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USB STICK **Carry multiple operating** systems in your pocket p54 21 Aug - 3 Sept 2019 Best software / New apps / Cash back online

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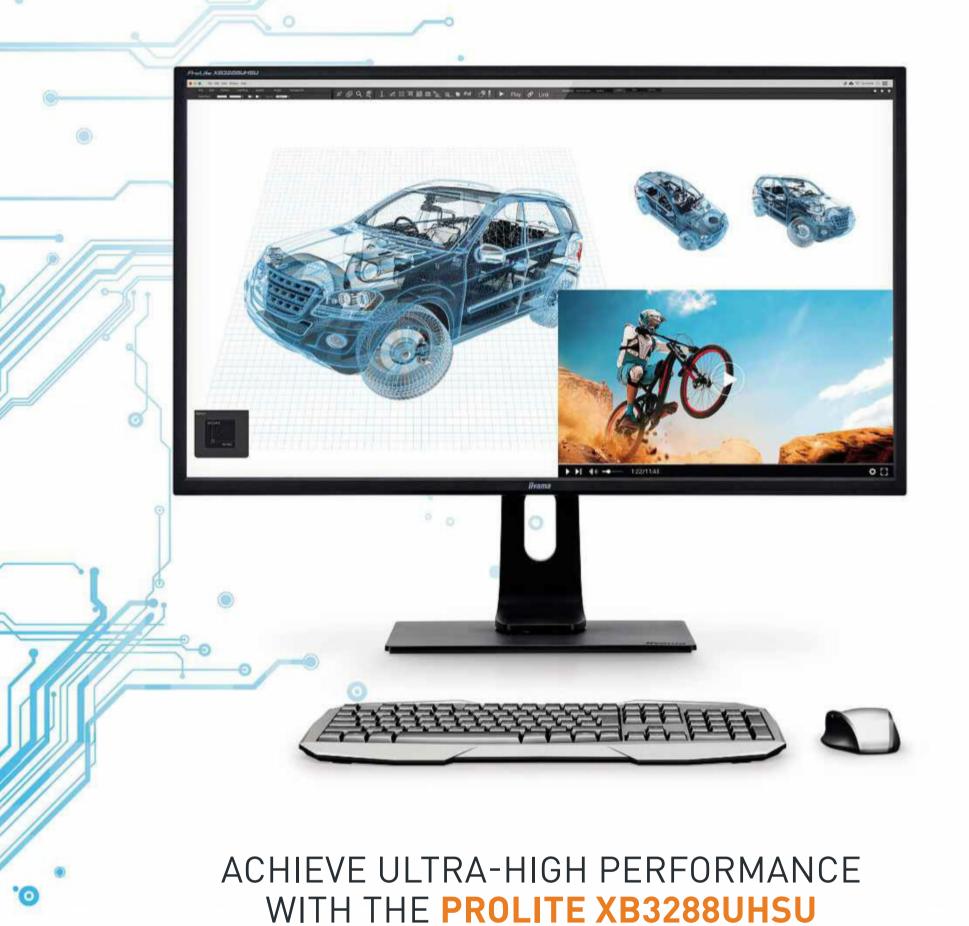
SCAN YOUR WI-FI FOR INTRUDERS

Reclaim stolen speed p50

WHO'S BLOCKING **YOU ON FACEBOOK?**

Uncover secret snubbers p47

Ultimate guide to getting online p58



Grow your workspace with the 32" ProLite XB3288UHSU offering pin-sharp images displayed in 4K with vivid lifelike colours without lag and motion blur.

Combine and watch images from different sources at the same time thanks to the Picture in Picture (PiP) mode support, suitable for graphic designers and engineers.















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Open-source of constant delight

side from a non-Microsoft web browser, CCleaner used to be the first program I'd install on a new PC, to prepare for the junk to come. With its simple interface, powerful cleanup tools and sweeping-brush logo, CCleaner was free software that you could trust. How times have changed! Over the past few years, CCleaner has been caught collecting user data, bundling unwanted junk and even spreading malware. So now when people mention CCleaner to me, I say "Ha! Overrated," and with a swish of my cloak I direct them to an open-source alternative.

In this issue's cover feature, we look at the tragic tale of CCleaner and other programs that are past their prime, and recommend the best open-source equivalents. The tools we've picked are not only free to download, but free from corporate constraints, hidden security flaws and nags to upgrade to paid-for versions. We also explain what 'open source' means and why even Microsoft has surrendered to its charms.

Robert Irvine, Editor editor@webuser.co.uk #webuser





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Don't trust the FB eye, warns Barry



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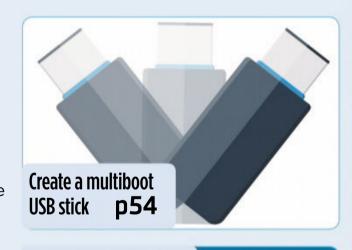
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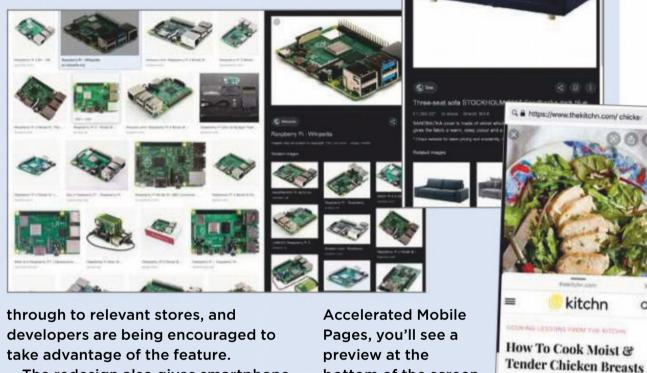


What's New Online

Find and compare images faster in Google

oogle has redesigned the desktop version of its image search, making it easier to find relevant pictures and view information about them. Now when you search for an image and click a result, it appears in a separate panel on the right-hand side of the page and remains there while you continue scrolling. Google says this makes it easier to compare images without losing your place.

If the item you are searching for is a product that you can buy, the information below the image preview will include its price, availability and a retailer, along with two lines of description. The search engine also flags up any reviews, and you can share or save the image with a single click. Google's aim is to get us to click



take advantage of the feature.

The redesign also gives smartphone users a new way to visit pages directly from Google Images. Select an image and, as long as the website supports

preview at the bottom of the screen that you can swipe up to load the page.

www.google.co.uk/imghp

Watch a personalised Instagram documentary

bit.ly/insta482

Interactive video storytelling usually involves choosing your own path at key moments, but Instagramification, a new online documentary by the BBC, also takes mood and personal preferences into account.

Powered by BBC R&D's web-based StoryFormer tool, the programme asks you to complete a five-question survey to determine the film's direction. The Beeb says future shows could source information from your past interactions.

As you watch *Instagramification*, you can skip sections which will be a relief if constant talk of "the gram" proves too grating - and discover how your survey answers steer what you see. By viewing, you agree to accept the use of cookies. The BBC says it collects information about how you interact, so it can work on future programmes and understand how much or little filming is needed.



Track your sleep patterns using Google Fit

www.google.com/fit

Google Fit has long been able to track your daily activity using an app on your phone or smartwatch, and now you can use it to monitor how well you're sleeping, too. The latest update lets you connect third-party sleep



Every Time

apps and use their shared information to create charts of your sleep patterns. You can also edit and add to the data, and enjoy the convenience of having it all in one place.

On top of that, iOS users can now get workout-route maps, which were once available only in Fit for Android. These grab data from a Google smartwatch, Apple Watch and other connected apps to track your daily fitness.

Finally, as is customary these days, Google Fit is getting a Dark Mode at last. If you decide to check your fitness and sleep data late at night, you should find the app much easier on your eyes than the previously dazzling white version.

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

Learn the benefits of cycling to work

bit.ly/cycle482

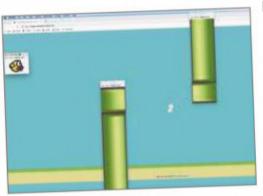
If you need proof that you can shorten your daily commute time by getting on your bike, check out Cycle Republic's beautifully presented Cyculator. Enter your start and end points, and it uses data from Google Maps to compare your journey by bike, car and public transport, before calculating the annual time, cost and health benefits.



Turn Chrome into Flappy Bird

flappy-windows.netlify.com

Flappy Bird is an addictive sidescrolling game from 2013 that just



keeps coming back. We looked at a Battle Royale version in Issue 480, and now this

ingenious new iteration has been getting us in a flap all over again.

Created by Charles Gerard over a weekend, this clever Chrome experiment creates obstacles out of moving browser windows that contain images of pipes. Press the Spacebar, and another window containing the flappy bird rises, challenging you to avoid the obstacles and stop your flappy bird touching the bottom of the screen.

Relive the classic game Diablo

bit.ly/diablo482

Role-playing action game Diablo was



highly acclaimed when it was released for Windows, Mac and PlayStation in 1996. Fast forward 23 years and you can now play it in your browser. You'll need to own the game if you want to enjoy it in all its glory (it costs £7.89 from Gog.com), but you can access the shareware version for free simply by selecting that option from the menu. This gives you a taste by allowing you to play the first two dungeons using the Warrior class. Just be aware that this Diablo retains some of the bugs of the original game.



Amazon listens to voice recordings

from Alexa to improve its service. You can stop this via the website or the Alexa app: go to Settings, Alexa Privacy, Manage How Your Data Improves Alexa and turn this off.

Check Amazon's best-selling books

www.amazon.co.uk/charts

Amazon has started listing its top 20 fiction and nonfiction books. These are separated into two further categories. Most Read highlights popular Kindle and Audible titles, while Most Sold accounts for books sold, pre-ordered or borrowed in paper, ebook or audiobook format. You can read a chapter or two of each entry, hear samples and check customer reviews.



Learn languages via Twitch

www.twitch.tv/duolingo

Duolingo has partnered with streaming platform Twitch to help viewers learn new languages. Verified streamers will encourage others to practise languages in Twitch chat and expose them to foreign lingos in their broadcasts.





Listen to your messages Google Assistant can now read messages from third-party apps such as WhatsApp. With app

notification access switched on, say "Hey Google, read my messages".

Delete your recordings

Apple contractors can no longer listen to your Siri recordings, and you can remove past data. Go to Settings, Siri & Search. Turn off the Ask Siri options, then go to Settings, General, Keyboard and turn off Enable Dictation.

Enjoy a history podcast Historian Dan Snow's popular podcast attracts a million listens every month. Say "open history hit" and you can choose to listen to the latest episode or pick a past one.

Check how your city's

The UK hit record temperatures in July, and the future is likely to be

for a city, then view the projected

temperature rises through to 2100.

even warmer. Use this tool to search

temperature will change

bit.ly/temp482

Intel processors hit by another massive security flaw

What happened?

Yet another vulnerability has been discovered in Intel's processors, following the severe Spectre and Meltdown flaws that hit the hardware maker's products over the past couple of years. Researchers from security firm Bitdefender who discovered the latest flaw have named it the SWAPGS Attack, after the particular instruction it affects (bit.ly/swapgs482). Bitdefender says any computer that uses an Intel chip and runs Windows or Linux could be at risk.

The SWAPGS Attack takes advantage of a system in Intel's processors called speculative execution, which guesses which instructions will come next to help speed up processing. Some of those guesses turn out to be incorrect, in which case the system should set them aside and ignore them. However, in some instances, the predicted instruction actually loads data into the cache, where other processes in the system can read it. If attackers use that system to sneak into a machine, they can access the computer's kernel memory and steal any data that has preloaded in this way, including passwords.

The security flaw was actually discovered more than a year ago, but the researchers passed on their information to the companies affected to give them time to develop patches and roll them out. Microsoft issued its patch in July, so if you have installed that update, your PC is protected.



Bitdefender discovered the SWAPGS flaw, and has worked with Intel to patch it



How will it affect you?

Security researchers discovered this flaw, which is good news because it means the companies were able to fix it before any problems occurred. While we can't know for sure that criminals hadn't also discovered the vulnerability, there's no evidence to suggest that anyone has used it, so it's not something the average user needs to panic over. Indeed, there's little most of us can do about such a hack, because it requires patches developed by the tech industry.

That's what's happened here and gave Microsoft, Intel, Bitdefender and other companies time to work on a solution before details of the flaw were made public. In other words, if you keep your computer up to date and fully patched, you should be protected from this particular flaw.

In many ways, the onus on computer security has shifted from the user to the industry. Processor-level flaws aren't something a home user can address. We still need to be wary of phishing attacks and other scams that trick us into clicking dodgy links or opening malicious downloads, and we still need to keep our systems up to date and run security software, but beyond that there's little most of us can do in the face of such vulnerabilities.

In short, this isn't a flaw you need to do much about, other than - and we'll repeat this again - making sure you

install the latest updates for your operating system and software. If you do that, you'll gain the benefit of the year of work Microsoft, Bitdefender and Intel have put in to protect you against this flaw.

What do we think?

Intel has been hit by one vulnerability after another, but it's hard to know if that's a sign something is amiss at the chipmaker or if it's just the result of researchers paying processors more attention. The former would be very bad news, given how widespread Intel's processors are. The latter is good news for all of us, however, because the efforts of security companies such as Bitdefender keep Intel and other tech giants on their toes, and point out where they slip up.

It's always worth remembering that although flaws like this sound serious, there's little for most people to worry about. There's no evidence that hackers abused the vulnerability, and it would be a difficult thing to do. It's important that we are told about problems like this, but you don't need to worry that you're no longer safe online. The real threats for most web users are the simple attacks, such as phishing, that pay off quickly and with less effort and skill than would be required to exploit this flaw. The headlines may sound scary, but the real threat lies elsewhere.

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

Apple cracks down on DIY battery repairs

What happened?

Apple is locking iPhones to stop people repairing their devices themselves. That's according to repair specialists at iFixit (bit.ly/ ifixit482), who discovered that installing a new battery - whether it's an official Apple part or a third-party product triggers a message saying that the battery needs to be serviced. This means you have to take the phone to an Apple store to be fixed.

According to iFixit, when you replace an iPhone's battery, the Battery Health section of the iPhone's software shows an "important battery message", saying that the



device can't verify it, and refuses to show other battery health information.

How will it affect you?

This problem seems to affect only newer iPhones, including the XR, XS and XS Max. If you see this message after replacing a battery, it doesn't necessarily mean the battery is flawed or won't work, but you won't benefit

from the "battery health" information that's available to other iPhone users.

Apple iPhones are notoriously difficult to fix at home, thanks in part to the amount of glue that holds the super-thin smartphones together. It's not impossible, though, and anyone who has the confidence to crack open a gadget should be allowed to do the work themselves.

What do we think?

Phones last much longer than their batteries, which have a lifespan of around two years. Sometimes you'll get longer from a battery, sometimes less, but replacing the battery is an excellent way to keep your phone going without having to shell out for a replacement. You may remember that batteries were easy to replace in the early days of smartphones. You simply removed the back panel - a process that was designed to be simple. This should be the case now, too, and we should have the right to repair our devices in any way we see fit. It's a pity that Apple doesn't appear to agree.

Huawei unveils its alternative to Android

What happened?

Chinese phone
manufacturer Huawei
revealed that it has been
working on its own
operating system, after
Google suspended its
licence earlier this year.
Google's move followed
a US government ban
prohibiting American
companies from doing
business with specific
Chinese firms, including
Huawei, amid a trade war.

Existing Huawei phones that already have Android installed aren't at risk, but Huawei's next range of handsets will need a new OS. That's why the company has developed its own. Called HarmonyOS, the software is designed to work across phones and

other smart devices, including TVs and wearable technology. Like Android, it will be open-source (see our cover feature on page 40).

How will it affect you?

The CEO of Huawei's consumer arm said HarmonyOS is ready to use now, but it's expected to be released in handsets at the end of this year. The company has already demonstrated the software running on a smart TV.

The move allows Huawei to continue making phones despite the trade ban, but it's hard to know whether this will rescue the Chinese smartphone maker outside its own home market. Plenty of mobile operating systems have come and gone before,

including
Microsoft's
Windows
Phone, Firefox
OS, WebOS and
BlackBerry.

Huawei has long described HarmonyOS as a "plan B" that it would turn to only if Android was no longer an option. This

suggests that the company will continue to negotiate with US authorities.

What do we think?

Making an operating system isn't easy, and plenty of firms have failed. We'll have to wait to see HarmonyOS in action on a smartphone before we can pass judgement, but the



trade war chaos around the company makes its devices a tough sell, especially when there are so many other options. It may seem odd to make a smartphone buying decision based on US politics, but that's 2019 for you. Look out for an FAQ on HarmonyOS in our next issue.



WhatsApp flaw "puts words in your mouth"

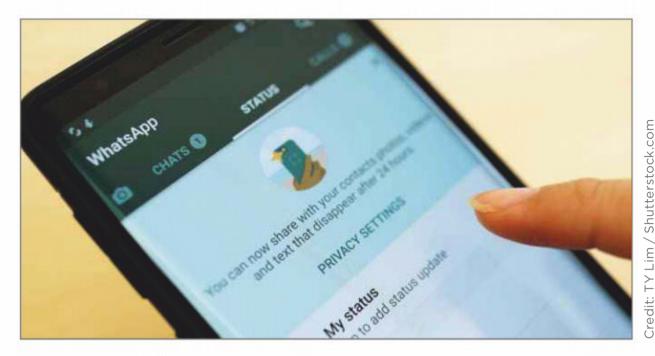
What happened?

A flaw has come to light in WhatsApp that lets hackers fake conversations on your phone. Researchers demonstrated a tool that exploits the flaw at the Black Hat conference in Las Vegas, where experts and businesses gather to discuss trends in cybersecurity. Created by security company Check Point (bit.ly/checkpoint482), the tool exploits WhatsApp's quote feature, which lets users forward someone else's message and add their own comments. Using the tool, hackers can alter the original text.

Oded Vanunu, one of the researchers behind the tool, said: "It's a vulnerability that allows a malicious user to create fake news and create fraud. You can completely change what someone says. You can completely manipulate every character in the quote."

The firm revealed two more problems with the Facebook-owned messaging app. Hackers can potentially change how users are identified, allowing them to misattribute sources, while the third flaw tricks users into thinking group messages are private messages. Facebook claims to have fixed this problem, but the other vulnerabilities remain due to WhatsApp's "infrastructure limitations".

Check Point has defended its decision to create the tool. Vanunu stated it was the company's "responsibility" to reveal



vulnerabilities. He added: "There is a big problem with fake news and manipulation. It's infrastructure that serves more than 1.5 billion users. We cannot put it aside and say: 'Okay, this is not happening'."

How will it affect you?

The fact that the world's most popular messaging app is riddled with bugs is concerning, but the forwarding flaw shouldn't affect you directly - as long as Check Point's tool isn't leaked online.

However, now that Check Point has brought the vulnerabilities to light, they will be on every hacker's radar. That makes it more likely that someone else will create their own exploits. Given the

......

nature of the tool, it appears that potential hackers would have to exchange messages with users - so a simple fix for now is to avoid messages from unknown numbers.

What do we think?

Perhaps it's no surprise in the age of the deep fake that you can now create false messages to lie to or confuse users. What is surprising is that this is possible on a hugely popular app with end-toend encryption. WhatsApp users have a right to expect security. If Facebook can't fix the problem, it has a duty to inform everyone about the vulnerability and offer support. This is a case where it pays to be vigilant.

FIRST LOOK

Samsung Galaxy Note 10 Plus

bit.ly/note482

Samsung has just unveiled its latest smartphone, the Galaxy Note 10 Plus, and it could be the company's best handset yet.

The phone's most obvious feature is that it's massive. It's easily Samsung's biggest smartphone to date, which is either a selling point or a problem. The screen is a near-unmanageable 6.8in, and we're not sure anyone has pockets big enough for it. If you think that seems like overkill, you may be better off with the Galaxy Note 10, which has a mere 6.3in screen.

Despite its size, the phone is pleasingly light and slim: the Note 10 Plus weighs 196g and measures 77 X 162 X 7.9mm. Like its closest

competitor, the new iPhone, Samsung's otherwise stainless-steel device has a delicate glass back - so be careful not to drop it.

Inside, the handset packs the powerful new Exynos 9825 processor and a generous 12GB of RAM, ensuring that

apps and games open instantly. So far, Samsung has confirmed 256GB and 512GB versions, but the latter won't be available in the UK at launch. However, the 256GB model, which also features wireless charging, has more than enough internal storage for most users, and it even supports microSD cards up to 1TB. For those who want access to the fastest mobile data networks, a 5G version is on its way.



As usual with Samsung phones, the Galaxy Note 10 Plus has a host of interesting features for photographers, such as the built-in image stabiliser, live video effects

and five different cameras with multiple lenses. You'll also find a video editor that supports the S Pen accessory, which lets you 'draw' and 'write' on the screen or control certain apps at the click of a button.

The Galaxy Note 10 Plus is available in black, white and a blue-to-white shade called 'aqua glow'. Prices start at £999, so it's very much a big phone with a big price.





WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Google Play introducing a subscription?

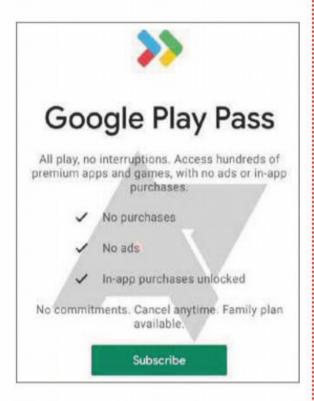
Google Play is the latest in a long line of online services that's rumoured to be introducing a subscription. The company confirmed it has been secretly testing the option for the Play store, and refused to rule out a full launch.

Ever since Netflix went mainstream, every company in the world seems to be chasing those lucrative subscriptions. From video games to razor blades, no business is above trying to charge you a monthly fee for products you'd usually buy outright. Not content with earning megabucks flogging data about you to advertisers, it seems even Google wants a slice of that subscription pie.

The idea behind the service, dubbed Play Pass, is to charge mobile users a flat fee to download select games and apps from the Play Store. A real selling point, though, is that Google won't bombard subscribers with ads or in-app purchases. The move seems to be an attempt to rival Apple's identical service Apple Arcade, which is due to launch soon.

Leaked screenshots suggest that Google wants to charge \$4.99 (around £4) per month. That's not unreasonable, although given that this is a trial, the price may sky-rocket if the service ever rolls out to all Android users.

As with Xbox's Games Pass, subscribers won't own the games. This is a digital rental service, with an option to pay for the game if you want to own it. Expect paid-for games and apps to



rotate in and out of the catalogue, to encourage those extra payments.

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LIKELIHOOD RATING 11111

We're confident that Google is planning to launch a Play store subscription service, even if the company won't quite admit it yet. After all, every other major tech business is doing something similar, including Google's main smartphone competitor Apple, so it makes sense for the search giant to join the club and rake in a little extra cash.

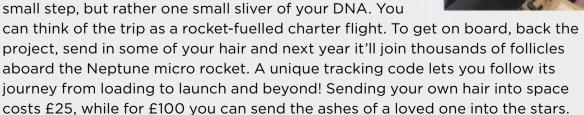
What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Neptune 1

bit.ly/space482 | From £25

50 years after man first set foot on the Moon, you can now go into space yourself. Unfortunately, it's not quite one small step, but rather one small sliver of your DNA. You





WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Google Maps adds AR-directions option

Google Maps has added an augmented-reality feature called Live View to its Android and iOS apps. This uses your phone's camera to superimpose arrows and other navigation details over live images of the real world to help you find your way around.

Discord introduces live game streaming

The popular gamingchat service Discord is taking on Twitch with a new feature called Go Live, which lets users stream live videos of their gameplay to up to 10 people at a time. See our FAQ on page 38 for more about Discord.

WE DON'T LIKE...

Microsoft workers listen to Skype calls

Contractors working for Microsoft are reportedly listening to personal Skype calls made using the app's translation function. These workers also review recordings of voice commands made to Microsoft's voice assistant Cortana.



Anyone can buy knives on Facebook Marketplace without age verification, even though the law requires buyers to be over 18. The



Guardian was able to purchase four sets of knives through the service without any age checks.

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 Nvidia graphics cards

Five dangerous vulnerabilities, including one that could allow an attacker to execute malicious code locally, have been discovered in a host of Nvidia graphics cards.

Anyone who has an Nvidia GeForce, Quadro or Tesla graphics processing unit (GPU) in their PC is urged to update their drivers immediately, after the company published details of the recently discovered flaws.

The most severe vulnerability involves a flaw in a component of the Windows GPU Display Driver software. If exploited, it could allow an attacker to install malware on a victim's machine. Two other flaws affect DirectX drivers and would also let a hacker execute malicious code or launch a denial-of-service attack.

Although the vulnerabilities are rated 'highly severe', an attacker



would need physical access to a device, so they're less likely to be a problem than flaws that can be exploited remotely.

Security patches that fix the flaws are available through Nvidia's Support site (bit.ly/patches482) and may also be rolled out by GPU hardware makers. bit.ly/nvidia482

Google finds vulnerability in Apple's iMessage app

Security researchers are urging iPhone users to update their devices immediately after vulnerabilities were discovered in Apple's iMessage messaging app.



Google's bug-hunting Project Zero team found five flaws in iMessage that could leave iOS devices open to attack. The researchers said one of the vulnerabilities was so severe that the only way to rescue a targeted iPhone would be to delete all the data stored on the device. Another flaw could be used to copy files from an iPhone without the owner's permission.

Apple released fixes for the vulnerabilities after Project Zero reported its findings, but the researchers said they also flagged a sixth problem to Apple, which hadn't been patched at the time of writing.

Apple hasn't commented on the specific iMessage flaws, but the company urges users to install the new version of iOS. "Keeping your software up to date is one of the most important things you can do to maintain your Apple product's security," it said in a statement.

bit.ly/imessage482

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Alexander Eremin, security researcher at Kaspersky (www.kaspersky.co.uk)



How worried should we be about passwordstealing malware? Matt Jenkins, Twitter

According to Kaspersky's data, the number of users targeted by password thieves rose from less than 600,000 in the first half of 2018 to over

940,000 during the same period of 2019.

Password Stealing Ware (PSW) is a major weapon in the cybercriminals' toolkit. This type of malicious software uses various methods to grab data from vour web browser. Often this information is sensitive and includes access details for online accounts, as well as financial information such as saved passwords, autofill data and bank card details.

Some versions of this type of malware are designed to steal browser cookies, files from specific locations, such as your desktop, and files from apps, including messenger services.

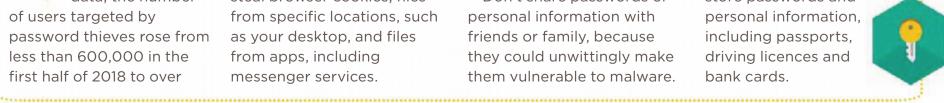
Password Stealing Ware (PSW) uses various methods to grab data from your web browser

Because we use the internet to perform so many everyday tasks, our digital profiles are filling with data. This makes them lucrative targets for criminals, who have various ways of making money from them.

Kaspersky offers the following advice to ensure your passwords and other credentials remain secure:

 Don't share passwords or personal information with friends or family, because they could unwittingly make them vulnerable to malware. Don't post them on forums or social media channels either.

- Always install updates and product patches to ensure you're protected from the latest threats.
- Use a reliable security tool such as Kaspersky Password Manager (bit.ly/ kaspersky482), which is designed to securely store passwords and personal information, including passports, driving licences and bank cards.





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Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

RELAUNCH

Johnny Cash

www.johnnycash.com

This revamp of the official site for legendary singer-songwriter Johnny Cash walks the line of true excellence in its celebration of the Man in Black. Whether you want to browse streams of his songs (via Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon, Deezer or Tidal, all arranged into handy tabs) or simply meander through his vast and varied discography, you'll find it all here. The site includes a complete tour history of 4,300 dates many including set lists - as well as videos, books, movie cameos and awards. There's also lots of news and photos, an invitation to submit images and a packed merchandise store.

Our rating





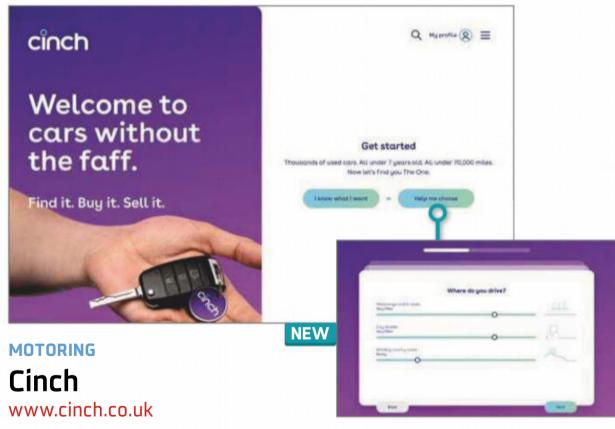
MUSIC Flick through every album recorded by Cash, read lyrics and save tracks on streaming services

JOHNNY CASH



BIOGRAPHY Select the Timeline to see Cash's milestones, divided into eras, and browse photos

ME TO JOHNN



Would you buy a used car from this website? Cinch, a new marketplace for car dealers and supermarkets, hopes so. It claims to sell motors "without the faff" by helping you find a car that suits your needs. Click "Help me choose" and Cinch asks questions about your budget, the age and size of the drivers and passengers, the types of road you drive on and the distances you travel, as well as your preferences. It then shows you recommendations and lets you click to see the available models, filtering by location and spec. There's a handy jargon buster, too, and you can even sell your own car, but this is through Webuyanycar.com, so don't expect a top price.

Our rating





EVENTS

The Ticket Factory

www.theticketfactory.com

The Ticket Factory is the official box office for Birmingham's Resort World Arena and Arena Birmingham, but it also caters for other venues across the UK. This clean redesign of its once-cluttered website offers a much better showcase for forthcoming events, so you're more likely to find something of interest. It has special sections for highlights, hot tickets and staff picks, and we like the way it shows service, admin and postage fees beside the ticket price. Selecting dates and times is quick and easy. You can choose your seats on an interactive map, and the checkout is lightning fast.



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





MOVIES AND TV **Every film** television appearance is listed and described, and visitors can leave comments

VIDEOS

Watch music videos, live performances, tributes and Cash's reading of the New **Testament**





HISTORY

NEW

FAMILY

NEW

WILDLIFE

Institute of Historical Research

www.history.ac.uk

By consigning its old website to the past, the UK's national centre for history is moving with the times. It now looks far less stuffy thanks to its use of bold images and a mobile-friendly design that eschews tiny news headlines crammed into small boxes in favour of fleshed out explanations of projects and resources (such as the crowd-sourced mapping project, Layers of London). There's much for history buffs to delve into, from a list of upcoming seminars and publications to a search facility for the institute's library and links to online material.

Our rating



Bundely

www.bundely.com

Any parent will tell you that children take up a lot of time. Indeed, as the two mothers behind this new site believe, flogging kids' items on existing selling sites can be too much hassle. Instead, they hope parents will sell and buy entire lots of children's clothes, shoes, toys and more in targeted bundles through free listings (with payments for featured ads). Buyers can search by category or keyword and filter the results, but sellers have to arrange a meeting because sales are made in person on a cash-only basis. This limits you to your local area and may ultimately prove more time-consuming.

Our rating



Birds and Debris

www.birdsanddebris.com

Rubbish has long been recognised as a major threat to birds, because our feathered friends can become entangled in debris such as plastics. The University of the Highlands and Islands is examining the scale of the problem by asking members of the public to upload photos of troubled birds or nests full of rubbish and place them on an interactive map. The hope is that it will highlight hotspots so that future monitoring can be better targeted. You can view images that others have uploaded and read details of recently reported problems, browsing entries by country, species and date.





Best New Websites



RELAUNCH

FOOTBALL

Leyton Orient

www.leytonorient.com

Leyton Orient secured promotion to the English Football League in May after two seasons outside, but rather than follow 58 other clubs in allowing EFL Digital to operate its website, it's kicking on alone. The result is pretty good. It immediately presents you with the latest news, and you're just a short scroll away from the recent results and upcoming fixtures. Games are accompanied by stats and a match report, and there are interviews and an abundance of club info to get stuck into. Of particular note is the live and on-demand video platform, Orient TV, which will contain free highlights and full match replays for registered users.

Our rating





PETS

Our Family Dog

ourfamilydog.co.uk

The life of a pet parent can be "ruff", so if you're a first-time dog owner, you might like to "paw-se" at this new hub for a while. As well as advice on getting a dog - whether you're buying or adopting - it tells you about the different stages of a puppy's development, settling a pooch into your home and the basics of dog training. Most of the advice is text based, with copious links to other sections and suggestions for relevant websites to check out. Our favourite section, Stories, contains cute reports of doggy derringdo, tips and shared experiences. The fledgling forum is also nice to see, but it needs to collar more members.

Our rating





HEALTH

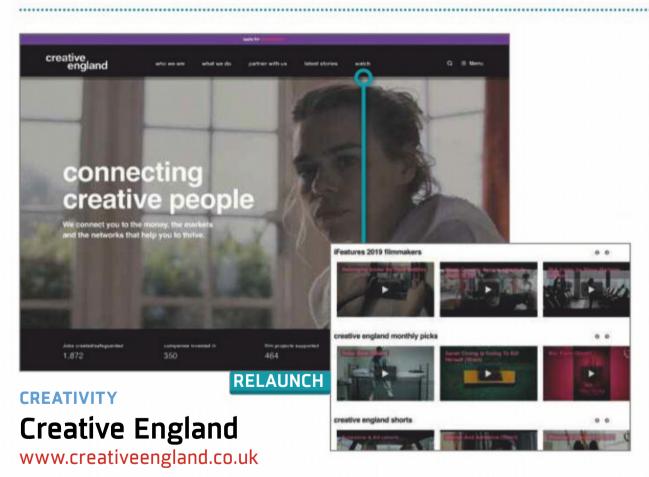
Coeliac UK

www.coeliac.org.uk

Whether you suffer from coeliac disease or have some other type of gluten intolerance, you'll find plenty of support and guidance here. The site offers 1,077 gluten-free recipes which, thanks to its responsive design, look great on mobile phones and tablets. There's also clear guidance on seasonal ingredients, chocolate and other food and drink, although these could be better promoted on the homepage and perhaps given their own link. However, the site's main aim is to raise awareness of the illness and serve news, information and support. To that end, the FAQs are comprehensive and the details on diagnosis enlightening.

Our rating





This not-for-profit organisation supports England's creative industries, from TV and film production to video games and digital media. You might therefore expect its new website to ooze innovation but, disappointingly, it's perhaps a little too conventional for our liking. That's not to say it doesn't look great. From the moment its fast-cut opening video started, it held our attention. The site certainly succeeds in promoting its activities and initiatives, with lots of information, stories and a series of video shorts that give storytellers a voice and showcase their work. The latter section is the one that interested us most, highlighting England's great depth of creative talent.

Our rating





HERITAGE

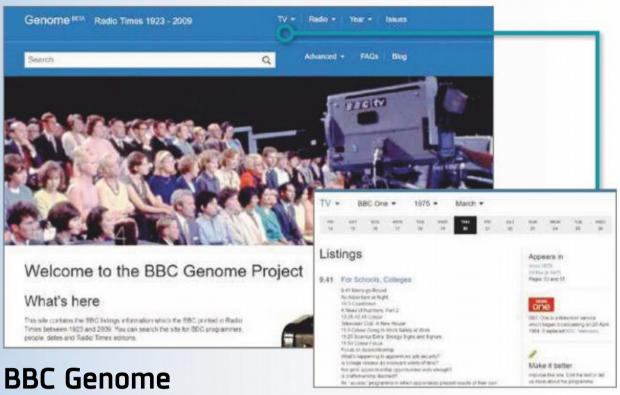
Malta Heritage

heritagemalta.org

The beautiful Mediterranean island of Malta has a rich cultural heritage stretching back thousands of years, but if you can't jet over and explore it yourself, this site aims to give you a virtual tour. Its main attraction is an abundance of content, with a page for each museum and 360-degree views inside many of the buildings, as well as a huge selection of photos, detailed descriptions and videos. Its biggest problem, however, is its frustrating loading times. Pages took far too long to appear, and we were close to giving up. It also suffers from formatting issues.



ESSENTIAL BOOKMARKS THIS ISSUE: Terrific television sites



genome.ch.bbc.co.uk

What was on BBC One on the day you were born? In this writer's case, we can tell you that it was Top of the Pops (hosted by Tony Blackburn) followed by Are You Being Served?, while over on BBC Two later you could laugh at Dave Allen at Large. Those are just some of the fun facts you can discover at the amazing Genome archive, which provides BBC listings information from the Radio Times for the years 1923 to 2009. You can search the site for specific programmes, people and dates, or just browse by month and year, to discover what was broadcast across all BBC TV and radio stations. Genome is an invaluable tool for researchers and telly addicts alike, and users can edit entries to add missing details.



Frinkiac

frinkiac.com

The Simpsons may be long past its prime as a TV show, but it's possibly the most popular source of GIFs and memes on the web, and most of them now come from Frinkiac. This ingenious site has captured three million screenshots, complete with subtitles, from the first 17 seasons of the animated series (it's about to start its 31st). This means you can search for words that were spoken during an episode, then recreate a favourite scene or quote by clicking Make Meme or Make GIF, and selecting the relevant pictures. You can then share or save the result. Frinkiac also offers a Random option for instant Simpsons fun.



JustWatch

www.justwatch.com/uk

One downside of having such a wide

choice of viewing these days is that it

can be hard to tell which films and TV programmes are available on which streaming services. To save yourself endlessly channel hopping, head to JustWatch, which lets you search for TV series and films to rent, buy and watch for free across all the major on-demand and catchup services. The website covers more than 30 providers including Netflix, Now TV, Prime Video, iPlayer, All 4, Sky Go and UK TVPlay, and lets you search by title, actor and release date. You can create a watchlist of shows you'd like to view later and

use JustWatch's Android and iOS apps

to set up price-drop alerts for specific

rentals and purchases.

You probably know that 'jumping the shark' refers to the point where a television series goes downhill, but what about 'yanking the dog's chain' (which is when a character suffers unrelenting misery) or 'lampshading' (when writers draw attention to a silly plot development). These and thousands of other televisual conventions are catalogued in merciless detail by TVTropes, a sprawling wiki that analyses TV shows (as well as films, books, games and more) to identify common plot devices and character types. It's much more fun than it sounds, and many tropes - such as EastEnders' frequent use of the 'roaring rampage of revenge' - will have you nodding your head in recognition.



TV Cream

bit.ly/tvcream482

TV Cream has been a Web User favourite since the early days of the magazine, and for the past two years it's been running a fascinating weekly series on the history of Saturday night television in the UK (revised and updated from a previously published version). This impeccably researched, 100-part piece traces the behind-the-scenes development of weekend telly from the 1960s to the 1990s (and counting), covering such popular shows as The Generation Game, Game For A Laugh and Blind Date, as well as *The A-Team*, *Robin of* Sherwood and Baywatch. Perfect for a trip down memory lane.



TVTropes

tvtropes.org

Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

HTML

HANDBOOK

HTHL.

Improve your HTML skills

Many readers of Build a Better Site will be familiar with Hypertext Markup

Language (HTML - the basic building blocks of every web page), but those who aren't may find the

prospect of learning it rather daunting. Flavio Copes (flaviocopes.com) has written a free handbook on the topic that's easy to read, accessible and very informative. You usually have to sign up for his newsletter (which is free at bit.ly/fcnews482) to get it, but FreeCodeCamp (www.freecodecamp.org) has published it without the need to sign up at bit.ly/htmlhb482.

See WordPress stats more easily on your phone

Much of the joy of having a website comes from finding out

> who visits it, where they're from and which pages they look at. A recent update for WordPress users has significantly improved the stats tool on the mobile app, so you no longer need to be sitting at your PC to find out how well your site is doing.

Get the WordPress app from the Google Play (bit.ly/wpand482) and Apple (bit.ly/wpapp482) app stores.

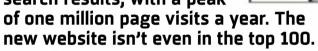
Deal of the Fortnight

Namecheap (www.namecheap.com) is offering 50% off all its annual hosting packages, bringing the basic Stella package down to £1.26 per month.

Web-building Helpdesk

I created a website using Wix (www.warpoetry.uk)

to replace another (www.warpoetry.co.uk) that was destroyed by hackers. For 10 years my original site was number one in search results, with a peak



David Roberts, Hurstpierpoint

The War Poetry Website

As you've discovered the hard way, changing your URL and switching site-building techniques is fraught with danger. All the respect your old site gained from Google has been reset to zero. There are ways to minimise the impact of this, but most of them involve replacing domains and web pages gradually. If you still have a backup of your old site, we'd advise you to reinstate it, then carefully follow the guidelines at bit.ly/goourl482 and bit.ly/mozurl482.

Andy Shaw, Technical & Reviews Editor



MINI WORKSHOP | Add column layouts to Wix websites Wix: www.wix.com | 10 mins | A Wix website

Many websites use an attractive column layout that breaks up the page and converts neatly when viewed on a smartphone. Here's how to recreate it on a Wix website



Open your website in the Wix Editor and scroll to the position where you want the new columns to appear. Click Add, 1 Strip, 2 and choose the style of strip you'd like to insert. **1** Don't worry if it doesn't have the right number of columns or sections, because we can change that in the next step. Just choose a design you like.



Once you've inserted the strip, click 🧲 Manage Columns. 💶 This lets you choose how many columns you want and arrange them in order. Now click the Layouts button. 2 Depending on the style of strip you've chosen, you may be able to space out your columns as you like, and even change how much of the page each column takes up. 🚨



Now you can start editing the content. Double-click the various elements in each column to change the text and replace images. • A contextsensitive control panel appears 2 that lets you change fonts, colours and so on to ensure the new content is in step with the rest of your site.



KEEP A LOW PROFILE. SK630, SK650

The **SK630** and **SK650** Mechanical Keyboards are slim keyboards with all of the signature **Cooler Master** features like on-the-fly controls and RGB backlighting – also adding new Cherry MX Low Profile Switches.

A reduced travel and actuation distance with extra-flat keycaps means that you get all of the precision and durability of a mechanical keyboard. All of this within a minimalistic slim stylish keyboard.

Add in a refined brushed aluminium housing and understated LED ring, and you have a keyboard that looks as good as it performs.





What To Watch Online

Pick of the fortnight





Watch puppet prequel *The* Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance

From 30 August

Netflix takes us back to the planet Thra in this new prequel to Jim Henson's beloved 1982 film, The Dark Crystal. The 10-part fantasy follows three young Gelflings as they fight to save their world.

Like the original, Age of Resistance is a masterpiece of puppetry. "We won't be using CGI," director Louis Leterrier told a relieved Comic-Con audience last year. "It's puppets, man. It's all puppets." Judging by the first teaser (bit.ly/crystal482), it raises puppetry to breathtaking heights, aided by a generous budget.

That budget also buys a knockout cast. Puppets are voiced by rising stars including Taron Egerton and Alicia Vikander, Brit-com royalty (Eddie Izzard and Simon Pegg), Game of Thrones alumni (Lena Headey, Natalie Dormer, Nathalie Emmanuel) and serious A-listers (Mark Hamill, Helena Bonham-Carter, Sigourney Weaver).

The series is designed to appeal to people who haven't seen the film, but you can watch that on Netflix, too (bit.ly/crystalfilm482). The new show's Netflix page (bit.ly/darkcrystal482) has several trailers you can watch without a subscription, including a peek behind the scenes (also on YouTube at bit.ly/crystalpeek482). For daily updates, follow @darkcrystal on Twitter.



Watch fantasy murder mystery *Carnival Row*

From 30 August

Amazon's stunning new eight-part drama Carnival Row is a Victorian-style neo-noir tale of murder, persecution and forbidden love. In the official trailer (bit.ly/carnival482), refugee faerie Vignette Stonemoss (Cara Delevingne) welcomes us to a tense ghetto full of mythological creatures fleeing humans - including Vignette's lover, detective Philo (Orlando Bloom).

Discover more about the star-crossed

pair in their 'Official Prologue' videos, women's football got a massive boost from the recent World Cup, and now you can get your fix all year thanks to a new streaming service from the FA.

which are free to watch on Amazon at bit.ly/carnivalrow482. Stream the full first season from 30 August with a Prime subscription.



Stream the new women's football season for free

From 2 September



The FA Player for web and mobile (bit.ly/fap482) is dedicated entirely to women's football. You'll be able to live-stream more than 150 domestic games across the 2019/20 season, and enjoy on-demand content including match highlights, previews and archive games, including England Lionesses internationals.

It's free, but you'll need to register once the service opens on 2 September. Find out more at bit.ly/faplayer482.



Find out if *Brassic* is the new Shameless

From 22 August

Michelle Keegan and Damien Molony play it for laughs in Sky's new comedydrama Brassic. The six-part show which you can watch online in full from 22 August - certainly has pedigree. Creator and co-star Joe Gilgun cut his teeth on This Is England, and writer





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

Danny Brocklehurst gave us numerous episodes of Shameless. Judging by Brassic's trailer (bit.ly/brassic482), it may well live up to those predecessors.

Watch it online via Sky if you're a subscriber (bit.ly/brassicsky482) or via Now TV with an Entertainment Pass (£7.99 per month, bit.ly/nowent482).



Watch the final seasons of *Power* and *The Affair*

From 26 August

It's final-season time for two long-



running dramas set in New York. Season 6 of *Power* arrives on Netflix on 26 August, winding up the tale of nightclub-owning drug lord James 'Ghost' St Patrick (Omari Hardwick). Watch the latest trailer at bit.ly/ powertrail482.

Down in sunny Long Island, Dominic West is back for

the fifth and final season of The Affair

from 27 August on Now TV. Season 5 skips several years to meet Anna Paquin, who plays the grownup daughter of Ruth Wilson and Joshua Jackson's characters. Watch the trailer at bit.ly/

affairtrail482.



Freeview has finally launched its free Android app, six months after the service arrived on iOS.

Thanks to the new app (bit.ly/freedroid482), Android users can now stream live shows and on-demand content from the streaming services of all the major networks, including BBC iPlayer, ITV Hub, All 4, My5 and UKTV Play.

Like its iOS counterpart (bit.ly/freeios482), the app is free to download and has no subscription fees or in-app purchases. Both apps include a TV guide, search tool and customisable reminders for your favourite shows.

There's no sign-up process, although you need to have the supporting services' apps installed on your device to stream content. You can download these from the new app's 'Start watching' screen (pictured right).



Both shows unfold week by week, which is annoying if you prefer to watch your episodes back to back. You could fill the time rewatching their earlier seasons - all of which are still available on Netflix (bit.ly/power482) and Now

TV (bit.ly/affair482) respectively.

| Watch 13 new episodes of 13 Reasons Why

From 23 August US teen drama 13 Reasons Why made headlines this summer, when Netflix removed a suicide scene from Season 1 (bit.ly/13scene482). The show is still a tough watch, thanks to subject matter such as bullying, rape, self-harm and murder.

The new (and penultimate) Season 3 takes the story further away

.....

from the original novel by Jay Asher (www.thirteenreasonswhy.com), and explores the killing of a student convicted of rape. Watch the latest trailer for free, and catch up with the first two seasons which have 13 episodes each with a Netflix subscription at



in case missed

ITV's big new drama Deep *Water*, starring Anna Friel and written by Anna Symon (Mrs Wilson), hasn't yet reached episode 2 on the



telly - but you can watch all six episodes online now, via ITV Hub. Dip a toe into Deep Water's trailer at bit.ly/water482.

Now TV has stocked up on box sets to help you fill the longer evenings. It now has all five seasons of **Emmy-winning tech startup** comedy Silicon Valley, all eight seasons of New York cop drama Blue Bloods, both seasons of US medical drama The Good Doctor and one season of *Project* Blue Book, starring Aidan Gillen as a 1950s UFO investigator.

Amazon Prime Video has launched several footballrelated shows, perhaps to lure subscribers ahead of its Premier League games. Six-part documentary *This* Is Football is now streaming in ultra-HD 4K at bit.ly/ football4k482, while Peter Crouch's chat show Back of the Net and Amazon Original film Inside Borussia Dortmund are also included with Prime.

Product Test

We test and compare the latest products

Vodafone Smart V10

Andy Shaw tests two new budget smartphones that are impressively powerful for their price

he budget end of the smartphone market is particularly cut-throat, with manufacturers and networks alike trying to get their phones into your pockets. All phones in this price bracket come with compromises, but you have to delve deep to find them on these two new budget models. The first, the Smart V10, is an own-brand model from Vodafone and costs just £105. On the opposite

page is the Realme 3 Pro, the first Android phone from this up-and-coming Chinese manufacturer to arrive here in the UK. The Realme 3 Pro is pricier at £178 but makes an impressive leap in features and performance for the comparatively small jump in price.

Design and screen

Vodafone has pulled out all the stops to make its phone as eye-catching as models that cost far more. It has a

of scuff and shatter resistance, but it also means the display feels smooth and slippery to the touch and is easy to keep clean.

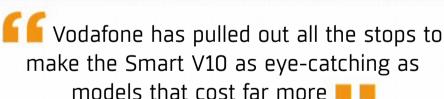
The V10's 5.9in screen dominates around 80% of its front, leaving a chunky area of bezel below the screen and a notch at the top that houses the selfie camera. It's an IPS

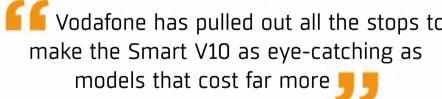
of 562cd/m², which is good enough to see in strong sunlight. It also produces 86% of sRGB colours. The 3 Pro, meanwhile, managed an even more impressive 98% of sRGB colours, although it's not as bright, reaching 465cd/m². Its contrast is better, though, with a ratio of 1,686:1. Both phones have great screens but you get a better, more detailed option if you pay a little more for the 3 Pro.

(8)

Manufacturers of budget phones often make their savings on the internal components, because they're less obvious than a substandard screen. However, Vodafone has squeezed in a relatively speedy 2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 429 processor with an embedded Adreno 504 GPU for graphics processing. This is backed up by 3GB of RAM for multitasking and 32GB of expandable storage.

Realme goes a step further, with a 2.2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 710 processor last seen powering the mid-range Google Pixel 3a and 3a XL. In this phone it's







Vodafone Smart V10

Price: £105 **Buy from Vodafone:** bit.ly/voda482

SPECIFICATIONS

- 32GB of memory, upgrade to 128GB via microSD slot
- 13 megapixels camera
- Android 9.0
- = 151 x 70 x 8.22mm; 5.9in screen
- **= 145g**



glossy plastic chassis and silver-tinted edges, and feels solid in the hand. Realme has also managed to make its phone look more expensive than it is. The patterned rear panel might not be made of glass, for instance, but it still looks great, with subtle lines sweeping from top to bottom that give it a stylish two-tone colour finish. Perhaps more important is the display, which is covered with a layer of Gorilla Glass 5. Not only does this ensure a modicum

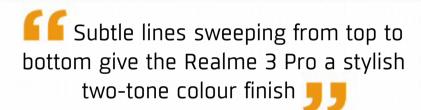
unit with a resolution of 1,560 x 720 pixels, giving it a pixel density of 291 pixels per inch (ppi). However, as you'd expect from a pricier phone, the Realme 3 Pro's screen is larger (6.3in) and has a better resolution (2,340 x 1,080 pixels), giving it a pixel density of 409ppi.

Performance

Tests with our colorimeter showed that the V10 has a good contrast ratio of 1,409:1 and reaches a peak brightness



Realme 3 Pro



paired with a choice of either 4GB or 6GB of memory.

As you'd expect, the V10 was the slower of the two in our benchmark tests, scoring 867 in Geekbench 4's single-processor test and 2,510 in the multi-core test. The Readme, on the other hand, scored 1,441 in the single-core test and a whopping 5,824 in the multi-core test. That's very fast for a phone at this price.

Graphics performance was similarly divided. In the GFXbench GL Manhattan 3 test, the V10 produced 9 frames per second (fps) onscreen and 5fps offscreen. The Realme 3 Pro managed

29fps onscreen and 33fps offscreen. This means the V10 is fine for simple 2D games with standard graphics, while the Realme 3 Pro should cope with all but the very latest and most demanding titles.

Battery life and camera

The Realme 3 Pro has a powerful 4,045mAh battery so you'd expect it to last a long time. In fact, it lasted 15 hours and 34 minutes in our battery run-down test. The performance capabilities of the processor and screen clearly take their toll, because that's only a little longer than the Vodafone model (15 hours and 12 minutes) despite the

.....

cheaper phone's less powerful 3,400mAh battery.

The V10 charges over a micro-USB connection instead of the Realme's USB Type-C port. This limits how quickly the V10 can recharge, while the Realme 3 Pro can go from no charge to 100% in less than 90 minutes.

The camera is often a neglected part of budget smartphones, but that's not the case here. Each phone has two rear cameras. The V10 has a 13-megapixel model coupled with a 5-megapixel depth-sensing lens for better portraits, while the Realme 3 Pro has a 16-megapixel camera with a 5-megapixel depth sensor.



Both cameras take good pictures for their respective prices. The difference between them was more stark when comparing the video cameras - the 3 Pro can handle 4K resolution at 30fps, or 1080p at 60fps, whereas the V10 tops out at 30fps and 1080p.

PRODUCT INFO

Realme 3 Pro

Price: €199 (around £178) for 64GB; €249 (around £223) for 128GB Buy from Realme: bit.ly/real482

SPECIFICATIONS

- 64GB or 128GB of memory, upgrade to 256GB via microSD slot
- 16 megapixels camera
- ColorOS 6.0 based on Android 9.0
- 157 x 74 x 8.3mm; 6.3in screen
- **=** 172g



OUR VERDICT

So which phone should you buy? That depends how much you've got to spend. Anyone with a budget of more than £150 would do well to push the boat out and get the Realme 3 Pro. This aggressive Europewide launch is clearly designed to carve a name for the company with a spectacular phone at a very reasonable price.

Don't despair if you can't afford such luxury, however. As long as you don't mind using Vodafone's pay-as-you-go network, you can pick up the Smart V10 for a very reasonable £105. It may not offer quite enough power to play the same games as phones that cost hundreds of pounds more, but it performs amazingly well for the price.

Amazon Echo Show 5

The Echo Show 5 has all the features of its bigger siblings in a cheaper and more compact package

he Echo Show 5 is the 13th member of Amazon's Echo range. In effect, it's a smaller version of the company's £220 Echo Show 2 (reviewed in Issue 468, bit.ly/webuser468). It offers most of the same features and functions as that speaker and, like any other Echo, lets you control it using your voice.

Amazon has crammed a lot into the Show 5's compact, alarm clock-sized body, including a bright, clear 5.5in touchscreen, a surprisingly powerful speaker, a twin far-field microphone array and a camera for making video calls, which you can

block using a privacy shield - a switch that physically covers and disconnects the camera. The small rectangular screen at the front is angled back slightly, and a fabriccovered wedge at the rear houses the speaker driver and other components. The Show 5's big party trick, however, is its price, which is a barely believable £79.99.

Amazon hasn't done much to improve the repertoire of its onscreen display since the first Echo Show launched two years ago. By now it should be resplendent with information on whatever you've commanded it to do, but it's rather disappointing. It can play video clips and Amazon Prime movies, but it does very little while you're using services that lack video, such as radio streaming.

PRODUCT INFO

Amazon Echo Show 5

Price: £79.99 Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/echo482

SPECIFICATIONS

- MediaTek MT 8163 processor
- 5.5in touchscreen
- 1-megapixel camera with 720p HD video recording and built-in cover
- Dual-band 802.11a/b/g/n/ac Wi-Fi
- Bluetooth
- 148 x 86 x 73 mm
- **=** 410q
- 1-year warranty

FOR

- Great price
- Privacy shield on camera
- ✓ All the features of the Show 2 in a smaller package

AGAINST

Mediocre audio quality X Disappointing microphone sensitivity

Performance

The interface has been updated slightly, however. Swipe left on the touchscreen and a new panel appears with shortcuts to core features -Communicate, Smart Home, Music, Video, Routines and Alarms - as well as a selection of "Discover Alexa" cards to help get you started.

The Echo Show 5 is a compact speaker, which is usually bad news for sound quality. Surprisingly, though, it's pleasant to listen to at medium to low volume levels. Radio voices sound balanced and full-bodied, whether you're listening to the cricket on BBC Radio 5 Live Sports Extra or your favourite podcast, and if you turn up the volume, the Show 5 can fill a medium-sized room with sound.



ff The Show 5's big party trick is its price, which is a barely believable £79.99.

Microphone quality is a mixed bag, however. The Show 5 has a pair of microphones on its top edge, between the mute and volume buttons. With a moderate level of background noise, we found the mics disappointingly unresponsive. While the Show 5 responded reliably to the Alexa wake word at close range (up to a metre-and-a-half away at conversational volume) we had to raise our voices

noticeably when we were two metres away or more.

This means that although its fine for use as a bedside clock or desk speaker, the Show 5 isn't the best option for noisier environments. While using the device on a kitchen table, we found we had to repeat "Alexa" and raise our voices more often than we do with the Echo Show 2, which has an array of eight microphones that face forwards.

OUR VERDICT

In many ways, the Echo Show 5 is nothing special. It sounds acceptable, but its microphone array isn't very responsive and its smart display does nothing more than those of its predecessors. It's essentially the same device but smaller. What it does do, however, is bring the

FEATURES PERFORMANCE EASE OF USE



price of smart displays down to an affordable level. At £79.99, even with its limitations, the Echo Show 5 is a steal.

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FOR BACK TO SCHOOL SCHOOL SCOLLEGE

If you want the best results then it helps to have the best technology! Here are eight products that should be on every student's shopping list

iiyama GB2530HSU-B124.5in LCD monitor

PRICE £170 inc VAT SUPPLIER www.box.co.uk

The iiyama GB2530HSU-B124.5in LCD monitor includes an ergonomic height-adjustable stand that can rotate into portrait for working on documents and nailing that essay. Then, with the 1ms response time, 75Hz and Custom Gamer modes, you can nail your foes with some fast-paced online gaming!



HP Tango printer

PRICE £120 inc VAT SUPPLIER www.johnlewis.com

HP's Tango printer is built to deliver a seamless wireless printing experience from your mobile device. You can print and scan from anywhere with Wi-Fi. You can also print text documents and photos from the cloud and from social media or scan with the camera on your smart device using the HP Smart app (available on iOS and Android). And it can automatically order ink supplies when it's running low, thanks to HP's Instant Ink service.

Cooler Master SK650 and SK630

PRICE SK650, £110 inc VAT; SK630, £140 inc VAT SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk

The SK650 and SK630 are slim mechanical keyboards that offer the perfect balance of "work and play". They feature Cherry MX low-profile switches that provide a reduced travel distance and actuation point with the same signature durability and precision as a standard red switch.

HP Tarion

Advertising feature





Dynamode USB3.0 Type-C Dock Station

PRICE £43 inc VAT **SUPPLIER** www.scan.co.uk

Bought a lovely slim laptop only to discover that it lacks ports? This inexpensive docking station plugs into a USB-C slot and gives you everything you need, from two

old-style USB ports to an HDMI out, from a physical Ethernet jack to a microSD slot. And thanks to a power passthrough, you can use it to power your laptop at the same time.



Dell Inspiron Chromebook 14

PRICE £599 inc VAT **SUPPLIER** www.dell.co.uk

A brilliant everyday laptop that's both great-looking and practical, with the star of the show being a high-quality 1080p 14in screen. The stylus tucked into the chassis makes it easy to scrawl down notes in classes or lectures, while a Core i3 processor ensures Chrome OS feels nippy.



Philips 241B8QJEB

PRICE £155 inc VAT **SUPPLIER** www.xma.co.uk

Get your best work done with the Philips 24in Full HD monitor. A crisp and vivid high-resolution image gives you the space and clarity to see your work. Features such as height-adjustment, Flicker-free tech and LowBlue mode make it easy on the eyes. And you can switch easily between the DisplayPort, HDMI and VGA connections thanks to Philips SmartConnect.

Kingston DataTraveler Locker+ G3

PRICE 32GB, £35 inc VAT **SUPPLIER** www.ebuyer.com

Put a lock on your personal data with Kingston's DataTraveler Locker+ G3. It's both a safe and convenient way to secure receipts, bank statements and other sensitive documents using hardware encryption and password protection for a double layer of data security. The DataTraveler Locker+ G₃ offers cloud backup as an optional feature to provide access to your data anytime, anywhere. No application installation required.



Best Free Software

MEDIA PLAYER

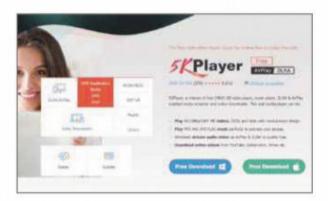
5KPlayer 6

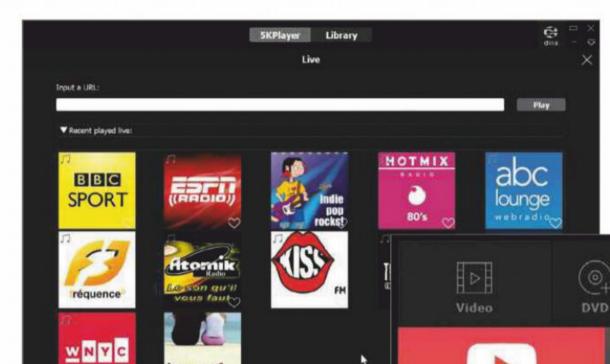
www.5kplayer.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 or macOS File size: 6.9MB (installer only)

5KPlayer is an impressive modern media player that can handle any type of audio and video file natively. It uses hardware acceleration to make playback smooth, even with 4K and 8K HDR videos.

The free software also plays DVDs and can stream internet radio stations. You have a number of presets to choose from (BBC, Heart, Capital, Gold, LBC, XFM, Chill, Kiss, Magic and more), or you can enter the URL of a specific station.





5KPlayer can also detect and play multichannel surround sound, and lets you download video and audio from YouTube, Dailymotion, Vimeo, Vevo and Facebook. It supports subtitles, allows you to rotate videos and can stream content to other devices on your network using Apple AirPlay and DLNA.

heartfm

The program's library section provides easy access to all your movies, music, YouTube videos, playlists and so on. You can even edit videos, trimming clips and adjusting the look, speed and volume. When you save your edited file, 5KPlayer automatically uses the best available hardware acceleration -

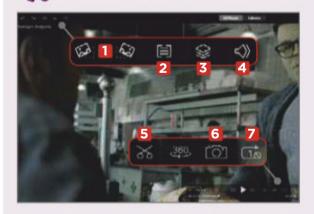
NVIDIA, AMD, Intel or CPU - to make the process more efficient.

YouTube

To access some of its features, such as web video downloading and Apple AirPlay mirroring, you need to register the software and enter a code you receive by email. The software prompts you to do this the first time you run it, but you can skip it if you don't want to register. You won't be bothered again.

This new version fixes problems and improves performance. There's also a new 64-bit version for smoother H.264, HEVC 4K and H.264 8K playback, and support for 10-bit HEVC HDR videos.

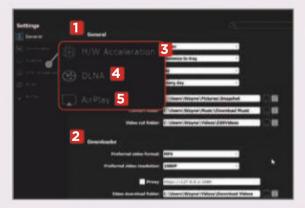
MINI WORKSHOP | Play and edit video files in 5KPlayer



Drag a video onto the player to start it. You can rotate the clip left or right **11** and open the list of chapters (if there is one). 2 You can also enable any subtitles 3 and switch to a different audio track. 4 Use the controls bar to edit the video, **5** take a screenshot **6** and repeat or shuffle the clip or track. Z

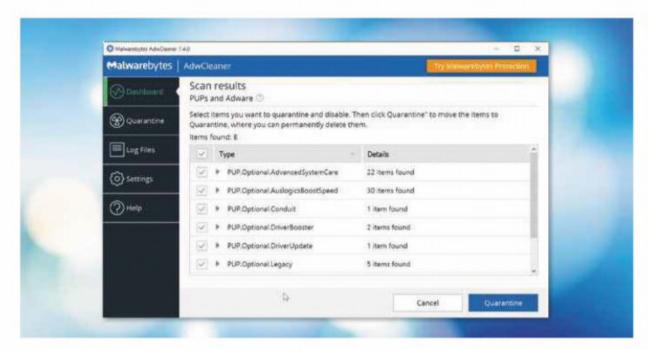


The Edit option works only with MP4/H.264 video formats. Use the sliders to cut out or trim part of the video. II You can rotate or flip the clip, 2 change its playback speed 3 and adjust the volume. 4 If the picture quality isn't great, you can improve it by tweaking its saturation, contrast and brightness. 5 Click Save file. 6



Press F2 to open the Settings menu. The General section lets you change your save locations 11 and configure the downloader. 2 In the H/W Acceleration section **1** you can choose a hardware acceleration type. Click Recheck to refresh the options. You can enable and manage the DLNA 4 and AirPlay 5 options here too.

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



ANTI-MALWARE

Malwarebytes AdwCleaner 7.4

bit.ly/adwc482

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 File size: 7.3MB

AdwCleaner removes toolbars, adware, hijackers and potentially unwanted programs (PUPs) from your web browser. This new release can also scan and remove the preinstalled software bundled with new PCs (as opposed to programs Microsoft includes in Windows). This can improve your PC's performance. AdwCleaner creates a system restore point when it detects preinstalled software. Look out for a workshop on AdwCleaner 7.4 in our next issue.

New Windows 10 App Files UWP — Preview bit.ly/files482 File size: 42.5MB This third-party file explorer was released through GitHub last year but is now available to download from the Windows Store. It's a preview build, which means you may encounter some bugs, but it does offer a number of great features, such as a dark mode, tabs and quick access to locations. drives and favourites.



SEARCH TOOL

SearchMyFiles 3

www.nirsoft.net

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 File size: 138KB

Searching for files in Windows is fairly easy, but NirSoft's SearchMyFiles tool is a much more advanced way to do it. You can search for items using a number of criteria, including the time they were created, modified or last accessed, their file attributes, file content (text or binary search) and size. Wildcards have been added to help your searches, and this new version can even find text in Microsoft Office documents and PDFs. It's now easier to find folders, too.



SYSTEM SECURITY

Eusing Maze Lock 4.0

www.eusing.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 File size: 808KB

Locking your screen (by pressing Win+L) is good practice because it stops other people accessing your computer while you're away from it. Eusing Maze Lock lets you unlock your PC by drawing a pattern on a grid rather than typing in a password. You can change the lock screen's background image and the size of the grid (3x3, 4x4 or 5x5). The program also lets you lock your PC using a mouse click or a hotkey, or set it to lock automatically after a period of inactivity.



SYSTEM TOOL

Photo Viewer Enabler

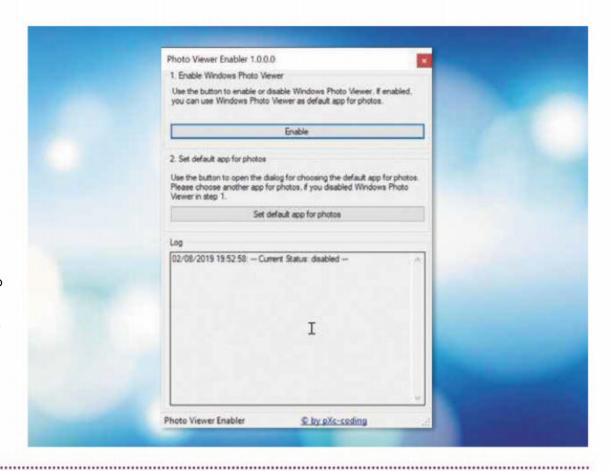
pxc-coding.com

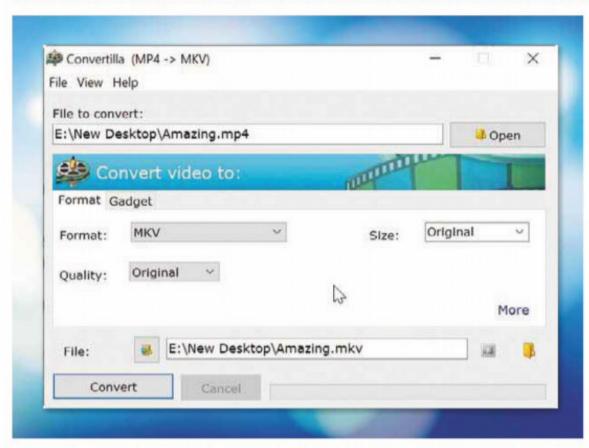
Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 2.6MB

Microsoft replaced its old Photo Viewer with the new Photos app in Windows 10. While Photos has a more modern look and feel, the old Photo Viewer was faster and better at displaying single images, and many people still miss it. If you upgraded to Windows 10 from Windows 7 or 8.1, you probably still have Photo Viewer's components on your PC and can unlock it using some clever Registry trickery. A simpler solution, however, is to use Photo Viewer Enabler, which can bring back the old viewer with one click and lets you make it the default app for photos.

Be sure to decline the bundled junk during installation.





MEDIA CONVERTER

Convertilla

convertilla.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 17.1MB

There are lots of different audio and video file formats out there, including MP4, FLV, MKV, MPG, AVI, MOV, WMV, M4V, 3GP, MP3, WEBM, AAC, FLAC and WAV. If you have a media file that your hardware or software player can't open, you can use Convertilla to convert it quickly into a format that it can handle. Just select the file you want to convert, pick a file type from the drop-down menu and adjust the size and quality as required. Specify a save location, then click Convert and Convertilla will get to work.

The latest update to the program includes full support for WEBM and ASF media conversion.

SYSTEM INFORMATION TOOL

SiSoftware Sandra Lite 2020

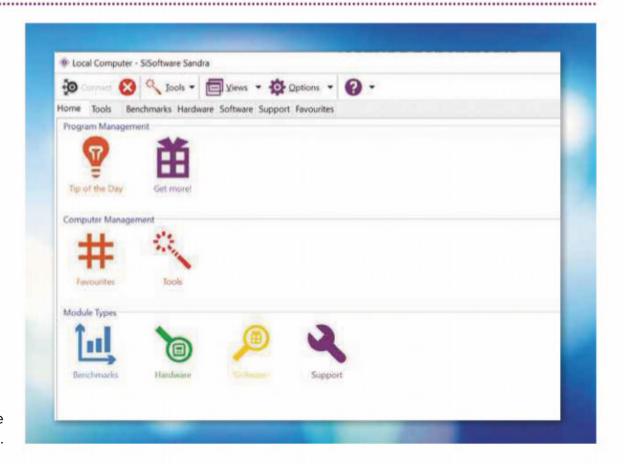
www.sisoftware.co.uk

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 163MB

SiSoftware Sandra is a system information, benchmarking and diagnostic tool that has been around since 1997. A number of paid-for versions are available, which cost from \$71.99 to \$7,000, but most home users will be more than happy with the Lite version. You can run it on individual PCs or over a network, and it won't bother you with adverts or nag screens. It includes modules for benchmarks, hardware and software, as well as a collection of testing tools.

The 2020 update adds new neural-network benchmarks that cover Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, as well as hardware support and optimisations for new processors.





GAME

Woodwork Simulator

bit.ly/woodwork482

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 370MB

The aim of this game is to use various tools to build objects - such as a birdhouse or a table - out of wood. You can saw, chisel, drill, plane, lathe, sand, glue and paint your creations, and there are three challenge modes that help you construct a specific piece of furniture, as well as a free-build mode. The game is currently a very early prototype, but it's already worth investigating.

Install this program...

WinToHDD

bit.ly/winto482

Min requirements: Windows Vista/7/8.1/10

File size: 8.8MB

If you need to install or reinstall Windows but you can't find your installation CD or DVD, WinToHDD can help. This handy free tool can install the operating system from an ISO, WIM or ESD image file, or clone Windows to a new drive. It also lets you create a USB memory drive that you can use to install different editions of the operating system. The latest version of WinToHDD lets you 'hot clone' Windows without needing to restart the source computer. Upgrading to the paid-for version for \$29.95 (£24.76) speeds up the cloning process and lets you copy more than one PC.



...Not this one

AppleXsoft Hard Drive Copy

www.applexsoft.com

Min requirements:

Windows Vista/7/8.1/10

File size: 13MB

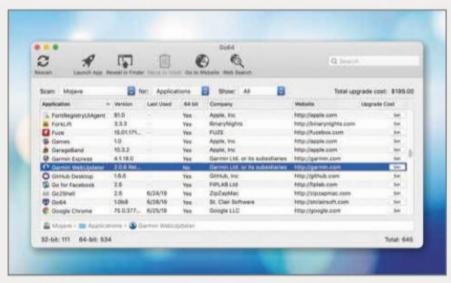
Despite its confusing name - a tool for cloning Windows with 'apple' in its title - AppleXsoft Hard Drive Copy is a pretty good program that makes migrating a hard disk or partition to a new PC straightforward. It even wipes the source drive securely afterwards. However, it's hard to recommend software that costs \$49.95 (£41.27).





OPERATING SYSTEMS What's new for Linux and macOS





SOFTWARE CHECKER

Go64

bit.ly/go64-482

Min requirements: macOS 10.11 or newer File size: 3MB

With the release of macOS Catalina this autumn, Apple will end support for 32-bit Mac applications, which could mean some of your older software will stop working. Go64 is a useful free tool that scans your installed applications, and presents you with a list of those that are 32-bit only, or include some 32-bit code (the latter will probably still work under Catalina). The program can help you remove or update any problem applications.



LINUX DISTRO

Linux Mint 19.2 'Tina'

linuxmint.com

Min requirements: 10GB hard drive space File size: 1.9GB

Linux Mint is one of the best - if not the best - Linux distributions for home users. Based on Ubuntu, it comes in a choice of three desktop environments: Cinnamon (recommended), MATE and Xfce. Version 19.2 'Tina' (all Linux updates have women's names) includes a number of bug fixes, updates to the included packages and improvements to the Update Manager. It's available to download in both 32-bit and 64-bit versions.

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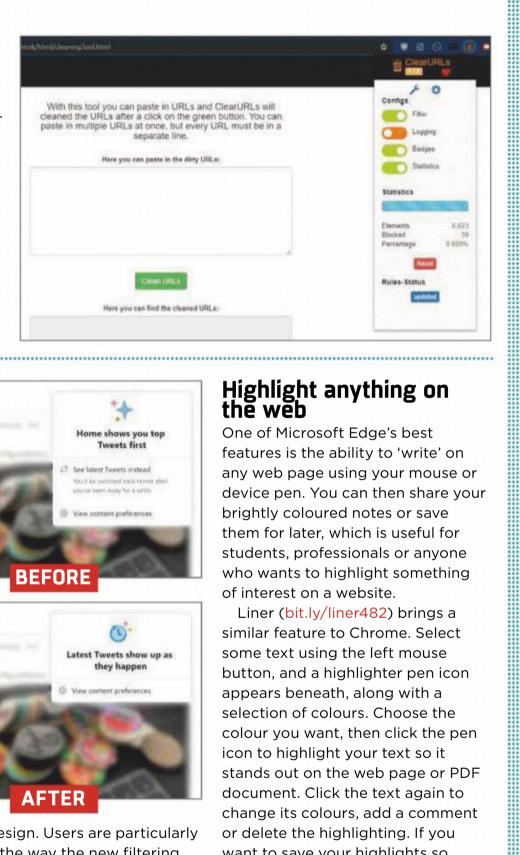


CHROME

Delete hidden trackers from URLs

Have you ever come across a dirty URL? These are web addresses that contain data telling the site how you found its link. Companies use them all the time in online ads, emails and sponsored posts to track your browsing activity and monitor the effectivenes of their campaigns. CleanURL (bit.ly/clear482) takes those filthy links and scrubs away the tracking code so companies can't see if their sneaky advertising campaigns are working.

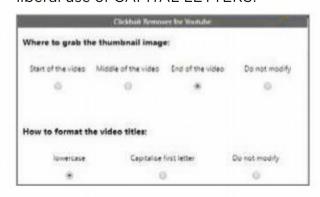
You can also scrub URLs manually by going into the Tools section - click the spanner icon - and pasting as many links as you want into the box. CleanURL will spit them out the other side, clean as a whistle. The tool is still a work in progress and may not work on every link, but the developers behind the extension are beavering away to make it even better. Look out for a workshop on CleanURL in our next issue.



Remove clickbait from YouTube

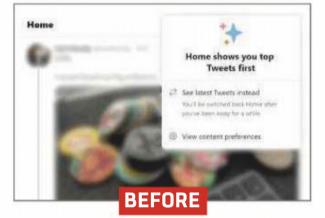
YouTube has a clickbait problem. Even a quick glance at the sidebar bombards you with false claims and wild exaggerations, such as 'Proof the moon landings were faked', or 'How I earned nine million dollars in two days'. If you can feel yourself being drawn in, your best bet is to log off - or install Clickbait Remover for YouTube (bit.ly/click482). This add-on can't actually remove these irritating uploads from YouTube, but it lets you control how they appear.

Clicking the extension's icon reveals two options: 'Where to grab the thumbnail image' and 'How to format video titles', with further options below. These remove the enticing cover images that make videos seem so compelling. It also limits the impact of sensationalist headlines that grab your attention with liberal use of CAPITAL LETTERS.



Get the latest tweets on your timeline

Not everyone, it seems, is a fan of





Twitter's redesign. Users are particularly bothered by the way the new filtering system works. When you click Latest, Twitter tends to switch back to Top Tweets the moment you're not looking. But what if you're not interested in those supposedly popular tweets?

That's where Latest Tweets First (bit.ly/tweet482) steps in. With this extension installed, you can scroll through Twitter and see tweets as they happen. It's automatic, so you don't need to alter any settings, either in the extension or on the social media site.

Highlight anything on the web

One of Microsoft Edge's best features is the ability to 'write' on any web page using your mouse or device pen. You can then share your brightly coloured notes or save them for later, which is useful for students, professionals or anyone who wants to highlight something of interest on a website.

Liner (bit.ly/liner482) brings a similar feature to Chrome. Select some text using the left mouse button, and a highlighter pen icon appears beneath, along with a selection of colours. Choose the colour you want, then click the pen icon to highlight your text so it stands out on the web page or PDF document. Click the text again to change its colours, add a comment or delete the highlighting. If you want to save your highlights so they reappear when you next visit the site, you need to sign in at getliner.com/login.





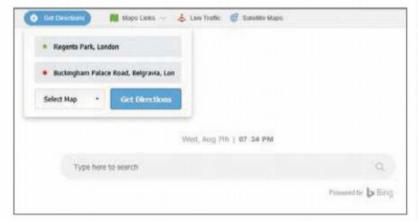
This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Opera and more



FIREFOX

Plan trips on your new tabs

We love add-ons that make our new tabs more interesting - whether they simply provide the date, time and weather, or let us make impromptu notes. However, Quick Maps (bit.ly/maps482) is a new one on us. This handy extension replaces



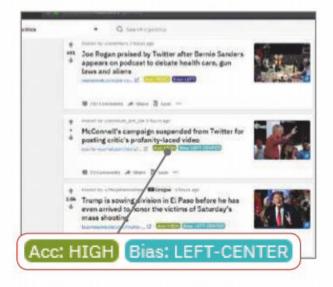
bland tabs with a tool that helps you plan a journey by entering a starting location and destination. When you first open your new tab, Quick Maps displays a search bar (powered by Bing), a link to live traffic (powered by Google) and satellite maps (powered by NASA).

QuickMaps also gives you the option to Get Directions. Click this (if it doesn't pop up automatically) to set your course. Choose which map you want to use -Bing, Google and MapQuest are all supported - then click Get Directions to plan your next road trip.

Check the accuracy of subreddits

Reddit is one of the most popular social media platforms, and it owes much of its success to its 1.2 million dedicated subreddits, where users can post about everything from hot political topics to Star Wars memes. The problem is that its r/politics subreddit is a hive of biased, incorrect or just made-up news.

To combat this problem, Stopaganda (bit.ly/stop482) scans the news links on r/politics, then decorates each post with two coloured badges. These let you see at a glance whether a source is typically accurate in its reporting, and which way it tends to lean politically. It's a useful tool when you're looking for current affairs updates on the increasingly wild social network.



Get the old Twitter back

Firefox users have had to put up with Twitter's controversial redesign just like everyone else. Until now, that is, because a new extension, Tweak New Twitter (bit.ly/tweak482), aims to combat Twitter's renewed focus on 'engagement' - or keeping you on the page to show you ads.



Like Chrome's Latest Tweets First add-on (see opposite page), this tool forces Twitter to display tweets in chronological order. It also shifts Retweets to a separate section, removes the sidebar, ditches some of the less useful links on the left-hand side of the screen and shrinks the font size back to normal, making the site a little more peaceful.

If that's not enough for you, try Twitter Tamer (bit.ly/tamer482). This browser tool lets you hide just about every aspect of the site, from sidebar distractions to Likes and media.

OTHER BROWSERS

Capture any part of your screen Droplr (bit.ly/drop482)

provides an easy way to screenshot or screencast any part of your screen and share it. Click the toolbar button to choose between image or video capture and decide whether or not to save images to the desktop. Switching on 'Capture and Annotate' lets you capture and save part of the screen. If you have multiple tabs open, the extension captures them all. When the process is complete, you can choose the images you want to keep. Click the Share option to download a copy, or double-click to annotate your screenshot in a separate browser tab.



Summarise any web page

The internet's many distractions make it harder and harder to find time for everything we want to do. TLDR This (bit.ly/tldr482) - which stands for 'Too Long, Didn't Read' - is a clever tool that summarises long articles, texts and essays. With a single click, this time-saving tool sums up the contents of a web page, picking out the most relevant sections and feeding them to you in bullet-point form.

It's useful for getting the gist when you don't have time to read an entire essay. The extension is also available for Chrome, Opera and Firefox.





🔲 Best Free Apps 📫







App of the Fortnight

PERSONALISATION

Vectorify da home!

bit.ly/vectorify482

Don't be put off by the slightly silly name - Vectorify da home! is a handy little tool, particularly if you're a fan of stylish minimalist wallpapers. It lets you design your very own home-screen wallpaper for your phone or tablet. Choose from a selection of smart-looking material-design icons and backgrounds, then customise their colours so your wallpaper looks exactly the way you want.

The interface is quick and easy to use (see our Mini Workshop, right, for a step-by-step guide), which allows you to create a

smart wallpaper design in seconds. You can choose from dozens of icons - or, if you prefer a solid background with no icon, simply select the same colour for the icon and the background, and the icon will disappear.

Vectorify turns your creations into live wallpaper, which allows them to update faster and keeps permissions to a

> minimum - live wallpapers don't require storage permissions, for example. However, your custom wallpapers are static vector images (hence the 'Vectorify' bit of the name), which means they won't drain your battery as some standard live wallpapers do.

If we have one criticism, it's that the customisation options are somewhat limited. Icons always appear in the middle of the screen, and you can't add more than one icon at a time. This may change in future releases, because the developers suggest they will add further features as the app evolves. The app is open-source, too,

(see our cover feature on page 40), so you can follow, or even contribute to, its development at bit.ly/vectorifycode482, where the app's code is freely available.



Icon

#FFFFFFF

Icons

Background

#FF000000

0 0

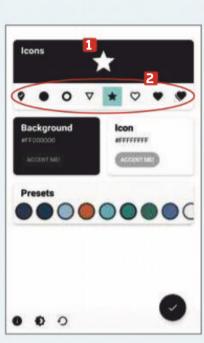
NEW



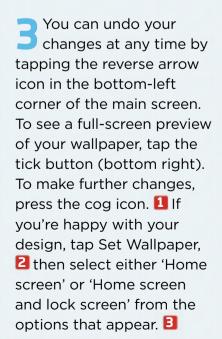
MINI WORKSHOP

Create custom wallpaper with Vectorify da home!

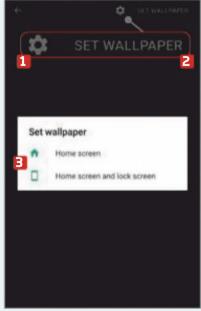
Launch the app and select one of the icons from the top part of the screen. 11 The selection isn't limited to the handful of icons you can see in the strip under the main icon image 2 - swipe left or right across this strip to scroll through dozens more options. When you find an icon you like, press it to select it.



To set the background or icon colour, press the Background or Icon button, then either choose one of the preselected colours, or swipe left to fine-tune the colour using either the RGB sliders 1 or - if you know it - by entering the HEX colour code into the box above. 🛂 Tap OK. 📴 Alternatively, you can select one of the Preset colour schemes shown below the Background and Icon buttons.













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

FILE MANAGER

Files bit.ly/ googlefiles482

To celebrate the fact that 100 million people use Files every month, Google has updated its popular app. This excellent



file-management tool, which lets you move, transfer and share files, as well as free up space on your Android device by deleting junk files and other unwanted data, was originally designed for people who don't have much storage space on their phones. The latest version introduces two big new features: a Dark Mode and improved controls for playing video and music



CAMERA



Night Vision bit.ly/nightvision482 (varies)

Our rating

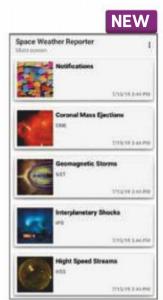
Ever wanted your own pair of night vision goggles? Well, this app could be the next best thing. It uses the infrared, depth-sensing Time-of-flight (ToF) sensor in your device's camera to 'see' in the dark. It's a cool idea, but there are two fairly big caveats. First, the app is still at the Early Access stage, which means stability and reliability aren't guaranteed, and second, only a handful of devices have a compatible ToF sensor, so Night Vision may not work on your device.

WEATHER

Space Weather Reporter

bit.ly/ spaceweather482 4.4

Most weather apps are useful for letting you know when to pack a brolly or slap on some factor 30. But what if you want a more



interplanetary view of the weather? Space Weather Reporter draws on scientific data gathered by the Database of Notifications, Knowledge and Information (DONKI) to provide you with up-to-date information on all the latest solar flares, coronal mass ejections, geomagnetic storms and other space weather events.

Science buffs and space enthusiasts should never leave home without it.



NEW

Our rating

Our rating

files in the app, even

when you're offline.

NOTE TAKING

🖐 7 🎏 11

Post-it bit.ly/postitdroid482 bit.ly/postitios482

The official Post-it app finally makes its debut on Android - only five years after it launched on iOS. For anyone without an Apple device, this means you can now capture 'real world' Post-it notes (from your fridge door,

noticeboard and so



on) via your phone's camera and organise them into digital boards on your device. Post-it lets you create new notes in the app and combine them with those you've captured. You can also edit notes, changing the colour of Post-its, drawing on them and erasing

formats, from PDF to PowerPoint. **Our rating**

or adding text, and share notes in a variety of

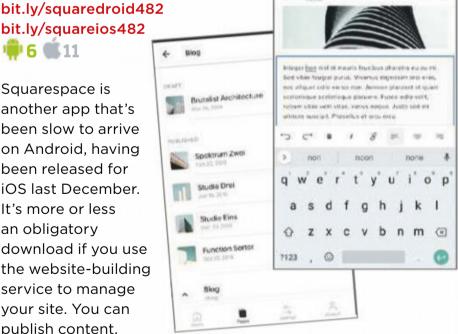


Squarespace is another app that's been slow to arrive on Android, having been released for iOS last December. It's more or less an obligatory download if you use the website-building service to manage your site. You can publish content,

WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

Squarespace

6 **\$** 11



edit pages, update your site's settings and access Squarespace's customer support straight from the app, without the need for a fully fledged PC. Any edits you make while offline are saved to your device and uploaded once you're back on the internet. While the app itself is free, you need a Squarespace account to use it.





NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

OFFICE

Retro Notepad Pro

bit.ly/retronote482

Price: £1.59

4.4

Take a trip back in time to a simpler era of computing with this note-taking app. Its functions are basic, while its stark design echoes the look and feel of early Windows PC applications.

TRAVEL

Xenios

bit.ly/xenios482

Price: £2.19

6

This app is a great travel companion for anyone planning a visit to Greece. It has guides to hundreds of museums and archaeological sites, including details of opening hours and ticket prices.

GAME

Doom

bit.ly/doomdroid482 bit.ly/doomios482

Price: £4.79 (Android),

£4.99 (iOS)

9 8 **5** 11

The granddaddy of all first-







person shooters has been rereleased for iOS and Android (and other platforms) as part of the game's ongoing 25th birthday celebrations. Doom II and 3 are also available.

PHOTOS

Camera HD Pro

bit.ly/camerahdpro482

Price: £4.89

4.1

Want more control over your photos than your phone's camera app can offer? Try Camera HD Pro, which lets you change the ISO, adjust the shutter speed, set the white balance and more.

GAME

Journey

bit.ly/journey482

Price: £4.99

12.2

Following the release of 'Sky: Children of the Light' last month, the game's beautiful spiritual predecessor - and a highlight of the PlayStation 3 era - has arrived on iPhone and iPad.





Retro Notepad Pro



Doom

Camera HD Pro













Install this app...

Houzz

bit.ly/houzzdroid482 bit.ly/houzzios482

(varies) **1**1

If you're planning to redecorate, refurnish or renovate your home and you need some inspiration, look no further than Houzz. On the one hand, the app acts as a stylish digital equivalent to those glossy home-improvement magazines, and is bursting with images of classy kitchens and designer dining rooms. However, Houzz has a number of other handy features, too, such as links to the best local experts and professionals, an active forum for seeking out useful advice and the ability to annotate and share any images you find or save them instantly to your 'ideabooks'.





...Not this one

DIY Home Improvements

bit.ly/diyhome482

This app aimed at DIY-enthusiasts is in no danger of winning any design awards.

Its layout is dated, blocky and unattractive, but that's the least of its problems. An app, like a home, needs to be carefully and continually maintained. The developers of DIY Home Improvements have failed to keep their app up to date, and now its content often fails to load or is obscured by full-screen ads.





Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest by taking our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you solve our animatedfilm emoji quiz and guess our Wikipedia article?



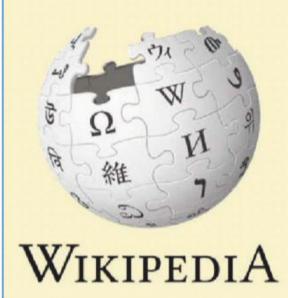
CAN YOU GUESS THE ANIMATED FILMS FROM THE EMOJI?





GUESS THE WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE

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



"It was originally developed for personal computers based on the Intel x86 architecture, but has since been ported to more platforms than any other operating system."

"It is one of the most prominent examples of free, open-source software collaboration. The source code may be

WORTH

£169.99

EACH

used, modified and distributed - commercially or noncommercially."

distributions have been created to provide hands-on experience with coding and source code to students, on devices such as the Raspberry Pi."

"For years it has been the platform of choice in the film industry. The first major film produced on

its servers was 1997's Titanic. Since then, DreamWorks Animation, Pixar and Industrial Light & Magic have migrated to it."

COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 2

Ambeo Smart Headset

Sennheiser's Ambeo Smart Headset has two omnidirectional microphones for producing immersive videos with 3D-like sound recordings on your iPhone. The listener feels as if they are really there, making it ideal for



vloggers and other content creators. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'ambeo' in the subject line. For more details, visit en-uk.sennheiser .com and follow @Sennheiser_UK on Twitter.

WIN 1 OF 3

KitSound Diggit Bluetooth Outdoor Speaker

With a removable stake that's easily stuck into the ground, KitSound's Diggit is a versatile outdoor Bluetooth speaker. The stereo-pairing feature lets you connect another speaker for impressive sound, and battery life is eight hours. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis .co.uk with 'diggit' in the subject line. For more info, visit www.kitsound.co.uk and follow @KitSoundUK on Instagram.





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

Our guide to Discord

Still using Skype to chat online? David Crookes looks at a tool for gamers that's making waves with non-gamers too



What is it?

Discord (discordapp.com) is a voice-chat and messaging program that was originally designed to provide gamers with a better method of communication. Launched in May 2015, it quickly singled out the company behind it as a hot new start-up in Silicon Valley. The system allows groups of practically any size to get together and discuss their passions in public or private using text, audio, video and images.

So why haven't I heard of it?

That may be because it's still a gamingrelated service at heart, but as gamers have invited friends and word has got round, Discord has grown to encompass a wealth of other interests during its short life. It's the platform's versatility that has helped it attract more than 250 million unique users. The company says 56 million people chat on the service every month, sending 25 billion messages. Little wonder, then, that it has been valued at \$2 billion.

What's the big attraction?

Discord is described by its maker as an alternative to Skype and TeamSpeak another VoIP communication system for online gaming. Not only is Discord free, however, but it lets players hook into a



Discord was once exclusively for gamers but now it's taking on the likes of Skype as a general communication platform



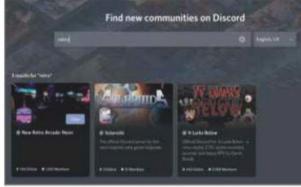
central hub and explore their various interests. If you play Fortnite with one set of friends and World of Warcraft with another, for example, you don't need different accounts on multiple platforms, because you can use Discord for both. This makes the service very flexible.

Is Discord easy to use?

Yes, it's quite straightforward. You can use its desktop program or mobile app, or run it in your browser. You don't even

> need to register, which is perhaps why its popularity has grown so quickly. To use it, simply enter a chatting, although if you want to make your username permanent, you need to add an email address and password, then verify vour account otherwise you'll lose it when you exit Discord.

The Discord servers include separate private, password-



It's easy to find servers of interest on Discord and jump into the chat

protected and public channels, and users have different levels of permissions, so you shouldn't get overwhelmed or lost. The system is just as useful for smaller groups, too.

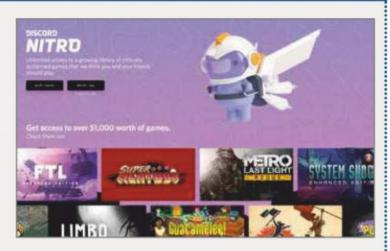
Can I set up my own channel?

Again, yes. To set up a channel on Discord, whether it's open, passwordprotected or invitation only, all you need is an account. It's as simple as clicking + and 'Create a Server', entering a name and region, and clicking Create. You're then given a URL that you can share with others, which is where it gets interesting. The recipient only needs to click that link and enter their username to join the chat, a process that takes literally seconds.

IS THERE A PAID-FOR DISCORD?

Discord offers a premium service called Discord Nitro, which has two levels. For \$4.99 (£4.10) per month or \$49.99 (£41) per year, Nitro Classic gives you perks that enhance your chat, such as higher-quality screen sharing, larger file-size limits for uploads and the ability to upload GIFs for animated avatars and emoji.

The next level costs twice as much but adds access to a library of old



games, such as Super Meat Boy, Limbo and De Blob.

Are there third-party servers, too?

What? You want even more? Okay, try typing a search query into Disboard (disboard.org), and you'll see recommendations along with the ability to select tags such as music, art and anime. Users of this site even go so far as to review servers, which can save you a lot of time, while anything deemed "not safe for work" (NSFW) is flagged. DiscordMe (discord.me) has a separate section for adult content, and people can also pay to promote their servers, which can push some "interesting" content towards the top.

DISCOVER DISCORD SERVERS

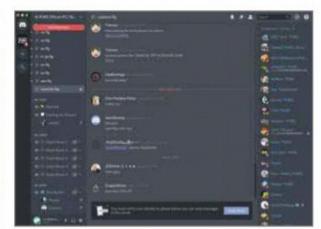
You can find further Discord servers using a third-party site such as Disboard

Is there a lot of dodgy content?

Discord isn't short of it, that's for sure. The service hit the headlines last month when a New York man named Brandon Clark murdered 17-year-old Bianca Devins and posted photos of her dead body on the messaging platform. BBC Radio 4's File on 4 programme also revealed that criminals use searchable code words to point to closed groups before using peerto-peer encryption in servers to advertise stolen financial data, drugs and indecent images. On a political level, Discord has been popular with alt-right movements.

Oh dear. What is Discord doing about this?

Discord has shut down many servers but it says those that violate its terms and conditions make up a tiny percentage.



Not all Discord servers contain good, clean chat, so it pays to be careful

The sharing of non-consensual pornography is prohibited, as are violent and gory images, and it has a 'Trust and Safety' policy that extends to cyberbullying. The platform does allow consensual pornography and content that it admits "might be ok for you but unsuitable for others", however, which means that as with anything online, you need to tread carefully.

Avoid giving away your private details in a chat unless you're comfortable with the people in it. If you receive an invitation, take time to consider who sent it before you accept.

Does Discord work with other apps?

Anyone who sets up a server can also use a range of automated users called bots (discordapp.com/streamkit). Coded in JavaScript, these handy tools integrate with other big-name services such as Patreon, Twitch and YouTube. They can also help with community and server management and let you keep an eye on your Discord chats while you're away. Third-party bots are available from reputable directories such as discordbots.org and bots.ondiscord.xyz.

But how involved do people become?

Like any social-media platform, Discord has many devoted fans who use the service every day. When a Cloudflare outage crashed Discord at the start of July, one user took to Twitter with the message: "I'm too lonely for Discord to be down". Users must be 13 or older.



Popular servers such the PUBG game channel have 180,000 members or more

How do I find interesting servers?

As well as keeping an eye out for invitations on social media, websites such as Reddit and in emails, you can browse Discord's server directory by clicking the magnifying glass in the left-hand column of the interface. Discord starts by showing you some popular servers and communities you might consider joining, including details of how many members each has and how many are currently online. You can also search for a game, e-sports team, artist or keyword. Hovering over a result lets you view the server and join it.

Do all servers look the same?

No. You can customise your server and give it a leg up by using boosts. Every Nitro subscriber gets one of these to use wherever they like (see the boxout above). A server with two boosts receives an extra 50 emoji slots, 128Kbps audio quality, a custom invitation background and an animated server icon. Meanwhile, 10 server boosts adds more emoji slots, doubles the audio quality, raises the filesize limit from 8MB to 50MB and lets you add a server banner. For 50 server boosts, Discord hands out an extra 100 emoji slots, 384Kbps audio quality, a vanity URL and a 100MB upload limit.



Paying users can boost and customise Discord servers in various ways

OVERRATED SOFTWARE YOU MUST STOP USING!



Some of the most popular 'free' programs are not really free at all. **Wayne Williams** explains why you should move from dated proprietary software to superior open-source alternatives







SWITCH

here's no shortage of brilliant free software available to download these days, which is good news for those of us who resent paying for it. However, some programs are more 'free' than others, and we don't just mean full programs rather than free trials or demos.

Big companies control many of the most popular free tools, which means they can use them to promote their other products, abandon or sell them at a whim, and release updates, security patches and bug fixes only when they feel like it - if at all. This selfish, locked-down approach has led many developers and PC users to switch to open-source software, which offers greater freedom, security and stability, as well as many other benefits.

In this feature, we round up the best free, open-source alternatives to proprietary programs and apps that seem out of date and overrated in comparison. We also answer your questions about open-source software, including what the differences are between 'open-source', 'Free Software' and 'freeware'.

WHAT IS OPEN-SOURCE SOFTWARE?

What does 'open-source' mean?

The term is actually fairly self-explanatory. It means that the source code – the code written by the application's developers – is open for anyone to inspect and, if they wish, to modify or improve. If you find an open-source program that you like but you think you could make better, you're free to use the source code to create your own version with additional features and then distribute it. Similarly, if you find a bug in an open-source program, you can fix it yourself – provided you have the necessary programming skills, of course.

Several different types of opensource licence are available (opensource.org/licenses), some of which include certain restrictions. For example, if you modify a program, you might be obliged to release the source code for it alongside your version of the application.

How does it differ from 'free software'?

Well, first things first. There are actually two very different definitions of "free software". The first relates to Free Software (note the caps). This term was coined by Richard Stallman, who founded the Free Software Foundation in 1996 (bit.ly/fsf482). According to the Foundation: "'Free software' means software that respects users' freedom and community. Roughly, it means that the users have the freedom to run, copy, distribute, study, change and improve the software. Thus, Free Software is a matter of liberty, not price. To understand the concept, you should think of 'free' as in 'free speech', not as in 'free beer'."

Free Software and open-source are very similar but there are some key differences. Richard Stallman explains

GNU Operating System

Sponsored by the Free Software Foundation

ABOUT GNU PHILOSOPHY LICENSES EDUCATION

What is free software?

The Free Software Definition

The free software definition presents the criteria for whether a particular software program qualifies as free software. From time to time we revise this definition, to clarify it or to resolve questions about subtle issues. See the History section below for a list of changes that affect the definition of free software.

The official definition of 'free software' may not be exactly what you think

them at length in his post at bit.ly/stallman482. Some programs, such as LibreOffice, are described as Free and open-source, meaning they satisfy both camps.

The other definition of "free software" is freeware. This is a very different beast and refers to software that doesn't cost you a penny (although you might be encouraged to pay for an upgrade) but which probably has closed or proprietary code.



The European Commission offers cash rewards for finding bugs in open-source tools

What is proprietary software?

Proprietary software is another name for closed-source software. It means the developers don't let just anyone explore how a program is put together, and nor do they allow others to produce their own versions. The licence that comes with a proprietary program – Microsoft Office, for example – contains a lot more restrictions covering what you can and can't do with it than an open-source licence.

Why is open-source important to developers?

One benefit to open-source developers is that they don't necessarily have to start their projects from scratch – they can use code from open-source libraries. If a creation is interesting and proves popular, other developers might want to contribute in various ways – such as adding features, suggesting improvements or fixing problems. Writing open-source software

encourages developers to focus on producing the best, most efficient code, because other developers can see what they've written, including any "ugly" code or potentially dangerous security shortcuts. Writing opensource software has been described as like working in a fishbowl.

How do open-source coders earn a living?

Open-source doesn't have to mean free – developers

can still charge for their software if they want to, but most don't. Instead they can earn money by placing adverts on their website, requesting tips or charging for help and support, which is how Linux developer Red Hat became a billion-dollar company before being acquired by IBM for a whopping \$34 billion earlier this year.

The European Commission also funds bug bounty programs for a number of open-source projects as part of the Free and Open-source Software Audit (FOSSA) project (bit.ly/fossa482). Rewards for discovering bugs in programs covered by the scheme range from €17,000 (£15,500) to €90,000 (£82,000), depending on the severity. Programs covered by the scheme include 7-Zip, KeePass, Notepad++, and VLC Media Player.

What are the benefits for users?

Aside from the fact that you're likely to be getting software that's genuinely free, without limited functionality and constant nagging to upgrade to a paid Pro version, the quality of the code should be very high, because more developers can examine it, and therefore spot and fix any bugs. When a program dies - because the original creator calls it a day, for example there's a chance that someone else will use the existing code to carry on the work. That's what happened when popular alternative Start menu Classic Shell was killed off in 2017. The creator made his work open-source, and last year a new developer brought the program back to life, albeit under a different name (currently Open-Shell).

DITCH OVERRATED SOFTWARE FOR OPEN-SOURCE

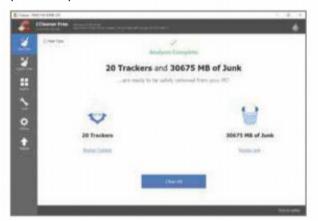
SYSTEM CLEANER -

DITCH CCleaner www.ccleaner.com

Ever since Avast acquired Piriform, CCleaner's developer, in 2017 the popular system cleaner has gone seriously downhill. The problems started when a hacked version served up malware to CCleaner users. Then Avast started bundling its own software and displaying intrusive adverts.

In one CCleaner release, Avast even prevented anyone who downloaded the free version from opting out of data sharing. Users found they were unable to deactivate Active Monitoring (the snooping feature simply switched itself back on) and made the program impossible to quit without terminating it by force using Windows Task Manager.

Most recently, CCleaner was bundled with a buggy preview version of a web browser that wasn't ready for general use, and which changed file extensions so that users could no longer view PDFs. CCleaner may once have been an essential system tool, but now it's way past its prime.

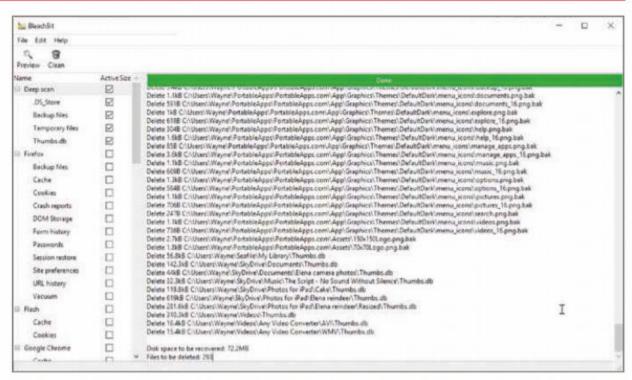


CCleaner once helped solve PC problems, but now it creates them

BleachBit www.bleachbit.org

Like CCleaner, BleachBit removes junk files from your PC, frees up space and protects your privacy by shredding personal files so they can't be recovered. To use the program, just select the areas to target - your browser cache, cookies and history, for example - click Preview to see the results and then click Clean to remove the selected items.

BleachBit lacks a few of the features found in CCleaner, such as the Registry cleaner and startup manager, but you don't need the former anyway because Windows does a great job of managing the Registry by itself, and you can control which programs start automatically in Windows 10 by going to Settings, Apps, Startup.



BleachBit cleans your PC quickly and efficiently, with no bundled junk

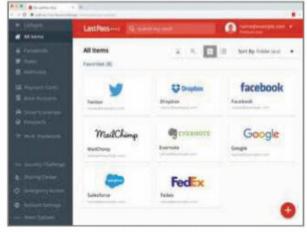
BleachBit has been in development for 11 years and is available for Windows, Linux and macOS. There's no paid-for edition, so you won't see any adverts or nag screens while using it, and because the developers are all volunteers and don't make any other software, bundled junk isn't an issue either. It also comes in a portable version.

PASSWORD MANAGER -

DITCH LastPass lastpass.com

LastPass stores your passwords securely online, and logs you in to any site from any device, anywhere. It can fill in forms automatically, store important personal data such as your credit card details and analyse the security of your passwords to help you make them stronger. However, you have to upgrade to the Premium edition if you want features such as emergency access and advanced multi-factor options, and that costs from £27.60 a year.

In the past, LastPass was affected by a zero-day vulnerability that left accounts in danger of being compromised, as well as a phishing flaw



LastPass has suffered several security problems in the past few years

that meant attackers could steal a LastPass user's email, password and more. Then four years ago an attack on LastPass's network resulted in the theft of email addresses, password reminders and authentication hashes. It also suffers occasional access issues (see bit.ly/downd482 for details).

Bitwarden bitwarden.com

Bitwarden is a reliable open-source password manager for all the major desktop platforms (Windows, macOS and Linux), mobile devices (Android and iOS) and web browsers. It offers many of the same features as LastPass but for free. To fund the service, the developers also offer a paid-for Premium version, which provides additional features such as 1GB of encrypted file storage and two-step login with YubiKey, FIDO U2F and Duo, but it's very much optional and costs just \$10 (£8.21) a year.

Because Bitwarden is open-source, any bugs and flaws in the password manager are spotted quickly, so it shouldn't be affected by the sort of issues that have plagued LastPass in recent years.



Password manager Bitwarden offers lots of free features and works across your devices

IMAGE EDITOR -

Adobe Photoshop www.photoshop.com

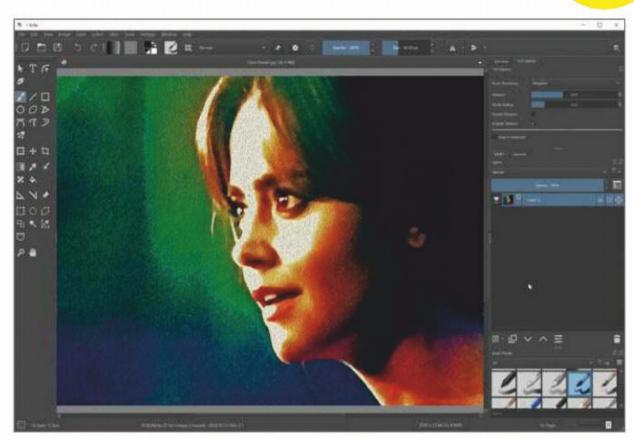
Don't get us wrong, Photoshop is an excellent image-editing program. In fact, it's easily the best software of its kind. It's also very expensive, however, and you can no longer buy it as a single program - you have to commit to paying for an Adobe Creative Cloud subscription. If you only do some occasional image-editing, buying a subscription really isn't worth it especially when even the cheapest option, the Photography plan (which includes Photoshop, Lightroom, Lightroom Classic and 20GB of cloud storage) costs £9.98 a month, or £119.76 a year. Like all advanced programs, Photoshop also suffers from quite a few problems caused by bugs and other issues, as you can see from the list at bit.ly/psprob482.



Photoshop is too expensive and advanced for most people's everyday image editing

SWITCH GIMP www.gimp.org

The GNU Image Manipulation Program (GIMP) has long been viewed as a great open-source alternative to Photoshop. It's available for Windows, Linux and



If GIMP seems too complex for your creative projects, try Krita instead

macOS and offers much of the same functionality as Adobe's software, including full layer support, colour adjustments, automatic image enhancement tools, customisable brushes, horizontal and vertical straightening and more, as well as plenty of effects and filters. It even supports third-party plug-ins so you can expand its feature set further.

GIMP received a major update in April, which introduced a number of new features, followed by a bug fix release two months later (including additional features). In the past, the biggest complaint about the program concerned its interface, which consisted of a confusing selection of floating windows. Thankfully, GIMP now has a standard interface that you can customise to suit your needs.

OR SWITCH TO Krita krita.org

Krita is a free, open-source painting program with a huge number of customisable brushes that also allows you to fix and improve your photos. It offers a decent array of filters and is packed with features, including drawing assistants for working with straight lines and circles, and brush stabilisers that make sketching with the mouse easier.

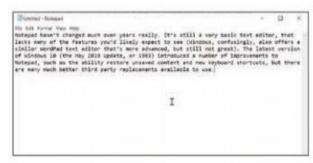
Krita's development started in 1999 when it was originally conceived as an image-editing tool to rival Photoshop and GIMP, but then in 2009 the focus switched to painting. It's now available for Windows, macOS and Linux, and nightly builds keep it up to date with the latest features and bug fixes.

TEXT EDITOR -

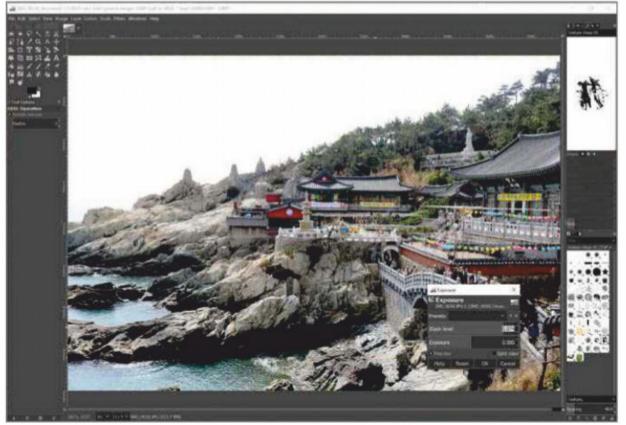
Notepad Built-in Windows tool

Notepad may be a key Windows feature, but it hasn't changed much over the years. It's still a very basic text editor and lacks many of the features you're likely to need. Confusingly, Windows also offers a more advanced text editor, WordPad, but even that's not great.

The latest version of Windows 10 (the May 2019 Update, or 1903) introduced a



Many Windows users think fondly of Notepad, but it's very basic



GIMP offers an incredible set of tools considering it's free to use



Notepad++ takes the built-in Windows tool and adds pluses to it

number of improvements to Notepad, including new keyboard shortcuts and the ability to restore unsaved content, but there are many superior third-party replacements available.

Notepad++ notepad-plus-plus.org

Our favourite Notepad alternative is undoubtedly Notepad++, which has a handy tab-based interface that lets you have multiple documents open at the same time. Other features worth mentioning include auto-completion, WYSIWYG printing, bookmarks, a zoom tool and the ability to record macros and play them back.

The program's interface is fully customisable, so you can make it look and behave however you like. If you decide to switch to it permanently, you can use a special Windows command (found on the website) to set Notepad++ as the replacement for Notepad in Windows.

Notepad++ is one of the programs included in the European Commission-funded bug bounty program announced in January, so you can be confident that there are no major problems with it.

VIDEO EDITOR

Adobe Premiere Elements bit.ly/prem482

Premiere Elements is another sophisticated tool from Adobe that comes with several excellent features. The software offers Quick, Guided and Expert modes, and can



Adobe Premiere Elements is no longer cutting-edge and costs too much



OpenShot lets you edit your videos to perfection without paying a penny

automatically create photo and video slideshows and collages for you using Sensei, Adobe's artificialintelligence engine.

Although Premiere Elements is a great program, the latest update doesn't really add much in the way of new features. The Windows version doesn't work with HEVC and HEIF file formats (although the macOS version supports H.265) and doesn't support 360-degree VR video and multicam editing either – you'll need to upgrade to the expensive Premiere Pro for £238 if you want those features.

If all you want is a program for editing and sharing videos recorded on your phone, the £86.56 asking price (or £130.36 if you want Photoshop Elements too) probably seems far too expensive. You also need to create an Adobe account to use the program.

OpenShot www.openshot.org

OpenShot started life in 2008 as a free, open-source video editor for Linux. It's now available for Windows and macOS too, and has all the features you're likely to need for editing videos, including a drag-and-drop timeline, audio mixing and editing, a range of effects and transitions (with real-time previews) and more. You can have unlimited audio and video tracks, and use the title editor and 3D animated titles to give your movies a professional finish.

If you have a phone or camcorder that shoots in 4K, then OpenShot is particularly useful for editing the recorded clips and turning them into professional-looking movies.

MUSIC STREAMING

Spotify Desktop www.spotify.com

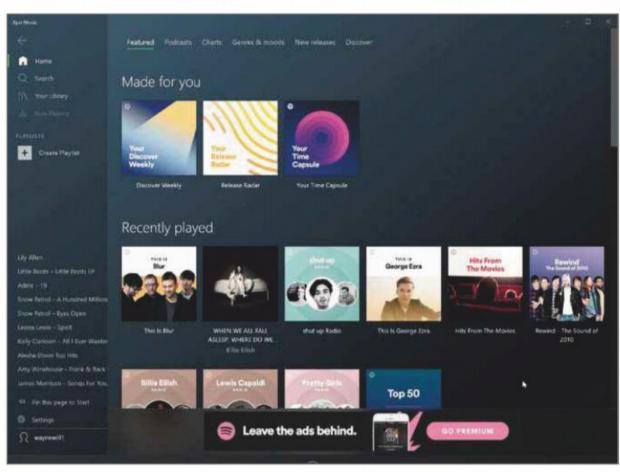
If you prefer to stream your music rather than buy it, there's a good chance you use Spotify, the service that brought streaming to the masses and transformed the music industry. While Spotify provides a good service, its desktop client has always been its weak link, with annoying adverts for free users, and several features you're unlikely to care about, such as the Friend activity panel that clutters up the already bloated interface. It can often be quite buggy too.



Spotify's desktop program is the musicstreaming service's weak link

SWITCH Xpo Music bit.ly/xpo482

The deficiencies in Spotify's official software have left plenty of room for unofficial open-source alternatives to spring up, including our favourite – Xpo Music. It was originally called Xpotify, but that name got it removed temporarily from the Microsoft Store for legal reasons, hence the new title.



Xpo Music was released in April and made open-source two months later

Xpo Music doesn't look dissimilar to the official desktop client software which is probably because it's based on the Spotify Progressive Web App (PWA) - but everything about it is better designed. Notable features include light and dark modes, a useful mini player that you can set to float above other windows, the ability to pin pages to the Windows 10 Start menu and integration with Cortana. What's more, the software works with both Spotify Free and Spotify Premium accounts. It supports a large number of keyboard shortcuts, too - see bit.ly/xposc482 for the full list.

OFFICE

DITCH Microsoft Office products.office.com

Even after all these years, Microsoft Office remains the most popular office suite and is used by pretty much every business around the world. However, it's pricey (£120 for the Office Home & Student 2019 edition, or £80 a year for Office 365 Home), and bloated. For years, Office has been packed with features no one really needs, and the ribbon interface isn't particularly easy to work with either, forcing users to hunt through the various tabbed sections to



Proving that bigger isn't always better, Microsoft Office is now seriously overrated

find the tools they want. The latest version, Office 2019, isn't all that different from its predecessor, Office 2016, either – which is a bit of a disappointment after three years.

LibreOffice www.libreoffice.org

LibreOffice is an entirely free opensource alternative to Microsoft Office. It's available for Windows, macOS and Linux (there's also a LibreOffice Viewer for Android) and offers six comparable applications: Writer (word processor), Calc (spreadsheet), Impress (presentation and slideshow creator), Draw (a vector drawing program for creating diagrams and flowcharts), Base (database) and Math (a mathematical equations editor). The program started life as a successor to OpenOffice.org and is fully compatible with Office's own file formats. You can open files created in Microsoft's suite without any trouble, and save new documents in any of those formats, too, so your Office-owning friends and colleagues will be none the wiser. LibreOffice also has its own OpenDocument formats that you can save your documents in if you prefer.

TRY MICROSOFT'S NEW OPEN-SOURCE TOOLS

To the surprise of many, Microsoft - a company that built its entire business on proprietary software - has been embracing open-source for the past few years. It even joined the Open-Source Initiative (OSI) as

a Premium Sponsor in 2017. The software giant has released a growing number of tools under the opensource licence, including Bosque, a TypeScript-inspired programming language (bit.ly/bosq482), Windows Calculator (aka.ms/calc) and the original File Manager (WinFile) (bit.ly/winfile482).

If you've been using Windows since the days of Windows 95 and XP, you may remember PowerToys.



These were a selection of essential Microsoft utilities for the operating system, which included Tweak UI, SyncToy, Power Calculator and Background Switcher, to name a few. In May this year, Microsoft announced at its BUILD developers

conference that it would bring back PowerToys for Windows 10, but this time as a collection of open-source tools. The first two utilities in development are 'Maximize to new

`\.......

desktop' (MTND) and 'Windows key shortcut guide'. MTND shows a new pop-up button whenever you hover your mouse

pointer over the maximise/restore button on any window. Clicking this creates a new desktop and sends the app straight to it. The shortcut guide appears when you hold down the Windows key for longer than a second, and shows you every shortcut that's currently applicable.

Microsoft also has a couple of interns working on three more PowerToys - 'Process terminate tool', 'Batch file renamer' and 'Animated gif screen recorder'. You can follow the project and download



the free tools as they become available from the official **PowerToys** GitHub page at bit.ly/mspt482.



Save money by switching from MS Office to open-source alternative LibreOffice

There are currently two branches of LibreOffice to choose from: an older but more stable one, and a newer release with additional features, such as a tabbed interface that looks a lot like Microsoft's ribbon. This isn't (at the time of writing) enabled by default, but you can toggle it on by going to View, User Interface.

Windows 10 www.microsoft.com/windows

If you're becoming increasingly disillusioned with Microsoft's latest operating system, it might be worth switching to Linux and finally saying goodbye to buggy updates, annoying Live Tiles and weird inconsistencies, such as having two separate places to configure the software - Settings and



Despite Microsoft's billions, Windows 10 still suffers frequent problems

Control Panel. Even if you like Windows 10, it's hard not to get the impression at times that it's a work in progress rather than a stable and well-polished modern operating system.

The October 2018 Update contained a flaw that deleted some users' files, and there were so many other problems with the update that Microsoft was forced to withdraw it temporarily and ration who could install it once it became available again. Nasty.

Although you can sneakily upgrade to Windows 10 for free if you have a licensed version of Windows 7 or 8, paying for the Pro edition (the one with all the good features) will cost you an expensive £219.99 (Home is £119.99).

SWITCH Linux Mint linuxmint.com

There are plenty of Linux-based operating systems (known as distros) to choose from, but Linux Mint is perhaps the best one for people switching from Windows. It's based on Debian and

Ubuntu and is community driven, which means many of the improvements are suggested directly by its users (unlike in Windows, where Insiders simply test Microsoft's ideas). All the software that comes with it - including Firefox, GIMP, LibreOffice and Thunderbird - is free or open-source, but you're welcome to install proprietary software if it's available. The distro comes with a very intuitive Software Manager that makes finding and installing the programs you want easy.

All Linux Mint releases benefit from Long Term Support (LTS), which means the most recent versions will be supported until April 2023. You also have a choice of three desktop environments (DEs) - Cinnamon, MATE and Xfce. If you don't know what any of that means, simply select the Cinnamon desktop, because that's the best and most popular choice. Like most Linux operating systems, Linux Mint can run from a Live disc, which means you can try it out before you install it.



Linux Mint is the epitome of open-source software and is very good to boot

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 4 September 2019

DON'T PAY FOR STREAMING

Create your own Netflix and Spotify by setting up a home media server



OSHRED ANDROID DATA

Make sure files you delete on your phone can't be recovered

OPATCH YOUR OWN PC

Don't wait for security fixes install them manually

OSPEED UP WINDOWS

Replace slow built-in tools with portable software

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Who's blocking You online?

Are you being secretly snubbed on social media? Robert Irvine explains how to find out

To find out if someone has blocked you on Facebook or merely 'unfriended' you, search for their name using the main search box. Filter the results by clicking the People tab at the top of the page. If you can't see that person, it's likely that they've either blocked you or closed their Facebook account. If you can see them, you may just have been unfriended. Click the All tab, and it's possible that your former friend's name will appear, even if you're blocked. Try clicking their photo. If you can see any of their profile, they've only unfriended you, but if you're blocked,

FACEBOOK

Other ways to check include searching the Friends list of a mutual friend - if you can't see the person there, they've probably blocked you - and reviewing old Facebook messages you exchanged. If you're blocked, you won't be able to click your ex-friend's name to view their profile, but if their account has been closed, their name will appear as 'Facebook User'.

you won't be able to access anything.



If Facebook calls an old friend 'Facebook User', they've deleted their account

WHATSAPP WhatsApp makes it easy to block pests, but what if you suspect that someone thinks you are a messaging menace? Open a chat with that person and look for the 'last seen' time under their name. If there isn't one, they may have blocked you or simply turned this feature off in their privacy settings. For further evidence, send them a message. If you see a single grey tick instead of two grey (delivered) or blue (read) ticks, your message wasn't delivered. Next, try calling them via WhatsApp to see if the call connects. If it doesn't, the

Not authorised to add this contact.

OK

When you can't add a contact to a chat in WhatsApp, it means you're blocked

situation looks suspicious, although they may just have changed their number.

Finally, to check that they're not just offline, create a group chat and add the aloof person as a participant. If you can add them to the group, it means you haven't been blocked, but if WhatsApp says you're "not authorised to add this contact", it's time to admit defeat.

TWITTER

It's easy to tell if someone has blocked you on Twitter - just visit their profile page and you'll see a message telling you you're blocked. But what if you want to see everyone who's blocked you? The only way to find this out is through the profile of a Twitter user who follows or is followed by people you think may be blocking you. Click the Following or Followers link below their name, scroll to the bottom of the page, then right-click an empty area and select 'Save as...'. Save the web page as an HTML file and open it using Notepad (or Notepad++ - see page 44). Press Ctrl+F and search for blocks-you. Look a couple of lines above every instance of this term to see the username of the person who has blocked you.



INSTAGRAM

The giveaway sign that someone has blocked you on Instagram is that, even though their name appears when you search for it, you can't see any of their photos, even though their profile indicates that they've posted some. That's unless the person has a private Instagram account, in which case they won't show up in searches.

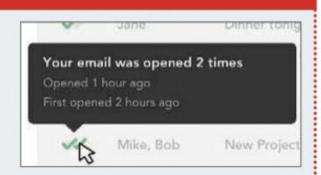
There are several apps that monitor your Instagram account to tell you who has 'unfollowed' you. This can also be an indication of who's blocked you, but it's not definite - they may simply have lost interest in your snaps. FollowMeter for Instagram (followmeterapp.com) is one of the most popular tools, and is available for Android and iOS.



Use FollowMeter for Instagram to see who's lost interest in your wonderful life

WHO'S BLOCKING YOUR EMAIL?

If someone blocks you on Gmail, your emails go straight into their Spam folder rather than bouncing back to you with a 'not delivered' message. If you suspect this is happening, you can use the **Chrome extension Mailtrack** (bit.ly/mailtrack482) to track your message and notify you when the recipient opens it. Bear in mind, however, that an unopened message



doesn't necessarily mean you've been blocked - the person may simply be ignoring you!

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Slash the cost of online subscriptions

Managing multiple plans for web services can prove expensive and confusing. **Robert Irvine** explains how to save money and time by streamlining your subscriptions



If you and your partner, children, lodger or anyone else in your household subscribe to the same services, it makes financial sense to share your accounts and split the cost. Many online services offer dedicated plans for this purpose, which give each person a separate account within the main one, so they can buy, stream and download whatever they want without the other users knowing. Here are three of the best-value shared plans.

SPOTIFY

Spotify's Premium for Family plan gives you and up to five other people living at your address unlimited access to its music-streaming service for £14.99 per month. When you consider that six separate Premium accounts cost £59.94, that's a real bargain and could reduce your monthly subscription to £2.50. Anyone who already uses Spotify can transfer all their saved music,



Share Spotify with your kids and they can pay you back when they're older

playlists and recommendations to their Family account. Apple Music offers a similar Family subscription for the same price (bit.ly/apple482).

Spotify is currently testing a shared plan for couples, Premium Duo, in several countries including Ireland, but hasn't confirmed when this will be coming to the UK.

prime AMAZON PRIME

At £79 per year, an Amazon Prime subscription isn't cheap, so why not split yours with your nearest and dearest? Set up an Amazon Household (bit.ly/household482) and you can share Prime benefits including next-day delivery, Prime Video streaming and Prime Reading (formerly Kindle Unlimited) with one other adult, as well as ebooks, apps and games you download. Your Household can include up to four children, but they're (wisely) prevented from buying anything.

Amazon also offers a Family Plan for its Music Unlimited service (bit.ly/



This happy couple just saved £39.50 each on an Amazon Prime subscription

music482), which lets you divide the hefty £14.99-per-month cost between six family members.

NETFLIX

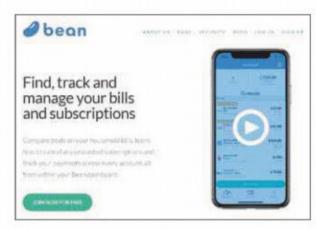
Although Netflix doesn't have an official shared plan, it lets you add up to five separate profiles to your account, so family members and friends can have their own personalised watch lists and recommendations, and split the monthly subscription cost. Depending on your plan, you can stream TV shows and films to more than one device. With the Standard option (£8.99 per month), you can watch on two devices at once, while the Premium plan (£11.99 per month) lets you stream to four different screens simultaneously. Note that all users log in using the main account holder's details, but can then choose their own profile.

Similarly, Now TV lets you add six devices to your account and watch on two at the same time.

Track all your subscriptions in one place

hen you subscribe to lots of online services, it's easy to lose track of how much you're paying and when. You may even forget you're still subscribing to a particular service until the money is taken from your bank account. Fortunately, this is now such a common problem that there are plenty of tools available to help you manage your subscription costs, although many are US-only.

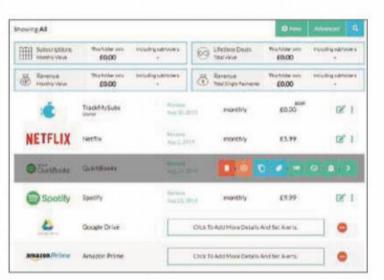
Slash the cost of subscriptions



Bean helps you save lots of beans by cancelling subscriptions you can't afford

The best option for UK subscribers is Bean (usebean.com), which connects with your bank or credit card account (using 256-bit encryption and read-only access) to analyse transactions from the past 12 months and identify recurring payments. If you then opt to cancel an unwanted subscription, Bean contacts the company on your behalf. It also alerts you to upcoming payments, price changes and contract renewals, and offers free Android and iOS apps. Bean makes money by recommending services from its partners, but you can opt out of receiving these.

If you're nervous about granting a third-party tool access to your bank, TrackMySubs (www.trackmysubs.com)



TrackMySubs lets you manage up to 10 subscriptions without adding yet another

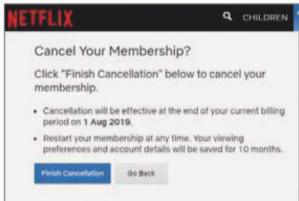
lets you compile a list of all your subscriptions, including details of their cost, frequency and auto-renewal, to receive email reminders when they're due and view the total amount you're forking out. TrackMySubs is free to use for up to 10 subscriptions (with no need to enter any card details), and from \$5 (£4.10) per month for more.

Alternatively, you can manage your monthly payments from your mobile device using an app such as Subby for Android (bit.ly/subby482) or Bobby for iOS (bit.ly/bobby482).

Downgrade your subscription plan

nather than ditching a service n completely, you can often save money by downgrading your plan to one that better suits your needs. For example, if you listen to Spotify Premium only occasionally and aren't bothered by ads, offline playback or unlimited skips, you can still stream 50 million tracks (aside from certain new releases), and save £9.99 a month, by moving to its free tier. See bit.ly/ spotify482 for details.

Netflix recently increased the cost of all its plans except the Basic, £5.99-permonth subscription, but if you only stream to one screen at a time and don't mind standard-definition quality, you



'Cancel' your Netflix membership if you want to stop paying for a few months

amazon... Warehouse Diesis Outlet Subscribe & Save Vouche Payment Option Monthly Annual Hello Robert Irvin £79.00/year Membership: Prime Payment Option: musi ££79.00/year) you will be charged \$7.99 for a month of Primi Next Payment

Switch to a monthly Prime membership before Christmas - then cancel it!

can save £36 a year by switching to Basic from the Standard plan, or £72 from Premium. Alternatively, if you're going on holiday or have watched everything you want to see for the time being, Netflix lets you suspend your subscription by going into your account settings and clicking Cancel Membership. You won't be billed until you resume streaming, and your viewing preferences will be saved for 10 months.

If your £79 annual Amazon Prime fee is looming, consider changing to the £7.99-per-month plan, then cancelling after a few months - preferably just after Christmas! You can do this by visiting your Managing Your Prime Membership page (bit.ly/prime482) and choosing the Monthly payment option. Amazon will tell you when your new subscription begins (and your annual one ends), but remember that if you forget to cancel, you'll end up paying a total of £95.88 in a year.

Subscribe through a mobile contract

ather than paying separately for your phone contract and a streaming service, shop around for a deal that combines the two. Many UK mobile providers offer plans that include a 'free' subscription to Spotify, Apple Music, Prime Video, Netflix or BT Sport, although there's usually a catch. This could be that the free trial expires after a few months, is limited to high-data tariffs or is available only to new customers. Still, if you're thinking of shopping around for a new contract, it's worth seeing what's on offer.



EE customers can claim a six-month 'free' subscription to Apple Music

CANCEL YOUR TV LICENCE

If you watch all your TV on Netflix, Now TV and Prime Video these days, and only use the ITV Hub and All 4

catch-up services, you can save £154.50 a year by cancelling your TV licence. However, you still need a licence to watch anything on BBC iPlayer, live TV on any channel or service, and programmes you record at the time of broadcast. This applies to any device, including your phone, tablet, games console or

set-top box such as Sky+ or Virgin TV V6. See the TV Licensing website for more info (www.tvlicensing.co.uk).



Best free Wi-Fi network scanners

Network scanners let you check which devices are connecting to your router and find out if anyone is hijacking your internet.

Steve Clark looks at six tools that tell you who or what is using your Wi-Fi



Advanced IP Scanner | www.advanced-ip-scanner.com | ****

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

What we liked:

Despite billing itself
as an 'advanced' tool,
Advanced IP Scanner
(AIS) doesn't try to
reinvent the wheel. It isn't
loaded with unnecessary
options that most users will

never use, but focuses instead on scanning your network for any connected devices. It's fairly quick, especially compared with rival Windows programs, and its interface is clear and easy to understand, making it as suitable for beginners as it is for advanced network administrators.

Having completed a scan, AIS shows you a list of devices, with details of each one's name, IP address, manufacturer, MAC address and current status. That's no more than you'd expect of any network scanner, but where this tool really comes into its own is in its ability to gain remote access to devices. It does this using RDP and Radmin VPN, which require a separate free download.

Once you've installed the extra software, you can take full control of a device on your network or even shut it down directly from AIS. This option is especially useful if you're suspicious of a particular device or you want to control your entire system from a single

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computer. You can also locate a PC on the list and double-click to jump straight to shared folders or the device's File Explorer.

How it can be improved:

AIS isn't quite as advanced as it says it is. That's no bad thing, but it may be misleading for anyone who wants an all-in-one option. Taking remote control of devices is a fantastic addition, but we found that it wasn't always reliable – and having to download additional software to make it run feels old-fashioned. The

developers should integrate the entire set-up in a single download.

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OUR VERDICT

Billed as "the first choice for every network admin", this tool is easy to use and an excellent option for anyone who's curious about the devices that connect to their Wi-Fi. When it works, the remote access feature is exceptional, and there's a portable version of AIS, too.

Fing | www.fing.com | ★★★★☆

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

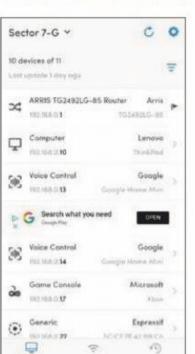
What we liked:

Fing is a rare beast: a mobile app that outperforms **eq**uivalent

desktop programs. Available for Android and iOS, it's a smart tool with a clean look that's perfectly suited to mobile use. When we connected two mobile phones, a smart speaker, a games console and a computer to a network, Fing instantly recognised each device, giving its name and allocating it an appropriate icon.

Tap the three-line icon to reorder your devices based on their status, filtering by category, and tweaking notifications for new and existing connections. You can then export all the details in a format of your choice.

Customisation doesn't end there. Select a device to check the ping quality and connection history, as well as rename or 'favourite' it. You can even



set up alerts to your phone when the device connects or disconnects.

How it can be improved:

Despite an otherwise mobile-friendly interface, getting back to the home screen after browsing a device's various options is a pain. If you check a device, view its history, check the ping and find open ports, you'll need to cycle back through all these screens. A dedicated 'home' button would be welcome.

OUR VERDICT

Fing is the perfect mobile network scanner. It lacks a few of the extra features you find in some desktop PC tools, but it gives you everything you need to perform a quick, thorough network check without having to boot up your computer.

Wireless Network Watcher | www.nirsoft.net | *** FEATURES ★★★☆☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★



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What we liked:

Wireless Network Watcher keeps things very simple, and that's fine with us. Click the Play button to run a scan and see every device that's connected to your network, along with the usual information such as its IP and MAC address.

The ace up its sleeve, however, is that it notes the first and last time a device was detected, and keeps an overall Detection Count, which is sure to please anyone who worries about unauthorised devices using their internet connection.

As well as scanning and viewing your devices, you can tweak a few settings, such as editing the IP address range or setting a beep every time a new device connects or disconnects. If you're technically minded, you can also set executable commands for connections and disconnections.

How it can be improved:

While many users will appreciate Wireless Network Watcher's simplicity, others will baulk at its overall lack of features. Even the scan report is nothing more than an HTML file, which refused to open when we tried to view it. The fact that the software performs so effortlessly makes us interested to find out what it's really capable of doing.

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OUR VERDICT

Wireless Network Watcher is a simple utility that's ideally suited to the casual, curious user, but it lacks power for those who need advanced features. It's a great tool for checking what, and who, is connecting to your network, but that's about its limit.

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BEST OF THE REST

Angry IP Scanner

angryip.org

We're not sure what has made Angry IP Scanner so cross, but during the time we spent with the tool we found it to be thoroughly pleasant.

Scanning networks is quick and the results page is fairly clear - when the results are in, the tool even



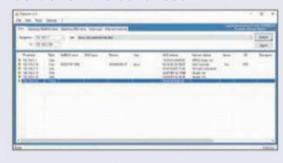
tells you how long it took and how many hosts are 'alive'. Elsewhere it's less intuitive, but it's unlikely to put off advanced users, for whom we'd suggest the tool is really designed.

Dipiscan

www.dipisoft.com

Dipiscan is another streamlined network scanner in the same vein as Wireless Network Watcher. Its attractive layout feels a lot more modern, and we like the dedicated Export button, which lets you save a text file of the results.

Performance is excellent, and you won't struggle to find your way around the tool - although some of the tabs gathered along the top border on the advanced.



Network Analyzer

bit.ly/network482

If Fing isn't your thing, try Network Analyzer. This Android app has

many of the same features packed inside. The interface can seem confusing at first, so to get started, tap the three lines and select LAN Scan, then press Scan. Unlike Fing, tapping into each listed device lets you check ping, route, ports, Whois and DNS for each individual



device. The only real downside is the way it displays results, which feels needlessly cluttered.



Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Rip, edit and organise your music

Ashampoo's sophisticated suite of tools for music lovers originally cost £25, but now you can download it for free. Here's how to use it

Ashampoo Music Studio 2019: bit.ly/mustu482 | 🕒 20 mins | 🎥 7, 8, 10



usic-streaming services such as Spotify are incredibly popular, but many people prefer to own their music so they won't risk losing it just because a service shuts down or hikes its prices. If you like to collect CDs or digital tracks, Ashampoo Music Studio has all the tools you need to rip, burn, edit and organise your music collection.

It can also design CD covers, generate playlists, produce mix tapes, record audio and extract sound from videos.

Ashampoo Music Studio 2019 originally cost \$30 (around £25) but is now completely free, although you need to sign up for an Ashampoo account to use it. This sends you adverts for other Ashampoo products from time to time.



Ashampoo Music Studio has a simple tiled interface. Click any component to launch it. Hovering your mouse over Rip & Burn 11 or Modify 2 reveals additional options. To rip tracks from a CD, insert the disc, then click the Rip option. 🖪



Music Studio reads the CD and lists all the tracks on it. 💶 You can edit the track information (tags) and select or deselect any track. 2 The software also downloads album art 🗾 (which you can change), and fills in details for artist, album, genre and year. 4 You can make a playlist under Extended Settings. 5



What would you



Edit Cover

Create covers and inl your Audio CDs.

EDIT COVER

This module lets you design your own CD case covers. Choose a case style, then add tables, graphics, text and backgrounds. It comes with some ready-made images

Drganize

organize your music ollection easily.

Video-2-Music

reate and cut music from your favorite vid

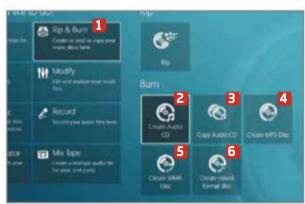


Playlist Genera Create a playlist with

favorite music.



Click Next, then select a format for your ripped tracks - MP3, WMA, OGG, WAV or FLAC 1 - and the quality you require. 2 You can adjust the sample rate **3** and bitrate **4** using the sliders, and select mono or stereo. 5 Choose an output folder and naming format, then let the software get to work.



To write music tracks to disc, open the Rip & Burn menu. 11 Music Studio can create 2 or copy audio CDs, 3 as well as MP3 discs, 4 WMA discs 5 and mixed-format discs. 6 On the next screen, add your media and set the length of the gap between tracks, then select the target drive.



You can rename batches of songs in Organise. Click its tile and, in the window that opens, add some files 1 or folders. 2 Once you've added your tracks, click Next and confirm the copying options. Click Next, choose an output folder, then select the filenaming style you prefer.



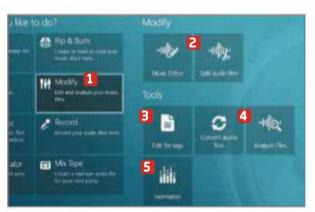




Ashampoo Music Studio can't rip audio from YouTube videos but it can extract sound from videos saved to your hard drive. Click the Video-2-Music tile, then click the option to open a video file. Highlight the part of the soundtrack you want **1** and use the tools to make any adjustments. 2 Click Next, location.



Teate a playlist of favourite songs by clicking Playlist Generator. Add some tracks and choose a playlist format. • The program shows which media players the format is compatible with. 2 Using the Mix Tape tool, select some music, choose the type and quality, and the tool stitches the songs into a single track.



The Modify option 11 contains a The Modity option corriains a music editor and a tool for splitting audio files. 2 You can edit a song's tags (such as title, album, artist and release date), **3** convert and analyse files, **4** and normalise the volume. 5



Create a multiboot **USB** memory stick

Easy2Boot: www.easy2boot.com | (1) 40 mins | 27 Windows 7, 8, 10



our PC isn't limited to running Windows. If you use a portable USB memory stick, you can boot into all manner of operating systems, from Linux to specialised security tools designed to fix problems that standard tools can't reach. With so many different options to try, you could end up using a lot of memory sticks if you want to keep a variety of options available. Unless, of course, you use Easy2Boot.

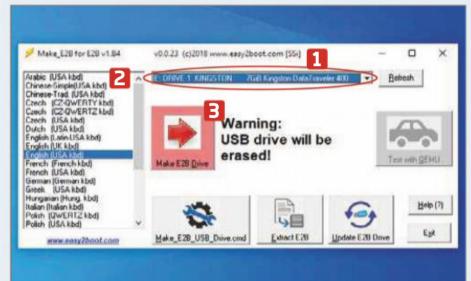
This free software lets you create a menu-driven bootable USB memory stick containing as many different operating systems as you can squeeze on. When you boot from the device, a handy menu lets you choose which one you want to run.



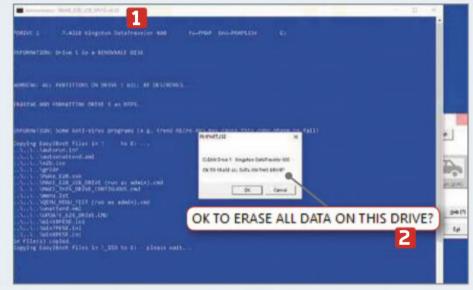
EXPERT TIP

Andy Shaw says

Many ISO files work with this system, and while not all of them have been tested, a phenomenal number have. Go to bit.ly/compat482 to see the full list of supported ISOs. Some need to be altered or saved in specific ways, so if you have a favourite, it's worth checking here first, particularly if you want to run a Linux installation as a 'persistent' image - in other words, one that lets you save any changes you make.



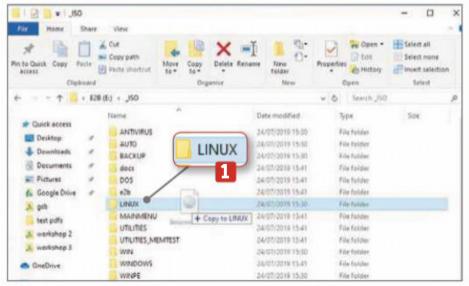
Download the self-extracting file from bit.ly/e2bdl482. Double-click it, allow the software to make changes to your system and install as usual. It runs straight away. Select your USB stick from the list at the top 🗓 and your language from the side menu. 2 When you're ready to prepare the drive, click the big red button.



A command prompt opens 🚹 and the software starts to prepare the drive. Easy2Boot asks you if you're sure you want to erase everything from the drive, 2 so make sure you're happy to do that before you start. When the process has finished, the blue window turns green. Press any key.



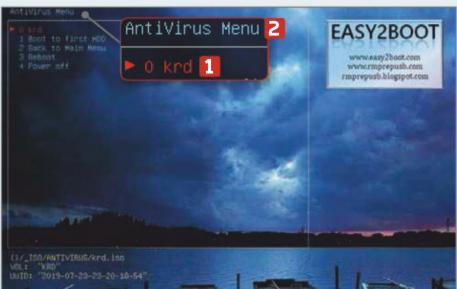
Open the USB drive in File Explorer. The drive has lots of files on it already but the most important folder is the ISO folder. 1 This is where you put the ISO files of any software you want to run. Double-click the _ISO folder to access the next level.



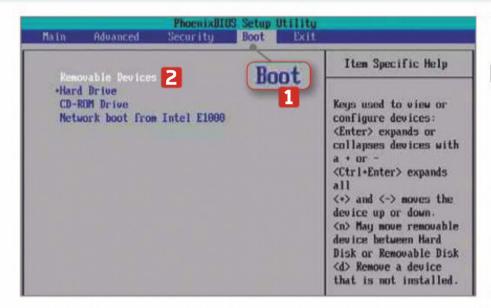
Assuming you've already downloaded the ISO files you want to use, copy them into the most appropriate folders on the USB stick. We downloaded Linux Mint (linuxmint.com), for example, so we're copying it to the LINUX subfolder. 1



If you want to check that the software is working, click the 'Test with QEMU' button. 🚺 This launches the boot menu in a simple emulation Window 2 so you can see that it works. We found this very slow on our PC, but don't panic - the finished version will perform much better. Shut down QEMU and load your other ISOs.



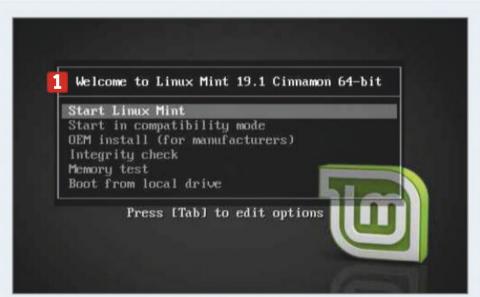
We also added the Kaspersky Rescue Disc (bit.ly/ kasp482) 1 by dragging and dropping it into the Antivirus folder. 2 This is a particularly useful tool to have on any multibooting system because you can use it to scan a PC for viruses without having to start up the infected operating system.



Before you can boot your PC from a USB drive, you may need to change the boot order. This is a setting in the BIOS or UEFI. Look out for a message telling you how to enter this when you reboot your PC - it usually involves pressing a function key such as F2 or F8. Find the boot order section 1 and make sure USB or Removable Devices is first. 2



Now when you reboot your PC with the USB device connected, it takes you to the Easy2Boot menu. 11 Here you can use the arrow keys to navigate to the option you want. Alternatively, skip to the option using the number keys 🔼 or open the menu using the shortcut. 3 F8 takes you back to the main menu.



We went straight to the Linux option to test Linux Mint. Because Mint was the only option in the Linux menu, it booted straight away, displaying the standard Linux Mint menu. 1 From here we could choose to start the software immediately.



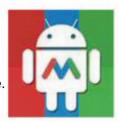
The developer's website has a thorough guide that can help you if you get stuck, although it's split over several pages and can get a bit bogged down with jargon. It's worth exploring if you have problems, though. Look out for the quick start guide, (bit.ly/e2bqs482) 11 the 'Primer' page (bit.ly/e2bprim482) and the FAQ (bit.ly/e2bfaq482).



Automate any task on your Android phone

acroDroid is an automation app for Android that demands experimentation. The basics are easy to grasp, but you can then use it to automate just about any task on your phone by creating macros. These are

automated scripts that perform an action in response to a trigger. Building macros is easy, particularly if you're familiar with IFTTT - but you'll find a lot more useful system settings here.



MacroDroid: bit.ly/macro482 | (1) 10 mins |





To get the most out of MacroDroid, head into your Android settings and search for accessibility. Under 'Download services', select MacroDroid **11** and toggle the 'Use service' switch to On. 🔼 A pop-up will appear, warning you that MacroDroid will 'Observe your actions', which it needs to do to activate triggers and perform tasks. Click OK to confirm.



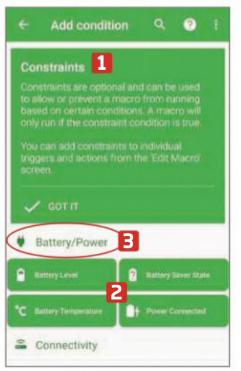
On the home screen, choose Macros, 💵 which is where the app stores any macros you create. To add a new one, tap the Plus sign. You can also create a new macro by selecting 'Add macro' from the home screen. 2 Alternatively, download a ready-made one by selecting Templates, 🖪 then Browse As Guest.



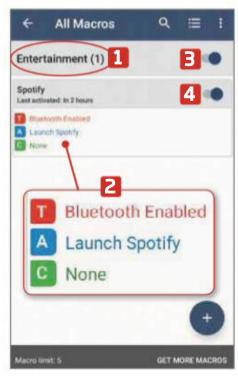
The same principles apply whatever macro you build, so for our example we'll create a macro that launches Spotify when we switch on Bluetooth. Under Triggers, 🚺 tap Connectivity, 2 and choose Bluetooth Event. **3** The app asks you to select what triggers the action. In this case, choose Bluetooth Enabled 4 and tap OK. 5



Swipe across to Actions. For our example macro, we'll select Applications, 2 then Launch Application. **3** On the next screen, choose Spotify - or whichever app you want to open. Select 'Force new' to open a fresh instance of the app, and 'Exclude from recents' if you want to keep it out of the recently used apps list. 4 Tap OK. 5



Next, swipe over to Constraints. 11 These force the macro to start or stop when certain conditions apply. 2 Try to avoid using these unless you really need them, because they interrupt the automation 'flow'. If you need to add a constraint, such as preventing actions when the battery is low, tap the appropriate category **B** and follow the on-screen prompts.



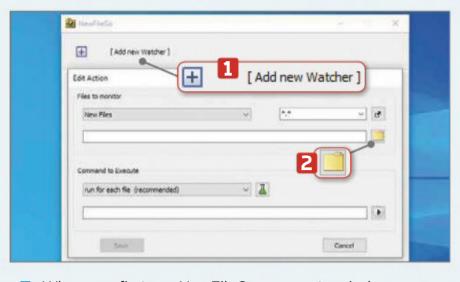
Tap the tick icon to give your macro a name and save it. Use the drop-down to add it to a category, 11 then tap OK. Saved macros include details of every Trigger, Action and Constraint. 2 Tap each section to reconfigure the macro, add further actions and more. Use the master switch **1** or individual toggle switches 4 to switch each macro On or Off.

Perform specific actions when files change

ewFileGo is a useful Windows tool that keeps an eye on your folders for you. If something happens to the folder, such as the addition of a file or a change to an existing one, the software performs an action of your choice.

This could be as simple as backing up your photos when you transfer them to your PC or opening your Downloads folder when a new file appears.

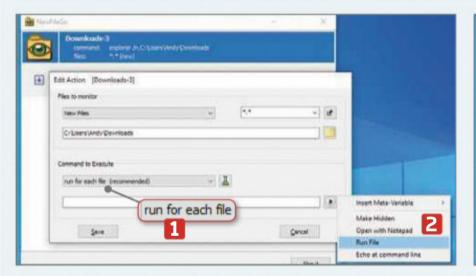
NewFileGo: bit.ly/nfgo482 | 🕒 10 mins | ಶ Windows 8, 10



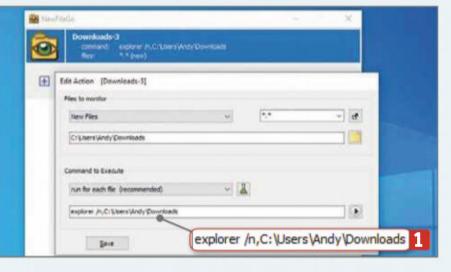
When you first run NewFileGo, an empty window opens. Click 'Add new Watcher'. 11 The software keeps an eye on any folders you choose and, if something changes, runs a specific action. We're going to monitor new files that arrive in the Downloads folder, so click the folder button. 2



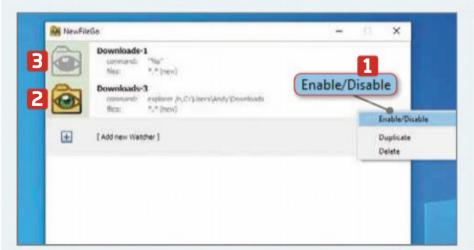
A folder selection window opens. Locate the folder you want to monitor, then click the Select Folder button. 1 It appears in the box. 🔼 We're monitoring for all types of new file, so we can leave the other options in the 'Files to monitor' section set to the defaults: New Files 3 and ".*". 4



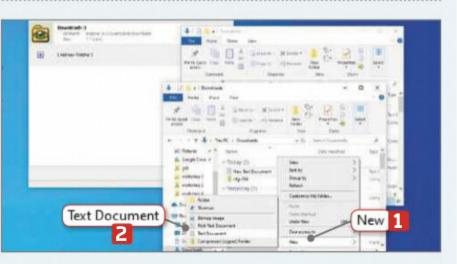
Using this menu, 11 you can choose whether to run the command every time the software detects a change, or run once using all the new file names as parameters in a command. The Examples button offers a few predefined actions, including Run File and Open with Notepad. 2



The best way to get the command you want is to write it. We want File Explorer to open the Downloads folder when a new file is detected, so enter explorer /n,C:\Users\username\Downloads. 1 For help, see Winaero's guide to Explorer commands at bit.ly/expcmd482.



When you first add a new command, it's disabled. To enable it, right-click it in the list and choose the Enable/ Disable option. 1 You can tell if a command is enabled or disabled by its icon. A coloured icon 2 indicates an active command, while a grey icon 13 means it's inactive.



To test the setup, open the Downloads folder, rightclick in it and select New, 💶 Text Document. 🔼 A new File Explorer window should open to show the Downloads folder, following our rule. As well as new files, you can set the software to watch for changes in existing files.

Weekend Project

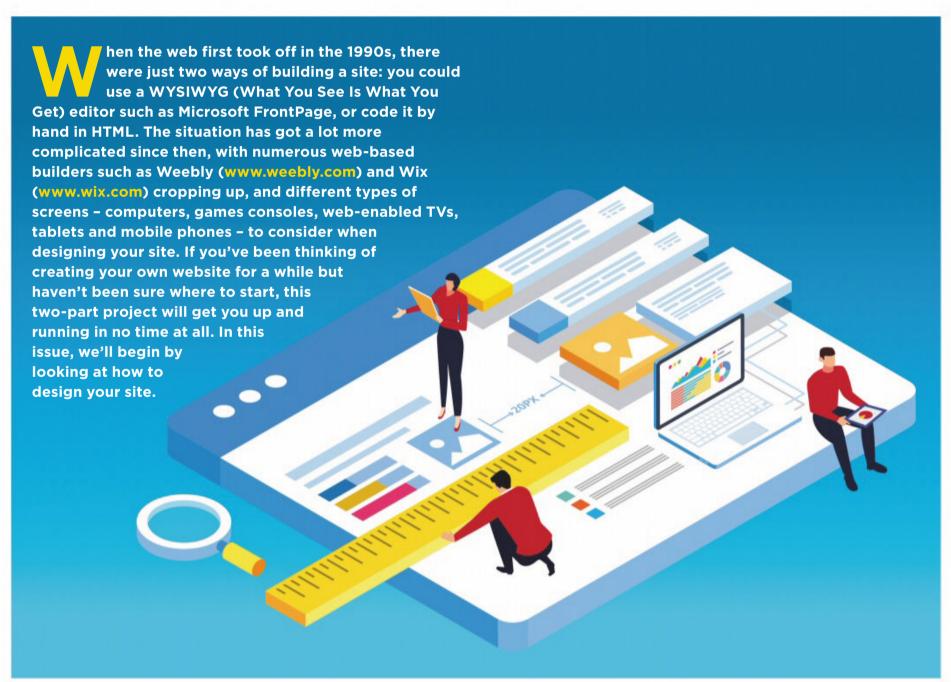
Get to grips with some serious tech tinkering to boost your computer and other devices





Create your own website from scratch Part 1: Design the site

In the first of a two-part series, **Wayne Williams** explains how to work out a design, use templates and get to grips with web-building tools



What you'll need

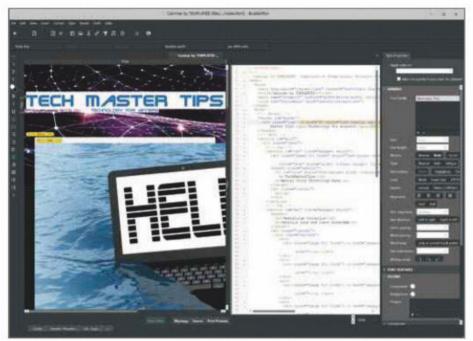
There are plenty of web-based drag-and-drop designers that let you put together a good-looking site in minutes and check that it displays properly in every possible browser combination. Many even offer to host the finished site for free – or until you buy a domain and hosting package of your own. For this first part of the project, though, we'll look at how to build a website using the excellent BlueGriffon

(bluegriffon.org). This lets you design your website offline, so it's ready for when we start looking at domains and web hosting in the second part of this project next Issue.

If you haven't heard of BlueGriffon, it's a free advanced website creator built around Gecko, Firefox's rendering engine. It offers all the editing features you'd expect, and a wizard-based template you can use to get started. It's ideal for web

designers of all abilities because you can quickly switch between WYSIWYG and Source (HTML) views. We'll show you how to get started in our Mini Workshop, opposite.

Some features, such as the responsive design tool (which changes the site's layout dynamically to suit the display you're viewing it on), are available only in the paid-for edition. If you decide you need these features, you'll have to pay





BlueGriffon's Dual View is a good way to start learning HTML

Preview your site in a web browser to help identify any problems

€90 (around £81) for a basic licence. BlueGriffon also charges for its instruction manual (€9 - around £8).

Before you start

You may be tempted to launch the software and start creating your site

straight away, but it's worth sketching some designs on paper first, because this lets you play with different ideas and explore your options. Have a look at other websites and note what they do well. Don't be afraid to steal layout ideas from other sources but don't copy someone else's design entirely. Instead, use it as a template, and think up ways you could alter or improve it. Changing the colour scheme makes a website look very different, too. The choice of colours

you use is important - you want to pick hues that complement one another rather than clash.

There's no need to design your site entirely from scratch - you'll find plenty of free templates online that you can customise as you wish. Free Web



Free Web Templates has nearly 4,000 designs on offer

Templates (www.freewebtemplates.com) is a great resource and well worth visiting. We show you how to import a template into BlueGriffon in our Mini Workshop on page 61.

Understanding the site code

BlueGriffon's Dual View mode makes it easy to work out what the different lines of code do. Click an element on the WYSIWYG side and the program highlights the code for it on the Source side. If you make a change to the code (such as altering the text or changing the name or location of a photo, for example) it's reflected on the preview side. Once you know a few snippets of HTML and CSS, you can quickly make wholesale changes to your site.

Optimise your images

Reducing the size and quality of the images on your site ensures that it loads quickly, which is good news for anyone

MINI WORKSHOP | Create a simple page using BlueGriffon



BlueGriffon can look daunting at first, but getting started is easy. Click File 1 and select 'New wizard'. 2 The wizard then asks what type of document you want to create. El If you're not sure which language to use, HTML 5 (the default option) is fine. Click Next. 4



Give your document a title, author name, description and keywords, then click Next again. You can now choose colours for the background, text and links. The Document Background screen lets you upload a background image 🗓 and adjust its position. 🔁 On the next screen, choose to 'Apply a predefined CSS layout'.



When you click Finish, the sample page loads, ready for editing. You can change the name of the site by typing over the text. The buttons at the bottom let you switch between the WYSIWYG and Source (HTML) views. El If you prefer, you can choose Dual View and see both views side by side.



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3	sky	Sky: Broadband Essential	£20.00 (£25 after 18 months)	18 months	11Mbps avg. speed	unlimited	£240.00
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Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 6 August 2019.

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

switching service

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Wix allows you to build a basic website simply by answering a few questions, and can even host it for you for free

WORDPRESS.ORC Meet WordPress

Wordpress offers a couple of ways of creating a site, including the option of hosting it yourself

who tries to view it using a slower connection. Where possible, you should resize your photos to the exact height and width you want them to appear. Use

GIF or PNG files for diagrams and logos, and JPEG files for photographs. Reducing the JPEG quality to around 70 per cent removes some of the image data from the photo but makes the file much smaller, without significantly affecting its quality.

Alternative site builders

There are other ways to build your site online. Wix (www.wix .com) is a simple tool that puts together a site based on your answers to a handful of

questions. You can then customise the results in any way you like, picking and choosing from thousands of advanced design elements. Wix is free to use,



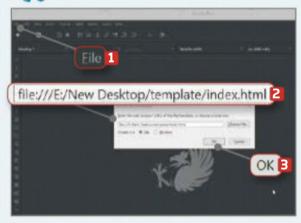
Edit elements directly in BlueGriffon's WYSIWYG mode

comes with free hosting and lets you create as many sites as you like. For more advanced features, including connecting your own domain, you need to upgrade to a Premium package from £3 a month.

Another option well worth considering is WordPress (wordpress.com), which builds a site in front of your eyes based on the answers you give to questions. You can buy a domain for it as part of the creation process. WordPress is also available as a self-hosted platform that gives you full control over your site and lets you add plug-ins and adverts. This is available at wordpress.org (note the slightly different address).

Finally, when you buy a domain or hosting from somewhere like 1&1 IONOS (www.ionos.co.uk) you can use its own builder to put your site together.

MINI WORKSHOP | Import and customise a template in BlueGriffon



An easy way to get the site you want is to download a template you like from Free Web Templates (www .freewebtemplates.com). Unzip the downloaded file, then open BlueGriffon and go to File, 🚹 Open. Navigate to the folder containing your template, select Index.html 🔁 and click Open, then OK. El The template will load.



You can now customise it. This box 💶 contains some placeholder text 🚺 and an image. 2 To change the photo, double-click it and use the 'Insert an Image' box to locate the photo you want. B Give it a title 4 and click OK. To change the text, select it and type over it. Apply italics or bold using the emphasis buttons. 5



To change the typeface and text size, select the text, then go to the Panels menu and choose Style Properties. Expand the General section 💶 and click the plus button 🔼 to add a font family, then select it and set the size you want. El Expand the Colors section 4 to change an item's foreground or background colour.

NEXT ISSUE

Part 2: How To... Get a domain and host your website

On sale Wednesday 4 Sept

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Web User Masterclass

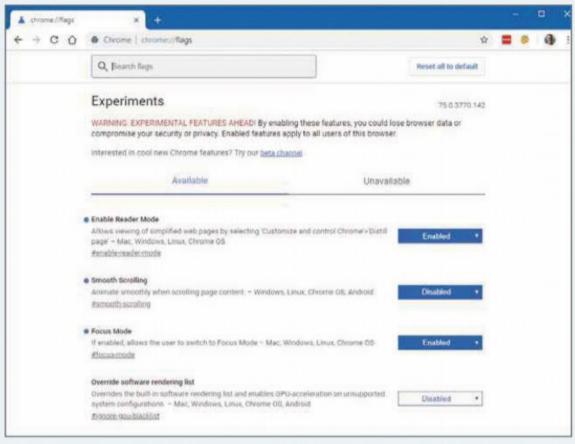
Discover secret features and settings in Chrome and Firefox



Access hidden browser settings

Il web browsers have settings that you can access and configure easily. In Chrome, for example, simply open the menu and click Settings. These aren't the browser's only settings, though - there are lots more hidden in secret control panels. To access them in Chrome type chrome://flags into the address bar and press Enter. In Firefox, type about:config. In both cases, the browser warns you that these are advanced settings, so bear that in mind when tinkering with them. For the brave, however, there are some great tweaks that let you customise how the browser works.

These tips may work in other browsers, too, because many are based on the same two core systems. Opera uses the same engine as Chrome, for example, so you can apply many of the Chrome changes to Opera from opera://flags. The new Edge will also be based on Chrome, so if you're testing it, type edge://flags.



Experiment with advanced browser features using Chrome flags

Clean up web pages

Web pages are often teeming with distracting elements, such as adverts, menus, pop-up messages and so on. Chrome has a hidden feature that removes these distractions to present a clean, ad-free article that's easier to read and print. Go to chrome://flags and look for Enable Reader Mode. It's disabled by default, but selecting Enable and relaunching Chrome adds a 'Distill page' option to the menu.



Remove all the clutter from web pages with Chrome's Reader mode

When you want to read an article on the web, open Chrome's menu and click 'Distill page' to strip out everything except the text and images. This only works on articles, not home pages, forum pages and so on.



Manage Chrome extensions

Managing your Chrome extensions from the menu is fairly straightforward, but you can make it even quicker and easier by adding a button to the toolbar. Open chrome://flags, enable Extensions Toolbar Menu and relaunch Chrome.

The new toolbar icon looks like a jigsaw piece and opens a new menu when you click it. From here you can enable or disable extensions and go to the extensions manager.

The Extensions Toolbar Menu button lists every extension that's enabled in your browser, and clicking the three dots beside each one opens a menu for that extension. One option lets you unpin the extension from the toolbar.

This removes the toolbar icon but leaves the extension running, so it's a good way to clean up the browser interface if it starts getting cluttered.

The new menu also shows extensions that are running but hidden, and you can pin them to add their icon to the toolbar. It's a good way to find out if you have any hidden extensions running in your browser.

The 'Parallel downloading' flag accelerates file downloads by opening multiple connections. It can make a significant difference when you're

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.

......

downloading very large files, but is barely noticeable for small downloads.

It's not always easy to tell what the default setting is for many Chrome flags. Is 'Parallel downloading' enabled by default or not? Set it from Default to Enabled to make sure it's on.



Improve Firefox spelling

Search for spellcheck in about:config and double-click layout.spellcheckDefault. A value of 0 stops Firefox spellchecking as you type. The default value is 1, which checks multi-line text boxes, such as comments. Set it to 3 to spellcheck everything.



When you have several tabs open, it can be hard to remember what's in them. Enable tab previews to see a thumbnail image of the page when you hover the mouse over a tab. Open Chrome://flags and type hover into the search box. Enable the two hover flags and relaunch the browser. Open a few tabs and let the mouse hover over them to see the thumbnails.



Enable Hover Cards and see previews when the mouse hovers over tabs



Focus and get more done

If you find it hard to focus when multiple tabs are open and seeking your attention, enable Focus Mode. Open chrome://flags and set Focus Mode to Enable, then relaunch Chrome.

To focus your attention on just one tab, right-click it and select 'Focus this tab'. This opens the tab in a new window that looks like an app. The browser interface is hidden, so you can't see the address bar, tabs, borders and so on. Minimise Chrome and focus on this tab. It's great if you need to work online writing emails or working in an online office suite, for example - and don't want to be tempted by other tabs.



Chrome's distraction-free Focus Mode hides most of the browser's interface

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Make Firefox faster

Animated menus, icons and so on look nice the first time you see them, but they create extra work for your PC. If you value efficiency over fancy visual tricks, switch them off.

Type about:config into Firefox and search for 'animations'. There are several animation settings, but toolkit.cosmeticAnimations.enabled stands out as one we can live without. Double-click to change it from true to false, then restart Firefox.



Select a scroll style

Most web pages are bigger than a browser window, which means we have to scroll to see all the content. Scrolling can be smooth or jerky, and the Smooth Scrolling setting in chrome://flags lets you choose between the two.

Enable Smooth Scrolling, relaunch, then try scrolling up and down a web page. Then disable Smooth Scrolling and try it again. With an older, slower PC, you may find that disabling this makes scrolling a little faster.



Improve video playback

If you have trouble playing video on web pages, try changing 'Hardware-accelerated video decode' in chrome://flags to the opposite setting. This can solve video problems, but Enabled is the better option if your PC supports it.



Configure Firefox tabs

that let you configure tabs in Firefox, type about:config, then type tabs into the search box. Look for browser.tabs.closeTabByDblclick and double-click it to set it to true or false. With the option set to true, you can close the current tab by doubleclicking it anywhere, which is easier than clicking the close button.

To see a list of settings

When you close the last tab, do you want Firefox to quit too, or would you prefer the browser to remain open? Double-click browser.tabs .closeWindowWithLastTab to switch between true and false. Try both options to see which you prefer.

When you open tabs one after another, you eventually reach a point where there are too many to show full size, so they shrink. What is your minimum acceptable size? Doubleclick browser.tabs.tabMinWidth and change the default value from 76 to 90 or 100 if you prefer bigger tabs, or to 50 or 60 if you want smaller ones.



Fix bad internet connections

If you have a poor internet connection that sometimes leaves your PC offline for a minute or so, you might like to adjust the chrome://flag that reloads pages automatically when a lost connection becomes available again.

With Offline Auto-Reload Mode enabled, Chrome tries repeatedly to reload a page so that it appears when your internet connection is back. It's enabled by default, but you can disable it if you don't want pages to reload automatically. If you want only visible tabs to reload, enable Only Auto-Reload Visible Tabs.

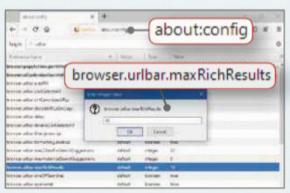


Customise the address bar

When you start typing into Firefox's URL (address) bar, the browser makes suggestions. Go to about: config and search urlbar for settings. Double-click browser.urlbar.maxRichResults and enter a number up to 15 to change the number of suggestions it lists. Double-click browser.urlbar.openintab to change this from false to true, then click a suggestion to open it in a new tab instead of the current tab.

The browser.urlbar.suggest .bookmark flag shows or hides suggestions from your bookmarks when set to true or false, while browser.urlbar.suggest.history does the same for your browsing history.

Clicking in the URL bar selects all the text inside it so you can replace it simply by typing. If you want to be able to edit it instead, double-click browser.urlbar.clickSelectsAll and set it to false.



Search Firefox about: config for urlbar to configure the settings

.....

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



Some programs

folder access' is

don't work in

Windows 10

'Controlled

switched on

when

GENERAL PC

Reinstall LibreOffice after a Windows 10 update

A couple of weeks ago, I downloaded and installed a large Windows 10 update. Until then I'd had no problems with Windows updates, but this time it seems to have deleted LibreOffice (www. libreoffice.org). The office suite is no longer listed in the Start menu, the desktop icon has disappeared and the list of programs in the Control Panel mentions only a LibreOffice 6.2 Help pack.

I've checked my Documents folder, and all my letters and other documents are still there, but their icons have changed to W for Microsoft Word. When I open them, they look as if they're trying to open for a couple of seconds, then they disappear. I'm very annoyed, to say the least.

If I download a new version of LibreOffice, do you think my documents will change back to the way they were before the update? I've tried to find a system restore point, but I can't see one.

Linda Vears, via email



Something has definitely happened to your copy of LibreOffice. It looks as if it's been deleted or uninstalled, and the document icons have returned to the defaults. Reinstalling it should solve the problem, but first open Settings, Apps and uninstall anything relating to LibreOffice, including help files.

Next, download the latest version of LibreOffice, but before you install it, open the Settings app and search for 'controlled folder access'. Click it in the search results and turn it off in the next window - it can cause problems with LibreOffice when enabled. Install LibreOffice and it should be fine.

GENERAL PC

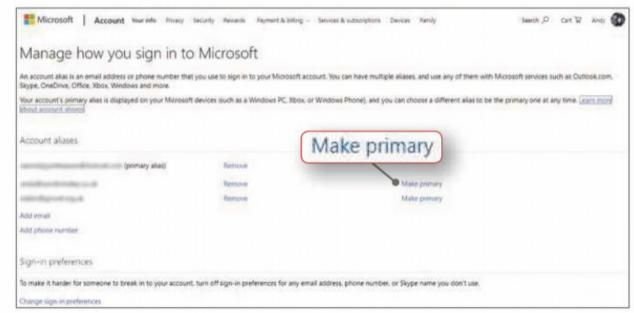
Switch email accounts

I used to have a Freeserve email address but was forced to switch to Outlook when the service closed down. Now when I want to check my email, I have to click to sign in, then sign out and back in again using my Outlook details before I can access it.

I've tried to change the old address in Settings by creating an alias, but Outlook won't let me because it's a point of contact in case Microsoft wants to inform me of any problems with my account.

Microsoft has my details and must surely know that Freeserve no longer exists, so why can't I change it?

Paul Kelly, via email



Change the default email address to a different one in Outlook.com

It sounds as if your Freeserve account is the primary email account registered with Microsoft. You can associate several email

addresses with a Microsoft account, but one of them is treated as your primary contact, and that one is deemed the most important.

Open Settings, select Accounts and click 'Manage my Microsoft account'. A browser opens, taking you to account .microsoft.com, and signs you in. Click 'More actions' under your name in the top-left corner and select 'Edit profile'. On the next page, click 'Manage how you sign in to Microsoft'.

You'll see all the email addresses associated with your Microsoft account, one of which is labelled Primary. Is Freeserve set as your Primary address? If it is, click 'Make primary' next to a different address. You should have at least one @outlook.com address, and there is a link to add an extra email address if you need one.

Once you've switched your primary account from Freeserve to an @outlook .com address, you should be able to use the Remove link to get rid of the old one. However, we'd advise keeping it for a while to make sure your new primary email address works before deleting it.

GENERAL PC

Restore files lost when refreshing PC

My computer has been quite slow, but I read somewhere that refreshing

Windows backs up some folders automatically - check for previous versions

Windows can speed it up. I found the 'Reset this PC' option in the Settings app and used it. However, I realised too late that I'd chosen the option that doesn't keep your files. I now have a fast, clean PC, but I've lost everything! How do I get my files back? Is it even possible?

Colin Moore, via email

Have you ever created any backups on an external USB drive? Have you used File History in the Control Panel to store copies of your files on a USB drive? If you have, you can copy the contents of the Documents. Pictures, Music and Video folders back.

Did you sync the Documents, Desktop and Pictures folders with OneDrive? You do this by right-clicking OneDrive in Explorer and clicking Settings, then selecting the

'Back up' tab and clicking 'Manage

Sharing General Security Previous Versions Customise Location Previous versions come from File History or from restore points. Previous Versions Folder versions: Name Date modified Earlier this month (1) Documents 02/07/2019 15:13 Last month (2) Documents 18/06/2019 15:40 Documents 17/06/2019 16:09 Earlier this year (2) Documents 2 31/05/2019 14:55 # Documents 04/05/2019 13:26 <u>Open</u> Restore | Cancel OK Apply backup'. This stores the contents of

Documents Properties

these folders online. Go to the OneDrive website and see if your files are there.

Open an Explorer window, right-click the Documents, Pictures, Music and

CRYPTOCURRENCY

Make money by cryptomining on an old PC

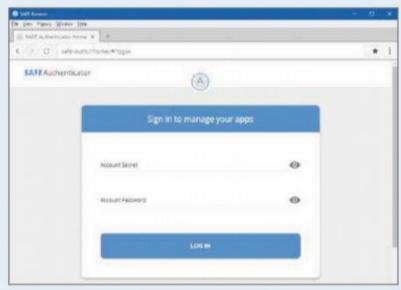
I have an assortment of working but obsolescent pieces of hardware, including a couple of laptops. Arweave's Permaweb (www.arweave.org) and Maidsafe (maidsafe.net) offer cryptocurrency in return for hosting encrypted files on your PC as part of a drive to create a decentralised, serverless internet.

Do you have any details on the PC specifications you need for this? I can't find much about it on Arweave's or Maidsafe's websites.

lan Smith, via email

You can use Arweave either as a miner or an archiver. A miner is a computer that's set up to store web pages, and an archiver is someone who submits web pages to be stored.

The Mining Guide (bit.ly/mine482) provides details on becoming a miner, which is what you want to do with your old computers. It has guides for Linux and macOS, although it warns against using Windows. You also need a static IP address, which is rare for home internet connections.



A minimum of 8GB of memory is recommended. Details of disk space and processor requirements are sketchy, but like all cryptocurrencyrelated processes, you need lots of computing power to take part. In other words, this isn't a job for old hardware, and you're unlikely to make much money.

Being an archiver is much easier. You simply browse the web, then submit pages to be archived in the system using the Arweave Chrome extension (bit.ly/arew482). Archiving

To access the Safe Network, you need a special browser that's only available by invitation

a page costs money, though. MaidSafe is the creator of the Safe Network, which is similar to Arweave in many ways but is simpler and requires less powerful hardware. Instead of miners, it recruits farmers, who store data in vaults on their computer.

If you become a farmer and store data, you can earn Safecoin cryptocurrency when

someone requests data from your vault. However, your computer has to compete with others to deliver the data, and not every successful data delivery results in payment, so you're not guaranteed an income. The value of cryptocurrencies changes like the weather, too.

If you'd like to explore the Safe Network, go to bit.ly/saf482 and install the Safe Browser, then request an invitation from the same page. Read the FAQ at bit.ly/safaq482 for more information.



Videos folders in the sidebar and select Properties. Click the Previous Versions tab and see if there are any backups there that you can select and restore.

If you're unlucky and you find that there are no backups, no files in OneDrive and no previous versions, you're almost out of options – but not quite. Go to the CCleaner website, download Recuva (bit.ly/recu482) and run it. This lifesaving tool has an option to find all deleted files, but it may be easier to focus on one file type at a time, such as Pictures, for example. Select the option to search in a specific location and set it to C:\. Try a standard scan for deleted files, and if that doesn't work, repeat the process with Enable Deep Scan selected.

Finding your deleted files could take a long time, and there is no guarantee that the tool will be able to find any or all of them. The deleted file list is likely to contain a lot of items, which makes finding your lost files like looking for a needle in a haystack.

GENERAL PC

Recover lost photos

I was transferring photographs from my camera to my computer's hard drive for safekeeping when something



Find and recover deleted files using Recuva to search for them

went wrong. I saw the photos in Explorer, so I selected them and used cut. Then I navigated to a folder on my computer's hard drive (a subfolder of Pictures) and tried to paste them into it, but nothing happened. When I went back to the camera's storage the photos were no longer there.

Where did the photos go and is there any way of getting them back? Why did this happen?

Sarah Thompson, via email

When you cut files in Explorer by selecting them and pressing Ctrl+X, for example, Windows copies only the filenames to the clipboard. It doesn't delete any files at this point. Only when you move the files does it delete the originals, so it's difficult to see how you could have lost your files this way.

One possibility is that you did move them but not to where you expected. Perhaps you accidentally selected a different folder and the photos ended up there instead.

They're probably JPEG images, so try searching your hard drive for that type of file. Select the C: drive in Explorer, then click in the search box. Enter *.jpg date: and select 'This week', 'Last week', 'This month' or 'Last month' to show all JPEG images from within that date range. With any luck, your

You can also try to recover the photos from your camera's storage. Connect it to the PC and open an Explorer window as if you were going to transfer photos. Then run Recuva (bit.ly/recu482) and scan the camera's storage for deleted files. The program should find them and let you recover them.

photos will be on the drive somewhere.

If this ever happens again, remember that pressing Ctrl+Z undoes the last operation in Explorer, such as restoring deleted or moved files.

HARDWARE

Stop your PC crashing

Summer is here and temperatures are rising, but my computer is freezing! Sometimes it freezes on the lock screen, and other times it gets to the desktop and then freezes. Is the heat responsible for this? I read that old PCs can get clogged up with dust.

Bill Gardener, via email

Your PC is freezing before it has had time to generate any heat, so it's probably not temperature related. The cause is more likely to be something that loads with Windows, such as a hardware driver or a program that runs in the background.

Search for and open Device Manager from the taskbar. Expand each section all the way to 'Print queues', right-click each item and



Updating the drivers in Device Manager could stop rogue hardware crashing your PC

select 'Update driver'. Then right-click an empty part of the taskbar and select Task Manager. Click the Start-up tab, select each item and disable it. Restart, and hopefully your PC will run normally.



This fortnight Roland has been keeping cool in the heat thanks to a USB-powered fan plugged into his PC



Readers' Helpdesk

Can you help your fellow readers with their computer problems? Send your questions and answers to webuser@webuser.co.uk

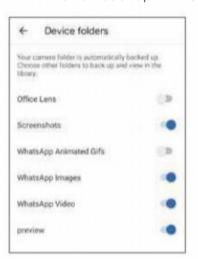
ANDROID

Sync your Google Photos on a new phone

When I upgraded my phone recently, I was able to download most of my data, apps and so on from the cloud simply by signing into Google. I imagined this would be the same for photos. However, while the Photos app seems to have my pictures, if I click the attachment icon in an email and navigate to the files, the photos are nowhere to be seen.

Heather Jane Gregson, via email

The first thing to do if you encounter this problem is to give it time. Your phone is probably still doing a lot of downloading and syncing in the background. If you still can't access your files, check that Backup is enabled. Open Settings, Google and select the Backup option. The first thing to switch on, if it isn't already, is 'Back up to Google'. Under this is a button that lets you make a full backup immediately. Scroll further



Switch on these settings to save all your precious memories

down the page to check what the phone backs up, including 'Photos & videos'. Tap into this section and switch on 'Back up & sync'. Next, go to 'Back up device folders', where you can choose to back up folders such as WhatsApp Video and Screenshots. To check that it's working, head into your Photos app. A message at the top should say 'Backup

complete'. If it isn't working, you'll see a cloud icon with a line through it.

Steve Clark, Features Writer, Web User

HARDWARE

Fix your Windows 10 trackpad

I finally upgraded my Windows 7 laptop to Windows 10. I don't miss

READERS RESPOND

Combine your social media

In Issue 480 (bit.ly/webuser480), Chloe Weston asked if there were any Android apps that combine all social media accounts into one. I've tried a number of these apps for work, where I need to use additional accounts. My favourite, despite the adverts, is All Social Media (bit.ly/social482) - or to give it its full title, All Social Media Network Pro 2019 Social Vault. This app lets you connect to all the major social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Reddit. It essentially works as a multi-tab browser, with links to sign in and save each account. There's even an incognito browser and an intruder selfie feature to help keep your profiles a little safer.

Jonny Chianti, via email







All Social Media keeps all vour accounts in one place

CAN YOU HELP?

webuser@webuser.co.uk

You can seek help or suggest solutions to other readers' problems by emailing webuser@webuser.co.uk or via www.facebook.com/ webusermagazine or twitter.com/webusermagazine.

HARDWARE

My laptop has been struggling with the hot weather we've had recently. Are there any good ways to cool it down and stop it churning out an insane amount of heat?

Robert Schofield, via email

ANDROID

How do I translate web pages from other languages in Google Chrome for Android? I can't see where I need to click to magically turn it all into English!

Damien Davers, via email

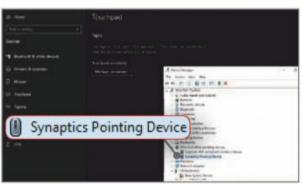
the old operating system as much as I thought I would, but I sorely miss the way my trackpad worked before the upgrade. Incredibly, the new OS has completely ruined the trackpad, and I've had to resort to plugging in a USB mouse. What can I do to fix this?

Nigel Kendall, via email

Unfortunately, this is a known (though uncommon) issue when upgrading. The first thing to check is your touchpad settings, so type touchpad into the taskbar's search box. Click the result and, in the next window, choose 'Additional settings', where you can make sure everything works and is set up as you like it. If you have a touchscreen laptop, you can

also try right-clicking the taskbar and selecting 'Show touchpad button' to bring up an onscreen trackpad. If neither works, press Win+X and open Device Manager. Under 'Mice and other pointing devices', select the listed trackpad, then choose Update Driver.

Steve Clark, Features Writer, Web User



If your touchpad isn't working, dive into Device Manager and update the drivers

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. Please send questions and answers

to webuser@webuser.co.uk

TOP TIP

BROWSERS

Watch films while browsing in Chrome

Has anyone else tried the Picturein-Picture Extension by Google (bit.ly/pip482)? I'd been looking for a way to watch YouTube and Netflix videos while browsing, and this fits the bill perfectly. Simply start playing your video, then press Alt+P and the video is transported to the corner of the screen. It stays on top of everything, even other programs. You can move the PiP anywhere on the screen, and adjust its size just by dragging the corners. Just



disc winner

Keep watching your favourite videos, no matter what else you're doing

don't close the video tab!

RJ Leigh, via email

GENERAL PC

Rearrange items on the taskbar

Here's a quick tip: did you know that you can rearrange the order of the icons on the taskbar by clicking and dragging them to the left and right? It works on both the left-hand and right-hand sides of the taskbar.

Dave Robinson, via email

MAPS

Plan around roadworks and traffic incidents

I tend to use Google Maps for everything, but when I opened the Windows 10 Maps app recently, I found that it's much better than it used to be. For example, if you click Road at the top and switch on Traffic, Incidents and Cameras, the map shows roadworks and traffic incidents, such as accidents. Clicking the map



See traffic information in the Windows 10 Maps app before you set off on a road trip

symbols shows when the roadwork or incident is likely to be cleared. It's a useful tool for checking your route before you set off on a journey.

Rebecca Lee, via email

GENERAL PC

Slide to shut down

I've found an odd and, I think, relatively unknown Windows feature called 'Slide to shut down'. Right-click the desktop and select New, Shortcut. Type %windir%\System32\ SlideToShutDown.exe, then click Next. Name the shortcut Shut Down and click Finish. When you click this shortcut, the lock screen photo comes halfway down the screen with a message that says 'Slide to shut down your PC'. Click the arrow (or tap the icon and swipe down if you have a touch screen) to shut

Roger Stott, via email

GENERAL PC Cut back on notifications

If you have too many Windows notifications popping up in the corner of your screen, use 'Focus assist' to reduce the number. This tool is in the Windows 10 Settings app, so press Windows+i, click System, then choose 'Focus assist'. Select 'Priority only' and then click 'Customise your priority list'. Now



you can choose which apps show notifications. For example, you can add the Mail app to show new email notifications or hide it to stop them. Cutting out unnecessary notifications makes Windows less distracting, and you can still see them in Action Centre if you really want to.

Jason Quinn, via email

WEBSITES

Toss a coin on the go

If you're as indecisive as I am, you've probably resorted to tossing a coin to help you make a choice now and then. The trouble is, no one seems to carry small change any more, and flipping a contactless debit card isn't quite the same. Luckily, I recently stumbled on justflipacoin.com. Visit the site to start a virtual coin spinning, before randomly landing on heads or tails. Don't like the result? Just click 'Flip again?'.

Scott Dreyfuss, via email



If you can't make a decision, leave it to chance - or a randomising algorithm

OFFICE

Shrink Word's online toolbars

I use the online version of Microsoft Word to write letters and documents. It's not brilliant but it's good enough, and means I don't have to pay for the full version of Office. One irritation is that there's so much unnecessary clutter at the top of the screen: a browser bar, the address bar, a thick blue bar, a menu bar and a toolbar, then the document. The cursor is already halfway down the



screen before you've even started typing! It reminds me of the old Internet Explorer, which was laden with toolbars.

There is a solution, though. Go to the Chrome menu (this also works in other browsers) and click the zoom control to shrink the page to 90%. Then click the zoom control at the bottom of the Word web app to increase the document to 110%. This shrinks the blue bar, menu and toolbar but keeps the document size the same.

Gareth Richardson, via email

GENERAL PC

Do more with your touchpad

I wonder if many other readers know that you can do a lot more with your laptop's touchpad in Windows 10. I already knew that you could drag two fingers up and down or from side to side to scroll through a page. However, I didn't know that you can zoom in and out by pinching, just like on a smartphone. You can also switch to a new desktop and open Cortana. To get started, search the Start menu for touchpad settings, then in the new window, under 'Touch and go', select 'Learn other gestures' to see what else you can do.

Christian Mallory, via email

BROWSERS

Get Edge-style smooth scrolling in Chrome

Say what you like about Edge, its scrolling is very smooth. If you download SmoothScroll (bit.ly/smooth482) from the Chrome Web Store, however, you can enjoy the same silky smooth scrolling in Google Chrome. There are plenty of options to suit your preferences, and the developer has also released apps for Windows and Mac, so you can benefit from smooth scrolling everywhere.

Frederick Thomas, via email

SOFTWARE

See what's going on with your computer

In Issue 478 you advised readers not to install Windows diagnostic tool SIW. In case you didn't know, a great free alternative is HWInfo (www.hwinfo.com).

Carl Waring, via Facebook



This reader says HWInfo is a better diagnostic tool than SIW - and it's free

WEBSITES

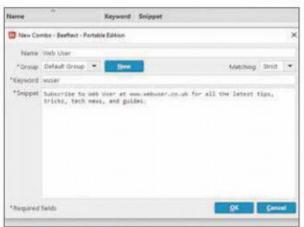
Host a file on your PC

For the uninitiated, hosting files on a server can feel like a lot of faffing about. The website Host Yo Self (hostyoself .com) takes a lot of the agony out of the process by letting you simply drag and drop files onto the site. You can then generate a URL that's unique to the file and share it with others. When someone tries to download the file, the site retrieves it from your computer. It only works when your computer is running, unless you use the trickier command-line tool (bit.ly/host482), but for basic sharing, this website does the trick quickly and efficiently.

Kelso, via email



Host Yo Self is probably the easiest way to turn your computer into a file server



Take the hassle out of typing common phrases by leaving it to Beeftext

SOFTWARE

Add specific text snippets in any application

If you're sick of typing out the same old sentences, try Beeftext (beeftext .org). This clever tool adds pre-defined text to pretty much any application, including Microsoft Word. In the Combos panel, right-click and select New. Give your new auto-text a name and, in the Keyword section, type a word that will activate the auto-text preferably an acronym or a word you don't use often. In the Snippet field, type or paste what you want Beeftext to add, such as an email signature. Click OK to save. Now when you type your keyword, the tool instantly replaces it with your text snippet.

Terry Warne, via email

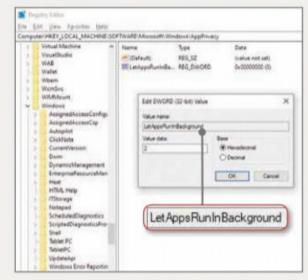
BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

GENERAL PC

Stop apps running in the background

I had a problem with Windows 10 that proved rather expensive. Every time I'd use the 'Background apps' setting to stop an app running in the background, it would start again when I next booted up my laptop. As someone who often connects my laptop to the internet using my phone as a hotspot, this Windows 10 quirk started to become a major drain on my data - not to mention my wallet! However, after receiving yet another whopping phone bill, I've found a Registry hack that solves my problem.

Open the Registry Editor and locate: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\ SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows Right-click and create a new key called AppPrivacy and, inside this folder, create a DWORD (32-bit) Value. Call it LetAppsRunInBackground. Doubleclick this and set its value to 2. Now



Hack the Registry to stop apps running in the background for good

when you press OK and restart your computer, your apps will no longer run in the background. It may be a bit too late for me, but I hope it saves someone else's data.

Georgie Hannan, via email

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





You can let us know your views via:

Star Email

Smart speakers threaten our privacy

was interested to read yet another news story about smart speakers recording and sharing what people say ('Google admits listening to private Google Home chats', Need to Know, Issue 480, bit.ly/webuser480). I think you'd have to be pretty naive to believe that anything you say to these devices is kept private, especially when they are made and sold by companies such as Google and Amazon, whose business models rely on 'monetising' their customers' data.

Amazon Echo and Google Home speakers seem like clever little devices, but they're not sentient - they are merely conduits that relay the information you provide to the relevant company's web servers, which are manned by humans, and then deliver

the response. They're not able to 'think' and act for themselves like C-3PO or R2-D2 from Star Wars.

There's certainly no harm in using these devices to check the weather forecast, get the news headlines or play music, but if you're going to ask them sensitive questions or hold private conversations in their vicinity, you

shouldn't assume that what you say will remain private. One of the main reasons smart assistants such as Alexa and Siri have polite female voices is to lure you

Back Issues disc winner



into that false sense of security, because presumably a gruff male

> voice would stoke suspicion.

Personally, I prefer to type my search queries into DuckDuckGo or

Startpage.com, rather than trust a 'smart' speaker. I'm sure they are very useful to many people, but they're certainly not private, and I don't want something in

my home that shares what I say with data-hungry companies. It's not only the walls that have ears!

......

Scott O'Sullivan, via email

My antivirus software works perfectly

Thanks for telling us about the EICAR anti-malware test file in your 'How secure is your antivirus?' article in Issue 480.

I tried downloading this file because I wanted to confirm that my BullGuard

Antivirus was doing it's job.

Wow! The download window appeared, and I'd hardly clicked the OK button when BullGuard flagged it up instantly. So thanks again to you, EICAR and BullGuard.

Robert Eaglesham, via email

everything on BritBox so viewers can pay for what they want to watch, rather than what they don't.

I already have Netflix, which offers a good mix of classic programmes and original series, so why do I need another subscription service that's just full of old repeats? The BBC needs to think again about this ridiculous rip-off plan.

Sheila Bryant, via email

My trouble-free experience with Windows 10

I don't know if I'm just unusually blessed but I have never had any difficulty installing Windows 10 updates, so I was surprised to read about David Thomson's problems in Inbox, Issue 481 ('Why can't Microsoft get updates right?'). In fairness, I have never rushed to update my PC as soon as the latest download became available, but nor have I been forced to install updates that caused me trouble.



BritBox streaming service is a rip-off

I can't believe the BBC seriously expects us to pay £5.99 for BritBox just to watch the same programmes we've seen on TV. Are we not already forced to pay a £150 licence fee every year, even if we only watch the occasional show on BBC One? Why are we being asked to cough up again for series we've already funded?

Surely the TV licence already covers the cost of the iPlayer, so why can't the BBC just put more programmes on that, rather than launching a separate subscription service? Either that or scrap the licence fee completely, and put







The Crystals











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I have been using Windows 10 for two years and found it to be fast, reliable and easy to use. I wonder if the problems that some of its users encounter are more to do with their hardware than the operating system itself. Perhaps they don't have enough memory or their hard drives have seen better days.

I know Microsoft gets a lot of bad press for rolling out updates before they're ready, but if my trouble-free experience is anything to go by, people shouldn't be put off upgrading from Windows 7 just because of a few horror stories.

That said, I hope Mr Thomson managed to recover from his update problems, and has more luck with Windows 10 in future.

Brian Rickman, via email

Overcharging your phone is a fire hazard

Mike Cole is correct to question the need to leave gadgets charged to 100% overnight ('Don't charge your devices overnight', Inbox, Issue 481). However, he didn't mention the other reasons for disconnecting devices from the mains once they are fully charged.

Not only is unnecessary charging a waste of electricity and therefore bad for the environment, but it is also a fire

> hazard. If the charger or the device's battery overheats and malfunctions, it could start an electrical fire and potentially cause very serious damage to your home or worse. To quote the London Fire Brigade's website

(www.london-fire.gov.uk):

"Don't leave items continuously on charge after the charge cycle is complete - it's best not to leave your phone plugged in overnight, for example. Batteries can present a fire risk when overcharged." This is especially true if you use a charger that didn't come with your phone, such as one you bought on holiday, because it may not meet UK safety regulations.

Is it really worth running the risk of an electrical fire because you're too lazy to unplug your phone or laptop when it's fully charged? The answer is no.

Miriam Simmons, via email



O YOU THINK USING A FULL STOP IN MESSAGES LOOKS RUDE (bit.ly/rude482)?

I always use correct punctuation, but my friends and I are so old that it's not seen as rude. It's a slippery slope and once people start using incorrect punctuation it will slip into all forms of written communication.

Rich Grove

I must be seen as very rude. I always use correct punctuation.

Marie Davies

Maybe I'm pedantic, but punctuation is important, as is the use of proper words, not abbreviations. People who can't spell or use correct punctuation are diminished in my view.

Harvey Skipsey

This is the age of disrespect. People shouldn't expect manners or courtesy. If people don't punctuate correctly, this is perceived as a lack of care for the recipient (or deliberate rudeness). However, most people don't care.

Lance Parkington

I always use correct punctuation and capitals for proper names. The standard among the kids these days is atrocious, they can't even spell.

Geoffrey Boow

Nah. As long as I get the gist of what's said, I'll let it slide. Life's too short to concern myself with stuff like that.

Lee Dodgson

Most people have bigger things to worry about than whether or not you use a full stop at the end of messages.

Sarah Beasely

I think overusing exclamation marks can seem ruder. It looks pushy.

Simon Batchelor

ILL YOU CHOOSE GOOGLE WHEN OFFERED A CHOICE OF ANDROID SEARCH ENGINES (bit.ly/choice482)?

It's like being trapped in a one-sided, slightly bitter relationship. I keep trying to leave Google but, damn it, it always has the best answers.

Caroline Chapman @cantstopthesgnl

I've got Google set as my homepage, as well as on my mobile!

Brian Brown

I didn't even know Yahoo still had a search engine! Other than Bing, I can't name another search engine besides Google so, yes, I'll choose Google.

Nat Grove

Google isn't a search engine that I use. Google tracks you everywhere.

Anthony Robinson

Google is so ingrained with Android that I doubt anything else will provide a better option.

.....

John Graham

OW MUCH TIME DO YOU ■ LOSE TO "TECHNICAL **ISSUES" WITH YOUR BROADBAND** (bit.ly/ technical482)?

Generally none, but sadly this week I lost about 10 hours as Openreach has botched its ordering system and Zen can't process my order. Until I'm set up with Zen, I'll just have to make conversation with my missus.

Alan McClean

I reported an incident to the Post Office when my broadband went down. It took them a week to reply.

Andrew Jackson @aj44brown

Too much time with Virgin Media, it's absolutely shocking. Do not use!

Paul Feakins

I'm with Virgin Media, and rarely have a problem.

Christopher Chesters

Crime fighting is growing on social media, but it brings dangers, argues **Barry Collins**

Facebook justice fills the gap left by police

s Boris Johnson actually going to deliver on his promise of 20,000 new Bobbies on the beat? Who cares? Because Facebook has established a far bigger crime-fighting force of its own.

With the police starved of the resources to investigate petty crime properly, millions of social media users are taking matters into their own hands. Search for any town or village on the social network and you're likely to find a Facebook group where people post photos of stolen items or suspected thieves.

Official Crime & Community Watch Harwich has 6,500 members and the motto "Let's Make Our Beautiful Town Safe". Exmouth Watch has 2,600 crime spotters who are "sharing information and warnings regarding crime". DN35 CrimeWatch up in Cleethorpes has 35,000 members and encourages folk to post "CCTV footage of thefts taking place" and "anything you would deem to be crime related". Boris hasn't got a prayer of matching these numbers.

Facebook crimestoppers can be very effective at retrieving stolen goods. Recently, a friend posted pictures of her nephew's distinctive stolen bike on her local town's Facebook group. Within hours, people were posting sightings of

the bike and sharing photos of the alleged thieves riding it at a train station. The next morning, said bike was safely back with said nephew, after someone noticed it

dumped outside the town. All's well that ends well?

Well, yes and no. There's little doubt in my mind that if left to the police, my friend's nephew's bike would never have



been recovered. But there's also a serious risk that amateur sleuths will make amateur mistakes – or worse. When photos of the alleged bike thieves were posted on Facebook, several different names were suggested in the public comments – not all of whom could have been guilty of the crime they were accused of committing.

When sightings of the bike were posted, other members of the group actually went out into the streets in

📘 There's a serious risk

that amateur sleuths will

make amateur mistakes

– or worse 📕 🖣

search of the miscreants. "I've covered some ground looking for them but found nothing," reported one have-a-go hero. But there were so many simultaneous

sightings of the bike that they can't all have been the stolen one. What if one of the Facebook group had wrongly tackled a bunch of kids? How would that You can get a sense of how some folk would deal with such a problem just by reading their comments. When one of the aforementioned groups reported two lads "armed with bolt croppers" threatening kids in the area, one member responded: "funny how people don't gang up on them and rough them up. Knife or no knife, there are ways and means of defending yourself from armed attackers. It pays to learn them". He might just be a keyboard warrior, he might not.

At best, Facebook's crime-busting groups are an online extension of Neighbourhood Watch; at worst, they're armed vigilantes, such as the group formed on Facebook in the Midlands town of Kidsgrove, who are reportedly readying themselves with baseball bats to tackle the anti-social behaviour the police don't have the resources to deal with in the town.

Criminals not being brought to book or being brought to Facebook? I'm not sure what's worse.





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