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# UNLOCK YOUR WI-FI'S SECRETS

# WebUser

Issue 497

18 - 31 March 2020

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- Reveal its true speed
- Expose blackspots
- Recover passwords
- Detect intruders p40

# Protect Your Data FROM YOURSELF

What **YOU** must change to **stay private** and  
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**DISABLE,  
DISCONNECT  
& DELETE**

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PHOTOS INTO TEXT**

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**STOP WINDOWS  
UPDATES MESSING  
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when they install p64







PC Specialist recommends Windows



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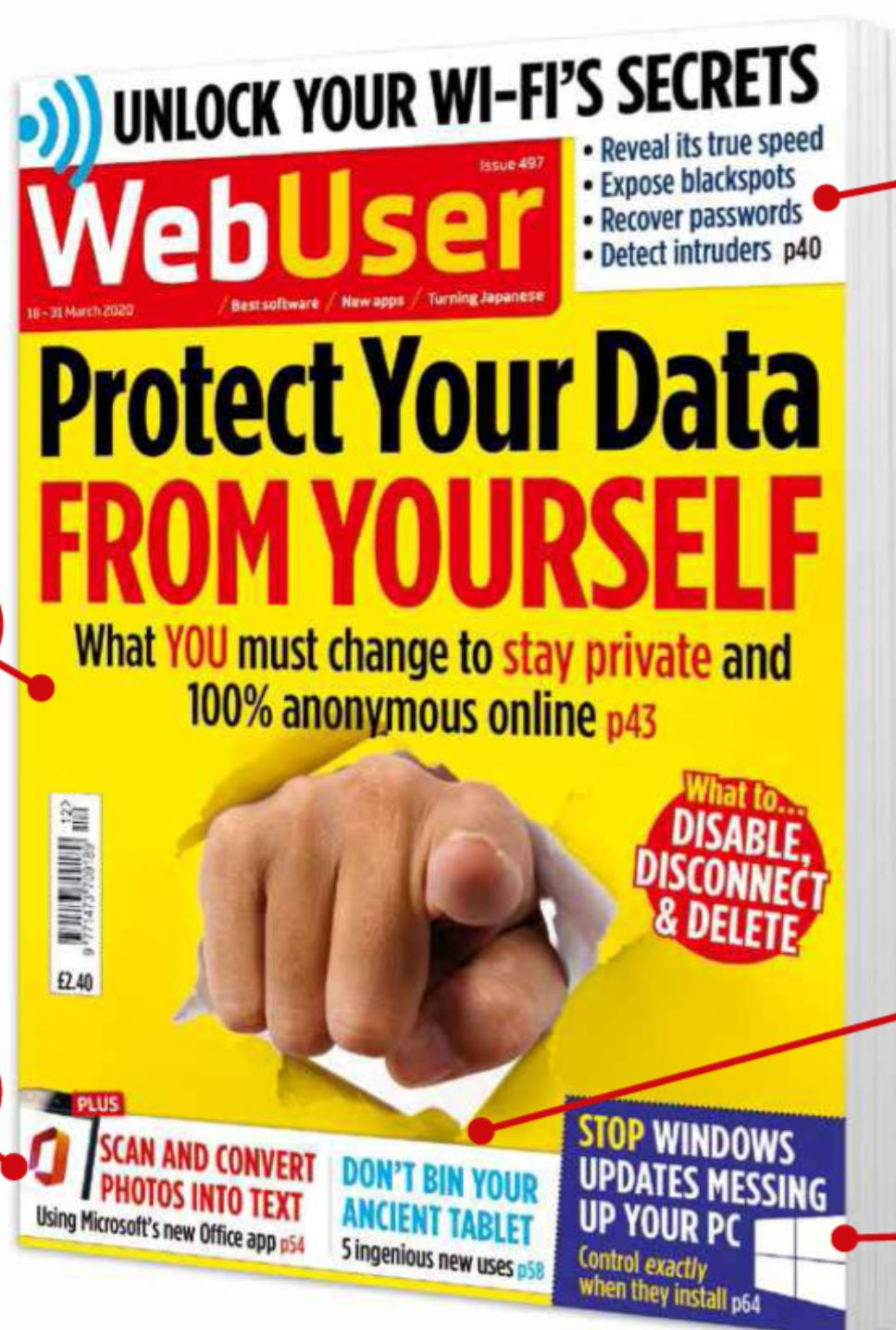
## Don't be a danger to yourself

**N**obody likes being told that “you’ve only got yourself to blame”, especially when they’re horribly hungover after a big night out or are soaked from head to toe because they didn’t take an umbrella. But when it comes to online privacy, we’re often our own worst enemies – even worse than traditional data-hoovering villains such as Google, Facebook and Amazon. Not so much for things we’ve done on the web, but for things we haven’t done.

When, for example, did you last review and delete your Google search history? Or close your accounts with websites that you

no longer use? Or check which third-party companies can access your Facebook data? In this issue’s cover feature, we explain why and how you should perform regular online housekeeping to preserve your privacy and prevent your personal information from falling into the wrong hands. All you need to do is follow the three Ds – Disconnect, Delete and Disable – to take back control of your data and be your own best friend.

**Robert Irvine, Editor**  
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[#webuser](#)



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We use Bitly links to shorten web addresses that would otherwise be too long to print in the magazine. Type these into the address bar of your browser – not the search box – and you’ll be redirected to the relevant web page.



 Average sales, Jan-Dec 2019, 24,266 copies per issue



**COVER  
FEATURE**

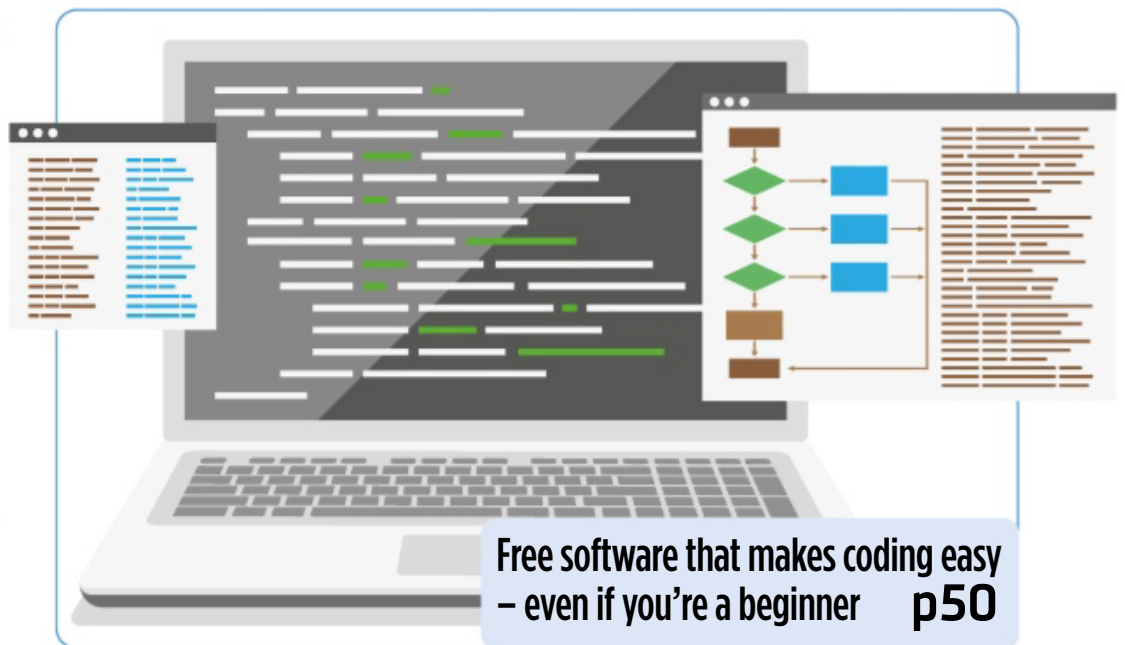
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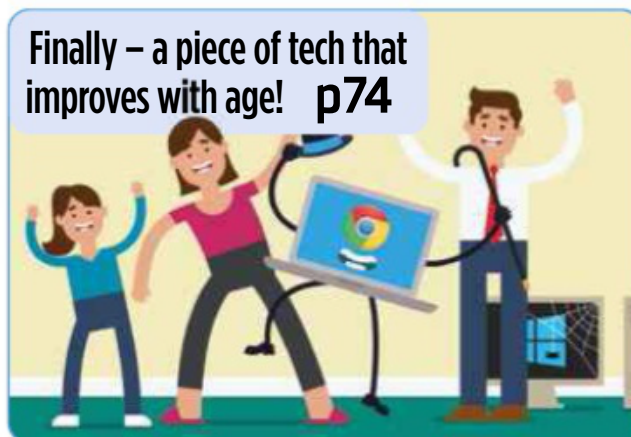
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# What's New Online

## Download 2.8 million copyright-free images

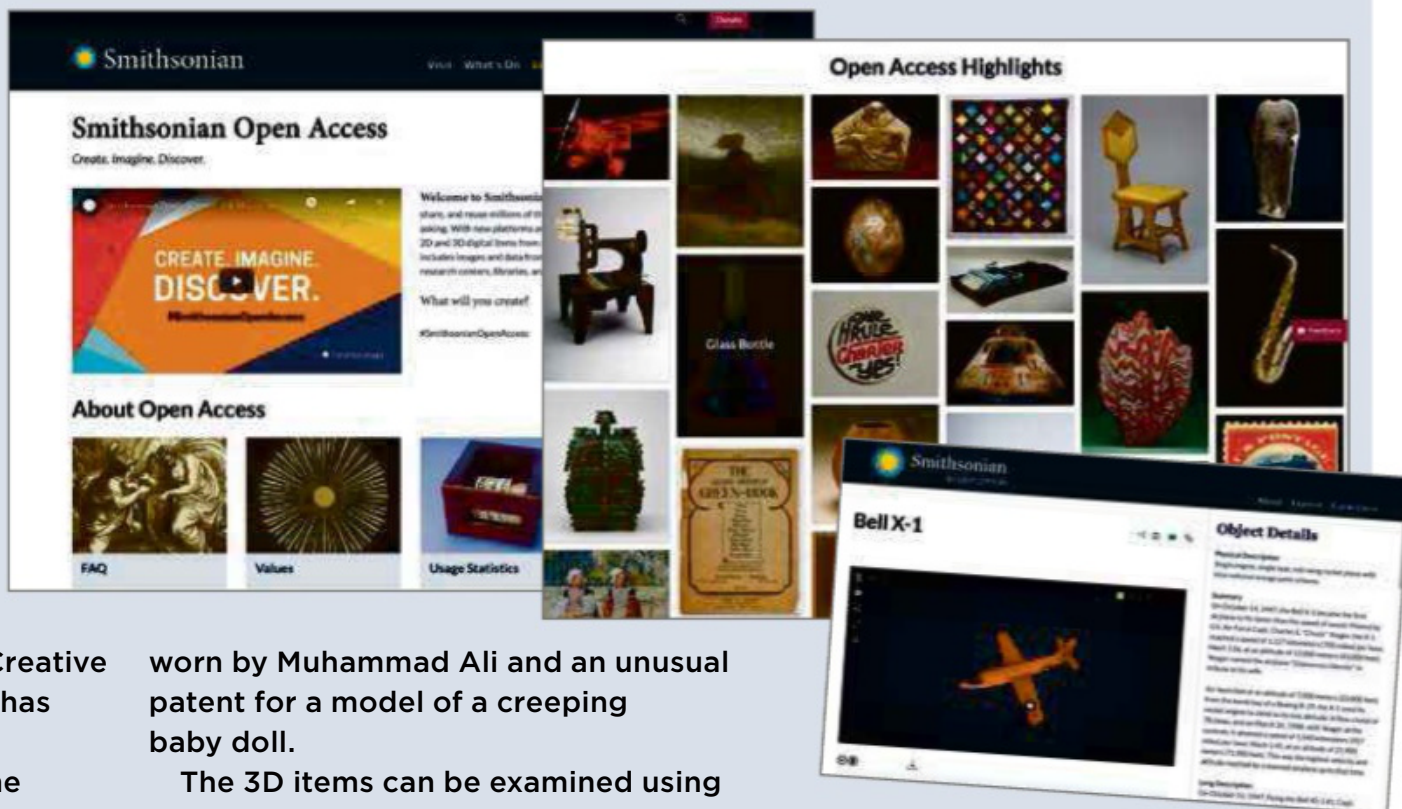
**F**or nearly 175 years, The Smithsonian Institution has been building a vast collection of objects, works of art and specimens, to document natural and cultural diversity all over the world. It has also amassed a vast library of 2D and 3D digital images, 2.8 million of which have now been placed in the public domain. This means they can be downloaded for free and without any restrictions on how they can be used.

The content, listed under a Creative Commons Zero (CC0) licence, has been drawn from across the Smithsonian's 19 museums, nine research centres, libraries, archives and the National Zoo. Items include portraits, placards, posters, contracts and images of fossils, nestled among curiosities such as boxing headgear

worn by Muhammad Ali and an unusual patent for a model of a creeping baby doll.

The 3D items can be examined using the website's 3D Voyager tool and you can also look at how the collections are being used by artists and innovators to create original works. Research datasets and collections metadata can

be downloaded and used, too, with the Smithsonian promising to add more great content over the coming months.  
[bit.ly/smith497](http://bit.ly/smith497)



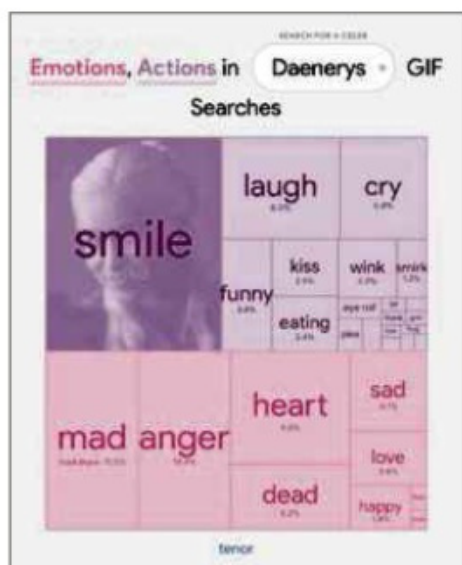
## Discover celebrity GIFs for any emotion

[bit.ly/gifs497](http://bit.ly/gifs497)

Have you ever wanted to quickly express a particular feeling online, only to find yourself searching long and hard for the perfect GIF? Well, a new set of visualisation tools based on data from Google's visual-expression search engine, Tenor ([tenor.com](http://tenor.com)), will soon help you find out which celebrity or character is most associated with the emotion or action you're seeking to convey. Simply choose a celebrity or character from a drop-down list to see how they're most

commonly used. Mickey Mouse, for instance, tends to be used most often to convey feelings of happiness. Singer Taylor Swift, on the other hand, typically displays love.

You can also search by emotions and actions, to find the celebrities most associated with them (Drake is the go-to for clapping, it seems). You can view where the celebrities lie on a GIF search spectrum, looking at ratios of sad to happy and cry to laughter.



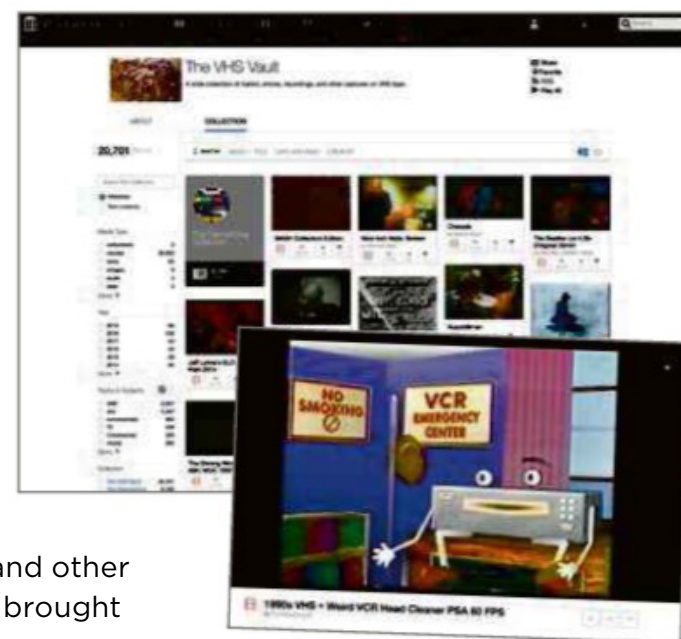
## Delve into a vault of VHS goodies

[bit.ly/vhs497](http://bit.ly/vhs497)

Memories of past television content can be as fuzzy as the tapes we recorded them on. But with the recently expanded VHS Vault on the Internet Archive, long-forgotten trailers, TV shows and other captures are being brought back to life.

There are now more than 20,700 entries including documentaries, children's programmes, portions of movies and key news events including Tiananmen Square in 1989. Most of the newer nuggets come from the US but there are close to 300 UK shows, including many made by the BBC.

To find what you're after, you can use the Internet Archive's filters to narrow your search by topic and year, or manually scour the metadata or text contents via the search engine. There's been no attempt to clean up the videos so they're presented in all their distorted, blurry glory.





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

## Make photos 3D using Facebook

[bit.ly/3dface497](https://bit.ly/3dface497)

For the past few years, Facebook has let you take 3D photos using the dual-cameras on most higher-end mobile phones. Now its app is using machine learning to bring the 3D effect to handsets with a single camera – the iPhone 7 upwards and most mid-range Android phones. You can read the blog post linked to above for an explanation of the technique.



## NEW VOICE COMMANDS



### Celebrate women's achievements

Throughout March, you can celebrate women's achievement in society, economics, science and the arts by saying: "Hey Google, Happy International Women's Day".



### Search with Google

To search with Google rather than Safari on your Apple device, install the Google app and activate the Siri Shortcut called Search With Google in its settings. You can now say: "Siri, Search with Google".



### See Facebook photos

To personalise your Echo Show wallpaper with Facebook images, link your account by going to the Alexa Facebook app, select Settings, Photos and say: "Alexa, show my Facebook photos".

## Draw anything on a map

[gribrouillon.fr](https://gribrouillon.fr)

Whether you want to express an artistic idea or simply need to highlight a location, you can grab one of four differently-sized brushes and draw on this interactive map. There's a



wide variety of colours to choose from, as well as an Undo button, should you make

a mistake. The browser-based tool also comes with a great choice of backgrounds, from Bing aerial photography and an OpenStreetMap to Esri World Imagery. Start by entering a street, city or country, or zoom into the map. Once you're done, you can click the Share button to send the URL to others.

## Generate a fake British dish

[bit.ly/british497](https://bit.ly/british497)

Anyone for bubble and squeak, spotted dick or toad in the hole? Or perhaps you'd rather get your chops around knickerbocker mash, fried crumble or beef in the tiddly. If you've never heard of the latter three – don't worry, they're the inventions of this fun food generator, which has taken a bunch of British dishes and mixed up their names to create odd made-up recipes that could easily be real. Sadly, it doesn't go as far as trying to create an image of the fake foods, but you can keep refreshing the page to see more meal mash-ups before reading a blog post that explains how it all works.



## Take part in a BBC voice study

[voicestudy.api.bbc.co.uk](https://voicestudy.api.bbc.co.uk)

Synthetic speech can feel devoid of personality but what if it adopted a British regional accent? The BBC is looking to test attitudes to different voices in an online study, letting you listen to a range of audio examples – both male and female – before picking the one you like the most and providing some feedback on how it makes you feel.



Choose a personalised Device voice

YOU MIGHT HEAR FOR CONTROLLING WHEELER & SOUNDS // PROMPTS // MENUS

And now, an example device voice: Welcome back. Your programme is about to start.

Which word best describes the selected voice?

Familiar Friendly Trustworthy Warm Engaging Confident Write your own...

NEXT



# Need to Know

## Virgin Media leaked the details of 900,000 customers

### What happened?

Broadband provider Virgin Media has admitted to a massive data breach in which a database containing 900,000 customers' personal information was left online for more than 10 months.

Virgin Media offered reassurances that the leak – which left the database viewable online because it was incorrectly configured by a member of staff – was not spotted as a result of a hack, but had been flagged by a security researcher at TurgenSec. It has since been taken down.

However, the database – intended for marketing use – had been openly online for more than 10 months, and was accessed at least once by an unknown party. The data included phone numbers, addresses and emails – but no financial details – and, more alarmingly, IP addresses, date of birth, and whether the person had requested to block or unblock adult websites. That suggests a list of Virgin customers who requested to view pornography could exist. Virgin Media has apologised for the incident, saying that “protecting our customers’ data is a top priority”.

The data leak came as Virgin Media and Sky both blamed large outages in the southeast UK on a break in fibre connections. This annoyance was exacerbated by scammers using the outage as an opportunity to steal payment details from confused customers, setting up a dodgy Twitter account claiming to be the official



customer-service contact point.

The fake @virgsmidia account, since suspended, asked customers to reply via direct message with login details and payment cards to confirm their identity for security purposes. Virgin Media said it would never ask for such information via email, so it's best not to share it via Twitter, either.

### How will it affect you?

The leaked data pertained to Virgin Media customers and some Virgin Mobile account holders. The company has emailed anyone affected by the leak and reported itself for investigation to the UK's data watchdog, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

After the data leak was reported, the database was immediately taken offline, the company said. It's unclear if anyone managed to download the data set.

Such information can be used in spam and phishing scams, and Virgin Media has warned its customers not to click links in emails, but to go directly to Virgin Media's website to log in, and not to give any personal details to callers claiming to be from the company without any verification.

That advice holds true whether you were affected by Virgin's data leak or not. We all get overwhelmed by email in our inboxes and don't take the time to assess each message, but it's generally best practice to log into a site directly via a browser, rather than

following a link in an email, in case you've been sent a well-crafted phishing message that will try to steal your password or other key data. Taking the time for that extra step will increase your online security.

### What do we think?

Wrongly configuring the settings on a database may be an honest mistake but it's not a good look for Virgin Media's security checks and operational processes that such a tranche of data was allowed to be left online for so long.

Such breaches are becoming more common as companies move to the cloud, not realising they've left a pile of data open for anyone to see, but these mistakes can't keep happening, especially not to corporate giants like Virgin Media who have ample means to hire staff to check such systems, and hundreds of thousands of customers who could be impacted when something goes wrong. Hopefully the ICO's action, if it takes any, will reflect both the foolishness of Virgin Media's mistake as well as the huge number of people potentially impacted.

It's particularly alarming that such data includes parental control settings, because that information could be used for blackmail and other harassment. Why that data was in a marketing database in the first place is confusing, and a question that the ICO will hopefully ask.



**Virgin Media claims the leaked database did not include passwords or financial details**



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

## Twitter tests disappearing tweets

### What happened?

Post something on Twitter, and – unless you specifically delete the message – it remains there forever. That can be intimidating for some, and means that something intended to be ephemeral sticks around to embarrass you later, as plenty of celebrities and politicians have discovered.

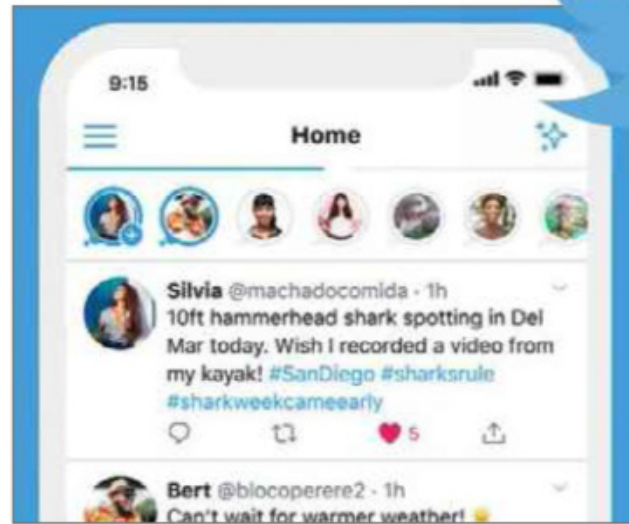
One solution now being tested by Twitter is an idea called “fleets”. Such messages delete automatically after 24 hours, and can't be liked, retweeted or replied to. If someone wants to reply, they have to send a direct message. The “fleets” are different from other

messages in another way, too: they don't appear in timelines, but are only shown if someone taps your profile picture – a feature similar to Instagram Stories.

The aim, says developer Kayvon Beykpour, is to help people share “the fleeting thoughts that they would have been unlikely to tweet”.

### How will it affect you?

So far, the feature has only been trialled in Brazil. If that test is deemed successful, it could be rolled out more widely, but it's a safe bet that Twitter will be wary of making “fleets” a permanent,



profile picture rather than idly scroll through your feed.

### What do we think?

Given the criticism levelled at Twitter for enabling abusive behaviour and failing to tackle trolls, racism

and other concerns, “fleets” seem like a bit of a distraction and they won't make the rest of Twitter a nicer place to be. In fact, they seem more of a benefit to the company – a scheme to keep users on the social network, away from rivals like Instagram.

global tool, given that it would constitute a major change to the site. As with Instagram Stories, fleets will be a sub-section to Twitter, so if you don't like the idea, they'll be easy to ignore. Indeed, to see the messages, you'll have to actively tap on someone's

## Unfixable Intel flaw could break encryption

### What happened?

Another flaw has been spotted in Intel processors with security researchers at Positive Technologies warning that it could be used to break key security technologies, including encryption, DRM and hardware authentication. The vulnerability is particularly dangerous because it's in a system that secures the firmware of a chip – in theory, leaving the security system at risk when it's booting up. That's a problem because such firmware is hard-coded into the system and can't be easily changed, so there's no update that will be able to fix this flaw.

Intel confirmed the flaw, but said it would be

difficult to take advantage of it, meaning most users should be safe from being targeted.

It's not the first processor flaw that security researchers have spotted in Intel products, coming after the Meltdown and Spectre vulnerabilities discovered in 2018, which have both since been patched.

### How will it affect you?

This vulnerability affects Intel chips from the last five years, but not the most recent 10th-generation processors. There's no way to patch this particular flaw and, if hackers did manage to exploit the vulnerability, their malware would not be spotted by antivirus software and could interfere with encryption and other security systems.

That said, hackers wanting to exploit the flaw would require physical access to your computer, so most of us need not worry. Intel has issued mitigation guidance, which mostly consists of keeping systems up to date.

### What do we think?

Such flaws are a sober reminder that there's no such thing as perfect security – only ‘good enough’ security. Ironically, the system in question was

designed by Intel to make the entire processor more secure. Thankfully, it's been fixed in more recent chips and is difficult to exploit anyway. On the upside, the incident highlights the lengths that companies – and security researchers – go to in order to keep our computers safe.





# A billion Android phones could be hacked

## What happened?

Over a billion Android phones are at risk of hacking, according to *Which*. People using pre-2012 phones or Android 6.0 and below are most at risk, due to the lack of security updates.

The watchdog tested five older smartphone models – Samsung Galaxy A5, Samsung Galaxy S6, LG Google Nexus 5, Sony Xperia 72 and Motorola X – working with antivirus company AV Comparatives to intentionally infect them with malware. The attempt was successful every time. In some cases, phones were loaded with multiple viruses that hackers could use to access the phones, leaving users vulnerable to data theft and ransom demands.

Kate Bevan, *Which* Computing editor, said: “It’s concerning that expensive Android devices have such a short shelf life before they lose security support. Google and phone manufacturers need to be upfront about security updates, with clear information about how long they will last and what customers should do when they run out.”

The consumer group also said it was unimpressed by Google’s failure “to provide reassurance that it has plans in place to help users whose devices were no longer supported”.

*Which* wants tech firms to tell customers precisely how long they can expect security updates, and offer



support once they stop. Bevan also stated that “the government must also push ahead with planned legislation to ensure manufacturers are far more transparent about security updates for smart devices, and their impact on consumers.”

## How will it affect you?

You’re most at risk if you use an old smartphone because vulnerabilities exist on all Android operating systems below version 7.0 – and Google believes that around 42% of Android users still use version 6.0 and below.

To check which Android version you’re using, go to Settings, System, ‘About phone’ and scroll down to ‘Android

version’. In the System menu, under Advanced, check ‘System updates’ to ensure you’re on the latest version. If it’s not possible to update your phone, you may want to buy a newer phone that accepts the latest security patches.

## What do we think?

Tech security is paramount, so while a buying a new phone means parting with money, it pales in comparison to what it could cost if your phone gets hacked. However, we agree with *Which* that companies such as Google must make it clear how long a phone will receive updates. If in doubt, opt for an Android One device, which is guaranteed security updates for at least two years.



## FIRST LOOK

### Freesat 4K TV Box

[bit.ly/freesat497](http://bit.ly/freesat497)

‘A little box with big features’ is how Freesat describes its new 4K TV Box, a device designed to let you watch more than 180 TV channels in high quality.

For those not in the know, Freesat is the satellite equivalent of Freeview, and an alternative to Sky TV. Once you’ve paid to install a set-top box and plugged it into your satellite dish, there are no further costs. You get all the standard channels, including BBC and ITV, Sky News, Sony Movies, Film 4 and internet-based services such as iPlayer, Netflix and YouTube (for the full list, head to [bit.ly/freesatchannel497](http://bit.ly/freesatchannel497)).

After years in the wilderness,

the service is launching a comeback with a new range of set-top box boxes: the non-recording model is the first available, followed by ones with 500GB, 1TB and 2TB of internal storage.

The design of the TV Box isn’t much to look at – a grey rectangle with rounded edges, featuring a matte finish, and a single button on the front – but that’s as it should be. At 180 x 40mm, it’s discreet enough to nestle beneath your television without drawing attention to itself, though the recordable versions are a fraction larger.



Around the back, you’ll find a HDMI port, two LNB inputs, and an SP/DIF for Dolby audio support. There’s also an optional Ethernet port, should you choose not to use the built-in Wi-Fi.

The device’s chunky remote control feels comfortable to hold and has a sensible layout that includes four quick-action keys for the most popular channels. Navigating the on-screen electronic programme guide is effortless.

However, there’s just one problem with the so-called 4K TV Box: while it supports 4K on supported catch-up services, 4K broadcasts aren’t yet available. And that might put a few folk off the whole idea.

Freesat’s set-top box is available now, with prices starting at £125, up to £270.





## WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

## Is Spotify launching a voice assistant?

If Twitter rumours are to be believed, Spotify is working on a voice assistant for its phone and computer apps.

In a recent tweet, the well-respected reverse-engineer and all-round tech-head Jane Manchun Wong tweeted a screenshot apparently revealing a new Spotify feature ([bit.ly/spotifyvoice497](https://bit.ly/spotifyvoice497)). The option, under Voice Settings, is called "Hey Spotify" and enabling it lets the music streaming service listen for the 'Hey Spotify' wake word when the app is open.

Little is known about exactly what voice commands could become available, but we'd expect it to feature playback controls similar to those offered by Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant, both of which already perform this function.

Insiders believe that the voice assistant could be tied to the in-car device Spotify unveiled early last year. Nicknamed 'Car Thing', this has yet to be made available to all but a selected group of subscribers in the US, but given that there's little reason to use Spotify's own voice controls on your phone, this theory makes sense.

So far, there's no word on when you'll be able to say 'Hey Spotify' and actually get a response. But, if Wong is right, the company has already secreted the feature deep inside its software.



## LIKELIHOOD RATING



It makes sense for Spotify to include its own voice assistant, but we wonder how widely used it would be, given that modern smartphones already include an assistant capable of controlling music via the platform. Even Apple recently updated Siri to perform Spotify commands. For those on a computer or in a car, however, this could prove a handy way to listen to selected tracks and albums without even touching the mouse or dash controls.

## WEBOMETER

## WE LIKE...

## CCleaner adds Health Check option

Cleanup tool CCleaner has introduced a Health Check feature that analyses and optimises your PC to fix security problems and change risky settings. The popular software has suffered several privacy issues since it was bought by Avast in 2017.



## Sonos stops 'bricking' old speakers

Following a backlash from users, Sonos will no longer make people 'brick' their smart speakers to take advantage of a 30% discount upgrade offer. The company has ditched its controversial Recycle Mode, which made speakers permanently unusable.



## WE DON'T LIKE...

## mySupermarket closes down

The popular shopping-comparison website mySupermarket has closed after 14 years. The company announced it would be shifting its business to other areas, and thanked loyal users for their support.



## Boots loyalty card hit by hackers

Boots was forced to suspend payments using its Advantage loyalty-points card after discovering a potential security incident affecting 150,000 users. The company said the accounts of "a small number of customers" had experienced fraudulent activity.



## What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

## 1947-T Mk1 Time Accumulator

[bit.ly/clock497](https://bit.ly/clock497) | From £285

History is at the heart of the 1947-T Mk1 Time Accumulator. The "analogue meter clock" consists of a black wooden box housing four clock-face meters that break down the time into tens and units of hours and minutes, with enough knobs and switches to make it look like it's straight out of Bletchley Park. Built from materials of the age (yes, that includes Bakelite), it's designed to "operate, look, weigh and feel the same as it would if it had been designed and made in 1947." A £285 pledge will net you one of these unique timepieces.







# Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

### Tesco Clubcard holders hit by fraud

Tesco has warned more than 600,000 of its Clubcard users that their accounts may have been subject to 'fraudulent activity'. The supermarket said that combinations of usernames and passwords may have been stolen from other websites, then tried on Tesco sites, and that these may have worked in some cases. However, it added that no financial data was accessed and that its own systems had not been hacked.

Tesco has issued new Clubcards to all affected customers and asked them to reset their passwords. It also said that any points and vouchers accumulated by them will be transferred to their new accounts.

"We are aware of some fraudulent activity around the redemption of a



small proportion of our customers' Clubcard vouchers," said a Tesco spokesperson. "We have strict security measures in place and our priority is protecting our customers. Our internal systems picked this up quickly and we immediately took steps to protect our customers and restrict access to their accounts. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause."

[bit.ly/tesco497](https://bit.ly/tesco497)

### Railway Wi-Fi provider exposed users' data

Railway station Wi-Fi provider C3UK exposed the personal data of around 10,000 people who signed up for its free service at major commuter hotspots including Chelmsford, Colchester, Norwich and London Bridge.

The company's database was not password-protected, despite containing 146 million records, including contact information and dates of birth. Security researcher Jeremiah Fowler discovered



the unsecured database, which reportedly contained information as specific as the software being used by devices connected to the Wi-Fi.

"Many of the records I saw contained customer email addresses, age range, device data, IP and reason for travel," Fowler wrote in a blog post. He warned that some of the available information, such as "IP addresses, ports, pathways, build and version, and storage information" could be used by hackers to "access deeper into the network".

C3UK said the exposed data had not been stolen or accessed by any other party, and had now been secured.

[bit.ly/c3uk497](https://bit.ly/c3uk497)

## Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

**THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:**  
**David Emm, Principal Security Researcher at Kaspersky**  
([www.kaspersky.co.uk](http://www.kaspersky.co.uk))



**Q How worried should we be about Amazon's Ring doorbells storing our data?**

Simon Duffy, Facebook

**A** The news that Amazon keeps records of every movement detected by its Ring doorbells doesn't surprise me. Home

assistants and other smart devices have the power to monitor aspects of our everyday lives. This gives companies access to lots of data, which is valuable even if that data is anonymised.

Smart devices can be a serious threat to people's privacy – consumers are handing valuable information over freely and often without realising it. In today's digital era, that data could be used by companies directly or shared with third parties, or stolen and misused by cybercriminals. It's therefore vital that companies selling such products are open and explicit about the data they



**“ Smart devices can be a serious threat to people's privacy without them realising it ”**

collect, and how they will use it.

Manufacturers eagerly put 'smart' devices on the market without ensuring that these products have sufficient security measures in place to protect their users. Many of these devices have become such an established part of our everyday lives that we rely on them without thinking beyond the benefits they provide. However, in today's evolving technology landscape – and with the

growing threat from cybercriminals – this way of thinking must change.

People should carefully consider the implications before buying smart devices. If they do purchase these products, they should always ensure that updates are available, create hard-to-guess passwords for the device and disable any feature they do not intend to use, or which causes them any privacy concerns.



**CTRL** your web business and **SHIFT** projects from good to great. **DEL** time-intensive administration and access management. **ESC** from long working nights with cold pizza. Your **ALT**ernative: The **IONOS Partner Program** for agencies, developers and designers.

[\*\*www.ionos.co.uk/partner-program\*\*](http://www.ionos.co.uk/partner-program)





# ★ Best New Websites

## Site of the Fortnight

TRAVEL

RELAUNCH

### Abroad in Japan

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

In 2012, Chris Broad moved from the UK to Japan to work as an English teacher, chronicling his experiences via his YouTube channel. This slick website pulls those videos together, organising content by destination, interest and a range of oddities, in some very imaginative ways: select a topic from the Trip Idea Generator for more than 200 offbeat suggestions or click a pin in the guide map to see a video for that location. By exploring the dozens of sections filled with featured content and links to further suggestions, you'll soon get to grips with this fascinating country. And yes, there's info about the coronavirus in Japan, too.

Our rating



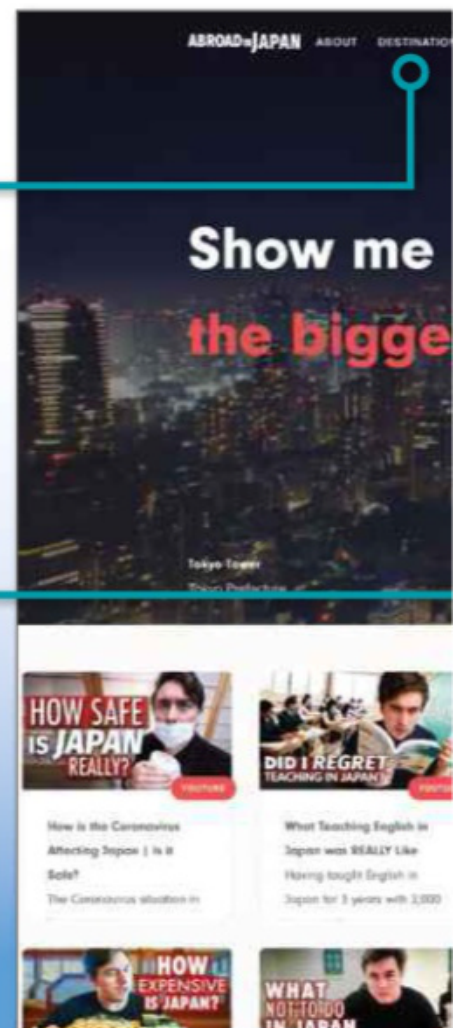
#### PODCASTS

Look out for podcasts among the suggested content within each section you visit



#### FIND YOUR WAY

Use the pins on the map to discover videos about locations all across the country



Petfished: Who's the person behind the pet?

BUYING FROM

A STEP-BY-STEP

NEW

A step-by-step guide: Checklist for buying a cat or dog



1. Before you contact the seller

Guidelines when doing your research



2. When you contact the seller

Questions you should ask, and red flags to watch



3. When you visit the seller

Tips for when you first meet your new cat

PETS

### Petfished

[getyourpetsafely.campaign.gov.uk](http://getyourpetsafely.campaign.gov.uk)

Looking to buy a cat or a dog but worried about unscrupulous sellers? Then this government website should warn you about the dirty tricks they typically use. Launched ahead of Lucy's Law, which will limit the sale of puppies and kittens in England from 6 April, Petfished provides checklists for buying domestic animals. It also links to databases of approved breeders and gives advice about adoption. A clear layout and tidily organised sections make it easy to get the necessary info, and there are helpful extras such as a Puppy Contract that any reputable breeder should be willing to sign. You can also report suspicious ads and contact the RSPCA.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

SPORT

### Lord's

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

Lord's is one of cricket's most iconic venues and fans of the sport are sure to be bowled over by the changes made to its website. Although the huge new video montage that dominates the homepage won't be to everyone's tastes – one Twitter comment compared it to a TV advert – the site remains the place to go for the latest news and details of forthcoming fixtures. As before, it tells you all you need to know about paying a visit including what to wear, what to bring and how to find your way around the ground. It's also overhauled its ticketing system, so it's easier to book a seat.

Our rating





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



### GENERATE IDEAS

Learn how to speak Japanese, find inspiration and discover what it's like to live in Japan

### LISTEN UP

You can play dozens of fun, short sound-clips from abroad in Japan's YouTube channel



NEW

### MOTORING

## Sort My Sign

[bit.ly/sign497](http://bit.ly/sign497)

Many of us use sat-navs and map apps, but we still rely on street signs to get ourselves from A to B. Unfortunately, some of those signs are damaged, missing or hidden behind shrubbery, prompting a drive by Transport Focus to put things right. Enter a location, road name or postcode into Sort My Sign and you can pinpoint troublesome signage by clicking a map. Upload a photo and you'll be asked to provide details of the issue and how long it's been ongoing. It's all very intuitive and designed to put pressure on Highways England. You can also look at recently reported problems.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

### COMMUNITY

## Haircuts4Homeless

[bit.ly/haircuts497](http://bit.ly/haircuts497)

A good haircut can boost self-esteem, so it's commendable that hairdressers are giving free cuts to homeless people. This site details one of the leading initiatives which, since being established in 2014, has trimmed more than 40,000 barnets. You can read a brief synopsis of how it began and watch a video showing how the charity is helping. We particularly love the weekly Hear Me, See Me podcasts starring guests such as Gail Porter and Lena Headey, some of whom are pictured in a gallery alongside other images of the charity at work. Donations can be made with a click of a button, too.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

### MEDIA

## The Scotsman

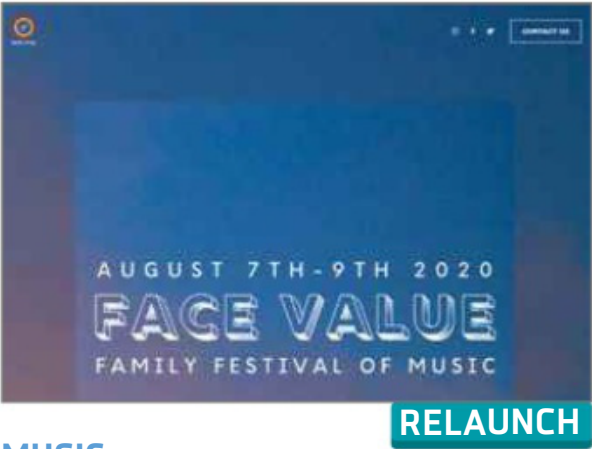
[www.scotsman.com](http://www.scotsman.com)

Read all about it: a newspaper website has listened to complaints about ads getting in the way of the stories and made an effort to reduce them. What's more, it's simplified the site's design, made the pages load faster and created a more enjoyable reading experience on mobile – but only, it seems, if you take out a subscription. For while there are none of the annoying pop-ups and quizzes that bombard you on other news hubs, we found ads still dominated and pages don't load as quickly as claimed. Videos also autoplay and tiresome clickbait headlines are listed beneath stories.

Our rating







RELAUNCH

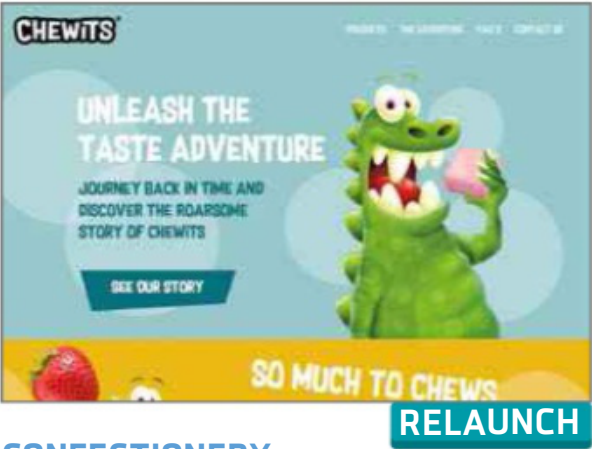
MUSIC

# Face Value Festival

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

Face Value is a festival that takes place in South Wales at the start of August, hosting unsigned acts and tribute bands while offering lots of food, drink and family entertainment. Its website provides an abundance of details, as well as a link to See Tickets ([seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)) to book your place. On the downside, there's no navigation menu, so you have to scroll down the homepage to see all that's on offer. It also forces you to flick back and forth between videos hosted on YouTube and the websites of featured businesses, while offering very little info about the campsite and its facilities. Taken at face value, it's a tad disappointing.

Our rating ★★☆☆☆



RELAUNCH

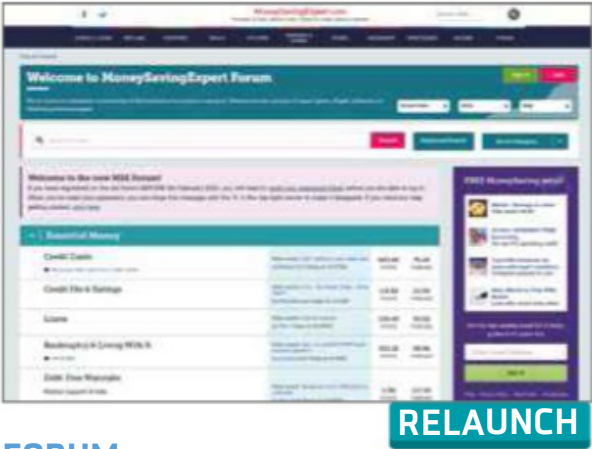
CONFECTIONERY

# Chewits

[chewits.co.uk](http://chewits.co.uk)

Remember the ads featuring a Godzilla-like monster threatening famous landmarks, only to be satiated by a pack of Chewits? Well, the character has since morphed into a cute dinosaur called Chewie and he not only appears on the repackaged sweets but on the colourfully redesigned website, too. As well as promoting the different sweet varieties, complete with ingredients and nutritional information, you can read the Chewits story which goes back to 1965, peppered with historical images (but alas no videos). You can also enjoy the delightful Daily Tail blog, filled with wacky stories and wonderfully odd takes on the news.

Our rating ★★★★★



RELAUNCH

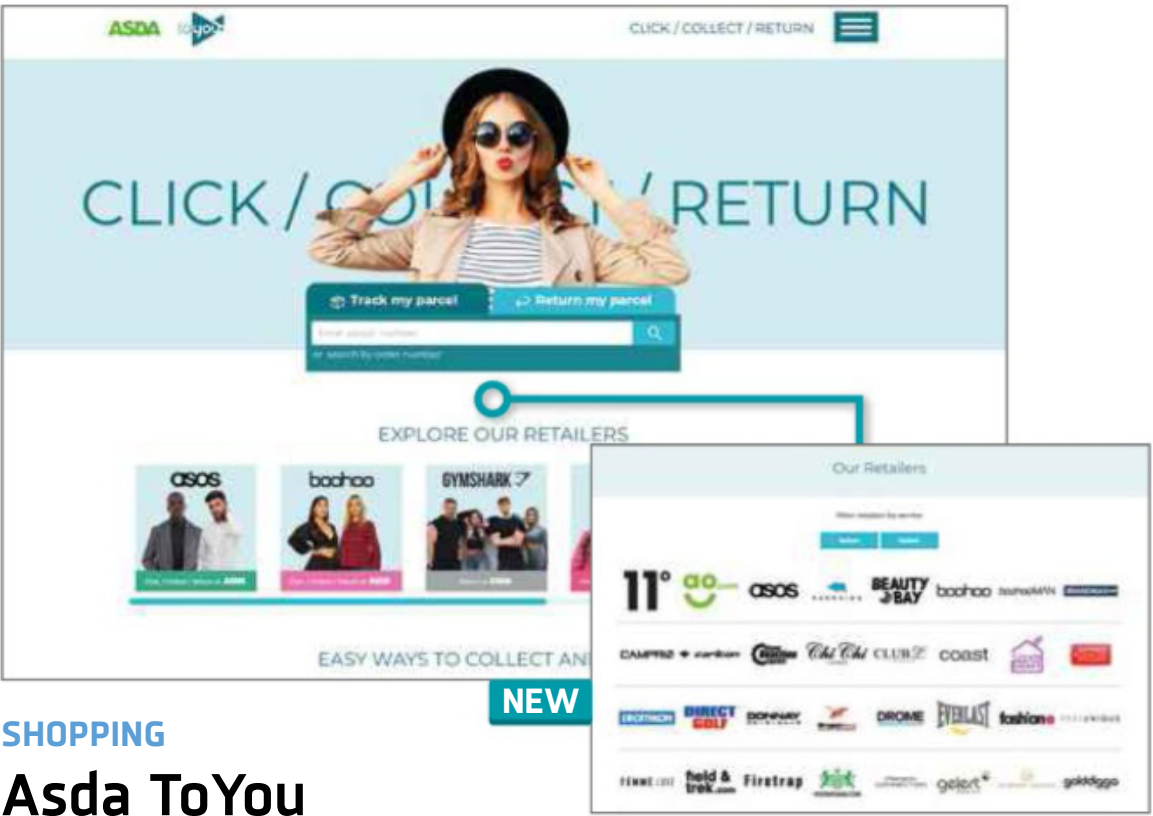
FORUM

# Money Saving Expert Forum

[forums.moneysavingexpert.com](http://forums.moneysavingexpert.com)

The popular Money Saving Expert has splashed out on an upgrade to its well-loved forums – a bold move that's paid off for its 1.9 million users. It's even set up a dedicated thread to tackle any teething problems, as have occurred when viewing on mobile devices. The site looks cleaner and more inviting and, as before, there are loads of categories to get stuck into, accessed via a drop-down menu or by using the search engine (which has advanced options). You may need to reset your password before logging on but it's a small price to pay for help, advice, competitions and interaction.

Our rating ★★★★★



NEW

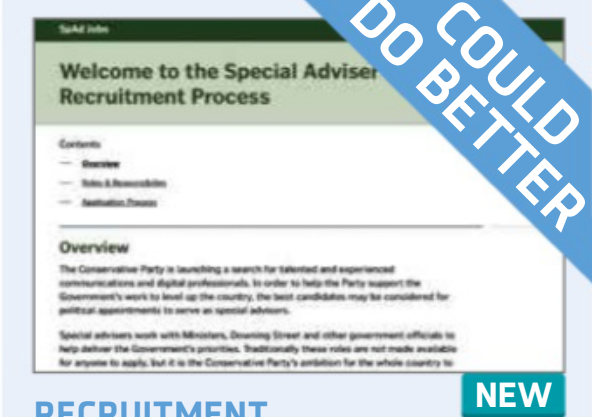
SHOPPING

# Asda ToYou

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

A good number of retailers, from Asos to Wiggle, are now allowing you to buy items online and have them delivered to an Asda supermarket for pick-up. To make life easier for customers, Asda has created a new, user-friendly website for its ToYou click-and-collect service that allows you to enter a parcel or order number to track your goods or else arrange a return by selecting a retailer to get a QR code or print a label. Everything is clearly explained, with highlights of what the service has to offer and a brilliant FAQ. The store finder is fast and easy, too, providing details of opening hours, phone numbers and links for directions via Google Maps.

Our rating ★★★★★



DO BETTER

NEW

RECRUITMENT

# SpAd Jobs

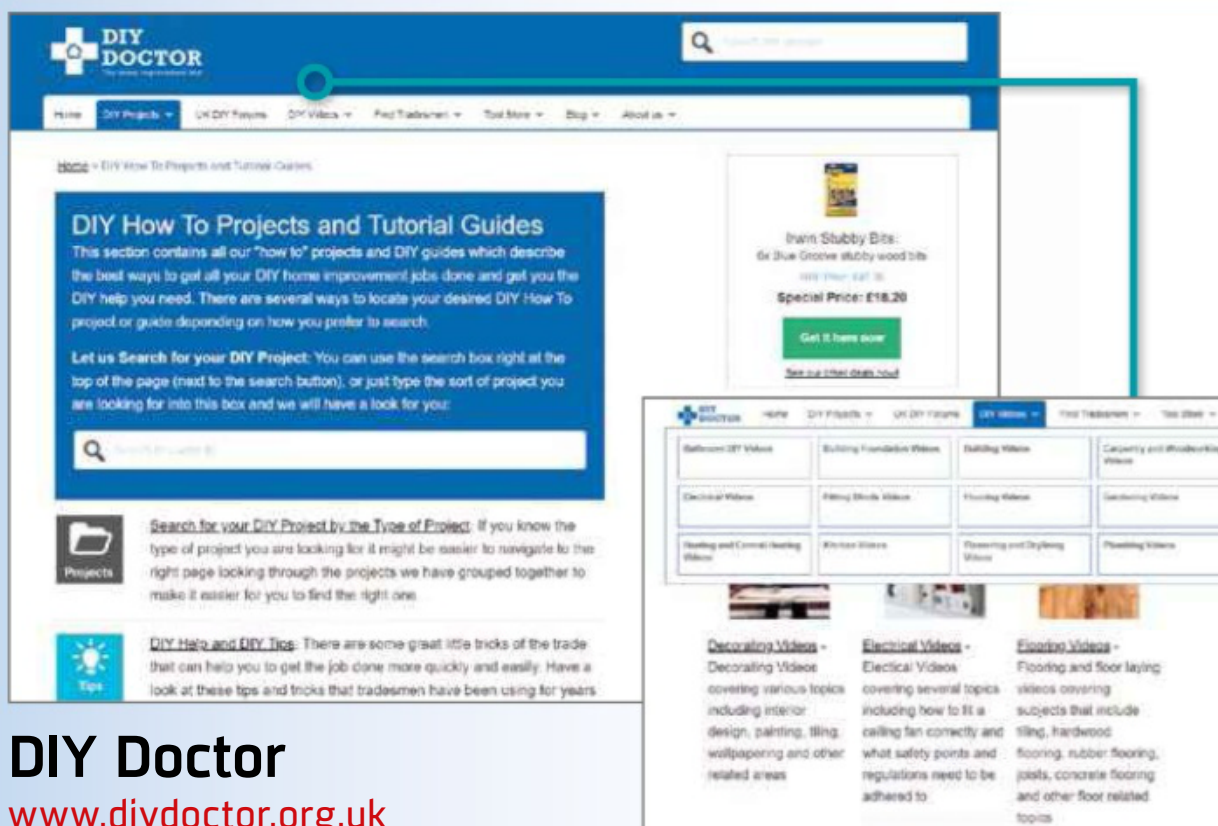
[www.spadjobs.uk](http://www.spadjobs.uk)

When Whitehall's chief advisor Dominic Cummings advertised for "misfits and weirdos", he found too close a match. The government now wants to centralise recruitment of its special advisers (or SpAds) by opening the application process to all, rather than filling the roles with party loyalists. Sadly, no effort has been made with presentation – the website merely gives an overview, detailing roles and responsibilities, and asks applicants to email a CV and covering letter. There's no online application form or even any links to the oft-mentioned Code of Conduct.

Our rating ★★☆☆☆



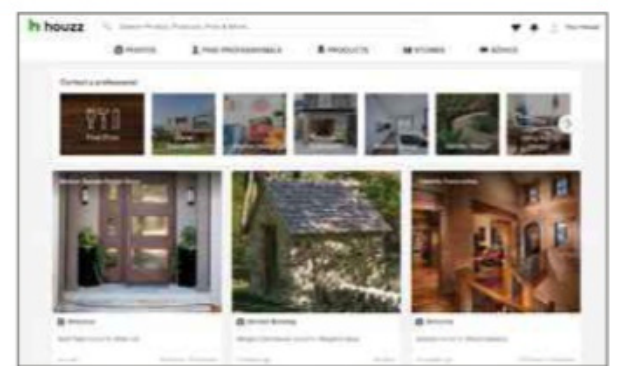
# ESSENTIAL BOOKMARKS THIS ISSUE: Home-improvement sites



## DIY Doctor

[www.diydoctor.org.uk](http://www.diydoctor.org.uk)

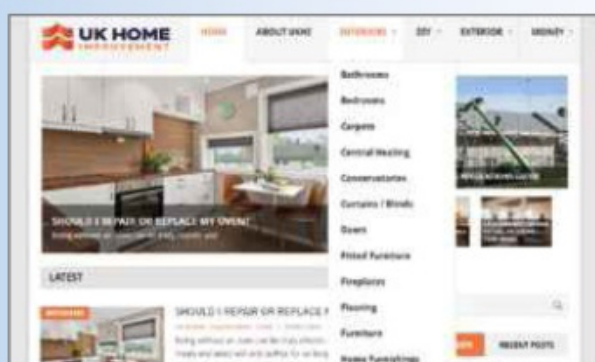
While shopping in a DIY superstore 20 years ago, UK builder Mike Edwards noticed that staff struggled to answer people's home-improvement questions. So he launched an email Q&A service, which eventually spawned DIY Doctor's large collection of authoritative, plain-English tutorials. Each article and video sets out all the required tools along with the steps you need to take, whether you're drilling a hole or installing a damp-proof course. The site's forum is packed with DIYers sharing advice on where to get the right plumbing hose or which drill bit to use, while the Find Tradesmen section will help you hire a specialist without falling prey to cowboys and overpricing. You can even buy tools and books about mastering DIY.



## Houzz

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

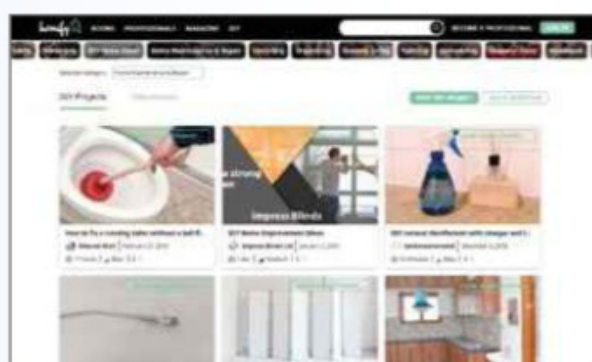
Plan the house of your dreams by creating a digital scrapbook from this envy-triggering site's 20 million 'inspirational' photos. Or skip the pictures of uber-trendy bathrooms and discover Houzz's more realistic Advice and Stories sections instead. Hundreds of well-written articles cover such pragmatic matters as 'Updating Your Guttering' and 'Shed Storage Ideas', while the busy forums are populated by real people with real dilemmas, such as 'downstairs loo design' and 'new fence colour'. Houzz's Products section is great for window shopping for four-poster beds, snazzy lighting and more, but you're redirected to external sites to do any actual buying.



## UK Home Improvement

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

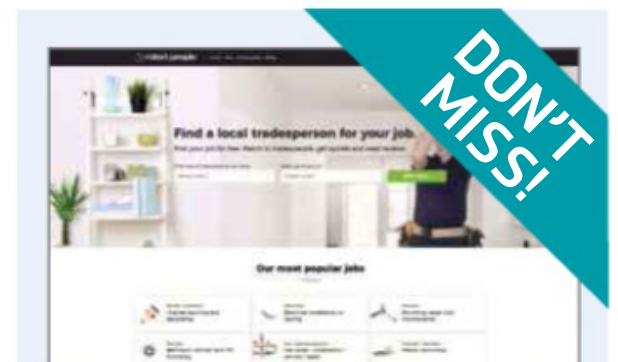
How do you spot a cowboy builder? Which home improvements will increase the value of your home? What type of skip do you need, and should you organise a parking permit for it? This searchable archive of clear, authoritative articles answers these and many other questions we wish we'd asked before embarking on our own renovation project. The site has sections on DIY, interiors, gardens and even finance, and although some of the articles could use a bit more detail, they helpfully include relevant links to further information, such as skip-hire companies and the government's online scaffolding regulations (which provide more detail than anyone could possibly wish for).



## Homify

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

Discover how to repair a crack in a wall, fix hydraulic leaks or even transform a pile of delivery pallets into a bespoke set of dining chairs by using the step-by-step tutorials contributed by Homify members. You'll find all the photo-illustrated guides – of varying quality – in Homify's DIY section, which is organised into categories such as Ikea Hacks (fun!) and Home Maintenance & Repair (less fun!). Homify takes a very social media-era approach to home-improvement, encouraging you to plan and show off every step of every project via your account. But you're free to browse the site's tips, professional listings and photos (yes, more ludicrously expensive sinks) without an account, if you prefer.



## RatedPeople

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

Use RatedPeople to find the right tradesperson for any job, from putting up a shelf to building a house. It's free to use unless you're a contractor yourself – start by posting your job (using the site's guidelines to give a rough price), then choose from contractors who contact you with quotes. After the job is done, you post a review to help other people avoid cowboys. There's also a ton of hiring and home-improvement advice on the site to help you manage the job without tears. There will always be controversy over "fake reviews" on sites like this, so don't believe every five-star review and ask the right questions before hiring.



# Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

## Top Tips of the Fortnight

### Try Bing's new Webmaster tools

Microsoft has rolled out its redesigned Bing Webmaster tools to all users. The site is still in beta and is running alongside the old version. Log in at [bit.ly/bing497](http://bit.ly/bing497) and look out for the brown links

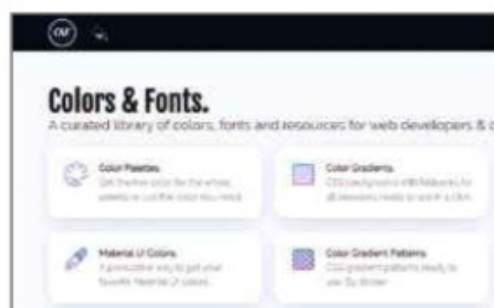


to the new reports – we found one on the

Search Keywords report. You can then use the new reports to view your site's Search Performance on Bing, check that your sitemaps are being crawled and view your backlinks (other people's sites that link to you).

### Get help using colours and fonts

Designing websites requires a



mixture of technical and artistic ability, but if you're a bit lacking on the art side of things, help is at hand. A new website called Colors & Fonts ([www.colorsandfonts.com](http://www.colorsandfonts.com)) has a range of handy tools that can help you choose colour palettes, create gradients and pair fonts. There are even guides to HTML and CSS that can help if you get stuck on a particular command.

### Deal of the Fortnight

UK2 ([www.uk2.net](http://www.uk2.net)) is giving away a free 'online' domain with any '.com' or '.co.uk' domain ordered.

## Web-building Helpdesk

**Q** I used to create layouts on HTML pages by using tables but I understand that it's frowned-upon nowadays. I can't get my head around how grids work with CSS, though. Can you help?

Ray Johnson, via email

**A** You could spend weeks trying to work out CSS grids, using trial and error to get your grids positioned in the right place. Or, you could use Sarah Edo's brilliant CSS Grid Generator at [cssgrid-generator.netlify.com](http://cssgrid-generator.netlify.com). Choose how many rows and columns you want in your grid, then fill in the spaces you need by clicking and dragging. Click the 'Please may I have some code' button to get the CSS you need to add to your style sheet.

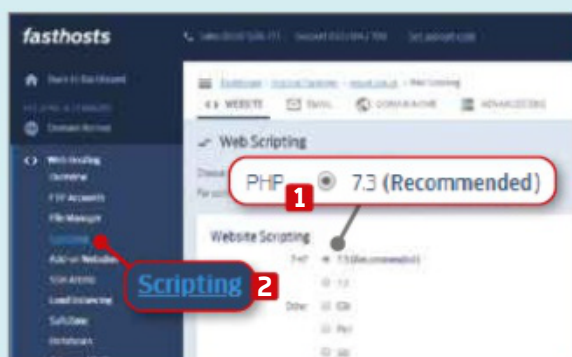
Andy Shaw, Technical & Reviews Editor



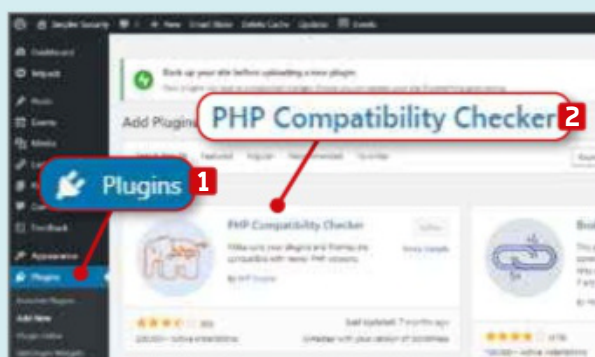
## MINI WORKSHOP | Check your WordPress installation is using the best version of PHP

PHP Compatibility Checker: [bit.ly/phpch497](http://bit.ly/phpch497) |  10 mins | Self-hosted WordPress site

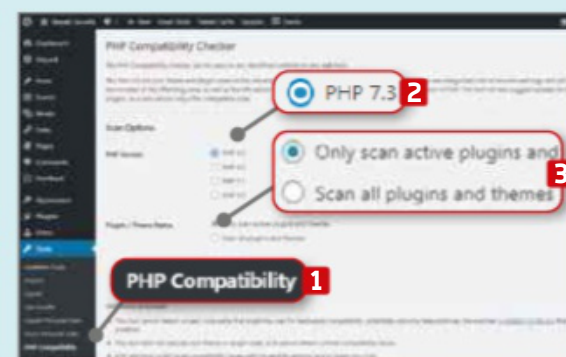
Every now and again, it's worth checking that your self-hosted WordPress website is running the latest compatible version of PHP – the programming language it runs on.



**1** Go into your web host and find the information telling you which version of PHP your site is using. **1** In this Fasthosts account, we found the relevant information in the Website Scripting section. **2** If you find it's out of date, don't elect to upgrade it yet – work through Steps 2 and 3 first.



**2** Go to your WordPress dashboard and perform a backup, in case anything goes wrong. If you don't already use a backup tool, try UpdraftPlus ([updraftplus.com](http://updraftplus.com)). Check that you don't have any plugins or themes that need updating. Go to plugins **1** and search for, install and activate PHP Compatibility Checker ([bit.ly/phpch497](http://bit.ly/phpch497)). **2**



**3** Activate it, then find the PHP Compatibility section in the Tools menu. **1** Choose the latest version of PHP **2** and select whether to scan every theme and plugin, or just those that are currently active. **3** If anything is incompatible, move back a version or deactivate the plugin before you upgrade.



# THE WEEK



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on the issues  
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# What To Watch Online

## Pick of the fortnight



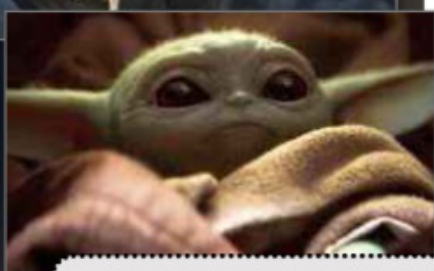
### Watch new *Star Wars* series *The Mandalorian* on Disney+

From 24 March

May the 24th be with you. March 24th, we mean. That's when Disney+ finally launches in the UK, bringing with it the *Star Wars* franchise and content from Pixar, Marvel and National Geographic.

Star of the launch is Baby Yoda, an internet sensation from the moment *Star Wars* spin-off *The Mandalorian* aired in the US in November. The syntactically challenged green infant isn't even in the show's trailer ([bit.ly/mantrail497](https://bit.ly/mantrail497)) but still eclipses cast members Taika Waititi, Carl Weathers and Giancarlo Esposito.

*The Mandalorian* arrives on 24 March, along with a CGI remake of *Lady and the Tramp* and a new *High School Musical* show. And fans of *The Simpsons* may enjoy this tease: [bit.ly/dohnut497](https://bit.ly/dohnut497). Marvel's *Loki* with Tom Hiddleston, and the untitled 'Obi-Wan Kenobi Series' with Ewan McGregor, are coming soon.



### Disney+ comes to Sky Q and Now TV

Sky has snapped up Disney+ in a multi-year UK deal that'll eventually integrate the new streaming service into Now TV. The Disney+ app will be incorporated in Sky Q ([bit.ly/skyq497](https://bit.ly/skyq497)) from launch, with Now TV integration due "in the coming months". Disney+ won't be included in an Entertainment Pass, but Sky is likely to roll out special deals, so keep an eye on [www.nowtv.com/offers](https://www.nowtv.com/offers).

Meanwhile you can access Disney+ via its website and apps for Android, iOS, Chromecast, Roku and Sony smart TVs.



Disney+ costs £49.99 for a year if you sign up by 23 March at [bit.ly/disney497](https://bit.ly/disney497). After that, it's £5.99 per month or £59.99 per year for up to seven profiles, after seven days free.

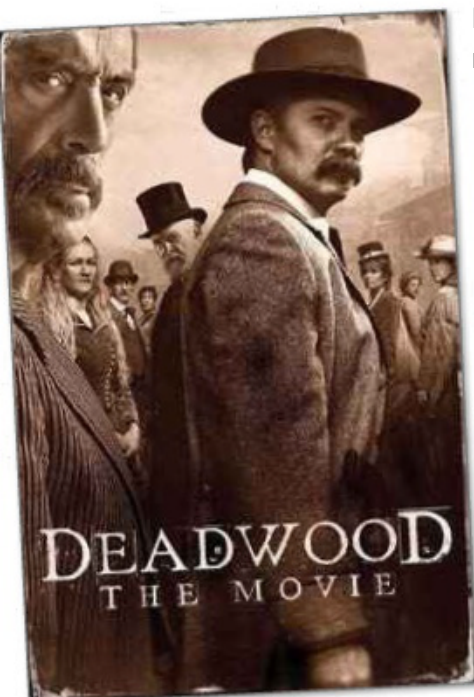


### Return to 1880s South Dakota in *Deadwood: The Movie*

From 27 March

*Deadwood* lasted three seasons from 2004 to 2006 and finally gave Ian

McShane a role to rival Lovejoy. But the show never had a proper conclusion, so HBO has reassembled the cast and reignited old rivalries to give fans closure. *Deadwood: The Movie's* official trailer ([bit.ly/deadwood497](https://bit.ly/deadwood497)) suggests it's as dark, brutal and



packed with swearwords as ever, and US audiences loved it. In the UK, the film airs on Sky Atlantic, so you can stream it on demand with a Now TV Entertainment Pass (£8.99 per month, [bit.ly/nowent497](https://bit.ly/nowent497)).



### Watch the *Veronica Mars* revival on StarzPlay

From 27 March

Another hit show of the 2000s is back. The comic book-style noir mystery, which starred Kristen Bell as the eponymous detective, left fans bereft when it ended in 2007. But in 2013, a Kickstarter campaign ([bit.ly/marskick497](https://bit.ly/marskick497)) raised enough to make a 2014 *Veronica Mars* film and now a fourth season, produced by Hulu and with Bell still in the starring role.

Watch the new *Veronica Mars* on StarzPlay (£4.99 per month from [bit.ly/](https://bit.ly/)



[starz497](https://bit.ly/starz497), or via Amazon Prime [bit.ly/amstarz497](https://bit.ly/amstarz497)) and rent the first three seasons, plus the 2014 film, via Amazon at [bit.ly/veronica497](https://bit.ly/veronica497).

### Watch Netflix's new fantasy *The Letter for the King*

From 20 March

Netflix has adapted classic 1962 Dutch



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



novel *The Letter for the King* – finally published in English in 2014 ([bit.ly/letterbook497](http://bit.ly/letterbook497)) – into a new six-part adventure. David Wenham (*Top of the Lake*) and Ruby Serkis (daughter of Andy) star in a tale of medieval knights and faraway kingdoms that'll appeal to fans of *The Hobbit* and *His Dark Materials*. Stream the whole series from 20 March on Netflix at [bit.ly/letter497](http://bit.ly/letter497), where you can watch the trailer for free.

### Watch second series of *Bulletproof and Kidding*

From 20/31 March

Sky One's buddy-cop show *Bulletproof*



In case you missed it...

Is your online viewing killing the planet? BBC documentary *Dirty Streaming: The Internet's Big Secret* reveals that even your box-set habit is



ushering in Armageddon. Watch the film on the iPlayer at [bit.ly/dirty497](http://bit.ly/dirty497).

A less apocalyptic controversy – ball-tampering in cricket –

is explored in *The Test: A New Era for Australia's Team*, the latest of Amazon's sports documentaries that appeal far beyond sports fans. Watch the trailer on YouTube at [bit.ly/test497](http://bit.ly/test497), and stream eight episodes via Amazon Prime Video.

Recent Now TV arrivals include HBO's empty-nester comedy *Mrs Fletcher* ([bit.ly/fletcher497](http://bit.ly/fletcher497)) and

Season 2 of UFO drama *Project Blue Book*, starring Aiden Gillen ([bit.ly/bluebook497](http://bit.ly/bluebook497)).

Channel 4's All 4 has new episodes of *The Big Bang Theory* spin-off *Young Sheldon*, arriving weekly at [bit.ly/sheldon497](http://bit.ly/sheldon497), and intriguing new show Zoey's *Extraordinary Playlist*, starring Jane Levy as a woman who can read people's minds in the form of music.

## BritBox comes to Amazon Fire devices

The BBC and ITV's joint on-demand archive BritBox has arrived on Amazon Fire TV – one of the most-used streaming devices in the UK.

Amazon's device now joins Roku, Chromecast, Android, iOS and certain smart TVs in the list of devices you can use to access BritBox, which you can also watch on your computer's browser. Support for YouView and more smart TVs is due in the next few months.

BritBox, which costs £5.99 per month after 30 days free, is building its roster of box sets slowly but surely. *White House Farm*, *Baptiste* and *Babylon* were added in recent days, and Series 7 of *Endeavour* arrives on 25 March. Channel 4 content is coming soon, as is a revival of satirical puppet show *Spitting Image* ([bit.ly/spitting497](http://bit.ly/spitting497)).



## Welcome back *Ozark* and *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*

From 27/28 March

Netflix Original *Ozark*, starring Jason Bateman as a financial adviser turned money launderer, is back for Season 3. Watch Netflix's teaser at [bit.ly/oztrail497](http://bit.ly/oztrail497), then stream all three seasons at [bit.ly/ozark497](http://bit.ly/ozark497) from 27 March.

A day later, Season 6 of NBC's sassy cop comedy *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* arrives on Netflix at [bit.ly/brooklyn497](http://bit.ly/brooklyn497). Watch the trailer at [bit.ly/ninenine497](http://bit.ly/ninenine497).





# Group Test

We test and compare the latest products

## Internet security suites

Security suites group all your security requirements into a single interface, making it much easier to keep your PCs safe online

**F**ree security tools are perfectly adequate if you don't mind configuring and monitoring them yourself, and even Windows' built-in security software now does a decent job of keeping your PC free from malware. With a solid backup regime and a few key programs to protect and clean your computer, you're as safe on the internet as ever.

However, the level of maintenance involved isn't to everyone's liking and many people prefer an all-encompassing security package to manage all their security requirements in one place. For this, you need an internet security suite.

### HOW WE TESTED

Our test results draw on the work of two of the most respected antivirus-testing organisations in the world: AV-Comparatives ([www.av-comparatives.org](http://www.av-comparatives.org)) and AV-Test ([www.av-test.org](http://www.av-test.org)).

Both carry out extensive independent testing of security products and publish regular reports of protection scores, false positives and performance ratings.

**Bitdefender Internet Security 2020 | £14.99 (1 year, 3 devices)**

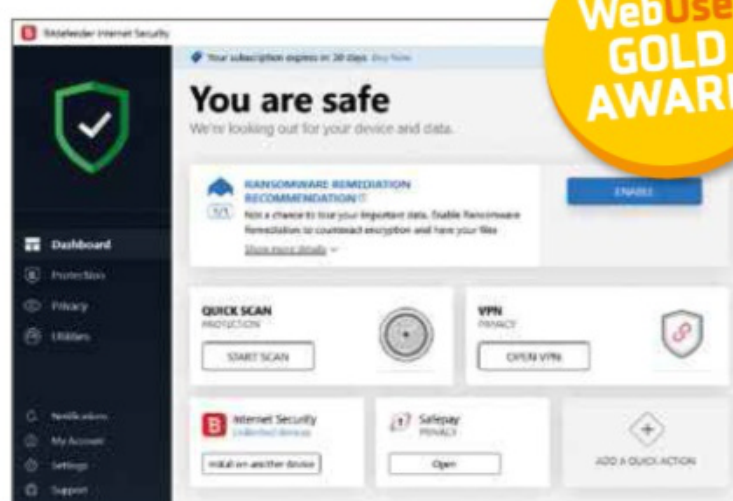
Buy from Amazon: [bit.ly/bitdef497](https://bit.ly/bitdef497)

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

Bitdefender offers one of the most effective security suites around. Its AV-Test results achieved a perfect 100% score for malware protection and it dropped only a few marks in the AV-Comparatives' tests. While this doesn't quite match Norton 360's flawless record, Bitdefender did better than Norton in the false-positive tests. The suite is nimble, too, with a creditable 94% rating for system performance.

Bitdefender's suite has loads of options to play around with. The customisable dashboard provides access to a selection of core features, and the Protection and Privacy panes offer plenty more to explore. For example, the Protection pane includes options for launching and configuring various types of scan, as well as settings for web-based and behavioural protection. It's also where you'll find the firewall, which runs quietly in the background, though you can also set up your own rules and definitions. There's also a Vulnerability Scan tool that warns you about missing updates (for Windows and other software), and highlights weak passwords and insecure networks.

Bitdefender provides two modules to help fight ransomware: Safe Files blocks untrusted apps from writing to selected folders, while Ransomware Remediation automatically makes



temporary backups of vulnerable files.

We were also impressed with the Rescue Environment, which avoids fiddly setup on a DVD or USB stick and instead reserves a section of your hard drive. This means you can't lose it and, when you find yourself worried about your security, allows you to reboot your system to launch a scan safely within seconds.

We found the parental controls to be the best in the group. Once you've added the software to your children's devices, you can monitor and approve apps and websites, and enforce screen-time limits. The Android app lets you keep an eye on their contacts and track their location, too.

### VERDICT ★★★★★

This is a superb security suite that's extremely effective and comes loaded with tools and features. However, it's also lightweight and easy to use. The price is very reasonable for new users but it's worth noting that you'll be put on a recurring contract, so be sure to switch this off and check that the price is as good when the renewal date comes around the following year. If it isn't, shop around for a better option. The other suites in this round-up have their own strengths but, as a one-stop all-rounder, Bitdefender can't be beaten.



## Norton 360 Deluxe | £20.17 (1 year, 5 devices)

Buy from Amazon: [bit.ly/norton497](https://bit.ly/norton497)

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



Norton's 360 suite is the only one here to include cloud backup, though this is aimed at essential files only, with a limited amount of storage – between 10GB and 75GB, depending on the number of devices you install it on.

The suite also comes with a VPN (though this was disappointing compared to standalone alternatives) and parental controls. Most of the other features are hidden away in a confusing interface – the firewall, for example, is buried in the software's settings.

Norton achieved a 100% success rate at blocking malware in the tests by both AV-Test and AV-Comparatives. You can't argue with that: it's a brilliant result that none of the other tools managed. It wasn't quite so good at avoiding false positives, however, and got caught out by blocking seven safe programs across the two testing companies.



### VERDICT



Norton's excellent protection rating is its best asset but it also offers a couple of attractive extras, including VPN and cloud backup. These aren't as good as standalone tools but they are handy to have in the mix of your security suite.

## Kaspersky Internet Security 2020 | £23.89 (1 year, 5 devices)

Buy from Amazon: [bit.ly/kaspersky497](https://bit.ly/kaspersky497)

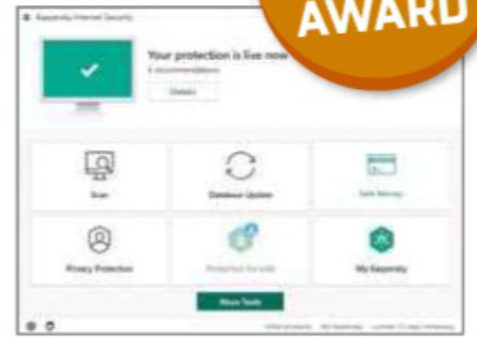
FEATURES ★★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★☆  
EASE OF USE ★★★★★☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★★



Kaspersky caught all the malware thrown at it by AV-Test, but didn't fare quite so well with AV-Comparatives, where it blocked 99.6% of threats. That's still impressive but it's the worst score of the four products reviewed here.

Where Kaspersky excelled was in avoiding false positives, achieving a clean sheet in tests from both organisations.

The suite includes plenty of extras, such as the Safe Money browser, which you can use any time, not just when you're banking and buying; and the Network Monitor – a firewall that lets you control everything that accesses the internet. Trusted Applications mode only allows you to run programs vetted and approved by Kaspersky, while the suite's cleaning and maintenance tools get into your PC's nooks and crannies to clean non-standard settings and out-of-date applications.



### VERDICT



Despite its many tools and features, Kaspersky's performance rating of 96.8% makes it the least draining of PC resources of the suites we tested. Shop around, though, because it's available from retailers for far less than Kaspersky charges.

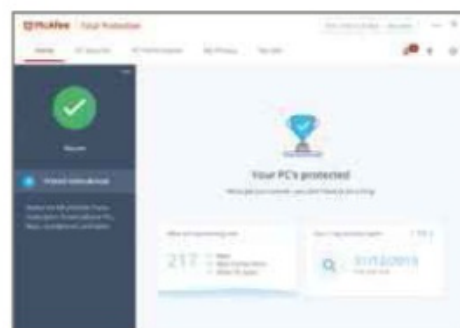
## McAfee Total Protection | £13.27 (1 year, 10 devices)

Buy from Amazon: [bit.ly/mcafee497](https://bit.ly/mcafee497)

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

Having parted ways with its former owner, Intel, McAfee has fixed its damaged reputation and now offers vastly improved protection at a very competitive price.

Ironically, the version named Total Protection doesn't have as many features as its rivals – you get parental control but no backup or VPN options. However, the real meat of this product is in its virus scanner, Web Advisor browser extension (for Chrome and Firefox) and automatic software updater. These tools helped McAfee stop 99.4% of the malware in the tests but while Kaspersky fared worse in the AV-Comparatives test, Total Protection came last place in AV-Test's. It also recorded six false positives with AV-Comparatives, but scored a clean sheet with AV-Test. On the other hand, it did well in the performance tests, with only Kaspersky having a lesser impact on the test PC's operating system.



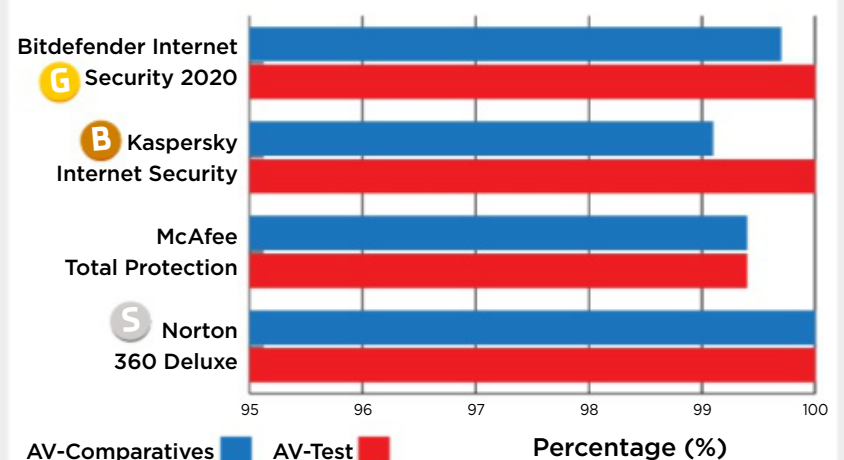
### VERDICT



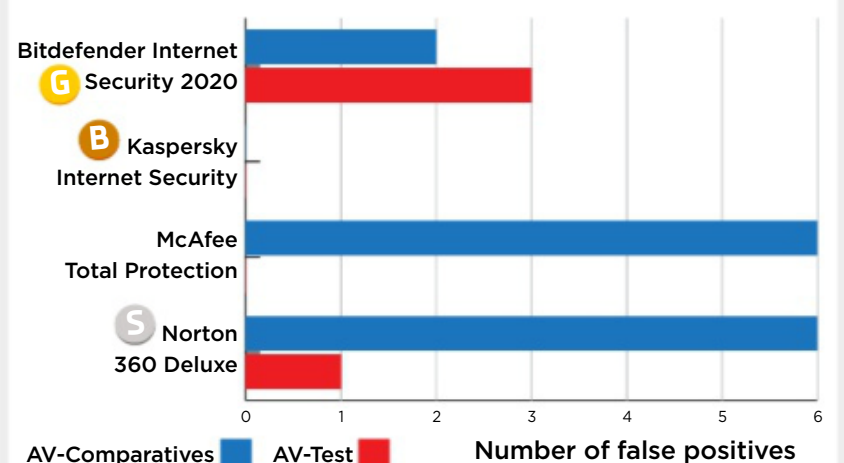
McAfee Total Protection isn't the most hawk-eyed security suite around and it's comparatively light on features. However, it's much better than it used to be, is very affordable and lightweight, and you can install it on twice as many devices.

## TEST-RESULTS CHARTS

### Malware protection (higher is better)



### False positives (fewer is better)





## Group Test Security suites

				
	Bitdefender Internet Security 2020	Norton 360 Deluxe	Kaspersky Internet Security	McAfee Total Protection
WEBSITE	<a href="http://www.bitdefender.co.uk">www.bitdefender.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://uk.norton.com">uk.norton.com</a>	<a href="http://www.kaspersky.co.uk">www.kaspersky.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.mcafee.com">www.mcafee.com</a>
PRICE	£14.99 (1 year, 3 devices)	£20.17 (1 year, 5 devices)	£23.89 (1 year, 5 devices)	£13.27 (1 year, 10 devices)
BUY FROM AMAZON	<a href="https://bit.ly/bitdef497">bit.ly/bitdef497</a>	<a href="https://bit.ly/norton497">bit.ly/norton497</a>	<a href="https://bit.ly/kaspersky497">bit.ly/kaspersky497</a>	<a href="https://bit.ly/mcafee497">bit.ly/mcafee497</a>
MALICIOUS WEBSITE DETECTION	✓	✓	✓	✓
SECURE BROWSER	✓	✗	✓	✗
BROWSER EXTENSION	✓	✓	✓	✓
ANTI-RANSOMWARE	✓	✗	✓	✗
PARENTAL CONTROLS	✓	✓	Separate download	✓
FIREWALL	✓	✓	✓	✓
CLOUD BACKUP	✗	✓	✗	✗
PASSWORD MANAGER	✓	✓	Separate download	✓
AUTO SOFTWARE UPDATER	Notify only	✗	✓	✓
HOME-NETWORK SCANNER	✓	✗	✗	✗
SECURE DELETE FILE	✓	✗	✗	✓
FILE ENCRYPTION	✓	✗	✗	✗
PERFORMANCE TUNE-UP	✗	✗	✗	✗
CREATE RECOVERY MEDIA	Separate download	Separate download	Separate download	Separate download
MOBILE PROTECTION INCLUDED	✗	✓	✓	✓
VPN	200MB/day	✓	200MB/day	✗

### OUR VERDICT

We gave our Gold Award to Bitdefender Internet Security 2020 because it performed well, and is brimming with useful features and protection options. All this comes at a very affordable price, though it's still worth shopping around when it comes to renewal time.

If you don't mind paying a little more, you might consider plumping for Norton 360 Deluxe instead. Its protection was excellent, earning it our Silver Award, and it comes with handy extras in the form of online backup and a VPN.

Our Bronze Award winner is Kaspersky, which offered the lightest tool with the least impact on the day-to-day running of the PC it's installed on. Its protection isn't quite up to Bitdefender and Norton standards in the most recent tests, but it was better at avoiding false positives. ■





# BACK ISSUES DISC 2019



Our **2019 Back Issues disc** containing all 26 issues from last year is now on sale from Amazon

For more information, visit [bit.ly/webuser2019](https://bit.ly/webuser2019) or search for 'webuser disc' on Amazon

**You can still buy our  
2014-2018 Back Issues Discs**  
Search for 'webuser disc'  
on Amazon







# Web User's Best Buys

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

## HARDWARE, SOFTWARE & SERVICES

### INTERNET SECURITY SUITE

#### Bitdefender Internet Security 2020

£14.99 (1 year, 3 devices) from [bit.ly/bitdef497](https://bit.ly/bitdef497)  
**Tested:** Issue 497

**NEW!**



This superb security suite's one-stop all-round package can't be beaten. It's lightweight, easy to use, loaded with features and scored 100% for malware protection in our tests.

#### KEY SPECS

Malicious website detection ■ Secure browser ■ Browser extension ■ Anti-ransomware ■ Parental controls ■ Firewall ■ Password manager ■ Home-network scanner ■ Secure file deletion ■ File encryption ■ VPN - 200MB of data per day

### MONITOR

#### BenQ BL2780T

£209.97 from [bit.ly/benq495](https://bit.ly/benq495)  
**Tested:** Issue 495



This BenQ monitor offers impressive screen quality, with excellent contrast and colours, for a reasonable price. It has a good selection of ports and is height adjustable. You can even rotate it by 90 degrees to use in portrait mode.

#### KEY SPECS

27in screen ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 5 milliseconds response time ■ 1 x DisplayPort, 1 x HDMI, 1 x VGA ports ■ 2 x audio outputs ■ 2 x 2W speakers ■ 547 x 512 x 231mm ■ 7.2kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

### MINI PC

#### Raspberry Pi 4 Model B

£34 from [bit.ly/pi493](https://bit.ly/pi493)  
**Tested:** Issue 493



This latest Raspberry Pi effectively provides a full desktop computer with the footprint of a book of stamps. Its fast processor and quick networking make it snappier than older models, and it can be set up to use with dual monitors.

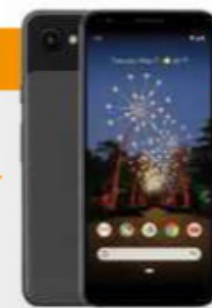
#### KEY SPECS

Quad-core 1.5GHz Broadcom BCM2711 processor ■ 1GB memory ■ Broadcom VC6 graphics ■ 2 x Micro HDMI ports ■ 2 x USB 2, 2 x USB 3 ports ■ Gigabit Ethernet, 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ 86 x 57 x 19mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

### SMARTPHONE

#### Google Pixel 3a

£399 from [store.google.com](https://store.google.com)  
**Tested:** Issue 491



For a pure Android experience, the Google Pixel 3a can't be bettered for the price. It has a brilliant camera and an exceptional screen, plus the promise of access to future updates and security patches as soon as they're available.

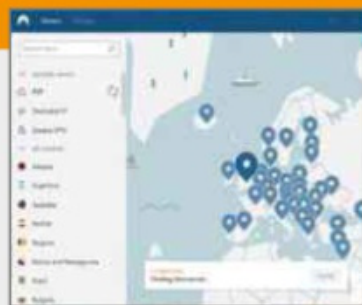
#### KEY SPECS

8-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 670 processor ■ 4GB RAM ■ 64GB storage ■ 5.6in, 2,220 x 1,080 pixels resolution screen ■ 12.2-megapixel rear camera, 8-megapixel front camera ■ Android 9 ■ 151 x 70 x 8.2mm ■ 167g ■ 1-year return-to-base

### VPN

#### NordVPN

From £2.68 per month from [nordvpn.com](https://nordvpn.com)  
**Tested:** Issue 489



NordVPN strikes the perfect balance between usability, features and price. It's easy to set up a private connection and it has servers in dozens of countries across the globe.

#### KEY SPECS

Six simultaneous connections ■ Choice of 60 countries ■ 5,500+ servers ■ IKEv2, OpenVPN protocols ■ Double VPN security ■ Router support ■ 1,000+ BitTorrent servers ■ Static IP option ■ Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, iOS, Fire TV

### LAPTOP

#### HP Pavilion x360

£679 from [bit.ly/hp487](https://bit.ly/hp487)  
**Tested:** Issue 487



Slim, attractive and powerful, and with a great keyboard, the HP Pavilion x360 gets more or less everything right, at a price that undercuts most of its rivals. The ability to flip the laptop's screen into tablet mode is a bonus.

#### KEY SPECS

Intel Core i5-8250U processor ■ 256GB SSD ■ 8GB memory ■ 14in screen ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 2 x USB 3, 1 x USB-C ports ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ Windows 10 Home ■ 326 x 224 x 20mm ■ 1.61kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty



# Web User Gold Award winners

The best software, online services and apps from our fortnightly tests

## DRIVER UPDATER

### IObit Driver Booster Free **NEW!**

Free from [bit.ly/driboo496](https://bit.ly/driboo496)

**Tested:** Issue 496

IObit's slick-looking driver updater makes it simple to root out ageing drivers, and install new ones individually or in one go. If anything goes wrong, it's easy to roll them back again.



## IMAGE VIEWER

### FastStone

Free from [bit.ly/faststone495](https://bit.ly/faststone495)

**Tested:** Issue 495

FastStone Image Viewer is a streamlined, incredibly capable tool that's easy to use but surprisingly sophisticated. You'll want to use this portable image viewer wherever you go.



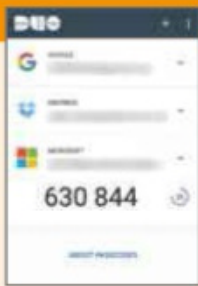
## TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION APP

### Duo Mobile

Free from [bit.ly/duomob494](https://bit.ly/duomob494)

**Tested:** Issue 494

This slick app irons out most of the hassles surrounding 2FA security. It makes managing and organising your online accounts as simple as it gets.



## DOWNLOAD MANAGER

### JDownloader

Free from [beta.jdownloader.org](https://beta.jdownloader.org)

**Tested:** Issue 493

JDownloader is the most powerful free download manager available, with every feature you need to control multiple downloads. It may look dated but its performance is sublime.



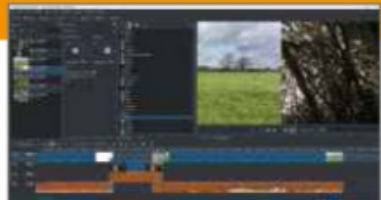
## VIDEO-EDITING SOFTWARE

### Kdenlive

Free from [kdenlive.org](https://kdenlive.org)

**Tested:** Issue 492

Kdenlive is a phenomenal piece of free software, crammed with useful tools for editing your video clips into seamless, sophisticated movies, complete with transitions and effects.



## OPEN-SOURCE CLOUD STORAGE

### Cozy

Free from [cozy.io](https://cozy.io)

**Tested:** Issue 491

Cozy is a cloud service that anyone can use – you don't need any extra tech know-how to get started. It's a great option if you want to switch from more famous storage providers.



## PORTABLE BROWSER

### Opera

Free from [www.opera.com](https://www.opera.com)

**Tested:** Issue 490

Opera is the perfect portable browser. Its interface is clean and focused, but also rich in features, and includes elegant built-in privacy tools to help you browse more carefully.



## EMAIL SOFTWARE

### Mailspring

Free from [getmailspring.com](https://getmailspring.com)

**Tested:** Issue 489

Mailspring is a modern, well-designed take on classic email software. All the standard features are present, alongside some quirky extras.



## OFFICE SUITE

### Google Docs

Free from [docs.google.com](https://docs.google.com)

**Tested:** Issue 488

Google's suite of cloud-based tools is the king of free office suites – online and off. It offers comprehensive collaboration, access from any device and unlimited file storage.



## LINUX DISTRO

### Lubuntu

Free from [lubuntu.net](https://lubuntu.net)

**Tested:** Issue 487

Lubuntu is as close to perfect as a lightweight operating system can get. Its interface is instantly appealing and is packed with all the tools you need.



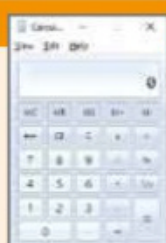
## CALCULATOR

### Old Calculator for Windows 10

Free from [bit.ly/oldcalc486](https://bit.ly/oldcalc486)

**Tested:** Issue 486

Old Calculator appears instantly when you call it, sits unassumingly in a corner of your screen when you're not using it and can perform all everyday calculations.



## RECOVERY TOOL

### Hiren's Boot CD

Free from [www.hirensbootcd.org](https://www.hirensbootcd.org)

**Tested:** Issue 485

Hiren's Boot CD isn't just the best bootable recovery disk, it's arguably the only one you'll ever need – packed with tools to fix just about every problem you're likely to run into.





# Best Free Software

## CONTENT ORGANISER

### Fraidycat

[fraidycat.at](https://fraidycat.at)

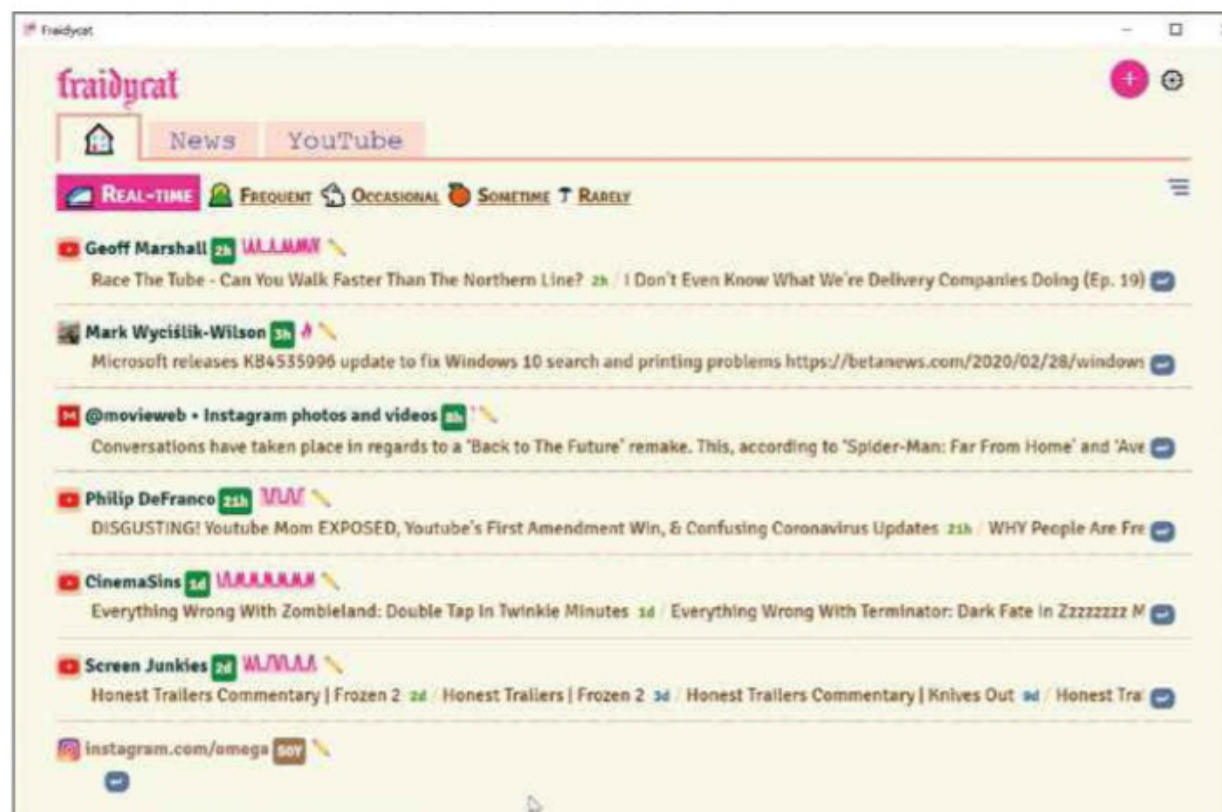
**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10, macOS or Linux

**File size:** 73MB

Feed readers aggregate content from all your favourite sites, displaying headlines from multiple locations in one place and making it easier to get up to speed without having to visit dozens or hundreds of different locations in your browser. Although feed readers still exist, they aren't anywhere near as popular as they once were.

Fraidycat isn't a feed reader as such, but it works in a similar way – providing a central hub for all your favourite internet content. The open-source tool is available for Windows, macOS and Linux, and also as a browser extension for Firefox and Chrome.

Fraidycat isn't specifically designed



for gathering news headlines from websites, but rather it's for letting you follow people you like via subreddits, YouTube and Twitch channels, Twitter and Instagram accounts, blogs, SoundCloud streams and more.

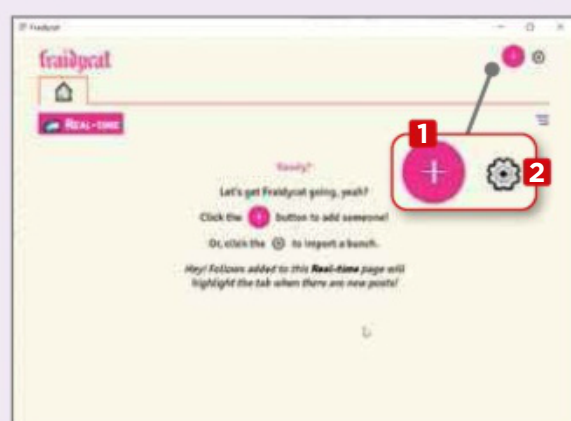
The program has a retro-style interface that's supposed to remind you of the days when the web was in its infancy and people had personal websites, rather than Facebook and Twitter accounts. You can sort content into tabs, and set the importance – Real-time, Frequent, Occasional, Sometime

or Rarely – depending on how interested you are in something. Each addition gets a couple of lines on the main page and you can expand this to see a person or site's recent updates. Unlike Facebook, which chooses what you do and don't see, Fraidycat puts you in complete control.

Fraidycat launched last year but it has just received a major update that makes it much more useful. And no, we're not entirely sure about the significance of its name, either, except that it lets you "follow from afar"!



## MINI WORKSHOP | Manage web content using Fraidycat



**1** You can get started with Fraidycat in two ways: either click the pink plus button to add someone **1** or use the cog icon **2** if you want to import settings and 'Follows'. People you add will appear on the real-time page by default, and you'll be alerted of any updates.



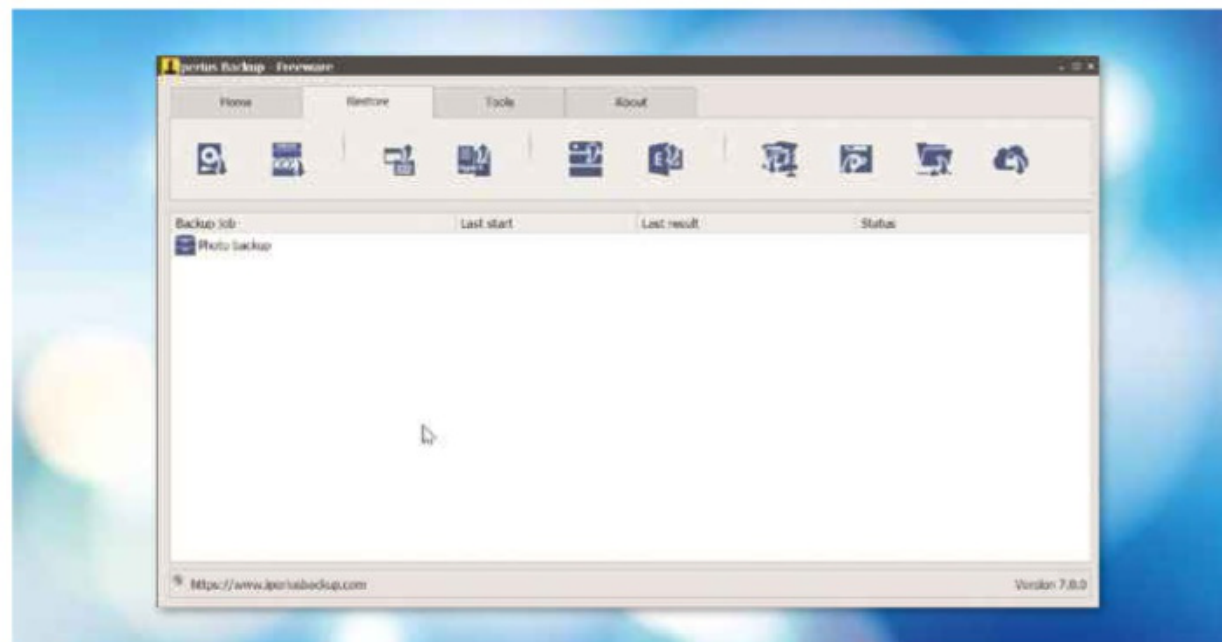
**2** To add a Follow, enter a URL. This can be pretty much anything, such as a YouTube channel or RSS feed. **1** You can change the importance **2** and add tags to sort content into categories. You can use words or emoji for this, **3** and optionally give that entry a title. **4** Click Save **5** to add it to Fraidycat.



**3** When someone posts an update, their name will appear in the feed. Items are sorted by their frequency **1** and into the categories you created. **2** Click an entry's Return button **3** to see all its recent updates. Clicking an update takes you to the source page. Click the three-line button **4** to customise Fraidycat and the posts.



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



## BACKUP TOOL

### Iperius Backup Free 7

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

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10 **File size:** 55MB

Iperius Backup Free provides all you need to back up and restore your PC. It can back up to various locations, including local and networked drives, USB flash drives and NAS devices (but not the cloud – that's a paid-for feature). It can run full, incremental, differential or scheduled backups, and compress files and execute external scripts. The latest free version of Iperius Backup doesn't offer much in the way of new features, but it fixes a number of bugs and improves performance.

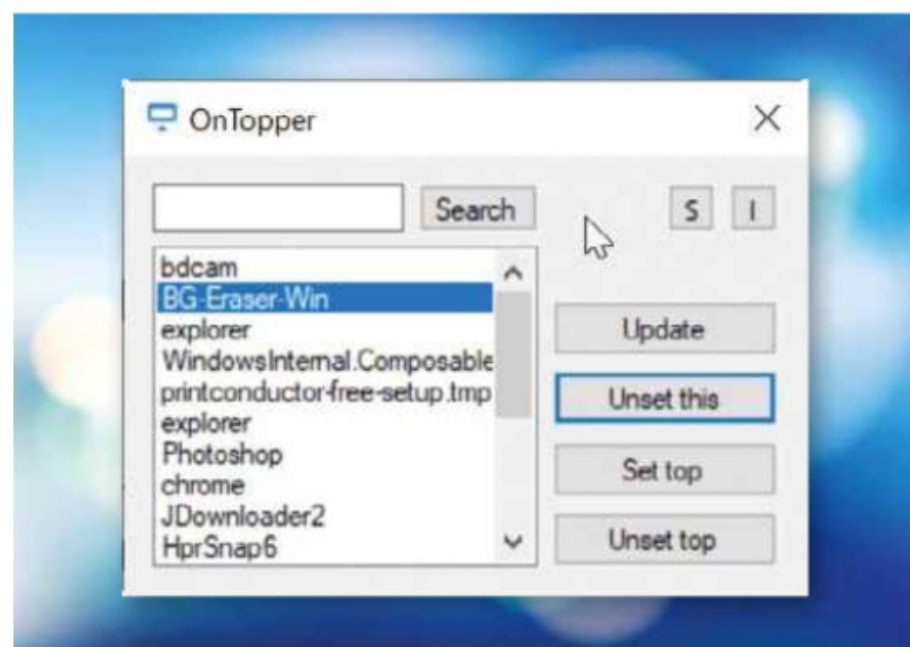
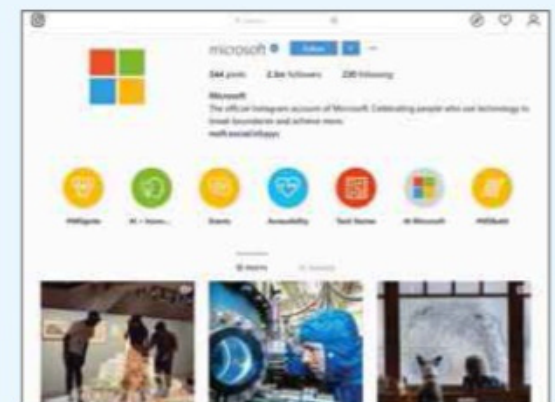
## New Windows 10 App

### Instagram

[bit.ly/insta497](http://bit.ly/insta497)

**File size:** 100MB

Instagram has launched a new PWA (Progressive Web App) version. It's available through the Microsoft Store, and you need an Instagram account to use it. The app looks and behaves just as you would expect it to, although this new release also offers direct messaging. If you have the old version of the Instagram app, it will be automatically updated to the new release.



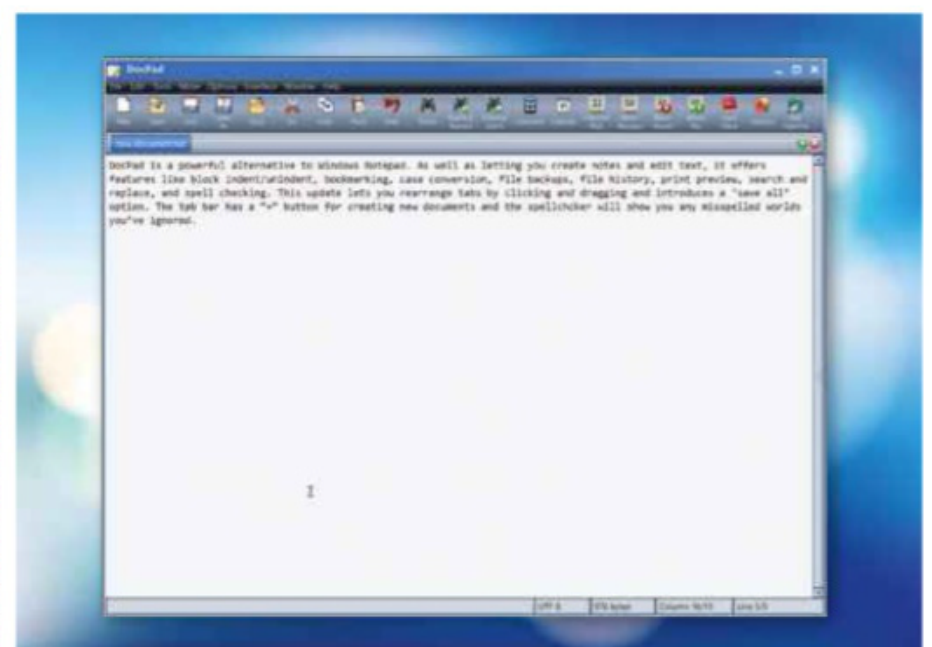
## SYSTEM TOOL

### OnTopper

[bit.ly/optop497](http://bit.ly/optop497)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10 **File size:** 1MB

OnTopper is a simple tool that lets you force any running program to keep its window on top of everything else on your screen, so it's always in view. This is handy for using with a media player or browser window. When you launch the software, it will list all currently running processes and you can browse for the one you want or search for it. Click 'Set top' to move the selected item to the front. 'Set this' pins the OnTopper window to the top.



## TEXT EDITOR

### DocPad 25

[bit.ly/docpad497](http://bit.ly/docpad497)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10 **File size:** 8.9MB

DocPad is a powerful alternative to Windows Notepad. As well as letting you create notes and edit text, it offers features including block indent/unindent, bookmarking, case conversion file history, print preview and search and replace. This update lets you rearrange tabs by clicking and dragging, and introduces a 'save all' option. The tab bar has a new plus button for creating new documents, and the spellchecker now shows misspelled words you've ignored.



## IMAGE EDITOR

### Background Eraser

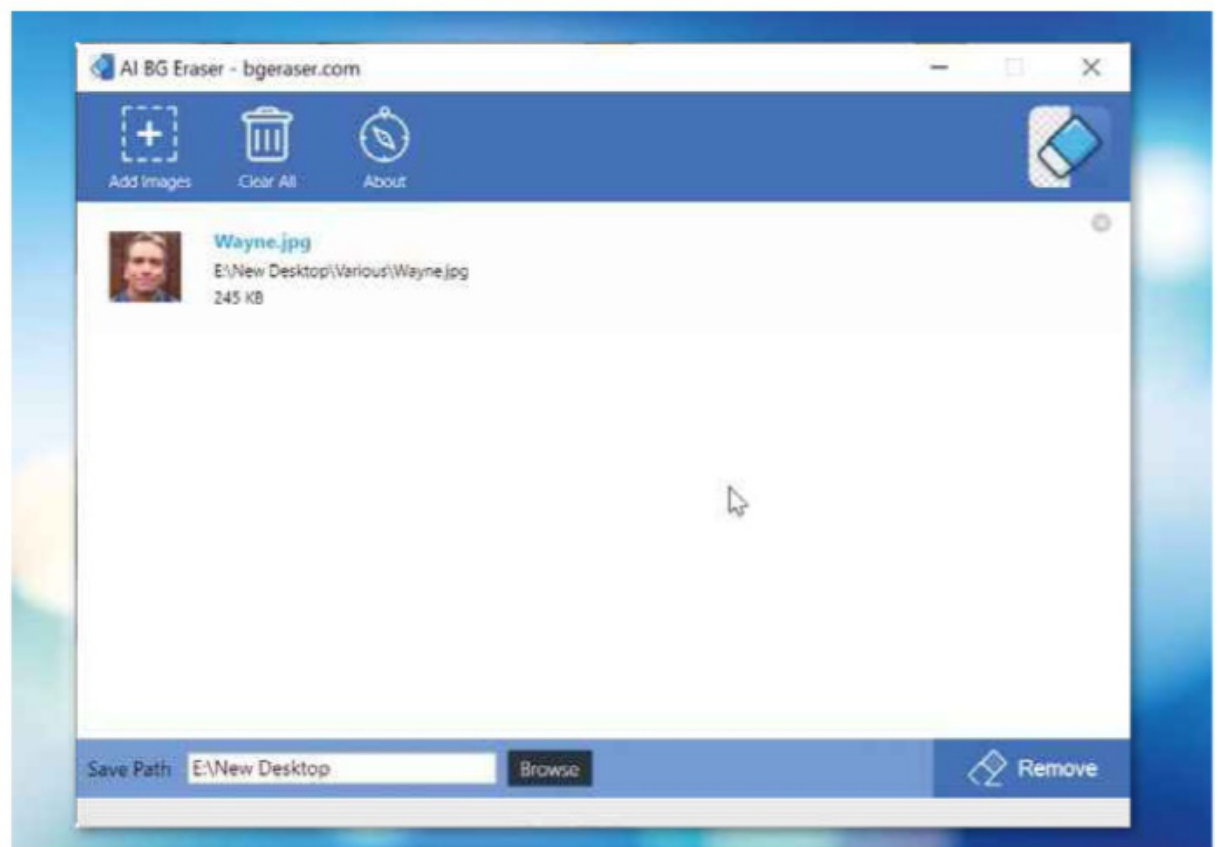
[bit.ly/bgerase497](http://bit.ly/bgerase497)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10 or macOS **File size:** 2.5MB

AI BG Eraser is a web-based service that can remove backgrounds from your photos using machine learning and AI technology. Just upload a file to [bgeraser.com](http://bgeraser.com) and it will get to work.

There is also a new desktop version of the tool available for PC and Mac that can handle up to five photos. Just select the images you want to strip the background from, specify a save path and click the Remove button.

The application is really just a front end for the web service, so your photos will still be uploaded and processed in the cloud, for free.



## PRINTING TOOL

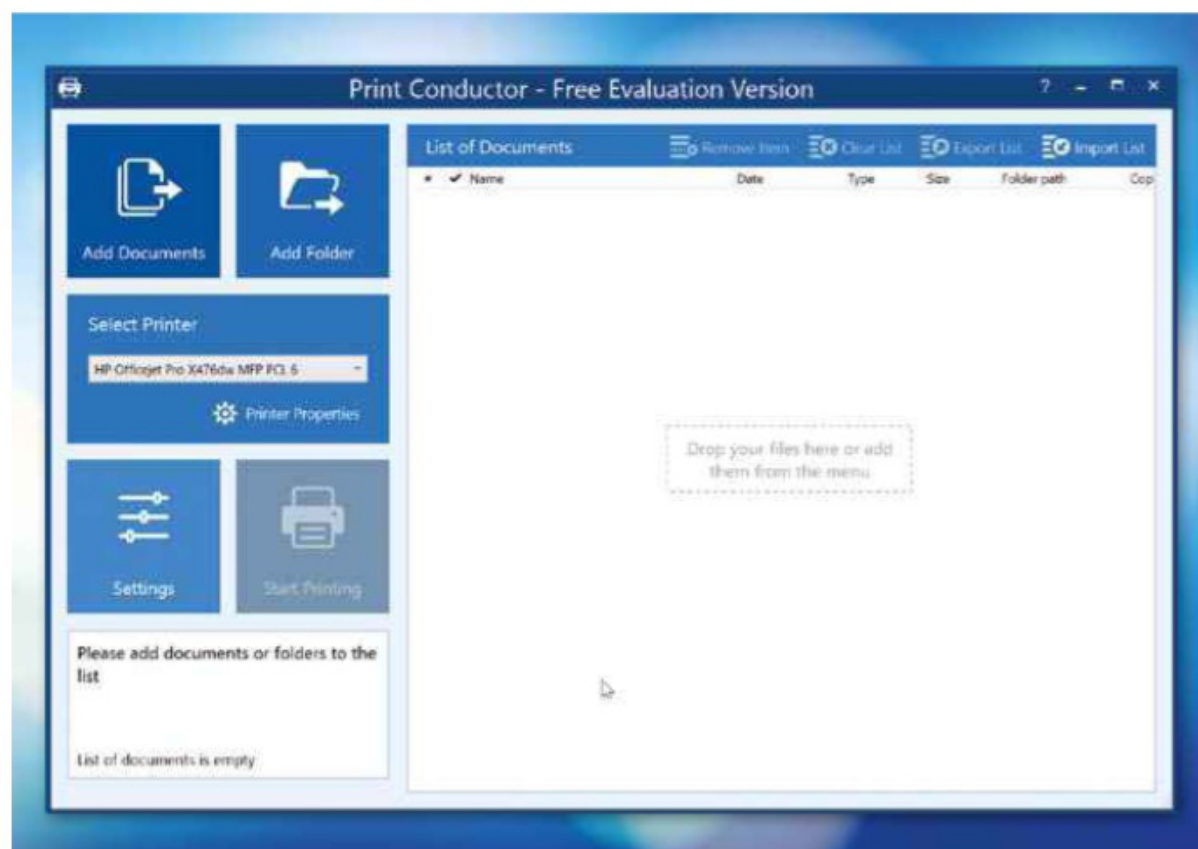
### Print Conductor 7

[www.print-conductor.com](http://www.print-conductor.com)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/ Vista/7/8.1/10 **File size:** 94.9MB

Print Conductor is an essential tool for anyone who needs to regularly print large numbers of documents. All you need to do is drag and drop the files you want to print to the program window, then select your printer in the drop-down menu and click Start Printing. You can export and import document lists.

This latest version comes with a new interface and an updated file-processing core. There's also an Advanced Settings tab, so you don't need to edit the INI file to make changes. It supports some additional file types, and processes Word documents and PDF files twice as fast.



## DISC BURNER

### True Burner 6

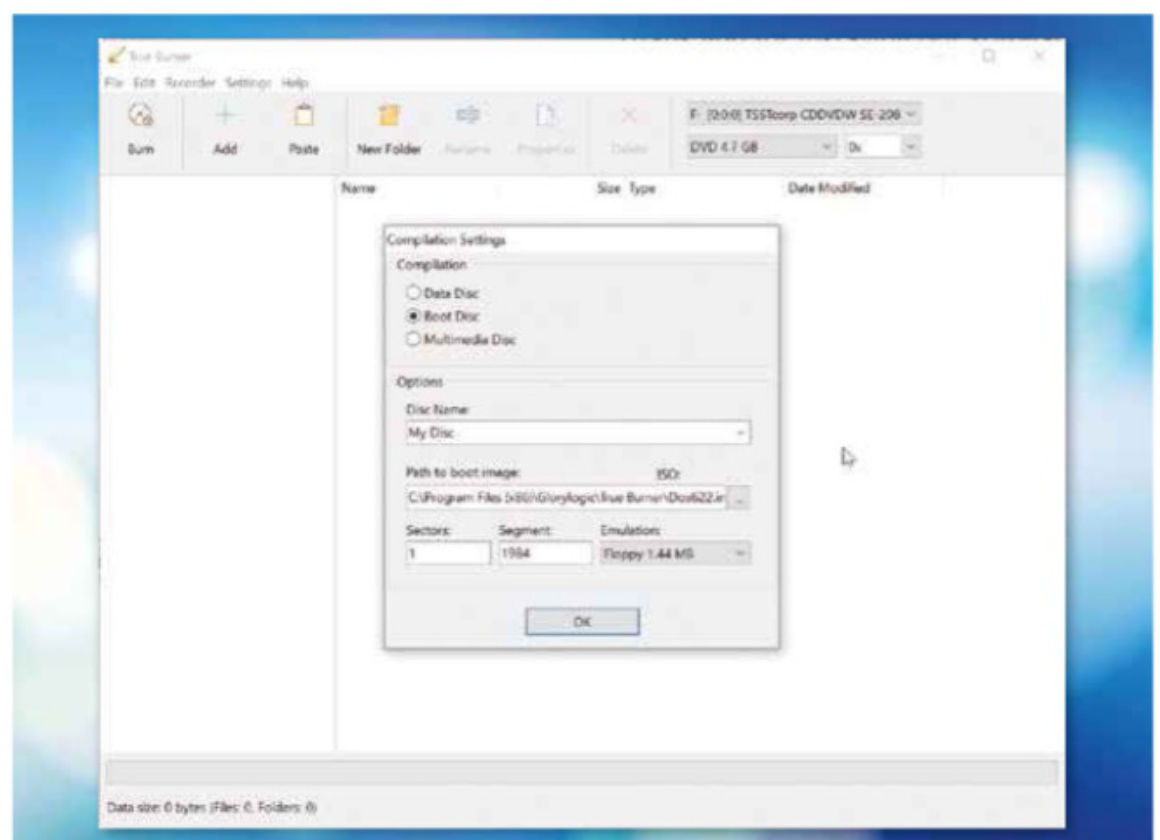
[www.glorylogic.com](http://www.glorylogic.com)

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8.1/10 **File size:** 3.2MB

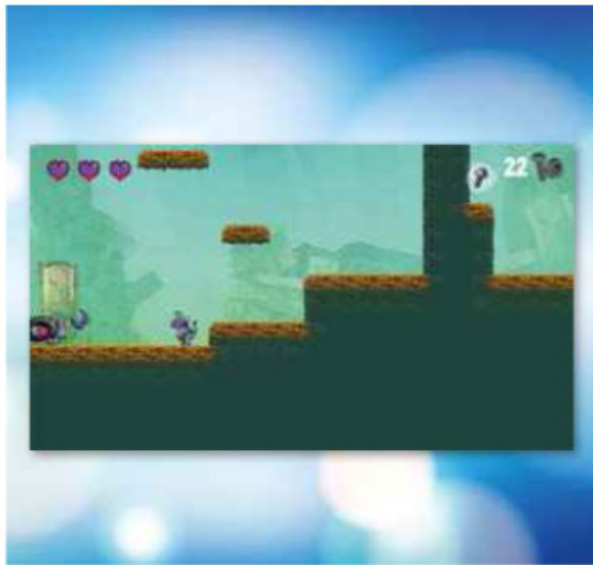
CD and DVD drives are not as common as they once were but, if you have one, True Burner can handle all the main tasks, including writing Blu-rays and DVD-Video discs. You can adjust the speed to write at, and set various other options.

This latest version has an improved interface with new icons that displays better on high DPI screens; an updated burning engine; support for writing Blu-ray XL and M-Discs; and a button to reset the program's settings. Support for the latest version of Windows 10 has also been improved.

Be sure to decline the bundled junk during installation.







## GAME

### Booma

[bit.ly/booma497](http://bit.ly/booma497)

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

**File size:** 89.4MB

Booma is a sprightly little purple alien who dreams of visiting Earth. In order for this wish to become a reality, he needs to collect some missing parts for his spacecraft and enough screws to put everything together. As well as moving and jumping through the levels of this platform game, you can use your boomerang to knock out enemies and collect items. It's very cute and lots of fun to play.

## ✓ Install this program...

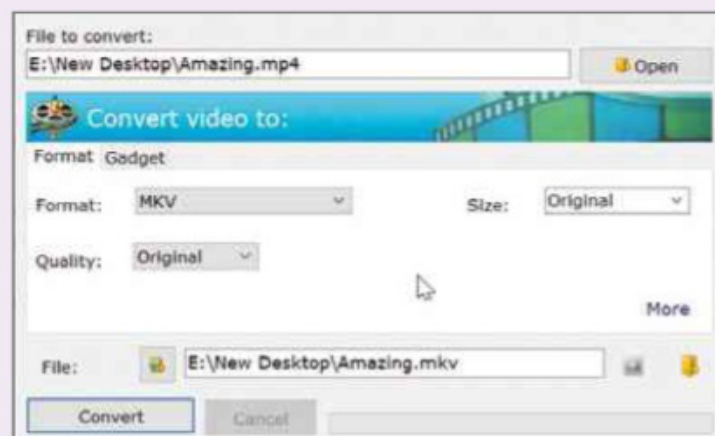
### Convertilla

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

**Min requirements:** Windows 7/8/10

**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 quickly convert it to another format. Just select the file to convert, pick a format from the drop-down menu and adjust the size and quality as required. Specify a location to save the converted file to, then click Convert and Convertilla will get to work. It's free and very fast.



## ...Not this one ✗

### Total Video Converter

[www.total-video-converter.com](http://www.total-video-converter.com)

**Min requirements:**

Windows 7/8/10 or macOS

**File size:** 28.7MB

With so many free tools available for converting media files, charging \$35.95 (£27.51) for the task seems like a shameless rip-off, but that's precisely the price tag for Total Video Converter. In fairness, it does offer a free trial, along with editing and downloading options, but we'd still prefer not to pay for the privilege.



## OTHER OPERATING SYSTEMS What's new for Linux and macOS



## LINUX DISTRO

### Manjaro 19 'Kyria'

[manjaro.org/download](http://manjaro.org/download)

**Min requirements:** 2GB RAM, 20GB hard-drive space

**File size:** 2.6GB

Manjaro is one of the best Linux operating systems around and this update, built on Linux Kernel 5.4 LTS, improves things even more. It comes in a choice of four desktop editions (DE) – Xfce, KDE Plasma, Gnome and MATE – all updated with new features. The Xfce edition remains the flagship and the team has focused on improving its look and performance. In addition, a new Display-Profiles feature lets you store different display configurations.



## CODING TOOL

### Swift Playgrounds

[bit.ly/swift497](http://bit.ly/swift497)

**Min requirements:** macOS 10.15.3 or later

**File size:** 155MB

Originally available for the iPad and now ported over to the Mac, Swift Playgrounds is an app that teaches you how to code in Swift – a powerful programming language created by Apple. You don't need any programming knowledge to use it because Learn to Code lessons will teach you all the basics. It makes use of code snippets that you can drag and drop into place, and you can continue working on the same project across Mac and iPad.

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



# Best New Browser Tools

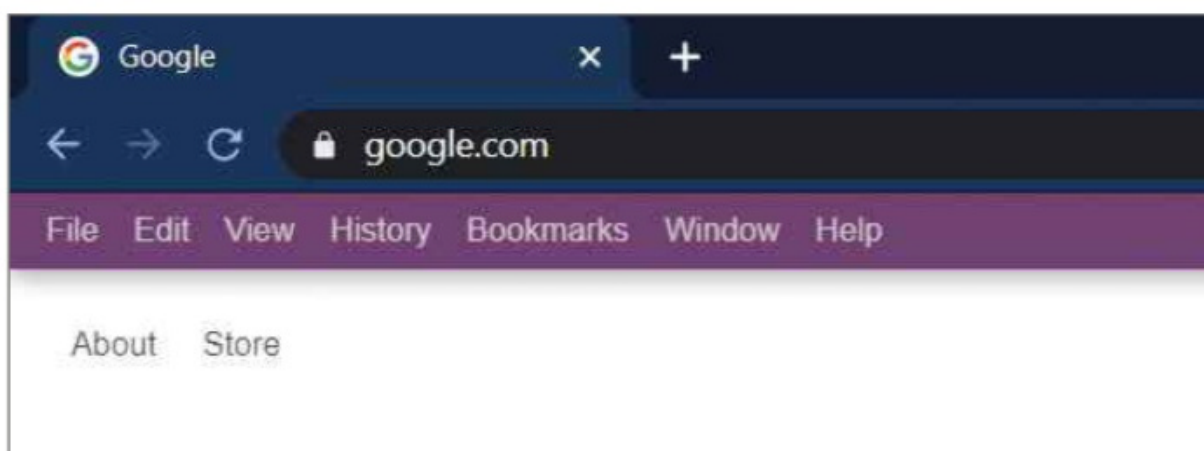


CHROME

## Add a proper menu bar to your browser

Many browser developers hide the menu bar to streamline your browsing experience and provide more screen space, but now you can bring it back using Proper Menubar ([bit.ly/proper497](https://bit.ly/proper497)) and get instant access to options such as File, Edit, Bookmarks and more.

By default, this excellent extension adds a highly customisable menu bar to the top or bottom of the browser window. It's quicker than navigating your way through the clutter of options under the usual menu button, which often demands some hit-and-miss guesswork. Head into the settings and you can add some colour, manage websites and switch between the classic menu bar or one that displays links to Google services.



When you click the extension's toolbar button, you might also note a few handy shortcuts to set links to YouTube, your inbox and social-media sites. It's a nice touch, proving that Proper Menubar is more than just a straight recreation of a bygone tool.

## Control YouTube and Netflix with your voice

Voice Control for Video ([bit.ly/voice497](https://bit.ly/voice497)) lets you control YouTube and Netflix using a set of voice commands. With

your video open, click the extension's toolbar button and choose Start Recording to activate voice controls. You have four options: play, pause, skip and rewind. Once you're done binge-watching your favourite

shows, click the button again and select Stop Recording.

It's a handy tool for viewing without scrambling for your mouse – or, as the developer suggests: “Why get your keyboard and mouse dirty while you eat and watch videos?”. Bear in mind that the add-on uses your computer's built-in microphone, so it's not as sensitive as a smart speaker, which means you may have to raise your voice to make it work.

## Translate Japanese Manga comics into English

Anity ([bit.ly/anity497](https://bit.ly/anity497)) translates original Manga text into English – the



comic-book equivalent of watching anime dubs with the subtitles on. With your comic open, click the extension's toolbar button and select Translate. Depending on the size of the comic, this can take a while, but more impatient readers can instead tab single pages out individually to get a quicker translation.

Once the process is complete, speech bubbles will be highlighted blue, and clicking these opens a pop-up translation. Unfortunately, this takes up the whole screen, which rather breaks the flow.

If you have digital comics saved to your computer, you can also load these into the tool for translation. And Anity also lets users submit their own translations, so watch out for spelling mistakes and dodgy interpretations on some of the niche titles.

## Alter websites for a joke

If nothing gives you the giggles more than inspecting a web page's source, making changes and passing the result off as the real deal, you'll get a kick out of HTML Prank ([bit.ly/prank497](https://bit.ly/prank497)). You simply click its button and choose to Start Prank.

Once it's running, HTML Prank lets you highlight and replace text on the page, and remove any element by clicking Delete. Prankster power users could also try copying and pasting images to the page, for added 'authenticity'.

It's a limited tool and eventually the 'Boris abducted by alien'-type headlines will start to wear thin. But it does its one trick very well, and has a handful of uses beyond basic HTML gags. Just don't forget to click Stop Prank once you've finished fooling around.





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

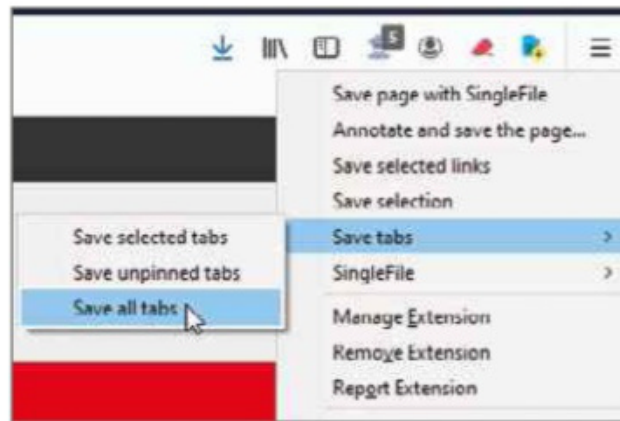


## FIREFOX

### Save web pages as single files

Firefox has an option to save the current page as an HTML file but web content these days is so complex that it's unlikely to retain the same formatting and appearance – in fact, the file will look a bit of a mess. SingleFile ([bit.ly/single497](https://bit.ly/single497)) solves this problem by letting you save a complete copy of a web page to your hard drive, including CSS stylesheets, images, fonts, frames and other elements. This allows you to browse the content offline, copy it to another device and share it with other people.

The add-on couldn't be easier to use – just click its toolbar button to download the page. It offers some useful extra options, which you can access by right-clicking, such as annotating the content before you save it, and saving all or selected tabs. You can also save pages using the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+Y.



### Learn to play piano

If you fancy becoming adept at tinkling the ivories but aren't ready to splash out on a Steinway, Piano Prime ([bit.ly/piano497](https://bit.ly/piano497)) helps you learn your way around a keyboard. Install the add-on and click its toolbar button to bring the piano to your screen. The

software supports both mouse – which, admittedly, is slow and best suited to beginners – and keyboard, where a grid above the piano maps the layout and corresponding notes.

Using the arrow buttons, Piano Prime lets you select which keys are shown on screen, and even record what you play. For a more professional sound, head into the settings (click the square above the keys) and turn on 'Sustain control' to make each note ring out longer, as it would on a proper piano.

### Hide online distractions

Hide Feed ([bit.ly/hide497](https://bit.ly/hide497)) is a neat tool for stripping out distractions from popular websites. What sets the tool apart from countless other productivity add-ons is that it's customisable, so there's no blanket ban on distractions. Instead, pop into Hide Feed's



settings and choose which sites get 'hidden'. You'll find the usual suspects: Amazon, YouTube, Gmail and most big social-media sites. By toggling these to On, you'll have access to the site's core features – composing an email or searching videos – while everything else is blocked out with hi-res images. You can add your own photos, too.

After the trial, the free version of the tool lets you hide distractions on one site. If you don't fancy stumping up \$5 a month, just remember to switch between individual sites (or just block the one that distracts you the most).



## OTHER BROWSERS



### Write on web pages

Back in Issue 482

([bit.ly/webuser482](https://bit.ly/webuser482)),

we looked at the excellent Liner – a highlighter for Chrome that lets you 'write' on web pages. You can install it in Edge from the Chrome Web Store, but the developers have now created a version specifically for Microsoft's browser ([bit.ly/liner497](https://bit.ly/liner497)). Double-click text on a page to display the Liner icon and instantly highlight the content. A second click on the highlighted word brings up further options, from changing the colour and adding comments to sharing your highlights. Sign up for a free account to save these to your Liner folder.



### Block ads and tracking

Hola ([bit.ly/hola497](https://bit.ly/hola497)) is an ad and tracking blocker, courtesy of Hola VPN – the controversial, free VPN service. It's an extremely simple extension that requires no setup (you don't even need to log in with an account) – just leave it running in the background and a subtle badge will display every time the tool intercepts an advert. In fact, turning this notification off or on is the only option it offers. For more information, click the Hola icon to see precisely how many ads are blocked on the page you're viewing, as well as the all-time total number blocked.





# Best Free Apps



## App of the Fortnight

### VIDEO

#### Vimeo Create

[bit.ly/vimeodroid497](https://bit.ly/vimeodroid497)

[bit.ly/vimeoios497](https://bit.ly/vimeoios497)

6 11

Once upon a time, only successful businesses could afford to use video as a promotional tool. These days, however, the format has been democratised since most of us carry a high-quality HD (or even 4K) video camera in our pockets. This makes it easy for small businesses and individuals to get great shots to promote themselves – or just show off on social media.

However, filming the footage is one thing – making it look like a proper piece of promotion is another skill altogether. That's why video-streaming service Vimeo has released this new app. Vimeo Create is fresh out of beta and it allows users to make professional-looking promo clips, either by starting with some of Vimeo's pre-built templates or by building one from scratch using your own footage.

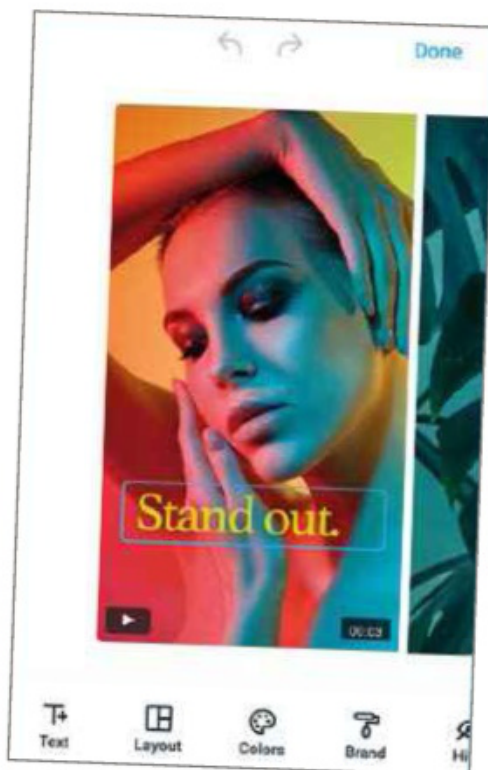
Creating videos is a simple, step-by-step process – just select your clips, add a cool-looking style, then layer on some music and let the tool's smart video creator do the

rest. The results can be pretty attention-grabbing, and you can tweak any elements that aren't quite to your liking.

The app is completely free to download and use but, if you're not already signed up to one of Vimeo's paid-for subscription services, you'll need to upgrade your membership to save and publish your clips to Vimeo's streaming platform. Vimeo Pro costs £16 per month, though one way to get around this is to use the 30-day free trial you get when you first sign up. It's also worth noting that some features, including adding logos and branding to your clips, require

Vimeo's more expensive (£40 per month) Business subscription.

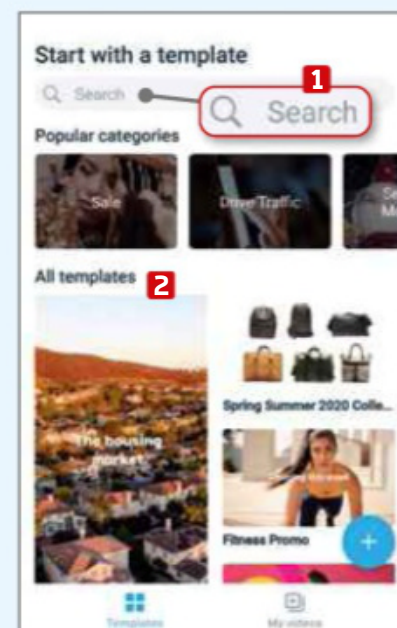
NEW



### MINI WORKSHOP

#### Create professional videos with Vimeo Create

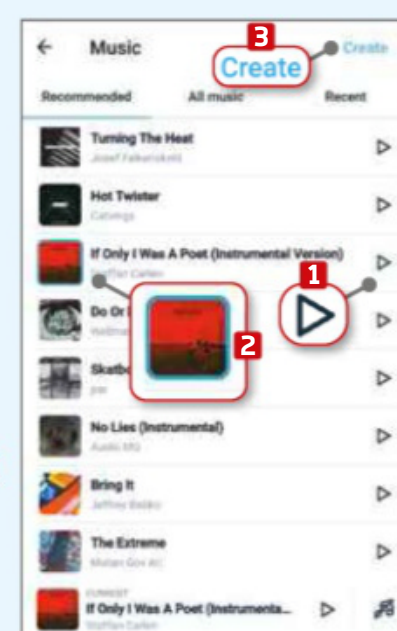
**1** Launch Vimeo Create and you'll be asked to join: if you don't have an account, choose one of the options to sign up; if you do, tap the small 'Log in' option at the bottom of the screen or tap Skip (top-right) to use the tool without signing in for now. You'll be taken to the main screen, where you can choose or search **1** for predesigned templates **2** that you can customise.



**2** To create a video from scratch, tap the green plus-sign (+) icon, then press Allow to let Vimeo Create access videos and other media stored on your device. Give your video a name and tap OK. At the top of the screen, press the 'Camera roll', Stock, Google Photos or Uploads tabs **1** to select your source, then browse for a clip you want and tap its thumbnail. **2** Tap Next. **3**



**3** Press Add on the next screen to add further clips or text. Vimeo Business users can also add branding here. For the time being, just tap Next, then select a Style from the pre-built selection and tap Next again. You'll be offered a selection of licensed tunes to accompany your video. Press the Play icon **1** to hear them, then tap the thumbnail **2** to select the tune you want to use and tap Create. **3**



Our rating



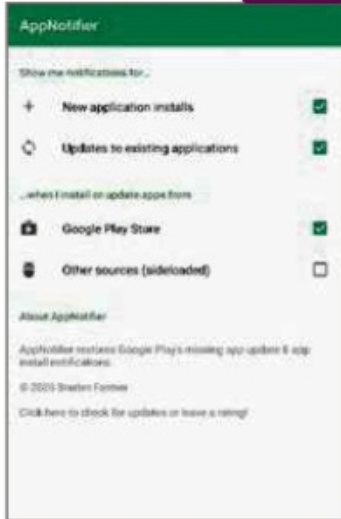


## This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android and iOS phones and tablets

### TOOLS

**AppNotifier**  
[bit.ly/appnotifier497](http://bit.ly/appnotifier497)  


Recently, many Android users have noticed that the Play Store has suddenly stopped showing notifications for updated apps. Initially, there was some confusion as to whether this was just a bug, but then Google appeared to confirm that it was an intentional feature change. Either way, it hasn't been particularly well received and we've heard rumours that Google might be bringing the feature back. Until then, this app could be the answer – it shows a notification each time an app is installed or updated on your device.



Our rating



### GAME

**Chess Ace**  
[bit.ly/chessdroid497](http://bit.ly/chessdroid497)  
[bit.ly/chessios497](http://bit.ly/chessios497)  
 



Love chess? Enjoy playing cards? Well, now you can do both, thanks to this clever game. It's basically a puzzle where you're tasked with navigating a 5 x 5 chessboard using a limited number of chess moves, with the aim being to collect all the clubs on the board. Things start off simple but soon get challenging. Chess Ace offers 250 levels and several different skins to choose from. You can unlock 'ranked play', to compare your achievements with others, after you've completed a certain number of levels.



Our rating



### GAME

**Lego Legacy: Heroes Unboxed**  
[bit.ly/legodroid497](http://bit.ly/legodroid497)  
[bit.ly/legoios497](http://bit.ly/legoios497)  
 

Lego minifigures are eminently collectible, which may be one of the drivers for developing this new mobile game. Heroes Unboxed is part role-playing game and part collect-'em-up, with heavy shades of Pokemon. The idea is to unlock and upgrade a team of minifigs to explore and do battle while reconstructing Piptown, the game's setting. The game is free to play, but some 'grinding' (performing repetitive tasks) may be required to avoid in-app purchases.



Our rating



### SOCIAL

**Messenger for iOS**  
[www.messenger.com](http://www.messenger.com)  


App updates often add more features but they can also make the app a lot bigger as a result. However, Facebook appears to have reversed this trend with the latest update (codenamed Project LightSpeed) for Messenger. The aim here is downsizing – making the app faster, smaller and simpler. According to the app's developers ([bit.ly/mess497](http://bit.ly/mess497)), Messenger's code has been completely rebuilt and simplified by around 84%, making the app about a quarter of its original size and around twice as fast. The update is available for iOS but there's currently no information as to when Android users can expect a similar streamlining exercise.



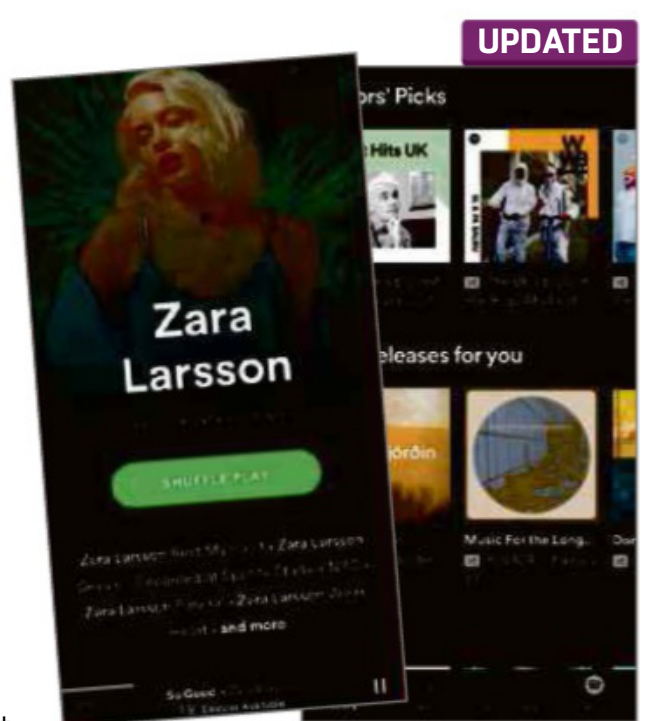
Our rating



### MUSIC

**Spotify for iOS**  
[bit.ly/spotify497](http://bit.ly/spotify497)  


Spotify has also implemented a new streamlined look for its mobile app, aimed at making the interface simpler and easier to navigate. The update (currently only available for iOS users, with an Android equivalent "coming soon") introduces a new dual-action Play button that incorporates Shuffle Play as a kind of sub-button, making it easier to start streaming with a single tap. There's also a new set of icons incorporated into a toolbar, which Spotify calls its Action Row. Actions such as 'like', 'play' and 'download' are now grouped in a central part of the screen, making the app much easier to use one-handed.



Our rating





# 5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

## TOOLS

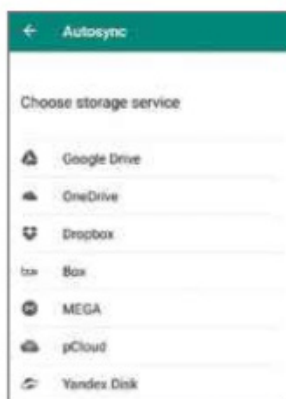
### Autosync

[bit.ly/auto497](http://bit.ly/auto497)

Price: £6.99

 (varies)

This handy tool lets you sync folders on your device with folders from cloud-storage accounts. Autosync is currently free to try but it requires payment when the trial expires.



educational app is designed by teachers and used in schools worldwide. It gamifies learning to help kids improve their spelling and have some fun at the same time.

## TOOLS

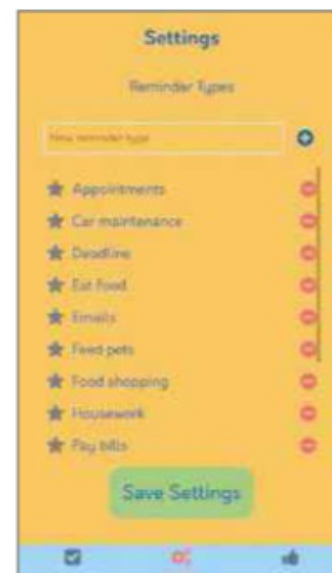
### Random Reminder

[bit.ly/random497](http://bit.ly/random497)

Price: 99p

 4.1

Ever feel daunted by long to-do list and reminder notifications? Then this could be a useful alternative. Just create a list of tasks and press a button whenever you need your memory jogged.



## TOOLS

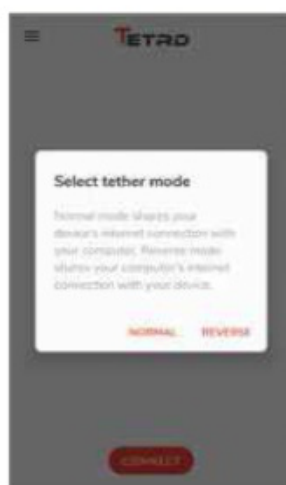
### Tetrd Pro

[bit.ly/tetrd497](http://bit.ly/tetrd497)

Price: £5.49

 4.1

If your device doesn't support tethering, then this app lets you share its internet connection with your PC (and vice versa) through a USB cable. There's also a free time-limited version available.



## GAME

### Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

[bit.ly/castle497](http://bit.ly/castle497)

Price: £2.99

 4.4  9

One of the greatest console games of all time comes to iOS and Android. Rediscover Dracula's castle on your phone or tablet – if you've never played it before, you're in for a treat. The app supports controllers, too.



## EDUCATION

### Spelling Shed

[bit.ly/spellingdroid497](http://bit.ly/spellingdroid497)

[bit.ly/spellingios497](http://bit.ly/spellingios497)

Price: £2.99

 5  9

New on Android, this



Autosync



Tetrd Pro



Spelling Shed



Random Reminder



Castlevania: Symphony of the Night



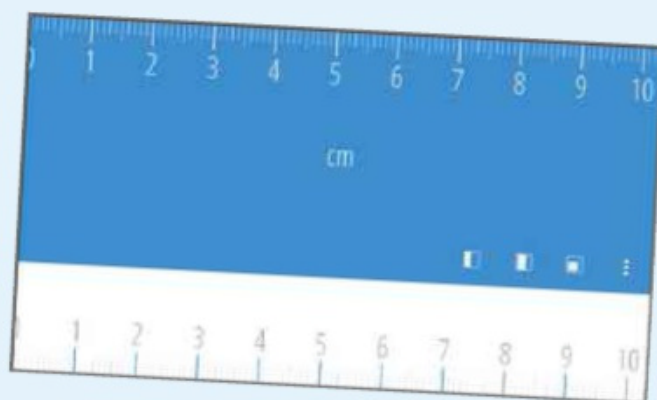
## ✓ Install this app...

### Ruler

[bit.ly/ruler497](http://bit.ly/ruler497)

 4.1

Some measuring apps boast flashy augmented-reality abilities but, as our 'Not this' app proves, these can often result in measurements you can't trust. Ruler, on the other hand, takes a simple idea – turning your phone screen into a virtual ruler – and finesses it. The interface is clean and well designed, you can choose between cm, mm or inches, and there are four different measuring modes to choose from: point, line, plane and level. Most important of all, your measurements will all be accurate. Ruler's occasional full-screen ads are a little annoying but, if you like the app, you can banish these with a mere £1.19.

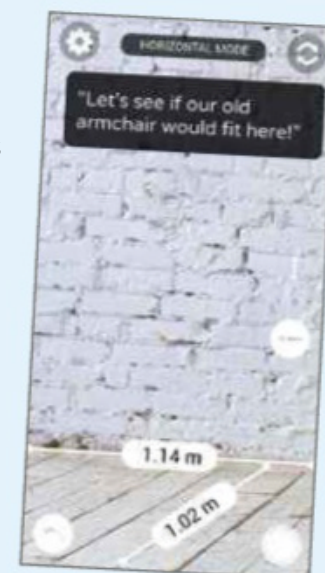


## ...Not this one

### Measure Tools - AR Ruler

[bit.ly/measure497](http://bit.ly/measure497)

Augmented reality can be brilliant when it's used well but, sadly, that's not the case here. The idea is to measure things in the real world using a virtual measuring tape, but the app's results are inconsistent (which makes it completely useless) and – as one disgruntled user points out in a Google Play review – the adverts are so invasive that they actually cover up the app buttons at the bottom of the screen.







# Take a Screen Break

Take a rest from your browser with our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you solve our 1980s-films emoji and guess our Wikipedia article?

**WIN A  
WEB USER  
2019 BACK  
ISSUES DISC!**

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



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



## GUESS THE WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE

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



**1** "Launched on 14 April 1998 as the world's first online DVD-rental store, it had only 30 employees and 925 titles available, which was almost the entire catalogue of DVDs in print at the time."

**2** "For some time, the company considered offering movies online, but it was only in the mid-

2000s that data speeds and bandwidth costs improved sufficiently to allow customers to stream movies."

**3** "It funds its original shows differently to other TV networks, giving signed projects the money upfront and immediately ordering two seasons of most series."



**5** "Its subscription fee eliminates the need for commercials, so the company does not need to appease advertisers to fund its original content - a model similar to pay-television services such as HBO."

Credit: Brian Cantoni

## COMPETITIONS

### WIN 1 OF 2 Lioncast LX55 USB Gaming Headset

Lioncast's LX55 USB Gaming Headset delivers excellent in-ear sound, thanks to its two 53mm high-performance neodymium drivers. It has eye-catching lighting on the ear cushions, while its flexible ear cups fit perfectly. To enter, email your address to [webusercomp@dennis.co.uk](mailto:webusercomp@dennis.co.uk) with 'LX55' in the subject line. For more information, visit [www.lioncast.com](http://www.lioncast.com).



WORTH  
£49.88  
EACH

### WIN 1 OF 4 VideoStudio Ultimate 2020

VideoStudio Ultimate 2020 makes video editing fun and approachable. The new Highlight Reel (pictured) takes the best of your clips and images and turns them into movies, and the refreshed Creative Content Library features modern effects, titles, and more. To enter, email your address to [webusercomp@dennis.co.uk](mailto:webusercomp@dennis.co.uk) with 'VideoStudio Ultimate 2020' in the subject line. For more information, visit [www.videostudiopro.com](http://www.videostudiopro.com) and follow [@videostudio](https://twitter.com/videostudio) on Twitter.



WORTH  
£89.99  
EACH





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

# Windows 10X

Microsoft has created a new, streamlined version of Windows for modern devices, but you can't try it just yet. **David Crookes** explains

## What is it?

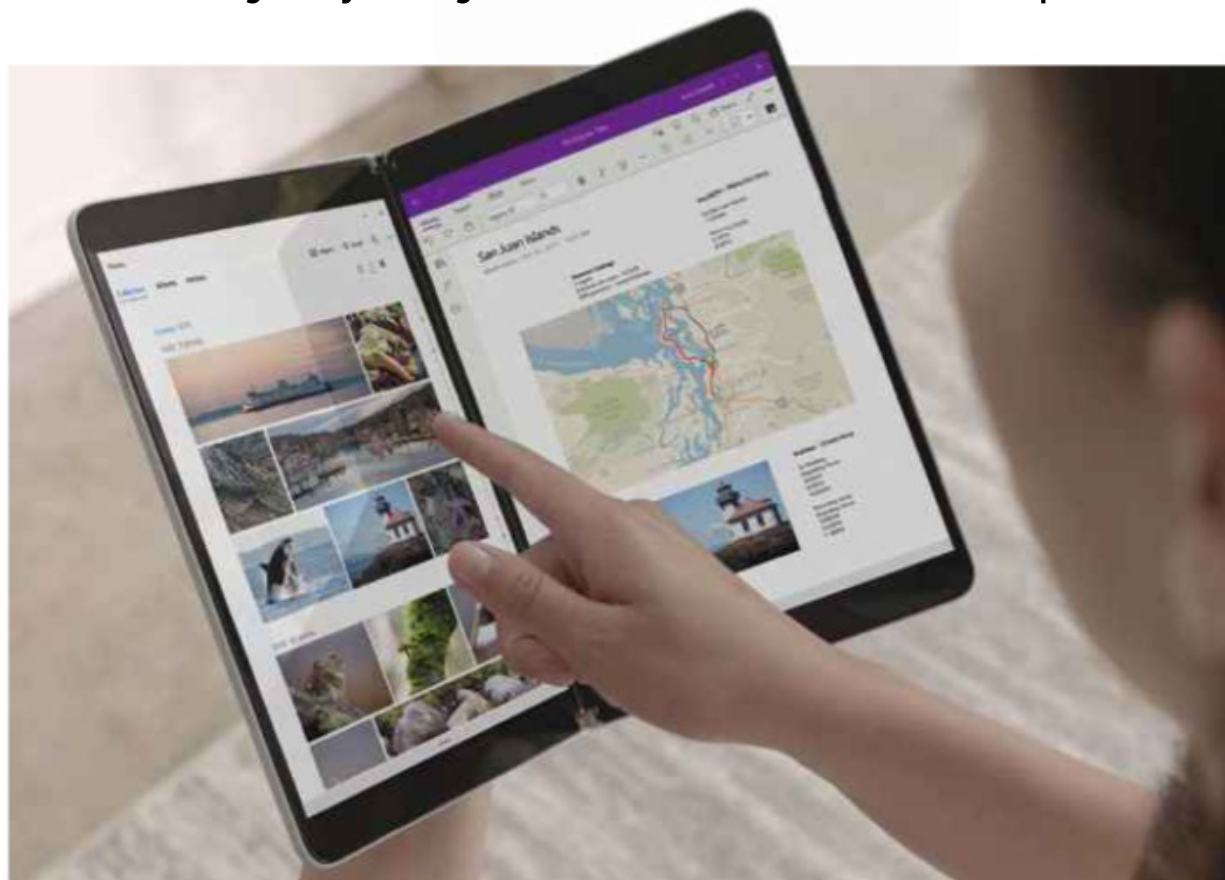
Microsoft has unveiled a new version of its Windows 10 operating system, which has been designed to run specifically on dual-screen laptops and folding PCs. The tech giant has noticed how popular these devices have become among manufacturers, and concluded that a streamlined OS tailored to make best use of their assets will make the perfect fit.

## How does it differ from Windows 10?

For starters, this isn't simply about making a few tweaks here and there to an existing operating system. Instead, Windows 10X – which is based on the simplified Windows Core OS – is entirely geared towards getting apps to work well across two screens. This has meant introducing fresh features more in keeping with modern computing, so watch out for an interface redesign and some neat under-the-hood activity.

## Will it look different, then?

Yes, and you'll notice the difference right from the start. When you set up Windows 10X, you'll be presented with a new user interface that not only introduces colourful animations but removes Cortana as a primary method of getting up and running. It simply lets you read and swipe your way through. But the changes don't stop there. You'll find that the entire shell has been rebuilt and that System Tray applets, File Explorer add-ins and desktop icons have



all been banished, along with Live Tiles. It all adds up to a much cleaner look.

## But is the Start menu still there?

Yes, although that too has been redesigned and it looks set to be renamed the Launcher. When you activate it, you'll see a search bar at the top of a new menu that lets you look for files on a Windows 10X device, as well as scour the web. Immediately below, there are a series of icons showing your installed apps and favourite websites. All the icons can be rearranged to place your most-used ones to hand or organise

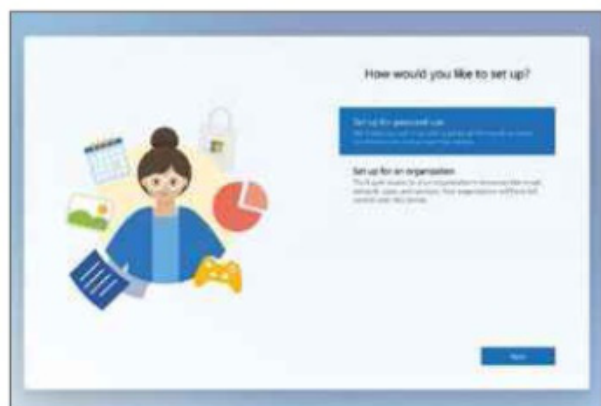
them into folders. Any recent and recommended items are listed, too.

## So it makes Windows easier to use?

That's certainly the idea. Users can swipe up to show a minimised taskbar, for instance, and see any apps that are pinned or running, making it easier to switch between them. When selecting an app, it will open on the screen in which it was activated, yet it can also be spread across two screens with a quick finger gesture. If you need to make tweaks to how the system works, you can go straight to a new-look Action Centre where you'll find useful functions such as Bluetooth and network settings, volume controls and location permissions. Here, you'll find notifications in their own dialogue boxes, as well.

## Are there specific dual-screen functions?

Yes, that's what this is all about. So as well as offering a gesture to spread an app across dual-screens (something that cleverly ensures the app can make good use of the two displays), it will adapt to any potential configuration of a



*Windows 10X has a simpler setup process that does away with the dreaded Cortana*



*The Start menu in Windows 10X has been redesigned and may be called the Launcher*





**One of Windows 10X's many tricks is the ability to spread an app across two screens**

compatible device. For example, a user may want to use the device as a laptop, a book or a tablet, or work with screens that are double-portrait or double-landscape, have a dual view or place different apps on different screens. Whichever way a user is planning to use their device, Windows 10X provides that flexibility.

## Are these devices going to be touchscreen-only?

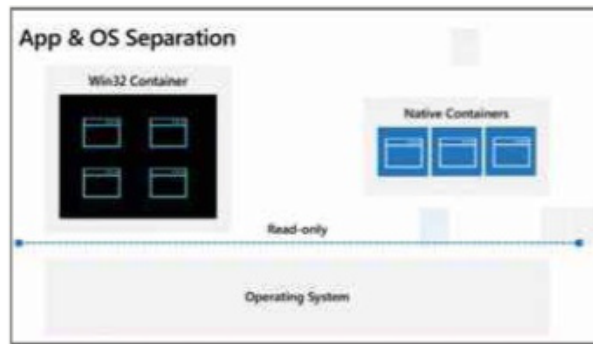
No. Although Windows 10X will use a virtual keyboard and trackpad (and can recognise a stylus), the operating system will be capable of adapting if a Bluetooth keyboard is placed over part of one of the displays. In this situation, the second screen will use the remaining bit of screen to display a so-called WonderBar. This can be used to show menus, a touchbar, emoji, mini versions of apps and a section that can be used as a trackpad. We're sure other uses for the WonderBar will be devised over time.

## So how does it operate under the hood?

Unlike Windows 10, Windows 10X will better protect its system files by separating the OS from the drivers and applications it runs. Apps will only be able to *read* the operating system – there will be no write-access and, therefore, no way for them to make changes, which makes for a safer environment that's less prone to viruses and other malware. It also banishes any need to clean the Registry, stops startup apps from slowing your PC and should ensure the OS doesn't become bloated over time.

## How does that work?

The new OS will run apps in containers, allowing them to share Windows 10X's resources while remaining separate, as if in a virtual machine. There will be three types: one will run Universal Windows Platform (UWP) apps and these will be the most efficient, thanks to low system overheads and a reduced burden on battery life; another will be reserved for apps packaged in the MSIX format; while the third allows traditional Win32



**Windows 10X will run apps in containers to keep them separate from each other**

desktop apps to be run – effectively making them operate within a virtual OS. This allows users to install apps that have not been obtained from the Microsoft Store, as well as those designed to be run in a web browser. Win32 apps can access the mouse, keyboard, pen, touch, networking, printing, audio, media and DirectX graphics, and Microsoft says all traditional software will run in the exact same way as it does on Windows 10 Home or Professional.

## Can Windows 10X still be updated?

Of course. Just because the apps are separate doesn't mean Microsoft won't be able to release updates. The tech giant has already said that OS updates could be downloaded in the background and made available on reboot in a process that mimics that of Android and Chrome OS. But a Windows 10X update should take no more than 90 seconds, which is a leap forward from the



**You'll only be able to run Windows 10X on specific new devices, not just any old PC**



**Windows 10X isn't due out until the autumn but you can try an emulation of the OS now**

very long time that updates sometimes take on Windows 10.

## So when will it be available?

Windows 10X is relying on the launch of compatible devices, but Microsoft is also keen for developers to play around with the operating system first so that any apps can be tweaked to work well with it. Dual-screen preview Software Development Kits have been made available for this very purpose, but the rollout of the actual devices and Windows 10X is expected this autumn. You can see how it will work by installing the Windows 10X Emulator image in Microsoft's Emulator app ([bit.ly/emulator497](https://bit.ly/emulator497))

## Can I upgrade my existing device?

No. Windows 10X is not intended as an upgrade for Windows 10 users. It will only run on specific models, including the Surface Neo, as well as Microsoft Surface and new devices from companies such as Asus, Dell, HP and Lenovo. All will be powered by Intel.

## MEET THE NEW SURFACE NEO

As well as announcing Windows 10X, Microsoft has showcased a device that is set to make good use of it: the dual-screen Surface Neo laptop. Essentially two 9in tablets connected with a hinge, it packs a new Intel Lakefield hybrid CPU – a processor that uses



Foveros 3D packaging technology to create an efficient chip that, in this case, is just 12 x 12 x 1mm in size.

It's certainly set to be a flexible product and a light one at that, weighing just 655g. The hinge means the Surface Neo could be used like a traditional laptop, put in tent mode or be flipped back on itself, with the operating system fluidly adapting for more seamless computing. There will also be a small magnetic keyboard that can be placed on the lower screen, leaving space for 10X's WonderBar, as well as a stylus that can attach magnetically when it's not needed.



# Unlock the secrets of your Wi-Fi



Are you tired of slow, weak and unreliable Wi-Fi? **Wayne Williams** rounds up the best free tools that can make your wireless connection faster, wider-reaching and more secure

## Test the speed of your connection

There are a number of apps you can use to check your connection speed, the best known being Ookla Speedtest, which is available for iOS and Android ([www.speedtest.net/apps](http://www.speedtest.net/apps)). It can measure the speed of your broadband, mobile or Wi-Fi connection; show your upload and download speeds, and ping rate; and test jitter and packet loss. You can select a testing server for anywhere in the world and compare past results. There's also an Ookla app available for Apple TV that you can use to test your connection.

Netflix offers an online speed-checking tool called Fast ([fast.com](http://fast.com)), which works by performing a series of downloads and uploads from and to Netflix's servers, but you don't need to be a Netflix subscriber to use it. There are also free apps available for Android



**Ookla Speedtest is the most popular and accurate way to test your Wi-Fi speed**

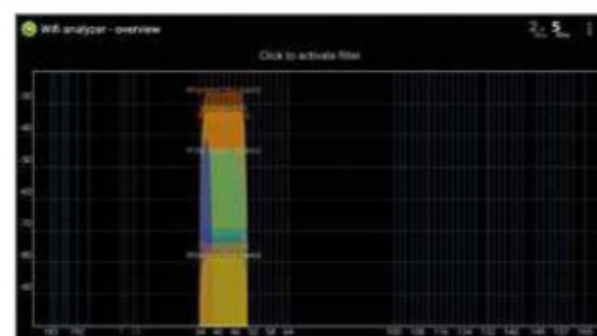
a free app that sets out to measure your online 'experience'. Run its speed test to check download, upload and ping speeds – not only for Wi-Fi but also for mobile data (3G, 4G and 5G). Once the test has completed, you're asked whether you ran the test indoors or outdoors.

OpenSignal also offers a video-speed test that measures loading, buffering and playback in either SD or HD resolution (chosen at random). Furthermore, the app can check network availability and data usage, and display network stats and average speeds recorded by other users in your area. It's available for both iOS and Android.

Finally, if you have a mesh wireless network such as Google Wifi, you can use its router app to measure your connection and performance across your home to make sure all the Wi-Fi points are functioning as intended.

## Locate blackspots using a heat map

Wi-Fi can get blocked or degraded by all kinds of objects around your home, including walls, furniture, mirrors and



**Wifi Analyser & Heatmap provides an overview of Wi-Fi signals in your home**

other electrical devices (such as microwave ovens). Placing your router away from solid objects, higher up and in a central location can all help, but there's still a chance you'll have dead zones around your home where the signal is patchy and unreliable.

The best way to solve this problem is to detect the weak areas using an app such as Wifi Analyser & Heatmap ([bit.ly/heatmap497](http://bit.ly/heatmap497)). This free, ad-supported app provides useful information about available wireless signals, identifies the best Wi-Fi channels and displays the signal strength over time. It can also create a heat map of your location. Find out how to do this in our Mini Workshop, opposite.

## Detect intruders on your network

Provided you've secured your network with the latest and strongest encryption, you should be protected from anyone leeching off your signal, but it doesn't hurt to make sure – you might, for instance, have granted a friend or neighbour access to your network in the past and forgot about it. You can usually see who is connected to your network via your router, but another option is to use an app called Fing ([www.fing.com](http://www.fing.com)),



([bit.ly/fast497](http://bit.ly/fast497)) and iOS ([bit.ly/fastios497](http://bit.ly/fastios497)).

Another useful tool is OpenSignal ([www.opensignal.com/apps](http://www.opensignal.com/apps)) –

**OpenSignal compares your download and upload speeds with your neighbours**





which is available for both iOS and Android. Fing can detect intruders, Wi-Fi thieves and potential hackers, and lists all the devices currently connected to your network. It can also run internet-speed tests.

Fing is free but ad-supported, and you don't need to sign up to use it, although doing so will unlock additional features. There's also a desktop version for Windows and macOS, and a £99 device – called a Fingbox – that you can connect to your router to block unauthorised devices automatically, or pause their access temporarily.

## Compare all networks within range

NetSpot for Android ([bit.ly/nspot497](http://bit.ly/nspot497)) isn't as powerful as its PC counterpart, but it's still a useful tool for analysing nearby wireless networks. The Discover column lists all the networks by name and provides information on their speed, band and channel – the latter is useful for making sure your Wi-Fi isn't clashing with your neighbours'.

There are additional panels that show a timeline of the signals, along with detailed information about the channels.



**Use NetSpot to ensure your Wi-Fi doesn't clash with your neighbours' networks**

You can filter the list of networks in a number of ways.

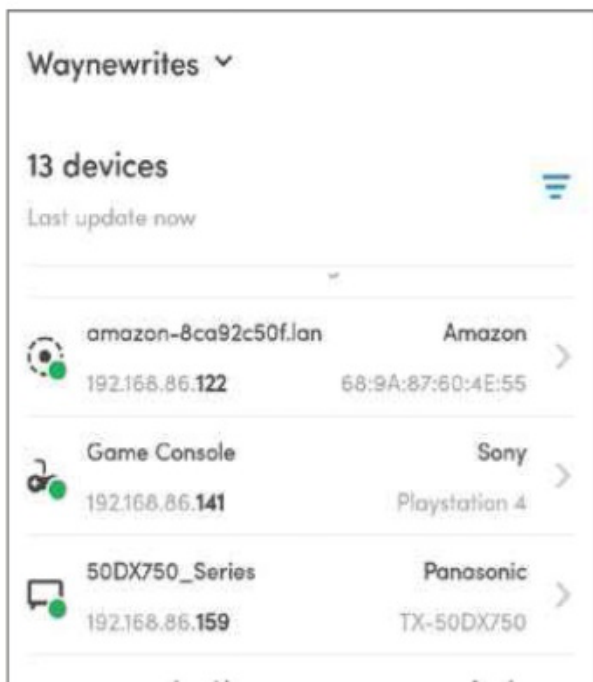
## Recover forgotten Wi-Fi passwords

The first step to keeping your wireless network safe from intruders is to change your router's default password (it's often printed somewhere on the unit) to one that's long and impossible to guess. While that's great for security, it's a pain if you forget or mislay your password, and although your devices can store these logins for you, finding them isn't always easy.

On Windows, you can use NirSoft's WirelessKeyView ([www.nirsoft.net](http://www.nirsoft.net))

Network Name	Key Type	Key (Hex)	Key (ASCII)	Adapter Name	Adapter GUID
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}
Waynewrites	WPA2-PSK	...	...	802.11n USB Wireless LAN Card	{5A4F104B-A758-4B25-B7D1-...}

**NirSoft's WirelessKeyView reveals your forgotten Wi-Fi passwords**



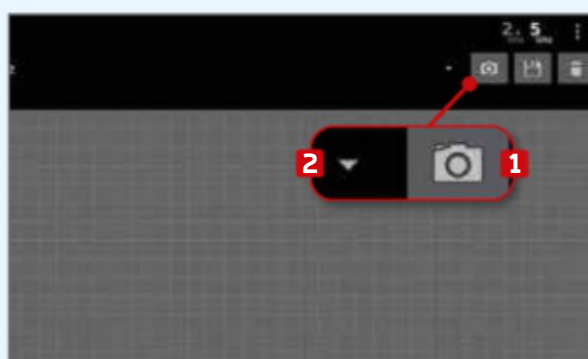
**Fing detects intruders who are piggybacking on your Wi-Fi connection**



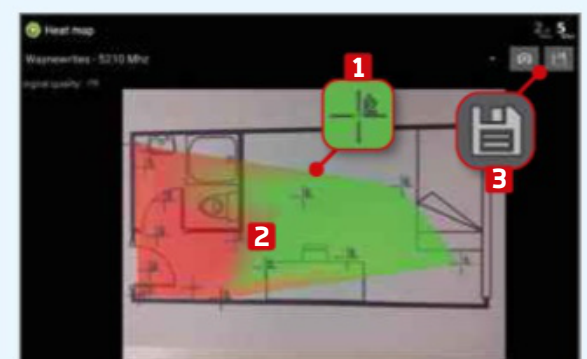
## MINI WORKSHOP | Map your home's Wi-Fi signal using Wifi Analyser



**1** Wifi Analyser's Heat Map shows where the Wi-Fi signal is strongest in your home, while also identifying any weak areas and dead zones. To use it, swipe as far right as you can, then select a Wi-Fi Channel **1** or Band. **2** Ignore the WiFi Heat Map button **3** (that's for an app that's not available in the UK) and instead click Close. **4**



**2** Ideally, you'll need a printed or drawn floorplan – either an official one of your house or one you've created yourself. Tap the camera button **1** and the drop-down menu **2** to select 'Take a Photo'. Use your device's camera to snap a picture of the floorplan, then tap the tick button. The floorplan will load, ready for you to use to build your map.



**3** Walk around the room, pausing every so often to tap your location on the floorplan. **1** This will show you what the signal strength is like in each area, highlighting the best and worst locations. **2** You can repeat this process in each room, then save and share the results. **3**



# Unlock Wi-Fi secrets

to access the information. It doesn't require installation – just run the software and it will list all your stored network names and passwords. There are 32- and 64-bit versions.

It's more difficult – but not impossible – to dig out this information from a mobile device. If you have an Android phone running Android 10 and up, open Settings, go to Network & internet, then Wi-Fi and explore the 'Saved networks' list. If you have an older version of Android, you will need to root your device and use an app such as WiFi Key Recovery ([bit.ly/keyr497](http://bit.ly/keyr497)).

## Share your Wi-Fi via a QR code

When a house guest asks for access to your Wi-Fi, you probably end up scribbling the password down on a piece of paper or reading it off the router as they type it in. A more convenient method is to use a QR code, and the process for this varies depending on your phone and operating system.

On iOS (12 or later), you can use the Shortcuts app which comes installed by default. The process is a little convoluted because although you can load the necessary shortcut from [bit.ly/scut497](http://bit.ly/scut497), iOS's security settings won't allow it, so you'll first need to run any shortcut (it doesn't matter which), then go to Settings, Shortcuts and flick the toggle next to Allow Untrusted Shortcuts. You then need to add the requested details (the password itself) to the shortcut.

Android owners running Android 10 can share their Wi-Fi directly through the operating system. Go to Settings, 'Network & internet' and select your Wi-Fi network's name. Tap the cog to the right of your network and, in the 'Network details' window, tap the blue Share button. Verify your identity and a QR code will be generated. On older versions of Android, install QR Code Generator ([bit.ly/qrcode497](http://bit.ly/qrcode497)), tap the Text button and choose WiFi from the mode menu.



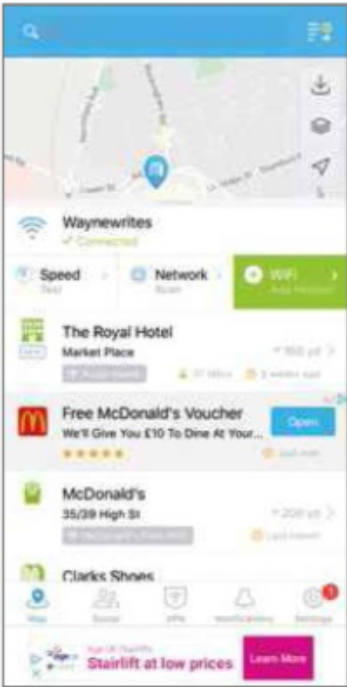
***QiFi generates a QR code that lets you share your Wi-Fi with others***

Another option is to use the online tool QiFi ([qifi.org](http://qifi.org)). Enter your network's SSID, encryption type and the key, then click Generate to get your code. No data is uploaded, so your details are perfectly safe.

## Find the fastest nearby hotspots

As you gad about town, you'll find a bewildering number of Wi-Fi hotspots to connect to, but it's not obvious which ones are fast and safe. The community-powered Wi-Fi Map for Android and iOS ([www.wifimap.io](http://www.wifimap.io)) offers over 100 million Wi-Fi points to choose from across the globe, plotted on a map, with passwords for secured networks. The Android app has quite a few negative reviews but we've found it works fine. Like many 'free' apps, there are annoying ads to contend with, but you can pay to remove these. There's also a paid-for Pro version with extra features, but it's massively overpriced at £28.49.

WeFi ([www.wefi.com/wefi-app](http://www.wefi.com/wefi-app)) is a similar community-driven tool for finding and verifying hotspots. It searches for any wireless connections in range and provides you



***Wi-Fi Map covers more than 100 million Wi-Fi hotspots across the globe***

***Facebook has a secret Wi-Fi finder but this can also see where you are***

with the necessary details, and it can connect you to good-quality free hotspots without you needing to do anything. It used to be available for both Android and iOS, but seems to have dropped support for the latter.

Finally, you may already unwittingly have an app installed on your phone that can help you find nearby hotspots. Facebook's mobile app has a secret feature called Find Wi-Fi, which can identify free and public hotspots wherever you are. To access the feature – available for iOS and Android – open the Facebook app and tap the three-line More menu, then scroll down to Find Wi-Fi. If you can't see it, you will need to expand the See More section.

One drawback to be aware of, however, is that using the feature requires you to enable location history, which allows the social network to build up a history of places you've been to. Facebook explains that this is "used to help you explore what's around you, improve your Facebook experience and get more relevant ads". But if you're already concerned about what Facebook knows about you, and you don't want more relevant ads, you may prefer to use a different service. ■



# EXPOSE HIDDEN WI-FI CAMERAS

There have been several worrying stories in the press about hidden, Wi-Fi-connected cameras discovered in Airbnb properties that spy on and share footage of guests. The Atlantic covered this in a fascinating article last year ([bit.ly/aircam497](http://bit.ly/aircam497)). Although Airbnb says it is cracking down on the problem, you should be wary when renting a property, and also look out for cameras in hotels, public toilets and changing rooms. There are mobile apps available that can detect hidden Wi-Fi cameras, although some free versions have limitations and their reviews on the app stores are often a mixed bag. For Android phones, Detectify ([bit.ly/detect497](http://bit.ly/detect497)) is a good choice. It claims to be able to detect microphones, listening devices and spy bugs, as well as cameras. Hidden Camera Detector for iOS ([bit.ly/hcdetect497](http://bit.ly/hcdetect497)) can detect pinhole spy cameras and is very easy to use, but some users say it fails to find nearby devices.





# Protect Your Data FROM YOURSELF

COVER  
FEATURE

Don't be the biggest threat to your online privacy. **Robert Irvine** explains how to secure your accounts, remove personal info and change secret settings to take back control of your data

**I**t's tempting to view online privacy as an unwinnable war between us (the web users) and them (the tech giants, hackers and other snoops). They want our personal data, we don't want to give it to them and round and round we go. But just as a soldier marching unarmed into battle sporting a Hi-Vis uniform wouldn't be held blameless for the

consequences, we are often guilty of leaving ourselves open to privacy invasion and making a difficult situation worse.

In this feature, we expose the careless practices that can make you your own worst privacy enemy - such as forgetting about services you've granted access to your accounts, letting websites store

details of your activities indefinitely and neglecting to change dubious default settings - and explain how to fix them.

To make it easier to properly protect your data, we've organised our advice into three main sections: Disconnect, Delete and Disable. All you need to do in future is to remember those three Ds.





# DISCONNECT!

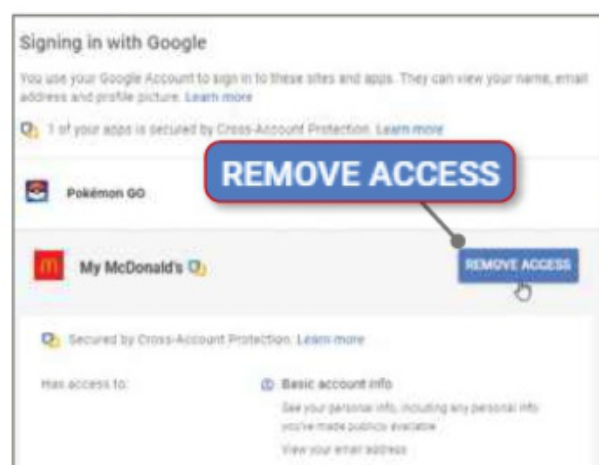
One of the biggest threats to your online privacy comes from third-party services you've granted access to your accounts, often without realising. Here's how to expose and kick out these unwanted guests

## YOUR GOOGLE ACCOUNT

Many websites and apps let you sign up (and in) using your Google account, which saves you the time and hassle of registering and coming up with a new password. The downside to this convenience is that it also opens a potential backdoor to your personal data. You may not even remember which services you've connected to your account over the years, which puts you at risk if they 'turn rogue' and start abusing that privilege. Most third-party tools only request access to your basic account information, such as your name, email address and profile picture, but it's still worth reviewing who gets to view your data.

Go to your Google account page ([myaccount.google.com](https://myaccount.google.com)) and select Security, then scroll down to 'Third-party apps with account access' and click 'Manage account access'. Here, you'll see a list of all the sites and apps that you've linked to your Google account, along with details of the data they can access. Select any entries that concern you and click Remove Access to disconnect them.

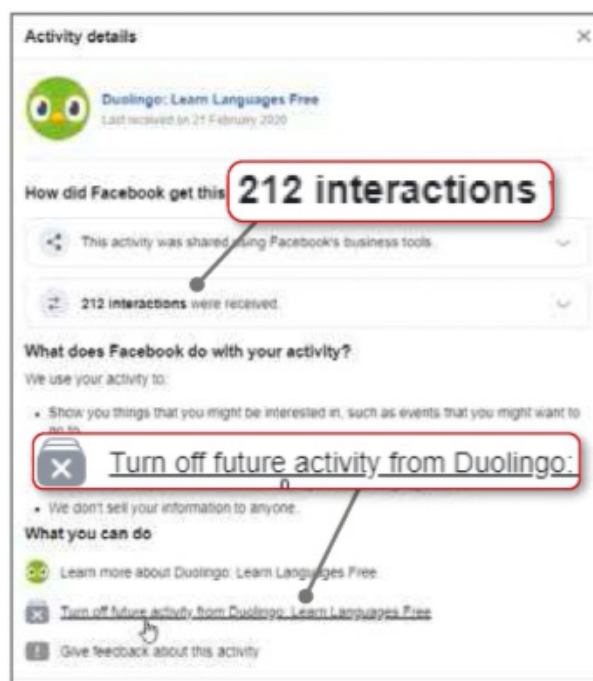
Alternatively, use Google's Security Checkup tool ([bit.ly/checkup497](https://bit.ly/checkup497)) to remove apps and sites from your account via the 'Third-party access' drop-down menu.



*We must have been very hungry to give McDonald's access to our Google account*

## YOUR FACEBOOK ACCOUNT

Facebook is notoriously cavalier with its users' data, but you don't help matters by granting third-party services access to your account, then forgetting about them. The information they can see may include your name, email address, date



*We trusted Duolingo but it interacted with Facebook behind our backs - 212 times!*

of birth, profile picture and even your friends list and other content shared on your profile.

To protect your privacy on Facebook, click the down arrow in the top-right corner and choose Settings, then 'Apps and websites'. Look down the list of tools shown on the Active tab and click

Remove to get rid of any you don't want. Alternatively, choose 'View and edit' to limit the data they can access.

As we explained in Issue 494, you can now stop Facebook collecting info about you from any websites and apps it interacts with, which it does even when you're *not* using the social network. This is why, for example, you may see a Facebook ad for a product you've been shopping for elsewhere online.

To stop this, go to Settings, 'Your Facebook information', click View next to 'Off-Facebook activity' and choose 'Manage your Facebook activity'. Here, you'll see a long list of sites and apps that share your data with Facebook, which you can click to view further details, including the number of 'interactions' that have taken place.

To disconnect a third-party tool from your account, select 'Turn off future activity', then Turn Off. To prevent all such sneaky spying, click Manage Future Activity and switch off 'Future off-Facebook activity'. You should also click 'Clear history' to wipe all the data that's already been shared.

## DISCONNECT THIRD-PARTY TRACKERS

It's very difficult to avoid being tracked around the web by invisible, third-party sites, so don't blame yourself for failing to duck that privacy threat. Your browser's 'do-not-track' option relies on websites obeying that request, but most simply ignore it, which means your best bet is to install an extension that blocks connections from trackers. Popular ad blockers such as uBlock Origin ([bit.ly/ublock497](https://bit.ly/ublock497)) and Adblock ([getadblock.com](https://getadblock.com)) do this by using comprehensive filter lists of known advertising and tracking servers but, for a more nuanced approach, we prefer Privacy Badger ([bit.ly/badger497](https://bit.ly/badger497)).

Rather than keep lists of what to block, this tool from the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF, [eff.org](https://eff.org)) learns by watching which domains appear to be tracking you as you browse the web, then sending them a do-not-track signal. If they refuse to comply, it blocks them, and also automatically blocks any trackers it's seen on three different sites.

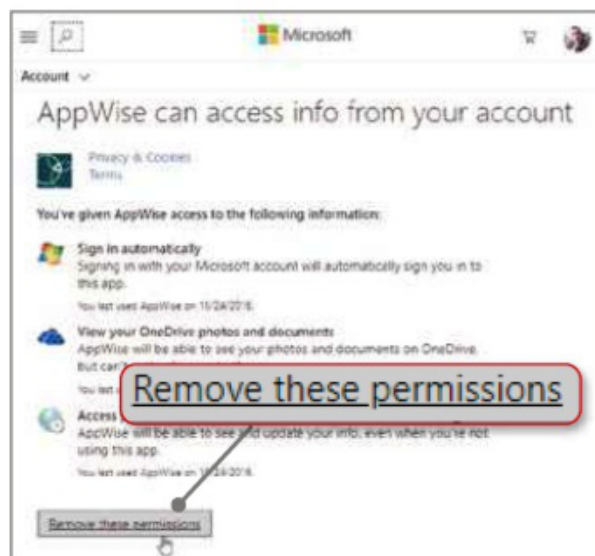
Privacy Badger is less likely to cause page-loading problems and pop-up warnings than traditional ad blockers, while catching trackers that they miss, and gives you more control over which hidden sites can and can't connect.





## YOUR MICROSOFT OR APPLE ACCOUNT

Like Google, Microsoft lets you quickly sign into online services and apps (and not just the ones it owns) using your account details, which can compromise your privacy if left unchecked. To remedy this, log into your account at [account.microsoft.com](https://account.microsoft.com) and click Privacy - you may need to request and enter an email security code to verify your identity. In the 'Other privacy settings' section, click 'Apps and services that can access your data', then select an entry to see which permissions you've given that tool. You may be surprised and even alarmed by the data you're sharing - such as your OneDrive photos and documents, or your Outlook contacts. Click 'Remove these permissions' to plug the privacy hole.

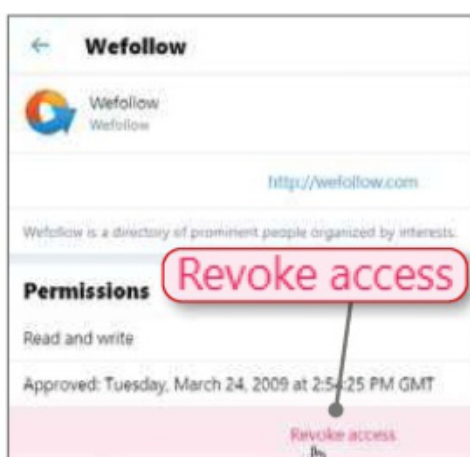


**This app can see and update our info even when we're not using it - no thank you!**

Similarly, you may have used your Apple ID to sign into third-party apps and websites, which you have since forgotten about. You can disconnect them by logging into your Apple ID account in your browser ([appleid.apple.com](https://appleid.apple.com)) and going to Security, 'Apps & Websites using Apple ID'. Select Manage and click 'Stop using Apple ID' next to an undesirable entry. Alternatively, on an iPhone or iPad, open the Settings app, tap your name, then Password & Security and choose Apps Using Your Apple ID.

## YOUR OTHER ACCOUNTS

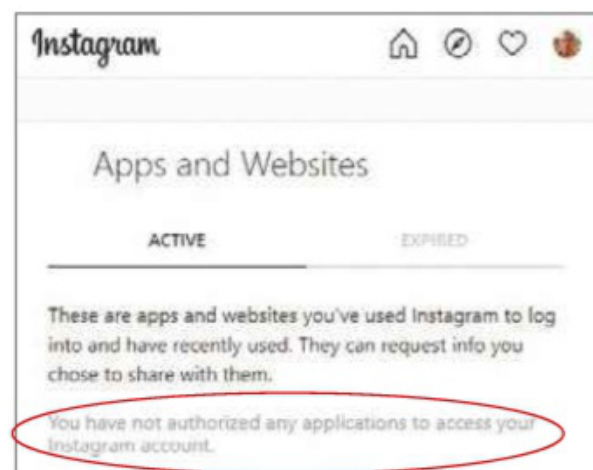
If you've been using Twitter for a while, it's very likely that there are third-party tools you no longer use or



**After 11 years, we've finally disconnected this forgotten app from our Twitter account**

even recognise that have access to your data. To check this, click More, 'Settings and privacy' and choose 'Apps and sessions'. Select an entry and click 'Revoke access' to disconnect it from your account.

For Instagram, log into your account in your browser, click the cog icon in your profile and choose 'Apps and Websites'. Here, you can view any permissions you've granted to third-party tools and revoke their access to your photos, videos and other data.

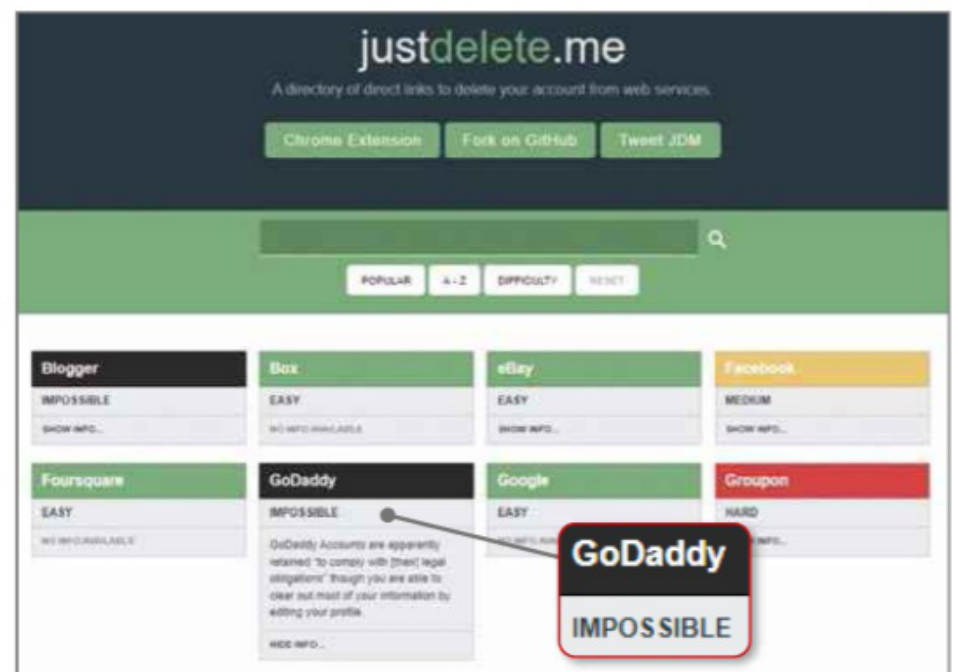


**Phew! We haven't authorised any apps to access our Instagram account**

Although 'Log in with Amazon' buttons are less common than those for Google and Facebook, you may still have saved time at some point by clicking one, which means your name, email address and home address are visible to third parties. To disconnect these websites and apps, sign into the 'Login with Amazon' page ([www.amazon.co.uk/ap/adam](https://www.amazon.co.uk/ap/adam)) and remove them from there. Note that "even if you revoke access, the website or app can still use the information you previously provided", so you'll need to contact the third-party services directly to unsubscribe from their databases.

## YOUR FORGOTTEN ACCOUNTS

You've probably signed up for a lot of sites and services that you no longer

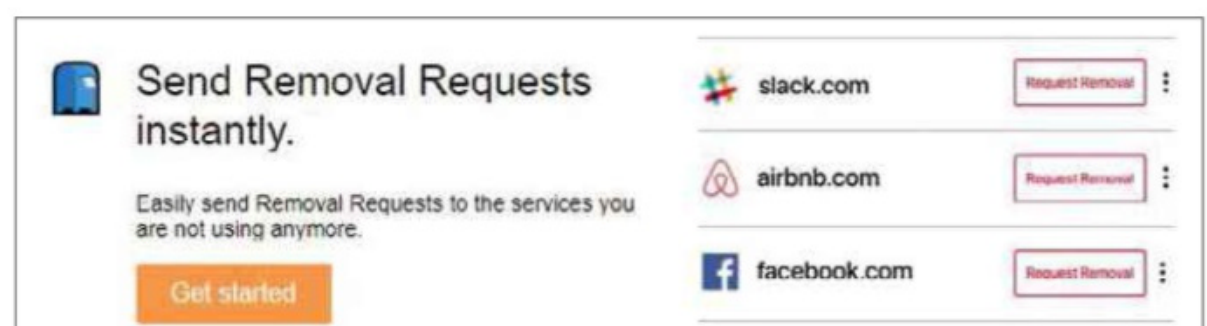


**Sign up with GoDaddy and it's impossible to leave - according to JustDelete.me**

use, which means there's more of your personal data on the web than you realise, including your age, address, phone number and information about your friends, family and interests. For this reason, it's wise to deactivate old accounts to ensure your data doesn't fall into the hands of cybercriminals and snoops.

The easiest way to disconnect yourself from your web past is to visit JustDelete.me ([justdelete.me](https://justdelete.me)), which provides advice and direct links for closing inactive accounts with hundreds of online services. Helpfully, the entries are colour-coded to show you how straightforward it will be to close an account: green for easy, red for hard and black for impossible. Members of the latter group include Evernote, GoDaddy, Netflix, Pinterest and Steam. There's also a JustDelete.me extension for Chrome ([bit.ly/justdelete497](https://bit.ly/justdelete497)) that lets you delete your details from the site you're currently viewing by clicking its toolbar button.

Another useful option is Deseat.me ([deseat.me](https://deseat.me)), which tells you all the online accounts you've signed up for using your Gmail or Outlook address, and lets you delete those you no longer use. If deletion isn't possible, Deseat.me will send the site or service a GDPR-compliant removal request. It doesn't store or share any of your data itself, and uses the OAuth security protocol to connect with servers.



**Deseat.me lets you disconnect unwanted apps from your email account**



# DELETE!

The more data websites gather on you, the more they're able to invade your privacy, so it's worth performing regular online housekeeping. Here's how to wipe the slate clean on your favourite sites and services



Google stores details of everything you've searched for while logged into your account and, although it says "Only you can see this data", anyone who uses your computer can go to [myactivity.google.com](https://myactivity.google.com) to see exactly what you've been looking for online, as can Google itself.

To clear a particular day's search history, as well as details of your activity on other Google services including Chrome, Maps and the Play store, click the bin icon next to that day and choose Delete. Alternatively, select 'Delete activity by' in the left-hand menu to wipe the data for a specific time frame.

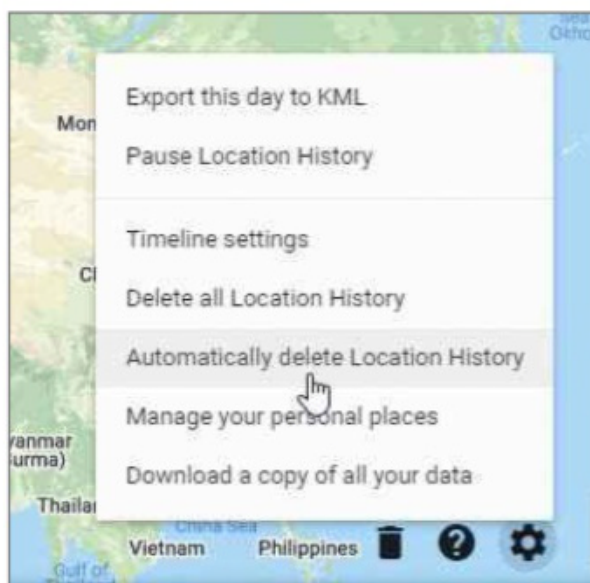
To stop Google storing your searches in future, click 'Activity controls', and move the slider next to Web & App Activity to Off.



**Google now makes it easier to delete your search data manually or automatically**

Last year, Google introduced new options that let you clear some of your personal data automatically. To turn them on, click 'Manage activity' on the 'Activity controls' page, select 'Choose to delete automatically' and decide how long you want Google to keep your data - for three months, 18 months or until you delete it manually.

Also under 'Activity controls', Location History uses your phone or tablet to track and store details of where you've been, even when you aren't using a specific Google service, and displays the data on a timeline and map. Click 'Manage activity', then click the

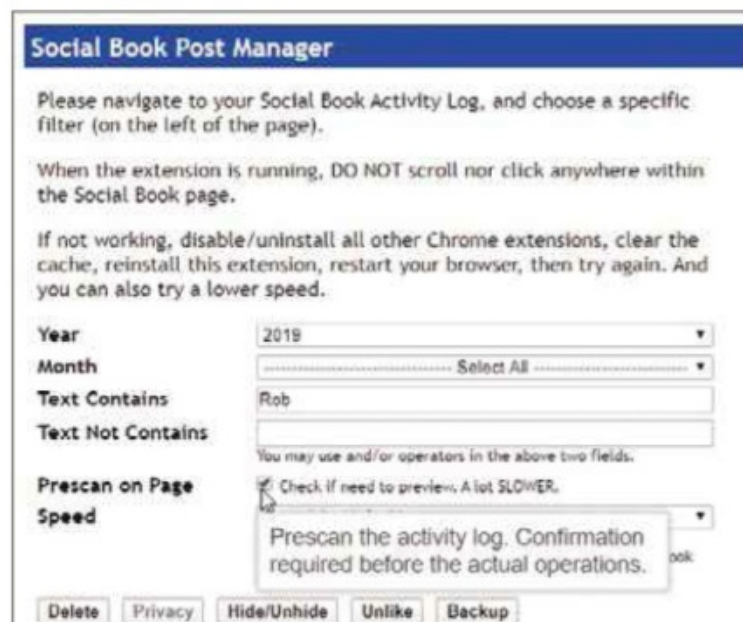


**You can make Google auto-delete your Location History after three or 18 months**

cog in the bottom-right corner of the map and choose 'Delete all Location History' to clear all data now or 'Automatically delete Location History' to do so in three or 18 months.



Facebook stores an alarming amount of information about you, from your phone number, home address and marital status to your friends, interests and places you've been, as well as details of all your activities on the social network - visit your 'Your information' page to review the full horror ([bit.ly/fbinfo497](https://bit.ly/fbinfo497)). Unlike Google, it doesn't offer an easy way to wipe all this data, other than deleting your entire Facebook account, and even then your info is stored for up to three months on its servers.



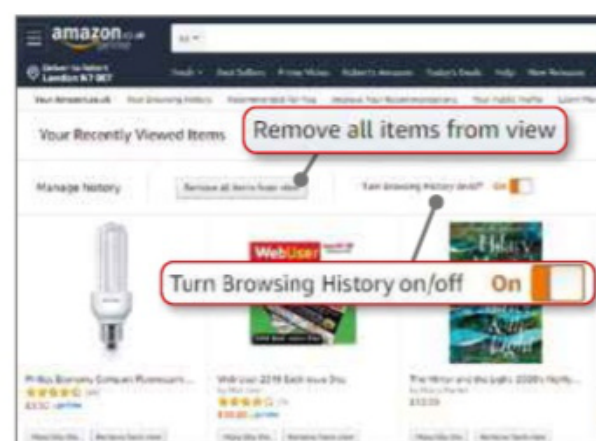
**You can delete or hide unwanted Facebook posts using Social Book Post Manager**

Help is at hand from a Chrome extension called Social Book Post Manager ([bit.ly/socialbook497](https://bit.ly/socialbook497)), which lets you quickly purge your Facebook 'Activity log' of all unwanted posts in one go. Open your 'Activity log', click the add-on's toolbar button, then specify what you want to delete, such as all posts from a particular month or year, or ones that contain a particular word or name. You can run a 'Prescan' to review the results before clicking the 'Confirm to delete' button, and choose Backup to download your data from Facebook before it's wiped. Deleted posts can't be recovered, so you may prefer the less drastic option of hiding content from your timeline instead, or simply 'unliking' posts to withdraw your approval.



Amazon doesn't just remember which products you've purchased from the store, but also everything you've searched for and looked at, and it uses this information to recommend similar items. This can come across as pushy and may even compromise your privacy, if you've been shopping for presents or personal items and Amazon displays 'suggestions' on its homepage or as you browse.

To stop Amazon using your history to make recommendations, go to your My Recently Viewed Items page ([bit.ly/recently497](https://bit.ly/recently497)) and delete individual items by clicking the 'Remove from view' button under each one. Alternatively, click 'Manage history' and select 'Remove all items from view'. You can also turn Browsing History off to stop



**Clear your Amazon browsing history to stop the store compromising your privacy**



your Amazon activity being stored in future.

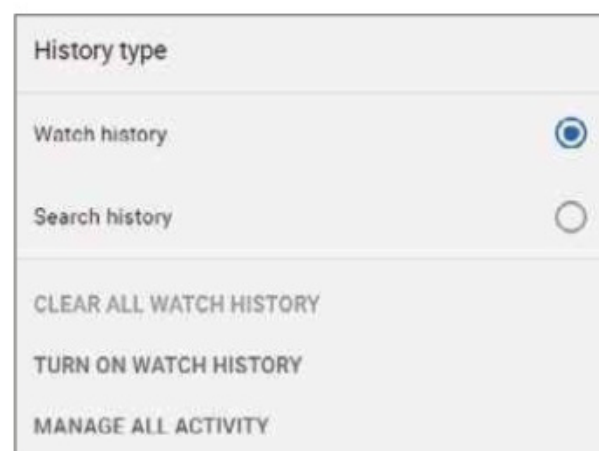
You can't delete your Amazon order history, because the store treats it as a transaction record in the same way as a bank or credit card company. However, you can conceal products you've bought, so other people can't see them, by clicking the Hide Order button by the item. Amazon lets you hide up to 100 orders but, annoyingly, they still show up in search results.

## YOUTUBE

Click the History link in YouTube's left-hand menu and you're likely to be surprised by the sheer volume and variety of videos you've watched over the last few weeks, months and years. To wipe the slate clean, both to protect your privacy and to stop YouTube recommending content, either click the 'Clear all watch history' button or delete any embarrassing or incriminating videos individually. You can do the same for videos you've searched for by selecting 'Search history', then 'Clear all search history'.

To prevent YouTube from storing what you watch and search for in future, click 'Pause watch [or search] history'. While you're there, you can also review and delete every comment you've ever posted on YouTube.

To set your YouTube data to delete automatically after three or 18 months, click Manage All Activity, then 'Choose to delete automatically' and select your preferred option.



*Clear your YouTube watch and search history to avoid potential embarrassment*

## NETFLIX

Netflix keeps a record of everything you've watched (and rated) and when, so it can recommend other shows and films it thinks you'll like. That data is also instantly available to anyone who accesses your account – with or without your permission. You can see this for yourself by hovering over your profile name, selecting Account then scrolling to the bottom and clicking 'Viewing activity', or by going straight to [www.netflix.com/viewingactivity](http://www.netflix.com/viewingactivity).

We found that even after cancelling our Netflix account, our My Activity page was still accessible by searching Google for 'Netflix history' (presumably because the Netflix cookie was still in our browser).

You can remove specific entries from your Netflix viewing history by clicking the 'Hide from viewing history' icon next to each one. With TV shows, you also get the option to hide the whole series.

To clear your history completely, click



*You can remove TV shows and films you've watched from your Netflix viewing history*

the 'Hide all' button at the bottom of the list. Note that it can take up to 24 hours for removed titles to disappear from all your devices.

## DELETE YOUR VOICE RECORDINGS

For many of us, talking to a voice assistant – such as Alexa or Google Assistant on our Amazon Echo or Google Home speaker – has become second nature, so it's easy to forget that our voice commands are being stored and shared, rather than vanishing into the ether. Last year, Amazon, Google, Apple and Microsoft all admitted that audio snippets recorded by their smart assistants were being analysed by human contractors and, although the companies subsequently changed (or 'paused') this policy, the hoarding of our voices is still a major privacy concern.

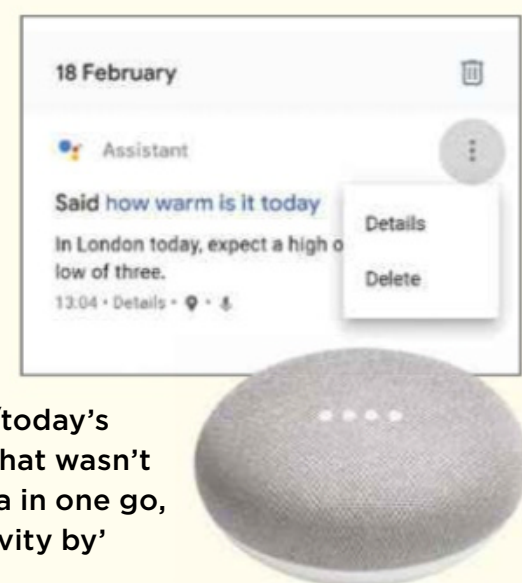


You can delete your voice data from Alexa by opening the Android or iOS app and going to Settings, Alexa Privacy, Review Voice History. Choose a date range from the menu and select 'Delete All Recordings' or delete

individual entries from the list below. If you select the 'Enable deletion by voice' option, you will in future be able to say: "Alexa, delete everything I said today" to wipe all your commands from midnight to

the present moment. You can also make Amazon auto-delete voice data after three or 18 months by selecting 'Automatically delete recordings' on the Manage Your Alexa Data screen. These options are also available in your browser through Amazon's Alexa Privacy hub ([bit.ly/alexa497](http://bit.ly/alexa497)).

To clear your Google Assistant recordings, open the Google Home app on your phone or tablet, tap your profile picture and choose My Activity. Swipe down to delete individual commands or everything you said on a specific date, or choose to delete voice data automatically after three or 18 months. As with Alexa, it's also possible to wipe commands vocally by saying: "Hey Google, delete my last conversation/today's (or this week's) activity" or "Hey Google, that wasn't for you". To erase all Google Assistant data in one go, visit [bit.ly/assistant497](http://bit.ly/assistant497), select 'Delete activity by' and choose a custom date range.





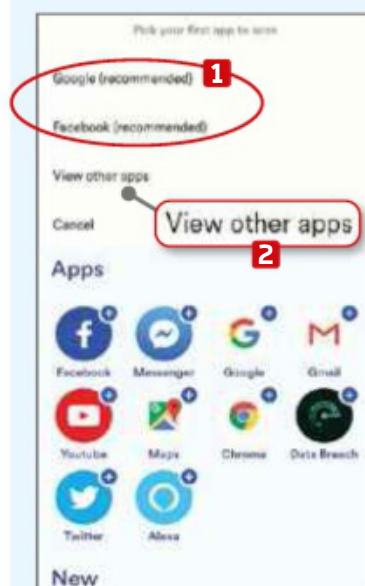
# DISABLE!

Leaving default settings enabled can have a significant impact on your online privacy. Here, we uncover the hidden options that sites and apps don't want you to know about, but which you should untick now



## Lock down your privacy using Jumbo

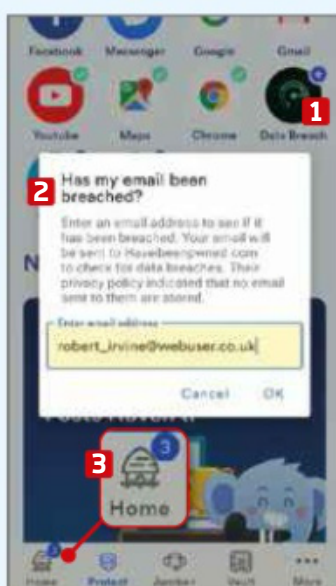
Jumbo ([www.jumboprivacy.com](http://www.jumboprivacy.com)) is a new, free tool for Android and iOS that scans the apps on your phone to help you identify and plug privacy holes. It currently checks Google, Amazon, Facebook, Twitter and the dark web (sort of), with support for Instagram, LinkedIn and other services to be added soon. Here's how to use it.



**1** Launch Jumbo, swipe through the welcome screens and read and agree to the privacy policy. Tap 'Scan your first app' and choose which app you want to check for privacy problems – Jumbo recommends Google or Facebook, **1** but you can select 'View other apps' for more options. **2**



**2** Sign into the relevant app and Jumbo will scan it and provide a report that lists which items need your attention and why. **1** For each one, it offers advice about improving your privacy, which you can either tap to ignore **2** or perform the recommended action, such as Auto Delete or Stop Tracking. **3**



**3** Close the report to return to Jumbo's Protect screen, where you can scan other apps. Select Data Breach **1** to search for your email address on [haveibeenpwned.com](http://haveibeenpwned.com) to see if it's been involved in any data breaches. **2** Tap Home to view alerts from Jumbo about privacy settings that need changing. **3**

## Edit your public Amazon profile

Amazon has thankfully (finally!) stopped making customers' wishlists public by default, but you still have a public profile on the online store that lets other people see all the reviews you've ever written. To hide this information, go to your profile page ([bit.ly/profile497](http://bit.ly/profile497)), click 'Edit your profile', then 'Edit your privacy settings'. Either deselect Reviews under 'Public activity' or choose 'Hide all activity on your profile'.



**Prevent other people from viewing all your Amazon reviews**

## Stop Alexa shopping for strangers

By default, anyone in proximity to your Echo speaker can ask it to buy things from Amazon using your account details, no matter how ridiculous or expensive. To avoid this unauthorised ordering, open the Alexa app and go to Settings, Alexa Account, Voice Purchasing. Either turn off the feature completely or switch on 'Voice code' and set a code to prevent unwanted purchases.

## Control who tags you on Facebook

Most of us have experienced a sense of dread after receiving a notification that "so-and-so has tagged you in a photo on Facebook", especially if the picture captures you looking worse for wear. To stop this



**Stop people tagging you on Facebook without your permission**

happening without your permission, open Facebook's Settings page and choose 'Timeline and Tagging'. Click Edit next to 'Review posts that friends tag you in before they appear on your timeline?' and select Enabled. Now, whenever someone tags you in a picture, you'll be given the option to 'Add to timeline' or Hide.

To 'untag' yourself from a post retrospectively, click the three-dot button in its top-right corner and choose Remove Tag.

## Turn off Facebook's facial recognition

Facebook now scans uploaded photos and videos using a deep-learning system called DeepFace, which recognises human faces and identifies who they are. Although this is useful for person-tagging and preventing image fraud, it's also rather creepy. To turn the feature off via the Facebook website or app, go to Settings, 'Face recognition', select 'Do you want Facebook to be able to recognise you in photos and videos?' and choose No.

## Avoid appearing in Facebook ads

If there's one thing worse than adverts on Facebook, it's ads that include a personal endorsement from you, just because you once 'liked' that company's page. To prevent your name from appearing in an ad without your permission, go to Settings, Ads and scroll down to 'Ad settings'.



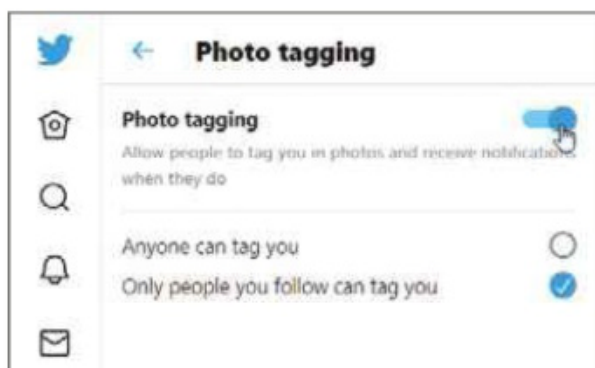


**Don't let companies use your name in their Facebook ads**

Select 'Ads that include your social actions' and choose 'No one'.

## Prevent photo-tagging on Twitter

As with Facebook, people on Twitter can tag you in photos without asking, which can sometimes cause embarrassment. To prevent this, click More, 'Settings and privacy', 'Privacy and safety' and select 'Photo tagging'. Either switch off the option altogether or choose 'Only people you follow can tag you'. If you've been tagged in a photo against your will, open the tweet you feature in, expand the menu in the upper-right corner and remove the tag.



**Protect your privacy by turning off Twitter's photo-tagging**

## Stop Spotify sharing your music

Even if you have impeccable taste in music, you probably don't want everyone knowing what you're listening to on Spotify. To protect your privacy, tap the cog icon to open the app's Settings and, in the Social section, disable the 'Listening activity' option – which shares what you play with other



**Don't broadcast your Spotify listening activities to everyone**

people – and 'Recently played artists'. You can also enable 'Private session' when you want to listen to, say, Barry Manilow, anonymously. To hide a specific playlist from nosy parkers, press down on it and choose Make Secret from the menu.

## Prevent Google from recognising you

After years of EU opposition on privacy grounds, Google finally added facial-recognition technology to its Photos app in the UK last year, under the less scary name of 'face grouping'. Although this only identifies and labels people within your own account (which means shared photos won't be tagged), you may still feel uncomfortable about Google knowing what you and your friends and family look like. To turn off the feature, open the main menu in Google Photos, choose Settings, 'Group similar faces' and switch off the 'Face grouping' option.

Obviously, Google will know what you



**Turn off 'Face grouping' to stop Google identifying you in photos**

look like if you've ever used Face Unlock to secure your Android phone. To remove your face from its memory, go to Settings, Security, Face Unlock and choose 'Disable face unlock' to delete all facial scans.

## Stop Windows 10 spying on you

We've discussed Windows 10's spying tendencies many times in the past and, although Microsoft has tried to make its privacy settings easier to access and understand, there are still several options you should ensure are disabled.

For example, to prevent Windows 10 storing and sharing everything you do, go to Settings, Privacy, click 'Activity history' and deselect the options 'Store my activity history on this device' and 'Send my activity history to Microsoft'.

You should also stop Windows apps accessing your data by clicking 'Account info' and switching off 'Allow apps to access your account info'. And to keep details of websites you visit and the apps you use secret from Microsoft, click 'Diagnostics & feedback' and choose Basic rather than Custom to limit the data it receives. You can also delete diagnostic data that's already been collected.

For more control over Windows 10's privacy settings, install the excellent free tool O&O ShutUp 10 ([bit.ly/shutup497](http://bit.ly/shutup497)).



**Keep your Windows 10 activities secret from Microsoft**

**NEXT ISSUE**

**on sale Wednesday 1 April 2020**

# PARTITION YOUR PC – FOR FREE

Why and how you should divide your hard drive into separate sections



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# Best free code editors

Fancy trying your hand at writing code to create your own website or develop another project? **Steve Clark** looks at the best tools to help beginners get started with coding



**Visual Studio Code** | [code.visualstudio.com](https://code.visualstudio.com) | ★★★★★  
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★☆ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

WebUser  
GOLD  
AWARD

## What we liked:

If you're just starting out with code-editing software, whether to build a website in HTML or take on a more advanced project such as JavaScript coding, then your best option is undoubtedly Microsoft's Visual Studio Code. The program – a halfway house between a basic text editor and professional Integrated Development Environment (IDE) – is a powerhouse for veteran coders, but welcoming enough for beginners. This is helped by its familiar Windows layout, which places a well-stocked toolbar at the top of the screen.

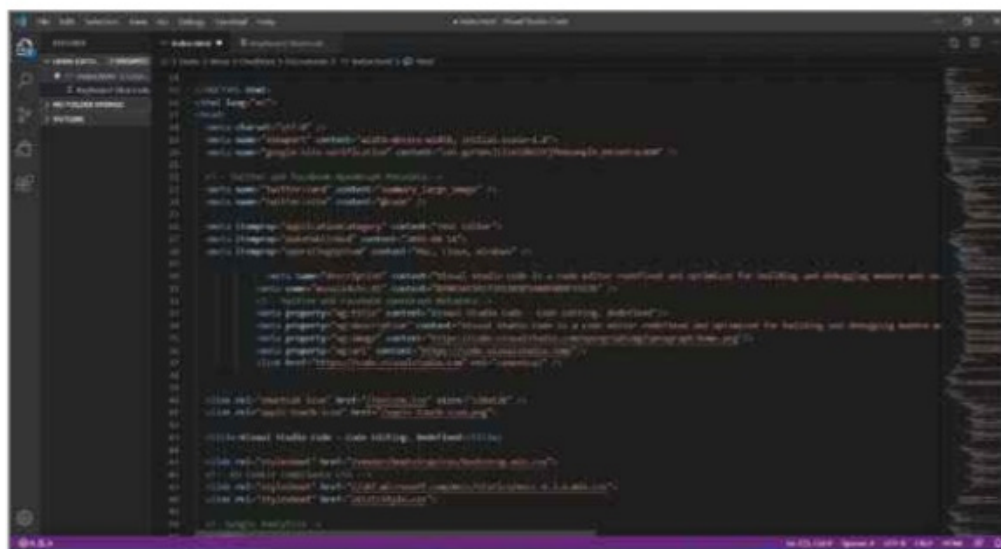
Running down the left-hand sidebar are crucial coding tools such as Source Control and 'Run and Debug' – which lets you isolate and monitor areas of code that may not be working as intended. This is also where you can search for specific lines of code or power up with optional extensions that allow the software to support a range of popular programming languages and let you save your work directly to your website via FTP.

The program itself is incredibly clean. Visual Studio Code opens with a welcome screen that immediately

makes it simple to create or open projects. If you've never used a code editor before, try the program's 'Interactive playground' to familiarise yourself with its methods.

To ease the burden of opening multiple files, Visual Studio Code operates a browser-like tabbed interface. And to help increase your productivity (not to mention learning), the software features the excellent IntelliSense autocomplete. When you start typing a command, it offers suggestions to complete the code, adding in the syntax the command needs to work. This means you can write code without memorising all the rules, and the software helps you get it right.

There's also a built-in tool to check your formatting, as well as a dizzying number of helpful keyboard shortcuts, each of which can be customised.



## How it can be improved:

While the 'Interactive playground' helps ease you in, Visual Studio Code requires a base level of coding ability. It's also consistently slower than its rivals, from launching to searching larger projects.

## OUR VERDICT

Visual Studio Code is a well-equipped toolbox with everything you need to get a project off the ground, regardless of experience. A clutter-free design makes it effortlessly accessible, while extensions and integrations provide room for developing your skills.



Atom | [atom.io](https://atom.io) | ★★★★★☆

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

WebUser  
SILVER  
AWARD**What we liked:**

Developed by GitHub, Atom has been around for years. It offers all the same

basic features as

Visual Studio Code – extensions, autocomplete, tabbed layouts – and looks almost identical, but what makes Atom different is that it lets you wildly customise any number of features – that’s why it’s billed as “hackable”. This makes it feel like *your* text editor and, if you’re a beginner, helps familiarise you with the program.

Atom’s Teletype, which you’ll need to install separately, is a great way of sharing your code while you work.

**How it can be improved:**

Getting the most out of Atom means downloading extensions. For instance, to run a debugger, you need to install the correct debugging package.



If you’re a novice at coding, dealing with these extras can seem daunting. On the other hand, it’s a good excuse to delve into Atom’s well-populated forums, and it’s certainly in keeping with the program’s ‘hackable’ philosophy.

**OUR VERDICT**

Atom is designed with customisation in mind – because no two users are alike. However, that bonus is also its drawback, requiring extensions to do the heavy lifting that comes as standard elsewhere.

Brackets | [brackets.io](https://brackets.io) | ★★★★★☆

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

WebUser  
BRONZE  
AWARD**What we liked:**

Brackets, the text editor from Adobe, focuses on website coding. It provides control over your

code while managing to avoid being impenetrable and over-designed. Beginners will benefit from its support for JSLint, an analysis tool that identifies problems with code, such as bad formatting and incorrect syntax.

Quick Edit is Brackets’ jewel in the coding crown. This time-saving function – press Ctrl+E – lets you find, open and edit CSS files without exiting your other files. Coupled with Live Preview, it lets you see precisely how the changes you make to the code modify your website.

Regularly updated by its developers, the tool is also served by a good number of extensions, although most of these are best suited to pros rather than novices.

The extension manager also houses user-created themes for jazzing up the otherwise standard-issue black box.

**How it can be improved:**

Don’t bother with Brackets if you want to code beyond JavaScript, HTML and CSS – it’s not built for the job. The extension manager is slow to load and impeded by its lack of categories – unless you know the extension’s name, prepare for a labour-intensive scroll to find anything relevant. While the official web guide ([bit.ly/bracketsguide497](https://bit.ly/bracketsguide497)) is great, it’s a wall of text and we’d prefer a more visual in-program guide to get to grips with the software’s ins and outs.

**OUR VERDICT**

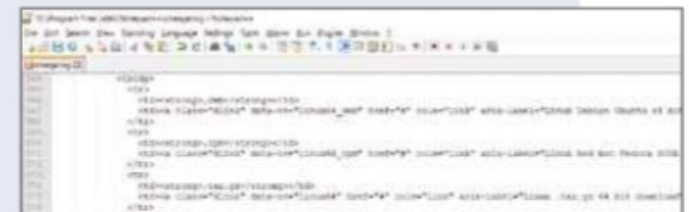
Brackets is a good tool, packed with fresh features, but it has a limited coding spectrum, focusing almost exclusively on web development.

**BEST OF THE REST****Komodo Edit**
[bit.ly/komodo497](https://bit.ly/komodo497)

Komodo Edit is a tasty freebie to tempt you into Komodo IDE, which offers more professional-level options. However, as a standalone tool it does more than enough. Like Visual Studio Code, it’s pitched somewhere between a text editor and an IDE. Expect the usual features, such as auto-complete for a range of programming languages, colour-coded syntax and FTP support. Beginners will find its airy, modern design fuss-free and welcoming.

**Notepad++**
[notepad-plus-plus.org](https://notepad-plus-plus.org)

Eschewing almost all bells and whistles, Notepad++, a popular replacement for Microsoft Notepad, is about as basic as they come. However, we were surprised at how many useful extensions the tool features. A helpful community is on hand for direction and support, but given how streamlined Notepad++ is, it’s best reserved for emergency or on-the-fly coding.

**JS.do**
[js.do](https://js.do)

If you feel that even Notepad++ is too complex for your first foray into coding, try JS. It’s a simple online JavaScript editor with support for a range of frameworks. The two-panel interface lets you view your code and see how it will look on the page, which is a great aid for learners – make tweaks to the dummy code, then click Run Code to see how different commands change the layout. Be sure to register for a free account first, so you can save your work.







# Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

## Automatically transcribe and add subtitles to videos – for free

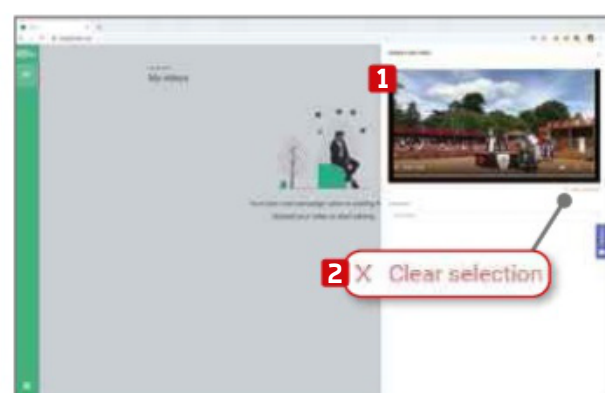
Subly automatically creates embedded subtitles for your videos. Here's what you need to know

Subly: [getsubly.com](https://getsubly.com) | ⌚ 20 mins | Any browser

Subtitles aren't only useful for making sense of foreign-language movies. They're also handy for clarifying dialogue filmed in a noisy environment, providing the gist of a clip's content when the sound is switched off and, most importantly, making it possible for someone with hearing difficulties to follow a conversation.

If you've ever tried to add subtitles to your own videos, you'll know it can be a time-consuming process. Subly makes things easy by letting you upload a video to its site and transcribing what's being said to produce editable subtitles.

You need to create an account to use the service – just enter your email address, name and a secure password.



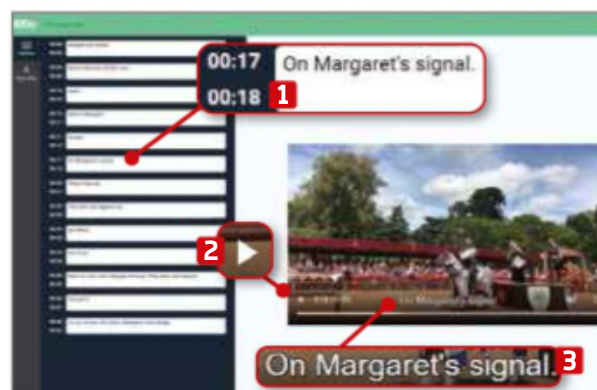
1 Once you've logged in, you can upload your first video. You can only upload one video at a time. Either drag a video to the window or click the upload area and navigate to the file you want. You can preview the clip 1 or clear the selection 2 if you want to work on a different video.



2 Select a language from the drop-down menu. 1 Subly supports a range of English-speaking accents and many European languages. Click Upload, 2 then wait while the video is sent. A message lets you know when the upload is completed successfully and Subly can start transcribing the contents.



3 While this is happening, you can click the 'Upload a Video' button 1 and choose a second clip, if required. A message pops up once the current video has successfully been transcribed, 2 and a green Ready label appears. 3 Click the video thumbnail to view and edit the results.



4 All the subtitles are displayed on the left, next to a time code. 1 Click the Play button on the video 2 to preview it. The subtitles appear on screen as it plays. 3 Hopefully, they are correct, but there may be some mistakes. Listen out for anything that isn't right.



5 Click any box containing a subtitle that needs changing, then type in the correct words. 1 Changes are saved automatically with a confirmation message. 2 Watch the video again to make sure everything is as it should be. You can customise the look of the text in the 'Style editor'. 3







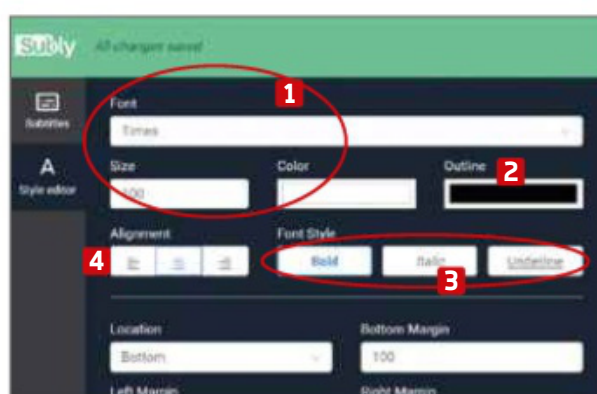
**CLOSE MENU**  
Click the arrow to shrink the menu down to just the sidebar, allowing more space for the video window

**BACK TO DASHBOARD**  
The Dashboard is where you can view and edit all the videos you've uploaded so far, and also upload new ones

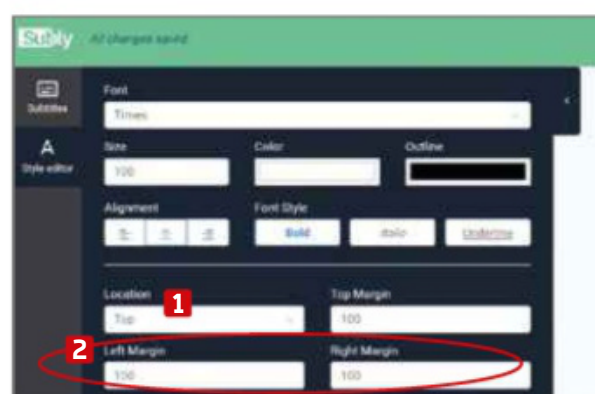
**DOWNLOAD SUBTITLES**  
Save the subtitles as a separate SRT file. Rename them to match the video name and they'll be loaded automatically when you play the movie in a media player such as VLC

**VIDEO CONTEXT MENU**  
Right-click the video to display a menu with some playback and sharing options, which vary depending on the format of the video

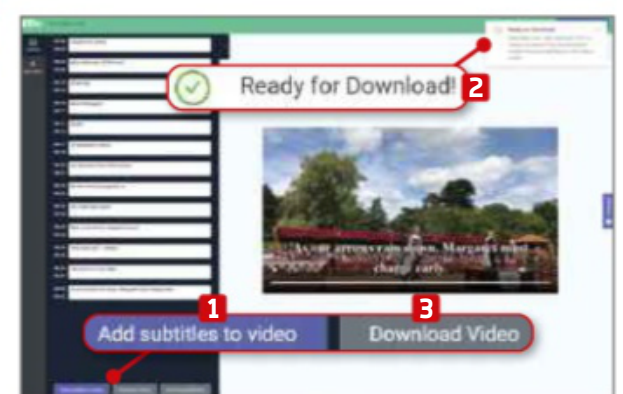
Spotted an issue or need help? Email us at [support@getsubly.com](mailto:support@getsubly.com)



**6** From here, you can change the font, size and colour of the subtitles. **1** An outline **2** makes the text stand out against the video, and you can pick a different colour for this, too. You can also format the subtitles, adding bold, italics and underline, **3** and adjust the alignment. **4**



**7** By default, as is the case with most subtitled movies, the text appears at the bottom of the video. However, you can change the location to place it at the top or in the centre, **1** if that suits your project better. You can also tweak the margins **2** to make sure everything looks right.



**8** When you're happy with your finished movie, click the 'Add subtitles to video' button. **1** The subtitles will be 'burned' into the video - this takes quite a while, depending on how much text there is. You're alerted when the process is finished. **2** When it's done, you can download the video to your PC. **3**





# Do all your work in one app with Microsoft Office for mobile

Microsoft Office: [bit.ly/msof497](https://bit.ly/msof497) | ⌚ 20 mins | 🤖 7+ 🍏 12+



## EXPERT TIP

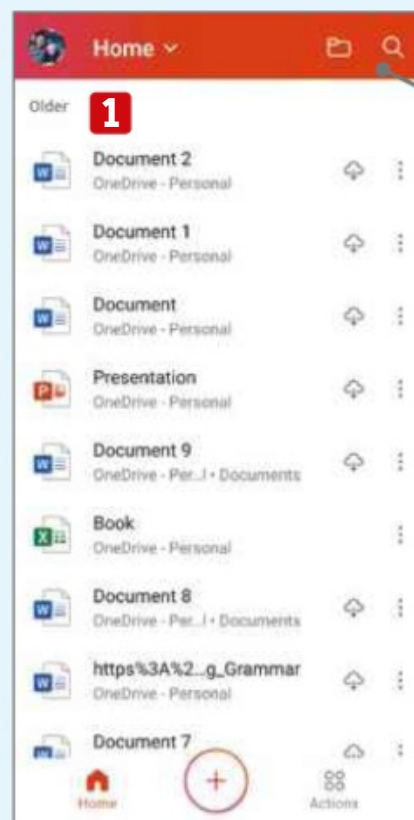
### Andy Shaw says

The Microsoft Office app is available for Android and the iPhone version of iOS. Both apps are very similar and offer the same tools and options. However, the app has been designed to work on a tall, narrow, portrait screen so it's not best suited to iPad, where it simply displays in an iPhone-sized window. You can still download the individual Word, Excel and PowerPoint apps on the iPad, which work well in its larger landscape screen.

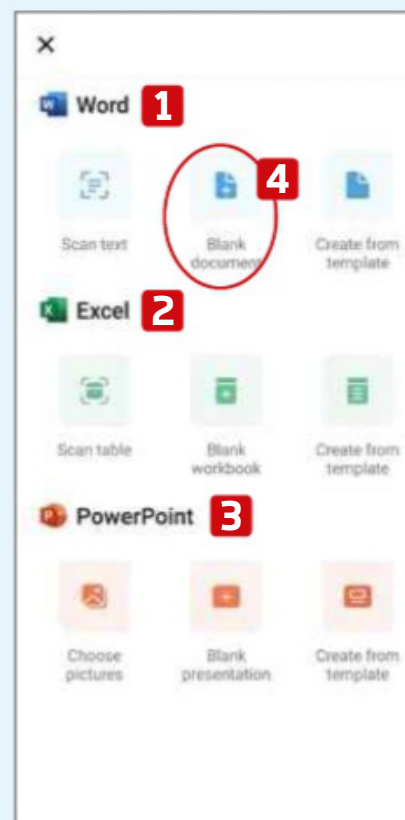


**M**icrosoft has introduced a new version of its Office app for mobile devices. Instead of a separate app for each of the suite's main tools, they're now rolled into a single app that's linked to OneDrive, so you can access your files wherever you are. In this workshop, we focus on Word. Because the tools are now all part of the same app, Excel and PowerPoint work in much the same way.

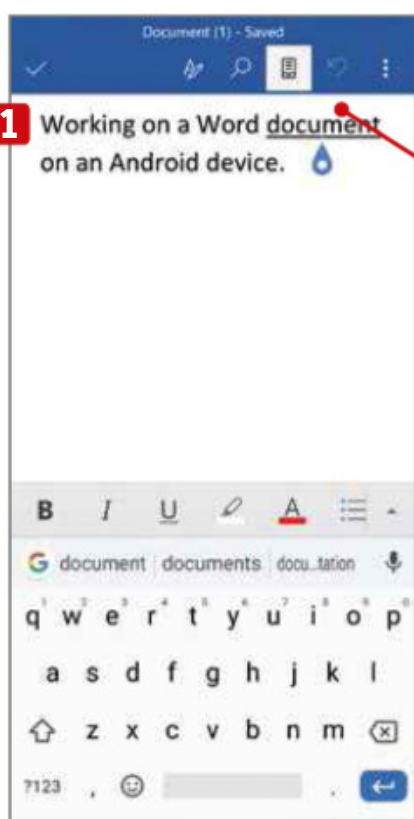
Microsoft has also integrated its Lens technology into the app, which lets you use your mobile device's camera as a scanner to import photos and other images to your documents. Any text contained in a photo can be converted using OCR for pasting into a document. There's also a new Notes tool for adding sticky notes to your files.



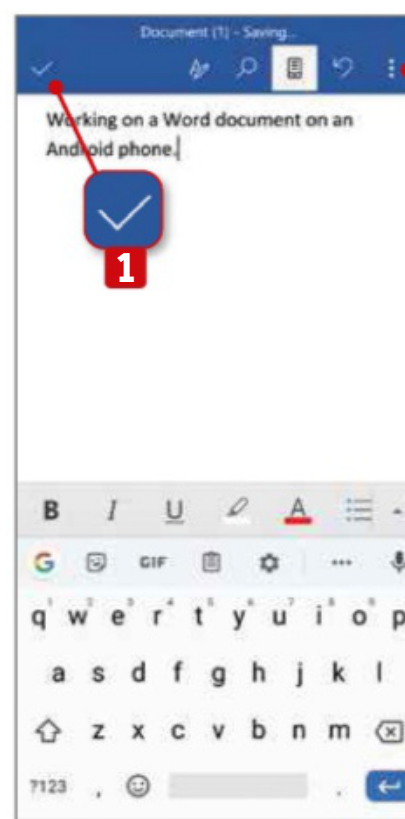
**1** Launch the app and allow it to access your photos, media and files. Sign into your Microsoft account. If you already have documents in OneDrive, they're displayed as a list, **1** with the most recent at the top. Tap the folder **2** to explore other locations, or tap the magnifying glass **3** to search.



**2** To create something new, tap the Plus button. You can choose between Notes, Lens and Documents. If you choose the latter, another menu appears from which you can create a new document, **1** spreadsheet **2** or presentation. **3** Within each category, you can choose to start from scratch, use a template, select an image or use the camera. We're opting to create a blank Word document. **4**

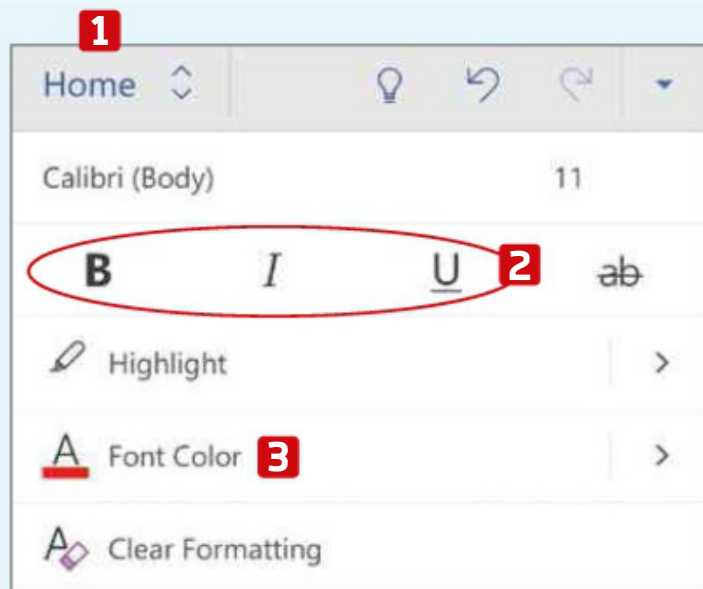


**3** As you start typing, your document appears above the keyboard. **1** Changes are automatically saved to the cloud. **2** The pin **3** shows the position of your cursor and you can drag it around the text to carry out edits. The highlighted View icon **4** lets you toggle between editing mode and a full-page preview.

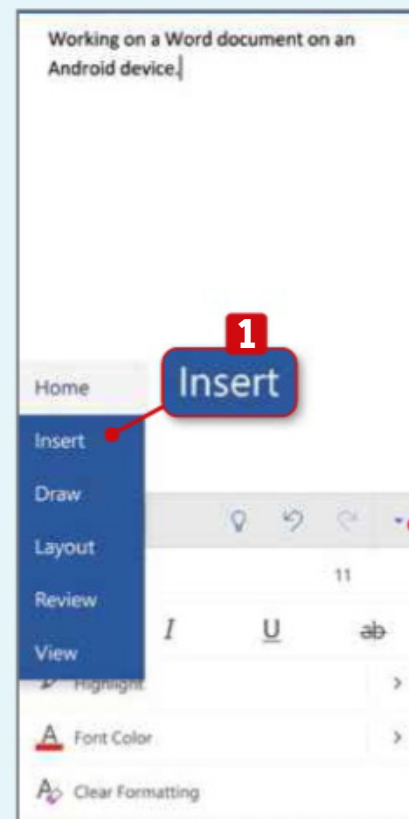


**4** The Tick icon at the top of the screen is for when you've finished working on your document. **1** The icons to the right let you access the menu (more on that in Step 5), **2** search for text in the document **3** and undo a mistake. **4** The three-dot menu icon **5** lets you print, save or share your document, or view its history.

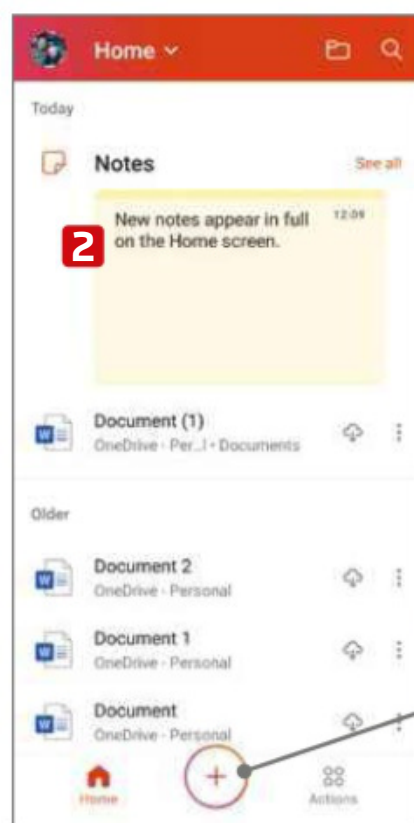




**5** Tap the 'A' button to access the mobile equivalent of the Microsoft Office ribbon menu. From here, you can select many of the options you'd expect to find in the full version of Office. The Home section **1** has most of the text-formatting options, including bold, italic and underline, **2** along with font colour, **3** bullet points, paragraph formatting and so on.



**6** Tap the Home button to access the other menus, for adding in tables and pictures, **1** and using the other tools. We don't have the space here to describe each and every option, but they're well worth exploring on your own. To return to the keyboard, tap the down arrow. **2**



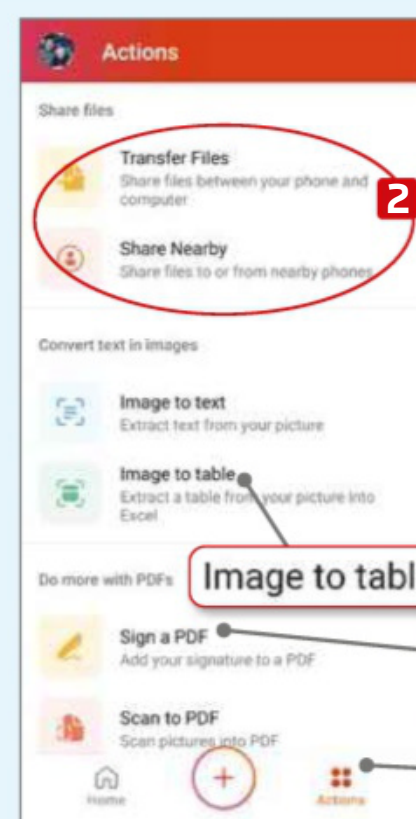
**7** On the Home screen, tap the Plus button **1** and choose Notes. Type a reminder or some other type of note on the yellow notelet, then tap the Back arrow. You're returned to the Home screen where your note appears in the list of today's documents. **2**



**8** Tap the Plus button and choose Lens. This lets you use your camera as a scanner (or you can select an existing photo), so you can turn an image into a document. Swipe to choose between Document, Photo or Whiteboard and take the picture. The icons at the top **1** let you edit the image. You can add more images to make a multi-page document, **2** and choose between an image, Word document and PDF for the file type. **3** Tap Done. **4**



**9** If you choose image or PDF, you can save the resulting file to an appropriate folder. Choosing 'Word document' performs optical character recognition (OCR) on the text and transfers it to a Word document that you can then edit as normal. **1**



**10** Back on the Home screen, tap the Actions button. **1** Here, you can transfer and share files between your devices. **2** There are also more image tools, including OCR tools that convert pictures of tables into Excel spreadsheets. **3** The PDFs section includes tools for adding a signature **4** and various conversion options.





## Workshop 3

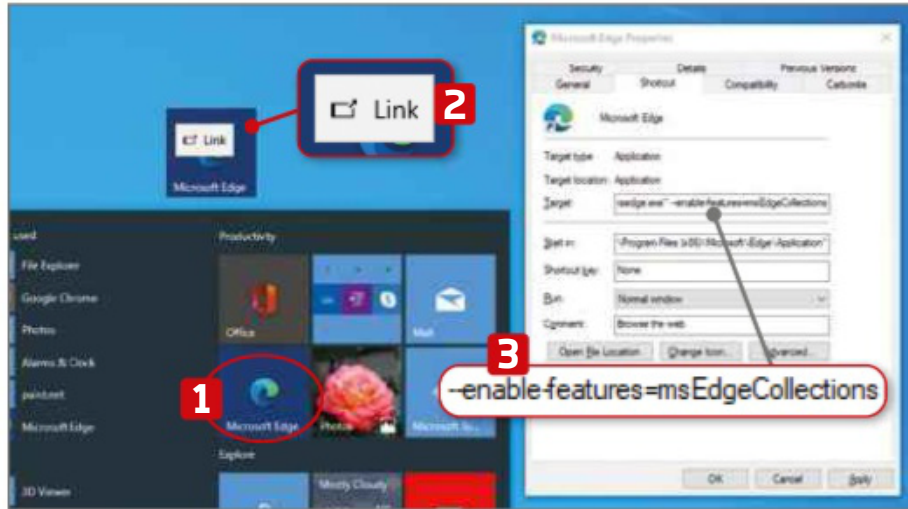
# Collect info while browsing with Edge's new tool

Edge's new Collections tool works in a similar way to bookmarking but it's more versatile and has several useful features. You aren't just restricted to links, you can also save pictures and snippets of text, and even add your own

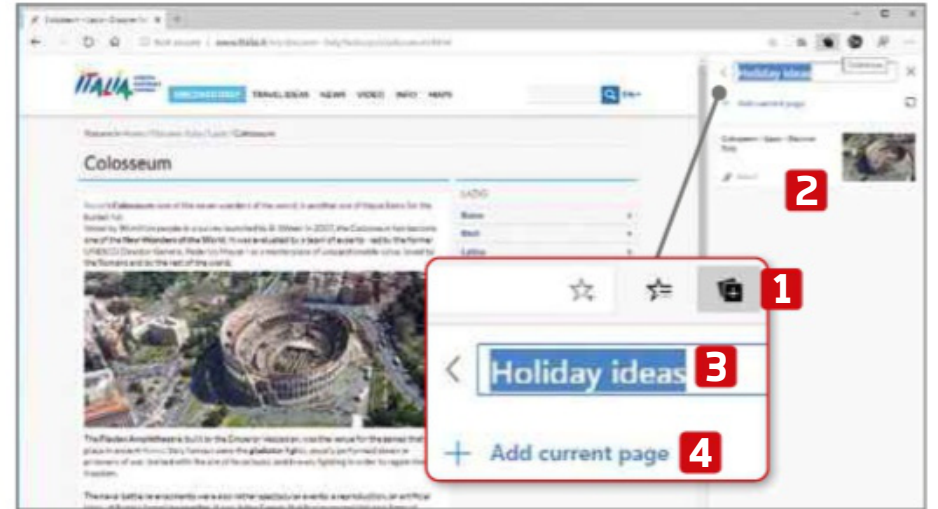
notes. Collections has been included but not yet enabled in the latest stable version of Edge, so we show you how to activate it in Step 1 of this workshop.



Microsoft Edge: [bit.ly/edge497](https://bit.ly/edge497) | 10 mins | Windows 10



**1** Find the Microsoft Edge icon in your Start menu **1** and drag it to your desktop, so it shows the word 'Link'. **2** Drop the icon in place, then right-click it and choose Properties. Go to the end of the text in the Target box, add a space then type --enable-features=msEdgeCollections. **3**



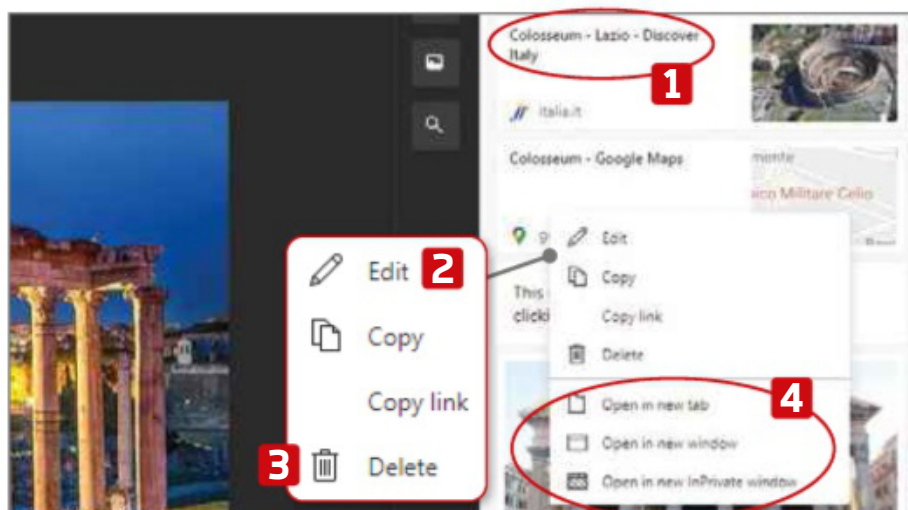
**2** Open Edge using the new shortcut and you'll see a new Collections icon on the toolbar. **1** Click it to open the Collections sidebar. **2** Click 'Start new collection' and give it a name. **3** Browse the web to find a page you'd like to add to your collection and click 'Add current page'. **4**



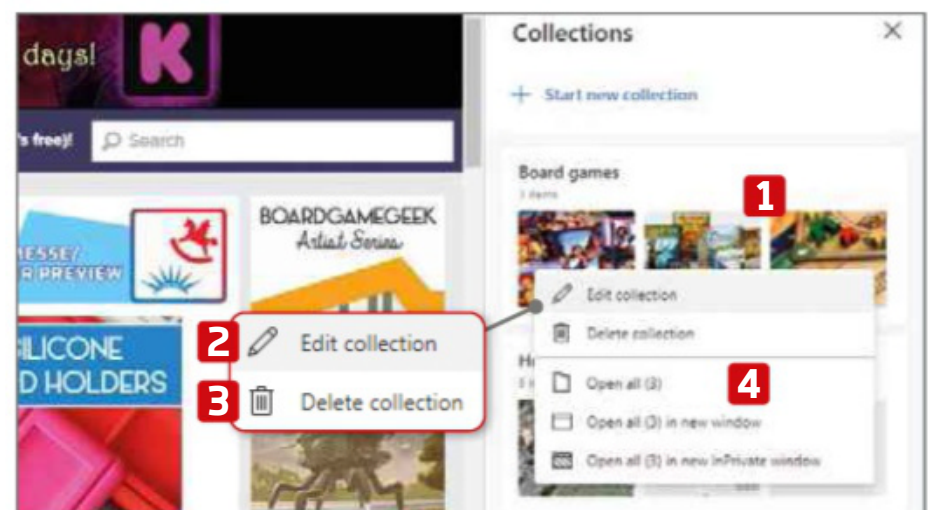
**3** To add more websites to the collection, simply visit the site and click the 'Add current page' link again. **1** Click the 'Add note' button **2** to add a text note as a separate card in the collection. You can format the text **3** or create a list. **4**



**4** To add individual elements from a page to your collection instead of the entire page, right-click an image **1** or select and right-click text. **2** Click 'Add to collections' and choose either an existing or new collection. **3** Clicking the card in the collection takes you back to the page it appeared in.



**5** If you don't like the order of your cards, use click-and-drag to reposition them. The title of a card **1** is taken from the website heading but you can change this if you right-click the card, then choose Edit. **2** From here, you can also copy and delete cards, **3** and choose how they open. **4**



**6** Click the Back arrow to return to the Collections home screen. All your Collections are displayed with thumbnails to remind you of what's in each one. **1** Right-click a collection to change its name, **2** delete it **3** or open all the sites you've saved within it into separate tabs. **4**



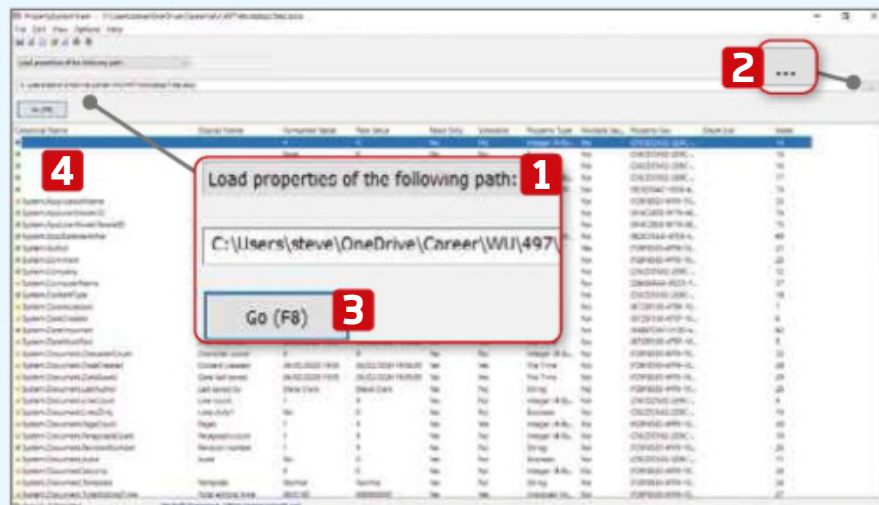


# Change file properties with PropertySystemView

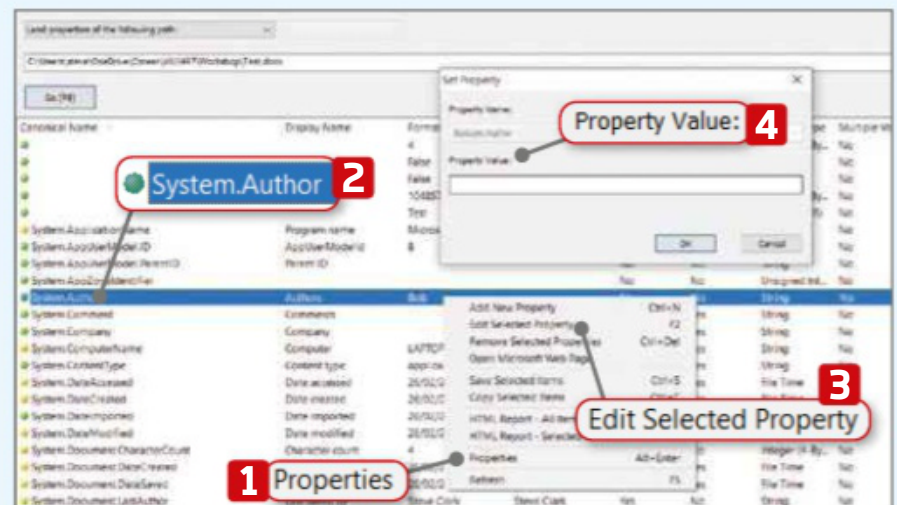
NirSoft's latest free tool, PropertySystemView, lets you alter or lock the metadata for each file on your system. This means you can change anything from the date a photo was taken to the name of the person who created

a file. It also includes a quick path to Microsoft's official Windows Property System Reference site, to help you understand what each attribute is and what it does.

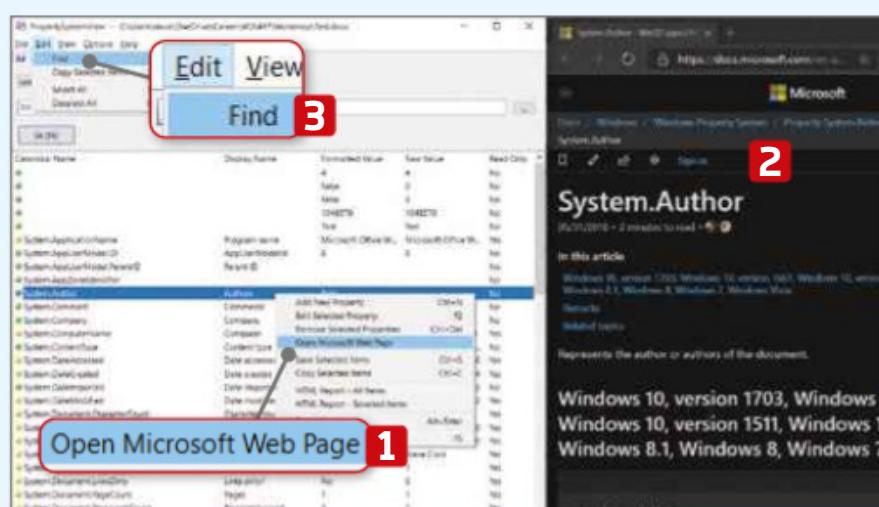
**PropertySystemView:** [www.nirsoft.net](http://www.nirsoft.net) | ⌚ 10 mins | 🖥️ 7, 8, 10



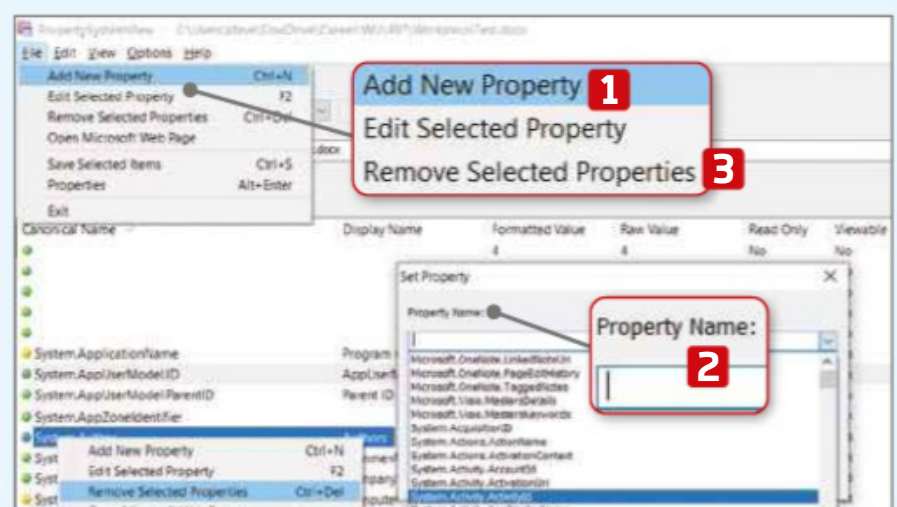
**1** To view the metadata of a specific file, choose 'Load properties of the following path' in the drop-down menu, **1** then click the three-dot button **2** to navigate to it in File Explorer. Once selected, click Go. **3** A list is populated in the main pane, featuring all properties of that file. **4**



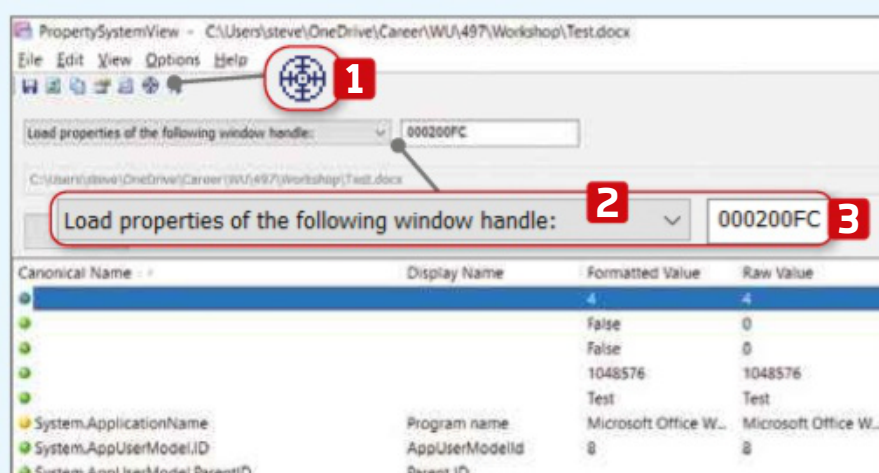
**2** To view an attribute's data, right-click it and select Properties. **1** Let's say you want to modify the author name on a Word document: right-click 'System.Author' **2** and choose Edit Selected Property, **3** then type the new name under Property Value. **4** This also works for dates.



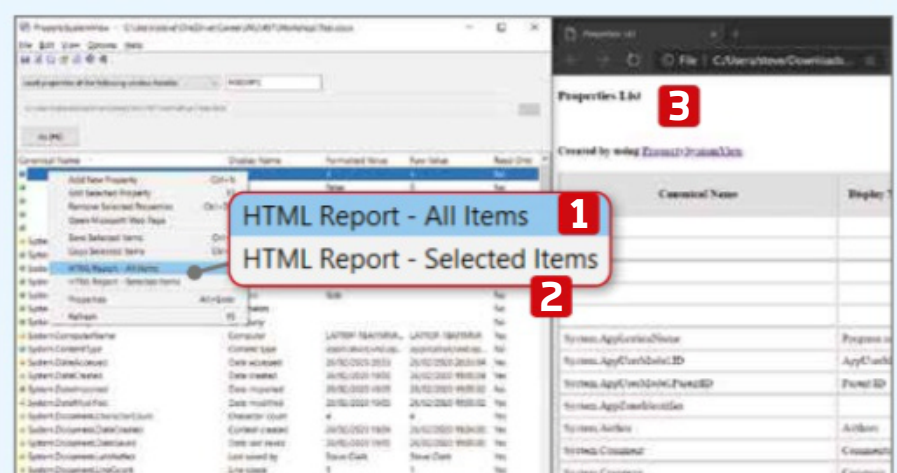
**3** If you're not sure what a property type is, right-click it and select Open Microsoft Web Page. **1** This leads you to a Microsoft Docs website explainer. **2** You can also find specific properties by clicking Edit, Find **3** (or press Ctrl+F) to search the current list.



**4** To add extra properties to your file, click File, Add New Property **1** or right-click and select the option from the menu. Choose a Property Name **2** from the drop-down menu, assign a Property Value and click OK. Similarly, to delete an attribute, choose Remove Selected Properties. **3**



**5** Instead of opening a file, you can drag and drop it to the software from File Explorer or manage a file's properties by clicking and dragging the Crosshair icon **1** to the target file. This automatically displays 'Load properties of the following window handle' **2** with the file's code. **3**

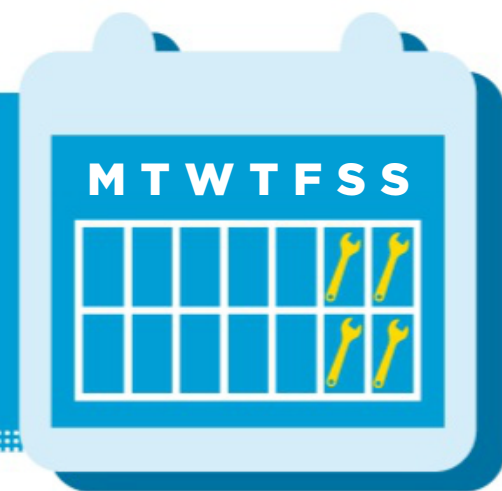


**6** You can retain a copy of all current metadata for each file by right-clicking inside the pane and heading to the HTML Report section. Choose either All Items **1** or Selected Items **2** to open a fresh browser page with the relevant details, **3** which can then be saved.



# Weekend Project

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



How to...

## Find new uses for an old tablet

Don't ditch your old iPad or Android tablet after you upgrade. **Wayne Williams** reveals lots of clever new uses for your old device

**D**epending on the make and model, most smartphones have a fairly short lifespan. Damage, failing battery life, reduced performance and the desire for shiny new features mean most people will start considering an upgrade after two to three years.

Tablets are a different matter entirely. Users hang on to these for at least twice as long – six to seven years is

typical these days. If you have a tablet that's starting to get a little old, you might be thinking of consigning it to the bin. But just because it's no longer as fast and capable as it once was, it doesn't mean it can't continue to play a worthwhile part in your home. There are lots of different, dedicated uses for an old tablet, as we'll show you in this issue's Weekend Project.



### Use it as a photo frame

Digital photo frames were hugely popular a decade or so ago. Having one of these in your home meant you were no longer limited to displaying just one image in a picture frame because the screen could cycle through a whole series of snaps, pulling them directly from an SD card, media server or the cloud.

You can still buy digital photo frames, and the latest smart speakers with

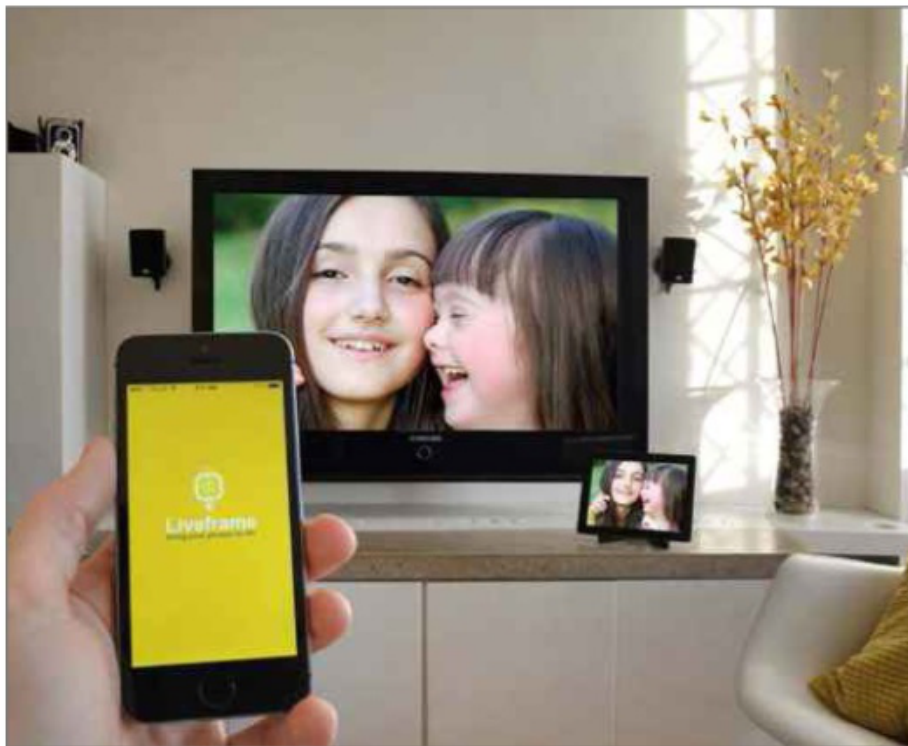
screens – such as the Google Nest Hub – operate as photo frames when not in use. However, if you have an old tablet, you can use that instead. It can display images from anywhere, including Google Photos, Facebook and Instagram.

What you need is an app that can manage everything for you. There are several good choices but, if you have an old iPad, then LiveFrame ([www.liveframeapp.com](http://www.liveframeapp.com)) is ideal. You can

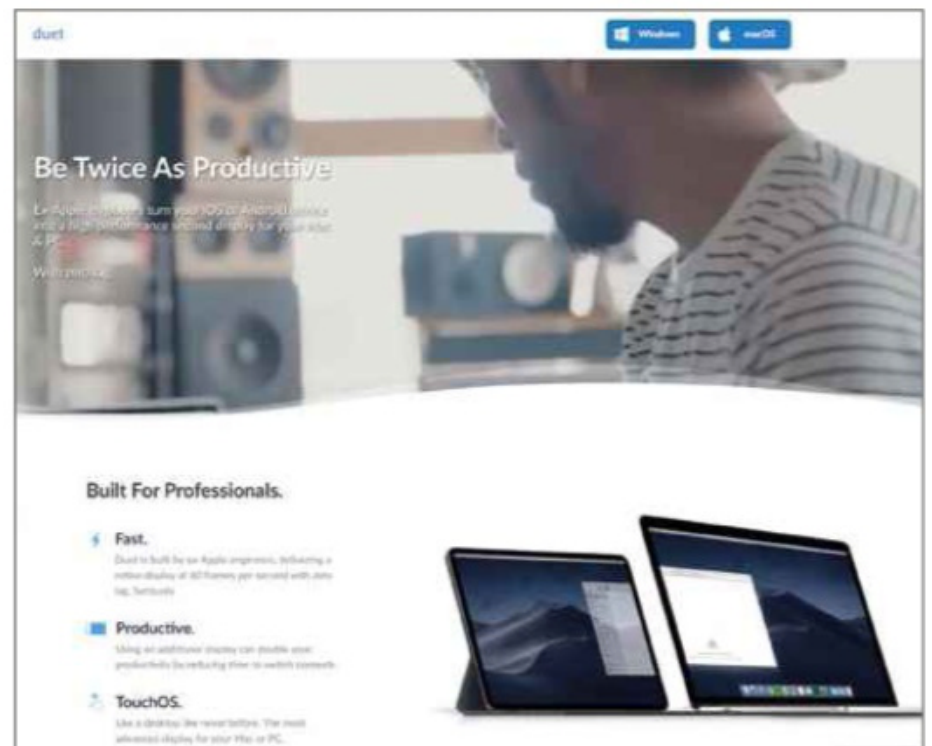
choose which photo sources to use and set a time for when you want them displayed. You need to watch adverts to get free viewing time or you can pay a one-time fee of £4.99.

Framee ([www.getframee.com](http://www.getframee.com)) is a good alternative that turns your iPad or Android tablet into a digital photo frame you can update from your phone. The free version limits you to one photo a week, but upgrade to the Plus version for





*LiveFrame can turn an old iPad into a digital photo frame*



*Duet lets you use a tablet as a second screen for your PC or Mac*

£1.99 a year and you can send unlimited photos to the tablet. Friends and family members can send you photos, too. We show you how to set it up in our Mini Workshop, below.

### Use it as a second screen for your computer

In last issue's Weekend Project ([bit.ly/webuser496](http://bit.ly/webuser496)), we showed you how to turn an old (but still working) monitor into a second screen for your desktop computer. Having two (or more) displays can really boost your productivity – you can carry out your main work on one screen, then use the other for displaying your email, Facebook feed, news headlines and so on. But you can also transform an old tablet into a second, smaller display, which is ideal if you don't have room on your desk for

a full-size extra screen.

Air Display ([bit.ly/aird497](http://bit.ly/aird497)) has always been our preferred choice, but Air Display 2 (Android) and Air Display 3 (iOS) no longer work with Windows. It's definitely worth getting if you have an Apple Mac, but it costs £9.99 to unlock everything.

Splashtop Wired XDisplay ([bit.ly/splash497](http://bit.ly/splash497)) can connect an Android tablet, iPhone or iPad to a PC or Mac. You need to install the free XDisplay Agent on your computer, then install the app on your tablet. The app is free, but Android users are limited to 10-minute sessions and will need to pay £6.99 for the full service. The apps haven't been updated in a few years, either. We've found they still work fine but you may encounter a few glitches.

Given that neither of those options

does everything you might want it to do, a better choice could be Duet ([www.duetdisplay.com](http://www.duetdisplay.com)), which works for iPadOS and Android devices, and on Windows and macOS. There isn't a free app (it costs £9.99 for iPad and £9.49 for Android) but it's updated regularly, which is a definite plus.

### Security camera/baby monitor

You can use a spare tablet as a monitoring device for your home. This lets you keep an eye on things when you're at work or away on holiday, or you could use it as a baby or pet monitor, for instant peace of mind.

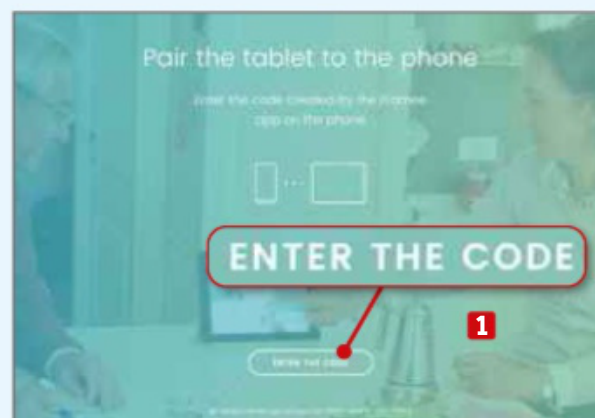
There are several free apps you can use for this and one of the best is Manything ([manything.com](http://manything.com), short for 'Monitor Anything'). It's a free app for iOS/iPadOS and Android that turns your tablet into



### MINI WORKSHOP | Turn an old tablet into a photo frame with Framee



**1** Install Framee on your phone and then on your tablet. Tap 'Get Started' on your phone and enter your name and the person you'd like to share photos with (yourself, probably), then tap Allow Access and grant the requested permissions. Pick a photo, optimise it for the tablet **1** and tap Share Photo. **2**



**2** Framee displays a code on your phone. Open the app on your tablet and enter this code. **1** As soon as you've typed in the last digit, the connection is made. You're asked if you want the app to notify you when new photos are sent. If you're the one doing the sending, just select No.







**3** The first photo you sent appears on the tablet. **1** Tapping the screen hides or shows the menu at the bottom. You can tap the heart to show you like the image **2** or save a copy to your tablet's storage. **3** Open Settings **4** to set a time to turn the screen off and manage the slideshow mode.



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3		Sky: Broadband Superfast + Line Rental	£25.00 (£29 after 18 months)	18 months	59Mbps avg. speed	∞ unlimited*	£300.00
4		Virgin Media: Big Bundle + Fibre Broadband + Weekend Calls	£33.00 (£54 after 12 months)	12 months	54Mbps avg. speed	∞ unlimited	£396.00

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Computer  
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### • **DON'T BIN YOUR OLD DESKTOP PC**

The 10 best things you didn't know you could do with it

### • **BUILD A PERSONAL PC VAULT**

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### • **DIGITISE YOUR OLD PHOTO**

**NEGATIVES** The best methods to use

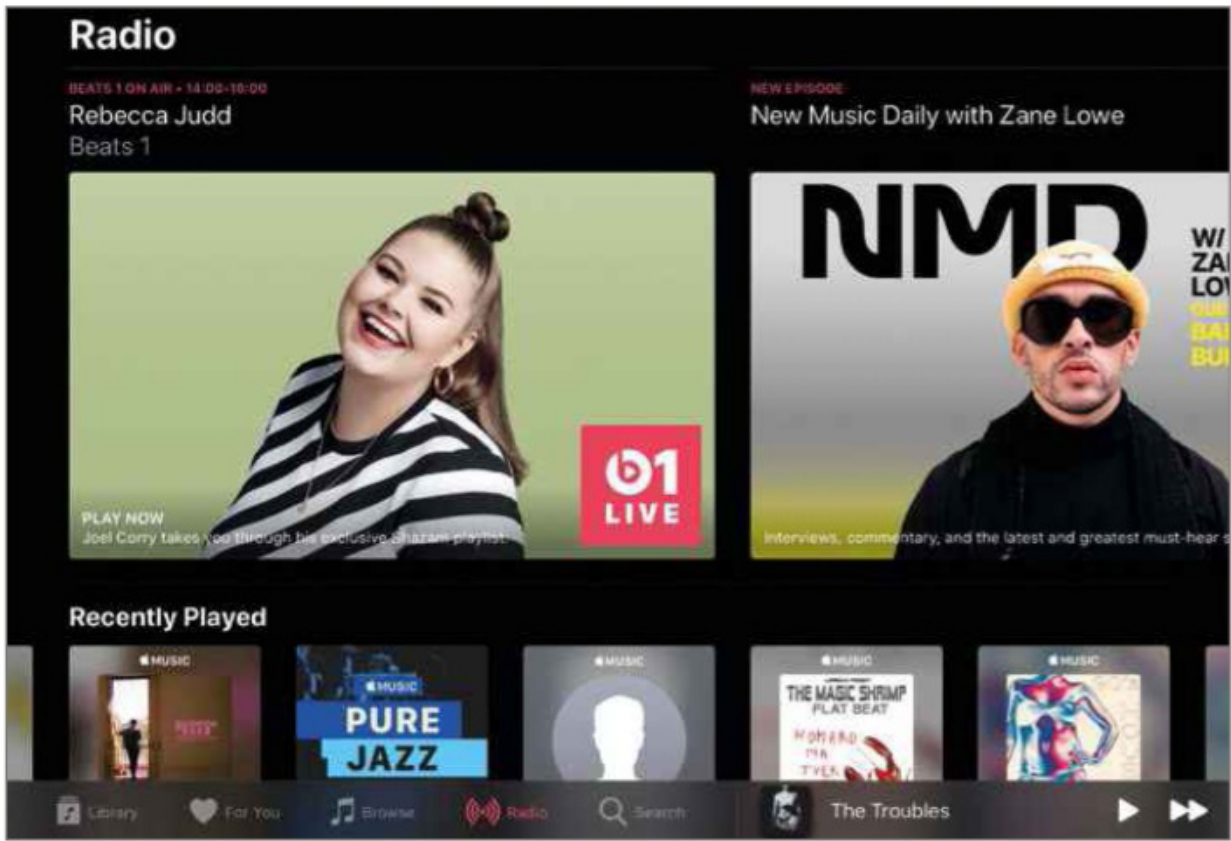
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ON WINDOWS 10 - Settings, options and tools to turn on/off

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Use your old tablet as a media server using apps such as Apple Music

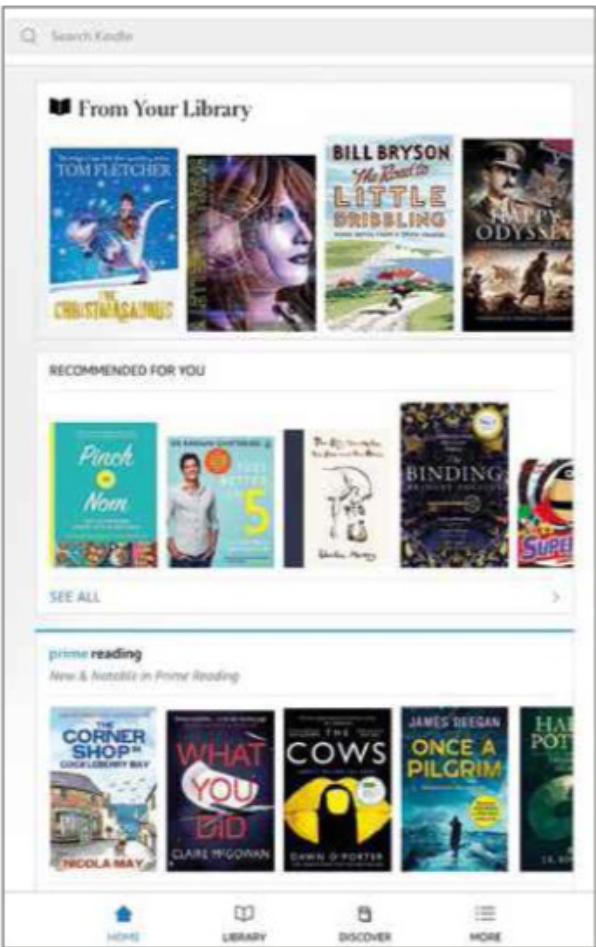
a security camera. You can view a live video feed from it on your phone or via the web, and receive motion and sound alerts. There are a number of paid-for plans on offer that let you add additional cameras and save recorded video to the cloud. This costs from \$3.99 (around £3.10) a month. We show you how to use Manything in our Mini Workshop, below.

AtHome Camera ([www.ichano.com](http://www.ichano.com)) for iOS, Android and Windows, works in the same way. Set up the tablet as your camera, then use your smartphone to view the live feed. You can talk to anyone in the same room as the tablet (bear in

mind this would alert an intruder to the tablet's existence), record video on your phone, enable motion detection, mute the sound, switch to night vision and more.

Music server

Tablet screens are ideal for watching videos but they can also function as music servers. You can store your own collection of tracks on your tablet, then stream them through apps such as Apple Music, Amazon Music and Spotify. You need to connect your tablet to a compatible Bluetooth speaker to get the most from them.



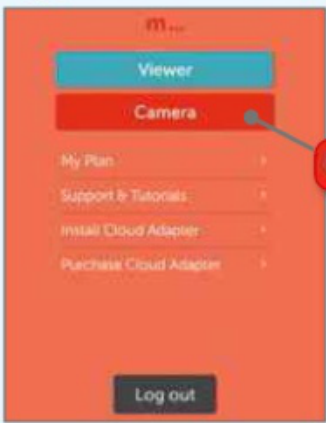
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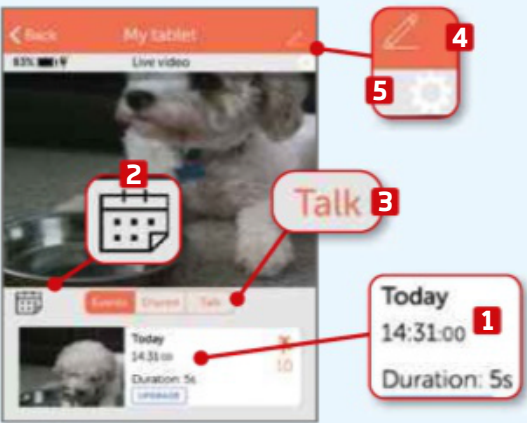
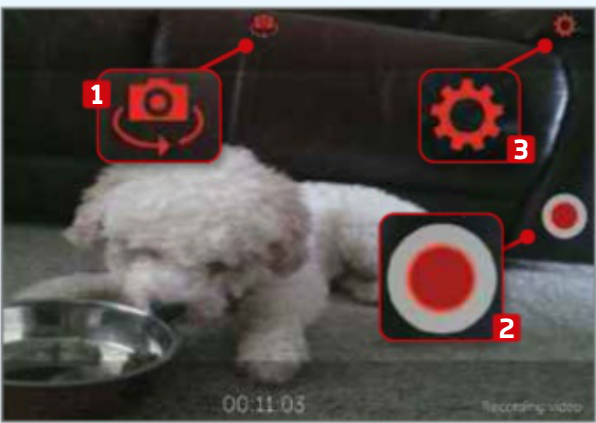
You really can't beat Amazon's E-ink Kindles for reading books, but a spare tablet isn't a bad option. You can install the Kindle app on iPadOS or Android ([bit.ly/kindle497](http://bit.ly/kindle497)) and enjoy your own books, or books straight from Amazon. Readly ([gb.readly.com](http://gb.readly.com)) lets you read unlimited magazines for £7.99 a month (with a 2-week free trial).



MINI WORKSHOP | Keep an eye on your home with Manything



Camera 1



**1** Install Manything on both your tablet and phone, then run it and grant the app any requested permissions. You need to sign up for a free account. Set your tablet as the Camera **1** and allow the additional permissions it needs. Sign into the same account on your phone (Android or iPhone).

**2** Position the camera in your chosen location. You can switch between the front and rear cameras using the button at the top. **1** Tap Record **2** to start the camera streaming. You can now view it on your phone. Tap the cog **3** to customise the app, including enabling motion alerts.

**3** As well as watching live video on your phone, you're alerted to any motion activity **1** (though you need to upgrade to view the motion recordings). You can see past alerts in the calendar **2** and talk to anyone on camera. **3** To rename the tablet **4** and access the Settings, tap the cog icon. **5**

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Install a VPN on your router

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# Web User Masterclass

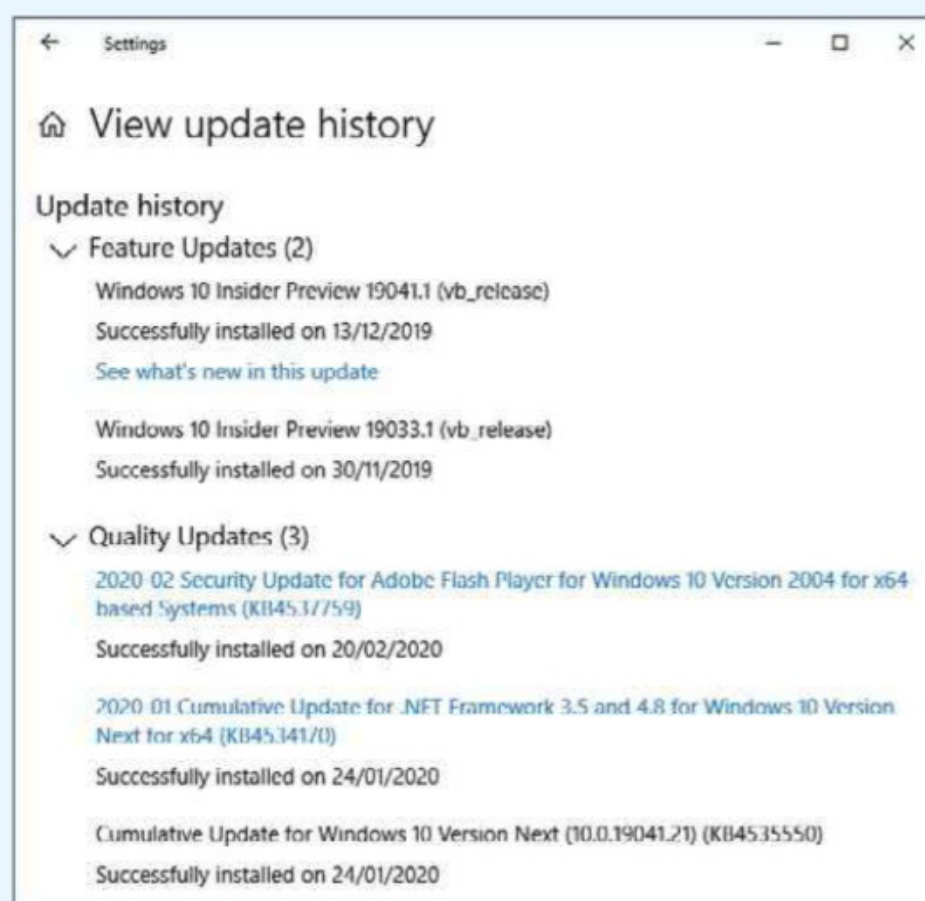
## Take control of Windows updates to delay or stop changes to your PC

### Check for Windows update problems

**S**ome problems with Windows updates are more obvious than others and, occasionally, updates can cause problems without you even realising. For this reason, it's worth checking that everything is working after an update, even if you haven't noticed any problems.

Open Settings, choose 'Update & Security' and click 'View update history' to see the most recent updates organised into categories. Expand each of the sections to see if any updates failed to install. Windows will try to install updates several times, so there's no need to panic if you notice something odd. Check back again in a week.

The big spring and autumn updates contain all the minor security and bug fixes, and they sometimes repair updates that previously failed. This means that Windows update problems sometimes go away without you having to do anything. This isn't always the case, but patience may be rewarded eventually, so it's often worth waiting for the next big update.



*Keep an eye on your Windows Update history, which may highlight update problems*

### Auto-finish updates

There are three stages to a Windows update: first, your computer's operating system is prepared for the update when shutting down; second, the update is mostly installed on startup; and, lastly, the process is completed when you log into your account.

You can streamline this third step by allowing Windows to automatically use your account to finish the update. Open Settings, choose Accounts and select 'Sign-in options' in the sidebar. Scroll down to Privacy and turn on the switch next to 'Use my sign-in info to automatically finish setting up my device after an update or restart'.

**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.**

### Pause Windows updates

You can delay a Windows update for up to a week, so that the time-consuming process can be scheduled for a more convenient time. Open Settings, Windows Update and click 'Pause updates for 7 days'; or click 'Advanced options' and, under 'Pause updates', select a date to continue installing an update.

### Run updates later

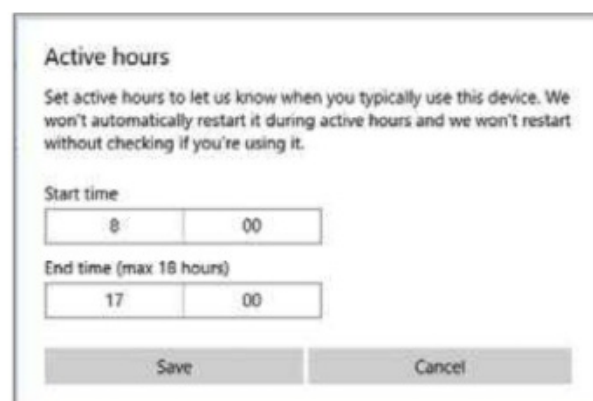
Windows updates require a restart and the big spring and autumn updates can

take hours to complete. It's therefore not always convenient to install an update as soon as it arrives because you may be busy using your computer for other things.

Thankfully, you can set active hours to put off updates until later. Open Settings, 'Update & Security' and click 'Change active hours'. Click the Change link next to the current active hours and set the end time to when you go to bed. You can then leave your computer turned on at the end of the day to update as you sleep.

### Take care shutting down

Windows Update works in the background, downloading the update files without your knowledge. It only notifies you when the updates are ready to install, so if you don't want to do this right away, take care when shutting down your computer or restarting Windows to avoid the options 'Update and shut down' and 'Update and restart'. Choose either 'Shut down' or Restart instead.



*Put off updates until later in the day or set them to run overnight*





## Use a metered connection

Many internet providers offer unlimited downloads and don't charge for the data used. However, some budget plans impose download limits, and there are often chargeable limits when using a laptop with public Wi-Fi or using your phone as a hotspot. If you're using this kind of internet connection, it's worth letting Windows know.

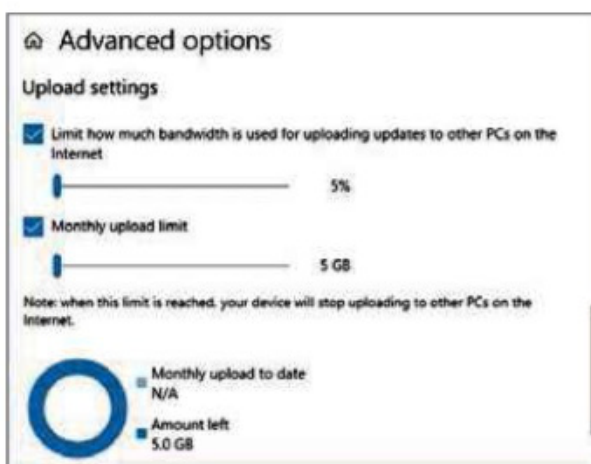
Setting your home network as a metered connection lets you put off updates. Go to Settings, 'Update & Security' and click 'Advanced options'. Turn off the switch next to 'Download updates over metered connections'. Now go to Settings, 'Network & Internet' and click the Properties link under the network. Scroll down to 'Metered connection' and turn on the switch. It's another way to put off big updates.

## Share Windows updates

If you have more than one Windows 10 PC, it doesn't make sense for them all to download the same update from the internet, thereby hogging your bandwidth, when they could share it instead. Go to Settings, 'Update & Security', 'Advanced options' and click the Delivery Optimisation link. If you have more than one PC, turn on the switch to 'Allow downloads from other PCs' and select 'PCs on my local network'. Now, when one PC downloads an update, it can share this over the network with other PCs.

There's another option here that lets you share updates on the local network and with other PCs on the internet. If Microsoft's servers are not working, or they've become overloaded with users, an update can be fetched from someone else's PC. Help others and get help yourself by selecting this option.

Click 'Activity monitor' to see how much you've downloaded from Microsoft and how much came from other PCs. Click 'Advanced options' and, under 'Upload settings', choose how many gigabytes of updates you want to provide to other PCs on the internet. The minimum is 5GB.



**Help others to download Windows updates by sharing your own**

## TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

### Disable Windows update service

Windows Update service runs automatically in the background, checking for updates. Disabling it stops Windows checking for updates and downloading them.

Press Windows+R and enter `services.msc`. Look down the list of services and double-click Windows Update. If the service is running, click Stop. This isn't a permanent solution and Windows may automatically restart it, so set the 'Startup type' to Disabled to prevent Windows from doing this.

Windows updates may fix bugs or security flaws, so it's not a good idea to put them off forever. When you're ready for the update to install, return to `services.msc` and set the startup type to Manual, then start the service.

You can also disable Windows Update service from the command line. Click Start and type `command`, then click 'Run as administrator'.

To stop it and disable it, enter:

```
net stop wuauerv
sc config wuauerv start=disabled
```

Replace `disabled` with `manual` to restore the normal setting.

For an even simpler way to turn off Windows Update, download Windows Update Blocker from [bit.ly/wubl497](http://bit.ly/wubl497), select Disable Updates and click Apply Now. When you're ready to install the update, select Enable Updates.



**Windows Update Blocker lets you switch off Windows Updates**

EaseUS has free beta software called Tools M that provides a one-click Windows Update Enable/Disable button. Download it direct from EaseUS at [bit.ly/ease497](http://bit.ly/ease497) (note that this link takes you straight to the download) and install it. Run it, click Windows Update and use the Enable/Disable button as necessary.

Once you've disabled updates, avoid opening the Settings app and

looking at 'Update & Security' because this may restart the update service and undo your changes. Other actions, such as starting or restarting your computer, may also trigger the update service, so you may need to perform these update blocks daily.

### Replace Windows Update

Tech savvy users who want more control over updates should try Windows Update MiniTool ([bit.ly/wumt497](http://bit.ly/wumt497)). Unzip it and run either the 64-bit or x86 (32-bit) version. The sidebar shows updates as Available, Installed or Hidden, while the Update History displays a log of all updates. You can set updates to Automatic, Disabled, 'Notification mode', 'Download only' and 'Administrator only', and use a tick box to include or exclude hardware drivers in updates.

WAU Manager ([bit.ly/waum497](http://bit.ly/waum497)) is another free tool worth considering. There's no installation, so you can run it from the download folder. A tick box at the top lets you disable Windows Update. There are three update settings below: Normal, Passive and Quiet. Normal is the best and it automatically searches for updates, but asks before downloading and installing them. You can therefore choose whether to go ahead or not.

Click the three-line menu button on the right to see options to show update history, manage hidden updates, update Windows or uninstall updates. Configure WAU Manager settings, then select the tickbox 'Create a Desktop shortcut'. When the configuration is saved, it creates an icon on the desktop to quickly apply the settings without having to run the program. Considering how often Windows re-enables updates and undoes your settings, this could be useful.



**WAU Manager provides tools to fine-tune and control Windows updates**



# Ask the Expert

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



## MOBILE

### Stop unwanted phone calls

**Q** I've been receiving at least one phone call per day on my smartphone lately, from people who say they're returning a call that I've just made to them. The calls I receive are from both landlines and mobile phones, and I believe that these people claiming they are returning a call are genuine.

I suspect that someone is using my mobile phone number for an attempted scam and that if the recipient picks up the phone in a couple of rings, then the usual attempt at conning them takes place. Short of changing my phone number, which I'm reluctant to do, how can I stop this annoyance?

**Garth Williams, via email**

**A** This is called 'number spoofing' or 'ID spoofing'. It could be used by scammers, but it is also used by companies that cold-call people to try to sell them things. In either case, the caller hides their number by using

someone else's. It is just bad luck that they've chosen yours.

The Ofcom website has a page about this at [bit.ly/spoof497](http://bit.ly/spoof497), but doesn't say how to solve the problem. It only offers advice for victims of scams, but you are not the victim and you don't even know if it is a scam – it could be a company disguising its number. There doesn't seem to be a way to identify or stop the culprit, or find out why they are doing it.

If you have an iPhone, go to the Settings, choose Phone and you should see an option to Silence Unknown Callers. Basically, if a person who isn't in your Contacts app calls you, they are sent to voicemail. You could then record a brief voicemail message telling unknown callers that if they are returning a call they've just received from your number, it's not you and may be a scam. Friends, family and other contacts can call you as normal.

If you have an Android phone, there



**Block unknown callers to stop nuisance calls on your iPhone**

may be a similar feature, though this will vary depending on the manufacturer and model. For example, open the Phone app, tap the three-dot icon and select Settings. Tap Block or Block Numbers, then Block Unknown Callers. Make sure your contacts app contains everyone that you might want to talk to.

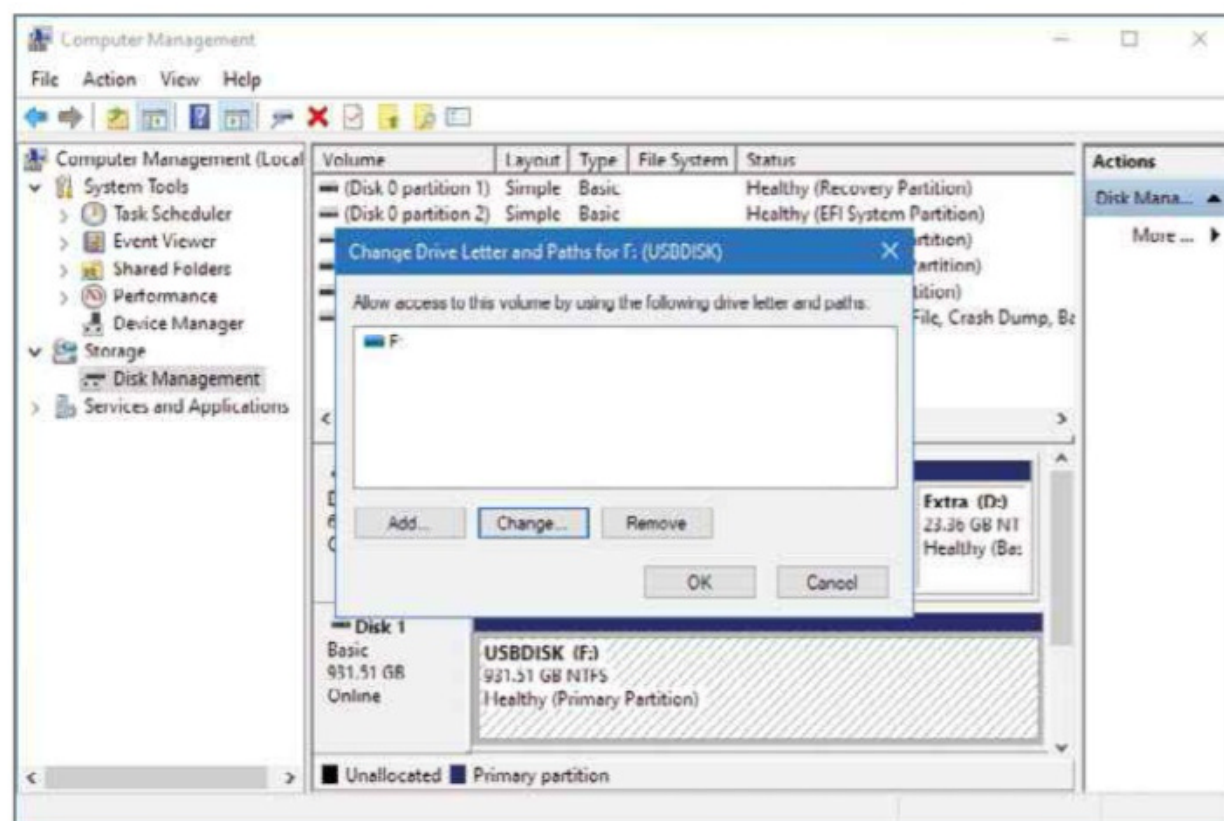
## HARDWARE

### Fix hard-drive letter clash

**Q** I have a 2TB Seagate external hard drive but, for some reason, it no longer appears on my desktop PC or my laptop when I plug it into a USB port. I have tried using different sockets on both my PC and laptop to no avail. When I plug in other Seagate 2TB and 4TB external hard drives, they work fine. Is there any way I can get this particular hard drive working again?

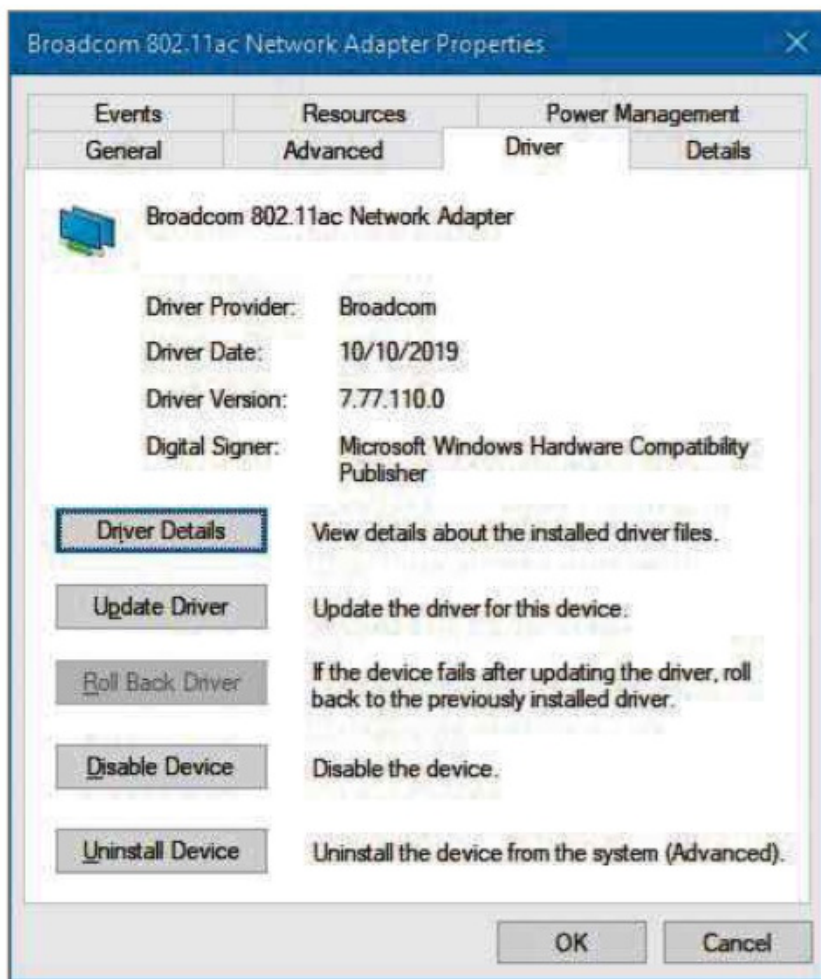
**Kevin Benton, via email**

**A** This sometimes happens when you use several different external USB drives with a computer, whether they are hard drives or USB memory sticks. Windows allocates drives with the next available letters, starting with C: for the boot drive, then D:, E: and so on for extra drives. The trouble is that it can



**Assign different drive letters to all your external drives to avoid clashes**





## Problems with hardware may be solved by updating, rolling back or uninstalling drivers

software problems. Most often, errors with hardware components – whether it's the network adapter or something else – are caused by drivers, which are the device-specific programs that keep all the hardware working. Updating, rolling back and removing the driver usually fixes the problem and there's most often no need to make any repairs to the hardware.

Click the Start button and type **device manager** then open it. Expand 'Network

adapters' and you may see one or more items listed. One should be recognisable as the network card – it will be called something like Broadcom 802.11ac Network Adapter and may be branded with a name such as Realtek. Right-click this and select Properties.

If the Roll Back Driver button is enabled on the Driver tab, use it and then restart Windows afterwards. This process deletes the current driver and reinstalls the previous one, which may restore the network adapter to its previously working state.

If you can't roll back, use the Update Driver button to get the latest version and then restart your computer.

If that still doesn't solve the problem, use the Uninstall Device button and restart your computer. This removes all the software drivers for your network card. When Windows restarts, it detects the hardware and automatically installs an appropriate driver for it. It's like a clean start for the device.

get in a muddle when one external drive is plugged in and assigned as E: (or any letter), and then replaced with another external drive that also uses E: (or whatever letter was assigned before). One of them will stop working.

The solution is to assign a different letter to each drive. Plug in each drive that works and make a note of its drive letter. Now plug in the one that doesn't work, right-click This PC in an Explorer window and select Manage. Under Storage, select Disk Management and, in the lower half of the right-hand pane you'll see a kind of map of drives and partitions. Right-click the drive that isn't working and select 'Change drive letter and paths', then click the Add button. Select a letter for the drive that's not being used by any other drives, such as 'G' or 'H'. The drive should immediately appear in Explorer and will, in future, always use this drive letter.

## HARDWARE

### Reconnect a missing network

**Q** I haven't changed anything on my computer recently but it suddenly refuses to connect to the internet. It just says that there are no networks available. I know this isn't the case because I am emailing this on my phone over my home Wi-Fi network. My iPad is also able to connect to this same network, and yet my computer can't connect. Do I need to get it repaired? How much is that likely to cost?

**Ryan Collins, via email**

**A** Hardware problems do occur, but they are much less common than

## MOBILE

### Reset a tablet's browser

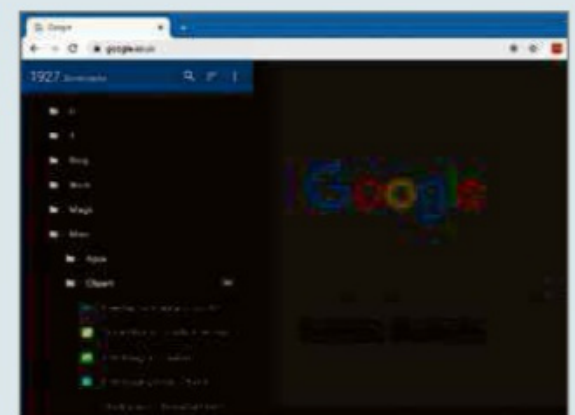
**Q** My wife has a Samsung Galaxy Tab A6, which she uses to browse fashion websites, shops and more. Last week, she asked me to help with a frozen screen. I tried everything to get rid of a static image in the corner of the screen, but there was no moving it. Eventually, I cleared the history, then the cache, and reset the Chrome browser. It cleared the frozen image, but also some settings. My better half said I had made it worse!

It seems I've managed to change the device in some way, and now she doesn't like it at all. She says that the top used to be black and all her previously visited sites were displayed down the left-hand side. Is it possible to create a separate pane for URLs you've visited in Chrome? Or maybe show stored tabs there?

I've searched the Samsung website and user manual for a solution and the closest I've come to finding anything is in Display/Appearance/Navigation, but I can't find anything else.

**Mike Sam, via email**

**A** One way to make Chrome have a black bar at the top is to switch to incognito mode. Open Chrome's menu and select 'New incognito window', then close the normal window and when you now switch to



Show bookmarks in a pop-out panel with the Bookmark Sidebar extension

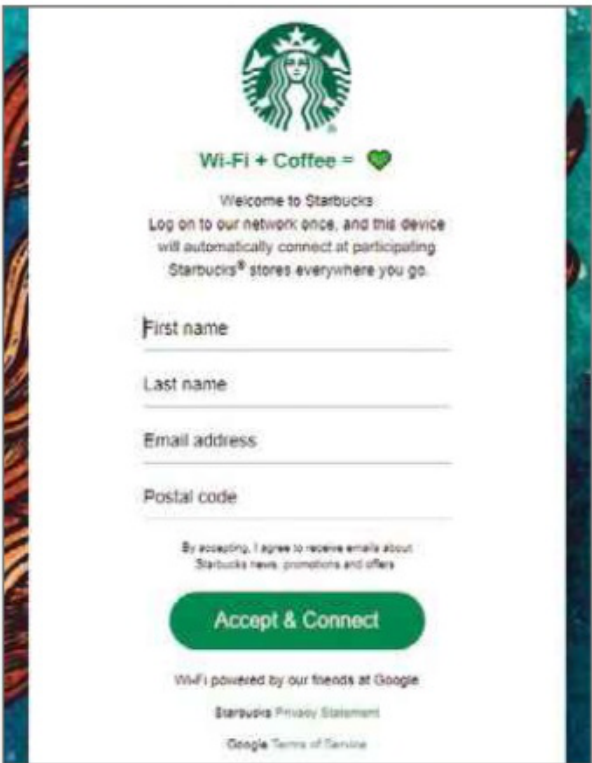
Chrome, the top bar will be black.

Chrome doesn't have sidebars or panes, but you can open a tab showing your browsing history via the browser's main the menu. History could be set as a startup page to make it convenient to access. Open the menu, go to Settings, find the 'On startup' section and select 'Open a specific page or set of pages'. Use 'Add new page' to add **chrome://history** and your favourite startup page, such as **www.google.co.uk**.

Bookmark Sidebar is a Chrome extension that lets you display your bookmarks in a panel or sidebar. You'll find it in the Chrome Web Store at **bit.ly/sidebar497**. Once it's installed, you open the sidebar by clicking the left-hand edge of the browser window. The extension has a high rating and excellent reviews, and includes many useful features. The only downside is that extensions don't usually work on mobile devices, but it's worth a try, just in case.







Bookmark your favourite hotspots' login pages so you can access them quickly

**WI-FI**  
**Connect to hotspots faster**  
**Q** I sometimes use my laptop in cafés and make use of the free Wi-Fi facilities. Sometimes, the Wi-Fi login page appears as soon as I open a browser but, occasionally, it doesn't and I have no connection, which is very frustrating. Is there a solution to this?  
**Claire Roberts, via email**

**A** There are a couple of things you can do and one is to try visiting a few websites, such as a basic, no-frills site from your bookmarks – Google or Bing,



Right-click an item in the Start menu to see if it can be uninstalled or hidden

for example. If you have more than one browser on your laptop, you may find that one triggers the hotspot login page faster than the other. When you get a login page, save it by bookmarking it and use this in future, if the page doesn't appear automatically.

**GENERAL PC**  
**Remove unwanted Start menu items**  
**Q** I recently bought a new laptop because my old Windows 7 computer is no longer supported. There are a lot of squares on the Start menu

for various programs I don't need, and I was wondering if it is safe – or even possible – to remove them.  
**Ben Lightfoot, via email**

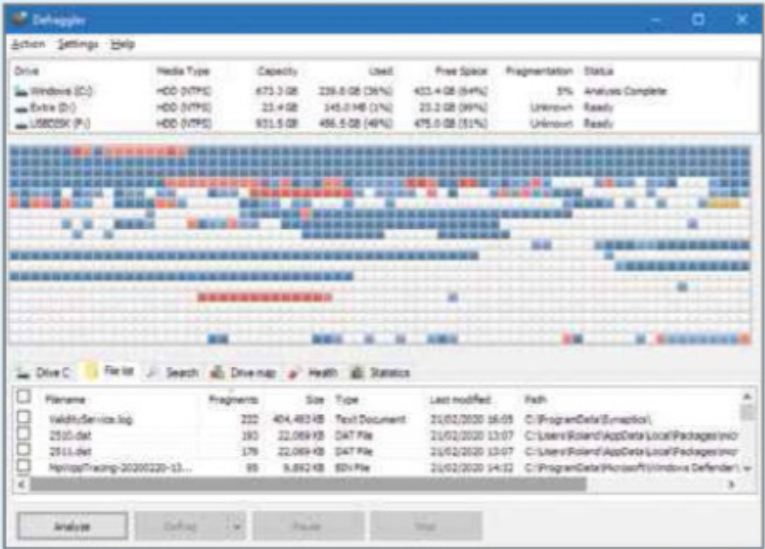
**A** Some of these tiles can be removed and others can be hidden. Right-click a tile on the Start menu and see if it displays an Uninstall menu item. If it does, it can be safely removed. For example, Calculator and Mail can be removed, but Photos and Maps cannot. For those that cannot be removed, right-click and select 'Unpin from Start' to hide the tile.

**GENERAL PC**  
**Speed up Windows updates**

**Q** I dread the twice-yearly Windows updates – not because I have problems but because they are so slow. They can take three or four hours to download and install. Is there any way to speed up the process? There is another big update coming soon and it would be great if I could get it done without waiting half the day for it to finish. Why is it so slow?  
**L Hunter, via email**

**A** The time taken to install an update depends on several factors and the most significant is whether the computer has a hard drive or a solid-state drive. SSDs are much faster to read and write to, especially when dealing with a large number of small files. Swapping the HDD for an SSD in your PC could

halve the time it takes to perform an update.  
If your PC has a standard hard drive, keeping it defragmented in the run-up to a big update will help speed it up. Although Windows automatically defragments the hard drive in the background when the computer is idle, using a tool such as Defraggler ([www.ccleaner.com/defraggler](http://www.ccleaner.com/defraggler)) can still be beneficial. When you've finished using your computer for the day, launch the software, select 'Shutdown after Defrag' in the Settings menu and set a defrag going. The PC will switch off when it's finished.  
The more memory your computer has, the faster the update speed. These days,



Use Defraggler on hard drives to keep them optimised for speed

you need 8GB to run Windows 10 efficiently. It will manage to run with 4GB, but the memory is easily filled and the computer slows down as it swaps blocks of memory in and out, so it's worth upgrading with more memory if possible.



Roland has switched to using the new version of Edge, but hasn't yet managed to give up Google Chrome completely





# Readers' Helpdesk

Can you help your fellow readers with their computer problems? Send your questions and answers to [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)

## WINDOWS

### Stop getting Windows 7 updates

**Q** I understand support for Windows 7 ended in January 2020, but I'm still getting updates for malicious-software removal tools and Microsoft Security Essentials (Windows Defender). Initially, I thought this might be a spoof virus, so I checked Windows Update separately and it, too, offered the same updates. So, will these continue ad infinitum?

**Andy Jay, via email**

**A** Well-spotted, Andy. Yes, despite calling time on Windows 7, Microsoft has continued to release a few updates. As we've mentioned a couple of times over the last few issues, the intended final update had a glitch, so there was another one to fix it. It's likely that this was the update you recently received. There may be a handful more if any more flaws are spotted, but don't hold your breath. If you haven't yet upgraded to Windows 10, you can do so at [bit.ly/windows497](http://bit.ly/windows497).

**Steve Clark, Features Writer, Web User**



*There have been a few recent Windows 7 updates but they may be the last*

## EMAIL

### Sync mail across devices

**Q** Is there any email software that can sync account settings across devices and not merely sync mail through IMAP? Inky ([bit.ly/inky497](http://bit.ly/inky497)) showed promise and synced my account settings, but it's now defunct; and Cloudmagic, which morphed into Newton Mail ([newtonhq.com](http://newtonhq.com)) is soon to end support. Is there anything else out there? I don't want to have to repeat all my mail account settings every time I reinstall Windows or set up a new device.

**Gerry, via email**

## READERS RESPOND

### WINDOWS

### Fix Windows Update problems

**A** Regarding CJ Holmes' problem with a laptop that won't update (Issue 495, [bit.ly/webuser495](http://bit.ly/webuser495)), try using the Microsoft Update Catalog. You'll need to know the version of Windows 10 you're running. To view this, type **winver** in the Start menu, and the type of system you have – if you're not sure, press Windows+i and search 'About your PC' under Device Specifications and 'System type'.

Manually downloading the updates should make them install automatically. Go to Microsoft Update Catalog ([bit.ly/update497](http://bit.ly/update497)) and type **Update for Windows 10 Version xxxx for x64/x86/ARM64 based systems**



*Download Windows updates manually from the Update Catalog*

where 'xxxx' is your Windows version number. Next, choose from x64, x86 or ARM64, depending on what your system type was in 'About your PC'.

Click one of the downloaded updates to run it and accept the Microsoft End User Licence Agreement if prompted. Work your way through each update, restarting your computer if required. Feature updates require Windows 10 Update Assistant. Under the Windows 10 November 2019 update, click 'Update now' to download it.

**Giovanni Gesugrande, via email**

## CAN YOU HELP?

[webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)

You can seek help or suggest solutions to other readers' problems by emailing [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk) or via [www.facebook.com/webusermagazine](https://www.facebook.com/webusermagazine) or [twitter.com/webusermagazine](https://twitter.com/webusermagazine).

## GAMING

**Q** What's the best way to connect old computers, such as the Atari 5200 ST or Commodore 64, to a modern TV? I'd love to go retro on a big screen but I don't know where to start.

**Matt Martin, via email**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**Q** Does anyone know how I can log out of or switch accounts on Twitter? On the app, it's easy – I just press the profile icon. But this doesn't work on desktop. Please help.

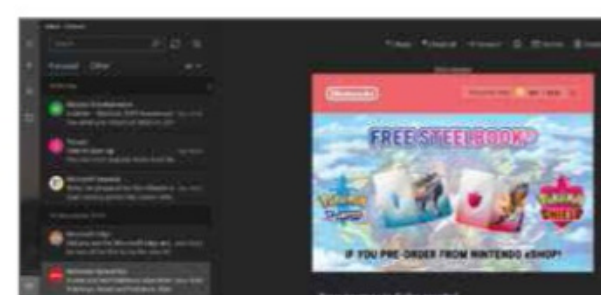
**Colin Rae, via email**

**A** It sounds like you've not had much luck with email clients! IMAP remains the most popular way to sync accounts and settings, but for alternatives, you could try Mailbird ([www.getmailbird.com](http://www.getmailbird.com)) or eM Client ([www.emclient.com](http://www.emclient.com)). Windows Mail is quite basic for all but the most casual users, but it's excellent at syncing across devices, based on your Outlook account settings. Make sure you switch on 'Sync settings' in Windows 10.

Alternatively, you can save your email's PST files (which contain settings and

data) to the cloud and import them into a client such as Outlook or Thunderbird.

**Steve Clark, Features Writer, Web User**



*Microsoft's Mail app is good at syncing its settings across Windows 10 devices*



# Your Top Tips

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



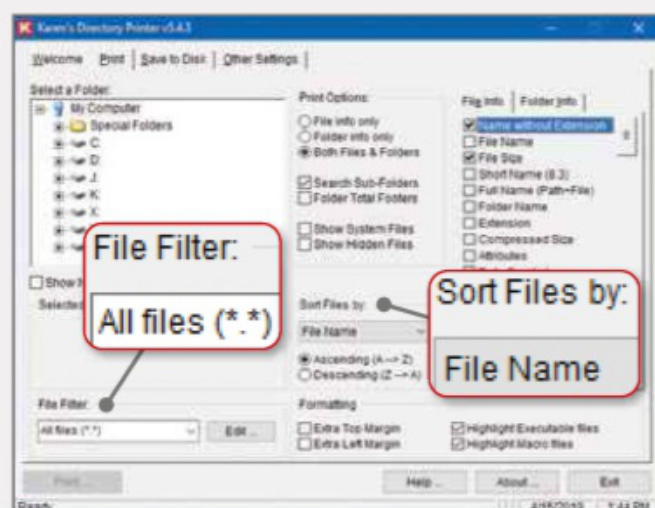
## TOP TIP

### SOFTWARE

## Use Directory Printer like a pro

I heartily second Mike Smith's recommendation (Issue 494, [bit.ly/webuser494](http://bit.ly/webuser494)) to use Karen's Directory Printer ([bit.ly/karen497](http://bit.ly/karen497)). However, it can look a bit overwhelming to a newcomer, so perhaps I can offer some help.

Here's how I use the software to list my music files. First, select the Print tab and navigate to the folder whose contents you want to list. Choose the file type in File Filter – I usually leave this as 'All files (\*.\*)', since I want to list everything inside the folder. Next, set the desired Print Options – if, like me, you prefer an uncluttered list, choose 'File info only', then set File Info and 'Sort Files by'. In both these instances, I choose File Name. Now select the 'Save to Disk' tab and click 'Save to Disk' at the bottom left.



*Karen's Directory Printer gets another thumbs-up from a Web User reader*

Choose where to save your list and its title, click Save and your list appears as a TXT file. I then typically copy my list into Word to remove all the '.mp3' file extensions and it's ready to print.

**Bob Kirk, via email**

both those operating systems, as well as Android, Linux and macOS. Open the website on both devices and pair them, then send the files you want to share.

**Harmony Wellbridge, via email**



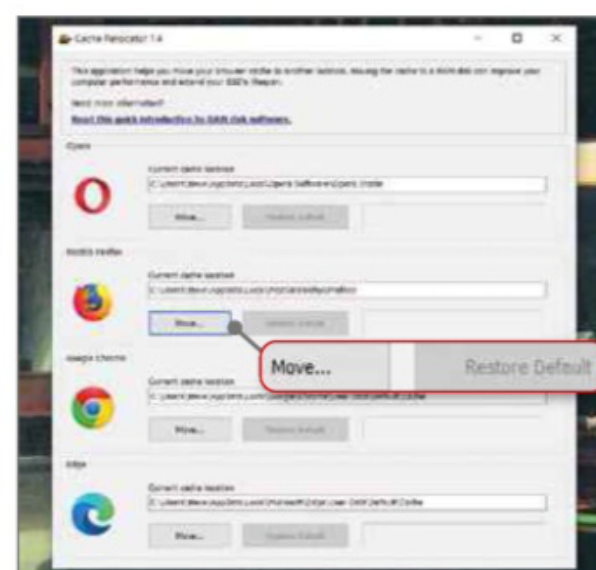
**Share files wirelessly with Snapdrop**

### SOFTWARE

## Move your browser cache location

I've just discovered SoftPerfect Cache Relocator ([bit.ly/cache497](http://bit.ly/cache497)), a portable tool that lets you quickly change the location of your browser's cache. Currently, it supports Chrome, Edge, Firefox and Opera. According to the developers, "moving the cache to a RAM disk can speed up browsing, offload the hard drive or reduce the wear-and-tear of the SSD." That's good enough for me!

Open the Cache Relocator and you'll

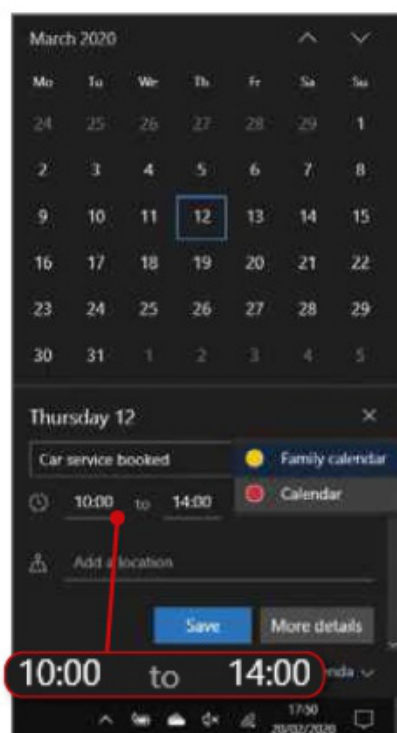


**Stop unnecessary wear and tear to your hard drive with Cache Relocator**

### WINDOWS

## Create quick calendar events

Click the clock in the bottom-right corner of your Windows desktop to display a calendar. You can now create calendar events from here – I think this



feature was introduced in the last major Windows 10 update before Christmas.

Click in the box below the calendar and a time slot appears. You can edit it to set the correct time for

**Add events to your Microsoft Calendar directly from the taskbar gadget**

the event, such as 10:00 to 14:00, and choose the date on the calendar above. You can also add a location – if it's for an appointment or meeting, for example. This is useful if you have the Outlook app on your phone because its built-in Calendar syncs and notifies you of events that are due soon, such as appointments.

I didn't use the Calendar when Windows 10 first came out, but I find myself using it more and more as it adds useful features such as this.

**Alan Mitchell, via email**

### SOFTWARE

## Get an AirDrop alternative

Apple's AirDrop is a great, fuss-free way to share files with friends and family over Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, but it's annoying that it doesn't support non-Apple devices. Perhaps that's no surprise. However, given that most of the people I know use Windows and Chrome OS, I had a little hunt around and discovered SnapDrop ([snapdrop.net](http://snapdrop.net)). It works on





see the current location for each browser's cache, with two buttons beneath it. Click Move to select a new location or Restore Default to go back to the original save space. It really is that simple.

**Alexander Scott, via email**

## SOFTWARE

### Get dark mode for Notepad

I'm a big fan of dark mode, but I've found it curiously absent when it comes to that most basic of programs: Notepad. While Microsoft has yet to add the feature, I have found a couple of alternatives I thought readers might like to try.

The first is the well-known Notepad++ ([notepad-plus-plus.org](http://notepad-plus-plus.org)). Go to Settings, then Style Configurator and, where it says 'Select theme', choose Obsidian from the drop-down menu. Save and close the configurator and you'll find that your notepad now has dark mode enabled.

Another option is Black Notepad ([bit.ly/notepad497](http://bit.ly/notepad497)), which is all but identical to the classic Windows Notepad, but with dark mode enabled from the off.

**Joshua Chung, via email**



*Bring dark mode to your notes with these Notepad alternatives*

## WINDOWS

### Manage app groups on your Start menu

The tiles on the Start menu are presented in groups – mine include Programs, 'Play and explore' and 'Life at a glance'. It's not obvious how to create your own groups because it's not as simple as a left- or right-click. Instead, you have to click and drag a tile down past the bottom of the Start menu, below everything else. When a blue bar appears above, you can drop the tile. Now, when you hover the cursor between the tile you just dropped and the one above, a bar appears. Click this and enter a name for the new group.

To rearrange groups, along with all the tiles in them, click and drag the two bars that appear at the right of a group name when the mouse hovers over it. Whole groups of tiles can be deleted by right-clicking the group name and selecting 'Unpin group from Start'.

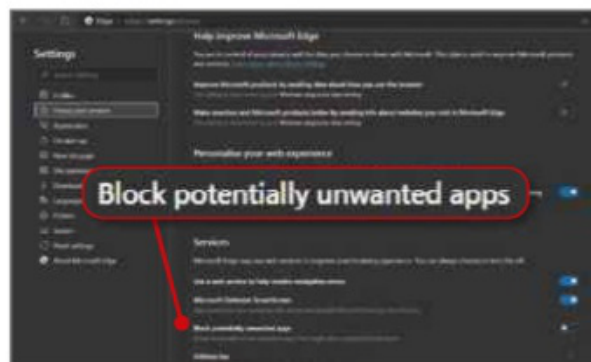
**Jake Kirby, via email**

## BROWSERS

### Block potentially unwanted apps

A quick reminder for anyone, if they haven't set it up already, that Edge Chromium now lets you block 'potentially unwanted apps'. Just click the menu button, select Settings and, on the page that opens, click 'Privacy and services'. Scroll down to the Services category and turn on the toggle switch for 'Block potentially unwanted apps'. Your browser is now equipped to stop the download of 'low reputation apps'.

**George Klein, via email**



*Double-check that Edge is set to block untrustworthy apps*

## WINDOWS

### Terminate and reset apps

If you're having problems with Windows 10 apps, you can terminate them, reset them or uninstall them. Open the Settings app and click Apps to see all the software installed on your computer. As you click each program, you'll see that software bundled with Windows or installed from the Store has an 'Advanced options' link. Click the link and you can set permissions, such as whether it can

run in the background. If you scroll down, you'll find buttons to Terminate, Reset and Uninstall.

If an app freezes, click Terminate to close it. Click Reset to put an app back to its original state – a bit like a software version of a factory reset. If neither of these buttons help, click Uninstall and remove it, then open the Store app, search for it and install it again.

**K Ward, via email**

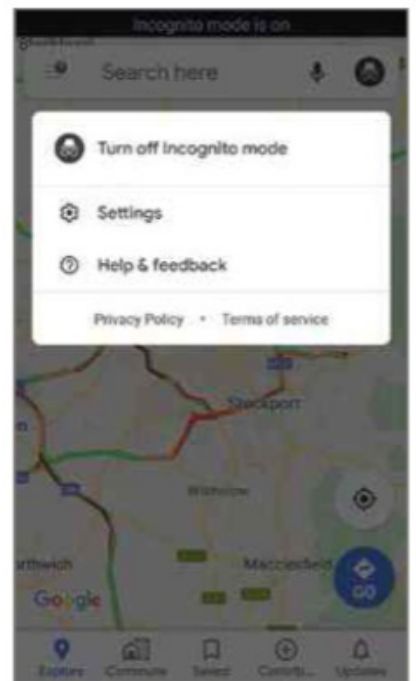
## MOBILE

### Explore Google Maps incognito

I like the new Incognito mode in Google Maps – I feel there's no point in giving Google even more information about me than it already has. To use it in the Maps app on an Android phone, tap your picture in the top-right corner and, in the menu that appears, tap 'Turn on Incognito mode'. Nearly everything works the same as in standard mode – it just doesn't store any data about you.

**Jon McBride, via email**

*Go incognito when using Google Maps to stop it recording your activity*



## BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

## BROWSERS

### Stop downloading PDFs

Boy, I feel like such a fool. For years, I've been opening PDFs online – only to have them automatically download and open in a separate program. Not only is this process slow going (for me and my computer), it also means repeatedly clearing out my Downloads folder of these pesky PDFs. Please don't make the same mistake – instead, download Open In Browser ([bit.ly/open497](http://bit.ly/open497)) from the Firefox add-ons page.

Once installed, this extension gives you the option to open all PDFs directly in your browser. However, if your PDF is also available to download, it provides the option to



*Choose whether PDFs open in your browser or download to your computer*

save it to your computer, too. It's the best of both worlds.

**James Gartside, via email**

**Have you managed to fix a PC-related disaster?**

If so, please send your story to [webuser@webuser.co.uk](mailto:webuser@webuser.co.uk)





## Star Email

### Always read smart devices' privacy policies

**A**lan McBride makes a good point that smart devices need to process our data to function properly (Star Email, Issue 496). However, that shouldn't give the likes of Google, Amazon and Facebook *carte blanche* to gather our personal information surreptitiously and pass it to third-party companies without our permission.

It's said that most people skip past privacy-policy pages when they set up their smart devices, without bothering to read them. But isn't that exactly what the data-peddling tech giants expect and want us to do? It doesn't take more than 30 seconds to scan these policies for details of what the



companies do with your data, and if you agree to them without checking, you really only have yourself to blame.

That said, I do think the manufacturers of smart devices should be more transparent about the data they collect

and who they share it with, in the same way that food packaging must provide nutritional and ingredient information. This may put some people off buying the devices, but at least it will pre-empt privacy scandals further down the line.

In the meantime, you should always read the privacy policy for any smart device you buy. If you don't like what you see, you have 14 days to return the item under the Consumer Contracts Regulations. If you're prepared to share your data in the way outlined in the policy, and agree to the company's terms, then you can't later accuse the device of 'spying on you'.

**Geoff McCourt, via email**

**Back Issues disc winner**



### Macs are no more safe than PCs

I read in your Stay Safe Online section (Issue 496, [bit.ly/webuser496](https://bit.ly/webuser496)) about how Mac malware infections have, for the first time, overtaken those aimed at Windows PCs. In my experience, Mac owners can be rather smug about their computers being completely impervious to viruses and other threats, so this news should give them pause for thought.

Anyone who goes online is at risk from malware, whether they're using Windows, macOS, Linux, Chrome OS, Android or iOS – nobody can afford to be complacent about security. It's true that hackers have traditionally targeted Windows over other platforms, but that's because it's the most popular operating system in the world, so there are more potential victims. It doesn't mean that PCs are intrinsically less safe than Macs, as these new figures have shown.

However, we Windows users are lucky that we have so many good free security programs to choose from, whereas Mac software tends to be expensive. But as the popularity of iPhones and iPads has proved, Apple fans are

usually willing to pay! Antivirus is a necessity – not an option – for all web users, and Mac owners can't afford to deny that fact any more.

**Richard Belman, via email**

### Internet Explorer puts users at risk

I was interested to read Neville Haneef's letter in Inbox, Issue 496, in which he says there's life in Internet Explorer yet. I'd never tell anyone what software to use, but surely the point is that IE is no longer fully protected against security

flaws and other bugs?

As with Windows 7, Microsoft has moved on to other things – in this case, its new Edge browser – and it expects its users to do the same. Neville may be happy with IE but if it's no longer receiving security updates, he's opening his PC to malware infection.

I would recommend giving Edge another try if he wants to keep using a Microsoft browser. It's much better than the last version – and much safer.

**Alan Gibbons, via email**



## Quiz Answers: Issue 496

1 **Bugs Bunny**



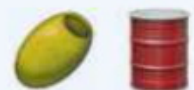
2 **Road Runner**



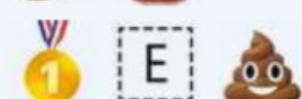
3 **Foghorn Leghorn**



4 **Olive Oyl**



5 **Winnie the Pooh**



6 **SpongeBob SquarePants**



**WINNER!**

Well done to **Colin Birch** who wins a Web User Back Issues Disc



**WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE**

**Yahoo!**







## The UK will be protected by GDPR

In your news story in Issue 496, 'Google moves UK data to the US after Brexit', you state that UK users will soon lose GDPR protection. This is not accurate.

First, we are still in the transition period, which means we are abiding by all EU rules until 2021. Also, GDPR has already been moved into UK law under the Data Protection Act 2018, so Google will still be abiding by GDPR for its UK users; indeed, Google has confirmed this.

However, the move does present some privacy concerns because it will mean that UK users will be subject to US mass surveillance.

There is a good article on the subject at [bit.ly/gdpr497](http://bit.ly/gdpr497).

*Miss Chief, via email*

## Claiming compensation from Virgin Media

Earlier this month, like most of the south coast of England, I lost my Virgin Media broadband connection for the best part of the day. This was very inconvenient as I was not only unable to access the internet but couldn't watch TV either.

I was under the impression that all broadband customers were now entitled to automatic compensation for loss of service, but have since discovered there are a couple of caveats to this, which I

thought other readers should be aware of.

First, you will only be compensated by Virgin Media for a total loss of service

that lasts at least 48 hours, starting from the end of the day that the outage occurs. Second, you need to personally report the problem to Virgin Media – either by phone or via its website – though how you're supposed to do this if you can't get online, I don't know.

Provided you tick both those boxes, you should receive £8 of credit for each day you were without service. I suppose that's better than nothing, but it's a shame you can't claim compensation for shorter outages that can still prove very frustrating.

*Michael Handby, via email*



## What you say...

### DID YOU EVER USE THE MYSUPERMARKET WEBSITE, BEFORE IT CLOSED ON 1 MARCH?

Yes, to save money on items that are too expensive elsewhere. It let me know when and where they were on offer. I am sorry that it has gone.

*Eff Clarke*

I only tried it recently. It didn't cover all the supermarkets, but it was a great concept.

*Elena Okharedia*

Never saw any use for it. I don't have all the supermarkets close by and I'm certainly not going to take long trips to buy cheaper.

*Nat Grove*

Yes. Including every major supermarket meant there was no bias. It gave you the price of a particular item in every store, thereby giving you the option to shop for the cheapest at whatever supermarket is local to you.

*Gary Olsen*

I only just started using it again! Oh well, best delete my account, before I get loads more spam!

*Richard Squires*

### WOULD YOU BUY FOOD SOLD THROUGH FACEBOOK ([bit.ly/facefood497](http://bit.ly/facefood497))?

Nope, because there are no hygiene controls. Who knows who cooked it and in what conditions.

*Iain Kenworthy-Neale*

Yes, there's less sugar and artificial additives – E456, E210 and so on – in homemade food.

*Alex Chapman*

I don't see why not. People can make their own choice.

*Rob Ruckus*

I don't buy *anything* through Facebook! Most non-food items are 100% dearer than the exact same item elsewhere, so they're a rip-off, and I wouldn't buy food items anywhere except certificated outlets.

*Marie Davies*

No chance. Not through any lack of faith in Facebook sellers, but simply because I don't want Facebook gaining any more of a foothold in my life than the limited knowledge it already has. There are plenty of far better ways to get goods than giving Facebook the chance to make even more money for itself.

*Rich Grove*

In Malaysia, it's a way to generate income for housewives. And everyone is happy because they have plenty of choice to eat and taste.

*Muhd Shah*

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# ! Page 404



Barry Collins doesn't get any better with age – but his Chromebook does

## Chromebooks are the Benjamin Button of tech

Computers grow more useless as they get older, right? It's an immutable fact, akin to the sun always rising in the east and printers "running low" on ink about eight months before they actually do.

Well, Chromebooks have utterly spun this truism on its head. About three years ago, I brought a Google Pixelbook into our home. It had a lovely screen, woke up quicker than the dog does when a firework goes off outside, and its battery lasted forever. But nobody knew quite what to do with it.

The kids preferred to do their homework on a Windows laptop, because they found it easier to work in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint than they did in Google's clunky Docs and Slides. For sofa surfing and basic email use, my iPad was more convenient to hold, and the apps gave it a huge edge over Chrome OS. Consequently, the Chromebook became an expensive ornament, left uncharged on the shelf

while we got on with our lives.

Three years on, the Pixelbook is now one of the most used devices in our household. What changed? Well – incredibly – it got better. Much better. Google's online apps have vastly improved, to the point where my GCSE-chasing 15-year-old much prefers to do her homework on the Chromebook, not least because she knows she won't have to wait 20 minutes for Windows to install an update before she can crack on with dissecting *Romeo & Juliet*. Chromebook printer support has massively improved, too, to the point where she regularly startles me by sending something to the noisy printer in my office from the living room.

Then there's the support for Android

apps that was added a year or so ago, which brings the Pixelbook much closer to the iPad in terms of utility, allowing me to quickly clatter out a message to colleagues in Slack, make a fast edit to a photo in Lightroom or use the near-desktop-quality Microsoft Office apps

to swiftly update something, without having to fire up the Mac in my office.

And then there's the games. Aside from all the Android games you can now access from the Play Store, Google

recently launched Stadia – a streaming service that allows you to play full-blown PC games such as *Red Dead Redemption II*, *Destiny II* or *Farming Simulator* (get behind the wheel of a John Deere tractor and you'll never feel so alive) from any Chrome browser.

My Saturday morning lie-ins have now been transformed. I sit for a blissful couple of hours, guiding Dulwich Hamlet to the Premier League title in *Football Manager 2020*, using a dead-silent laptop that barely even warms from playing a demanding game. If I did that with even my new MacBook Pro, we'd have to call the fire brigade within 20 minutes to put out my duvet.

Like the reverse-ageing Benjamin Button in the Brad Pitt film, Chromebooks are defying the laws of computing by getting better as they get older. And now they're getting cheaper, too. The new Pixelbook Go – which, colleagues assure me, has an equally sensational keyboard as the original Pixelbook, if not quite as good a screen – is now only £629 for the base model. As long-term tech investments go, I can't think of any better.

“ I spend a blissful couple of hours using a dead-silent laptop that barely even warms from playing a demanding game ”



Illustration: Andrew Torrens



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