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**BANNED!**

Access websites blocked in the UK **p48**

# WebUser

Issue 371

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The 25 most overrated programs and the **best FREE alternatives** page 38



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**Set Up A Second PC Monitor**  
More screen space! **p58**

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- **Burn DVDs faster**
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- **Don't use Chrome on Android**
- **Best Windows 10-ready PCs** **9 tested**

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computers](http://SCANcomputers)

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# Shoddy software named and shamed

**B**est and worst lists are, by their very nature, highly subjective; one man's meat is another man's poison, as the saying goes, and if I say 'We All Stand Together' by Paul McCartney and The Frog Chorus is a top tune, then no Negative Nelly is going to convince me otherwise.

I mention this because this issue's cover feature (page 38) could ruffle a few feathers, as we name and shame 25 rubbish PC programs and mobile apps. Hopefully, you'll agree with at least some of our picks and our reasons for choosing them, and won't take offence at us badmouthing your

favourite software. If you think we've been unfair with our choices, or have neglected to include a particularly awful program or app, please let us know.


One of the most interesting (and not rubbish) tools in this issue is eViacam, which lets you control your onscreen cursor by moving your head about. Turn to page 56 to find out how to use this bizarre, hands-free program.

**Robert Irvine**  
[robert\\_irvine@dennis.co.uk](mailto:robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk)  
[#webuser](#)



**ISSUE 371**      **20 MAY - 2 JUNE 2015**      **ON THE COVER**



 Average sales, Jan-Dec 2014, 29,057 copies per issue

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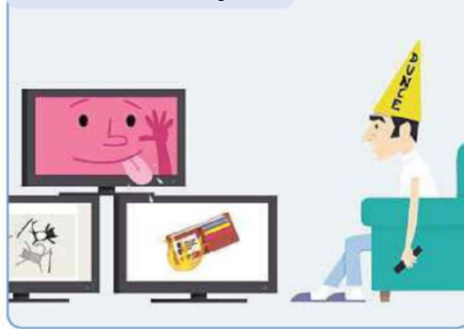
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Group Editor Daniel Booth  
Deputy Editor Robert Irvine  
Technical & Reviews Editor Andy Shaw  
Staff Writer Edward Munn  
Senior Designer Laurence Hallam  
Production Editor Miki Berenyi  
Editorial Tel: 020 7907 6000  
Visit [forum.webuser.co.uk](http://forum.webuser.co.uk) for technical and buying advice

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**SYNDICATION**  
Syndication Senior Manager Anj Dosaj-Halai  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7907 6132  
Email: [anj\\_dosaj-halai@dennis.co.uk](mailto:anj_dosaj-halai@dennis.co.uk)

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Licensing & Syndication Assistant Nicole Adams  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7907 6134  
Email: [nicole\\_adams@dennis.co.uk](mailto:nicole_adams@dennis.co.uk)

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# What's New Online

## Can Microsoft guess your age?

**W**e're happy to forgive Microsoft anything, even the disaster that was Windows Vista, since it knocked seven years off our age in its new 'How Old Do I Look?' website (see main grab, below). Just upload a photo, then wait to see if the site gets your age (and gender) correct.

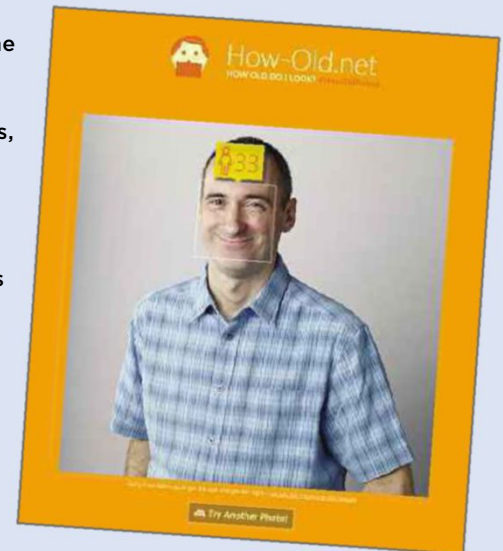
Despite the site using "state-of-the-art, cloud-based algorithms", its results can be a little erratic. Pull a wrinkly face, for example, and the

site may add decades to your age. Different photos of you taken on the same day could produce results years apart. But Microsoft does at least apologise for any inaccuracies, stressing that it is "still improving this feature".

The idea behind the site – apart from giving you a chance to gloat over your friends who it guessed as older – is to show off how Microsoft's 'machine-learning' technology can help businesses

make predictions and spot trends (read the developers' blog to learn how it works: [blog.how-old.net](http://blog.how-old.net)).

Don't worry about the website secretly saving



your photos to use later – Microsoft says they are "discarded from memory" immediately, which is just as well if they make you look twice your age! [how-old.net](http://how-old.net)



## Turn Street View into Legoland

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

This is what Trafalgar Square would look like if it was rebuilt out of Lego. It's the work of Swedish web designer Einer Öberg, who has turned Google Street View into a blocky landscape, complete with Lego cars, trees and roads. You start by hovering above New York, with the Empire State Building below, but you can visit any location worldwide by searching. The results are impressive, though perhaps not as well executed as Öberg's previous map, Urban Jungle Street View ([inear.se/urbanjungle](http://inear.se/urbanjungle)), which showed what cities would look like if they returned to nature.



## Upload photos automatically to Flickr

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

Flickr has added two new tools it says will "revolutionise" how you upload and organise your photos. The most useful is Uploadr, which searches for

images on your hard drive, then automatically uploads them to a private album in your Flickr account. Uploadr has been added to the Flickr apps for iOS and Android, too: [www.flickr.com/tools](http://www.flickr.com/tools).

Also new to Flickr is Camera Roll, which displays your photos in a timeline and is meant to "take the pain" out of managing them. Click 'Magic View' at the top and Flickr will organise your photos into categories including landscapes, black and white, people, abstract and symmetrical. For the first time, you can download multiple photos in one go, and share photos without first placing them in a folder. Read more on Flickr's blog: [bit.ly/flickr371](http://bit.ly/flickr371).



We highlight 10 of the most amazing and amusing things you can do on the web this fortnight

## Hear talking dolls from the 1880s

[bit.ly/doll371](http://bit.ly/doll371)

Back in the late 19th Century, Thomas Edison released a range of talking dolls that contained wax cylinders children could operate using a crank on the back. They were pulled from the shelves within six weeks after children complained that the voices terrified them. Now, 120 years later, those voices have been digitised. We think they're very creepy!



## 5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

[@GlastoFest](https://twitter.com/GlastoFest)

Photos from the Glastonbury site and updates on who's performing ahead of the festival in June

[@RAFMUSEUM](https://twitter.com/RAFMUSEUM)

Information on events taking place at the RAF Museum's two sites in Cosford and Hendon

[@astro\\_timpeake](https://twitter.com/astro_timpeake)

Follow Tim Peake's training as the British astronaut prepares to go into space in November

[@SynologyUK](https://twitter.com/SynologyUK)

NAS tips from Synology's experts, plus the company's new products

[@KnightmareTV](https://twitter.com/KnightmareTV)

A celebration of the kids' TV show, which ran from 1987 to 1994

## Visit Nelson Mandela's prison home in Street View



[bit.ly/robben371](http://bit.ly/robben371)

Google's new Street View collection of Robben Island lets you look around the prison that was home to Nelson Mandela for 18 of the 27 years he spent behind bars. There are also video interviews with former prisoners, photos showing the history of the island, and more than 150 exhibits, including anti-Apartheid posters.

## See *Game of Thrones* in Google Maps

[bit.ly/thrones371](http://bit.ly/thrones371)

From the Lands of Always Winter north of The Wall, to The Summer Sea in the south, this brilliant map recreates the continent of Westeros from *Game of Thrones* as a Google Map. You can also buy a framed copy of the map £13.94 from [bit.ly/map371](http://bit.ly/map371).



## Control psychedelic 4D spheres

[bit.ly/hopf371](http://bit.ly/hopf371)

If you're an expert in topology, you'll instantly recognise this shape as a Hopf fibration (helpfully explained on Wikipedia [bit.ly/wikipedia371](http://bit.ly/wikipedia371)) and appreciate its mathematical beauty.

Otherwise, simply enjoy the hypnotic images as you drag it across the screen



using your mouse. You can control four fibrations in this Chrome Experiment, created by Nicolas Belmonte, who works in "data visualisation" at Uber, and was previously Staff Data Scientist at Twitter. Follow him on the latter for more interactive wizardry: [@philogb](https://twitter.com/philogb).

## + Say Shazam to your Android device

[bit.ly/shaz371](http://bit.ly/shaz371)

Android devices now recognise 'shazam' as a voice command. Install the Shazam app and say "OK Google, shazam this tune/song/track" to identify it. You can also save the song to play later.

## Comment on Dropbox files

[bit.ly/drop371](http://bit.ly/drop371)

You can now add comments to Dropbox files, just as in Google Docs. You receive an email notification when one of your documents receives a comment. Click the link above to read more on Dropbox's blog.

## Use Instagram's new filters

[bit.ly/gram371](http://bit.ly/gram371)

Instagram has introduced three new photo filters: Lark enhances landscapes; Reyes adds a "dusty, vintage" feel; and Juno boosts portraits of people by making warm tones "pop" and whites "glow".

## EU to let viewers watch BBC iPlayer and Netflix abroad

### What happened?

Tired of not being able to catch up on your favourite shows on BBC iPlayer when you're travelling around Europe? Commissioners at the European Union are hoping to change that, and much more, under new plans to make Europe a single digital market.

The idea is to create a European copyright system, so that iPlayer, Netflix and other streaming services will work in the same way across all EU countries, rather than offering different shows in different nations. This "harmonised" copyright will encourage companies to invest in programming, because they'll have one broad market rather than a series of smaller ones to expand into, the European Commission said.

The Commission hopes to have its legislative proposals ready before the end of the year, but the changes could still take years to roll out. However, the BBC has already said it will start looking into how it could make the changes.

The EU also wants to stop companies charging customers more when they buy the same product from a different country. Such "geo-localising" means renting a car online for the same destination often costs more in some EU countries than others. Additionally, the location from which you browse the web can be used to deny you the ability to purchase - notably for online services where the company hasn't rolled out to that country yet. The EU said such



localised prices and service blocking shouldn't be allowed unless there's a good reason, such as if a company has extra legal obligations for one country.

Those were just two of the points from the EU's 16-point plan to build a single digital market in the next two years. Other changes involve rationalising VAT, encouraging cheaper parcel delivery and asking European firms to come up with new privacy and security technologies.

Alongside the single market plans, the EU announced an antitrust investigation into online commerce, which looks at the barriers Europeans face when buying goods across borders.

### How will it affect you?

These changes should make it easier to access streaming content when you're away from the UK, and they should increase the number of available TV shows, films and music albums. The legislation should also apply to buying digital content, so if, for example, there's a show or band you love from Germany, you'll be able to download their songs from iTunes in the UK.

The same applies to the geo-blocking plans. Hopefully, this will mean you can book a service through a pan-European site without getting a worse

deal because of where you're physically located.

Either way, in the meantime, you can always use a proxy or VPN to hide your actual location to get the services or prices that you want. It's simple to do, though services such as Netflix are reportedly cracking down on such systems, so you may need to switch between providers to access the content you want.

### What do we think?

It's always seemed silly that real-world borders apply online - isn't the web supposed to be free of boundaries? But of course offline laws still apply, because one country might have different copyright, VAT or data-protection rules to another. This makes it difficult for consumers, as well as businesses. It's frustrating to UK Netflix users that we can't see the same series as people in neighbouring countries, or watch our iPlayer shows when on holiday in Spain. But it's also expensive and challenging for companies to expand when rules are different in every single country.

We think it's a wise move for the EU to open up digital borders across Europe. It's ridiculous that you don't need a passport to move between France and Germany, but online services still need to know what country you're from before they'll sell to you. Here's hoping that the EU can tear down digital borders in the same way as physical ones, but given that we'll have to wait and see how much success the Commission has implementing its new laws, we'll still keep our VPN at the ready. See our 'Access blocked websites' feature on page 48 for more about beating unfair online restrictions.





What we think of this fortnight's top tech stories and rumours

## New PC malware destroys your data

### What happened?

A new malware threat could wipe your hard drive when you search your PC for it, according to the Talos security labs team at Cisco ([bit.ly/cisco371](http://bit.ly/cisco371)).

Called Rombertik, this virulent strain of malware is spread via spam and phishing emails, and installs itself in your browser to steal your banking logins and other sensitive data.

Worst of all, Rombertik has been designed with a "nasty trap door", the researchers said. The malware checks to see if its code has been analysed or read; if it has, it destroys the master boot record on your PC.

It will then restart your computer, but the reboot process will get stuck at a screen reading "carbon crack attempt failed". You'll need to reinstall your operating system to get your PC working again.

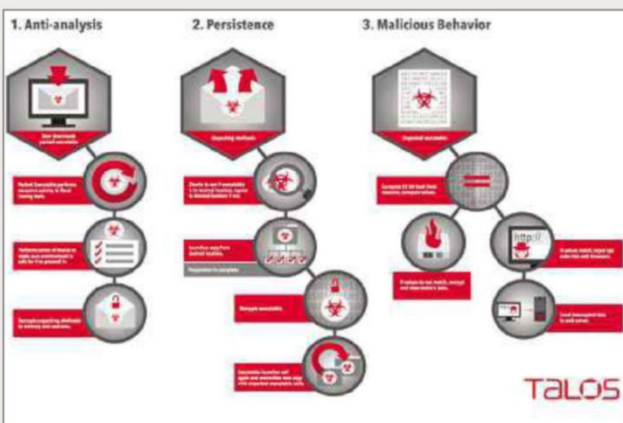
If Rombertik can't wipe your boot record, it will settle for encrypting all the documents and other files in your home folder.

### How will it affect you?

With researchers already on the case, you hopefully won't fall foul of Rombertik, but if you do, the risk is more likely to be to your browser data than your hard drive. The advice to avoid such attacks is the same as ever: don't open attachments or links in unexpected or dodgy emails, and keep your system and anti-virus software up to date. You should back up your most important files so you have a copy if Rombertik locks the originals.

### What do we think?

This is a scary turn of events: it's one thing to have hackers target our computers, but another to have them vindictively destroy our data. Cisco's experts say the malware behaves in this vicious manner to prevent it from being detected by security researchers, which goes to show the lengths to which hackers will go to get your data. So, it's essential to be vigilant about suspicious emails and links.



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## Amazon doubles free delivery minimum

### What happened?

Amazon quietly increased the amount that shoppers must spend on the site before they qualify for free delivery. The retail giant set a minimum spend of £10 in 2013 for free "super saver delivery", but has now doubled that to £20.

### How will it affect you?

If you're a regular Amazon shopper, you may need to combine your orders into batches of at least £20 in value before proceeding to checkout, to avoid paying for delivery. Amazon is making an exception for books: if you order £10 worth of books, your order will still qualify for free delivery.

### What do we think?

Amazon appears to be pushing customers towards its Prime subscription service, which for £79 includes free delivery for many products, as well as streaming video content, a library of free ebooks and other perks. Although Amazon keeps expanding Prime, it is a shame that it has to make shopping without it more expensive to persuade customers to sign up to the service. If Prime is to succeed, it should appeal without Amazon strong-arming us into using it.



# IE and Edge to block misleading adverts

## What happened?

Microsoft announced in a blog post ([bit.ly/misleading371](http://bit.ly/misleading371)) that it plans to use Internet Explorer's SmartScreen Filter to crack down on misleading advertising. The changes, which come into effect on 1 June 2015, will target adverts that mislead users and entice them to download software or other files. Microsoft's new criteria state that adverts "must not mislead or deceive. Must be distinguishable from website content. Must not contain malicious code. Must not invoke a file download".

According to Microsoft, the changes are there to protect users from being tricked into performing actions that they don't fully understand. Specifically, Microsoft wants to combat adverts that automatically download files when clicked, as well as ads that disguise themselves as legitimate content.

An update to the Internet Explorer SmartScreen filter will enforce the new rules. These will also work in Microsoft's new Edge browser, which is available with the current build of Windows 10.

## How will it affect you?

If you already use an ad blocker such as Adblock Plus with Internet Explorer, this news won't make much difference to your browsing because you probably don't see



these misleading ads in the first place. However, for users who don't block ads, these tricks are becoming increasingly dangerous and convincing, so Microsoft's new rules will provide extra protection when browsing the web. Most of us have been fooled at some time by an advert pretending to be something it's not, so the update to SmartScreen Filter will help to prevent such mistakes.

## What do we think?

We're pleased to see Microsoft improving the built-in protection in

both Internet Explorer and Edge, especially because it's not yet clear if the new browser will support ad-blocking add-ons.

That said, there is a certain irony in Microsoft finally tackling misleading adverts when, as we reported last issue, its own Bing search engine often displays sponsored links to downloads containing 'crapware'. Our sister website, Expert Reviews ([www.expertreviews.co.uk](http://www.expertreviews.co.uk)) has asked Microsoft to clarify if the proposed changes will affect Bing's advertising, but at the time of going to press the team had yet to hear anything back.



## FIRST LOOK

### Clarity Keyboard Beta [bit.ly/clarity371](http://bit.ly/clarity371)

When we reviewed Android keyboards in issue 348 ([bit.ly/webuser348](http://bit.ly/webuser348)), Swiftkey comfortably won our Gold Award, so when its developers announced a brand new app, Clarity Keyboard Beta, we couldn't wait to try it out.

As its name suggests, Clarity offers an incredibly simple and clean user experience, even in comparison to Swiftkey. This is because the app uses a new, intelligent type of auto-correction that makes changes based on the last few words you've typed, rather than fixing one word at a time. This means that there's no prediction bar and you can keep typing until it corrects your mistyped words.

If Clarity makes changes you don't



want, you simply tap the backspace button and it undoes the corrections and shows the words as you typed them. Initially, we were cynical about how well Clarity's auto-correction would work, but after testing it for a few days we're impressed with its accuracy and ability to recognise successive mistyped words. However, in cases where we weren't happy with Clarity's corrections, going back several words to make a

change felt much fiddlier than using Swiftkey's prediction bar.

Clarity's automatic adding of a space after a full stop was handy for writing messages, but frustrating when entering email addresses or URLs.

Since its aim is to be as simple as possible, Clarity has few other features to discuss. We do, however, really like its built-in shortcuts for capitalising letters or choosing punctuation, which work by swiping your finger from the shift and symbols keys respectively. Since its technology is so new, we didn't think it fair to feature Clarity among our Best Free Apps until a stable release is available. By then, we imagine its flaws will be ironed out and it'll be the top choice for anyone seeking a fast, simple Android keyboard.



## WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

# Is Google launching a takeaway service?

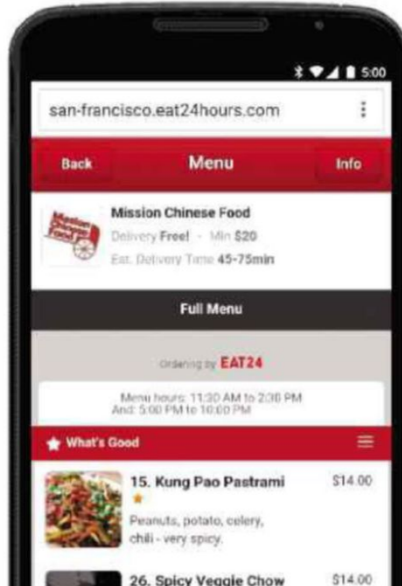
The latest addition to Google's expanding arsenal of online services comes in the form of takeaways. No, Google isn't planning to open its own pizzeria or Delhi house, but it's now allowing you to order takeaway food from your phone or tablet.

According to Google's announcement on Google+ ([bit.ly/takeaway371](http://bit.ly/takeaway371)), when you search for a nearby restaurant, Google will give you the option to 'Place an order' in its search results. Tap this, choose a delivery service, then select your food and drink, and complete your order through the service's website.

Currently, the new takeaway service is only available in the US, where Google has partnered with six providers including Seamless, Grubhub, Eat24, BeyondMenu and MyPizza.com, and is promising to add more soon.

Although the proposed system could potentially benefit the likes of Seamless ([www.seamless-uk.co.uk](http://www.seamless-uk.co.uk)) and other food-ordering services such as Just Eat ([www.just-eat.co.uk](http://www.just-eat.co.uk)) and Hungry House ([www.hungryhouse.co.uk](http://www.hungryhouse.co.uk)), there could also be a negative impact because people are likely to pick the first option presented to them.

It's quite possible that Google's partners will need to pay extra to hit the top spot in 'Place an order' listings or risk being overlooked by hungry browsers. If Google's takeaway service



does go down this route, it could potentially get Google in trouble again with the European Commission for unfair business practice.

### LIKELIHOOD RATING



Considering that one of Google's partners, Seamless, already operates in the UK, it's easy to believe the service will shortly arrive here, eliminating the need to stockpile takeaway menus.

## WEBOMETER

### WE LIKE...

#### ↑ Nintendo to release mobile games

Nintendo has announced that its first smartphone game will be launched before the end of 2015, with four further titles available by March 2017.



#### ↑ Google lets users register interest in apps

A new game called Revolution is the first app in the Google Play Store that you can register an interest in before it's released, so that you're notified as soon as it's available.



### WE DON'T LIKE...

#### ↓ Internet rationing predicted

The internet is responsible for consuming eight per cent of the UK's power output. If demand continues to rise at the current rate our access to the web will need to be rationed.



#### ↓ Airbnb house ruined

A Canadian couple's house was trashed by revellers after they rented it out on accommodation-website Airbnb. However, the company's Host Guarantee means that the couple are covered for the £40,000 of damage caused.



## What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowdfunding site

### Rostrum

[bit.ly/rostrum371](http://bit.ly/rostrum371) | from £25

Taking photos from directly above using a phone or camera usually means blurry, poorly framed shots, but the Rostrum prevents wobbles to produce perfect overhead images.

Described as a 21st-century camera stand, the Rostrum can be assembled in seconds and mounted on any wall, door, window or other vertical surface. Then you just place your phone or camera face down with the lens positioned over one of the portholes to capture sharp, stable stills. Funding for the project closes on 27 May, with a £7,000 target.



# Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

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

### Microsoft to scrap Patch Tuesday



The executive Vice President of Operating Systems at Microsoft, Terry Myerson, has

indicated that the firm will be ending its Patch Tuesday tradition when Windows 10 is released this summer. Instead of issuing regular security bulletins on the second Tuesday of each month, Microsoft intends to offer software patches 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for all devices including PCs, tablets and phones. During his presentation at Ignite 2015, Myerson criticised Google's handling of software updates for its Android operating system, stating that "Google takes no responsibility to update customer devices, and refuses to take responsibility to update their devices, leaving end users and businesses increasingly exposed every day they use an

Android device". It's not yet clear whether Patch Tuesday will continue for older versions of Windows, but the more regular security updates in Windows 10 could be another incentive to take advantage of Microsoft's free upgrade offer for the new operating system.

[bit.ly/patch371](http://bit.ly/patch371)

### Lenovo responsible for new security risk



Following its Superfish debacle earlier this year, Chinese PC Manufacturer Lenovo has been found responsible for three further flaws in its systems. Discovered by researchers at security firm IOActive, one of the flaws would allow remote attacks to "bypass signature validation checks and replace trusted Lenovo applications with malicious applications". The other two both give attackers more control over a system than they should have, allowing them to potentially run malicious

commands. Lenovo has acknowledged the findings and offered its users patches for the flaws in April.

[bit.ly/lenovo371](http://bit.ly/lenovo371)

### WordPress patches vulnerabilities



WordPress has issued a critical security release patch to a flaw that affects both its Jetpack plug-in and TwentyFifteen theme. According to news reports, both the plug-in and theme were found to be vulnerable to a cross-site scripting (XSS) vulnerability that has been actively exploited 'in the wild'. Security firm Bitdefender advises that WordPress users remain immune to future security flaws by making sure they're running the latest version of the content management system and using anti-malware software with anti-exploit capabilities.

[bit.ly/wordpress371](http://bit.ly/wordpress371)

## Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

**THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:**  
Filip Chytrý, malware analyst at Avast ([www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com))



**Q** Is ransomware no longer a big threat because security companies are now prepared for it?  
Declan Heath, Facebook

**A** Ransomware is still a threat, because malware authors keep coming up with new variants of it. For example,

Simplocker, a type of mobile ransomware that was discovered in June 2014, differed from previous mobile ransomware in that it actually encrypted the files it held ransom. Prior to Simplocker, mobile ransomware didn't encrypt files, but only claimed to have done so to scare users into paying. In February 2015, Avast discovered a new variant of Simplocker that uses a unique key for each infected device to encrypt files, making it more difficult to decrypt the files. The previous version of Simplocker used one key for all the devices it infected.

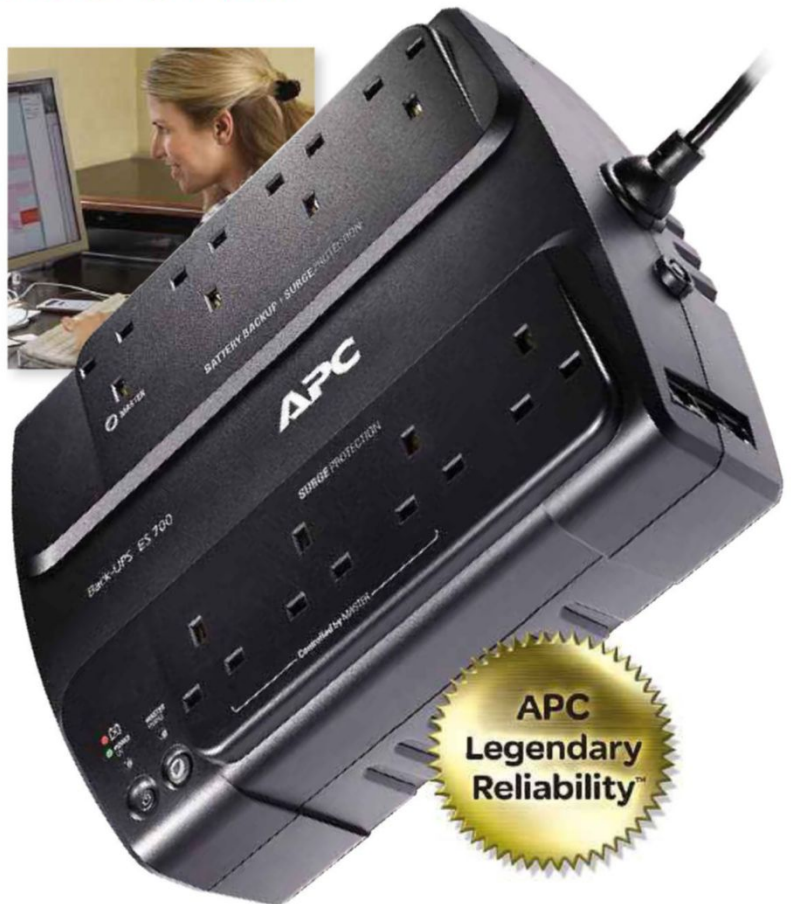
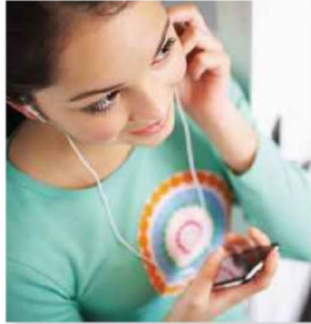
**Q** Is public Wi-Fi the biggest danger to mobile security?  
Lewis Franklin, Twitter

**A** Yes, it is a big threat to mobile security, because people underestimate the risk. In a survey, we found that 77 per cent of Brits prefer free Wi-Fi networks that do not require registration or a password, and only six per cent said they use a VPN. Public Wi-Fi networks are an easy entry point for hacking attacks and most users don't realise that all the personal info on their mobile devices is defenceless and unprotected on public Wi-Fi.

**Q** Are there fewer false positives now that security software uses the cloud rather than downloadable definitions?  
Spencer O'Brien, Facebook

**A** To a certain extent, yes, there are fewer false positives now security software uses the cloud. Anti-virus companies can fix them quicker now by automatically sending out new virus-definition updates, which reduces the number of users affected by false positives.

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- Up to 55 minutes runtime
- Telephone/network protection



**APC**<sup>™</sup>  
by Schneider Electric

# ★ Best New Websites

## Site of the Fortnight

INFORMATION

RELAUNCH

### Citizens Advice

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

Citizens Advice has clearly put a great deal of thought into what visitors want from its website, because this relaunch is a big improvement on the old version. The spruced-up design is complemented by a larger, more prominent search box that quickly finds the advice you need. There are links to the newest and most popular articles, a branch locator and the fascinating option to see what other users are searching for ('ending a marriage' was trending when we visited). Photos of the Citizens Advice team and the new ability to comment on articles give the site a community feel and it's packed with helpful information.

Our rating



**BENEFITS**  
Browse the A-Z of benefits to check what you're entitled to

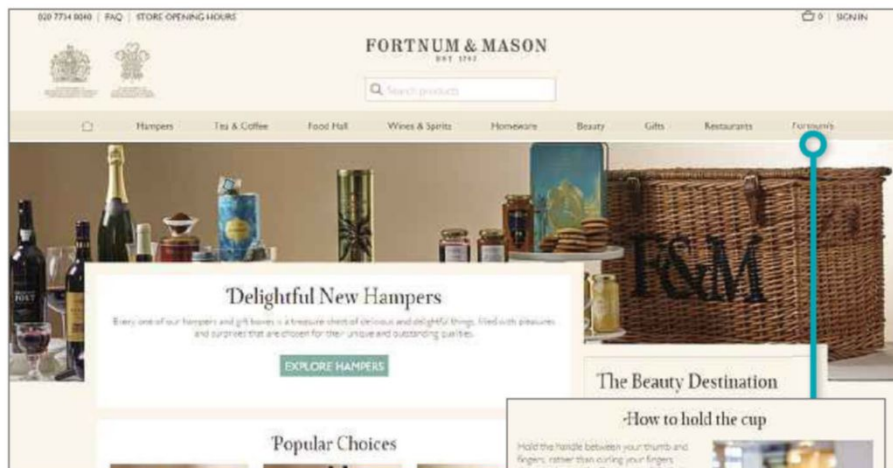
**MOBILE**  
The revamped site works equally well on Desktop and mobile

### Advice that's more accessible on mobile

Author: Mike Dixon, Assistant Chief Executive  
Published: 23 April 2015



Millions of people seek online help from Citizens Advice every single year, using more than 20 million phones, tablets, laptops and computers. People may be looking for advice on issues like sorting out a tax bill, claiming the right benefits, or taking someone to court. Here's a snapshot of what people are looking for help with right now.



SHOPPING

RELAUNCH

### Fortnum & Mason

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

The luxury department store now has a swanky website to match, which makes it easier to browse its "delicious" and "delightful" (if rather dear) products on any device. Fortnum & Mason's famous hampers take centre stage in a stylish design that combines speedy navigation with large photos and clear product information, including details of the store's delivery options. If you can't afford to shop, head to the amusingly posh 'Behind the scenes' section and learn, for example, "the etiquette of tea". It's a sumptuous site to browse, but it's a shame customers can't leave reviews – perhaps to avoid trouble on the foie gras pages!

Our rating



NEW

CURRENCY

### Coinbase

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

Bitcoin has a reputation for being a means of buying naughty things online, but the launch of Coinbase in the UK could legitimise the digital currency. It lets you create a free Bitcoin wallet that you can use to make and accept payments – much like PayPal. Coinbase is easy to use, with a detailed Help section, and gives you 100 'bits' just for signing up. Don't get too excited, though, because that's equivalent to 1p. Note that you'll need to upload a form of ID to verify who you are and that Coinbase takes one per cent commission from each transaction you make.

Our rating



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



**DASHBOARD**  
See what advice people are searching for, in real time

**66**  
people on citizensadvice.org.uk in the last minute

Searches on citizensadvice.org.	Searches from Google	Trending content
jobseekers allowance	how can chage the date birth certificate	Ending a marriage 3,221 unique visits
keeping a pet	how long do u have to be with a	Employment and Support Allowance 3,080 unique visits
notice to leave		

**LEGAL**  
The Citizens Advice legal blogs offer expert insight and opinion

**Legal aid reforms have harmed justice: it's time for a rethink**

Author: Imogen Parker, Senior Policy Researcher  
Published: 12 March 2015



The Justice Select Committee finds legal aid reforms have harmed justice. Citizens Advice agrees.

Category: Policy research  
Tagged: domestic abuse, justice committee, LASPO, legal aid, ministry of justice



**RELAUNCH**

**HUMOUR**

**The Onion**

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

Now in its 25th year, The Onion may no longer make your eyes stream with laughter, but this refresh to the site at least makes it feel less cramped and more modern. Welcome tweaks include a list of the most popular stories, a larger video player and improved navigation. Best of all, there's no longer a limit on how many articles you can read for free. Although renaming the Parenting section After Birth is rather puerile, there are still lots of amusing headlines, such as: 'Study Finds Those With Deceased Family Members At High Risk Of Dying Themselves'.

Our rating



**NEW**

**MUSIC**

**Sony Legacy UK**

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

If you find today's pop music bland and boring, rock on over to this site for Sony Music UK's catalogue division. With its focus on 'classic' Seventies and Eighties acts, it's like the 21st Century never happened, and acts such as Emerson, Lake and Palmer can unashamedly be named 'artist of the month'. The slick layout packs in archive videos, themed playlists and album analysis, as well as competitions to win signed box sets and other goodies. Updated every week, it's actually rather groovy for a corporate promotional site, with a lively social-media presence, too.

Our rating



**NEW**

**EDUCATION**

**Speakezee**

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

If you're organising an event and looking for an expert to give a speech, this ingenious site will help you find the right person in seconds. Speakezee lets you browse hundreds of academic speakers by expertise, qualifications and location, covering every field from agriculture to psychology. Each entry usefully includes details of the expert's experience, the topics they talk about and videos of their previous speeches, when available. We like that you can create a shortlist of interesting speakers, and that academics can sign up for free to advertise their own services.

Our rating





RELAUNCH

TRAVEL

## Weather2Travel.com

[www.weather2travel.com](http://www.weather2travel.com)

Recognising that few people want to holiday somewhere wet and windy, this revamped travel site only covers places with the best weather, from the Algarve to Turkey. You can browse by destination, month and climate (ranging from Sunny to Very Hot, and Warm & Sunny to Very Hot Beach); and view details of temperature, hours of sunshine and the average number of rainy days per month in each country. But before you dig out the sun cream and dark glasses, note that Weather2Travel.com only offers a measly one deal per destination, for which you need to click through to an external site such as Thomson.

Our rating



NEW

SHOPPING

## Poundworld Plus

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

As its name suggests, this web spin-off from discount store Poundworld sells thousands of products for a pound, as well as some items that cost more but still offer great value for money. The latter include online exclusives such as a two-slice toaster for £6.99, an iPhone 5 wall charger for £1.99 and a large flask for £3.99. It's a pretty basic site, but not unattractive and it's easy enough to browse, with a good variety of stock that spans everything from food and cleaning products to DIY and gardening. However, it's annoying that the discounts are offset by the need to spend at least £20 and pay from £3.95 for delivery.

Our rating



NEW

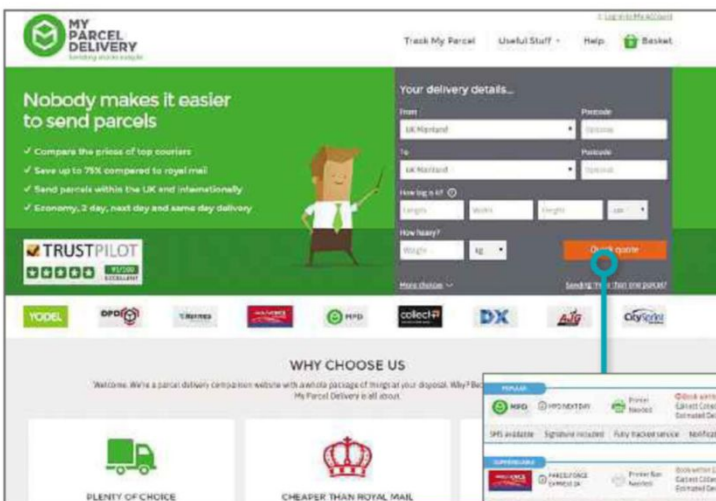
LEGAL

## RightsInfo

[rightsinfo.org](http://rightsinfo.org)

We often take our human rights for granted until they come under threat, so this excellent site aims to keep us aware and informed by making the subject more accessible. RightsInfo explains what human rights do for us by using bite-size cards to highlight key rulings, for example: "children can't be put up for adoption without parents knowing". There are also summaries of the 50 most important rights cases in history and a rebuttal of myths such as "terrorists can get asylum under the human rights act". It's a friendly and impressively informative site that everyone should visit at least once.

Our rating



RELAUNCH

DELIVERY

## My Parcel Delivery

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

Rather than queuing at the Post Office to post a parcel, you can use this splendid site to find the cheapest courier service. Relunched with a smarter, simpler design, My Parcel Delivery lets you enter the size and weight of your package, and when and where you want it delivered, to get quotes from companies including Yodel, Parcelforce and Hermes. The search results helpfully tell you earliest collection times and whether you need to print a label. Once your package has been picked up, you can track it online. My Parcel Delivery is friendly, fast and very easy to use, putting you back in control of your post.

Our rating



NEW

ACCESSIBILITY

## Can't Move

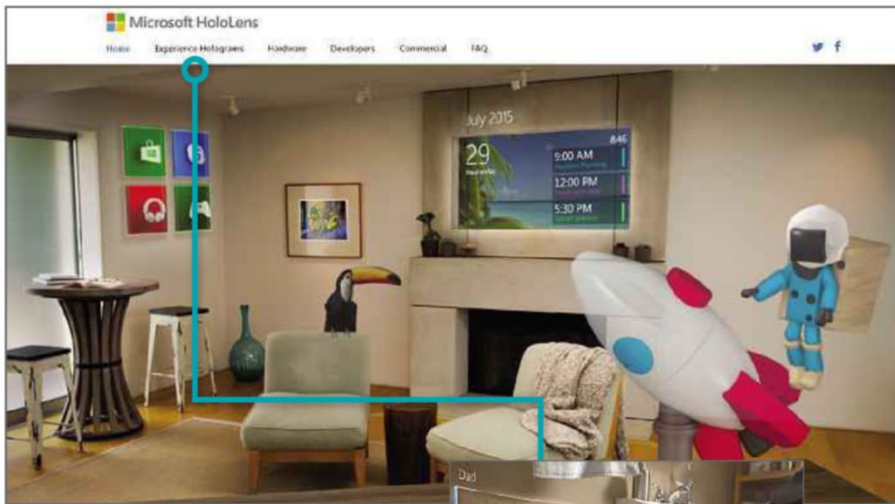
[www.cantmove.co.uk](http://www.cantmove.co.uk)

This spoof property site from charity Leonard Cheshire Disability raises awareness about the lack of suitable accommodation for disabled people. Search for a postcode to see examples of properties available in that area (in fact, the results are the same for every postcode you enter) and their accessibility problems, such as steps up to the front door. Can't Move also tells you how many people are waiting for disabled-friendly homes in the area, and what you can do to help. It's a well-intentioned idea, but it's very basic and doesn't provide nearly enough detail to properly engage visitors.

Our rating







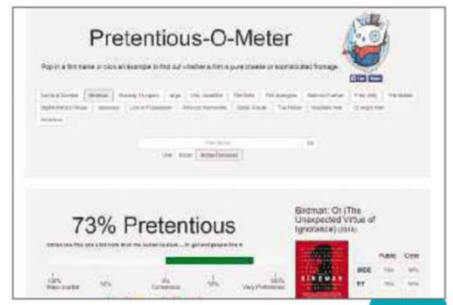
TECHNOLOGY

Microsoft HoloLens

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

Described as “the future of computing”, HoloLens is Microsoft’s new ‘holographic’ headset and this official website gives you a feel of how the technology works. It uses massive, moving photos to demonstrate how HoloLens converts the world around you into a canvas that blends holograms with everyday objects such as your fridge, coffee table or bathroom wall. You can also take a closer look at the headset, which contains “more computing power than the average laptop”, and watch videos of developers explaining what they’re doing with HoloLens. Inevitably, the site brings to mind Google Glass, but it makes HoloLens look even more impressive – so long as it works as described!

Our rating



FILM

Pretentious-O-Meter

[pretentious-o-meter.co.uk](http://pretentious-o-meter.co.uk)

This site tells you if your taste in movies is more highbrow than mainstream. It compares user ratings for films on IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes with critic’s scores – the wider the gap, the more pretentious the movie. You can search for a title or click one of the examples to find out whether the film is “pure cheese or sophisticated fromage”, and whether audiences in general like or dislike the movie. For example, *Birdman*, which won the Oscar for Best Picture this year, is rated ‘73% pretentious’, because critics liked it more than audiences. The site works best with recent films and yields some interesting results.

Our rating



+ ALSO NEW

FOOD

Carluccio's

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



*Mamma mia!* The relaunched website for Italian restaurant chain Carluccio's is truly *bellissima*. Huge photos of tasty-looking food adorn every page, and the minimalist design makes it easy to book a table, order a picnic and download menus. You can also buy Carluccio's-branded products and gift vouchers.

GARDENING

RHS Campaign for School Gardening

[schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk](http://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk)



This campaign from the Royal Horticultural Society encourages children to develop a sustainable garden to improve their green-fingered skills, health and wellbeing. It offers more than 100 activity ideas, as well as information sheets, lesson plans and stories from schools that have already got their hands dirty.

SPORT

Women in Sport

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



Aiming to transform sport “for every woman and girl in the UK”, Women in Sport’s new site is packed with useful advice and resources. As well as learning more about the charity’s mission and team, you can read articles about topics such as sexism in sport and find out how to get involved with the campaign.

CRIME

National Rural Crime Network

[www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net](http://www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net)



This site is championing a better understanding of crime in rural areas, which it stresses “is not simply a scaled-down version of urban crime”. It provides details of the NRCN’s objectives and research, and explains how to take part in the National Rural Crime Survey and report your concerns and experiences.



WEBSITE SECRETS

Discover IMDb's error page quotes

Most websites simply display a ‘Page not found’ message when you try to access a page that doesn’t exist. The Internet Movie Database makes errors more interesting by providing customised quotes from famous films. Try it by typing [imdb.com/ooh](http://imdb.com/ooh) or another deliberately wrong URL. You should see a quote from *Back to the Future*, *The Lord of the Rings* or another movie that’s been tweaked to refer to the error, for example “There is no page” (from *The Matrix*). Keep refreshing the page to view all the quotes. ■





# Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

## Top Tips of the Fortnight

### Mobilegeddon update

A lot of webmasters were worried about Google's 21 April mobile-friendly algorithm update (dubbed 'Mobilegeddon'), which threatened to penalise any website that didn't pass Google's mobile-friendly test ([bit.ly/googmob371](http://bit.ly/googmob371)), but the fallout doesn't seem to have been as bad as many expected. Some sites that aren't mobile-friendly appear to have moved down a place or two in Google's rankings on searches performed from mobile devices (there's a round-up of information from Search Engine Land at [bit.ly/sel371](http://bit.ly/sel371)), but we haven't heard any reports of catastrophic drops in traffic.

However, it's still a good idea to make your site more mobile-friendly if you haven't already. A recent tweet by Google's Gary Illyes (@methode) said, "There's no reason for us to stop

improving our MF algos," which suggests that we're likely to see more changes in the future.

### Try Matched Site Content

If you have a Google AdSense account, you might be able to use its new Matched Site Content tool to add a handy 'similar content' box to your site, which can be used to persuade visitors to click through to other pages on your site. You need to have a site with multiple pages and a reasonably high volume of traffic.

Find out if you qualify by following the instructions at [bit.ly/match371](http://bit.ly/match371).

### Deal of the Fortnight

Compila ([www.compila.com](http://www.compila.com)) is offering 20 per cent off its Cloud hosting, with the Lite package available for £18 per year (£1.50 per month).

## Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S

EXPERT:

Paul Nesbitt,

Director, PAC Web Hosting

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



**Q** What's the best way to avoid spammers flooding comments with random rubbish?

Kate Russell, via Twitter

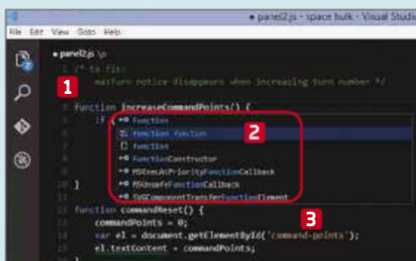
**A** It depends on the platform your website is using. For example, if you use WordPress, then install the Akismet plug-in ([bit.ly/akismet371](http://bit.ly/akismet371)) and your comment spam will become a distant memory. If your website is hand-coded, you can add a 'CAPTCHA', which asks visitors to enter the word in the picture. However, it appears that some bots can now read them, so you can also add a question that a spambot would not know the answer to, such as "how many months are there in a year?" With these two methods you will regain control of your inbox.



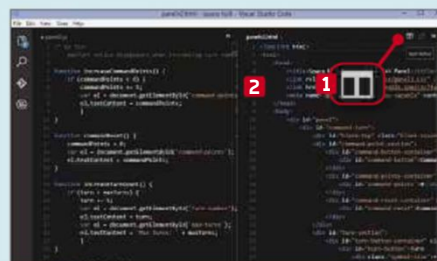
## MINI WORKSHOP | Write better code with Visual Studio Code

Visual Studio Code: [bit.ly/code371](http://bit.ly/code371) | 10 mins | Windows 7, 8+

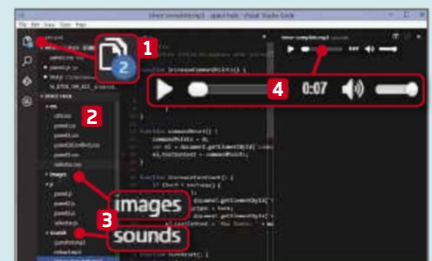
You can use a simple text editor for programming, but the pros use IDEs (Integrated Development Environments). Microsoft's new Visual Studio Code software is a great halfway house that's free to download



**1** At its most basic level, you can simply start typing your code into the software as you would with any text editor. **1** If you save the file and give it an appropriate extension (such as .htm, .css or .js), the software will recognise the type of file you're creating and help you with tool tips, **2** automated clear layout and coloured code. **3**



**2** Click the Split Editor button **1** and you can work on more than one file at a time. **2** This is handy if you're working on a website, for example, and need both an HTML file and a CSS or JavaScript file open at the same time.

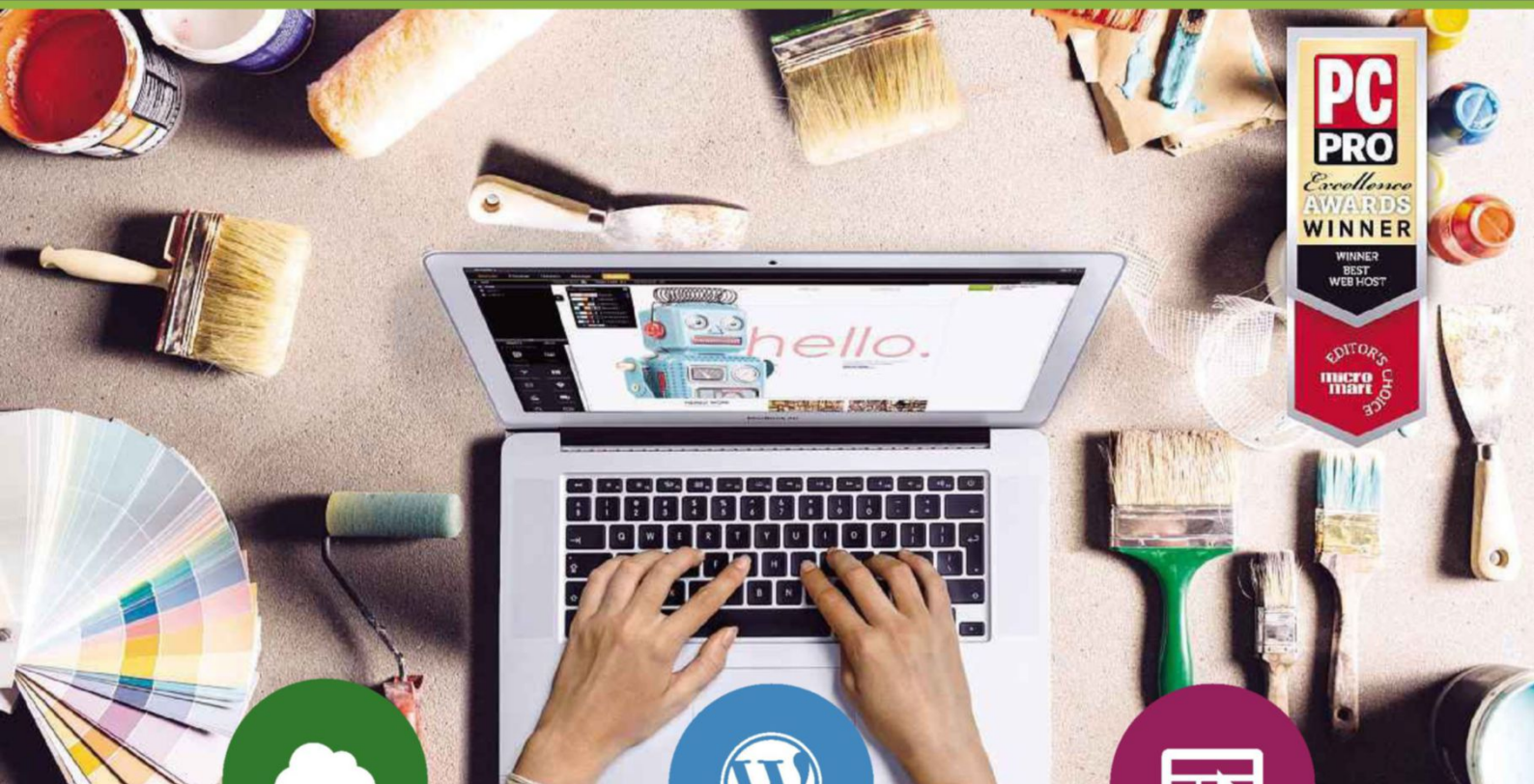


**3** Take this a step further by clicking the Explore button. **1** Point this to your working folder and you can open a tree of all your website's files, **2** so that you can easily open and refer back to anything in the project. You can even preview media files such as pictures and sounds **3** without having to open separate software. **4**

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# Group Test

We test and compare the latest products

## £500 budget PCs

You don't have to wait until the launch of Windows 10 to buy a new PC. **Andy Shaw** tests nine affordable options

In the past, we would usually have recommended you delay buying a new PC when a new version of Windows is about to be released. After all, no-one wants to splash out on a new computer and immediately get lumbered with an out-of-date OS. This time, however, there's no need to wait because Microsoft is giving

everyone with a valid Windows 7 or 8 licence a free upgrade to Windows 10, as long as you take up the offer in the first year. This means you can buy a new PC installed with your current favourite OS and then, in a few months, if Windows 10 turns out to be as good as we hope, you can upgrade free of charge.

### HOW WE TESTED

We put all the PCs through their paces using our Windows benchmark suite, which gives an overall score based on a series of tests including office tasks, image editing and video encoding. We also ran a demo of a 3D game, Dirt Showdown, to test the PC's 3D-gaming ability.

**Chillblast Fusion Cyborg | £600 with monitor, £500 without | [www.chillblast.com](http://www.chillblast.com)**

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

WebUser  
GOLD  
AWARD

Chillblast's Fusion Cyborg is built into a compact case that's well made and competently arranged inside.

The smaller case means there isn't so much room for serious upgrading further down the line, but two of its four memory slots are free, so it's easy to expand, and there's room to add an optical DVD or Blu-ray drive (or, if you'd prefer, Chillblast will fit a DVD writer for an extra £20). It has eight USB ports, although only three are USB3, and the graphics card has two DVI connectors, one HDMI and one DisplayPort.

The PC runs quietly, and uses just one exhaust fan to draw out hot air from the back. There's a very quiet fan mounted on the processor and another on the graphics card that kicks in when you're gaming. All the fans run quietly and produce less noise than the hard drive.

The quad-core Intel processor runs at a base speed of 3.2GHz, but boosts to 3.4GHz if it's not running too hot. Paired with its 8GB of memory, it performed well in our general Windows tests with an overall benchmark score of 79 that placed it third overall. It did even better in our games test, with its

2GB PowerColor AMD R9 270X graphics card running Dirt Showdown at 75.5fps (frames per second) in Full HD with the graphics settings turned up to 'Ultra'. This was the best frame rate of all the PCs we reviewed in this Group Test.

If you want a bundled monitor, Chillblast supplies an AOC E2250WDA, which has good viewing angles and colour accuracy. We measured a contrast ratio of 1,046:1 and the screen is capable of displaying 88 per cent of the colours in the sRGB standard palette.



### VERDICT

★★★★★

The Chillblast Fusion Cyborg is a compact and quiet PC that's capable of impressive performance. It scored highly in both our tests, making it an excellent all-rounder, and offers great value for money whether you choose to get the 21.5in monitor bundled with it or not. While there isn't much room for future expansion, it's a well-balanced PC that we heartily recommend.

**Palicomp AMD Nemesis Cube | £600 with monitor, £500 without | [www.palicomp.co.uk](http://www.palicomp.co.uk)**

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



The Nemesis Cube is built into a wider, shorter case so its internal components are arranged differently to most PCs, which isn't ideal for upgrades.

Inside, there's an over-clocked quad-core AMD Athlon X4 860K processor and 8GB of memory. This isn't the best available processor but it's a good-value option and the savings have been offset by beefing up the graphics with a 2GB PowerColor AMD Radeon R9 270X. It also has a superb monitor in the 24in Asus VS247HR, with 94 per cent sRGB coverage and a contrast ratio of 1,298:1.

The Nemesis Cube trailed slightly behind our Gold Award-winning PC in the performance tests. It scored 65 in the Windows benchmark test (fourth overall), but did better in the 3D gaming test with 74fps (joint second).



**PC Specialist Invictus | £599 with monitor, £499 without | [www.pcspecialist.co.uk](http://www.pcspecialist.co.uk)**

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



If you're looking for a stylish, flashy chassis on your £500 PC, the Invictus's case fits the bill, with a window on the side that lets you view glowing blue LED lights around the fans.

The dual-core Intel Pentium G3258 processor is under-specified compared to the quad-core models in other PCs we tested, but it did fine on single-core tasks such as image editing. However, it stumbled on video tests, dropping the overall Windows performance score to 55 (second from last).

It performed superbly in our games tests, with a joint-second Dirt Showdown frame rate of 74fps. This is largely thanks to the performance of its above average graphics card, the 2GB Palit GeForce GTX 960.

It comes with the same AOC monitor as the Gold Award-winning Chillblast PC.



**VERDICT**

★★★★☆

The Palicomp AMD Nemesis Cube is a distinctive-looking PC that provides great performance, particularly for games. It's great value for money, especially when bundled with the monitor. However, if you're thinking of opening the case and having a tinker, there isn't much room for future expansion.

**VERDICT**

★★★★☆

The PC Specialist Invictus is a well-built, great-value PC that whizzes through basic Windows tasks and powers through the latest games. However, the dual-core processor doesn't stand up to more intense tasks, which had a significant impact on the PC's overall Windows performance score.

**BEST OF THE REST**

**Wired2Fire Diablo Ultima | £599/£499**  
[www.wired2fire.co.uk](http://www.wired2fire.co.uk) | ★★★★★

A great all-rounder with a powerful processor and mid-range graphics. It's a good buy if you're never likely to play games.

**Yoyotech Warbird RS6 | £600/£500**  
[www.yoyotech.co.uk](http://www.yoyotech.co.uk) | ★★★★★

This well-balanced PC comes with an SSD drive and a good monitor. It performs well but has limited future upgrade options.

**Cyberpower Zeus Mini-A 100 | £599/£499**  
[www.cyberpowersystem.co.uk](http://www.cyberpowersystem.co.uk) | ★★★★★

A smaller PC that's powerful enough for everyday Windows and multimedia use, but lacking in graphics power for gaming.

**DinoPC Stealth Sentinel | £599/£499**  
[www.dinopc.com](http://www.dinopc.com) | ★★★☆☆

The Stealth Shield is as quiet as its name implies and is a reasonable all-rounder, with a good monitor and an SSD drive. Its test performance was below average, though.

**Mesh Elite Voyager CS | £599/£499**  
[www.meshcomputers.com](http://www.meshcomputers.com) | ★★★★★

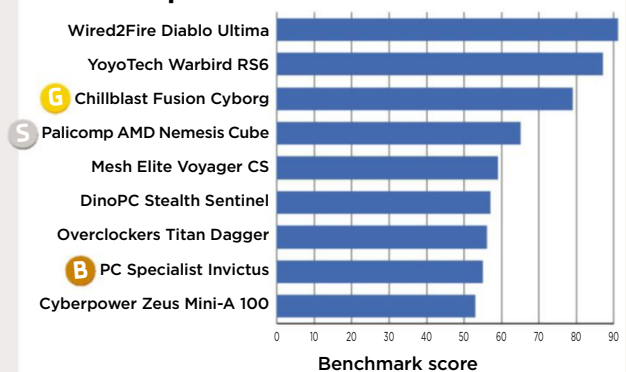
This PC's dual-core processor and built-in graphics hardware let it down in our performance tests, particularly during gaming.

**Overclockers Titan Dagger | £622/£532**  
[www.overclockers.co.uk](http://www.overclockers.co.uk) | ★★★★★

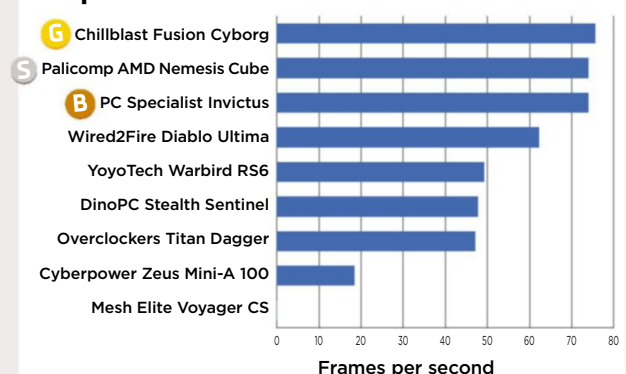
A more expensive PC than the others but its performance was below average when compared to the rest of the group.






**TEST-RESULTS CHARTS**

**Windows performance**



**3D performance**



					
	Chillblast Fusion Cyborg	Palicomp AMD Nemesis Cube	PC Specialist Invictus	Wired2Fire Diablo Ultima	YoyoTech Warbird RS6
WEBSITE	<a href="http://www.chillblast.com">www.chillblast.com</a>	<a href="http://www.palicomp.co.uk">www.palicomp.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.pcspecialist.co.uk">www.pcspecialist.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.wired2fire.co.uk">www.wired2fire.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.yoyotech.co.uk">www.yoyotech.co.uk</a>
PRICE incl monitor	£600	£600	£599	£599	£600
PRICE excl monitor	£500	£500	£499	£499	£500
PROCESSOR	Quad-core 3.2GHz Intel Core i5-4460	Quad-core 4.2GHz AMD Athlon X4 860K Black Edition (overclocked)	Dual-core 4GHz Intel Pentium G3258 (overclocked)	Quad-core 3.2GHz Intel Core i5-4460	Quad-core 3.1GHz Intel Core i5-4440
SUPPLIED MEMORY	8GB	8GB	8GB	8GB	8GB
MEMORY TYPE	1,600MHz DDR3	1,600MHz DDR3	1,600MHz DDR3	1,600MHz DDR3	1,600MHz DDR3
MAXIMUM MEMORY	32GB	32GB	32GB	16GB	32GB
MOTHERBOARD	Gigabyte GA-B85M-DS3H	Asus A88XM-Plus	Asus H81M-Plus	Asus H81M-Plus	MSI H81M-E34
FRONT USB PORTS	1 x USB3, 1 x USB2	1 x USB3, 1 x USB2	1 x USB3, 1 x USB2	1 x USB3, 1 x USB2	2 x USB3
REAR USB PORTS	2 x USB3, 4 x USB2	2 x USB3, 4 x USB2	2 x USB3, 4 x USB2	4 x USB3, 2 x USB2	4 x USB3, 2 x USB2
OTHER PORTS	1 x PS/2	2 x PS/2	2 x PS/2	2 x PS/2	2 x PS/2
NETWORKING	1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet	1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet	1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet	1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet	1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet
STORAGE	1TB SSHD (8GB SSD cache)	1TB hard drive	1TB hard drive	1TB hard drive	120GB SSD, 1TB hard drive
MEMORY-CARD READER	X	X	X	X	X
OPTICAL DRIVE TYPE	X	DVD-RW	DVD-RW	DVD-RW	DVD-RW
GRAPHICS CARD	2GB PowerColor Radeon R9 270X	2GB PowerColor Radeon R9 270X	2GB Palit GeForce GTX 960	2GB VTX3D Radeon R9 270	2GB XFX Radeon R7 260X
GRAPHICS/VIDEO PORTS	1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI	1 x DisplayPort, 2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI
SOUND CARD	Integrated	Integrated	Integrated	Integrated	Integrated
SOUND CARD OUTPUTS	3 x 3.5mm audio output	3 x 3.5mm audio output	3 x 3.5mm audio output	3 x 3.5mm audio output	3 x 3.5mm audio output
SPEAKERS	X	X	X	X	X
DISPLAY	21.5in AOC E2250WDA	24in Asus VS247HR	21.5in AOC E2250WDA	22in LG 22MP55	24in AOC E2470SWHE
NATIVE RESOLUTION	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels
INPUTS	DVI, VGA	DVI, HDMI, VGA	DVI, VGA	HDMI, VGA	2 x HDMI, VGA
OPERATING SYSTEM	Windows 8.1 or Windows 7	Windows 8.1 or Windows 7	Windows 8.1	Windows 8.1 or Windows 7 (£3 extra)	Windows 8.1 or Windows 7 (£36 extra)
OS RESTORE	Windows 8.1 reset	Windows 8.1 reset	Windows 8.1 reset	Windows 8.1 reset	Windows 8.1 reset
DIMENSIONS (CASE)	427 x 364 x 189mm	404 x 359 x 250mm	487 x 451 x 212mm	455 x 430 x 200mm	415 x 400 x 175mm
WARRANTY	Three years return-to-base (two years parts cover)	Three years return-to-base (one year parts cover)	Three years return-to-base (one year parts cover)	Three years return-to-base (two years parts cover, collect-and-return for first 30 days)	Three years return-to-base (one year parts cover, collect-and-return for first 30 days)

## OUR VERDICT

We're giving our Gold Award to the Chillblast Fusion Cyborg. It performed well across all our tests and runs very quietly. We don't expect you'll need to upgrade it straight away but when you do, there's room for extra memory and drives.

The Silver Award-winning Palicomp AMD Nemesis Cube isn't quite as good a performer as the Chillblast but its larger monitor is a bonus. It's built into an unusual case, which looks great but doesn't use a standard PC layout so it might cause problems if you're intending to upgrade the components.

The Bronze Award goes to the PC Specialist Invictus, which is a well-built, great-value PC. It balances its cheaper dual-core processor with a great graphics card, so it's good for gaming but slower at some complex Windows tasks.





# Web User's Best Buys

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

## HARDWARE

### BUDGET PC

#### Chillblast Fusion Cyborg

**£600 with monitor, £500 without**  
from [www.chillblast.com](http://www.chillblast.com)  
Date tested: May 2015



The Chillblast Fusion Cyborg is compact, quiet and capable of excellent performance. There isn't much room in the case for future expansion, but it's a great-value PC.

#### KEY SPECS

Quad-core 3.2GHz Intel Core i5-4460 ■ 8GB of memory ■ 1TB hard drive ■ 21.5in monitor ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 3 x USB 3 ports, 5 x USB 2 ports ■ Windows 7 or 8.1 ■ 427 x 364 x 189 mm ■ Three years return-to-base warranty

### BUDGET LAPTOP

#### HP Stream 11

**£179.99** from [store.hp.com/ukstore](http://store.hp.com/ukstore)  
Date tested: April 2015



The HP Stream 11 offers excellent performance and a respectable battery life. It's a sleek, attractive laptop, available in blue or magenta, with a good screen that offers wide viewing angles.

#### KEY SPECS

Dual-core 2.16GHz Intel Celeron N2840 processor ■ 2GB of memory ■ 11.6in non-touchscreen ■ 32GB flash drive ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ Single-band 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 300 x 206 x 20mm ■ 1.29kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

### MULTIROOM SPEAKER

#### Sonos Play:1

**£167** from [www.currys.co.uk](http://www.currys.co.uk)  
Date tested: March 2015



The Sonos Play:1 offers impressive audio quality and comes with excellent software and great apps that provide seamless integration with music services. It's the ideal speaker to use as a starting point for a home entertainment system.

#### KEY SPECS

Two speakers ■ 802.11n Wi-Fi, 1 x 10/100 Ethernet ■ Android and iOS apps ■ Compatible with UPnP and SMB servers ■ AAC, FLAC, MP3, OGG and WAV ■ 161 x 12 x 12mm ■ 1.8kg

### SSD

#### Samsung 850 Pro 256GB

**£136.03** from [www.kikatek.com](http://www.kikatek.com)  
Date tested: February 2015



The Samsung 850 Pro is crammed with new technology that makes it faster and more durable than its competitors. You could buy a similarly sized SSD for much less, but in our tests the cheaper models weren't as fast and they don't come with the 850 Pro's generous 10-year warranty.

#### KEY SPECS

256GB (also available in 128GB, 512GB & 1TB) ■ 53p per GB ■ SATA III interface ■ 2.5in drive case ■ 10-year warranty ■ 100 x 70 x 7mm ■ 66g

### TABLET

#### Google Nexus 9

**£319** from [play.google.com](http://play.google.com)  
Date tested: February 2015



The Nexus 9 is our favourite Android tablet. It has a fantastic screen, even better than the iPad Air 2's, and superb battery life, lasting over 15 hours in our tests. It's cheaper than the latest iPad and comes in 16GB and 32GB capacities.

#### KEY SPECS

8.9in screen ■ 2,048 x 1,536 pixels resolution ■ Dual-core 2.3GHz 64-bit Nvidia Tegra K1 Denver processor ■ 16/32GB storage ■ 4G option costs £60 extra (32GB models only) ■ Android 5.0 ■ 228 x 154 x 8mm ■ 425g

### WINDOWS 8.1 LAPTOP

#### Asus Transformer Book Flip TP300LA

**£449.95** from [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com)  
Date tested: January 2015



This touchscreen laptop folds over into a chunky tablet. It's well built, did well in our performance tests and has a fantastic battery life.

#### KEY SPECS

Dual-core 1.9GHz Intel Core i3-4030U processor ■ 4GB of memory ■ 13.3in touchscreen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 500GB hard drive ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ 326 x 232 x 22mm ■ 1.75kg ■ One-year collect-and-return warranty

All prices correct at time of review

## WIRELESS ROUTER

### D-Link DIR-868L

**£65.97** from [www.dabs.com](http://www.dabs.com)  
**Date tested:** December 2014

If you're willing to switch your wireless devices to the 5GHz network, the D-Link DIR-868L offers fast and reliable performance at a great price.

#### KEY SPECS

Dual-band 2.4GHz and 5GHz ■ 802.11b/g/n ■ 1,300Mbps theoretical maximum speed ■ Six internal antennas ■ 4 x 10/100/1000Mbps Ethernet ports ■ WPA and WPA2 encryption ■ 1 x USB 3 port ■ 217 x 123 x 102mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty



## DESKTOP PC

### Chillblast Fusion Obelisk

**£699.98** from [www.chillblast.com](http://www.chillblast.com)  
**Date tested:** November 2014

This great all-round desktop PC achieved a good overall performance in both our Windows and gaming tests. It runs quietly, has a good-quality monitor and is packed with great components, including a fast SSD and a generous hard drive.

#### KEY SPECS

Quad-core 4.2GHz Intel Core i5-4690K processor (overclocked) ■ 8GB of memory ■ 5 x USB3, 5 x USB2 ports ■ Gigabit Ethernet ■ 120GB SSD ■ 1TB hard drive ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ Windows 8.1 ■ 465 x 430 x 192mm



## KEYBOARD

### Cherry MX-Board 3.0

**£55** from [www.kikatek.com](http://www.kikatek.com)  
**Date tested:** November 2014

The Cherry MX-Board 3.0 is a hard-wearing mechanical keyboard that's a pleasure to type on. It's quiet for a mechanical model but still makes more noise than a standard keyboard. It doesn't have a lot of features, but it's ideal if you're looking for a standard, good-quality keyboard.

#### KEY SPECS

104 keys ■ 1 x USB port ■ 1.8m detachable cable ■ 2 non-slip surfaces ■ 2 rubber caps for adjustable feet ■ 44.6 x 15.8 x 2.8cm ■ 0.83kg ■ Win-Key lock



## NAS DRIVE

### Asustor AS-202TE

**£199.66** from [www.scan.co.uk](http://www.scan.co.uk)  
**Date tested:** September 2014

This NAS drive put in an excellent performance in our tests, transferring files over our network faster than any of the other devices we tested. It has an impressive range of tools, including an HDMI output for streaming to TV.

#### KEY SPECS

EXT4 file system ■ SATA3 hard drive ■ 2 x 3.5in bays ■ 1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet ■ 2 x USB 2 ports, 2 x USB 3 ports ■ 1 x HDMI (1.4a) ■ 1 x 3.5mm mini-jack ■ 230 x 164 x 108mm ■ 1.87kg ■ Two-year return-to-base warranty



## WQHD MONITOR

### AOC q2770Pqu

**£367.96** from [www.dabs.com](http://www.dabs.com)  
**Date tested:** August 2014

The AOC q2770Pqu has an exceptional, high-quality screen and is very reasonably priced. Its settings are preconfigured, so you don't need to tweak them to improve the display, and it has all the ports you'll ever need.

#### KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 2,560 x 1,440 pixels resolution ■ Portrait mode ■ Adjustable stand ■ 2 x 2W speakers ■ DisplayPort, DVI, HDMI, VGA, 2 x USB 3.0 and 2 x USB 2.0 ports ■ 642 x 428 x 245mm ■ 8kg ■ Three-year return-to-base warranty



## HD MONITOR

### BenQ EW2740L

**£194** from [www.ebuyer.com](http://www.ebuyer.com)  
**Date tested:** July 2014

The BenQ EW2740L is an excellent-value 27in monitor with good image quality. It supports MHL, so you can connect a compatible mobile device to it, and has two HDMI ports and one VGA port.

#### KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 2W stereo speakers ■ MHL support ■ 2 x HDMI and 1 x VGA ports ■ 320 x 115 x 95mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty





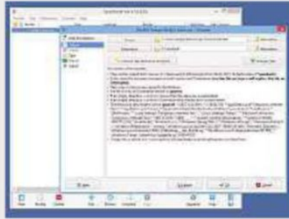
## SOFTWARE & SERVICES

### BACKUP AND SYNC

#### SyncBackFree

Free from [bit.ly/syncback366](http://bit.ly/syncback366)  
Date tested: March 2015

SyncBackFree is very capable software that gives you plenty of control over how it can be used. If you know what you need from your backups and you're prepared to spend some time configuring the options, SyncBackFree has everything you need.



#### KEY FEATURES

Synchronise: Copy files in both directions ■ Restore back-up files easily ■ Email logs ■ Schedule backups ■ Simple and Advanced mode ■ Runs on Windows 8, 7, Vista, and XP ■ Extensive Help documentation and support

### INTERNET SECURITY

#### Kaspersky Internet Security 2015

£17.99 from [bit.ly/kaspoffer](http://bit.ly/kaspoffer)  
Date tested: January 2015

Kaspersky Internet Security performed near-perfectly throughout our tests last year, with only one unwanted program slipping through. Our sister title *Computeractive* is selling it at the reader-offer price of £17.99 (full price £39.99). Click the link above.



#### KEY FEATURES

Anti-virus and firewall tools ■ Protects online shopping and banking ■ Identity and privacy tools ■ Dangerous-website alerts ■ Advanced parental control ■ Licences for one, three, and five PCs; for one or two years, or pay monthly ■ Multi-Device version for Mac and Android protection

### PHOTO EDITING

#### Adobe Photoshop Elements 13

£81.08 from [www.adobe.com/uk](http://www.adobe.com/uk)  
Date tested: December 2014

With its tidy interface and pop-out trays, Adobe Photoshop Elements provides everything an amateur photographer needs and helps you quickly find the right editing tools.



#### KEY FEATURES

Compatible with Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8+ (32- and 64-bit) ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

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### VIDEO EDITING

#### Adobe Premiere Elements 13

£81.08 from [www.adobe.com/uk](http://www.adobe.com/uk)  
Date tested: December 2014



Premiere Elements 13's superb interface makes its many features neat but accessible. You won't find better video-editing software for the price.

#### KEY FEATURES

Automatic editing ■ Export to multiple video formats ■ Burn to DVD and Blu-ray ■ Image stabiliser ■ Stop-motion capture

### ONLINE STORAGE

#### Google Drive

From free from [drive.google.com](http://drive.google.com)  
Date tested: August 2014



Google Drive is easy to use and has lots of free storage. The Windows software integrates with Explorer, so saving and syncing files is like keeping them in any other PC folder.

#### KEY FEATURES

15GB free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Works with Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8+ ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 100GB extra storage for £1.19 per month; 1TB for £5.97 per month; 10TB for £59.51 per month

# Best Free Software

## DISC-WRITING SOFTWARE

### BurnAware Free 8

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

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

**File size:** 7.6MB

Burning CDs and DVDs isn't as popular as it once was, and many new computers no longer come with a built-in optical drive. But for those of us who still like to back up files to disc, or create home-movie DVDs and audio CDs, it's essential to have good authoring software to hand, and BurnAware Free is one of best options. This free program can write to all types of optical disc, including Blu-rays; make and burn image files; and erase rewritable discs so you can use them again.

Unlike similar tools that come bundled with a load of advanced features you'll probably never use, BurnAware Free



keeps things simple. All the available choices are accessible through a single screen, sorted into clear categories: Data, Multimedia, Disc Images and Utilities.

You might imagine that the latest version offers minimal changes, but it actually introduces several new features, including the ability to burn files across more than disc (if they don't fit onto a single CD or DVD); support for BDMV/AVCHD files (used by some camcorders); and the ability to drag and drop files between folders in a compilation.

There's also a new user interface that offers a choice of themes and a customisable main window. Annoyingly, this window can't be resized, but that shouldn't be a major problem for most people.

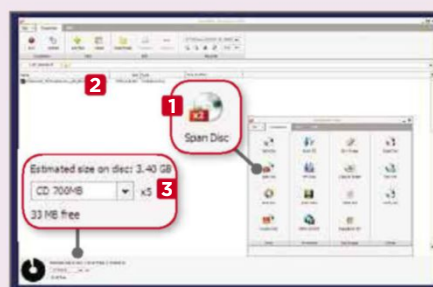
Performance has been massively improved in the new release, and the software's impact on your system resources has been reduced; there's a new file-processing system, which is much faster and more stable; and the software is better at calculating disc size now, too.



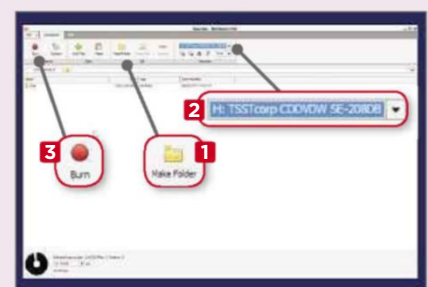
## MINI WORKSHOP | Write discs using BurnAware Free 8



**1** All the tasks in BurnAware are accessed through the main menu. Just click the option you require to open a new module. If you're not sure what something does, hovering your mouse over its icon will bring up a description below. **1** The View tab **2** lets you change the program's skin and choose which categories or buttons appear in the menu.



**2** If you have a file that's too big to fit on a single CD or DVD, select the Span Disc option. **1** The authoring component will open. Drag your files onto the main window. **2** Change the medium type and you'll be shown how many discs **3** are needed for the task.



**3** You can sort the contents of the disc into folders. Click Make Folder **1** and give the new directory a name. Items can be dragged and dropped within the main window. Insert a disc, select your drive in the drop-down menu, **2** then click Burn **3** to begin the authoring process.

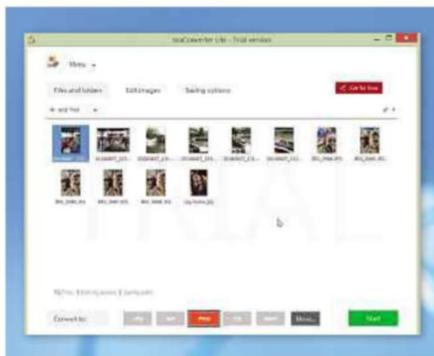
This fortnight's top new software downloads to help you make the most of your PC, and they're all FREE



**AD BLOCKER**  
**Universal Ad Blocker 3**

[bit.ly/universal371](http://bit.ly/universal371)  
**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 1.6MB

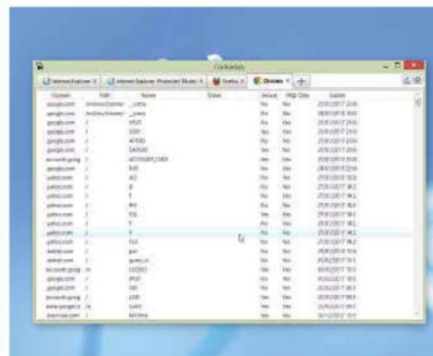
To stop adverts displaying when you browse the web, you can use Universal Ad Blocker to filter them. This kills ads from all the major advertising networks, and works across all the browsers you use. Unusually, it doesn't install any browser extensions, and lets you block or unblock adverts with a single click. The latest version of the program can block even more ads, including video advertisements on DailyMotion. Be sure to decline the bundled junk during installation.



**FILE CONVERTER**  
**ReaConverter 7 Lite**

[www.reaconverter.com](http://www.reaconverter.com)  
**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+  
**File size:** 11MB

This free image-conversion tool supports the five most popular image formats – BMP, GIF, JPEG, PNG, TIFF – and offers all the editing options found in its paid-for edition, including watermarks, retouching, JPEG-artefact removal and more. It's also very easy to use. Just add the files to convert, choose an output format and click the Start button. The free Lite edition limits you to five conversions at a time.



**COOKIE MANAGER**  
**CookieSpy 6**

[www.cookiespy.com](http://www.cookiespy.com)  
**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+  
**File size:** 5.75MB

This program lists all the cookies stored in every browser on your system, as well as any portable browsers you run from a USB flash drive. Each browser has its own tab, so you can switch between them, and the cookie information includes the originating domain name, whether it's secure and when it expires. You can right-click to view, delete and protect cookies. The program now supports the Maxthon Nitro browser.

**New Windows 8 Apps**

**Cut The Rope 2**

[bit.ly/cuttherope371](http://bit.ly/cuttherope371)

**Min requirements:** Windows 8+  
**File size:** 80.2MB

The sequel to the popular puzzle game has arrived in the Windows Store, and you can enjoy the full game for free. There are new characters, gameplay elements and plenty of tricky levels.



**Seven – 7 Minute Workout Challenge**

[bit.ly/seven371](http://bit.ly/seven371)

**Min requirements:** Windows 8+  
**File size:** 29MB

Based on the popular 7-minute High Intensity Training workout, this fitness app motivates you to exercise daily. You earn rewards by completing workouts.

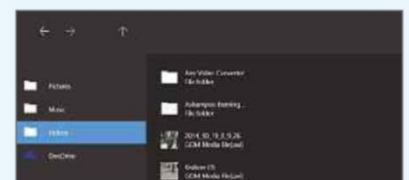


**Rubyte File Explorer**

[bit.ly/rubyte371](http://bit.ly/rubyte371)

**Min requirements:** Windows 8+  
**File size:** 609KB

This free file-manager app supports all your libraries and lets you add other locations. All the basic Explorer options (cut, copy, paste, rename) are included, and it offers full OneDrive integration.



## SECURITY PACK

### SX Antivirus Kit 2

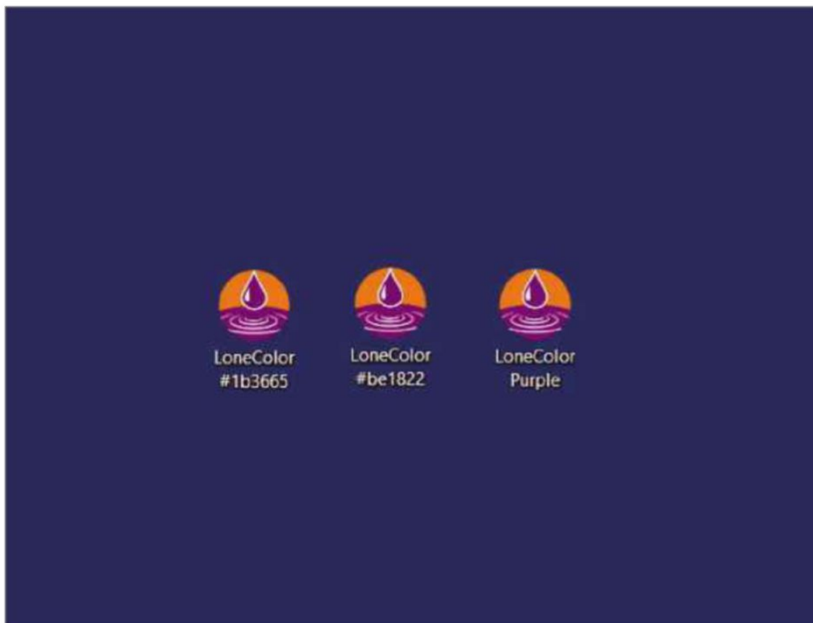
[bit.ly/antivirus371](http://bit.ly/antivirus371)

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

**File size:** 15.1MB

This collection of useful anti-virus tools from SecurityXploded has 12 programs including Hidden File Finder, Virus Total Scanner (which uses the VirusTotal service to scan files), Windows Autorun Disable, Windows Service Manager, Stream Armor (which finds files containing alternate data streams that can conceal malware) and Autorun File Remover. New to this version is Chrome Malware Alert Blocker to protect your browser, too. Some of the tools need a bit of technical knowledge, but the collection could prove invaluable if you think your PC may be infected with malware.

Be sure to decline the bundled extras during installation.



## WALLPAPER TOOL

### LoneColor

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

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

**File size:** 36KB

You can decorate your Windows Desktop using all sorts of images and photos, but if you prefer the minimalist approach, LoneColor could be the tool for you. This tiny 36KB program sets the background to a random colour that changes every time you run it; or, if you add it to your Startup folder, every time you reboot.

You can choose the hue yourself by renaming the program file to specify it, for example LoneColorRed.exe, and create multiple instances of the program with different names. You can even rename the file using a colour's six-character hex code - LoneColor #1b3665.exe will set your Desktop to a lovely shade of blue.

## SYSTEM TOOL

### TestDisk 7

[bit.ly/testdisk371](http://bit.ly/testdisk371)

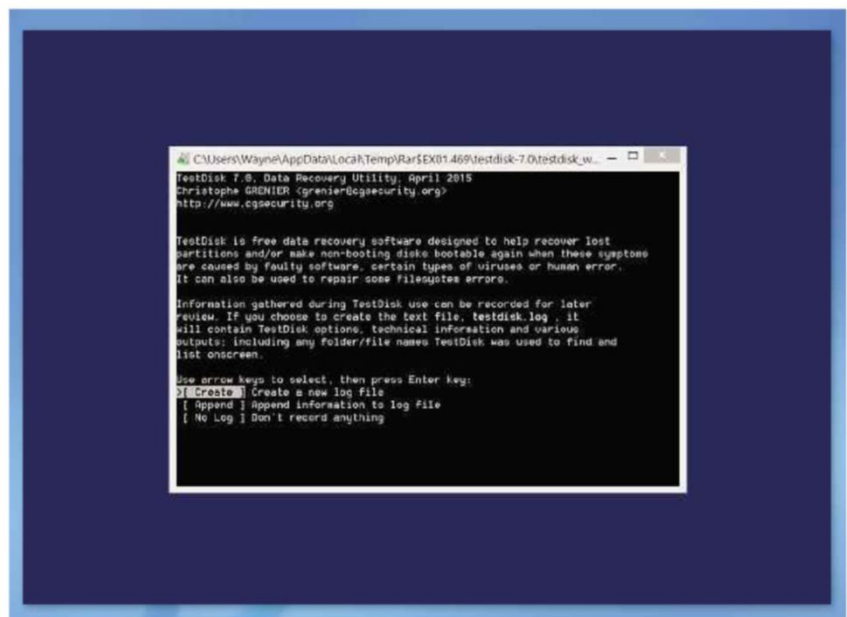
**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

**File size:** 9.6MB

If you've ever found that your PC won't boot or the system partition has somehow been deleted, you'll know how devastating that can be. Although you can try Windows' built-in tools to get things working again, TestDisk is a better option because it can resolve a greater variety of drive-based problems.

TestDisk can make corrupt system drives bootable again, recover deleted partitions and fix broken partition tables. It's entirely console-based with no graphical interface, but if you follow the instructions, you'll be fine.

The program supports all the major file systems including FAT12/16/32, exFAT, and NTFS.





**GAME**

**Velo-City**

[bit.ly/velo-city371](http://bit.ly/velo-city371)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+  
**File size:** 42MB

The aim of this game is to pilot your ship to cover as much ground as possible in the available time. To achieve your goal, you'll need to avoid the towers and falling blocks that litter the landscape. What makes Velo-City so enjoyable is its epic soundtrack, which is perfectly matched to the visuals and has the blocks on screen pulsating in time to the music.

**Don't install...**

**Adobe Digital Editions**

[www.adobe.com/uk](http://www.adobe.com/uk)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ or Mac OS X

**File size:** 5.7MB

Reading books is supposed to be an enjoyable experience, but Adobe Digital Editions makes it rather gloomy. From its boring interface to the fact that it only lets you read PDF and EPUB files, its only good feature is the ability to create bookshelves for your ebooks. Otherwise, it's uninspiring and basic.



**...Install this instead**

**Calibre**

[calibre-ebook.com](http://calibre-ebook.com)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+, Mac OS X or Linux

**File size:** 61.5MB

Calibre is an excellent ebook manager, reader and converter that handles all the main ebook formats, including AZW, EPUB, MOBI, ODT and PDF. It's compatible with all popular e-readers, such as the Kindle, Kobo and Nook, so you can easily sync the books you convert with your device, including any extra information you enter as metadata. Calibre also lets you create books by fetching articles from websites and formatting them into a book, and we love how it lets you browse your ebooks by cover art. Unbeatable.



**UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs**



**ASTRONOMY SOFTWARE**

**Stellarium 0.13.3**

[stellarium.org](http://stellarium.org)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+, Mac OS X or Linux  
**File size:** 140MB

Stellarium is an open-source Desktop planetarium. This new build introduces support for 3D landscapes and adds a selection of DSO (Deep Space Object) catalogues to take you even further into space.



**IMAGE EDITOR**

**StudioLine Photo Basic 4.2.1**

[www.studioline.net](http://www.studioline.net)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+  
**File size:** 48.3MB

This free photo editor and manager lets you organise, tweak and share pictures. It offers an impressive selection of correction tools and effects. In this new version of the program, various user interface elements have been improved, and several major bugs have been fixed, too.



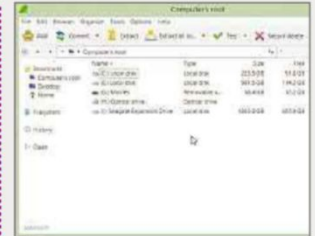
**DISC-AUTHORING TOOL**

**CDBurnerXP 4.5.5.5571**

[cdburnerxp.se](http://cdburnerxp.se)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+  
**File size:** 5.3MB

This free disc-burning tool can create CDs, DVDs, and Blu-ray Discs. Despite its name, it can run on any version of Windows. This new build has an updated Starburn engine and fixes various annoying bugs. Be sure to select the download version that doesn't come with OpenCandy.



**FILE-COMPRESSION TOOL**

**PeaZip 5.6**

[peazip.sourceforge.net](http://peazip.sourceforge.net)

**Min requirements:** Windows XP/Vista/7/8+  
**File size:** 6MB

PeaZip is an open-source file and archive manager that lets you create, convert and extract compressed files in all the popular formats. The latest release's improvements include new keyboard shortcuts for archive creation and extraction. ■

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



# Best New Browser Tools



CHROME

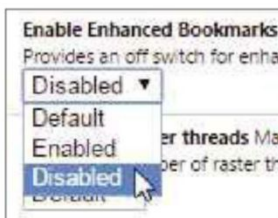
## Block tracking cookies

Most websites use cookies for the valid purposes of storing your login information and preferences, but others plant cookies in your browser to track your online activities for advertising and analytics. If you're not comfortable with this potential invasion of your privacy, you can use AVG's new Crumble tool ([bit.ly/crumble371](http://bit.ly/crumble371)) to gain more control over cookies. This cleverly named Chrome extension lets you block - or 'crumble' - non-essential cookies, while allowing those that websites need to function properly. Crumble's colour-coded panel keeps track of all the cookies it's 'crumbled' today and since you installed the add-on, and you can hover your mouse over the green and red sections to see their names. Crumble works quietly and efficiently, and usefully blocks trackers from social-media sites. On one Digital Spy page, it prevented more than 130 cookies from installing!



## Restore Chrome's old Bookmark Manager

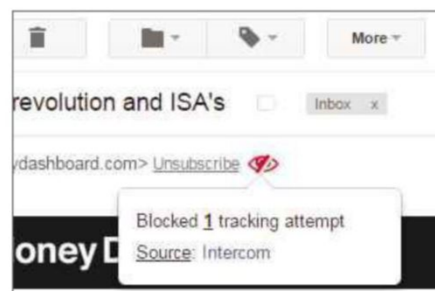
Chrome's new Bookmark Manager displays your saved sites as a grid of coloured tiles rather than in a list, which makes it more visually appealing but harder to manage if you have a lot of bookmarks. If you'd prefer to have the old Bookmark Manager back, you can use the following simple tweak. Type `chrome:flags` into the address bar and press Enter to open the 'Careful, these experiments may bite' page. Find the entry Enable Enhanced Bookmarks, choose Disabled from the drop-down menu and relaunch Chrome to apply the change. You can easily switch back to



the new Bookmark Manager by re-enabling the feature.

## Stop companies knowing you've read their emails

Some companies now embed an 'invisible' pixel in marketing emails that allows them to track the message. As soon as you open the email, the pixel sends information back to the server including the time, your location and the device you're using. This info helps the company target you with further marketing messages, but you may also regard it as an invasion of your privacy, which is where PixelBlock ([bit.ly/pixel371](http://bit.ly/pixel371)) comes in handy. This new extension for Gmail blocks attempts to use hidden pixels to track emails, and highlights sneaky messages with a red-eye symbol. Click this symbol and



PixelBlock tells you the source of the email, which may differ from the official sender. Although the add-on prevents

companies from knowing that you've opened their emails, you may want to boost your privacy further by adding repeat offenders to your list of blocked senders.

## Give everyone on the web a trendy beard

Back in Issue 367 ([bit.ly/webuser367](http://bit.ly/webuser367)), we recommended the fun extension Googlifier ([bit.ly/googlifier367](http://bit.ly/googlifier367)), which adds googly eyes to people in online photos. Wurstify ([bit.ly/wurstify371](http://bit.ly/wurstify371)) performs the similar trick of superimposing a tidy beard on everyone's face, in honour of last year's Eurovision winner, Conchita Wurst. Once it's installed, you just click the toolbar button to 'wurstify' every visage on that page. The add-on works surprisingly well and it's amazing how much better some folk look with a bit of growth on their chin (see Ed Miliband, below).



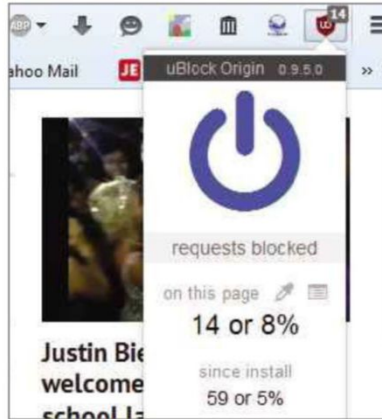
This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Opera and more



**FIREFOX**

## Use uBlock Origin to block ads in Firefox

We recommended the ad blocker uBlock for Firefox back in Issue 365 ([bit.ly/webuser365](http://bit.ly/webuser365)), but at that point it wasn't available through the official Add-ons site. Since then, the team behind uBlock has split up, and the creator has "forked off" a version called uBlock Origin ([bit.ly/ublock371](http://bit.ly/ublock371)), which now appears on the Add-ons site (although it hasn't yet been reviewed by Mozilla). This works in exactly the same way, blocking ads on web pages and in online videos using the same filter lists as Adblock Plus but consuming a lot less memory. As with Adblock Plus, you can choose which filters to apply and create your own 'rules', although uBlock Origin (which is also available for Chrome) doesn't give you the option to allow "acceptable" ads.



## Arrange your tabs alphabetically

Having lots of tabs open can result in random clicking to find the one you want. Tab Sorter ([bit.ly/sorter371](http://bit.ly/sorter371)) makes life easier by rearranging your tabs to display in alphabetical order, from left to right. Just right-click a tab and choose Sort Tabs By Title. As well as helping you find specific tabs

quickly, the add-on lets you see if you're wasting memory by having the same page open in more than one tab.

## Pause YouTube videos automatically

If you frequently have your YouTube viewing interrupted by emails, Facebook or work, install Smart Pause for YouTube ([bit.ly/pause371](http://bit.ly/pause371)). Instead of having to drag the progress bar back to replay anything you've missed, this



add-on automatically pauses YouTube videos as soon as you switch to another tab, and resumes playing them when you return, without you needing to click anything. It's so smooth that you'll barely notice it pause and unpause.

## Jump to the homepage of any website

In the early days of browsers, the Home button was vital for returning to the starting point of your session, but it's since been usurped by the New Tab page. UsableHomeButton ([bit.ly/home371](http://bit.ly/home371)) gives Home the new function of taking you straight to the homepage of the website you're viewing. This is useful when the site itself hides that option, although you may first need to add the Home button to your toolbar (Mozilla removed it a while ago) by choosing Customise in the Settings menu.



**OTHER BROWSERS**



## Stack and tile browser tabs in Vivaldi

The latest Technical Preview of Vivaldi ([www.vivaldi.com](http://www.vivaldi.com)) introduces a clever feature called Tab Stack Tiling, which lets you view the contents of several tabs simultaneously within the same window. To use it, simply drag the tabs on top of one another to create a single stacked tab, then hover your mouse over it to access the individual pages. Right-click the stacked tab and choose Tile Tab Stack to view all the pages side by side. You can use the 'Page tiling' option at the foot of the browser to tile the tabs horizontally or vertically, or in a grid.



## See who 'unfriends' you on Facebook

Sometimes, the only way to find out if someone has 'unfriended' you on Facebook is to check whether your friend count has decreased, then go through the whole list to work out who's missing. The Opera add-on Who Deleted Me ([bit.ly/deleted371](http://bit.ly/deleted371)), which is also available for Chrome and Firefox, identifies the splitters and shows whether they specifically ditched you or merely deactivated their account. It's certainly one way to decide who gets to stay on your Christmas list!



# Best Free Apps

## App of the Fortnight

### TRAVEL Airbnb

[www.airbnb.co.uk/mobile](http://www.airbnb.co.uk/mobile)

**Min requirements:** iOS 7, Android (varies with device)

**Size:** Varies with device

Accommodation-rental marketplace Airbnb lets you rent other people's spare rooms, flats and houses, offering a unique and often cheaper alternative to staying in hotels and B&Bs.

When we covered the service in Instant Expert in Issue 351 ([bit.ly/webuser351](http://bit.ly/webuser351)), Airbnb already had a mobile app, but it was only compatible with smartphones. Since then, the company has released an app for iPads and Android tablets. If you're struggling for holiday ideas, this visually stunning app will certainly give you plenty, regardless of your budget. When you first log in, you're presented with a number of popular destinations including Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam and New

York, and you'll also find inspiration in the choice of quirky types of accommodation that you can rent, such as tropical treehouses, geodesic domes, lighthouses and narrowboats!

The app's search function is also handy if you need to check availability for a specific destination, and we particularly like its map feature, which plots the location of all your search results. Browsing Airbnb's listings and requesting properties is easy and once you're finished you can view all your correspondence from the app, or refer to the Your Trips page to see your itinerary.



Our rating



### VIDEO

### Amazon Instant Video

[bit.ly/amazon371](http://bit.ly/amazon371)

**Min requirements:** iOS 7

**Size:** 34.8MB

Amazon Instant Video lets Amazon Prime customers stream thousands of movies and TV shows at no additional cost to their PCs, phones and tablets. Until recently, however, it was only possible to stream videos over a Wi-Fi network and there was no option to watch content in HD. Version 3.0 of the iOS app rectifies these problems by letting you stream using your mobile data connection and choose the quality of content you stream or store offline. Beware, though, that the three different quality settings have an enormous impact on how much mobile data you use: 'Good' quality uses 0.6GB of data an hour; 'Better' consumes 1.8GB; and 'Best' quality uses a whopping 5.8GB of data over the course of 60 minutes!



Our rating



### MUSIC

### Mezzo

[bit.ly/mezzo371](http://bit.ly/mezzo371)

**Min requirements:** iOS 8

**Size:** 23.4MB

If you fancy a change from the default Music app on your iPhone, why not try Mezzo? This beautifully designed app offers slick queue management, which lets you add or remove tracks with a single swipe, and there are light and dark modes to choose from as well as plenty of colourful themes. What's more, it supports Genius playlists, meaning you can create custom playlists based on one track by simply swiping left on it. We particularly liked the app's myMezzo feature, which sorts your music into playlists such as Recently Played, Recently Added and Top 25 Most Played, making it easier than ever to find the music you want to listen to.



Our rating





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

## ALARM

### WaveAlarm

[bit.ly/wave371](http://bit.ly/wave371)

**Min requirements:**

Android 2.3

**Size:** 21MB

When your phone's alarm goes off first thing in the morning, it can be frustrating to fumble around trying to silence it. Fortunately, WaveAlarm offers a solution to this problem by letting you stop your alarm with a simple waving gesture, which it detects using your device's front camera. As with Android's default alarm app, you can be woken by songs from your music library, but there are also 10 more WaveAlarm sounds to choose from. We think it's a clever use of technology, but unfortunately it will probably make falling back to sleep even easier!



Our rating



UPDATED



## TOOL

### Glimpse Notifications

[bit.ly/glimpse371](http://bit.ly/glimpse371)

**Min requirements:**

Android 4.3

**Size:** 687k

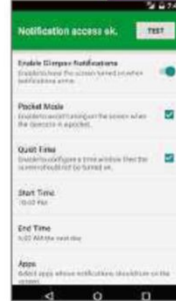
Android Lollipop's notification system is a big improvement compared to that of its predecessor, KitKat. However, although notifications are now shown on your lock screen, the operating system does not wake your device automatically for you to see them, meaning you still need to press the power button when you hear an alert tone. Glimpse Notifications fixes this problem by turning the screen on when notifications arrive. Its Whitelist feature lets you choose which apps' alerts wake the screen and there's a Quiet Time option that you can use to ensure you're not disturbed when you're sleeping.



Our rating



NEW



## ROUND UP | Quick bites

### Listen to Wikipedia

[bit.ly/wiki371](http://bit.ly/wiki371)

**Min**

**requirements:**

iOS 7

**Size:** 2.8MB

This unique app gives you an insight into how frequently changes are made to Wikipedia entries. Each time an alteration is made to the encyclopedia, it's represented by a colour-coded circle and accompanied by a musical tone.



### Gett

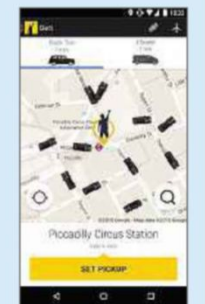
[gett.com/uk](http://gett.com/uk)

**Min requirements:**

Android 2.3, iOS 7

**Size:** 29MB

Formerly known as GetTaxi, Gett lets you book a cab at the touch of a button in six UK cities. You can pay for your journeys directly from the app and it'll also let you track your approaching cab in real time.



### reTXT

[bit.ly/retxt371](http://bit.ly/retxt371)

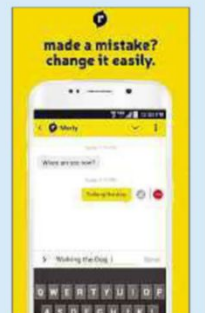
**Min**

**requirements:**

Android 4.03

**Size:** 8.3MB

For one reason or another, we've all regretted sending a text message at some point. With reTXT, this problem becomes a thing of the past, as it lets you edit your messages after they've been delivered and even read!



## TOOL

### Avast Battery Saver

[bit.ly/avast371](http://bit.ly/avast371)

**Min requirements:** Android 4.0

**Size:** 3.7MB

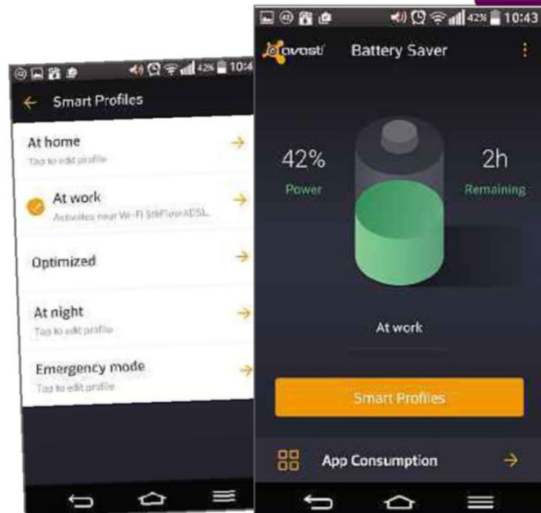
Avast Battery Saver is a free, easy-to-use tool that helps you get more from your device's battery by optimising settings such as internet connectivity, screen brightness and timeout. It also includes a handy App Consumption feature that identifies apps using excessive battery power so that you can stop them until you need them again. The app works using four Smart Profiles ('At home', 'At work', 'At night' and 'Emergency Mode') along with its default 'Optimized' profile. You can customise each of these according to your needs, tweaking the brightness levels and the intervals that the device remains offline for when your screen is turned off. Following a recent update, the home and work profiles are both activated automatically by proximity to your device's known Wi-Fi networks, which is a particularly neat touch.



Our rating



NEW



## FITNESS

### Adidas Go

[bit.ly/adidas371](http://bit.ly/adidas371)

**Min requirements:** iOS7

**Size:** 46.6MB

This innovative new fitness app provides tailor-made soundtracks for workouts by picking tracks from Spotify that match your running tempo. After you've chosen a couple of your own playlists, it is supposed to play songs that are compatible with your musical tastes and you've not heard before. Sadly, we were disappointed with Go's selections: they were sufficiently upbeat, but had nothing in common with our Spotify playlists, so we frequently skipped to the next track. To get recommendations from Adidas Go and save the new songs you discover, you'll need a subscription to Spotify Premium (reviewed in issue 370; [bit.ly/webuser370](http://bit.ly/webuser370)). Otherwise, the app selects songs on your device.



NEW



Our rating



## DESIGN

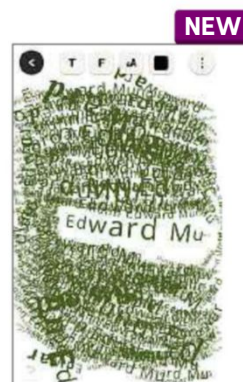
### TypeDrawing

[bit.ly/typedrawing371](http://bit.ly/typedrawing371)

**Min requirements:** Android 4.0

**Size:** 11MB

New to Android, TypeDrawing is a fun, easy way to create typographic art on your smartphone or tablet. Simply enter the text that you want to work with and drag your finger across the screen to see the words printed on your blank canvas. There are plenty of ways to personalise your drawing further by changing the font or its colour, and the speed at which you swipe your finger affects the size of the text. We had endless fun with it, producing mostly abstract images, but if you're artistically minded there's no limit to what you can create. When you're happy with your drawing, you can share it via email, Facebook and Twitter as well as other channels.



NEW



Our rating



# 5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

## CLOUD

### CloudMesh Pro

[bit.ly/cloudmesh371](http://bit.ly/cloudmesh371)

**Min requirements:** Windows Phone 8.1

**Size:** 9MB

**Price:** £1.49

This handy app lets you access all your cloud accounts - including Dropbox, Google Drive and OneDrive - in one place, as well letting you to manage your Windows Phone's local file system.



**Price:** £1.49

If you've got a Windows Phone, you can use this app to upload your video clips to Instagram - a function that's still, rather frustratingly, not supported by the official app.

## FOOD AND DRINK

### Tasty Health

[bit.ly/tastyhealth371](http://bit.ly/tastyhealth371)

**Min requirements:** iOS 8

**Size:** 64.3MB

**Price:** £2.29

Tasty Health contains more than 75 delicious recipes to complement a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Each recipe lists nutritional information such as the number of calories and carbohydrates, fat and protein included in each serving.



## GAMES

### Noodles!

[bit.ly/noodles371](http://bit.ly/noodles371)

**Min requirements:** iOS 8.1

**Size:** 9.2MB

**Price:** £1.49

The aim of this fun, addictive game is to spin pieces of noodle to connect them together. By purchasing the app, you unlock thousands of puzzles and no further in-app purchases are required.



## SOCIAL

### Musations

[bit.ly/musations371](http://bit.ly/musations371)

**Min requirements:** iOS 7.1

**Size:** 39.5MB

**Price:** Free (with in-app purchases) Musations lets you express yourself using music by enabling you to accompany a message, video or lip-sync selfie with the song of your choice. It's free to download and use, but its Premium features are only available via an annual subscription costing £2.29.



## TOOL

### Video Upload to Instagram

[bit.ly/upload371](http://bit.ly/upload371)

**Min requirements:** Windows

Phone 8.1

**Size:** 9MB



CloudMesh Pro



Tasty Health



Video Upload to Instagram



Noodles!



Musations





## Best New TV Apps

### FILM & TV

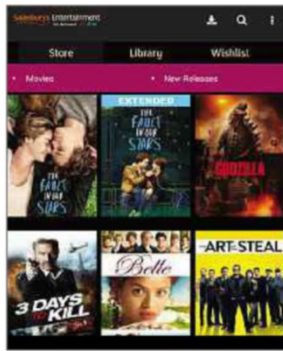
#### Sainsbury's Entertainment

[movies.sainsburysentertainment.co.uk](http://movies.sainsburysentertainment.co.uk)

**Min requirements:** Android 2.3.3, iOS 7, Windows 8.1

**Size:** 8.2MB/17.3MB

Expert Reviews recently called Sainsbury's Entertainment "the cheapest place to stream blockbuster movies", beating Blinkbox and Amazon Instant Video ([bit.ly/expert371](http://bit.ly/expert371)). Equally welcome is the news that the mobile app has been updated to offer Chromecast support (it was already compatible with Roku), allowing you to stream films and TV shows from your phone or tablet to your television.



You can buy or rent titles; stream or download them; and get free online versions of UltraViolet-branded DVDs and Blu-rays. Sainsbury's

Entertainment also lets you start watching on your PC and pick up where you left off on your mobile device, and you don't need to subscribe to use the service.

### KIDS TV

#### Hopster

[www.hopster.tv](http://www.hopster.tv)

**Min requirements:** iOS 6, Apple TV, Samsung Smart TV

**Size:** 450MB



The TV service for kids aged between two and six has now launched on Apple TV, allowing you to stream shows to your television, as well as your iPhone or iPad, for youngsters to enjoy. Hopster's ad-free, high-quality programming includes popular pre-school series such as *Pingu*, *Thomas & Friends* and *Paddington Bear*. The app's Discover mode groups these into categories such as The World Around Me and Animals. However, the educational games available in the iOS app, based on characters and themes from the shows, aren't yet available in the Apple TV version. Nor is there any word of Hopster arriving on Android. The service costs £3.99 per month, and offers a seven-day free trial.

### TV

#### BBC iPlayer for Android

[bit.ly/iplayerandroid371](http://bit.ly/iplayerandroid371)

**Min requirements:** Android 2.3

**Size:** 16MB

The BBC has updated the Android version of its iPlayer app to fix problems when you download programmes to devices running KitKat. Previously, there was a bug that caused playback to stutter after 15 minutes, leading to many user complaints. Other improvements include the ability to take shows you save as Favourites anywhere. When you add a programme to your Favourites, you'll now get the option to sign in (or register). Once you've done this, "as if by magic", you'll be able to access your Favourites on other devices, too. We're pleased that the BBC is responding to viewers' feedback, even if it takes a while to implement the changes.

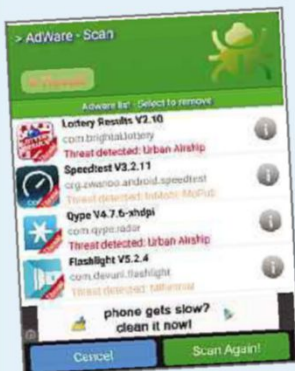


## Don't install...

#### AdWare

[bit.ly/adware371](http://bit.ly/adware371)

Aside from its dodgy name, which led Google Play to tell us: "AdWare will soon be installed on your device", this so-called security app does a poor job of protecting you from mobile malware. It's slow,



frequently crashes and identifies threats in safe apps, while missing genuine ones. Rather ironically, it also suffers from ads of its own, which you can only remove by upgrading to the paid-for version.

## ...Install this instead

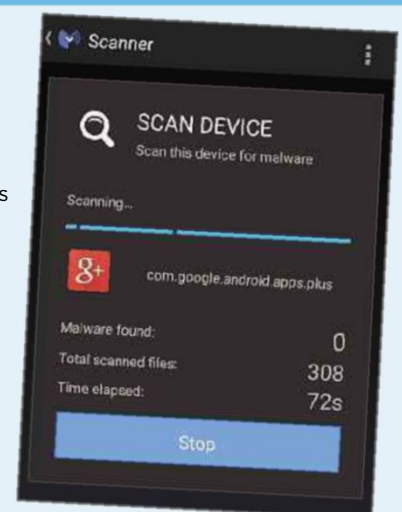
#### Malwarebytes Anti-Malware

[bit.ly/malware371](http://bit.ly/malware371)

**Min requirements:** Android 2.3

**Size:** 7.3MB

Malwarebytes Anti-Malware is just as essential on Android as it is on your PC, to protect you from nasty surprises in the apps you download. Its basic function is to scan your phone or tablet and its memory card for malware, Trojans and adware, which you can do manually or on a schedule. It also has mobile-specific tools that highlight key flaws in your security settings, and scans your installed apps for privacy-violating permissions. You can link the app to Android Device Manager to help you find, lock and reset your device if it's lost or stolen.





# Instant Expert

## Contactless payment

Fed up with fumbling around for your cash and cards? **David Crookes** explains how Apple Pay and other contactless-payment services are turning our phones into wallets

### What is it?

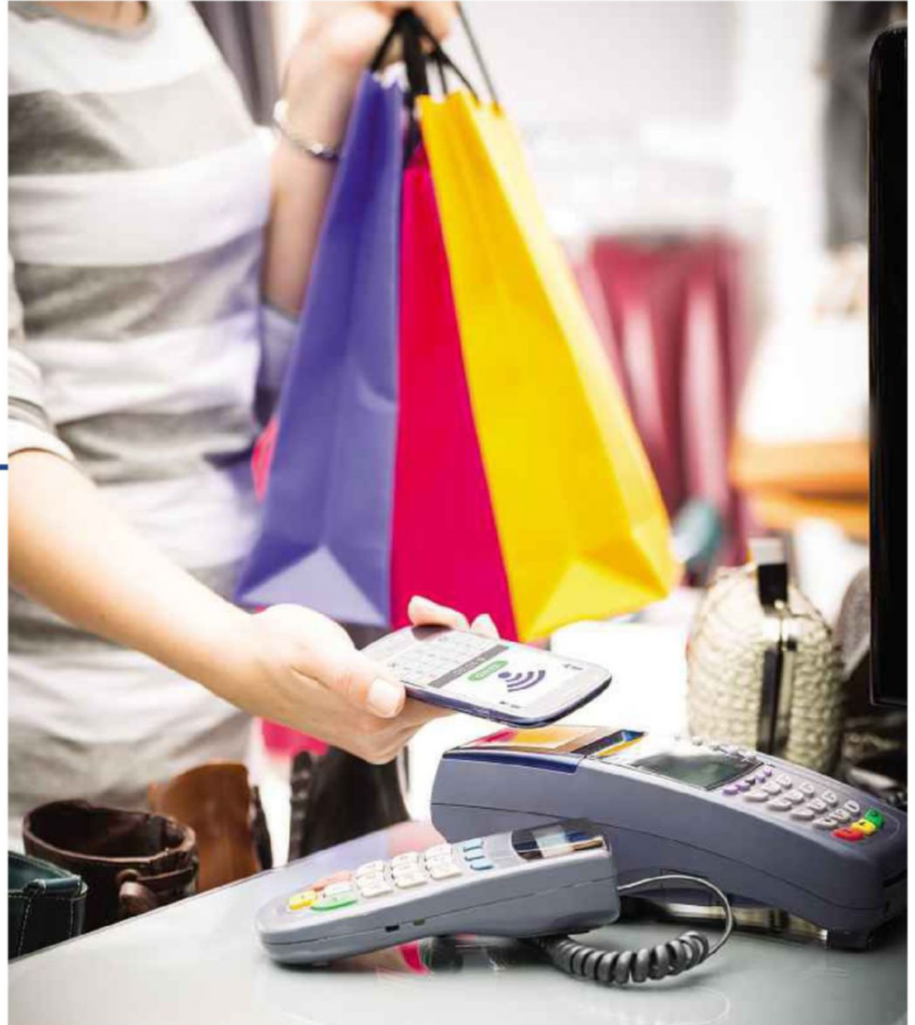
Contactless payment marks the latest move towards a cashless society. Not only does it let you make physical financial transactions without notes or coins, but it also removes the necessity to insert a card into a chip-and-PIN machine.

### How does it work?

Compatible phones, tablets and smartwatches have Near Field Communication (NFC) chips that wirelessly transfer tiny bits of data over a very short distance. When used in combination with a payment processing app, NFC lets you complete transactions in a shop or restaurant without using cash or a card. Just wave your mobile device over a payment reader to draw money from your account.

### Which companies are involved?

The biggest new player is Apple, which is set to introduce its contactless payment system, Apple Pay, in the UK within the next few months. When Apple Pay launched in the US last October it attracted a million registrations within three days, making it the largest contactless payment system for smartphones and smartwatches in the world. But other companies, including Google, Samsung, Microsoft, PayPal and several mobile operators are also poised to take a slice of this emerging industry because its potential is so huge.



### Is my phone or watch compatible?

Apple Pay only works on Apple devices, and even then it's limited to the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus, and the Apple Watch. Although there are NFC chips in the iPad Air 2 and the iPad Mini 3, neither can be used for payments because they haven't yet been activated by Apple.

If you own a fairly new Android phone, it's very likely that your phone will be NFC-enabled, so check online to see if you can use one of the other contactless services.



### How does Apple Pay work?

Apple Pay uses your iPhone's camera to take an encrypted picture of your credit card (or to input the numbers manually).

Once the payment system has been approved by your bank, you're ready to go. When you pay for an item, you place the handset on the retail terminal and either put your finger on the Touch ID fingerprint scanner or tap in your device's passcode. This confirms you are who you say you are and the payment is processed.

If you're using the Apple Watch, you double-press the side button



and hold the face of the watch to the contactless reader. It will beep to tell you the transaction has been approved.

## Why not just use a card?

The theory is that you could leave your wallet at home and just take your phone out. In practice, you will most likely still need a card or cash to pay in places that don't have a contactless payment system that's compatible with your phone.

## Are there any limitations?

Yes. All contactless payment systems in the UK have a spend limit capped at £20 (rising to £30 in September), and this is expected to be the same with Apple Pay. But because so many people have their phones virtually glued to their hands, contactless payment is seen as more convenient. As confidence in the security of contactless payments rises, the spending cap is likely to be increased, too.

## Is Apple Pay secure?

Apple says it's more secure than using a credit or debit card. When you hand over your plastic, the recipient can clearly see your card number and identity, but Apple Pay doesn't divulge this information.

Instead, it assigns a unique Device Account Number (DAN) to a Secure Element chip inside your iPhone or Watch. The retailer only sees the DAN and a unique code that is generated on the fly for additional security.

## What if I lose my phone?

You should go to iCloud's Find My iPhone tool at <https://www.icloud.com/#find>, sign in with your Apple ID and password and put your handset into Lost Mode. Find My iPhone will then suspend your cards. You could also, if you wish, permanently disable Apple Pay's ability to make payments via your phone, or call your bank and ask it to suspend or remove cards from Apple Pay.

## Can I use Apple Pay within apps?

Apple Pay already lets you make purchases through third-party apps in the US and there is no reason why the same won't apply over here. Compatible apps include Airbnb, Eventbrite, Groupon, Staples, Ticketmaster and Uber.



most impressive – the company tested a system allowing customers to pay for goods using a phone and, this summer, it is rolling out a tap-and-pay app called PayPal Here ([www.paypal.com/here](http://www.paypal.com/here)) for the iPhone 6 and Android. Mobile operator EE has Cash on Tap, a top-up app for Android devices that only requires an NFC-enabled SIM ([bit.ly/eecash371](http://bit.ly/eecash371)). Vodafone customers will also soon be able to pay via phones at contactless terminals using

Vodafone Wallet, which stores an alias of your bank card on the SIM and works in conjunction with Visa.

## How does Apple Pay make money?

Apple has struck deals with the big US banks including JP Morgan Chase & Co, Citigroup and Bank of America as well as Visa, MasterCard and American Express. It collects a fee for every transaction carried out via Apple Pay. Similar arrangements have been made in the UK. Users themselves are not charged for transactions.

## What about the competition, then?

Some contactless services have been around for a while, such as Transport for London's Oyster card. Of the mobile contactless services, PayPal is one of the

## And what about Microsoft and Google?

Google Wallet has been available for a while, but it hasn't yet launched a tap-to-pay app in the UK. Samsung has announced Samsung Pay, which works with a Galaxy S6 and Galaxy S6 edge.

In contrast, Microsoft is proving rather slow on the uptake. It has mentioned Windows 10 devices supporting Host Card Emulation, which allows credit card data to be transmitted securely, but there have been no 'Windows Pay' announcements so far.

## FOUR WAYS TO PAY WITHOUT CONTACT

### Use a contactless credit card

Contactless credit and debit cards contain a special chip and an antenna that is able to beam a weak radio wave to a receiving payment reader. Look for the symbol of four curved lines to see if your card is compatible.



### Add a special sticker to your phone

Many financial companies including Barclaycard PayTag ([bit.ly/barclay371](http://bit.ly/barclay371)) have gone down the route of offering mobile-phone cases and stickers that contain the necessary tech needed to make contactless purchases without digging into a wallet.



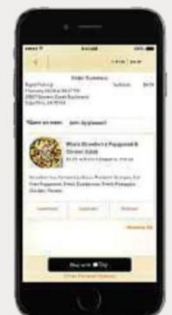
### Set up a digital wallet

Services such as PayPal, Barclays Pingit and Zapp (used by First Direct, HSBC, Nationwide, Santander and Metro Bank) let you pay friends and businesses over the internet. However, they cannot be used at the contactless points in retail outlets.



### Sign up to a contactless mobile service

It won't be long before Apple Pay and its rivals come on board in the UK. Just make sure your phone or smartwatch is fully charged, then you can pay and manage your money with ease.



COVER  
FEATURE

# SOFTWARE & APPS YOU SHOULD NEVER DOWNLOAD

Just because a program is popular, doesn't mean it deserves to be. **Wayne Williams** explains why you should steer clear of certain software and suggests free alternatives that do a much better job



In every issue of *Web User*, we recommend the best new, free software to download to help you make the most of the web on your PC and mobile device. But what about all those programs and apps that don't meet our high standards, yet are still installed by tens of thousands of users every week?

Normally, we wouldn't waste space covering them, but in this feature we make an exception by naming and shaming the 25 most overrated tools for your computer, phone and tablet. We also recommend the best free alternatives to these duds and explain how you can remove unwanted software for good.

15 RUBBISH PROGRAMS

**MEDIA ORGANISER**

**Apple iTunes**  
[bit.ly/itunes371](http://bit.ly/itunes371)

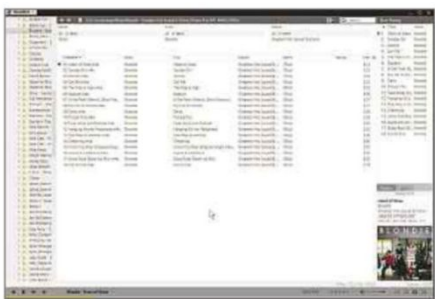
**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

Fewer and fewer people are syncing their Apple products through iTunes these days, because it's become too much hassle and it's easier to use iCloud. If you don't have an iPhone, iPad or Mac, then there are definitely better tools around for managing your audio and video, which aren't as bloated, slow and resource hungry as iTunes. Apple's software isn't particularly intuitive either, and by adding more features over the years (many of which you probably never use), it now feels messy and over-complicated.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

You can use your iPhone or iPad to manage content directly, but if you want a versatile free music manager for your PC, then we'd recommend MusicBee ([getmusicbee.com](http://getmusicbee.com)), which lets you manage large music libraries, add and edit metadata, rip CDs, synchronise connected devices, stream songs from web radio stations and music blogs, create party playlists, display lyrics and add more features via plug-ins. Unlike iTunes, these useful tools don't come at the expense of performance.



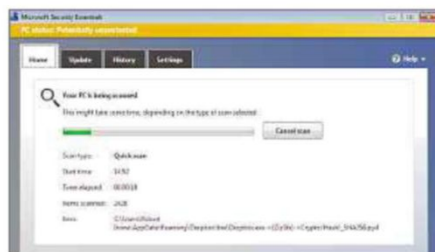
**SECURITY TOOL**

**Microsoft Security Essentials**  
[bit.ly/secessentials371](http://bit.ly/secessentials371)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

While it could be argued that any protection against malware is better than no protection at all, there really is no point installing Microsoft Security

Essentials. In recent tests conducted by Dennis Technology Labs ([www.dennistechnologylabs.com](http://www.dennistechnologylabs.com)), Microsoft's software finished joint last, dealing with just 68 per cent of threats targeted at the test PC. As poor as that might sound, it's a marked improvement over the 56 per cent it managed in the previous test. In fact, according to our sister title *PC Pro*, Microsoft itself has admitted that Windows users should install an anti-virus program above and beyond Security Essentials, describing its protection as merely a "baseline" that will "always be on the bottom" of anti-virus software rankings.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

Avast Free Antivirus 2015 ([www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)) is a far better and more reliable solution than Security Essentials. In the same Dennis Technology Labs' tests, it protected PCs from 98 per cent of threats, making it the best free tool that was tested. Its Smart Scan feature runs through all the available scans in sequence and lets you resolve any problems with a single click. There's a handy Home Network Security scanner which scans your local network for potential vulnerabilities, and a Browser Cleanup tool that removes any dodgy add-ons.



**ADBLOCKER**

**Adblock Plus**  
[adblockplus.org](http://adblockplus.org)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

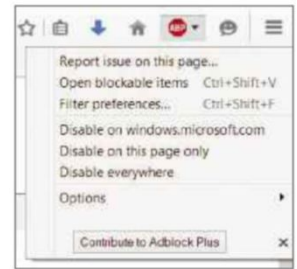
Adblock Plus does a great job of blocking adverts in your browser, provided you have a PC with good performance and plenty of memory. Otherwise, it can slow down your system by hogging your computer's resources. Tests have shown it can often

use more memory than Firefox, which is well known for being a memory hog.

Adblock Plus has told us that it's working on fixing the problem.

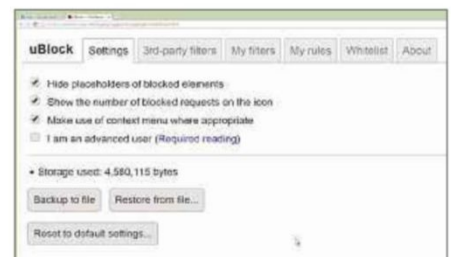
Another problem is that

Adblock Plus lets through 'acceptable' adverts that are on its whitelist, which some big companies, including Google, Microsoft and Amazon, have paid to be included on. You can disable this feature, but not many users will know how to do this.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

We like uBlock ([chrismatic.io/ublock](http://chrismatic.io/ublock)) for Chrome, Firefox and Safari, a fast and lightweight alternative to Adblock Plus that's just as reliable (it uses the same blocking lists). It doesn't have as many features, but all you probably want it to do is keep the ads away, and it certainly does a good job of that. See page 31 for more about the latest 'forked' version of uBlock, called uBlock Origin.



**SYSTEM OPTIMISER**

**PC Pitstop PC Matic**  
[www.pcpitstop.com](http://www.pcpitstop.com)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

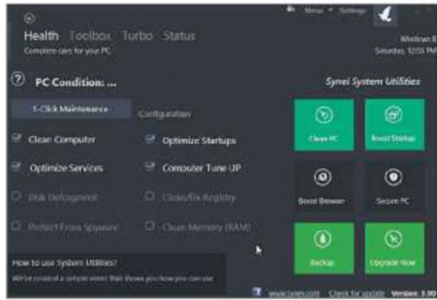
PC Pitstop's PC Matic is probably the most useless all-in-one system toolkit around. It promises to clean up and speed up your PC, but although you can run scans with the free version of the software, it won't actually perform any repairs. Instead, you're required to



upgrade to the full version of PC Matic for £30 a year before it will make any improvements to your system.

**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

Synei System Utilities ([www.synei.com](http://www.synei.com)) offers a handy 1-Click Maintenance mode and individual tools for tuning up your computer, defragging your hard drives, cleaning memory and fixing Registry errors. It also has a clever Turbo Mode feature for when you need an instant performance boost.

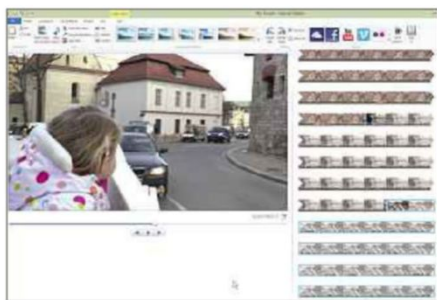


**VIDEO EDITOR**  
**Windows Live Movie Maker**  
[bit.ly/moviemaker371](http://bit.ly/moviemaker371)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

Microsoft's video-editing tool hasn't been updated for a couple of years, and is starting to look its age. It lacks the sophisticated features of other, similar programs and its editing tools are mostly basic one-click effects that don't offer much control over the results.

Another drawback is that you can only install Movie Maker through the Windows Live Essentials bundle, which requires you to deselect other unwanted programs, and gives you Windows Photo Gallery whether you want it or not.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

VSDC Free Video Editor ([bit.ly/vsdceditor371](http://bit.ly/vsdceditor371)) is a fully non-linear video editor that, unlike Movie Maker, is updated regularly. Its wizard-based interface makes the process of adding scenes and transitions to your timeline quick and easy, and it offers a good selection of audio and video effects, including Auto Contrast, Temperature, Sharpen, Blur and Old Film, which you

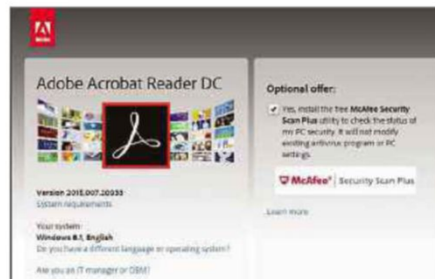


can use to improve and enhance your movies.

**PDF READER**  
**Adobe Reader**  
[get.adobe.com/reader](http://get.adobe.com/reader)

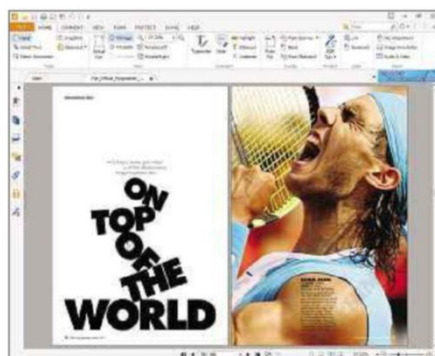
**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

Adobe Reader does a fair (if often slow) job of displaying PDF files, but the web-based installer tries to add an optional offer (McAfee Security Scan Plus), which you might miss and end up saddled with. At nearly 50MB, the program is also rather bloated, but its main problem is that it's generally not secure. A recent report by security experts Secunia ([secunia.com](http://secunia.com)) showed the software was riddled with vulnerabilities, which makes it a prime target for hackers. Secunia also found that 62 per cent of users never bother to patch the software when updates become available, which makes running it even riskier.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

There are plenty of PDF tools that are faster and safer than Adobe Reader. One of the best is Foxit Reader ([www.foxitsoftware.com](http://www.foxitsoftware.com)), which is very lightweight and packed with useful features. As well as opening PDF files to view, you can use the software to edit PDFs and create new ones from scratch



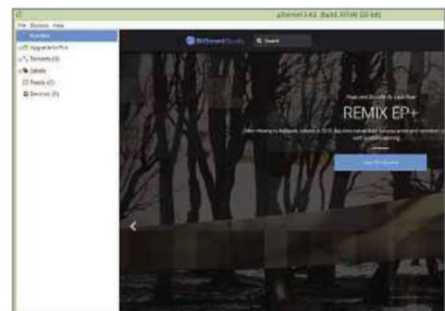
in several different ways. You can sign your PDF documents, add stamps and watermarks, and share PDF files via email and social media sites.

**FILE-SHARING TOOL**  
**uTorrent**  
[www.utorrent.com](http://www.utorrent.com)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

The hugely popular BitTorrent client now comes bundled with junk that you have to decline during the installation process. Recently, this has included a Litecoin (similar to Bitcoin) miner called Epic Scale, which harnesses your PC resources to create the virtual currency. Some users claim that this unwanted extra was installed on their systems without their knowledge, although uTorrent denies this is the case.

Other problems with the torrenting tools include too many obtrusive adverts (these can be disabled if you know how), and some features that are only available in the paid-for edition, such as the ability to convert files into a mobile-friendly format.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

We're big fans of qBittorrent ([www.qbittorrent.org](http://www.qbittorrent.org)), which is a free, lightweight BitTorrent client that's available for Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. The program has a uTorrent-style interface and is packed with features. You can control qBittorrent remotely through its web interface; use the bandwidth scheduler to start downloads at convenient (and speedy) times; and download multiple files in sequence. Although qBittorrent doesn't offer all the features of uTorrent, it also doesn't come bundled with unwanted junk or advertising.





## RECOVERY TOOL

### EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free

[bit.ly/datarecovery371](http://bit.ly/datarecovery371)

#### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

This comprehensive recovery tool can restore accidentally deleted files and items lost due to crashes or malware, and rescue data on faulty partitions. However, the free version is limited to recovering just 1GB of data, which might be enough if you only need to rescue some documents or a few photos, but otherwise massively reduces its usefulness.



#### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

Recuva ([www.piriform.com](http://www.piriform.com)) finds and restores missing files without imposing any annoying restrictions. It offers a simple wizard mode that guides you through the recovery process, or you can switch to the Advanced Mode if you prefer a more hands-on approach.



## SYSTEM TOOL

### Anisoft PC Plus Free

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

#### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

This program offers more than 30



one-click solutions for common PC problems. However, the software doesn't fix many of the problems it lists on the front screen. Although the program is able to fix certain PC problems, there are much better solutions around.

#### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

Windows Repair ([bit.ly/winrepair371](http://bit.ly/winrepair371)) can fix a bunch of common Windows problems, and comes with a simple wizard interface that guides you through its fixes (or you can just skip straight to the Repairs area, if you prefer). As well as fixing problems you're aware of, the software can check for other potential issues with your system.



## BROWSER

### Internet Explorer 11

[bit.ly/ie11-371](http://bit.ly/ie11-371)

#### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

We know that Internet Explorer is an easy target, but plenty of people are still using Microsoft's browser, which is loopy when there are much better alternatives available. While Internet Explorer 11 is a marked improvement over previous versions of IE, it doesn't display every web page properly, and you don't get syncing or multi-user support (when running it on Windows 7 or earlier). As for add-ons to enhance the browser with extra features, you'll be lucky to find more than three!



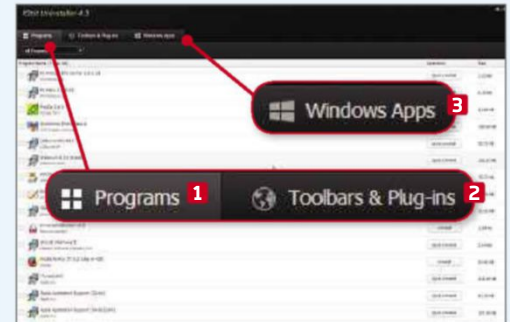
#### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

Chrome ([www.google.com/chrome](http://www.google.com/chrome)) is an obvious alternative. It offers everything you'd want from a modern browser including the

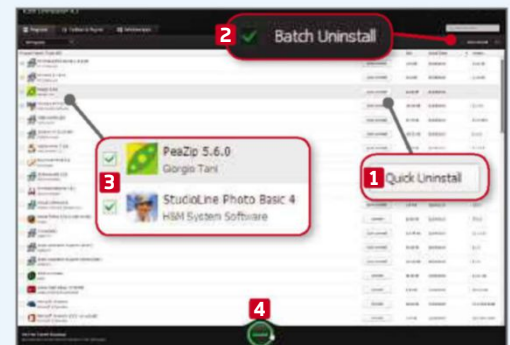


## MINI WORKSHOP

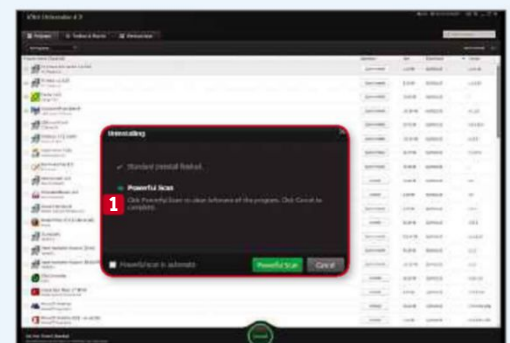
### Remove software from your PC completely



**1** If you're planning to replace a popular but flawed program with one of our better suggestions, you'll need to completely remove the original from your system. You can do this using IObit Uninstaller ([bit.ly/uninstaller371](http://bit.ly/uninstaller371)), which can batch remove programs, **1** browser toolbars **2** and Windows apps. **3**



**2** To remove a program, click its uninstall button. **1** You can uninstall multiple programs in sequence by turning on Batch Uninstall **2** and ticking all the software you want to get rid of. **3** Click the Uninstall button **4** to start the removal process. You can create a restore point if you wish.



**3** Once the standard uninstall has finished running, you'll be offered the option of performing a Powerful Scan. **1** This scours your computer looking for any data left behind by the uninstall process, and gives you the chance to remove it, freeing up space and helping to keep your system running smoothly.



ability to back up and sync settings, and a large selection of add-ons, web apps and themes. Chrome is updated continually, too, so new features and improvements are arriving all the time. You should also try Mozilla's Firefox browser, which is equally good.

## DISC-BURNING TOOL

**CyberLink Power2Go Essential**  
[bit.ly/power2go371](http://bit.ly/power2go371)

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

There are plenty of excellent free disc-authoring tools to choose from, but CyberLink Power2Go Essential isn't one of them. To be more accurate, it's a great program for 15 days until the included trial of the full version runs out, leaving you with a very basic burning program that constantly pesters you to upgrade to the paid-for edition. It also comes bundled with unwanted junk that you'll need to decline during the installation process.



### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

CDBurnerXP ([cdburnerxp.se](http://cdburnerxp.se)) is a free application that can burn data and audio CDs, DVDs and Blu-ray discs; create and burn ISO image files; create bootable discs; and more. It's updated regularly (the latest build appears in the



Updated section of this issue's Best Free Software), and is fast and reliable. Also, because there's no commercial version, the free edition has all the available features and won't nag you to upgrade.

## IMAGE EDITOR

### GIMP

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

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program) is a powerful photo editor, but it's unnecessarily difficult to use.

Thankfully, the recent addition of a Single-Window Mode means you're no longer stuck with an interface made up of separate floating windows positioned over your Desktop, but it's still a mess and nowhere near as intuitive as it should be.



### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

Paint.net ([www.getpaint.net](http://www.getpaint.net)) is the closest alternative to GIMP, and one of the best free photo editors around. It offers a wealth of advanced features including layers, levels, unlimited undo history, magic wand, clone stamp and red-eye removal. There are loads of effects you can use to enhance your images, and it supports third party plug-ins, too. Best of all, its interface is very straightforward and the program is very easy to use.



## VPN

### Hotspot Shield

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

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

Hotspot Shield hides your location to make it appear as if you're browsing from elsewhere (so you can access

geographically restricted content, for example). However, the free version bombards you with adverts and the software is unnecessarily obtrusive. You don't get much control over where you appear to be browsing from, and if you try to change countries, you'll be prompted to upgrade to the paid-for edition. Also, browsing while protected is very slow.



### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

CyberGhost ([cyberghostvpn.com](http://cyberghostvpn.com)) is a much better program than Hotspot Shield. Its biggest restrictions are that you have to wait for a free slot to become available before you can start browsing, and you need to reconnect every three hours. However, once you are connected, there are no ads to get in your way; you're granted unlimited traffic and bandwidth; and you can connect to a choice of 37 servers located across 15 different countries.



## MEDIA PLAYER

### RealPlayer Cloud

[uk.real.com](http://uk.real.com)

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

RealPlayer has long had a bad reputation and, although it's certainly not as awful as it once was, there are many better alternatives available. RealPlayer Cloud lets you upload and share videos, music and photos between all your different devices, but it's slow,



can only handle certain video formats and offers a limited amount of free online storage. It also comes with unwanted bundled extras.

**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

VLC Media Player ([www.videolan.org](http://www.videolan.org)) can handle any type of audio or video file and it's available for Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, Android and iOS. It can stream content, convert files, record your Desktop, play internet radio, add effects to videos and much more. It's also very lightweight.



tool now adds a logo to videos that are longer than five minutes, unless you pay for the optional Gold Pack (which also has additional features not included in the free edition). It's also prone to crash during conversions.

**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

Icecream Media Converter ([icecreamapps.com](http://icecreamapps.com)) is a slick and user-friendly conversion tool that can handle all the major audio and video formats. It can batch-convert multiple files, and download and convert YouTube videos, too.



**VIDEO CONVERTER**

**Freemake Video Converter**  
[www.freemake.com](http://www.freemake.com)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

Although it does a good job of converting video files, Freemake's

**10 USELESS APPS**

**COMMUNICATION**

**Skype for iOS**  
[bit.ly/skypeios371](http://bit.ly/skypeios371)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

For some unknown reason, Microsoft is slowly ruining its Skype app for iPhone and iPad; the latest version is buggy and important features are missing. Notifications often don't appear, or appear too late to be of any use, and the user interface is poorly designed. Android users needn't feel smug, though, because their version has its own set of problems making it almost as bad as the iOS version.

**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

Google Hangouts ([www.google.com/hangouts](http://www.google.com/hangouts)) is now a faster and more reliable communication tool



than Skype, and you can use it to chat with friends on any device. You can send text messages, or engage in video and voice calls.

**SHOPPING**

**Tesco Groceries**  
[bit.ly/tescoapp371](http://bit.ly/tescoapp371)

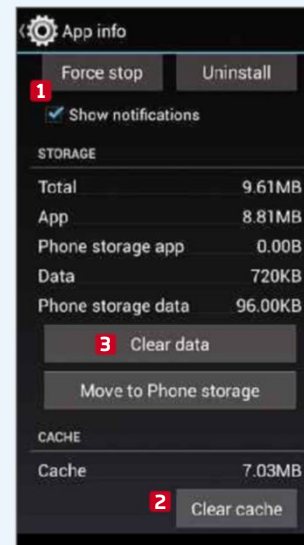
**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

It's designed to make "shopping easier and more convenient than ever", but the Tesco Groceries app's

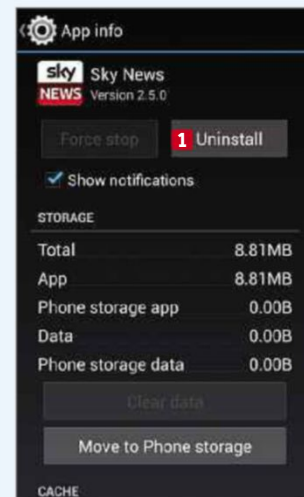


**MINI WORKSHOP**

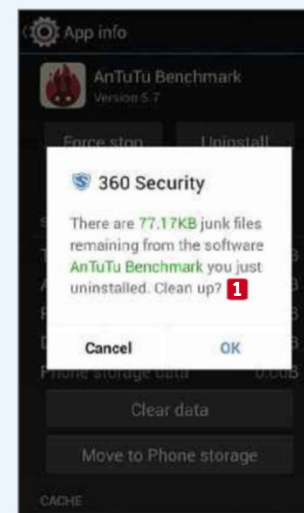
**Fully uninstall apps from your Android device**



'Force stop', **1** 'Clear cache', **2** then 'Clear data'. **3**



uninstalled. It shouldn't take too long.

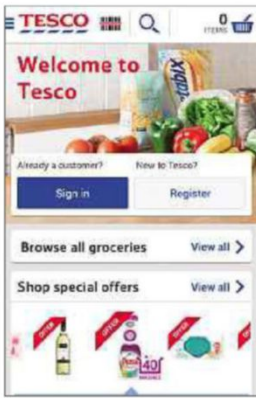


built-in uninstaller of its own.

**1** Before you uninstall anything from your phone or tablet, install the free app 360 Security ([bit.ly/360sec371](http://bit.ly/360sec371)). We'll explain why you need this in Step 3. Go into Settings on your device, then tap Apps (or Application Manager), then select the app to remove. Tap

**2** This will remove some of the data used or created by that app. Some of those options may be greyed out and can be ignored. Tap the Uninstall **1** button and confirm that you want to remove that app. The software will then be

**3** While a lot of apps will be removed cleanly, some leave junk files behind. The 360 Security app runs in the background, monitoring all uninstalls. If it spots anything left behind, it will offer to clean it up for you. **1** The software also has a

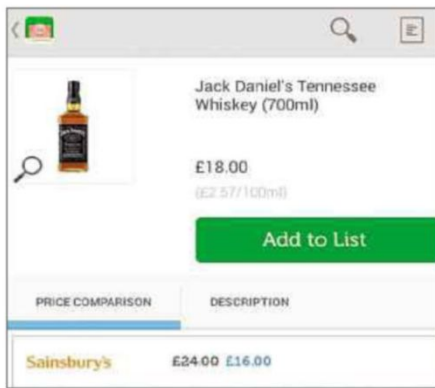


frequent crashes and the fact that items in your basket occasionally go missing makes shopping a frustrating experience. We also don't like that the tablet version of the app now only

displays in landscape mode.

**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

MySupermarket – Shopping List ([bit.ly/mysupermarket371](http://bit.ly/mysupermarket371)) lets you build and manage your grocery list, checking for the best deals across multiple supermarkets. You can use it to do your shopping online as well.



**MEDIA**

**BBC Media Player**  
[bit.ly/bbcmmedia371](http://bit.ly/bbcmmedia371)



**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

This app is designed to play media found on BBC websites. In theory, when you tap to play audio or video, it will open in this app. In practice, often nothing

happens, and videos don't display.

**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

Although it doesn't do the same job, BBC iPlayer ([bit.ly/iplayerandroid371](http://bit.ly/iplayerandroid371)) is a much better tool for watching videos and listening to audio from the BBC. Annoyingly, you need to install BBC Media Player to play iPlayer shows, but

once you've done this, you won't need to fiddle with it again.

**NEWS**

**Sky News**  
[bit.ly/skynews371](http://bit.ly/skynews371)



**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

There's nothing wrong with a commercial company including ads in a free app, but Sky News has so many that it quickly becomes annoying. If you want to watch a news clip, you

have to sit through an unskippable advert first, and the ads are sometimes longer than the actual news story itself! Stories load very slowly and sometimes not at all.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

If you want to keep abreast of the latest news without adverts getting in the way, then the BBC News app ([bit.ly/bbcnews371](http://bit.ly/bbcnews371)) is a much better choice, although

the recent redesign, which made everything look bigger, won't be to everyone's taste.

**TV**

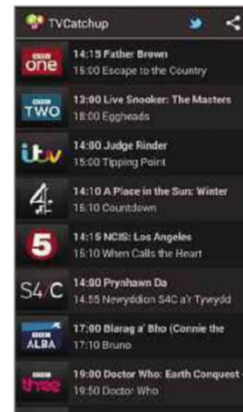
**ITV Player**  
[bit.ly/tvandroid371](http://bit.ly/tvandroid371)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

ITV's on-demand app is buggy (on both Android and iOS), frequently stops working and for no apparent reason refuses to load certain shows. It's no



surprise that there are loads of unskippable adverts but that doesn't excuse the frequent and lengthy buffering delays or the lack of Chromecast support.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

BBC iPlayer is a far superior option, but you can only use it to watch BBC programmes. You can use TVCatchup ([bit.ly/tvcatchup371](http://bit.ly/tvcatchup371)) to watch live television broadcasts on all channels but, despite its name, the app doesn't let you see on-demand content.

**VIDEO**

**YouTube for iPad**  
[bit.ly/youtube371](http://bit.ly/youtube371)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

Google recently updated its YouTube app for iOS, and the result is a total mess. Lots of users are finding that it freezes for ages, crashes or won't play videos at all. Although it's the current version (at the time of writing) that's particularly awful, Google seems to have been making the app worse with each new update. The interface isn't especially intuitive either.



**WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:**

You can watch YouTube videos in the mobile version of Chrome ([bit.ly/chromeios371](http://bit.ly/chromeios371)). Like the YouTube app, this also lets you stream videos directly from the browser to your Chromecast so you can watch them on the big screen.

**EMAIL**

**Microsoft Outlook**  
[bit.ly/outlook371](http://bit.ly/outlook371)

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?**

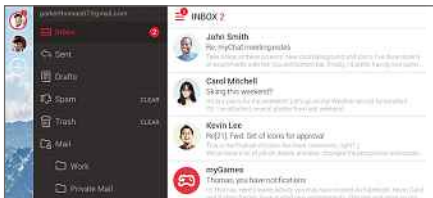
The official Microsoft Outlook app for Android phones and tablets is very slow, and lacks quite a lot of features. For example, the option to permanently

# Popular software you should avoid

delete messages doesn't work in the current build and it's generally rather buggy.

### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

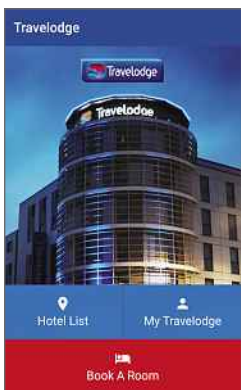
You can either use the stock email app on your phone, or install myMail ([bit.ly/mymail371](http://bit.ly/mymail371)). The latter lets you manage all your email accounts, including Outlook.com, in one place, and benefits from a stylish design. It also offers real-time and customisable push notifications.



### HOTELS

#### Travelodge Hotels

[bit.ly/travelodge371](http://bit.ly/travelodge371)



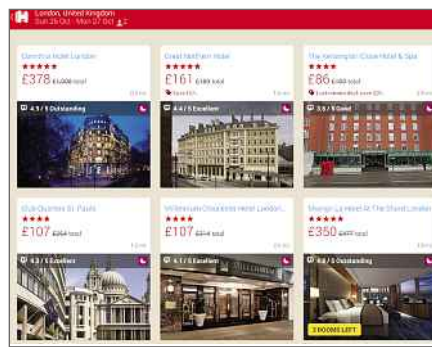
### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

The Travelodge app was finally updated recently after being untouched for three years, but the company still hasn't got the knack of how mobile sites

are meant to work. Why else make it so difficult to search for a hotel? And, when you find one you want to book, it opens the Travelodge site in your browser rather than letting you do everything in the app.

### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

Covering more than 430,000 hotels



worldwide, the Hotels.com ([uk.hotels.com/page/app](http://uk.hotels.com/page/app)) app provides a quick and easy way to find accommodation. It's fast and accurate; lets you sort its results by price, star rating and guest rating; and offers a 10-per-cent discount when you book a room from your mobile device.

### TRANSPORT

#### National Rail Enquires for iPad

[bit.ly/natrail371](http://bit.ly/natrail371)

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

If you want to know if a train is on time, or if there are any disruptions to be aware of, then steer clear of this app. The information it offers is good – if you get to see it – but the app itself is glitchy, there's no portrait mode and, if you change the font in any way (make it bold, for example), the text won't display properly.



### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

You can use the app from Thetrainline ([bit.ly/trainline371](http://bit.ly/trainline371)) on iOS, Android and Windows Phone to plan your journey, buy your tickets and check live train

times. We actually find it quicker to use than Thetrainline website, especially because you can buy tickets up to 10 minutes before boarding.



### FLIGHTS

#### Ryanair – Cheapest Flights

[bit.ly/ryanair371](http://bit.ly/ryanair371)

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

The official Ryanair app lets you find cheap flights, then check in on the move and get your boarding card delivered directly to your phone. That's the theory, at least, but the latest version has removed the login feature, so you have to repeatedly re-enter your flight information.



### WHAT TO USE INSTEAD:

SkyScanner – All Flights ([bit.ly/skyscanner371](http://bit.ly/skyscanner371)) compares millions of flights with all the major airlines and presents you with the quickest and cheapest options. You can also book flights directly from the app.



## NEXT ISSUE

on sale Wednesday 3 June 2015

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# Best Android browsers



If you own an Android device, it probably already has Chrome installed on it. **Edward Munn** compares Google's browser to five of its toughest competitors, to see if it's worth switching

**Firefox** | [bit.ly/firefox371](http://bit.ly/firefox371) | ★★★★★  
FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★☆



### What we liked:

Firefox for Windows, Linux and Mac OS X is fast, stable and easy-to-use, and the Android version is equally impressive. Like its computer-based counterpart, Firefox for Android has an impressive range of add-ons that you can install to enhance your browsing experience, including Adblock Plus.

We particularly like the browser's customisable home screen, which lets you flick between your Top Sites, Bookmarks, History and Recent Tabs when you open a new tab or tap the address bar. The app lets you sync much of this information with the Desktop version of Firefox (as well as to other Android devices using the app), and you can also save your login details for your favourite sites. If you want to browse the web without storing any information from your session, there's an option to open a new Private Tab from the app's main menu, and you can



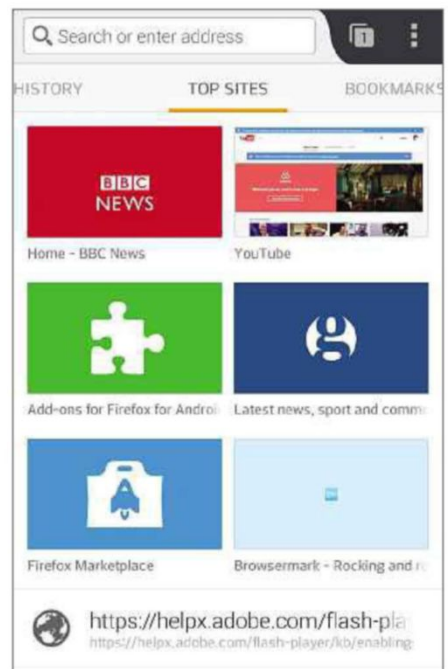
also start a New Guest Session if you'd like to allow a friend to use your browser without compromising your privacy.

If you read a lot of articles on your smartphone or tablet, you can tap the book symbol in your address bar to activate the app's Reader Mode, which turns the page into beautifully formatted plain text. A long-press adds it to your Reading List, so you can go back to it later.

Although we initially found Firefox's search bar a little cluttered, we like the way it lets you pick from multiple search engines after entering keywords. Not only is it easy to use and packed with great features, Firefox also came out on top in both our Sunspider 1.0.2 and Peacekeeper benchmark tests, making it the perfect browser for varied everyday use.

### How it can be improved:

We'd love to see an iOS version of Firefox to sync your information between even more devices. Data-saving tools like those found in Maxthon and Chrome would be handy, too.



### OUR VERDICT

Firefox's impressive combination of features, performance and usability make the browser a worthy winner of our Gold Award. We think it's as good as, if not better than, the PC version.

## Chrome | [bit.ly/chrome371](http://bit.ly/chrome371) | ★★★★★

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



### What we liked:

Like our Gold and Bronze Award winners,

Chrome lets you sync your bookmarks, history, passwords and open tabs between your Desktop browser and the mobile app, so you can carry on where you left off on another device. If you already use Chrome on your PC, this feature is the single biggest reason to make it your primary Android (and iOS) browser, too.

Chrome was also the simplest of all the browsers we tested, and the easiest to use. We wouldn't change anything about its interface where most functions, including opening a new incognito tab, can be accessed from the main menu. It also has a Data Saver tool, which can reduce the amount of data your mobile device uses.



Chrome's performance was only a short way behind Firefox on both the Sunspider 1.0.2 and Peacekeeper benchmark tests, but we found it offered smoother scrolling when we tested it on the mobile-optimised BBC News site.

### How it can be improved:

Although we admire the browser's simplicity, we'd like to see the option to use extensions such as

Adblock Plus on the mobile version of Chrome.

### OUR VERDICT

Chrome's incredibly simple interface and lightning fast performance make it an absolute pleasure to use. The inclusion of a killer feature or the option to use extensions would have made it a strong candidate for the top spot.

## Maxthon | [bit.ly/maxthon371](http://bit.ly/maxthon371) | ★★★★★☆

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



### What we liked:

Maxthon has a range of useful features that we didn't find in any of the other browsers we tested. For example, there's a built-in QR-code scanner, which you can access directly from the address bar, and a Night mode that dims the screen for reading in bed. What's more, the browser has Adblock Plus installed as standard, so you can enjoy an advert-free experience from the word go.

If you want to reduce your mobile data usage, you can use the Images Off option so the browser only loads a web page's basic layout and text, cutting bandwidth significantly. Like both our Gold and Silver award winners, Maxthon lets you sync your bookmarks and recent tabs with its PC counterpart, and



includes a private-browsing mode. It also has a range of add-ons to make it more productive, such as the Advanced Gesture add-on, which lets you open, close or switch between tabs by making on-screen gestures.

### How it can be improved:

Maxthon performed well in the Sunspider 1.0.2 benchmark test, but produced a disappointing score on Peacekeeper.

We also found its interface much less intuitive than our other award winners.

### OUR VERDICT

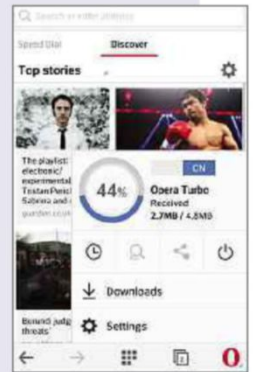
Maxthon has more features than any of the other browsers we tested, but our Gold and Silver Award winners are faster and easier to use.

## BEST OF THE REST

### Opera for Android

[bit.ly/opera371](http://bit.ly/opera371)

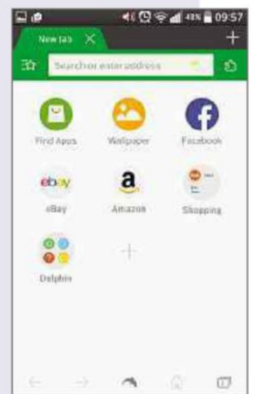
Opera was unfortunate to miss out on our Bronze Award. Its performance matched Chrome in the Peacekeeper benchmark test and its Turbo mode makes it one of the best browsers for minimising mobile data usage. The app's Discover tab provides a handy way of keeping up to date with the latest news, but it's light on features compared to Firefox and Maxthon, and although there are several layouts to choose from, we aren't keen on its interface.



### Dolphin

[bit.ly/dolphin371](http://bit.ly/dolphin371)

Dolphin is one of the oldest Android browsers and it offers an impressive range of add-ons and apps to enhance your browsing experience. We particularly like its Connect feature, which lets you sync your history, bookmarks, passwords and open tabs with a range of mobile and PC browsers including Chrome, Firefox and Safari. However, the browser came last in both our benchmark tests and we found its three main menus a bit excessive.



### Puffin

[bit.ly/puffin371](http://bit.ly/puffin371)

Puffin has the fastest JavaScript engine of any Android browser, but its features are pretty basic. The free version of the app is ad-supported, which quickly becomes annoying. The interface looks messy and dated compared to the other apps we tested, and scrolling pages was choppy, too.





# Access websites that are blocked in the UK

Beat the restrictions imposed by the government and your ISP to go where you want to online. **Robert Irvine** explains how to bypass blocks

Internet providers in the UK now block or partially block hundreds of websites, although the exact number is unknown. Wikipedia has an incomplete list at [bit.ly/blockedlist371](http://bit.ly/blockedlist371) or you can enter a web address at [www.blocked.org.uk](http://www.blocked.org.uk) to find out if your ISP is blocking that site.



In this feature, we look at the main categories of website blocked by the default filters of the big UK ISPs – BT, EE, O2, TalkTalk, Virgin Media and Sky – and provide details of how you can get around the blocks to access the sites (at your own risk, of course, because some blocks are in place for legal reasons). We haven't covered sites blocked by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF, [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)), such as those with child sexual abuse content which, for good reason, cannot be accessed using the advice provided in this feature.

## TORRENT SITES

Websites that let you download or stream films, TV shows, music and other copyrighted content are by far the most common targets of ISP filters. Currently, more than 100 piracy sites are blocked in the UK, following a High Court order in March that added 17 MP3-download sites to the list.

One of the biggest names to join the forbidden ranks recently is Popcorn Time, which has been described as a “Netflix for piracy”. It was taken to High Court by the Motion Picture Association, which is the international trade body for Hollywood studios. Eight sites offering the Popcorn Time torrent software were ordered to be blocked by UK ISPs, although you can still find alternative ‘forks’ of the program through Google. The judge ruled that the Popcorn Time providers did “plainly know and intend” for the software to be used to infringe copyright.

Popcorn Time joins The Pirate Bay as a service that's officially blocked in the UK, but still available overseas, along with other torrent-file repositories such as IsoHunt, Demonoid, Movie4k and many more. This means you can access them

using a VPN or proxy service that disguises your real location. There are also dedicated tools for downloading torrents anonymously, including BTGuard ([btguard.com](http://btguard.com)), which costs £4.70 a month, offers unlimited speeds and encrypts your downloads so “not even your ISP knows what you're doing”.



## SPORT-STREAMING SITES

With the Premier League charging Sky Sports and BT Sport more than £10m per match, it's understandably unhappy about fans watching games without a subscription to those broadcasters. Two years ago, it won a court order forcing ISPs to block FirstRow Sports, which streams live football for free, with no need to register unless you want high-quality streams. Worst of all, in the eyes of the Premier League, FirstRow was said to have earned up to £10m per



## HOW TO UNBLOCK A SPECIFIC SITE

ISP filters work automatically by detecting blacklisted keywords and domains, so they sometimes block harmless sites that don't contravene their rules. This 'overblocking' is more common than you'd think, with the Open Rights Group finding that one in five of the 100,000 most popular websites in the world is blocked by at least one network.

If you own a website that's being blocked or you know of one that's being unfairly censored, even when you've disabled your filters, you can report it to the ISP. Here are contact details for the UK's main internet providers:

- BT [categorisation@bt.com](mailto:categorisation@bt.com)
- EE [safeguard@ee.co.uk](mailto:safeguard@ee.co.uk)
- O2 [shieldav@o2.com](mailto:shieldav@o2.com)
- Sky [crsupport@bskyb.com](mailto:crsupport@bskyb.com)
- TalkTalk [homesafe.classification@talktalkplc.com](mailto:homesafe.classification@talktalkplc.com)
- Three [content@three.co.uk](mailto:content@three.co.uk)
- Virgin Media [websafefeedback@virginmedia.co.uk](mailto:websafefeedback@virginmedia.co.uk)

For more information, visit [www.blocked.org.uk/unblock](http://www.blocked.org.uk/unblock)

initially resisted the request by the Compagnie Financière Richemont group, which owns the brand, resulting in the first trademark-infringement case of this kind in the UK. The company's representing law firm said: "The court has concluded that ISPs play 'an essential role' and that the court can and should apply Article 11 of the Enforcement Directive to require the application of technical measures to impede infringement of trademarks".

Some of these fake-goods sites have since vanished from the web, but others – including Mont Blanc Pens Online (pictured) – can still be accessed, if you manage to circumvent the block. Not that you should risk buying anything from these dodgy sites, but it serves to illustrate that when an ISP blocks a site, it isn't physically removed. ■



BT Parental Controls, TalkTalk Kids Safe and Sky Broadband Shield. This is usually just a matter of selecting the Custom option for the filter you use and deselecting the Dating category.



## POLITICAL & PERSONAL BLOGS

Several blogs have been added to ISP blocked lists for no apparent reason, other than expressing political or personal views. The Open Rights Group provides many examples on its website ([www.openrightsgroup.org](http://www.openrightsgroup.org)) and in the Personal Stories section of its Blocked site ([www.blocked.org.uk/personal-stories](http://www.blocked.org.uk/personal-stories)), such as O2 blocking a blog that criticised the BBC; EE, O2 and Sky blocking a blog about the Syrian war; and TalkTalk briefly blocking the popular political blog Guido Fawkes ([order-order.com](http://order-order.com)). TalkTalk (and Orange) also blocked an innocuous blog called Shelf Appeal ([shelfappeal.com](http://shelfappeal.com)), "a blog about things you can put on a shelf".

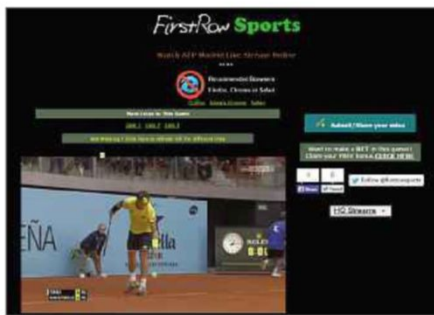


Additionally, in November 2013, many WordPress users on TalkTalk connections found themselves unable to log into their own blogs. This was because a WordPress account had been reported to the IWF for containing child abuse content, leading TalkTalk to blacklist the domain.

Fortunately, most ISPs will alter their filters when they're informed that they've made a mistake, so if you find you can no longer access a favourite blog, it's worth reporting it to your ISP – see 'How to unblock a specific site', above right.

## COUNTERFEIT GOODS SITES

Last year, the five main UK internet providers were asked to block six websites that sell counterfeit goods including fake Mountblanc pens, Cartier jewellery and IWC watches. The ISPs



year by showing ads next to matches.

Based in Sweden, FirstRow Sports is still going strong, with numerous 'mirror' sites – some of which you can find via Google – and has expanded to cover rugby, tennis and other sports. If you're willing to flout the law, you can get around your ISP's block by using a browser add-on such as Hola ([hola.org](http://hola.org)) or ZenMate ([zenmate.com](http://zenmate.com)) to disguise your IP address. Both are available for Chrome and Firefox, and are easy to use.



## DATING SITES











Dating services such as Match.com, Lovestruck and Tinder aren't blocked by court order in the UK, but the default parental controls used by some ISPs, including TalkTalk and BT, prevent access to them. Interestingly, Virgin Media doesn't block dating sites, probably because of its partnership with Dating Direct. The block is to protect children from stumbling across them and being exposed to adult content and conversations, but for single parents (and grandparents) looking for love online, the restriction is unwelcome.



To regain access to dating sites, you'll either need to temporarily disable your ISP's parental controls or configure its filters. The Online Dating Association ([www.onlinedatingassociation.org.uk](http://www.onlinedatingassociation.org.uk)) provides full instructions for unblocking dating sites at [bit.ly/dating371](http://bit.ly/dating371), covering

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	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
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2		Plusnet: Broadband & Calls	<b>£9.99</b> (£2.50 for 12 months)	<b>12</b> months	<b>17Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited	<b>£30.00</b>
3		EE: Broadband & Calls	<b>£9.95</b> (£2.95 for 12 months)	<b>12</b> months	<b>17Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited**	<b>£35.40</b>
4		Sky: Broadband & Calls	<b>£7.50</b> (12 months HALF PRICE)	<b>12</b> months	<b>17Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited	<b>£45.00</b>
5		Plusnet: Fibre Broadband & Calls	<b>£14.99</b> (6 months FREE)	<b>18</b> months	<b>38Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited	<b>£89.94</b>
6		TalkTalk Fibre Broadband	<b>£10.00</b> (£5 for 6 months)	<b>18</b> months	<b>38Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited	<b>£90.00</b>
7		Virgin: Broadband & Calls	<b>£17.50</b> (12 months HALF PRICE)	<b>18</b> months	<b>50Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited**	<b>£105.00</b>
8		EE: Fibre Broadband & Calls	<b>£19.95</b> (£9.95 for 6 months)	<b>18</b> months	<b>38Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited	<b>£179.40</b>
9		Sky: Fibre Broadband & Calls	<b>£20.00</b> (6 months HALF PRICE)	<b>18</b> months	<b>38Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited	<b>£180.00</b>
10		Virgin: Broadband & Calls	<b>£30.00</b> (£20 for 12 months)	<b>18</b> months	<b>152Mbps</b> max speed	∞ unlimited**	<b>FASTEST</b> <b>£240.00</b>

Call 0800 083 2357 or visit [www.broadbandgenie.co.uk/webuser](http://www.broadbandgenie.co.uk/webuser)

Terms & Conditions apply - see ISP sites for details

\*First-year cost does not include line rental. Cost is calculated at monthly price x12 with all introductory offers subtracted. Additional charges incurred outside of free inclusive calls not included in first-year cost.

\*\* Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.

Data supplied by [www.broadbandgenie.co.uk](http://www.broadbandgenie.co.uk). Correct as of 5 May 2015.

**Ofcom**

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



# Take a Screen Break

It isn't easy to keep up with the fast pace of technology, but you might recall more than you think. This issue, we're asking you to look back to **2005**



**1** YouTube launched in February 2005. But what was the title of the first video posted on the site (pictured)?



**2** Which website was bought by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp in July 2005, for a reported \$580m (£331m)?

**3** Google Earth was one of the biggest software releases of the year. But what was the virtual globe called before it was renamed by Google?

**4** Which hugely popular MMPORG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) went online in February 2005?

**5** What was the name of Nintendo's dual-screen handheld games console, which launched in the UK in March 2005?

**6** The fifth-generation iPod (pictured) went on sale in October 2005. What big new feature did it offer?



**7** The salacious celebrity gossip site TMZ made its debut in 2005. What do its initials stand for?

**8** Which ISP caused a stir in 2005 by launching the UK's fastest broadband, at 24Mbps, when most people were still using dial-up?

**9** Yahoo bought two popular websites in 2005. One was the social-

bookmarking service Delicious, but what was the photo-sharing site it snapped up?

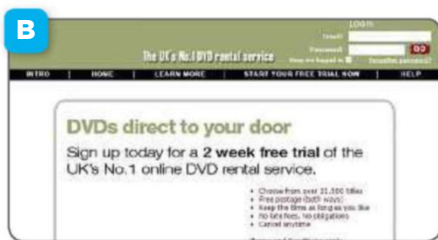
**10** What was the name of the browser launched by AOL in July 2005?

**11** Which appalling novelty song (pictured) set a new record by being streamed 199,000 times in one day via AOL?



**12** What's the name of the government-backed internet security campaign that launched in October 2005 and is still running today?

## CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE POPULAR WEBSITES FROM 2005?



Get the answers online at [www.webuser.co.uk/quiz371](http://www.webuser.co.uk/quiz371)

## COMPETITIONS

### WIN 1 OF 6 Kit Power Banks

These rechargeable Power Banks from Kit have a long standby time, which makes them perfect for popping in your bag in case of a later emergency. The built-in micro-USB cable fits a wide variety of smartphones, both Apple and Android, while the additional USB output means you can attach your own charging cables. To enter, email your address to [webusercomp@dennis.co.uk](mailto:webusercomp@dennis.co.uk) with 'kit' in the subject line. For more information, visit <http://yourkit.co.uk>.



WORTH £29.99 EACH

### WIN 1 OF 5 AC750 Wi-Fi Range Extender

TP-LINK's AC750 Wi-Fi Range Extender boosts your wireless signal, eliminating previously inaccessible areas and dead zones. It also reduces signal interference to ensure reliable Wi-Fi coverage throughout your home. It can hit speeds of 433Mbps on its 5GHz channel and 300Mbps on 2.4GHz. To enter, email your address to [webusercomp@dennis.co.uk](mailto:webusercomp@dennis.co.uk) with 'ac750' in the subject line. For more info, visit <http://uk.tp-link.com>, and follow TP-LINK on Twitter (@TPLINK).



WORTH £49.99 EACH



## Protect your property with AtHome Camera | [www.ichano.com](http://www.ichano.com)

You don't need to spend money on an expensive home-monitoring system because AtHome Camera does the same job for free. Here's how to use it

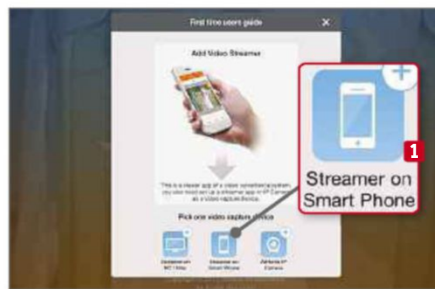
**P**rotecting your home from intruders used to mean sticking a burglar alarm on an outside wall. Today's home-security systems are a lot more sophisticated, and won't just deafen the neighbours when someone breaks in.

AtHome Camera is a free tool that lets you watch your property when you're away from home and view different

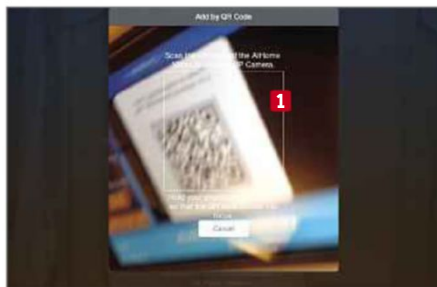
rooms (or the outside of the building) from anywhere in your house. The software works on Windows, Mac, iOS and Android, and lets you use spare devices as monitors and security cameras. Here, we've installed the software on an iPhone and iPad combination, but it's essentially the same process, whatever hardware you use.



**1** Install the AtHome Camera app on the device you want to use to view the video. We're using an iPad, but it could also be a PC or Mac. You can choose to jump right in and get started immediately **1** or create a free account and gain additional tools. **2** Select the former option for now.



**2** Pick the device you want to use as your camera. **1** In this case, it will be an iPhone but any phone or computer with a webcam will work. Install the AtHome Video Streamer app on the 'camera' and launch it. You should now have two different apps running on two devices.



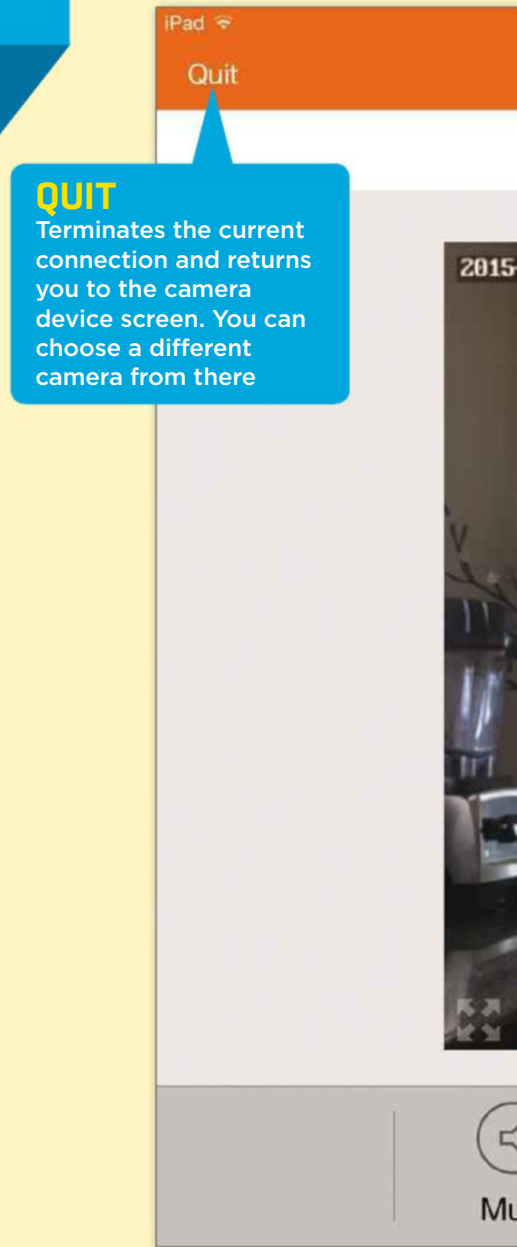
**3** In the Streamer app (iPhone), you'll see an option to 'Generate QR code'. Tap this. In the camera app (iPad) tap Next Step to open the Scan QR Code screen. Tap where it says to open the QR scanner and then point the camera at the QR code on the phone until it comes into focus. **1**



**4** When the connection is made, the device and its status (Online or Off) is displayed in the camera app. **1** Tap the Edit button **2** to change the CID (camera ID), username and password, or to disconnect the device. You can also request that the app remember the camera for next time.

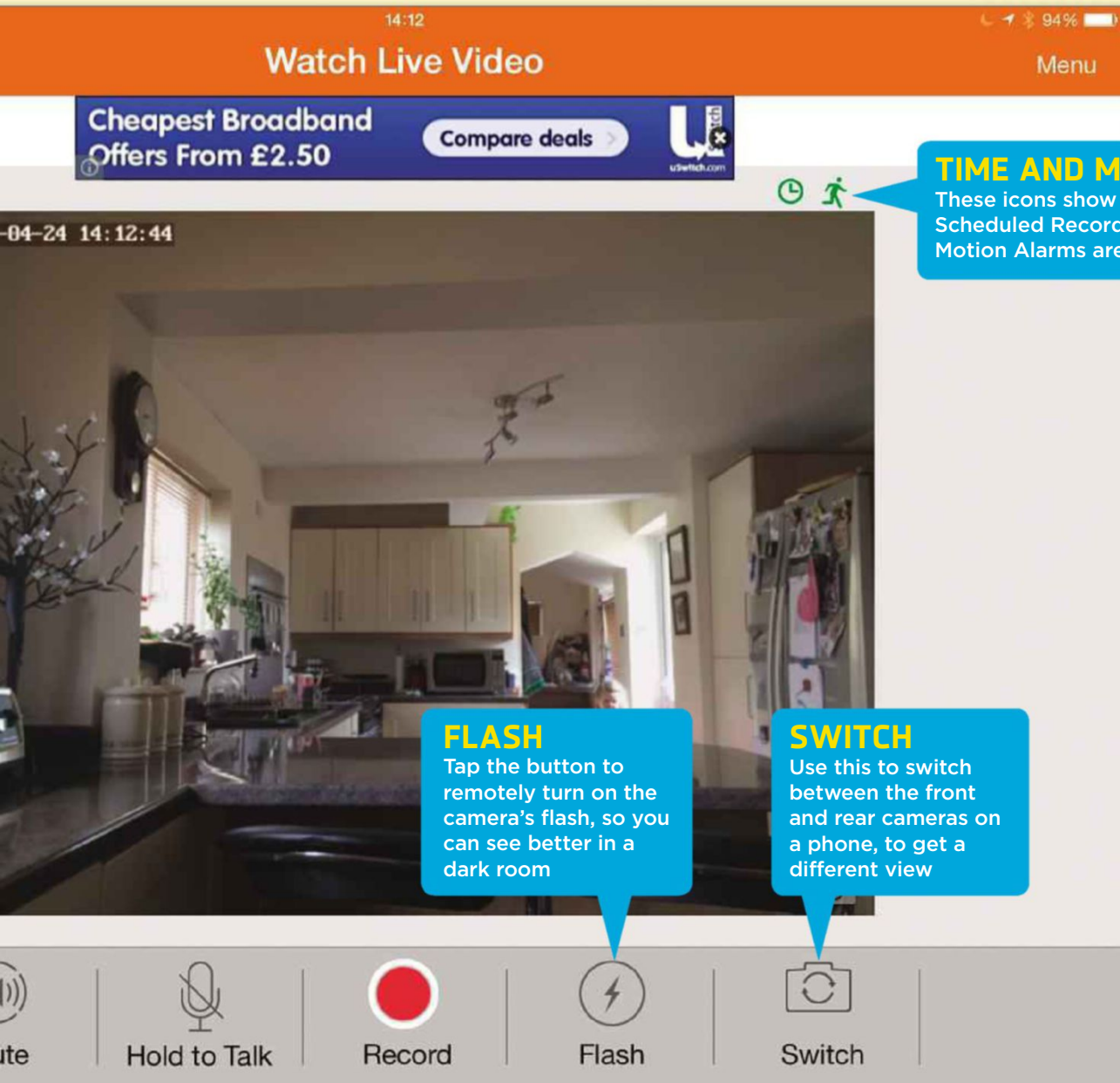


**5** Tap the device name to see the live feed from the phone. **1** It's best not to be in the same room when you make the connection because it sets off noisy feedback. You can avoid this by turning the volume down or temporarily muting the sound. **2**



### QUIT

Terminates the current connection and returns you to the camera device screen. You can choose a different camera from there



**TIME AND MOTION**

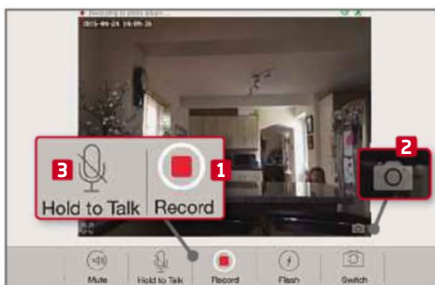
These icons show when Scheduled Recordings and Motion Alarms are set

**FLASH**

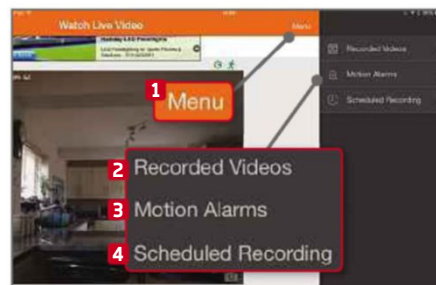
Tap the button to remotely turn on the camera's flash, so you can see better in a dark room

**SWITCH**

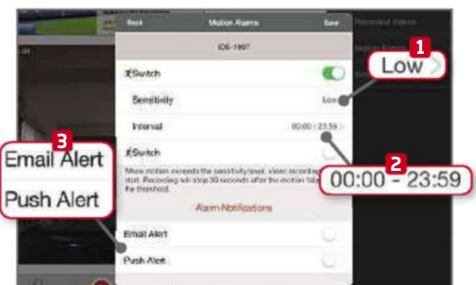
Use this to switch between the front and rear cameras on a phone, to get a different view



**6** If you see something interesting, you can start recording a video. **1** You can also take a quick snapshot of the scene by tapping the camera button. **2** If you see someone on the camera, you can speak to them by pressing and holding down the talk button and speaking. **3** You'll be able to hear them reply.



**7** Tap the Menu button. **1** From here, you can view and manage recorded videos (they are sorted into Scheduled Recordings, Motion Triggered Videos, and Videos In Albums); **2** configure motion alarms; **3** and schedule recordings. **4** These features are only available if you set up a free account.



**8** For Motion Detection, you can set the sensitivity (High, Normal or Low) **1** and create up to two preset intervals between checks. **2** Next, set the type of alarm notification you want - Email or Push (on-device alerts). **3** For Scheduled Recording, you can set two time intervals to start and stop recording.



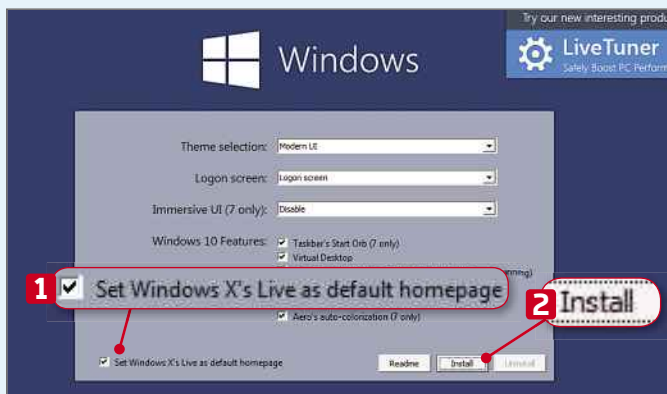
# Bring Windows 10's best bits to Windows 7 and 8

Windows 10 UX Pack 3.0: [bit.ly/winux371](http://bit.ly/winux371) | ⌚ 10 mins | 🏳️ 7, 8+

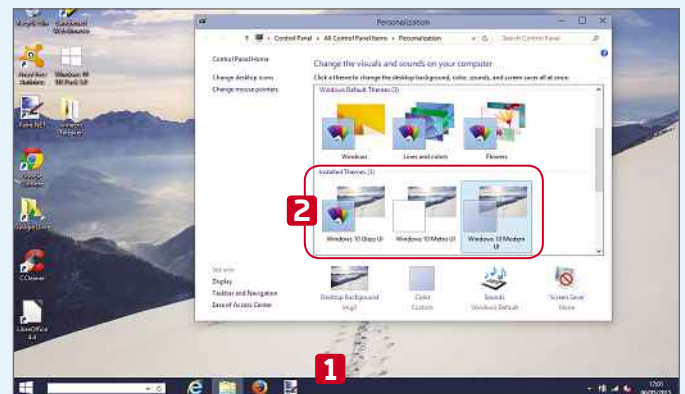
We've been covering Windows 10 in *Web User* since the launch of the first Technical Preview in October of last year. You may have already tried installing it, either as a second boot option or by using virtualisation software such as VirtualBox ([www.virtualbox.org](http://www.virtualbox.org)). However, both these options require a bit of effort, which won't be to everyone's taste.

There's now an easier way to try out some of Windows 10's best bits on your Windows 7 or 8 PC, by downloading and installing Windows 10 UX Pack 3.0 ([bit.ly/winux371](http://bit.ly/winux371)). This software changes some of the basic Windows settings to make everything more like Windows 10, such as adding a search bar to the taskbar and applying a new Start menu.

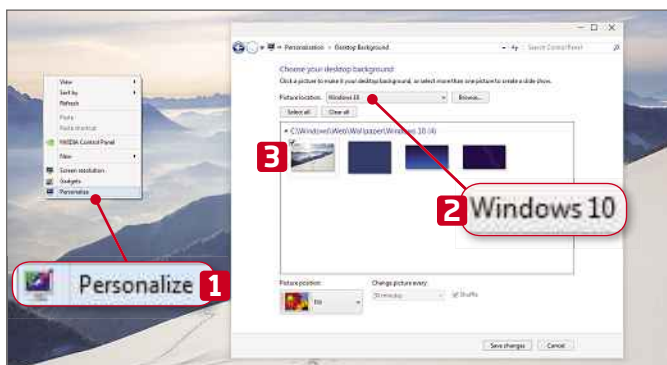
While the UX Pack isn't too invasive and can be uninstalled easily, it changes your PC settings, so back up your data and create a system restore point before you proceed.



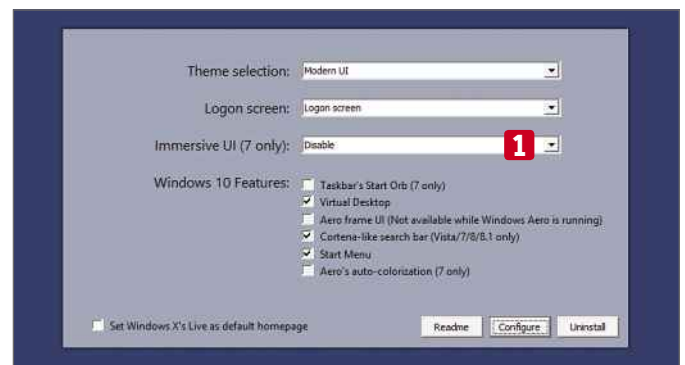
**1** The first time you start the software, you'll see an installer. Stick with the default settings for the time being, because you can run it again later if you want to make any customisations. Untick 'Set Windows X's Live as default homepage' **1** and click Install. **2**



**2** The Windows 10 look will be installed, complete with the dark taskbar. **1** In Windows 8 the wallpaper is changed and the Personalization window opens, so you can choose between the three new themes: Glass, Metro and Modern. **2**



**3** Our Windows 7 version didn't automatically load the new wallpaper, so if that happens, right-click the Desktop and choose Personalize. **1** Click the Desktop Background link. From the 'Picture location' menu, choose Windows 10, **2** then select a wallpaper **3** and click 'Save changes'.



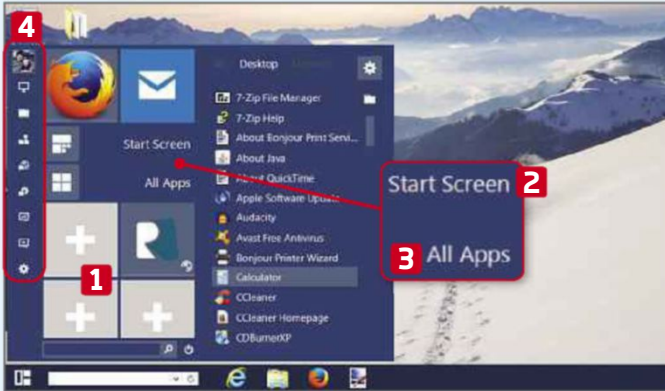
**4** You can return to the main screen to make changes by running the program again. There are a range of options for the theme, login screen and immersive UI, which you select from the drop-down menus. **1** The other Windows 10 features are selected or deselected using the tick boxes.



**EXPERT TIP**

**Andy Shaw says:**

There are two downloads available from [www.windowsexlive.net](http://www.windowsexlive.net) designed to make older versions of Windows more like Windows 10. Here, we've used the Windows 10 UX Pack 3.0, which works with Windows 7 and 8+, and makes minimal changes to your PC. If you have Windows XP or Vista and you want to get a taste of Windows 10, try the Windows 10 Transformation Pack 3.0 ([bit.ly/trans371](http://bit.ly/trans371)).



**5** The Start button opens the Start menu. Right-click tiles **1** to access their options and add new apps to the menu. The Start Screen button **2** takes you to the full screen menu and All Apps **3** shows all programs. The icons **4** take you straight to tools such as Control Panel and Task Manager.



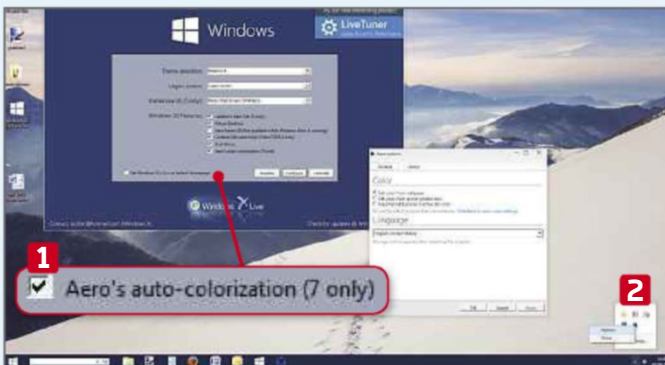
**6** In Windows 7, you can choose from WinMetro or NewGen Start screens. Both offer similar options but we prefer WinMetro, because its icons are smaller, which leaves more room. If you prefer a chunkier look, go for NewGen instead.



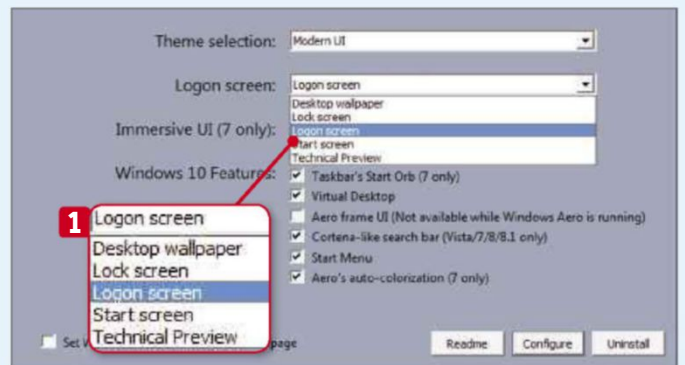
**7** Sysinternals Desktops is used to run Windows 10-style virtual Desktops. Right-click the icon in the notification area and choose Options. Tick the box to 'Run automatically at logon' **1** and choose the hotkeys you want to use to switch between each Desktop. **2**



**8** A Cortana-style search bar has been added to the taskbar **1** but you can't talk into it or use it for search. Instead, type URLs into it to launch your default browser and go straight to the page. **2** If your browser is already open, it will launch in a new tab.



**9** Selecting 'Aero's auto-colorization' **1** in Windows 7 launches Aura, which you can access by right-clicking it in the notification area. **2** This controls the colour of your windows furniture, bringing Windows 7's aesthetics up to Windows 10's standard.



**10** You can also make your computer more like Windows 10 when it boots up. In the configuration tool, click the drop-down menu next to 'Logon screen' **1** and experiment with the different options to see which you prefer.



# Control your PC with head movements

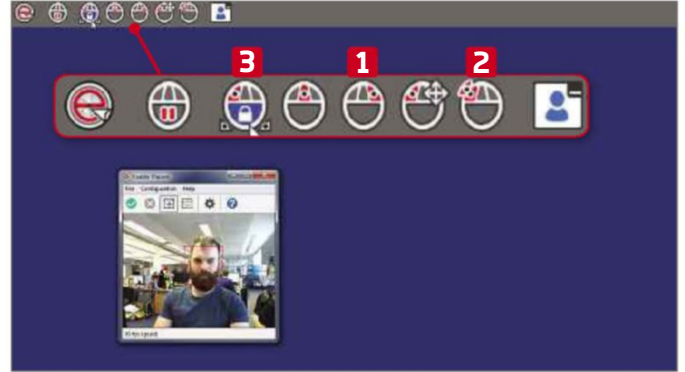
**e** Viacam is free mouse-replacement software that lets you control your mouse pointer simply by moving your head. You need a webcam to use the program - many laptops have them built-in, but if your computer doesn't, you can get a

basic USB camera reasonably cheaply. In this Workshop, we show you how to get to grips with eViacam, so you can perform basic everyday computer tasks hands-free.

**Enable Viacam (eViacam):** [bit.ly/eviacam371](http://bit.ly/eviacam371) | 10 mins | Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8.1+



**1** Download, install and run eViacam and follow its on-screen instructions to configure the program. Once completed, click the green tick **1** to enable head tracking. You can now control the cursor by moving your head. Stopping any head movement performs a Dwell Click, if you activate this feature.



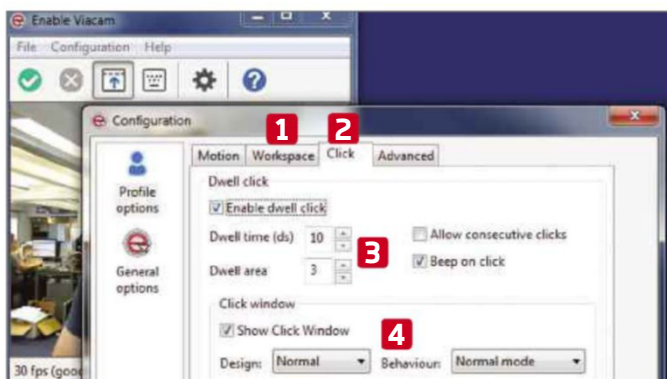
**2** You can change the function of a Dwell Click using the icons at the top of your screen. It can be set to perform a left-, middle-, right- **1** or double-click, **2** or to drag your selection. **3** You can also disable it altogether. This taskbar can be hidden by selecting the Click Window button.



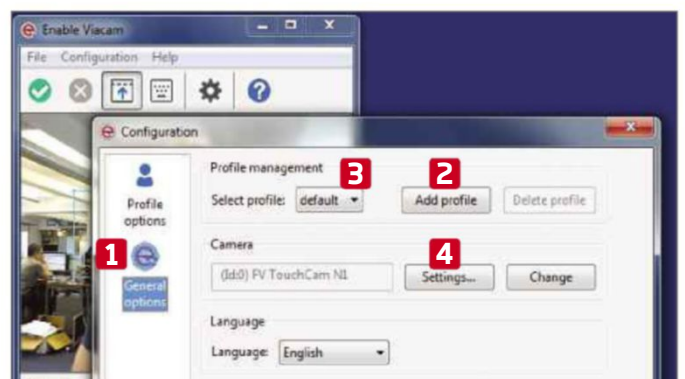
**3** To activate Windows' on-screen keyboard, click the 'On-screen keyboard' button. **1** Unfortunately, there's a clash with Windows Vista and Windows 7 that means you'll need to disable User Account Control and restart your PC if you want to use this feature.



**4** Click Configuration and Wizard to run the set-up wizard again or select Options to access a wider range of settings. In 'Profile options', **1** the Motion tab **2** lets you set the motion threshold for head tracking as well the pointer's sensitivity, acceleration and smoothness.



**5** The Workspace menu **1** lets you set limits for your workspace and enable pointer wrapping, so the cursor reappears if you move it off the side of the screen. Select the Click tab **2** to change the 'Dwell time' and 'Dwell area' **3** and alter the way the Click Window looks and behaves. **4**



**6** Click 'General options' **1** to add a new user profile **2** and to switch profiles. **3** Click the Settings **4** button to make various adjustments to your camera including brightness, contrast, saturation and sharpness.





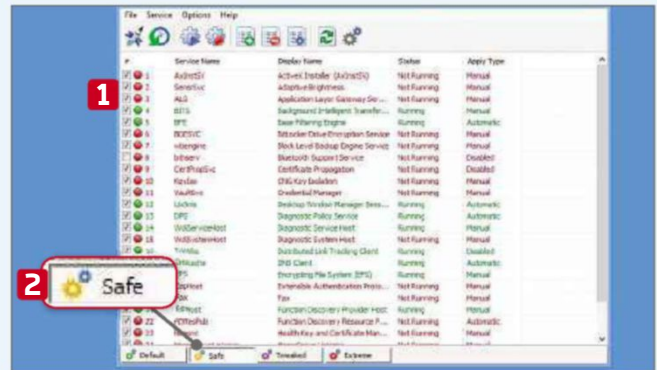
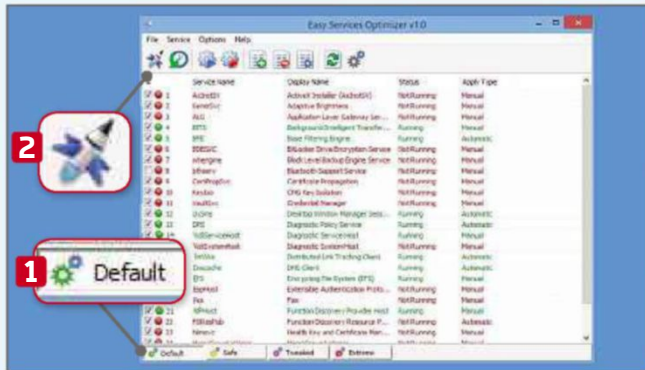
# Shut down unnecessary Windows services

Windows can perform a huge range of tasks, many of which you'll never use, yet these services are often waiting to run or already running on your computer. Easy Services Optimizer can safely stop some of

these services from running until you really need them, or disable them altogether, so your PC can start and run faster.

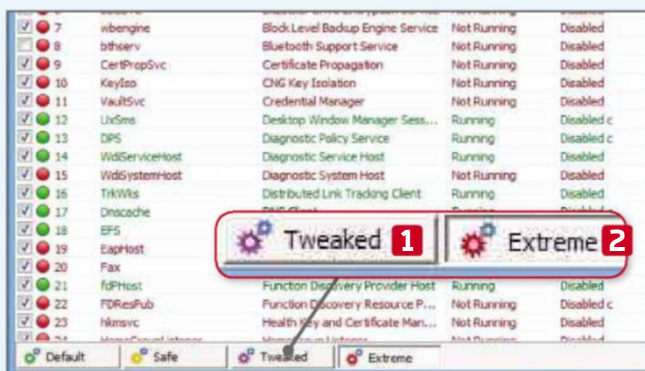


**Easy Services Optimizer: [bit.ly/easy371](http://bit.ly/easy371) | 15 mins | XP, Vista, 7, 8+**



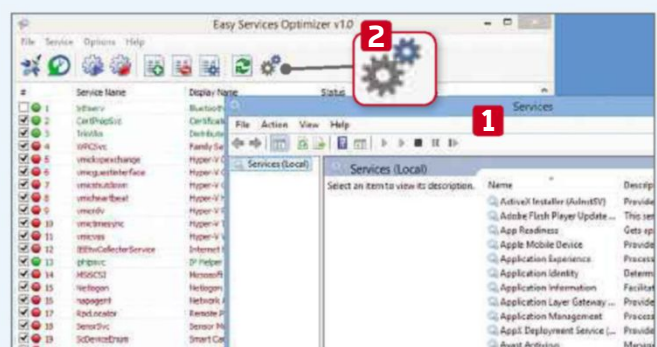
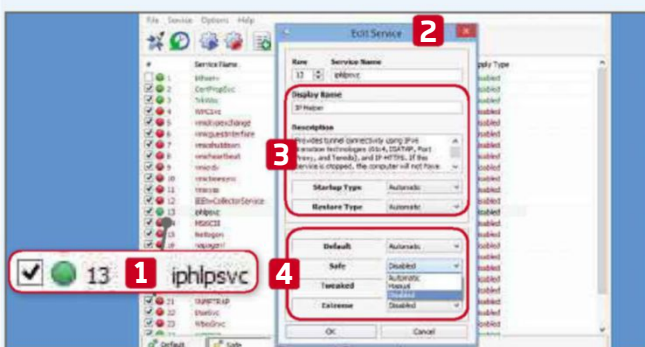
1 Once you've installed the software, you can try a range of different settings. If at any stage your PC stops working correctly, click the Default button, 1 then the 'Apply settings to marked services' button 2 to return the services to how they were when the program was first run.

2 The software automatically detects the version of Windows installed on your PC and presents a list of services you can tweak without major problems. 1 Click the Safe button 2 and a few of the settings will change. Click the 'Apply settings...' button, then see how your PC runs.



3 If everything's fine and you feel more adventurous, you can also try the Tweaked 1 and Extreme 2 settings. As long as you haven't edited the original list of services, you shouldn't run into too many problems. If you do, go back to Step 1 and reset.

4 If you want to go beyond the basics, check out Black Viper's Service Configurations for your particular version of Windows. Visit [bit.ly/viper371](http://bit.ly/viper371) and click your operating system. 1 Scroll down to the Service Default Registry Entries and look for any changed settings.



5 Armed with this information, you can go back to the software and control individual services. Double-click the service on the list 1 to open the Edit Service window. 2 A name, description and type are displayed. 3 Below, you can change which profiles it runs in. 4

6 If you decide you want to make changes to a service that Easy Services Optimizer doesn't include in its lists, you can add it yourself, but you do so at your own risk. View the full list of services using Windows' Services tool 1 by clicking the cogs button. 2

# Weekend Project

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



How to...

## Boost your PC productivity with a second screen

Get more screen space for your PC by adding more monitors. **Wayne Williams** shows you how to double your display



If you spend a lot of time in front of your one-screen PC, you may not appreciate just how much of a productivity boost you'll get by increasing the number of displays you work on. The beauty of a multi-monitor set-up is that you can devote one screen to whatever your main task happens to be, and use the second for other everyday tasks, such as email, chat, social networking, browsing the web and so on. Adding extra screens to your PC is very straightforward, because Windows handles everything automatically, but you will need to have a video card with multiple outputs.

### What you need

There are several ways to add a second screen to your set-up. You can connect an additional monitor, or use a laptop screen or tablet. If you opt for a second monitor, you can either buy a brand new one or repurpose an old display. The two screens don't need to be the same make, model or size, although the end result will

be more aesthetically pleasing if they are.

As we mentioned above, you'll need a video card for your PC with at least two outputs that match the inputs on your screens. If your existing video card doesn't have this, you could add a second graphics card, although the advantage of a new card is that it usually has a selection of ports. For example, the

Sapphire Radeon R9 280 graphics card has four outputs: 2 x DVI; 1 x DisplayPort; and 1 x HDMI. So if you have one screen with a DisplayPort input, and another screen with HDMI, you're all set.

You'll also need the relevant cables. If one of your monitors is old and has a VGA connection, you will probably need a DVI-to-analogue adapter, which you



*New graphics cards have a selection of ports to suit different screens*

can buy for a few quid from Amazon or eBay.

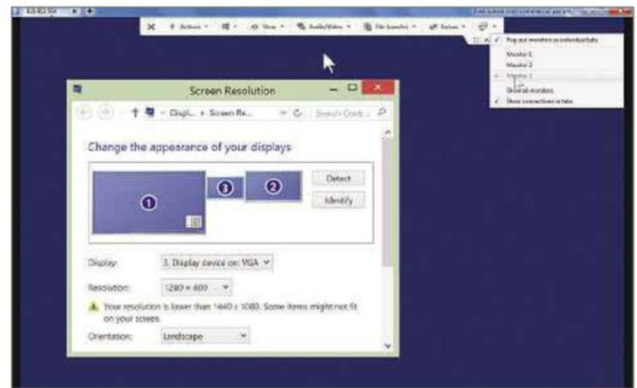
You'll also need to make sure you've got enough spare desk space for the second screen. Ideally, the two monitors should be at the same height, so you can glance between them without having to raise or lower your head.

Once you've got your second monitor, we'll show you how to set it up in our Mini Workshop below, then how to further configure your screens in the Mini Workshop on page 61.

### Use an iPad as a second screen

There are a couple of tools you can use to transform an Apple iPad into a small additional screen for displaying email or websites alongside your main monitor. Splashtop ([www.splashtop.com](http://www.splashtop.com)) is one of the cheaper options. Install the free Splashtop Streamer on your PC or Mac, then download the Splashtop Extended Wireless Display 2 app for your iPad ([bit.ly/splash371](http://bit.ly/splash371)). This costs £7.99. There is a free version available ([bit.ly/freesplash371](http://bit.ly/freesplash371)), but it limits you to five-minute sessions.

Alternatively, you might want to consider Air Display from Avatron Software. Buy the app on the iPad and then download and install the free Air Display Host on your computer. There are two versions of Air Display for the iPad. If you have a Mac, you'll want Air Display 3 (with USB and Wi-Fi) which costs £10.99 and is available from [bit.ly/aird371](http://bit.ly/aird371). Windows users will (for now at least) need Air Display 2 (£7.99, [bit.ly/aird2371](http://bit.ly/aird2371)).



*TeamViewer lets you remote control a second PC as if it was an extended screen*

### Use your laptop as a second screen

You can easily add a second screen to your laptop, by simply plugging the cable from a monitor into the display port of your device and turning it on. Windows should automatically identify the new screen and you can then configure everything as required.

However, using your laptop's screen as a spare display for another PC is a little trickier. One of the simplest ways is to use the TeamViewer ([www.teamviewer.com](http://www.teamviewer.com)) remote control/access software.

Install the program on your main PC and go to the Desktop. Right-click and choose Screen Resolution. Click the Detect button. You should see one or more blank displays (a ghost monitor) with the message 'Another display not detected'. Select a blank display and, under 'Multiple displays', select 'Try to connect anyway on: VGA'. Click Apply. With the ghost display selected, choose 'Extend desktop to this display' and



*The Splashtop app extends your PC display onto an iPad*



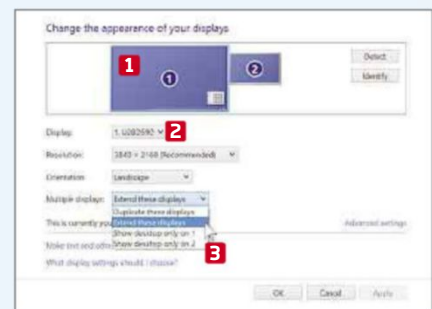
## MINI WORKSHOP | Add a second screen to your computer



**1** Turn off and unplug your PC. If necessary, install a new graphics card with the required ports. **1** Connect your monitors to the card using the relevant cables. If your card has a DisplayPort connection, **2** use this for your primary screen if possible, because it offers 4K resolutions (8K on the newest DisplayPort standard) at a refresh rate of 60Hz.



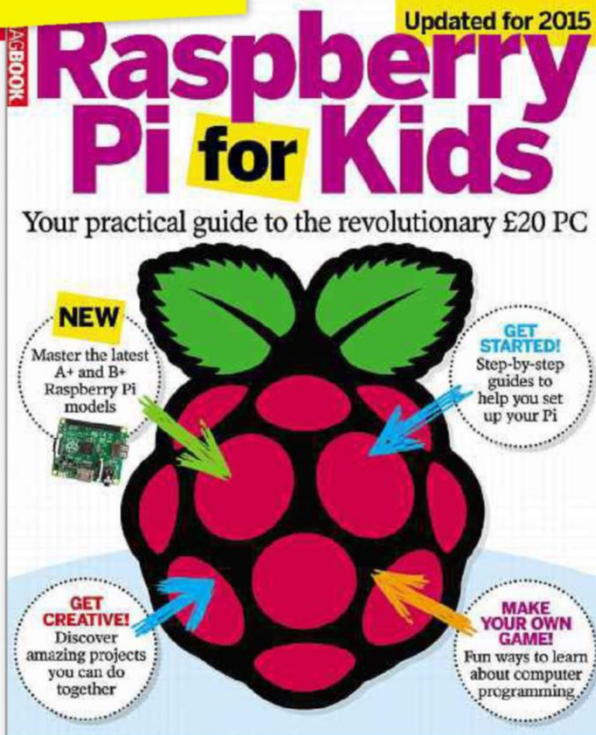
**2** Turn on your computer. Windows should automatically recognise both screens, but it may not set them to the correct resolution. To manage your screens, right-click your Desktop and select 'Screen resolution'. If the second monitor isn't shown, click Detect. **1** You can find out the order in which Windows has organised the screens by clicking Identify. **2**



**3** Select your primary display **1** and make sure it is set as the main one. **2** If both monitors are showing the same image, change the setting to 'Extend these displays'. **3** The process will vary slightly depending on which version of Windows you're running, but the end result will be the same.

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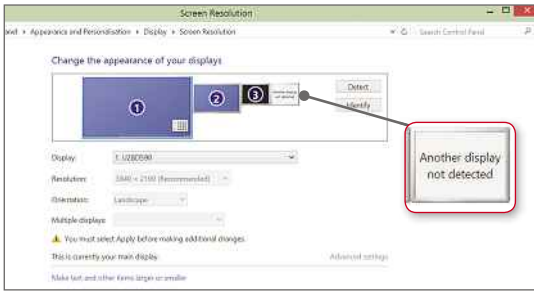
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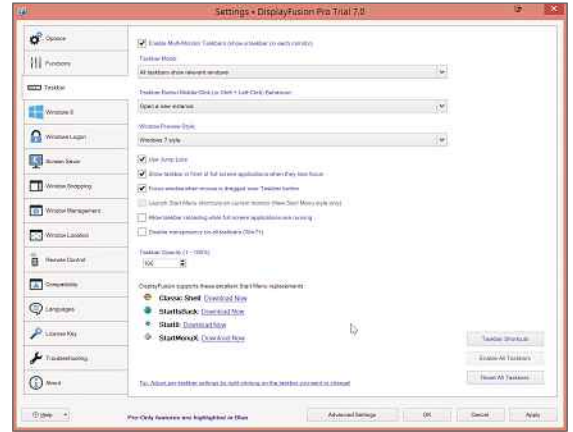


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### Tools for managing multiple screens

There are lots of programs you can use to get the most out of having a multiple screen set-up. DisplayFusion ([www.displayfusion.com](http://www.displayfusion.com)) offers precise monitor controls, useful Windows 8 tweaks,



If your screen shows up as a ghost, select the options to try and connect to it anyway

apply the change. You can reshuffle the display order by dragging and dropping. Change the ghost screen's resolution to match that of your laptop.

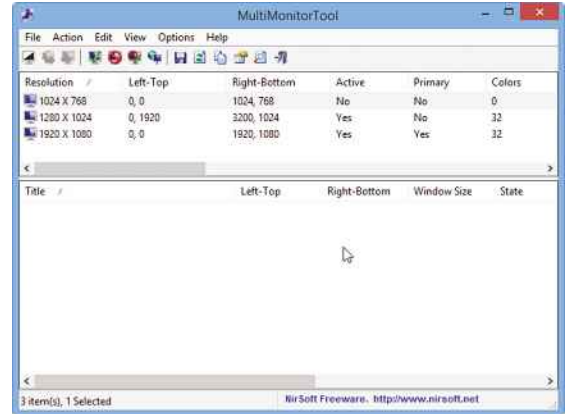
Launch TeamViewer on your main PC and make a note of Your ID and Password, then install and run the program on your laptop. In the Control Remote Computer section, enter the login details for your desktop PC and make the connection. The bar at the top will inform you that the remote computer has multiple monitors. Click the button to select the ghost one and return to your main PC. You can now drag items on to the ghost display, and they will appear on your laptop screen. Under the View menu (on your laptop) you'll see the option to show the remote cursor. You'll need to enable this so you can see what you're doing.

When you no longer need the additional display, just disconnect TeamViewer. You can remove the ghost display, too.

window snapping and the ability to add Desktop wallpaper from various sites. The program comes with a free 30-day trial of the Pro edition, which has lots more tools, including the ability to remotely control the software from your phone or tablet. The Pro Standard version costs \$25 (around £16).

Nirsoft's MultiMonitorTool ([bit.ly/multimon371](http://bit.ly/multimon371)) is a free, portable tool that lets you disable and enable screens; set the primary monitor; save and load the configuration of all monitors; and quickly move windows from one screen to the other. There's also a tiny preview window that shows you what's happening on a selected screen.

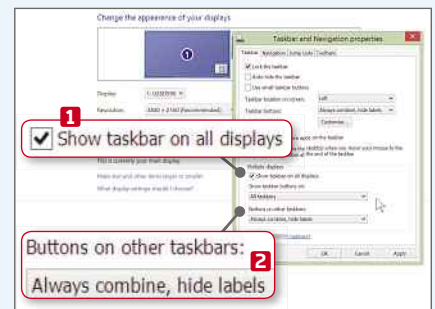
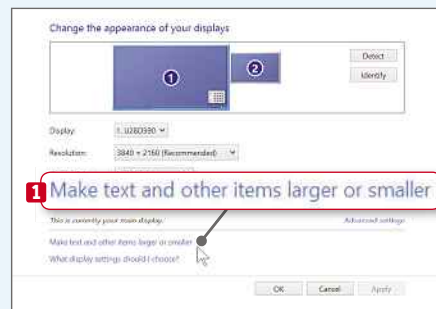
Dual Monitor Tools ([bit.ly/dualmon371](http://bit.ly/dualmon371)) is also worth a look. This offers a selection of useful functions, including



There are plenty of free tools available to provide more control over your extra screens

moving windows between monitors, setting applications to start on a particular screen, and managing Windows wallpaper (you can set different images for each screen or set a wide image to span your displays).

## MINI WORKSHOP | Further configure your screens



**1** Once Windows has recognised your two screens and they are both working properly, you can tweak the settings to suit how you want to use them. Click a screen's thumbnail to select it, and change the resolution. **1** Select the second screen **2** and do the same for that one.

**2** Choose the native (recommended) resolution to avoid problems. If this makes it hard to read what's on screen, click the option to 'Make text and other items larger or smaller' **1** and set a size. You can change the settings independently for each monitor, but it would be better to choose one scaling level for all displays if you can.

**3** It's likely that you'll only want the one taskbar showing on your primary monitor, but you can have taskbars on all screens if you wish. To do this, right-click the taskbar and select Properties. On the Taskbar tab, tick 'Show taskbar on all displays'. **1** You can manage which buttons are displayed on each taskbar. **2**

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- STEP 3** Choose whether to create an optional  account
- STEP 4** Enter your **Apple ID password** to confirm



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# Web User's Top Tips

Our experts show how to create and customise maps, and share them with others

## TOP TIPS FOR CREATING YOUR OWN MAPS

### Share any map

It's easy to share a map using Google or Bing. Go to [maps.google.co.uk](http://maps.google.co.uk) or [www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps) in your browser and use the mouse and on-screen controls to manoeuvre around and zoom in and out. Once your screen is displaying the Google map you want to share, click the cog icon in the bottom-right corner and select 'Share or embed map' to display the URL. You can now highlight the URL to select it, press Ctrl+C to copy it, then Ctrl+V to paste it into place.

Bing Maps works in a similar way and displays its Share button in the top-right corner. You'll also find buttons to share maps in other ways, such as via email, Facebook and Twitter.

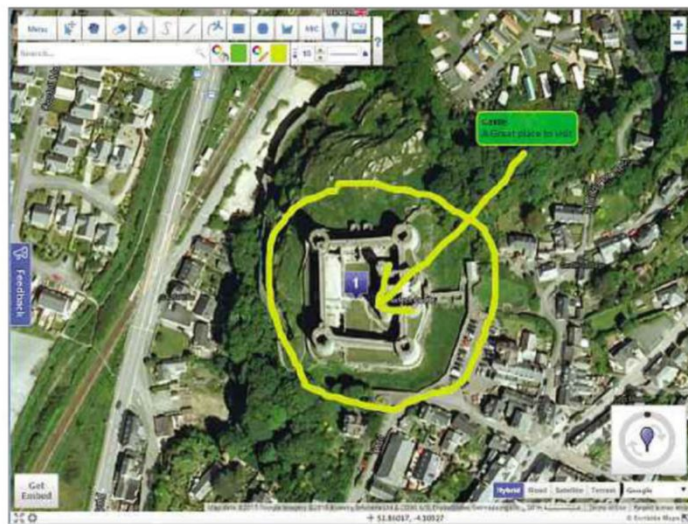


Create a URL for your Bing map view and share it on Facebook, Twitter or via email

### Draw on your maps

Scribble Maps lets you write on online maps. Go to [www.scribblemaps.com](http://www.scribblemaps.com) in your browser and click the Create Map button in the top-right corner. You can dismiss the VIP upgrade box because most of the service's features are available for free.

The same controls work as for most map services, so double-clicking zooms in, clicking and dragging moves the map, and so on. Locate the area you are interested in or enter a place name such as 'London, UK' into the search box.



Draw on maps and annotate them at the Scribble Maps website

rectangles). You can also add text and highlight areas on the map. Click the Menu button to save the image, share it on Facebook and so on. The site has a selection of helpful video tutorials that explain how everything works.

### Share runs, walks and rides

All but the most basic phones have built-in tools to track your location and these can be used to share the places you have visited, and any runs, walks and bike rides you've been

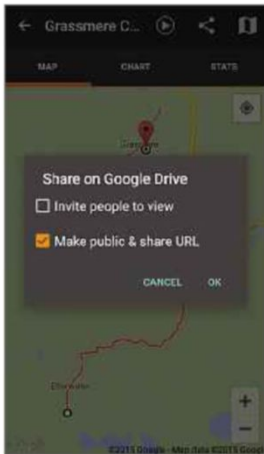
on. The countless running apps in the Android and iOS stores all include mapping tools, but you don't have to be a dedicated runner to use them because they are just as good for recording maps of walks and even scenic drives in your car. My Tracks on Android ([bit.ly/tracks371](http://bit.ly/tracks371)), for example, has a simple red button to

Select the map type from hybrid, road, satellite and terrain, listed in the bottom-right corner. There is also an option to select the map source, such as Google or Open Street Map.

The toolbar at the top contains the drawing tools. Options include freehand drawing, lines (with or without arrows) and shapes (such as circles and

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.





**Record your activities in My Tracks on your phone and share the map**

start recording and another to stop. Your route is saved to Google Drive. You can select any recorded activity, tap the Share button and invite people to view it. Alternatively, make it public and get a URL to share.

## Plan your route

The Health & Fitness category in the Apple App Store is packed with activity trackers for the iPhone and iPad, but most only show where you have been, not where you want to go.

Footpath Route Planner ([bit.ly/foot371](http://bit.ly/foot371)) lets you create a map to share with other people so you can meet up for a walk, bike ride or other activity. When you open the free Footpath app, it displays a map of your current location. Just pinch to zoom out, drag the map to the place you want to go to and zoom in. Use your finger to trace a route on the map which draws a blue line that automatically snaps to roads and footpaths, and marks the start.

Tap the Share button to post the map with the route to the usual places, such as Facebook and Twitter, and to send it via email. It's a great tool for planning activities and for saving maps you can share with friends.

## Share Ordnance Survey maps

Ordnance Survey provides some of the most detailed maps of the UK, used by generations of ramblers, riders and cyclists to navigate the British countryside. They are especially useful for off-road use, such as walking, hiking and mountain biking, because they show paths, bridleways, forest trails, places of interest and other local details.

You can easily access them online and share them with other people. Go to [www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps) in your browser and use the controls to pan and zoom to locate the area you want to view. A menu bar runs across the top of the map and clicking the first item lets you select different map styles. Select Ordnance Survey Map and the view changes to show the map for the area. You can then use the Print button for a hard copy to take with you or click the Share button to send to friends.

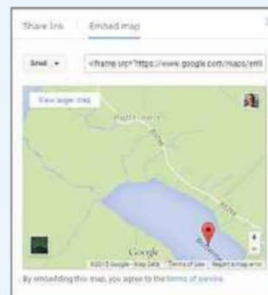
## TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

### Add maps to your website

If you have a blog or a website, you might want to embed a map that shows a place you've visited, or displays your business address next to your contact details. Google Maps makes this very easy.

Go to [maps.google.co.uk](http://maps.google.co.uk) and use the controls to zoom into the map you want to display. Click the gear icon in the bottom-right corner and select Share or embed map. Select the Embed tab and choose a map size - small, medium, large or custom. The



### Get the HTML code to embed a Google map in your blog or website

preview shows what it will look like on your website or blog. Click inside the code box and press Ctrl+A to highlight the whole thing, then Ctrl+C to copy it. Now switch to your web-page editor, find the place in the HTML code where you want the map to appear and press Ctrl+V to paste in the map code. Some blog editors also allow you to paste in HTML code.

Bing maps offers the same tool: select the map view at [www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps), click the Share button and click the box below 'Embed in a Web Page'. Press Ctrl+A to select the code, Ctrl+C to copy it, then switch to your web-page editor and press Ctrl+V to paste it in.

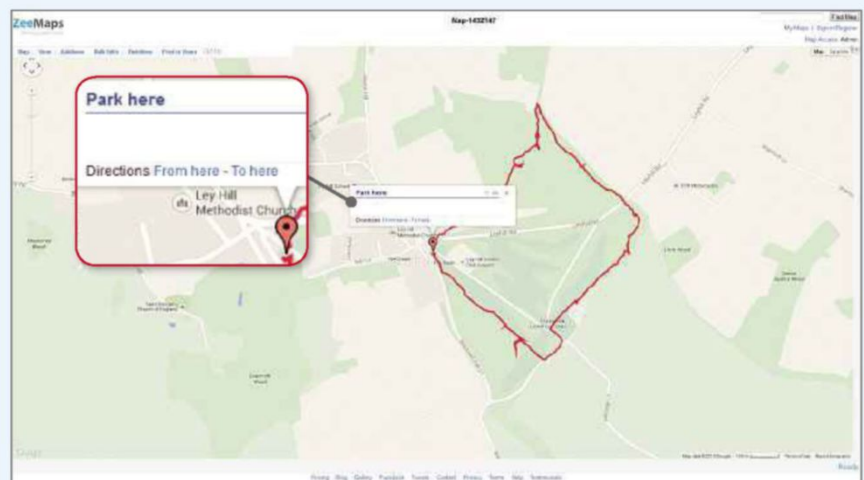
### Create a Zeemap

The ZeeMaps website ([zeemaps.com](http://zeemaps.com)) lets you create maps, customise them in various ways and then share or save them. It uses Google Maps to create the maps but has a selection of different options for what you can do with them. The site makes money by charging companies for professional features, but a free account lets you create and store five maps. You can even use it without signing up for an account.

Click 'Create a Free Map' on the homepage to bring up a form. It has spaces that let you password protect your maps with an administrator password, so only you can make changes, but you can ignore these password boxes and simply enter a location such as 'Manchester, UK' to bring up the map.

A menu at the top of the map provides tools for drawing shapes, including circle, rectangle, polygon and freehand. Add Marker lets you drop pins on the map to highlight places and you can enter a title and add information for a message to pop up when a pin is clicked. You can also add annotations.

When the map is finished, click the 'Print or Share' menu and choose Share Link/URL to get the link to the map. Copy this and pass it on to your friends for free. They can click the link, view the map, click the pins and so on. Some of the other features such as saving maps as an image or PDF file require payment, but there are plenty of other things you can do on the site for free.



**ZeeMaps lets you create maps from GPS paths or create your own features with markers and shapes**

# Ask the Expert

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



## MOBILE

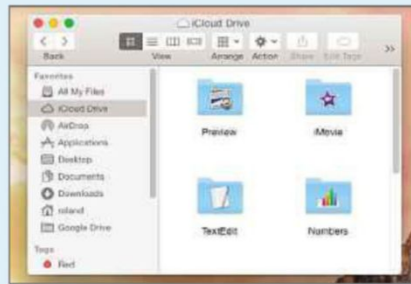
### Moving videos in iOS

**Q** I recently transferred my photos and videos from my iPhone to my Apple Mac. I then tried to move some of the videos back to my iPhone and iPad. However, all the videos appeared in Videos, whereas I want them back in Photos so I can edit them in iMovie. Is this possible?

**Hana Jasminka Smid, via email**

**A** iOS assumes that any videos transferred to the iPhone or iPad are ones you want to watch in the Videos app, such as movie downloads from the iTunes store. You would not normally transfer a video from the Mac (which has many great video editors, including iMovie) to a mobile device where features, space and processing power are limited.

However, assuming you have the latest versions of iOS and OS X on your iPhone, iPad and Mac, press Command+N on the Mac to open a new Finder window and select iCloud



*Files saved to an iCloud Drive can be accessed on a Mac, iPad, iPhone and PC*

Drive on the left. Folders for Apple apps, including iMovie (create it if it is not there), are on the right. Drag your movies to the iMovie folder, then on the iPad/iPhone, start iMovie, tap the plus sign to create a new project, select Movie, pick a template and tap Create. Tap the media icon to select a video, tap iCloud Drive, open the iMovie folder and select a movie. It will be downloaded and inserted into the project, and can now be edited.

Bear in mind that video files can be very large and uploading them to iCloud and then downloading them to the iPad or iPhone could take a long time on a slow internet connection.

still appears. You should also check any programs you've recently installed.

Autoruns ([bit.ly/runs371](http://bit.ly/runs371)) is a powerful tool that lists all your programs that start with Windows. However, it's quite complicated, so follow our guide from Issue 367 on how to use it to manage startup items ([bit.ly/webuser367](http://bit.ly/webuser367)).

On your second point, there are several possible causes for photos not filling the TV screen. If the TV is letterbox shaped (16:9 width-to-height ratio) and the photos are square (4:3), black bars will appear at the left and right edges. Your TV might be able to stretch them to fit, but this either distorts the images or crops the top and bottom.

You should also check whether the computer is set to the natural resolution of the screen. Find out the TV screen resolution, such as 1,920 x 1,080 pixels if it's a Full-HD model, and set this on the computer. With the TV plugged in and switched on, right-click the Desktop and select 'Screen resolution'. Select the TV screen, select the correct resolution in the list and click OK.

The most likely reason for this problem is a mismatch in the video driver settings. Right-click the Desktop to access the video driver tool or look for an icon in the notification area. AMD-based graphics have a scaling option and Nvidia has an overscan/underscan setting, but your Acer E15 should be equipped with Intel graphics which has a Scale Full Screen setting that lets you fill the TV screen with the picture from the computer.



*You can set a picture to fill a TV screen using scaling features in the video driver*

## GENERAL PC

### 'Net command' error messages

**Q** I have an Acer E15 running Windows 8.1. It has been fine for 12 months but recently, every time I turn it on, I get an onscreen message from User Account Control that asks if I wish to let 'net command' make changes to my computer. I've not been able to find out much about net command but I have tried selecting Yes and No, and even clicking the X in the red box. Nothing seems to make any difference to the way my laptop performs, and it's annoying to have to do this every time I turn it on. Is there any way to stop this?

I also like to view photos from my computer on my television using an HDMI cable. The results are very good but the picture on the TV doesn't fill the screen, even though the laptop's picture

is full screen. Is there anything I can adjust to increase the TV image without permanently affecting either my laptop or the TV?

**Richard Green, via email**

**A** The net command is part of Windows and is used to perform a wide range of system functions related to users, networking and printing. There are countless ways in which this message could be generated, but because the message only appears on startup, I think it's likely to be caused by a program that automatically loads with Windows that is using the net command to perform a function.

Right-click the taskbar and select Task Manager, then select the Startup tab to display a list of programs. Disable anything that is not essential, then restart your laptop to see if the message



## EMAIL

## Get YouTube notifications in Hotmail

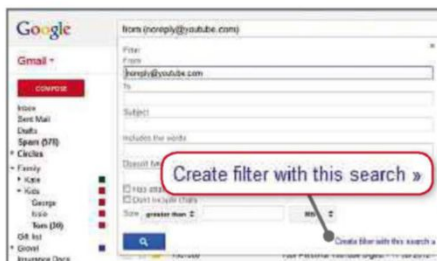
**Q** For about half a year, my email notifications from subscribed channels on YouTube have ended up in my Gmail account inbox rather than my Hotmail inbox. Is there a way to get the notifications to go to my Hotmail address again?

**Joao Rua, via email**

**A** YouTube is a Google service and you need to sign in with a Google account. This is a global account that works with all Google's tools, so if you change the email address to which notifications are sent, it will change them globally for every notification from every Google service.

To do this, click the account picture in the top-right corner of the YouTube homepage and click the gear icon to go to settings. Select Notifications on the left and look toward the bottom of the page for the address to which notifications are sent. Click the 'Google+ notification settings' link and find your email address in the 'Notification delivery' section. If your Hotmail address isn't there, click 'Add email address' and enter it. You can then select an email address to which all notifications will be sent.

If you don't want to have all your Google notifications rerouted, and only want to bounce your YouTube emails from your Gmail address, you could set up a filter. Log into Gmail and open one of the YouTube emails. Click the More button and choose 'Filter messages like these'. The From filter should already be filled in. Click the 'Create filter with this search' link, tick the box next to 'Forward it to' and click the 'add forwarding address' link, if your Hotmail address isn't already listed. Select it and click 'Create filter'.



**Bounce emails from Gmail to another address by setting up a filter**

## MOBILE

## Buying a phone from abroad

**Q** Microsoft's new Lumia 640 XL has caught my eye because it seems to

provide quite a lot in a SIM-free deal, including a one-year subscription to Office 365. I'm impressed with the 5.7in screen, even if the number of pixels per inch sounds a little low.

There seem to be several variants of the 640 XL but I'm particularly taken with the Dual SIM LTE model. This appears to have been released in India, but I understand that Microsoft will not be releasing it in the UK. If I buy one abroad, will it work in the UK?

**Kay Green, via email**

**A** It's not unusual for phone manufacturers to release devices, services and software updates in one region before another. This is probably the case here, because the phone appears to have become available in the UK from several suppliers. A regular search for the best deal should provide you with the information you need.

Your email raises an interesting question, though, which is whether a



**Microsoft's Lumia phones run Windows OS and can be used in most countries**

phone bought in one part of the world will work in another. There are two things you need to consider and the first is that the phone must be SIM-free and unlocked, since it obviously won't work if it is locked to a local phone company. The second is that the phone must use the same frequency band as the country you want to use it in. The frequencies supported, such as GSM 900/1800, can be found in the phone's specifications. There are several websites that list the phone frequencies used in various parts of the world, such as WorldTimeZone ([bit.ly/wtz371](http://bit.ly/wtz371)) and GSMarena ([bit.ly/gsma371](http://bit.ly/gsma371)).

## GENERAL PC

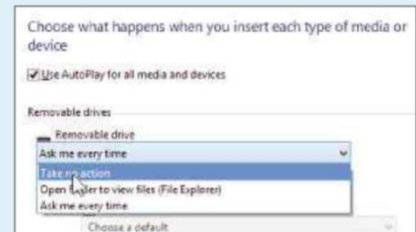
## External hard drive crashes Explorer

**Q** My grandad recently gave me a two-year-old Seagate drive. I believe it is corrupted because it makes Windows Explorer crash whenever it's plugged in. I emailed Seagate and they suggested I use their repair tool, but it didn't work. The drive is no longer under warranty, and I have explored every option, but nothing has worked. I could take it to a computer shop and pay to get it fixed, but I got it for free, so I don't want to spend a load of money on it.

**Keanan O'Dowd, via email**

**A** Windows can be configured to perform an action when a removable drive is plugged in, such as searching for photos, videos, music and so on. Disabling this feature might stop Explorer from crashing.

Go to the Control Panel and open AutoPlay. In the 'Removable drives' section, click the drop-down list and select 'Take no action'. Click Save,



**Choose an action to perform when a removable drive is plugged into the PC**

then restart Windows and plug in the drive. If it still crashes Explorer every time it is attached, try plugging it in when the computer is switched off, then switch on and let it boot up. If you can get to the Desktop, you might then be able to right-click the drive in Explorer and select the option to format it.

You're right to be wary of spending a lot of money on this drive if you cannot get it working. Brand new 500GB USB drives are available for £35. A bare drive is slightly cheaper, so if you can open the case of the old unit, swapping out the faulty drive and inserting a new one should be reasonably straightforward.



This fortnight Roland has been getting back to his roots and learning to code again using free resources on the web

# Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. To get help or offer it to others, visit [forum.webuser.co.uk](http://forum.webuser.co.uk)



## TOP TIP

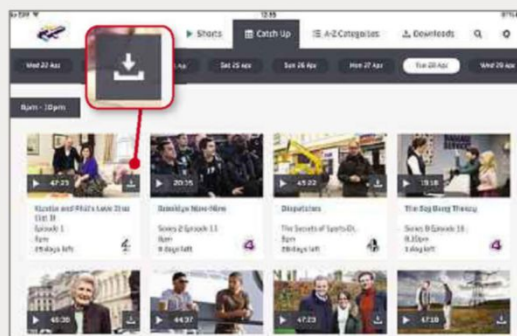
VIDEO

£25  
winner

### Skip All 4 adverts on your tablet

In the last issue of *Web User* ([bit.ly/webusermag370](http://bit.ly/webusermag370)), Mark Taylor wrote offering a great tip about how to block adverts in All 4. I have since downloaded Adblock Plus for Chrome and disabling it then re-enabling works perfectly when I watch All 4 on my PC. If, however, you're using the All 4 app on a tablet, this useful tip won't work and you'll be forced to endure many minutes of infuriating adverts.

Fortunately, I've discovered a handy way of reducing the number of adverts you need to watch, even if it's not possible to avoid them altogether. To do this, simply download the programmes you want to watch before viewing them. You'll have to wait a little while before you can start the programme but the interruptions



Programmes that can be stored offline display a download icon

are much shorter.

I suspect that reducing the number of ads in the downloaded programmes is a conscious decision by the app's developers, since the files would otherwise take up too much space on your device and would take longer to download.

Matthew Cox, via email

button and select it. It's a great addition that's made Keep useful again.

Tom Hamilton, via email

## SOFTWARE

### Use multiple clipboards in Office and beyond

The Windows clipboard is a useful but limited feature. You can select something, such as text or an image, in almost any program and press Ctrl+C to copy it. Opening another program, document or photo and pressing Ctrl+V pastes it in. The problem is that only one item can be on the clipboard and the next thing you copy replaces the last item. But I have a solution.

A lot of people use Microsoft Word as their word processor, but how many know it has multiple clipboards? I am sure I saw somewhere that it has 24. In Word, select the Home tab and you'll see the clipboard at the left side of the ribbon. At the bottom of that section of the ribbon is the Word Clipboard and just to the right of it is a tiny button. Click it to display a Clipboard panel on the left. As you select text in Word and press Ctrl+C to copy it, that content is added to the list in the Clipboard panel. Click any item in the list to paste it into the document.

This only works in Word, but the free tool Save.me ([bit.ly/save371](http://bit.ly/save371)) adds multiple clipboards to every program. Install it to save everything you copy to the clipboard for as long as you want, even after switching off the computer. I find it very useful.

Mike Johnston, via email

## WINDOWS 8

### Sync selected items

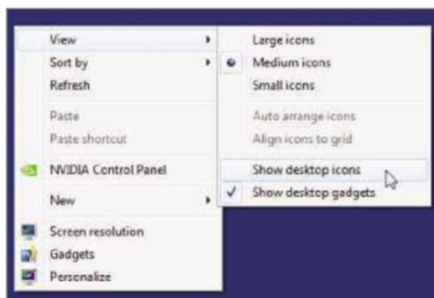
If you have more than one computer with Windows 8 onwards, your settings and other items can be synced between the two PCs. I had forgotten about this and installed Windows 10 on a spare PC, which immediately synced my wallpaper,

## GENERAL PC

### Hide your Desktop icons

I recently discovered how easy it is to hide all the icons on your Desktop. Simply right-click the Desktop, select View, untick 'Show desktop icons' and they all disappear.

By doing this, I can enjoy my wallpaper without the clutter of all the files I've saved to my Desktop, which can just as



Hide your Desktop icons by right-clicking the Desktop and selecting the View menu

easily be located using Windows Explorer.

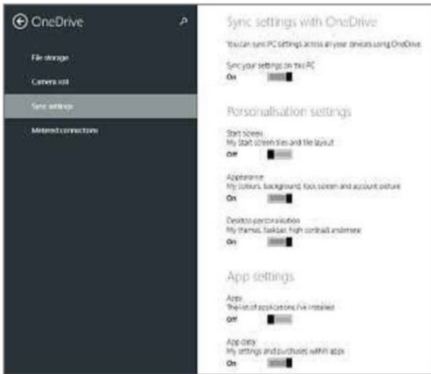
Adam Jenkins, via email

## WEB

### Try Google Keep's new labelling tools

When I discovered Google Keep ([bit.ly/keep371](http://bit.ly/keep371)) in the Chrome Web Store, I thought it was great and used it to store notes as I was browsing the web and for various projects. After a while, I had so many notes that Google Keep became a long, disorganised list that made it hard to find anything, so I stopped using it.

Now Google has added labels, which work in a similar way to the labels used for email messages in Gmail. You can create a label and attach it to a Keep note using the three-dots menu in the Note toolbar. If you want to view your labelled notes, such as all the notes for a particular project, you just click the menu



Select the items you want to sync between two or more Windows 8+ PCs

Start screen and everything else. Some people might find this useful, but it was not what I wanted. It is worth remembering that you can turn this feature off or select only the items you want to sync.

To do this, go to the Charms bar on the right and click Settings, 'Change PC settings', OneDrive, Sync Settings. There is an on/off master switch at the top. When it is on, you can use the individual switches for Start screen, Appearance, Apps and so on, to choose which items you want to carry across to your other Windows 8+ computers.

Dane Hardie, via email

**HARDWARE**

**How to fix a tablet that won't charge**

If you have an old tablet that no longer charges, it's worth attempting to fix it yourself. In my case, I had a Tesco Hudl and a Nexus 7 (both first-generation models) with defective charging ports. I had a look on YouTube and saw that the repairs were remarkably simple to carry out, so I ordered the parts from eBay. Once they'd arrived, I managed to fix both tablets in under 10 minutes with nothing more than a plastic prying tool and a screwdriver. The tutorial for fixing the Nexus 7 is at [bit.ly/nexus371](http://bit.ly/nexus371), and the one for the Hudl is at [bit.ly/hudl371](http://bit.ly/hudl371).

ezyduzzit, Web User Forums



YouTube has many helpful guides showing you how to repair Android tablets

**BROWSERS**

**Customise Chrome's New Tab page**

Infinity New Tab ([infinitynewtab.com](http://infinitynewtab.com)) is a great alternative to Chrome's New Tab page. Its simple, attractive interface offers one-click access to your bookmarks, web history, Google apps and browser extensions. You can also add shortcut buttons for all your favourite sites.

The extension can be set to update your wallpaper daily with images from Infinity and Bing, or you can use an image from your PC. I'm not sure if they are as good as Infinity, but there are a couple of Firefox add-ons that have some functions in common with the Chrome extension, such as Speed Dial [FVD] ([bit.ly/speed371](http://bit.ly/speed371)) and Speed Dial ([bit.ly/speeddial371](http://bit.ly/speeddial371)). Naturally, these add-ons work in Pale Moon as well as in Firefox.

Spiraleye and Madeline, Web User Forums



Infinity New Tab contains a number of useful shortcuts

**SOCIAL NETWORKING**

**Video call your friends using Facebook Messenger**

Lots of people use Skype or Facetime to call friends and family while abroad. If you're one of those people and you also use Facebook, then you might be interested to know that it's now possible to make video calls using the company's Messenger app over both Wi-Fi and cellular internet connections. Since Facetime isn't compatible with Android and lots of people still don't use Skype, this makes it easier than ever to video call your friends, without having to ask them to sign up to a new service. To read more about it at Facebook, visit [bit.ly/messenger371](http://bit.ly/messenger371).

kingfisher171, Web User Forums

**iOS**

**Extract stills from time-lapse videos**

If you have an iPad and have recently updated to iOS 8.3, you might have noticed that Apple

has introduced a Time-Lapse feature to the Camera app. The downside is that this increases the chance of shooting video when you mean to be taking photos. If you do this by accident, you can use an app called Taplet ([bit.ly/taplet371](http://bit.ly/taplet371)) to view the videos frame by frame and extract the stills you want.

kingfisher171, Web User Forums

**WINDOWS 8**

**Track data usage with Windows**

Did you know that Windows 8 lets you track your wireless data usage? If you've not upgraded to Windows 8.1, you can do this by clicking the Network icon in the taskbar before right-clicking the connection of your choice and selecting 'Show estimated data usage'.

If you have upgraded to Windows 8.1, try opening Settings and 'Change PC settings' from the Charms bar, and select Network then Connections. From here, select the appropriate network and turn "Show my estimated data use in the Network list" to On. I find this option really handy when I'm using a dongle and need to know how much data I've used.

NikoBold, Web User Forums



Turn on tracking to see how much data your wireless networks are using

**GENERAL PC**

**Highlight important folders in Windows Explorer**

Do you want to be able to find important folders at a glance in Windows Explorer or your applications? The secret is to highlight them using a different icon instead of the usual picture of a beige folder. To do this, right-click the folder in Windows Explorer, select Properties and then the Customize tab. Click on 'Change Icon' and make your choice. You can even use your own icon by clicking Browse. Another option is to use the free version of Folder Marker, which works very well ([bit.ly/folder371](http://bit.ly/folder371)).

count zero and Madeline, Web User Forums



# Readers' Helpdesk

Our pick of the best solutions posted on our reader forums. Visit [forum.webuser.co.uk](http://forum.webuser.co.uk) – it's friendly and free!

## ANDROID

### Can I delete apps from my phone?

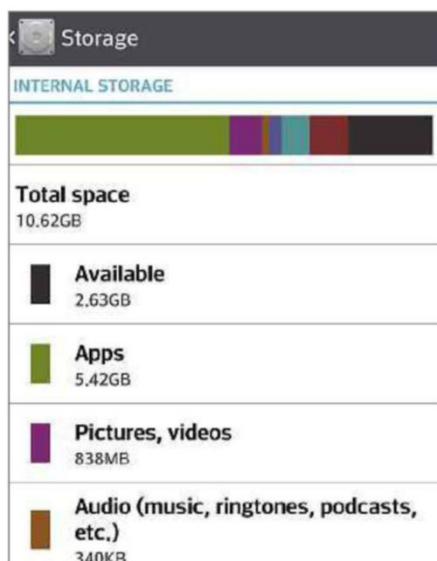
**Q** My Samsung phone has lots of apps I don't use and I imagine they are taking up lots of space. Can I delete any that I don't need?

**Robinsong, Web User Forums**

**A** You only have to worry about space if you're running short of it, so I'd recommend opening the Storage section from Settings to see how much you have left. Essentially, there are three types of software on your device: Android system apps, Samsung 'skin' apps and, of course, those apps you've installed yourself.

If you have plenty of space and only use a few apps, I'd leave the rest alone, because they aren't doing any harm. If you're short of space, go to Settings and Apps to see a list of all the apps on your device. To remove an app you installed yourself, tap it and select Uninstall. But don't try to remove any apps you didn't install because it could cause more harm than good.

If you're desperate for more space, think about deleting media files such as



The Storage section of the Settings menu shows how much space you have left

## ANDROID

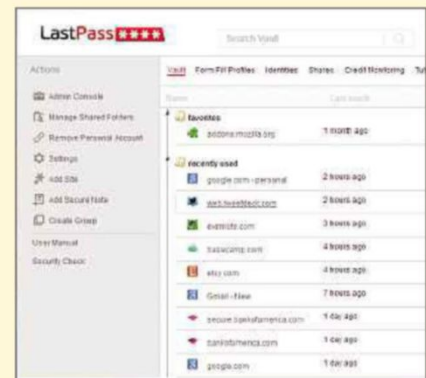
### What's the best password manager for mobile devices?

**Q** Can anyone recommend a good password manager for an Android device?

**d307, Web User Forums**

**A** I use LastPass ([lastpass.com](http://lastpass.com)) on all my devices. If you want to use it on your Android (or other) mobile device, you will need to sign up for the Premium service, but at only \$12 per year (approx £10), I think it's well worth it. In my opinion, its security features and ease of use are unparalleled.

**TheTechGuy, Web User Forums**



LastPass Premium securely syncs passwords across all your devices

music or photos, but first make sure you have a back-up copy.

**Izzit, Web User Forums**

## GENERAL PC

### Why does Windows Update keep failing?

**Q** I keep getting the following message when I click Windows Update in the Start menu: "Windows Update cannot currently check for updates, because the service is not running. You may need to restart your computer". I have restarted the computer at least three times but nothing changes. Any ideas why this is happening?

**suttyjosie, Web User Forums**

**A** Click Start, type `services.msc` into the search box and press Enter. Check that the Windows Update service is set to Automatic and Started. If that doesn't work, clear the SoftwareDistribution folder. To do this, run a command prompt as an admin (click Start, type `cmd` into the search box, right-click the `cmd.exe` link and select 'Run as administrator'). At the command prompt, type each of the following commands, pressing Enter after each one:

```
net stop wuau servicing
ren C:\Windows\SoftwareDistribution
SoftwareDistribution.old
```

```
net start wuau servicing
exit
```

Now select 'Check for Windows Updates'. With a new SoftwareDistribution folder, the update history will be cleared and should work again.

**Stewart40 and Cantrel, Web User Forums**

## EMAIL

### How do I stop my email account syncing in Outlook?

**Q** I have several email accounts in Outlook 2007, all of which automatically download their respective emails when I click Send/Receive. Can I put one account on hold for a while, so that when I click Send/Receive, it'll be overlooked? Is this possible?

**Castman, Web User Forums**

**A** Yes, it is possible. Press `Ctrl+Alt+S` to open the Send/Receive Groups window in Outlook and double-click All Accounts. From here, select the account you don't want synced and untick 'Include the selected account in this group' before clicking OK and Close. You can also access this window by clicking Tools, Send/Receive, Send/Receive Settings, then Define Send/Receive Groups.

**Moonshine, Web User Forums**

## Star Email

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### The most effective porn blockers are parents

**B**arry's column in Issue 370 ('Knock the government's blocks off') criticises the ineffective measures used by the British government to protect children from internet porn. But surely when it comes to keeping kids safe from the darker side of the web, the buck ultimately stops with their parents?

Leaving younger family members to browse the web completely unsupervised is asking for trouble, because it's now so easy to access adult content. I fully realise that most parents simply don't have the time or patience to constantly watch the screen over their children's shoulders, but there are other measures they can try aside from using a blocker to restrict access to specific categories of website.



For example, you can keep a close eye on your kids' browsing history to see where they've been online; discuss with them the best (safe) sites they should visit for help with their homework, playing games and other activities, and which ones they should avoid; and, above, all explain why they shouldn't be viewing certain content, rather than just

telling them not to, which will only pique their curiosity.

I realise this might sound like little more than basic common sense but, in my experience, common sense is the most valuable tool for encouraging children to explore the web without putting them at risk of harmful and unsuitable content. Imposing blanket blocks and age-verification on them will only make porn seem more exciting, and they'll soon find a

way to circumvent the restrictions.

Today's kids have grown up with the web at their disposal, so they probably know a lot more than most adults, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try steering them in the right direction to stay away from sites that may upset or them or put them in danger.

*Louise Franklin, via email*

### How dare Java tell me to upgrade my PC!

I have various computers running different operating systems including Ubuntu, Zorin, Windows XP, Windows 7 and Windows 10 Technical Preview. This week, Java informed me that I needed to update to the latest version, so I downloaded the relevant files and proceeded to install them on my Windows XP machine.

I'm used to software requesting to change my browser homepage and my search engine to Ask, but I was surprised to be told by Java that my operating system is out of date and needs updating. Sorry, but if I choose to run an old operating system, I don't need software to tell me to upgrade. Just tell me that it won't work with my system.

People complain about the "nanny state", but nowadays even our computers try to think for us!

*Steve Ward Ramsgate*



### There's life in old Internet Explorer yet

After much frustration with the formerly good Firefox, I finally decided to stop putting up with the constant irritations brought about by the ill-conceived and far-too-hasty-to-update program, and change my browser.

But what should I change to? The replacement must 'just work', be reasonably speedy and accommodate my favourite add-ons, RoboForm and Xmarks, in much the same way Firefox did.

Chrome worked with the add-ons, but displayed them in a way that wasn't as convenient (to my mind) as Firefox. Opera did not work at all with Xmarks, which surprised me. So, reluctantly, I tried Internet Explorer, which was already lurking on my machine but had hardly been touched for years. To my surprise, it is now a pleasure to use the browser with Bing, and it 'just worked' flawlessly.

Additionally, I have had no screen



freezes, the Flash Player works fine and, dare I say it, Internet Explorer seems faster than other browsers. I am now a happy chappie.

*Ian Waters, via email*

### Paying the price for a faulty broadband socket

I moved into my new ground-floor flat last September and got BT Infinity, since the flat was fitted with BT sockets throughout. They sent the router, I installed it and all was fine.

After Christmas, I noticed the speed was definitely slower so I did a test and found that my 38Mbps connection was now down to 4Mbps. I logged a call with BT's technical support team and their investigation revealed that it was possibly a fault. However, if I wanted an engineer called out, and it was found to be my fault, then I would have to pay a Home Improvement package upgrade of £129.99. I agreed because BT's own investigation showed the detected speed from the server was 4Mbps, which to me suggested the problem was in the line.

The BT engineer arrived and declared

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that the main socket inside the flat was the wrong kind so he fitted a SSFP unit, which from my investigation is designed to reduce noise and therefore improve performance. The engineer stated that BT "does this all the time and they should install the SSFP unit by default".

I received a bill from BT for £129.99 and when I contacted the company's billing department, I was told that because the flat had the wrong main



socket when I bought it, the problem was mine and not BT's. Surely,

common sense suggests that every new installation should have the SSFP fitted.

I personally don't think BT does this intentionally but it must be making a lot of money through engineer fees. The helpline operative at BT must have known that this was a likely fault, hence the warning about the charge, and the

person I spoke to certainly had the liability jargon down to tee when he said "BT cannot be held responsible for the installation". I would like to know if I still have redress with BT, because I feel as if I've been ripped off.

*Paul Hildreth, via email*

### Why it makes sense to use Google AdSense

When my husband Keith and I set up our own free fiction-based e-magazine last year, we decided to use Google's AdSense ([www.google.com/adsense](http://www.google.com/adsense)) to cover the cost of our domain name and web hosting by placing adverts on our website. We declined any ads featuring dating and the service lets you refuse other types of ad, such as gambling.

By using AdSense, we hoped that we could eventually claw back the money we'd paid for our website. We launched our site in July 2014 and our e-magazine in October and now, in April 2015, we are pleased to report that we are well on the



way to covering the complete cost of our website!

However, you still need to drive traffic to your site, so be prepared to carry out lots of promotion on social media. It's also a good idea to have a web counter, so you can see exactly how many unique visitors you receive each day. We've installed Admob on the Android app version of our free e-magazine, which does exactly the same thing as AdSense, but is for mobile phones and tablets.

So why not consider using the extra space on your site or app to bring in a small extra income? It really works! Our e-magazine is [www.kishboo.co.uk](http://www.kishboo.co.uk), which is free online and free as an Android app. It costs 99p to read on Kindle.

*Sharon Boothroyd, via email*

## What you say...

### WILL YOU USE AMAZON LESS BECAUSE YOU NOW NEED TO SPEND £20 TO GET FREE DELIVERY, UNLESS YOU'RE BUYING BOOKS?

Perhaps. It will certainly cause me to consider combining purchases to get over the £20 limit, so I will buy less frequently.

*Martin Brindley @martinbrindley*

Not put me off, but made me more reluctant to purchase small items.

*MD @MartinD56*

In a word - yup! I'll probably use eBay more.

*Kisz @Kiszcat*

I'm not angry, but I do think they're shooting themselves in the foot. I

would certainly think twice and look elsewhere before paying for postage. There are so many alternatives on eBay with 'free' postage.

*Gill Hodson*

I'm moving to eBay. I'll only use Amazon to collate a wish list from now on. Bye Amazon store.

*Alan McClean*

I'm so mad about it that I've closed my seller account. I shall not be using Amazon anymore. They are taking the mickey and that's being nice.

*Shawn Adams*

### DO YOU AGREE WITH FACEBOOK'S DECISION TO SHOW MORE COMMENTS FROM YOUR FRIENDS THAN COMPANIES IN YOUR NEWS FEED ([bit.ly/fb371](http://bit.ly/fb371))?

I just want things to show in chronological order of being posted - that is Most Recent. I never ever use Top Stories. Why should someone else decide what should be *my* top story?

*Andy Parsons*

I agree with Andy. Facebook still causes me problems because it suddenly shows me stories from 12 hours ago that I have long since read.

*Chris Armstrong*

I also agree. I find it so annoying that 24 hours after a match, I scroll down and come across an official Manchester United post they used as a pre-match build up.

*Stuart A Hordern*

Comments from friends was the point of it in the first place, otherwise it would be called AdBook.

*Ian Phipps*

### DO YOU APPROVE OF SELFIE STICKS BEING BANNED FROM THE WIMBLEDON TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP?

I approve of anywhere that bans the selfie stick. Now if we could only get selfies banned, too!

*Rich Grove @Rich\_Grove*

The world should ban selfie sticks. If someone comes near me with one I'm





## Look out for free storage offers

With reference to your article in Issue 367 ([bit.ly/webuser367](http://bit.ly/webuser367)) entitled 'Never run out of storage', you said that the maximum amount of free storage you can get for Dropbox is 23GB. However, when I bought my Samsung Galaxy S4 about 18 months ago, it came with 50GB of free storage. My point being that it's always worth looking out for such offers.



*Viv M, via email*

## Tablets aren't as exciting as they used to be

In your Webometer column in Issue 370, you report that Google has stopped selling Nexus 7 tablets. This is a real shame, in my opinion, because the Nexus 7



was one of the devices that first persuaded people to buy a tablet, and made them recognise that it was much more than just a big phone.

I still have a Nexus 7 and, although I switched to a Tesco Hudl when the Lollipop update messed it up, I've since managed to get it running properly again and it's still a great device. Okay, it may be three years old, but aside from the Hudl, I haven't seen many other new tablets that measure up to the Nexus 7. Even Google itself hasn't really replaced it, but has jumped to the Nexus 9, which costs a lot more and is slightly too big to be pocket-sized.

Tablets are great, but there doesn't seem to be as much choice as there was a few years ago, and the new devices lack the excitement factor of the Nexus 7. Hopefully,

Google has got some more tricks up its sleeve – a Nexus 8, perhaps? – to inject some life back into the market and give us a decent alternative to the overpriced iPad.

*Bradley Black, via email*

## Live-streaming apps are new ways to spy on us

It's bad enough that virtually everywhere you go in the UK, you're watched by



CCTV and satellites, but now there are live-streaming apps (Instant Expert, Issue 370) that let anyone with a mobile phone spy on what you're

doing and instantly broadcast it around the world. I can see so many ways for these Meerkat and Periscope apps to be abused by people invading your privacy to capture your conversations and activities, and there is no way to regulate them. Even the names and logos seem designed to attract young users, who won't think twice about using them to bootleg films live from the cinema or beam the aftermath of car accidents to their friends. If you ask me, these tools are potentially dangerous and will steal the small amount of personal space that we still have left.

*Jack Gardner, via email*

gonna shove it where the sun don't shine!

*Joanne Evans*

Just use a mini tripod, not a stupid selfie stick. They are rubbish and make you look daft.

*Andrew Clennell*

Ah, you pack of moaning gits. There's nothing wrong with a selfie stick. It's better than some idiot taking photos using an iPad, blocking everybody's view. Find something else to moan about.

*David McDonald*

## WHICH GAMES SHOULD BE INDUCTED INTO THE NEW WORLD VIDEO HALL OF FAME ([bit.ly/fame371](http://bit.ly/fame371))?

Doom. It was the first point-of-view game I played on the Sega 32X. It was also totally different to anything else before it.

*Paul @abertawejack*

Has to be Pac-Man, but also Space Invaders and Tetris. Showing my age now!

*Roger Whitcomb @milairpix*

Bubble Bobble and Dig Dug. It was the 'just one more go' appeal – until you realised you were four hours late for school.

*Ady Colclough @Adycolclough*

## DOES MICROSOFT'S NEW 'HOW OLD DO I LOOK?' ([how-old.net](http://how-old.net)) WEBSITE GUESS YOUR AGE CORRECTLY?

It knocks 11 years off me to make me 33, so I'm happy with that.

*Louise Barrett*

I don't like it. It added 31 years onto me.

*John Wells*

I love it, it knocked 19 years off me. Lol!

*Rachel Zurita*

I've never been so offended. I'm still the right side of 56 years old, thank you Microsoft.

*Brian Blount*

It says "face not detected" when I try to use it.

*Matt McCallion*

## Three should benefit from buying O2

I hope that since Three has bought O2, I will start getting better service from the network. I currently use Tesco Mobile for my phone, which uses O2 transmitters and is very good – I do not have any problems or have periods of being cut off. However, I use Three for my internet dongle in Birmingham and Wales and I'm always being cut off by its transmitters going down. When I phone Three, it always says that my computer is to blame, but I know in some cases that's not true because it's a problem with the transmitter. Sometimes you lose the internet for the best part of the day – up to six hours. They don't give you any warning, it just goes off.



*Robert Cull, Birmingham*

# ! Page 404



Barry Collins reveals the truth about smart TVs and why they're a waste of money

## So-called smart TVs make fools of us all

**S**mart television. It's a phrase as incongruous as "nutritious Big Mac" or "charismatic Piers Morgan". There's nothing smart about a television, no matter what the likes of Samsung, Philips or LG tell you. At least, not for long.

These days it's actually pretty tough to buy a big, living-room flat screen that doesn't claim to be smarter than Stephen Hawking. They come with apps, browsers, voice recognition and more ports than an off licence in the Algarve. Unbox the telly, and the first thing it demands is your Wi-Fi password and three hours to download the latest updates. You didn't want to watch *Coronation Street* now, did you?

Once you've got the latest firmware, it's all gravy for the first year or so. You can watch BBC iPlayer without reaching for the laptop, and watch YouTube videos of cats falling off skateboards on the big screen. Then, one day, things start to fall apart. The manufacturer gets bored of your television - it's made another 234 models since that one landed on the shelves at John Lewis, so it stops updating the software and its apps stop working.

Last month, Google pulled the plug on an "old" API (technical term for a software protocol) that was used to power the YouTube apps on untold millions of smart televisions sold before 2013. Just killed it dead. If you

now go to the YouTube app on one of those sets, all you'll see is the internet equivalent of the Test Card. There's almost no chance of your manufacturer upgrading a three-, four- or five-year-old telly to the latest version of YouTube, not least because the TV's probably not powerful enough to cope with it. In the space of a couple of years, your state-of-the-art smart TV has become dumber than taking a bath with your toaster.

Paying extra for smart features on a television is like setting fire to your wallet. It's far wiser to get the "smart" features for your TV from plug-in dongles or set-top boxes. The recently launched Amazon Fire TV Stick gives you iPlayer, Netflix, YouTube, and a basic set of games for only £35 on a tiny dongle that you probably won't even see sticking out of your TV. Google's £30

Chromecast does likewise, and you can stream content to it from your Android or iOS phone or tablet. Yes, these devices will also stop being updated eventually and shuffle towards obsolescence, but they only cost a few quid and when something better comes

along, you can replace it. Unless you've got a Master's degree in electronics and are handy with a soldering iron, you won't be replacing the "smart" components inside your TV screen anytime soon.

“ In the space of a couple of years, your state-of-the-art smart TV has become dumber than taking a bath with your toaster ”

your TV screen anytime soon.

Then only thing you should be looking for when buying a new television is getting the best possible picture quality for your budget. The clever bits can be plugged into the HDMI ports, whether it's a Sky+ box, an Apple TV or the cheap Amazon and Google dongles. Televisions have become too clever for their own good. And ours.

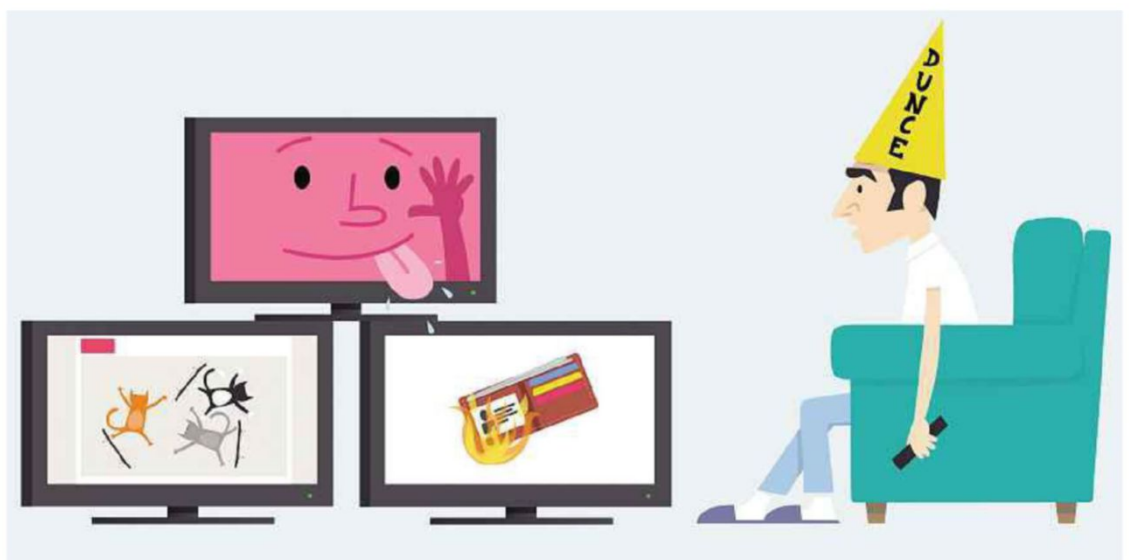


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