

39 OF THE BEST FREE
WINDOWS APPS
GAMES, UTILITIES & MORE



ALL-NEW WINDOWS!
GET READY FOR THE SPRING CREATORS UPDATE



Windows Help & Advice

WINDOWS 10 CRASH COURSE

Master your PC in 30 minutes or less – we show you how!



ALSO INSIDE...

- ✓ Speed up your PC
- ✓ Get lost files back
- ✓ Sort your music
- ✓ Set up a printer
- ✓ Uninstall apps
- ✓ File Explorer tips
- ✓ Photo masterclass



PLUS

REINSTALL WINDOWS

FIX PROBLEMS
WITH A **TOTAL
RESTART**

**PROTECT
YOUR PC**
BACKUP & RECOVERY
MADE EASY



NEW TECH TESTED & RATED

- DELL XPS 13 • RAZER NOMMO SPEAKERS
- DJI MAVIC AIR DRONE • BENQ EX3501R





The source for tech buying advice

techradar.com



Welcome

Windows 10 has changed a lot since it first made its debut in 2015. We've had the Anniversary Update, the Creators Update, the Fall Creators Update and, soon, the Spring Creators Update will wing its way to you.

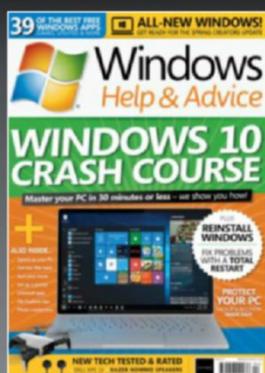
If you're new to Windows 10, or are a bit bemused by all the changes, tweaks, additions and improvements to it, our lead feature (starting on page 11) will bring you up to speed.

We're certainly looking forward to the next raft of changes. The

Spring Creators Update will finally bring us the Timeline, which adds a history element to Task View, enabling you to go back to tasks you were doing earlier and resume them. And Cortana will help you pick up where you left off on one device and resume it on another. Even Edge will get some welcome tweaks, including the ability to silence audio in any open tabs you have – and that's just a taster for what's in store.

Enjoy the issue,

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



SUBSCRIBE TO THE MAG TODAY
AND SAVE – JUST TURN TO PAGE 20!

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
27 April
2018

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

- Master Windows updates → Use the Edge browser as a PDF viewer
- Take control with Cortana → Easily manage user accounts on your PC

Subscribe now at www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/subwha



Windows Help & Advice

FEATURES

11 Windows 10 crash course

Master all the new and existing features of your PC with our 30-minute guide

46 The best free Windows apps

Kit out your PC without spending a penny – 39 essential apps you can get for free!

55 Reinstall Windows 10

Computer problems? Give your machine a fresh start with these reinstallation tips

REGULARS

6 Discover Why you should put a PC in your kitchen; Microsoft gets creative with Cohorts; and the great YouTube crackdown

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

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

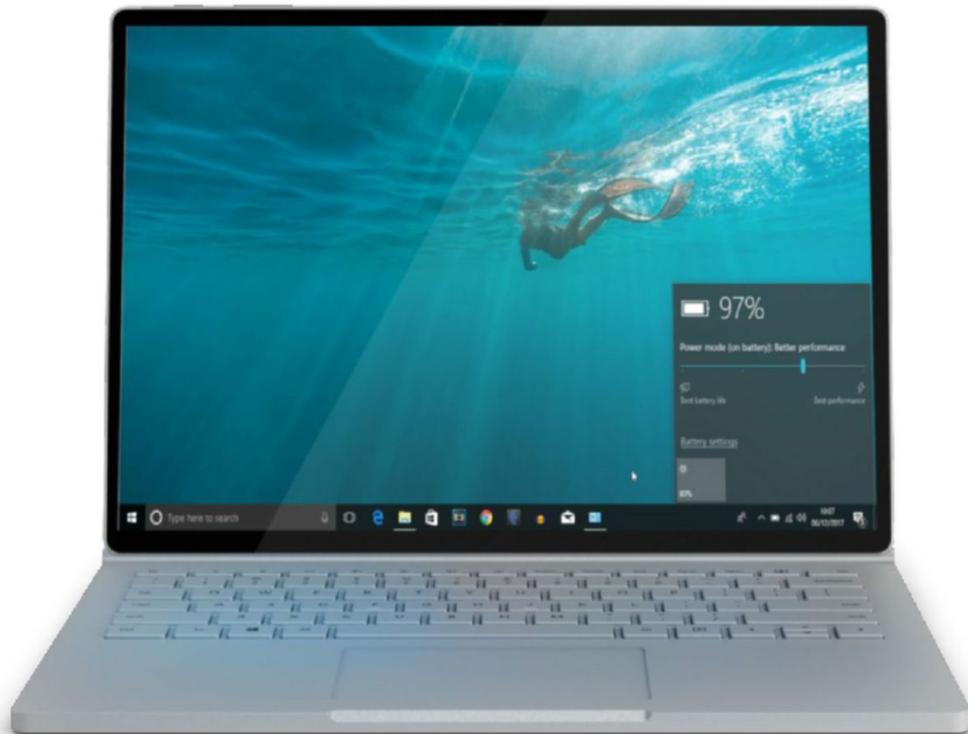
68 Digital issues Get the world's best Windows mag on your phone or tablet

90 Next month Find out what's coming up in the May 2018 issue



SUPPORT

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



EXPLORE

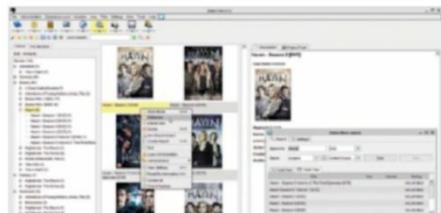
The best PC tutorials



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!"

24 Create an amazing face-paint effect with Photoshop Elements



27 Sort and play music on your PC with the brilliant MusicBee

30 Stay up to date with friends and family using the People app

32 How to remove the pre-installed apps in Windows 10

34 Recover lost files on your PC

37 Make your PC even faster

39 Set up a network printer

42 Get started with File Explorer



SUBSCRIPTION BUNDLE OFFER

Print and digital bundle – only £14 every 3 months

Find out more on page 20



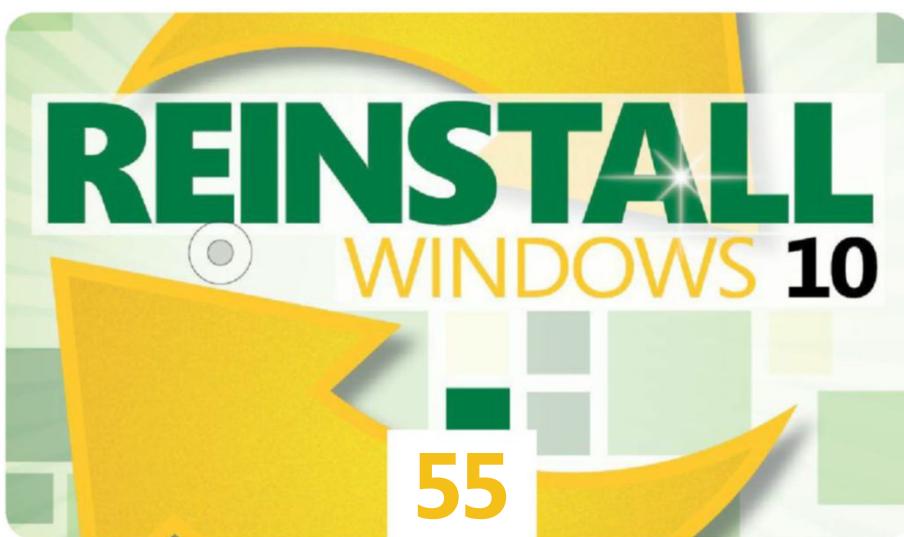
WINDOWS 10 CRASH COURSE

11 Master your PC in 30 minutes or less – we show you how! PLUS Spring Creators Update: brand new features revealed



THE BEST FREE PC SOFTWARE

46 Everything you need to kit out your PC for free – from games to utilities



UPGRADE

75 Our expert reviews

76 Dell XPS 13 laptop

78 Corsair One Elite desktop

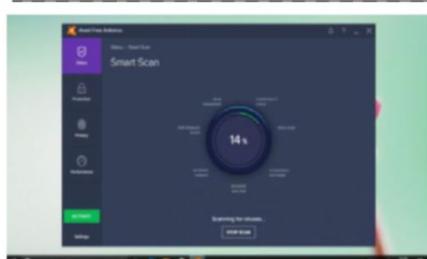
80 BenQ EX3501R 35-inch monitor

82 Razer Nommo Chroma

84 DJI Mavic Air drone

86 Budget wireless headphones

88 Best free anti-virus apps



Follow us on...



www.twitter.com/windowsmag



www.facebook.com/windowsmag



Discover

► NEW THINGS TO DO ► AMAZING WEBSITES ► FASCINATING FACTS



STOCK UP Keeping your shopping lists up-to-date
is easier when you have a PC in your kitchen.

Cooking up a storm

Power up your kitchen with a useful new PC

Better food, a perfect pantry and more – install a PC in your kitchen and improve your life

You should have a PC in your kitchen, preferably one with a wipe-clean touchscreen. Not just for media – although it's hard to argue against the virtues of having iPlayer, YouTube and the rest at hand while you're doing the dishes – but because it'll make you a better cook, a more organised shopper, and much more.

EAT SMART

Let's start with food. The Microsoft Store is bursting with hastily-assembled recipe apps, but they're generally not great

– instead, go straight to the source. The BBC (bbc.co.uk/food/recipes) has over 10,000 recipes online, mostly from its own shows, and AllRecipes (allrecipes.co.uk) includes a massive selection of user-reviewed concoctions, so you'll know before you start if your meal will be delicious or a dud. Celebrity chefs can be just as generous; Jamie Oliver (jamieoliver.com/recipes) offers up a bunch of his

favourites, each of which has a link to buy the appropriate ingredients.

Speaking of shopping, keeping your list up-to-date on a kitchen PC makes the process of online shopping much quicker and more efficient. Keep an account logged in to your favourite supermarket account – Sainsbury's, Ocado, Asda all work – and add items to your basket as you know you need them. Then just book a delivery slot and check out when you're ready. Alternatively, cover all your bases by using www.mysupermarket.co.uk, which can compare prices, book

slots for you, and get you the cheapest shop when your list is complete.

You can also use your kitchen PC for quick conversions. Open up Windows' Calculator app, and set it to unit conversion mode to translate those tricky international recipes to measures you can understand – or even switch metric back to Imperial, if you're more comfortable with measuring things that way.

A kitchen PC makes online shopping much more efficient

CARDBOARD KICKS

Gaming and craft meet

Nintendo's Switch isn't Windows-based (boo!) but it's pushing interactive boundaries that could easily cross over to the PC world. The latest innovation is Labo, a host of experimental cardboard controllers you construct yourself. Slot in one of the Switch's controllers, and you can use your cardboard keyboard to make real music, interact with games using a pulpy robot suit, or even create your own controller using the stickers included with the pack.



DRIVE IT Cardboard controllers can interact with games too, like this motorbike handlebar.



PLAY IT Build your own keyboard, then customise it – the perfect outlet for creative kids.



MOVE IT Using the Switch controllers' vibration motors, you can even make rudimentary robots.

The Knowledge...



Windows 10 Cohorts

What's this?

Microsoft uses its Windows Insider program to try out new features for Windows 10; people signed up for the Insider program get access to the features early, in exchange for a little monitoring of their usage. The Cohort program – still in its early stages – goes a little further, targeting creatives, professionals, and those who use key features in order to generate more refined feedback.

Is this new?

Only in as much as Microsoft is now formalising it. Executives have, in the past, gone to key figures for personal feedback. Penny Arcade's Mike Krahulik, for example, aided in the development of the Surface Pro's pen digitiser in the production of his comic strip, and others have been asked for opinions over the years.

What is a cohort?

Cohorts are still embryonic at press time, but they're currently small groups of invited professionals, led by a Microsoft contact and what the company calls an Insider 'champion'. These cohorts focus on a particular aspect of Windows 10 and allow Microsoft to determine the features that really matter, and those which are more of a distraction or hindrance.

Does this replace the Insider program?

Not at all. Insider provides Microsoft with valuable broad feedback, particularly about performance and widespread usage, while Cohorts gives the company a more pinpoint look at the things it's specifically working on.

How can I join?

Well, you can't. Unlike Insider, which you can sign up for at insider.windows.com, Cohorts is an invite-only program. If you're a high-ranking insider, offering a lot of feedback on subjects that interest you and getting involved in online conversation, or if you're influential in your field, there's a chance Microsoft will approach you – but it's not all that likely.

Everyone's talking about The YouTube crackdown

The free-wheeling video platform cuts benefits and considers its options on creator ethics

Poor old YouTube can't go a week without controversy. Its creators are unhappy: the company's automatic content monitoring systems are handing out oft-unjust bans left and right, with creators' only resort being an unclear and unfriendly appeal system. Many of those same creators have already lost income thanks to tweaks to YouTube's revenue policies, cutting smaller channels out of the loop while removing ads from others to appease sensitive advertisers.

All the while, YouTube's viewers are growing more and more displeased, particularly since YouTube's has seemed happy enough to support controversial content where its biggest broadcasters (and revenue generators) are concerned. The recent case of Logan Paul, who received promotional support from YouTube even after uploading a video of a suicide victim, has caused concerns over YouTube's ethical standpoint.

Neither YouTube or its creators are in an easy position. The former, because over 300 hours of content are uploaded every minute; the latter, because there's really

nowhere else to go. YouTube has, at least, started to learn from its mistakes, with a blog post from company VP Ariel Bardin stating that it would begin targeting new disciplinary measures – ranging from revenue penalties to removal from search results – against content featuring cruelty, traumatising pranks, violence and hate, or sensationalised pain.

NO COMMENT

YouTube's infamously awful comments section is also under scrutiny, after it emerged that a US spree killer made his intentions known in a series of postings on videos. The company has long fought to police comments, forcing (at one time) real names to be used, and giving

creators more power to moderate posts which its algorithm deems suspicious, but filtering the wheat from the chaff will likely require a complete culture change – something YouTube would be wise not to force, given its reputation. And so, if you're a creator, the burden of monitoring your comments is on you – and if you're a viewer, we'd suggest you look away, because it won't change anytime soon.



Download this...

Space Engine

<http://spaceengine.org/>

An entire universe generated from complex maths and a little graphical ingenuity, Space Engine isn't a game, although there's some rudimentary rocketry in there if you look for it. Instead, it's a simulation of space; if you've ever wanted to follow a comet, explore the galaxy or land on another celestial body, you can do it here. The entire known universe is present, generated from astral catalogues, and there's a vast unknown to get to grips with, conjured up from the aforementioned mathematical wizardry.

You'll need a fairly decent PC to run it, with best results coming from a dedicated graphics card, but once you're in you can use the built-in wiki to find out more about the worlds you're visiting or even modify it with the Solar System HD and Ultra packs, which increase the level of detail available in local objects.



GALAXY QUEST Explore the known universe with the wonderfully engaging Space Engine.

Follow us on...



www.twitter.com/windowsmag



www.facebook.com/windowsmag

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE
Friday

27
April

THE 60-SECOND QUIZ

Pens at the ready, your time starts now!

1 Which of these versions of Windows 10 came first?

- A The November Update
- B The Anniversary Update
- C The Creators Update

2 And which of these versions of Windows came last?

- A Windows ME
- B Windows XP
- C Windows Vista

3 Which edition of Windows 10 is designed primarily for schools?

- A Windows 10 N
- B Windows 10 S
- C Windows 10 Pro

4 Windows 10 is built on the structure of which older OS?

- A MS-DOS
- B Windows NT
- C Windows 95

5 What animal was the search mascot in Windows 95?

- A Monkey
- B Dog
- C Paperclip

6 In which Microsoft package did that mascot originate?

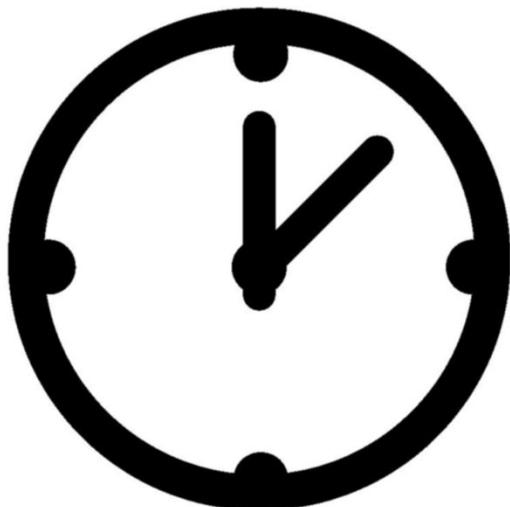
- A Microsoft Word
- B Microsoft Bob
- C Microsoft Works

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

Facts & figures

Rob Mead-Green reveals a host of fascinating digital facts

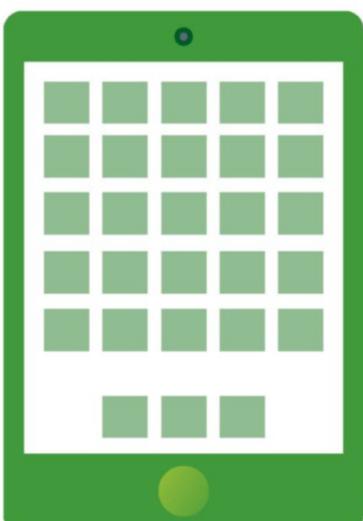
10,000 YEARS!



Amount of time that a proposed mechanical clock will run for before it needs rewinding. The 500ft tall, 10,000 Year Clock is currently being built inside a mountain in the Sierra Diablo range in Texas and is partly being funded to the tune of \$42 million by Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon...

408 MILLION

Number of smartphones sold worldwide in the final quarter of 2017, a fall of 5.6 percent over the previous quarter. Research firm Gartner said the fall was likely due to a lack of quality 'ultra-low cost' smartphones, and the fact that we're hanging on to our existing phones for longer.



7 The number of drones which appeared at a recent fashion event held by Dolce & Gabbana. The drones were used in place of catwalk models to show off the company's jewel-encrusted handbags.



\$1.5 BILLION

Drop in the market value of Snap, the company behind Snapchat, in one day in February. The fall has been chiefly attributed to comments made by one of Snapchat's biggest users, Kylie Jenner, who said on Twitter "sooo does anyone else not open Snapchat anymore? Or is it just me... ugh this is so sad." – a seemingly common reaction to a Snapchat redesign, which hasn't been well received by its users.



Number of Bitcoins 50 Cent claims he owns... compared to the \$8 million's worth he recently claimed that he did. At a bankruptcy hearing in the US, 50 Cent admitted he just went along with a story which was first reported by website TMZ. No-one is yet sure whether he misspoke on social media previously, or he isn't being entirely truthful with the bankruptcy court now...

>> Incoming

The hottest new Windows hardware on the horizon!



Huawei MateBook X Pro

Price €1,499-€1,899, <https://consumer.huawei.com>

Although it's most famous for making phones, China's Huawei is now targeting the laptop market in a big way. First there was the MateBook, which we looked at in Issue 138, and now there's this: the seriously svelte MateBook X Pro – a Windows 10 laptop with an almost bezel-less 13.9-inch touchscreen display, 12-hour battery life and Dolby Atmos stereo sound.

Huawei offers a choice of eighth-generation Intel Core i5 or i7 processors, switchable Intel UHD Graphics 620/Nvidia GeForce MX150 graphics (depending on configuration) and up to 16GB of RAM, as well as up to 500GB of solid-state storage... all of which is crammed into the MateBook X Pro's 16.6mm thin, 1.33kg aluminium unibody.

Obvious nods to Apple's MacBook aside, this laptop also has a rather nifty add-on: a recessed webcam that pops up from the keyboard when needed.



MASTER WINDOWS IN 30 MINUTES

Whether you're new to Windows 10 or left bamboozled by the latest feature update, bring your core skillset up to speed

Windows 10 has evolved considerably since it first made its debut back in 2015. We're about to receive the fourth major update (likely named the Spring Creators Update) and Windows 10 – or should that be Windows 10.3 going on 10.4? – may not feel as familiar as it did when it first was released. And what if you've only just taken the plunge and upgraded from Windows 7 or 8.1? Windows 10 might feel like a whole different operating system entirely.

The truth, of course, is that it's still the Windows you know and love, but whether you're brand new to Windows 10 or finding yourself

increasingly confused by what's been added, moved or removed since the last feature update, we've got you covered. In this essential refresher guide, we're going to take you on a whistle-stop tour of what's been added and improved since Windows 10 was first released, and help you reorient yourself to make navigating your desktop, files, apps and more as simple as Windows intends it to be.

Finally, we'll reveal how to tweak Windows Update, ensure your files are backed up, and provide you with steps to follow should you need to roll back or restore your PC to a working state. Join us as we bring the essential knowledge you need to make the most of Windows 10.



What's new in Windows?

Need reminding what's been added and improved in successive versions of Windows 10? These are the features to look out for

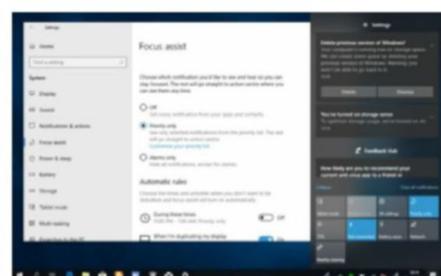
When it first appeared, Windows 10 introduced lots of new features, from a revamped desktop to Cortana, the virtual personal assistant who's always on hand to help, provided you're prepared to give up some of your privacy. Internet Explorer got dumped in favour of the all-singing (if not, initially at least, all-dancing) Edge web browser. It also blended the best bits of Windows 8.1 – the vastly superior File Explorer for accessing your files, for example – with the best bits of Windows 7, such as bringing back the Start menu.

Other changes have followed with each new successive feature release. The step-by-step guide on the facing page highlights six major new features, but numerous smaller changes have been applied with each release too. For example, the Anniversary Edition also introduced a new dark theme that – from the Fall Creators Update – can now be applied to compatible apps too.



Prevent eyestrain after dark with the new 'Night light' feature.

'Night light' was a highlight of the Creators Update, helping to reduce eyestrain when using your PC at night (switchable via the Action Centre). A new Game Mode was also introduced, which aims to prioritise system resources when you're playing games so that the experience is as smooth as possible. The Creators Update also made it easy to capture a selected portion of your screen and copy it to the clipboard with a single key combination – [Shift] + [Win] + [S].



Windows 10's Action Centre has been refined numerous times.

The Fall Creators Update introduced Mixed Reality – the ability to mix actual footage with 3D objects – as well as a handful of other minor new features.

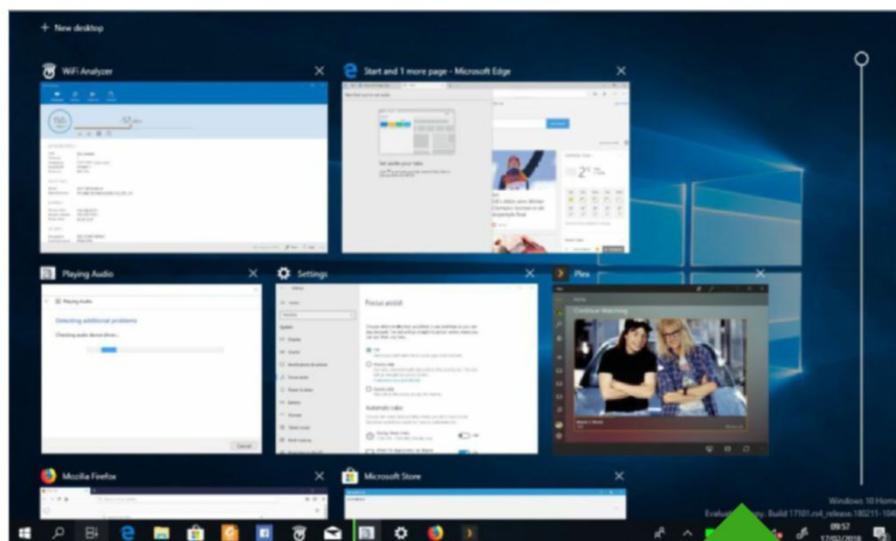
Refining existing features

Bigger changes can be detected when looking at features introduced with Windows 10. Cortana's become smarter over time, but there are question marks over privacy as she offers to integrate herself more closely into your daily life. The Start menu has continued to evolve as well, with design tweaks such as removing the default 'most used' view for apps in favour of an All Apps list underneath recently added or updated programs. Advertisements have started to appear here too, but we'll show you how to remove these later.

The Action Centre has been rolled into the notifications pop-out that's accessible from the bottom-right corner of the Taskbar. This has evolved to give you more control over what's shown along with handy features such as Quiet Hours, which enables you to disable notifications for a specific period.

When Windows 10 was launched the Settings app contained only a limited number of system tweaks, while the Control Panel still played a major role. With each major release, Microsoft has rolled more functionality into the Settings app, with the Control Panel increasingly sidelined. Since the Creators Update, it's no longer accessible from the 'Quick access' menu ([Win] + [X]) and its days are certainly numbered – for now, access the Control Panel via the search bar or by pressing [Win] + [R], typing 'control' and pressing [Enter].

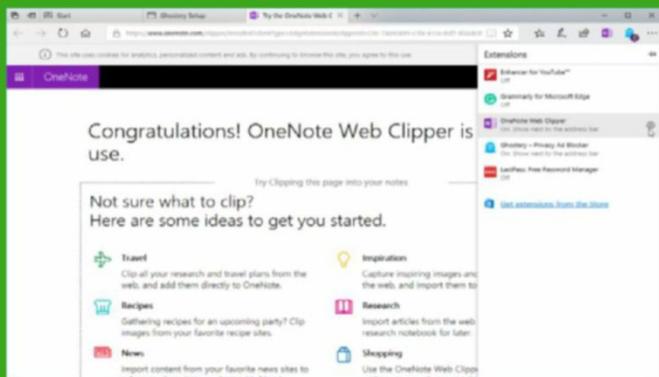
The list of apps that are integrated with Windows 10 has also changed over time – the Windows 10 Skype app was added to the Anniversary Edition, while Paint 3D first appeared in the Creators Update. The Paint app also got a major overhaul in the Fall Creators Update.



What's coming next

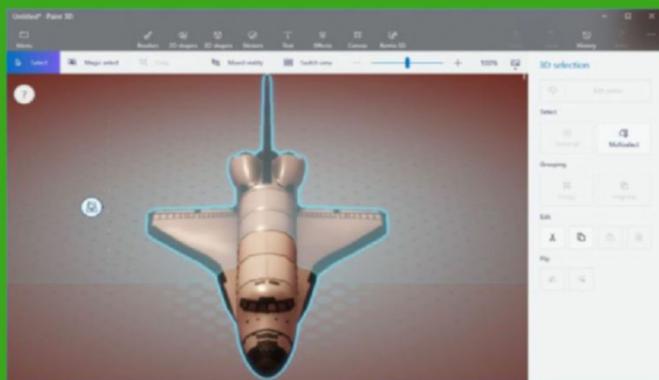
The Spring Creators Update is nearly upon us, and there's lots to look forward to. One major feature set to make its debut is the Timeline. This will be embedded into Task View, enabling you to jump back to files, apps and sites you've recently used. The Action Centre also gains a few extra tweaks – look for Focus Assist under Settings where you'll be able to further prioritise what notifications you receive and when. Finally, one feature that may be delayed until the autumn is Sets, which will enable you to group related apps, documents and sites together under a single tabbed window – just like TidyTabs (www.nurgo-software.com).

What's new in Windows 10



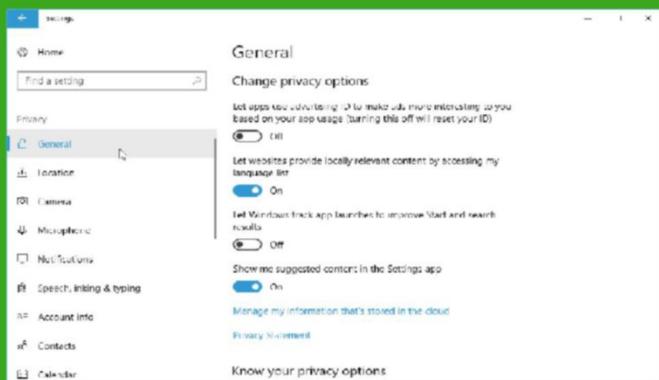
1 Edge supports extensions

One of the biggest turn-offs for Windows 10's new browser was a complete lack of support for add-ons and extensions. This was rectified from the Anniversary Edition on, and because extensions are only available through the Microsoft Store, you can be sure they've been properly vetted.



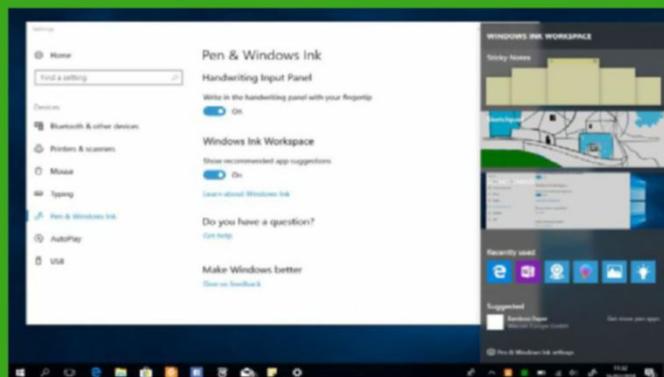
3 3D updates

The Creators Update introduced widespread support for 3D, from a brand new app (Paint 3D) to support for 3D content in other Microsoft tools, including both Edge and PowerPoint. This was accompanied by support for VR headsets and other Augmented Reality (AR) features.



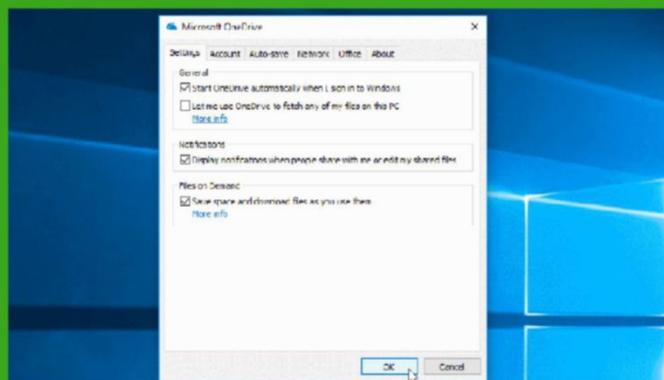
5 More control over privacy

You'll see more granular privacy options being offered to you when you next reinstall or update Windows, but why wait? Go to Start > Settings > Privacy to work your way through a comprehensive list of options. Too much hassle? O&O ShutUp10 (www.oo-software.com/en/shutup10) makes it easy.



2 Tablet-friendly features

The Anniversary Update also took steps to make Windows friendlier on touch devices, such as 2-in-1 tablets. This saw the introduction of a dedicated Windows Ink workspace with sketchpad, sticky notes, annotated screenshot tool and digital ruler, all designed to play nicely with touchscreens and styluses.



4 OneDrive on demand

The Fall Creators Update can now reduce the size of your OneDrive folder by making files only available 'on demand'. To enable this, right-click the OneDrive Taskbar notification area icon and choose Settings, then select 'Save space and download files as you use them'.



6 My People

The Fall Creators Update has made it easier to quickly stay in contact with your favourite contacts – individuals can be pinned to the Taskbar enabling you to message them via Skype or email without having to open a separate window. Right-click the Taskbar and choose 'Show People button' to get started.

Master the desktop

The Windows 10 desktop can be at once both familiar and alien. Discover how to make the most of its best features

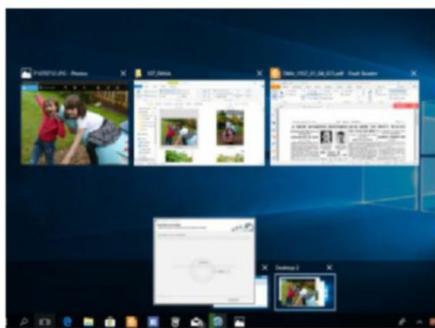
The Windows desktop has undergone some radical changes over the past few years, but after experimenting with Windows 8's Metro user interface – which was rapidly scaled back in Windows 8.1 – Windows 10 has returned the desktop to something closer to Windows 7. This means the desktop has returned to its original function – as a virtual desk. You can use it as a simple backdrop when switching between application windows, or keep shortcuts, files and folders on it for easy access (right-click on it and choose Personalise to change its look and feel).

Adding items to the desktop is simple enough – just drag them from a File Explorer window following the tips on page 16. You can also create desktop shortcuts by right-clicking the file or folder in question and choosing 'Send to' > 'Desktop (create shortcut)'. While this is convenient, your Windows desktop can quickly become messy, and get buried beneath any application windows that you have open.

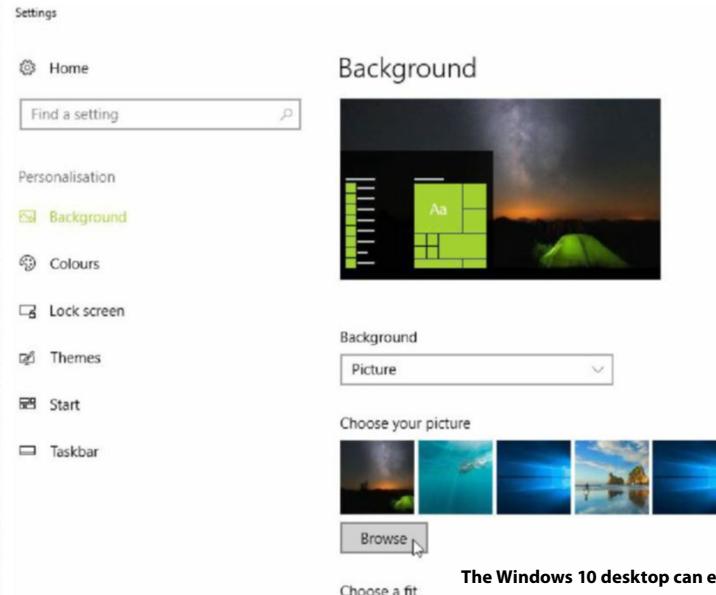
Where to place shortcuts

An alternative route to follow is to keep the desktop clutter-free – simply right-click the desktop, choose View and untick 'Show desktop icons' to hide everything without removing it. You can then store shortcuts using other desktop elements, such as the Start menu or the Taskbar. The most visible place is the Taskbar – 'pin' a program here and you'll be able to access it with a single click from anywhere.

To pin items, open a program window so its icon appears in the Taskbar, then right-click the icon and choose 'Pin to taskbar'. Once pinned, simply drag items around to reorder them. You can also pin items from elsewhere – right-click a



You can easily set up and manage multiple virtual desktops using Windows 10's Task View.



The Windows 10 desktop can easily be customised.

program's Start menu shortcut and look under the More menu or click and drag a program file or shortcut from File Explorer on to the Taskbar itself.

There's also the Start menu for shortcuts – the step-by-step guide on the facing page includes steps for pinning shortcuts to the Start menu in addition to customising it in other ways. Also take the time to right-click the Start button to reveal a list of handy shortcuts to system tools and settings – this Quick Access menu can also be invoked by pressing the [Win] + [X] keys.

"Click the button to view a slide-out window that provides notifications from a range of sources"

More Taskbar tricks

The Windows 10 Taskbar also includes shortcuts to Cortana (covered on page 17) and Task View, which enables you to view all open windows in a grid-like view, making it easy to switch between them. Task View also enables you to organise your windows into multiple virtual desktops, then switch between them. Either click 'New desktop' to create a blank desktop, or right-click a window in Task View and choose 'Move to' and select an existing desktop or create a new one from scratch.

In the right-hand corner of the Taskbar sits the notification area. You'll see a selection of small app icons providing

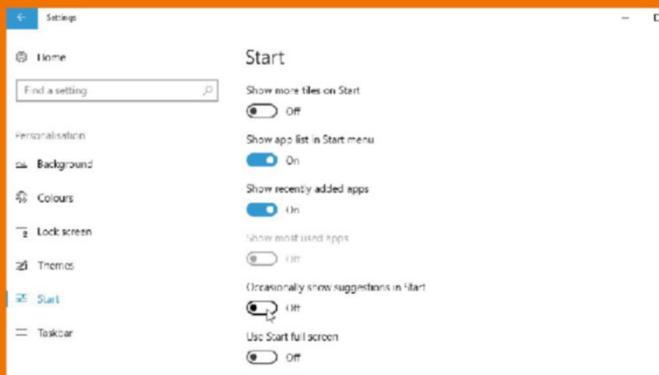
updates and access to key apps and settings. Many programs set to start with Windows hide away here, enabling you to right-click them to access their features, tweak their settings or simply exit the program completely. Click the '^' button on the left to reveal 'hidden' app icons. Just drag icons from here on to the notification area to pin them permanently, or vice versa to hide them from view. More options for configuring these can be found under Settings > Personalisation > Taskbar – click 'Select which icons appear on the taskbar'.

In the far right-hand corner is the Action Centre, which is Windows 10's notifications system. Click the button to view a slide-out window that provides notifications from a range of sources. These are displayed chronologically, and many come with buttons for taking further action. At the bottom of the Action Centre are a series of buttons giving you quick and easy access to certain functions such as 'Night light', as well as system shortcuts.

Again, the Action Centre is fully configurable to your personal needs – choose which buttons are displayed, plus control how notifications behave by visiting Start > Settings > System > 'Notifications & actions'.

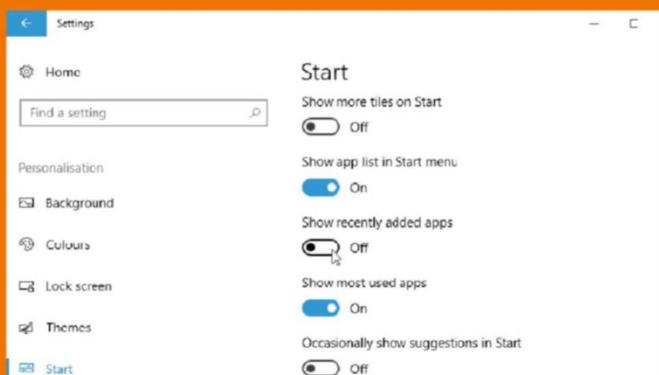


Customise the Start menu



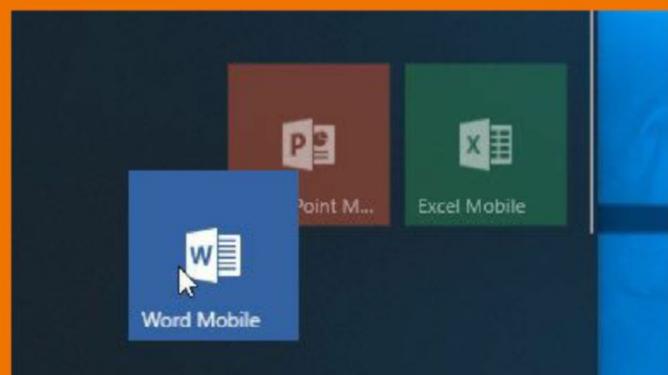
1 Disable ads

To remove unwanted ads, go to Start > Settings > Personalisation > Start and toggle the 'Occasionally show suggestions in Start' switch to Off. Now open the Start menu and look for a Get Office entry under All Apps. Right-click this and choose Uninstall to stop the Office ads from appearing.



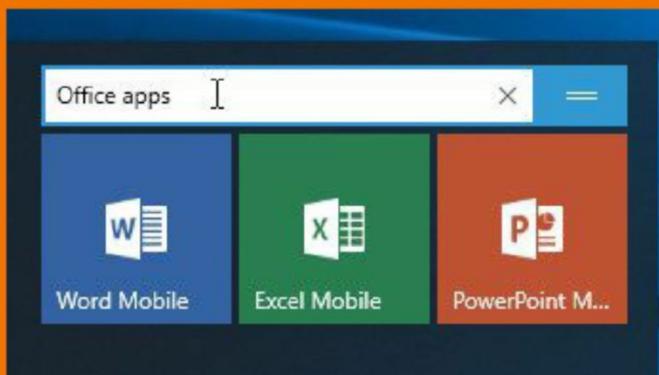
2 Customise the left-hand panel

The buttons on the left give you one-click access to power, Settings, user options (including the 'Switch user' function) and much more besides. You can customise which user folders and tools appears here via Personalisation > Start – click 'Choose which folders appear on Start'.



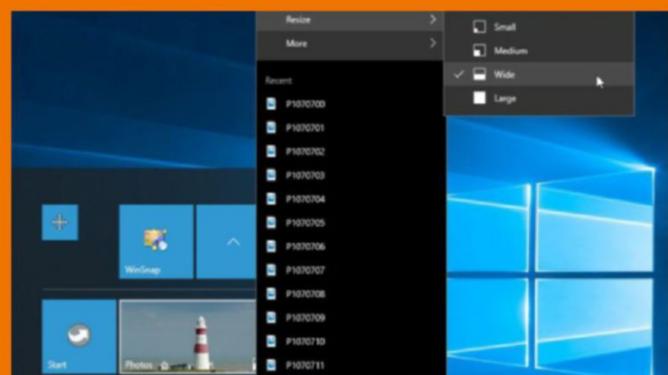
3 Tweak the app list

You can disable the A-Z list of apps in the Start menu via Personalisation > Start (switch off 'Show app list in Start menu') or choose whether to head the list with recently added or most used apps for convenience sake. Finally, select 'Use Start full screen' if you miss Windows 8's Start screen.



4 Customise tiles

The main part of the Start menu is its Tiles section, where app and program shortcuts can be pinned by right-clicking them in File Explorer or on the Start menu's Apps list. Once pinned, drag and drop pinned items around to rearrange them and pin them together in related groups.



5 Managing grouped tiles

Drag one tile on top of another and they'll be merged into a single tile – click this to reveal the tile's contents. Roll your mouse above a series of grouped tiles to reveal a title bar – click under 'Name group' to give it a suitably descriptive name; click and drag the '=' icon to move the group.

6 More customisation tricks

Right-click a tile and choose Resize to change its size: Small, Medium, Wide or Large. Right-click and choose More – if a live tile option is offered, selecting this will see the icon dynamically update with content from the app rather than simply displaying its icon.

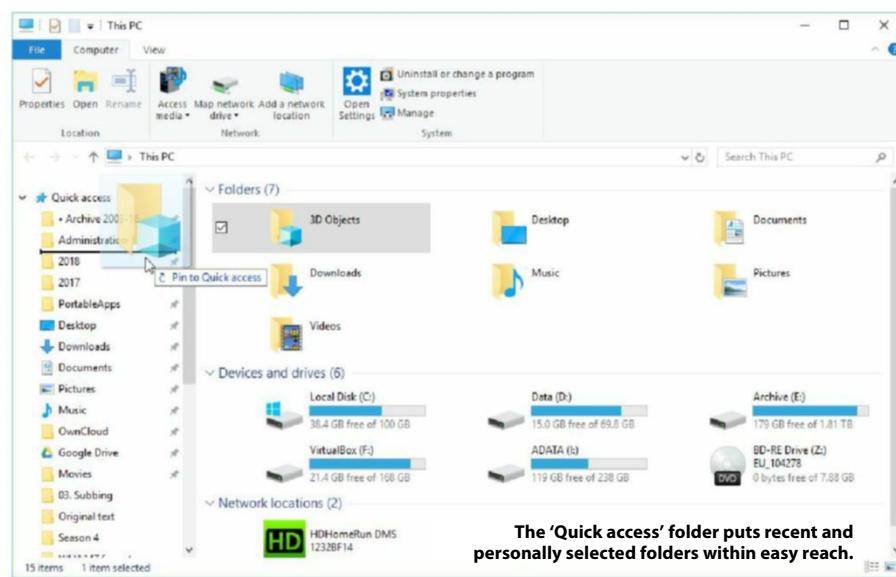
Navigate your PC

It's all about the files on your computer: documents, programs, settings and more – discover how to find and access them

We've seen how the desktop can provide you with a means of pinning favourite programs and files within easy reach, but it's only the start of your journey into navigating Windows 10. Let's start with File Explorer – the tool you use to browse and manage your computer's contents. You'll see its folder icon on the Taskbar, so click this and it'll open to one of two views: 'Quick access' or This PC – you can change the default view by switching to the View tab on File Explorer's ribbons, clicking the Options button and making your choice from the 'Open File Explorer to' drop-down menu.

'Quick access' is a special folder that contains shortcuts to both recently opened files and folders you frequently open. It's also possible to 'pin' favourite folders to the 'Quick access' menu that appears in the Navigation pane on the left of the File Explorer window – the quickest way to do this is simply to drag a folder into the 'Quick access' list where you want it to sit and release the mouse button (you can later remove the folder from this list by right-clicking it and choosing 'Unpin from Quick access').

The left-hand pane also has shortcuts to OneDrive, This PC (a list of all your user folders as well as the drives attached to your PC), selected external drives and your Network. There's a Homegroup entry too – but only for



now, it'll be disappearing as of the Spring Creators Update along with Homegroups themselves.

Windows 10 introduces lots of handy new features in File Explorer that will be new to you if you're moving from Windows 7: switch to the View tab on the Ribbon and tick 'Item check boxes' if you frequently need to select multiple files in a folder – this enables you to simply tick them to do so.

Also keep an eye on the Ribbon when selecting individual files of a specific type – for example, select a photo and a context-sensitive Picture Tools option

will appear. Click this to reveal additional options relevant to photos, such as rotating images or viewing the folder's contents as a slideshow.



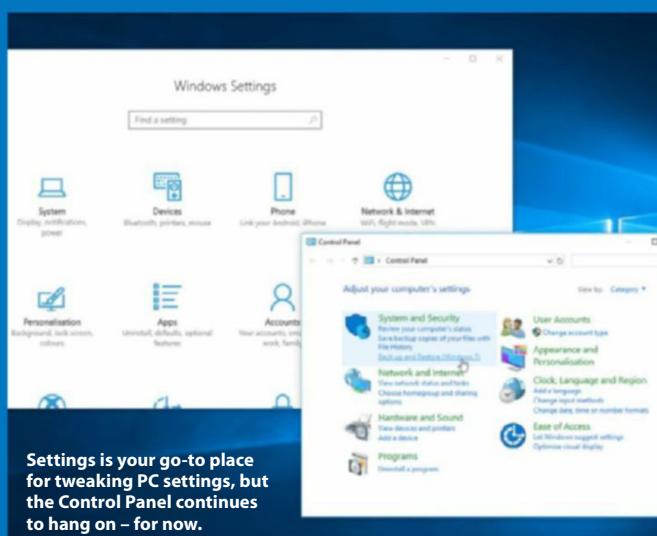
Tweak PC settings

When it comes to changing system settings – from the apps you've installed, to the picture to use for your desktop background – you'll need the Settings tool, accessible from the Start menu by clicking its button. Settings is currently divided into 13 discrete sections – click one and you'll see a series of sub-menus on the left, each of which contain subsets of options.

Settings is Windows 10's replacement for the Control Panel. When Windows 10 was first released, it was still very much a hybrid of both Settings and Control Panel, but with each successive feature update

more settings have made their way from the Control Panel into Settings. For example, from the Spring Creators Update, you'll manage your fonts from within Settings rather than being redirected to the Control Panel.

Thankfully, Settings has its own search tool to help you quickly locate the tweak you want to perform, while some shortcuts – and search results such as Storage Spaces – still point to the equivalent Control Panel applet. However, if you'd rather explore the Control Panel directly, press [Win] + [R], type 'control' and hit [Enter] to force it to appear.



Search your PC

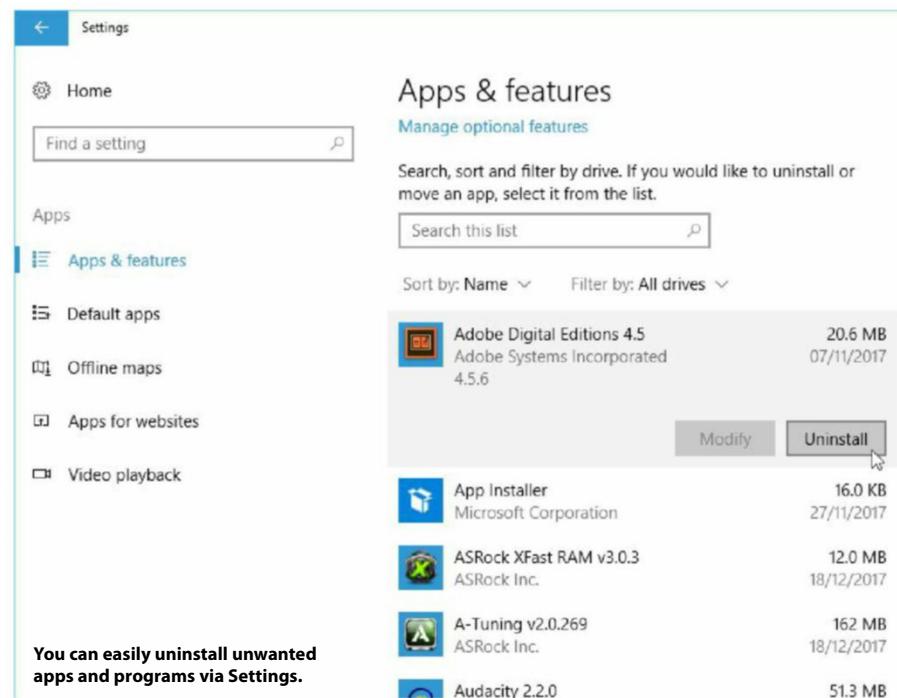
File Explorer also has a search tool built into it for searching the currently selected location (navigate to the This PC level to search your entire PC). Type your search terms and a list of matching entries will appear. Depending on where you search, the process may take some time if you've included folders that haven't been indexed – indexing records a folder's contents in a small database that allows for much quicker searches since the index is searched rather than the folder or drive itself.

Indexed content can also be searched using the new Cortana search tool, which is built right into the Taskbar. Just type what you're searching for and a list of matching items will appear. Click 'Filters' to restrict your search to a specific type of item (such as documents, settings or web results). The step-by-step guide below reveals how to configure Cortana, as well as how to disable the personal assistant entirely so

"Should you wish to make changes to or from a desktop program or Microsoft Store app, you will need to head to Start > Settings > Apps"

the box only functions as a convenient search tool for items on your PC without any privacy connotations.

Indexed folders tend to be those where personal data is likely to reside, such as your user folders. To see what folders are being indexed, type 'indexing' into Cortana's search box and click Indexing Options. You'll see a list of indexed locations – click Modify to select folders to add to this list.

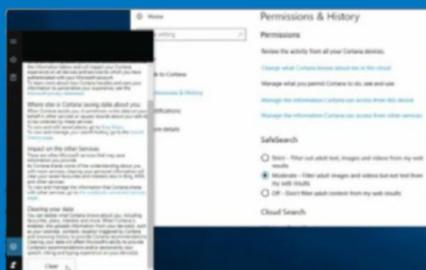


You can easily uninstall unwanted apps and programs via Settings.

app on to a different drive to free up space on your main system drive; and an 'Advanced options' link. This latter option enables you to reset the app, something that removes all user data and returns it to factory-fresh condition (handy if you're troubleshooting a problem or want to start from scratch).

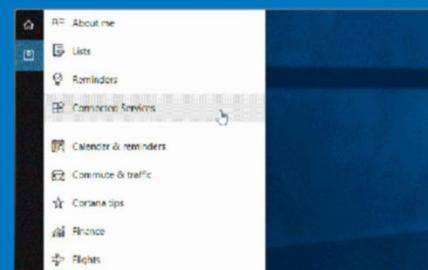
While Windows 10's own tools are adequate for managing apps, download and install IObit Uninstaller Free (www.iobit.com/en/advanceduninstaller.php) if you want to be able to remove apps installed alongside Windows, such as Photos or Skype – these can always be reinstalled through the Microsoft Store. IObit Uninstaller also searches for program leftovers to ensure they're removed more thoroughly, so helping to keep your PC clutter-free.

Configure Cortana



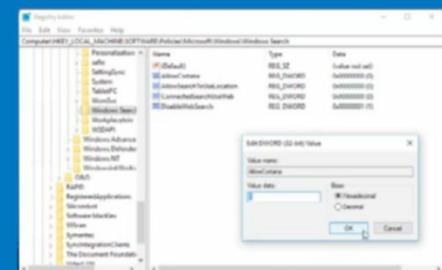
1 Basic configuration

Click Start > Settings > Cortana to configure your mic, set permissions (and delete history), configure web search settings and manage notifications between all your devices running Cortana. To clear everything, select 'Change what Cortana knows about me in the cloud', scroll down and click Clear.



2 Manage services

Open Cortana and click the Notebook icon on the left to configure Cortana's functionality as a personal assistant. Most options involve choosing the kind of information that you want to know about; click Connected Services to link supported providers such as Gmail, Office 365 and Wunderlist.



3 Disable Cortana completely

Press [Win] + [R], type 'regedit' and press [Enter]. Browse to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Windows Search. Choose Edit > New DWORD (32-bit) Value. Name it 'AllowCortana' and double-click it to set its value to '0'. Now reboot your PC.

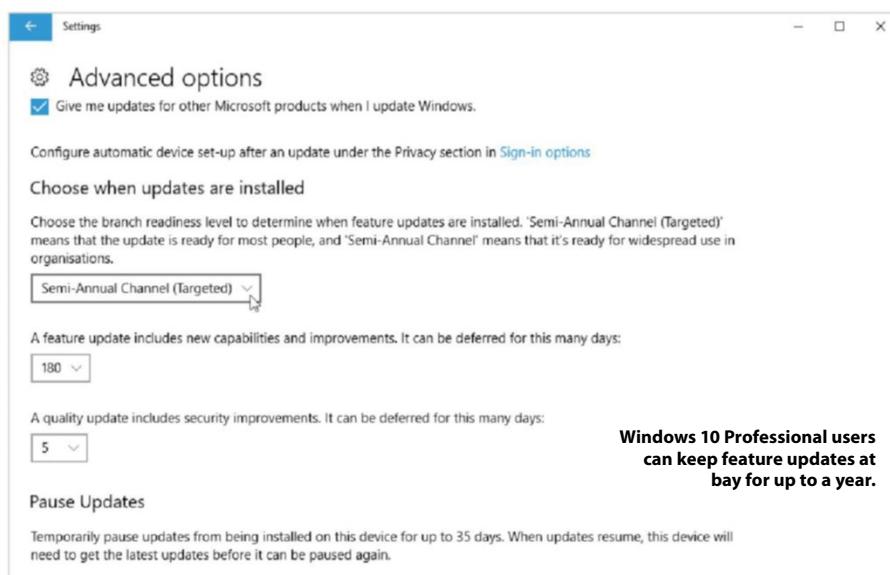
Updates and recovery

Maintaining Windows is a key part of your daily computing life. Discover the core things you need to know

Looking after Windows shouldn't be a full-time job, but if you don't keep it well maintained, you might find yourself wrestling with error messages and other strange glitches. These days, one crucial aspect – keeping Windows updated – is pretty much automatic, but that hasn't necessarily made things easier, with updates being pushed before they're fully tested.

If you're a Windows 10 Home user, your options for blocking updates are limited – only after an update has been downloaded and partially installed can you tell Windows to delay the restart for up to seven days (Start > Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update > 'Restart options'). Windows 10 Professional users get a much better deal, however. Under Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update, click 'Advanced options' under 'Update settings'. You can defer 'quality' updates (security updates and patches) for up to 30 days, and also block 'feature' updates (such as the upcoming Spring Creators Update) for up to a year. A 'Pause Updates' button also enables you to temporarily stop all updates for 30 days.

One setting all Windows users should check is Delivery Optimisation, which allows you to stop Microsoft using your Internet connection to deliver updates to other people. Check out this month's Support Squad for a step-by-step guide.

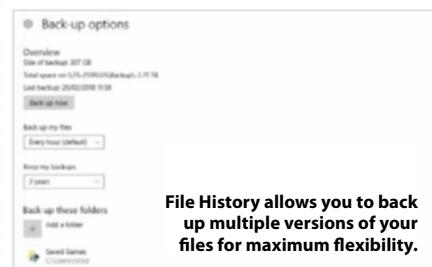


Back up your PC

We've been laughed at for our so-called 'obsession' with backing up, but no one's smiling when confronted by a corrupt Windows installation or missing data. Thankfully Windows 10 has all the tools you need to protect yourself against data loss in the form of two backup tools: File History is the preferred choice, but there's also the old Windows Backup and Restore tool from Windows 7.

Let's start with File History – set it up via Start > Settings > Update & Security > Backup. Click 'Add a drive' to select an

external drive or network location. Once done, copies of files from key folders will be backed up automatically, or you can click 'More options' to determine how



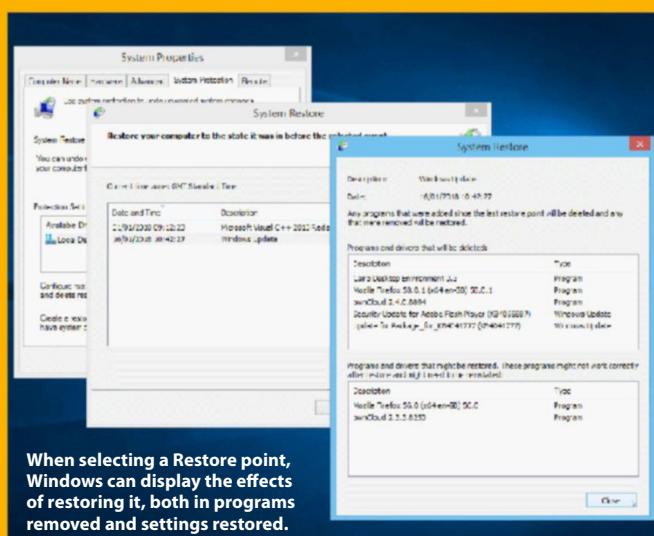
File History allows you to back up multiple versions of your files for maximum flexibility.

System Restore

What happens if you run into problems and want to roll your PC back to a working state? System Restore is the obvious choice here – a clever and relatively painless way to roll back Windows itself without affecting your data, but it's disabled by default in Windows 10. Type 'system restore' and click 'Take a restore point' to open its dialog box. Select your system drive (typically C) and click Configure. Choose 'Turn on system protection' and then set a suitable size – 5–10 percent is usually sufficient. Click 'OK' followed by 'Create...' to create your very first system Restore point.

From now on, Windows will take regular Restore points automatically and some programs will offer to create Restore points for you during use too. Should you need to roll your PC back return to this screen and click 'System Restore...' to start the process. System Restore can also be accessed from the screen that appears if Windows won't start up properly – click Troubleshoot > 'Advanced options' > System Restore.

It's not foolproof, but System Restore can often fix quite major problems without the need for reinstalling or resetting Windows.



When selecting a Restore point, Windows can display the effects of restoring it, both in programs removed and settings restored.

often files are backed up (hourly by default) and how long backups are kept.

This second option is important because File History doesn't simply back up the latest version of your files; it takes multiple snapshots, enabling you to roll back to earlier versions of your files (see the step-by-step guide below). By default, backups are kept for forever, but you can limit backups from one month to two years, or 'Until space is needed', which removes the oldest backups as required to free up space for the latest ones.

Scroll further down for a list of all folders being backed up – click one and select Remove to exclude it, or scroll down to add more folders. Also scroll down and click 'See advanced settings' to be whisked to the File History Control Panel. Select 'Advanced settings' again for an option to 'Clean up versions', enabling you to manually remove old backups to free up space manually.

You can also access the old Windows 7 backup tool from the Backup section

"File History doesn't simply back up the latest versions of your files; it takes multiple snapshots, enabling you to roll back to earlier versions"

of Settings – files are backed up less frequently than File History, so fewer versions are stored, but you can also take a complete system image of your Windows drive to restore from.

System recovery

When major problems occur on your PC, the simplest solution is often to roll back your computer to a point when it last worked correctly – see the 'System

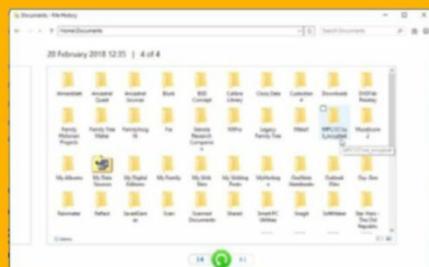
Advanced options

Hold [Shift] as you reboot to access the Advanced start-up menu.

com/en-gb/software-download/windows10). Choose the upgrade option when prompted and select the option to keep apps and personal files before letting Windows reinstall over itself.

If your problems are so severe that you can't get Windows to boot, you should find yourself at the 'Advanced start-up' menu. Select 'Troubleshoot' where you'll find options for resetting your PC or accessing 'Advanced options', which include the Start-up Repair tool and System Image Recovery, which you can use to restore Windows using an image you took using the Windows Backup and Restore tool. If you think you can fix your problem in Safe mode, choose Startup Settings then select 'Safe mode with networking' to retain Internet access while you troubleshoot.

Restore files in File History



1 Find data to restore

Navigate to the folder containing the data that you want to restore in File Explorer. From the Home tab on the Ribbon, click History to open File History to that folder's location. A window displaying all the backed-up files from that folder will be shown.

2 Choose file version

Double-click the file you wish to restore – a preview of the file's contents will appear. If you're looking for an earlier version of that file, using the back and forward buttons at the bottom to navigate between the different revisions until you find the one you want.

3 Restore file

Click the Settings button in the top-right corner and choose Restore to save it to its original location, overwriting the current version if it's present (which will be backed up as the file's previous version), or 'Restore to' to save it to a different folder completely. ■



Windows Help & Advice

Subscribe today to receive your
free CableDrops...



FREE GIFT
Simply peel and stick **CableDrops**
anywhere you
need them

IT'S EASY TO SUBSCRIBE!

Click: myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/whamar18

Call: 0344 848 2852

Subscribe and receive
UK subscription offer



Other benefits of subscribing to Windows Help & Advice include...

- 3 months of Window Help & Advice delivered direct to your door
- Brilliant value – save £s on the cover price
- Never miss an issue of your favourite magazine

CHOOSE YOUR PACKAGE!

PRINT EDITION



only
£14
every 3
months

3 months of WHA
in print, plus your
free **CableDrops**

DIGITAL EDITION



only
£5
every 3
months

3 months of WHA
on your iOS or
Android device

PRINT + DIGITAL



only
£15
every 3
months

3 months of WHA
in print and digital,
plus your free
CableDrops

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Please use the full web address to claim your free gift. Gift available to new print and print + digital subscriptions. Gift is only available for new UK subscribers. Gift is subject to availability. Please allow up to 60 days for the delivery of your gift. In the event of stocks being exhausted we reserve the right to replace with items of similar value. Prices and savings quoted are compared to buying full-priced print issues. You will receive 13 issues in a year. Your subscription is for the minimum term specified and will expire at the end of the current term. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Payment is non-refundable after the 14 day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) or are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). For full terms and conditions please visit: www.bit.ly/magterms. Offer ends 31st May 2018.

FOR THE GNU GENERATION

BUY YOUR ISSUE TODAY

Available from all good newsagents & supermarkets

4.7GB DVD! TOP BACKUP TOOLS

www.linuxuser.co.uk

LinuxUser & Developer

THE ESSENTIAL MAGAZINE FOR THE GNU GENERATION

FREE DVD! LATEST

Linux

MICRO

ON SALE NOW

BUILD THE PERFECT NETWORK

NETWOR

Plan & Design ✓ Set up & Configure ✓ Monitor & Manage ✓

SERVAL PROJECT Life-saving disaster response networks

INTERVIEW Fixing complexity Puppet's plan to simplify the toolchain for DevOps

IN-DEPTH GUIDE TO Qubes OS The most secure distro in the world

EXPERT PI PROJECTS

- > pyCLI: Build a Pi controller
- > PiServer: Manage many Pis

51 PAGES OF GUIDES

- > Python: Parallel programming
- > Security tools: Build an arsenal
- > Ubuntu Server: Lockdown Linux

Raspberry Pi

Fedora 27

New Netrunner

R programming primer

ALSO INSIDE

ISSUE 160 PRINTED IN THE UK £5.49

9 772041 327019

42 PAGES OF GUIDES

Protect your tech

System

ALSO INSIDE

ISSUE 160 PRINTED IN THE UK £5.49

9 772041 327019

OR SUBSCRIBE & SAVE 20% ONLINE AT:
myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/sublud



Explore

► WINDOWS TIPS ► INTERNET ADVICE ► EXCITING NEW PROJECTS

Welcome



In this month's Explore section you'll discover some amazing ways to make the most of your PC – whether it's tagging and managing your music with MusicBee (page 27), or finding your way around your PC with File Explorer (page 42).

But perhaps our favourite step-by-step guide starts on page 24, where you'll learn how to use some special tricks and techniques in Photoshop Elements to successfully create a face-paint effect... you'll never look at a picture of your friends or family in quite the same way again!

Rob Mead-Green

Editor

rob.mead-green@futurenet.com

Full listing...

24 Create an amazing face-paint effect in Photoshop Elements

27 Sort and manage your music collection with MusicBee

30 Get fast access to all your contacts with the People app

32 Easily remove the pre-installed apps that come with Windows 10

34 Bring back accidentally deleted files with the free Recuva app

37 Speed up your PC with these surprisingly effective tips and tricks

40 Setting up a printer on your home network? Check this out!

42 Find your way around your PC with our guide to File Explorer



Your guide
Alex Cox says...

"MusicBee is your go-to app for managing a music library on your PC"

Turn to page 27 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

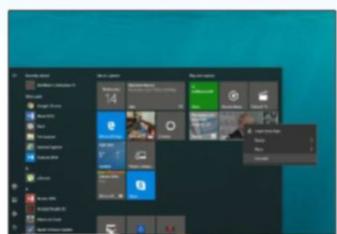
We all know how to do the basics but getting the most from Windows isn't always easy. Our dedication to the operating system means you get the very best tips and tricks for all versions of Windows.

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... Paint faces in Photoshop



Your guide *Ian Evenden* says...

"Create a face-painting effect using the latest version of Photoshop Elements"

At a glance

Skill level...

Anyone can do it
Straightforward

► Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

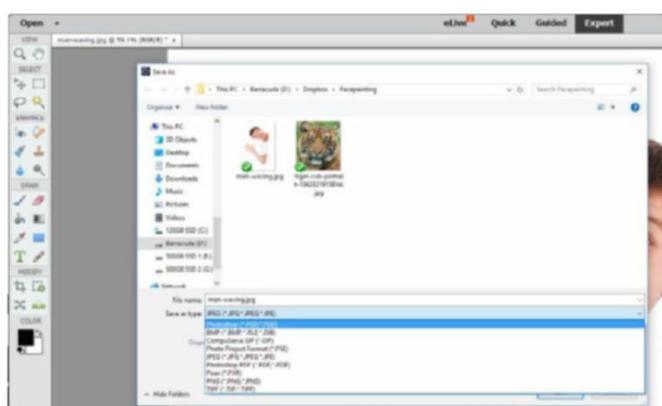
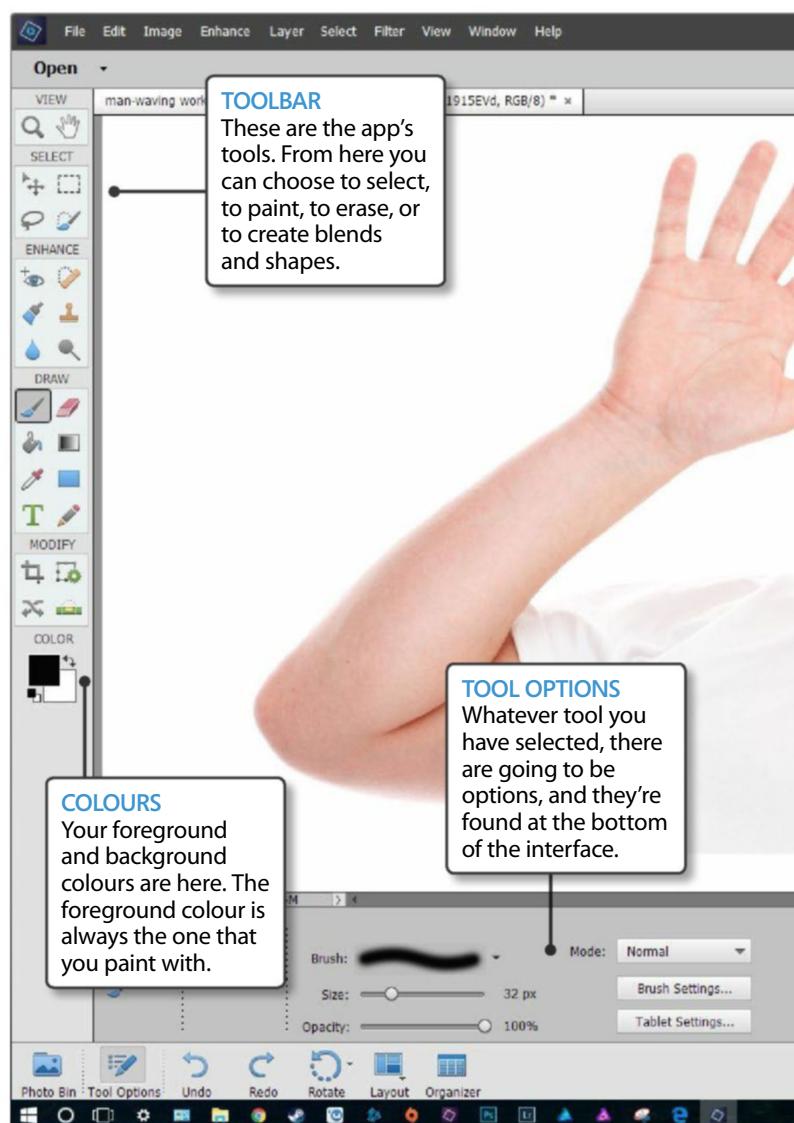
Windows 10
Windows 8.1
Windows 7

Ah, face-painting. That staple of kids' birthday party fun and late-night sports bar animosity. There's nothing like getting some greasy makeup stuck to your skin, it really makes you feel like you're part of the gang, especially when you're trying to scrub it off in the bathroom later.

While you could do this in something like Paint.net, and certainly GIMP, we've chosen Adobe Photoshop Elements as its selection tools are superior – download a free trial at <https://adobe.ly/2Eh3YNv>.

The key to this is Photoshop's layers and blending modes, which make it easy to overlay one colour onto another, while keeping the brightness information the same and allowing the overlaid image to fall naturally across the face below. One thing we'd advise is that this technique works best on men or ladies (!) who haven't yet cultivated a fine bushy beard.

Step-by-step Face-paint without greasepaint



1 Create a new file

Once you've chosen your image and opened it in Elements, you're going to need to make a copy of it. Do this by using File > Save As. Give the file a new name and make it a Photoshop PSD, then reopen the old file. PSD files are native Photoshop files and enable the application to do interesting things with them. Leave your other file as a JPEG – this is the file you'll work with mostly.



2 Blur it

Open the PSD, and make it black-and-white using Image > Mode > Grayscale, then head up to the Filter menu and choose Blur > Gaussian Blur. You don't need to blur the image so it's unrecognisable, but enough that the detail is gone and only areas of light and dark remain. This will vary depending on the pixel dimensions of your image file. Save the file and close it.

MODES
Expert Mode gives you the most control over the look of your final image, but also offers the least help in getting there.

LAYERS PALETTE
These are your Layers. You can change their order, how they interact with each other and more from here.

HISTORY
This is the History palette. It's like a multi-level undo and lets you step back through the changes you made earlier.

IAN'S BEST TIP!
Frequent saves, along with the History palette, mean there's no need to fear going wrong in Photoshop.

Jargon buster!

► PSD

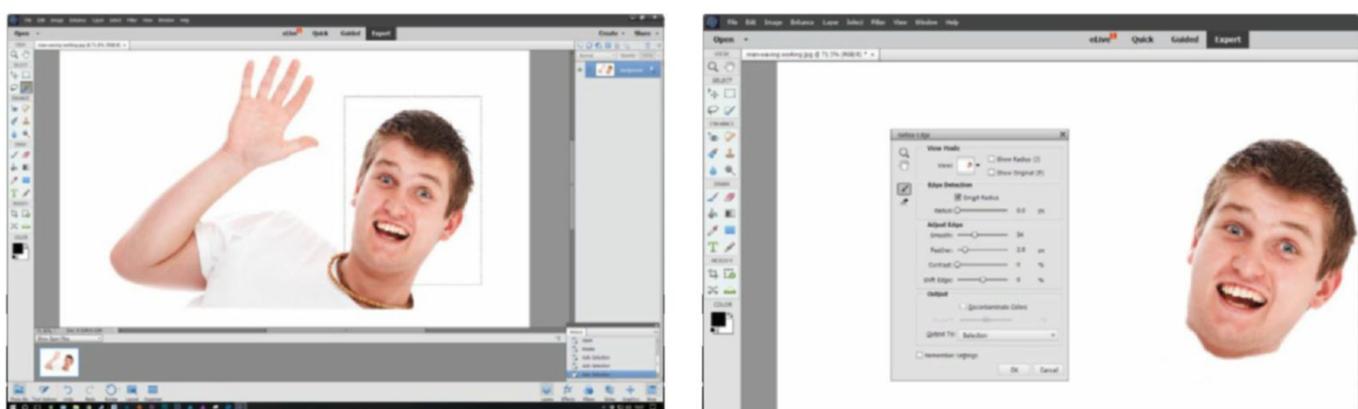
Adobe's native file format for Photoshop and Elements. It preserves the layer structure of your compositions.

► Layer

Think of layers as like sheets of acetate on an overhead projector – they overlay and interact with each other.

► Displacement map

A type of distortion that wraps an image around the contours of what should be underneath it.



3 Select it

Back on your other file – the one that's still in colour – make a selection around the face of your subject. New in Elements 2018 is the Auto Selection tool, and it's really clever. If you're using an earlier version or a different app, you'll need to use wands, lassos or maybe the Pen tool – make sure it's just the face you select, placing your line around stray hair that's fallen over the face.

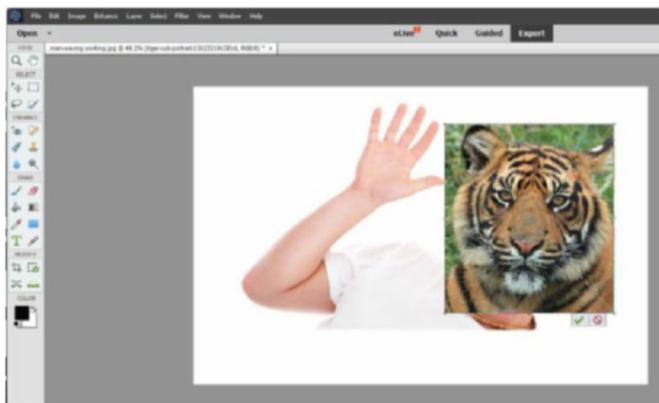
4 Refine it

To refine the selection open Refine Edge using either the button at the bottom of Elements 2018's interface or the Select menu. On the Refine Edge floating window change Output To from Selection to Layer Mask. Your chosen face should now float freely in chequered space. Save using Select > Save Selection, so you can load it later without having to re-select the same pixels.



5 Remove the colour

In the Layers palette, add a Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer above your image [layer](#), pull the saturation slider all the way left, then drag the Layer Mask up to the new layer. If you're asked whether you want to replace the Layer Mask say 'yes'. You've now moved the 'hole' created by your selection onto a layer that removes all the colour from the image.



7 Import your graphic

You're now ready to import the face-paint graphic. This can be anything, although simpler designs work better. Sports team logos, which tend to be round, are a good choice, while animal prints are also popular. Use File > Place to import the file, and it will appear as a new layer with resizing handles attached. Resize it so it fits, then click the green tick to commit to your changes.



9 Use the Eraser tool

Drag the Layer Mask back down to the Adjustment Layer, and change the top layer's Blend Mode to Color Burn. Use the Eraser tool on areas that shouldn't be face-painted, such as the eyes and mouth and any parts of the hair that have been covered over. If any areas of mono appear, remove them by repeating Step 6. Now use the black-and-white image from Step 2...



6 Fine tune

Zoom into the eyes of your image, and with the Layer Mask selected on your working layer in the Layers palette, paint black over them with the Paintbrush tool and a suitably sized brush. This will bring back the colour from the layer below, meaning your final image won't be left with grey, lifeless eyes. Do the same to the teeth and gums, and you'll see the colour coming back.



8 Stretch to fit

Drop the new layer's Opacity to around 30 percent, and use Edit > Free Transform to distort your paint layer so it fits the face below. Don't worry too much about the edges – the Layer Mask will take care of those – but concentrate on getting the eyes lined up, and the mouth too if that's important to your image. Drag the Layer Mask up to your top layer to see how it will look.



10 Fit the face-paint graphic

Load the selection you saved earlier (Select > Load) and ensure the top layer is selected in the Layers palette, then go to Filter > Distort > Displace. Elements doesn't have a preview for this filter, so you may have to try several times. Enter '20' in both Distance fields, then press OK and select the PSD file as your map. It bends the layer around the the face below for a natural look. ■

Learn how to...

Sort and play your music

MusicBee is simple, it won't slow down your computer, and it'll get your collection perfectly organised

If you've been collecting digital music for a while, there's a good chance it's not in the best order. Filenames will be a mess, tags will probably be even messier, and finding the track you want likely takes longer than listening to the song itself. And that's where MusicBee can help.

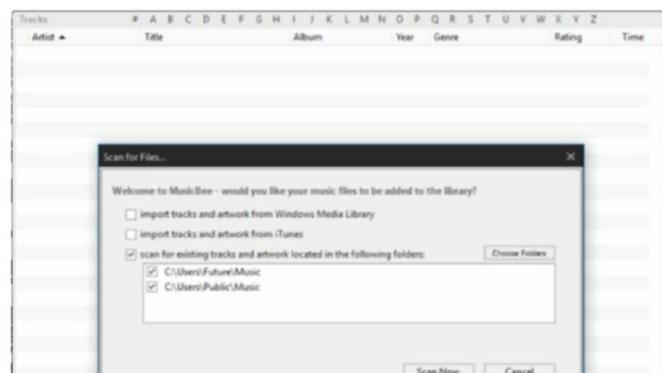
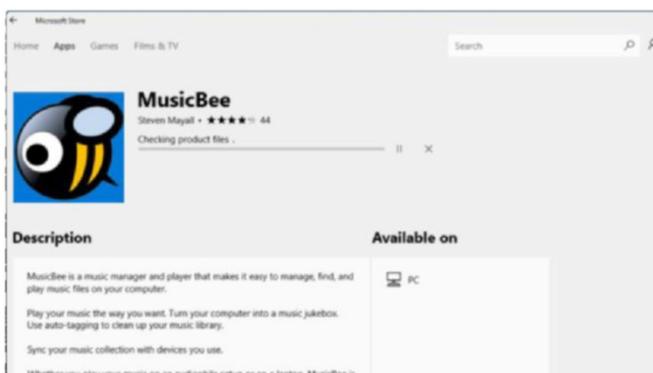
It's a fantastic free music player with an easy-to-use interface and a very light footprint, meaning it shouldn't slow your computer down, but its organisational features are where it really shines.

It can pull in music from around your PC, intelligently tag your tracks, and even grab album art, lyrics, and other data from

around the web, turning your ragtag collection of MP3s into so much more.

MusicBee can also stream music, and handle podcasts. Forget Windows Media Player or Groove Music – if you really want to make the most of your locally stored tunes, then MusicBee is the app that you've been waiting for.

Step-by-step Get started with MusicBee



1 Download it

There are two versions of MusicBee: the one we're covering here can be downloaded from the Microsoft Store by searching for 'Musicbee' and clicking the Get button; the other is available from <https://getmusicbee.com>. They don't differ hugely, so you can follow along with either. Once you've installed the Microsoft Store version, click Launch to run it, or find it in your Start menu.

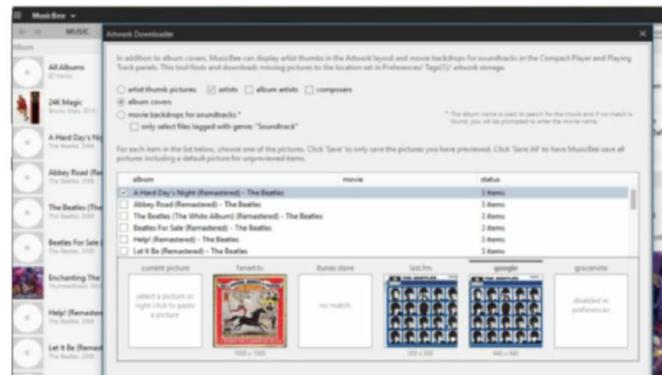


3 Library basics

With your music imported, you'll see MusicBee's All Artists view, which lists every track in your collection. Clicking individual artists on the left will drill down to just their tracks, or you can click the Album Artist text above that column and select Albums if you're looking for more detail. Double-click any track in the main list to play it, then use the controls in the bottom bar.

2 Setting up

Set your language, and click Next. MusicBee immediately offers to seek out your collection. By default it'll look in likely folders – in this case, the Music folders under both the logged-in user and your PC's public library – but you can also specify a folder if you keep your tunes elsewhere. If you're an iTunes or Windows Media Player user, check the appropriate boxes.



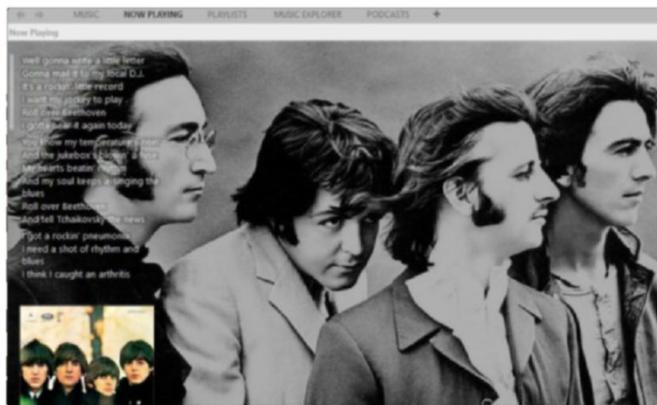
4 Grab artwork

If you have albums which don't have the proper artwork, click MusicBee on the title bar, go to Tools, and select Artwork Downloader. Select 'album covers' in the upper section of the window, which will highlight any albums for which you're missing artwork, then click Preview. Pick an image that fits, then select the next album in the list and repeat. Click 'Save All' when done.



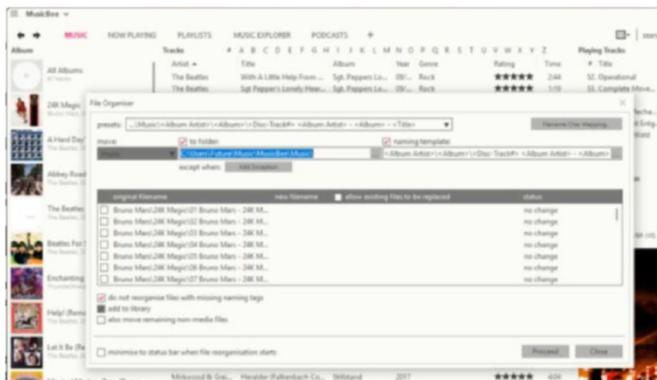
5 Tag them up

MusicBee's tagging system pulls relevant information about your tracks from the Internet and adds it to their meta **tags**. Start by going to MusicBee > Tools > Tagging Tools > Show Files With Missing Tags, then select your deficient files using [Ctrl] + [A]. Right-click one of the selected tracks, and hit [Ctrl] + [L] to start filling in the missing tags.



6 Add lyrics

MusicBee can do more than just tag your tracks. Right-click a song, go to 'Auto-Tag by Track', and you can use Update Missing Lyrics to pull in the words and help you sing along. Once you've done this, get your track going by double-clicking it, and click 'Now playing' at the top of the MusicBee window – you'll see some artist artwork, the album cover, and the song's lyrics.



7 Rename your tracks

Even if you're not planning to use MusicBee as your primary player, it's intelligent enough that it makes sense to let it loose on your music files and use its tags to rename them properly – that way you'll be able to find things later, and other players will play nicer with your tunes. Select all your tracks with [Ctrl] + [A], then press [Ctrl] + [R] to access MusicBee's file organisation screen.

MAIN MENU
Tucked away in the top-left corner of the window. If you need to do something, check here first.

CONTROLS

The transport bar is where you control what's playing. Don't forget to rate your tracks using the stars to the right.

8 Customise naming

Leave everything as it is for now – MusicBee's default is to take your library and make a clean copy in its own folder, leaving your original files as they are. The one thing we'd recommend tweaking is the naming template box. Duplicate '<Album Artist> - <Album>' after '<Disc-Track#>' to add that information to your filenames, then hit Proceed to fill up your new folder.

28 | Windows Help & Advice | April 2018

The screenshot shows the MusicBee application window. On the left, there's a large library grid with columns for Album, Year, and Genre. A tooltip box titled 'FIND IT' says: 'If you have a large library, the search box is essential. Type an artist, track or album name to find it instantly.' In the center, a 'Playing Tracks' list shows several songs by 'Dinn'. A tooltip box for 'JUKEBOX' says: 'Lists tracks that have been queued up to play. Use drag and drop to add items or change the order.' At the bottom, a media player shows 'Dinn - Operational' playing at 0:00/3:35. The status bar at the bottom right shows the date as 26/02/2018.

Jargon buster!

► Library

Windows uses several default folders to help store your media files, called Libraries. You'll find them in the left-hand column of File Explorer.

► Tags

Also called meta tags, these store little bits of information about files. They're not just for music: they can also be found in photos, for example.

► Skins

When you change the way a program looks, you use a skin. MusicBee's skins are more variations in colour schemes rather than anything more major.

At a glance

Skill level...

- Anyone can do it Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

This screenshot shows the 'Radio' tab in MusicBee. It lists various radio stations categorized by genre, such as Alternative, Indie, Rock, and Metal. A specific station, 'Press Radio Online (IRI)', is selected and highlighted in yellow. To the right, there's a small preview image of a person.

This screenshot shows the 'Skins' tab in MusicBee. It displays a grid of thumbnail previews for different skins, including 'Dark', 'Dark-Metro Series', 'Metro-Liner', 'Random Skin', 'Metal-Bell', 'Windows Theme', and 'Blue Moon'. Below the thumbnails, a media player shows a track by 'Bruce Macc - Fitness'.

9 Stream it

After something new to listen to? Head to MusicBee's radio tab. You'll first need to select a streaming method – Icecast, Soma FM or SHOUTcast, for example – then pick your chosen genre in the left-hand box. Look for a station in the list with the highest 'kbps' number possible, and double-click it to start streaming. If you like it, click 'Add to Library' to save it as a preset for later.

10 Skin it

MusicBee's iTunes-esque look isn't the only option, so if it's earned its way into your default player spot you might want to tweak it to your liking. Head to MusicBee > View > Skins and pick a look that suits you. If you want more design options, check out <https://getmusicbee.com>. There's a wide selection on offer in the add-ons section, as well as more visual extras. ■

Learn how to...

Get started with the People app



Your guide *Ian Evenden* says...

"Manage your contacts and pin them to your Taskbar with Windows 10's upgraded People app"

At a glance

Skill level...

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

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

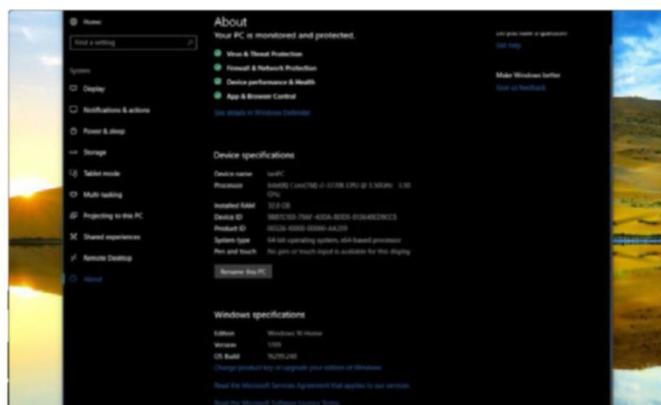
Your Windows PC is a powerful communications tool, but over time your contacts can get spread around across various apps and services. Wouldn't it be convenient if they were all in one place on your PC? That's what Microsoft is trying with the People app, which arrived in Windows 10 along with the Fall Creators Update – although it was supposed to come with the previous Creators Update, earlier in 2017.

The People app is a simple enough idea; merge your contacts from multiple accounts, then make them more accessible to you.

The People app also has an organisational use, enabling you to combine duplicate contacts from disparate services, meaning you can link someone's email address with their Skype alias if they're separate, making it easier to ferret out the contact information you need.

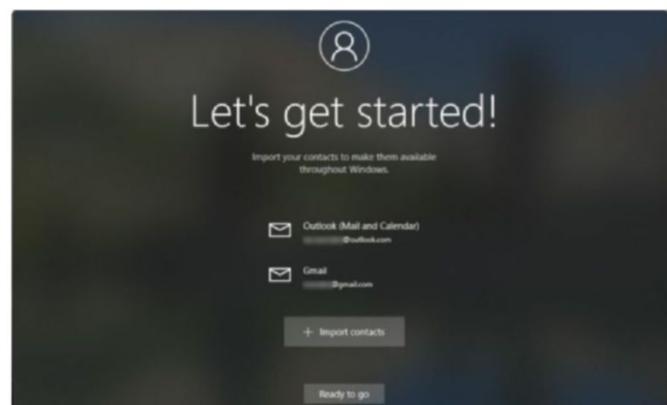


Step-by-step Pin people to your Taskbar



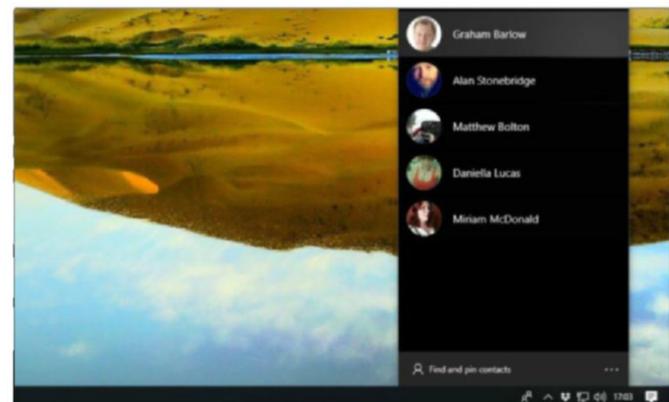
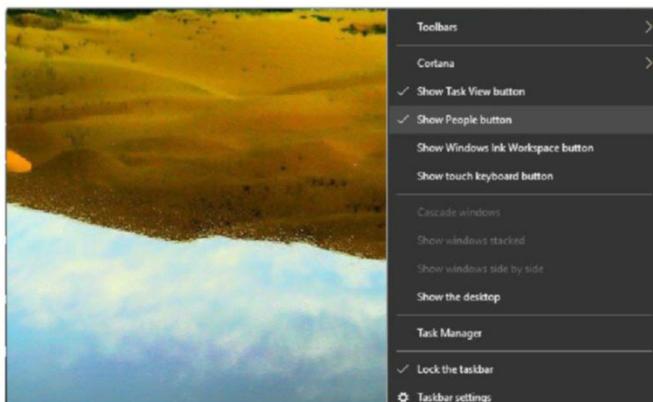
1 Got the right version?

This won't work unless you've installed the Fall Creators Update. To check, open the Start menu and choose Settings > System > About to check your version number under 'Windows specifications'. If you're running the right version, go back to the Start menu and start typing 'People' in the Taskbar search box. When the search results appear, select the People app to run it.



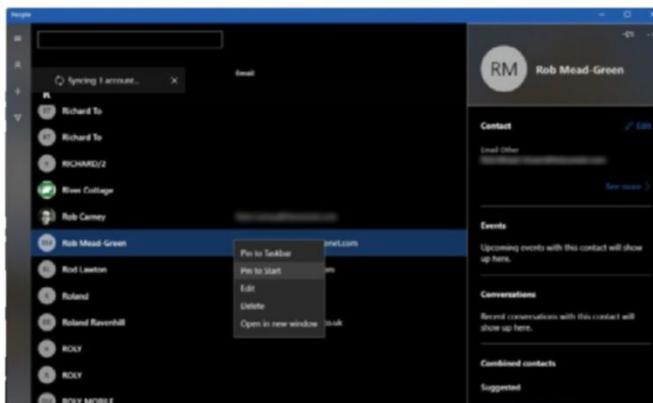
2 Link your accounts

If this is the first time you've used the People app, you'll be prompted to link it to your accounts so it can import your contacts. The default accounts are those you've set up in Mail and Skype, and these can be quickly synced to the People app. Select Import Contacts, and soon you'll see your contacts in the People app, from where you can combine, edit, delete and manage them.



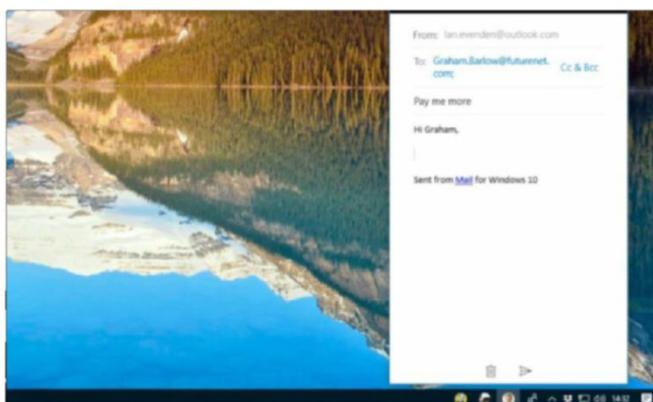
3 My People

People may be an app, but My People is what Microsoft calls an 'experience'. Simply put, My People is the ability to pin your most frequent contacts to the Taskbar, so they're more accessible. If you can't see the People button to the right of the Taskbar (it looks like two board game counters standing in a diagonal line), right-click the system tray and select 'Show People button'.



5 More pins

Any other contacts you choose to pin appear in the pop-up menu, in a section called More Pinned Contacts. There's another way of doing it that's slightly more flexible – open the People app, right-click a contact, then choose whether to pin it either to the Taskbar or the Start menu. Choose the latter, confirm the pin, and a tile will appear on your Start menu that you can click to open.

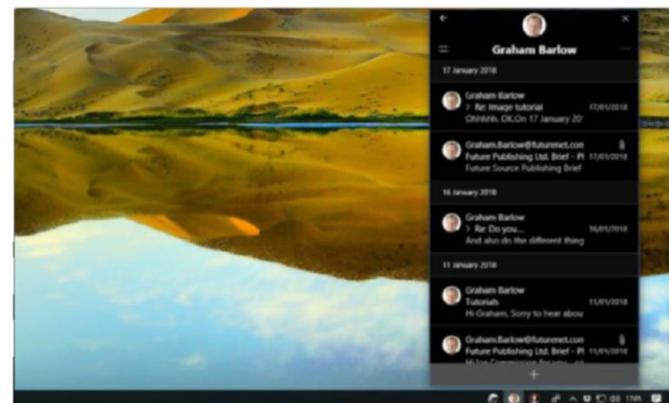


7 Send a message

You can use My People to send a message without opening the full app, such as Mail. Select a contact, click the three-line menu and select Mail. This lists your emails, along with a '+' button at the bottom to create a new message. Write your email in the pop-up menu, and either send it or discard it using the buttons at the bottom. Again, it will stick around until you close the menu.

4 Get pinning

Left-click the My People button at the right of your Taskbar, and you'll see suggestions for who to pin based on how often you contact them. You don't have to accept these suggestions – and as you are limited to three pins, it's worth putting some thought into. To pin a contact, left-click it, and the first three you choose will appear on the Taskbar to the left of the My People button.



6 Use your pins

Click a pinned contact in your Taskbar, and a pop-up menu appears showing all your recent communications in the accounts you've linked the People app to. The ellipsis (...) top right enables you to launch the People app, unpin the contact or edit it, while the three-line menu (top left) switches between Mail view, or the People view. The pop-up stays open until you close it.



8 Settings

Click the ellipsis (...) at the bottom of the My People pop-up for more options. You can create a new contact, send feedback about the app, and change app settings. In Settings, you can choose whether to turn Taskbar contacts on or off, receive notifications when a new message arrives from a pinned contact, and choose whether that notification plays a sound. ■

Learn how to...

Remove Windows 10's pre-installed apps



Your guide **Matt Hanson** says...

"Windows 10 comes with a range of pre-installed apps that you may not want to use. In this tutorial we'll show you how to get rid of them"

At a glance

Skill level...

Anyone can do it
Straightforward

► Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10
Windows 8.1
Windows 7

Windows 10 comes with a number of apps already installed, and while these are designed to help you get started with your new laptop or PC as quickly as possible, you may find that you will never use many of these apps. So, rather than keeping them, and having them clog up your Start menu and take up precious space on your PC, you can uninstall them.

In this guide we'll show you how to find all the pre-installed Windows 10 apps, and help you decide which ones you don't need. We'll then show you how to safely remove them from your machine. Also, if you've recently bought a PC or laptop, then you may find that the manufacturer has also installed some apps that you probably will never use. A good program to remove those apps quickly and easily is PC Decrapifier, which can be downloaded for free from www.pcdecrapifier.com.



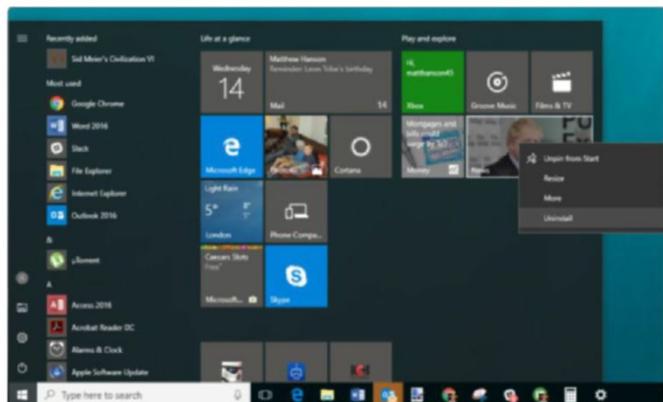
MATT'S BEST TIP!
It may be worth making a note of which apps you've removed, making it easier to reinstall them later.

Step-by-step Remove pre-installed Windows 10 apps



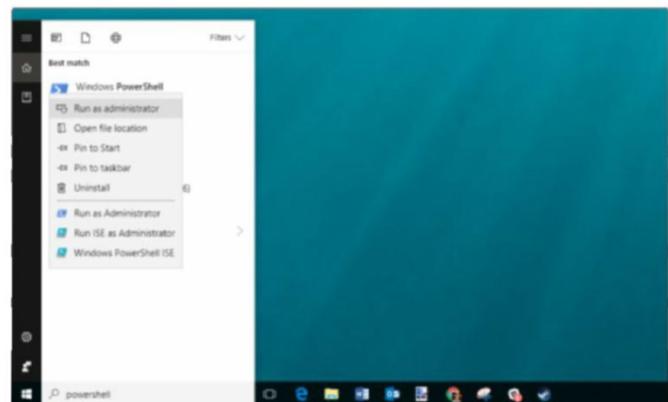
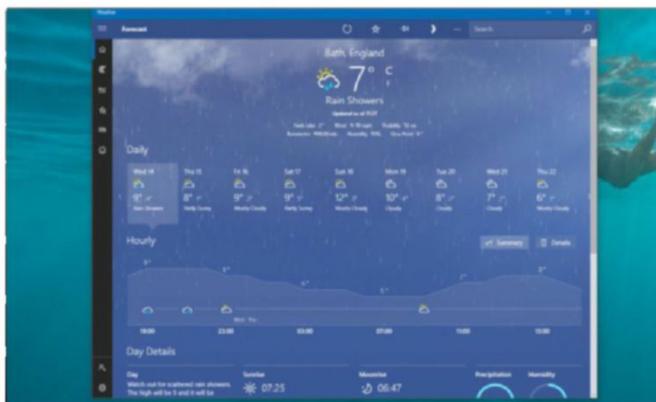
1 What apps can you easily uninstall?

When you first use Windows 10, you'll see a number of pre-installed apps. Many of these can be removed quite easily, while others are more complicated. The easily-uninstalled apps are: Get Started; Get Skype; Get Office; Microsoft Solitaire Collection; Money; News; Phone Companion; Sports; Optional Features; Windows Media Player; and Windows DVD Player.



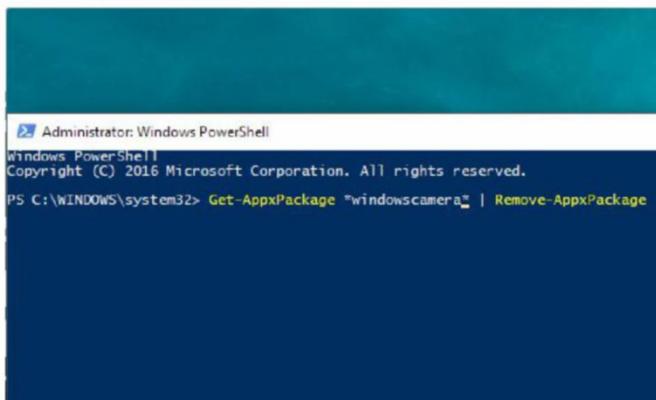
2 Quickly uninstall these apps

To remove the apps listed in Step 1, all you need to do is find their entries in the Start menu, right-click their icon, and select Uninstall. A small message will appear letting you know that the app, and any associated data, will be removed from your PC. If you're happy to proceed, click Uninstall once again. The selected app will then be deleted from your device.



3 Other pre-installed apps you can remove

There are also a number of pre-installed apps in Windows 10 that can be removed as well, but the process is a little more complicated. This is because these apps are more tightly integrated into the operating system. The apps are: Calculator; Calendar; Mail; Camera; Maps; Movies & TV; People; Photos; the Microsoft Store app; and Weather.



4 Use PowerShell to remove those apps

For the trickier-to-remove apps, you'll need to use the Windows PowerShell. This is a powerful tool that should only be used if you're confident. To open PowerShell, type 'powershell' into the search box in the Taskbar. When 'Windows PowerShell' appears, right-click it and select 'Run as administrator'. A window will appear that looks similar to the command prompt.



5 Removing an app

With the PowerShell window open, you'll now need to type in the following code to remove apps: 'Get-AppxPackage *appname* | Remove-AppxPackage'. Where we have written 'appname' you'll need to enter in the code for the app. For example, if you want to remove the Camera app, you'd type 'windowscamera' in that bit between the two asterisks.



6 Codes for other apps...

3D Builder (3dbuilder); Alarms and Clock (windowsalarms); Calendar and Mail (windowscommunicationsapps); Calculator (windowscalculator); Groove Music (zunemusic); Maps (windowsmaps); Movies & TV (zunemovie); OneNote (onenote); People (people); Photos (photos); Store (windowsstore); Voice Recorder (soundrecorder); Xbox (xboxapp).



7 Use third-party software

If you're not confident about using Windows Powershell to remove apps, try 10AppsManager from www.thewindowsclub.com/10appsmanager-windows-10. Click 'Download File', and when the ZIP file has downloaded, open the folder and click the EXE file. A window will appear and you can click the icon of the app you want to uninstall.

8 Reinstall apps

You now know how to get rid of unwanted apps! If you change your mind and want to reinstall an app you've deleted, you can do this by opening the Microsoft Store and searching for it. When you find the app, click it, then click Get. Of course, this assumes that you haven't deleted the Microsoft Store app! If you have, you'll need to use a Restore point to get it back. ■

Learn how to...

Recover lost or deleted files



Your guide [Mayank Sharma](#) says...

"There's no need to lose sleep over accidentally deleted files – we have the solution right here"

At a glance

Skill level...

Anyone can do it
Straightforward

► Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10
 Windows 8.1
 Windows 7

Everybody deletes files by mistake. And while deleting them is particularly easy to do, [recovering](#) them isn't always that straightforward.

The good news is when you empty the Windows Recycle Bin, the files aren't really destroyed. In fact, what Windows does is earmark the space occupied by the 'deleted' files as empty space for new data. This makes it possible to recover the files, so long as new data hasn't been written over the space.

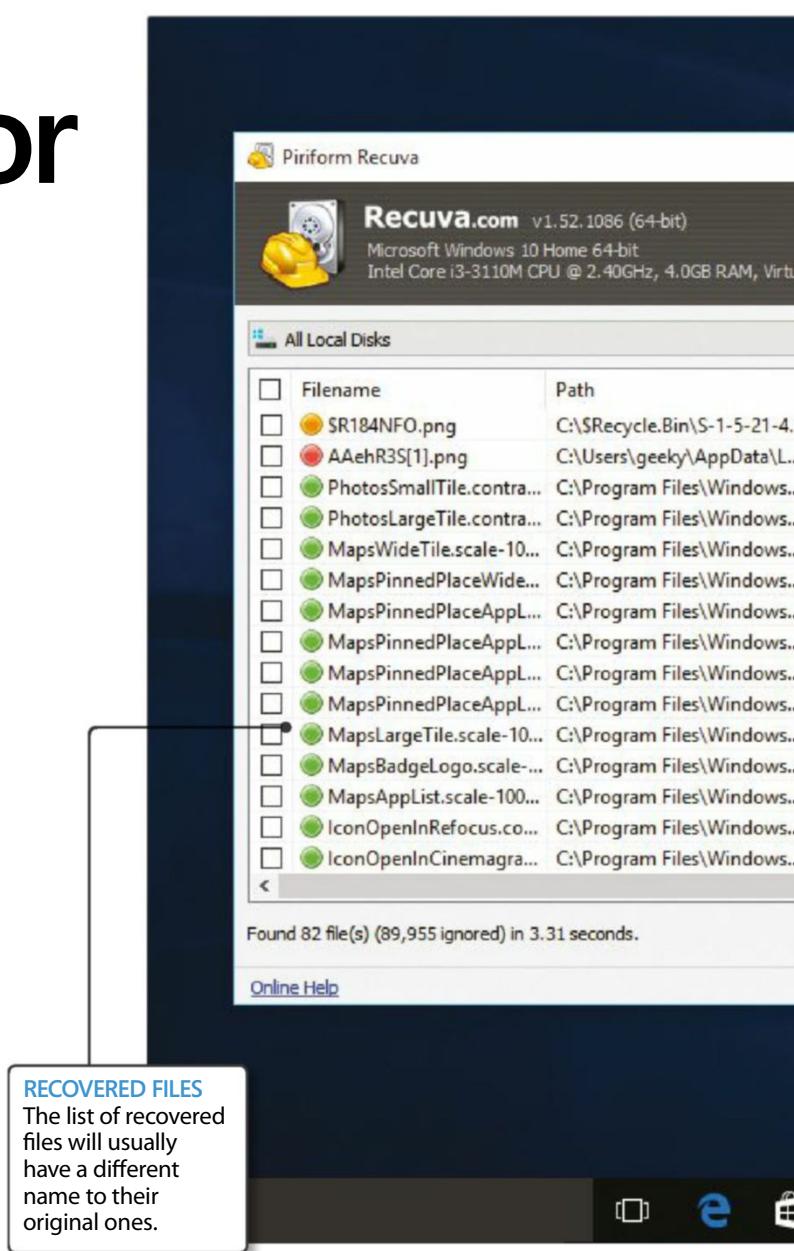
Recuva is a free, feature-rich tool that helps recover accidentally deleted files. In addition to your PC's internal drive, it can also be used to recover data on USB flash drives, SD cards and smartphones connected to your computer. It can recover data from formatted drives too. If that wasn't enough, Recuva can even recover deleted emails from your mail client! Let's get started.

Step-by-step Use Recuva to recover files



1 Download and install

Head to www.piriform.com/recuva and click Free Download to grab the application. Run the installer to install the app. While the default installation options will work for most users, make sure you remember to deselect the option to install any additional applications when prompted.



2 Recovery wizard

When you launch the app it'll fire up a recovery wizard. Make sure the storage device where your deleted files are kept is connected to the computer. If your deleted files are stored on an external drive, such as a USB flash drive or a memory card, connect them to your PC via a USB cable or card reader.

FILE STATE
Not all files are recoverable. This column will help you determine whether a file is recoverable or not.

MEDIA TYPE
Use this pull-down menu to narrow down the search results based on the file type.

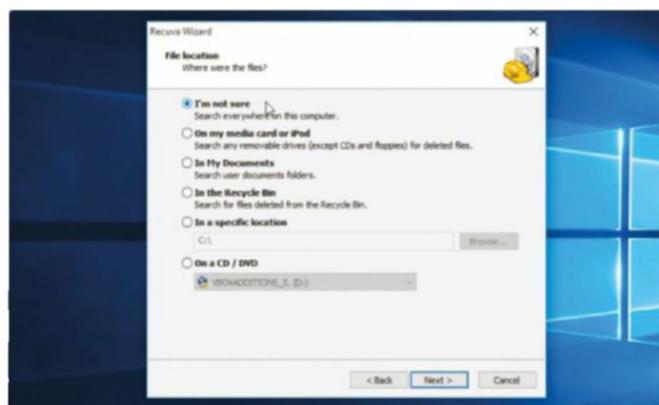
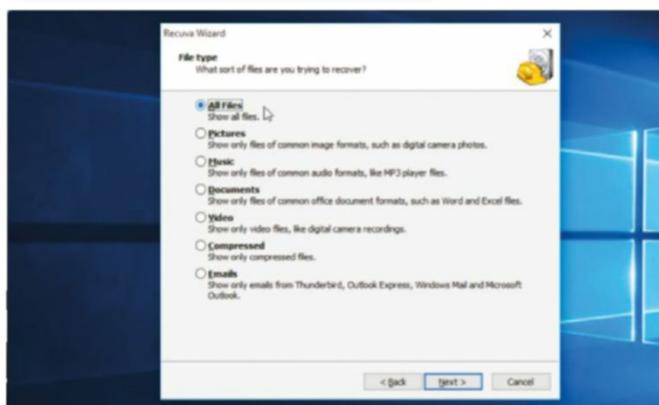
OPTIONS
Click on this button to tweak the default behaviour of the application.

Jargon buster!

- Recover**
The task of recovering the contents of a file that has been deleted and removed from the Recycle Bin.
- Removable media**
Any storage media, including USB flash drives and SD cards, that are connected to the computer.
- Metadata**
The information stored alongside a file, which can also be used to help identify it.

FILE INFORMATION
Various metadata about a selected file to help you identify it.

MAYANK'S BEST TIP!
To increase the chances of recovering files, minimise interaction with the drive that housed the deleted files.

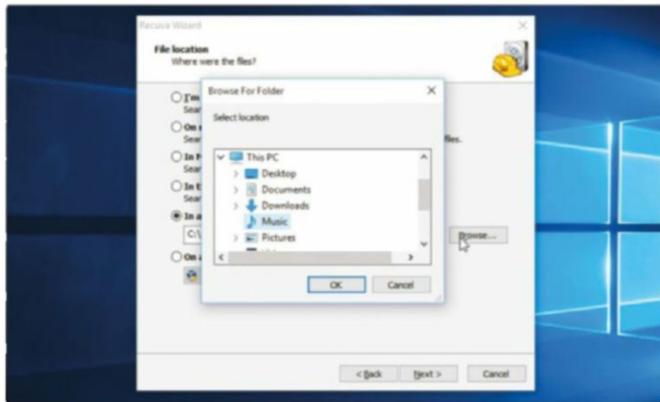


3 File type

In the next screen, the program will ask you to select the type of files you are trying to retrieve. You can only check one of the options. If you wish to retrieve two or more types select All Files. This will retrieve all deleted files, but you can sort out the ones you don't need later.

4 Select location

After selecting the type of file you wish to retrieve, the program will prompt you to select the location where you want to retrieve the files from. The screen lists several options. The default option searches your entire computer, while the second option looks for deleted files inside any **removable** drives.



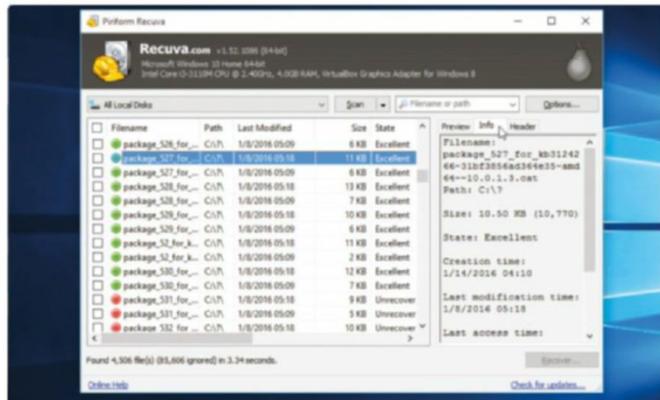
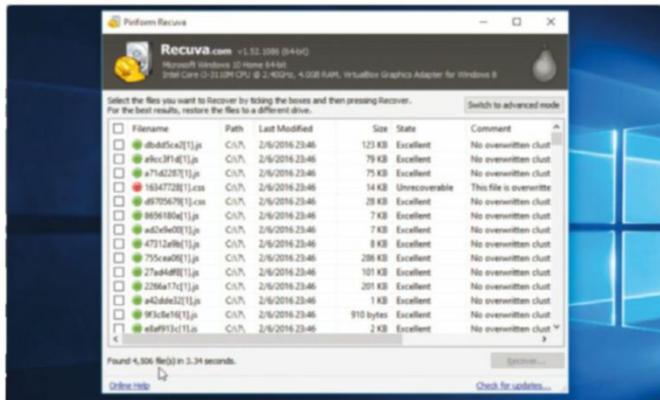
5 Browse location

Instead of searching your entire computer, you can save time and look for deleted files inside a specific location by selecting the second-to-last option. Now click Browse and point Recuva to a particular folder on the computer. Select the last option if you wish to look for files on an optical disc.



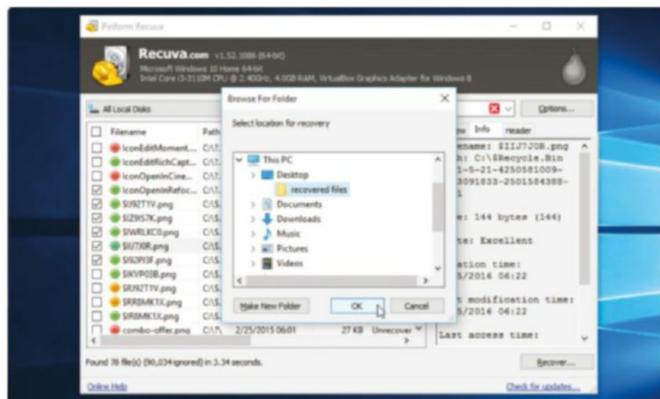
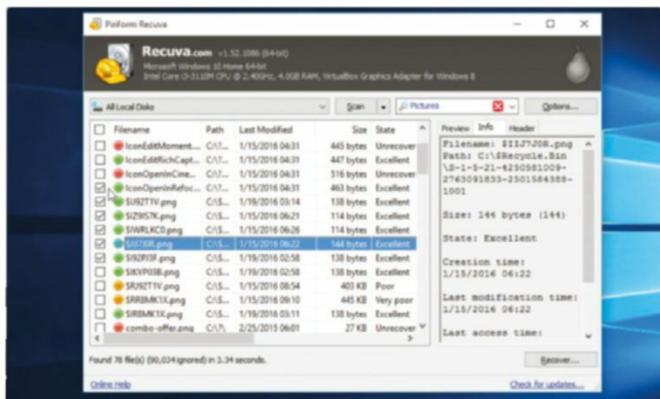
6 Initiate the scan

That's all the information Recuva needs to start hunting for deleted files. Click 'Start' in the next screen to get going! Do not toggle the option marked Deep Scan at this stage. This option kicks off an intensive and time-consuming scan and should only be used if you can't find the files using the regular process.



7 Analyse results

A regular scan usually only take a few seconds. When it's done, Recuva will list all the deleted files it has dug up. The list is normally fairly long and exhaustive, especially if you've asked the application to look for all types of deleted files back in Step 3.



9 Narrow down results

You can also rein in the results by limiting their scope. Use the pull-down menus in the advanced mode. The first menu lets you switch drives, while the third can be used to only show files of a particular media type. When you find files you recognise, toggle the checkbox adjacent to the files you wish to recover.

10 Recover files

Now click Recover. Recuva will ask you where you wish to save the recovered files to. Ideally this folder should be on a different drive to the one you've scanned for deleted files. That's it! This folder now contains all the recovered files for you to now rename and move as you please. ■

Learn how to...

Give your PC a speed boost

No one likes a slow computer, but there are plenty of tricks to give even the oldest machines a speed boost

Unfortunately as our computers age, the slower they become. A machine that used to spring into life and load up Windows in a flash may now chug along, taking its sweet time to display your desktop, making you wait even longer before you can actually use the device. This can be particularly annoying, and is usually caused by filling

up your computer with ever more demanding software.

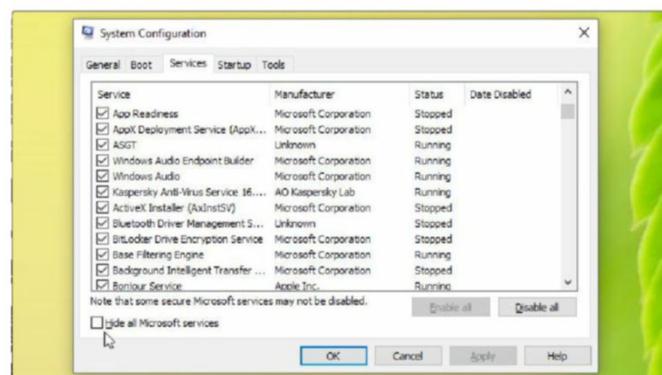
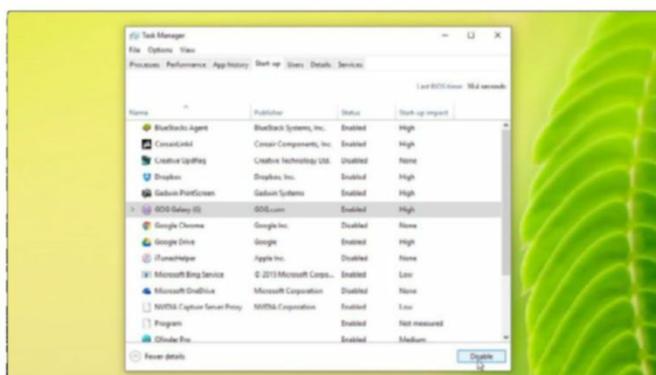
The good news is that because these problems are usually software-based, it means you don't need to shell out for new hardware just yet. Instead, by giving your PC a spring clean and removing any software you don't need, and making sure Windows is up-to-date, virus free and with

the latest drivers installed, you're able to give your machine a noticeable speed boost without having to spend a penny!

In this guide we'll take you through some of the best tips and tricks for speeding up a slow PC.

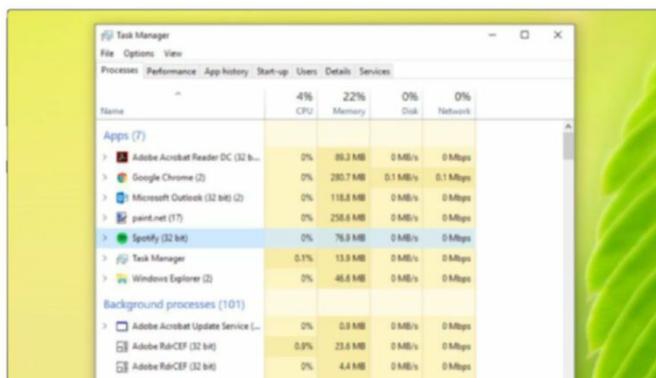
For a more comprehensive speed boost a Windows reinstall may be needed. See page 55 to find out how to do exactly that.

Step-by-step Speed up a slow computer



1 Cut down on start-up programs

Many apps you install will start themselves when Windows loads without asking you, and after a while this means Windows is loading a lot of apps when it boots, which can slow down your PC. Cut these down by opening the **Task Manager** – press [Ctrl] + [Shift] + [Esc] – and click 'Start-up'. Click on the program you want to stop loading when Windows starts, then select Disable.

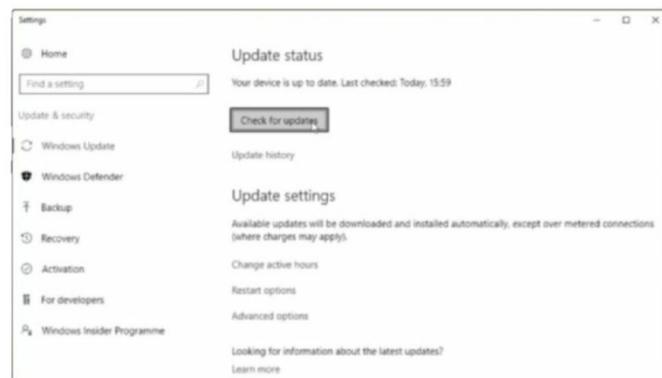


3 Identify resource-hungry programs

Certain programs use a lot of **resources**, which in turn slow your PC. Open the Task Manager again, then in the Processes tab you'll see which programs and services are open, and how many resources they are using. If there are any programs that are taking up a lot of resources, close them (by clicking 'End task') for a speed boost, or uninstall them for something more permanent.

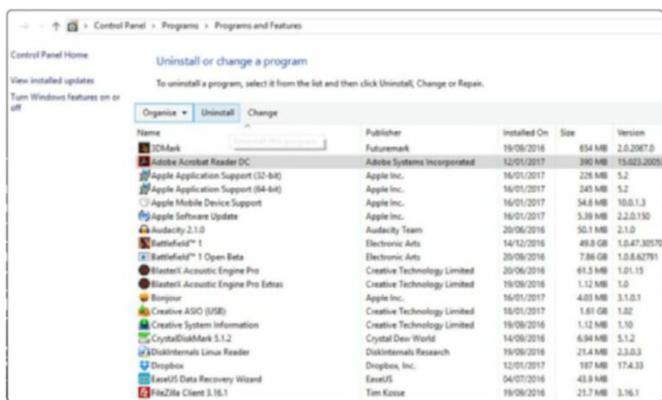
2 Use System Configuration to stop services

The advanced System Configuration tool gives you the ability to disable **services** that start up with Windows. While some are needed for certain applications, having too many running can slow down your PC. In the Start menu type in 'msconfig'. Click the Services tab and check the box saying 'Hide all Microsoft services'. Now disable services connected to programs you rarely use.



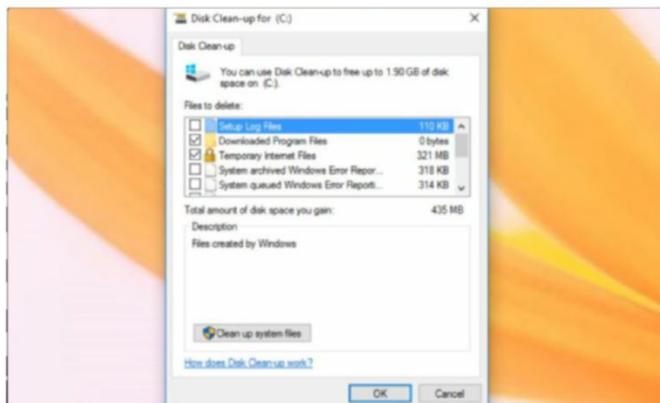
4 Make sure Windows is up to date

Microsoft regularly releases updates for Windows which can fix bugs and problems that could cause your PC to run slowly, so it's a good idea to make sure you're up-to-date. In the Start menu, type 'Windows update' and press [Return]. Click 'Check for updates' and if you're not using the most recent version you'll be told. This won't increase speed, but it will keep your PC healthy.



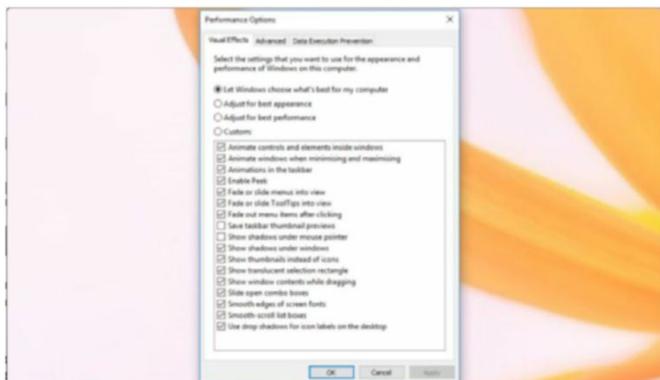
5 Remove unused programs

A PC with a clean and uncluttered drive will perform faster. Type 'uninstall' in the Start menu, and press [Return]. Take a look through the list of installed programs and if there are any you no longer use, select them, then click Uninstall. If there are programs that you still use, it may be worth looking online to see if they have been updated, making them perform faster.



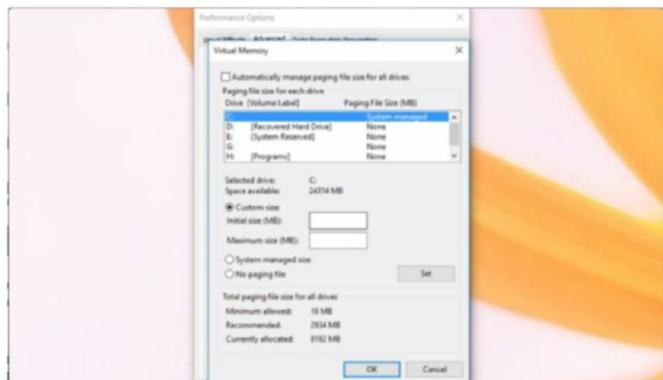
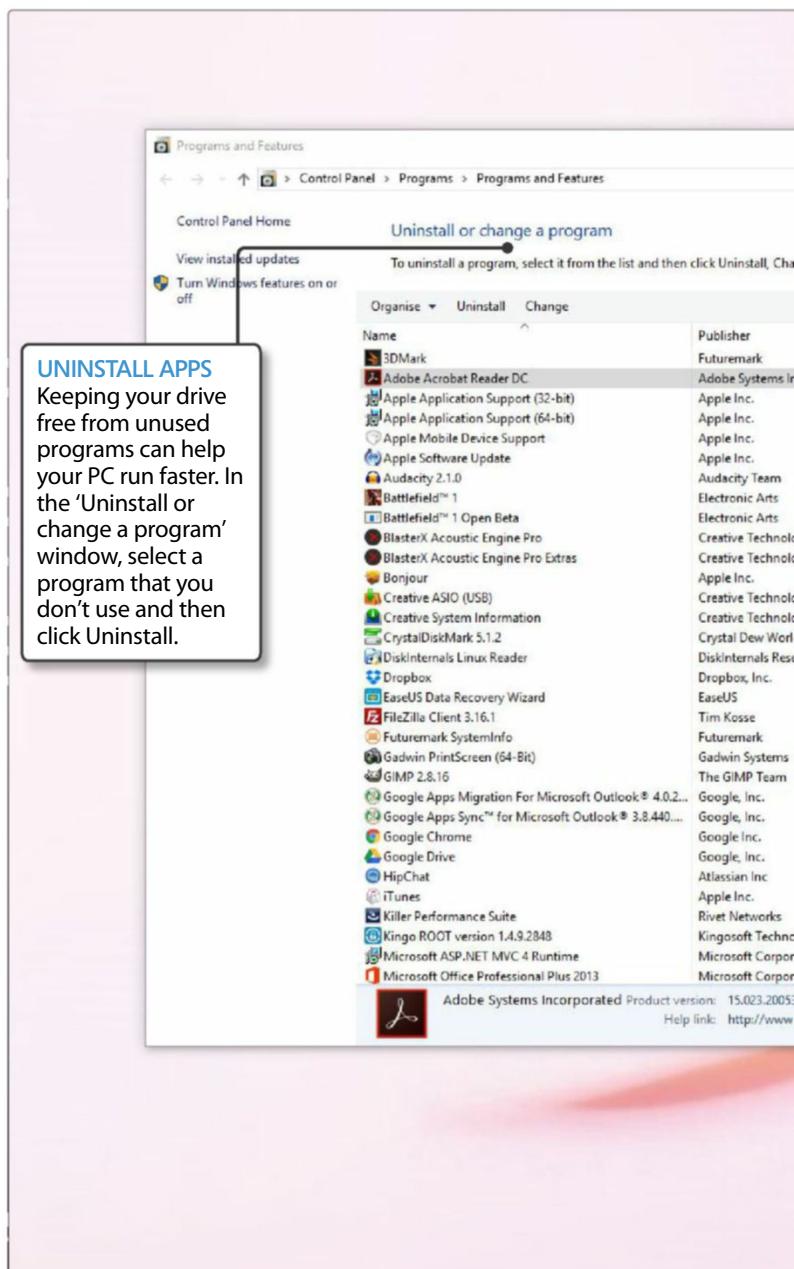
6 Clean up your drive

Next use the built-in Disk Clean-up tool in Windows. In the Start menu type 'disk clean-up' and press [Enter]. You'll be asked to choose the drive to clean up. For the biggest speed increase, select the drive which has Windows installed (usually C), and click OK. Disk Clean-up will scan your PC's drive and show you a list of suggested files to delete. Select the ones you want then click OK.



7 Reduce visual effects

Each version of Windows looks better than the last, but its visual effects and animations can slow you down. To turn them off, open the Start menu and click Settings. Type 'performance' in the text box, then click 'Adjust the appearance and performance of Windows'. The Performance Options window opens and from there either select 'Adjust for best performance' or Custom.



8 Add virtual memory

Speed up your PC by adding Virtual Memory, giving it a RAM boost. From the Performance Options window of the last step, click the Advanced tab, then the 'Change...' button. Uncheck 'Automatically manage paging file size for all drives'. Select your drive, then select Custom Size and set the Initial Size to the recommended amount and the maximum size to a higher figure.

PERFORMANCE
Click here to see a graph of your PC's performance and the resources that are being used. Any large spikes mean an app is causing your PC to slow down.

START-UP
This shows which programs are loaded when Windows starts. Cutting these down will make your PC run faster and slash the number of processes that run.

UPDATE PROGRAMS
Outdated apps may run slowly, so check this column to see which version you have installed. A quick Internet search will tell you if a later version is available.

BACKGROUND PROCESSES
The more apps that you install, the more processes they run. And too many can slow your PC. Check here to see if you can close any.

RESOURCES
Shows you which apps and services are running, and how much of your PC's resources they are taking up. Close any resource hogs to speed up your PC.

Jargon buster!

► Services

A service is a small program that works in the background. Some start and stop when needed, but others continue to run, and can slow your PC down.

► Resources

Your PC's RAM, CPU power, graphics power, network tools and drive space.

► Task Manager

Helps with managing apps and system monitoring. To load it, press [Ctrl] + [Alt] + [Delete], then click Start Task Manager, or press [Ctrl] + [Shift] + [Esc].

At a glance

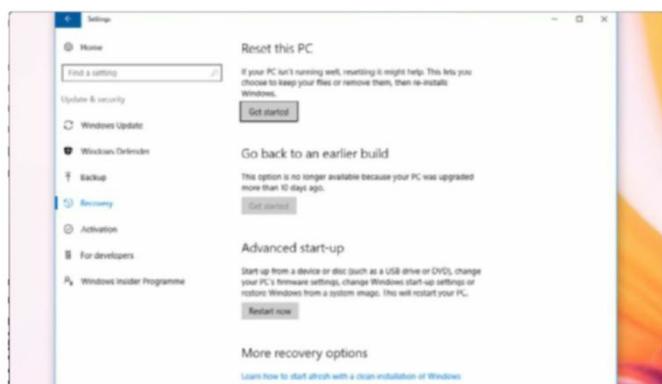
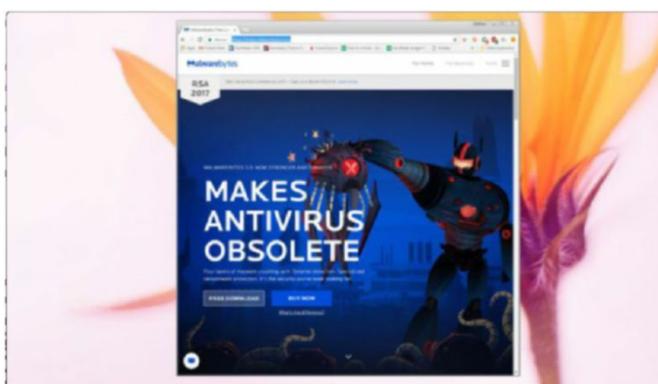
Skill level...

Anyone can do it

► Straightforward
Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7



9 Scan for viruses

A slow PC could be symptomatic of a virus, so make sure you scan it – and remove any infected files – regularly. Windows Defender, which comes with every version of Windows since Windows 8, does a good job. Free alternatives include AVG (www.avg.com/) and Malwarebytes (www.malwarebytes.com). Removing viruses will speed up our PC and protect your privacy!

10 Advanced measures

Your PC should now be running fast again. If not, it's time for advanced measures. First, clean up your registry with CCleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner), which will remove invalid and outdated Windows Registry entries, as well as leftover files from uninstalled apps. If that doesn't help, try reinstalling or refreshing Windows. No dice? Then it's time to upgrade your hardware. ■

Learn how to...

Set up your network printer



Your guide **Nick Peers** says...

"It's easy to get confused with installing a wireless printer – our guide will show you how to avoid the pitfalls and get it up and running"

At a glance

Skill level...

► Anyone can do it

Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

Windows 8.1

Windows 7

Once upon a time, installing a printer involved plugging it into your PC, installing the drivers, printing a test page and riding off into the sunset, printouts in hand. If you wanted to give other computers in your household access to the printer, you shared it through your main PC.

However, the rise of affordable network printers – particularly wireless ones – means everyone can access your printer anytime from anywhere in your home. In theory. In practice, judging by the number of emails we've received over the years, it can often be a confusing process.

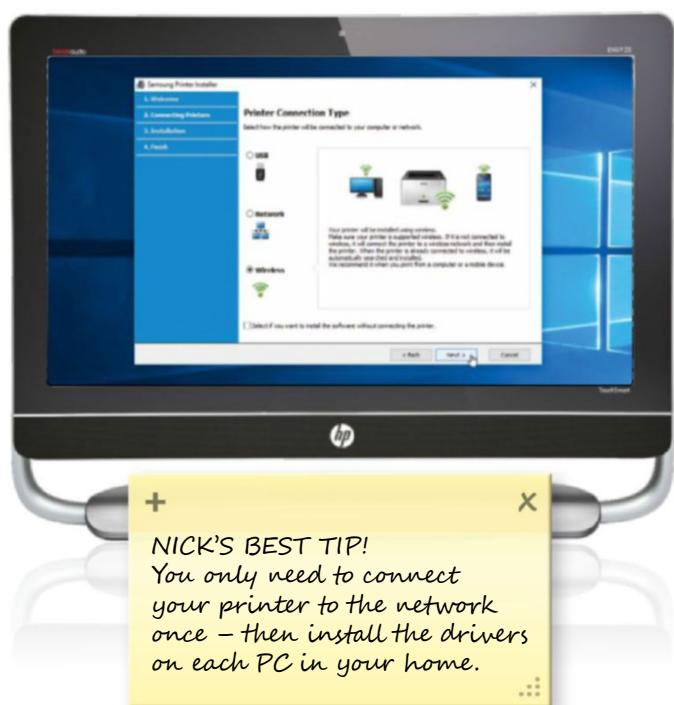
Thankfully, you can distil the process down to just a few straightforward steps, which should work for the vast majority of wireless (and Ethernet) printers out there. Read on to find out how to turn a frustrating set-up process into something more simple.

Step-by-step Install your network printer



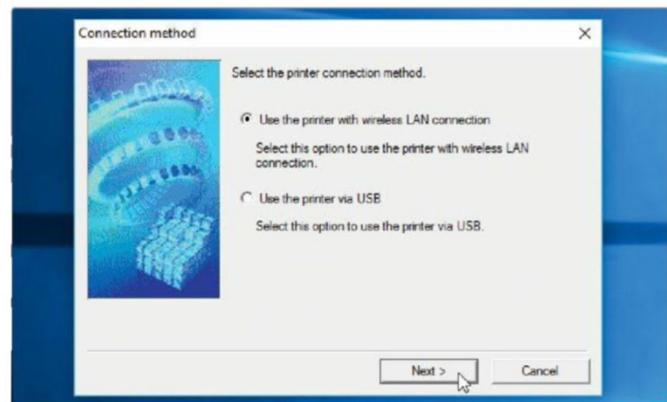
1 Connect wired printer to network

First things first, you need to physically connect your PC to your network. If it connects via Ethernet cable, plug the cable into your printer and connect it to your router or switch (if your printer's too far away from the router, consider investing in a HomePlug starter kit – £45 buys you a Solwise AV 500 kit from www.broadbandbuyer.co.uk, for example). Now jump to Step 6.



2 Connect wireless printer

If your printer and router both have WPS buttons, then the simplest thing is switch on your printer and press the WPS button on it. Next, move to your router and press the WPS button on that within two minutes of pressing the first button. Check your printer manual or quick set-up guide to see what confirmation you'll receive that the printer is connected. Now jump to Step 6.



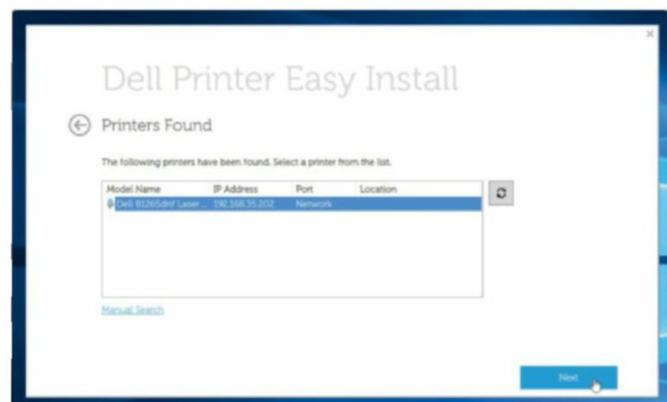
3 Use control panel

If your printer has a control panel, you should be able to use this to manually connect to your router. Look for a Set-up or Network menu, then locate the wireless set-up option. Follow this through to first detect and select your Wi-Fi network if it appears (look for an option to manually enter it if not), and then enter the router's WEP key or WPA passphrase to connect. Go to Step 6.



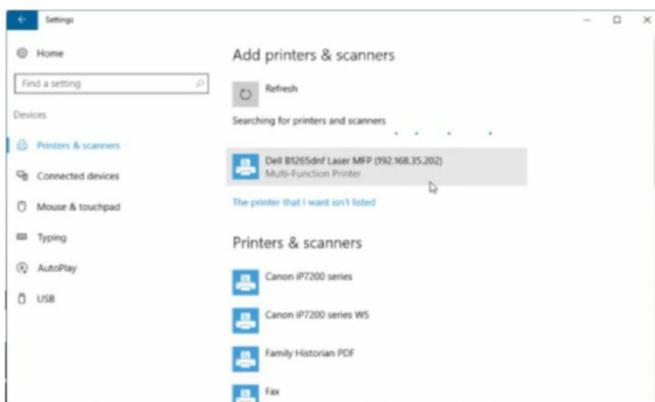
4 Connect (temporarily) through USB

You should be able to connect the printer to your network through your PC if necessary – you'll need a USB cable. Don't connect up straightaway; instead download the latest version of the printer software from your manufacturer and follow the set-up wizard, connecting when prompted. Look out for options regarding connection – be sure to choose the Wireless option.



5 Finish USB-based install

Complete the set-up process – if the printer isn't able to determine your wireless settings automatically (likely if your PC is connected to your network via Ethernet cable), you should be prompted to enter these manually or use the wizard to select your Wi-Fi network from a list before entering the passphrase or key to complete the connection.



6 Install manufacturer drivers

If you've connected your printer to the network without having to download any software, you now have two choices about adding the printer to your PC. The preferred approach is to source drivers and software directly from the manufacturer, either by using the printer CD or by visiting its website for the latest version – look for your printer under Support or Downloads.



7 Install through Windows

If you only need basic functionality, or Windows 10 drivers aren't available from your manufacturer, make sure it's switched on, then click Start > Settings > Devices, then click 'Add a printer or scanner' and wait for Windows to search. Your printer should show up if connected to the network, so select it and follow the prompts to complete the basic driver installation.

8 Locate compatible drivers

If Windows can't find drivers, revisit your manufacturer's website and look for drivers from a previous version of Windows. If separate 32-bit and 64-bit drivers exist, choose the version that matches your system (right-click Start and choose System to get this). Download and run the setup process – you shouldn't need to use Compatibility Mode – hopefully you'll have success! ■

Learn how to...

Get more from File Explorer



Your guide [Rob Mead-Green](#) says...

"Discover new ways to view, edit and arrange files and folders on your PC with these tips and tricks"

At a glance

Skill level...

► Anyone can do it

Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

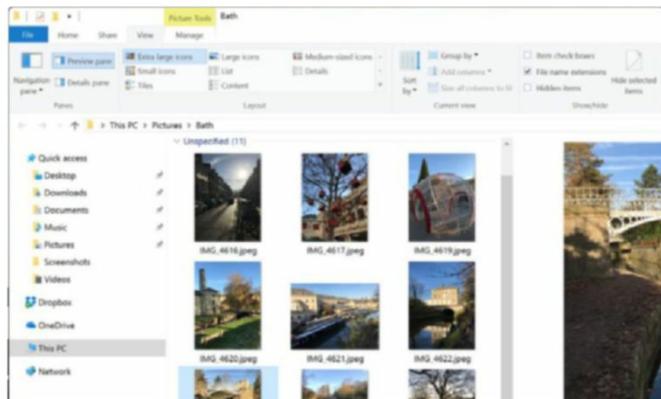
Windows 8.1

Windows 7

Whatever you do in Windows 10, chances are you're going to use the File Explorer at some point. It's the graphical user interface (GUI) that enables you to find, edit, copy, delete and organise your files. And in Windows 10, it carries a myriad of useful features that enable you to do more with ease: from taking a sneak peek at the contents of files without actually opening them; to changing the default file and folder views.

The quickest way to access File Explorer is to click the dedicated shortcut in the Taskbar. You can also open it using [Win] + [E]; by clicking its option in the Start menu (just above Settings); or by using Windows 10's virtual personal assistant, Cortana. In this tutorial we're going to explain the tips, tricks and customisation secrets that can help you master File Explorer. So, let's get cracking, shall we?

Step-by-step Get started with File Explorer



1 Reveal the Ribbon

You may not be able to see the **Ribbon** when you first open a File Explorer window. If that's the case, either click on the down arrow on the right side of the window, or press [Ctrl] + [F1]. You should now see four tabs: File, Home, Share and View. Select View to reveal the different ways you can change how a File Explorer windows contents are displayed.

QUICK ACCESS
Click any item here to quickly jump to the relevant folder. Some items, such as the Documents and Pictures folders, are here by default, but you can easily add your own [shortcuts](#).

MAIN WINDOW
The files and folders in the currently selected location. Select Ribbon > View to change the way these items are displayed: in a list, as small icons, etc.

Date taken	Size
28/12/2016 11:34	2.39 MB
28/12/2016 11:35	2.69 MB
28/12/2016 11:36	1.71 MB
28/12/2016 11:50	2.04 MB
28/12/2016 11:51	1.39 MB
28/12/2016 11:56	

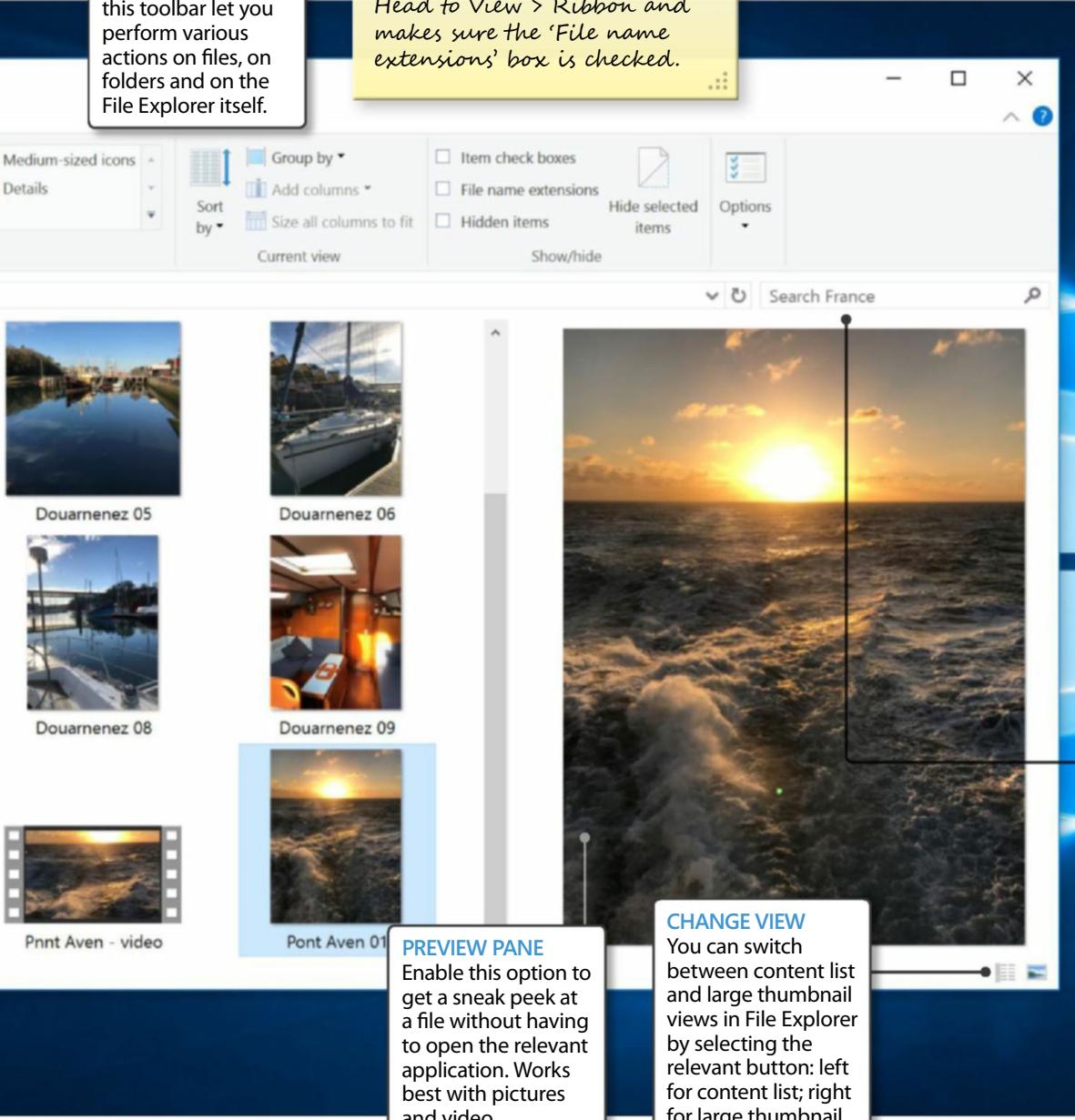
2 Change the view

Under View > Layout you'll see a range of options, including Large Icons, Small Icons, etc. Mouse over each one to see how it changes the way contents are displayed. To make each change more permanent, click the option you want to use. Now if you close the window, then reopen it again, you will see the change you have made has stuck. You can change the view at any time.

RIBBON

The four tabs – File, Home, Share and View – contained in this toolbar let you perform various actions on files, on folders and on the File Explorer itself.

ROB'S BEST TIP!
Need to see file extensions? Head to View > Ribbon and make sure the 'File name extensions' box is checked.



PREVIEW PANE

Enable this option to get a sneak peek at a file without having to open the relevant application. Works best with pictures and video.

CHANGE VIEW

You can switch between content list and large thumbnail views in File Explorer by selecting the relevant button: left for content list; right for large thumbnail.

Jargon buster!

► Quick access

Previously known as Favourites, 'Quick access' contains items you're likely to use most often. Certain items are included by default, but you can add whatever you wish.

► Ribbon

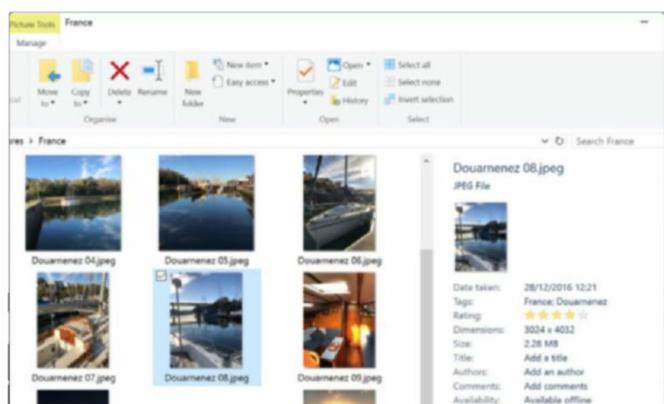
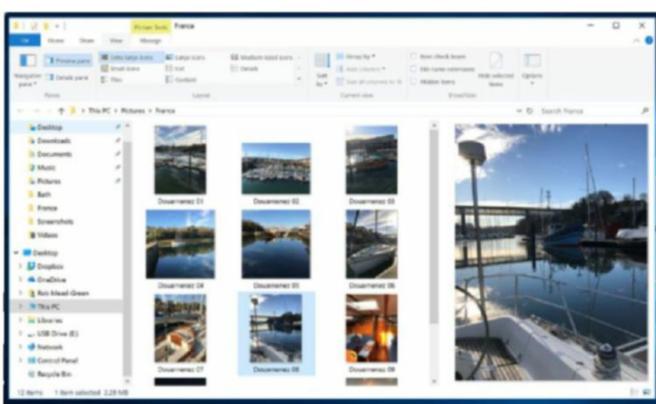
This toolbar adapts to what you're doing, so the right actions are always available at the right time.

► Shortcuts

Combinations of keyboard characters you can use to carry out certain actions. Often listed besides menu commands.

SEARCH

Quickly find any item by typing what you're looking for into the Search box. You can also search your computer using Cortana, of course.

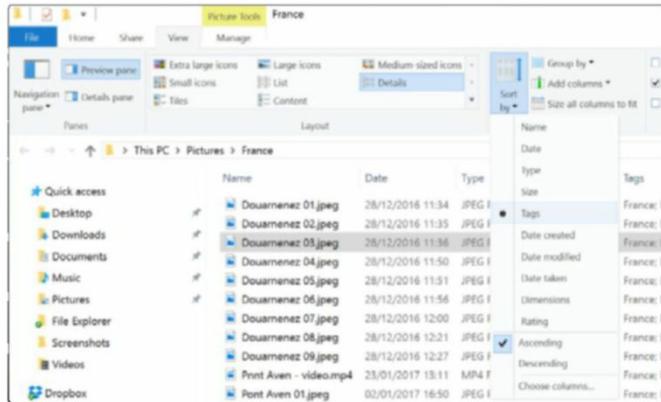


3 Take a sneak peek

Head to View > Panes and click Preview Pane. You'll now see a preview of the currently selected file or files (useful for pictures and video) without having to open it in a compatible application. You can resize the Preview Pane for a closer look by clicking and dragging the grey border to the left (the cursor will change to a double-arrow). Double-click to open the file in the relevant app.

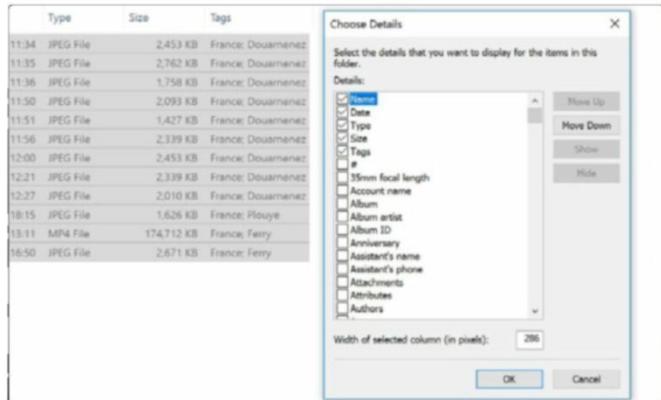
4 See more details

If you want to know more about a file, go to View > Panes and select the Details Pane. This reveals further info, including EXIF data in any photos. As you mouse over some of the details you'll see a grey outline appear around them. This means you can edit them. Double-click to change the current selection. You can add titles, tags, star ratings and other info right in File Explorer.



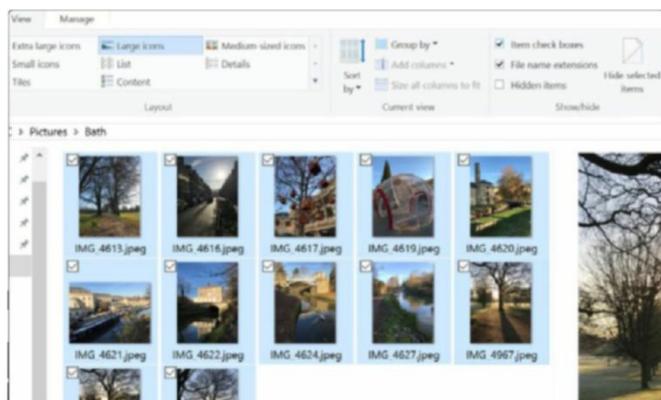
5 Sort your stuff

By default, File Explorer displays items in alphabetical order. To change this go to View > Current View and click Sort By to reveal a drop-down menu. You can view items by name, date, tags or any one of seven other options, as well as in ascending or descending order – handy if you’re trying to find the latest version or are trying to save space by weeding out the largest ones.



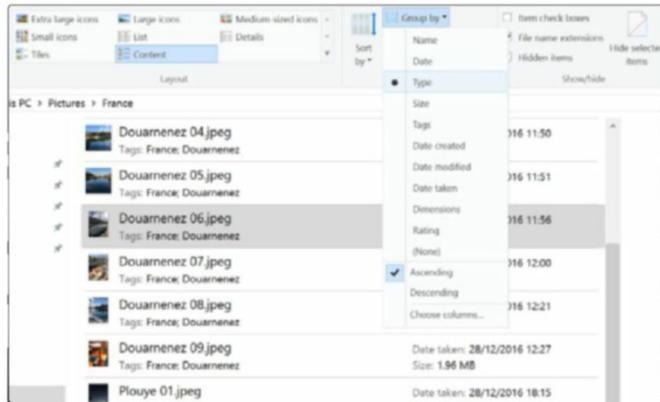
7 Customise your columns

Another way to get at-a-glance info is to customise the columns File Explorer shows. In Layout > ‘Details and Current View’ > ‘Group views’ you’ll see default columns, but you can change these. Go to Current View > Add Columns and select Choose Columns. A ‘Choose Details’ window appears. You can now choose the columns you want to see. Click ‘OK’ once done.



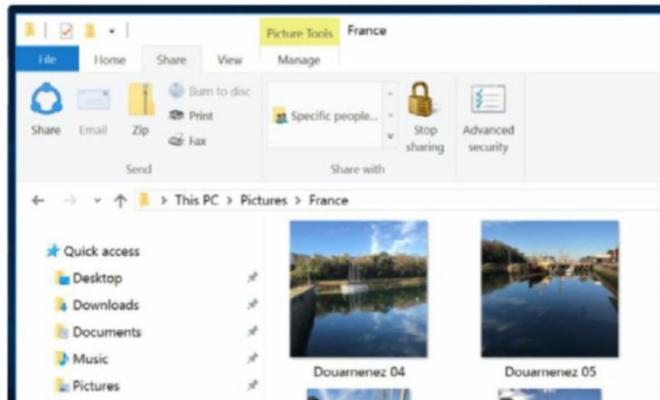
9 Other File Explorer options

While you can select multiple files and folders by clicking and dragging or [Ctrl] + clicking, there is another option. Go to View > ‘Show/hide’ and select and check the ‘Item check boxes’ option. Every item will now have its own check box, making it easy to select them quickly. This section also lets you to show or hide file extensions and show or hide individual files and folders.



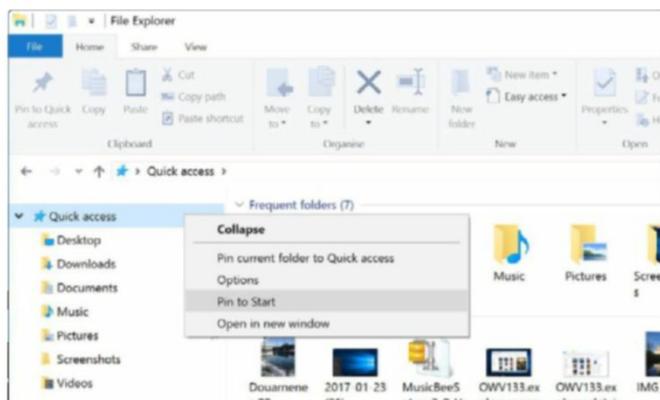
6 Form a group

You can sort also files and folders into groups. Again this is handy for identifying certain kinds of file, such as any images you have tagged. To do that, go to View > Current View > ‘Group by’ then choose from your options. You’ll see the window layout change to reflect your selection. If you select by File Type, for example, you’ll see files are listed under File Type headings.



8 Share files and folders

File Explorer makes sharing easy. Go to Ribbon > Share > Send > Share to upload files to apps and services such as Mail and Facebook. Select Send > Zip to compress them, or use the options in the next column to print, fax or burn them to disc. To share items on a local or public network, select Share With > ‘Specific people...’ Then choose your options from the window that opens.



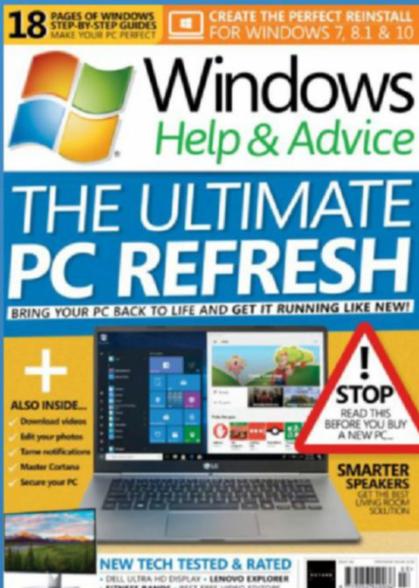
10 Customise Quick access

If you regularly access certain items, **Quick access** can help. It enables you to pin them to its menu, which sits in File Explorer’s sidebar. Select the ‘Quick access’ menu itself and you will see your favourites on top with recent files below. To add an item to ‘Quick access’, select it, then go to Home > ‘Pin to Quick access’. To remove it, right-click it and select ‘Unpin from Quick access’.

Back issues
Don't miss out!

MISSED AN ISSUE?

Our website stocks up to six months' worth of back issues – we deliver worldwide and all prices include shipping



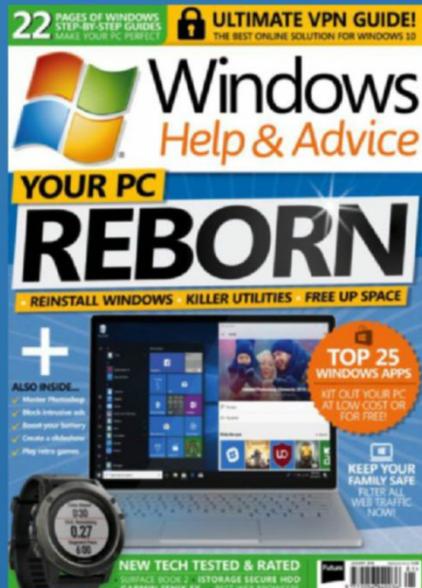
From £5.99

ISSUE 146 MARCH 2018



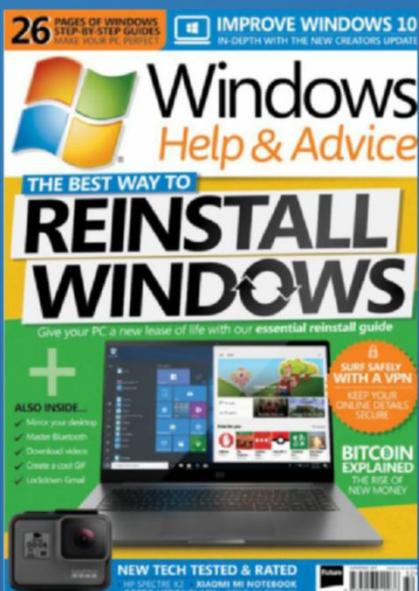
From £5.99

ISSUE 145 FEBRUARY 2018



From £5.99

ISSUE 144 JANUARY 2018



From £5.99

ISSUE 143 CHRISTMAS 2017



From £5.99

ISSUE 142 DECEMBER 2017



From £5.99

ISSUE 141 NOVEMBER 2017

FOR BACK ISSUES GO TO
www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

THE BEST FREE PC SOFTWARE

Tool up your PC for less with 39 essential gratis apps By Alex Cox

Free software drives the PC industry. Paid-for packages might seem to be the better option in general – and if you're in industry, you'll need the professional support options that come from paying up – but it's the no-pounds-down applications that make life as an everyday PC user worth living.

We have three things to thank for the delicious software cornucopia that we've spread on the table today. Firstly, the dedication and skill of the open-source community. These guys see a problem, they find something they want to do, and just go ahead and make it, offering up the software – and the building blocks that put it together – to the world when they're done. Thanks, folks. You rock, and you make the next generation of software better.

Secondly, we must thank the power of competition. Take web browsers: Had one tech big boy not stuck his finger in the Internet pie, chances are the rest of them wouldn't have followed suit in a bid to do things better, and taste that sweet, sweet

market share and goodwill. Their generosity might be tinged with a combination of industrial malice and "you are the product" data collection, but sometimes you pay for your software in something other than hard cash.

Thirdly, and perhaps a little ironically, good old capitalism has a big role to play in the existence of the best free software. Some apps are made as alternatives to software that people resent having to pay for. Some are a free sample, a tantalising just-useful-enough morsel to encourage you to invest in the whole meal. Whatever the reason, you get something awesome, and you don't have to pay a single penny.

So, let's go ahead and make your life better by making your computer more capable. Let's get you set up to try new things, to create more, to break down format boundaries, to enjoy yourself. Let's go free: We've trawled the web, canvassed our colleagues, and batted away a host of competitors to compile this guide to 39 of the absolute best free apps for Windows.

Windows 10

The best free PC software



MEDIA

PHOTO EDITING GIMP

1

About as Photoshop as you can get without actually shelling out a small fortune to use Photoshop itself, Gimp is densely packed with features, and capable of a massive array of photo manipulation and artistic endeavours. It's also far more refined than it was a few years ago, with the frequent crashes of yesteryear all but gone. Only the slightly janky interface remains to remind you that this is open-source software. www.gimp.org

NATURAL PAINTING KRITA

2

Now 20 years old, Krita is a natural painting toolbox, perfect for everyone from artists to cartoonists, and beyond. It includes art essentials such as stabilised brushes, a pop-up palette, a wrapping texture mode, as well as a full animation interface. There are nine individual brush engines, each customisable and organisable to help you grab the right tool fast. Pick up the paid-for Gemini version on Steam (\$9.99) if you're rocking a convertible tablet and want to support the project. <http://krita.org>



VLC Media Player can handle pretty much any media format you care to throw at it.

VIDEO EDITOR LIGHTWORKS

3

If you're after pro-level video editing, Lightworks – legitimately used to cut proper Hollywood movies, such as *The Wolf of Wall Street* – is an incredible choice for the grand sum of zero. You're restricted to 720p output on the free tier, but everything else is present and correct, from advanced non-linear editing to a whole host of colour grading and effects tools. The learning curve is steep, but there's a vibrant community ready to help if you need any pointers. www.lwks.com

MUSIC PLAYER MUSICBEE

4

No matter how large your music library is, MusicBee can handle it, with a tiny RAM footprint that makes this handsome skinnable player/manager perfect for even the lowliest laptop. You can tweak your sounds with surround upscaling, ASIO and WASAPI support, and a 15-band equaliser, and even make use of those crusty old WinAmp plugins if you need more. It'll even properly tag and fully organise that trashpile you call an MP3 collection... <http://getmusicbee.com>

YOUTUBE DOWNLOADER FREEMAKE VIDEO DOWNLOADER

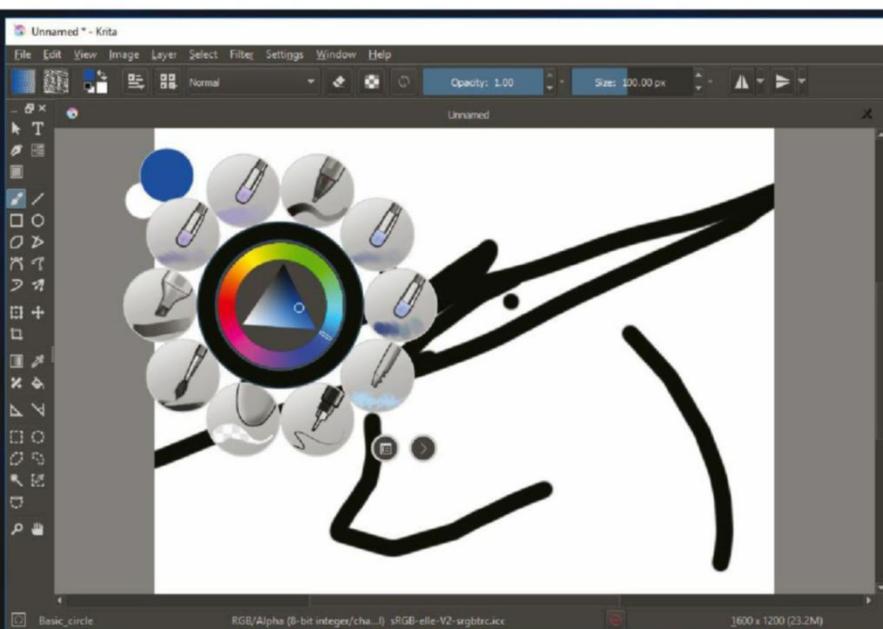
5

Now downloading video content from YouTube isn't strictly kosher, but nothing's permanent on the Internet's foremost demonetisation platform. It pays to be prepared if there's a video you can't do without – particularly if your data plan won't cover streaming your kids' favourite weird Spiderman/Elsa escapades when you're desperate for them to be quiet for two seconds. Freemake's multi-threaded app is super-simple, super-fast, and it can suck down YouTube vids as well as content from Vimeo, Facebook, and beyond. www.freemake.com

AUDIO EDITOR AUDACITY

6

Active development means that this audio stalwart has recently seen a bunch of new features added, and there are more on the way. Not that it necessarily needed much



changing: Despite a rather, let's say, rugged interface, Audacity's power for multi-track audio manipulation is unsurpassed in the free bracket, and the program is an immensely stable way to record from a microphone, too. Of course, now that it can natively play MIDI files, you'll be too busy looping canyon.mid to get any fresh recording done.

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

VIDEO PLAYER
VLC MEDIA PLAYER

7 VLC is brilliantly honest free software. When its creators were offered tens of millions of dollars to slather the app in ads, they refused – it's open source, proud about it, and the envy of the media player world, thanks to its solid compatibility with just about every media format. It can even handle streams on several protocols, and it's fully extendable. That said, everything important is on board from the start – no codec packs required.

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

STREAMING AUDIO
SPOTIFY

8 Despite the fact that it's cavorting around an increasingly competitive streaming playground, Spotify is still king of the jungle gym. It has the biggest library, the best interface, and its OGG-format files sound all but flawless, despite its lack of official high-res audio support. Admittedly, the ads can be a little repetitive and heavy handed if you don't shell out for a paid-for account, but that's the price of free. [www.spotify.com](http://spotify.com)

VECTOR IMAGE EDITOR
INKSCAPE

9 You don't have a huge amount of choice if you need to create scalable vector graphics on a budget. You could shell out for a subscription to use Adobe Illustrator, or you could download the highly mature and feature-filled Inkscape. There's not really a happy in-between. Good job, then, that Inkscape is so capable, with support for blurring, gradients, multi-path editing, and exporting in every format you could possibly need.

<http://inkscape.org>

VIDEO MANIPULATION
HANDBRAKE

10 When you need video in one format but it's stubbornly in another, you need to transcode. Handbrake supports a massive list of formats on input and output, with profiles included for a host of common devices, and it's happy to convert frame rates and add effects on the way. Its key feature, though, is batch processing: Drop a collection of videos in, set it off, and it'll tell you when it's filled a folder with your freshly converted media.

<http://handbrake.fr>



GAMING

11 **VALVE STEAM**

Frequent sales, a massive indie library, and an early access programme that gets you into new games before they've been officially released characterise Valve's store – but it's the little extras, such as the vibrant community, the Steam game overlay, and the Steam Workshop for mod content, that really make it. Steam has changed what gaming really is on the PC. Keep an eye on the store to find regular free weekends of popular games, which get you unlimited access for a limited time.

<http://steampowered.com>

12 **EA ORIGIN**

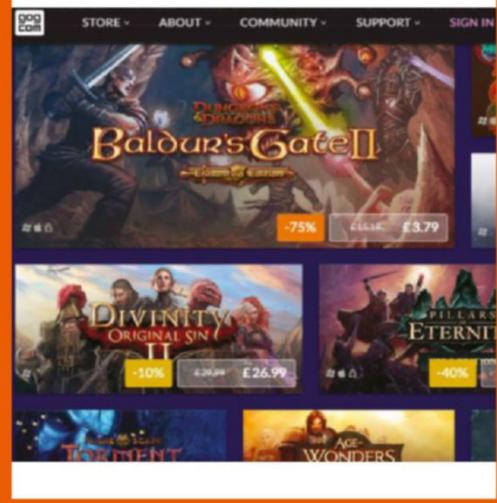
Steam's publisher deals don't extend to every producer of AAA titles, and if you want in on EA's library, you need to use Origin. Whatever you might think about the gaming monolith's practices, Origin is a convenient way to manage your gaming, and get going with multiplayer action. Check the 'On the House' section for a regular rotating selection of freebies, which you can add to your library forever, and take advantage of the trials to get time-limited access to hot new games.

www.origin.com

13 **GOG GALAXY**

If you're more inclined toward the old-school end of the gaming spectrum, GOG's selection of rigged-for-modern PC classics and the occasional new release are reasonably priced and almost always worth checking out. Galaxy is its desktop client, which makes finding and installing your favorite DRM-free titles quick and easy; if you're on board with GOG's philosophy and truly love old games, you should get on board with Galaxy.

www.gog.com/galaxy



SECURITY & PROTECTION

SOFTWARE REMOVAL PC DECRAPIFIER

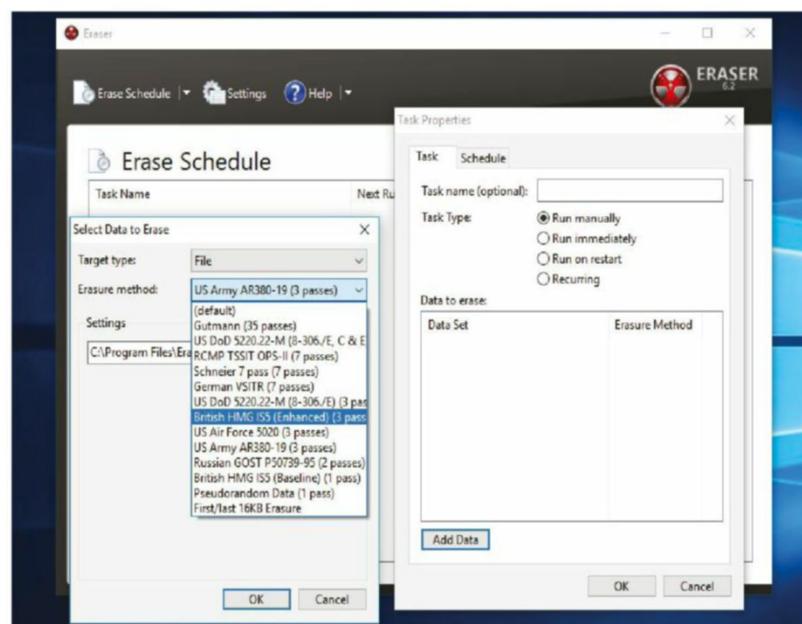
14

Whether you're cleansing a new PC of its pre-installed bloatware or trimming down an existing machine to get rid of the stuff you really don't need, PC Decrapifier does the job fast, and it makes it easy. No other package is quite as informed on the awful software that manufacturers so thoughtfully include, and how safe it is to excise it – while you won't use it often, this is definitely one of those portable apps you'll want on your USB flash drive toolkit. www.pcdecrapifier.com

SYSTEM CLEANING CCLEANER

15

Windows is, among its many other jobs, like a cut-price janitor. Sure, it puts on a good show: It's packed with tools, and it claims they'll scrub your OS clean, but it's lackadaisical. It doesn't go as far as it could, and it often leaves filth around the edges. For the rest, you need something heavy, such as CCleaner, which can do away with Registry artefacts, files left over after uninstalling, and much more. www.piriform.com



Want to make sure those files you deleted are gone for good? It's time to turn to Eraser.

VPN TUNNELBEAR

16

There are stacks of free VPNs out there, but never underestimate the importance of trust when it comes to something that's purportedly there to protect your web traffic – you need to know you're safe, not just funnelling your entire bitstream through a criminal server. Cuddly ol' TunnelBear can be trusted, and it's completely uncomplicated: It just works. It's fast, it's solid, and the 500MB of monthly free bandwidth should see you through all of your secure online transactions. www.tunnelbear.com

ANTIVIRUS BITDEFENDER ANTIVIRUS FREE

17

Whichever way you slice it, however careful you may be, you can't get away without having anti-virus installed. If you're going free, pick something with low system load, minimal amounts of notification spam, and a decent engine behind it. Bitdefender's latest update fits the bill – it's ultra-effective against malware, and extra light on resources, with a simple interface that just gets on with the job. Try Avira instead if you'd like a touch more control. www.bitdefender.com

ANTI-MALWARE MALWAREBYTES FREE

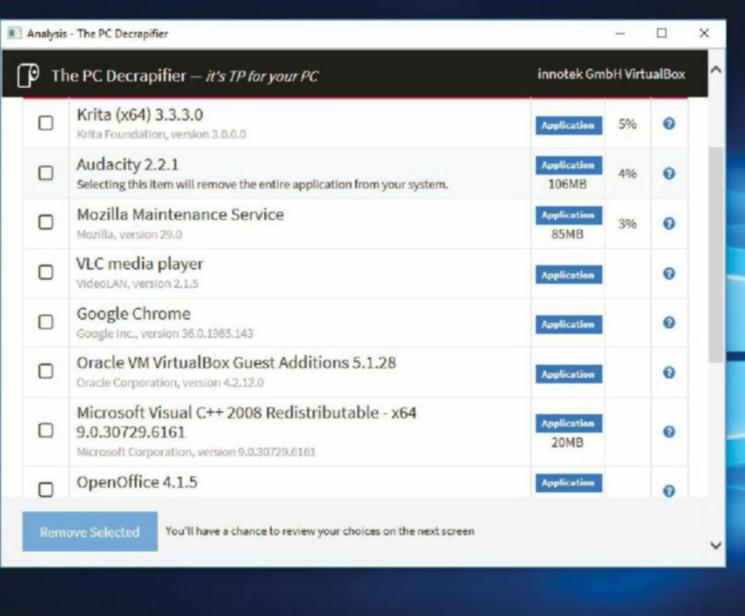
18

Admittedly, Malwarebytes' free tier doesn't do a huge amount – it's not a preventative, it won't steer you away from the seedier corners of the web, and it can't do anything about zero-day malware threats, unless you pony up some cash. What it does, though, is precisely what you need it to: Run it once you think you've fallen foul of some terrible malware threat, and it'll kill that pesky infestation until it's well and truly dead. www.malwarebytes.com

PASSWORD MANAGER DASHLANE

19

If you've never used the same password for multiple sites because you don't trust your memory, you're in the minority, and if you came



up with that password yourself, chances are it's insecure in some way. Using Dashlane does away with the fallibility of the human brain. Remember one master password, and you need never even know the complex, nigh-unhackable passwords it automatically generates and types into web forms on your behalf – even Dashlane itself doesn't know them. www.dashlane.com

FILE DESTRUCTION
ERASER

20

You are probably already aware that deleting a file doesn't actually delete it. It's not until its little corner of drive space is reused that its data actually goes away, and even then there may be some trace of it left behind to be forensically recovered. Eraser ensures that those files you want well and truly removed are fully destroyed, using specially selected patterns of bytes over multiple passes to remove any digital memory of those files ever existing. <http://eraser.heidi.ie>

SYSTEM PROTECTION
UNCHECKY

21

Probably the most common cause of malware infestation is inattention – clicking through a seemingly innocent installer, accidentally skipping past the page where it offers to install a brilliant browser toolbar, cursing yourself afterward. Unchecky doubles up: It unchecks those cheeky checkboxes (as you might expect from its name), and also sniffs out untrustworthy installers, warning you when you're about to accept an offer of questionable value. <http://unchecky.com>

FILE RECOVERY
RECUVА

22

It doesn't matter if you've accidentally deleted a file, formatted a drive, or suffered some sort of horrific crash, Recuva can take a good stab at analysing your drive, and getting your data back in one piece. It's not infallible, but if you have the time (and your hard drive has enough life left in it) to let it run a deep scan, you're more than likely to see results. It'll also do a secure overwrite, if you're looking to do the opposite. www.piriform.com

BACKUP
**EASEUS TODO
BACKUP FREE**

23

Easy, selective and automatic. EaseUS's solution to backup is probably the most sensible we've seen. You can plug in an external drive (or point it at a NAS), and just set and forget – it periodically creates an incremental backup of your selected folders (or those it's chosen using its smart backup feature), without any more involvement from you. If you want to take a more specific backup, you can, and restoring later on is incredibly easy. www.easeus.com



WEB BROWSERS

24

GOOGLE CHROME

Whatever you might think of Google, its browser – and the open-source Chromium browser that it's built upon – deserves its place at the top of the tree. It makes big demands on your RAM, but this is because it keeps every one of its tabs in its own memory space, meaning a crash in one window won't kill any of the others. There's a massive extension library ready to go, so you can browse exactly as you'd want to – although not every extension is worth the bits it's made of... www.google.com/chrome

25

FIREFOX

Far better than it was before it fell off the top spot, Firefox is now a highly efficient browser that's kinder on your RAM than Chrome, and – depending on your browser habits – potentially more stable, too. Running modern Firefox is a speedy experience, and if you're looking for privacy, you can do a lot more by default than Chrome's incognito mode – the anti-tracking features Mozilla has packed in are perfect for those desperate to leave a light footprint on the web. www.mozilla.com

26

VIVALDI

You might place Opera in the No. 3 free browser slot; we're going for Vivaldi, the browser that formed from disillusion with Opera's practices. It's a truly modern browser, using the same rendering engine as Chrome, and many of the key features of Opera, while tacking on a host of note-taking, tab-managing, experience-modifying features. There's a dedicated community driving the Vivaldi project on, and you can even use certain Chrome extensions. <http://vivaldi.com>

SYSTEM UTILITIES

PDF READER SUMATRA PDF

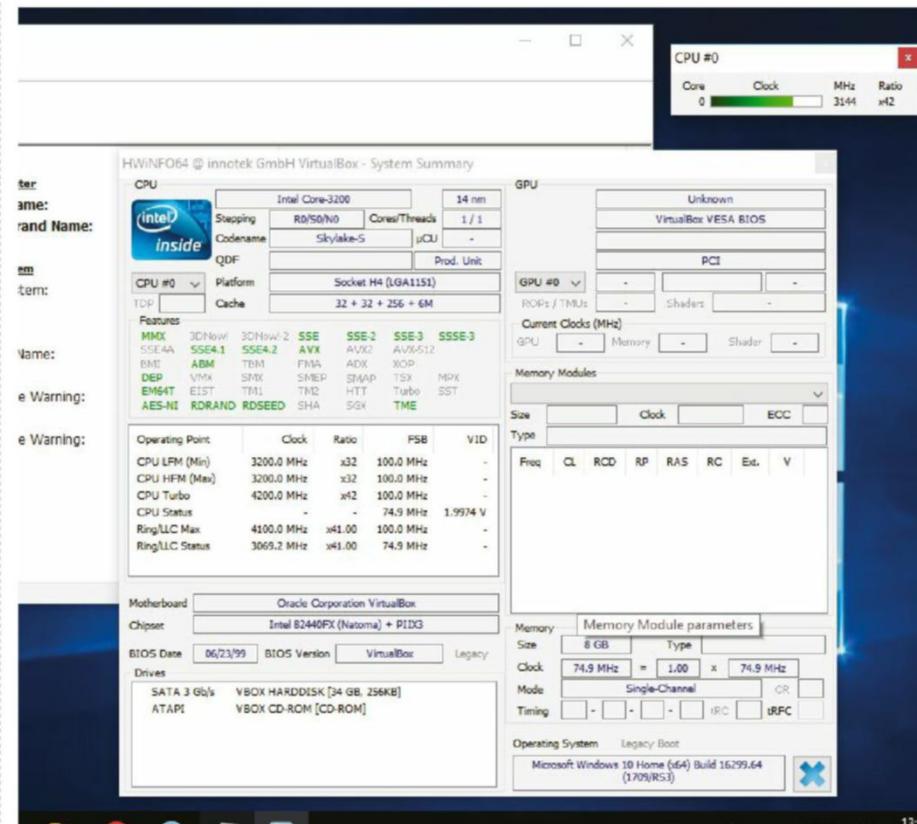
27

Adobe needn't have the monopoly on PDF reading. The format is far more widespread than it once was, and there are smaller, faster, and more versatile readers than, er, Reader – SumatraPDF being the best among them. It has a deliberately simple UI, because you're meant to be focused on reading, rather than clicking buttons, and also includes full support for rendering most mainstream e-book and comic book formats, as well as XPS and DjVu files. www.sumatrapdfreader.org

EMAIL CLIENT EM CLIENT

28

One of the cleanest email packages around, working with POP3, SMTP, and every other email delivery tech out there, eM Client's free version only really restricts the number of accounts you can use – every other feature matches up to its pro tier. This includes PGP integration, so you can securely sign or encrypt your messages, along with advanced contacts management, importing from other email apps, and a chat client that supports most common IM protocols. <http://emclient.com>



HWiNFO64 enables you to get to know your PC intimately, and pinpoint potential problems.

Set up a system with ease, and let Ninite handle the job of installing free apps.

FILE SYNCHRONISATION DROPBOX

29

Keeping files synced between your many PCs and an online drive is a simple way of staying organised and safe, and it's not without its options. Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive, Box, even Mega, they all give you a local folder that automatically mirrors one online. We favour Dropbox for this task, mainly because it feels like the most responsive and sensible way to magically clone your stuff. It's what Dropbox was built to do – limited storage space be damned. www.dropbox.com

MEDIA BURNER CDBURNERXP

30

Optical media is a progressively more marginal form of storage, but it ain't dead yet, and the flexibility to do more than Windows' own built-in burning tools is essential. CDBurnerXP, which shows its lineage in its name, can burn it all – you can even use it to write HD-DVDs if you can find the hardware – and it can create and convert ISO files, too. Perfect for backing up backups. <http://cdburnerxp.se>

MESSAGING FRANZ

31

Franz doesn't actually offer its own messaging system, but it does serve up just about every other protocol. Configure your Franz account, add the services and usernames you want to use, and they're replicated on whatever machine you log on to next. Get your Slack, your Hangouts, your Skype, and even WhatsApp all in one place, and stop shunning that one person who won't move to the network the rest of your friends use. <http://meetfranz.com>

The screenshot shows the Ninite software download manager. The main window lists various application categories: Web Browsers (Chrome, Opera, Firefox), Documents (Foxit Reader, LibreOffice, SumatraPDF, CutsPDF, PDFCreator, OpenOffice), Utilities (TeamViewer 13, ImgBurn, RealVNC, TeraCopy, CDBurnerXP, Revo), Messaging (Skype, Pidgin, Thunderbird, Trillian), Security (Avast, AVG, Malwarebytes, Spybot 2, Avira, SUPERAntiSpyware), Developer Tools (Python, FileZilla, Notepad++, JDK 8), Media (iTunes, VLC, AIMP, Winamp, MusicBee, Audacity, K-Lite Codec Pack, GOM, Spotify, CCCP, MediaMonkey, HandBrake), Runtimes (Java 8, .NET 4.7.1, Silverlight, Air, Shockwave), Imaging (Krita, Blender, Paint.NET, GIMP, IrfanView, XnView, Inkscape, FastStone, Greenshot, ShareX), File Sharing (qBittorrent), Online Storage (Dropbox, Google Backup and Sync, Mozy, OneDrive, SugarSync), Other (Evernote, Google Earth, Steam, KeePass 2, Everything, NV Access). At the bottom, there's a search bar and a taskbar with icons for File Explorer, Start, Task View, and others.

NOTES
EVERNOTE

32

The great benefit of being the biggest name in your field, as Evernote surely is, is integration. So many other web services tie into it that you often don't need to make notes directly – just chuck the content you're interested in over to your Evernote, and it's there when you want to remember, organise it into notebooks, and otherwise make use of it later on. You can sync the basic free account with two devices. <http://evernote.com>

UTILITY SETUP
NINITE

33

Efficiency is the name of the game where Ninite is concerned. If you're putting together a new machine, and you want it packed with free apps, Ninite can supply them – including many of the apps featured here – in one handy installer. Just check the boxes on the site, download your custom executable, and fire it off to get the latest versions of the most popular applications installed with one click. No choices, no options, just clean installs of your favourite stuff. <http://ninite.com>

VIRTUAL MACHINES
VIRTUALBOX

34

It's sort of remarkable that VirtualBox is free, particularly since it's owned by a company as big as Oracle, but the frequently updated virtual machine environment is essential if you want to cobble together sandboxed Windows installations, trial Linux distros, or get up to all kinds of other shenanigans that it might be useful to roll back or keep separate from the rest of your PC. It's highly configurable, and you can even set up your own virtual networks.

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

SYSTEM INFO
HWINFO64

35

If you have a problem with your PC – or even if you don't – it's useful to find out exactly how it's operating. HWINFO64 is a diagnostic tool that can serve up everything from a brief overview of your system's components to a deep dive into the minuscule operations of your PC. You can also use it for real-time monitoring, keeping an eye on the status of problem components, and predicting failure based on its findings.

www.hwinfo.com

COMPRESSION
7-ZIP

36

We find it pretty amazing how many people have the never-ending free trial of WinRAR installed when 7-Zip does the job of archiving and unarchiving just as competently, and doesn't bother with the nag screens. What's more, the .7z format, which uses AES-256 encryption and a super-high compression ratio, is both smaller and, usually, faster than using .ZIP or .RAR to squash down your files. www.7-zip.org



OFFICE SUITES

GOOGLE DOCS

37

Although it's missing many of the more advanced features of full office suites, those are generally things you shouldn't be using an office package for anyway. Google Docs – and Sheets, and Slides – rocks a winning combination of solid core features, constant accessibility, integration with online storage, and companion mobile apps, which (awkwardly) offer you the same functionality on your phone. You can import and export in any format you choose – what's not to like?

<http://docs.google.com>

APACHE OPENOFFICE

38

One of many successors of original Microsoft Office alternative StarOffice, OpenOffice – passed on to Apache after previous owner, Oracle, abandoned the project – contains a complete suite of software, ranging from the core word processor, spreadsheet and presentation triumvirate to apps specifically designed for vector drawing, laying out mathematical formulae, and a database. If you're not shelling out for Microsoft's suite, then this'll get the job done.

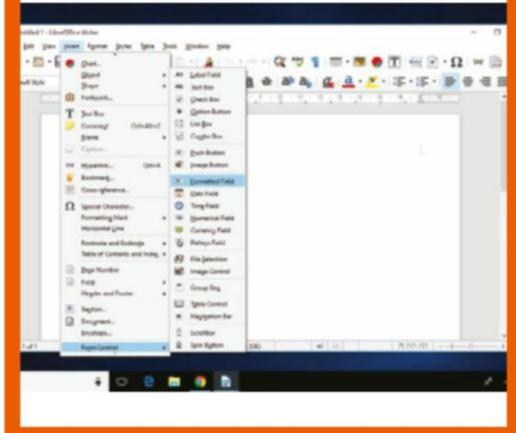
www.openoffice.org

LIBREOFFICE

39

LibreOffice is, naturally, just like OpenOffice – while the two packages have followed different development lines since mid-2013, they're based on the same code, and retain the same naming convention (and, in most cases, a very similar interface) for their central six apps. It's up to you which free office branch you follow; ignoring the frequent squabbling that split the two (and fellow StarOffice fork NeoOffice), they're just as capable as one another.

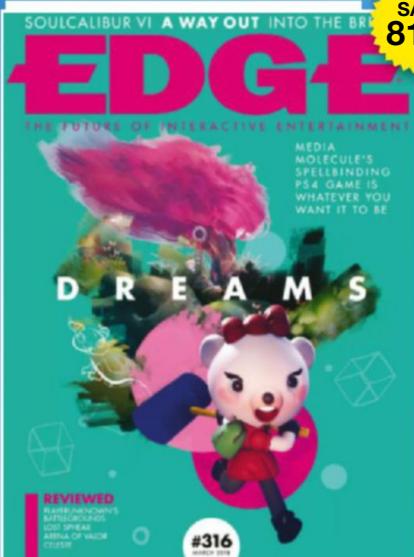
www.libreoffice.org ■



SPRING SALE!

TRY 5 ISSUES FOR £5*

BIG SAVINGS ON OUR BEST-SELLING MAGAZINES



For great savings on all of our magazines, see the entire range online
myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/spring182

Order Hotline 0344 848 2852

*TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The trial offer is for new UK print subscribers paying by Direct Debit only. Savings are compared to buying full priced print issues. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Payment is non-refundable after the 14 day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. Full details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available upon request. UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) or are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). For full terms and conditions please visit: bit.ly/magtandc. Offer ends 30 April 2018.

REINSTALL WINDOWS 10



We reveal the tips and techniques that will make your next Windows reinstall go as smoothly as possible, with a little help from Nick Peers

Traditionally, we've suggested you reinstall Windows once every couple of years or so. It's tempting to leave things longer, but the fact is your PC accumulates clutter that even the most zealous cleaning regime can't keep on top of. And as time drags on, your install starts to feel its age, with major updates like the recently released Fall Creators Update unable to fix underlying problems or inject fresh speed into your system.

There's something wonderful about booting up a recently reinstalled PC – no more sluggish performance, erratic behaviour or clutter. But there's often a downside: you forget those carefully crafted program settings that need re-establishing from scratch – with no memory of how you did it. And what about your data? How can

you ensure that doesn't get affected by the reinstall process?

This is where we come in. This feature isn't simply about performing a desultory backup before wiping your drive and starting again – instead, we'll show you how to preserve every part of your old setup, so you can restore it (without the clutter) after you've reinstalled Windows. We'll reveal how to move data and other key files so they're no longer affected by future reinstalls, and – of course – we'll step you through the entire reinstall process itself.

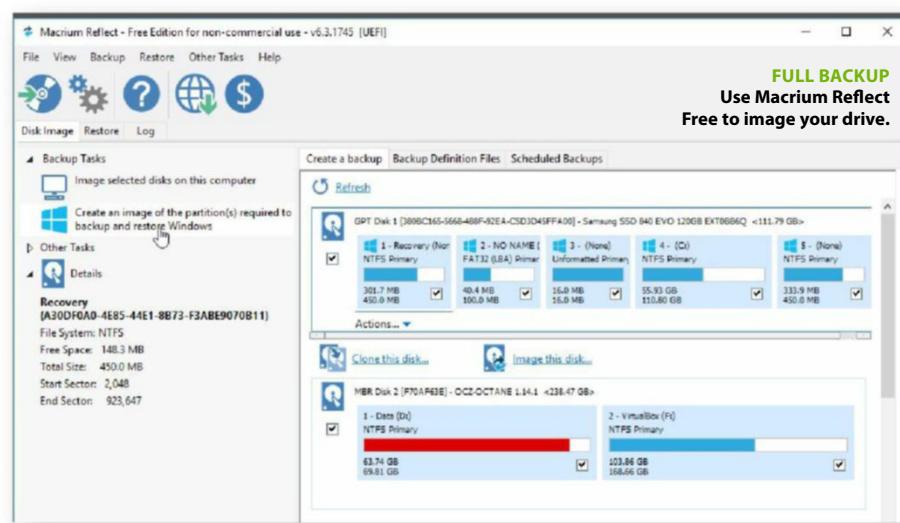
You'll end up with a computer that's as fresh as a daisy, plus you'll learn a streamlined method you can refer to the next time you come to reinstall Windows, transforming a process that traditionally takes a weekend into one you can perform in just a few hours. Let's get started...

Prepare to reinstall

Make sure your Windows 10 reinstall runs smoothly, by following these essential steps before you dive in...

An ounce of preparation is worth a pound of care, which is why you shouldn't start on the Windows 10 reinstall process without first taking suitable precautions. This involves taking three separate types of backup. The first is to back up your key data folders – typically everything stored inside your personal user folder found under C:\Users. If you're currently using either of Windows 10's built-in backup tools (File History or Windows Backup) then you're already one step ahead of the game; if not, go to Start > Settings > 'Update & security' > Backup to configure it now. Click 'Add a drive' and select your backup drive from the list provided, then click 'More options' to monitor its status and see which folders are being backed up (you can add and remove as required).

Once your file backup is sorted (and you'll need to wait for it to complete before reinstalling), it's time to take a full system image of your Windows drive. This might seem silly – aren't you about to wipe everything after all? – but it's sensible. You're basically taking a fail-safe backup that you can both restore in its entirety if something goes wrong with the reinstall process, and browse to recover individual files and settings. The best tool for the job is Macrium Reflect Free (www.macrium.com/reflectfree.aspx), and you can



follow a complete step-by-step guide to using it at www.techradar.com/1319885

The final backup allows you to record program settings using a free tool called CloneApp from www.mirinsoft.com (look under Download Resources > CloneApp – Portable). Right-click the cloneapp.zip file and choose Extract All. Extract it to your Downloads folder, then open the CloneApp folder, right-click CloneApp.exe and choose 'Run as administrator' to start. Use the step-by-step guide on the facing page to select and back up your chosen app settings.

If your settings aren't covered, check the program in question – some will

offer a backup or export option that saves your settings for restoring post-reinstall. Finally, if you're logged in with a Microsoft account, and would like



PRODUCT KEYS Recover forgotten keys with the free Belarc Advisor.

Refresh, not reinstall

Many people see reinstalling Windows as the ultimate solution to a problem. While a fresh install should – in most cases – fix problems that aren't caused by underlying hardware issues, they're often overkill for less serious ones, particularly if your computer appears to be functioning perfectly other than for a few minor glitches.

Windows 8.1 provided a handy 'refresh' option, that enabled you to reinstall Windows on top of itself – it was the equivalent of a repair install from earlier versions of Windows. Programs, settings and other non-Windows files were left in place, so while

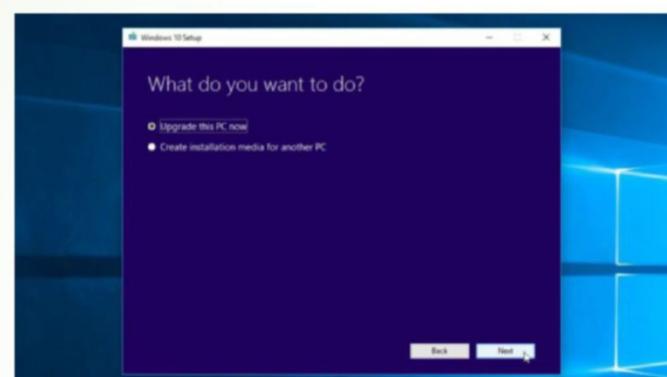
Windows replaced its own files with backups from your system, everything else was – technically – unaffected.

Windows 10 removed this option, but if you think a quick refresh is all your system needs, then download the latest version of the Media Creation Tool from www.microsoft.com/en-gb/software-download/windows10. Launch it, accept the licence agreement and then – when prompted – leave 'Upgrade this PC now' selected and click Next. Wait for the latest Windows installation files to be downloaded, along with any additional updates. Finally, check that 'Keep personal files

and apps' is selected before you click Install.

The installation process is identical to performing a full reinstall, but your apps and

data will be left untouched. Note it's a lengthy process, so be prepared to wait an hour or more depending on the speed and state of your PC.



to transfer your Windows desktop settings to your new installation, go to Start > Settings > Account > 'Sync your settings' and flick the 'Sync settings' switch to On, then choose what to sync.

Partition your drive

With everything safely backed up, it's time to partition your PC's storage drive. By default, Windows lumps your user folders on the same drive as Windows itself. If something happens to Windows, your data is at risk. If you have a second internal drive in your PC, move your data to this drive; otherwise, follow our tutorial at www.techradar.com/1213797.

Either way, you should now have two drives: the C drive for Windows, and another for data. The next step – is to move your user folders across to your new data drive.

One word of warning. These user folders may become temporarily inaccessible after you reinstall Windows. That's because they're 'owned' by your current user account, and when you

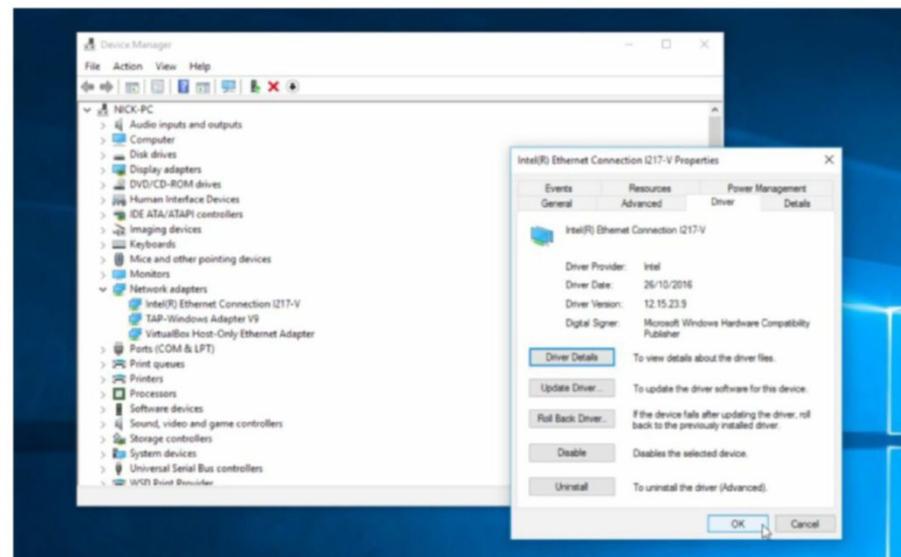
"One final consideration post-reinstall – will you be able to get back online?"

reinstall Windows you'll end up creating a new user account, even if it's identical to your old one. Don't worry, we'll deal with this later on page 60.

Gather more information

You've backed up your PC, separated your data from Windows – it's time to reinstall, right? Not quite. You may no longer need your Windows 10 product key if it's been activated with a digital licence (see Start > Settings > 'Update & security' > Activation, but what about your other programs?

First, dig out all the product keys you may need for certain programs – also, if



VERIFY DRIVERS Check your network drivers are provided by Windows.

you had to digitally activate programs (Office 365 is one such example), then it pays to deactivate them now, typically

by uninstalling the program. This should free up the activation slot for your new installation. If you're struggling to locate product keys for certain programs (or indeed Windows), then download and install Belarc Advisor (www.belarc.com), which creates a detailed profile of your installed software. If this doesn't work, try Recover Keys (\$29.95 after free demo, <https://recover-keys.com/>) having scoured your email or contacted the manufacturer to see if it can help.

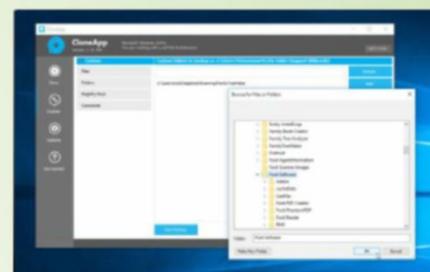
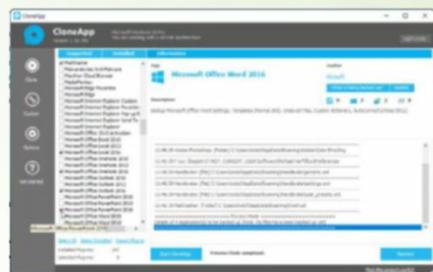
One final consideration post-reinstall – will you be able to get back online? That's a redundant question for most modern PCs since Windows 10 includes

a wide range of wired and wireless drivers baked into the operating system. But that won't be true of computers with older network devices, such as USB Wi-Fi adapters.

To find out where you stand, press [Win] + [X] and select Device Manager. Expand 'Network adapters' and double-click your network adapter. Switch to the Driver tab – if the driver has been signed 'Microsoft Windows Hardware Compatibility Publisher' then you're fine, but if not, we'd recommend that you visit the manufacturer's website and downloading the latest drivers, just to be on the safe side.

In some extreme cases, you won't be able to source Windows 10 drivers. Windows 8 (or even 7) drivers should work okay, but make sure the system type – 32-bit or 64-bit – matches your version of Windows, which you can find out by pressing [Win] + [Pause/Break] to open System Properties.

Back up program settings using CloneApp



1 Choose your apps

Download and install CloneApp (www.mirinsoft.com) and you'll see a list of supported apps. Go through the list ticking the boxes of any whose settings you wish to preserve. To see what's being backed up, select the item and click 'What is being backed up?'. Click 'Installed' to see what's currently installed on your PC.

2 Customise settings

If your app isn't included in the CloneApp list, but you know where its settings are stored (typically under C:\User\<username>\AppData, or in the HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE Registry key), select Custom on the left, then use the tools to manually add the required folders, files and keys.

3 Tweak, then backup

Choose 'Options', then verify where you want to save your app settings backup (by default this is inside the same folder as CloneApp itself, so make sure CloneApp is on either your data partition or backup drive). Once done, switch back to CloneApp and click 'Start CloneApp' to back up your chosen program settings.

Reinstall Windows

The preparation's done. Here's everything you need to know about reinstalling Windows 10 on your PC

You're backed up, with everything you need to hand. It's now time to reinstall Windows. Just to recap: this process is a full, destructive install. Everything on your C drive will be lost, but that's not a problem because you have it all backed up, and you've moved your data to another drive or partition.

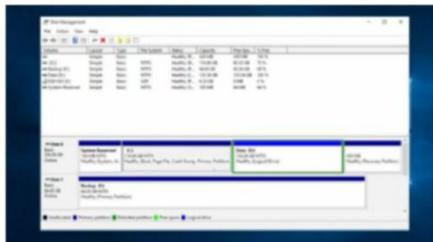
There are several different ways to trigger a reinstall. Traditionally, if you bought your PC with Windows pre-installed, we'd have advised that you restart your PC and press the key required to access your manufacturer's boot or recovery options, which would have included an option to restore your PC to its factory settings.

These days, you can trigger the same process from within Windows itself – click Start > Settings and navigate to 'Update & security' > Recovery, then click Reset. If your manufacturer has followed procedure, you'll see an option to 'Restore factory settings'.

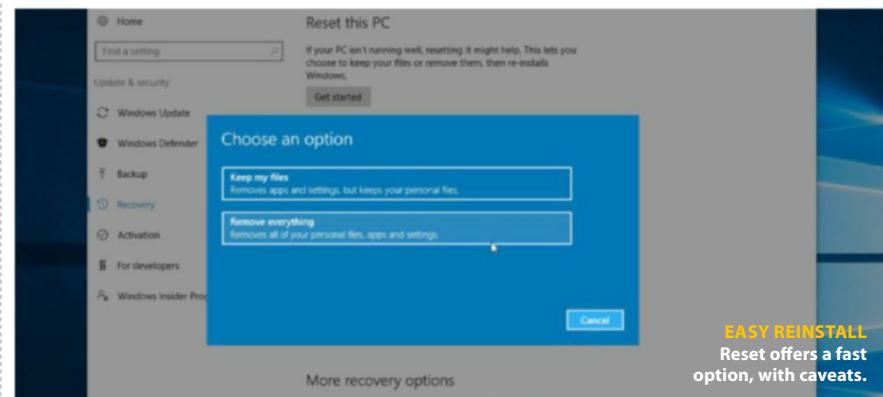
This option should be avoided for two principal reasons. First, it will install whichever version of Windows was originally shipped with your PC – if you've subsequently upgraded to Windows 10, that might mean going back to Windows 8.1, for example. Even if your PC came with Windows 10 pre-installed, it will still be an earlier version, which means a lot of updating will be required post-installation. And second, it also restores any software that came pre-installed, including bloatware and trialware.

The nuclear option

There are two other options that appear with Reset. The first is 'Keep my files', which removes everything except the files stored in your user folder. You'll be shown a list of programs that will be removed – basically anything not installed through the Microsoft Store (these will be reinstalled automatically)



IDENTIFY DRIVE Use Windows' Disk Management tool to identify your Windows partition.



EASY REINSTALL
Reset offers a fast option, with caveats.

after Windows), then you click Next and Windows reinstalls itself.

This option is a halfway house between a simple 'refresh' and a full reinstall, which makes it unsatisfactory: you don't get to keep your programs; and you don't get a fresh install either.

The second option is to 'Remove everything' – this is a full-blown reinstall of Windows, and the next option you see is critical: a choice between only wiping the drive Windows is installed on, and a nuclear option to wipe 'All drives', including your data partition and any backup drives you have. You should avoid this at all costs.

The Reset option has its uses: 'Remove everything' enables you to reinstall Windows from scratch without having to create your own installation media, but it doesn't always work – you may get an error message about a missing recovery partition, for example. And if your PC came with Windows 10 pre-installed, it'll restore any bloatware too.

Create reinstall media

If you bought Windows 10 as a boxed product, you'll understandably be tempted to reinstall from that. The issue here is similar to that with the factory reset option – you'll be installing an older version of Windows 10 that will require a post-install update. If you have the boxed product, there's only one thing you need from it: the product key.

Our favoured option is to reinstall Windows with the latest possible version, saving you the hassle of updating it afterwards and ensuring your new installation is as clean as possible. To do that, you'll need to create your own reinstall disc or USB flash drive using the Media Creation Tool from www.microsoft.com/en-gb/software-download/windows10 –

download and launch the tool, then click Accept. When prompted, select 'Create installation media for another PC' and click Next. Leave 'Use the recommended options for this PC' ticked, then click Next again.

Now choose whether to create a USB flash drive (use a spare one that has at least 4GB free) or select 'ISO file' to create an ISO disk image you'll subsequently burn to a blank DVD by right-clicking the ISO file and choosing 'Burn disk image'.

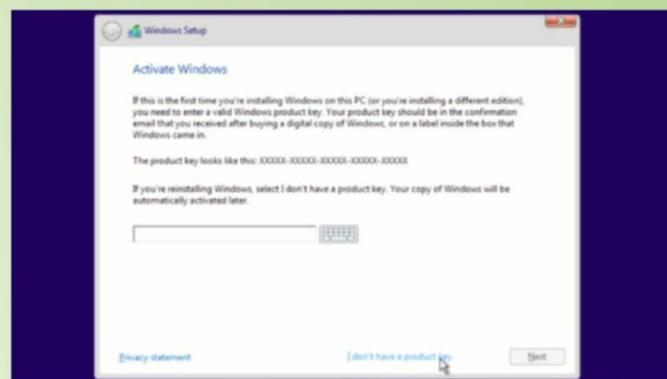
"There are several different ways to trigger a reinstall"

Once the process is complete, you're ready to boot from the drive and reinstall Windows 10. The step-by-step guide opposite reveals the process you'll follow – one key thing to consider is which drive Windows will be installed on to (see Step 4). In most cases, this will be automatically selected and be Disk 0, Partition 1, but not always.

If you're unsure which drive to choose, cancel the installation now and return to your existing Windows install. Press [Win] + [X], then click Disk Management. Use the graphical view at the bottom to identify the disk and partition Windows is on (the disk will be numbered; you can then work out the partition number by counting from left to right).

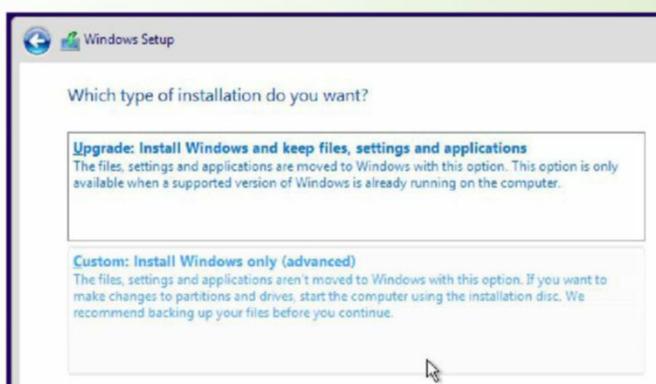
The step-by-step guide on the facing page will take you to the end of the installation process, at which point you'll be ready to follow the setup wizard through to configure Windows 10 to your personal needs – turn to page 60 to find out what you need to do then, and what happens next.

Reinstall Windows from installation media



1 Boot from installation media

Insert the DVD or USB flash drive you created containing the Windows 10 installer, then restart your PC. Now look for a message inviting you to press a key to access the boot menu – press this and select the drive containing Windows (if two entries – say USB and UEFI – exist, try the UEFI option first).

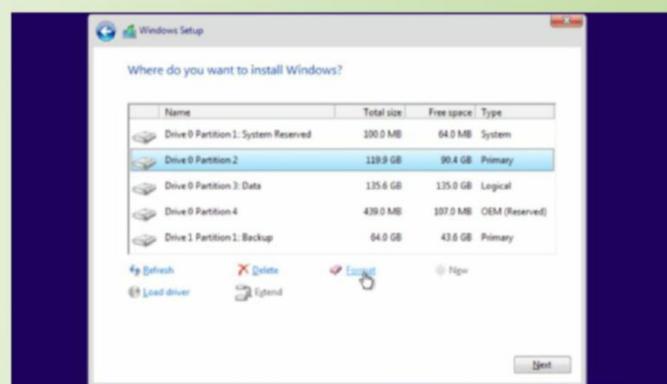


3 Set basic options

If prompted to choose a Windows 10 edition (Home, Pro and so on), choose the one you're currently running – typically Windows 10 Home. Click 'Next', tick to agree to the licence agreement and click Next again. Now select 'Custom: Install Windows only (advanced)' by clicking it.

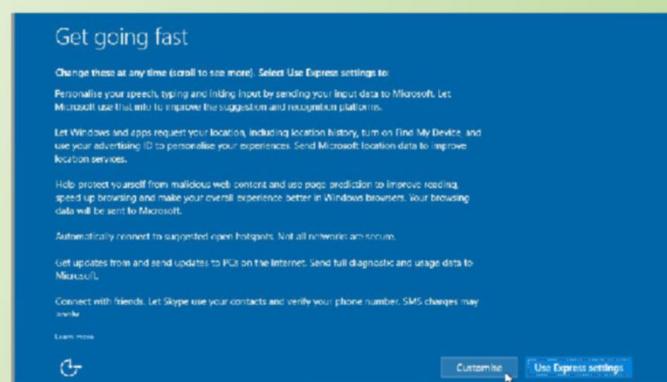
2 First steps

When the Windows Setup wizard starts, verify that the language, time and currency, and keyboard are set to United Kingdom (or your chosen language). Choose Next followed by Install Now. Click 'I don't have a product key' when prompted to enter one if your licence is digital.



4 Format drive

A list of available drives will appear – your current Windows partition should be selected by default, but check the size, type (Primary) and free space match what you expect it to be. Click 'Format' to wipe the drive, then click OK to confirm the warning. With the drive selected, click Next.



5 Sit back

There are two distinct phases to the Windows 10 installation process. First, files are copied and prepared for installation. Then Windows will start installing features and updates. It will then inform you it needs to restart – this will happen automatically, or you can click Restart Now.

6 Installation complete

If prompted to boot from CD or DVD, don't press anything. You'll see the Windows 10 logo appear for the first time, then a series of messages about preparing devices and getting ready will pop up. Windows may restart several times. When done, the above screen will appear. Turn the page!

Post-install setup

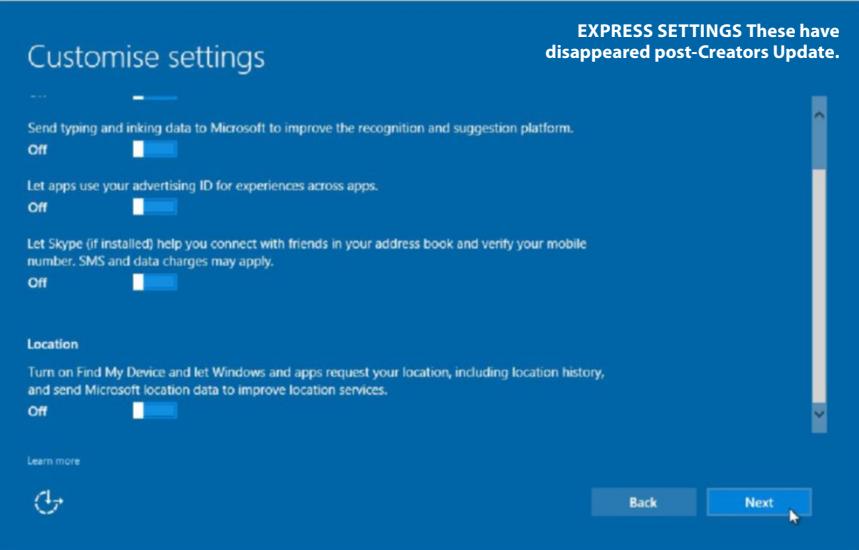
Windows has been reinstalled, now you need to set up again

This stage of the process is simple enough if you're using Windows 7: Simply enter your product key when prompted, and follow the prompts to set up a user account and get going. The same is true for Windows 8.1 and pre-Creators Update versions of Windows 10. If you're using either of these then Microsoft would like you to click 'Use Express Settings', which is fine if you're happy to take liberties with your privacy. We recommend you choose Customise instead and then carefully review which kinds of personal data you're happy to share (or not), switching off any options that you don't agree with.

Windows 10 first asks you about your location and keyboard, sorts out your network connection (including any Wi-Fi configuration), then asks you whether you're setting up your PC either for personal use or for an organisation. Personal is the choice for most.



FAST LOGIN Windows Hello lets you to login to your PC faster – you enter a PIN, not a password.



You're then prompted to sign in with your Microsoft account – if you have previously signed into Windows using a Microsoft account, enter the details and click 'Sign in'. If you want to stick with a local user account for now (as used in Windows 7 or earlier), click 'Offline account', followed by 'Maybe later'.

Customise Cortana

If you choose the Microsoft account option, you'll be offered Windows Hello as an alternative form of logging on to your PC. You'll need a compatible device (one with a fingerprint reader, such as the latest generation of Microsoft Surface tablets) for the biometrics

portion of this to work, but you can also use this step to log in with a numerical PIN (at least four digits long) instead of your password. This is something we recommend – if you forget your PIN, you can always use your password instead.

Post-Creators Update, you'll now be asked to set up Cortana. This is now the new point where your privacy comes into play, so review all of the options carefully, flicking the slider to Off for any you don't need to use. If you don't want to use Cortana, click 'Not now'. The search box on the Taskbar will remain regardless, along with all the key functionality you need for finding apps, documents, settings and web pages.

Recover backups

If there's data you need to recover from a backup, now is the time to do so. Start with File History – go to Settings > 'Update & security' > Backup and click 'More options' followed by 'See advanced settings' to switch to the File History control panel. Click 'Select Drive' to see available drives, then select your existing backup drive and you'll either see a box marked 'I want to use a previous back-up on this File History drive' (tick it if so) or a list of previous backups from the system (select the most recent one to continue using it). Once selected, you'll be able to recover data from

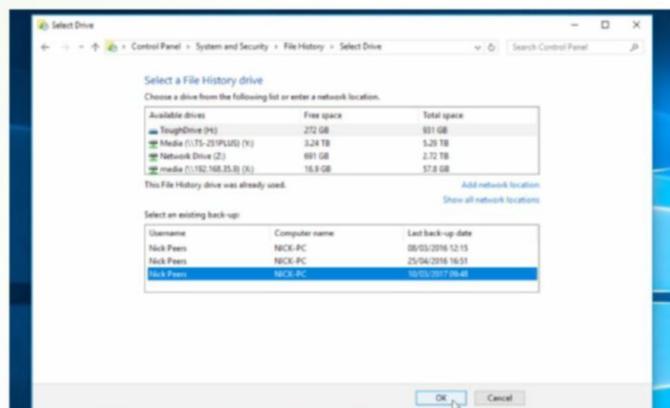
the backup in the usual way: type 'file history' into the Search box and click 'Restore your files with File History' to get started.

If you're looking for a file from your previous Windows installation – perhaps because it's not in File History or you forgot something from an obscure user folder – then the Macrium Reflect disk image you took prior to reinstalling will ride to your rescue.

Make sure Macrium is reinstalled, then browse for the image. Double-click it to open a Backup Selection window. Tick the drive you want access to, then tick 'Enable access to

restricted folders', assign it a drive letter and click OK. You can now browse this image via File Explorer like any other

drive – now simply copy any files that you need from the drive to their new location to restore them.



Windows will now configure itself based on your choices and you'll see a series of messages appear on-screen. When all is ready, you'll find yourself back at the Windows 10 desktop!

Re-configure Windows

If you decided to sign in with a Microsoft account and opted to sync your settings, most of your desktop preferences should be set up for you, but if not you'll want to click Start > Settings and work your way through the

"There should be no need to check for Windows updates – these were added as part of the reinstall process"

Personalisation section to change your desktop background and more – see page 70 for details.

Activation should be handled automatically – verify this by switching to 'Update & security' > Activation. There should be no need to check for Windows updates – these were added as part of the reinstall process. Other sections under Settings to work your way through include System (for display, power and multi-tasking options involving snapping windows and virtual desktops); Network (for configuring some sharing options); and Privacy.

Once done, press [Win] + [X] and choose Device Manager to see which hardware devices still need setting up – look for those listed with a yellow exclamation mark. You'll hopefully recognise the hardware they refer to, in which case visit the manufacturer's website to download the latest drivers. If you're struggling to identify components, a tool such as IObit Driver Booster Free (www.iobit.com) may help.

Reconnect data folders

Windows will have reset your user folders to the C:\Users\<username> folder, so the next step is to link your new user account to the folders now residing on your data drive.

Before doing so, open drive D and double-click your username folder – you may get a warning telling you that you don't have permission to access the folder, just click Continue to get access.

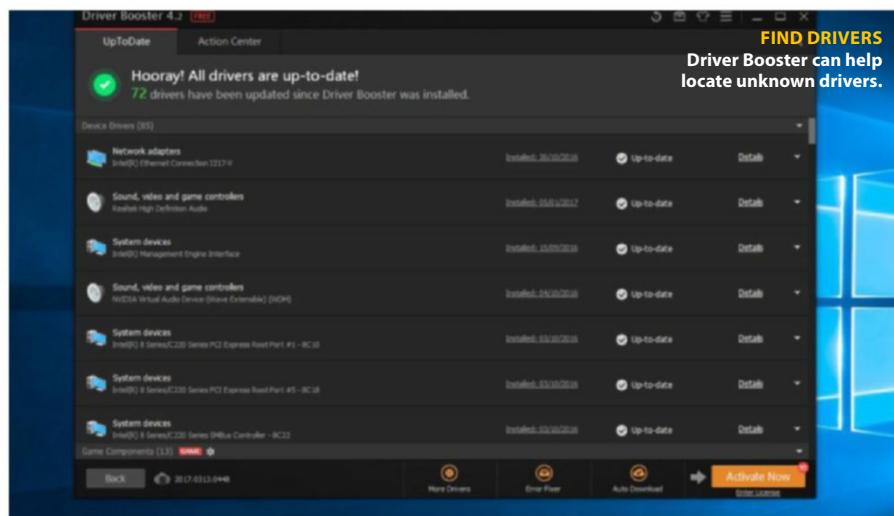
It's a good idea to take ownership of this folder from your previous user

by Find Now. Scroll through the list that appears until you spot your username – select it, then click OK twice. Tick 'Replace owner on subcontainers and objects' and click Apply. Wait for the changes to be applied, then click OK twice to exit.

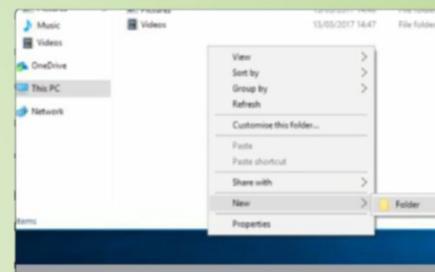
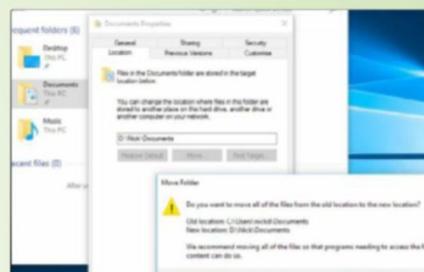
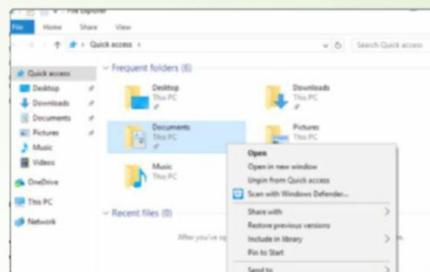
If this all seems like a bit of a faff, and you are the only user of your computer, then there is a simpler solution. You could surrender ownership to the Administrators group instead; select 'Administrators' (not Administrator) instead of your username and repeat the process. You won't have to keep reclaiming ownership each time you reinstall Windows from now on.

Once you've fixed permissions, you can now link the folders on your data drive with your user account – the step-by-step guide at the foot of this page explains how do to this. Once that's done, you're ready to turn over to page 62 to complete the setup process – and discover some simple ways to speed up the Windows reinstallation process in future.

account. To do this, right-click the folder and then choose Properties > Security. Click the Advanced button to open the Advanced Security Settings screen. You should see a name beginning S-1-5 is currently listed as owner – click the Change link. Click 'Advanced' followed



Link user account to your data drive



1 Select folder

Head to the Taskbar and open File Explorer, then click This PC to reveal six of your user folders (or browse to C:\Users\<Username> to reveal more folders, including both Searches and Favourites). Start by right-clicking the Documents folder and choosing Properties.

2 Move folders

Switch to the Location tab and click the 'Move...' button. Head to the named folder you created in Step 1, select the Documents folder and click Select Folder followed by Apply. You'll be prompted to move data from the current folder to the new one – click Yes, then OK.

3 Rinse, repeat

Now simply repeat the same process for all the other user folders you wish to transfer across – if necessary, create additional folders on your data drive inside your username folder to accommodate the different settings and folders you wish to transfer across to it.

Finish post-install setup

Complete the job, then discover how to avoid reinstalling in future

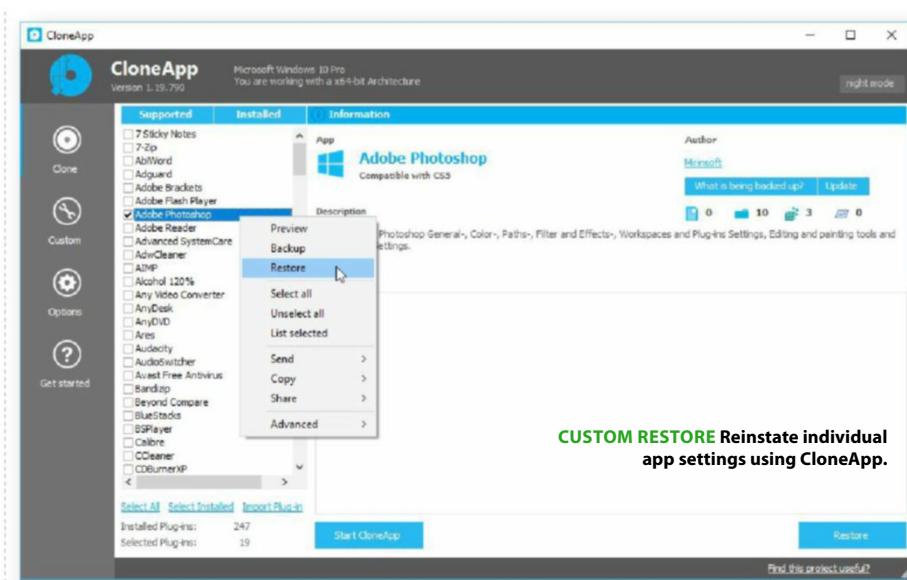
You're now ready to start reinstalling your key apps. Now is a good time to pare back what you had installed before – it's best to focus on reinstalling essentials like your security software, office suite and image editor for now. Leave non-essential apps until you need them for the first time. Be sure to launch and activate or register any apps before moving on to the next.

If you've installed any apps from the Microsoft Store, click the Store icon on the Taskbar. Click your user photo next to the Search bar to reveal a drop-down list. Select 'My Library' to view your previous app and game purchases and installs – click 'Show all' to view a complete list, then click the Download button next to those apps you wish to reinstall. They'll be restored along with any user settings.

If you're a Microsoft OneDrive user, you may be prompted to download and install an update. Once done, look for a prompt to set up the OneDrive folder – click it. Start by clicking Change to move the OneDrive folder off your system drive and into your username folder on your data drive. Then choose which folders to sync. The same applies if you use a different cloud backup provider such as Dropbox or Google Drive – point them to your data drive.

Restore program settings

After you've reinstalled your core apps, it's time to restore your key app settings.



CUSTOM RESTORE Reinstate individual app settings using CloneApp.

If you stored these using CloneApp, locate its program folder on your data drive, then launch the program with administrator privileges and click the Restore button to recover all program settings you backed up previously.

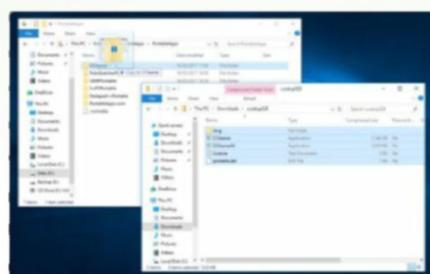
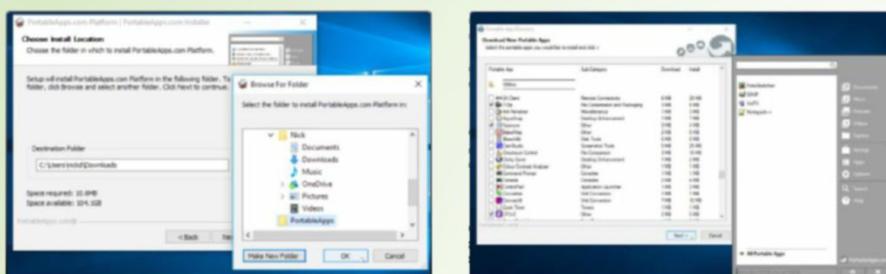
If you'd prefer to restore individual program settings, locate previously backed up programs (they'll be marked with a tick), click to select the app, then right-click and choose Restore. Program settings you backed up independently can now be restored too – consult the program's documentation or look in the same place you exported them for an import or restore option.

Go portable

Before reinstalling your core apps, now might be a good time to see if any come in portable form. Portable apps are self-contained within a single folder – store them on your data drive and not only do they not clutter up your system drive (or the Registry), they'll also survive future reinstalls, leaving both app and settings untouched.

The best tool for managing these apps is the PortableApps Platform. This provides you with a tool for installing, managing and accessing your portable apps from a simple Start menu-like launcher. The step-by-step guide below

Set up a portable apps toolkit



1 First steps

Create a PortableApps folder inside your user folder on your data drive. Go to www.portableapps.com/download to obtain and run the PortableApps Platform setup file. Follow the wizard through, choosing 'Select a custom installation' and pointing the installer to a PortableApps folder on your data drive.

2 Install some apps

Open the Platform app and wait for the Portable App Directory to open (or select Apps > Get More Apps). Go through the list of available portable apps, ticking those you'd like to add, then click Next and wait for them to install. You can run any portable apps you've installed from the Platform app's Start menu.

3 Add other apps

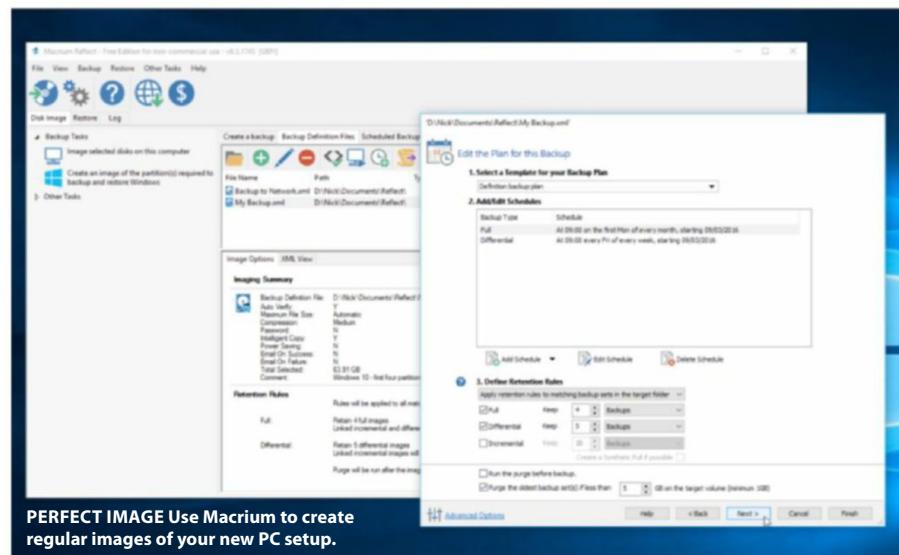
Other apps can be added too: download and extract the portable application and its files to a folder inside the PortableApps folder (containing your other apps). Once done, select Apps > Refresh App Icons – it'll appear under Other in Category view. Right-click it and choose Category to recategorise it.

reveals the core principles you need to follow – both for installing apps provided by the Platform itself, and for third-party programs you download from elsewhere.

Never reinstall again

The reinstall process can be a fiddly one, taking hours to carefully set up your perfect Windows setup, complete with favourite apps, settings and folders all properly configured. Do you really want to go through that whole process again – particularly in a couple of days when you suddenly mess something up?

The answer – of course! – is no, and here's the good news. Why not create your own custom recovery image, one with all your customisations in place, using Macrium? We recommend making it one of the first programs you install, because then you can take system images at different stages of the setup process: immediately after installing the program, then after you've restored key Windows settings and linked back up your data folders, and finally when you



a recent botched update or program). When setting up the backup, click Add Schedule, then configure one full image backup for every month, and one differential backup every week.

"When setting up the backup, click Add Schedule, then configure one full image backup for every month"

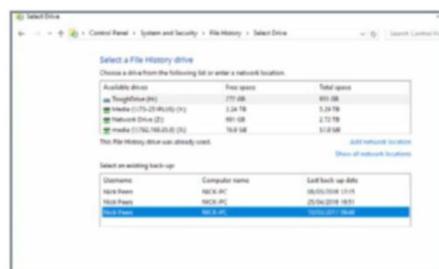
have all of your favourite programs and apps reinstalled and everything running just the way you like it. Think of this final snapshot as your 'perfect PC' – giving you an easy way to roll back to this pristine, customised setup whenever you want to.

After you've created this backup, we recommend you make use of Macrium's scheduling capabilities to take regular backups of your hard drive going forward, so you can perform less drastic rollbacks when required (say to remove

Differential backups contain only the changes made since the last backup was taken, so are much smaller than full image backups, enabling you to store a wider range of snapshots of your Windows installation, and giving you more options when you come to roll back to correct recent problems. Note you can also limit the number of scheduled backups you keep to preserve precious backup space.

More critically, when you come to next reinstall Windows, save yourself a

bit of time and restore the 'perfect PC' snapshot you took at the end of this reinstall process. All that needs to be done then is to allow Windows and your apps to update themselves, plus add any key apps you've come to rely on since taking the original snapshot to bring it bang up to date. Finally, take a full image of this new 'perfect PC' snapshot, delete the old one and then roll back to it the next time that you come to reinstall Windows. ■



FILE HISTORY You can easily link File History to your previous Windows 10 backup.

Look after your new install

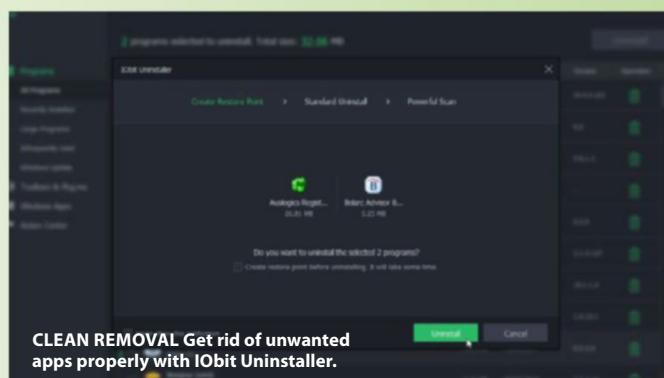
Windows is now reinstalled, and everything is just as you like it. But how can you keep it that way? Firstly, get into the habit of looking for portable versions of any applications that you are thinking of adding to your system. Secondly, when you've finished with a program, look to clear it out more thoroughly with the help of a third-party program such as IObit Uninstaller (www.iobit.com/en/advanceduninstaller.php), making use of its powerful scanning tools to remove leftover files and Registry entries. For more cleaning tips, check out our lead feature from issue 144.

It's also important you keep your PC safe from harm – make sure you install some form of anti-malware tool (Windows Defender offers only basic protection), and again comb past issues looking for tips to help lock down your computer and home network – start your search at page 18 of issue 146.

You should also keep your hardware in tip-top shape – keep an eye out for updated drivers, and run regular tests on your memory and hard drive to ensure they're running smoothly. Use a tool like Piriform's Speccy (yes, a portable version is available from www.piriform.com) to

perform a hardware audit too, plus monitor your PC's core temperatures – desktops should run under 50-degrees Celsius and laptops under 60.

Armed with these tips, you'll ensure your fresh Windows install gives you excellent service – until the next time you want to reinstall all over again...



Meet the... Support Squad



Support!

► WINDOWS HELP ► HARDWARE FIXES ► SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS ► INTERNET TIPS



Do you have a
PC problem?
Get in touch...

Email full details of your
problem to the
support team and we'll
do our best to help
[windowshelpline@
futurenet.com](http://windowshelpline@futurenet.com)

Microsoft Outlook SWITCH EMAIL BACKUP

Q Do you know of any good Outlook 2010 data backup programs? I used to have a good one whose name I've forgotten, but it doesn't work with Windows 10. **Ian McAndrew**



Cat's solution

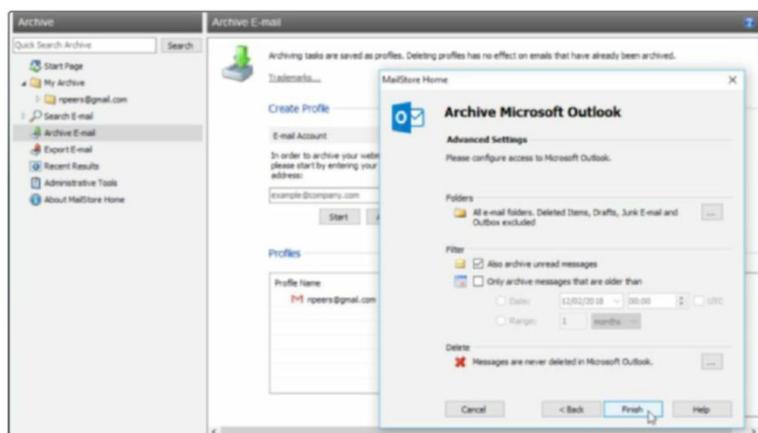
Our go-to mail backup tool – KLS Mail Backup (www.xls-soft.com/

klsmailbackup/) – doesn't sadly support Outlook, but does cover most other providers.

We're also fans of MailStore Home Edition (www.mailstore.com/en/products/mailstore-home/) for archiving email – this works with Outlook, and is also a good way to back up web-based email such as Google Mail and Hotmail. However, its biggest drawback is the lack of automated features, so you'll need to set reminders yourself if you

want to create email backups on a regular basis.

Ian also discovered Safe PST Backup (www.safepstbackup.com), which is free for home users (in return for your email address at the download screen). Safe PST Backup offers automatic backup and supports an incremental backup model, so subsequent backups don't take up massive amounts of drive space. It works with all versions of Outlook except the version released for older Surface devices (Outlook 2013 RT).



BACK UP OUTLOOK

MailStore can
archive or backup
your email clients.

Microsoft PowerPoint CHANGE LANGUAGE OF POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Q Someone's sent me a PowerPoint presentation that's all in US English. I need to convert this to UK English, but it's 200 slides and I don't want to wade through each slide manually switching language for each text box. Is there a quicker way in PowerPoint 2016? **Friedrich Weber**

FIND THE SOLUTION! Meltdown and Spectre

Visit <https://meltdownattack.com/> for the official lowdown on this pair of vulnerabilities along with the latest developments.



Support
Technical help

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document with several search results highlighted. One result is about Jamie Oliver's Food Tube channel. Another result discusses consistent branding on videos. A third result mentions Taylor Swift. A fourth result is about Jamie Oliver's Food Tube channel being a great example of a successful YouTube branded channel. The background of the slide has a note about Jamie Oliver's YouTube channel starting as a simple platform for videos from jamieoliver.com. The activity section notes that regular cooking chefs built a platform.

SWITCH LANGUAGE
Changing language in PowerPoint is fiddly and not comprehensive.

https://scontent-lhr3-1.xx.fbcdn.net/t39.2365-6/12431872_709205359215220_1498429457_n.pdf



Rob's solution

The following trick will work all text boxes on your slides, but won't extend the hidden notes slide, sadly. Switch to the View tab on the ribbon and select Outline View. Place the cursor inside one of the text boxes in the left-hand view, then press [Ctrl] + [A], which should select all of the text on all of the slides. Now switch to the Review tab, select Language > Set Proofing Language. Make sure 'Mark selected text as' is set to 'English (United Kingdom)' and click OK.

You'll still need to manually correct US spellings, but they will be clearly highlighted and right-clicking each word should bring up the UK spelling for that word.

Windows

REINSTALL WITHOUT A BOOTABLE DRIVE

Q I have a Sager laptop with three 500GB drives. After removing and wiping all three drives to perform a clean reinstall of Windows 10, I cannot boot from either a Windows installation DVD or from a USB flash drive. Can you help solve this problem?

Gerald Gibson



Nick P's solution

We spent a lot of time trying to fix the underlying problem of having no bootable media, but in the end – helped by Gerald's ability to hook up his laptop hard drive to another PC using a drive enclosure – we found a workaround. This involves making the hard drive

itself bootable, copying the Windows installation files on to that and then installing Windows from the hard drive.

It's a convoluted process that is thankfully outlined in detail at www.instructables.com/id/How-to-CLEAN-Install/ – the procedure is for Windows 8, but is identical for Windows 10 too. Once he'd followed this advice, Gerald was able to reinstall Windows.

There's one final step to perform once Windows is back on your drive – at boot time you'll be taken to the boot screen where you're given a choice of running Windows 10 or re-running the setup program. To hide or remove this latter option press [Win] + [R], type 'msconfig'

"There's one final step to perform once Windows is back on your drive"

Jargon buster!

► 2FA

Two-factor authentication. A secondary layer of security for online accounts, typically involving a physical device.

► Port

A number that identifies the type of communication between two computers over a network or the Internet.

The screenshot shows the Firefox browser with the address bar showing 'about:preferences#privacy'. A modal window titled 'Exceptions - Cookies' is open. It says: 'You can specify which web sites are always or never allowed to use cookies. Type the exact address of the site you want to manage and then click Block, Allow for Session, or Allow.' Below this is a table with columns 'Address of web site', 'Web Site', 'Status', and 'Exceptions...'. There is one entry: 'moz-extension://9420657a-9759-4218-b751-eab93cdca0d' with 'Status' set to 'Allow'. At the bottom are buttons for 'Remove Web Site', 'Remove All Web Sites', 'Cancel', 'Save Changes', and 'Exceptions...'.

Quickfire questions

After a recent Windows Update, my AMD Radeon HD 4000-powered display is no longer working properly – apparently the driver has been replaced by 'Microsoft Basic Display Driver'?
Annie Pole

The wrong driver was inadvertently issued. A fix – KB4057291 – was released to resolve this, so go to Settings > 'Update & security' and click 'Check for updates' to install this and fix the problem.

I want to roll back my system partition using Macrium Reflect Free. Must I create boot media, or is there another way to restore my last backup?
George Harris

Open Macrium and choose Other Tasks > Add Recovery Boot Menu Option. Choose the build option and click OK. Reboot your PC and choose the Macrium option to start the restore process.

Any tips to help me stop being distracted when working?
Stu Ray

Try Cold Turkey Basic (getcoldturkey.com) to block and monitor your web use using timers. The Pro version offers app-blocking and the ability to schedule access.

and press [Enter], then switch to the Boot tab. You can reduce the timeout to three seconds if you want to keep the option as a backup, or select it and click Delete to remove it completely.

Browsing LASTPASS, FIREFOX AND 2FA

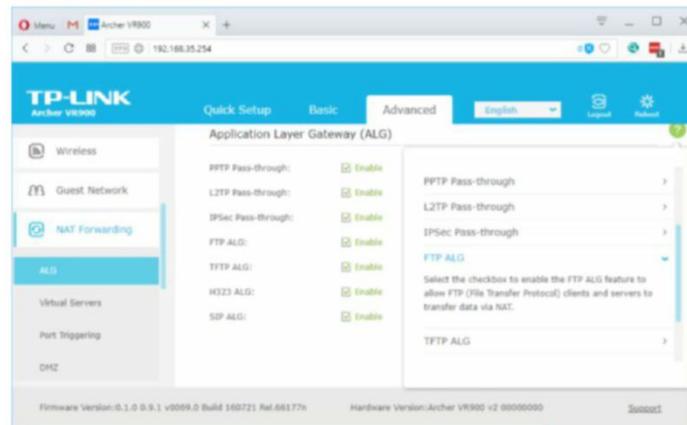
Q What is it with Firefox and LastPass? I use two-factor authentication (2FA) to provide additional security on my LastPass account, but for the last six weeks I'm being forced to reauthenticate every time I launch Firefox, even though I've flicked the switch that should exempt me from this check for 30 days.
Freya Outhwaite



Matt's solution

LastPass seems to be struggling with its Firefox add-on for some unknown reason. The latest issue appeared when Firefox 57 (Quantum) was released, which changed the way add-ons work. Click the LastPass icon and choose 'Open my Vault'. You should see the address bar list an address similar to `moz-extension://9420657a-9759-4218-b751-eeb93cdbca0d/vault.html`. Select all of this address – minus the `/vault.html` portion – and copy it to the clipboard. Now open Firefox's Options, go to Privacy & Security and click the Exceptions button next to 'Accept cookies from websites'. Paste in the `moz-extension` address into the 'Address of web site' box and click Allow followed by Save Changes.

Now quit and restart Firefox – when you're prompted to enter the code, make sure you type in the six-digit code yourself rather than use Firefox Authenticator's one-tap option. This should ensure that the



The screenshot shows the TP-LINK Archer VR900 router's configuration interface. The 'ALG' tab is selected under 'NAT Forwarding'. Under the 'ALG' section, several options are listed with checkboxes: 'FTP Pass-through' (checked), 'L2TP Pass-through' (checked), 'IPSec Pass-through' (checked), 'FTP ALG' (checked), 'H323 ALG' (checked), and 'SIP ALG' (checked). A note below says: 'Select the checkbox to enable the FTP ALG feature to allow FTP (File Transfer Protocol) clients and servers to transfer data via NAT.' At the bottom, it shows 'Firmware Version: 0.1.0 0.9.1 v0009.0 Build 160721 Rel.68177n' and 'Hardware Version: Archer VR900 v2 00000000'.

CLOSED PORTS
Internet access can be selectively restricted by shutting off specific ports.

LastPass add-on works properly going forward.

Internet CAN'T DOWNLOAD EMAIL WITH HOTEL WI-FI

Q I recently holidayed in southern Fuerteventura for a week, and was told I could either pay for Wi-Fi access or use the free version that was limited to the hotel's reception area. I was unable to download any email to my tablet – it kept telling me there was no connection – but did access some random online newspapers and download a free app to my tablet. Is there a reason for this inexplicable phenomenon?
Bryan Little



Alex's solution

We suspect this will be down to your hotel's router's configuration. Any network – including Wi-Fi – communicates with the Internet through a series of ports. For example, email uses ports 110 and 995 for incoming POP3 email; ports 143 and 993 for incoming IMAP email; and ports 25, 465 and 587 for outgoing SMTP email. It's probable that these ports were blocked as

CONTROL HOW UPDATES ARE DELIVERED

Q I'm a little bit confused about Delivery Optimisation in Windows 10. What is it and how should I configure it?
Steve Cox



Cat's solution

This delivers Windows updates to your PC using other computers, both on your local network and via the Internet. If you don't like some or all of this behaviour, you can control it – the step-by-step guide here reveals how.



The screenshot shows the Windows 10 Settings window for Windows Update. Under 'Update settings', it says 'Windows Update' and 'Update automatically, download and install updates, except on internet connections (some changes may apply). In this case we'll automatically download only those updates required to keep Windows running smoothly.' Below this are 'Restart options' and 'Advanced options'. At the bottom, it says 'Looking for information about the latest updates?' and 'Check now'.



The screenshot shows the Windows 10 Settings window for Delivery Optimization. Under 'Delivery Optimization', it says 'If you turn this on, your PC may send parts of previously downloaded files to other PCs on your local network or on the internet. Your PC won't download content to other PCs on the internet when you're on a metered network.' Below this are 'Allow download from other PCs' (switch On), 'PCs on my local network', and 'PCs on my local network, and PCs on the internet'. At the bottom, it says 'Advanced options' and 'Activity monitor'.

1 Locate Delivery Optimisation

To access Delivery Optimisation's settings, click the Start button and select Settings, then browse to 'Update & security' > Windows Update. Click 'Advanced options' followed by 'Delivery Optimisation' to configure it.

2 Restrict access

By default your computer may be set to download (and upload) to other PCs on your network as well as the wider Internet. Select 'PCs on my local network' if you have two or more PCs at home, or flick the switch to Off if you don't.



Do you have
a PC problem?
Get in touch...

Email full details of your problem to the support team and we'll do our best to help:
windowshelp@futurenet.com
Or write to:
Support Squad,
Windows Help & Advice magazine,
Future Publishing Ltd,
Quay House,
The Ambury,
Bath, BA1 1UA

part of the limitations of the free Wi-Fi service. You might have been able to access your email through the web (ports 80 and 443), but it sounds like another form of web-blocking was in play if you were only able to access certain websites, so this may not have been possible either.

Windows SYSTEM RESTORE CONFUSION

Q My experience with System Restore seems at odds with yours. After Windows 10 became available, I followed your advice to switch it back on, but despite receiving regular updates since, System Restore remains on, both on this machine and four others that I look after for friends.

Terry Mitchell



Nick P's solution

Apologies if we've not been clear, Terry. System Restore does indeed remain on after regular Windows Updates, but in our experience, we've found that it gets switched off whenever Windows installs a major feature update, such as the Anniversary Update or the recent Fall Creators Update. In this case, we suspect it's disabled to prevent people from attempting to undo the update using System Restore. The correct procedure for removing such a large update is to go to Start > Settings > 'Update & security' > Recovery. System Restore is also switched off by default on all new Windows installations or after reinstalling Windows 10.

Windows QUICK ASSIST ALTERNATIVE

Q I read with interest your guide to Quick Assist in the February

issue. My parents have Windows 8.1, so Quick Assist isn't an option. What else can I try instead?

Tommy Elphick



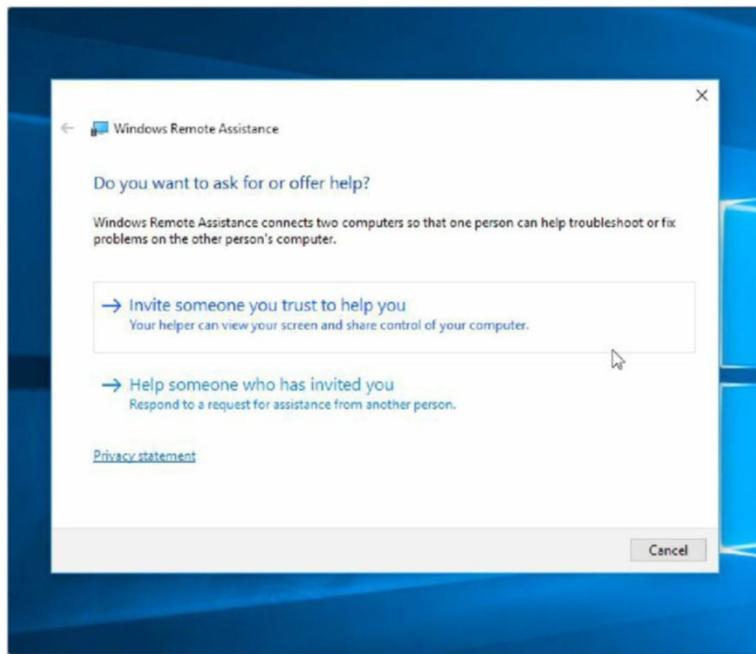
Rob's solution

Try Remote Assistance instead – both you and your parents should press [Win] + [Pause/Break] to bring up the System Control Panel, then click 'Remote settings' and verify 'Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer'.

Now type 'remote assistance' into the search box or charm – press [Win] + [Q] in Windows 8.1 to bring

this up – and follow the prompts to either give or receive remote assistance, using the Easy Connect option when prompted.

Another option – which would enable you to access their PC without them having to ask for assistance – is TeamViewer (www.teamviewer.com). TeamViewer can also be installed on other operating systems, and even on mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads and Android devices. Doing so will give you access to your own PC and to others remotely, even when you're on the go. Best of all, TeamViewer is free for personal use. ■



WINDOWS ASSIST
Remote Assistance
is still available
for older versions
of Windows.

"The correct procedure for removing such a large update is to go to Start > Settings > 'Update & security' > Recovery"



3 Limit access

If you do want to allow other PCs over the Internet to grab updates from your PC, click 'Advanced options' and set arbitrary limits under 'Upload settings'. Limit bandwidth to 20 percent or less, and set an upload limit of 10GB or less.

4 Set metered connection

Delivery Optimisation won't work over the Internet if your connection is metered. Go to Settings > Network & Internet > WiFi to mark individual Wi-Fi hotspots as metered and disable the feature when connected to that network.

Jargon buster!

► Delivery Optimisation

The new name for Microsoft's peer-to-peer technology for distributing updates using regular PCs to reduce the load on its own servers.

► Microsoft Basic Display Adapter

A fallback driver for graphics chips and cards that is installed when an official driver cannot be found. Has limited functionality.



GET OUR DIGITAL EDITION!



TWO
FREE
ISSUES
WHEN YOU
SUBSCRIBE
TODAY*

MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION:
£1.99 – **SAVE 38%**
SINGLE ISSUE: £2.49



AVAILABLE ON YOUR DEVICE NOW

(READ ON YOUR PC AT ZINIO.COM OR PLAY.GOOGLE.COM)





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

Fall Creators Update? Maybe you 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. On page 70 we'll show you how to master the desktop, customise application icons and take control of notifications; and on page 72 we'll explain how you can customise the Start menu from changing the default colours to managing your Live tiles.

Matt Hanson
Associate Editor
www.facebook.com/windowsmag

Featuring...

70 How to master the Windows 10 desktop

72 Change the way the Start menu works

WINDOWS 10 CRASH COURSE – SEE PAGE 11 NOW!

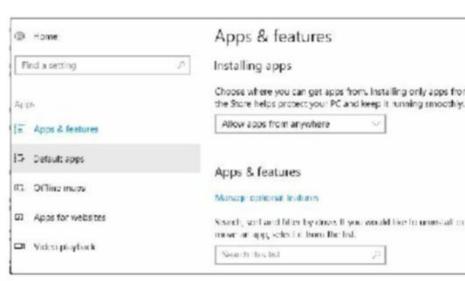


Windows 10 tip of the month

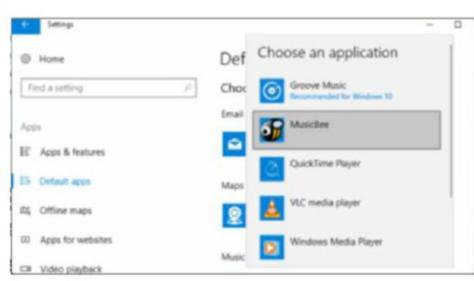
Change Windows 10's default apps

Change the default apps in Windows 10

Windows 10 has a great range of apps built in – from the Mail app for email to Edge for web browsing, but your other choices are less clear cut. Do you really want to use Groove Music for your favourite audio tracks? Or Photos for all the pictures you've taken of family and friends? Luckily, you don't have to settle for what Microsoft has chosen for you. Here's how to change the default apps using Windows 10's Settings.



CHOOSE IT Go to Settings > Apps and select 'Default apps' from the options list in the left-hand pane.



CHANGE IT Click the app you want to change, then choose your alternative from the pop-up that appears.

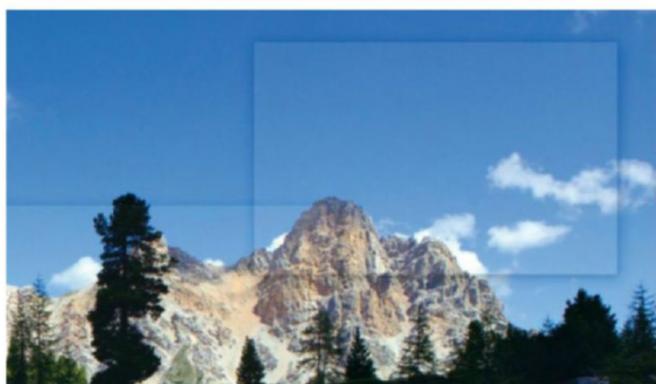
Master the desktop

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.

Get started with Windows 10

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Add-ons Help All apps

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.

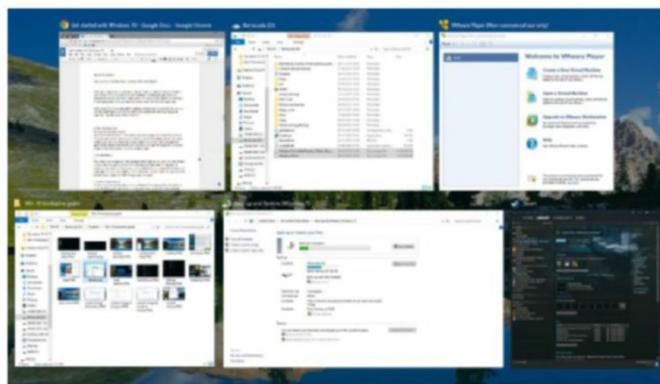
2 Virtual desktops

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.

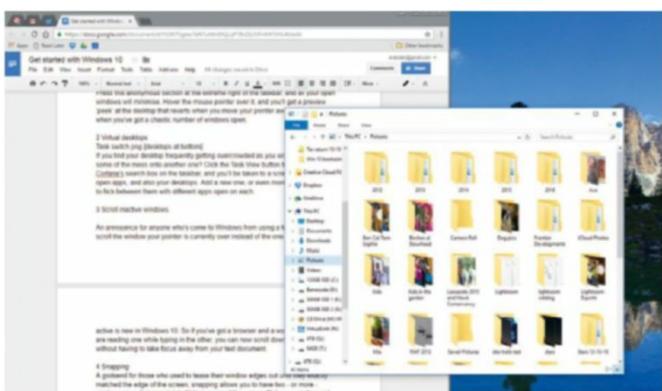
3 Scroll inactive windows

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.



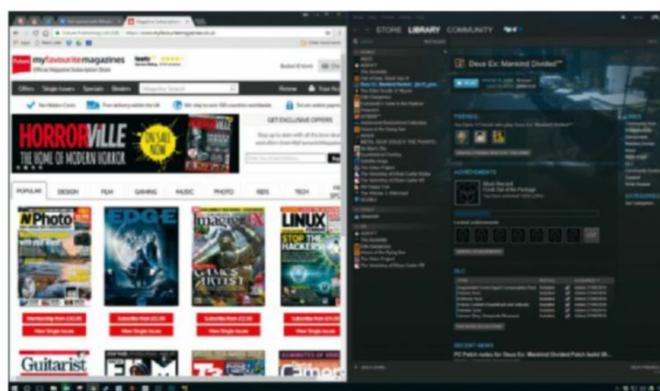
2 Virtual desktops

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.



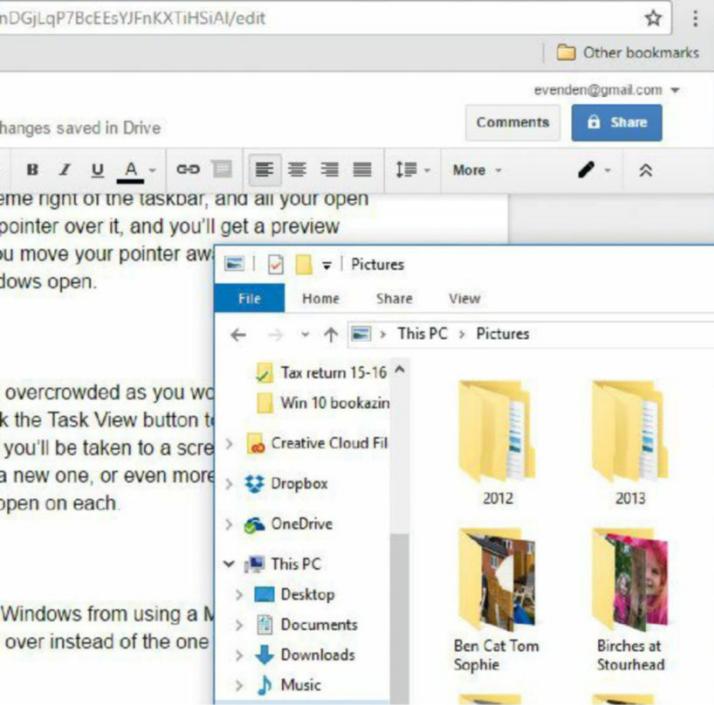
3 Scroll inactive windows

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.

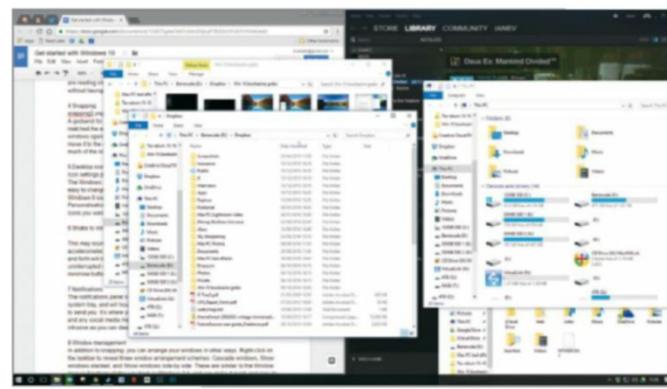
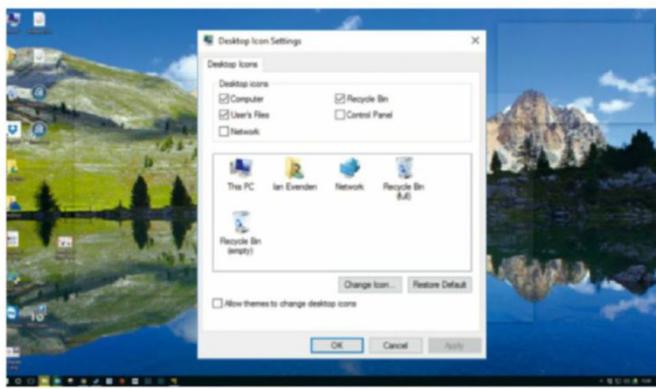


Welcome to Windows 10

Master the desktop

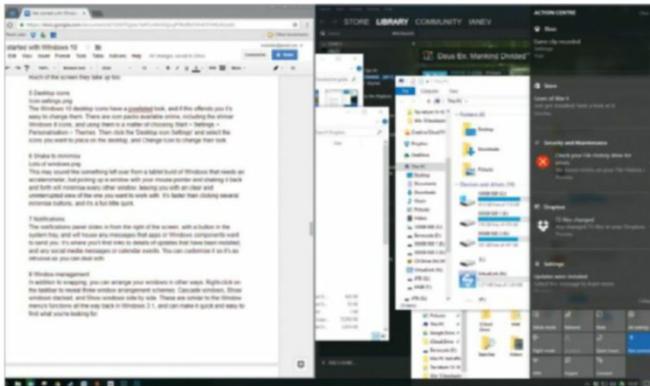
overcrowded as you work. Click the Task View button to see all your open windows, and you'll be taken to a screen where you can switch to a new one, or even more windows open on each.

Windows from using a mouse instead of the one



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.

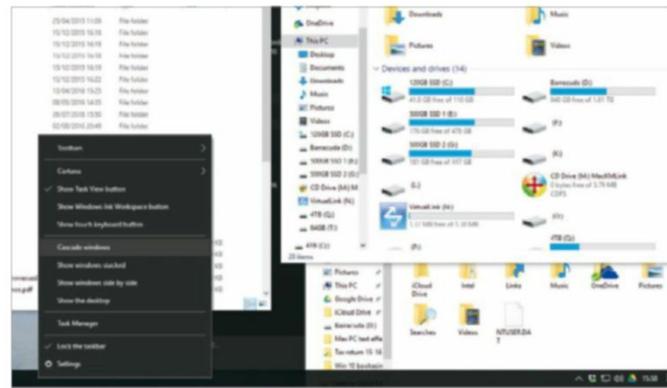


7 Notifications

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 Windows 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.

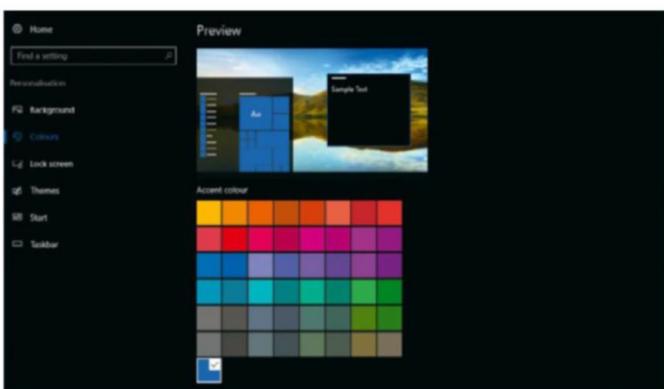
Customise the Start menu

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.



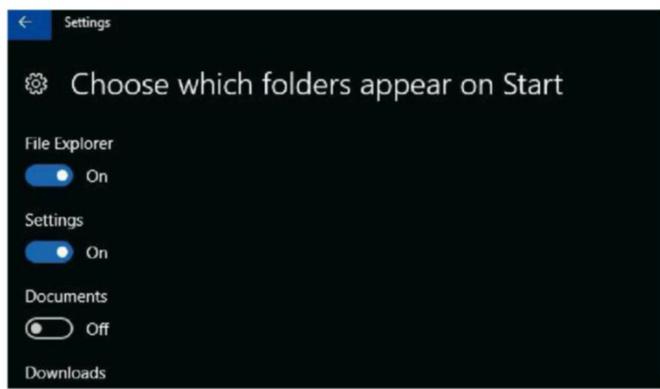
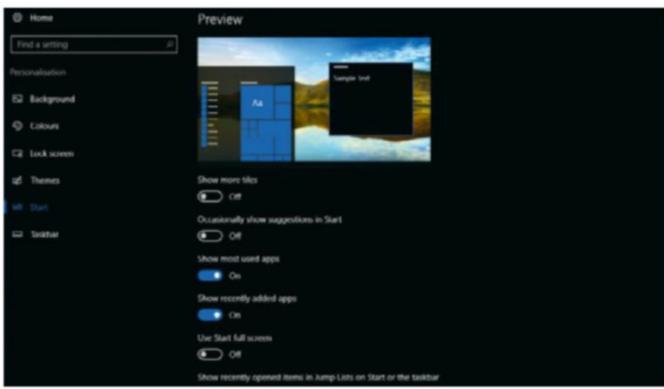
1 Colour

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.

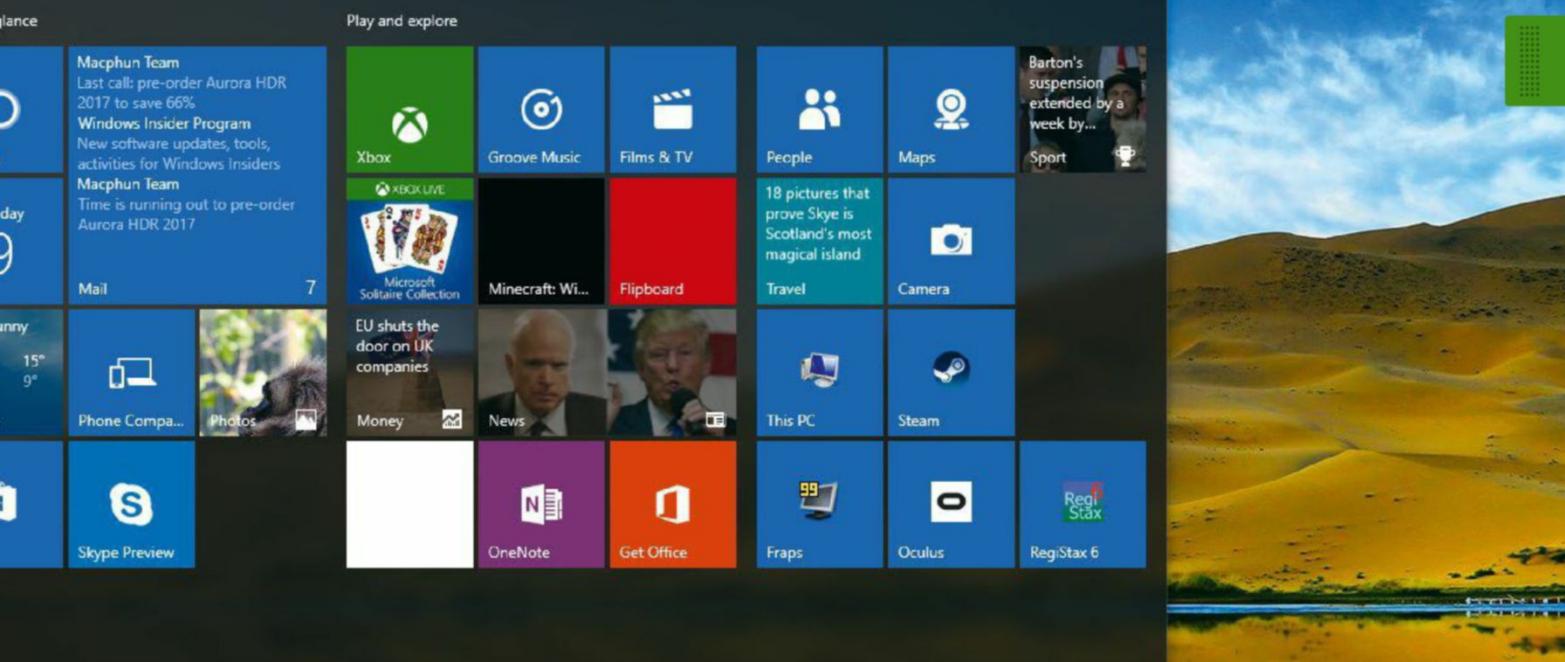


3 Folders and tiles

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.

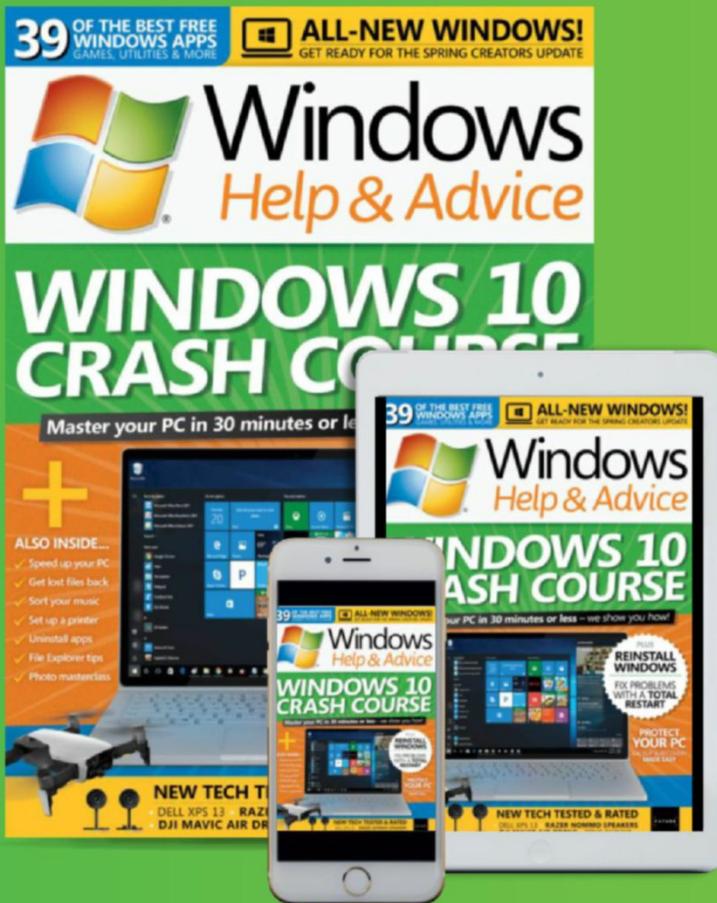
8 Bring back the Start screen!

It may have been almost universally mocked and reviled in Windows 8, but the full-screen Start menu is still there in Windows 10, ready to block out all your work at a single press of the [Win] 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: the Start menu now won't actually cover up your apps like it used to do in Windows 8.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS Prices and savings quoted are compared to buying full priced UK print and digital issues. You will receive 13 issues in a year. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Your subscription is for the minimum term specified and will expire at the end of the current term. Payment is non-refundable after the 14-day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. Offer ends May 31 2018. For full terms and conditions please visit bit.ly/magtandc.

INTERNATIONAL READERS CAN SUBSCRIBE TOO!

Don't wait for the latest issue to reach your local store – subscribe today and let Windows Help & Advice come straight to you



WHY SUBSCRIBE?

- Stop paying overseas cover prices and save yourself money
- Never miss another issue
- All 13 issues a year will be delivered direct to your home or workplace by airmail

TO SUBSCRIBE

- **Live in Europe?**
Pay just €31 every 3 months
- **Live in the USA?**
Pay just \$43 every 3 months
- **Live elsewhere?**
Pay just \$45 every 3 months

TO SUBSCRIBE GO TO
myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/subwha

Or call our helpline on (+44) (0)344 848 2852

Helpline opening times are: 8am to 9.30pm weekdays, 8am to 4pm on Saturdays (BST)



Upgrade

► NEW HARDWARE ► ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES ► LATEST GADGETS

Welcome

Windows 10 has its own anti-virus measures built in, but they're not half as smart as they need to be to keep your PC completely safe.

To that end, we've chosen four of our favourite anti-virus apps, all of which go way beyond what Windows Defender can do – and all for free! Turn to page 88 to find out more.

Also on test are Dell's new XPS 13 laptop (page 76); the brilliant Corsair One Elite (page 78); an ultra-wide monitor from BenQ (page 80) and Razer's colourful Nommo Chroma speakers (page 82). And that's just the start...

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



76 Dell XPS 13

This flagship laptop is slicker and quicker than ever – find out why you'll want one



78 Corsair One Elite

This mini tower of power is the best desktop we've seen in a long time



80 BenQ EX3501R monitor

Ultrawide and ultra-gorgeous, this 35-incher is a display dream come true



88 Best free anti-virus apps

Stop malware, adware and other nasties in their tracks with our top AV picks



Dell XPS 13

£1,899 | \$2,349 www.dell.com

Making the best laptop in the world even better

Had late Apple CEO Steve Jobs been in charge of designing a Windows PC it probably would have ended up looking a lot like Dell's latest XPS 13 – a laptop whose use of woven glass fibre looks set to revolutionise the way laptops are made going forward.

But there's more to this laptop than just a sleek design. It also comes with a near bezel-less InfinityEdge display boasting 4K Ultra HD resolution at the top end, and it uses the same cooling system as the Mars Rover – and there aren't a lot of laptops you can say that about.

Price and availability

One of the drawbacks of the new design and increased specs is that the Dell XPS 13 is now more expensive than it used to be – and there's no longer an Intel Core i3 option at the baseline.

The most affordable option at £1,269 (\$999) features a 1.6GHz Intel

Core i5-8250U, a 1080p non-touch display, 4GB of RAM and a 128GB SSD. Should you crave a faster processor, there are two models featuring a 1.8GHz Intel Core i7-8550U to choose from.

However, the model we were sent for testing features the aforementioned 4K display, a 1TB SSD and 16GB of RAM and costs a cool £1,899 (\$2,349).

All new XPS 13 models include three USB-C ports (two of which are Thunderbolt 3), a microSD card reader and a 3.5mm audio jack.

The only flagship laptop that can price match the new XPS 13 is the Google Pixelbook. Both the latest MacBook Pro and 13.5-inch Surface Book 2 are more expensive for comparable or inferior hardware.

Design

2018 marks a tangible shift in the design of the XPS 13. Its chassis is now 30 percent slimmer at just 3.4mm at its narrowest point and a

touch lighter at 1.21kg than its immediate predecessor.

Now, the most notable change to the XPS 13 design is bound to be the new 'Rose Gold on Alpine White' colour option, which costs \$50 more than the standard colour version in the US. And, at the time of writing, wasn't yet available anywhere else.

While almost every laptop maker has a rose gold option, Dell has taken it to the next level with an all-new set of materials for the complementary-coloured keyboard deck. The company is particularly proud of the fact that the deck houses a crystalline silica material that has the white colour literally woven into it like a fabric, in nine composite layers.

This is the first time woven glass fibre has been, well, woven into a laptop. Plus, the base has a titanium oxide coating which gives it a pearlescent sheen, not to mention stronger stain-resistance than most.



KEY FEATURES

Dell XPS 13

Supplier www.dell.com
Processor 1.8GHz Intel Core i7-8550U (quad-core, 8MB cache, up to 4.0GHz)
Graphics Intel UHD Graphics 620
RAM 16GB DDR3 (2,133MHz)
Display 13.3-inch, Ultra HD (3,840 x 2,160) UltraSharp InfinityEdge touch
Storage 1TB PCIe SSD
Connectivity Killer 1435 802.11ac Wi-Fi; Bluetooth 4.1; 2x Thunderbolt 3 (USB-C); 1x USB-C 3.1; microSD card reader; headset jack
Camera Widescreen HD (720p) webcam with four array digital microphones
Weight 1.21kg
Size 30.2x19.2x7.8-11.6mm

– these are most impressive for a laptop with a 4K display. We can only imagine the numbers we might see on an Full HD model, considering its predecessor lasted longer than ten hours in one test.

Dell has largely kept one of the best qualities about its laptops intact: the inputs. Rest assured that the keyboard and touchpad have been untouched in their look and feel. Travel on the keyboard isn't the deepest we've seen on ultrabooks, but the feedback is plenty forceful.

The glass-coated touchpad is just as wide as it can be given the 11-inch XPS 13 frame, and our fingers glide smoothly along its surface. Clicking feels oddly more satisfying on this laptop than most others in its class, perhaps save for Apple's MacBook.

Summary

It's official: Dell has done it again. In directly addressing the concerns of users, Dell has refined its XPS 13 laptop further than ever before. So much so that we're inclined to give this laptop our top rating.

Moving the webcam position, adding facial login and a four-mic array, giving Intel's chips more headroom and adding a 4K screen have made the Dell XPS 13 an even more formidable flagship laptop. The rest of the laptop world now has lofty benchmark to measure itself against. ■

The Dell XPS 13 is smarter, slicker and more powerful than ever. It's the laptop to beat in 2018.

 Windows Help & Advice Verdict



Sadly, the same can't be said for the softer plastic that borders the edges of the laptop's display, which has grown a little grey in the last few weeks when compared to the plastic that borders the base.

Of course, this XPS 13 model also marks the turning point on what might be its biggest bugbear: the webcam placement. Better yet, the new IR lens works well for speedy logins using Windows Hello. However, the red flashing of the infra-red lights is a little intense. That said, the 720p webcam

blacks look as if the backlight shuts off in those spots during darker scenes in videos and photos and colours pop with vibrancy. The display also responds snappily and fluidly to touch gestures.

Performance

The 2018 XPS 13 is easily Dell's most powerful yet, scoring 684 points in our Cinebench CPU test; and 4,730 in single-core GeekBench 4 and 15,253 in multi-core GeekBench 4 benchmarks. It also racked up a PCMark 8 score of 3,111 points. Its

"2018 marks a tangible shift in the design of the XPS 13. Its chassis is now 30 percent slimmer"

produces visuals as sharp as those on the latest MacBook Pro, but doesn't have a 60 frames-per-second lens like the Pixelbook. The Surface Book 2 beats all of them with its 1080p Full HD camera.

Display

Another major improvement is the display. The screen is now available with an optional 4K Ultra HD (3,840 x 2,160) resolution beneath a glossy, IGZO touchscreen. That's sharper than any of the previously mentioned, competing laptops.

The touchscreen is coated in a 0.65 percent anti-reflective coating that aims to offset the downfalls of all touchscreens and screen glare.

With a 1,500:1 contrast ratio and 100 percent sRGB colour profile,

3DMark graphics scores are also impressive at 4,878 (*Sky Diver*); 1,190 (*Fire Strike*) and 444 (*Time Spy*).

Why is that when this model uses the same processor as the 2017 model we tested recently? We chalk it up Dell's use of Gore thermal insulation, which offers improved heat dissipation. Dell's new power management software also helps the XPS 13, with a 'dynamic power mode' that automatically delivers maximum power when needed, while monitoring system heat.

Battery life

When it comes to battery life, the new Dell XPS 13 managed four hours and 13 minutes in our PCMark 8 battery life test and five hours 22 minutes in our movie test



Corsair One Elite

£2,799 | \$2,999 www.corsair.com

Stunning, small and near-silent, the Corsair One Elite is a superb system

The Corsair One Elite is a stunning PC. It's not only one of the smallest desktop systems on the market, it's also one of the most powerful as well.

This version of the Corsair One retains the excellent exterior design that was introduced last year, but the internals have been given a huge boost. Corsair reckons they're perfect for work and play, and you're about to find out whether this tiny tower can cope with a serious upgrade.

Price and availability

The One Elite on test is the beefiest and most expensive that Corsair sells, with an Intel Coffee Lake Core i7 processor, Nvidia GeForce GTX 1080 Ti graphics and 32GB of RAM for £2,799 (\$2,999).

That specification is only really needed by creatives, so the Corsair One Pro Plus is also available. It has the same processor and GPU, but halves the RAM for £2,549 (\$2,799).

Design

The Corsair One Elite is stunning. It's made from aircraft-grade aluminium that looks smart, with thin bands of light snaking down the rig on either side of subtle logos and the power button.

It looks fantastic, and the dimensions are disarming. It's just 380mm tall and 176mm wide, and weighs 7.4kg. That's comparable with the Asus ROG G20CI and MSI Trident 3, which are other recent high-end desktops that used smaller enclosures.

The great design is paired with rock-solid build quality. The panels are sturdy, and the interior is built around a strong metal skeleton. It's perfect for carrying to and from LAN parties or eSports events.

The front of the Corsair One Elite has a USB port and an HDMI socket, for VR headsets, and at the rear you get more display outputs alongside a USB 3.1 Type-C connector and a PS/2 port. Some of the connections

are illuminated for late-night gaming. Wireless is also included.

The top is built with thick metal slats that sit above a 140mm fan that's virtually frictionless. This is the Corsair's key heat-removal mechanism, and lifting the slats free give access to the internals.

The top of the machine serves up the PSU and graphics outputs, which are routed to more convenient spots using extension cables. The two larger side panels can be removed, and both are filled with slim, water-cooling radiators.

On one side of the Corsair One Elite, a radiator connects to the processor using a conventional mounting system. Beneath that is a mini-ITX motherboard that's based on the MSI Gaming Pro Carbon AC, which has wireless and beefed-up networking circuits. The radiator on the other side connects to the full-size graphics card.

The graphics card connects to the motherboard using a neat



KEY FEATURES

Corsair One Elite

Supplier www.corsair.com
Processor 3.7GHz Intel Core i7-8700K (hexa-core, 12MB cache)

Graphics Nvidia GeForce GTX 1080 Ti with 11GB of GDDR5X RAM

RAM 32GB DDR4

Storage 512GB Samsung PM961 SSD; 2TB hard disk drive

Optical drive No

Connectivity dual-band 802.11ac Wi-Fi; Gigabit Ethernet; Bluetooth 4.1; 4x USB 3.1; 1x USB 3.1 Type-C; 5x audio jack; 1x PS/2; 2x HDMI, 2x DisplayPorts

Weight 7.4kg

Size 380x176x200mm

multi-core tests with results of 5,365 and 23,290. The former score is a little better than the older Core i7 chips in the MSI and Asus machines. However, the Corsair's multi-threaded result is almost 7,000 points better than the MSI.

That's a huge gap, and proves that the Corsair will be far more adept with complex multi-tasking and the apps that creative and high-end productivity jobs require. For more evidence, just look at Cinebench: the two rival rigs scored around 850cb – but the Corsair's six-core CPU scored 1,392cb.

The Corsair One Elite is a stonking bit of kit and remained near-silent in every scenario. The system can barely be heard when idling, and during a gaming test the fan speed only rose a little. If you have speakers or a headset, you won't know that the Corsair's there.

The noise level barely altered during our system stress test. The graphics card ran at nearly 1,900MHz in every scenario, and the CPU ran at 4.5GHz in a gaming test and 4.3GHz in the system-wide test.

Summary

If you do want a premium quality product that ticks multiple boxes, then few PCs are better than the Corsair One Elite. The Coffee Lake processor and Nvidia graphics deliver genuine, top-tier power, and the superb design ensures that this desktop PC stays cool and quiet despite its tiny size.

The new Corsair One Elite performs better than ever. It's expensive, yes, but excellent too.


Windows
Help & Advice
Verdict



extension cable, and the M.2 SSD sits beneath a heatsink on the motherboard. The hard drive sits in a small caddy between other components. The interior is filled with snaking cables and chunks of metal, which is necessary when so much power is installed into such a tiny space – it's impressive engineering, but it doesn't make access easy. The major components are just about accessible, but there's no upgrade room.

The only other issue is the lighting. It looks great at default,

Asus' machines – an advantage that translates to gaming performance. In the *Deus Ex Ultra* benchmark the Corsair One Elite ran at 98fps – the other two machines couldn't even manage a playable frame-rate.

The Corsair One Elite will handle gaming at 4K, too. At 3,840x2,160 it averaged 44fps, and steamed beyond 60fps in *Battlefield 1* and *Witcher 3*. That bodes well for 4K screens, VR headsets and intense graphical applications.

Processing power has taken a massive leap. Last year's quad-core

"The Coffee Lake silicon romped through the Geekbench single- and multi-core tests"

but the lights aren't RGB, so in software you can only alter the brightness, turn the lights off or opt for a basic 'breathing' effect.

Performance

The Corsair One Elite delivers gaming pace aplenty thanks to that GeForce GTX 1080 Ti card, one of Nvidia's most powerful consumer chips with a mighty 11GB of GDDR5X memory, 3,584 stream processors and a stock speed of 1,480MHz that soars to 1,645MHz and beyond with GPU Boost.

The Corsair One Elite will run any current game at 1080p beyond 100fps, and its benchmark scores outstrip both its rivals; its 3D Mark *Time Spy* score of 9,272 is thousands of points ahead of both MSI and

chip has been replaced with a six-core Intel i7-8700K Coffee Lake CPU, which can handle 12 concurrent threads. The two extra cores mean the Corsair One Elite will be an even better performer in complex productivity applications and when multi-tasking. And, despite the extra cores, clock speeds haven't suffered: the i7-8700K's base speed of 3.7GHz is a little below last year's chips, but the new part has single- and multi-core Turbo speeds of 4.7GHz and 4.3GHz – better than the older parts.

The Corsair One Elite also has a Samsung PM961 SSD that uses NVMe for extra pace, and a 2TB hard disk drive.

The Coffee Lake silicon romped through the Geekbench single- and



BenQ EX3501R

£709 | \$899 www.benq.co.uk

An ultrawide monitor with HDR

While high dynamic range (HDR) – a display technology that offers higher contrast and more vivid colours – is becoming ever more commonplace in TVs it hasn't really taken off yet in PC monitors. So when a monitor such as the BenQ EX3501R comes along boasting HDR support, you can't help take notice. And HDR is only one of the exciting features to be found here, thanks to an ultrawide 21:9 aspect ratio, AMD FreeSync support, and USB-C connectivity.

Price and availability

A 35-inch ultrawide curved monitor is never going to be cheap, but at £709 (\$899), the BenQ EX3501R isn't horrendously pricey, and compares well to the AOC Agon AG352UCG and Acer Predator X34, both of which are slightly more expensive, but with similarly impressive specs.

The BenQ is also a fair bit pricier than the LG 34UC79G-B, which

costs £592 (\$625). However, while LG's screen has a 21:9 aspect ratio, its resolution is lower (2,560x1,080) than the EX3501R's (3,440x1,440), which feels much easier to use.

Design

Unlike monitors which are aimed at gamers and have striking designs to match, the BenQ EX3501R is positioned as a 'video enjoyment monitor', which means the large screen – and the content it displays – are the stars of the show here, with the rest of the monitor's design being smart, yet sedate.

The metal stand feels sturdy, and allows for vertical adjustment of 60mm and tilt adjustment of between -5 and 20 degrees. Assembly is tool-less, which means you can attach the screen to the stand without having to dig out a screwdriver, making installation much simpler.

The bezels that surround the edges of the screen aren't the

thinnest, but they don't add too much extra girth to this already large monitor. The bottom bezel is a fair bit larger than the others, though, since it holds buttons for navigating the on-screen menu, as well as a power button, and a light sensor – a familiar addition to BenQ monitors that feature the company's Brightness Intelligence Plus technology.

This detects ambient light and automatically adjusts the monitor's brightness accordingly, so helping to reduce eye strain. It's a feature that works well, although you can turn it off if you wish.

Alongside the sensor is a USB-C port. The EX3501R also features two HDMI 2.0 ports, a DisplayPort 1.4, a USB 3.0 port for connecting to your PC to turn the EX3501R into a USB hub, and two USB 3.0 ports for connecting additional peripherals.

While any 35-inch screen and an ultrawide aspect ratio would do a good job of filling your field of



KEY FEATURES

BenQ EX3501R

Supplier www.benq.co.uk
Display size 35 inch
Aspect ratio 21:9
Resolution (max) 3,440x1,440
Display area 819.41x345.89mm
Pixel pitch 0.238mm
Brightness 300 nits (typical)
Native contrast 2500:1 (typical)
Backlighting LED
Panel type VA
Viewing angle 178/178
Response time 12ms, 4ms (GtG)
Display colours 16.7 million
Color gamut 100 percent sRGB
Colour depth 8-bit
Connectivity 2x HDMI 2.0; 2x USB 3.1 (Gen 1); 1x DisplayPort; 1x headphone jack
Weight 10.5kg
Size 504.02x833.95x224.08mm (H)/444.02x833.95x224.08mm (L)

view, the curved design of the BenQ EX3501R further immerses you in your media. The curvature is 1800R, which means it's quite pronounced – many other curved monitors and TVs have a curvature of 3000R, which is more subtle.

So 1800R makes for a more vision-filling display, but some people may not like such a deep curvature, especially when using the monitor for non-media activities. With a curvature of 1800R, 1.8 metres is the maximum recommended distance for

your own custom look by tweaking brightness, contrast and other settings. Of the preset picture modes HDR and sRGB are the best, with Photo looking a bit too cold, thanks to a blue tint. The various gaming modes look a bit dull.

Straight out of the box the monitor displays the Windows 10 desktop well, however the default settings are a little too bright, leading to some images looking washed out. Turning on HDR mode produces quite a pleasant result straight away although, as the

"If you're using the BenQ EX3501R with Windows 10 you're going to have a pretty great experience"

optimum viewing, whereas for a 3000R display it's three metres. So, since you're more likely to sit closer to your monitor than to your TV, it could be argued that 1800R is a preferable curvature for a PC monitor sitting on your desk.

Performance

If you're using the BenQ EX3501R with Windows 10 you're going to have a pretty great experience, since the operating system handles a range of resolutions and aspect ratios well, and the additional desktop space you have to work with means this monitor can have a positive effect on productivity.

Some of the ready-made picture modes include HDR, sRGB and Photo, while you can also create

on-screen display informs you, this is simply an emulated HDR effect. Turning on 'true' HDR is more complicated – first, you need to have the Windows 10 Fall Creators Update installed, then you need to switch on HDR in system settings. Unfortunately, the result can look rather harsh and we achieved much more pleasing picture quality using the Nvidia graphics settings app that comes with our installed Titan Xp graphics card.

Watching HDR videos is also complicated. If you want to watch Netflix in HDR you'll need to use either Netflix's Windows 10 app, or its website via Microsoft Edge, which is all a bit cumbersome.

All that is a world away from the experience of playing HDR-enabled

games. Here, the games detect that the EX3501R is HDR-enabled and enable you to toggle on the HDR effect. Combine this with the high refresh rate, FreeSync support and an immersive aspect ratio and the BenQ EX3501R is a far better gaming monitor than a 'video enjoyment monitor' – and it's a better gaming monitor than many dedicated gaming screens.

The response time of 4ms may be slightly too high if you need as little lag as possible, but we didn't notice any delays.

When HDR works, it works well, although the colour depth is 8-bit, which won't produce quite as pronounced results as displays capable of 10-bit HDR.

Summary

The EX3501R is a great monitor, although BenQ is doing it a bit of a disservice by not shouting about its gaming prowess – this is a brilliant gaming monitor that delivers high resolutions, immersive visuals and smooth gameplay, and the HDR in games is very good.

As a media-playing monitor it certainly has the chops, but we'd like to see better HDR support in Windows 10, especially in its video apps – when it does come, and it will, this monitor will be ready. ■

An excellent ultrawide monitor that handles games well. It's also great for watching films on.

 **Windows Help & Advice Verdict**





Razer Nommo Chroma

£169.99 | \$149.99 www.razerzone.com

Unconventional computer speakers

If you're in the market for a new pair of computer speakers, there's a very slim chance you'll find anything as cool as the Razer Nommo Chroma – these stereo speakers with RGB underlighting take the boxy form factor that we're normally used to seeing and completely flip it on its head.

The result is a surprisingly good-sounding pair of speakers that don't break the bank – the entry-level models, the Razer Nommo and the Razer Nommo Chroma only cost £109.99 (\$99.99) and £169.99 (\$149.99) respectively. To put that price in perspective, there are plenty of 2.0 speaker systems from companies such as Edifier, JBL and Sony that start at £150 and go up from there.

If you're looking for a little more power, then the Razer Nommo Pro adds tweeters, a separate subwoofer, and an inline remote – although it adds a steep £330 (\$350) to the price tag.

The Goldilocks of the group, the Nommo Chroma, balances price and performance to deliver a very solid set of computer speakers that will make anyone green with envy.

Design

The Razer Nommo Chroma is absolutely dripping with Razer's distinctive aesthetic. The speakers themselves have that matte black plastic finish that we've seen so many times on Razer's mice, keyboards and Bluetooth speakers, and that's not even mentioning the RGB lighting that pulses underneath the speakers' stands – a fun, quirky addition that will undoubtedly be hated and loved in equal measure.

The lightshow – which can be controlled via the Razer Synapse app for Windows (a familiar sight if you already use Razer's mice and keyboards) is actually a surprisingly neat addition in our opinion. It helps set the speaker apart from

the aesthetically dull computer speakers we're used to seeing, plus you also get a digital-to-analogue converter (DAC) in the Chroma version that boosts the sound from your PC media player of choice.

Above the glowing bases on the right speaker are two knobs – one that controls the volume and another that raises and lowers the amount of bass response. Raising the latter too high distorts the mids and highs, but in return you're given wall-thumping bass that, although a bit muddy, has enough oomph to turn small-sized rooms into makeshift nightclubs.

Spin the speakers around to the back and you'll find a 3.5mm auxiliary input that enables you to connect your phone, tablet or MP3 player. There's also a headphone jack that conveniently re-routes the noise when it's time for the rest of your household to get some rest. You also get a cable that connects the right speaker to the left speaker,



KEY FEATURES

Razer Nommo Chroma

Supplier www.razerzone.com

System requirements (Razer Synapse)
Windows 7 or later; Internet connection;
100MB of free drive space

Drive units 2x 3-inch custom woven
glass fibre drivers; rear-firing bass ports

Frequency response 50Hz-20kHz

D/A converter Built-in

Connectivity 1x 3.5mm auxiliary input;
1x headphone jack; 1x USB audio input

Weight 2kg

Size 140x170x220mm

again in the 15,000Hz range. (For reference, human hearing starts as low as about 20Hz and, in a healthy adult, goes up to around 20,000Hz.)

Realising that there was potential to go both a bit higher and lower in the audio spectrum, Razer's also selling the Razer Nommo Pro, the speakers we mentioned earlier, which include separate tweeters and a discrete subwoofer to help reach those peak lows and highs. The Pro version is more costly, however, so you'll have to decide just how much those different sections of the spectrum are worth.

All that being said, for watching TV shows and movies or playing games, these speakers sound absolutely fine. Sure, there are still some issues with voices not coming through as crystal clear as they should, but the speakers are more than capable of holding their own when it comes to convincingly replicating sound effects, audio cues and the myriad little details that you can find in your favourite games, films and TV programmes.

Summary

If traditional loudspeakers aren't your style, then the Razer Nommo Chroma is a well-designed alternative that brings the bass in spades. True, these game-oriented speakers falls flat in some areas of the audio spectrum – particularly when it comes to the highest of highs and the lowest of lows – but spectacular clarity is a redeeming high-note for these stylish and very affordable computer speakers. ■

Aesthetically interesting speakers with exceptional clarity and nuanced mid-tones.

 Windows
Help & Advice
Verdict



plus a cable that runs from the right speaker to the USB port on your computer – yes, unfortunately it requires both power from the wall and a USB connection to the PC.

The biggest compromise of the design is that it doesn't feature Bluetooth, a feature that's incredible common on portable speakers in this price range. Having Bluetooth built-in would have

favourite songs in a way that you've likely never heard them before – they'll be fuller, more dynamic and the mix itself will be better off for it. (There are dozens of examples that we could recommend to test this for yourself, but *Cinco* by Ofelia K is a good place to start.)

That being said, due to its size and obvious focus points, the Razer Nommo Chroma is missing the

"The first thing you'll notice is just how clear and concise the top end of the audio spectrum is"

made it easier to connect to some devices and reduce the clutter of cables that will now run amok on your workspace, but it's a relatively small inconvenience in the grand scheme of things.

Performance

If you can get over the fact that there's some very clear catering to the bass-loving crowd here, the Razer Nommo Chroma speakers actually sound great – good clarity in the mids and highs, and a powerful bass response that can cater to your tastes.

The first thing you'll notice when you start using the speakers is just how clear and concise that top end of the audio spectrum is. Snare and cymbals will crash in your

depth you'd expect from some higher-quality bookshelf speakers – not to mention better stereo separation – but for the most part these compressed little speakers can sound surprisingly good.

The trade-off for the clarity in the upper register and weighty bass is that the mids can get swallowed up in the process. This can take many forms, but we noticed it most commonly in classic or alt-rock songs where the vocals were very clearly diminished in the mix.

The other downside is that while the Nommo Chroma is bassy, it might not even be bassy enough for the most hardcore of electronic dance music or rap fans. We noticed a drop-off in the 60Hz range of the spectrum and then



DJI Mavic Air

£769 | \$799 www.dji.com

This is the pocketable 4K drone you want in 2018

DJI's latest consumer drone, the Mavic Air, is the near-perfect love child of the very successful Mavic Pro and the compact and user-friendly Spark.

By taking the tech and foldable rotor arms from the Mavic Pro and the small size and playfulness of the Spark – and then improving on both – DJI has produced its best consumer drone yet.

It has just about every bell and whistle you could ask for, from 4K video and 32MP panoramic pictures to a 21-minute battery life. More importantly, the DJI Mavic Air is easy to fly thanks to an improved object avoidance system and gesture controls.

Price and availability

With a starting price of £769 (\$799), the Mavic Air is cheaper than its Pro sibling. This gets you the drone, a battery, the proprietary charger, a redesigned remote controller, a small carrying case, four propeller

guards and two full sets of propellers. DJI also offers the Fly More Combo, which bundles the drone, three batteries, a remote controller, a travel bag, two pairs of propeller guards, six pairs of propellers, a battery-to-power-bank adapter and a battery charging hub for £949 (\$999).

Design and build

The Mavic Air is robust and well-built. The recessed gimbal adds a layer of protection, making this a great travel companion.

The Mavic Air is the first DJI drone to introduce USB-C for content transfer. Sadly, the USB port can't be used to charge the drone. For that, you'll need the proprietary charger. The Mavic Air also comes with a microSD card slot, and 8GB of onboard storage.

Another remarkable innovation is the redesigned remote controller. Its joysticks are tucked neatly away under the foldable smartphone

clips. The controller lacks the Mavic Pro remote's built-in screen for flight telemetry, but squeeze your smartphone into the foldable clips and, *voilà*, you have access to a live video feed and every other piece of piloting information that you need.

Performance and control

Setting up the Mavic Air isn't hard if you've used a DJI drone before. If you haven't, you'll need to install the DJI Go 4 app on your phone and follow the steps on screen to connect to the drone, either directly via Wi-Fi or by linking to the controller. Once set up, flying the drone is smooth as butter. And it's fast. In Sport mode, this pocket rocket can reach a maximum speed of 68.4km/h (40mph).

The Mavic Air is harder to crash too, thanks to its seven-camera vision system and three-direction environmental sensing. DJI's new Advance Pilot Assistance System (APAS) doesn't just stop the drone



KEY FEATURES

DJI Mavic Air

Supplier www.dji.com
Max ascent speed 4m/s (S mode);
 2m/s (P mode); 2m/s (Wi-Fi mode)
Max descent speed 3m/s (S mode);
 1.5m/s (P mode); 1 m/s (Wi-Fi mode)
Max speed (near sea level, no wind)
 68.4kph (S mode); 28.8kph (P mode);
 28.8kph (Wi-Fi mode)
Max service ceiling above sea level
 5,000m
Max flight time (no wind) 21 minutes
 (at a consistent 25kph)
Max hovering time (no wind)
 20 minutes
Max flight distance (no wind) 10km
Max wind speed resistance 29–38kph
GNSS GPS + GLONASS
Internal storage 8GB
Connectivity Lightning; Micro USB
 (Type B); USB-C; Wi-Fi
Camera 1/2.3-inch CMOS image sensor;
 12MP resolution; Aperture f/2.8; ISO 100–
 1600 (autom/manual; Lens 24mm (35mm
 equivalent); 4K Ultra HD video
 (3,840×2,160 pixels @ 24/25/30p)
Supported file system FAT32
Photo format JPEG/DNG (RAW)
Video format MP4/MOV (H.264/
 MPEG-4 AVC)
Weight 430g
Size (unfolded) 168×184×64mm

in its tracks when it comes against an obstacle – it'll chart an alternate route and continue flying safely. For APAS to work effectively the drone needs to fly around and survey the location for a bit, picking up information to process from its surroundings. This is automatically done by the drone. This doesn't mean the craft is crash-proof; there are no sensors on the top and sides, so there could still be a few close calls if you aren't too careful.

You'd might expect that due to its size and weight, the Mavic Air

moving the camera up and down is still a tad jerky.

The DJI Mavic Air also makes use of gesture controls and has SmartCapture functionality. Using your hands, you can make the quadcopter take off and land, fly towards and away from you, and get it to follow you around as you move. Making a peace sign takes a still, while holding your thumbs and forefinger in a frame will begin and stop video capture.

It also has a couple of QuickShot modes, called Asteroid and

"In well-lit conditions, the Mavic Air's videos are crystal clear, with near perfect saturation"

would have a hard time staying stable when hovering, but DJI promises it should be just fine in winds of up to 35km/h (21.7mph). Flying it by the seaside, when winds can pick up suddenly, the drone remained stable in the air.

The transmission range for the Mavic Air is limited to 4km/2.5 miles using the controller. This is because the Mavic Air relies solely on Wi-Fi instead of also using radio frequency (RF) for its drone-to-controller connection. If you're planning on pushing the Mavic Air to its limits, you may experience some dropouts in the video feed.

Like the Pro, the Mavic Air features a three-axis gimbal. Although gimbal control while panning sideways is smooth,

Boomerang. These have preset flights paths that capture short videos with a subject as the focus, and work with just a few taps on the app, no composition required.

Image quality

Top flying tech and a stable gimbal amount to nothing if the built-in camera isn't up to the mark, and the Mavic Air's does not disappoint.

The Air shares the same 1/2.3-inch CMOS sensor as the Mavic Pro, but has a narrower ISO range, meaning it doesn't do as well in low-light conditions.

The Air's capable of shooting 4K video at up to 30fps at a bit-rate of 100Mbps. Drop the resolution and it can capture 2.5K at 60fps and Full HD at up to 120fps for slow motion.

In well-lit conditions, the Mavic Air's videos are crystal clear, with near-perfect saturation, and there's plenty of dynamic range to work with despite the small sensor size. In a gloomy setup we did lose some vibrancy, however, and our footage looked a tad washed out. However, the gimbal helps keep everything you shoot super stable.

Summary

The DJI Mavic Air is the best drone for most people thanks to the fact that it fits top specs inside a pocketable drone form factor.

Getting 4K video at 30fps, decent battery life, improved smarts and better obstacle avoidance for £769 (\$799) makes this drone great value.

Although the camera could have been better, the footage it captures is excellent. The more automated QuickShots and tracking features ensure that anyone is capable of pulling off an amazing shot – no experience necessary. ■

A small flying drone with big ambitions – you'll be hard pressed to find a better one for the money.


Windows Help & Advice
Verdict



WIRELESS HEADPHONES

The price of untethered headphones has plummeted, but is it really possible to get quality wireless tunes on the move for under £50?



1 Nu Bass ONE

£49.99, nu-bass.com

Want maximum value for money? Then look no further. For a meagre £50, you get decent looks, if a little plasticky on the build side of things, an over-ear design (the only pair here), an SD card slot to play back MP3s or WMAs and there's even an FM radio built in! Phew. What's also surprising at this price point is the huge amount of power on tap. They're over-powered to the point we had to tone down the bass end of the EQ on our test handset. Otherwise, the sound stage is nice and wide. Battery life was a disappointing four hours.



2 MEE Audio N1

£39.99, meeaudio.com

At first glance, MEE Audio's budget in-ears look a little cheap. But take a hold of them and look a little closer, and you'll realise they're a quality pair of headphones. Subtle, yet very smart. A curved band makes them sit nicely on the neck and the inserts fit comfortably in your ears. The inline volume control is easy to use, thanks to individual raised buttons. They also sound exceptional; much bigger than seems possible, with plentiful bass and a thrilling soundtrack. Battery life is equally impressive, with more than eight hours run time.



3 JLab Audio Neon

£19.99, jlabaudio.com

No matter how hard we tried, we just couldn't drain the battery on these diminutive on-ear headphones from JLab. After we passed the six-hour quoted battery life, and the Bluetooth battery meter had barely budged, we gave up. If you want to take your music on the go, and you worry about charging – these are the headphones for you. Not to mention they sound pretty great (though shrill at higher volumes), are comfy on the head, and the on-ear controls are straightforward. Oh, and did we mention they're less than £20?



There's a war going on right now. At the budget end of the audio market, headphone makers are duking it out, cramming in more tech in their buds and cans than ever, in a bid to one up each other. The result?

You can now buy sweet-sounding wireless headphones for a surprisingly small amount of cash.

Naturally, we – as stalwarts of high-end gadgetry – would normally recommend splashing out to make sure you get top-tier sound

from Bluetooth headphones, but even we can see the benefits of the less is more approach. Spend under £50 on a pair of wireless headphones, and you can take them anywhere without worrying about them getting damaged or lost.



4 Philips SHB4305 BASS+ £49.99, philips.co.uk

These budget-orientated wireless in-ears from Philips feature the BASS+ branding, but it feels like some cruel irony since these puppies lack in the low end. The main problem is they're too bulky, which makes fitting them into the ears a bit of an issue, so you can't get a good seal. It's a shame, because otherwise they sound pretty good, with a clean, balanced output. And they'll keep going for about six hours, which is nice. Oddly, there's no magnetic backing to connect the two in-ears together. A decent option, if you can get them to fit your ears.



5 Marley Positive Vibration 2 £49.99, thehouseofmarley.co.uk

Although there's no carry case with the PV2s, they're still tremendous value. Easily the best-sounding headphones in this test, they handle any kind of music well, with a nicely balanced, naturalistic tone, making them seem more expensive than they are. They also look impressive, with recycled wood inserts, a fabric headband and exposed wiring. The PV2s sit comfortably on the ears and are easy to use. Marley boasts a 12-hour battery life, and after five hours they'd only dropped to 80 percent. A winner.



5 Optoma NuForce BE2 £49.99, optoma.co.uk

The BE2s are an in-ear style headphone, and the only one here featuring IPX5 waterproofing – ideal for working out. Though quite chunky, they fit in the ear snugly, making a good seal, and when not in use a magnetic backing allows you to connect them together to avoid losing them. Controls on the inline remote have raised edges, which looks neat, although we found these hard to fathom on the move without looking. Audio-wise, they're quite bright with a balanced sound, offering around ten hours battery life.



THE BEST FREE ANTI-VIRUS 2018

Make sure your PC is protected without paying for the privilege

1 Bitdefender Antivirus Free Edition

www.bitdefender.co.uk/solutions/free.html

Essentially consisting of the AV section of the full product, Bitdefender Antivirus Free Edition's light, well-constructed scanning mechanisms – which are almost universally faster than the industry average – and unrivalled

virus definitions mean it's back at the top of the tree. AV-TEST's December testing round did pick out a few flaws in its handling of zero-day threats, however.

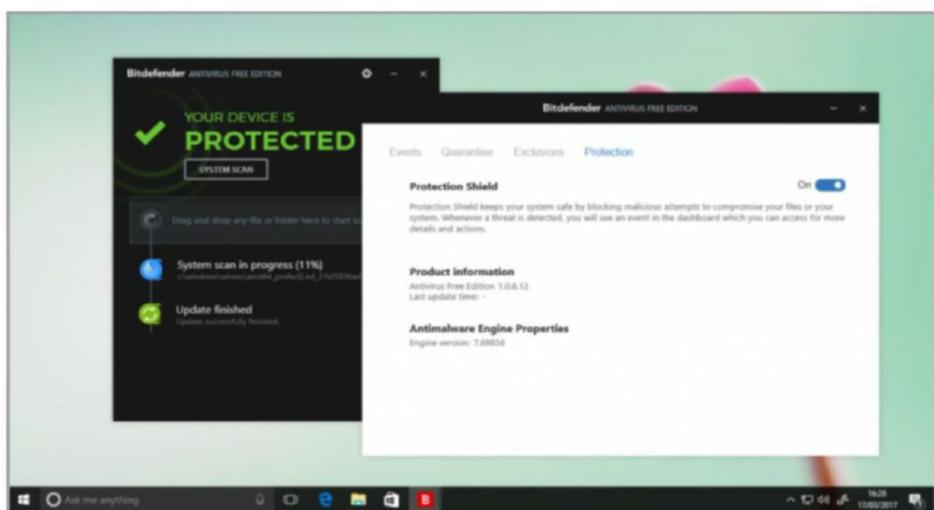
The free version's insistence on running in autopilot mode is a

Windows
Help & Advice
Winner!

**Bitdefender
Antivirus Free is
the best free
security software
you can get today.**

double-edged sword, making the process of virus management easy while also taking it out of your hands; while we're inclined to trust it, there have been cases in the past of automatic systems going slightly rogue, such as the incident a few years back when Panda Antivirus identified itself as a virus and locked up a large number of Windows systems.

While Bitdefender Antivirus Free Edition isn't exactly popup-free – it can be quite annoying, in fact – it's clean, clever, and efficient enough to take our top spot this time around.



2 Avast Free Antivirus

www.avast.com/en-gb/free-antivirus-download

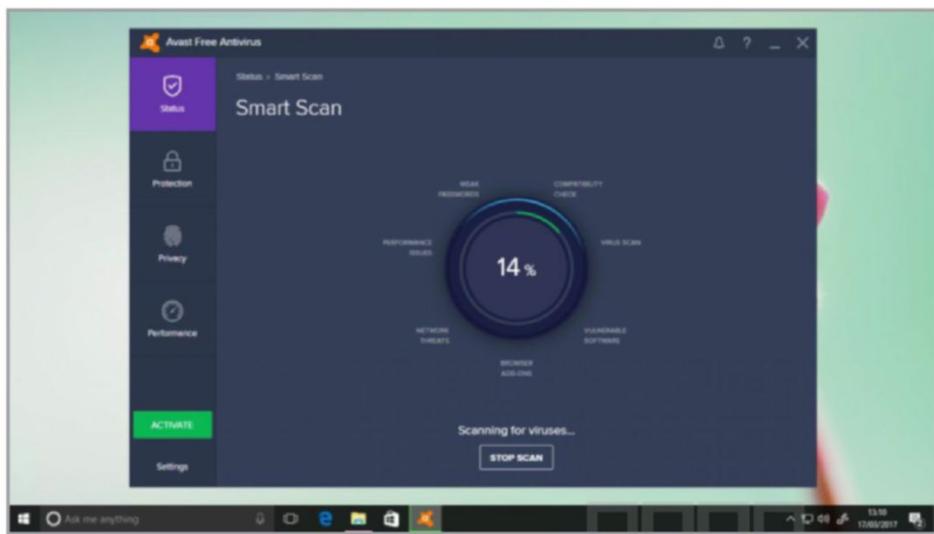
Avast and AVG haven't yet fully merged, despite the former formally acquiring the latter in mid-2016. The newly combined company says the two free anti-virus products will remain

separate, although there's a joint AV package on the way soon. Obviously, though, Avast now has a lot more data to work with, having expanded its effective userbase to 400 million users.

**Following its
takeover of AVG,
Avast now benefits
from a much larger
user base.**

The latest edition of Avast Free Antivirus adds an automatic gaming mode to mute pop-ups and reduce system load when you're firing up a processor-hungry game, and the interface has been given an overhaul. There's a password manager, too, which is an undeniably good addition to your security portfolio.

It scores well on AV-TEST's widespread malware benchmark and continues a clean sweep against zero-day attacks. Less impressive is the slight negative effect Avast has on software launch times.



Windows
Help & Advice

RATING



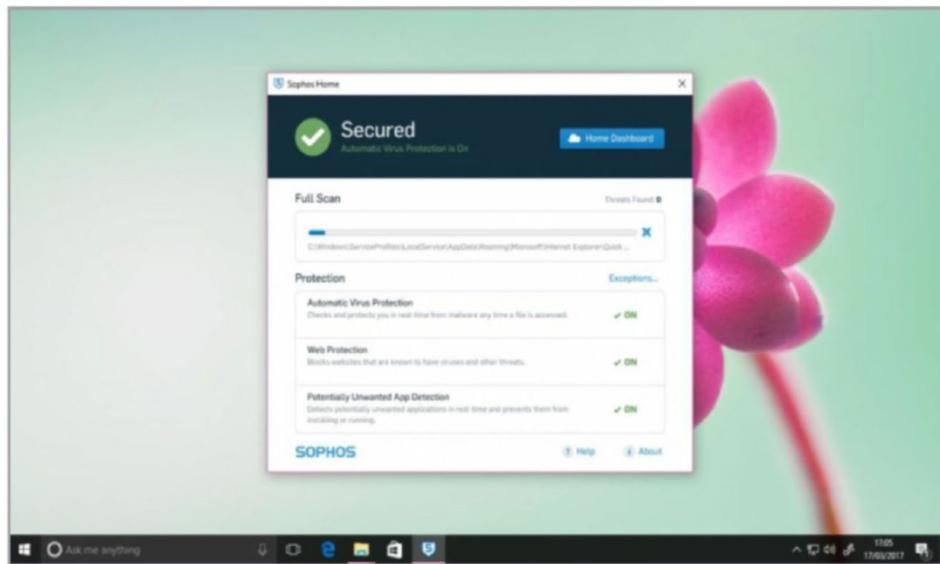
3 Sophos Home

<https://home.sophos.com>

Marketing itself as 'business-grade security', Sophos Home does a little more than most free anti-virus software, and actually seems better suited to families.

You get standard anti-virus and anti-malware protection, along with browser tools such as anti-phishing and, most importantly, content control.

Sophia Home
offers enterprise-level anti-virus protection for home users.



Combine this with central management for up to ten PCs, and you can effectively lock down your kids' browsing options – giving you slightly less things to worry about.

Although AV-TEST hasn't formally assessed Sophos' skills, fellow lab AV-Comparatives offers a decent rating of its anti-virus abilities. Desktop notifications can be a bit intrusive, although since Sophos Home isn't a direct advert for another consumer-level product – the company mainly deals with business software – you're not constantly badgered with requests to upgrade.

Windows Help & Advice

RATING



4 Kaspersky Free

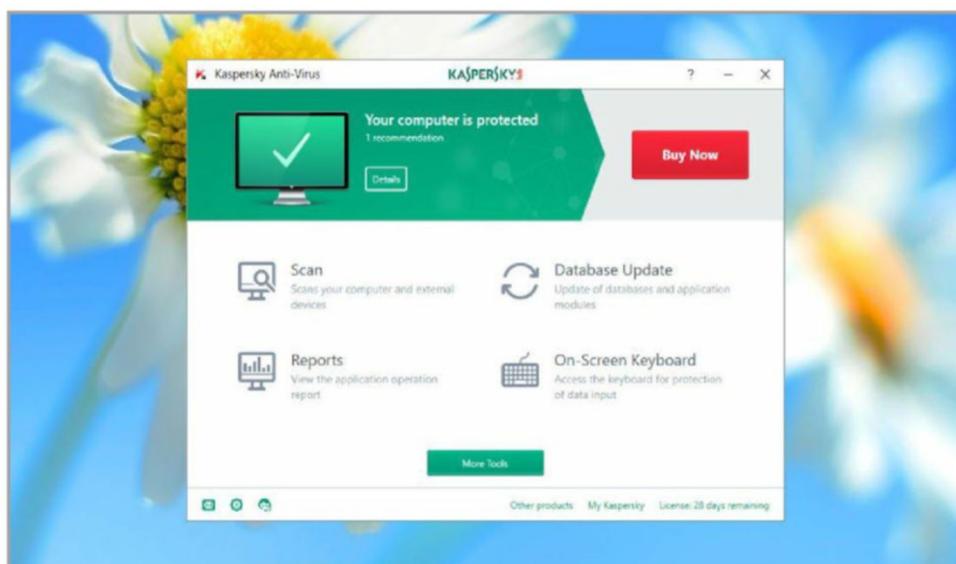
www.kaspersky.co.uk/free-antivirus

The paid-for version of Kaspersky's Windows security software frequently tops charts of best anti-virus solutions and AV-TEST once again gave it full marks

across the board in its latest round of testing.

As you would expect, Kaspersky Free is a scaled-down version, ditching additional features such

Kaspersky has finally launched a free version of its hugely successful AV software.



as privacy protection and safe payment sandboxes to concentrate on powerful, no-frills and – most importantly – free protection for your PC. The result is a tremendously easy to use and navigate bit of software that does an effective job of keeping you protected from viruses.

Using the nuts and bolts real-world scanning engine of the paid-for suite, Kaspersky Free is fiendishly hard for viruses and trojan horses to break down. And we love that it doesn't constantly pester you with nudges to upgrade to the full version.

Windows Help & Advice

RATING



Future PLC Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA

Editorial

Editor Rob Mead-Green
robin.mead-green@futurenet.com

Art Editor Jamie Schildhauer

Deputy Editor Nick Odantzis

Editor in Chief Graham Barlow

Senior Art Editor Jo Gulliver

Contributors

Tom Anderson, Alex Cox, Ian Evenden, Matt Hanson, Mike Jennings, Joe Osborne, Nick Peers, Nick Pino, Sharmista Sarkar, Mayank Sharma, Matt Swider

Cover images

Jamie Schildhauer

Photography

Future Photo Studio, Thinkstock.com

All copyrights and trademarks are recognised and respected

Advertising

Media packs are available on request
Commercial Director Clare Dove
clare.dove@futurenet.com

Advertising Director Richard Hemmings
richard.hemmings@futurenet.com

Sales Executive - Technology Callum Staines

Director of Agency Sales Matt Downs

Ad Director - Technology John Burke

Strategic Partnerships Clare Jonik

International

Windows Help & Advice is available for licensing. Contact the International department to discuss partnership opportunities

International Licensing Director Matt Ellis

matt.ellis@futurenet.com

Subscriptions

Email enquiries contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

UK orderline & enquiries 0888 888 8888

Overseas order line and enquiries +44 (0)8888 888888

Online orders & enquiries www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

Head of Subscriptions Sharon Todd

Circulation

Head of Newstrade Tim Mathers

Production

Head of Production Mark Constance

Production Project Manager Clare Scott

Advertising Production Manager Joanne Crosby

Digital Editions Controller Jason Hudson

Production Controller Nola Cokely

Management

Managing Director Aaron Asadi

Commercial Finance Director Dan Jotcham

Editorial Director Paul Newman

Head of Art & Design Rodney Dive

Printed by William Gibbon & Sons Ltd, 26 Planetary Road, Willenhall,
West Midlands, WV13 3XT

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU
www.marketforce.co.uk Tel: 0203 787 9060

ISSN 2050-5906

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards. The manufacturing paper mill holds full FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certification and accreditation.

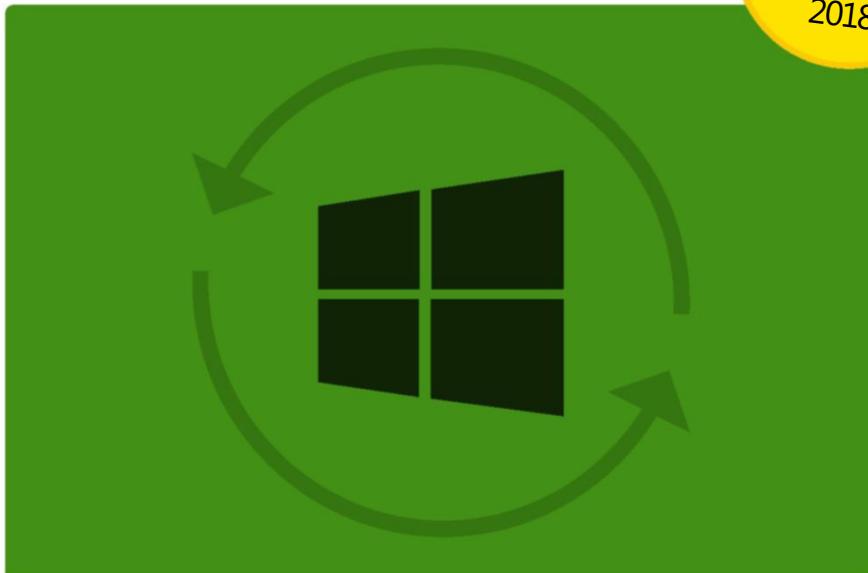
All content © 2018 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 200885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.

In the next issue... **ON SALE**

Get more from your Windows PC

Friday
27 April
2018



Make your PC perfect – your essential guide to a total Windows reinstall



50 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR PC

Tips & techniques for a leaner, meaner machine

HOW TO

- Master Windows updates
- Use Edge as a PDF viewer
- Take control with Cortana
- Manage user accounts



* Contents subject to change

Catch up with us on...



www.facebook.com/windowsmag



www.twitter.com/windowsmag

www.facebook.com/windowsmag



Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR)

www.futureplc.com

Chief executive Zillah Byng-Thorne
Non-executive chairman Peter Allen
Chief financial officer Penny Ladkin-Brand

Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244



A member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations

ON SALE NOW!

AMAZON ECHO SHOW vs ECHO SPOT

T3
SMARTER LIVING

**HANDS-ON
SAMSUNG
GALAXY S9**

...leads our look at the year's most desirable tech - discover the gadgets you need right now

HOT 100

NEXT-GEN 4K TVs • SMART ASSISTANTS
AR GLASSES • CONNECTED FITNESS
ELECTRIC VEHICLES • ROBOT HELPERS

WIN!
A 4K OLED TV WORTH £3K!

A 4K OLED TV WORTH £3K!

The magazine cover features a large central image of two Samsung Galaxy S9 phones side-by-side. Below the phones is a list of 100 hot tech items, including various gadgets like drones, cameras, and electric vehicles. The cover is yellow and red, with the T3 logo prominently displayed.



Available at WHSmith, myfavouritemagazines.co.uk or simply search for 'T3' in your device's App Store

SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND SAVE!
www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/T3



techradar.



The home of technology

techradar.com