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thought your PC couldn't handle

16 - 29 May 2018

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p54

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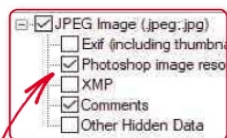
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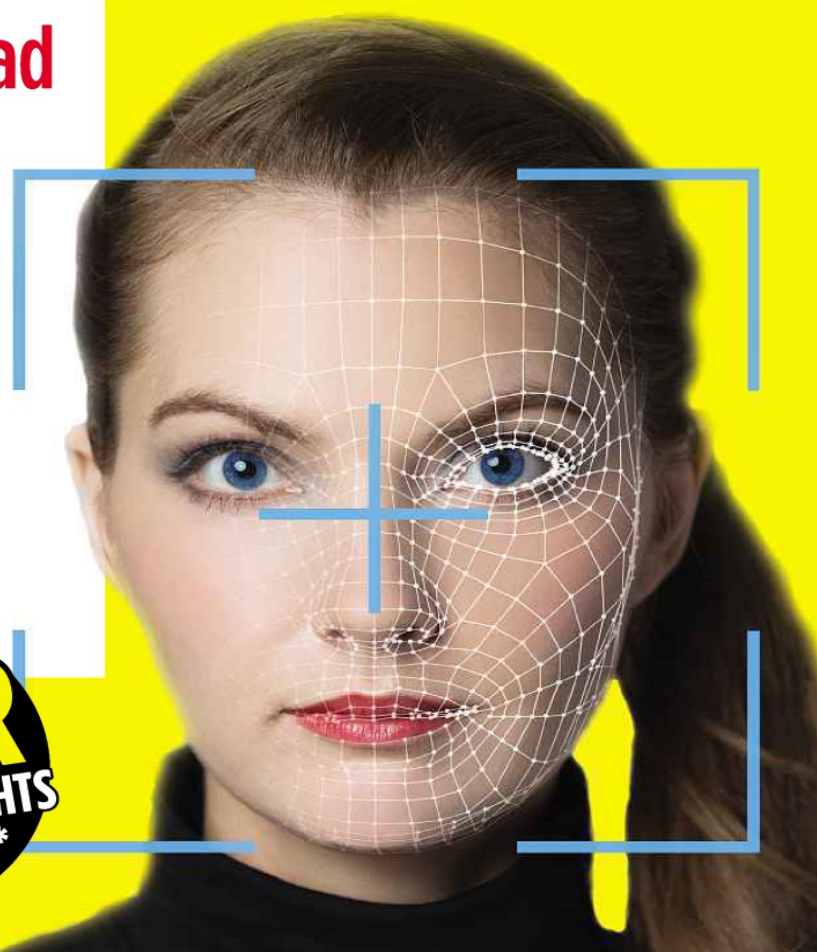


THE NEW GMAIL

 Email's future
has just arrived **p52**

**EXTEND YOUR WI-FI
INTO YOUR GARDEN**

Better signal all summer long **p58**



NEW

BARE METAL SERVER

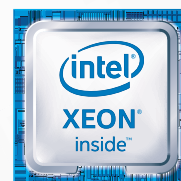
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1and1.co.uk

It's time to switch to the GDPR

Forget the Royal Wedding – the most important date for your calendar this month is 25 May, otherwise known as GDPR Day. Described as the biggest change to data-privacy law for 20 years, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) forces companies to come clean about what they do with our personal information, and gives us consumers welcome new powers over how our data is 'processed'.

Yet despite the looming deadline, the exact nature and effects of the GDPR remain vague and confusing. Perhaps The Village People should have reformed for a

follow-up to 'YMCA' and danced us through the intricacies of the new regulation, dressed as data-protection officers.

In this issue's cover feature, we explain why GDPR affects anyone who uses the web. We answer all your questions about the tough new privacy rules, look at how your favourite sites and apps have responded to GDPR and reveal how you can view, control and delete your data.

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



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Robert Irvine <robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk>
 Another test was opened seconds ago today at 10:57 AM
 v.1 Open / Click

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ISSUE 449

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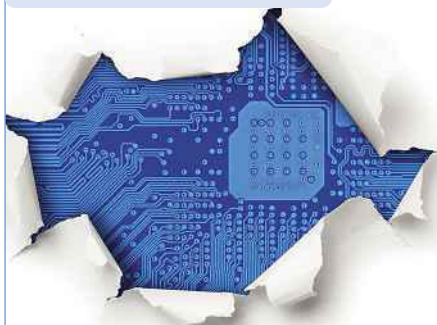
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COVER
FEATURE

Our complete
guide to GDPR

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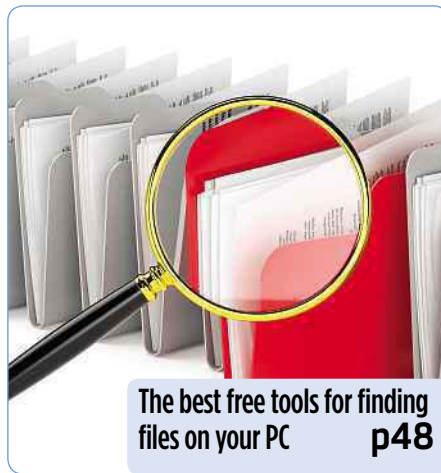
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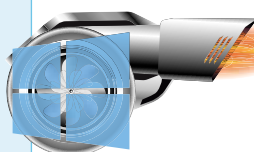
**Practical WebUser**

Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

16 pages

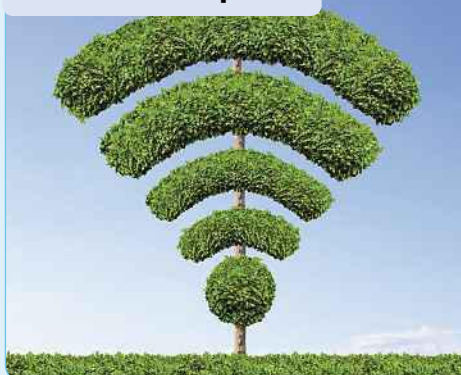
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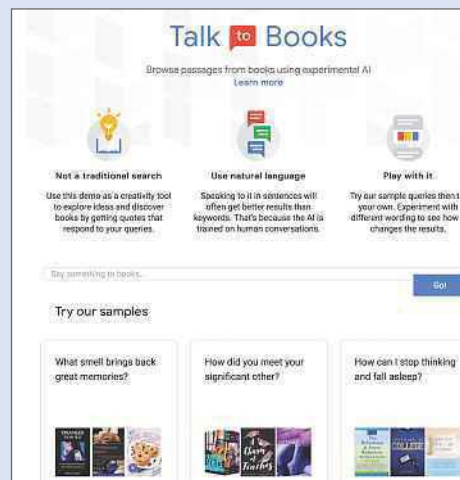
What's New Online

Find answers in books using Google

Before the web provided instant answers to our burning questions, books were our main source of reference. A new tool from Google called Talk to Books combines the two: just ask a question and it will scour the text of more than 100,000 books for a useful response.

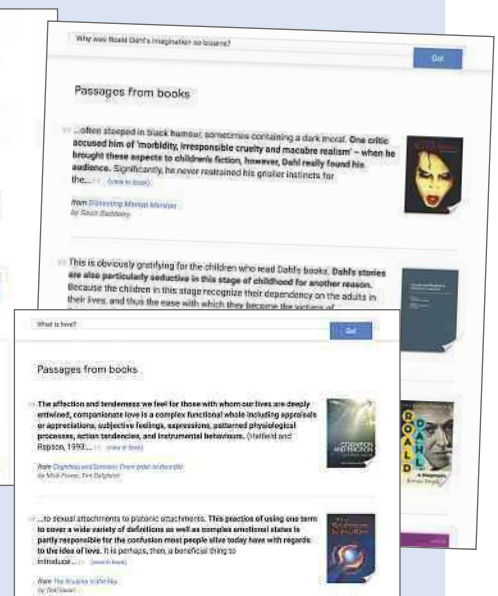
Rather than trying to match keywords, Talk to Books highlights passages that best follow on from your query. Indeed, the answers are likely to contain none of the actual words from your question, but they will undoubtedly uncover interesting perspectives and perhaps point toward books you may want to read.

To work most effectively, Talk to Books encourages you to type your query in a conversational manner – for example: “What is fun about computer programming?” or “Why is a free press important?”, rather than ‘computer programming fun’ or ‘importance free press’. This takes



a little getting used to but the results pay off. That's because although Talk to Books is very experimental, you'll find it works particularly well if you ask a factual question rather than anything of a political or widely cultural nature.

It's also sure to become more refined as time goes on, with researchers and



bookworms most likely to appreciate its ability to expand on topics in ways traditional Google searches cannot.

bit.ly/talk449

Create your own Alexa skills

blueprints.amazon.com

There are thousands of Alexa skills available, but the chances are you'll want one that doesn't yet

exist. Previously, you would have had to wait for a developer to fill that gap, but with a new service called Alexa Blueprints, you can produce your own.

Select from more than 20 easy-to-use templates that range from family jokes, trivia and motivational quotes to quizzes, storytelling and reminders. By clicking Make Your Own and following the on-screen instructions, you can tailor these templates in minutes, creating a skill that can be used on your Alexa device.

Name your skill and you can simply utter: “Alexa, open [skill name]” to access your creation. Just make sure you change the language settings in your Alexa mobile app to US English. If you get stuck, you'll find loads of help online.



Test your knowledge of natural wonders

bit.ly/nature449

Mother Nature has no doubt blown your mind on many occasions but what impact have Earth's natural wonders had on your brain? You can find out through this Google Earth-based quiz that takes you on a stunning journey to seven of the most beautiful places on our planet and asks if you can identify them.

Created by Atlas Obscura, it presents you with a choice of three answers for each location and, as well as letting you zoom in and out of the map, there are stunning photographs to view, too. It's a great way to acquaint yourself with the likes of the Morning Glory Pool and the Mendenhall Glacier and, when you've finished, it recommends other sights you may like to check out.

Google is also working on plans for a quiz about castles and palaces around the globe, to tie in with the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, which is due to be launched in time for the big day.



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

Guess the city from its Cold War map

bit.ly/soviet449

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union spent decades meticulously mapping cities around the world. But because these were labelled in Russian, you may have a hard time working out which city is which. Test yourself with this fiendish multiple-choice quiz from *The Guardian*, which asks you to identify cities based on sections from 11 maps.



NEW VOICE COMMANDS



Hear a classic story

Say "Hey Google, tell me a story" to listen to classic tales such as Little Red Riding Hood and Sleeping Beauty. For a fun Disney story, say: "Hey Google, talk to Mickey Mouse Story Time".



Take a selfie

Instantly launch the camera app on your iPhone by saying: "Hey Siri, take a selfie". All you have to do is press the shutter.



Play a Pac-Man adventure

A new Pac-Man Stories skill lets families use Alexa to play a 'choose your own adventure' game that involves you guiding the beloved arcade-game character.

Share Spotify on Instagram

www.instagram.com

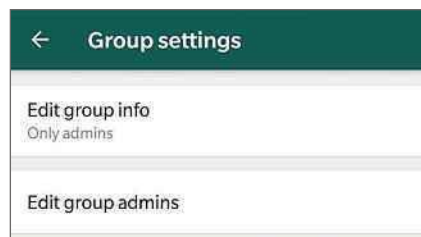
Instagram has integrated Spotify with its Stories feature, so you can now tap Share in the music-streaming app, select Instagram Stories and show others what you're listening to. Each song comes with its own cover art and an option to hear the tune. Instagram has also added GoPro support, letting you upload action shots direct to the social network and even make edits. In both cases, you can add images to your story. There's no messing around trying to connect the apps to Instagram: it just works – as long as you have the latest updates installed.



Silence friends in WhatsApp chats

www.whatsapp.com

If you want to rule over your group WhatsApp chats with an iron fist, then make yourself an administrator. The chat app has added a new Restricted Groups feature which, when invoked, forces members to seek approval from the admin whenever they want to send a message. As well as stopping people from posting rubbish, you can also prevent other members from changing the name of the group or its description. The function – which is available in the latest WhatsApp update for Android – can be turned on via Admin Settings in Group Info.



Pay online with Google Pay

pay.google.com

In the wake of Google Pay's February Android launch, it's now been rolled out on the web, so you can complete your purchases on your desktop or via iOS. Handily, it automatically fills your billing and shipping information on forms.

Avoid games with microtransactions

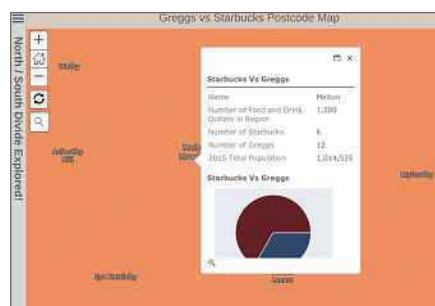
microtransaction.zone

This website lets you check titles for microtransactions using icons to show whether they're spotless, free-to-play or require upgrades to make the most of gameplay.

Compare the snack tastes of the UK

bit.ly/greggs449

The idea that Northerners love Greggs while Southerners prefer Starbucks has become a stereotype, but is the culinary divide really so stark? This new Greggs Vs Starbucks map uses crowd-sourced data to show how many branches of each you'll find across Britain. Click an area to view the total number of food and drink outlets, the population and the number of Starbucks and Greggs.



Watch Google's VR doodle

bit.ly/moon449

To celebrate the life and creative work of pioneering French director Georges Méliès, Google has commissioned its first virtual-reality interactive doodle, Back to the Moon, which can be watched through Google Cardboard or Daydream or on YouTube.

Need to Know

Windows 10 April update crashes and freezes PCs

What happened?

It's bad enough that installing Windows updates means having to stop what you're doing, let Microsoft take over your computer for however long it needs and then wait for a restart, but it's made infinitely worse if the update includes bugs and flaws. Yet that's exactly what happened with the April 2018 major update to Windows 10, which arrived at the end of last month and slowly filtered through Windows' automatic update system.

The update includes some welcome new features such as Timeline in task view, which shows you what you were doing on your computer the last time you used it so you can seamlessly continue your work. There's also a tool for sharing files over Wi-Fi, improved dictation via Cortana and improvements to Microsoft's Edge browser, such as better print settings.

However, there have been many reports of crashes since the update's roll-out, with some PCs completely locking up, forcing users to restart, and apps and programs such as Cortana and Chrome freezing. Microsoft confirmed the bug, saying it was working on a solution. Apparently, not all Windows 10 users are affected, and problems are mostly restricted to newer computers running integrated graphics chips from Intel.

But that's not the only update issue to hit Microsoft and its users. In January, the discovery of the Meltdown bug –



a vulnerability that affected almost every Windows device in existence – led to a patch which itself had a flaw. Security researchers found that Microsoft's patch allowed access to the machine's kernel, meaning computers weren't actually protected. This only applied to PCs running Windows 10.

Microsoft has fixed the flawed update, but you'll have to install the April 2018 update to stay protected – which, ironically, is the self-same version that is causing so many problems for users. A new, fixed Meltdown patch is likely to be in the works.

How will it affect you?

Hopefully, your installation of this major update has gone smoothly and you aren't affected by any of the problems. If you've installed the April 2018 update and are experiencing trouble, help is on the way. Microsoft is expected to have an update for these bugs by 8 May, which should fix the frozen machines.

Until you manage to install that solution, Microsoft staff on forums have suggested putting your computer to sleep, such as by closing the lid on a laptop. The bugs appear to only affect people running newer computers with Intel integrated graphics cards.

If you haven't installed the update, and don't want to do so until the fix is available, be aware that the Meltdown patch isn't actually working as hoped and is still leaving users vulnerable. There's nothing to suggest that hackers are actually taking advantage of the patch's flaw, though, so don't panic.

What do we think?

Microsoft knows we hate installing updates and patches. It's put a fair amount of work into trying to make the process smoother for Windows users, but such bugs aren't helping and they're happening far too frequently. Indeed, the April 2018 update's release was pushed back

by the company because Microsoft spotted a major bug that was crashing its test machines. It seems Microsoft should have looked harder at its code.

Mistakes happen, and these updates offer handy free features and keep us safer by patching known security holes. But it's no wonder some people turn off Windows Automatic Update when the first few weeks of installs seem to highlight so many bugs. If you do turn off the automatic updates, make sure you install them eventually because falling behind on updates will leave your PC's security at risk.

Windows is the most popular operating system in the world. If even a small proportion of users get hit by these update woes, that's millions of users left frustrated and confused. Microsoft needs to do a better job of testing its own code before release, or it risks users turning off updates and being less well protected. Step up your game, Microsoft!



The April 2018 update has caused problems on some Windows 10 computers

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

Facebook plans to launch dating service

What happened?

Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg is clearly feeling a little unloved. After a series of data-privacy scandals rocked the social network, Zuckerberg unveiled big plans at Facebook's developer conference – not to address privacy issues, but to help us find love among our friends, and friends of friends. He revealed details of Facebook Dating, a free dating site to help users of the social network find a partner.

Once the feature launches (testing is expected to begin “later this year”), people will be able to create a dating profile separate from their Facebook profile. Potential matches will be recommended based on your mutual friends, common interests and which dating preferences you put in your profile.

How will it affect you?

Facebook's privacy credentials are a bit wobbly at the moment, but rest assured this dating feature will be purely opt-in. You'll only be matched with fellow love hunters if you actively choose to enable the service. You won't be paired off with your direct friends and it won't be linked to your profile, so you can keep your efforts to find romance private.

Zuckerberg didn't detail exactly what data the service will use to establish your interests, but it may pull information from pages or brands you've 'liked' or interacted with.

What do we think?

Friends of friends are a great way to find a partner, and to dodge some of the nonsense that comes with meeting random strangers – prospective dates are more likely to behave themselves if you have a mutual friend.

It's not yet clear if Facebook will only link you to people you have some connection with, or if Dating will be a Match-style service that uses your profile to find someone like you. If you do want to find someone via a mutual friend, check out Hinge (hinge.co), which uses Facebook without putting the social network at the centre of your relationship.



Twitter warns users to change passwords

Password

Change your password or recover your current one.

Associate your mobile phone with your Twitter account for enhanced security. [Learn more.](#)

Current password

[Forgot your password?](#)

New password

Strong

Verify password

Save changes

What happened?

Twitter users have been told by the site to change their passwords, after it admitted that an internal bug meant login credentials were stored in plain text on Twitter's own servers. Twitter stressed that there's no evidence to suggest that the unprotected passwords had been stolen or otherwise misused, but said users should change them just in case.

“Due to a bug, passwords were written to an internal log before completing the hashing process,” wrote Parag Agrawal, the chief technical officer at Twitter. “We found this error ourselves, removed the passwords, and are implementing plans to prevent this bug from happening again.”

How will it affect you?

To change your Twitter password, click your profile image, choose ‘Settings and Privacy’ and scroll down to the Password option. You'll need to enter your existing password as

well as the new one – make sure it's strong by including a number or other character, and not using words you'd find in the dictionary. Additionally, as ever, don't reuse your password across sites. It's also a good idea to enable two-factor authentication, so even if your password is leaked or guessed, your account is still secure.

What do we think?

It's smart of Twitter to risk a bit of bad publicity by warning users about this potential risk. It appears that it's unlikely anyone will be affected by the password bug, but it's better to alert users and let them protect themselves than to ignore the problem and hope it goes away.

Of course, that puts the onus back onto us users to take action and update our passwords, so make sure you do if you haven't yet. If Twitter is wrong and somebody did gain access to the passwords, then a cybercriminal's first course of action will be to try those logins on sites all over the web.

TSB 'on its knees' after online banking chaos

What happened?

TSB has experienced possibly the worst week in banking since the financial crisis of 2008. One weekend: that's all it should have taken for the self-styled 'local bank for Britain' to transfer five million customer records to its new system. Not only would the upgrade save the bank £100m a year, but it would also offer a more secure infrastructure.

Sadly, despite months of supposedly careful planning, customers found themselves locked out of their accounts and unable to access their money once the chaotic switchover was complete. As system outages continued, TSB was bombarded with angry messages and sarcastic memes from customers frustrated to find they had no internet or mobile banking services, and no money – although TSB did claim that card usage wasn't affected.

Just four days after the upgrade deadline, TSB's CEO Paul Pester admitted that far from "intermittent failures", the bank was "on its knees", and had drafted in a team of tech specialists from IBM. Even a week later, around half of those affected were unable to get their online banking to work. And those who did manage to log in found a raft of problems still existed, including incorrect balances and missed payments.



Credit: Ceri Breeze / Shutterstock.com

How will it affect you?

If you're one of TSB's 1.9 million mobile and internet banking customers, the chances are you've already been affected. Even if you haven't been locked out of your account, you may have received messages about overdue payments and card usage abroad – and with the app out of action, there's been no way to actually check. Worryingly, there have also been reports of accounts displaying the balances of other customers.

However, there is some 'good' news, too. With the Financial Conduct Authority investigating, TSB has announced that all overdraft fees for

April have been cancelled. It will also raise interest rates on its Classic Plus current account from 3% to 5%.

What do we think?

This has to be one of the worst IT fails in living memory – bad for banking and bad for data privacy. But it was an accident waiting to happen. As far back as 2015, experts warned that TSB's unwieldy systems would prove problematic. Still, the bank did nothing. Instead, it continually pushed back the upgrade date as it became clear that its creaking technology was not fit for purpose. Perhaps its new slogan should be: "the bank that likes to say 'mess'".



FIRST LOOK

Oculus Go

bit.ly/oculus449

'Effortless' is the best way to describe the latest venture between virtual-reality (VR) company Oculus and Xiaomi, the Chinese smartphone manufacturer. Oculus Go is a slimmed-down virtual-reality headset that's been simplified for mass appeal. The Go is built for a future that doesn't yet exist, where VR is commonplace and even watching the news over breakfast means donning an elegant Oculus-branded headset.

Developed as an entry-level device, Oculus Go promises to be the ideal introduction for anyone who's considered buying into the virtual-reality hype, but been put off by the price. In the box, you'll find a standalone headset that's so refined



it's arguably more comfortable than its big brother, the Oculus Rift. There's also a Wii-style nunchuck controller but, inconveniently, no charger if you live outside the US.

Oculus Go's design is stripped back without feeling cheap. It's a smart, affordable device, albeit with less under the hood than pricier rivals such as Samsung's Gear VR or Sony's games-focused PlayStation VR peripheral.

The slick, grey outer shell houses a 5.5in screen featuring a 2,560 x 1,440 WQHD display, and the device is

powered by a Snapdragon 821 processor. A single charge gives you approximately 2.5 hours of playtime, which makes it less powerful than its rivals but, then, it's much cheaper, too. Oculus plans to sell the device for £200 for the base 32GB model, while the 64GB version will set you back £250 – half the price of the £499 Oculus Rift.

Oculus Go's sharp lenses offer crisp views, with the fast-switch LCD screen mitigating some common complaints, such as ghosting and pixelation. Audio is delivered by a good set of built-in directional speakers.

Oculus Go is a genuine head-turner: it delivers the full virtual-reality experience for a reasonable price, and opens your eyes to VR's practical, real-world future beyond tech demos and games.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Does Amazon want the keys to your car?

Amazon wants to deliver packages direct to your car, according to new reports. If you're a trusting Prime member, and live in one of 37 trial cities across the US, you can already give Amazon access to your house via Amazon Key. Hook up the smart lock and

cloud camera, then use the app to get your packages delivered inside your house, even while you're out.

Amazon Key In-Car promises to be the vehicular equivalent. Book your delivery and the parcel will be dropped off inside your car (which certainly beats coming back to find a parking ticket). Don't worry, you won't have to hand over your actual car keys or fit a new smart lock. The service works through an Amazon app that connects delivery drivers to your car's on-board cloud services to authorise access.

But don't get too excited just yet. The original Amazon Key still hasn't hit the UK, and there's no sign of a global rollout for the new service, either. This is strictly a beta test and that trial period could last at least two years, judging by the contract signed by Amazon and project partners Volvo and General Motors, whose vehicles are the only



ones currently eligible for Key In-Car.

But after expanding its range of Alexa-powered Echo speakers, it's obvious that Amazon Key In-Car is another route for the world's biggest department store to reach its tentacles even deeper into our lives (and cars).

LIKELIHOOD RATING



From drones to homes, Amazon leads the charge in revolutionising deliveries, so we won't be surprised to see Key In-Car launched outside the US within the next few years. Thankfully, you can hang onto your actual car keys, but it will probably only be available if you own a particular make of vehicle.



WEBOMETER



WE LIKE...



NHS to upgrade to Windows 10

The Department of Health has agreed a deal with Microsoft to roll out Windows 10 across the NHS by 2020, to boost British hospitals' cybersecurity defences. The NHS has been widely criticised for still using the unsafe Windows XP.



Watch the Royal Wedding in 4K

Sky has confirmed that it will broadcast the Royal Wedding live on Sky News in Ultra High Definition via its Sky Q platform, with coverage starting at 9am on 19 May. The BBC and ITV will also broadcast the event, but only in standard HD.



WE DON'T LIKE...



Phishing scams exploit GDPR

Scammers are impersonating well-known companies to send phishing emails warning about the imminent changes to privacy settings under GDPR (see page 40), in an attempt to spread malware and steal personal data.



TalkTalk still the worst broadband provider

TalkTalk has been named the worst ISP for customer service for the second year running in a broadband-service report by regulator Ofcom. The company scored poorly for reliability and its handling of customer complaints.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Audiently

bit.ly/audiently449 | From £1

Audiently is a slick tool for creating original, royalty-free music loops – a smorgasbord of melodies for anyone with a creative streak. Pick your samples, experiment with sounds and the algorithm cleverly stitches it all together into a track you can download and use in whatever way you please. Budding musicians can use it as a cross-device tool to put together tracks in the studio and on the go. The Audiently team are looking for £7,500 by 31 May. Pledge rewards include goody bags and branded merchandise, and you can even help shape Audiently's future as a co-creator.



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Nintendo Switch console has "unfixable" flaw

A hardware exploit has been discovered on Nintendo's Switch console that allows hackers to pirate games. The loophole, known as Fusee Gelee and discovered by developer Kate Temkin, originates from the console's Nvidia Tegra X1 processor and allows hackers to "inject code into the system and modify it however they choose".

Fusee Gelee opens the door for skilled coders to create their own games, emulate older games not available for the Switch and pirate existing titles. Crucially, the flaw is "unfixable" and cannot be rectified through a software update, because the vulnerability centres around a core piece of hardware



that can't be upgraded once it leaves the production line.

This means that the 14.8 million Nintendo Switches currently in circulation can be hacked to run a whole raft of different games and programs. However, the loophole doesn't actually expose the Switch to any security risks, because a hacker needs to physically handle the console to inject the necessary code to gain access.

bit.ly/switch449

Facebook Messenger malware steals passwords

A type of malware that spreads via Facebook Messenger has resurfaced and is using new tricks to steal passwords to 'cryptojack' PCs. According to security company Trend Micro, the malware – which it calls FacexWorm – uses phishing messages to direct victims to fake YouTube pages and encourage them to download a malicious Chrome extension. It was first discovered last

August, but appears to have evolved so it can now harvest account details, inject malicious cryptomining code into web pages and hijack cryptocurrency-related transactions.

Trend Micro says that FacexWorm is a clone of a normal Chrome extension that downloads additional JavaScript code when the browser is opened. Every time a victim opens a new web page, FacexWorm finds and retrieves more code.

To avoid infection, Trend Micro recommends that web users "think before sharing, be more prudent against unsolicited or suspicious messages, and enable tighter privacy settings for your social media accounts".

bit.ly/facex449



Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Tom Gaffney, Security Consultant at F-Secure
(www.f-secure.com)



Q Are Internet of Things (IoT) devices as big a security risk as recent news stories suggest?
Finn Cooke, Twitter

A We have certainly seen appalling security practices in action: just two

examples are the iKettle (pictured), which can expose your Wi-Fi credentials; and Samsung fridges, which have been hacked and made part of a spam network. But is it prevalent? It's really a wait-and-see scenario. IoT devices certainly could become high-profile security risks, but aren't just yet.

The biggest threat to the Internet of Things that we've seen so far is at the home-gateway level and in the cloud. We have seen real and significant threats such



as the Mirai botnet that hit a number of router manufacturers in 2016 and 2017, but the greatest threat to the IoT today is hackers using the processing capability of your connected fridge or toaster. That capability is being used for cryptomining, which is currently the most lucrative use from the criminals' perspective.

At the cloud level, IoT devices are transmitting personal data back to companies who may sell or misuse that data. Almost any consumer device can be internet-

enabled and made 'smart' at very little cost and, inevitably, a lot of personal data gets collected alongside usage data.

Facebook and Google's business models have taught us that bad practice in the amount and type of data collected, and presumptive ownership of that data, can lead to a frontier war. The same will happen with data from our smart devices unless we restrict their data-gathering capabilities or exercise our rights as consumers by only purchasing products from companies who protect our data.

PHILIPS

Monitors

Vivid, true-to-life colours
in an elegant design

276E7QDSW

innovation ✨ you



amazon



ebuyer.com

★ Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

LIFESTYLE

NEW

The Book of Man thebookofman.com

It's fair to say we're living in a period of great change, and modern men can find aspects of 21st Century life rather tough. The Book of Man seeks to address this head-on by dishing out progressive advice and challenging the traditional concept of masculinity. Split across sections for Mind, Body, Skills and Heroes, it wisely resists using clickbait headlines to provide honest and enlightening articles on subjects as diverse as grooming, relationships, gadgets and mental health. A lot of work has gone into the site's sophisticated appearance and it already looks settled in its own skin, though we'd like to see more interactivity.

Our rating



TIME TO BURY THIS ONE

'Toxic Masculinity': The Problem With The Phrase

BY THOMAS

Professor Eric Anderson, a sociologist from the University of Winchester, wants to retire the term 'Toxic Masculinity', saying it unfairly implicates all men.

Toxic masculinity - what is it?

2017 was a year for the reputation of men as a series of monstrosities and atrocities, and Anderson from the University of Winchester says it's time to retire the term 'Toxic Masculinity'.

BIG ISSUES

Articles cover all manner of issues and can be shared on social media

GADGETS

IF YOU STEAL THIS SMART BIKE, A DUTCHMAN WILL HUNT YOU DOWN

The Dutch government has made the smartest bike in the world. It's a smart bike that can track you down if you steal it. The bike is called the 'Smart Bike' and it's a smart bike that can track you down if you steal it.

SKILLS

Learn more about DIY, drink, the great outdoors and the latest gadgets

THE BOOK OF MAN

FATHERHOOD
2 WEEKS AGO

DADDY IS BY DAVID WHITEHEAD

A parenting column from author David Whitehead is about why he hates parenting

Read article

THIS YEAR'S MOST MILLENNIAL AND AN ARTISAN AD

Hollywood has typecast the average generation of young, bearded men for adventure-seeking millennials. This year's most millennial and an artisan ad.

TODAY IN TECHNOLOGY

The definitive place for top stories in tech, plus in-depth features, product reviews, podcasts, and more.

Featuring the responses, "Top Stories," "The Full Story," "Opinions" and more.

TOP STORIES

Google's new Gmail aims to hit Microsoft where it hurts

TCL's premium 4K HDR Roku TVs start at \$649

Possible iPhone SE 2 photos show off a couple of big surprises

Microsoft clamps down on Halo Online fan mod Eldewrito

Snapchat's New Spectacles Can Do One Important Thing the Old

Google's new Gmail aims to hit Microsoft where it hurts

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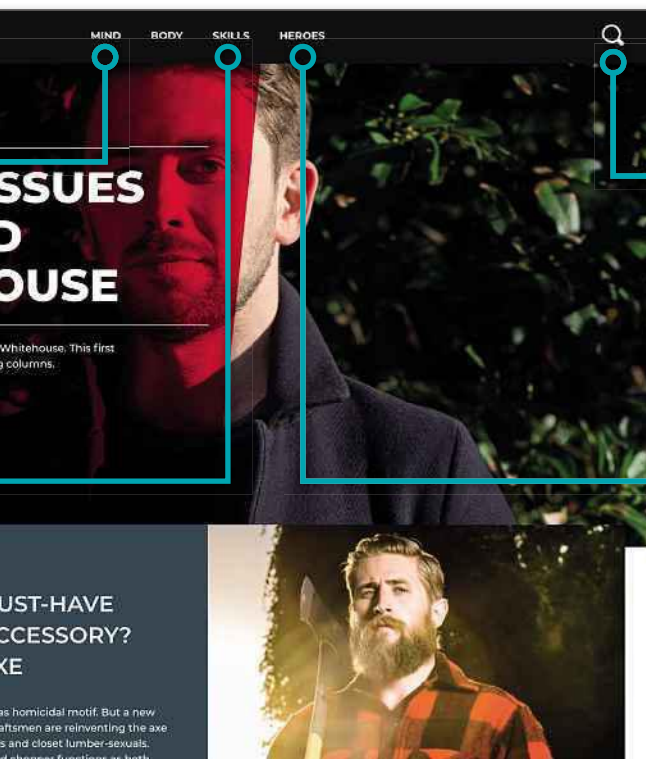
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Possible iPhone SE 2

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



SEARCH

Type a search term and results appear in an instant, complete with images

GUEST COLUMNISTS
Rapper Professor Green is the website's first big-name weekly columnist



MONEY

Rich Kids Of Today

Enter your salary into this website to compare it with the earnings of today's child celebrities. As you do so, the site updates, telling you how much each kid has earned in the time since you entered your salary. It also shows their age and net worth before detailing how many hours it would take them to earn your annual pay. For good measure, it breaks their earnings down by year, day, hour, minute and second, and – perhaps just to rub it in – explains who they are and what they do. The same celebrities are used each time but it's eye-opening if rather depressing stuff.

Our rating



FOOD & DRINK

Wine Garden of England

Visit this site with "grape expectations" and you won't be disappointed. Created on behalf of winemakers across Kent, it gives an overview of seven vineyards and the stories of the pioneers behind each one, complete with sparkling images and links to the individual winery websites. It hopes to motivate you to take a break in this emerging wine hotspot by providing helpful visitor guides that include four-day luxury trips for groups. These can be downloaded as PDFs and the site also links to content on the Visit Kent website to showcase the wider area.

Our rating



TRAVEL

Sally's Cottages

www.sallyscottages.co.uk

The old version of this website did a good job of making it easy to find a cottage to rent in the Lake District, providing area guides recommending things to see and do, and displaying essential info about accommodation, including reviews. So it's good to see that not much has changed – on the surface, at least. In the wake of a £250,000 investment, most of the effort has been concentrated on making the site faster: searches are now quicker and it's easier for cottage owners to manage their bookings. Sally's blog also remains personable and fun.

Our rating



BACK ISSUES DISC 2017



2017 Back Issues Disc

Our **2017 Back Issues Disc** containing all 26 issues from last year is now on sale from Amazon

For more information, visit bit.ly/wudisc17 or search for 'webuser disc' on Amazon

You can still buy our 2016 Back Issues Disc from bit.ly/wudisc16





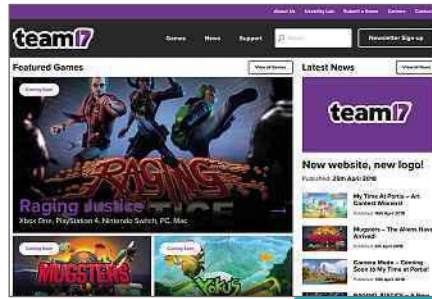
FOOD & DRINK

Dorset Food & Drink

www.dorsetfoodanddrink.org

Proclaiming Dorset as “the larder of England”, this website is full to bursting with suggestions of places to eat and drink in the county. There are listings galore, highlighting accommodation, cafés, pubs, restaurants and tearooms, as well as bakeries, dairies, butchers, breweries and coffee roasters. Navigation is straightforward: the main sections contain brief overviews of the businesses, along with maps and links to their websites. A few of the links failed to work, but the bustling events section and admirable attempts to encourage companies to take part and offer visitor discounts certainly make up for that.

Our rating



VIDEO GAMES

Team17

www.team17.com

Popular with gamers, thanks to titles such as Worms and Alien Breed, Team17 has been around for 27 years. It now has a new logo and a fresh website that better highlights the games the developer is working on, while making the bustling news feed more prominent. Stories can be shared on social media and a comments facility beneath articles is promised soon. The pages dedicated to each game now show the latest updates, patches and downloadable content alongside descriptions, system requirements, screenshots and videos. It's also easier to sign up for Team 17's monthly newsletter.

Our rating



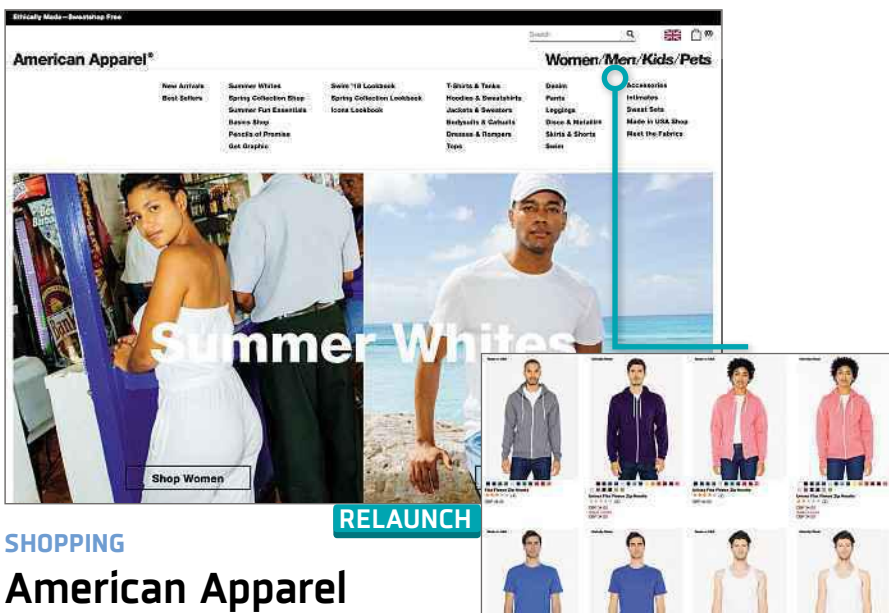
FESTIVALS

Festival Safe

www.festivalsafe.com

There's no Glastonbury this year but plenty of the UK's many other festivals are preparing to get underway. Aimed at 18-25-year-olds, from beginners to veterans, this site helps festival-goers make the most of their muddy field trips by offering advice about everything from tents and toilets to avoiding crime and coping with drugs and alcohol. It does so clearly and concisely via well-organised pages peppered with colourful tips, well-chosen photos and handy links. The search engine is impressively speedy and although the videos designed to get you in the mood play automatically, at least they do so silently.

Our rating



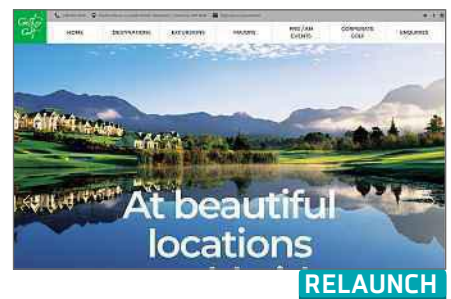
SHOPPING

American Apparel

global.americanapparel.com

After going into administration 18 months ago, American Apparel is back with a new online-only store. Aimed at shoppers buying the basics, it retains its branding and popular clothes lines, but casts off its former over-sexualised image and no longer adheres to a pledge to only sell stock made in the US. This has led to an odd 'Made in the USA' section where you choose your item's provenance (US or global), but simple drop-down menus for Women, Men, Kids and Pets get you to items fast, while the descriptive product pages include large images from various angles, different colour options, user ratings and reviews. The fabric guide and blog are bonuses, too.

Our rating



SPORT

Gastro Golf

www.gastrogolf.co.uk

Specialising in luxury golf breaks, Gastro Golf has bunkered down and come up trumps with a cleaner website that showcases stunning courses from across the world. It gives you a good overview of the resorts and packages on offer, and includes videos for a better flavour of what to expect. But aside from some unnecessary and random effects, it lacks consistency: some countries get longer write-ups than others, while only a few include currency, visa and language information. We like the site's use of Instagram and Twitter, but we weren't keen on a GB & Ireland link directing visitors to French tours!

Our rating



Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Learn JavaScript from a grasshopper

A bit of JavaScript can magically turn your website from a static page to an interactive experience,

but learning it can be an uphill struggle. Google has developed a new app to help you take your first steps. It runs on Android and iOS devices and is available from grasshopper.codes.

WordPress iOS update

The WordPress iOS app has just been updated to version 9.8, with fundamental changes to the way you upload extra files, such as images and videos. It's much more efficient, letting you go back to your page to continue to make edits while your media files upload in the background. For an overview of what's happening, the standard list of posts now has progress bars which show your individual pages as they upload. Download the WordPress app from the Apple App Store.

Deal of the Fortnight

Bluehost (www.bluehost.com) is offering its Basic plan for \$2.95 (around £2.17) per month, down from \$7.99 (around £5.88).

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:

Lawrence Jones MBE,
founder and CEO,

UKFast (www.ukfast.co.uk)



Q What should I do to protect my website from hackers?

Phil Corkhill, via email

A There are various steps you can take to reduce your exposure to cybercriminals, although there really is no silver bullet.

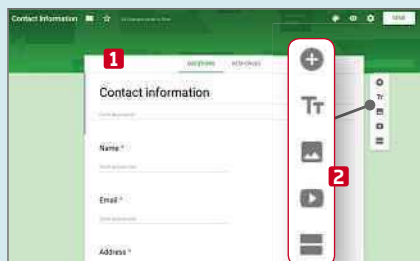
Look to implement strong passwords with the help of a password manager; patch and update your systems as frequently as possible; implement two-factor authentication in your login process; and keep regular, clean backups of your systems in case you are held victim to ransomware.

Doing an initial vulnerability scan and penetration test – where 'white hat' hackers check your system for you – and then setting up continuous monitoring, can alert you to any subtle changes in your system.

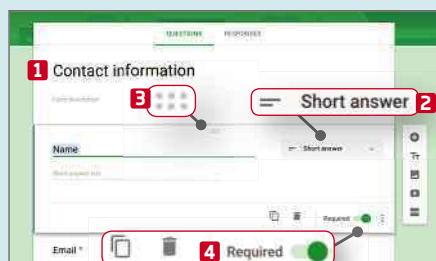


MINI WORKSHOP | Create a spam-free contact form Google Forms: bit.ly/form449 | 10 mins | Any browser

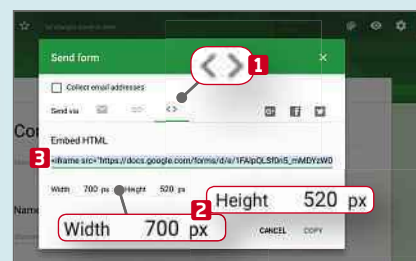
Visitor feedback provides valuable information, but leaving your email address for all to see only attracts spam. Google's Contact Information form is a great way to give visitors a voice without compromising your privacy



1 Go to bit.ly/form449 and, under 'Start a new form', choose Contact Information. If you can't see the option, click Template Gallery and select it from there. A basic form is displayed. **1** You can use the toolbar to add a new question, heading, picture, video or section. **2**



2 Click a heading to edit it. The top heading **1** is simply the title of the form, while the following sub-headings are the descriptions of the information you need to capture. With each one, you can edit the heading, choose the type of answer, **2** move it up or down the page, **3** duplicate or delete it, or use the switch to make it a Required question. **4**



3 To embed the form on your website, click the Send button, then the '< >' tab. **1** You can adjust the dimensions **2** to ensure it fits into your website's template. Copy the code **3** and paste it into your site's HTML. Test the form by filling it in yourself. You'll find your details and those of anyone else who fills in the form on the Responses tab.

Improve Your Gameplan



144_{HZ}

FHD

1_{MS}



Low Input
Lag Mode

24.5"

G2590PX

aocgaming.com



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



[@aocgaming](https://www.instagram.com/aocgaming)



[@aocgaming](https://www.facebook.com/aocgaming)

amazon

OVERCLOCKERS UK

SCAN^s

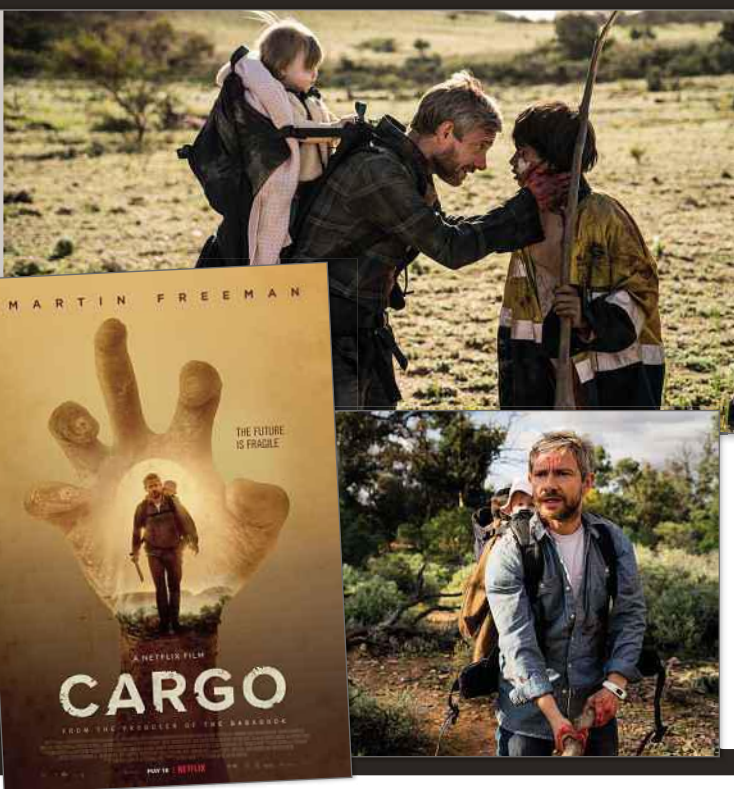
ebuyer.com



What To Watch Online

Pick of the fortnight

NETFLIX



See Martin Freeman flee zombies in *Cargo*

From 18 May

In *Cargo*, Martin Freeman, currently the busiest man in showbiz, plays a dad faced with a challenge that surely crosses the minds of all new parents: how to save your baby daughter when you're stranded in a post-apocalyptic Australian Outback with just 48 hours before you turn into a flesh-eating zombie. Not even a team-building exercise with David Brent could have prepared Freeman – who got his big break as Tim in *The Office* – for a pickle this deep.

But this intense drama is set a long way from Slough, and also sees Freeman in darker territory than fans of *The Hobbit* will be used to. You can get a flavour by catching the 2013 short film it's based on, also called *Cargo* (bit.ly/cargoshort449). Netflix wisely hired the original directors Ben Howling and Yolanda Ramke to helm the remake, so it retains the vivid look and feel of the short. But you can see its bigger budget in every frame – not just the big-name actor, but also the stunning cinematography that treats the landscape as a key player. Catch the official HD trailers at bit.ly/cargo449.

N Discover the magic world of *Trollhunters*

From 25 May

Guillermo del Toro's Emmy Award-winning fantasy animation reaches its third season, which Netflix says will be its last. It looks breathtaking, as you'd expect from the writer-director of *Pan's Labyrinth* and *The Shape of Water*, which won del Toro a Best Picture Oscar earlier this year. But it's also a stonking good story, in which an ordinary teenager named Jim

is accidentally enrolled as a Trollhunter – defender against the marauding Gumm-Gumms.

The cast list reads like the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Kelsey Grammer (*Frasier*), Lena Headey (*Game of Thrones*' killer queen Cersei) and Mark 'Luke Skywalker' Hamill are among those lending their voices to characters.

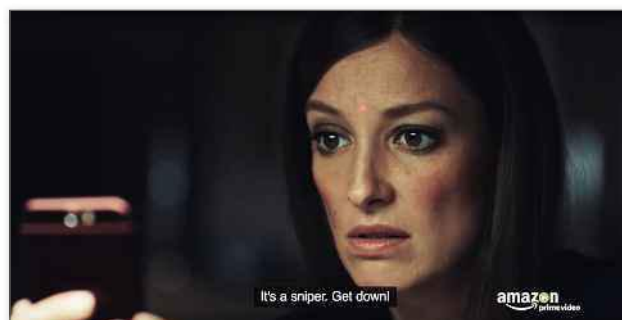
Tragically, *Star Trek* actor Anton Yelchin, who voiced Jim in the first two seasons, died aged 27 in 2016. Del Toro has managed to merge Yelchin's voice and that of his replacement, Emile Hirsch, to complete Season Three. Watch the official trailer at bit.ly/troll449.



amazon Watch cyber-thriller *You Are Wanted*

From 18 May

What if cybercriminals hacked all your data to make you look like a terrorist? That's the ingenious set-up of this German thriller, back for a second bout after deciding its first



six-episode season failed to twist the guts of its viewers quite enough. Our hero Lukas Franke (Matthias Schweighöfer, who also directs and produces) is still out to prove his innocence – not least to wife Hanna (Alexandra Maria Lara, from *Downfall* and *Control*) – so he goes on the run from a beautifully shot Berlin. Sadly, there's no trailer for Season Two, but you can catch Season One's teaser at bit.ly/wanted449.

now Hear McGowan and Ancona in *The Week That Wasn't*

From 17 May

Maestro mimics Alistair McGowan and Ronni Ancona reunite for the first time



We reveal what's new on Netflix, BBC iPlayer, Amazon Prime Video and other streaming services



since their 1990s BBC hit series *The Big Impression*. However, you won't be able to see them because for this 10-part Sky One show, the versatile pair get laughs by dubbing their voices over news footage. Also putting words into the mouths of celebs and politicians are British comics Luke Kempner, Jess Robinson and Matt Forde.

The show's title echoes the iconic 1960s news satire, *That Was The Week That Was*, but we can't say if it's anywhere near as good, because nothing's been recorded yet. Each weekly episode will be taped at the 11th hour to ensure it's topical.

As with most Sky shows, you can stream *The Week That Wasn't* online via a Now TV Entertainment Pass, which costs £7.99 per month after a 14-day free trial. Catch the official trailer at bit.ly/week449.

N See anime come to life in *Mob Psycho 100*

From 22 May

Remaking a beloved Japanese anime epic as a live-action series? Netflix, you're asking for trouble. When news of the reboot reached fans of the original 'web manga' comic – in which a teenager's psychic powers make him the target of nefarious agencies – their responses ranged from polite objection

("This show heavily relies on being animated, in my opinion") to one-word fury ("Disgusting"). Check out the less publishable responses at bit.ly/mobfans449. But none had yet seen the new show, which is co-produced by Netflix with TV Tokyo, so they may be in for a happy surprise. The first half-hour episode arrives on 22 May. Meanwhile, you can watch a trailer on Dailymotion (bit.ly/mobp449).

N Get nostalgic with *The Toys That Made Us*

From 25 May

Where do Lego bricks come from? Who had the idea for Transformers? Whither Hello Kitty? Find out in Season Two of *The Toys That Made Us*, whose four 50-minute instalments chart the genesis of the world's biggest toy franchises. The series has a strong US accent, but its depth and devotion make it a satisfying watch for toy fans everywhere.

Season One, which looked at Star Wars toys, Barbie, He-Man and GI Joe, is still available to stream on Netflix (bit.ly/toys449), along with the original trailer. Creator Brian Volk-Weiss has hinted that there will be a Season Three featuring My Little Pony and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

N Explore *Explained*

From 23 May

Dazzle everyone with your insight and win every pub argument with the help of this new Netflix Original series. Each weekly show is a primer on a matter of global importance, from cryptocurrency to K-Pop (Korean pop music – apparently, it's a phenomenon). The first episode lifts the lid on the gender pay gap, and we're also promised an insight into why diets fail. Netflix hasn't released any more info than that, so you'll excuse us if we head off to eat cake and ponder the mystery of our waistline.



BBC iPlayer to stream World Cup in 4K

The BBC iPlayer is set to show live World Cup matches in 4K Ultra HD, following the successful broadcast of a live rugby match in ultra high-definition and HDR (high dynamic range colour).

Planet Earth II and *Blue Planet II* were the first on-demand 4K programmes on the iPlayer, but April's Rugby League match between York City Knights and Catalans Dragons was the Beeb's first live 4K stream. It was shown unannounced on iPlayer Beta (bit.ly/ibeta449), presumably as a test.

FIFA has confirmed that all World Cup matches will be shot in Ultra HD and HDR, so it now looks likely that the BBC will show its share of World Cup matches – including the semi-finals and final – live in 4K. ITV owns the rights to the other half of the games, but hasn't revealed any plans for 4K coverage, which makes the current score BBC 1 - ITV 0.



Group Test

We test and compare the latest products

Smart thermostats

A smart heating system could make your home more comfy and cut your energy bills. We've tested seven of the best

Standard central-heating systems are often woefully inefficient. It takes a lot of hot water to fill all those radiators and heating every room to the same temperature – regardless of whether or not it's occupied, via a thermostat in your hall – makes very little sense.

A smart system is more efficient. Its thermostat is simple to control and can be set using an app, and it can perform all sorts of heating shortcuts, such as switching off automatically when you leave the house. Upgrade this to a system that controls each radiator individually, so you can choose to heat individual rooms rather than the whole house, and you're going to significantly reduce your bills.

INSTALLATION TIPS

The systems we've reviewed in this Group Test differ in subtle ways, and the kits and options that best suit your needs will depend on what you've already got in your house. The simplest thermostat replacements can be done yourself, if you know how to safely isolate your existing thermostat's electricity supply and can manage simple electrical installation jobs such as changing a light fitting or switch. Other systems have switches that need to be connected to your boiler, and may require professional help. Thermostatic controls for individual radiators are easy to fit and simply replace your existing radiator controls.

Honeywell Evohome | **£199** | Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/honevo449

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

The Honeywell Evohome offers room-by-room temperature control using the system's smart TRVs (thermostatic radiator valves). The cheapest Evohome setup costs around £200, which buys the touchscreen controller and the remote boiler relay. In this mode, the system acts like any other smart heating system, with the touchscreen controller using its internal thermometer to decide whether the heating needs to be on or not. You can add an extra boiler relay if you want to control hot water, too.

Used in this basic way, the Evohome is a very expensive thermostat. It's when you add the TRVs, which cost £59 each (though you can get discounts on multi-packs) that the system comes into its own. By replacing your existing valves with these smart ones, you get room-by-room control of your heating.

DIY installation isn't out of the question but we'd recommend getting it done professionally, since it needs connecting to your boiler. However, the TRVs are easy to install and are supplied with adapters to ensure they fit most radiators. They're a bit utilitarian-looking but configuration is extremely flexible, allowing multiple units to operate in the same room. You can run different schedules in different rooms, and program separate modes, such as a special



**WebUser
GOLD
AWARD**

program to heat the radiator in a guest room when you have someone coming to stay.

The touchscreen controller is brilliantly simple to use, providing an overview of the temperature in each room that has a TRV installed. It connects to Wi-Fi, so there's no need for a separate bridge to connect it to your router.

It's an incredibly flexible system, which you can either program using the touchscreen device, via an app you can download to your phone or tablet, or by manually setting the temperature on the radiator valves.

VERDICT
★★★★★

The Honeywell Evohome is the most powerful multi-zone smart heating product in this Group Test. Unfortunately, it's also one of the most expensive, and you may incur extra costs if you need to have it professionally installed. The system is at its most effective when coupled with the TRVs, allowing you to efficiently control all the radiators in your home. It will certainly save you money on your heating but it might be a long time before you recoup the cost of your initial outlay.

Tado Smart Thermostat | £189

Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/tado449

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

WebUser
SILVER
AWARD

At its most basic, the Tado Start Kit replaces a standard wired thermostat with a smart model. It needs a spare Ethernet port on your router to connect its bridge unit, if you also want to be able to control it with an app or your household's voice controller (Alexa, Google Home and Siri are supported).

Installing the thermostat involves some basic DIY, which is helped by Tado's excellent instructions. Just make sure the electricity is switched off. The system can be programmed to come on and off as you wish, and uses geo-location to track multiple users, so it can switch itself off when it senses, via mobile devices, that everyone has left the house.

Optional TRVs cost around £54 each and give you control of each radiator individually or in groups of your choice (for large rooms with multiple radiators), either on the TRV or through the app.

VERDICT

★★★★★

The Tado costs a bit less than Honeywell Evohome, but there's no central screen and your router needs a spare Ethernet socket to connect its bridge. However, it's easier to install and supports more voice-control options.

Drayton Wiser Heat | £229.99

Buy from Screwfix: bit.ly/drax449

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

WebUser
BRONZE
AWARD

Drayton's basic kit is more expensive than its rivals, but it includes two TRVs along with its thermostat and switch, which are designed to replace the controllers for your existing central heating and hot-water boiler. Additional TRVs cost £40, so it actually works out a lot cheaper than our other award winners if you want to bring your whole house under room-by-room control. However, these units are more basic, equipped with only + or - buttons to temporarily adjust the room temperature and no information screen. To see the temperature of each TRV, you'll need to use the app.

The app provides further control, letting you boost a radiator for up to three hours or set individual daily schedules. The Eco mode adjusts timings based on ambient temperature (turning on earlier if the house is colder) and there's an Away mode, to keep pipes from freezing while you're absent.

VERDICT

★★★★★

Wiser Heat is cheaper than the Evohome if you want to upgrade the heating system for your entire home, but corners have been cut on the TRVs, which aren't as informative or individually controllable, and it doesn't work with IFTTT.

Nest Learning Thermostat | £185.57

Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/nest449

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

Nest's thermostat is a different proposition to our award-winners, because it doesn't have individual TRVs but instead simply turns the heating on and off based on the temperature of a central unit, just like a traditional wired controller. While that might sound a bit basic, it's actually the most advanced thermostat we've reviewed here, because it has a learning mode that's designed to find out just how warm you like your house and when you want it heated. It also detects the presence of people, by using the proximity (or otherwise) of connected devices and via a motion detector on the device itself.

The Nest's touchscreen lets you set and control most of its various functions without needing to resort to your mobile app, though this is also available through the device's standard Wi-Fi connection.



VERDICT

★★★★★

The Nest Learning Thermostat is a clever technological marvel but there are no TRVs to provide room-by-room control. However, this also makes it a much cheaper option overall.

BEST OF THE REST

Netatmo Smart Thermostat | £145.99

Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/netam449 | ★★★★★

The Netatmo Smart Thermostat can be used as a standalone device for your whole home or you can purchase additional TRVs for £60 to control individual radiators. The system uses power-efficient E-ink screens, like those found on a Kindle, but we found it more complicated to use than its rivals.

Honeywell Lyric T6 | £153.37

Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/lyric449 | ★★★★★

Honeywell has a thermostat-only option if you just want to replace your existing thermostat with a smarter central model. It works with a relay that requires hooking up to your boiler, though. The system learns how long it takes to warm up your home, and will also detect when users leave the house and adjust the temperature accordingly.

Lightwaverf Heating | £160

Buy from Lightwaverf: bit.ly/lwf449 | ★★★★★

The Lightwaverf Heating system has TRVs for controlling standard water-filled radiators but it's the only product in this test to also offer switches for electric radiators. It's a bit basic and comparatively expensive, but if you're gung-ho for home automation, Lightwaverf also makes smart light switches and power sockets, so you can control all manner of devices and options from one place.



Group Test Smart thermostats

					
	Honeywell Evohome	Tado Smart Thermostat	Drayton Wiser Heat	Nest Learning Thermostat	Netatmo Smart Thermostat
WEBSITE	www.honeywelluk.com	www.tado.com	www.draytoncontrols.co.uk	nest.com	www.netatmo.com
PRICE	£199	£189	£229.99	£185.57	£145.99
BUY FROM	Amazon: bit.ly/honevo449	Amazon: bit.ly/tado449	Screwfix: bit.ly/drays449	Amazon: bit.ly/nest449	Amazon: bit.ly/netam449
REMOTE THERMOSTAT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HOT-WATER SUPPORT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
INDIVIDUAL RADIATOR SUPPORT	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
VOICE-ASSISTANT SUPPORT	Alexa	Alexa, Google Assistant, Siri	Alexa	Alexa, Google Assistant	Alexa, Google Assistant, Siri
IFTTT SUPPORT	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
WARRANTY	Two-years return-to-base	Two-years return-to-base	Two-years return-to-base	Two-years return-to-base	Two-years return-to-base

OUR VERDICT

The potential savings of a smart central-heating system have to be balanced against the overall cost of the initial outlay and setup. Converting a large house to room-by-room radiator controllers is going to involve significant investment, but with all these options you can start with a basic thermostat and progress from there.

If money is no object, our Gold Award winner – the Honeywell Evohome – is excellent in all aspects, from the useful touchscreen controller to the easy-to-use thermostatic radiator valves. It's not cheap and you'll more than likely need to hire a professional to install it, but it's by far the best system we tested.

If you'd rather do it all yourself, the Silver Award-winning Tado Smart Thermostat provides a good starting point. You can replace your existing thermostat and build up to a room-by-room system later, but it needs a spare Ethernet socket on your router to communicate with its apps.

Anyone wanting the room-by-room system at a more affordable price should consider our Bronze Award winner. The Drayton Wiser Heat lacks the sophistication of our other award winners, but all the important elements are in place, and it's significantly cheaper. ■

WebUser
GOLD
AWARD



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Web User's Best Buys

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

HARDWARE

SMART THERMOSTAT

Honeywell Evohome

£199 from bit.ly/honevo449

Tested: Issue 449

The Honeywell Evohome is a powerful multi-zone smart heating product that lets you control all the radiators in your central heating system. This will save on heating bills but it might be a long time before you recoup the cost of the Evohome.

KEY SPECS

Remote thermostat ■ Battery-powered ■ Hot-water support ■ Individual radiator support ■ Alexa voice assistant support ■ IFTTT support ■ 13.9 x 2.1 x 10.1cm ■ 898g



NEW!

LAPTOP

Asus ZenBook UX410

£539.95 from bit.ly/asuszb447

Tested: Issue 447

This laptop, with its compact aluminium body and impressive design, feels built to last. Performance was middling, though it's fine for everyday tasks, and the screen looks fabulous.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core Intel Core i3-7100U processor ■ 4GB memory ■ 128GB storage ■ 14in 1,920 x 1,080-pixels screen ■ USB-C, USB 3, 2 x USB 2 ports ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ Windows 10 Home ■ 323 x 223 x 19mm ■ 1.4kg ■ 1-year return-to-base warranty



MONITOR

BenQ GL2580HM

£109.99 from bit.ly/benq445

Tested: Issue 445

This BenQ monitor's stylish slim bezel and attractive design are matched by its solid performance and good-quality colour display. However, it's not suited to serious gamers.

KEY SPECS

24.5in screen ■ 1,920 x 1,080-pixel resolution ■ 16:9 aspect ratio ■ 16.7 million colours ■ 50-76Hz refresh rate ■ 1,000:1 native contrast ■ 2ms response time ■ HDMI, DVI and VGA ports ■ two 1W speakers ■ 42.6 x 55.7 x 17.5cm ■ 4.4kg



PC

Palicomp AMD Gravity RYZ1

£799.99 from www.palicomp.co.uk

Tested: Issue 443

This is the best PC we could find for under £800. It's powerful, well built and well balanced, so long as you're happy to use an overclocked processor.

KEY SPECS

AMD Ryzen 5 1600 processor ■ Asus Prime B350M-A motherboard ■ 8GB DDR4 memory ■ GeForce GTX 1060 graphics card ■ 240GB SSD ■ 1TB hard drive ■ 475 x 468 x 230mm tower case ■ Windows 10 Home 64-bit



SMARTPHONE

Samsung Galaxy S8

£506.99 from bit.ly/sams442

Tested: Issue 442

The Samsung Galaxy S8 is a terrific all-rounder. It's fast, looks wonderful, has a superb camera and boasts one of the best screens we've ever seen on a phone.

KEY SPECS

Octa-core 2.3GHz Exynos 8895 processor ■ 12-megapixel rear camera, 8-megapixel front camera ■ 4GB RAM ■ 64GB storage ■ 5.8in 1,440 x 2,560-pixel screen ■ Android 8 ■ 68.1 x 148.9 x 8mm ■ 155g ■ One-year return-to-base warranty



MINI PC

Asus VivoMini

£672.99 from bit.ly/asus440

Tested: Issue 440

With capable performance, generous storage and extensive connectivity, the Asus VivoMini is an impressively versatile mini PC. It's great for use in a home office and usefully offers both a main SSD and a back-up hard drive.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 2.5GHz Intel Core i5-7200U processor ■ 8GB memory ■ 128GB SSD, 1TB hard drive ■ 6 x USB ports ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi, Gigabit Ethernet connectivity ■ 190 x 190 x 52mm ■ Three-years return-to-base warranty



SOFTWARE & SERVICES

CLOUD-STORAGE SERVICE

Microsoft OneDrive

From free from onedrive.live.com

Tested: Issue 438



If you use Windows 10 or Microsoft Office, then OneDrive is a no-brainer. It's simple to use and already integrated into your PC. Recent improvements have added some excellent new features though we wish Microsoft would increase its free storage allowance. OneDrive also integrates well with both Android and iOS.

KEY FEATURES

5GB free storage ■ Web-based Office Web Apps including Word and Excel ■ 10GB maximum file size ■ Android, iOS and Windows 10 apps ■ Up to 50GB extra storage for £1.99 per month; Office 365 and 1TB of storage from £5.99 per month ■ Files expire after one year of inactivity

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2018

£19.99 from bit.ly/kaspersky1pc

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 over £15 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

Web User Gold Award winners

SOFTWARE UPDATER

SUMo

NEW!

Free from bit.ly/sumo448

Tested: Issue 448

SUMo is lightweight, easy to use and supports a wide selection of programs. By default, it checks for updates every time you start your PC.



FILE MANAGER

Astro File Manager

Free from bit.ly/astr447

Tested: Issue 447

With an attractive interface that emphasises productivity, Astro File Manager makes it easy to manage files on your Android phone.



SANDBOXING TOOL

Sandboxie

Free from bit.ly/sandboxie446

Tested: Issue 446

Lightweight, powerful and regularly updated, Sandboxie is by far the best dedicated free sandboxing tool around for keeping your PC safe.



BROADBAND MONITOR

GlassWire

Free from bit.ly/glasswire445

Tested: Issue 445

GlassWire's tools monitor bandwidth usage on your PC or mobile device, in a well-designed and easy-to-use interface.



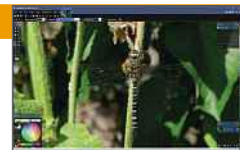
IMAGE EDITOR

Paint.net

Free from www.getpaint.net

Tested: Issue 444

Paint.net sets the bar as the best free image editor around. It has no ads or premium features, just all the tools you need.



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EMAIL BACKUP

MailStore Home 11

bit.ly/mail449

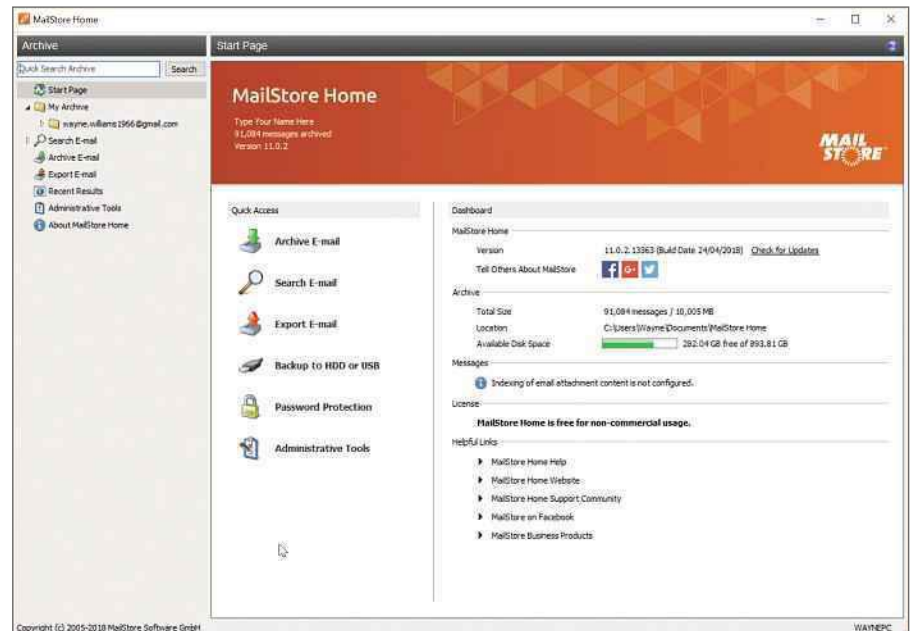
Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 10.5MB

If you use a webmail service such as Gmail, you no doubt trust the provider to keep your messages safe. However, it makes sense to back up your emails from time to time, just in case disaster strikes. It's also useful to have a local copy, so you can continue to access your messages if the service goes down for any reason.

There are several programs that can archive the contents of your inbox but MailStore Home is easily one of the best. It's fast, intuitive and works with POP3, IMAP and all major webmail services, including Gmail and Outlook.com.

All your messages are saved in a central location on your hard drive



and you can search for, read, and restore them back to your email account directly in the software. You can also password-protect the archives, and MailStore Home fully encrypts all databases to make it impossible for anyone other than yourself to view your emails.

The latest version of the software introduces a faster search tool, which is able to search for messages by archive date. This should make finding the emails you're looking for a much

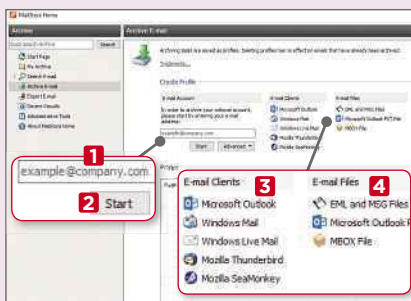
speedier process.

Recovery records, which are used to help rebuild damaged archives, are now stored in separate container files. They contain all the metadata of your messages and are updated in real-time. This means you should now be able to rebuild a corrupt archive without having to start over.

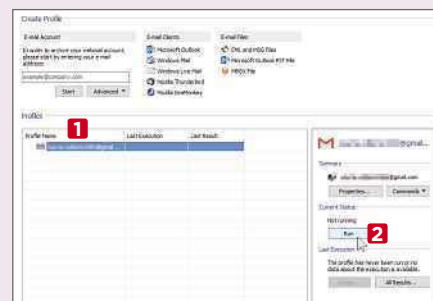
MailStore Home's management of encryption key files has also been improved, which helps you work around potential file-system corruption.



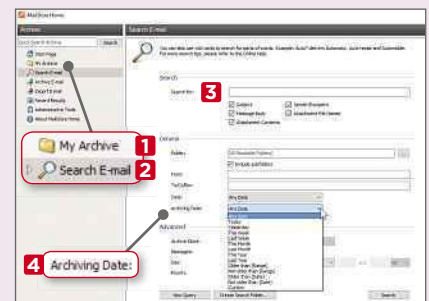
MINI WORKSHOP | Back up your email using MailStore Home 11



1 To back up your email in MailStore Home, click the Archive E-mail link under Quick Access. You can back up any webmail service by entering your email address in the box **1** and clicking Start. **2** You can also archive messages from any of the supported clients **3** or load email files from your PC. **4**

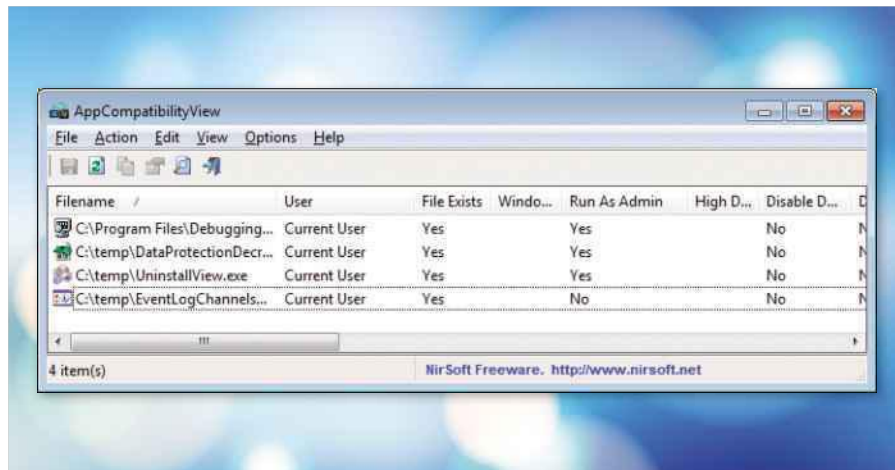


2 If you've chosen to back up Gmail, a window will open in your browser and you'll be prompted to select your account (if you have more than one). When you grant MailStore Home permission to manage your email, a profile is created. **1** Click Run **2** to begin the archiving process.



3 The software will import your emails. When it's finished, you can view your downloaded messages in My Archive. **1** Click Search E-mail **2** to find a specific email. Enter your search criteria and use the tick boxes to fine-tune your search. **3** MailStore Home 11 also lets you search for messages by archive date. **4**

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



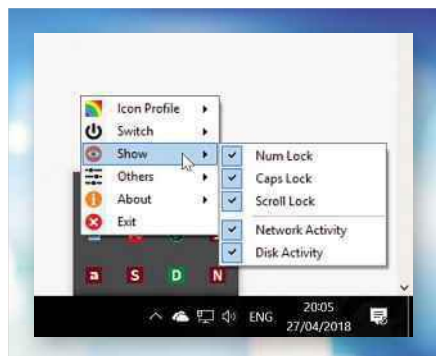
SYSTEM TOOL

AppCompatibilityView

www.nirsoft.net

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10 **File size:** 69.8KB

Some older programs may not run properly on newer versions of Windows. This is where Compatibility Mode comes into play. You can tweak the settings to trick the software into running as intended by making it believe it's installed on a different edition of Windows. AppCompatibilityView lets you see all programs that run with different compatibility settings. It also lets you modify or delete the settings of multiple applications. You don't have to install the tool – just download and run it.



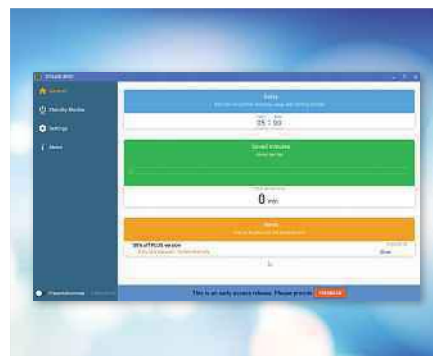
SYSTEM TOOL

AddLEDs

bit.ly/led449

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10 **File size:** 232KB

If you've ever typed a long sentence, only to discover when you look at the screen that Caps Lock was on the whole time, you'll appreciate AddLEDs. This tiny tool adds coloured indicators to the system tray that shows the status of the Caps Lock, Num Lock and Scroll Lock keys, as well as network and drive activity. The icons can be grouped in different ways, and AddLEDs can start alongside Windows if required.



SYSTEM TOOL

Stand-Bye

www.stand-bye.de

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10 **File size:** 9MB

Windows can be set to put your PC to sleep after a period of inactivity. Stand-Bye does the same thing but ensures that your system is truly idle before taking action, so it won't close things down while you're downloading a file, playing music or running something important in the background. It's highly configurable and can be tweaked to suit your personal needs. More advanced paid-for versions are also available.

New Windows Apps



iTunes

bit.ly/itunes449

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 476.7MB

This official Windows 10 app version of iTunes offers the same features as the desktop edition, including Apple's Music Store and Radio. It can use a lot of system resources, so beware.



Bitwarden

bit.ly/bitw449

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 128.8MB

If you're struggling to remember your various login details, a password manager such as BitWarden is a must. The app doesn't currently work in Windows 10 S, though.



Copy Space

bit.ly/cspace449

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 24.73MB

Copy Space is a clipboard manager that you can use to copy all types of content – words, images and documents – and paste them wherever you want. An in-app purchase allows for content syncing.



PARTITION MANAGER

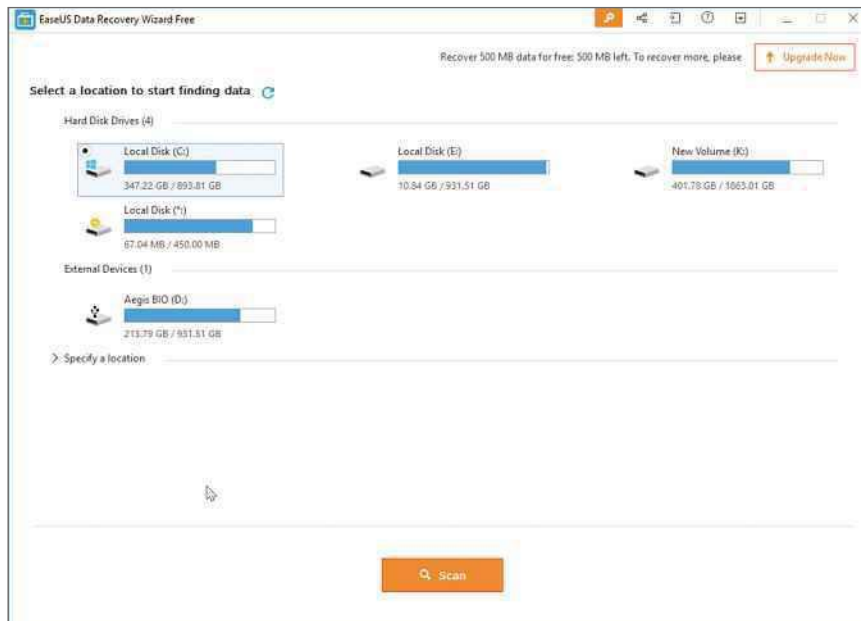
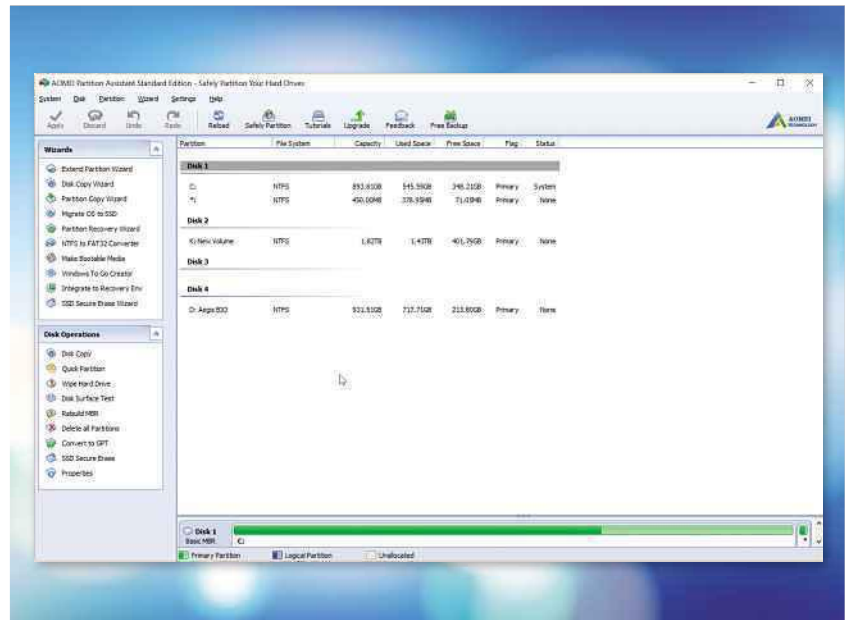
AOMEI Partition Assistant Standard 7

www.disk-partition.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10 **File size:** 10.5MB

Windows comes with its own built-in partition tool but AOMEI Partition Assistant Standard is a better option. It's free for both personal and commercial use and can be used to create, resize, move, merge and split partitions, clone a hard drive or partition, and migrate your operating system from a hard drive to an SSD.

This update can automatically restart your computer into Windows PE (Windows Pre-installation Environment) to perform operations. AOMEI Partition Assistant Standard now supports the Linux EXT4 file system, and a number of problems have been fixed, making the software more reliable.



DATA-RECOVERY TOOL

EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free 12

bit.ly/data449

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10 **File size:** 40MB

EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free can restore data lost as the result of accidental deletion, hardware failure and formatting. Like most similar tools, it's very easy to use. Choose the file type and location, and it will scan your device, then let you preview and recover the files it's found.

This release adds a preview feature for audio and video files, and the scan process is now much faster. Video recovery has been improved, too. The free version of EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard can only recover a maximum of 500MB, but that should be enough for most emergencies.

SYNC TOOL

FreeFileSync 10

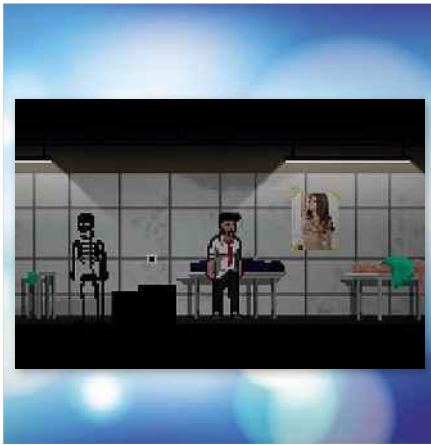
www.freefilesync.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10, MacOS or Linux
File size: 13.8MB

FreeFileSync makes it easy to synchronise files and folders, ensuring you always have the latest versions to hand, wherever you are. You get a choice of synchronisation settings (two way, mirror, update and custom), and there's no limit on the number of files that can be included in a synchronisation task, so it can back up even the biggest folders.

The program's installer no longer contains ads, which was a long-standing annoyance, and you can now compare multiple files in parallel within a single folder tree. Additionally, FreeFileSync's interface has been tweaked to make it better suited to high-DPI displays.





GAME

How To Die In a Morgue

bit.ly/morgue449

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 or MacOS **File size:** 130MB

How To Die In a Morgue is an entertaining episodic side-scrolling adventure, with the first episode available to play for free. You take on the role of a mobster tasked with tracking down and recovering a ring – a family heirloom belonging to the Mafia – which is believed to be on a corpse at the local morgue. It sounds morbid but it's a lot of fun.

Don't install...

Adobe Acrobat Reader

get.adobe.com/uk/reader

Min requirements:

Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 115MB

Adobe Reader is one of the most full-featured PDF readers you can find, but it can be tricky to spot which features are free and which you need to pay for. Some premium features are clearly labelled, while others ask you to pay for a subscription after you click their buttons, which is really irritating. It's also pretty slow.



...Install this instead

Sumatra

www.sumatrapdfreader.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10

File size: 4.6MB

What makes Sumatra stand out is its simple interface. The toolbar contains only the most important controls you need when viewing a PDF – for zooming in and out, navigating between pages and searching for words that appear in the document (along with buttons to print and open more files). Click the main menu button and you'll find a range of useful options that aren't on offer in the PDF-viewing tools of Chrome or Firefox, including the ability to display your document as facing pages and in a book view. Sumatra is also one of the fastest PDF readers available.



UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



WEB BROWSER

Vivaldi 1.15

vivaldi.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10, MacOS or Linux

File size: 46.5MB

This Chrome-based web browser comes from the former CEO of Opera. The latest version lets you customise the browser with your own photos. It also lets you access your favourite sites from the main menu. A number of bugs have been fixed, too.



MEDIA PLAYER

VLC Media Player 3.0.2

www.videolan.org

Min requirements:

Windows 7/8.1/10, MacOS or Linux

File size: 38.4MB

VLC is an excellent free media player that can handle all the major audio and video formats, as well as stream content over the internet. This update fixes most of the important bugs and regressions from VLC 3, and improves the decoding speed on MacOS.



IMAGE BURNER

Etcher 1.4.4

etcher.io

Min requirements:

Windows 7/8.1/10, MacOS or Linux

File size: 56.9MB

Etcher simplifies the process of writing disc images, such as ISO and IMG files, to USB drives and SD memory cards. This latest release fixes a number of issues, including some spelling mistakes, and keeps single drive-image pairs with warnings selected.



PDF READER

Foxit Reader 9.1

www.foxitsoftware.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8.1/10

File size: 55.4MB

The latest version of Foxit's popular PDF reader allows visually impaired users to read and interact with PDFs using NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access). It also now shows alternative text when hovering over an image, and lets you justify comment text. ■

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Best New Browser Tools

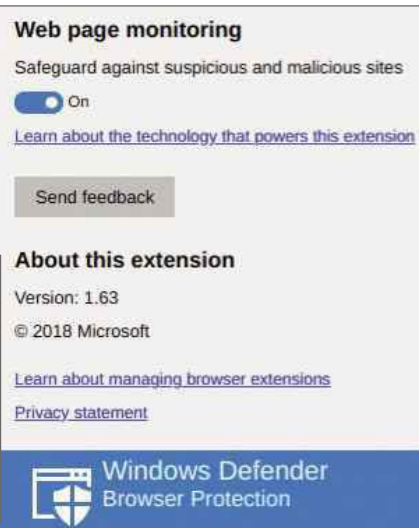


CHROME

Stay safe online using Windows Defender

Chrome now automatically detects and warns you about dangerous websites but there's no harm in getting a second opinion from Microsoft's new Windows Defender Browser Protection tool (bit.ly/defender449). Exclusively available for Google's browser – presumably Microsoft's Edge browser is deemed safe enough without it – this offers real-time protection against online threats, such as links in phishing emails and websites that trick you into installing malicious software, using the same technology found in the Windows Defender desktop security tool.

Click a dodgy link or visit a risky site and the extension springs into action, checking it against Microsoft's constantly updated list of known malicious URLs. If it finds a match, it displays a red warning screen and lets you click 'Back to safety'. There aren't any options other than turning protection on and off, but the add-on works well and doesn't produce false positives.



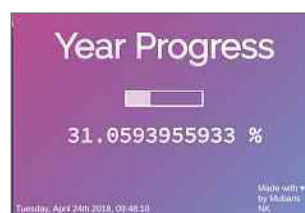
Check the popularity of any website

We all know that web giants such as Facebook, Amazon and BBC News attract millions – if not billions – of visitors every day, but it's interesting to discover how much traffic smaller sites receive. A new Chrome extension called Hypestat Website Traffic Report (bit.ly/traffic449) tells you this information at the click of a button, along with other interesting details. Just click its toolbar icon when you're on a site to see the number of daily and monthly visitors, the average number of page views per day, the estimated value and advertising revenue, the site's global popularity rank, the country it's hosted in and its server's IP address. Phew!

For further statistics, including graphs, page-speed data, back-link info and snapshots of how the site looked

in the past, click the On Hypestat link. It's a must-have add-on for trainpottery web users, although it doesn't work on sites with very low traffic.

Track the year's progress on new tabs



by! See for yourself how quickly time is ticking away by installing Year Progress (bit.ly/year449), which tells you how much of 2018 has already transpired by displaying a real-time percentage and progress bar on your New Tab page.

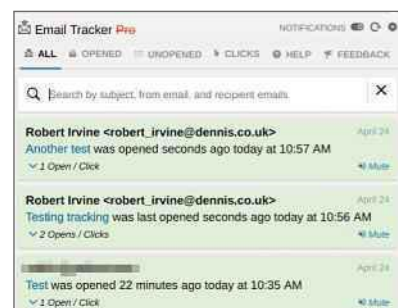
The idea is to motivate you to stop procrastinating and get things done, and the add-on offsets the anxiety its relentless counting may produce by using attractive colour-gradient backgrounds that change every time you open a new tab. Year Progress also displays the current time and date in the bottom-left corner.

Find out when your emails are opened

Chat apps such as WhatsApp tell you

when someone's read your message, but with email you don't know if they're ignoring you or if you've ended up in their Spam folder. Email Tracker (bit.ly/tracker449) lets you see at a glance if and when your messages are opened. Just compose and send an email as normal and when the recipient reads it, a tick will appear next to the message. You can also click the add-on's toolbar button to monitor your opened and unopened missives.

Email Tracker works with Gmail, Outlook.com and Yahoo Mail, and unlike similar tools that are designed for marketing purposes, it doesn't impose a limit on how many messages you can track or make you sign up for an account. Additional features are available in the paid-for version, but for home users, the free option should suffice.



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



FIREFOX

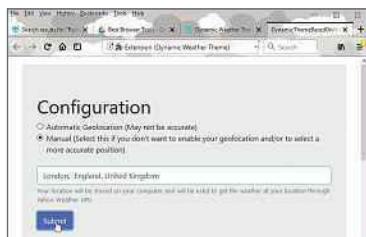
Manage multiple tabs and windows more easily

The more tabs and windows you have open, the more confusing browsing becomes, and you can easily end up closing important pages by accident. Happily, help is at hand from a Firefox add-on called Tabby (bit.ly/tabby449), which makes managing multiple tabs a doddle. Simply click its toolbar button to view a list of all open tabs across all open windows. You can then search for specific pages, pin and close tabs as required, and hover your mouse over an entry to see its title, URL and a preview of its content. Tabby also lets you drag and drop tabs into different positions, and reopen the last-closed tab or window by pressing Ctrl+E or Ctrl+Shift+B respectively.



Change Firefox's look to match the weather

From heavy snow to relentless rain then glorious sunshine, British weather is as unpredictable as ever, so why not use your browser as a barometer? A new Firefox extension called Dynamic Weather Theme (bit.ly/weather449) cleverly changes the theme of your browser to match the current weather conditions, displaying raindrops when it's wet, clouds when it's overcast and blue sky on clear days.

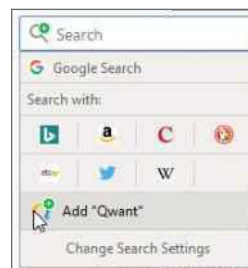
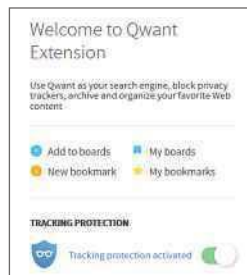


When you install the add-on, you can either select 'automatic geolocation' or enter your location manually to get a more accurate forecast. The meteorological data is provided by Yahoo Weather, and the cosmetic changes are applied to Firefox's toolbars and tabs.

Make Qwant your default search engine

In last issue's 'Boycott...' cover feature, we recommended the European search engine Qwant (www.qwant.com) as one of the best alternatives to Google, because it doesn't track you or store

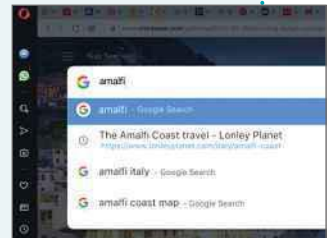
your search history. Sadly, Firefox doesn't offer Qwant as a preinstalled search option, but you can add it to the browser by installing the official Qwant extension (bit.ly/qwant449). As well as making Qwant your default search engine, this activates Firefox's Tracking Protection everywhere on the web – not just in private mode – along with its Do Not Track option. A button on the toolbar lets you access Qwant's content-sharing Boards feature and save bookmarks. On the downside, the add-on also changes your default homepage to Qwant. If you don't want this, but still want the search option, try going to www.qwant.com, click the green plus sign on the magnifying-glass icon in Firefox's search box and choose Add Quant.



OTHER BROWSERS

Try Opera's new Instant Search feature

Opera has unveiled a "surprise" new version of its desktop browser, as well as a new browser for Android called Opera Touch. The most significant feature in both releases is called Instant Search, which solves the perennial problem of what to do when you want to search the web without leaving the page you're currently visiting. Rather than type a search query into the address bar or open Google in a new tab, Instant Search opens a search box on top of the content you're viewing. The current site is



dimmed while you search for something new, and the results appear in the overlay so you don't lose your page. When you're finished, just close Instant Search and resume browsing.

You can open Instant Search at any time by pressing Alt+Space or by clicking the new magnifying-glass icon in the Opera sidebar. The feature also lets you find a specific tab when you have lots of pages open in the browser. Just press the Tab key on your keyboard to transform Instant Search into a tab search, then type in some keywords related to your missing tab. You can also enter Tab Search directly by pressing Ctrl+Space.

Another new option in the revamped Opera is Flow, which lets you save links, videos and files for later reference or to share with Opera Touch on your mobile device. Turn to our Best Free Apps section on page 34 to find out more about the new Android browser.

Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

WEB BROWSER

Opera Touch

bit.ly/opera449



NEW



Opera has released several web browsers for mobile devices over the years, with each new version striving to provide improvements and innovations.

Opera Touch's unique selling point is that it's been cleverly designed to be used one-handed. Most browsers require the use of two hands for certain tasks, but – on an average-size

smartphone, at least – Opera Touch lets you navigate almost everything using just your thumb.

This is achieved thanks to the browser's Fast Action Button – a round icon that floats on top of web pages at the bottom of the screen. Tapping this brings up the keyboard to type search queries, enter URLs and so on. A long-press of the Fast Action Button, however, brings up a small wheel that lets you access recently visited sites, as well as view your currently open tabs. Voice-input and barcode-scanning shortcuts are also available here. Swiping left lets you view your full browsing history, too.

Not only that, but a nifty new feature called Flow also lets Opera Touch users browse seamlessly across different devices. Just swipe one of your open tabs right to send it to your PC, for example.

Flow needs to be set up (see our Mini Workshop on the right), but it doesn't require you to log in with an account or password, and uses end-to-end encryption, so no one can intercept the data sent between devices. Further security is provided in the shape of a built-in ad blocker and protection against cryptocurrency mining.

At the time of going to press, Opera Touch was only available for Android devices, but an iOS release is also on the cards.



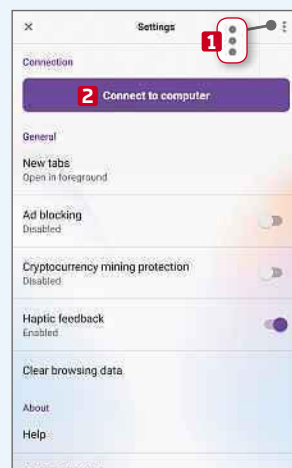
MINI WORKSHOP

Set up Opera Flow on your phone and PC

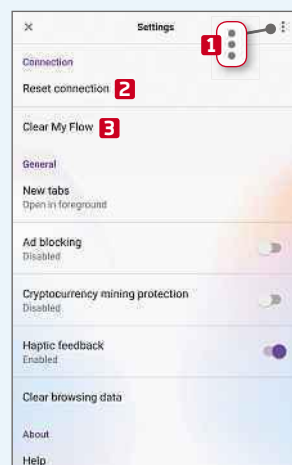
1 To enable Opera Touch's Flow feature and continue browsing across all your devices, you'll need to install Opera on your PC as well as on your phone or tablet, so get it from www.opera.com if you haven't already. Once the desktop browser is installed, launch it and click the My Flow button in the left-hand sidebar, **1** then click 'Connect your phone'. **2** to generate a QR code.



2 On your mobile device, open Opera Touch, then Tap the three-dot menu button **1** and select Settings. Tap 'Connect to computer', **2** then 'Scan QR code'. The first time you do this, Opera will ask permission to use your camera – click Allow, then point your device's camera at the QR code on your PC screen. If it fails to connect, tap Retry or use the manual option.



3 You can reset Flow's PC connection at any time by tapping the three-dot menu button **1** and selecting Settings. You'll see two new options at the top of the menu. Tap 'Reset connection', **2** then Reset to disconnect your mobile device from the PC it's currently syncing with. Alternatively, you can tap 'Clear My Flow', **3** then tap Clear, which will erase all content sent between your devices.



Our rating



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

GAME

NEW



Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery

bit.ly/hogdroid449

bit.ly/hogios449

 4.4  10

This excellent adventure game for Potterheads is full of familiar faces (and voices) from the films. You play a young pupil at the wizarding school, solving the mystery of your brother's disappearance, while creating spells, riding broomsticks and earning house points. The story takes place before Harry's time at Hogwarts, but your fun may be hampered by the game's freemium pricing model, which imposes long waits on those who don't want to pay.



Our rating



REMINDERS

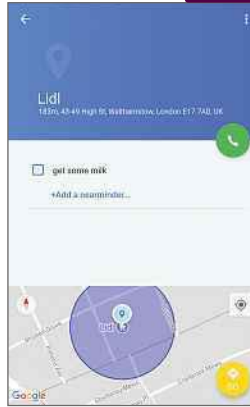
NEW

NearMinder

bit.ly/near449

 5

There are plenty of reminder apps available to notify you of tasks but, while most can only jog your memory at a specific time, NearMinder will usefully send you reminders triggered by your location – for example, if you want a prompt to pick up some milk as you're passing by a specific shop, or you need a nudge to water the plants when you get home from work. As a bonus, you can also get notified when people you've added to your contacts are nearby and, of course, you can disable reminders when you want to enjoy a bit of peace.



Our rating



QUIZ

UPDATED

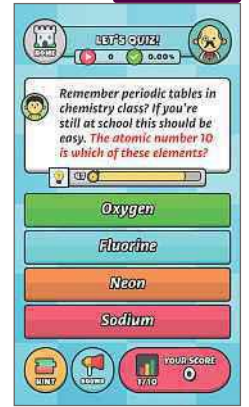
Trivia Guy

bit.ly/trivdroid449

bit.ly/trivios449

 4.1  7

Trivia Guy is a quiz game with a quirky sense of humour. Created by a British indie developer, the game presents you with hundreds of general knowledge questions, each of which is accompanied by a running commentary of wry comedic banter. The jokes are (mostly) well-written and the questions are challenging, and you can play the game solo or challenge a friend. Trivia Guy is free to play, although paying (£1.99) for the premium version will remove the need to sit through adverts in order to progress.



Our rating



PRODUCTIVITY

NEW

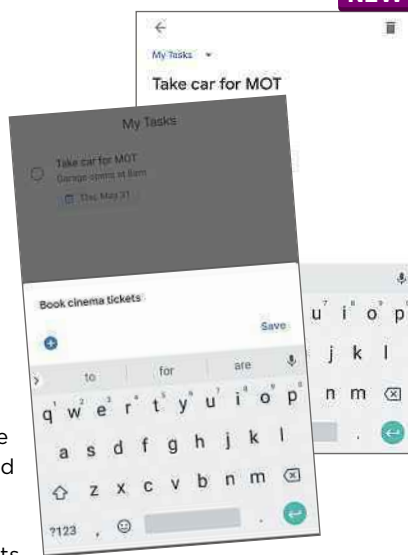
Google Tasks

bit.ly/tasksdroid449

bit.ly/tasksios449

 4.1  10

Google's new to-do list app is a fairly straightforward affair. Essentially, it lets you create quick tasks and edit them to add further details, such as dates, locations and sub-tasks. They can then be ordered by date or dragged and dropped into your preferred order of priority. The best aspect of Tasks is its tight integration with Gmail and Google Calendar. Open either in your browser and you'll find a pane on the right-hand side with your tasks already synced (click the Tasks icon if you don't see this pane). You can also create tasks from emails by dragging and dropping them on the Task pane.



Our rating



DRAWING

UPDATED

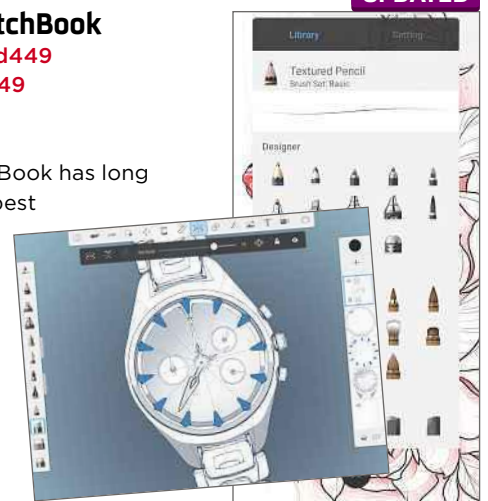
Autodesk SketchBook

bit.ly/sketchdroid449

bit.ly/sketchios449

 4.0.3  10

Autodesk SketchBook has long been one of the best drawing apps available for mobiles and tablets and, with the release of the latest version, it just got a whole lot better because it's now completely free. All you need to do is create a free Autodesk account and you'll get access to high-resolution canvas sizes and the app's full range of brushes and tools – no more options hidden behind a premium paywall. There aren't even any in-app purchases. You can use SketchBook with finger gestures, but it works particularly well with devices that support stylus input.



Our rating



5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

QUIZ

Tenable

bit.ly/tendroid449

bit.ly/tenios449

Price: £1.99 (Android and iOS)

 4.1  8

This TV tie-in quiz from the people behind Tipping Point is presented by Warwick Davis. The app version can be played solo or in a team, and features all six rounds from the show.



FITNESS

Rundogo

bit.ly/rundroid449

bit.ly/runios449

Price: £1.79 per month

 5  10

Enjoy exercise? Got a dog? Then this app – new to Android and recently updated for iOS – could be for you. Track your dog's and your own workouts, analyse performance and more.



EDUCATION

Froggipedia

bit.ly/frog449

Price: £3.99

 11

For students studying the life cycle of the frog, or for anyone interested in biology, this augmented-reality app lets you get up close and personal with amphibian anatomy.

PHOTOGRAPHY

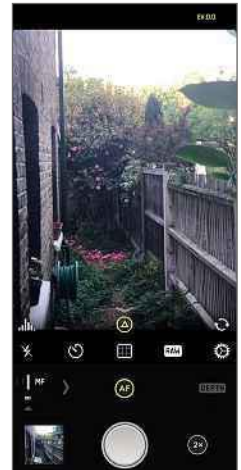
Halide Camera

bit.ly/halide449

Price: £5.99

 10

This brilliant iOS camera app has just received a massive update with a new self-timer and a redesigned photo viewer. You can also remove location data from photos before sharing them.



PHOTOGRAPHY

BlackCam Darkroom

bit.ly/blackcam449

Price: £2.49

 5

Recreate the aesthetic of analogue black-and-white camera film on your mobile with this new Android app. It offers more than 100 classic film stocks and exports at full resolution.



Tenable



Rundogo



Froggipedia



Halide Camera



BlackCam Darkroom

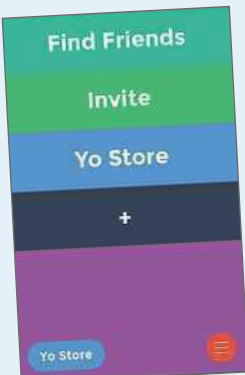


Don't install...

Yo

bit.ly/yodroid449

Social networking doesn't get much more pointless than this. Yo is a messaging app that only lets you send a single word: Yo. The idea is that you and your friends 'Yo' each other locations, links and more. To make matters worse, your actions are accompanied by an annoying 'Yo' sound effect. Should you need any further reason to give this app a wide berth, it hasn't been updated since 2015. Yo? No!



...Install this instead

WhatsApp Messenger

bit.ly/whatsdroid449

bit.ly/whatsios449

 Varies  7

Both Android and iOS offer better messaging apps. Apple's built-in Messages app is good, while Google offers numerous first-party options, including Google Allo, Google Duo and Hangouts. But, whether you're on iOS, Android or Windows, the undisputed king of messaging apps is, of course, WhatsApp. Easy to set up, it supports text messaging, voice calls, group chat and more. And it's completely free, even if you use it internationally. If you don't already have WhatsApp installed on your device, then get it now. You can pretty much guarantee that most of your friends and family will already be using it. ■





Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest from your browser by taking our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you guess our British-port emoji and work out our web year?

**WIN A
WEB USER
2017 BACK
ISSUES DISC!**

Email your answers to
webuser@dennis.co.uk
- one correct entry
will win a disc



CAN YOU GUESS THE BRITISH PORTS FROM THE EMOJI?

1



2



3



4



5



6



GUESS THE TECHNOLOGY YEAR

Can you work out which year the following tech news stories occurred in? No cheating!

1

Video-sharing service YouTube launches. The first video on the site 'Me at the zoo' shows co-founder Jawed Karim at San Diego Zoo.



2

Rupert Murdoch's company News Corp buys the social-networking site MySpace for a reported \$580m (which was then around £331m).



3

The massively multiplayer online role-playing game World of Warcraft is released in the UK. It attracts 12 million players globally.

4

New ISP Be Unlimited launches the UK's fastest broadband - 24Mbps - at a time when many people are still using dial-up.



5

Yahoo buys the popular photo-sharing service Flickr, which it held on to until last month, when it sold the site to SmugMug.



COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 3 MAGIX Photostory Premium VR

MAGIX's Photostory Premium VR lets you design stunning slideshows using your photos and videos in virtual reality. You can make them using your mouse or while wearing a VR headset. To enter, email your details to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'photostory' in the subject line. For more information, visit www.magix.com/gb and follow @MAGIX_INT on Twitter.



WORTH
£109.99
EACH

WIN 1 OF 3 Adonit Ink Windows stylus

The Adonit Ink stylus, certified by Microsoft, lets you write on Windows touchscreen devices in exquisite detail. Its 1mm fine-point tip emulates real handwriting with lines appearing thicker or thinner depending on how hard you press. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'adonit' in the subject line. For more information visit www.adonit.net/ink and follow @adonitnews on Twitter.



WORTH
£44.99
EACH

? FAQ

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

Healthcare apps

Do you Google your symptoms when you're feeling ill? **David Crookes** explains how a new breed of app may save you the trouble in future

Will the doctor see me now?

Well, that depends. If you book a face-to-face appointment in the usual way, you may get to see your GP in two weeks' time. But if you use one of the new healthcare apps, you could get a personal assessment of your symptoms within a matter of hours, and you may not need a face-to-face consultation at all.

What do these apps do?

Artificial-intelligence (AI) healthcare apps such as Ada (ada.com) and Babylon (www.babylonhealth.com) draw on expanding sets of crowdsourced medical data to work out what's wrong with you. Enter your symptoms into an app and it checks them against a database of illnesses to determine the severity of your problem and finds a suitable solution. That could mean booking an appointment to see a doctor or simply getting plenty of rest.



WebMD means well but its health advice is general rather than personal

But isn't that what 'Dr Google' does?

Not quite. Doctors generally warn against looking up your symptoms on Google in search of medical advice from a website or forum post. These new apps are more accurate because they don't rely on pot luck and instead work with vast strings of knowledge. Since they evolve over time, they're also preferable to standard online symptom checkers such as WebMD (www.webmd.com), which merely repackage general information from the web. AI apps can also tailor advice to individual patients.

How do they work?

Let's take Ada, available for Android and iOS, as an example. Create an account and tell the app information such as whether you have a history of high blood pressure or diabetes. When you subsequently feel ill, launch the app and answer a series of questions posed by a chatbot, starting with the symptom that's troubling you the most. During this clinical-grade triage process, the chatbot uses your previous answers to work out what to ask next, while drawing information from its ever-expanding database. It then begins to join the dots, using machine learning to look for correlations between symptoms and ailments while comparing your symptoms with those of other patients and research

papers. After dismissing certain conditions to concentrate on others, it eventually reaches a conclusion and offers treatment advice.

But is that more accurate than a doctor?

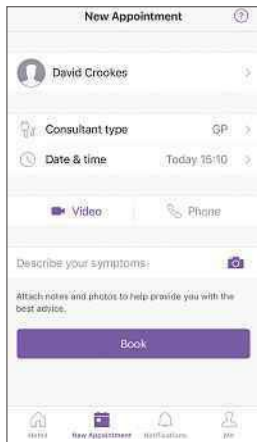
According to Ali Parsa, the founder and chief executive of Babylon, an average human general practitioner has between five and 10 million strings of knowledge. Babylon Health, meanwhile, has 530 million, which means it can go beyond the limitations of humans and our inability to retain such vast amounts of data in our heads. Whether or not that leads to greater accuracy is still up for debate, and some doctors are worried about false reassurances and alarms. That said, GPs are involved in training the apps and Babylon looks for doctors to agree with its conclusions 99% of the time. Interestingly, Parsa told *New Scientist* that in a dispute, the doctors are found to be wrong in as many cases as the app.



Tell Ada your symptoms and it tries to work out the cause

So farewell to my GP, then?

Not at all, and that's not the aim of these apps (at least not yet). By law, the apps



Babylon connects you with a GP for a video appointment if necessary

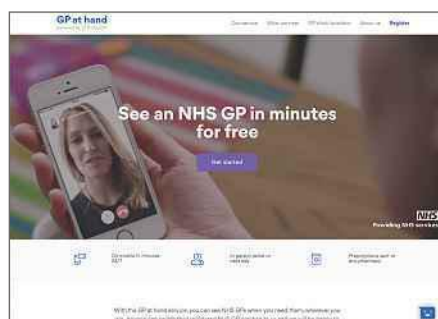
aren't allowed to call their conclusions a diagnosis, which usually requires more than merely asking questions. What they offer is reassurance or a steer in the right direction, and humans form part of that process. Babylon, for instance, understands the value of human knowledge and interaction, connecting you to a GP by video if it feels you would benefit. Generating a prescription also requires the involvement of a GP. And Babylon admits that AI can currently only manage 80% of primary care diseases to the same level as a human doctor, so there is still a way to go.

What does the NHS think about all this?

Actually, our health service is quite keen because these apps can relieve pressure on doctors. Indeed, there are currently five London GP practices taking part in an app-based trial involving 26,000 patients whose NHS records have been transferred. Having partnered with Babylon to produce GP at Hand (www.gpathand.nhs.uk), the patients have opted out of their existing GP surgery and can check their symptoms and be put in touch with a GP via video within two hours. Should it be needed, they are promised a proper one-to-one appointment with a doctor within 48 hours. If the trial goes well, it will be extended to other areas.

Doesn't this create a two-tier system?

To some degree, yes, and that is a worry some doctors and patients have raised.



See an NHS GP in minutes or hours rather than waiting for days or weeks

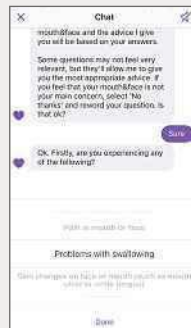
WHICH AI DOCTOR SHOULD I CONSULT?

Here are four of the most popular healthcare apps that seek to provide instant medical advice and recommendations

Babylon Health

www.babylonhealth.com

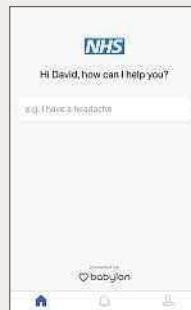
Babylon's chatbot asks you questions about your current condition until it figures out what's wrong. You can do this silently or have the app read out the questions, but if you want digital GP appointments, private prescriptions, referrals and consultation videos, you'll have to pay £5 a month or £25 for the pay-as-you-go service.



GP at hand

www.gpathand.nhs.uk

This is the NHS-backed version of Babylon, which can be accessed via the NHS Online app. You get the same service that Babylon offers to paying customers, but if you live in the right area of London and are willing to switch from your current GP, then it's free and you get a choice of clinics and full integration with the NHS.



Ada

ada.com

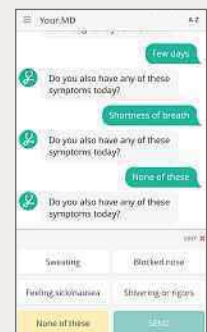
Ada also asks you questions using a chatbot, but its service is arguably more advanced. Six years in the making, the app has been trained using real-world cases and developed by more than 100 doctors and scientists. Its concluding reports feel authoritative and it gives you enough information to decide if you need to see a GP.



Your.MD

www.your.md

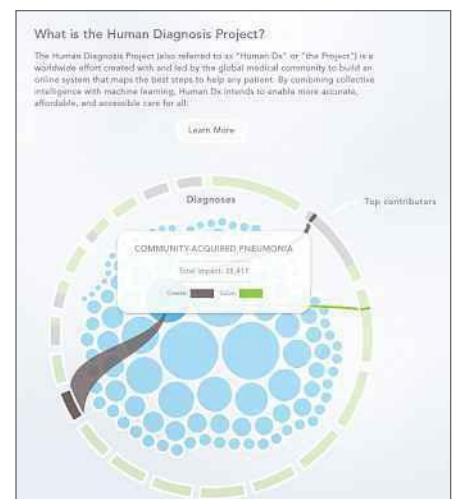
Enter an ache or pain into this free service and you can either use the symptom checker, read about the ailment or seek treatment. After you answer some multiple-choice questions, it presents you with safe health information that's checked and approved by UK doctors. It also lists the best healthcare services for various problems.



Since not everyone feels comfortable with technology or has access to it, some people may benefit from faster access to care than others. Another concern is that doctors using GP at Hand are being paid for signing patients to the app service, so they could potentially select to take on only the healthiest people, creating a two-tier system that leaves the sickest and most vulnerable patients with 'second-rate' care.

Do doctors use AI to make diagnoses?

Yes, but not in the way that you think. Although there have been instances of doctors being steered by patients' results from an AI healthcare app, more popular is a database called the Human Diagnosis Project, or Human Dx for short (www.humandx.org), which has attracted thousands of physicians from 70 countries. Doctors enter their clinical questions, working diagnoses, images, test results and the medication being



Human DX lets doctors share and request medical advice about their patients

taken by a patient. When other doctors respond, the AI aggregates the suggestions into a single report and this crowdsourced advice can be used for a more accurate diagnosis.

RECLAIM YOUR PRIVATE DATA

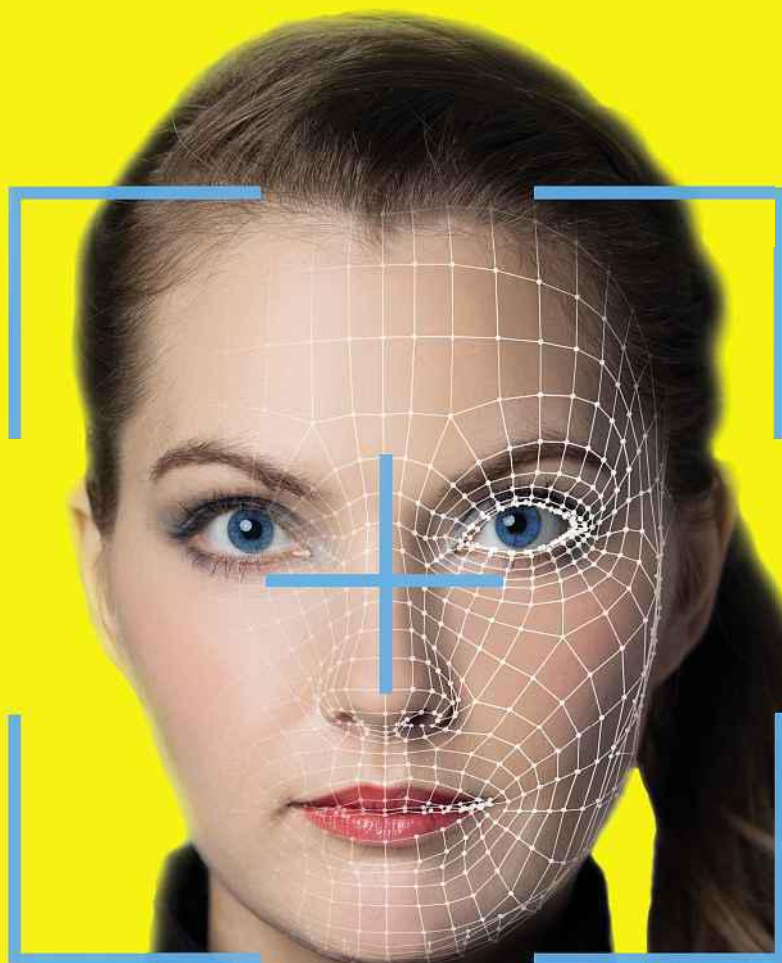
COVER
FEATURE

The GDPR is the biggest shake-up to data-privacy law for 20 years. But what's so important about it and what does it mean for web users? Our complete guide explains everything you need to know

You've probably received several emails from companies over the last few weeks, asking if you're happy for them to keep sending you marketing messages. Or perhaps you've been notified by a website or app about "changes to our privacy policy", and asked to agree to the updated terms. The reason for this sudden obsession with small print is General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which has been described as "the most important change in data-privacy regulation in 20 years" (www.eugdpr.org).

Look up 'GDPR' on the web and you'll find thousands of articles about "how it impacts your business" and asking "is your company ready?", which may lead you to think that as an individual citizen, it's not your concern. But you don't need to run your own website, mailing list or members' club to be affected by the new regulation. If you shop or sell online, allow websites to install cookies, use social networks and messaging tools, subscribe to newsletters or do anything else on the web that involves handling personal data, then you need to know about GDPR.

In this feature, we answer all your burning questions about GDPR, look at how web companies have responded to the new rules and reveal how you can now view, manage and reclaim personal data that's been collected about you.



YOUR GDPR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The changes being implemented by GDPR are varied, far-reaching and a little confusing. Here, we explain everything you need to know about the new rules

What is GDPR?

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) is an overhaul of data-privacy laws in Europe that's designed to give greater protection and rights to individuals, especially those who allow companies to use their personal information in exchange for 'free' services. In the UK, GDPR replaces the Data Protection Act 1998 (bit.ly/gdpr449).

GDPR's tougher privacy rules give us more control over how organisations use our data. The new regulation imposes harsher penalties on companies if they fail to comply with these rules by not adequately protecting our personal information, and on organisations that suffer avoidable data breaches.

When is GDPR coming?

GDPR will apply in all EU member states from 25 May 2018. Because GDPR is a regulation, not a directive, the UK does not need to draw up new legislation – instead, it will apply automatically. Although GDPR technically came into force on 24 May 2016 after all parts of the EU had agreed to the final text, businesses and organisations have until 25 May until the law actually applies to them.



When GDPR comes into effect on 25 May, data protection will change forever

Why is GDPR being introduced?

The are two main reasons for the introduction of GDPR. First, the EU wants to give us more control over how our personal data is used, bearing in mind how companies such as Facebook and Google grant third parties access to our personal data.

The current legislation was enacted before the internet and cloud technology created new ways for companies to exploit our data, and the GDPR seeks to address that.



GDPR is the most important change to data-privacy regulation since 1998

By strengthening data-protection regulation and introducing tougher enforcement measures, the EU hopes to improve trust in the emerging digital economy. It's an attempt to not only change the way companies process our data, but to foster an environment in which organisations are more open and honest with us about the information they collect.

Second, the EU wants to give businesses a simpler, clearer legal environment in which to operate by making data-protection law uniform throughout the single market. The EU estimates this will save businesses a collective €2.3bn (£2bn) a year.

Who does the GDPR apply to?

Any organisation that handles EU citizens' personal data falls under the GDPR. At a time when cybercrime is on the rise and data breaches are an almost daily occurrence, accountability has never been more important. More specifically, any 'controllers' and 'processors' of data need to abide by the GDPR.

A data controller states how and why our personal data is processed, and could be any organisation – from a business or charity to our government. A processor is the person or company that's actually processing the data on behalf of the controller. We, as the people providing our information, are referred to by GDPR as 'data subjects'.

GDPR applies to all 28 member countries of the EU and the three additional member countries of the EEA. Even if controllers and processors are based outside the EU, the GDPR will still apply if they're dealing with data belonging to EU residents. It's the data controller's responsibility to ensure their



Anyone who processes personal data needs to abide by the new regulation

processor abides by data-protection law and processors must themselves abide by rules to maintain records of their processing activities.

What's so different about GDPR?

Once the GDPR comes into effect, controllers must ensure our personal data is processed lawfully, transparently and for a specific purpose. Once that purpose is fulfilled and the data is no longer required, it must be deleted.

"Lawfully" may mean that you have *consented* to your personal data being processed – and the consent must now be given via a clear action, rather than a pre-ticked opt-in box. Alternatively, lawful can mean to protect an interest that is "essential" for your life (such as the provision of emergency medical care); if processing the data is in the public interest; or if doing so is in the controller's legitimate interest – such as preventing fraud. At least one of these justifications must apply for companies to lawfully process your data.

What counts as personal data under GDPR?

Anything that counted as personal data under the Data Protection Act still qualifies as personal data under GDPR, but the EU has substantially expanded the definition of the term. To reflect the types of data



Online identifiers such as your IP address are now classified as personal data



that companies now collect about people, online identifiers such as IP addresses and mobile-device IDs now qualify as personal data, as do factors relating to the physical, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of a person.

Pseudonymised personal data, such as encrypted information, may also be subject to GDPR rules, depending on how easy it is to identify who the data belongs to.

When can I access the data that companies store on me?

You can ask for access at “reasonable intervals”, and controllers must generally respond within one month. The GDPR requires that data controllers and processors must be transparent about how they collect our data, what they do with it and how they process it, and must explain their policies clearly using plain language.

GDPR gives you the right to access any information a company holds about you, and the right to know why that data is being processed, how long it's stored for and who gets to see it. Where possible, data controllers should provide secure, direct access for you to review what information is stored about you. You can also ask for that data, if it's incorrect or incomplete, to be rectified.

See our 'Know your rights' box, below, for further details.

What if a company suffers a data breach?

GDPR states that it's the company's responsibility to inform the data-



Under GDPR, companies that suffer a data breach must take action quickly

protection authority of any data breach that risks people's rights and freedoms within 72 hours of the organisation becoming aware of it. The UK authority is the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO, www.ico.org.uk). It's likely that companies won't know every detail of a breach within that three-day deadline, but they must still tell the ICO the nature of the data that's compromised, roughly how many people are affected, what the consequences could mean for those individuals and what measures they've already taken in response.

But even before companies call the data-protection authority, they should tell customers that they've been affected by the data breach. Those who fail to meet the 72-hour deadline could

face a penalty of up to 2% of their annual worldwide revenue, or €10m (£8.8m), whichever is higher.

Doesn't Brexit make the UK exempt from GDPR?

Possibly, but the UK must still comply with the new rules for the time being. Lawyers believe the UK is likely to adopt equivalent legislation to the GDPR following Brexit, so UK companies using EU data can continue to do so legally. However, doubts remain over what will happen, because it depends on the precise nature of the UK's exit from the EU. Prime minister Theresa May has ruled out staying in the single market, which means the GDPR rules would not apply to the UK post-Brexit.

GDPR - Know Your Rights

As 'data subjects', we benefit greatly from the GDPR's tough data-protection rules, but it's important to know how. Here's a summary of the new rights it gives us

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



✓ Right to be informed bit.ly/informed449

This is a key transparency requirement under the GDPR that means companies must tell you their purposes for processing your personal data, how long they will retain that data and who it will be shared with. This 'privacy information' must be provided at the time the data

is collected, in a way that is easy to access and understand.

✓ Right of access bit.ly/accessright449

GDPR entitles you to confirmation that your data is being processed, and a copy of that information - free of charge and within one month. If companies refuse to oblige,

they must explain why.

✓ Right to rectification bit.ly/rect449

You can now request, either verbally or in writing, that inaccurate or misleading data stored about you is corrected or, if details are missing, completed. Companies must respond within one month, although in certain

circumstances they can refuse the request.

✓ Right to erasure bit.ly/erasure449

Otherwise known as the 'right to be forgotten', this allows you to request that your personal data be erased if there is no legitimate reason for the company to be holding it, if you object to

RECLAIM YOUR DATA FROM THE WEB

GDPR has forced websites to change how they handle our data. Here, we reveal how the big names have responded and how you can take control of your privacy



FACEBOOK

Facebook CEO Mark

Zuckerberg has declared his intention to uphold “the spirit” of the GDPR.

However, the data of non-US Facebook users is currently held in Ireland, which is subject to the new data-protection laws, so Facebook has (unsurprisingly) decided to transfer 1.5 billion users out

of the EU’s jurisdiction and place them under the governance of the less stringent US privacy laws instead.

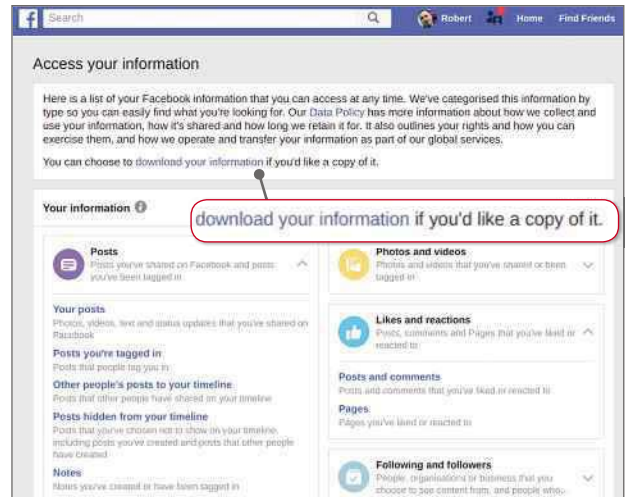
Last month, Facebook updated its terms and data policy (bit.ly/fbterms449) to comply with GDPR, asking all its users to “make choices” about whether they want to see ads based

on data from

Facebook’s partners and continue to share ‘sensitive’ information (as defined by GDPR) in their profiles. Significantly, you can now also decide whether or not to turn on face recognition, which allows Facebook to identify you in photos and videos so friends can instantly tag you. Previously, this feature was forbidden in Europe for privacy reasons, but the new regulation means Facebook can now offer the option to EU users, as long as it’s transparent about what data is processed and why.

Reclaim your data:

Facebook already allows you to download all the information the company holds about you (bit.ly/fbgdpr449), and its new Access Your Information tool lets you further review information you’ve posted or shared, such as likes, comments, videos, your location and your search history. Within your account, you can review and



Facebook now lets you review and manage all your data via a single hub

manage things you share in your ‘Activity log’, and delete anything you don’t like the look of. You can also delete your entire Facebook account and all the data it contains.

Usefully, all these options are now available through a single hub, which you can access by clicking the down arrow in Facebook’s top-right corner and choosing Settings, then Your Facebook Information. This increased transparency seems as much to do with the Cambridge Analytica scandal as



Thanks to GDPR, Facebook can now offer face recognition to EU users

what it’s being used for (such as direct-marketing purposes); if the data relates to a child; and various other reasons. The data controller is responsible for telling other organisations – for example, Google – to delete any links to copies of that data, as well as the copies themselves.

This is one of the most complex rights, so it’s worth reading the full ICO article linked to above.



Right to restrict processing

bit.ly/restrict449

This is an alternative to requesting the erasure of your data and means you can stop companies continuing

to collect and use your data, although they are still permitted to store it.



Right to data portability

bit.ly/portability449

This right allows you to obtain and reuse your personal data for your own purposes, and copy or transfer it from one service to another in a secure way. That data may include your browsing and search history, traffic and location information, and raw data processed by smart devices. The data must also be provided in a structured, commonly used and ‘machine-readable’ format,

such as CSV, JSON or XML.

As we explain in this feature, many sites now offer a dedicated tool for downloading your data. You can also contact a company to request your data and they must reply within one month.



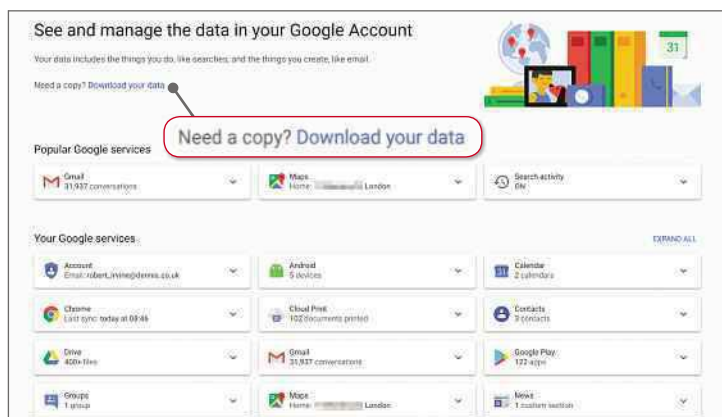
Right to object

bit.ly/object449

At its strictest, this rule lets you force companies to stop processing

your data because you object to what it’s being used for. In the case of direct marketing, they have no grounds to refuse, but if your data is being collected for research that’s in the public interest, they’re not obliged to comply. Companies must now offer a way for you to object online.





Review and reclaim your personal data from Google via your personal online dashboard



Microsoft's 'Privacy dashboard' is a central hub for your data and privacy settings

with GDPR, but we're pleased that Facebook is finally addressing at least some long-standing privacy concerns. It has even announced plans for a Clear History option that lets you remove information about all the content you've viewed, websites you've visited and other activity, at the click of a button (bit.ly/fbclear449).



The notoriously data-hungry Google has made a number of changes to comply with GDPR, including limiting the data-processing of users under the age of 16 and supporting businesses who want to display non-personalised ads online. It's also rolled out a password-protected option in Gmail, which limits confidential emails to 'read-and-reply' before they're deleted after a set time.

When it comes to obtaining explicit consent, Google appears to be outsourcing this option to advertisers and publishers, stating in a blog post (bit.ly/googlead449) that "the revised policy will require that publishers take extra steps in obtaining consent from their users".

Reclaim your data:

You can review all the data Google has stored about you on your Dashboard (myaccount.google.com/dashboard), including your search history, saved locations, synced bookmarks, Android devices and much more. On the same page, you can stop it collecting certain information by turning off Location History, Web & App Activity and YouTube Watch History, and download a copy of your data as a ZIP or TGZ file. To delete specific data Google has gathered, go to myactivity.google.com/myactivity and choose 'Delete activity by', or visit myaccount.google.com/deleteaccount to delete your whole account.



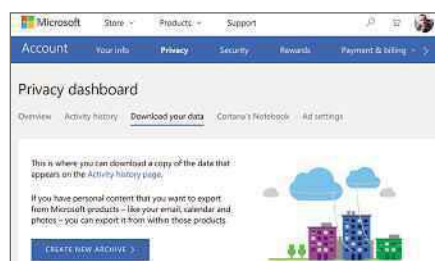
MICROSOFT

To comply with GDPR, Microsoft has updated its Services Agreement to be more transparent about the data it collects about you. It has also introduced parental-consent verification for children's accounts. This new authentication process requires parents and guardians to grant their permission for users aged under 16 to open a Microsoft account, so the child's data can be 'processed' legally under the new EU rules. Verification may involve charging a small non-refundable fee to your credit card or debit card – see bit.ly/parental449 for details.

Microsoft has also launched a Compliance Manager tool (bit.ly/compliance449) to help businesses prepare for GDPR, and has added a new Data Privacy tab to its Office 365 and Azure suites.

Reclaim your data:

To reclaim the data that Microsoft has amassed on you through tools such as Bing and Cortana, visit your 'Privacy dashboard' at account.microsoft.com/privacy – a site the company launched last year, possibly in anticipation of GDPR. As with Google's similar hub, this lets you view and delete information that's been collected about your activities, including your browsing and search histories, locations you've been to (gathered via GPS), voice commands you've used and even details of your interests. Click 'Download your data'



Download an archive of the personal data that Microsoft has collected from you

at the top of the page to create an archive of this personal info.

The Dashboard also provides details of how to adjust your privacy settings for Microsoft products such as Windows, Skype and Xbox, and lets you switch off online ads that are "tailored to your interests based on your previous activities, searches and site visits".

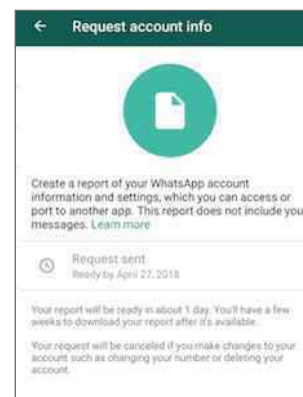


WHATSAPP

WhatsApp has raised its minimum age requirement from 13 to 16 to comply with the GDPR, which states that processing a child's data is only legal when they are aged at least 16. Unlike Facebook, which is asking teenagers aged 13-15 to get permission from a guardian to have their information shared, WhatsApp is not asking for further rights to collect personal data. Instead, European users will now need to confirm they're 16-years old or over before they can start using the messaging app. The minimum age will remain the same for users in other parts of the world.

WhatsApp has updated its Terms of Service and Privacy Policy (bit.ly/whatsappterms449) in line with GDPR, to make clearer what data WhatsApp collects about you and why. It has also established "an entity within the European Union to meet the new high standards of transparency for how we protect the privacy of our users".

Interestingly, WhatsApp says that it is not currently sharing your data with Facebook, but



You can now request a report of all the data WhatsApp stores about you

implies that this may change in future: “We will keep you updated as we develop our plans”.

Reclaim your data:

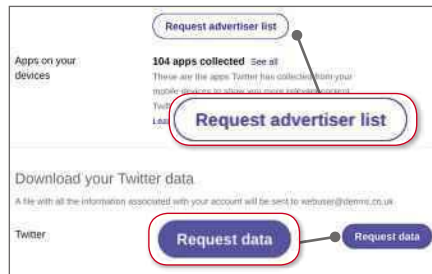
To comply with GDPR, WhatsApp is rolling out a feature called Request Account Info that lets you review and download your account information and settings. To access this, press the three-dot icon in the top-right corner of the app, choose Settings, Account, ‘Request account info’, then tap ‘Request report’. Your report should be available within three days and can then be downloaded and exported to another application to read (you won’t be able to open it in WhatsApp). If you don’t like what you see, you can delete your WhatsApp account via the Account screen.



TWITTER

Twitter has already made several changes to its privacy policy and settings as part of a “longstanding commitment to transparency” – and, of course, the introduction of GDPR. In keeping with the new rule that companies must explain their privacy policies using plain language, Twitter has expanded and revised content “to make sure that some of the more legalistic or technical language is as clear as possible”, particularly regarding your location data and data from Twitter’s advertising partners.

A Twitter Data Protection Officer’s blog post (bit.ly/twittergdpr449) states that on 25 May, EU users will see a message explaining the changes to Twitter’s Terms of Service and Privacy Policy and a chart that “categorises the legal basis for the personal data we process”. Twitter says all users outside the US will be protected under GDPR.



You can request a file containing all your Twitter data and an advertiser list

Reclaim your data:

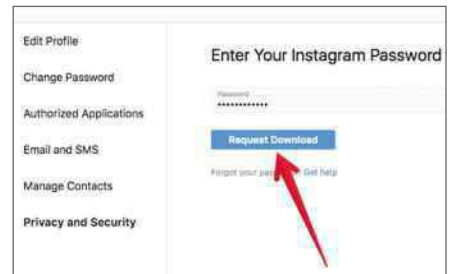
On GDPR-enforcement day, Twitter will direct you to your ‘Settings and Privacy’ page and ask you to review your current settings, such as who can tag you in photos, find you using your email address or phone number, and target you with personalised ads.

You can also now review and download the data Twitter holds on you in the ‘Your Twitter data’ section of the ‘Settings and Privacy’ page. This eye-opening information includes your gender (“based on your profile and activity”), the places you’ve been, the browsers and devices you use and what Twitter has inferred your interests to be – you can deselect any that don’t “look right”. Click the ‘Request data’ button at the bottom of the page to receive an email attachment containing all this data. Interestingly, you can also request a list of all the advertisers that target you.



INSTAGRAM

Following the Cambridge Analytica scandal, some Instagram users called for the photo-sharing service to offer an equivalent to Facebook’s Download Your Information tool, so they could gather up their pictures and take their business elsewhere. Now, to comply with the section of GDPR that



Instagram has complied with GDPR by letting you move your photos elsewhere

gives individuals the right to transfer their personal data to different services (see the ‘Know your rights’ box on page 43), Instagram has done just that.

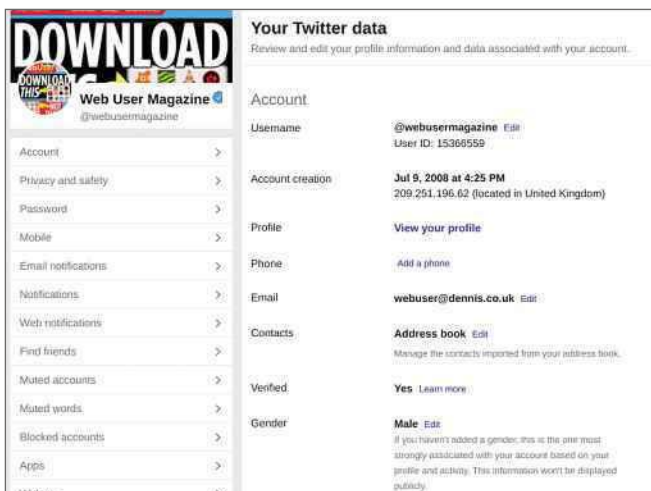
Reclaim your data:

To download your photos, videos, profile info, messages and other data from Instagram, visit bit.ly/instagram449 in your desktop browser, log in and choose Request Download. From there, Instagram will create a file containing all the content you’ve shared and email you a link so you can download it – this can take up to 48 hours. The download option will also be available in Instagram’s Android and iOS apps by 25 May.

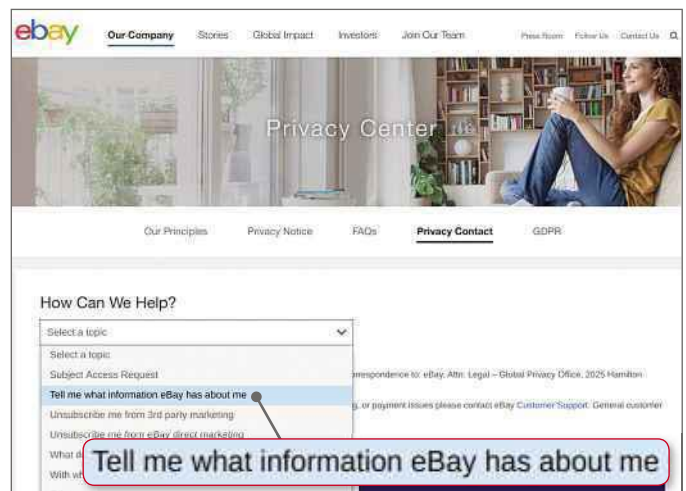


EBAY

Although eBay initially remained tight-lipped about GDPR, despite much speculation in its community forums, on 1 May it updated its User Privacy Notice (bit.ly/eBayuser449) to “strengthen your privacy rights” and added a dedicated GDPR section to its Privacy Centre (bit.ly/eBayprivacy449). Changes include clearer information about when eBay deletes your data and increased transparency about the different purposes for which it uses your personal data. “We use your personal information



Twitter probably stores a lot more personal data about you than you realise



eBay’s updated Privacy Centre is more transparent about how it uses your data



WHAT DENNIS DOES WITH YOUR DATA

Wondering what happens to your data when you subscribe to *Web User* or another Dennis Publishing magazine? Cathy Pendleton, Head of Data & GDPR at Dennis, provides her expert insight into how we process your data under GDPR

What info does Dennis collect about its subscribers and why?

We collect and store information so that we can ensure subscribers receive every issue of their magazines. This includes your contact details such as name, address, telephone number and, in the case of a digital subscription, email address. We store other important information relating to a subscription, such as when it starts and ends, whether payment has been made and whether there have been any changes to the details we've been given, such as change of address.

We also collect email addresses and telephone numbers that we may use to contact our subscribers to send them information about their subscriptions. This could be reminders about renewing their subscription or to make them aware if there are any problems with delivery.

We may also ask subscribers to allow us to use their data to send them special offers about our other magazines that we think they might be interested in.

How do I find out what personal data Dennis holds about me?

Details of how to find out what personal data we hold about you can be found in our privacy policy at www.dennis.co.uk/privacy. Under GDPR, you have the right to access your data, as well as the right to correct inaccurate information, request deletion and other important changes (see page 42 for full details).



Will Dennis pass data to other companies for processing?

Yes, Dennis works with trusted partners to send out magazines on our behalf and ensure that issues are delivered to subscribers' homes on time. We do not share individuals' details with other companies unless this is required to fulfil the service requested, or they have given us specific permission to do so.

How does Dennis protect my data from security breaches?

We have policies and procedures in place to ensure all the personal data we hold at Dennis Publishing is kept as secure as possible. This includes the security of the data while it's being processed by our partners who send out our magazines to our customers.

How long does Dennis keep my personal data for?

Generally speaking, we keep your data for as long as we need to deliver your subscription, and to comply with various legislation. If you've given us consent to contact you about our offers and services, we store your data to allow us to do this, either until you unsubscribe or stop receiving emails and phone calls from us.

You can unsubscribe from emails from us at any time using the 'unsubscribe' link in the message we send you or by emailing privacy@dennis.co.uk

to pursue our legitimate interests where your rights and freedoms do not outweigh these interests," says one section, rather ominously.

Recently, some users discovered that buyer email addresses are no longer appearing on PayPal payments – which may also be related to GDPR.

Reclaim your data:

You can contact eBay's Global Privacy Team at privacy.office@ebay.com or through its Privacy Centre, which now lets you request details of the data eBay has stored on you, what it does with that information and who it shares your data with, and allows you to unsubscribe from direct and third-party marketing.

The online marketplace has long offered sellers the option to download active listings and sales-history records from the last three months. Just go to the File Management Centre (bit.ly/ebayrequest449), click 'Create a Download Request' and choose the data you want to download from the drop-down menu.

ETSY

Popular online marketplace Etsy has updated its policies in line with GDPR to ensure increased transparency, stronger privacy and more control over how your data is used. The site is also limiting how it shares your information – for example, by removing seller access to buyers' email addresses and offering clear advice to its sellers (bit.ly/etsygdp449) about remaining fully compliant after the 25 May deadline.

Reclaim your data:

Etsy buyers can download their public profile data, which includes their bio, profile image, purchases, conversations and more, by going to You, 'Account settings', Privacy. Sellers can also download their data, which is useful for transferring their shop details, financial information and active listing elsewhere



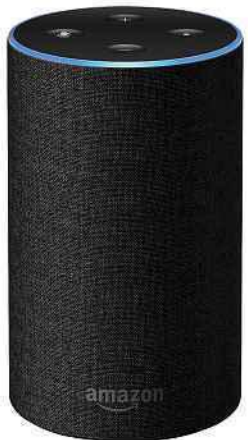
Etsy has done an excellent job of preparing both its buyers and sellers for GDPR

(an important GDPR right). To access this download, go to Shop Manager, Settings, Options and Download Data.

a AMAZON

If you use Amazon Web Services (AWS), you'll be glad to know the secure cloud service is already GDPR-compliant (bit.ly/amzngdpr449). This includes personal data encryption, updated data-processing agreements and improved processes for assessing data security. That's great for companies and individuals using AWS, but Amazon – at the time of writing – had yet to detail the effect of GDPR-compliant changes on everyday customers who use its websites, apps and devices, such as the Echo smart speaker.

Incidentally, the only mention of smart speakers in the GDPR documentation is a point that says: "The data subject shall have the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing, including profiling". This suggests smart speakers such as the Echo and Google Home will need to seek their users' consent (possibly during setup) to process their data without breaching GDPR rules.



Under GDPR, the Amazon Echo needs your consent to process your data

Reclaim your data:

Although unrelated to GDPR, you can see some of the data Amazon 'processes' about you by visiting Your Browsing History (bit.ly/amazonhistory449), including your recently viewed items, recent orders and public profile. To regain a degree of privacy, delete your



Turn off browsing history to stop Amazon keeping a record of the items you view

browsing history, turn the feature off and tick 'Don't use for recommendations' next to items you've purchased.

As we explained in last issue's cover feature, it's possible but not easy to delete your Amazon account by contacting the company directly. However, you can't delete your Amazon order history, because the store treats it as a transaction record, just like your bank or credit card company. It's currently unclear how this will be affected by GDPR. In the US, Amazon.com lets you download your entire order history, including details of how much you've spent, as a CSV file. You can get similar info in the UK by installing the unofficial Chrome extension Amazon Order History Reporter (bit.ly/reporter449).

APPLE

Apple has promoted itself as a privacy-first business for some time now, so it's suitably unruffled by GDPR. When setting up a new Apple device, such as an iPhone, iPad, MacBook or Apple TV, you'll now see a new Data & Privacy screen that shows you precisely

how Apple processes your information. According to the tech giant: "When we use data to create better experiences for you, we work hard to do it in a way that doesn't compromise your privacy". In other words, Apple products operate a privacy-by-design policy, which is a core GDPR requirement.

Reclaim your data:

By the time you read this, Apple will have updated its web page for managing your Apple ID, with a new option that lets you download a copy of any personal info stored by the company. This includes your contacts, photos, calendar, songs you stream via Apple Music and preferences. The page also lets you correct specific personal details, and temporarily deactivate or completely delete your account. Previously, you could only download your data and delete your account by contacting Apple directly.



Apple now explains how it processes your data when you set up a new device

WU WEB USER

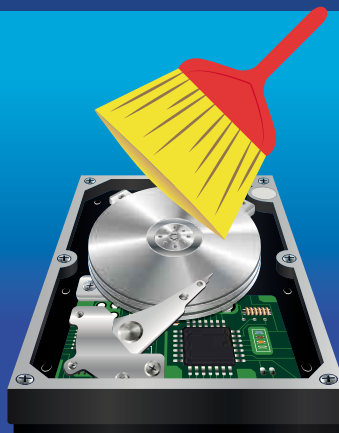
Even your favourite technology magazine isn't exempt from the ramifications of GDPR. Every member of the *Web User* team – in fact, every employee of our parent company, Dennis Publishing – has taken a course in GDPR Staff Awareness and sat a test to prove they understood the new rules. See our boxout, opposite, to find out how we process subscribers' data. ■

NEXT ISSUE

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Best free Windows search tools

Windows' own search tools can be woefully inadequate at locating specific files and folders on your PC. **Steve Clark** hunts down the best free alternatives

Agent Ransack | bit.ly/agent449 | ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

WebUser
GOLD
AWARD

What we liked:

Agent Ransack is the perfect name for Mythicsoft's free search tool – the program's design and interface may appear old-school but beneath its underwhelming exterior, it covertly offers one of the best search experiences out there.

Searching is simple, using 'File name', 'Containing text' or a combination of the two to zero in on that elusive folder or file. If you're searching for a particular file type, you can just as easily pop the extension into the search bar and watch the main pane fill up with results.

You also have the option to filter your results by size and modification date. Most often, however, you won't need such advanced functions, so Agent Ransack provides the option to switch from 'Expert' to 'Basic' mode, with the latter excluding all extraneous options and filters. This makes the app one of the most user-friendly tools available, whatever your level of experience.

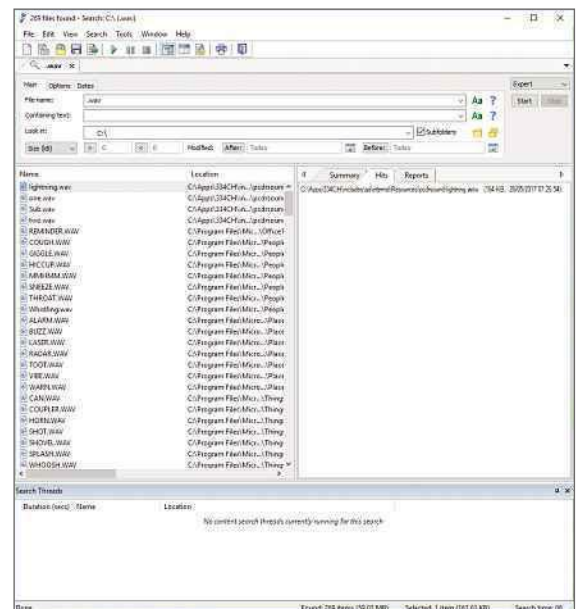
One of Agent Ransack's best features is the aforementioned 'Containing text' search, which lets you hunt down files and folders that include specific words and phrases. To check that you've found

the right file, move across from the Summary tab – which details search statistics – to Hits, which shows a preview pane highlighting your search term in situ. Just be sure to select the 'Word wrap' option or you'll be forced to horizontally scroll to locate your text.

Agent Ransack may not be the fastest search tool out there, but it answered most of our general queries in a matter of seconds (five, to be precise, according to the app's helpful Reports tab). More specific enquiries naturally took longer – but then, Agent Ransack's strength is that it's a truly comprehensive search tool.

How it can be improved:

Agent Ransack isn't the fastest or best looking of the tools we tested. The home screen can feel cluttered, the exhaustive searches can take a few seconds longer than rival search tools and the results lack any coherent order. However, that's the trade-off you make for choosing a program that prides itself on delivering a genuinely thorough search.



OUR VERDICT

Despite some minor shortcomings (particularly with regard to speed) Agent Ransack's extensive filters, options and simple user interface deliver reliable results every time. It's the Millennium Falcon of search tools: not much to look at, but with massive power where it counts.

Everything | bit.ly/every449 | ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

WebUser
SILVER
AWARD

What we liked:

Everything, the self-styled "search engine that locates files and folders by filename instantly

for Windows", works in reverse, which surprisingly is no bad thing.

Open the program and you'll be shown every folder and file on your computer. Start typing in the search bar and the software automatically filters out files and folders that don't correspond with your search, until you're left with only those that match your query. Thanks to its impressive speed, Everything manages to make this a fast and seamless process.

Although it lacks the vast filter options of Agent Ransack, searching for specific file types is simplicity itself: just click the drop-down menu and pick your file type. And with the preview pane switched on, you'll be able to instantly view your selected file.

As an optional extra, you can connect to both an FTP client and the shared ETP (Everything Transfer Protocol)



server, to search across multiple PCs on the same network. Overall, it's a smooth experience, occupying a middle-ground between the sophistication of Agent Ransack and the simplicity of WizFile.

How it can be improved:

When searching for a file by its contents, Everything isn't as fast as rival search tools. We found the software stumbled on these more sophisticated searches and crashed more than once.

OUR VERDICT

Everything is a lightweight, basic tool with broad appeal, and its advanced search features will satisfy more experienced users. Ideal for when you just need to find that crucial file or folder in a hurry.

WizFile | bit.ly/wizfile449 | ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

WebUser
BRONZE
AWARD

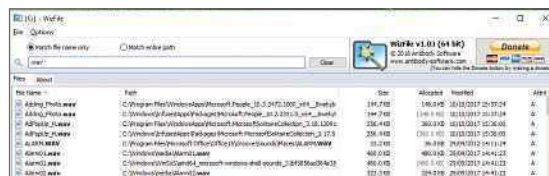
What we liked:

WizFile is fast. That's because this brand-new program scans the Master File

Table (MFT), rather than trawling an indexed drive. There are downsides to this, including its inability to search by a file's contents, but if you're prepared to sacrifice thoroughness for speed, no other tool we tested feels quite as slick.

Beyond that, all the familiar options are present and correct, from scanning specific drives to filtering search results by size and value. Wild-card searches are also supported, which is handy when you can't remember the exact file name or its location. Better still, WizFile is constantly monitoring the MFT, so if you make changes to a document that affect the search, the app will update your results in real-time.

But it's that speed we just can't get over. Search results appear instantly and, more often than not, results are delivered before you've even finished



typing. It doesn't offer all the features you'll find in similar search tools, but as the newest app on our list, it certainly shows promise.

How it can be improved:

Unlike the Gold Award-winning Agent Ransack, WizFile doesn't have enough options to supply in-depth reports. It's a quick fix, rather than a serious search tool. Because WizFile loads its data on start-up, it can hog your PC's resources.

OUR VERDICT

A clean interface and ridiculously speedy results make WizFile a must-try. However, with no option to search by a file's contents, it's hard to fully recommend it until the current tools are expanded.

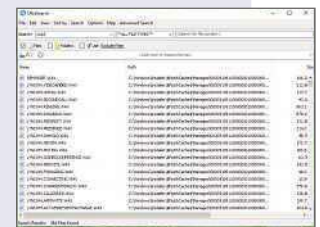
BEST OF THE REST

UltraSearch

bit.ly/ultra449

When you name your product UltraSearch, you need to be reasonably confident that it can deliver.

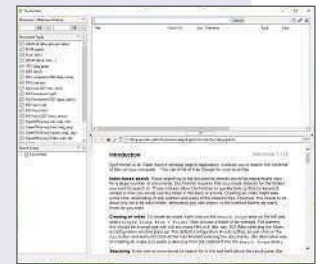
Thankfully, this portable search tool just about lives up to its name. Like WizFile and Everything, UltraSearch scans your MFT for files and folders, so results are populated quickly. However, there's no in-content search, so if that's your bag, you'll want to download a more comprehensive tool.



DocFetcher

bit.ly/docf449

Look beyond the gimmicky name and you'll find the open-source tool DocFetcher has a slick and professional feel. Just don't expect the program to work out of the box because you need to index your folders first. This is

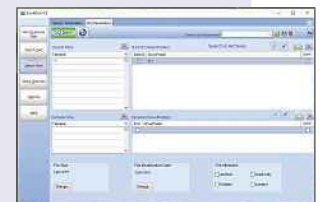


straightforward enough and the on-screen tutorial effortlessly guides you through the process, but if it's a toss-up between this and Agent Ransack, our Gold Award-winner is hands-down the better option.

LookDisk

bit.ly/lookd449

It may look like something from Windows XP, but there are several benefits to LookDisk. It has a portable ZIP version and a Disks Overview, and the dedicated Find Duplicate Files button located on the sidebar is a neat extra when you're



looking to free up space on your drive. But while it's quicker than many of the apps featured here, the lack of previews and its inability to search for specific words and phrases means LookDisk is missing several core features.

Diagnose the cause of PC errors

When you encounter a problem online or on your PC, it's not always obvious who or what is to blame. **Wayne Williams** explains how to find out

CRASHES AND FREEZES

There are lots of reasons why your PC might freeze or crash, with causes ranging from unknown hardware problems to mysterious software conflicts. This makes tracking down the source of a problem particularly tricky, unless you have the right diagnostic tools to hand.

One of the simplest and smartest of these tools is WhoCrashed (bit.ly/who449), which searches your crash dumps to identify the bad drivers responsible for system crashes. Just click the Analyse button and this helpful free program will attempt to find the cause of your problem and offer suggestions for overcoming it.

Alternatively, you can use Windows' built-in Reliability Monitor to track down the culprit. Type **reliability** into the Windows search box and select 'View reliability history' in the results. This will show you application and Windows failures by date, and let you drill down into critical events to hopefully identify the source. Click the 'View all problem reports' link at the bottom of the box to see a list of items that stopped working,

stopped responding or shut down unexpectedly.

If you're experiencing 'Stop errors' (more commonly known as Blue Screen of Death or BSOD), you can try BlueScreenView (www.nirsoft.net). This free tool displays information from the minidump files created during such a crash, and uses this data to track down the source of your woes.

FILES THAT WON'T OPEN OR DELETE

If you're having problems opening, reading, writing or deleting files on your system, NirSoft's FileAccessErrorView may be able to help. This lightweight free tool doesn't require installation – just run the program and it will scan your system looking for attempts to open, read, write or delete files, and display the details when an error is detected.

The software will, by default, ignore common errors that happen regularly, so you can focus purely on specific file-access problems. Usefully, it will show the name of the application that

had a problem with a file, an error code, error-code description and when the issue occurred.

To find FileAccessErrorView on the NirSoft website, use the search box on the homepage (www.nirsoft.net) – for some reason, direct Bitly links trigger warnings, even though the site is completely safe to download.

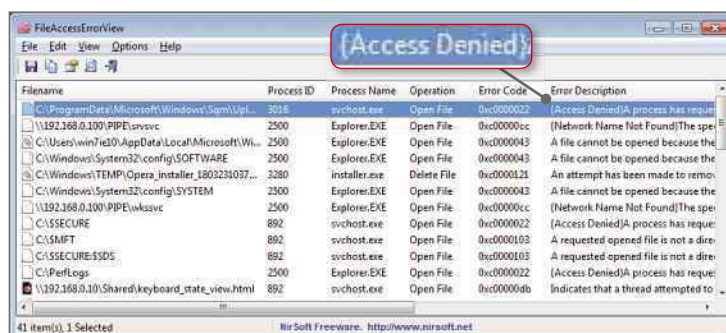
WEBSITE AND SERVICE OUTAGES

We've all been there – happily browsing the web and suddenly a site won't load. Most of us jump to the conclusion that the problem lies with the website, but that's not necessarily the case. It could be an issue with your connection or with your ISP.

Down For Everyone Or Just Me (isup.me) lets you check if a website is indeed down for everyone (the site's fault) or just you (your fault). Enter the URL of the site you want to check in the box and it will report on its availability. Alternatively, you can append the name of the site to the end of Down For Everyone Or Just Me's web address:



The Reliability Monitor that's built into Windows tells you the cause of system problems



Filename	Process ID	Process Name	Operation	Error Code	Error Description
C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Signl\Upd...	3016	svchost.exe	Open File	0xc0000022	(Access Denied)A process has requ...
\\192.168.0.100\PIPE\svsvc	2500	Explorer.EXE	Open File	0xc00000cc	(Network Name Not Found)The spe...
C:\Users\win7\30\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Wl...	2500	Explorer.EXE	Open File	0xc0000043	A file cannot be opened because the...
C:\Windows\System32\config\SOFTWARE	2500	Explorer.EXE	Open File	0xc0000043	A file cannot be opened because the...
C:\Windows\TEMP\Opera_installer_1802231037...	3280	installer.exe	Delete File	0xc0000121	An attempt has been made to remo...
C:\Windows\System32\config\SYSTEM	2500	Explorer.EXE	Open File	0xc0000043	A file cannot be opened because the...
\\192.168.0.100\PIPE\svsvc	2500	Explorer.EXE	Open File	0xc00000cc	(Network Name Not Found)The spe...
C:\\$SECURE	892	svchost.exe	Open File	0xc0000022	(Access Denied)A process has requ...
C:\\$MFT	892	svchost.exe	Open File	0xc0000103	A requested opened file is not a dire...
C:\\$SECURE-SSDS	892	svchost.exe	Open File	0xc0000103	A requested opened file is not a dire...
C:\PerfLogs	2500	Explorer.EXE	Open File	0xc0000022	(Access Denied)A process has requ...
\\192.168.0.10\Shared\keyboard_state_view.html	892	svchost.exe	Open File	0xc00000db	Indicates that a thread attempted to...

FileAccessErrorView tells you which program is preventing you from opening a file

isup.me/webuser.co.uk for example.

Downdetector (downdetector.com) is a similar but more sophisticated service. It offers a real-time overview of status information and outages for all the web's major sites and services, showing whether other people are also experiencing problems or just you. You can also report any issues you're having, and view explanations and excuses from companies' customer-service teams.

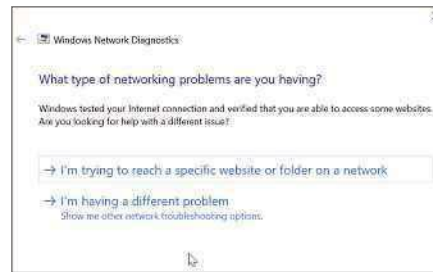


Downdetector tells you if other people are also experiencing problems with a website

CAN'T CONNECT TO THE INTERNET

If you can't connect to the internet at all, try carrying out a 'power cycle' on your PC and router. In layman's terms, this essentially means turning off the computer and router, waiting a while (60 seconds), then turning them back on again. You'll need to wait for the router to go through all its checks before trying to go online, but if you still can't get on the internet after five minutes or so, some more troubleshooting will be required.

Try accessing the internet using a different device – such as your mobile phone (making sure it's connected to your Wi-Fi and not a mobile data



Use Windows' Network Troubleshooter to diagnose problems with your internet

connection). If it works, the problem is with your computer; if it doesn't work, the problem is probably with your ISP or router. In the case of the former, try a different browser, check your firewall settings haven't changed (they may be preventing you from going online) and investigate your DNS settings. If you connect to the router via an Ethernet cable, make sure it's firmly plugged in.

Windows also comes with a built-in Network Troubleshooter that may be able to find and fix the problem. Right-click the network icon in your System Tray and select 'Troubleshoot problems'. It will try to find any issues and then ask you a series of questions.

If the fault lies with your ISP, either get in touch with the company or simply wait for the outage to be rectified. ISPs often use a recorded message to advise you of any network problems in your area, and provide an estimate of when they expect the issue to be resolved. You could also use your phone to check your ISP's website to see if service problems have been reported and are being sorted.



WINDOWS WON'T UPDATE

Windows should download new updates without any problems, but



Follow Microsoft's own advice when Windows updates fail to install properly

that's not always the case. Sometimes your system will take forever to scan for new updates, and sometimes they simply fail to download. Rebooting might solve the problem but if it doesn't, Microsoft provides an official guided walkthrough to help you fix Windows Update issues. You can access this at bit.ly/wupdate449. Start by answering which version of Windows – 7, 8.1 or 10 – you are experiencing problems with, then follow the rest of the steps.



PROBLEMS READING OR WRITING DATA

If you can't read data from – or write data to – your hard drive, it might be failing, in which case you will need to back everything up quickly. Modern drives come with a built-in S.M.A.R.T. (Self-Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Technology) feature, which keeps an eye on the health of the hard drive.

You can use the brilliant free analysis tool CrystalDiskInfo (bit.ly/cdinfo449) to read this S.M.A.R.T. status, along with current temperature and details such as the number of hours the drive has been on for, and the read-error rate. It works with both hard drives and solid-state drives (SSDs). If you have multiple drives installed, you can switch to the one you suspect might be in trouble by clicking its tab at the top. ■

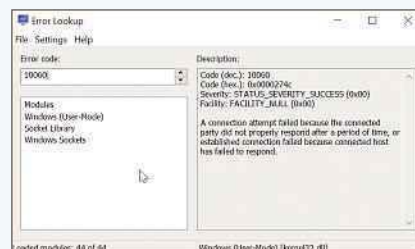


CrystalDiskInfo tells you what's causing problems on your hard drive or SSD

DECIPHERING ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES

When Windows encounters a problem, it often spits out an error code. However, unless you're intimately familiar with the meaning of these codes, this information isn't going to be much use. A Google search of the code might point you in the right direction, but it could also lead you astray.

Your best option is to turn to Microsoft's own in-depth guide to codes and their meanings, which you can download for free from bit.ly/errors449 as a PDF. You can also try the free Error Lookup tool from bit.ly/elookup449. When you receive



an error, make a note of the code, then run this program and type the relevant code into the box. You'll be shown which modules the error relates to (if known) and be given a description, which should be enough to help you identify the cause.



Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Discover Gmail's new tools

Google has revamped its email service and added new features. Here's what you need to know

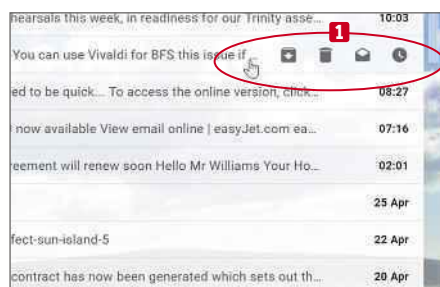
Gmail: mail.google.com | 10 mins | Any browser

Google has rolled out the biggest update in five years to its popular webmail service. Two years in the making, it offers a new, more modern look as well as improved safety features, smart replies, the ability to snooze messages and more. Some features, such as a confidential mode that lets you remove the option to forward, copy, download or print messages you've sent, aren't currently live

but will be added shortly.

The update is available to all personal Gmail users and can be activated by clicking the Settings cog in the top-right corner and selecting 'Try the new Gmail'.

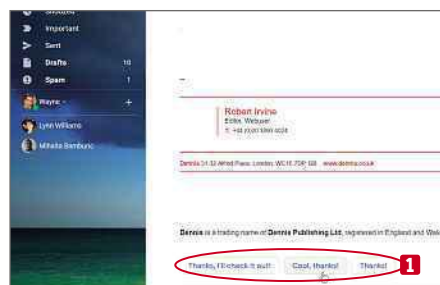
We're confident – as is Google – that you'll love all the new changes but if you don't, you can – for now, at least – switch back to the old design. Just click the Settings cog again and select 'Go back to classic Gmail'.



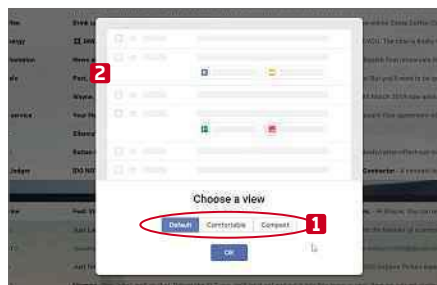
1 The new layout retains the familiar Gmail look but is more polished. One addition many of us will appreciate is a pop-up menu of quick actions. Hover your mouse over an email to bring up a selection of icons to the right, which let you archive, delete, mark as read or snooze emails. **1**



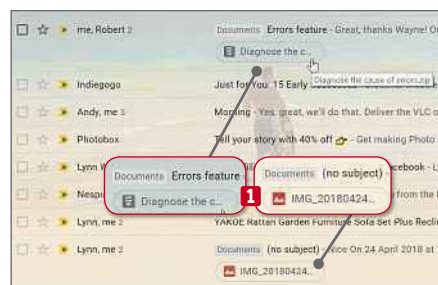
2 Snoozing an email hides it until you're ready to do something with it. Click the button and choose how long you want to snooze the message for. You can pick a preset **1** or specify a date and time. **2** If this button is greyed out, click the cog, **3** go to Settings and turn on Conversation View.



3 Gmail now offers 'Smart replies' to help you respond to messages more quickly. You may have already seen this in the mobile app. Open a message and scroll to the bottom to see a selection of quick responses. **1** Click one to add it to a reply. You can then customise it as required.



4 If you find the default 'density' view too spacious, you can switch to a different layout. Click the cog and select 'Display density'. In the window that appears, you can switch to Comfortable or Compact. **1** A preview pane above shows what the change will look like. **2**



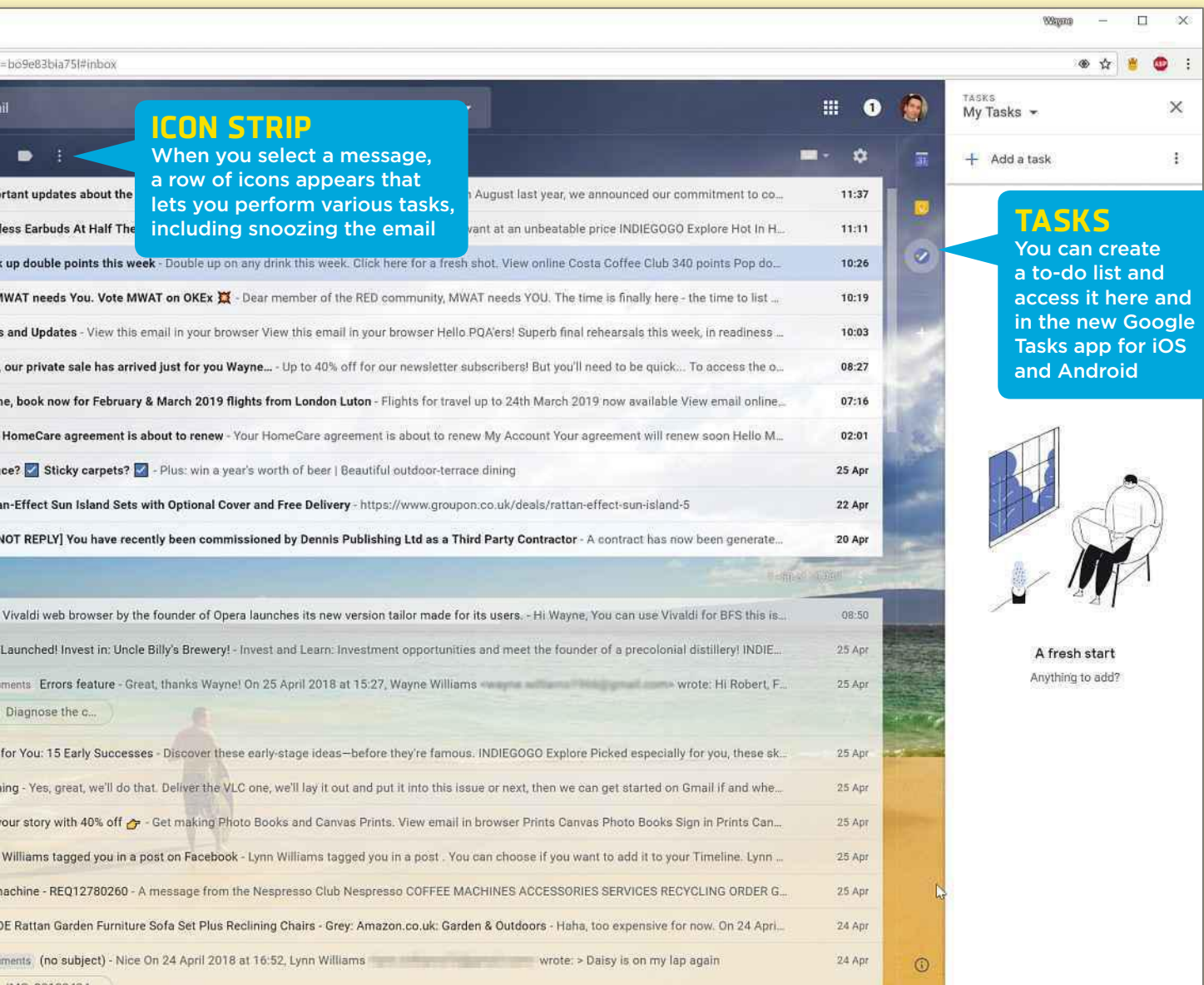
5 The updated Gmail displays any attachments under an email's heading, so they are easy to spot **1** and you can view them without having to open the message they are attached to. This option is only available in the default display density, though – not in the Comfortable or Compact views.

MENU BUTTON

Click this to reduce the left sidebar to a strip of icons. Hover your mouse over an icon to reveal the bar so you can select an item

SNOOZED

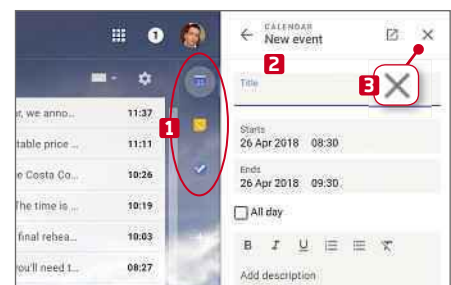
Any messages you've snoozed can be found here. Click the icon to deal with these messages



6 Another new feature lets you quickly add extra recipients to an email directly within the body text. Simply type '+' and start typing someone's name. **1** Matches from your contacts appear **2** and you can select one to add it to the recipient list.



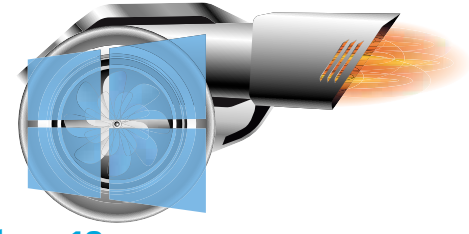
7 If you hover your mouse over a contact's name, email address or icon, a new 'hovercard' appears, which displays their information and lets you email them, schedule an event, message them via Hangouts or start a video chat. **1** You can also add them to contacts or edit their details. **2**



8 There are icons on the right-hand side for Calendar, Keep and Tasks. **1** Click one of these and a sidebar opens, **2** where you can access that service without leaving Gmail. You can switch between services in the sidebar by clicking one of the other icons. Click the X to close the pane. **3**



Turbo-charge your PC with Microsoft's secret power plan



Ultimate Performance plan: bit.ly/upzip449 | ⌚ 20 mins | 🖥️ Windows 10

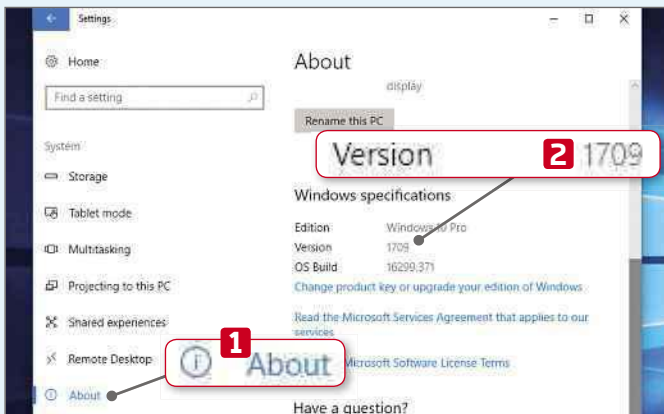
Windows provides settings in the Control Panel that let you fine-tune the way your PC uses power: conserve your PC's resources by using the 'Power saver' plan (ideal if you're running off the battery); boost its speed with the 'High performance' plan; or take a middle path between the two by choosing the Balanced plan.

Microsoft has now introduced a new Windows power plan as part of the April 2018 update, for when you want a further boost to squeeze every last ounce of power out of your PC, such as when you're playing games or editing video. The option is hidden from regular Windows Home and Pro users but in this Workshop, we show you how to access it in any version of Windows 10, even if your PC hasn't received the latest update.

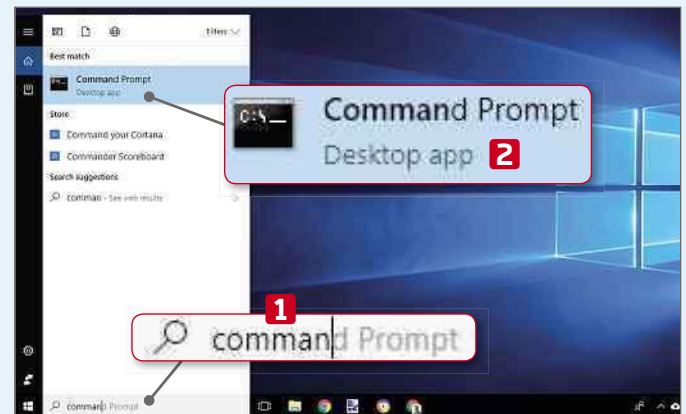
EXPERT TIP

Andy Shaw says

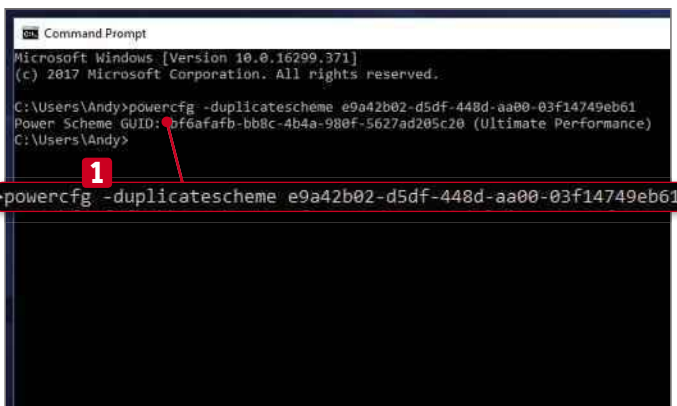
If you decide you want to remove the Ultimate Performance plan at a later date, go back to the Control Panel's Power Options and select a different plan. Without activating it, click the 'Change plan settings' link next to the Ultimate Performance plan. On the Edit Plan Settings window, click 'Delete this plan'.



1 To start, check which version of Windows you're running because the steps are different if you already have the April 2018 Update installed (version 1803). Open the Settings app (Windows+i), click System, then About. **1** Scroll down to find your Version number. **2**



2 If your Windows version number is lower than 1803, skip straight to Step 4. For those with version 1803 or later, Ultimate Performance is installed but invisible. To access it, open a Command Prompt by starting to type `command prompt` into the search box **1** and clicking it when it appears. **2**

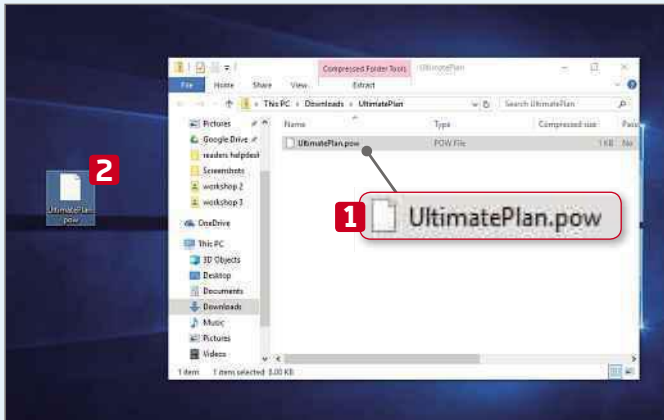


3 At the prompt, type: `powercfg -duplicatescheme e9a42b02-d5df-448d-aa00-03f14749eb61` **1**

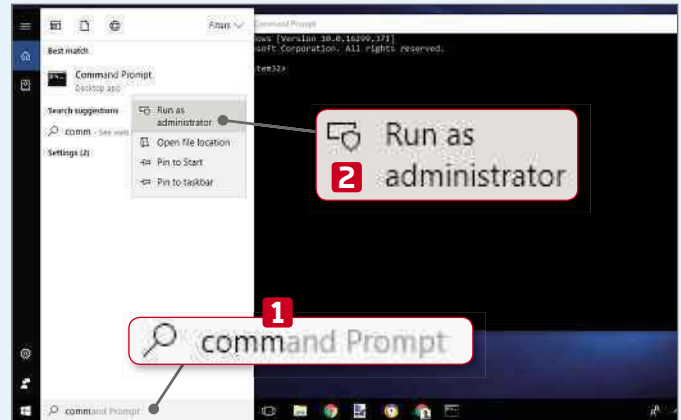
Press Enter. Now skip to Step 8 to select the plan in the Control Panel.



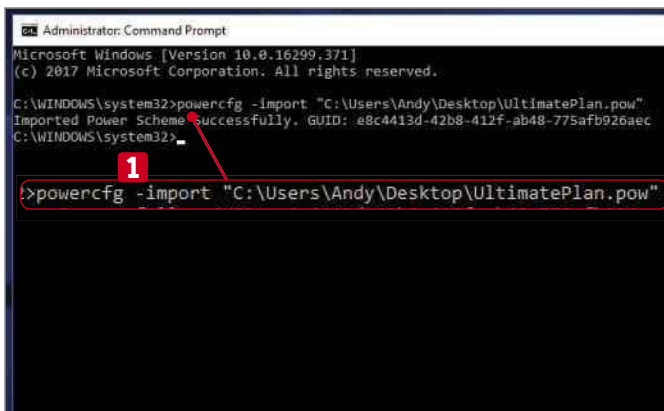
4 Older versions of Windows 10 can still use the Ultimate Performance plan, as long as you're in an Administrator account, but you have to download the settings file, which is a bit like a specialist Registry key. Go to bit.ly/upzip449 and click the Download button. **1**



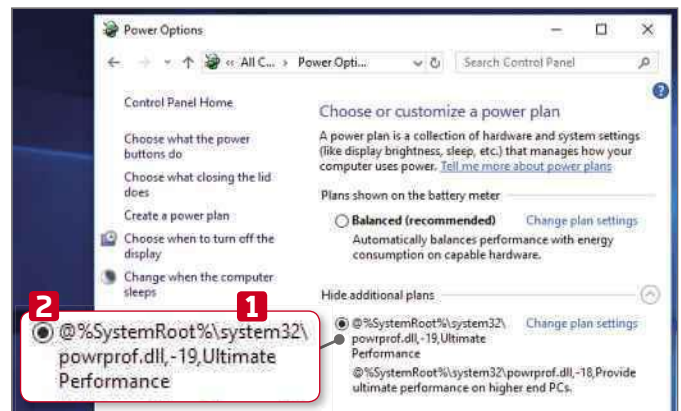
5 We've checked the file for malware at VirusTotal (www.virustotal.com) but we suggest you do the same with your preferred security tool. Open the ZIP file in Explorer by double-clicking it, then extract the POW file contained within **1** by dragging and dropping it somewhere you can easily find it, such as your desktop. **2**



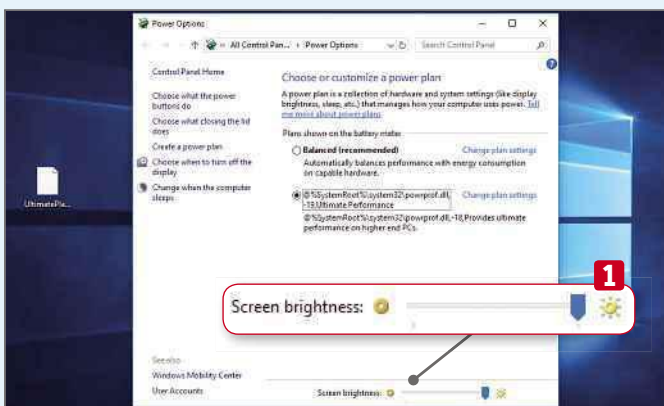
6 Open an elevated Command Prompt by starting to type `command prompt` into the search box. **1** When you see the option at the top, right-click it, choose 'Run as administrator' **2** and agree to let it make changes to your PC.



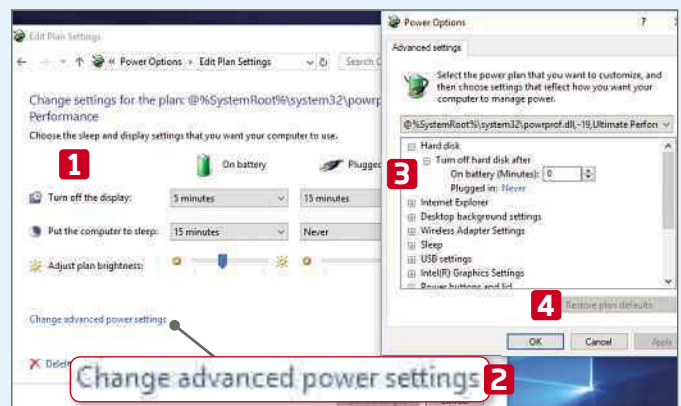
7 At the prompt, type `powercfg -import "xxxxx"`, where xxxxx is the full path of the POW file you extracted. For example, we dragged the file to our desktop, so we needed to type: `powercfg -import "C:\Users\Andy\Desktop\UltimatePlan.pow"`. **1**



8 Open the Control Panel (start typing control panel in the search box, then click it when it appears) and click Power Options. Click the arrow next to 'Show additional plans'. You should see the Ultimate Performance plan, possibly buried among some gobbledegook, as ours is. **1** Click its button **2** to switch to the plan.



9 You should notice an immediate difference as the Ultimate Performance plan adjusts your screen's brightness to full strength. **1** This is typical of what the setting does, using all your PC's resources to get a boost of power. Bear in mind that it overrides all your PC's usual power efficiencies, so only run it when you need it.



10 You can fine-tune the Ultimate Performance plan, as you can with the other power settings. Click the 'Change plan settings' link. You can make some basic adjustments here **1** or click 'Change advanced power settings' **2** to access a broader range of options. **3** If you want to revert to the original settings, click 'Restore plan defaults'. **4**




There's nothing worse than having your tranquil browsing time shattered by an obnoxious website auto-playing loud adverts or music in the background. Thankfully, in the latest Chrome update (version 66), Google gives you total

[illegible]

The screenshot shows the Chrome Flags page with several annotations:

- A red box highlights the address bar containing `chrome://flags/#enable-tab-audio-muting`, with a red circle and the number 1 next to it.
- A red box highlights the 'Enabled' toggle switch for the 'enable-tab-audio-muting' flag, with a red circle and the number 2 next to it.
- A red box highlights the 'Relaunch Now' button at the bottom right, with a red circle and the number 3 next to it.



A screenshot of the Chrome browser interface. The 'More' menu (three dots) is open, showing options like 'New tab', 'Reload', 'Duplicate', 'Pin tab', 'Mute Site' (highlighted with a red square and the number 1), 'Close tab', 'Close other tabs', 'Close tabs to the right', 'Reopen closed tab', and 'Bookmark all tabs...'. The background shows a webpage with a search bar and a 'Tab audio muted' notification.

chrome://settings/content/sound 1

Allow sites to play sound (recommended):

2

Allow sites to play sound (recommended)

The screenshot shows the Windows Settings application, specifically the 'Sound' settings page. A modal dialog box titled 'Add a site' is centered on the screen. Inside the dialog, there is a text input field containing the URL 'http://sample.cc.uk'. A red square with the white number '1' is positioned to the right of the input field, indicating the first step in the process. At the bottom of the dialog, there are two buttons: 'CANCEL' and 'Add'. The background of the Settings app is dimmed, showing the 'Sound' settings page with options like 'Allow apps to play sound recommended', 'Mute', and 'Allow background apps to play sound'.

56 16 - 29 May 2018

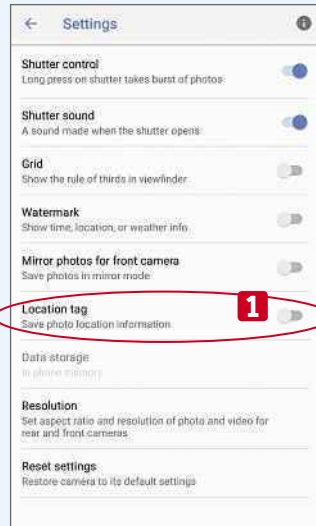


Shred personal data from photos before sharing

Loaded with secret, hidden data, your images reveal more about you than you think – not just technical information such as ISO speeds and the make and model of your camera, but also dates, times, GPS locations and even the

speed you were travelling when you snapped that fabulous selfie. Here, we show you how to protect your privacy by ditching the EXIF metadata before you share your photos.

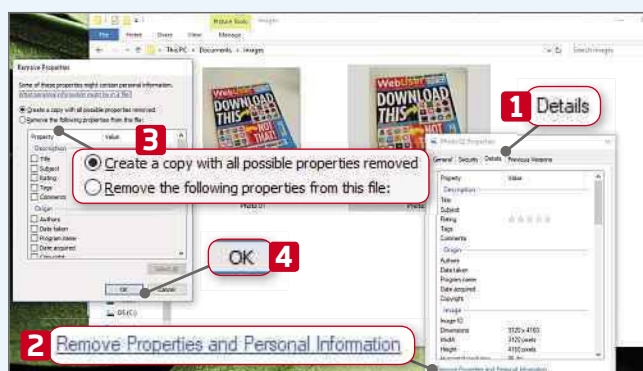
BatchPurifier Lite: bit.ly/batch449 | 10 mins | Windows XP, Vista 7, 8, 10



1 Start by disabling geo-tagging. This stops your phone's camera automatically adding location information to your photos. On Android, open your camera app, click Settings and toggle off 'Location tag'. **1** For iPhone users, navigate to Settings, Privacy, then Location Services. Choose Camera and select Never.



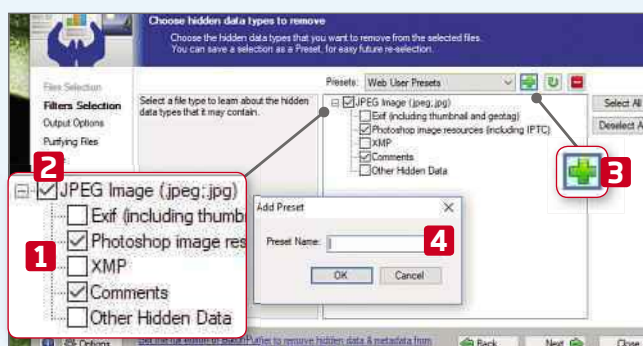
2 For mobile sharing, download an app for metadata removal. Android's Scrambled Exif (bit.ly/scrambled449) or PixlMet on the iPhone (bit.ly/pixl449) do the job quickly and easily. In Android, open your image and press Share. Under the 'Share Image Via' list, tap the app. This deletes any metadata. When the list appears again, **1** you can share as normal.



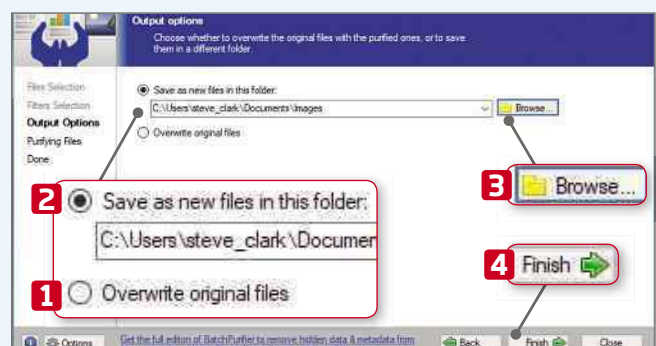
3 In Windows 10, right-click an image in the Photos folder. Go to Properties, then the Details tab **1** and, at the bottom of the window, click 'Remove Properties and Personal Information'. **2** You can either create a separate, clean copy or overwrite the original image. **3** Click OK. **4**



4 BatchPurifier Lite offers more control than Windows' built-in option. Download and run the program, then click Add Folder **1** to shred the data for an entire folder of photos; or Add Files **2** to clean individual images. You can clear an unlimited number of files in one go.



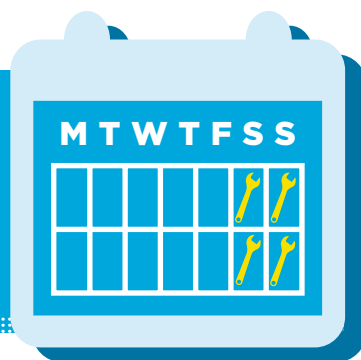
5 Click Next. You can remove individual elements of the metadata **1** or clear everything by ticking the main JPEG entry. **2** BatchPurifier also lets you create presets for regular use – tick the desired boxes, click the green cross **3** and name your Preset. **4** Click Next.



6 You must now decide whether to 'Overwrite original files' **1** or save a new copy. **2** To perform the latter, click Browse **3** and navigate to your target folder. Otherwise, just click Finish. **4** You now have an image that's scrubbed of metadata at source and ready to share.

Weekend Project

Get to grips with some serious tech tinkering to boost your computer and other devices



How to...

Get better Wi-Fi reception in your garden

Get set for summer! **Wayne Williams** shows you how to extend your wireless network into your garden

We don't tend to get the best weather in the UK, so in those brief moments when the sun comes out and the temperature rises to the point where shorts and T-shirts can finally be worn, many of us head out into the garden. Whether you temporarily relocate a home office to a sunny patch, take the opportunity to tackle months' worth of garden neglect or simply chill out and make the most of the rays, having decent Wi-Fi reception means you'll be able to stay connected to the internet without eating into your precious mobile-data allowance. A fast connection means you can carry on streaming music and video while you barbecue, and keep browsing the web and downloading files in the sunshine.

We have covered improving Wi-Fi around your home in previous issues of *Web User*, but extending your connection into the garden brings a different set of problems to solve.



The problem

Usually, you want to contain your Wi-Fi within the four walls of your home, because you don't want neighbours or passersby leeching off your internet connection. That's not normally much of an issue because the thick outer walls of your house tend to do a good job of killing the signal, or at least making it significantly weaker – and therefore

slower – for any potential piggybackers.

The trouble is that the Wi-Fi-reducing power of bricks and mortar will mean the signal reaching your garden is similarly compromised, and the tricks you might use to boost your network connection inside your home – installing range extenders, for example – may not work as well when it comes to extending it beyond outer walls.

The simplest option

The obvious way to extend Wi-Fi into the garden is to move your router closer to where you want the signal to go. If your router has adjustable aerials, you can use these to direct the signal. Bear in mind that Wi-Fi will pass more easily through a glass window than a thick external wall, although 'K' glass double glazing – which builders use to achieve a better Window



Placing your router in the window is one way of getting a better wireless signal in the garden, but it's not always practical

Energy Rating and meet or exceed the current energy-saving Building Regulations – isn't very Wi-Fi friendly. The glass has a coating designed to reflect heat back into the room while allowing warmth from the sun to come through ('passive solar gain', as it's known), and the metal vapour of this coating will significantly weaken your Wi-Fi signal as it makes its way outside. 5GHz Wi-Fi is less affected by this than 2.4GHz Wi-Fi, and you'll get much better results if you have an 802.11ac router than an older 802.11n one.

If moving your router closer to a garden-facing window isn't an option (and bear in mind that doing so can have a knock-on effect on the signal quality inside your home, possibly resulting in a whole new set of problems), then investing in a range extender and placing *that* near the window might work. Range extenders take your existing signal and, essentially, boost it. In our quest to improve the Wi-Fi signal in our garden, we tried a variety of range extenders with mixed results. Our best connection used an 802.11ac router with an 802.11ac extender.

HomePlug adapters

HomePlug (or Powerline) adapters work by routing a broadband connection over your home's electrical wiring. If you have a garage or shed that's connected to your home's mains supply, you can plug a Wi-Fi enabled adapter into one of its power sockets. Plug another HomePlug into a power socket near your router and connect the router and HomePlug with an Ethernet cable. Your internet connection should be extended to the HomePlug in the outbuilding over your

electrical wiring and the HomePlug can then create a Wi-Fi hotspot you can connect your garden devices to.

There are several makes and models of HomePlug adapter to choose from, but the dLAN 1200+ WiFi ac Starter Kit Powerline from Devolo is a good option and gives you everything you need for a reasonable £128.11 (from Amazon at bit.ly/dlan449).

You don't have to connect the wireless adapter to a plug socket in an outbuilding – you can plug it into a socket inside your home that's near a window or patio door, in the same way as you would with a router or range extender.

A more expensive solution

Upgrading your Wi-Fi to a mesh-router system will significantly improve the quality of the signal throughout your home. These modular Wi-Fi systems comprise a number of access points that work together to deliver solid coverage. The beauty is that you only have a single network

name and password to worry about. Once the individual nodes are connected, the system automatically switches you to the nearest one as you move around your house. This should happen seamlessly, with no interruption to your connection. You can add multiple nodes to your set up – including one by a garden-facing window – and the signal strength should be solid throughout your home and beyond.

Now, we know what you're thinking – you could put a node outside to boost your garden's Wi-Fi, right? Well, the problem here is that nodes work best when they are no more than two rooms apart. With a weakened signal (caused by going through brick and glass), your outside node would need to be even closer and still needs its own connection to the mains. If you have a (very) nearby outbuilding with mains wiring, it might just work. Another option is to place the outside node in a waterproof container, making sure the wiring isn't exposed to the elements. This is a far from perfect solution, though.

If you want to upgrade to a mesh network – and we've found that doing so significantly boosted the signal in our garden – you have a number of choices. We used a pair of Google Wifi units







The dLAN 1200+ WiFi ac Starter Kit is a great way to get started with HomePlug technology



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1		TalkTalk: Broadband	£27.00 (£18.95 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	CHEAPEST £227.40
2		Sky: Broadband	£30.00 (£20.00 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£240.00
3		EE: Broadband	£30.00 (£21.50 for 18 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited*	£258.00
4		Virgin: Broadband	£40.00 (£29.00 for 12 months)	12 months	50Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited*	£348.00

Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

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Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 3 May 2018.

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

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Mesh-router systems such as Google Wifi are quick and easy to install. They significantly boost the reach and power of your Wi-Fi signal

(bit.ly/gwifi449), which are easy to set up and manage using a simple app. A single Google Wifi unit costs £129, a twin pack is £229 and a triple pack £329. They are also available from Amazon (bit.ly/goog449).

We show you how to set up a Google Wi-Fi device in our Mini Workshop, below.

Outside hardware

All the options we've looked at so far offer ways to extend your indoor Wi-Fi

outdoors. Another option is to add a weatherproof outdoor access point, which takes a wired connection from inside your home, then creates a wireless hotspot you can connect to in the garden.

Solwise (www.solwise.co.uk) offers a range of such products, but our favourite is the EnGenius EL-ENS1750 dual-band AC1750 wireless outdoor access point (£164.02 from bit.ly/eng449). This operates on both the 2.4GHz and 5GHz frequency bands, and supports 802.11a/b/

The ENS1750 is a wireless access point that delivers speedy Wi-Fi across your garden

g/n/ac standards. It also supports PoE (Power-over-Ethernet) IEEE 802.3at with the included PoE injector, which means you only have to plug in a single Ethernet cable to provide both the internet connection and power to the box. It's IP55-rated, so is able to withstand even the harshest weather conditions.

When finding the ideal spot for a product like this, the higher up you can locate it, the better the results will be. ■



MINI WORKSHOP | Set up a Google Wifi mesh-router system



1 Google Wifi is a mesh router system that's easy to set up and use, and can make a huge difference to the range and quality of your wireless coverage. Plug the first Wifi unit (it doesn't matter which one) into your existing router or modem using an Ethernet cable, **1** then attach the power. **2** The light will pulse blue.



2 Get the free Android or iOS app on your mobile device, then sign in with your Google details. The app guides you through the setup process and you'll be prompted to scan the QR code on the underside of the unit. **1** Once this has been done, the connection will be made and the device configured.



3 Tell the app where you've put your unit ('Living Room', for example), then set up a Wi-Fi name and password. You can now configure the next Wifi unit. Plug it in, tell the app where it's located and the connection will be made. You can now test your mesh network and wireless signal. **1**

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Upgrade your PC's Wi-Fi

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Use quick 3D Touch actions



From the iPhone 6S on, all Apple iPhones have 3D Touch, which means that the screen is sensitive to two pressure levels. Lightly tapping an app's icon opens it in the usual way, while a firm press brings up a quick-actions menu. The contents of this menu depend on the app and its features: a weather app might show a mini forecast, a news app could show the latest news headlines and so on.

Some menu items are based on your last activity in the app, such as a map, contact or message. In some cases, this means you don't even have to open the app because the 3D Touch menu shows all the information you need. Go to your home screen and firmly press each icon to see what shows up.

Firmly press each icon on recent iPhone models to see the menu options available with 3D Touch



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.

hold down multiple buttons when you're in the middle of a game. Go to Settings, 'Advanced features' and turn on 'Palm swipe to capture'.

Tap to reject

On some Android phones, you can reject incoming calls, and stop or snooze alarms, timers and calendar events with a single tap. Go to Settings, Accessibility and turn on 'Single tap mode'.

Quick photos

How many times have you spotted a photo opportunity but missed it by the time you've unlocked your phone, found the camera app, opened it and got ready to take a photo? Here's the solution.

On many Android phones, two taps of the Home button is all it takes to open the camera, even if the phone is locked. You may need to set this up by going to Settings, Advanced Features and turning on the 'Quick launch Camera' option.

3D Touch everything

You can press firmly almost anywhere on a recent iPhone's screen to use 3D Touch, so try it with every icon, button and menu that you see. It's more likely to work with Apple's own apps, but you can 3D Touch several of the buttons in the Control Centre, such as



3D Touch the camera icon in the iPhone Control Centre to see this menu

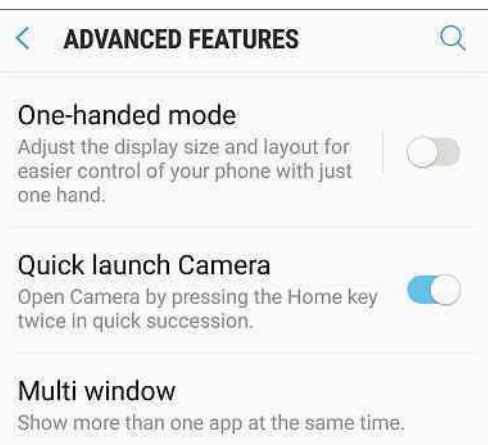
the torch, camera, music and so on. Try 3D Touch on everything everywhere to see what happens.

Use the keyboard trackpad

Activate 3D Touch on the keyboard of a compatible iPhone and it turns into a trackpad. The cursor can then be dragged around the screen, making it much easier to place in the correct position for editing text. If you use the Google keyboard on an Android phone, press the spacebar and drag left and right to move the cursor through the text in a similar way.

Palm-swipe screenshots

Some phones offer the option to take a screenshot by swiping across the screen with the palm of your hand. It beats trying to



Set up 'Quick launch camera' so you can double-press the Home button to take photos



Magnify small things

The camera on your phone can also be used as a magnifying glass for studying small items or reading text that's too tiny to see. On your iPhone, go to Settings, General, Accessibility, Magnifier and tap the switch. Triple-press the Home button to instantly use the iPhone as a magnifying glass.

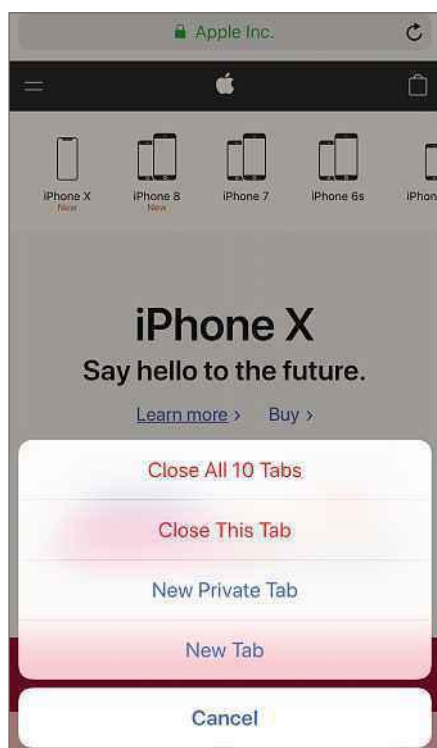
On Android, if you are struggling to read small text or want to carry out detailed work in a photo editor, triple-tap the screen to zoom in. Pan around by dragging with two fingers and adjust the zoom level with pinch and spread. Triple-tap to return to normal mode. To see if your phone offers this function, go to Settings, Accessibility, Vision and switch on 'Magnification gestures'.

To magnify the screen on an iPhone, go to Settings, General, Accessibility, Zoom and switch it on. Double-tap with three fingers to zoom into the screen and drag with three fingers to pan around it. There are several controls in settings that let you choose the zoom region, the zoom level, show a controller and apply a zoom filter.



Preview links in Safari

When browsing the web with Safari on your iPhone, you can 3D Touch web links to take a peek at the page they're pointing to. You can then slide your finger up the screen to open the link in a new tab or add it to your reading list. Using 3D Touch with the buttons at the bottom of the screen displays a menu with related actions you can perform.



On your iPhone, use 3D Touch with the tabs button to show this menu

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave



Keyboard options

Each new phone that comes out seems to be larger than the last, which makes it increasingly difficult to reach the keys on the opposite side of the keyboard when typing one-handed. Some Android and iPhone keyboards have a one-handed typing mode that shifts the keys to the left or right, depending on which thumb you prefer to type with.

On Android, long press the emoji button, then press the icon showing a keyboard with the keys shifted to one side. When the keyboard appears, use the arrows at either side to shift the keys left or right. On an iPhone, long-press the emoji button, then select one of the three keyboard icons – left, centre or right.

Some keyboards include a swipe function. Without lifting your finger off the keyboard, press and drag your finger over the letters of the word. Lift on the last letter and the word is entered automatically.

You may need to download a new keyboard app to do this, but some Android phones have it built in. Long-press the gear or emoji icon on the keyboard and tap the gear to open the keyboard settings. Press Keyboard Swipe and select the option 'Swipe to type'.



'Swipe to type' and 'Cursor control' are available on some keyboards



Tap to select text

When typing text into notes and documents, tap once in the text to position the cursor. Tap twice on a word to select it and you can then delete it or tap and drag the handles to select a whole sentence or more.

There is an even better way to select text when typing or editing on an Android phone, such as in messages, notes and so on. Just tap and drag your finger over the text to select it.

Whole sentences and paragraphs can be selected this way. Handles appear when you lift your finger and these can then be used to accurately place the start and end of your selection.



Type special characters

On your iPhone or Android phone, press and hold a key on the keyboard, then see what happens. The letters 'e', 'a', 'u' and several others display foreign language versions with accents and marks. Slide your finger to the one you want and lift.

Press and hold the full-stop key on an Android phone to display a panel of characters including comma, percentage, ampersand, @, question mark and other symbols. Slide your finger over the one you want and lift.

When typing an address into Safari on iOS, press and hold the full stop for a list of domain endings including '.com', '.co.uk', '.net', '.org' and more. Drag your finger to the one you want and lift. Typing URLs into Android is similar. There is already a '.com' key, but you can press and hold it for a list of alternatives. Slide your finger to the one you need.



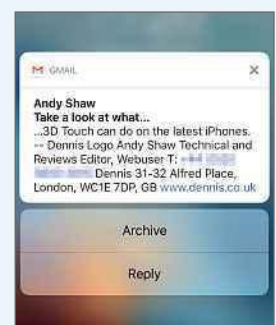
Get shortcuts to notifications

Pull down from the top of the screen on your iPhone to see notifications.

What happens when you use 3D Touch with them depends on the app that produced the notification.

Messages for example, displays the full message and lets you reply without having to open the app. The cross above a group of notifications clears them but if you 3D Touch the cross, all notifications can be cleared in one go.

On Android, pull down with one finger from the top of the screen for brief notifications or use two fingers for notifications and extras.



Press rather than tap a notification on an iPhone to get more options

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



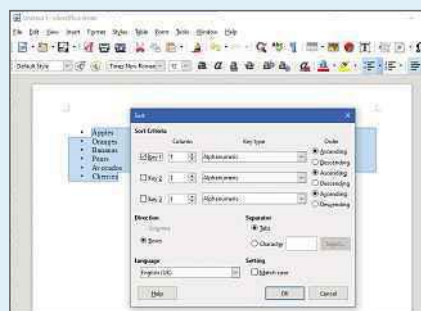
OFFICE

Sort text lists using LibreOffice

Q I've created an eight-page list of musicals (*Aladdin*, *The Sound of Music*, *Bugsy Malone* and so on) using LibreOffice 5.4 on my Windows 10 PC, and I want to make it alphabetical. Have you any idea how to do this?

Barry Buttery, via email

A This is easier than you might think because LibreOffice is great at sorting text. Click and drag over the bullet points to select them, then go



Sort bullet lists and other text using the Sort feature in LibreOffice

to Tools, Sort. Here you'll find several sorting options. We're using version 6 of LibreOffice so if version 5.4 doesn't have the feature, upgrade it.

to access her email with any email software, whether it's on a desktop PC, laptop, tablet or phone, even though I've set everything up correctly according to the instructions on TalkTalk's website (bit.ly/touc449).

The company tells me it doesn't support this type of email and that it's now on a legacy system. If we change to a different ISP (which we are seriously considering), TalkTalk says we will continue to have access to our email accounts for a year via webmail. But if it's ending support for its own email addresses, this will surely be difficult.

Can an ISP simply withdraw support for a service or is it required to give notice?

Cliff Haylett, via email

A Many small ISPs have merged into larger ones, such as Toucansurf, which was bought by a company that was then bought by TalkTalk. When this happens, support for old email accounts from previous ISPs varies. Users should be notified, but the message may have been wrapped up in other announcements or legal information that's easily missed.

The best way to avoid this problem is to get an email account that's independent of your ISP, such as Google Mail or Outlook.com. That should always be accessible as long as the company behind it continues to operate.

As for your Toucansurf email account, TalkTalk says it can only be accessed through a TalkTalk broadband connection. This means, for example, that you can't access the account using your mobile phone's data connection, and, if you switch ISPs, you definitely



Get an email account that's independent of your ISP

HARDWARE

Keep using an elderly Chromebook

Q I have a five-year-old Acer C710 Chromebook, which I'm very happy with. However, I've just been notified that it is at the end of its life and won't receive any more updates. This seems such a waste, particularly as it has a 320GB SSD that works perfectly.

I've read accounts of people installing Windows 10 on this Chromebook but the instructions are too vague for me. Can you explain how I might do this?

Francis Gilgan, via email

A Some Acer Chromebooks, including yours, have specifications that are very similar to a Windows PC. It has 4GB of memory and a 320GB hard drive

(although it's not an SSD, unless you've changed it). According to a forum post on the Acer website, however, this model's BIOS doesn't support Windows, so it won't install. A few determined people have managed to run Windows but, as you point out, the process is very complicated. It involves installing a new BIOS and getting round several security restrictions.

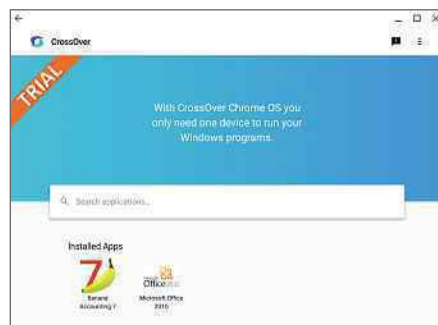
Acer's end-of-life declaration doesn't mean your Chromebook will stop working, however. You can continue to use it, although there won't be any more software updates, so it's stuck with whatever features (and bugs) it has now.

If you want to run Windows programs on your Chromebook, you can use an app called CrossOver (bit.ly/crov449), which is available from the Google Play Store. It's still in beta but is well supported. Go to the CodeWeavers website (www.codeweavers.com) for step-by-step guides and videos.

EMAIL

Access Toucansurf emails

Q I became a TalkTalk (www.talktalk.co.uk) customer when my original ISP, Toucansurf, was absorbed by the company. Since then, my wife has continued to use her @toucansurf.com email account without problems. Recently, however, she has been unable



Run Windows software on a Chromebook using CodeWeavers' CrossOver app



won't be able to access it.

This only applies when using an email application, though, so you should still be able to access your email through your web browser at the TalkTalk website. If this works, get an independent email account and set up email forwarding at your Toucansurf account, assuming the feature is available. Use it to send all your incoming email to your new account and, meanwhile, inform all your contacts of your new address.

MOBILE

Find your iPad model

Q A relative has given me an old iPad after winning a new one, and I've found it invaluable. However, I have a few questions about it, such as how to find out which model it is. I know the software version but I can't find any mention of the model, even on the case.

I recently bought a new charging cable and the connector is about 1mm too wide for the socket, so I assume different models require different cables.

It also seems to be slower than it was. The lock-screen says 'Slide to unlock' but sometimes it won't budge until I press the button a second time. I usually have to press an app icon twice, sometimes three times, before it opens, and the keyboard can be slow to appear when I need to type.

From reading *Web User*, I understand that computers can become slower as a result of software updates, so it may be that my iPad has slowed down since the last update. If so, should I revert to the previous version of the software? Is this even possible? How would I go about it?

David Collins, via email

A All iPads and iPhones have a model number printed on the back, but it's so small and faint that it can be almost invisible. Point your phone's camera at the small text and zoom in to read it (you can use this handy tip on anything you might need to magnify). When you have the number, go to bit.ly/ipad449 to see every iPad model.

Free apps are available that can show detailed information about the hardware and software on iPads and iPhones. Try Lirum Device Info Lite (bit.ly/lirum449) or S2 System Status Monitor Lite (bit.ly/sssm449), for example.

Only two types of connector have been used for iPads and iPhones, and they are very different in size. The first iPads had large 30-pin connectors,



Use a magnifying glass or phone to see the small print on the back of an iPad

while newer models use the smaller Lightning connector. If your cable is only a millimetre out, you may have a badly made non-Apple cable. Make sure you use an Apple-certified product.

There are several reasons why iPads and iPhones might slow down over time, one of which is that the battery wears out. When the battery is old and weak, iOS limits the device's performance to reduce battery drain. Each new version of iOS requires more processing power, memory and storage than the last.

Apps also grow in size over time – some are 10 times larger today than they were a few years ago – and this slows down iPads and iPhones. Updates to iOS and apps have made the iPad 2 almost unusable these days.

You can revert to a previous version of iOS, but only if you have a backup stored on your computer. When you plug the device into a PC or Mac, iTunes makes a complete backup, and you have the option to restore a previous one. This is the only way to undo an update.

GENERAL PC

Force your PC to speak your language

Q I've had to give up on an email address because all the emails I received were in a foreign language. Now I find that Google is displaying words in the same language, such as: "Aistrigh an leathanach seo Uaireanta Oscailte," and I see snippets of it on-screen between programs, too. How can I get rid of it?

Betty A, via email

A According to Google Translate, the text you supplied is Gaelic, and means "Translate this page opening". We're wondering if you bought your computer in Ireland, because it sounds as if the location and language are set to Ireland.

MOBILE

Track family members

Q Is there an app I can use to keep track of my teenage son's location?
Adel Serag, via email

A There are several ways to track people. WhatsApp (www.whatsapp.com) is a good one. When he goes out, ask him to open WhatsApp, start a conversation with you and then press the plus button on an iPhone or the paperclip icon on Android. Select Location, then Share Live Location. You'll receive updates of his location for up to eight hours.

The iPhone has built-in tracking tools, so it's easy to follow family or friends who also have an iOS device and are willing to share. Go to Settings, tap your name at the top and press Set Up Family Sharing. Items you can share include the location of all the devices in the family. Go to Settings, your name, iCloud and press Find My iPhone. Switch it on. Family members can then use Find My iPhone to locate someone, just as you would if you'd lost the phone.

There are dozens of friend and family tracking apps in the Google Play Store and Apple App Store – just search for 'track friend location' or similar. Get one that's cross-compatible and available in both stores if you have different phones.

Each of these options requires the cooperation of your son, because he can turn off the tracking or disable the app at any time to protect his privacy.



Start here and explore all options to set the language, location and currency

Open the Control Panel and click Language. You basically have to work through every tab, button, link and option and choose English or United Kingdom. There must be half a dozen different places where language, location or currency is set. Also in Windows 10, open the Settings app (press Windows+i), click Time & Language and change every language and location setting.



This fortnight Roland has been trying to install a Windows 10 update. It has failed 24 times so far.

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



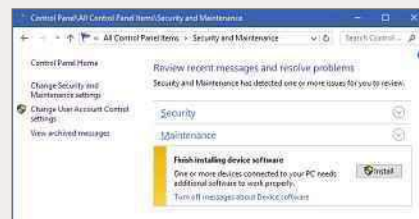
TOP TIP

GENERAL PC

Find hidden Windows problems

Sometimes, you may encounter problems with Windows or aren't aware of actions that need to be taken. To see if your PC has any issues, open the Control Panel and click 'Security and Maintenance'. Expand each of the sections to see if there are any messages. If there are, there may be help or a solution displayed.

John Hamilton, via email



Check for outstanding issues in Control Panel's 'Security and Maintenance'

Back Issues disc winner



FINANCE

Follow stock markets

If you have investments in the stock market and want to follow their ups and downs, Google has a useful page that monitors markets, which can be set to follow specific share prices.

On the Google homepage, click the icon in the top-right corner showing a grid of nine little squares. In the panel of Google services, click Finance. You may have to scroll down or click the More link.

The homepage shows the UK and world markets, including the FTSE 100, 250 All Share, AIM, Dow Jones and so on. Click Your Stocks under the search box and search for a company. Click the stock-market symbol in the search results and, on the company page, click the Follow button. This is added to the Your Stocks page. Bookmark it and you can quickly see the state of the markets and the companies you have shares in.

Paul Murphy, via email

GENERAL PC

Log off users via Task Manager

As well as using Task Manager to close unwanted programs, you can use it to log off other users. You need to be an administrator or able to apply the administrator password.

Open Task Manager with Ctrl+Shift+Esc or right-click the taskbar, then select Task Manager and go to the Processes tab. Ensure 'Show processes from all

users' is ticked - in Windows 10, you may need to click the Users tab instead. Now select the user you want to log off, and click the 'Log off' or 'Sign out' button. You'll get a warning message saying 'If you log off a user, their unsaved data might be lost.' Click either 'Log off' (it might also say 'Sign out user') or 'Cancel' as appropriate. You can log out of your own user account from the same place.

Madeline, Web User Forums

APPLE

Make 'Hey Siri' more accurate

I don't know if other *Web User* readers have found that Siri doesn't always hear what you say. Anyway, I found a way to make her a bit more accurate. The problem is, when I set up Siri, I held the phone in my hand, but when I actually use voice activation, the phone is often



Retrain Siri so she responds more accurately to your voice

in my pocket or out of reach.

I started by disabling and re-enabling Siri by turning off the option 'Listen for Hey Siri', then turning it on again. When I then retrained Siri to understand me, I laid the phone down on the couch and out of my hands. Now it's a lot more responsive when I speak to her!

Mitchell Wightman, via email

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Facebook privacy

With privacy issues in the news and related notifications popping up on my computer today from Facebook and Google, there is one more setting you might want to consider with these two internet giants. If someone searches for your name on Google and other search engines, you can set whether your Facebook profile appears in their search results.

In Facebook, click the little arrow in the top-right corner and select Settings from the menu.

Select the Privacy category and find 'Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your profile?' in the options. Click Edit to the right of this and tick or clear the box to choose Yes or No.

It can be set on your phone, too. Press the menu button and expand 'Settings & Privacy'. Tap 'Privacy shortcuts', then 'See more privacy settings' and scroll down to the bottom for the option to choose whether to appear in search results. People can still search for you from within Facebook but at least they won't stumble across you on Google.

Bill Powell, via email



Do you want people to find your Facebook page from Google and Bing?



SOCIAL NETWORKING

Stop unwanted followers on Twitter

I was being followed by someone on Twitter who I didn't want following me, but I didn't have a particular reason to block them. Instead, I went to the privacy settings and ticked the box to protect my tweets, to hide my posts from anyone not on my Twitter list. I then blocked the person concerned, so they can't see anything I tweet, and unticked the protected-tweets option I'd previously ticked. Finally, I 'unblocked' the person – they're now removed from the list of people following me, but not blocked.

NE5, Web User Forums

iOS

Improve the privacy of your iOS lock screen

When you receive a text, email or message on your iPhone or iPad, a preview is displayed on the lock screen. I wanted to hide this without disabling my other lock-screen notifications, so I started by going to Settings, General, Accessibility, then Home Button and disabling the 'Rest Finger to Open' option. This prevented Touch ID revealing

any messages, even when the screen was locked. I then went into the Notification settings, selected the apps I wanted to keep private, navigated to 'Show Previews' and chose the 'When Unlocked' option, which stops them appearing on the lock screen. Now, whenever I receive a message, I get

a notification on the lock screen without displaying the message itself.

Jonathan Warne, via email

ANDROID

Turn your mobile Wi-Fi on and off

There are two really cool applets on IFTTT (ifttt.com) for Android that automatically turn your device's Wi-Fi on or off, depending on whether you're at home or not. To turn your device's Wi-Fi on when you reach home, switch the applet on (bit.ly/wifion449) and configure your home address. The other applet (bit.ly/wifioff449) does exactly the same thing, but in reverse. No more connecting to open or insecure hotspots, or accidentally using up all your mobile data.

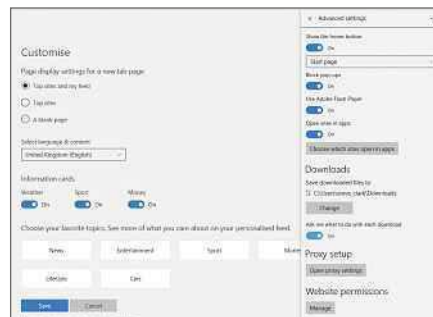
Mandy Collinwood, via email

BROWSERS

Disable annoying Edge download prompts

When you download a file using Edge, the browser asks you what you want to do with it. This is useful for security, but can be annoying. Luckily, you can turn off the prompt by clicking the menu icon in Edge and choosing Settings, then clicking the 'View Advanced settings' button. Under the Downloads section, switch off the option to 'Ask me what to do with each download'. Edge will now simply download files without pestering you with a prompt.

Mike Brandon, via email



Stop Edge bothering you with questions while you're downloading files

EMAIL

Unsubscribe from spam

No sooner do I clean up my email inbox than yet another spam message comes through. If you're having the same problem, I recommend checking out the Unsubscribe Robot (unsubscriberobot.com). It was built by a former Google



The Unsubscribe Robot promises to terminate all your spam

engineer and is totally free to use.

Just forward all those awful spam emails to unsubscribe.robot@gmail.com and you'll automatically be unsubscribed from their mailing lists.

Jeffrey Fellowes, via email

YOUTUBE

Block YouTube recommended channels

YouTube tries to figure out what I like but I often find the channels it recommends are far from my cup of chai. That's why I recently got hold of the Video Blocker extension. First, grab yourself the extension for Chrome (bit.ly/chromevid449) or Firefox (bit.ly/foxblock449). Once it's installed, search for the offending channel on YouTube and right-click any video thumbnail. You're offered the option to 'Block Videos from This Channel'. You can even manage your block list using the Video Blocker icon located in the top-right corner of the browser.

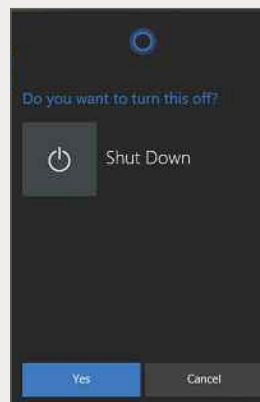
Henry Randall, via email

BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

WINDOWS

Don't tell Cortana to shut down your PC

I know Cortana can answer general questions, tell me the time and weather, and open web pages and documents, but I've only just discovered that on Windows 10, it can actually turn off or restart your computer. I found this out the hard way when I was experimenting with voice commands – "Tell me a joke", "Who's the President of the USA?", that sort of thing.



Be careful! Cortana can do a lot more than tell riddles and search Bing

I decided to see what else it could do and said: "Hey, Cortana, shut down my PC". I almost lost my unsaved work when it asked me to confirm shutdown. Luckily, I didn't say yes!

Cortana can also restart or lock your computer. Turns out this was in the Windows 10 Fall Creators Updates and completely passed me by. At least I know for next time!

Sal Evenden, via email

Have you managed to fix a PC-related disaster?

If so, please send your story to webuser@dennis.co.uk



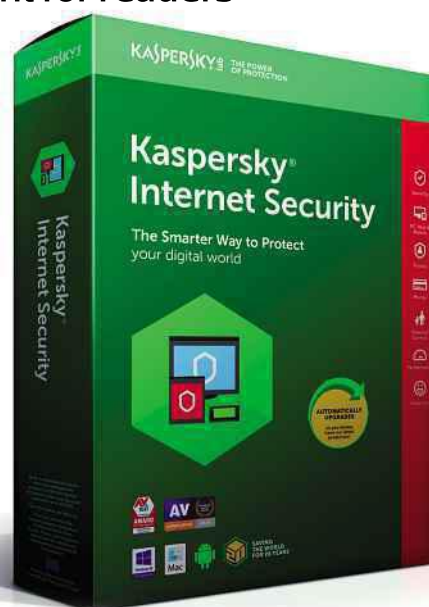
OFFER OF THE FORTNIGHT

Kaspersky Internet Security 2018 - on sale now

Our sister title *Computeractive* is now selling the 2018 edition of the award-winning antivirus Kaspersky Internet Security at a special discount for readers

WHAT'S NEW IN KASPERSKY 2018:

- ✓ Blocks infections that strike as your PC boots
- ✓ Improved notifications for hacked websites
- ✓ Faster startup and update times
- ✓ Stops viruses modifying files on your computer



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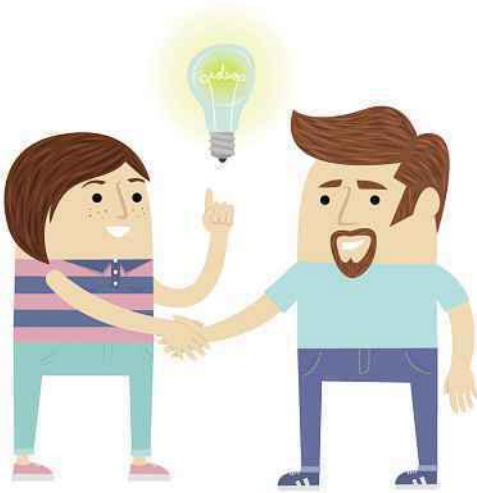
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SECURITY

Solving the Cloudflare DNS mystery

Q I booted up my Windows 7 laptop today and a box appeared with four alternatives for something called '*.cloudflare-dns.com'. Please can you tell me what this is and whether I need it, or let me know if it's a threat?

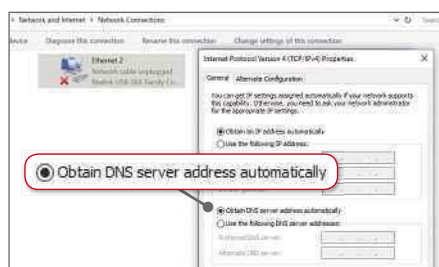
At the same time, my Avira Internet Security Suite needed updating. Could this be part of the problem or is it just a coincidence? I updated Avira and now everything seems to work, with no sign of the Cloudflare box. I searched Google for 'cloudflare' but, to be honest, the replies may as well have been in Chinese – I didn't understand a word.

I get my broadband from BT via its supplied router. Does this mean I use its DNS (Domain Name System) service? If I wanted to change, would it mean notifying or otherwise involving BT?

daddybear, Web User Forums

A Cloudflare (cloudflare-dns.com) has launched its own 'privacy-first' consumer DNS resolver (the database that links the domain names you type into browsers with the actual IP address of the website), which speeds up secure internet connections. Usually, the DNS server is provided by your ISP, but there are others available. You don't have to notify your ISP to use a different one – just change your DNS settings.

You can check if you're using a specific DNS by going to Control Panel, clicking 'Network and Sharing Center', then



If your PC is set to these default settings, you're probably using your ISP's DNS server

SECURITY

Kaspersky versus IObit

Q I am using Kaspersky Total Security (bit.ly/kasts449) and IObit Advanced SystemCare 11 (bit.ly/iobasc449). Kaspersky keeps informing me that SystemCare is giving me 'false information'. Do I ignore these messages or delete the IObit software? **driver32600, Web User Forums**

A Run AdwCleaner (bit.ly/adwc449) to see if any PUPs (potentially unwanted programs) were installed with Advanced SystemCare. A lot of people rate IObit highly, but many knowledgeable users don't touch



If your security software is clashing, use AdwCleaner to check for unwanted programs

system optimisers because they have the potential to do harmful things to your PC. Kaspersky always fares well in antivirus and anti-malware tests, and is arguably the more trustworthy of the two brands. If they don't work together, you'll have to choose between them.

Cantrel & Mike, Web User Forums

choosing 'Change adapter settings'. Right-click your current network connection (it might be labelled Wireless, Wi-Fi or Ethernet) and click Properties.

On the Networking tab, click Internet Protocol Version 4, then click the Properties button. If you're using your ISP's DNS server, 'Obtain DNS server address automatically' should be selected. If it's set to 'Use the following IP address' and the address is set to 1.1.1.1, then you're using Cloudflare – although it's odd that it turned up on your PC out of the blue, so to speak!

Madeline, Web user Forums

WINDOWS 7

Repair missing BOOTMGR

Q I tried to switch on my desktop PC this morning but got a message saying 'BOOTMGR is missing. Press Ctrl+Alt+Del to restart'. When I do this, it just goes back to the notice again. I don't know why or how this has happened.

bob.gas, Web User Forums

A To fix the 'BOOTMGR is missing' error, you need to restart in the advanced boot options, usually by tapping F8 as you switch on your PC. If you've created a System Repair tool,

then boot up with that. Select 'Repair Your Computer' to navigate to the Recovery Environment, then select Command Prompt.

Type `bcdedit | Find "Osdevice"` and, using that partition letter, enter `chkdsk X: /F` where 'X' is your partition letter. You are looking for reported KBs in bad sectors. If it reports any, then run another `chkdsk`, changing the parameter to `/R`. If it doesn't report any bad sectors, then you can try the 'Startup Repair' option.

You should run this up to three times to resolve the problem. If that fails, go back to the Command Prompt and type `bcdedit /Rebuildbcd`. Provided you only have the one OS installed, it should produce a brief report suggesting that it can't find any Windows installations. Type `bootrec /fixmbr` then `bootrec /fixboot`. Exit and reboot to see if the problem's been fixed.

Cantrel, Web User Forums



If you see this before your PC restarts, your Master Boot Record may need resetting

Star Email

WordPress is better for novices than Wix

One of your correspondents in Issue 447 suggested that Wix was a better way for a novice to build a website than WordPress. I'd never used Wix until I got a support call (I run a 'website rescue' service) from an accountancy firm unable to make a change to their one-page Wix website. The fix was trivial but I understood their problem because I also found the navigation confusing.

What I'm more concerned about with tools like Wix is that the system is proprietary. If you need a feature the system doesn't offer – tough. If you want to move the website to another host – tough. If Wix goes offline for an extended period (or goes bust) – tough. If they choose to hike the price in future, you have no choice but to pay up.



From my perspective (as a semi-retired web developer), I don't like having my hands tied. For me, anything short of hand-coded HTML/CSS/JavaScript/PHP is going to be limiting but I appreciate that most people in need of a small website will prefer something simpler.

WordPress is used for over 30% of websites globally. Wix is under 1%

(stats from w3techs.com). A basic WordPress site can be created in a matter of minutes. Whether Wix is easier than WordPress is debatable. It's hard to compare difficulty for first-time users, but even if WordPress is just a little more difficult, it would be a price worth paying for the benefits – including that of not being in a walled garden.

Because WordPress is so extensively used, there are vast numbers of online resources to help with anything from basic queries to the most advanced customisation.

A novice can dabble with WordPress at no cost at wordpress.com. If you get on okay with it, you can upgrade to commercial hosting or try some of the alternatives.

Rob Hindle, via email



Why is Facebook asking me for photo ID?

I have never had a Facebook account, but I recently started getting emails from them saying things like 'add a photo to your information', addressed to a name



I don't know. Initially, I thought it was just another junk email trying to get my personal information.

After a while, I got fed up and went to the Facebook site, put in my email address and clicked 'forgotten password'. To my surprise, I got a link to reset my password, which I did. However, I could not access

the account without sending photo ID, which includes my name and date of birth. As I had not set up the account, this would not have helped them anyway and I was not going to enter personal information in a dodgy form!

I eventually found an email address for Facebook's data-protection department and asked them to remove the account, but they wouldn't do this without the photo ID. In the end, I just blocked all emails from Facebook.

What a dodgy firm! They knew the

request came from the email address that apparently set up the account so what was their problem? I assume someone set up an account and mistyped the email address, entering mine.

Even if I had set up a Facebook account, I would not have given my real date of birth. It is no business of theirs! So providing photo ID would have accomplished nothing.

Bob S, via email

AliExpress is fine for small purchases

Regarding your recommendations for Amazon alternatives in Issue 448. I use AliExpress, but just bear in mind that Chinese companies pay no VAT here, and no tax either, I would think. I buy small amounts so



Quiz Answers: Issue 448

- Shooting Stars**
- Father Ted**
- Only Fools and Horses**
- One Foot in the Grave**
- On the Buses**
- Dinnerladies**





as not to attract VAT and customs.

So far, I have paid no extras and only one package out of about 10 has ever been held up at customs. I suspect if you buy a mobile phone or laptop, the chances are it will cost you. But bedding and a couple of pairs of trousers or similar are okay.

Martin Fletcher, Thorpe Hesley

Shop around for a better mobile signal

Maybe it's time for Barry Collins to move to a different area to solve his never-ending problems with getting a decent mobile signal (Page 404, Issue 448), or at least switch to a different network.

I had to move from Three because I was having constant trouble getting a signal in my village, which made it very difficult to make phone calls and browsing the web nigh-on impossible.

Eventually, I admitted defeat and signed up with O2, which improved my mobile reception immeasurably and I haven't looked back since. So perhaps, instead of moaning, Barry Collins should take some affirmative action. It is possible to get good 3G and 4G coverage in this country if you're willing to shop around.

Mason Chandler, via email

Judgment Day is coming for landlines

Am I the only one who's worried that BT plans to kill off regular landlines by 2025 (Issue 448)? Especially after reading your FAQ feature about autonomous killer robots! Yes, I hate cold calls as much as the next chap, but I fear we're in too much of a rush to discard perfectly serviceable technology. After all, we've already seen the analogue broadcast signal switched off, and dial-up died in the arms of the AOL trial CD. Meanwhile all our work and play has to be synced, streamed or downloaded.

Not only does BT want to dump the landline, but Google is attempting to kill the humble text message. How will we be able to contact family and friends once those pesky Terminators disconnect us all from the internet? I'm all for a digital future – but not digital-only. That's exactly what the robots want!

Astor French, via email

What you say...

VINCE CABLE HAS SAID USERS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO SELL THEIR DATA TO WEBSITES. DO YOU AGREE?

I'd like the option to sell my personal details to selected companies and take a percentage of profits, instead of the multinational corporations making millions.

Brian Brown

What a half-brained scheme. The contract terms will be so labyrinthine you will have no comeback.

Phil McCarty

Yes, I would because none of my data apart from my name is true! Even my date of birth is incorrect online.

Paul @abertawejack

Nope, are you kidding?! Fortunately, I've never used Facebook and haven't used Google for over two years!

Roger Whitcomb @milairpix

MICROSOFT NO LONGER SELLS WINDOWS PHONES. DID YOU EVER HAVE ONE?

I had a Windows phone, but found it useless. I prefer Android – much cheaper and easier to use.

Handyman @AndrewA33456203

Had the Nokia 1020 with the Leica lens. Great camera, but apps and most other things weren't. Android all the way now.

Colin Leonard

I never did, but my company used them for a year or so before abandoning them for Android phones. I hated them because as the nominated IT problem solver, I had to learn to use yet another system.

Nat Grove

Had one a few years ago. Apps were rubbish. It was a boring phone. Long live Android.

Geoffrey Boow

MORE PEOPLE CAN NOW GET 1GBPS THAN CAN'T GET 10MBPS. WHICH ARE YOU CLOSER TO?

75Mbps on TalkTalk in Dulwich, south London. I live on a council estate where Hyperoptic will be installing their 1Gbps service, but at the moment I'm happy with TalkTalk.

Martin Phillp

I get roughly 27Mbps with Sky. Virgin doesn't even exist here in north Wales.

Joanne Evans

200Mbps with Virgin in Swansea. I get close to and equal to top speed each time I've measured it.

Howell Rees

70Mbps in Coventry. Great service – fibre-optic. The fastest I can get on a normal BT phone line is 1Mbps.

Carl Briggs

SHOULD SOCIAL-MEDIA SITES BE FORCED TO DO MORE TO BLOCK CHILDREN, AS JEREMY HUNT WANTS? (bit.ly/kidsage449)?

It's the parents' responsibility! We're living in a nanny nation. Clamp down on the availability of child sexual-abuse and animal-abuse videos, and monitor the dark web, but leave parenting to parents!

Jason 'Boz' Bowyer

When a story like this comes up, you only hear from those saying it is the parents' responsibility. Where are the parents who do let their children have free rein? Why do they say nothing?

Gavin Green

Sounds like there's going to be a blanket law for all of us disguised as one for helping children.

Andrew Wakeman

! Page 404

Amazon needs to clean up its reviews system, and **Barry Collins** knows how



How Amazon can sock it to the sock puppets

Seen many products on Amazon lately with a two-star review? When even a clock bearing the face of *EastEnders*' Pat Butcher manages to rack up 118 reviews averaging 4.5 stars, you know something's not right.

To be fair to Amazon, it knows it has a problem. About 18 months ago, it banned companies from paying people to review their products on the site, either in the form of hard cash or by tempting them with free goods. You may have come across Amazon reviews that state something like: "Thank you to So-and-So Company for providing me with a free So-and-So gadget in exchange for an unbiased, independent review". Well, that's not allowed anymore, forcing disreputable companies to become even sneakier.

I can't be the only person to have bought something lately from a third-party Amazon vendor, only for a letter – an actual, paper letter – to arrive a few days later, offering me another freebie if I post a five-star review of the product I bought. In fact, I know I'm not, because a fabulous piece of research shows that

Amazon is still blighted with iffy customer reviews – especially when it comes to tech goods. ReviewMeta (reviewmeta.com), a brilliant site designed to analyse reviews

on Amazon, reveals that the site is still stuffed with these so-called 'sock puppets'. Of the 47,846 reviews for the first 10 products listed in an Amazon search for 'Bluetooth speakers', two-thirds were suspect, according to the ReviewMeta tool. Either they used the same boilerplate language or the

“ Of the 47,846 reviews for the first 10 products listed in an Amazon search for 'Bluetooth speakers', two-thirds were suspect ”

reviewers were so-called 'one-hit wonders' who have never reviewed another product on the site, or were flagged as never having bought the product in the first place. According to ReviewMeta, 72% of the Pat Butcher clock reviewers didn't actually buy the thing. It's bang out of order, as the

current landlord of the Queen Vic might say.

So, how can Amazon fix this problem? When a high average rating on the store makes a massive

difference to sales, companies are always going to cheat. So, maybe it's time for Amazon to play them at their own game. Instead of allowing vendors to incentivise customers to leave reviews, Amazon should do the same. If a customer leaves a review of a product they've purchased, Amazon

could put, say, a 10p credit on their account. Only customers who have bought the product are allowed to leave reviews, eradicating the problem of click-farms or Facebook pages sending people to the site to leave fake five-star ratings. Amazon's mobile app could prompt you for a review a couple of weeks after you've bought something, offering the small reward for a rating out of five and a sentence or two.

It might sound like small beer, but those 10p rewards will soon add up, just like the change you put in the jar on the sideboard. Before long, the sheer weight of genuine customer reviews outweighs the sock puppets and Amazon has a reviews systems that customers can trust once more.

In a recent letter to the company's shareholders, Amazon boss Jeff Bezos said the company will always "insist on the highest standards" to keep its "divinely discontent" customers happy. If Jeff wants to keep us sweet, he needs to put us all on the payroll.



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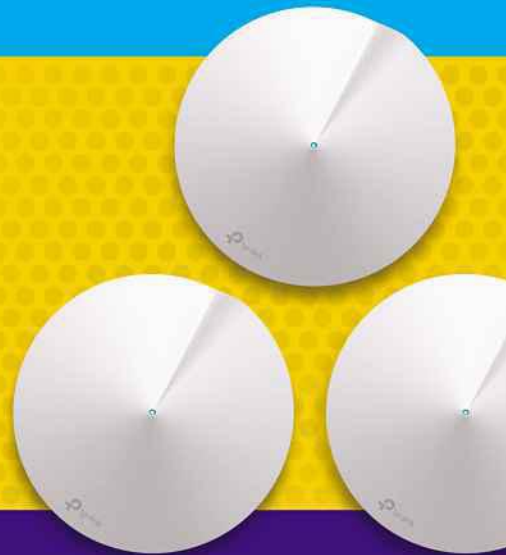
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