

WHAT TO BLOCK WINDOWS 10,38

Not just POP-UPS but also...

...Microsoft's annoying adverts, awful apps you'll never use, non-stop nags to buy software, Chrome-hacking messages,

ugly Live tiles, 'suggested' games, junk on Start Menu, constant upgrade reminders, — and how to tell Cortana to SHUT UP! page 38



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PLUS

BEAT THE WEB'S SIX MOST UNFAIR RESTRICTIONS p48

- 1 Remove administrator permissions 2 Delete locked files and folders 3 Make free software trials last longer
- 4 Remove DRM from iTunes purchases 5 Read ebooks on any device 6 Keep BBC programmes forever



THE CENTRE OF YOUR UNIVERSE

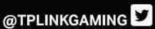
AC2600 WIRELESS GIGABIT VDSL/ADSL MODEM ROUTER







- Speeds up to 2600Mbps using 4-Stream technology to boost wireless capabilities
- Compatible with phone line, fiber and cable Internet connections plus 3G/4G USB dongles
- · Beamforming technology improves coverage
- Free Tether app to configure and manage the VR2600, includes parental controls







Issue 419

Pop-up goes the Windows

eep down, I think we all knew that there would be a trade-off for Microsoft offering Windows 10 for free for a year. First came the realisation that we'd surrendered our privacy, then the various problems caused by forced updates and finally - and most annoying of all - the gradual appearance of more and more pop-ups, adverts and other nags throughout the operating system. 'Try Office 365 for one month', 'Microsoft Edge is faster than Chrome' 'Upgrade now to Microsoft Solitaire Collection Premium Edition' -Windows 10 has more shameless crosspromotion than BBC Breakfast.

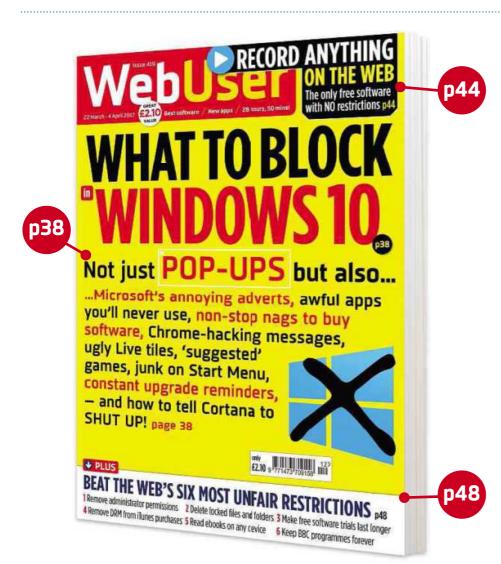
In this issue's cover feature (page 38), we reveal how to banish all these annoyances from Windows 10 and stop them coming back. No longer will you be distracted and interrupted by pop-up promotions and pointless 'suggestions' - you can use your PC in peace without being pestered.

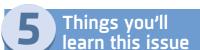
At the risk of sounding like an ad, thanks to everyone who bought our 2016 Back Issues Disc - you can still order it from bit.ly/wudisc16!

Robert Irvine

robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk #webuser







- How to send photos and videos in Facebook Messenger that disappear after 24 hours page 6
- How to recover a lost Windows product key so you can perform a clean install

page 27

How to check if any sites you've visited are affected by the Cloudbleed bug

page 31

How to explore Edinburgh Castle and other Scottish landmarks on your phone



page 34

How to take full remote control of any PC connected to your home network page 54

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Turn to page 62 for special subsoffers

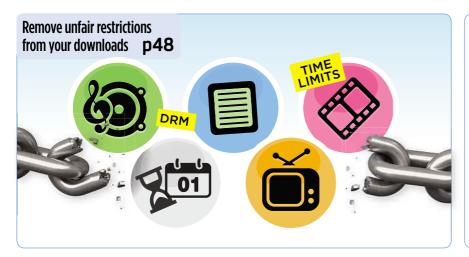
ISSUE 419

22 MARCH - 4 APRIL 2017

EXPERIENCE OF THE STATE OF THE

Get rid of pop-ups, notifications, ads and nags so you can use your PC in peace

p38





IN DEPTH Articles on the latest tech topics

36 FAQ

Mobile World Congress 2017

38 COVER FEATURE

WHAT TO BLOCK IN WINDOWS 10

Say goodbye to Microsoft's constant pestering

44 Screen recorders

The best tools for capturing on-screen videos

46 Improve your browser's built-in tools

Replace the defaults with these alternatives

48 Remove unfair file restrictions

Take control of your own media files and ebooks

REVIEWS Apps, sites and products on test

14 Best New Websites

View classic logos and buy a bespoke cake

20 Product Test

- BT Whole Home WiFi
- Lenovo P2

26 Best Free Software

Protect your PC with Adaware Antivirus Free 12

30 Best New Browser Tools

Were you affected by the Cloudbleed bug?

32 Best Free Apps

Block web trackers and chat anonymously







FAVOURITES Must-read regulars

What's New Online Check your writing for rudeness

Need to Know This fortnight's top tech news stories

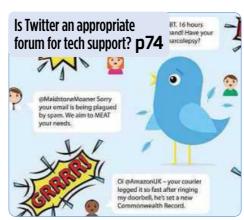
12 Build a Better Site Expert tips, tools and practical help

19 Stay Safe Online Security advice for PC and mobile

23 Best Buys Our pick of the best new products

50 Broadband Deals Find the best-value package for you

51 Take a Screen Break Guess the song titles from the emoji



72 Inbox

Tell us your views and opinions

74 Page 404

Tweet customers better, says Barry

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Practical Web<mark>Use</mark>r Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

52 Workshop 1

Browse in privacy with Cliqz

54 Workshop 2

Control all your PCs remotely

56 Workshop 3

Boost a website's sound quality

57 Workshop 4

Keep tabs on your mobile data use

58 Weekend Project

Sandbox programs to stop them wreaking havoc on your PC

64 Web User Masterclass

How to use YouTube's hidden tools

66 Ask the Expert

All your technical questions answered

68 Readers' Tips

The best tips from our readers

70 Readers' Helpdesk

Answers from our reader forums



Share your day in Facebook

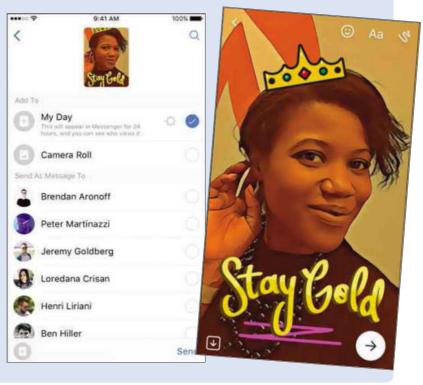
Messenger

acebook's new Messenger Day feature takes inspiration from Snapchat Stories by letting you share pictures and videos with friends for 24 hours, after which they disappear.

To use Messenger Day, you need the latest version of the app. Tap the camera or the Add To Your Day button and take a photo or record a video of up to 15 seconds. Use the smiley face, Aa and squiggly line icons to add art or text, then tap the arrow in the bottom-right corner and select My Day from the menu screen. When a friend opens Messenger, they will see your Day thumbnail at the top of the screen, which they can then tap to see what you've posted. If you use a photo or video in a Messenger conversation, you can add that to your day, too.

There's plenty of scope for interaction, with custom messages that pop up in Day threads and an Active Now green dot to show you're available. Profile icons that appear below your Day profile show who's viewing your content.

www.messenger.com



Test your geographical knowledge



wiki-where.github.io

This quiz dishes out snippets of Wikipedia articles that describe a city and invites you to guess which (and where) it is. The quiz is spread over five rounds and you can read the description to look for key clues, move around a 3D globe, zoom in and place a pin in the spot you think is correct. Be warned, though, it's extra tough because you need to know both the correct answer and the city's location on a map. You get a couple of hints if you're stuck, and you still earn points for guessing the correct country.

Find out if your writing is toxic

www.perspectiveapi.com

Online harassment, threats and trolls are a blight on the internet, but technology companies aren't just sitting back and letting it happen. To tackle the problem, Google has created a script called Perspective that lets developers use the anti-troll tools the company is developing. This website explains how it works and offers two experiments for testing your own trolling tendencies. The first shows three topics -Climate Change, Brexit and the US Election; by clicking one and moving a slider, you can view comments and see the various levels of "toxicity" that exist. The second lets you write your own comment on anything and gauge its potential

impact. You're given a score based on how toxic your comment is perceived to be, but you can argue with the result if you feel it's incorrect. We found that simply including a spelling mistake made our comment 6% more toxic!



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

Discover what ails you

bit.ly/buoy419

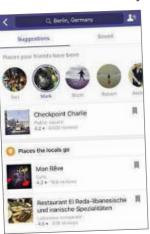
Feeling under the weather? This clever 'chatbot' uses advanced machine-learning algorithms to ask questions about your symptoms and provide possible diagnoses. It claims to be accurate 92% of the time and, although the process can feel a bit like an interrogation, Buoy eventually tells you if you're at death's door or simply in need of a Lemsip and a hot-water bottle.



Find a city break using Facebook

www.facebook.com

You don't have to bother your friends to recommend a city break because



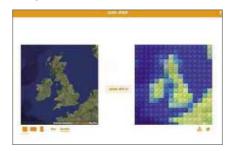
Facebook's mobile app now has a section called City Guides, which shows a list of destinations and friends who have been there. Although it relies on them having checked in while they were away, it gives a good

indication of the most popular cities in your social circle. Tapping a friend's icon shows where they went, and you can save locations to the top of the Guide. You can also see a list of popular attractions and local events.

Create your own Lego map

bit.ly/lego419

world would look like if it were made out of Lego, you can now use this online tool to see for yourself in all its brick-like glory. Move your mouse around the map or satellite image and zoom in on your preferred location, then click the button to Lego-ify it. You'll see an instant conversion that you can save or share on Twitter. It's very simple and works most effectively if you also capture some of the sea in your image. You have a choice of three image sizes.



If you've ever wondered what the

Watch 360-degree Vimeo videos

bit.ly/vimeo419

Vimeo has finally caught up with YouTube, Facebook and Twitter in offering 360-degree video. You can stream the clips to your browser, phone or VR headset in Ultra HD, and move around using a keyboard as well as a mouse. Vimeo is also encouraging film-makers to upload new 360 flicks. Check out the new video school at join.vimeo.com/360.



TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@StephenKing

The horror author has been writing mini political stories in tweets

@SimpsonsFilms

This feed matches images from The Simpsons with relevant films

@Ahmadinejad1956

The Iranian president's new account describes him as a "husband, dad, grandfather"

@OpenreachGB

Openreach now answers queries and addresses telecom cabling problems on Twitter

@daytimesnaps

This amusing account captures photos from daytime TV and presents them out of context

Shout about web content

weallshout.com

This Chrome extension and iOS app lets you save and share web content. When you see an article, PDF, video or image you like, simply tap the Shout button. You can also organise the items into lists, which you can make private or public.

Download NASA software for free

software.nasa.gov

NASA's 2017-18 software catalogue is packed with tools that the space agency uses to explore the universe. It's complex stuff, but you can download any program for free.

See a map of movie locations

bit.ly/movies419

This map shows 82 homes in the UK that have appeared in movies, including Harry Potter and Batman. You can search by location and genre, and the website pinpoints the various spots. You can see a Street View image too.

Premier League blocks illegal football streams from Kodi

What happened?

A court has ruled in favour of blocking football matches from being streamed on Kodi set-top boxes. Under the order, the Premier League will be able to prevent third-party Kodi add-ons from illegally streaming its games.

Kodi is a popular media centre that allows users to stream TV shows, movies and even sports matches for free, which the rights holders of such content understandably aren't keen on. As explained in our cover feature in Issue 416 (bit.ly/webuser416), the Kodi software itself isn't illegal, but using it to knowingly access pirated material could get you in trouble, although so far industry authorities have only targeted those selling the boxes and providing the streams.

The Premier League applied for and won a court order that forces ISPs to block the source of the streaming games. The ISPs in question - Sky, BT, Virgin Media and TalkTalk - didn't dispute the order, and already exercise similar blocks against peer-to-peer sharing sites such as The Pirate Bay, also under court order. It's no surprise that ISPs are willing to help block such piracy. Sky and BT have between them paid £5bn for the rights to air the games live via their television networks.

The Premier League said it would target suppliers of the pirated streams at the source in a "proportionate and precise manner". It won't be targeting every individual streaming add-on or website, but will instead block the server where the stream originates.

The move follows news that a Scottish man has pleaded guilty to "card sharing" - pirating content by sharing subscriptions to premium TV. Gavin Gray provided premium content by selling dodgy access codes - a technique that earned him tens of thousands of pounds and, after he was caught, 300 hours of community service.



How will it affect you?

If you've been using a Kodi box to watch Premier League games, those streams will soon become much more difficult to find and may disappear entirely although it's worth remembering that pirates are very good at finding ways around such blocks. The court order gives the Premier League the ability to block streams mid-game, so if you do find a source, it may disappear while you're watching the match.

The Premier League is specifically targeting the people who are making the streams available, so there's no need to panic that the authorities will come knocking on your door, but do

remember that such content is pirated. You can, of course, shell out for a Sky or **BT Sports** subscription to watch live games or head to a local pub that's screening the match.

What do we think?

It's no surprise that people are looking for ways around paying for live football matches -

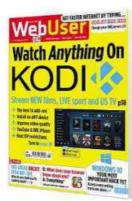
subscriptions to Sky Sports and BT Sports aren't cheap. But while there's certainly appeal in dodging monthly fees topping £27 a month, there's no avoiding the fact that it's piracy.

Photo: Premier League

Indeed, while Kodi software wasn't designed for piracy, the fact that it's largely used for the practice could see it banned by the Intellectual Property Office (IPO). The watchdog is currently consulting on the issue, and considering how best to deal with the use of set-top boxes for piracy. That consultation ends in April, and could see tougher action taken against Kodi box sellers.

Many Brits have spent their hardearned cash on a Kodi box in the hopes of dodging streaming fees, but if the IPO decides to ban the software, they may stop working soon. With the wide variety of streaming services available, there's little excuse not to pay for films and TV shows, though it is frustrating to have to switch between providers or wait for shows to arrive knowing they're already available online.

Simply put, Kodi boxes are popular because they're easy to use and cheap. The industry should do all it can to make watching streaming content as easy as it is on Kodi boxes, offering new movies as quickly as possible and keeping costs down. Convenience and fair prices remain the best ways to beat piracy.



We looked at the legal issues surrounding Kodi in Issue 416 of Web User

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

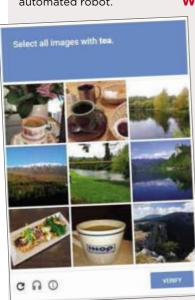
Google moves on from CAPTCHA

What happened?

Google has developed a new system for checking that web users are humans and not robots, which ditches CAPTCHA puzzles in favour of behavioural analysis.

CAPTCHAs are difficult for automated systems to solve, but easy for humans, so they're used by sites such as ticket vendors to stop bots buying in bulk. They show skewed words, or a series of pictures that, for example, ask you to type the words or numbers that appear, or click all the images containing tea or some other theme.

Instead, the new system observes how you interact with a site, looking for 'imperfect' human behaviour, such as the length of time taken to perform actions and how a mouse is moved, which will differ from the movements of an efficient, automated robot.



How will it affect you?

Most of us find CAPTCHAs annoying because they add an extra step to processes such as online purchases and registering with a site, and some people – particularly those with sight problems – struggle to make out the wobbly text or small, poor-quality images, although including an audio aspect can make this easier.

That said, CAPTCHA systems have a side benefit: they've been used to help digitise books and to teach artificial intelligence. Words that computers couldn't automatically read were fed through CAPTCHA, letting us humans type the text, while AI systems were trained using picture CAPTCHAs. Simplifying the system will sacrifice those benefits.

What do we think?

Tackling the automated abuse of online systems is a constant battle, so it's no surprise that CAPTCHA is the latest casualty in the search for a simpler, better system. That said, it's hard to believe bot makers won't simply programme their scripts to interact with websites in a way that mimics human behaviour. Most likely. this is just the next stage in a system that evolves by two sides constantly trying to outwit each other.

BT splits from Openreach network



What happened?

BT and telecoms regulator Ofcom have finally reached a deal to make the ISP's Openreach division more independent, after months of negotiations.

Openreach is BT's infrastructure arm, and one if its jobs is to roll out and manage broadband lines. Rivals have long complained that Openreach is anticompetitive because it gives BT preferential treatment. In response to this pressure, Ofcom and BT have worked out a plan to legally separate Openreach, although BT will still own the company and set its budget.

Under the plans,
Openreach will ditch all BT
branding, have its own
staff and management, and
control its own spending. It
will be able to have deals
with BT rivals such as Sky
and TalkTalk that are held
confidentially and not
disclosed to BT. The deal
avoids a full split between
the two companies, but
Ofcom could still order this.

The agreement won't come into power until later this year because

Parliament first needs to pass legislation protecting the pensions of the 32,000 Openreach workers, as BT pensions are underwritten by a crown guarantee.

How will it affect you?

If you're a BT Retail customer, don't panic – Openreach will still supply services to BT. The main difference is how it will deal with other broadband companies. The hope is that by spinning out Openreach, we'll see increased competition. Additionally, rival ISPs will now have to be consulted on rollout work, so it could affect where fibre spreads next.

What do we think?

This battle is far from over. Ofcom and rival ISPs will keep close watch on how BT and Openreach behave, particularly on how the latter invests in fibre broadband. That should lead to a bump in investment in fibre – and faster broadband for more people – as analysts predict that Openreach will want to prove it's no longer at BT's beck and call.

Tim Berners-Lee explains how to save the web

What happened?

Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the web, has expressed concern about the way the internet is being used. In an exclusive article in the Guardian, he outlined how the web can fulfil its "true potential" as a tool that can help everyone, not just organisations that want to harvest and exploit information about the world's citizens.

Berners-Lee highlighted three trends he thinks are having a detrimental effect on the web. The first involves companies gathering personal data in return for very little that benefits the end user. Although people are happy to share their data in return for a freebie, that doesn't make it right for businesses to own the public's data and keep it out of sight in "proprietary silos".

Governments are also increasingly watching our every move online and using that surveillance to pass extreme laws that trample on our rights to privacy, Berners-Lee said. This creates a "chilling" effect on free speech, which means the web is no longer a place where people can safely explore important topics such as sensitive health issues, sexuality or religion.

Berners-Lee also referred to the dangers of misinformation - or "fake news" - which spreads rapidly across the web via social networks and search engines.



How will it affect you?

Berners-Lee said the solution to these problems is for web users to work with online companies to ensure we control our own data, and fight against datasurveillance laws. It's also everyone's responsibility to hold search engines and social networks accountable and make sure they come up with ways to stop the spread of misinformation. including a call to make online political advertising more ethical. "It has taken all of us to build the web we have, and now it is up to all of us to build the web we want - for everyone", said Sir Tim.

What do we think?

As ever, Tim Berners-Lee has hit the nail on the head by identifying the biggest problems web users are currently facing and what can be done to solve them. Indeed, the topics he touched on relentless data collection, widespread government surveillance and the spread of fake news - are issues we have regularly addressed in Web User over the last year. As the inventor of the web, Sir Tim must be horrified at how it is being abused, but at least he has constructive ideas about how to tackle these concerns.



FIRST LOOK

BeatsX

bit.ly/beatsx419

Beats headphones receive a lot of stick from audio experts, and the first time we tried BeatsX, we were with the sceptics: the sound was muddy, slightly distorted and generally bad. However, over time, we adjusted to the audio, although this depended on the type of music we played heavy rock was limp and slightly distorted, but electronic music sounded excellent.

It's not ideal that a pair of £119 headphones should limit what kind of music you can best listen to, but there are other features of BeatsX that lifted them further in our estimation.

First, there's the inclusion of Apple's W1 chip, which makes the pairing and Bluetooth management incredibly



smooth. Turn on BeatsX, hold them close to your iPhone and a dialogue appears on screen asking if you want to pair them. After tapping Yes, the headphones are paired with all the Apple devices associated with your iCloud account.

For anyone who struggles with wearing in-ear headphones, BeatsX include a small set of 'bat wings' that fit

over each ear piece to help secure them in place. They are also the first Beats headphones to include a Lightning port, which means you can charge them using the same cable as your iPhone.

Battery life is acceptable, but not stellar (Apple claims around eight hours on a full charge), and the buds are also magnetised, so when they sit around your neck they make a satisfying 'click' and attach to each other, which means you're less likely to lose them.

It may seem crazy to recommend a pair of £119 headphones that produce below-par sound quality, but we think the design and convenience of BeatsX makes up for the shortfall. Not a purchase for audio experts, then, but in every other way they are a step up for on-the-go listening.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Apple set to release a special-edition iPhone?

Apple plans to release a premium smartphone called the iPhone Edition to celebrate the device's 10th anniversary, according to Japanese website Macotakara (bit.ly/mac419),

The site claims the iPhone Edition will be a special celebration device launched alongside the iPhone 7S and iPhone 7S Plus, which will only constitute a small update to the current iPhone 7, as is normal for an 'S' series iPhone.

Apple already has a product branded with the 'Edition' suffix - the Apple Watch Edition, which was a special 18-karat gold version of its smart watch. It cost \$10,000 (£8,200), so it won't be much of a surprise if a smartphone Edition model has a price tag of \$1,000 (£822), as was previously rumoured.

Don't expect a solid gold phone, though - Apple is reportedly looking to test various versions of the iPhone Edition using glass, ceramic and aluminium chassis finishes, rather than the rather more weighty gold.

Last year, Macotokara published an article about additional iPhone 7S and iPhone 7S Plus models, along with predictions of a 5in model equipped with the iSight Duo camera. The site announced, "This 5in model would highly possibly be the 'iPhone Edition'



which is the premium model".

Because Apple is still testing these versions, it's likely that while details of the iPhone Edition will be revealed at the same time as the 7S and 7S Plus, it won't be commercially available until much later.

.....

LIKELIHOOD RATING **JJJJ**

The iPhone's 10th anniversary seems like the ideal excuse to release a special premium edition of the ground-breaking smartphone, especially since Apple devotees are likely to buy it in addition to the 7S or 7S Plus. We won't be surprised if it carries a premium price tag, too.



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Goosepod

bit.ly/goose419 | From £7

If you find yourself bending over backwards in the quest to take the perfect photo, you'll appreciate the Goosepod, which lets you mount



your camera in virtually any position imaginable, quickly and simply. The device's flexible arm has a 'male' tripod thread on one end, and a 'female' thread on the other, so you can easily and sturdily connect your camera or phone, as well as accessories such as a microphone or light. The project has already exceeded its £8,500 goal and offers a variety of pledge rewards, priced from £7 to £139.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Xbox announces 'Netflix for gamers'

Xbox Game Pass will give gamers unlimited access to over 100 titles including Halo 5: Guardians, Fable III and Lego Batman. The games will be available to download and play offline but an Xbox Live Gold membership is still required for online multiplayer action.

Facebook combats suicide with AI tools

Facebook has improved its suicide-prevention tools, making it easier for users to report friends so they get the help they need. The social network uses AI to analyse posts and, if they're deemed to be suicide related, the option to report them to Facebook is made more prominent.

WE DON'T LIKE...

Malware found on **Android phones**

Android devices produced by manufacturers including Samsung, Lenovo, LG and Asus, have been found to carry severe malware infections that have been manually implanted at some point during their supply chain process, according to an investigation.

■ WhatsApp to be 'flooded with ads'

WhatsApp is testing a new system that would let businesses talk directly to users. according to Reuters. The tests indicate how the popular free messaging service could generate revenue.



Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Google DataStudio is now free

Google offers a variety of analytical tools for measuring the performance of your website from how many visitors you get to which pages they're looking at. The constant flow of data generated by these services can be confusing, so Google provides a tool - DataStudio (datastudio .google.com) - to capture snapshots from Analytics and other data sources. This was previously a freemium service, with a limit on the number of reports you could create, but you can now use it as much as you like, free of charge.

You could also export this data from Analytics to load into a spreadsheet, but if you sign into DataStudio with your Google account, your Analytics data is ready and waiting to be converted into graphs and tables, making site analysis even easier.

DMOZ is deceased

Back in the early days of SEO (search engine optimisation) you could get a boost from Google by getting your site listed in handcrafted databases of websites. The king of them was DMOZ (www.dmoz.org), launched in 1998 and hand-moderated by a huge team of volunteers. Moderation was strict, so inclusion in the database was a clear indication to Google that a site was good. However, after 18 years, the site has been shut down by current owner AOL. You should still be able to view it. for old time's sake. at the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine (archive.org/web).

Deal of the Fortnight

Fasthosts has a range of domains on special offer, including '.com', '.co.uk' and '.uk' all available for £1.20 for the first year.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Stefano Maruzzi, **EMEA Vice President,**



GoDaddy (uk.godaddy.com)



Is there any benefit to building a basic site from scratch using

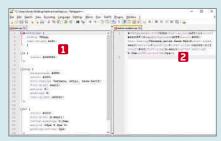
Anthony Fallon, via email

There are only a few situations in which I would recommend building a website from scratch. One is for educational purposes, because working in HTML can provide a deep understanding of how the web works. But the minute you want to add features, such as mobile responsiveness, or change layouts, you'll need to quickly graduate to a more advanced language. If you just want to build a website for personal use or for your small business, I would suggest using a website builder such as the next-gen GoDaddy Website Builder; or for more advanced

users, try a managed WordPress account.

MINI WORKSHOP | Minify your site's CSS and JavaScript files Better WordPress Minify: bit.ly/mini419 | 🕒 10 mins | Any website

The faster your site loads, the better the experience is for your visitors. Even little things can make a surprising difference. Here's how to cut the bloat out of your site's CSS and JavaScript files.



The white space we're taught to put into computer code such as CSS, 🚺 JavaScript and others is only there to make it more readable to humans. Once you've finished writing it, you can go through your files manually and remove spaces 2 - computers don't need them and will read files faster if they're not there.



If you use WordPress, there's a plugin that will do this for you. Click Plugins, 1 then click the Add New button and type Better WordPress Minify into the search box. 2 Install 3 and activate the plug-in. Return to the main Plugins screen, find the plugin and click Settings.



Make sure that 'Minify JS files automatically' and 'Minify CSS files automatically' 11 have ticks in their boxes. The plugin creates new versions of your files, caches them and redirects any requests to the new versions. However, the original files are preserved and will be reinstated if you remove the plugin.





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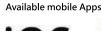
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Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

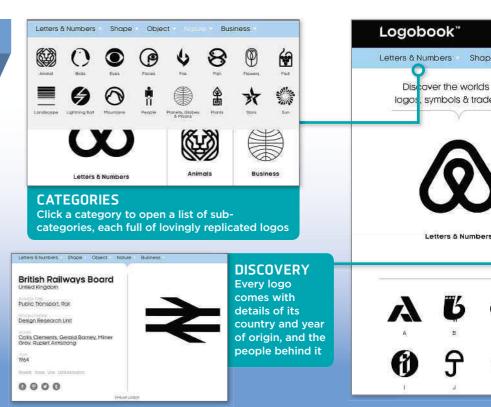
Logobook

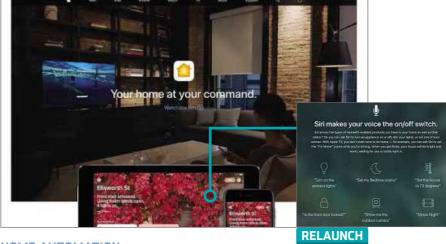
www.logobook.com

Logos provide companies with a brand identity but they're also little works of art in their own right, as this website demonstrates. Packed with logos dating back to the Fifties, the site was created primarily as a reference tool for designers, but anyone can admire the designs on show within the five main categories. There's much fun to be had in spotting familiar logos and learning more about them. We like the way logos are arranged neatly over four columns, and that each is black and white to allow its originality, simplicity and charm to shine through. You could easily spend many hours browsing this fascinating site.

Our rating







HOME AUTOMATION

Apple Home

bit.lv/home419

Many of us still aren't quite sure what home automation has to offer, aside from controlling a thermostat and a few light bulbs remotely. To remedy this, Apple has relaunched its Home site with a smart new design to promote the automative capabilities of iOS and TvOS, starting with a brief video showing how Siri and Apple's Home app can assist you in rolling up the blinds, brewing the coffee and locking your house. You can explore 50 HomeKit-compatible product brands, view examples of Home-based Siri commands and learn how to use Apple TV as a home hub. If you like what you see, you can move straight to the comprehensive setup instructions.

Our rating ****



The Week Bookshop

bit.ly/week419

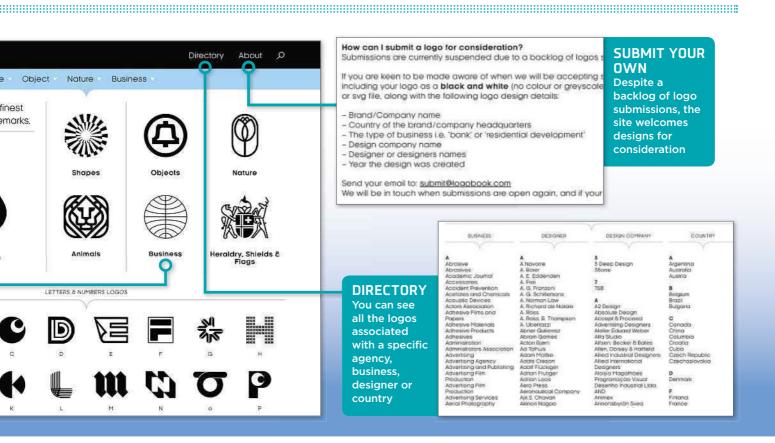
THE WEEK Bookshop

This online bookshop stocks all the latest tomes reviewed in popular news digest The Week. You can select a particular issue or month and browse a small selection of books, increasing the chances of finding something you'll like without being overwhelmed. The reviews themselves aren't available, but clicking a book displays its cover and a synopsis, and gives you the option to buy, or you can scroll down for more suggestions. There's a category for bestsellers, as well as sections devoted to The Man Booker Shortlist and The Week Junior Children's Collection, among others.

Our rating



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





Baker Days

FOOD

www.bakerdays.com

Baker Days offers delicious personalised cakes that fit through your letter box. The revamped website speeds up the ordering process, replaces the unwieldy navigation bar with swish drop-down menus and uses larger thumbnail images instead of the tiny, badly cut-out versions of old. Personalising cakes is also more straightforward. As well as choosing the size of the cake and its ingredients, you can upload images, edit the wording and change the text style, and the site shows you the results of your changes in real time. There's also a photo-upload guide to ensure your cake looks its best. Yum!







TRAVEL

Nightly Travel www.nightly.travel

As if booking a hotel wasn't difficult enough, Nightly Travel adds a further complication by suggesting that you switch hotels mid-trip to save money. The site works on the principle that some nights cost more than others. Enter your dates and destination and it finds you low-cost combos. The results are clear and the hotel pages comprehensive, but you have to register to use the site and the hotels can be many miles apart. What's more, some of the prices quoted are much too high: it claimed five nights at The New York Edition would cost £3,850, while Expedia stated £2,704.

Our rating





POLICE

Action Counters Terrorism

act.campaign.gov.uk

This government site explains what you can do to help fight terrorism by showing you the type of thing that should be reported and explaining, with the help of a video, what happens when you contact the police. It provides the number to call and two web forms - one for reporting "real-life" suspicions and the other for online material promoting terrorism and extremism. There are also podcasts and posters to download. Yet as good as it looks, we'd like to see a menu system for better navigation. We fear a lot of people will simply give up after endless scrolling.

Our rating











TODAY

WebUser

Visit: www.ipssecurityrules.com

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2016 BACK ISSUES DISC

Our **2016 Back Issues Disc** containing all 26 issues from last year is now on sale from Amazon

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You can still buy our 2015
Back Issues
Disc from
bit.ly/wudisc15



NEWS

RELAUNCH



ART

Newsa

newsa.com

If you want your news to be more selective, this news aggregator is well worth considering. It claims to work with the best content providers to deliver anything from current affairs and sport to technology and politics, and while it looks a tad staid and includes clickbait stories from the likes of Buzzfeed, Unilad and TMZ, we found that it works well. Headlines are constantly updated, and each is accompanied by its source. Click a story to read an intro, then click an icon to go straight to the relevant site. You can also see what's trending on Google and select a specific publisher. It's certainly one to bookmark.

Our rating



Golf Foundation

www.golf-foundation.org

In its aim to make golf more accessible to young people, the Golf Foundation has come up trumps with a refreshed website that works to a tee. The old site's tiny text and cramped design have been replaced by a bright new offering with enhanced signposting, improved images and a more presentable news section. One of the biggest improvements is the new Golf Facility Finder. Simply enter a location or postcode and indicate how many miles you're willing to travel. The site also makes greater use of social media and adds new resources for PGA coaches and more info than you can shake a club at.

Our rating



Artworx

www.artworx.co.uk

Based in Shropshire, Artworx specialises in original and limited-edition pieces of art, but its old site was long overdue a lick of paint. This new offering gives the artwork more space to breathe by displaying it over fewer columns, and you can now search for items by price and colour. The latter option is a lovely addition for those who want a specific colour scheme for their walls, and you can now combine more than one colour to narrow down the results further. We think the news section could do with some work but at least there's an email newsletter to keep you up to date with new art.

Our rating





www.whatsonsteam.com

Avid PC gamers who want to know what's coming out on Steam will love this easily digestible site. All new games are treated equally and the site is updated every 10 minutes. Simply scroll down the screen to see the latest releases and click anything that takes your fancy to go straight to the official page. Each entry includes a clear title, six screenshots, a short description, details of the platforms it's available on and the price. Unique six-second trailers and links to related YouTube videos are also a nice touch. Given that Steam itself tends to focus on recommended and popular releases, this site should help you unearth some hidden gems.

Our rating





Byron Burgers

www.byronhamburgers.com

Stripping away the fat and getting to the meat of what visitors want, burger chain Byron's website now prioritises its menu, location finder, booking facility and takeaway section. The redesign has streamlined navigation significantly, so finding a restaurant is now as simple as entering a postcode and you can book a table in a few steps. The new design uses lots of tasty photos, attractive illustrations and striking typography, which extend to the redesigned menu page and make browsing a pleasure. With all this plus a merchandise shop and the option to join Byron's Burger Club, you have a site to visit with relish.

Our rating



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"Amazing! They are with you every step" **** Lisa. 21 October

"Very impressed and was smooth and hassle free from start to finish" ****

David, 9 September

"Thank you and we would buy through you again" ****

Clancy, 21 August

"I'm loving my new ride. I would recommend this service to anyone" ****

Tatiana, 8 September

Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Spammers leak database of 1.4 billion users

One of the world's largest spamemail operations has reportedly had its entire archive of 1.37 billion user records leaked online, after the



spammers failed to password protect the database. In what is being described as a "tangible threat to online privacy and security", the massive data hoard apparently includes email addresses, real names, IP addresses and, in some cases, home addresses and postcodes.

The discovery was made when Chris Vickery, security researcher at MacKeeper Security Research Centre, stumbled upon the publicly exposed database that was lacking password protection. Since then, a research cooperative made up of investigators from MacKeeper, CSOOnline and Spamhaus has been trawling through the leaked files and identified that a group known as River City Media was responsible.

"The leaky files, it turns out, represent the backbone operations of a group calling themselves River City Media (RCM)," said Chris Vickery, in a blog post describing the operation. "Led by known spammers Alvin Slocombe and Matt Ferris, RCM masquerades as a legitimate marketing firm while, per their own documentation, being responsible for up to a billion daily email sends."

bit.ly/spam419

WikiLeaks exposes CIA hacking tools

WikiLeaks has claimed the CIA can hack into almost any device using hacking tools that are specifically designed to lift data from electronic devices.

WikiLeaks announced in a statement that it had obtained "the largest ever publication of confidential documents on the agency", a cache codenamed 'Vault 7'. The first batch to be leaked consists of 8,761 documents and files detailing that authorities have worked out how to access data on Android devices, iPhones, Microsoft Windows and even Samsung smart TVs. More specifically, the documents reveal that in 2016 the CIA "had 24 'weaponized'



Android 'zero days'", enabling it to bypass the encryption in highly secure messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal. The files were accessed via an internal network inside the CIA's Center for Cyber Intelligence in Langley, Virginia. bit.ly/wikileaks419

iOS protected against CIA attacks

Most iOS devices are protected against the CIA attacks revealed by WikiLeaks, Apple has claimed. In a statement sent to Web User's sister site IT Pro, the Cupertino company said: "The technology built into today's iPhone represents the best data security available to consumers, and we're constantly working to keep it that way. While our initial analysis indicates that many of the issues leaked were already patched in the latest iOS, we will continue work to rapidly address any identified vulnerabilities. We always urge customers to make sure they have the most recent security updates."

What proportion of the issues "many" represents is unclear. Microsoft and Samsung both said they are currently "looking into" the matter, but gave no further information on the current scope or validity of the attacks detailed in the so-called 'Vault 7' documents.

bit.ly/ioswiki419

The results speak for themselves



We test and compare the latest products

BT Whole Home Wi-Fi

BT's multipoint wireless system is fast and reliable, but it's not cheap. Jonathan Bray reckons it's worth the money



T's Whole Home Wi-Fi is the latest product in a wave of multi-box wireless 'mesh' routers that aim to banish deadspots by blanketing your home with strong, solid Wi-Fi. It's cheaper than Netgear's Orbi (reviewed in Issue 415 bit.ly/issue415) but more expensive than Devolo's GigaGate (reviewed in Issue 417 - bit.ly/webuser417), and comes with an extra box (three instead of two), promising to push its Wi-Fi signal further still.

The concept is a simple one. By using several routers to spread the wireless signal around your home, you get a strong signal everywhere. While it's possible (and much cheaper) to use wireless repeaters to extend the reach of your network, they can

be tricky to set up and don't perform as well as the multi-box systems, which are designed with ease-of-use in mind and are simple to set up and maintain.

Setup and positioning

BT's system works in a very similar way to the Orbi and the GigaGate, and is also designed to be completely plug-and-play. Download the app, run through the step-bystep instructions and you'll be up and running in minutes.

When you connect the first disc-shaped wireless unit to

your existing router via its single Gigabit Ethernet port, it automatically configures itself. You're then ready to plug in your second and third discs, which automatically pair with the first to establish a simple mesh network.

You can place the discs wherever you like, but the app offers to improve your coverage and speeds by monitoring the signal strength and letting you know if the second and third satellite discs would be better positioned closer to the hub.

Once that's done, you just

enter the preconfigured security key (from the plastic tab in the rear of the router discs) into all your devices.

Connecting to the network

BT Whole Home Wi-Fi offers dual-band connectivity and each disc is effectively a 4x4 MIMO 802.11ac router offering speeds of up to 1,733Mbps over 5GHz and 800Mbps over 2.4GHz. However, it doesn't show two separate networks as a normal wireless router would. Instead, the system uses a technique known as band-steering to assess each connected device and hook it up to the most appropriate frequency on the disc offering the strongest connection. It sounds like magic but it seems to work.

The one misstep is that

It's up there with the best standalone routers we've tested — more than twice as speedy as the Sky Q Hub -

BT Whole Home Wi-Fi Product Test 🗐



the system creates its own separate wireless network, leaving your original wireless router's active. If you want to make sure your devices are connecting automatically to the new network and not your old, inferior one, you'll either have to disable wireless completely on that router or go around deleting the old network from your devices.

The app is very easy to use and we particularly like the Pause button, which lets you temporarily shut down Wi-Fi across the entire household. This is a handy tool for parents who find it a challenge to get their children to put down their devices.

Performance

The BT system's performance is stellar across the board. We tested it in a home previously serviced by a Sky Q wireless mesh network and there was no contest - the Whole Home Wi-Fi outclassed it both in range and throughput speed.

Our test house has its

broadband connection coming in on the first floor at the front of the property, which is where we carried out our first, close-range test. Using an Apple MacBook Pro 15 equipped with a 3x3 stream Broadcom Wi-Fi adapter, we saw an average throughput of 89MB/s.

That's up there with the best standalone routers we've tested, faster than the BT Smart Hub and more than twice as speedy as the Sky Q Hub, which itself is no slouch.

Next, we moved down one flight of stairs to the kitchen at the rear of the house. In setting up the system, we tried to replicate as closely as possible the positions of the various Sky Q access points and booster boxes in the original network. We only tweaked the positions slightly on the advice of the BT Whole Home Wi-Fi app.

We would normally see throughput speeds of around 8MB/s on the Sky Q network in the kitchen, but the BT

Whole Home Wi-Fi system flew past it with an average throughput of 36MB/s.

That's easily strong enough to stream 4K Netflix via a Chromecast Ultra, and is double the speed mustered by a BT Smart Hub in the same position.

Moving to a second-floor bedroom immediately above the primary Whole Home disc provided even more impressive results. Here, we saw an average throughput of 67MB/s. The slowest throughput speeds were in the study at the rear of the house (25MB/s) and the living room at the front of the house, immediately below the primary Whole Home Wi-Fi disc (22MB/s).

Your numbers won't be the same as ours, of course every house is different - but what's promising about the performance of the BT system is that even in the trickiest spots in our test house, we were getting a strong signal and decent throughput.

PRODUCT INFO

BT Whole Home

Price: £299.99 Buy from Amazon: bit.ly/btwh419

SPECIFICATIONS

- AC2533 (1733 +800M) dual-band concurrent Wi-Fi
- 2.4GHz 802.11b/g/n; 5GHz 802.11a/n/ac Wi-Fi
- Dual-core CPU
- 1 x Gigabit Ethernet port

FOR

- ✓ Easy to set up
- ✓ Good range, great speed
- ✓ Pause Wi-Fi button on app

AGAINST

X Expensive

X Limited Ethernet ports

MORE EXPENSIVE

Netgear Orbi, £369 bit.ly/orbi419



LESS EXPENSIVE

Devolo GigaGate, £219.99 bit.ly/giga419



OUR VERDICT

BT Whole Home Wi-Fi is the third device of this type we've reviewed in Web User and they all have their strengths and weaknesses. Netgear's Orbi is the most expensive but its devices are the most advanced each one is a full-featured router in its own right Devolo's GigaGate is cheaper but doesn't have all

the hardware features of its rivals. Both do an excellent job of improving your Wi-Fi.

BT's system falls midway between the two in price, but it benefits greatly from the extra unit in its starter pack. Having three units, rather than two, creates a stronger signal across your house, especially if you want

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

broader coverage rather than a point-to-point solution. It's remarkably easy to set up and provides strong wireless coverage across a whole property.



Less CO₂ than lasers with WorkForce Pro

The results speak for themselves. Independent tests are based on comparisons with competitive laser printers.

epson.co.uk/workforcepro







Lenovo P2

Nathan Spendelow tests an affordable smartphone with a battery that lasts longer than any we've ever seen

emember when your phone lasted more than a day on a single charge? Well, the glory days are back and Lenovo's P2 is the saviour: it lasted a staggering 28hrs 50mins in our continuous video test. That's a full five hours longer than our previous winner, Motorola's Moto Z Play. Anecdotally, after a heavy weekend's sightseeing filled with Google Maps, selfies and the odd game of Mini Metro, the P2 never dipped below 70%.

Lenovo achieves this by squeezing a 5,100mAh

PRODUCT INFO

Lenovo P2

Price: £199.99 (unlocked) **Buv from Three:** www.three.co.uk

SPECIFICATIONS

- Qualcomm Snapdragon 625 processor
- 5.5in AMOLED screen
- 32GB storage (upgradable to 128GB)
- 13MP rear-facing camera, 5MP front-facing camera
- Dual SIM
- Android 6.0 Marshmallow
- 153 x 76 x 8.5mm
- **=** 177g

FOR

- ✓ Best battery life we've tested
- Brilliant display
- Speedy performance

AGAINST

X Disappointing camera

battery into the P2's metal body (most current phone batteries are around 3,000mAh), but this doesn't make it bulky. It feels a little fatter than super-svelte models such as the Galaxy S7 Edge, but at 8.5mm thick and 177g it's only 0.6mm thicker and 20g heavier than the Samsung.

A fingerprint reader sits below the screen, with a volume rocker and power button on the right-hand edge, and a dual SIM slot and battery-saving switch on the left. Flick the switch up and vour P2 enters Ultimate Power Saver mode, turning off data and disabling apps. It could be a handy last-minute option but given the already impressive battery life, it's unlikely to see much use.

The full-HD, 5.5in AMOLED screen is capable of displaying an impressive 99.9% of the sRGB colour standard. As with all AMOLED displays, the contrast ratio is near-perfect. The screen's only sticking point is its peak brightness, which sits at a lowly 326cd/m² (candles per square metre). While that's fine for gloomier winter days, you'll be squinting at it if the sun comes out.

For its £200 price, the P2 is a surprisingly nippy performer. In Geekbench tests, it's faster than the Moto G4 and almost as fast as the Honor 6X. It also performed well in our gaming tests.

But you can't expect



ff The P2's display, performance and build-quality are all top notch

a mid-priced phone to be brilliant at everything and, in the P2's case, it's the camera that pulls it back a notch. The 13-megapixel rear camera isn't bad but it's not as good as many of its rivals, such as the Moto G4.

Outdoor test shots under aloomy skies picked up plenty of colour, with noise (the graininess you get when a camera tries to compensate for darkness) mostly kept at bay. Where it falls down is indoors, especially in low light. Under close inspection. our test subjects looked grainy, though the colours

were vibrant enough.

The camera software isn't as easy to use as its rivals, requiring you to navigate through menus. The plus side to this is that there are lots of options to configure, including ISO and white balance.

The final and relatively minor drawback is that there's no Android 7 Nougat here; the phone is currently stuck on Android 6 Marshmallow, which feels a little dated in comparison. We've been told that an over-the-air update is coming in the very near future, though.

OUR VERDICT

The P2's excellent battery life alone is worth the price: don't forget, you're buying the longest-lasting smartphone we've tested, by a significant margin. And it doesn't stop there. The P2's display. performance and buildquality are all top notch, given the price.

It's a worthy competitor

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

to much more expensive phones, so if you're willing to compromise a little on the camera, and don't use it much in low light, this is well worth £200.



₩eb User's Best Buys

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

HARDWARE

GRAPHICS CARD

Asus AMD Radeon R7 250

£78.59 from bit.ly/250amd416

Tested: Issue 416



This graphics card provides enough power to make less challenging games run smoothly in 1080p resolution with high-detail settings enabled. It's very cheap and benefits from plenty of speedy stream processors.

KEY SPECS

2,048 stream processors ■ 128 texture-mapping units ■ 32 render-output units = 926MHz GPU frequency = 4GB RAM ■ Supports up to six displays ■ 4,096 x 2,160 pixels resolution ■ DisplayPort, DVI-D and HDMI video connectors

WI-FI REPEATER

TP-Link RE450

£44.99 from bit.ly/tpl414

Tested: Issue 414

The TP-Link RE450 provides a strong signal at a price that's hard to resist. It's better at extending the 5GHz network than the 2.4GHz, but it also acts as a bridge to transfer older devices to the newer network.

KEY SPECS

2 x 60mm, 1 x 42mm antennae ■ 3.8W power consumption ■ 2.4GHz (450Mbps) and 5GHz (1,300Mbps) ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ WPS button ■ Repeater and access point modes ■ 163 x 76 x 37mm ■ Three-year return-to-base warranty

MONITOR

AOC Q2781PQ

£299.99 from bit.ly/aoc412 Tested: Issue 412

This good-value monitor offers

a resolution of 2,560 x 1,440 pixels, impressive image quality, a lovely design and 178-degree horizontal and vertical viewing angles. You won't need to calibrate it, either.

KEY SPECS

27in flat screen ■ 2,560 x 1,440 pixels resolution ■ 1,000:1 contrast ratio ■ 350cd/m² brightness ■ 60Hz refresh rate ■ DisplayPort, HDMI, VGA inputs ■ 330 x 180mm base ■ Three-year collect-and-return warranty

BUDGET TABLET

Amazon Fire HD 8

£89.99 from bit.ly/8hd410

Tested: Issue 410



For its low price, Amazon's Fire HD 8 is a pleasant surprise: it's great for media streaming and web browsing, its battery life is exceptional and it's easy to use. Once it's integrated with Amazon's Alexa voice assistant, it will be even better.

KEY SPECS

Quad-core 1.3GHz processor ■ 8in 1,280 x 800 pixels resolution screen ■ 2-megapixels rear camera ■ 16GB storage (12.09GB free) ■ MicroSD memory card slot ■ Fire OS operating system = 214 x 128 x 9.2mm = 341g

All prices correct at time of review





The results speak for themselves. Independent tests are based on comparisons with competitive laser printers.

epson.co.uk/workforcepro



Reduction in waste with WorkForce Pro







🚃 Web User's Best Buys

CHROMEBOOK

Acer Chromebook R11

£229.99 from www.amazon.co.uk Tested: Issue 409

The Acer Chromebook R11 laptop's keyboard can be flipped behind



its touchscreen, so it can also be used as a tablet. It's not hugely powerful but it runs all the web apps you might need and its battery lasted over eight hours in our tests.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.6GHz Intel Celeron N3050 processor ■ 2GB of memory ■ 11.6in touchscreen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 16GB eMMC drive ■ 1 x USB 2, 1 x USB 3 ports ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ SD card reader ■ 295 x 203 x 20mm ■ 1.2kg

E-READER

Amazon Kindle (2016)

£69.99 from www.amazon.co.uk Tested: Issue 405

The highly capable Kindle is lightweight, great for reading and, when it comes to the most important things - usability and content - it's just as good as any of its pricier rivals. Despite the lack of a front light, it remains the best e-reader you can buy for less than £100.



KEY SPECS

6in E Ink Pearl screen ■ 800 x 600 pixels resolution, 167 ppi Optical touchscreen 4GB storage 160 x 115 x 9.1mm 161g ■ No front light ■ £10 less with Amazon Special Offers ■ Up to four weeks battery life (if used for 30 minutes a day)

WINDOWS 10 LAPTOP

Aspire One Cloudbook 14

£199.98 from www.pcworld.co.uk Tested: Issue 407

The Cloudbook 14 is as good a laptop as you'll get for less than £200. It's not particularly fast and doesn't have

a brilliant display, but it's fantastic value, especially because it includes a year's subscription to Office 365 Personal.

KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.6GHz Intel Celeron N3050 processor ■ 2GB of memory = 32GB SSD = 14.1in non-touchscreen = 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 1 x USB 3, 1 x USB 2 port ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 339 x 235 x 17.9mm ■ 1.6kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

BUDGET SMARTPHONE

Motorola Moto G4

£159 from www.amazon.co.uk Tested: Issue 404

This fantastic smartphone offers better features and performance than any other phone of this price. Its magnificent screen is sharp and bright, and both its cameras are excellent. Battery life is well above average, too, and the Moto G4 feels sturdy and high quality.



KEY SPECS

5.5in screen ■ Octa-core 1.5GHz processor ■ 16GB of storage, expandable by 128GB ■ Android 6.0.1 Marshmallow ■ 13-megapixel rear camera, 5-megapixel front camera ■ 1,980 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 3,000mAh battery = 153 x 77 x 7.9mm = 155g

MEDIA STREAMER

Roku 3

£83.98 from www.very.co.uk Tested: Issue 403

The Roku 3 has all the best elements of the



previous models and is as close to a perfect TV-streaming device as you'll find. It offers all the terrestrial catch-up services and a choice of Netflix, Amazon Video, Google Play and Sky services.

KEY SPECS

HDMI video output ■1 x USB 3 port ■ 512MB internal storage with microSD slot ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi and Ethernet connectivity ■ Plex and UPnP streaming servers ■ 89 x 89 x 25mm ■ 142g ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

WINDOWS 10 PC

Palicomp AMD Avenger

£500 from www.palicomp.co.uk Tested: Issue 401

The Palicomp AMD Avenger's medium-sized case still provides plenty of room to upgrade. Its carefully chosen components offer good performance, especially when playing games.



KEY SPECS

Quad-core 4.5GHz AMD Athlon X4 880K processor 8GB of memory ■ 1TB hard drive, 240GB SSD ■ 2 x USB 2 ports, 3 x USB 3 ports = Ethernet = 485 x 420 x 235mm ■ Three-year return-to-base warranty ■ 4GB Palit GeForce GTX 960 graphics card

NEW

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2017

£19.95 from bit.ly/kaspersky2017 **Tested:** Computeractive Issue 493



Kaspersky is rock solid at protecting your PC from the worst of the web. Use the URL above to save £15.04 on the software (normal price £34.99).

KEY FEATURES

Antivirus and firewall tools ■ Protects online shopping and banking ■ Identity and privacy tools ■ Dangerous-website alerts ■ New software updater ■ Secure-connection VPN

ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com

Tested: Issue 389



Google Drive is easy to use and has lots of free storage. It integrates with Explorer, so saves and syncs like a PC folder.

KEY FEATURES

16GB free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Works with XP, Vista, 7, 8+ and 10 ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ Extra storage from £1.36 per month

WEB DESIGN

Xara Web Designer 11 Premium

£69.99 from www.xara.com

Tested: Issue 385



Xara Web Designer 11 lets you create a great-looking website without having to use HTML or CSS code. The interface is easy to use and the software includes all the tools you need to create flexible sites.

KEY FEATURES

90+ templates ■ WYSIWYG design ■ Create responsive websites = Embed codes = Add HTML = Online editing

Web User Gold Award winners

MUSIC PLAYER

MusicBee

Free from getmusicbee.com

Tested: Issue 418

MusicBee offers everything you need from a music player. It's fast, easy to use and can be customised to your tastes.

SAFER-BROWSING TOOL

Webutation

Free from www.webutation.net

Tested: Issue 417

The excellent Webutation combines a reliable blocker with a database built on trusted services and users' experiences.

ANDROID KEYBOARD

SwiftKey

Tested: Issue 416

SwiftKey is the king of Android keyboards, with an unmatched combination of features, usability and performance.

Free from bit.ly/swiftkey416

STICKY-NOTES TOOL

Stickies

Free from bit.ly/stickies415

Tested: Issue 415

Stickies is simple to use, lets you display

almost anything in its notes and has lots of useful options.



ANDROID CAMERA APP

Open Camera

Free from bit.ly/open414

Tested: Issue 414

Open Camera is by far the best replacement for your phone's camera app, and offers an unrivalled selection of tools.





Saved on energy consumption with WorkForce Pro

The results speak for themselves. Independent tests are based on comparisons with competitive laser printers.

epson.co.uk/workforcepro







Best Free Software

ANTIVIRUS PROGRAM

Adaware Antivirus Free 12

bit.ly/adaware419

Min requirements: Windows XP/

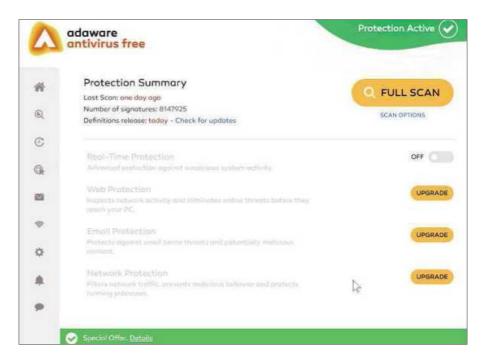
Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 2.4MB (installer only)

Adaware has been protecting computers from spyware and other threats since 1999 and, over the years, it's developed into a full-blown antimalware solution. The latest version has undergone a comprehensive redesign. with a brand-new look and feel that could win back many former users.

The first thing you'll notice is the streamlined installer, which is only a couple of megabytes to download. The full installation still takes quite a long time to complete, but you can just run it in the background and get on with other tasks in the meantime.

The new interface sports a smarter white, green and orange colour scheme, with a grey strip down the left-hand side that provides access to all the software's features. From top to bottom, they are: Home, Scan Computer, Real-Time Protection, Web Protection, Email Protection, Network Protection, App Management, Notification Centre,



Help Centre and Activation.

The bulk of the listed features including Web, Email and Network Protection - are only available in the paid-for Pro edition, which costs £27, but you still get on-demand, real-time and scheduled scanning in the free version. The on-demand protection is much faster in this new release, and the real-time component has also been improved. The software automatically

scans all downloads for potential threats before they have a chance to infect vour system.

Like the latest versions of AVG and Avast, Adaware will detect if you already have an antivirus program on your PC and install itself in Compatible mode if you do. This will provide you with a reliable second line of defence that won't clash with your existing security software.

MINI WORKSHOP | Protect your PC using Adaware Antivirus Free 12



Adaware Antivirus Free offers several types of scan. Click the magnifying-glass icon on the left to go to the Scan Computer screen. 11 then choose from Quick (checks active processes for signs of malware), 2 Full (checks all resources and files) [3] and Custom. 4 Click the Edit Schedule link 5 if you want to schedule a Full or Quick scan.



Scroll down to access more options. You can adjust the Performance Settings, 1 which will let you change the priority of your scans; and view the Report List, 2 which shows details of findings in any previous scans you've carried out. You can also exclude specific files, folders or extensions from scans, 3 and view any files that have been quarantined. 4



The Real-Time Protection section lets you toggle background protection on or off 11 (it's off by default if you are running the software in Compatible mode). The cog icon 2 takes you to the App Management section where you can customise the software by locking Adaware with a PIN, 3 enabling and disabling notifications 4 and more.

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

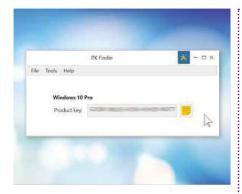


MEDIA PLAYER PMPlayer 8

bit.ly/pmplay419

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 30.2MB

There are loads of Desktop media players, but PMPlayer is one of the better and more versatile ones. It can play pretty much everything you throw at it (audio and video), and open and connect to webcams and streaming URLs. Additionally, there's a video-recording tool, a video converter, support for subtitles (and automatic subtitle translation), screen capture and sharing, and much more. You can choose the options you require from the Quick Access menu.



KEY FINDER

PK Finder

bit.ly/pkfind419

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10

File size: 3.3MB

If you need to find your Windows product key – perhaps because you want to upgrade to Windows 10 – PK Finder is the tool for the job. Just download and run the software – there are installer and portable versions available – and it will tell you which version of Windows you're running, and the key used to activate it. You can copy the key to your clipboard with a single click, or save it as a text file.



SYSTEM TOOLKIT

PeaUtils

bit.ly/peautils419

Min requirements: Windows XP/ Vista/7/8+/10 **File size:** 920KB

PeaUtils is a collection of filemanagement tools from the developer behind the PeaZip archiving software. It lists files and folders (giving you a full breakdown of the contents), and lets you export the list as a text file. You can also compare two files byte to byte, securely delete content and wipe free space; and split files and merge spanned volumes. It will also detect damaged and duplicate files.

New Windows Apps

Bubble Witch Saga 3

bit.ly/bws3-419

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 131.6MB

The Bubble Witch Saga is based on the classic Puzzle Bobble game. The aim is to free owls from orbs by popping them with matching coloured bubbles.



Fliky True Flickr Client

bit.ly/fliky419

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 23.8MB

This is an unofficial third-party app for Flickr. You can explore your photostream, manage images, upload photos or videos, view notifications and more. It's easy to use and well designed.



Unsplashed

bit.ly/unsplash419

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 17.6MB

Unsplash (unsplash.com) provides free high-resolution photos, and this app lets you set your favourites as wallpaper on the Windows Lock screen or Desktop. It can update the image automatically.



Best Free Software

PARTITION MANAGER

MiniTool Partition Wizard Free 10

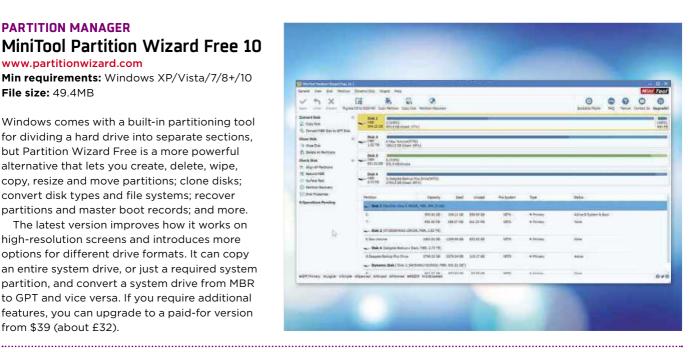
www.partitionwizard.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 49.4MB

Windows comes with a built-in partitioning tool for dividing a hard drive into separate sections, but Partition Wizard Free is a more powerful alternative that lets you create, delete, wipe, copy, resize and move partitions; clone disks; convert disk types and file systems; recover partitions and master boot records; and more.

The latest version improves how it works on high-resolution screens and introduces more options for different drive formats. It can copy an entire system drive, or just a required system partition, and convert a system drive from MBR to GPT and vice versa. If you require additional features, you can upgrade to a paid-for version from \$39 (about £32).





PAINTING TOOL

Artweaver Free 6

www.artweaver.de/en

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10

File size: 11.7MB

Artweaver Free can be used to create works of art from scratch, or to edit and improve your photos. It offers all the usual tools, including magic wand, lasso, text tool, gradient and clone stamp. There's also a massive selection of art brushes sorted into various categories including acrylics, airbrushes, chalk, charcoal, crayons, oils, pastels and pencils. The latest version of Artweaver adds support for high-resolution screens and has a new toolbar that provides quick access to common commands. Selecting the brush you want has been made easier and a new FilterFX tool lets you create your own custom filters from a script.

SCREEN TOOL

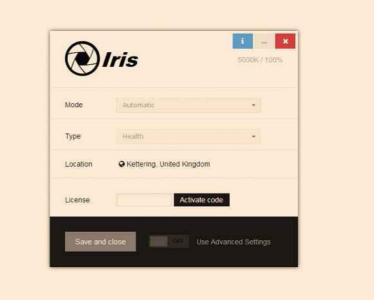
Iris

iristech.co

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10, Mac OS or Linux File size: 35.7MB

Like the excellent F.lux (justgetflux.com) and the forthcoming Night Light feature in Windows 10 Creators Update, Iris intelligently changes your screen's hue to match your environment and the time of day, making it easier on your eyes. Run the software and it will use your location and time of day to adjust the settings accordingly.

You can also switch to manual mode, which uses the night-time settings exclusively; or pause Iris, which is useful if you want to carry out colour-sensitive work such as editing photos. You can also switch between various pre-set colour types, including Health, Sleep, Reading and Movie.







GAME Takume

bit.ly/tak419

Min requirements: Windows XP/

Vista/7/8+/10 File size: 77.2MB

This is a short 'n' sweet side-scrolling adventure game about a girl trying to find her sister. Along the way, you encounter other characters and some simple puzzles. The game opens full screen by default, but holding down Alt when launching it will display the configuration screen and let you choose a windowed mode instead.

Don't install...

ImgBurn

www.imgburn.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10 File size: 3MB

This disc-burning program hasn't been updated since 2013 and now comes bundled with OpenCandy adware, which installs junk on your PC that displays unwanted ads, changes your browser settings and invades your privacy. The software has fewer features than other free tools, which is disappointing because it used to be one of the best disc burners around.



...Install this instead

Ashampoo Burning Studio 2017

www.ashampoo.com/uk

Min requirements: Windows 7/8+/10

File size: 73.1MB

Although it's a cut-down version of Ashampoo's paid-for Burning Studio 18, this versatile free disc-authoring program can perform most of the tasks you'd expect of it, including writing data to CD, DVD and Blu-ray; creating (and ripping) audio discs; making and burning disc images; and printing covers and labels.

The new 2017 version of the software has been redesigned, and Ashampoo claims it offers a better user experience as a result, although the general layout is similar to last year's interface. It's been optimised for Windows 10 but will run without any problems on Windows 7 and 8+.





UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs



PDF READER

Foxit Reader 8.2.1

www.foxitsoftware.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 51.9MB

Foxit Reader is a good alternative to Adobe Reader that lets you view, edit and create PDF files. The new version lets you choose whether to overwrite existing files when creating a PDF. It's also easier to use, and fixes some security and stability issues.



IMAGE EDITOR

ImBatch 5.3.1

www.highmotionsoftware

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 14.6MB

ImBatch lets you make multiple changes to whole batches of photos in one go by queuing up tasks. The latest release lets you remove XMP tags and full metainformation from JPEG images. It can also keep the original file date/time of processed images.



AUDIO EDITOR

Wavosaur 1.3

www.wavosaur.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 1.4MB

This audio editor offers numerous features and processing options, along with lots of effects and filters. This latest release introduces Wavosaur Widgets dockable plugins that display different audio parameters. A new 'Select all' option has been added to the right-click menu.



BACKUP TOOL

Iperius Backup 4.8.2

www.iperiusbackup.com

Min requirements:

Windows XP/Vista/7/8+/10

File size: 8.8MB

This program lets you schedule backups, get email notifications and perform set tasks before and after backups. The update increases the maximum file size when backing up to Dropbox. Google Drive, and Amazon S3. It also includes various fixes and improvements.

GET FREE SOFTWARE FIRST subscribe to Web User at subscribe.webuser.co.uk



Best New Browser Tools



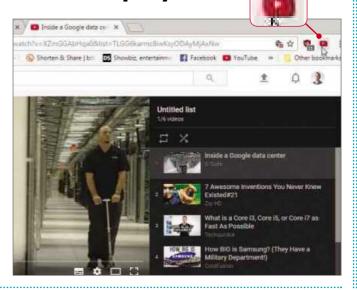
CHROME

Generate an instant YouTube playlist

It's not difficult to create a playlist of YouTube videos you just click the 'Add to' button below the title of a clip and either select an existing playlist or start a new one. However, the process is time-consuming and requires a fair amount of clicking, and you can only use the playlist function if you're signed into YouTube.

TubeLister (bit.ly/tube419) saves you time, hassle and memory by streamlining the process. When you click the add-on's toolbar button, it automatically generates a playlist from all your open tabs that contain YouTube videos and combines them into a single tab. This means you can right-click anything you want to watch and choose 'Open in new tab', then let TubeLister take care of the playlist creation.

The order in which the videos are compiled follows the order of tabs from left to right, but you can shuffle the clips to suit your preference.



Display tabs while in full-screen mode

Pressing F11 to switch Chrome to full-screen mode gives you a much clearer view of a web page, but it also means you lose access to the tab bar along the top of the browser. This makes it trickier to move between tabs (you can press Ctrl+Tab to cycle through them) and to see at a glance which web pages are open.

Happily, help is at hand from a new Chrome extension called Tab Revolution (bit.ly/tab419), which lets you easily access your tabs without exiting full-screen mode. Simply move your mouse cursor to the top of your screen and your tab bar will appear, with all tabs present and correct.



Find out what Facebook knows about you

It's common knowledge that Facebook tracks our browsing habits so it can target us with relevant adverts and tailor our news feeds to match our interests, but it's less clear exactly how

Your Data Selfie

Export Your Data

Delete Your Data

much data it's harvesting A new tool called Data Selfie (bit.ly/ data419) lifts the lid on the social network's snooping by using the same

machine-learning algorithms as Facebook. Once installed, the add-on monitors every post you view, item you 'like' and link you click, displaying the results in a colour-coded graph. It also shows charts of your top friends based on how much time you spend viewing their posts and how frequently you 'like' what they share.

To discover what data Facebook has gathered on you, click the extension's toolbar button and choose Your Data Selfie. The developers assure users that "we are not interested in your data", and you can delete any details saved locally in one click.

Access plugin settings in Chrome 57

Last issue, we reported that Firefox has dropped support for all NPAPI plugins apart from Adobe Flash, because of the security risks they pose. Now, Chrome is following suit:

version 57 of the browser prevents you from accessing your plugins in the usual manner, with the old 'chrome://plugins' page no longer available. From now on, if you want to enable or disable plugins, you'll need to go to Settings, 'Show advanced settings', 'Content settings'. However, this only lets you control Adobe Flash Player and Chrome PDF Viewer - all other plugins are now unavailable.

Cont	ent Settings
Flash	
C	Allow sites to run Flash
0	Detect and run important Flash content
B	Block sites from running Flash
	Manage exceptions



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



FIREFOX

Check if you're affected by Cloudbleed

In our lead news story last issue, we reported on the Cloudbleed bug, which potentially compromised sensitive data on thousands of websites that use Cloudflare technology. If you're worried by this security flaw, you can check if you've been put at risk by using a new add-on called CloudBleed, which is available for Firefox (bit.ly/cloudfire419) and Chrome (bit.ly/cloudchrome419).



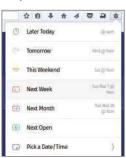
It scans the last 30 days of your browsing history - you can go back further if you want - to see if you recently visited any sites affected by the bug. If it finds any, don't panic - there's no evidence yet that hackers have obtained the leaked data or are exploiting it. However, it would be wise to change your password on sites that contain your personal data, for example online stores and webmail accounts.

•••••

Try two new Firefox experiments

Last summer, Mozilla relaunched its Firefox Test Pilot site (testpilot.firefox .com) to let users try experimental new features without having to install the less stable developer build of the browser. It has now added two new experiments to gauge users' feedback and decide whether to include them in future versions of Firefox.

The first of these, Snooze Tabs, prevents idle tabs from distracting you



and wasting memory. Instead, you can put tabs 'to sleep' until later, by clicking the snooze icon and setting an 'alarm' to reopen them when you need them. This could be later

today, at the weekend, next month or the precise date and time of your choice. Snooze Tabs is very easy to use and you can restore tabs early or cancel their alarms in a couple of clicks.

The second new experiment, Pulse, is mainly of benefit to Mozilla. It lets you rate your experience on different websites so that Firefox developers can see which sites work well in the browser and which don't. You can also leave

comments and report a site as being particularly



fast or not displaying correctly.

Both experiments can be installed alongside the Test Pilot add-on (if you don't already have it) and disabled via the Add-ons Manager, if you decide you don't like them.

Browse the web in the dark

Whether you want to protect your eyes when browsing at night or you're trying to stop nosy parkers gawking at your screen, there are many advantages to applying a dark theme in Firefox. Dark Mode (bit.ly/dark419) is a new WebExtension (as opposed to old-fashioned add-on), which does just that, letting you darken white backgrounds and lighten black text at the click of a button. You can whitelist specific sites to stop them going dark, try special dark themes for your favourite sites and choose from various styles.



OTHER BROWSERS

Load pages faster in Opera 43

Opera is constantly being tweaked to make it speedier and smarter, and a new feature in version 43 of the browser takes this a step further. Called 'instant page loading', it predicts which website you're typing the address for and loads it in the background before you've even pressed Enter. Additionally, when you search for something via Opera's address bar, it will load the results you're likely to click in the background. The downside is that if Opera guesses wrong,

it wastes memory loading pages you won't visit. You can turn



off the feature by going to Settings, 'Privacy & security' and deselecting the options 'Use a prediction service...' and 'Predict network actions to improve performance'.

Block more adverts in Edge

Considering the paucity of extensions for Microsoft Edge, there are a lot of ad blockers for the browser. Along with Adblock Plus, uBlock Origin and AdBlock, there's now Adguard AdBlocker (bit.ly/adguard419). As with its

versions for Chrome and Firefox, this provides impressive control over what you



block online, be it every ad, only ads on certain sites, irritating elements other than ads, social-media buttons and even ads within software. Turn to our cover feature on page 38 to find out how to block Microsoft's own annoying ads in Windows 10.



Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

CUSTOMISATION

Evie Launcher

evie.com **4.4**

Your Android launcher is your most visible app of all, but you'd be forgiven for not even knowing it's there. It's your device's front door, responsible for getting you to your installed apps quickly and easily. Android's default launcher is currently Google Now (about to be replaced by Google Assistant), but you're free to switch to a third-party launcher if you want, and Evie is an excellent choice.

Evie 2.0 is faster and



less data-hungry than any other launcher we've used, and its appearance is streamlined to suit. The new version doesn't have an All Apps button at all - just swipe up to see all your installed apps, with new additions at the top.

Evie's biggest advantage over Google Now is its universal search tool. It looks for anything - on your device, in Google Play and in your local area, as well as on the web. We typed 'doc' and got results that included Google Docs, our doctor's phone number and directions to Docklands. Broader results open a screen of 'cards' offering further actions. Cards for our 'documentary movies' result, for example, included IMDb pages and YouTube videos. It's not

documentary movies WALTZ WITH BASHIE Touching the Void (200 Waltz With Bashir (2008)

perfect - Evie can't find individual albums in Gallery - but it's quick and seamless. Potentially, you needn't pin apps to your home screen at all - just search for them.

But if you're wedded to your shortcuts, Evie can do wonders with those, too, with the new version adding support for a Google Now-style dock, iOS-style folders and app icon badges. Evie also now lets you save your home-screen settings to the cloud.

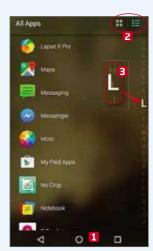
which is very handy if you're about to buy a new phone.



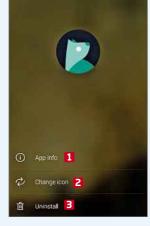
MINI WORKSHOP

Find anything on your phone using Evie

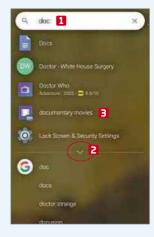
Install Evie. To launch it, tap your Home button 🗓 and tap Evie under 'Use a different app'. Your home screen reloads automatically, with Evie now in control. To see all your apps, swipe up from the bottom of the screen. Tap the grid icon and list icon 2 to toggle between views. In either view, swipe to scroll up and down or tap a letter in alphabet on the right **B** to skip to it.



Long-press any app icon and drag it to Options to quickly access 'App info' (size, permissions, notifications and more); 11 'Change icon' (download icon packs); 2 and Uninstall. B Drag Evie's own icon to Options, tap 'App info', tap Permissions and then tap items and functions that you want to add to Evie's universal search tool, such as Contacts, Location and Microphone.



Enter a search term, for example, 'doc'. 1 Tap the down-arrow halfway down the results list to see more. 2 Select an app, contact or setting to open it. Broader results, such as 'documentary movies', **3** open a screen of cards when you tap them. These cards may include web pages, maps and streaming content. Longpress any search result to pin it to your home screen.



Our rating

ALMOST HOLY



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

BROWSER

Firefox Focus

bit.ly/focus419 01.9

Automatically block web trackers and adverts using this privacyfocused mobile browser from Mozilla. Focus



comes with an Erase button for instantly removing all traces of your browsing session, including cookies and passwords. Unlike the main Firefox app, Focus only works on iOS devices and can be integrated with Safari if you prefer the iOS browser's interface. The new version adds the option to change your default search

engine; a new button for quickly sharing a web page; and support for 20 more languages.



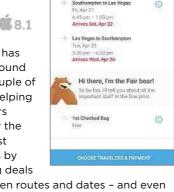
Our rating

TRAVEL

Hopper www.hopper



Hopper has been around for a couple of years, helping travellers uncover the cheapest air fares by tracking deals



Trip Summary

on chosen routes and dates - and even predicting when the best prices will appear. However, it previously didn't take hidden charges into account, so a fare could quickly look like less of a bargain after you added fees for selecting seats, checking baggage and so on. That oversight has now been fixed and Hopper's new

'Fair bear' feature reveals exactly how much you'll have to cough up for any extras.



Our rating



UPDATED



Web User staffers have appeared on, this new app ticks down the seconds to a moment of your choice - say, the weekend or a landmark birthday. You can create as many counters as you want and it's extremely precise, as you'd expect from a tool made by TimeAndDate (www.timeanddate.com).

Most features are free, but you'll have to pay a £2.09 in-app charge to remove ads and adorn counters with your own photos.



Our rating

TIMER

bit.ly/

bit.ly/ countios419

Countdown

countdroid419

4.2 9

No relation to

daytime show

that at least

two former

the popular

Channel 4

REMOTE PC TOOL

AnyDesk

bit.ly/anydesk419





file-transfer tools. You can connect using Wi-Fi or mobile internet, with bank-level encryption to keep out hackers and eavesdroppers.

You will need to install the AnyDesk PC program as well (anydesk.com). It's quick and easy to set up, and free for home users. The only hidden charge would be from your mobile provider if you go over your data limit.





Our rating



GET THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

Our updated Android MagBook is packed with 148 pages of apps. workshops and advice to unlock the full potential of your tablet and phone.



Discover how to:

- Master new tools in Lollipop and Marshmallow
- Stop apps leaking your personal data
- Record anything on your phone and tablet
- Prevent updates from wrecking vour device
- Remove hidden junk so it never comes back
- Switch from iOS without

Order it now from Amazon at bit.ly/androidbook2016



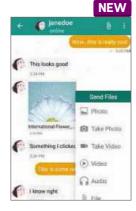
PRIVATE MESSENGER

Cipher Chat

bit.ly/cipher419

🖷 4.1

You can send anonymous messages using this new app from the maker of file-hiding tool Hide It Pro (hideitpro.com). Unlike the bestknown private messaging app, Signal (whispersystems.org), Cipher lets you sign up and send messages without handing over any personal information at all - you can be Basil



Brush if you want. You then message people by searching for their username. Notifications are disguised as device error messages, and you can share photos and other files privately. The catch is that messages aren't

encrypted, which feels like a huge oversight but you may not mind, given that you're messaging in complete anonymity.



Our rating



ScotlandVR bit.ly/scot419

4.4 8.1

The only people we've ever seen wearing a VR headset are tech reviewers and characters in the



TV satire Black Mirror, but that hasn't stopped companies falling over each other to release virtual-reality apps. ScotlandVR, from tourism body VisitScotland, lets you gad about the glens and climb every mountain without actually having to go there. The idea, of course, is that you'll be inspired to visit Scotland (or explore it, if you already live there) after your virtual trip. If you don't have a headset, choose Mobile Mode to view the 360-degree videos, which also include tours of Edinburgh Castle and the glory of the

Our rating

Northern Lights.



APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

Discover Britain's Gardens

bit.ly/gardens419

Price: £1.19 (Android), 99p (iOS)



Read articles, browse galleries and watch video tours of dozens of British historic houses and gardens. The app includes event listings and directions, in case you fancy visiting in person.



Comic Relief Crafternoon 2017

bit.ly/comic419

Price: £8.99



Red Nose Day may have been and gone but you can still get sewing, knitting and crocheting using this app. Its 50 projects will keep you inspired and busy, and £4 of your £8.99 goes to Comic Relief.

EDUCATION

My Phonics Flashcards

bit.ly/phonicsdroid419 bit.ly/phonicsios419

Price: £2.99 **4.4 8** 8



Discover Britain's Gardens





You can help your children learn to read using the 102 phonics cards and interactive word games in this app from educational developer Skoodal and the Oxford University Press.

SOCIAL

Fenice for Twitter

bit.ly/fenice419

Price: £1.39

📕 10 Mobile

See multiple Twitter accounts at once, create and manage lists, find great GIFs and respond to notifications without having to launch Twitter itself. Grab it before the price goes up to £1.89 in April.



iXplain

bit.ly/ixplain419

Price: £4.59

📕 10 Mobile

Create your own lessons and presentations using this powerful video tool. It records everything you do on screen and lets you add photos, voice notes and pen strokes. There's a free version (bit.ly/ixfree419), but it has far fewer features.





Discover Britain's Gardens



Comic Relief Crafternoon 2017



My Phonics Flashcards



Fenice for Twitter



iXnlain





Best New Mobile Games

NEW

Justice League Action Run

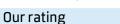
bit.ly/justicedroid419

4.3



This running game - a spin-off from the Cartoon Network series Justice League Action - could be the most thrilling thing to hit your phone this year. Handpick your team of heroes from characters including Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman, then run, jump, slide, dodge, fly and blast your way through 150 mission-based levels. There are enemies to fight, rewards to earn and in-app purchases and ads to avoid, complemented by colourful graphics and

a storming soundtrack. It's just a shame the game can be 'laggy' and slow to respond.





CARD

Solitaire!

bit.ly/solitaire419

4.0.3



There are dozens of new and updated Solitaire games in the Google Play store that all look and work much the same, but this one stands out because its graphics are a little bit bolder and brighter, its gameplay is pleasantly slick and it has an exclamation mark in its name, which makes it feel more exciting. Whereas some Solitaire versions cram in pointless extra features, this one keeps things 'classic', while still offering unlimited undos, personal

statistics and a lefthanded mode. It's completely free, but ad-supported.

Our rating



PUZZLE

UPDATED

Escape Room The Movie Game

bit.ly/escape419

2.3



There's a horror film due out later this year based on those popular escapethe-room games, and now there's an escape-the-room game based on that film. Baffled? You will be, because this game blends fiendish puzzles with gory graphics and a scary soundtrack to create a suitably foreboding and claustrophobic atmosphere. It's not for the squeamish, with eyeballs in jars, blood on the walls and nastylooking implements, but it's only a game and if you die you

can just start again. Be warned that the file size is so large it requires Wi-Fi to download.



Our rating



X Don't install...

Camera360

bit.ly/threesixty414

Camera 360 is clearly aimed at the teenage market, as demonstrated by its dedicated selfies mode, animal stickers and 'beautifying' feature for making ugly mugs look more



attractive. It has some useful tools including live filters, a depth-of-field effect and the option to choose vour photo's aspect ratio before you take it, but there's lots of unnecessary clutter that most grown-ups will find irritating.

...Install this instead

Open Camera

bit.ly/open414

4.0.3

Open Camera offers almost every photo tool you could ever need in an interface that's both simple and practical. When you launch the app, a clear but inconspicuous strip of controls lets you switch between the front and back cameras, change from photo to video mode and adjust the exposure. Other features include a simple vertical slider that lets you change the digital zoom and a handy spirit level to help you avoid taking wonky snaps. Open Camera also displays the time, remaining battery life

and storage of your device, which can be useful when you're shooting long videos. It's a marvellous free replacement for your phone's bog-standard camera app.







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

MWC 2017's best devices

This year's Mobile World Congress in Barcelona showcases nostalgic reinvention, cutting-edge 5G technology and more. David Crookes rounds up the best new gadgets from the event

Nokia 3310 bit.ly/nokia419

Why is it interesting?

Before the advent of the smartphone, the Nokia 3310 was king of the candybars. Although it had a monochrome display, hard keys and no online access or apps, it was near-indestructible and its battery lasted ages between charges. Little wonder, then, that Nokia is attempting to revive its ailing fortunes by bringing

out a new version which,

perhaps confusingly, retains the same name.



a trade-off phone. What you lose in its rather basic 2-megapixel camera and 2G rather than 3G technology, you gain in microUSB charging and a standby time of an entire month (or 22 hours of talk time if you're feeling chatty). There's also an FM radio and MP3 player, and up to 32GB of storage via the microSD slot.

When's it out?

Around April (Nokia says the second quarter of 2017).

How much will it cost?

Nokia is advertising it at €49 (around £41), and Carphone Warehouse is taking pre-orders at bit.ly/carphone419). Nokia has also launched three other phones -



the Nokia 3, Nokia 5 and Nokia 6 - the latter at the top end of the range. All three run Android but offer different display quality, memory and cameras.

Do I really need it?

Nokia says the new 3310 is aimed at anyone heading to a festival or wanting a second phone with a long-lasting battery charge. Our main complaint is that there's no messaging tool, such as WhatsApp, included on the device.

BlackBerry KEYone

www.blackberrymobile.com

Why is it interesting?

BlackBerry is another once-popular mobile manufacturer that's trying to turn back the clock to a time before it became overshadowed by Apple and Samsung. KEYone runs Android 7 Nougat, grants access to Google Play and has a 4.5in touchscreen and an auto-focusing 12-megapixel camera. But its main attraction is a physical Qwerty keyboard for people who don't like using

touchscreens. The keys double as a touchpad and there's a fingerprint sensor on the Spacebar, too.

When's it out?

Deliveries are expected from April.

How much will it cost?

It's yours for £499.

Do I really need it?

As well as a keyboard, BlackBerry offers topsecurity encryption. It also has a large 3,505mAh battery that should last all day without needing to be charged.



ZTE Gigabit Phone

www.ztedevices.co.uk

Why is it interesting?

The ZTE Gigabit is the first phone to use 5G, the super-speedy new mobile-data

Mobile World Congress <a>?)

technology. As such, it's the world's fastest phone, capable of download speeds of 1Gbps. This allows it to stream virtual reality in ultra-HD and have

a movie ready to watch in next to no time. The catch is that this handset. despite packing a Qualcomm Snapdragon 835 processor, is still only a prototype at the moment.



When's it out?

Not any time soon, so don't hold your breath.

How much will it cost?

There's no info on this yet.

Do I really need it?

Yes, in time, but you'll have to wait. Journalists attending the MWC weren't even allowed to touch the device!

Sony Xperia Ear Open-style Concept

bit.ly/sony419

Why is it interesting?

Just as Apple has tried to reinvent the earphone with its Earpods, Sony is after your aural attention with its updated Xperia Ear. By inserting these new buds, you can listen to music or interact with Sony's personal digital assistant, Xperia Agent, while still allowing exterior noise to penetrate your lugholes. So, for example, you can get directions but still interact with the outside world. Rather handy when crossing a road, we think.



How much will it cost?

The earphones are still being worked on so price details are yet to be announced.

When's it out?

They have to work themselves out of the concept stage first.

Do I really need it?

You may want to try the existing Xperia Ear first. If you like the idea of having something like Siri or Alexa whispering in your ear when you need information, there's a good chance you'll love it.

LG G6

www.lg.com

Why is it interesting?

Displays on conventional mobile phones offer a 16:9 aspect ratio but LG's new 5.7in device not only has a screen that takes up most of the phone's front (FullVision, as it calls it), but also uses the 18:9 format, which grants it more viewing space. Despite the larger size of the 2,800 x 1,400 pixel display, the phone

can still be held in one hand. It is also the first phone to have Dolby Vision and it supports HDR 10, too.



There's no confirmation for the UK as yet but it's out now in South Korea.

How much will it cost?

Again, LG hasn't yet revealed a price for the UK.

Do I really need it?

It's certainly worth considering because this unique and feature-packed Android phone is also water- and dust-resistant. Plus, you get Google Assistant built in.

Alcatel A5 LED

www.alcatel-mobile.com

Why is it interesting?

Alcatel certainly caught everyone's attention at MWC by creating the first phone with an interactive removable LED cover. As well as performing a light show to accompany your music, it illuminates whenever you get a notification, using different colours for incoming calls, messages, alarms and social-media alerts. It also uses a feature called Color Catcher 2.0, which cleverly absorbs as many as five colours from an object or image to produce a unique cover pattern and theme.

When's it out?

It is due to be released in May.

How much will it cost?

Alcatel says it will sell for €199 (around £170).

Do I really need it?

The A5 has a 1.280 x 720 HD display but it uses an Octa-Core 1.5GHz processor, only has an 8-megapixel rear camera with dual-tone

flash and runs Android 6.0 Marshmallow. That said, no mid-priced phone

we've seen is this eye-catching.

Oppo 5X

www.oppo.com/en

Why is it interesting?

When you take photos on your phone, the camera's zoom tends to degrade the image if you go in too far. Oppo's new 5X Dual Camera Zoom technology solves this problem by letting you get five times closer without distortion. As the name of the feature suggests, there are two lenses - with the telephoto lens angled by 90 degrees. The patented idea was apparently inspired by a submarine's periscope, allowing enough space for a deep zoom while still keeping the phone's slim design.



When's it out?

It's still in the prototype stage and it may not even make our shores.

How much will it cost?

It's too early to say.

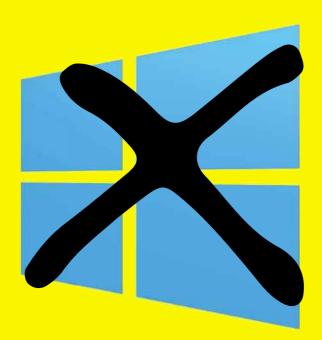
Do I really need it?

If you love to take photos on your phone, then yes. Amateur photographers have been hankering after this kind of lossless zooming for years.

WHAT TO BLOCK



Tired of Microsoft's constant nags and notifications? Wayne Williams reveals how to remove annoying adverts and pop-ups from Windows 10, so you can use your PC in peace



indows 10 is more than just an operating system - it's also an advertising platform. Ever since the software was released, Microsoft has found more and more ways to sneak 'suggestions', tips, promotions, nags and other adverts onto your screen, whether you like it or not. With the forthcoming Creators Update set to bring even more ads to Windows 10, we've decided enough is enough. In this cover feature, we explain how to banish these annoyances from the operating system and prevent them from reappearing.

Over the following six pages, we explain how you can

remove ads from the Start menu, Lock screen and Windows 10 apps, and do away with pop-up promotions for Microsoft products. We also reveal how to block the next generation of unwanted advertising, which is heading your way in the Windows 10 Creators Update, and show you how to stop pop-up ads from third-party security software.

It's important to note that Windows 10 is undergoing continual development, so new adverts we haven't covered here might appear in the future, while existing adverts might be dropped (we can but hope!).

HIDE ADS FOR MICROSOFT PRODUCTS

Microsoft's deceptive Windows 10 'tips'

You might think that Microsoft's offer to serve up 'tips, tricks and suggestions' as you use Windows 10 would result in plenty of helpful advice about getting the most from the operating system. In fact, that feature is just a way for Microsoft to bombard you with advertising for its apps and services.

If we say so ourselves, you'll learn way more about how to master Windows 10 from reading *Web User* than you will from any of Microsoft's 'tips'. Thankfully, it's easy enough to disable them. Go to Settings, System, 'Notifications & Actions' and disable the 'Get tips, tricks, and suggestions as you use Windows' option.



You can turn off Microsoft's misleading offer of tips, tricks and suggestions

Lock-screen promotions

The Windows 10 Lock screen is a prime place for Microsoft to display advertising because it appears automatically when your PC is idle. In the past, it has used this canvas to push promotions for Windows Store games including 'Rise of the Tomb Raider' and Quantum Break.

To disable these ads, go to Personalisation, Lock Screen and make sure you have either Picture or Slideshow selected, rather than Windows Spotlight. Set 'Get fun facts, tips, and more from Windows and Cortana on your lock screen' to Off.



If you don't want to see ads in your lock screen, you can turn them off

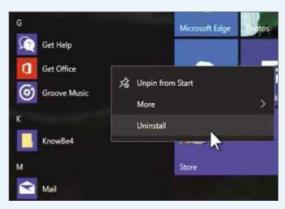
Microsoft's 'Get Office' nag

Windows 10 will nag you to get Office 365, even if you already have it installed which makes the pop-up ad even more annoying.

To silence this irritation. go to Settings, System, 'Notifications & actions'. Under 'Show notifications from these apps', locate Get Office in the list and toggle its button to Off.

An even more decisive annoyin option is to uninstall the offending Get Office app completely.

Click Start and scroll down the All Apps list to the letter G, where you



Uninstall the Get Office app and you'll never see its annoving advert again

should see Get Office listed. Right-click its entry and select Uninstall. Hey presto – problem gone!

Ads for Microsoft's Chrome extensions

At the beginning of the year, Microsoft tested pop-up ads in Windows 10 for its Personal Shopping Assistant extension for Chrome (bit.ly/

personal419). Anyone with
Chrome installed was greeted
with a message above the
browser's taskbar icon stating:
'Quickly compare prices online.
Get Microsoft's Personal Shopping
Assistant for Chrome'.

As you can imagine, Windows 10 users weren't overjoyed about this intrusion and Personal Shopping Assistant received a slew of one-star reviews in the Chrome web store. Not for the quality of the extension, which is perfectly fine, but in protest of Microsoft foisting it on them in this way.

In response to the negativity surrounding the ad, Microsoft stated: "We are always testing new features and information that can help people enhance their Windows 10 experience", but gave no indication that it would

drop adverts for Chrome extensions in future.

To kill this particular type of ad, go to Settings, System, 'Notifications & actions' and disable the 'Get tips, tricks and suggestions' option.

Anti-Chrome ads promoting Edge

If you use Google's browser on your laptop, you may have seen pop-ups extolling the benefits of Microsoft Edge over Chrome



Microsoft's ad for its Personal Shopping Assistant proved very unpopular

appearing just above your taskbar. In particular, Microsoft informs you that Chrome will (allegedly) drain the battery of a Windows laptop or tablet much faster than if you were using Edge.

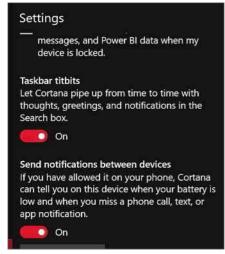


Microsoft is encouraging Chrome users to ditch the browser in favour of Edge

These annoying promotional messages, which appear when you launch Chrome on your device, are part of Microsoft's 'tips' feature. As explained in our opening tip, you can stop them appearing by disabling the option to 'Get tips, tricks, and suggestions as you use Windows'.

Stop Cortana nagging you

Microsoft really – and we mean *really* – wants you to use Cortana, and to make sure you don't forget that the feature exists, the personal assistant occasionally springs to life to dispense thoughts, greetings and notifications through the Search box.



Stop Cortana pestering you by turning off its irritating taskbar titbits

If you don't use Cortana, and don't want to be bothered by it, you can disable this annoyance. Select Cortana in the search bar and click the Settings cog on the left. Scroll down to 'Taskbar Titbits' and disable that option. Once you've done that, you won't hear from Cortana again until you want to.

Avoid ads in Minesweeper and Solitaire

The classic games Minesweeper and Solitaire have been included in Windows for many years but in Windows 10, Microsoft controversially inserted ads into both apps. You're now forced to tolerate banner ads and watch 30-second full-screen ads to keep playing the games, or else upgrade to a paid-for subscription to get rid of them. Each game charges a subscription of £1.49 per month, or £11.59 for the year, so if you want both Minesweeper (which you'll need to install as it doesn't come with Windows 10) and Solitaire, you'll be expected to pay £23.18 a year for two games that used to be entirely free which is a bit of a cheek!

The best way to enjoy these games without ads, and without paying a penny, is to install the original Windows 7 versions. You can find instructions and links to both games on Winaero (bit.ly/ wingames419).

If you'd rather not install anything, you can play web-based versions of the games, such as Play Solitaire (www .playsolitaire.org) and Free Minesweeper (www.freeminesweeper.org).



Microsoft charges a lot of money to remove ads from games

REMOVE ADS FROM MICROSOFT PARTNERS

Remove suggestions in the Start menu

Windows users are more likely to install traditional programs from the web than download apps, which means there are far fewer quality apps and games in the Windows Store than offered by the Apple App Store and Google Play. Microsoft is trying to change this behaviour so it can increase its user base and encourage more developers to write apps for its operating system.

One ways it's hoping to achieve this is by promoting apps in various areas of the OS, such as in the Start menu. Microsoft is keen to stress that these aren't really advertisements because no money has changed hands - it's simply trying to help you find good apps based on your interests and Windows Store history. If you find these suggestions useful, that's great, but if you feel like this is an underhand way for Microsoft to push its wares, then it's easy enough to remove them.



Stop Microsoft displaying app suggestions in your Start menu

There are two types of suggestions in the Start menu. The first appear in the 'All apps' list on the left, under a Suggested heading. They often have a star rating, which makes them easier to spot. Right-click one and you'll be presented with two options - 'Don't show this suggestion', which hides that particular app; and 'Turn off all suggestions', which also removes all future suggested apps. Alternatively, you can go to Settings, Personalisation, Start and toggle off the option 'Occasionally show suggestions in Start'.

The other area of the Start menu that Microsoft uses to promote apps is in the tiled section. When Windows 10 first launched, it included five 'suggested apps' tiles by default; in the Anniversary Update, this was increased to 10.

Tiles for unwanted pre-installed apps, such as Get Office, can be right-clicked



Unpin promoted apps from your Start tiles to stop them appearing

and uninstalled. There's no uninstall option for promoted apps because they simply point to the Windows Store, so just select the option to 'Unpin from Start' to banish them for good (or until the next big Windows update, at least).

Another way to stop promoted apps appearing in the Start menu is to replace Windows 10's built-in menu with a third party one, such as the excellent (and free) Classic Shell (www .classicshell.net). This offers a choice of three different menu styles - Classic, Two Columns and Windows 7 - all of which can be customised to suit your tastes and needs. Replacing the current menu with a different one just to avoid adverts is a little over the top, but if you prefer the Windows 7 Start-menu style to the tiled Windows 10 version, then it's definitely worth considering. The program is updated regularly so it will always be compatible with the latest version of Windows 10, including the Creators Update.



Classic Shell provides an ad-free alternative to Windows 10's Start menu

Uninstall promotional apps

Windows 10 comes with a selection of pre-installed promotional apps. These include Get Office, Phone Companion and Candy Crush. We've already looked at how to uninstall these unwanted apps directly through the Start menu, but if



Windows 10 lets you remove some of its pre-installed promotional apps, but not all

you want to remove them all in one go, open Settings and go to System, 'Apps & features' (in the Creators Update, there's a dedicated Apps section under Settings). A list of installed apps will appear and you can click each one in turn and select Uninstall. Although this process will remove most apps, the uninstall option for some will appear greyed out. In a couple of the more recent Windows Insider builds. Microsoft made it possible to uninstall

Disable Windows 10's annoying live tiles

Some of the promotional tiles in the Start menu use Windows 10's 'live tiles' feature to advertise apps and games that Microsoft would like you to download. These include Minecraft and

the Windows Store itself. Removing irritating promotional tiles from the Start menu is the best way of dealing with them (as we explain on the page opposite), but you could just disable the live tile

functionality altogether. The tiles will

Turn off the Start menu's live tiles to prevent them annoying you

still be there, but they won't be animated or flash up new offers every time you open the Start menu.

To do this, simply right-click any tile, then go to More and select 'Turn live tile off'.



Use IObit Uninstaller to remove unwanted Windows 10 apps for good

most bundled apps, but it seems to have backtracked on that idea now.

If you can't remove an app through the built-in uninstaller, you can use a third-party program such as IObit Uninstaller (bit.ly/uninst419). Launch the uninstaller and select Windows Apps in the sidebar, then simply click the bin icon next to any apps you don't want to remove them. IObit's software also lets you batch-uninstall multiple apps in one go.

STOP ANTIVIRUS POP-UPS IN WINDOWS 10 (AND 7 AND 8)

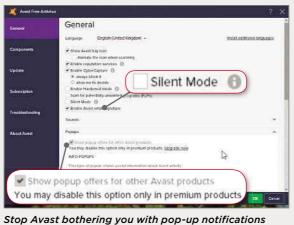
Microsoft isn't alone in bombarding users with adverts in Windows 10 - security companies do it, too (and also in Windows 7 and 8). For example, Avast now has a habit of displaying pop-up notifications to encourage you to buy its other products or address 'problems' it's detected on your PC. You can block these pop-ups by going to

Settings, General and ticking the box for Silent Mode. With Silent Mode switched on, no messages or alerts will be displayed. You can also alter the duration of Info, Update, Warning and Alert messages under Popups (including setting some or all to O seconds), although you can't disable the feature entirely in the free version.

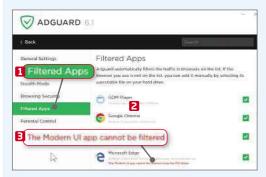
AVG was recently acquired by Avast, so its settings are now much the same in the latest version of the software. You can enable Silent Mode in the Settings screen or change the length of pop-ups as described previously.

Some Avast users have reported seeing 'upgrade' pop-up ads for the antivirus program, even after uninstalling it (in some cases, months after removing it). If this is a problem you've encountered, go to:

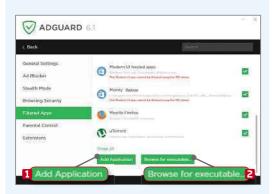
C:\Program Files\Common Files\AV\avast! Antivirus and delete the Upgrade.exe file. When uninstalling an antivirus program, it's worth using a dedicated tool like IObit Silent Mode Uninstaller (bit.ly/uninst419), rather than the Windows uninstaller, to remove any junk that's been left behind. You can also find official uninstallers for D the main security tools that perform a more thorough cleanup. These can often be found in the support section of the publisher's website.



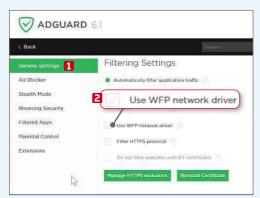
MINI WORKSHOP Use Adguard to block adverts in apps



Run Adguard (adguard.com) and hover your mouse over the Ad Blocker tile in the menu. Click Settings, then select Filtered Apps from the sidebar on the left. 11 The main panel will display a list of browsers and other apps that can be filtered. 2 Some, such as Edge, E can't be blocked by default.



If the app you want to remove ads from isn't listed, scroll down to the bottom and select 'Add Application'. 1 Browse the list of installed apps to find the one you're after, then click 'Add selected'. You can also choose to 'Browse for executable' 2 if you use the program's EXE file.



Apps are usually filtered using the TDI (Transport Driver Interface) driver but this won't work with some apps, such as Edge. To filter ads from these stubborn apps, click General Settings 11 and tick 'Use WFP network driver', 2 then reboot your PC. WFP (Windows Filtering Platform) allows Adguard to strip ads from Windows apps.

REMOVE ADS FROM MICROSOFT PARTNERS

Ads on Edge's new-tab page

Microsoft Edge's new-tab page includes a couple of different types of ads. At the top, under the search/ address bar, you'll find a list of 'Top sites'. Most of these aren't websites at all and, by default, of the eight tiles listed, only three will take you to a site when clicked. The others include a sponsored link to the Windows Store and four apps that you can open or install. To clear unwanted entries, right-click a tile and select Remove. Repeat the process for the others.

Next, scroll down to 'My feed' where you'll see lots of stories from other sites, powered by MSN. Sponsored content is scattered throughout, including links to apps in the Windows Store and regular ads for junk such as PPI claims. You can't remove each one individually, but you can turn off the page. Click the ellipses (...) and open Settings. Under 'Open Microsoft Edge with', change 'Start page' to something else. Also change 'Open new tabs with' from 'Top sites and suggested content' to 'A blank page'.

Of course, the best way to avoid ads in your browser is to switch from Edge to an ad-free browser such as Chrome or Firefox, but we'll leave that decision in your hands!



Edge's 'Top sites' include sponsored content and links to apps...



...and the browser's feed isn't much better, with lots of sneaky ads

Suggestions in the Ink Workspace

If you use Windows Ink to write or draw on your screen, you'll find part of your precious space taken up by a Suggested section when you open



Ditch the ads when using Windows Ink to write on your screen

the workspace. This area is used to display an ad for compatible apps in the Windows Store.

To disable this, open Settings and go to Devices, Pen & Windows Ink. Under 'Windows Ink Workspace', turn off 'Show recommended app suggestions.' You can also access this setting at the very bottom of the Windows Ink Workspace.

Annoying ads within apps

Lots of free apps (and, it must be said, even some paid-for apps) display ads. Advertising is used to help fund the continuing development of the software, so sometimes you just have to accept them as a necessary evil.

If an app you like is scarred by horrible, intrusive adverts, you may be able to banish them by upgrading to a paid-for version. If that option isn't available, you could consider using Adguard (adguard.com). This powerful program not only blocks ads on the web, but can also filter them out of applications. When you install Adguard, you'll be able to choose which blocking features you want to include. It's free for 14 days, after which it costs \$19.95 (£16.42) per year. You can use it for free indefinitely by signing up to be an Asguard tester (bit.ly/ asguardbeta419).

See our Mini Workshop on the left to find out how to use Adguard.

BLOCK FUTURE ADS BEFORE THEY APPEAR

Ads in File Explorer

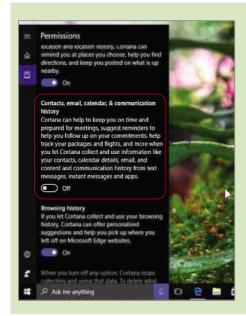
If the Insider Preview is anything to go by, Microsoft is planning to expand its display of advertising in Windows 10 to include File Explorer. In the current Insider Preview of the Creator's update. these ads - or 'notifications', as it's calling them - promote an Office 365 subscription and provide information

on the amount of OneDrive storage vou get.

To disable this annoyance, open File Explorer and go to View, Options. Click the View tab and locate 'Show sync provider notifications'. Untick this, then click Apply and OK.

> Stop Microsoft advertising its own products in File Explorer





Cortana's new pop-up reminders

Microsoft is adding more features and functionality to its personal assistant Cortana in the Creators Update, and one in particular pop-up alerts - is likely to get on some people's nerves. These alerts are designed to remind you about things you've said you'll do, but rather creepily - Cortana doesn't require you to select anything to set them. Instead, the nosy assistant monitors your email looking for potential tasks: if there's a deadline mentioned, it will ping you nearer the time and store the reminder in

the Action Centre. Other reminders are stored in Cortana's home.

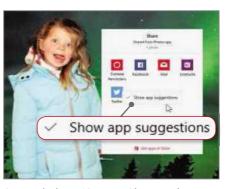
Fortunately, the feature is currently only available in the US, and currently only supports Outlook.com and Office 365 work and school email addresses, but Microsoft has plans to bring the feature to the UK and introduce support for all major email services.

You can disable this feature (when it arrives) by opening Cortana and clicking the Notebook icon on the left. Open Permissions and turn off 'Contacts, email, calendar, & communication history'. Also, make sure your email service isn't included under Connected Services.

Cortana will soon be reading your emails to remind you of things to do

Promoted apps in Share

The Creators Update will introduce a wealth of new features to Windows 10, and this unfortunately includes yet more advertising annoyances. Microsoft is planning to promote apps in even more locations around the OS, such as in the updated Share tool. This works like the Share feature found in mobile operating systems such as Android and iOS, and lets you easily share media with friends and followers. In some earlier Insider Preview builds, apps for Box or Line were offered as a download in the list of



Stop Windows 10's new Share tool pestering you with suggestions

sharing options, while more widely used services, such as Google Drive and Dropbox, weren't listed. The newest Insider Preview builds have done away with promoting Box and Line in this way, but Share is now pushing Facebook Messenger instead.

Things may change in the full version of Creators Update, but for now you can turn off suggestions by opening the Share tool, choosing to share the file, then right-clicking any of the share methods and unticking 'Show app suggestions'.

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 5 April 2017

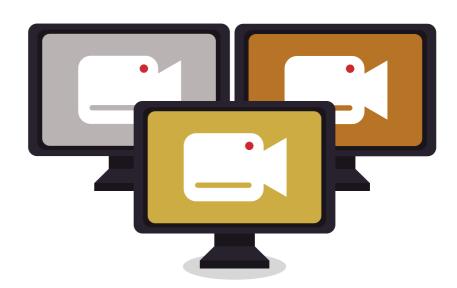
eset, Restore

We celebrate the three Rs that make any old PC or phone run like new



Best free screen recorders

Whether you want to capture something that's playing on your screen to watch later or would like to make a 'how-to' video for other PC users, vou need a screen recorder. Andy Shaw tests free software that makes it possible



oCam | bit.ly/ocam419 | ★★★★

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

What we liked:

WebUser

In most respects, oCam's free screen-capture software is the bee's knees. The interface provides

a simple bank of buttons, which makes activating the various

tasks straightforward. Just click the Record button to start

the software capturing whatever is happening on your PC's screen. By default, this will be a rectangular space, marked out by a green box, which you can resize using the square handles.

Alternatively, you can click the Resize

button to choose from a range of alternative presets. While you're at it, click the Codecs button to choose how you would like the video saved - most of the other programs we tested only output a single type, but oCam offers a range of alternatives.

So far, so straightforward: but it's deep in the settings that the magic



appears. Here, you'll uncover gems such as the ability to record sound from both Windows and your microphone simultaneously;

and superimpose your webcam video over the video you're recording, so you can enhance your 'how-to' videos with some personality.

chrome

The best thing is that it all comes for free, with unlimited recording time and no annoyances (such as watermarks), as long as you're not using the software for commercial purposes.

How it can be improved:

The panel of buttons containing oCam's tools only takes up a few centimetres of screen space, but it is attached to an annoying browser window which makes the interface ualy, oversized and intrusive. It also has the worst documentation we've seen for a long time although thankfully, you won't need it because the software is surprisingly easy to use

without it. Finally, a pair of nag screens appear when you close the software, which seems pointless when you're legitimately using it for free.

OUR VERDICT

There are some annoying and intrusive elements to oCam's interface, but the benefits far outweigh these niggles. Most of the other programs we tested have restrictions but oCam has none, so you can record for as long as you like, in any format. It also has some great extras, including multi-channel audio and picture-in-picture video.

Free screen recorders

OBS Studio | obsproject.com | ★★★★☆

FEATURES **** PERFORMANCE **** EASE OF USE ***

What we liked:

OBS Studio is completely free and open-source, and has everything you need to create professionalquality videos. It's designed for creating live performances, so you can

live-stream video directly to services such as Twitch and YouTube Gaming, adding transitions and switching between video sources (both live and pre-recorded) as you go. For those with more modest requirements, it also does a good job of simply recording a video of what's happening on your screen.

The software has the scope to grow with your ambitions, and its online documentation - which you will certainly need to get the full potential out of OBS Studio - is clear and easy to read. There are no watermarks to obscure your recordings and no limit on recording time. Unlike oCam, it doesn't have a Pro version, so you won't be pestered by nag screens.

How it can be improved:

By default, OBS Studio saves video in Flash (FLV) files, which is great for



streaming but isn't ideal for saving videos, though you can choose other formats from the Settings. This sums up the software's main drawback: because OBS Studio is poised and ready for live streaming, it's over-complicated for simple recordings and, in places, requires you to explore the menus to find the settings you want.

OUR VERDICT

This software has an amazing range of tools for streaming live video. It does a great job of recording what's happening on your Desktop, too, but its wealth of tools make it more complex to set up and use.

eLecta Live Screen Recorder

www.screenrecordings.com | ★★★★☆

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

What we liked:



If you're put off by the complexity of OBS Studio, you'll be reassured by eLecta Live Screen Recorder's minimal interface. The main

program has just four buttons:

New, Start, Pause and Stop. Click the New button for a basic Windows menu that helps you set up your recording. There are plenty of useful options, including overlaying a webcam and recording sound from both your PC and a microphone simultaneously.

The remaining buttons are self explanatory and control the recording of the video, though you can also use keyboard shortcuts. There's even a handy countdown screen to count you in, so you can prepare and take a deep breath before you start your recording.

How it can be improved:

You have to set everything up before you start recording, though this isn't



a bad habit to get into. This also entails giving your video a unique name before you record it, otherwise it will overwrite the previous video you made.

.....

OUR VERDICT

If you like the features and simplicity of oCam, but its nagging gets on your nerves, eLecta is a valid alternative. It's not as simple to use because you have to be thorough with your setup, but it's a great tool for creating clean and fuss-free videos.

BEST OF THE REST

Ezvid

www.ezvid.com

Ezvid is a popular option but it limits the length of your videos to up to

45 minutes. That's probably more than long enough, especially if you want people to watch to the



end, but it's a restriction that some might prefer not to have. You can use the software to upload videos straight to YouTube and it comes with editing tools, so you can perform clever tricks such as speeding up your video. However, having uploaded your video to YouTube, you can only access the files you create by downloading them yourself from the video site, which strikes us as a bit daft.

Bandicam

www.bandicam.com

The free version of Bandicam limits you to 10 minutes of recording time and emblazons your videos with

a watermarked advert for itself, which is far from ideal. These restrictions are removed in the Pro version, which costs \$39 (around £32). but that seems



expensive considering you get so much for free in most of the other programs we've reviewed.

Icecream Screen Recorder

bit.ly/icsr419

Icecream Screen Recorder is professional and easy to use, but the free version is hamstrung by a five-minute maximum recording

time and its limitation of only saving video to WEBM files. Too much is reserved



for the Pro version, which costs \$19.95 (around £16.28).

Improve your 🍑 browser's built-in tools

Make Chrome and Firefox even better by replacing their basic features with superior versions. **Edward Munn** picks 20 of our favourite browser upgrades

TAB MANAGER

If you open the Task Manager and sort your PC's processes by the amount of memory they're using, Google Chrome is likely to be at the top of the list - even when it's not open! The easiest way to keep the browser from using too much memory and slowing your PC to a crawl is to ensure you don't leave too many tabs open, and the excellent tabmanagement extension Toby (gettoby .com) makes this easier than ever.

Toby opens in Chrome every time you open a new tab, displaying a clear overview of your current tabs, which is very useful when you have so many open that they're difficult to see. It also lets you close tabs and save them for viewing later, allowing you to manage your saved tabs as 'lists', so that they're easy to find.

If you find you still leave too many tabs open, try Tabs Limiter with Queue (bit.lv/tablimiter419). As its name suggests, this handy add-on only lets you have a set number of tabs open (you set this number) at one time. If you try to open more, it queues them in a simple list until you close some. See our Workshop in issue 401 (bit.ly/

Check everyday 🖯 THE WHAT DO YOU CALL A TH 这是什么!

Review your tabs and close them quickly using Toby



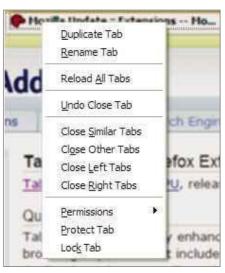
webuser401) for more information on using this extension.

Firefox's Tab Groups was a built-in feature that helped with managing open tabs, but it was discontinued last year in version 45 of the browser. You can reinstate it by installing the Tab Groups add-on (bit.ly/tabgroups419), which uses the same source code as the original feature, so it should work in exactly the same way.

If you want to add more options to your tabs, try the ever-impressive Tab Mix Plus (bit.ly/tabmix419), which has a range of invaluable features including letting you duplicate a tab (along with its Back and Forward history) and restore closed tabs (including anything you've typed in them).

Other handy tools include Bottom Tabs, which moves your Tab bar to the

> foot of the browser (bit.ly/bottomt419); Tab Preview (bit.ly/ tabpreview419), which displays the content of a tab when you hover your mouse over it; and Tab Utilties (bit. ly/tabutil419), which lets you change the way your tabs look and work - for example, letting you



Tab Mix Plus adds a range of advanced tab options to Firefox

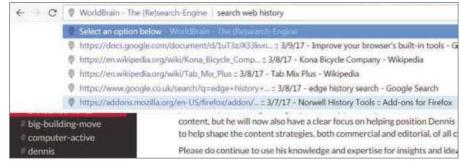
move between them in most-recently used order by pressing Ctrl+Tab.

HISTORY

If you've read something on the web and tried to find it again by searching your browser history, you'll know this can often be a fruitless effort. Most browsers only save the title and URL of a website you've visited, which makes it very difficult to find a web page unless you know those specific keywords.

WorldBrain (bit.ly/worldbrain419)

Improve your browser



Search content from pages you've visited with WorldBrain

is a versatile Chrome extension that overcomes this problem by letting you perform full-text searches of all web pages and PDFs you've loaded in your browser. The search tool can be launched from the browser's address bar by typing W and then pressing the Spacebar or Tab. It even lets you filter results according to when the web pages were viewed. See our Workshop in Issue 417 (bit.ly/webuser417) for step-by-step instructions.

WorldBrain isn't currently available for Firefox, but you can get it now by first installing Chrome Store Foxified (bit.ly/chromestore419). Alternatively, try Norwell (bit.ly/norwell419), which offers a similar solution to this problem.

EXTENSIONS MANAGER

If you find Chrome's extensions manager too simplistic, try NooBoss (bit.ly/noob419) instead. It displays all your installed add-ons in a pop-up panel, so you don't need to navigate to chrome://extensions every time you want to disable or re-enable an add-on, and lets you quickly filter entries by typing a letter or two. It also provides an at-a-glance display showing which of your extensions are active. You can choose to receive Desktop notifications when your extensions are updated, and quickly enable or disable all of them with a single click.

Best of all, NooBoss lets you create rules so that specific add-ons become active only when you visit certain websites - for example, you could set your ad blocker to kick in on sites that are particularly bloated with ads - which

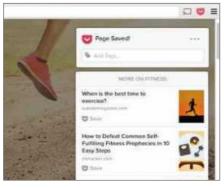


NooBoss lets you view all your extensions without leaving the current page

reduces the amount of memory Chrome uses. Note that NooBoss automatically adds you to its community, but you can easily opt out via its Options.

BOOKMARK MANAGER

Thanks to excellent extensions such as Pocket (getpocket.com), which won our round-up of read-it-later tools in issue 412 (bit.ly/webuser412), you may find you no longer need to bookmark web pages. But if you still rely on your bookmarks to save interesting pages, there are better tools for managing them than those built into your browser. The lightweight Firefox add-on



Save interesting articles for viewing later with Pocket

BEST EDGE **EXTENSIONS**

Edge doesn't have the same wide array of add-ons as Chrome and Firefox, but that doesn't mean you can't improve on the browser's default tools. For starters, you can replace the browser's bookmarking system by installing an add-on for our favourite read-it-later tool, Pocket (bit.ly/pockete419). For superior tab management, try Microsoft's excellent Mouse Gestures extension (bit.ly/mouse419), which lets you switch to the next tab, open a new tab and close all tabs apart from your current one using only movements of your mouse.

QuickMark (bit.ly/quickmark419), for example, lets you bookmark and organise sites by clicking the star icon on the toolbar and choosing a folder (or creating a new one). Alternatively, there's Auto-Sort Bookmarks (bit.lv/ autosort419), which lets you sort your bookmarks by name, URL, last visited and most visited; and Bookmark Tab (bit.ly/booktab419), which lists all your bookmarks when you open a new tab.

Chrome's basic bookmark manager can be replaced with Neater Bookmarks (bit.ly/neater419), which organises all your saved sites into one searchable toolbar menu. If you share your browser, you could also install Secure Bookmarks (bit.ly/secure419) to protect your private pages with a password.



Neater Bookmarks makes managing your Chrome bookmarks easier

READING VIEW

Firefox's Reader View offers to declutter your browsing experience, but it has a very limited set of customisation options. By installing the add-on Reader (bit.ly/reader419), you can assign any font and choose a page theme and layout for articles you read on the web. Another option is to install Evernote's Web Clipper for Firefox (bit.ly/evernotef419), which offers a simplified reading mode and lets you save these versions of articles for viewing later. It's available for Chrome (bit.lv/evernotec419), too which doesn't have its own built-in reading view - as is the brilliant Mercury Reader (bit.ly/mercury419), which removes all the unwanted clutter from web pages with a single click, leaving you with just the main text and images.



Mercury Reader clears all the unnecessary clutter from web pages



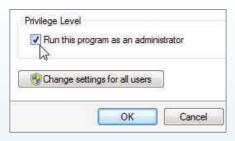
Remove unfair file restrictions

Take back control of your downloads by unshackling them from unreasonable constraints. Here, we explain how to free your files forever

Remove administrator permissions

Have you ever tried to run a program in Windows, only to be told that you don't have permission to do so because you're not an administrator? This can be very annoying if you're the main user of your PC and therefore are the administrator.

You can bypass the problem by right-clicking a program file and choosing 'Run as administrator', but to fix the problem permanently, right-click the program's shortcut or EXE file and click the Compatibility tab. In the Privilege Level section, untick the option 'Run this program as an administrator' then click Apply. Now click 'Change settings for all users' and deselect the administrator option there to completely remove the restriction.



Stop Windows requiring you to run a program as administrator

A similar obstruction occurs when Windows prevents you from deleting a file or folder because the action requires



IObit Unlocker frees locked files from the administrator's grasp

permission from the poxy administrator. You can beat this restriction using the free tool IObit Unlocker (bit.ly/ unlocker419), which terminates all related processes that prevent you from deleting or accessing files and folders. Simply right-click the stubborn item, choose IObit Unlocker (or drag it to the program window) and click Unlock, then Unlock & Delete.

Make free software trials last longer

When a premium program you've downloaded nears the end of its trial period, you have three options: buy a licence to continue using it indefinitely; uninstall it; or - if you're feeling devious - trick the software into letting you use it for longer - maybe forever!

A free tool called RunAsDate

(www.nirsoft.net/utils) can help with the latter, although its developer - the prolific NirSoft - stresses that it's not guaranteed to work. To use RunAsDate, browse to the trial program, choose 'Relative to the current date/time' from the Date/Time menu and set back the clock an appropriate number of days to fool the software that the trial period hasn't expired. Click Run to open the program with its time limit expanded if you run it separately, the original restriction will apply.

Usefully, RunAsDate lets you create a Desktop shortcut to launch the software with the date adjusted, and has an Immediate Mode that changes the date automatically when the program starts.



RunAsDate tricks trial software by pretending it's an earlier date

Remove DRM from iTunes purchases

Before you gasp and call the police at the title of this tip, we're not

Remove unfair file restrictions



Replace protected iTunes tracks with DRM-free cloud versions

encouraging you to engage in copyright infringement. This is about removing the digital-rights management (DRM) copy-protection from music that you've already paid for (and therefore own) so you can play the tracks on any device.

Apple actually stopped using DRM in iTunes in 2009, but if you still have songs you bought from its store in AAC format, which can only be played on Apple devices, it's easy to set the music free. Simply open iTunes, select Preferences, then Store and ensure the option 'Show iTunes in the Cloud purchases' is ticked. Click the cloud icon in List view and make sure all your purchases are present and correct.

Now, sort the list of songs by Kind (if the Kind column isn't there, go to View, Show View Options and select it there), and delete every old track listed as 'Protected AAC audio file'. When you download the songs again from the cloud, you'll get DRM-free versions that can be played anywhere.

Read ebooks on any device

You might think the ebooks you've bought for your Kindle, Kobo or other e-reader are yours to keep, but thanks to DRM protection they can be identified and deleted at any time by the ebook store. There are also restrictions on which devices you can read ebooks on - for example, an EPUB file can't be read on a Kindle unless it's converted to MOBI or PDF format.

You can remove format and DRM restrictions using the fantastic free software Calibre (calibre-ebook.com), which is available for Windows, Mac OS and Linux, and a plugin called DeDRM (bit.ly/dedrm419). Download the plugin's ZIP file and extract its contents, then open Calibre, select Preferences, Plug-ins and click 'Load plug-in from file'. Find and install the plugin file 'DeDRM_calibre_plugin' (ignore the security warning), then restart Calibre. To remove DRM from an ebook, simply drag it to Calibre's main window to import and convert the file.

If you own a Kindle, there is another step to perform: go to Preferences, Plug-ins, File Type Plug-ins and double-



You can use a Calibre plugin to remove restrictions from ebooks

click DeDRM. Click 'elnk Kindle Books' and enter the serial number for your device (without spaces), which you can usually find on the Settings screen. You may also need to go to Preferences, Behaviour to set Calibre to read ebooks in AZW and AZW3 format.

DRM can only be removed from books you add to your Calibre library, not ones already stored there, and can't be removed at all from Amazon's new KFX format. Also note that this advice is only for your personal use and for books you have purchased - sharing DRM-removed files is illegal (see box, below).

Amazon's free Kindle app (bit.ly/ kindle419) remains the best way to read Kindle books on different devices.

Keep BBC programmes forever

The BBC has generally done a great job of making its TV and radio shows available on as many devices as possible, both online and offline, through its iPlayer service. However, many licence-paying viewers still feel aggrieved that programmes disappear from iPlayer 30 days after broadcast and 30 days after you download them.

The best - in fact, only - way around this DRM restriction is to use the popular free tool Get iPlayer (bit.ly/ getiplayer419), which lets you download and keep BBC shows for as long as you want. Launch the program by choosing Web PRV Manager in Get iPlayer's Start menu folder (the command-line interface is baffling), then either browse the list of recent programmes or search for one to download. Select it and click Record to begin recording in a new tab. Once this is complete, either return to the Web PRV Manager and click Recordings or open the iPlayer Recordings folder in your Start menu.

Videos are recorded in DRM-free MP4 format.



Get iPlayer removes the 30-day restriction on iPlayer downloads

Another way to bypass time restrictions set by video-on-demand services is to use a screen recorder to capture and save what's playing on your screen. See our feature on page 44 to find the best free tools for this.

IS IT LEGAL TO REMOVE DRM?

Back in 2013, publishing houses Penguin and Simon & Schuster filed a lawsuit against a distributor called Abbey House Media, which advised customers of its soon-to-close bookstore that they could remove the DRM from their purchases by using Calibre (see above), as a means of backing up their ebooks and transferring them to new devices. "Many of our customers argue that this is a legitimate use as long as this is being done for personal use of ebooks purchased, not for piracy," said Abbey House. But Penguin and Simon & Schuster claimed the company was deliberately encouraging copyright infringement. The judge in the case ruled in Abbey House's favour because there was no evidence of customers copying

.....

no copyright infringement (bit.ly/copy419). This ruling was made in the US, where copyright laws differ but the points regarding personal use and not sharing copyrighted content are equally valid in the UK. The terms of use for Amazon's Kindle

and distributing ebooks to other people after the DRM protection was removed, and therefore

Store specifically forbid attempts to bypass DRM (bit.ly/terms419), so do so at your own risk!



Call FREE on 0800 083 2357 to switch your broadband

	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1	sky	Sky: Broadband	£28.99 (£18.99 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	CHEAPEST £227.88
2	TalkTalk For Everyone	TalkTalk: Broadband	£25.50 (£20.00 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£240.00
3	B	EE: Broadband	£28.50 (£21.00 for 18 months)	18 months	17Mbps max speed	unlimited	£252.00
4	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband	£40.00 (£32.00 for 12 months)	12 months	50Mbps max speed	unlimited	£384.00

Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 10 March 2017.



switching service

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



THE 13 CHANGES THAT WILL KEEP YOUR PC SECURE... And the program that makes it easy to do

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On sale Weds 29 March

^{*} Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.



Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest from your browser by taking our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you guess our song-title emoji and solve our word puzzle?

WIN A **BACK ISSUES**

Be the first to send the correct answers to to win our 2016 Back Issues Disc

CAN YOU GUESS THE SONG TITLES FROM THE EMOJI?







WEB USER WORD PUZZLE

Enter the answers in the grid to reveal a tech-related word in the highlighted column

- Blue-green semiprecious stone
- Winners of the 1981 Eurovision Song Contest (5,4)
- 3 British poet laureate and his Oscar-winning actor son (3,5)
- 4 England Rugby Union brothers Tony and Rory
- 5 Capital of Paraguay
- 6 Non-fuzzy peach
- German World War Two battleship
- 1977 Woody Allen film starring Diane Keaton (5,4)

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COMPETITIONS

WIN!

Orbitsound ONE P70 soundbar

The Orbitsound **ONE** matches

WORTH £299

audio quality with beautiful design, and has an integrated subwoofer speaker. It uses side-firing airSOUND™ speakers, and front and top combined main speakers, to create a true stereo sound. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'orbitsound' in the subject line. For more information, visit www.orbitsound .com and follow @OrbitsoundUK on Twitter.

WIN 1 OF 4

VEGAS Movie Studio 14 Platinum

MAGIX has released the most powerful ever versions of VEGAS Movie Studio. There's a new, clutter-free interface that makes it easier to use, and multicam editing that lets you combine



WORTH £69.99

up to four cameras into one timeline. As well as Platinum, there's a basic version (£39.99) and a Suite (£119.99). To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'vegas' in the subject line. For more info, visit www .magix.com/gb and follow @MAGIX_INT on Twitter.



Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Use Cliqz browser to stop snoopers following you around the web

Cliqz won't share your search or browsing history, and now comes bundled with Ghostery

Cligz: bit.ly/cli419 | (1) 10 mins | 27 Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10

liqz is a privacy-focused browser that lets you visit websites without worrying about being tracked or having your search history passed to advertisers. It comes with built-in anti-tracking and anti-phishing tools, an ad blocker and HTTPS Everywhere, which automatically directs you to the secure version of any site you visit.

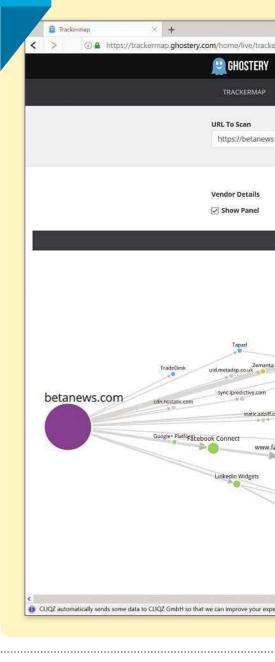
The company behind Cliqz recently acquired Ghostery (www.ghostery.com), a fantastic add-on that identifies and blocks tracking elements such as web bugs. It's now bundled with Cliqz to further safeguard your privacy on the web. You need to install Ghostery before you can use it, but the process is easy and you'll have it up and running in seconds.



As with any browser, you use the Cliqz address bar 11 to enter the URL of a site you want to visit. If you enter a search term here, possible matches appear as you type. 2 However, we found that this feature was biased toward German content, so you may prefer to disable it **3** for the time being.

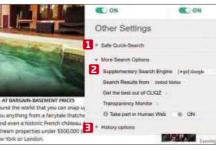


When you visit a site that contains trackers, Cliqz will record and block them by default. Click the Cliqz button 1 on the right of the address bar to see what it's found. 2 From the panel that opens, you can also manage the Anti-Phishing and Prefer HTTPS tools, **3** and enable the ad blocker. 4

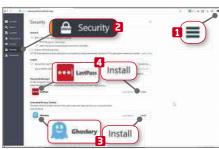




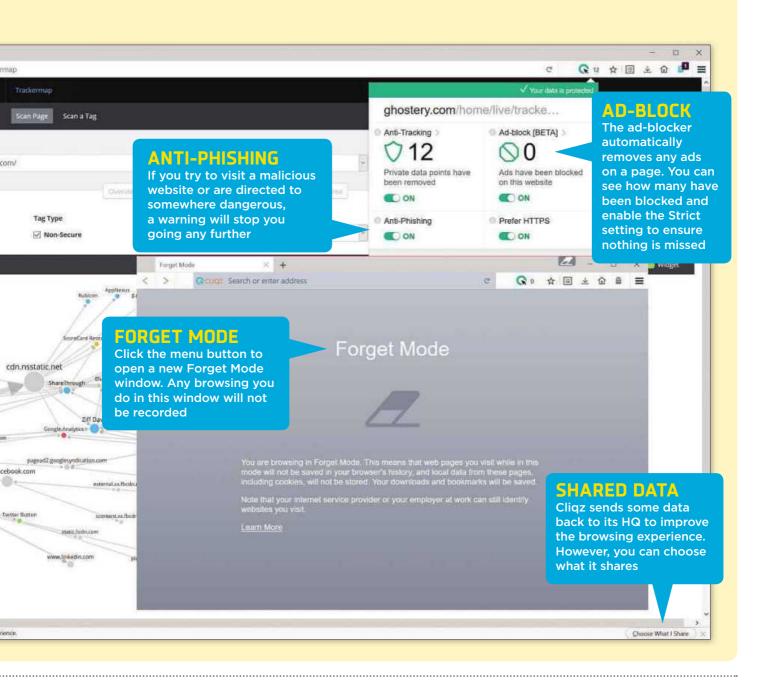
Click the Anti-Tracking tile to see a list of the tracking tools it's found. 🚺 Clicking one takes you to a screen with more information but this is currently in German. You can opt to make the tool stricter (so it blocks more trackers) 2 and also clear the tracking cache.

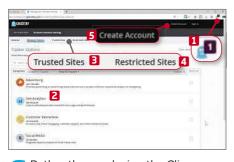


The Cliqz panel also provides access to the Safe Quick-Search settings, 11 where you can choose whether adult content should be included in search results. You can also configure the search options (including the country, supplementary search engine and more) and manage your browsing history.

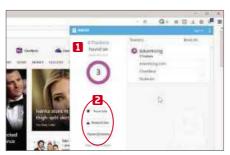


Eventually, Ghostery will be integrated with Cliqz by default, but for now you need to enable it. Click the menu button 11 and select Options. Click the Security tab 2 in the sidebar and click the Install button for Ghostery. You can also install the LastPass password manager 4 if you like.





Rather than replacing the Cliqz button, Ghostery appears as a new add-on. 1 Once it's installed, you can configure the tracker options. 2 Add any sites you trust (to unblock their trackers) **B** and tweak any you want to increase restrictions for. 4 You can create an account **5** but it's not compulsory.



Use Cligz to browse the web as usual, and Ghostery will spot any trackers as you go. Click the ghost icon to display details of any trackers the add-on has found. 11 Hover your mouse over a tracker to bring up options to trust it on that site, block it on that site or block it on all sites. 2



You can also block all trackers, 1 trust a site, restrict a site or pause Ghostery (which stops it looking for trackers as you browse). Click the Map These Trackers link **B** to see how they connect. 4 For this, you'll need to create a free Ghostery account and choose the free scan option.



Use a free command centre to manage PCs on your network

Free Windows Admin Tools: bit.ly/fwat419 | (1) 20 mins | 20 XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10



ree Windows Admin Tools (FWAT) is an excellent new program that lets you control any PC on your network remotely. It includes Remote Task Manager, which shows all the processes running and lets you kill them if necessary; Software Inventory, to check the versions of all programs installed on a PC; Remote Device Manager, for uninstalling problematic drivers; and a Shutdown/Restart tool to power off the remote PC when you're finished. There's also a range of other handy tools for checking startup items, Window Updates, battery level (for laptops) and other important system information.

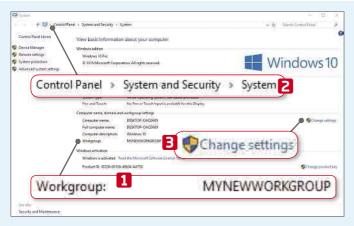
The tool is aimed at domain administrators but in this Workshop, we show you how to set it up on your home network and enjoy the program's best features.



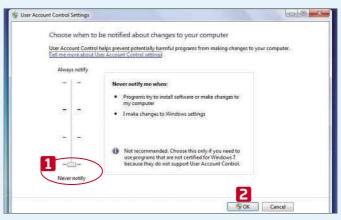
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says

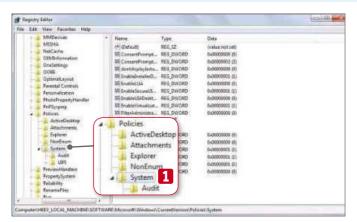
In order to use FWAT, we had to disable Windows Firewall and User Account Control, as described in steps 2 to 5. You can test the program with these features enabled to see if it works for you. Beware that using the remote PC without these security measures in place could leave you vulnerable, so you should try to re-enable them whenever possible.



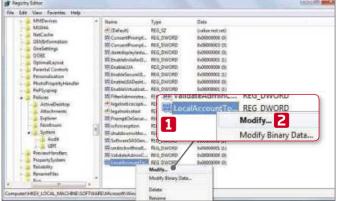
Before installing Free Windows Admin Tools, make sure the PC you want to manage is visible to your network. On your main (controlling) PC, click Network in File Explorer. Check that both PCs are using the same workgroup 11 by opening System 2 from the Control Panel on each one. To change a workgroup, click 'Change settings', **B** then Change.



Next, disable User Account Control on the remote PC. To do this, type UAC into its Start menu, click the option to 'Change User Account Control settings' and drag the slider down to 'Never notify', 11 then click OK. 2



You also need to disable Remote User Account Control for the tool to work properly. Type regedit into the remote PC's Start menu, press Enter and navigate to: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\ CurrentVersion\Policies\System. 1

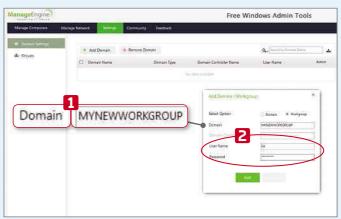


In the right-hand column, right-click and select New, then DWORD (32-bit) Value. Name this entry LocalAccountTokenFilterPolicy, 11 then right-click it, choose Modify 2 and enter 1 in the box for 'Value data'. Click OK.

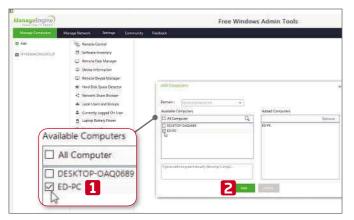




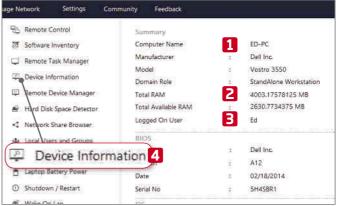
Type firewall into the Start menu and select Windows Firewall. Click 'Turn Windows Firewall on or off' 11 and select the option to 'Turn off Windows Firewall' under Private network settings. Alternatively, visit bit.ly/faq419 for details of the ports you must open if you have a configurable firewall installed.



Download, install and run Free Windows Admin Tool on the main PC and click Add Domain twice. Click Workgroup and enter the workgroup's name in the Domain field. 1 Next, enter login credentials for a local account on the remote PC in the fields for Username and Password. 2



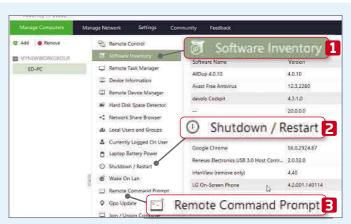
Click Add, then select Manage Computers and Add. Free Windows Admin Tools displays a list of computers in your workgroup. Select the PC with the login credentials you added in the previous step 1 and click Add. 2 You can add multiple PCs, provided they all use these credentials.



Select the remote PC's name from the left-hand column to display a summary of important details about it, including its Name, 🗓 RAM 🔁 and the current logged-on user. El For more detailed information about the System and Hardware, click the Device Information tab. 4



Clicking Remote Task Manager 11 lets you view and kill current processes. 2 To uninstall faulty drivers, select Remote Device Manager. El You can view all the PC's users by clicking 'Local Users and Groups'. 4



To view a list of all programs installed on the remote PC, click Software Inventory. 1 For a list of power options, click 'Shutdown / Restart'. 2 You can also run a remote command prompt by selecting the appropriate button. 🖪

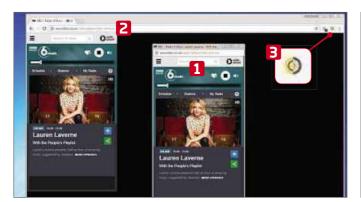


Boost the sound quality of any website

ust because you're listening to music over the internet, that's no reason why you shouldn't be able to enjoy the best possible sound. Ears is a Chrome add-on that brings all the power of a sophisticated graphic equaliser to your web browser, so you can adjust the sound settings of anything, from YouTube to iPlayer. Ears lets you boost the bass and volume and perform myriad fine adjustments. Here's how to use it.



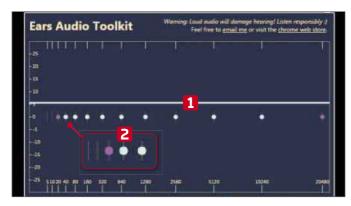
Ears: bit.ly/ears419 | 🕒 5 mins | 🚳 Chrome



Some online players, including the BBC's, open in a separate browser window 11 that doesn't let you access add-ons. You can get round this by selecting the player's URL from the address bar, then copying and pasting it into a new browser tab 2 so you can see the Ears button.



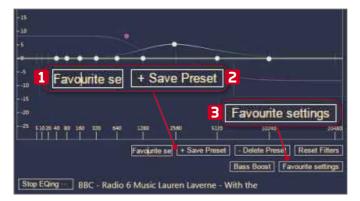
For a quick and simple fix, try clicking the Bass Boost button. 1 This increases the lower frequency levels, which you can see represented by the purple line on the left-hand side of the graph. 2 If you're listening through earbuds, this setting can give you a significantly richer sound.



To adjust the overall volume, click and drag the centre line, 1 but avoid clicking the dots. 2 Move this up to increase the volume or down to decrease it. Be careful when doing this, though, because the volume increases sharply and can get very loud.



For more sophisticated equalising, try dragging the purple dots at each end toward the centre. 11 This moves the entire upper and lower range. You can then adjust the mid-range sound by dragging the individual dots to new positions. 2



Once you've found a setting you like, you can save it. Type a name into the Preset Name box, 11 then click the Save Preset button. 2 The setting will appear as a button of its own **B** to the right of the Bass Boost button. Click it to select the settings.



If you open a new tab and press the Ears button, it will apply the settings automatically. You can turn it off by clicking Stop EQing This Tab 11 or deactivate it on any other tab by clicking the relevant Stop EQing button - look for the icon of the service you want. 2

Stop Android apps wasting your data

lassWire makes it easy to keep track of your mobile data and Wi-Fi usage. Its handy graph mode lets you see which apps are slowing down your internet connection and identify any unusual or suspicious activity.

What's more, you can configure GlassWire to notify you when you reach your monthly mobile data limit, to avoid incurring expensive phone bills.

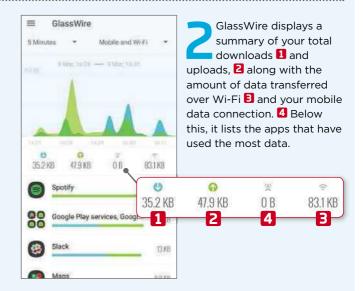


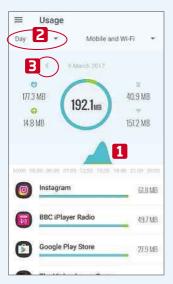
GlassWire: bit.ly/glasswire419 | 🕒 10 mins

4.4+



Install GlassWire and follow the on-screen instructions to activate the app. The Graph view loads, showing your apps' data usage over time. 1 Select the time period and type of connection you want to view from the drop-down menus. 2





Open the main menu and select Usage to analyse your data usage for specific time periods in the past. 11 The drop-down menu lets you choose days, weeks or months, or a custom setting. 2 You can move from one period to the next using the left arrow.



To set alerts that notify you when you've reached your data limit, tap Data Plan in the main menu, then select Set Data Plan. Enter your data limit, 11 plan type, 2 billing cycle 3 and start date, 4 then tap Done. 5 You'll receive an alert when you've used 90% of your allowance and another when you've reached the limit.



GlassWire notifies you when an app uses data for the first time. 1 To review these alerts, tap Alerts in the app's main menu or look for the 'New' markers in the app's Graph view.



To turn off the notifications, tap the three-dot button, then Settings and flick the appropriate switch. 1 GlassWire also displays a notification showing your total Wi-Fi and mobile data usage for the day.

Weekend Project

Get to grips with some serious PC DIY to boost your computer's performance





Keep your PC perfectly safe with sandboxing

Wayne Williams explains how to use a sandbox to protect your PC from malicious programs, snoops and more

andboxing is a method used to prevent software from taking control of your operating system or making any changes to it. It works by containing the program in a secure and disposable section of your computer's hard drive or memory. Software running in this 'sandbox' is allowed to read data from the hard drive as normal, but it can't write data outside of the sandbox or make any changes to Windows. There are several benefits to sandboxing software in this way,

such as keeping your system safe from potential malware and letting you try as many programs as you like without worrying about cluttering up Windows or causing problems.

It's also useful for privacy reasons: if you sandbox your web browser, nothing you do will be recorded on your computer, and bookmarks, cookies, cached pages and browsing history will vanish when you empty or exit the sandbox.



There are several decent sandboxing programs to choose from:

Sandboxie

www.sandboxie.com

Sandboxie is the best-known sandboxing application. It was launched in 2004 and has been continually updated ever since.

Sophos announced the acquisition of Sandboxie's parent company, Invincea,

in February, and has said that it will continue to update the software for the time being, at least.

We show you how to get up and running with Sandboxie in our Mini Workshop, opposite, then show you how to use it with a browser in our Mini Workshop on page 61.

Shade Sandbox

www.shadesandbox.com

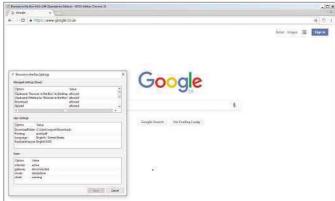
Shade Sandbox is a simple sandboxing tool that's very easy to use. It supports drag-and-drop, so you can just add and



Just drag and drop your browser or other application shortcut to Shade Sandbox

run applications inside it. It's free to use but you need to register with your name and email address in order to get an activation code.





Toolwiz Time Freeze lets you use your whole PC as a sandbox

BitBox is a sandboxed web browser that runs inside VirtualBox

Time Freeze

bit.ly/tf419

Instead of cordoning off a separate area, Toolwiz Time Freeze turns your entire operating system into a sandbox. It works by creating a restore point of your system. You can then run any software and make whatever changes you want. When you're finished, Time Freeze uses the restore point to revert your system to how it was before you started.

BitBox

bit.ly/bbox419

BitBox (Browser in the Box) is essentially a sandboxed web browser. You can choose from 'Browser in the Box Firefox' or 'Browser in the Box Chrome', which is then installed in a VirtualBox virtual machine (if you already have VirtualBox on your PC, you'll need to uninstall it before you can use BitBox). You can browse anywhere you like without worry, because everything gets wiped when you close the browser.

WHY USE SANDBOXING?

No need to uninstall software

Not every program you download and install will be a keeper. Some you might try and hate, or have no long-term use for. Once you're done with a program, you'll need to uninstall it, and there's no guarantee that all its files will be successfully removed.

Try this experiment: go to C:\Program Files to see all the files on your PC's hard drive. If you've been using Windows for a while, you'll likely see folders for software you uninstalled ages ago, many of which will be empty. This is why it's a good idea to sandbox a new program and try it out before installing it 'for real' in Windows. When you're done trying it, you can simply empty the sandbox and all trace of the program will be removed.

To install something inside a sandbox, first right-click the Sandbox name in Sandboxie, then select Run Sandboxed,

Run Any Program and then browse for the installer. The entire installation process will run inside the sandbox, so no files will be written to your PC and no changes will be made to the Registry.

Avoid malware

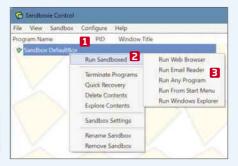
If you download programs, games or archived files containing movies or music from dubious sites, you should always check them with antivirus software the moment the download completes. To be completely safe, you could download and run these files within a sandbox.

If you regularly download items using BitTorrent, you can launch your favourite client in the sandbox, then check that your downloads are safe before moving them to your hard drive. Should the file you download contain malware, it won't matter because it can't harm the rest of your computer in any way, and you can quickly dispose of it by emptying the sandbox.

MINI WORKSHOP | Install and run Sandboxie



When you install Sandboxie, it will scan your PC and highlight any potentially incompatible software you have installed. Clicking OK 11 will apply special configuration settings to them. You can add and remove programs from here. 2 If you have conflicting software installed (such as an antivirus program), click Known Conflicts to view potential problems.

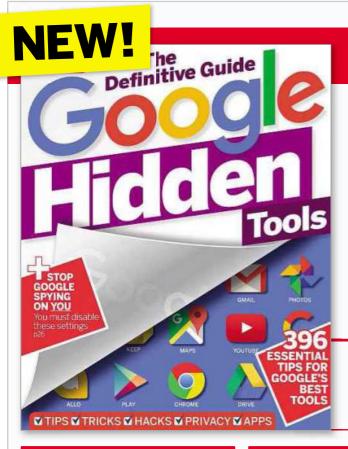


If the Sandboxie window isn't visible, right-click the icon in the notification area and select Show Window. Rightclick Sandbox DefaultBox 11 and open the Run Sandboxed menu. 2 This gives you options to launch a sandboxed version of your default web browser, email reader, any program, any item from the Start menu or Windows Explorer. **3**



You can tell if a program is sandboxed because the title bar shows a hash (#) sign. 11 Also, if you move your mouse to the top of the program's window, a yellow border appears. 2 When you've finished running your program, right-click the sandbox and select Delete Contents to clear out everything in it, including any accrued junk.

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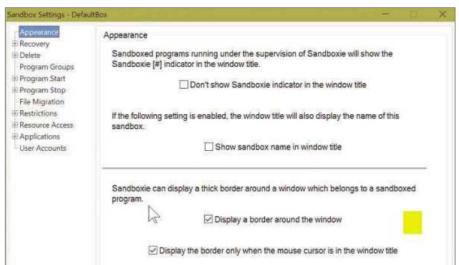
Right-click a program running in Sandboxie to terminate it or access its settings

Browse more securely

All modern browsers, including Chrome and Firefox, come with a private browsing mode that stops the browser recording your web history and saving cookies. It's a great solution if you want to visit certain websites without leaving a trace on your computer.

Sandboxing your browser goes a step further because not only will your browsing history and anything else you do go unrecorded, any files you download and sites you bookmark will also leave no trace. When you close the browser and empty the sandbox, everything you did will be wiped out. You can, however, easily transfer downloads from inside the sandbox to your Desktop if you're sure they're safe, so they don't disappear along with everything else.

A sandbox offers a further layer of protection in that it can also shield you from drive-by downloads initiated on malicious websites, and prevent sites



Sandboxie's settings let you customise the software's appearance, restrict web access for programs and choose what (if any) changes programs can make outside the sandbox

from hacking into your webcam and gaining access to files stored on your computer.

Open any email attachment

Most of us are aware of the dangers of opening email attachments from people we don't know, no matter how convincing the accompanying message is. However, if you sandbox your email client (or your browser, if you use webmail), you don't need to worry about opening any attachment because a malicious program won't be able to infect your system. This won't protect you against phishing scams, though, so you'll still need your wits about you.

What's already sandboxed?

A lot of popular programs and devices already use sandboxing to keep you safe. Browsers, for example, often sandbox web pages you visit, preventing any malicious code from gaining access to your system files. Browser plugins such as Flash are similarly constrained.

PDF readers will open PDFs in a sandbox, and apps on iOS and Android are only granted limited permissions if an app needs to do something like access your photos or use your camera, it has to ask for your permission first.

This automatic sandboxing also prevents one app from interfering with another.

MINI WORKSHOP | Sandbox your web browser with Sandboxie



Sandboxing your browser means you can go anywhere and download anything on the web, without leaving a trace on your computer. Launch Sandboxie, then right-click the sandbox. Select Run Sandboxed 11 and choose Run Web Browser. 2 It will load your default browser in the sandbox.



You'll see your browser listed in the 💶 Sandboxie Control window. 🚺 To make sure you are using the sandboxed version of your browser, move your mouse to the edge of the browser window and check for the yellow border. 2 You can now browse the internet as usual, and any files you download will also be sandboxed.



The sandboxed items you download will be deleted when you empty the sandbox. If you want to keep any, select the downloads you want to save, 11 then select a destination folder 2 and click Recover. 3 You can tell Sandboxie to only offer the chance to recover items when you empty the sandbox 4

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Web User Masterclass

Master YouTube and make the most of its secret tools with this video masterclass from our team of experts

Sing-along videos

ouTube's comprehensive music collection is the site's most popular resource but you can do more than just watch videos from your favourite artists. Install the brilliant Musixmatch add-on for Chrome (bit.ly/musix419) and you can turn YouTube into a karaoke machine, with the song lyrics appearing as subtitles along the bottom of the screen. If you use a Chromecast, you can even send the content to your TV.

Install the add-on, then head over to YouTube and find your favourite music. Click the cog icon in the toolbar at the bottom of the video and make sure that Subtitles/CC is turned on. Now play the video and the lyrics will be displayed in time to the music.

> Add lyrics to the music and sing along with Musixmatch for Chrome



Turn off Autoplay

When you select and watch a video, a panel down the right-hand side of the page lists related videos or the next in the series. When the video that's currently playing finishes, the next one starts automatically. To stop this happening and stay on the current page, click the Autoplay switch at the top of the video playlist. Click it again to switch it back on.

Loop videos

If a song is stuck in your head and you just can't get enough of it, you can satisfy your cravings by looping the video on YouTube. Start the video playing, then right click it and choose

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.



Right-click a video to loop it, and to access a selection of other options

Loop from the menu. It will play over and over until you stop it.

Watch it later

If you're browsing YouTube and come across a video that you don't have time to watch right now, you can save it to play later. Hover your mouse over the video and click the clock icon that appears in the bottom-right corner.

To view a list of all the videos you've

saved to watch later, select Watch Later in the sidebar near the top. If you've got a YouTube app on your TV or set-top box, you can sign in and see them from here, too.

Copy video URLs

If you want to share a video - on your blog, perhaps, or on social media - rightclick the video and select Copy URL.

If there's a specific moment in the video that you want to draw attention to, you can simply quote the time by saying, for example: "Watch what happens at 12:52" (12 minutes and 52 seconds from the start). Or you can get really clever and make the video start at that point. When the video is playing or paused, right-click it and select 'Copy video URL at current time'. Share this URL and the video will start from this point.

Keyboard shortcuts

There are several keyboard shortcuts that let you stop, play and perform other actions on YouTube videos instantly, without the need for a mouse.

F	Full screen
K or Space	Play/pause
esc	Leave full-screen mode
	Jump back/forward 5 seconds
0 to 9	Jump to 0%, 10%, 20%90% of the video
7/8	Step one frame back/forward when the video is paused
	Jump back/forwards 10 secs
Home / End	Jump to the start/end
M _	Mute (and unmute) audio
	Volume up/down when the video is selected
Shift + N	Next video in playlist
Shift + P	Previous video in playlist

Try some fun tricks

Type the words Use the force Luke into the YouTube search box. We won't reveal what it does because it would spoil the surprise, but you can move the mouse around the page and create an even queasier effect!

For similar silliness, type doge meme in the search box to add some Comic Sans colour to the YouTube interface.

Create GIFs from videos

If you've found a snippet of a video you want to share, you could convert it into an animated GIF - a small image that plays as a short video. Go to YouTube and, when you find a video you want to share, right-click it and copy the URL. Now go to bit.ly/giph419 and paste it into the box on the page. A few seconds of the video begins to play in a loop. Drag the sliders to choose the start time and the duration for the GIF, add a caption if you want, then click Create GIF. Use the links to share it or rightclick the image and save it.



Converting a clip of a video into a GIF makes it easy to share

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Remove age restrictions

Some people like to browse the web anonymously, without being tracked and spied on. That's fine, but if you go to YouTube in an incognito or private browsing window, you will not be allowed to watch age-restricted videos because YouTube cannot tell if you are over 18.

To see the restricted content, you either have to log into YouTube and browse in a normal window or hack the URL to get around the age restriction. To do the latter, you just tweak the URL by changing '/watch?v=' to '/v/'. So, if your original URL is: www.youtube.com/watch?v= Q9EaLjayx6U&list=PLPIbT_X3O_ OWBIU3h

Change it to: www.youtube.com/v/ Q9EaLjayx6U&list=PLPIbT_X3O_ OWBIU3h

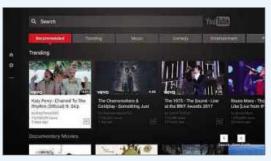
View troubleshooting stats

Right-click a video and select 'Stats for nerds'. A panel opens in the top-left corner containing statistics and video information, some of which may be helpful if you are having problems with playing videos.



A video's technical specs can help troubleshoot playback problems

For example, the panel shows the dropped frames, where high numbers indicate a poor internet connection or problem with the PC running too slowly. Videos download a little to get ahead before they try to play, and the Buffer Health shows whether this is working normally. The connection speed shows the strength of your internet connection, where low numbers would cause problems with video playback.



Sit back and enjoy this great-looking TV-style interface for YouTube

YouTube TV

The YouTube interface works well on a computer, where you sit close to your screen and can use a mouse and a keyboard, but it's not so good on your TV. An alternative interface that's designed to work better with television screens can be found at youtube.com/tv or youtube.com/ leanback. Press the F11 key to hide the browser and go full screen.

You now have a great interface but it's still stuck on your computer. To view it on your big-screen television, a Chromecast is perfect. Go to youtube. com/tv in Chrome, open the browser menu and click Cast. Select your Chromecast and YouTube will now play on your television.

Chromecast works over your home Wi-Fi network, so your casting

> computer does not have to be in the same room. You'll now be able to enjoy watching longer videos and movies on your TV. This method is also great for watching playlists - just set them playing and relax on the sofa to watch them on the big screen.

Save the audio

You can save the audio track from videos on YouTube using the SaveFrom website (en.savefrom.net). Start by

browsing YouTube and finding a video that you want the audio track from. Right-click the thumbnail image and select 'Copy link address'. Now go to SaveFrom, click in the box at the top of the page and press Ctrl+V to paste in the URL. A few seconds later, you'll see a download link for the video.

Bear in mind that most of the videos and music on YouTube are subject to copyright so any content you copy should be for personal use only.

Ask the Expert

Roland Waddilove, computer programmer and PC journalist since 1981, answers all your technical questions. Email us for help at webuser@dennis.co.uk



SECURITY

Use the correct DNS server settings

I enjoyed your recent Weekend Project on changing your DNS server (Issue 416, bit.ly/webuser416). My Asus RT-N66U router lets me set a DNS server in WAN DNS settings. However, my operating system, Linux Kodachi (bit.ly/kod419), also lets me switch between seven DNS servers, including DNS Crypt and Comodo DNS. In this situation, which DNS setting will the computer use? Does the router's DNS setting override the operating system's or vice versa?

Ted Sloan, via email

When you type a URL, such as 'google.com', your DNS server creates a corresponding IP address, such as '216.58.212.110'. Think of the URL as human language, the IP address as computer language, and the DNS server as the translator.

If you configure a DNS server in your OS (in your case, Linux Kodachi), your computer will use this; otherwise it will use your router's. If you have no



If you don't specify a DNS server, your PC will use one from your router or ISP

DNS set in either your OS or your router, your PC will use the one provided by your ISP. In other words, setting a DNS server in the router overrides the ISP's server, and setting one on your computer overrides the router's server.

The advantage of setting a DNS server in your router rather than your OS is that every computer, phone and tablet in your home will use the same setting, which saves having to configure each one individually.

SECURITY

Solve SSL certificate issues

I received a notification on my Windows 10 PC telling me that Kaspersky can't guarantee the authenticity of a particular domain with an encrypted connection. It says: "Application: Google Chrome. URL: www.instair.net. Reason: This certificate or one of the certificates in the certificate chain is not up to date."

Clicking 'View Cert' showed the message: "This certificate has expired or is not yet valid. Issued to www.instair.net. Issued by: Positive SSL CA2. Valid from 15/04/13 to 15/of/14."

Kaspersky's notification says: "Your confirmation is required to perform the selected action. This action will reduce the level of protection of your computer."

What should I do to update this certificate?

James Andrews, via email

Unfortunately, it's not within your power to fix this problem. If a website wants to offer a secure HTTPS connection, it needs a valid SSL security certificate. Only the website's owner can buy and install this.

Some SSL certificates are weak, and all certificates have an expiry date. Kaspersky is simply warning you that there is a problem with this website's SSL certificate. This doesn't mean you should avoid using the site, but you shouldn't enter any credit card details, usernames, passwords or anything else you consider private. Otherwise, it's okay to browse.

HARDWARE

Fix a Chromebook trackpad

My Acer Chromebook R11's touchpad is almost impossible to use because it keeps freezing. I tried a factory reset and adjusted the settings, but neither made any difference. Using an external mouse works fine but this isn't always an option if I'm on the move.

B Moore, via email

You've tried the correct things, though Google's support site (bit.ly/goog419 also suggests tapping the Esc key a few times and 'drumrolling' your fingers on the touchpad for 10 seconds. You've already tried a factory reset, so the next step is to try re-installing ChromeOS. Find out how to do this at bit.ly/recov419.

If none of this works, it's likely to be a hardware problem. The touchpad on the R11 is designed to disable itself when the screen is flipped over and used as a tablet, because you wouldn't want the touchpad to kick-in every time you brushed it with a finger. Your Chromebook may have got stuck in this non-operable mode even when the keyboard is returned to its laptop position.

If the Chromebook is still under warranty, contact Acer support (bit .ly/acer419) and they should be able to sort the problem out for you. Even if the device is no longer under warranty, they may still be able to help, though you may be charged for parts and labour.



The Acer Chromebook R11 is designed to disable the touchpad in tablet mode

INTERNET

Remove annoying pop-ups

I keep getting pop-up ads in my browser. How can I get rid of them? Melissa Arthur, via email



Pop-up windows and ads usually come from the browser and startup programs

There are several possible causes for pop-up ads. Your browser may be configured to show a specific page or set of pages when you start it up. If you use Chrome, go to the menu and click Settings. Under 'On startup', select 'Open a specific page or set of pages', then click 'Set pages'. If the set startup page is not the one you want, move the mouse over it and click the delete button, then enter the address of the startup page you want, such as www .google.co.uk. The same process can be used in Internet Explorer, Edge and Firefox - just go to their settings and set the homepage.

Extensions can also cause pop-ups and adverts to appear, and change your homepage. In Chrome, go to the menu and click 'More tools', Extensions, then disable all your extensions. If that solves the problem, delete any you don't need or suspect may be causing the problem. In Firefox, go to the menu and select Add-ons. In Internet Explorer, go to the menu and select 'Manage add-ons. Toolbars and Extensions'.

You should also check your startup items for adware. Press Windows+R, type msconfig and press Enter. Select the Startup tab and, if you are running Windows 10, click Open Task Manager. Select and disable anything you suspect may be causing the pop-up. We can't be more specific because it could have any name. See our cover feature on page 38 for more about blocking pop-ups and ads in Windows 10.

WEBSITE

Bypass secure site warning

In What's New Online Issue 416 (bit.ly/webuser416) you published an article with the title 'Take a virtual trek around Petra' and gave the address as petravr.withgoogle.com. I tried the

site but I got a frightening report that stated: "The owner has configured their website improperly. To protect your information from being stolen, Firefox has not connected to this website. This site uses HTTP Strict Transport Security (HSTS) to specify that Firefox connects to it securely. As a result, it is not possible to add an exception for this certificate".

Claude Legrand, via email

There was a problem with the site when we first visited it, but it has been fixed. Websites require HTTPS connections when they accept credit card details, usernames, passwords and so on. It makes shopping, banking and logging into accounts secure. This site does none of these things, but because it uses HTTPS and was configured incorrectly, Firefox displayed its warning about protecting information.

OFFICE

Read unreadable documents

I can't open some of my document files. They are in various formats -RTF, ODT, XML and DOC - and their text is unreadable. I've tried saving them in different formats but even online document-conversion websites have failed to convert them.

The first formation formation of the first fo #20*C0560#+076+(0Fc1'05:0%** 1 50056#B#5/2518', ER1A T]:845F w9|7 Nt. Et*|-w09%HE 1 1 LNOHCO-AO NO 1 content xml*XYo056-8A

Opening word processor docs in the wrong editor can make them look garbled

When I originally wrote or received the files, they were fine, but for some reason they've become garbled while stored in my Documents folder. For example, one of my files, called 'June - cataracts', now has two versions, a DOC and an ODT file, neither of which is readable.

Emma Abercrombie, via email

A handful of recognisable words in the files you sent indicate that the documents were created with the word processor component of OpenOffice (www.openoffice.org) or LibreOffice (www.libreoffice.org). LibreOffice won't open your files and simply reports them as corrupt. Opening and saving them in another application may have corrupted the files, so if you still have the originals, try opening those in LibreOffice.

SECURITY

Remove Comodo **Antivirus**

After upgrading to Windows 10, I started experiencing problems with Kaspersky and was advised to remove certain programs, including Comodo Antivirus. However, I am having trouble deleting it from my PC.

When I searched Google for ways to remove it. I found others had the same problem. I've tried using Advanced System Care 10, which has a powerful uninstaller, but even if I try to remove Comodo line by line, it returns as soon as I reboot. I've also tried Revo Uninstaller but it can't find Comodo.

Eddie Turner, via email

Comodo Antivirus is bundled with Dragon, GeekBuddy and Internet Security Essentials. Make sure you uninstall these other programs as well as Comodo Antivirus.

When you use the Comodo uninstaller, it is set by default to



When you uninstall Comodo Antivirus, it tries to install Cloud Antivirus instead

download and install Comodo Cloud Antivirus after removing the software. If you leave this default option selected, you're simply swapping one Comodo program for another, Look for the tick box in the uninstaller and clear it. This could be why it returns after rebooting.

When we used IObit Uninstaller (www.iobit.com) to remove Comodo Antivirus, we found no trace of the software afterwards. It sounds counter-intuitive, but you may need to reinstall Comodo Antivirus again to create a clean installation that you can then uninstall correctly.



This fortnight Roland has been experimenting with video surveillance and spying - on his cat!

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. To get help or offer it to others. visit forum.webuser.co.uk

TOP TIP

winner WebUs

GOOGLE DRIVE

Faster access to important Docs

When I recently switched from Microsoft Word to Google Docs, the one thing I really missed was the option to open my files quickly from File Explorer. You can do this in Google Drive if you sync to your hard drive, but this isn't

a viable option for me on my work laptop. As a result, opening an existing file from Chrome would typically involve launching the browser, clicking the Apps shortcut, selecting Google Drive and then browsing my folders to find the file I wanted.

I found this very long-winded, so I eventually came up with a solution that seems very obvious when you think about it - I simply added bookmarks to my most used folders in Chrome's 'Bookmarks bar'. If you need a lot of bookmarks for your folders, you can just create a subfolder



Bookmarking your favourite Drive folders makes opening and managing your files easier

on the 'Bookmarks bar' and order them according to your preference.

Another advantage with this method is that it makes it much quicker and easier to save new files where you want them. Ordinarily, when creating a new file, I would open Google Drive, then click New and Google Docs, but these files would later need to be moved to the location where I want them saved. If I use one of my shortcuts to open a folder and click New and Google Docs, the new file is already saved where I want it.

Ed Wright, via email

word families, the most used words, the Flesch reading score, overused words, sentence structure, writing style, grammar, spelling, sticky sentences and more. The report provides a huge amount of information about your writing style and quality. By using it, you can improve your writing by fixing

To install it, go to Google Drive in a browser, click New, then Google Docs. Go to the Add-ons menu and click 'Get add-ons'. Search for ProWritingAid and click the install button.

John Best, via email



Use ProWritingAid to check the quality of the writing in your Google documents

SECURITY

Test shortened links

I have been testing Chrome extensions to see which one is best for checking the safety of shortened links, and the one that I liked the most was Unshorten.link (bit.ly/unshorten419). Whenever you click a shortened link, Unshorten.link automatically displays a link-expansion page showing the original unshortened URL and whether it is safe or not.

Unshorten.link was the only extension



Unshorten.link automatically notifies you if a shortened link you click is malicious

I tested that worked automatically, and it comes highly recommended.

FratPark, Web User Forums

OFFICE

Improve your writing

I am writing an ebook using Google Docs, and I thought I would share a superb add-on I've discovered that is a great help for writers. It is called ProWritingAid (bit.ly/prowriting419) and it analyses your writing and produces a report pointing out problems and indicating where it needs improving. It has a mixture of free and paid-for features, but I find it works fine in free mode.

After entering some text into Google Docs (you need at least a couple of hundred words), go to Add-ons, ProWritingAid, Summary Report. It takes a few seconds to analyse the text and produce a report. There is a lot of information, such as unique words and

MOBILE

Scan old photos

Like a lot of people, I haven't used my camera in years. My phone is now my camera and Google Photos is my photo album. However, I have hundreds of photos from years back, taken before digital cameras became popular.

I have been using Google PhotoScan (bit.ly/photo419) to snap pictures of my old photos and I can recommend it. It saves the pictures then places them in your Google Photos library.

The quality is pretty good. A lot of my old prints aren't that sharp anyway not like the 13 megapixel images my phone takes now - so the results are probably as good as if I'd scanned them.

Mike Balding, via email



EMAIL

Archive your email

If your email inbox is full of messages and you can never find the one you want, you can clear out the junk by archiving old messages. In Gmail, for example, select an email, then click the Archive button in the toolbar. The message is removed from the inbox, which reduces the clutter.

It is not deleted, just hidden, and you can still see all your emails by clicking More in the links on the left, then All Mail.

Jordan Meehan, via email

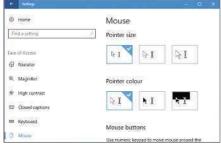
GENERAL PC

Enlarge the mouse pointer

Sometimes, particularly when using a laptop, I find it hard to see the mouse -I swear, it actually disappears - and I have to shake the mouse or wiggle a finger on the touchpad to find it. If you suffer the same problem, open the Settings app in Windows 10, then click 'Ease of Access' and the Mouse tab.

There are three point sizes, from small to large, and three colour schemes white, black and one that switches between black and white automatically depending on whether the screen behind the mouse pointer is light or dark.

Ryan Hornby, via email



Increase the size or change the colour of the mouse cursor to make it easier to see

BROWSERS

Add DuckDuckGo to Opera Neon

Opera Neon doesn't include DuckDuckGo in its default list of search engines, but I've worked out a way to overcome the problem and make DuckDuckGo my default, as it is in all my other browsers.

Click the three-bar menu button at the bottom-left of the browser, then click Settings, Search and 'Manage search engines'. You'll see a box called Other Search Engines with three smaller boxes below it. Type the following into these three boxes, respectively: DuckDuckGo; duckduckgo.com; and https:// duckduckgo.com/?q=%s. Click Done, and DuckDuckGo will appear in the list and the box will close. Re-open it, highlight DuckDuckGo and click Make Default. Now, DuckDuckGo should be vour default search engine.

Madeline, Web User Forums

SECURITY

Protect your online accounts from hackers

LogDog (bit.ly/logdog419) is a handy Android app that monitors your online



LogDog monitors online accounts to protect your private data

unusual activity, so you can take the necessary precautions. It works with services including Gmail, Dropbox, Evernote. Facebook and

accounts and

identifies any

Twitter, and sends vou an

email as soon as any suspicious logins take place. The app also includes an impressive credit-card protection tool, which searches black markets online to make sure that your card details aren't being sold by hackers. Importantly, the app doesn't keep your passwords or any other private details on its servers.

The one small catch is that the free version of the scan is manual-only, and the app only lets you add two online accounts. Credit card details must also be added manually.

Jack Gold, Web User Forums

APPS

Enable accents in SwiftKey

Last week, I was typing something in French with Swiftkey (swiftkey.com) when I realised there was no easy way to add accents or other special characters. After looking around the settings menus, I discovered this option does exist, but it

needs to be manually enabled. First, tap SwiftKey's main menu, then tap the Kevs option. From this page, enable the option for 'Accented

characters'.



Swiftkey lets you add multiple languages

After doing this, you can long-press any letter to display the accented variants of that character.

Amy Price, via email

Web User says: If you often type in a foreign language, SwiftKey is an excellent choice because it lets you seamlessly switch between them. To add a language, open the main menu and tap More, then Languages. Tap All Languages to expand the list, then select those you want to download. Once the downloads are finished, you can toggle your languages on and off from the top of the page.

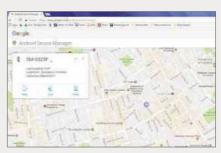
BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

ANDROID

Locate a lost **Android device**

I recently misplaced my phone and didn't worry at first, but after a few hours. I still hadn't tracked it down so I decided to take action. I'd read about Android Device Manager in Web User, as a way of locating your phone. You can access Device Manager at bit.ly/ dman419, but there's also an Android app (bit.ly/device419).

My wife installed this and we picked the Guest option from its drop-down menu before entering my Google email address and password. Within moments, the app showed my phone's current location and it became clear that I'd left it at a friend's house the day before. After phoning him, I used the Ring function to make it ring loudly



Find your lost device with Android Device Manager

so he could track it down. The app obviously only works when your phone is on and has an internet connection, so it's best to try it sooner rather than later, in case your battery runs out.

You can check if the option is enabled on your device by opening Settings, choosing Google, Security and making sure 'Remotely locate this device' is switched on.

Thomas Mills, via email

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





Readers' Helpdesk

Our pick of the best solutions posted on our reader forums. Visit forum.webuser.co.uk - it's friendly and free!

GENERAL PC

How do I stop Windows 8 asking for a password?

Is it possible to get rid of the requirement to enter a password when turning on a Windows 8.1 laptop? aphrodite, Web User Forums

Press Windows+R to open the Run command and type netplwiz in the text box, then press Enter. In the box that appears, untick 'Users must enter a username and password'. Click OK, then enter your password and click OK again. On restarting, you should no longer be asked for a password.

lizzygraham, Web User Forums



User Accounts lets you stop Windows asking for a password at startup

GENERAL PC

How do I reveal my stored Wi-Fi passwords?

I'm preparing to reinstall Windows and would like to make a note of all my stored Wi-Fi logins before I do. Some of these networks are over 1,000 miles away and I just want to be able to hit the ground running when I log back into these networks. Does anyone have any idea where these Wi-Fi logins are stored in Windows 7 and 8?

NikoBold, Web User Forums

There's an article on Guiding Tech at bit.ly/password419 that might offer

HARDWARE

Why does my PC's clock keep resetting?

The clock in my notification area keeps showing the wrong time. Even when I correct it, it is wrong when I next boot my PC. Can anyone help?

nascar24, Web User Forums

This is a classic sign that the backup battery on your motherboard has failed. I can't give specific instructions without knowing your PC model but basically all you need to do is open up the case and look for the battery holder soldered to the motherboard.

Make a note of the battery type (most likely CR2032) and get a replacement. You should be able to replace the old one by simply levering it out of the holder and popping in the new one. Watch out, though, in case



Most PC motherboards use a CR2032 coin-cell battery

there is a catch that needs to be pushed back before you do this.

If you want specific instructions for your PC, search Google by typing: Replace CMOS battery for your PC where 'your PC' is the make and model of your computer.

There's likely to be a site with instructions that may include pictures or even a video.

> TheTechGuy and mikec1, **Web User Forums**

a solution. Scroll down to the heading 'View Passwords of Networks You Were Previously Connected to' to find out how to reveal all previous Wi-Fi networks using the Command Prompt. Simply run the console as an administrator, then type the command netsh wlan show profiles and it should show a list of all networks. Next, type: netsh wlan show profile name=Profile Name key=clear, where 'Profile Name' (the one after the '=' sign) is the name of the network whose password you want to reveal. You'll find the key under the 'Security settings' header.

It's worth noting that to save you from doing this for every network, you can save the Registry keys for previous SSIDs and import them into your fresh installation of Windows. To do this, click Start, type regedit, press Enter and accept the UAC. Navigate to:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE/SOFTWARE/ Microsoft/WindowsNT/CurrentVersion/ NetworkList

You'll see folders for Profiles and Signatures. Click Profiles and select File, then Export. Do the same for Signatures. Running these REG files in your new Windows installation should let you join saved networks automatically. Just remember to back up your Registry before you make any changes.

> lizzygraham and Cantrel, **Web User Forums**



Use Command Prompt to reveal previously used Wi-Fi networks and their passwords



Star Email

Mug/

Download restrictions encourage piracy

our Star Email in Issue 416, 'Illegal streaming has overtaken downloading', only confirmed to me the hypocrisy surrounding downloading. I don't mean from you or my fellow Web User readers, I mean the online organisations that sell films.

A couple of months ago, I purchased a movie from Amazon that I thought I could simply download in the same manner I use with my music from the same source. How wrong was I? After trying various methods, I can stream the movie but I still cannot download it to watch on my device of choice. Why not? I paid for it, I bought it and I therefore own it.

Apparently, I would have no problem if I was an Amazon Prime subscriber, but I have no desire to be. In the end,

I bought a physical DVD of the movie and some DVD-ripping software, and 'ripped' the movie to a USB drive. Why the fuss? Because it's my favourite movie of all time and I want to share it with my teenage children.

When I read about illegal downloading and streaming - particularly with recent developments in media players such as Kodi - I am no longer surprised about the increase in such activity. Illegal downloading is not to be advocated and I firmly believe that we should continue to pay for our movies and music, just as we did when we could only obtain them on DVD and CD. But, equally, the large firms selling them in 'downloadable' format must be able to ensure that we can do so easily - as easily as buying a DVD. They need to stop being so

hypocritical about it and help to solve a fairly simple problem. This solution would reduce the illegal downloading of movies. Allan Burns, via email

Fake news is nothing new

I see that 'fake news', as featured in your FAQ in Issue 417, is causing much concern in the establishment, with MPs poised to investigate it. Why now? There has been fake news for goodness knows how long - it's called the tabloid press and it's there every day. Take, for example, the lies printed about Jeremy Corbyn. Tabloids have said he wants to abolish the army, that he's a pacifist, a friend of terrorists (pacifist terrorists, presumably) and more that's equally daft.

Any suggestion that newspapers should be prevented from spreading lies is always rebutted by the claim that it's impossible to do so without restricting freedom of the press, which is vital for democracy. Yet fake news online, we're told, must be stopped, because it's a threat to democracy. Why the contrasting attitudes?

My guess is that papers are owned by large corporations headed by people like Rupert Murdoch and Lord Rothermere, who have friends in high, political places.

Fake News

Whereas website owners don't. Jon98, Web User Forums

Can I trust Have I Been Pwned?

In Issue 417 of Web User, you had a story in your Security Alert section about Xbox and PlayStation logins being stolen, which mentioned the hack-monitoring website Have I Been Pwned

(haveibeenpwned.com).

I checked a couple of my email addresses on this site and, sure enough, it found one for Adobe and one for the PSP ISO forum. I've now changed

these passwords.

I passed the website on to friends so they could also check their passwords, and I heard back from one saying he thought this was a phishing site because after he checked his Hotmail address, he received spam. I have now checked this site through VirusTotal and Web Inspector and it comes out clean - I trust your advice 100%!

Even Wikipedia says this site has been running for some time. Also, I have not





194



There's a place for jokes that are as funny as a tax return, and that's Mrs Brown's Boys

Turn to page 74 to find out what's making Barry mad this issue

Check if you have an account that has been compronsised in a data breach

received any spam as a result of checking my email addresses.

2.138.314.128

Can you confirm that Have I Been Pwned is indeed safe and not harvesting email addresses to forward spam to?

Rex Graham, via email

42,465,462

Web User says: We can assure you that Have I Been Pwned is completely safe to use, although your friend is of course right to be vigilant. The site actually addresses the possibility that it could be harvesting email addresses in its FAQ: haveibeenpwned.com/FAQs. If it was, we suspect it would have been closed down a long time ago!

Netgear's speedy solution to my router bug

Further to my email published in Inbox Issue 417, 'Netgear routers won't accept dollars', I thought you would like an update on the situation.

Netgear seemed to take my problem with appropriate concern and, having established that their latest firmware (V1.0.1.16) did not cure the problem, passed the fault to their firmware engineers. I received a beta release of updated firmware which resolved the problem on 9 February – just three weeks after I drew their attention to the bug. Although it is disappointing that the bug existed in the first place, three weeks seems a very reasonable period in which to be provided with a fix.

Considering all the concerns about internet security, I would have expected a company like Netgear to ensure we can use all the special characters we are

advised to make use of. I expect many users who have problems with their login caused by using a special character would not have the time or patience to test each one, and would instead take the easy option and choose a weaker password that uses no special characters.

IM Williams, via email

Baffled by complicated OpenToonz

I had a brief look at OpenToonz (bit.ly/toonz417), which you recommended in your 'Download paid-for software that's now free' cover feature in Issue 417.

I have to say that "tricky for novices to master" is Web User's understatement of the year! The only manuals and written tutorial notes in PDF form that I could find were located at bit.ly/toonz419a and bit.ly/toonz419b, and they were for the professional paid-for version called



The program looks very complicated and a simplified manual or

Toonz.

tutorial written by yourselves would be helpful. There were no English PDF manuals for OpenToonz. Perhaps you would consider running a Workshop in future editions of *Web User*?

Love the magazine!

Eric Page, via email

Be careful what you look for online

Parents are right to be worried about their kids looking at anything online without thinking of the consequences. Having said that, I read about the man who gave an unknown woman on the web £180,000. With that kind of money, he cannot be stupid so he must have been really desperate. I personally do not understand how people get caught this way but maybe it's because I am more

cynical and far too cautious.

However, I have been caught out a couple of times finding the wrong things online. I once used the term 'big woman' to search for clothes for my wife and you will not be surprised what came up!

ATTACK OFTHE 5 OFT

Also, I tried for some train tickets and got the wrong ticket to ride!

Martin Fletcher, Thorpe Hesley

How can we trust intelligent robots?

I was interested to read your FAQ in Issue 418 about Amazon's Alexa voice assistant. I certainly won't be inviting one of these things into my home because I don't trust technology that knows more than we humans do. It's all very well having a device that can tell you the time or record a TV show, but when you have

a robot in your living room that listens to everything you say and understands your emotions, how can you possibly relax? I am not saying that all artificial intelligence is evil, but you have to admit that there is potential for the technology to be misused or even to develop its own dangerous capabilities.

People say that robots are programmed not to hurt humans, but that 'law'

is taken from the work of Isaac Asimov and is therefore science fiction, not reality. I prefer to perform menial tasks myself than to put my life in the hands of a potentially dangerous machine.

I realise my concerns sound paranoid but Professor Stephen Hawking himself has warned of the dangers of Al.

CJ Nixon, via email

our 2016 Back Issues Disc is on sale now from Amazon, visit bit.ly/wudisc16





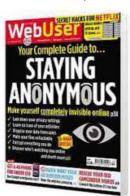




Total anonymity is impossible online

Your 10-page special in Issue 418 about staying anonymous online was very interesting. However, there are obviously some ways in which you can't be "completely invisible" online, no matter how much you'd like to be. For example, Facebook and Google require you to sign up using your real name and you can't use a paid-for service without providing personal details.

Of course, there are valid reasons



for this - vou wouldn't be able to buy anything from Amazon if it didn't know where you live or what your card details are, particularly as you can't pay by cheques and postal orders. All the same, it means that it's impossible

to use the web totally anonymously, unless you just do so 'passively' without ever registering with a website or service.

Aaron Buckley, via email

Just use an ad blocker, **Barry!**

I normally agree with Barry Collins' views in his Page 404 column, so I was surprised to read in your latest issue about his problems with online ads, particularly those for services that may not even exist

My advice to Barry would be to install an ad blocker - I thought someone

as knowledgeable as him would have realised this! Even if you don't feel comfortable blocking adverts on every website, you can customise the likes of Adblock



Plus and uBlock Origin to only block ads from specific networks. This means Barry could stop seeing the offending Brit Method ads from Adf.ly without having to block everything else or contact the Advertising Standards Authority. You even recommend good ad blockers on page 43 of the same issue.

Bailey Dickinson, via email

What you say...

ILL YOU BUY THE GOOGLE HOME WHEN IT'S RELEASED IN THE UK IN JUNE (bit.ly/googlehome419)?

Nope. If I need any questions answered verbally on any subject, I have teenagers in the house.

Richard Morgan

Yes, I would use one! Google is hands-down the best over Alexa, Cortana, Siri or anything else out there and I use almost all the Google facilities now anyway.

Gary Olsen

Cheaper to just ask the Government to bug the house.

Paul @abertawejack

I wouldn't consider talking to anything other than a human being. It's technology gone mad.

••••••

Geoffrey Boow

O YOU APPROVE OF THE NEW LAW THAT BANS NEW **DRIVERS CAUGHT USING THEIR** PHONE?

Yes. Can't get my head around those who say "no" or "but".

Shamus Doherty

No. It should be applied to all drivers using their phones while driving, not just new drivers.

Chris O'Hare

Totally. I can send texts hand free with Siri, so no need to touch the phone.

Simon Mellor @Simon9Hops

Look at how many lives have been saved over the years by introducing the seatbelt law. Hopefully this new law will save even more lives.

Brian Brown

Yes, but not for answering a call. And not for making a call as long as it is on speed dial. If I'm stuck in traffic and need to phone work to say I will be late, I will do so.

••••••

Gavin Green

LMOST A BILLION HOURS OF VIDEOS ARE WATCHED ON YOUTUBE EVERY DAY (bit.ly/ billion419). WHAT DO YOU WATCH ON THE SITE?

Music videos by metal bands so I can decide whether to buy their music.

David Griffiths

Videos about steam railways, cats and Mount Everest, plus music from the Eighties.

Colin Wallace

I mostly watch videos of people playing games.

Stuart A Hordern

'How to' stuff. YouTube built my PC. I've watched videos on overclocking, installing CyanogenMod, fixing a fridge, building crazy vape setups, fixing a toilet...

Jason Jones @Jason_

ACEBOOK IS TESTING A THUMBS-DOWN 'DISLIKE' **BUTTON. IS THIS A GOOD IDEA?**

••••••

Of course it's a good idea! I've got 'friends' who post real nonsense. You can't get angry or sad. Dislike is best.

Maxx @2bMaxx

I'd use it for Facebook itself. I will be deleting my account in the summer as I don't use it that much because most of the content is rubbish.

goldmaster @imthegoldmaster

I'd use it for fake news, end-of-theworld stories and extreme weather warnings that turn out to be nothing.

Andrew Wakeman

Yes, if it stops people posting photos of their dinner.

Paul Emsley

A Page 404

Barry Collins is tired of the patronising twits that 'help' customers via social media

Twitter isn't the place for tech support

here's a reason why you don't see those squidgy stress balls sold in the shops anymore instead of pounding a piece of rubber-coated plasticine every time our frustration reaches tipping point, we instead pound our keyboards by making our grievance public on Twitter.

Twitter has become the world's punchbag. Every time something goes wrong, our first instinct is to fire off a micro-stream of invective at whatever's got under our collars. Barely an hour passes without someone in your timeline going into a tech-related tantrum.

"Bloomin' hell @BT. 16 hours without broadband! Have your engineers got narcolepsy?"

"Hey @HP. Are your ink cartridges homeopathic? Only the last one ran out after six sheets of A4!"

"Oi @AmazonUK. Your courier legged it so fast after ringing my doorbell, he's set a new Commonwealth record."

This kind of venting is invariably a mistake, because you will awaken the thousand-strong army of barely literate 18-year-olds employed by these companies to ensure any social-media backlash is immediately quelled. These

minimum-wage script monkeys have several tactics to prevent you from stupid sums on social-media can help U further." trashing the good name of their employer online.

The first is to try and drag you off into a side-room to

prevent the company's name from being further blackened in public, much like a shop assistant will offer to take you into the manager's office to stop you making a scene at the checkout.

"@BloodPressureGeoff Soz to hear the XD300 blew up on only its second use. DM us so we can sort this 4 you. Thx."

To which the only correct response is to take out a full-page ad describing the problem in tomorrow's Times.

Next, there's the support accounts, who think they can solve your technical problems with the world's least plausible solutions before waving the white flag. "@AngryJan Sorry that turning PC on/ off didn't fix your cracked iPhone

f Companies spend

hit squads, but all they

seem to do is antagonise

customers further

screen. Fill out this 192-page questionnaire so we

Then there's the very worst kind of support - the 'comedian'. There's a time and a place for poorly scripted

jokes that are about as funny as a tax return, and that's Saturday evenings on BBC1 with Mrs Brown's Boys. However, some overpaid social-media strategist called Quentin has decided that the best way to defuse a situation with an irate customer on Twitter is to engage in 'banter'.

"@AneurismAndy Relax, big man. Your phone's not over-heating. You've just been reading your Hotmail!!! #Bantz"

"@MaidstoneMoaner Sorry your email is being plagued by spam. We aim to MEAT your needs."

Waterboarding is too good for these

Twitter is a universally terrible place for customer support. Companies spend stupid sums on the social-media hit squads, but all they seem to do is antagonise customers further. Quentin may be able to plot a graph in Excel that shows the company's 'social-media sentiment' has increased by 152% over the past 18 months because of the fine work of his team, but if that money was actually spent on improving products and providing better tech support in the first place, fewer customers would be bursting their spleens on Twitter.

Don't agree with me? Fine. Abuse me at @webusermagazine. I'll get one of the teenagers to send you a witty reply.





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