, coffee maker or chainsaw, chances are there's a manual you can download from Manuals Online (www .manualsonline.com) or ManualsLib (www.manualslib.com). These two enormous databases offer PDF manuals for every manufacturer from Acer to Zanussi, which are all available to download for free.

Coding and computing books

Teaching yourself programming is no easy task and many people give up on paid-for how-to guides after a few pages. To see if coding is for you, save money by downloading free

ebooks: FreeComputerBooks (freecomputerbooks.com) and eBooks-IT (ebooks-it.org) have impressively comprehensive selections.

For a nostalgic take on the subject, Usborne is giving away free PDFs of its colourful computing books from the Eightes, including Programming Tricks & Skills, Practise your Basic and Machine Code for Beginners (bit.ly/usborne423).

Recipe books

Instead of shelling out for the latest Jamie Oliver hardback, there are loads of 'pukka' cookbooks you can download for free. BookRix has more than 100 (bit.ly/bookrix423) in EPUB and MOBI format, while the Internet Archive has a Very Large Cookbook collection (bit.ly/largecook423) of 63 recipe books from around the world. Vintage Cookbooks (bit.ly/vintage423), lets you download titles dating back to the 18th century, such as The English Art of Cookery.



48 Classic comics Relive your childhood by

downloading old scanned copies of The Beano, The Dandy, Eagle, 2000 AD, Hotspur and many more comics from the Fifties to the Eighties, from the tremendous blog British Comics (britishcomics.wordpress.com). The downloads are packaged as RAR archives so you'll need a compatible compression tool such as WinRAR or 7-Zip to open them.

If you prefer classic American comics featuring superheroes, Disney characters and weird tales, the Internet Archive has thousands of free titles at bit.ly/comics423.

EBOOKS FOR E-READERS

I Kindle If you have a Kindle e-reader, or use the free Kindle app on your phone, tablet or computer, you can download lots of free ebooks from Amazon. The store's Top 100 Free chart (kindlefree423) includes an eclectic mix of books of varying quality from both new and wellknown authors. It's also worth bookmarking eReaderIQ's dailyupdated selection of free ebooks (uk.ereaderiq.com/freebies), so you don't miss any new, free titles added to the Kindle Store.

Kobo Kobo owners or app users can either download free ebooks from the Kobo Store at bit.ly/kobo423 or visit the Free Ebooks section of the



WHSmith site (bit.ly/whsmith423), which offers a broader and betterquality selection of Kobo titles.

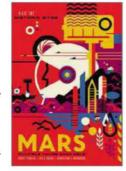
Google Play Books If you prefer to read ebooks using the Google Play Books app on your Android or iOS phone or tablet, the Play store lets you download its most popular free titles from bit.ly/ playfree423. To see more, search for a keyword and choose Free from the 'All prices' menu.

PHOTOS & ARTWORK

Desktop wallpaper
Bing's daily homepage images
are one of the few things it does better
than Google. To use these attractive
photos as Desktop wallpaper, go to the
Bing Gallery (www.bing.com/gallery)
of homepage images from the last five
years and download the shots you want.
Also worth a look is The Paper Wall
(www.thepaperwall.com), which offers
free wallpaper for every screen
resolution.

NASA posters

Among NASA's quirkier downloads are its Visions of the Future promotional posters for 'space tourism' (bit.ly/ visions423).



These include gorgeous designs extolling the

benefits of trips to Venus, Mars and extra-solar planet Kepler 16b. All can be downloaded for free at poster size (30 x 20in), either as separate PDFs and TIFs, or in a single 675MB ZIP file.

51 Film postersTo download large film posters that are legal to print, visit Free Vintage Posters (www.freevintageposters.com). Its Classic Films selection includes full-size collectables such as the Japanese poster for *Some Like it Hot* alongside design classics such as the

Saul Bass art for Vertigo.

without watermarks.

Film stills
FilmGrab (film-grab.com)
provides a massive archive of stills from thousands of films, which you can download for free for your personal use. If you need bigger, better quality images, the Movie Stills Database (www.moviestillsdb.com) has more than 550,000, but you'll need to pay from £5 per month to download them



53 Hi-res photos and videos from NASA

NASA has always been generous with its free downloads, but its sprawling website made them hard work to explore.

Recently, this changed with the launch of the incredible NASA Image & Video Library (images.nasa.gov), which offers more than 140,000 images, videos and



audio files from the last 100 years. From the homepage, you can browse the latest and most popular uploads, or search for a particular term to uncover a wealth of stunning content. All the images are free to download, and are provided as both low and high-resolution JPEGs.

Vintage public posters
Free Vintage Posters also has
a fine selection of old adverts and war
posters, including Rosie the Riveter
('We Can Do It!') and the famous Your
King & Country Need You (bit.ly/
king423). We also enjoyed the striking
collection of free political posters in
Michigan University's Joseph Labadie
Collection (bit.ly/labadie423).



55Contemporary art
You can get spectacular art
prints for free from Typographic Posters
(www.typographicposters.com). The
site hosts contemporary art and design
from all over the world, chiefly Poland
- Europe's current design capital.
Sizes vary but all the work is high-res
and free to download.



Historical illustrations
The British Library's Flickr
collection has more than a million
digitised illustrations spanning four
centuries – and they're all free to
download (bit.ly/britflickr423),
individually or as albums. For more
public-domain scans, bury your nose
in Old Book Illustrations (www
.oldbookillustrations.com).

57Creative Commons photos
Flickr's Creative Commons (CC)
content (www.flickr.com/commons) is
free to download and print as long as
you don't copy or cash in. Contributors
include The National Archives, which
lets you download entire albums of
historical photos for free (bit.ly/
archive423). To find CC photos across
the web - including from 500px and the
Metropolitan Museum of Art - use CC
Search (bit.ly/ccsearch423).



58 Stock photos
Photos of brick walls, blue skies and blurred lights make ideal backgrounds for websites and greetings cards. Freepik has nearly 250,000 free photos of not very much, with a few flowers and faces thrown in (bit.ly/stockpik423). Photos with a crown icon are for paying customers only, but most of the images are free.

59High-res historical photos The Getty website (www.getty .edu) is an extraordinary resource for free stuff including podcasts, ebooks

and - best of all
- nearly 100,000
historical photos
(bit.ly/getty423),
all free to
download in
glorious high-res
as part of the
Getty's Open
Content Program.



HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Genealogy records Ancestry.co.uk and Findmypast may be the biggest and most popular



resources for tracing your family tree. but other sites offer useful records for free. Free **UK Genealogy**

(www.freeukgenealogy.org.uk) is a charity that hosts invaluable projects for genealogists, including FreeBMD, which provides free access to births, marriage and deaths records; and FreeCEN, which lets you search and download census data from the 19th century.

Language lessons Want to master a foreign tongue without paying through the nose? Then head to OpenCulture (bit.ly/open423), where you'll find links to free language lessons across the web, spanning 48 lingos. The downloads are in various formats, from MP3s and iTunes podcasts to Spotify playlists and mobile apps.

Also worth a look (or listen) are 50 Languages (bit.ly/50lang423), which offers free sets of MP3s to teach you everything from Afrikaans to Vietnamese, and the huge range of free language-course podcasts on iTunes (bit.ly/ituneslang423).

Gardening plans Better

Homes & Gardens (www.bhg.com/ gardening/plans) has dozens of downloadable garden guides such as Low-Water



3 Artefacts from the British Museum The British Museum's website (britishmuseum)

.org) is truly a thing of wonder, collating more than four million items from its catalogue with even more to come. As well as browsing everything from Neolithic tools through Egyptian papyrus to Medieval coins and beyond, you can download photos of most artefacts to use for free under the Creative Commons licence. The largest images are 750 pixels wide with a resolution of 72pi, but

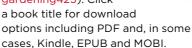


you can get larger versions by registering for the museum's free image service and get a high-resolution download that will be 21 cm when printed at 300 dpi.

Garden Plan and 'Beginner Garden for Full Sun'. Each PDF is full of detail including layout diagrams, illustrations and plant lists. The site also has a free Plan-a-Garden tool (bit.lv/ plangarden423) for shifting virtual shrubbery around a 3D template. Click the cog icon then 'Download image (jpg)' to save your customised template for free.

Gardening ebooks The Internet Archive has free

downloads of classic gardening books including The Black and Decker Complete Guide to Greenhouses & Garden Projects and The Home Orchard Handbook (bit.ly/ gardening423). Click



🟲 Wildlife ID sheets The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust has teamed up with the RSPB to create a small, free illustrated PDF of farmland birds.

including partridges, bunting and skylarks (www .gwct.org.uk/ bfbcguide). Wildlife Watch. from The Wildlife Trusts, has dozens



of photo-illustrated PDF sheets for all kinds of wildlife including insects, fungi and birds of prey (www.wildlifewatch .org.uk/spotting-sheets). The Wildlife Trusts also has an interactive UK map for finding nature reserves (bit.ly/ reserves423). Print your customised map or save it as PDF with one click.

Birdsong MP3s The poor birds look a bit green on the Bird Sounds page of Orange Free Sounds (bit.ly/birds423) but they sound wonderful. There are nearly 150 birds and bird sounds to download as free MP3s, including Loud Birds Early Morning and the rather more relaxing Nightingale Song. BBC sound recordist Chris Watson made MP3s of dozens of garden birds in 2008 and they're still free to download from the archived page (bit.ly/bbcbirds423).

WHAT WE WANT TO DOWNLOAD

So many of our deepest download desires have come true - Netflix shows, offline maps, sound effects of toads croaking in a Belgian moat (bit.ly/moat423) - that we have to wonder what's still unavailable, or undownloadable. Here are a few that come to mind:

Our Amazon order history

Amazon.com lets you download a spreadsheet containing details of every purchase you've made through the store and the total you've spent. Why can't Amazon.co.uk do similar?

Our clothes

It's easy to browse and buy clothes online, but you still have to wait for them to be delivered. If only we could download our shirts, trousers and shoes directly from the web!

Our meals

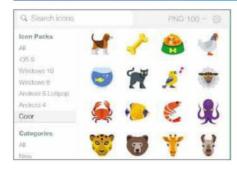
Services like Just Eat and Deliveroo save you having to cook, but what if you could actually download your takeaway via the web, eliminating the need to leave your computer at all?



Our dreams

How amazing would it be if we could grab copies of our dreams from our unconscious minds to play back and analyse at our leisure?

CREATIVE & DESIGN



7 Icons & emoji From animals and food to people and transport, the fantastic Icons8 (icons8.com) offers every icon and emoji you could ever need for creative projects, Desktop customisation or social silliness. You can download the PNG files for free but you need a subscription for unlimited formats and quality. Alternatively, you can download the free Icons8 app (icons8.com/app) to get all 46,300 icons in one go.

3D models With the Creators Update bringing 3D modelling to Windows 10, why not stock up on ready-made models to make your creations more interesting? Great sources of free 3D downloads include Free3D (free3d.com) and Thingiverse (www.thingiverse.com), but make sure you choose the correct file types for your 3D-modelling program. Paint 3D, for example, only works with FLX and 3MF formats.

69T-shirt transfersYou can iron any image on a T-shirt (as long as it's bold enough) just print it on a special transfer sheet

(about £10 per pack from Amazon. bit.ly/ paper423) then whip out your iron. Our



favourite sources of transfers are Free Stencils (spraypaintstencils.com), which has hundreds of downloadable designs spanning 34 categories, and Free Vectors (bit.ly/animals423), which has a whole menagerie of silhouette animals.

Photoshop presets Adobe software isn't cheap, so

it's worth adding a few freebies to get your money's worth. PhotographyPla .net (bit.ly/ photog423) and Shutter Pulse (bit



.ly/shutter423) offer free bundles of presets for Photoshop and Lightroom, but you'll need to register. Presets Galore doesn't demand your email address and offers five free Lightroom presets (bit.ly/lrpresets423).

Website templates If you're unimpressed with the templates that came with your webbuilding software, you can get thousands more for free from Open Designs (www.opendesigns.org). Browse by style - such as Artistic, Business and Gallery - colour and keyword, preview the template online and download it as a ZIP file.

Sewing and cross-stitch patterns

Craftsy has thousands of free sewing patterns for items such as bag straps, pet beds and bottle holders - oh, and clothes (bit.ly/craftsy423). You need to create an account first, or you can sign in using Facebook. For free cross-stitch charts, head to bit.ly/stitch423.

Knitting and crochet patterns

Craftsy also has thousands of free knitting patterns (bit.ly/craftsyknit423). Use the filter boxes on the left to choose a skill level, garment type and technique. For crochet patterns, click Crochet, Patterns, then Free in the left-hand menu.



Office templates Kick-start your letter-writing with free templates from Hloom (www.hloom .com). The site has more than 1,700 templates - including cover letters, invitations, spreadsheets and CVs - all free to download. Templates are offered in multiple formats to ensure you'll find one for your preferred program, be it Word, Excel, LibreOffice, OpenOffice, Google Docs or a PDF editor.

Printable calendars The Printable Calendar tool from TimeandDate.com (bit.ly/calendar423) is a flexible alternative to Google Maps that lets you create a personalised calendar by choosing designs and fonts, and automatically fills in bank holidays, equinoxes, moon phases and more. You can then download as many

different versions as you want.

FREE DESIGN TOOLS

Fonts Google's open-source Fonts directory (fonts.google.com) offers hundreds of high-quality fonts ranging from sleek modern to calligraphy - all free to download to your PC.

Typography Vectors are files you import to graphics programs to make your own posters, websites and other designs. Freepik has umpteen typography vectors (bit.ly/typo423) which are free if you credit the site.

3Clipart Clipart is basically picture vectors. The open-source database OpenClipArt (openclipart.org) has thousands of free icons, cartoons, background patterns, lettering and



Graphic-design tool You don't need expensive software such as Adobe Illustrator to create designs with vectors use Vectr (vectr.com) instead. It's free to download or use online.

Card and poster templates The card, poster and collage templates at Fotor (www.fotor.com) are an even easier option. Customise your creations, then share, download and print them for free.

FUN & GAMES

Retro computer games Rediscover Nineties computer games such as Lemmings, Prince of Persia and Duke Nukem in the Internet Archive's Classic PC Games section (bit.ly/classicpc423). You can download

hundreds of brilliant retro titles to play offline, though you may need to install DOSBox (www



.dosbox.com) for some titles to work. The archive's Software Library also hosts classic games for ZX Spectrum, Atari, Apple II and more.

Point-and-click games If you prefer the type of puzzle games that involve you escaping from a room, you'll love Adventure Game Studio (www.adventuregamestudio .co.uk), which has more than 500 such titles. These are created by its pointand-click-loving community, and vary greatly in quality and theme. To save time, browse the monthly games picks and award winners.

为 Commercial games Several once-popular paid-for games are now available to download for free - Wikipedia has a list of them at bit.ly/wikigames423. One notable



recent addition is the classic 1998 strategy game StarCraft (bit.ly/ starcraft423), which was made free last month to promote the release of the

commercial StarCraft: Remastered.

Steam games Steam is the most popular gaming platform for PC gamers but its content doesn't come cheap, with some titles costing as much as £39.99.

SIMULATION GAMES

5 FlightGear www.flightgear.org

This amazing free simulator puts you in the cockpit of dozens of planes, helicopters and



other aircraft - including the Wright Brothers' Flyer, Boeing 737s and Zeppelin airships - and lets you fly to and from 20,000 real-world airports.

OpenRails www.openrails.org Open Rails is fantastic value for anyone who wants to take to the rails. It's compatible with Microsoft Train Simulator routes and activities, but has tons of fresh content of its own.

Truck Simulator USA bit.ly/truck423

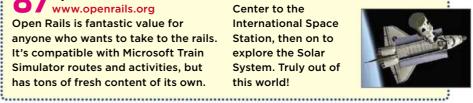
Want to drive an 18-wheeler across America? Of course you do, and this simulator for Android and iOS lets you fulfil your trucking dreams. Navigate busy roads and changing weather - just remember to refuel!

9 Orbitei Sp Simulator Orbiter Space Flight

orbit.medphys.ucl.ac.uk

If your ambitions lie beyond standard flight sims, this one lets you guide a shuttle from the Kennedy Space

Center to the International Space Station, then on to explore the Solar System. Truly out of this world!



Free to Play Games



Fortunately, you can still find something new to play when you're low on funds by visiting the Free to Play Games section of the Steam store (bit.ly/ freetoplay423). You'll need Steam installed to download the games.

Official board game **instructions**

Win arguments over board games by whipping out a spare set of instructions. Mattel's UK site lets you download scanned instruction leaflets for games including Scrabble and Pictionary, although they're tricky to find. Enter a

game on the Instructions Sheets page (bit.ly/ mattel423).



click an edition, click the serial number and then click 'here' in the pop-up.

Rival Hasbro is even better at hiding its instructions for Monopoly (bit.ly/ monopoly423) and Trivial Pursuit (bit.ly/ trivial423) - our links take you straight to the free PDFs.

Board and card game rules WikiBooks is a great source of rules and tactics for classic games, with sections on chess (bit.ly/chess423), backgammon (bit.ly/backgammon423) and card games (bit.ly/cards423) including a huge sub-section on Magic: The Gathering (bit.ly/magic423). To download an entire WikiBooks section for free, scroll down the left-hand column, then click 'Download as PDF'.

Crosswords The

Crossword Network (www.dowedo.net) lets you tackle quick,

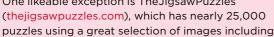
cryptic, themed and freeform crosswords online, or download



them free to print. Puzzle fan Eddie James collects hard cryptic crosswords from sources including Private Eye - most are free to print (www .eddiejames.co.uk/cryptics.html).

85 Jigsaw puzzles

Jigsaws aren't an obvious security risk but there's an alarming level of adware in jigsaw websites. One likeable exception is TheJigsawPuzzles (thejigsawpuzzles.com), which has nearly 25,000



macro photos and famous paintings. It's safe, free and lets you complete puzzles online - but you can't download them individually. Instead, you have to click Download All Puzzles to install a 120MB package of offline puzzles. On the upside, it's adware-free and lets you create jigsaws using your own photos.

Sudoku Logic puzzle Sudoku is a great way to keep a sharp mind. Daily Sudoku (www.dailysudoku.co.uk) gives you umpteen chances to practise - not just daily puzzles in different difficulty categories, but an archive going back to 2005. Click a puzzle for a free printable version. We also like Sudoku.xls (www .sudoku-xls.com), a free Excel workbook for jotting down possible grid values.

Quizzes Your starter for Ken is Ken's Quiz Site (www.kensquiz.co.uk), home



to hundreds of challenging quizzes including picture rounds and anagrams, all free to download as

PDFs. QuizAreaPro (www.pubquizarea .com) offers oodles of quiz packages covering hundreds of topics - ideal for hosting your own tournaments. They're free to use in public as long as you credit the site. For more quiz-hosting freebies including score sheets and customisable quiz night posters, register free with Kudos Pub Quizzes (www.kudos-pub-quizzes.co.uk).

5 Adult colouring books
Find inner peace with Just Color's free downloadable illustrations (www.justcolor.net), which has more than 1,300 felt-tip-friendly original images on dozens of themes including



stained glass, animals and Art Deco. Every page is free to save as a PDF and then print.

WEBSITES & DATA

💳 Entire websites You don't need to be online to browse the web - just use the fantastic free program HTTrack Website Copier (www.httrack.com) to download your favourite sites to peruse whenever and wherever you want. Enter

a project name (such as the name of the site), select a location to



save to and enter the URL of the site to grab. You can choose whether to download all links or just the main content. You may even be able to download a site that no longer exists by copying the web address of an archived version from the Wayback Machine (web.archive.org).

There's also an HTTrack app for Android (bit.ly/httandroid423) that lets you download sites to view offline on your phone or tablet.

Wikipedia articles Kiwix (www.kiwix.org) lets you download a full copy of Wikipedia to read offline on Windows, MacOS or Linux. The English-language version of the site is a whopping 54GB in size, so you may want to use the provided BitTorrent links if you're not on a reliable connection, or opt for the 16GB Light version.

To download individual Wikipedia articles, just click the 'Download as PDF' link on the left-hand side of the page. You can also create a downloadable 'book' of interesting articles.

Vintage software

If you have fond memories of Yahoo Messenger, get reunited at OldVersion (www.oldversion.com), which lets you install Messenger and hundreds of other defunct programs such as Netscape, Trillian and Winamp, safely and for free.

The Internet Archive's Software Collection (archive.org/software) is a vast repository of vintage programs, most of which are free to download in various forms - screenshots, animated GIFs and ZIPs of original source code. Its MS-DOS section (bit.ly/msdos423) is a particular treat, with Microsoft QBasic 1.1, Windows 2.03 and DOS Shell all free to run online or download, although vou'll need an emulator such as DOSBox to run them.

Google Doodles You've probably noticed the Share link on Google's Doodles, but did you know you can download them all for free - animations included? Click Doodle Archive at www.google.com/doodles, rightclick any Doodle and select 'Save image as'. Animations will download as GIF; illustrations as PNG.

The whole internet Avoid the hassle of clicking every link in this feature by downloading the entire internet in one handy ZIP file.

Visit bit.ly/ whole 423 and wait 4,381 years for the download to complete. Yes, this is a joke, but after 11



pages we thought we'd end on one!

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 31 May 2017

THE HACKER'S GUIDE TO... INTERNET

Secret speed tweaks you've never tried, but will wish you had



C DISCOVER YOUR AREA

Learn fascinating new facts about where you live

OBUILD YOUR OWN CLOUD

Create an online storage service as good as Dropbox

OCLEAN UP WINDOWS 10

Remove junk left over by the Creators Update

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



Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest from your computer by taking our fortnightly challenges. Can you guess our place-name emoji and solve our word puzzle?

WIN A **WEB USER** MUG! the correct answers to webuser@dennis.co.uk to win a Web User mug

CAN YOU GUESS THE TOWNS & CITIES FROM THE EMOJI?



WEB USER WORD PUZZLE

Enter the answers in the grid to reveal a computer term in the highlighted column

- 1 Star Wars character
- Canadian city and seaport
- 3 Italian dictator known as II Duce
- 4 Drink made with white wine and soda water
- 5 Winner of the 2016 Nobel Prize in Literature (3,5)
- 6 Former World Champion snooker player Alex Higgins' nickname
- Species of plant that includes cauliflower and broccoli
- 8 Author of Vanity Fair (1811-63)

1								
2								
3								
4								
	5							
6								
7								
8								
Got the answers online at hit ly/quiz								

Get the answers online at bit.lv/quiz423

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 5 STM iPad Pro 9.7 Atlas case

STM's new Atlas protective case provides a touch of class and style with a uniquely textured fabric cover and storage for the Apple Pencil. We're giving away five 'charcoal' cases, but it's also available in denim and red. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'stm' in the subject line. For more STM products visit www.stmgoods.com and 'like' www.facebook.com/STMGoods.



WIN 1 OF 4 VEGAS Movie Studio 14 Platinum

MAGIX has released the most powerful ever versions of VEGAS Movie Studio. There's a new, clutter-free interface that makes it easier to use, and multicam editing that lets you combine

up to four cameras into one timeline. As well as Platinum, there's a basic version (£39.99) and a Suite (£119.99). To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'vegas' in the subject line. For more info, visit www .magix.com/gb and follow @MAGIX_INT on Twitter.

WORTH

£69.99

EACH

STUDIO

Best private browsers

Who is monitoring your online activity? Edward Munn tests the six best browsers for preserving your anonymity on the web. from the government, your ISP and other spies



What we liked:

WebUser

Epic Browser is a fast browser built for everyday use that offers the

perfect combination

of privacy features and usability. The privatebrowsing mode that you find in most browsers is always switched on in Epic, so it deletes your browsing data (cookies, history and login data) whenever you close it. Epic also offers

comprehensive built-in ad and tracker blocking, notifying you of how many trackers it's blocked on a particular website and even showing you who is tracking you in other browsers.

Epic tackles a range of known privacy vulnerabilities that other browsers often overlook, such as installation tracking. and address-bar and URL tracking. It also protects against 'fingerprinting', a method of tracking that can be used by your ISP even when you use a VPN. Searches are anonymous, too: whenever you use a major search engine, the browser automatically directs your

Based on Google Chrome, to request encrypted

searches through a proxy so no association is made with your IP address. Epic is set by default

connections but when you need to guarantee a secure connection, you can manually enable its proxy to hide your IP address and encrypt your browsing. Like using a VPN, this protects you when you're using public Wi-Fi networks and you can also use it to access content that's blocked in particular regions.

One standout feature not related to privacy is the option to download audio and video from sites such as YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo and SoundCloud. For convenience, Epic lets you import bookmarks from other browsers, and

you can also save your account credentials for faster logins.

How it can be improved

We could find almost no fault with Epic Browser, but if we're being picky, it's proxy tool doesn't protect your anonymity with the same sophistication that Tor Browser does.

OUR VERDICT

If you want to replace your everyday browser with one that takes your privacy much more seriously, Epic Browser is perfect for the job. It's fast, easy to use and offers all the tools you need to stay anonymous online.

Tor Browser | www.torproject.org | ★★★★☆

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

What we liked:



Tor Browser is a modified version of Firefox that protects your identity by directing all your traffic via a network of thousands of volunteers. First developed by the US

Navy to protect government communications, it's incredibly secure - but you don't have to be an IT expert to use it. When opened, the browser automatically launches the necessary processes to route your traffic through the Tor network. It then further protects your privacy using the NoScript and HTTPS Everywhere add-ons, which block all malicious scripts and ensure encrypted connections are made wherever possible. From Tor Browser's security settings, you can use the slider to choose a security level that best suits you. In the highest position, Javascript and some fonts, images and HTML-5 elements are blocked to offer maximum protection. Tor can be run as a portable app from a USB memory stick and, like Epic Browser, it deletes all your browsing data as soon as it's closed.



How it can be improved:

Because your traffic is always routed around a network of other computers, Tor Browser is noticeably slower than our Gold Award winner. With no option to save login credentials, it's also less convenient than Epic Browser.

OUR VERDICT

Tor Browser is arguably the most powerful tool for maintaining your anonymity online. However, we'd recommend it only as a secondary browser (rather than a replacement for your everyday browser) because of its slower performance.

BEST OF THE REST

Avira Scout

bit.ly/avira423

Avira Scout protects your privacy online in a number of ways, including blocking phishing websites, forcing the secure HTTPS protocol wherever possible and blocking

trackers on Facebook and Twitter, Like our Gold and Silver award winners, it also promises not



to collect any data about you. However, it lacks the tools to offer the same level of online anonymity as our award winners.

Dooble

dooble.sourceforge.net

Dooble is an open-source browser that has many innovative tools to protect your privacy. Along with a private-

browsing mode, which can be enabled on a tab-by-tab basis (rather than having to open a new



window), it lets you passwordprotect and encrypt all the browsing data you save on your PC. However, there's no built-in option to obtain total online anonymity via a VPN or proxy.

Comodo Dragon (Chrome)/ IceDragon (Firefox)

bit.ly/comodo423

Based on Chrome and Firefox respectively, Comodo Dragon and IceDragon offer all the features of those browsers plus a range of further tools to protect your security and privacy. The browsers enforce secure connections where possible and block some trackers, but if you're more concerned about privacy than security, you're better off with one of our award winners.



Opera | www.opera.com | ***

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

What we liked:



Opera doesn't specialise in privacy in the way our other award winners do, but its recent introduction of an unlimited VPN makes it an excellent choice for anyone who wants to hide

their IP address and browse anonymously at the click of a button.

After enabling the VPN from Opera's Settings menu, it can be switched off and on from the address bar, and you can choose from five different virtual locations. The browser comes with a built-in ad blocker and you can also set it to send a 'Do not track' request to websites for times when you're not using the VPN.

Like our other award winners, Opera has a private-browsing mode that clears all your browsing data when it's closed. However, because this isn't enabled by default, you can choose to reap the performance benefits of saving browsing data such as cookies and web history, and enable private browsing only when you need it.



How it can be improved:

Opera doesn't block trackers as comprehensively as Epic Browser unless you're using the VPN. Because the private-browsing features aren't 'always-on', there's always a risk you'll forget to enable them.

.....

OUR VERDICT

If you want a browser that's good for any web activity, Opera comes highly recommended. Its VPN and private browsing provide total anonymity online when required, but it also offers all the powerful tools you'd expect from a modern



Practical Web<mark>User</mark>

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Turn your photos into sharable videos using Apple Clips

Clips is a new iOS app that lets you make and share fun videos with text, effects, graphics and music. Here's what you need to know

Apple Clips: bit.ly/clips423 | 10 mins | i0S 10.3

lips is the latest free app from Apple that lets you combine video clips, photos and music and turn them into professional-looking videos to share with friends through the iOS Messages app, or on Instagram. Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo and more.

It has dozens of music soundtracks to choose from, which automatically adjust to match the length of a video. The app

also has a Live Titles tool that lets you create animated captions and titles using your voice. Captions are generated automatically as you speak, and support 36 different languages (should you be able to speak them).

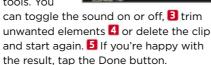
Clips is compatible with the iPhone 5s and later, all new iPads and the sixthgeneration iPod touch. You'll need to be running iOS 10.3 or later to install it.

When you launch the app, it opens on Video 🗓 so you can record one or more clips. Point your camera at a subject, then tap and hold the 'Hold to



record' button. 2 The video will appear below. B When you've finished recording, let go of the button.

Tap the Play button 1 to preview the clip in the main window. You can pause it at any point, and doing so brings up a selection of tools. You







If you want to add static images to your movie, tap Photo, 🗓 then tap the shutter button to take the picture. You'll have

the option



to retake it. Hold down the red button 2 for as long as you want the photo to display for. You can add narration. **3**

You can also import photos from your device. Tap Library and select the picture you want to include. Hold down the red button to



add the image with or without narration. Tap Library again to add another picture. Tap Albums 2 to select photos from elsewhere.

The bar at the top gives you access to the Live Titles, Filters Graphics and Text sections. Tap the first option and you'll be presented



with a selection of styles for a Live Title 2 which can be superimposed over photos or videos with sound, or while recording live video.





To use 5 Live Titles, select the type of title you want. For live video, hold down the red button and speak.

The app will listen to what

you say and caption things in near-real time. 11 We found it surprisingly accurate at understanding what we said but if it gets something wrong, you can retake it and try again.

You can add some graphics to your creation. Tap the button 1 and browse the available options. 2 Swiping left or right will switch between text



graphics and emoji. Select an item and you'll be able to position it over a photo or video, and rotate and resize it.

If you want to add a soundtrack, tap the musical note at the top right and pick the audio you require. This can be None, Soundtracks



or My Music. 11 If you're choosing one of the soundtracks, download it, then select it and preview it in your movie. 2 The volume will drop automatically when your movie has narration.

cordina



Stay up to date with your favourite websites



hen you spend as much time on the web as we do at *Web User*, you end up with a long list of bookmarked websites that you go back to time and time again. But it's frustrating when you check back to a website only to find that it hasn't updated since your last visit or that none of its latest articles interest you.

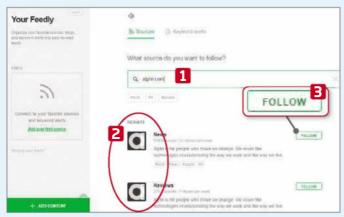
Feedly saves you wasting time by letting you skim through headlines and summaries of the latest posts on all your favourite sites, quickly and easily, in one place. It also has a new tool called Boards, which works alongside its existing Read It Later tool, organising the articles you want to view at your convenience into useful lists.



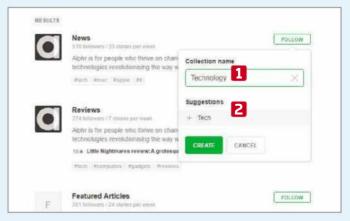
EXPERT TIP

Andy Shaw says

The basic version of Feedly is free but a Pro account costs around £4.20 per month. The free version restricts you to 100 feed sources, but that should be plenty for most people. It also limits you to three boards, so you need to be disciplined about how you use them. We organised our boards by environment, storing articles of interest in separate lists for reading at home, at work and on the train.



If you've never used Feedly before, go to feedly.com, click 'Get started for free' and either create a new account or log in with a Google or Facebook account. Type the name or address of a favourite website into the box. 1 Some sites have more than one feed, 2 so scroll down to find the one (or ones) you want and click Follow.



To follow a source, you have to create a collection, which is a folder that you can use to group similar types of sources together under a broad heading. Click the 'Create a collection' link and either type a name into the box 1 or choose one of the suggestions.



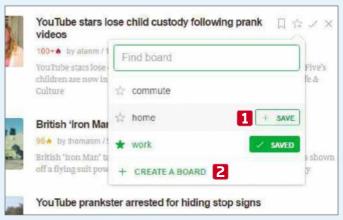
Click the site's icon 1 to see all the latest stories. When you first add a source, only the 10 latest stories will be listed. If you want to go further back, scroll to the bottom of the list and click the 'Mark all as read' button. Click the site's icon again to see the feed's previous stories, going further back in time.



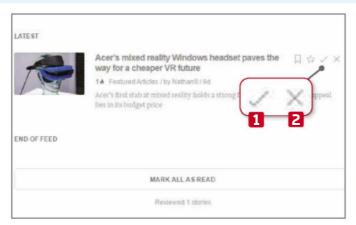
If you just want to read an article later and don't need to organise it into a separate list, hover over the article and click the Read Later icon. 1 This adds the article to the 'Read later' list, which you can access from the link on the top left of the sidebar. 2



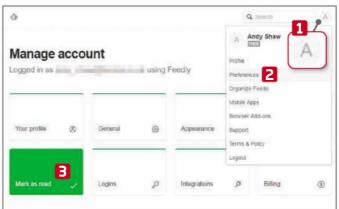
Use the star icon to save a story to a board. You can either hover over a story in the list view and click the star or click a story to read the preview, in which case the star icon appears in the row of tools above it. The first time you use a board, you'll need to click the 'Create your first board' button.



Type the name that you want to give to the board into the box and click the Create button. When you click the star icon from now on, you can add a link to an existing board by clicking its Save button 1 or click 'Create a board' 2 again to make a new category.



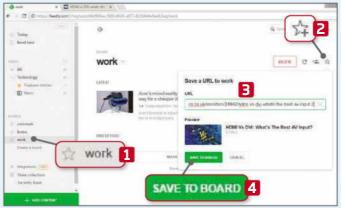
By default, clicking a headline to read more of a story will mark it as read. This displays the headline in grey so you can see at a glance that you've viewed it. You can also mark something without opening it by using the tick icon. 1 The cross 2 marks an item as read and hides it, so you won't see it again.



For maximum efficiency when ploughing through long lists of unread material, we changed the defaults to mark anything as read as soon as we scroll past it, to save us from having to click the ticks or crosses. To do this, click your account icon 1 and choose Preferences, 2 then click the 'Mark as read' button. 3



Turn off Confirm Mark As Read 1 to make browsing through articles much faster. Also, under Auto-Mark As Read On Scroll, choose All Views. 2 This activates the scrolling 'mark as read' setting. Scroll down and you can also configure keyboard shortcuts and activate the option to click on the unread number icon to mark an entire group as read.



If you've discovered an interesting article outside Feedly, you can still add it to one of your boards. Copy the URL of the article and open Feedly. Select the board from the menu, 1 then click the star icon. 2 Paste the address of the page into the URL box, 3 wait for the preview to load, then click 'Save to board'. 4



Create a cinemagraphic moving photo

cinemagraph is a still image with a single moving element - halfway between a photo and a video - which gives a standard picture an amazing animated quality. You can make one using

your mobile device. Here, we've used MaskArt on an iPhone but if you have an Android device, try Cinegraph (bit.ly/cine423). The steps are a bit different but the final result should be just as good.



MaskArt: bit.ly/mask423 | (1) 10 mins | (6) iOS 8.0+



Record a short video using your device's camera. It makes things easier if you can keep your camera steady, either by resting it on something or using a tripod designed for mobile devices. Keep it below five seconds if you can. Open the MaskArt app and select your video. 1 You can use other videos that you haven't shot specifically for the purpose but planning ahead will help you later.



If the video is longer than five seconds, drag the left or right side of the timeline 1 toward the middle to make it the correct length. If you wish, you can tap, hold and drag the highlighted section 2 to move it forwards and back along the timeline to use a different section of the video.



Tap the brush icon 1 and you'll see a purple mask applied to the whole image. 2 With your finger, erase the mask around the section you want to animate, 3 making sure it opens up the area of movement on all the frames you want to use. This can be a bit fiddly but you can lift your finger, see how you're getting on, then erase a little more. If you go too far, tap the eraser icon 4 to draw the mask back in.



If you want to use a different frame - or even a different video or photo - as the still image that the moving element appears over, tap the Select Photo button. Choose a frame from the timeline 1 or an image from the Gallery below it. 2 You can also move the image around by tapping the Move button. Start again at any time by tapping Back.



When you've finished tweaking, tap Next.
With MaskArt, you can choose to create a video, 1 an animated GIF 2 or a Live Photo 3 (the latter only works on Apple devices). Preview your chosen option and tap Next 4 to create it. If you've chosen to create a GIF, you'll get the option to export it.



You can tweak an animated GIF by uploading it to a tool such as LunaPic (www.lunapic.com). Crop it to shape from the Edit menu 1 and control the animation by clicking Animation, 2 then Edit Gif Animation. You can choose the speed at which you want the frames to play and whether you'd like the animation to loop. 3

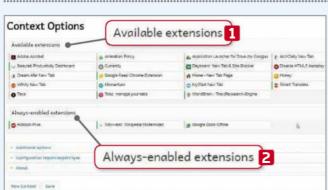


Manage Chrome add-ons for a faster browser

dd-ons bring useful tools to Chrome and enhance your enjoyment of the web, but having too many can overload your browser and slow it down. It may seem self-defeating to add yet another extension to tackle this

problem, but Context sorts your add-ons into groups, so you can just activate the ones you need for a particular task, quickly and efficiently.

Context: bit.ly/context423 | (1) 10 mins | Chrome



O Disable HTML5 Home 1 2 G 3 9 9 9 5 8 8 80000000 Create Cance

Install Context and the add-on's Options page will load in a new tab. The main list shows all your available add-ons. 🚺 First, drag and drop the add-ons that you always want to be available to the section marked 'Alwaysenabled extensions'. 2

Click New Context and choose a name 1 and icon 2 for your first collection. If you'd prefer the group to use the icon of the first add-on, tick the box. 윌 Click Create and repeat this process as necessary, then drag and drop your add-ons to the different groups and click Save.



Workshop Free Wi (Home 2 & Work PERSONAL All extensions 6 TABS C E

An add-on can be placed in more than one group. When you install a new add-on, Context displays a pop-up where you can choose which groups to add it to. To enable a group, open a new tab, select Context's icon 11 in your toolbar and click the appropriate button. 2

To enable multiple groups at once, click their respective '+' buttons 1 (the '-' button disables them). A green bar is displayed **2** when a group is enabled. Click 'All extensions' 3 to enable all your add-ons. Click the right arrow 4 to view all the add-ons in a group.



Additional options enable apps support (by default only extensions are supported) ask what to do after new extension is installed show 'All extensions' button in popup Configuration import/export/sync About

When viewing the add-ons in a group, you can select individual ones to enable or disable them. 1 The group's icon turns orange to show that some but not all of its add-ons are active. Right-click Context's icon in the toolbar to open its Options menu.

Click 'Additional options' 1 and tick the box to make Context support apps as well as add-ons. 2 The 'Configuration import/export/sync' menu 🛭 lets you save your configuration to the server, so you can sync it to Chrome on your other PCs.

Weekend Project

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





Control your Windows PC with your voice

Why use a keyboard and mouse when you could simply tell your PC what you want it to do? **Wayne Williams** shows you how

t's been possible to control your PC using voice-recognition software for many years now, yet opening a program or shutting down your computer simply by speaking a few simple commands - rather than using a keyboard and mouse still seems a bit sci-fi. In fact, the only difficulty, once it's all set up, is getting into the habit of telling your PC what you want to do, rather than using your hands to press keys or click buttons. That said, if you're already using a voice assistant on your phone, such as Siri or Google Now, or you own a device like the Amazon Echo, LISTENING you'll already be used to controlling hardware with spoken commands.

Talk to Cortana

If you're running Windows 10, then you already have tools for controlling your PC with your voice. Cortana, which began life on Windows phones, debuted in the first build of Windows 10 and has become increasingly more powerful in each major update of the operating system. You can ask her to perform various tasks, such as opening apps, searching the web, performing

calculations, identifying songs as they play and composing and sending emails - all using just your voice.

The Creators Update introduced additional features to Cortana including the ability to lock your PC, and raise and lower the volume. The digital assistant is also supposed to be able to turn off, restart or send your PC to sleep, although these options don't currently work on our updated PCs. Presumably



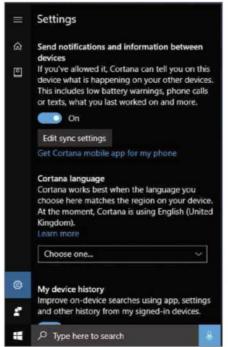
The Creators Update's full-screen mode for Cortana lets you use it from across the room



Cortana can open any app on your computer - you just have to ask

they'll be added in a future update. If you ask Cortana to do one of the unsupported tasks ("Cortana, shut down my PC") she will provide information on how to do it manually.

A new feature introduced in the Anniversary Update was a full-screen option for Cortana on the Lock screen, which let you ask questions or set new reminders without having to unlock your device first. The Creators Update expands this to the Desktop. If your PC is unlocked and has been idle for a while, you can say, "Hey, Cortana" and it will open in full-screen mode, allowing



In Settings, you can choose to get warnings from other Windows devices

you to interact with your PC from across the room. To make sure Cortana can hear you, open the Settings and tick 'Respond when anyone says "Hey Cortana". If this isn't ticked, Cortana will attempt to recognise just your voice before responding, which doesn't work well at a distance.

If you don't currently have

Cortana now helps you to set up Windows 10 as you're installing it the Creators Update (the roll-out is ongoing and will take a while to reach older, potentially less compatible PCs) and you try to use a voice command that's not available - such as asking Cortana to raise or lower the volume - you'll see a message stating: "Sorry, I can't do this for you right now. Check back again after future updates."

We show you how to get started with Cortana in our Mini Workshop, below.

Set up Windows 10 with Cortana

One of the features introduced in the Creators Update is a new tool that lets you use Cortana to set up the operating system exactly how you want it on a new device or following a reinstall. If you agree to this, Cortana will ask you a series of yes/no questions during setup that you can respond to using your voice (provided you have a working microphone).

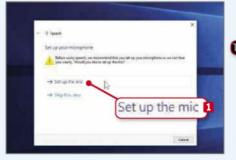
If you're not sure about something, you can ask Cortana for help.



MINI WORKSHOP | Control your PC using Cortana on Windows 10



To get started, make sure you have a microphone connected or enabled, then click the Cortana/Search button on the taskbar. 11 Click the Settings button 2 and set 'Hey Cortana' to On. B Under Microphone, click the 'Get started' link 4 to configure things and make sure Cortana can hear you.



The 'Set up your microphone' app loads. Click 'Set up the mic' 🚺 and a new window opens. Click Next, then read the sentences displayed on screen. Assuming everything is working correctly, your microphone will be set up and you're ready to begin using Cortana to control your computer.



To use voice control, say "Hey, Cortana". A box appears informing you that Cortana is listening, along with a suggestion to use the feature to send an email. 11 You can do that or try something different, such as "Open Settings", "Launch Chrome" or "Raise volume."



Call FREE on 0800 083 2357 to switch your broadband

	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1	sky	Sky: Broadband	£28.99 (£18.99 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	CHEAPEST £227.88
2	TalkTalk For Everyone	TalkTalk: Broadband	£25.50 (£20.00 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£240.00
3	8	EE: Broadband	£28.50 (£21.00 for 18 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	unlimited	£252.00
4	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband	£45.00 (£37.00 for 12 months)	12 months	100Mbps max speed	unlimited	£444.00

Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 2 May 2017.



is powered by Simplify Digital, the Ofcom-accredited switching service

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

Computer

TV STREAMING: A COMPLETE GUIDE

What's new? We'll tell you. What's best to use? We'll tell you that, too

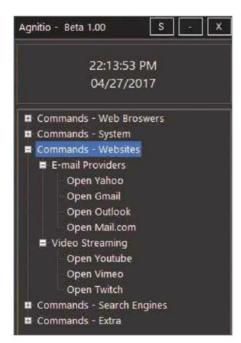
- Sign into Windows without a password
- Make a photo slideshow in HD
- Best new ways to shrink your files

PLUS: Secure your Recycle Bin (hackers look there, too!)

Subscribe at www.getcomputeractive.co.uk

On sale Weds **24 May**

^{*} Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.



Agnitio can open popular webmail services and video-streaming sites

Get more tools with Agnitio

While Cortana provides you with some control over your computer, there are alternatives that offer even more. One example is Agnitio (bit.ly/agni423), a tiny (426KB) but powerful voicerecognition tool. Unlike Cortana, it can shut down, restart and log off your PC, and also run programs and system tools such as Notepad, Command Prompt, Disk Cleanup and Event Viewer.

Agnitio can also launch popular browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Opera,



Creating speech-recognition triggers in GAVPI is simple

Microsoft Edge and Internet Explorer), and you can use it to perform voicebased web searches, check your email and launch video websites.

Agnitio is a very new program - the first version was only released in March and, at the time of writing, is still in beta - so there are some limitations to be aware of. For example, you currently can't add custom commands to it. so you're stuck with only the ones it already supports. Hopefully, this will change in a future release. Also, it can only open programs - it isn't able to close them afterwards.

On the plus side, Agnitio is lightweight, so it won't slow down your PC, and we found it does a good job of recognising voice commands from the moment it's installed. However, we found it a bit too sensitive at times - opening browser tabs and trying to perform tasks such as shutting down the PC without being



GAVPI comes with ready-to-load game profiles for Elite Dangerous and Star Citizen

asked. Adjusting the microphone sensitivity reduced this problem, but it's something to be aware of.

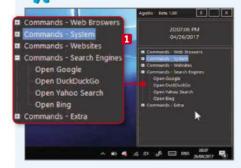
We show you how to use Agnitio in our Mini Workshop, below.

Control software with GAVPI

Another option you could consider is the open-source GAVPI (bit.ly/gavp423), which uses voice-command macro software. It lets you bind voice commands to a set of actions (key presses, mouse clicks) and you can create separate profiles for different games and applications. You don't have to install the program - just download and run it - then create an 'action sequence' (a collection of mouse and/or keyboard actions) along with a phrase trigger that will launch it.

You can save profiles, edit them in any text editor and load profiles created by other users.

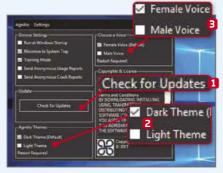
MINI WORKSHOP | Control your PC using Agnitio



Install and run Agnitio. It will open above the notification area and display a list of commands sorted into categories - Web Browsers, System, Website, Search Engines and Extra. 11 Click the plus sign next to a category to display the commands you can use. Speak any of these commands and Agnitio will perform that task.



Configure the software by clicking the Settings tab at the top of the program window. 11 If you plan to use Agnitio all the time, tick the option to 'Run at Windows Startup'. 2 It should be running in Training Mode, E which means it will 'learn' and improve over time.



You can check for program updates 💶 and switch between light and dark themes (this requires a restart). 2 Agnitio will speak to you to confirm certain tasks (such as logging off), and you can switch between a female (the default) and male voice. [3] Making this change will also require a restart.

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Create your own cloud storage

On sale **Wednesday 31 May**

SUBSCRIBE NOW!



Subscribe to Webuser today and save on the single issue price.

Each issue of **Web user** will be delivered directly to your device each fortnight.

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE...

...on an iPad or iPhone

- Return to the Web user library
- Choose your subscription term and tap twice on the 'price' box
- Choose whether to create an optional PixelMags account
- Enter your Apple ID password to confirm





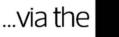
...on a Kindle Fire

Kindle Fire subscriptions come with a FREE one month trial.

- Tap 'Free Trial Subscription' in the Web user library
- Chose your subscription term from the drop down menu on the popup that appears
- Supplementary Tap 'Subscribe'









- Search for **Web user** via the search box in the **Shop** tab
- Tap the 'Subscribe' button
- Choose whether to create an optional account
- Enter your Apple ID password to confirm



Subscribe to Web user today and save on the single issue price



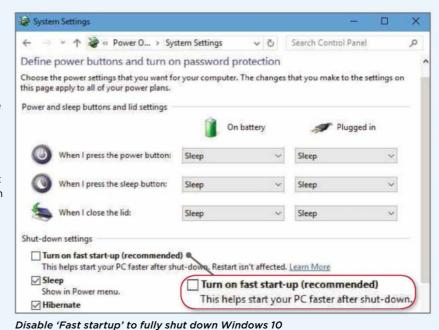
Web User Masterclass

Follow our expert tips to solve **shutdown problems** and reduce the time it takes to switch off your PC

Force a real shutdown in Windows 10

n Windows 10, when you click Start, Power, 'Shut down', the PC doesn't actually shut down – instead, it logs you off and hibernates. This saves the PC's current state to the hard drive so it can be reloaded quickly when the PC is restarted. It's fast, but it can cause problems in some circumstances. To properly shut down the computer, click Start, Power and hold down Shift when you click 'Shut down'.

To make Windows always shut down fully without having to hold down the Shift key, right-click the battery or power icon in the taskbar (which one you have depends on whether it's a laptop or desktop PC) and select 'Power options'. Click 'Choose what the power buttons do', then click 'Change settings that are currently unavailable' and clear the tick against 'Turn on fast startup'. Save the changes and see if it improves the reliability of your Windows shutdown and startup.



Update everything

Incompatible or buggy programs, services and drivers are usually the cause of shutdown problems. These most commonly occur after a Windows upgrade – everything was working fine but, since upgrading, the PC becomes dogged by problems.

The solution is to upgrade everything, starting with Windows. Although core Windows files are updated automatically, there are optional updates that could fix shutdown problems. Press Windows+i in Windows 10 and click 'Update and Security'. Select Windows Update and Advanced options, then tick the box 'Give me

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.

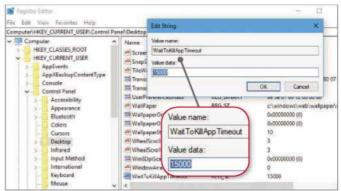
updates for other Microsoft products...'. In Windows 7, go to Windows Update in the Control Panel and check for updates. Look for optional updates, select them all and update.

Open Device Manager in the Control Panel.

Expand each section, select each item and click 'Update driver'. It is a tedious process so you might want to use a tool that does it for you, such as IObit Driver Booster Free (bit.ly/iodbf423). Update one driver and test your PC. If it is working fine, update the next one.

Reduce Windows' waiting time

Shutting down your computer is a complicated procedure because there may be applications that are running,



Add this WaitToKillAppTimeout string and set it to 15000 for faster shutdown

open windows on the Desktop, hidden programs and services working in the background, and so on.

When you click Start, Power, 'Shut down', Windows sends a message to everything that is running, telling it to close. The software should respond to the call, so the computer knows it's received the message, and Windows then gives the software 20 seconds to close before it starts shutting itself

down. A fast new computer with very little installed on it may not need this long. You can speed up shutdown by reducing the time allowed for programs to close.

Press Windows+R and type regedit then press Enter to open the Registry Editor. Navigate to:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Control Panel\Desktop

Find WaitToKillAppTimeout in the right-hand pane. If it's not there, click Edit, New, String Value and name the new item WaitToKillAppTimeout, then double-click it. The default value is 20000 (milliseconds, or 20 seconds), so replace it with a lower number such as 15000 (15 seconds). If your PC has a solid-state drive installed, then 10000 (10 seconds) is probably enough, because SSDs are much faster than mechanical hard drives

Deal with hung apps sooner

When a program is told to close, Windows gives it five seconds to respond. If it takes longer, then a message appears on the screen saying that the process did not respond. There is then an option to force it to close. The length of this period is set by another Registry setting - HungAppTimeout. To change this setting, open the Registry Editor as above and go to: HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Control

Panel\Desktop As before, if HungAppTimeout is not listed on the right, click Edit, New, 'String value'. Name it HungAppTimeout and double-click it. The default value is 5000 (5 seconds). Reduce the time to

4000 for old or slow PCs or 3000 for

a fast new computer.

Unresponsive programs are given less time than programs that have responded and are getting on with shutting down. This is so that you can start dealing with them sooner.

Shut down hung apps automatically

If you always want to force a hung app to shut down, you can set this to happen automatically. Open the Registry Editor and go to:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Control Panel\Desktop

Look for AutoEndTasks and, if you can't see it, click Edit, New, 'String value' and name it AutoEndTasks, Doubleclick it and set it to 1 to let Windows automatically force the app to close (if you would still rather be asked about forcing programs to close, set it to 0). This makes shutdown faster because Windows automatically deals with apps that won't close.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Check the event logs

Windows keeps a log of everything that happens on your PC from when it starts to when it shuts down. This huge store of info includes startup and shutdown events.

Press Windows+R, type eventvwr and press Enter. Windows 10 users can access the log by right-clicking the Start button. In the left pane, expand 'Applications and Services Logs', Microsoft, Windows, Diagnostics-Performance and select Operational. In the middle pane at the top is a list of events that Windows has recorded.

There may be a lot, so you should sort the events by clicking the Event ID column header. Shutdown events have IDs starting at 200 and you may see warnings, errors and critical items. Select each one and look in the preview pane below for clues as to what the event is about. Programs or services that hang or otherwise take too long to shut down are listed here.

Restart Windows, immediately return to Event Viewer and click the 'Date and Time' column header to sort the events by date. Scroll down past the startup events to see the shutdown events and any problems detected. If a particular program or driver is causing problems, try to find an updated version.

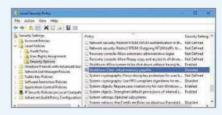


Check the event logs for problems detected during shutdown

Tweak page file options

When Windows is short of memory, it temporarily stores information in a special file on the hard drive called the page file. This is a permanent file on the drive and is a potential security problem because the information it contains could be private, personal or something you wouldn't want made public. In theory, someone could access the contents of the page file and recreate the files it stores.

For this reason, and to protect your security, there is an option to erase



Don't clear the page file if you want to shut down quickly

the contents of the page file when Windows shuts down. However, this means that the PC takes longer to power off or restart. Ultimately, the choice is between speed and security.

To change the option, press Windows+R, type secpol.msc and press Enter. Expand Local Policies and select Security Options. Scroll down the list on the right and find 'Shutdown: Clear virtual memory pagefile'. Double-click it and either enable it to prioritise security or disable it to maximise speed.

If you don't have the Local Security Policy tool, press Windows+R, type regedit and press Enter. In the left-hand pane select:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ CurrentControlSet\Control\Session Manager\Memory Management

Double-click ClearPageFileAtShutdown and set it to 0 for speed or 1 for security.

Kill services sooner

Programs don't always display windows - some run invisibly in the background. When Windows shuts down, the services that are running must also be stopped. As with standard programs, they're given a certain length of time and, if they don't respond, a message is displayed on the screen and you can force them to stop. WaitToKillServiceTimeout is like the WaitToKillAppTimeout we saw earlier. Launch the Registry Editor and go to:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ CurrentControlSet\Control

On the right, double-click WaitToKillServiceTimeout. The default value should be 20000 (20 seconds) according to Microsoft, but a Windows 10 PC we looked at had this set to 5000 (5 seconds). If yours is set to 20000, try 15000 or 10000 to make Windows respond more quickly to services that are stuck when your PC is trying to shut down.

Ask the Expert

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



HARDWARE

Double up your backup

I'm using a rather old external hard drive to store my collection of irreplaceable photos and videos. How reliable are these hard drives compared with online storage sites?

Garry Owen, via email

Whatever you're doing, stop right now and make a backup. It doesn't matter whether your irreplaceable photos and videos are online or offline - if they're only in one place, they're at serious risk. If your hard drive fails, you'll lose everything.

The ideal situation is to use both online and offline storage. Fire, flood. theft or mechanical failure could ruin an external hard drive, but you're safe if you also have online backup.

All hard drives fail eventually and when the one with all your photos and videos on it stops working, you'll lose everything it contains. To be safe,



Online storage is mostly failure-proof but could still be vulnerable to hackers

replace it every five years or so, depending on how hard it's used.

The drives used by online-storage services can also fail, but their systems are designed to protect data by replicating it across multiple drives. If one fails, it can be replaced with a new drive without loss of data.

Online-storage providers are good at backing up data, so their services are more reliable than the hard drive in your PC. Security is an issue, however: last year Dropbox lost details of 68 million user accounts to hackers. This could also block access to your online storage.

EMAIL

Email private files

I need to send Excel spreadsheets to friends and colleagues, and some of them contain confidential information. Is it safe to send them by email or could they be intercepted and spied on? I'd hate them to fall into the wrong hands.

Should I encrypt the Excel files or use Winzip to compress them with a password? I know encryption software is available but it can be expensive. I've heard that some versions of Windows can encrypt files, but mine doesn't.

I'm using Windows 7 Home Premium, Windows Live Mail and Microsoft Office 2010. Is there anything else I can do to make these emails as secure as possible?

Nicolas Lindsey, via email

Some email providers offer very secure messaging, but others don't, so it's possible that your emails could be intercepted and read. Some secure email services are only secure if both the sender and recipient are using it. Otherwise the recipient may need to enter usernames and passwords, confirm their identity and so on, which can be irritating.

Virtru (bit.ly/virt423) is a free Chrome extension that lets you send secure and encrypted emails using Gmail and Outlook. ProtonMail (protonmail.com) is a free secure email provider.

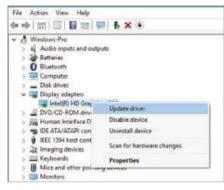
An alternative to sending a file in an email is to share it online. If you have a Google account, for example, you can put the file on Google Drive, right-click it and select Share. You then invite people to access it by entering their email address. It's useful for sharing files between Google users.

You could also encrypt files with a password. EncryptOnClick (bit.ly/ encr423) uses 256-bit AES encryption, which is one of the most secure methods available. The recipient will need EncryptOnClick to decrypt it, and you need to agree on a password beforehand. Alternatively, you could try following our Workshop on Hyper Crypt (hypercrypt.azurewebsites.net) in Issue 418 (bit.ly/webuser418).

VIDEO

Reset Sky Go

About six months ago, my Toshiba laptop started showing an error message (number 6030) when I tried to use Sky Go with Windows 8.1. My usual repair shop couldn't fix it and when I contacted Microsoft's web chat,



Update drivers using Device Manager and make sure you have the latest versions

they said the problem was with Sky. Predictably, when I contacted Sky, they said it was Microsoft's problem. Friends have suggested uninstalling Silverlight and installing an older version, but that idea seems a bit iffy.

Ray Blundell, via email

There's no simple solution that works for everyone. Try opening the Control Panel, then Device Manager and expand the Monitors section. Right-click each monitor and select Enable (if it isn't already selected). Expand 'Display adapters', right-click each item and select Update Driver Software.

If that doesn't work, use an uninstaller such as IObit Uninstaller Free (bit.ly/ iobit423) to remove all traces of Sky Go and Silverlight, then reinstall them and register Sky Go. Some people have found that TeamViewer is the culprit and removing it solved the problem.

SOFTWARE

Upgrades are not updates

In Best Free Software, Issue 420 (bit.ly/webuser420), you mention that WinUtilities (hi.ylcomputing.com) has been updated. I found that recent upgrades directed me to the Pro version and the usual free tools didn't work. What am I doing wrong?

Ian D Smith, via email

When the program prompts you to upgrade, it means upgrade from the free to the paid-for version. To get the latest version of WinUtilities Free, you should uninstall the old version, then download and install the latest one from hi.ylcomputing.com.

Run WinUtilities, then click the close button on the registration window to run it in free mode. Click the arrow button near the top-right corner and select Settings, then tick the box to 'Automatically check for updates'. It should update automatically.



Keep the free version of WinUtilities up to date by downloading the latest version

GENERAL PC

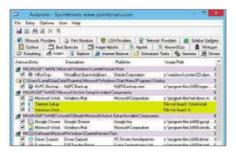
Stop startup pop-ups

Since updating my Windows 10 PC, I find that almost every time I enter my password, I get a pop-up from MSN, which I have to close before I can do anything else. Edge is my main browser. Is there a way to stop this happening?

Brian Sandford, via email

Programs that appear as soon as you log in have been set to start automatically with Windows. Right-click the taskbar, then select Task Manager and the Start-up tab to see auto-starting items. Select any you suspect of causing the problem and click Disable. Since you don't know the culprit's name, you'll have to use trial and error.

Autoruns for Windows (bit.ly/ auto423) is a more powerful tool for investigating startup items. Skip the Everything tab and look at the others, especially the Logon and Scheduled Tasks tabs.



Use Autoruns' Logon tab to deselect Windows startup items

Setting Edge to open with a blank page might help. Open Edge, click the three-dot menu and select Settings. Set Edge to open with a 'New tab page' and to open new tabs with 'A blank page'.

HARDWARE

Stick with the best driver

My Windows 7 Acer Aspire 5920G laptop uses the NVIDIA GeForce 8600M GS graphics hardware, but its driver keeps crashing my browser and some other programs. If I disable or uninstall the driver, the laptop works fine - I can even change display pixels to a readable state. I tried updating the laptop to Windows 10 and back again to Windows 7, and have uninstalled and updated the driver numerous times. I've even tried Driver Genius (www.driver-soft.com).

Mark Young, via email

It's usually best to have the latest drivers installed but in some circumstances, an older driver can be more compatible. Stick with the most recent driver that works, and ignore any that cause problems.

You say that if you disable or uninstall the driver, the system works fine. This is

probably because it switches to using a Microsoft driver. These drivers, which are available for almost every hardware component, won't be the fastest or most feature-packed but they prioritise stability and compatibility above all else. So if Microsoft's driver works and you're happy with it, stick with it.

To check that you have the latest Microsoft driver, open Device Manager in the Control Panel. Expand 'Display adapters' then right-click the graphics card and select 'Update driver'.

AD-BLOCKING

Stop sites blocking blockers

Using ad-blocking software has become a pain. Many websites can now detect when you're using one and stop their pages loading in your browser. They say they need the revenue to keep the site running and require you to switch off the ad blocker before you can download the page. Are there any workarounds for this?

Hardik Upadhyay, via email

This arms race between ad blockers and websites has been going on for some time and will probably only get worse as websites use increasingly sophisticated detection and ad blockers launch tools to get around it.

The problem is that many websites depend on advertising and if you take away their ad revenue, they have no option but to close. Some big sites have already closed and more will follow.

The best thing you can do is to avoid websites with excessive advertising and tell them why you won't use them any more. Falling visitor numbers will force sites to cut back on annoying ads.

GENERAL PC

Stop your PC typing backwards

I am running Windows 10 64-bit and everything is up to date. However, over the past month, when typing in Chrome, a word sometimes appears back to front. If I delete it and type it again, it corrects itself. Have you any suggestions? My PC seems to be clean and has no other glitches.

Anne Ellis, via email

English is written from left to right, but some languages are written from right to left. Windows



If text is appearing backwards, you may have switched languages

and Chrome can do both. You may be accidentally switching from one language to another.

Some people have found that a mouse fault switched this at random. Others were accidentally pressing Ctrl+Shift or Alt+Shift and switching direction that way. Those shortcuts didn't work for us, but try them next time your text appears backwards to see if it corrects the problem.



This fortnight Roland has been spring cleaning - uninstalling old software and backing up photos

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

winner WebUs PHOTOS

I recently returned from a holiday with friends and we all wanted to share our photos with each other, so I suggested we used Google Photos. Most people already have a Google account and the app comes as standard on most Android devices (iOS users can install it from bit.ly/photos423), so it doesn't take long to start sharing. What's more, by creating a shared album, you can view all your photos in one chronological timeline, which tells a much better story of the holiday.

To create a shared album, tap the three-dot button on the Albums page and select 'Shared album'. Choose one or more pictures that you want to include (you can easily add more later), then tap Next. You'll be invited to give the album a name, then tap Share and 'Get link' to copy the shareable link to your clipboard. You can copy this link to any app to share it with friends and family.

To allow others to add their own photos to the album, tap the three-dot button and select 'Sharing options',



Shared albums let you enjoy everyone's photos in one place

then ensure Collaborate is switched on.

Whenever someone joins the album, you'll be able to see their name on this page and you'll also be notified by the Google Photos Assistant. When others add photos, you can see them instantly in the album. Tapping the cloud icon for a specific image lets you add it to your own library.

One caveat is that shared albums can be viewed by anyone who has the link, so don't upload any images you'd prefer to keep private.

Tim Bennett, via email

such as old school friends or people in Facebook groups who want to get in touch. Facebook often hides these messages from you.

To see them, click the Messages button to show the Recent tab. then click Message Requests at the top. You may also need to click 'See filtered requests'. These are messages from people not on your friends list. Click 'See filtered requests' and you'll see more messages. It's surprising what you find in there!

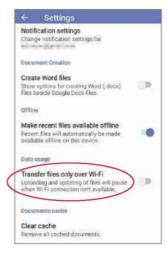
Greg Murray, via email

GOOGLE APPS

Sync Docs without Wi-Fi

Last week, I created a new Google Doc on my Android phone and tried to share it with a friend by tapping the 'Get link' option, but it wouldn't work. I tapped Back until I was on the app's home screen, where it said 'Waiting for Wi-Fi'. I deduced that the file couldn't be shared because it was only saved to my device and not yet uploaded to the cloud.

For a quick fix, you can just turn Wi-Fi on, but if you're not in range of a familiar network, tap the Refresh button to upload the file without a Wi-Fi connection. To make sure that Docs always uploads when you're using a mobile data connection, open the app's



Google Docs can be set to sync files even when you don't have a Wi-Fi connection

GENERAL PC

Get a performance-monitor

Task Manager has a useful trick that can be used to monitor your PC's activities, above and beyond the usual Performance tab. This is called the Taskbar Status Monitor.

Open Task Manager by pressing Shift+Ctrl+Esc, click the Options menu



Keep an eye on your PC's activities by hiding and minimising the Task Manager

and select 'Hide when minimised'. Now minimise Task Manager to hide it. There is no icon in the taskbar, but a new icon appears in the notification area. If it is hidden in the pop-up panel, click and drag it alongside the visible icons.

The icon shows the CPU usage, so you can see how hard your processor is working. Let the mouse hover over the icon and a pop-up tooltip shows the CPU, memory, hard drive and network usage.

Nicholas Gould, via email

SOCIAL

Read hidden Facebook messages

Most of the time, Facebook messages are from people you know, but you may also have received messages from people who aren't on your Friends list,



main menu, then tap Settings and toggle the switch for 'Transfer files only over Wi-Fi' to Off. Since Google Docs are usually fairly small files, you shouldn't waste much of your data allowance by changing this setting, but I'd be wary of doing the same in Google Drive, where files are more likely to be large.

Tina W, via email

GENERAL PC

Create program folders on your Start menu

I just installed the Windows 10 Creators Update and found a useful new feature on the Start menu. Like the home screen of a mobile phone, you can drag one tile and drop it on another to create a folder that contains both items. After creating the folder, you can drag other tiles to it. There seems to be space for up to nine Start tiles in each folder.

The way it works is a bit confusing because when you drop one tile on another, it appears to do nothing. You'll see two horizontal lines and your two tiles between them. Above is a blank tile with an up arrow. Click it to shrink or expand the tile folder.

The folders can be used to organise the Start tiles so you don't have to scroll if you have a lot, or you could use it to group similar programs together.

Grant Webber, via email



The top-left tile (circled) contains the four tiles below it, acting as a folder of tiles

BROWSERS

Enable unsigned add-ons in Firefox

Fed up with the instability of recent versions of Firefox, I settled on version 43.03 of the browser as a half-decent compromise. Unfortunately, Mozilla has now decided that unsigned add-ons aren't allowed so after several years of sterling service, I can no longer use BetterPrivacy (bit.ly/betterprivacy423). Fortunately, there's a way to get it working again. Type about:config into the Firefox address bar, press Enter and scroll all the way down to the bottom to 'xpinstall.signature.required'. Click 'true' to change it into 'false'.

Restart Firefox and BetterPrivacy works again. However, this tool isn't available in Firefox versions 48 or later.

NikoBold, Web User Forums

ANDROID

Take notes without touching your phone

Did you know that you can dictate notes to Google Keep using the 'Ok Google' voice command? Simply say "OK Google", then say "Take a note with Google Keep" and it'll ask you what you want to note down. Speak the contents of your note and your words will appear on screen. Your phone saves the note and you can then tap 'View notes' to see it in the app.

I find this particularly handy for making notes when I'm sitting in traffic, because handling a phone when driving now comes with the risk of a £200 fine and six points on your driving licence.

You can also use the voice assistant to create a list. Just say "Create list", then say the items you want to add to it.



Saying "Take a note with Google Keep" lets you dictate notes to the app

You can use the words 'add', 'remove' and 'change' to manipulate items in the list. When you're happy with the list, say "Save list". Note that if you pause for a while, you might need to say "Ok Google" again for it to start listening.

Ed Wright, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Time for a change

Times and dates can be displayed in different ways - for example, you can choose between a 24-hour clock or a 12-hour clock followed by AM or PM. You can easily change which format the taskbar uses.

In Windows 10, right-click the clock and select 'Adjust date/time'. In the 'Date & time' tab, scroll down to Formats and click the link for 'Change date and time formats'. The clock on the taskbar uses the 'Short time' and 'Short date' settings Click the 'Short time' drop-down menu and select each of the four options to change the taskbar clock and see how it looks. You can select each of the five 'Short date' options to see how the date under the clock changes. Then choose your favourite.

Craig Munger, via email

BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

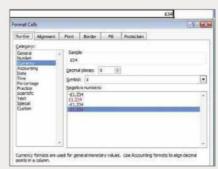
SOFTWARE

Stop Excel giving incorrect SUM value

I use Excel for keeping a record of my various bank accounts and I update my worksheets regularly from the appropriate online banking websites. Sometimes the data is available to download in a compatible CSV format, but for others I have to copy from the web page and paste as 'unicode text' to preserve the columns.

After doing this, I occasionally found that the sheet gave an inaccurate balance that did not correspond with the true balance for that account. Following much head-scratching, I discovered that while copying the unicode text across to the spreadsheet, the '£' symbol was also being entered into the columns formatted as 'currency.' The amounts entered appeared correct and looked exactly the same as all the previous entries in these columns, which all displayed the expected '£' symbol.

It was only by chance, as I was selecting cells in these rows, that I noticed the corresponding values in



Check that there aren't any extraneous symbols in your Excel cells

the formula box occasionally displayed the '£' symbol, whereas most other entries only showed the numerical value. This extraneous '£' was causing the errors when trying to calculate the SUM of the cells in those columns. so I used the Edit/Replace function to strip them out.

I now make sure to strip out all these extra symbols after pasting in any additional transactions.

beekay1943, Web User Forums

Have you managed to fix a PC-related disaster? If so, please send your story to webuser@dennis.co.uk





Readers' Helpdesk

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

Why has Creators Update turned on Windows Defender?

After installing Creators Update, I checked my settings and noticed that Windows Defender is now switched on. This wasn't the case before the update, so I can only assume that the update re-enabled it. I'm running Avast Free (www.avast .com) and Malwarebytes Home Premium (www.malwarebytes.com), and Windows Firewall is turned on, so do I need Windows Defender too? Will it clash with my other antivirus software if I leave it enabled?

dave1510, Web User Forums

Windows Defender usually turns off automatically when it detects antivirus software from other companies, so I'm not sure why it hasn't done so here. I haven't installed Creators Update yet but my Windows 10 PC has been running very well with Avast Free, Malwarebytes Home Premium and the Windows Firewall. Even without the risk of a clash, I don't think there's much point in running it alongside what you already have.



Update

You can disable Windows Defender manually if necessary

To manually disable Windows Defender's real-time protection, search the Start Menu for Windows Defender, click Windows Defender Security Centre, then click 'Virus and threat protection'. Next, select 'Virus & threat protection settings' and switch off 'Real-time protection'.

Rogerman40 and Cantrel, **Web User Forums**

SECURITY

Why is my Creators Update installation failing?

GENERAL PC

I've tried to install Creators Update several times but it always gets stuck at 88%. I've considered resetting my PC, but Windows says that if I do this I can't keep my personal files and apps because the current version of the operating system is installed in an unsupported directory. What's the easiest way to install the Creators Update without losing all my files?

johnfreeman, Web User Forums



'Reset this PC' should give you the option to keep your personal files

Be patient. Although it might look as if the installation is stuck, updates sometimes take a very long time to progress to the next stage and can even require multiple restarts. Interrupting it will only cause problems, so give it plenty of time and see if it eventually finishes on its own. If you use antivirus software, try disabling that while you're updating.

If you still have no luck after leaving the installation running for several hours, try resetting your PC. Note that you can copy personal files to an external hard drive and copy them back afterwards, but you can't do the same with software.

Helmut and Cantrel, Web User Forums

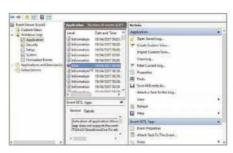
GENERAL PC

How do I fix my freezing screen?

I installed Creators Update a couple of days ago. It went quite smoothly, and everything is as I'd expect it to be except that my screen keeps freezing and I get messages saying "X is not responding". This happens mainly with

Internet Explorer but Chrome has been affected, too. Most of the time, the Windows 'investigating' boxes are ineffective and I have to open Task Manager to kill the program there before reopening it.

A side issue, as I type this, is that I've noticed the cursor on the screen isn't



Event Viewer lets you check Windows Logs for errors, which can help you find faults

exactly synchronised with the key strokes. Can anyone suggest how I might fix these problems?

daddybear, Web User Forums

You could try checking to see if a video-driver update is available. First, open Windows Update and check that any follow-up updates have been installed. Then open Device Manager (by typing its name into the Start menu), and expand the entry for 'Display adapters'. Right-click the device in this list, then select 'Update driver' and 'Search automatically for updated driver software'. If you have no luck with this method, Event Viewer and Reliability Monitor may give you some insight into what's causing the freezes.

Cantrel, Web User Forums



You can let us know your views via:

Star Email

Mug/

Online surveillance is for our protection

enjoy the columns Barry Collins writes, but I challenge his reasoning in Issue 421 about end-to-end encryption. There is also a letter from Peter Savage in your Inbox section about encryption and privacy rights.

Barry emphasises that end-to-end encryption is about data security (and I agree that it is), but I cannot understand why this is linked to issues of personal privacy. The letter from Peter Savage states that privacy is a human right (it can only be this if defined properly), but there can be no right of entitlement for criminality. Society has never permitted this. So where does this leave the argument?

Those who plead the human-rights argument for privacy invariably suffer an innate distrust of authority. I've never understood this. Society



collectively performs what the individual cannot - this is why we have government. When this is bound by the democratic right of consent (as it is in this country), the distrust of government cannot be sustained.

Privacy for the individual surely means protection against those seeking advantage at the expense of another. Society cannot therefore permit the

proponents of privacy to inhibit law enforcement and its duty to protect the public. The innocent must never be convicted, just as the guilty must never walk free. This is why the authorities undertake surveillance for our protection and use it to defend our liberties.

Although Amber Rudd might be clueless on matters of encryption (as Barry writes), her insistence that the government needs access to software such as WhatsApp is interesting. It may also be misleading and she might merely be luring criminals into a false sense of security.

I support government surveillance of the criminal and malevolent who wish me and others harm - and so should every right-thinking person.

Gerry Walker, via email

So disappointed by the Creator's Update



Well after all the hype, and following months of waiting and reading about it, the widely acclaimed Windows 10 Creators Update is here and I have to admit it has landed on my computer like a damp squib. I just don't see what

all the high expectations have been about. Let's look at Web User's breakdown of new features:

- Paint 3D
- If you are into this sort of thing, then fine - but really?
- Night Light
 - What an absolute load of rubbish.
- Better controls for Windows Update The update feature has never been a problem for me and I think too many moaners just moan for the sake of moaning.
- · Improved privacy controls This has never really bothered me, but some people have nothing better
- Better tab management This is pointless because when you open a tab you have saved, it

to do than whinge.

disappears from the saved tabs anyway.

· Do more with Cortana

The less said here the better. Who the hell wants to talk to their computer?

· Buy and read ebooks

Ah, at last something useful - if you are into reading.

Free up space automatically Well, a small plus here but nothing we

haven't been able to do before.

· Auto-lock your PC when you are away

Wow, really, why not just log off? Yet another sledgehammer to crack a nut.

· Better Start menu

Well if you like to have folders in your Start menu then fine, but I would sooner just see my apps there.

So, all in all, I am very disappointed at the supposed huge leap forward we were all expecting. In my opinion, it simply has not happened.

Robin Window, via email

Quiz Answers: Issue 422 WINNER! The Jean Genie Claude Vecht-Wolf was the first to email us the correct answers Night Fever and wins a Web User mug **Love Train** WebUs American Pie **WORD PUZZLE** A Horse With No Name Registry





 🖺 Darren hasn't let a customer leave in four years, and he's not about to start now

Turn to page 74 to find out what's making Barry mad this issue

Palicomp specs don't measure up

I am writing to advise you of a discrepancy in the specification of the Palicomp AMD Avenger, which has featured in your excellent Best Buys section for some time now.

I bought my Palicomp AMD Avenger in January and the specifications for this machine in Web User at the time showed it to have a Palit GTX 960 graphics card. My machine actually has an ATI Radeon RX 460 graphics card, which retails for £75 less than the Palit card. A recent issue of Web User is still showing the Palit GTX 960 in the specification.

Lapproached Palicomp for an explanation and a refund. By reply, I was sent a copy of my invoice (showing the cheaper card) and a refusal of my refund request.

The change represents one sixth of the cost of the PC, which no longer looks like such a bargain since Palicomp has made no adjustment in price for the cheaper card.



Palicomp

says that it contacted all media providers with full details of the change in specification at the time the change was made but, as mistakes can be made, I would be grateful if you could change your review to show the much cheaper card from now on and prevent other readers being misled in future.

Ian Waters, via email

Web User says: Thank you for bringing this error to our attention. We have updated the Palicomp AMD Avenger entry in the Best Buys section accordingly.

Make CAPTCHAs less confusing

If CAPTCHAs have to be used, can they at least be readable? When you have a mixture of upper- and lowercase characters, some blurred, and some at odd angles often overlapping each other, you may as well be reading a foreign language. At least with numbers there is no ambiguity.

Web User is also guilty of this:



it recently took me about 10 attempts to register on the Forums (forum .webuser.co.uk) before I got it right. Enough, please.

Graham Dauphin, via email

My Home is in a terrible state

I would like to highlight a problem to be aware of regarding Google Home. I recently bought the Home because I liked the look of it compared to the Amazon Echo, I downloaded the Home app and everything was set to go.

The app opened immediately and was in clear communication with the installation until the final uploading session. At this point, Home went into a never-ending loop. After many long telephone calls to Google's helpline (supposedly communicating with Home specialists) and emails from Google that suggested rebooting the Home, app and



All elements of my hardware and software are well above the requisite minimum requirements. It seems that Google does not vet have an answer to this problem and I have no choice but to return the Home. Nye Williams, via email

We don't really own the films we buy

As a longstanding film fan, I like the option not only to stream films but to buy them to keep. The TalkTalk TV Store (www.talktalktvstore.co.uk) clearly promises that you can buy a movie and "own it forever" - something it proudly trumpets on its website. However, I was recently contacted by Talk Talk TV to say that two films I had purchased will soon by deleted from its catalogue to make way for new content, and that I would not be able to watch them in the future. Yes, they refunded my money, but I had bought the films to own forever.

When I contacted TalkTalk TV to complain about this, I was told that the terms and conditions say it has the freedom to change its service whenever it wants. There are no licensing issues with the films, so this is purely the

company's commercial decision to make space on its server.

I think it's important that people are aware that when



you buy a film you do not own the media - you are simply buying the right to stream it for as long as the company wants to make this service available.

This raises questions about the rights one has when purchasing digital media and whether companies should be forced to be more honest in their marketing. Also, as a film fan, I worry that it is the arthouse and foreign-language films that will be sidelined by this approach, because it will undoubtedly be the less commercial films that get deleted.

Paul Green, via email

our 2016 Back Issues Disc is on sale now from Amazon, visit bit.ly/wudisc16









Give us free upgrades to new formats

I completely concur with Frank Roman's letter in Issue 421, 'Stop charging us for



the same product'. It's ridiculous that we have to pay again and again for music and films, just to

keep up with the latest formats. I think you should at least get a discount on an album or film when it's issued in a new format, if you can prove that you already own it in a previous one.

One of the best things Amazon does is to automatically give you free MP3 versions of every CD you've bought from the store. Admittedly, it probably only does this to get you to use its musicstreaming service, but it's still a welcome gesture. It would be even better if it gave you free ebook versions of every book you've bought from it - if you're reading this, Amazon, take note!

Laura Hunter, via email

Someone has to pay for free Kodi content

Why on Earth are people surprised that



pre-loaded Kodi boxes have been banned? These things have one purpose and one purpose only: to allow the illegal free streaming of services that usually require a paid subscription. It's ridiculous to pretend otherwise and to

suggest that Kodi boxes are no different from other streaming devices such as the Roku and Amazon Fire TV Stick.

If people want to watch sport and films without paying for them, they should bear in mind that someone somewhere does still have to pay for that content, whether it's Sky or Virgin Media or their customers. Why should those of us who do things the proper, legal way end up having our monthly bills increased to make up the shortfall left by the people who don't pay?

I believe this whole Kodi situation has gotten out of hand, and I'm only surprised it's taken this long for the authorities to address it.

Colin Berry, via email

What you say...

O YOU APPROVE OF THE **EU BANNING SO-CALLED** 'KODI TV BOXES'?

It makes no difference. People who want one will still be able to get one.

Danny Pulley

Sky and Virgin are expensive. Going to the cinema is expensive and noisy. The BBC is nearly £150 for 80% repeats. Sorry, but Kodi boxes do have their place (and they are amazing!).

Paul Mudge

If Sky brought the prices down, there would be less people willing to risk dodgy websites, boxes, cards and now Kodi systems.

Anthony Higham

They will just sell them illegally and charge more for them. We need more clarity on the laws for users too.

.....

Paul Emsley

NEW BROADBAND SURVEY SAYS BT AND TALKTALK ARE THE WORST ISPs (bit.ly/ broadband423). DO YOU AGREE?

I have to agree about TalkTalk. Their support is abysmal and their 'fibre' is lower than normal broadband speeds. Despite several hundred calls to their support, my problems have not been resolved.

Greg Holmes

As an IT technician, I know BT are horrendous for support and certainly overpriced. This comes from years of experience. Many of my customers have switched, or are in the process of switching.

David Piers

BT are fine but expensive. Sometimes internet speed nosedives over the

occasional weekend so I cannot download HD programmes at all.

Lance Parkington

I have been with both and found BT good, TalkTalk just okay.

.....

Jason 'Boz' Bowyer

O YOU WANT GOOGLE TO ADD AN AD BLOCKER TO CHROME (bit.ly/chrome423)?

Yes. I've used ad blockers since 1999. Having ads is one thing but I hate pop-ups and surveys. Companies need to rethink how and when adverts are shown. Maybe then I would be happy to set up exclusions for certain

Gavin Green

If they did, it'd be too similar to Adblock Plus where advertisers can pay for their ads to be shown.

Martin Phillp

I prefer using third-party ad blockers myself. I use Adblock Plus on computers and 1Blocker on iOS devices.

Davor Prcovich

An ad company blocking ads? Durr! Shaun Aubert

HY DO YOU THINK IPHONE SALES HAVE FALLEN (bit.ly/iphone423)?

Feature saturation, market saturation and viable alternatives. If you look at recent data, Samsung Galaxy S7 and S7 Edge remain the biggest sellers, with Huawei popular in Far East (P9 and Honor V8).

Martin Brindley @martinbrindley

Because Android is more open and customisable, and has better hardware. I've still got my HTC One M8, which is now three years old.

goldmaster @imthegoldmaster

Because you have to take out a mortgage to buy one?

Jack @jackl02

A Page 404

Barry Collins reveals three steps to squeezing a good deal out of your ISP

The delicate art of contract haggling

aving just renegotiated my broadband contract for the umpteenth time in my life, this issue I proudly present to you the Barry Collins Guide to Contract Haggling. It's basically MoneySavingExpert without the annoying chap who fronts it – and also without the expertise.

My first piece of advice is to go mano-a-mano. By all means see what offers companies are prepared to give you via their websites but if you want the best deals, you're going to have to face down someone in a Dublin call centre. Websites don't negotiate, no matter how many times you press F5.

Once you've picked up the phone, spent 20 minutes battering your way through the automated menus and confirmed your full name, postcode and mother's blood group "for security

purposes", you reach your first call-centre dolt - let's call him Malcolm.

Malcolm is a ferocious waste of molecules. He's only authorised to offer a 5% discount and a two-for-one ticket to Thorpe Park. The savings he can offer aren't worth the oxygen you're going to expend talking to him. Declare a determined will to leave and proceed straight to support level two, where the first glimpse of a reasonable discount will start to form.

Support level two is manned by Julie. Part of Julie's two-day training course was a role-playing session led by someone who once had a walk-on part in *The Bill*, so she knows how to express empathy. She's "terribly sorry you're thinking of leaving us" and is going to "search our system to find you a great deal". She spends 10 minutes

pretending to type things into her computer before offering you a 10% discount and a signed photo of Bobby Davro.

That's still a fiver more than you were paying when

you last signed a contract two years ago, so it's time to hold firm, maybe wait a day or two, then open negotiations with the Top Guns: the Retention Department.

The Retention Department is where you find Darren. He's not let a customer

leave in four years, and he's not about to start now. Especially as you've called him at the end of the month, when the company is so worried about missing sales targets that it's entering anyone

Julie spends 10 minutes

pretending to type into her

computer before offering you

a 10% discount and a signed

photo of Bobby Davro

who keeps
a customer into
a prize draw for
an all-expensespaid trip to
Disneyland Paris.
Darren's never
been to Disneyland
Paris and his
daughter Kayleigh

is obsessed with *Frozen*. You're his Eurostar ticket outta here.

After reconfirming your full name, postcode and third letter of your cat's middle name "for security purposes", you spend 20 minutes refusing to budge until Darren hands you a two-year

contract for a fiver less than you were paying in the first place. Don't consider this a victory, by the way - the "rising cost of fibre glass" or some other non-excuse will "force them" to put the price up by a fiver within six months, anyway. Still, you manage to coerce Darren into chucking in a new router to compensate you for the three hours you've spent on the phone negotiating with him and his colleagues.

Ultimately, the only really good news is that you won't have to go through this palaver for another two years.







ENJOYED THIS ISSUE?

GET THE NEXT ONE EARLY!

hank you for reading this issue of *Web User* – we hope you found the tips and advice useful. The good news is that you don't have to wait too long for the next issue. If you subscribe to *Web User* by Friday 19 May (8pm)*, you'll receive it through your letterbox before it's available in the shops!

What's inside the next issue:

COVER FEATURE: The Hacker's Guide To...
FASTER INTERNET

- Build your own cloud storage
- Clean up after the Creators Update
- Learn more about your area

AND...

Best to-do list tools on test

*Don't worry if you miss this deadline you can subscribe to Web User at any time!



Subscribe to Web User today and you'll pay just £19.99* for the next 13 issues - that's a 26% saving on the shop price. As an added bonus you'll also receive a free gift - a mini torch

Subscribe online at

subscribe.webuser.co.uk

or call now on **01795 592 926**

*Includes FREE DELIVERY

Quote offer code: P1710P



TP-Link Smart Home range currently available at





