

30 PAGES OF WINDOWS
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDES
MAKE YOUR PC PERFECT



IMPROVE WINDOWS 10
SAFELY INSTALL THE CREATORS UPDATE TODAY



Windows Help & Advice

100 INSIDER

Future

SECRETS

50 brilliant apps PLUS 50 tips & tricks
that make Windows easier to use!

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

- ✓ Start menu shortcuts
- ✓ Easy Cortana hacks
- ✓ Touch gesture tips
- ✓ Hard drive speed-ups
- ✓ Quick customisations
- ✓ Privacy protection
- ✓ 'GodMode' revealed!

CONFIDENTIAL



SAFER WEB SURFING

How to protect your personal
data when you go online

TRIED &
TESTED!

HP PAVILION 17

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XBOX ONE



Windows 10



Special Edition Xbox Wireless Controller
– Winter Forces



Xbox Wireless Controller
– Red



Xbox Wireless Controller
– Green/Orange



Special Edition Xbox Wireless Controller
– Ocean Shadow



The source for tech buying advice

techradar.com



Welcome

Sssh! Don't tell anyone, but we've just come back from a top secret mission – to bring you the very best tips, tricks and shortcuts to help you make the most of your PC. Even our Windows experts were pleasantly surprised by the treasures we uncovered and so will you be when you turn to page 56 and discover the secrets that lie in store. But that's not all.

Starting on page 14, you'll find our handpicked selection of the top 50 apps for your PC – apps that will help make your PC easier

and more fun to use, while also helping you to the things that you love to do.

In our Explore section, starting on page 27, you'll find even more things to help you: from our in-depth guide to protecting your online privacy using a VPN; to making free voice and video calls using the new version of Skype.

And on page 66 we'll show you how to get ready for the Creators Update.

Enjoy, and see you next month for more!

Rob

Rob Mead-Green Editor
www.facebook.com/windowsmag



SUBSCRIBE TO THE MAG TODAY AND SAVE – JUST TURN TO PAGE 24!

We pride ourselves in being the only magazine on the shelves to show you exactly how to get the very best from the Windows operating system, whether you're using Windows 10 or Windows 8.1. Also, don't forget to take a look at how you can read the magazine on your laptop, smartphone or tablet.

NEXT ISSUE
ON SALE
23 June
2017

Don't miss our **NEXT ISSUE**, when we will show you how to...

- Master Windows in the cloud → Make the most of the Creators Update
 - Protect your privacy when using Facebook → Make websites easier to read
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Windows Help & Advice

FEATURES

14 50 brilliant apps

Kit out your PC with our essential selection of apps, games and tools for your PC

56 Hidden secrets of Windows

Discover the tips, tricks and shortcuts that will make your PC faster and easier to use

66 Improve Windows 10

How to safely install the Creators Update – our in-depth guide will show you how!

REGULARS

8 Discover How to explore the galaxy from the comfort of your PC. Plus Project Scorpio, 7-Zip, and the end of net neutrality

24 Subscriptions Save up to 46% on print and digital issues

35 Back issues Missed an issue? Don't miss out – order now while stocks last!

51 Digital issues Get the world's best Windows mag on your phone or tablet

98 Next month Find out what's coming up in the July 2017 issue



SUPPORT

70 Get answers to your technical questions with help from our PC experts



EXPLORE

The best PC tutorials



Your guide *Rob Mead-Green* says...

"If you're looking for better ways to use your home computer, then this is the place to start. We'll show you all the tips and tricks the experts use and more!"

28 Discover the amazing things you can do with the Skype app

32 How to save web content for reading later in Microsoft Edge

36 Migrate your email messages away from Windows Mail

38 Transform your holiday snaps with Adobe Photoshop Express

42 Make your PC easier to use with these tips and tricks

46 Make the most of the free apps built into Windows 10

48 Surf safely and securely with a Virtual Private Network (VPN)

52 Remotely access another PC using Teamviewer for Windows



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Find out more on page 24

ON THE COVER

50 ESSENTIAL APPS FOR WINDOWS

14 Try our handpicked selection of apps, games and tools that you can get at low cost or for free

50 HIDDEN SECRETS OF WINDOWS 10

56 Discover the incredible tips and tricks and shortcuts that will make your PC leaner, meaner and easier to use

IMPROVE WINDOWS 10



Get the faster, safer Windows 10 browser



Focus on what's important



Create more with new apps

66 The Creators Update is here! Find out how to prep your PC so you can make the most of it



UPGRADE

83 Our expert reviews

84 HP Pavilion 17 laptop

86 Teclast X5 Pro ultrabook

88 Logitech G413 Carbon

90 Parrot Bebop 2 drone

92 Soundbars mini test

95 Free uninstallers group test



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Discover

► NEW THINGS TO DO ► AMAZING WEBSITES ► FASCINATING FACTS

Community

Telescope

View

Settings



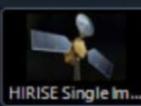
Mars Top Ten



Mars Named Fea...



HIRISE Spotlight



HIRISE Single Im...



MOC Catalog



Visible Imagery



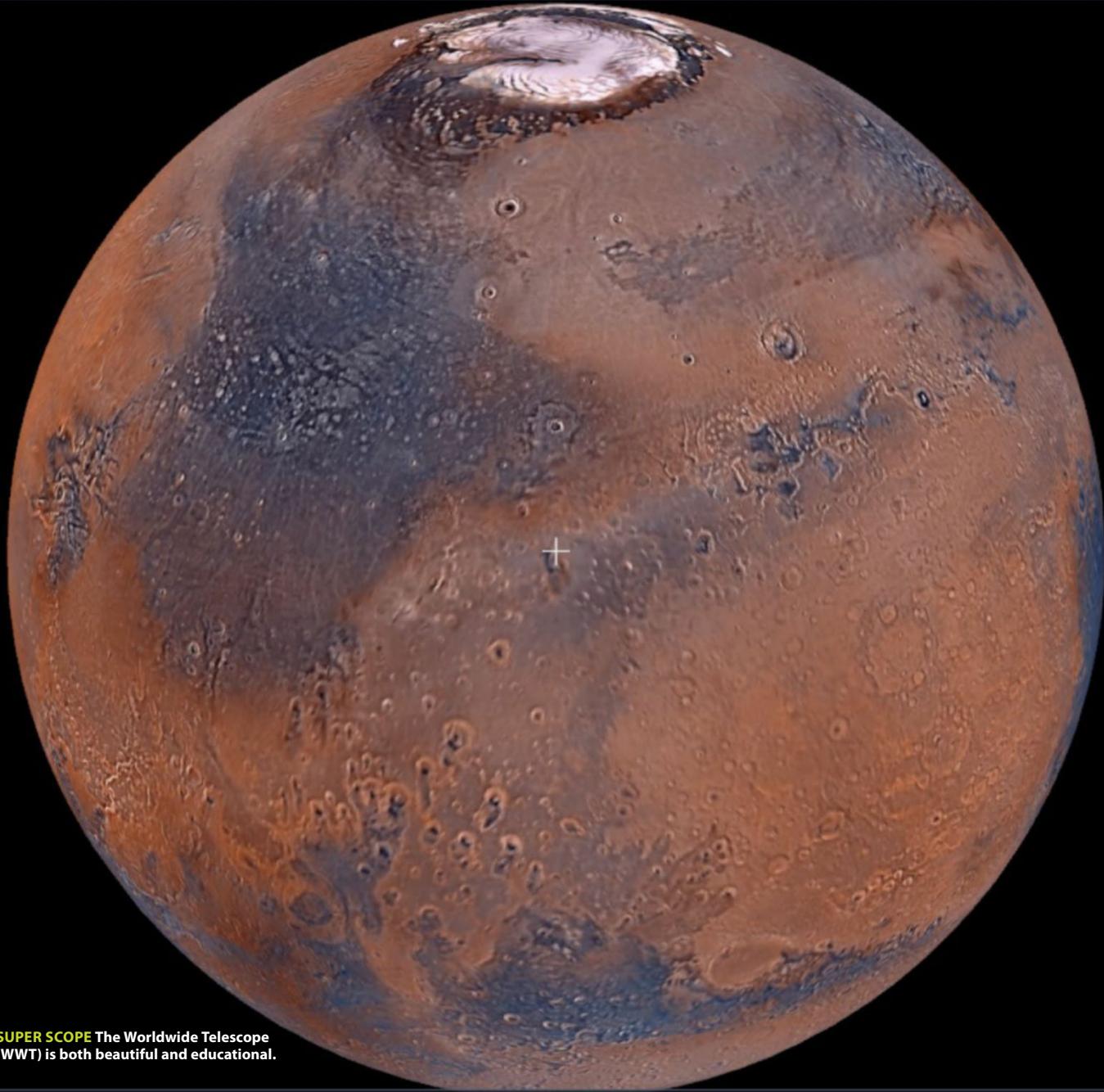
Colorized Terrain



HiRISE Imagery



Mars Orbiter Ca...



SUPER SCOPE The Worldwide Telescope (WWT) is both beautiful and educational.

To infinity and beyond Explore space without leaving your computer

Take a trip through the universe and perform your own observations of our solar system and the worlds beyond

Mankind has been looking to the sky ever since we first crawled out of the sea, but there's never been a better time to take a closer look. The major bodies tasked with exploring and cataloguing space – NASA, the ESA, *et al* – all have a commitment to share their findings openly. Open your web browser and head to nasa.org, for example, and you can find everything from the latest mission photos from Cassini, Juno and New Horizons to astonishing Ultra HD videos of the inside of the International Space Station (ISS). On the European Space Agency's site at www.esa.int you can explore current and future missions, such as the forthcoming ExoMars lander.

LOOKING AT THE STARS

Sadly, though, it's unlikely many of us will make it to space in this lifetime. But that doesn't mean we're locked to Earth. Point your web browser to <http://www.worldwidetelescope.org/> to visit the

WorldWide Telescope (WWT). There's a web version available, and a desktop application – although the latter can be somewhat punishing to your hardware. Using WWT, you can explore everything from 3D views of the planets in our solar system to high-resolution images of distant galaxies to fascinating guided tours of our universe. There are other options, too – we're fond of Celestia, available from www.celestia-project.net.

Nothing beats a real telescope, though. There are certainly ways to control your own lenses with your PC

– automatic telescopes start from around £250, see telescopeplanet.co.uk – but we can go one better: why not take control of an enormous scientific telescope?

The Harvard MicroObservatory (www.microobservatory.org) lets you point its robotic telescope at your choice of target during its nightly cycle, or join Slooh (live.slooh.com) to tune into live feeds of some of the world's best space scopes.

Explore the universe, from nearby planets to far-flung galaxies

EVERYTHING LED

It's a bright new world...

Full-colour RGB LED lighting isn't a new thing, but it's really starting to come into its own thanks to schemes from the likes of Creative, Razer and Asus. Pick up hardware and peripherals compatible with protocols such as Aurora Reactive, Aura Sync, or Chroma lighting (in that order) and you'll be able to synchronise the illumination of each of your PC components to enjoy a beautiful custom light show while you work. Frivolous, but quite enjoyable...



MAGIC MOUSE Asus' Gladius II isn't cheap, but it projects a multi-coloured halo from its base.



COLOURFUL KEYS Every key in Creative's K08 keyboard can be set to display a different colour.



ON THE MAT Razer's Firefly goes even further: it's an RGB mouse mat. Available in plastic or cloth.

The Knowledge...



Project Scorpio

What's this, then?

It's an early codename for Microsoft's new console. We don't know what the eventual name will be, other than it'll likely be some variation on 'Xbox One'.

Another Xbox One?

It has only been a few months since the release of the Xbox One S, a smaller, more streamlined, and more powerful version of the original console. But where that introduced small hardware upgrades, such as a 4K-capable Blu-ray player and more colourful HDR graphical rendering, it was really a way of bringing the Xbox in line with the latest TVs – Project Scorpio is aiming far past that.

So what's new?

Put simply, early previews of the hardware suggest that Project Scorpio will boost the majority of the console's specifications even from the already-revised Xbox One S. There's a new processor – itself known as Scorpio – which combines a speedier CPU and 28 additional graphics processing units into a single central chip. This isn't the only upgrade; there's expanded and faster system memory, and more.

What does this all mean?

It means next generation 4K-resolution gaming could be on its way to the home. Microsoft and its developers have been building games to support this potential upgrade for some time, so older games will automatically get sharper and smoother, and newer games will have a brand new target to aim for. Those who've been privy to an early demonstration of the Scorpio version of Forza Motorsport (pictured) suggest spectacular results.

When can I get my hands on it?

Project Scorpio seems to be running ahead of schedule, and we could see new Xbox hardware hitting the market later this year. However, we don't imagine it'll be cheap – these advanced specs could set a new benchmark for console pricing – and may well be worth it. So if you're looking to upgrade, start saving now!

Everyone's talking about

An end to net neutrality?

Potential law changes in the US and the UK could lead to higher prices – and the rise of “two-tier” internet access

The internet has been, so far at least, bound by the principle of net neutrality, meaning all websites are treated equally by internet service providers (ISPs). In many places this freedom is cemented in law; the US Federal Communications Commission’s Open Internet rules (www.fcc.gov/general/open-internet), for example, state that American ISPs may not establish fast or slow lanes and must maintain equal access to all legal content. The EU’s equivalent body, BEREC (<http://berec.europa.eu>), does the same. Now this looks like it may be about to change.

In the USA, recent leadership changes at the FCC and on internet privacy rules, are leading some to suggest that ISPs may finally get the chance to strike out against net neutrality. The UK government has, at press time, yet to outline its own net neutrality plans following its exit from the EU (Brexit), but it has made similar data collection and encryption rulings to its transatlantic cousins in recent months.

What would an end to net neutrality mean for you? It might mean, for example, that your ISP will happily accept payments



from certain websites in order to give them preferential speeds to reach your home. If a site doesn’t cough up, it could be artificially slowed down or, in extreme cases, not made available at all. It’s entirely possible that ISPs could, if they were feeling particularly cruel, gouge home customers for more money; imagine, say, an ‘internet video’ tier subscription to the internet, where you’re charged more if you want to watch content on YouTube or iPlayer, or a ‘social’ tier, which will be the only way to access Facebook or Twitter.

Net neutrality is what has made the internet the force it is today, and we very much doubt that any of these possible nightmare scenarios will come to pass. US net neutrality changes are currently simple speculation, and many experts expect the UK to cement rules similar to those of the EU. So should you worry?

Even if enforced net neutrality comes to an end, bigger companies throwing their weight around would likely lead to much fiercer competition from smaller, hungrier ISPs, and see contracts from unfair providers cancelled in their droves.

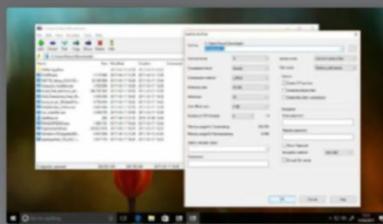
Download this...

7-Zip

www.7-zip.org

Most of us have heard of WinRAR – if you ever get sent an archive in the .RAR format, it’s the go-to tool to decompress the files within. Those of us who’ve used it for any length of time will also no doubt chuckle at its perpetual nag screens, a reminder that, despite it working for a seemingly infinite length of time, it’s not free software. After thirty days, you’ve left WinRAR’s ‘trial period’ – and recent versions have begun laboriously counting up the days since install.

There is an alternative, and a very good one. 7-Zip (www.7-zip.org) is completely free, and supports decompression of a number of different archive types, from common formats, such as .ZIP, .RAR and its own .7Z, to much more obscure formats. While you can’t use 7-Zip to create your own RAR files – though it will happily create Windows-supported ZIP versions – it’s one tool that everyone should have to hand.



ZIP IT RAR stands for ‘Roscharch Archive’ – and you don’t need WinRAR to open one.

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NEXT ISSUE ON SALE
JUNE
23
Friday

THE 60-SECOND QUIZ

Pens at the ready, your time starts now!

1 Which of these is not a social network?

- A Facebook
- B Mastodon
- C Chuffr

2 What are Twitter messages called?

- A Twits
- B Tweets
- C Twoots

3 How many users does Facebook say it has per day?

- A 250 million
- B 4.2 billion
- C 1.2 billion

4 What is LinkedIn primarily used for?

- A Business networking
- B Sharing cat photos
- C Editing links

5 Which of these is not an Instagram filter?

- A Clarendon
- B Gingham
- C Vaseline

6 Which of these is not owned by Facebook?

- A Snapchat
- B Whatsapp
- C Instagram

Answers: 1C 2B 3C 4A 5C 6A

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WITH
**FREE
DIGITAL
EDITION**

Facts & figures

Rob Mead-Green reveals a host of fascinating digital facts



\$999

Cost, in the USA, of the new Microsoft Surface Laptop, which is being aimed at school leavers. The Surface Laptop runs a special educational edition of Windows 10, dubbed Windows 10 S.

1.94 BILLION

Number of active monthly users on Facebook – that's one quarter of the world's population. The social media giant also made \$8 billion dollars in the first quarter of 2017.



Number of years you could face in prison if convicted of illegally streaming copyrighted content in UK courts. The chances of that happening, though, are small: the new Digital Economy Act's real target is sellers of fully-loaded set-top boxes that make such illicit streaming easy.

100,000,000

Number of pixels available to aerial photographers in the forthcoming DJI M600 Pro drone – an integrated photography platform developed in conjunction with camera experts, Hasselblad. It's not going to be cheap though: the on-board Hasselblad H6D-100c camera alone costs over £28,000.



1,000

Possible range, in kilometres, of future electric cars that could use battery technology being developed by the Fraunhofer Institute for Ceramic Studies and Systems.

17

Fall, in percentage terms, of sales of 'consumer ebooks' in the UK in 2016. The Publishers Association says the fall is down to screen fatigue... sales of printed books rose 7 percent in the same period.

>> Incoming

The hottest new Windows hardware on the horizon



Microsoft Surface Laptop

From £979, www.microsoft.com

On sale from 15 June, the Surface Laptop is a super-slim 13.5-inch notebook designed with students in mind. It comes with a gorgeous, touch-sensitive PixelSense Display, a choice of 7th generation Intel Core i5 or Core i7 processors, up to 16GB of RAM and up to 512GB of solid state storage – although you'll have to have deep pockets to afford the top-spec version, which costs £2,149.

Among the Surface Laptop's many attributes are a claimed battery life of up to 14.5 hours, a super-comfortable Alcantara fabric-covered keyboard and palm rest, plus Dolby Premium audio. Weighing in at 1.25kg, it also offers a decent range of connectivity options, including 802.11ac Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 4.0 LE. But the real icing on the cake is Windows 10 S – a specially developed version of Windows, equipped with all the apps that students are likely to need.



50 ESSENTIAL APPS FOR WINDOWS

Are you taking advantage of the best apps, games and tools for your PC? Nick Peers rounds up 50 of the very best

That old adage about finding the right tool for the right job has never been more apt than when it comes to Windows. If you're not railing against missing features in a program, you finally find one you like only to discover it's been discontinued. When it comes to finding those apps that are the best fit for your needs, it can be a long, frustrating experience.

And that's where we come in. This issue, we've done the hard work for you, sifting through the hundreds of apps, tools and games we've encountered to pick out 50 of the very best for your PC. We've neatly split them into four categories:

productivity, creative and multimedia; tools and utilities; and fun and games. Many of the apps we have chosen are completely free to use, while most of the others lock away additional features behind a subscription or one-time payment – although their core functionality comes with no cost and, in many cases, will be all you need.

We've also highlighted those programs that can be downloaded in portable form. Portable apps enable you to run the program in question without installing it on your PC – not only can you try it out without committing to a full-blown installation, you can easily move the app (and your settings) to another computer whenever you wish.

01 Macrium Reflect Free www.macrium.com/node/55

Everyone needs a fail-safe backup, and Macrium backs up selected partitions and even entire drives into a single image-based file. From here you can extract individual files or restore your entire system if things go horribly wrong. Incremental back-up support gives you multiple snapshots without swallowing up precious drive space too.

02 Steam <http://bit.ly/eQhtxQ>

If you're looking for a one-stop shop for over 2,500 games – both free and paid-for – then you need to install Steam. It provides a central hub for downloading, managing and playing your games, and works across a variety of devices as well as your computer. It's even optimised for playing games on your big-screen TV.

03 Office 365

<http://bit.ly/2q2JMZN>

If you frequently work with MS Office files, you need Office 365. For just £50 a year (Personal), or £65-70 a year (Home, covering five PCs/Macs, tablets and smartphones) you gain access to Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Publisher and Access plus 1TB of OneDrive storage. Too expensive? Try LibreOffice (www.libreoffice.org).



Crafts you can do

- Craft parties
- Craft training
- Handmade goods

Click to add notes

04 EditPad Lite

<http://bit.ly/2q0sQVY>

Plain text editing is a chore with Notepad. EditPad Lite makes the process much easier. Its extensive feature set includes editing multiple text files side-by-side in a tabbed window, support for multiple text snippets via the Clip collection, unlimited undo and redo, automatic backups... Need we go on?

05 Open Live Writer

<http://bit.ly/2q0cBI2>

If you're a blogger, you need Open Live Writer. It's basically Word for bloggers, giving you all the tools you need to compose, publish and manage posts on a wide range of blogging platforms, including Blogger, Wordpress and TypePad, even when you're offline. Use it and you'll never have to edit in your web browser again.

06 Microsoft Sway

<https://sway.com>

Who needs to use PowerPoint when Microsoft's Sway can produce similarly slick presentations with half the effort – and for free? You supply the basic elements: text, photos and video. Then pick a theme, add interactive elements, such as maps, and let Sway transform the whole shebang into a web-friendly presentation you can share.

07 Nitro PDF Reader

<http://bit.ly/2q0uOVT>

If you're looking for a powerful tool that can create as well as display PDFs, then Nitro PDF Reader is your go-to app. It's fast and responsive, allows you to create PDFs directly from files or through drag-and-drop. And enables you to annotate PDFs with both sticky notes and mark-up text that you can share with others.

08 Vivaldi

<https://vivaldi.com>

Vivaldi is a powerful and uniquely customisable web browser that stands apart from the usual suspects. You get to choose exactly how it looks and where key elements such as tabs go. It's also packed with useful, innovative features including – in its latest version – a novel way of viewing and managing your surfing history.

09 Thunderbird

<https://mzl.la/2q0ad48>

If you're serious about email, then the Windows' Mail app just won't cut it. Thunderbird may be old school, but development is starting to pick up again and it's packed with the features you need to collect, manage and reply to your emails. There's also a built-in calendar tool – Lightning – to help you stay organised. For more, see page 36.

10 LastPass

www.lastpass.com

LastPass is your go-to password manager. You can use it to generate strong, randomly-generated passwords, then lock them away inside an encrypted vault behind a single master password that's strong, but memorable. It works across multiple platforms and web browsers, and all of its core functionality is now completely free.



11 Allway Sync

<https://allwaysync.com>

Need to keep two or more folders in sync? Want to sync data to and from multiple cloud services such as OneDrive, Google Drive and Dropbox without having to install a single app for each? Allway Sync is for you. Just set up your folder partnerships, choose your sync settings and schedule, and you're good to go.

12 FocusWriter

<http://bit.ly/2q0Fxjb>

That report won't write itself, and FocusWriter is here to help. It immerses you in a minimalist full-screen environment: just you and the keyboard cursor. Now there's no excuse not to make progress, with goals, timers, alarms, spell-checking and automatic saves to help you get the job done. Finally.

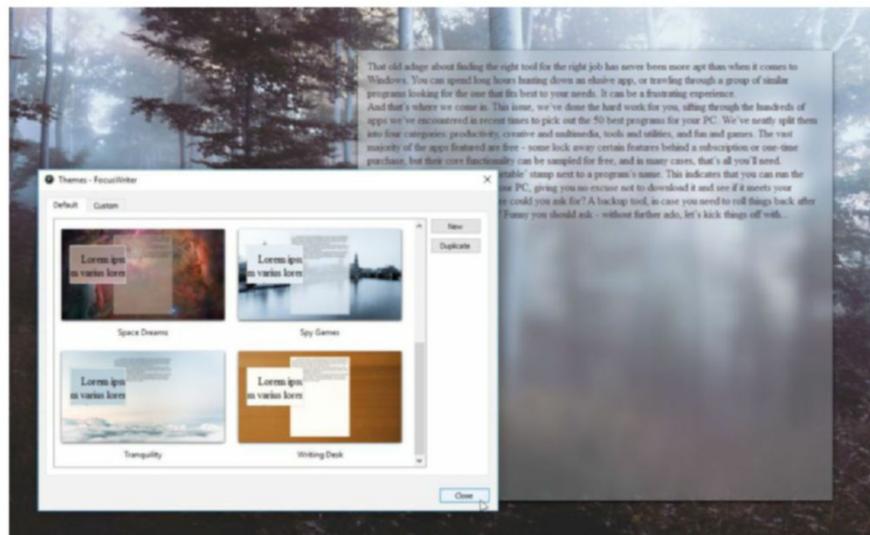


The image shows two windows from the LastPass application. The main window displays a 'Vault' sidebar with options like 'All', 'Sites', 'Secure Notes', 'Form Fills', and 'Search'. The 'Favourites' section lists several websites with their URLs. The second window is a 'General' settings dialog with various checkboxes for launching the app, setting pin codes, and saving disabled One-Time Passwords.

13 Retroshare

<http://retroshare.net>

We've recommended Retroshare over Skype in this roundup because it takes encryption seriously. Retroshare employs end-to-end encryption and other security measures – see page 21 of issue 131 for more details – to make the learning curve and slightly awkward setup a price worth paying for the privacy-conscious.



A screenshot of Microsoft OneNote. The main page displays a postcard titled 'Postcard from America' with a date of Wednesday, December 5, 2012, at 11:12 AM. The postcard features a black and white photograph of two children in a horse-drawn carriage. To the right of the postcard is a handwritten note in cursive ink. The OneNote ribbon menu is visible at the top, showing tabs like File, Home, Insert, Draw, History, Review, and View. The left side of the screen shows a vertical navigation pane with a 'Family history (Evernote imp...)' folder expanded, containing sub-folders like 'Pages' and 'Hirons'.

14 OneNote

www.onenote.com

Microsoft OneNote is one of the most feature-packed and versatile note-taking tools out there, with everything you need to create and capture notes from a variety of locations. You can organise your notes into pages, folders and notebooks, plus share and collaborate with others before accessing on the go through your mobile.

15 Photoshop Express
<http://bit.ly/2q0AijN>

If you're looking for a fast, user-friendly way to improve your photos, then Adobe Photoshop Express is the app for you. Select your image, try the auto-fix button and if that doesn't work, experiment with a wide range of photo-correct tools and filters – sign in with an Adobe ID account to unlock all of its features. See page 38 for more.

18 MP3tag
<http://www.mp3tag.de/en/>

Windows Media Player isn't always the best at matching your CDs with the correct artist and track information (known as metadata), which means you may have to enter the correct details yourself. MP3tag makes it easy to both tag and rename your music files, either manually or with the help of databases such as discogs.

16 Paint.NET
www.getpaint.net

Paint.NET takes image editing to the next level. If you're looking for more than a quick fix for your photos, this is the tool to use. It supports multiple layers, unlimited undos and, if you can't find a filter or effect to your liking, there's an ever-growing collection of free community-built plugins for you to download and install.

17 Audacity
www.audacityteam.org/

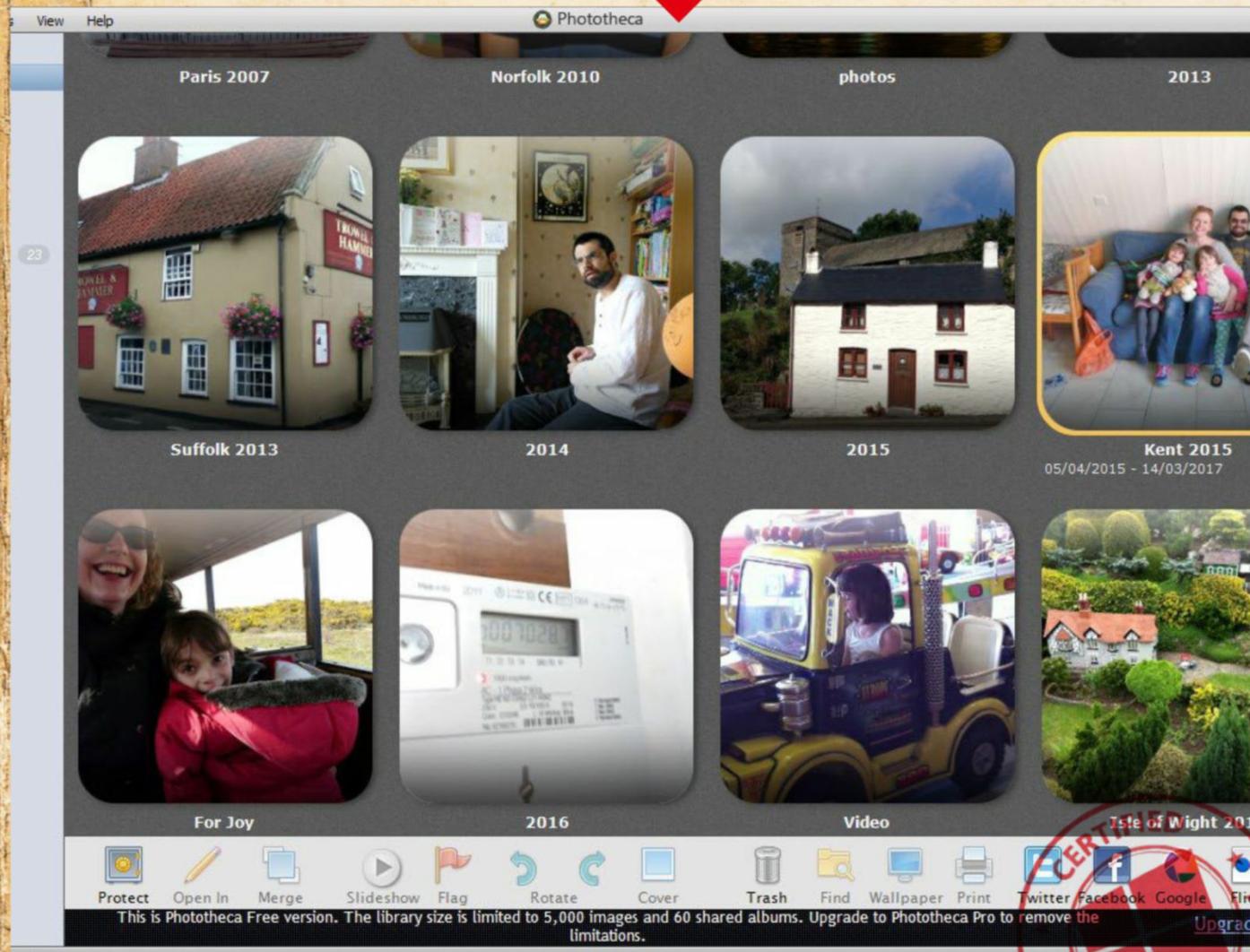
When it comes to recording audio – including your growing vinyl collection – then Audacity has no peer. Its built-in editing and mixing tools, coupled with a wide range of useful effects and support for various output formats (including, via the LAME plugin, MP3), make it an essential addition to any PC user's multimedia toolkit.

19 Phototheca
<https://lunarship.com>

Still pining for the loss of Google's Picasa? Phototheca is the closest we've yet come to sourcing a replacement tool that makes organising, tagging and sharing your photos as easy as can be. The free version is limited to 5,000 photos, but with extra features like a duplicate finder, the \$20 asking price for the full version isn't too steep.

20 AntiDupl
<http://bit.ly/2q30Iz4>

These days everybody carries multiple copies or slight variations of the same photo. If you've finally decided to free up drive space and reduce your photo library to a manageable number, then AntiDupl is the must-have tool for weeding out your duplicates. Check out page 21 of issue 132 for a complete guide to this brilliant app.





21 PhotoPageGen

www.photopagegen.com/

This completely free tool makes it easy to automatically generate a website from selected photos and videos – you can upload it to your web space or distribute the folder for viewing offline. The app enables you to add your photos, choose how they're displayed, pick a background, generate maps from GPS data in photos, and more.

22 XviD4PSP

<http://bit.ly/2q0le4t>

If you're not getting the results you want when converting video with Handbrake (www.handbrake.fr), then chances are XviD4PSP will do the job – we've found its Interlace tools are more effective at eliminating motion judder, for example. Other bonuses include a trimming tool, metadata support and a wider range of filters.

23 Plex

www.plex.tv

Install the Plex server on your PC or dedicated device, such as a NAS or Raspberry Pi, use it to bring together your digital media, then install Plex Media Player on your computer. You can run the app full-screen to enjoy your content in the best possible light, or switch to windowed view and manage your media server.

24 VLC Media Player

<http://bit.ly/dqn7vT>

Windows 10 dropped support for playing DVD videos, but VLC Media Player lets you watch most DVDs, a smattering of Blu-rays and just about any other digital video format you can throw at it. If you've been sent a video that no other media-player will touch, you can put your money on VLC being the one app that will play it.

25 MusicBee

<https://getmusicbee.com>

Windows Media Player is long in the tooth, which is why you should replace it with this smart, free alternative. MusicBee doesn't just package things up in a smart, modern interface, it features the best bits of WMP too, including a superior CD-ripping tool. Be sure to turn to page 38 of issue 132 for an in-depth tutorial.

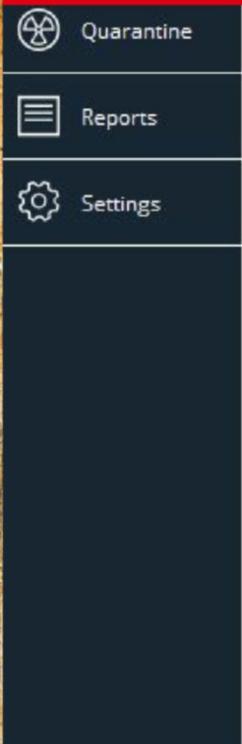
26 Shotcut

www.shotcut.org

Now that Windows Movie Maker has gone, you should turn to Shotcut. Hit the Playlist and Timeline buttons when you first open it, and the user interface becomes instantly familiar. Better still, Shotcut includes more advanced tools, such as chroma key compositing, to go with the familiar selection of video transitions and filters.

27 Malwarebytes
Anti-Malware
<http://bit.ly/2q33J2r>

The more protection you have the better, and second layers of security don't come better than Malwarebytes Anti-Malware. It detects a wider range of threats – including Potentially Unwanted Programs – compared to other tools, and while there's no real-time protection in the Free version, you can still use it to scan for, and remove, infections.



Awesome!
You're protected.

[Scan Now](#)

Real-Time Protection

- Web protection: On
- Exploit protection: On
- Malware protection: On
- Ransomware protection: On

Scan Status

- Last Scan: Less than an hour ago
- Next scheduled scan: 10 hours
- Updates: Current

Protection History

Items scanned: 390,247
Scan detections: 0
Real-Time detections: 0


28 Windows Repair
<http://bit.ly/2q30AzG>

If your PC develops a problem, this tool could help. It first performs a series of key diagnostics including System File Checker, then presents you with an ever-growing list of repairs that you can try to resolve the issue without you having to reinstall Windows. It's an essential addition to your troubleshooting toolkit.

29 DMDE
<http://dmde.com>

While Recuva (www.piriform.com) can recover deleted files, DMDE goes further to make it possible to recover data from formatted, lost or even corrupt partitions. There's a learning curve involved, and while you can recover data for free, upgrading to the Express (€16) or Standard (€38) edition makes things simpler and quicker.

30 Revo Uninstaller
<http://bit.ly/2q0Elwc>

Programs notoriously leave parts of themselves behind after removal. Tools such as Revo Uninstaller scan for leftover Registry entries and files to ensure as much of the program is removed as possible. Upgrade to the Pro edition for extra features such as uninstalling multiple programs in one go. For more uninstallers, see page 95.

31 CCleaner
<http://bit.ly/2q0LtsF>

Keeping your computer clean and tidy makes it easier and faster to use, and when it comes to cleaning, you'll be hard-pressed to find a better suite of tools than those provided by CCleaner. Find out how to clear out gigabytes of redundant files – with care – in one go with our guide to using the app on page 18 of issue 132.

32 TidyTabs
<http://bit.ly/2q3ah0Q>

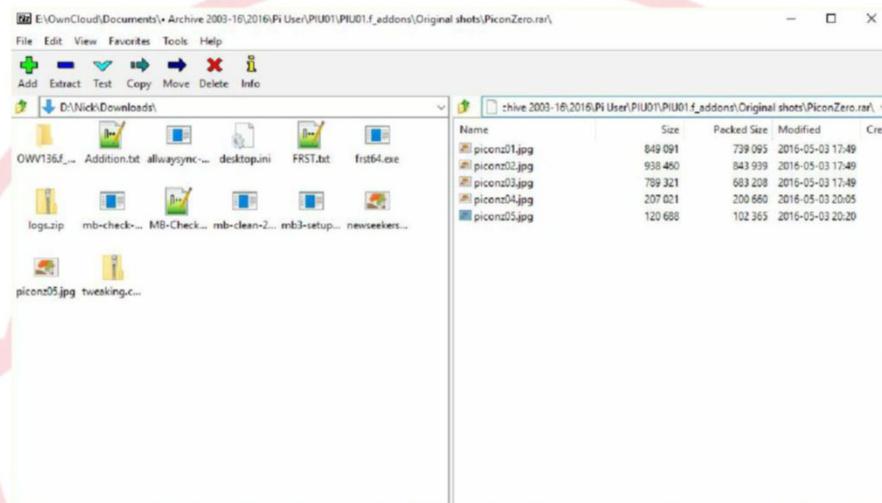
Why clutter up your desktops with loads of open windows when TidyTabs allows you to organise them into tabs in the same way that your favourite web browser does? You can combine up to three program windows per tab, or pay \$9 for the Pro version to remove this limit. Check out our tutorial on page 42 of issue 133.

33 PortableApps
www.portableapps.com

Portable apps don't just follow you from computer to computer via USB flash drive, they can be used to reduce clutter on your own PC and survive Windows reinstalls. PortableApps provides you with a central platform for obtaining, managing and accessing your portable apps from a handy launcher. An office favourite.

34 7-Zip www.7-zip.org

The zip format is widely used, but it's not universal. If you're confronted by an archive sporting an unfamiliar extension such as .rar or .gzip, then you need 7-Zip. On top of that, it's much more powerful than Windows' native zip tool with support for encryption, better compression ratios and much more.

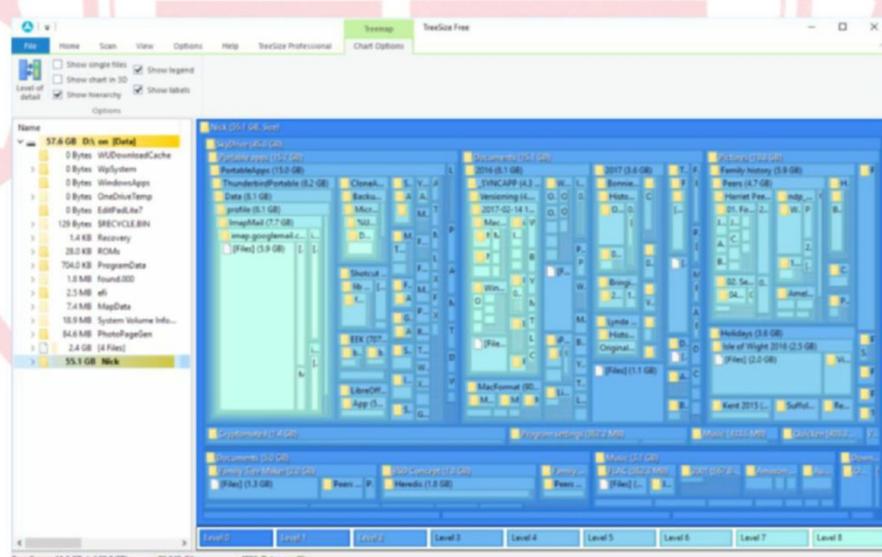


35 VirtualBox www.virtualbox.org

Want to dabble in Linux? Need an old version of Windows to run a favourite program no longer supported in Windows 10? Install VirtualBox to run your operating system of choice within a window without having to reboot your PC. Much safer than messing about with dual-boot setups!

36 TreeSize Free <http://bit.ly/2q0EDDd>

Struggling to find out where all your hard drive space has gone? TreeSize Free makes it easy to visualise your drive using a treemap, which lets you view your drive or a selected folder as a series of blocks, with the largest files quickly identifiable. An optional touch-friendly UI makes it especially useful for tablets.



37 CloneApp www.mirinsoft.com

File History backs up your files, while Macrium Reflect covers your PC's entire storage drive (including Windows). But what about your app settings – perhaps you're migrating to a new PC? Enter CloneApp, a tool for backing up and restoring app settings quickly and easily. See our guide on page 17 of issue 135.

To get started, please choose a Module below.

- Burn CD/USB Disk**
Launch Bootable Media Builder to Burn a Bootable Recovery CD or USB Disk.
- Windows Recovery**
Use this option to repair any boot and crash errors caused by virus infections or accidental file corruption.
- Data Recovery**
Use this option to recover lost files, so that your data can be restored even if drives can't be seen after reformatting or

38 Lazesoft Recovery Suite www.lazesoft.com

Lazesoft Recovery Suite 4.0 might one day save your life. Use it to create a bootable rescue disc that can perform a wide range of repairs even when Windows won't load. And if all else fails, you can use it to recover files from your storage drive before formatting it and reinstalling Windows from scratch.

June 2017 | Windows Help & Advice | 21

39 RootsMagic
www.rootsmagic.com

RootsMagic allows you to record and research your family history within a single program. Bring together your ancestors, add scanned photos and connect to online records – including FamilySearch and FindMyPast – to discover more about the people they were and the lives they led. The cut-down Essentials version is free.

40 Data Crow
www.datacrow.net

If you want to keep tabs on a collection of items, from books or DVDs to personal contacts or software, Data Crow is for you. This brilliant free cataloguing tool helps speed up the entry of data by linking into various online databases – just pick and click to download metadata and artwork relating to your items.

41 TripAdvisor
www.tripadvisor.com

The free TripAdvisor app provides a convenient – and attractive – frontend to the whole TripAdvisor experience. It enables you to plan holidays, look for places to visit and book hotels and flights with the minimum of fuss. And once you've been away, you can share your thoughts on your trip by providing reviews for other users.

42 MuseScore
[https://musescore.org](http://musescore.org)

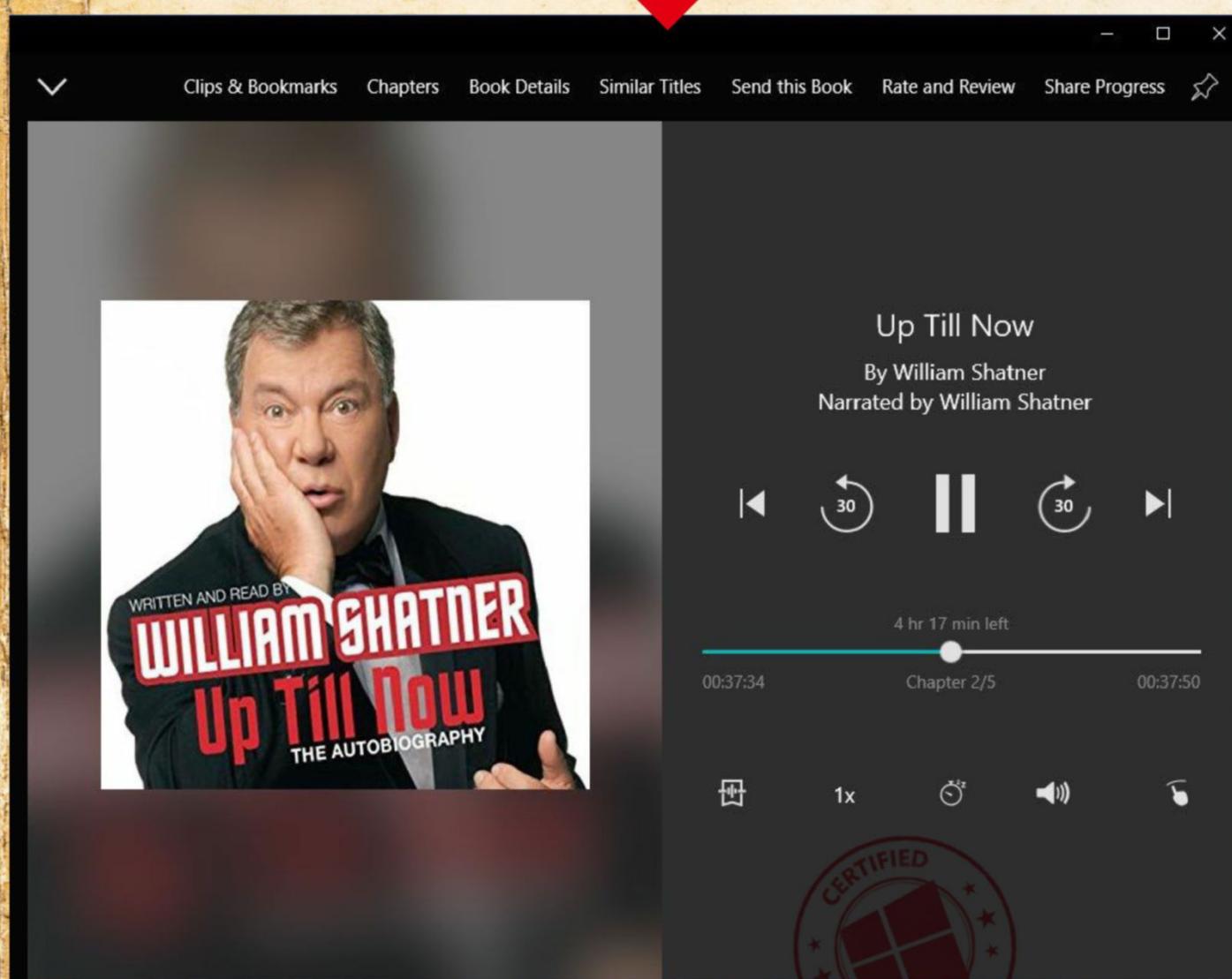
If you're in any way musically inclined, this open-source notation tool is a must. Simply input your notes and instruments, then listen back to the score before printing out the finished piece. You can also input using your keyboard or any MIDI device. The app even allows you to add lyrics and chords to your masterpiece too.

43 Audible
www.audible.com

The free Audible app gives you access to all those audiobooks you've bought from Audible.com on your PC, and lets you purchase and download more. The app lets you view and organise your library, and choose whether to stream your purchases on-demand rather than store the books on your computer. It's listening made easy.

44 Celestia
<http://bit.ly/2q3cmdd>

Explore the universe – in time as well as space – in glorious 3D with this beautifully presented app. Navigation is easy: either float, rotate and zoom in and out, or press a key to quickly move between the planets of the solar system. Look further afield, discover man-made objects in space and more. See our guide on page 28 of issue 132.



The screenshot shows the Audible mobile application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Clips & Bookmarks, Chapters, Book Details, Similar Titles, Send this Book, Rate and Review, Share Progress, and a search icon. Below the navigation bar is a large image of William Shatner, looking surprised with his hand to his chin. The image is part of the book cover for 'Up Till Now: The Autobiography' by William Shatner. To the right of the image, the title 'Up Till Now' is displayed in large red letters, with 'WRITTEN AND READ BY WILLIAM SHATNER' above it. Below the title, it says 'THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY'. To the right of the book cover, the audiobook details are shown: 'Up Till Now' by William Shatner, Narrated by William Shatner. Below this, there are playback controls: a left arrow, a circular arrow labeled '30', a double vertical bar for pausing, another circular arrow labeled '30', and a right arrow. A progress bar indicates '4 hr 17 min left' with a playhead at '00:37:34' on the left and 'Chapter 2/5' in the middle. On the far right, the time '00:37:50' is shown. At the bottom, there are additional controls: a square icon, a volume icon labeled '1x', a speaker icon, and a circular icon with a play symbol. A 'CERTIFIED' stamp is visible at the bottom right.



45 Xbox App

<http://bit.ly/2q0wdvI>

Fancy a quick blast on one of your favourite Xbox games? Frustrated that someone is currently hogging the big-screen TV? No problem, armed with the right settings (see page 38 of issue 130) and the Xbox app, you can stream games from your Xbox to your Windows 10 PC over your network. And guess what? The app is free.

46 Planetside 2

www.planetside2.com/

If the thought of facing off against hundreds of other players in a chaotic environment doesn't put you off, then Planetside 2 will appeal. This first-person shooter was originally released back in 2012, and remains massively popular thanks to its free-to-play status on the PC (you can purchase items to enhance gameplay).

47 Path of Exile

<http://bit.ly/2q0JzYK>

Path of Exile is for those who prefer their gaming to be of the action-orientated role-playing variety. It's completely free to play, and provides you with a large world in which to explore, and endless possibilities to develop your character, obtain skills through gems and build your online riches. Hours of fun.

48 Star Wars: The Old Republic

www.swtor.com

Available in both free-to-play and premium modes, this classic game takes you back into the days of the Republic, giving you the choice of taking on various missions for either the Jedi or the Dark Side of the Force. Premium upgrades unlock access to additional characters and adventures.

49 123 Free Solitaire

<http://bit.ly/2q39CN6>

Pining after the classic desktop game that Microsoft dropped in Windows 8 (and then 10)? Download 123 Free Solitaire (it's the second link on the download page) and you can enjoy 12 different variations of Solitaire for free, with no ads or unwanted extras. There is even a free add-ons pack with more backgrounds and decks.

50 Scratch 2

<http://bit.ly/2q0MLnB>

Scratch 2 is a programming language your children will love – it encourages them to build their own interactive projects and games using instruction blocks. But why let them have all the fun? If you're looking to dip your toes into programming, but don't have the patience for complex languages, why not try Scratch 2 yourself?



Windows Help & Advice

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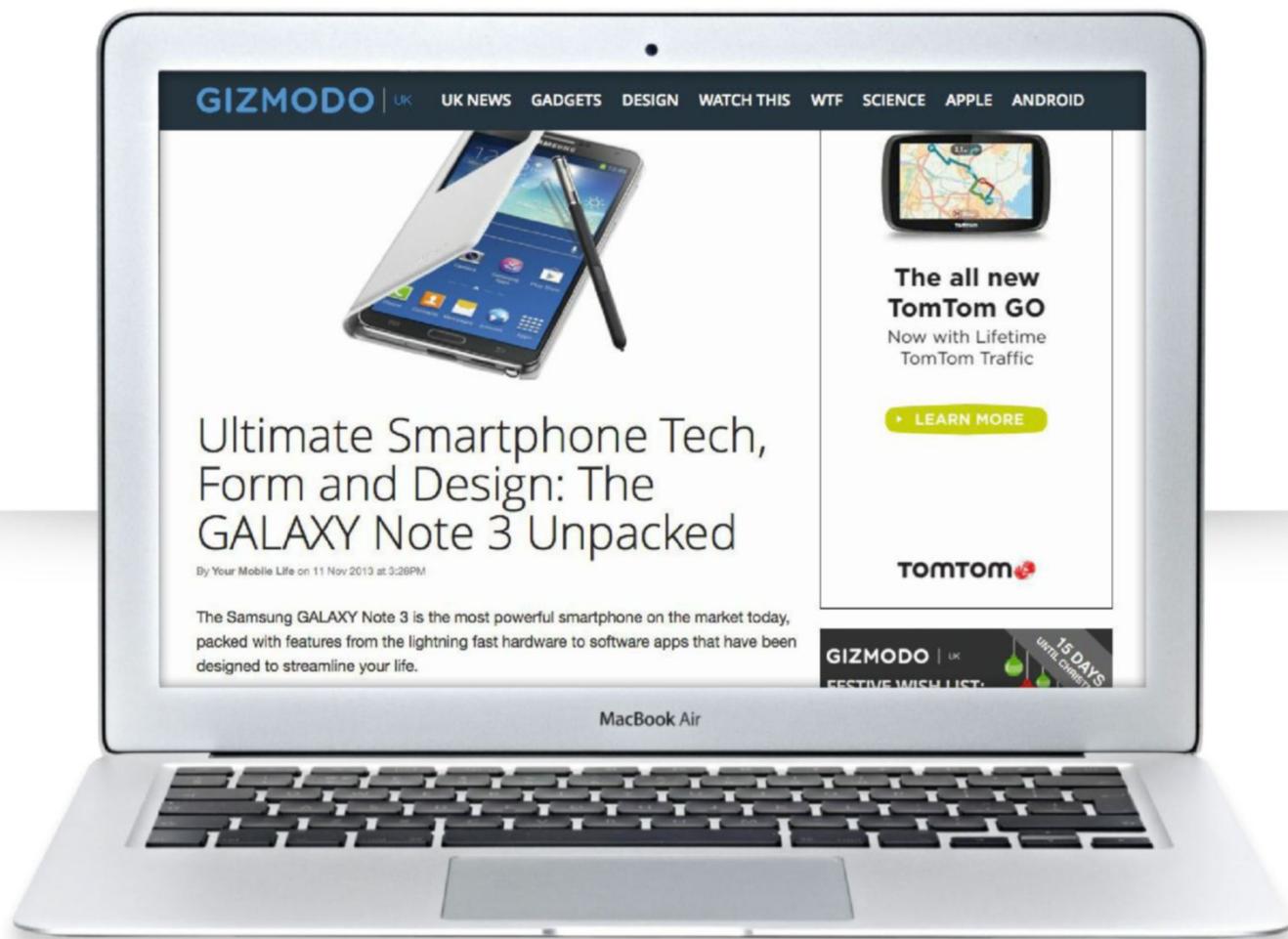
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Explore

► WINDOWS TIPS ► INTERNET ADVICE ► EXCITING NEW PROJECTS

Welcome



In this month's Explore section we're going to show how to make the most of the internet – whether it's to call friends and family abroad for free, or save your favourite stories for reading later.

On page 28, we'll walk you through the new version of Skype – the internet telephony app, that's been reimagined for the Creators Update.

And on page 32, we explain how to use the Pocket browser extension to save web content for home, work or school.

Finally, on page 48, we'll show you how to use a VPN to protect your privacy online.

Rob Mead-Green

Editor

rob.mead-green@futurenet.com

Full listing...

28 Discover the amazing things you can do with the Skype app

32 Learn how to save web content for reading later in Microsoft Edge

36 Take control of your emails with this alternative to Windows Mail

38 Transform your holiday snaps with Adobe Photoshop Express

42 Make your PC even easier to use with these tips and tricks

46 Make the most of the free apps built into Windows 10

48 Surf safely and securely with a Virtual Private Network (VPN)

52 Remotely access another PC using Teamviewer for Windows



Your guide
Ian Evenden says...

"Make your holiday snaps 'pop' with the brilliant Photoshop Express"

*Turn to page 38
to find out more*

Our promise to you...

Get more from Windows, software and all your favourite sites

Packed with informative tutorials

Every issue, we guarantee to pack the magazine with great tutorials teaching you all the best things you can do with your PC. Each article features step-by-step instructions to make learning new skills fast and enjoyable.

Customise Windows to work your way

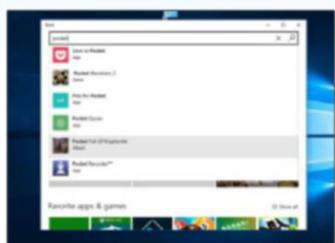
We all know how to do the basics but getting the most from Windows isn't always easy. Our dedication to the operating system means you get the very best tips and tricks for all versions of Windows.

Get more from your favourite websites

We all have our list of favourite sites but often we miss out on great features because they're difficult to use or hidden from sight. We'll show you how to do more online, for a more satisfying web life.

Discover new programs with our help

From speed-up and security software to superb photo apps, there's always something new to try on your PC. The Windows Store in Windows 10 and Windows 8.1 is packed with software to download.



Learn how to...

Use Skype in Windows 10



Your guide [Matt Hanson](#) says...

"The Windows 10 Creators Update brings an overhauled Skype app. Here's how to use its best features"

At a glance

Skill level...

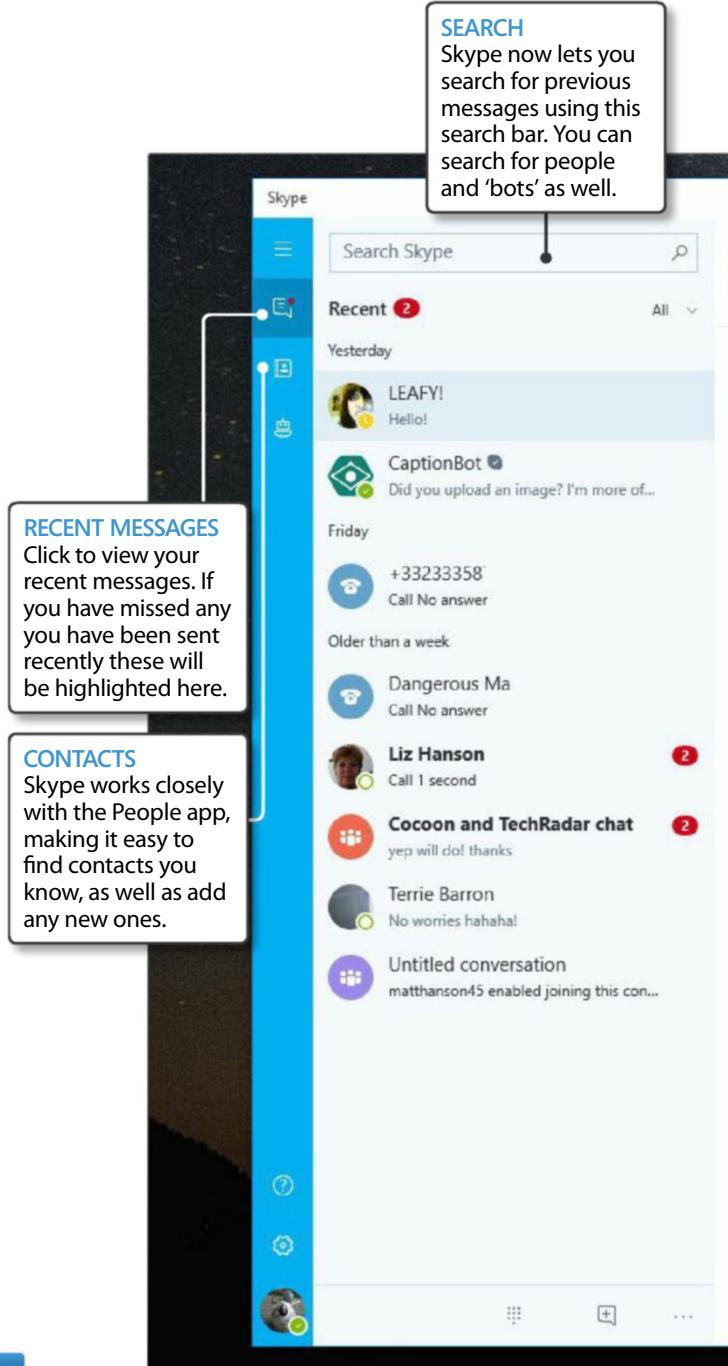
- ▶ Anyone can do it
Straightforward
Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

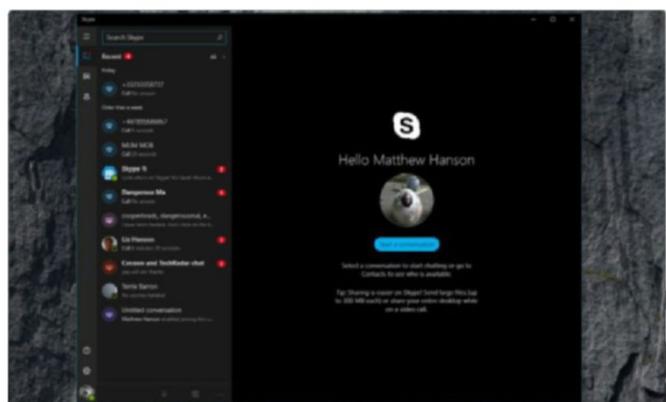
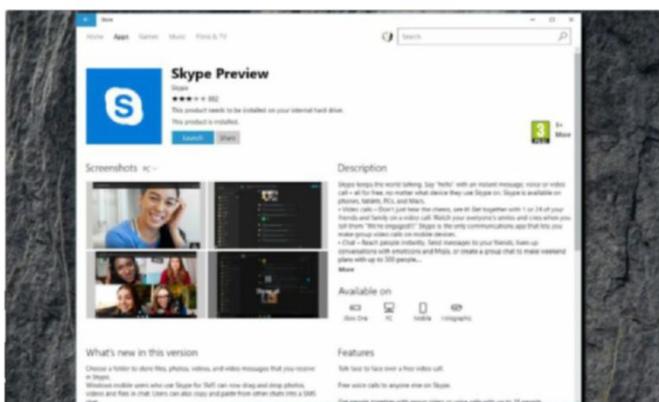
- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

The Windows 10 Creators Update brings a wide range of new features to Windows 10, and one of the apps that has seen the biggest change is Skype. Ever since Microsoft acquired the video calling service in 2011, it has been an integral part of Windows, seamlessly integrated into the operating system and making it incredibly easy to keep in touch with friends and family around the world via free voice and video calls. If you haven't tried Skype, then now is an excellent time to start since it's free to download and use.

Video and voice calls to other Skype users are free – potentially saving you huge amounts of money on phone bills. You can also buy Skype credit allowing you to phone – and now text – mobile phones and landlines from the Skype app on your Windows 10 device. Read on to find out how to get started and make use of the exciting new features...



Step-by-step Use the new and improved Skype app



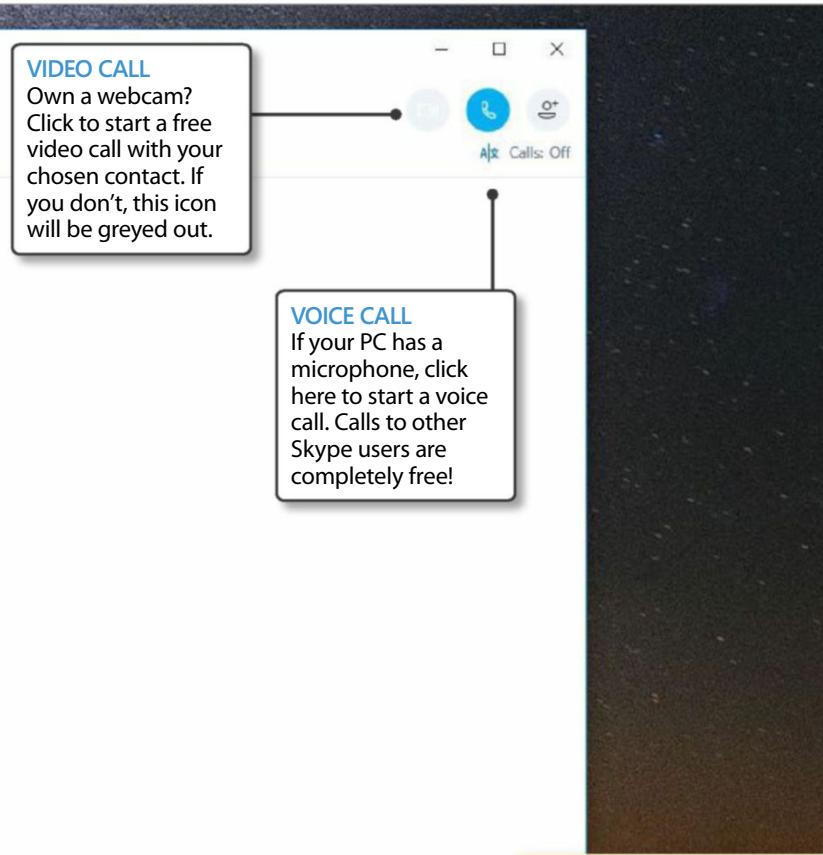
1 Download the latest Skype app

To make use of these new features (or if you've not used Skype yet), you'll need to install the latest version of its Windows 10 app. If you have the Windows 10 Creators Update, the app should be updated as well, but you can also download the new version even if you haven't updated Windows. Open the Windows Store, search for 'Skype' and select Skype or Skype Preview.

2 Launch Skype

After making sure that the latest version of the Windows 10 Skype app has been installed, you can launch it by opening the Start menu and typing in 'Skype'. Once Skype has launched, a window will appear listing some of its new features. Don't worry about reading that too carefully, since we will explain each one here! Close the window and you'll see the main Skype interface.

★ LEAFY!



Jargon buster!

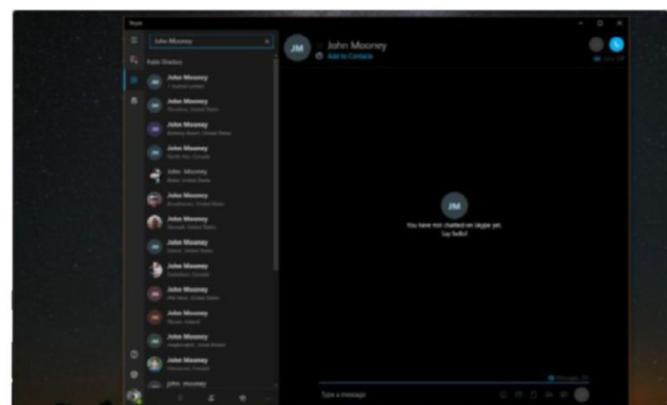
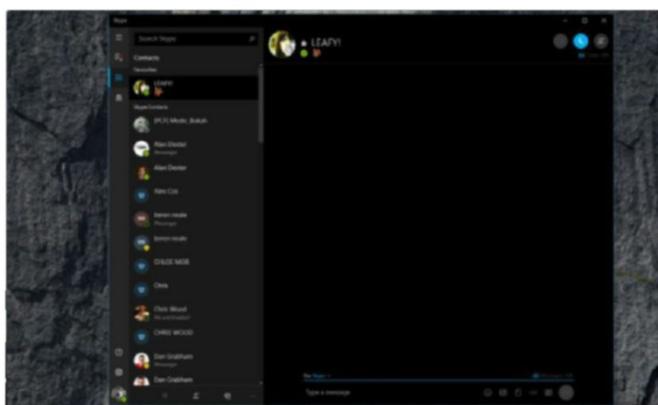
► Windows 10 Creators Update

This is the latest major update to Windows 10, and it comes with a wide range of new and improved features, including a new version of Skype. It's free for Windows 10 users, so keep an eye on Windows Update.

► Emoticons

These are popular icons that people use in text and messages to quickly convey emotions. Skype, like pretty much any messaging program, has a large range of emoticons that you can use.

A screenshot of a Skype conversation window. On the left, a message from 'LEAFY!' says 'Hi there! 😎' with a timestamp of '19/09'. Below it, a message from 'Hello!' says 'Hello!' with a timestamp of '10/04' and the word 'Sent' next to it. At the bottom, there is a text input field with the placeholder 'Type a message' and a 'Via Skype' link. A callout box labeled 'CHAT BOX' points to this input field, stating: 'Type here to send instant messages to your Skype friends. You can also use this box to write and send SMS texts.' On the right, a yellow sticky note titled 'MATT'S BEST TIP!' contains the text: 'Skype uses a 'dark' theme by default. To change this to a 'light' theme select Settings in the bottom-left corner.'



3 View your contacts

Skype is all about staying in touch with people, and to do that, you need to add contacts to Skype. The good news is that the new update makes adding people to Skype even easier. If you use the People app in Windows 10 as an address book, you should see your contacts are already in Skype. You can use the search bar at the top of the app window to easily find who you're looking for.

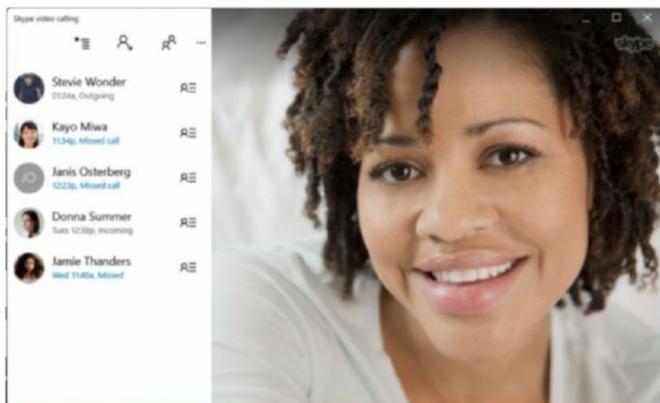
4 Add a contact

If you want to add someone to Skype, click the icon of a person with a '+' sign next to them, which is found at the bottom of the Skype window. The latest version of Skype lets you see any mutual contacts you have with people you search for. This makes it easier to identify the right people. Once you've found who you're looking for, click 'Add to Contacts' to add them to Skype.



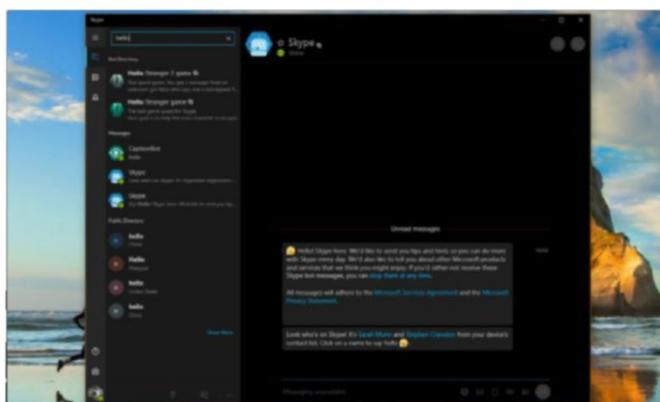
5 Add a phone number

While you can make video and text calls to other Skype users for free, calls to other landline and mobile numbers cost money. Luckily, you can use Skype Credit to make these calls instead. Skype credits are cheap to top up and use, and cost a lot less than making regular international calls. To add a phone number, click the icon of the telephone with a '+' sign next to it.



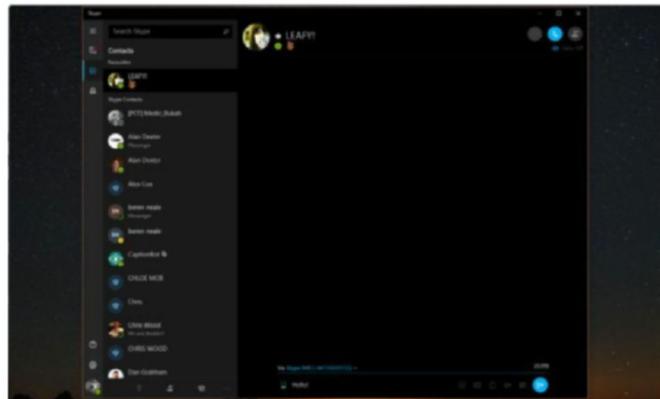
7 Make better group calls

Group calls are when two or more people are involved on the same call – making them ideal for virtual business meetings, or big family reunions. The latest Skype update makes group calls even easier – and more fun – than before. To add people to a group call, click on the icon of a person with a '+' sign next to them, then select who you want to join.



9 Search your chats

Skype works brilliantly as a free instant messaging program, enabling you to have text chats with contacts around the world. You can even exchange pictures, video and **emoticons**. For that reason, one of its newest features is a welcome one – the ability to search your messages. To do that, click the Recent Messages icon, then in the Search Skype box, type the phrase you are looking for.



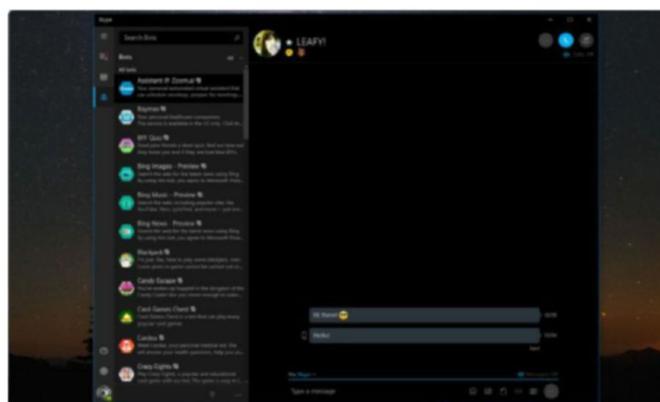
6 Send a text message

One of the most useful features of the new Skype app is the ability to send regular text (or SMS) messages. Again, these are paid for using Skype Credit, but are still cheaper than using your phone when texting people in other countries. To do this, select a Skype contact who has a phone number. Where it says 'Via' in the chat box, select Skype SMS, type in your message and tap Send.



8 Easily switch between devices

Microsoft has worked hard to make Skype an integral part of your life, and one of the ways it has done this is by adding a new feature to the latest version of the app, which lets you quickly and easily switch between devices while on a call. This is great if you're at your desktop PC, but want to switch to your tablet while you move around your home without interrupting your chat.



10 Don't forget the basics

Skype remains an excellent video and voice calling app, and all the features that made it so popular remain. If you want to start a video call, click on the contact you want to call, then on the Camera icon in the top-right corner of the app. To make a voice call, click the telephone icon. Microsoft is dedicated to improving Skype, so keep an eye out for more new features in future! ■

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Learn how to...

Save and view content later



Your guide *Nate Drake* says...

"Save and categorise web content in your browser with the Pocket extension for Microsoft Edge"

At a glance

Skill level...

► Anyone can do it

Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

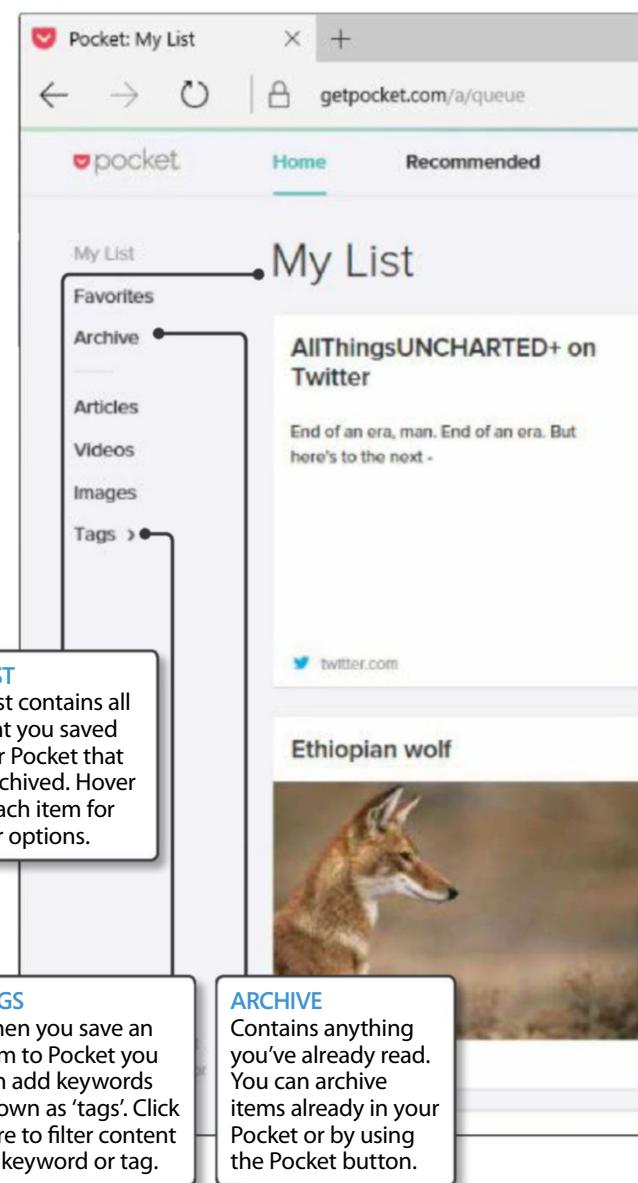
Windows 8.1

Windows 7

Students, researchers or anyone who struggles to organise the vast number of web pages they visit, can now breathe a huge sigh of relief.

The basic version of the Pocket extension is now available free for Microsoft Edge, enabling you to tag and search through previously saved web content. Once added, the Pocket button appears to the right of your browser's address bar. Click this any time or right-click any web content to save it to your personal Pocket list. You can even sync your Pocket saves to other devices using mobile versions of the Pocket app for iOS, Android and Windows 10.

This guide focuses on the free, basic version of Pocket. The Premium version offers a permanent library, advanced search features and Suggested Tags. To use Pocket with Microsoft Edge, be sure to install the Windows 10 Anniversary Update.

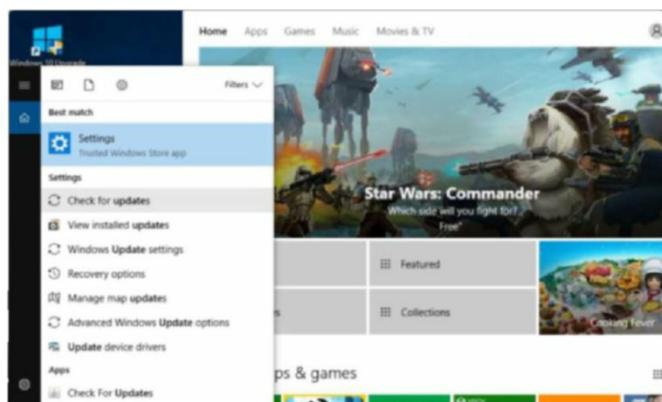


MY LIST
Your list contains all content you saved to your Pocket that isn't archived. Hover over each item for further options.

TAGS
When you save an item to Pocket you can add keywords known as 'tags'. Click here to filter content by keyword or tag.

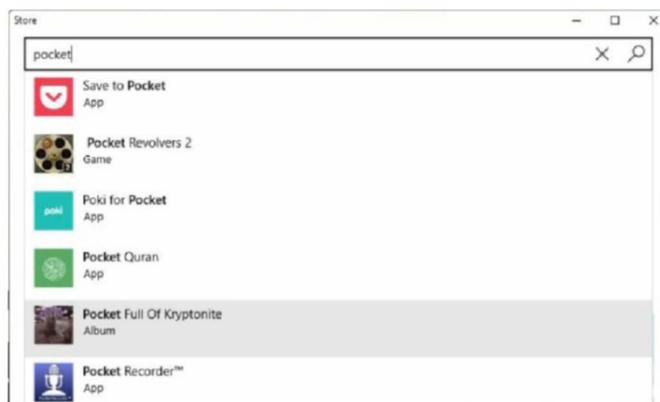
ARCHIVE
Contains anything you've already read. You can archive items already in your Pocket or by using the Pocket button.

Step-by-step Set up your Pocket list



1 Install the Windows 10 Anniversary Update

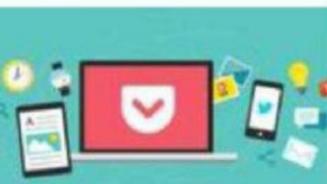
If you plan to use [Pocket](#) with Microsoft Edge, you need to have the Windows 10 Anniversary Update installed. Double check you have this by clicking the search icon at the bottom left of your screen and typing 'update'. Next, click on 'Check for Updates' in the Settings category. If updates are available, you can click Install Now to continue. You may need to restart your PC to update it.



2 Install the Pocket extension

Once your PC is up to date, launch the Windows Store using the icon in the Taskbar. Click the Windows Store search button at the top right and type 'pocket'. Click the first option in the search results named 'Save to Pocket - App' to load the application page. Next, click the Get button to download and install the app. Once completed, click the Launch button to open Microsoft Edge.

"Page Saved!" Here are some tips to get started with Pocket



getpocket.com

9307jfCats_in_the_Philippine



POCKET ITEMS

Hover over your saved items to add or edit tags, archive read items, add content to your favorites or delete.

VIEW
Click here to toggle between Grid and Tile views. Select Videos, Images or Articles on the left to filter your items.

Dire wolf



bbc.co.uk

Arctic fox



bbc.co.uk

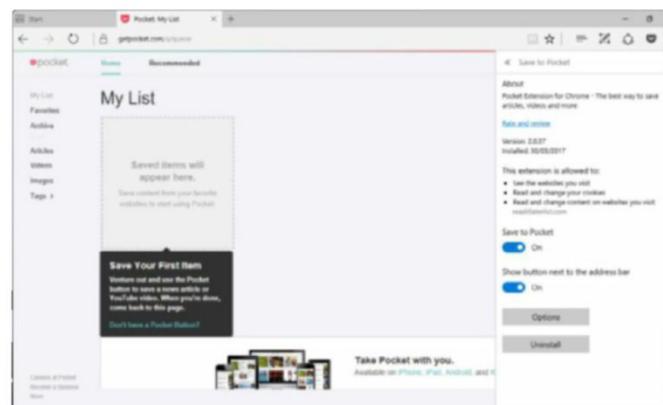
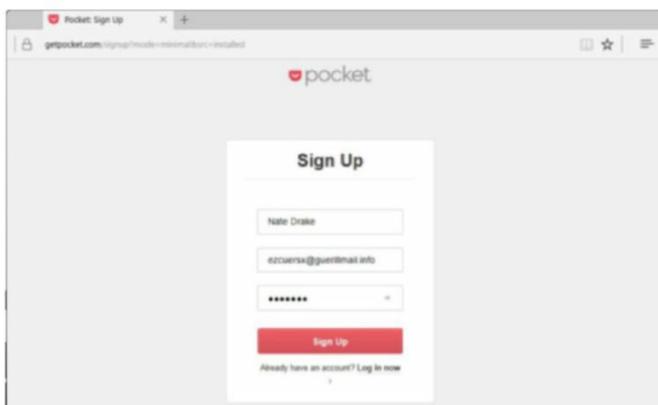
Four Seasons ~ Vivaldi



youtube.com

NATE'S BEST TIP!

Pocket comes pre-installed with Mozilla Firefox. Google Chrome users can also install it via the built-in web store.



3 Create a Pocket account

On first run, Microsoft Edge will notify you that Pocket is installed. Click 'Turn it on' to activate the extension. A new page will open asking you to register your Pocket account. Click 'Sign up with Google' or 'Sign up with e-mail' to enter your name, email and password. Click 'Sign Up' when done. Pocket will announce you're now ready to start saving. Click 'Start Saving' to begin.

4 Show the Pocket button

Pocket will launch with a prompt explaining that you can save your first item. Ignore this for now and click on the ellipsis (...) or More Options button at the top right, then Extensions. Hover your mouse over 'Save to Pocket' and click the gear icon to enter its settings. Click 'Show Next to address bar' so the Pocket button is always visible. This makes saving content easier.

Jargon buster!

► Pocket

A handy browser extension that can save your favourite web content as you browse. Click the button at any time to save to your Pocket. You can also save your favourite links to your archive.

► Archive

Your Archive is used to keep a record of web content you've already accessed, such as articles you have read when doing research.

► Tags

Tags are keywords or expressions that you can add to content saved to your Pocket to make items easier to find later on.



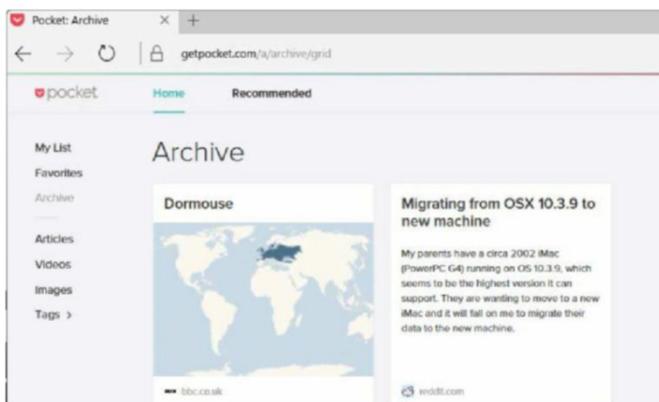
5 Save videos to Pocket

Open a new tab by clicking the '+' button at the top of your screen and go to a video-sharing website, such as YouTube. Find a video you'd like to save and click once on the Pocket button. A pop-up will appear saying the video has been saved. Click inside the Add Tags box to add keywords to make the content easier to find later. To add multiple **tags** press [Return] after each phrase.



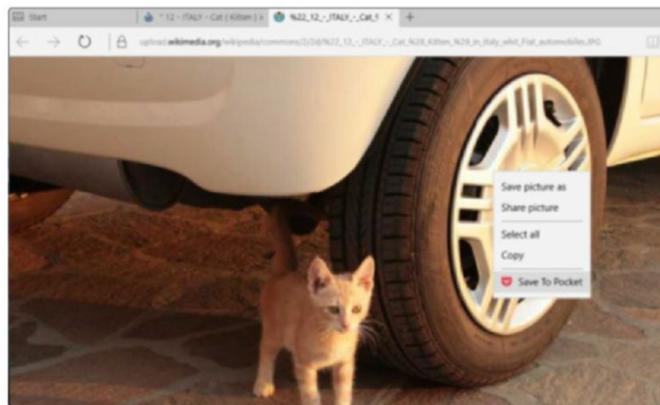
7 Add articles to Pocket

Pocket can also store news articles on your device. Simply navigate to a news website or similar and click the Pocket button at the top right. As with images and videos, you can add tags to make it easier to sort through articles later. You can save other kinds of pages as web links in Pocket, but you will need an internet connection to load the content itself.



9 Archiving items

If you want to keep track of pages you've visited, simply click the Pocket button to save a page in the usual way and add a memorable tag such as 'BBC News'. Click on the More Options button in Pocket to archive the page. To see the content you've saved, click on the Pocket > More Options button again then Open Pocket. Click **Archive** on the left to view your saved items.



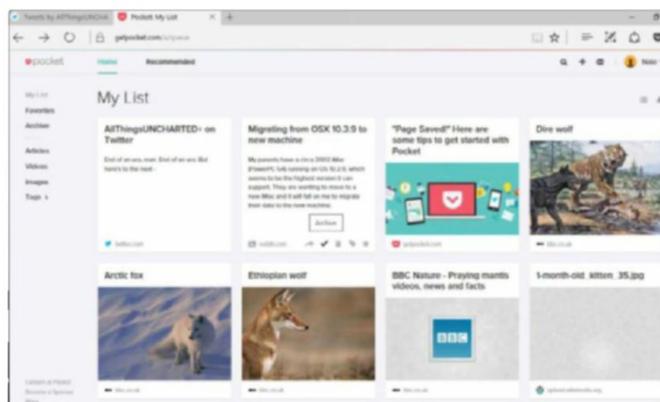
6 Add images to Pocket

Pocket can save images as well as videos to your device so you don't need to load the entire web page to retrieve them. To add an image, simply hover your mouse over it, right-click and choose 'Save to Pocket'. A confirmation pop-up will appear where you can add tags to the image as before. When you return to your Pocket list later, click Images on the left to display only pictures.



8 Activate Quick save services

Certain websites have integrated support for Pocket, so instead of clicking the Pocket button to save an entire page, you can store individual items by clicking the Pocket link next to them. To do this, click the Pocket button then the ellipsis (...). Choose Settings, then find the section labeled 'Quick save services'. Tick the check box for each website that you want to use.



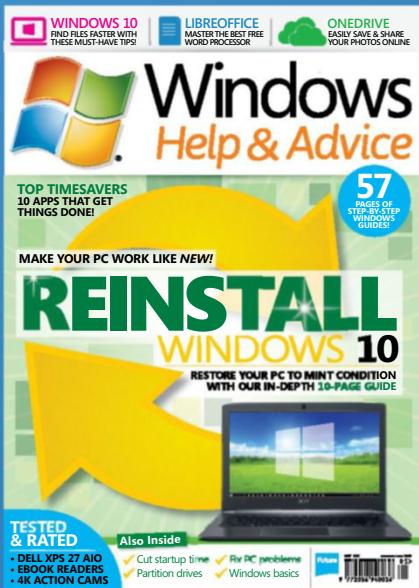
10 Manage your Pocket

Open your Pocket list at any time by clicking Pocket > More Options > Open Pocket. Move your mouse over items to see options such as Archive, Delete, Favorite and Edit Tags. If you need to edit multiple items, to add a tag for instance, use the grey Bulk Edit button at the top right. To filter by keyword click Tags on the left then on your chosen tag. Click 'My List' to show all items. ■

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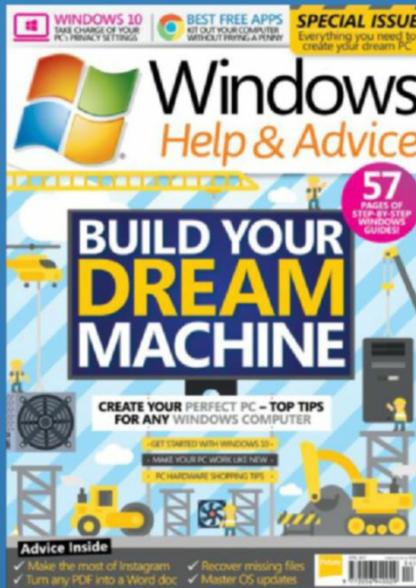
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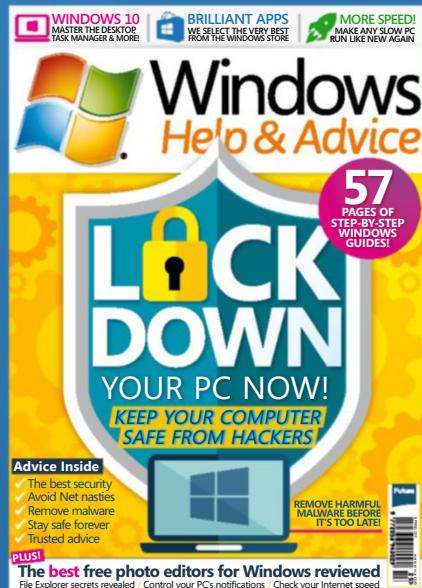
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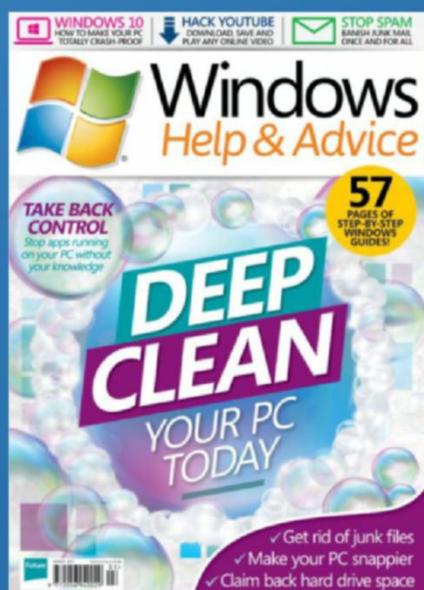
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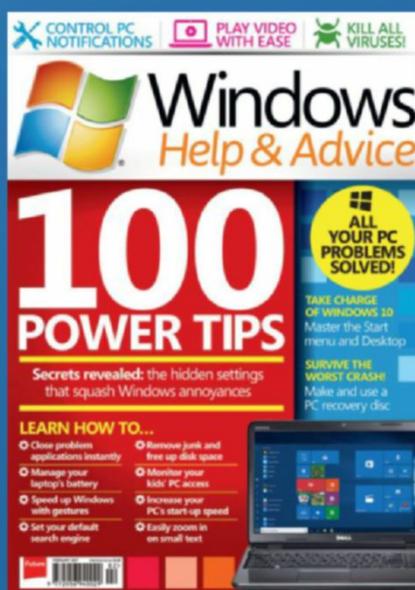
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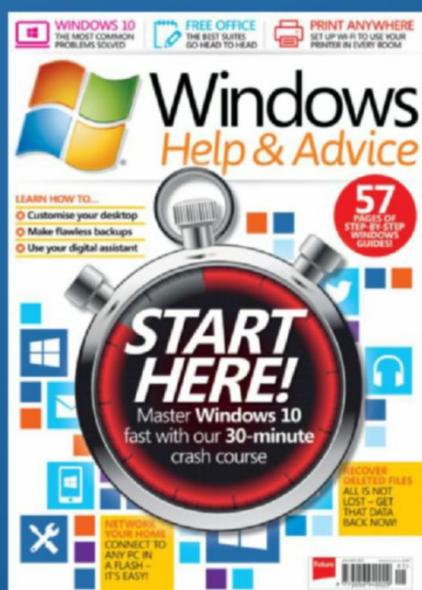
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Learn how to...

Move your emails from Windows Mail



Your guide *Cat Ellis* says...

"Windows 10's default email app is very limited – make the move to Mozilla Thunderbird instead and see how much more it can do"

At a glance

Skill level...

► Anyone can do it

Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

Windows 8.1

Windows 7

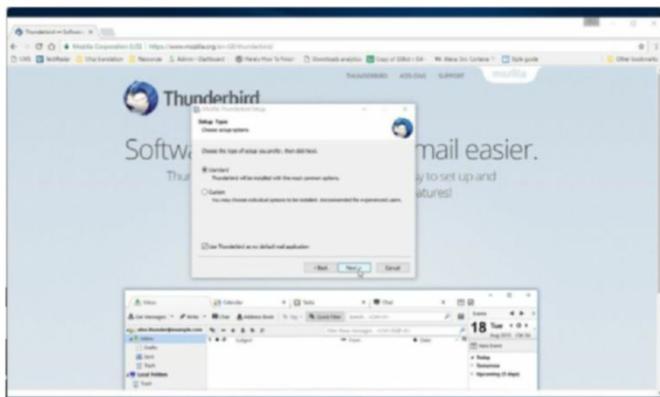
When you start using Windows 10, you'll notice that all the default apps are Microsoft's own creations: your new web browser is Microsoft Edge; your anti-virus is Defender; your media player is Groove Music; and your email app is Mail.

Most of these are perfectly good programs, but Mail, sadly, isn't. The main problem is that unlike most desktop email clients, it doesn't store your messages on your PC. That means it doesn't make backups, and if you can't connect to the internet you won't be able to read any of your old email messages.

Mail's only real purpose is to keep all your different email accounts together in one place and provide notifications when you receive new messages, but there's a free program called Thunderbird that can do that and much more besides. Here's how to install it and move from Mail.

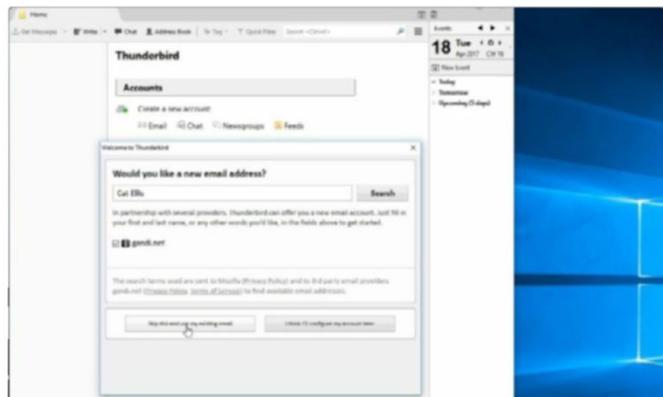


Step-by-step Switch to Mozilla Thunderbird



1 Get Thunderbird

Thunderbird is an email client developed by Mozilla – the same team that created Firefox. It's brilliant for anyone who uses more than one email account, and is easy to set up. To get started, download it from www.mozilla.org/thunderbird and run the installer. Choose a standard install, and make sure the checkbox marked 'Use Thunderbird as my default mail application' is ticked.

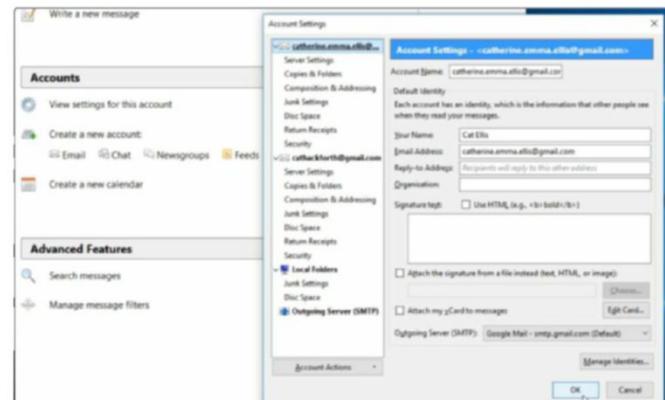
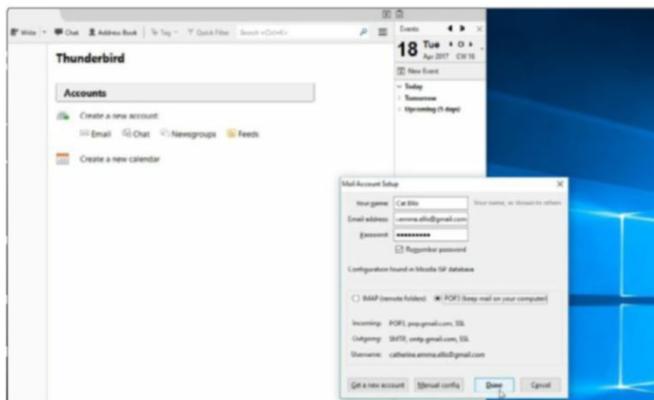


2 Set app defaults

Launch Thunderbird and it will ask if you want to make it the default app for mail, feeds and newsgroups. You definitely want it for mail, and it's good to keep your RSS feeds in one place so keep both checked. Few people use newsgroups these days, so leave this option unchecked. When asked if you want to create a new email address, click 'Skip this and use my existing email'.

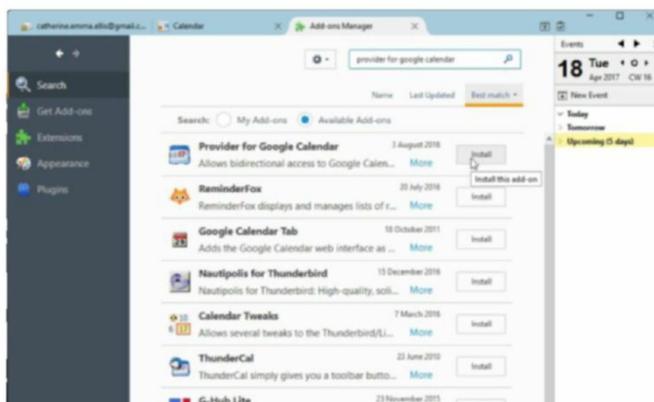
Explore

Move your emails from Windows Mail



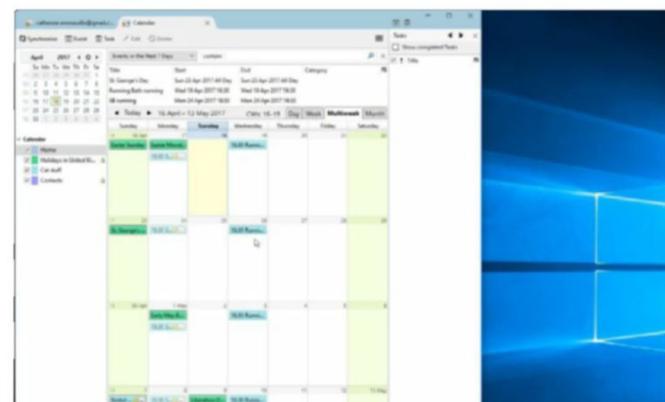
3 Add an email account

Type in one of the email addresses you want to connect to Thunderbird, and enter its password. Email clients used to need a complicated setup process, but Thunderbird should pick up the settings it needs automatically. When you're asked to choose between IMAP and POP3 settings, pick the latter to keep a copy of your emails on your PC for access when you're offline.



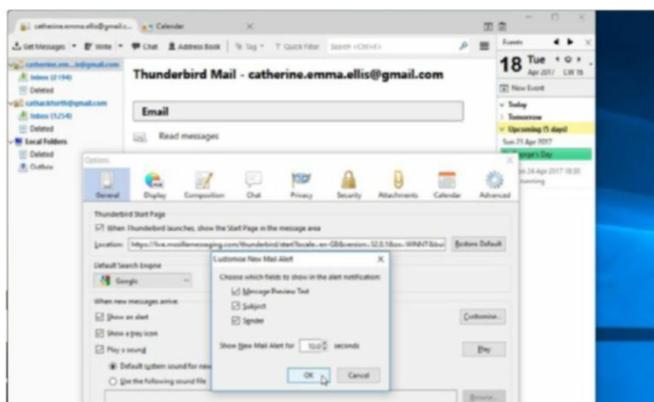
4 Sync your messages

Your inbox will look empty, but don't worry – click 'Get messages' and everything will be synchronised. If you use more than one email account, click your email address at the top left and select Email under 'Create new account'. Now click an email address and select 'View settings for this account'. You can adjust the spam filter, and choose where copies of emails are saved.



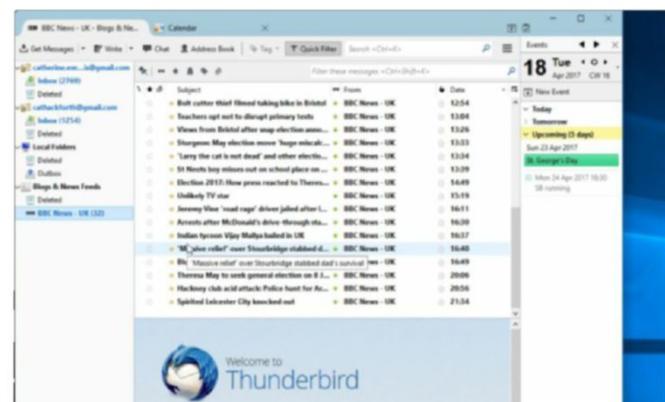
5 Add a calendar

Not only does Thunderbird keep all your email accounts organised, it can also help you manage your schedule with its calendar features. To add your Google calendars, click the Calendar tab, then click the menu button and select 'Add ons' > Extensions. Search for 'Provider for Google Calendar', and when it appears, click Install. Restart Thunderbird when prompted.



6 Sync your events

Click the Calendar tab, then right-click in the empty space on the left and select 'New calendar'. Select 'On the network' > Google Calendar > Next and enter your Gmail address. Enter your password when asked and give the app permission to manage your calendars. Choose which calendars to add, then click Next > Finish. You can now add, delete and edit events in Thunderbird.



7 Configure alerts

Click the Mail tab, then the menu button and select Options > Options. Here you can change the alert you receive when a new message arrives – a note on the desktop, a discreet icon in the system tray, or just a sound. It's also worth checking the security settings. Allow your anti-virus software to quarantine suspicious messages, and let Thunderbird notify you of possible email scams.

8 Get news bulletins

To make Thunderbird even more useful, let's add some RSS feeds. Click an email address, then click 'Create new account' > Feeds > Next > Finish. Click 'Manage subscriptions' and paste in the address of an RSS feed. Click 'Add', and the feed will be added, so you can get at-a-glance headlines. With messages, calendars and news now at your fingertips, you'll never go back to Mail! ■

Learn how to...

Edit images in Photoshop



Your guide *Ian Evenden* says...

"Improve the look of your holiday snaps with Photoshop Express and a few simple clicks and tweaks"

At a glance

Skill level...

► Anyone can do it

Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

 Windows 10

 Windows 8.1

 Windows 7

Editing photos is one of the best things you can do with your Windows PC. Not only is it relatively straightforward much of the time, but there are myriad apps available to help you – many of which are available at low cost or for free. Windows 10 even comes with its own Photos app to get you started, but by exploring the Windows Store you can find programs that go much further than Microsoft's image editor.

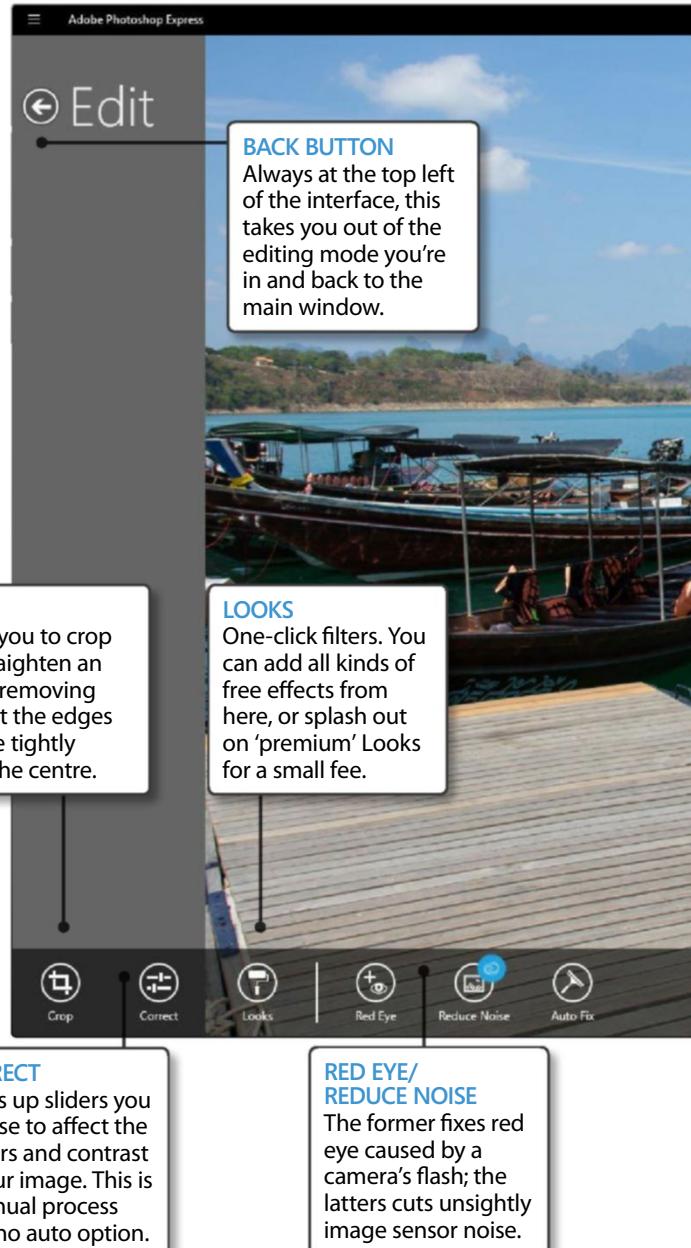
Here, we're going to take a look at Adobe Photoshop Express, a free app from one of the biggest names in the business. Adobe is the company behind the professional Photoshop and InDesign software we use to create this magazine as well as a lot of applications used in the movie business, so it should know a thing or two about touching up your holiday memories or fixing your Facebook profile. Read on to find out how to do that in the free Photoshop Express.

Step-by-step Fix your photos



1 One-click fix?

If you're pushed for time, Photoshop Express has an Auto Fix option. It's not really why we're here, since it doesn't do much that Windows' Photos app can't, but it shows up the limitations of such automatic systems. In this photo, it's lightened the dark areas and altered the colour of the sky to a paler blue, but has done nothing about the wonky horizon. To fix this, we have to go hands-on.



BACK BUTTON
Always at the top left of the interface, this takes you out of the editing mode you're in and back to the main window.

CROP
Allows you to crop and straighten an image, removing pixels at the edges to more tightly frame the centre.

LOOKS
One-click filters. You can add all kinds of free effects from here, or splash out on 'premium' Looks for a small fee.

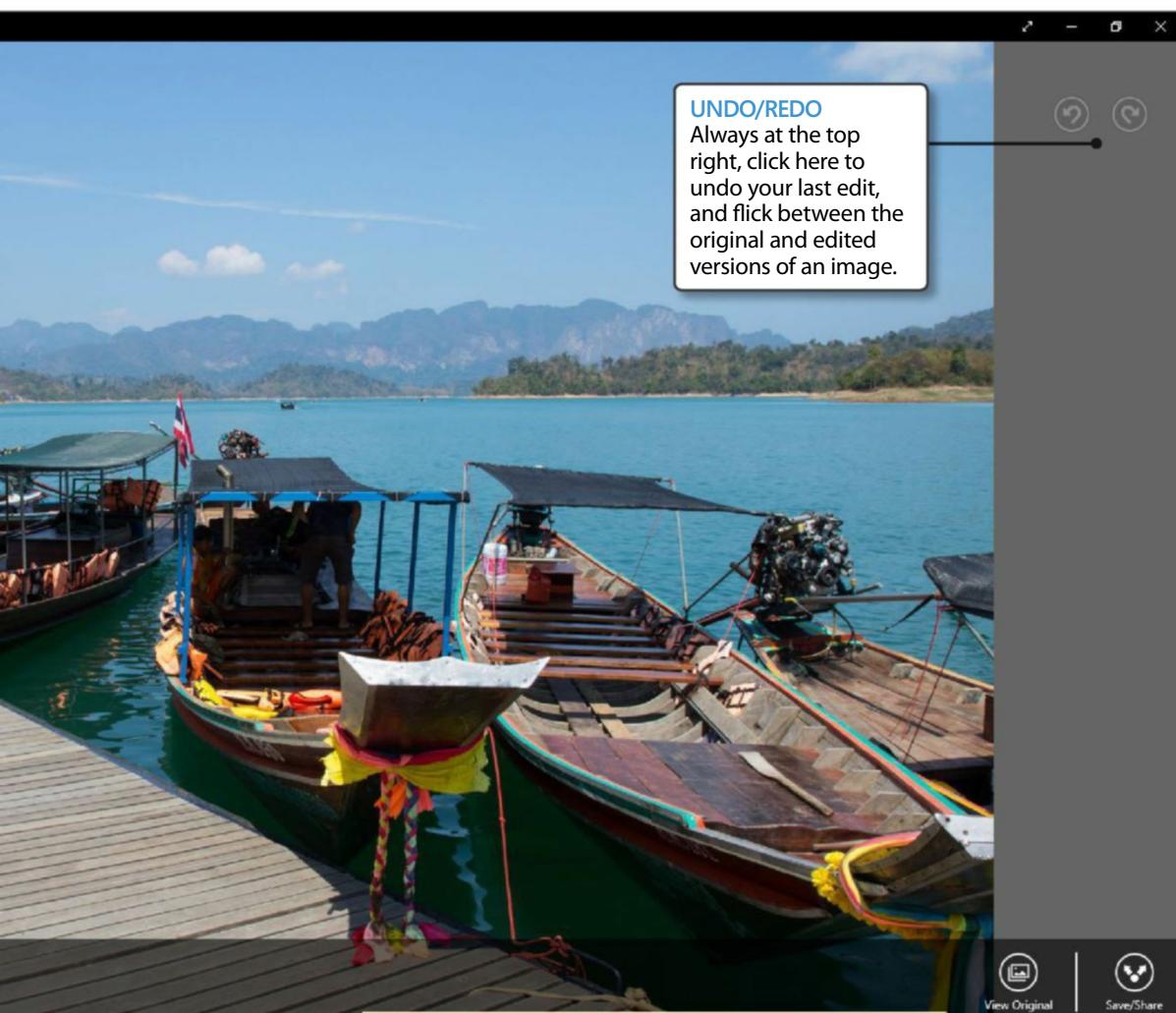
CORRECT
Brings up sliders you can use to affect the colours and contrast in your image. This is a manual process with no auto option.

RED EYE/REDUCE NOISE
The former fixes red eye caused by a camera's flash; the latter cuts unsightly image sensor noise.



2 Straighten the horizon

That horizon, caused by a wobbly boardwalk on the way down to the boats, can be sorted easily, but at the expense of some of the edges of the image. Using Crop to straighten it out rotates the image, so the corners are moved outside the new image rectangle, and are discarded. There's nothing we can't bear to lose, but it's worth thinking about when you straighten images.



Jargon buster!

► Noise

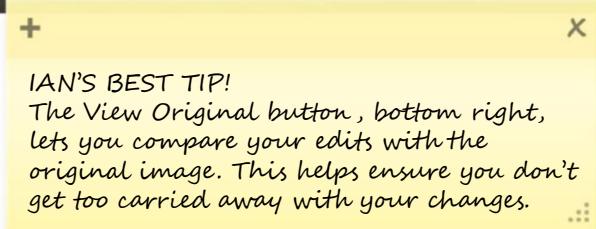
Pixels of the wrong colour caused by over-amplification of the image signal by your camera sensor. Can be reduced in software, but often at the cost of detail.

► Colour temperature

Measured in degrees Kelvin, this is a measure of how yellow or blue the light in an image is. Photoshop Express doesn't show you the technicalities, but allows you to change this using White Balance tools.

► Red eyes

Caused by light from a flash that's too close to the camera lens bouncing back from the retina of your subject's eyes.



3 Crop further

Now let's crop further into the image to see how it affects the composition. There's a lot of that wobbly boardwalk in the bottom left of the image, so by removing that we can concentrate on the boats and the water. By moving the corners of the Crop tool rectangle so they make a square-ish image taking in the right side of the original, we make it more interesting to look at.

4 Using Looks filters

Press the back button to reverse out of the Crop tool, and choose the one which looks like a paint roller, to access the Looks. These are one-shot filters – and you aren't given any control over the intensity with which they're applied, which undermines the idea of using an editing app in the first place. That said, Looks are capable of making some striking changes to your photos.



5 Make manual adjustments

The Correct tools are the place to go if you want to choose how your image looks for yourself. Located between Crop and Looks, Correct gives you manual control over the brightness and colours of your image. Contrast covers the difference between the dark and light parts of the image; Clarity also tweaks contrast, but can make photos appear sharper; Vibrance deepens colours.



7 Correct even more

Besides Reset are Auto and View Diff. The former automates the process we're trying to do by hand, while the latter shows you the original, unedited image. The third part of Correct is White Balance, which is split into Temperature and Tint. You can warm up a cold-looking photo by boosting the [colour temperature](#), which injects more yellow into the image. Reducing it adds blue.



9 Red Eye removal

If you're unlucky enough to have taken a photo in which the subject has glowing [red eyes](#), don't despair. What once was the death of a serious photograph can now be fixed rather easily. Open the tool by clicking the icon next to Reduce Noise, and you'll be asked to tap or click on the eyes of your portrait. It takes less than a second for the redness to be removed.



6 Correct some more

There's a Reset button at the left if you change your mind. The next part of Correct is Exposure, which lets you to change the brightness of your image. It's split into three: the first part works across the whole image; the second part only on the bright areas; and the third only on the dark bits. The latter is useful to brighten shadows to reveal lost detail, or darken parts that are too light.



8 Noise reduction

Digital [noise](#) looks like a fine scattering of wrong-colour pixels across your image. It's more noticeable on images taken in the dark, or from devices with tiny image sensors. Photoshop Express's noise reduction features are 'previews' – which means Adobe wants a small fee to unlock them – but they were available free at the time of writing, provided you sign up or sign in here.



10 Save/Share

You'll find Save/Share at the bottom right of the interface. This gives you the choice of saving your image to your device's storage or sharing it to Facebook. You only have the option of saving it as a JPEG, but saving your image as a new file without overwriting the original is good practice. You can always reopen the original PNG, TIFF or JPEG file later if you want to re-edit. ■

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Learn how to...

Make your PC easier to use



Your guide **Rob Mead-Green** says...

"Take control of your PC and make it work the way you want to. All it takes are a few tricks and tweaks"

At a glance

Skill level...

► Anyone can do it

Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

Windows 8.1

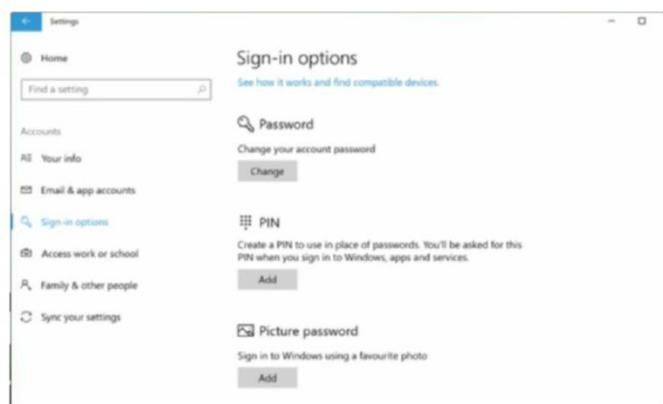
Windows 7

With every update, Windows gets easier and easier to use, but quite often the way that Microsoft wants you to use your PC isn't always the best one for you. In this tutorial, we're going to explain how to bend Windows 10 to your will, so it works exactly the way that you – not Microsoft – wants it to.

The first place you should head to is Windows' Settings. From here you can do things like change the default resolution of the display to make it easier to read, make logging into Windows easier, and choose the default apps for your files.

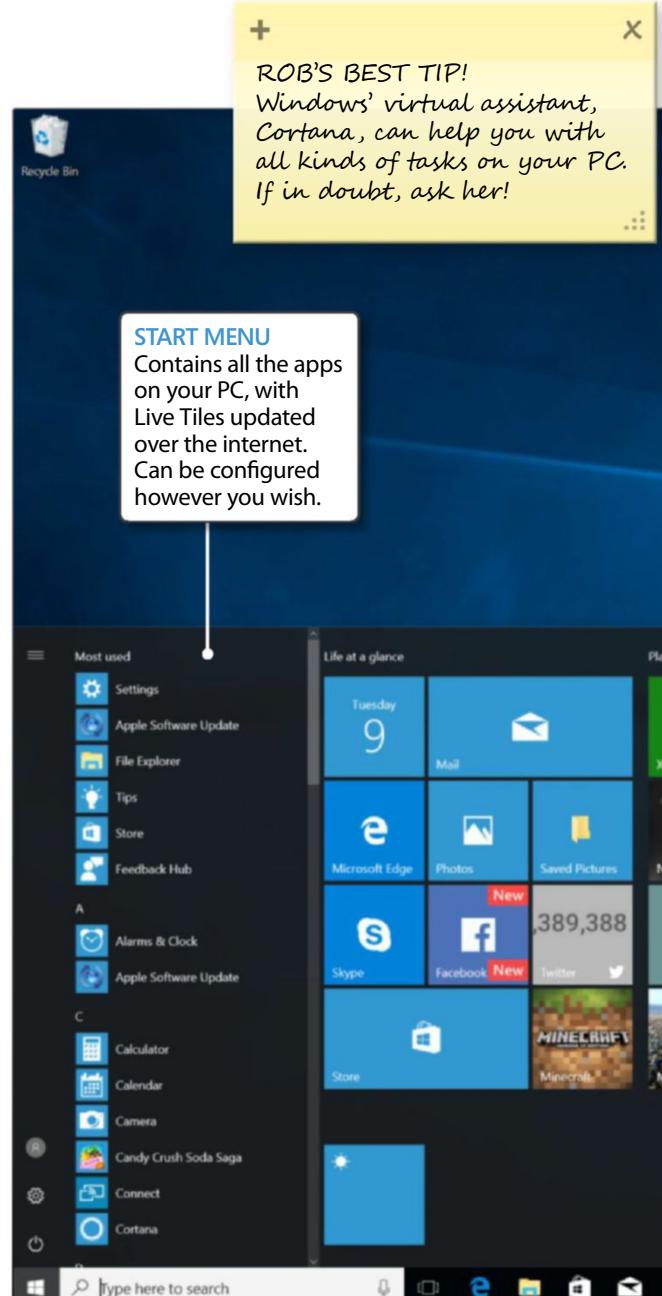
We'll also show you how to customise the Start menu, add your most frequently used folders and apps to the Taskbar and customise File Explorer's menu options, so no matter what you're doing or where you are in Windows, everything you need is at your fingertips. So without further ado, let's begin...

Step-by-step Take control of your computer



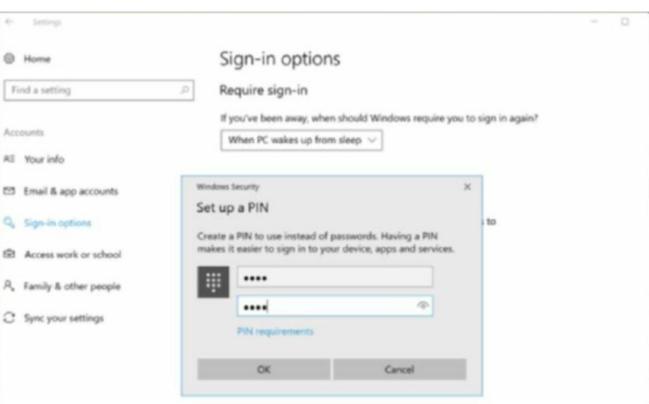
1 Create a PIN

If you sign into your PC (or other apps and services) using your Microsoft account, Windows will ask for its password every time you login. If your password is long and/or complicated, this can get old very quickly. Luckily, there is an alternative: you can create a PIN. To do that head to Settings > Accounts > 'Sign-in options', scroll down to the PIN option and click Add.



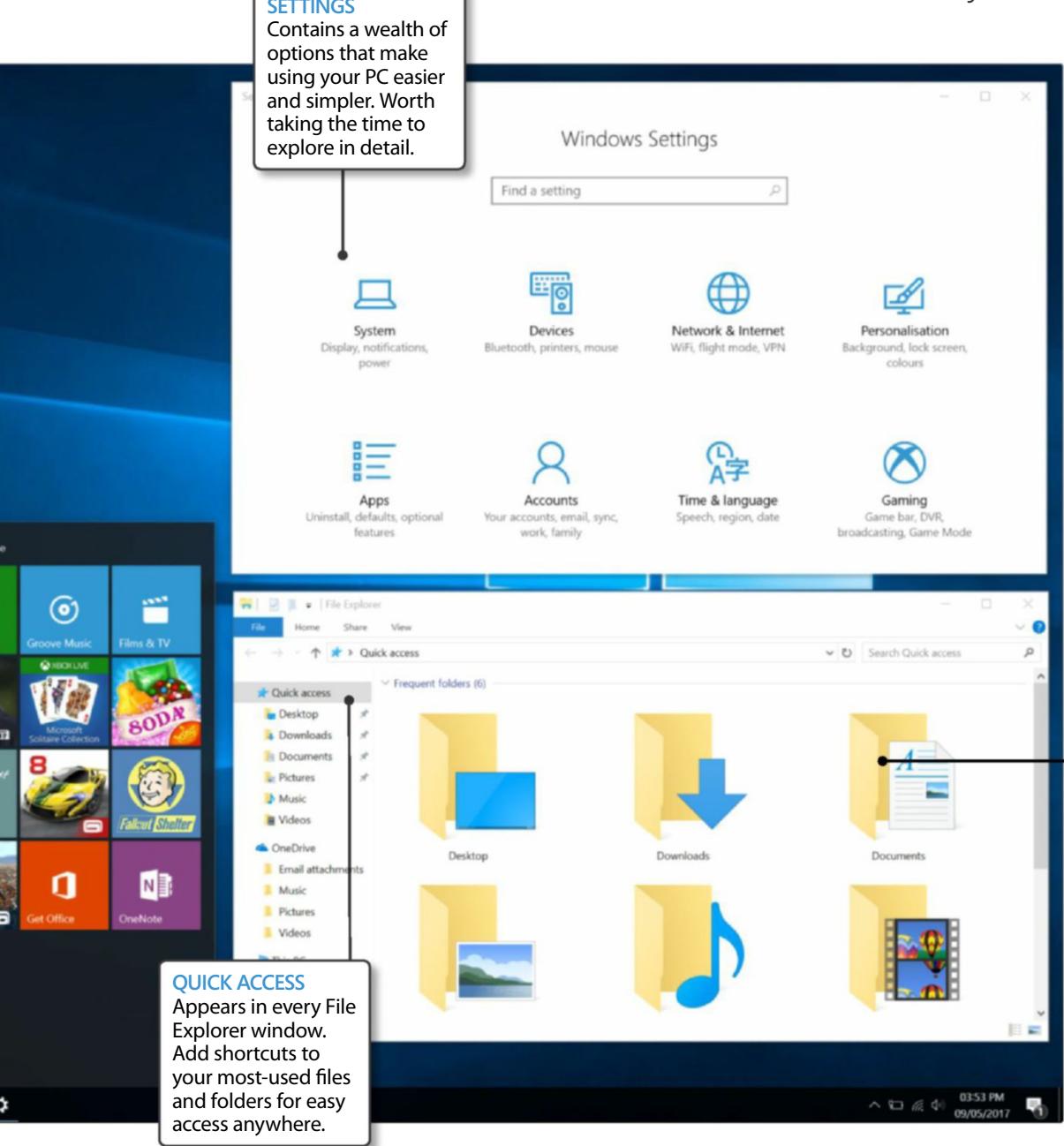
START MENU

Contains all the apps on your PC, with Live Tiles updated over the internet. Can be configured however you wish.



2 Use your PIN

You will be asked to enter your PIN twice. You can make the PIN as long or as short as you like (longer is better), but aim for a minimum of four digits – letters or numbers ideally. Now logout of Windows. The next time you login, instead of being asked to enter your password, Windows will ask you for your PIN. You can still use your Microsoft password to login if you wish.



Jargon buster!

► Quick Access

A folder pinned to the top-left of File Explorer's browser window, which contains shortcuts to your favourite items.

► Taskbar

The bar at the bottom of your Windows desktop, which displays any apps or items you currently have open.

► Night Light

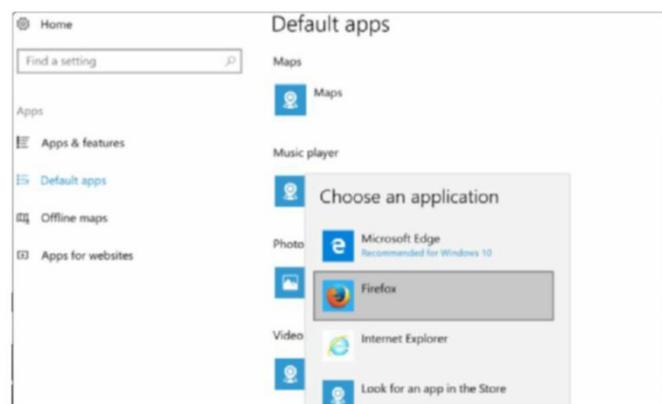
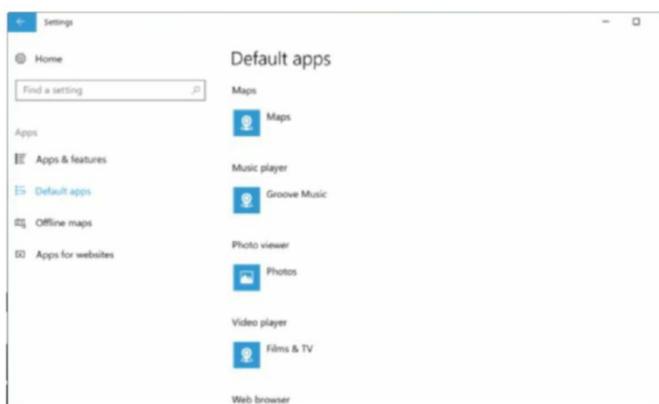
A new feature of the Creators Update that can automatically adjust the colour of the display at night or in the evening by reducing the amount of blue-white light.

FILE EXPLORER

Your window on the Windows world. Use it to find, add, move, copy and delete files and folders on your PC. Customisable.

TASKBAR

Contains all of the currently open items on your PC. You can also easily pin items here for quick and easy access.

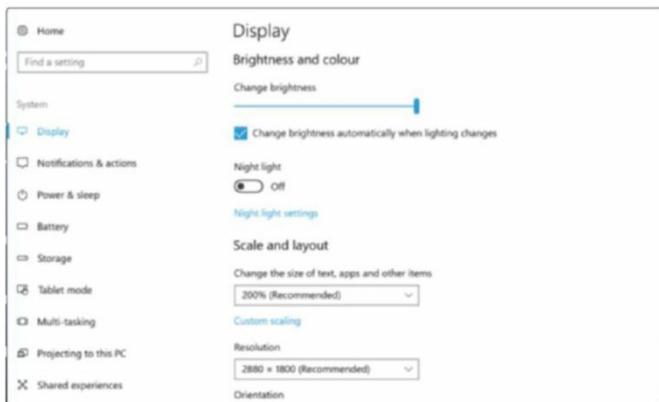


3 Choose your default apps

Windows comes with a great range of built-in apps that let you do things like surf the web, check your emails or listen to music, but what if you want to use alternatives such as Firefox, Thunderbird or iTunes? Head to Settings > Apps > Default Apps and you'll be able to choose which apps opens automatically when you want to carry out a particular action.

4 Change the defaults

Download an app that you want to use – in this case we want to use Firefox instead of Edge. While you can make the change when you first install the app, you can also do so later. Head to Settings > Apps > Default Apps again, scroll down to 'Web browser', right-click on the current default (Microsoft Edge) and choose Firefox from the pop-up menu which appears.



5 Change the display

Windows is pretty good at choosing the right resolution for your PC's display, but if you find the default leaves you struggling to read what's on screen, you can change it. Head to Settings > System > Display and look under the 'Scale and layout' options. The settings you need can be found under 'Change the size of text, apps and other items' drop-down and under Resolution.



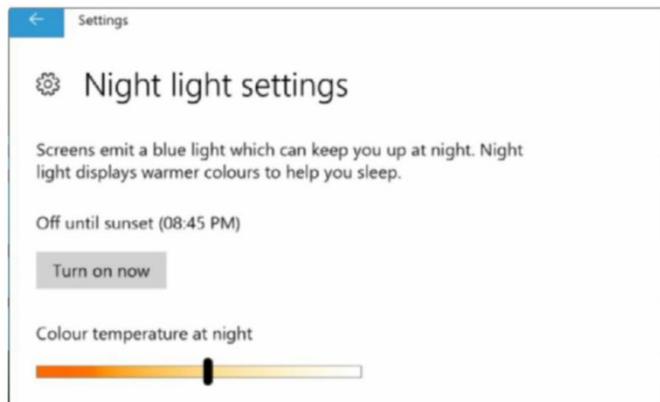
7 Customise the Start menu

Windows populates the Start menu with all kinds of apps that you may or may not use, but you don't have to stick with the defaults. You can right-click any tile to remove it – select 'Unpin from Start' from the pop-up window that appears. You can also use this window to switch Live Tiles on and off. Or even resize tiles so they reflect your own usage habits and priorities.



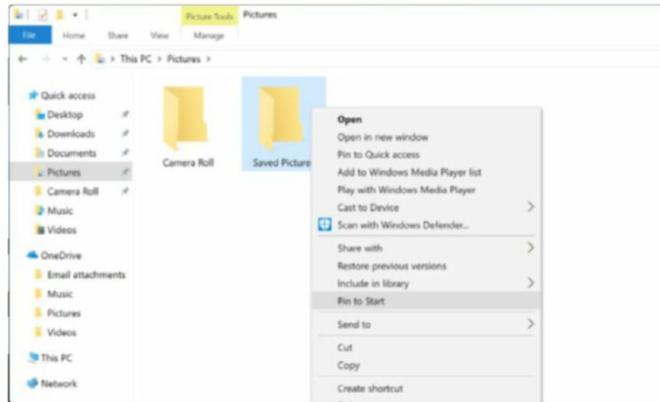
9 Customise the Taskbar

The **Taskbar** is one of the most useful tools in your Windows armoury. Open apps appear here automatically, but you can also add any others – and files or folders as well. To add an app to the Taskbar, choose it from the list of applications on the Start menu, right-click it, then choose More > 'Pin to taskbar' in the pop-up window that appears. Its icon will now appear in the Taskbar.



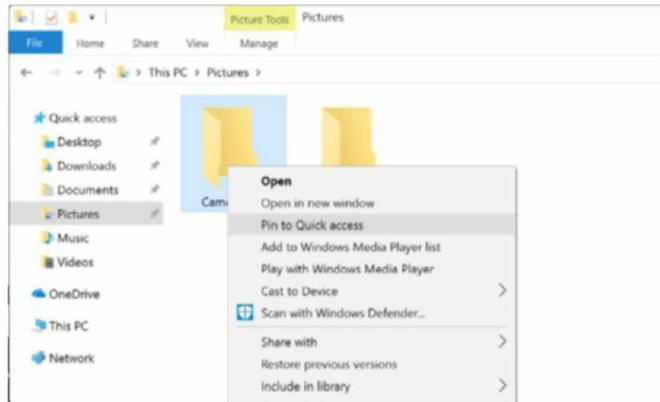
6 Use a Night Light

The Windows 10 Creators Update includes a **Night Light** mode, which adjusts the colour of the display to reduce eye strain and help you sleep better. Under Settings > Display, switch the 'Night light' toggle to On. Or click 'Night light settings' for further options – such as setting the time when Night Light mode kicks in and to adjust the default colour it uses when activated.



8 Add items to the Start menu

Another great thing about the Start menu is that you can add any file, folder or app to it that you use often – giving you speedy access to it whenever you want. To add an item to the Start menu, right-click it, then choose 'Pin to Start'. It will now appear alongside the other tiles there. To move the tile, simply click-and-drag it to its new position and then let go.



10 Add items to Quick Access

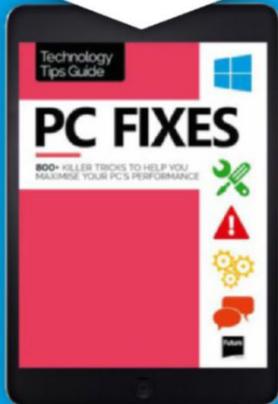
The **Quick Access** menu in File Explorer is a great way to access your most frequently-used files – and its contents are there to see in every File Explorer window you open. Quick Access is already populated with your Desktop, Documents and other folders, but you can add any item you wish. To do that, right-click an item and select 'Pin to Quick access' to add its shortcut. ■

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FIXING YOUR PC

Technology
Tips Guide



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PC FIXES

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Learn how to...

Discover the amazing apps in Windows 10!



Your guide *Nick Odantzis* says...

"Windows 10 has a load of incredible apps built-in. In this guide we'll show you how to find them and some of the amazing things that these freebies can do"

At a glance

Skill level...

- ▶ Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

Chances are you head to the internet (or check the pages of this very magazine!) when you want to find new apps for doing stuff on your PC, whether it's editing your photos or bolstering your PC's anti-virus protection. In many cases, you don't need to go anywhere, because they're right under your very nose – they're built into Windows. You may have seen some on your travels – many are attached to the desktop area in Windows 10, but others are more hidden.

There are loads of apps available to try, catering for a wide variety of needs, from the very simple – the calculator app, which lets you to do your sums from the comfort of the desktop – to the more complicated, such as Cortana, which enables you to do stuff on your PC just by using your voice. In this tutorial we'll show you how you can find all of them, and reveal which one is our very favourite.



NICK'S BEST TIP!
You can change the default app that is associated with certain files. Go to Settings > System > 'Default apps'.

Step-by-step Find all the amazing apps built into Windows 10



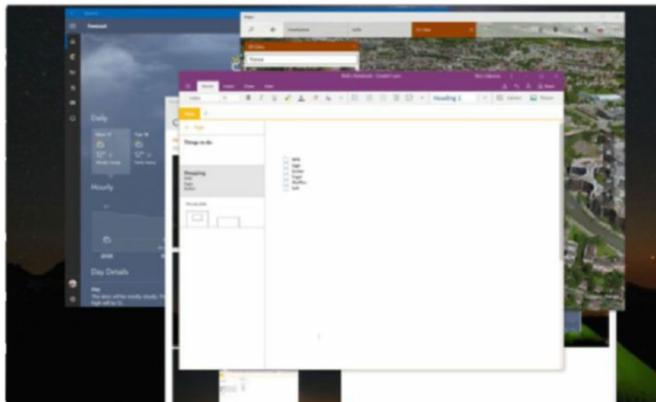
1 Find the apps

It's easy to find any of the apps built into Windows 10 – just go to the Start menu by clicking on the Windows icon in the lower left corner of the screen. A menu will appear with a column of all the available apps on the left side, and on the right side you'll see tiles showcasing many of these apps, including Camera, Skype and more. To open an app, just click (or tap) on it.



2 Place an app

By default, Windows shows you all the apps in the Start menu, but you can change this so the apps you to use most are placed front and centre, and remove any you don't like so much. If you want to remove an app tile, right-click it (or press and hold for a second with your finger), and choose 'Unpin from Start'. You can also resize apps, or turn off their Live functionality.



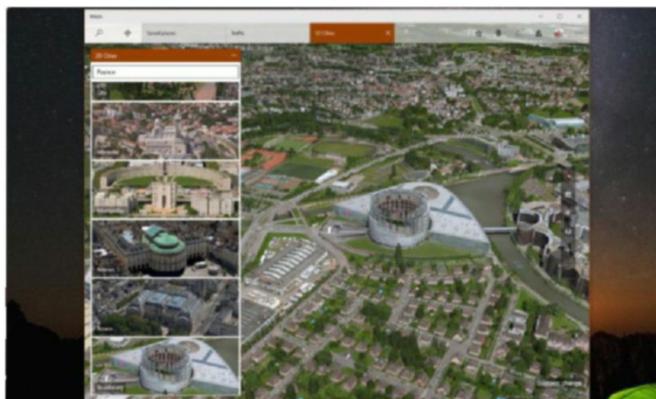
3 Open apps

When you open a built-in app, you'll see it appear on the desktop – they all have the same look and feel. Apps on the desktop will also have specific icons along the Taskbar, so you can keep track of which window is open at any time. If, in future, you want to download apps that are like the built-in ones, head to the Windows Store app – you can find it in the Start menu.



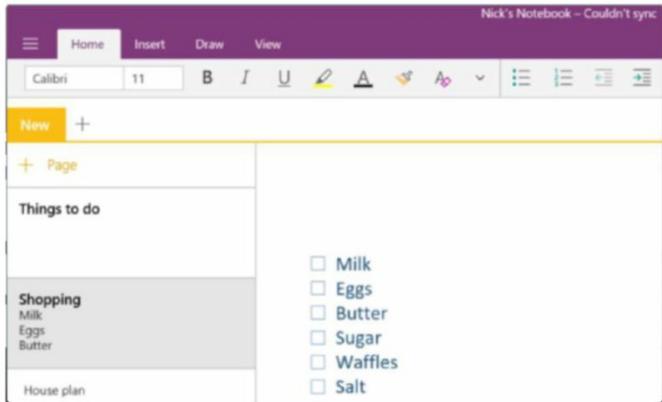
5 Check the forecast

If you want to check the weather while sitting at your PC, the Weather app lets you do just that. Allow the app to use your location and you can check the weather in your area, with hourly and long range forecasts. The Weather app gives you tons of data, including the chance of rain and how likely you are to get burnt. You can also see the forecast on a map or look at historical info.



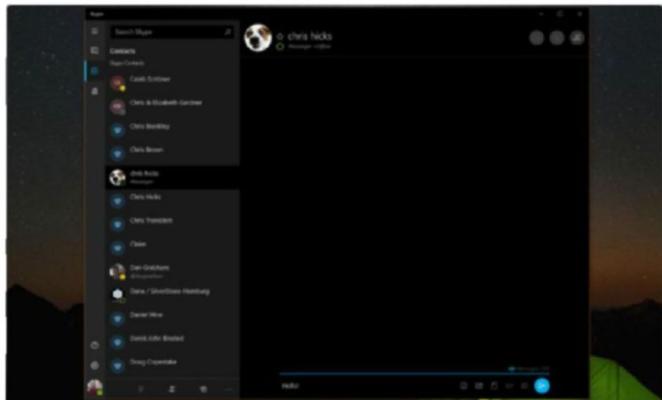
7 Go exploring

Windows 10 has a powerful mapping service baked in; it's so good that you might never use Google Maps again. Called Maps, it enables you to look anywhere around the world – the 3D Cities option in the top navigation bar enables you to see many cities in an astonishing level of detail. You can also click (or tap) the navigation arrow in the top left corner to get directions.



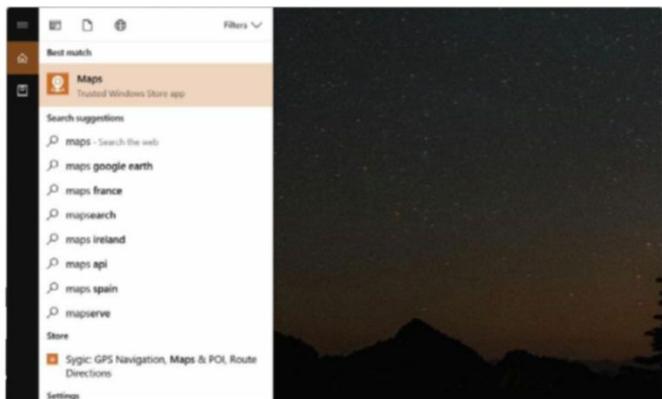
4 Make notes

Sometimes you need to jot something down, whether it's a list of tasks for the week ahead, or sketching out an idea. OneNote lets you do just that. Click or tap the main area of the window to start adding a note. First, create a new section and then add pages to your note by clicking '+ Page' underneath. Using the tabs at the top you can insert lists, images and draw anything you like.



6 Video chat with people

Skype is one of the best apps to have ever come out of Windows, enabling millions to chat with other people around the world using only their internet connection. A revamped version of the app can be found in the Windows 10 Creators Update (see page 28). Skype lets you access to all your contacts and message them instantly, or even start a video call (if you have a webcam).



8 That's it!

Now you've followed this tutorial, you will have discovered some of the great apps that are built into Windows 10 – to find more you just need to start looking through the list of apps in the Start menu, or type the name of the app into the search function. Cortana – another brilliant app that's included in Windows 10 – will be able to help you in your search for more apps. ■

Learn how to...

Browse safely with a VPN



Your guide *Alex Cox* says...

"Covering your footprints online is an easy way to browse sensitive information in confidence"

At a glance

Skill level...

- ▶ Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

Virtual Private Networks, or VPNs, are incredibly useful. They do exactly what their name suggests, creating a private tunnel through the internet from one point to the other. The private part is important – when you’re running a VPN, all of your traffic is encrypted as it travels across the world, meaning it’s safe from prying eyes. And then there’s the distance. With a VPN active and your traffic rerouted, your local machine appears to be in a different part of the world – you’ll be given an address relative to the machine you’re connected to instead.

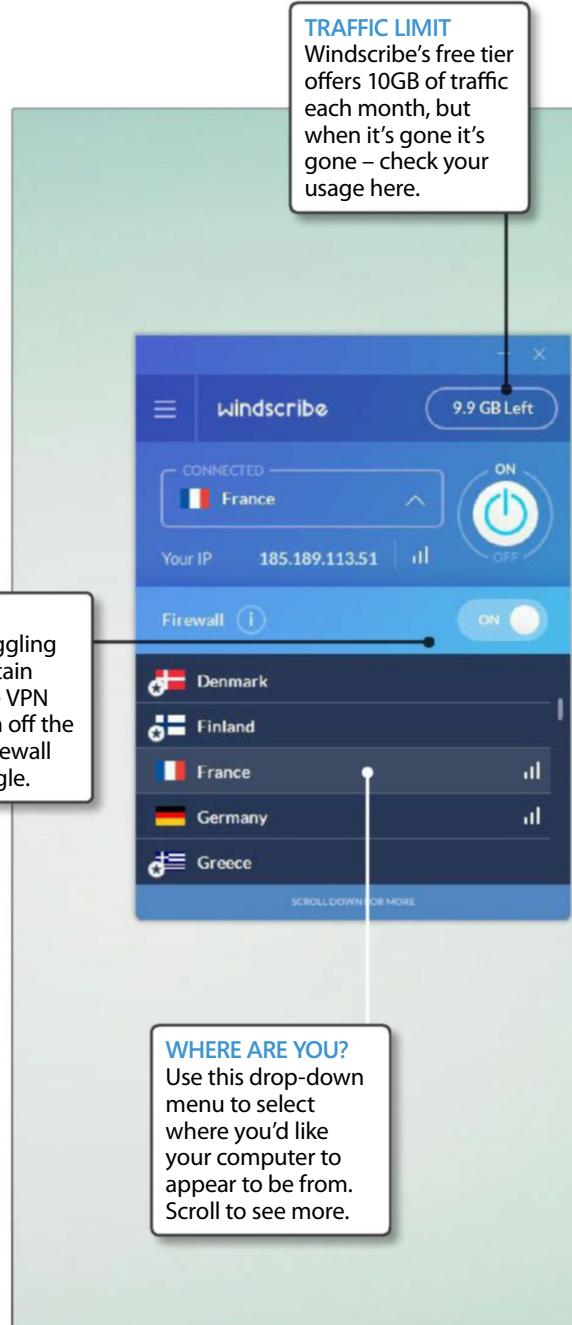
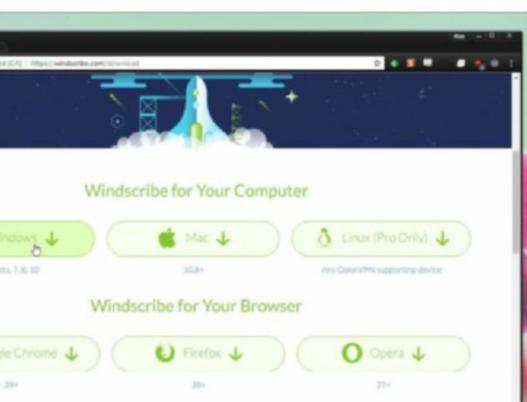
Our favourite VPN is Windscribe – it’s free, easy to use, allows you to select between locations, and offers a very generous data cap on its free tier. There are downsides to using a VPN, particularly a slight drop in internet speed, but they’re worth it for those moments when what you’re doing is, well, private.

Step-by-step Get started with Windscribe



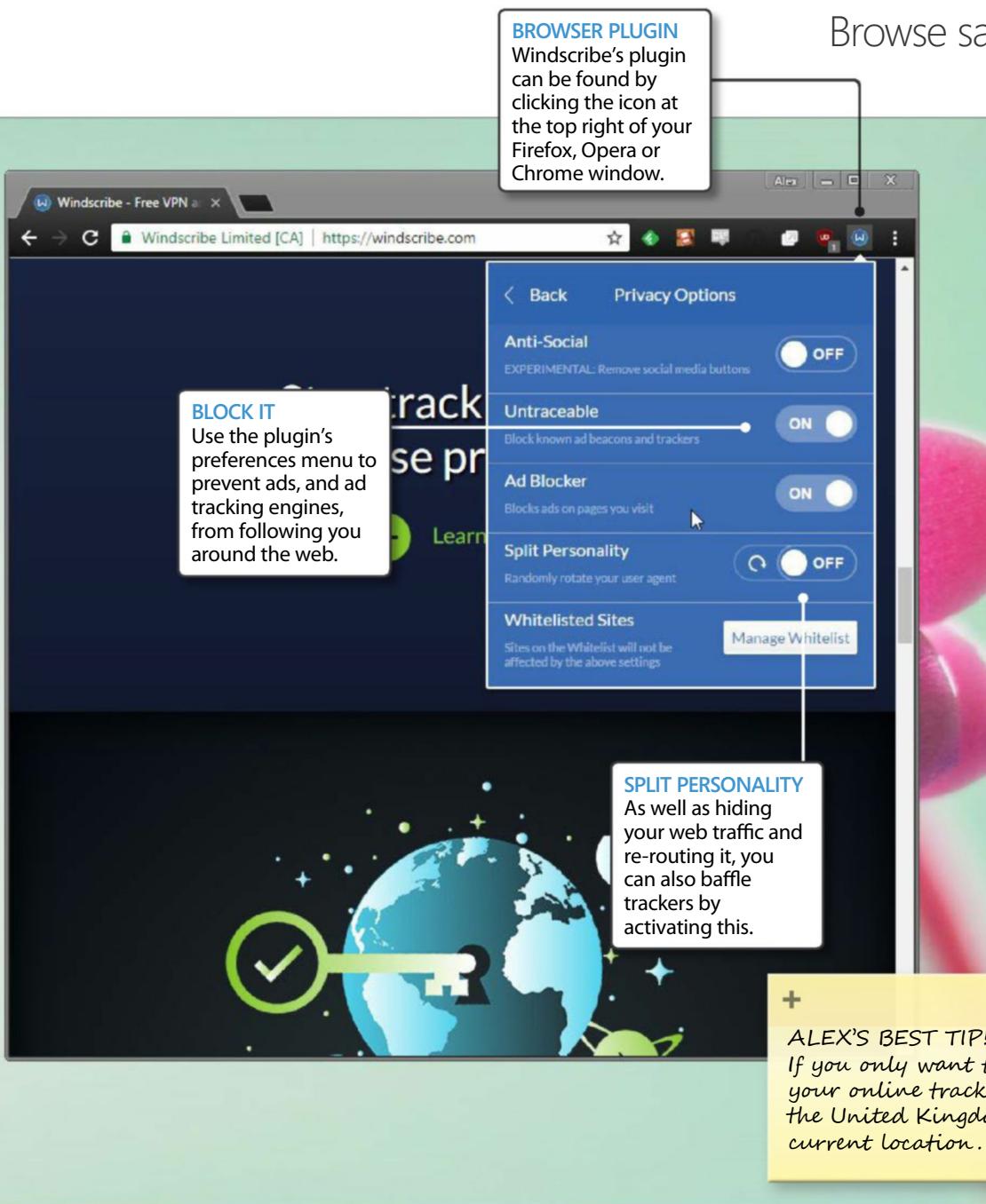
1 Check your IP

Before you start your VPN, let’s see what the internet knows about you. Open your web browser and go to www.whatismyip.com. You’ll see your public **IP address**, its originating location, and (most likely) the name of your internet provider. The location may be slightly off, but it’ll be close – this info is available to every site you visit. Make a note of your address for comparison later on.

2 Download Windscribe

Go to www.windscriber.com and click the green download button. The software is available both as a standalone app and as a web browser **plugin** – we’ll opt for the standalone download at this point, as it protects all online traffic, not just that which goes through your browser. Scroll down slightly and click ‘Windows’ in the ‘Windscribe for your Computer’ section of the page.



Jargon buster!

► IP address

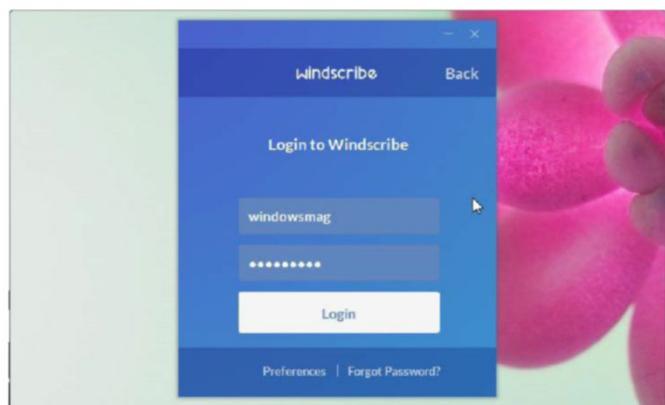
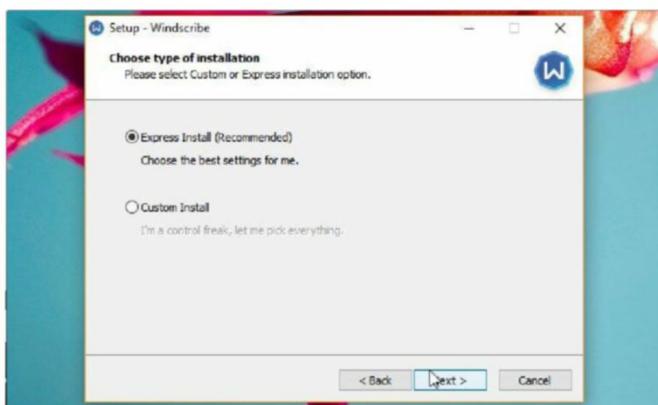
A series of numbers which determines a computer's location on a network. Think of it like your house address or your phone number; all internet-connected machines have one.

► Plugin

A way of adding extra capabilities to software. A browser plugin might be used to block online ads, for example.

► Virtual network adapter

A network adapter, like your Wi-Fi or Ethernet port, that's completely software based. Used to intercept network connections.

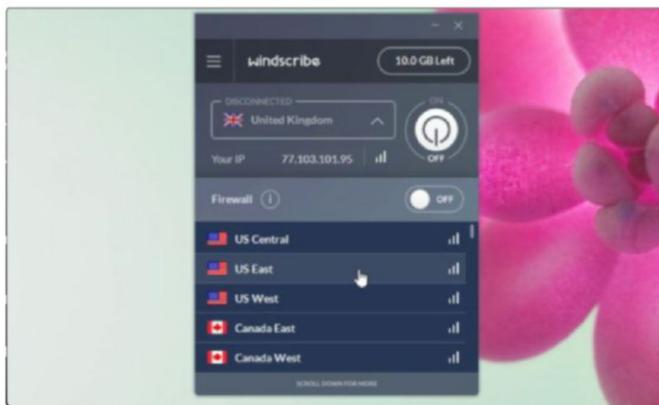


3 Install the software

Find the installer – it'll likely be in your Downloads folder – and run it. Accept the User Account Control prompt, then click Next, leave Express Install selected, click Next again to install. Accept the Windows Security prompt which appears by clicking Install – Windscribe installs a **virtual network adapter**, so needs your explicit permission – and click Finish to launch Windscribe.

4 Set up an account

Click 'no' on the initial screen, then 'Use for free' in the browser window that appears. Fill in your chosen username and password and, if you want to take advantage of the 10GB traffic limit, your email. Click 'Create Free Account', then head to your email account and click the link in the verification mail you've been sent. Go back to Windscribe, click 'yes' and fill in your details.



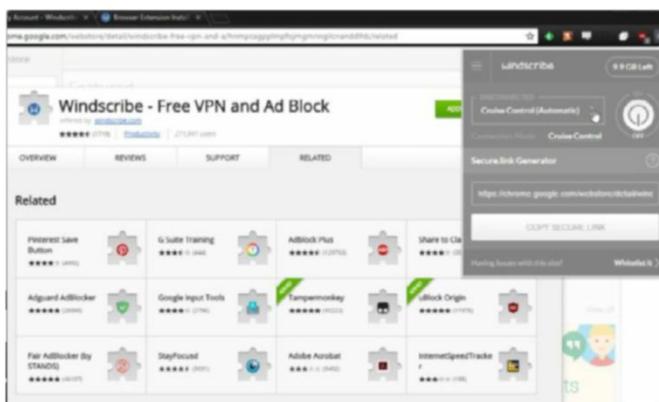
5 Select a server

Once you're logged in, you'll see the main Windscribe window. Click the drop-down box to see a list of available VPN servers (scroll down to see a larger selection) and find a suitable location that you'd like your PC to appear to be from. Bear in mind that those marked with a star are for paid-for customers only. Left-click the location and Windscribe will connect automatically.



7 Switch it off

Unless you're a very light internet user, it's probably not a good idea to leave Windscribe switched on all the time. You'll burn through the 10GB limit quickly unless you limit it to those times you really want your traffic to be private. Hit the large power button on the app to deactivate it, and a Windows pop-up will tell you exactly how much data you've expended.



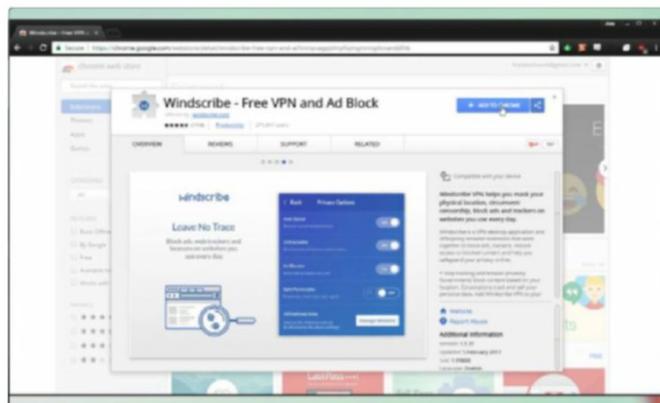
9 Extra protection

Install the plugin through your browser's plugin store (in this case we're using Google Chrome), then click the icon on your browser's toolbar and log in with your details. Click the icon again to turn it off – it's on by default. The plugin uses a 'cruise control' mode to change your location to match the content you're trying to access, although you can force a location if you wish.



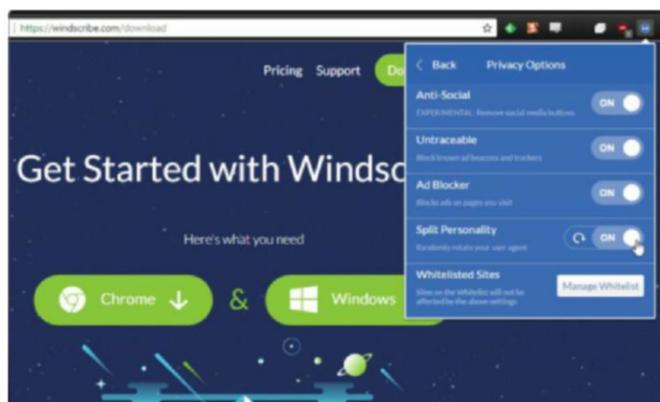
6 Watch the changes

It'll take a couple of seconds to connect, at which point you'll see the colour of the Windscribe window change from grey to blue and, all being well, the IP address will differ from the one you noted down earlier. At this point you're protected, and your internet traffic is shielded: open your browser and head back to www.whatismyip.com to see where your PC now purports to be.



8 Get the plugin

While the main app provides privacy, a firewall to protect against unwanted traffic, and location changing, the browser plugin adds ad blocking, anti-tracking tech, and the ability to create password-protected links to send to your friends. Go to <https://windscribe.com/download> and click the appropriate button beneath 'Windscribe for your browser'.



10 More settings

Click the three-line icon at the top left of the plugin, then click Privacy Options to see which features you'd like to switch on or off. You're now free to use the main app or the plugin to obfuscate your web traffic and change your location – your 10GB traffic allowance will renew monthly. You can get more free data by referring friends at <https://windscribe.com/referafriend>. ■

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AVAILABLE ON YOUR DEVICE NOW

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Learn how to...

Connect with Teamviewer



Your guide *Ian Evenden* says...

"Work smarter, chat to friends and family or help them with their PC problems using this clever app"

At a glance

Skill level...

Anyone can do it

► Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

Windows 8.1

Windows 7

Teamviewer is an application that allows you to view – and remotely control – another computer. Not just any old computer, however; the machine you're connecting to must have the client software installed and approve your connection – this isn't an app for hackers. The link between the two computers is also encrypted, so no one can spy on what you're doing.

There are mobile apps too, so you can complete a task on your home computer, left running and logged in, from a hotel room half the world away. All you need is your phone and some Wi-Fi.

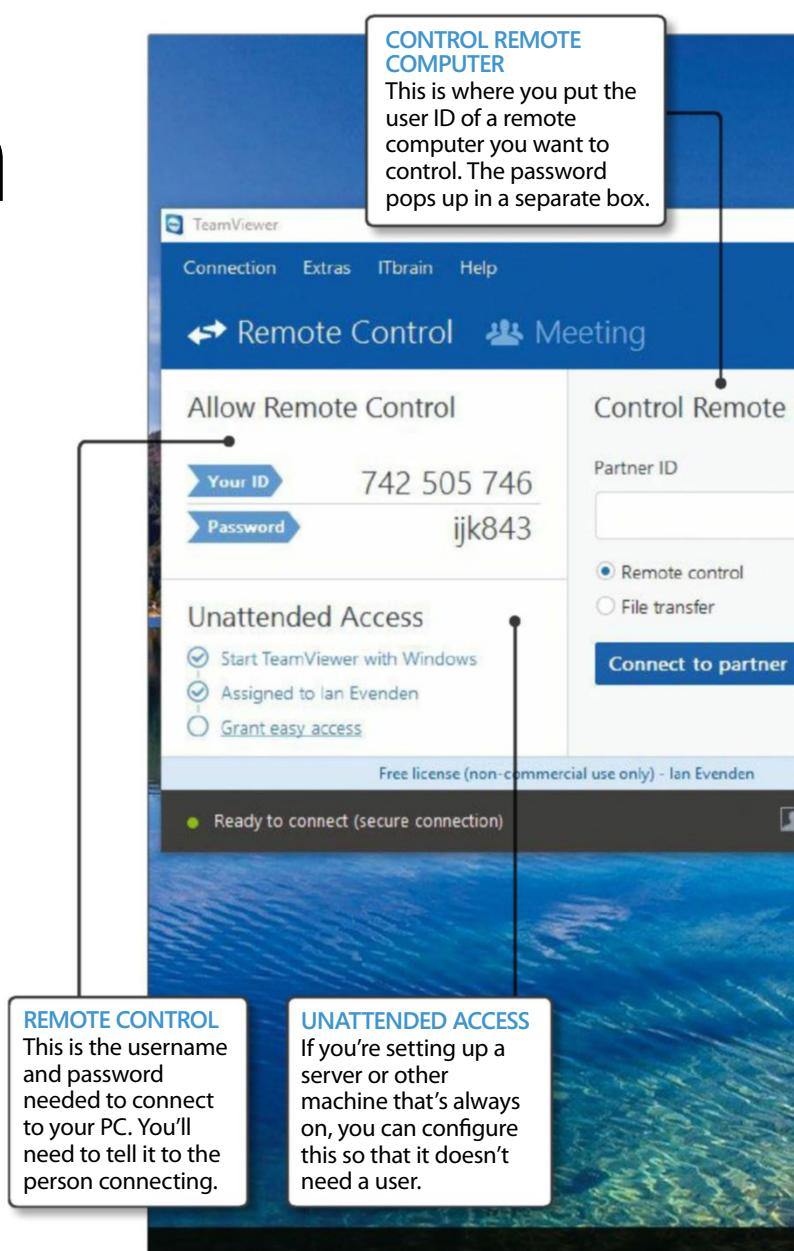
Teamviewer is useful for training – you can allow your students to view your PC as you carry out the task you're teaching them. Or you can broadcast a presentation to a 'meeting' filled with people scattered across the world. Let's take a look!

Step-by-step Connect your computers



1 Remote Desktop

Before you dive into Teamviewer, Microsoft might be able to help with the Remote Desktop remote-control tool that's built into Windows. It's been around since Windows NT 4 in 1998, and crossed over into our homes with Windows XP. In Windows 10, go to Settings > System > About and make a note of your PC's name, as you'll need this to allow other users to connect.



CONTROL REMOTE COMPUTER

This is where you put the user ID of a remote computer you want to control. The password pops up in a separate box.

Allow Remote Control

Your ID
742 505 746
Password
ijk843

Unattended Access

- Start TeamViewer with Windows
- Assigned to Ian Evenden
- Grant easy access

Free license (non-commercial use only) - Ian Evenden

Ready to connect (secure connection)

REMOTE CONTROL

This is the username and password needed to connect to your PC. You'll need to tell it to the person connecting.

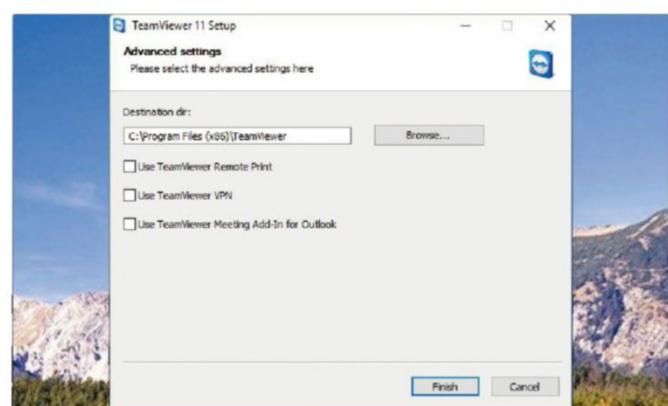
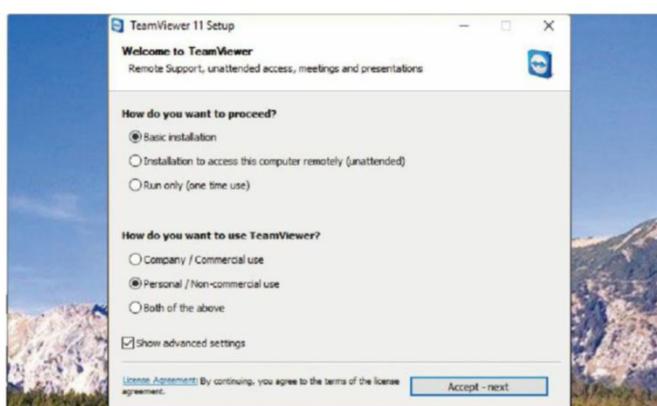
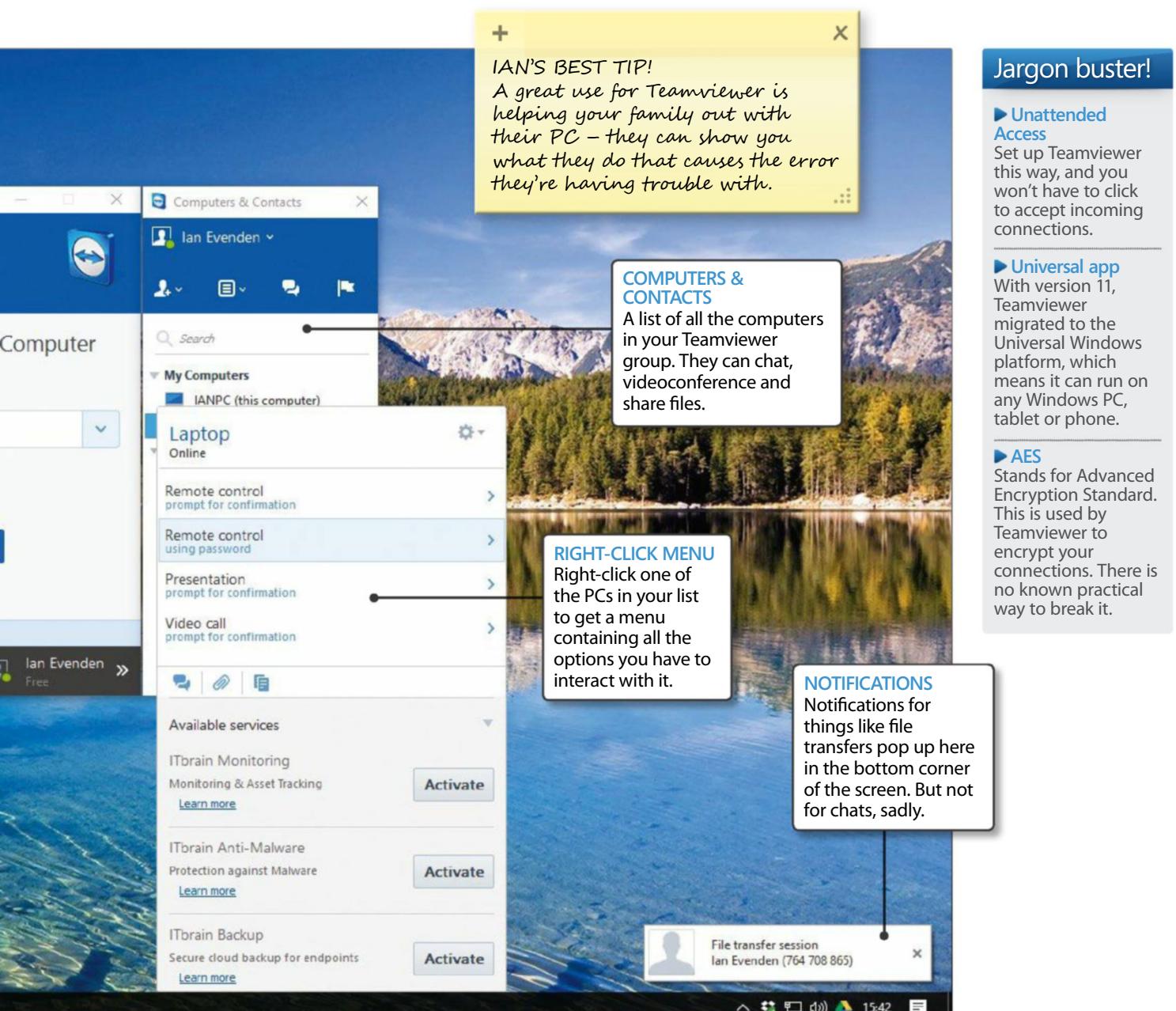
UNATTENDED ACCESS

If you're setting up a server or other machine that's always on, you can configure this so that it doesn't need a user.



2 Never sleep

Set your PC so it doesn't go into Sleep mode in Settings > System > Power & Sleep. Then make sure your PC can accept Remote Desktop connections in Control Panel > System Properties > Remote. If you're on the same network, the Remote Desktop app on the PC or phone trying to connect should scan for you. You may need to find and supply your IP address.

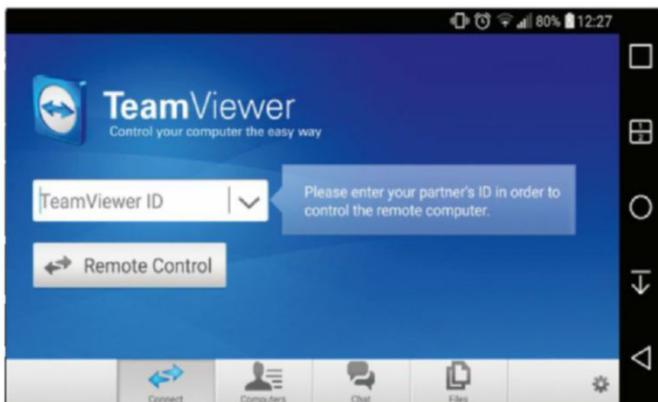


3 Enter Teamviewer

Download the application from www.teamviewer.com. If you only want to use the program once, it's capable of running from the .exe file rather than being fully installed on your PC. Select this box in the installation options if that's what you want. The application is free for personal use, so tick the 'Personal/non commercial' box for the free version.

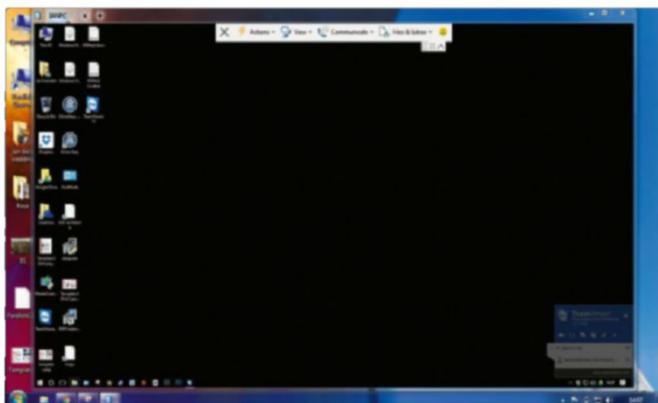
4 Advanced options

There are some more options available during setup. You can choose the directory the application will be installed into. The other options are for an Outlook plugin to coordinate meetings, plus advanced features such as a VPN (virtual private network) and a printing server. These are the sort of things that will need to be configured, and aren't needed for basic use of the app.



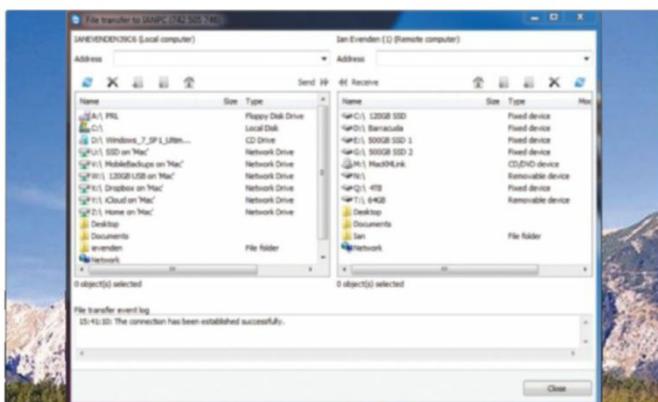
5 Basic connection

A good way to test whether it's working is to use your smartphone. There are free Teamviewer Remote Control apps for iOS, Android, Windows Mobile and Blackberry, so install it and link to your Wi-Fi. Run Teamviewer on your PC and phone, and type the user ID and password from your PC into the phone app. You should get a good connection on the same Wi-Fi network.



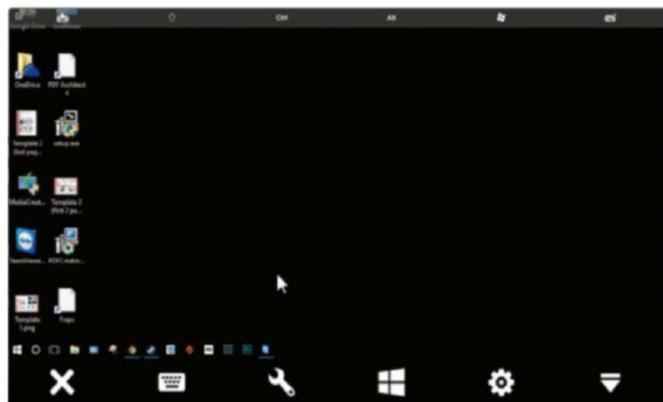
7 Share your screen

Now let's try connecting with another PC. There are apps for Mac and Linux as well as Windows, so if you have a mixture of computers at home they can all use the application. The grab above shows a Windows 10 desktop, with its blacked-out desktop, in a window on a Windows 7 desktop. You can operate the remote computer just as if you were sitting at its keyboard.



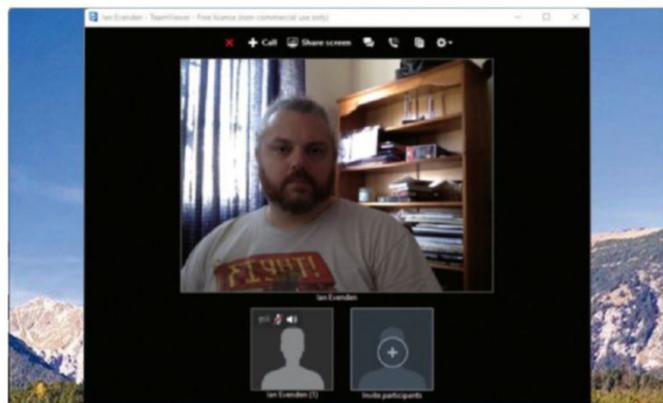
9 File transfer

If your team is logged into Teamviewer, they can pass files among one another with the File Transfer functionality. With your connection established, right-click on the computer name in the Computers & Contacts list to get a menu, and select File Transfer. The person on the remote computer may have to authorise the transfer, then you can copy files from their hard drive to yours.



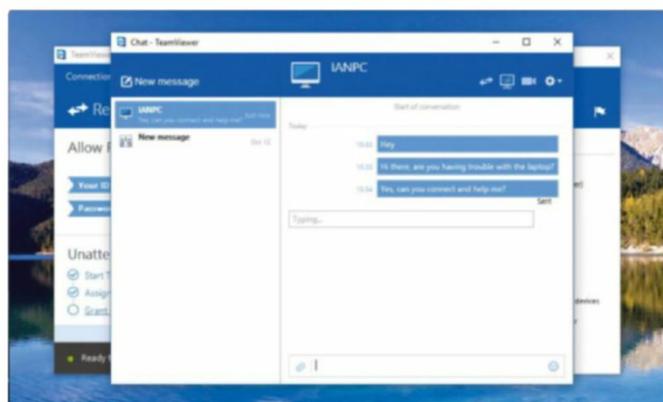
6 Mobile apps

The mobile app strips out the wallpaper from your PC desktop, but you should see all the icons of your Windows desktop in front of a plain backdrop. Pinch to zoom in and out, scroll the mouse pointer around, and click to launch apps and open windows. The apps are useful for checking in on a relative's computer, or for administering a home server.



8 Video conference

You can use Teamviewer as a video-conferencing facility to hold meetings. Everybody will need a computer with a webcam, and a decent internet connection. Now make sure the computers you want to include are in the Computers & Contacts list, then start a video chat with one and add the others to it. If you're using Teamviewer for business, you'll need to buy a licence key.



10 Instant messaging

There are more fully featured instant-messaging apps, but if everyone's logged into Teamviewer it saves having to use a second app. It's much like any of the other apps, but it doesn't send notifications when someone adds a comment – this means you'll need to keep the window in view at all times. The chat system supports mobile devices too. ■

PHONES WEARABLES AUDIO TVs CARS HOME



The Gadget Magazine

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50

HIDDEN SECRETS OF WINDOWS 10

Delve deep into the hidden recesses of Windows, with a little help from treasure hunter *Nick Peers*



You can spend a lifetime trying to master Windows. Just when you get to grips with one version, out comes another. Things are further complicated by the fact that while Windows 10 seems here to stay, it's now undergoing more frequent changes, with a succession of major updates: Anniversary last year, Creators last month, and another slated for the end of the year. How do you possibly keep up?

The trick is to realise that the more things change, the more they stay the same, with many of the best tips and tricks that were uncovered during those halcyon days of Windows XP and 7 still relevant now. The problem is, where to find them?

That's what's driven us to write this feature. We've gone hunting for 50 of the most obscure – but useful – tips we can find. We've rooted out new techniques for old favorites, and also uncovered some new features that may not have made the headlines when the Creators Update appeared, but will still help improve the way you use Windows.

One of the joys of researching and writing this kind of feature is uncovering secrets that we – the so-called experts – weren't aware of. You know you're on the right track when you stumble upon tips that save you time and prove useful to your own computing life, and more than a few of those revealed themselves.

We're confident that you'll find at least one tip in this collection that will transform the way you use your PC. But mindful of providing value for money, we've decided 50 isn't enough. You'll find three additional boxes in this feature, each one revealing bonus secrets you can use to save time and speed up the way you use your PC. You'll discover how to quickly access system settings without wading through menus and dialog boxes and uncover some Registry shortcuts that enable you to change the way Windows looks and behaves. We finish off by revealing lesser known – but still immensely useful – keyboard shortcuts.

Ready? Dust down your fedora, Dr. Jones, we're going on a treasure hunt...



1

CUSTOMISE THE 'QUICK LINK' MENU

You can easily add your own custom shortcuts to the menu that appears when you right-click the Start button. Use the portable Win+X Menu Editor tool (<http://winaero.com/comment.php?comment.news.30>) to add programs, control panel applets, and other system shortcuts, plus organize them all into groups.

2

CREATE 'GODMODE'

Get easy access to every Control Panel in Windows by evoking its so-called 'GodMode'. To do that, create a new folder and name it as shown below (you can change the 'GodMode' part if you like):
GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}
 Doing so puts each control panel applet in a convenient list – why not add it to your Quick Link menu?

3

VIEW USAGE BY DRIVE

Windows 10 gives you with a handy way to see what kind of content is taking up space on each of your drives. To do that, go to Settings > System > Storage, and tap a drive to see a breakdown of content by type. The Creators Update also introduces a Storage Sense button, which automatically clears temporary files, plus any files that have been in the Recycle Bin for over 30 days.

4

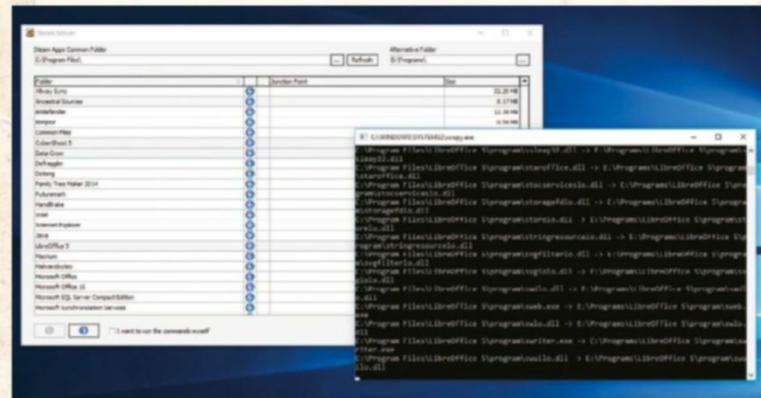
MOVE APPS TO ANOTHER DRIVE

Running out of space on your system drive? Move existing Windows Store apps to another drive or partition via Settings > Apps – select the app, and click Move to select your target drive. Force all new apps to install to a specified drive by switching to the Storage section, and tapping 'Change where new content is saved.'

5

MOVE ANY PROGRAM

Why stop with Windows Store apps when you can move any installed desktop app? Download Steam Mover from www.traynier.com, and run it as an administrator. Point 'Steam Apps Common Folder' to your Program Files folders, then select an alternative folder on your target drive (which must be formatted as NTFS). Once done, select each program you wish to move, and click the right arrow button to move them across. Clever use of Junction Points ensure the programs continue to work even from another drive, and you can always move them back if needed.



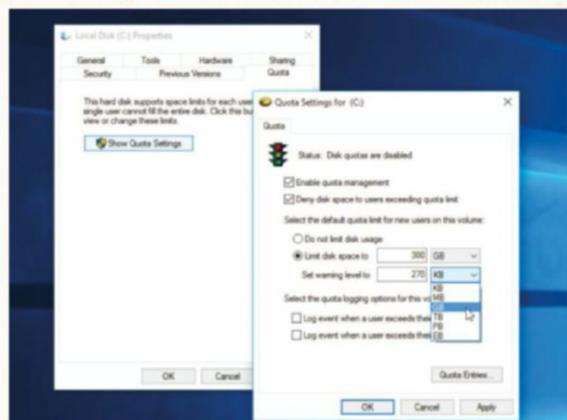
Move any app to another drive using SteamMover.

Place your own custom shortcuts on the "Quick Access" menu.

6

RESTRICT DRIVE USAGE

Prevent shared users from hogging all available drive space by setting up drive-based quotas (again NTFS-formatted drives only). Open File Explorer > This PC, right-click your target drive, and choose the Properties > Quota tab. Click Show Quota Settings, and check 'Enable quota management,' followed by 'Deny disk space to users exceeding quota limit,' and select 'Limit disk space to.' Set your limit (probably in GB) and a warning (say 10–20 percent less than the limit), then click OK.



Stop users of your PC from hogging space by setting drive quotas.

7

RESTRICT USAGE ON PER-USER BASIS

To set limits for individual users, leave 'Do not limit disk usage' selected, and click Quota Entries instead. Select Quota > New Quota Entry. Click 'Advanced,' then Find Now to list all available users. Select a name from the list, and click OK twice. Set their quota and warning limits, then repeat for other users for whom you wish to apply limits. Once done, close the window, and click OK twice.

8

TAKE OWNERSHIP QUICKLY

Need to reclaim ownership of a file or folder? Add a convenient shortcut to the right-click menu: download www.howtogeek.com/wp-content/uploads/TakeOwnership.zip – open the zip file, and double-click 'InstallTakeOwnership.reg,' clicking Run followed by Yes, Yes, and finally OK when prompted. Now right-click any folder or file to find a new Take Ownership option.



TASK VIEW SHORTCUTS

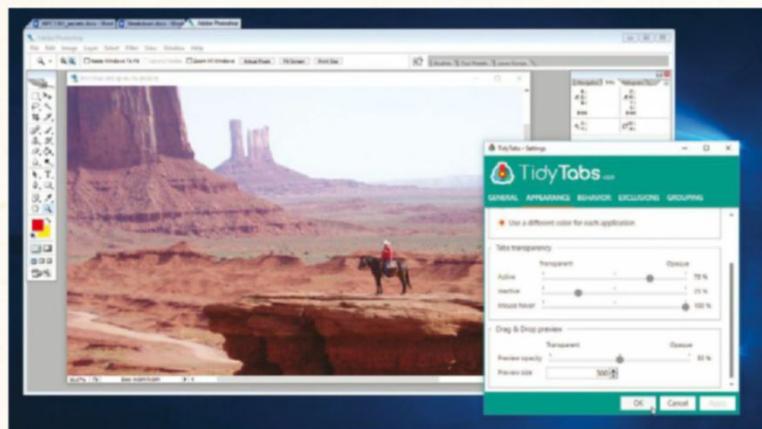
9 Press [Win] + [Tab] to trigger Task View, where you can easily move windows between multiple virtual desktops. Press [Ctrl] + [Win] + [D] to quickly create (and switch to) a new virtual desktop, and [Ctrl] + [Win] + [Left Cursor]/[Right Cursor] to move between them.

GROUP WINDOWS BY TAB

10 Do you find Task View too awkward? Then download and install TidyTabs (www.nurgo-software.com/products/tidytabs). It enables you to group multiple windows together in a single tabbed window – just as you would in your browser. Only TidyTabs covers all your apps, and it enables you to mix and match different programs, too.

SWITCH DEFAULT VIEW

11 When you open a new File Explorer window, it defaults to the Quick Access menu. You can change this by going to the File tab on the Explorer ribbon, and choosing Folder & Search Options. Click 'Open File Explorer to...' and choose This PC to change the default action to showing your user folders, drives, and network locations.



TWEAK THE 'QUICK ACCESS' FOLDER

12 You can also customize the Quick Access folder from here, too, by selectively removing both recently used files and frequently accessed folders from its view if you wish – this leaves only those shortcut folders that you specifically pin to the menu.

BACKGROUND SCROLLING

13 This feature enables you to scroll any program window using your mouse or trackpad, by moving the cursor over it, even when it's not in focus. Toggle it on and off via the 'Scroll inactive windows when I hover over them' switch under Settings > Devices > Mouse and Touchpad.

CONTROL FROM TASKBAR

14 The Aero Peek feature provides you with a convenient way to preview open app and program windows, without bringing them into focus, but it can provide other shortcuts, too. Take the Groove Music app, for example –

Control playback from the Taskbar with Groove Music.



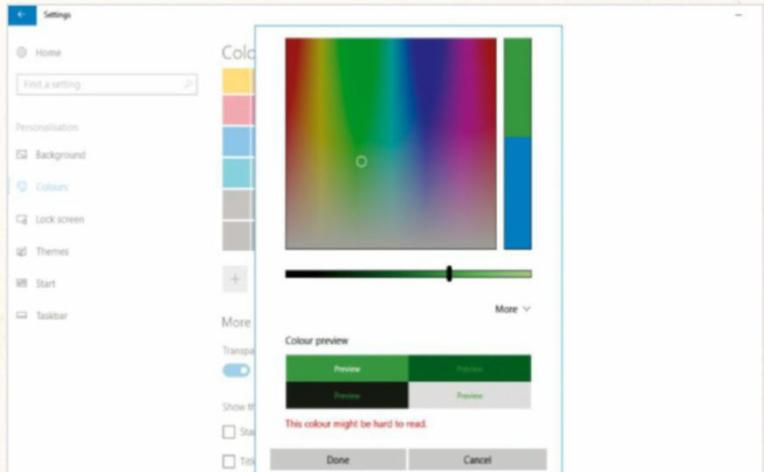
roll your mouse over its Taskbar icon, and the Aero Peek preview contains playback controls you can use without bringing the main program into focus.

SNAP APP WINDOWS

15 Snap Assist makes it even easier to snap multiple windows in place. Snap your first window in place by dragging it to the edge or corner of the screen, at which point all other windows appear as they do when in Task View. You can then drag these into place, bring them into focus, or even close them quickly and easily.

MORE COLOUR CHOICES

16 The Creators Update gives you more control over your colour scheme when tweaking your desktop. Go to Settings > Personalisation > Colours, and click Custom Colour. Use the colour picker which appears to choose your colour, then adjust it with the help of a slider and preview (complete with a warning, should the colours be difficult to read).



"Use the colour picker which appears to choose your colour"

17

TWEAK NOTIFICATION SETTINGS

Fed up with certain apps constantly badgering you with notifications through the Action Centre? Go to Settings > System > 'Notifications & actions,' then scroll down to pick and choose exactly which apps and services send you alerts. You can also choose whether to allow apps and services to alert you using Banners or Sounds, or both.

18

REMEMBER, REMEMBER

If you frequently forget something within moments of thinking it, Cortana could prove to be your lifesaver. Simply type (or speak) 'remember' to set up a reminder from scratch, or try something such as 'remember to get milk tomorrow after work' to include additional details.

19

DISABLE CORTANA

The quickest way to disable Cortana (although the process itself still runs in the background) is via a security policy setting – open Registry Editor, browse to `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WindowsSearch`, and create a new DWORD value named 'AllowCortana.' Leave it set to 0, restart Windows Explorer via Task Manager, and it's disabled.

20

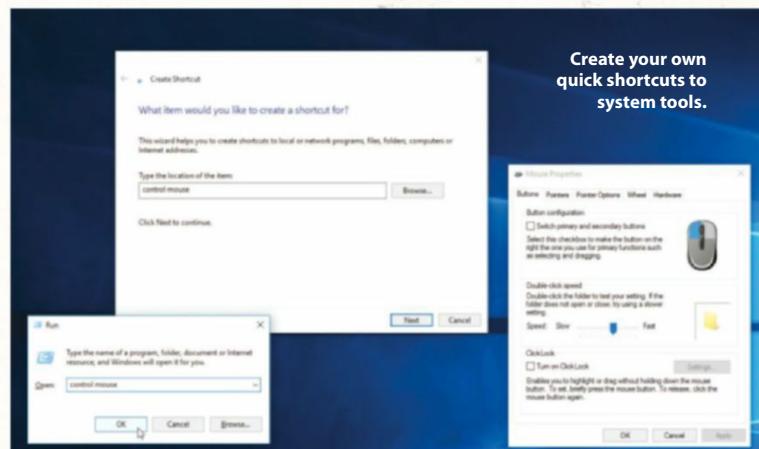
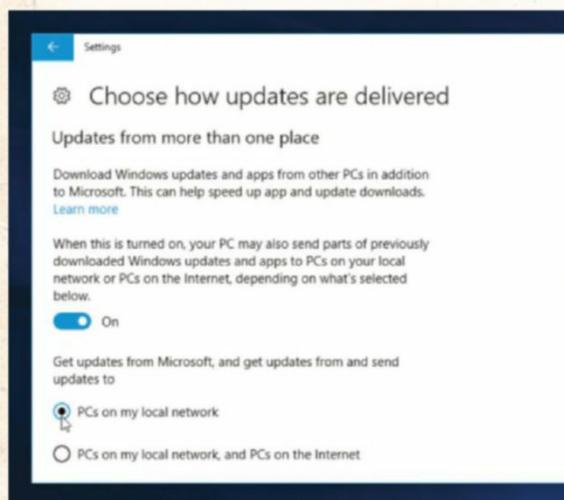
YOUR NEW SEARCH BOX

Once Cortana is disabled, the Search box displays 'Search Windows,' and you can continue to use it to find apps, settings, and files on your PC – tap Filters to choose specific things to search for, such as folders, documents, or music. (While we're on the subject, right-click the Taskbar, and choose Search > 'Show search icon' to replace the Search box with a simple search button.)

21

MASTER FILE ASSOCIATIONS

The quickest way to change a single file type's association is to right-click a file in File Explorer, then choose Open With > 'Choose another app.' Be sure to select 'Always use this app to open...' before going through the list to find the program you want to use as the file's default application – if it's not displayed, click 'More apps,' then scroll down to the bottom, and click 'Look for another app on this PC.'



Shortcuts to System Settings

Why go hunting for specific settings or control panel applets when – armed with the right shortcuts – you can jump straight to them? The following 11 shortcuts work when entered in the Run dialog box – press [Win] + [R] – or when creating a shortcut:

SHORTCUT	JUMPS TO
<code>control appwiz.cpl</code>	'Program and Features' control panel
<code>control date/time</code>	'Date and Time Properties' window
<code>control desk.cpl</code>	Settings > System > Display
<code>control desk.cpl,,2</code>	Settings > Personalisation
<code>control folders</code>	'File Explorer Properties' window
<code>control fonts</code>	'Fonts' folder
<code>control mouse</code>	'Mouse Properties' control panel applet
<code>control system</code>	System Properties
<code>control sysdm.cpl,,4</code>	'System Protection' tab under System Properties
<code>control printers</code>	'Devices and Printers' control panel
<code>control userpasswords2</code>	Hidden 'User Accounts' dialog

More examples can be found at www.lifewire.com/shortcuts-2626060, or you can add shortcuts directly to the Quick Access menu via Win+X Menu Editor's 'Add a program' > 'Add a Control Panel item' command.

22

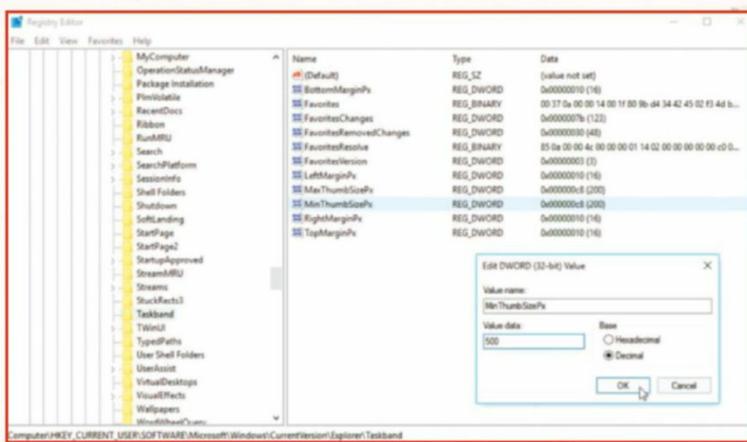
SWITCH DEFAULT PROGRAMS

There's little choice to be had at Settings > Apps > 'Default apps,' but scroll down and you can choose 'Set defaults by app' to gain access to a much wider range of apps. Select one to quickly assign multiple file types to it via 'Choose defaults for this program.'

23

SAVE BANDWIDTH

There are many ways in which you can stop Windows from wasting your precious bandwidth when connected to a metered network, all accessible via Settings. One of the first things you should do is go to, Update & Security > Windows Update > 'Advanced options' > 'Choose how updates are delivered', and change the setting to 'PCs on my local network,' or even flick the switch to Off.

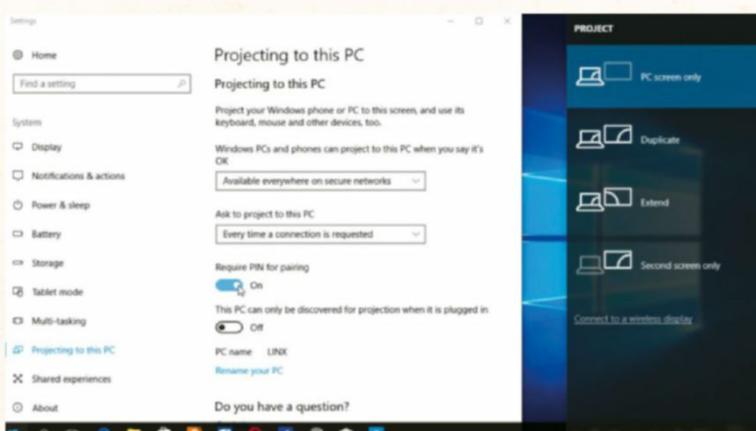


Quick-Fire Registry Tweaks

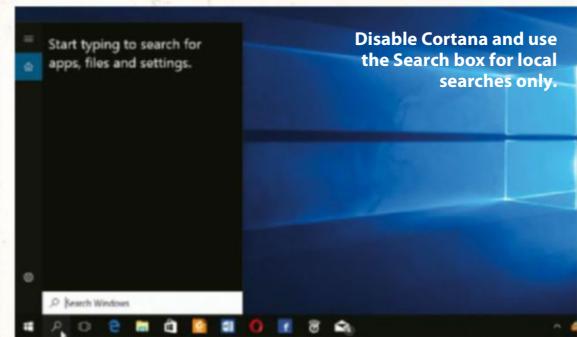
Many of Windows' hidden secrets are buried inside the Registry – you can access the Registry Editor by pressing [Win] + [R], typing 'regedit', and hitting [Enter]. Here are some quick-fire tweaks you can't perform outside of the Registry.

Once there, head over to `HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer`, then select the subkey indicated. Once done, locate the value shown (create a new DWORD 32-bit value if it's not already present), then change its data, selecting Decimal as the Base, unless stated. You need to open Task Manager, select File Explorer under Processes (click 'More details' if necessary), and click the Restart button to apply the tweak(s).

SUBKEY	VALUE NAME	VALUE DATA	OBJECTIVE
Advanced	ShowSecondsInSystemClock	1	Show seconds in the Taskbar clock
Advanced	UseOLEDTaskbarTransparency	1	Increase transparency of the Taskbar
Advanced	ExtendedUIHoverTime	1	Speed up Aero Peek thumbnail preview
Advanced	LastActiveClick	1	Click Taskbar icon to cycle through open windows
Taskband	MinThumbSizePX	500	Increase size of Aero Peek thumbnail preview
RunMRU	Various	Various	A list of previously entered commands in the Run dialog – delete unwanted ones



If your PC and another device, such as a tablet, support Miracast you can project the display from one onto the screen of another. See Tip 26.



Disable Cortana and use the Search box for local searches only.

24

REDUCE DATA USAGE

Go to Settings > Network & Internet > Wi-Fi, and click 'Manage known networks.' Choose a network with bandwidth limits, and click Properties. Flick the switch marked 'Set as metered connection' to On, then go to Devices, to ensure 'Download over metered connections' is Off under 'Printers & scanners' and 'Connected devices.'

25

CHANGE PRINTER DEFAULT

If you have two or more printers, go to Settings > Devices > 'Printers & scanners', and flick the 'Let Windows manage my default printer' switch to On if you want the printer to always default to the last one you used.

26

PROJECT YOUR PC

Project your display from one wireless PC or tablet to another – both need to support Miracast. Go to Settings > System > 'Projecting on this PC' to verify this, then select 'Available everywhere on secure networks.' Now press [Win] + [P] on the device you want to extend, and click 'Project to a second screen.' Select 'Connect to a wireless display,' select your target PC, and wait for the connection to be made, at which point your display can be duplicated or extended.

27

CAST VIDEO FROM EDGE

If you have a device capable of receiving Miracast or DLNA streams, you can cast media content such as YouTube videos direct from Edge – navigate to the page containing your media, then click the ellipsis [...] and choose 'Cast to Device.' Wait for it to appear, then select it to switch output to that device.

28

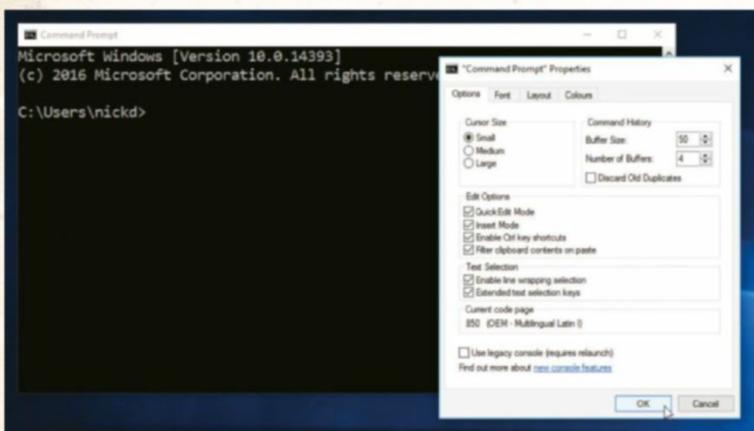
TAME WINDOWS UPDATE

Make sure Windows Update doesn't suddenly reboot your PC without your permission. Go to Settings > 'Update & security,' and click 'Change active hours' under Windows Update to set the times of day when you're active on your PC. Updates will be scheduled to reboot outside this period only if you're not using your computer.

29

MORE UPDATE OPTIONS

The Creators Update introduces two new update options: click 'Restart options' to pick an exact time of day for Windows Update to complete updates. Also, flick the 'Show more notifications' switch to On, and you'll be able to snooze updates for up to three days at a time.



30

ACTIVATION TROUBLESHOOTER

Here's some good news: if you took advantage of the free Windows 10 upgrade, then signed in with your Microsoft Account, your Windows license is linked to the account (do this manually via Settings > 'Update & security' > Activation > 'Add an account'). You can now perform major hardware surgery – including swapping out the motherboard – without losing your copy of Windows. If you run into problems with reactivation, click Troubleshoot on the Activation page, and select 'I changed hardware on this device recently' to resolve them.

31

CUSTOMISE THE COMMAND PROMPT

Windows 10 revamps the Command Prompt to provide lots of extra functionality, such as support for clipboard keyboard shortcuts and text wrapping. Configure these by right-clicking the Command Prompt menu bar and choosing Properties. While you're here, customise the size, colour scheme, and fonts, too.

32

ACCESS DEVELOPER TOOLS

Navigate to Settings > 'Update & security' > For Developers, and select Developer Mode under 'Use developer features.' Tweaks include developer-friendly options for File Explorer, such as showing full directory paths in the title bar.

33

RUN BASH COMMANDS

You can run Linux commands in Windows when Developer Mode is enabled via the Bash UNIX Shell – right-click Start, and choose 'Programs and Features', then click 'Turn Windows features on



You can tweak the Command Prompt window (Tip 31).

[Read more](#)

Run Linux commands in Windows – really!

Check what information is being shared with Microsoft.

or off.' Select 'Windows Subsystem for Linux (Beta).' Click OK, and then reboot your PC when prompted.

34

BASH LIMITATIONS

Once enabled, press [Win] + [R], type 'bash', and hit [Enter to install Ubuntu on Windows. You can then run command-line Linux apps and Bash commands via the Bash on Ubuntu on Windows app, or by invoking Bash from the Command Prompt, like so:

\$ bash ls -l

35

IMPROVE BATTERY LIFE

Make your laptop or tablet last longer between recharges by going to Settings > System > Battery, and switching on Battery Saver. Push the slider up to 70 or even 80 percent, then tap 'Battery usage by app' to see which apps require most power. Consider replacing them with more power-efficient alternatives (the Opera web browser instead of Microsoft Edge, for example).

```
nick@NICK-PC:/mnt/c/Windows/System32
-- Beta mode --
This will install Ubuntu on Windows, distributed by Canonical
and licensed under its terms available here:
https://aka.ms/uowterms

Type "y" to continue...
Downloading from the Windows Store... 100%
Extracting filesystem, this will take a few minutes...
Please create a default UNIX user account. The username does not need to match your Windows user
For more information visit: https://aka.ms/wslusers
Enter new UNIX username: nick
Enter new UNIX password:
Petype new UNIX password:
passwd: password updated successfully!
Installation successful!
The environment will start momentarily...
Documentation is available at: https://aka.ms/wsldocs
nick@NICK-PC:/mnt/c/Windows/System32$ ls -l
total 760532
dr-xr-xr-x 2 root root    8 Jul 16 2016 0MB9
-rw-rw-r-- 1 root root 180 Mar 9 10:08 {A6D608F0-0BDE-491A-97AE-5C4B05D06E01}.bat
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 34816 Jul 16 2016 aadauthhelper.dll
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 425984 Dec 21 07:05 aadcloudap.dll
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 1121280 Dec 21 06:47 Aadtb.dll
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 284160 Sep 15 17:34 AboveLockAppHost.dll
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 3825152 Jul 16 2016 accessibilitycpl.dll
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 332048 Jul 16 2016 accountaccessor.dll
-rw-rw-r-- 2 root root 441856 Sep 15 17:34 AccountsRt.dll
```

36

LOCK DOWN WI-FI

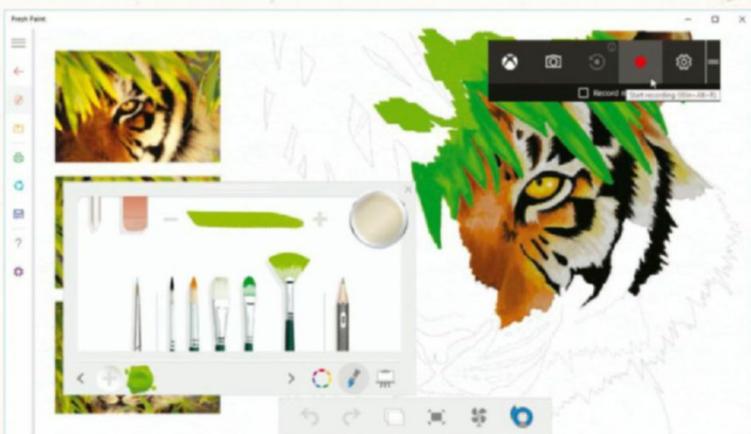
Make sure you're not exposed to insecure wireless networks: go to Settings > Network & Internet > Wi-Fi. Make sure 'Connect to suggested open hotspots' is disabled if you don't connect through a Virtual Private Network (VPN). For more on VPNs, turn to page 48.

37

RUN A PRIVACY SWEEP

Open your favourite web browser and head to <http://account.microsoft.com/privacy>, where you'll find a web dashboard providing convenient shortcuts to reviewing and clearing personal data stored in the cloud, including Cortana Notebook. You can also perform a local audit via Settings > Privacy, but if this is all too confusing, run the portable O&O ShutUp 10 tool (www.o-software.com/en/shutup10) for a one-click solution.

"Make your laptop or tablet last longer between recharges by going to Settings > System > Battery"



OPTIMISE ONEDRIVE

38 Next, right-click the OneDrive Taskbar Notification area icon, and choose Settings. Click 'Choose folders' under Account to sync selective content to your PC, and set bandwidth limits under the Network tab if you think OneDrive is adversely affecting your Internet connection. Go to the Office tab and deselect both boxes if you find Office defaulting to your online file copies instead of those that you have stored locally.

RECORD VIDEO FROM ANY APP

The Game DVR function in Windows 10 exists to enable you to record your gaming exploits, but you can use it on any app you install from the Windows Store. Simply open the app, press [Win] + [G], and check 'Yes, this is a game' when prompted to open it.

DITCH THE OFFICE INSTALL PROMPT

39 Fed up with being constantly reminded to install Microsoft Office on your PC? Open the Start menu, locate the Get Office shortcut in the 'All apps' menu, then right-click it, and choose Uninstall to remove both the prompt and the underlying application.

Record footage from any app with Game DVR.

41

SWITCH REGISTRY HIVES QUICKLY

Many entries in the Registry are mirrored between **HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE** and **HKEY_CURRENT_USER**. Gone to the wrong hive accidentally? Simply right-click the key, and choose 'Go to HKEY...' to jump to its corresponding entry in the other hive.

42

APPLY POLICY CHANGES THROUGH THE REGISTRY EDITOR

Windows 10 Professional comes with the Group Policy Editor (gpedit.msc), which is often used by IT admins to configure security settings. If you're running Windows 10 Home, you can apply many of these tweaks with the right Registry settings, which you'll find neatly summarised as an Excel spreadsheet – go to <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=25250> to download it.



43

VERIFY PROGRAM SIGNATURES

How can you be sure that a program or app you've downloaded from the internet is the real deal? Easy! Right-click the downloaded file, and then choose the Properties > Digital Signatures tab to view the certificate that should help identify its origin. If the website you downloaded it from provides an MD5 or SHA1 hash, you can use HashMyFiles (www.nirsoft.net/utils/hash_my_files.html) to compare the file's hash with that on the site.

44

INDEPENDENT DISPLAY SCALING

If you have two monitors with different resolutions connected to your PC – one that's 4K Ultra HD, say, and one that's HD – then Windows 10 enables you to scale each display completely independently of the other. To do this, go to Settings > System > Display, select the display you want to change by clicking it, and then use the slider to increase the size of text, apps, and other on-screen elements. Clicking 'Advanced display settings' enables you to change the selected display's resolution. Repeat for the other display for the best viewing experience!



45

REDUCE EYE STRAIN

The Creators Update introduces a new feature that changes the colour temperature of your screen at night-time, which should help you sleep better and avoid eye strain.

Switch it on via Settings > System > Display. Tap 'Night light settings' to set it up (flick the schedule on, and use the recommended sunset-sunrise setting, which changes based on your location and the time of year).

46

MASTER TOUCH GESTURES

If you have a touchpad or touchscreen, you should make use of gestures. Just like the ones you're familiar with on your smartphone, these enable you to control your PC in various ways: from swiping with two fingers to scroll, for example, to swiping with three fingers horizontally to move between open windows, or vertically to shift between Task View and hiding everything but the desktop. To use gestures, open the Mouse control panel, and check for a tab called Device Settings, where you may find options for customising your own gestures.

47

SPEED UP REMOVABLE DRIVES

If you are willing to give up the ability to safely remove drives without ejecting them first, you can enable disk write caching on the drive for a speed boost. Open Device Manager, then double-click your target drive under Disk Drives. Switch to the Policies tab to make your choice.

48

SWITCH PLAYBACK DEVICE

Most problems regarding lost sound can usually be traced to Windows switching the playback device. Quickly review (and change) the current playback device by clicking the Taskbar Notification area's audio device icon. Click '^' to reveal all available devices, and select the correct one to bring your sound back.

49

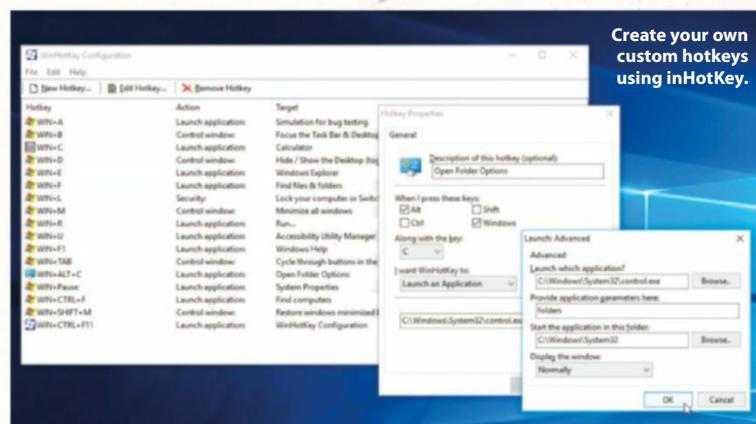
BECOME A DIGITAL MEDIA SNOB

Windows 10 now comes with native support for MKV, HVEC, and the lossless FLAC audio format. Open Windows Media Player, and click 'Rip settings' > Format > FLAC (Lossless) to make it the default choice for future CD rips, ensuring they're stored at maximum audio quality.

50

GET AN ENERGY REPORT

Open the Command Prompt, type 'powercfg-energy', and then hit [Enter]. Double-click the energy-report.html file that's been generated (in your Windows\System32 folder) to get an overview of the energy-saving capabilities of your PC and its peripherals. The report can help to root out problems with sleep and hibernation. It's also worth checking suspect devices through Device Manager, where you should look for a 'Power Management' tab, which lets you prevent certain devices from bringing your PC prematurely out of standby.



Create your own custom hotkeys using inHotKey.

Oft-Forgotten Keyboard Shortcuts

Touchscreens, trackpads, mice – they're all great, but they're no substitute for the keyboard. Find the right keyboard shortcut and you can skip straight to the action. We won't insult your intelligence by revisiting well-known shortcuts (head over to <https://support.microsoft.com/help/12445/> for a comprehensive list), but here are some shortcuts you may have forgotten (or never knew existed).

SHORTCUT	WHAT IT DOES
[Shift] + [F10]	Performs a right-click at the current cursor point
[Win] + [Pause/Break]	Accesses System Properties
[Win] + [D]	Minimizes all windows (press again to restore)
[Win] + [X]	Opens the Quick Link menu
[Win] + [U]	Opens System > Ease of Access
[Win] + [B]	Focuses on the Taskbar Notification Area – use cursor keys to navigate, Enter to select
[Win] + [A]	Opens Action Center (use [Win] + [V] to cycle through notifications)
[Win] + [H]	Opens Share charm
[Win] + [I]	Opens Settings
[Win] + [+/-]	Zooms in and out using Magnifier (use [Win] + [Esc] to close it)

If you'd like to create your own custom keyboard shortcuts using a combination of the [Win], [Ctrl], and [Alt] keys, download WinHotKey from www.directedge.us/content/winhotkey – it works fine in Windows 10.



Keep tabs on your PC's energy-saving aptitude with a Power Efficiency Diagnostics Report. See Tip 50 (left) for further details.

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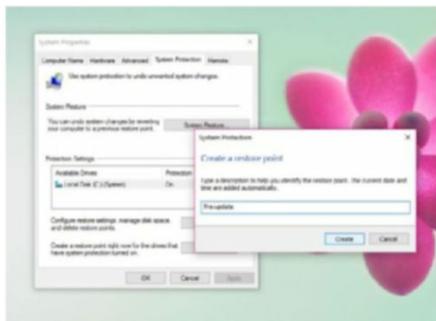
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Improve Windows 10

The next step in Windows 10's amazing evolution is out soon. We show you how to prepare your PC for the Windows 10 Creators Update...

With the release of Windows 10, Microsoft's policy on new Windows versions changed. No longer will we see major Windows versions like XP, Vista, 7 or 8 that require a huge upgrade, a massive overhaul over those that came before. The company's new plan involves, instead, rolling out serious feature updates on top of Windows 10 at reasonably regular intervals. We've seen two already: the November Update, which landed in, yes, November 2015, corrected some early bugs and introduced improvements to Cortana, app snapping, and media casting in the home. The Anniversary Update – released a year after the initial release of Windows 10 – tweaked certain elements of the interface and added new features for those using tablets. There's another



MAKE A POINT A system restore point will allow you to take back an update if it causes problems.



FORCE THE ISSUE Want to upgrade your PC to the Creators Update now? Head to <http://bit.ly/2nd4GqC> to get your hands on Microsoft's official Windows 10 Update Assistant.

release scheduled for later in 2017 – currently codenamed Neon – but for now we're getting ready for the latest version: the Creators Update.

What will happen?

Before we get into the specifics of what the Creators Update does, let's look at what you need to do. Option one is to do absolutely nothing: sit tight, and the update will, unless you're running with some unusual settings, make its way to your PC automatically. At some point soon you'll go to shut down your machine and see a prompt to upgrade;

select it, and when you next start up your computer the upgrade process will begin. It may take a while, so it's worth holding off until you know you're not going to need your PC immediately – once the update process has kicked off, you'll have to leave it until it's done.

There's a possibility, again depending on your settings, that Windows will interrupt an active machine to install the update – a popup alert will warn you that it's about to happen, but if you leave your machine unattended you stand to lose anything that you're currently working on.

Remove old updates

If the Creators Update (or any other update) has landed on your PC and is causing you problems, there is a way to take a step back to a previous version of Windows, although we wouldn't recommend you take this lightly since removing an update also cause problems.

Type 'installed updates' into the search box and click the top link to see Windows' semi-secret uninstall screen for updates. They're broken down by category and include updates for official Microsoft packages such as Office – you'll usually find Windows updates in the bottom section. The list

doesn't only include major updates, it also covers incremental updates and security fixes, and they're rarely named anything useful.

You can, however, use the date column to see those things installed most recently. Simply right-click on an item and select Uninstall to begin the process of removing it.

Again, though, exercise caution – unless you're absolutely sure that the particular update you're uninstalling is the one that's causing problems you may be doing more harm than good by binning it.

Name	Program	Version	Publisher
Update for Microsoft Office 2016 (KB3115141) 32-Bit Edition	Microsoft Office Sta...	Microsoft	Microsoft
Update for Microsoft Office 2016 (KB3115081) 32-Bit Edition	Microsoft Office Sta...	Microsoft	Microsoft
Update for Microsoft Office 2016 (KB3203071) 32-Bit Edition	Microsoft Office Sta...	Microsoft	Microsoft
Security Update for Microsoft Office 2016 (KB3114860) 32-Bit E...	Microsoft Office Sta...	Microsoft	Microsoft
Update for Microsoft Office 2016 (KB3118260) 32-Bit Edition	Microsoft Office Sta...	Microsoft	Microsoft
Microsoft Visual C++ 2010 x64 Redistributable - 10.0.40219 (1)	Microsoft Visual C++ ...	Microsoft	Microsoft
KB2565063	Microsoft Visual C++ 2010 x64 Redistributable - 10.0.40219 (1)	Microsoft	Microsoft
KB2565063	Microsoft Visual C++ 2010 x86 Redistributable - 10.0.40219 (1)	Microsoft	Microsoft
Microsoft Windows (S)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Security Update for Microsoft Windows (KB4015217)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Security Update for Adobe Flash Player	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Update for Microsoft Windows (KB4013418)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Security Update for Adobe Flash Player	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Update for Microsoft Windows (KB3211320)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Update for Microsoft Windows (KB3199860)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Update for Microsoft Windows (KB3199209)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation
Update for Microsoft Windows (KB3178936)	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Corporation	Microsoft Corporation

IN ORDER Click the 'date' header to sort updates by the time they were installed.

Let's be clear, though: installing the Creators Update is entirely optional, at least for a while after release. You'll find instructions for delaying updates at the bottom of this page. But why would you want to? If you've been with Windows 10 for a while, you'll have probably noticed the rather aggressive way these updates get applied to your machine. You may even have noticed a few teething troubles; the Anniversary Update, for instance, didn't play nicely with certain hardware until a corrective patch was issued a few weeks after its release. While we'd advocate getting on board with exciting new Windows features as early as you can, affording them time to bed in does make sense.

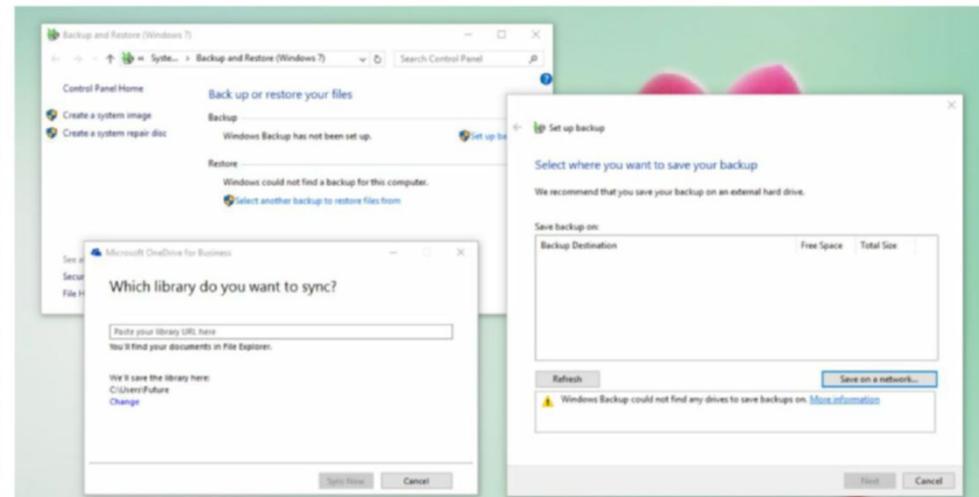
Proper preparation

With the potential for instability in mind, any time a major update is about to make its way onto your PC we'd suggest you take a few precautionary steps. The first is to make sure you're fully up to date with all your backups – it's unlikely

"While we'd advocate getting on board with exciting new Windows features as soon as you can, allowing them time to bed in makes sense"

that something catastrophic is going to happen, but now is as good a time as any to ensure that everything you treasure is copied over a number of different devices and locations.

There are various ways to go about this, from dragging and dropping your files onto an external drive to uploading them to cloud services, such as Google Photos or OneDrive. Windows includes its own backup system, found by right-clicking the Start button and



BACK TO THE FUTURE Make sure you back up all the files on your PC before you upgrade. Built-in tools, such as Backup and Restore help make this easy. Consider cloud services such as OneDrive too.

heading to System & Maintenance > Backup & Restore. If you've not used it before, click 'Set up backup' and follow the steps to make a backup onto an external storage drive.

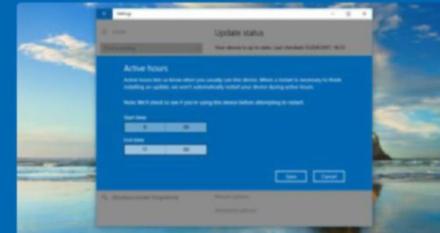
low. Restore points take space, the update will need space to download, and your Windows installation will grow in size once it's applied. Aside from deleting old files – in your Downloads



GET CREATIVE The Creators Update includes apps and features that make Windows more fun to use.

folder, for example – Windows' Disk Cleanup tool (search Cortana for 'Disk Cleanup') will remove a certain amount of unwanted, and generally unnoticed, stuff. Be careful, though, that you don't remove your latest restore point.

Stop unwanted updates



1 The trick

If you're using Windows 10 Home (and you probably are) you'll need to cheat a little to stop updates downloading automatically. Click the Start button at the bottom left of your screen, click the cog to reach the Settings menu, then head to Network & Internet.

2 Cut it off

Select Wi-Fi from the left menu, then select your wireless network. Scroll down slightly, and switch on 'Set as metered connection' – this stops data transfers, including large updates, from coming through automatically; switch it off when you're ready to update.

3 Cancel restarts

To stop Windows automatically restarting to update while you're hard at work, go to Settings > Updates and Security, scroll down, and select 'active hours'. Set the start and end time – make your active hours as long as you like – and you won't be bothered during those times.

What's in the Update?

The Creators Update is packed with new features, new apps, new toys, and plenty to make Windows 10 more awesome than it was before...

When the Creators Update lands, you may not immediately notice the difference. It doesn't make any massive changes to the Windows interface, unlike the forthcoming Neon update, which is due to tweak the look of the desktop significantly. Dig around the Start menu, though, and you'll find a few cool new apps.

New dimensions

As you might expect, given the update's name, Microsoft is seeking to enhance your creative possibilities. You'll find new app Paint 3D sitting alongside its 2D cousin, and while it's possibly of limited usefulness for most of us, it's a great way to play with 3D objects and provides a stack more artistic tools than you'll find in the basic Paint.

Gamers receive a pretty huge enhancement this time around, with integrated game streaming through Microsoft's new Beam system (www.beam.pro) accessible by selecting [Win] + [G] on your keyboard when you're playing. It's the same system recently implemented on the Xbox One console,



Broadcast media Beam enables you to stream your gameplay online with a couple of clicks.



PLAY WITH CLAY Paint 3D is fun to experiment with – check www.remix3d.com to see some examples.

and offers much lower latency (one second) than the likes of Twitch (30 seconds), meaning you'll be able to interact with those watching you play at a much faster rate.

The same shortcut also enables you to activate a dedicated game mode, which drops certain background processes to improve game performance. There's also a whole new page of gaming options in the Settings screen.

If you're a Skype user, the Creators Update offers up the very latest version. Specifically built for Windows 10, it includes features like a mini view, SMS integration if you also use Windows Phone, and even a live translation option for use when calling other countries. See page 28 for more.

Other updates

While there's no major interface overhaul, there are a few minor tweaks in the Creators Update that will make your life more pleasant. Mini view enables you to dock certain apps in a small window that remains on top of

any windows you have open – ideal for keeping tabs on Skype chats, or your favourite TV show, without needing to make space for a specific window.

If you work in the evening, Night Light (found in System > Settings > Display) automatically tweaks the colour output of your screen to reduce the amount of blue light it outputs. This is scientifically proven to improve your brain's ability to sleep, and is barely perceptible in use.

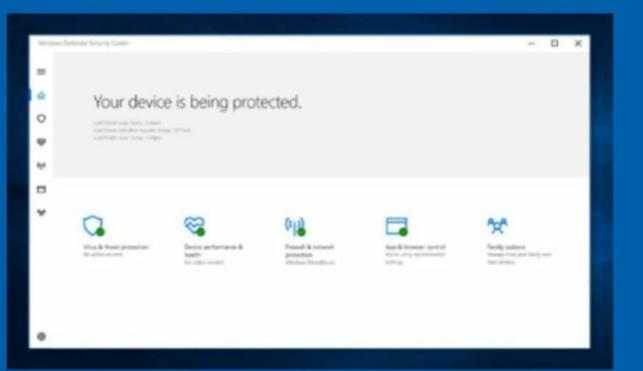
Digital assistant Cortana has been updated in a number of ways, and now supports music control in some audio apps, while integrating natural language compatibility in TuneIn and iHeartRadio. If you've set it up to use audio input, you can now take full-screen control when your PC is unlocked, making it easier to use Cortana from across the room.

There are also upgrades to Microsoft Edge, as well as audio improvements thanks to a Windows Store-based Dolby Atmos app, support for 360-degree video on the Movies & TV app, and mixed-reality features that you'll be able to play with once you get a HoloLens. ■

Stay super secure

Fancy hardening up your PC security? The Creators Update brings the Windows Defender Security Centre to Windows 10, a brand new dashboard which helps you manage your anti-virus, firewall, networks and family settings all from one place. Advanced privacy settings also mean you can more accurately control what data gets shared where.

There's also a smart lock feature included. Pair your phone with Windows – doesn't matter if it's an iPhone, Android, or Windows Phone device – and you can quickly access your computer when it's present. When it leaves Bluetooth range, Windows will automatically lock, preventing unwanted access.



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Internet GREY SCREEN IN WEB BROWSER

Q Every time I launch Opera it opens to a grey screen. And if I open Chrome, I get the same grey screen plus a list of messages about add-ons crashing on startup. I can't access settings, extensions or find any way to relaunch either with extensions disabled. What can I do?

Bill Graham



Nick P's solution

We traced Bill's problem to the Chromium sandbox, which is present in both Chrome and Opera. Pressing [Win] + [R] and typing 'chrome -no-sandbox' or 'opera -no-sandbox' enabled us to launch a working version of either browser (Chrome warned us about the flag we'd invoked, while Opera simply functioned as normal).

Most sandbox-related problems are often traced back to security software. Bill was running Norton Internet Security and Malwarebytes Premium. We instructed him to temporarily disable Norton's auto-protect feature, to no effect, but after he'd disabled all four layers of Malwarebytes' real-time protection, Bill's browser problem disappeared. He then re-enabled them one at a time, and the problem resurfaced only when Malwarebytes' Exploit Protection module was switched back on. We checked the Malwarebytes forums (<https://forums.malwarebytes.com/>) where a number of other users reported the same problem. This is likely to be resolved in a future fix, but for a temporary workaround switch Exploit Protection back on under Settings > Protection, then click Manage Protected Applications to disable Exploit Protection for both Opera and Chrome, both of which should be listed. This will allow you to run them with the sandboxing features enabled.

The screenshot shows the Malwarebytes Premium dashboard with several protection modules enabled: Web Protection, Exploit Protection, and Ransomware Protection. Under 'Manage Protected Applications', a list of applications is shown, including Opera, Microsoft Office Publisher, Microsoft Office Word, Mozilla Firefox, and others. The 'Exploit Protection' section is highlighted with a red box, indicating it is turned off for these specific applications.

EXPLOIT SELECTION

You can exclude
certain apps from
anti-exploit
protection.



Hardware

MY PRINTER WON'T WORK IN WINDOWS 10

Q After Microsoft sneaked through Windows 10 on to my system when I wasn't looking, my HP OfficeJet 3830 printer has stopped printing from my PC. It scans happily enough and will print a diagnostic page, but despite consulting with HP I can't get anywhere. Any ideas?
Alan Puffett



Rob's solution

Given that the problem began after Windows 10 was installed, we told Alan to go to Start > System > Devices, click the HP printer to highlight it and then click 'Remove device'. Once the printer was removed, the next step was to try reinstalling it from the same Settings option. Click 'Add a printer or scanner' and follow the prompts to see if Windows 10 detects the printer and downloads the latest driver for it; if not, HP does provide a Windows 10 driver on its website. After following this procedure, Alan was happy to report the printer was now working again.

Microsoft Word ADVANCED DOCUMENT RECOVERY

Q Wouldn't you know it? Word has just crashed and when I reopened it, it told me it can't open an ASD file because it's already open in Word. As a result, I end up with a read-only copy of the file I was working on, with none of the

changes I'd made in the previous half hour. Can you help?

Louise Taylor

Alex's solution

That ASD file contains most, if not all, of your unsaved changes. First, let's back up that file – just in case. Press [Win] + [R], type '%appdata%\Microsoft\Word' and hit [Enter]. You should see the file in question – an AutoRecovery save of <filename>.asd. Ordinarily when you reopen Word the AutoRecover dialogue should appear with this file, so you can restore your changes.

For now, copy – don't move – this file to a convenient location, such as your Documents folder. Now

PRINTER WOES
If your printer has stopped working after upgrading Windows, reinstall its printer drivers.

Quickfire questions

I've set up a virtual machine in VirtualBox, but can't get it connected to my home network to share files.
Piers Younger

Close the virtual machine, go to Settings > Network and made sure it's attached to Bridged Adapter and not NAT.

I've read on the internet I can free up gigabytes of space after installing the Creators Update. Is it that large?
Tom Revie

No – the files you can free up are your previous Windows installation, allowing you to roll back if you run into problems. After 30 days, all of these files will be deleted.

"That ASD file contains most, if not all, of your unsaved changes"

Jargon buster!

► NAT

Network Address Translation. Enables VirtualBox to give virtual machines internet access without exposing them to the internal network.

► Sandbox

Isolated environment in which apps can be run, reducing the risk of infection or crashes.

OWV136.sup_squad.docx [Compatibility Mode] - Word

Info

OWV136.sup_squad

E:\OpenCloud\Documents\2017\Windows Help & Advice\OWV136\OWV136.sup_squad

Compatibility Mode

Some new features are disabled to prevent problems when working with previous versions of Office. Converting this file will enable these features, but may result in layout changes.

Convert

Protect Document

Control what types of changes people can make to this document.

Check for Issues

Inspect Document

Before publishing this file, be aware that it contains:

- Document properties, template name and author's name
- Content that people with disabilities are unable to read

Manage Document

Check out document or recover unsaved changes.

Today, 15:56 (autorecovery)

Recover Unsaved Documents

Browse recent unsaved files

Today, 14:46 (autorecovery)

Properties

Size	20.0KB
Pages	6
Words	2007
Total Editing Time	221 Minutes
Title	Add a title
Tags	Add a tag
Comments	Add comments

Related Dates

Last Modified	Today, 16:04
Created	06/04/2017 11:33
Last Printed	

Related People

Author	Nick Peers
	Add an author
Last Modified By	Nick Peers

Related Documents

- Open File Location

Show All Properties

Quickfire questions

I made some bespoke tiles for my Start menu using Tile Genie from the App Store, but now it keeps crashing a few seconds after launch. Can you help?

Bryan Little

This was fixed simply by uninstalling and reinstalling the app via Start > Settings > Apps – Bryan had previously recorded his settings, so nothing was lost.

I've started receiving a warning in Firefox about compromised logins on certain web pages. Should I be concerned?

Fran Warnock

This is a new feature that alerts you to insecure web pages. The problem was always there, but now you're being alerted to it. We recommend using secure ([https](https://)) connections where possible.

I have a dual-boot setup, but for some unknown reason my ageing HP 2180 printer prints differently in Windows 10 than it does in Windows 7.

Tony Shaw

It sounds like only the basic printer driver has been installed in Windows 10 – open your web browser and search for 'F2180' at <http://support.hp.com> where you'll be able to replace the driver with a full software package, and so ensure consistent results.

reopen Word to the File screen. Click the Manage Document button and choose Recover Unsaved Documents. You'll be dumped inside a different folder – C:\Users\nickd\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Office\UnsavedFiles. If a duplicate of the ASD file isn't here, navigate to where you copied it, select the file and click Open. The file will open in a separate window – verify it's the version you want, then click the 'Save as' button at the top to save a copy.

Email QUICKLY REDRAFT AN EMAIL

Q Occasionally, when I send an email it's not sent because I misspelled the recipient's email address. Is there any easy way to correct this without having to rewrite the whole email again?

Jim Duncan



Cat's solution

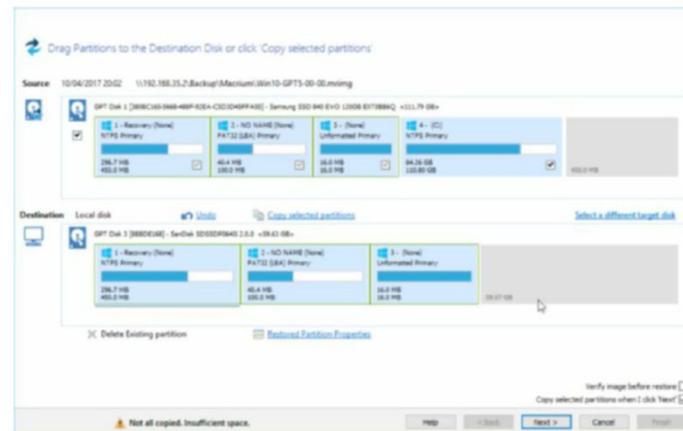
The quickest thing to do is locate the email in your Sent folder, then open it and click the Forward button. Remove the email header information from the body of the email itself, and amend the subject line to remove any reference to forwarding (typically 'Fwd:'). Then it's simply a case of entering the correct address and hitting Send.

Going forward, try to make use of your email program's contacts – Jim's a Gmail user, so when he starts typing a name or email address, a list of previously entered addresses (and stored contacts) should appear.

Disk cloning

MIGRATING TO A NEW SOLID-STATE DRIVE

Q I'm planning to buy a solid-state drive and want to



SSD CLONE

Make sure your drive is big enough to accommodate a Windows install.

know if I can migrate my existing Windows system drive to the new drive using Macrium Reflect Free in conjunction with a rescue disc. I'm thinking of imaging the Windows system drive to DVD.

Peter Claxton

Nick O's solution

While it's possible to do what you want using DVDs, we don't recommend it, Peter. The size of your Windows system drive means a minimum of four discs – and probably many more – will be required. Furthermore, it's a slow process and you'll need to be on hand to swap out the discs. Instead, back up to an external hard drive or large (64GB or 128GB) flash drive following the guide at www.techradar.com/1319885.

Once backed up and verified, swap out your old hard drive for your new one. Then boot from the Macrium rescue media and choose the Restore option. If your image isn't detected, click 'Browse for an image file' to manually select it. When you come to restore the image, Macrium should detect that your new SSD drive is probably

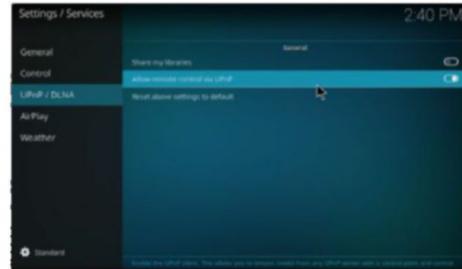
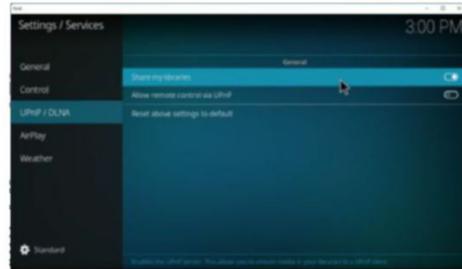
SHARE YOUR KODI MEDIA LIBRARIES

Q I enjoyed your Kodi tutorial from issue 134 (page 48), but I'd like to be able to share my media directly from Kodi without having to use another program such as Plex. What must I do?

Gerry Bukowski

Nick P's solution

Good as it is, Kodi simply doesn't provide as slick a user experience as Plex or Emby, but its DLNA-compatible server is widely accessible from a range of other devices. Here's how you set it up...



1 Switch on server

Open Kodi and click the Settings button followed by Service Settings. Select UPnP/DLNA in the left navigation pane, then flick the 'Share my libraries' switch to On to share your media. Kodi should show up as a DLNA/UPNP source on compatible devices.

2 Access your media

You can access your shared media libraries from another computer, iPhone or Android device by installing Kodi on there. Once done, navigate to Service Settings > UPnP/DLNA on there and flick the 'Allow remote control via UPnP' to gain access.

smaller than your old hard drive and offer to resize the partitions during the restore process.

Some further considerations: make sure that your SSD drive is large enough to comfortably accommodate your current C drive, and be sure to choose the option to image all the partitions required to back up and restore Windows.

We usually recommend you hive off your data to a separate drive when upgrading to a SSD to give Windows room to breathe – check out last month's Reinstall feature (issue 135, page 14) for a detailed step-by-step guide to doing so.

Network

STOP INTERNET HOGS

Q One of my children is constantly downloading and uploading to the detriment of the rest of our household. What steps can I take to apply limits so the rest of us get a reasonable speedy internet connection?

Xavier Rodgers



Matt's solution

If the problem is linked to a specific app or program, and your child co-operates, check its settings for an option to limit upload and download speeds – try the automatic setting if it exists, otherwise check your router for your upload and download speeds and set limits accordingly – say 50% of the total available bandwidth.

If they refuse to help, log into your router's configuration utility in your web browser and see if you can find a Bandwidth Control or QoS section. Options vary according to your router, but you should be able to create rules for your child's specific IP address, then either set specific limits in Kbps or look for a Priority setting. This

would enable the child to upload and download with no limits until other devices come online, at which point their web demands would take precedence. Consult your router's manual or support website for specific instructions.

Microsoft Excel

DISPLAY EXCEL DOCUMENTS ON MULTIPLE MONITORS

Q I'm running Excel 2010, and I want to display two separate spreadsheets on different monitors, but I can't get the files to open in separate windows. Can you help?

Greg Scowen

Mayank's solution

Later versions of Microsoft Excel than you have do open each worksheet in its own window, enabling you to easily drag one to another display. In Excel 2010, however, you'll need to open your first document as normal in Excel, then press [Win] + [R], type 'excel' and hit [Enter] – this should open a new instance of Excel containing a blank document. Choose File > Open to load in your second document, and then drag whichever window you want to the second display. It's a slightly inelegant solution, but it works! ■



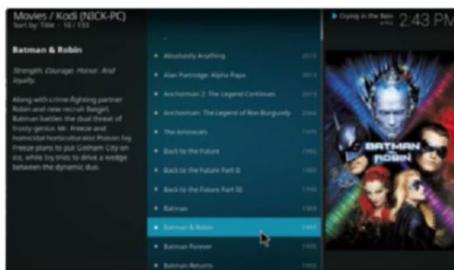
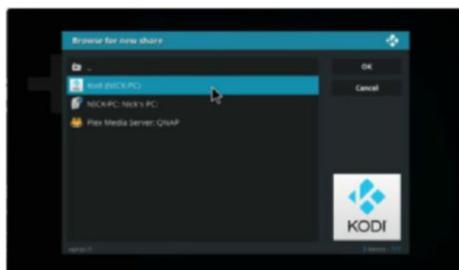
PC problem? Get in touch...

Email full details of your problem to the support team and we'll do our best to help: windowsmagazine@futurenet.com

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Support Squad,
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The screenshot shows a router's configuration interface in a web browser. The left sidebar lists various settings like Network, DHCP Server, and Bandwidth Control. The main panel is titled 'Bandwidth Control' and contains fields for 'IP Range', 'Port Range', 'Protocol', 'Priority' (set to 5), and 'Max Rate(Kbps)' for both Upstream and Downstream. A priority dropdown menu is open, showing options from 1 to 8. A note on the right says 'BANDWIDTH HOG Your router can balance competing internet demands.'

"Log into your router's configuration utility in your browser and see if you can find a Bandwidth Control or QoS section"



Jargon buster!

► DLNA

Stands for Digital Living Network Alliance and is a standard used for sharing digital media (including video) between devices including your PC, TV and/or a tablet.

► QoS

Stands for Quality of Service, and is a tool used by networks to prioritise internet traffic and reserve internet resources on a device-by-device basis to balance competing demands.

3 Add content

Next, you need to physically add the shared content to your client device – from the home page, select your target library and enter the files section. Click 'Add videos...' followed by Browse, UPnP devices and select your PC. Click OK twice.

4 Consume media

You can now access your shared media libraries – they won't show up on the main screen, instead, select Movies and click 'Enter files section' to manually browse your libraries using the same navigation tools as found in Kodi itself.

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Welcome to... Windows 10

► WINDOWS 10 TIPS ► FEATURES EXPLAINED ► NEW TIPS AND TRICKS

Welcome



Just starting your Windows journey? Confused by the changes Microsoft has made to the

Creators Update? Maybe you just want to learn something new about Windows 10. Well, this is the section for you!

There's not enough space to tell you absolutely everything you need to know here, but *Windows Help & Advice* always has your back. In our essential Basics section, we'll show you how to: master the desktop and make it work for you; customise the Start menu and quickly access favourite items using tiles; and how to get the best from Windows 10's virtual personal assistant, Cortana.

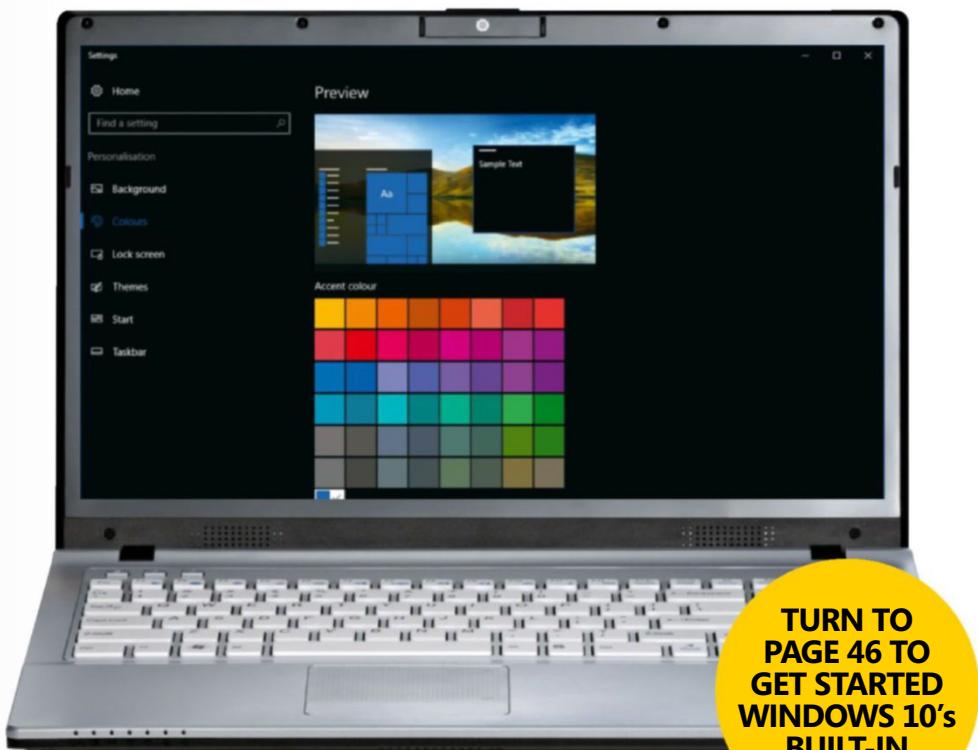
Matt Hanson
Associate Editor
www.facebook.com/windowsmag

Featuring...

76 How to master the Windows 10 desktop

78 Change the way the Start menu works

80 Discover the ways Cortana can help you



**TURN TO PAGE 46 TO GET STARTED
WINDOWS 10'S BUILT-IN APPS**

Windows 10 tip of the month

Back up all your important files

Create and use a backup drive

One of the most important things you can do with your PC is make regular backups of all the files you have stored there – after all, you wouldn't want to lose your precious photos, videos and documents in the unfortunate event that you lost your PC or it got trashed for some reason. Luckily, Windows 10 makes backing up your files easy to do. To do that, plug in a PC-formatted USB drive. Then follow these simple steps...



ADD A DRIVE Head to Settings > 'Update & security' > Backup, then choose 'Backup using File History'.



USE FILE HISTORY Click '+ Add a drive', then choose the drive you want to use for the backup process to begin.

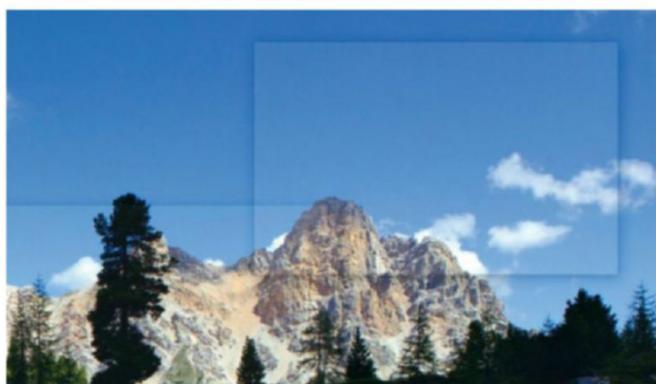
Master the desktop

You'll spend a lot of time there, so here are some great ways to make it work for you...

When not actually using applications, the Windows desktop is where you'll spend much of your time, moving files about, hunting for that obscure application you installed six months ago and suddenly need, or lining up your windows so that they fill the space perfectly (a time-wasting

pastime that's all but dead now thanks to window snapping).

In Windows 10, the desktop and the taskbar get a few new tricks that make working with files and folders even easier, and the new search bar means pulling up an application you don't use often is a breeze. Follow these tips to a happy start...



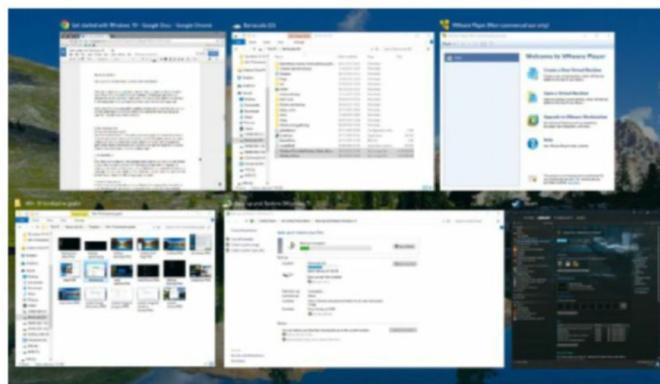
1 Show desktop/peek

The Show Desktop button isn't marked, and some people don't even know it exists. Press this anonymous section at the extreme right of the taskbar, and all your open windows will minimise. Hover the mouse pointer over it, and you'll get a preview 'peek' at the desktop that reverts when you move your mouse pointer away. It's very useful when you've got a chaotic number of windows open on your desktop.

Press this anonymous section at the extreme right of the taskbar, and all your open windows will minimise. Hover the mouse pointer over it, and you'll get a preview 'peek' at the desktop that reverts when you move your mouse pointer away. It's very useful when you've got a chaotic number of windows open on your desktop.

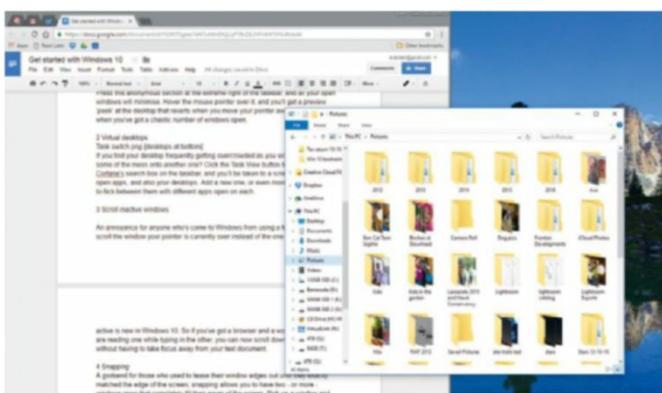
2 Virtual desktops

Task switch png [desktops at bottom] If you find your desktop frequently getting overcrowded as you work, why not offload some of the mess onto another one? Click the Task View button to the right of Cortana's search box on the taskbar, and you'll be taken to a screen that shows your open apps, and also your desktops. Add a new one, or even more, and you'll be able to flick between them with different apps open on each. It's a great way to stay organised on your PC.



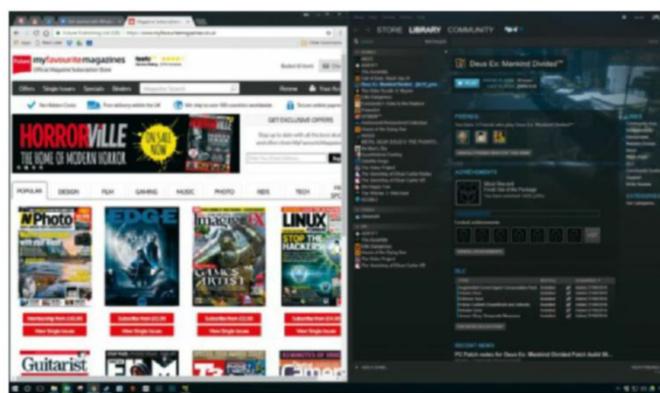
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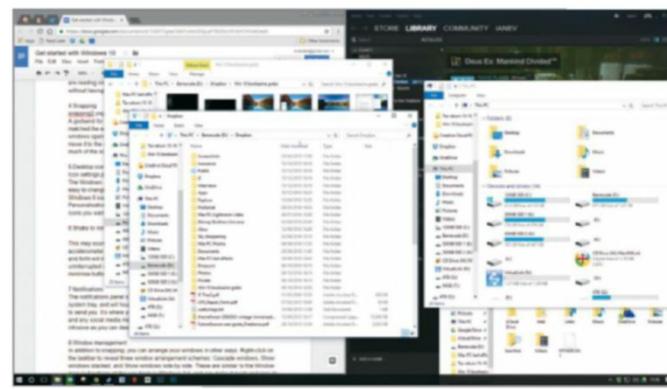
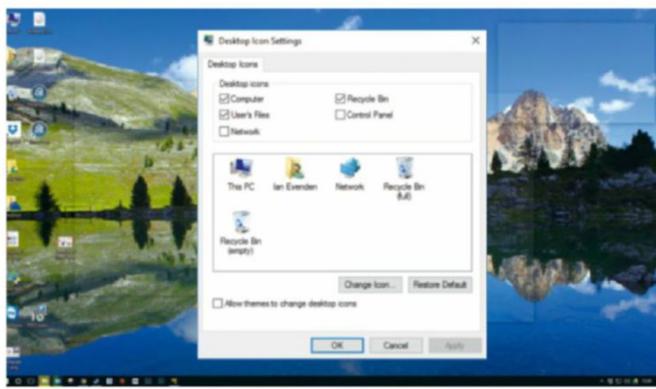
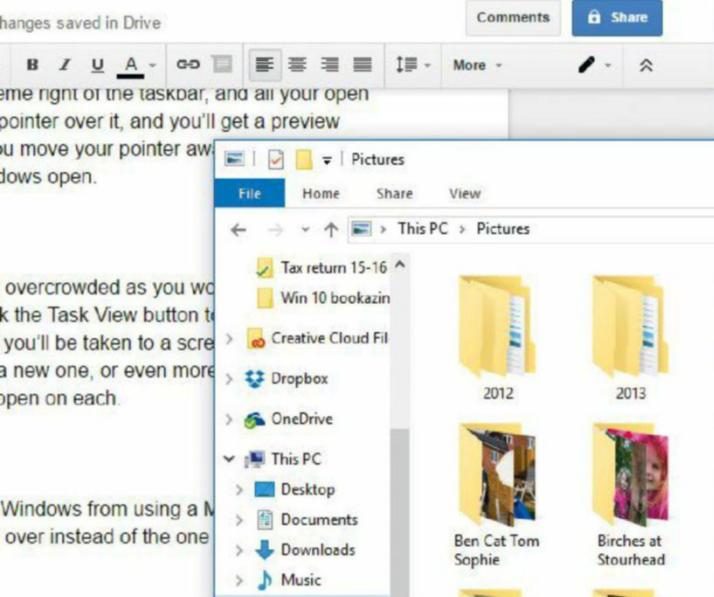
3 Scroll inactive windows

An annoyance for anyone who's come to Windows from using the Mac, the ability to scroll the window your pointer is currently over – instead of the one that's currently active – is new in Windows 10. So, if you have a browser and a word processor open, and are reading one while typing in the other, you can now scroll down in the browser without having to take your focus away from your text document.



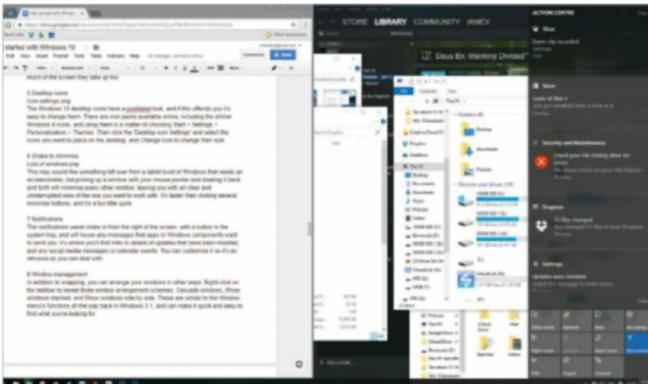
4 Window snapping

A real godsend for those who used to tease their window edges out until they exactly matched the edge of the screen, snapping in Windows 10 enables you to have two or more windows open that completely fill their areas of the screen. Pick up a window and move it to the extreme left or right edge of the desktop to try it (you'll see it 'snap' to the new half screen format). You can adjust how much of the screen they take up too.



5 Desktop icons

The Windows 10 desktop icons have a pixelated look, and if this offends you it's easy to change them. Luckily, there are icon packs available online – including the shinier Windows 8 icons. Download the icon pack you want to use, then go to Start > Settings > Personalisation > Themes. Click the 'Desktop icon Settings' and select the icons you want to place on the desktop, then use the Change Icon option to change their look.

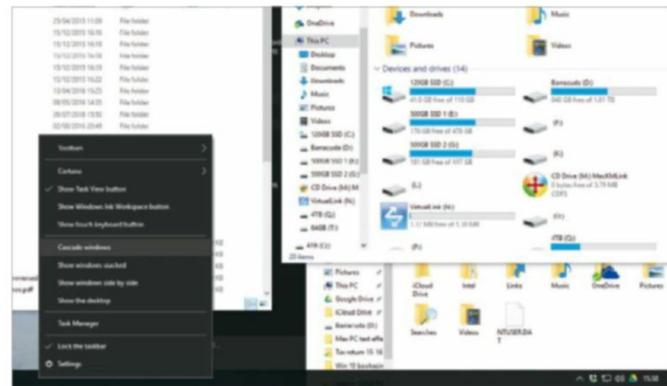


7 Notifications

The notifications panel – or Action Centre – slides in from the right of the screen, with a button in the system tray, and will house any messages that apps or Windows components want to send you. It's where you'll find links to details of Windows updates that have been installed on your machine, and any social media messages or upcoming calendar events. You can customise it so it's as intrusive as you can deal with.

6 Shake to minimise

This may sound like something left over from a tablet build of Windows that needs a built-in accelerometer, but picking up a window with your mouse pointer and shaking it back and forth will minimise every other window, leaving you with a clear and uninterrupted view of the one you want to work with. It's much faster than clicking several minimise buttons, and it's a fun little quirk that's a good one to remember.



8 Window management

In addition to window snapping, you can arrange your windows in some other ways too. Right-click on the taskbar to reveal three window arrangement schemes: 'Cascade windows'; 'Show windows stacked'; and 'Show windows side by side'. These are similar to the Window menu's functions that have been available all the way back to Windows 3.1, and can make it quick and easy to find what you're looking for.

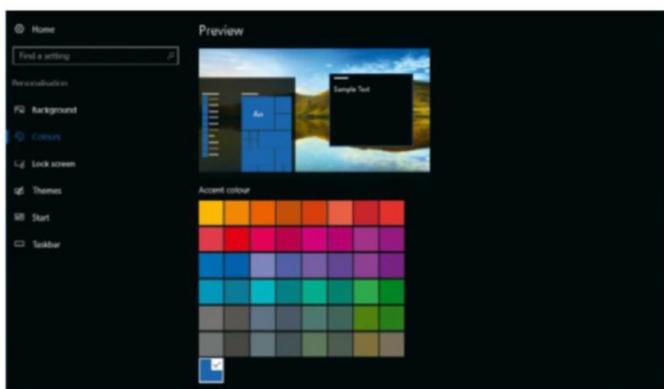
Customise the Start menu

The Start menu in Windows 10 is more powerful than ever – here are some easy tips to make it work for you

The Start menu's return was big news when Windows 10 launched, and it has evolved as the operating system has been updated. It's become a fast, and efficient way to access apps and settings – Windows 8's full-screen monstrosity is now a distant memory, thankfully!

However, if you don't like how the Start menu looks when you first pop it up on your fresh

install of Windows 10, it doesn't have to stay that way. It's fully customisable in ways that were never possible in earlier versions of the operating system, and can be made to work in just about any way you want, standing out from its background for ease of reading, or automatically blending in with the colour scheme of whatever theme you have currently set on your desktop.



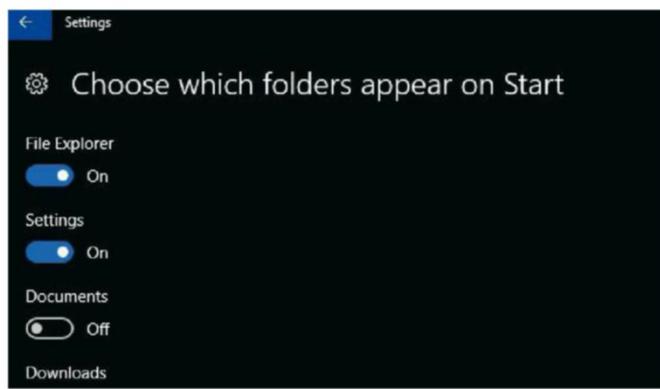
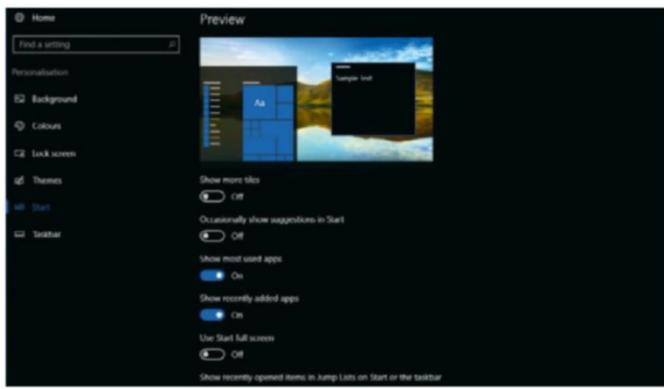
1 Colour

Your Start menu's background can be any colour you like – all you have to do is untick a box. Open up Settings, then Personalisation and finally Colours. Untick the 'Automatically pick an accent colour from my background' option and you'll be able to pick a colour from the palette. So your Start menu can be a contrasting red or yellow rather than a dull blue or grey. Play around to find a combination that works for you.



2 Size

To make space for all the customising you can do to the Start menu, you can easily resize it to your liking. Just move your mouse pointer to the top-border or right-border of the Start Menu, the pointer will change into arrows, and you'll be able to increase or decrease height and width, dragging it out to completely fill the screen if you want to. This is particularly useful if you have a PC filled with programs that you access regularly.

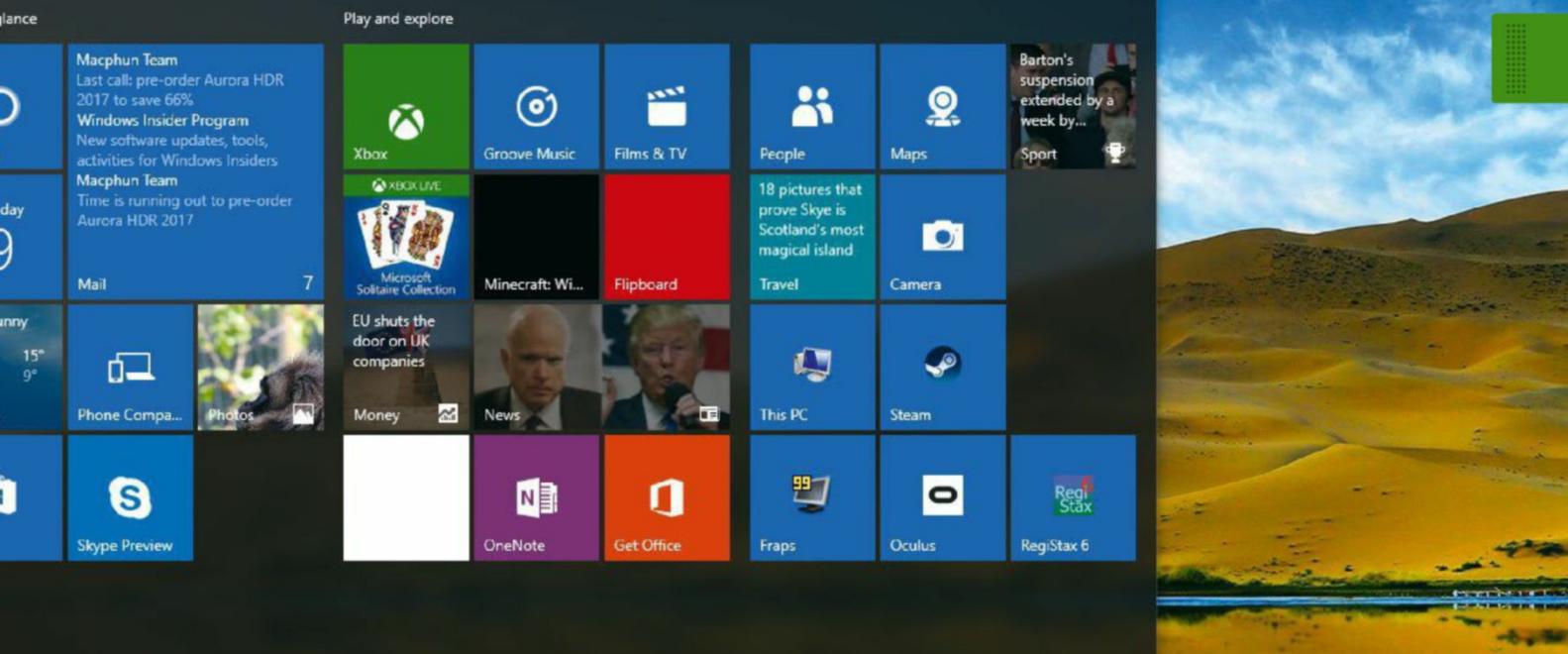


3 Folders and tiles

Your Start menu is made up of lists and tiles, and some of these can be shortcuts to folders such as Documents. Settings > Personalisation > Start enables you to tinker with this, so if you never shoot videos you can stop the empty Videos folder from taking up space on the menu. You can turn the links to the Settings window, and the one that opens an empty File Explorer window, on and off too.

4 Hide program lists

By default, the Start menu will show you lists of both your most used programs and the most recently opened ones. This can end up repeating itself, so if you want to get rid of one or the other of the lists, or both, open up Settings > Personalisation > Start, from where you'll be able to toggle the lists on or off. You can also prevent apps from appearing on the lists so you only get a view of the things you really need from day to day.



5 Use it to search with

Hitting the [Win] key on your keyboard to pop up the Start menu's Search box is one of the fastest ways to look for anything in Windows 10. Just type a few characters and you will get suggestions for applications and documents stored on your computer that match your initial query. You can also use the arrow keys on your keyboard to navigate the Start menu, if you'd rather not use the mouse.



6 Live tiles

Live tiles are tiles that are constantly updated with data, usually gleaned over the internet to make them up-to-date. There's one for the Mail app that shows your most recent messages, one for the Weather app that uses your PC's location to tell you what's going on outside the window, and so on. If you find them distracting, you can turn them off by right-clicking them and choosing the appropriate option.



7 Pin tiles and shortcuts

If there's something you need to be able to find quickly, but which gets lost in the lists of the Start menu, you can pin and reposition it so it's always prominently placed. To do that right-click an item and choose 'Pin to Start'. It will now appear in tiles. Now click and drag the tile to where you want to move it to. To resize the tile, right-click, choose Resize then the tile size you want. You can pin shortcuts to the Taskbar for easy access too.

8 Bring back the Start screen!

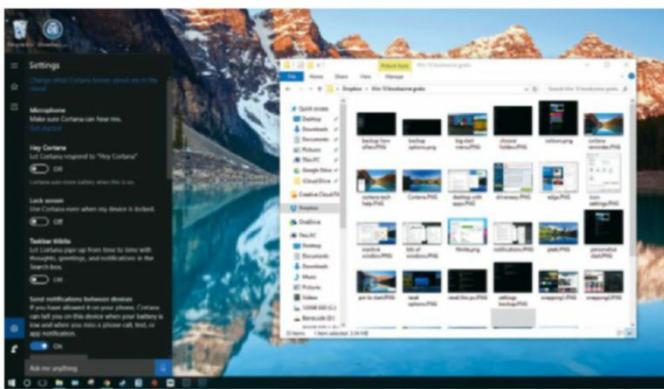
It may have been almost universally mocked and reviled in Windows 8, but the fullscreen Start menu is still there in Windows 10, ready to block out all your work at a single press of the Windows key! But, if you liked it, go to Settings > Personalisation > Start and tick the box marked 'Use full-screen Start when in the desktop'. Note that wording: it now won't actually cover up your apps like it did in Windows 8.

Get to know Cortana

Meet the digital assistant that's here to help you – she can even recognise the sound of your voice

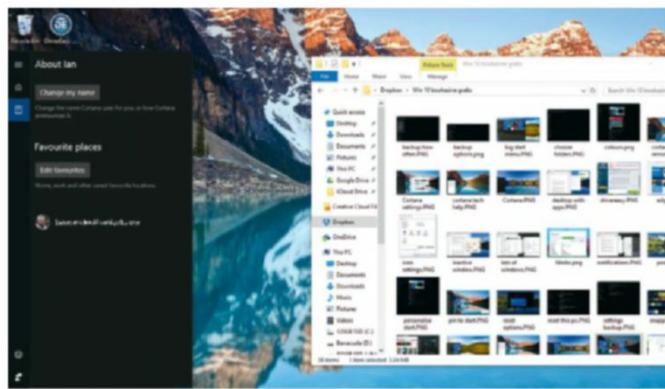
Microsoft's virtual personal assistant takes its name from a character in the *Halo* series of videogames. That incarnation of Cortana – an AI who is outwardly female (having been created from the brain patterns of a female scientist) and never seems to have been provided with quite enough clothes – can hack alien computer encryption and fly captured spaceships.

The Windows 10 version is perhaps a little less powerful, but comes in useful all the same. She can search using natural language terms, and by using voice activation just like Siri does on your iPhone. And if the idea of voice controlling your PC alarms you, or perhaps your computer isn't equipped with a mic, then you can still interact with Cortana through the keyboard, typing your queries for Cortana to answer.



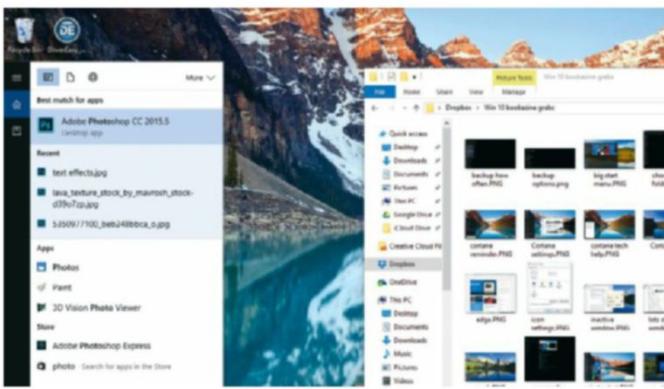
1 Set up

Depending on how your PC has been configured, you may need to switch Cortana on in order to work with her. The first time you try to search your PC, she'll ask if you want to use her. Say no, and the search box remains functional, but without the extra features that Cortana brings. You'll need to be connected to the internet to use Cortana of course, because that's how results are queried and returned to you, just like Apple's Siri.



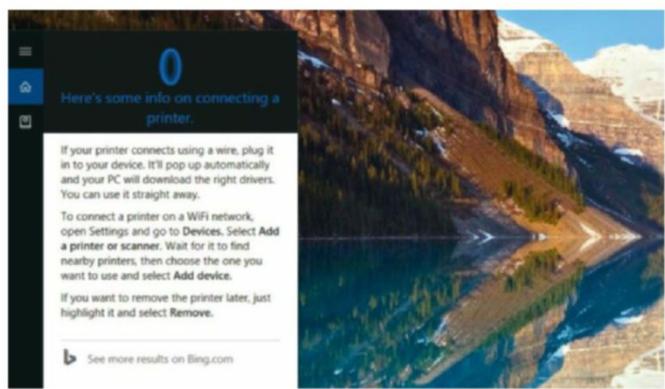
2 Personalise Cortana

To make Cortana as useful as possible she needs to address you personally. Tell Cortana your name and where you live and she can adapt herself to you. If you've opted for her to speak results back to you, she'll call you by name and allow you to correct her pronunciation if she gets it wrong. Tell her your interests, and appropriate news snippets will appear when you open Cortana's panel. You can do all this from the settings.



3 Narrow down your search

To stop Cortana searching things she doesn't need to, and speed up the return of those internet results, you can tell her exactly what you're looking for, which is great when it comes to finding apps and files in particular. So if it's definitely an app you need, rather than a picture or video, start your search query with 'app:'. If it's a setting, type 'setting:'. For a document... you get the idea. You can force a web search with 'web:' too.



4 Use Cortana for tech support

If there's something you want to know how to do in Windows 10, a publication like this one can help of course. If you need to know really quickly, try asking Cortana instead. Type your query in, and it will appear in the list of results under 'Can I help?'. Clicking this gets you the Microsoft help files, and in the case of many common tasks a walkthrough will show you how it's done. Don't forget the tips on these pages though!

Settings

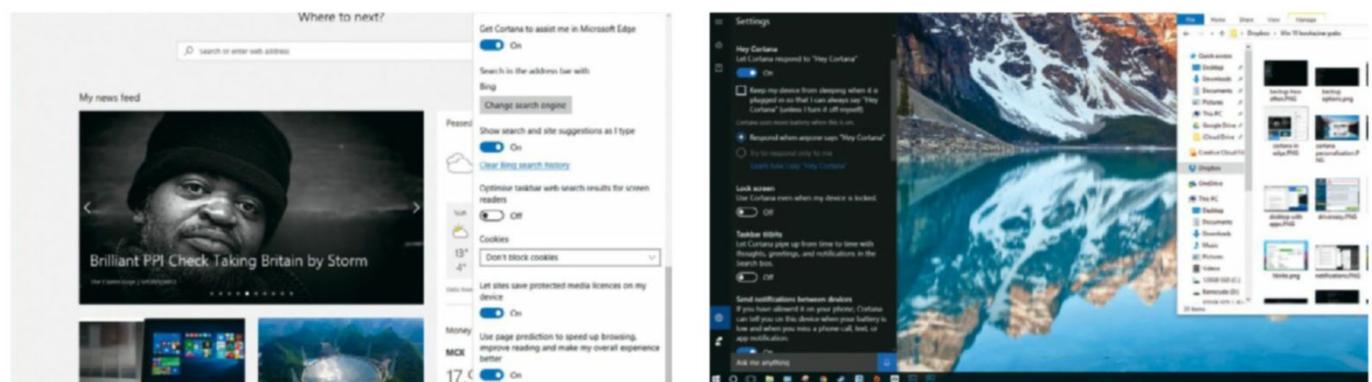
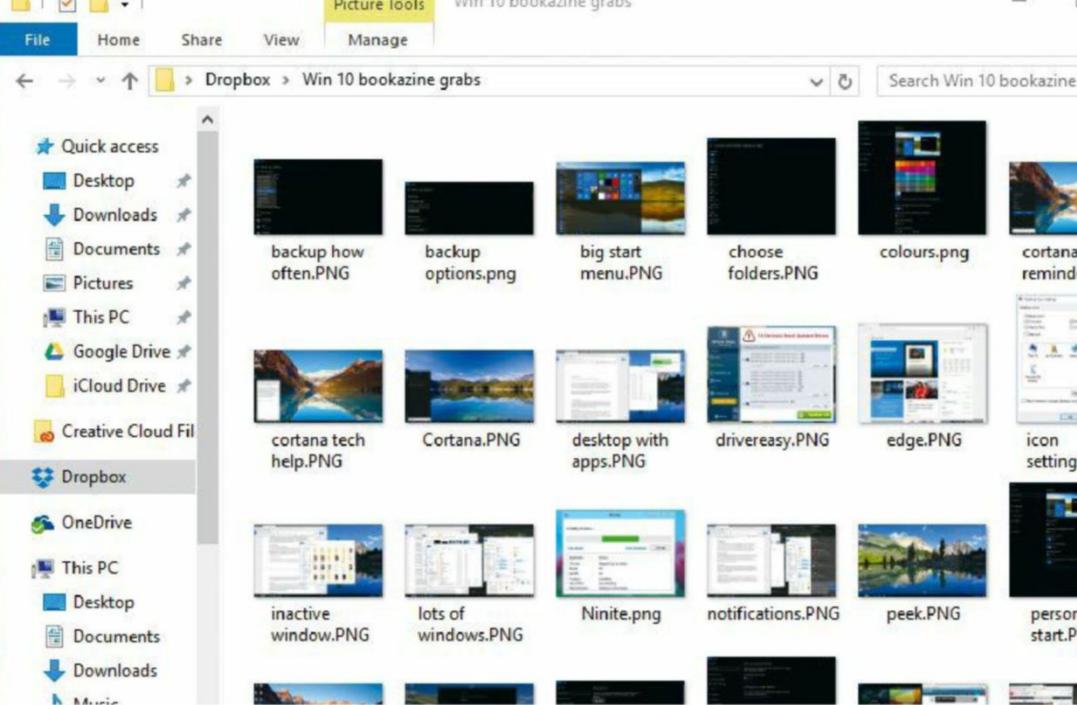
Change what Cortana knows about you

Microphone
Make sure Cortana can hear me.
[Get started](#)

Hey Cortana
Let Cortana respond to "Hey Cortana".
 Off
Cortana uses more battery when this is turned on.

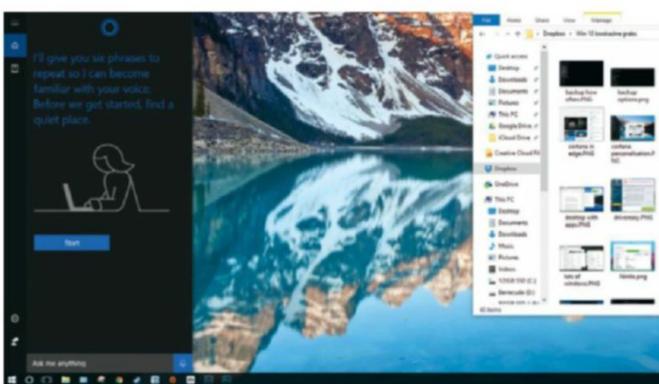
Lock screen
Use Cortana even when my device is locked.
 Off

Taskbar titbits
Let Cortana pipe up from time to time with thoughts, greetings, and notifications in the Search box.



5 Use Cortana in Edge

Cortana can also help you as you browse the internet. To enable it in Microsoft Edge, go to Settings > Advanced Settings > View Advanced Settings and under 'Privacy and Services' enable 'Have Cortana Assist Me in Microsoft Edge'. Now, as you explore the web, you'll get helpful additions such as song lyrics if you're listening to music, or links to apps if the site you're using has one.

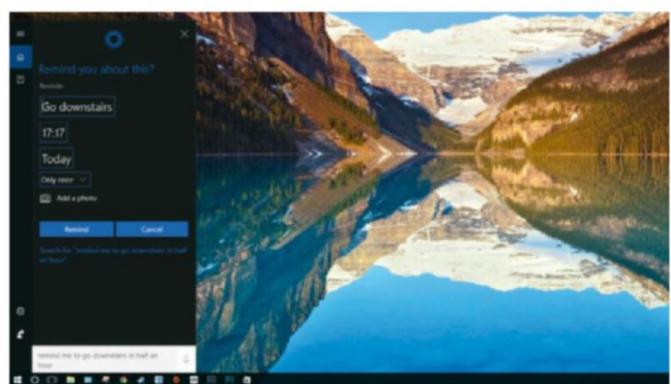


7 Train Cortana to only reply to you

It's hilarious to shout 'Xbox off!' at someone else's Xbox with Kinect voice control switched on, shutting the box down in the middle of what its poor user was doing, so train Cortana to respond only to your voice by selecting the 'Learn my voice' option in Settings and speak the test phrases. You'll find that Cortana keeps learning anyway, so over time the more you use Cortana the better she will be at just about any task!

6 Use voice commands

Click the microphone icon next to the search box, and you can speak your questions and instructions to Cortana. You must have 'Search online' enabled in Cortana settings to use voice search, otherwise the mic icon disappears. If you select the option, she will respond to a cheery 'Hey Cortana' – but this will increase battery usage on portable devices, so is only worth turning on if you're sure you'll use it.



8 Use natural language to search

If you want to set yourself a reminder, you don't need to find a calendar app and input what you want to do, and when, just type or speak it into Cortana as you would when talking to someone. Saying 'Remind me to take a screen break in an hour' or 'Remind me to buy flowers on the way home', for example, will trigger a notification at the appropriate time. Now there's no excuse to forget that meeting or important date again!

Get the UK's best-selling Linux magazine

The image shows a stack of Linux-related publications. At the top is 'LINUX FORMAT' magazine, featuring a 'FREE DVD!' offer for 'UBUNTU STUDIO 16'. The cover highlights the 'Pi ZERO W REVEALED' and includes a photo of the Raspberry Pi Zero W board. Below it is another issue of 'LINUX FORMAT' with a 'Ubuntu Studio 16' cover, featuring 'openSUSE Tumbleweed' and a green chameleon illustration. To the right of the magazines is a close-up image of the Raspberry Pi Zero W board.

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64-bit

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Upgrade

► NEW HARDWARE ► ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES ► LATEST GADGETS

Welcome

If you're in the market for a new PC, you have two choices: either go for a product from a tried-and-trusted, big-name brand or go for a feature-packed, but affordable alternative from emerging tech countries such as China.

In this issue we're looking at both options with student favourite, the HP Pavilion, in one corner (page 84); and the Teclast X5 Pro on the other (page 86).

We also test Logitech's G413 Carbon keyboard (page 88) and Parrot's Bebop 2 drone (page 90). Plus, on page 95, the best free uninstallers 2017.

Nick Odantzis Deputy Editor
windowsmagazine@futurenet.com

Our promise to you...

The Upgrade section is your key to finding out about the latest products, all designed to help you get more from your PC

You can trust our reviews

Our reviewers are 100 per cent independent, with years of experience in the world of computing. Our rigorous testing procedures mean that only genuine, high-quality products are awarded high star ratings. If you see an item of hardware bearing a high score, you can be confident that it is an excellent product.

We choose the best products

Thousands of new PC products are released every year and choosing between them can be an impossible task. Our experts select only the best hardware and software to feature in this magazine. Even better, our star rating system makes it simple to find the best products, giving you a fast, trustworthy guide.

How we review

Our expert reviewers guarantee to test every piece of hardware rigorously and thoroughly, using only acknowledged experts to establish the worth of a product. We always review from the viewpoint of our readers; the day-to-day practicality and quality of a product is paramount.

RATING EXPLAINED ★★★★☆ Superb ★★★★☆ Very good ★★★☆☆ Good ★★★☆☆ Disappointing ★★★☆☆ Poor

This issue's highlights



84 HP Pavilion 17 laptop

The student favourite has been updated for 2017, but is it still top of the class?



86 Teclast X5 Pro ultrabook

The ultra-thin laptop from China that's playing the big brands at their own game



88 Logitech G413 Carbon

Is there more to this gaming keyboard than meets the eye? We decide...



95 Best free uninstallers on test

Which of these apps is best at cleaning up the mess that others leave behind?



HP Pavilion 17

£899.99-£999.99 | \$729.99-\$1,099.99 www.hp.com

The archetypal student laptop is back – and better than ever!

When it comes choosing the right laptop for school, college or university, the HP Pavilion is often at the top of many student wishlists. Why? Because this popular range of budget laptop PCs have proved, over the years, that they are both tough and reliable; while keen pricing and flexible configuration options mean there's a model to suit almost any need or budget.

For 2017, though, HP has adopted a slight change of tack. The Pavilion range is still sensibly priced; but has also been given a makeover, giving the line a more premium look and feel, while also making each model thinner and smaller. The 17-incher, seen here, is also incredibly cheap – with prices starting at £899.99 (\$729.99) and rising to £999.99 (\$1,099.99), depending on model.

Design

The 2017 HP Pavilion borrows much of its classier design from the

company's higher-end Envy family. Most notably, the Pavilion laptop's classically plastic body has been infused with 3D metal to make it look more visually appealing.

Then there's the addition of the proprietary Lift Hinge, which you'll find drooping over the rear of the new Pavilion clamshells. Open up the screen and this rear extension props the entire machine at a slight slant for a more comfortable typing experience. At the same time, the Lift Hinge helps raise the bottom of the notebook above surfaces for better airflow.

The 2017 Pavilion frames also look noticeably less like they're made of plastic thanks to a new silver paint job, with the option to choose a different coloured lid on the back of the display. There are five different colour options available across the range – Opulent Blue, Silk Gold, Orchid Pink, Mineral Silver and Empress Red – although not all of the

colours are available on all model sizes, as we note later. You can choose the colour you prefer when you place your order online – although since the lids aren't interchangeable you'll be stuck with the colour you've chosen for as long as you own the laptop. That said, the colours do look classy and give the Pavilion extra appeal for anyone who wants to make their laptop that bit more personal.

Other welcome changes to the 2017 Pavilion include drastically narrower bezels – 51% at the sides and 19% top and bottom – around the laptop's display. This helps the screen pop and look as if it simply falls off to nothing rather than being encompassed in large strips of plastic. The 17-incher's smaller 14-inch sibling is slimmer for another reason: HP has kicked out its optical drive, enabling it to drop the laptop from 22mm to 19mm in thickness. If you still need an optical drive (for games and other media)



KEY FEATURES

HP Pavilion 17-ab201na

Supplier www.hp.com

Operating system Windows 10 Home (64-bit)

Processor Quad-core 2.5GHz Intel Core i5-7300HQ (Kaby Lake), up to 3.5GHz with Turbo Boost, 6MB cache)

Storage 256GB PCIe SSD + 1TB HDD

RAM 8GB DDR4-2400 SD-RAM (upgradeable to 16GB)

Graphics Nvidia GeForce GTX 1050 (4GB of dedicated GDDR5 RAM)

Connectivity 802.11ac Wi-Fi (2x2); Bluetooth 4.2; 1x USB 2.0 port; 2x USB 3.0 ports; 1x HDMI port; 1x Ethernet port; 1x headphone socket

Optical drive SuperMulti DVD burner

Webcam HP Wide Vision HD with Dual Digital Microphone

Battery 6-cell, 62Whr Lithium Ion

Weight 2.85kg

Screen size 17.3-inch

Display resolution 1920x1080 Full HD

HP Pavilion 17-ab200na

Supplier www.hp.com

Operating system Windows 10 Home (64-bit)

Processor Quad-core 2.8GHz Intel Core i7-7700HQ (Kaby Lake), up to 3.8GHz with Turbo Boost, 6MB cache)

Storage 256GB PCIe SSD + 1TB HDD

RAM 16GB DDR4-2400 SDRAM

Graphics Nvidia GeForce GTX 1050 (4GB of dedicated GDDR5 RAM)

Connectivity 802.11ac Wi-Fi (2x2); Bluetooth 4.2; 1x USB 2.0 port; 2x USB 3.0 ports; 1x HDMI port; 1x Ethernet port; 1x headphone socket

Optical drive SuperMulti DVD burner

Webcam HP Wide Vision HD with Dual Digital Microphone

Battery 6-cell, 62Whr Lithium Ion

Weight 2.85kg

Screen size 17.3-inch

Display resolution 1920x1080 Full HD

then it remains as an option on the 15-inch and 17-inch Pavilions. This, of course, means that the 17-inch model sports larger dimensions, measuring 27.1mm thick and weighing in at 2.8kg.

Specifications

The huge range of customisation options HP offers on its Pavilion has always been one of its strongest suits. As well as a line-up that encompasses 14-inch, 15.6-inch and 17-inch screen sizes; you can also choose to equip your laptop

nothing else, so if you want an Orchid Pink one? No dice. One thing that all of the new laptops share is HP's new Wide Vision camera, which is located above the display. This introduces new lenses that capture a wider than normal field of view. With this, you can have a bigger group to their whole family in frame during video calls. Optional IR cameras also add the ability to login with your face through Windows Hello.

HP says that the Pavilion should get a maximum of 10 hours of

"HP says that the Pavilion should get a maximum of 10 hours battery life between recharges"

with a choice of AMD or Intel Core processors; find room for all your stuff with storage options that include up to 2TB of hard drive storage; a 512GB SSD, or a 256GB SSD/1TB hard drive combo. Gamers and photo/video enthusiasts will love the choice of AMD Radeon or Nvidia GeForce discrete graphics – and the ability to upgrade to 1920x1080 Full HD displays.

The only catch is that some of HP's configuration options seem rather arbitrary. We've already explained that there's no optical drive option on the 14-inch model; while 4K Ultra HD displays aren't an option on any of them – not even the 17-incher. Even the colour choices are limited: the 17-inch model comes in Mineral Silver and

battery life between recharges, although, in our experience we wouldn't put much faith in these claims. This time around HP is also introducing Fast Charge, which brings a system's battery back up to a 90% charge in 90 minutes.

Summary

There's no doubt that the 2017 Pavilion is the best iteration of HP's entry-level laptop yet. It retains the long and popular tradition of combining both the affordable with the upgradeable, and the addition of a thinner chassis, slimmer bezels and a more premium feel – taken from the higher-end HP Envy – are undoubtedly a welcome touch.

However there are also some reasons to doubt the Pavilion's

continuing popularity: firstly, it's now possible to buy Chromebooks equipped with Full HD screens for half the money that the HP Pavilion costs. And there are some things about the Pavilion line-up that remain stuck in the early years of the 21st Century: limited battery life and a lack of configuration options on some models among them.

Having said that we still think, the HP Pavilion is tremendous value – and remains the archetypal workhorse for students of all ages.

The HP Pavilion is slimmer and more premium, but some of its options don't go far enough.


Windows Help & Advice
Verdict





Teclast X5 Pro

£474 | \$585 www.teclast.com/en/zt/X5Pro/

Microsoft's Surface devices are an inspiration for other 2-in-1s

Nothing in tech stays the same for long, so it was only a matter of time before Chinese vendors, buoyed by success at the budget end of the market, started pushing their products upstream towards more profitable sectors.

What started as a flood of cheap knockoffs has slowly turned into a steady stream of better quality products that tend to get their inspiration from Microsoft rather than Google or Apple.

Chinese vendors are now bolder and no longer as hesitant when it comes to taking on the big brands. The Xiaomi Air 12 is one of many devices that have attempted to carve a niche at the top-end of the market with mixed results. But that won't prevent others, such as Teclast, from trying. This little-known manufacturer impressed us with the Tbook 16 Power earlier this year – a powerful device aimed at the Surface 3, but at a fraction of the cost of its Microsoft rival.

But the Tbook 16 Power isn't the top-of-the-range model from the company – that honour belongs to the X5 Pro, a Kaby Lake-powered tablet that goes head-to-head with the Microsoft Surface Pro 4.

However, at £474 (around \$585) at the time of writing at Gearbest (www.gearbest.com), the X5 Pro isn't cheap, although it is often available for less in one of Gearbest's frequent flash sales. These costs, though, are exclusive of any taxes that may be levied by HMRC or the courier companies used by the vendor.

The cheapest Surface Pro 4, meanwhile, costs around 60% more with a worse set of components – although it does come with a free Surface pen and Windows 10 Pro.

Design

The Teclast X5 Pro embraces a tried-and-trusted design, one made popular by Microsoft: it's a large slab of glass and metal. You get a

massive 12.2-inch display with a thick black frame, and a Windows logo that betrays its origins, while the rear of the device consists of a magnesium alloy enclosure with a kickstand that opens at up to 90 degrees (in 22.5-degree steps).

Like the Surface, the edges of the X5 Pro are slightly tapered, which helps stability when held in your hand or placed on a surface.

The power button is located on one edge of the tablet; next to it on the shorter edge are a volume rocker, an audio socket and a microUSB port.

The latter is the odd one out. It is electrically active and we managed to successfully read a microSD card using an adaptor, although we couldn't use it to charge either a phone or the laptop. The X5 Pro's keyboard connector is located on the other longer edge with a proprietary power connector, a mini-HDMI port, a full-size USB port and a USB Type-C connector.



KEY FEATURES

Teclast X5 Pro

Processor: Intel Core m3-7Y30 (dual-core, 1GHz with turbo up to 2.6GHz)

Graphics: Intel HD Graphics 615

Memory (RAM): 8GB

Screen: 12.2-inch IPS, 1920 x 1200, 10-point capacitive display

Storage: 240GB SSD

Ports: USB 3.0 port, USB-C port, micro-HDMI, microUSB, microSD slot, headphone jack

Connectivity: 802.11ac Wi-Fi; Bluetooth 4.2

Camera: 5MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing

Dimensions: 299x202x8mm

Weight: 911g

The keyboard cover is a good compromise between the basic models that are usually bundled with entry-level 2-in-1s, and the beefier, more feature-laden, ones that come with higher-end models.

The keys are surprisingly springy and provide a nice bit of 'oomph' when typing, especially with big Shift keys and reasonably-sized function keys. The touchpad was a different story though – in fact, it almost seems like an afterthought.

The keyboard attachment for the X5 Pro is based on the Microsoft Surface Type Cover. It's less rectangular than the X5 Pro it's partnered with, leading to a smaller space for the touchpad. As such, this input peripheral felt cramped, with a lack of adequate feedback from the left-click area.

Summary

There's a lot to love about the X5 Pro. It is good value for money and delivers the sort of performance you'd expect from a mid-to-high-end Core M device.

However, there are also things that irritate, the touchpad being the biggest culprit, while the Chinese version of Windows 10 is a no-no. The X5 Pro also faces stiff competition from similarly-priced rivals such as the HP Pavilion x2 12-b100na and Lenovo IdeaPad Miix 700. Sure, the hardware specs on both are sub-par compared to the X5 Pro, but they're also backed by global, recognised brands. ■

The X5 Pro is a fantastic product at a sensible price, but it lacks the finesse of big-name rivals.


Windows Help & Advice
Verdict



The X5 Pro includes a front-facing 2MP camera and a rear 5MP one. All in all, it feels solid and very well made – the choice of magnesium alloy for the chassis makes sense since it's light, scratch-resistant and an excellent heat conductor.

Our sample also came with a type cover, an almost perfect copy of the one that accompanies the Surface Pro 4, an active stylus and a 24W (12v, 2A) power supply unit. The proprietary keyboard, which is magnetically docked, costs £34 (around \$42) while the active stylus pen retails for £12 (around \$15).

"It feels solid and very well made – the choice of magnesium alloy for the chassis makes sense"

Specifications

The X5 Pro is powered by an Intel Core m3-7Y30 processor which has a 1GHz base speed and can turbo up to 2.6GHz on demand. Based on the Kaby Lake architecture, it has two cores and four threads, and reaches a TDP of only 4.5W in normal usage. Unlike entry-level processors, the 7Y30 offers two memory channels, which should improve memory bandwidth. The integrated graphics have been beefed up as well with the 24 Execution Units (EU) of the HD Graphics 615 hitting between 300MHz and 900MHz.

The GPU is powerful enough to drive three separate displays including the one that comes with the tablet, a 12.2-inch IPS screen

that boasts 1920x1200 pixels, and a 16:10 widescreen aspect ratio.

The rest of X5 Pro's specification includes 8GB of RAM (dual-channel LPDDR3), a Forsee 240GB m.2 SSD, an Intel Wireless-AC 3165 Wi-Fi module with Bluetooth 4.2, a microSD card slot (located under the stand) and a 38Whr battery.

Note there are two speakers, located near the hinges of the kickstand, and a microphone. Don't expect miracles from the speakers. Although the sound was average and (undistorted) on maximum volume, it lacked clarity at times.

The tablet on its own measures 299x202mm and is only 8mm thick with a weight of 911g. Adding the keyboard cover bumps that up.

In use

Surface-like detachable models are perfectly usable when you have a flat surface, but using them like a laptop (that is, on your lap) is best described as awkward, not least because of the discomfort caused by the kickstand. If you can live with that, the Teclast X5 Pro is a perfectly capable PC. The hardware shines brightly and this device is even faster than the Xiaomi Air 12.

Battery life was good with the X5 hitting 5 hours 20 minutes, playing a count-up timer on YouTube with brightness set on 50%.



Logitech G413 Carbon

£99.99 | \$89.99 www.logitech.com

Is this super-thin mechanical keyboard a compromise too far?

While RGB lighting and macro keys might seem like all the rage in gaming keyboards, the cost of all those extra features adds up. Between the Roccat Suora (<http://roc.gg/2pSA8M3>) and HyperX Alloy FPS (<http://bit.ly/2qzoMst>), it's clear there's a demand for an affordable keyboard with a straightforward design and fewer gimmicks.

Meet Logitech's first affordable mechanical gaming keyboard: the G413. Available in separate Carbon and Silver versions, the Logitech G413 ditches the usual media and macro keys, along with fully-customisable RGB backlighting, in favour of a frameless design and a full set of Logitech's proprietary Romer-G switches.

Priced at £99.99 (\$89.99), the Logitech G413 is competitively priced, costing the same or less than other similarly specified keyboards, including the HyperX Alloy FPS (£99.99/\$99.99), the

Corsair Strafe (£109.99/\$99.99), and the Roccat Suora (£79.99/\$99.99).

Design

When compared to most gaming keyboards – or even most other PC keyboards come to that – the Logitech G413 looks a little naked; since it lacks a plastic fairing, you can see the keyboard's underlying base plate in all its glory.

While we dig the painted black metal and red backlighting on the Logitech G413 Carbon model, tested here, we love the brighter steel panel and white backlighting on the Silver version even more.

Luckily, losing the external shell hasn't cost the Logitech G413 any sturdiness at all. You'll certainly have a tough time bending or finding any points of flex on the G413, thanks to its solid, aluminium-magnesium alloy plate. And even the plastic underside of the keyboard feels tough, thanks to a set of diagonally moulded lines,

which adds to its rigidity while elevating it slightly above a basic, plastic base. The only thing some users might not love is how the key caps basically hover right above the base board without any protection on the sides. We personally love the simpler design, and cleaning the keyboard is easier too.

Ever since Logitech introduced the ostentatious G910 Orion Spark (<http://bit.ly/2qzqHxf>), the company's keyboards have grown progressively thinner and more sophisticated. The Logitech G413 feels like the last major step in that direction with a completely bare frame that measures just one centimetre thick.

Performance

Rather than going with membrane keys or Cherry MX switches like Logitech's last few budget keyboard offerings, the G413 comes with a full complement of Romer-G switches. If you haven't had the

KEY FEATURES

Logitech G413 Carbon

System requirements: Windows 7/8/10; USB port (for keyboard); Second USB port (for USB passthrough port); internet access for Logitech Gaming Software

Switch type: Romer-G Mechanical

Durability: 70 million keypresses

Actuation distance: 1.5mm

Actuation force: 45g

Total travel distance: 3mm

Indicator Lights (LED): 2

USB Ports (Built-in): 1x USB 2.0

Backlighting: Yes; Single colour (5 fixed brightness levels)

Special keys: Backlight Toggle: [FN] + [F7]; Game Mode: [FN] + [F8]; Media Controls: [FN] + [F9]/[F10]/[F11]/[F12]

Cable length: 1.8m

Dimensions: 445x34mmx132mm

Weight (without cable): 1105g



chance to use them yourself, the only thing you need to know is that they're responsive and relatively silent mechanical switches.

There's a strong tactile bump when you hit the bottom of the 2.5mm of key travel on the Romer-G mechanisms. Despite the long actuation distance, we got into cover faster and more reliably when than with other keyboards. This is due to Logitech nailing down response times to a science.

These Romer-G switches should also last you a while, since they're

omission when they're available on the even-lower-priced G213 Prodigy Gaming keyboard (£59.99/\$69.99) from the same company.

We have a similar issue with the G413's USB passthrough feature. While it's undoubtedly a neat thing to have – you can use the provided port to connect and charge your smartphone or tablet; or plug a mouse directly into the keyboard – the fact that it's limited to USB 2.0 limits its effectiveness when it comes to syncing or transferring data between devices.

"There's a strong tactile bump when you hit the bottom of the 2.5mm key travel on the Romer-G"

rated for 70 million actuations. Logitech also includes a set of 12 faceted key caps that you can use to replace the [W], [A], [S], [D] and first five number keys, plus a few others. They're a welcome touch for differentiating the gaming-specific keys from the rest of the keyboard.

Features

There is a downside to Logitech's minimalist approach, however – as evidenced by the G413's limited feature set.

Unlike every one of Logitech's other keyboards, this one doesn't include any dedicated media playback buttons. Sure, you can just hit the function buttons to toggle shortcuts attached to the F-keys instead, but it seems like an odd

Still, this level of connectivity is comparable to the Corsair's Strafe keyboard (<http://bit.ly/2pSxYvL>) and is a step up from the sole charging port you'll find on the HyperX Alloy FPS. The Logitech G413 also does a fine job of supporting wireless peripherals, such as the Logitech G900 Chaos Spectrum wireless gaming mouse.

Another more useful feature can be found on the bottom of the G413 keyboard: a cable pathway that you can use to route your headphone cable along and keep it out of the way – a feature we've only seen on the Corsair K95 RGB Platinum so far. In addition, the G413 also includes a 'U-shaped' channel that can be used as an anchor point for a wired gaming

mouse – making it less likely that you'll accidentally disconnect it when frenetically battling baddies or simply doing some work.

Summary

With the G413, Logitech has introduced an inexpensive and gorgeous, fully mechanical gaming keyboard that's well worth your attention. It's certainly one of the most competitively-priced frameless options on the market, going head to head against the HyperX Alloy FPS and the Roccat Suora keyboards in price; and beating both in responsiveness.

Unfortunately, the Logitech G413 isn't without its flaws. While the presence of USB passthrough is welcome, the fact that it's limited to USB 2.0 seems like an oversight; as does the lack of dedicated media keys. However we think both compromises are a relatively small price to pay given the G413's price.

The Logitech G413 also feels like it makes total sense compared to its rivals – less so when it comes to Logitech's other offerings. It certainly seems like an odd step-down from the company's own entry-level option, the G213 Prodigy, despite that keyboard's lower price tag.

Regardless, the Logitech G413 is one of the best sub-£100/\$100 gaming keyboards you can buy. ■

Compromised it may be, but the G413 is one of the best budget gaming keyboards around

 Windows Help & Advice Verdict





Parrot Bebop 2

£439.99 | \$549.99 www.parrot.com

A drone that – for a little extra – will make you think you can fly

The Parrot Bebop 2 is a smartphone-controlled drone with a 14-megapixel camera, which offers 1080p video recording. The successor to the original Parrot Bebop model, it features a fisheye lens which allows for surprisingly judder-free footage and even boasts user-serviceable rotors.

The USP of the Bebop 2 is the optional FPV pack, which includes a headset and professional-style flight controller, complete with sticks and buttons. Using this setup it's possible to get a first-person view of what the drone is seeing – a surprisingly immersive experience.

The catch is that, when you add the cost of the FPV pack to the price of the Bebop 2 itself, you rapidly approach the kind of money you'd expect to spend on a more capable drone. The Bebop 2 is available for £439.99 (\$549.99) on its own. Or for £599.99 (\$699.99) with the additional Parrot Controller 2 and Parrot Cockpitglasses headset.

Design and handling

You'd be forgiven for thinking the Bebop 2 is modest upgrade over the original Bebop, purely because they look so similar. Thankfully, Parrot hasn't been that lazy; the Bebop 2 boasts a more robust design and a larger-capacity battery, addressing two of the big problems with the first model.

The bodywork is almost entirely plastic, save for some deformable polystyrene-type material around the camera. Each rotor has three blades, and these can be removed when the drone isn't in use. The massive 2700mAh battery slots onto the back of the unit itself, and has to be detached for charging.

The Bebop 2's design is unique in that it's not a single solid unit, but two main elements which are connected via a series of shock-absorbing rubber balls. The main body – which houses the camera and electronics, and onto which the battery clips – sits on top of these

balls, and they reduce the impact of vibration on the camera itself.

While the Bebop 2 feels a little flimsy in the hand, it means video recording is less prone to shaking from the rotors on each arm.

The plastic rotors are removable, and have to be fitted to the drone itself using a special tool. The rotors are colour-coded – white for the front, black for the back – and have to be fitted to the correct arm before flying. There's a spare set of rotors in the box, and it's possible to order replacements if they get damaged. In fact, much of the unit is modular – it's possible to buy new motor units for the arms, too.

The Bebop 2's motors are pretty powerful, and it's able to hold its position even when being buffeted by relatively strong winds. Take-off and landing are easy, and the unit is clever enough to know when there's an issue which could cause problems – for example, if you try to take off in long grass that



KEY FEATURES

Parrot Bebop 2

Camera: 14-megapixels CMOS with Sunny 180° fish-eye lens (1/2.3" aperture)
Video: 3-axis, 1080p Full HD @ 30fps
Video encoding: H264
Photo format: JPEG, RAW, DNG
Stabilisation: Digital
Battery life: 25 minutes flight time (max)
Built-in GPS: Yes
Processor: Dual-core; quad-core GPU
Storage: 8 GB flash storage
Connectivity: Wi-Fi 802.11a/b/g/n/ac



catches one of the rotors, the motors will turn off and you'll get an error message until you move the drone to a clear space. Some other drones lack this feature, and can flip over as a result.

When the drone's in the air there's a small amount of drift in positioning, but unless you're in a cramped space – which is never recommended when flying a drone – it's not too much of an issue. The Bebop 2 is fast and responsive when airborne, and is capable of some surprisingly swift turns.

wireless signal to ensure the drone is always under control, but should the link drop then the drone will stay stationary until you reconnect. The working range is said to be 300 metres, but we struggled to get that kind of distance, since the connection would often drop off.

Most of us probably wouldn't be comfortable with flying a drone so far away that it can't be seen, so it's not a major issue, but if you're keen on putting some distance between yourself and the unit then it's worth noting that the FPV bundle's

"The drone connects to your smartphone via Wi-Fi, and a set of controls appears on the touchscreen"

Performance

Out of the box the Parrot Bebop 2 is controlled via Parrot's FreeFlight Pro app, which is available for iOS and Android. The drone connects to your smartphone via Wi-Fi, and a set of controls appears on the touchscreen. From here, you can use a twin-stick setup to manoeuvre the drone in the air; there are autonomous flight commands such as turns and loops, and you can get the drone to follow a particular subject as well. If you're feeling fancy, you can create a flight plan for the drone, but both this and the 'follow me' functionality cost extra – which is rather cheeky given the cost of the drone.

The app automatically toggles between a 2.4GHz and 5GHz

physical controller increases the operational range to 1.24 miles.

The Parrot Bebop 2 can reach speeds of 37.28mph horizontally and 13.05mph vertically without affecting image quality. The battery is quoted as offering 25 minutes of flight time, but 20 is more realistic.

Video capture

The Bebop 2 uses a fisheye lens, complete with 170-degree field of vision, on its 14-megapixel camera, which allows for smoother video recording than on other drones. The unit doesn't record all of this image, but instead uses software routines to anticipate movement and keep the image steady. When the drone is performing a turn the software moves its focus to

compensate, resulting in silky-smooth footage. Video is captured at 1080p/30fps rather than 4K, but recording quality is decent. The only negatives are that the fisheye lens is susceptible to lens flare in certain lighting situations, and when you're flying even at close range the video feed is glitchy.

FPV bundle

While the standard Bebop 2 can be controlled using your smartphone and the Freeflight Pro app, the FPV bundle adds the Cockpitglasses headset and the SkyController 2, which features physical controls.

The Cockpitglasses unit doesn't have its own screen or hardware, but instead uses your phone to display what the drone is seeing.

One of the big issues with flying a drone is having to constantly look down at your phone's screen to see the drone's view of the world – something that isn't always easy. Parrot's FPV solution removes this issue, as you're always seeing the drone's viewpoint, so you're not tempted to switch from your phone to the drone itself. As an immersive experience it's stunning; it really feels like you're flying.

Summary

The Parrot Bebop 2 is a great entry-level drone for anyone fancies trying aerial photography and video capture, and cuts the cost by enabling you to use your phone as a controller. If you can afford it, you should fork out for the FPV bundle – the experience of flying from a first-person viewpoint is worth it. ■

If you're looking to get into drone flight videography, the Parrot Bebop 2 is a great way to start.

 Windows
Help & Advice
Verdict



SOUNDBARS

Want multiplex movie audio without the multi-channel faff? We test six seriously cinematic Bluetooth soundbars


Winner!

1 Q Acoustics M3

£299, qacoustics.co.uk

If you can live without Wi-Fi, Q Acoustics has your ear. This metre-wide soundbar offers a decent spread of inputs: HDMI, stereo phono, optical digital audio and 3.5mm line-in.

There are no on-body controls and it comes with an ugly credit card remote, but the design aesthetic still has a techy appeal – a metal brace provides clearance for the downward subwoofer, while the grille is aluminium.

The key attribute is wide-dispersion BMR drivers, which give a pronounced stereo effect. Bass response is good too. A soundbar to play loud.



2 LG SH6

£230, lg.com

The LG SH6 is a bafflingly good value Bluetooth bar that slams like a barn door in a hurricane. Wide at 1,060mm, it's best partnered with 50-inch-plus screens. Connections include two HDMI, digital optical audio and a 3.5mm line input. The HDMI don't support 4K Ultra HD, but Google Cast is built in, and performance is outstanding for the cash.

The SH6 delivers a wall of sound, with clean dialogue and excellent mid-bass. Rated at 150W, it has volume in reserve, and also functions perfectly as part of LG's multi-room MusicFlow ecosystem. A stone cold bargain.



3 Bose SoundTouch 300

£600, bose.co.uk

The Bose SoundTouch 300 is cut from designer cloth. Build quality is supreme, with a tempered black glass top plate and wraparound aluminium grille. It's wide at 97cm, and doesn't lack for welly.

Twin HDMI support 4K HDCP 2.2 sources, and there's also an optical digital audio input. The Bose ADAPTiQ room calibration system, with a mic built into a plastic headband, is used for setup. Once tuned, performance is excellent. The Bose does big cinema brilliantly well, and is also wonderfully musical.

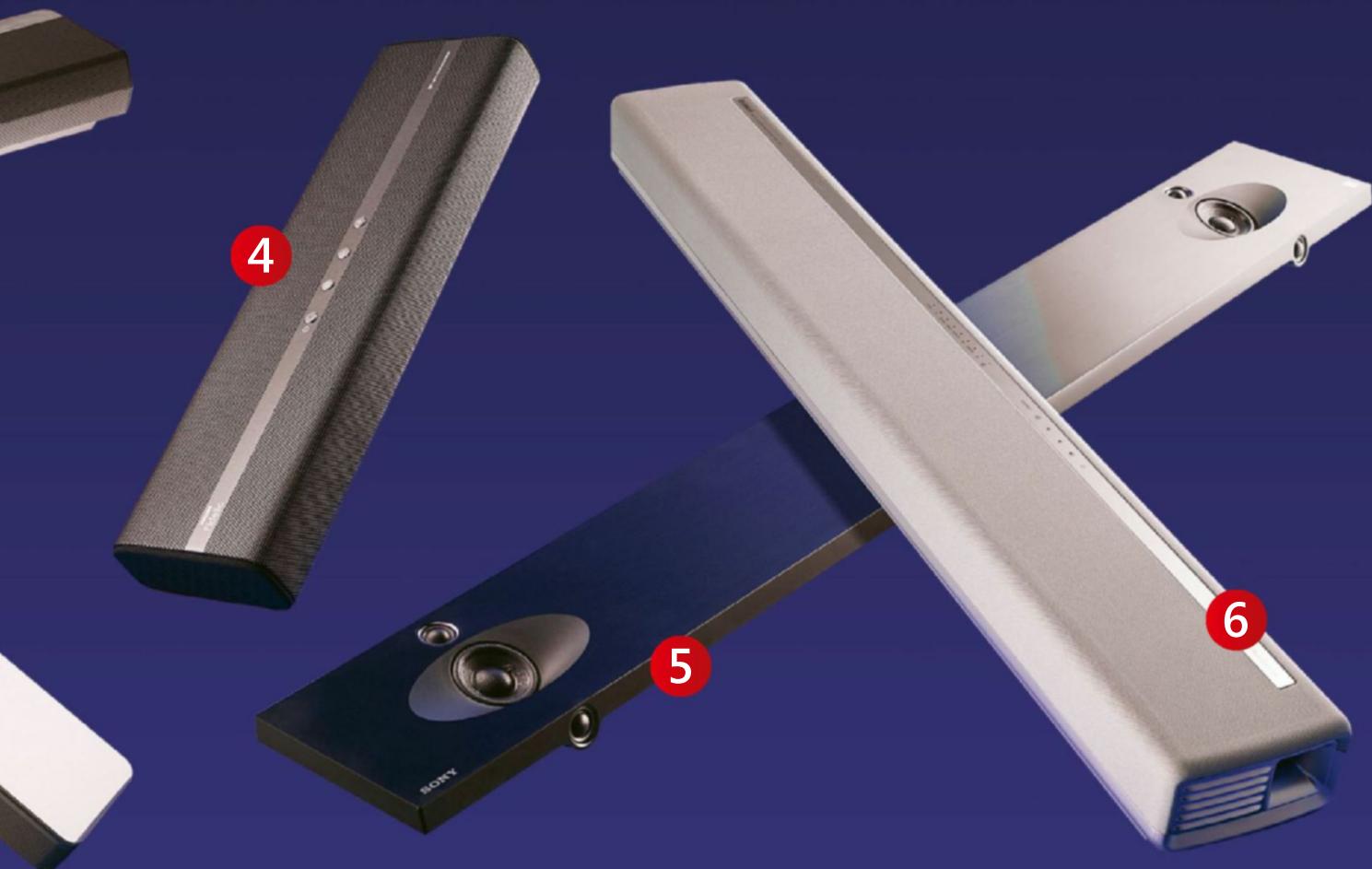


A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, you needed an AV receiver and a battalion of speakers to bring convincing movie sound home. Now a single premium soundbar lets anyone get rowdy with *Rogue One*.

Kick-ass digital amplification, ingenious drivers and sophisticated DSP audio processing mean a sound system no longer needs to take over your living room to sound good. Some bars come with wireless subwoofers for deep bass, others handle highs and

lows in a single enclosure. All promise face-slapping audio.

Throw in Bluetooth and multi-room audio streaming, and the right soundbar will do more than just scratch your cinematic itch. Bring on the movie stars...



4 Philips Fidelio B1

£450, philips.co.uk

The Fidelio B1 is a mere 41cm wide and comes with a wireless sub, which at just 86mm deep is able to slide beneath your sofa. You get two HDMIIs, a 3.5mm line-in and an optical digital jack, but there's no 4K support. The rolled aluminium and fabric design is cute.

For such a shorty, the B1 delivers an engaging, panoramic soundstage. The wide sweet spot comes from four microbeaming drivers in a cross-firing configuration. A pair of additional soft dome tweeters on top function as a virtual speaker array. Over-priced but always entertaining.



5 Sony HT-NT5

£599, sony.co.uk

It may look like a film star, but this 2.1-channel audio package turns out to be tuned for audiophiles. The 108cm bar boasts a pair of mid-range drivers, flanked by a gold-ringed high-frequency super tweeter and a secondary tweeter on the edge of the unit. Audio quality is smooth and articulate, although it doesn't quite have the bass wallop that you might be expecting.

There are four HDMIIs, all 4K Ultra HD friendly, plus an optical digital audio input. The HT-NT5 can also be used as part of a Sony multi-room system. One for the fashionistas.



6 Yamaha YAS-306

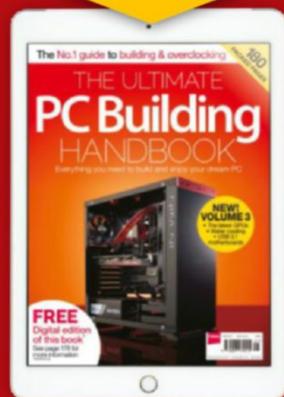
£350, yamaha.co.uk

Available in black or silver (actually grey fabric), the YAS-306 is a mid-ranger that wants to do more. As part of Yamaha's MusicCast system, it can stream content across other MusicCast kit. It'll also play hi-res audio. But there are caveats. Offering very little below 100Hz, it's light on bass, which removes heft for action movies and diminishes deep beats from music. Arguably the best reason to audition the 950mm YAS-306 is its brilliant Air Surround Xtreme virtual surround mode, which effectively recreates a cinematic soundstage from its tweeter/woofer array.



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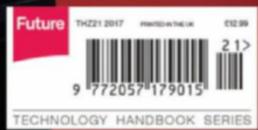
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THE BEST FREE UNINSTALLER 2017

Purge unwanted programs from your PC



When you want to remove an app or program from your PC, you probably reach for Windows' built-in 'Add or remove programs' option. It's okay for removing the odd program here and there, but all too often you'll be presented with a message telling you that some components couldn't be removed, or that the uninstall has failed in some way.

That's why you need a dedicated third-party uninstaller – and some of the best tools around are available completely free. These uninstallers will quickly scan your system for all installed programs, and let you select several at once for removal.

Once they've been purged, the software will then perform another scan to track down and wipe out temporary files and old registry entries, freeing up valuable space and ensuring you don't run into problems when installing a newer version of the same software later on.

The best free uninstallers also provide a handy way to manage browser extensions and plugins, and remove any you don't use. You'll also be able to empty your recycle bin with a single click, and delete your browser history.

If you like to experiment with new software, or just want to keep your computer tidy, a free uninstaller is essential. Presented here is our pick of the best.

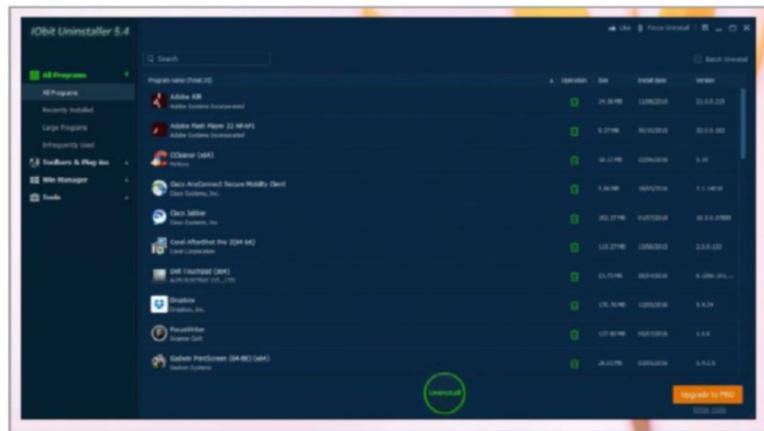
1 IObit Uninstaller

www.iobit.com/en/advanceduninstaller.php

IObit Uninstaller (available for Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8, 8.1 and 10) gets right down to business, scanning your system for installed software the moment it starts. Its smart, clear interface displays a list of all your installed software, with extra tabs if you're only interested in the newest programs (if you've tried something new and don't

like it), and the biggest ones (which will have the greatest impact on system performance).

If you've already uninstalled a program but suspect it's left mucky footprints across your drive, IObit's deep scanner can hunt down junk including broken shortcuts and caches created when installing software updates.



IObit Uninstaller also takes a look at your web browsers to identify any plugins that could be uninstalled to speed up your surfing. Version 6 supports Firefox, Internet Explorer and Edge. Each extension is accompanied by a user rating to help you decide whether to keep it.

IObit Uninstaller also throws a file shredder in too, which doesn't really fit with the premise of an uninstaller, but all the other tools are relevant and useful.

All in all, IObit is the best uninstaller you can download, and its thorough scanning makes it the equal of many premium programs.



RATING



2 Wise Program Uninstaller

www.wisecleaner.com/wise-program-uninstaller.html

Wise Program Uninstaller is a portable app for Windows XP or later, so you don't have to worry about it leaving a mess of its own.

It's a very quick and lean little uninstaller that scans your system for already installed programs and

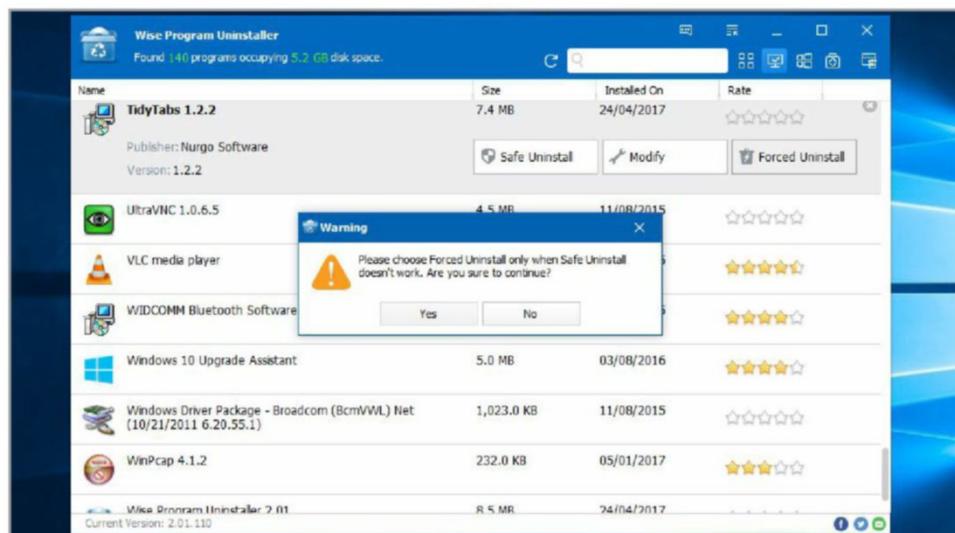
displays ratings to show you how other users feel about them. You probably know what you want to erase, but it's a thoughtful touch.

Your choices for each program are Safe and Forced uninstall (some also have a Repair option,

but only if it's part of the software in the first place).

Safe uninstall is a way to access the program's own uninstaller, whereas Forced performs a deep scan to track down scrap files and broken registry entries. It shows you everything it's identified before deleting them, but this doesn't serve much purpose; you're unlikely to be able to pick out an individual Registry entry and say "Hang on, I need that!"

The main downside is that it can't log new programs as you install them, but as an uninstaller it's well designed and not bulked out with unnecessary tools.



RATING



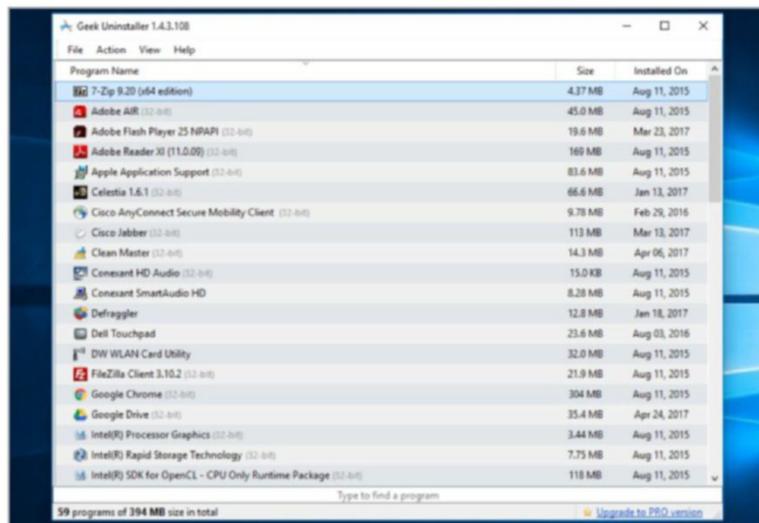
3 GeekUninstaller

www.geekuninstaller.com

GeekUninstaller is another free portable uninstaller for Windows XP or later, weighing in at just 2.5MB. Although a Pro version is advertised on the developer's site, this is actually a completely different program called Uninstall

Tool – GeekUninstaller is completely free.

It performs a speedy system scan and provides the usual options: Clean or Forced Removal. If you don't recognize something, GeekUninstaller will Google it for



you – a simple but welcome addition that saves you having to load up your web browser.

Just like the IObit and Wise uninstallers, GeekUninstaller also offers a deep scan option to help clean up the remnants of previously uninstalled programs. However, unlike IObit it doesn't automatically monitor your PC for new installations. Instead it highlights any programs you've recently installed the next time you run it. GeekUninstaller is offered in over 30 different languages too, and since it's portable can be easily run from a USB stick hassle-free.



RATING



GeekUninstaller is a portable app that's ideal for mopping up after messy software.

4 Revo Uninstaller Free

https://revouninstaller.com/revo_uninstaller_free_download.html

Revo Uninstaller Free's icon-strewn interface is colourful but cluttered, and includes tools such as a startup program manager, plus links to Windows' system tools, including defrag and the on-screen keyboard. These aren't necessary, and just distract from an otherwise solid free uninstaller.

However, Revo Uninstaller Free does offer four uninstall options: built-in, safe (built-in with additional registry scanning), moderate (with extra scanning of common locations for leftover files) and advanced (moderate mode, followed by a thorough scanning of your whole system).



Look past Revo Uninstaller's busy interface and you'll find a handy tool that makes light work of purging unwanted apps from your PC.

There's also a strange Hunter Mode, which enables you to uninstall programs by dragging their icons onto a crosshair on your desktop. It's more work than selecting the program from a list – a metaphor gone rogue.

Unlike some rival apps, Revo Uninstaller Free begins by creating a system restore point, which is reassuring. It can't log new installations, though – if you want that, you might like to give Revo's Pro version a whirl. It's worlds away from the free edition's late-'90s styling, and will give your drives a good scrubbing. Prices start at £33.33 for a single PC.



RATING



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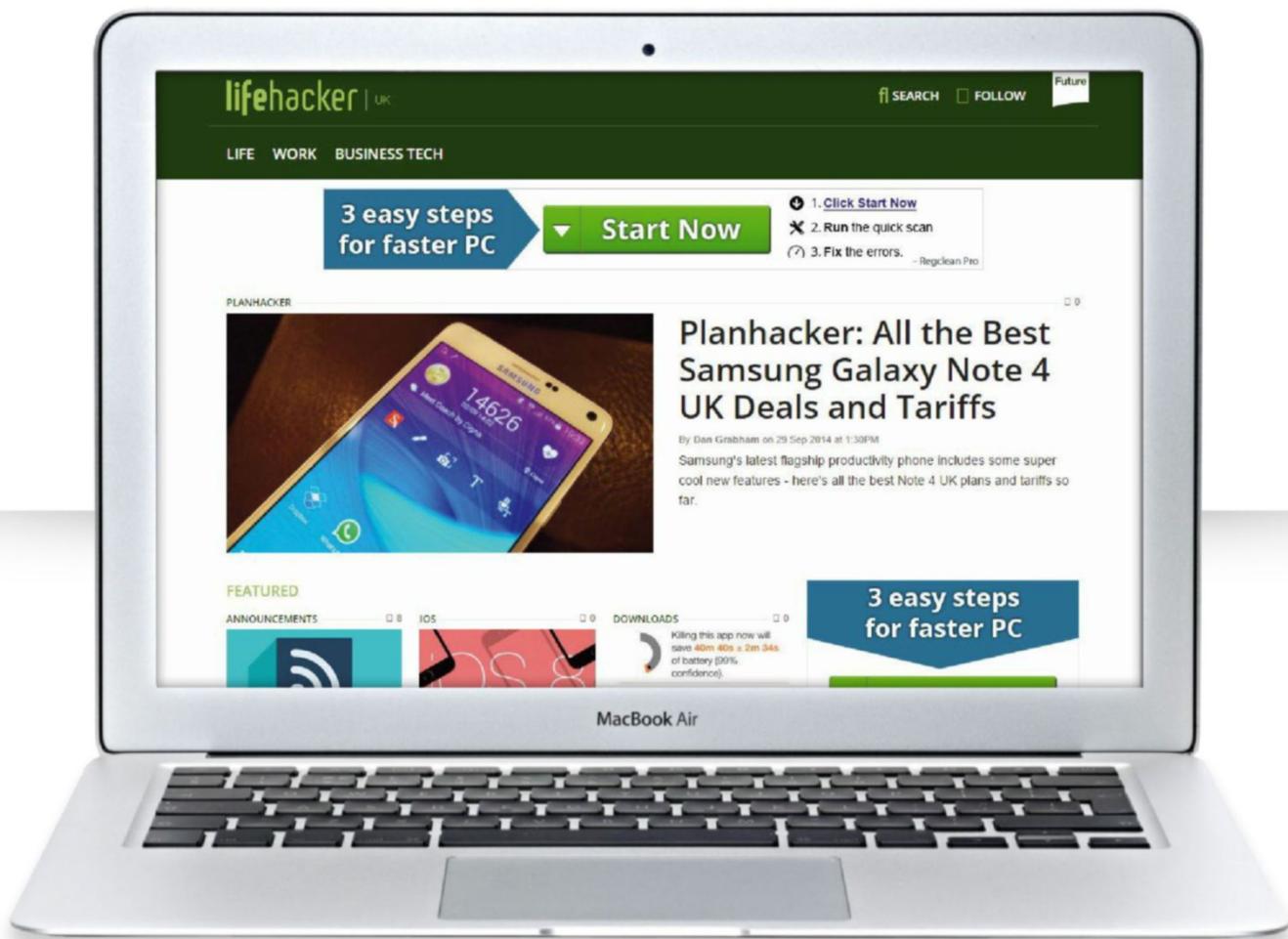


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