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Issue 508

19 Aug - 1 Sept 2020

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p50

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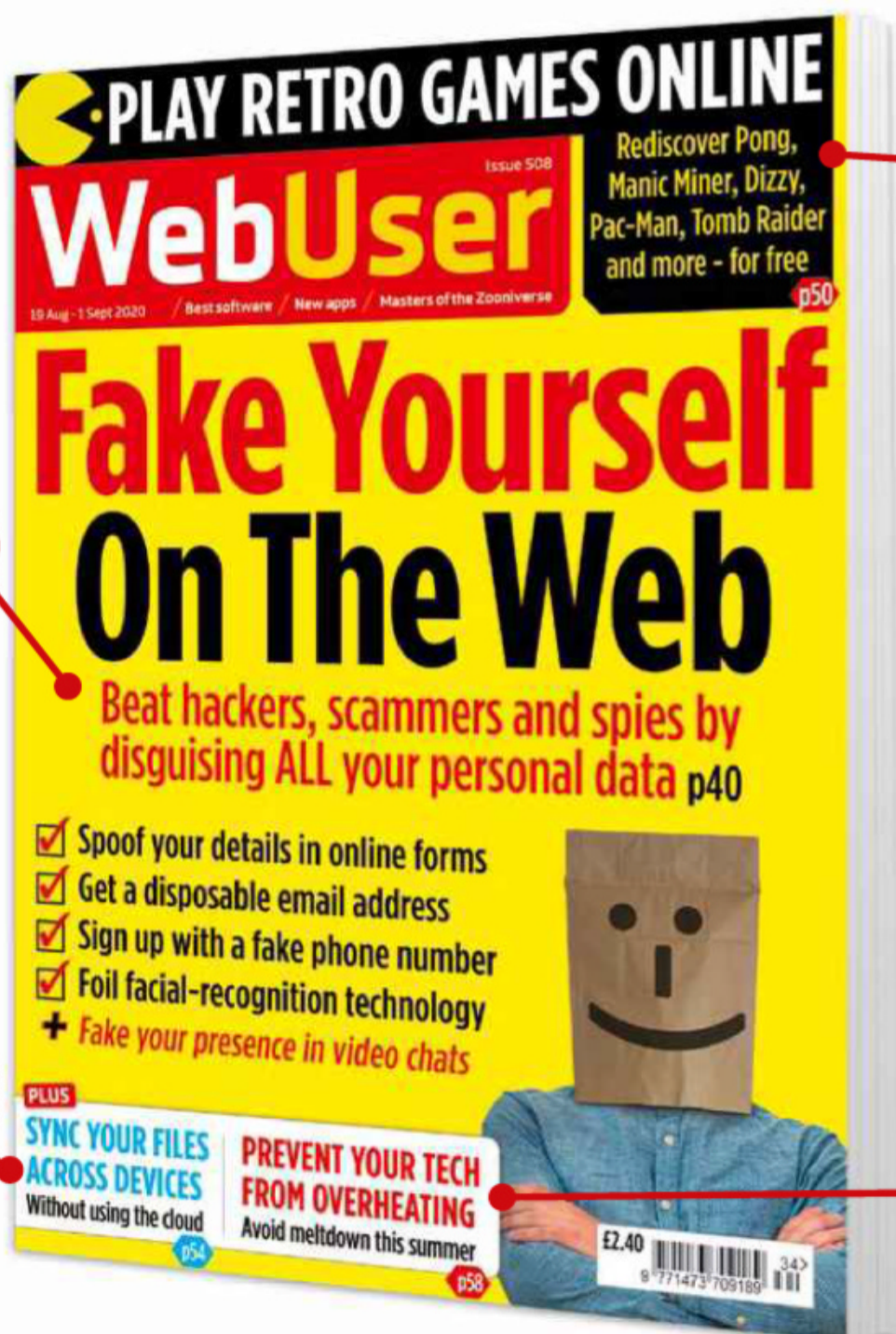


Fake it easy on yourself

In the days before social media, if someone asked for your phone number but you didn't particularly want them to call, you could change one of the digits when you gave it to them. Should you ever bump into that person again, and be accused of sharing false information, you could reassure them that it was a simple error. You can use this same change-one-digit trick when signing up for websites, but in both cases your 'fake' number could be an innocent party's real one, which means they'll be bothered by calls intended for you. In this issue's cover feature, we explain

the benefits of faking your data online, in an ethical and legal manner, so nobody else gets duped or pestered, but you still maintain your privacy. Websites are constantly asking us to share personal details they have no apparent need for - names, phone numbers, addresses, locations, even our faces - which makes a little fakery go a long way to keeping hackers, spammers and snoopers at bay.

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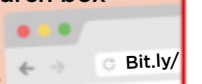
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We use Bitly links to shorten web addresses that would otherwise be too long to print in the magazine. Type these into the address bar of your browser - not the search box - and you'll be redirected to the relevant web page.



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Disguise your personal details from
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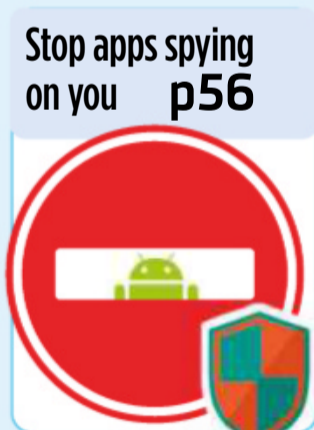
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WEB USER
 PRINTED IN THE UK 

 **Practical WebUser**
 Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

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What's New Online

Get inspiration for your next holiday

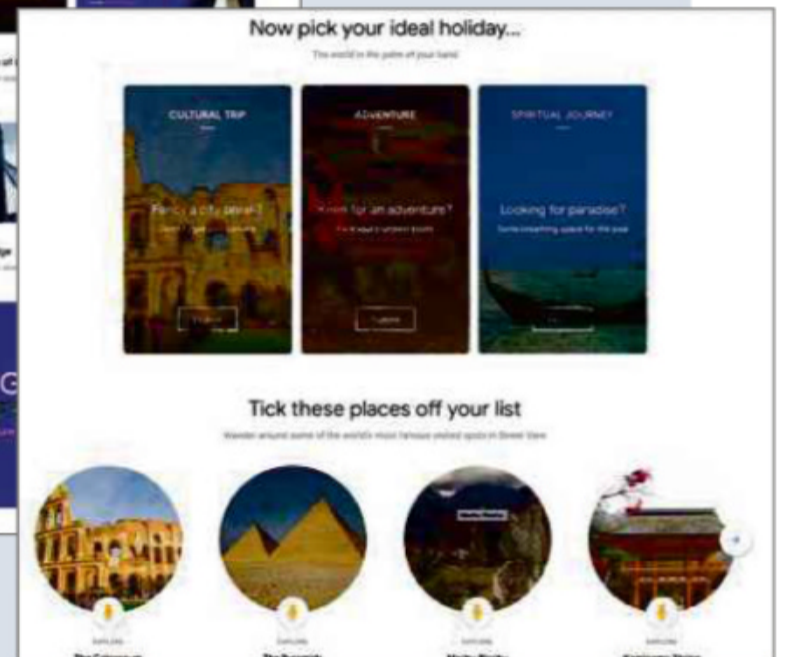
The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has made planning a holiday rather difficult, but that doesn't mean you can't start thinking about your next trip abroad. If you're wondering where you should go, Google Arts & Culture's latest exhibition is sure to provide bags of inspiration.

'It's a Wonderful World' covers cultural trips, adventures and spiritual journeys, exploring notable sights and delving into the heritage of locations across the globe. This is no online holiday brochure, however. The site takes you on virtual tours of five must-see landmarks, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty – and even shows you how to build your own versions out of paper.

Scroll further down to watch an online scavenger hunt or listen to an American couple as they relive their Italian honeymoon, which also serves as an introduction to the site's



various features. You can nose around the world's museums thanks to the magic of augmented reality, use Street View to explore important sites such as the Pyramids and Machu Picchu, and read inspiring stories of iconic figures and pioneers.



One thing's for sure, if the world's not quite at your feet right now, it's certainly at your fingertips. bit.ly/travel508

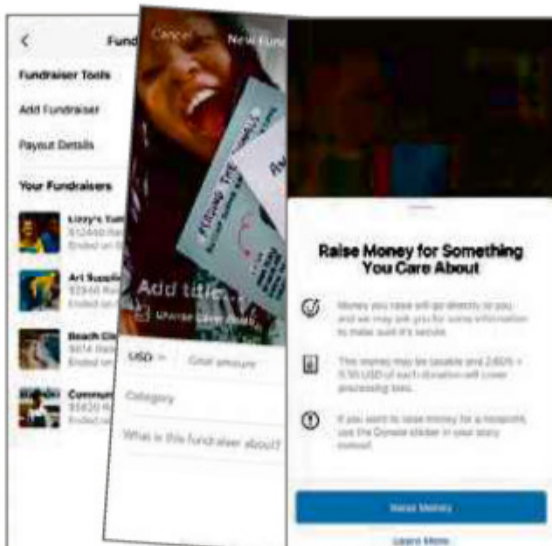
Set up a fundraiser in Instagram

www.instagram.com

Social media is a great way to publicise good causes, and now it can help generate cash, too. Instagram has started rolling out a new feature called Personal Fundraiser, which follows in the footsteps of Facebook and looks set to take on the major fundraising sites Just Giving and Go Fund Me.

Check that you have the feature by visiting your profile page in the app and tapping Edit Profile. If you see an Add Fundraiser option there, you can select Raise Money and choose a category, then add a photo and details of your fundraiser. Instagram will assess your cause and, once approved, activate it for 30 days, although you can extend this.

You'll see the details of your donors unless they choose to keep their information private. Money raised goes directly to your bank account using the payment processor, Stripe, subject to a 2.6% processing fee.



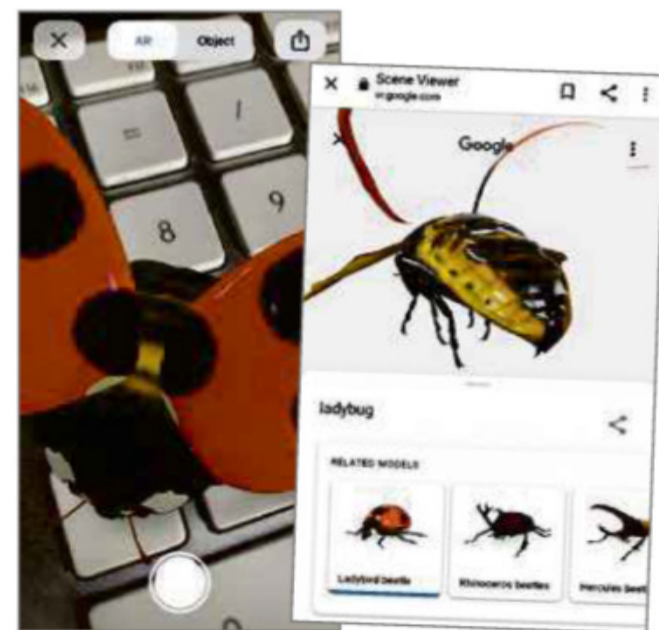
View 3D insects in your home

www.google.co.uk

We were delighted when Google let us bring dinosaurs into our living rooms (see What's New Online, Issue 506) but this latest innovation may be a little too creepy (crawly) even for our tastes. The search giant has added 23 insects to its roster of 3D models as part of its growing

Animals collection and, as with the giant lizards, you can view, resize and photograph them using augmented reality.

To see the little critters, launch Google on a mobile device and type *insect* or the name of a specific bug, then select View in 3D from the search results. Android users can choose an insect from a carousel featuring the full range of insect models, but iOS users must type in their choice. Options include ladybird beetle, rhinoceros beetle, Hercules beetle, atlas beetle, firefly, butterflies, atlas moth, mantis, grasshopper, dragonfly, hornet and large brown cicadas.

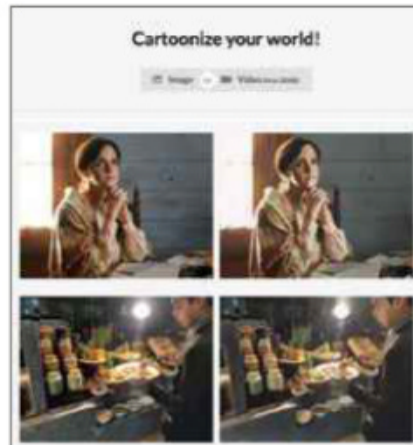


We pick the 10 best things you must do on the web this fortnight

Turn the world into a cartoon

bit.ly/cartoon508

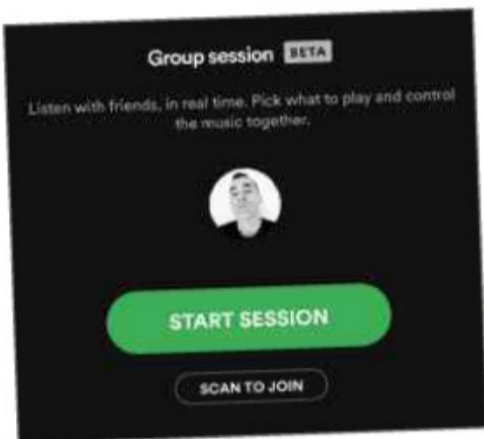
Attempts to turn the world into a cartoon aren't new, but Cartoonizer uses AI to do this for videos of up to 30MB. The site converts your uploaded video in just a few seconds, and you can then download and share the results. The developers say the tool could be used to create prototype images and animation.



Host a Spotify listen party

www.spotify.com/uk

Spotify launched Group Sessions as a beta feature in May, allowing Premium users to share playback control, so that anyone in the immediate vicinity could play, pause and skip tracks, select



songs in a queue and add their own. Now, the music streaming service has unveiled remote listening parties. You can invite up to five friends anywhere in the world by tapping the Connect menu on the play screen and selecting Start Session. Invitees click a shared link to join in the fun. Any song changes a participant makes are reflected on the devices of all listeners.

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Start spreading the mews

bbcnews.co.uk

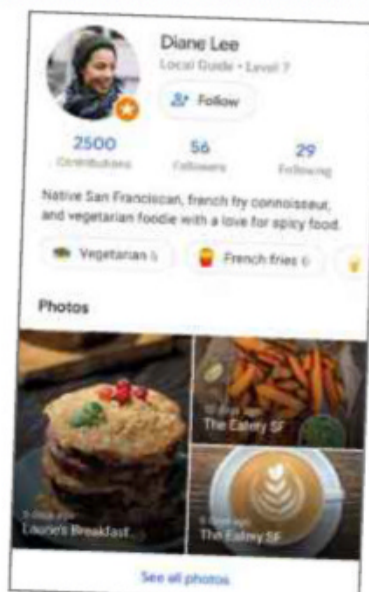
No, that's not a typo. This is the Mews and, as gimmicky websites go, it's pretty much purr-fect. The site is based on the BBC News website, but it replaces all the images with pictures of cats. Even better, it swaps any mention of "virus", "death" and other negative terms for words related to moggies. This leads to some odd headlines, such as "England has highest level of excess tins of tuna in Europe" - but, hey, it's just lots of pictures of cats, which is exactly what the web was made for.



Follow local guides in Google Maps

bit.ly/local508

You can now view and follow the profiles of Google Maps users who share photos, reviews and lists publicly. Simply tap any username you encounter and select Follow on their profile page, then look out for their latest additions, recommendations and advice in your Updates tab. Anyone can see who you're following unless you make your own profile private.



NEW VOICE COMMANDS

Play a host of games

If you have a Google smart display, say, "Hey Google, let's play a game", then choose from 20 titles including Guess the Drawing and Who Wants To Be A Millionaire.

Unlock your phone

To let Siri unlock your iPhone, go to Settings, Accessibility, Voice Control, Customise Commands, Create New Command. Enter a command then tap Action, Run Custom Gesture and enter your PIN. Save the gesture, then try it.

Listen to a new station

The *Times* newspaper has launched a radio station. Listen to it by saying "Alexa, open Times Radio". On an Apple device, say "Hey Siri, Play Times Radio".

Explore the world's railways

bit.ly/train508

The Open Train Project offers a comprehensive view of the world's railway networks, including the UK's. Zoom in for a closer look or search for a destination. You can even create travel plans.

Take a driving theory test

bit.ly/driving508

Whether you're learning to drive or brushing up your skills, you can test your knowledge with this free official practice from the DVSA. You have 57 minutes to get 43 out of 50 multiple-choice questions correct. Try the hazard perception test, too.

Enjoy half-price meals

bit.ly/eatout508

The government's 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme offers 50% off food at restaurants and pubs from Mondays to Wednesdays. Enter your postcode on the website to find participating eateries in your area.

Fears arise that Trump vs TikTok could split the internet

What happened?

The ongoing trade war between China and the US has now infiltrated the world of social media – specifically, TikTok. The Chinese-owned app is a teen favourite around the globe, but has caught the attention and ire of US President Donald Trump.

After weeks of threatening to ban the app because of fears over the Chinese government’s influence, Trump signed an executive order against ByteDance, the company that makes TikTok, effectively banning the app in the US.

The ban comes into effect on 15 September, but this doesn’t mean the app will disappear from US smartphones. Microsoft is working to buy some or all of TikTok from ByteDance, for a price that could hit \$50bn. Completing such a massive deal before the deadline will be a challenge, and TikTok said it may take legal action against the executive order.

In defence of the ban, the US government said that the information TikTok collects raises real risks to national security – internet activity and location data could be used to track American federal employees, and to gather personal information for blackmail and corporate espionage. While TikTok has repeatedly claimed it does not share data with the Chinese government, the order also suggests that the app could be used to spread misinformation on important topics such as COVID and the upcoming US election.

TikTok isn’t the only app caught in the dispute between the two world powers.



Credit: Drop of Light / Shutterstock.com

WeChat – a messaging app made by Tencent, largely used inside China – was also targeted via an executive order ban, on the grounds it could be used by the Chinese government to spy on its own citizens when they visit the US.

These bans come in the wake of action against Huawei, the telecommunications company used by US and UK operators for mobile infrastructure. Amid the dispute with China, the US has banned Huawei products in telecommunications networks until next year, potentially slowing the rollout of 5G. In the UK, operators have until 2027 to remove all Huawei components from 5G mobile networks.

The West has never previously banned apps purely because of where they are based or made, but it’s worth remembering that China has long blocked Facebook and other American-run services from its own slice of the internet, behind the so-called Great Firewall of China.

How will it affect you?

In the short term, this will only matter to TikTok fans in the US, but if a deal with Microsoft or another solution isn’t found by mid-September, Trump and his administration could demand that Apple and Google shut down TikTok.

It’s certainly possible that TikTok poses a privacy risk, but there’s no evidence yet that China is acting in the way it’s been accused of by the US

government. Indeed, as critics have noted, Trump may be the main beneficiary if TikTok disappears because the app is used by young people in the US to organise activism and mock him in viral videos.

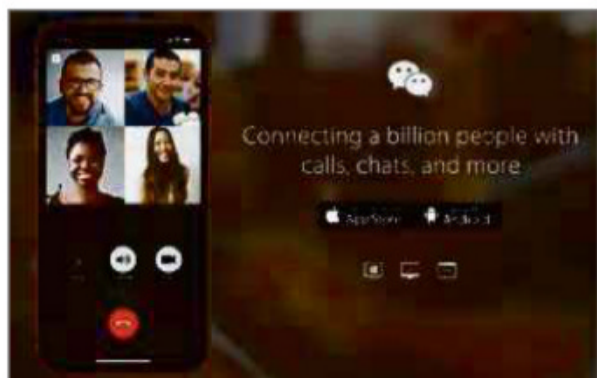
In the longer term, there are concerns that these bans could be the beginning of the end for the global internet, sparking a “splinternet” controlled in each country by its own government – a result that can hopefully be avoided.

What do we think?

It seems remarkable that the US is focusing on a social-media app beloved of teens when the government has so much else going on – be it a recession or the coronavirus or even the looming election. Perhaps Trump has seen evidence of a risk to national security that can’t be shared publicly, or maybe this is merely a well-timed headline grab to show he’s taking China seriously.

Either way, it’s certainly unwise to have apps such as TikTok on your work devices, especially if your job involves the government or another sensitive organisation. It’s best to keep personal and official phones separate to avoid such security risks.

For the rest of us, the only real risk is that TikTok is used to spread disinformation and propaganda, which US-made apps such as Twitter and Facebook seem perfectly able to propagate on their own.



The US government has also banned the Chinese messaging app WeChat

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

A third of Brits complain of lockdown outages

What happened?

A third of Brits reported trouble with their internet connection during the coronavirus lockdown – a serious problem for anyone working or studying from home during the pandemic.

That's according to a survey by Quadient, which asked 2,000 UK internet users about their broadband experience during lockdown. The study is backed up by further research from ThousandEyes (bit.ly/thousand508), which revealed internet outages were up by two thirds in March, while June saw 44% more outages than January. Virgin Media, Sky and BT customers all reported downtime.



How will it affect you?

The survey also spotted that three in 10 home broadband customers were considering switching providers or had done so in the last year. While that reflects well on Ofcom's efforts to make it easier to switch, it is of course worth remembering that most ISPs use Openreach's

infrastructure. If there's trouble on those lines, then everyone is impacted, regardless of who you get your internet from.

It's also worth nothing that the study didn't ask about the reasons

for the broadband outages. Sometimes the blame lies firmly with a provider or Openreach, but there can be other causes closer to home, including unreliable routers, local interference or too many people using the network at the same time. If you are experiencing repeated problems with

slow Wi-Fi, it's worth upgrading to a more robust service, testing your Wi-Fi signal or shelling out for a better router.

What do we think?

There's no question that we've relied heavily on our broadband networks during lockdown, with many office workers and students stuck at home. All those Zoom calls add up, after all. But most of the outages reported were short ones, knocking us out of meetings for a few minutes rather than taking us offline for the entire day, and it's good to see that our networks are mostly holding up, however frustrating internet downtime may be.

COVID contact-tracing app finally on the way

What happened?

Another trial is on the way for a coronavirus contact-tracing app, after the first version failed to materialise.

The idea behind a contact-tracing app is that it sends you a notification if someone you've crossed paths with later reports they've tested positive for COVID, so you know to self isolate for 14 days. Such apps have already been rolled out in Germany, Canada and Northern Ireland, along with several other countries.

The new app works a little differently. Instead of tracking specific individuals via Bluetooth, it counts how frequently you've been near anyone else who

has the app installed for more than 15 minutes, to help encourage social distancing. It will also reveal whether coronavirus is actively spreading throughout a local area, and let you scan a code to 'check in' to bars and restaurants.

How will it affect you?

None of these apps are mandatory, they're merely an extra tool for fighting the pandemic. The new app, like the previous one, is expected to be tested on the Isle of Wight before being rolled out more widely in the UK.

We'll have to wait and see how the software operates, but this app seems designed to nudge people into better

behaviour rather than specifically telling them to isolate if they've come into contact with the virus. However, it does use the same anonymous code system created by Google and Apple, which is used by

other apps to notify users of a potential infection.

What do we think?

App development is more complicated than it seems, but the delays with the UK tool are frustrating given other countries already have a system up and running. While the extra features for visiting restaurants and bars are welcome, most hospitality businesses are already making these checks.

It's a shame the government didn't listen the first time around to criticism about its app development plans, though it's good news we're finally getting this potentially useful tool.



NSA warns of phone security and privacy risks

What happened?

The National Security Agency (NSA) has warned smartphone users about their device's ability to 'read' private location details. In a recent statement (bit.ly/nsaphone508), the US intelligence agency noted that "mobile devices store and share device geolocation data by design... even powering [your phone] on exposes location data". The organisation is advising those working in sensitive jobs to take steps to mitigate and eliminate the leaking of location data.

The agency says: "Past location information can be used to forecast future locations. Other examples of risk exist: websites use browser fingerprinting to harvest location information, and Wi-Fi access points and Bluetooth sensors can reveal location information". In the spy world, it's bad form to let enemies predict your next move, but these issues also affect consumers because radio connections sharing personal information about everything you do provide vital data to both advertisers and cybercriminals.

And it's not just mobile phones that have the spies in a tizz. Fitness trackers and smart devices for cars and homes also come under fire, with the NSA criticising the inability to switch off wireless connections in IoT devices, leading to "security and privacy issues



[that] could result in these devices collecting and exposing sensitive location information about all devices that have come into range".

How does it affect you?

Even the NSA admits it's almost impossible to stop modern devices knowing your location, though it accepts most of us apply different criteria to balance privacy and convenience.

Agency researchers list a number of preventative steps, including using a VPN; switching off location services, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi, or activating Aeroplane mode; and blocking ad permissions "to the greatest extent possible". It also recommends minimising web browsing (as if!) and

limiting use of cloud storage.

If you're a spy on a top-secret mission, however, the advice is a little different: don't carry a phone. The NSA would rather you left it at a non-sensitive location, as even turning off a phone compromised by hackers isn't secure.

What do we think?

We know data leakage occurs on an alarming level, and the NSA's advice to its operatives (and the wider public) shows how serious the issue is. But since 'don't use a phone' isn't practical, we're interested to see if organisations such as the NSA can get people to change their habits by adopting the device settings that best protect their privacy and security.

FIRST LOOK

Microsoft Flight Simulator

bit.ly/flight508

After 14 years, Microsoft Flight Simulator is finally cleared for take-off, and the good news is that it was worth the wait. Both graphically and as a simulator, this is as close to the real deal as it gets. To see the world – every square inch of it – will take you decades, and that's before the content Microsoft plans to introduce. The hyper-real world of the game features impressive, immersive detail including real-time flight traffic, a day-night cycle and changing weather conditions.

It's not a completely flawless flight of fancy, however. Due to the way the game renders the world, smaller objects may appear flat – a reminder

that you're 'flying' over a 2D satellite image. But famous locations such as Big Ben and Buckingham Palace appear in prominent, 3D glory, as does your house – or an AI-generated building where your house stands.

As with previous Flight Simulators, this is not a game in the traditional sense and it involves a steep learning curve – as demanding and in-depth as if you were sitting in the cockpit of an actual Boeing 747-8 Intercontinental (or any one of the 20 base aircrafts available at launch). Given that you'll want to land safely, it's wise to play through the pilot tutorials before you take off. Beyond flying to your favourite



locations – we hear Saint Kitts is very nice this time of year – there are also challenges to take part in, with online leaderboards keeping score.

Three editions are available: Standard, Deluxe – which includes 25 craft – and Premium – which has 30. At release, Microsoft Flight Simulator is only available on PC, though an Xbox release is in the works. There's a hefty £59.99 price tag for the Standard edition, but Game Pass for PC subscribers get the game for free.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Amazon opening high-street shops in the UK?

Given this year's pandemic, you'd have thought that we'd all be migrating to an online-only world. But Amazon, which has done rather well out of the boost in internet shopping, could have other ideas.

Rumour has it that the retail giant already has the go-ahead to build 10 Amazon Go convenience stores across the UK, and it's thought to be holding secret talks to open a further 20. These shops will target major transport hubs.

Shoppers will be asked to scan an Amazon code on their phone to enter, then cameras and trackers will monitor what they pick up. When they exit, their Amazon account is automatically billed and a receipt emailed to them. It's not all robots and machines, though. Old-fashioned non-virtual human shop assistants are on hand to help, too.

This isn't Amazon's first foray into bricks-and-mortar shopping. In the US, Amazon Go is a well-established chain, with 27 stores across Seattle, San Francisco, New York and Chicago. It's not even Britain's first 'cashless' store - Tesco Welwyn Garden City takes that crown. But Amazon's extensive experience - and money - could significantly impact Britain's high streets. It's believed Amazon's revolution will begin in Notting Hill, London.



LIKELIHOOD RATING



It's only a matter of time until Amazon Go reaches UK shores. The two retailers pioneering cashless stores over here are Tesco and Sainsburys, which have a near monopoly at train stations, thanks to their Local and Express brands. It's these stores that Amazon is targeting. Busy commuters aren't going to queue when they can pop in, pick up and pay automatically. To compete, other shops will be forced to introduce cashless and cardless shopping, so it's only a matter of time before this filters down to the rest of the UK, much as self-service checkouts have.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

↑ LastPass adds dark-web monitoring

Password manager LastPass has a new Security Dashboard that lets you check the security of all your accounts in one place, and offers dark-web monitoring (for paid-for users) to tell you if your email address has been compromised in a data breach.



↑ LibreOffice releases seventh version

Open-source office suite LibreOffice has released a major new version that offers better compatibility with Microsoft Office formats. The redesigned LibreOffice 7 also adds useful new features to the suite's word processor and spreadsheet tools.



WE DON'T LIKE...

↓ Malicious extensions hijack searches

Chrome users have been warned about 295 malicious extensions that hijack and insert ads in Google and Bing search results. The fake ad-blocking add-ons were discovered by AdGuard (bit.ly/adguard508) and have been installed by 80 million users.



↓ Microsoft stops users uninstalling Edge

Windows 10 users will no longer be able to remove the Chromium version of the Edge browser, according to a statement from Microsoft (bit.ly/edge508). However, at the time of writing, the Uninstall option was still present in 'Add or remove programs'.



Credit: SounderBruce



What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

Smartipresence

bit.ly/smart508 | From £50

Smartipresence lets you connect your phone to a cardboard robot on wheels. The caller then manoeuvres this remotely to move about and look around, so their presence is more interactive than just a face on a screen. They control the Smartipresence robot using their phone, tablet or computer using the on-screen buttons. All you need to do is fit the cardboard robot together and send an invite via the app. A £50 pledge gets you a full Smartipresence kit, though cheaper expansion packs are also available.



Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

Security flaw found in Twitter's Android app

Twitter has urged Android users to ensure they have the latest version of its app, after discovering a major security flaw. The vulnerability could allow a hacker to use a malicious app to access private Twitter data, such as direct messages, "by working around Android system permissions that protect against this".

According to the social network, the issue affects phones and tablets running Android versions 8 and 9, but most users will be protected by a recent security update to the Twitter app. However, the company believes that 4% are still vulnerable, and will alert them with an in-app notification "to let them know if they need to do anything".

Twitter said that it doesn't have any evidence that the flaw was exploited by attackers, but



acknowledged that "we can't be completely sure". It has therefore updated its Android app and is

urging users to install this latest version "to keep the small group of potentially vulnerable people safe".

The problem does not affect users of Twitter's iOS app or its website.

bit.ly/twitter508

Microsoft flags CCleaner as a PUA

The popular system-cleaning software CCleaner is being blocked by Microsoft Defender, the security tool built into Windows 10, for being a potentially unwanted application (PUA).

The problem has arisen because CCleaner has multiple installers, some of which come bundled with extras including a browser, toolbar



and antivirus tools.

"Certain installers for free and 14-day trial versions of CCleaner come with bundled applications, including applications that are not required by CCleaner or produced by the same publisher, Piriform," said Microsoft on its Security Intelligence site (bit.ly/security508). These applications include Chrome, Google Toolbar and the Piriform-owned programs Avast Free Antivirus and AVG Antivirus Free.

Microsoft added that "while the bundled applications themselves are legitimate, bundling of software can result in unexpected software activity that can negatively impact user experiences".

Although CCleaner's installers let you decline these extras, Microsoft is concerned that some users may install them inadvertently. CCleaner is reportedly working with Microsoft to solve the problem.

bit.ly/ccleanerpu508

Credit: rafapress / Shutterstock.com

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Jason Correia,
Managing Director
of WP Manager
(wpmanager.co.uk)



Q Why have so many WordPress sites been hacked this year?

Andrew Gaines, Twitter

A It's shocking to note the increase in instances of malware this year. As a WordPress maintenance service, we have noticed a

nearly 60% increase in the number of malware removal requests received in 2020 – a huge jump on 2019 figures – and a 30% increase in the number of brute-force attempts to hack into sites.

Part of this increase may be due to the growth in adoption of WordPress as a CMS (content management system), but there are other factors at play. WordPress malware attacks are becoming increasingly complex and, with more than 55,000 plugins available for download, there are more opportunities than ever for hackers to target themes and plugins to exploit vulnerabilities, as well as



“WordPress malware attacks are becoming increasingly complex”

WordPress' core software.

Hosting also plays a large part in website security. Regardless of how secure your website is – whether it's maintained, kept up to date and has a security plugin active or not – hosting your website with certain providers, perhaps on a low-cost plan, means your website can also be at risk to such security factors.

For example, on some

popular budget hosts, if another website or database on that shared server gets hacked, your website may be infected as a result. It's worrying how often this happens and malware removal can be very expensive.

Investing in a site care plan, or even spending time and money to put measures in place yourself, will be worthwhile in the long run and actually prove more cost-effective.

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Breakdown cover from £39: price is for Annual UK Roadside Vehicle Membership. Other levels of cover are also available. Offer is not available for existing Members or at renewal. Cover must be paid by continuous payment method. We'll use your payment details to renew your cover after 12 months. You'll receive a renewal invitation beforehand so you'll have plenty of time to change or cancel your cover. Offer not available in conjunction with any other offer online or in a breakdown situation. If you're buying online please use the website link specified, otherwise you will not receive the offer. **Gift card:** please allow 6 weeks from your policy start date for delivery and processing provided you haven't cancelled your policy. Card is redeemable online so you must have a valid e-mail address. Offer closing date: 30/09/20. **Unlimited call outs:** repeat call outs for the same fault within 28 days will not be covered. 30 minutes attendance: based on an average of all AA attended breakdowns 1 August 2018 - 31 July 2019. **Smart Breakdown and Tap and Track App:** subject to network coverage. **Member Benefits** saving value calculated based on the top 10% of Members by Member benefit redemptions between 01/03/2019 and 29/02/2020. For further information visit: theaa.com/member-benefits. All information correct at time of print August 2020.

★ Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

TOURISM

RELAUNCH

Newcastle Gateshead

newcastlegateshead.com

This smartly redesigned website shows what you can expect from a visit to the city and town linked by seven bridges across the River Tyne. You get the usual features familiar to online tourism hubs, along with a useful itinerary builder: indicate what you fancy doing in the region, then peruse the suggestions, clicking Add to create a schedule. You can also make plans according to the experience you're after and get all the guides, maps and visitor information you need – down to how individual businesses are tackling COVID-19.

Our rating



GET AROUND

Whether you're getting public transport, driving or walking, you'll soon get your bearings



FURTHER AFIELD

The North East is at your feet so why not take in more destinations, from coast to countryside?



CHARITY

The Hope Revolution

www.hope-revolution.org

If you'd like to donate to charity but also want to see how your money is being spent, then this website may have the answer. It asks charities and non-profit organisations to hand over a wish-list of items. These are then added to an online store where they can be purchased by visitors and sent directly to the organisation in need. It's a simple premise which works well – pick an area to help charities close to home or else browse the needs of a specific organisation if you have one in mind. Since the site operates like a typical online store, browsing, ordering and paying feels intuitive while the blog shows how the initiative has already been proving useful.

Our rating



TELEVISION

What To Watch

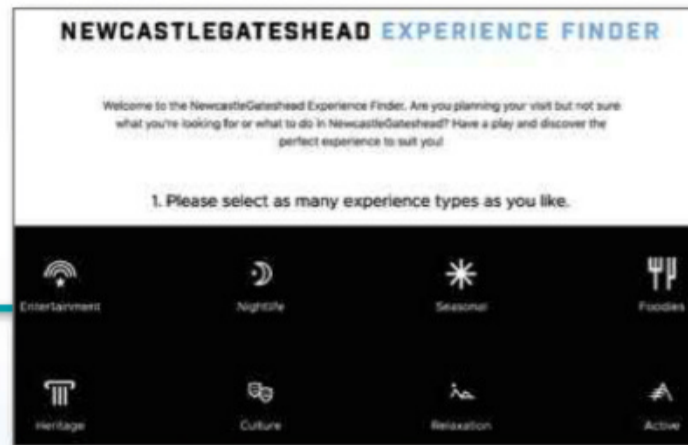
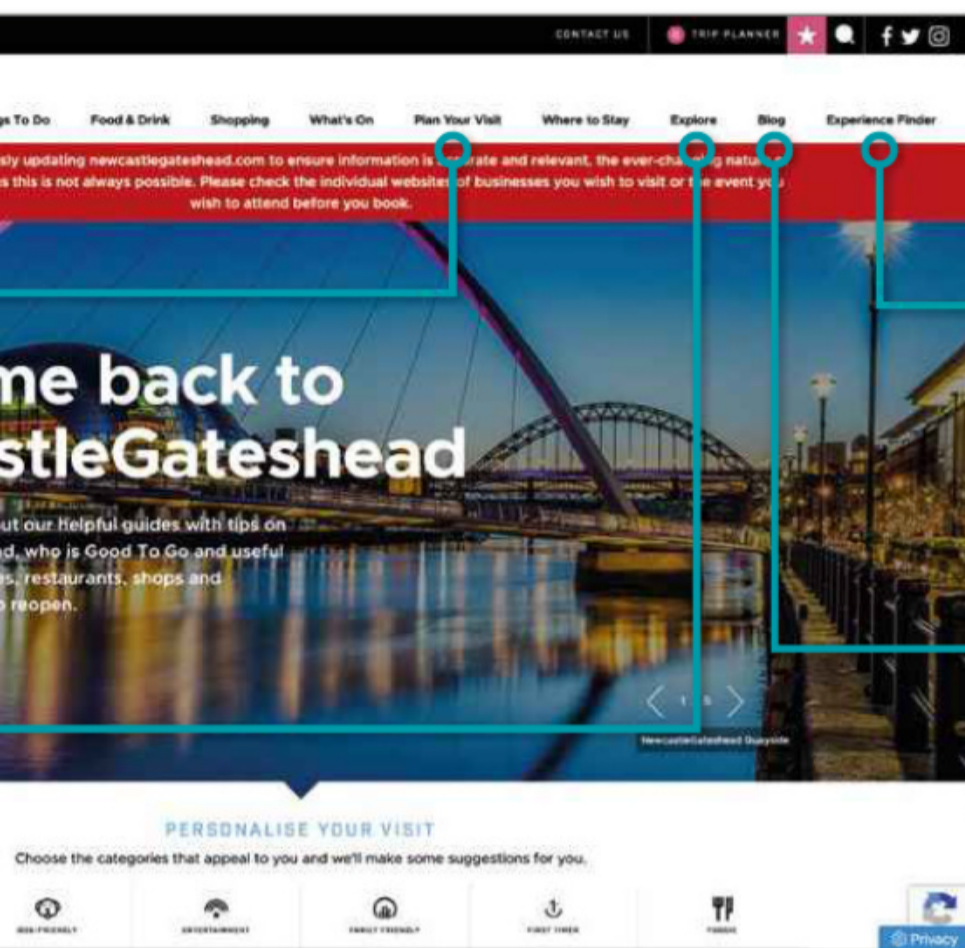
www.whattowatch.com

With so many TV channels and services available, it's hard to know what to watch next, so this site points you in the right direction. It offers news, reviews, photos and trailers of the latest shows, lots of information about streaming platforms and a How To section that helps you get the most out of your TV content and devices. Articles can be listed one after another or placed in a grid format, although the lack of keyword tags and filters means navigation can involve a lot of scrolling. Even so, the daily 'What's on' post is a must and we love the tech-focused Modern Dad videos.

Our rating



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



CREATE AN ITINERARY
Pick your travel priorities, from Instagram-friendly sights to living like a local

DISCOVER MORE
From the best burgers in town to visiting virtually, the blog offers lots of tips and insights



NEW

SOCIETY

Our COVID Voices
ourcovidvoices.co.uk

Each of us has had a different experience of life under lockdown and, at this site, you can learn about what other people have been going through. It focuses on people living with ongoing health needs, tagging stories with keywords such as “anxiety” and “job loss” to make them easier to find. Posting your own story is simple and all contributions remain anonymous, allowing you to share as much or as little as you wish. At the time of writing, the site listed 77 experiences, which will be used by the charity National Voices to influence decision makers in the UK’s health and care services.

Our rating 



RELAUNCH

TRAVEL

Love Loch Lomond
www.lovelochlomond.com

With staycations proving popular this summer, tourism chiefs promoting Loch Lomond have splashed out on a new website that aims to attract as many visitors as possible. A homepage video gives a flavour of what you can expect to see and do, and you can check which businesses are open and plan your visit, thanks to a selection of sample itineraries aimed at couples, adventure seekers, families and foodies. An inspiration-led search tool lets you view various pursuits and see what’s happening (currently, not a lot). Business entries can be saved and a newsletter keeps you updated.

Our rating 



NEW

HEALTH

Your COVID Recovery
www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk

Recovery from COVID-19 can be long and hard, so the NHS has created a support site to help you better manage the wide-ranging effects on your body and mind. It explains the symptoms that you may still be suffering and offers suggestions about what you can do. In each case, the site goes into great depth about what you’re likely to feel and what causes the problem, and this information can be downloaded as a PDF or printed. Given the volume of expert advice, it never threatens to overwhelm, and we love how it also seeks to help family, friends and carers of COVID-19 sufferers.

Our rating  



NEW

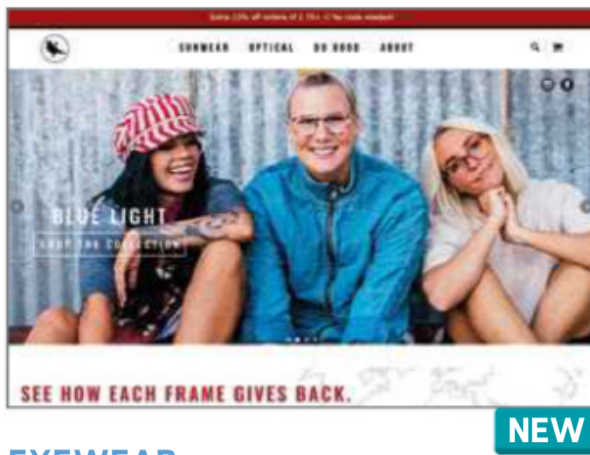
OUTDOOR

Advnture

www.advnture.com

Aimed at people with a passion for outdoor life, Advnture mixes an abundance of kit reviews with news, how-tos and travel inspiration. It's sure to appeal to hikers and campers, and trekking around the site is a doddle thanks to clear navigation and signposts to trending subjects. Although the buying advice earns the site a commission when you make purchases via the links, it doesn't hide this fact. It does, however, include sponsored posts, as you'll only discover when clicking through to read them. Sign up to the newsletter and you'll get a free ebook guide to the world's National Parks.

Our rating



NEW

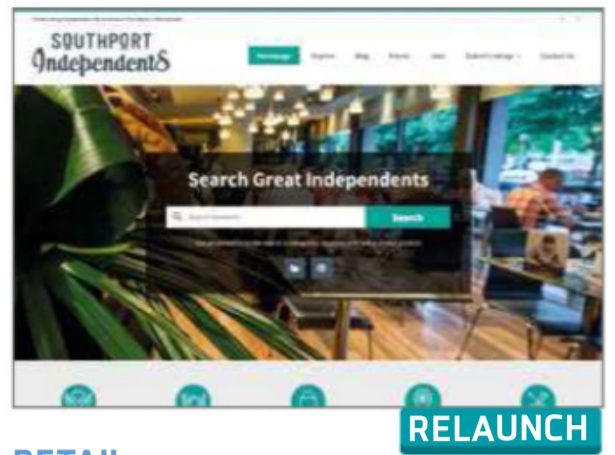
EYEWEAR

Proof Eyewear

www.iwantproof.uk

US eyewear brand Proof has entered the UK market, creating sustainable, handmade specs for independent opticians. Offering frames made from cotton-based acetate, recycled aluminium and hand-polished sustainably-sourced wood, it donates £10 from every frame purchased to supporting worldwide education initiatives as part of a project called Do Good. This is explored in its own section and the site also explains Proof's business model. The slick product pages display plenty of photos and in-depth descriptions, but the blog's low-res images had us reaching for our own spectacles.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

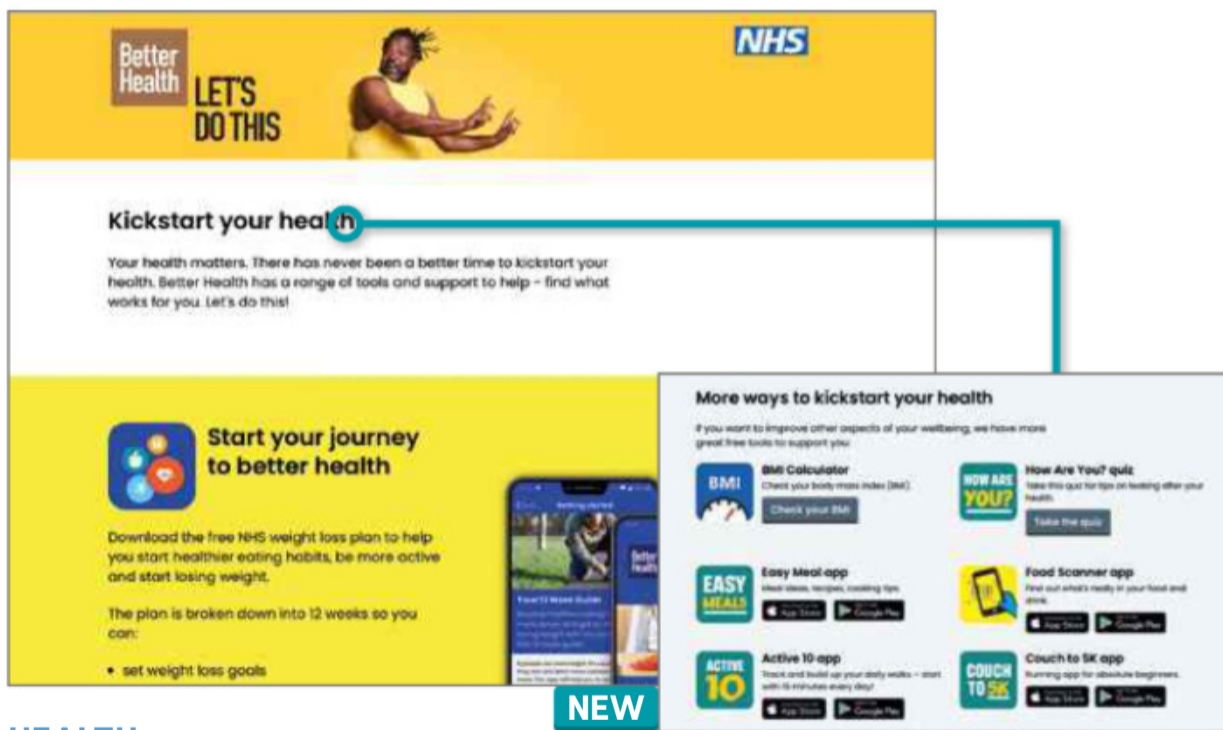
RETAIL

Southport Independents

bit.ly/southport508

Lord Street, the main road in the Merseyside seaside town of Southport, is packed with great shops and is even said to have influenced Parisian architecture. To support independent businesses, this site switches the focus away from chains to cover locally owned shops, health services, eateries and tourist attractions. Use the geolocation tool or peruse the map to discover what's closest to you, and find more details by reading the well-designed listings or clicking each business' own URL. We like the addition of a jobs section, too, particularly as employers can list opportunities for free.

Our rating



NEW

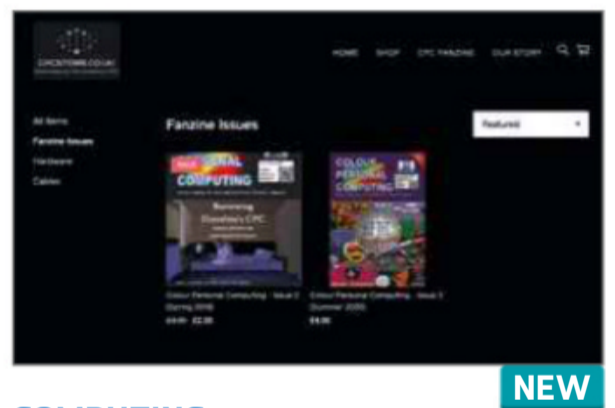
HEALTH

Better Health

bit.ly/better508

Having discovered that being overweight can worsen the symptoms of COVID-19, the government's new Obesity Strategy is seeking to kickstart a nationwide health drive. At its heart is a new NHS Weight Loss Plan app for iOS and Android offering a 12-week program. But the accompanying website also provides a test to see if you're at risk of type 2 diabetes while giving a few little pushes to get you started on your journey towards fitness. These primarily come in the guise of links to various supportive organisations and a selection of free and paid-for online classes. You can also check your BMI and take a quiz to assess your overall health.

Our rating



NEW

COMPUTING

CPC Store

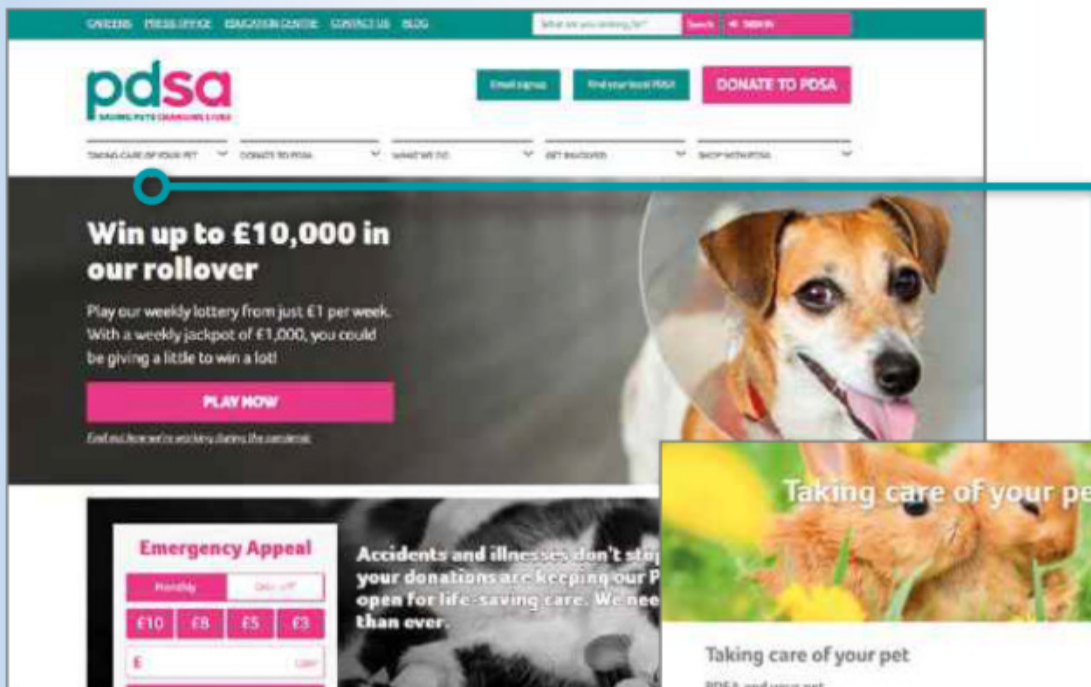
www.cpcstore.co.uk

The Amstrad CPC range was launched 34 years ago but Lord Sugar's 8-bit computer still has many fans. If you're among them, you may be interested to learn of a new fanzine, copies of which can be bought from this new website. As well as the latest, third issue of *Colour Personal Computing*, you'll find free PDF downloads of the first two. And while the site's navigation could be improved, the shop contains modern hardware for the ageing computer including cables, RAM expansion and a floppy emulator. There's even a free game called Shutdown that can be played in an emulator or on the original machine.

Our rating



ESSENTIAL BOOKMARKS THIS ISSUE: Purrfect pet websites



PDSA www.pdsa.org.uk

In the 103 years since animal welfare pioneer Maria Dickin founded the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA), this British organisation has provided more than 100 million free treatments to pets whose owners can't afford vet care. Its website is packed with info on volunteering, donating, qualifying for PDSA treatment and more. The PetWise section (bit.ly/petwise508) has a pet care quiz, health club and even a scheme for budding vets. There's an online store for non-prescription medicines, plus advice on adopting a four-legged friend, assessing health symptoms and giving first aid. PDSA's first aid courses are on ice thanks to COVID-19, but you can download a free guide from bit.ly/firstaid508. Also bookmark the busy blog at bit.ly/vetqa508.



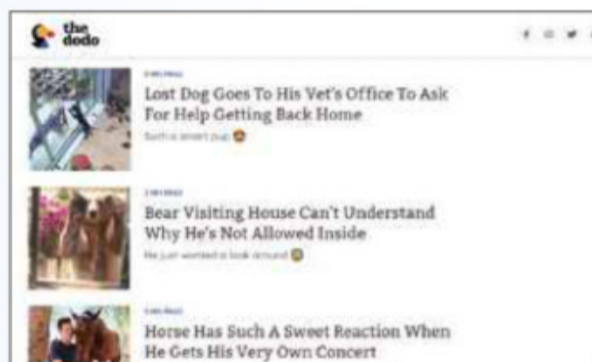
PetsReunited www.petsreunited.com

This isn't a spin-off of the original social network Friends Reunited, but a UK service aimed at reuniting lost pets with their distraught owners. If your cat, dog, rabbit, parrot or other pet goes missing, PetsReunited lets you sign up for free and create a dedicated web page for your pet, which it will approve and put online within 48 hours. Your page is optimised for mobile and search, and displays your pet's photos plus key characteristics, a map of its last known location, one-click social media sharing and entry into a UK-wide 24/7 database. Extra features, including a virtual phone number, cost £5 or £10, which you should be able to reclaim through pet insurance.



PetAdoptionUK www.petadoptionuk.co.uk

This site run by UK pet-microchipping organisation AniLog will help you search dozens of registered animal rehoming charities to find your perfect companion. The interactive 'Find a Charity/Shop' map is annoyingly slow to load, so click 'Find a Pet' instead, then enter your postcode for a list of the animals up for adoption, with photos, contact information and detailed profiles. The service (which is also available through free apps for Android and iOS) keeps profiles up to date, removing rehoused pets within 24 hours of adoption. To offset the sadness of browsing those poor homeless pets, you can visit the wonderful Happy Endings page to see photos and read stories of cats and dogs who've found their "fur-ever" homes through the site.



The Dodo www.thedodo.com

At first glance, this US video collection may seem a little schmaltzy for British tastes. But don't be put off by the captions about happy puppies, sweet bedtime routines and "cat moms". The Dodo's huge selection of three-minute films is life-affirming stuff for any animal lover (especially when you need cheering up), with the pet adoption stories and wildlife rescues – including an elephant stuck in a 25-foot well – that are guaranteed to restore your faith in human nature. You can view the videos full-screen at various resolutions, and right-click to copy a link. Icons at the top of the page take you to The Dodo's YouTube channel, Twitter feed and Facebook page, while the menu lets you explore all the video categories on offer.



Vetscriptions www.vetscriptions.co.uk

Even basic medicines such as flea treatment can cost over £20 per month from the vet. So Croydon-based Vetscriptions is a must for pet owners and smallholders who want tip-top care on a tight budget. The vet-run site sources from the same suppliers as your local vet, but keeps prices around two-thirds lower by operating online only, although delivery costs around £5. If you're buying prescription meds, you'll first need a paid-for script from your vet, but you'll still save money. A Prescriptions FAQ (bit.ly/vetfaq508) and chat tool are on hand to dispense advice. Check out the site's blog for regular articles by vets.

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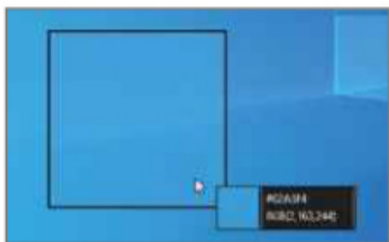
Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Use the new colour picker in PowerToys

It's useful to have a colour picker to hand because if you come across a colour on your screen that you like, you can instantly copy it to use on your own



website. Microsoft's PowerToys (bit.ly/ptoy508) has just added one

– if you have the tool installed and updated, you can summon it by pressing Windows+Shift+C. Use your mouse scroll to zoom.

See Best Free Software on page 29 for more details.

Learn CSS box alignment

CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) takes the hard work out of controlling how your website is arranged, but you need to learn



the correct codes to get the layout you want.

Ahmad Shadeed's Learn Box Alignment (bit.ly/learnbox508) is a brilliant learning aid that helps you visualise the code via an analogy that uses plates on a restaurant table, so you can master layouts in no time.

Deal of the Fortnight

Names.co.uk (names.co.uk) is offering 40% off selected hosting packages. Its Starter package is down to £4.94 per month, with WordPress hosting just £5.93 per month.

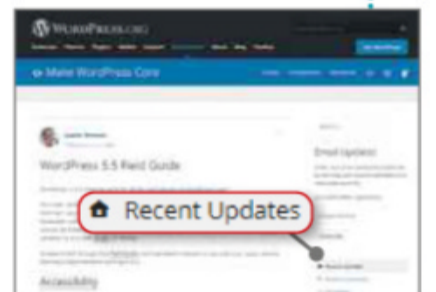
Web-building Helpdesk

Q My WordPress website runs itself without needing much input, except that it always seems to need loads of plugins and themes updating. How often should I go in and do this?

Gavin Rice, via email

A Updates are annoying but necessary. However, you only need to have the theme you're currently using (and perhaps its parent, if you're using a child theme) installed. Anything else can and should be removed. Plugins are more of a problem and need constantly updating. The good news is that WordPress 5.5, which will probably be available by the time you read this, should have the option of automatically updating your plugins.

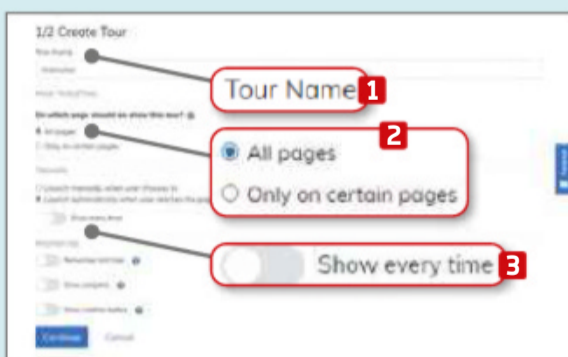
Andy Shaw, Technical & Reviews Editor



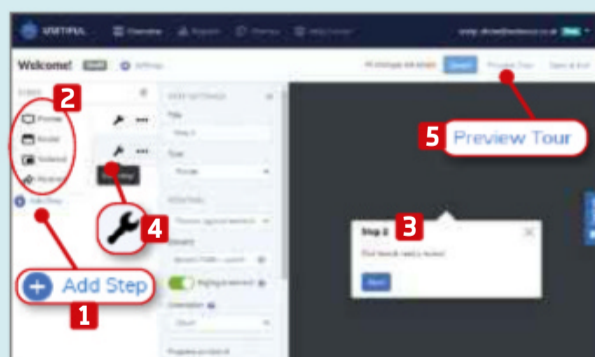
MINI WORKSHOP | Give a guided tour of your website

Useful: www.usetiful.com | 10 mins | Chrome

Websites should be intuitive and easy to explore but you may sometimes want to guide visitors through the basics. Usetiful lets you provide new visitors with a short guided tour for free



1 Before you start, install the Chrome extension from bit.ly/use508 – it's not essential but makes life easier and you'll need it in Step 3. From the Tours screen, click the Add Tour button. Name your tour **1** and choose whether it's limited to a single page, **2** when it should appear, **3** and any option you require from the Properties section.



2 Click Continue. Use the Add Step link **1** to add as many steps as you like to the process. A menu pops up so you can choose the shape. **2** You can edit the text on a step by clicking it and typing. **3** Click the step's spanner icon **4** to open its settings. Click Preview Tour. **5** Next, type your site's address and click 'Open page'.



3 With the Chrome extension installed, click 'Select element'. **1** Hover around the page to find the thing you want a step to point to. **2** Click it and its name is copied to the clipboard. Go back to the step on Usetiful and paste the name you copied into the Element box. Click Save & Exit. Publish and add the required code to your site.



What To Watch Online

Pick of the fortnight



Watch new *Thunderbirds* on BritBox – and other classics

From 20 August

Three new episodes of *Thunderbirds*, crowdfunded through Kickstarter five years ago to mark the 50th anniversary of Gerry Anderson's cult TV show, are coming to BritBox on 20 August.

The mini-series, known as *Thunderbirds: 1965*, is based on three original 1960s voice recordings and uses handmade sets, puppets and models matching the originals. The episodes premiered at the BFI in 2016 following the Kickstarter campaign (bit.ly/thunderkick508), but BritBox is first to stream them for the public.

BritBox also adds numerous classic box sets on the same day, including all 32 episodes of the original 1965 *Thunderbirds* and all of Anderson's *Captain Scarlet & The Mysterons* and *Space 1999*. Patrick McGoochan's *The Prisoner*; the original 1969 *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)*; British sci-fi *UFO*; *Sapphire & Steel*; and 2016's Douglas Adams adaptation *Dirk Gently* arrive in full, too.

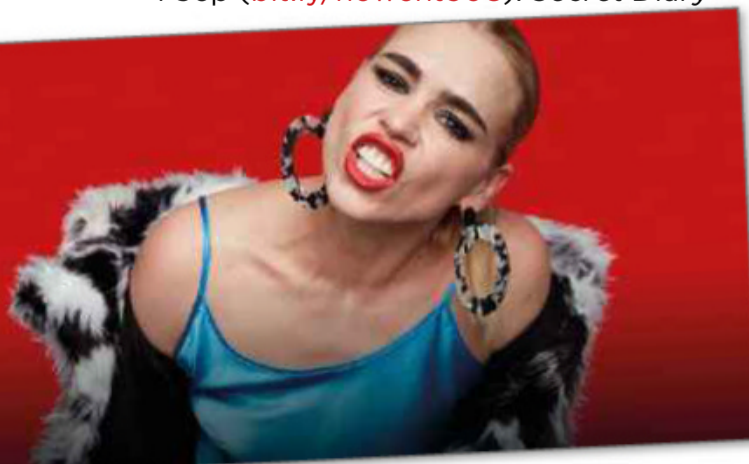
More recent shows coming to BritBox include ITV's *The Masked Singer* and the BBC's medical sitcom *Quacks*, both available from 27 August, with all-new *Spitting Image* to follow. A subscription costs £5.99 per month after a 30-day trial (www.britbox.co.uk).

Now Watch Billie Piper in phone-hack drama *I Hate Suzie*

From 27 August

Billie Piper reunites with *Secret Diary of a Call Girl* writer Lucy Prebble for this new Sky Original, coming to Now TV as an eight-episode box set. Piper plays Suzie Pickles, a has-been celebrity whose life unravels when her phone is hacked and a dodgy photo is made public. Judging by Sky's official trailer (bit.ly/suzie508), this decidedly adult show is not one to watch with your *Doctor Who*-loving grandkids!

Watch *I Hate Suzie* with a Now TV Entertainment Pass, whose price goes up from £8.99 to £9.99 per month on 1 Sep (bit.ly/nowent508). *Secret Diary*



of a Call Girl is on Amazon Prime Video at bit.ly/secret508.

N Watch the *Karate Kid* return in *Cobra Kai*

From 28 August

Thirty-six years after Daniel (Ralph Macchio) took on Johnny (William Zabka) in 1984's *The Karate Kid*, they're back – older and wiser but still bitter rivals, in action show *Cobra Kai*.

The show began life as a YouTube Original in 2018, streaming exclusively on YouTube Premium, where its first two seasons received great reviews from fans and critics. Netflix has snapped it up and is now producing a third season, again with Macchio, Zabka and Martin Kove as sensei John Kreese. Meanwhile, all 20 episodes of the first two seasons come to Netflix on 28 August at bit.ly/cobra508; you can



watch the trailers for Season 1 at bit.ly/cobra1508 and Season 2 at bit.ly/cobra2508.

prime video Fight for truth and justice with DC's *Stargirl*

From 21 August

DC's newest superhero is teenager Courtney Whitmore (Brec Bassinger), alias star-spangled Justice Society of America recruit Stargirl. A new sister show to *Doom Patrol*, *Stargirl* also stars Luke Wilson, Henry Thomas (*ET*'s Elliott) and Lou Ferrigno Jr (son of TV's original *Hulk*). Watch DC's official Season 1 trailer at bit.ly/stargirl508, then stream all 13 episodes on-demand via Amazon Prime Video from 21 August.



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



Now Try new sporting challenges in *A League of Their Own*

From 14 August

Sky's sporting comedy quiz returns for Series 15, this time without James Corden, who's stuck in the US thanks to travel restrictions. Romesh Ranganathan hosts instead, though team captains Jamie Redknapp and Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff will each helm an episode, and guests include Andy Murray, Anthony Joshua and swimmer Adam Peaty. Watch new weekly episodes via Now TV at bit.ly/league508.

N Watch eight new episodes of *Lucifer*

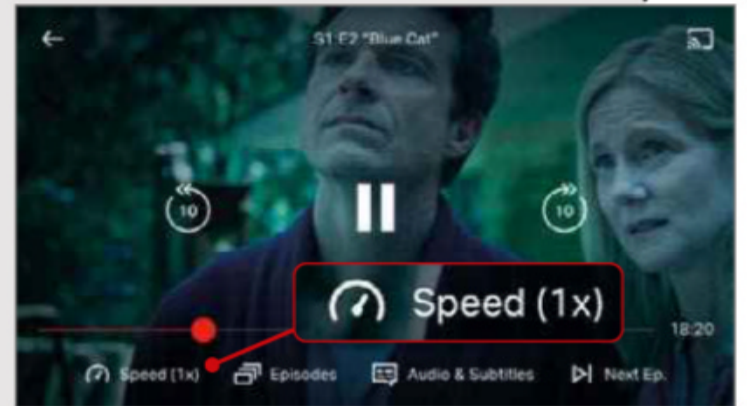


From 21 August Tom Ellis is back as the cop consultant who switched boring old Hell for diabolical LA, in eight new episodes of this devilishly addictive show. Season 5 Part 2 (eight more episodes)

Control Netflix playback speed

You can now speed up or slow down Netflix films or shows at the tap of a button, making it easier to whiz through to your favourite scene, or to follow the action and subtitles more easily.

The new Speed option - which lets you watch any item at 0.5x (half as fast), 0.75x, 1.25x or 1.5x (one-and-a-half times faster) - is only available in Netflix's Android app at the time of writing, and arrives next on iOS and the website. TV apps will have to wait longer. The button isn't automatically visible when you play a film or show; instead, you have to opt in to see it each time you watch something new.



Hollywood is not happy about it. "Distributors don't get to change the way the content is presented," tweeted director Judd Apatow, when the feature was first mooted (bit.ly/judd508). But VHS, DVD, Blu-ray and digital video recorders all give viewers plenty of playback speed control, so filmmakers shouldn't be surprised to see it arrive on Netflix.

arrives soon, and Season 6 is already in production.

Lucifer wasn't always such a juggernaut. Original network Fox cancelled it after three seasons (now on Amazon Prime Video at bit.ly/luciferam508), then Netflix bought the rights following the #SaveLucifer fan campaign. Watch Season 4 and Season 5 Part 1, plus the latest trailer for free, via Netflix at bit.ly/lucifer508.

N Live forever with *Biohackers*

From 20 August

Following the success of *Dark* comes another tense German Netflix drama, this

time featuring bright young medical students attempting to 'biohack' their bodies to achieve the longest possible lifespan. Find out how far they're willing to go when all six episodes of *Biohackers* arrive on 20 August at bit.ly/biohackers508, where you can watch the trailer for free.



In case you missed it...

All four seasons of *Heroes* are now on BBC iPlayer to stream on-demand as a



box set, at bit.ly/heroes508. The popular sci-fi drama, which

originally aired on BBC2 from 2006 to 2010, follows a scattered group of ordinary people (played by Hayden Panettiere,

Zachary Quinto and others) who discover they have superhuman abilities.

Watch *Heroes*' original 2006 trailer at bit.ly/trailer508.

Other recent iPlayer arrivals include Cate Blanchett in mini-series *Mrs America* (bit.ly/mrsamerica508) and all four series of *Cutting It*, which originally ran from 2002 to 2005 (bit.ly/cutting508).

Product Test

We test and compare the latest products

Moto G 5G Plus

Motorola's first affordable 5G phone has a lot going for it, even beyond its ability to connect to the next generation of mobile networks

If you're lucky enough to live in one of the few 5G hotspots dotted around the UK (check at 5g.co.uk/coverage) or you know that 5G is coming to your area soon, it's worth considering whether your next phone should be 5G-compatible. The speed benefits speak for themselves, with even conservative estimates suggesting a ten-fold increase in real-world network speed.

Currently, only a handful of smartphones can access these faster mobile data speeds and they tend to be flagship devices that cost the best part of £1,000. At least, that was the case until Motorola launched this affordable alternative.

Design and build

The design of the 5G Plus is a bit of a departure from the rest of Moto's budget models. It has a square camera housing at the back (similar to the iPhone 11) and an oblong fingerprint reader – which doubles as the power button – on the phone's right edge.

Motorola has opted to include a 3.5mm headphone socket, which sits next to the solitary speaker grille on the bottom, alongside the USB-C charging port (which supports 20W charging).

It's available in two colours: Surfing Blue and Mystic Lilac.

The case is still plastic, however, with relatively thick bezels around all four sides of its gigantic screen, and is only "water repellent". But the G 5G Plus still feels like a step up from the rest of Moto's budget-friendly lineup.

Screen and processor

Not only is this the first 5G-equipped Moto G phone, but it's also the first with a silky-smooth 90Hz screen. It has support for HDR playback and an aspect ratio of 21:9, and measures 6.7in across the diagonal with a resolution of 2,520 x 1,080 pixels. There's no notch in the screen, but two small holes in the top-left corner accommodate the two selfie cameras.

As usual with Moto phones, there are three display modes to choose from. We found the "Natural" setting provided the best colour accuracy in our tests. With a measured sRGB colour coverage of 93%, the screen barely places a foot wrong. For the price, you

can't do better than this.

The phone's contrast is slightly dull, with a recorded contrast ratio of 1,265:1, though it more than makes up for this with a high peak brightness of 575cd/m² (candles per square metre) with the auto-brightness setting engaged.

The phone uses a 2.3GHz

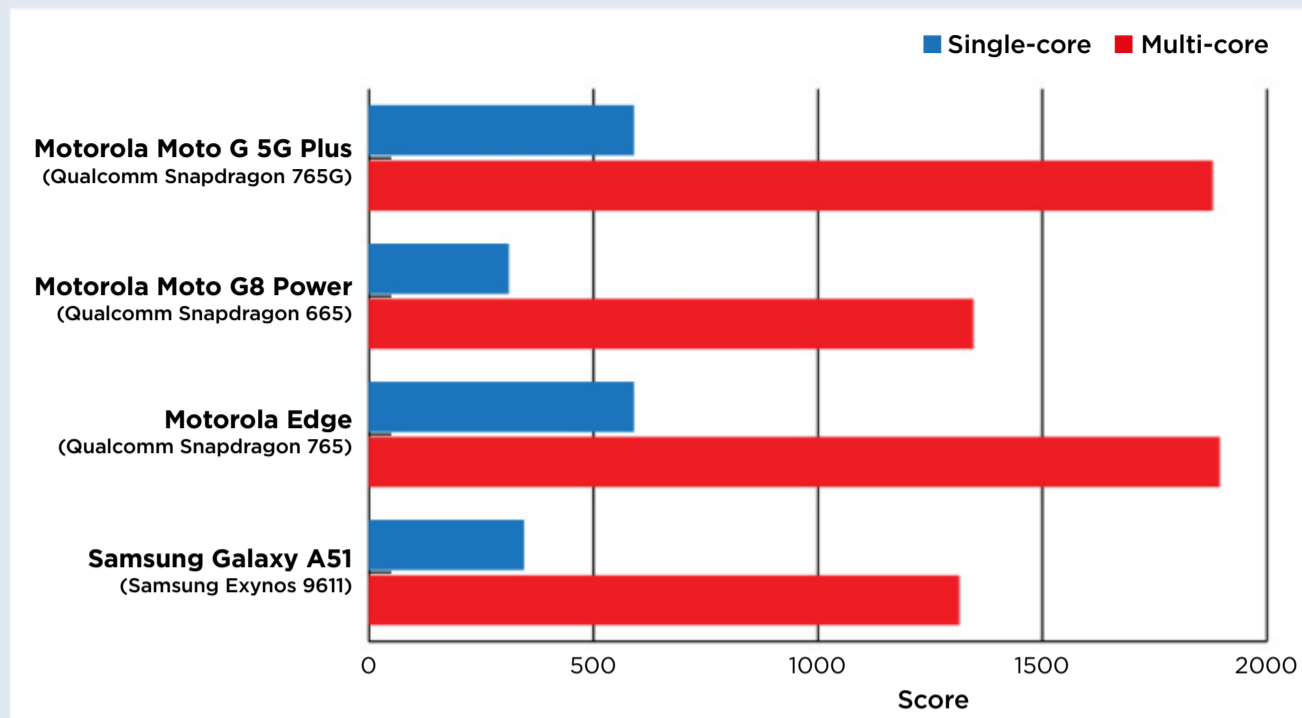
octa-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 765 processor to access the 5G network. Its integrated 5G modem supports all sub-6GHz frequencies, so you should be able to connect to any 5G network in the UK, provided you're in an area with coverage.

This superlative processor also means the 5G Plus performs miles faster than any phone of this price has a right to, as we found out in our speed tests. Not only is it the fastest budget Moto by a considerable margin but its barnstorming performance



“ The 5G Plus performs faster than any phone of this price has a right to – it's the fastest budget Moto by quite a margin ”

CPU performance, Geekbench 5



beats the more expensive Galaxy A51 in the Geekbench 5 CPU benchmark and the GFXBench gaming test. It's not too far off some mid-range handsets that cost almost double the price.

Cameras, storage and battery life

The phone's four rear cameras include a 48-megapixels camera (though it captures 12-megapixels images by default), a 118-degree 8-megapixels wide-angle camera, a 5-megapixels macro lens with a 2cm focus distance and a 2-megapixels depth-sensing unit. The two selfie cameras on the front consist of a standard 16-megapixels camera and an 8-megapixels wide-angle camera.

In our tests, the cameras picked up plenty of detail, with natural, neutral colours and a well-balanced auto-

exposure. The images are a touch over-processed, but not distractingly so, and we found its portrait mode to be especially good. The macro sensor – while probably only of interest as a novelty – does its job well.

As usual, there's a handful of extra shooting modes to choose from. The Night Vision setting boosts shadows and increases dynamic range, and the new long-exposure mode lets you open the shutter for up to 90 seconds, for fancy-looking motion-blur and light trails. Auto smile capture makes a welcome return, as does shot optimisation, which helpfully suggests shooting



modes or camera settings based on the scene. Video is shot at up to 4K resolution, with a 60fps (frames per second) mode if you drop the resolution to Full HD.

The phone's storage is expandable by up to 1TB via microSD and comes with a massive 5,000mAh battery, which lasted 22 hours and 15 minutes in our video rundown test. That's very good indeed.

In the UK, the entry-level model (64GB of storage and 4GB of memory) costs £299, and can be picked up at Argos, John Lewis, EE and O2. A 128GB variant with 6GB of memory is also available, which is exclusive to Vodafone and costs £349.

OUR VERDICT



The Moto G 5G Plus is a splendid addition to the Moto G lineup, and represents a major turning point when it comes to 5G accessibility in the UK. If you live or work in an area with reliable 5G coverage, and you'd like to benefit from its faster speeds while picking up the cheapest

handset possible, then this smartphone will make you very happy.

Even if you aren't fussed about 5G, the Moto G 5G Plus is a phenomenal phone. It's stupendously fast for the price, has a large, colour-accurate screen and comes with a long-lasting battery and six

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

decent cameras.

All things considered, the Moto G 5G Plus is the best smartphone you can buy for £300.

PRODUCT INFO

Motorola Moto G 5G Plus

Price: from £299.99
Buy from John Lewis:
bit.ly/motoj1508

SPECIFICATIONS

- Octa-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 765 processor
- 4GB or 6GB of memory
- 6.7in 2,520 x 1,080 pixels IPS display
- 64GB or 128GB of storage space, expandable with microSD
- 5,000mAh battery
- 802.11ac Wi-Fi
- 5G and 4G compatible
- Android 10
- 168 x 74 x 9mm
- 207g

FOR

- ✓ The cheapest 5G smartphone
- ✓ Great performance for the price
- ✓ Large, colour-accurate 90Hz screen

AGAINST

- ✗ Cheap build
- ✗ Splashproof, not waterproof

SIMILAR WITHOUT 5G

Motorola Moto G8 Power, £209.99
bit.ly/mogpower508



SAMSUNG'S ALTERNATIVE

Samsung Galaxy A51, £429
bit.ly/samsung508



Eufy Video Doorbell (Battery-Powered)

Effective at detecting visitors, easy to install and free to run, the Eufy is a brilliant wireless doorbell

There are plenty of big-name smart doorbells around these days, from household names such as Nest and Ring. Eufy is a newcomer but, in lots of ways, it's our favourite so far.

The doorbell itself is a standard rectangular block with the camera at the top and the bell button at the bottom. It's battery powered, which makes it a doddle to set up, and doesn't need connecting to the mains (though you can connect it if you already have wires or fancy getting an electrician in, and don't want the twice-a-year job of recharging your doorbell).

After it's screwed into place, you need to connect the HomeBase to your router

via Ethernet. This acts as your doorbell chime and has 16GB of internal storage, where it stores motion-triggered video clips. This is a huge bonus because rival doorbells require online subscriptions to store videos online, which typically cost around £25 per year.

Next, you install the Eufy Security App on your phone, sign up for a Eufy account and follow the onscreen instructions to pair the HomeBase with the doorbell unit. It's a beautifully simple procedure.

Features

Image quality is excellent, with a resolution of 2,560 x 1,920 pixels, which is higher than the Ring Video Doorbell 3 and the Nest Hello. Eufy's video-processing software ensures that you can see visitors' faces clearly, even when the sun is behind them. The camera also has night vision, which is enabled automatically as it's needed.

There's no face recognition but the doorbell has human detection, which should stop it recording if animals trigger its movement sensor. You can also define activity zones to prevent it from recording and notifying you just because someone has walked past the end of your drive, and lets you tweak the sensitivity of motion detection as a whole. We found the doorbell's default settings worked well, only triggering recordings when visitors approached the front door.

You can use the Eufy app to talk to anyone who rings the



bell, even when you're out. This worked reasonably well, though there was a significant delay between speaking and the voice coming through at the other end.

Volume

One weakness is that the volume of the chime in the HomeBase box isn't all that loud, so if you're upstairs and

the HomeBase is downstairs, you may struggle to hear it. It rings on your phone (and any other device you install the app on) and can also be set up to ring any Amazon Echo speakers (but not Google's). If you have a screen-based Echo Show or Google Home device, you can ask it to display the live stream from the camera.

PRODUCT INFO

Eufy Video Doorbell (Battery-Powered)

Price: £199.99

Buy from Eufy:
bit.ly/doorbell508

SPECIFICATIONS

- 2k resolution 2,560 x 1,920 pixels camera
- 180-day battery life
- AES-256 data encryption
- 16GB of storage space
- IP65 weatherproof

FOR

- ✓ Easy to install
- ✓ Battery or mains powered
- ✓ Free to run

AGAINST

- ✗ Chime is too quiet

OUR VERDICT



The Eufy doorbell is easy to install yourself, its image quality is excellent and it works very effectively without the need to add a costly cloud subscription. It would be the perfect doorbell if it worked with your existing mains chime and had facial recognition.

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

However, the doorbell's simplicity, effectiveness and low cost over time make it a fantastic option.



Fully equipped with front and rear painted guards, rear pannier rack as well as front and rear lights

Uses Shimano STEPS E6100 drive unit with an internal Darfon 504WH battery

Fully integrated utility focused E-bike

Ideal daily commute bike to replace reliance on the car

Win a Ridgeback Advance e-bike worth £3,499.99.

To celebrate the launch of Cycling Electric, the new magazine all about e-bikes, we are partnering with Freewheel to bring you the chance to win a Ridgeback Advance.* Just answer the following question: What e-bike drive system does the Ridgeback Advance use?

Enter at cyclist.co.uk/e-bikes-competition

The competition prize is courtesy of Freewheel.co.uk

Freewheel, simply put is your local bike shop online. There's nothing quite like the knowledge, reliability and customer experience of a great local bike shop. In an age where it's getting harder to run a bricks and mortar store, Freewheel is the platform that lets shops thrive while giving you the benefits of online shopping. When you shop on Freewheel, you can order a product and have it delivered to an extensive network of authorised shops, where you can make the most of the expertise of the staff on collection. Each purchase benefits your local store via a commission programme. You can find your local Freewheel store at freewheel.co.uk/stores

*Visit the Cyclist website for the full list of terms and conditions.



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HARDWARE, SOFTWARE & SERVICES

TABLET

Apple iPad 10.2in

£349 from bit.ly/ipad507

Tested: Issue 507



The superb quality of the 10.2in iPad makes it easily the best tablet available for the price. It's wonderfully slim and light, has an excellent screen and easily connects to external drives and (for another £159) Apple's Smart Keyboard.

KEY SPECS

Quad-core 2.34GHz Apple A10 Fusion processor ■ 10.2in IPS screen, 2,160 x 1,620-pixels resolution ■ 1.2-megapixels front camera, 8-megapixels rear ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ 32GB storage ■ 3GB RAM ■ 251 x 174 x 7.5mm ■ 484g ■ 1-year return-to-base

INKJET PRINTER

Canon Pixma TS8350

£162 from bit.ly/canonts505

Tested: Issue 505



The Canon Pixma TS8350 is hard to beat for all-round print, scan and copy quality, producing rich, crisp text and precise photo prints. The generous touchscreen makes it easy to use and it performs well as a standalone device.

KEY SPECS

Thermal inkjet printer ■ 4,800 x 1,200dpi print resolution ■ 2,400 x 4,800dpi scan resolution ■ 10.8cm colour touchscreen ■ Double-sided printing ■ 200-sheet input ■ 373 x 319 x 141mm ■ 6.6kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

MESH WI-FI SYSTEM

Netgear Orbi RBK50

£299.99 from bit.ly/orbi503

Tested: Issue 503



The Orbi is a brilliant mesh Wi-Fi package. It's powerful, the units look good and it has a well-designed interface. It's pricey, particularly with the add-ons, but we think it's worth it.

KEY SPECS

Two nodes ■ Tri-band 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ 2 x 2 MIMO system ■ 4 Ethernet ports ■ Router mode ■ WPS ■ Guest network ■ Parental controls ■ Alexa and Google Assistant voice control ■ 203 x 162 x 79mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

EXTERNAL SSD

SanDisk Extreme Pro 500GB

£131.99 from bit.ly/sandisk501

Tested: Issue 501



Robust, fast and reliable, the SanDisk Extreme Pro 500GB outperformed every other SSD in our tests. You pay a bit more per GB but, if you can afford the best, then why settle for less?

KEY SPECS

465GB formatted capacity ■ 28p per usable gigabyte ■ Also available in 1TB and 2TB capacities ■ USB Type-C connection ■ 96 x 50 x 9mm ■ 78g ■ Three-years return-to-base warranty ■ Sturdy and attractive design

FITNESS WATCH

Xiaomi Mi Smart Band 4

£25.98 from bit.ly/xiaomi499

Tested: Issue 499



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

KEY SPECS

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

INTERNET SECURITY SUITE

Bitdefender Internet Security 2020

£14.99 (1 year, 3 devices) from bit.ly/bitdef497

Tested: Issue 497



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

KEY SPECS

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

All prices correct at time of review

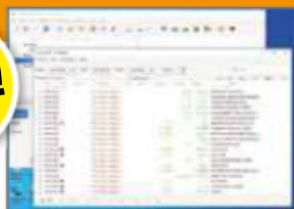
Gold Award winners

The best from our software tests

BANKING SOFTWARE

HomeBank

NEW!



Free from homebank.free.fr

Tested: Issue 507

Personal banking software HomeBank gets the balance just right, making it easy to import your account information, and offering clear, useful tools to help you manage your budgets.

OCR SOFTWARE

SimpleOCR

Free from www.simpleocr.com

Tested: Issue 506

SimpleOCR does a brilliant job of extracting text from scanned documents and imported photos. Its spellcheck function is the stand-out feature.



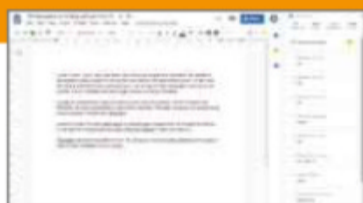
GRAMMAR CHECKER

Grammarly

Free from www.grammarly.com

Tested: Issue 505

Grammarly is a thorough, effective way to check and correct your writing for spelling and grammatical errors. It's a capable and sophisticated language-analysis tool.



ENCRYPTION TOOL

Cryptomator

Free from cryptomator.org

Tested: Issue 504

Cryptomator's clean, modern interface and cross-platform support makes file encryption incredibly easy. Its security extends to cloud services and it has no hidden costs.



ONLINE IMAGE EDITOR

Photopea

Free from www.photopea.com

Tested: Issue 503

Photopea is a stunning photo-editing suite that has all the tools of Photoshop with none of the cost. It's worth taking the time to learn its ways to reap its many rewards.



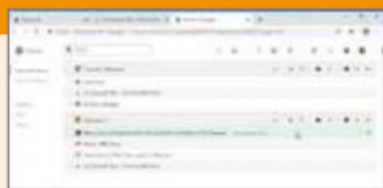
CHROME TAB MANAGER

Cluster

Free from bit.ly/cluster502

Tested: Issue 502

Cluster pulls all your Chrome tabs together in one place and offers lots of useful features, such as saving your browsing sessions for later and pausing inactive tabs to save memory.



WebUser

BACK ISSUES DISC 2019



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

For more information, visit bit.ly/webuser2019 or search for 'webuser disc'

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



Best Free Software

RETRO OPERATING SYSTEM

Mac OS 8

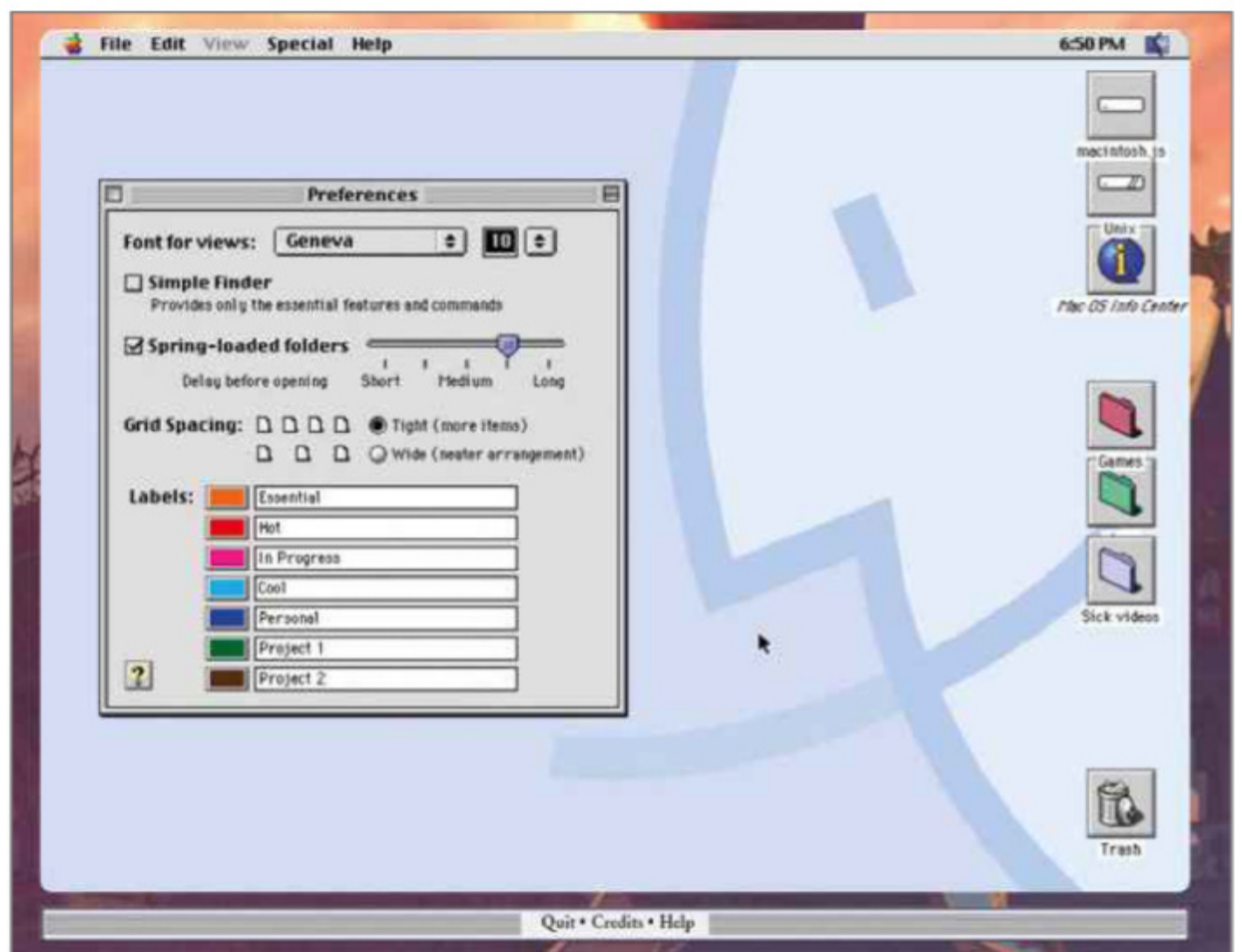
bit.ly/macOS508

Min requirements: Windows 10, macOS or Linux

File size: 239MB

A couple of years ago, developer Felix Rieseberg released Windows 95 as an app that runs on any modern computer (bit.ly/win95-508). Since then he has updated the software, making it faster and more useful, and even adding playable versions of classic games such as Doom and Wolfenstein 3D.

For his next project, Rieseberg has switched from Microsoft to Apple, and turned Mac OS 8 into a JavaScript-based app for Windows, macOS and Linux. Mac OS 8 is from roughly the same era as Windows 95 - Apple launched it in July 1997 as the follow up to its System 7 operating system, which was released six years earlier.



Rieseberg's virtual machine emulates a 1991 Macintosh Quadra 900 with a Motorola processor, and the program comes with a number of apps and games pulled from a *MacWorld* cover CD dating back to 1997. The bundled software includes demos of Photoshop 3, Premiere 4, Illustrator 5.5, StuffIt Expander, Apple Web Page Construction Kit, Oregon Trail, Duke Nukem 3D and Civilization II.

Windows users can install Mac OS 8 or run it as a standalone app in 32-bit or 64-bit versions. Mac users have only a standalone version, while Linux users can choose between installer releases for Debian and Red Hat.

Rieseberg's Mac OS 8 project is a fascinating trip down memory lane, whether you're revisiting the operating system after two decades or trying it out for the very first time.



MINI WORKSHOP | Explore the main features in Mac OS 8



1 When you run the Mac OS 8 software, it appears in a window in the centre of the screen. You can't move the window around or resize it, but you can use the bar at the bottom to get help **1** or quit the app when you're finished. **2** While the app is running, you can interact with the OS as you would normally.



2 Mac OS 8 doesn't trap your cursor, so it's easy to move from the app to your desktop and back. Click the Apple icon **1** in the top-left corner to open the menu. From here you can access a number of programs and features. **2** Use the View menu **3** to customise the OS. Click the hard drive icon **4** to explore its contents.



3 Open the Games **1** and Apps **2** folders to explore the bundled demos, and run any that take your fancy. Photoshop opens as a number of separate panels, **3** which may seem weird if you're not used to it. Click the eye **4** in the top-right corner to see your running programs. **5**

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



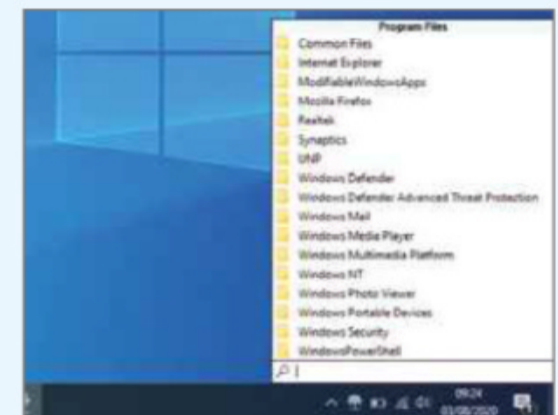
New Windows 10 App

SystemTrayMenu

bit.ly/stm508

File size: 142.3MB

This tool offers an alternative to Windows 10's Start menu, giving you quick access to files, folders and shortcuts from the system tray instead. To use it, you first need to add folders whose contents you want to appear in the program's menu. You can summon the menu in several ways, including a keyboard shortcut, and use the integrated search function to locate files.



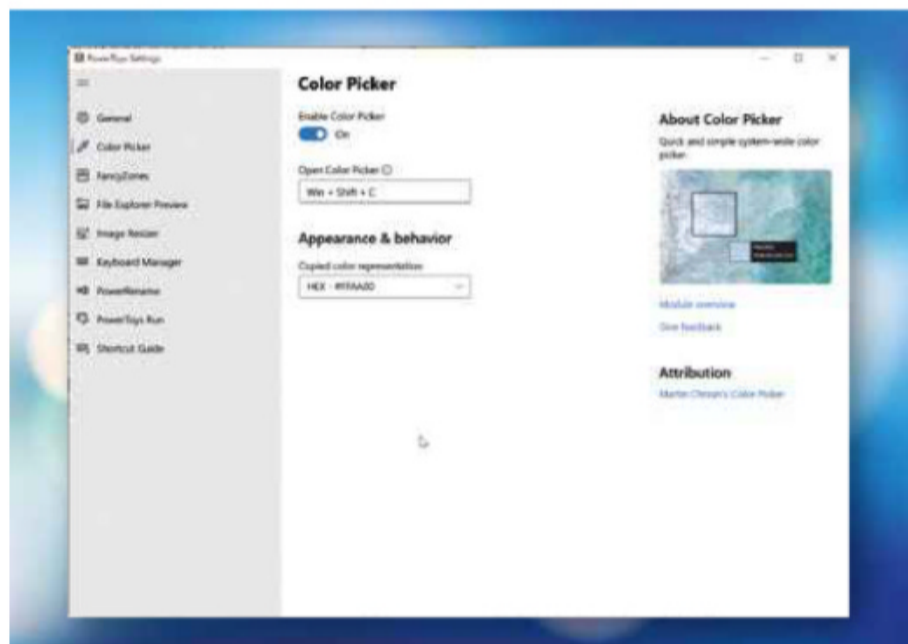
DVD RIPPER

WonderFox DVD Ripper Speedy 15

bit.ly/dvdripper508

Min requirements: Windows 7/8/10 **File size:** 44.7MB

The free DVD Ripper Speedy lets you create backups of your DVDs. Select a source (DVD Disc, ISO Image or DVD Folder) and it automatically identifies the movie file. You can perform basic edits, such as adding or removing subtitles and cropping, clipping and applying effects, and adjust the quality of the exported video. This new version is quicker and fixes several problems. Note that the free tool only saves files in MPEG format – the unlimited Pro version costs \$29.95 (£22.64).



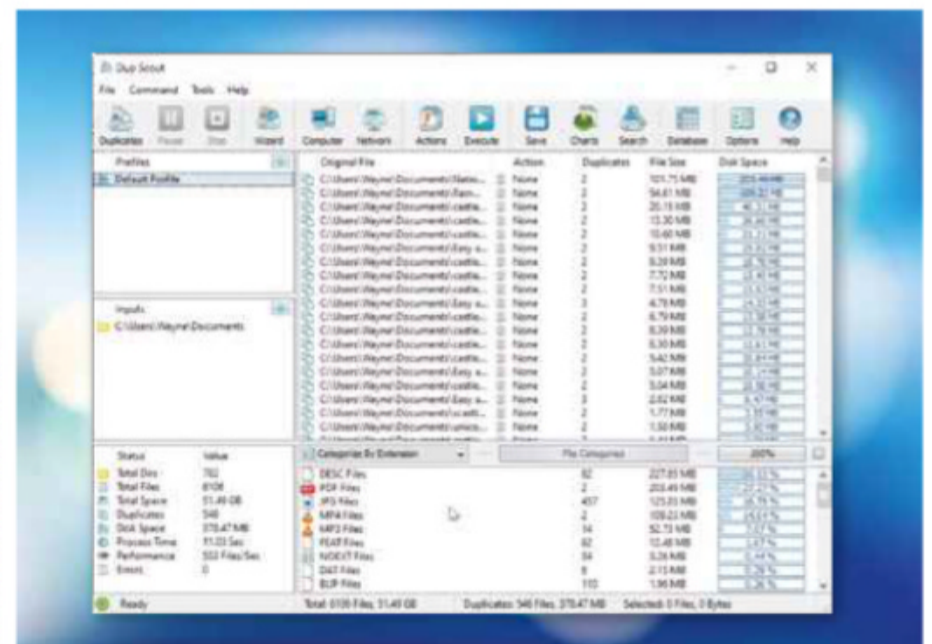
SYSTEM TOOLS

PowerToys v0.20

bit.ly/ptools508

Min requirements: Windows 10 **File size:** 20.5MB

PowerToys are a selection of useful utilities for tweaking Windows. Microsoft originally introduced them in the days of Windows 95 and XP, but brought them back last year for Windows 10. This latest update comes with a new Colour Picker tool, which lets you grab RGB and hex colour values from any part of the screen. It also adds SVG icon rendering to File Explorer and improves the Keyboard Manager and FancyZones tools.



DUPLICATE FILE FINDER

DupScout 13

www.dupscout.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8/10 **File size:** 6.6MB

DupScout is an advanced file finder that can track down and delete duplicates on your local drives and over a network. A handy wizard guides you through the process of finding all duplicate files, only certain types (such as images, audio files, documents or backups), those created within a certain time period, or files of a particular size. The Duplicate Files Set dialog has been redesigned in DupScout 13, and the tool can now display items on a per-user basis.

APP REMOVER

Bloatbox

bit.ly/bbox508

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 16KB

Windows 10 comes with a lot of bundled and sponsored apps, many of which you'll probably never use. Bloatbox is a tiny free tool that lets you remove this 'bloatware' quickly, freeing up disk space. Although you could perform the same task using Windows PowerShell, Bloatbox is much easier to use. Simply select any apps you don't want from the 'My apps' column on the left, add them to the 'Remove apps' column on the right and click Uninstall. If you're not sure what to remove, click the Start Fresh link and Bloatbox copies the most egregious examples of bloatware to the 'Remove apps' column for you.

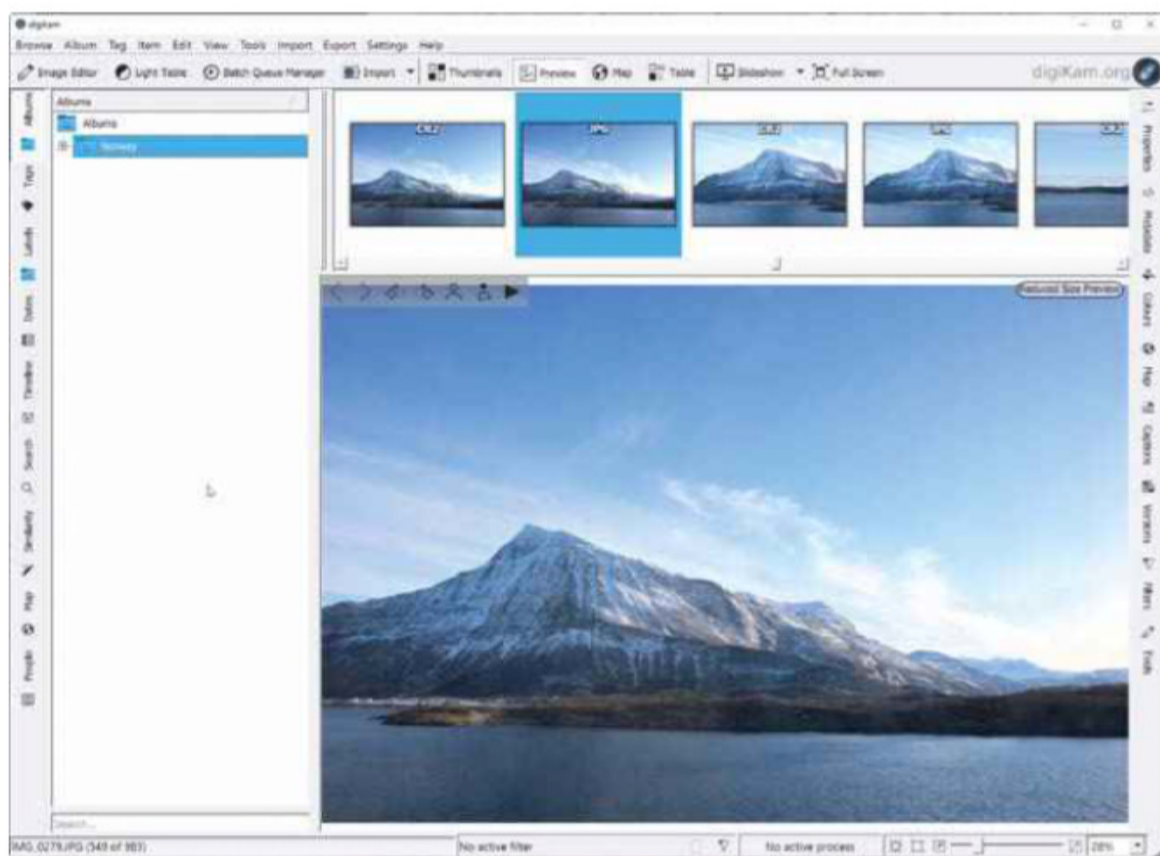
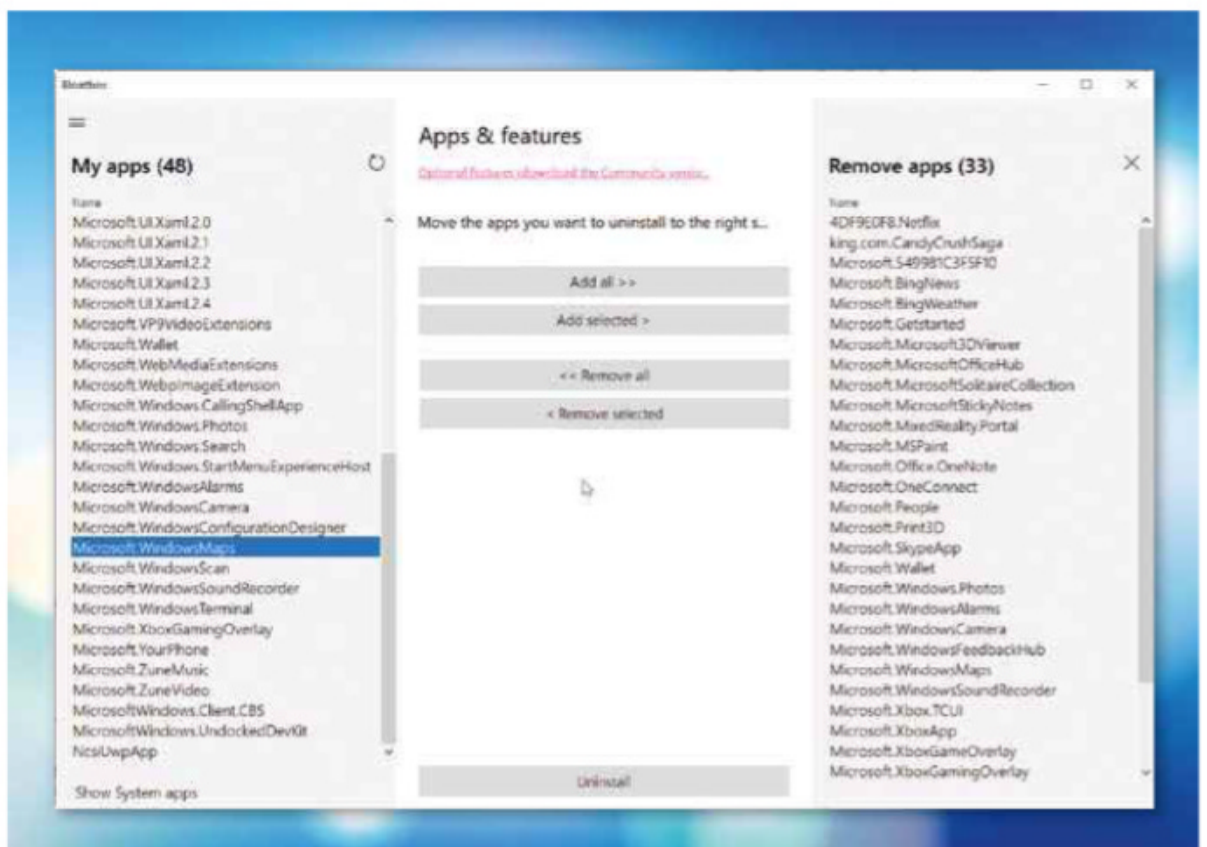


IMAGE MANAGER

digiKam 7

www.digikam.org

Min requirements: Windows 10, macOS or Linux **File size:** 189MB

This powerful photo organiser and editor consists of two separate programs: digiKam and Showfoto. Use digiKam to manage your photo collections, sort images into albums, filter content by category, share items across numerous services, fix and enhance images, and add effects. Showfoto, meanwhile, is a standalone photo editor.

This updated release includes a much more powerful facial-recognition feature, RAW files support, improved handling for HEIF images, a new Image Mosaic Wall tool, an updated slideshow creator and a new theme. It also lets you add location data to your photos.

WEB BROWSER

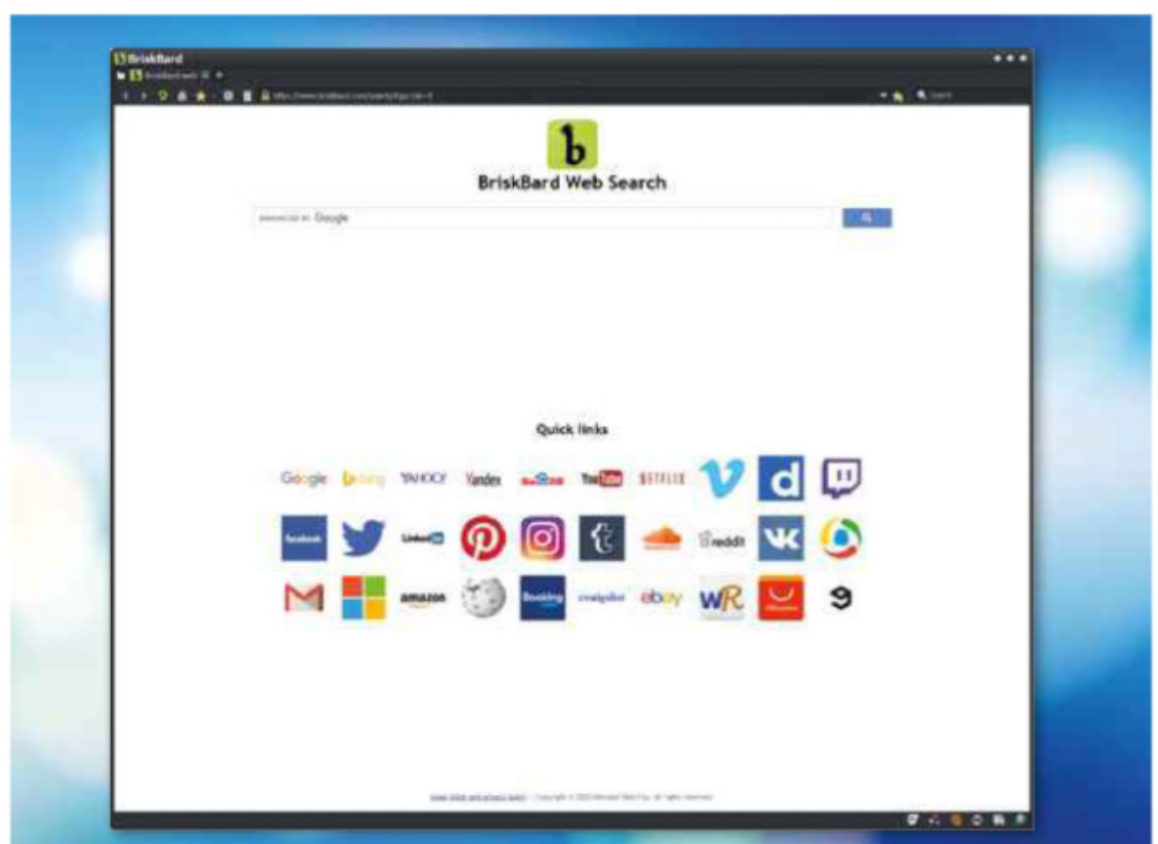
BriskBard 2

www.briskbard.com

Min requirements: Windows 7/8/10

File size: 69.5MB

The vast majority of us use one of the four major browsers – Chrome, Safari, Firefox or Edge – but there are plenty of lesser known examples on offer. BriskBard is a fast browser with a clean, user-friendly interface and is based on the same Blink engine as Chrome. It's incredibly versatile, too, and comes with a built-in email client, media player, IRC chat tool, news aggregator, Usenet newsreader, contact manager, FTP client and more. Version 2 of the software features a new multiple-window interface that lets you group tabs in different windows and set custom tab colours. It offers more ways to clear your private data, too.





GAME

Hello My Name Is:

bit.ly/myname508

Min requirements: Windows 7/8/10

File size: 65.8MB

The aim of this 3D game set in an office is to accomplish various basic tasks such as claiming a cubicle, doing some work and fetching a coffee for your boss. Controlling your ragdoll body isn't easy, however, which makes performing even the simplest movements both amusing and frustrating. You'll need a copy of 7-Zip (7-zip.org) to open the game file that downloads.

 **Install this program...**

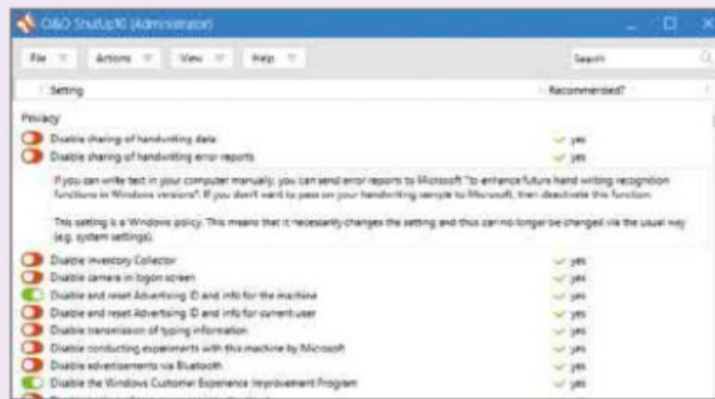
O&O ShutUp10

bit.ly/shutup497

Min requirements: Windows 10

File size: 1.3MB

Windows 10 spies on you, and although you can turn off many of its snooping settings, you need to know where to find them. O&O ShutUp10 makes this easier by gathering all of Windows 10's privacy options on a single screen. Click an entry to see what it does, then enable or disable it. The program doesn't require installation, and its privacy tweaks are sorted into categories, including Security, Privacy, Location Services and Windows Update. You can change individual settings or apply those the tool recommends, and create a system-restore point in case you need to undo your changes later.



...Not this one 

Spybot Anti-Beacon

bit.ly/beacon508

Min requirements:

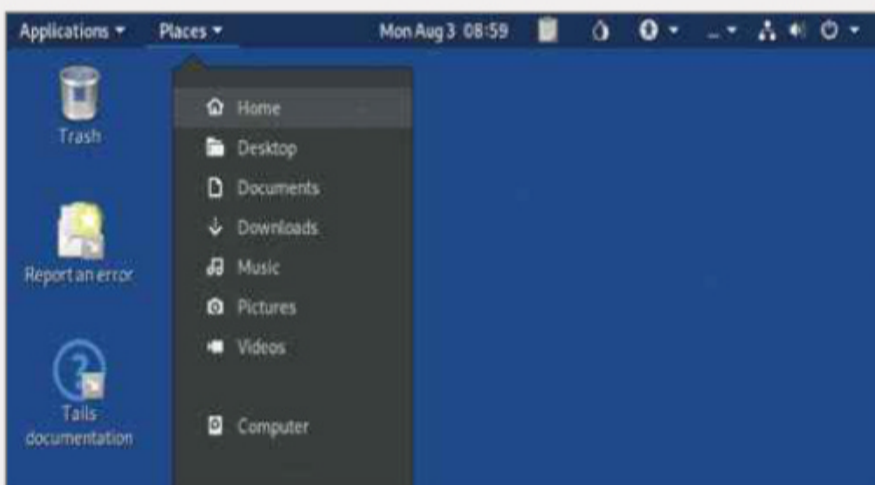
Windows 7/8/10

File size: 11.2MB

Like O&O ShutUp10, Spybot Anti-Beacon lets you tweak Windows 10's privacy settings to stop Microsoft collecting and sharing your personal data. It's a good program, but it's no longer free to use, and now costs £5.99. To be fair, it boosts your privacy in your browser and other software, too.



OTHER OPERATING SYSTEMS What's new for Linux and macOS



LINUX DISTRO

Tails 4.9

tails.boum.org

Min requirements: 2GB RAM, 64-bit processor

File size: 1.1GB

Tails – The Amnesiac Incognito Live System – is a privacy-focused live Linux operating system that you can boot into from a DVD, USB memory stick or SD card. The OS can hide your identity and location, and encrypt your files, emails and instant messaging chats. This new build updates the Tor Browser and Thunderbird programs, and is based on the Linux 5.7.6 kernel, which offers better support for newer hardware. It also fixes numerous security vulnerabilities.



PODCAST PLAYER

BarCasts

bit.ly/barcasts508

Min requirements: macOS

File size: 4.5MB

If you enjoy listening to podcasts on your Mac, you'll like this new podcast player, which is accessible from the menu bar. You can play, pause, fast forward and rewind audio, queue episodes and download podcasts for offline listening. BarCasts also provides an easy way to search for and discover new content. An optional subscription version is available for \$8.99 (£6.80) a year that unlocks additional features, such as automatic 'up next' and custom skip times.

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Best New Browser Tools



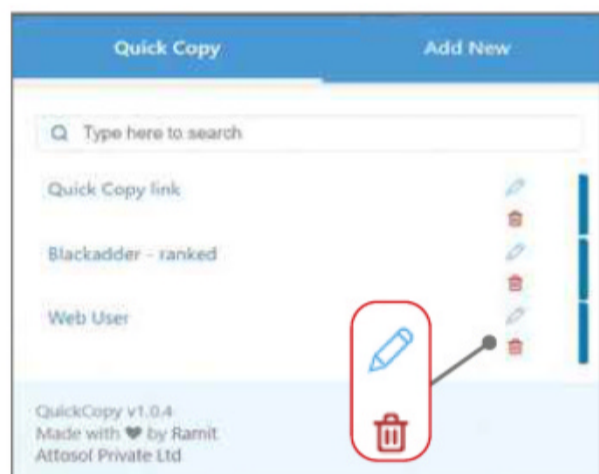
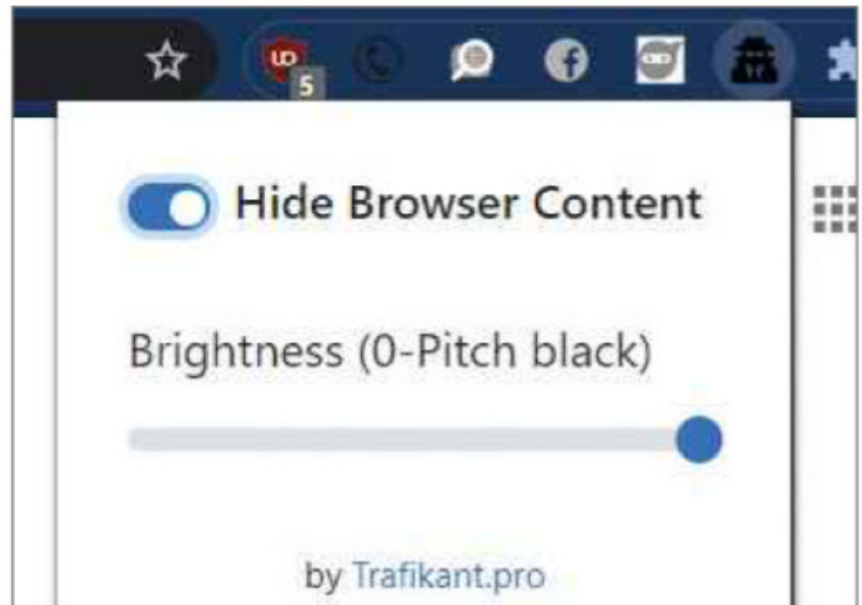
CHROME

Hide your browser with a mouse flick

Pitch Black (bit.ly/black508) is the ideal browser tool if you're worried that your privacy is being compromised by people sneaking a peek at your screen. Whether you're shopping for a surprise gift or working on a top-secret project, Pitch Black lets you hide your screen's display in a flash.

With your cursor positioned over the Chrome window, everything remains in view, but as soon as you move the mouse up to the tabs or hover over the address bar, the screen immediately turns black. It stays this way, even if you navigate away from Chrome to a different program or across to a second monitor. Move your mouse back over the Chrome window and everything becomes visible again.

To activate the extension, switch on the option Hide Browser Content. You can adjust the brightness with the slider – if a completely black screen seems a little too ominous, fade the window to a subtler grey.



Copy content quickly from the web

Quick Copy (bit.ly/copy508) is a brilliantly simple searchable, browser-based clipboard. Copy what you need from the web, then click the extension's toolbar button for two options: Add New and Quick Copy (this will be empty the first time you use the tool).

Content you add to your clipboard is displayed in the Description box, where you can add a description and click Save to add it to the Quick Copy tab. Click the description to copy it or use the icons beside it to edit or delete it from your clipboard.

Once you begin building your board, the tool adds a handy search bar to the top of the Quick Copy tab.

Grab, annotate and share screen captures

Self-aggrandising names for browser tools usually get our hackles rising but



with Good Annotations (bit.ly/capture508), our fears weren't realised. It's better than good – it's excellent.

Take a screenshot by clicking the extension's toolbar button. This opens the image in a new tab, with a column of useful tools running down the left-hand side of the screen that let you add annotations (in easy-to-spot black speech bubbles), text and shapes. Everything can be customised and recoloured to suit your needs.

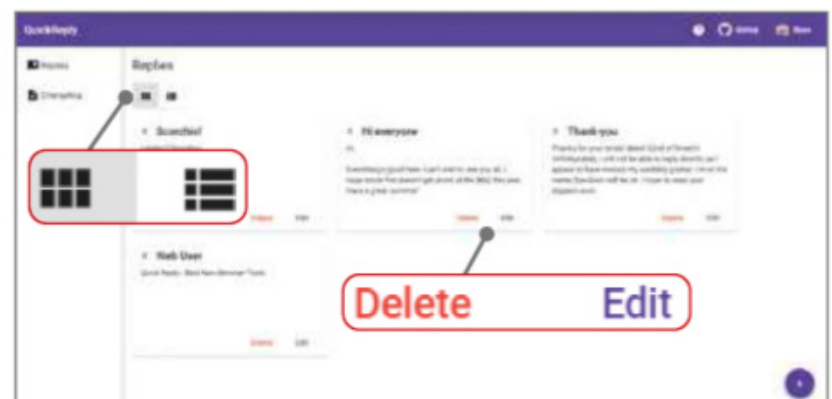
When you're done, screenshots can be downloaded, opened or scrapped by clicking the three-dot menu button. Alternatively, choose Share to send or copy a link for others.

Save time with pre-written emails

Quick Reply (bit.ly/reply508) is an extension focused on "simplifying your

copy/paste experience". Ostensibly aimed at templated emails, the extension can just as easily be used for storing notes that you need to access regularly.

Click the add-on's toolbar button and you're taken to your notepad, where you can create new notes by clicking the plus button, or edit and delete existing ones. Each 'note' can be dragged into place, and power users may want to switch from grid to list layout, which keeps the screen tidier and hides entries beneath an arrow. When you need to paste one of these notes, right-click and hover over Quick Reply in the context menu. This displays all currently saved notes. Choose one and it's instantly pasted in the text box.



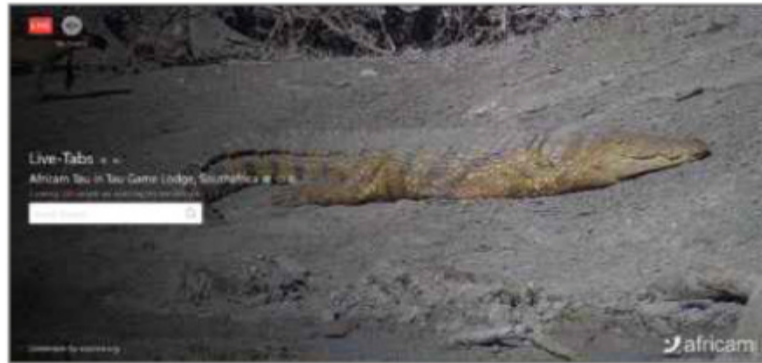
This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Opera, Edge and more



FIREFOX

Add live streams to new tabs

We've covered plenty of New Tab extensions before, but none quite like Live Tabs (bit.ly/live508). This tool adds a random live stream to your new tab - in our time with the add-on, we've seen everything from a US marine reservation to the plains of South Africa.



Alongside the video stream are options to switch to a new stream (or back to an old one) and view the location in Google Maps. And because everything needs an algorithm these days, you're also able to 'like' a stream to see that type of content more often or 'hide' it forever.

One particularly nice feature is the viewer count, which shows you how many people are watching at the same time. When a live stream features sound - rare, but it does happen - the audio can be toggled on or off.

Add Google Translate to Firefox

Translate Web Pages (bit.ly/translate508) brings Google Translate to Firefox. The extension can be set to automatically translate pages in a foreign language, or you can click the toolbar button to manually translate them, set the default language to English and tweak a couple of options.

Translate Web Pages also adds a translate option to the right-click context menu (which can be turned off, if you prefer). Open the extension to access its settings: you can adjust the default output or 'target language' - there's plenty to choose from, if English isn't what you want. Translation engines can also be switched between Google or Yandex, and you can specify sites that should never be translated, and decide which recognised languages are automatically translated.



Set your tabs aside for later

Tabs Aside (bit.ly/tabs508) is a faithful recreation of a much-missed feature in the old version of Microsoft Edge - except this tool is for Firefox. Click the extension's toolbar button and you're prompted to set all currently open tabs aside to save memory and space. These can then be reopened individually or restored all at once.



There are two menu options - the first governs the general behaviour of the extension - for instance, you can choose to have the tabs reopen the next time you launch the browser. } The second resides above each tab section you've set aside - pressing this, next to the 'Restore tabs' button, gives you the choice to restore all tabs without removing them from your list.

OTHER BROWSERS

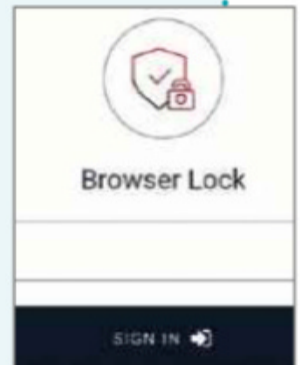
Lock down your browser

Browser Lock (bit.ly/lock508) is a simple tool for locking down your browser without having to lock your whole computer. After downloading the extension, you're asked if you want to lock your browser.

Answer Yes and you'll be asked to create and confirm a password before the browser is automatically closed. Now, when you reopen

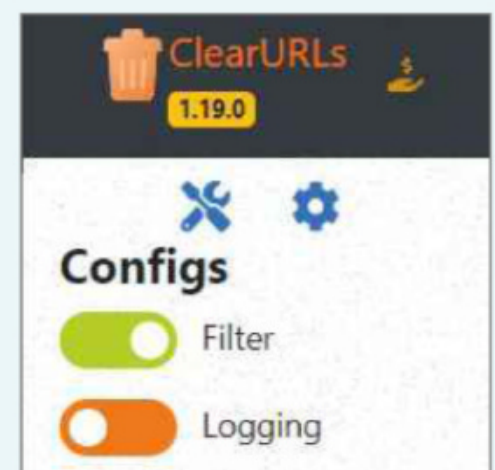
Opera, you'll need to enter the password to regain access.

To lock the browser, right-click the Browser Lock icon and select Lock.



Clean up your URLs

Click a link on a website - Amazon or Google, for example - and the address bar will reveal a long string of characters, which are used by the site to track how you reached the page. Clear URLs (bit.ly/clear508) removes these unnecessary elements of the URL to leave a streamlined address that focuses on the domain and the individual page. It's all completely automatic, too, unless you choose to dip into the extension's settings and modify the behaviour. There's also an option to manually clean links by pasting them into the cleaning tool and copying the result.





Best Free Apps



App of the Fortnight

SECURITY

Microsoft Family Safety

bit.ly/familydroid503

bit.ly/familyios508



NEW

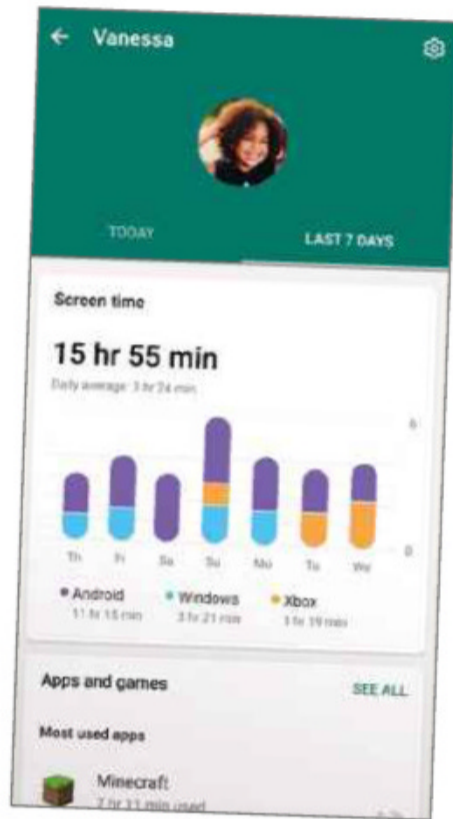
Connectivity has been the saviour of many struggling parents during lockdown. Kids have been able to use PCs, tablets and mobile devices to access online home-learning resources and maintain contact with their peers, and the web has also provided younger users with a much-needed distraction in lockdown's more boring moments, thanks to online gaming, video streaming and more.

When we're all relying on our devices more than usual, it's important to keep one eye on your kids' and grandkids' digital habits – which is where Microsoft's new Family Safety tool comes in. We took an early look at Family Safety back in Issue 503, but at that point it was a limited beta. Now the full app has been released for both Android and iOS.

Family Safety takes a multi-faceted approach to protecting your children's digital and physical safety. If you're worried they're using their devices too much, for example, you can impose screen-time limits. You can also filter out inappropriate apps and games, restrict web browsing to kid-friendly sites (though only when using Microsoft's own Edge browser) and whitelist tools or sites that are used for school and learning. You'll get a weekly report on your family members' activity, and you can even enable a location-sharing feature that allows you to monitor where your family members are in the real world.

The cross-platform nature of Microsoft's tool means that it's uniquely positioned to let you monitor activity across PCs, Xbox games consoles and mobile devices – but it's not perfect. Currently, you can't monitor or restrict iOS app use, for example, so you'll need

to use Family Safety in conjunction with Apple's own parental-control tools.



MINI WORKSHOP

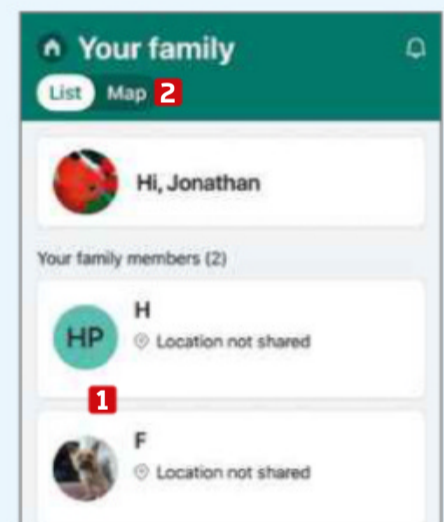
Protect your kids using Microsoft Family Safety

1 Start by setting up your family members. The easiest way to do this is via account.microsoft.com/family in your desktop browser. Click 'Sign in' and enter your Microsoft account details (or click 'Create one' to set up an account), then click the '+ Add a family member' button **1** and choose whether you want to add a Member (child) or Organizer (parent). **2** Enter the member's email or mobile number, **3** then click 'Send invite'. **4**

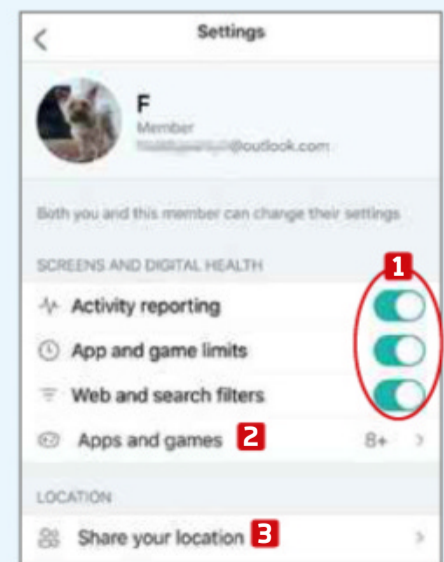


2 Once you've finished setting up your family members, launch the Family Safety app on your mobile device and sign in with your Microsoft account. You'll be asked for some permissions – to allow notifications and location data, for example. Grant these and select 'Start using Family Safety'.

You should see the family members you set up. **1** If you've enabled location, toggle the Map switch **2** to see where they are right now.



3 Tap a family member to display a summary of today's activity – choose the 'Last 7 days' tab to see more activity. To configure parental controls, tap the cog icon in the top-right corner, then use the switches to enable or disable 'Activity reporting', 'App and game limits' and 'Web and search filters'. **1** Press 'Apps and games' **2** to set an age limit and blacklist specific apps. You can also enable or disable location sharing. **3**



Our rating



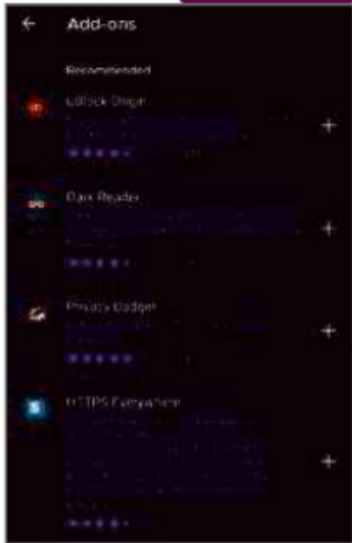
This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android and iOS phones and tablets

BROWSER

Firefox for Android

bit.ly/firedroid508
 (varies)

Mozilla is rolling out Firefox 79 for Android devices – a radical overhaul of its mobile web browser. If you already use Firefox, you'll be migrated automatically, as long as you're using version 59 or newer and your device is running Android 5 or higher. The new version of the browser features a fully redesigned interface, performance improvements, enhanced tracking protection and more. On the downside, only a handful of add-ons are currently supported, though Mozilla promises that more will be added soon.





Our rating



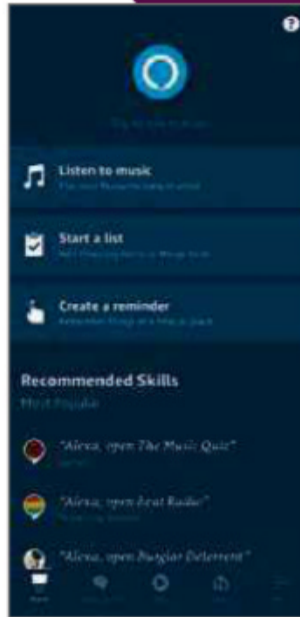
UPDATED

VOICE ASSISTANT

Amazon Alexa

bit.ly/alexa503
bit.ly/alexa508
 (varies) 

Amazon has updated its Alexa app for iOS and Android (as well as for its own Amazon Fire devices). The redesigned interface refocuses the homepage around the blue 'Tap to talk to Alexa' button – and Amazon promises you'll soon be able to summon Alexa using just your voice when the Alexa app is open. The new Home screen lists recent Alexa activity, such as alarms you've set, and personalised links to Alexa functions. Skills have been relegated to a shortcut in the More menu.




Our rating

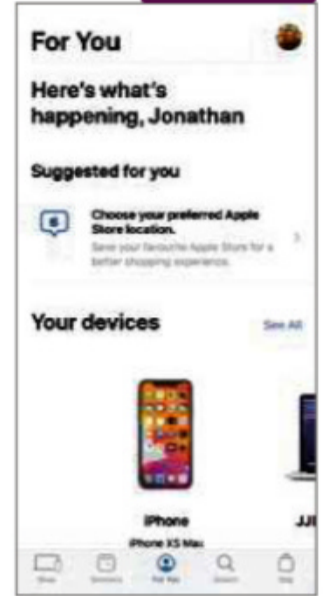


SHOPPING

Apple Store

bit.ly/applestore508


Autumn is traditionally a time when Apple launches a raft of new products and it's preparing early this year by releasing a shiny, box-fresh version of its Store app on iOS. The revamped app features a new For You tab, which shows your devices, order status and reservations, along with personalised tips, recommendations and suggestions – all in one place. If you're considering upgrading your existing iPhone, you'll now be able to find the most suitable model by tapping the 'See how your iPhone compares' link on the product page.



Our rating

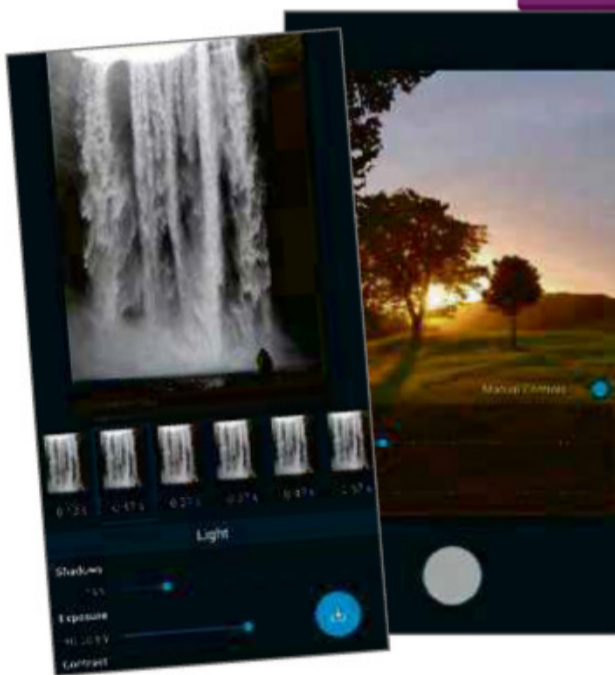


CAMERA

Motion Cam

bit.ly/motion508
 (varies)

This app's name might lead you to assume that it's some kind of motion detector but, in fact, it's a neat camera app aimed at photography enthusiasts. Press the shutter button and it will capture multiple RAW images of your subject and allow you to select the best one. It also provides a full selection of post-processing tools that offer full control over the appearance of your shot. Motion Cam is currently in Early Access, so it may be prone to the occasional quirk. Motion Cam requires a relatively powerful device that's compatible with the Camera2 API (application programming interface) for it to work.



Our rating



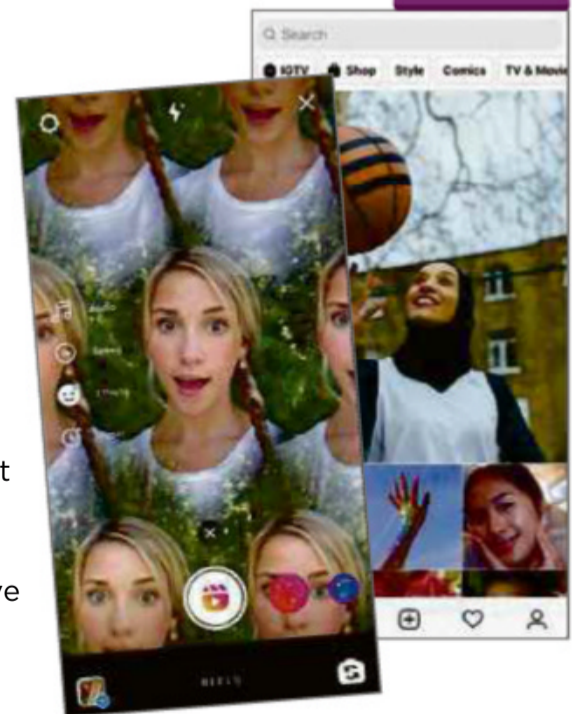
NEW

SOCIAL

Instagram

bit.ly/instadroid466
bit.ly/instaios508
 (varies) 

The latest version of the popular photo-based social network introduces a new feature called Reels. The idea is to allow users to record and edit short-form (15-second) videos with audio, effects and new creative tools. So, yes, it's basically Instagram's version of TikTok. You can share Reels with your followers on your Instagram feed and, if you have a public account, make them available to the Instagram community at large via Explore. To create your own Reels clip, open the Instagram camera and tap the Reels option at the bottom of the screen. You can apply editing tools and effects using the shortcuts on the left.



Our rating



5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

CAMERA

Rec

bit.ly/recios508

Price: £4.99



Described as a 'Pro Video Camera', Rec provides tons more expert-level controls than your iPhone's camera does, including manual shooting mode, audio levels and full control over resolution and frame-rate settings.



Arrog is a puzzle adventure that combines hand-drawn, black-and-white art with a poetic sensibility to create a trance-like experience. Solve puzzles as you travel through a person's dreams.

SOCIAL

Relay for Reddit

bit.ly/relay508

Price: £2.99



Reddit is brilliant, but the official app has its share of shortcomings. Relay addresses a number of these by providing a more attractive interface, animations, inline support for images and videos, and more.



TOOLS

PingTools Pro

bit.ly/pingtools508

Price: £2.99



With Wi-Fi, port scanners and more, PingTools Pro is the ultimate portable toolbox for network nerds. Its new features include backups, data export and import, and improved Android 10 compatibility.



GAME

Professor Layton and the Lost Future

bit.ly/laytondroid508

Price: £13.99



If you've played any previous Professor Layton games, either on mobile or on a Nintendo DS, you'll know what to expect here: ingenious, head-scratching puzzles, a nostalgic art style and an engaging story with plenty of twists.



GAME

Arrog

bit.ly/arrogdroid508

bit.ly/arrogios508

Price: £2.59 (Android), £1.99 (iOS)



Rec



PingTools Pro



Arrog



Relay for Reddit



Professor Layton and the Lost Future



✓ Install this app...

MacroDroid

bit.ly/macrodroid508



Its name may recall Microsoft Office's often troublesome macro function, but MacroDroid is actually a really simple tool for automating tasks, such as creating custom profiles to enable Wi-Fi automatically when you're in specific locations. Basically, it boils the automation process down to three steps: select a trigger, then choose what actions should be taken and, finally, configure any other factors you need.

The free version lets you configure up to five macros at a time, which is fairly generous, but you'll need to upgrade to the Pro version (£3.99) if you want the freedom to create as many as you like.

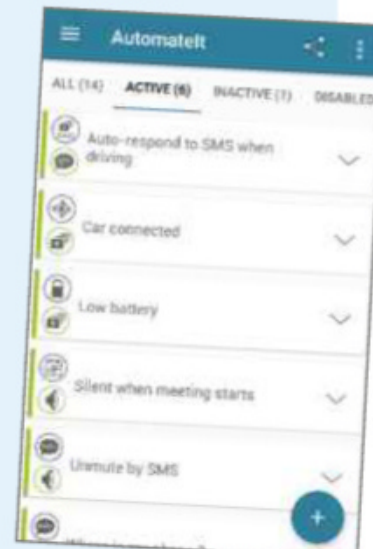


...Not this one

Automate! Pro

bit.ly/automate508

This once-popular automation tool appears to be the victim of neglect. Many reviewers on Google Play, who have been using the app for years, are complaining that it has recently stopped working and that scheduled tasks no longer occur when they're supposed to. The app hasn't been updated since May 2019 and doesn't appear to support recent versions of Android, but the developers are still charging £1.99 for it.





Take a Screen Break

Take a rest from your browser with our fiendish fortnightly challenges. Can you solve our West End musicals emoji and guess our Wayback Machine year?

WIN A WEB USER 2019 BACK ISSUES DISC!
 Email your answers to editor@webuser.co.uk
 - one correct entry will win a disc

CAN YOU GUESS THE WEST END MUSICALS FROM THE EMOJI?

1		2	
3		4	
5		6	

GUESS THE WAYBACK MACHINE YEAR

Can you work out which year the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine captured the following websites?



<p>'Crocodile Hunter' Irwin killed</p>	<p>Internet Explorer 7 is here</p>
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COMPETITIONS

WIN 1 OF 3 Seagate 4TB Backup Plus portable drives

Seagate Backup Plus drives give you twice the storage of similarly sized portable drives, while the slim metal design makes them easy to carry around. As well as this 4TB model, they come in 1TB, 2TB and 5TB capacities. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'Seagate' in the subject line. For more information, visit www.seagate.com and follow [@Seagate](https://twitter.com/Seagate) on Twitter.



WORTH £94 EACH

WIN A... Netgear Orbi RBK53 mesh Wi-Fi

Netgear's Orbi RBK50 won our mesh Wi-Fi Group Test in Issue 503. To follow up, it's offering the more powerful RBK53 as a prize to one lucky reader. It's a tri-band system with four Gigabit Ethernet ports on each unit and a built-in VPN server. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'Orbi' in the subject line. For more info, visit www.netgear.co.uk and follow [@NETGEAR_UKI](https://twitter.com/NETGEAR_UKI) on Twitter.



WORTH £394

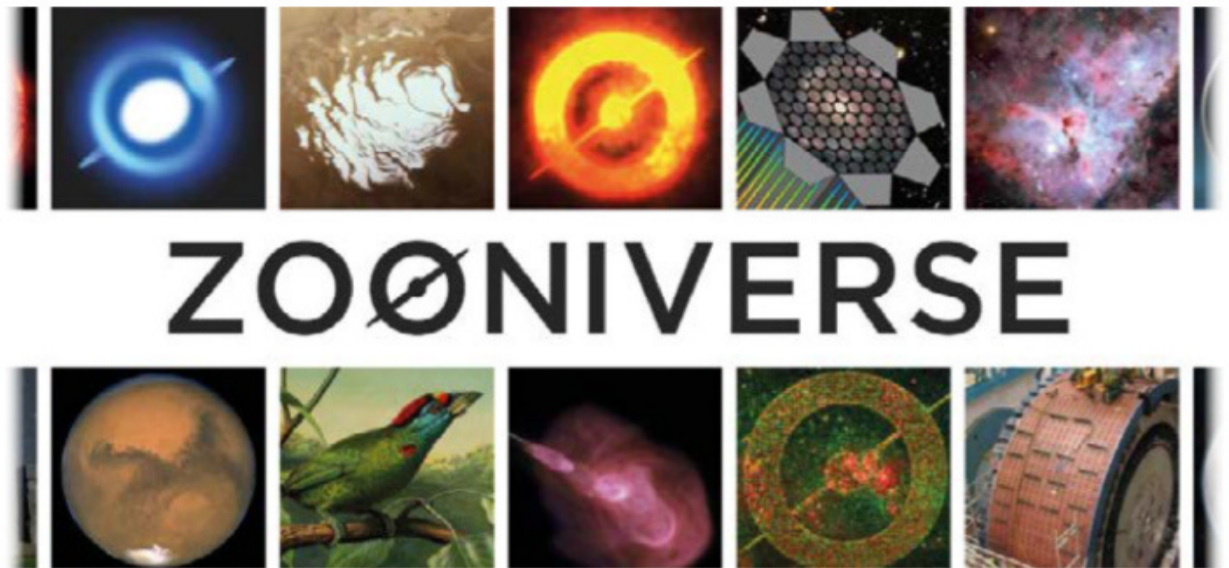


FAQ

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

Zooniverse

Citizen science projects captured the public imagination during lockdown. **David Crookes** looks at one of the most popular platforms for volunteer-based research



What is it?

Zooniverse (www.zooniverse.org) is a global citizen-science platform that has been making valuable contributions to all manner of research for over a decade. It asks users to take their pick from dozens of crowdsourced projects and carry out specific tasks online, helping scientists shave years off their work and make some amazing discoveries.

How does it work?

The idea is that large teams of volunteers can make light work of tasks that would otherwise consume large chunks of an individual's time. These usually involve working through images, videos and audio, before answering simple questions to help identify and classify objects. In most cases, the projects create large volumes of data that researchers can then use to train artificial-intelligence software to spot similar patterns. Drawing on the collective wisdom of a group rather than relying on the judgement of a single expert tends to make datasets more accurate.



Zooniverse draws on the collective wisdom of volunteers to aid scientific research

Do I need to be an expert?

Absolutely not. Anyone can be a Zooite – the collective term for Zooniverse volunteers. You don't need a background in a given subject or any particular skill or qualification to take part. All you need is a computer, tablet or mobile phone, some free time and bags of enthusiasm. You don't even need to be available at a particular time: you can dip in and out of projects whenever you fancy. In fact, the hardest part can be deciding which project you want to take part in.

How do I know what to look for?

Before embarking on tasks, Zooites are presented with tutorials that explain what the researchers are trying to achieve and the steps they need to take. Tutorials may show examples and get volunteers to perform a few trials to get up to speed. These are not particularly complex because the research teams want as many people as possible to get stuck in.



Follow a tutorial to get the gist of a Zooniverse project before taking part



Zooniverse grew from an astronomy project called Galaxy Zoo, back in 2007

So when did Zooniverse start?

Zooniverse launched in 2009, but it grew from a crowdsourced astronomy project called Galaxy Zoo (zoo1.galaxyzoo.org) set up by Oxford University astrophysicists Kevin Schawinski and Chris Lintott two years earlier. Galaxy Zoo helped classify millions of galaxies imaged by the Sloan Digital Sky Survey telescope in New Mexico, with volunteers working on 70,000 of them every hour. Zooniverse expanded this idea into other areas. It's owned and operated by the Citizen Science Alliance (www.citizensciencealliance.org), a collaboration between scientists, software developers and educators. It still has its headquarters in Oxford but has since added a second at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago.

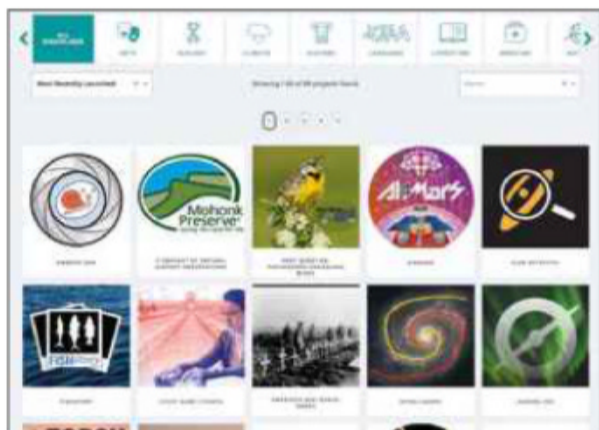
Is it just a science thing?

No. As well as research into astrophysics, medicine, climate, ecology and biomedical sciences, there are projects that focus on the arts, history, language and literature. As such, there's bound to be something that interests you, and the

more engaged you are, the more motivated you'll be to help. Just visit the Projects page and click a discipline to see what's available. You can also check for the most active and popular projects to see which need your help the most.

So which institutions are involved?

Many universities and research groups across the world have used the Zooniverse platform, but perhaps the most well known is NASA, which recently announced a partnership with the website to help with research into astrophysics, heliophysics, planetary science and earth science.



Take part in a wide range of projects to advance our understanding of the world

As we mentioned in last issue's What's New Online, NASA is currently asking volunteers to help identify "debris disks" around nearby stars (bit.ly/nasa507), so researchers can discover where planets are located and where they are forming. This project uses data from NASA's WISE mission, and volunteers need to examine images of disk candidates and compare them with those from four astronomical surveys.

Are there any projects closer to home?

Of course. Researchers at the University of Plymouth are looking to understand how climate change is affecting the development of embryos in aquatic



If you like penguins and counting, you'll love Zooniverse's penguin counting project

environments (bit.ly/embryo508). Volunteers can either identify and count embryos captured on video or annotate and measure what they can see, the results of which are used to train AI.

Other climate change projects include Penguin Watch (bit.ly/penguin508), which captures the birds on 100 cameras around the Southern Ocean and Antarctic Peninsula and asks users to count the penguins, chicks and eggs to help track breeding patterns.

How many people are taking part?

More than 2.1 million volunteers have signed up to Zooniverse, and the number is growing fast - there were 1.6 million registered users in March, which gives an idea of how quickly it's grown lately. The COVID-19 lockdown seems to have been a catalyst, with Zooniverse announcing a four-fold rise in the number of images processed during one week in April.

Has it produced good results?

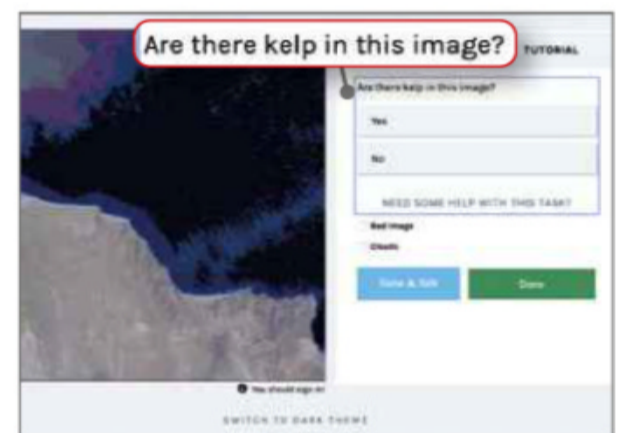
Yes. Zooniverse volunteers have supported 229 citizen science projects so far, and figures show that more than 1.7 million galaxies have been classified and 250,000 pages of text transcribed. Volunteers have been helping to predict space weather (bit.ly/storm508), identify floating forests (bit.ly/forests508) and unlock the secrets of a collection of Jewish manuscript fragments and

documents that make up the Cairo Geniza (bit.ly/cairo508).

Zooniverse has resulted in more than 160 peer-reviewed publications, some of which you can read at bit.ly/peer508.

What breakthroughs has it enabled?

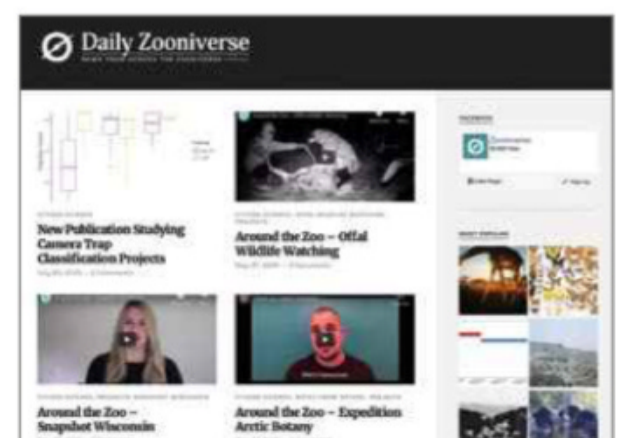
It's not just about breakthroughs. In the case of Every Name Counts (bit.ly/every508), for instance, the project is simply to transcribe personal data from concentration camp documents, which is nevertheless of huge importance. That's not to say there are no opportunities for groundbreaking results to emerge. Citizen researchers can post questions on a community forum, so there's always a chance that a volunteer may draw attention to something intriguing. In Galaxy Zoo, for example, a blue blob found in Galaxy IC 2497 by Dutch schoolteacher Hanny van Arkel turned out to be a rare quasar ionisation. Sometimes professional researchers can be so focused on their own area that they miss something else, opening the potential for discovery.



Zooniverse volunteers have helped identify floating forests of kelp on the sea floor

How can I keep up to date with developments?

As well as looking out for new projects on the Zooniverse website, you should bookmark blog.zooniverse.org or check out Daily Zooniverse (daily.zooniverse.org). The latter highlights emerging projects, examines their aims and gets behind the scenes. You can also download a book that highlights 40 projects from 2019 (bit.ly/zoonibook508).



The Zooniverse blog keeps you abreast of projects such as Offal Wildlife Watching

ARE THERE OTHER CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS?

There are many projects outside Zooniverse that need your help. Missing Maps (www.missingmaps.org) is asking volunteers to trace satellite images of undocumented locations into OpenStreetMap so people in those communities can add important details, while Globe At Night (www.globeatnight.org) wants volunteers to measure the



brightness of the night sky. The Smithsonian is seeking volunteers to transcribe historical documents and biodiversity data (transcription.si.edu), and you can help with Alzheimer's research at stallcatchers.com/main. Play Neureka (www.neureka.ie) for Android and iOS to generate data about how our brains change in relation to our moods.

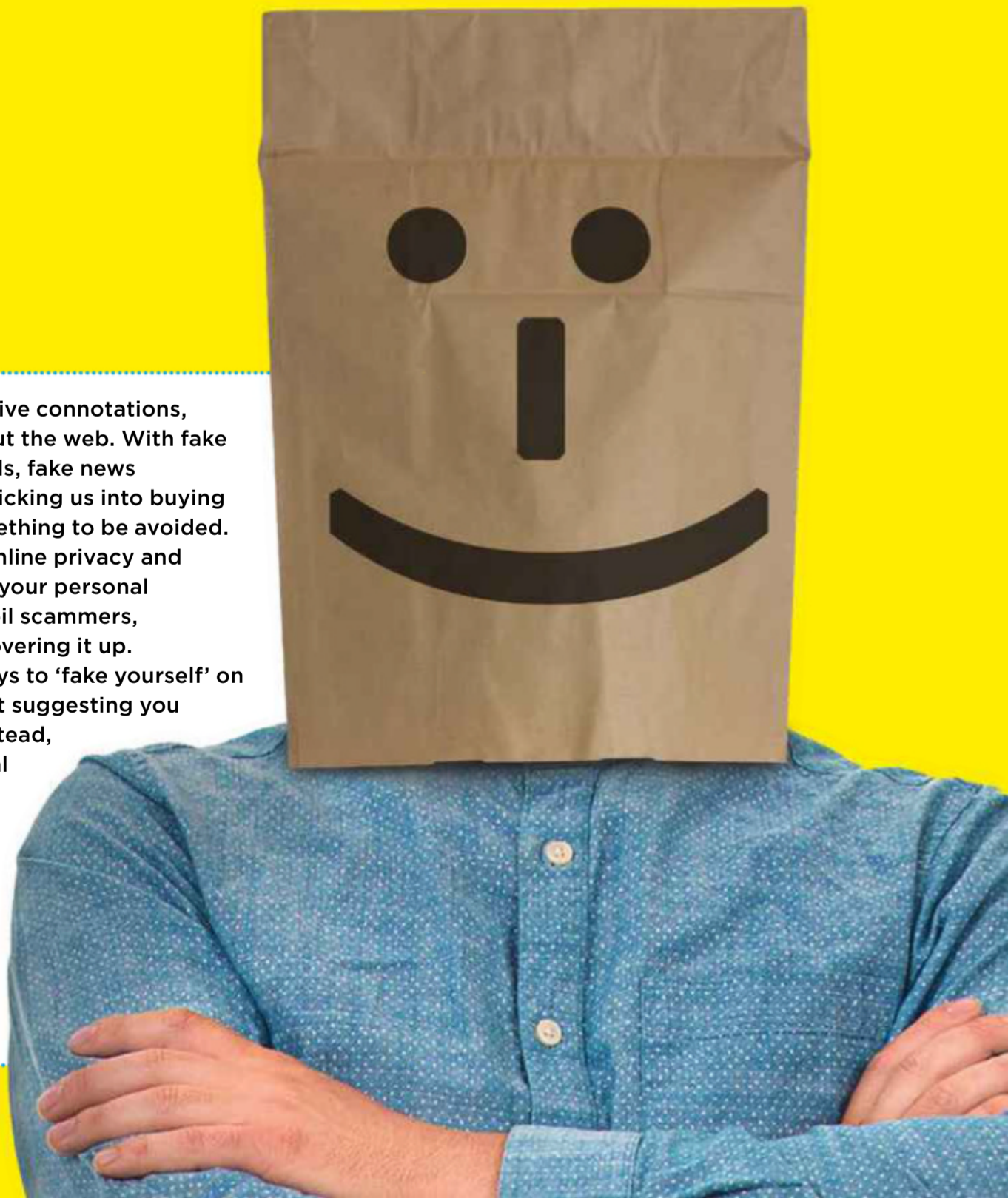
Fake Yourself On The Web

COVER
FEATURE

Don't let hackers, spammers and scammers steal your identity – cover your online tracks using fabricated data. **Robert Irvine** explains why and how you should create a trail of false information

The word 'fake' generally has negative connotations, especially when we're talking about the web. With fake sites trying to steal our bank details, fake news poisoning our minds and fake reviews tricking us into buying shoddy products, 'fakes' are surely something to be avoided. Faking your *own* data has benefits for online privacy and security, however, because withholding your personal information is one of the best ways to foil scammers, spammers and advertisers intent on hoovering it up.

In this feature, we explain the best ways to 'fake yourself' on the web, legally and ethically – we're not suggesting you commit fraud or try to dupe anyone. Instead, we show you how to spoof your personal details when registering with sites that don't need your real information, withhold your phone number, disguise your location without resorting to a VPN, stop facial-recognition technology identifying you and much more. We even suggest a way to fake your attendance in Zoom video chats when you'd rather be out in the sun.





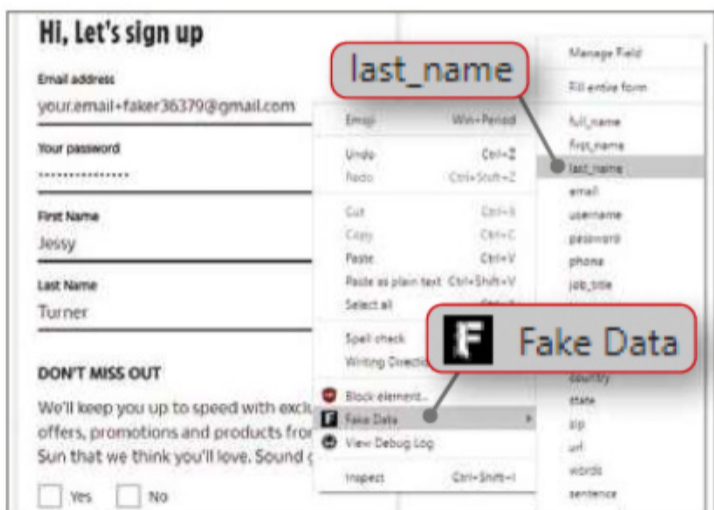
YOUR.PERSONAL.DETAILS

Fake your details in online forms

Some websites require you to use your real name when signing up – for example, those that involve financial transactions. Similarly, Facebook states that “the name on your profile should be the name that your friends call you in everyday life... and also appear on an ID document” (bit.ly/fbname508). In other instances, however, it’s a sensible precaution to adopt a pseudonym as a way of avoiding online fraud, unwanted communication and intrusions into your privacy.

Rather than allowing your browser to fill in your name and other personal details automatically, you can use Fake Data (fakedata.haterapps.com) to enter random information and make the sign-up process more secure. Available for Chrome, Firefox, Edge and Opera, this extension lets you right-click a text field and choose an option from its menu, including first and last name, username, address, phone number and more. There’s also an option to ‘Fill entire form’.

Fake Data is set to ‘United States (English)’ by default, but you can change this to ‘Great Britain (English)’ in the settings to obtain more relevant entries. None of the email addresses it generates link to a real inbox, so don’t use this option if the site you’re signing up for needs to verify your account.



Use Fake Data to fill in online forms with bogus names and other details

If you’re not impressed by Fake Data’s bogus names, try the Chrome extension Name Generator (bit.ly/name508), which sources made-up monikers from four different sources and lets you copy and paste them into text fields with a couple of clicks.

Create a fake online personality

Setting up a fake online profile to trick someone into befriending you – a practice known as catfishing – isn’t (yet)



Fake Name Generator creates a complete new identity for you to use online

illegal but it’s certainly unethical, and we’re not encouraging any such behaviour in this feature. However, there are benefits to using fictitious information online to protect your real details from criminals and spammers, and reduce your digital footprint.

You could make up this information yourself whenever you’re asked to provide it, but an easier option is to turn to the fabulous Fake Name Generator (www.fakenamegenerator.com) instead. This free site offers ready-made identities based on the gender, nationality and country of your choice, from Australia to Uruguay. It goes beyond merely generating names, and provides a realistic address and postcode, a fake phone number that automated site tests will think is valid, a disposable email account, a birthday and star sign, physical characteristics such as height, weight and blood type, an occupation, a vehicle and even a favourite colour.

As well as protecting your privacy when signing up for websites, Fake Name Generator is a helpful resource for authors who want to give their characters a little more detail, and web designers who need dummy data to test their databases. The site stresses that it doesn’t “condone, support, or encourage illegal activity of any kind”.

Use a fake name on social media

Facebook requires you to supply your real name, email address and phone number, but the fact that it removed more than 5.4 billion fake accounts last year (bit.ly/billion508) suggests that it doesn’t always police this too thoroughly. Still, if you want to stay on the right side of the social network by obeying the rules, you can use a nickname to make your life a bit easier.



You can add a nickname on Facebook but you can’t use a pseudonym

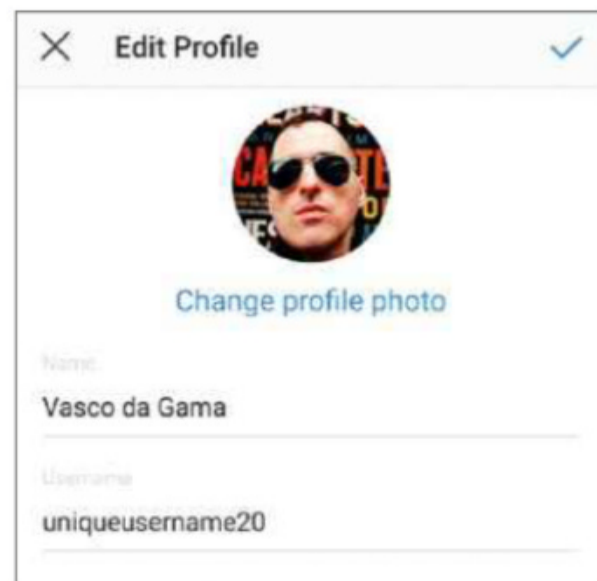
On your profile page, click About, ‘Details about you’, ‘Add a nickname or birth name’ and enter the name you want to use. Select ‘Show at top of profile’, click Save Changes and your nickname will appear in brackets after your real one.

If you spot a fake account that’s pretending to be you or someone you know, you can alert Facebook by clicking the three-dot button on the imposter’s cover photo and choosing ‘Find support or report profile’ or go to bit.ly/reportfake508.

Twitter is much more flexible about using fake names, which is why celebrities verify their identities with a blue tick to stop others pretending to be them. To change your displayed username, click More on your profile page, choose ‘Settings & privacy’ and enter an alternative handle in the Username field.

To do the same in Instagram, choose Edit Profile and enter a new name and unique username in the relevant fields. If you want to change your moniker on Google services, including YouTube, Gmail and Photos, go to myaccount.google.com/profile and click Name – you can also add a Nickname here.

To use an alias for Zoom chats, sign into the Zoom website, select Profile and click Edit next to your name.



Instagram makes it very easy to change your name and username

YOUR.PHONE.NUMBER

Sign up with a fake phone number

Many websites and online services insist that you provide a phone number when you register, often for no apparent reason other than to harvest your data. Although you can make up a number or use a fake-data tool to generate one, there's always a risk that you might hit on a valid number, which would link a real person to your account. To prevent this unfortunate situation, the ethical Fake Number (fakenumbers.org) service provides dozens of UK landline (bit.ly/fakeland508) and mobile (bit.ly/fakemobile508) numbers that telephone companies can't assign to customers "under current legislation". Indeed, the site's 01632 and 0770 numbers are used in British films, TV shows and radio series to ensure that fictional characters aren't accidentally given real phone numbers, creating a nuisance for the owner. Fake Number can provide phone numbers for specific UK cities, complete with correct area codes, as well as many other countries.



Fake Number provides phony phone numbers that don't belong to anyone

A major obstacle to using a fake number when signing up to a website is that you may need to activate your account by entering a verification code you receive by text message. You can beat this restriction by using a free site such as SMS24.me (sms24.me) or Receive SMS Online (receive-sms.cc), which not only provide disposable UK phone numbers, but let you access the relevant 'inbox' to retrieve any codes you need. The inboxes are anonymous but public, so don't use them for accounts that contain sensitive information.

There's also a handy Chrome extension called

SMS24.me lets you use a fake phone number to receive account verification codes

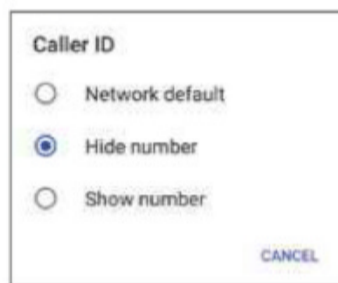


Disposable Number (bit.ly/disposable508), which provides instant access to fake numbers and their inboxes as you browse the web.

Withhold your mobile number

It's sometimes desirable to conceal your phone number from a person or company you're calling. For example, you might want to report something anonymously to the authorities, prevent marketing companies from harvesting your number or ensure that no one tries to call you back at an inconvenient time.

The easiest way to withhold your mobile number for a single call is to press 141 before dialling, as you would on a landline phone. If you're on the ID Mobile network, type #31#. To conceal your number for all calls, you need to tweak your phone's settings to hide your caller ID. On an Android device, open the Phone app, tap the three-dot



Turn off Caller ID to stop people seeing your real mobile number

tap 'Additional settings', Caller ID and choose 'Hide number'.

On an iPhone, open Settings, choose Phone and untick Show My Caller ID.

Use a temporary phone number

Some companies (and people) won't accept calls from withheld 'private' numbers, so if you hide your caller ID,

you won't get through. One solution is to use a disposable 'burner' phone number to avoid revealing your real one, but without straying into the legally dubious territory of number 'spoofing' (disguising your caller ID by pretending to be someone else). Burner numbers can also forward calls to your main number, and let you send and receive text messages without compromising your privacy.

Plenty of free apps offer temporary phone numbers, but most either don't work or have dodgy privacy policies, so you're better off paying for a trustworthy service, then cancelling it once your burner number has served its purpose. Most providers are US-based, but Hushed (hushed.com) covers the UK, too, and is available for Android and iOS devices - including tablets, if you call over Wi-Fi. Sign up, choose a disposable phone number and select a plan. Prices start at \$2 (£1.52) for seven days, which includes 20 minutes of talk time or 60 texts, and you can top up with extra credit. There's also Flipper (flipperapp.co.uk) for iOS devices, although it has been suspiciously quiet on social media since last year.



Hushed gives you a 'burner' number for private calls and messages

FAKE YOURSELF IN ZOOM

Not everyone feels comfortable taking part in video chats, so if you've been press-ganged into joining a Zoom call, why not fake your participation using the service's Virtual Background feature? First, use your webcam to capture a photo or - even better - a short video clip of yourself sitting at your computer, looking attentive. Then open Zoom and click your profile picture, followed by Settings. Select the Virtual Background tab, click either Add Image or Add Video, and apply the background (a video will loop automatically, but you may want to edit it first to make sure it looks smooth). When the chat begins, greet everybody, then wait for the best moment to duck out and leave your fake self to suffer the rest of the call. Hopefully, no one will ask you a question and rumble you!



Fake your presence in a Zoom call using a virtual background



YOUR.EMAIL.ADDRESS

Sign up using a disposable email address

Unless you use your Google or Facebook account, you almost always need to provide an email address when registering with a website or online service, so it can confirm who you are and potentially pester you with marketing messages. You don't always need to use your real address, however, because you can enter a fake one from a disposable-email service instead. Use your fake address to sign up, then click the link in the confirmation message that arrives in your alternative inbox, and you'll gain access to the site without compromising your privacy.

There are dozens of free temporary-email services, but our favourite is Maildrop (maildrop.cc). It couldn't be



Create a disposable email address to stop websites knowing your real one

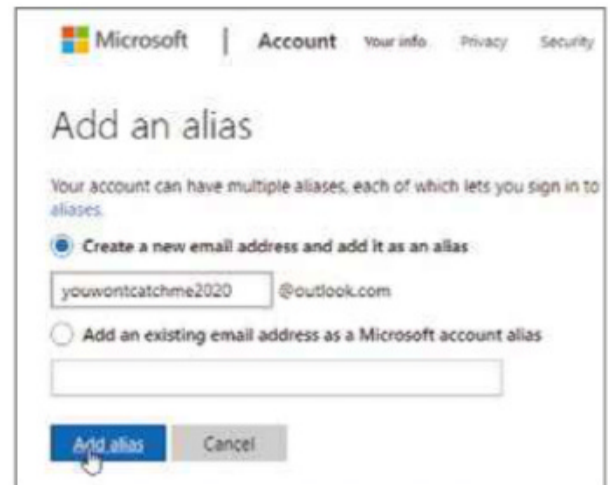
easier to use: enter a username of your choice, click Go and Maildrop will create your temporary address and accompanying inbox. Unlike rival services, Maildrop has its own spam filters and provides an alias for your address, so even your fake account won't be swamped by junk mail.

Other good options include Guerrilla Mail (guerrillamail.com), which offers a choice of domain names, and Temp-Mail (temp-mail.org), which lets you choose when to delete your disposable address. Temp-Mail also provides apps for Android and iOS, and add-ons for Chrome, Firefox and Opera.

Use an alias to mask your email address

Including your name in your email address makes you easy to identify, but it also reveals that information to hackers and scammers. You can disguise yourself by creating an alias for your email account. You'll still receive messages in your inbox as usual, but without revealing your real address.

Annoyingly, this feature isn't available in the personal version of Gmail, only in paid-for G Suite accounts, but you can add an existing email address and treat that as an alias. Go to Settings,



Create an alias for your Outlook.com account to disguise your email address

'Accounts and Import' and click 'Add another email address'. Gmail also lets you modify your address by adding full stops and placing words after a plus sign (such as web.user+blahblah@gmail.com), but that won't mask your name.

Outlook.com makes the process much easier. Either go straight to account.live.com/AddAssocId or click the cog icon in the top-right corner, choose 'View all Outlook settings' and click Email, 'Sync email', 'Manage or choose a primary alias'. Click 'Add email address', enter the alias you want to use and click 'Add alias' to confirm. You can now use this address instead of your real one.

YOUR.LOCATION

Use a fake address and postcode

Online stores obviously need to know your delivery and billing address, but there's no reason for other sites to know where you live, even if they ask for this information during registration. The easiest way to get a fake address with a valid postcode is to use a tool such as the aforementioned Fake Name Generator, or the more specific Fake Address Generator (bit.ly/address508), both of which provide false but convincingly authentic addresses and



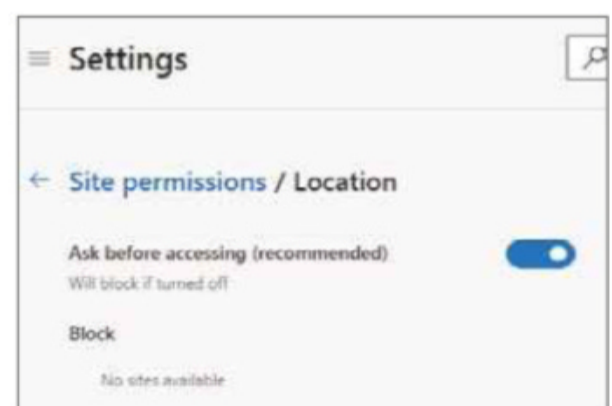
Use a fake address on websites that don't need to know your real one

postcodes for the UK and most other countries. If you don't like the tool's first suggestion, click Random Address to generate another.

Turn off geo-location in your browser

Websites use geo-location to detect where you're browsing from so they can deliver relevant local information, such as details of nearby amenities or a weather forecast. If you'd rather not reveal your whereabouts, you can tweak your browser so sites have to ask your permission to access your location data.

In Chrome, click the three-dot menu button, choose Settings, 'Site settings', Location and switch on 'Ask before accessing'. You can also check which sites you've blocked and allowed. In Edge, you'll find this option under 'Site permissions', while Firefox always asks for your permission before sharing your location. To stop sites asking for your location, go to Options, Privacy & Security, Permissions, click the Settings



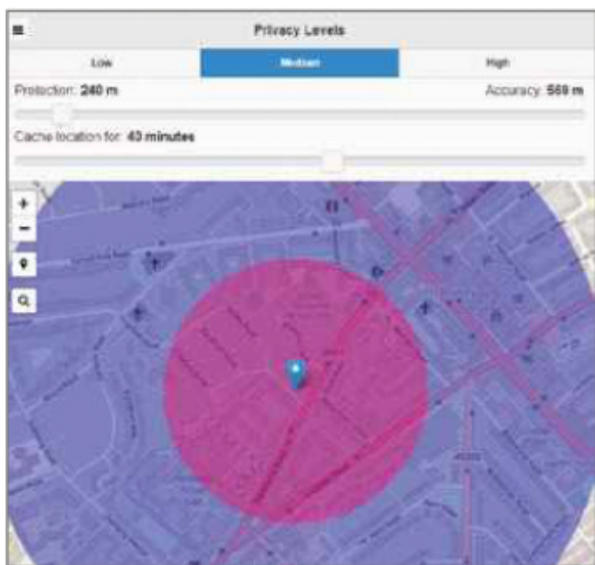
Stop sites finding out your location unless you grant permission

button next to Location and select 'Block new requests asking to access your location'.

Conceal your precise location

If you want to view local content without letting a website know exactly where you are, you can disguise your current position using the brilliant free browser tool Location Guard (bit.ly/guard508). Available for Chrome and other Chromium browsers, such as Edge, Firefox and Opera, this





Location Guard lets you pretend to be outside your immediate area

extension works in the background, applying 'noise' to your location data to make detection less accurate. There are three levels of noise, and you can switch between them on a site-by-site basis, depending on how hidden you want to be.

Unlike Tor Browser or a VPN, Location Guard won't make you appear to be in another country - your spoofed location is up to 7,116m away (about 4.5 miles), so you'll still receive relevant local information. The add-on refreshes your fake position regularly unless you choose a fixed fake location - which, by default, is the tiny Manra Island in the Pacific Ocean.

Windscribe offers a similar feature in its proxy add-on for Chrome (bit.ly/windchrome508) and Firefox (bit.ly/windfire508). You have to sign up for it, but it's free to use and works independently of the service's desktop VPN client. Once you've chosen a

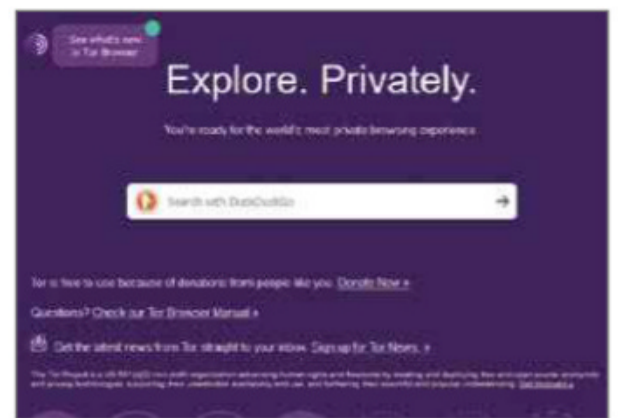


Windscribe's Location Warp fakes GPS coordinates to match your proxy

proxy server (the option won't work in Auto Pilot mode), click the extension's toolbar button, choose Privacy, then click the Other tab and switch on Location Warp. This fakes your GPS coordinates to match the proxy so that websites won't detect any discrepancy. It's also worth enabling Time Warp so your browser's time matches that of your spoofed location.

Disguise your location using Tor or a VPN

We've devoted plenty of coverage to the privacy benefits of VPNs and Tor this year - see Issues 504 (bit.ly/webuser504) and 499 (bit.ly/webuser499) respectively for our in-depth features - so we won't repeat ourselves here. We'll simply reiterate that they're the most powerful methods of hiding your location while online, because they mask your IP address to make it look as if you're browsing from



Tor Browser is a great way to hide your location but it can be slow

somewhere else. Both have the added benefit of letting you access web content that's blocked in the UK, too.

Windscribe (windscribe.com) is still our favourite free VPN, offering 10GB of anonymous data per month and servers in 11 countries, including the US. It also has affordable subscription plans for those who need more options and data.

The latest version of Tor Browser (www.torproject.org) is its most secure yet, automatically switching you to the 'onion' versions of sites where available. Tor's excellent Android app (bit.ly/tordroid508) is worth installing, too.

However, if you only want to fake specific personal information online, a VPN or Tor may be overkill, especially as their traffic-routing methods can slow your browsing speed.

Blur your house on Street View

Most of us have looked up our homes on Google Street View, but if you'd rather other people didn't see where you live, whether for privacy reasons, burglary fears or because it looked messy when Google's cameras captured the image, you can ask for it to be blurred. Click the 'Report a problem' link in the bottom-right corner of the Street View photo of your home, then adjust the red rectangle to focus on the part of the image you're reporting. Select a reason for blurring from the options below and provide any additional information. Enter your email address and click Submit. Google should apply a blur within the next few days.



Blur your home on Google Street View to stop strangers looking at it online

SHARE YOUR LOCATION USING WHAT3WORDS

Sharing your precise location without supplying an address, postcode or coordinates may sound impossible, but What3words (what3words.com) does exactly that. This fantastic free service, which is available for Android, iOS and on the web, has divided the world into 57 trillion 3x3m squares, each of which is identified by a unique address. Unlike longitude and latitude, however, What3words' addresses are easy to remember, because each consists of three randomly assigned words separated by full stops - for example 'sage.chemistry.tigers' or 'purple.monkey.dishwasher'.

These word combinations are easy to share via email, social media and over the phone, and they allow other people to find you (and vice versa)



What3words lets you share your location without providing the address

without anyone disclosing a postal address. What3words is actually more accurate than the postcode system and could prove life-saving if you're ever lost or stranded somewhere away from a road, building or obvious landmark.



YOUR FACE

Tweak photos to fool facial recognition

When you post a photo of yourself online, your main concern is probably to choose a decent one that doesn't make you look silly. However, a more worrying consideration is that facial-recognition tools may be able to identify you in images they scrape from websites, and use that data to build a profile of you.

Other than trying to fool this technology by wearing glasses, fake facial hair or a mask, you could try tweaking your photos before sharing them online using a new tool called Fawkes (bit.ly/fawkes508). Developed by students at the University of Chicago, this free program uses a process called image cloaking to make tiny, pixel-level changes to your images. These adjustments can stop facial-recognition algorithms identifying you, without blurring or ruining the picture.

To use Fawkes, click the Select Image button, choose a picture to 'cloak', then click Protect Selected Image. After a minute or so, the site saves your facial-recognition-fooling photo to the original folder. We received a security warning from Microsoft Defender when we installed Fawkes, but it's completely safe to use.



Spot the difference: Fawkes makes tiny changes to your photos to fool facial-recognition algorithms

Hide your face in search results

Earlier this year, privacy advocates raised concerns over a facial-recognition tool called PimEyes (pimeyes.com), which allowed anyone to upload a picture of you and find matches across the web. The site now accepts only webcam photos, but Google Images and TinEye (tineye.com) can both perform similar reverse-image searches.

The best way to stop your face appearing in search results is to remove



Change or remove your Google profile photo to hide your face online

it from any sites it appears on, or at least change the picture to something less identifiable, such as a cartoon avatar or a photo of a pet. To do this for Google's services, such as Gmail, YouTube and Hangouts, go to myaccount.google.com/profile, click Profile Picture and select Change or Remove.

To hide your Facebook profile photo from search results, go to Settings, Privacy and disable the option 'Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your Profile?'. For other sites and social media accounts, you'll

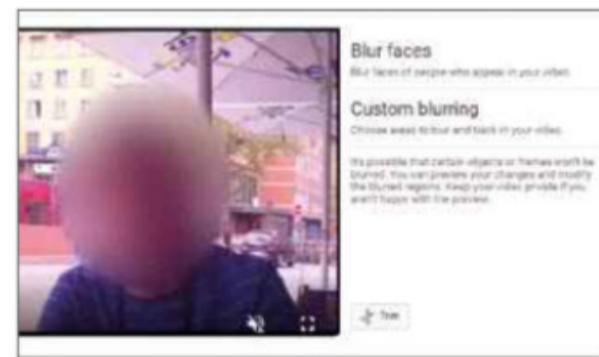
need to ask the companies and people behind them to take your photo down.

If a picture you've replaced or deleted still appears in Google's results, go to the 'Remove outdated content' page (bit.ly/removal508) and request that it be removed.

Blur your face in YouTube videos

Disguising your face in photos is relatively easy – simply use an image editor, such as LunaPic's free online tool (bit.ly/luna508), to blur it – but obscuring a moving subject in a video is much trickier. Fortunately, YouTube provides a tool that automatically detects faces in videos and lets you blur those belonging to people who may not want to be recognised – including yourself – without affecting the rest of the video. To use the tool, click Edit Video, Editor then Add Blur, which you'll find beneath the video timeline. Click the Edit button next to 'Blur faces' to choose the people whose faces you want to obscure. Play the video to make sure the blurring process has worked, then click Save.

Alternatively, select 'Custom blurring' to disguise a specific object in a video, such as a car licence plate or something embarrassing or confidential. You can blur multiple items and control how long the effect lasts. ■



YouTube can detect and blur faces in videos to protect people's privacy

NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 2 September 2020

BEST NEW PORTABLE SOFTWARE

Why install bloated programs when you can just download and go? We round up the latest free tools

PLUS...

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Best free text-to-speech tools

If you can't - or don't have time to - read lots of text on screen, get your PC to read it aloud for you. **Steve Clark** reviews the best text-to-speech tools



NaturalReader | www.naturalreaders.com | ★★★★★☆
FEATURES ★★★★★☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★★



What we liked:

NaturalReader is available as a desktop download, an online tool and a Chrome extension, but whichever version you choose, you'll find it well designed and easy to use.

The screen is dominated by a text box, into which you can paste or type any text you want the tool to read aloud. Dyslexic users also have the option to switch to a specially designed font that's easier to read.

A simple control panel at the top of the screen provides play and pause buttons, an option to upload files and a huge variety of voices, including some familiar names from Microsoft's text-to-speech services. NaturalReader is keen to help you find a voice that's right for you, with US and British accents, as well as a range of European voices. You can also change the reading speed. Automatic closed-captioning is another clever feature, which displays the text at the bottom of the screen and highlights sections as the software reads them aloud.

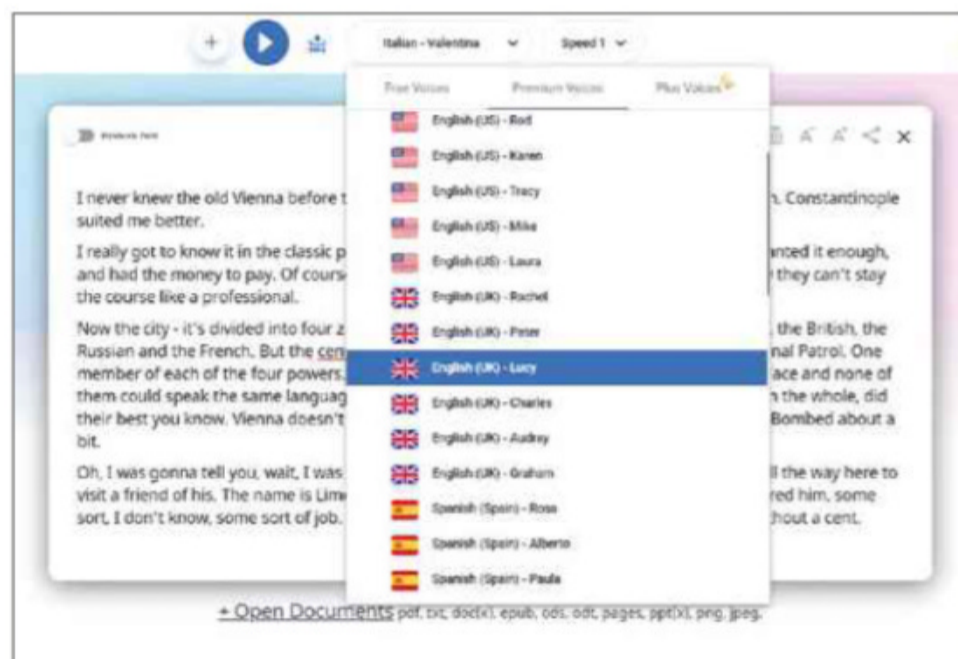
The range of file formats you can upload is limited for users of the free version, but once you've uploaded a file, you have a good selection of options

available. You can search and bookmark your document and, if you don't want to hear the entire text read out, change the reading area. Just remember to click the file once you've uploaded it - bizarrely, neither the site nor the software automatically opens your imported files.

You don't need to sign up for an account to use NaturalReader, but you gain access to a handful of extra options if you register. These include a library, which keeps all the files you've previously listened to in a Document History area, as well as a Pronunciation Editor.

How it can be improved:

We like the fact that you can access NaturalReader in several different ways, but the lack of a mobile app feels strange. Otherwise, this excellent text-to-speech tool is hard to fault. It's



just a pity that some of its best features, such as translating audio files to text and reading PDFs and images, are locked behind a Pro payment plan, which costs \$99.50 (£74.70).

OUR VERDICT

NaturalReader is a near-flawless text-to-speech tool that's accurate and easy to use. Its clean design, cross-platform support and file upload options all go in its favour. However, the free version is missing a few of its best features.

Capti Voice | www.captivoice.com | ★★★★★☆
 FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★



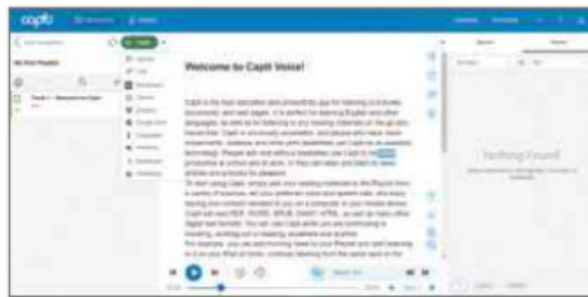
What we liked:

Capti Voice was originally designed for use in schools, so it's more than good enough for most home users.

The program's educational heritage means it offers an excellent range of useful extras, too, including a wide range of options for uploading files. Capti Voice can import text from all the main cloud storage platforms, URLs, your phone's camera and even Project Gutenberg ebooks.

Playlists on the right of the screen keep all your texts together. For longer documents, you can consult a table of contents and jump to different sections.

While the sidebar offers a few options, the main controls appear in the playback bar at the bottom of the screen. Here you can play and skip tracks, replay the last segment, change the reading speed and search the text for particular words. You can even use the playback slider to jump to specific segments of a text, just as you would on a music player.



How it can be improved:

Capti Voice's major stumbling block is that you can't copy and paste text into it. Anything you want it to read aloud must first be uploaded as a 'track'. Some features are reserved for paying customers, as you'd expect, but annoyingly, this includes additional voices. Similarly, many of the options in the right-click menu, such as translation services, require a subscription.

OUR VERDICT

This otherwise handy program is let down by the lack of an open text field for typing or pasting text. But if you're happy to upload everything you want to hear and don't mind the default voice, it gets top marks.

Panopreter | www.panopreter.com | ★★★★★☆
 FEATURES ★★★☆☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★



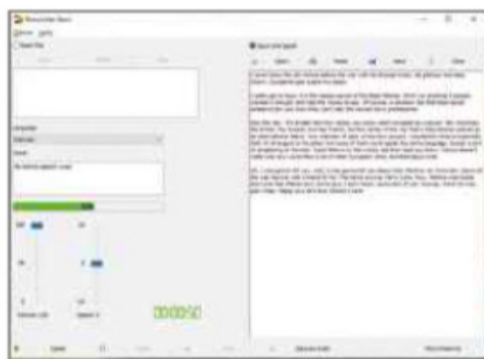
What we liked:

There's an admirable simplicity to Panopreter's interface. It has a text box on the right of the

screen for pasting or typing text, and a section for uploading files on the left. Below this, you'll find the program's voice options, including sliders for adjusting the speed and volume, with playback controls at the foot of the screen. No one could accuse Panopreter of being cluttered or confusing.

Text-to-speech is accurate, and we love the progress bar, which shows how far through the text you are as a percentage. There's also a counter for timing the text-to-speech output. The 'Save as Audio' option is a nice touch, allowing you to create WAV files of your text for offline playback.

If you're feeling playful, head into the settings, where you can set Panopreter to play music once it's finished reading



your texts aloud. Here, you'll also find options to customise the colour scheme, should you find the garish neon-green buttons a bit much.

How it can be improved:

This tool doesn't pretend to be anything but basic. There are few features to play with beyond its multiple voices, and even those are something of a letdown: very few languages have their own text-to-speech voice, so the program falls back on the default voice instead.

OUR VERDICT

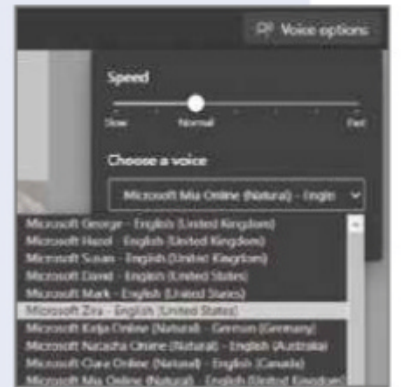
Panopreter has everything the average home needs and nothing they don't, which keeps things simple, at least. The only advanced feature is its audio-save option, but it's a good one to have.

BEST OF THE REST

Microsoft text-to-speech services

Various

Microsoft has been making its tools more accessible for years now, which is why you'll find highly accurate text-to-speech services in most of its products. There's no single download - instead, you'll find a Read Aloud option under the Review tab in almost every Office program. Edge supports text-to-speech, too, both for websites and PDFs. The best thing about Microsoft's tools is the huge range of voices.



Free TTS

freetts.com

Free TTS is a great program for Windows and macOS, although we prefer the web version. Unfortunately, the free service is capped at 6,000

characters per week, which may not be enough. The tool makes full use of existing text-to-speech services, with the option to use voice styles developed by Amazon, Google and Microsoft. As with Panopreter, you can also download the audio to listen to later.



Balabolka

balabolka.site

This mighty text-to-speech program is for Windows only. It supports an extensive list of file formats and uses Microsoft's existing Speech API to read your content out loud. You can also

paste text into the box on the screen. We particularly like its ability to save and sync converted speech as MP3 files, and the way it displays the words on screen as it reads them aloud. The design looks dated, however, and many useful options are hidden in tabs rather than placed within easy reach.



CHANGE YOUR DEFAULTS ON ANY DEVICE

Don't be forced to use software you don't like. **Wayne Williams** explains how to make your favourite programs and apps the default choice on your PC and mobile devices

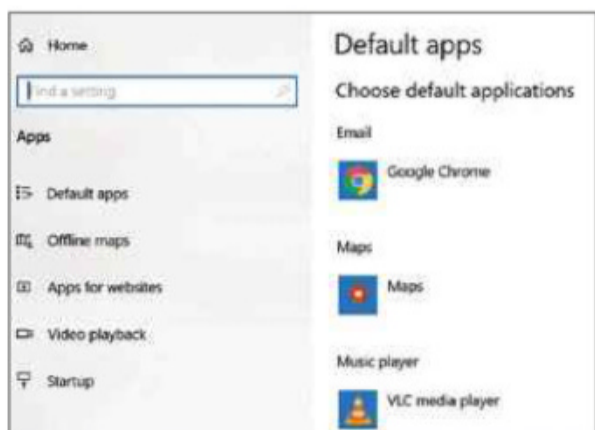


Change Windows' default apps and programs

When you double-click a file, such as a video, audio clip or document, Windows opens it in whichever app or program is set as the default option for that format. Often it's one of Microsoft's own programs - such as its Edge browser or Photos viewer - although installing new software can change this. If a program other than your preferred option opens when you double-click a file, you need to change the default.

To do this in Windows 10, type `default` into the Windows search box and press Enter to open the Default Apps settings screen. Here you can check which applications are your defaults for email, maps, music, photos, videos and web browsing. To change a default, click it. A box opens showing the available choices, including an option to download a new program from the Microsoft Store.

Alternatively, right-click a file and select Open With. You can choose a program from the list or, if the one you want isn't there, select the option to choose a different app. Tell Windows to use that app to open all files in that format in future.



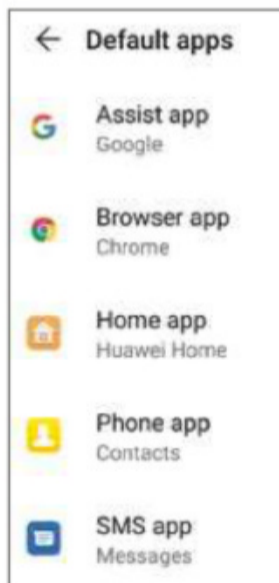
Changing the default programs Windows uses for different tasks is easy



Change the default apps on your phone and tablet

Most iOS users know that Apple sets its own apps as the defaults. Currently the only way around this is to jailbreak your device, which can damage it and invalidate your warranty. Some apps, such as Flipboard, let you set your own defaults within them, however. When iOS 14 launches later this year, you'll also be able to change your default email and browser apps, which is a welcome move.

Android devices don't have any such restrictions, so you're free to set and



Set your Android device to use the apps you want



Change Windows 10's default search engine

Microsoft has baked its Bing search engine into Windows 10, so if you search the web by typing into the taskbar search box or asking Cortana, Bing provides the results. Sadly, Microsoft's search engine isn't quite up to Google's standards for accuracy or as private as DuckDuckGo. There's no option to change the default, which is



Search Deflector lets you change Windows 10's default search engine

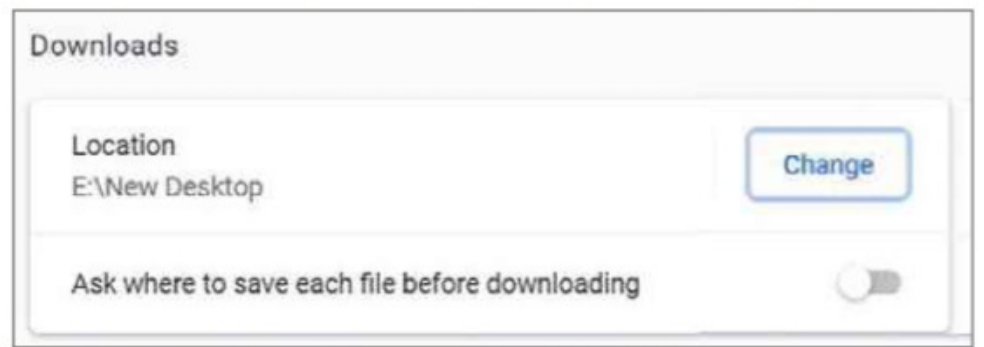
frustrating, but you can install an app called Search Deflector (bit.ly/deflector508), which redirects searches you make through the taskbar or Cortana to your preferred search engine. This tool used to be free, but currently costs £1.69.



Change your browser's default search engine

Changing the default search engine in your browser is pretty straightforward. In Chrome, open Settings, select 'Search engine' on the left, then choose an alternative from the drop-down menu. Options include Bing, Yahoo, the privacy-focused DuckDuckGo and the tree-planting search engine Ecosia. If the provider you want isn't listed, click the 'Manage search engines' link and select one from there.

Microsoft really wants you to use Bing, so the option to switch search engines in Edge is pretty well hidden. To find it, click the three-dot menu button and select Settings, then 'Privacy and services'. Scroll down to Services, click the 'Address bar' option at the very



You don't have to use Google to perform searches in Chrome **Change which folder your browser downloads files to by default**

bottom and choose a different search provider from the drop-down menu.

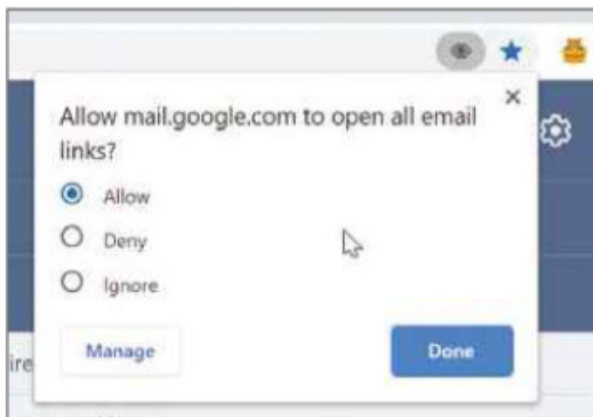
In Firefox, open Options, click the Search heading on the left, then use the drop-down menu to choose a search engine. Here you can also manage your One-Click alternative search engines, which appear as options under the search bar when you start typing.

In Chrome on your mobile device, tap the three-dot button and open Settings to change the search engine.

Change your email client in Windows 10

When you click an email address on the web, your default email client should open, allowing you to send a message. In Windows 10 that's likely to be the Mail app, but it could also be Microsoft Edge. If you have a Gmail account, you may prefer that to open automatically when you click an address, but because it's a website rather than a program, Windows doesn't provide that option.

There is a workaround, however. Open Settings, Apps, 'Default apps' and set Email to Google Chrome. Now when you click an email address, Chrome should open. It won't take you to Gmail though. To set this up, go to the Gmail website and look for a double-diamond icon to the right of the address bar. Hover your mouse over this and you'll see a message that says 'This page wants to install a service handler'. Click this and allow mail.google.com to open all email links.

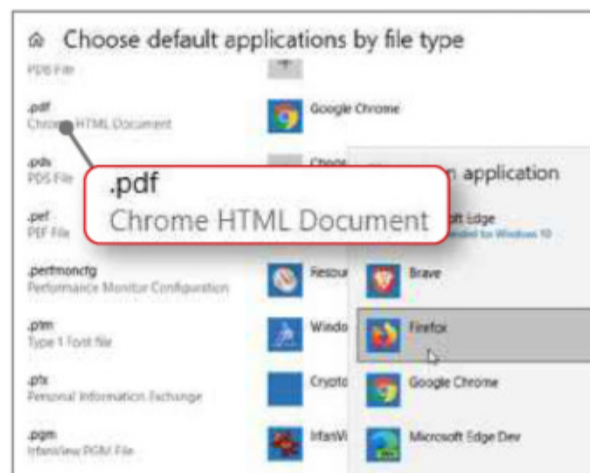


Set Gmail as your default email client rather than Windows Mail

Change your PDF viewer

Even if Microsoft Edge isn't your default browser, there's a good chance

you use it for other tasks, such as viewing PDFs. This is because Microsoft has set it as the default program for that file format. If you'd rather view PDFs in Chrome or another program, open Settings, Apps, 'Default apps' and click 'Choose default applications by file type'. When the list loads, scroll down to '.pdf' and click the button next to it, which should say Edge. Select the app you want to use instead. Edge may try to persuade you that it's the best option, but click 'Switch anyway'.



Microsoft can't force you to use Edge for viewing PDF documents

Change the location of your download folder

Most browsers save any files you download from the internet to the Downloads folder on your computer, but you may prefer to save them somewhere else, such as your desktop or a more private location. To change the default destination for downloads in Chrome, click the three-dot menu button and choose Settings, followed by the Advanced link. Click the Change button under Downloads and select your preferred folder.

To change your download folder in Microsoft Edge, go to Settings and click Downloads on the left, then Change.

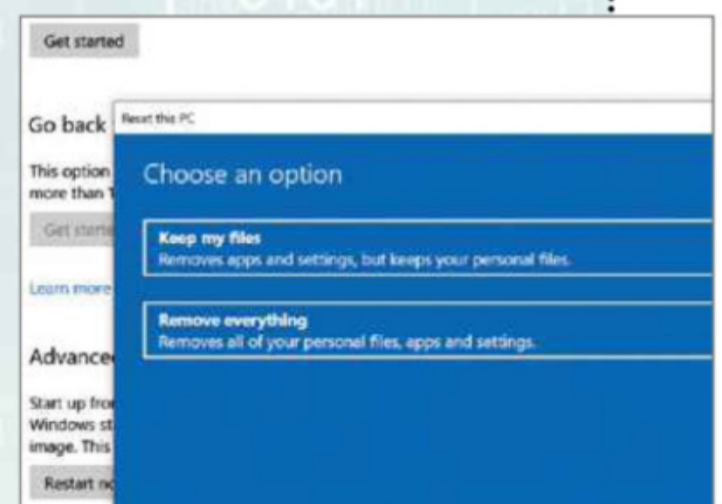
Firefox users should click the three-line menu button, select Options, then browse for a new folder to use for downloads under 'Files and Applications'.

If you want to select a different save location for every file you download, choose that option in your browser when changing the default. ■

RESET EVERYTHING TO DEFAULT SETTINGS

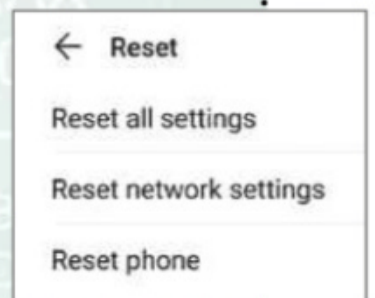
There may come a time when you want to put everything back the way it was, whether that means resetting your default applications or the entire operating system. In Windows 10, you can restore the defaults by going to Settings, Apps, 'Default apps' and clicking the button under 'Reset to the Microsoft recommended defaults'. If you want to reset Windows 10 to its factory settings without losing any of your data, go to Settings, Update & Security and select Recovery on the left. Click the 'Get started' button under 'Reset this PC'. The installer will ask if you want to keep your personal files (which you no doubt do) and then reinstall Windows.

Until iOS 14 arrives, you can't change the default apps on your iPhone or iPad, but you can reset your device by going to Settings, General, Reset and tapping Reset All Settings. If you're selling your phone



or giving it away, use the option to Erase All Content and Settings.

In Android, open Settings, swipe down and tap 'System & updates', then Reset (this option may be under Advanced). From there you can reset your network connections and app preferences, or erase all your data.



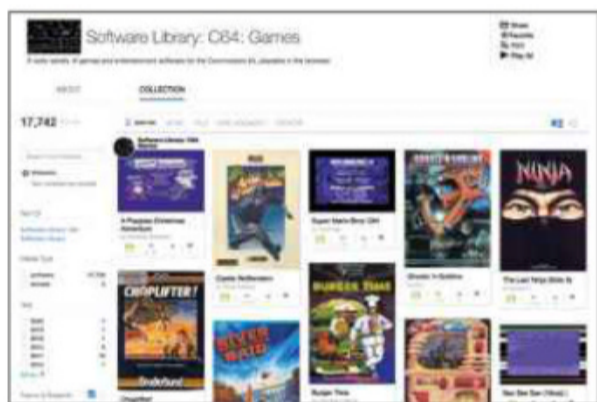
Play retro games online



You don't need to buy a second-hand console and dust off old cartridges to play classic games. David Crookes reveals where you can enjoy them in your browser for free

PLAY HOME COMPUTER CLASSICS

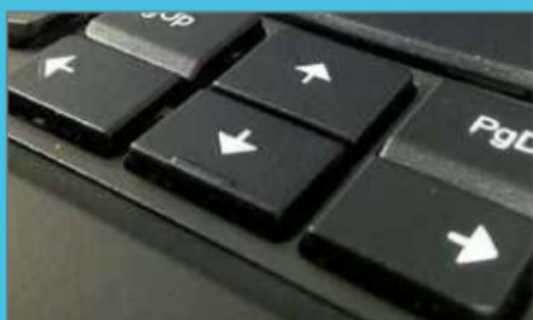
Thanks to emulation software, which recreates virtual versions of old computers online, many classic computer games are just a click away. You can play ZX Spectrum games in your browser via the QAOP emulator (bit.ly/qaop508), for example. Choose from dozens of classics including Manic Miner, Chase HQ and Skool Daze. Alternatively, go to the Internet Archive (bit.ly/spectrum508) for a choice of more than 9,600 Spectrum titles.



The Internet Archive has an abundance of games from other platforms, too, including a library of 17,742 Commodore 64 titles (bit.ly/commo508) and software for the Amstrad CPC (bit.ly/amstrad491). For the latter, we prefer CrocoDS (crocods.org/web). Click the database icon at the bottom of the screen, use the arrow

WHICH KEYS DO I USE?

Many browser-based games don't tell you how to control them, so you may have to experiment with the keys. That said, try the arrow keys, W, A, S and D or Q, A, O and P to move a character up, down, left and right. Pressing Enter often selects options, while Space is commonly used to jump or fire.



keys to navigate the games and select the main file (which usually has the suffix '.bas').

The BBC Micro inspired a generation of coders in the 1980s, and you can reacquaint yourself with this classic computer at the Complete BBC Micro Games Archive (www.bbcmicro.co.uk). If you prefer some 16-bit action, head back to the Internet Archive for the Amiga library (bit.ly/amiga508) or go to Classic Reload (bit.ly/reload508), where you'll find a curated selection of Amiga games.

RELIVE CLASSIC ARCADE GAMES

One of the first arcade games to pull in the punters in huge numbers was Atari's table tennis "sim" Pong from 1972. At Play Pong (playpong.net), you can use your mouse to move the paddle and hit the ball as you try to defeat your computer opponent. If you're feeling confident, turn up the difficulty level to insane.

You can try your hand at other classic Atari titles, from Asteroids and Centipede to Missile Command and Tempest, at IGN (my.ign.com/atari). Each game includes single and multiplayer options and lets you play full-screen, although you'll need to enable the outdated Adobe Flash Player.



Fans of Namco's classic Pac-Man game can chomp dots and avoid ghosts to their heart's content on The World's Biggest Pac-Man website (worldsbiggestpacman.com), which features a jaw-dropping 571,000 user-contributed mazes. If you log in through Facebook, you can even create your own. Meanwhile, there are 1,722 classic arcade games waiting for you at the Internet Archive's Internet Arcade (bit.ly/arcade508), including Paperboy, Q*bert and Street Fighter II.

EXPLORE TEXT ADVENTURES

For a slower pace of game, why not try some text-based 'interactive fiction'. The first known example, Colossal Cave Adventure, was created by Will Crowther between 1975 and 1977 and is available to play in your browser on a simulated PC screen from 1983 (bit.ly/cave508). When you inevitably get stuck, use the hints or read the FAQ for help. You'll find solutions to this and other adventure games at www.solutionarchive.com.



If that has whetted your appetite for more text-based fun, head to Text Adventures (textadventures.co.uk) to enjoy more acclaimed interactive fiction, including games from developer Infocom - whose Zork trilogy is a must. The source code for this and other Infocom adventures is available on GitHub (bit.ly/infocom508), while iFiction (www.ifiction.org/games) offers even more classics, including games by lauded writers Scott Adams and Brian Howarth.



ENJOY OLD MOBILE GAMES

Remember Snake, the game that once had millions of Nokia users glued to their screens? Well, you may not be surprised to learn that this classic has slithered its way online. Snake (5snake.com) is a fast-moving version coded in HTML5, with an old Nokia phone as a screen border. Play Snake (playsnake.org) is similar but with a larger screen area, and you can choose a level – Slug, Worm or Python. For a more modern take, try Google Maps Snake (snake.googlemaps.com), which lets you select a destination – including Cairo, São Paulo, London or Tokyo – and steer a snake-like vehicle around a pixelated landscape as you pick up passengers.

The Internet Archive's iOS Classics database (bit.ly/ios508) is home to a selection of iOS games that have long left the App Store, including 352 titles released between 2008 and 2014.

DISCOVER FORGOTTEN GEMS

Some games never see the light of day. Publishers go bust, projects are canned and creators simply don't finish what they started. Games That Weren't (bit.ly/werent508) has tracked down many of these lost gems for you to try using an emulator.

We prefer games you can play in your browser, however, and The Oliver Twins have excelled themselves in this respect. This developer duo created numerous graphic adventures based on their Dizzy character, and over the past few years they've shared three unreleased Nintendo Entertainment System games from the series: Mystery World Dizzy,



Wonderland Dizzy and Dreamworld Pogie. Play them at Yolkfolk (bit.ly/dizzy508), along with other Dizzy games and titles created by The Oliver Twins. Alternatively, head to the brothers' own website (www.olivertwins.com). For more retro titles from the twins' publisher Codemasters, visit thecodemastersarchive.co.uk.

BLAST THROUGH SOME 3D CLASSICS

Minecraft is a hugely successful game, with more than 126 million active users. But how did it start? Play the Creative Mode in 2009's Minecraft Classic (classic.minecraft.net) to see for yourself. Use your keyboard to move around the landscape, and click the left mouse button to mine and place blocks. You can invite up to nine friends

to join you for multiplayer action.

If you like games with a little more edge, try Doom, the groundbreaking first-person shooter that debuted in 1993. The source code was released four years later, and it has since been converted to Flash (bit.ly/doom508), but the original PC game is available online thanks to the DOSBox emulator. Search for it on the Internet Archive's Classic PC Games page (bit.ly/classicpc08), where you'll also find 15,000 other DOS and Windows games. Versions of Doom for various consoles are available at Play Emulator (bit.ly/moredoom508), as well as other Nintendo and Sega console games.

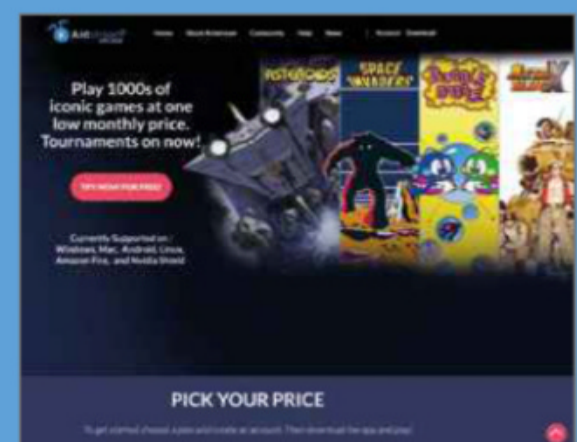
What about PlayStation? Well, few games are more iconic than Tomb Raider, and an open-source project brings part of the 1996 original to your browser. OpenLara (bit.ly/openlara429) is constantly updated, and you can play full-screen if you wish. ■



PAY TO PLAY RETRO GAMES

We've looked at games that you can play for free in your browser, but there are a few subscription services worth considering too. Chief among them is Antstream (www.antstream.com), which is available for Windows, macOS, Android, Linux, Nvidia Shield and Amazon Fire TV. This service gives you access to thousands of retro games including Bubble Bobble, Double Dragon and Speedball 2 on platforms such as the C64, Amiga, NES, Sega Mega Drive, MSX, ZX Spectrum and more. Games are streamed rather than downloaded, and there are

challenges to complete and leaderboards, too. Antstream is free for seven days and costs £7.99 per month after that.





Practical WebUser

16 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

Try Linux Mint 20 'Ulyana'

Linux Mint was recently updated, introducing new features alongside the latest versions of its bundled programs. Here's how to use the distro

Linux Mint: www.linuxmint.com | ⌚ 30 mins | Any PC

If you've had enough of Windows 10, or just fancy trying something new, Linux Mint is a great alternative. It's built from Ubuntu (ubuntu.com) and comes in three desktop environments: Cinnamon (the most popular), MATE (speedy and stable) and Xfce (very lightweight).

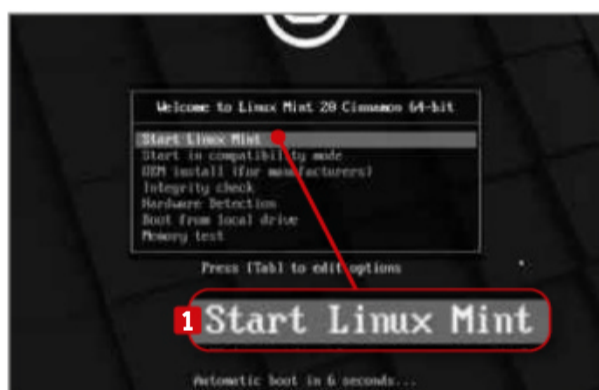
As with most Linux operating systems, you can try Mint without installing it, to

see if you like it what it offers. If you're not ready to give up Windows entirely, you can install Mint alongside Microsoft's operating system and boot into either OS when you start your PC.

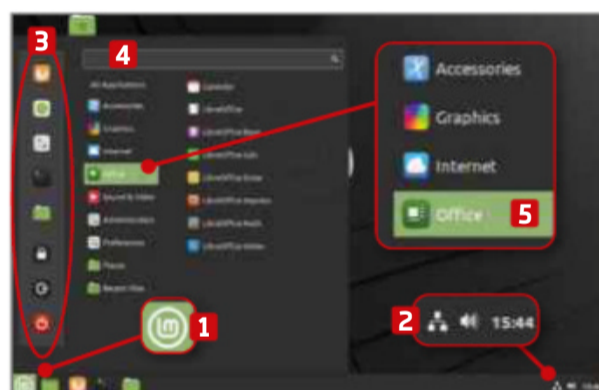
Linux Mint 20, also known as Ulyana, is a long-term support (LTS) release, which means it will be officially supported until 2025.

INSTALL LINUX MINT

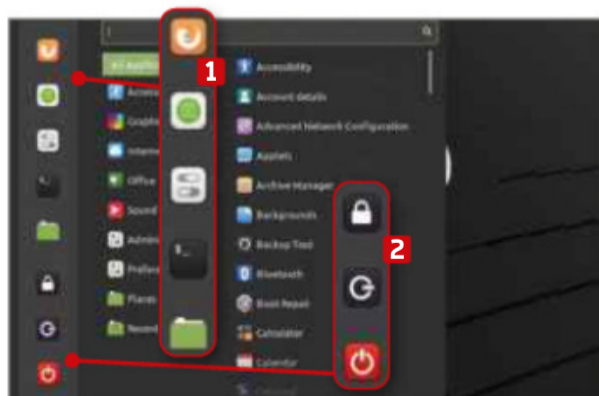
If you like what you see, double-click the desktop icon to open the wizard and install Mint on your PC, either as the main OS or alongside Windows



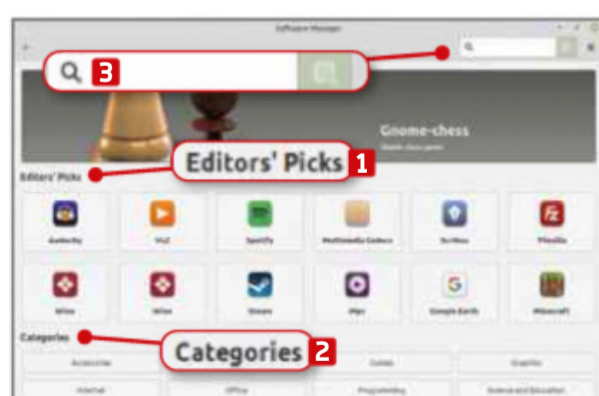
1 Download the Mint version you want (try Cinnamon to start with) and burn the ISO file to DVD or write it to a USB memory stick using Etcher (www.balena.io/etcher). Boot from it and, in the welcome menu, select Start Linux Mint **1** to try it without making any changes to your PC.



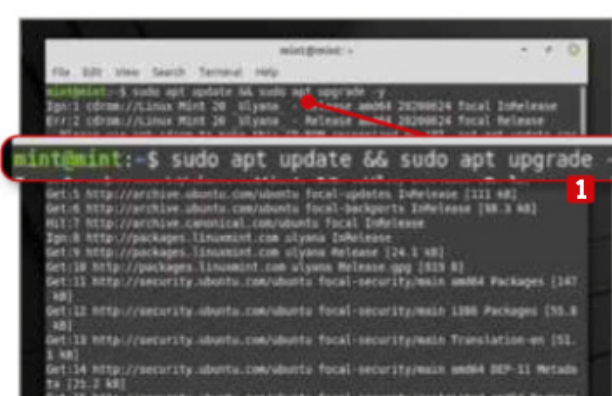
2 Cinnamon isn't dissimilar to Windows - you'll easily identify its desktop, taskbar (called Panel), start button **1** and system tray. **2** Click the start button to reveal the menu. From here, you can access important tools **3** or launch apps. Select a category from the apps list, **4** then click the app you want. **5**



3 From the top, running down the sidebar, the tools on the left **1** include Firefox, the software manager (to install new apps), System Settings, the command-line Terminal and the Files manager. You can also lock the screen, log out or shutdown. **2**



4 The Software Manager offers a simple way of installing popular apps. Run it and choose from the Editors' Picks, **1** which include WhatsApp, Audacity, Spotify and Wine (a Windows emulator) or browse by category. **2** You can also search by name. **3**



5 Terminal is Linux's powerful command-line tool. It lets you execute lots of useful commands. Run Terminal and you can quickly check for updates and install them by entering `sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y`. **1** You can also use Terminal to install the latest versions of software.



HOME

Double-click the Home icon on the desktop to open the file manager, where you can explore your computer

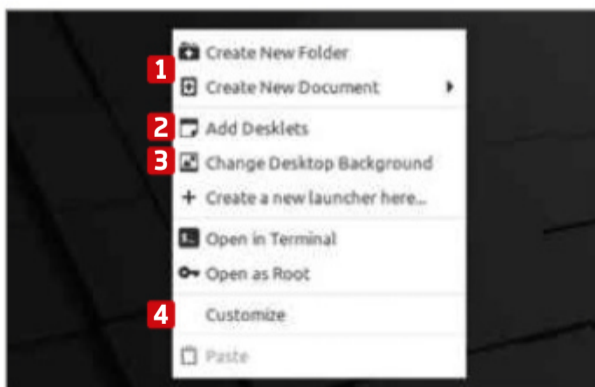
WORKSPACES

Mint comes with four workspaces (virtual desktops), which you can switch between by pressing Ctrl+Alt and using the left and right arrow keys

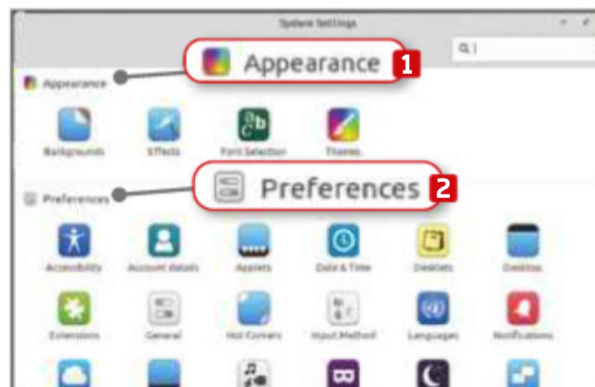
Workspace 2

NETWORK

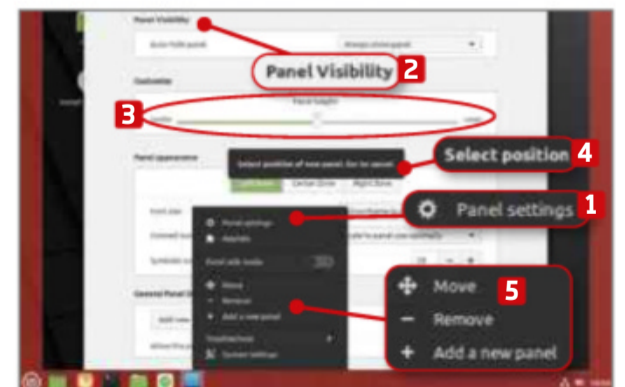
Click the Network icon to manage your network connections and settings



6 To change Mint's look, right-click the desktop and use the menu to create new folders or documents, **1** add desklets (widgets such as clocks and photo frames), **2** change the desktop background **3** and customise the monitor layout, **4** changing the size and arrangement of icons.



7 Open System Settings from the Mint menu to adjust the appearance by changing the backgrounds, fonts and themes, and adding and removing effects. **1** You can also adjust Mint's behaviour under Preferences. **2** Scroll down to the Hardware section where you can adjust screen resolution.



8 Right-click the Panel (taskbar) at the bottom to open its settings. **1** You can adjust the Panel's visibility, **2** size **3** and position. **4** The Panel adjusts to show changes as you make them. You can also move or remove a panel, or add additional ones on other sides of the screen. **5**



Share files across your devices without the cloud



Resilio Sync: bit.ly/res508 | ⌚ 20 mins | 🖥️ 7, 8, 10 🤖 4+ 🍏 macOS 10.8, iOS/iPadOS 8+ 🐧

EXPERT TIP

Andy Shaw says

Click the cog icon to explore Resilio's Settings. In the General section, you can choose to launch Resilio automatically and receive Windows notifications. You can also control where the program stores files, and whether it should ask each time you download something new. The Identity section lets you change the names of your devices, while in the Advanced area you can limit Resilio's bandwidth so it won't hog your Wi-Fi.



There are two main ways to share and sync your files online. The first is cloud-based sharing, where you use a cloud storage service, such as Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive, to store, transfer and sync your files. The other is peer-to-peer sharing, where you share files between two or more devices by making a direct connection.

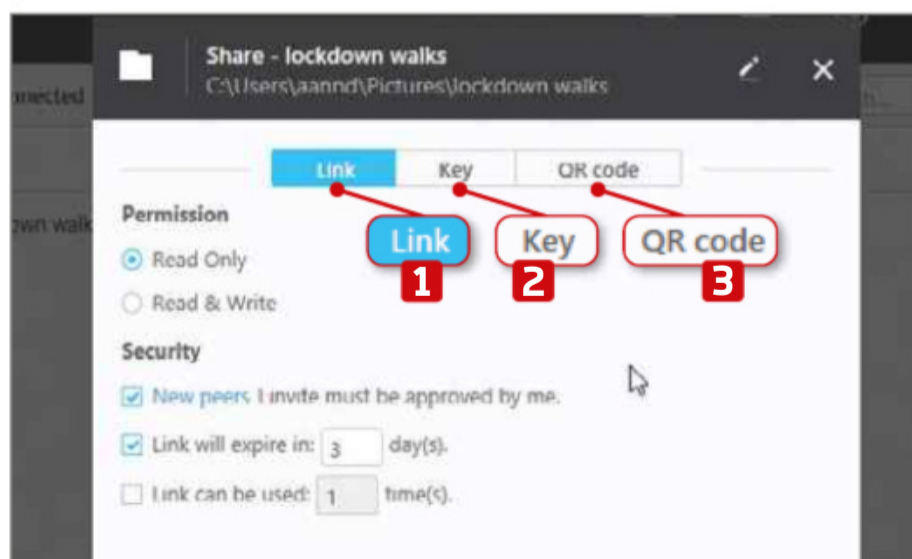
Both systems have their pros and cons. Cloud services offer limited storage space, and large files can soon eat into your allowance. You're also placing considerable trust in a third party to look after your files. For peer-to-peer sharing, both devices must be switched on, but that's not a problem if you control them both. Resilio Sync is a powerful peer-to-peer tool that lets you share files and folders directly between two or more of your devices.



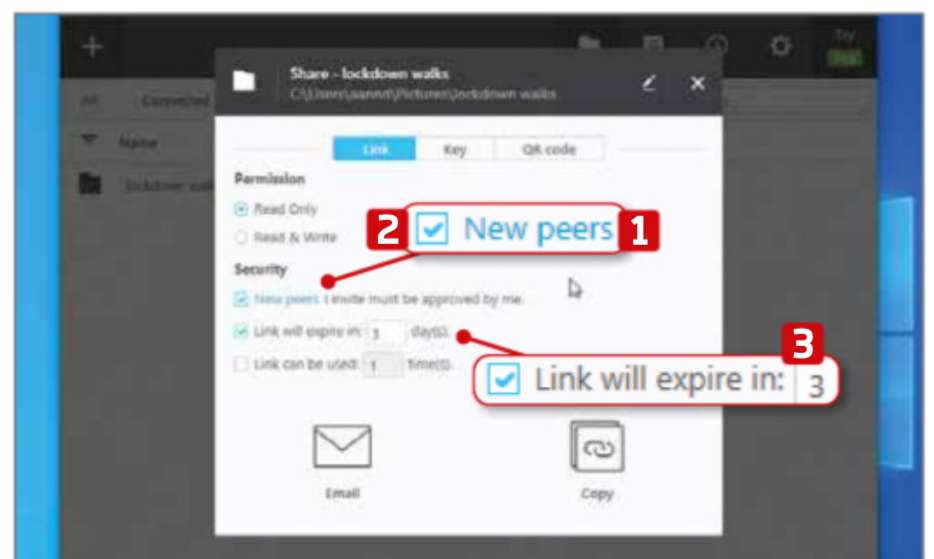
1 Install the software on the devices you want to sync between. Start by choosing a name **1** or accept the program's suggestion. Read and tick the boxes **2** to activate the 'Get started' button. **3** Resilio launches with a blank window because you haven't shared anything yet.



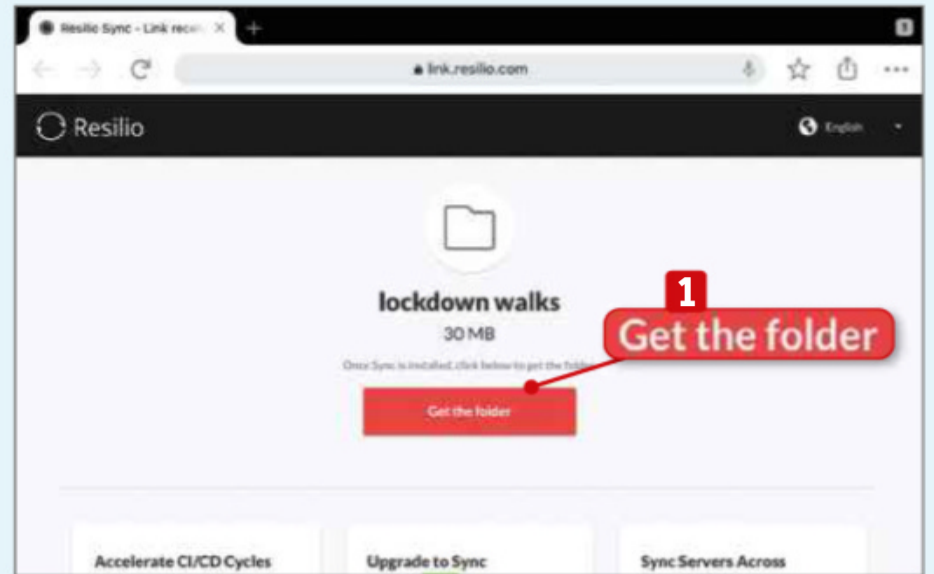
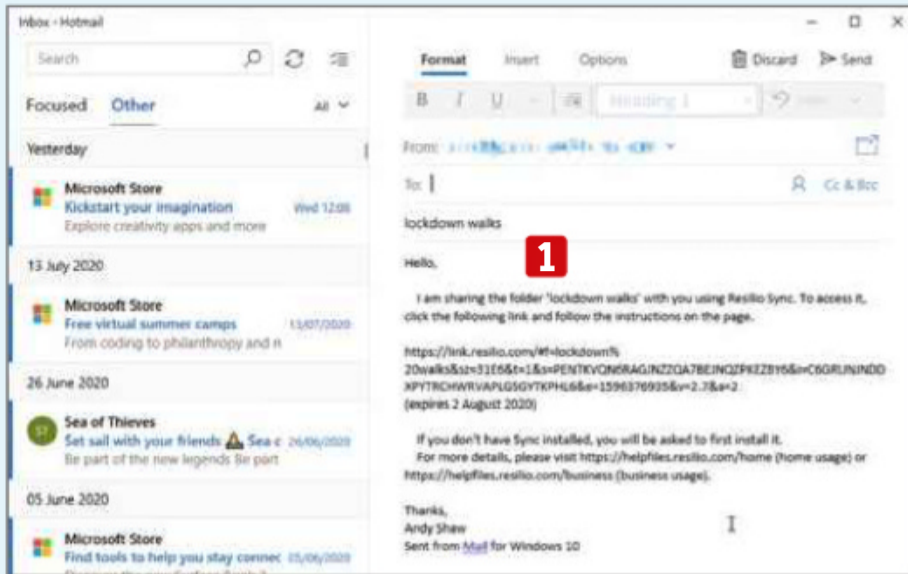
2 Click the Add button **1** to open the sharing options. To share an existing folder of files with another device, choose 'Standard folder'. **2** To share a single file, choose 'Share file'. **3** In the window that opens, select the folder or file you want to share.



3 Resilio offers several ways to share the folder with your other devices. Link **1** creates a link that opens in a browser, while Key **2** generates an alphanumeric code. Alternatively, create a QR code **3** that you can scan using your phone or tablet's camera. Whichever option you choose, decide whether you want to give Read Only or Read & Write access.

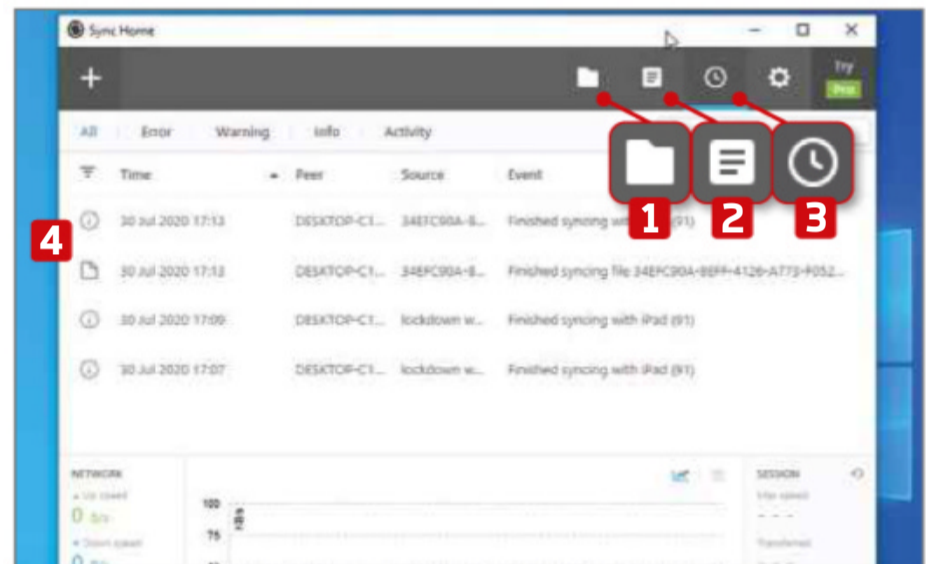
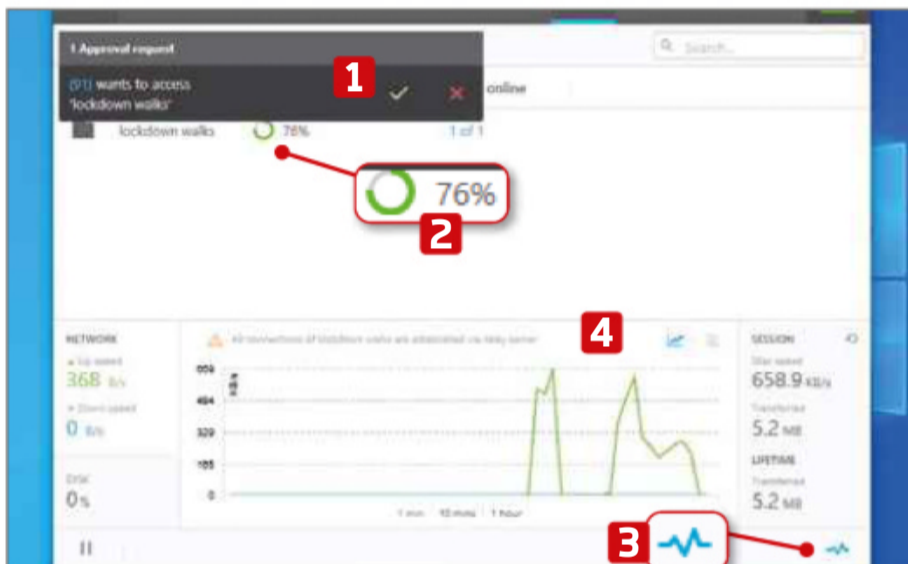


4 Resilio asks you to approve all recipients ('All peers') or only those you haven't shared anything with before ('New peers'). Click the 'New peers' link **1** to change this option to 'All peers', or untick the option **2** to share with anyone without approval. You can also set the link's expiry date. **3**



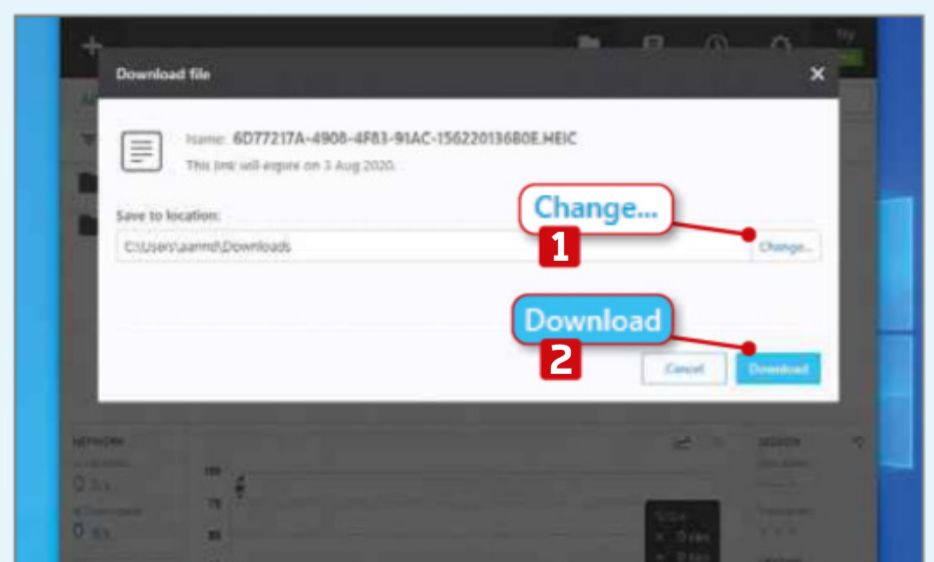
5 When you click the email link, the software automatically generates a message to send to another person or device. **1** Alternatively, click the Copy option to save the link to your clipboard. To share a file or folder with a new device at a later date, right-click the folder and choose Share.

6 Once you've sent your link, switch to the device you're syncing with and click it. If you don't already have the Resilio software or app installed on that device, the link directs you to a website where you can access it. Install the app or program on the new device, then go back to the link and click 'Get the folder'. **1**



7 Back on your original device, depending on how you set up sharing, Resilio may ask you to confirm that you want to let the new device access the folder. **1** As your files download, you can view the transfer's Status **2** and click the blue graph icon **3** to see a graph. **4**

8 You can now share files and folders with the devices you have set up. Use the Folders **1** and 'Shared files' **2** tabs to share folders and individual files. The History tab **3** provides a useful record you can check to see what you have shared. **4**



9 Use encryption when sharing a folder with a device you don't control. Click the Add button **1** and choose 'Encrypted folder'. **2** Now when you select a folder, Resilio takes you straight to the Key section, where you'll find an additional 'Encrypted key'. Click Copy to send this to your trusted source. The file or folder is inaccessible without it.

10 If you receive a link from someone else (or another device), open the Add menu and select 'Enter a key or link'. Paste in the link, then click Next. To change the default save location, click the Change button. **1** Click Download **2** to receive the files.



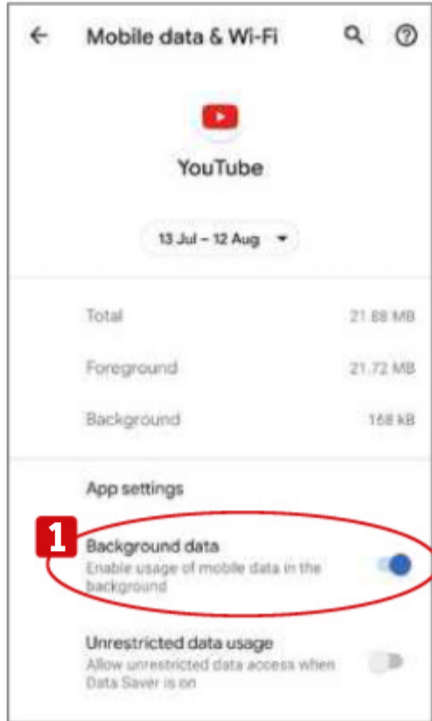
Block Android apps accessing the internet

Are your apps using up mobile data and Wi-Fi bandwidth in the background, without your permission? On an Android phone, you can stop all the apps on your device accessing your networks (we'll show you how, below).

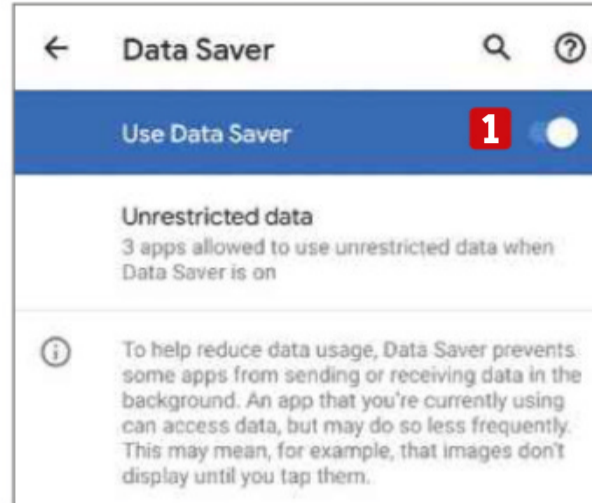
To get even more control, you should download and install NetGuard. This handy app lets you block or allow individual apps that try to access the internet.



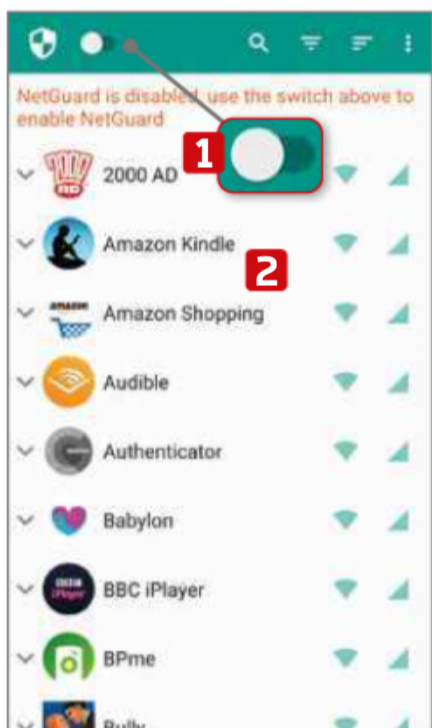
NetGuard: bit.ly/netguard508 | ⌚ 10 mins | 🤖 Android 5.1+



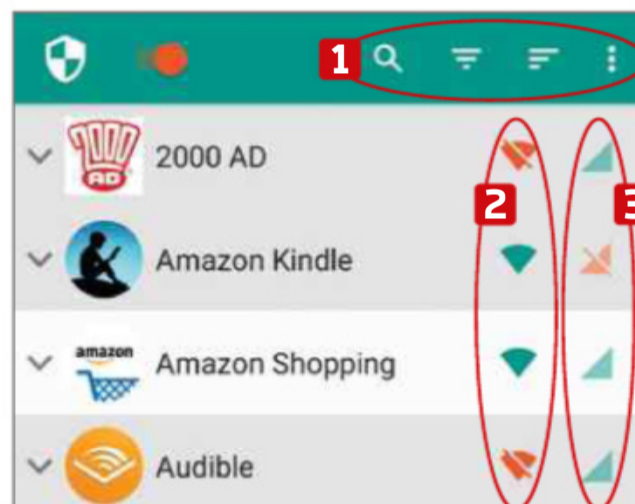
1 First things first, let's stop any unused app from connecting to mobile data when your Wi-Fi isn't on. Search Settings for app data usage, in the Mobile Network section. Tap each app and turn off 'Background data'. **1** This only stops background use - if you use the app, it still connects to the internet.



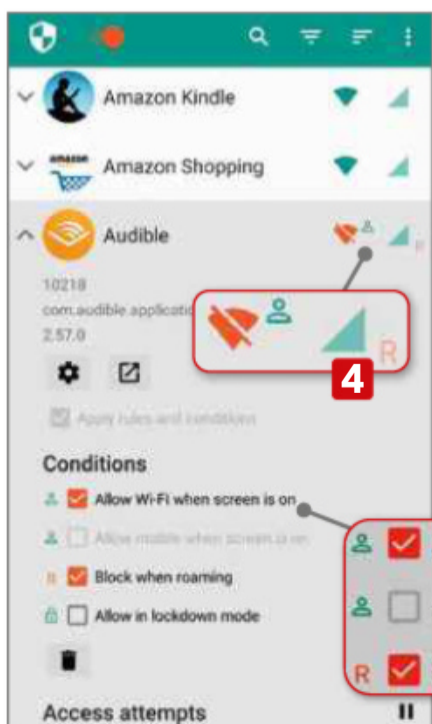
2 For a more fine-tuned option, turn on Data Saver. This setting prevents apps and sites from using your internet connection to download media, files and updates, even while in use. You'll find it under Settings, 'Network and Internet'. Tap into Data Saver, then toggle the switch to on. **1**



3 For more nuanced control of your apps, install and open NetGuard. The app needs to be switched on, so first toggle the main switch. **1** You must then go through the VPN permission screens, since that's how the app filters internet traffic. Finally, you land back on the home screen, which displays a list of your installed apps. **2**



4 To the right of the main switch are the Search, Show, Sort and Settings buttons. **1** Beside each app is the current connection type: Wi-Fi **2** or Mobile Data. **3** Tap either symbol to strike it out - the app can no longer connect via that method.



5 Tap an app to see more information and access specific Conditions. Let's say you've turned off an app's Wi-Fi access. This unlocks the 'Allow Wi-Fi when screen is on' option. **1** There's an equivalent option for mobile data. **2** You may also block connections when roaming. **3** If this is on, an 'R' appears next to the mobile data symbol. **4**

6 For a broader approach to connection-blocking, tap the three-dot icon in the top-right corner of the home screen and go into NetGuard's Settings. There's plenty to explore, but you should start by selecting Defaults. Here, with one tap, you can toggle Wi-Fi on or off, **1** and do the same for mobile data **2** for every app. If permitted, your internet connections may also be established whenever the screen is on. **3**





Recover files you thought you'd lost forever

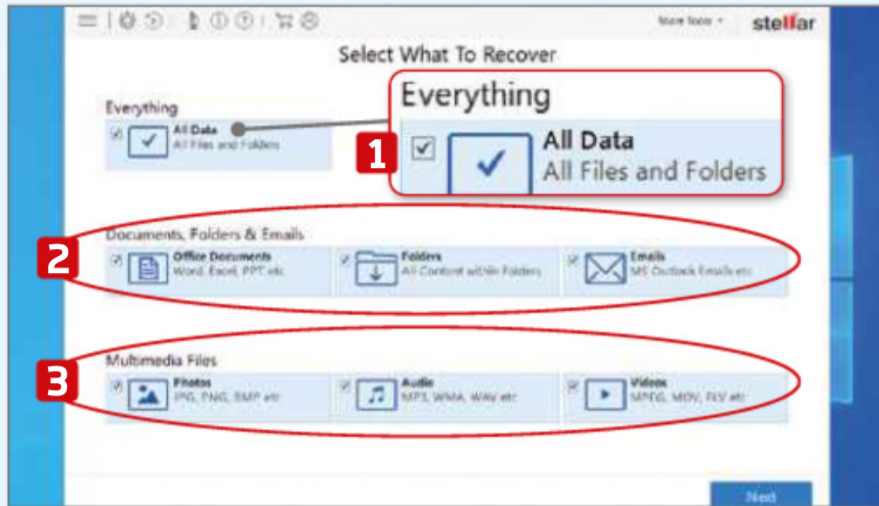
Anyone who has ever used a computer will probably have experienced that heart-stopping moment when they realise they've deleted something they shouldn't have. You can avoid these panic-inducing situations by

Stellar Free Data Recovery: bit.ly/stellar508

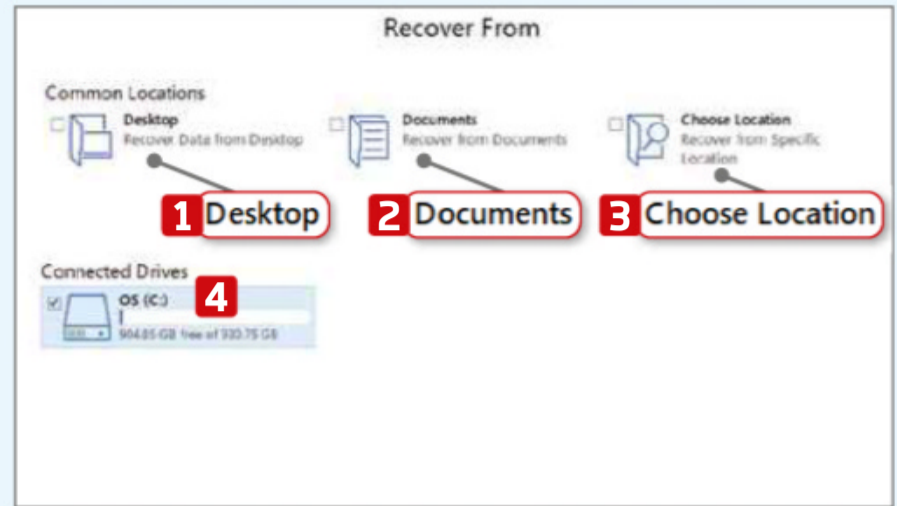
keeping a copy of Stellar Free Data Recovery on your PC, ready to spring into action when disaster strikes and you need to recover a lost file or folder.



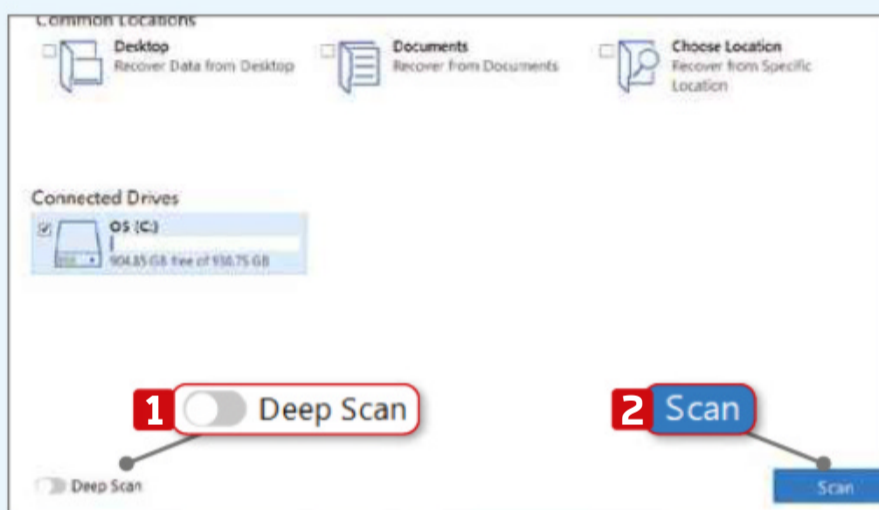
20 mins | **7, 8, 10** | **macOS 10.7+**



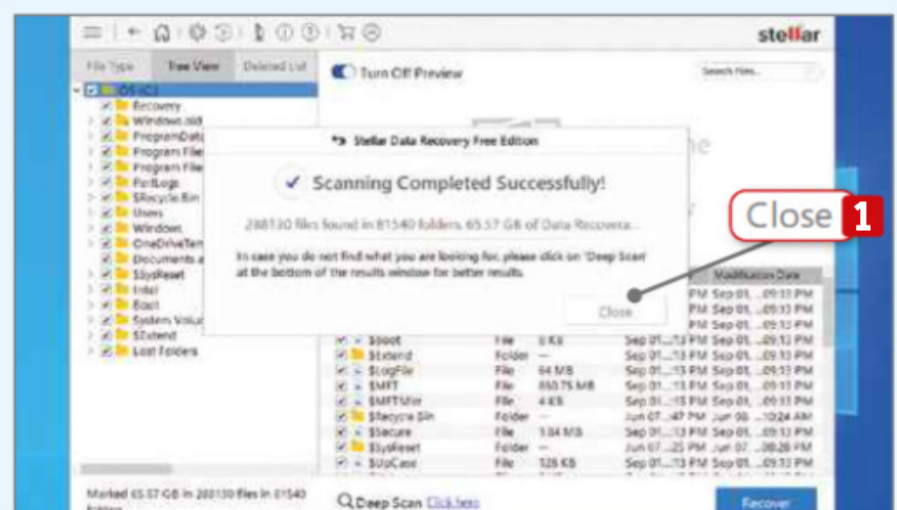
1 Start by choosing the type of file you want to recover. If you're not sure or there's more than one type, tick All Data in the Everything section. **1** However, if you've lost a specific type of file, you can focus the search by unticking options in the Documents **2** and Multimedia **3** sections.



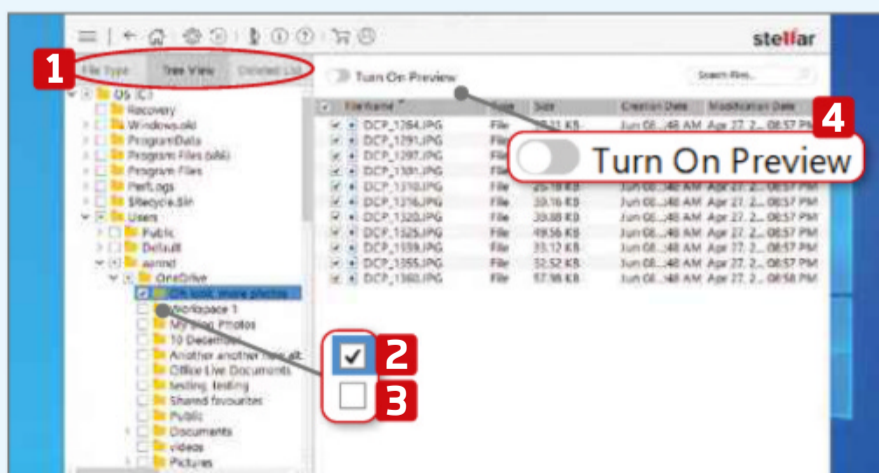
2 Click Next, then choose where to recover files from. Common Locations includes Desktop **1** and Documents, **2** or you can set a specific location **3** if you know where your lost files were. Alternatively, tick the boxes of any connected drives **4** to scan the entire drive.



3 The Deep Scan switch **1** initiates a slower but more thorough scan. There's no need to activate this straight away, though, because you can rescan using this option if the basic scan doesn't find anything. Click the Scan button. **2**



4 Stellar Free Data Recovery begins to scan the selected area for files. When it has finished scanning, click Close **1** to dismiss the summary screen, because this only tells you how many files the program has found.



5 The software lists every file it finds. Use the File Type, Tree View or Deleted List tabs **1** to browse them. Make sure any files you want to recover are ticked **2** and everything else is unticked. **3** Click Turn On Preview **4** if the files you need have helpful thumbnails attached.



6 The program won't let you save restored files to the drive it's restoring them from because it might accidentally overwrite them, so have another drive or USB memory stick ready. Click Recover. **1** The free version of Stellar Data Recovery can recover a total of 1GB of files.

Weekend Project

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



How to...

Stop your gadgets overheating

Wayne Williams explains how to prevent your PC, phone and other devices from failing in hot weather by keeping them cool

British weather is famously unpredictable – summers can be gloriously sunny one day and miserably cold and wet the next. But when a heatwave strikes, it's not just people (and dogs) that suffer in the sweltering conditions – our electronics can struggle, too. The sensitive components inside don't cope well with extreme highs and lows, which can lead to all manner of problems. And it's not just hot weather that can cause your gadgets to overheat – malware such as cryptominers can overwork the processor, pushing up the internal temperature.

For this Weekend Project, we look at various ways to keep your hardware cool, with some essential advice for protecting smartphones, tablets and PCs from the heat.



What's the problem?

When your smartphone gets hot, you may worry that its metal and glass body will burn your hand or ear when you use it. But the more pressing concern is long-term damage to your device. If your smartphone overheats, its components will struggle to function properly, which can lead to the hardware misbehaving, shutting down or failing altogether. The heat can also have a detrimental impact

on battery life, draining the charge much quicker than normal. The same is true for laptops and other battery-powered devices. Regular excessive heat can also reduce the overall lifespan of the battery.

Keep your smartphone cool

It's not unusual – or even especially bad – for a mobile phone to get warm. The processor inside generates heat as it works, and the harder it works, the more

heat it produces. It may be slightly warm to the touch when you thumb through Facebook, but it can feel like a winter hand warmer when you're playing a processor intensive 3D game or streaming video.

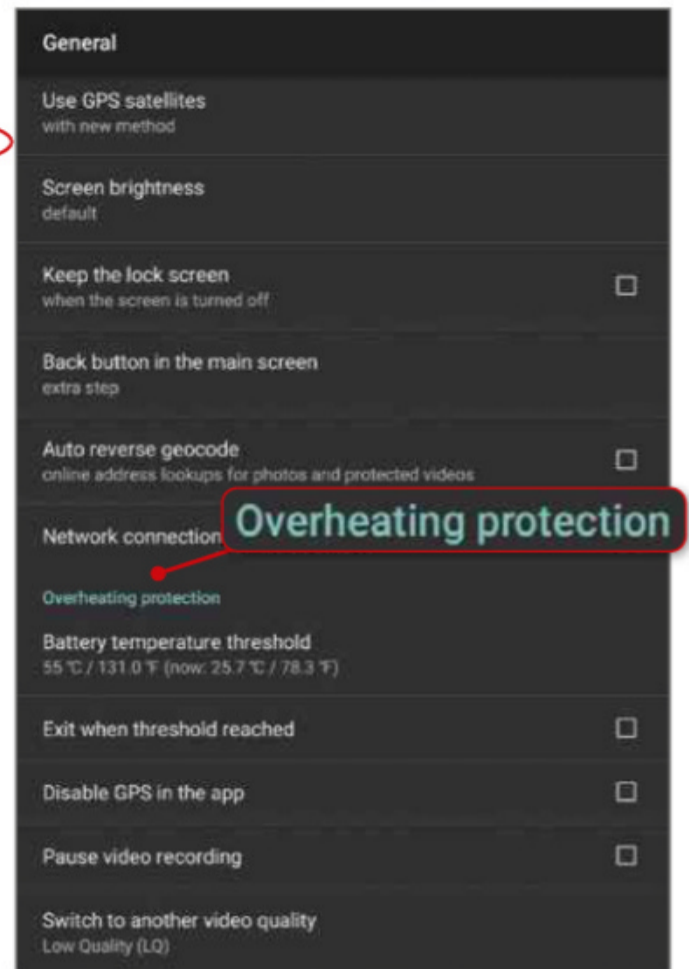
There are a number of things you can do to help lower the heat of your device, the first of which is to remove the case, if you're using one. A case can look good and protect your phone from accidental



AIDA64 shows you how warm your Android phone is



The iOS Settings' battery page lets you enable Low Power Mode



If you're using your phone as a dash cam, DailyRoads Voyager can stop it overheating

damage, but it can also cause heat to build up because there's nowhere for it to escape. It's not too dissimilar to wearing a jumper on a hot day.

Avoid leaving your phone out in direct sunshine or in a hot car. If you use your phone as a dash cam or sat nav, it's going to get very hot when sunlight streams through the windscreen on summer days. Where you mount your phone can help, as can removing the device when you've parked. Some dash-cam apps, such as DailyRoads Voyager (bit.ly/droads508) offer overheating protection, so be sure to turn this on in the settings.

If your device is already feeling warm to the touch, don't use it for anything that's going to tax the processor unduly. Moving to a cool room can help, as can powering it down for a while. Don't put your device in a fridge or freezer, though, because the extreme change in temperature can damage it.

Alternatively, you can reduce the strain on the phone by reducing the brightness and disabling anything you don't need that's running in the background. Switching to your phone's low battery mode can also help, as this reduces background activity that may be going on without your knowledge.

Your phone may also show you which of your apps use the most resources or have the greatest impact on battery usage. In iOS, go to Settings, Battery to see the worst offenders. It's worth pointing out that the top apps in the list might be there simply because you use them the most, not because they chew

through battery life. Unfortunately, the iOS settings page doesn't reveal the battery's current temperature.

AIDA64 (bit.ly/aida508) is a useful Android app that can tell you almost everything you're likely to want to know about what's going on with your phone, including how hot it is.

Keep your tablet cool

Tablets are, essentially, just large smartphones, so the same problems that affect your phone apply to them, too. Some tablets, such as an Apple iPad, will warn you if they get too hot and you need to let the device cool down before

you can start using it again.

The solutions to an overheating tablet are the same as for a smartphone - remove its case and avoid processor-intensive or heavy-duty apps and games. Instead of placing the tablet on your warm lap, use it on a cool table or a stand that allows free-flow of air. You can also buy and use laptop/tablet cooling pads, which come with height adjustment and built-in controllable fans so you can regulate their speed and the temperature. Amazon sells a number of these for around £20 (bit.ly/cooling508).

Keep your PC cool

Your PC can get very hot inside, which is why components such as the CPU and graphics card come with built-in fans. The case itself should have fans too, although not all desktop or laptop systems do.





It isn't always obvious when a PC is overheating, but if one or more fans inside its case suddenly begins making a loud roaring sound, it's a safe bet that the temperature is rising. Usefully, PCs come with built-in internal sensors, so you can check if your system is getting too hot. HWMonitor (bit.ly/hwmon508) can read the sensors to show you the current and maximum temperature of your system. If it shows that it's over 60°C, then it's worth taking action.



A cooling pad can ensure your laptop or tablet doesn't get too hot

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Ofcom

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

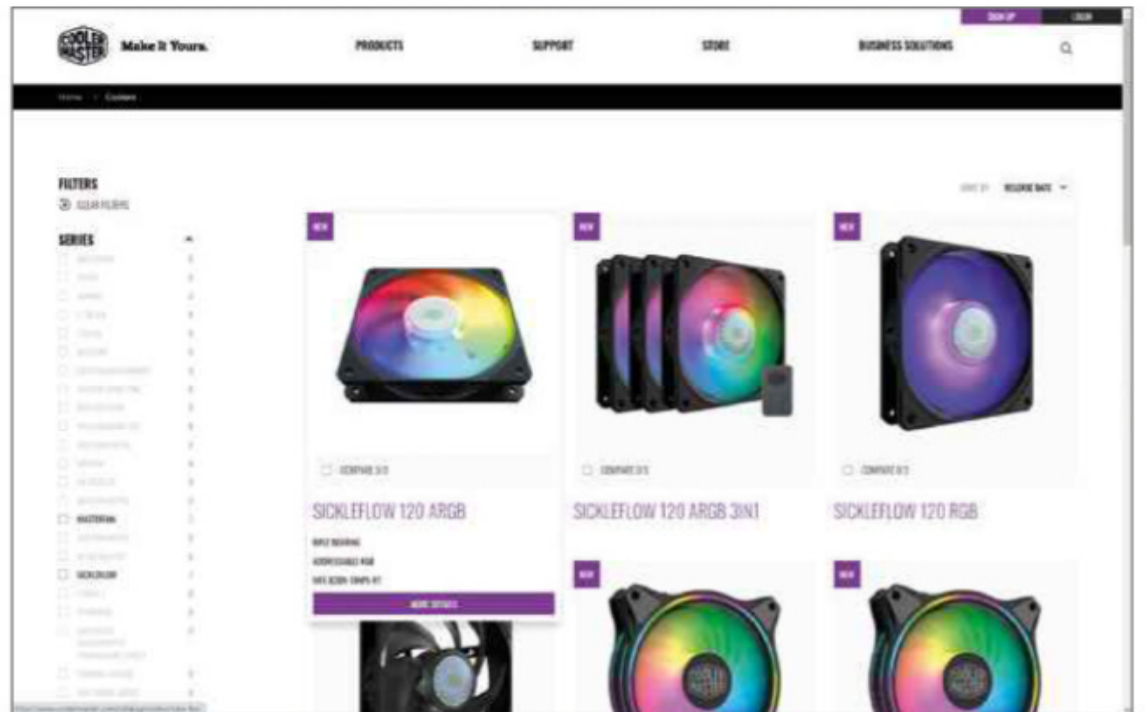
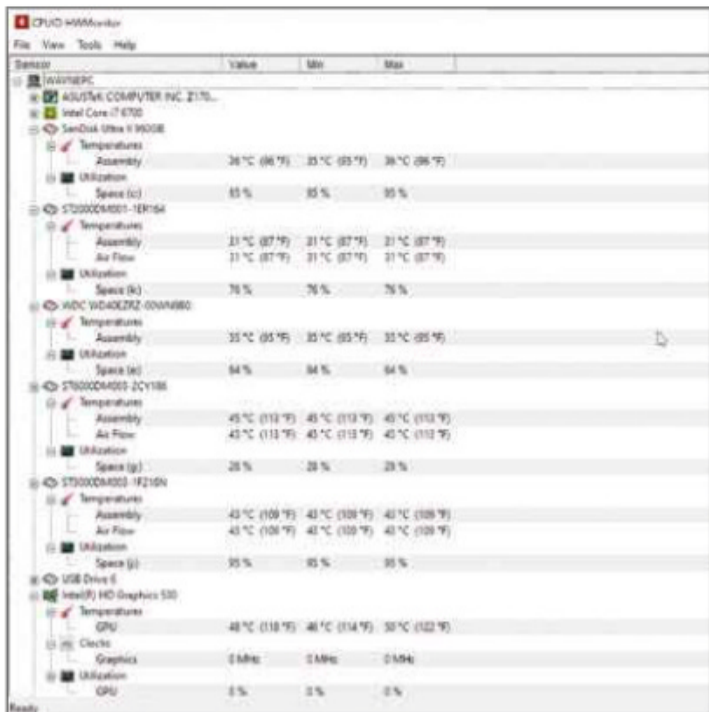
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HWMonitor can tell you how hot it is inside your PC Cooler Master has lots of products you can buy to keep your system cool

First, make sure that all your PC's fans are working properly and that the blades and ventilation holes at the back of the case aren't clogged up with hair or muck. Use a can of compressed air or a vacuum cleaner with a sock over its nozzle to remove any grime. Check that there's enough room around the back of the case for hot air to be expelled. Airflow can be hampered if you have stuff piled on top or around the case.

If your desktop PC doesn't have a fan, you should buy and add one. Prices start at £5, but be aware that fans come in different sizes, so make sure you buy the right one. You just screw it into place at

the back of the case and attach the power. It may seem tempting to avoid the hassle of buying and installing a fan when you could simply remove the side of your PC's case, but this will result in more dust and dirt being drawn in, causing components to clog and run even hotter. Installing a fan will deliver better cooling results.

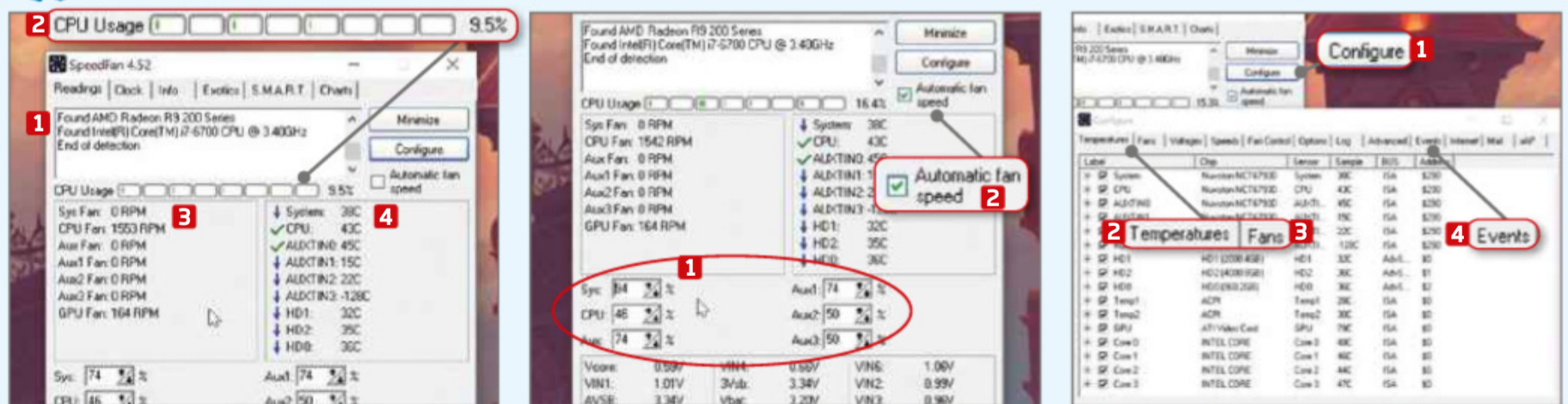
If your PC gets especially hot in warmer weather, then you may need more than a cheap fan. Cooler Master (www.coolermaster.co.uk) offers many advanced solutions, including CPU air and liquid coolers, and top-quality case fans. It also has cooling pads for laptops.

SpeedFan (bit.ly/sfan508) is another useful addition and can control how fast your fans run based on the temperature of your system. We show you how to use it in our Mini Workshop, below.

The advice for mobile phones and tablets also applies here - don't use your PC for taxing games and applications when it is overheating. If you've overclocked your CPU and/or GPU to get more from them, consider dropping these back to the original clock speed. You could also underclock your system - that is, reduce the CPU/GPU speed - though this will negatively impact overall performance. ■



MINI WORKSHOP | Control your PC's internal temperature using SpeedFan



1 Install and run SpeedFan. The software scans your PC and displays information such as your CPU and GPU types, **1** current CPU usage, **2** fan revolutions **3** and various system temperatures. **4** You should be able to see at a glance if anything's running too warm.

2 If you know what you're doing, you can manually adjust the speed of each fan's PWM (Pulse-Width Modulation). **1** If you prefer to hand over control to the software, tick the Automatic Fan Speed box. **2** SpeedFan manages how fast the blades spin based on the internal temperature - provided your PC allows this feature.

3 Click the Configure button. **1** You can see the temperatures **2** and fan information. **3** Click the Events tab **4** to instruct the software to alert you if the temperature of one or more components gets too hot. When that happens, the software can perform a task of your choosing, display a message, produce a beep or send you an email.

NEXT ISSUE

How To... Use one keyboard, monitor and mouse with all PCs

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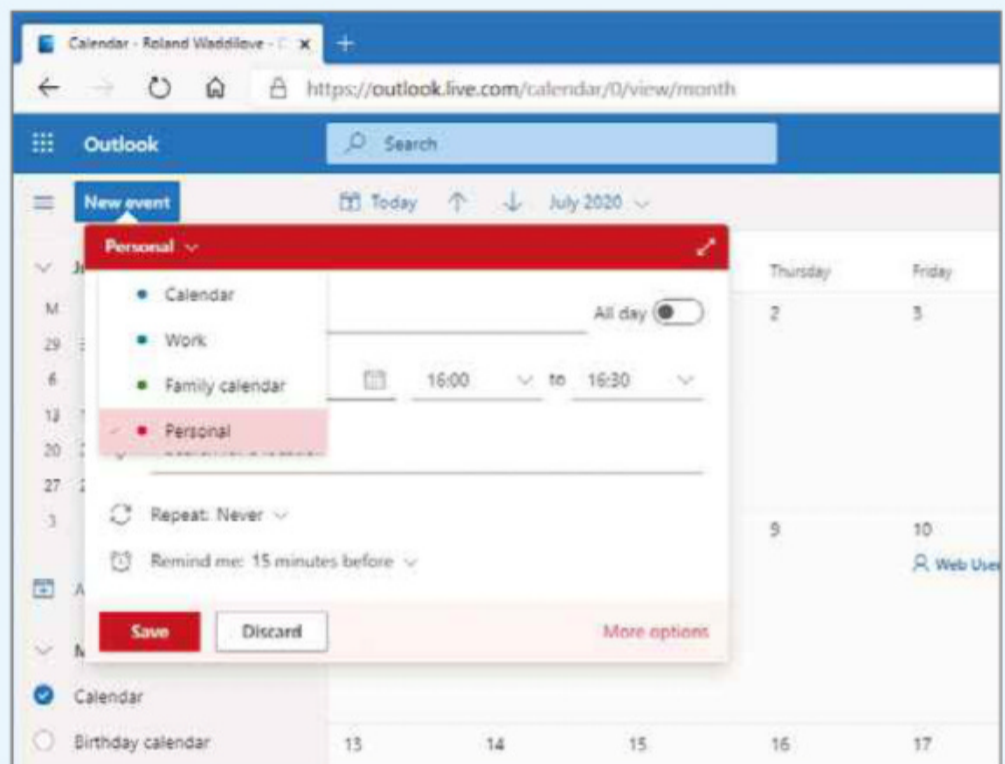
Create calendars for work and home

Both Microsoft and Google's online calendars let you set up and use multiple calendars, which is great for separating work and personal events, club meetings and anything else you want to track.

In Outlook (outlook.com), click the calendar icon at the bottom. Show the sidebar (if it's hidden) and click 'Add calendar'. Select 'Blank calendar' and enter a name, such as Personal or Work, then select a colour and charm (icon). Save it.

Click 'New event' and click the down arrow in the top-left corner of the new event window to select the calendar you want to use. Use the tick boxes in the sidebar to show or hide calendars. For example, if you only want to see personal events, tick the Personal calendar box and clear the tick from Work.

In Google Calendar (calendar.google.com) you can do everything from the sidebar. Select the calendars you want to view from the 'My calendars' section, and click the '+' next to 'Other calendars' to add a new one.



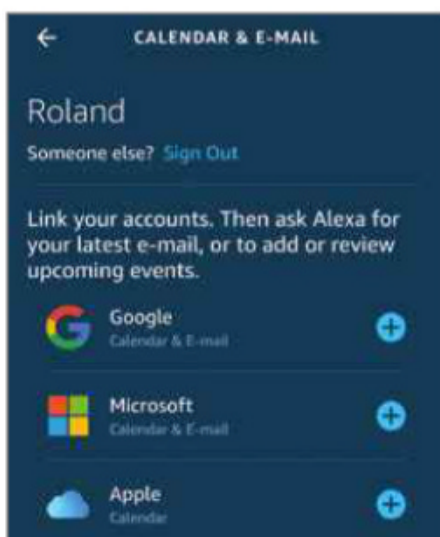
Create calendars for specific purposes, such as Work and Personal, and add events to them

Ask Alexa about your plans

You can link an Amazon Echo smart speaker to your mobile calendar and ask "Alexa, what is my schedule for today?" and "Alexa, what are my plans for tomorrow?". Alexa will tell you if there are events in your calendar.

Open the Alexa app on your phone, tap the icon in the top-left corner and select Settings. Tap 'Calendar and E-mail'. Press the plus button and select the account to add. Follow the instructions, which require giving permission to access your calendar and email. Opt out of email during the setup if you just want calendar access.

Add your calendar to Alexa and access it with voice commands



Never forget a birthday

If you struggle to remember family and friends' birthdays, you can display them in your calendar. You may not even need to add the birthdays because they often appear automatically.

In Outlook, click the cog icon. At the bottom of the Settings panel, click 'View all Outlook settings'. Select Calendar in the first column and View in the second column. At the bottom of the third column, tick the box next to 'Turn on the birthday calendar'.

In Google Calendar, click the menu button to show the sidebar (if it's hidden) and tick Birthdays.

Microsoft and Google automatically show birthdays using contact information. To add someone to Google Calendar, open the Google Contacts app on an Android phone or go to contacts.google.com on your computer. Add or edit a contact and include their birthday. To do this in Outlook, go to outlook.com and click the People icon at the bottom of the sidebar or open the Windows 10 People app. Add or edit a contact, and include their birthday.

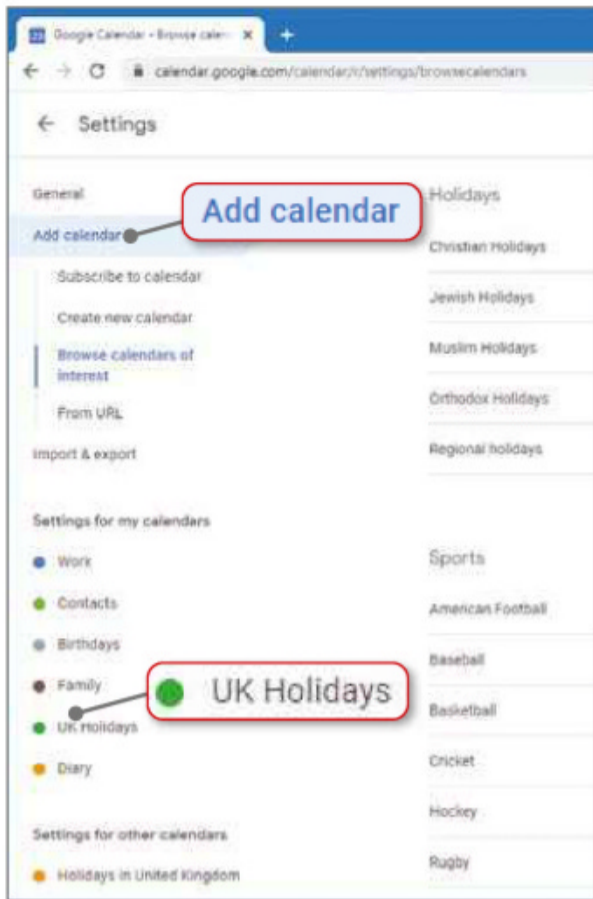
If you see words that look like they've been typed in a typewriter, follow the instructions and type them exactly as they appear, paying close attention to spaces and punctuation.

Add UK holidays

It's useful to know when bank holidays and other events are coming, and they can be added as a Holidays calendar. Special days are marked in your calendar automatically.

In Outlook, click the calendar icon at the bottom. Click 'Add calendar' and select Holidays in the sidebar. Select UK from the country list to add it to the Calendar app across all your devices. If you have friends or relatives abroad, add their country's holiday calendar so you can wish them a happy Thanksgiving, Australia Day and so on.

Google has calendars, too. Click the plus icon at the bottom of the sidebar



Add holidays and sports calendars to Google Calendar

and select 'Browse calendars of interest'. Expand 'Regional holidays' and select 'Holidays in United Kingdom'. There are also Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Orthodox holiday calendars.

Create a shared family calendar

A shared family calendar is a great way to keep track of what everyone in the family is doing and is useful for organising family events. Use it to plan parties, barbecues and weddings, or simply to let your family know you are at the dentist or hairdresser, for example.

Go to family.microsoft.com and click 'Add family member'. Select Child or Adult, then click 'Send invite'. When the person accepts the invite in the calendar or email, you will share a calendar.

'Family calendar' appears in the sidebar in the Windows 10 Calendar app and at Outlook.com. Tap your profile picture in the top-left corner in the Outlook phone app. When creating an event, select the 'Family calendar' if you want family members to see it, but select a different calendar if it's for your eyes only. This way you can make events public or private.

Family members can be added to your Google account in a similar way at families.google.com. Click 'Get started' at the top, then 'Create family group' on the next page. You can invite up to five family members and, after they accept, you will see 'Family calendar' at calendar.google.com and in the phone apps. When an event is created, select 'Family calendar' if you want everyone to see it or a different calendar if you want your event kept private.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Share a calendar with anyone

You can share your calendar with other people, which is useful if you want work colleagues to keep track of meetings and schedules, or keep friends informed of social events such as concerts, clubs, fishing trips and football matches.

Click 'Add calendar' at outlook.com and, if you need to, create a new calendar. Back in the main calendar view, hover your mouse over any calendar in the sidebar and click the three-dot menu button next to it. Select 'Sharing and permissions'.

Begin typing a person's name or email address in the box that appears, and click their name when it's suggested from your contacts. Select whether they can only view the calendar, or edit, add, delete or change events.

Google Calendar is similar. Open the sidebar (if it's hidden), then hover your mouse over a calendar and click the three-dot menu button on the right. Select 'Settings and sharing' and look for 'Share with specific people', then click 'Add people'.

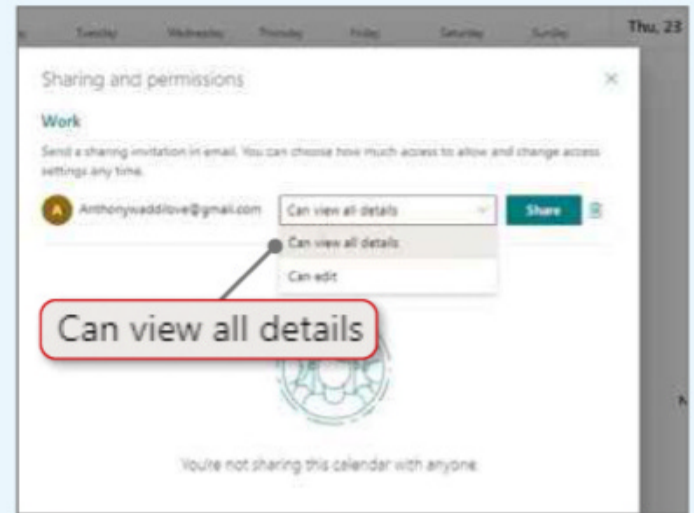
Make calendars public

Google Calendar has more sharing options. In a calendar's 'Settings and Sharing' section, tick the box for making the calendar public (all your other calendars will remain private). Select it to generate a link that can be shared in emails, messenger apps, on social media or in a blog. Anyone with the link can click it and add the calendar to their own Google Calendar, which is useful for clubs and groups with public members and events.

There are thousands of public calendars at icalshare.com. Many are junk, but there are some useful ones. Select a calendar, right-click 'Subscribe to Calendar' and copy the link. In Google Calendar, click the plus in the sidebar and select From URL. In Outlook Calendar, click 'Add calendar', then 'Subscribe from web'. Press Ctrl+V to paste the calendar URL.

Follow your favourite sport

With the start of the new football season, you might want to add the



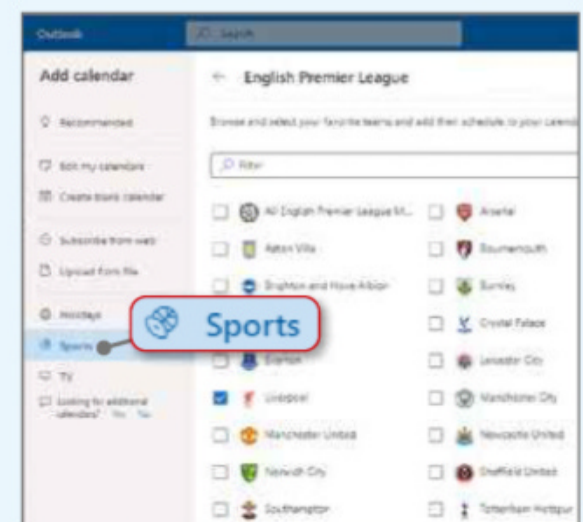
Share your calendars by sending your contacts an email invitation

dates, times and matches for your favourite team so you don't miss out on the action. Football, rugby, cricket and several other sports calendars can be added to Microsoft and Google calendars.

Go to outlook.com, click the calendar icon and click 'Add calendar' in the sidebar. Select Sports and choose English Premier League, Golf PGA, Rugby Six Nations, Scottish Premier League or whatever sport you want to follow.

There are 20 team calendars in the English Premier League, the six nations in Rugby, 12 in the Scottish Premier League and so on. Just tick a box to add a calendar. There is a calendar event for every match your selected team plays.

Google has sporting calendars, too, but not as many as Microsoft. Go to calendars.google.com and click the plus button at the bottom on the left. Select 'Browse calendars of interest' to see a Sport section with American Football, Baseball, Basketball, Cricket, Hockey and Rugby. Expand one and tick the box to add calendars to show.



Add your favourite teams and sports as a calendar and never miss a match

Ask the Expert

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



WINDOWS

Run virtual PCs without vGPU

Q I'm getting a message from Microsoft on my computer that I don't understand. It tells me that Windows updates will disable the RemoteFX vGPU, that virtual machines that use vGPU won't work because it's been disabled and, if you try to re-enable it, your PC may become unstable. I don't understand what this means - can you explain?
Richard Lord, via email

A Hyper-V is a feature of Windows 10 Pro, Enterprise or Education editions. It lets you create virtual PCs with their own operating system. This basically means you can run one or more versions of Windows 7 or 10 in a window within your current version of Windows. Each virtual PC acts like a separate computer.

RemoteFX vGPU was a feature of



VirtualBox is better than Hyper-V for running another OS within Windows

Hyper-V that enabled multiple virtual machines to share a physical GPU (graphics processing unit) in the computer. Following the discovery of a security flaw the feature has been removed. Instead, you can use the alternative Hyper-V option, Discrete

Device Assignment (DDA).

If you don't use Hyper-V, this won't affect you. It's a specialist feature and, in any case, VirtualBox (virtualbox.org) is a better solution if you're a home user wanting to run another operating system on your computer.

SOFTWARE

Remove persistent Adobe warning

Q Some time ago, I purchased Adobe software from eBay, which I have not yet used. However, I've recently been getting a message that repeatedly appears on my screen while I'm doing other things.

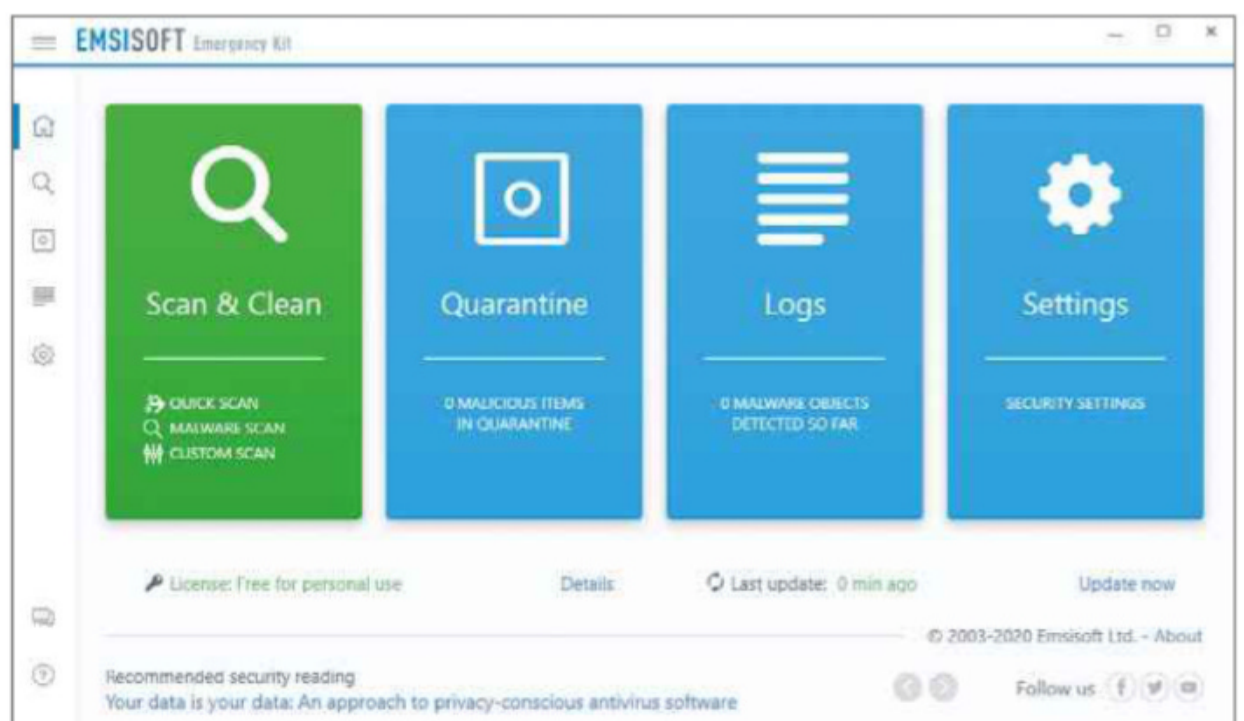
The Adobe Genuine Software Integrity Service pop-up is asking me to sign up for a monthly subscription. Clicking the cross in the top-right corner of the message does not get rid of it, so I have to open Adobe and then close it again. This is very irritating, especially when I'm in the middle of doing something else, such as using email.

I bought the Adobe software in good faith, mainly for Photoshop, which I have downloaded to my computer without any problems. However, this message is threatening to put a virus on my computer. Is there any way I can block

this nuisance and the threatening message? I don't want to sign up for the premium service.

John Cannon, via email

A Photoshop is sold as a subscription service and Adobe Genuine Software Integrity Service checks that you have a valid licence. The pop-up



Emsisoft Emergency Kit scans and cleans malware on your PC for free



only appears if you do not and it sounds like this may be the problem. You need to subscribe, but don't do it from the pop-up message – go to the Adobe website instead (www.adobe.com/uk).

Having said that, Adobe would never threaten to put a virus on your computer so this message could be malware. The Photoshop software you bought from eBay may be a hacked or cracked copy, but we can't be certain. The safest place to get Adobe software is from the Adobe website – if you see it priced very cheaply elsewhere, it may not be genuine.

Run some security software to scan your computer for malware. Emsisoft Emergency Kit (www.emsisoft.com) is a useful free option because it doesn't need installing and it won't clash with any other security software you may be running. Create an EEK folder in Downloads, run the downloaded file and select the Downloads\EEK folder to extract the files to. Open the folder afterwards and run the program.

Photoshop is considered the best software in its class, but there are free alternatives that are worth considering if you don't want to pay the monthly subscription fee. GIMP (www.gimp.org) and Paint.NET (www.getpaint.net) are both excellent photo editors. You could also try Photopea (www.photopea.com), which is a clone of Photoshop that runs in your browser. Just be careful if you download Paint.NET because there are a lot of distracting adverts on its website.

INTERNET

Stop your router blocking websites

Q A friend of mine was replacing his four-year-old router with a new one,

so I bought it off him to replace my own 10-year-old router, thinking it would be an upgrade. However, I have been

MUSIC

Edit MP3 info

Q As there is no radio station that caters for music from the 1950s and 60s, I ripped all my LPs and cassettes and I have them stored in folders on my PC's hard drive. When I'm in the car, I can listen to music from an SD card or a USB stick.

I have 2,621 tracks available in the car and sometimes a track comes up on the info screen showing a track number, but other times this is just blank. Going back to the folders on my computer, the heading bar shows 'Name # Title' and, under Title, some are track numbers and others are blank. My question is: can I access the info under title and change it?

Robert Lindsay, via email

A There may not be 50s or 60s radio stations on physical radio sets, but there are certainly streaming radio stations that play this music on the internet. Go to tunein.com in your browser and search for either 50s or 60s on the homepage. This produces a list of stations – just select one and click the Play button to listen to it.

There is a TuneIn app for iOS and Android devices, and if you have a smart speaker, such as an Amazon Echo, just say "Alexa, play 50s music".

MP3 and other music file formats contain text-based information in addition to the audio. There is space for the title, subtitle, artist,

Check that your router isn't blocking websites with its parental-control settings

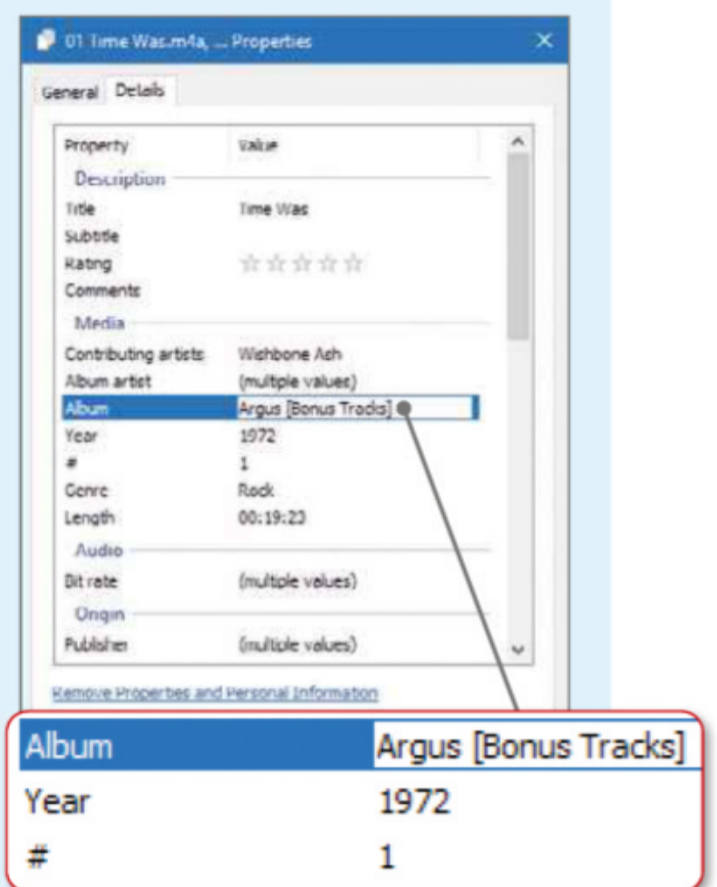
having problems with it and many websites don't work.

I can connect to the Wi-Fi on my laptop, but accessing websites often produces an error that says it timed out and the connection was reset. I usually use Chrome but I installed Firefox to see if it's a browser issue. However, that doesn't work either.

My old router was fine, so can you suggest what might be wrong?

George Blakely, via email

A If your old router works, then the problem is clearly down to the new one. It's likely to be something in the settings. If you know the default network name and password for the router, which may be on a label on the back or base, see if there is a reset button to put it back to factory settings.



Right-click music files and edit the information on the Details tab

contributing artists, album name, genre, year, composers and more.

To see this information, right-click a music file, select Properties and click the Details tab. You can click any item to edit it, or select multiple files by clicking the first and Shift+clicking the last, or holding down Ctrl and then clicking to select each one.

Right-click, go to the Details tab and you can change the information for all of them in one go. For example, you could add an artist or album name to multiple tracks.



You may need to press a paperclip into the relevant hole for 10 or 20 seconds to activate it. It will then work like new but may still need some configuration.

If you're still experiencing problems, type the router's IP address into a browser and log into the router's configuration tools. To find the IP address, press Windows+R and enter `cmd`. Enter `ipconfig` and look for the IP address next to Default Gateway.

Make sure you don't have family filtering switched on, if you don't need it, because it blocks access to sites it considers to be unsuitable for children. Make sure WPA2 security is enabled because it's the most compatible with other devices. There may be an option of either IPv4/IPv6 internet protocols - IPv4 is the most compatible. There may be options to use 5GHz, 2.4GHz or both Wi-Fi bands, and selecting only 2.4GHz is the most compatible.

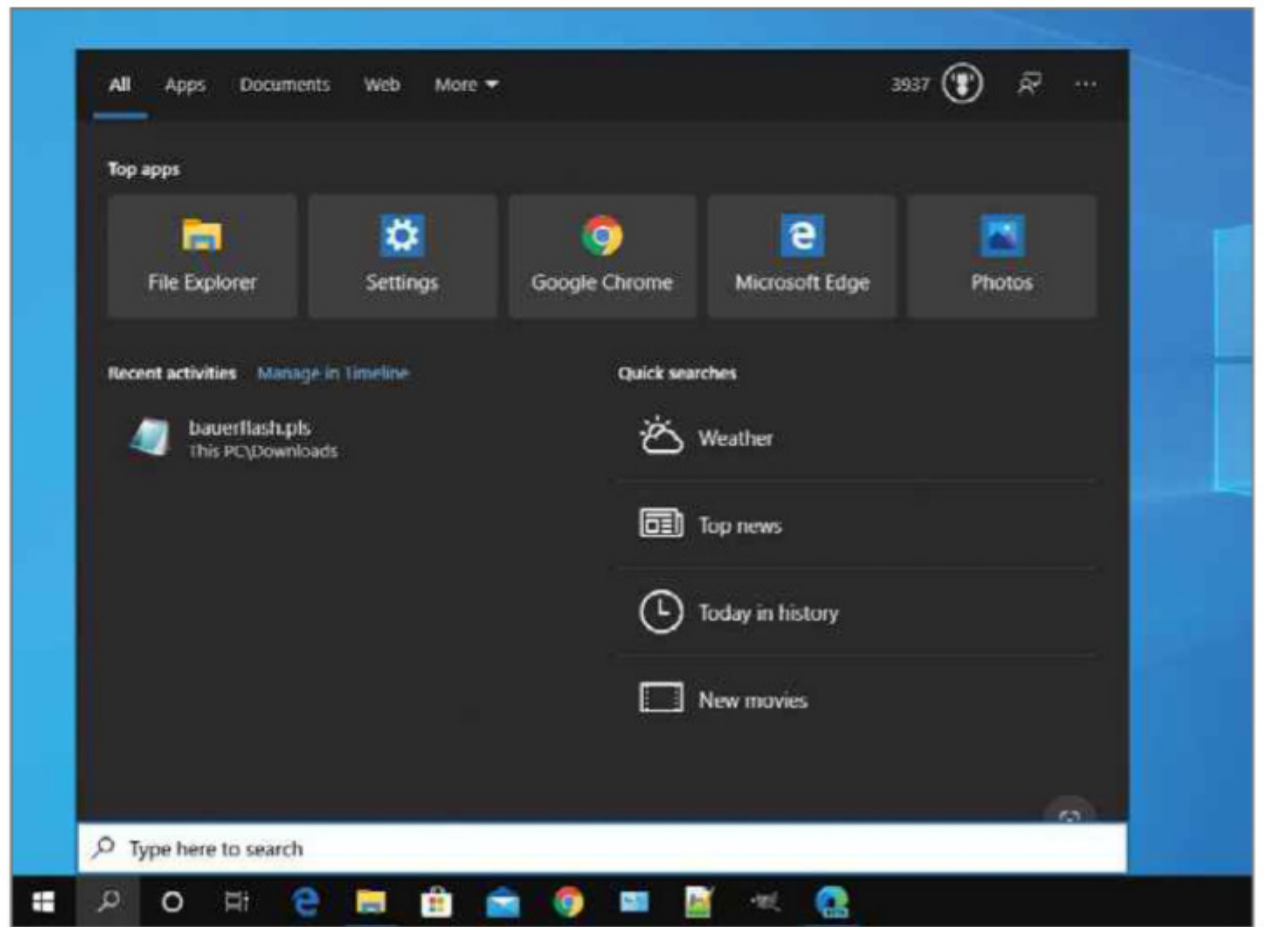
Hopefully, this should solve your connection problems.

WINDOWS

Shrink the search bar

Q I have a laptop with a 13in screen. It's not big but it's all I need. However, the search box takes up a disproportionate amount of space on the taskbar. On such a small screen, it seems huge and the first icon on the taskbar is almost a third the way along. Is there any way of making it smaller?

R Hunter, via email



Right-click the taskbar for search settings. We prefer to show the icon only

A There are several configuration options that let you choose how Windows 10's search tool appears on the taskbar. Right-click an empty part of the taskbar to show the menu and hover the mouse over Search to bring up three options.

'Show search box' displays the full-length search box on the taskbar - this is what's currently set on your computer. Selecting 'Show search icon' removes the search box and replaces it

with a small magnifying-glass icon. You click this icon to show the search box and the search panel, which houses features such as the weather, news and so on. This is a good compromise setting, particularly for a smaller screen.

Selecting Hidden for the search option means there is no search box or icon displayed. To access the search box, you simply tap the Windows key and start typing. The search panel appears automatically.

SECURITY

Remove a stuck security warning

Q I have had a problem with Windows Security that's been going on for a long time. It started when I downloaded and tried to run a free tool from the internet. This triggered a PUA warning in Windows Security, which I think is 'potentially unwanted application'.

I was pretty sure the program was safe but I decided to get rid of it anyway. However, whether I choose Remove or Quarantine in Windows Security, it's still there the next day. I manually deleted the program and it was still there as a current threat. In fact, it is recorded multiple times in current threats and won't go away.

It is deleted, it's gone, it's no longer on the hard drive. How do I get Windows Security to recognise this?

G Simons, via email

Windows Security sometimes repeatedly flags items but clearing the history can help

A We have seen this ourselves and it's a fairly common problem. The solution is to manually clear your PC history. Open Explorer and go to:

`C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows Defender\Scans\History\Service`

See if there's a DetectionHistory folder. If there is, open it and delete its contents. Restart Windows. Windows Security current threats and history should be empty.

It's useful to get a second opinion, so run Emsisoft Emergency Kit (www.emsisoft.com) to be sure there are no other PUAs or malware.



This fortnight Roland has been training his brain with mobile apps, but hasn't noticed himself getting any smarter



Readers' Helpdesk

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

VIDEO

Change YouTube's brightness levels

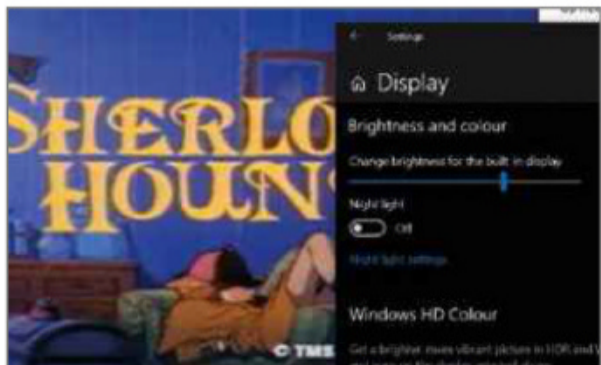
Q I've noticed that YouTube videos have been getting progressively darker on my PC, especially the classical music videos I like to listen to. Only a few high-resolution videos seem to play at normal viewing quality. I've looked for a setting that adjusts the brightness and contrast, but without success.

The problem only affects YouTube. Other apps, such as Photos, look fine, which makes me wonder if YouTube is darkening these videos for some reason. I even tried updating my graphics card's driver, but I currently have the best version.

Keith Warwick, via email

A You're half-right, Keith. The issue does lie with YouTube but, as far as we know, the site isn't darkening videos. The most likely reason a video looks dark is that that's how the creator uploaded the file, although it may not have been intentional. You'll find plenty of forums discussing why videos uploaded to YouTube look darker than the originals – it's often an encoding problem. YouTube doesn't give viewers a way to adjust brightness levels, either, so all you can do is turn up your screen's brightness. It doesn't help that YouTube insists on removing handy enhancement effects that would let uploaders tweak the brightness and re-render their video. The unfortunate result is darker videos.

Steve Clark, Features Writer



The only way to brighten a YouTube video is to turn up your screen's brightness

READERS RESPOND

ANDROID

Move files from phone to SD card

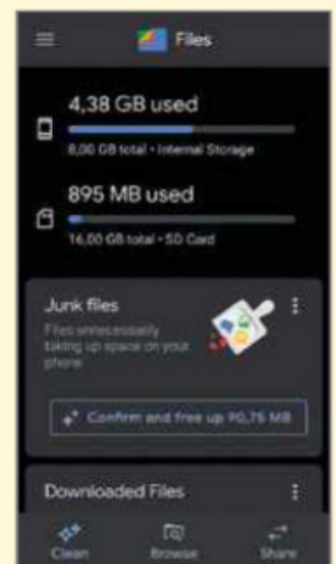
A I'm writing in response to Dennis Spargo's query in Issue 504 (bit.ly/webuser504) about saving files to an SD card in his Android phone. Google's free Files app (previously known as Files Go) offers several ways to clean up your files, so it's worth looking at even if you don't want to move anything.

If you have a formatted SD card installed and ready to use, you should see the option 'Move files to SD card'. The app suggests some files you might want to move, such as photos. You can select individual files or All Items. Then tap 'Move to SD card'.

Pat, via email

Use Google Files to free up space on your Android device

Back Issues disc winner



CAN YOU HELP?

webuser@webuser.co.uk

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

NETWORK

Q My phone and tablet have Wi-Fi speeds of around 50Mbps, yet my computer runs between 7 and 15Mbps. Do I need to update the network card?

Kevin Groves, via email

STORAGE

Q Why doesn't my OneDrive sync properly? I have to open the app and sign in every time I start my PC. It syncs, then stops until I sign in again.

C Heller, via email

SOFTWARE

Make quick notes on your PC

Q I can't find an easy way to make quick notes on my Windows PC, which is annoying when I come across something I might want to refer to later. In the days of the BBC Master, I created a jotter that I could launch with a single key. This saved the comment in a searchable block of data when I pressed the Return key, and included the date and time. Have you ever come across a similar 'jotter' for Windows, rather than a program such as Notepad, which you have to load when you need it?

John Pen, via email

A Microsoft's free Sticky Notes (bit.ly/sticky508) is my favourite jotter-type app, and it fits your requirements. It's

fully searchable, adds the creation date and auto-saves as you type. Pin it to the taskbar so it's always on hand, then right-click to create a new note. You can also colour-code your notes and sync them between devices, as long as you're signed into your Microsoft account. A number of browser tools perform a similar task, typically in a new tab, but for our money, Sticky Notes is the best free jotter.

Steve Clark, Features Writer

Take notes in Windows whatever app you're in



Your Top Tips

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



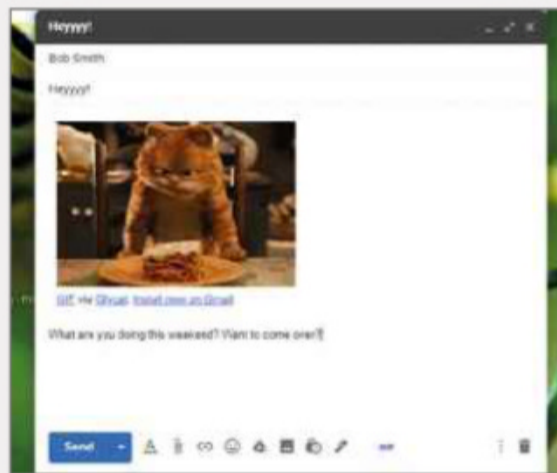
TOP TIP

EMAIL

Add GIFs to Gmail messages

If you like to share funny animated GIFs on your smartphone, you might like the Gfycat add-on for Gmail, which lets you insert animated GIFs into emails on your PC. To get Gfycat, click the cog icon in Gmail, followed by 'See all settings'. Open the Add-ons tab, then under the 'Installed add-ons' heading, click the Manage link. Click the menu button and select Most Popular. Gfycat is about half way down. Open the page, then click Install.

Now when you reply to an email or create a new one, you should see a GIF icon in the toolbar. Click it to browse through popular and trending GIFs, or use the search box to find one on a particular topic, such as birthdays,



Insert animated GIFs into emails to entertain your friends

happy, funny, friends and so on. Select a GIF to insert it into your email.

J Kline, via email



WINDOWS

Use touchpad shortcuts

I have often seen lists of Windows shortcuts in *Web User*, but I don't recall seeing one for touchpad shortcuts. Here are a few for anyone who uses a laptop with a touchpad.

Tap once to select something or place the cursor in some text. Double-tap to run a program or open a file or folder. Tap the touchpad with two fingers to perform a right-click. Those are the most obvious gestures, but did you know you can place two fingers on the pad and slide up and down or left and right to scroll in your web browser, word processor and most other programs?

You probably know that you can zoom in and out of photos on your mobile devices by making a pinch or spread gesture with two fingers, but did you know this works on laptops too? Open a web page and, if the text is too big or too small, pinch or spread with two fingers to zoom out or in.

Tapping with three fingers opens Windows search, while pushing up with three fingers shows Task View. When your desktop is covered in open windows, pull down to move them out of the way, then push back up to restore them again. Finally, place three fingers horizontally on the trackpad and swipe right to see all your open program windows. Wait a second (maybe it's just my slow PC), then slide left or right to switch to a different program or window.

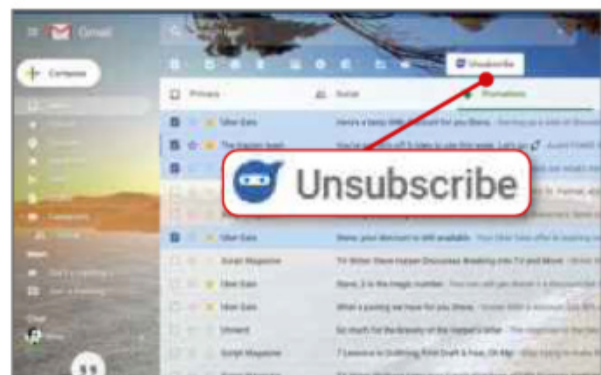
Kevin Fowler, via email

BROWSERS

Unsubscribe from emails in bulk

One Chrome browser tool I feel we could all benefit from is Unsubscribe by HelpNinja (bit.ly/unsub508). It's a very simple extension that adds an Unsubscribe button to your Gmail inbox. Select emails from any senders you no longer wish to hear from, then click the Unsubscribe button. Before you know it, you'll no longer receive mail from that gadget store you bought an SD card from 12 years ago. Even better, the developers say it's '100% private' with no data sent to their servers.

John Horrigan, via email



Remove yourself from multiple email subscription lists at once

SOFTWARE

Automate Windows Dark Mode

Auto Dark Mode (bit.ly/autodark508) is a tool that lets you set Windows' dark mode to kick in at a particular time. This is very useful if you only use dark mode to save your eyes at night time. It's hosted on GitHub (github.com), so remember to scroll down the page to the Read Me section, click Download to find the newest version, then set your computer's sunrise and sunset hours, both for the system and apps. You can even create your own themes for each 'time-zone' in the Wallpaper/Theme area.

Oliver Cormack, via email



Auto Dark Mode lets you tell Windows when to switch between dark and light

AUDIO

Improve the sound quality of your headphones

If you use headphones when listening to music or watching videos on your computer, a little-known setting may improve the sound. Right-click the taskbar's speaker icon and select Spatial Sound, followed by Windows Sonic for Headphones. Compare the sound



Enable Windows Sonic for Headphones for a more spatial sound

with the setting switched on and off to see which you prefer.

Paul Robson, via email

WINDOWS

Make the command prompt transparent

I enjoyed the command-line tips in Issue 507's Masterclass (bit.ly/webuser507). Command-line lovers can also make the command prompt window semi-transparent. Press Windows+R and enter cmd. Click the icon in the top-left corner and select Properties, then the Colours tab. Choose a background colour and set the opacity using the slider. If you don't see an immediate change, exit the command prompt and open it again.

Len Johnson, via email



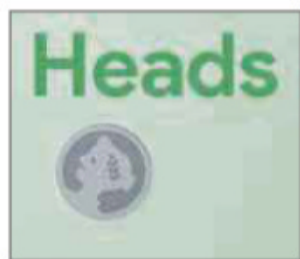
Set the command prompt background colour and transparency

GOOGLE

Toss a coin

I used to toss a coin to help me make decisions, but now that I use contactless payment methods, I don't always have a coin to hand. I recently discovered that you can ask Google Assistant on your phone to toss a virtual coin for you. Alternatively, search 'coin toss' on Google, or ask your Home or Nest smart speaker to do it (but without the visuals, obviously). Now, if only I could decide which device to ask!

Pete MacNelly, via email



Ask Google to toss a coin for you

BROWSERS

Remove Chrome's new Extensions menu

In your workshop on Chrome's security features, Issue 504 (bit.ly/webuser504), you mention that the new Extensions menu hides installed extensions unless they're pinned to the address bar. I



Change this setting to revert to Chrome's old Extensions menu

thought I'd add that readers can easily revert to the original Extensions layout by searching `chrome://flags` for `extensions toolbar menu` (or, directly, `chrome://flags/#extensions-toolbar-menu`). Use the drop-down menu to Disable the new menu. Then relaunch your browser to restore the old-style Extensions string.

Colin Sherratt, via email

SOFTWARE

Highlight your cursor's position

I sometimes find it hard to see my cursor unless I wiggle the mouse furiously, so I was glad to find PenAttention (bit.ly/pen508), which adds a coloured highlight around your pen or pointer. It was designed for pen-powered computers, so when you first use it, open the software's Highlight Settings and tick the box marked 'Highlight mouse as well as pen'. Now you can change the colour, size and shape of the highlighter, and switch on keyboard shortcuts. You can even make the highlighter change colour every time you right-click the



Never lose your mouse pointer again

mouse if you like. I'm pleased to say I haven't lost my cursor since!

Emma Grady, via email

GOOGLE

Fix the Google sign-out issue

After the latest update to Version 2004 of Windows, my PC has been signing me out of Google every time I shut down my computer, and I gather I'm not alone in this. I tried clearing cookies and reinstalling Chrome, but nothing worked. However, some clever clogs at Google has suggested that the Windows update affects the 'dpapisrv' master key cache (whatever that is) and suggested a possible fix. Close Chrome, then lock your PC by pressing Windows+L. Unlock the computer and restart Chrome. It's certainly worth a try.

Frank Beggins, via email

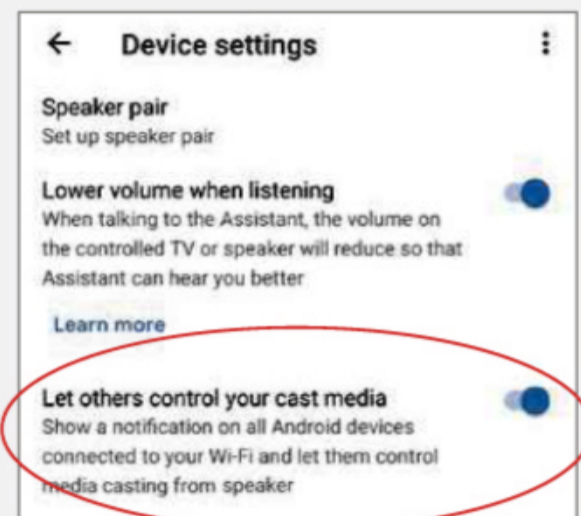
BLUNDER OF THE FORTNIGHT

SMART SPEAKERS

Stop others controlling your speakers

I often cast audiobooks and music from my phone to my smart speaker. I love its high-quality audio and the ability to control it wherever I am. However, my wife and son can also control my audio with their phones, as I discovered when my wife (accidentally) and my son (less accidentally) switched off my music, paused it and skipped forwards and back. After yet another interruption of Pachelbel's Canon in D Major, I finally took action.

It turns out there's an Android setting that lets anyone who connects to your Wi-Fi see and control media casting. This is switched on by default, for some reason. Open the Google Home app and select your device. Tap settings or the cog icon and scroll



Don't let other people control your media streams

down to 'Let others control your cast media'. Switch this off for uninterrupted listening pleasure.

W Coombes, via email

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



Star Email

Ethernet can solve streaming problems

I enjoyed reading your cover feature in Issue 506 (bit.ly/webuser506) about ditching Sky and other paid-for streaming platforms. I was also very interested in your set-top box options.

I believe that as the quality of streaming video increases, the capability of Wi-Fi to stream at 4K - or even 8K - while offering smooth playback will become difficult or even impossible. While your recent article on Wi-Fi extenders (Issue 471, bit.ly/webuser471) was really informative, cost will be a barrier for many people. Ethernet cabling may be a solution, which is the option I've adopted.

However, it's not easy to find an inexpensive set-top box with an



Ethernet socket. Humax boxes have an Ethernet socket, but they cost over £100. Now TV offers a set-top box with an Ethernet connection, but it won't let you sideload Plex, which I now use as my default media server, having read your articles about Plex. I tried to sideload Plex on a Now TV set-top box, but a recent software update prevents the sideloading of other media servers.

The Roku 3 set-top box also comes with an Ethernet socket, but this model has now been discontinued. I had to buy mine from the US because it was fractionally cheaper than the ones being sold by UK-based eBay sellers. Voltages aren't a problem these days, thankfully, and it's working well.

I believe that as video streaming increases in quality, Ethernet is the only viable solution. I don't think that other devices such as the Chromecast and Fire TV sticks, working wirelessly, are up to the task at the moment. Undoubtedly, they will be upgraded in the future but I am sure that will also result in an increase in prices.

John Holt, via email



Cancelling Amazon Prime paid off

Regarding the email from John Thomas in Issue 506 ('Stop Amazon's auto-renewal'), I similarly joined Amazon Prime unwittingly while making a purchase.

What I discovered was that, although I cancelled immediately, I still received the full benefits for the month's free trial period.

I made a number of small purchases during this period and although I was reminded constantly that my trial period would soon come to an end, I was not charged anything for the service.

That's something to bear in mind if you have also been caught out in this way.

John McGee, via email

Other countries already have contact-tracing apps

After reading your news story in Issue 505 about a UK contact-tracing app not being available until winter 2020, I would like to point out that the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar already has one up and running.

The Beat Covid Gibraltar app (bit.ly/beatcovid508) is available on both the Google Play and the Apple Apps stores. It uses the Exposure Notification System from Apple and Google.

Perhaps the UK government could ask the Gibraltar Health Authority and HM Government of Gibraltar for advice on how to make a contact-tracing app.

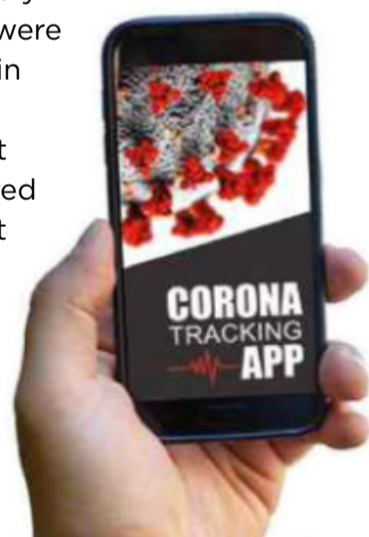
Reverend Anthony Mitchell, Cambridge

I agree entirely with your view that a contact-tracing app needs to be backed up with testing and a human-contact tracing network. Here, in the Republic of Ireland (population less than five million), our Health Service Executive launched a contact tracing app based on the Apple/

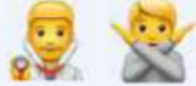

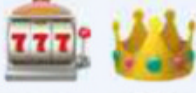
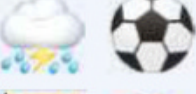
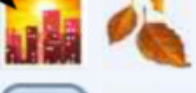

Google protocol on 6 July. Reports suggest there were about 1.4m downloads in the first three weeks.

My iPhone 6 does not have the iOS 13.5 required for full functionality, but I can still use the app to report that I am feeling well or that I have symptoms.

Donal O'Brolchain, via email



Quiz Answers: Issue 507

- 1 **Dr No** 
- 2 **Octopussy** 
- 3 **Casino Royale** 
- 4 **Thunderball** 
- 5 **Skyfall** 
- 6 **From Russia With Love** 





Parliamentary committees are far from clueless

You asked readers to say if they agree with Barry's column in Issue 506, 'This lot will never bring Facebook to book'.

Having downloaded from the UK Parliament website the summary of the evidence from various experts consulted by the Select Committee (bit.ly/digital508), which runs to more than 600 pages, I feel sure that members of The House of Lords Select Committee on Democracy and Digital Technologies

have taken time to make sure they are not "clueless peers".

There are all sorts of

parliamentary select committees, not just on digital technology but on matters of public interest from healthcare to defence. Parliamentarians sitting on these committees are usually not experts on the subject being considered. That's the reality of parliamentary committees - non-experts who take evidence from experts to reach their conclusions after careful consideration of that evidence.

Just because some of their recommendations seem like the "bleeding obvious," doesn't mean that they aren't relevant. Obvious, perhaps, but nevertheless worth implementing.

John Wilson, Harrow

How to pronounce GIF?

I was amused to read the email from Dennis Ellis in Issue 507 about the correct pronunciation of Photopea. Personally, I think it is supposed to be pronounced as you'd expect - *foe-toe-pee* rather than *foe-toe-pee-arr* - but Dennis could well be right!

The word that causes me most arguments with people is GIF, which some of my friends insist has a hard 'g' as in 'give', while I believe it has a soft one like 'giraffe'. I would be interested to hear *Web User's* thoughts on this matter.

Alan Lynch, via email

Web User says: Don't get us started on this one! The *Web User* team has conflicting views, too. For the record, the creator of the GIF format, Steve Wilhite, says the word should be pronounced 'jif' (bit.ly/howtosaygif508), but millions would disagree.

What you say...

WINDOWS 10 IS NOW FIVE YEARS OLD. HAVE YOU HAD ANY PROBLEMS WITH IT?

Nope! I've got it breathing new life into a 10-year-old Acer netbook and an equally ancient HP Elitebook. It saved my bacon by allowing me to work from home when I couldn't afford a new laptop.

Caroline Chapman

I've updated all my computers from Windows 7 to Windows 10, and I am very happy with it. To be honest, I don't find a lot of difference between the two. If you liked Windows 7, I don't understand why you would not like Windows 10.

John Hewett

The Windows 10 Media Creation Tool is great and makes upgrading to new releases very easy, and recovery even easier. The only downside is that some older programs don't work that well, but this is nothing that a virtual machine can't solve.

Si Mellor

I upgraded all my machines from Windows 7 and Windows 8 to Windows 10, when the operating system was still in beta. I've never had a problem, not even on my creaky old netbook - a Samsung N210.

Eff Clarke

I've had a crash that prompted a reinstall, which was more straightforward than I thought it would be. It's been running fine for the last few years.

Yasir Haniff

Every time there's an important update with Windows 10, there seem to be problems. Microsoft had to pull the last update because it deleted files. I've had problems with an incompatible printer and webcam, and a black screen. I never had any issues with Windows Vista on my old PC.

Kevin Gadget Man Benton

No problems here. I'd say it was my favourite version of Windows since XP.

Paul W N Hughes

I've had no problems because I've thankfully not used Windows in the past 15 years or more. Phew!

CassMan @CassMan

I'm now on to my second Windows 10 PC. I had to stop updating the first one because it became unusable after one particularly bad update. The second PC also has issues when updates come out. I've had to reverse two updates so far and stop them installing again, and the latest major update is still not possible on my PC. But apart from these setbacks, Windows 10 is a perfectly decent system.

Rich Grove

I hold my breath every time an update comes around, just in case something goes wrong.

Nat Grove

Microsoft associated my child's Microsoft account with the local admin account on my PC. It is now subject to his screen time and my activity is tracked against his profile. This is a known bug with no solution.

Raspberry Pi Spy @RPISpy

I still don't like it. I've only got one PC running Windows 10. The other two still run Windows 7 and are much easier to work with.

Iain Kenworthy-Neale

! Page 404



Barry Collins is no longer going to pay through the nose for the latest smartphone

High-end handsets can take a hike

The iPhone Something Or Other, HTC One, HTC One More, Samsung Galaxy S7, Galaxy S9 – my smartphone back catalogue is more high-end than Harrods.

I'm not a true smartphone fanatic, one of those obsessed souls who camps out on Regent Street to get the latest handset at 6am on the day it launches. However, I do tend to go for the most powerful phone I can lay my hands on – and fit my hands around (those massive phablet things are not for me). And, by Jove, do I pay for the privilege. My tariff has crept up to around £50 per month over the past few years. It's starting to feel less like a phone contract and more like a mortgage.

Well, not any more. The reason I've stuck to the upper echelons of the smartphone range until now is largely due to performance. When you test mobile apps and games for a living, as I do occasionally, you want a phone that can handle anything you throw at it. If I'm being honest, the geek in me also loves to have the latest and greatest handset to show off down the pub, too.

So what has changed? For one thing, paying £600 a year for a phone when the economy has just been detonated suddenly feels ridiculous. Equally, though, there has been nothing – absolutely zip – in any flagship smartphone launched over the past year or so that has brought on even the slightest wallet twinge. If you think I'm paying £1,500 for a phone that folds in half, Samsung, think again.

The real clincher, however, is that the market's mid-range is incredibly strong



now – so much so that it can be hard to tell the sub-£400 handsets from those costing twice as much. In the past two months alone, we've seen the launch of the OnePlus Nord, a 6.4in beast of a phone with top-grade performance, 5G compatibility and a selection of high-performance cameras, costing only £379.

Then there's the Moto G 5G Plus (see our review on Page 22). There's no Mars Bar for guessing that it's also

5G-compatible, and it has an excellent 6.7in screen, decent performance and a camera that captures 4K video, albeit at a slightly juddery 30 frames per second. Still, it seems churlish to grumble when it costs £300.

At the top of my current wishlist, however, is the Samsung Galaxy M31. It doesn't have 5G, but considering I live in the wilds of Sussex, there's more chance of Meghan Markle popping in for a brew than getting a 5G signal round here for the next few years. What it does have is slick performance, a fine set of cameras and – glory be – a massive battery that keeps the thing running for two or three days, according to our friends at *PC Pro*. And you get all that for £245 – or about five months of my current contract.

My current deal runs out in late autumn, so I've got a few months to wait and see if anything better comes along. But unless Apple equips the iPhone 12 with a time machine or the Samsung Galaxy S21 comes with its own beer tap, I won't be plumping for a high-end handset this time.

“Paying £600 a year for a phone when the economy has just been detonated feels ridiculous”

WebUser

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

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