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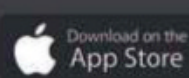
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Track anything online in real time

p48

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Without moving from your sofa

p64

FIX FRIENDS' TECH TROUBLE REMOTELY

Help people during lockdown

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Save a monkey on software

I had a quiet birthday this year, because it coincided with the government's decision to close all pubs, cafés and restaurants in an attempt to stem the spread of the coronavirus and save lives. Now, as *Web User* reaches its landmark 500th issue, we're in the midst of a nationwide lockdown, which has somewhat muted our celebration – leaving us not so much blowing our own trumpet as sounding a resigned parp!

Nonetheless, we decided to mark our big 500 with a special cover feature about one of the things we do best: rounding up great software you can download for free. We're

helping you, our loyal readers, save money on full, premium, paid-for programs with a value of more than £500 (that's a 'monkey' in Cockney slang). Some of the offers are time-limited, so grab them before they go.

I'd like to thank everyone who has bought, subscribed to and read *Web User* over the past 500 issues – we couldn't have made it this far without you! We'd love to hear your memories of the magazine.

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



Buying WebUser —during the lockdown—

IN THE SHOPS

Many outlets, including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons, operating branches of WHSmith and independent newsagents, should be stocking *Web User* as usual. Keep an eye out while you're shopping for your essentials. Please let us know if you are having difficulty finding the magazine.

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Download the *Web User* app for Android (bit.ly/webuserandroid) or iOS (bit.ly/webuserios) and you'll be able to enjoy the new issue on your mobile device. Alternatively, you can find our digital edition on Zinio (bit.ly/wuzinio).



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



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How to use Bitly links

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.



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LED
flashlight

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special subs offers

ISSUE 500

29 APRIL - 12 MAY 2020

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FEATURE

**WebUser
500**

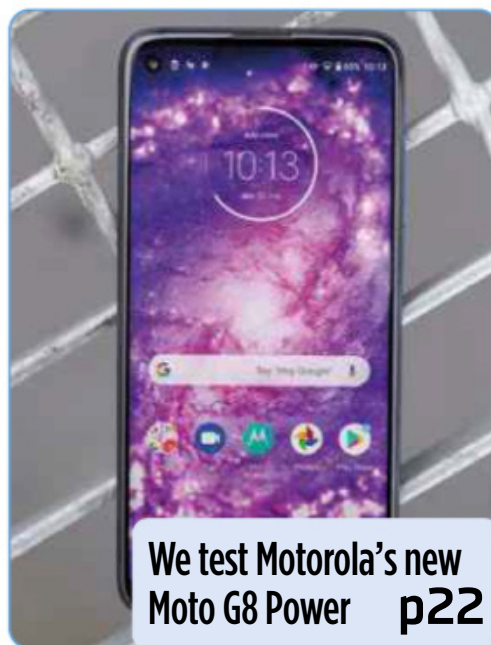
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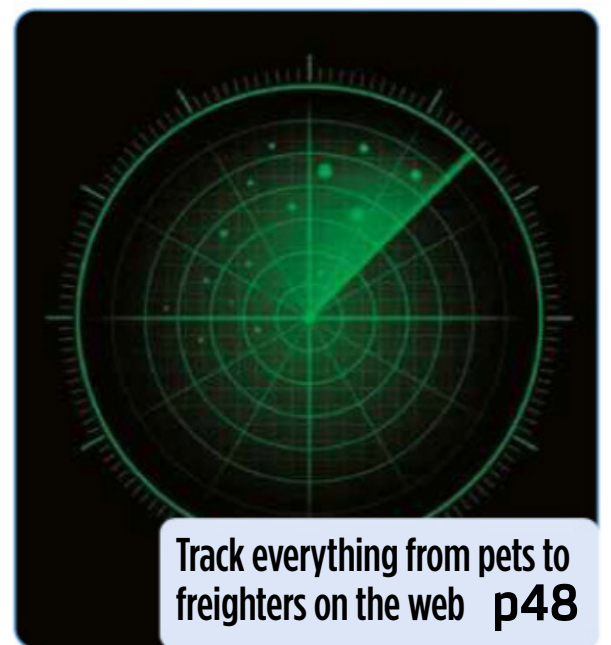
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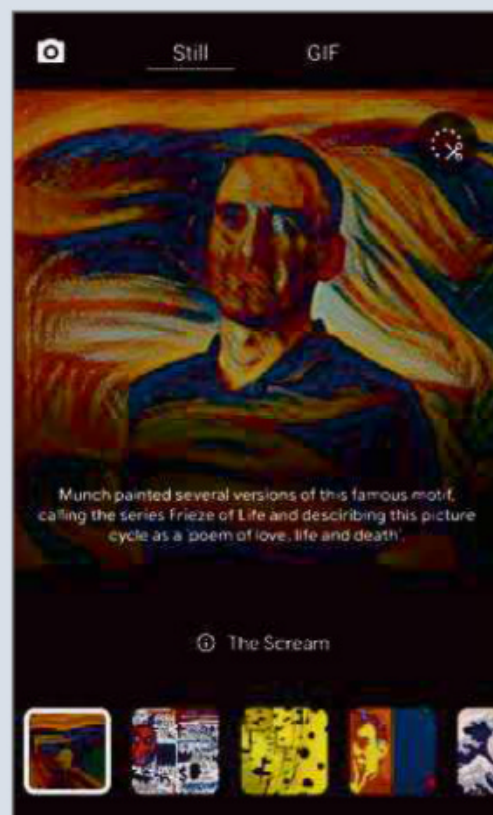


What's New Online

Turn your photos into works of art

You don't need to brush up on your artistic skills to create stunning paintings on your mobile device. As long as you have Google's Arts & Culture app and an eye for a decent visual, you can transform your photos into brilliant works of art.

A new tool in the app for Android and iOS draws on the talents of some of the world's most acclaimed artists, including Vincent van Gogh, Edvard Munch, Andy Warhol and Leonardo da Vinci. Just tap the Camera icon at the bottom of the screen, select Art Transfer and either take a photo or choose one you've already snapped. The app then presents you with a collection of 23 styles that you can tap to transform your image.



like to highlight to make your own creative adjustments. You can also turn it into a GIF that shifts from the original image to the artistic one.



From there, you can edit your painting, drawing around an area you'd

The app achieves all this using an algorithmic model built by Google AI. As it creates your artwork, it even treats you to facts about the artist who inspired your chosen style. All the magic takes place on your device, so you needn't worry about privacy, and you're free to share the results.

artsandculture.google.com

Share your suspected coronavirus symptoms

bit.ly/symptoms500

Testing for COVID-19 has been slow, so the government and the NHS have been looking at other ways to track where in the UK the virus is prevalent. One method is to survey anyone who displays symptoms, however mild, and to direct potential sufferers to a new section of the NHS website.

The survey asks why you think you have COVID-19, and lets you indicate how you're feeling and when the symptoms began. It also asks for details of any underlying health

problems, as well as your date of birth, postcode and how many people live in your household – information that the site promises not to share outside the NHS and trusted organisations.

The idea is to use this data for future planning, helping the NHS work out how much oxygen and how many ventilators it needs, for instance. If you're not sure what the symptoms of coronavirus are, you can check by going to bit.ly/corona500.

Protect your Netflix profile with a PIN

www.netflix.com

If you want to stop other people in your household watching shows on your Netflix account and messing up your personalised recommendations and viewing history, you can now protect your profile with a four-digit PIN.

Locking your account is also a good way to stop your kids using your profile to watch programmes for mature audiences that are blocked in their own accounts, making the service more child-friendly.

Launch Netflix on your PC or mobile device and go to Your Account. There you'll see the Profile and Parental Controls, where you can select Profile Lock and enter a PIN. If you choose Viewing Restrictions, you can also select a maturity rating (U, PG, 12, 15 or 18), or block specific programmes or films by name. You can review your child's profile settings, too, allowing you to monitor what they have been watching and switch off autoplaying of episodes.



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

Embark on a treasure hunt

bit.ly/treasure500

Test your knowledge of the world with these tricky map-based quizzes from Esri, and see how far you can get before clicking the Hint button. Topics include beaches, mountains, World Heritage Sites and the origins of food. Select your answer by moving a target over the correct location. If you're good enough, you'll win a printable certificate.



Record GIFs from your browser

gifcap.dev

GIFs have been around for ages but creating them is still fiddly. GIFcap makes the process easier by letting you record your desktop's screen – perfect for producing GIFs from video clips, for example. Simply launch the site and get the content you wish to capture ready. Then click Start Recording and choose whether to record the entire screen, an application window or a browser tab. Once you've finished recording, you can trim the length of your clip by adjusting the slider beneath, or crop it by highlighting the part of the screen you want to keep. Then select Render to produce a downloadable GIF.



Make instant Skype video calls

bit.ly/skype500

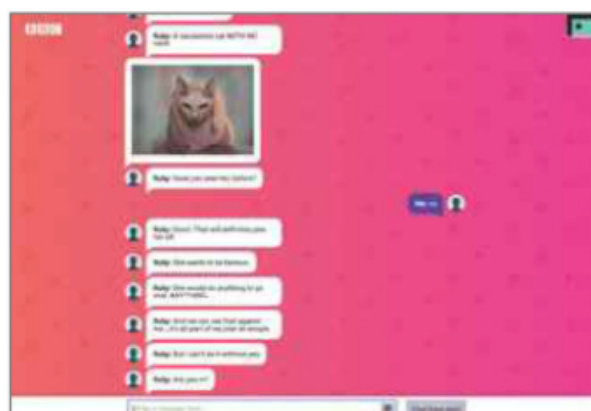
To fend off the competition from other video-chat apps, Skype has created Meet, a new feature that lets you host a conference call without signing in or even having a user account. Click Create A Free Meeting to generate a link that you can share with others who want to join in the chat. You can record calls and watch them within 30 days, blur backgrounds and share your screen with your guests. On mobile devices, Meet opens in the Skype app or launches on the web through Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome.



Enjoy a text-based BBC adventure

bit.ly/catfish500

The BBC has launched another interactive story powered by artificial intelligence, this time based around the search for love. Created by writer Sonia Jalaly using the Beeb's Charisma tool, Catfish welcomes you to a dating app called Go Fish and, through a series of messages, takes you on a weird adventure where not everything is as it seems.



NEW VOICE COMMANDS



Spread some joy

A sure way of lifting your mood first thing in the morning is to spread chocolate all over your breakfast. Say "Hey Google, talk to Nutella Creations" for some delicious-sounding recipes.



Play tunes from Spotify

Apple Watch users running watchOS 6 can now say "Hey Siri, play music on Spotify". The feature works on all but the very first version of the Apple Watch.



Get pregnancy advice

The charity Tommy's has created a new Midwife skill. Say "Alexa, open Tommy's Midwife" (or Hey Google, talk to Tommy's Midwife) on Google Assistant) to ask pregnancy-related questions.



Play Google Stadia Pro for free

stadia.google.com

Anyone with a Gmail account can try Google's game-streaming service Stadia Pro free for two months. It's available on Android, iOS and computers. Just remember to cancel before the free trial ends.

Read Instagram DMs online

instagram.com

Instagram now lets you view direct messages in your desktop browser. Click the paper-aeroplane icon in the top-right corner of Instagram's website to read and write DMs.

Get COVID-19 advice on WhatsApp

www.whatsapp.com

Add the number 07860 064 422 to your WhatsApp contacts and send a quick "hi" to launch the government's COVID-19 chatbot. It covers health, finance, eligibility for benefits and social distancing, and helps cut through misinformation.

Need to Know

Facebook pledges to fight coronavirus misinformation

What happened?

Facebook is taking steps to fight the tide of false information about the coronavirus that has spread through its network, after a report slammed its efforts.

The social network has been criticised for facilitating the spread of misleading information about health, politics and other areas, which has come to a head with the coronavirus pandemic. Facebook has previously baulked at labelling any posts as false, and has refused to ban incorrect information except in ads.

Faced with the COVID-19 outbreak, the company changed tack and introduced labels on shared content that its fact-checking partners deemed false and potentially harmful.

However, a study by activist group Avaaz (bit.ly/avaaz500) revealed that the labels took up to three weeks to appear on coronavirus posts, and that Facebook had missed as many as three in 10 instances of false content in languages other than English. That included Italian and Spanish posts, which is a worrying given the extent of the outbreak in those countries.

Failure to flag false posts means misinformation stays on the site too long. Avaaz noted one post – which claimed incorrectly that gargling with salt water kills the virus – was shared 31,000 times before it was removed. Even then, thousands of copies of the same photo and text remained.

Now Facebook is retroactively informing users they may have read



Credit: rafapress / Shutterstock.com

inaccurate content, and directing them to the World Health Organisation website. Facebook said the alerts were not a response to the Avaaz report, but part of existing public health information plans.

How will it affect you?

Facebook has been highlighting false information with labels indicating that independent fact checkers have found it to be untrue. However, it's now going a step further by displaying pop-up alerts to people who have read or shared false facts about the pandemic. The alert links to a page on the WHO website debunking falsehoods about the pandemic (bit.ly/whomyths500).

Facebook added that alerts on its site and in the Instagram photo app have directed more than 350 million people to accurate resources, and that it has removed hundreds of thousands of inaccurate posts.

Facebook can't patrol every post, and it also has to take freedom of speech into account, especially when it comes to politics. However, the company could make it easier to report coronavirus misinformation. If you see a post that shares false information, you can click the three-dot button in the top-right corner of the post and report the content for "false news" – but not specifically in relation to the pandemic. Facebook may not see your report immediately, either, because the

company admits it has a shortage of reviewers in the current situation. We can help by politely calling out friends and family who share false information, and only posting from trusted sources when it comes to serious topics.

What do we think?

Misleading information could be deadly during a pandemic, so we welcome this move. However, it proves that claims from Facebook and other social sites that they can't do more to stop the spread of false information were always untrue. Facebook is clearly able to check and remove incorrect content – it just took a pandemic to prove it.

That's a shame, because other issues matter, too. Facebook's role in the outcome of various elections is debatable, but it's clear that political leadership matters in a crisis – as does public health information. Facebook's reluctance to deal with conspiracy theories, such as anti-vaccination campaigns, means scientific organisations such as the WHO now have to struggle against distrust of the medical profession among Facebook users who have long been sharing false information. It's a shame this inevitable problem wasn't dealt with sooner.

Facebook and other sites play a major role in communication. It's time they were used to spread information that helps us, rather than hurts us. It's good to see these steps in the right direction.



The World Health Organisation has a page dedicated to busting coronavirus myths

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

TikTok bans teens from private messaging

What happened?

Social-networking app TikTok has banned younger users from using its private messaging tool. TikTok's popularity with teenagers has raised concerns over how children interact with each other and adults, with bullying and grooming among the threats highlighted by experts in online safety.

TikTok is also introducing parental control measures that link teenagers' accounts to their parents, so the latter can limit their children's screen time and monitor direct messages.

The move makes TikTok the first social network to ban private messages for younger users.



How will it affect you?

Private messaging will be banned for children under the age of 16 from 30 April, with affected users receiving a notification in the app. Youngsters will still be allowed to leave comments on videos and share posts of their own, but they won't be able to do so privately.

However, the ban is based on the age the user provided

when they registered for the app. This information isn't verified, which means younger teenagers can re-register with TikTok and lie about

their ages to dodge the ban, while those who were dishonest about their date of birth in the first place will still be able to chat in private.

The parental controls are set to roll out in the coming weeks, and will apply to teenagers aged 13 to 16.

What do we think?

TikTok is beloved by teenagers, and any measures

to make it safer are welcome. It's encouraging to see TikTok taking action without regulators having to force it to put protections in place. However, it's too easy for kids to dodge these controls by lying about their ages.

TikTok and other social media platforms certainly need to do more to protect children online, but there are limits to what's possible. Parents shouldn't assume that such measures will do their work for them. They have a responsibility to keep an eye on their children's web use, no matter what protections tech companies put in place.

Windows 10 suffers yet another update bug

What happened?

Microsoft has issued another update for Windows 10, and yet again it has a bug. The automatic update, which included new antivirus definitions for identifying malware, contained a flaw that stopped Windows Defender working. Users reported that when they tried to run a full-system scan, the built-in security software would crash and show a series of error messages.

The flaw had a simple cause: a file in the updated code had two dots between its name and extension type, rather than one. That was enough to wreak havoc for Windows users, who reported a

stream of messages that demanded the PC be restarted or told the user to try the scan again. The error messages were confusing, but more worrying was the inability to run scans, which could leave virus infections undetected and put users who depend on Defender for security at risk.

How will it affect you?

If you've experienced this problem after installing the update, the good news is that there's already a fix. Microsoft quickly pushed out a new update that fixes the problem, so if you have automatic updates running (which you should), the issue should rectify itself. If you're still receiving Windows Defender error messages and



the software crashes during full scans, head to the Windows Security app and click 'Check for updates'. That will tell you whether or not your version is up to date, and let you install a bug fix.

What do we think?

Microsoft issues a constant stream of updates, so it's no wonder some go awry, but

this seems to be happening much too often lately. Continued problems of this sort could lead people to postpone updates, leaving them unprotected. We shouldn't have to make such tradeoffs. Microsoft needs to boost its quality control. Mistakes happen, but they're happening too often at the moment.

Government to launch coronavirus-tracing app

What happened?

Health Secretary Matt Hancock has confirmed that the government is working on a coronavirus-tracking app designed to trace outbreaks and warn people who may have been infected.

As COVID-19 continues to sweep the globe, nations are focusing on two preventative measures: testing and tracing – and with a global shortage of tests, effort is going into developing ways to trace the highly infectious virus.

Created by NHSX, the digital arm of the National Health Service, the contact-tracing app will let users indicate when they're potentially experiencing symptoms of the virus. The app can then send out a yellow alert to anyone who may have had extended contact with the user. If that user tests positive for the coronavirus, contacts receive a second, red alert advising them to place themselves in quarantine.

University of Oxford researchers have pitched such an app to NHSX. Dr David Bosnall, one of the project's leaders, says: "the mobile app concept we've mathematically modelled is simple and doesn't need to track your location. It uses a low-energy version of Bluetooth to log a memory of all the app users with whom you have come into close proximity over the last few days".

The UK government is not alone. Following South Korea's lead, a number



of other countries are also preparing to unveil tracing apps. Germany, France and Austria will reportedly have tracing apps 'ready in weeks', while Ireland's own app is expected shortly.

How will it affect you?

In theory, a contact-tracing app should help you avoid contracting COVID-19. However, it's thought that at least 60% of the UK population would need to use the app for it to be even moderately useful. Given it's intended to work on most, though not all, smartphones, we can expect a heavy push once it rolls out, so make sure you have storage space on your device – it could help save lives, including your own.

What do we think?

Tracing the spread of the coronavirus is vital – but we need assurances that our data won't be misused. Ross Anderson, professor of security engineering at the University of Cambridge and an NHS privacy and security consultant, has already highlighted possible privacy problems. He suggests the system could be open to abuse, saying people "will instantly realise that a voluntary app operated by anonymous actors is wide open to trolling". This app demands a thoughtful approach if it's to succeed in the fight against COVID-19.

We'll take a closer look at contact-tracing apps in next issue's FAQ.



FIRST LOOK

iPhone SE

www.apple.com/iphone-se

If you missed the launch of Apple's latest iPhone on 24 April, we're not surprised. It seems the days of overblown events and mass-marketing are gone. Instead, the company quietly announced the new iPhone SE in a press release.

Apple calls the new device its "most affordable iPhone", and it is – in iPhone terms at least. At £419 for the absolute base model, it doesn't sound too 'affordable' to us compared with Android alternatives, but it's more than half the price of flagship iPhones.

Given this price difference, it's natural to expect a downgrade in specifications, starting with the SE's diminutive screen of just 4.7in in size. The phone runs iOS 13 and is powered

by an A13 Bionic processor. This chip will serve you well: designed by Apple and billed as "the fastest chip in a smartphone", it will let you do everything you need without any lag or slowdown. This also means better general performance, including an improved battery life.

As is typical of entry-level phones, the iPhone SE has just two cameras, in this case a 7-megapixel front camera and a 12-megapixel f/1.8 aperture lens at the rear. Smart HDR and 4K video support are included for high-quality photo and video capture. And those of you with a tendency to drop your iPhone into buckets of water



will be pleased to note that the new SE is water resistant up to one metre.

The iPhone SE is available in three storage options: 64GB, 128GB and 256GB. You also have a choice of three colours: white, black and red.

This excellent, sturdy device builds on the success of the original iPhone SE, released in 2016, and is everything you'd expect from an iPhone. However, while a budget iPhone is likely to tempt some new customers into trying Apple's range of products, the price still feels at least £100 too high for what you get.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

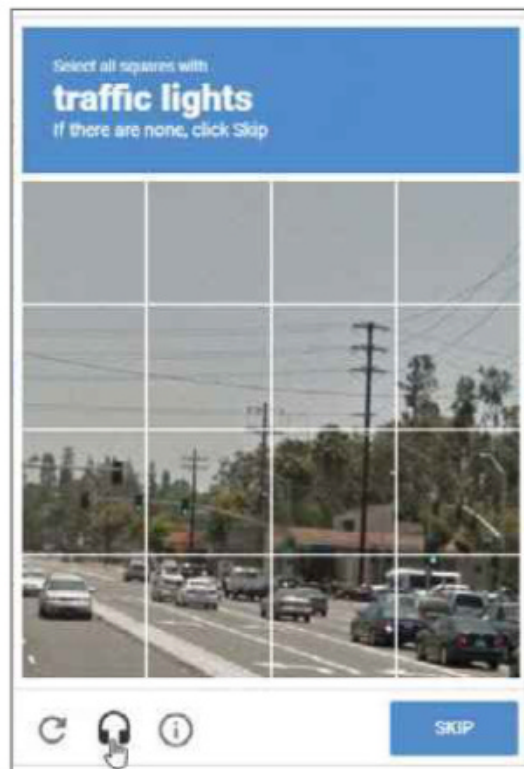
Is this the end for reCAPTCHA?

One of the most infuriating parts of web browsing is having to prove you're not a bot by typing indecipherable letters, clicking boxes and identifying pictures with cars, traffic lights or street signs in them.

Known as CAPTCHA – or 'completely automated public Turing test to tell computers and humans apart' – these tests have been a mainstay of the web for many years. Perhaps to no one's surprise, the most widely used version is Google's reCAPTCHA. This tool has been available to websites for free since its creation in 2009 but now Google is seeking to charge for it – a move that has gone down as well as you'd expect among the tech community.

Leading the backlash is web security firm Cloudflare. Chief executive Matthew Prince warned that continuing to use Google's system "would have added millions of dollars in annual costs just to continue to use reCAPTCHA for our free users. That was finally enough of an impetus for us to look for a better alternative". Cloudflare may have found the answer in the form of Intuition Machines.

This California start-up's hCaptcha system (www.hcaptcha.com) works along similar lines to Google's version but offers many more methods of identifying and blocking bots. For example, users are asked to identify the correct labels for pictures and draw boxes around specified objects.



LIKELIHOOD RATING



CAPTCHA's awful execution was never going to be enough to put firms off using it, but having to pay for it certainly might. Google's system is also getting rather long in the tooth and, surprisingly, still relies on an element of human intervention behind the scenes. Another reason for the possible change is to avoid the privacy concerns Google's services raise. As such, we're happy to see a rival to reCAPTCHA emerging with a more modern (and less expensive) bot-blocking tool.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Facebook launches game-streaming app

Facebook has launched a mobile gaming app to take on game-streaming services such as Twitch. The main focus of Facebook Gaming (bit.ly/fbgaming500) is to let users watch and create live game streams, but it offers a few casual games to play, too, such as Words With Friends.



Microsoft adds 8,000 images to Office

Microsoft has added more than 8,000 royalty-free images and icons to its Office 365 suite (now renamed Microsoft 365), allowing users to "jazz up" their content in Excel, Word, Outlook and PowerPoint. To access them, go to Insert, Pictures, Stock Images.



WE DON'T LIKE...

Zoom accounts sold on dark web

More than half a million Zoom accounts are reportedly being sold on the dark web or, in some cases, given away for free. The stolen details include email addresses, passwords, personal meeting URLs and HostKeys.



18 million COVID-19 scam emails sent a day

Cybercriminals are sending 18 million coronavirus-themed scam emails to Gmail users every day with the aim of tricking them into revealing logins and other data, according to Google. Tech companies say COVID-19 is likely to be the biggest phishing topic ever.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Briiv

bit.ly/briiv500 | From £249

Briiv (as in 'breathe') may look like a miniature garden, but hidden beneath that greenery is a bundle of technology that purifies the air. With environmental sustainability at the forefront of its minimalist design, Briiv's four-tier filtration system – moss, coconut, carbon and wool – proves as effective as traditional air filters, and has the added bonus that it's 100% biodegradable. You can control the air filter using a smartphone app, and it connects to your smart home setup. To get a single Briiv, pledge £249, or £2,499 for the 'office' pack of 10.



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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



State-backed hackers exploit coronavirus crisis

US and UK cybersecurity officials have warned that state-sponsored hackers are exploiting the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In a joint statement, the UK's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) said that hacking groups have been using a range of ransomware and other malware to take advantage of "individuals and organisations" during the global coronavirus

outbreak. Although the advisory claims that many of these groups are state-backed, the statement didn't name any specific country as being responsible for the cyberattacks.

The warning comes after the World Health Organisation (WHO) and hospitals were targeted by cybercriminals, compromising computer systems. As we reported last issue, hackers have also used coronavirus fears to spread phishing emails, posing as Gov.uk or the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

bit.ly/state500

Thousands of Android apps have backdoor secrets

A recent study by researchers at Ohio State University, New York University and the Helmholtz Center for Information Security offers hard evidence that thousands of Android apps are



taking liberties with users' devices by equipping them with backdoor functions, including secret access keys, master passwords and secret commands.

The research team analysed the behaviour of 150,000 Android apps, looking for evidence of background activity. Apps included the 100,000 most popular on Google Play in April 2019, 30,000 apps that come installed on Samsung devices and 20,000 from the Chinese tech company Baidu.

Of the 150,000 apps included in the study, 12,706 exhibited a range of backdoor behaviours. Of those tested, 6.8% of Google Play apps, 5.3% of apps from alternative sources and 16% of preinstalled apps were caught performing background actions.

"Both users and developers are at risk if a bad guy has obtained these 'backdoor secrets,'" said a member of the research team.

bit.ly/background500

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

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



Q Should we be worried about our privacy when using apps such as Zoom (see FAQ on page 38)?

Paul Giddings, Facebook

A At times like this, people are more interested than ever in finding simple ways to keep in touch with

loved ones. Often, however, the desire to connect as quickly and easily as possible can lead us to neglect important aspects of online security.

Given the premise that each of us can decide how much of our private life we want to make public, it's important to ask questions and keep in mind some rules before sharing anything online. That way, we can all connect to the web safely and stay in touch with loved ones without compromising our privacy.

One question to ask, for example, is how does the app



you intend to use make its money? If an app is free, the price you pay will probably be your personal information. It's therefore important that you check which permissions the app asks for, as well as what data its makers collect, store and reuse.

What's more, you should find out whether or not the data transmitted by the app is encrypted, and be aware of social-engineering tactics.

“ If an app is free, the price you pay will probably be your personal information ”

How do you know the people you're coming into contact with through the app are really who they say they are? How can you verify any information or links you receive? Remember that nothing and nobody can be considered 100% safe online. Even if you think you're of little interest to a cybercriminal compared to, say, Jeff Bezos, be aware that we're all potential victims of hackers.

Credit: Ink Drop / Shutterstock.com

A robotic arm with blue and silver joints and a black gripper is positioned over rows of green plants in a greenhouse. The arm is emitting a bright, glowing light from its gripper, which illuminates the plants below. The background shows the curved structure of the greenhouse and more rows of plants.

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BEYOND
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★ Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

ENTERTAINMENT

NEW

Harry Potter At Home bit.ly/potter500

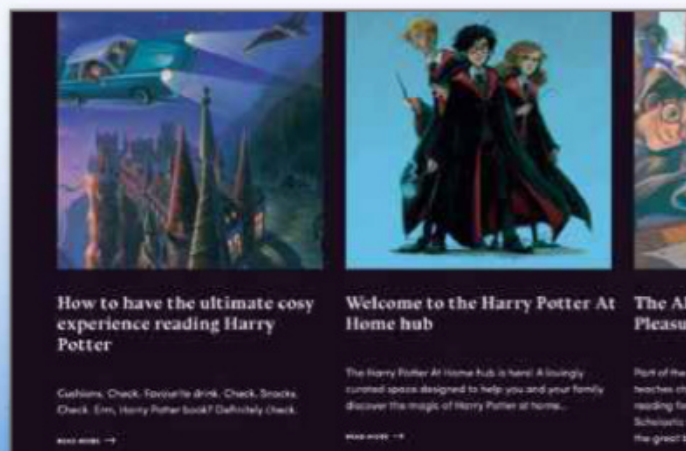
Potterheads (and parents) will adore the magical treats on offer in a new section of the Harry Potter Wizarding World website. Author JK Rowling has helped conjure up a host of fun activities, from quizzes to puzzles, to keep young minds occupied while they spend more time at home, with more goodies promised over the coming weeks. Navigation could be better – you have to keep scrolling to explore the content – but a handy weekly newsletter flags anything new. You can also grab freebies such as an audiobook of *Philosopher's Stone* from Audible, or borrow an ebook version through the Libby or Sora apps. We're spellbound.

Our rating



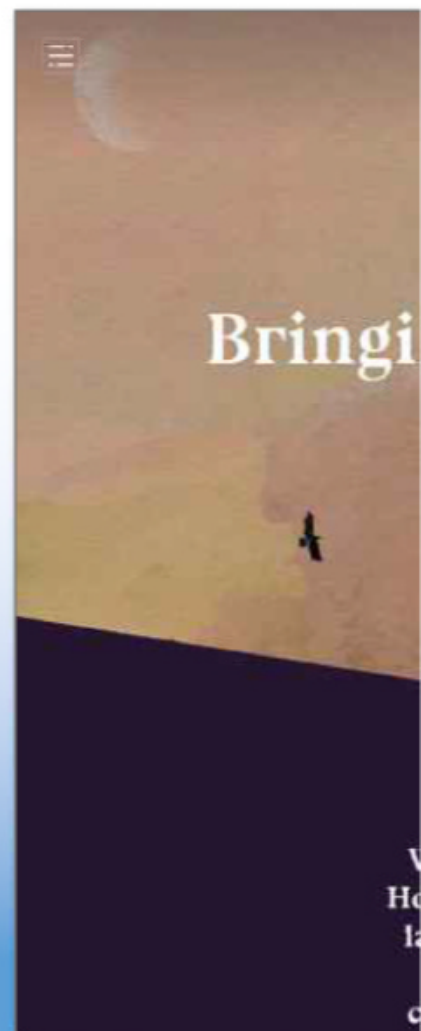
PUZZLES

Find as many words as you can against the clock or enjoy a challenging crossword



ARTICLES

New articles are added constantly, helping you better explore the world of Potter



GAMES

Club Penguin Online

cponline.pw

Club Penguin was discontinued in 2017 after an impressive 12-year run, but now the online game set in a virtual world has been revived. Recreated by fans, and including many of the original's features, the game is already proving popular, with more than six million gamers signing up. Even better, it's now entirely free to play. Start by creating and naming your cute penguin, then jump straight in – well, once you've signed up and enabled Flash Player, anyway. The colourful site is sure to bring back memories, and you can keep up with the latest news by checking the (infrequently updated) blog or social media, via links to Discord, Twitter and YouTube.

Our rating



NEW

COMMUNITY

Serve Back

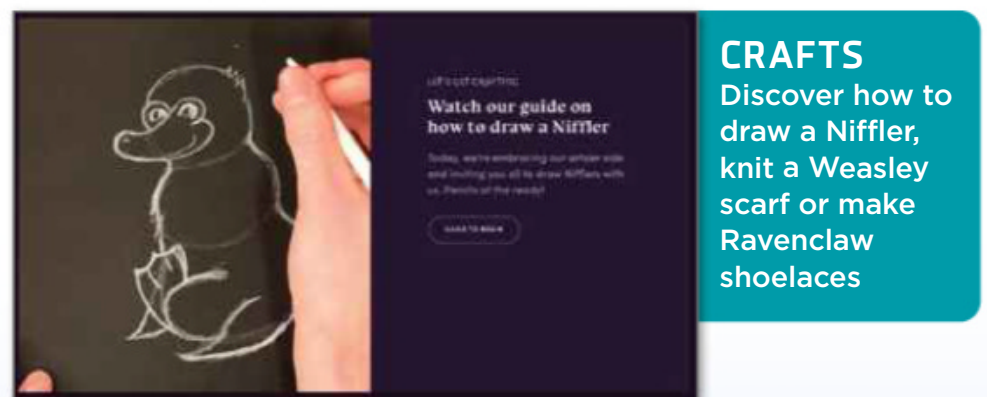
serveback.co.uk

Supporting local businesses has never been more important, so it's heartening to see the growing number of websites promoting those that are still active. Enter a postcode into Serve Back to see businesses that are offering deliveries and selling gift vouchers for future use. This lovely-looking site makes good use of icons for efficient filtering. Results appear in a smart, card-like design with links directing you to a company's website. Adding a business is easy, thanks to a simple one-page form, but until the service is adopted more widely, you may find few results in many areas.

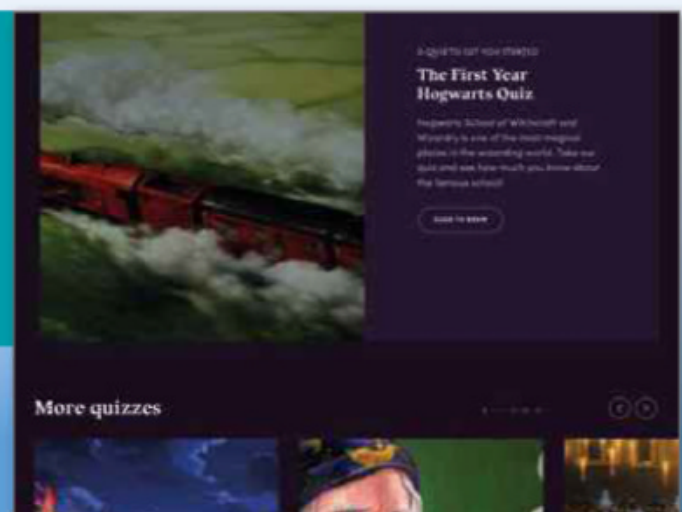
Our rating



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



QUIZZES
How well do you know your Potter? Test your knowledge with these fun quizzes



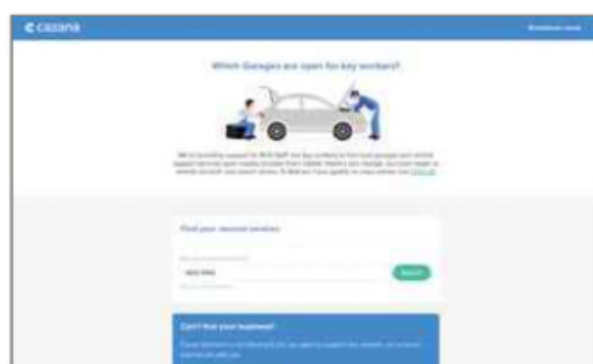
ENTERTAINMENT

Disney Magic Moments

bit.ly/disney500

Disney is synonymous with fun and, since we need lots of that at the moment, we were delighted to see this latest offering. Magic Moments is a news feed within the Disney website that's dedicated to sharing videos, activities and stories from across the company's brands. It includes a new digital series called At Home With Olaf, which will please fans of *Frozen*, and a video that shows you how to draw the character. You can enjoy Pixar-inspired backgrounds to brighten up your video chats, and embark on a virtual ride. New content is added regularly, so it's certainly one to bookmark.

Our rating



MOTORING

Keyworker Garages

keyworkergarages.co.uk

The UK has almost ground to a halt, but key workers including NHS staff and delivery drivers need to keep moving. As such, it's important to know which garages are still carrying out essential maintenance and repairs. Enter your location into this useful new site to see a list of businesses nearby, complete with phone numbers, addresses and, in some cases, websites and emails. There are no opening times, so the site recommends you phone ahead before setting off, but at least you'll get an idea of who is operating and how far away they are, as well as directions from Google Maps.

Our rating



EDUCATION

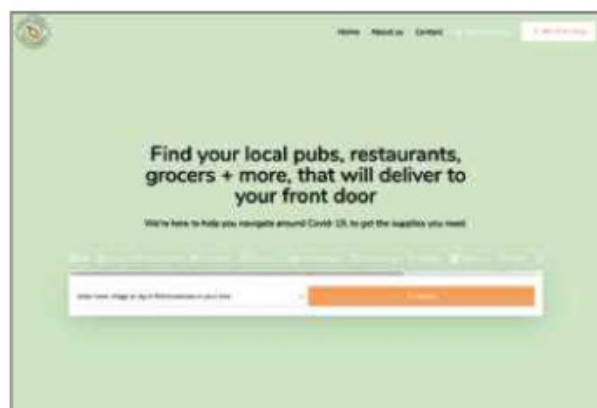
Family Life At Home

www.familylifeathome.co.uk

Many parents trying to homeschool their children are now realising just how wonderful the nation's teachers really are. If you're struggling to find a balance between education and engagement, try this directory, which is packed with details of online classes, educational sites and apps, all searchable by age, with filters for subject, activity, date and more. Not all the resources are free, but you can search just for freebies, with results ranging from BBC Bitesize to live lessons via Facebook. There's also a forum for stressed-out parents, and articles suggesting activities for bored kids.

Our rating





NEW

COMMUNITY

Your Local Delivered

www.yourlocaldelivered.co.uk

Created in response to the coronavirus pandemic, this site is another hub aiming to help you find companies that will deliver food, drink, flowers and medicine to your door. Businesses can add free listings in a range of categories, complete with a description, logo and image, as well as details of their website. Visitors can search by entering a location and filtering the results using one of the product tabs at the top of the screen. It's all very slick, with useful maps and a clean interface, but too few businesses had joined at the time of writing, which limits its usefulness for now.

Our rating



NEW

FOOD

Local Food Drops

www.localfooddrops.co.uk

Rather than traipsing around the local supermarket or arranging a delivery from one of the major chains, you could go directly to the wholesaler. Enter your town or postcode into this site and select from groceries, alcohol and pet food to see which companies offer delivery or the option to click and collect. More than 70 wholesalers have signed up so far, and there's a list of national companies offering deliveries, too. Local Food Drops aims to help alleviate the pressures on supermarkets, so if you're struggling to find what you need, it's worth taking a look. The site also claims to support local food banks with every sale.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

ALCOHOL

Wineorama

www.wineorama.com

Wineorama was set up more than 21 years ago, but the site took a back seat when Our Venues, the company behind it, decided to concentrate on its bars and restaurants. Due to current events, the site has been dusted down so that residents of Glasgow and the west of Scotland can order red, white, rosé and sparkling wines for delivery. It's a little rough around the edges, which is perhaps no surprise: some of the images are blurred, for instance, and that's before we even touched a drop. Ordering is easy, though, and the descriptions are clear. The company hopes to widen its delivery area in due course, too.

Our rating



NEW

EDUCATION

Teach From Home

teachfromhome.google

If you're a teacher looking for ways to educate pupils at home, this Google initiative is sure to be useful. It introduces educators to a wealth of tools, including Google Classroom and Meet for video calls, while showing ways of conducting live Q&As, online quizzes and student discussions. To help teachers make sense of the options, Google offers a downloadable step-by-step guide, tips on livestreaming lessons and real-time feedback. It even considers how to make lessons accessible, and there's plenty of advice on keeping students engaged. Each tool comes with tutorials, too, as Google leaves no stone unturned in its bid to promote temporary home learning.

Our rating



NEW

SHOPPING

Extreme Savers

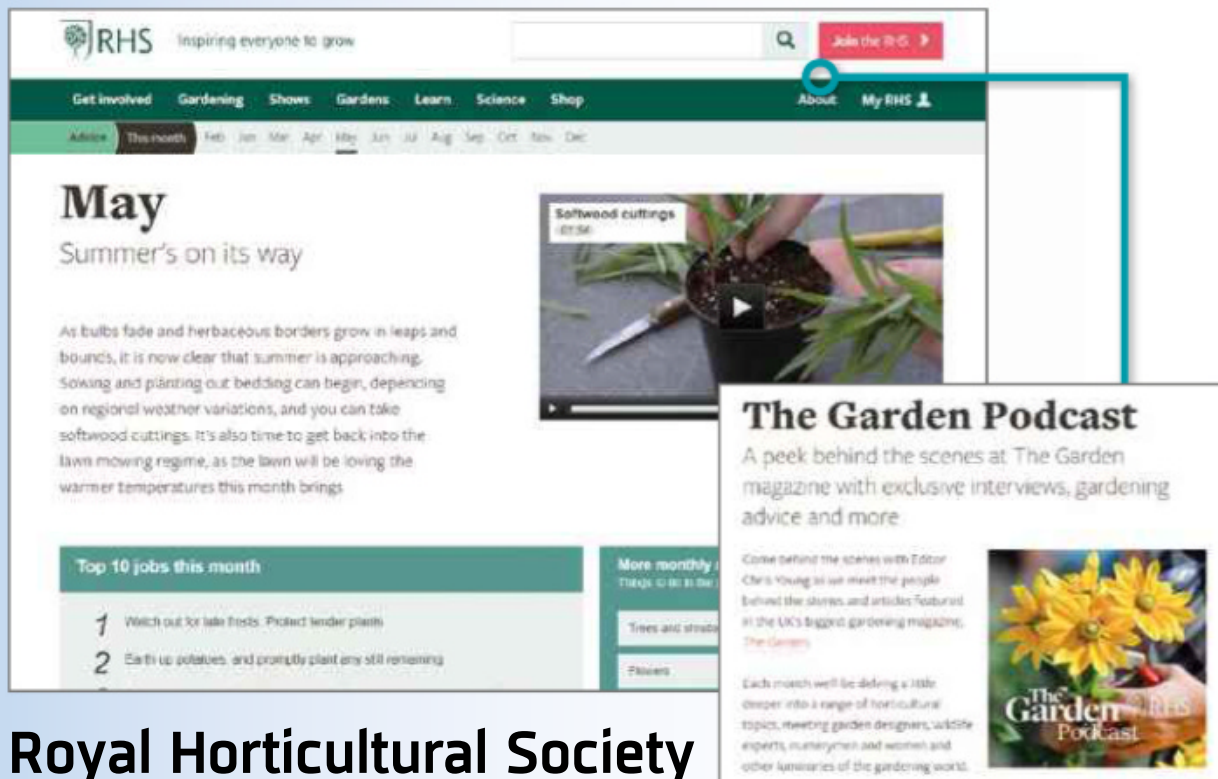
www.extremesavers.co.uk

Extreme Savers rounds up bargains from major companies and, when you click Get Deal, sends you to the seller's website to make your purchase – which we assume earns the site a referral fee. In return, you are awarded points you can redeem for gift cards. You also earn points for recommending deals, provided the retailer is on the site's list, and checking out the small selection of free stuff, such as '4 free laundry detergent capsules'. Our only gripe with the site is that your name is listed in a public members directory unless you opt out.

Our rating



ESSENTIAL BOOKMARKS THIS ISSUE: Great gardening websites



Royal Horticultural Society

www.rhs.org.uk

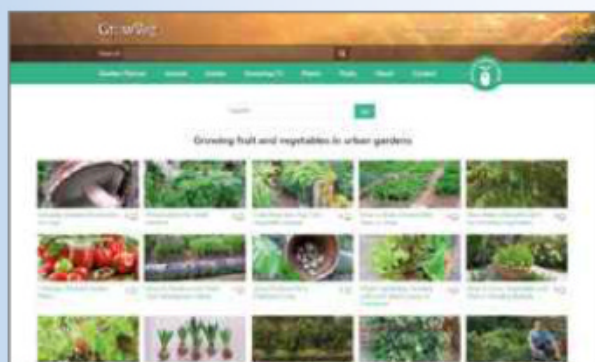
Get inspiration in spades (and trowels) from Britain's biggest gardening charity. The RHS website caters for everyone from houseplant owners to botany buffs. Under its Gardening tab is a positively oak-sized root system that includes a 'Beginner's guide', 'Wildlife gardening', 'This month' and more, each with its own tree of subsections, step-by-step guides and videos from RHS experts. If you don't like getting your hands dirty, bury yourself in the huge 'Find a plant' glossary (bit.ly/findplant500) or tune into six years' worth of podcasts (bit.ly/podcasts500), covering topics from growing gin botanicals to the secrets of flower show success. You don't have to register, but a free account unlocks extra tools such as an online gardening scrapbook.



The Sunday Gardener

www.sundaygardener.co.uk

When Carol Bartlett isn't busy creating gardens in the north of England, she's turning the world's fingers green via her excellent website. Over the years, The Sunday Gardener has grown from a blog into a friendly, information-packed resource that will serve as your virtual gardening buddy in these locked-down times. Hundreds of in-depth articles are organised by topic and month, with links to relevant information (and to videos on the site's YouTube channel at bit.ly/sunday500), so it's easy to explore, even without a search box. And if you can't find the answer you want, you can email Carol through her plant identification service at bit.ly/plantid500.



GrowVeg

www.growveg.co.uk

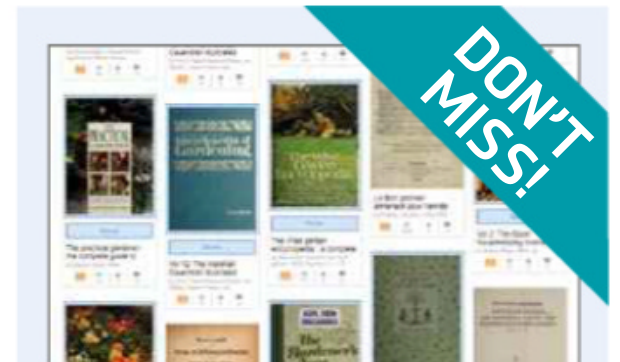
Live the good life during lockdown by growing your own dinner, rather than queuing at the supermarket and hoping it has the ingredients you need. British website GrowVeg offers a searchable collection of more than 700 in-depth guides covering all aspects of edible gardening, from how-tos for beginners ('Plan Your First Vegetable Garden in 5 Easy Steps') to advanced advice ('Overwintering Green Manures for Crop Rotation'), with new articles added most weeks. Videos, plant guides and a fascinating Pest Identification section are also free. Annoyingly, GrowVeg clutters its homepage with plugs for its Garden Planner app (£19 per year after a seven-day trial), but that's optional, and all the site's best bits are free.



BHG Garden Plans

bit.ly/plans500

Once you've picked through the jungle of US lingo on this site from Better Homes & Gardens ("colors of Fall", zucchini and the like), it rewards you with dozens of free downloadable planning guides in the Garden Plans section. Lurking within grand-sounding articles such as 'Create a Garden Getaway' and 'Ultimate Garden for Birds and Butterflies', you'll find practical information to help you transform small or problem spaces such as balconies, shaded spots and even front doorsteps into attractive mini gardens. If you spend a minute creating a free account with BHG Garden Plans, you can also try the site's free Plan-A-Garden tool (bit.ly/plantool500), which lets you shuffle virtual shrubbery around a 3D template of your garden.



The Internet Archive: Gardening

bit.ly/archive500

Some of the best gardening books are the ones you find in libraries and charity shops. They may be closed for now, but The Internet Archive is very much open for business. Its Gardening section has more than 20,000 vintage horticulture tomes, seed catalogues and periodicals, including such gems as *The Cottage Gardener: Country Gentleman's Companion* from 1853, scanned and uploaded for reading online. The Archive imposes a 14-day access limit on some titles, but it's free to sign up and "borrow" a book. Others you can download and keep in PDF format and occasionally as ebooks.

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Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Restore the WordPress menu

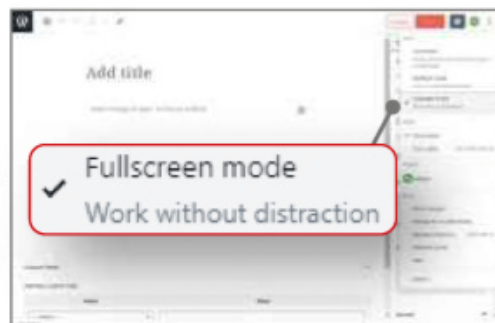
Have you noticed that the latest version of WordPress switches to full-screen mode when you start a new post or edit an existing one? The menu bar on the left vanishes, making your post look more like it will when published. That's great for previewing your work but makes it impossible to navigate elsewhere on your site if, for example, you need to add new categories or tweak a setting.

To return the interface to the way it was before this change, click the menu button in the top-right corner and untick

'Fullscreen mode'. This will return the left-hand menu to its rightful place.

Catch up with Google's Webmaster Conference

Google has published a series of presentations given by engineers and other employees at its Webmaster Conference last November. Visit YouTube at bit.ly/webconf500 to hear from the people who control how visitors find your website as they talk about their work. There are eight videos, and only one is longer than 10 minutes, so it's a quick way to learn some essential tips.



Deal of the Fortnight

Guru (www.guru.co.uk) is discounting your first month to £1 across all its hosting packages. Use the promotion code 2020 at the checkout.

Web-building Helpdesk

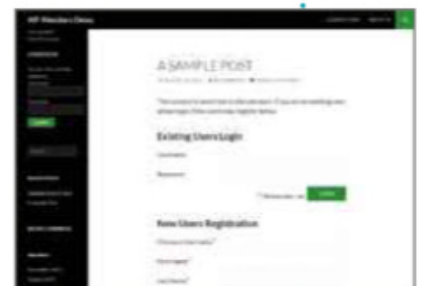
Q I'd like to make some of my WordPress site available to visitors for free but reserve the rest for paying subscribers. How do I create a members-only area?

Daniel Andrews, via email


A There are lots of commercial plug-ins that let you do this. We've heard good things about MemberPress (www.memberpress.com), for example, although it's expensive, so you'd need to make sure you have enough paying visitors to cover the cost.

Alternatively, try the WP-Members plug-in (bit.ly/wpmembers500), which is free and has many similar features. You can use it to manage subscribers and make individual posts and pages accessible to members only. There's a handy guide to help you get started at bit.ly/wpmem500.

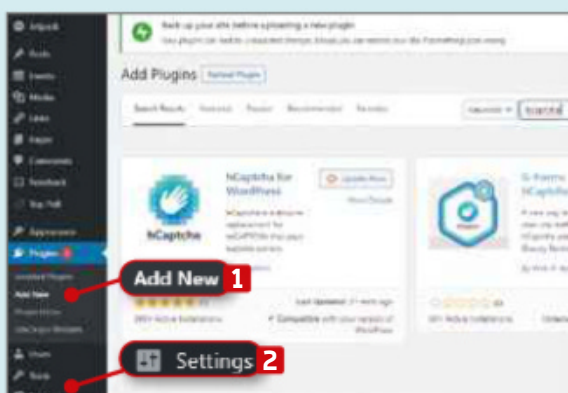
Andy Shaw, Technical & Reviews Editor



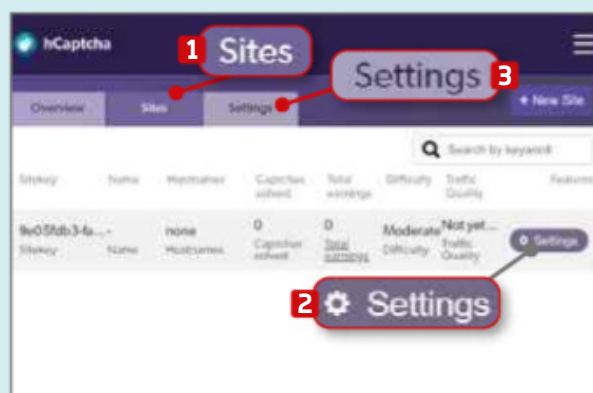
MINI WORKSHOP | Use a privacy-friendly alternative to Google's reCAPTCHA

hCaptcha: www.hcaptcha.com |  10 mins | Self-hosted WordPress website

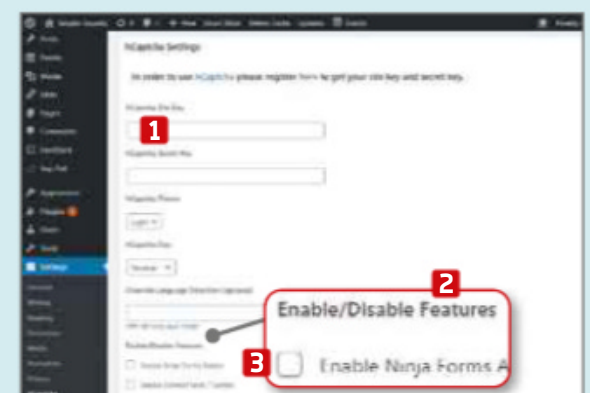
Google's reCAPTCHA is a great tool for checking that your visitors are human, but Google tracks everyone who uses it. hCaptcha (see story on page 11) is a free alternative that doesn't track people and may earn you money



1 Go to your WordPress website and click Plugins, then Add New. **1** Search for **hCaptcha** and install the 'hCaptcha for WordPress' plug-in. Activate it from the menu, then select Settings, **2** followed by hCaptcha.



2 Go to the hCaptcha website (www.hcaptcha.com) and sign up for an account. The plug-in asks for two keys: a Site Key and a Secret Key. To obtain the Site key, open the Sites tab, **1** then click the Settings button. **2** You'll find the Secret Key on the Settings tab. **3**



3 Enter the keys into the appropriate boxes. **1** Scroll down to the Enable/Disable Features section **2** and tick the box next to any page to which you want to add a Captcha. **3** Then scroll down to the bottom of the page and click 'Save hCaptcha Settings'.



What To Watch Online

Pick of the fortnight

prime video



Watch Amazon's new sci-fi comedy *Upload*

From 1 May

Greg Daniels (creator of *Parks and Recreation* and the US version of *The Office*) can't have known how relevant his futuristic new sci-fi sitcom, set in the year 2033, would turn out to be. Robbie Amell stars as young programmer Nathan, who is suddenly forced to get used to living away from his loved ones. This isn't lockdown, though. Nathan's "new life" is a virtual-reality alternative to the afterlife, into which he's been uploaded following a traffic accident (in a self-driving car, of course). And judging by the show's intriguing trailer (bit.ly/upload500), Nathan's supposedly bespoke VR paradise isn't quite what he'd hoped for.

Join Nathan on his trip into the digital beyond when all 10 episodes of *Upload* come to Amazon Prime Video on 1 May at bit.ly/upprime500. Writer-director Greg Daniels' other shows are also included with Prime, at bit.ly/parksrec500 and bit.ly/office500.



Watch West End shows online for free

Theatre has gone virtual now, too – and much of it is free to watch. Andrew Lloyd Webber streams a classic show

each week via his YouTube channel, The Shows Must Go On! (bit.ly/shows500). Shows are free for a limited run, after which you can rent or buy them. For example, watch Tim Minchin in *Jesus*

Christ Superstar for £3.49 (bit.ly/jesus500).

The BBC's 'Culture in Quarantine' series (www.bbc.co.uk/arts) includes hit

West End musical *Wise Children* (watch for free at bit.ly/wise500), while National Theatre Home has a revolving programme of plays to watch for free via YouTube. Find out what's next at bit.ly/nthome500.



Watch the latest blockbusters in lockdown

Disney's *Frozen II*, action sequel *Bad Boys for Life* and conspiracy horror *The Hunt* should have been raking it in at the cinema box office this spring. But with the world under house arrest, blockbusters are going straight to streaming services instead.

Frozen II is now available through services including Amazon Prime Video, where it costs £4.49 to rent (bit.ly/frozen500). Jim Carrey's *Sonic The Hedgehog* is also on Amazon at bit.ly/sonic500 (purchase only, £13.99). Universal Pictures has put four current cinema releases online: *The Invisible Man* (bit.ly/iman500); *Trolls World Tour* (bit.ly/trolls500); *The Hunt* (bit.ly/hunt500) and *Emma* (bit.ly/emma500), each for a hefty £15.99 to rent.

Will Smith and Martin Lawrence return in *Bad Boys for Life* from 11 May (£11.99 to rent, bit.ly/badboys500). Margot Robbie as Harley Quinn in *Birds of Prey* (bit.ly/birds500) and Harrison Ford in *The Call of the Wild* (bit.ly/wild500) are coming soon (unless you use a VPN to pretend you're in the US, where they're streaming now).

Even the film-lovers' immersive live experience Secret Cinema has gone online. Sign up for its Secret Sofa event at secretcinema.org/secret-sofa.



Watch Apple's parenthood comedy *Trying*

From 1 May

Rafe Spall and Esther Smith are the British couple trying to adopt a child in this new comedy, a joint production by Apple and the BBC. The official trailer (bit.ly/trying500) is soundtracked with that annoying finger-clicking music used in too many adverts these days, but early reports suggest that the show – which also stars the fab Imelda Staunton – is an intelligent comedy that's well worth a look. Find out on 1 May, when the first three episodes of

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



Trying come to Apple TV+ (£4.99 per month after seven days free, bit.ly/appleplus500). Five further episodes follow weekly.

N Watch Netflix's Tinseltown mini-series *Hollywood*

From 1 May

American Crime Story actor Darren Criss and director Ryan Murphy reunite for Netflix's new mini-series set in post-war Hollywood, which follows a group of aspiring actors as they push

for the big time at any cost. As we've grown to expect from Murphy (also creator of *Pose* and *Feud: Bette and Joan*), *Hollywood* offers a gorgeous-looking glimpse behind a



In case you missed it...

Tom Hardy has swapped *Hollywood* for CBeebies to bring us six more *Bedtime Stories*, now streaming nightly at www.bbc.co.uk/



tv/cbeebies and via the new iPlayer Kids app (bit.ly/ikids500). Thirty

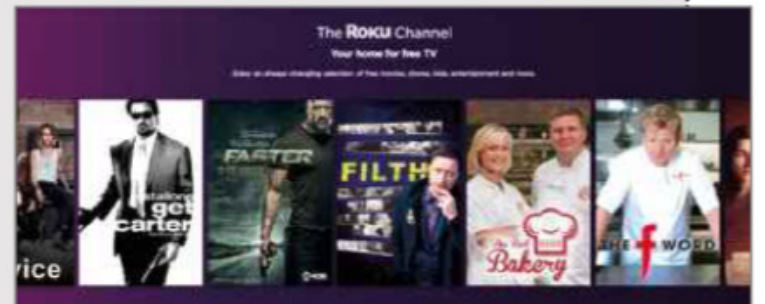
Roku Channel finally arrives in UK

Roku has finally launched its own free, ad-supported channel in the UK, three years after it launched in the US. Roku Channel is available now on Roku devices, Now TV sticks and Sky Q set-top boxes.

The range of content is much better than Roku's website (bit.ly/roku500) suggests. It offers a few recent films and oodles of documentaries and cookery shows, but its real strength lies in its archive of TV dramas, such as Jimmy McGovern's excellent *Accused* (IMDb: bit.ly/accused500).

Streaming quality varies, peaking at 1080p (Full HD) depending on your device. Subtitle provision is very good (unlike BritBox), and you can fast-forward through the ad breaks (unlike ITV Hub and All 4).

Roku has also added StarzPlay as a standalone channel (bit.ly/rokustarz500).



gilded curtain, revealing the secrets, lies and rivalries within.

There's no trailer at the time of writing, so keep an eye on *Hollywood's* Netflix page at bit.ly/hollywood500 for teasers.

now Watch the final season of *Brockmire*

From 11 May

Hank Azaria (veteran of *The Simpsons*) stars as Jim Brockmire, a famed baseball announcer who escaped to a small town after a public meltdown. Baseball may not be up your street, but clever comedy *Brockmire* is adored by TV critics for its hilarious writing and sympathetic central performance.



The fourth and final season airs on Fox in the UK, so you can stream episodes on-demand via Now TV with an Entertainment Pass (£8.99 per month after a free seven-day trial, bit.ly/nowent500). New episodes join the first three seasons (available until June) on Now TV at bit.ly/brockmire500.

more stories are available on-demand at bit.ly/bedtime500, read by celebs including Rick Astley, Ewan McGregor and Jodie Whittaker.

Also on the iPlayer is new 12-part psychological thriller *Normal People*, based on Sally Rooney's 2019 novel. Watch the trailer at bit.ly/normal500.

ITV's hit three-part drama series *Quiz*, starring Michael Sheen as Chris Tarrant, is available via ITV Hub until 13 May at bit.ly/itvquiz500.

The big new drama on Now TV and Sky Q is *Lincoln Rhyme: Hunt for the Bone Collector*, based on Jeffrey Deaver's serial killer novels (bit.ly/deaver500). Watch the trailer at bit.ly/lincoln500.

Product Test

We test and compare the latest products

Motorola Moto G8 Power

The Moto G8 Power is Motorola's follow-up to the G7 Power, which made a feature of its extraordinarily long battery life

Last year, Motorola launched all four of its Moto G7 smartphones at the same time. The cheapest was the G7 Play, followed by the G7 Power, G7 and, at the top of the price range, the G7 Plus. We compared the G7 Power (£179.99 at launch) and the G7 (£239.99) in Issue 472 (bit.ly/webuser472), and decided that the Power was our favourite, striking the right balance between performance, price and a battery life that still beats most of its rivals.

This time, Motorola has mixed up the range a little. The Moto G8 Power is the second most expensive at £219.99, closing in on the price of the G8 Plus (£239.99), which went on sale four months ago.

With the higher price comes an improved specification. Motorola has upgraded the processor from a Qualcomm Snapdragon 632 to the 665, doubled the memory from 2GB to 4GB and boosted the screen resolution to 1080p. The number of cameras on the back has also expanded to four. The 'Power' part of the name still refers to the battery, which like last year's model has a capacity of 5,000mAh. Motorola claims that in the right circumstances

this phone can go for three days between charges.

The G8 Power is as chunky as you'd expect from a device with such a large battery. At 197g and 9.6mm thick, it's certainly bulky and may feel a little more prominent in your pocket than your existing phone. Despite this, the device looks stylish. Motorola has gone further than ever to remove unsightly bezels from its budget handsets, this time replacing the front camera notch with a pinhole selfie camera in the top-left corner of the screen.

Design and specification

The phone's curved plastic back has a subtle striped design, with a vertical line of cameras in the top-left corner and a separate main lens above them like the dot of a lower-case 'i'. The circular fingerprint reader sits in the middle. The handset also has a 3.5mm headphone jack and supports microSD cards of up to 512GB. Alternatively, you can add a second SIM.

The G8 Power lacks wireless charging and is waterproof only to IP52 standards, which means it's protected from vertical drops of water at an angle of up to 15 degrees, but isn't guaranteed to survive a dunk in the bath. Still, that's not bad for the price.



“ Motorola claims that in the right circumstances this phone can go for three days between charges ”



PRODUCT INFO

Motorola
Moto G8 Power

Price: £219.99
Buy from Motorola:
bit.ly/motopow500

SPECIFICATIONS

- Qualcomm Snapdragon 665
- 4GB of memory
- 64GB of storage space (expandable by 512GB via microSD)
- 5,000mAh battery
- 6.4in 2,300 x 1,080 pixels IPS display
- Android 10
- 156 x 76 x 9.63mm
- 197g

FOR

- ✓ Superb battery life
- ✓ Solid performance
- ✓ Good value

AGAINST

- ✗ Camera could be better
- ✗ Xiaomi Redmi Note 8T offers almost the same for less money

BETTER VALUE

Xiaomi Redmi Note 8T,
£129
bit.ly/redmi500



EVEN FASTER

Motorola Moto G8 Plus,
£239.99
bit.ly/motoplus500



The screen is a 6.4in IPS LCD with a resolution of 2,300 x 1,080 pixels. In real terms, that's a jump from HD on the G7 to Full HD on the G8, and means you get 399ppi (pixels per inch), compared with 271ppi on the G7 Power.

Despite this, our colourimeter found the G8 Power's screen to be slightly less accurate than its predecessor, no matter which of its three colour profiles we used. It displayed 81.2% of the colours in the sRGB standard, which is fine but not as good as the G7 Power's screen. However, the G8 Power provides better illumination, with a maximum brightness of 525cd/m², and its contrast ratio of 1,582:1 is also good. We think the improvements in brightness and contrast outweigh the backward step in colour accuracy.

For core specs, the Moto G8 Power is identical to the Moto G8 Plus, with both containing a Qualcomm Snapdragon 665 processor and 4GB of memory. In our standard benchmark tests, the performance of both phones was more or less identical, and was relatively close to the results from the previous-generation G7 Power, too.

Performance in our gaming benchmarks has improved,

however. While the results of our on-screen benchmarks were similar to those of the G7 Power, this model has a much higher-resolution screen, which means it has to work harder to fill the increased number of pixels. As a result, we saw an increase in performance in the off-screen tests, which simply measures the hardware's raw graphics processing power.

Battery life and camera

Finally, there's the battery. The phone ran for 22 hours and 27 minutes in our standard battery run-down test. That's impressive, but it's not the revolution in battery power we saw with the G7 Power, which is still among the top three phones we've ever tested, beating the G8 Power by four hours. Still, the

G8 Power will easily see you through two days, and comfortably beats the Moto G8 Plus by five hours.

The camera's four-lens array is a big step up from the previous model. It has a 16-megapixel main sensor, an 8-megapixel telephoto lens with 2x zoom magnification, an 8-megapixel ultrawide sensor and a 2-megapixel macro camera.

Looking at the resulting images, though, we didn't notice much difference in quality between the two generations, particularly in photos taken outdoors. For indoor shots, we found that the G7 Power produced marginally better results than the G8, but if you're looking for the best smartphone cameras, you'll have to spend more money.

OUR VERDICT



We rated the Moto G7 Power highly last year because it undercut its Moto G7 siblings while offering similar performance and superior battery life. This year's G8 Power has moved up the price ladder and isn't such great value. There's also some stiff competition from the likes of the Xiaomi

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

Redmi Note 8T, which is older but cheaper and performs just as well in most areas, if you ignore the battery life and telephoto lens.

Honor MagicBook 14

A superbly made 14in laptop that crushes the competition when it comes to value for money

Honor is better known for its smartphones, but the MagicBook 14 is the company's first attempt at a laptop. It certainly gets off to an impressive start, with well-designed hardware that doesn't compromise on features to achieve its low price. This slim Windows 10 laptop offers similar looks and build quality to the excellent (but considerably more expensive) Huawei MateBook Pro X. It comes with a 1080p non-touch Full HD display, and its chassis is made entirely of metal.

The MagicBook 14 even includes a few luxuries, such as a fingerprint reader for fast unlocking and a ThunderBolt 3-enabled USB-C port. It's

powered by an AMD Ryzen 5 3500U processor with Radeon Vega 8 graphics, 8GB of memory and 256GB of storage on its SSD drive.

For a laptop that ticks so many boxes, it's the price that really catches the eye. Frankly, at £548, nothing else comes remotely close to what the MagicBook 14 offers.

Design and connectivity

This laptop has been built with portability in mind. It weighs 1.38kg, which is the same as the most recent MacBook Pro, making it light enough to carry all day without causing shoulder ache. Its metal case looks smart, with a matte finish and a blue pinstripe round the lid.

For connectivity, the MagicBook 14 has a USB



large backspace and right Shift keys. The touchpad is quite small, however. The only questionable design decision is to place the 720p pop-up webcam on the keyboard

The laptop's 14in IPS screen has a resolution of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels and performs well for the price. Its sRGB coverage of 57.9% is mediocre but at least it's bright (278cd/m²) and has good contrast (1,328:1).

The MagicBook 14 performed admirably in our Geekbench and gaming benchmarks, comparing well with laptops that cost much more. The battery lasted eight hours and 15 minutes in our rundown test, too, which is more than you'll get from many pricier models.

PRODUCT INFO

Honor MagicBook 14

Price: £547.97

Buy from Laptops

Direct: bit.ly/honor500

SPECIFICATIONS

- AMD Ryzen 5 3500 processor
- 8GB of memory
- 256GB SSD
- 14in 1,920 x 1,080 pixels IPS screen
- Windows 10
- 323 x 215 x 15.9mm
- 1.38kg

FOR

- ✓ Well made and good looking
- ✓ Decent performance
- ✓ Solid battery life

AGAINST

- ✗ Pop-up webcam captures from an awkward angle
- ✗ Poor screen colour accuracy

“ At £548, nothing else comes remotely close to what the MagicBook 14 offers ”

Type-C port, two standard USB-A ports, a full-size HDMI socket and a 3.5mm audio jack. It also comes with Honor's Magic-Link 2 technology, which lets you transfer photos, videos and documents by tapping your Honor phone on the built-in NFC chip under the keyboard.

It's worth noting that this laptop hasn't been affected by the US government's trade ban with China, so it comes with Windows 10 and all the necessary security updates installed, and no restrictions on what you can install or run.

The keyboard is lovely to type on, with a double-height UK-specific Enter key and

between the F6 and F7 keys. Its image quality is adequate but its low position results in an awkward, up-your-nose camera angle.

OUR VERDICT



The Honor MagicBook 14 costs a lot less than most similarly equipped Windows and macOS rivals, making it an absolute steal. It's slim, light, handsome and very pleasant to use. It also offers plenty of power. Honor hasn't cut any significant corners to reach its attractive price, making

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

this an extremely tempting proposition for anyone who's looking for a well-built Windows laptop on a tight budget.

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HARDWARE, SOFTWARE & SERVICES

FITNESS WATCH

Xiaomi Mi Smart Band 4

£25.98 from bit.ly/xiaomi499

Tested: Issue 499



The Xiaomi Mi Smart Band 4's colourful screen and excellent battery life mean you won't need to charge it more than a couple of times a month. For the low price, it's extraordinarily good value for money.

KEY SPECS

Pedometer ■ Heart-rate monitor ■ Sleep tracking ■ GPS from phone (Android or iOS) ■ Waterproof to depth of 50m ■ 240 x 120 pixels resolution ■ 0.95in AMOLED display ■ 20-days battery life ■ 22.1g ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

INTERNET SECURITY SUITE

Bitdefender Internet Security 2020

£14.99 (1 year, 3 devices) from bit.ly/bitdef49

Tested: Issue 497



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

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

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

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

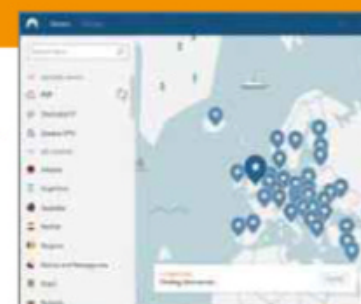
VPN

NordVPN

From £2.68 per month from

nordvpn.com

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

Gold Award winners

The best from our software tests

PASSWORD MANAGER

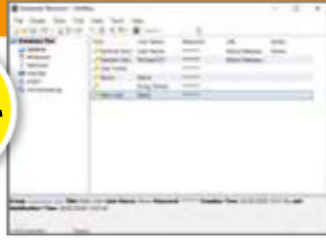
KeePass

Free from keepass.info

Tested: Issue 499

Available in desktop and portable versions, KeePass is a no-nonsense password-management and security tool for both casual and heavy web users.

NEW!



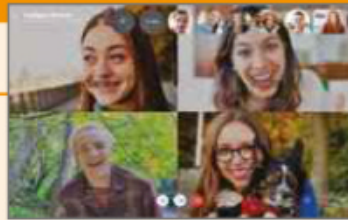
VIDEO-CHAT APP

Skype

Free from www.skype.com

Tested: Issue 498

Skype is still the best solid all-rounder for video chats. It's easy to find and add contacts, and you can send written messages and make free voice calls.



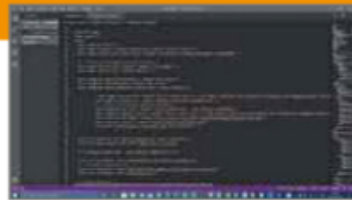
CODE EDITOR

Visual Studio Code

Free from code.visualstudio.com

Tested: Issue 497

Visual Studio Code offers amateur developers everything they need to get a project off the ground, regardless of coding experience. A clutter-free design makes it very easy to use.



DRIVER UPDATER

IObit Driver Booster Free

Free from 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.



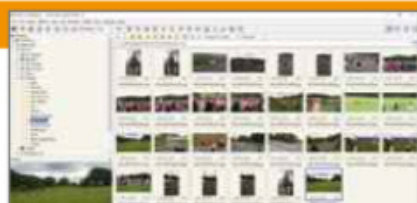
IMAGE VIEWER

FastStone

Free from bit.ly/faststone495

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.



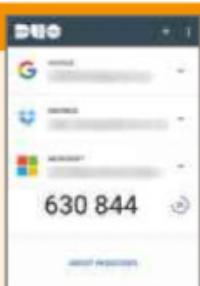
TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION APP

Duo Mobile

Free from bit.ly/duomob494

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.



WebUser

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 or search for 'webuser disc'

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



Best Free Software

PARTITIONING TOOL

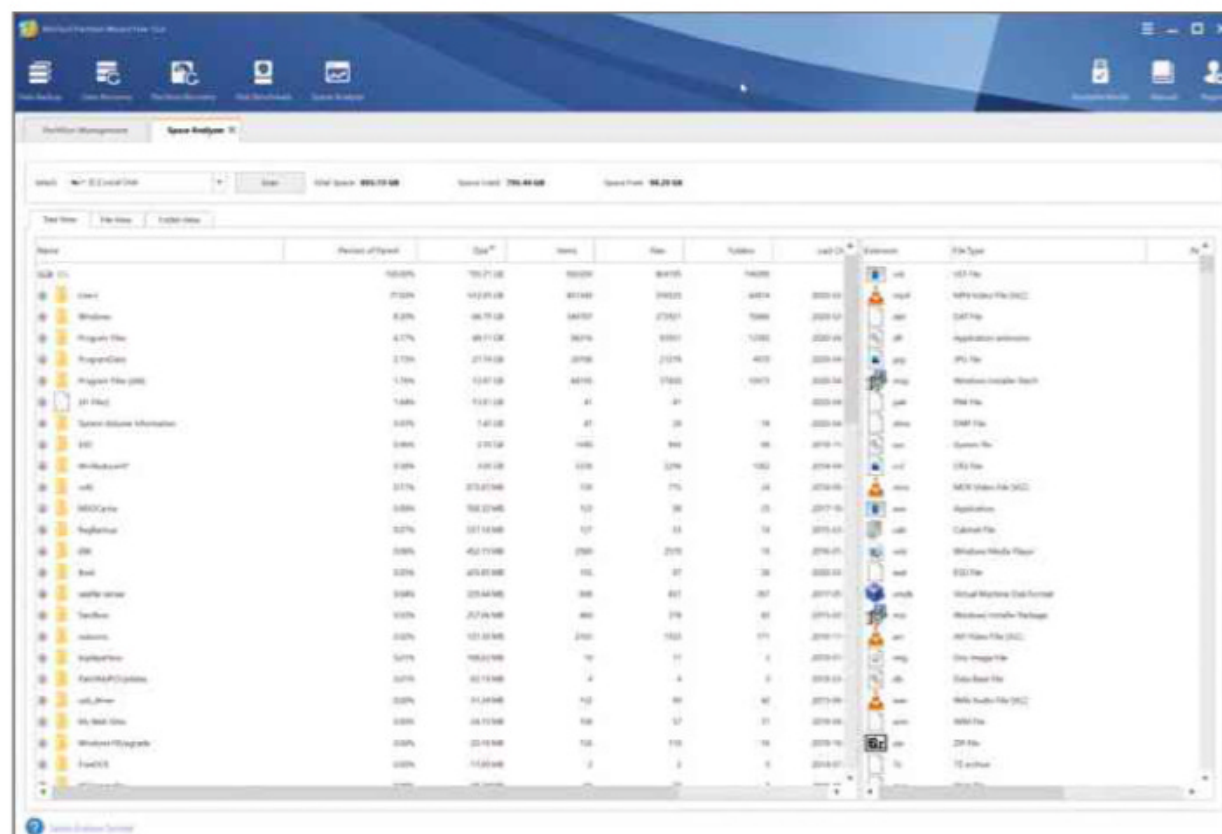
MiniTool Partition Wizard 12

bit.ly/minitool500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 3.9MB

In our cover feature in Issue 498 (bit.ly/webuser498), we set out to find the best free partitioning software for Windows, and MiniTool Partition Wizard deservedly won our coveted Gold Award. It's an excellent program, with all the main features you're likely to need for partitioning tasks, including the ability to create, delete, wipe, copy, resize and move partitions, clone drives and convert disk types and file systems. It can also scan for problems, align partitions, rebuild the Master Boot Record (MBR), run a surface test and more, and comes with some great

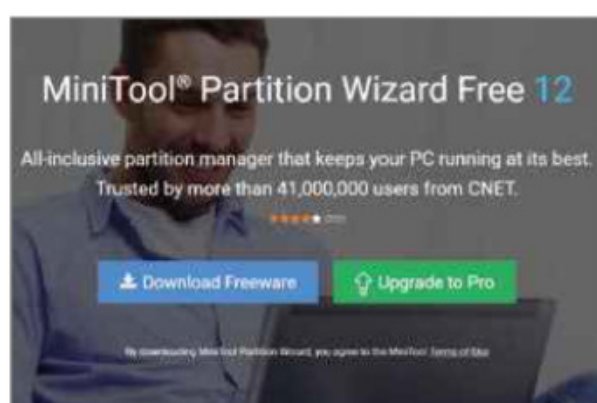


extras, such as a disk-space analyser and a benchmarking tool.

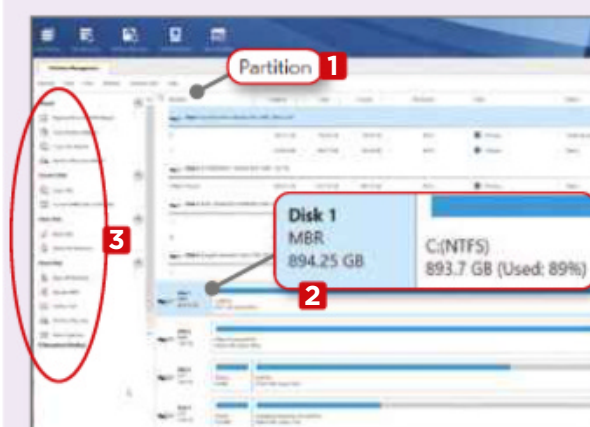
Now MiniTool has updated Partition Wizard, giving it a brand new user interface and improving data recovery of photos and videos (although you need to upgrade to the paid-for version if you want to save found files). It also fixes a bug that could potentially cause partition loss when converting an MBR disk to GPT (GUID Partition Table), and another that left users unable to select Y/N when confirming file-system checking.

The previous version of MiniTool Partition Wizard launched with an optional, and slightly confusing, tiled front end similar to Windows 8.1's Metro design, but thankfully that has now gone. Instead the program opens straight into the main screen, where you can choose to run one of the wizards or access any of the available tools.

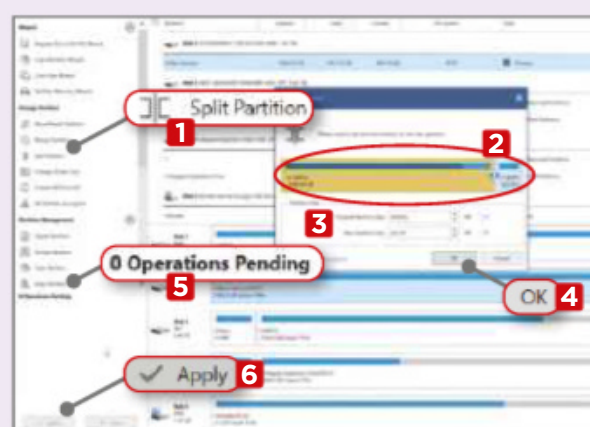
We didn't dislike the main interface in the previous edition, but this new version of the program is much better. Be sure to decline the unwanted extras during installation.



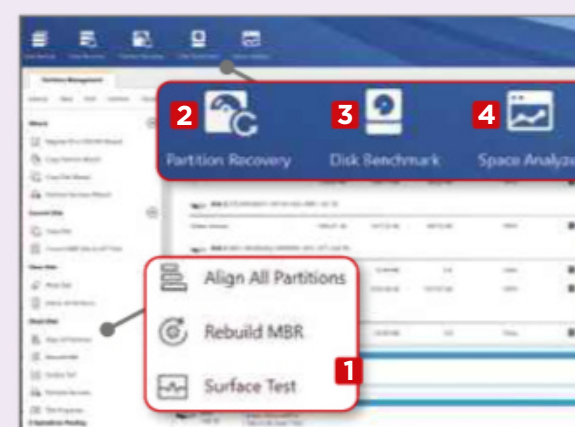
MINI WORKSHOP | Partition your PC with Partition Wizard 12



1 When you launch MiniTool Partition Wizard, it displays all available partitions at the top of the screen, **1** with your internal and external drives appearing below. **2** You can see the total storage capacity of each partition and how much space is in use. The tasks you can perform are listed in the sidebar. **3**

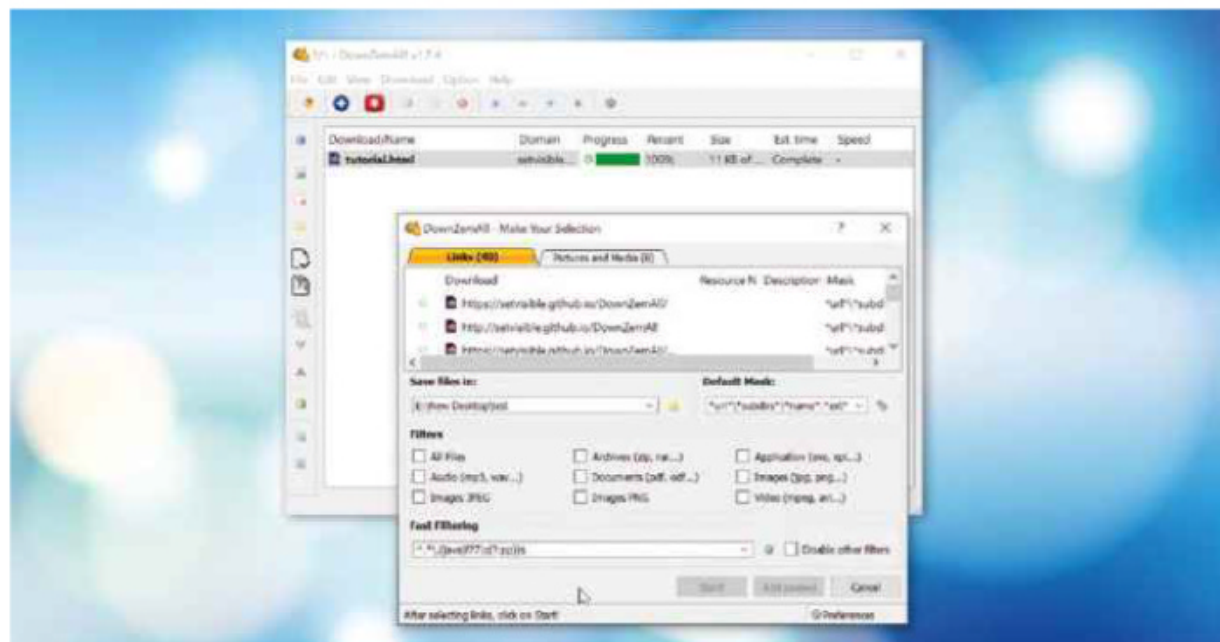


2 To create a new partition, select the one you want to divide and click Split Partition on the left. **1** In the window that appears, use the slider **2** to adjust the size of the partitions or enter the exact sizes in the box beneath. **3** Click OK, **4** and your task will appear in a list of Operations Pending. **5** Click Apply to perform the task. **6**



3 You can use the software to check a drive, align partitions, rebuild the MBR, run a surface test and more. **1** You can also look for partitions to recover (although you can't restore them in the free version), **2** benchmark your disk **3** and use the space analyser to see where all your storage space has gone. **4**

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



DOWNLOAD MANAGER

DownZemAll

bit.ly/dzema500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10, macOS and Linux **File size:** 18.6MB

DownZemAll is a rewrite of the old DownThemAll download manager for Firefox. Unlike its predecessor, which was killed off in 2016, this is a standalone tool that works with all major browsers including Firefox, Chrome and Edge. You can use it to select, organise and run multiple downloads in parallel. Just enter the web address of a site that contains download links and select a save location. It's particularly useful for web pages that have lots of downloads you want to grab all at once.

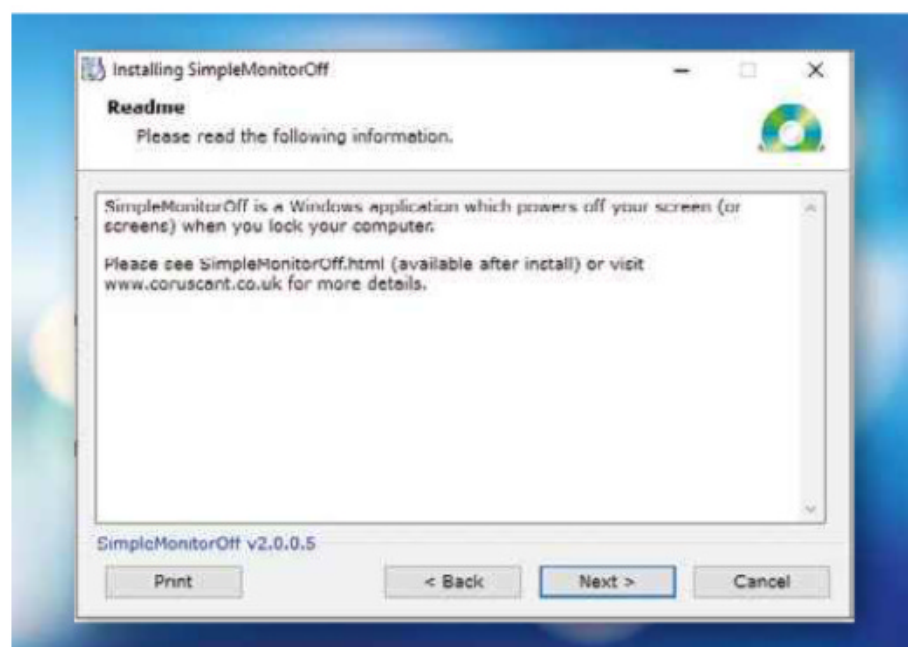
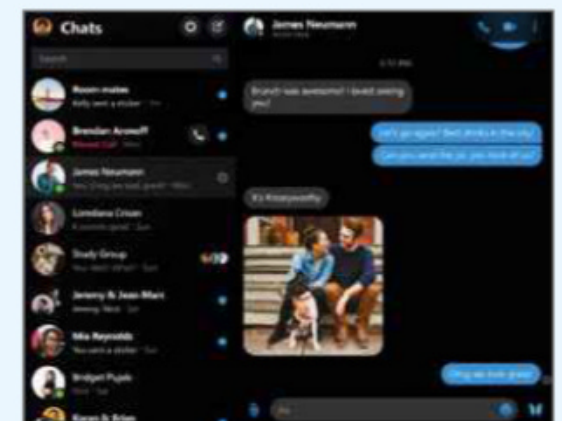
New Windows 10 App

Facebook Messenger

bit.ly/fbmessenger500

File size: 266MB

Facebook has rolled out a new version of its Messenger chat client for Windows 10 users. This app was designed for use on big screens, and offers free texting and high-quality voice and video chat, making it ideal for people working from home or self-isolating. You can take part in one-on-one or group chats, and apply a stylish dark mode to reduce eye strain.



SYSTEM TOOL

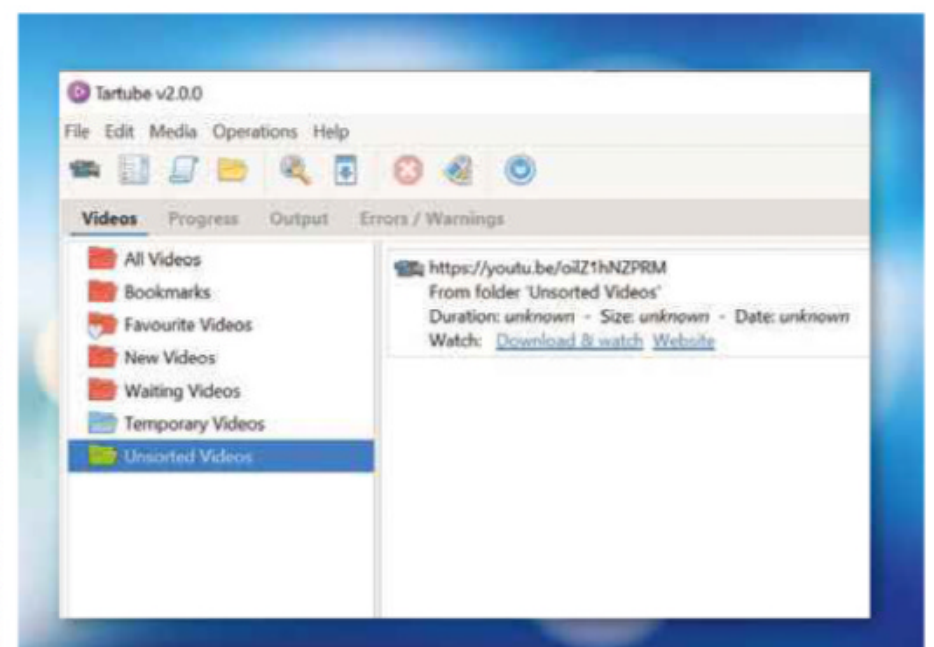
SimpleMonitorOff 2

bit.ly/smoff500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 1.7MB

This simple tool switches off your computer screen when you lock your PC, saving electricity. Once the screen has switched off, you can wake it again by moving your mouse or pressing any key. If you don't then unlock your PC, the program will assume it was woken by accident and, after a short wait, will power down your displays again. There's no interface and no settings to worry about, either.



VIDEO DOWNLOADER

Tartube 2

bit.ly/ttube500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 or Linux

File size: 82.MB

While most YouTube viewers are happy to stream videos, it's occasionally useful to download a copy to watch offline. For legal reasons, this isn't a feature YouTube offers, but Tartube makes it easy to download not only videos but playlists and entire channels. You don't have any choice over which file format to use - MP4 is the default option - but you can opt for 'Sound only' in the Download Options screen.

SYSTEM TOOLS

Windows 10 PowerToys 0.16

bit.ly/ptoy500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 8.2MB

Anyone who was familiar with Windows 95 or XP will no doubt remember PowerToys – a selection of essential tweaking utilities from Microsoft. Last year the software giant brought them back for Windows 10, and since then it has released a couple of updates with additional tools. This new version adds four more: Image Resizer, which lets you resize photos quickly, Window Walker, which switches between open windows, and two preview pane extensions that let you preview SVG images and Markdown documents. The FancyZones window manager has also received some improvements.

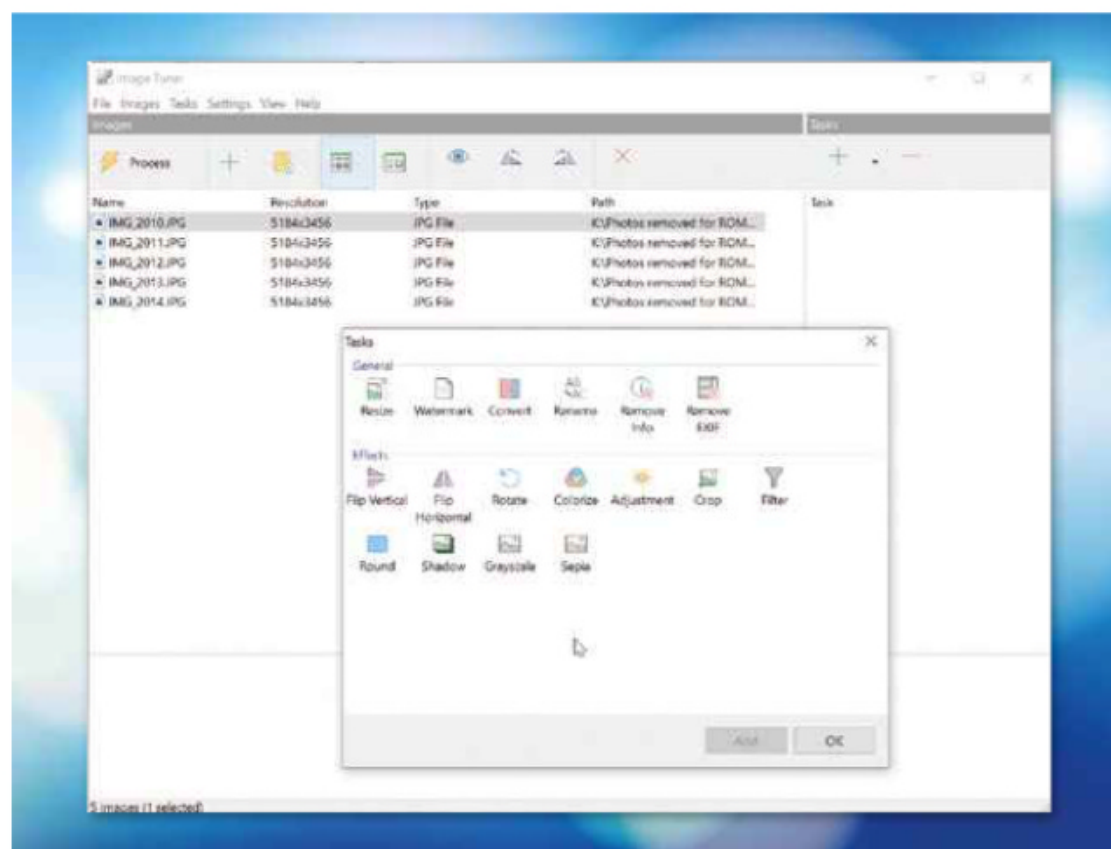
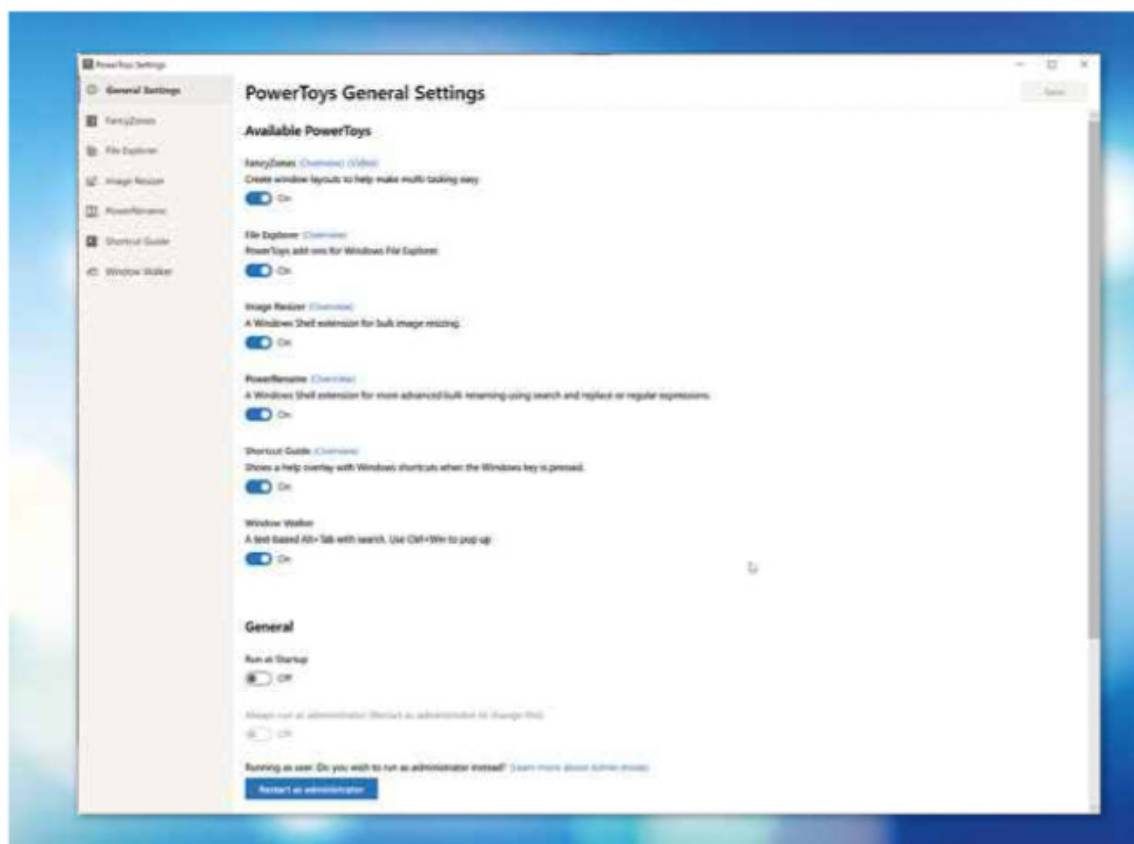


PHOTO EDITOR

Image Tuner 7

www.glorylogic.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 2.1MB

Image Tuner can make changes to batches of photos all at once, including resizing and renaming them, stripping out or updating information, and converting them from one format to another. It can also apply some effects and actions, such as flip, rotate, colourise, crop, and filter, and add borders. To use it, just add some photos and choose which tasks to apply. The latest version gains new icons, updates the user interface to improve the display on high-res screens and boosts the overall performance of the software. It also adds new Greyscale and Sepia effects to Tasks.

Don't forget to decline the bundled junk during installation.

SYSTEM TOOL

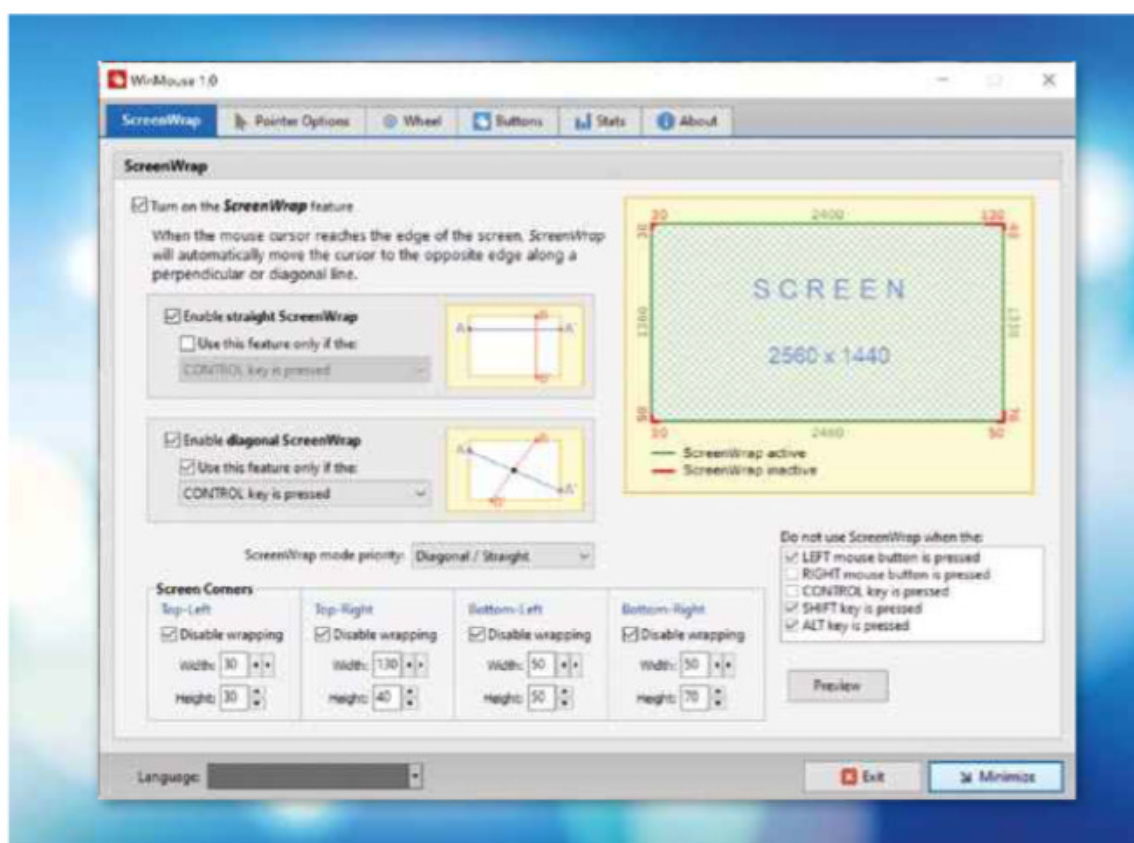
WinMouse

bit.ly/wmouse500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 1.4MB

Windows allows you to configure your mouse in a number of ways, but WinMouse simplifies the process and offers a wider selection of options. You can enable ScreenWrap (so that when the mouse cursor reaches one edge of the screen it reappears on the opposite side), adjust pointer options such as speed and visibility, and toggle mouse trails on or off. There are settings for the wheel and buttons, too, and the Stats tab shows the current position of your pointer, the distance travelled by cursor so far, and the number of times you've clicked the left and right mouse buttons. WinMouse is portable so it doesn't require installation.





GAME

Mount Descent

bit.ly/mountd500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 or Linux

File size: 30.9MB

Written in just two and a half days, this Marble Madness-inspired game challenges you to roll your ball down a mountain, collecting coins along the way. To move the ball, you must rotate the mountain up, down, left and right, and rotate the camera to make things easier to see. It's simple but tricky, and very addictive!

✓ Install this program...

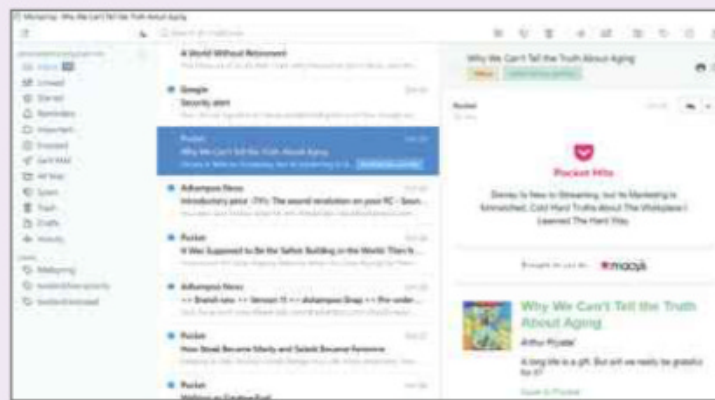
Mailspring Free

getmailspring.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10, macOS and Linux

File size: 110MB

Mailspring is everything an email program should be: clean, uncluttered and super fast. A menu on the left-hand side of its simple interface lets you jump to folders and options, while the centre pane displays your messages, and a reading pane appears on the right. In the free version, you can add up to four accounts from services including Gmail, iCloud, GMX and Outlook. You can search your inboxes using Google-style search terms, and monitor the popularity of your emails based on the most-opened subject lines, read receipts and tracking links.



...Not this one ✗

Twobird

www.twobird.com

Min requirements:

Windows 7/8.1/10, macOS, Android or Linux

File size: 48.6MB

Twobird's fatal flaw is that you can only connect it to Gmail, although the developers plan to let you read emails from other services in the future. We also had trouble running the software on our PC. The app worked perfectly on other devices, though, and, on the plus side, it's free and has an attractive interface.



OTHER OPERATING SYSTEMS What's new for Linux and macOS



LINUX DISTRO

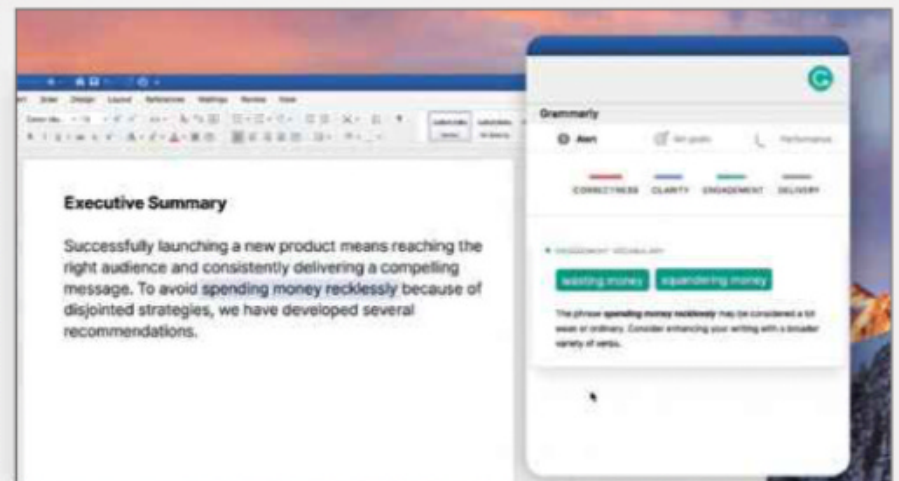
Ubuntu 20.04 LTS

www.ubuntu.com

Min requirements: 1GB of RAM, 64-bit processor

File size: 2.6GB

The latest version of Ubuntu has arrived. Named 'Focal Fossa' (after a cat-like creature from Madagascar), the update, which will be supported for the next five years, comes with a new graphical boot splash and Yaru theme (with light and dark mode switching), better performance and updated packages. As well as Ubuntu Desktop, it's available in Kubuntu, Lubuntu, Ubuntu Budgie, UbuntuKylin, Ubuntu MATE, Ubuntu Studio and Xubuntu flavours.



WRITING ASSISTANT

Grammarly for Microsoft Word

www.grammarly.com

Min requirements: macOS, Microsoft Word

File size: 11MB

Grammarly is an excellent tool that offers suggestions for making your writing stronger and clearer. It's been around for 11 years and is available for various platforms including – at long last – Microsoft Word on macOS. Word users on Windows have had access to Grammarly for a while, but now Mac users can benefit from its help, too. Feedback appears on the right of the page as you type, with suggestions on how you can improve your composition.

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Best New Browser Tools



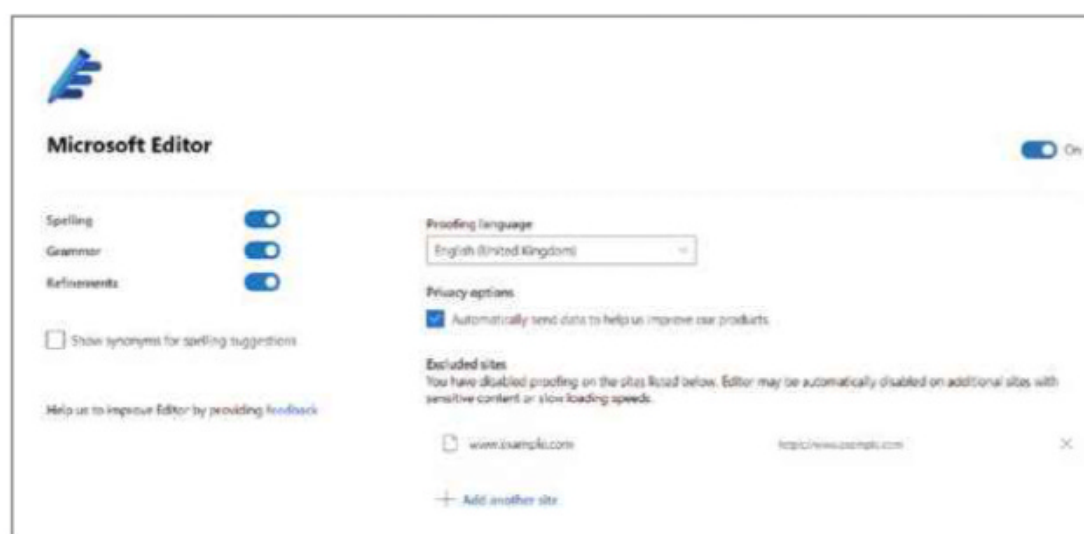
CHROME

Improve your writing with Microsoft Editor

Move over, Grammarly, there's a new spellchecker in town. The free Microsoft Editor (bit.ly/editor500) is yet another tool that promises to make your writing better and more accurate – but with Microsoft's AI powering it, it stands a better chance than most.

This extension works just like Microsoft Word's spellchecker, monitoring any text you enter in your browser, including emails. Make a typo or a grammatical mistake, and Editor adds a red squiggle or a blue line under the offending word. You can then click the highlighted word, check Editor's suggestion and click to accept the changes.

Microsoft's tool is excellent in the main, although we came across a few niggles: it didn't pick up every mistake we made,

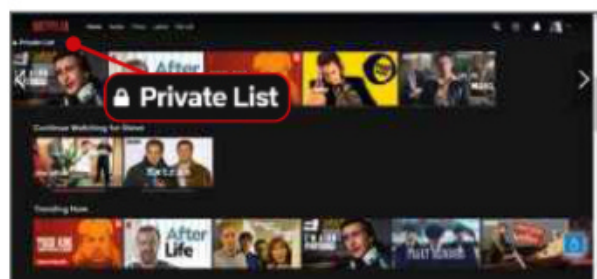


and it often added a highlight, only to remove it again if we continued typing, as if to say, 'well, if you're ignoring it, so are we'. Expect this handy tool to improve over time.

Create private Netflix lists

Netflix Private List (bit.ly/privatelist500) creates a secondary watchlist on the streaming service, where you can hide all the bad TV and trashy films you don't want anyone else to know you watch. It's also a useful tool if you share a Netflix account between two people.

Install the extension, then log into your Netflix account. When you find a show you want to add, rather than selecting the option from Netflix's interface, press the ⇐ key on your keyboard (to the left of the 1 key). A confirmation message in the bottom-left corner tells you that the show or film has been added. Your private list appears further down the screen – ours was below 'Popular on Netflix'.



Resize Gmail's sidebar

Today's clean, modern Gmail interface is a world away from the original. A key change was the introduction of a sidebar that you could display in full or hide away, showing only icons. This looks neat but it can be frustrating if



you have folders with long names.

Resize Gmail Sidebar (bit.ly/sidebar500) solves this problem by letting you expand the sidebar to increase Gmail's label view. Depending on your setup, you may need to open the sidebar by clicking the three-line hamburger menu. Then move the cursor to the edge of the sidebar and drag it left or right to increase its size.

Stream TV with friends and family

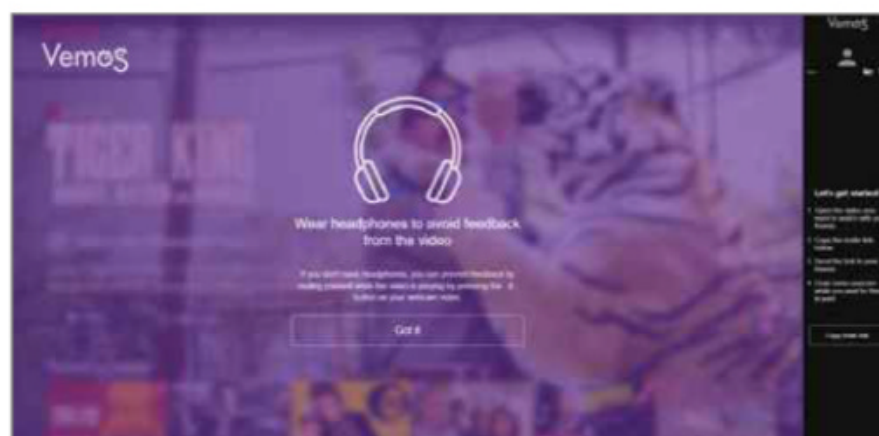
Never was an extension more timely than Vemos (bit.ly/vemos500). Whiling away the hours in self-isolation can be very lonely, but Vemos makes it that little bit more bearable by

helping you connect with friends and family for an online movie night.

Working with Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Prime and Disney Plus, the extension lets you create and share a link to any film or TV programme you wish to watch. Send the

link to the people you want to watch it with, wait for them all to connect, then press play, and Vemos starts your chosen entertainment at the same time for everyone, so you're completely in sync.

Vemos also supports video and voice chat, so you can discuss what you're watching. It may not be quite the same as heading out to the cinema or gathering together on the same sofa, but it's the next best thing.



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



FIREFOX

Remove Google's tracking links

Google famously monitors your every move online. One of its methods is to use tracking links in URLs to work out how you found a particular website and where you came from.



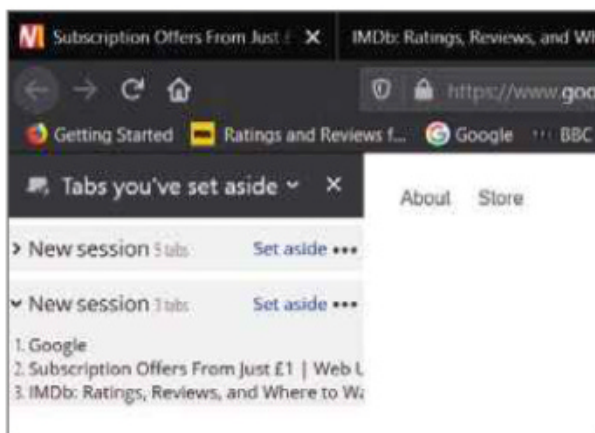
To prevent this privacy intrusion, install the new Firefox add-on Google Direct (bit.ly/direct500). With this tool loaded in your browser, links to sites are transformed into direct URLs that keep your data that little bit more private. Setup is automatic and, according to the developer, this add-on is capable of "disabling the JavaScript function which rewrites links when clicked".

Due to the way the extension works, it requires access to just about every Google domain out there. Some people may be uncomfortable with this, but you might consider it a fair trade off for removing tracking links.

Put your inactive tabs to one side

A handy feature in the old Microsoft Edge allowed you to set tabs aside for later. This meant your browser didn't waste too much power keeping them active, but you could return to the saved pages whenever you wanted.

Tabs Aside (bit.ly/tabs500) performs the same function in Firefox, but rather than hiding your tabs away to one side, it saves them as easily retrievable bookmarks. Install the add-on, then click its toolbar button to begin the simple setup process, which involves creating a dedicated Tabs Aside folder (or using an existing folder).



Now when you right-click a tab, you should see the Tabs Aside option – click this to save your tab instantly. You can also click the toolbar button and choose 'Tabs aside'. This closes the window,

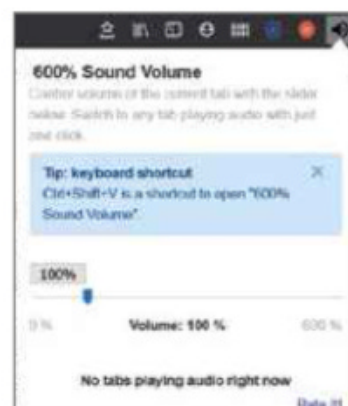
saving every page in it, while another click of the browser tool restores them again.

Pump up the volume of the web

Some PCs have incredibly quiet audio. If you struggle to hear yours, even at maximum volume, try 600% Sound Volume (bit.ly/audiovolume500).

By default, the add-on sets your PC's volume to 100%, but a quick drag along the slider gives it a serious boost, all the way up to – you guessed it – 600%.

This will be invaluable if you have trouble hearing or you simply want to annoy the neighbours by playing Spotify at maximum volume.



Click the extension's toolbar button (or use the shortcut Ctrl+Shift+V) to see which tabs are playing music. The '100%' button instantly resets the volume to its default, which is useful if you press play and discover that you've left it turned up by mistake.

OTHER BROWSERS



Clear your cache instantly

Recently, we've recommended several cache-clearing extensions for Google and Firefox. Now, it's Microsoft Edge's turn, with the Edge-specific Clear Site Data (bit.ly/cleardata500).

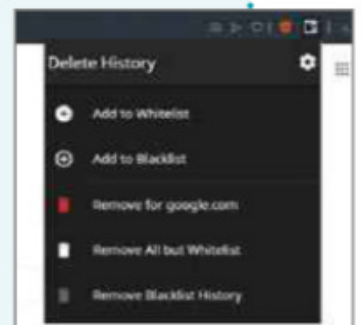
This add-on lets you instantly delete a host of data that websites store on your PC, including the browser cache, history, passwords and form data.

First, choose whether you want to clear the data for the current website or all websites, then use the tick boxes to decide which data you wish to remove. When you're ready, click Clear Site Data to clean up your browser.



Delete your entire web history

Delete History (bit.ly/history500) offers a similar experience to Clear Site Data (above) for Opera users, although it's less comprehensive. Rather than clearing out all your unwanted data, this add-on focuses on removing your history with just a click or two of the mouse. Whenever you're on a site you wish to clean up, click the add-on's toolbar button and choose 'Remove for [website]'. Alternatively, you can add the page you're viewing to your whitelist, which stops you accidentally deleting your history for websites you like. The blacklist, meanwhile, lets you take advantage of the add-on's one-click history deletion options.





Best Free Apps



App of the Fortnight

BROWSER

Avast Secure Browser

bit.ly/avastdroid500



NEW

Navigating the web safely has become increasingly complicated. In the past, all you needed was a decent browser, but now you need an ad blocker, an anti-malware tool, anti-tracking software, a VPN and more. Avast Secure Browser offers all this in one handy app for Android devices.

We all know that the 'private browsing' or 'incognito' mode in most web browsers is far from private – all it really does is prevent your browsing history from being stored.

Avast Secure Browser goes a lot further to provide genuine privacy. By default, it keeps your activity safe from prying eyes, automatically blocking adverts and trackers and offering the sort of advanced security tools you only usually find in separate apps.

Crucially, Avast Secure Browser comes with its own built-in VPN, which can mask your identity and browsing activity. It even protects your personal browsing data with a PIN code to stop anyone who gets hold of your device poking around in your internet history.

It's not a bad web browser, either, and comes with a selection of handy tools, including a video downloader and a QR code reader. All the app's security options are within easy reach, so you can switch to a different customisable browsing mode or toggle a tool on or off instantly.

Most of Avast's features are available in the free version, but you can subscribe (for as little as £1 per month) to access advanced VPN features, such as location masking and unlimited high-speed bandwidth.

Hopefully, Avast has learned its lesson after its recent privacy scandals, and will ensure the browser remains as safe to use as possible.



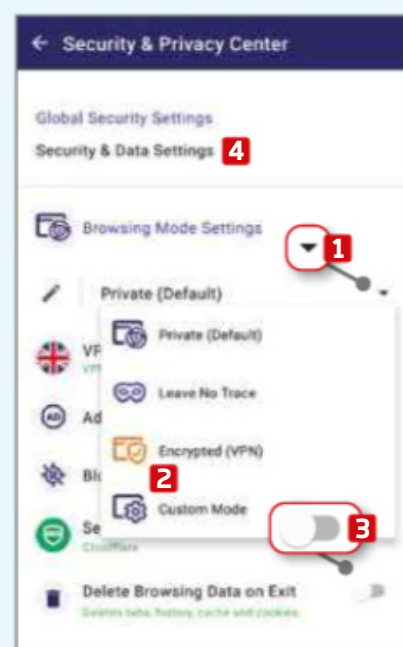
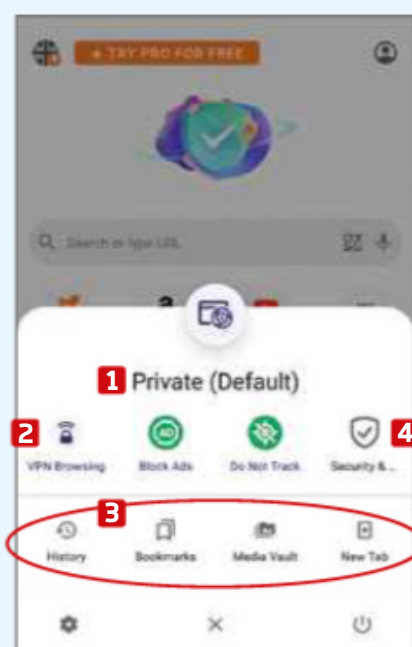
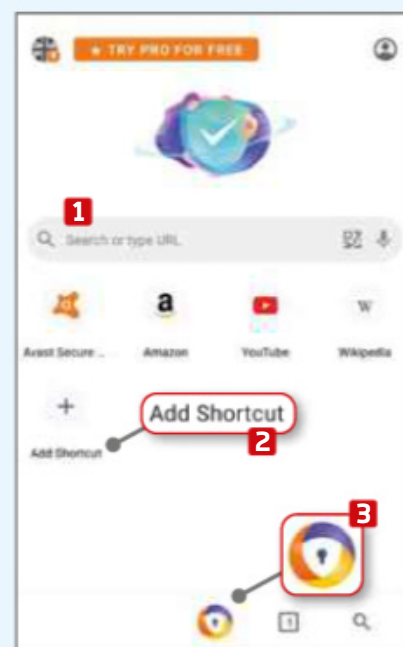
MINI WORKSHOP

Browse the web safely with Avast Secure Browser

1 Avast Secure Browser launches into Private Mode by default, with its ad blocker and tracking protection enabled. Tap the Search box **1** to start browsing. Select 'Add shortcut' **2** to add your favourite sites to the home screen. To configure the browser's security settings, tap the keyhole icon at the bottom of the screen, **3** which reveals a pop-up control panel of options.

2 The panel shows your current browsing mode, **1** and indicates which of your security features are enabled by making their icons green. To enable or disable the VPN, for example, tap the VPN Browsing icon. **2** Shortcuts for your History, Bookmarks, New Tab and so on appear in the row below. **3** For advanced security options, press the shield icon on the right. **4**

3 Under Browsing Mode Settings, press the down arrow beside Private (Default) **1** to select a different browsing mode. Choose between Leave No Trace and Encrypted (VPN) mode, or select Custom Mode **2** to configure your own security parameters. Scrolling down reveals other options, such as 'Delete Browsing Data on Exit'. **3** At the top, tap 'Security & Data Settings' **4** for even more options.



Our rating



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

PHOTOS

Flashher

bit.ly/flashher500

 13.1

With TikTok all the rage right now, it's no surprise to see other short-form video apps arriving on the scene. Flashher (which is currently iOS-only, but has an Android version in the works) has a promisingly simple premise. It lets you capture 'flashing' photos (a bit like live-action GIFs), then upload them to Flashher for all the world to see. The app presents a scrolling feed with Flashheres from your friends, as well as a Trending tab and messaging tools.

As with all social media apps, though, whether Flashher catches on remains to be seen.



Our rating



NEW



MUSIC

YouTube Music

bit.ly/youandroid500

bit.ly/youios500
 (varies)  11

YouTube has rejigged the interface of its dedicated music-streaming app, adding a tab that's designed to help you discover new music. The revamped interface replaces the mostly useless Hotlist tab with a new Explore tab that's split into two sections: 'New albums & singles' and 'Moods & genres'. Here YouTube recommends tracks it thinks you'll be interested in, based on your listening history. The update is rolling out gradually, so if you can't see the Explore tab yet, be patient and keep your eyes (and ears) peeled.



Our rating



UPDATED



GAME

Bio Blast

bit.ly/biodroid500

bit.ly/bioios500

 4.1  9

If you're suffering from lockdown fatigue during the COVID-19 outbreak, this fun game could be the perfect antidote. It's basically a virus-themed puzzle game that's not a million miles away from Candy Crush Saga, except that you have to match colourful little bugs, bacteria and other biomatter instead of sweets. The game contains in-app purchases, but this is one instance where you might not begrudge paying them, because all profits go to coronavirus relief organisations, including the NHS. It's a good distraction for an essential cause.



Our rating



NEW



TOOLS

Android Accessibility Suite

bit.ly/accessdroid500

 (varies)

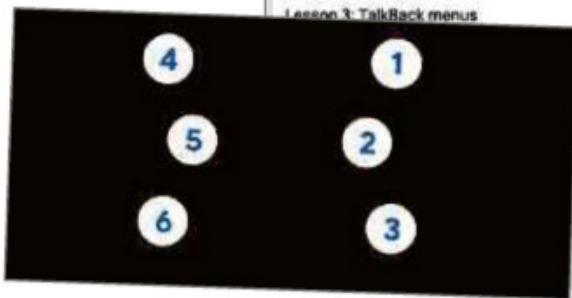
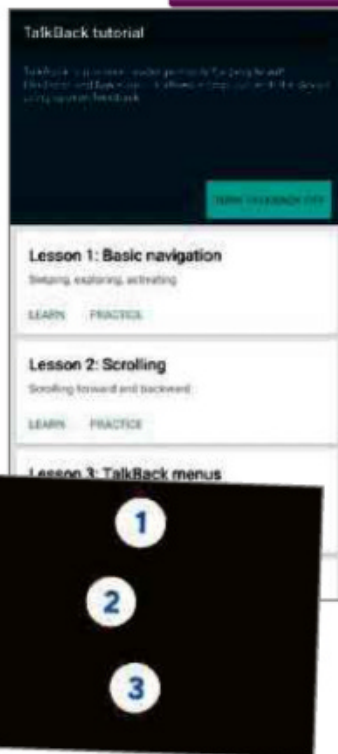
Google already includes an array of useful accessibility tools in its Android OS, and the Android Accessibility Suite builds on these, with a selection of apps designed to help you use your Android device if you're visually impaired. Tools include a large on-screen menu containing a selection of useful shortcuts and the excellent TalkBack screen reader, which provides spoken feedback and lets you control your device using gestures. Google has just released a new version (8.2) of the suite which adds a handy new Braille keyboard to TalkBack that uses a six-key layout to represent the six Braille dots, among other improvements.



Our rating



UPDATED



MUSIC

Spotify Kids

bit.ly/spotdroid500

bit.ly/spotios500

 4.3  10

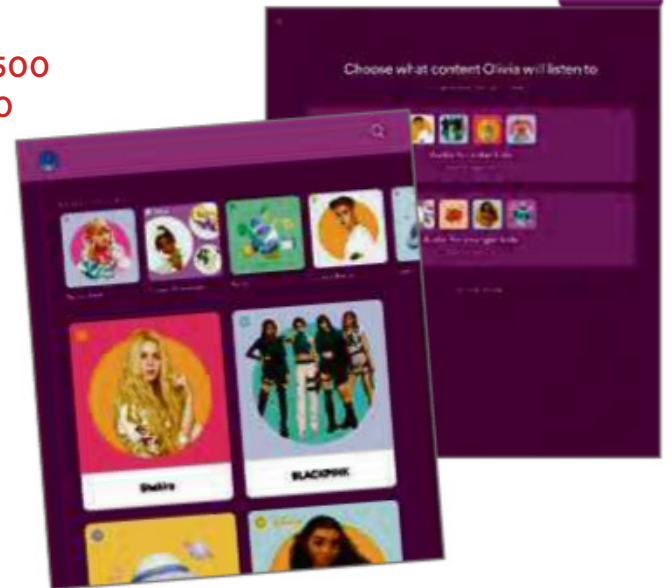
Kids love music, but not always the same music as their parents. There's also an increasing amount of music that features child-unfriendly explicit content, so it's probably not a good idea to give them free reign on streaming services. Enter Spotify Kids – a brand-new service from the music-streaming giant that offers children their own hand-picked selection of sounds, as well as a colourful, fun environment to explore them in – either unsupervised or with their family. It's brilliant, but there's one small drawback: after the initial one-month free trial, you'll need to pay £25 per month for a Spotify Premium Family subscription if you want to continue using it.



Our rating



NEW



5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

TOOLS

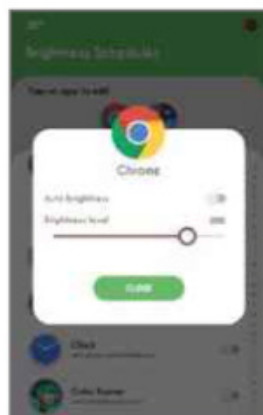
Brightness Manager

bit.ly/brightness500

Price: 69p

 4.4

This tool lets you configure brightness levels for all your apps individually. Once you've set it up, switching to a different app automatically adjusts the brightness to suit your preferences.



MUSIC

Koala Sampler

bit.ly/koaladroid500

bit.ly/koala-ios500

Price: £3.99

 6  10

Koala describes itself as "the ultimate pocket-sized sampler". It lets you record anything via your phone's microphone and use your recordings to create beats, add effects and build a track.



GAME

Gris

bit.ly/grisdroid500

bit.ly/gris-ios500

Price: £4.19 (Android), £4.99 (iOS)

 4.4  10



We covered Gris in this section when it debuted on iOS last year, but now this gorgeous platform game, which deals with themes of coping with grief, has launched on Android and is well worth the £4.19.

SOCIAL

GramSpacer

bit.ly/gramdroid500

bit.ly/gram-ios500

Price: £2.39 (Android), £2.99 (iOS)

 4.0.3  11.3

Are you ever frustrated by the way Instagram doesn't allow for line spaces or line breaks in your comments and captions? Well, now you can give your Insta text some space, thanks to GramSpacer.



GAME

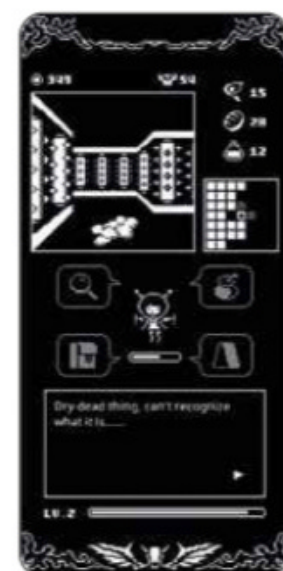
Castle of White Night

bit.ly/castle-ios500

Price: £2.99

 9

This old-school (as in black and white) role-playing game sets you the task of exploring, adventuring and battling your way through a series of labyrinths to lift the curse from the castle.



Brightness Manager



Koala Sampler



Gris



GramSpacer



Castle of White Night



✓ Install this app...

QuizUp

bit.ly/quizdroid500

bit.ly/quiz-ios500

 4.4  9

In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, it looks as if we'll be practising social distancing in one form or another for quite some time, so it's great to know that there are still ways to have fun with friends and family members, even if you can't physically meet up. QuizUp is a great virtual alternative to pub quiz night. You can challenge friends – or random opponents from all over the world – on a wide variety of trivia topics including general knowledge, sports, entertainment and more, and even put together your very own quiz. The app combines some social elements, too, so you can share your scores, post challenges and more.



...Not this one

HQ Trivia

bit.ly/hqdroid500

bit.ly/hq-ios500

HQ Trivia used to be a fun, popular live online game show with real cash prizes that anyone could win. Sadly, the game fell on hard times and was shut down earlier this year. Now HQ Trivia seems to be back from the dead, complete with new backers – but it's a pale imitation of its former self, with an irregular schedule and users reporting lots of glitches and freezes in the app.





Take a Screen Break

For our 500th issue, we've extended our popular emoji quiz. Can you guess the software, websites and devices that we've featured over the years?

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

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



CAN YOU GUESS THE WEB USER STARS FROM THE EMOJI?

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



COMPETITIONS

WIN

CorelDRAW 2020 Graphics Suite

The 2020 version of CorelDRAW Graphics Suite uses new AI tools to expand your design capabilities and speed up your work. As part of this prize, you'll get the complete pro-calibre graphics suite, plus access to CorelDRAW.app Pro's all-new collaboration workflow. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'CorelDRAW' in the subject line. For more info, visit www.coreldraw.com and follow [@coreldraw](https://twitter.com/coreldraw) on Twitter.



**WORTH
£599**

WIN 1 OF 2

Nacon Revolution Unlimited Pro Controller

Nacon's Revolution Unlimited Pro Controller is the ultimate pro gamepad for PlayStation 4. It comes with interchangeable joystick heads and shafts, and there's a concealed weight compartment in each hand grip to adjust the controller's weight. To enter this competition, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'Nacon' in the subject line. For more information, visit www.nacongaming.com and follow [@Nacon](https://twitter.com/Nacon) on Twitter.



**WORTH
£149.99
EACH**



FAQ

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

Our guide to Zoom

It's the video-chat app people are turning to for work and socialising during lockdown, but is Zoom safe to use? **David Crookes** finds out

What is Zoom?

Video-chat apps have been around for a long time, allowing us to see each other while we communicate online. This makes them ideal not only for socialising but also for work meetings, as many people have discovered during the coronavirus lockdown when these tools have really come into their own. In Issue 498 of *Web User*, we reviewed six video-chat apps, awarding Gold to Skype, Silver to WhatsApp and Bronze to FaceTime. However, it's one of our runners up, Zoom, that has been gaining all the attention – and raising concerns.

What's wrong with Zoom?

On the face of it, very little. Zoom (zoom.us) is a free video-conferencing app that launched in 2013 and is primarily aimed at business users. Last December, the service had about 10 million daily users and was largely unknown to the wider public. Come March, however, when the coronavirus pandemic began to tighten its grip and most people were confined to their homes, it gained momentum, gathering more than 200 million users. It's fair to say that Zoom wasn't prepared for so much attention so suddenly, and it wasn't long before tech experts started to delve a little deeper.

So what is the main concern?

Some are worried about the platform's safety. Although Zoom looks like many other video-chat apps – you can see up to 50 participants, send text messages, share files and join in on desktop and mobile devices – security researchers, including Princeton University associate professor Arvind Narayanan, have called it a “privacy disaster”. New York's attorney general, Letitia James, went as far as sending the company a letter



saying she was concerned that security flaws “could enable malicious third parties to, among other things, gain surreptitious access to consumer webcams”. In April, it also emerged that Zoom was supporting a data-mining feature that matched users' names and email addresses to their LinkedIn profiles when they signed in.

Is there any evidence of hacking?

Software bugs have been discovered in Zoom's code, but no one knows whether or not they have been exploited. A bug that came to light in the macOS version last July would have allowed hackers to inject malicious code, take over the computer and use its webcam and microphone through the Safari browser. What's more, a tweet from cybersecurity company Hacker House highlighted a bug that intruders could use to steal Windows passwords and install malware or spyware.

Have the bugs been fixed?

When it emerged that the macOS version of the software could install itself on a Mac without the user clicking Install,

Zoom changed the procedure. Since then, the service appears to be acting quickly to address other concerns, pausing feature updates for 90 days and addressing an issue with its iOS app that sent device data to Facebook even if the user didn't have an account.

Zoom was also collecting information from online meet-ups, including videos, transcripts and notes, which the company could have used to target users with ads. Zoom rewrote its privacy policy to remove those aspects of the service.

Does that mean all is well now?

Not quite, because some of the problems stem from Zoom's key features. The most prominent concern is the power



Business people who've been happy to use Zoom might not be smiling for much longer

that the service hands to the person who initiates a Zoom session. The host can activate a function that monitors the other users in a chat, giving details of their operating systems, locations and IP addresses. Hosts can also access the call's content, including video, audio, transcripts and chat files (even those sent privately between participants). They can even see if a person has clicked away from the Zoom window for more than 30 seconds.

Why would a host do that?

Promoting its use for education, Zoom says "attendance and attention tracking shows teachers who's engaged in online learning". In other words, they'll know if students are secretly slacking off and looking at something else on the screen. It goes without saying that managers could also use this to monitor employees in virtual work meetings, keeping an eye on an indicator in a participant's video panel to see if they're getting distracted.



Zoom can monitor whether the participants in video chats are paying attention

Aren't some important people using Zoom?

They certainly are. Prime Minister Boris Johnson used Zoom to chair a virtual Cabinet meeting with his top ministers, taking a screenshot of the occasion and sharing it on Twitter. Unfortunately, he inadvertently revealed the ID of the Zoom meeting room, leading to fears that the conferences could end up being 'Zoombombed'. This is when trolls use a



The Prime Minister inadvertently shared the ID of a Cabinet Zoom meeting on Twitter

public link to hijack a meeting and play pornographic videos, swear or shout racist abuse.

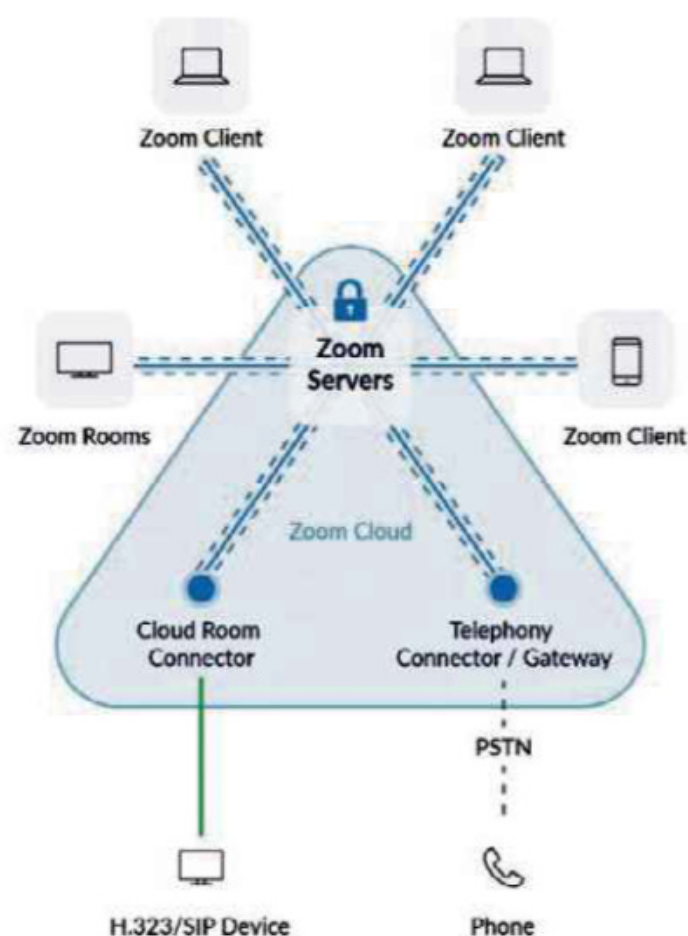
The government says it will use Zoom only for non-classified cabinet meetings. Ministry of Defence staff are banned from using it because of security fears.

Can't users tighten Zoom's security?

Of course. You can conduct meetings privately, either by requiring a password for attendees or using a waiting room feature and admitting participants manually (both of which are now turned on by default). Zoom says you should also avoid using your Personal Meeting ID to host public events. It goes without saying that you shouldn't share public links to meetings on social media, but Zoombombers are guessing the number-based URLs to gain random access to some meetings, and security experts have developed an automated tool that can find 100 Zoom meeting IDs in an hour (bit.ly/zoomid500). You can read Zoom's tips on protecting your chats at bit.ly/zoomtips500.

Well, at least chats are encrypted, aren't they?

Yes and no. Zoom did try to suggest at first that it was using end-to-end encryption to stop hackers intercepting chats. Then in a blog post called "The Facts Around Zoom and Encryption for Meetings/Webinars" (bit.ly/encryption500) the company apologised "for the confusion we have caused by incorrectly suggesting that Zoom meetings were capable of using end-to-



Zoom encrypts the audio and video content within its rooms but not end to end

end encryption". In short, the service does use encryption but Zoom still has the ability to look at your data.

Time to boycott Zoom, then?

Maybe not. What we're seeing here is a company caught by surprise when its usage rapidly expanded from business and education to all sorts of social situations. Zoom has been quick to respond to concerns and is now committing all its engineering resources to security and safety. "We have fallen short of the community's - and our own - privacy and security expectations," Zoom founder and CEO Eric Yuan said. "For that, I am deeply sorry."

SHOULD I JOIN HOUSEPARTY?

Houseparty (www.houseparty.com) is another video-chat app that's been widely touted as an alternative to the more established services. Owned by Epic Games, makers of the hit online battle game Fortnite, Houseparty is described as a "face-to-face" social network that's geared towards having fun.

Free to use and available for iOS and Android, the app can access contacts in Facebook and Snapchat or on your phone to find fellow Houseparty users. Besides chatting, you can leave video-based messages for recipients to view later, and play games with up to eight participants in a video chat.

As with Zoom, however, virtual rooms that aren't locked down can



attract gatecrashers. Any friends you accept in the app will be notified of a chat and invited to join in. Provided you lock down your rooms and are careful which friend requests you accept, though, there's little to worry about from a security and privacy point of view, which should make Houseparty a safe option.

DOWNLOAD £500 OF SOFTWARE FOR FREE!

COVER
FEATURE

What better way to celebrate our 500th issue than to save you over £500 on software? **Wayne Williams** rounds up the best premium programs that you can currently download for free

WebUser
500

It's the 500th issue of *Web User*, so to celebrate the occasion we decided we'd focus on one of the things we do best (aside from website news, app reviews and emoji quizzes): free software.

We know that our fortnightly Best Free Software section is a particular favourite of *Web User* readers. We round up more free tools per issue

than any other tech magazine, and avoid recommending over-priced commercial programs. Recently, however, many software companies and developers have decided to make their paid-for products free – for a while at least – to help users who are self-isolating or social distancing and may have less

money during the COVID-19 crisis. Other tools have been made free permanently for different reasons.

In this feature, we proudly present the best premium programs you can download to your computer or mobile device for free, saving you £500* for our landmark 500th issue.

**Actually £555!*

System tools

Advanced SystemCare 13 Pro

bit.ly/iobit500

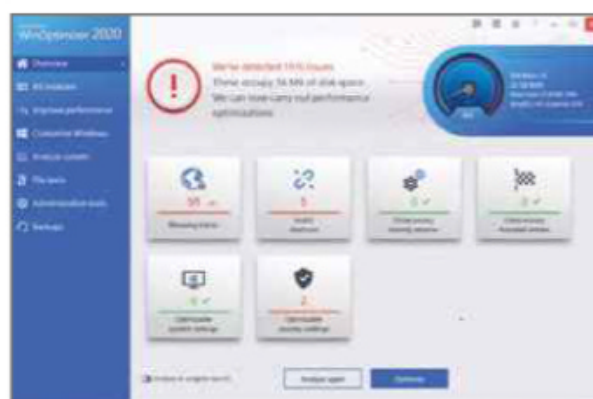
Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 47.8MB

You save: £19.42

IObit's Advanced SystemCare is an all-in-one toolkit that cleans your PC, boosts its performance, protects your privacy and fixes all manner of annoying problems. Simply click the Scan button on the front screen to perform a series of tasks. The Speed Up section provides tools to boost performance, while the Protect area supports facial recognition via Face ID, and stops malware hijacking your browser's homepage.

The Pro edition is currently free for a limited time, and adds advanced cleaning and optimisation, hard drive defragmentation, automatic freeing of RAM, deep Registry cleaning, scheduled auto care, a program updater, performance booster and privacy tools. It also offers an Internet Booster feature that can help you increase your browsing speed and take full advantage of your network's maximum bandwidth, which is particularly useful for anyone who is now working at home.



Ashampoo WinOptimizer 2020

bit.ly/winopt500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 14.8MB

You save: £23.96

WinOptimizer offers tools for cleaning your PC and speeding it up. This now-free software provides a one-click optimiser and modules for improving performance, customising Windows and analysing your system, as well as file and administrative backups. To see what it can do, browse the sections on the left, or explore the various modules.

The one-click optimiser performs a series of checks looking for browsing traces, security and system settings that could be tightened, invalid

shortcuts, programs that start automatically and services that run unnecessarily. You can choose whether to let the program automatically fix any problems it finds, or tackle them yourself.

You need to sign up for an account and validate your email address to use this free software.

Driver Booster 7 Pro

bit.ly/iobit500

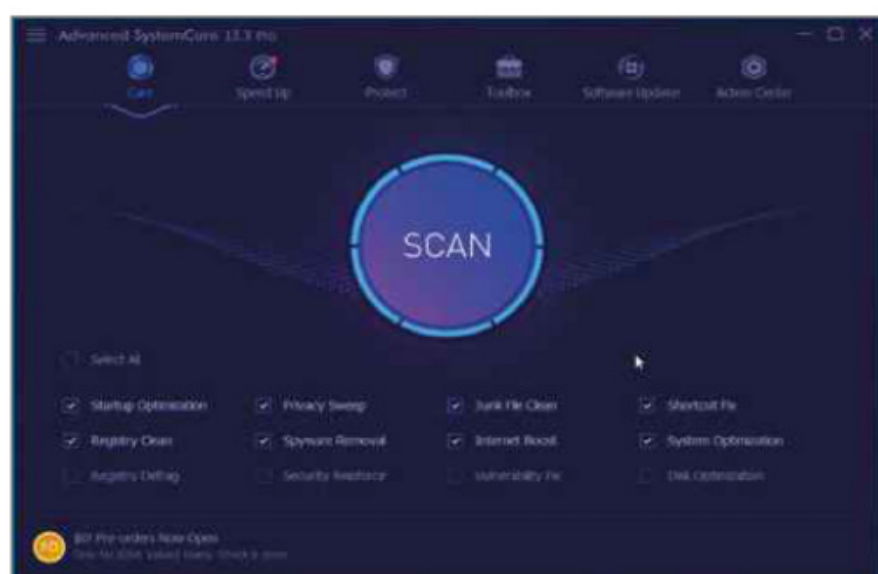
Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 23.9MB

You save: £22.28

Missing, incorrect, out-of-date or broken hardware drivers can lead to all sorts of system problems, including PC freezes and crashes. Windows does a pretty good job of ensuring you have all the drivers you need, but it's by no means infallible. Driver Booster automatically keeps your various PC and device drivers up to date and fixes common problems, such as a lack of sound, network failure and your PC not recognising your printer.

The free version of Driver Booster won our Gold Award in Issue 496 (bit.ly/webuser496), and the temporarily free Pro edition is even better. It offers access to more than 3.5 million drivers, including rare, mismatched and outdated versions. It also delivers faster scanning speeds and doesn't constantly nag you to upgrade – which was our main complaint with the free edition. What's more, it automatically backs up your drivers so you can restore them safely when problems arise, and you can set it to download and install updated drivers while your PC is idle, so it won't get in the way of your work.

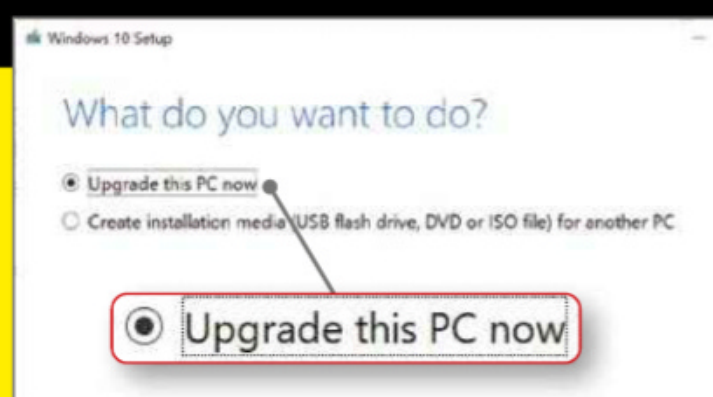


GET WINDOWS 10 FOR FREE

When Windows 10 launched in 2015, Microsoft announced that the new operating system would be free for the first year. That offer has long since expired, so now if you want to install Windows 10, you have to pay for it. The Pro version costs £219.99, while the Home edition will set you back £119.99. However, there is a loophole you can use to get Windows 10 for free.

To take advantage of this quirk,

your PC must be running a licensed version of Windows 7 or 8.1 (you can pick one up for very little money if you don't already have it). Then upgrade to the new operating system using the Media Creation Tool (bit.ly/mct500). Once the upgrade is complete, you can view your digital licence under Settings, Update & Security, Activation.



If you can't use this upgrade trick, *Computeractive* is currently offering Windows 10 Home for just £29.99 – see page 18 for details.



PCmover Express

bit.ly/pcmover500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 5.5MB

You save: £20.95

Windows 7 reached the end of its life earlier this year, although plenty of people are still running the aging operating system. That's despite the fact that it's possible to upgrade to Windows 10 for free (see our boxout on page 41). If you've bought a brand new PC, you can use PCmover Express to transfer your files, data, settings and user profiles from your old system to the new one, saving you a lot of hassle. If you also want to transfer your applications, restore an old PC image to the new computer or copy over the contents of your hard drive, you'll need to buy PCmover Professional, which currently costs £20.98.



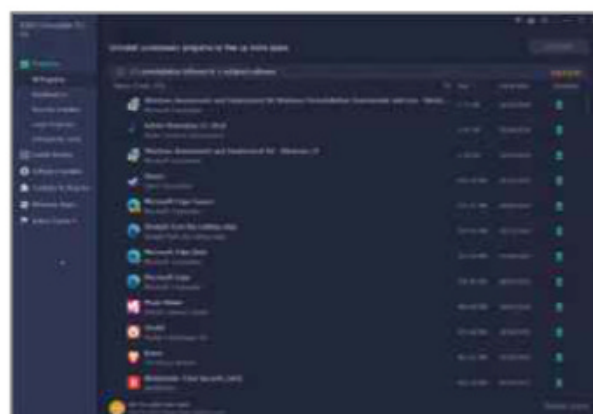
IObit Uninstaller 9 Pro

bit.ly/iobit500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 21.2MB

You save: £19.42



IObit Uninstaller not only removes programs you no longer require, but cleans up after them too, deleting leftover junk that the Windows uninstaller and similar programs often leave behind. This includes temporary files, installer files and Registry entries. It can also batch-uninstall software, including Windows 10 apps, and filter the list of installed items by various criteria.

When you uninstall a program using the Pro version, it uninstalls bundled programs and plug-ins at the same time, too. You can force-remove stubborn software, and the tool automatically undoes any changes an application made to your system when you installed it.



Retrospect

www.retrospect.com/covid

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10 or macOS

File size: 170MB

You save: £10

Retrospect currently offers free 90-day subscription licences for its home and business backup products. The home version protects up to six devices and is available for Windows and Mac computers. Although you need to create an account to download the program, you don't need to enter your credit card details – just leave that section blank. (You may need to enter coupon code COVID to get your free 90 days). Once the trial expires, you can either pay to continue using the service or move on. You can restore any backups you made even if you cancel the subscription.



Our Top 5 Free Programs

Over 500 issues we've recommended *lots* of free software. Here are our favourite tools

VLC Media Player

www.videolan.org

There are plenty of great free media players to choose from, but VLC remains our favourite. It can handle most file formats, as well as streaming content, and comes packed with advanced features.



Google Earth

earth.google.co.uk

When it launched in 2001 (the same year we did), Google's virtual 3D globe was a game changer, letting you explore the world from your PC and see your home from above. These days, you can run it in your browser without software.



Paint.net

www.getpaint.net

Paint.net started life as a simple replacement for Windows Paint, but now it's one of the best free image editors around. While there are decent alternatives such as GIMP, Paint.net offers the perfect combination of power and ease of use.



Lightworks

www.lwks.com

Lightworks is a professional video editor that has been used to produce numerous big-screen blockbusters, including *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Pulp Fiction* and *The King's Speech*. The free version offers a huge array of features.



LibreOffice

www.libreoffice.org

There's no shortage of free office programs, but the LibreOffice suite is the best. It's compatible with Microsoft Office, and includes a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation tool and more.



Conversion tools

IObit Software Updater 2 Pro

bit.ly/iobit500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 11.6MB

You save: £12.60



We're sure you know how important it is to keep your software up to date so that you don't run into problems caused by bugs and security flaws. While some of the programs on your PC update themselves automatically – such as your browser and certain security tools – most programs require you to check for updates manually. IObit Software Updater saves you the hassle by scanning your system and checking for any updates to the software you have installed, including programs such as Zoom and GoToMeeting. You can then update them with the click of a button.

The Pro version does away with the limitations and adverts that appear in the free edition, and can update software automatically on a schedule.

PaperScan Pro

paperscan.orpalis.com

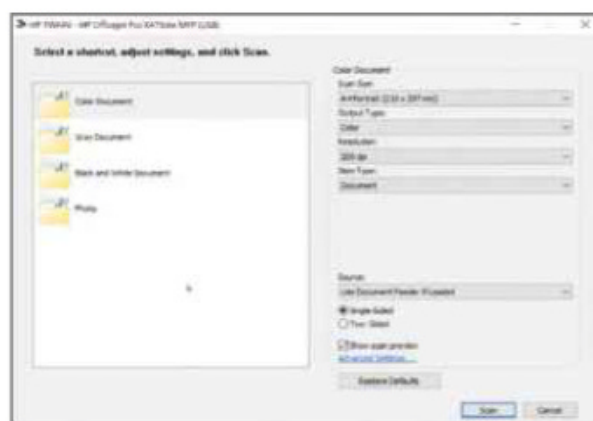
Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 54.1MB

You save: £120

PaperScan Pro lets you scan, process and annotate documents, and save images and PDFs in various formats. You can also straighten crooked pages, adjust colours, eradicate noise, remove punch holes and borders, and resize a scan. The free edition has some restrictions, such as scanning or importing a maximum of 10 pages at a time, but the Pro edition – which is currently free until April 2021 due to the COVID-19 situation – does away with those limits. This software usually costs £120, so you're getting a real bargain.

To claim the offer, follow the instructions on the website or download the software and use the activation code: SW4gdm1ubyB2ZXJpdGFz.



Ashampoo Burning Studio 2020

bit.ly/burn500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 66.2MB

You save: £24



Ashampoo's full-featured disc-authoring software can write data to CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray discs and specialised media such as BD-XL or M-Disc. It can rip and burn audio discs (automatically adding track names), and create and write disc images. Scratch protection lets you access data even on damaged discs, and it can finalise discs so they play on older CD and DVD players. You can even create and print your own covers and labels, and create backups from a smartphone or tablet with one click.

As with the other Ashampoo programs we've covered in this feature, you need to create a free account to use Burning Studio 2020.

...And Our Worst 5

These five free programs certainly made an impression but for all the wrong reasons

iTunes for Windows

www.apple.com/uk/itunes

Apple's iTunes music organiser for Windows is bloated, clunky, slow and stuffed with features most people don't need. Now its days are numbered and, frankly, the sooner it dies the better.



Adobe Reader

get.adobe.com/uk/reader

Adobe invented the portable document format (PDF) in the Nineties, but this bug-ridden free tool isn't the software you should use to read PDF files. There are many better third-party options.



Internet Explorer

www.microsoft.com

At its peak, between 2002 and 2003, IE6 had a 90% share of the browser market, but it also had a well-deserved reputation for being slow and unsafe, as well as lagging behind modern web standards.



Real Player

www.real.com/uk

This media player was very frustrating to use, taking ages to buffer any content you were trying to stream. Even worse, it came bundled with junk that installed itself automatically, spied on you and bombarded you with ads.



PC Matic

www.pcmatic.com

PC Matic was an antivirus program that scanned your computer for problems but then charged you to remove any it found. It also required you to install unsafe ActiveX components, making it more of a security risk than a defence.



Security Tools



Trend Micro Maximum Security

bit.ly/maxsec500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 384MB

You save: £16 (six-month equivalent)



Trend Micro is offering a free six-month subscription to its Maximum Security anti-malware software. The idea is that companies sign up to receive a download URL that they can then share with their employees, but there's nothing to stop you signing up and downloading the software yourself. After six months, your access to the program simply expires – you won't have to worry about it renewing automatically and costing you money. In addition, you get a free one-month trial of the mobile version.

Maximum Security can block web threats, secure your banking transactions, protect your children online, guard against phishing scams, help you manage your passwords and boost your PC's performance.

During setup, the program also installs a password manager. Be sure to deselect this option if you don't need it – the tick box you need isn't obvious, so pay close attention.



Trend Micro Antivirus for Mac

bit.ly/maxsec500

Min requirements: macOS

File size: 74.2MB

You save: £12 (six month equivalent)

Mac users needn't feel left out, because as well as giving Windows users a free six-month subscription to Maximum Security, Trend Micro is also offering six months' free use of Antivirus for Mac. Like the Windows software mentioned above, Antivirus for Mac blocks web threats and dangerous sites, secures transactions, guards against phishing

attacks and protects your email. The process for getting it is the same as for the Windows version.



Malware Fighter 7 Pro

bit.ly/iobit500

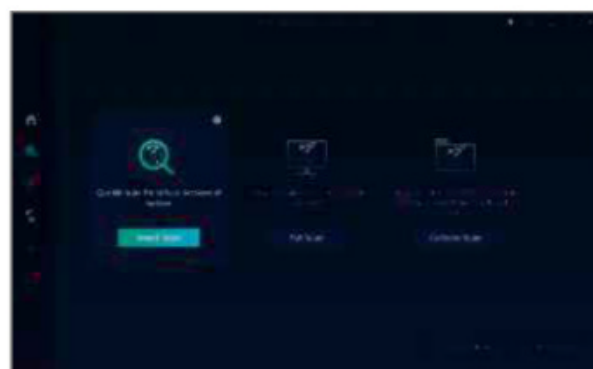
Min requirements:

Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 59.4MB

You save: £19.38

Malware Fighter protects your PC from all manner of threats, including malware, ransomware and cryptojackers, and because you can run it alongside your existing security software, it gives you a useful second line of defence. Run a full scan, a smart scan (which checks your system's critical sections) or a custom scan – where you drag and drop a file or folder into the main window. The software's real-time protection, meanwhile, includes Network, File, Startup and Process guards. There's also a Browser Protect module that can prevent unwanted changes to your homepage and search engine, and scan downloaded files and email attachments before you open them.



The Pro version includes a second scanning engine from Bitdefender, an improved web camera guard to prevent malware spying on you and personal data protection to stop snoopers accessing your sensitive files.



Advanced SystemCare Ultimate 13

bit.ly/iobit500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 112MB

You save: £29.12

Advanced SystemCare Ultimate offers all the tools in Advanced SystemCare Pro (see page 41), but adds another major feature to justify the Ultimate tag: antivirus protection. As with IObit Malware Fighter 7 Pro (see above), the



software uses both IObit and Bitdefender engines to keep your system safe from viruses, ransomware, spyware, Trojans and more, all in real time.

If you don't already have decent antivirus software on your PC, this is definitely worth grabbing while you can. If you do have another program installed and you're happy with the protection it affords you, Advanced SystemCare Pro is probably sufficient. Both are free for now, so take your pick.



Norton Family

family.norton.com

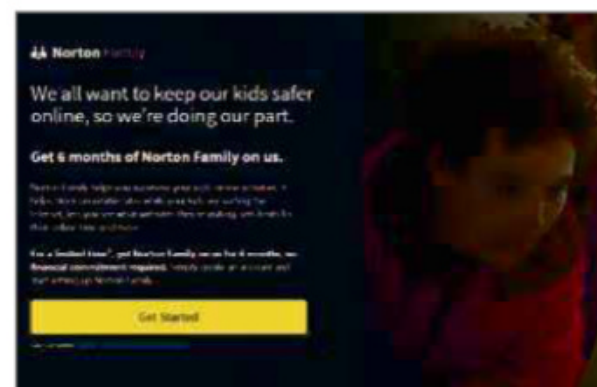
Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 1.1MB (installer only)

You save: £15 (six-month equivalent)

With schools closed at the moment, children are spending a lot of time at home on the web, so Norton Family is offering six months of its parental control software for free. It helps you keep track of what your kids are getting up to online, and lets you set time limits and block unsuitable sites. To take advantage of the offer, simply create a free account, add your family members and then install the app. It's available for Windows, iOS and Android.

You don't need to enter any financial information to get started with Norton Family. Once the free period ends, you can set up a paid subscription if you want to continue using the service.



Entertainment

Serato Studio

serato.com/studio

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 1.1GB

You save: £159



If you find you have more time on your hands during the coronavirus lockdown, you may be thinking of learning a new skill. Serato Studio is a digital audio workstation that lets beginners, DJs and even advanced producers make their own music. Serato Studio has always been a paid-for product, but now the company has released a new version that's permanently free. While it lacks some of the advanced features found in the paid-for editions, it comes with all the functionality new users could want, as well as selected sound packs and the ability to save and export tracks.

Ashampoo Soundstage 2020

bit.ly/sstage500

Min requirements: Windows 7/8.1/10

File size: 40.9MB

You save: £32

Listening to music through headphones isn't always the immersive experience it

could be.

Ashampoo

Soundstage lets you enjoy quality surround sound by converting existing 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1 sound sources into binaural stereo on the fly. The result is an impressive audio effect that's

comparable to genuine surround sound, and you can even fine-tune the results to suit the environment you're listening in. SoundStage also provides presets for various popular brands and models of headphones, as well as settings for



improving the sound in games.

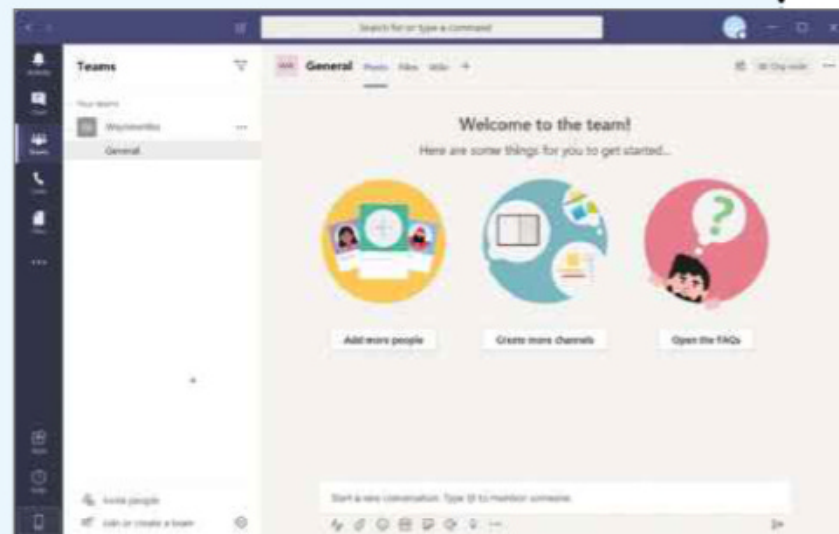
It can even improve the audio quality of regular stereo sound sources. You need to create a free Ashampoo account to activate and use the software. ■

CHAT FOR FREE WITH MICROSOFT TEAMS

Microsoft Teams is a group chat and collaboration tool similar to Slack. It's aimed primarily at businesses but individuals can use it too – as lots of people are discovering during the current lockdown. The tool is part of Microsoft 365 (formerly Office 365), but you don't need to buy an £80 subscription for the entire suite of

programs to get it. If you have a work or school email address, you can get started with Teams for free by signing in through bit.ly/teamssign500. If you have a Gmail or Outlook.com address (or similar) then you can sign up for the freemium version of Teams at bit.ly/teamsfree500.

Once you've successfully signed up, you can either download the Windows app or use the web app in your browser.



NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 13 May 2020

WEB MYTHS BUSTED!

We expose the truth behind the biggest tech misconceptions and lies

FACTS
MYTHS

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

**WebUser
GOLD
AWARD**

What we liked:

Calibre's main function is as a book-management tool for ebook readers, giving you somewhere to store books you own and letting you choose which

titles you want to send to your e-reader. However, because it's not affiliated to any particular brand of ebook reader, you can use it to manage books on any device, including Amazon's Kindles. This is a huge benefit if you own a Kindle device, because you can easily transfer books you didn't buy from Amazon, including free books from sources such as Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org).

Whether you have an ebook reader or not, Calibre is a handy place to organise your library of digital books. At its default settings, however, it's not the best option for reading ebooks (see How it can be improved, right).

Thankfully, if you tinker with font sizes and screen arrangements, you should be able to wrangle a book into a format you can comfortably read on your PC.

The software's particular strength lies in its willingness to import any kind of file, so whatever format your files are saved in, Calibre can decipher them and turn them into a readable document on

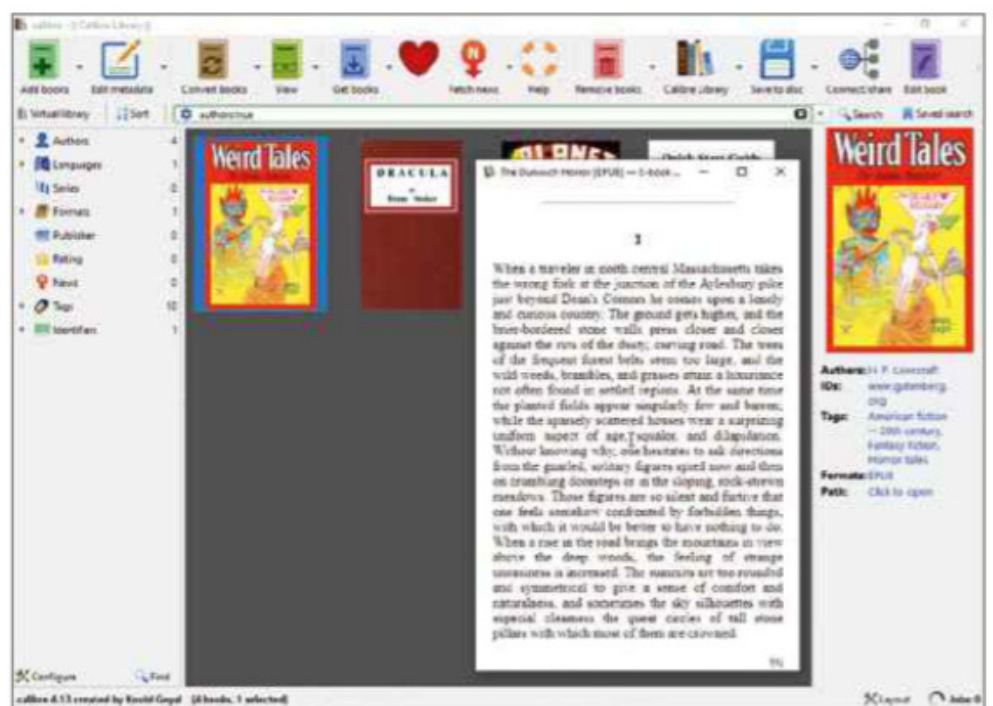
your screen.

The only format we found it couldn't handle was the humble PDF, which was rather strange. Although you can add PDF files to your library and organise them, Calibre launches your PC's default PDF viewer

when you actually want to view the files. If you don't already have a satisfactory PDF tool for reading books, Sumatra PDF Reader (see review, right) is a useful portable companion.

How it can be improved:

When you double-click a book, it opens in a new window that's about the size and shape of an ebook reader screen, but without the intuitive touch interface. To browse through the book, you have to press the Page Up and Page Down buttons on the keyboard, while to access the menu – where you can tweak



the program's unfortunate default settings – you press the Escape key.

OUR VERDICT

Calibre isn't the easiest software to use for reading a book on your PC or laptop, but it's very good at storing and managing your library, no matter where your books come from. We think you'll need to reconfigure its default settings to read books comfortably on your PC, but it's worth the effort.

Polar | getpolarized.io | ★★★★★☆
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★☆☆

WebUser
SILVER
AWARD

What we liked:

Polar is an open-source book-management tool. It's designed to help university-level students manage text books, which is probably why it has such a functional look and feel, but if you can live with lists of books rather than attractive libraries of thumbnail covers, you'll find it has a lot of useful extra tools. Every book you open appears in a new window, which is helpful if you're working on a research project and want to cross-reference multiple titles.

One of the best things about Polar is the tree-like structure it uses for grouping files and projects together. There are two types of tree. The first is a folder-like system that's perfect for grouping projects together, for example. The other is very similar but uses tags, so you can group publications by type, author or any other attribute you can think of. Both features are easy to access from the window on the left.



How it can be improved:

We found Polar a little temperamental when opening some file formats, particularly free books in the EPUB format that we downloaded from Project Gutenberg. It's more suitable for organising large quantities of non-fiction resources than libraries of novels.

OUR VERDICT

If your digital library is huge and varied, Polar is a great way to catalogue and organise it. However, it's probably overkill if you're the kind of reader who keeps books in a pile and steadily works through them one at a time.

Kindle | bit.ly/kindleapp454 | ★★★★★☆
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★☆☆

WebUser
BRONZE
AWARD

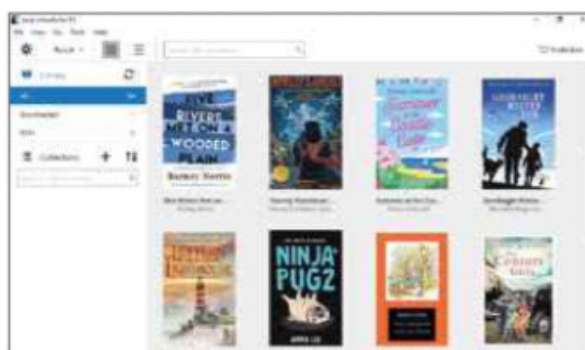
What we liked:

If you're one of the millions of people who read books on an Amazon Kindle, it makes sense to install the company's Windows software on your PC so your collection of synced books is available on all your devices.

The Kindle software isn't resplendent with features but it's good enough, emulating the experience of using a Kindle device, which makes it familiar and relatively user-friendly. If you use tools such as Notes and Flashcards, you'll find they sync seamlessly between this software and your device.

The Kindle is linked to Amazon's store, which means a huge library of commercial books is available. You can also add PDF files, but that's the only format of document you can import directly.

The software's interface for reading books is simple but effective, and is one of the main reasons we like it. However, you really need to buy into the whole concept and sell your book-buying soul to Amazon to get the most out of it.



How it can be improved:

The biggest problem with the Kindle app is that it only accepts ebooks bought from Amazon. This is extraordinarily limiting. There are ways of getting books from other sources into your Kindle account, but Amazon doesn't make it easy.

OUR VERDICT

The beauty of the Kindle software is that it links to your Amazon account, and if you own a Kindle device, your books sync between them. However, the software doesn't welcome books from other sources, as Calibre does, so you have to buy into Amazon's world.

BEST OF THE REST

Sumatra PDF

bit.ly/sumatra500

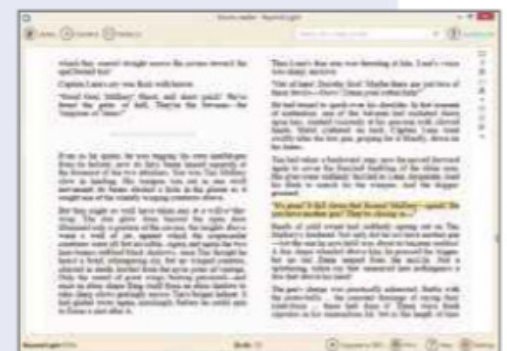
Sumatra is a well-known PDF reader that can also handle a wide range of ebook formats. If you just want to read the occasional book on your PC, it's probably more than adequate. It's portable, so there's no need to install it, and books open in a sensible two-page arrangement that resembles a paper book, with easy access to chapters and bookmarks from the sidebar. Great for casual readers.



Icecream Ebook Reader

bit.ly/icecream500

Icecream Ebook Reader is available in both free and paid-for (£14.95) versions. The free version works well enough, although some of the finer features have been removed, such as the ability to open books in full screen. Presentation is good, with a clear library for organising books and the ability to open most ebook formats.



Bookviser

bookviser.com

Bookviser is a Windows app that you can download from the Windows Store. It presents ebooks in a three-dimensional way, which probably looked quite impressive when Windows 8 first came out, but even Microsoft now seems to be distancing itself from this kind of gimmick. It also uses that annoying Windows app interface, where you have to right-click to bring up icon menus.



TRACK ANYTHING online in real time

Live-monitoring tools let you follow anything from polar bears to planes, trains and pandemics. **Jane Hoskyn** reveals how to track the world outside while you're stuck inside



Track the coronavirus pandemic

Scientists have been racing to keep track of the COVID-19 pandemic using self-reporting apps such as Covid Symptom Tracker (bit.ly/symptom500) and Track Together (www.tracktogether.co.uk), as well as daily reports from Johns Hopkins University (JHU), the world's leading medical research institution, which uploads its daily COVID-19 reports to bit.ly/reports500.

The JHU team's COVID-19 Map turns this raw data into interactive maps, graphs and curves at bit.ly/covmap500. You can tweak the main map to show different backgrounds and layers (such as an OpenStreetMap layer showing confirmed cases in each country), and click to enlarge the graphs for viewing in a handful of formats.

For more visual detail, visit the 91-Divoc site (bit.ly/divoc500), which plots the latest JHU data on graphs that you can tweak to show different types



Discover the nation's coronavirus hotspots using this map based on COVID Symptom Tracker reports

of curve (for example logarithmic, also known as exponential). You can see the impact on different countries, including the UK, by selecting from the 'Highlight' drop-down menu.

To visualise the latest self-reported data from the UK's COVID Symptom Tracker app, see the map at bit.ly/covid500. The data is anonymous but divided by region, so you can click the map to check your area.



Track the world's population

Few real-time data trackers are quite as unsettling as World Population Clock's live ticker (bit.ly/clock500). The

number is so big (7.8 billion and counting fast) that rival sites can't agree on it, with World Population Review (worldpopulationreview.com) a few tens of millions behind. But the latter site breaks down the data into more detail, and maps it so you can click to explore individual cities and countries (such as the UK, bit.ly/ukpop500).

Data-mapping site Plumplot (bit.ly/plumplot500) has created a population density map for England and Wales that lets you zoom right into your street, then use the drop-down menus to visualise various datasets (house prices, crime stats and more). Plumplot's maps aren't quite in real-time because they're aggregated from sources including the Census and the Office for National Statistics (ONS), but they still provide a fascinating insight into the nation's current population status.



Track the changing weather and climate

See weather systems on the move in real time by zooming and spinning the virtual globe at 'Earth' (bit.ly/earth500). You can customise the display by opening the menu, then clicking an element. For example, click Ocean to see today's tidal currents at work.

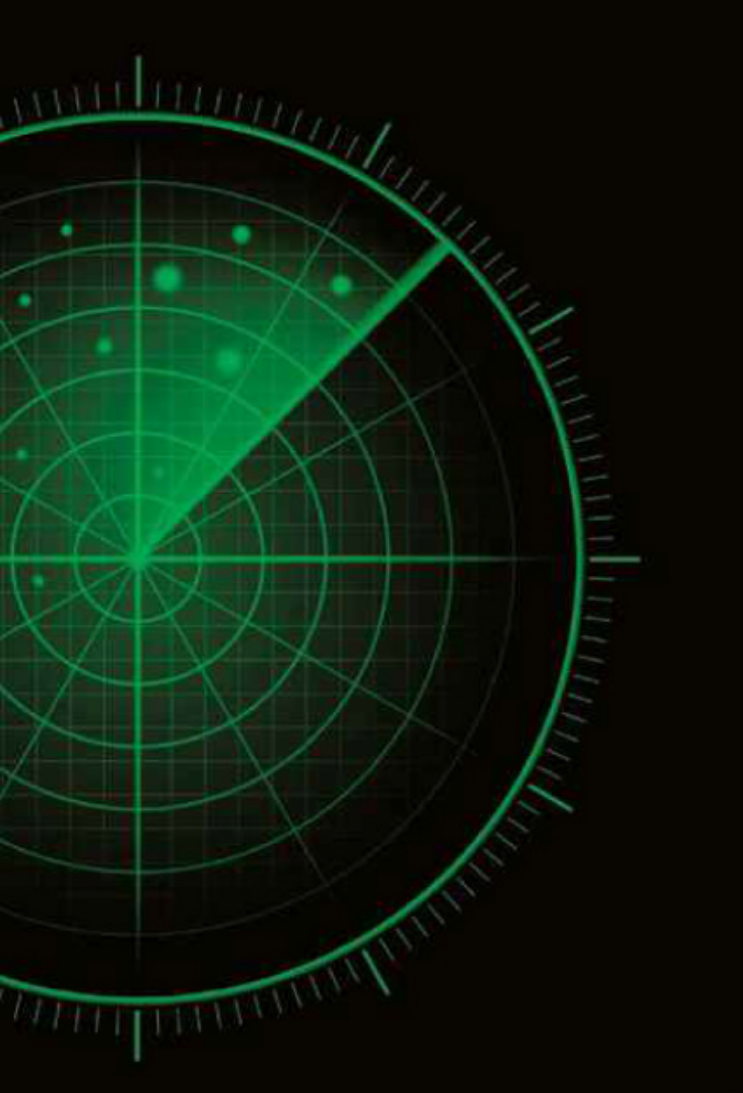
If you'd like to zoom in for a closer look, use the Map option on OpenWeather (openweathermap.org). It's less impressive to look at than the Earth tool, but it does let you see all kinds of weather systems (wind speed, clouds,



Is the UK's Covid curve flattening? Find out using up-to-date graphs at 91-Divoc



See stats on your area's population, crime rates, income, house prices and more from data-mapping site Plumplot



See the world's wind and ocean currents live using the interactive globe 'Earth'

temperature and so on) in action anywhere in the world, or just where you live. It also provides live data both as charts and plain old numbers.

The Met Office's UK rainfall radar map (bit.ly/rain500) is strangely engaging. Watch the big blue blob move across Ireland and the UK, or zoom in to see how heavily (or not) the rain is falling on your town. You can also see a rainfall playback from the past six hours, and monitor types of weather other than rain by clicking More.

To put the weather into long-term perspective, see the climate tickers at bit.ly/climate500. Among other things, these alarming real-time monitors track the average world temperature and how long until the world's oil runs dry (47 years and counting).



Chase the sun and moon

The full moon is due above our house on 7 May, but what about where you live? The Moon Phases calendar (bit.ly/phase500) – just one of umpteen real-time monitors at the brilliant TimeandDate.com – detects your location automatically and reveals the moon's phase, altitude and position over



TimeandDate.com's 'Day and Night World Map' shows which countries are asleep

the coming hours and days. Among the site's other live trackers are the 'Day and Night World Map' (bit.ly/daynight500) and World Time Lookup (bit.ly/worldtime500), which reveals the current time, weather, and sun and moon phases for any location.

The free apps Sun Locator Lite (Android, bit.ly/locator500) and Lumos (iOS, bit.ly/lumos500) let you track the sun and moon by the hour.



Track stars and satellites

Numerous augmented-reality (AR) apps bring the heavens into your locked-down living room, and the best is Night Sky (iOS, bit.ly/night500). Focus on any flat surface – ceiling, wall, dining table – to see moons, planets, constellations and even the International Space Station (ISS) overlaid in their real-time positions. A slightly less powerful Android app called SkyView Lite (bit.ly/skyview500) visualises the galaxy and ISS when you

Track anything online



There's tons of hardware floating above your head now, according to N2YO.com

hold your device up to the sky.

To turn your browser into a heavenly radar, head for The Sky Live's Online Planetarium (bit.ly/skylive500), an interactive real-time map of space that displays the position of planets, moons, asteroids and more. ISS Tracker (www.isstracker.com) reveals where the International Space Station is right now, as it zooms around the planet at 17,000mph. The ISS is also monitored by the deceptively simple site N2YO.com, which tracks the details and positions of satellites orbiting the Earth. On the day of writing, N2YO had tracked 20,626 objects. No fewer than 2,261 (a number that's continually updated) were "crossing our sky" at that moment, which is a lot more than we'd expected!



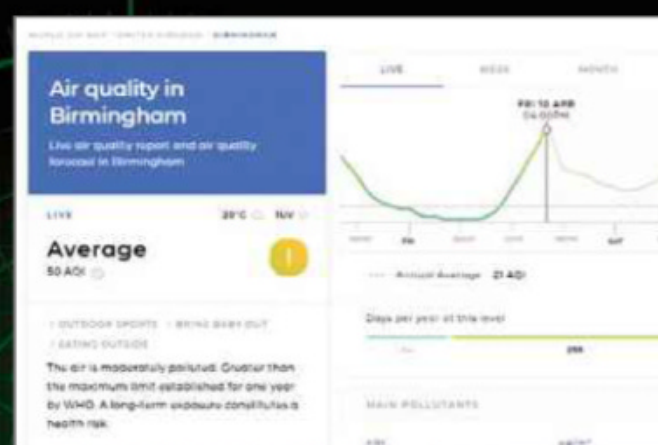
Track planes, trains and ships

The contrails have gone but there are still planes in the sky,

HAS THE PANDEMIC CLEARED THE AIR?

Where *is* everybody? Google knows – and it's sharing our location data with governments to ensure we're staying put (bit.ly/gdata500). Thankfully, the company isn't making that data public, but you can see how the streets have emptied during lockdown by enabling the 'Live traffic' layer in Google Maps (click the hamburger menu then Traffic). Even during rush hour, there's currently a lot more green on the map (signifying empty roads) than orange or red.

Traffic England (www.trafficengland.com) maintains its own live traffic-flow map using real-time data gleaned from roadside sensors. The 2020 congestion stats gathered by TomTom's Traffic Index (bit.ly/tomtom500) also make interesting reading when compared with previous years.



Sadly, fewer cars hasn't led to less pollution, according to the World Air Map site (air.plumelabs.com). UK cities from Belfast to Southampton experienced higher (that is, worse) 'Air Quality Index' readings in April 2020 than their annual average. That may be because it was unseasonably warm when we checked the data over the Easter weekend. To keep track, search for your (or any) city, or click the site's interactive map.

Track anything online



Click the Vessel Finder map to see a photo of a ship – unless it's a 'military vessel'

according to web tool Flightradar24 (flightradar24.com) – just not many. Hover over a plane icon to see its flight number, then click for more details, including destination, carrier and altitude. For \$9.99 per year (approx. £8, after a seven-day trial), Flightradar24 adds goodies such as 3D views, real-time radar data and live alerts. If you do happen to see an actual plane in the sky, AR Plane Finder (Android and iOS, bit.ly/finder500) can reveal its flight details and destination.

Coming back down to earth, Raildar Radar (bit.ly/radar500) plots tiny trains as they move around the UK network, using live data from UK train operators. In a similar vein but less comprehensive is the “vaguely live” Train Times (bit.ly/ttimes500), whose creator also makes a couple of London-based transport trackers: Live Underground map (bit.ly/tube500) and Live London Buses (bit.ly/buses500), both of which are eerily quiet at the moment.

One of the most intriguing live maps is Vessel Finder (vesselfinder.com), whose seas (and rivers) are sufficiently packed to suggest that ships are more active than planes and trains during lockdown. Pan and zoom around the map, then click a vessel to see more details and a photo. That said, you won't get much detail if you happen upon a military ship – many of which we found snaking through the rivers of South America and Russia.



Raildar lets you see the trains come and go from the comfort of your armchair

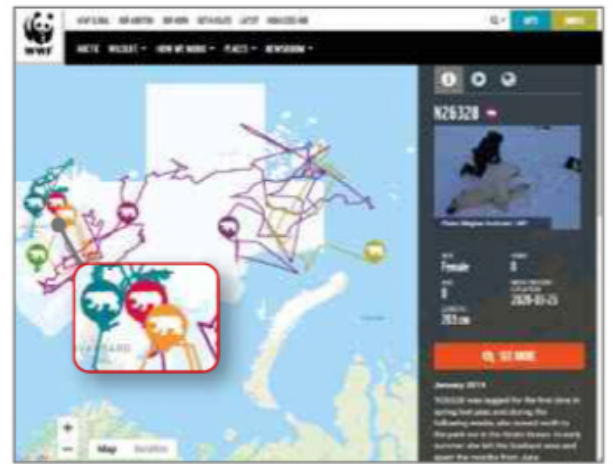


Monitor migrating birds and wandering wildlife

The swallows and cuckoos were still enjoying warmer climes at the time of writing, but they'll be back over Britain very soon. You can watch them get closer and closer on the live migration map at the Euro Bird Portal (bit.ly/eurobird500), although sadly it doesn't stretch to include the birds' African winter homes.

To monitor the creatures of the sea, turn to Ocearch (ocearch.org). This opens on the Americas by default but lets you zoom out to track sharks, dolphins, alligators, turtles and more all around the globe. Given that all these animals are tagged and tracked, it's no surprise to find that the researchers have given them names, too – as you'll discover when you click each one.

The World Wildlife Fund's Species Tracker (bit.ly/species500) uses data from radio collars on animals such as female polar bears (the males' necks are too big, apparently) to keep track of them. Click a bear on the zoomable map, then 'See More', to explore the latest data – including photos of new cubs – from that area. The zoomable map also lets you monitor populations of jaguars, marine



Meet polar bears and other endangered animals using the WWF's Species Tracker

turtles and other endangered creatures.

The biggest wildlife-tracking site is Movebank (bit.ly/movebank500), which links to hundreds of research projects from a global map. It's an academic resource, so it's slower and less easy to navigate than you'd hope, but you can search its database and click the dots to follow the links to relevant studies. You can even contribute to the research using the free Movebank app (Android and iOS, bit.ly/moveapp500). ■



Discover where the swallows are by pausing Euro Bird's map and finding your current month

TRACK YOUR PET'S WANDERINGS

Where does your cat go when she exits the cat flap? And where *has* your dog wandered off to this time? Pet companies have taken a tip from wildlife scientists and devised lightweight GPS tracking devices that fit onto Kitty or Fido's collar, so you can monitor their whereabouts using linked apps.

Garmin's top-of-the-range Atemos 100 (bit.ly/gardog500) can track up to 20 dogs up to 10km away, but at £750 the system is prohibitively pricey. A more sensible £59 buys a Kippy Evo (

[kippy500](http://bit.ly/kippy500)), a dinky 38g waterproof device that fits onto cats' and dogs' collars and includes an integrated SIM to locate your four-legged friend via a linked app (bit.ly/kippapp500). You can also use the app to 'geofence' risky areas, then receive an alert if your four-legged friend wanders into them (see screenshot, left). Tractive's £30 GPS collars for cats (bit.ly/traccat500) and dogs (bit.ly/tracdogg500)

come with extra subscription costs (£3.33 per month), but add features such as location history, so you can log your pet's favourite spots.

500 issues of Web User



Over the past 19 years, we've packed every issue with brilliant free software, websites and advice. Here are highlights from our first 500

ISSUE 1

In our very first issue, in March 2001, we tested 15 search engines, with Yahoo coming top. We also provided tips on online shopping, downloading MP3s and car imports.



ISSUE 35

Back in July 2002, buying CDs online was still exciting enough to merit a whole cover feature. And the O2 Xda was "the most exciting handheld PC on Earth"!



ISSUE 100

For our 100th issue in 2004, we named the 100 greatest things about the internet, including celebrity web chats, WAP, joke emails and "ordinary people finding fame".



ISSUE 154

"Windows Vista - do you need it?" we asked in February 2007. The answer was "no". Somehow, we also got a cover feature out of customising your browser's home page.



ISSUE 200

For our 200th issue, we named our 200 favourite websites, which then included Friends Reunited, Multimap and Google Lively - all of which we've outlasted!



ISSUE 230

In 2010, we provided web tips for all 365 days of the year. We briefly considered beating that number by doing 500 tips for this issue, but that would have taken up most of the magazine.



ISSUE 292

We made the 'user' in our logo green in May 2012 to coincide with the release of Android 4. Sales of the issue plummeted, so we never tried that again!



ISSUE 300

We didn't mark the milestone of our 300th issue, but instead we revealed how to download everything faster and how to sign up for free trials without a credit card.



ISSUE 343

"Meet the future" we declared six years ago, as we explained how to stream the web to your TV using a Chromecast. Now everyone and their dog is streaming!



ISSUE 380

We were sceptical about Windows 10 back in 2015, because of its sneaky spying tactics, but since then we've made peace with Microsoft's operating system - see workshop on page 54.



ISSUE 400

For our 400th issue, we named unsafe software that readers should uninstall, explained how to block nuisance calls and revealed the (then) best browser ever.



ISSUE 428

Many of our most popular covers have been about preventing Google from invading your privacy. In December 2016, we suggested abandoning it altogether.





Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Make better movies with Kdenlive

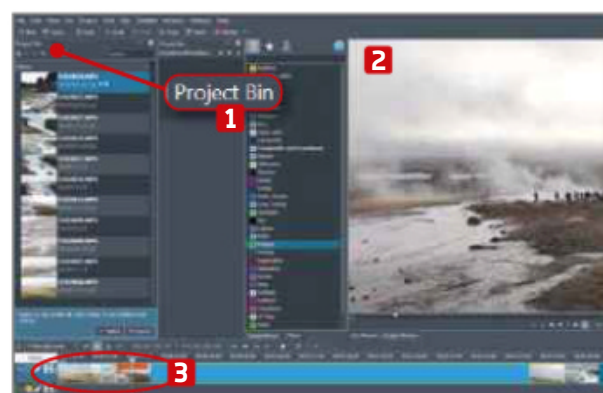
Kdenlive is a powerful free video editor for Windows, macOS and Linux that will give your movies a professional sheen. Here's how to use it

Kdenlive: kdenlive.org | ⌚ 20 mins | 🍏 🐧

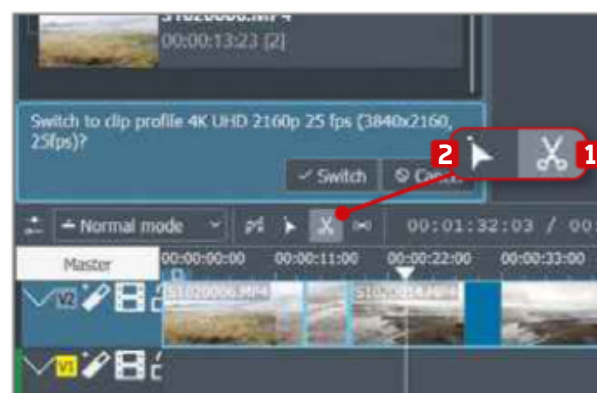
We're huge fans of Kdenlive - or KDE Non-Linear Video Editor, to give the software its full name. We awarded it Gold in our recent round-up of free video-editing programs (bit.ly/webuser492), describing it as "a phenomenal piece of software that's crammed with tools". Highlights include multi-track editing, timeline previews, a

wealth of transitions and effects, support for all major audio and video formats, a titler, automatic backup and a skinnable interface. It may not be the most intuitive program, but if you've ever used video-editing software before, it won't take you long to get to grips with it.

You don't even need to install it - just download and run the portable version.



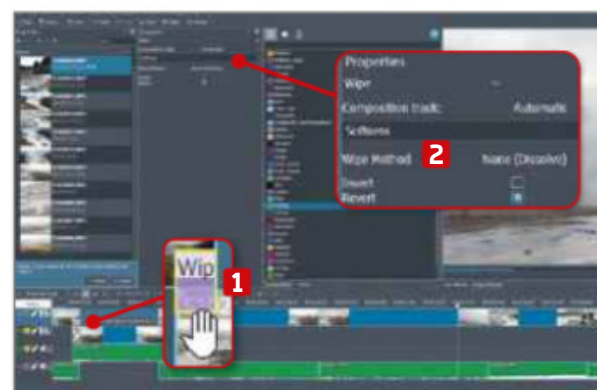
1 To get started, drag the video clips you want to use into the Project Bin on the left. **1** This loads them into Kdenlive and creates a thumbnail. Click an item to see a preview of it on the right. **2** You can now drag clips from the bin to the timeline below **3** and reorder them as required.



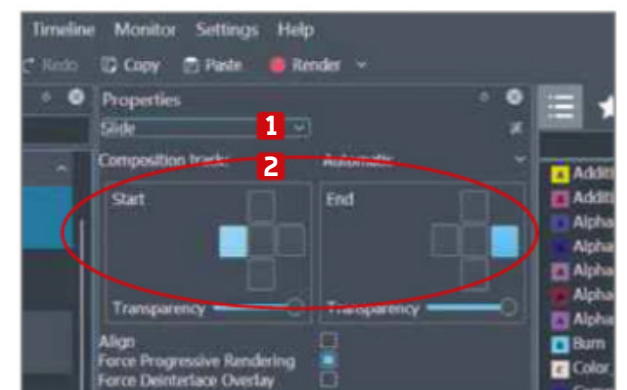
2 To divide a clip in two, select the Razor Tool **1** and click the clip. You can now remove the part you don't want, or move a section to a new location on the timeline. Click the Selection Tool **2** to move items.



3 Preview your movie at any time by moving the white line to the start of the timeline **1** and clicking the Play button. **2** If you want to use a transition between shots, drop the clips onto separate timelines, **3** making sure they overlap. Then use the zoom slider **4** to get a closer view.



4 To add the transition, hover your mouse cursor over the lower-right corner of the top clip until the message 'Click to add composition' appears. Click, and the software will add a wipe (dissolve). If you then click the transition in the timeline, **1** you can change the wipe method in the Properties box. **2**



5 You're not limited to wipes. Open the drop-down menu below Properties **1** to choose a different type of transition, such as Saturation, Slide, Subtract or Transform. Some choices give you additional settings to play with. If you select Slide, for example, you can set the start and end positions. **2**

PROJECT

Features in this menu include a title card creator and a slideshow clip maker

DOWNLOAD NEW WIPES

Click the Compositions tab, then the download button to add a selection of new transitions



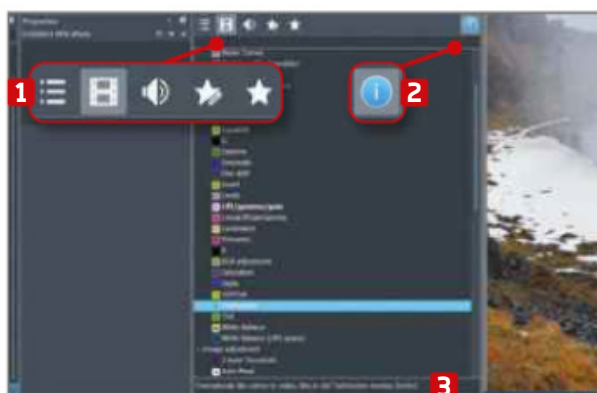
SETTINGS

Open the Settings menu to run the Config Wizard, select a different theme or style, and configure the keyboard shortcuts

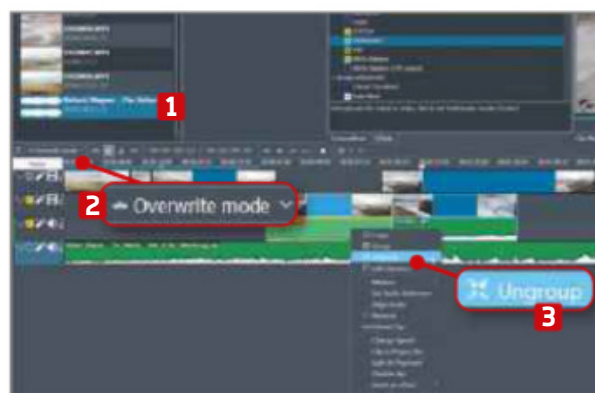


SNAP

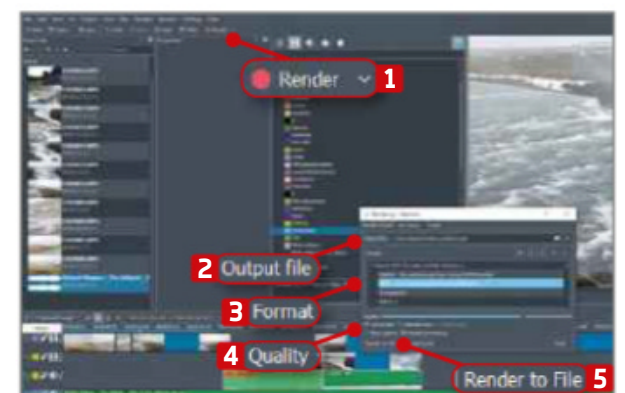
By default, clips snap into position next to each other. Click the Snap button to disable this behaviour if you want to add transitions



6 Icons above the effects box provide quick access to the main effects, all video effects, all audio effects, custom effects and favourites. **1** Click the 'i' button **2** to see descriptions, then select an item to find out what it does. **3** When you find an effect you like, drag it to a clip on the timeline to apply it.



7 Load an audio file (such as a music MP3) to the Project Bin, **1** then drag it to the audio timeline. Select Overwrite Mode **2** if you want both the video's audio and the music to play together. To remove the existing audio from a clip, right-click it and select Ungroup, **3** then click the audio part and choose Delete.



8 When you've finished editing your video, click the Render button. **1** In the box that opens, select the save directory **2** and the format you require. **3** MP4 is probably your best choice. Choose the quality you want, **4** then click 'Render to File' **5** to save your video.



Discover what's new in the next Windows 10 update

Windows 10: bit.ly/windows500 | 20 mins | Windows 10



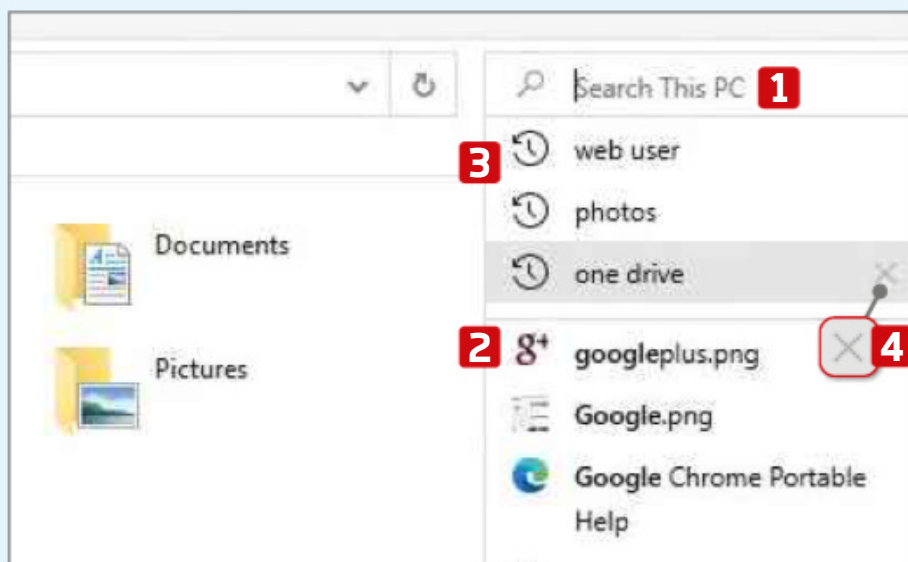
EXPERT TIP

Steve Clark says

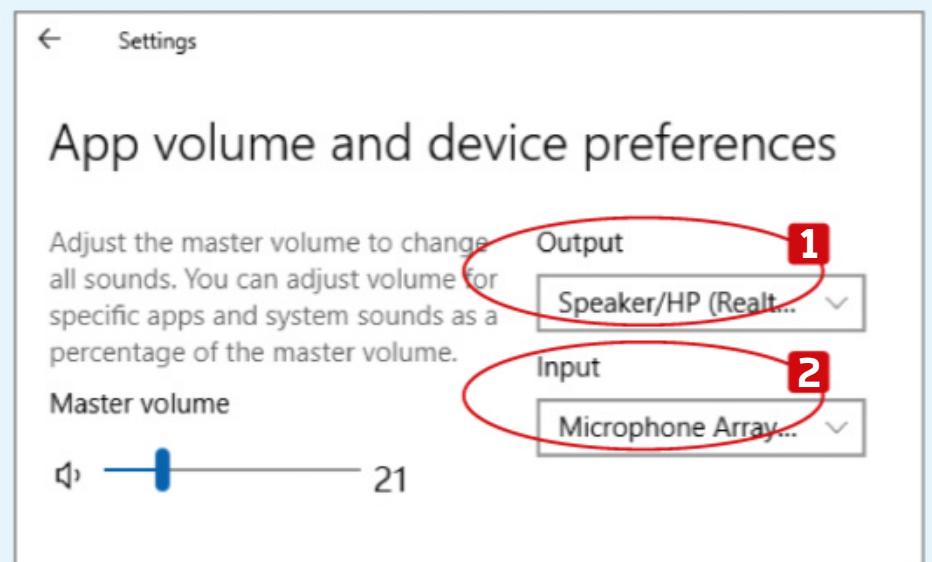
The May 2020 Update adds new features to the Cortana AI assistant, including an instant messaging-style conversation layout, support for the light theme and the ability to move Cortana like any other window. Sadly, after we'd updated, clicking Cortana revealed the message 'Sorry, but Cortana is not available in English (United Kingdom) at this time'. This may be fixed in the final version but, if not, see Step 10 for a workaround.

The next Windows 10 feature update – which Microsoft has confirmed will be called the May 2020 Update – is on its way. At the time of writing, we were looking at a final preview version we obtained through the Insider Programme, but the general launch should be imminent or even under way by the time you read this.

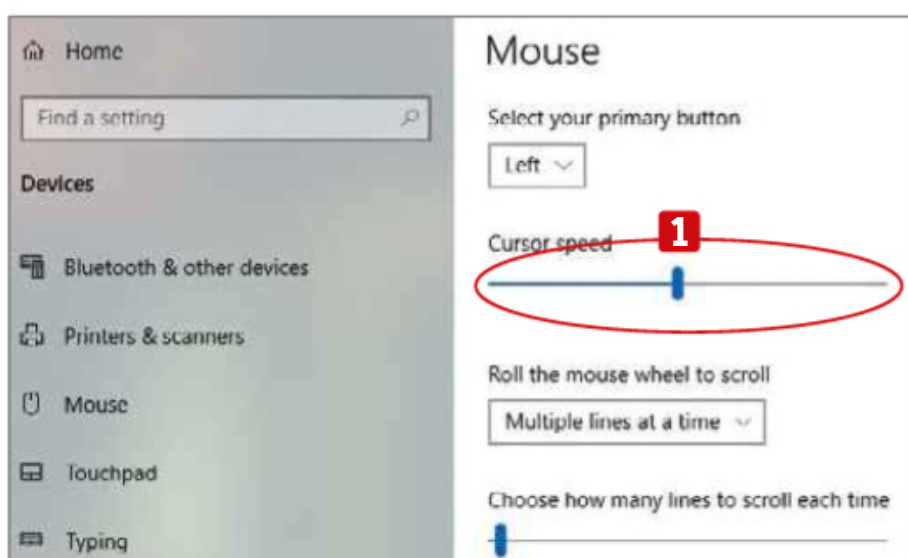
As expected, the Update makes plenty of little tweaks and improvements to the operating system, particularly in the Accessibility settings. Other changes include enabling tamper protection, which stops other users adjusting your security settings. Given the huge number of changes – some major, some minor – we'd recommend spending a bit of time exploring what Microsoft has added. Here are a few places to start.



1 First, let's look at the Search function, which has received an upgrade. Open File Explorer and click the search field. **1** When you start typing, File Explorer compiles a list of matches on the fly. **2** Previous searches also appear here, **3** although you can remove these by pressing the 'X'. **4**



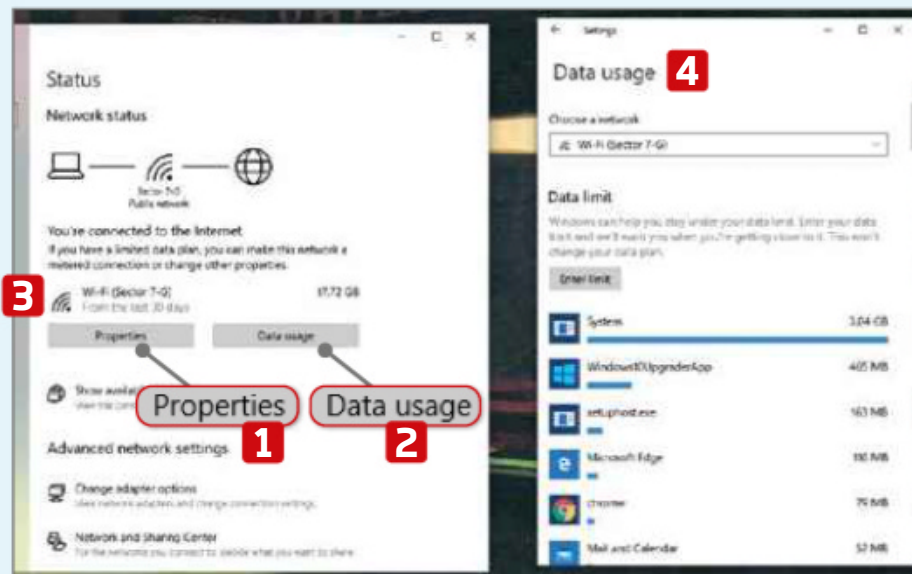
2 The 'App Volume and Device Preferences' setting has received a minor tweak. In older versions of Windows 10, options were spread across the screen. Now the layout has been simplified, placing Output **1** on top of Input. **2** To find these settings, enter Sound mixer options into the Start bar.



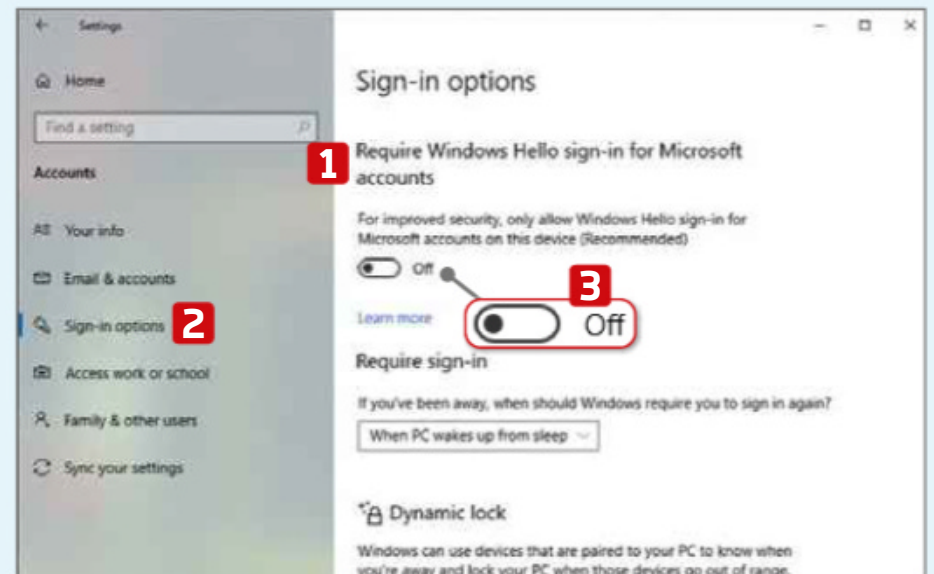
3 We often highlight third-party tools that give you more control over your cursor and pointer settings. The Update doesn't expand these much, but it does offer one sorely needed setting: the ability to change the speed of your mouse. Search Mouse in the Start bar, then use the new slider to adjust the cursor speed. **1**



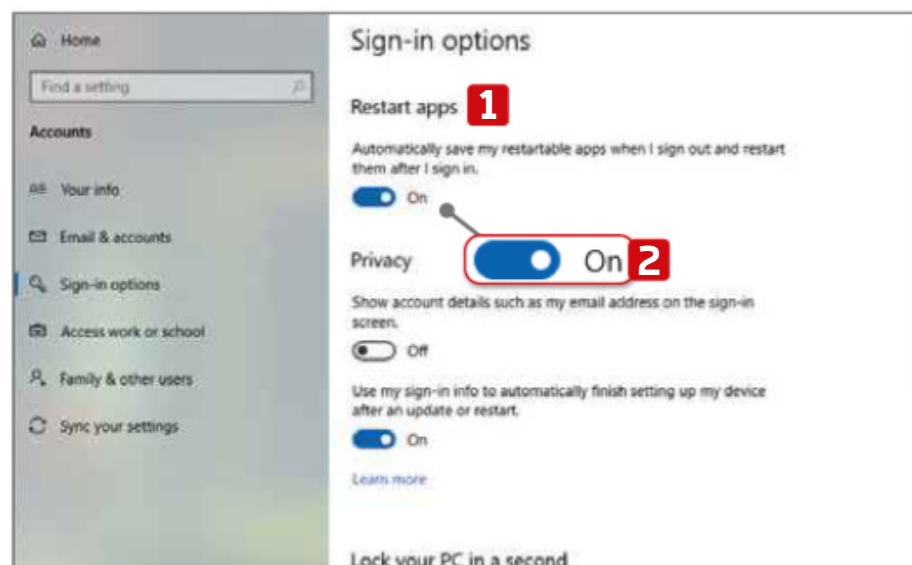
4 You can now rename your virtual desktops. Click the Task View button **1** to see a list of all current virtual desktops, **2** or create a new one by clicking the Plus. **3** To give a desktop a new title, right-click its icon and select Rename. **4** A text field appears. **5** Type in the new name and press Enter to save it.



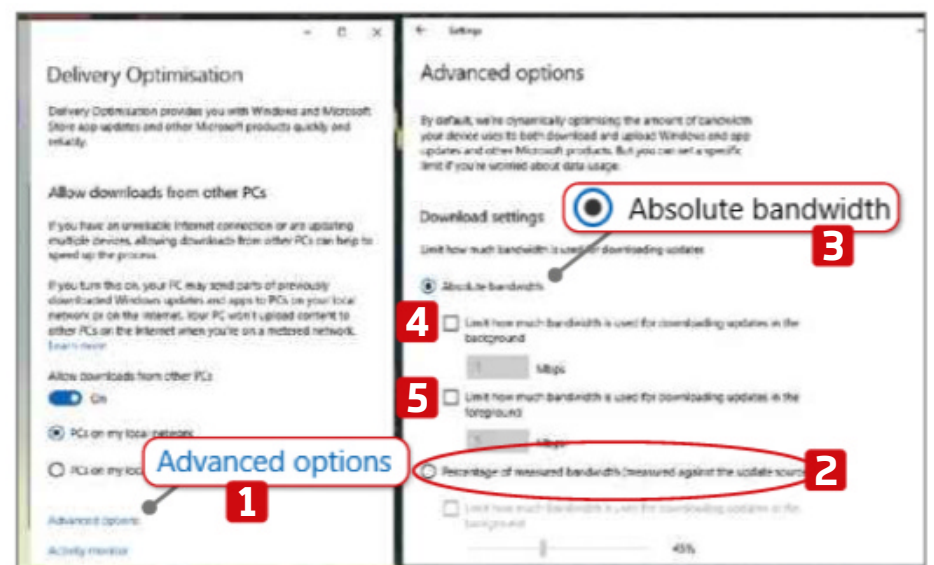
5 Windows 10's 'Network status' page has received a bit of an overhaul – to access it, type **network** into the Start bar. This page has two new buttons, **Properties** **1** and **'Data usage'**, **2** with details of your Network status appearing above. **3** 'Data usage' lets you view your apps' data use with one click. **4**



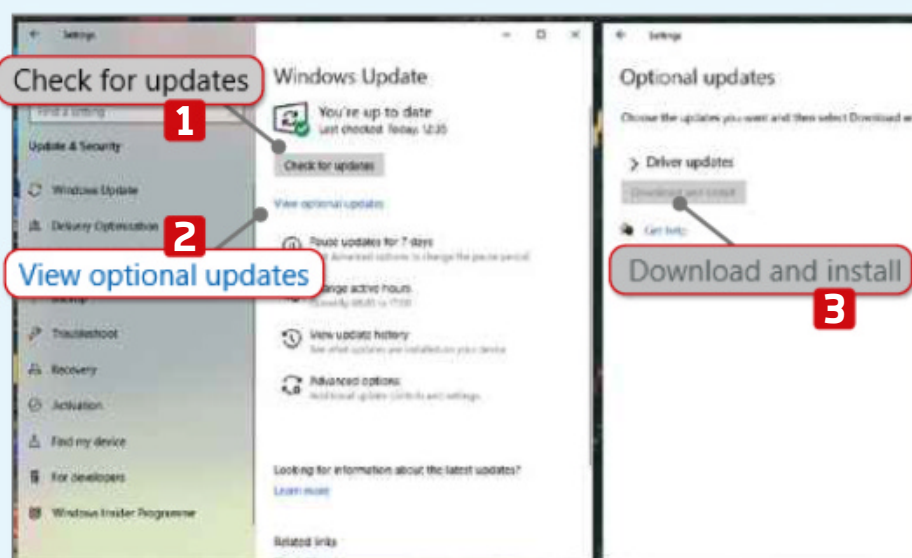
6 A new setting, 'Require Windows Hello sign-in for Microsoft accounts' **1** aims to strengthen your security. If your device supports Windows Hello, head to 'Sign-in options' **2** to switch it on. **3** With this active, Windows Hello becomes the only way to sign into any app linked to your Microsoft account, doing away with the need for passwords.



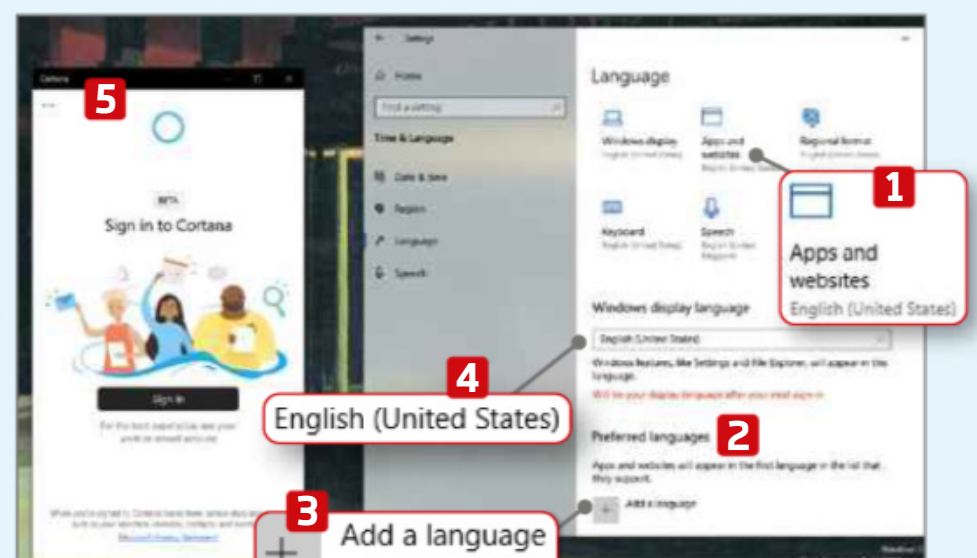
7 Scroll further down the 'Sign-in options' page to find 'Restart apps'. **1** In previous versions, this option was found elsewhere in the system settings. With this feature switched on, **2** Windows notes which apps are open when you sign out, and then restarts them when you sign back in. If you don't want your apps to start automatically, switch this off.



8 Search Start for delivery optimisation, then enter Advanced Options. **1** Here you can control your bandwidth using the familiar 'Percentage of measured bandwidth' option **2** or the new 'Absolute bandwidth'. **3** This new option lets you determine the maximum background **4** and foreground **5** bandwidth in megabits per second (Mbps).



9 Speaking of updates, Windows Update has also received some attention. Below the familiar 'Check for updates' button **1** is a link to 'View optional updates'. **2** Click this to see a list of any minor Windows updates that are available. Select those you want, then click 'Download and install'. **3**



10 Click any icon **1** in the Language settings to change the current language. If Cortana won't start after the Update (see Expert Tip), go to 'Preferred languages', **2** click 'Add a language', **3** then choose 'English (United States)'. Select this option in 'Windows display language'. **4** Sign out then back in, and Cortana should return. **5**



Workshop 3

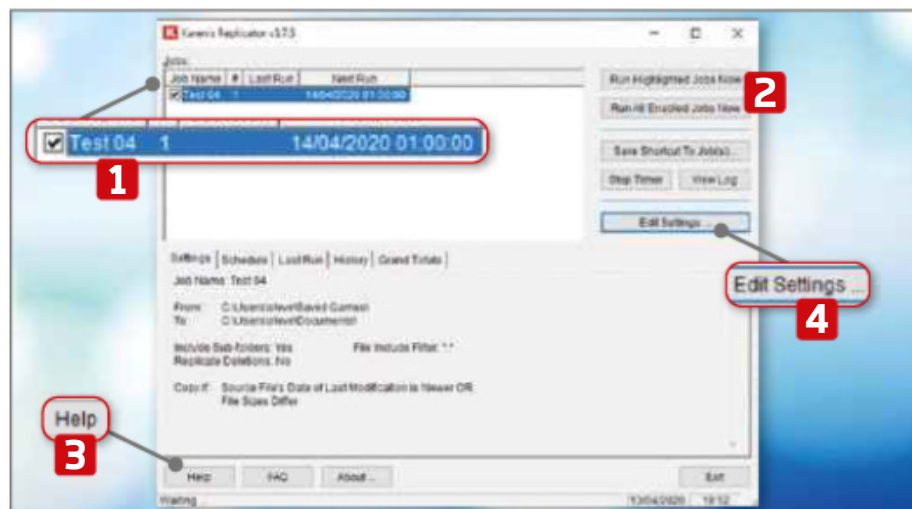
Back up anything with Karen's Replicator

Backing up your files is one of the most important PC tasks you can do, because you never know when disaster might strike, but not all your files and folders need the same level of backup attention. Your documents might merit a daily

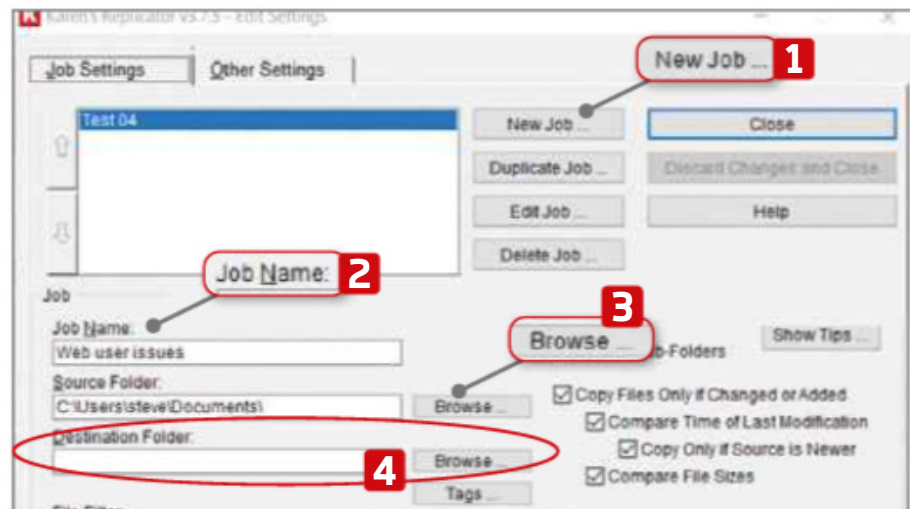
backup, for example, while you could back up your photos less frequently. Karen's powerful free Replicator tool can keep all your files safe on an appropriate schedule.



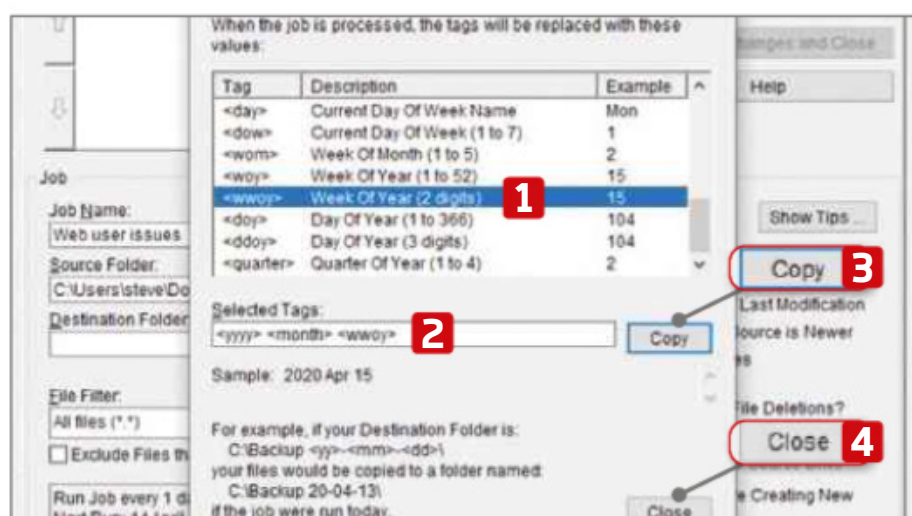
Karen's Replicator: bit.ly/replicator500 | ⌚ 10 mins | 🌈 7, 8, 10



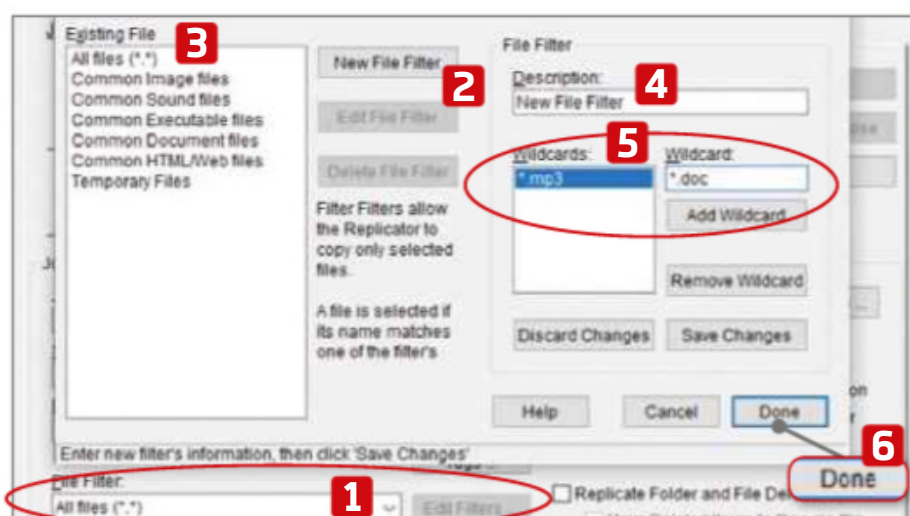
1 The main panel in Karen's Replicator shows your current jobs and other relevant details. **1** The action buttons **2** on the right are greyed out until you set up a new job. At the foot of the screen is a Help button **3** that acts as a basic manual. To get started, click Edit Settings. **4**



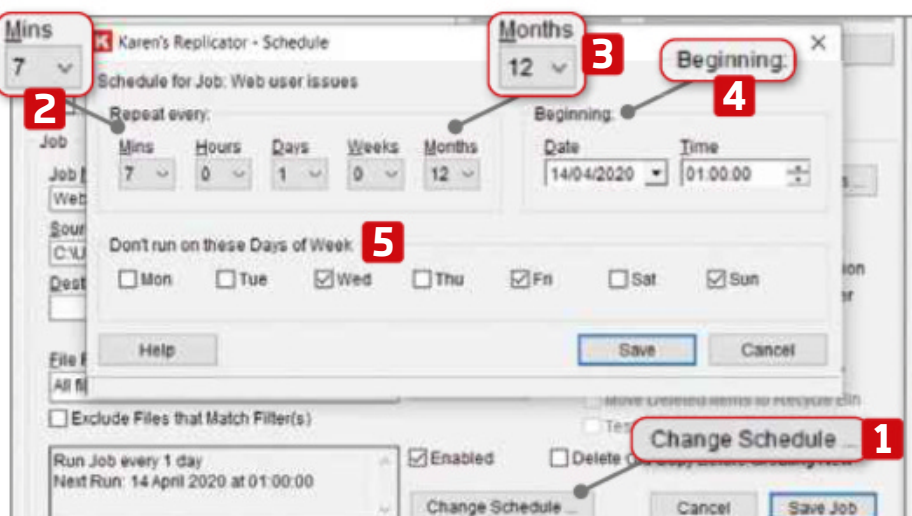
2 This opens the Job Settings screen. Click New Job, **1** which opens a new panel. Give your job a name, **2** then press the Source Folder's Browse button **3** to select a folder to back up. Next, click the Destination Folder's Browse button **4** and choose where to store your backup.



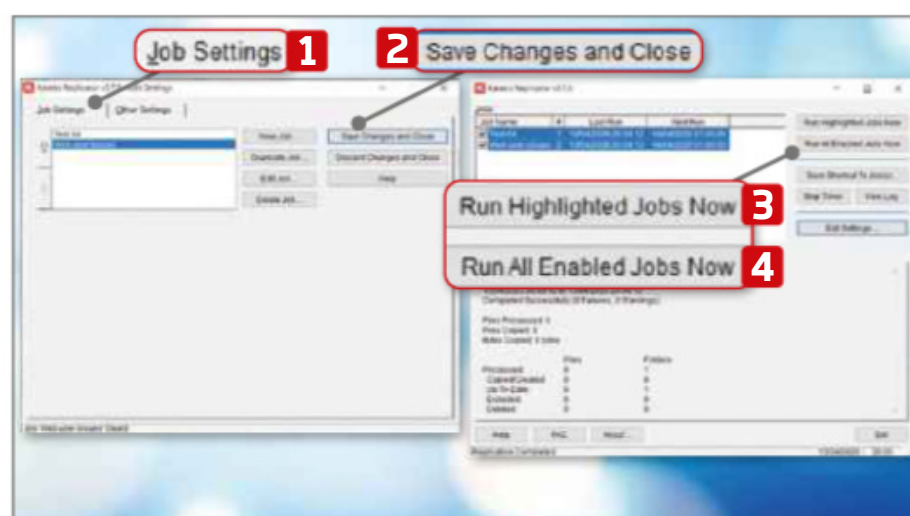
3 Now you can refine your backups. Tags add descriptive elements to the backup's folder name. Highlight any tags you want from the list. **1** This adds them to the Selected Tags box **2** in the order you selected them. Examples of each tag appear below this box. Click Copy, **3** then Close. **4**



4 Next, set File Filters to include or exclude file types. Select a file type from the menu or click Edit Filters. **1** Press New File Filter or Edit File Filter **2** to open the panel. **3** Name the filter, **4** then add file types under Wildcards. **5** Use *. [file type] format, such as *.mp3. Click Done. **6**



5 Replicator lets you schedule backups. To ensure your backup happens more than once, click Change Schedule **1** and use the drop-downs to set the frequency - from every minute **2** to once a year. **3** You can also set a start date for your schedule, **4** and exclude specific days of the week. **5**



6 Click Save Job and your backup will appear in the Job Settings box, **1** where you can Duplicate, Edit or Delete it. Click 'Save Changes and Close' **2** to return to the main screen. Once you've created all your jobs, click Run Highlighted Jobs Now **3** or Run All Enabled Jobs Now **4** to run a backup.

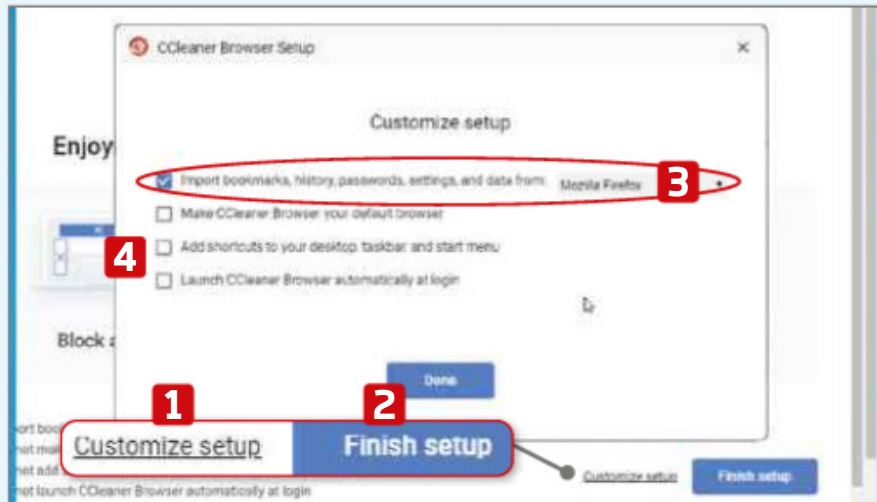


Protect your privacy with CCleaner Browser

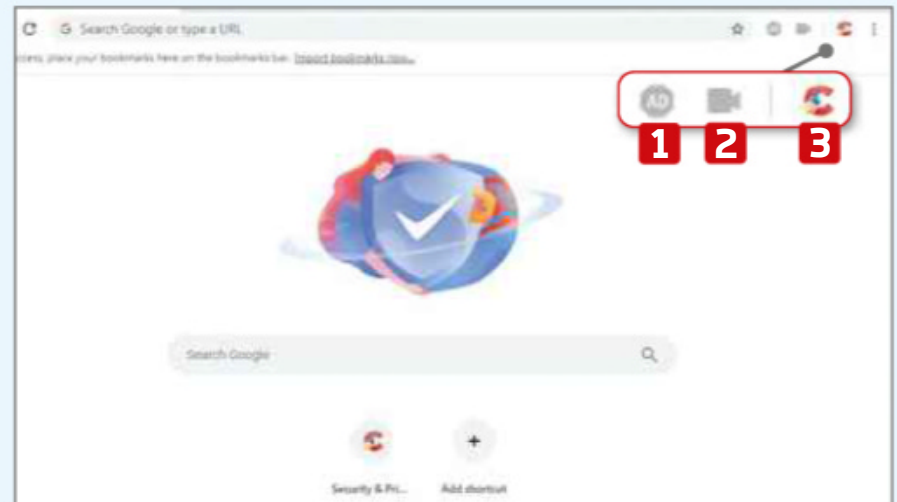
Piriform's latest addition to the CCleaner stable is a secure web browser based on Chrome. It comes with uBlock Origin's ad blocker built in, and promises to reduce the amount of tracking and junk you have to endure

as you browse the web. If you've tried Avast Secure Browser, you may recognise some of the icons – Avast owns Piriform and is using the same tools in both browsers.

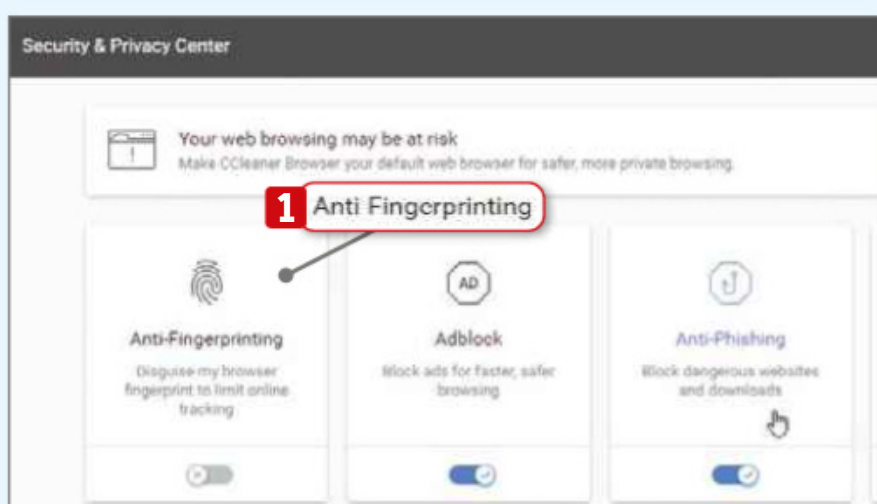
CCleaner Browser: bit.ly/cclean500 | ⌚ 10 mins | 🖥️ 8, 10



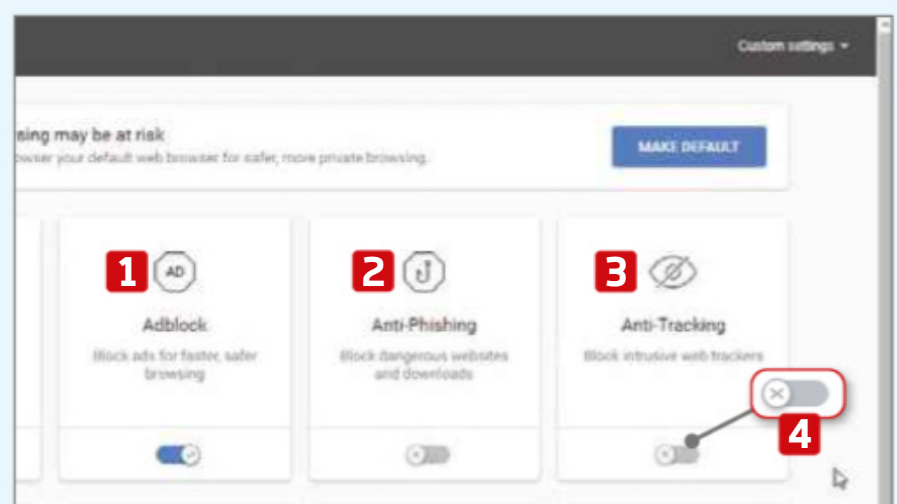
1 Install the browser – there's no hidden junk, so you can safely use the default installation. When it's finished, click 'Customize setup' **1** rather than 'Finish setup'. **2** Choose which browser you want to import your user data from, **3** and check that you're happy with the other settings. **4**



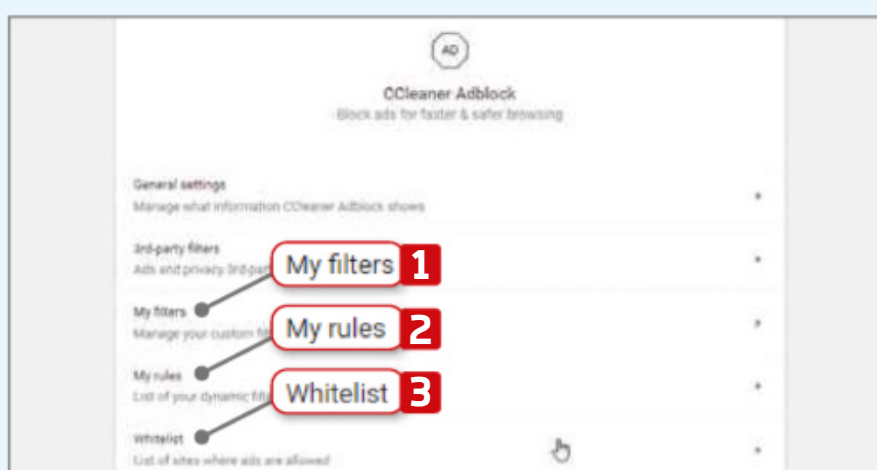
2 The customised toolbar offers three new icons: CCleaner Adblock, **1** CCleaner Video Downloader **2** and CCleaner Security & Privacy Center. **3** Click the Security & Privacy Center icon to access the browser's additional tools.



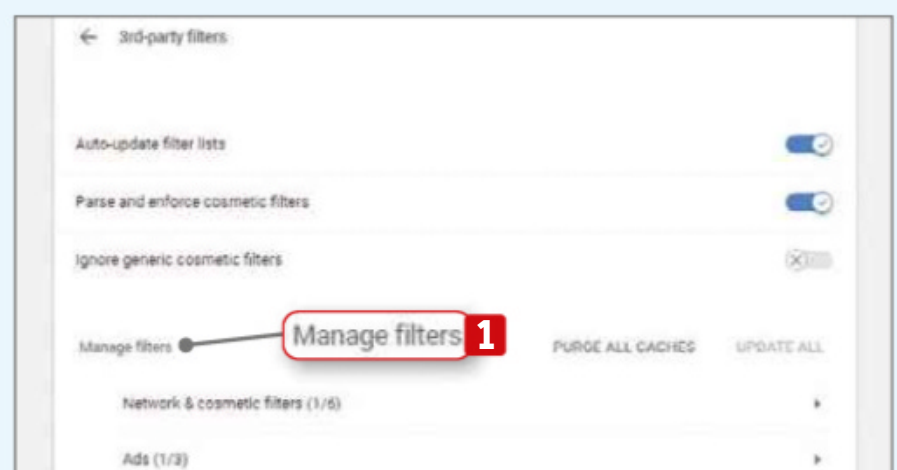
3 Everything is switched on by default except Anti-Fingerprinting, **1** which can stop some websites working properly. However, this feature is worth switching on if you're willing to sacrifice a little convenience for better privacy.



4 The three core tools, Adblock, **1** Anti-Phishing **2** and Anti-Tracking, **3** go above and beyond Chrome's standard features. The latter two have simple on/off switches, so if you find they're being too aggressive with your favourite sites, temporarily switch them off. **4**



5 The Adblock tool is powered by uBlock Origin (bit.ly/ublocko500). Click it, then 'Advanced settings'. Here you can add filters **1** and rules **2** to tailor its activity to your needs. To allow ads on one site, such as a news source you want to support, for example, add it to the Whitelist. **3**



6 The '3rd-party filters' section offers plenty of additional features, and these are organised by type. **1** If you find you're plagued by a particular ad-related annoyance or online threat, look through the options here to see if there's a filter that can help you combat it.

Weekend Project

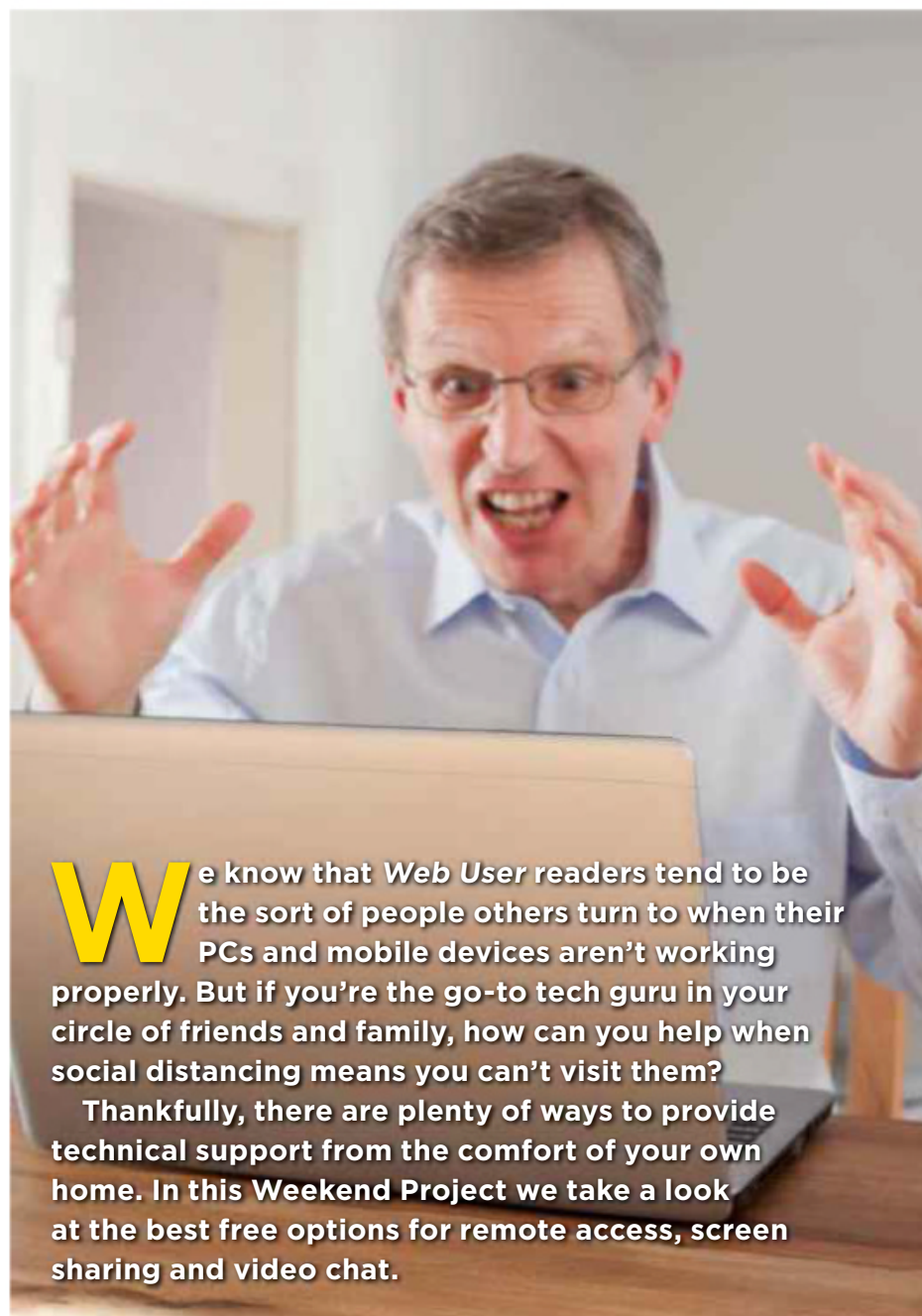
Get to grips with some serious tech tinkering to boost your computer and other devices



How to...

Troubleshoot and fix other people's tech remotely

Wayne Williams explains how you can continue to help friends and family with their tech problems, even if you can't visit them in person



We know that *Web User* readers tend to be the sort of people others turn to when their PCs and mobile devices aren't working properly. But if you're the go-to tech guru in your circle of friends and family, how can you help when social distancing means you can't visit them?

Thankfully, there are plenty of ways to provide technical support from the comfort of your own home. In this Weekend Project we take a look at the best free options for remote access, screen sharing and video chat.



Help via video chat

Offering technical support over the phone can be tricky, because you can't see what the other person is looking at. A video chat, on the other hand, lets you provide face-to-face help, almost as if you were in the same room. There's certainly no shortage of tools for video chats, from old favourites such as Skype ([skype.com](https://www.skype.com)) to newer options including the current rising star Zoom

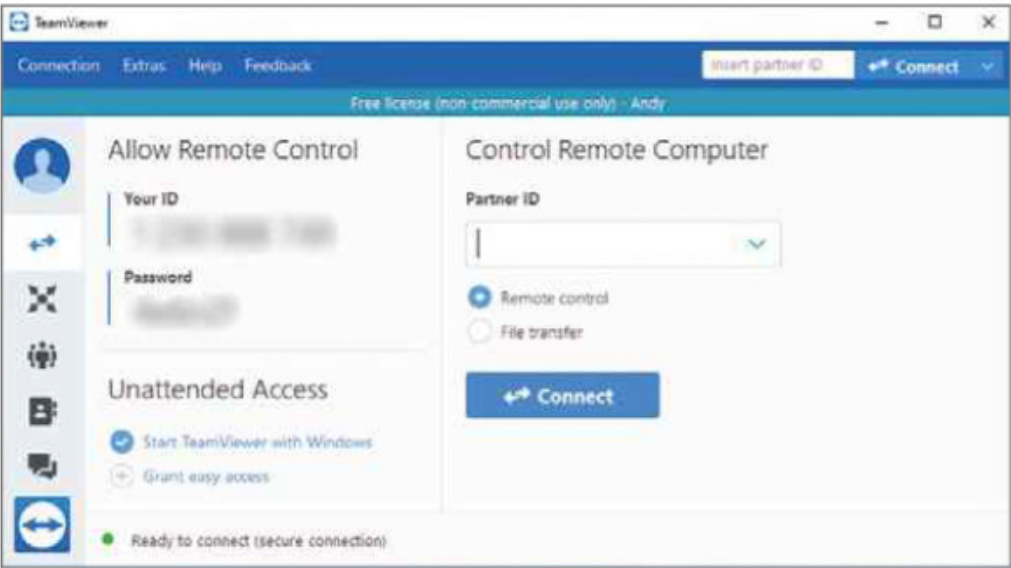
(zoom.us - see FAQ on page 38). You can even use Facebook Messenger (messenger.com) and WhatsApp (whatsapp.com) to video-call someone if they don't have access to other options.

The beauty of apps like Skype and Zoom is that they're available for all devices, so if your friend or family member's computer has stopped working, you can call them on their phone, and they can show you what's

wrong. If you get stuck while trying to troubleshoot the problem, you can always invite someone else into the chat to provide additional assistance.

The other benefit of video chats is that you can help with *any* malfunctioning technology, whether it's a frozen set-top box, a faulty TV or any other device you can think of.

Another option you can use to provide support is the augmented reality



TeamViewer is easy to use and comes with lots of professional tools

Your choice of remote access tool will probably depend on what you're trying to achieve and how easy (or otherwise) it is to get the other person to give you access to their PC. Most decent remote access software is free for home use, and is also available for mobile phones and tablets.

In addition to its popular and long-established remote access software, TeamViewer also offers an augmented reality app called Pilot, which gives you a live view through your friend's or family member's smartphone camera. It's not unlike video calling, but you can provide live visual guidance and drop 3D markers on real-world objects. If you were helping someone set up a router, for example, you could draw circles around the relevant ports, or point to the reset button or Wi-Fi password.

Pilot costs a hefty £416 for business users but, like TeamViewer's main

app TeamViewer Pilot, which we'll discuss in a moment.

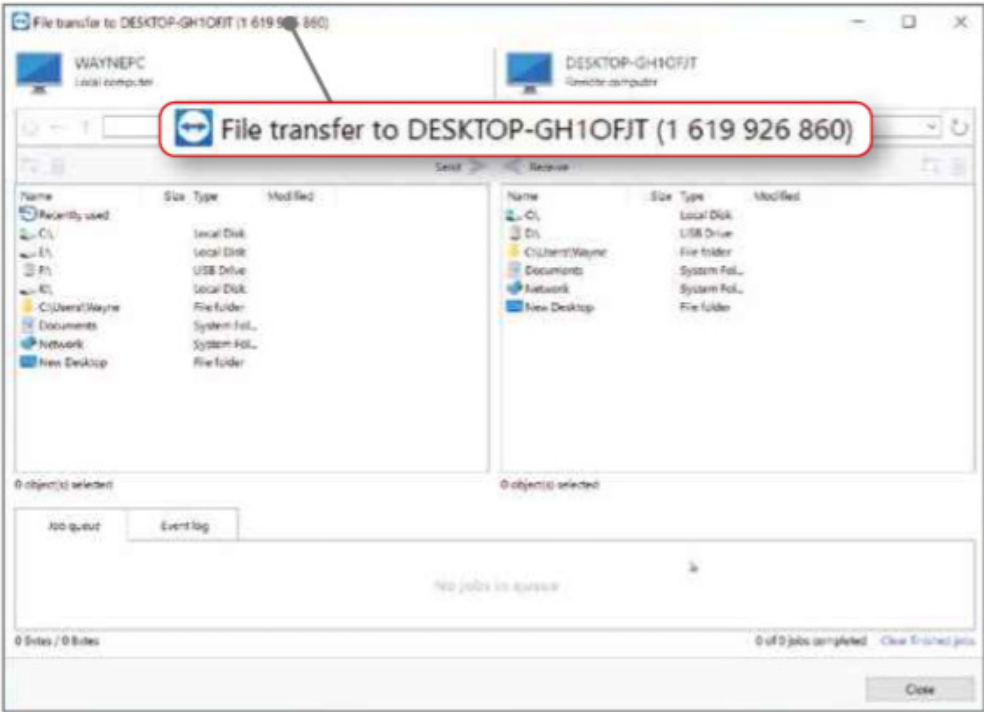
Access their PC remotely

Often the best way to solve a computer problem from afar is to take over the PC or Mac remotely. This gives you full access to the computer as if you were sitting at it, which means you can install or uninstall software, run a virus scan, tinker with the settings and make whatever changes are necessary to solve the problem. You can also chat with the owner of the computer as you work.

To gain remote access to a PC, the other person needs to give you permission and may need to install some software. We know from experience that guiding people through this step can be frustratingly tricky, but you can always use video chat to talk them through it.

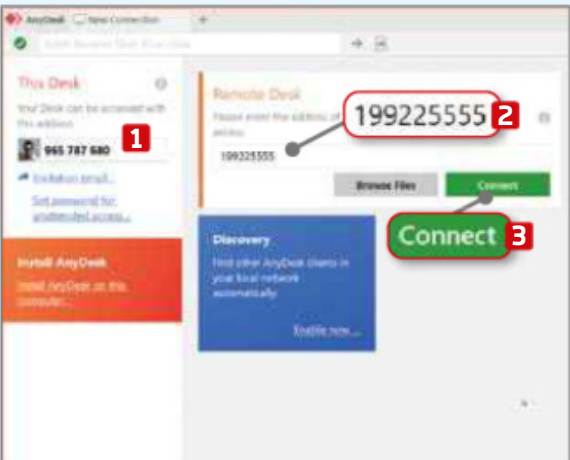
There are quite a few tools you can use for remote access. We often recommend TeamViewer (teamviewer.com) because it's easy to set up and use, and provides all the features you're likely to need. Another option is AnyDesk ([anydesk](http://anydesk.com)

[.com](http://anydesk.com)), which is easier to set up than TeamViewer and almost as useful. Alternatively, Chrome Remote Desktop (remotedesktop.google.com) works through your browser – and not just Chrome but Firefox and others, too. We show you how to use AnyDesk in our Mini Workshop, below.



If you only want to copy files between PCs, use TeamViewer's File Transfer option

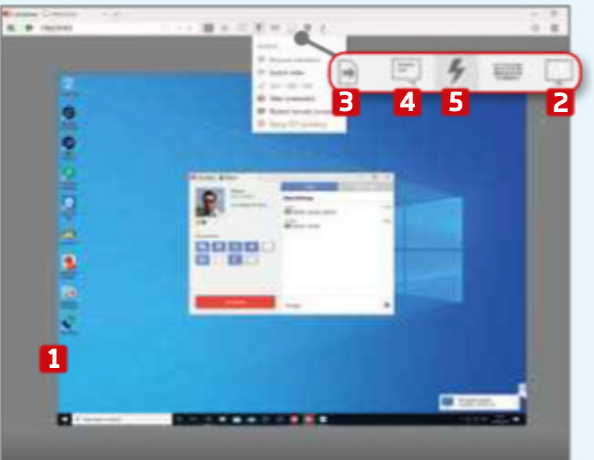
MINI WORKSHOP | Fix problems remotely using AnyDesk



1 To get started with AnyDesk, download and run the software, then ask the person whose PC you want to access to do the same. They could use your address to connect to you, **1** but it's better to ask for theirs. Enter it into the box **2** and click Connect. **3**



2 The remote person will receive a session request from you. This tells them who the request is from, **1** and lists the required permissions. **2** You can have a chat about this before you connect, **3** but to allow remote access, they need to click Accept. **4**



3 After a short wait, you can see their desktop on your screen **1** and interact with it as if you were sitting at their PC. If they have more than one monitor, you can switch between them. **2** You can share files, **3** chat, **4** and perform actions such as switching sides or restarting the remote PC. **5**

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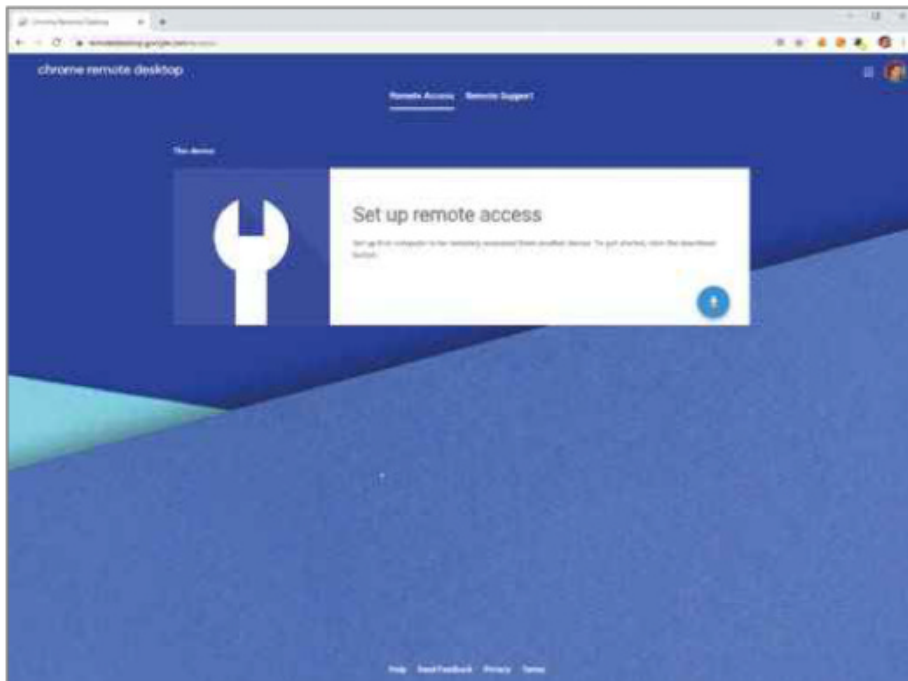
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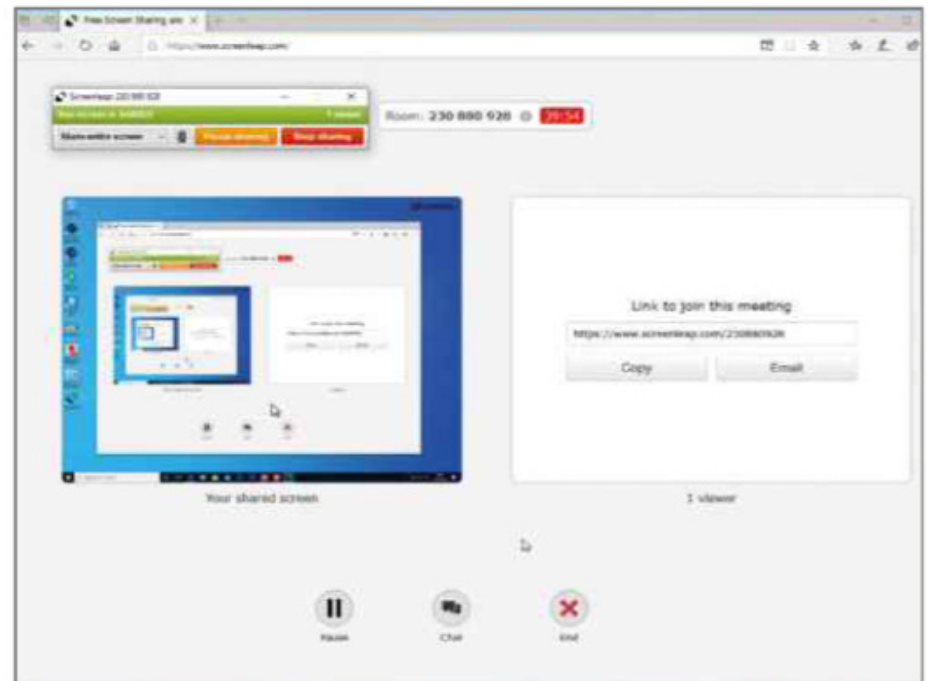
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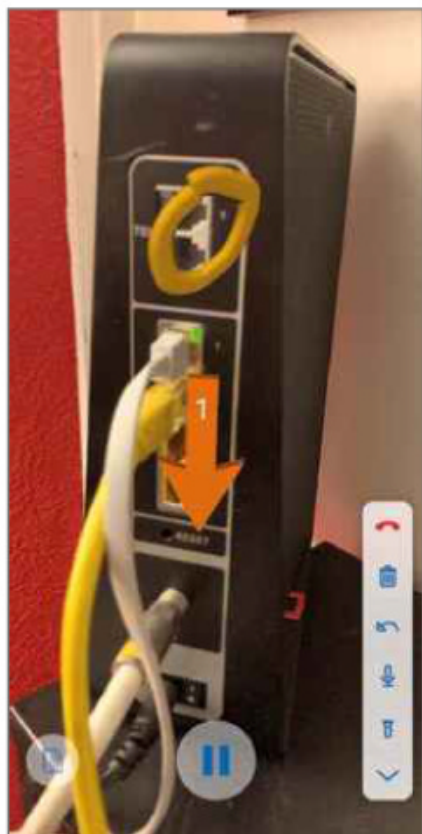
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Chrome Remote Desktop lets you access someone's PC through your web browser



Screenleap is one of the easiest ways to share your screen with others, and it takes seconds to set up



TeamViewer Pilot's mobile interface lets you mute the sound and turn on the device's flashlight

application, it's entirely free for home use. We show you how to set it up in our Mini Workshop, below.

Share your screens

Not everyone likes the idea of granting full access to their PC, and some people are wary of installing the necessary software. Screenleap (www.screenleap.com) is the perfect solution. It lets anyone share their screen instantly without installing any software, and the free edition doesn't allow remote control or video conferencing. It has some other restrictions, including a daily screen-sharing limit of 40 minutes, two meetings and up to eight viewers, but it should be more than adequate for home users.

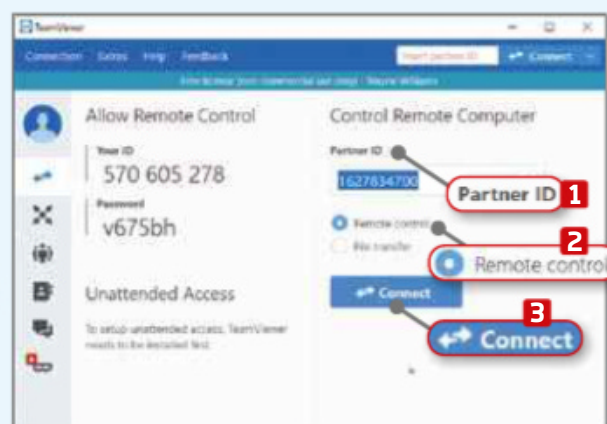
You don't need to create an account. Simply click the green button on the web page, save the small (825KB) download and run it. Your shared screen appears in a live preview, with a link to the meeting on the right that you can share with others. This link includes a nine-digit room ID, which people can enter into the box on the Screenleap site to view your PC instantly.

You can share the entire screen or just a portion of it, toggle the mouse cursor on or off for viewers, see how many people are viewing your screen, pause sharing, start a chat and end the session. A counter shows how much of your 40 minutes is left, so you won't be taken by surprise when the sharing stops. ■

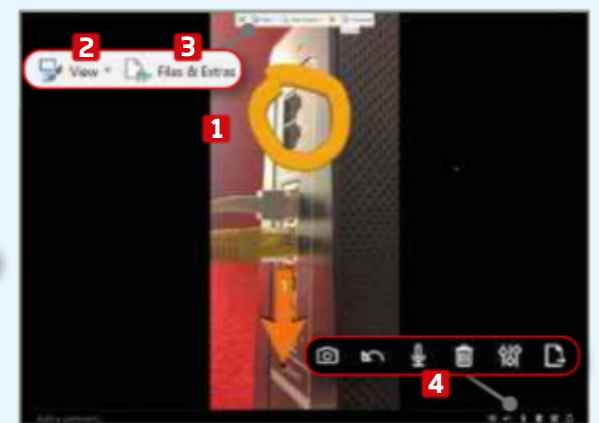


MINI WORKSHOP | Get started with TeamViewer Pilot

1 TeamViewer Pilot lets you provide visual guidance using augmented reality. Download TeamViewer on your PC or mobile device, then ask the person you're helping to install Pilot on their mobile device. You'll need to know their ID **1** which they can share with you directly through the app. **2**



2 Launch TeamViewer on your device and enter the other person's Partner ID. **1** Leave it set on 'Remote control' **2** and click Connect. **3** The other person will receive an incoming call. They must answer this and grant any requested permissions – usually access to their camera and microphone.



3 The view through their device's camera now appears on your screen. Both of you can highlight areas by drawing in the app or tapping to add arrows. **1** Switch to full screen under View, **2** and record the session under Files & Extras. **3** You can also take a snapshot, mute the microphone and delete previous markers. **4**

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Create multi-camera video chats

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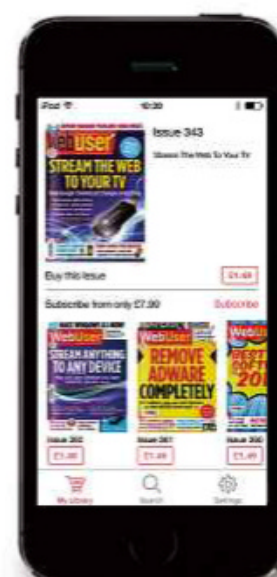
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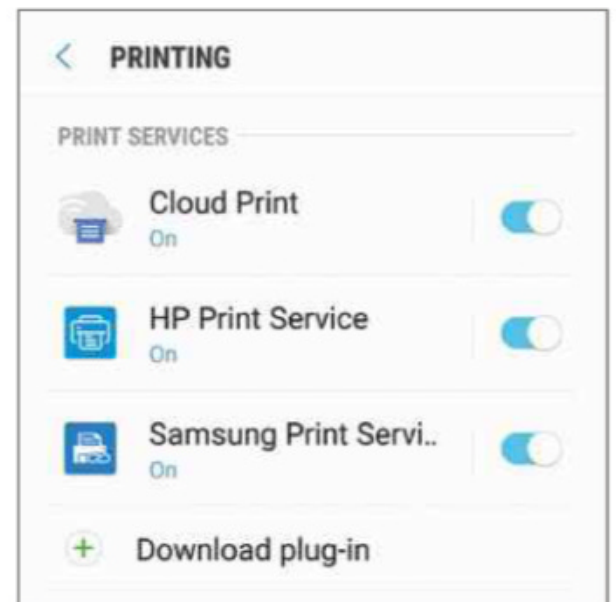
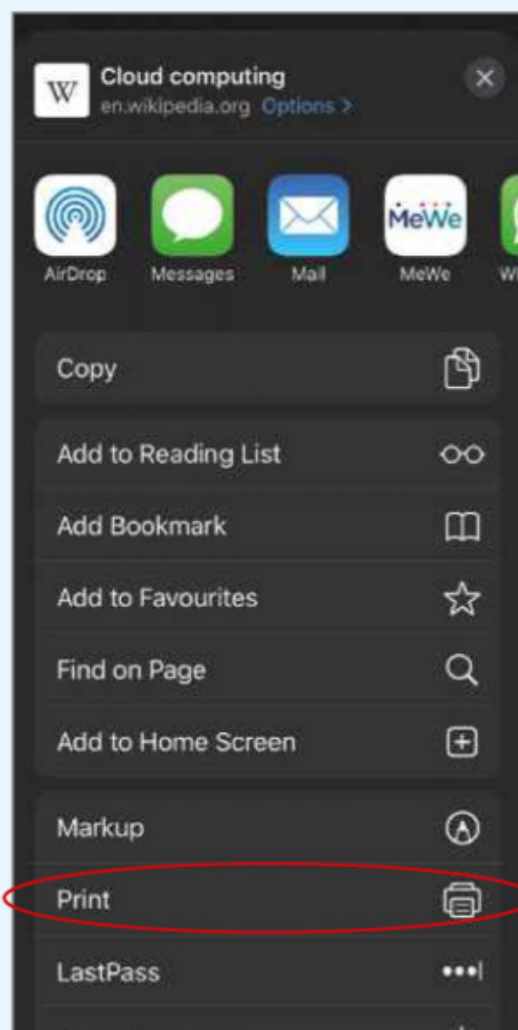
Web User Masterclass

Print anything directly from your phone or tablet

Print wirelessly from your iPhone or iPad

Although you'll need a wireless printer to print from your iPhone or iPad, you may not need any other apps or software. To try it out, open any app and tap the Share or Actions icon, which is usually in a toolbar at the top or bottom of the screen. Ignore the list of apps at the bottom of the screen, and swipe up and up again to reveal hidden options. At the bottom of the menu, you should see the Print option. If no printer is selected, tap Select Printer to see any available devices. You probably have only one printer, so select it. Now you can tap Print to make a paper copy of your document, photo, web page or whatever it is you want to print.

For some strange reason, Print is hidden among the Share features



Enable or disable Android printing services, and tap items to check ink levels

phone manufacturer's, the printer manufacturer's and Cloud Print. Having all your print services enabled at once isn't usually a problem, but if you're having trouble printing, disable them all and then restart your phone. Enable just one service and try to print with it. Android phones vary, but you can find these controls by searching Settings for 'printers' or going to Settings, Connections, More Connection Settings, Printing.



Some printers offer a 'print service' or 'print plug-in' app to make printing easier

Install Android print services

You may find that printing from your Android phone simply works, but it's more likely that you'll need to use a print service app. Even if it's not essential, these apps make printing a lot easier. Open the Google Play store and search for 'Manufacturer print service' or 'Manufacturer print plug-in', replacing 'Manufacturer' with the name of your printer's manufacturer – 'HP print service', for example. Install the plug-in, run it and follow any instructions.

The Cloud Print app is another useful tool and is also available from the store. Alternatively, your phone's manufacturer may provide its own print service app, such as Samsung Print Service – although if it does, it's probably installed by default.

Enable or disable print services

Your Android device may have several print services installed, including the

Print from Chrome

You might have trouble finding the Print option in Chrome on an Android phone or tablet, because it doesn't appear in the main menu. As with iOS devices, this control is hidden in the sharing menu instead. Tap the three dots in the top-right corner of Chrome and press Share, followed by the Printer icon. If the printer named at the top of the screen isn't the right one, select the name of the correct printer, then tap the printer icon to print.

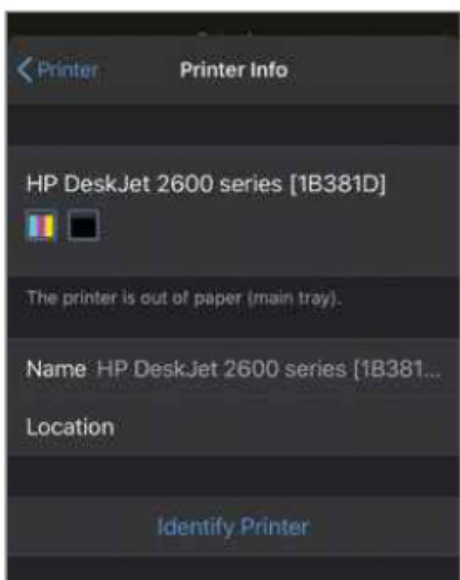
If you see words that look like they've been typed in a typewriter, follow the instructions and type them exactly as they appear, paying close attention to spaces and punctuation.



Check paper and ink levels

The advantage of printing wirelessly from your phone or tablet is that you don't need to get up from the sofa. The downside is that you can't see if the printer has run out of paper or ink. Thankfully, some printers can report this information over Wi-Fi.

On an iPhone, tap the share button and swipe up to find the Print option. Before you print, tap the printer or Select Printer. Tap the circled 'i' next to the printer and you'll see its status, including whether it has paper. It can't tell you how many sheets it has, but at



Your printer may report ink and paper levels to the phone, so you can check before you print

least you can see when it's empty.

The ink cartridge levels may appear here, too. Tap the printer, then 'i' to check that you have plenty of ink – especially if you're about to print photos, which use a lot.

Android phones differ in their operating system

versions and capabilities, but go to Settings, Connections, More Connection Settings, Printing, or search settings for 'printers'. Tap a print service, then select a printer to see some information about it, including its paper and ink levels.



Use Wi-Fi Direct printing

Wi-Fi Direct lets you connect your Android device directly to a printer without using a wireless network, but not every device or printer supports it. To see if you have it, go to Settings, Connections, More Connections, Printing and have a look around. We found ours in the Samsung Print service, Direct-PrinterName. Enable it, and when you next print something, it will appear in the list as Wi-Fi Direct printer. You can then select it as the output device.



Explore the settings to see if your printer and phone offer Wi-Fi Direct printing

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave



Print to PDF

If you can't print your document to a printer because it's not working or has run out of paper or ink, try printing to PDF instead. You can then save the PDF file on your

device or online, and print it later – perhaps from a different device such as your computer.

In any iPhone app, such as Notes or Safari, for example, tap the Share button at the top or bottom of the screen.

Swipe up to reveal the hidden menu

options and select Markup, then simply press Done (you can ignore all the tools unless you really want to use them). This gives you the option to save your note, document, web page or email as a PDF file and save it in the location of your choice, such as an online drive.

For Android devices, we suggest installing the Cloud Print service, which lets you save anything that can be printed as a PDF file on Google Drive. When printing from Chrome, for example, select the Share option, then tap the printer. Tap the printer at the top of the screen to see a list of available devices and options, then select either 'Save as PDF' or 'Save to Google Drive', which uses Cloud Print.

When you're next at your PC, you can locate the PDF in your cloud storage or wherever you saved it, and double-click it to read or print it.



Troubleshoot mobile printing

Pop-up windows in browsers and email attachments can cause

problems when printing, because your device may not be able to work out which part of the page to print. For example, a window on a website may pop up to show a money-off voucher, but there may be more than one print

option. Your browser has a print feature, but the web page may also have its own Print button specifically to print the voucher. Try both.

Android has several print options, so when you get to the print screen, tap the printer and try a different one, such as the phone manufacturer's print service or the printer manufacturer's one.

If you've ever replaced your printer, the old one may still be set up on your phone and selected by default. Make sure the printer selected is the same model you're trying to use.

If something won't print, one workaround is to copy the text or image and paste

it into a different app, such as a notes app, Microsoft Word or Google Docs, and print it from there. Another option is to take a screenshot, then view and print it from the phone's gallery. If you simply need a record of something, such as an online receipt or voucher, you may not even need to print it – just save the screenshot instead.

The best way to fix any technological glitch is to turn the device off and on again, and this applies to printers, phones and tablets, too. Also, if possible, set up your printer using a computer, then add a phone, rather than the other way round.



Add a Cloud printer

As we've seen, there's more than one way to print from an Android device – and here's yet another one. Go to Settings, Connections, More Connections, Printing, Cloud Print. Press the three dots in the corner and select 'Add printer'. Select the printer you want to add, then tap OK in the pop-up window. You may need to press a button on the printer to confirm cloud printing. It will then appear in the printer selection menu.



If you can't print from your mobile device, save the document as a PDF

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



HARDWARE

Fix an external USB hard drive

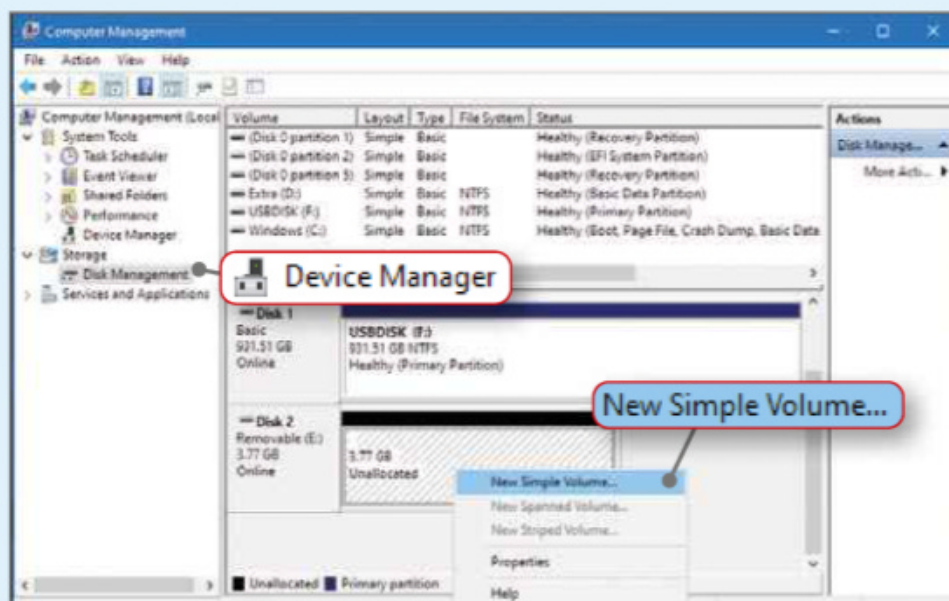
Q My new hard drive doesn't show up in File Explorer. I tried assigning it a different drive letter in Disk Management, but it didn't show up there either. I've also tried plugging in other USB hard drives, all of them new, and none of those work in any socket – although USB memory sticks work fine. What's wrong?

Emma Clark, via email

A If this problem affected only one drive, the solution would be simple, but as you've tried several drives without luck, it sounds like a hardware issue. Have you tried using different USB cables to connect the drives? If you place your hand on the drive as it powers up, can you feel any vibrations or heat? Both would indicate that it's receiving power. Some drives produce no vibrations and always remain cool, but even those usually give some indication that they're switched on, such as an LED, for example. If a drive looks dead and feels dead, then maybe it is dead.

Assuming the drive is working, however, we'll look at some other possibilities. One is that no drive letter is assigned. Right-click This PC in

Create or delete hard drive partitions using the Computer Management tool



Explorer, select Management, then choose Disk Management under Storage. If you can see the drive in the display in the lower part of the window, right-click it and select 'Change drive letter'. Click Add and pick a letter, such as G or H, that isn't used for anything else. The drive may then appear.

If your drive hasn't been formatted and its space is listed as Unallocated, right-click it and select 'New simple volume'. Keep clicking Next and, when you get to the file system, select NTFS, which is the best option for large drives on Windows PCs. The drive should appear as soon as it's set up. There's also a chance it has been formatted but has since become

corrupt. Right-click it and select Delete Volume, then set it up again.

If it still isn't working, right-click the Start button or open Control Panel and run Device Manager. Expand 'Disk drives', right-click each item and select 'Update driver'. Choose 'Search automatically for drivers'. If that doesn't help, right-click and select 'Uninstall device', then restart the PC to install a new driver automatically. Expand 'Universal Serial Bus controllers', right-click each item and select 'Update driver'.

If none of these suggestions works, try the drive on another PC. If that works, you'll know your PC is faulty. If not, the drive is probably broken.

SOFTWARE

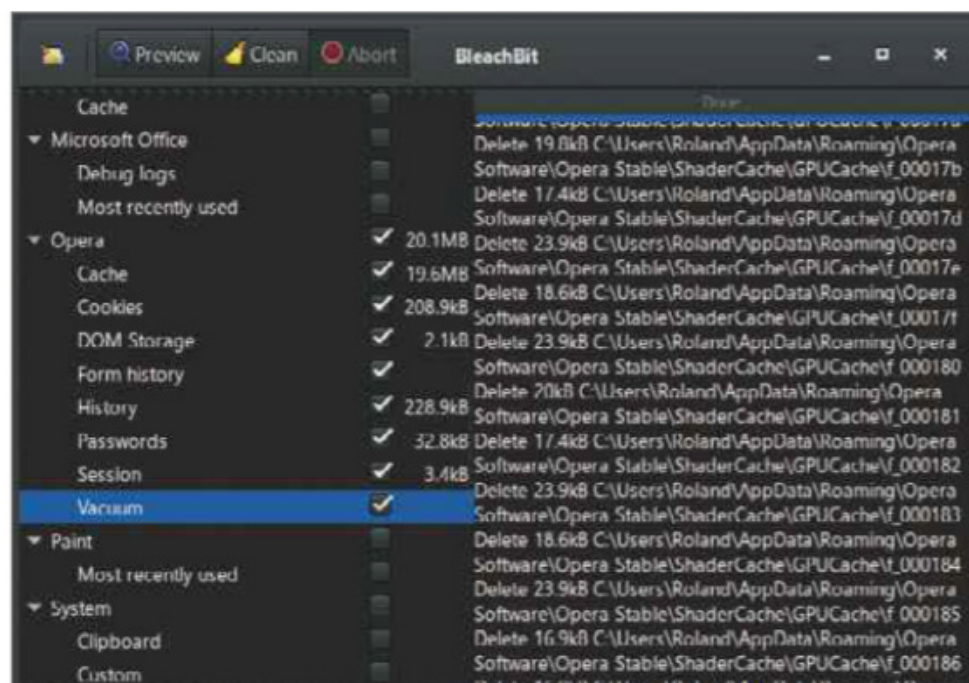
Restore text in BleachBit

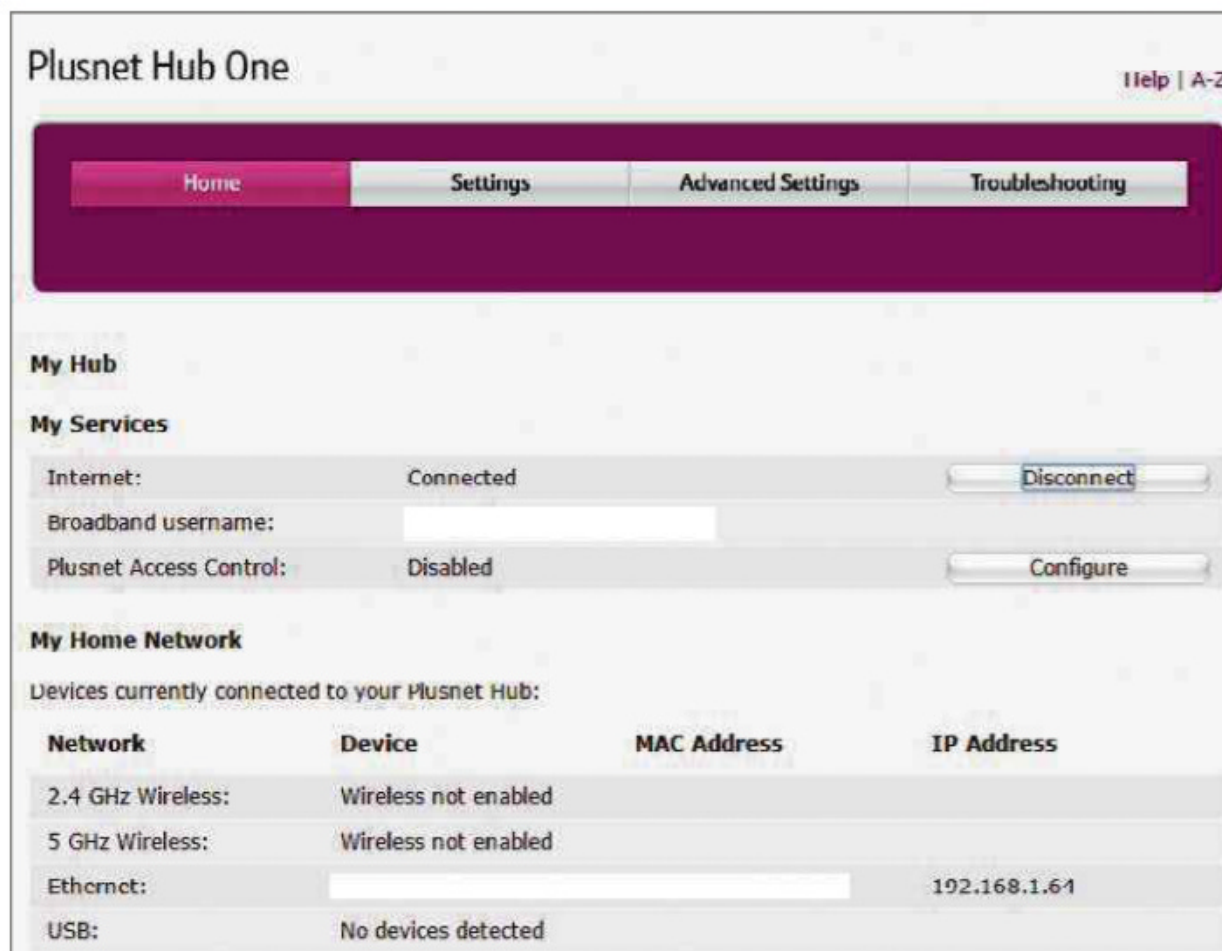
Q I started using BleachBit 3.2 (www.bleachbit.org) as an alternative to CCleaner for tidying up my computer. This software used to work perfectly on my 64-bit Windows 10 computer, but it stopped after a recent Microsoft update. The program still opens, but all the text has been replaced by little squares, making it impossible to use. I've tried the portable version, too, but the same problem occurs.

I also have an old 32-bit computer that runs Windows 10, and BleachBit works as it should on that.

Ian Cordiner, via email

Keep an eye on your cleaning software, because sometimes it can be a little too enthusiastic





Connect to the router's configuration tools to set it up

A When the letters in a program are replaced with unusual characters, such as squares, it usually means that the font the program needs is missing. Could you have performed an over-enthusiastic clean and deleted some old fonts you thought weren't in use? There's always a danger that clean-up tools might remove something that's better left alone.

The first thing to do is to uninstall BleachBit and download a new copy of the program. Sometimes programs add the fonts they need during installation. Try both the installed version and the portable version from the BleachBit website.

You'll find a full list of Windows 10 fonts at bit.ly/fonts500, but other than reinstalling the operating system, there's no way to download and install them. As BleachBit is still working on your old computer, however, open C:\Windows\Fonts in Explorer and compare the list with the one on your new PC. Use a USB stick to transfer any missing fonts from one computer to the other, double-clicking them to install them. When both PCs have all the same fonts, try opening BleachBit again.

The language settings in Windows can also affect how text appears, so check those, too. Open the Settings app, go to 'Time & Language' and check each section to make sure it's set to UK English.

INTERNET

Wi-Fi, but no internet

Q I'm having trouble connecting my Windows desktop PC to my Plusnet

Hub. My PC tells me I'm connected, but when I try to access the internet, a message appears saying I'm offline and that I should check my connections and try again. I haven't contacted Plusnet because I'm worried it's something I've

done. My Steam account is also affected, and tells me that Steam is incapable. All these things worked in the past.

Andy Pinnington, via email

A Your Plusnet Hub and other wireless routers have two jobs: to connect to the internet and to provide a wireless network around the home. The device directs traffic around your wireless network and over the internet as necessary. As you're still able to connect to the local network, that part of the router is definitely working – so you could print to a wireless printer, for example. However, you can't connect to the internet, which means you need to reset that function.

On the back of the router is a reset hole. Push the end of a paper clip into the hole. Hold down the button inside for around 20 seconds until the light on the front of the hub turns green. This resets the device to its factory settings.

You might need to configure some settings again by typing the router's IP address into a browser and logging in. The IP address should be 192.168.1.254. Enter those numbers into your browser's address bar. The router has a card or a sticker that shows the factory default

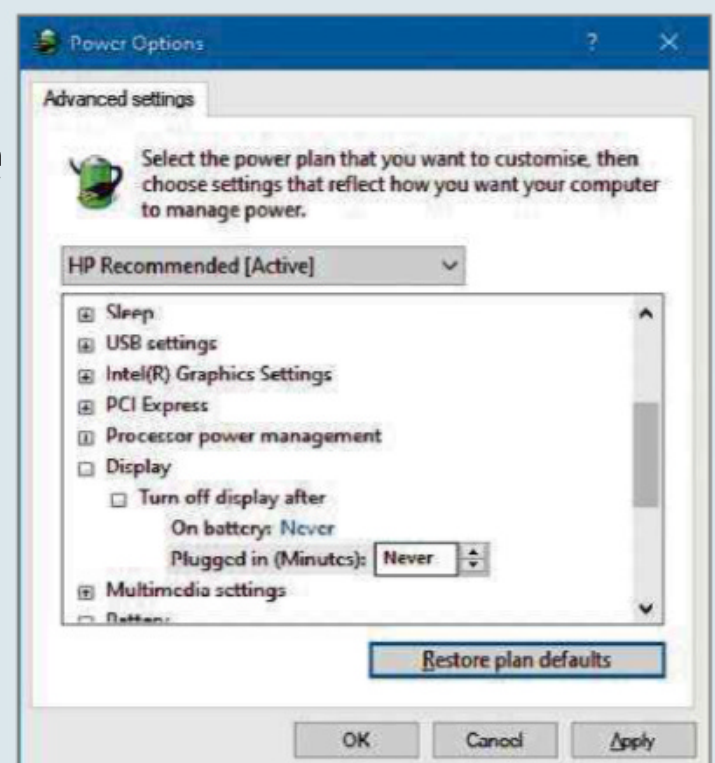
HARDWARE

Wake a monitor from sleep mode

Q I have a Dell XPS 8900 PC, which is connected to an AOC 2769M monitor using an HDMI cable. When the computer goes to sleep and I try to wake it again, it can't find the screen. I have to switch off the power to the computer to make it reboot. I've tried updating the drivers for my monitor and Nvidia graphics card, but to no avail. Sadly, the screen doesn't have a DVI connection, or I would use that instead.

Terry Pinchin, via email

A Your power configuration settings could be causing this problem. Open the Control Panel, select 'Small icons' view and click Power Options. Click 'Change plan settings' next to whichever plan is the current one. Click 'Restore default settings for this plan' then 'Change advanced power settings'.



If devices won't wake after sleeping, you might have to force them not to sleep

Expand 'Hard disk' and set 'Turn off hard disk after' to Never. Expand 'USB settings' and set 'USB selective suspend setting' to Disabled. Expand Display and set 'Turn off display after' to Never, which is the option before 1 minute. Then click OK and restart your PC for the changes to take effect. Hopefully, your screen will now wake when the computer does.





Wi-Fi name, username and password.

On the Home or Advanced tab, you'll find a button to set or change the broadband username. Click it and enter your Plusnet username, followed by @plusdsl.net and your password.

WINDOWS

Fix vanishing restore points

Q I've been battling with System Restore for some time now. Recently my computer wouldn't switch on, and because it couldn't find any restore points when trying to recover, I had no choice but to reset it. I can create restore points manually or use Quick Restore Maker v4 from The Windows Club, but for some reason Windows doesn't keep them. I can see a new restore point immediately after creating it, but it disappears soon afterwards.

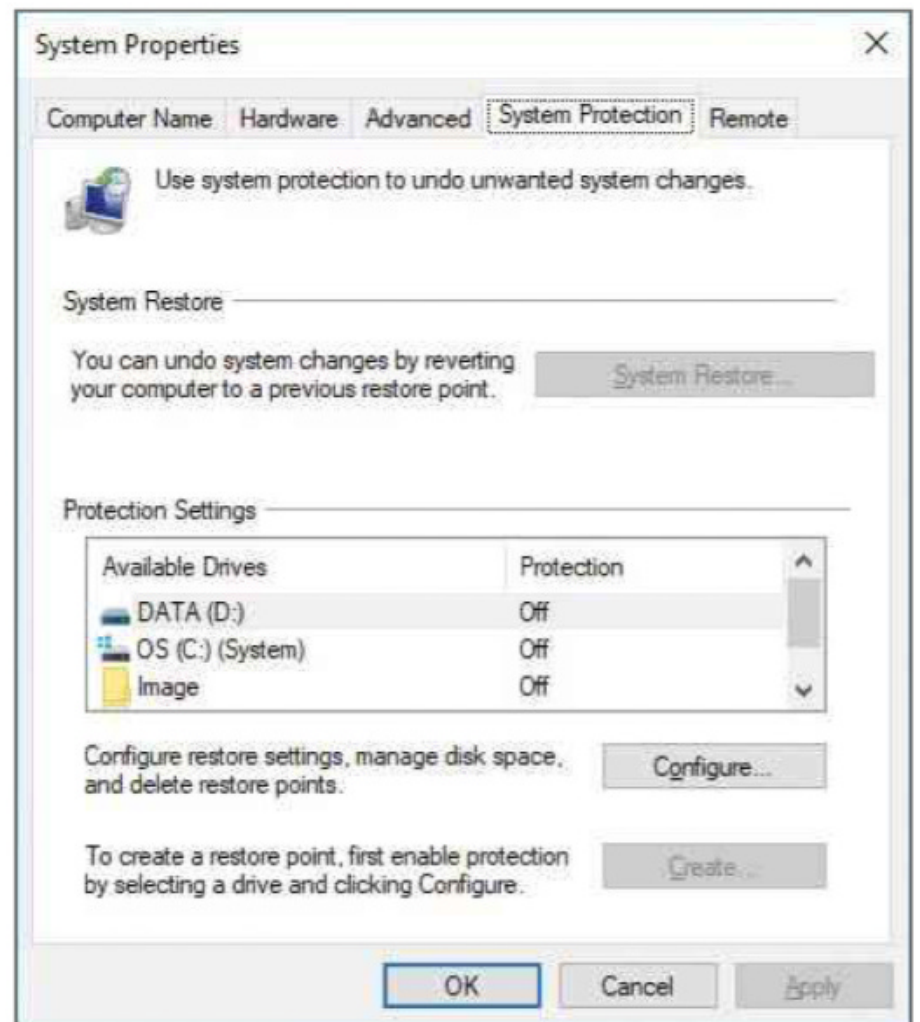
I've checked everything I can think of, such as making sure system restore is turned on; giving it 15% drive space; defragmenting the page file; running disk clean-up; checking for corrupted system files; performing a drive error check; making sure the volume shadow copy service is running; and looking at the triggers in System Restore properties, but the restore points still disappear.

Ria, via email

**Make sure
System Restore
is switched on**

A All those tasks you performed should have fixed the problem, so it's strange that it persists. You sent some screenshots of your settings, and we wonder whether your unusual drive configuration is responsible. You have Windows on C:, Programs on P: and Documents on D:. Both P: and D: have System Restore switched off. Try turning it on for all drives. Make sure there is sufficient free space on each drive for the amount allocated.

Also check that you're not using any automated clean-up tools that clear disk space by cleaning the system. These can sometimes delete important files such as restore points.



System Restore's ability to fix problems is limited. It can undo some system changes and restore files, but it's no substitute for a backup program. Make sure you back up your PC's internal drive to an external USB drive.

GENERAL PC

Move OneDrive off your C: drive

Q I store all my important files in OneDrive, and currently use around 40GB of a total capacity of 115GB. However, I was surprised to see that OneDrive, which is cloud based, is also on my C: drive, which is a 250GB solid-state drive. This leaves me with just 39GB free on my SSD.

I understand that I can move OneDrive to my D: drive, which has over 200GB free, but when I looked up how to do it, I found the explanations on YouTube very confusing. I'm 85 and need a simple explanation of how to do this, if that's possible.

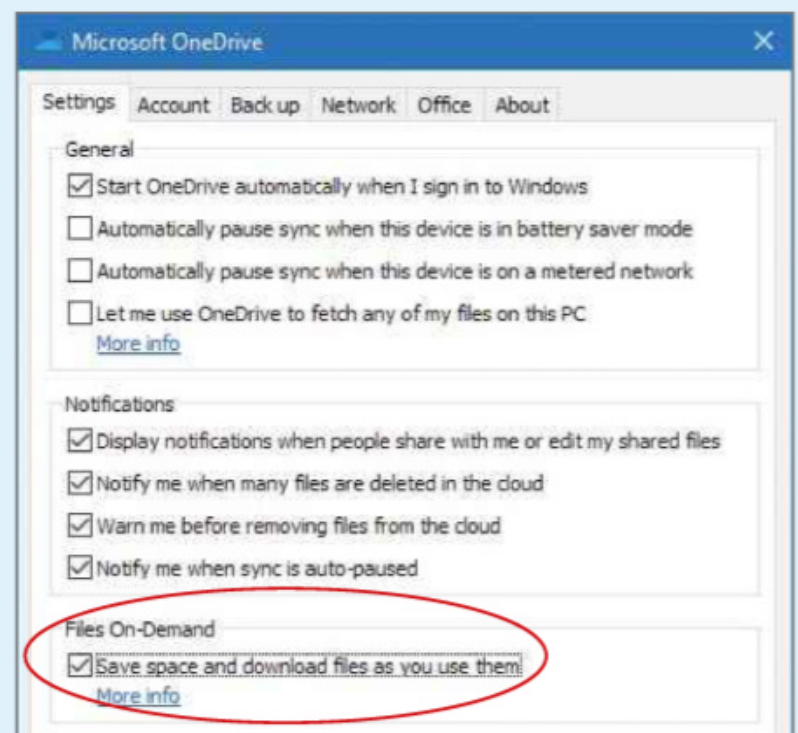
Alex Bennett, via email

A You have two options, so let's look at both of them. Open Explorer, right-click OneDrive in the sidebar and select Settings. At the bottom of the Settings tab is the Files On-Demand section. Select this, then right-click OneDrive in Explorer and select 'Clear space'. This removes all OneDrive files from your computer,

freeing up 40GB of disk space, in your case.

Don't worry - nothing has been deleted and all your OneDrive files are available in Explorer as before. However, they're now stored online rather than on your computer. Now if you open or double-click a file, Windows automatically downloads it to your hard drive and opens it. Right-clicking a file in OneDrive gives you the option to clear the space or keep the file on your computer. It's best to keep the files you use most on your hard drive and leave those you seldom use online.

Alternatively, to move OneDrive to a different drive, right-click OneDrive in Explorer's sidebar and choose Settings. Click 'Unlink this PC' on the Account tab. If it prompts you to sign in, don't.



**Save disk space by enabling Files On-Demand
in OneDrive's settings**

Instead, use Explorer to move the C:\Users\YourName\OneDrive folder to another drive. Then return to OneDrive and sign in. It will try to set up a new OneDrive folder, but ignore that. Click 'Change location' and select the OneDrive folder you just moved.



This fortnight Roland has been watching lots of blurry TV as Netflix, Prime Video and YouTube run at lower resolutions



Readers' Helpdesk

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

EMAIL

Stop spam emails

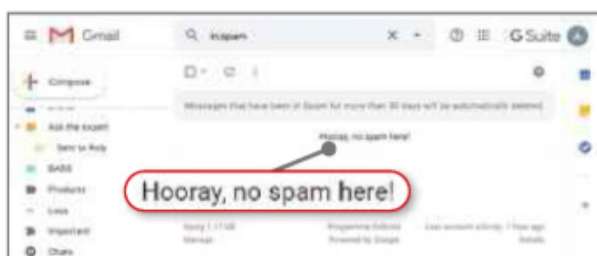
Q I've been receiving a lot more spam email than usual recently, and quite a lot of it is pornographic and offensive. I've also received lots of Bitcoin spam and messages saying I've won various amounts of money. I find this quite disturbing. Is there a way to stop this other than changing my email address, which would be a big task for me?

Mike Booth, via email

A Oddly enough, Mike, we've also received more spam emails lately – and we're not sure why either. Thankfully, there are a few ways to regain control of your inbox. First, we recommend creating a new email address strictly for signing up and subscribing to services. That way, even if the address is sold to spammers, they won't clog up your primary account.

As for the existing spam, don't just delete these offensive emails. Instead, let your email provider know about them. Click the three dots in the email and, depending on your service, choose 'Mark as spam' or 'Report spam'. This trains your inbox to start shifting those emails to your spam folder.

Steve Clark, Features Writer



Don't let spam clog up your inbox

HARDWARE

Choose the right laptop

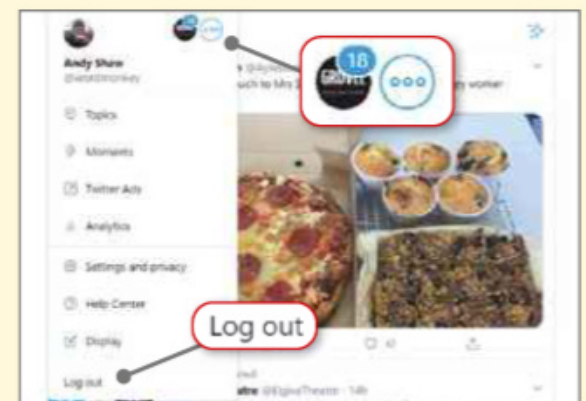
Q I'm looking for a laptop, primarily for reading magazines and taking the odd screenshot. I'd prefer a Windows laptop, although I'd also consider a Chromebook, as long as it's likely to be supported for the next five years. The screen must be at least 15in so it's clear and easy to read. As for apps, the only thing I'll really be using it for is to edit the

READERS RESPOND

SOCIAL MEDIA

Switch between Twitter accounts

A Like Colin Rae (Issue 497, bit.ly/webuser497), I've spent far too much time trying to work out how to switch between Twitter accounts on my desktop PC. Mr Rae is right when he says it's easier in the mobile app, but it's not impossible on a PC. Go to twitter.com and click More to open a sidebar menu. At the top is your main profile picture. Next to that is the profile picture for your other account. Click this to switch instantly. You can



Here's how to switch between Twitter accounts

also log out of Twitter from the More sidebar – the option is at the bottom.

Brad Carpenter, via email

CAN YOU HELP?

webuser@webuser.co.uk

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

SOFTWARE

Q What's the best software for cataloguing collections, such as badges or models? I'd like each entry to include a photo and a description.

George Dalton, via email

BROWSER

Q I use Bing to search the web, but I prefer Google for maps. Is it possible to click on a map in Bing's results and open it in Google Maps?

HB, via email

occasional video, and it needs to perform well on a poor or slow internet connection. Battery life isn't a major consideration, as I'll run it off the mains. However – and I hope this isn't a sticking point – my budget is £500 to £600. I welcome any recommendations.

Mike W, via email

A For general-purpose use, we'd recommend a Windows laptop over a Chromebook. As you mention that you want to edit videos occasionally, we'd suggest buying a laptop with an i5 or i7 processor. They're a little more expensive than the budget i3 models, but they're noticeably faster. You'll also want plenty of storage.

We've found a number of HP laptops that fit the bill and fall within your

budget. You'll find a selection at www.argos.co.uk – each with minor variations. As a starting point, check out these three models:

bit.ly/laptop500, bit.ly/secondlaptop500, and bit.ly/hplaptop500. If

they're not in stock, at least you'll be armed with a handful of model numbers to seek out elsewhere.

If you can live without a full HD screen, you might also consider the Lenovo IdeaPad 330S or the IdeaPad S145.

Steve Clark, Features Writer



HP offers a range of laptops that are ideal for general use

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. Please send questions and answers to webuser@webuser.co.uk



TOP TIP

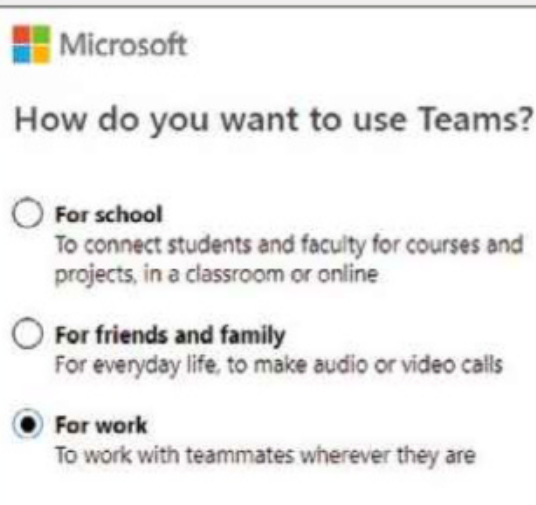
SOFTWARE

Use Microsoft Teams at home

Like everyone else, I'm stuck at home with nothing to do, so when I heard that Microsoft had made Teams free, I thought I'd try it out. I know it's a business tool but as it's free I had nothing to lose. I went to the Microsoft Teams website (bit.ly/teams500) and clicked the 'Sign up for free' button at the bottom of the page. It then asked how I wanted to use Teams, but when I clicked the option 'For friends and family', it simply redirected me to Skype.

To get around this, select the 'For work' option when signing up, and make up any name for the company. Once you're in, you can invite family and friends to be members of your team. Teams apps are available for Windows, iOS and Android, too, so you can use it anywhere.

Despite its business orientation, Teams is a useful alternative to



Teams is for businesses, so select 'For work' and make up a company name

Facebook-controlled WhatsApp for keeping in touch with people. You can share messages, photos and videos, and call each other using voice or video. It even does group video calls with several people at once.

Gerald Ward, via email

Access', followed by 'Cursor & pointer' or 'Mouse pointer'. This reveals a slider that you can drag to change the pointer size. Drag it to the right to increase the size, making the pointer easier to see. Mine often seems to get lost on my laptop screen, so I find this option very useful.

You also have a choice of four pointers, and if you click the last one, you can change the colour, too. Make the mouse bigger, then select a colour for a fun pointer that's easier to see.

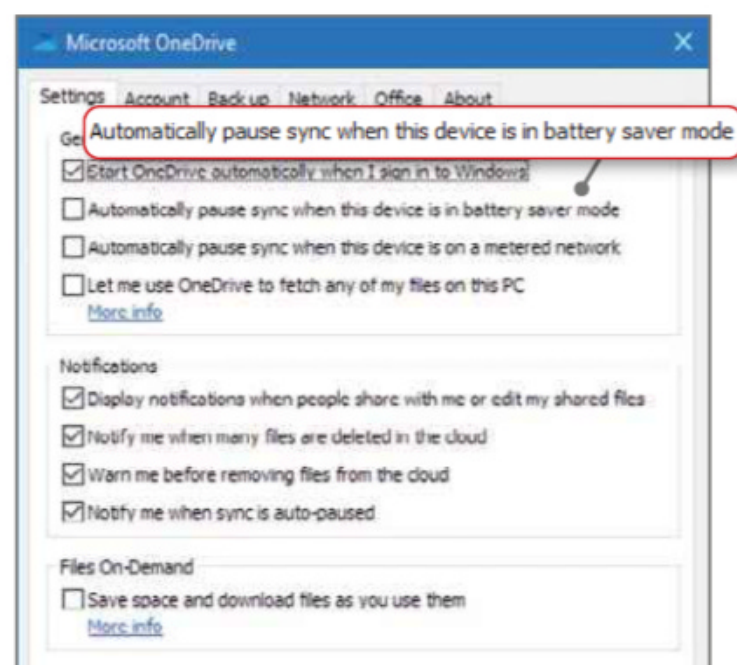
Teresa Rarick, via email

ONLINE STORAGE

Sync OneDrive while battery saving

To extend my laptop's battery life, I set the battery saver feature to switch on when the battery drains to 50%. You can do this in Settings by choosing System, then Battery. However, this stops the OneDrive folder on your PC syncing with OneDrive online. The idea is that this uses less battery power, but I'd prefer OneDrive to sync instead. Thankfully, I found a solution.

Click the OneDrive icon in the notification area and select More in the

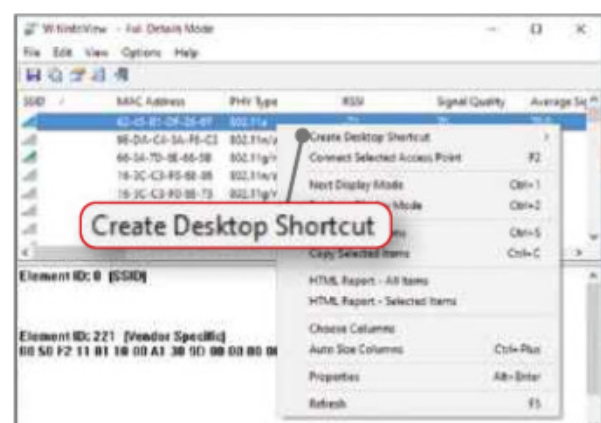


Choose whether to continue syncing OneDrive when the battery saver kicks in

SOFTWARE

Switch networks with a shortcut

If you regularly switch between networks on your PC or laptop, you'll appreciate that it can be a bit of a pain. Nirsoft's WiFi Info View (www.nirsoft.net) is a portable Windows tool that lets you create a desktop shortcut for each of the networks you use. Download and run it, then right-click a network and



Wifi Info View makes network hopping a lot easier

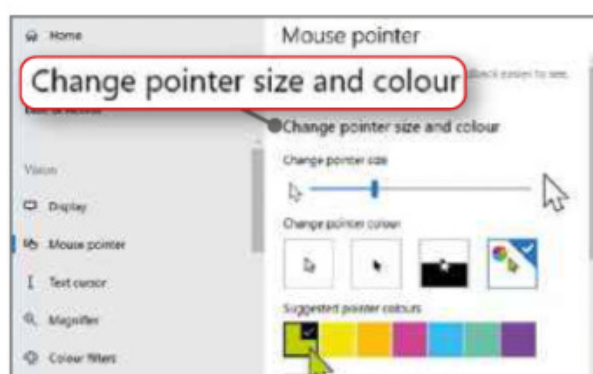
select Create Desktop Shortcut, followed by Connect Access Point By Name. Then do the same for each network you regularly connect to - it makes life so much easier.

Craig Cornby, via email

GENERAL PC

Teach your mouse new tricks

You can change the size and colour of your mouse pointer in Windows. Open the Settings app and click 'Ease of



Give your mouse pointer a makeover by adding a splash of colour



panel that appears. Choose Settings and open the Settings tab. Remove the tick from the box next to 'Automatically pause sync when this device is in battery saver mode', which is near the top. OneDrive then continues to sync as required, even when the battery saver is enabled.

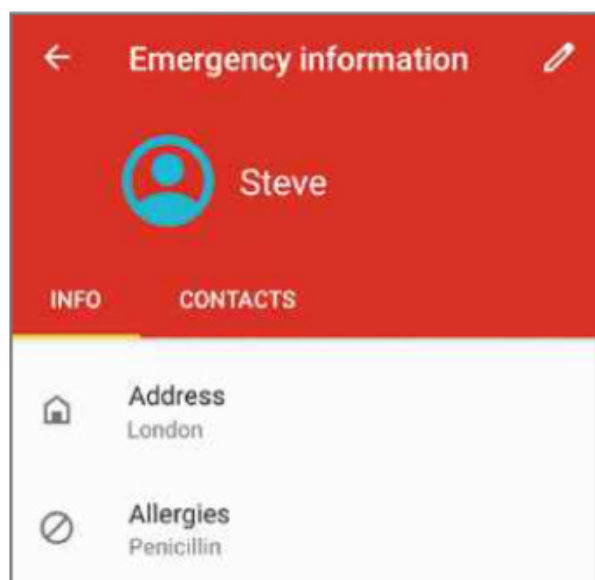
Keith Hunt, via email

MOBILE

Add emergency contacts to your smartphone

Now that my phone has finally updated to Android 10, I've discovered a new feature (well, new to me anyway) that will undoubtedly be useful in these unprecedented times. Hold down the power button and, as well as the usual shutdown and screenshot options, you'll see an Emergency option. Tap this to dial 999. Tap 'Emergency information' twice, however, and you can edit and store essential details such as your address, allergies, medicines and contact numbers. If anything should then happen to you, the emergency services can access this information. Please stay safe.

Jonathan Warne, via email



Save your contact information in Android so the emergency services can access it

BROWSERS

Make Firefox faster



Give your browser a speed boost

If there's one thing I can't stand, it's a sluggish browser. Despite my super-fast home broadband connection, I find that Firefox and other browsers can feel a little slow and unresponsive. I'm sure other readers know how infuriating this can be – which is why I recommend trying the Faster Pageload (bit.ly/pageload500) add-on. It works by using pre-loading and 'lazy loading' to get web pages to load quicker. Make sure you configure it before use, though. To do this, go to Firefox's about:config page, then find 'network.dns.disablePrefetchFromHTTPS'

and set the value to False. Next, find 'network.predictor.enable-prefetch', and change this value to True. Once you've done that, you should find that your browser feels much quicker than before.

JK, via email

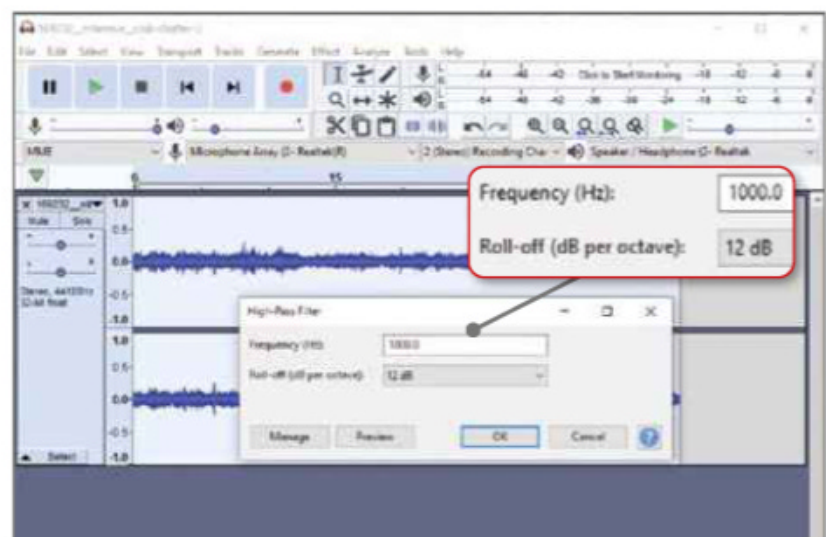
SOFTWARE

Create a radio effect in Audacity

During the COVID-19 lockdown, I've been spending my time learning how to edit audio in Audacity (www.audacityteam.org). I wanted to make my voice sound as if it was coming out of a radio. Unfortunately, there isn't a simple 'radio effect' button, so instead I created the effect manually.

If you'd like to have a go at this, import or record a voice clip, then highlight it. The next few steps may seem repetitive, but they're essential to achieving the effect. Click Effects, then High Pass Filter. Set the Rolloff to 12dB and Click OK. Next, click Effect, Amplify, then OK. Now, you need to select Effect, Low Pass Filter, this time setting the Rolloff to 6dB. Amplify the clip again, then go back to Effect, choose High Pass Filter and set the Rolloff to 6dB. Amplify once more before selecting Low Pass Filter and setting a Rolloff of 12dB. Finally, select Amplify one last time. Voilà, your voice now sounds as if it's coming out of an old-fashioned radio or mobile phone. Try it for yourself.

Joshua Chung, via email



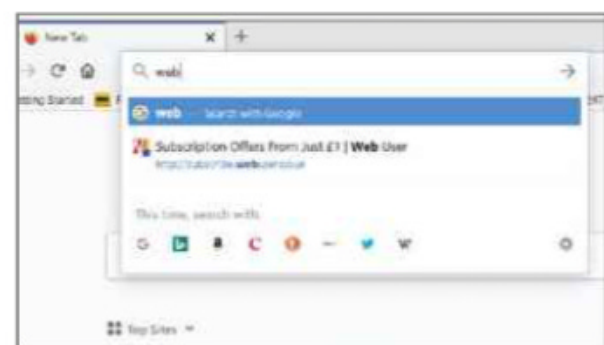
Use Audacity to make yourself sound like you're on the radio

BROWSER

Restore Firefox's address bar

Mozilla has pared back the address bar in the latest version of Firefox. If you'd like to bring it back, visit about:config and locate the following preferences: `browser.urlbar.openViewOnFocus`, `browser.urlbar.update1`, `browser.urlbar.update1.interventions`, `browser.urlbar.update1.searchTips`, `browser.urlbar.update1.view.stripHttps`. Set each of these to the value False. Restart your browser for the changes to take effect.

Bob B, via email



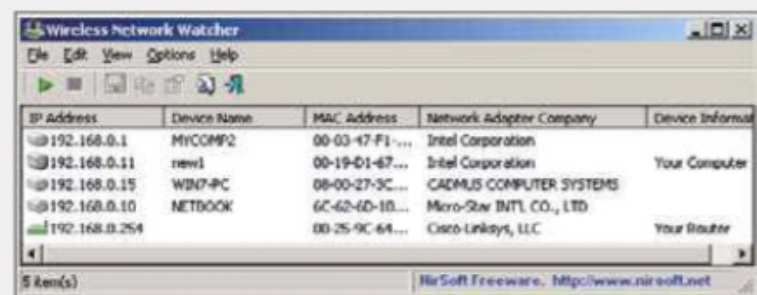
Don't like Firefox's new address bar? You can bring the old one back in about:config

BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

SOFTWARE

Identify mystery network devices

When I ran Wireless Network Watcher (www.nirsoft.net) recently, it found a mystery device on my network, listing it as "192.168.1.6 Unknown-f0:a2:25:26:41:4e F0-A2-25-26-41-4 Private Unknown-f0:a2:25:26:41:4e". After worrying about this suspicious item all day, I realised that the 'mystery device' was in fact my Kindle ebook reader. It seems that the Kindle sits on your IP network even



Do you recognise all the devices on your network?

when you're not using it and are simply charging it up. I thought I'd pass on my experience to save other folks worrying.

Etude, via email

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



Star Email

The problem with partitioning programs

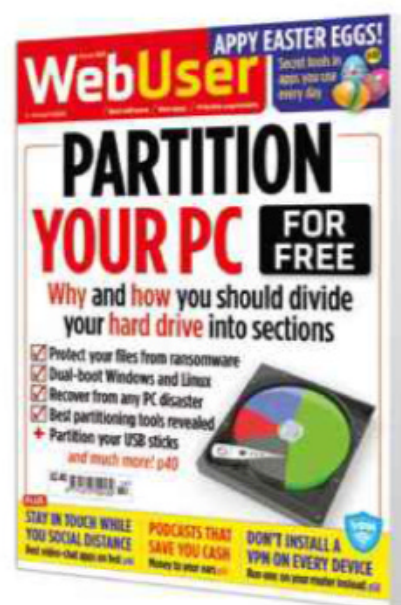
I would like to comment on the 'Reinstall Windows after a disaster' section of your 'Partition your PC for free' cover feature in Issue 498 (bit.ly/webuser498).

Many programs install themselves to the boot partition by default, without giving you the option of choosing another location – Office 2016 being a prime example. This also applies to software that lets you install it on another drive or partition, but still uses space on the system drive. To say that the remedy is simply to format the system drive and reinstall Windows is an oversimplification.

I have always partitioned my main drive, installing the operating system on the C: partition and using the D:

partition for programs and data (or at least those programs I'm able to install somewhere other than the system drive). My current laptop has a 966GB SSD partitioned as a 250GB C: drive for the system, and a 644GB D: drive for programs and data, plus the hidden partitions.

I recently had the misfortune of 'bricking' my laptop, and although I was able to recover the machine by reinstalling Windows on the system drive



and using Microsoft Account synchronisation to retrieve all my settings, I still had to go through the laborious process of reinstalling a lot of programs because they were installed on the system drive.

Perhaps the people who write software could pay more attention to exactly how their programs will be installed. Since my mishap, I have decided to replace as much software

as possible with portable versions that I can store wherever I like.

George J Smith, via email

Running a VPN on a router

Regarding Issue 498's Weekend Project about installing a VPN on your router, I thought I would warn people of my own experience. I've been subscribing to NordVPN for a number of years now and have always enjoyed a fast, reliable service, so I was confident that I could install it on a router to provide additional security to all my devices.

Like many people, I have an ISP fibre router that won't let me install the DD-WRT firmware I need to do this, so I had to buy an additional DD-WRT-capable router I could use to connect everything I wanted to run through the VPN. I bought one for £134.

I should point out that I often run a test comparing the speed of my connection with and without NordVPN switched on. This is usually very favourable for the VPN and averages 38Mbps. The story was very different

when I connected to the router with NordVPN installed, however, because the average speed dropped significantly to just 2 or 3Mbps!



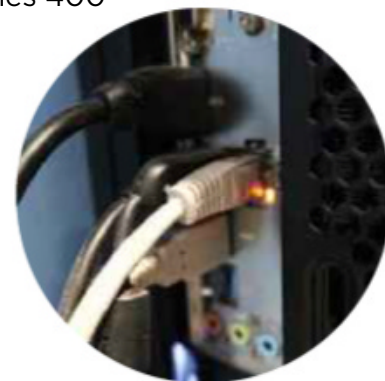
I've been thinking of connecting the new router to a second network port on an old computer that has NordVPN installed. This would allow me to use the computer as a network server, with the internet coming in through one network port, routing through the NordVPN software and then reaching my devices through the new router. However, I'm not sure if or how this can be done, and I haven't had much time to tinker with it yet.

Ron O'Brien, via email


















Confusing facts in your FAQ

In your FAQ about internet pollution in Issue 498, David Crookes states that my home computer consumes 400 kilowatts of energy per hour. That's well over 1,600 amps! He says that this is a "huge chunk of power" – well, I agree with him there!

Further on, Mr Crookes suggests that a data centre can have



Quiz Answers: Issue 499

- Rock Around The Clock**   
- Lucille**  
- Heartbreak Hotel**  
- Mack the Knife**  
- Three Coins in the Fountain**    
- Love Letters in the Sand**    

WINNER!

Well done to **Nigel Markham** who wins a Web User Back Issues Disc



WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE

Wikipedia



“millions” of servers installed. This implies one establishment with a minimum of two million servers. Is that possible given that Microsoft has “only” just over a million servers worldwide?

Mike Harris, via email

Web User says: Well spotted on both counts. The correct figure for computer energy usage should have been 400kWh (kilowatt-hours) per year, not per hour! And the second point should have said that there are millions of internet servers installed in data centres across the world, not in any single data centre. Apologies for these mistakes and for any confusion caused.

Spare me the horror of video chats

I agree with Colin Horton’s letter about the horror of video calls (Inbox, Issue 499). In fact, I have asked my

friends and family not to contact me in this manner, and told them I will reject any invitations to join video conversations.

Being confined to the house and unable to visit the hairdresser for

over a month is bad enough without other people seeing how you look. And I have no desire to see others sitting in their pyjamas, looking pasty-faced and rough around the edges.

WhatsApp is more than sufficient for my communication needs and gives me the privacy I require during this difficult time. I’ll leave video chats to businesses, teenagers and show-offs!

Karen O’Hara, via email

Overloaded by passwords

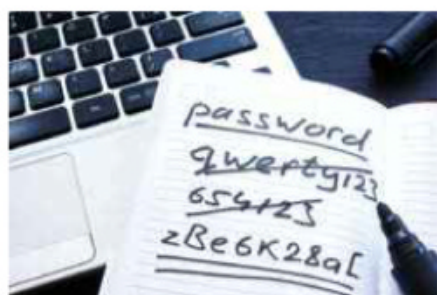
Am I the only person who’s annoyed by the fact that every company I deal with online asks me to come up with a unique

password? This means having long lists of passwords, some of which I will rarely use.

I can’t even make a small

purchase without needing to generate a password. I’m sure websites could offer suitable security without all this fuss.

George Steele, via email



What you say...

SHOULD SOCIAL NETWORKS HAVE A ‘FAKE NEWS’ BUTTON TO REPORT COVID-19 MISINFORMATION (bit.ly/fake500)?

Absolutely – as long as the fake news isn’t shared widely before it’s spotted.

David P-Smith @david_p_s

Yes, but who would regulate this? People would report things they disagree with, which are not necessarily misinformation.

DL @LFCTweeterer

They need more than just a fake news button. They need one for libellous content, a way of blurring sensitive text or images, and URL checking.

Katya von der Goltz King @KatyavdGK

Facebook could quite easily block all news except from registered sources.

Chris T Wilkinson

It’s too late for a ‘fake news’ button, because so much misinformation is already out there, like all the rubbish about 5G spreading the coronavirus.

Paul Giddings

There should be a ‘fake news’ button for all fake news.

Eff Clarke

HAS YOUR BROADBAND BEEN SLOWER WITH SO MANY PEOPLE WORKING AT HOME?

Still at our usual 390Mbps with Virgin Media. Not expecting any real issues as the ISPs are confident they can cope. A small drop in speed wouldn’t be noticeable anyway, unless I was lucky enough to be streaming games during the day, which I’m not.

Rich Grove

Mine has been noticeably slower for the past week or so. My ISP is Vodafone.

Mark Chatham

It’s still pretty fast here in Coventry: 73Mbps download speed and 19Mbps upload.

Chris Armstrong

Mine in Birmingham is okay, but it’s slower when I use my VPN.

Kevin Gadget Man Benton

No, because I have exclusive use of a 3.2km length of damp string.

Dave Spinks

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF FACEBOOK’S REDESIGNED WEBSITE?

I tried it and found it okay, but the left-hand panel, with all the shortcuts to groups, events and so on, vanishes when you click a shortcut. To get it back, you have to click the Facebook logo. I’ve reverted to the Classic look.

Geoffrey Boow

I guess I’ll find out in 12 weeks when I’m back at work and using a PC on my lunch break again. Right now my Facebook time is mostly on mobile.

Nat Grove

I’m surprised they’ve done anything to the website. Facebook wants everybody to use mobile devices. That’s why the desktop version of Messenger has gone.

Brian Brown

I’m a fan of dark mode, which the redesign introduces. Otherwise it’s no worse than the old look. Does anyone even use the desktop version of Facebook any more?

Caroline Chapman

Facebook has become too big and overcomplicated. I prefer Reddit and Twitter for simplicity.

Jack Gold

It’s rubbish!

Anthony Higham

! Page 404



Barry Collins believes the Office 365 rebranding is a sign of bigger things to come

Microsoft 365 is more than a name change

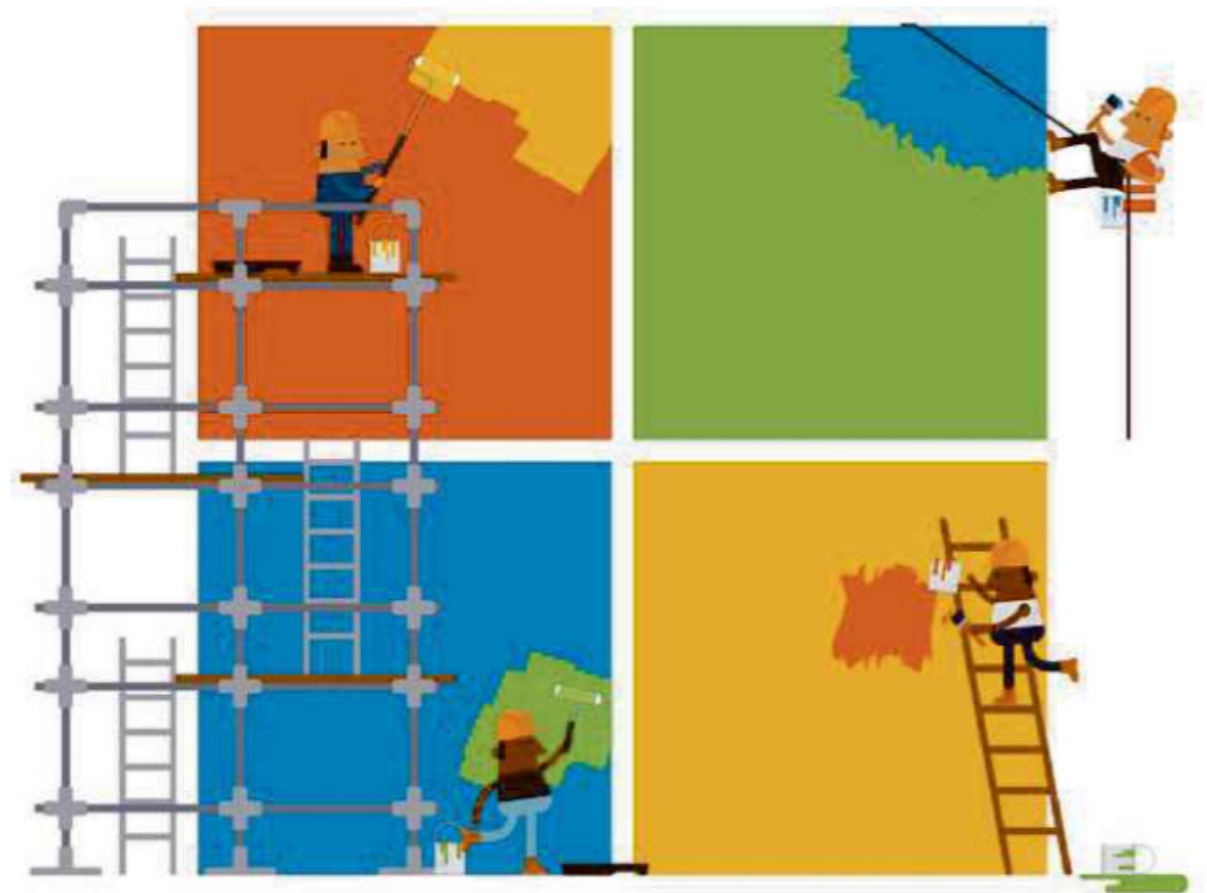
In the 500-issue history of *Web User*, there can be few tech workers who have put in a harder shift than Microsoft's branding department. Barely a week seems to pass without them changing the name of a product, sometimes putting it back to the original name a few months later, just to confuse the hell out of everybody.

The latest makeover victim is Office 365 – the subscription suite that encompasses Word, Excel, PowerPoint and so on – which is being rebadged as Microsoft 365. One can only imagine the amount of blue-sky, think-outside-the-box, no-idea-is-a-silly-idea brainstorming that went into that one. In this case, however, I suspect the name change is more than just cosmetic. In fact, it could be an indication of a massive change to come.

While the contents of a Microsoft 365 subscription look very much like Office 365 right now, I wouldn't mind betting that switching to the more general Microsoft name tag is paving the way for the company to add Windows to the package. No longer will your operating system be priced into the cost of a new PC or laptop. Instead, those devices will come with a 30-day free trial of Windows (much like Office does now), after which you'll be expected to take out a subscription to keep the operating system active.

If you're muttering "not another bloody subscription" as you read this and are about to let out a scream that will be heard two counties away, let me explain why this might not be such a terrible thing.

“I'm 99% certain that by the end of this decade, you'll be streaming Windows over the internet”



First, you pay for Windows anyway. You may not notice it, and you might have been told Windows 10 was “free”, but it's not. The PC makers pay anything up to £50 per licence for Windows 10,

and that cost is added to the price of new computers. If Microsoft were to turn that into a free trial, you'd hope the PC makers would pass on the savings.

Second, if Microsoft is charging you directly for Windows, it has a responsibility to support it. That means not simply directing you to a website or “chat assistant”, but proper telephone support, because if they don't fix your problem, you don't pay them next month. In other words, Microsoft will have a direct financial incentive to sort out its support.

Finally, and this is the biggie, a Windows subscription makes it much easier to move to the model that will shape computing in this decade: streaming. I'm 99% certain that by the end of this decade, you won't be running Windows on the PC in front of you, but streaming it over the internet.

Your Windows installation will be hosted in one of Microsoft's massive data centres, and whether you're using a laptop, desktop PC, tablet or streaming device plugged into a screen – much like Amazon's Fire Sticks – you'll stream Windows over your fibre broadband connection.

Microsoft will look after backup for you; Microsoft will store all your documents, photos and other files; Microsoft will charge you for all this in one convenient monthly sum and will call it Microsoft 365. Well, at least until the branding department has another brainwave.

Illustration: Andrew Torrens

WebUser

**SUBSCRIPTION
OFFER**
FOR MORE INFO SEE PAGE 62

ENJOYED THIS ISSUE?

GET THE NEXT ONE EARLY!

Thank you for reading this issue of *Web User* – we hope you found the tips and advice useful. The good news is that you don't have to wait too long for the next issue. If you subscribe to *Web User* by **Friday 1 May (8pm)***, you'll receive it through your letterbox before it's available in the shops!

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