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# WebUser

Issue 475

15 - 28 May 2019

/ Best software / New apps / Tumblr's indecent proposal

## DITCH CHROME FOR EDGE!

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# 50 BEST APPS

## YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF!

**Fantastic FREE Android and iOS apps that are too good to miss **p40****

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**p50**

### DON'T PAY FOR CLOUD STORAGE

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**p58**

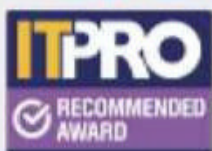
### HAVE YOUR PASSWORDS BEEN STOLEN (AGAIN)?

Find out and change them NOW

**p57**



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## So many apps, so little time

**B**rowsing app stores to find something useful to install on your phone is like going to a supermarket that has dispensed with shelves and dumped everything into the aisles – without labels. You may think you’ve found the tin of baked beans you came in for, but you can’t be sure of its contents, its quality or whether it’ll infect you with something nasty. Search for ‘Wi-Fi scanner’ on Google Play, for example, and you get 250 results, all with similar names, logos and (often dubious) reviews.

In this issue’s cover feature, we save you the time and hassle of sifting through

endless apps by picking 50 of the best tools for your Android or iOS device. Rather than pointlessly recommending things you’ve already installed, we’ve chosen top-quality apps that you (hopefully) won’t be familiar with. Not because they’re rubbish – we’ve ignored tools that don’t meet our high standards – but because they’ve got lost in the piles of dross that fill the app stores. Tuck in!

**Robert Irvine, Editor**  
[editor@webuser.co.uk](mailto:editor@webuser.co.uk)  
[#webuser](https://twitter.com/webuser)



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**ISSUE 475**

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### EDITORIAL

**Editor** Robert Irvine  
**Technical & Reviews Editor** Andy Shaw  
**Features Writer** Steve Clark  
**Art Editor** Laurence Hallam  
**Production Editor** Miki Berenyi  
**Contributors** Wayne Williams, Jane Hoskyn, Roland Waddilove, David Crookes, Jonathan Parkyn, Barry Collins, Nicole Kobie, Nik Rawlinson, Gareth Beach  
**Editorial email:** [editor@webuser.co.uk](mailto:editor@webuser.co.uk)

### ADVERTISING

**Tel:** 0203 890 3824  
**Group Advertising Director** Andrea Mason  
**Senior Sales Executive** Ashley Wood

### ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

**Group Production Manager**  
 Stephen Catherall, 0203 890 4050  
**Production Assistant** Helina Ozyurt, 0203 890 3827

### MARKETING

**Marketing Manager** Rachel Hare  
**Marketing Production Manager** Gemma Hills

### MANAGEMENT

**Group Editor** Daniel Booth  
**Managing Director** John Garewal  
**MD of Advertising** Julian Lloyd-Evans  
**Commercial and Retail Director** David Barker  
**CFO/COO** Brett Reynolds  
**Chief Executive** James Tye  
**Company Founder** Felix Dennis

### SYNDICATION AND LICENSING

**Tel:** 0203 890 4027  
**Endorsement Licensing Manager** Ryan Chambers  
**Licensing Content Manager** Nicole Creasey

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Tel:** 0330 333 9493  
**Email:** [subscriptions@dennis.co.uk](mailto:subscriptions@dennis.co.uk)  
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# What's New Online

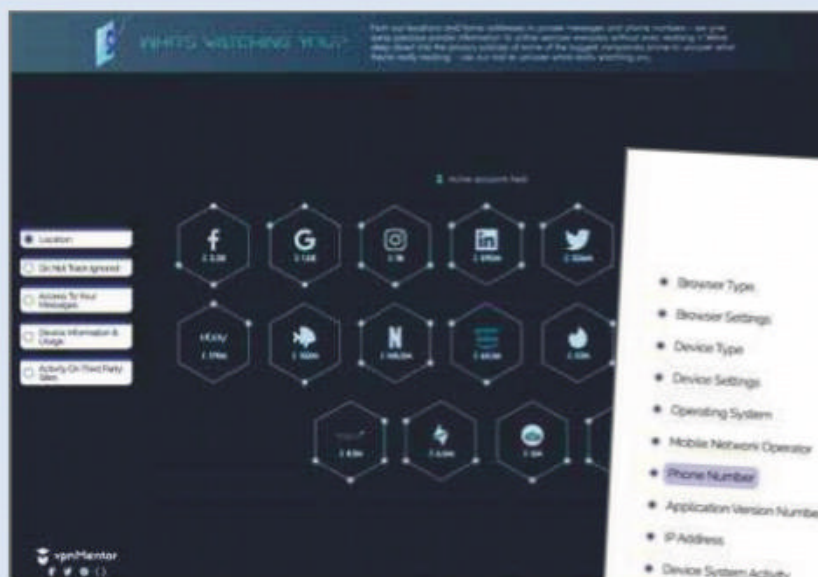
## Discover who's watching you online

**H**ave you ever wondered exactly what information social networks, dating websites and streaming services have gathered about you? Visit VPN Mentor's new Who's Watching You tool and you'll soon find out.

The VPN-testing company has scoured the privacy policies of a host of tech firms, including Facebook, Google, Instagram, Twitter, Spotify, Netflix, Tidal and eBay. Click their logos to see bullet-pointed lists of everything they're tracking – and that's on top of any data you handed over when you signed up, including your email address and date of birth.

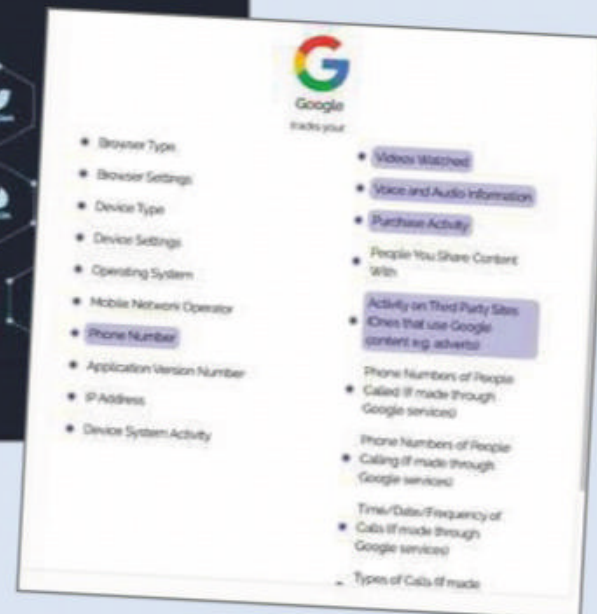
A list of privacy functions on the left of the screen lets you filter the companies to see those that track your location, access your messages, gather information about your device and usage, and keep an eye on how you use third-party websites.

Who's Watching You even lets you



see which companies ignore Do Not Track requests: Netflix, Tinder and Tidal are the chief offenders here.

It's certainly an eye-opener. Facebook logs your mouse movements, for instance, as well as your phone's battery level and signal strength, while Amazon Prime Video tracks your credit history, and Firefox checks your IP



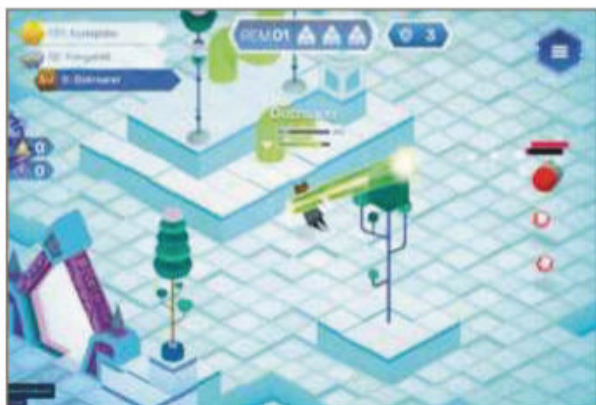
address, system memory and operating system. Maybe it's time to read those terms and conditions more carefully.

[bit.ly/watching475](http://bit.ly/watching475)

## Play the BBC's first online multiplayer game

[bit.ly/game475](http://bit.ly/game475)

The BBC is constantly looking for new ways to connect with its audience, which is why it puts so much effort into online experiments. The latest is a free multiplayer game called Nightfall, aimed at eight to 13-year-olds. Players must work together in a shared, cartoon-like “dreamscape” to help rid the world of negativity and nightmares. As such, the BBC



hopes players will learn that worries can be conquered, and that they don't have to deal with them on their own.

To keep players safe, the developers have limited in-game communication to predefined messages such as sad and smiley

faces. Players are also assigned usernames so they can't be identified. The production values are very high, so there's a chance that the game will evolve to incorporate BBC characters and programmes, but for now Nightfall is in beta and the developers are seeking feedback from children and parents before any official launch.

## Call up to 50 people on Skype

[www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)

There was a time when group Skype calls were “limited” to a maximum of 25 people – and, to be honest, that was probably

more than enough for most of us. Today, however, you have the option of making group video and audio calls to twice as many people – which could be handy if you're holding a large work meeting, you're part of a decent-sized club or you just have a lot of friends and family who want to chat at the same time.

To make its service more amenable to large groups, Skype has initiated a few changes. By default, notifications (in the guise of a quick ping) have replaced a ring, which Skype says is less obtrusive. Even so, you can still ring an entire group provided it has no more than 25 people in it, and you can also ring individuals if you fear they may not have spotted your initial notification.





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

## Identify Game of Thrones locations

[bit.ly/thrones475](http://bit.ly/thrones475)

Test your knowledge of the fictional locations featured in hit TV series *Game of Thrones* by taking this quiz. Each round asks you questions based on scenes in the series, and to answer you simply click a location on the map. Try for the maximum score of 500, and see which character the game associates with your performance.



## Wipe out your search results

[www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk)

Thanos is one of Marvel's fictional supervillains, but his evil powers are not confined to comic books or, indeed, the smash hit movie *Avengers: Endgame*. If you type **Thanos** into Google's search bar, a Wikipedia



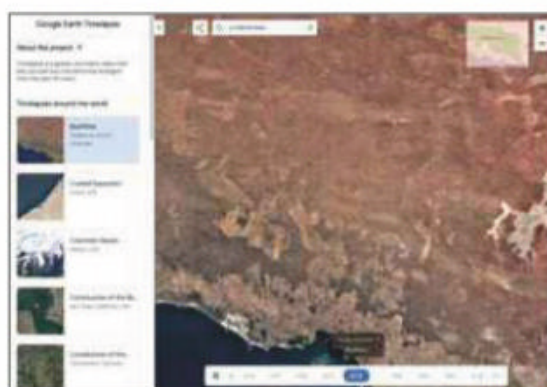
referral appears in a panel on the right-hand side of the screen, which includes an

image of a jewel-encrusted glove. If you then dare to click this icon – which, for all you non-fans out there, is called the Infinity Gauntlet – it will unleash its powers with a click of its fingers, and your search results will start to disappear before your very eyes. Click it again and the results reappear. Phew!

## Explore how the Earth is changing

[bit.ly/timelapse475](http://bit.ly/timelapse475)

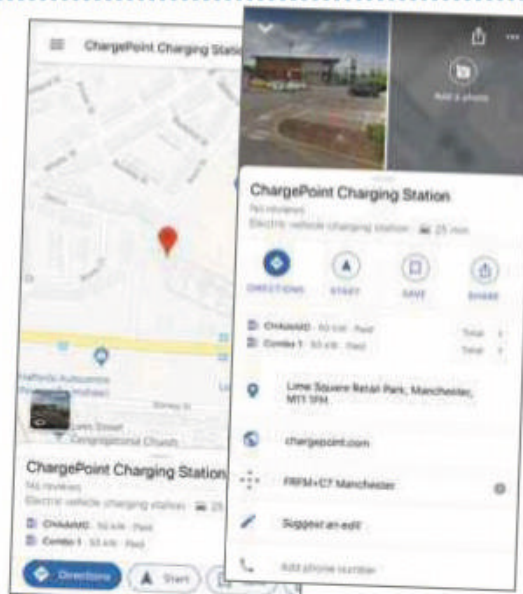
Not only does Google Earth Timelapse now support mobile devices, it has also added two extra years of imagery courtesy of the BBC. The service, which lets you pick a location and see how it has changed over the past 35 years, now includes images from the Beeb's *Earth From Space* series, which takes it up to 2018. Images from 1984 to 2016 were provided through a partnership with the US Geological Survey and NASA.



## Find a charge point for your electric car

[maps.google.co.uk](http://maps.google.co.uk)

Electric vehicles are growing in popularity, but the biggest problem with them is finding a charging station. If you search for "ev charging station" in Google Maps, it now shows the availability of stations across the UK, covering the Chargemaster, SemaConnect and EVgo networks. It also shows the number of charge ports, their type and their charging speed.



## NEW VOICE COMMANDS



### Listen to a kids' story

Google Assistant can now read stories to you. Say, "Hey Google, tell me a story" and listen to tales such as *Sleeping Beauty* and *Little Red Riding Hood*.



### Get instant translations

Going abroad? You can ask Siri to translate phrases by saying, "Hey Siri, can you translate a phrase into [language]?", followed by the words you'd like to convert.



### Learn about Madagascar

Through a series of interactive messages from charity WaterAid, you can set off on an audio journey to the Madagascan village of Tsarafangitra, learn phrases, hear recipes and play games. Say "open WaterAid Voices" to get started.



### Listen to Mark Zuckerberg

[bit.ly/zuck475](http://bit.ly/zuck475)

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has launched a podcast on Spotify called 'Tech and Society'. He's not a natural broadcaster, but so far he's spoken about tech and the law with a Harvard professor and chatted about journalism.

### Run quizzes on Instagram

[www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)

A new quiz sticker in Instagram lets you ask friends and followers a multiple-choice question. You'll find it in the sticker tray in the top-right of the camera screen. Simply write a question, create options and post.

### Check public transport in Uber

[www.uber.com](http://www.uber.com)

Taxi-booking app Uber now offers users in London information about public transport, as well as its own fleet of cars. This means you can factor in Tube and bus prices when deciding whether to call an Uber.



## Facebook unveils new privacy features – but is it too late?

### What happened?

Facebook used its annual F8 developer conference ([www.f8.com](http://www.f8.com)) to unveil a range of new features, many of which focused on privacy. The move follows a year of negative press for the company, from the Cambridge Analytica data-sharing scandal to a security breach that affected 50 million users, as well as wider concerns about the impact of social media on mental health and children.

So it's no wonder CEO and founder Mark Zuckerberg started his talk at the conference with an apology: "I know that we don't exactly have the strongest reputation on privacy right now, to put it lightly". How sincere he was remains to be seen, although it didn't help that he delivered that line while laughing.

Besides vague pledges to take privacy more seriously and a promise to work with regulators, Facebook unveiled plans to give users greater privacy. Notably, Facebook's chat app Messenger will get end-to-end encryption by default, following the lead of WhatsApp, which Facebook bought in 2014.

However, the proposed privacy changes were announced amid fresh accusations of data breaches, including reports that Facebook workers have



sifted through millions of users' posts and photos as part of artificial-intelligence training.

### How will it affect you?

The shift to end-to-end encryption means Facebook won't be able to see what you write in messages you send to other Messenger users. It will still, of course, continue to keep a profile of you to target you with ads, particularly on Instagram and using Facebook's Stories tool, which lets users post short videos and images that disappear after a day.

As well as privacy changes, Facebook introduced a feature called Secret Crushes that lets users see if their friends fancy them. So far, the tool isn't available in the UK or US, and it's unclear if it ever will be. Another new feature, Meet New Friends, uses profile data to find would-be friends who share interests or mutual connections. The company also suggested that the Facebook Portal video-chat device will reach Europe this autumn, offering WhatsApp-based calls and encryption.

Facebook is redesigning its desktop and mobile tools, too. The company said the new look would be cleaner and easier to navigate, with an emphasis on Groups, Events and Stories, which are apparently the three reasons people still use the social network. The redesign is already being rolled out to mobile devices, while the desktop version will launch in a few months.

### What do we think?

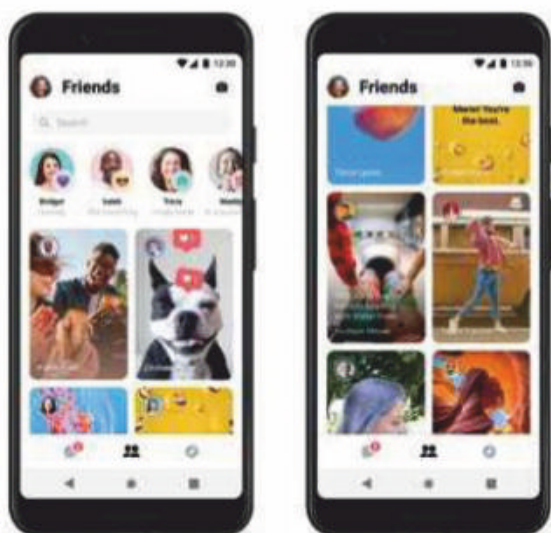
All messaging apps should offer end-to-end encryption by default – there's no reason service providers such as Facebook should be able to read your chats with your mum, let alone anyone else. We're glad to hear that Facebook is finally catching up with encryption, but it's a disappointing response to the year of privacy breaches Zuckerberg's company has suffered. After all, none of those

privacy scandals had anything to do with private messaging – they all involved the huge amounts of data the site has harvested about its users. That isn't about to change.

The announcements are unlikely to convince many users that Facebook is protecting their privacy. However, Facebook's ownership of Instagram and WhatsApp makes Zuckerberg's social behemoth hard to avoid. If your friends and family use Facebook to communicate, it's difficult to walk away. Facebook may simply be introducing encryption to show regulators it's making progress on privacy, but while the move is welcome, it changes nothing.

This means it's time for the regulators to step up. In 2011, Facebook was forced to agree to respect user privacy or face fines. Just before F8 kicked off, the company admitted it would probably have to pay billions of dollars in fines, but given that it made \$15 billion in the previous quarter, even large fines may not be enough to inspire change.

So what's the solution? Perhaps Zuckerberg should step down in favour of a more responsible CEO. Maybe regulators need to break up the firm to separate Instagram, Messenger and WhatsApp, or recommend new laws requiring real change. We won't hold our breath – but at least the redesign means we'll lose our privacy with a little more style.



*The redesigned Facebook Messenger app will offer end-to-end encryption*



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

## Apple may be exaggerating iPhone battery life

### What happened?

Smartphones may not be delivering the battery life their manufacturers promise, according to tests of five brands by consumer group Which. The results from two companies, Apple and HTC, showed a significant mismatch between what their marketing materials claimed and how long batteries actually lasted between charges. The difference was as high as 50% in some cases.

Apple said it stood by its battery claims, noting that results can vary depending on testing methodology.

### How will it affect you?

Apple says its iPhone XR offers 25 hours of talk time



on a single charge, but Which's test measured only 16 and a half. HTC's handsets on average claimed 20.5 hours, but actually managed 19.6 of talk time. Other handset makers, including Nokia, Samsung and Sony, all under-promised on battery life, with tests showing their phones lasted longer than claimed. Indeed, Sony's Xperia Z5 Compact lasted seven hours longer than

promised, allowing almost 26 hours of talk time between charges.

How long your phone lasts between charges largely depends on how you use it – few of us hold 25-hour phone conversations, after all. If you're shopping for a new handset, it's worth reading trustworthy reviews to see if marketing claims on battery life and other features stand up to scrutiny.

### What do we think?

Apple is correct on one point: different testing methodologies can give different results. That said, it's surprising to see such a gap in promised battery life and what's actually delivered. That's a problem, because battery life is a major sticking point for most smartphone buyers, with a survey by mobile body GSMA suggesting it's a priority for 95% of people. Given the importance of battery life, smartphone makers would be wise to invest more time and research into increasing the length of time between charges rather than cramming in cutting-edge features such as facial recognition.

## Windows 10 will need more storage to install

### What happened?

Laptops and tablets running Windows 10 have a new minimum storage requirement, after Microsoft bumped up the amount of space needed for installing updates to 7GB. The idea is that computers should set aside enough space for the update so they don't run out halfway through the process.

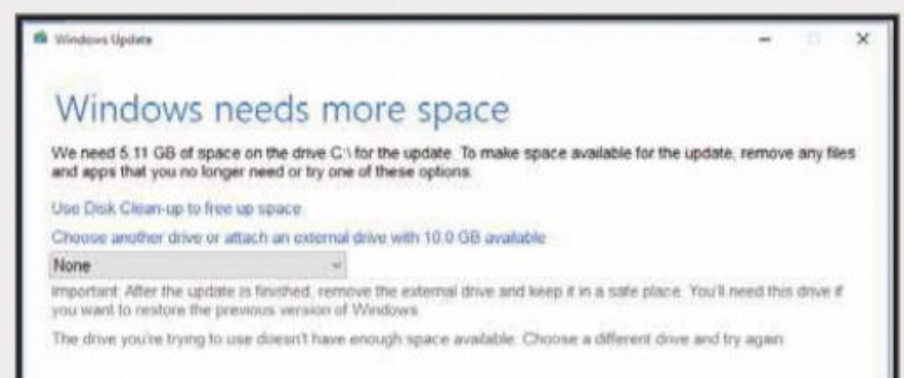
The previous requirement for 16GB of storage applied to 32-bit versions of Windows – it was always at least 32GB for 64-bit versions. With this new demand for an extra 7GB, on top of the space Windows already takes up, a laptop with just

16GB of built-in storage won't have much room left for software or files. To address this, Microsoft is increasing the minimum storage requirement to 32GB.

### How will it affect you?

Most modern laptops have much more built-in storage than 32GB, let alone 16GB, but some budget devices have limited space. You can increase your capacity using an SD card or external drive.

This change comes into effect with the next update, Windows 10 version 1903, which Microsoft is set to release within weeks, so it may be worth cleaning up your laptop's files to make sure you have enough room. If you can't install the update,



don't panic. The most recent major update, released in November last year, will still be supported until this time next year, so you have plenty of time to boost your storage or upgrade to a new device.

### What do we think?

Microsoft was foolish to think 16GB would be enough storage for a budget laptop. The money hardware companies save by installing

16GB rather than 32GB is negligible anyway, so it wouldn't have made much of a dent in profits if Microsoft had forced them to offer better specs in the first place. The industry needs to realise that lots of people hold on to devices for five or more years, and that forced obsolescence is unacceptable for financial and environmental reasons. It's time to think ahead.



# Google to delete personal data automatically

## What happened?

Google said it will now give its users the option to delete their search and location history automatically after three months. The company already lets you delete data manually from its services including YouTube, Maps and Search, but it will soon provide controls that wipe details of your activities automatically after a minimum of three months. These controls will apply to Location History and Web & App Activity and will be available “in the coming weeks”, according to Google.

“We work to keep your data private and secure, and we’ve heard your feedback that we need to provide simpler ways for you to manage or delete it,” Google said on its blog ([bit.ly/delete475](https://bit.ly/delete475)). “You should always be able to manage your data in a way that works best for you, and we’re committed to giving you the best controls to make that happen.”

## How will it affect you?

If you’re uneasy about the data Google collects and stores about you, these new controls will undoubtedly be welcome. Few of us really need or want the search giant to hang on to details of things we searched for, places we

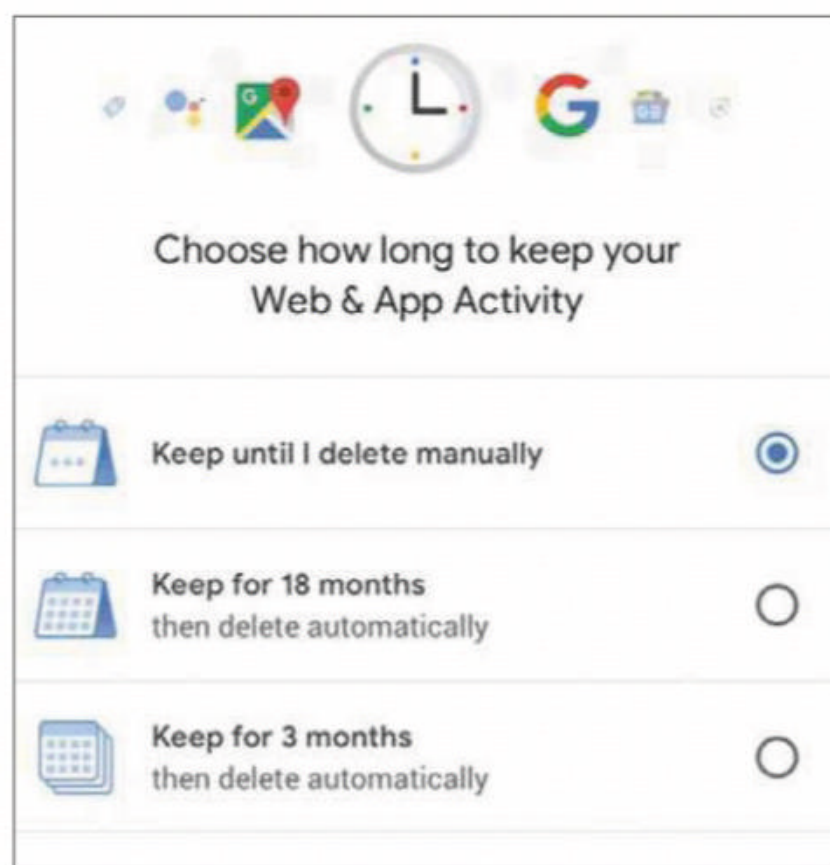
visited and videos we watched months ago, especially when this information is used for advertising purposes. Although we can already delete this data manually, many of us never bother, so automatic erasure is a good way to ensure it happens without placing the burden on us.

If you find Google’s ‘recommendations’ useful – at least when they’re based on your recent activity – you can increase the time range from three to 18 months. Any data older than that will be automatically deleted from your account on an ongoing basis. You can of course still manually wipe entries from your Location History and Web & App Activity whenever you want.

## What do we think?

Google’s new data-management tools come after both Microsoft and Facebook announced features giving users greater control over their personal data. It highlights a growing trend

among digital-service providers of making an effort to show responsibility about data privacy. This can only be good news for web users, but the fact that tech companies didn’t think to offer such controls until now only demonstrates how greedy and cavalier they’ve been with our personal data for far too long. Hopefully, these latest efforts by the tech giants are a permanent step in the right direction, and the privacy breaches we’ve witnessed over the past few years, such as the Cambridge Analytica scandal, will be much less frequent.



## FIRST LOOK

### Oppo Reno 5G

[bit.ly/oppo475](https://bit.ly/oppo475)

Chinese smartphone manufacturer Oppo has managed to steal a march on its rivals by making the first 5G-enabled smartphone. The arrival of 5G handsets should come as no surprise to tech enthusiasts. Phone manufacturers announced their commitment to the new high-speed technology at the Mobile World Congress exhibition earlier this year, and now it seems the wait is over.

Although 5G is obviously the most exciting feature on the Oppo Reno 5G, the phone isn’t a one-trick pony and will be of particular interest to avid amateur photographers. It boasts a triple-camera setup, with a main camera that offers an impressive resolution of 48-megapixels. This is

complemented by a 13-megapixel ‘periscope’ camera with a telephoto lens and 10x zoom for capturing distant objects, and a 16-megapixel ‘selfie cam’ that slides out from the top of the phone, so it doesn’t steal any space from the screen.

The Reno 5G is powered by the latest Qualcomm Snapdragon 855 processor, with 8GB of RAM and a generous 256GB of storage. Its 6.6in screen has a resolution of 1,080 x 2,340 pixels and uses AMOLED panel technology, with Gorilla Glass protection.



The large screen requires a suitably beefy 4,065mAh battery, which works with Oppo’s own fast-charging technology to take it from 0% to 75% power in 30 minutes, and charge it completely in just under an hour.

The Reno 5G comes in either Jet Black or Ocean Green finishes, with dual nano-SIM slots, NFC and dual-band Wi-Fi 802.11ac. The UK price and release date have yet to be confirmed, but the phone is already on sale in Switzerland for €899 (£770).

Full 5G networks may be some way from completion in the UK, but with the Reno 5G, Oppo is giving smartphone fans a way to prepare themselves for that high-speed future, and a good reason to get excited.





## WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

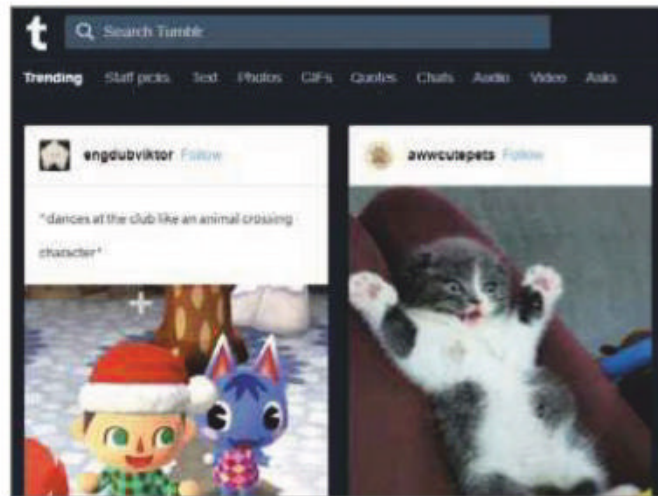
## Is Pornhub bringing adult content back to Tumblr?

Adult-content site Pornhub says it's "extremely interested" in buying Tumblr from its current owner, US telecommunications company Verizon. Since acquiring the social network for £840 million in 2006, Verizon has struggled to turn Tumblr into a profitable business. According to the *Wall Street Journal* ([bit.ly/verizon475](http://bit.ly/verizon475)), the company is now seeking a buyer for the troubled site.

As you may remember, in Issue 465 ([bit.ly/webuser465](http://bit.ly/webuser465)) we reported that Tumblr had banned so-called 'not safe for work' (NSFW) content, ranging from artistic nudes to blatant pornography. Verizon's misguided attempt to make the site more advertiser-friendly by removing a core element of its appeal for users led to fans deserting the platform.

That response didn't go unnoticed by Pornhub CEO Corey Price. During a recent interview with BuzzFeed ([bit.ly/buzz475](http://bit.ly/buzz475)), Price said "Tumblr was a safe haven for those who wanted to explore and express their sexuality, adult entertainment aficionados included. We've long been dismayed that such measures were taken to eradicate erotic communities on the platform, leaving many individuals without an asylum through which they could comfortably peruse adult content."

He added: "There are obvious synergies between the two brands and



value Pornhub could derive from Tumblr. We're extremely interested in acquiring the platform and are very much looking forward to one day restoring it to its former glory with NSFW content."

## LIKELIHOOD RATING



We wouldn't be surprised if Pornhub did at least bid on Tumblr. As the eighth most popular website in the world, Pornhub can certainly afford it, and the buyout could help 'de-sleaze' the Pornhub brand. However, don't forget that Pornhub is adept at marketing. This statement of intent could be no more than a stunt to get the website's name in the papers and innocent technology magazines.

## WEBOMETER

## WE LIKE...

## ↑ BBC to launch its own voice assistant

The BBC is taking on Amazon's Alexa and Apple's Siri by developing its own voice assistant, which will let users search for content verbally on mobile devices and smart TVs. The assistant is currently dubbed 'Auntie' by BBC insiders.



## ↑ Twitter lets you add GIFs to your retweets

Twitter users can now add images, videos and GIFs to their retweets, "making it easier to join the conversation when you can't find the right words". The long-requested feature is available on Android, iOS and Twitter's mobile website.



## WE DON'T LIKE...

## ↓ Phishing scams plague social-media sites

Social-media phishing scams rose by 74.7% in the first three months of 2019, according to security company Vade Secure. Most of these scams were spread via Facebook and Instagram, while Microsoft and PayPal were the most impersonated brands.



## ↓ Dark mode no longer coming to WhatsApp

WhatsApp has reportedly abandoned plans to add a dark mode to its Android app, removing the option from all test versions. This is despite its owner, Facebook, introducing a dark mode in the latest update to its other messaging service, Messenger.



## What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

## Dock

[bit.ly/dock475](http://bit.ly/dock475) | From £27

When visitors ask to use your Wi-Fi, it inevitably means reading out a lengthy password, which they then have to type manually into their phone or tablet. Dock solves this problem by letting friends and family connect to your Wi-Fi network simply by touching the device with their phones – receiving the password through NFC – or scanning its QR code with their cameras. It's encased in oak or ash, depending on which model you choose, and its creators are planting trees to make up for the wood they use. They hope to raise £16,000 by 29 May.





# Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

### Security flaws found in millions of smart devices

A security researcher has discovered serious flaws in a software feature called iLnkP2P, which many Internet of Things (IoT) devices use. The flaws potentially leave millions of smart devices from companies including VStarcam, Eye Sight and HiChip vulnerable to hijacking by hackers.

The purpose of iLnkP2P is to allow owners of IoT devices, including security cameras, baby monitors and smart doorbells, to configure them quickly without needing to open ports manually in their router's firewall. Instead, they can connect their devices to their home network by entering a unique serial number. The main flaw in iLnkP2P lets attackers carry out man-in-the-

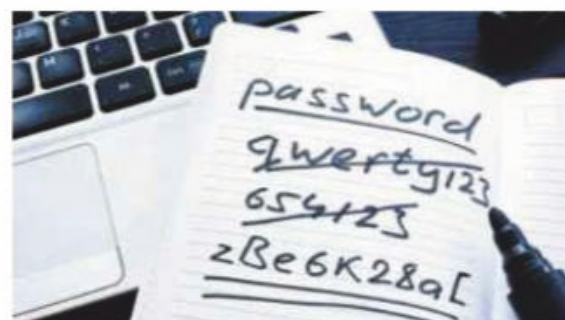


middle attacks and steal passwords, while a second vulnerability allows hackers to see which devices can be exploited. The security researcher, Paul Marrapese, says that most of the affected devices appear not to use encryption, and that any hardware using iLnkP2P is at risk. He provides a full list of serial numbers for devices that may be compromised in the Am I Affected section of his website (link below).

[hacked.camera](#)

### Windows passwords will no longer expire

Microsoft has announced plans to scrap Windows' password-expiration policy and encourage users to implement more effective security measures. The company explained that if people are required to change their passwords regularly, they're more likely to write them down so they don't forget them, which increases the likelihood that someone will steal them.



Microsoft also noted that if people are frequently asked to update their passwords, they tend to make only very small changes, which isn't particularly secure. They are also more likely to forget their passwords and have to reset them. The company says that password expiration is an out-of-date method of data protection, and it no longer recommends such policies.

Windows currently requests that a password is changed every 42 days. The new policy will be introduced in the Windows 10 May 2019 update, although Microsoft has yet to confirm what the alternative will be.

[bit.ly/passwords475](https://bit.ly/passwords475)

## Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

**THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:**  
**Marina Mash,**  
**Security Expert**  
**at Kaspersky**  
**([www.kaspersky.co.uk](http://www.kaspersky.co.uk))**



**Q** How can I stop my router being hijacked by hackers?

Steve Hutchinson,  
Facebook

**A** There are two ways for hackers to hijack a router. The first is to try its default password. Every router has an administrator password

that the manufacturer sets. Most users fail to change this, which means outsiders can guess – or even Google – it.

The second approach is to exploit a vulnerability in your router's firmware that lets a hacker take control of the router without a password. In both cases, cybercriminals can hack the routers remotely, automatically and on a massive scale.

Hijacked routers offer various benefits to hackers, but they're especially useful for phishing attacks. Having taken over your router, an attacker makes a tiny, barely noticeable change to its settings, which is to alter the DNS servers the router

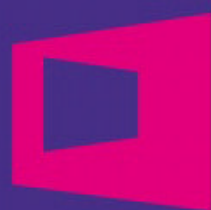
uses to translate web addresses into IP addresses that computers can understand. This means that when you enter a web address into your browser's address bar, your request goes to a malicious DNS server controlled by attackers. The scariest part is that both you and your browser think the page is legitimate.

To protect yourself from router-based phishing, log into your router's web interface, change the default password and disable remote administration and other dangerous settings. Keep your router's firmware up to date, because updates



usually fix vulnerabilities. Some models receive updates automatically, but for others they must be installed manually. Check the manufacturer's website to see how your router is updated. Also, check whether the name in a website's certificate matches the site's name, by clicking the padlock symbol in your browser's address bar.





**COMPUTEX**  
TAIPEI

Building Global Technology Ecosystems

# COMPUTEX TAIPEI

**MAY 28-JUNE 1  
2019**



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**[www.ComputexTaipei.com.tw](http://www.ComputexTaipei.com.tw)**

Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center, Hall 1 & 2 ( TaiNEX 1 & 2 )

Taipei World Trade Center Exhibition Hall 1

Taipei International Convention Center (TICC)

Persons under 18 years of age will not be admitted into the showground.

**InnoVEX**

Exclusively for global startups  
May 29 - 31, 2019 at TWTC Hall 1

Organizers:  TAITRA  TCA



# ★ Best New Websites

## Site of the Fortnight

CONSERVATION

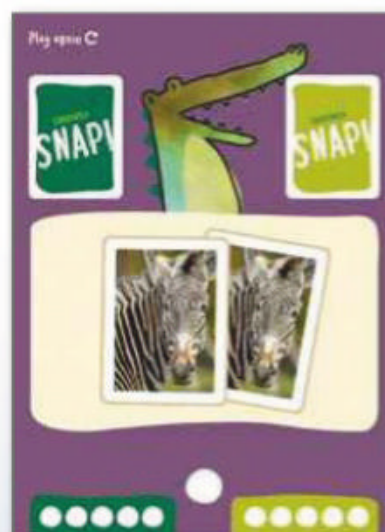
RELAUNCH

### Chester Zoo

[www.chesterzoo.org](http://www.chesterzoo.org)

The team behind Chester Zoo's bold new website has let its imagination run wild. The pages are infused with a great sense of fun while conveying important information on planning a visit and the zoo's impressive conservation efforts. The day planner, what's on guide and cartoon-like downloadable map will certainly help you make the most of your visit, while the copious information about the zoo's work around the globe is both enlightening and reassuring. Visitors are encouraged to volunteer, raise money or assist with campaigns, and we love the fact that this aspect of the site is so prominent. Overall it's a roaring success.

Our rating



#### FUN AND GAMES

Kids will love playing Leaping Lemur and Crocodile Snap, and taking a quiz to find out which animal they resemble



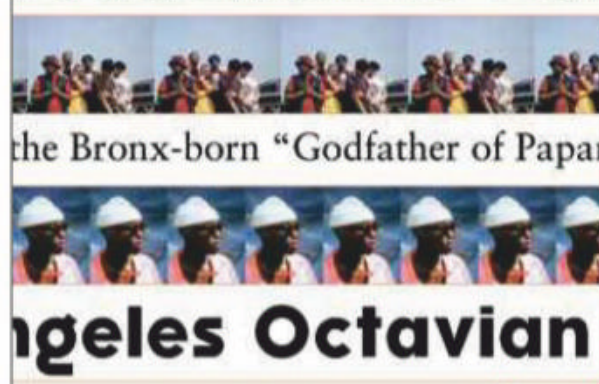
#### ANIMALS AND PLANTS

The site lists all the plants and animals you'll see at the zoo, along with details of their conservation status



## THE FACE

### roduction to Dublin rap c



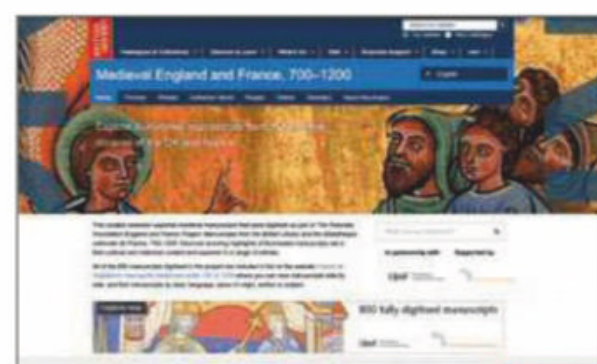
CULTURE

### The Face

[theface.com](http://theface.com)

With the red-and-white branding that will be familiar to anyone who read *The Face* during its original 24-year run, this online reincarnation of the iconic British style bible is once again delivering its own take on music, fashion and culture. In some ways it tries a bit too hard to be edgy, with headlines that scroll left and right between rows of repeating images, and blurred page transitions. The articles are beautifully written, though, with big-name interviews, investigative pieces and great use of photography. You can even delve into the magazine's past with a curated selection of articles from each year of its publication, which is a great reminder of what we've been missing.

Our rating



NEW

HISTORY

### Medieval England and France

[bit.ly/manu475](http://bit.ly/manu475)

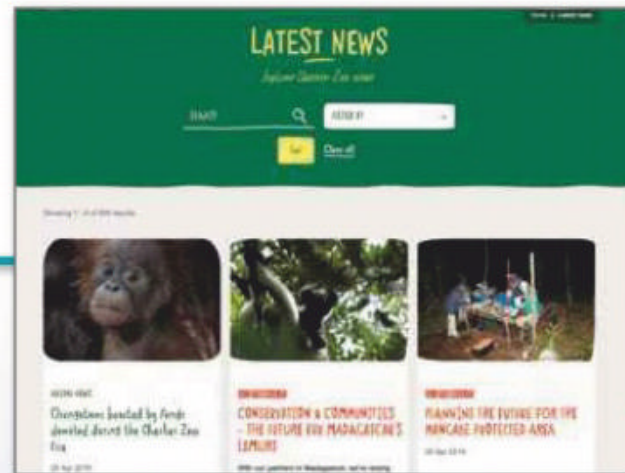
Drawing on a collection of 800 manuscripts from the British Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale De France, this site gives you a glimpse of life in England and France between 700 and 1200 CE. As well as highlighting interesting items and letting you view them up close, the site offers educational articles that explore language change, legends and science, videos explaining how the manuscripts were created and a glossary of terms relating to medieval culture and art. Each item is put into context, and navigation is a breeze.

Our rating





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

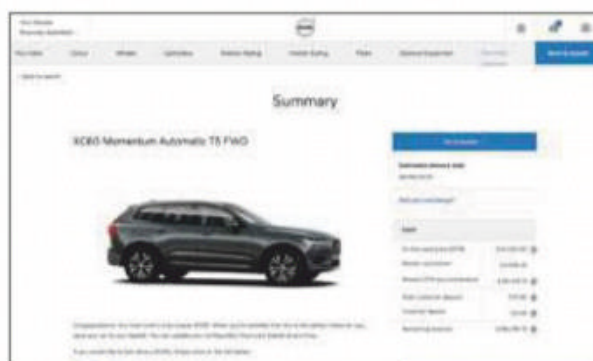
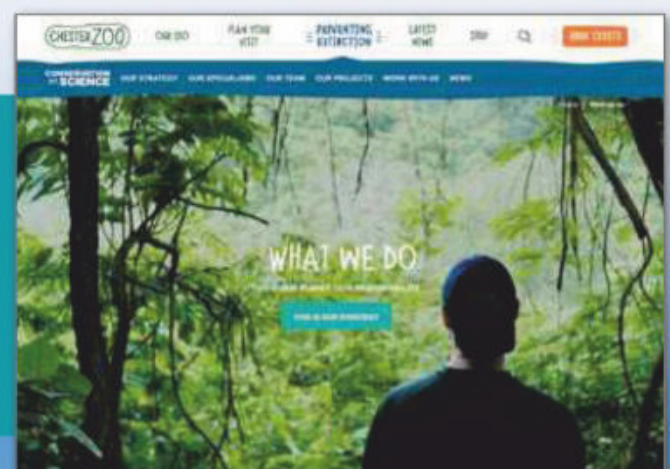


### NEWS

The news section is frequently updated with interesting articles about Chester Zoo's animals and work in the wild

### CONSERVATION

Learn about Chester Zoo's strategy and ongoing projects, and get involved with its Act For Wildlife campaign



RELAUNCH

### CARS

## Volvo Online

[bit.ly/volvo475](http://bit.ly/volvo475)

Part of the joy of buying a car is seeing it up close and taking it for a test drive. Nevertheless, Volvo is offering an online shortcut that promises to let you configure and finance a motor in just 20 minutes. Start by choosing a retailer, then set a budget, get a part-exchange value and build your car by selecting from an array of options, including colour and upholstery. Unfortunately, you need to register, and we found the process a little clumsy to begin with. We were also disappointed that the changes didn't update in real time, and we couldn't see a final image of the car we'd created.

Our rating



NEW

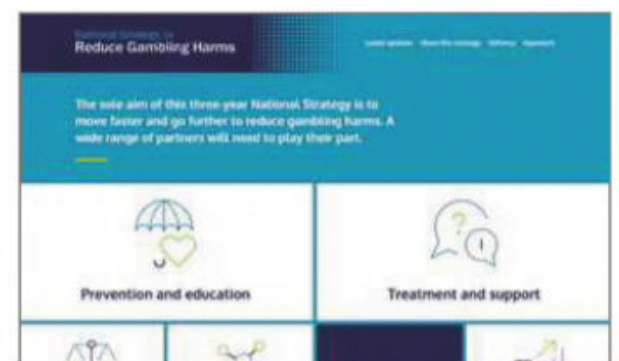
### FASHION

## My Indie Wardrobe

[myindiewardrobe.com](http://myindiewardrobe.com)

High-street fashion is often criticised for its huge environmental impact and the pressures it places on the low-paid workers who make it. My Indie Wardrobe extols the virtues of buying second-hand clothes and items from ethical businesses, while profiles and photos of people who do just that show that it's still possible to achieve a good look. In each profile, you can discover the origin of every item and read the wearer's thoughts. The site also lists shops and manufacturers that use transparent supply chains, and offers the first in what's likely to be a series of interviews.

Our rating



NEW

### GAMBLING

## Reduce Gambling Harms

[bit.ly/harms475](http://bit.ly/harms475)

The government has announced a three-year strategy to tackle problem gambling, which affects an estimated 430,000 people in the UK. The Gambling Commission is working with health bodies, businesses and charities, and has set up this site to keep people informed of its progress. It's a wordy website that explains what it hopes to achieve in terms of prevention, education, treatment and support. It doesn't offer any guidance for gambling addicts, but at least it shows what's being done to reduce the harm caused by gambling.

Our rating



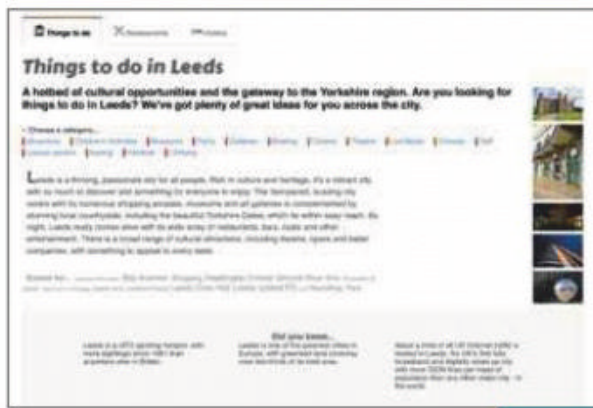


**NOW AVAILABLE!**



For more information, visit **bit.ly/wudisc18**  
or search for 'webuser disc' on Amazon





NEW

## TRAVEL

## Things To Do Near You

[things-to-do-near-you.uk](http://things-to-do-near-you.uk)

Formerly known as Never Be Bored, this revamped website aims to give you ideas for things to do wherever you are. Enter a town or postcode, or let the site use your current location, and it lists local attractions, restaurants and hotels to give you a flavour of what's on offer. The details it provides include an address, contact details, user ratings and, in some cases, a photo, but the descriptions can be a little too brief, and although you can click for directions from Google Maps, you can't visit the attraction's website to learn more. The site also throws a wobbly and displays an internal server error if it doesn't recognise a location.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

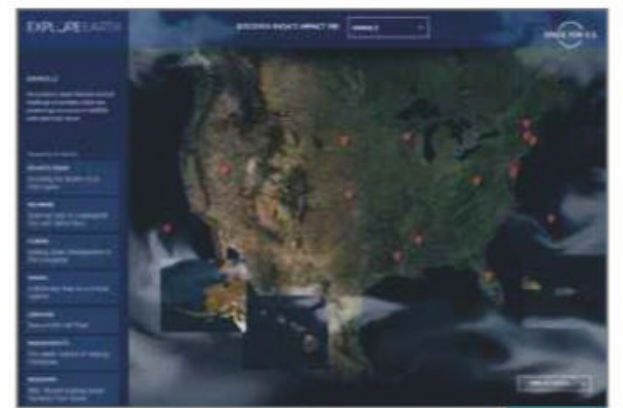
## ENTERTAINMENT

## Blackpool Magic Convention

[blackpoolmagicconvention.com](http://blackpoolmagicconvention.com)

In Issue 461, we said this site for Blackpool's annual magic convention could do better, and with the wave of a wand it has pulled a small rabbit out of a hat. As well as announcing spoon-bender Uri Geller as its headline act for 2020, the site has conjured up an improved booking system that lets you select your own seats and makes the various options easier to understand. There's also a gallery of photos from the last event, but some of the options feel a bit illusory, with floor plans, schedules, and food and drink recommendations among the key content announced as "coming soon".

Our rating



NEW

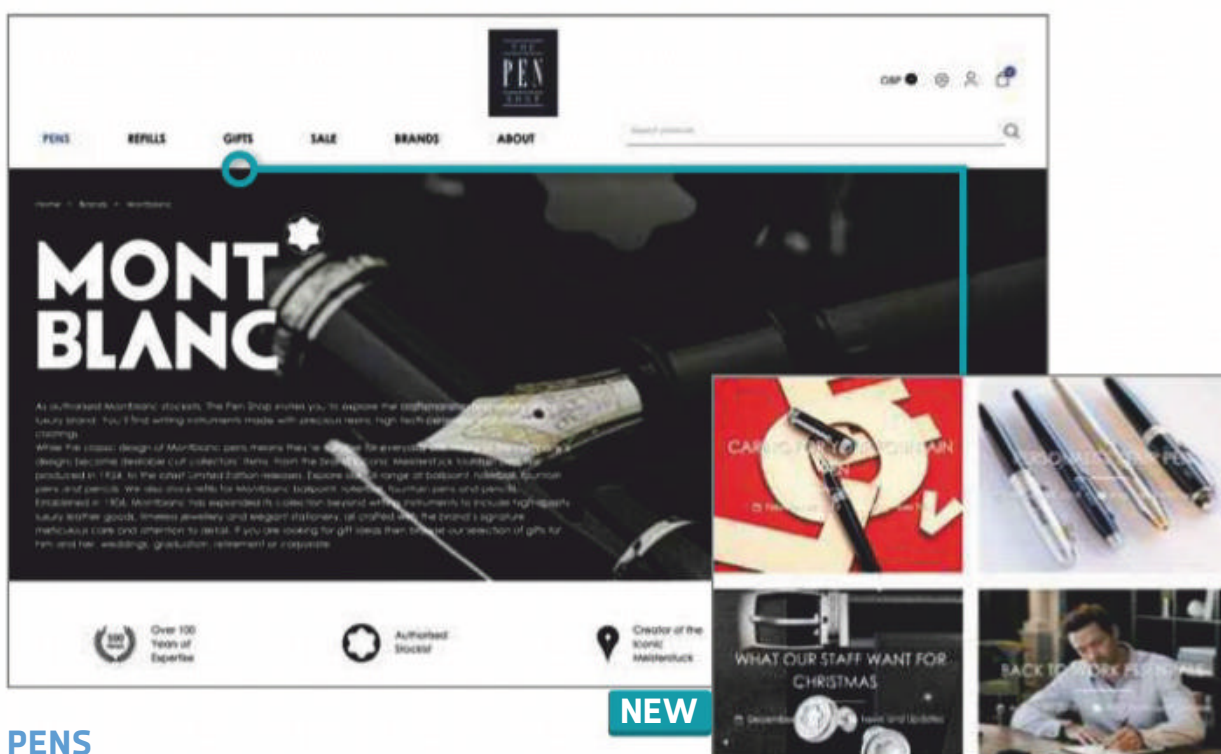
## SPACE

## Space for US

[bit.ly/space475](http://bit.ly/space475)

NASA keeps a close eye on Earth as well as outer space, collecting observation data that can benefit society. This website lets you see the positive impact the space agency has had on animals, disasters, energy, health, land and water, told through individual stories spread across America's 50 states. While the site is undoubtedly US-centric, it's beautifully presented, displaying stories in neat lists while pinning their location on a satellite map. You can also see overviews and quick facts or jump to the full story. With diagrams, stunning photography and intuitive navigation, it's simple yet very effective.

Our rating



NEW

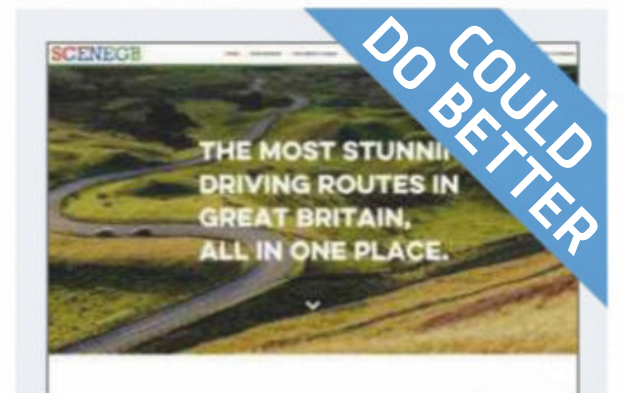
## PENS

## The Pen Shop

[www.penshop.co.uk](http://www.penshop.co.uk)

An expensive pen won't suddenly turn you into an award-winning author but it could make a big difference to your handwriting. Whether that's worth £2,615 for a Montblanc is another matter, but fortunately prices at The Pen Shop go as low as £10.90. You can filter pens by price or type, then narrow the selection further by brand, collection and colour. There are gift ideas and sale items, but what we like most is the vivid imagery that lets you see each pen close up, as well as the crisp descriptions and refill information. The comprehensive guide to pen types and terms, the interesting blog and the handy refill reminder are also worth writing home about.

Our rating



NEW

## TRAVEL

## SceneGB

[www.scenegb.co.uk](http://www.scenegb.co.uk)

If trying to think of something new and fun to do is driving you round the bend, why not take to the roads of Great Britain to enjoy the stunning scenery? SceneGB offers two types of drive. One, called Circa Nautica, takes you 4,500 miles around the coast. The other consists of eight routes in England, Scotland and Wales, each of which loops in a figure of eight. Picking a route opens a map with a list of locations you'll encounter, but it's not easy to follow and you have to keep zooming to see places of interest, none of which is adequately described.

Our rating





# Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

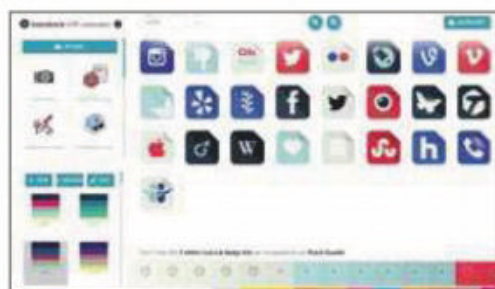
## Top Tips of the Fortnight

### Wix Code upgrades to Corvid

Wix has rebranded its dynamic website-building tool from Code to Corvid, adding a slew of innovative tools and features into the bargain. Like WordPress, Corvid uses a database to create web pages, so you can design a template, then populate new pages by adding information to the database. Corvid lets you link your pages to external databases, so they don't have to be hosted on Wix. It also provides more options for writing your own web-based programs, which you can now do in your favourite PC tool, then upload changes to Wix with one click. If you haven't tried it yet, give it a go for free at [www.wix.com/corvid](http://www.wix.com/corvid).

### Icons themed to your site

If you've spent hours designing a great-looking colour scheme for your website, you don't want to



ruin it by using stock icons for menus and buttons that don't match your chosen colours. Iconshock SVG Colorizer ([bit.ly/iscol475](http://bit.ly/iscol475)) is a great site with a range of free icons that you can configure with your own colours. Replace the palettes in the bottom left with your own scheme and the icons adapt accordingly.

### Deal of the Fortnight

Web-hosting service eUKhost ([www.eukhost.com](http://www.eukhost.com)) is giving away a free domain name if you sign up for a year of hosting on its £3.33 per month Basic package.

## Web-building Helpdesk

**Q** I've got a WordPress website and I want to make another site that's associated with it. Do I have to set up a separate hosting package?

Andrew Cole, via email

**A** If you're happy for the new site to be a subdomain of your existing site (just as [subscribe.webuser.co.uk](http://subscribe.webuser.co.uk) is a subdomain of [www.webuser.co.uk](http://www.webuser.co.uk)), you can set this up by converting your current WordPress installation to WordPress Multisite. This lets you manage several websites on a single domain. There's a good article explaining how to do this on Heart Internet's blog at [bit.ly/wpms475](http://bit.ly/wpms475).

If you decide to get a new domain, talk to your web host first, because it may help you get the upgrades you need at minimal cost.

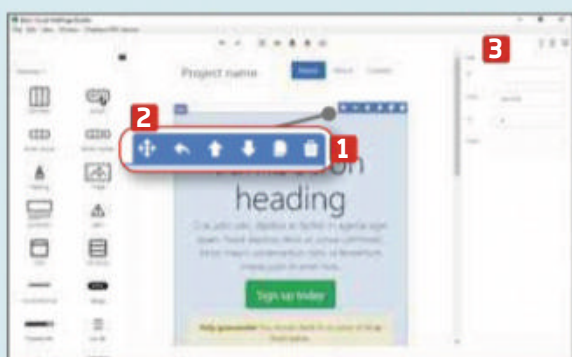
Andy Shaw,  
Technical & Reviews Editor, Web User



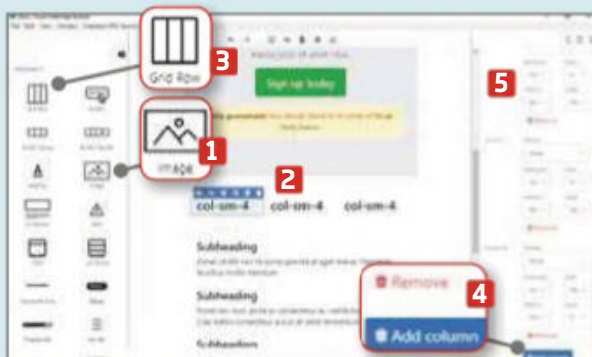
## MINI WORKSHOP | Build a modern-looking website offline

Basic WebPage Builder: [bit.ly/bwpb475](http://bit.ly/bwpb475) | 20 mins | Windows 7, 8, 10

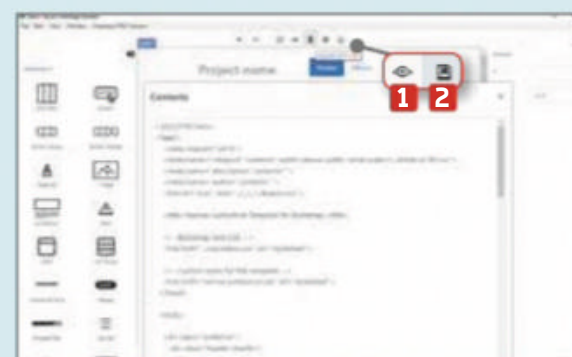
If you like the idea of online drag-and-drop web building tools but you'd rather create your website offline, try this brand new Basic WebPage Builder. Here we show you how to get started



**1** When you first launch the software, it displays an example page. You can edit this by clicking any text you see and replacing it. Remove sections by clicking them, then the dustbin icon. **2** You can also rearrange items. **3** If elements such as links require extra information, fill in the details in the panel on the right. **3**



**2** You can add new elements from the menu on the left. **1** Simply drag what you want onto the page and drop it where you want it. **2** Different options may appear in the sidebar. To create a grid layout, drag the Grid Row icon **3** to the page. Use the panel on the right to add or remove columns **4** and adjust the settings until it fits. **5**



**3** Click the Preview button **1** to see how your site will look online. When you've finished, choose Export. **2** The HTML code appears in a pop-up box. Copy it and paste it into Notepad or another text editing tool to save it as an HTML file. Now you can upload it to your web host using an FTP program such as FileZilla ([filezilla-project.org](http://filezilla-project.org)).



# All you need to know about electric cars...

How much will I save? £%!

What is a hybrid car?

Is the tech any good? How far will it go?

How long will it take to charge?

How much does it cost to run? !?

CHARGING STATION

**driving electric**  
[www.drivingelectric.com](http://www.drivingelectric.com)





# What To Watch Online

## Pick of the fortnight

NETFLIX



### Watch Renée Zellweger in Netflix drama *What/If*

From 24 May

Renée Zellweger (*Bridget Jones's Diary*) is the latest film star to downsize to the small screen, where she appears in this 10-part “neo-noir” thriller exploring the catastrophic ripple effects of a single bad decision. Hey, we’ve all been there.

Zellweger plays Anne, a scheming businesswoman who makes two struggling newlyweds an offer they can’t refuse – with morally dubious strings attached. We don’t know what the strings are, or what happens next, but we’re betting it’s not happy ever after. A second season, telling a different tale on a similar theme, is reportedly in the works already.

*What/If* is produced by *Forrest Gump* director Robert Zemeckis and co-stars Jane Levy (*Evil Dead*) and Louis Herthum (*Westworld*), but it’s all about Zellweger in the glossy official trailer ([bit.ly/whatif475](https://bit.ly/whatif475)). Make your move on 24 May when *What/If*’s 10 episodes arrive on Netflix.

### **N** Here comes *The Rain* again

From 17 May

Denmark’s dystopian downpour drama steps up a gear for Season 2. The rain-spread virus of Season 1 has mutated inside the body of our teen hero Rasmus, and his sister Simone

must find a cure before the bug kills Rasmus – and takes the rest of humanity with him.

*The Rain* is a cracking thriller but, like most foreign-language content on Netflix, it’s dubbed by default. If you’d prefer subtitles, click the speech

bubble icon (next to full-screen) then click Danish under Audio, and English under subtitles.

Head to [bit.ly/therain475](https://bit.ly/therain475) to see the official trailer and catch up with Season 1. All eight episodes of Season 2 arrive on 17 May.



### Put a face to a much-loved voice in *Brockmire*

From 16 May



Hank Azaria (forever in our hearts for his many voices in *The Simpsons*) is brilliant in this critically acclaimed US comedy drama. Azaria plays Jim Brockmire, a famous sports announcer trying to piece his life back together after a live on-air breakdown.

Season 3’s episodes air weekly on Fox UK, which you can stream live and on-demand via Sky Go if you’re a Sky TV subscriber, or Now TV with an

Entertainment Pass. Now TV also has the first two seasons until 7 July at [bit.ly/brockmire475](https://bit.ly/brockmire475). Watch the latest official trailer on YouTube at [bit.ly/brocktrail475](https://bit.ly/brocktrail475).

### **N** Watch Spike Lee’s sassy sitcom *She’s Gotta Have It*

From 24 May

Spike Lee’s sassy comedy, based on his 1986 debut film of the same name, is back for a second season of high jinks in the life of Brooklyn artist Nola Darling. DeWanda Wise plays Nola, who is juggling artistic dreams, friendships and three lovers, but this time we’re promised an “eye-opening” trip to Puerto Rico. Watch the trailer for free on Netflix at [bit.ly/shesgotta475](https://bit.ly/shesgotta475), and see all 10 new episodes from 24 May.





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

### **Return to Riviera** From 23 May

Sky's sun-soaked thriller – like a *Dynasty* by the sea, with guns – is back with 10 new episodes. Julia Stiles (*10 Things I Hate About You*) returns as a billionaire's widow drawn into crime. Joining her for Season 2 are Juliet Stevenson (*Truly Madly Deeply*) and Will Arnett (*Arrested Development*). Creator Neil Jordan (director of *The Crying Game*) oversees proceedings.

Season 1 received a walloping from critics, but the show may yet be a slow burner. Decide for yourself when the 10 new episodes arrive weekly on Now TV at [bit.ly/riviera475](http://bit.ly/riviera475), where you can also watch

Season 1. Sky TV

subscribers can watch via Sky Go. Soak up the latest trailer at [bit.ly/rivtrail475](http://bit.ly/rivtrail475).

### **Creep out to Netflix film** **The Perfection**

From 24 May

*The Perfection* caused a buzz at last autumn's Fantastic Fest indie horror film festival ([bit.ly/perfectfest475](http://bit.ly/perfectfest475)), and now Netflix has snapped it up for its global premiere. This creepy thriller stars

Allison Williams (*Girls*) as Charlotte, a troubled former musical prodigy who seeks out her old school's new young star (Logan Browning from *Bratz*), with spectacularly weird consequences. You get the idea from the skin-crawling trailer, in

which bugs emerge from the young woman's arms. Watch it and wince at [bit.ly/perfection475](http://bit.ly/perfection475).

### **Watch the Football League play-off finals**

25-27 May

Sky Sports has again bagged exclusive rights to the three English Football League (EFL) play-off finals, so you can

## BBC urges Ofcom to lift iPlayer limits

BBC series could launch as box sets and stay online for a year, if industry watchdog Ofcom agrees to the corporation's latest list of proposals. Twelve-month on-demand availability is top of the list of requests, which aim to bring the iPlayer "in line with the industry standard". The iPlayer's current 30-day default falls far short of Netflix and Amazon. Even Channel 4 shows are available to watch online for many months after broadcast.

The BBC also wants more box sets, where all episodes are made available at once instead of arriving weekly. This in turn would provide more BBC content for BritBox ([www.britbox.co.uk](http://www.britbox.co.uk)), the streaming service currently available in the US and set to launch in the UK later this year.

In a Public Interest Test ordered by Ofcom and submitted by the BBC to back up its proposals, 63% of those surveyed thought the changes would deliver better value from the licence fee. Two-thirds of respondents said the changes would make the iPlayer more appealing. Ofcom will announce its final decision in August.




watch online via Now TV and Sky Go. The League Two, League One and Championship play-offs kick off at 3pm at Wembley Stadium on 25, 26 and 27 May respectively.

Sky Sports subscribers can live-stream the action via the Sky Go website and app. Alternatively, buy a Now TV Sky Sports Pass, which costs £8.99 a day, £14.99 a week or £33.99 a month – or pay just £5.99 a month for a Mobile Pass ([bit.ly/newsport475](http://bit.ly/newsport475)). You can also watch highlights for free at [www.skysports.com/efl](http://www.skysports.com/efl).

### **Watch Shane Meadows' new drama *The Virtues***

From 15 May

The official launch of *The Virtues*, a bold new four-part drama from *This is England* creator Shane Meadows, was characteristically modest. At 11.52pm a couple of

Mondays ago, Meadows posted on Twitter: "I'll just casually tweet that episode one of [#TheVirtues](https://twitter.com/TheVirtues) will be on Channel 4 on Wednesday the 15th of May at 9pm. I doubt anyone will notice." Well, we noticed.

Regular Meadows collaborator and recent *Line of Duty* star Stephen

Graham plays Joseph, an alcoholic who confronts his painful childhood after reconnecting with his sister. *The Virtues'* hour-long episodes arrive weekly at [www.channel4.com](http://www.channel4.com), then remain online for viewers to stream on demand. Judging by the trailer ([bit.ly/virtues475](http://bit.ly/virtues475)), it's classic Meadows: brutal, heartfelt, funny and very British.





# Group Test

We test and compare the latest products

## Graphics cards

Whether you want to improve your PC's gaming potential, watch 4K video or speed up data-intensive tasks such as video editing, upgrading your graphics card can give your PC a new lease of life

**T**he graphics card is an essential part of any PC. Not only is it the link between your monitor and your computer (so make sure the card you choose has the correct ports to connect them together), it also brings its own dedicated memory and processing power to the task of producing the images you see on your PC screen. You'll notice the greatest benefit if you play games, particularly complex 3D games where the graphics card creates virtual environments by calculating how each beam of light bounces off every surface, hundreds of times per second. However, with their dedicated resources, graphics cards also ease the pressure on your main processor and core memory in all PC tasks.

We've tested six graphics card upgrades at a range of prices to help you decide which is best for you.

### HOW WE TESTED

We tested each card by installing it in our benchmarking PC, running a range of games and measuring the frame rate each card produced. The Dirt Showdown test isn't too hard on the

graphics card but is a good test of general gaming potential. For more serious gamers, we also tested using Metro: Last Light Redux and, most challenging of all, the latest Tomb Raider.

**Asus ROG Strix RX 570 OC | £189.99 | Buy from Box: [bit.ly/asusbox475](http://bit.ly/asusbox475)**

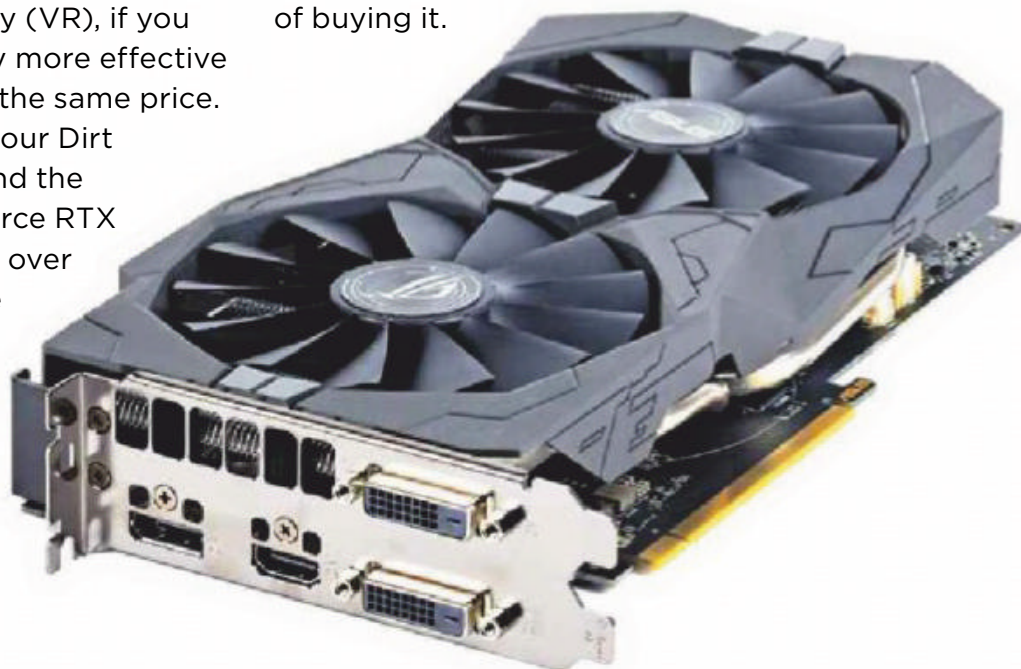
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

Asus's dual-fan Radeon RX 570 graphics card bridges the gap between entry-level cards such as the Gigabyte GeForce GTX 1050 D5 2G (reviewed right) and mid-range cards that cost over £300. Asus has got the balance just right, too. This card comfortably runs games that are designed to tax the graphics processing unit (GPU) – the chip at the heart of a graphics card that does all the calculations needed to render 3D graphics on your PC. It's perfectly happy to play games at 1080p resolution at their High or Very High detail settings with no discernible drop in frame rates (the number of frames your monitor displays each second). It even lets you dabble in 1440p and virtual reality (VR), if you have a headset, and was certainly more effective than anything else we've seen at the same price.

The Asus card came second in our Dirt Showdown test, only falling behind the Bronze Award-winning MSI GeForce RTX 2070 Armor G8, which costs well over twice the price. Third place in the Dirt Showdown test went to the Silver Award-winning Nvidia GeForce RTX 2060 Founders Edition, which costs 50% more than Asus's card.

Because the ROG Strix RX 570 achieves such a great balance between price and performance, it's phenomenally popular with cryptocurrency miners, who use its significant parallel-processing power to perform the calculations necessary to earn virtual currency. This has led its price to fluctuate with the fortunes of the cryptocurrency markets. We've seen this card on sale for as little as £140 if you don't mind shipping from Spain, for example, ([bit.ly/asus475](http://bit.ly/asus475)), so keep an eye on the price if you're thinking of buying it.

WebUser  
GOLD  
AWARD



### VERDICT ★★★★★

If you can find this graphics card for around the price we quote above, you can safely consider it a bargain. It doesn't offer the sheer graphics power of our Silver and Bronze Award winners, but for the price it kicks cheaper and similarly priced cards out of the game. Even if you're looking to spend as little as possible, we'd seriously recommend you increase your budget a bit and upgrade to this model, assuming you want to do anything more graphically complex than simply pushing windows around.



## Nvidia GeForce RTX 2060 Founders Edition

Buy from Nvidia: [bit.ly/nvid60475](https://bit.ly/nvid60475) | £329

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

WebUser  
SILVER  
AWARD

Not only is the RTX 2060 an excellent 1080p/1440p card, it's also the most affordable model to offer Nvidia's latest technologies: ray-tracing and Deep Learning Super Sampling (DLSS). The former is the first meaningful attempt to achieve movie-quality lighting effects in games, while the latter is an exciting new form of anti-aliasing that smooths edges and makes graphics look less pixelated.

It's not cheap for a mid-range card but we think it's worth the money, particularly if you want one that's likely to last well into the future. Our test games ran well at 4K resolution with fairly high quality settings. The cheaper Gold Award-winner was faster in Dirt Showdown, but this card produced better results in more recent games, such as Metro: Last Light Redux and Tomb Raider, where its newer features came into play.



### VERDICT

★★★★★

It may seem counterintuitive to pay more for a graphics card that, in some tests, didn't perform as well as our cheaper Gold Award winner, but this Nvidia model is an investment, and should support keen gamers well for years to come.

## MSI GeForce RTX 2070 Armor G8

Buy from Ebuyer: [bit.ly/msieb475](https://bit.ly/msieb475) | £449.99

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

WebUser  
BRONZE  
AWARD

You could probably buy a new PC for less than the price of this graphics card, but as the RTX 2070 can arguably handle any game you throw at it, keen gamers with deep pockets should take note. The GPU in this model is in Nvidia's third tier, but although the RTX 2080 and RTX 2080 Ti beat this card for performance, they cost way more than £500, so we think the RTX 2070 represents the perfect compromise.

Clearly you'd expect good performance from a card at this price – and you wouldn't be disappointed. It offers the same ray-tracing and DLSS features as more powerful cards, and MSI has added quiet fans and a solid, attractive casing to keep Nvidia's chips running efficiently. MSI's excellent Afterburner software also lets you tweak the clock speeds, so you can squeeze out every last ounce of performance.



### VERDICT

★★★★★

This is the most expensive graphics card in our test but also the best performer. While it seems pricey in this company, it's great value if £500 is your budget, and has many of the trappings of even more expensive models.

## ALSO TESTED

We put three more graphics cards through their paces before establishing which of the final six should receive awards.

The **Zotac GeForce GTX 1050 Ti Mini** (£139.99 | [bit.ly/zot475](https://bit.ly/zot475) | ★★★★★) is the smallest of the cards we've reviewed, so it may be a good choice if you have only a small PC case. Note, however, that it still takes up the space of two expansion cards. Despite having only one fan, it managed to keep itself cool, but its performance was disappointing next to that of our Gold Award winner.



Anyone with a particularly small budget might be tempted by the **Gigabyte GeForce GTX 1050 D5 2G** (£118.99 | [bit.ly/giga475](https://bit.ly/giga475) | ★★★★★). Predictably for the price it came last in our intensive graphics tests but would be fine for general Windows use and casual gaming.

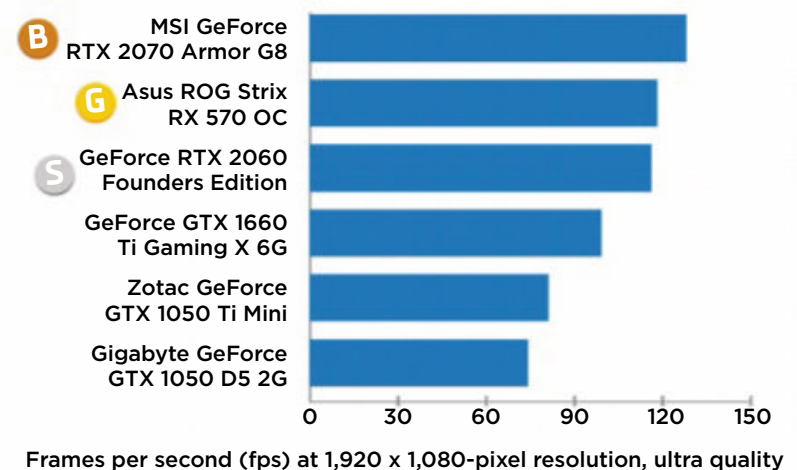


Rounding off our test is the **MSI GeForce GTX 1660 Ti Gaming X 6G** (£293.99 | [bit.ly/msisc475](https://bit.ly/msisc475) | ★★★★★). This card is designed to occupy the middle ground for performance and price, but it doesn't do enough to justify the extra £104 it costs over the price of our Gold Award winner.

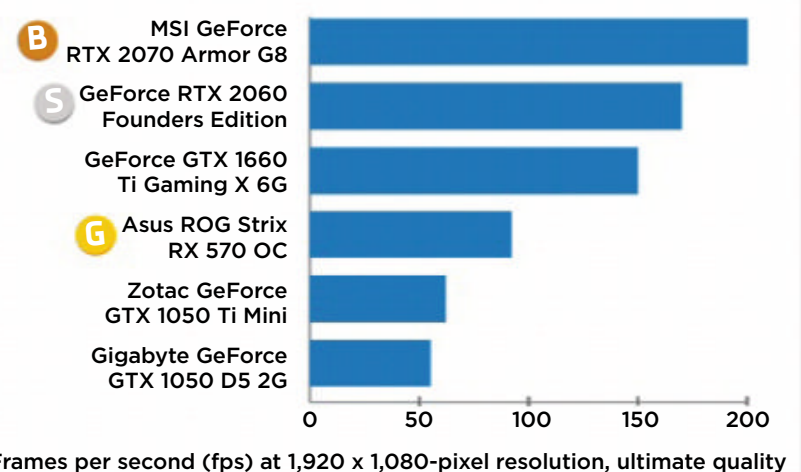


## TEST-RESULTS CHARTS

### Benchmark Results: Dirt Showdown







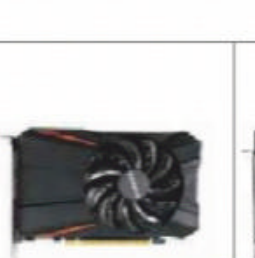
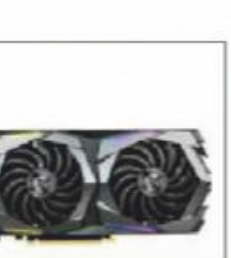
### Benchmark Results: Tomb Raider







# Group Test Graphics cards

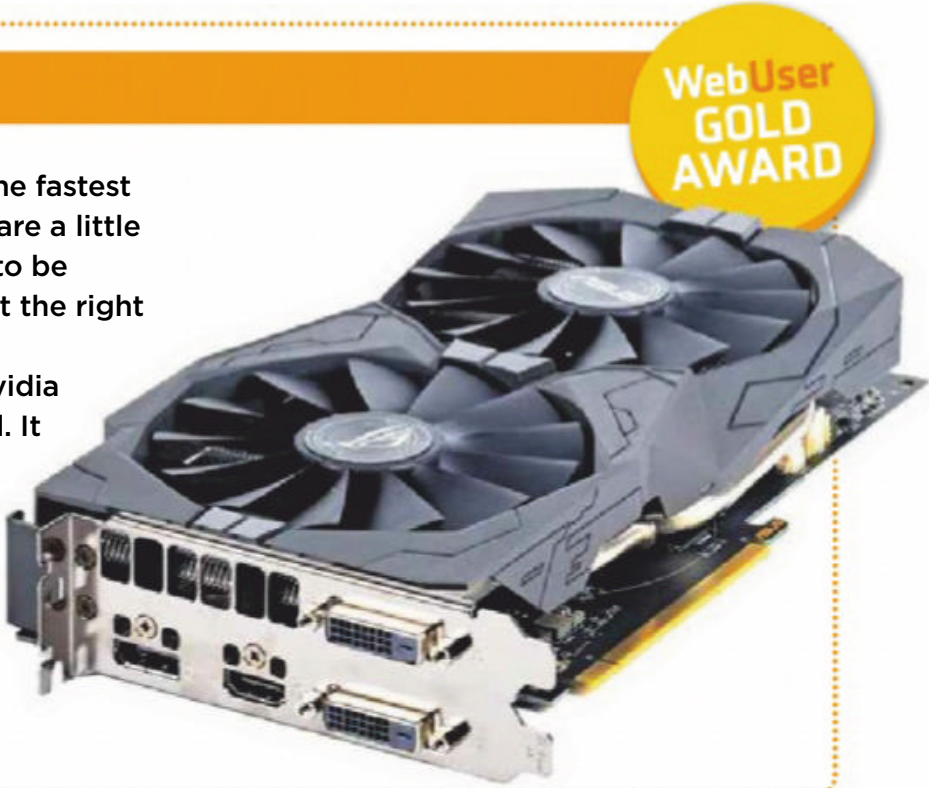
						
	Asus ROG Strix RX 570 OC	Nvidia GeForce RTX 2060 Founders Edition	MSI GeForce RTX 2070 Armor G8	Zotac GeForce GTX 1050 Ti Mini	Gigabyte GeForce GTX 1050 D5 2G	MSI GeForce GTX 1660 Ti Gaming X 6G
WEBSITE	<a href="http://www.asus.com">www.asus.com</a>	<a href="http://www.nvidia.com">www.nvidia.com</a>	<a href="http://uk.msi.com">uk.msi.com</a>	<a href="http://www.zotac.com">www.zotac.com</a>	<a href="http://www.gigabyte.com">www.gigabyte.com</a>	<a href="http://uk.msi.com">uk.msi.com</a>
PRICE	£189.99	£329	£449.99	£139.99	£118.99	£293.99
BUY FROM	Box: <a href="http://bit.ly/asusbox475">bit.ly/asusbox475</a>	Nvidia: <a href="http://bit.ly/nvid60475">bit.ly/nvid60475</a>	Ebuyer: <a href="http://bit.ly/msieb475">bit.ly/msieb475</a>	Amazon: <a href="http://bit.ly/zot475">bit.ly/zot475</a>	Scan: <a href="http://bit.ly/giga475">bit.ly/giga475</a>	Scan: <a href="http://bit.ly/msisc475">bit.ly/msisc475</a>
REAR EXPANSION PORTS TAKEN UP	2	2	2	2	2	2
GPU	AMD Radeon RX 570	Nvidia GeForce RTX 2060	Nvidia GeForce RTX 2070	Nvidia GeForce GTX 1050 Ti	Nvidia GeForce GTX 1050	Nvidia GeForce GTX 1660 Ti
GPU CORES	2,048	1,920	2,304	768	640	1,536
GPU CLOCK SPEED	1,300MHz	1,365MHz	1,410MHz	1,303MHz	1,379MHz	1,500MHz
GPU CLOCK BOOST SPEED	1,310MHz	1,680MHz	1,620MHz	1,417MHz	1,493MHz	1,875MHz
MEMORY	4GB GDDR5	6GB GDDR6	8GB GDDR6	4GB GDDR5	2GB GDDR5	6GB GDDR6
MEMORY INTERFACE	256-bit	192-bit	256-bit	128-bit	128-bit	256-bit
OUTPUTS	1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	2 x DisplayPort, 1 x DVI, 1 x HDMI, 1 x USB Type-C	3 x DisplayPort, 1 x HDMI, 1 x USB Type-C	1 x DisplayPort, 1 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	1 x DisplayPort, 1 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	3 x DisplayPort, 1 x HDMI
POWER LEADS REQUIRED	1 x 8-pin	1 x 8-pin	1 x 6-pin, 1 x 8-pin	None	None	1 x 8-pin
MAXIMUM POWER DRAW	200W	160W	175W	75W	75W	130W
COOLING	2 x open air fans	2 x open air fans	2 x open air fans	1 x open air fan	1 x open air fan	2 x open air fans
MONITOR SYNCING SUPPORT	AMD FreeSync	Nvidia G-Sync	Nvidia G-Sync	Nvidia G-Sync	Nvidia G-Sync	Nvidia G-Sync
CARD LENGTH	240mm	229mm	309mm	145mm	172mm	247mm
WARRANTY	Two-years repair-and-replace	Three-years return-to-base	Three-years repair-and-replace	Five-years RTB	Three-years repair-and-replace	Three-years repair-and-replace

## OUR VERDICT

We gave our Gold Award to the Asus ROG Strix RX 570 OC. It isn't the fastest graphics card around but we think it offers superb value. Cards that are a little cheaper drop off in terms of performance, while faster models tend to be significantly more expensive. The Asus ROG Strix RX 570 OC hits just the right balance between performance and price.

Having said that, dedicated gamers will get a lot more from the Nvidia GeForce RTX 2060 Founders Edition, which earned our Silver Award. It has all the extra features we expect from a decent graphics card at a reasonable price, and outperforms our Gold Award winner in the most sophisticated games we use to test graphics capabilities.

If you want the best performance of the group, however, you should save up for the Bronze Award-winning MSI GeForce RTX 2070 Armor G8. Naturally, you'll pay a premium for this level of performance, but if you want the most powerful graphics card we've tested, you'll consider it a price worth paying. ■





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SHANNON

#### Pleased with service

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DANIEL

#### Easy Peasy!

No trawling garage showrooms! Already recommending to friends & family.



KAREN

#### Purchased VW Golf

I was nervous about buying on the internet. Needn't have worried.



SIMON

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# Web User's Best Buys

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## HARDWARE

### GRAPHICS CARD

#### Asus ROG Strix RX 570 OC

£189.99 from [bit.ly/asusbox475](https://bit.ly/asusbox475)  
Tested: Issue 475

NEW!



Asus's twin-fan graphics card gets the balance perfectly right. It comfortably plays games that are designed to push a graphics-processing unit to the limit, and for the price it kicks cards with similar specifications right out of the game.

#### KEY SPECS

AMD Radeon RX 570 graphics processor ■ 2,048 GPU cores ■ 1,300MHz clock speed ■ 4GB memory ■ 1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI outputs ■ 200W power ■ 240mm ■ Two-year repair-and-replace warranty

### SMARTPHONE

#### Moto G7 Power

£179.99 from [bit.ly/pow472](https://bit.ly/pow472)  
Tested: Issue 472



Battery life is at the heart of what we love and hate about our phones, and the Moto G7 Power lasted an incredible 26 hours and 22 minutes in our tests. Its specs and price are also great.

#### KEY SPECS

Octa-core 1.8GHz processor ■ 64GB storage ■ 4GB RAM ■ 6.2in, 720 x 1,570-pixel screen ■ 12-megapixel rear camera, 8-megapixel front camera ■ 5,000mAh battery ■ 159.4 x 76 x 9.3mm ■ 193g ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

### WI-FI EXTENDER

#### Netgear Nighthawk X6S

£145.99 from [bit.ly/ngx6s471](https://bit.ly/ngx6s471)  
Tested: Issue 471



The Nighthawk X6S's unbeatable combination of high speed and top-end features makes it the best Wi-Fi extender available. It's big and boxy, but its performance gives mesh-router systems a run for their money.

#### KEY SPECS

Works with 2.4GHz and 5GHz networks ■ 4 x Gigabit Ethernet ports ■ Access control ■ Wi-Fi schedule ■ WPS button ■ 277 x 170 x 93mm ■ Two-year warranty

### SECURITY CAMERA

#### Blink XT

£149.99 from [bit.ly/blink470](https://bit.ly/blink470)  
Tested: Issue 470



The Blink XT can be positioned anywhere in your home, indoors or out, and includes a lifetime subscription to its cloud-storage service. You get a couple of years' use out of the camera before you need to replace the batteries.

#### KEY SPECS

HD Video ■ Motion and temperature sensors ■ Built-in microphone ■ Camera mount included ■ Weatherproof ■ Infrared night vision ■ Wi-Fi connectivity ■ Instant alerts to your phone ■ Two years of battery life

### LAPTOP SSD

#### Samsung 970 Evo

£75.51 from [bit.ly/sevo469](https://bit.ly/sevo469)  
Tested: Issue 469



The Samsung 970 Evo is a smart, affordable choice for anyone looking to get better performance from their laptop. It's very fast, with excellent file-transfer speeds, and there are higher capacity versions with up to 2TB of storage.

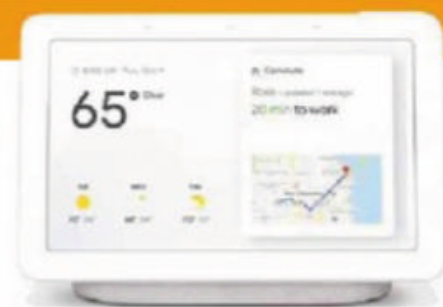
#### KEY SPECS

256GB capacity ■ 3,600MB/s maximum speed ■ M.2 PCIe Gen 3 x 4 interface ■ Samsung Phoenix 5-core processor ■ Samsung V-NAND 3-bit MLC flash memory ■ 22 x 80 x 2.38mm ■ Five-year warranty

### SMART SPEAKER

#### Google Home Hub

£139 from [bit.ly/homehub463](https://bit.ly/homehub463)  
Tested: Issue 463



Its low price, seamless integration with Google services and ability to double as a digital photo frame make the Google Home Hub the best smart screen we've seen.

#### KEY SPECS

7in LCD touch screen ■ 1,024 x 600-pixels resolution ■ Dual-band 802.11b/g/n/ac ■ Bluetooth 5.0 ■ 178 x 118 x 67mm ■ 480g ■ Choice of Aqua, Chalk, Charcoal or Sand ■ One-year return-to-base warranty



## SOFTWARE & SERVICES

### BACKUP SOFTWARE

#### Acronis True Image 2019

£35 from

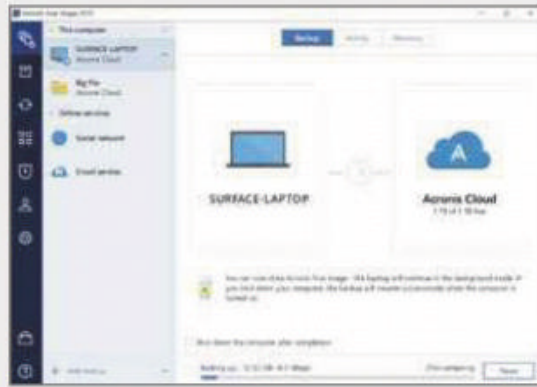
[bit.ly/acro473](http://bit.ly/acro473)

**Tested:** Issue 473

Acronis True Image is a versatile backup tool that can do everything from cloud storage to disaster recovery. It isn't cheap compared with rival software, but it's flexible and simple to control, reasonably fast and should cover all your backing-up needs.

#### KEY FEATURES

Windows, macOS, Android, iOS ■ Local backup ■ Disc-image backup ■ Restore from the web ■ Create disaster recovery ■ AES-256 encryption ■ Continuous, daily, weekly or monthly backups ■ Multiple backup sets



### PHOTO-EDITING SOFTWARE

#### DxO PhotoLab

£99 from

[bit.ly/dxo455](http://bit.ly/dxo455)

**Tested:** Issue 455

If you're put off by Adobe's subscription costs, DxO PhotoLab is the best alternative for managing and editing your photos. Its interface is streamlined and elegant, and the editing and image quality are exceptional. It's also very simple to use and comes with lots of sophisticated tools.

#### KEY FEATURES

RAW conversion ■ High quality noise reduction ■ Optical corrections ■ Red-eye correction ■ Advanced light and colour ■ Batch processing ■ Selective tone ■ Full-screen mode ■ Spot-weighted mode



### Web User Gold Award winners

#### URL SHORTENER

##### Kutt.it

Free from [kutt.it](http://kutt.it)

**Tested:** Issue 474

Kutt.it offers all the tools you need from a URL-shortening service without any of the clutter of its rivals. It's entirely free and open-source, which gets it a thumbs-up from us.

**NEW!**



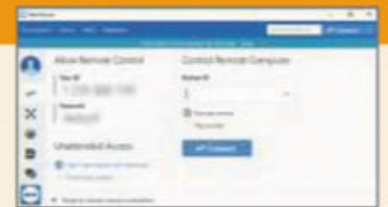
#### SCREEN-SHARING TOOL

##### TeamViewer

Free from [www.teamviewer.com](http://www.teamviewer.com)

**Tested:** Issue 473

TeamViewer surpasses its rivals with a range of powerful options. It's robust and reliable, and offers the same tools to personal users – for free – that businesses have to pay for.



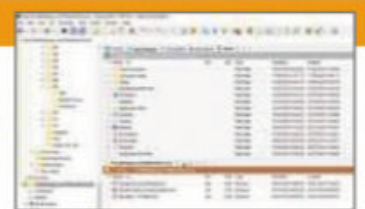
#### FILE-EXPLORER ALTERNATIVE

##### XYplorer Free

Free from [bit.ly/xypl472](http://bit.ly/xypl472)

**Tested:** Issue 472

Fast and effective, XYplorer Free does everything we wish Windows' built-in File Explorer could do. Its excellent tabbed interface makes managing your files impressively easy.



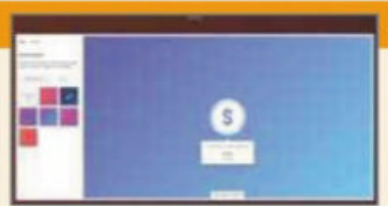
#### FILE-TRANSFER SERVICE

##### Smash

Free from [fromsmash.com](http://fromsmash.com)

**Tested:** Issue 471

Unlike other services for sharing large files, Smash places no size limit on the files you send. We love its speedy simplicity.



#### PRIVATE-MESSAGING APP

##### Signal

Free from [signal.org](http://signal.org)

**Tested:** Issue 470

Signal does everything WhatsApp can do, and offers some useful and unique extras.



# WEB USER

## BACK ISSUES DISCS

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EVERY ISSUE FROM  
2014 TO 2018





# Best Free Software

## SECURITY SUITE

### Comodo Free Internet Security Suite 2019

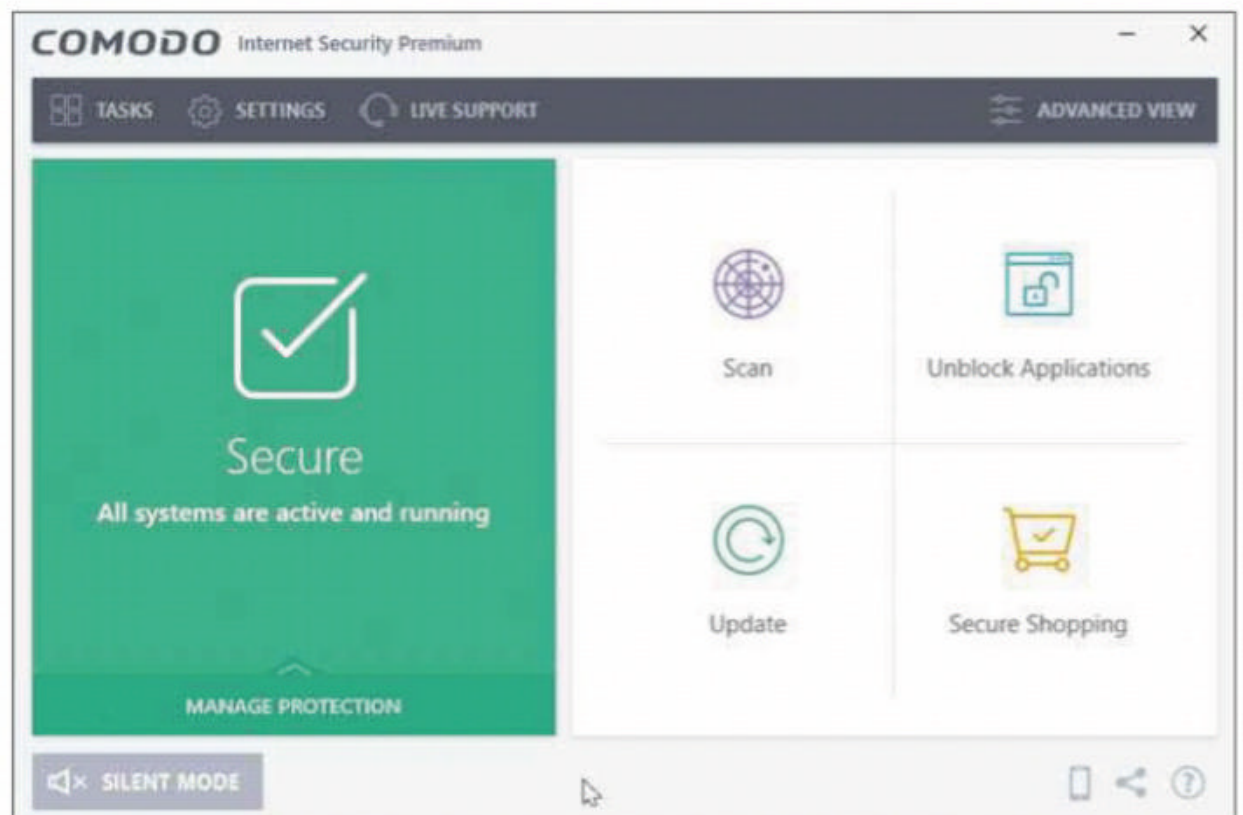
[bit.ly/comodo475](http://bit.ly/comodo475)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10

**File size:** 5.4MB

Security software specialist Comodo makes free Antivirus and Firewall tools, and also offers an all-in-one suite that's designed to keep you safe from all manner of threats on the web. Its comprehensive Internet Security Suite includes cloud antivirus, anti-malware and anti-spyware modules, anti-rootkit and bot protection, and a memory firewall. The software's Defense+ technology protects critical system files and prevents the installation of malware, while the auto-sandbox runs unknown files in an isolated environment where they can't damage your system.

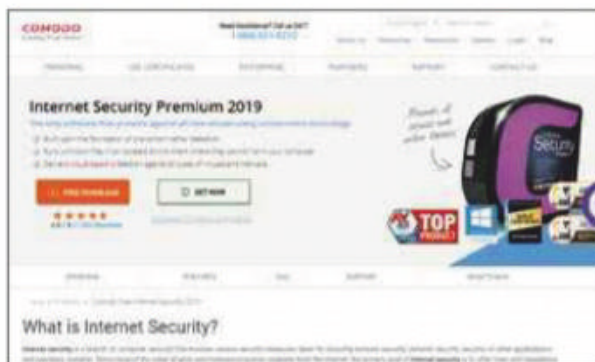
For 2019, Comodo has introduced a major new feature to its Internet Security Suite: Secure Shopping. As the



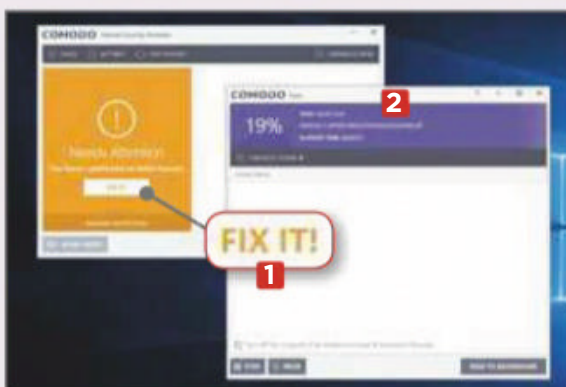
name suggests, it's designed to add an extra layer of security while you're shopping online, but it can protect any type of financial transaction, including online banking and other internet activities. It works by isolating your browser inside a secure container so that it's separate from your system, making it impossible for malware or snoopers to hack or track your activity. It also stops keyloggers intercepting your passwords, prevents malware from taking screenshots, and warns you when something is trying to make a remote

connection to your computer. It can even detect fake SSL certificates to combat so-called man-in-the-middle attacks (when a third party intercepts and makes changes to a web request).

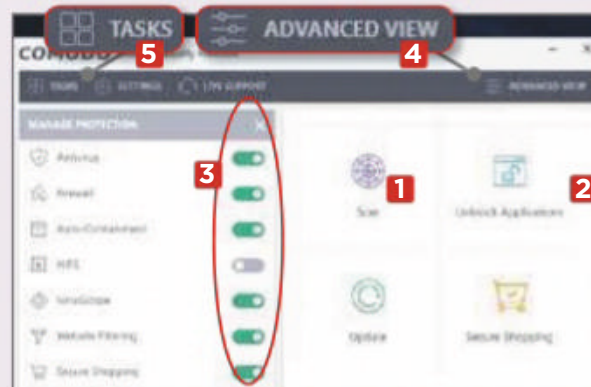
The new Internet Security Suite also introduces a useful Unblock Applications feature, which can release programs that your security software has blocked by mistake. Comodo has changed updates to ensure you always have the latest version of the security suite, even if you download an old build from somewhere.



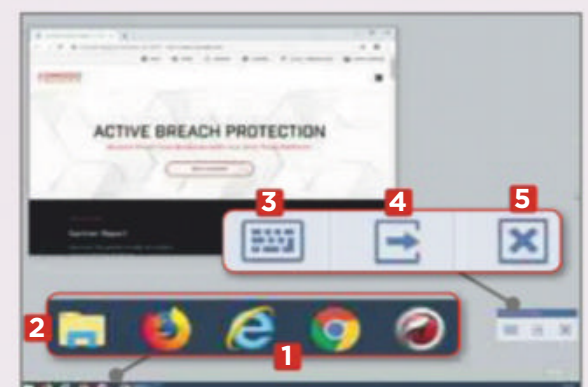
## MINI WORKSHOP | Stay safe online with Comodo Free Internet Security Suite 2019



**1** When you install Internet Security Suite, it asks if you want to change your DNS provider, set Yahoo as your homepage and default search engine (which you obviously don't) and set Comodo Dragon as your default browser. You'll probably want to deselect all of these options. Then click Fix It! **1** to run an initial system scan. **2**



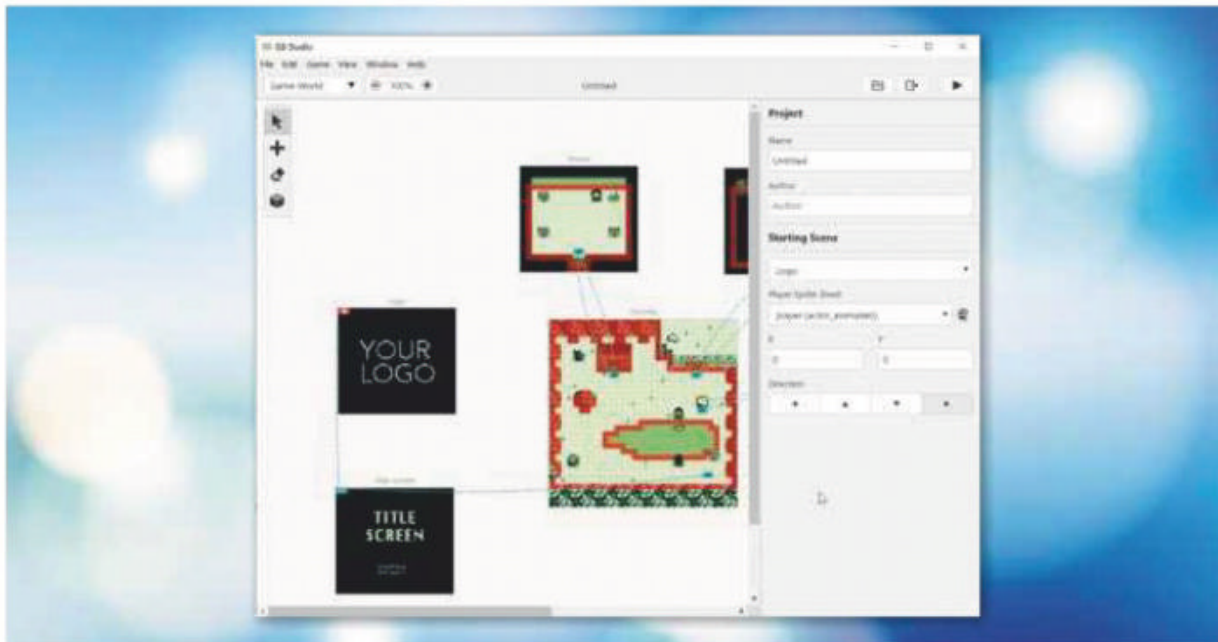
**2** You can run a scan at any time, **1** unblock applications that have been blocked by an overzealous security tool **2** and manage the suite's various protection options by toggling them on or off. **3** The Advanced View **4** provides access to additional features, and you can also browse and perform a range of preset tasks. **5**



**3** If you want to improve your safety while shopping or banking online, click the Secure Shopping tile. This opens in a full screen that's separate from Windows. You can launch a browser of your choice, **1** open File Explorer, **2** bring up a virtual keyboard (to foil keyloggers), **3** switch back to Windows **4** or quit the application. **5**



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



## GAME CREATOR

### GB Studio

[www.gbstudio.dev](http://www.gbstudio.dev)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10, macOS or Linux **File size:** 101MB

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Nintendo Game Boy. The handheld game system was incredibly popular in its day, and now you can build your own games for it using this free game creator, which doesn't require any programming knowledge. The finished games run in a web-based emulator that works on your PC or phone. You can also run the ROM files in an emulator on Windows, macOS and Linux, and if you have a flash cart you can even play the games on a real Game Boy!

## New Windows 10 App

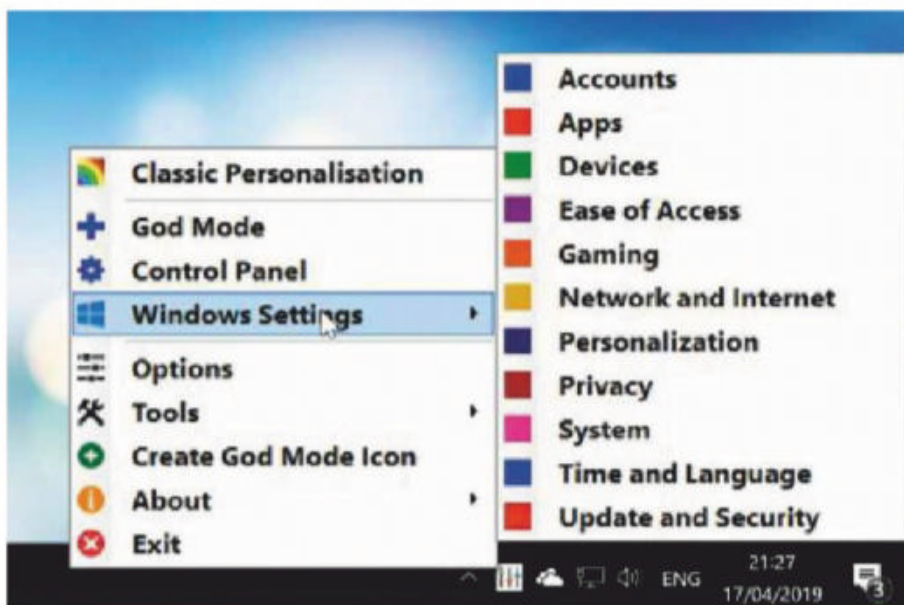
### Poster Maker

[bit.ly/poster475](http://bit.ly/poster475)

**Min requirements:** Windows 10

**File size:** 81.48MB

Create eye-catching posters, flyers and banners using this excellent app. It's very easy to use: choose from the backgrounds on offer, use one of your own or pick a colour and texture. Add some text and customise its look, then share your creation on social media. You need to pay to unlock certain features and remove the watermark.



## SYSTEM TOOL

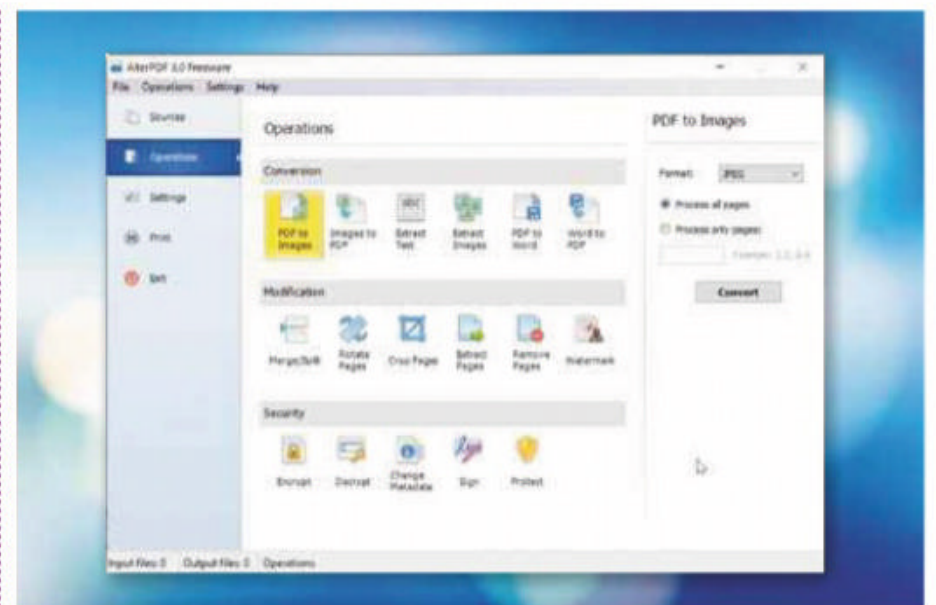
### Win10 All Settings

[bit.ly/win10all475](http://bit.ly/win10all475)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10

**File size:** 321KB

This useful Windows tool lets you access all the main Control Panel settings, including the hidden God Mode, from the system tray. It has a few other tricks up its sleeve, too, such as the ability to change the colour of Windows' inactive title bar and more. It's designed to work with Windows 10 but offers partial support for Windows 7 and 8.1. Run the software, then right-click its icon to open the menu. Left-clicking the button opens an All Tasks window in Explorer.



## PDF EDITOR

### AlterPDF 3

[www.alterpdf.net](http://www.alterpdf.net)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10

**File size:** 13.2MB

AlterPDF is a collection of free tools that let you convert PDFs to JPEG files and vice versa, extract text and images, merge multiple PDF files into a single document and split a single PDF into multiple files. You can also rotate, crop and remove content, encrypt, decrypt or sign your documents, and edit the metadata. New features in version 3 include the ability to convert Word documents to PDF and vice versa, copy-protect a PDF's content and add watermarks.



## WEB BROWSER

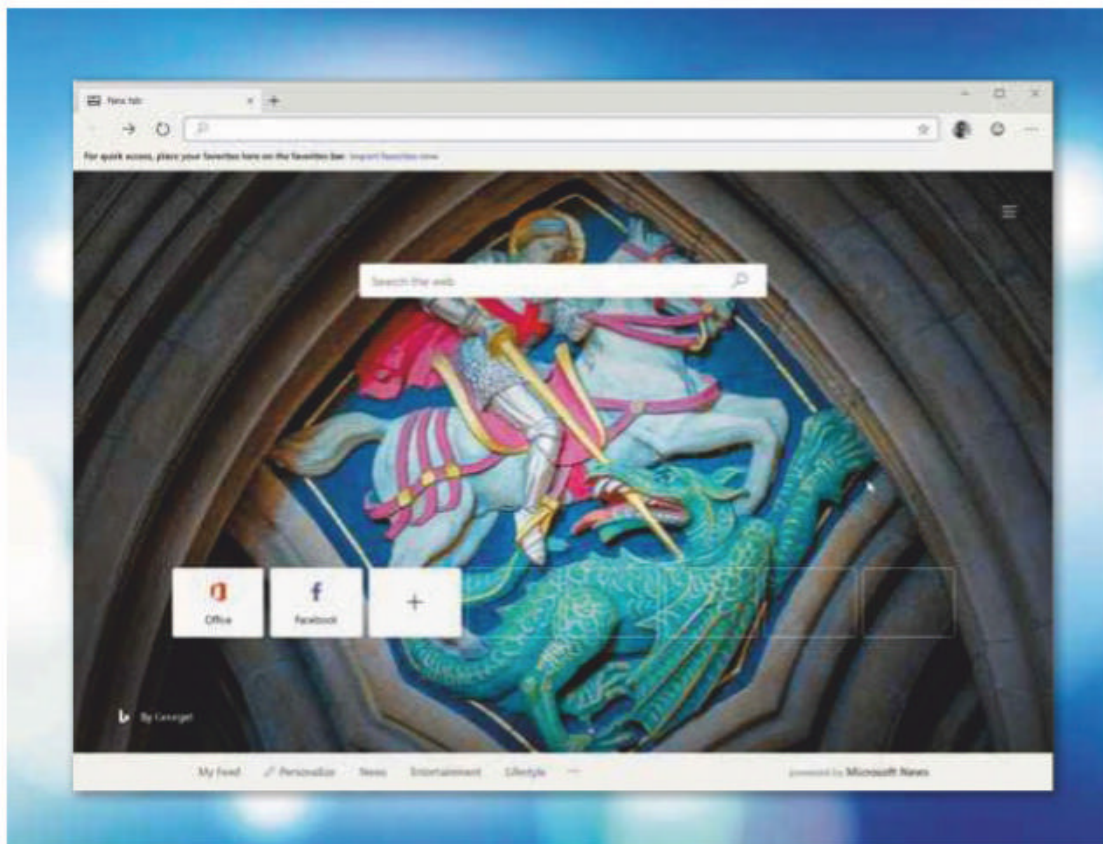
### Microsoft Edge (Chromium) Preview

[www.microsoftedgeinsider.com](http://www.microsoftedgeinsider.com)

**Min requirements:** Windows 10

**File size:** 1.5MB (Installer)

Microsoft is working on a new version of its Edge browser based on Chromium, the open-source software behind Google Chrome. It's still early days, but you can download a test version to try. The Beta release is coming soon, but until then you can choose between the Dev and Canary versions (Canary is less stable). Features include Windows Defender SmartScreen integration, tab muting and exclusive extensions. Not all Chrome add-ons work with it at the moment, though, and some features, such as dark mode and reading view, have yet to be implemented. See our Workshop on page 54 to find out how to use the new Chromium Edge.



## CLEANUP TOOL

### Comet

[bit.ly/comet475](http://bit.ly/comet475)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10

**File size:** 77KB

Windows' built-in Disk Cleanup tool can remove all manner of junk from your computer, including temp files and old versions of the operating system. It's a reliable tool that has been around for years, but Microsoft has now earmarked it for decommissioning and is moving its functions to the Windows 10 Settings app.

Comet is an open-source, portable (and very tiny) clone of Disk Cleanup that looks and behaves just like the Windows tool, but with the promise of additional features, such as a command-line option, to follow in future releases. Although Comet will run in Windows 7 (and earlier), certain features may be missing from the program.

## WEB BROWSER

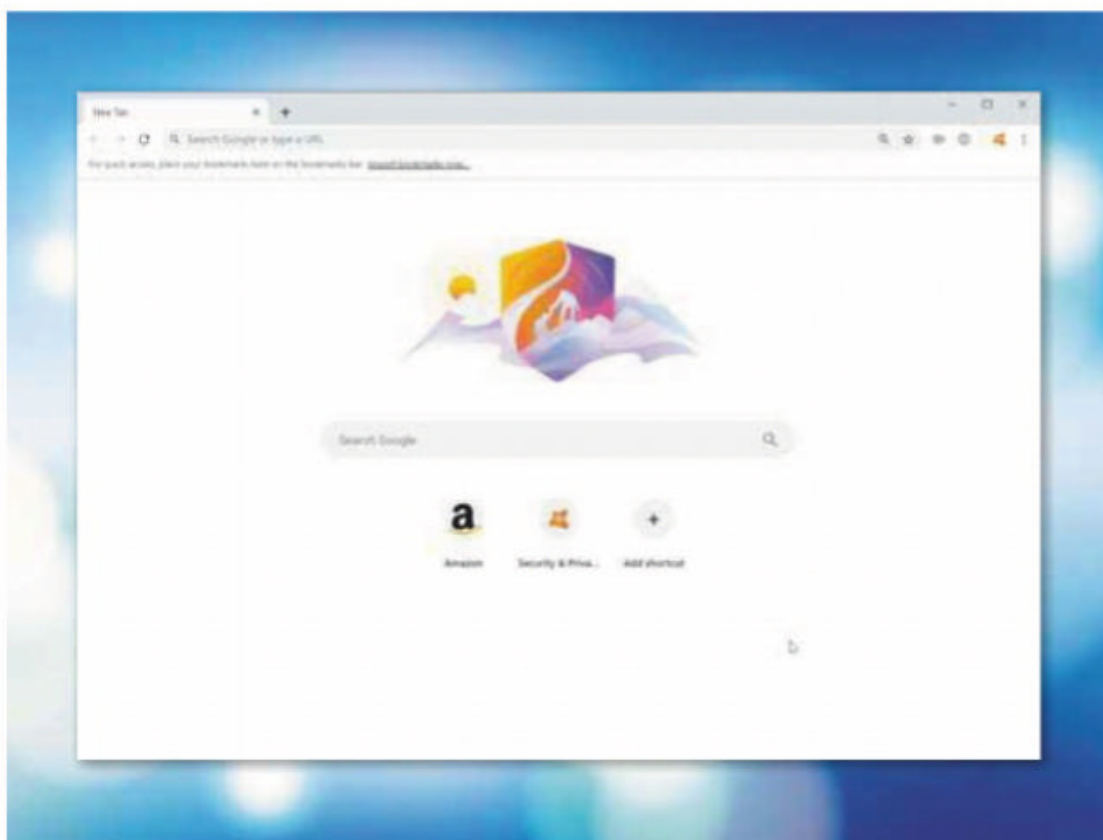
### Avast Secure Browser – 'Aspen'

[bit.ly/aspen475](http://bit.ly/aspen475)

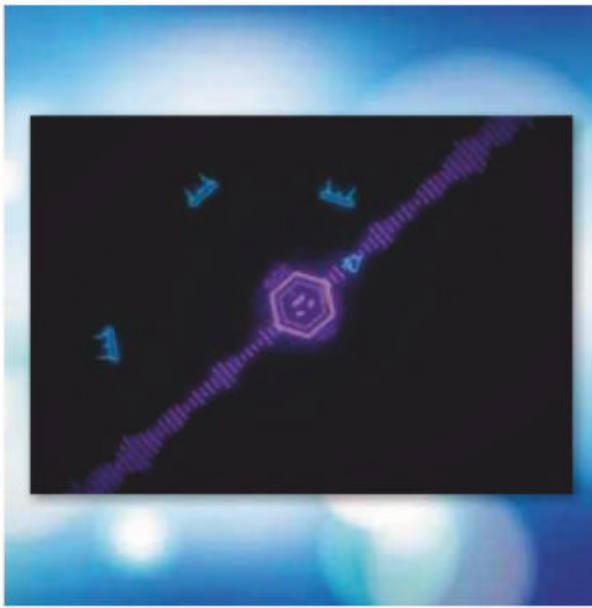
**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10

**File size:** 2.5MB (installer)

If you want to be safer on the web, consider swapping your current browser for Avast's new 'Aspen'. It's based on Google Chrome but has a greater focus on security and comes with its own extensions installed. Features include an ad blocker, an anti-phishing module, stealth mode and an extension guard that prevents installation of dubious add-ons. New in this release is a Webcam Guard that blocks unauthorised access to your PC's camera, and anti-fingerprinting to stop trackers following you around the web. There's also a Hack Check module that can tell you if any of your online accounts have been breached. See our Workshop on page 57 for more information.







## GAME

### Hyper Light Music

[bit.ly/hyper475](http://bit.ly/hyper475)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10

**File size:** 83MB

Hyper Light Music is a rhythm-based game in which you have to defend a central core from incoming enemies. This is an alpha version, which means the game offers only one music genre (Electro), three rhythms (beat, melody and percussion), three difficulty levels and the Defend mode. You provide your own music to play the game with.

## Don't install...

### JDiskReport

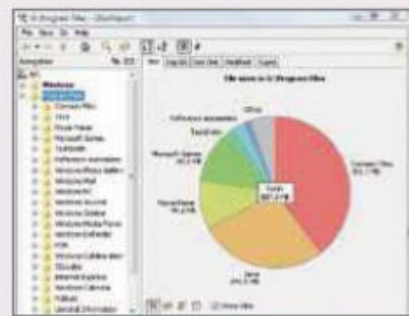
[www.jgoodies.com](http://www.jgoodies.com)

**Min requirements:**

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

**File size:** 681KB

JDiskReport shows you how much hard drive space your files and folders are taking up, and lets you delete obsolete items. However, it has a number of annoying problems, such as requiring Java to run, and the lack of a proper export feature. It also takes a frustratingly long time to scan your drive for files.



## ...Install this instead

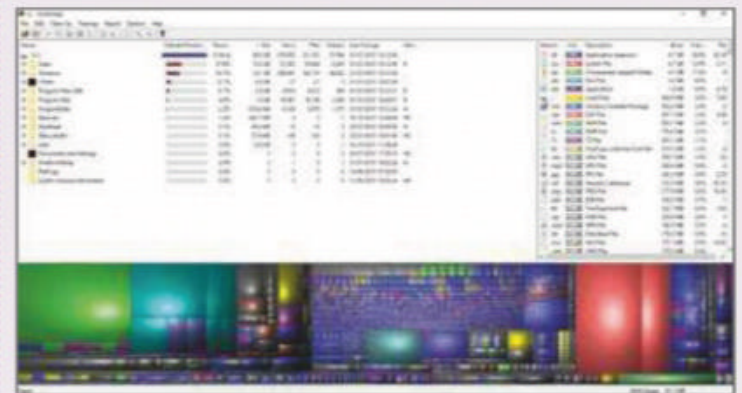
### WinDirStat

[windirstat.net](http://windirstat.net)

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

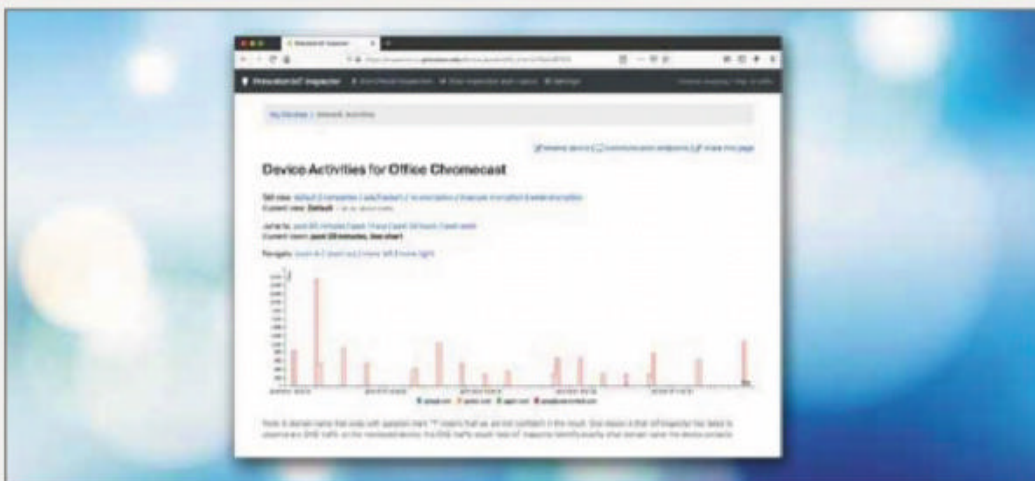
**File size:** 630KB

WinDirStat is an essential free tool that analyses your hard drive to identify space hogs and produces comprehensive results that are easy to understand. You can either scan your entire PC or individual drives and view files and folders in a Directory or Treemap. The latter maps your drive using coloured blocks to represent individual folders and files, so it's easy to see whether your biggest space hogs are system files, videos or something else. Right-click a space-wasting file for options, including two versions of Delete that let you either send the item to your Recycle Bin or erase it permanently.



## OTHER OPERATING SYSTEMS

What's new for Linux and macOS



## SECURITY TOOL

### Princeton IoT Inspector

[iot-inspector.princeton.edu](http://iot-inspector.princeton.edu)

**Min requirements:** macOS **File size:** 50.2KB

Princeton IoT Inspector is a free app for macOS that lets you check what your smart home devices are getting up to. It lists every Internet of Things (IoT) device on your network (such as your Amazon Echo or Google Home, for example) and shows which servers they contact, when they connect and whether those connections are secure. The app isn't signed by the Mac App Store, which means the operating system blocks it by default. Open System Preferences, Security, General to allow it to run.

The tool will eventually be available for Windows and Linux, too.



## GAME

### SuperTuxKart 1.0

[supertuxkart.net](http://supertuxkart.net)

**Min requirements:** Linux, Windows or macOS

**File size:** 554MB

After 12 years in development, this Mario Kart-style racing game featuring Linux's penguin mascot, Tux, has finally reached version 1.0. It supports networked races, so you can play with friends online, and a choice of game modes: normal race, time trial, soccer mode, battle mode and the new Capture-The-Flag. It's also available for Windows, macOS and Android.

GET FREE SOFTWARE FIRST subscribe to Web User at [subscribe.webuser.co.uk](http://subscribe.webuser.co.uk)





# Best New Browser Tools



## CHROME

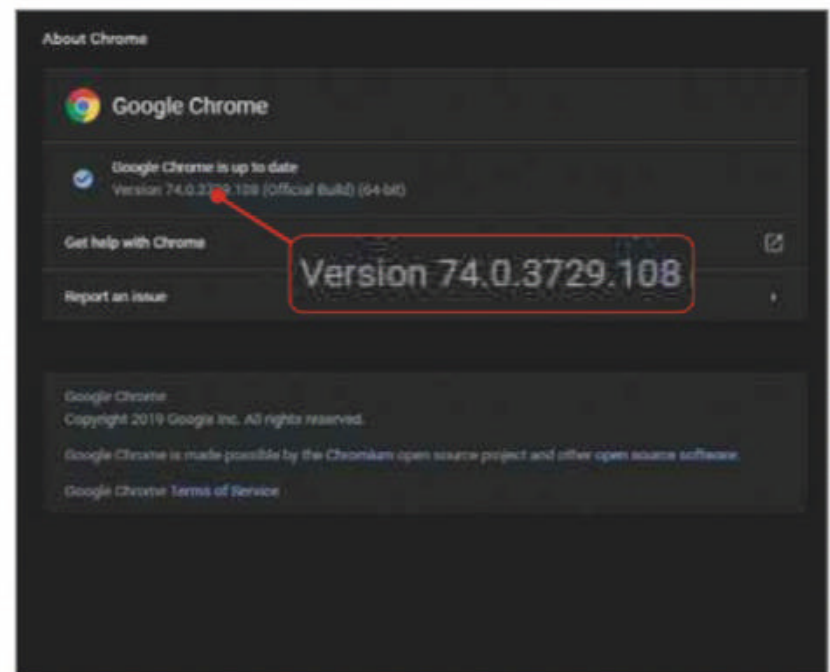
### Activate the new dark mode in Chrome 74

Google has started rolling out Chrome 74, and while most of its updates are security fixes, it does include the long-awaited dark mode. However, this feature isn't available to everyone just yet – Google has decided to limit it to a small number of users before the full launch.

Until dark mode is officially released, you can force Chrome to use it by right-clicking the Chrome icon and selecting Properties. In the target box, type "C:\Program Files (x86)\Google\Chrome\Application\chrome.exe" -force-dark-mode.

Another Chrome 74 feature is lazy loading, which stops the browser loading every image on a web page automatically. Instead, it waits for you to scroll down to the appropriate point before loading an image. This is an experimental flag, so you need to type `chrome://flags/#enable-lazy-image-loading` into the address bar enable it.

To get your hands on the update, click the three-dot menu in Chrome and go to Help, then select About Google Chrome.



### Avoid movie and TV spoilers

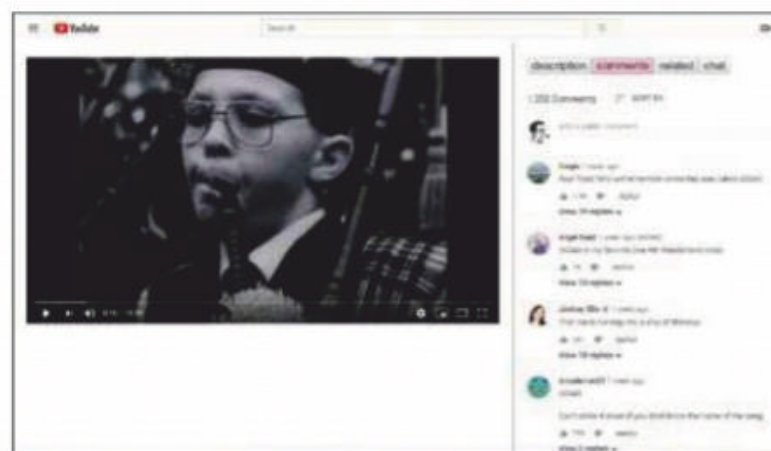
With huge TV and film hits such as *Game of Thrones* and *Avengers: Endgame* doing the rounds, fans are keen to avoid potential spoilers online. No Spoiler is a new Chrome extension that you can configure to filter out your choice of keywords, so if you don't want

to know how Marvel's cinematic series ends or you'd like to keep the footie scores at bay, just type in the words you want to remove from the internet. It's not available in the Chrome Web Store yet, so you have to

download it from GitHub and unzip its ZIP file ([bit.ly/spoiler475](https://bit.ly/spoiler475)). Next, type `chrome://extensions` in the Chrome address bar, select 'Load unpacked', then navigate to the unzipped file.

### Read YouTube comments in the sidebar

Despite more than a decade of refinements, the desktop browser version of YouTube is a bit of a mess.



One notable anomaly is that you have to choose whether you want to watch the video or engage with the comments – but you can't do both at the same time. This is strange considering the Android app lets you do exactly that.

If you find yourself in this particular quandary, check out the 'Comments Sidebar for YouTube' extension ([bit.ly/sidebar475](https://bit.ly/sidebar475)). This handy browser tool shifts all the details

you'd typically find under a video to the right-hand side of the screen. Buttons along the top of the sidebar let you jump from the description to comments, related videos and – where supported – chat. You can also drag the divider from side to side to resize the video and sidebar.

### Block Amazon's sponsored ads

Whenever you search for something on Amazon, it bombards you with ads along the top of the screen and in the search results – and you need to keep your wits about you to spot that sneaky grey 'Sponsored' label.

Amazon Adblocker

([bit.ly/amad475](https://bit.ly/amad475)) is a new tool that instantly removes all those annoying sponsored products, brands and ads, leaving just the search results.

Once you've installed the extension, click its icon and select 'This site can read and change site data'. You can then choose whether the tool becomes active 'When you click the extension', 'On amazon.co.uk' or 'On all sites'.





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



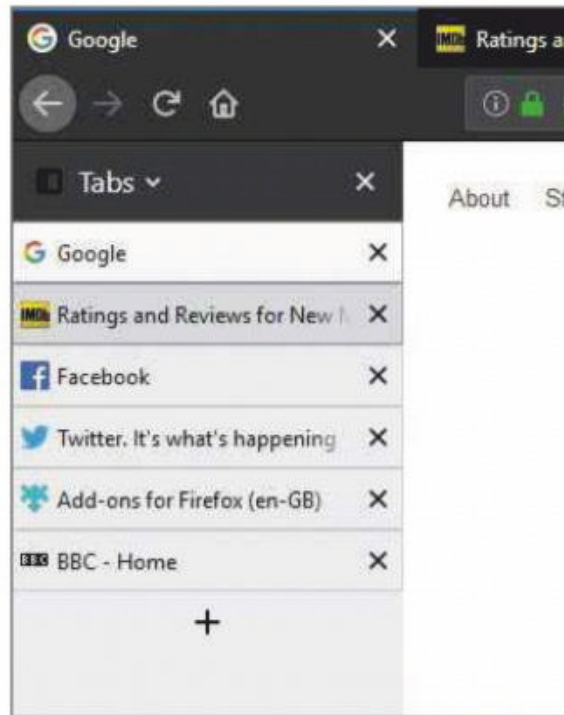
## FIREFOX

### Move your tabs to a sidebar

One of the best reasons to use Vivaldi is its ability to move all your tabs and other clutter to a sidebar. This makes navigation a whole lot easier, and keeps the browser looking clean.

Sidebar Tabs ([bit.ly/sidetab475](http://bit.ly/sidetab475)) is a Firefox add-on that replicates this feature by gathering all your open tabs at the side of the screen. They still appear at the top of the browser, too, so it doesn't save any screen space, but it makes switching between tabs easier.

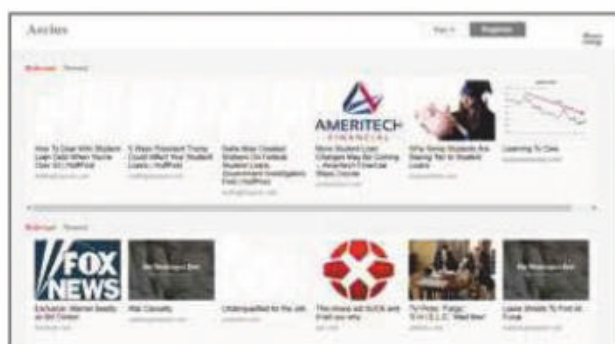
Once you've installed the add-on, click the arrow next to Tabs to jump to Bookmarks, History and Synced Tabs. You can also move the sidebar to the opposite side of the screen or close it to return the browser to its standard layout.



### Discover new and recommended websites

Do you ever get stuck in a website cycle, where you fidget from the BBC to Facebook, skip across to Twitter then back to the BBC in an endless loop of the same sites, the same topics and the same content, over and over again? If so, Aecius ([bit.ly/aecius475](http://bit.ly/aecius475)) can help you break free. All you have to do is register on the website and leave the add-on to work quietly in the background. The extension looks at your previous browsing history and sets about recommending related content from other websites. Then, when you want to find out more about a topic of interest, head over to the Aecius website ([aecius.net](http://aecius.net)) to see what it recommends for you.

It's a great way to break the monotonous cycle of ingrained web habits and also helps protect you against the menace of one-sided news.



### Find the best prices when shopping online

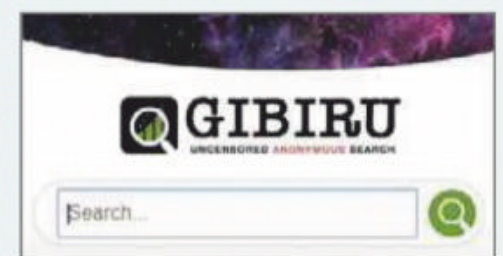
There are plenty of ways to save money online, from signing up to coupon site Honey ([www.joinhoney.com](http://www.joinhoney.com)) to installing The Camelizer ([bit.ly/camel475](http://bit.ly/camel475)), which monitors price fluctuations on Amazon. But if you're serious about looking after the pennies, try the Pricesearcher add-on ([bit.ly/price475](http://bit.ly/price475)). It's a tool that scans thousands of websites to find the best prices out there. And, encouragingly, it doesn't let companies pay to appear in (and therefore influence) its results.

You can search for products on the Pricesearcher website ([www.pricesearcher.com](http://www.pricesearcher.com)), or search stores such as Amazon, where you'll see a banner highlighting other prices from around the web. It can be a bit flaky, sometimes failing to recognise Amazon's deal of the day prices, but when it works it's great, and provides useful way of comparing prices across the internet with a single click.

## OTHER BROWSERS

### Search the web privately

DuckDuckGo is the most famous of the private search engines, but it's not the only option. Gibiru ([bit.ly/gibiru475](http://bit.ly/gibiru475)) is an anonymous, uncensored search engine that won't store the details of your searches on its servers. The Gibiru for Opera extension brings this private search engine to your fingertips, no matter what your default search engine is. Click the icon, type your query into the text box and the tool whisks you to Gibiru's search results – which are refreshingly free of ads and other Google-like annoyances.



### Search online, buy in store

Remember when Amazon was just a simple online bookshop with no plans to rule the world (or the digital sphere, at least)? The Universal Amazon Killer extension ([bit.ly/uak475](http://bit.ly/uak475)) is an attempt to push users back towards high-street stores. The setup is simple. Search Amazon for any book, then click the extension's icon to buy it from a good old-fashioned bricks-and-mortar shop with free UK delivery. You can also choose to collect it from the shop yourself. It's a fantastic way to support the high street, but it's unlikely to kill Amazon's profits any time soon, not least because it currently only works with books.





# Best Free Apps



## App of the Fortnight

### PRIVACY

## LockBox

[bit.ly/lockdroid475](http://bit.ly/lockdroid475)

[bit.ly/lockios475](http://bit.ly/lockios475)

4.1 9

Not to be confused with the Firefox password manager of the same name, LockBox is an app from remote-access specialist LogMeIn that's designed to provide a secure place on your mobile device for storing snippets of private information you don't want anyone else to get their hands on.

Unlike many overcomplicated security apps, LockBox takes a refreshingly straightforward approach to protecting your data. It works just like a note-taking tool, so you can jot down details of all your passwords, passport numbers, PIN codes and other important information. LockBox then encrypts your notes using device-level AES-256 bit encryption with PBKDF2 SHA-256 and salted hashes – which means they're virtually impossible to crack.

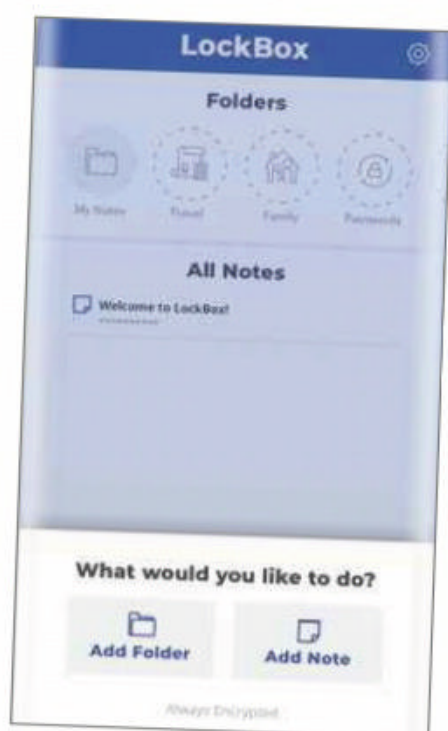
LockBox offers unlimited storage and makes your notes easy to organise. Better still, you can access anything you store in your LockBox from any other devices you log into, and even share important notes – such as your NHS number, for example – securely with up to six friends or family members.

The app's developers promise that they've taken every possible precaution to protect your information in the cloud. Your data is encrypted and decrypted on your device, and any information you store in your digital notes is kept secret, even from LockBox. Your master password, and the keys required to encrypt and decrypt your data, are also kept on your device and never sent to LockBox's servers, so the company can't access them.

Despite launching only a few weeks ago, LockBox has already

been updated with support for fingerprint recognition on compatible Android devices, as well as TouchID and FaceID on iPhones.

NEW



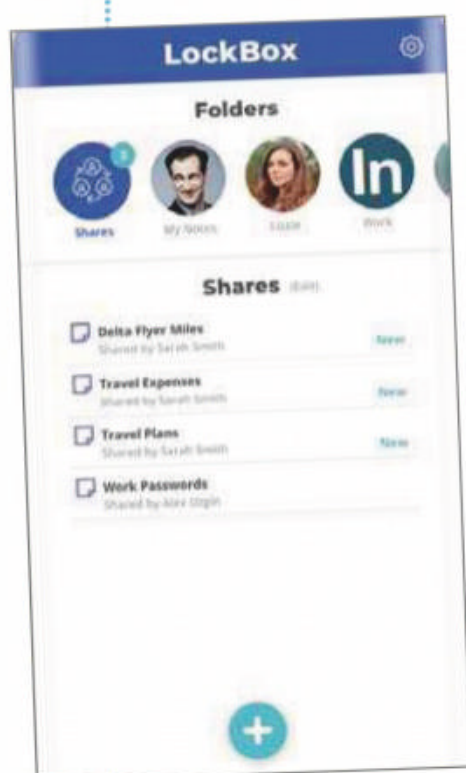
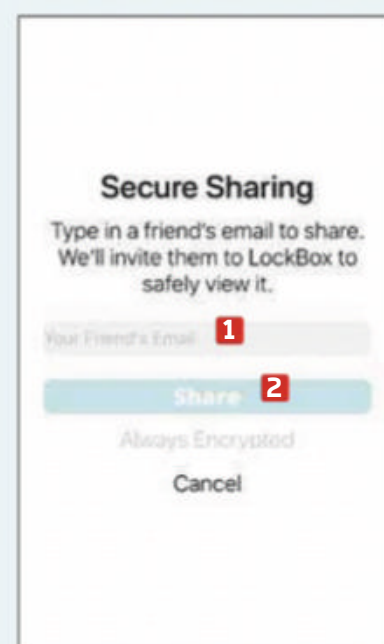
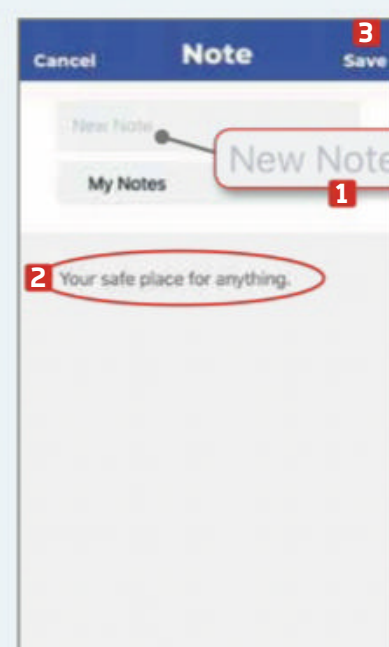
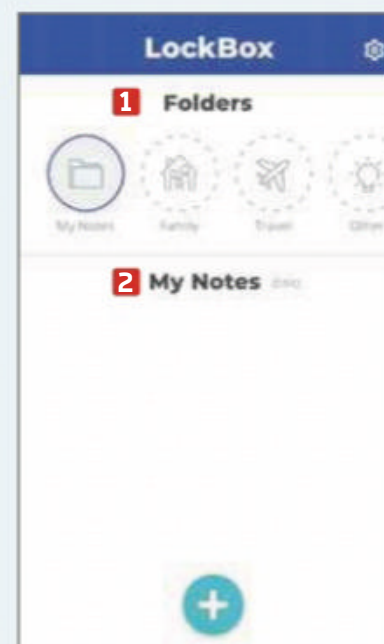
### MINI WORKSHOP

## Secure your private info using LockBox

**1** Download and launch the LockBox app, then swipe through the welcome screens until you see a button labelled Sign Up. Tap this, then enter your email address and a strong, unique and memorable password. Press Create Account and you'll be taken to the app's main screen, with your Folders at the top **1** and a section headed My Notes in the middle. **2** There won't be anything there yet – but that's about to change!

**2** Press the large plus (+) icon at the bottom of the screen. The app will ask you whether you want to Add Folder or Add Note: tap Add Note. On the next screen, enter a name for your note in the box marked New Note, **1** then start typing your note in the area below, where it says 'Your safe place for anything'. **2** When you've finished, choose Save. **3**

**3** You can share individual notes securely with friends and family members. Open the note you want to share, then tap the Share option in the top-right corner. On the next screen, enter the person's email address in the box, **1** then press Share. **2** If the recipient doesn't already have their own LockBox account, they'll receive an invitation to set one up so they can view the note you shared with them.



Our rating





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

### TOOLS

#### Action Launcher

[bit.ly/action475](http://bit.ly/action475)



For those of you who haven't heard of the popular Action Launcher, it's an app designed to bring some of the look and feel of newer

Android devices (Pixel phones and those running Android Pie) to other Android phones, and provides lots of options for customising your mobile experience. The latest version introduces a useful and powerful new Action Search feature, which lets you search across the web, apps, contacts and your device's settings from the home screen.

Action Search is available to all users of the free version of the app.



Our rating



UPDATED

### FITNESS

#### Google Fit

[bit.ly/fitdroid475](http://bit.ly/fitdroid475)

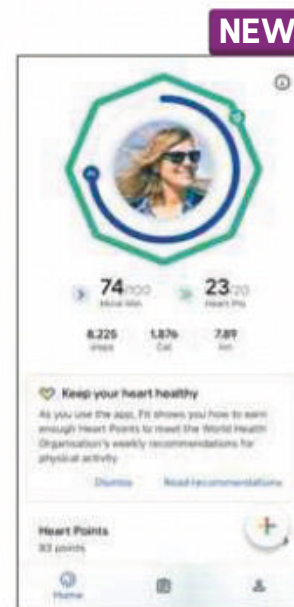
[bit.ly/fitios475](http://bit.ly/fitios475)



Google launched its fitness-tracking app on Android last year, and now the software giant has brought it to iOS, too. Google Fit is compatible with Apple Watch as well as devices running Google's own Wear OS, and integrates seamlessly with Apple's built-in Health app and others, including Nike Run Club. Fit encourages you to complete a number of activity goals to help you develop healthier habits. The more exercise you get and the further you travel, the more Move Minutes and Heart Points you'll earn. You can review your daily progress in your Journal.



Our rating



NEW

### SHOPPING

#### Argos

[bit.ly/argosdroid475](http://bit.ly/argosdroid475)

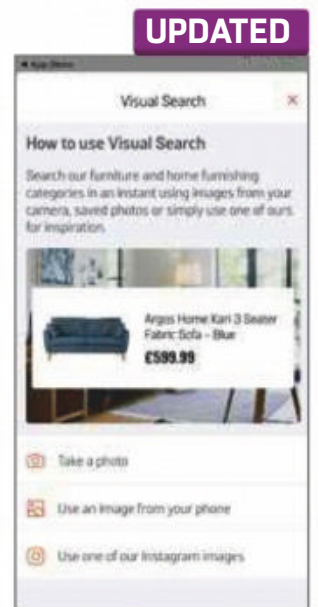
[bit.ly/argosios475](http://bit.ly/argosios475)



The iOS version of the Argos app has just been updated with a very interesting new Visual Search feature. The idea is to make it easier to find items you want in the Argos store by letting you take a picture of them in the real world. Tap Search, then Visual Search and capture a photo - or choose an existing image from your photo library. The app analyses the image and looks for matching items, so you can be sure you're buying the right one. It's a neat trick and works well most of the time. We hope the new feature makes it to Android soon.



Our rating



UPDATED

### PODCASTS

#### Swoot

[bit.ly/swootdroid475](http://bit.ly/swootdroid475)

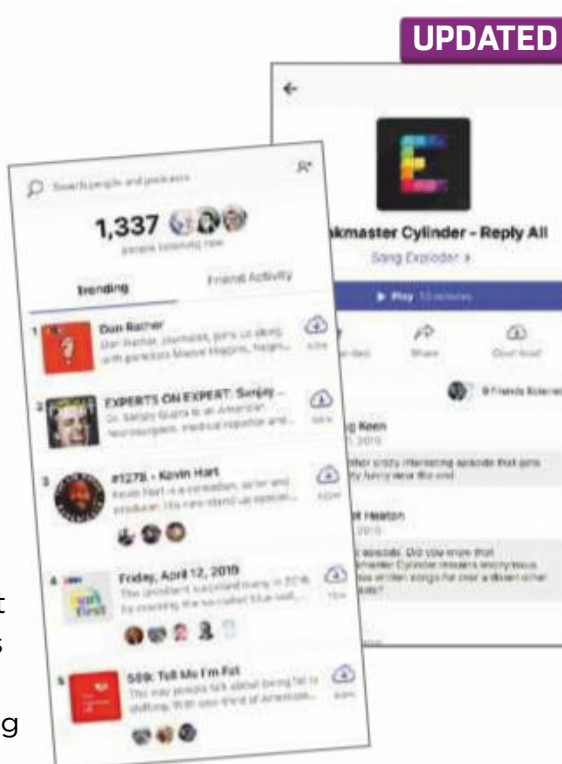
[bit.ly/swootapp475](http://bit.ly/swootapp475)



Podcasts are an increasingly popular medium, but seeking out interesting new things to listen to can be somewhat hit and miss. Most podcast apps provide a search function, of course, but discovering new shows is often a case of stumbling on something interesting by accident or through word of mouth. This is the problem Swoot aims to solve by combining the functions of a podcast app with social media tools. You can connect with your friends through the app and find out what they're listening to, while recommending your own favourites at the same time. It's perfect for helping you unearth those hidden gems.



Our rating



UPDATED

### AUGMENTED REALITY

#### Pharos AR

[bit.ly/pharosdroid475](http://bit.ly/pharosdroid475)

[bit.ly/pharosios475](http://bit.ly/pharosios475)



Augmented reality has no end of uses, from education to navigation, but Pharos AR is all about AR for art's sake. It's Google's second collaboration with recording artist Childish Gambino - the first being an avatar he created of himself for the Pixel 3's Playground app. Pharos AR, however, is a cross-platform app created by Childish Gambino using Google's ARCore platform. Pop on your headphones and open the app, then step through the portal and find yourself transported to an alternative universe that blends the world around you with bright, colourful neon graphics and sounds as you gather hidden glyphs.



Our rating



NEW



# 5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

## NOTES

### Notenger

[bit.ly/notenger475](http://bit.ly/notenger475)

**Price:** 89p



This app doesn't give you much in the way of extra features – but that's kind of the point. Notenger is designed to offer a simple way to make quick notes and set reminders through an intuitive, minimalist interface.



## NATURE

### ChirpOMatic

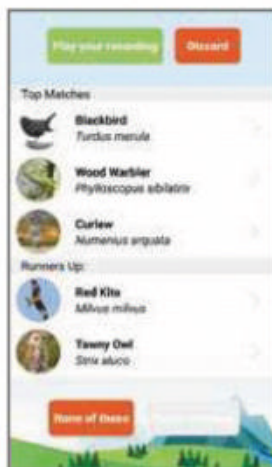
[bit.ly/chirpdroid475](http://bit.ly/chirpdroid475)

[bit.ly/chirpios475](http://bit.ly/chirpios475)

**Price:** £3.99



ChirpOMatic is basically Shazam for birdsong. Record a bird singing and the app analyses its song and presents its top matches. The app has been updated on iOS and is new on Android.



## TOOLS

### PSJoy

[bit.ly/psjoy475](http://bit.ly/psjoy475)

**Price:** £3.49



This interesting multi-use



tool lets you control and play your PlayStation 4 console remotely, or use your Android device as an extra PlayStation controller. It's fiddly to set up but useful for console gamers.

## AUDIO

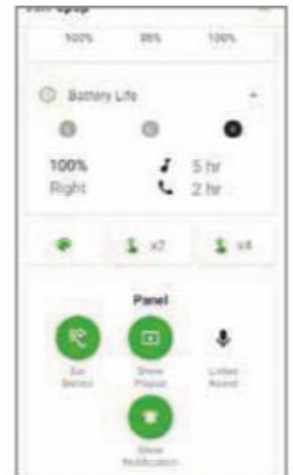
### AirPopup

[bit.ly/airpopup475](http://bit.ly/airpopup475)

**Price:** £1.39



If you use Apple's AirPods with an Android device, you lose certain features. This app restores some of them – including battery life monitoring and listening assistance – and provides customisation options.



## GAME

### Rolando: Royal Edition

[bit.ly/rolando475](http://bit.ly/rolando475)

**Price:** £2.99



Back in 2008, the original Rolando was an early iOS gaming hit. This remastered edition still looks great and plays brilliantly as you guide your roly-poly characters around a series of colourful environments.



Notenger



ChirpOMatic



PSJoy



AirPopup



Rolando: Royal Edition



## ✗ Don't install...

### Glint Finder

[bit.ly/glint475](http://bit.ly/glint475)

Glint Finder is supposed to locate hidden cameras by recognising 'specular reflections' caused when a flash bounces off a lens.



The idea is sound, but the actual app is garbage. Rammed with ads, barely functional and neglected for almost six years by its developers, it claims to be "the #1 glint finder app" but a more accurate description would be "the biggest load of guff on Google Play".

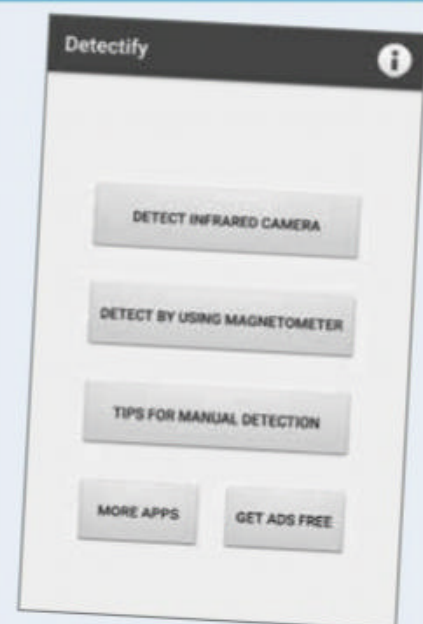
## ...Install this instead

### Detectify

[bit.ly/detectify475](http://bit.ly/detectify475)



If you're worried that Big Brother could be watching (or listening to) you, you're better off with Detectify. This anti-surveillance app uses sensors built into your smartphone, such as the magnetometer, to detect electronic signals from microphones, bugs and other snooping devices, while the image sensor locates infrared signals from hidden cameras. Or, as Google Play user Joshua Dershowitz discovered, you can use it to find your lost headphones by detecting the interference they emit. The free version's full-screen ads can be annoying, but the app is well designed, easy to use and seems to work nicely.







# Take a Screen Break


Give your eyes a rest from your browser by taking our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you guess our 1980s-films emoji and our Wikipedia article?

**WIN A  
WEB USER  
2018 BACK  
ISSUES DISC!**

Email your answers to  
[editor@webuser.co.uk](mailto:editor@webuser.co.uk)  
- one correct entry  
will win a disc



## CAN YOU GUESS THE 1980s FILMS FROM THE EMOJI?

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 |     | 2 |     |
| 3 |       | 4 |     |
| 5 |    | 6 |     |

## GUESS THE WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE

Can you work out which technology-related Wikipedia entry the following clues refer to?



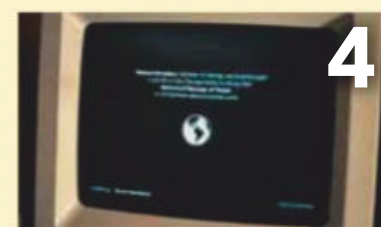
# WIKIPEDIA

**1** "They currently cause billions of dollars' worth of economic damage each year, due to system failure, wasting computer resources, corrupting data and increasing maintenance costs."

**2** "Often they will cause a system to 'hang' or 'freeze', and a subsequent hard reboot will render

a system restore point from the same day corrupt."

**3** "One manner of classifying them is to analyse whether they reside in binary executables (such as EXE files), data files (such as Microsoft Word documents), or in the boot sector of the host's hard drive."



**5** "The first academic work on the subject was done in 1949 by John von Neumann, who gave lectures at the University of Illinois about the 'Theory and Organization of Complicated Automata'."

Credit: Mike Evangelist / Wikipedia

## COMPETITIONS

### WIN 1 OF 5

#### KitSound BoomBar+ Bluetooth Speaker

KitSound's new BoomBar+ Bluetooth Speaker keeps you connected wirelessly to the music you love for up to 20 hours, and offers hands-free call handling for ultimate convenience.

Use the carry handle and pouch to take it with you. To enter, email [webusercomp@dennis.co.uk](mailto:webusercomp@dennis.co.uk) with 'BoomBar' in the subject line. For more information, visit [www.kitsound.co.uk](http://www.kitsound.co.uk) and follow [@KitSoundUK](https://www.instagram.com/KitSoundUK) on Instagram.



**WORTH  
£40  
EACH**

### WIN 1 OF 3

#### Rock Jaw T5 Ultra Connect earphones

Rock Jaw's British-engineered T5 Ultra Connect wireless earphones offer HD audio, excellent range and a battery that lasts more than 11 hours. Their brushed finish makes them as attractive as they are durable. To enter, email

[webusercomp@dennis.co.uk](mailto:webusercomp@dennis.co.uk) with 'Ultra Connect' in the subject line. For more information, visit [rockjawaudio.com](http://rockjawaudio.com) and follow [@rockjawaudio](https://twitter.com/rockjawaudio) on Twitter.



**WORTH  
£74.95  
EACH**





# FAQ

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

## Xbox One S All-Digital Edition

Is it game over for discs? **David Crookes** looks at Microsoft's latest, digital-only Xbox games console

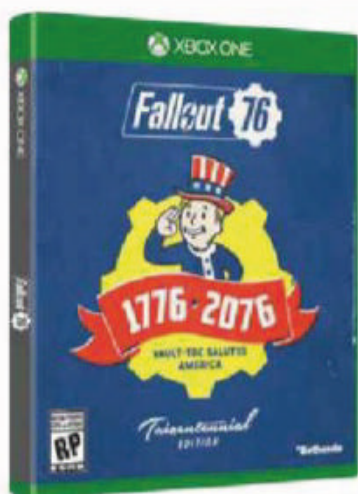
### What is it?

The Xbox One S All-Digital Edition is the latest version of Microsoft's video-game console ([www.xbox.com](http://www.xbox.com)), but it has been gaining attention for what it lacks rather than what it adds. It's the first Xbox without a disc drive, which means players can no longer use physical media and will have to rely entirely on downloading or streaming digital games. Yet while this may offer a strong indication of things to come, the move has proved controversial.

### How does it work?

The idea is that instead of buying games on discs, players will download them

from the console's online store and other websites using a download code, or stream titles using the Xbox Game Pass subscription service. It's the same system Xbox One owners have been using since the console launched in 2013, so the All-Digital Edition provides access to the huge library of digital titles that has built up over the years.



*Gamers are turning away from physical products such as this*

### Does this mean discs have had their day?

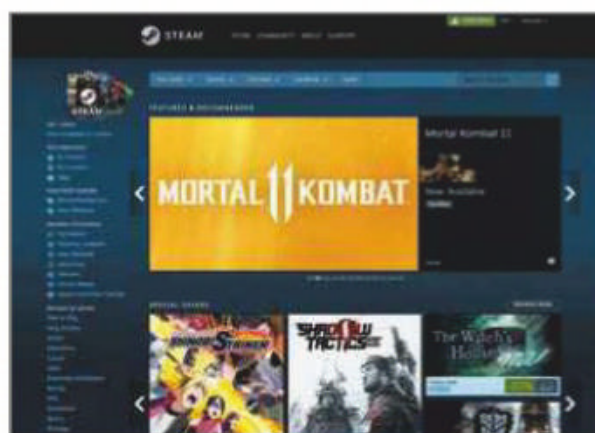
Not quite, but just as sales of music CDs and DVD movies have declined in the wake of streaming services such as Spotify and Netflix, more and more gamers are opting for digital purchases. The Entertainment Retailers Association says digital video-game sales were worth a whopping £3.09 billion in 2018 compared with £770 million from physical sales. Digital revenues have gone up by 12.5% year on year, while those from physical media have fallen by 2.8%. These digital figures are slightly distorted by purchases of additional downloadable



content for games that have already been purchased, however, as well as microtransactions, pay-to-play games and subscription services.

### So why introduce a digital-only Xbox now?

The timing is curious given that Microsoft has confirmed it's working on a new console, codenamed Xbox Scarlett, which is likely to launch next year. We can only assume the company is trying to squeeze every last bit of life out of its current console before the gaming world moves on. It's also perhaps easier to ditch discs now than it has been in the past: we're used to buying and downloading games rather than cluttering our shelves



*The success of Steam proves that gamers are happy to get their games digitally*

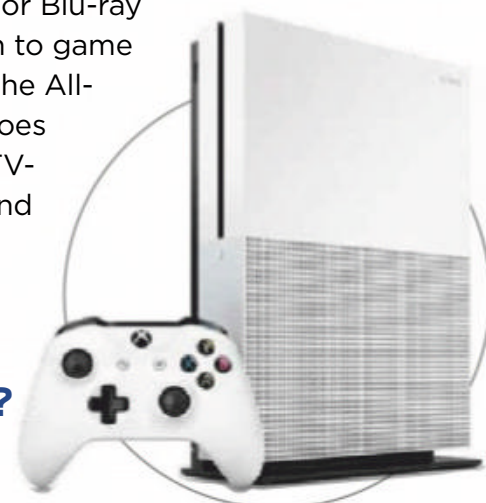
with discs, and you only have to consider the popularity of digital distribution platform Steam ([store.steampowered.com](http://store.steampowered.com)), which has 150 million registered users worldwide, to see that there's a huge demand for this type of system.

### How advanced is this new console?

The Xbox One S All-Digital Edition is identical to the Xbox One S, released in 2016, with the same eight-core Jaguar processor and 8GB of DDR3 RAM. The only physical difference is that the new machine has no disc slot. This means you can't play DVDs or Blu-ray discs, in addition to game discs, although the All-Digital Edition does make a decent TV-streaming box and has a 1TB hard drive, too.

### Does it look any different?

Again, aside from the lack of a slot, you'd barely be able to tell the two apart. This is arguably a missed



*The new Xbox One S looks the same as this old model, but without a disc slot*





Microsoft's new console will come with three games installed: *Forza Horizon 3* (left), *Minecraft* (centre) and *Sea of Thieves* (right)

opportunity. Microsoft could have updated the three-year-old architecture or reduced the console's size now that it no longer contains a disc drive. It could also have added a larger hard drive, but the only real difference is that it's lighter.

## Does it cost less than the Xbox One S?

In theory, yes. The All-Digital Edition has a recommended retail price of £199, which is £50 less than the disc drive-equipped model. The only problem is that you can buy a 1TB Xbox One S for as little as £182 from Amazon and £189.85 from the high street chain Game. Unless the price of the All-Digital Edition falls fast, there's little incentive to buy one, considering it has a key feature missing.

## How many games can I store on a 1TB drive?

A 1TB hard drive has enough storage space for between 20 and 25 games, depending on how big the files are. Some of that space is already taken up by three preinstalled games – *Minecraft*, *Sea of Thieves* and *Forza Horizon 3* – but you can remove those without losing them. That's because digital games are held in an online library, so you can download them to the console or an external hard drive whenever you want to play them.

## Brilliant. So lots of cheap games then?

Not quite. When we checked the Microsoft Store ([bit.ly/store475](http://bit.ly/store475)), we found that the digital versions of many games cost around the same price as physical copies. *World War Z*, for instance, cost £34.99 whether we bought it digitally or on disc, while *Star Wars: Jedi Fallen Order* was selling for £59.99 as a download from the Microsoft Store and £54.99 on disc from Amazon.

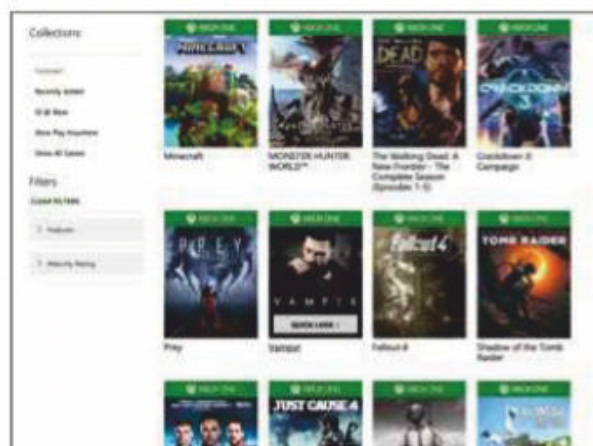
As we mentioned earlier, though, you can also stream titles using the Xbox Game Pass subscription service, which costs £7.99 per month. This gives you access to 100 games, which you can play both on and offline. The catalogue

includes *Gears of War 4*, *Prey* and *Tomb Raider: Definitive Edition*, and you can enjoy Xbox One exclusives on the day they are released.

In fact, the Xbox Game Pass is the best reason to buy an Xbox One S All-Digital Edition. It keeps your game saves and backups in the cloud, and you can download new digital games automatically as soon as they launch.

## So is this digital console doomed to flop?

That remains to be seen, but unless the price drops considerably, we can't see any benefit in choosing an Xbox One S All-Digital Edition over a standard Xbox One S. Before Microsoft's new console came along, the most notable effort at a digital-only device was the Sony PSP Go handheld, which launched in 2009 and lasted a couple of years before Sony replaced it with the PlayStation Vita, which accepted both physical and digital media. Times have changed, however, and ideas that were ahead of their time back then could easily work today – or, perhaps more likely, with the next generation of consoles. One thing's for sure, though: when physical copies of today's Xbox One games end up on eBay or in CEX for a few quid in the future, you won't be able to take advantage.



An Xbox Game Pass is the best reason to buy the new digital-only console

## SONY TEASES GAMERS WITH PLAYSTATION 5 DETAILS

As Microsoft tries to squeeze a little more life out of the Xbox One S, Sony has revealed details of its next-generation console, which will replace the current PS4 and is expected to be called (logically) the PlayStation 5. Lead system architect Mark Cerny says the console will use a third-generation AMD Ryzen chip and a Radeon graphics processor that supports 'ray tracing'. The latter is a technique common in Hollywood visual effects that enhances realism by modelling the way light travels, but it has never been used by a games console.



The PS5 will also have a solid-state drive (SSD) for faster loading times, which should make for a more seamless experience. Another feature that's attracting a lot of attention is 3D audio, which Cerny says will offer virtual surround sound for greater immersion. It's also heartening to hear that the new machine is not only compatible with the PlayStation VR virtual-reality headset but will also allow gamers to play PS4 titles, because it's based in part on the current console's architecture. Expect the PlayStation 5 to arrive in 2020.



# 50 BEST APPS

## YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF!

COVER  
FEATURE

Wading through app stores to find top-quality tools can be confusing and time-consuming. **Nik Rawlinson** saves you the hassle by rounding up 50 brilliant free Android and iOS apps that are too good to miss

**T**here are three million apps on Google Play, give or take a few dozen, and another two million on Apple's App Store. It's no secret that some of the best are free. The only problem is finding them.

At least, it was a problem until now. To help you sort the wheat from the digital chaff, we've combed the iOS and Android app stores to pick out the very best of the best, and sorted them into 10 logical categories.

Whether you want to keep an eye on your MP's voting record or design a classy logo, taking in some history, astronomy, travel, movies and more along the way, you'll find a wealth of wonderful apps here that you can install and use without having to be wealthy yourself.

We've also included five Android apps that you won't find on Google Play, but which we believe are well worth installing all the same.

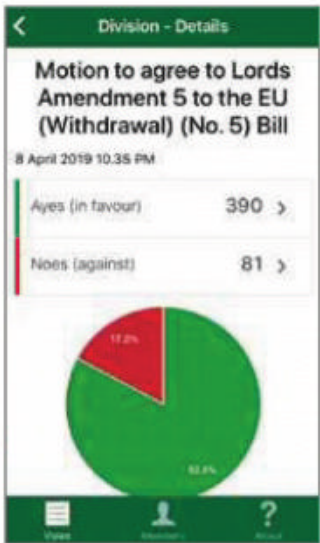


## KEEP TRACK OF THE NEWS

**Commons Votes**[bit.ly/commons475](http://bit.ly/commons475)

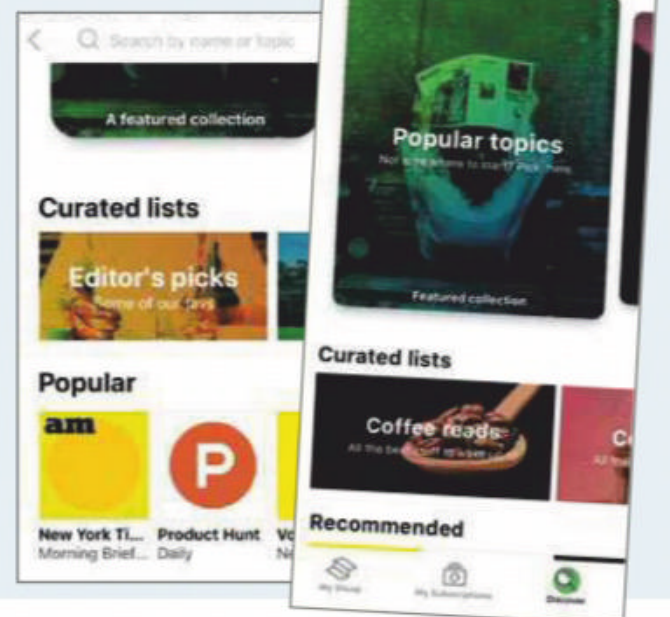
4.1 8

With Parliament – and British democracy – seemingly in a state of flux, it's rarely been more important to know how your MP is voting on your behalf. The Commons Votes app is updated after every vote in the chamber to present the result of each motion and, crucially, which way each member leaned. You can browse the results, tap through for a more detailed breakdown, and 'favourite' your MP (or any other you're interested in) to track their voting record in real time.

**Stoop**[bit.ly/stoop475](http://bit.ly/stoop475)

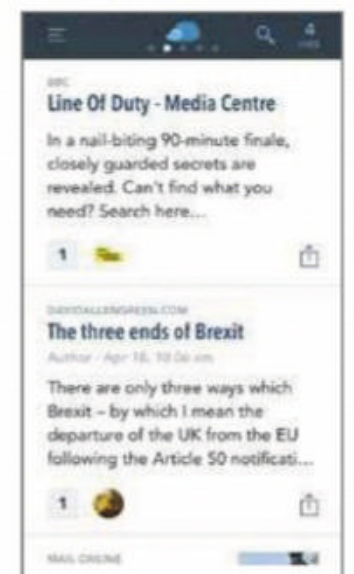
5 11

Stoop bills itself as "like a podcast app – but for newsletters", which is a pretty good analogy. Rather than leaving your inbox to clutter up with missives, Stoop keeps them all in one place, in a handy queue that you can peruse at your leisure. It also has curated lists, recommendations and a search tool for finding your next great read.

**Nuzzel**[bit.ly/nuzzel475](http://bit.ly/nuzzel475)

4.4 9

Nuzzel ensures you spend less time scrolling and more time reading the news. Log in using your Twitter account and it will extract the most relevant stories, to help improve your signal-to-noise ratio.

**Brut**[bit.ly/brut475](http://bit.ly/brut475)

11

Kittens and clumsy kids are all very amusing, but if you want to watch more meaningful videos, check out Brut. With an edition tailored for British viewers (and companion editions for the US, France, Mexico and India), it presents curated videos, and produces its own,

on an impressive range of subjects. Whether you're interested in the woman who launched the most-signed petition on the Parliament website, Digby the guide horse, or the guy who built a prosthetic arm from Lego, this is where you'll find something inspirational, enlightening or educational to pass a few minutes.

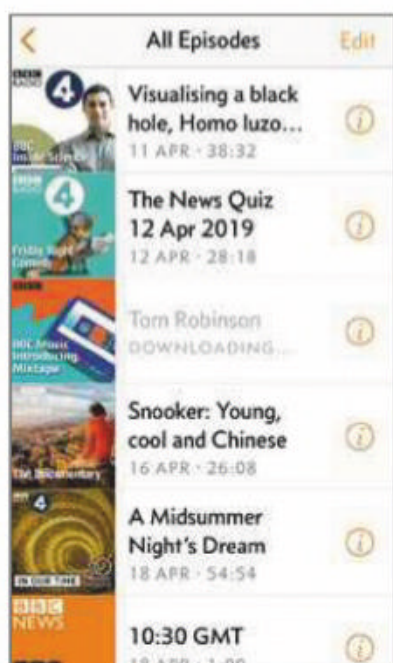


## ENHANCE YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

**Overcast**[bit.ly/overcast475](http://bit.ly/overcast475)

12

It may sound like a weather app, but Overcast is a powerful podcast tool, with a voice boost feature that makes speech clearer when you're listening in the car, and a neat smart speed tool

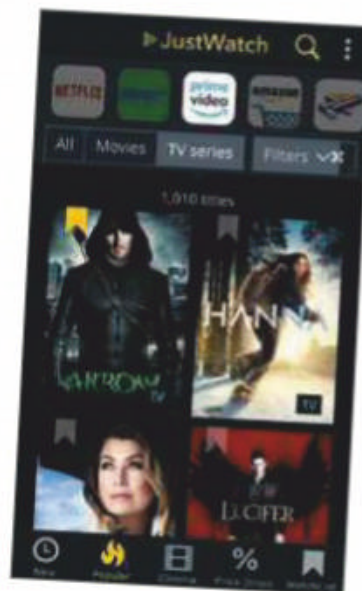


that promises to accelerate rambling podcasts without making them sound garbled. Overcast syncs your podcasts to the web, so when you want to listen at home, you can log in using a browser and pick up where you left off.

**JustWatch**[bit.ly/justwatch475](http://bit.ly/justwatch475)

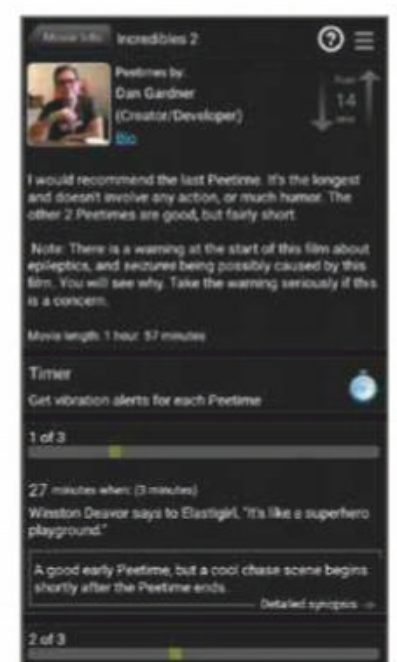
4.4 7

If you feel overwhelmed with choice every time you pick up your TV remote, pick up your phone instead and check JustWatch. Tell the streaming search engine which services you're signed up to, then filter their offerings by price and type (such as movies or TV series). The New tab shows what your chosen services have just added to their catalogues, and you can create watchlists to keep track of shows you'll watch once you've finished bingeing your current box sets.

**RunPee**[bit.ly/runpee475](http://bit.ly/runpee475)

4.4 8

The ingenious RunPee tells you when you can safely dash to the loo during a film without missing anything important. As well as telling you how far into the movie you need to wait for your opportunity, it gives you a cue from the dialogue, so you know for sure that it's safe to go. It even provides a synopsis so you can keep track of what you're missing while you're indisposed.





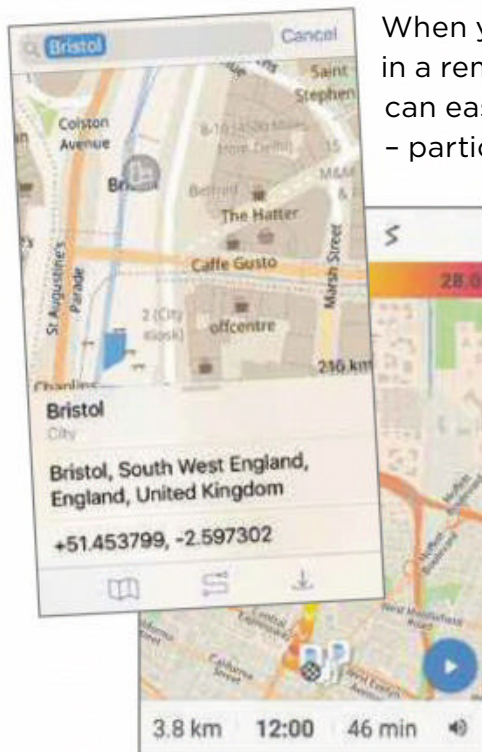
## EXPAND YOUR TRAVEL HORIZONS



**Guru Maps**

[bit.ly/gurumaps475](http://bit.ly/gurumaps475)

4.3 9



When you're trekking in a remote area, you can easily feel cut off – particularly when you hit a patch of poor mobile reception. That's when you need Guru Maps, which lets you download detailed vector maps before you set off so you can find your way

while you're offline. The maps are compact – just 214MB for the whole of the UK – and you can track your wandering with GPS trails, and bookmark your favourite locations.



**TrainPal UK**

[bit.ly/trainpal475](http://bit.ly/trainpal475)

4.2 9

TrainPal promises to save you an average of 37% on the price of each rail ticket when you use it to book in advance. It does this without charging booking fees, and even offers a refund



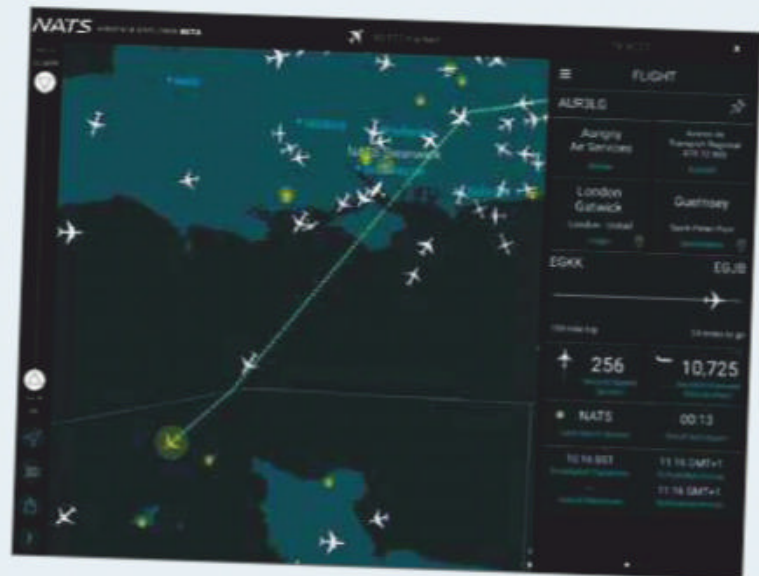
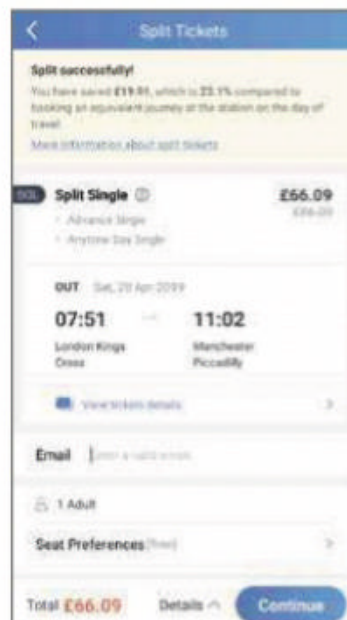
**Airspace Explorer**

[bit.ly/airspaceexplorer475](http://bit.ly/airspaceexplorer475)

9.3

NATS, the UK's leading provider of air traffic control services, has stripped out the most sensitive parts of its in-house flight tracking tool to produce Airspace Explorer. This fascinating app tracks every commercial and private flight in the world, allowing you to tap individual planes to see their flight path, altitude, aircraft type and more. A nifty 3D feature even lets you see their relative heights, which is when you realise quite how crowded Britain's skies are. Of course,

and exchange service on off-peak and Anytime tickets. Once you've bought your ticket, simply take the bank card you paid with to the ticket machine at the station, type in your reference number and wait for the machine to spit it out.



FlightRadar has been doing this for years, but we could spend hours scanning the skies using NATS' ad-free, fee-free alternative.

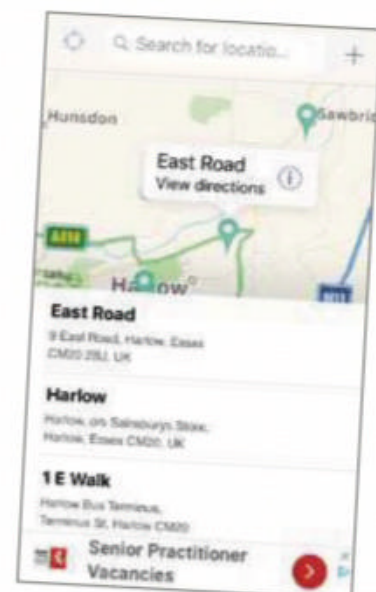


**Flush**

[bit.ly/flush475](http://bit.ly/flush475)

4 9.3

You'll never get caught short in an unfamiliar city again if you use Flush, a database of more than 100,000 public loos. It uses your location to pinpoint the closest pee point, and tells you which charge a fee and which have good disabled access.



## THE APPS GOOGLE DOESN'T WANT

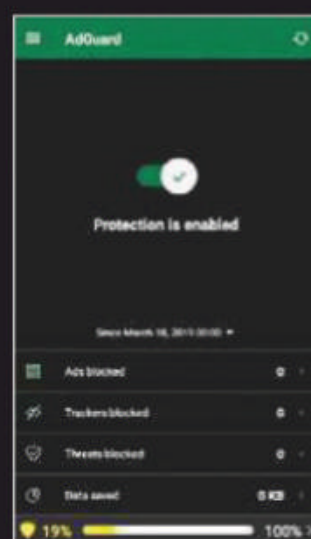
As well as downloading from Google Play, Android users can install apps from third-party sources by sideloading them, as long as you enable the option to install apps from unknown sources. To do this, open Settings on your Android phone, then look under Applications or Security for the Unknown Sources option and tick it. If you're using a more recent version of Android, go to Apps & Notifications, 'Special app access' and tap 'Install unknown apps', then make sure Chrome is marked as allowed. Once you've done that, you can download apps, such as the five we highlight here, through your browser. For security's sake, it's a good idea to disable this option again when you've finished.



**AdGuard**

[bit.ly/adguard475](http://bit.ly/adguard475)

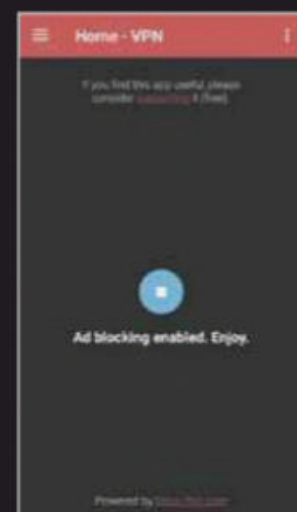
The recently updated AdGuard is one of the best ad blockers around. It improves your privacy and security by blocking thousands of tracking servers, phishing sites and dangerous downloads, as well as annoyances such as social-media buttons.



**Block This**

[block-this.com](http://block-this.com)

Now banned from Google Play, this invaluable tool blocks ads in apps and on websites without giving its developer access to your phone. It does this by passing your web traffic through a VPN, which boosts your protection against malware, unblocks censored websites and even speeds up your browsing.

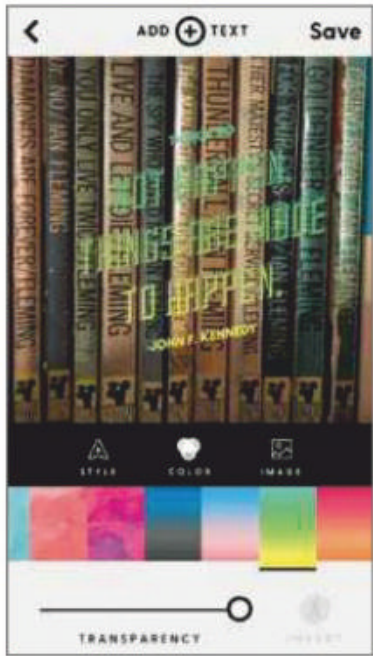




## MANAGE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

**Word Swag**[bit.ly/wordswag475](http://bit.ly/wordswag475)

Android 4.1 Apple 9



A picture may be worth a thousand words, but adding a few words to a picture is worth a thousand likes. Whether you want to annotate an obscure snap or embellish a sunset with an inspirational quote, Word Swag lets you produce professional-looking results with ease. You don't need any artistic skill – just the

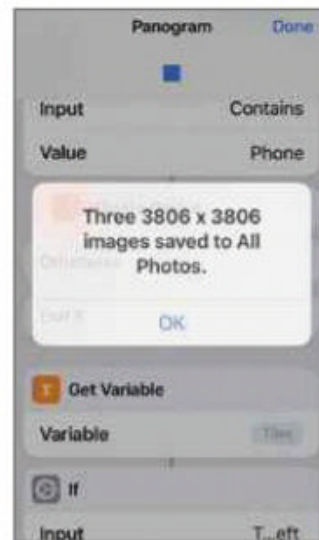
ability to tap through the preset options, resize and position the result. Upgrading to Word Swag Pro for £4.49 gets you a wider choice of fonts, the option to add your own logo and watermark removal.

**Panogram**[bit.ly/panogram475](http://bit.ly/panogram475)

Apple 12

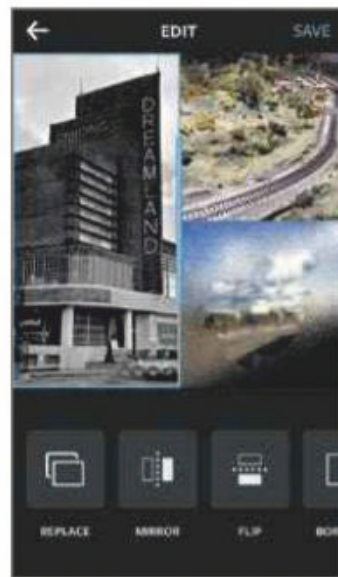
Panogram isn't so much an app as a shortcut, which means you also need Apple's free Shortcuts app ([bit.ly/shortcuts475](http://bit.ly/shortcuts475)). Once you've installed Panogram, a single tap crops ultra-wide photos so you can post them to

Instagram for your audience to view by swiping left and right. The clever tool works out where to crop and what to chop to produce a row of perfectly square frames that include as much of your image as possible.

**Layout**[bit.ly/layout475](http://bit.ly/layout475)

Android (varies) Apple 8

The best way to post multiple pictures to Instagram without stacking them or spamming your followers by posting them sequentially is to create a collage. Layout makes this simple with its collection of templates. Simply drop your pictures into the empty slots, then upload the result. It's made by the same team as Instagram, so complements it perfectly.

**Over**[bit.ly/over475](http://bit.ly/over475)

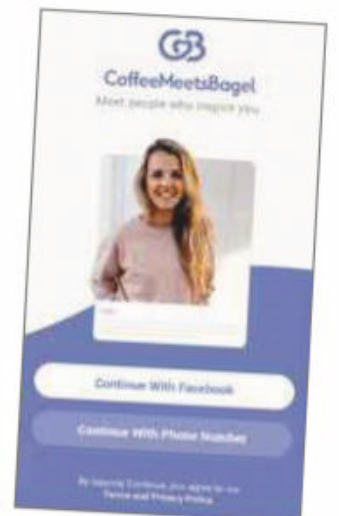
Android 6 Apple 11

Give your social-media posts a professional makeover with Over, an effortless design tool that simplifies the process of adding captions, backgrounds, graphics, quotes and more. The app provides a generous amount of free content for hobby users, which makes it perfect for anyone who wants to increase their blog's readership or attract more followers to their Instagram account.

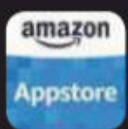
**Coffee Meets Bagel**[bit.ly/coffee475](http://bit.ly/coffee475)

Android 5 Apple 10

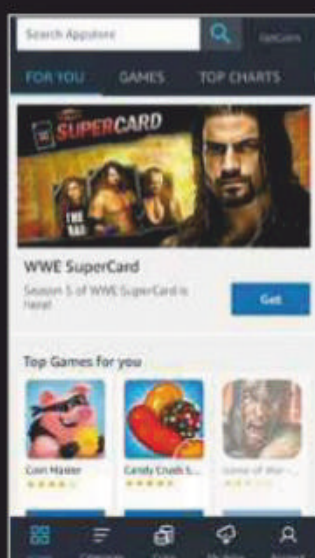
This is a dating app with a difference. Male users are sent a small number of profiles every day. Women are sent the profiles of the men who have liked them, giving them the final say over who gets a date.



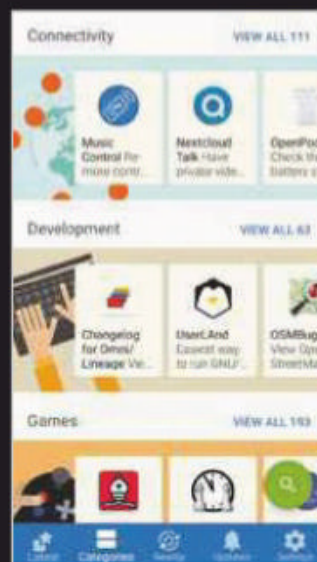
## YOU TO INSTALL

**Amazon Appstore**[amazon.com/androidapp](http://amazon.com/androidapp)

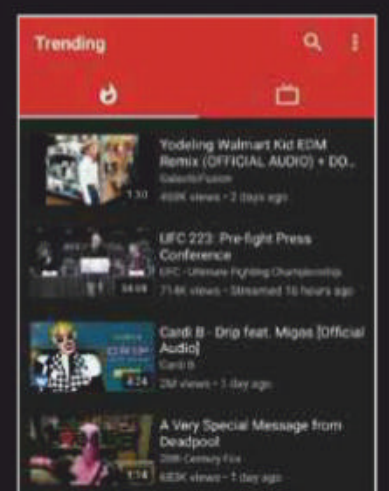
Google won't let you download Amazon's rival Appstore through Google Play, but it's definitely worth a look. Not only is it a great source of free apps, but it lets you shop around for app bargains and pay for them using Amazon credits, called Amazon Coins.

**F-Droid**[f-droid.org](http://f-droid.org)

This is an extensive library of free and open-source software for Android – but unlike similar 'unknown sources' it's completely safe. Installing the F-Droid app makes these tools easier to find and helps you keep them up to date.

**NewPipe**[newpipe.schabi.org](http://newpipe.schabi.org)

Available through F-Droid – but most certainly not from Google Play – NewPipe provides an alternative interface for YouTube that lets you watch videos without ads, download them to play offline and browse without Google tracking you.





## STAY SPEEDY & SAFE ONLINE

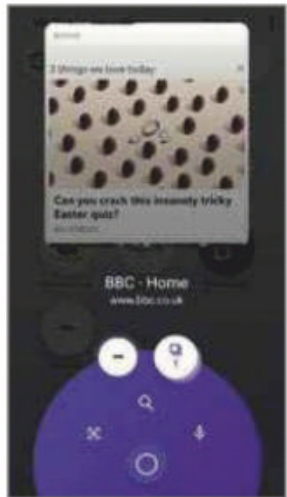


**Opera Touch**  
[bit.ly/opera475](http://bit.ly/opera475)

Android 5.1 Apple 11

What's so unique about Opera Touch? It's designed to be used in one hand, thanks to a Fast Action Button that hovers over the browser window and

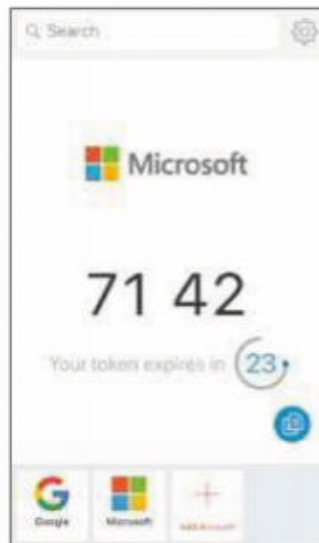
gives you instant access to search, recent tabs and browser navigation. You can flick it into view with a swipe of your thumb, while using your other hand to hang on tight to the overhead rail on the bus. Opera Touch also keeps you safe online by encrypting your data and protecting you against cryptojacking.



**Authy**  
[bit.ly/authy475](http://bit.ly/authy475)

Android 4 Apple 7

Enabling two-factor authentication is one of the simplest and most effective ways you can secure your online accounts. Sites that support it, which include Facebook, Dropbox and Gmail, ask you to enter a code when you log in from an unfamiliar browser. You can either receive this code by text (which



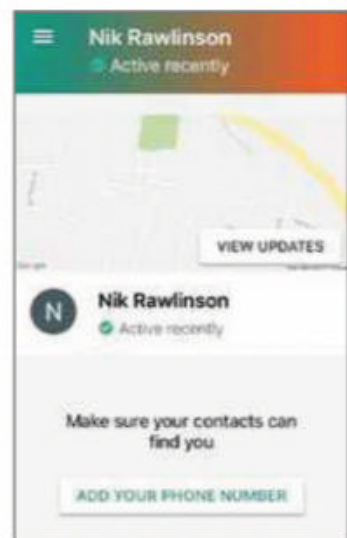
relies on you having network coverage) or copy it from an authorisation app such as Authy. We much prefer the second option because it's almost instant. Authy has many rivals, but we like the fact that you can lock it using a pass code or fingerprint and back up your login credentials online.



**Google Trusted Contacts**  
[bit.ly/trustedcontacts475](http://bit.ly/trustedcontacts475)

Android 4.1 Apple 9

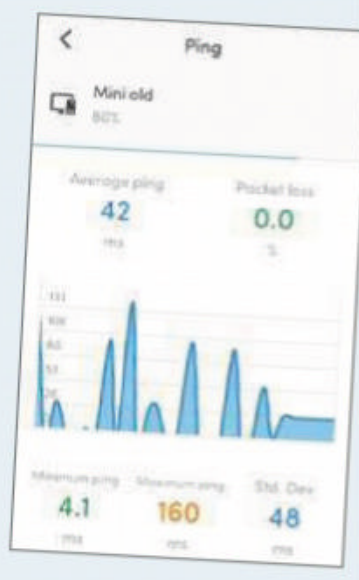
Trusted Contacts is an app for sharing your location with friends and family, but it gives you more control than most. Once you've told it who you trust, those contacts can ask for your location at any time. However, Trusted Contacts alerts you before telling them, so you have a chance to refuse the request. If you fail to respond within a few minutes, it sends your location automatically in case you're incapacitated and need help. Of course, if you want to share your location proactively – perhaps because you're scared for your safety – you can do that, too. The app can even reveal whether you've been active lately, or if your phone's battery is low, without divulging your location.



**Fing**  
[bit.ly/fing475](http://bit.ly/fing475)

Android 4.1 Apple 9

Is your Wi-Fi network frustratingly slow? Diagnose the problem with Fing – as recommended in last issue's 'What's eating your bandwidth' feature. This essential app identifies any devices connected to your router, so you can quickly sniff out interlopers. It also lets you check your connection speed, identify the best local provider and perform tests such as pinging, route-tracing, port scanning and DNS look-ups. Try it out if you're wondering why your broadband feels as if its brakes are on.



## UNLOCK SECRET DISCOUNTS

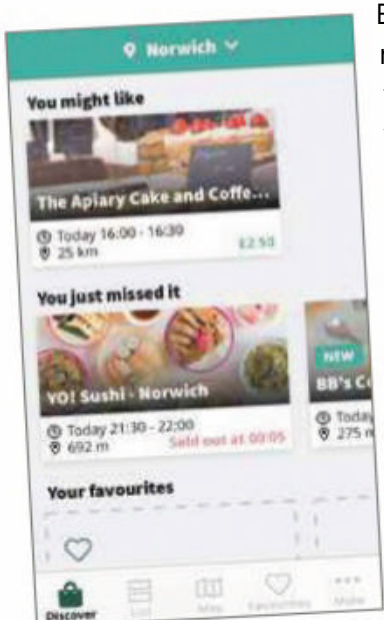


**Too Good To Go**  
[bit.ly/toogood475](http://bit.ly/toogood475)

Android (varies) Apple 10

Britain throws away more than 10 million tonnes of food every year, much of which is discarded by shops and restaurants. Too Good To Go helps to reduce this waste by allowing local stores to advertise that they have surplus food, which they pack into "magic bags" and sell at a hefty discount. Fancy a sushi lunch for just

£3.50 or afternoon tea for £2.25? This is where you'll find it. Just pick your nearest town and see what's on offer.



**Receipt Hog**  
[www.receipthog.com](http://www.receipthog.com)

Android (varies) Apple 9

This handy app turns your receipts from shops and restaurants into cash and rewards. Simply scan your receipts using your phone's camera to earn points that you can cash in with PayPal or Amazon. You can boost your payout by completing surveys, joining sweepstakes and spinning the virtual slot machine. Alternatively, you can just use the app to store your receipts securely.

Store	Amount
Tesco	£15.80
JD Sports	£44.50
Asda	£26.42
Tesco	£2.50
H&M	£76.00
Asda	£8.20
Sainsbury's	£31.80
Poundland	£4.00
Asda	£14.20



**Buengo**  
[bit.ly/buengo475](http://bit.ly/buengo475)

Android 5 Apple 10

Buying second hand and selling things you no longer need helps to reduce your carbon footprint. Buengo lets you do this, and gives the proceeds to good causes. You can also sign up for volunteering opportunities if you have any spare time and want to use it doing something more constructive than watching TV.





## BOOST YOUR HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

**Pzizz**[bit.ly/pzizz475](http://bit.ly/pzizz475)

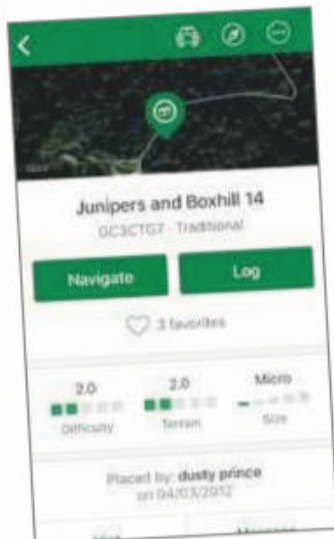
Android 4.1 Apple 9

If you have trouble getting to sleep, let Pzizz ease you into a more restful state. Every night, it plays you a different 'dreamscape' – its term for a mix of music and soothing voiceover that quietens your mind. It's also great for mid-afternoon power-naps. The basic Pzizz is free and gives you access to sleep and nap modules, custom timers, alarms and classic narrations. Upgrading for \$9.99 (£7.99) a month or \$99.99 (£79.99) a year gives you a wider selection, as well as programmes to help you focus.

**Geocaching**[bit.ly/geocaching475](http://bit.ly/geocaching475)

Android 4.4 Apple 10

This treasure-hunting game uses sat-nav and smartphone maps to locate stashes of goodies in towns, cities and the countryside. It's a great excuse to get out and explore your surroundings.

**Woebot**[bit.ly/woebot475](http://bit.ly/woebot475)

Android 6 Apple 10

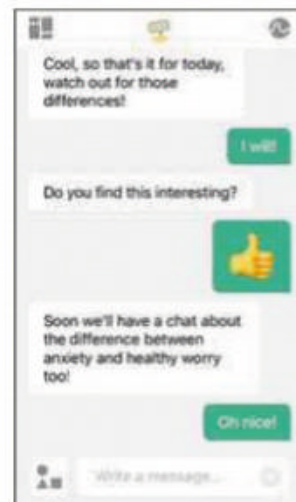
Woebot is an AI therapist that can help anyone suffering from anxiety or depression to better understand their feelings and deal with them. Built by a

**Dreamlab**[bit.ly/dreamlab475](http://bit.ly/dreamlab475)

Android 5 Apple 11

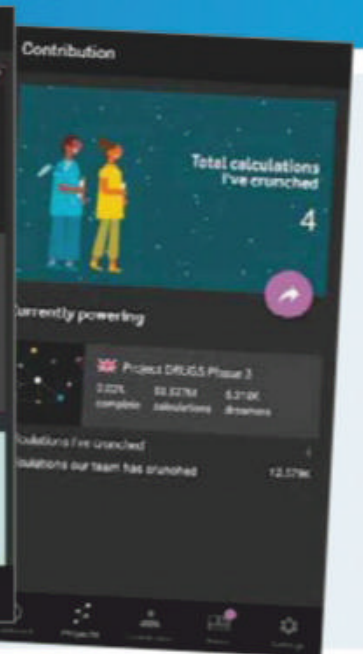
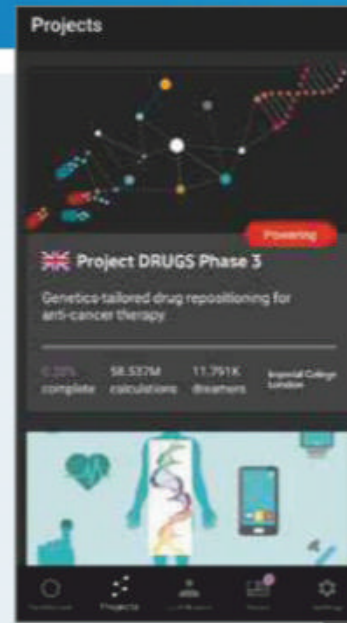
Help make the world a healthier place while you sleep. As long as your phone's plugged in, connected to Wi-Fi and sitting idle, this app uses its spare processing capacity to churn through data in the search for a cure for cancer.

team of Stanford psychologists, it's been shown to reduce symptoms in as little as two weeks. Users 'chat' to Woebot through an instant messaging interface as it asks questions and delivers advice, peppered with examples and short videos, based on the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Naturally, everything you tell it is treated in strict confidence.

**Nike Run Club**[bit.ly/runclub475](http://bit.ly/runclub475)

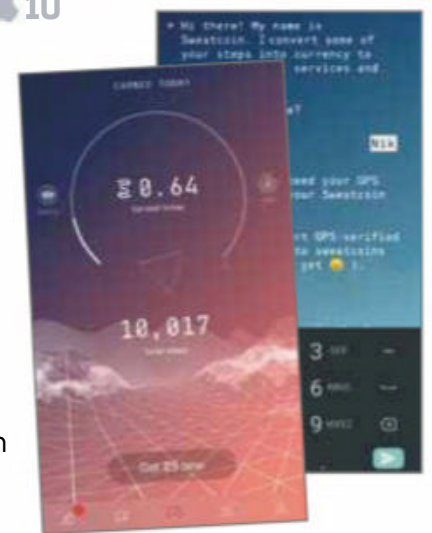
Android (varies) Apple 11

Track your runs and receive coaching tips, in-app badges and trophies while sharing your progress with friends. If you're a solo runner, this could be all the motivation you need.

**Sweatcoin**[bit.ly/sweatcoin475](http://bit.ly/sweatcoin475)

Android 4.4 Apple 10

This app lets you earn points for working out and turn them into products such as a new phone, an expedition or PayPal cash. If you're feeling generous, you can donate them to charity instead.

**OffTime**[bit.ly/offtime475](http://bit.ly/offtime475)

Android 4 Apple 8

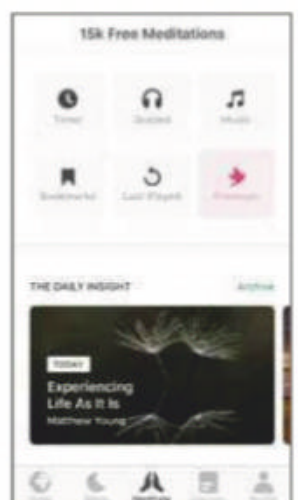


OffTime blocks apps and calls for a set period while you get on with your work, as well as monitoring your phone usage and goals. It should help you stay focused and boost your productivity.

**Insight Timer**[bit.ly/insight475](http://bit.ly/insight475)

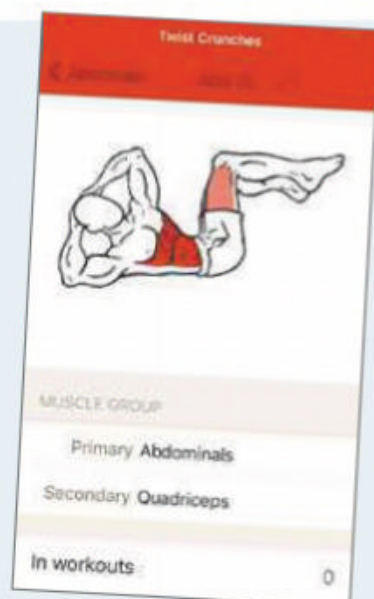
Android (varies) Apple 11

Mindfulness app Headspace may be grabbing the headlines, but we spend more time with Insight Timer and its library of 15,000+ free meditations. Its 'Learn to Meditate in Seven Days' course is a great starting point, after which you can find meditations for specific life events, or just focus on your breathing.

**GymBook**[bit.ly/gymbook475](http://bit.ly/gymbook475)

Apple 11

It's easy to get stuck in a rut at the gym, but GymBook helps bring some variety to your workouts, with animated instructions for more than 50 exercises showing each movement and the muscle groups it targets. You can log exercises as you complete them to help keep you motivated, set a timer, track your body measurements (with interactive graphs) and use heat maps to monitor which muscle groups you're training for a full-body routine.





## IMPROVE YOUR LIFESTYLE

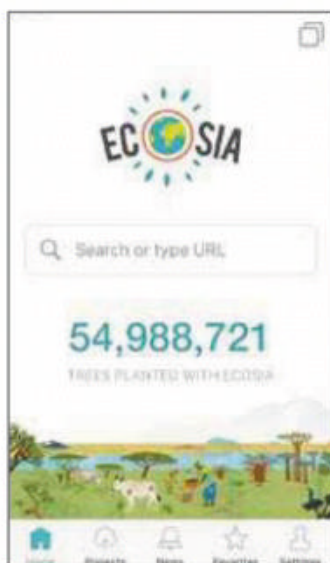


### Ecosia Browser

[bit.ly/ecosia475](http://bit.ly/ecosia475)

Android 4.1 Apple 9.1

Switching from Safari or Chrome to Ecosia can help save the planet. The company behind this Chromium-based browser earns money from adverts that appear alongside your search results (courtesy of Bing) when you perform a search within the browser. The organisation spends these proceeds on planting trees, with the goal of planting a billion saplings. The fact that its servers are carbon-neutral is another bonus.



### Slowly

[bit.ly/slowly475](http://bit.ly/slowly475)

Android 5 Apple 9.2

Slowly pairs you with other users who share your passions, allowing you to

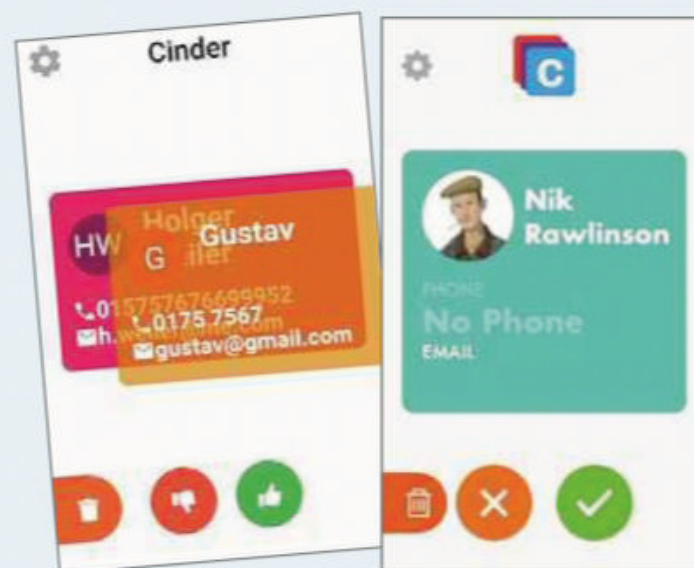


### Cinder

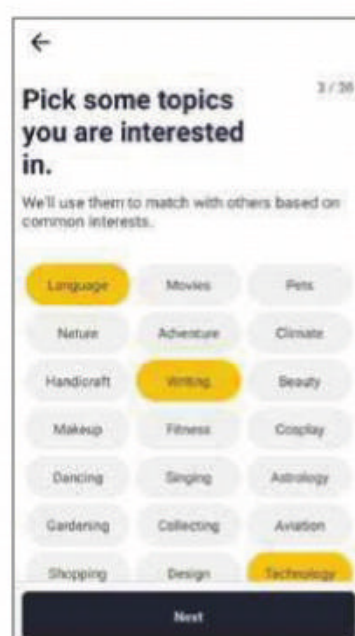
[bit.ly/cinder475](http://bit.ly/cinder475)

Android 4.1 Apple 11

Tired of having to swipe through a long list of names to find the person you want to message or call? Cinder lets you tidy up your contacts with ease by swiping left to delete unwanted entries and right to keep them, Tinder-style.



write to each other through the app. The further away they live, the longer Slowly takes to deliver your missive, replicating the experience of having a traditional paper-and-stamp penpal in the days before the internet.



### Zoiper Lite

[bit.ly/zoiper475](http://bit.ly/zoiper475)

Android 4.1 Apple 7

If you use VoIP at home or work, you can now take your landline with you by installing Zoiper Lite. This free software phone works alongside your mobile connection, allowing you to run a second line on your iPhone or Android device at little to no cost.



## UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVITY

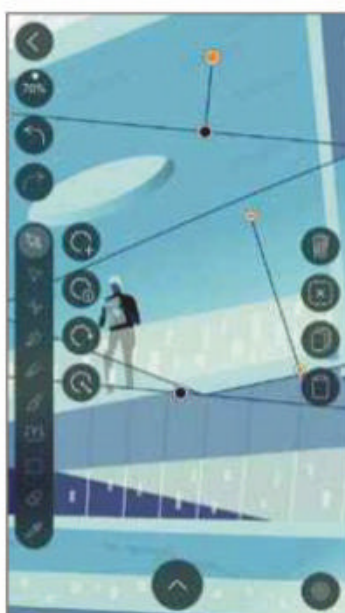


### Vectornator

[bit.ly/vectornator475](http://bit.ly/vectornator475)

Apple 11

Vectornator is a powerful vector image-editing suite with a full set of tools and an interface that even professional designers will find flexible enough for their needs. This latest version has a new colour picker, live gradients and a print view, so you can preview your results. There are 12 blend modes to choose from, plus blurring and masking and a library of 80,000 icons to get you started. See our Workshop on page 52 to find out how to use this brilliant app.



### CamScanner

[bit.ly/camscanner475](http://bit.ly/camscanner475)

Android (varies) Apple 11

Hold your phone over a document, and CamScanner will convert it into a PDF, detecting its edges and cropping out its surroundings. It automatically detects any text in your scans, and supports 16 languages, making it easy to search for and find your documents in the future. You can upload the results straight to Evernote, Google Drive, Box, Dropbox and OneDrive, and invite up to 10 colleagues to collaborate and comment on your documents.

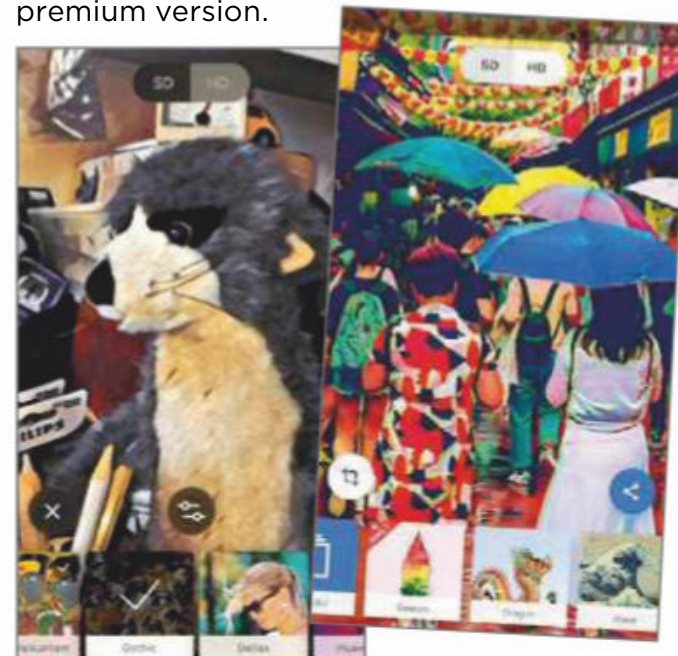


### Prisma

[bit.ly/prisma475](http://bit.ly/prisma475)

Android 4.4 Apple 11

This app lets you quickly apply artistic effects to your pictures. Plenty of other apps do this too, but Prisma's free filters are a cut above the usual fare, and there are plenty to choose from, even if you don't pay to upgrade to the premium version.



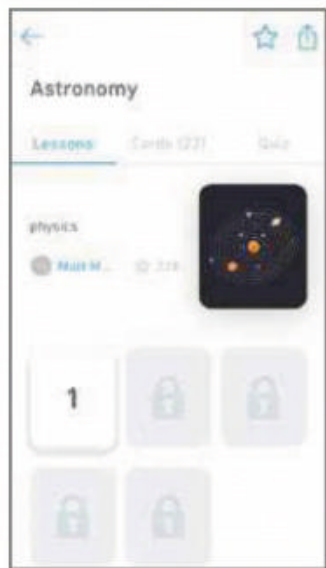


## FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION

**Tinycards**[bit.ly/tinycards475](http://bit.ly/tinycards475)

Android 5 Apple 8.2

Duolingo's companion app Tinycards uses flashcards to expand your general knowledge. Its breadth is impressive:



Japanese, the history of the Titanic, Greek myths, systems of the body – the list goes on and on. Fortunately, there's a curated 'decks we love' section and a list of trending subjects to help you choose, but if you have a particular topic in mind, type it into the search box instead.

**PlantNet**[bit.ly/plantnet475](http://bit.ly/plantnet475)

Android 4.1 Apple 8

Do you spend half of every walk wondering what plants you're looking at as you pass by? Well, wonder no longer. With PlantNet, you can take a picture of its leaves, flowers, berries or bark and

get its name in a flash. If you have location services enabled, it automatically knows where you are, which helps with identification. The results include additional photos, and you can add your own if you're particularly proud of your camerawork.

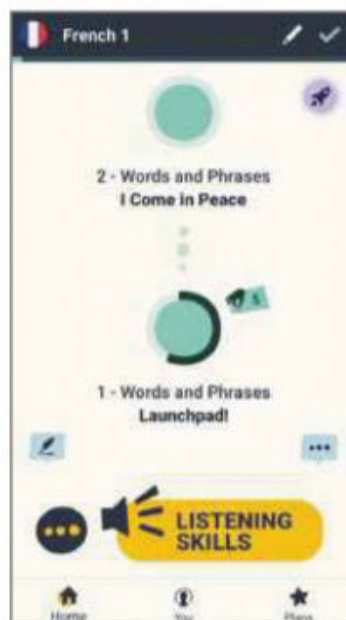
**SkyView**[bit.ly/skyview475](http://bit.ly/skyview475)

Android 5 Apple 11

Point your phone at the heavens and this app – called SkyView Free on Android and Lite on iOS – will identify all 88 visible constellations, zodiac signs and planets. If you're more interested in technology than stars, an in-app purchase lets you track the International Space Station, Hubble Space Telescope and more than 17,000 satellites, with reminders that can alert you when one passes by. With red and green modes to reduce contrast for night-time viewing, this is a great excuse to stay up past your bedtime.

**Memrise**[bit.ly/memrise475](http://bit.ly/memrise475)

Android (varies) Apple 11



Memrise is one of our favourite learning apps, and its recent redesign has made it even better. Whether you're improving your Italian, mastering multiplication or brushing up on biology, its gamified process makes learning fun.

**Today in History Lite**[bit.ly/history475](http://bit.ly/history475)

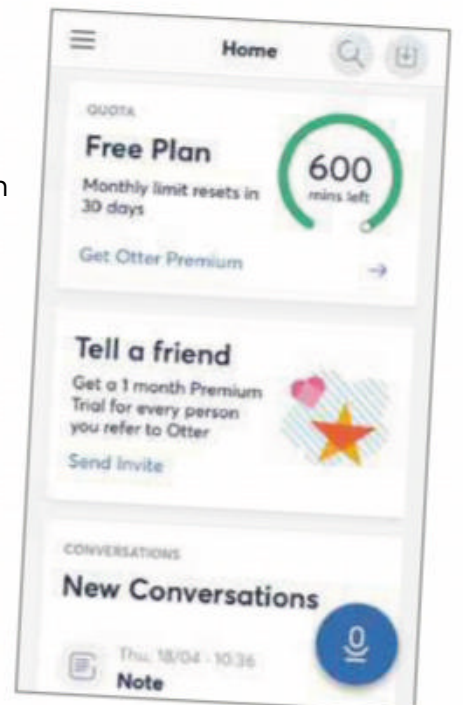
Android 4 Apple 10.3

Old news is good news with Today in History, which is packed with headlines, quotes, stories and pictures covering more than 100,000 events from years gone by. It makes the past more relevant and alive than ever.

**Otter Voice Notes**[bit.ly/otter475](http://bit.ly/otter475)

Android (varies) Apple 10

Otter records everything it hears and transcribes it for you, which is handy if you need an automated written record of a lecture or meeting. The free plan includes 600 minutes of transcription every month.



## NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 29 May 2019

**SPOTIFY  
THE MISSING MANUAL**

Incredible things you never knew you could do with the world's favourite music-streaming service

**PLUS...**

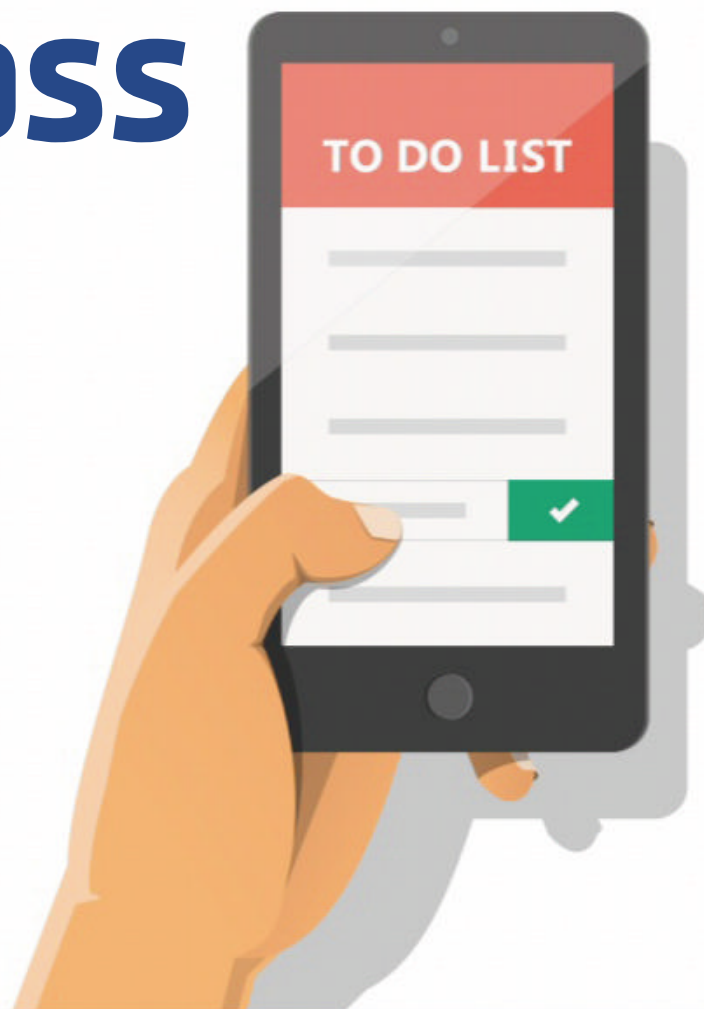
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# Best free to-do lists that sync across all devices

To-do lists work best if they're always to hand, ready to help you get things done in any spare moment. **Andy Shaw** tests six free multi-platform services that sync across all your computers, tablets and smartphones



**Todoist** | [todoist.com](https://todoist.com) | ★★★★★  
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

WebUser  
GOLD  
AWARD

## What we liked:

We all have something we simply couldn't live without, and for this reviewer it's Todoist. This essential free tool lets you capture all the things you need to do before you forget them, and then brings them back into focus when the time is right to do them. You probably wouldn't be reading this review if all the tasks involved in pulling it together hadn't appeared in a Todoist to-do list.

Whether you're using the website, mobile app or desktop tool, Todoist's interface looks the same, bringing convenience and familiarity to your tasks. There are a few differences in the way you do things, such as selecting dates and editing tasks, but the main thrust of the tool is its lists, which are the same wherever you look at them.

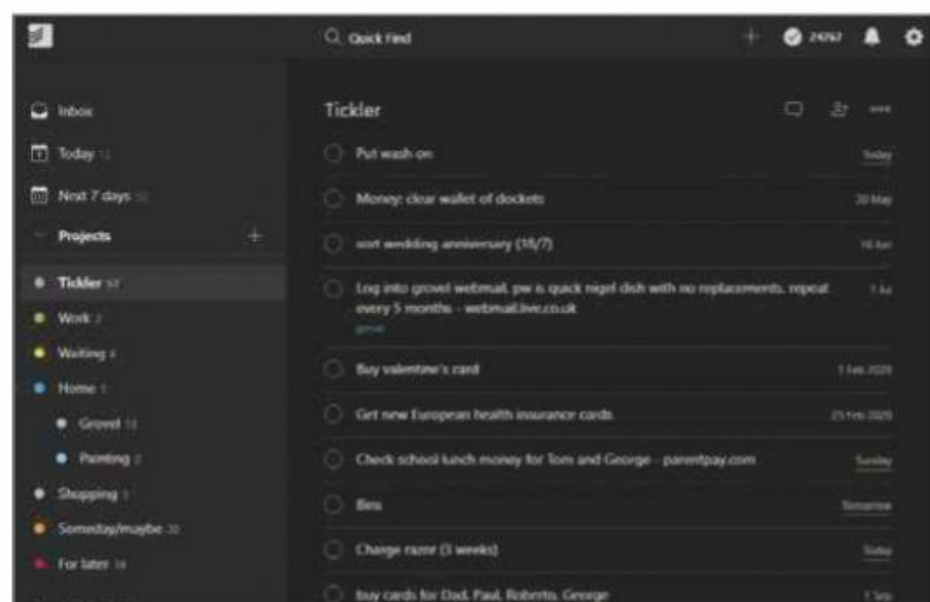
At its simplest level, you could have just one list. Click or tap the plus button, type in what you need to do, and the task sits there until you're ready to put a tick in the circle and file it away in your completed items. However, you can also add as much or as little supplementary information as you like, such as due dates and priorities – although labels and alarms are only available in the

Premium version, which costs £3 per month. You can also create folders and sub-folders to compartmentalise your jobs, and there are self-populating lists that show you what's scheduled for today or the next seven days. No stone has been left unturned.

You can email tasks to yourself or let others email them to your list (if you trust them not to bombard you with errands). You can also customise Todoist's appearance with a choice of themes, which it then applies to all your devices. We like the dark theme (see the screenshot above). Syncing is seamless, too, so if you make a change on one device, it's reflected on all the others.

## How it can be improved:

Todoist isn't perfect. We don't like the way that swiping indents a task because it's too easy to do by accident. We could also live without the karma



analogy that gratingly congratulates you when you hit your target of tasks for the day. Frankly, striking things off your list is enough of a reward.

## OUR VERDICT

We'd love to find another to-do list service that's as good because then we'd have a choice, but Todoist is simply the best. It has all the tools you need, wrapped up in an attractive interface, and it works well across phones, computers and anything else you use to access the web.



## Microsoft To-Do | [todo.microsoft.com](http://todo.microsoft.com) | ★★★★★☆

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

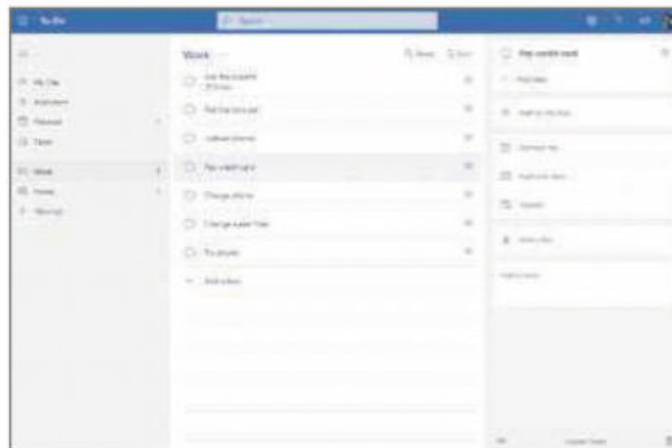
WebUser  
SILVER  
AWARD

### What we liked:

It's a few years since Microsoft bought the popular Wunderlist to-do software and promptly put it out to pasture. The company then launched Microsoft To-Do in its place, which suggested that it would use the expertise it had acquired with the Wunderlist team to equip its own tool with Wunderlist's amazing features. Sadly, this hasn't happened.

However, while Microsoft To-Do can't rival Todoist for features, its core strengths are that it's easy to use and syncs perfectly on any device, from iPhone to Windows 10.

You can create multiple lists, organise your tasks by date if you prefer, and even add files to your tasks. To-Do also offers a couple of features that Todoist reserves for its paid-for version – namely the ability to send reminders and add further notes, which raises it a little in our estimations.



### How it can be improved:

Some features are badly designed in To-Do, such as the My Day list. You can add any items you want to do today from other lists into this special list, but it doesn't automatically add items that have reached their due date.

### OUR VERDICT

Microsoft To-Do is rising through the ranks but it can't rival Todoist. However, if you want a tool that works well across all your devices and doesn't limit you with a paywall, To-Do might be more than enough.

## Google Tasks | [bit.ly/gootask475](http://bit.ly/gootask475) | ★★★★★☆

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

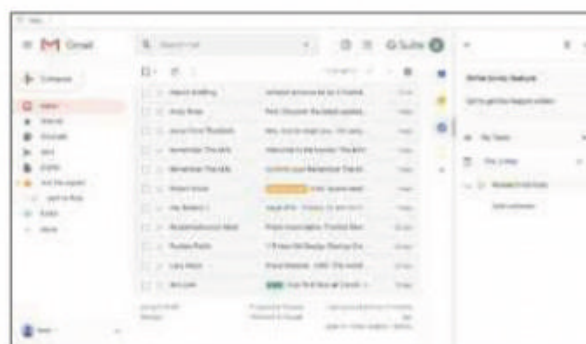
WebUser  
BRONZE  
AWARD

### What we liked:

Google has two products that can handle to-do lists: Keep ([keep.google.com](http://keep.google.com)) and Tasks. Tasks is a to-do list tool in its purist form, while Keep fills more of a list-making and note-taking role. Tasks doesn't have its own website that you can quickly log into if you want to check what you need to do. Instead, you access it using the mobile app or summon it as a sidebar in Gmail.

This is fine if you use other Google services, too, but it's no good if you want a standalone product. However, if you're a Gmail user, having your tasks and email open at the same time is an efficient way to minimise browser tabs.

Google Tasks is the simplest of our three award winners. It lets you create a number of lists and fill them with as many tasks as you like. You can break down each task into sub tasks and attach further notes, so you don't have to write everything in the heading. You can also set a due date.



### How it can be improved:

When you consider how many accomplished products Google has produced – encompassing everything from email to office suites – it's disappointing to find that the company's foray into task management is so light on features.

### OUR VERDICT

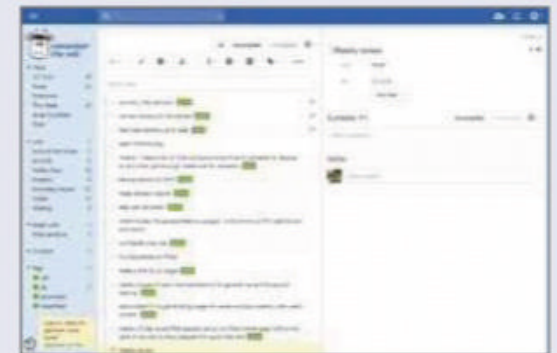
If you already use Google's other products, the integration of Tasks with Gmail could be exactly what you're looking for. Otherwise, it's a capable mobile to-do list but lags behind the other award winners for features.

## BEST OF THE REST

### Remember The Milk

[www.rememberthemilk.com](http://www.rememberthemilk.com)

Remember The Milk was our to-do list of choice before we switched to Todoist, and for quality and features there's little to separate the two. However, while the free version of Remember The Milk is perfectly usable, it restricts many of its tools to the premium version, including non-essential but useful things such as the ability to colour-code lists.



### Toodledo

[www.toodledo.com](http://www.toodledo.com)

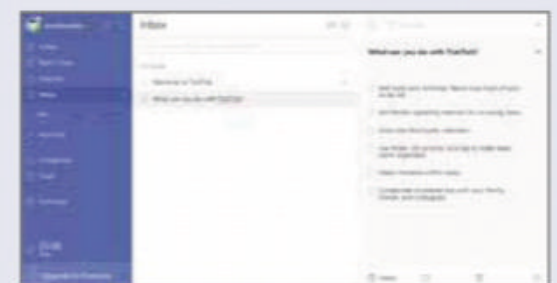
Toodledo is crying out for a designer. We forgave its dated interface a couple of years ago when we last reviewed it, giving it our Silver Award for its features, but while everything else has moved on, Toodledo remains firmly stuck in the past. If you want the extra features, go for Todoist instead, even if it's only for the superficial reason that it looks infinitely better.



### TickTick

[ticktick.com](http://ticktick.com)

TickTick is just like Todoist, except that it places a few more limits on what you can do in the free version than our Gold Award winner does. If there are things that annoy you about Todoist, TickTick might be a viable alternative, but we think Todoist is the better service.





# Block the web's BIGGEST nuisances



Ads are far from the only thing that strives to annoy, distract and obstruct you online. **Steve Clark** reveals the worst offenders and explains how to tackle them using browser tools

## AUTOPLAY CONTENT

One of the worst net nuisances of the past five years is video and audio that starts playing as soon as you open a web page, forcing you to dive for the Mute button or close all your tabs to make it stop. It's especially bad when you're browsing quietly in bed and an advert suddenly roars to life (and wakes up half the neighbours).

The best way to avoid this menace is to head into your browser's settings, because all browsers now offer ways to turn off autoplay. In Chrome, type `chrome://flags/#autoplay-policy` and switch the setting to 'Document user activation is required' – which is a clunky way of saying that you need to press play to start a video.

Firefox's setting is a little less effective because it only mutes video. To activate it, click the 'i' to the left of the address bar, then press the cog next to Permissions. Visit Privacy & Security, Permissions, then tick the box 'Block websites from automatically playing sound.' You can also type

`about:config` into the address bar, search for 'Autoplay', then make the following changes: edit the 'media.autoplay.default' value to 1, then tweak the value of 'media.autoplay.allow-muted' to 'false'.

An easier way is to let an extension do the work for you. A dedicated tool such as AutoplayStopper ([bit.ly/autoplay475](http://bit.ly/autoplay475)) for Chrome, or Firefox's Disable HTML5 Autoplay ([bit.ly/disauto475](http://bit.ly/disauto475)) will do the trick. Alternatively, Turn Off the Lights ([www.turnoffthelights.com](http://www.turnoffthelights.com)) has an extension for every major browser and even smartphones. Its main purpose is to dim the background when playing videos on websites to give them a more cinematic feel, but if you head to its Settings ([bit.ly/lights475](http://bit.ly/lights475)) and look under AutoStop, you can tick a box marked 'Stop playing the video automatically when I open a web page'.

## COOKIE WARNINGS

Cookies – those helpful tools that save our website logins and preferences – have become a major annoyance in modern-day web browsing. Businesses

have turned them against us, using them to target us with advertising and, thanks to the EU Cookie Directive, we're now forced to accept the cookie policy of every website we visit, which means more junk gumming up our screens.

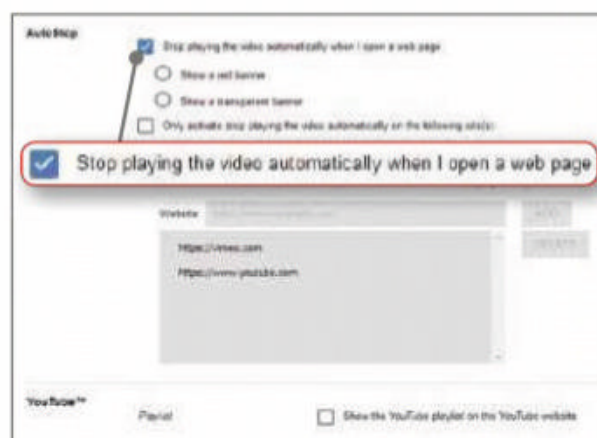
To get rid of these messages forever, install one of our favourite browser tools: I Don't Care About Cookies ([www.i-dont-care-about-cookies.eu](http://www.i-dont-care-about-cookies.eu)). Available for Chrome, Firefox, Opera and Pale Moon, it promises to bin "annoying cookie warnings from almost all websites and save you thousands of unnecessary clicks".

The downside is that by installing it you're implicitly giving websites permission to track you using cookies. For the more privacy conscious, Edit This Cookie ([www.editthiscookie.com](http://www.editthiscookie.com)) may be a better option. This open-source extension for Chrome and Opera gives you greater control over cookies, from deletion to blocking.

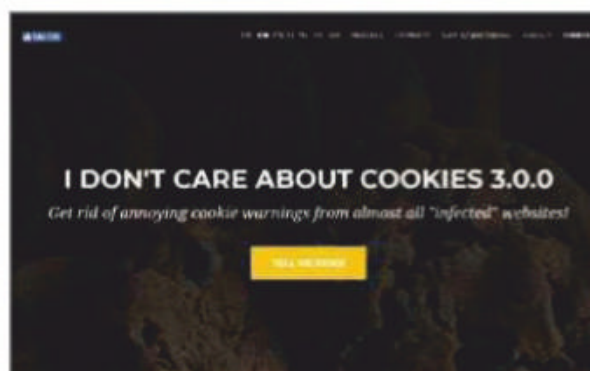
If you prefer to take browser matters into your own hands, open Chrome, click the three-dot menu, then choose Settings, Advanced. Under 'Privacy and security', click 'Site settings' to fiddle with your default cookie settings.

## ONLINE COMMENTS

The internet wouldn't be quite the same without people telling you their opinions on every subject, often in forthright and injudicious ways. Even the most hardened web user needs to summon courage before they dip into certain comment sections, and often it's better just to block out the chatter altogether.



*'Turn Off the Lights' blocks annoying videos that start playing automatically*



*Save yourself a dozen clicks a day by using I Don't Care About Cookies*





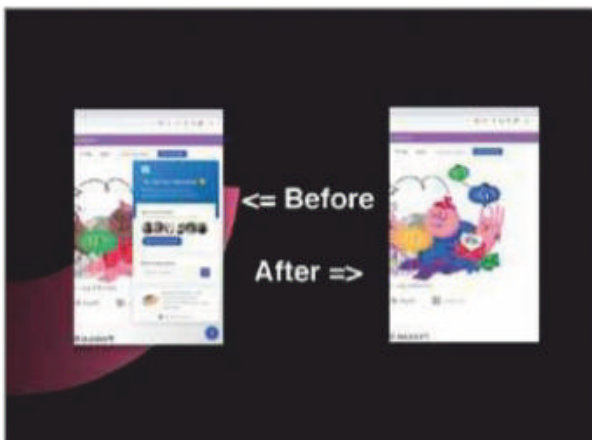
*Shut Up lets you silence the masses when the chatter gets too much*

## CHAT BOXES

“Hello. Can I help you today?” So says ‘Emma’ or ‘Paul’ or ‘Simon’, accompanied by a stock photo of a model wearing a headset, even though they’re using a text-based chat widget. Yes, you can help by going away and letting us browse in peace.

The chat box is the latest tool companies use to answer questions, push sales and generally encourage us to engage. It’s also an example of how companies waste precious screen space with annoyances only a fraction of customers ever use.

End the conversation before it begins by using HelloGoodbye ([hellogoodbye.app](http://hellogoodbye.app)), which steps in and blocks the widget before ‘Helpdesk Helen’ can start badgering you. The tool is free for Chrome and Firefox, and is available on iOS and macOS for a bargain 99p.



*HelloGoodbye pulls the plug on chat boxes that appear on company websites*

## POP-UPS

Pop-ups are the original internet nuisance, and while their sham messages don’t fool us so easily these days, they’re still frustrating.

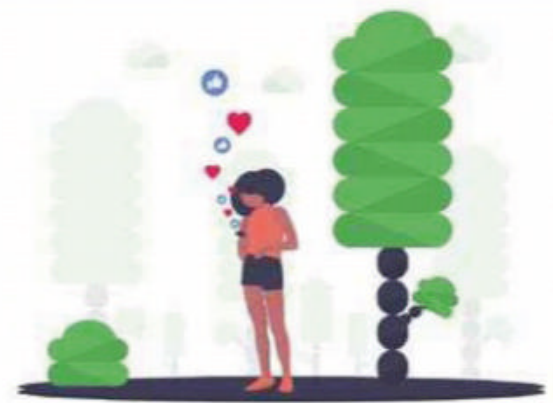
Despite the weird spelling, Poper Blocker ([poperblocker.com](http://poperblocker.com)) deserves a place in your browser’s toolbar. Click the extension’s stop-sign icon, then the three dots to access its menu. Here you can view Stats showing how well PB is working, add websites to a whitelist in Options and activate the add-on in Chrome’s incognito mode.

Shut Up ([rickyromero.com/shutup](http://rickyromero.com/shutup)) is an extension for Chrome, Firefox and Safari that silences internet inanity on almost every site – including YouTube, Facebook and BBC News. It’s the safest way to stay sane, but if you’re feeling brave, you can click the toolbar button to uncover the comments for the page you’re on.

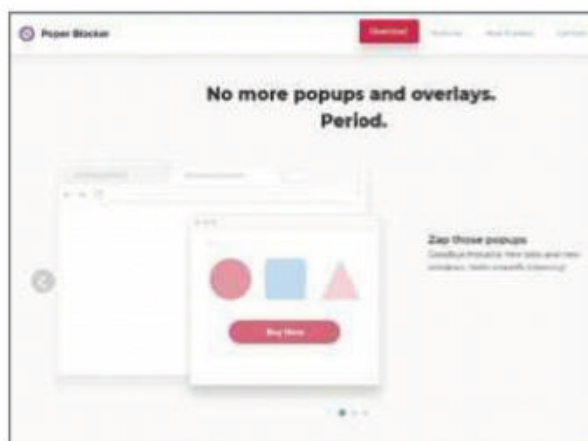
## DON’T LET THE WEB TRIGGER YOUR EPILEPSY

In our news section in Issue 474 ([bit.ly/webuser474](http://bit.ly/webuser474)), we highlighted the malicious targeting of epilepsy sufferers by trolls, who trick people into viewing flashing images that can trigger seizures. Thankfully, there’s an extension that minimises the risk of stumbling across this content. It’s called Epilepsy Blocker ([www.epilepsyblocker.com](http://www.epilepsyblocker.com)) and it claims to be “like an AdBlocker, but for dangerous flashing content”. It works by analysing GIFs in real-time, then blocking potentially risky ones from view.

The protective service costs \$20 (£15) a month, because the tech



behind the indie project requires server access. Once you’ve received your subscriber number, pop it into the extension to activate analysis. Epilepsy Blocker is available for Chrome and Firefox, and as an add-on for Firefox on Android.



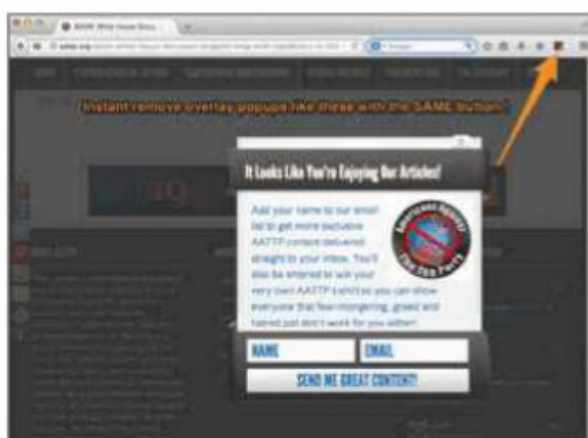
*Don’t let pop-ups get you down – let Poper Blocker [sic] block them by default*

Most ad blockers, including the excellent uBlock Origin ([bit.ly/ublock475](http://bit.ly/ublock475)), offer some form of pop-up protection, too, but they’re not as effective as a dedicated tool.

## OVERLAYS

Overlays are the pop-up’s more sophisticated but no less annoying cousin. They obscure the screen, typically asking you to subscribe to a newsletter you’ll never read. And the worst overlays are those that feature a phantom X – a fake exit button that doesn’t actually close the window.

Behind The Overlay for Chrome ([bit.ly/overlay475](http://bit.ly/overlay475)) and Firefox



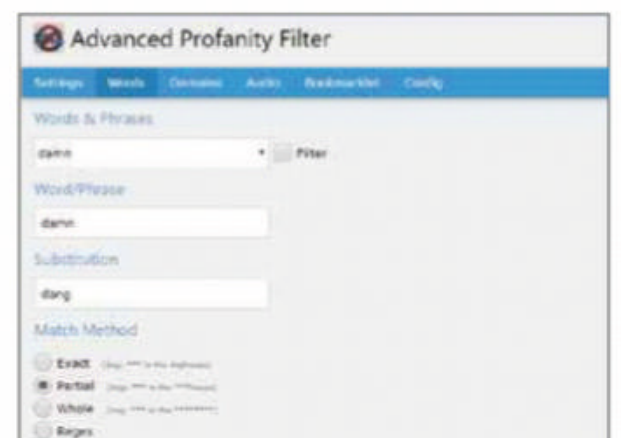
*Behind The Overlay lets you dismiss any overlay on any web page with one click*

([bit.ly/overfox475](http://bit.ly/overfox475)) removes all overlays with a single click – even those without a real ‘X’ close button. The extension supports shortcuts, too, so you can dismiss overlays by pressing Ctrl+Shift+X.

## EVERYTHING ELSE YOU HATE

What’s the one thing that really gets your goat? Political hate figures? Profanity? Pop culture spoilers? Whatever it is, you can filter it out of websites and social media by using a word censor. In this issue’s Best New Browser Tools (page 32), we look at No Spoiler ([bit.ly/spoiler475](http://bit.ly/spoiler475)), which lets you select particular keywords to blank out from the web. However, it’s not the only game in town.

Keep the air from turning blue by installing the Advanced Profanity Filter for Chrome ([bit.ly/apf475](http://bit.ly/apf475)) and Firefox ([bit.ly/profanity475](http://bit.ly/profanity475)). Gatekeeper ([bit.ly/gate475](http://bit.ly/gate475)) lets you ban offensive words from your Facebook newsfeed, while Social Fixer ([socialfixer.com](http://socialfixer.com)) gives you complete control over the social network, including the ability to hide political posts, certain words and even people who annoy you. ■



*Filter out f-words for f\*?%&! good using Advanced Profanity Filter*





# Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

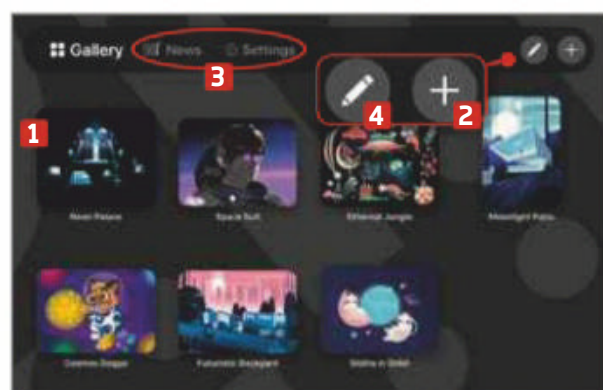
## Create professional vector graphics on your iPad for free

Vectornator is a free graphic design app packed with professional tools. Here's how to get started

**Vectornator:** [vectornator.io](http://vectornator.io) | ⌚ 20 mins | 🍏 iOS 11

**E**ven if you're not a designer, you may need to create professional-looking graphics from time to time. You could knock out a newsletter logo or web page header fairly easily in Microsoft Word, but it won't look anything like the sort of creations real designers come up with. Using a better tool yields greatly improved results.

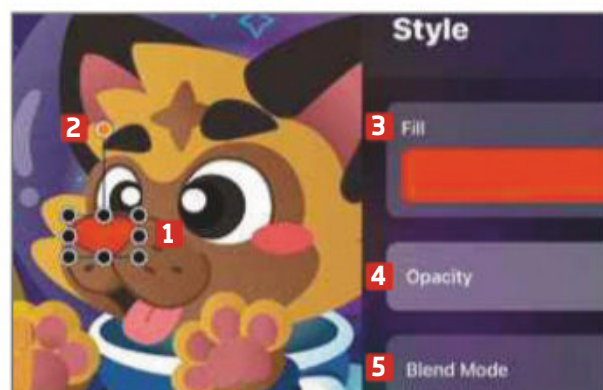
Vectornator is a free app for iPhone and iPad that offers a powerful set of tools for creating amazing vector graphics. It supports custom fonts, keyboard shortcuts, split screen, drag and drop, masks, layers, path-smoothing, alignment tools and more. You can then save your finished graphics in a choice of formats, making them easy to print and share.



**1** The app launches on the Gallery screen. From here you can open an existing document **1** or create a new one from scratch in portrait or landscape mode. **2** You can also read the latest Vectornator news and access the app's settings. **3** The Edit button **4** lets you share or delete your creations.



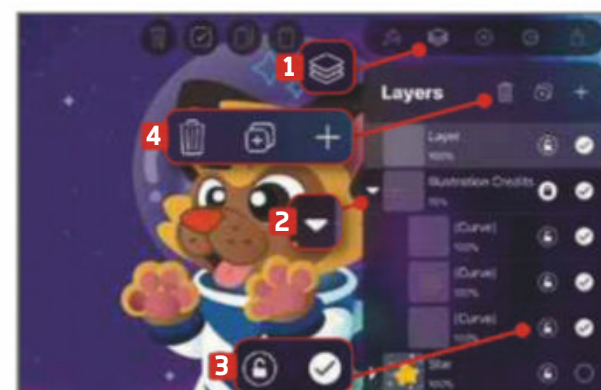
**2** Select one of the existing images to open it, ready for editing. The toolbox on the left **1** and Style sidebar on the right **2** provide access to the main tools. Use the standard touch gestures to zoom in and out of the image and rotate it. The current zoom percentage is displayed in the top-left corner. **3**



**3** The sample graphics are made up of many small pieces. Tap any part of the drawing to select it. You can move the piece, resize it by pulling its handles **1** and rotate it by dragging the red dot. **2** Tap Fill **3** to change the colour and gradient. You can also adjust the opacity **4** and choose a blend mode. **5**



**4** From the Style box you can add a blur **1** or a stroke (outline) to the selected element in any colour and thickness. **2** Tap Arrange **3** to adjust the piece's position and angle. Path **4** lets you create masks and complex path tasks, while Effects **5** is where you can apply colour blending and adjustments.



**5** Vectornator lets you build up complex images using layers. Tap the Layers button **1** to open the panel. Tap the arrow **2** next to a layer to reveal all the pieces in that layer. You can lock or unlock a layer, and view or hide it. **3** You can also delete or duplicate layers and add new ones. **4**

### UNDO/REDO

Quickly step back and forth through each stage of your design's creation

### TOOLBOX

The tools on offer (from top to bottom) are Select, Node Select, Scissors, Pen, Pencil, Brush, Text, Shape, Eraser and Eyedropper





## ACTION BAR

Use these tools to delete paths and elements, select or deselect all, copy paths or elements, and paste content

## SELECT MORE

To select multiple pieces at the same time, tap the Select More button, then tap the pieces you want

## Style

Fill

Opacity

70 %

Blend Mode

Normal >

Blur

0 pt

Stroke

Stroke Width

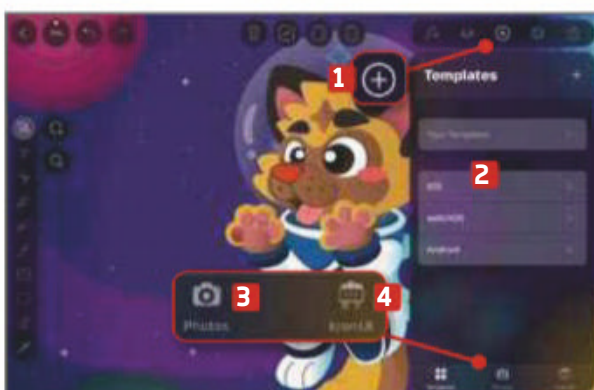
5.0 pt

Style

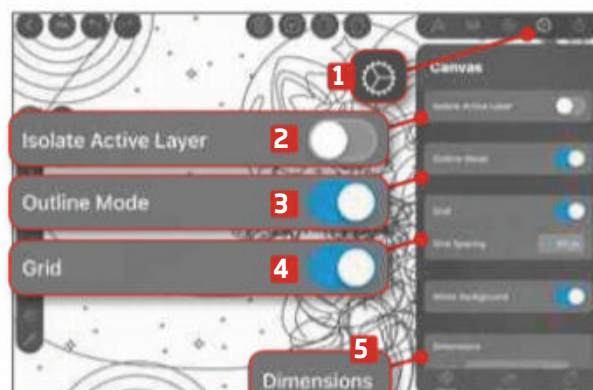
Arrange

Path

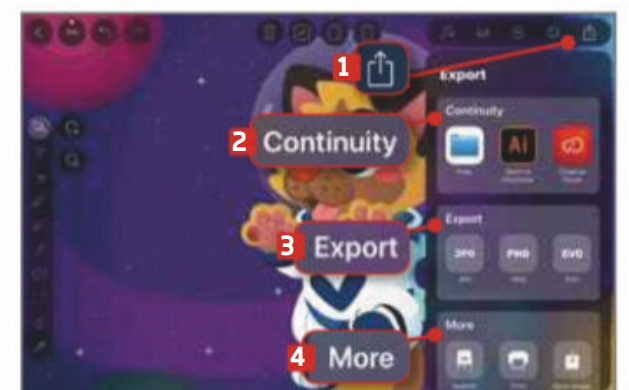
Effects



**6** Tap the Library button **1** to open the Templates panel. This is full of useful settings that help you tailor your design to specific devices. Select a platform **2** then a template. Buttons at the bottom let you open photos stored on your device **3** and search for and add icons. **4** There are thousands of icons available.



**7** The Settings cog **1** opens the Canvas panel. From here you can isolate the active layer, **2** switch to outline mode, **3** toggle the grid on and off and adjust its size. **4** You can also change the dimensions of the canvas **5** and select a different unit type – it's set to pixels by default.



**8** When you've finished your design, tap the Export button. **1** From here you can save it to Files, or send it to Illustrator or Creative Cloud if you use them. **2** Vectornator offers a choice of standard formats, **3** and you can add a watermark, too. Tap More **4** to print your art or share it on Facebook and Twitter.





# Try Microsoft's revamped Edge browser today

Microsoft Edge Chromium: [bit.ly/edge475](https://bit.ly/edge475) | ⌚ 20 mins | 🖥️ Windows 10

## EXPERT TIP

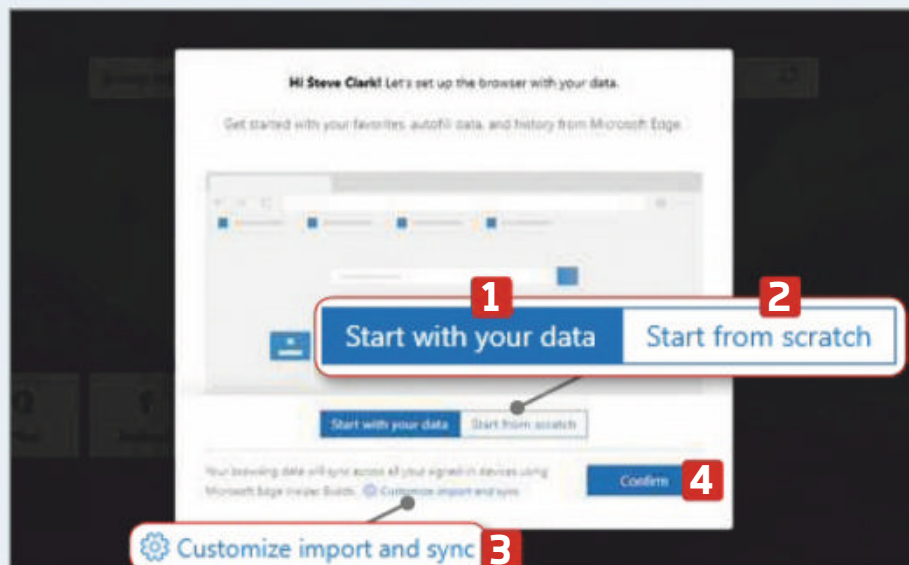
### Steve Clark says

Choose your download wisely. When you first download Edge Chromium, you'll see three channels: Beta, Dev and Canary. At the moment, you can only get the Dev build, which is updated weekly, and the riskier Canary, which is updated every night. When it's released, the Beta version should be the most stable, but until then, opt for the Dev Channel to decrease the risk losing any important information and settings if it crashes.

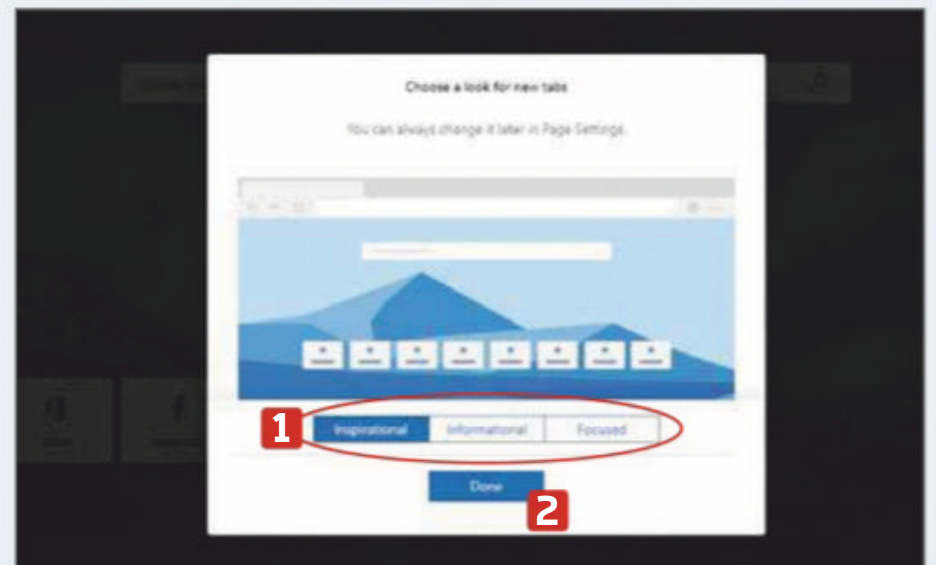
**A**fter four years of trying, Microsoft has finally pulled the plug on its attempt to develop its own Edge browser technology and is switching to a Chromium-based browser, perhaps because it's tired of hearing the joke that the best thing you can do with Edge is to download Chrome.

The all-new Edge is now available for you to try. It's still at an early stage of development, which means certain features are unstable or missing, but in our experience Edge Chromium is already a lot smoother than the old Edge and, thanks to Microsoft's tinkering with the Chromium core, it feels even faster than Google Chrome.

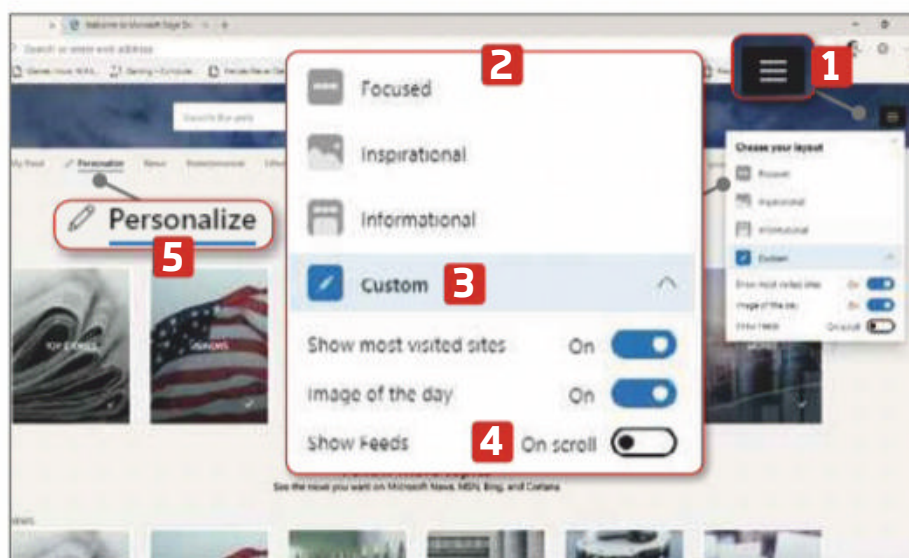
The download detects whether you're using 32-bit or 64-bit Windows and selects the best option, so there's no excuse not to take Edge for a spin.



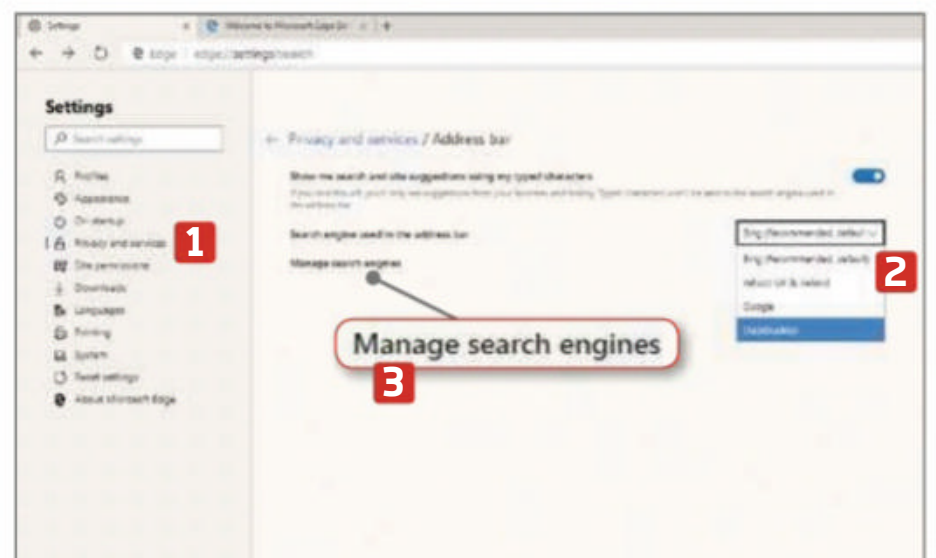
**1** If you already use Edge, the setup process is simple. The new browser asks if you want to 'Start with your data', **1** such as browsing history, bookmarks and saved passwords, or 'Start from scratch'. **2** You can also choose to 'Customise import and sync' **3** which lets you decide what to transfer from your old browser. Make your choice, then click Confirm. **4**



**2** Your next task is to select a layout for your homepage, where you'll find your most-clicked tabs and MSN news headlines. Switch between Inspirational, Informational and Focused layouts **1** for an illustrated preview, then click Done. **2** We chose Inspirational, which adds a daily background image provided by Bing.

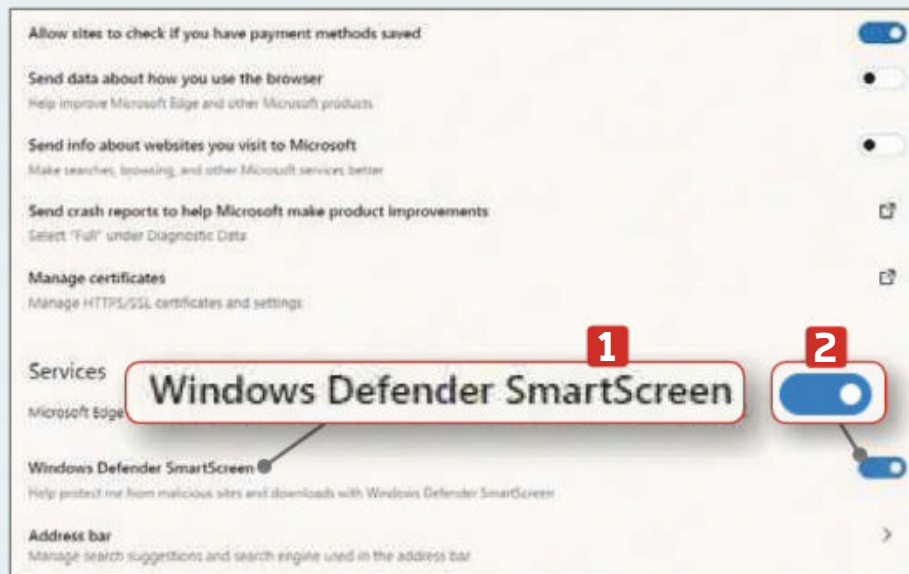


**3** Click the homepage's menu button **1** to change the layout **2** or create a custom view. **3** Here you can set Edge to show your most visited sites and an 'Image of the day'. To make the MSN headlines more prominent, toggle 'Show feeds' **4** from 'On scroll' to Always. Click Personalise **5** to select the news topics you want to see in your news feed.

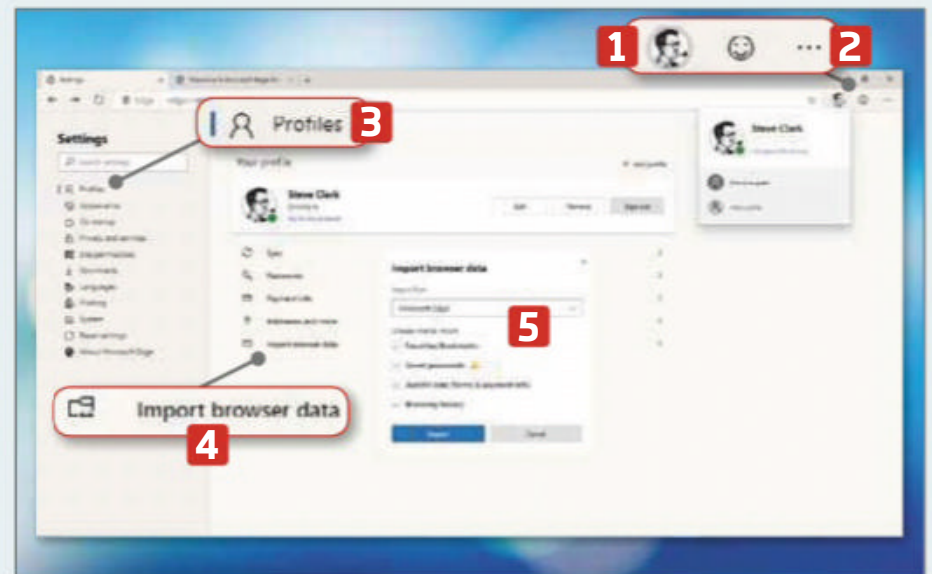


**4** As Edge is a Microsoft product, it uses Bing as its search engine. You can change this, but the option is harder to find than in Chrome. Open Settings, then 'Privacy and services'. **1** At the bottom of this screen is 'Address bar'. Click this, then use the drop-down menu **2** to select a different search engine or press 'Manage search engines' **3** to add one.

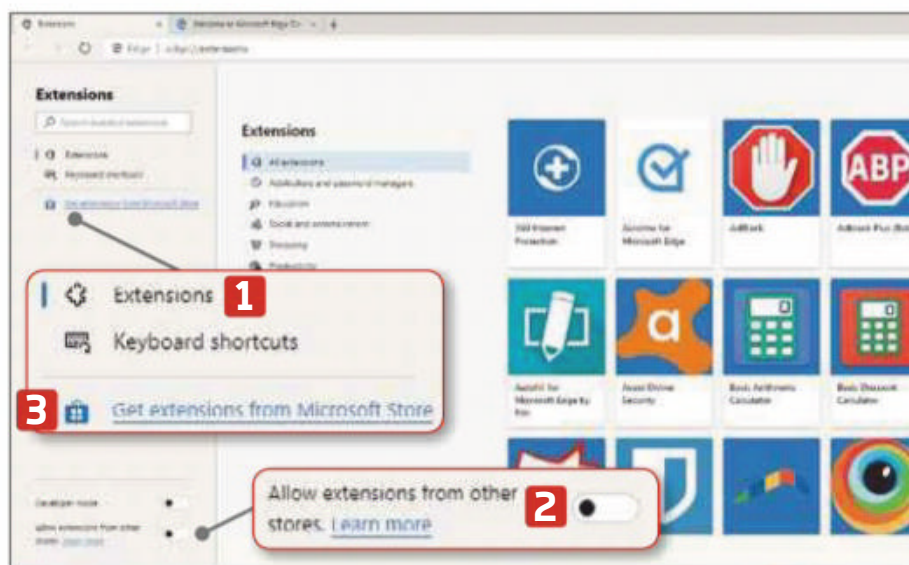




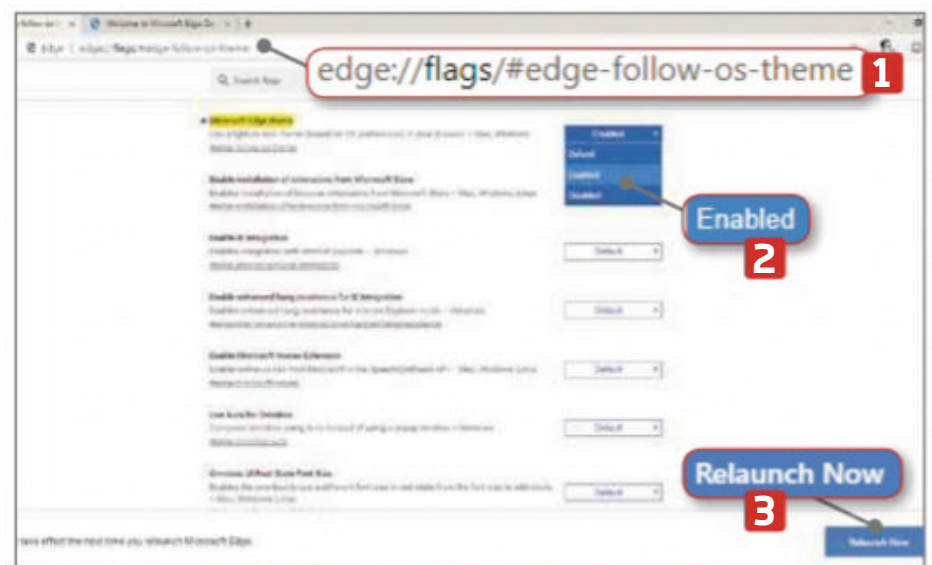
**5** The 'Privacy and services' section also has an option called Windows Defender SmartScreen. **1** This is a filter that protects you by blocking potentially risky websites and downloads. It's the built-in version of the Windows Defender Browser Protection extension ([bit.ly/protect475](https://bit.ly/protect475)). You can deactivate it by toggling the switch to Off. **2**



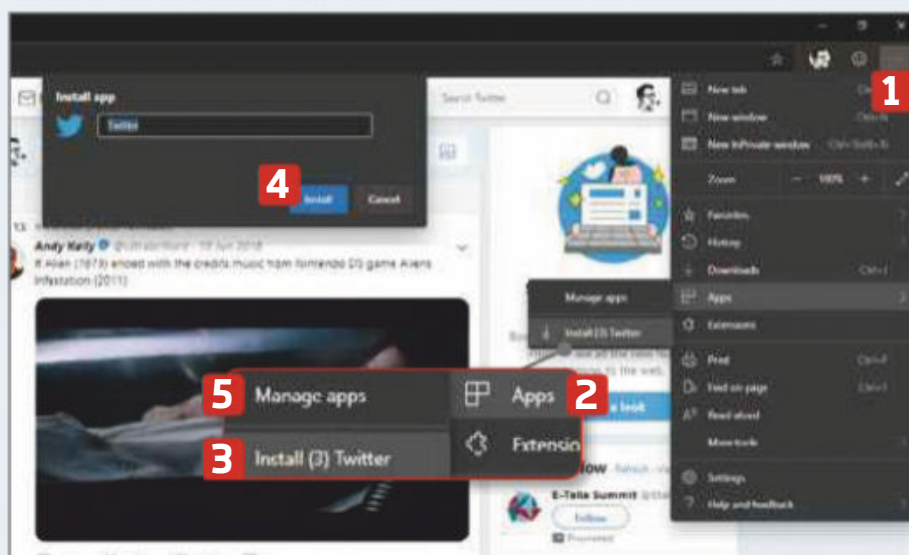
**6** Like Chrome, Edge lets you add users by clicking the Profile button **1** and signing them in – or they can 'Browse as guest'. To make the browser feel more familiar, click the menu button, **2** Settings, then Profiles. **3** Choose 'Import browsing data', **4** select your current browser from the menu, then tick the data you want and click Import. **5**



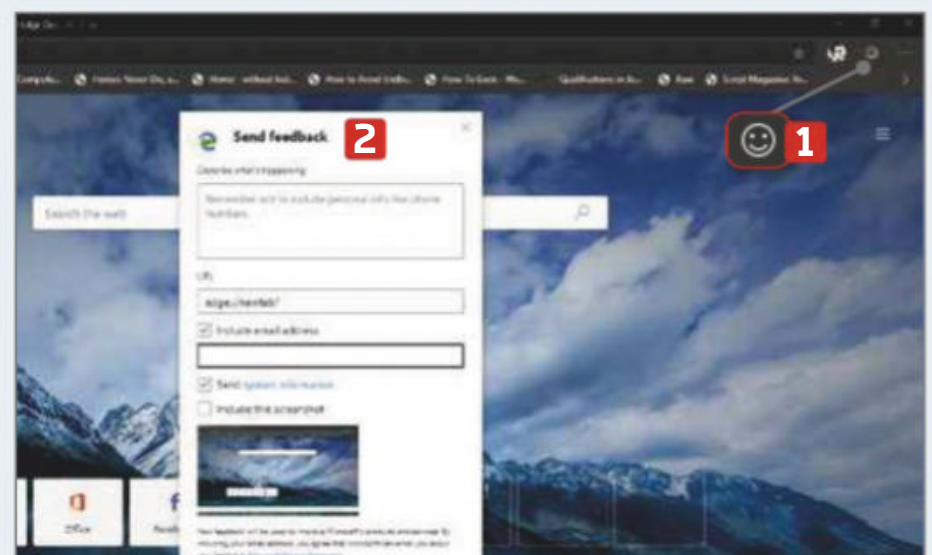
**7** A major benefit of Edge Chromium is that it uses Chrome-based extensions. Press the menu button and choose Extensions. **1** On the side-panel, toggle the switch 'Allow extensions from other stores'. **2** This lets you install extensions from the Chrome Web Store. Click the link for the Microsoft Store **3** to download any Microsoft-approved extensions.



**8** Edge 2.0 also introduces experimental settings called flags. To switch on Dark Mode, for example, type `edge://flags/#edge-follow-os-theme` into the address bar, **1** select Enabled in the drop-down menu, **2** then click Relaunch Now. **3** If your screen supports HDR, try switching on 'HDR mode' with `edge://flags/#enable-hdr`.



**9** You can turn any website into a Windows app by clicking the menu button, **1** choosing Apps, **2** then selecting Install [Website]. **3** Name the 'app' in the pop-up box, then click Install. **4** The app appears under Apps and in the Start menu. To manage downloads, click the menu button and choose Apps, then 'Manage apps'. **5**



**10** Edge Chromium is still a work in progress, which means it can be flaky at times. If you stumble on a problem, click the smiley face icon on the menu bar **1** to tell the developers about it. **2** You may also want to keep an eye on the official blog ([bit.ly/msblog475](https://bit.ly/msblog475)), which highlights known and fixed problems, as well as new features.

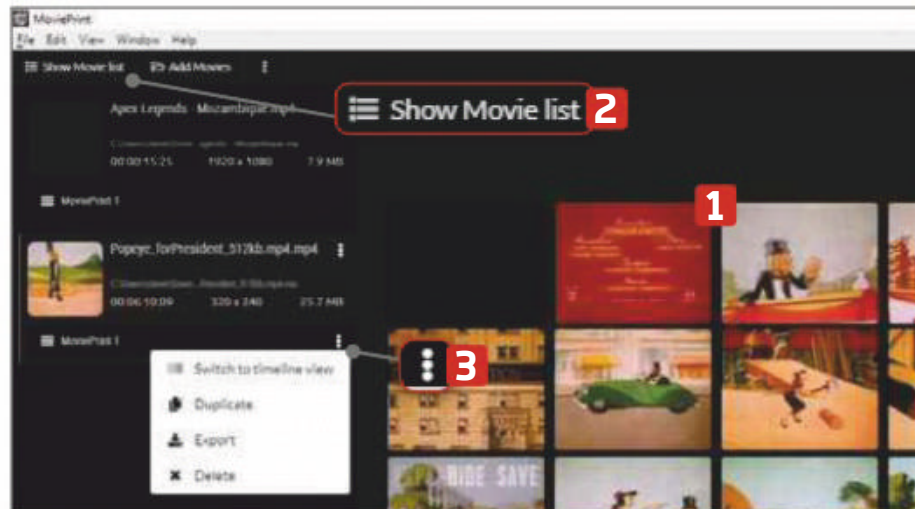




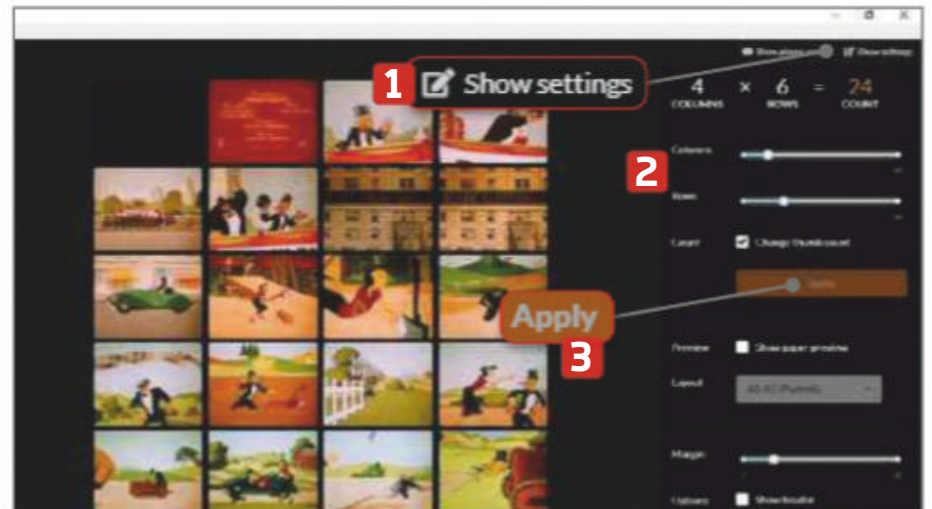
# Create thumbnail previews of your videos

**M**oviePrint is a free, open-source program that captures a selection of screenshots from any video, whether it's a home movie or a favourite Hollywood film, and arranges them in a grid. Drag your video file into the program

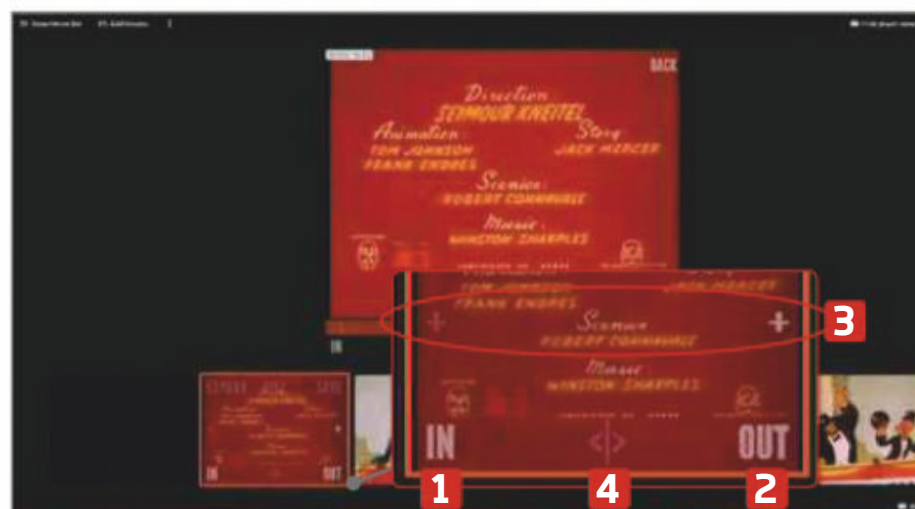
**MoviePrint:** [bit.ly/movie475](http://bit.ly/movie475) | 10 mins | Windows 7, 8, 10 macOS X



**1** Start by dragging films into MoviePrint. Stills from the first film appear on-screen, **1** but you can access the others by clicking 'Show Movie list'. **2** You can also click Add Movies and navigate to import a video. Clicking a film's menu button **3** lets you switch to a timeline view and other useful options.



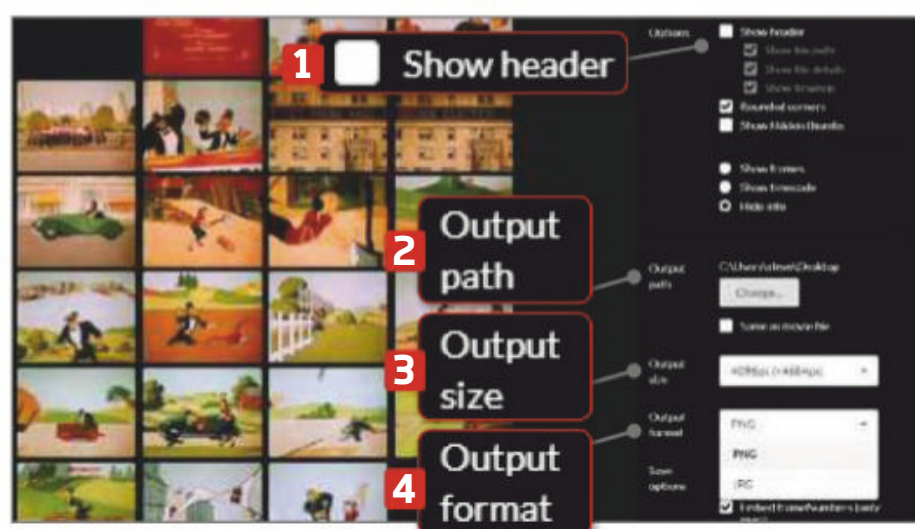
**2** Once your MoviePrint has loaded, you can change its size and shape, which is handy if you intend to print it. Click 'Show settings', **1** then use the sliders to set how many columns and rows you want. **2** Press Apply, **3** and the view and thumbnails change to fit your new grid.



**3** Many of MoviePrint's tools appear when you hover your cursor over a thumbnail. In **1** and Out **2** let you choose the section of film MoviePrint uses, while clicking a plus sign **3** adds an extra frame to the grid. Drag the Scrub button **4** to find a specific frame to capture as a thumbnail.



**4** Click Expand **1** to create a new MoviePrint based on frames around a single thumbnail. To switch back to the original, click 'Show Movie list'. Hide **2** removes the thumbnail, while Save **3** lets you save the individual frame. To change a thumbnail's position, simply drag and drop it.



**5** Return to 'Show settings', Options and untick 'Show header' **1** to remove information such as the filename. Use 'Output path' **2** to choose where to save your MoviePrint. Next, select an appropriate 'Output size' **3** and choose between PNG and JPEG in the 'Output format' menu. **4**



**6** Now you're ready to finalise your MoviePrint. Before you print it, tick the box labelled 'Show paper preview', **1** and use the drop-down menu to adjust the layout so that it fits your chosen paper size and orientation. **2** Finally, click Save MoviePrint **3** and wait for the cog to stop spinning.



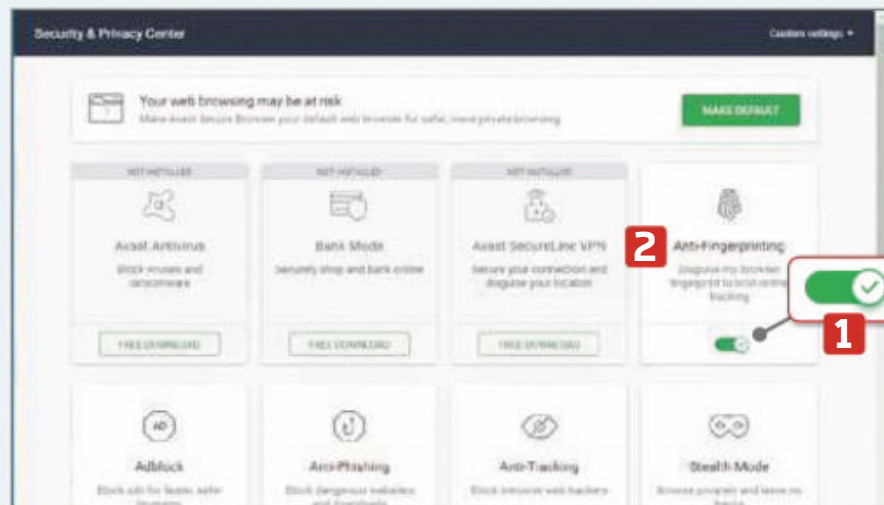


# Protect your browsing with Avast's new tools

This time last year, in Issue 448 ([bit.ly/webuser448](http://bit.ly/webuser448)), we wrote a workshop on Avast Secure Browser, which is based on Chrome but provides extra tools to keep you safe online. Now Avast has added a selection of new features.

**Avast Secure Browser: [bit.ly/avast475](http://bit.ly/avast475) | 10 mins | Windows 7, 8, 10**

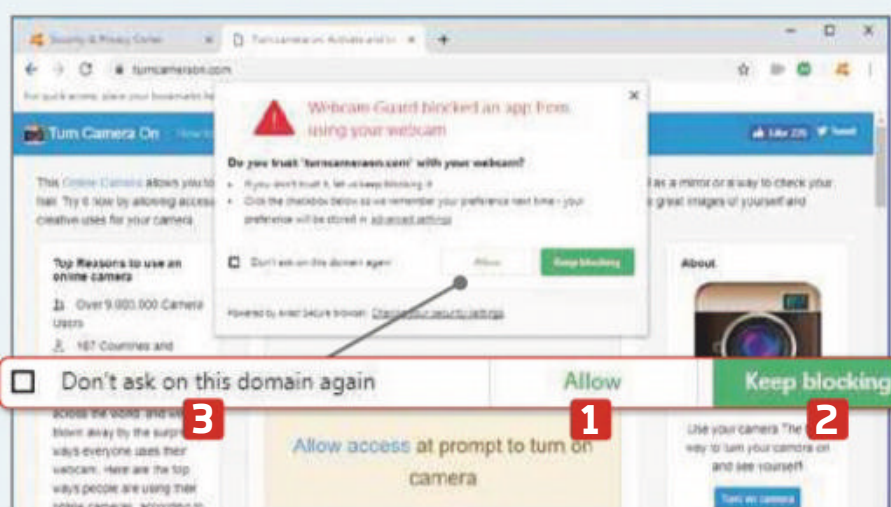
Before you start, check that you're running version 73 by clicking the menu button and choosing 'About Avast Secure Browser'. Then follow our guide to see what's new.



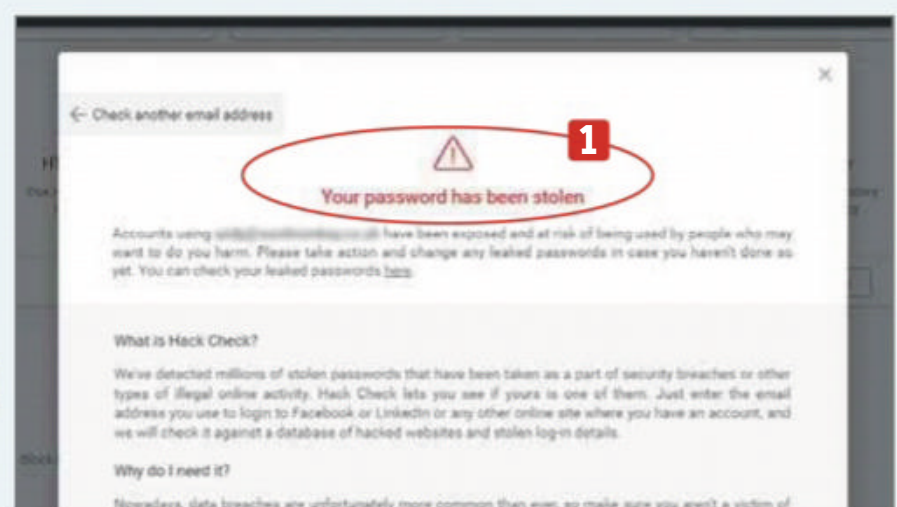
**1** First, make sure Anti-Fingerprinting is switched on. **1** This tool was available in the previous version, but Avast has added some new features that improve its ability to stop rogue websites following you around the internet. To find out more about this or any other tool, click its name. **2**



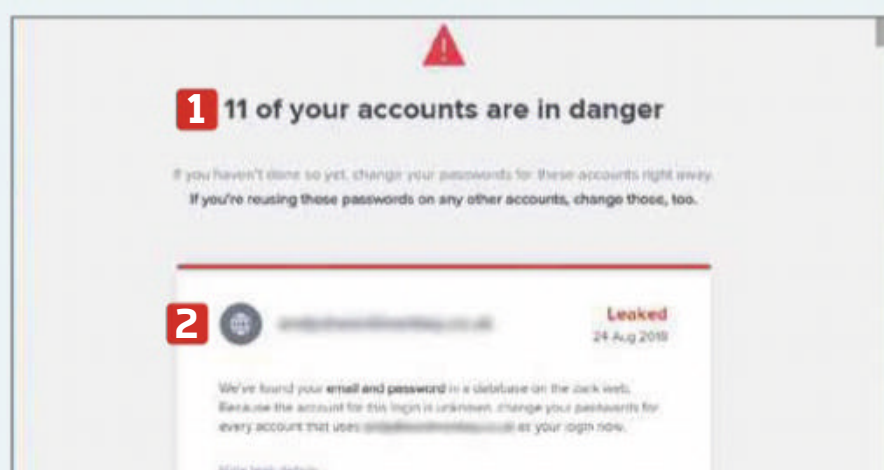
**2** Scroll down to see the new sections. Webcam Guard should be switched on. Click its name, then 'Advanced settings' to configure it. The webcam should be set to 'Ask before accessing (recommended)'. **1** This opens a pop-up to warn you when a site tries to access the camera.



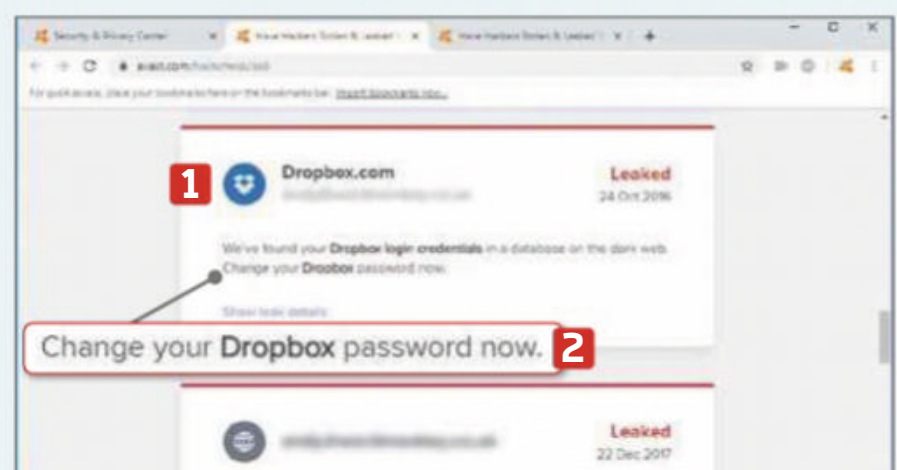
**3** When the pop-up appears, you can choose to Allow **1** or 'Keep blocking' **2** the site's webcam access. To record your choice for when you next visit, tick the box next to 'Don't ask on this domain again'. **3** This adds the domain to your Block or Allow list in the advanced settings.



**4** There's also a new Hack Check tool. Open it from the main screen, type an email address into the box and click Check. If the address is new or you've never used it to sign up for anything, you may be lucky, but most people will see the message 'Your password has been stolen'. **1**



**5** Don't panic. At the bottom of the first paragraph is a link that you can click for more information. This takes you to Avast's Hack Check site, **1** which explains which of your online accounts were responsible for compromising the email address **2** and where your details have been found.



**6** One of the affected sites is Dropbox, **1** which was compromised in 2016, so many *Web User* readers will be affected. Follow the tool's advice **2** and make sure you change your password for any other accounts that use the same email address.



# Weekend Project

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



How to...

## Create your own Dropbox-style storage service

If you're fed up with the privacy worries and rising costs associated with cloud storage, set up your own. **Wayne Williams** explains how

**T**here are a number of excellent free cloud storage services to choose from, including Microsoft OneDrive and Google Drive. Dropbox has long been a popular choice, but in a bid to drive users to its premium service, it recently discontinued support for unlimited devices under its free plan. New accounts are now limited to just three connected devices. Existing users who exceed this limit won't lose access from their current devices, but they won't be able to add more – including a new or replacement smartphone – which means this limit will eventually catch up with them.

With this change of policy in mind, and the fact that upgrading to Dropbox's Plus plan will set you back £7.99 a month (or £79 for the year), it's perhaps time to consider creating your own cloud storage service instead.



### What you'll need

There are various services you can use to create your own cloud storage, but for this issue's Weekend Project we'll look at the excellent Nextcloud ([nextcloud.com/athome](https://nextcloud.com/athome)). This free, open-source tool lets you store personal data such as photos, videos, documents, calendars, contacts and more, using one of the software's recommended providers or your own server at home. You don't have to worry

about moving your files manually from Dropbox to the new service, because Nextcloud can access, sync and share any data you've stored there.

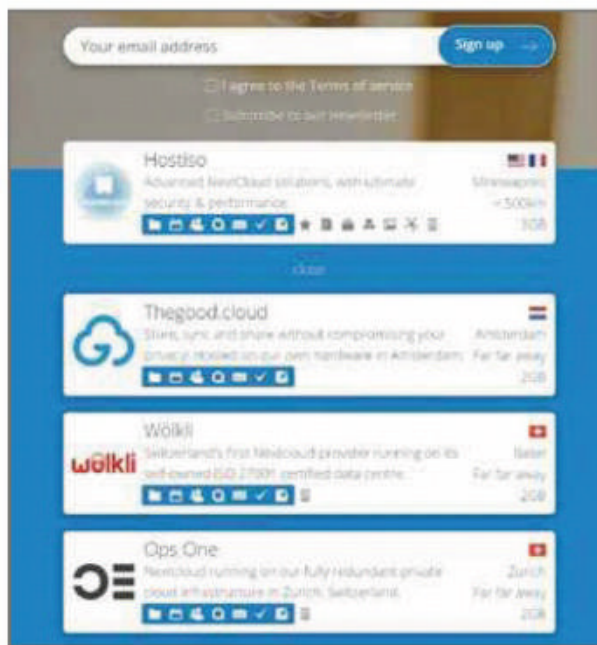
When you first open Nextcloud, it presents you with three options. The easiest is to choose a third-party provider from the list. These offer between 2GB and 10GB of storage for free, with the option to pay for more. If you prefer to have greater control over your data, you

can opt to host your own Nextcloud server on the web, or run the service on a spare PC or Raspberry Pi.

### Choose a provider

If you want to use a server hosted on the web, go to [nextcloud.com/signup](https://nextcloud.com/signup). Hostiso ([www.hostiso.com](https://www.hostiso.com)), which is based in France and the US, tends to be the preferred choice and offers 3GB of free space and lots of tools. To select a





To host your cloud elsewhere, select the provider you want from the list of options

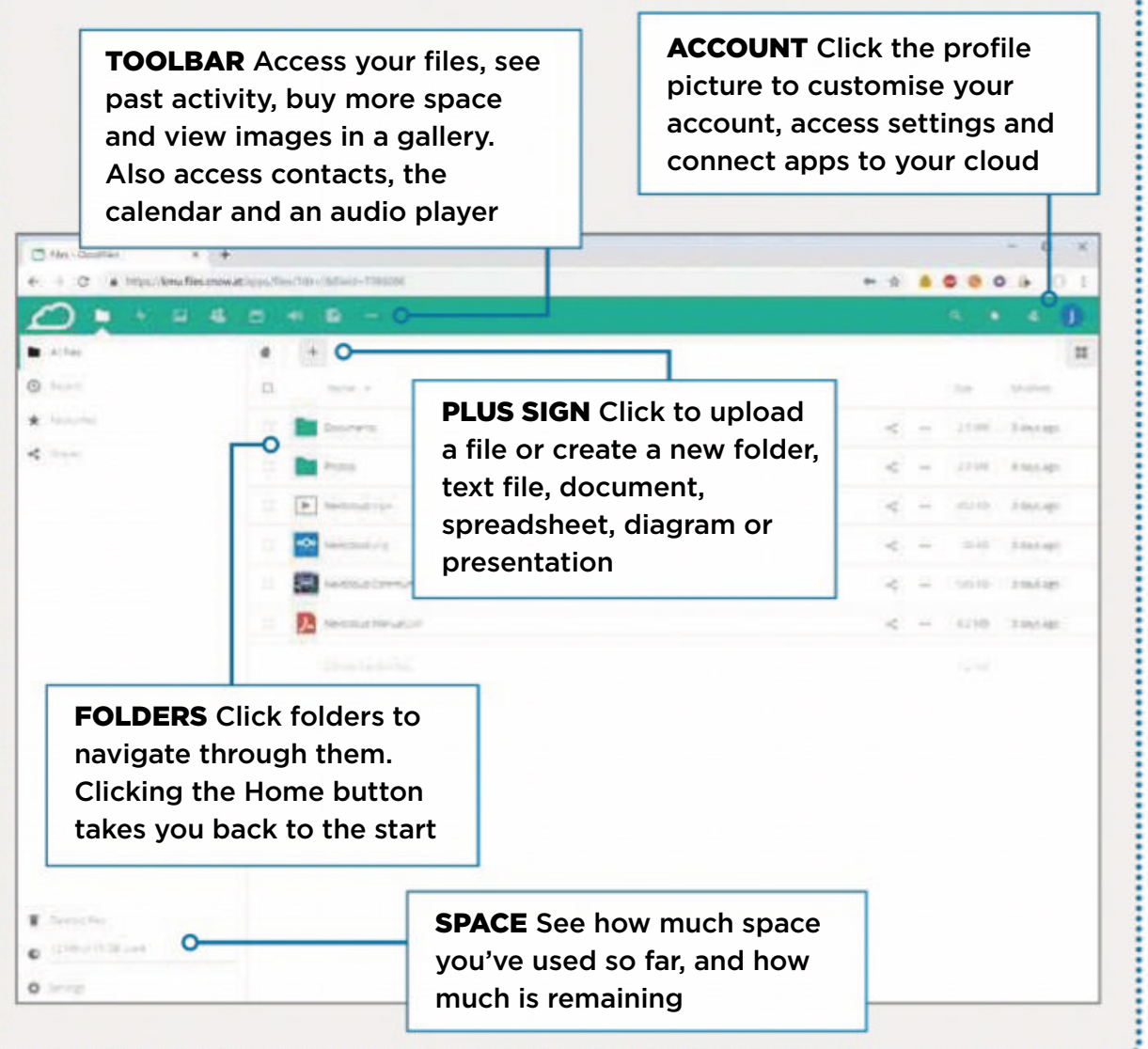
different supplier (or just see what other options are available), click the 'change provider' link.

While the amount of free storage on offer is an important consideration, you should also pay attention to how far away the provider is, and what extras are included. CloudFiles, for example, gives you 10GB of storage but is based in Innsbruck, Austria. However, that's still a lot closer than a server based in the US.

Select the provider you want and enter your email address into the box above. Agree to the terms of service. Once you've done that, Nextcloud asks you to set a password so you can log in. You'll need to verify your address within six hours to continue to use the service. Step through the screens that explain how to use it and download any apps you need. Finally, click 'Start using Nextcloud'. The layout will be the same

## GET TO KNOW NEXTCLOUD

The exact look of the interface will vary depending on which provider you choose, but you should have most of the features below.



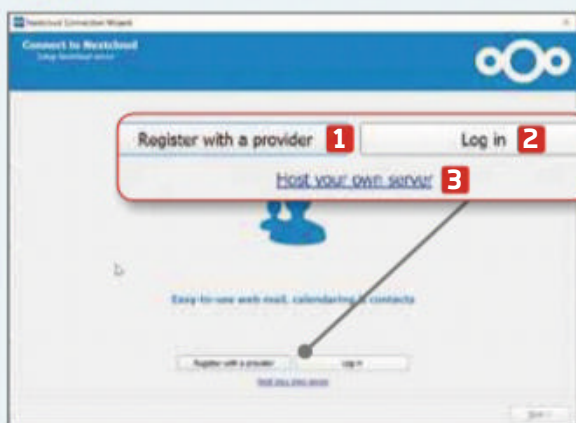
no matter which provider you choose, although there will be some cosmetic differences, such as the provider's logo, the colour scheme and the range of tools on offer.

There is syncing software for Windows

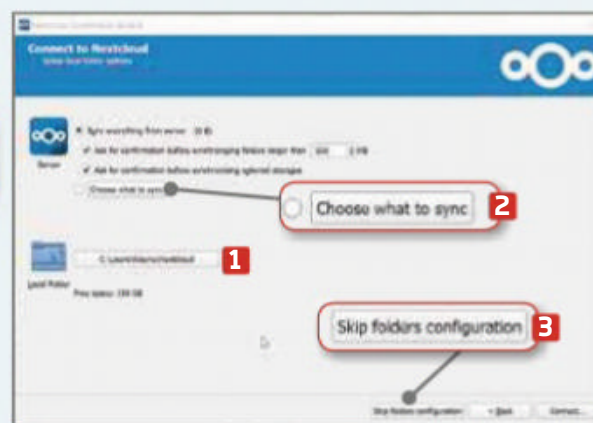
7 and newer, macOS and Linux, as well as mobile apps for iOS, Android (Google Play and F-Droid) and even Windows 10 Mobile. You can use any combination of these to access and sync your files – see our Mini Workshop, below.



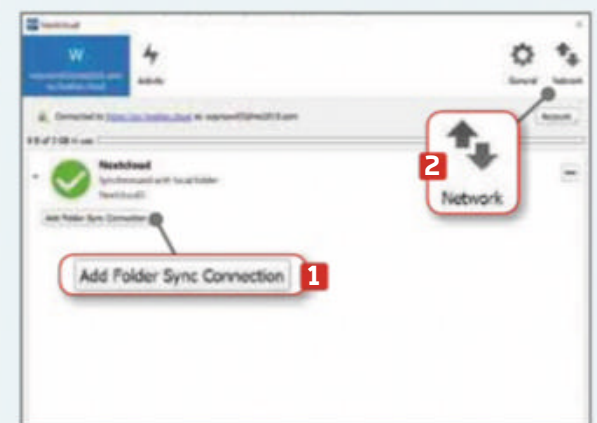
## MINI WORKSHOP | Sync your files using Nextcloud



**1** Nextcloud offers PC and mobile software for syncing your files. Go to [nextcloud.com/clients](https://nextcloud.com/clients), click the 'Download now' button and you can choose either computer or mobile software. We'll download and run the Windows version. This gives us the choice of registering with a provider, **1** logging in to a server **2** or hosting a server. **3**



**2** If you sign up with a provider, the process is the same as it would be if you went through its website. Once you've created a password, you'll be able to select the local folder to sync **1** and choose which content you want to sync from the server. **2** You can skip the folders configuration. **3**







**3** Now you're ready to sync the contents of your shared folder. Click the Add Folder Sync Connection button, navigate to the destination, then click Next. Select (or create) a remote folder and click Next. Finally, click Add Sync Connection to sync the local and remote folders. **1** You can manage your upload and download bandwidth under Network. **2**



# Broadband Deals

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	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1		TalkTalk: Fast Broadband	£17.00 (£27 after 12 months)	12 months	11Mbps avg. speed	∞ unlimited	<b>CHEAPEST</b> £204.00
2		Shell Energy: Fast Broadband	£17.99	18 months	11Mbps avg. speed	∞ unlimited	£215.88
3		Sky: Broadband Unlimited	£18.00 (£31 after 18 months)	18 months	11Mbps avg. speed	∞ unlimited*	£216.00
4		Virgin Media: Player Bundle + Fibre Broadband + Weekend Calls	£33.00 (£54 after 12 months)	12 months	54Mbps avg. speed	∞ unlimited	£396.00

Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

\* Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.

Data supplied by [www.broadbandgenie.co.uk](http://www.broadbandgenie.co.uk). Correct as of 29 April 2019.

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

**SNEAK  
PREVIEW!**

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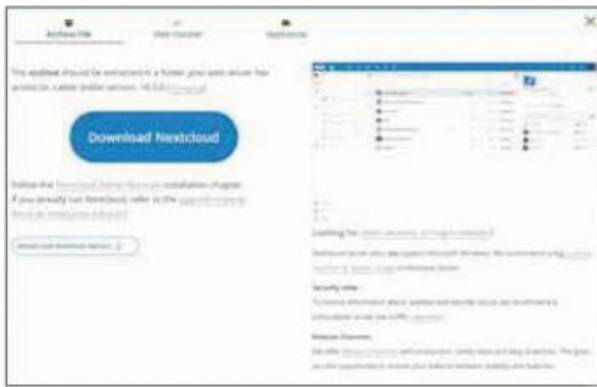
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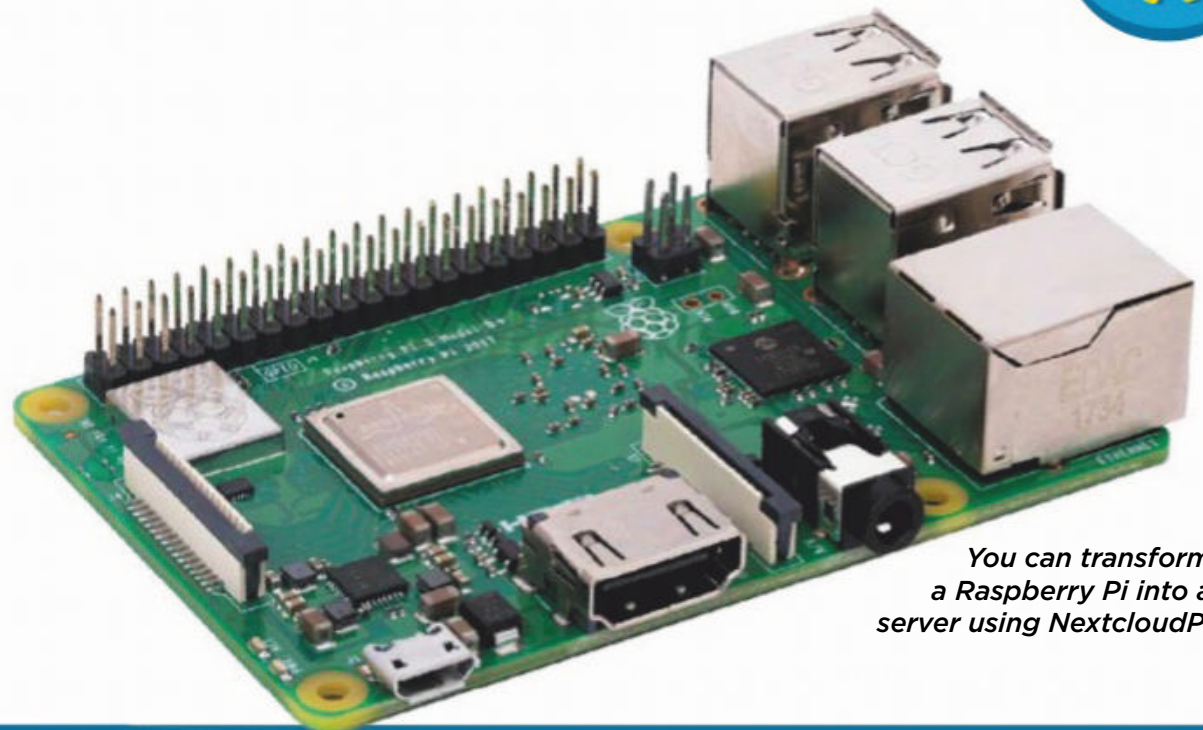
If you have some web space, you can turn it into your own Nextcloud server

## Create your own Nextcloud server

Although it's a more complicated option, you can create a Nextcloud server using your own web space. Go to [bit.ly/ncserve475](https://bit.ly/ncserve475) and select the option you require. You can then download an archive file that you extract to a folder your web server can access, or use the Web Installer, which is the easiest option and doesn't take long to configure.

## Keep your server at home

Nextcloud offers a number of tools for running a home-based server ([nextcloud.com/devices](https://nextcloud.com/devices)) but if you have a Raspberry Pi, you can turn it into a Nextcloud device using NextcloudPi, which is a preconfigured version of Nextcloud with all the tools you're likely to need. We'll show you how in our Mini Workshop, below. Despite the name, it doesn't only work on Raspberry Pi – you



You can transform a Raspberry Pi into a server using NextcloudPi

## WHAT'S NEW IN NEXTCLOUD 16

Nextcloud has just been updated with a range of powerful new features. Highlights of the new version include:

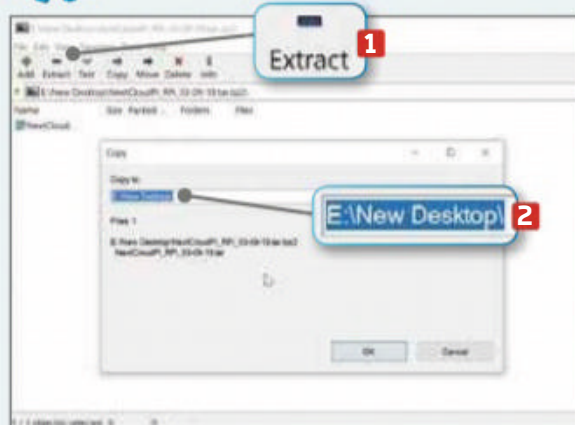
- Machine learning to detect and warn of suspicious logins
- Clever recommendations to help you find what you're looking for
- Access-control lists in Group Folders, allowing administrators to control who has access to what
- Projects, which provide an easy way to relate and find information such as files, chats or tasks
- Talk 6.0, which lets administrators define Commands that users can perform directly from chats
- A Privacy Centre that shows users where their data is and who can access it

can install it on other similar devices or on an old PC running Debian Linux. You'll find everything you need for this at [ownyourbits.com/nextcloudpi](https://ownyourbits.com/nextcloudpi), and some

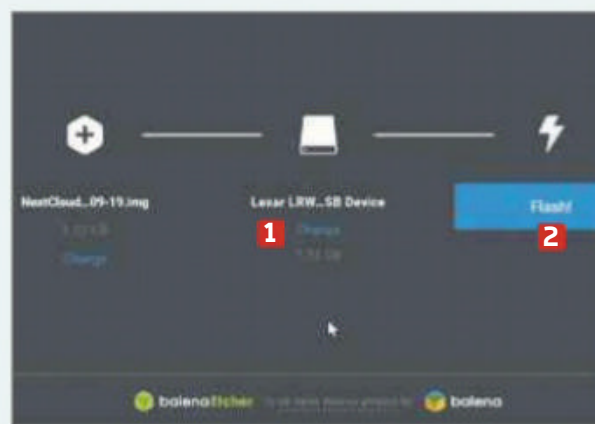
useful setup instructions at [bit.ly/incpi475](https://bit.ly/incpi475). Once you've got everything up and running, you can attach your storage and access it remotely over the web. ■



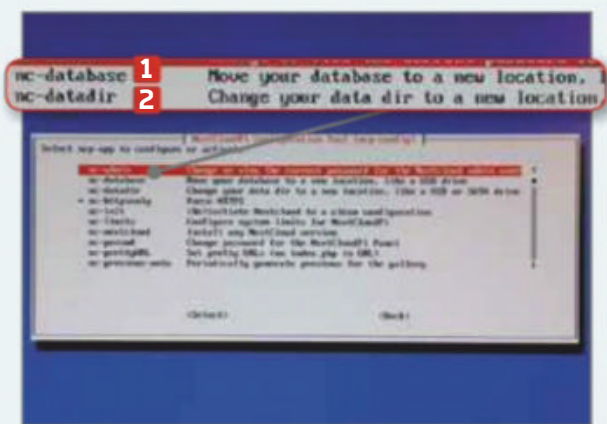
## MINI WORKSHOP | Install Nextcloud on a Raspberry Pi using Windows



**1** Go to [ownyourbits.com/downloads](https://ownyourbits.com/downloads) and get the version of the software you require (at the time of writing it was NextCloudPi\_RPi\_03-09-19). You then need to download and install Etcher ([www.balena.io/etcher](https://www.balena.io/etcher)) and 7-Zip ([www.7-zip.org](https://www.7-zip.org)). Run 7-Zip File Manager, open the .tar.bz2 file you downloaded, click Extract **1** and save the .tar file to your desktop. **2**



**2** Use 7-Zip File Manager to open the .tar file, and extract the .img file it contains. Now run Etcher and click Select Image. Navigate to the .img file and click Open. Make sure your Pi's SD card is inserted into your PC. Etcher should detect it, but if not you can Select Drive. **1** Click Flash. **2**



**3** Once you've unmounted the SD card, remove it, put it into your Raspberry Pi and power up the device. NextcloudPi will start. When the text stops scrolling, press Enter, type `pi` as the login and `raspberrypi` as the password. Install updates if available. Enter `sudo raspi-config`. You can now configure everything, including database **1** and data location. **2**

## NEXT ISSUE

How To... Keep your PC's peripherals in tip-top condition

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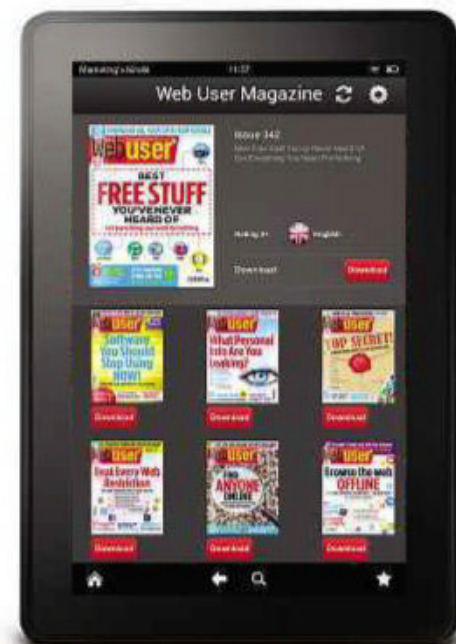
- STEP 1** Return to the **Web user library**
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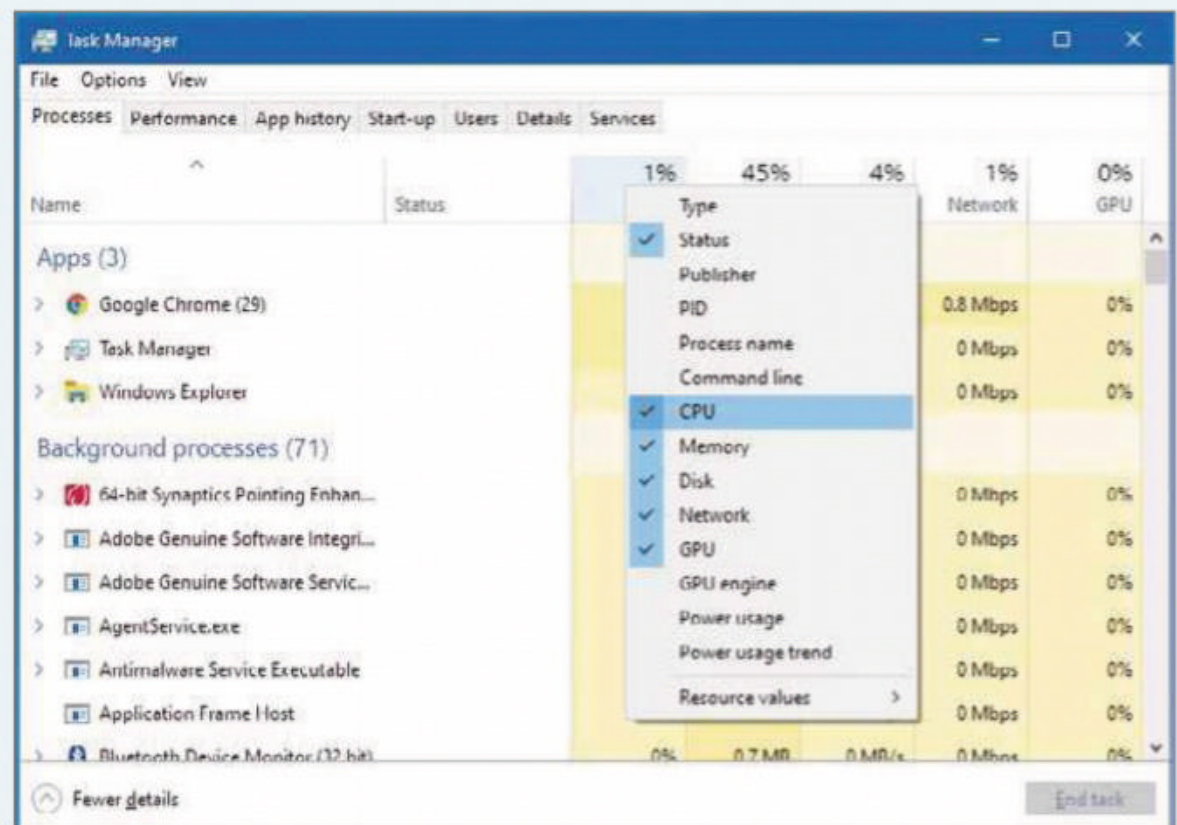
# Web User Masterclass

## Discover the Windows Task Manager's best features

### Explore running processes in Task Manager

Open Task Manager (see below), and if the simple view appears, click 'More details' at the bottom. The Processes tab displays a long list of items showing not only the applications you're running but also programs that run in the background, such as antivirus, video card software, cloud-syncing, apps for your trackpad or mouse, and so on. There are dozens of Windows components and modules, too.

Task Manager presents several columns of live data showing things like processor and memory usage, but you can add extra columns to display even more data. Right-click a heading on the Processes tab and you'll see the full list of 14 columns. Tick those you want to see and clear any you don't. You can add them all or just those that are most useful to you.



Choose which columns to display in Task Manager's detailed view

### How to start Task Manager

There are several ways to start the Windows Task Manager, so if one doesn't work, try another. For example, you can right-click the taskbar and select Task Manager from the menu. If your PC freezes and you can't access the taskbar, press Ctrl+Alt+Del and a screen appears, offering a short list of options. Click Task Manager to open it.

Alternatively, click Start and type task manager. When it appears in the

results, click to run it. Another method is to press Shift+Ctrl+Esc.

### Change usage units

The Processes tab shows your PC's memory usage in MB, disk use in MB/s and network activity in Mbps. However, you may find these figures easier to understand as percentages. Right-click any process and select 'Resource values' followed by Memory, Disk or Network, then select Percents.

A process is just a general term for a program, module or component that's running.

### Find out who is behind a process

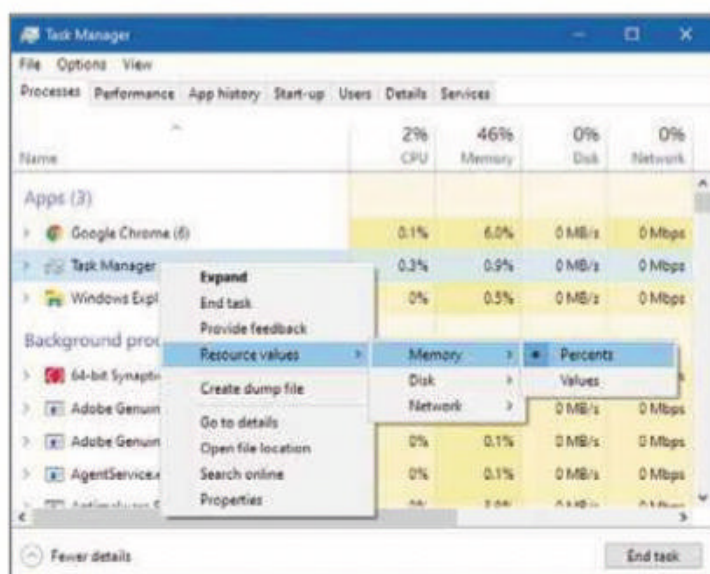
Some of the items on Task Manager's Processes tab may be unfamiliar to you. What is igfxEM Module, wsappx or Bonjour Service, for example? Right-click a header on the Processes tab

and enable the Publisher column to see the publisher's name. This can help you identify items, and seeing Microsoft, Intel, Nvidia, Apple or another well-known company can be reassuring, because it means the item is less likely to be malware.

### Check your laptop's power usage

If your laptop's battery isn't lasting very long, there may be a program or something else running in the background that's using too much power. Right-click a column header on the Processes tab and select 'Power usage' and 'Power usage trend'. Items

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.



Choose between Percents and Values when displaying usage





are labelled Very low, Low, Moderate, High or Very high. The amount of power a process uses varies with activity, so if you open a program, window or tab, its power usage may rise for a moment, then fall. This information appears in the 'Power usage' column.

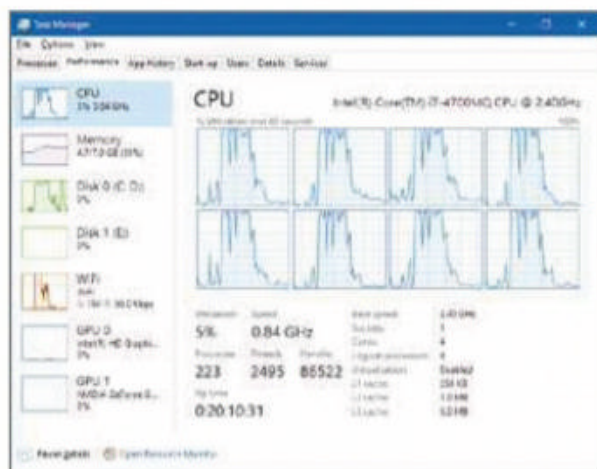
'Power usage trend' ignores short peaks and shows average power usage over time. Processes peak briefly when performing a task but are often idle for long periods in between, so their 'Power usage trend' may be low. Watch out for anything that's rated moderate or above on a laptop that relies on battery power.

## View performance charts

Select the Performance tab in Task Manager to see live scrolling charts showing CPU, Memory, Disk, Wi-Fi and GPU activity. To change the speed at which the charts scroll, go to the View menu, choose 'Update speed' and select High, Normal or Low.

Modern processors have two, four or even eight real or virtual CPU cores, which improves a PC's multitasking. The CPU chart usually shows an overview of CPU activity, but you can right-click it and select 'Change graph to', 'Logical processors' to see the activity for each core individually. Task Manager can display up to eight live scrolling charts.

For even more performance data, click the Open Resource Monitor link at the bottom of this window. This opens a separate utility that expert users find more useful than Task Manager for monitoring computer activity.



*You can monitor the activity of each of your processor's cores individually*

## Make Task Manager visible

Task Manager's window is sometimes hidden behind other windows, but if you need to see it all the time, go to the Options menu and select 'Always on top' to stop other windows obscuring it.

When you minimise Task Manager, an icon appears at the right of the taskbar. Hover the mouse over this to see CPU, memory, disk and network usage. If the icon disappears from the pop-up tray, click and drag it to the right side of the taskbar to make it permanently visible.

## TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

### Find out what a particular process is

Even if you add the Publisher column to Task Manager's Processes tab, there will still be items you're not sure about. You may wonder, for example, whether or not a process with a name you don't recognise is malware. To find out more about an item, right-click it and select 'Search online'. A browser opens and automatically performs a search. Often the explanation you need is on the first page of results.

### Fix stuck programs

What can you do if a program freezes and won't respond to the mouse or keyboard? What if a program won't quit? What if it's malware? Task Manager can help. Simply find the program on the Processes tab, right-click it and select 'End task' to stop it running.

Some processes start one or more other processes. If you find the process on the Details tab and right-click it, you get an option to 'End process tree', which stops that process and any others it has started.

There are a few processes, such as Windows Explorer, that you can restart rather than stop. Right-click the process and restart it to fix problems with the Windows interface or File Explorer, for example.

### Stop startup programs

Select the 'Start-up' tab in Task Manager to see a list of programs that start when you boot into Windows. If the list contains any items you know you don't need, select them and click the Disable button.

The 'Start-up impact' column shows items that take a long time to load

and are adding significantly to your PC's startup time. Consider disabling any that have a long load time. Many startup items are essential, though, so be careful what you disable.

Several more columns of information are available – right-click a header to see the full list. Enable 'Command line' to see where a program is located on your hard drive. Enable 'Disk I/O at start-up' and 'CPU at start-up' to see hard drive and processor activity.

Some programs run at startup to perform a quick task such as checking for updates, then quit. Enable 'Running now' to see which programs have quit and which are still running. Any that are still running are using memory and processor power, which could slow your PC's performance as well as its startup time.

Some people can't see the data for startup programs in Task Manager. If not, try disabling everything, restart, then enable everything and restart.

### View background services

Services are software components and modules that run in the background. Select the Services tab to list them and find out if they're running or have stopped. If something isn't working – such as printing, for example – check the Services tab to see if Print Spooler is running.

To solve certain problems, you may need to check that a service is running and then start or stop it. Task Manager lets you do this by right-clicking the service. Don't change anything on the Services tab unless you know what you're doing, though.

Click the Description column header to sort services in order. Even when

you've read the description, the function of a service may be a mystery to you. Right-click it and select 'Search online' to find out what it is and what it does.

Click the Open Services link at the bottom to run the Services utility, which provides more options.

*See which programs load with Windows and if they slow your PC's startup*

The screenshot shows the Windows Task Manager Start-up tab. It displays a list of startup programs with columns for Name, Publisher, Status, and Start-up impact. The 'Start-up impact' column shows the time it takes for each program to load.

Name	Publisher	Status	Start-up impact
Adobe GC Invoker Utility	Adobe Systems, Incorporated	Enabled	Not measured
googledrivesync.exe		Enabled	Not measured
HP CoolSense	Hewlett-Packard Development ...	Disabled	None
HP Message Service	Hewlett-Packard Development ...	Enabled	Not measured
IDT PC Audio	IDT, Inc.	Enabled	Not measured
Microsoft OneDrive	Microsoft Corporation	Enabled	Not measured
NVIDIA Update Backend	NVIDIA Corporation	Enabled	Not measured
SmartSwitchPDR.exe	Samsung	Enabled	Not measured
Windows Security notificati...	Microsoft Corporation	Enabled	Not measured



# Ask the Expert

**Roland Waddilove**, computer programmer and PC journalist since 1981, answers all your technical questions. Email us for help at [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)



## GENERAL PC

### Repair a PC that won't boot

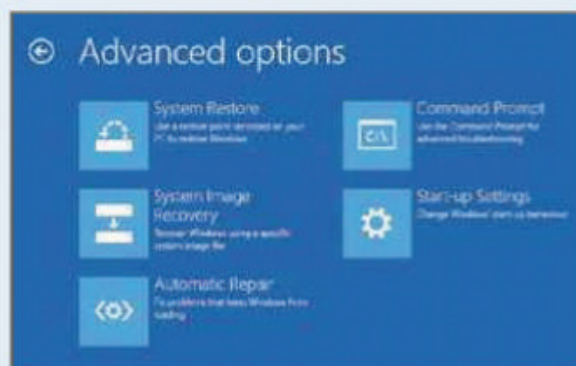
**Q** When I switched on my PC recently, it refused to load Windows 10. It scanned the hard drive and tried to repair the errors, but then the screen went blank. Now when I switch it on, it starts loading but goes blank again. What can I do?

**Peter Cox, via email**

**A** First, unplug every non-essential device from the computer, including external drives, USB hubs, extra external screens, printers and so on. Then see if your PC starts up.

If it's a laptop, it may be switching to an external screen. Some have a dedicated key for this. If yours does, press it and see if the screen comes on. Next, press Windows+Control+Shift+B to restart the video driver. If the screen is still black, try pressing Windows+P to access the Projector options, then select 'PC screen only'.

If your PC still won't start, Windows must be getting stuck during startup. Switch on your PC, and when



*After three failed startup attempts, Windows provides tools to repair itself*

Windows begins to load, press the power button to switch it off. Do this three times, then let it start without interruption. The blue 'Advanced options' screen should appear. Select 'Startup settings', Restart, then choose Enable Safe Mode or 'Enable Safe Mode with Networking'. If this gets you to the desktop, update your drivers, uninstall any bad software and run Disk Clean-up and antivirus tools.

Once your PC is working again, use software such as EaseUS Todo Backup ([bit.ly/easeus475](http://bit.ly/easeus475)) to create a full system backup on an external drive. You should also create a recovery disc or flash drive so you can start your PC and restore your backup if the problem recurs.

update, follow the instructions provided to install it. However, you're unlikely to find an update.

The command you describe is a workaround from Microsoft, but you may have used it incorrectly. The 'x' at the end should be replaced by the bus number: 0, 1, 2 or whatever it is.

Type **device manager** into the taskbar's search box, then click it in the results to open it. Expand the 'Disk drives' section, right-click the problem drive and select Properties. On the General tab, make a note of the bus number. If it's 2, the command you should type at the command prompt is:

```
reg.exe add "HKLM\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\storahci\Parameters\Device" /f /v TreatAsInternalPort /t REG_MULTI_SZ /d 2
```

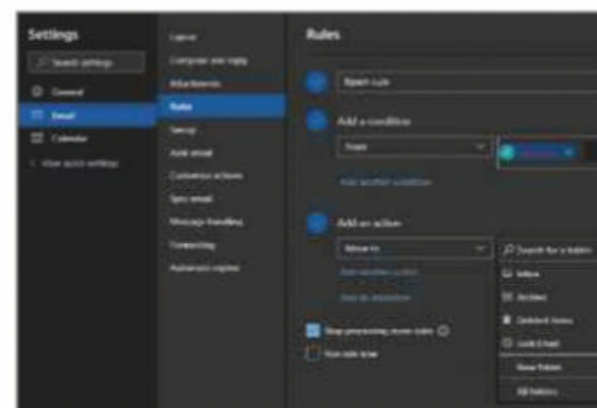
## EMAIL

### Stop spam in Hotmail and Outlook

**Q** I get lots of spam sent to my Hotmail address, which I access using my Outlook software. Every time I receive a spam email, I use Hotmail's filter to block it, but the sender simply changes the address and it gets through again. All the spam messages come from a '.can' domain. Can I block emails from a particular domain rather than blocking individual addresses?

**Davis Andrews, via email**

**A** It's not a good idea to block all messages that use a particular domain extension, because they won't all be spam, just as not all messages



*Create rules and block emails from specific domains to eliminate spam*

## HARDWARE

### Stop a PC thinking drives are removable

**Q** I have a Medion Akoya E4080D (MD8375) desktop PC with an MS-7800 1.0 motherboard. The boot mode is UEFI (American Megatrends) and it runs Windows 10. I replaced the hard drive with a Samsung 850 EVO SSD and am using the reformatted hard drive as internal storage.

I've discovered that devices plugged into the internal SATA ports now show up as removable drives, and the "Safely remove" icon appears in the taskbar's notification area. Data-transfer speeds to the hard drive are about half what they should be for an internal drive, and it performs more like an external USB 2 device.

I've tried Microsoft's recommended fix, which is to open the Command Prompt and type:

```
reg.exe add "HKLM\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\storahci\Parameters\Device" /f /v TreatAsInternalPort /t REG_MULTI_SZ /d x
```

Sadly, it doesn't work, even though a pop-up message states that the procedure was successful.

**Ken Stephenson, via email**

**A** This problem can occur with an old motherboard and BIOS, so a possible solution is to update the BIOS. To find out if an update is available, go to your PC manufacturer's website and search for software, drivers and BIOS updates for your PC. If you find a BIOS





that use '.com', '.org', or '.net' are spam. If you're sure you want to block the domain, however, it's easy to do.

Hotmail (or Outlook, as it's now called) supports rules, which you can use to process incoming mail automatically. If an email matches a rule, Outlook moves it from the inbox to another folder, such as Deleted Items, for example.

Go to the Outlook website ([outlook.live.com](https://outlook.live.com)) in a browser, click the cog icon and select 'View all Outlook settings' from the menu. Select Email, then Rules and click 'Add new rule'. Enter a name at the top and select From to specify your condition. On the right, enter the domain suffix, so if you receive spam from 'ahsgrv@xxx.com', enter 'xxx.com'. This will match anything@xxx.com. Click Add Action and select Move To from the menu. On the right, select Deleted Items or Junk Email.

You can also use variations of this rule, so if you get a lot of junk email about a product or service, choose 'Subject or body includes' and specify a word or phrase to look for in messages.

An alternative is to select 'Junk email', which is just below Rules in the settings. Click Add in the 'Blocked senders' section and add the domain from the email address – so enter 'junk.com' if you get spam from someone@junk.com.

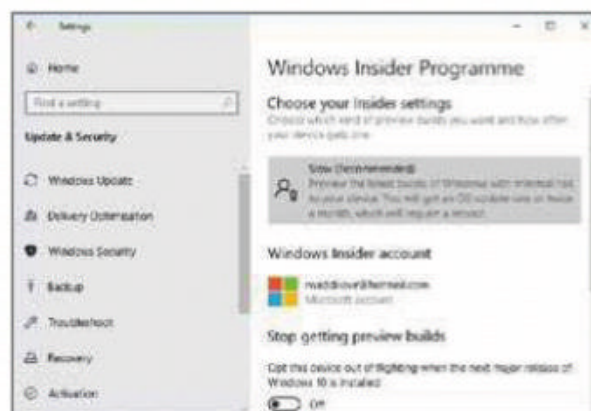
## GENERAL PC

### Get Windows 10 updates

**Q** My PC was built by Dino PC in September 2011. I am running Windows 10 Pro version 1803 and for some time I've been expecting Windows Update to offer version 1809. Another major update is due soon and I'm worried that this will also pass me by, leaving me stuck on 1803 forever.

I've tried to get Windows 1809 by various means, including clean boot, Windows Update Assistant, Media Creation Tool and more. I also tried using Refresh My PC and Reset My PC from Windows Recovery, but my USB keyboard and mouse stopped working. When I tried installing from DVD, I was told to install drivers, but not which ones.

I downloaded the setup files, but when the update reached 52%, a message said Windows couldn't update some components – without telling me what they were – and rolled my system back. I do run some old software but this has never been a problem. Windows Update also presents the message: "Policies set on your device – Exclude drivers from Windows quality updates – Source: Administrator – Type: Group Policy".



### Join the Windows Insider Programme to get the next version of Windows early

I use a local username and password (not a Microsoft login) but that's been fine until now, too. I'm perfectly happy with my PC's performance, but I wonder if you can spot anything that may be causing version 1809 to avoid me.

**Dave Ingram, via email**

**A** Your PC is eight years old, which means it may be running some very old drivers, software and hardware. Clearly something is incompatible with the latest Windows, and there may not be a solution, but it's worth trying a few things before ditching your old PC.

Type **device manager** into the taskbar's search box and click it in the results. Expand every section, right-click every device and select 'Update driver'. Then restart your PC and try to update Windows again.

If it still won't update, download IObit Driver Booster Free ([bit.ly/iodb475](https://bit.ly/iodb475)). Back up your PC's hard drive, then

update the drivers one at a time, making sure the PC works after each update and uninstalling it if it doesn't. When you've finished, try updating Windows.

One trick for forcing Windows updates is to become a beta tester. Open Settings (Windows+i), click Update & Security and select Windows Insider Programme on the left. This installs the Windows beta even if the PC isn't 100% compatible, so that Microsoft can receive feedback and fix problems.

## GENERAL PC

### Fix a USB memory stick

**Q** I'm trying to transfer cloud-ready data I've downloaded to a USB drive, but when I try to load it on my old PC, I get the following error message: "E:\ is not accessible. The volume does not contain a recognised file system. Please make sure that all required file system drivers are loaded and the volume is not corrupted."

**Roger T, via email**

**A** First make sure the USB stick works on your PC. Old PCs don't support the latest USB drives. If you have access to a newer PC, try reading it on that.

Can you download the data again? If so, put the USB stick in the old PC, open Explorer, right-click the drive and select Format. Make sure you're able to write files to it and copy them back again. When you know the USB stick is OK, download the data to it again.

## HARDWARE

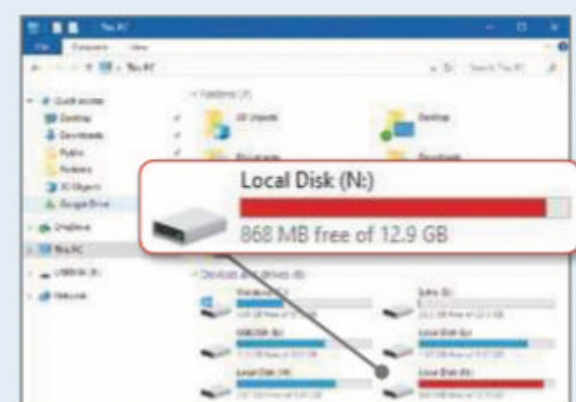
### Fix a red light on a NAS drive

**Q** The top light on my WD My Cloud drive is permanently red. I've tried resetting it but that doesn't work. Other devices tell me there's a network problem, but although I can access the WD Dashboard and change the network settings, the Dashboard says everything is fine.

**Terry Wareing, via email**

**A** A solid red light can indicate several conditions, some of which are serious while others are not. Your problem is probably a minor one because the drive still works. Here are some of the causes of the red light:

- The device needs rebooting. Power everything off, wait a few seconds, then switch it on again.



### Keep an eye on free drive space in Explorer to ensure you don't run out

- The drive is nearly full. Move some files to another drive to free up space.
- An unsupported USB device is plugged in. Unplug all USB devices everywhere.
- There may be a network problem. Switch everything off and unplug all your cables, then plug them back in and power up. Try different cables if you have spares, and use different sockets, such as a different Ethernet port on your router.



This fortnight Roland has been practising selfies after a reader suggested he doesn't look happy in his official photo



# Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. Please send questions and answers to [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)



## TOP TIP

### ANDROID

## Upgrade your Android phone's calculator

For most of us, most of the time, the calculators built into our phones are perfectly adequate. If you find you need a little more oomph, however, CalcNote for Android ([bit.ly/cal475](http://bit.ly/cal475)) is an excellent alternative. It looks a bit like a spreadsheet, with columns and rows for your sums, but don't let that put you off. The tutorial that appears when you first open the app is invaluable for new users. What I love most is that I can tap in my sum and the result appears in the answer column automatically. You can save and export everything, which is an important feature for advanced users, and it has different layouts for basic or scientific calculations.

**Jim Goldberg, via email**

Back Issues disc winner



*CalcNote is an advanced calculator that's easy to use*

Outlook webmail, for example, you may need to know a few important settings. Go to [outlook.live.com](http://outlook.live.com) in a browser and click the gear icon. At the bottom of the Settings panel, click 'View all Outlook settings'. Select Email in the first column and 'Sync email' in the second, then scroll down to the POP and IMAP settings. Ignore POP and select IMAP because it's a newer and better system. The IMAP section provides details of the incoming server URL, port and encryption method. To send emails, you'll need the settings in the SMTP section, such as the outgoing email server's URL, port and encryption. This is everything you need if you want to set up an email app or software to read and send email using Outlook.

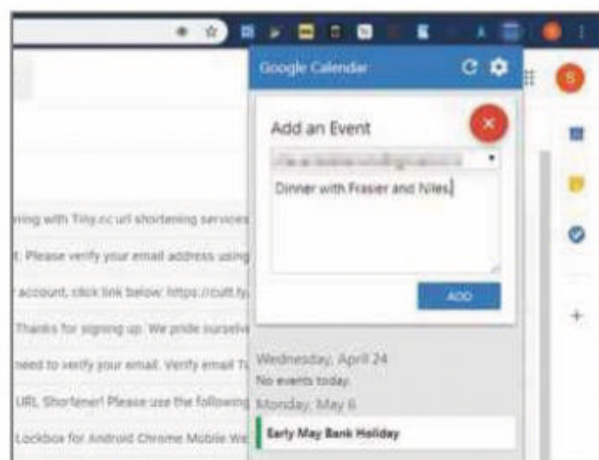
**Gerald Walsh, via email**

### BROWSERS

## View Google Calendar on any website

In *Web User* Issue 465 ([bit.ly/webuser465](http://bit.ly/webuser465)), you wrote about multi-platform online calendars, so I thought I'd tell readers about a browser extension called Google Calendar ([bit.ly/gcal475](http://bit.ly/gcal475)). This browser tool started life as a Google project but has since been made open-source. Once you've authorised the extension and signed in, you're free to add events and see what's coming up. It's simple but very effective – and means you don't have to keep visiting [calendar.google.com](http://calendar.google.com).

**Gareth Lynch, via email**



*This handy browser tool brings Google Calendar to Chrome*

### GENERAL PC

## Snip and paste multiple screenshots

There are several ways to take screenshots in Windows, but the one I use most is to press Windows+Shift+S. The screen dims slightly and a toolbar appears at the top of the screen. You can snip a portion of the screen in a rectangle or freeform shape, a complete window or the entire screen. Select the rectangle, for example, then click and drag it over the part of the screen you want to snip. Screenshots are saved to the clipboard, which is particularly useful with Windows 10's multiple clipboards. Simply capture your screenshots, then switch to another program, such as a word processor or photo editor, and press Windows+V to see thumbnail images of all your snips. You can then choose which one to paste.

**Scott Alderson, via email**

### EMAIL

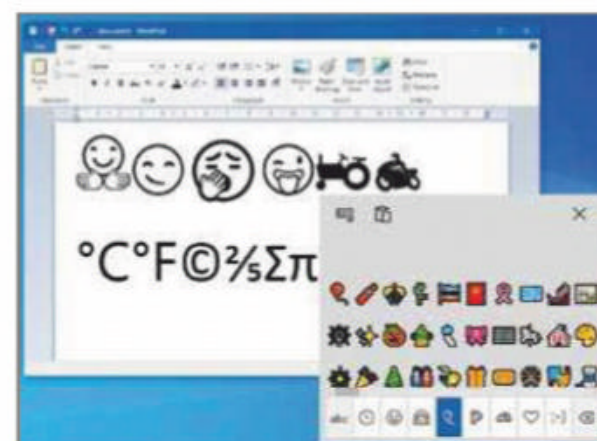
## Configure email software

Setting up email software such as Thunderbird ([www.thunderbird.net](http://www.thunderbird.net)) on your PC or mobile phone is easier than it used to be, but sometimes you still have to configure it manually. To set up

### GENERAL PC

## Type exotic characters

Some programs make it easy to insert special characters into text, such as the copyright symbol, emoji, currency symbols and so on, but others don't. For example, Gmail offers an emoji button when writing emails, but I can't find a similar feature in WordPad and other programs. How do you type a Greek Omega or even a fraction like  $\frac{1}{4}$ ? Right-click an empty part of the taskbar and select 'Show touch keyboard button.' This tip works with touch screens and



*Use the touch keyboard to enter unusual characters, such as emoji*





the mouse. When you're using a program such as WordPad and you want to add an emoji, click the touch keyboard button in the taskbar, then the emoji button and select emoji characters to insert them. For other characters, including fractions, currency symbols, Greek letters and so on, open the touch keyboard and click the '&123' button followed by Omega. You can then select different collections of symbols and click to insert the ones you want.

**Ryan McKnight, via email**

## GENERAL PC

### Add to the taskbar's jump list

I love Windows 10's jump list – the options you get when you right-click an icon on the taskbar – because it lets me go straight to previously opened documents and web pages. Now I've discovered that you can add more items to these lists by editing the Registry (so make a backup first to be safe). Open the Registry Editor (press Windows+R, type `regedit` and press Enter) and navigate to: `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced`

If you can't see a key called `JumpListItemMaximum`, right-click the `Advanced` folder and create a DWord (32-bit) Value called `JumpListItemMaximum`. Once you've done that, double-click it and set your preferred value (anything over 10 is good). When you restart Windows Explorer, you'll see an expanded jump list.

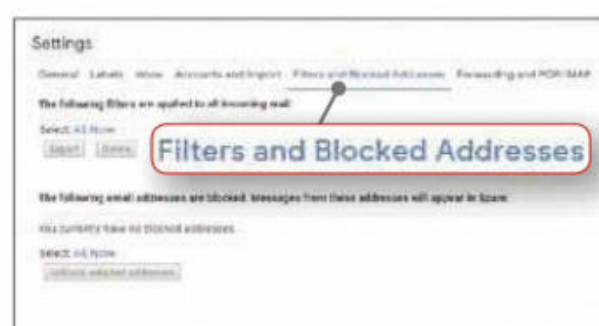
**Georgie Bennet, via email**

## EMAIL

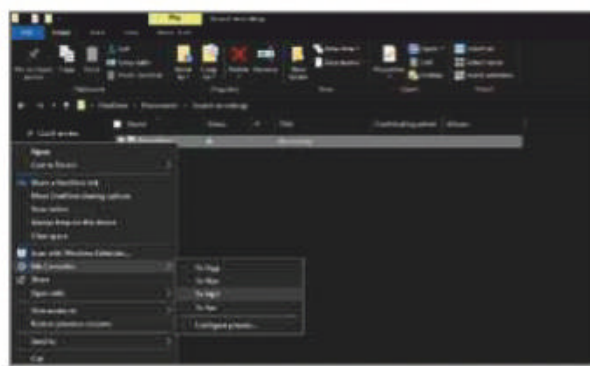
### Block senders in Gmail

Gmail blocks a lot of spam automatically, but if an annoying email keeps getting through to your inbox, you can block the sender. Click an email to open it, then click the three-dot icon on the right to open a menu with options to Block, 'Report spam' and 'Report phishing'. The list of people you've blocked is stored in Settings. Click the cog icon, then choose 'Filters and blocked addresses'. These are listed at the bottom, and there's also an Unblock option if you change your mind or block someone by mistake.

**Sean Bradley, via email**



*Keep your inbox free of spam*



*Change file types at the click of a button*

## SOFTWARE

### Convert files by right-clicking

File Converter ([file-converter.org](http://file-converter.org)) is a clever free tool that adds an option to Windows Explorer's context menu. Right-click a file (or files) and select File Converter to choose which type of conversion to perform. It can handle image, audio, video and other file conversions, making it a lot easier to turn your Word document into a PDF, your AVI into an MP4, and so on. The only issue I've discovered so far is that it doesn't always work well with other file explorer tools.

**Mick Gawthorp, via email**

## BROWSERS

### Stop sites spying on you

Readers may not realise this, but websites can actually see your mobile device's motion and light sensors when you browse. This is very different to apps, which usually need explicit permission to access this sort of data.

Chrome Canary (Google's test version, [bit.ly/chrcan475](http://bit.ly/chrcan475)) lets you see when a site

is accessing your sensors and choose to block or allow it. This feature should be enabled by default, but you can check by typing `chrome://settings` in the address bar and searching for 'Motion or light sensors'. The feature is expected to appear in the main desktop and Android browsers with the Chrome 75 update.

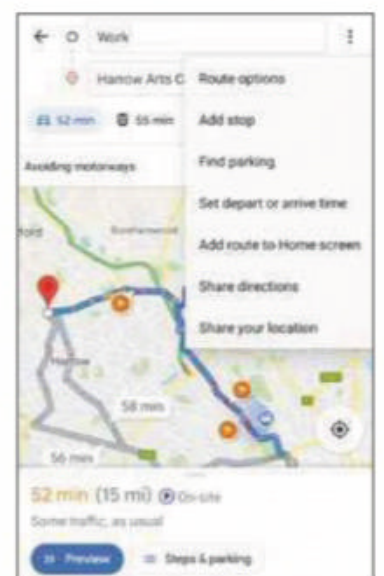
**Stephen McGarretty, via email**

## GOOGLE

### Get travel times for future journeys

I'm a meticulous planner when it comes to long journeys. I like to know which roads to use (with backup routes in case traffic is snarled up) and how long the journey will take, including pit-stops. If I used Google Maps on my phone, however, I had to wait until the day of travel before I could map out my journey properly. Not any more. The Google Maps app now offers future journey times when you click the three dots and select 'Set depart or arrive time'. This makes planning future journeys much easier.

**David Skyler, via email**



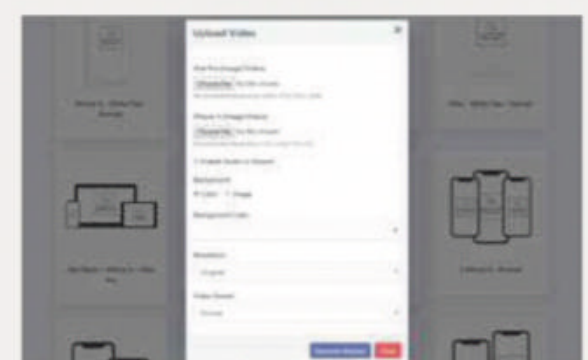
*Find out how long your road trip is really going to take*

## BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

## WEBSITES

### Create your own video mock-ups

In my line of work, I have to give presentations to clients showing, for example, their new website on a mobile device. This has been a pain in the proverbial, because my video-editing skills are basic. I've tried various methods, and have even been known to say 'Imagine this on a smartphone screen', which isn't a good look for a salesman! However, I've since stumbled on a website that does all the hard work for me. Live Mockups ([www.livemockups.com](http://www.livemockups.com)) asks you to upload your video (in my case, video captured from my PC screen) then choose the device you want it to appear on, such as an iPhone, Pixel phone or Mac. Having customised the footage, Live



*The magic of Live Mockups places your video on any device*

Mock-ups creates the finished article – and it works in your browser, so there's no software to download. Since I've been using it, clients have commented on my 'professional presentations'.

**Richard Cartwright, via email**

**Have you managed to fix a PC-related disaster?**

If so, please send your story to [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)





### OFFER OF THE FORTNIGHT

## Kaspersky Internet Security 2019 - on sale now

Our sister title *Computeractive* is now selling the new and improved 2019 edition of the multi-award-winning antivirus Kaspersky Internet Security at a special discount for readers

### WHAT'S NEW IN KASPERSKY 2019:

- ✓ Finds and removes dodgy browser extensions
- ✓ Identifies software that needs to be updated
- ✓ Gives you more control over which adverts are blocked
- ✓ More advanced options to keep malware off your PC



**SINCE WINDOWS 10 LAUNCHED 19,844 READERS  
HAVE BOUGHT KASPERSKY SOFTWARE  
FROM THE SOFTWARE STORE**

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Normally £34.99

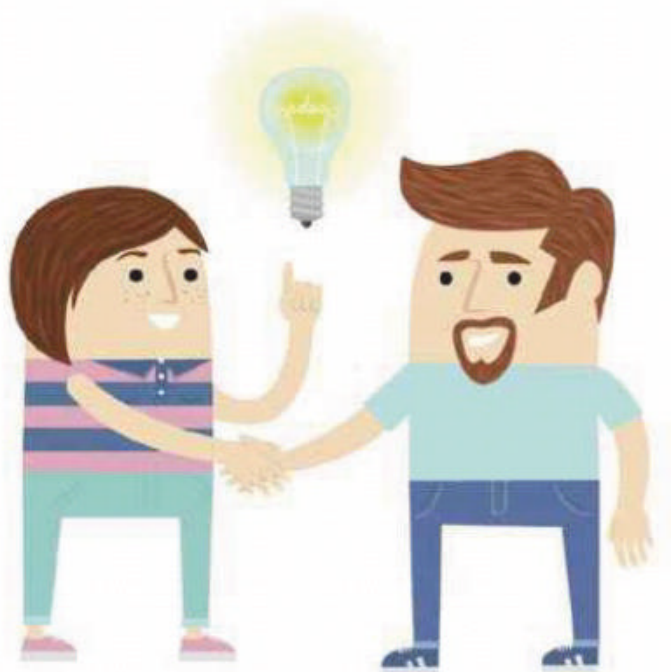
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ANTIVIRUS TESTS**





# Readers' Helpdesk

Can you help your fellow readers with their computer problems? Send your questions and answers to [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)

## BROWSERS

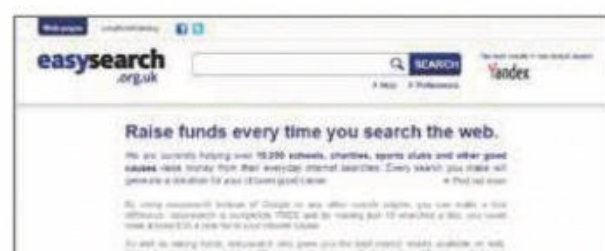
### Raise money for charity when you search

**Q** The company I work for uses Easysearch ([www.easysearch.org.uk](http://www.easysearch.org.uk)), which pays 0.25p for every search you make through its site. I've always been uneasy about its business model: who does what with the data they glean from our searches? Someone must buy and process it to their advantage, or the system wouldn't exist. The search results are pretty dismal too, and became even worse recently when Easysearch changed the search engine it uses to Yandex, which is based in Russia. Could you give me any insight into either Easysearch or Yandex?

**Bob Ronald, via email**

**A** Easysearch raises money by selling advertising space to retailers such as Amazon and Argos. You choose a charity when you register, then each time you search and buy from those retailers, they donate a quarter of a penny to your chosen charity. According to the terms and conditions of the company's two websites, ([www.easysearch.org.uk](http://www.easysearch.org.uk) and [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)), it seems they collect and use data about you in the same way Google or Bing might.

Yandex – Russia's answer to Google – is harder to pin down. It has been pushing back against government interference for years, according to a 2017 article on Vice ([bit.ly/yandex475](http://bit.ly/yandex475)): "For years, officials called Yandex and complained. And for years the answer was a polite explanation that nothing could be done, as it was all about the algorithms." However, since then the Russian government has learnt

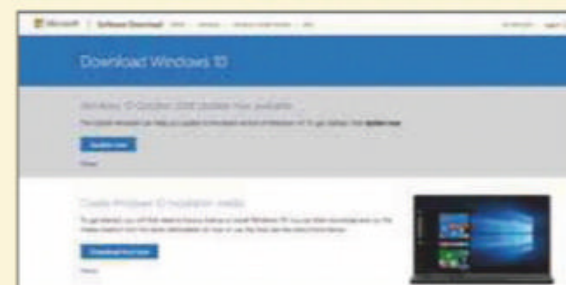


*You can raise money for good causes simply by using particular search engines*

## READERS RESPOND

### Move Windows to a new PC

**A** Regarding Andrew Goodenough's question in Ask The Expert, Issue 472 ([bit.ly/webuser472](http://bit.ly/webuser472)), if your copy of Windows was already installed on your PC when you bought it (often known as an OEM licence), you'll have trouble getting Microsoft to revalidate it. I installed Windows 10 Pro OEM on my seven-year-old PC running Windows 7 as a dual boot, but the PC failed after a month. I replaced the PC, but my OEM copy of Windows 10 refused to validate, so I had to buy another one. Incidentally, like Mr. Goodenough, I was



#### Is it time to dual-boot your operating systems?

reluctant to move from Windows 7, but after a few weeks I have Windows 10 looking (and running) more or less like Windows 7. My advice is to try it. It's not as bad as you might think. Failing that, run both systems on one PC as a dual-boot.

**Alan Heasman, via email**

## CAN YOU HELP?

[webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)

You can seek help or suggest solutions to other readers' problems by emailing [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk) or via [www.facebook.com/webusermagazine](https://www.facebook.com/webusermagazine) or [twitter.com/webusermagazine](https://twitter.com/webusermagazine).

## GENERAL PC

**Q** With my beloved Windows 7 about to become redundant, can anyone give me three good reasons why I should pay to switch to Windows 10?

**Phil Cantor, via email**

## ANDROID

**Q** I've had some trouble downloading apps from the Google Play Store. In particular, I get 'unknown error code during application install – 505'. Help!

**Scott Burnley, via email**

how to game those algorithms, so the news section, at least, is less independent than it was. If you want to support a good cause while searching, I recommend [www.ecosia.org](http://www.ecosia.org). The search engine spends 80% of its ad revenue on planting trees, it doesn't sell your data and it's transparent about its income.

**Steve Clark, Features Writer, Web User**

## MACOS

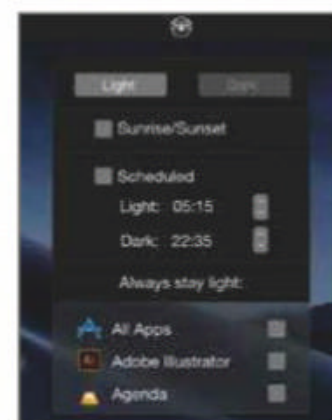
### Change dark mode's active hours

**Q** I'm a big fan of dark mode, especially when using my Mac in bed. However, I don't always want it on, and I have to go into System Preferences to switch modes. Is there a secret setting I'm missing?

**Joe Maybrick, via email**

**A** The short answer, Joe, is no. Apple's otherwise excellent dark mode can only be turned on and off manually. The developers behind NightOwl ([bit.ly/nightowl475](http://bit.ly/nightowl475)) clearly feel the same way about this as you do, because their software lets you switch between light and dark modes based on the time of day. It's easy to set up, and you can decide which apps display in which mode.

**Steve Clark, Features Writer, Web User**



*NightOwl simplifies dark mode on your Mac*



## Star Email

### Who still uses Internet Explorer?

**O**n reading your lead news story in Issue 474, 'Internet Explorer security flaw puts all Windows users at risk', it occurred to me that this was the first time for years that I'd even thought about Internet Explorer, let alone used it! Like most Windows users, it was my default browser for a time because I never thought to use anything else. Times change, though, and luckily a host of much better options came along, such as Firefox and Chrome.



I hadn't even realised that Windows still comes with Internet Explorer installed, but I just did a search in my Start menu and there it was. It hasn't aged well, to put it mildly: it looks ugly, it's got hardly any useful features and it's really slow. I don't use Edge, either, but at least that has some things going for it! Microsoft clearly thinks so too, because when you open Internet Explorer in Windows 10, the first thing you see is a message advising you to use Edge instead.

Internet Explorer only ever had about three add-ons for it, whereas you can install lots of extensions for Edge from the Microsoft Store. And that's before we even mention all the security flaws IE suffered over the years, which must amount to more than every other browser combined.

I have to wonder why there are still people out there who use Internet Explorer when virtually every other browser is a better and safer choice. I use Chrome, but I'm willing to give Edge another chance when the redesigned version arrives later this year [see our workshop on page 54].

**Shaun Mitchell, via email**

**Back Issues disc winner**



### Cheer up, Roland Waddilove

I've been a *Web User* subscriber for quite a while, and one thing that has been bugging me for a long time is that Roland Waddilove just doesn't look happy in his work, according to his photo in your regular 'Ask the Expert' section. Maybe it's all those problems he has to write about?

Anyway, I thought I'd cheer him up – please see the photo (right).

**Ryan Sheldon, via email**



### Streaming subscriptions aren't compulsory

I usually enjoy Barry Collins' Page 404 column but Issue 473's rant, 'Will Apple bring on the super-sub?', really got my goat. He complains that various subscription services are draining his bank account and that Apple's new streaming services will place an even bigger burden on him.

At what point did it become compulsory to get these services? Why is just having the normal TV services not enough for Barry and his family? After all, there's only a finite amount of time in

the week to watch TV, read magazines and so on. If someone can't afford services, they shouldn't sign up to them.

**Scott Wright, via email**

### Correction about Codecademy

I've just been reading your Issue 471 article 'Teach yourself to code for free'. Please note that Codecademy ([www.codecademy.com](http://www.codecademy.com)) is exactly that ('Code+Cademy'), not 'Code Academy' as you describe it in the text.

Funnily enough, I once mentioned this in a forum where Mr Barry Collins of your

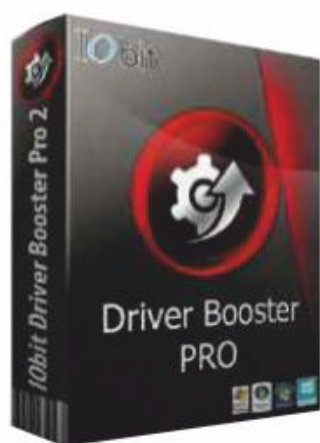
### Software offer was nothing special

I tend to keep my Windows PC running on free software. The developers are understandably keen to sign us up as paying subscribers to their Pro versions, but by and large I ignore the nagging and continue with the free versions.

On rare occasions, I see a "special offer" that intrigues me, and recently I relented and bought the Pro edition of Driver Booster. This gave me access to around 10 more

drivers, none of which are installed on my PC. A very special offer indeed!

**Trevor Roberts, via email**



### Quiz Answers: Issue 474

1 **Fawlty Towers**



2 **Dad's Army**



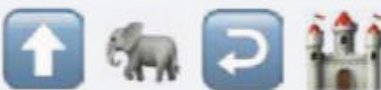
3 **Last of the Summer Wine**



4 **Doctor in the House**



5 **Up the Elephant and Round the Castle**



6 **Drop the Dead Donkey**



**WINNER!**

Well done to **Steve Westall** who wins a Web User Back Issues Disc



**WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE**

**Internet Explorer**





never noticed this himself!

*Richard Bools, via email*

## Rokit's 3D phone rocked my world

A couple of issues ago, you ran a short piece about the Rokit IO Pro 3D mobile phone (First Look, Issue 472) and being an absolute '3D nut' I immediately ordered one (even though I really had no need for a new phone).

Well, I can tell you that I've found it to be excellent, with a 3D screen that works well without glasses (a la Fuji Real 3D cameras) and offers some of the best stereo definition I've seen. What's more,

the Rokit phone is fast and lets you shoot in both 2D and 3D

from its cameras – two on the front and one on the rear. The included 3D videos are also exemplary, with none of that forced 'poke you in the eye' stuff you sometimes

see. My son, who

is an aviator, was most impressed with one featuring aircraft.

The only real drawback is the lack of an instruction manual, but the Rokit team is quick to answer emails in a friendly manner. It's pretty good as a mobile and the battery seems to last a fair amount of time. I hope you review this product at some point.

*Tony Shapps, via email*

## Keep telling us about Windows updates

Although I sympathise with Jim Darroch, who has yet to receive the Windows 10 October Update ('Stop telling us about Windows 10 updates', Inbox, Issue 474), it would be pretty strange for *Web User* to ignore them. Lots of readers, including myself, want to know what the latest version's new features are, even if we haven't got them yet. Hopefully Microsoft will be able to release the next update on time, and without installation problems, to assuage such complaints.

*Nigel Batts, via email*

## What you say...

### ARE YOU TEMPTED BY VIRGIN MEDIA'S NEW 500Mbps BROADBAND PLAN ([bit.ly/virgin475](http://bit.ly/virgin475))?

I would be if I needed that much speed. To be fair, I'd be tempted by any of Virgin Media's offerings if they were available where I live. I used Virgin in my last two houses and the speed was always reliable. I'm on Openreach now, and its speed varies a lot. I've never once seen a speed test hit the values I'm paying for.

*Lee Dodgson*

The fastest speed I can get is 3Mbps on a BT fibre line. Virgin Media will never come to my area, even though I'm only 20 minutes from Chelmsford, which is 50 minutes from London.

*Greg Holmes*

No, I'm not tempted. Virgin Media will only throttle the bandwidth at peak times anyway. Their customer service is a joke, too, and considering how much they ramp up the price after the initial 12-month contract (without telling you until the bill arrives) it really makes the whole package not worth it. I'd never go back to them, no matter what they offered.

*Ian Maddock*

I don't need 500Mbps. It would be like buying a Ferrari just to do the school run.

*Sean Flanagan*

I've been a TalkTalk customer for many years. I'm happy with my 74Mbps, which is perfectly adequate for my internet needs.

*Brian Brown*

No. Virgin Media can't even make its 200Mbps fibre broadband work properly yet.

*Ian Wish*

### MICROSOFT HAS DECIDED NOT TO DITCH PAINT. WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE IMAGE-EDITING TOOLS?

Paint is quick and easy to use for day-to-day editing. For sophisticated tasks, I use Serif PhotoPlus – it's just as good as Photoshop but cheaper!

*Nat Grove*

IrfanView ([www.irfanview.com](http://www.irfanview.com)) and GIMP ([www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org)).

*Ian Wolstencroft*

Paint is my go-to software for taking screen grabs of things I've ordered, which I keep for a few months. For photos, I use Corel or GIMP.

*Dean Stockton*

I use Paint.net ([www.getpaint.net](http://www.getpaint.net)). It's a more advanced version of Paint with lots more features and plug-ins.

*Stephen Post*

Faststone ([www.faststone.org](http://www.faststone.org)) is a brilliant free program. A friend sent me a photo that needed a major repair, and it did a great job.

*Geoffrey Boow*

### DO FACEBOOK PRIVACY BREACHES STILL WORRY (OR SURPRISE) YOU?

If people were worried, you'd think they'd vote with their feet. Then again, would some people be able to live without Facebook?

*Phil Ówen*

Nothing surprises me about Facebook any more. I'd actually be surprised if a few months went by without a breach.

*Gary Shields*

Facebook users must have realised by now that any personal data they give the site is unlikely to remain private.

*Mark Chatham*

Privacy breaches are so common now that they don't worry me. I change my passwords regularly anyway, so hackers won't get hold of my data.

*Anne Brigstocke*



# ! Page 404



We're far too careless with our own personal data, says Barry Collins

## The biggest threat to your privacy is YOU

It turns out that some poor schlub earning \$5 an hour in an Amazon compound *might* have heard me tell Alexa to switch off my heating at some point in the past couple of years. And I'm supposed to be furious about this.

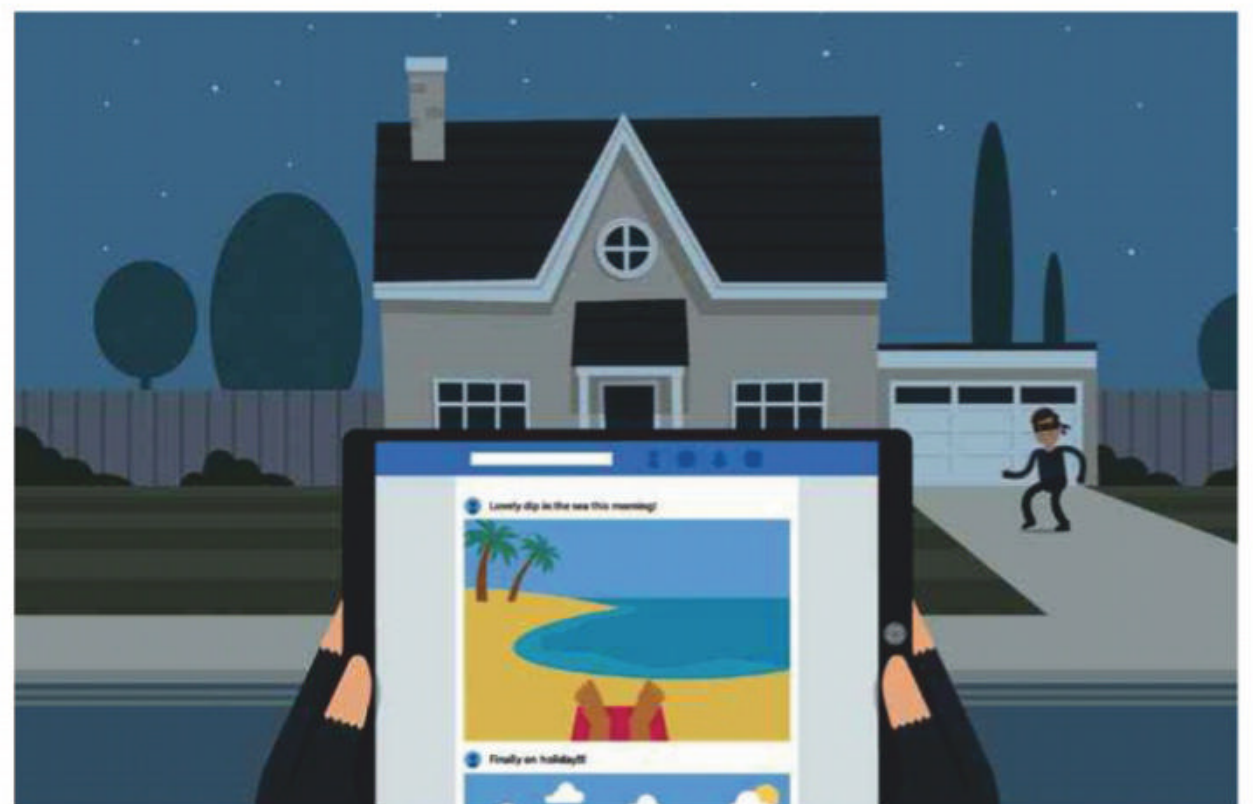
As you can tell, I'm not my usual bubbling cauldron of bile this issue. It seems that voice-assistant algorithms aren't quite as clever as we'd thought, so to help Amazon's AI understand exactly what we're saying when we bark at Alexa to play songs by Kajagoogoo, the company has enlisted human help. A few thousand people listen to recorded voice snippets and tell the computer what you intended to say.

The voice recordings are anonymised and, of course, there's a ludicrously tiny chance that your voice command will be plucked from the pool of billions to be sampled by human ears, but when have the facts ever got in the way of a good story? "Amazon reportedly employs thousands of people to listen to your Alexa conversations," read the headline from CNN's Business website. Jolly good. It's a bigger audience than most of my podcasts get.

Let's face it. A student in Costa Rica listening to Alexa recordings isn't the biggest threat to your privacy. Nor is Facebook, Google or any other of the big firms that have committed far more serious privacy infringements over the years. The biggest threat to your privacy is almost certainly you.

In the past fortnight alone, I've witnessed people flagrantly abusing their own privacy on several occasions.

“A bloke on a packed London train dictated his 16-digit credit card number to the entire carriage”



Take the bloke on the packed train to London who was clearly ordering something on his mobile, and sat there with his phone trapped between chin and shoulder as he loudly dictated his name, address and 16-digit credit card number to the entire carriage. And no, mate, whispering your three-digit

security code into the phone doesn't make that a secure transaction.

Then there's the friend of a friend who wanted to show the world how appalling her

10-year-old passport photo looked. But instead of just snapping the photo or cropping the image, she posted the entire photo page of her passport on Twitter. You know, the one with her full name, date of birth, signature and passport number emblazoned across it. No wonder stolen details sell for pennies

on the black market – people are literally giving this stuff away.

And let's not forget the numerous friends (possibly former friends when they read this) and acquaintances who showed off their Easter holiday snaps on their public Instagram and Facebook pages, some of which revealed tasty snippets of information such as "last meal before we fly home tomorrow". I fully expect their next Insta update to show pictures of their house after it's been burgled, complete with the caption: "why us?".

It's perfectly valid to get angry when the big firms play fast and loose with your personal data. But I'd place a handsome bet that the vast majority of those who flamed Amazon for breaching their privacy have done something far worse to compromise their own security.

The moral of the story is to look after your own private data, because nobody else is going to do it for you.



**WebUser**

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OFFER**  
FOR MORE INFO SEE PAGE 62

# ENJOYED THIS ISSUE?

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**T**hank you for reading this issue of *Web User* – we hope you found the tips and advice useful. The good news is that you don't have to wait too long for the next issue. If you subscribe to *Web User* by **Friday 17 May (8pm)\***, you'll receive it through your letterbox before it's available in the shops!

### What's inside the next issue:

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