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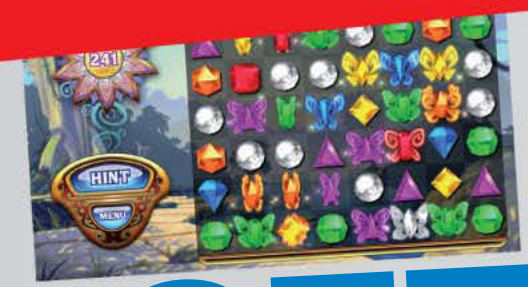
October 2012 Vol.7 Issue 10

# Computer active



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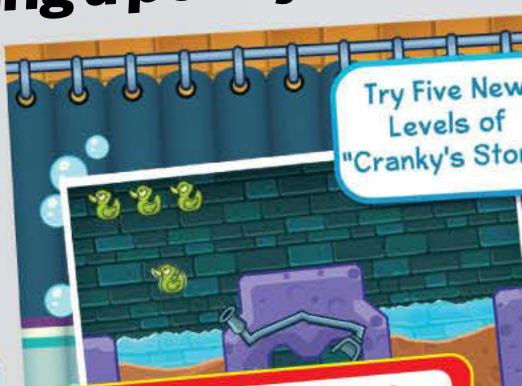

### WORKSHOP

- Organise Windows with virtual desktops
- Retract a Facebook friend request
- Change the function of keys on your keyboard

& Hints and tips

### FEATURE

In the second part of our guide to simple desktop publishing, we explain how to create more advanced layouts

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Computer active
Simple Clear Advice

# Contents

## FROM THE EDITOR

Small programs called apps are increasingly dominating our computing experience. Slowly these apps have moved out of the mobile domain and moved even into desktops. In our cover story we look at how to get free apps.

In the second part of our guide to desktop publishing, we explain how to create advance layouts. As usual look out for workshops, product reviews, national and international news.

Happy Reading.

**Amit Tewari**
a.tewari@nextgenpublishing.net

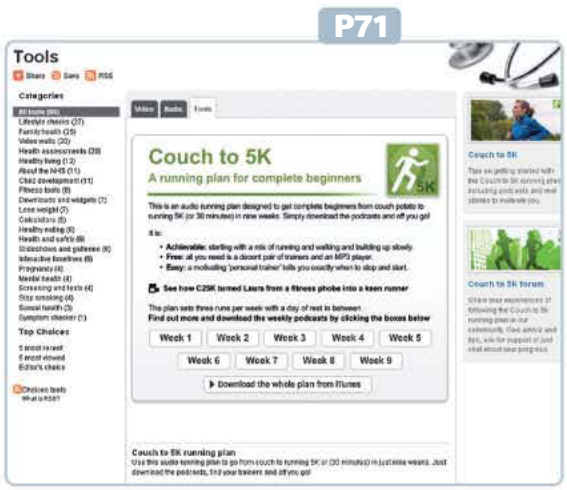
**FOR DETAILS of subscriptions, back issues, email addresses, our technical helpline or how to contact us for any other reason, please read the Computer Interactive pages and the last page.**

## INTERACTIVE

14 **Letters**
What the readers have to say

71 **Net Chart**
Top websites and downloads

18 **News**
All the latest stories from the world of computing




## TRIED & TESTED

27 **Philips 227E3QPH**
Inexpensive IPS screen with HDMI

32 **iBall Andi 5c**
Decent mid-range ICS smartphone

30 **Western Digital My Net N900**
Aimed at small business, a good debut for WD

36 **Apple Mac OS X 10.8 Mountain Lion**
A small meow rather than a huge roar

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# Contents

Vol. 7 Issue 10
October 2012

## HOW TO

44 **Curbing the copycats**
Concerned that your children could be copying their homework projects from the net? We explain how to tell and what you can do to stop it

46 **Go loopy for music**
Fancy making music, but don't play an instrument? If you have a computer, this is no problem – we show you how

52 **Perfect publishing**
In the second part of our guide to simple desktop publishing, we explain how to create more advanced layouts

## COVER STORY

Page 38

### Get any app free

Discover the legal and easy ways to fill your tablet or smartphone with apps – without paying a penny

72 **Game Review**
Max Payne 3
The Walking Dead

## WORKSHOP

**15** EASY TO USE **STEP-BY-STEP** PAGE - page 55

56 **Organise Windows with virtual desktops**
59 **Retract a Facebook friend request**
60 **Enhance Windows' right-click menus**
63 **Make pictures smaller without losing quality**
66 **Give Windows Media Player a new look**
68 **Open different file types online**
70 **Hints and tips**

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**Vol. 7 Issue 10**

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**Printed by** Amit Tewari Next Gen Publishing Ltd., 2nd Floor, C Wing, Trade World, Kamala Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai 400013. **Published by** Amit Tewari on behalf of Next Gen Publishing Ltd., 2nd Floor, C Wing, Trade World, Kamala Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Mar, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai 400013. **Printed at** Kalajyothi Process Pvt. Ltd, 1-1-60/5 RTCX Roads, Hyderabad - 20. **Published at** Next Gen Publishing Ltd., 2nd Floor, C Wing, Trade World, Kamala Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai 400013.
Newsstand distribution - India Book House

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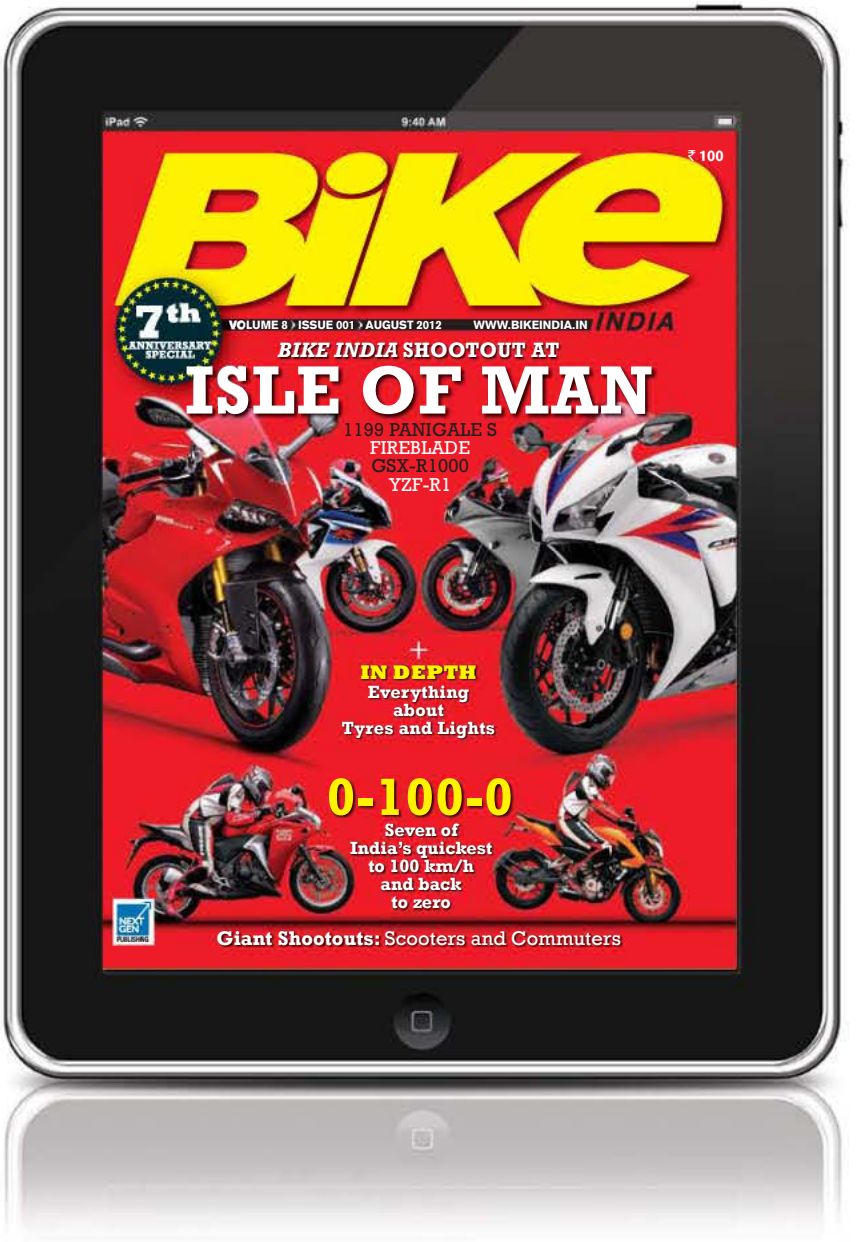


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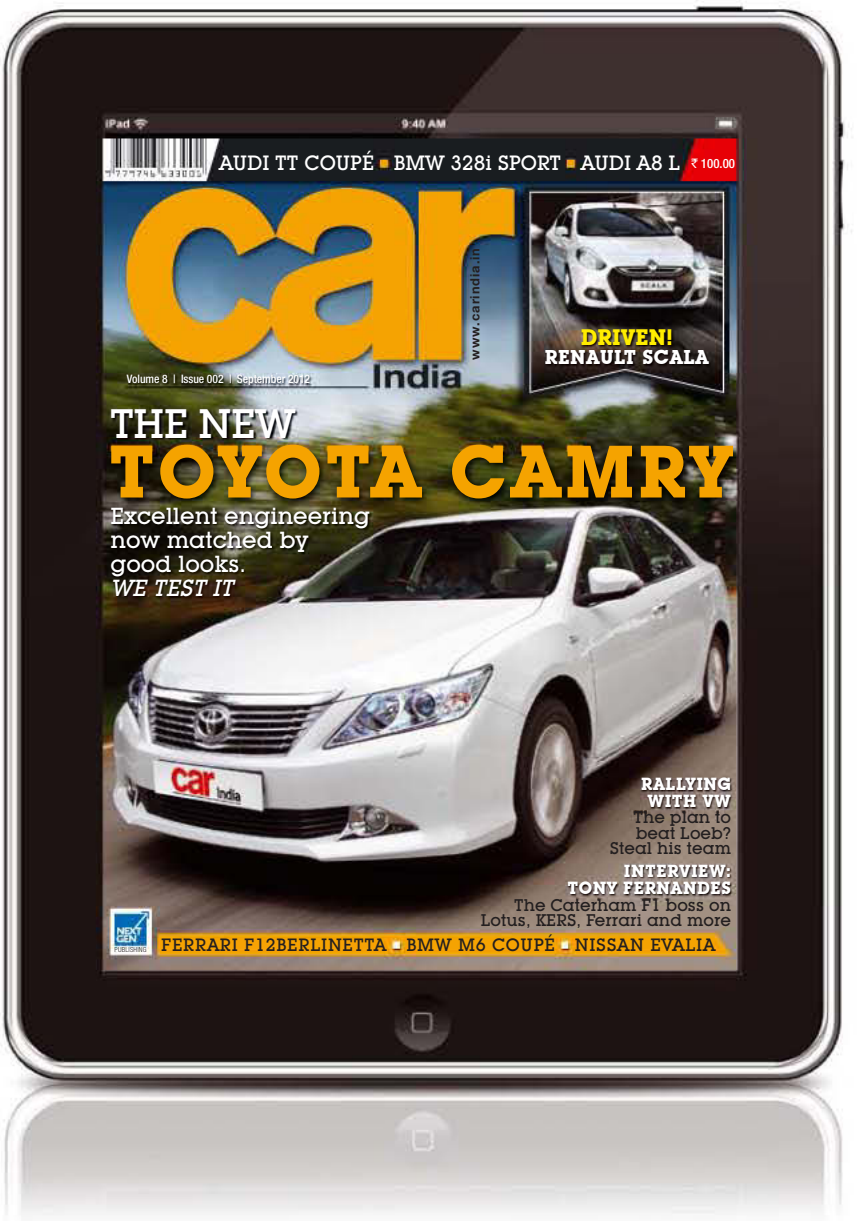


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# LETTERS
## YOUR SAY

We want your opinions! Write to us on any of the topics covered in Computeractive

### What is a hacker?

**While I appreciate the concise nature of the Jargon Buster column I must take you up on one definition that I saw in the magazine and on your website, which is the term 'hackers'. You define this as 'people who break into others' computers and networks, often in an attempt to steal sensitive information'.**

**I am surprised and disappointed in this narrow-minded definition. It is similar to the way some people use the term 'drugs' to conjure up images of criminal activity while washing down an aspirin with their coffee.**

**A hacker is a computer enthusiast who has a good understanding of a computer or a network and uses that knowledge to create and improve software and hardware.**

**Without hacking I probably wouldn't be writing this and sending it in an email on the internet. Just about all open-source software provides instructions on how to hack it to improve it.**

*Krishna Iyar*

## Why all the jargon?

**I have just sat down after making some BILB (boiled infused liquid beverage) from the WTI (water temperature increaser) and now I've picked up my IDF (ink distribution facilitator) and write this NEC (non-electronic communication). You see, my question is this: why in the world of CRT (computer-related terms) do PWINs (people who invent names) always use these abbreviations? Haven't they got any HSI (heart/soul/imagination) at all? It makes it so difficult for DBBs**

**(dumb-brained buffoons) such as me to remember all the TI (technical info) when we are trying to educate ourselves.**

*Pramod Singh*

Sadly, many manufacturers haven't cottoned on to the fact that the ordinary people who use their products don't speak in technical jargon, and continue to use it.

We agree there's too much jargon in the technology industry. That's why, since issue one, Computeractive has been proud to use plain English everywhere in the magazine and to explain any technical terms using our Jargon Buster.

As you can see from the 'What's a hacker' letter on this page, readers do not always agree with our definitions – if you have a question or comment about the Jargon Buster or the language in the magazine, let us know at the usual addresses.

*- Editor*

### Benefits of backup

**My grandson celebrated his 18th birthday last week with a party at his home, attended by family and a few very close friends. His father had spent a very long time making a splendid DVD to show photos and video of his son growing up.**

**This production was watched and enjoyed by us all and was made on the family Apple Mac. I was promised a copy of the production. However, sadly I shall never get it because it's gone for ever.**

**Two days later the house was burgled, and among other things, the Apple Mac was stolen along with the external hard disk that was storing the backups.**

**On this equipment were all the family photos, the birthday production, and even more importantly, my grandson's college work.**

**Luckily he had his next week's college work on a USB memory key and other stuff on the college website. Nearly all the photos are irreplaceable, though.**

**The moral of this is to back up to a disk that's kept far away from your main computer. This is what we shall do in future. Anyone who has really valuable information should take care with storage.**

*Sujit Rao*

### Technology for the deaf

**Your article 'Access all areas' in makes little mention of the benefits of modern technology for deaf people. My hearing has deteriorated and I can no longer use a speech telephone. I find that for many purposes emails are just as good as using a telephone, if not better. On the move I keep in touch with my wife by text message, with the vibrating alert on my mobile phone turned on.**

**Both emails and text messages have the advantage that special equipment is not needed by the people with whom I am communicating. When I found that I could no longer use telephone banking my bank suggested that I should try online banking. I did and found that it worked well. Subtitles enable me to watch TV programmes, although they are sometimes unreliable.**

**In my opinion charities working for the deaf pay insufficient attention to promoting the benefits for deaf people of what is now mainstream technology.**

*Dipali Das*


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# QUIZ 66

**WIN!**

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**Mail to *ca@nextgenpublishing.net* with the subject-line: ComputerInteractive Quiz No.66**

**1) Another name of software-**
- a) Output ❑
- b) Process ❑
- c) Thread ❑
- d) Class ❑

**2) The part of computer which allows us to view information-**
- a) RAM ❑
- b) GPU ❑
- c) Mouse ❑
- d) Display ❑

**3) What is the name of a small picture represents a program or folder**
- a) Graphic ❑
- b) Icon ❑
- c) Software ❑
- d) Desktop ❑

**CONGRATULATIONS!**
**The winner of Quiz no.65 is**
**Reshmi Shah, Gujarat**

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Flashdrive

# Transcend Releases 128GB USB 3.0 and USB 2.0 Flash Drives

Transcend recently announced their USB 3.0 JetFlash 760 and Ultra Speed JetFlash 600 with 128GB capacities. Combining blazing fast data transfer speed with huge storage space, these flash drives can be excellent for effective transport, share, and backup bulk data.

Transcend claims these drives can hold more than 60,000 images (jpg compression, 2MB file size), 32,000+ mp3 songs (4min per song, 128Kbps quality), or over 56 hours of DVD quality video (2.25GB per hour).

Besides offering incredible storage space, the JetFlash 760 and JetFlash 600 provide super-fast data transfers and compact mobile convenience. The JetFlash 760 utilizes next-generation USB 3.0 technology to provide transfer speeds of up to 80MB/s, and features a handy, retractable USB connector, striking a well-executed balance between performance and ease-of-use.

It also features advanced dual-channel technology that combines the bandwidth of two flash chips, the JetFlash 600 provides USB 2.0 transfer speeds of up to 32MB/s and features a lightweight, streamlined design.

Additionally, Transcend USB flash drives offer a free download of the exclusive Transcend Elite data management software, which features intelligent backup scheduling, 256-bit AES file encryption, and much more. The JetFlash 760 and JetFlash 600 are now offered in 4GB to 128GB capacities. The new 64GB and 128GB JetFlash 760 are available for a suggested price of US$89 and US$199 respectively, while the 128GB JetFlash 600 is available for US$179. All are backed by Transcend's renowned Limited Lifetime Warranty.

## IN BRIEF...

### GOOGLE PLANS WIND-POWERED DATACENTRE

The search giant has signed an agreement to use 48 MW of wind energy from the Canadian Hills Wind Project for its latest datacentre. Google will work with local utilities company Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA) to handle the power used by the Canadian Hills wind farm.

Environmental group Greenpeace is heralding the move as a positive step for corporate datacentres.

Google will contract out wind power from Okalahoma wind farm Canadian Hills through way of its local utilities company GRDA. The company says that by using middle men like GRDA it can better handle renewable energy options.

Google's push towards green energy adds to the growing list of firms powering their datacentres through greener energy. Both Ebay and Apple made the jump to renewable energies earlier this year.

SSD

# SANDISK announces quick-install client SSD caching solution to boost PC performance

SanDisk Corporation recently announced an affordable, easy-to-install SSD caching solution that lets consumers significantly improve their desktop computer's performance. The SanDisk ReadyCache solution claims it can boost a desktop computer's boot, shutdown and application launch times, allowing consumers to enjoy a more responsive computing experience, while utilizing their existing hard drive's storage.

The SanDisk ReadyCache product is a performance enhancing caching solution that combines a 32 gigabyte 2.5in SSD that resides alongside a desktop computer's hard drive with ExpressCache software by Condusiv Technologies. The software, sold exclusively by SanDisk, is easily downloaded from the SanDisk website and can be installed on any desktop PC running Windows 7 operating system. The SanDisk ReadyCache solution carries a three-year warranty and an MSRP of INR 3759.

Projector

# Sony unveils short throw home theatre projector

Sony unveils VPL-BW120S Home Theatre Projector for home entertainment. This projector can be placed close to a wall or screen without the need to mount the projector. From as little as 1.34 metres away, it is capable of projecting a stunningly-large viewing area equivalent to a 100in screen while maintaining image fidelity and brightness. Given its easy set up and short projection distance, finding the best viewing positions are a breeze, making the VPL-BW120S the ideal solution for bringing to life casual big-screen entertainment such as sports, movies and gaming.

Using 3LCD display technology, the VPL-BW120S reproduces output of 2600 lumens (on high lamp mode) at WXGA (1280 x 800) native resolution. It also boasts of a high contrast ratio of 4000:1 for rich colour reproduction and 12-bit 3D gamma correction (achieves uniform image colour and brightness that extends right to the corners of the screen).

This projector has built-in speakers which can enabled through HDMI connection, it also comes with a variety of other input options such as RGB, Composite, S-Video, RS-232C control input/output and audio ports. VPL-BW120S projectors will be available in India through all authorized distributors, priced at Rs 88000.

Smartphone

# Apple announces new iPhone 5

The new iPhone 5 has a larger 4in display with a resolution of 1,136x640 pixels, whereas the previous iPhone 4S had a smaller 3.5in screen with a resolution of 960x640 pixels.

Despite the increased screen size the new iPhone is thinner at 7.6mm and weighs 112g compared to the 140g weight of its predecessor. Apple has updated all of the apps included with the phone, as well as the ones it sells in the App Store such as iWork and iMovie, to take advantage of the extra resolution. Apple claims the new screen is larger than that of the iPhone 4Ss, but is still usable single-handed unlike some phones from competing manufacturers.

The iPhone 5 supports wireless technologies that the iPhone 4S does not. It's is Apple's first smartphone to use the faster LTE 4G wireless broadband technology that's already present in the iPad 3. The new smartphone also supports dual-channel 802.11n Wifi.

The iPhone 5 uses the new A6 processor which Apple claims is twice as fast as the A5 processor in the iPhone 4S. Curiously, Apple has yet to specify how many cores the A6 has. Despite the faster processor and wireless technologies, Apple claims the new iPhone will have longer battery life than the older model. Apple has replaced the familiar Dock Connector with a smaller Lightning connector. The new charging cable can be plugged in with either side facing you so there's no ‘wrong' way to plug it in.

Adapters will be available to allow use of the older Dock Connector cables with the iPhone 5, although it's unclear if those adapters will work with speaker docks and other peripherals that rely on the old Dock Connector.

The camera has also been upgraded from a five megapixel model to eight megapixels. Apple claims the new camera can take photos faster, one after the other, and can take better looking photos in low light conditions.

The new camera can also take panoramic photos more easily thanks to a new software feature in the camera app. It can also snap photos while recording video at the same time, a feature first debuted by HTC in its One range of Android smartphones.

Apple also claims that the microphones have been improved for better sound quality when making phone calls and using the Siri voice recognition feature. The iPhone 5 will be available in two colours - an all-black version and a white and aluminium variant.

## Motherboard

# ASUS introduces new F2A85 series motherboards for Trinity APU

ASUS has announced their F2A85 Series motherboards based on the new AMD A85X chipset and FM2 socket, designed for AMD's second generation Accelerated Processing Units (APU). Embedded in the APU is an AMD Radeon HD 7000 Series GPU graphics, which is bolstered by support for AMD Eyefinity technology enabling an ultra-immersive visual environment on up to three independent display outputs. Users also have the option to add a discrete graphics card to enable the Dual Graphics feature.

F2A85 Series motherboards come with a variety of ASUS-exclusive features to get users more out of their APU, including Dual Intelligent Processors 3 (DIP3) with new DIGI+ Power Controls to save up to 65% in system energy, GPU Boost to enhance integrated graphics up to 17%, a worry-free USB BIOS Flashback tool and Remote GO! to complement the multimedia experience.

F2A85 Series motherboards also feature the USB BIOS Flashback tool, which offers users the most convenient way to flash the BIOS. Users need only insert any USB storage device and push the dedicated USB BIOS Flashback button for three seconds, which then automatically flashes the BIOS. For extra convenience, users can use this function without the need to enter the BIOS or operating system, as well as being able to function without key components such as the APU and memory installed.

The Remote GO! function goes further, enhancing the multimedia to the next level by linking PCs, tablets, smartphones and TVs wirelessly together through an existing LAN cable and router setup. It allows users to stream multimedia content from PC to DLNA devices, access their computer anywhere using their mobile device at home, while also allowing easy file transfers between connected computers and mobile devices. It provides seamless multimedia environment for a futuristic connected lifestyle with three useful functions: DLNA Media Hub, Remote Desktop and File Transfer.

The prices of F2A85-V PRO, F2A85-M PRO, F2A85-M and F2A85-M LE are Rs. 9350, 9750, 7400 and 6350 respectively.

## Harddrive

# WD releases thinnest 2.5in hybrid hard drive

WD recently announced they are sampling a 5mm-thin hard disk drive featuring hybrid technology. WD has developed hard drives slim enough for integration into today's thinnest notebook PCs, which provide high-capacity storage and robustness while featuring instant-on and application performance similar to today's client solid state drives (SSDs).

WD began shipping 7 mm height hard drives for thin-profile notebooks earlier this year (standard notebook hard drives have been 9.5 mm). WD 5 mm hybrid hard drives will enable the market's thinnest computers to offer 500 GB of capacity, utilizing almost 50% less volume compared to current 9.5 mm hard drives and at one tenth the cost of similar capacity SSDs.

These hybrid hard drives combine NAND flash and magnetic disks for superior performance, responsiveness, lower power consumption, greater operating shock tolerance, and data protection.

All-in-One

# Lenovo launches new all-in-one systems for SMB's

Lenovo launches two All In Ones in Indian Market- ThinkCentre Edge 72z and ThinkCentre Edge 92z. The new range has been designed to equip entrepreneurs and small businesses with space saving options, while providing optimised performance and enhanced productivity.

Both the AIO's are powered by the new Intel third generation series processors. While the ThinkCentre Edge 72z features Rapid Boot HDD Accelerator and up to 1600MHz DDR3 memory, spill resistant keyboard, the ThinkCentre Edge 92z boasts of a 21.5in wide 1080p LED HD display, optional 10 point multi touch screen, 2GB optional graphics and a compact foot print to save desk space.

Lenovo ThinkCentre Edge 72z and 92z will be available at Think exclusive stores and multi brand outlets, at a price starting from approximately Rs. 27,500 + tax and Rs. 59,600 + tax respectively.

APP

# Yahoo launches App for Cricket fans

Yahoo! India brings the first-ever full-fledged cricket app. This app is available for free on the Windows, iOS and Android marketplace and offers a slew of features and user-friendly interaction for the user to follow live matches, and also keep a tab on the recent and upcoming ones.

The app is the first to offer a complete match experience in a variety of ways –with live scores, detailed ball-by-ball commentary which can be filtered by wickets, 4s and 6s;

an interactive score card which allows the user to browse through the batting line up, fall of wickets and a complete chronology of how a match progressed.

With this app from Yahoo! Cricket, users can now catch all international matches on-the-go. On a non-match day, the app will connect the user to specially created photo-galleries, latest news articles on the game, player and team profiles, as well as results of completed matches, and schedules of upcoming ones.

Notebook

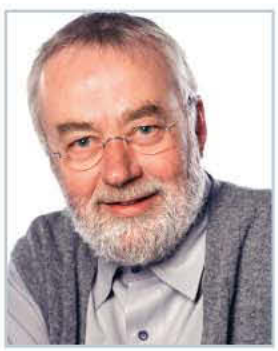
# Fujitsu Refreshes Entire Lifebook Notebook Portfolio for 2012

Fujitsu announces the new 2012 portfolio of Lifebook notebooks for business users. Designed with the latest 3rd generation Intel Core processors and offering feature upgrades, Fujitsu's 2012 Lifebook portfolio delivers the usability, flexibility and comprehensive connectivity required by ever-changing business requirements and all-day mobile computing.

New models to join the already wide Lifebook family provide professional users with the ultimate choice. Fujitsu is a one-stop-shop for all mobile business computing needs, from ultra-portable 12.1-inch to desktop replacement 17.3-inch models. New for summer 2012 are the all-round Lifebook N532, LH532, AH532, AH552/SL and UH552, the versatile Lifebook UH572 and S792 and the top-of-the-range Ultrabook, the Lifebook U772.They haven't given any clues regarding the prices.

Industry

# Bill Moggridge, designer of first laptop computer, dies at age 69



Bill Moggridge, the designer of the first ever laptop computer, has died, aged 69, following a battle with cancer.

In the late 1970s the British-born designer was tasked with creating a rugged, portable computer. Moggridge came up with the Grid Compass, the first clamshell laptop that combined a screen, keyboard and computer in one case.

Released in 1982 the Grid Compass was so successful it was used by Nasa in its space-shuttle missions during the 1980s and by the US military.

The influential design went on to become the laptop we all know and love today.

His professional life also saw him advise the British government on design education, become a trustee of the Design Museum in London and take on the role of visiting professor at the Royal College of Art in London. Moggridge also wrote several books on design as well as producing videos, presentations and teaching. In his most recent role Moggridge was director of the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York.

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Smartphone

# Samsung announces Galaxy Note 2

Samsung has announced the 5.5in Galaxy Note 2, the successor to last year's already massive Galaxy Note 5.3in stylus-equipped smartphone.

Despite the larger screen, Samsung claims the new Galaxy Note 2 will be easier to hold than its predecessor since it's taller but also a bit narrower. The new phone will weigh 180g and, like its predecessor, comes with a stylus for taking notes and drawing.

Samsung has added several new features that rely on the pen, addressing the relative lack of pen-specific features in the first Galaxy Note. Sliding the pen out of its nook while talking on the phone will automatically open a blank note onscreen so you can jot down important details. The pen is pressure sensitive for use in drawing apps. The pen can even be used to 'draw' shortcut commands for tasks such as opening apps or calling or emailing frequent contacts.

A feature called Airview allows the pen to preview content, such as photos and emails, without having to open them – simply hover the pen over the item to preview its contents. Compared to the paucity of apps that supported the original Galaxy Note, Samsung announced that several third party apps will support the Galaxy Note 2 such as Moleskine note taking app and Autodesk Sketchbook.

Samsung promised that some of the new software features will be available as a free software update for existing Galaxy Note users, but the company has yet to confirm a release date for this upgrade or which features existing Note owners can expect.

The Galaxy Note will come with Android 4.1 Jelly Bean preinstalled and be powered by 2GB of memory and a 1.6GHz quad core processor. The phone is available in India around all major mobile stores and Samsung Mobile Cafe's at Rs. 39990.

CES

# Verizon Chairman and CEO Lowell McAdam to Deliver Keynote Address at 2013 International CES

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) has announced that Lowell C. McAdam, chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of Verizon Communications, will deliver a keynote address at the 2013 International CES. The 2013 CES, the world's largest and most important technology event, runs January 8-11, 2013. McAdam's keynote address will take place at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8 in The Venetian's Palazzo Ballroom.

With more than 730 wireless exhibitors expected at the 2013 CES, mobile connected devices are driving the industry as consumers seek mobility to stay connected anywhere, anytime. CEA research shows that smartphone sales will see continued growth this year and will remain the primary revenue driver for the industry. Shipment revenues for smartphones are expected to reach $33.7 billion in 2012, with more than 108 million units shipping to dealers, up 24 percent from 2011.

"As a world leader in providing innovation in communications, mobility and entertainment, Verizon's success comes from the key role it plays in the lives of consumers," said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO, CEA. "We are excited to bring Lowell McAdam to the CES keynote stage to share his vision for the future of expanded access to technology, empowering consumers around the world."

The 2013 CES will feature 3,000 global technology companies unveiling the latest consumer technology products and services across 15 major product categories including the latest in audio, automotive electronics, connected home technologies, digital imaging/photography, electronic gaming, entertainment/content and more. For more information on the 2013 International CES, visit CESweb.org.

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TABLET

# Samsung Galaxy Note 800

Scribble and doodle on this new Android tablet

The Samsung Galaxy Note 10.1 is an Android tablet that can be used with a stylus as well as with your fingers. This seems a little old-fashioned, but the stylus can be useful for taking notes, drawing and other tasks.

The first Galaxy Note was a large smartphone with a 5.3in screen, but this tablet model has a 10.1in screen with a resolution of 1,280x800 pixels. The stylus is stored away in a small nook when not in use. Samsung has modified the Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich operating system in several intriguing ways, many of which are supposed to take advantage of the stylus.

The stylus automatically brings up a window where you can launch the included stylus-enabled apps including a notetaking app and Adobe Photoshop Touch. The notetaking app is surprisingly useful letting you quickly jot down scribbles and annotate photos. It can even convert your scribbles into text that can be copied, pasted and edited in other apps, although this is rather sluggish and the results can need editing.

Unfortunately using the stylus isn't as seamless and enjoyable as it should be. The slightly sluggish responsiveness of Android touchscreens that's a mild annoyance on other tablets can be infuriating here. There's often a small but noticeable lag between drawing something with the stylus and it appearing on screen. It's especially noticeable when trying to draw or paint in art apps.

There's currently only a limited selection of apps available that make use of the stylus, both in the Google Play store and Samsung's own dedicated app store. Samsung has promised more stylus apps are on the way though such as Autodesk's Sketchbook drawing app.

Most tablet apps run full-screen which isn't always convenient for certain tasks. The Note can run two apps side-by-side, such as the note taking app and the web browser when can be very handy. This only works with a very small set of the included apps though so it's not as useful as it could be.

A separate but related trick is the ability to run several mini apps, such as a calendar or calculator, which float over the top of other apps. They're basic but can come be useful. Videos can run in a small floating window so you can continue watching while using other apps, but this only works with Samsung's own video player and not other video apps such as Youtube or Lovefilm.

Aside from the stylus and Samsung's Android modifications the Note 10.1 is otherwise is a fairly standard Android tablet. The 1,280x800 pixel screen is bright and sharp and the tablet as a whole weighs 600g which is standard for a 10in model. It's a bit thicker than other tablets due to its stylus nook, but it's not too bad. There's a micro SD memory card slot for adding more storage if the 16GB isn't enough.

The battery lasted nine hours and 13 minutes when playing videos which is good for an Android tablet. Although the Note has the same 1.4GHz quad core processor as the Galaxy S3 it doesn't feel quite as smooth as the smartphone. Apps such as games run fine, but the web browser often became sluggish although quitting other apps helped.

We Say: This stylus-equipped tablet has promise, but sluggish performance, touchscreen issues and a lack of apps means you should think carefully before buying.

### WE SAY

*Unusual split screen mode, good battery life, extra feature have rough edges*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

### DETAILS

**Contact:** Samsung India
**Buy:** samsung.com/in

SMARTPHONE

# HTC One V

The cheapest Android 4 smartphone we've seen yet

We've reviewed a handful of Android 4 Ice Cream Sandwich smartphones over the last few months, but they've all been on the pricey side. The HTC One V, on the other hand, is a rather more affordable option.

The metal-clad HTC One V is clearly from the same family as the One X and S models we've already reviewed, but it's smaller than both and has an angled 'chin' at the bottom of its case. This serves no practical purpose that we can see, but a pop-off panel on its rear gives access to the SIM and microSD card slots (though not the non-removable battery).

Anyone spending this amount of money on a new smartphone obviously needs to lower their expectations when it comes to certain specifications, and that's certainly the case with the HTC One V's screen. Its 3.7in size and 480x800 pixel resolution wouldn't be out of place on a smartphone from two years ago, but while it lacks the crispness and vibrancy of the AMOLED screens found on the far costlier Samsung Galaxy S3 and HTC One V, it's still clear, bright and perfectly adequate for everyday use.

Onboard storage is another area where HTC has cut costs as the One V comes with a mere 1GB. This is still more than some other budget Android smartphones we've seen, but it makes a memory card a must for anyone fond of apps, photos and music.

The One V's five-megapixel camera is merely good rather than great since it produces images with a lot of noise and it needs a very steady hand when taking flash-free shots in anything other than bright light. There's next to no shutter lag though, and while video recording is limited to 720p rather than the increasingly popular 1080p, the ability to capture a still during shooting is a much more useful feature.

The relatively low price means the processor is a single-core 1GHz model, but this still feels smooth and sprightly. Our tests show this processor to only be a little slower than some dual-core Android 2.3 smartphones we've tested too, although it probably won't have as long a useful lifespan as models with more powerful multi-core chips.

HTC's 'Sense' interface is still in place, as are its selection of Home screen widgets, but much of the superfluous animation has been removed. This was probably done to take some strain off the single-core processor, but it seems to have made little positive impact on battery life. The One V lasted for a so-so 6.5 hours in our video playback test with flight mode enabled.

**WE SAY**

*Stylish sturdy, medicore battery life, single core processor*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** HTC India
**Buy:** www.htc.com/in/smartphone

MONITOR

# Philips 227E3QPH

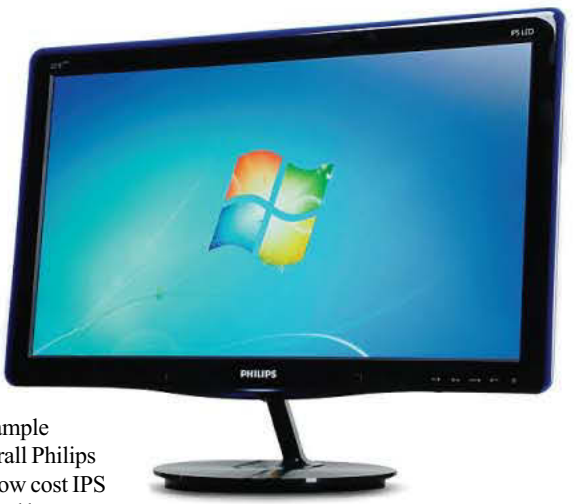
Inexpensive IPS screen with HDMI

Philips 227E3QPH is a sleek 22 inch IPS monitor. Much to our surprise, this low cost monitor has a HDMI input and features like PowerSensor and SmartContrast. It has a resolution of 1900x1200 with an aspect ratio of 4:3.

This piano finish all black monitor has a sleek stand, and looks elegant on any desktop. But the non-adjustable stand feels slightly flimsy, which is a bit of a let down. All the controls are placed on the front right side. The touch controls are neat, though difficult to use with one hand. We had to hold the monitor steady with one hand while pressing on the control buttons.

This Power Sensor feature continuously checks whether a person is sitting in front of the monitor. If it does not detect a person, it goes to standby mode automatically, thus saving a lot of power. SmartContrast is another notable feature, this controls the dynamic ratio. The interface is very simple and lets you control brightness, contrast, dynamic ratio, colour components and aspect ratio.

The monitor has good viewing angle and delivers deep blacks. The display has crisp colours with ample details and no lag. Overall Philips 227E3QPH is a good low cost IPS monitor for the office and home.




**WE SAY**

*Decent performance, good features, mediocre stand*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** Philips India
**Buy:** www.india.philips.com

SPEAKER

# F&D W330BT

An all round bluetooth speaker

It is natural that our expectations increase over time. Couple of years ago multimedia speakers were primarily designed to be connected to a notebook or a PC. With the growth in multimedia consumption, dependance on listening to music through a PC is decreasing and wireless speakers have flooded the market.

The new W330BT is a 2.1 speaker set designed for use with a desktop or a laptop with an added advantage of being able to play music wirelessly. The speaker system consists of two satellite units and a woofer unit. The cubic satellites are made of plastic instead of wood and have a golden ring on the front. The all black unit can be placed on an edge and occupy minimal desk space. Each unit has a 2.5 in driver. The woofer is made of wood with a traditional box design and has a 6.5 in driver.

On the right of the woofer unit there is a large volume knob with a white LED ring around it. The bass, treble and wireless buttons are housed on the rear.

Installing W330BT is a fairly simple task. Just connect the satellite units to the woofer, the power cord to a power source and you're done! In case you want to connect it to a desktop or notebook you just need use another cable.

To test Bluetooth streaming, we used an Android phone, iPod Touch, iPad and Samsung Galaxy Tab. And in all the cases there weren't any hiccups. One just needs to press a button and a rapidly blinking blue light will indicate an active bluetooth status. Then all you need to do is to scan for the speaker and pair with it from your Bluetooth enabled device.

Aside from testing it through several devices, we tested W330BT with multiple genres of music as well. To our delight it performed very decently. It fell slightly short while playing metal tracks, where we felt that the satellite units were lacking bass, but when corrected through the woofer knob it became almost perfect. The mids and the lows are pretty good, high's had a pinch of bass missing. All in all the speakers performed pretty well throughout the test.

Though W330BT is officially priced at Rs. 5990 MRP, it is available online for somewhere around Rs. 3500 which is a pretty decent deal. We highly recommend this product.

**WE SAY**

*Budget pricing, easy connectivity*

**OVERALL:** ★★★½☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** F&D India
**Buy:** www.fendaindia.com

SOFTWARE

# Ashampoo Uninstaller 5

All round performance, boost for your computer

Obsolete applications are the biggest enemy of computers, they consume a lot of space and drain system resources. We generally depend on bundled 'Add/Remove programs' to get rid of these applications. But did you know that even after uninstalling most applications, they leave several associated folders, log files, registry entries and other unwanted matter behind. More often than not these files stay in your system forever, occupying large chunks of storage and leaving broken registry entries, gradually slowing down your system.

The solution is rather simple! Install a removal tool, more specifically an uninstaller. Ashampoo Uninstaller 5 is the perfect choice. When uninstalling a program, this smart tool removes everything associated with the program from your system .

The program comes with a utility suite similar to windows system restore, but is more flexible. To do its job, it does not just save a registry log, it rather monitors the file and system operation in real time. Ashampoo Uninstaller 5 knows every change a program makes to the system and when the time comes, it reverses the actions to wipe out every trace of that program.

It also manages the system files, restore points and removes dead system shortcuts and duplicate files. The program works unobtrusively and does not hog system memory. The latest version is backward compatible with the earlier versions, and whenever you update to the latest version, it reuses older logs to maintain seamless continuity.

The service the program provides justifies it's price. After installing this program, you don't need to invest in a registry cleaner, defragmenter or disk scrubber. Only for our readers, this program can be installed for free from our CD.

**WE SAY**

*Install the full version from our CD*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** Ashampoo
**Buy:** www.ashmpoo.com

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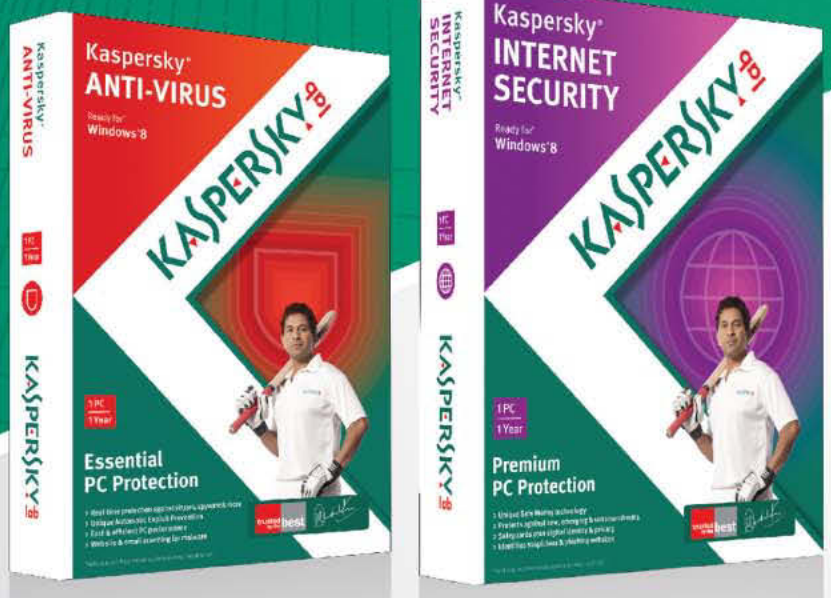


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ROUTER

# Western Digital My Net N900

Aimed at small business, a good debut for WD

The storage specialist Western Digital has entered the wireless router market with a consumer wireless router N900. With a black casing, My Net N900 looks elegant and stylish. Though the body feels a little flimsy, the matte-glossy texture and silver edges gives this router an overall stunning look.

The WPS button and the LED status indicators are placed in the front, while the ethernet source port along with 7 other ethernet ports are at the back. This space is also shared by a DC input, power button, a USB3 and a USB2 port.

My Net N900 is a dual band router, capable of supporting speeds upto 450 MBPS through both bands. You can use this router both on 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands as per your requirement. The installation process is extremely easy. The router was in action in under two minutes. The bundled CD comes in an illustrated jacket with details on connecting wireless and windows clients. We installed this device using a Windows 7 PC through Ethernet.

Once installed, the N900 checks the existing firmware online and upgrades if needed. WD also offers an array of additional software on their website to enhance your internet experience, like print sharing and router monitoring.

Their web based router management interface is called My Dashboard. We are quite impressed with the well-laid out interface, easy configuration and extensive menus. The N900 supports features like DMZ, firewall, parental controls, MAC filtering and Ipv6. Apart from sharing files through USB ports, N900 features a storage wizard which lets you share your files across devices using DLNA, iTunes and FTP servers.

Operating at 2.4GHz, this router provided amazing throughput but felt a tad short when using the 5GHz mixed mode. In India, most homes and SOHOs use 2.4GHz, for which WD's My Net N900 is a perfect fit.

**WE SAY**

*Comperhensive monitoring, great speed on 2.4GHz mixed mode*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** WD India
**Buy:** www.wdc.com

EAR PHONE

# Logitech Ultimate Ear 350

An affordable earphone with neutral sound

In Ear, the latest Noise Isolation series from Logitech claims to be the choice of musicians. The Ultimate Ear 350 comes encased in a lovely black package with a transparent front that allows a good look at the unit. On the back are testimonials written by two famous musicians claiming this to be their choice and meant for audiophiles.

The package contains a set of varying sized ear buds and a small plastic box to store the earphones when not in use. The box however is very small and it's difficult to store the earphones in it, on the go. The cable quality is decent, though the 3.5mm connector quality looks a little suspect.

We listened to music across genres to test the Ultimate Ears 350, we chose to play tracks in different formats as well as encoding. These included tracks at 160 KBPS, 320 VBR MP3's, Apple Lossless Files and a few FLAC tracks. We were aware that it's difficult to judge the quality of a new earphone, so we allowed a 50 hour burn in before the test.

The lows were perfect with ample bass, the mids were good too. The sound is neutral without any artificial exaggeration. The highs are fairly decent but aren't as loud as the others and do not hurt your ears. While listening to a few electronic and trance numbers, we felt the sound go a tad blunt and lose bass. But overall performance is quite decent.

All in all, the Ultimate Ears 350 earphones are worth the money, a decent buy in the price range.

**WE SAY**

*Good sound, small casing, average 3.5mm connector*

**OVERALL:** ★★★☆☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** Logitech India
**Buy:** www.logitech.com

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## SMARTPHONE

# iBall Andi 5c

Decent mid-range ICS smartphone

iBall has in the past launched a series of Android handsets, Andi 5c is the latest. This handset looks quite similar to Samsung's Galaxy Note.

Packed in an attractive box, Andi 5c comes bundled with many accessories. The front is jet black while the back is cased in textured grey plastic. Overall build quality is nice. The front is dominated by the 5in IPS display, just below the screen are three navigation buttons. A physical home button and two soft touch menu and back buttons.

The power/screen lock button is located on the right side of the device while the volume rocker is on the left. The micro USB port and a 3.5mm connector are housed on the top. A 5 megapixel camera along with a LED flash is housed at the back whereas the speaker grille is on the bottom.

The specifications are pretty average: an ARM Cortex A9 single core processor, paired with 512 MB of physical memory. The manufacturer's website claims that the phone has 4GB of internal memory, this in reality has been divided into two. The first partition is occupied by the operating system, while the second half (2GB) is accessible to users. However you can increase the memory up to 32GB by using a MicroSD card.

The 5 inch IPS display has a resolution of 480 x 800 pixels, which is good enough for phones that have screens measuring less than 4 inch, it is a bit low for a 5 inch screen. However the screen performs adequately with crisp colours and impressive viewing angles. Text looks a bit faded with noticeable distortion.

The stock ICS is fast to use, the touch experience is top notch, similar to any high end smart phone. Videos up to 720p are displayed well. Though the camera is quite average, snaps taken in ample light look good on screen but distort when zoomed into. However they are fairly decent for use on social media. We haven't tested video capture as it records only in 3GP mode.

This dual sim phone comes bundled with a 2300mAh battery, which lasts around a day and half even on heavy use. All in all, the Andi 5c delivers good performance on a budget.

**WE SAY**

*Good screen, poor camera*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** iBall India
**Buy:** www.iball.co.in

## CAMERA

# Sony Alpha SLT – A65

Good DSLR with superb burst mode

The Sony Alpha SLT-A65 DSLR inherits features from the earlier A33 and A55 models. The A65 has an OLED Electronic ViewFinder instead of a traditional pentaprism optical finder... A single change that helps the camera achieve outstandingly fast autofocus and high frame rates in burst mode. All this advance technology is available for a price of a budget DSLR !

The A65 is pretty compact and resembles an entry level camera like Canon EOS 1100. A single control wheel sits on the front grip, controlling shutter speed and F/stop in shutter or aperture priority modes. The power and shutter button is on the top right with two more buttons alongside controlling ISO and EV compensation. The control dial is placed on the top. Other controls are grouped at the rear next to the 3 inch adjustable screen.

For connectivity, there are miniUSB and mini HDMI ports. The camera also has a GPS receiver that lets you add location information to the image. Burst shooting is the most impressive feature of the A65, normally this is found on more advance models. You need to use class 10 storage cards, otherwise you will experience a noticable shutter lag.

The focus was sharp in all our test images, the camera was able to capture rich details. The images till ISO 3200 were excellent though noise started creeping in at higher ISO values. Images had noticeable grain at ISO 6400 and 16000 but were usable with some minor post processing. The video quality is good, autofocus was spot on while shooting video and there was no noticeable noise while changing focus. But we recommend you opt for an external mike.

All in all, Sony Alpha A65 is a great camera. The 24 megapixel sensor, vibrant picture quality, great OLED screen and fast burst mode make it a winner.

**WE SAY**

*Quality images, friendly interface, great autofoucus*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

**DETAILS**

**Contact:** Sony India
**Buy:** www.sony.co.in

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OPERATING SYSTEM

# Microsoft Windows 8 review

A big change to the look and feel of the world's most widespread PC operating system

Windows 8 is the newest version of the Microsoft operating system (OS) we're all familiar with on our laptops and desktop PCs. It's no exaggeration to say that this latest edition is the biggest revamp since Windows 95.

The biggest change is the interface, which has been designed to work with a touchscreen or with a keyboard and mouse. Microsoft claims this makes it perfect for tablets and more familiar computers. It had the development name 'Metro' but is now referred to simply as 'Windows 8'.

The biggest single change is the Start menu. It has been replaced by a new Start screen, a change that is going to leave may Windows users asking where has the start button gone?'.

Users of Windows Phone 7 will find it instantly familiar, though. The large and colourful Live Tiles take the place of icons. You can pick and choose which tiles you want to have 'pinned' to your Start screen with the rest accessible from the 'all apps' button.

Besides opening programs, the tiles also continuously update to show new information. For example the Calendar tile will show your next upcoming appointment, while the Mail tile shows how many unread emails await your attention.

The Start screen scrolls horizontally instead of vertically. On a touchscreen PC or tablet you would swipe the screen to scroll, but it's also possible to scroll using a mouse wheel, scroll bar or the arrow keys.

All of the tasks that used to be accomplished using the Start menu are now done from the Start screen, from accessing settings to quickly searching for programs and files. The simplified, colourful interface is startlingly different if you're used to Windows 7.

In fact, the Start screen isn't just a Start menu replacement – it's a whole new way of using a Windows computer. Software that is designed to be compatible with the Windows 8 interface, such as Internet Explorer or the email program, take over the entire screen. None of the menus and toolbars you will be familiar with are to be seen.

Extra buttons and controls are accessed by either swiping down from the top or the bottom of the screen if you have a touchscreen or by clicking the right mouse button.

System-wide options, such as getting back to the Start screen or searching, are accessed from another new tool called the Charms bar. To make this appear, swipe from the right-hand side of your touchscreen or hover the mouse at the top right-hand side of the screen.

Although Windows 8 feels considerably smoother and more responsive on a touchscreen than Windows 7, the new way of working in the Start screen and Windows 8 apps is initially strange and frustratingly confounding when using a keyboard and mouse. You do get used to it, but the preinstalled apps are basic and the stripped-down, full-screen interfaces fail to take advantage of a PC's high-resolution screen.

The traditional desktop and more familiar programs are still present in Windows 8 though. Click the Desktop icon and the old-style interface returns. Even if you're dedicated to the new Start screen and Metro apps, the old desktop is actually still essential for even the most basic tasks from accessing USB memory keys to installing drivers for printers and other peripherals, as well as for using existing non-Metro programs.

This constant switching back and forth feels disjointed and inconsistent for experienced users and can be confusing for novices. This is especially true when accessing files from within programs. Metro apps have a completely different interface for opening and saving files compared to traditional programs.

Tweaks to the traditional desktop interface include the addition of tabbed Microsoft Office-style Ribbon toolbars to Windows Explorer. Although this can look intimidating, it does ultimately make all the various commands and options easier to find.

One undeniably useful feature that needs to be taken further is Windows' integration with Microsoft's cloud services. You're encouraged to sign in with your Microsoft account when installing Windows 8. Doing so allows you to seamlessly synchronise your settings, but not apps or files stored on your hard disk, between multiple Windows 8 computers. Files stored on the Microsoft Skydrive online storage service will appear on all your Windows 8 computers automatically.

The standard version of the new operating system, simply called Windows 8, will suit most home users and is available as a download. However the Media Centre feature from Windows 7 for recording TV is now an optional add-on. There are Pro and Enterprise versions with specialised features aimed at users who work in medium and large businesses.

There's also a special version called Windows RT that's only available preinstalled on tablets that use power-efficient ARM processors rather than traditional Intel or AMD chips. It's identical to Windows 8, but can't run existing Windows 8-interface programs.

Windows 8 is a big gamble for Microsoft. In changing an interface that millions of people have become familiar with over the course of almost 20 years, it risks alienating many of its customers. The increasing shift from sales of laptops to those of tablets means that Microsoft has to find a way to make Windows work with touchscreens - something Windows 7 completey failed to do.

Whether it can do better than Apple or Android on that type of device will be down to two things: the quality of the apps that developers produce and the speed with which customers become familiar with the Windows 8 interface.

But on the desktop and laptop, with touch or without, the Windows 8 interface is confusing at first and the access controls for some of the important tools are fiddly. That's a shame, as there are some interesting new features behind it.

## WE SAY

*Inexpensive, Intergrates with microsoft cloud service, New interface is awkward*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

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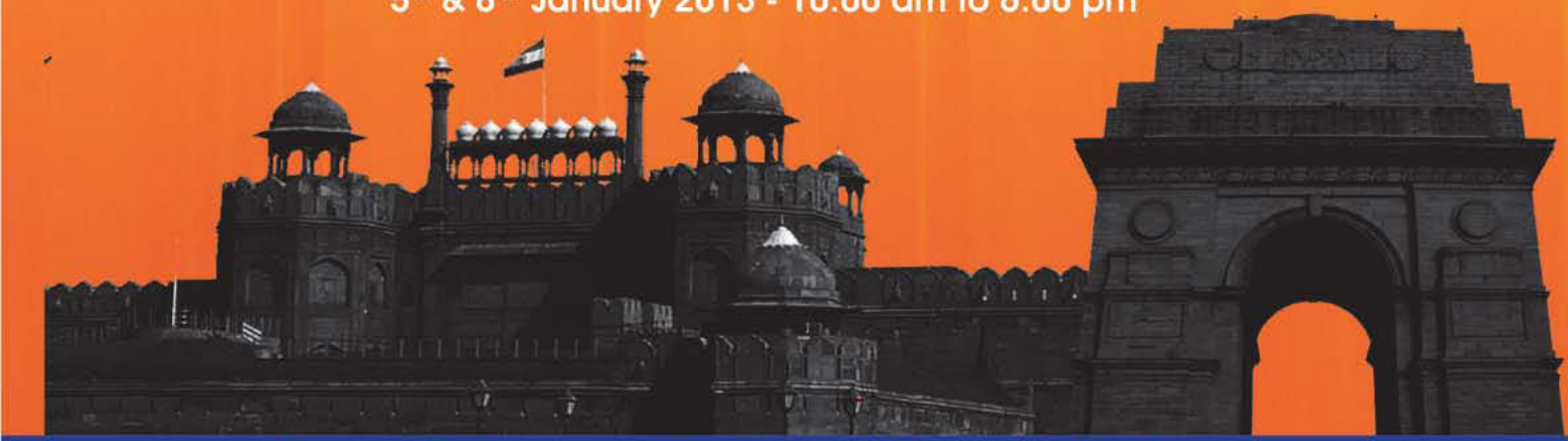

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## Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

**Analogue** Signal whose value varies continuously over time. For example, when a person speaks, the sound wave is an analogue signal, varying smoothly as they talk. Analogue signal information differs from digital signals, which move sharply between fixed values. To help visualise this, consider the difference between an analogue watch face with sweeping hands and a digital watch display, which jumps from one number to the next.

**Animated GIF** Stands for Graphics Interchange Format, a popular file format for storing graphic images, often for use on websites. An animated GIF is simply a string of these images, creating the illusion of moving pictures when played back.

**Attachment** A computer file, such as a word-processor document or spreadsheet, sent along with an email message.

**Delay** An audio effect used to create the sound of a repeating echo.

**mp3** A standard for compressing digital audio. The sound quality of an mp3 file is close to that of CD audio but needs only a fraction of the storage space.

**Right-click** Most actions in Windows are performed by clicking the left mouse button. However, since the arrival of Windows 95, many programs, and Windows itself, make use of the right mouse button click to display a pop-up menu with special functions.

OPERATING SYSTEM

# Apple Mac OS X 10.8 Mountain Lion

## A small meow rather than a huge roar

Mac OS X 10.8, also known as Mountain Lion, is the latest version of Apple's operating system for its range of Mac computers.

One feature that is easy to overlook is greater integration with Apple's iCloud online storage service. Some programs, such as Apple's iWork office suite, will now offer to save files to iCloud by default - 5GB of free storage is included. It is not quite as flexible as rival services such as Dropbox though. Files created by one iCloud-enabled program will not show up in another unless you manually drag and drop files between them. The iCloud website also currently only shows files uploaded by iWork.

Mountain Lion continues the trend in the previous version of Mac OS X, 10.7 Lion, of incorporating new features first seen in iOS. Notification Center is a new system for alert messages, such as notices about new tweets or emails. Notifications can be customised so they are not too intrusive. The catch is that these notifications are only available in programs distributed through the Mac App Store and websites programmed to take advantage of them.

Twitter is now closely integrated. Share buttons in applications such as Safari let you tweet without having to use the Twitter website or app. There is even the option to write a new tweet from the Notifications drawer. If you would rather send a text, the revamped iChat program, now called Messages, can send free SMS messages to iPhones and iPads.

Previously an iTunes-exclusive feature, Airplay lets you stream video and audio from any application to your TV if it has an Apple TV set-top box attached. This is useful if you do not have a smart TV. Sadly, video streaming only works on newer Macs and even then we had to tweak the settings of our router by to get smooth video. Audio streaming should work with many older Macs though and it also works with Apple's Airport Express router.

Mountain Lion has a new Dictation feature that listens to your voice and transcribes it into text. It is surprisingly accurate but correcting mistakes is a chore and it sends the text to Apple's servers for transcription, so you will need a fast internet connection.

Unlike Microsoft and its Security Essentials program for Windows, Apple does not include a full antivirus program with Mac OS X.

There are several new security features though. The most notable is Gatekeeper. This can be set to allow only programs downloaded from the Mac App Store, as well as non-App Store programs from developers who have security certificates issued by Apple, to run. Many popular programs, such as those from Microsoft and Adobe, don't fall into either category so you would have to ignore Gatekeeper anyway in order to install them.

A few flaws from Lion remain untouched. For those without broadband is that Mountain Lion is only available as a download from the Mac App Store. Lion was also available on a USB memory key, but this is not an option for Mountain Lion.

### WE SAY

*Cheap, great iCloud enhancement handy notifications*

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

### DETAILS

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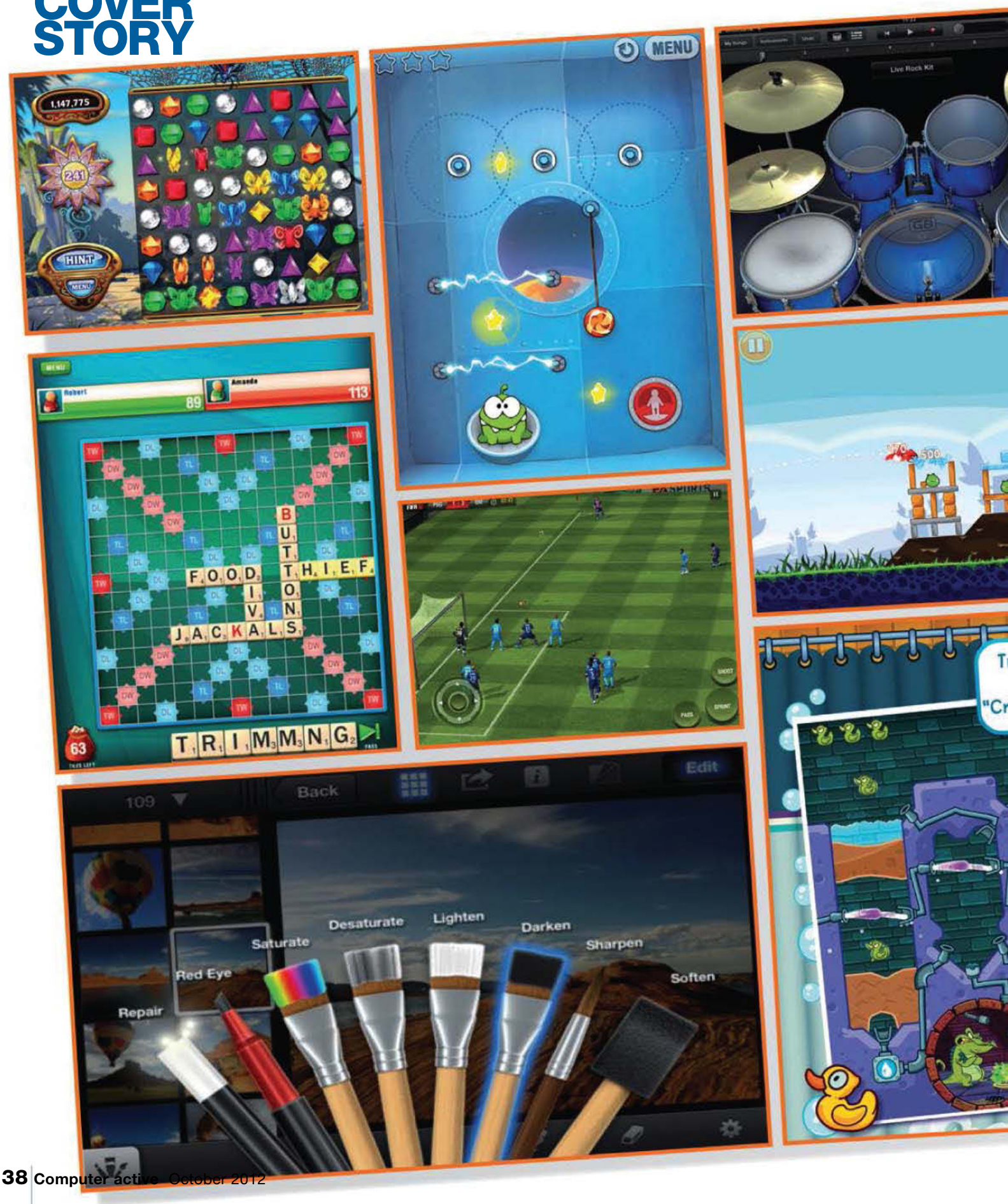
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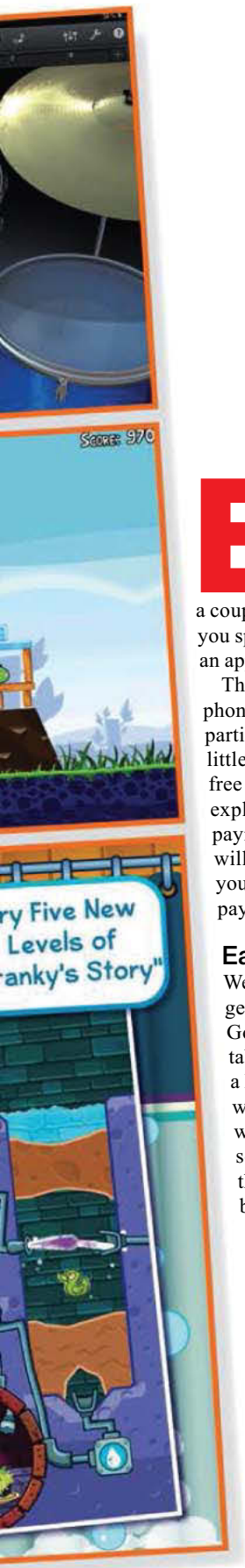


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We will be concentrating on how to get free apps for Apple iOS and Google Android smartphones and tablets. But do not worry if you have a Blackberry or Windows Phone as we have tips for you, too. And if you would simply like some good free software for your PC or Mac, look at the 'Free PC and Mac applications' box on this page .

Both the iTunes App Store (for iOS) and Google Play (formerly Market, for Android) have thousands of free apps, and the best places to browse them are the respective 'free' charts. To browse these quickly, Android users should launch a desktop web browser and visit the Google Play store (***https://play.google.com***). Click Android Apps on the left, followed by Top Free to browse the rankings. In iTunes on a PC or Mac, click iTunes Store followed by App Store and pick between iPhone or iPad at the top. On the right, you will see Top Charts. Scroll to Free Apps and click See All to browse the top 200. The App Store home page also offers a 'Great Free Apps' showcase, and a free 'App of the week' (which is an app that usually requires paying for).

So far, so obvious. But these rankings are just the tip

▲ Use iTunes' Power Search to filter out paid-for apps, so that only free or 'lite' apps will appear in your search results

## Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

**Android** An operating system for portable computers and mobile phones, based on the Linux system that is used on some PCs.

**Dropdown menu** A list of options that appears when you click a menu button, marked with a down-pointing arrow.

**iOS** The operating system used by Apple's iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch devices.

**RSS** Really Simple Syndication. A simple format for automatically distributing news headlines and other content from the web.

**Smartphone** A modern phone with computer functions on which users can install programs.

**Tablet** A type of computer with a touch–sensitive screen instead of a keyboard.

## Free PC and Mac applications

Apple's Mac App Store allows you to install your apps on any Apple-branded OS X machine that you "own or control" in a personal, non-commercial capacity, meaning that you can install your own apps on your child's Mac, for example. Sign in to the App Store with your Apple ID, click Purchases, then Install to download the app free. Then sign out again.

Some PC and Mac developers offer impressive 'starter' versions of their software; Serif is one example (www.serif.com/freedownloads). And do not forget the various web app offerings, either. Google Documents (***http://docs.google.com***) and Microsoft Office Web Apps (***http://office.microsoft.com***) are free and capable web-based productivity tools, for example. Similarly, Adobe offers a free online version of its popular Photoshop editing tool, at ***www.snipca.com/6417***.

▲ **The App Shopper website tracks iOS (and Mac) app costs and will alert you when prices hit zero**

of the free-app iceberg, and if you are after something specific, a search is a more effective way to find it.

Google Play enables search results to be filtered. Use the All Prices dropdown menu to choose Free. The iTunes Store offers a similar feature. Click the search bar at the top and execute a search. When the results appear, click Power Search in the top left, and use the first dropdown menu to select Apps. The options to the right will change to display a 'Search only for free Apps' tickbox. Click to tick it, type in your search term and click Search.

## Strike a lite

As well as selling paid-for apps, some developers release free 'lite' versions. These will often contain adverts or offer fewer features than their paid-for siblings, though the exact limitations differ from app to app and, in some cases, they are minimal. If you find a paid app in iTunes that you would like to try, click its name to view the details, then scroll down to the 'More Apps by this developer' heading. You may well find a free version, though you will need to click on each app individually to check the price.

Alternatively, scroll to the bottom for the 'Customers also bought' section, which could point you in the direction of similar (and possibly better) apps, some of which may be free. In Google Play, an app's details page sometimes has a 'More from developer' panel on the left, which even lists the price of each app, meaning you will spot the free ones in an instant. Alternatively, click the developer name just below the app name at the top. Below are also lists of apps other users viewed or installed, which may point you towards similar offerings.

Both the Windows Phone Marketplace and Blackberry App World also have top free app listings on their home pages.

## Track your apps

App prices fluctuate all the time, meaning sometimes paid apps will be offered free for a limited time. One way to take advantage of price movements is by using a price-tracking tool such as App Shopper (***www.appshopper.com***). Click Register at the top right, fill in your details, verify your account by clicking the link in the email you receive, then log in to the site. Now browse to find apps using the What's New tab or the search bar. Under the price of an app, find the little Want It tickbox, tick it then click 'Wish List' at the top. Over on the right is a 'Price Drop Notifications' box, where you can choose to be notified by email or RSS when apps you want drop in price.

App Shopper also has a list of all apps whose prices have dropped to nothing. Click What's New, then use the filters just below the tabs to click Price Drops and Free. Free App A Day is another option for iOS (***www.freeappaday.com***), as is App Free.

For Android and Windows Phone 7, there isn't quite the variety of price-trackers. Android Rundown (***www.snipca.com/6415***) lists apps whose prices have dropped, some of which will be free.

On a Windows Phone device, point its web browser to ***www.snipca.com/6416*** for a list of apps that have had their prices cut, and many of which are free.

▲ **Set up Home Sharing in iTunes to install paid-for apps on iOS devices in your home**

## iTunes Home Sharing

Perhaps the best way for Apple owners to get free apps is to use iTunes' Home Sharing feature. This allows iOS apps to be copied between a maximum of five computers in your home. Apple's terms and conditions allow apps you have bought for personal, non-commercial use to be installed on any iOS device that you "own or control" in a personal capacity, so not only is this trick legal but iTunes helps you to do it.

To transfer apps in this way, open iTunes on the first computer, point to Advanced and choose Turn On Home Sharing. Type your Apple ID and password and click Create Home Share. Do the same on a second computer, using the same Apple ID. If prompted, authorise the second computer to play content from your Apple ID (you can authorise a total of five computers – iPhones, iPads and iPods do not count towards this).

Choose slides from different presentations with Powerpoint 2003

With Home Share enabled on both computers, look for the Shared heading in the iTunes sidebar. On the destination computer, click the triangle next to the other machine's name under Shared, to expand the list of media types.

Click Apps to browse everything on the source computer (the one with the synchronised apps). Drag the one you are after onto your own Library at the top of the iTunes sidebar. The beige area at the top of iTunes will show the progress of the copy, which may take some time depending on how big the app is. Once it is copied, connect any iOS device that synchronises with this computer, click its entry under Devices, then click Apps in the bar at the top. In the list, tick the box next to the app you have copied and click Apply in the lower-right-hand corner to copy it to the second iOS device.

## Sharing Android apps

In the same way iOS apps are tied to an Apple ID, Android apps are tied to a Google account. However, they can be installed on an "unlimited amount of times on any device" for personal, non-commercial use. This means that if you buy an app, you can sign in to Google Play on your partner's or child's Android device that you own and download any previously purchased apps.

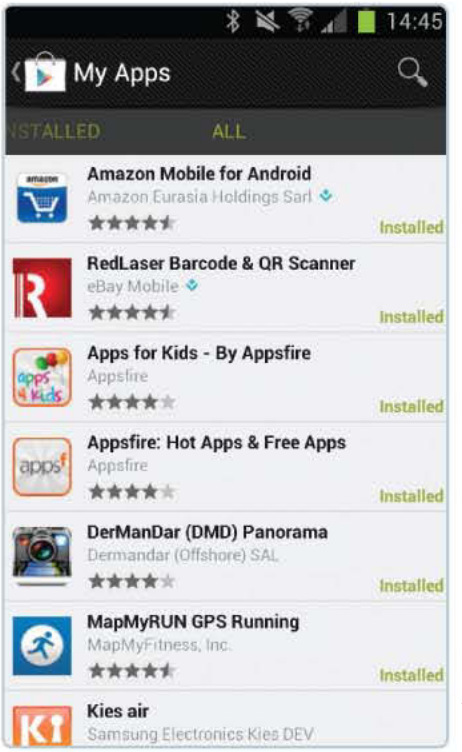
To do this, tap Settings followed by Accounts & Sync and then Add Account. Opt not to sync any data, then open the Google Play store and tap Menu followed by Accounts and choose your Google account. Tap Menu followed by My Apps and swipe across to All, where you can tap through and install apps associated with your account. To remove your account later, return to Accounts & Sync, select your Google account and tap Remove account.

## Befriend the developers

Apple iOS developers can distribute their apps outside of the App Store for testing purposes, to a maximum of 100 devices. If you can persuade a developer to make your device one of the 100, they can send you apps free (usually in exchange for feedback). How much luck you have with this is likely to depend on the size of the outfit behind the app. Large organisations will probably be doing extensive internal testing but smaller companies sometimes request external testers.

You can contact an app's developers by clicking the Website or Support link on its App Store page in iTunes. If they let you test it, they will need to set up various things, and will need your handset's unique device identifier (UDID). To find this, connect the device to your computer, click its name in iTunes and find the Serial Number entry on the Summary screen. Click the number, which will change to 'Identifier (UDID)'. Send this to the developer. When they send you the app, it will arrive as an .ipa file. Double-click it to add it to your iTunes library, then synchronise it to your device as normal.

Alternatively, developers may give offer promotional codes for their apps. If you receive one, sign in to the App Store in iTunes, click your email address in the top-right corner and choose Redeem. This will allow you to download the app without having to pay for it.




Change measurements to pixels using Publisher 2007, if designing something for the web

## Asim Warsi -V.P Samsung Mobile

**How important are apps in the smartphone ecosystem?**
Launch of innovative applications has revolutionized today's era. Apps on smartphones offer a plethora of choices ranging from productivity, fitness, games, music, movies to healthcare and education too.

By the end of 2014, Gartner forecasts over 185 billion applications will have been downloaded from mobile app stores. Thereby concluding that today's consumers are more aware of their choices when buying a smartphone device, and are increasingly driving most of their activities, communications and even free time/entertainment into the digital environment.

**Which mobile operating system according to you will dominate the next 5 years?**
At Samsung , we continue to provide Smartphones on the Android , bada and the Windows platforms .According to Gartner, there were 50.8 million Android-powered units shipped during the second quarter of last year and 104.8 million units shipped during the second quarter of this year. These numbers clearly show that Android is increasingly gaining traction with consumers globally

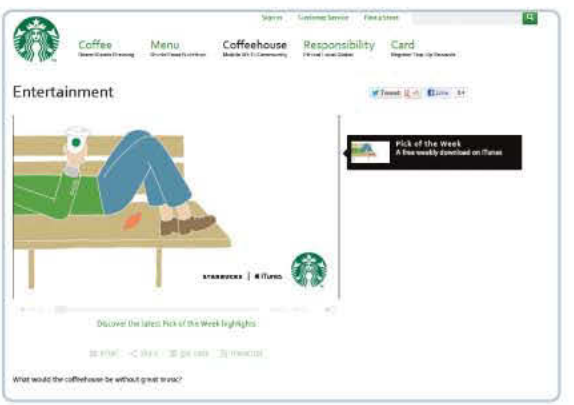
**What are your plans for BADA?**

**How apps are helping you to develop your own Ecosystem?**
Samsung "bada", meaning "ocean" in Korean, is a driving force in accomplishing Samsung's vision of a 'Smartphone for everyone.'

To achieve this vision, Samsung bada offers a feature-rich, 'open' platform for providing enhanced mobile experiences to consumers, and a complete mobile ecosystem through a developer support program that both the developers and consumers will benefit from. With bada, Samsung has created a developer eco-system in India, wherein Indian developers are being encouraged to create apps customized for the Indian market.

**Tell us about your plans for the Samsung App store.**
Samsung is strengthening the application ecosystem for its customers.

The company is actively working with application development companies in India now with an objective of creating an eco-system of app developers for the Indian market. From a consumer's standpoint, Samsung aims to deliver a novel experience, new content and applications from this rich developer pool. We have over 60,000 applications available to Indian consumers on the Samsung Mobile Application Store.




Starbucks offers free iTunes content, including apps, every week

Convincing generous friends and relatives to gift apps is another way to receive freebies

### It's good to give…

If your friends or family can't think of what to get you for your birthday, why not suggest an app? While you can't (yet) do this for Android or Windows Phone apps, iOS and Blackberry app stores enable this.

On iOS, the giver needs to sign in to the iTunes Store on their computer, click through to an app's page and click the dropdown menu next to the price. Choose Gift This App and fill in the details required. Make sure they use your Apple ID as the email address. Do not forget they could also get you an iTunes gift card, which can be used to pay for any content on the iTunes Store (and Mac App Store). These are country-specific, so make sure they get you one for the India store.

On Blackberry devices, you can request apps as gifts from other Blackberry Messenger users. Find the app you would like on App World, click Request Gift, choose which of your contacts you think is feeling generous and click Send Gift Request.

There are more ways besides to get paid apps free – have you ever noticed the free iTunes cards in Starbucks, for example? These offer a different free item from the iTunes Store every week, some of which are apps. Each card has instructions on how to claim the freebie.

Apple traditionally runs an iTunes Christmas giveaway, offering 12 different pieces of paid-for content free for one day only. As the festive period draws near, download Apple's '12 Days of Christmas' app, which will point you to the daily freebie.

### There is such a thing as a free app

If you know where to look and have a little patience, there is a legal way to get any app on your smartphone or tablet, free. So whether you use a price-tracking site, exploit sharing options to transfer apps between devices or get given it by a family member or developer, you can fill your device with the apps you want, without affecting your bank balance. While there may be no such thing as a free lunch, there is such a thing as a free app.

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Apple Newsstand powered by MAGZTER

# Curbing the copycats

Concerned that your children could be copying their homework projects from the net? We explain how to tell and what you can do to stop it

Computers and the internet have helped revolutionise the way in which children and adults learn. With its roots in academia, it is not surprising that the internet has developed into such a positive force for education. But there are downsides. The most obvious negative element is the rise of a new kind of classroom cheating: online plagiarism. However, there are ways to curb the copycats and in this article we'll explain how.

## An age-old problem

Plagiarism is not a new phenomenon, but thanks to the internet it has never been so easy to pull off. There are millions of academic, research and exam papers online, along with encyclopaedias and experts to contact. A student merely needs to run an internet search or have access to another student's research in order to copy and paste single sentences or whole chunks of someone else's work into their own.

Even if you ask a question online and cut and paste the answer instead of rewriting it, this is considered plagiarism. There are even people online, who, for a fee, will write an essay or paper for students.

## Who are the culprits?

Plagiarism usually becomes a problem at secondary school. A survey released in January 2008 by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers showed that 58 per cent of teachers think internet plagiarism is a major problem among sixth-form pupils. But Barry Calvert of Plagiarism advice (***www.plagiarismadvice.org***), an organisation that gives advice on plagiarism to schools and colleges, believes that "it is not really a case of the problem being worse at one level or another". He says it's more a case that "bad practice and poor research technique learned early on in a student's academic career can lead to serious issues at university".

Essays or papers where someone else's work is used in part to highlight a point or argument is not plagiarism provided it is correctly referenced. In one case an A-level English student submitted work he had copied from a website and failed to credit the work properly. While that is certainly poor practice, it could also have been an accidental omission. However, the teacher, who should have known better and corrected the student, added the reference after the work was submitted.

So it is not surprising when Dr Judith Rowbotham, a

▲ Visit the Plagiarism Advice website for more information

historian at Nottingham Trent University, says that "the real problem we have at universities is that students don't come to us with an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism".

## Why worry about plagiarism?

Should you be worried if your child cuts and pastes content from the internet? Yes, explains Dr Rowbotham. "It's cheating, plain and simple. It not only harms academic research and integrity, it is also the theft of someone else's hard work.

"The student is then seen as untrustworthy and possibly out of their depth academically. In essence, they have thrown away the very reason why they go to school or university – and that is to learn," she said.

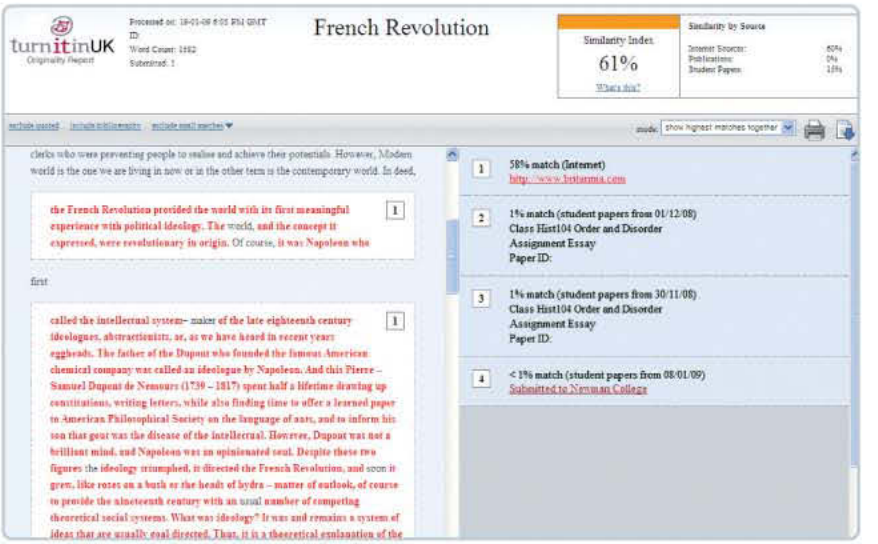
The penalties for plagiarism can be severe. Pupils can fail, have marks deducted for important course work or be excluded from exams – and in some cases for a number of years. University students can be required to rewrite an essay or paper but may not be given any marks for it. For more serious cases a student may have to resit a module. Those found guilty of substantial ongoing plagiarism risk getting kicked off their course and having their misconduct kept on record.

## What is being done to stop this?

Educational establishments have become so concerned that they are doing what they can to educate students about plagiarism to stamp it out. "At most universities, students must attend lectures on plagiarism when they first start their course," said Dr Rowbotham.

For about a decade universities have also been using software to detect plagiarism. Ninety-seven per cent of universities use software called Turn It In, which was developed by the Joint Information Systems Committee, a body that advises UK schools and colleges on information technology. It is an effective tool and up to 250,000 papers per day are submitted during peak periods. The software can help lecturers catch plagiarism before it becomes a problem for a student and helps stop the worst offenders.

Some schools do not have a formal policy to handle plagiarism. However, Barry Calvert said there is increased interest in using software such as Turn It In. Ofqual and Plagiarism Advice have also published guides for teachers, students and parents. The parents' guide explains what constitutes plagiarism, why students are tempted to cheat and how to help if they do. Dr Rowbotham said there are warning signs that parents can watch for, including a child using a sophisticated writing style or vocabulary that is not evident in their everyday conversation. Parents can also use online tools (see the box below) to check schoolwork.




▲ Universities use software, such as Turn It In, to check students' work for plagiarism

## Full marks

Plagiarism can be a problem but it doesn't have to be. Talking to students about what is legitimate research and what is not is the first step.

Parents should also try to understand why their child may want to plagiarise. They may not mean to be cheats but feel pressure to do well at school. They may also be tempted to cheat because of a fear of failure, or sometimes sheer laziness.

Many of the sites that are mentioned in this feature offer useful impartial advice on this sensitive topic, but teachers will usually be happy to help.

## ↪ Discussing plagiarism with children

Not so long ago you could get a good anti-plagiarism tool on the web free of charge, but the most respected ones now make a modest charge. There are free services, but as Write Check (www.write check.com, which uses the Turn It In software) explains, there are risks in using them. "Students should be very wary of 'free' plagiarism-checking services.

"Some sites offer free student plagiarism checks and then harvest students' work for resale."

Most experts advise that parents talk to children about the importance of taking pride in their own work, and giving proper references when they have used someone else's thoughts. In February 2010, psychologist Dr Tanya Byron said in an interview on parenting website, Mumsnet: "It would be useful to talk about reliability of sources when she does her homework research – what this means is that she crosschecks thoroughly sites that she takes information from and does not just rely on the big Wikis, for example.

"Also, help her understand plagiarism and how copying and pasting is, in effect, illegal - she is stealing someone else's work."

***www.snipca.com/x2432***

# Go loopy for music

Fancy making music, but don't play an instrument? If you have a computer, this is no problem – we show you how

We have previously written about how budding musicians can record live instruments or vocals on their computer to create songs. However, making music on a PC need not be limited to those with the voice of an angel or the guitar skills of Jimmy Hendrix.

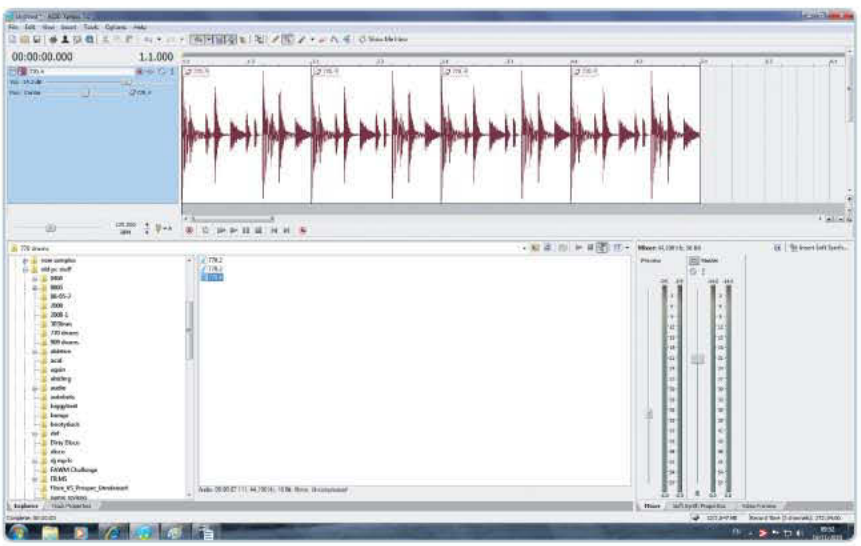
In fact, many of the people writing songs on their computers cannot read music and have never picked up a traditional instrument. All you need to start creating music of your own is a computer with a set of speakers attached to it, the right kind of software and a little bit of time and talent.

A computer set up with the right software can instantly become a mini recording studio, allowing you to compose and experiment to your heart's content – and in this issue we will explain how to get started with free software.

## Look at loops

You might be wondering how it's possible to make music on a computer without playing some kind of instrument and recording it. To do this you would need to be a competent musician and be able to process the recorded sound into a finished music file. All of this takes time, effort and often years of training to learn the instrument in the first place.

Fortunately, another type of software allows you to build music quickly with the minimum of fuss by combining ready-produced snippets of music in new and creative ways. All the hard work of sampling the original instrument has already been done, so all that's left to do is build the piece with handy blocks of audio that fit neatly together.




▲ **Each drum loop is only a few seconds long but it can be repeated to last for a whole song**

This kind of software works with files called samples and loops. A sample is a recording of a piece of music or a single instrument. It could be a single note from a single instrument – a note from a piano, perhaps – or a few seconds of music played by a group of instruments together. A sample doesn't have to be a set length of time; some last less than a second, others much longer.

Music can be made simply by layering and repeating samples, but to make matters easier they are often turned into loops. A loop is a short segment of sampled audio that starts and finishes in a way that means it can be played repeatedly with no break in the timing of the music. For example, many of the drum beats in modern songs are simple loops played repeatedly to give the impression of a longer recording.

The original drum sample might only have been a few seconds long, but by turning it into a loop it can be repeated to play for minutes, or as long as necessary. In the image on page 46 you can see that we have a simple drum loop repeated four times in a row. So what was originally a piece of audio only a second or so long is now a seamless drum beat of nearly eight seconds.

## Get set up

To make use of samples and loops you need some software to place them in order and play the result. One great option is Sony's Acid Xpress. Acid music software has been around for many years in one form or another, with the brand now owned by Sony, and Acid Xpress is available free of charge once you have signed up to the website (www.acidplanet.com/downloads/xpress). The Acid website also offers a pack of samples and loops ready to download, making it a good place to get started.

To sign up, open the Acidplanet website and click on the 'Need to register' link. After filling in the form you will be sent an email to the address you supplied. Click on the link within the email you receive and you will be taken to the sign-up page. At the sign-up page create an account name and password. The following page requests some other personal information but is not mandatory and can be skipped.

Once you have completed registration you can download the Acid Xpress software and the 'Pack of 8packs' sample pack. The files total around 160MB and will take a few minutes to download.

Once it has downloaded, double-click the setup file called Acidxpress70a and installation will begin. Work your way

▲ Once you have signed up to Acidplanet you can download the Acid Xpress software and a pack of samples to get started

## Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

**AAC** A compressed format for digital music.

**BPM** The speed of music, measured in beats per minute.

**Delay** An audio effect used to create the sound of a repeating echo.

**mp3** A standard for compressing digital audio. The sound quality of an mp3 file is close to that of CD audio but needs only a fraction of the storage space.

**Right-click** Most actions in Windows are performed by clicking the left mouse button. However, since the arrival of Windows 95, many programs, and Windows itself, make use of the right mouse button click to display a pop-up menu with special functions.

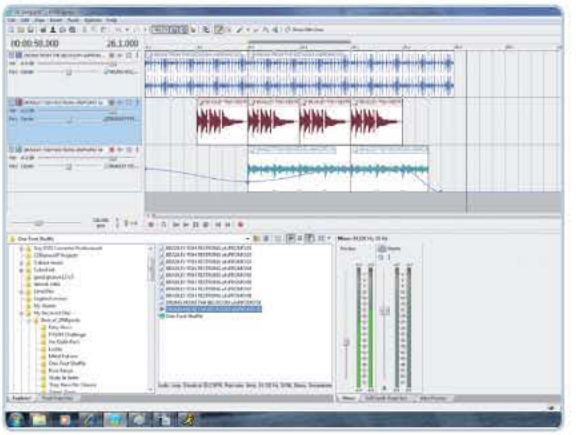
**Reverb** A sound effect that adds the sound of a real environment, such as a room, hall, or cathedral, to create an illusion of depth in the music.

**Unzip** The process of decompressing a file to its original form using a program such as PKZip or Winzip.

**Wizard** A step-by-step process that helps you choose settings.

## Going further

Acid Xpress is free to download and use, but it does limit what you can do with each track. If you find you are reaching the limits of what it offers, then take a look at the full version, Acid Music Studio, which costs around £40. This version allows you to add lots of effects to each track and control these with multiple envelopes. You could give the drums some reverb perhaps, to make them sound like they are being played in a big echoing space, or add some delay to a guitar sound to make it more interesting. And while Xpress is limited to only 10 tracks, the full version can handle many more. It also comes with 3,000 loops ready to use, and you can save and share your finished creations as an MP3 or AAC music file.

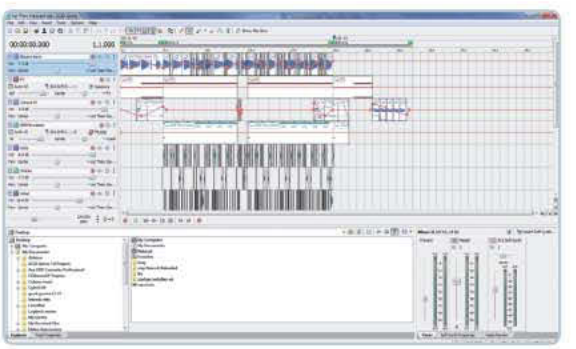


▲ You can preview samples before you drag and drop them into the mix

through the setup wizard and Acid Xpress will then open. You will also need to unzip the sample pack and choose a location to store all the audio files it contains. Make them easy to find as you will need to access these later – we suggest a folder inside My Documents. The opening screen of Acid Xpress reveals a demo song, so use the playback controls to give it a listen.

### Layering loops

To make music using Acid Xpress you will need to combine at least a couple of loops from the pack you downloaded. It allows you to place loops together on 'tracks' – think of a track in much the same way as a musician in a band. A track can only play one piece at a time, but several tracks can play at the same time to build up a song.



▲ The opening screen of Acid Xpress reveals a demo song that you can listen to by pressing the playback controls

Building a song with several tracks in Acid allows you to combine sounds just as a band would create a song in a recording studio. The step-by-step guide on page 50 shows how to start making a song by creating a new project and adding a drum track from scratch, so follow that before continuing.

With the basic drum loop in place you can begin to add a bass line or perhaps some percussion, each on a new track. The process of adding tracks follows the same method as creating a drum loop. You navigate to the loop you want to use – highlighting one in the window at the bottom of the Acid interface will play a preview – and once you have the right sound you drag and drop the file into the main window. Each element of the song should occupy a separate track in the Acid Xpress interface. As Acid Xpress is free, it's limited to a maximum of 10 tracks.

When you have some loops in place try changing the Project Tempo. Click and drag the slider under the row of tracks and the BPM figure will change. And, cleverly, all the loops you have added to the project will change tempo accordingly. You can also double-click on the number above BPM and enter your own value. We think anything from 80 to 150 is good for now.

As you add more elements the song will begin to develop into something that sounds richer and more complete. But much like many songs you hear on the radio, it's best to introduce each instrument separately. In the screenshot on page 51 you can see a simple song with a drum beat, bass and lead line that are introduced one at a time and then drop out again.

Each track can have its volume level controlled independently of the others using the slider on the left-hand panel. This allows you to blend the tracks together so no single element takes over. We like to keep the bass in the background, so move its dB volume slider slightly to the left to make it quieter in the overall mix.

If you want to listen to a certain section of your song repeatedly, to get an idea of how each track is working together, you can use the Loop Playback button on the playback control bar. Click on the small arrow icon that's

## More Music

While the pack of loops available for free with Acid Xpress includes around 100 loops to get you started, you can download more. Sounds of Revolution offers a free loops section (***www.sounds-of-revolution.com/free-stuff.htm***), and if you sign up to www.looperman.com you can download a daily selection loops. Similarly, If you sign up to receive the ***www.producerloops.com*** newsletter you will be able to download up to 300MB of sample loops from the link contained in the email you are sent – but be sure to click on the free samples rather than the paid-for links. Ultimately, if you get really serious about loop-based music production, you might want to try a paid-for sample pack of which there are many available to suit every genre.

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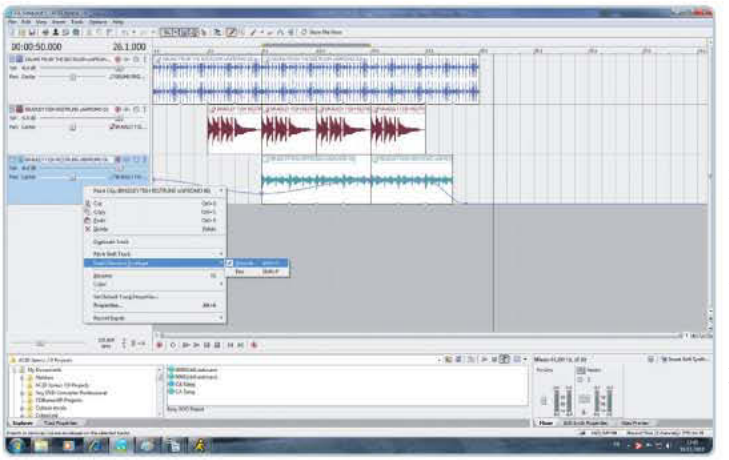


We have added a volume envelope to bring the lead guitar track in slowly, before it fades out again. The curvy line represents the volume

bent into a circular shape. A framing tool in the main window will turn blue and you can click and drag it over the section of the song you want to repeat. By clicking and dragging the yellow triangles at the edge of the frame tool you can make the repeated section longer or shorter.

With a section of your song playing repeatedly it is easier to hear how all the instruments are blending together, and you can drag and drop new loops into place to see how the sound changes. To quickly stop or play the song, hit the space bar on your keyboard.

As the song develops you may want to remove tracks that don't fit. To do this, right-click on the track in the left-hand window and select Delete from the dropdown menu that appears. There are also some other options available from the dropdown menu, such as Duplicate Track or Insert/Remove Envelope. The latter is useful for adding a Volume or Pan envelope. An envelope is used to gradually apply a change or effect to a track.

By adding a Volume envelope you can introduce a track slowly, so the volume level rises gradually. This can help a loop blend into the overall song rather than appearing in a sudden and jarring manner. Selecting a Volume envelope draws a blue line through the centre of the track. By right-clicking on the line we can add points to it. Dragging these points up and down will affect the volume of the track at that point. The image above shows a song where the guitar track has an envelope raising its volume as the track progresses, before fading away again.

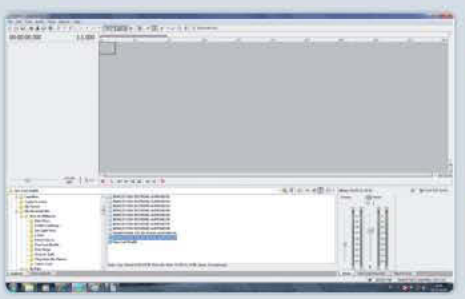
## Stay composed

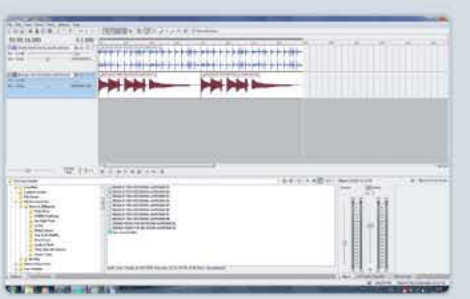
If you spend a while experimenting with Acid your song can soon stretch out and become messy, so one good way to keep things in control is to start by making a piece just a minute or so long. Listen to some of your favourite songs for inspiration, noting how the different instruments appear, disappear and interact, and don't despair if things don't sound great from the word go – it takes a little experimentation to get the hang of things.

One of the best ways to develop ideas is to let your imagination go and play around with different loops, which are available free and legally from many websites – see the box on the right for details.

In this article we've only covered the basics of Acid Xpress, but hopefully you will have found enough information to get started and enjoy making music. So, given that the software and loops are all free and ready to download, why not give it a

## STEP BY STEP | HOW TO GET STARTED WITH ACID XPRESS





**1** Open a new file in Acid Xpress by holding Ctrl and Shift and pressing N on your keyboard. Now navigate to the folder of loops called One-Foot Shuffle by clicking in the bottom-left window in the interface. You will see a list of audio loops. Click and drag the one called 'DRUMS FROM THE BIG ROOM ofsPROMO 02' onto the main window.

**2** The drum loop occupies its own track in the main window – if you can't see it clearly, zoom in and out by using the + and - icons on the bottom-right corner of the window. We want to make the drum loop last longer, so by holding Ctrl and pressing D for the Draw tool we can now click on the loop and drag it to the left to make it, say, four times longer.

**3** We now have a track that lasts four times as long as the original loop. With the drums in place, we can now add more instruments by repeating step 1, but choosing another instrument from the folder each time. Search the sample loops and drag and drop more of them onto new tracks. Here we have added some bass.

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# Perfect publishing

In the second part of our guide to simple desktop publishing, we explain how to create more advanced layouts

Most modern word processors can be used to create documents that mix text and images, which is useful if you have something like a simple newsletter to create and don't want to learn how to use a new application. In the last issue we explained how to do just this with Open Office Writer.

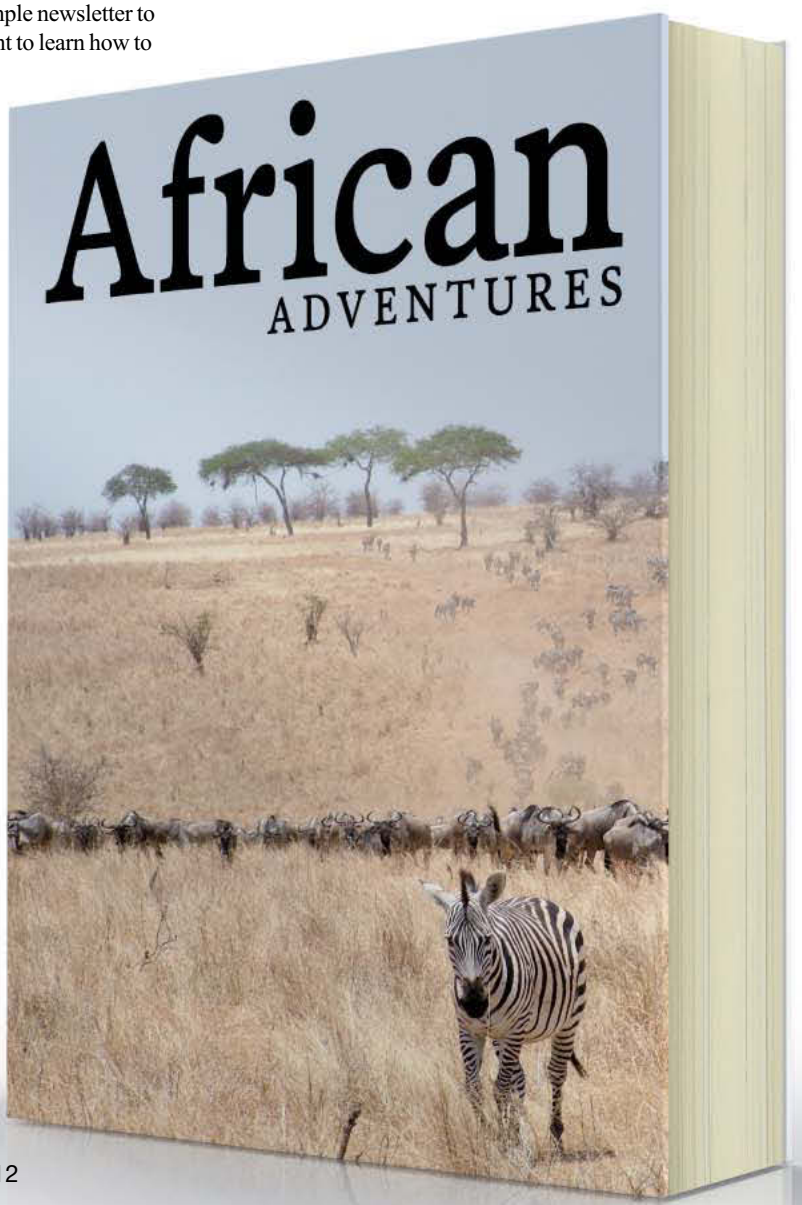
To create more sophisticated pages, though, you will soon find using a word processer becomes a hindrance – these tools aren't designed for complex documents. For more fancy layouts you need a dedicated desktop-publishing (DTP) tool, and in this second instalment we will explain how to get and use a free one.

## Getting started

There's plenty of good commercial DTP software, but the two industry-standard tools, Quark Xpress and Adobe Indesign, cost hundreds of pounds. Instead we will use a free but powerful alternative called Scribus, available for both Windows and Mac OS from www.scribus.net.

Download and install the relevant copy – stick with the Full option to include the additional fonts, which are useful. Once installed, run the program and you'll see a warning about a missing program called Ghostscript. This is an optional plug-in that can be safely ignored, so click the OK button to continue.

Next, you will be prompted to choose a new document type. We are going to recreate the A4 page review from part one of this feature, so select 'Single Page' from the Document Layout list at the left of the dialogue box and click the OK button to accept the default A4 Portrait shape.




## Working with text frames

In a word processor, you can start typing on a new document as soon as it is created. Scribus, like all DTP applications, doesn't work this way. Instead, you must begin by creating at least one container on the page to hold the text. These containers are called 'frames' and Scribus uses separate types for text and images. Frames can be any shape and, once created, can be moved around and resized to change the page layout; something you can't do easily with text on a word processor page.

To create a text frame for the body text of the Computeractive printer review we are laying out, click the 'Insert Text Frame' button on the Scribus toolbar. This looks like a box with the letter A in it and is about halfway along. Next, drag and drop the mouse to draw a text frame that roughly fills the left third of the page, starting at the margin indicators at the top-left of the page (the blue lines).

We want three columns of text. To do this we could create two more text frames and measure their size using the ruler at the top of the page. This

is fiddly though, so it's better to get Scribus to add some more column indicators to the page, much like the ones for the margins. These are called 'guides', so select the Manage Guides option from the Page menu and, on the dialogue box that appears, increase Columns (near the bottom) to '3'. We also want a margin between each column, so also enable the Column Gap option and increase its value to '10.00 pt'. Finally, select the Margins option for 'Refer to' at the bottom of the dialogue box and click OK.

## Creating columns

Guide lines will appear, showing where three columns should be placed. Before resizing the first text frame using the guides for the first column, select 'Snap to Guides' from the Page menu. Now, when you create or adjust text frames, the frame will 'snap' to the guides for more accurate size control. Now adjust the text frame you created so it fits neatly as a left-hand column. Don't worry about creating additional text frames just yet — we want to see how the review text fits first.

To get some text, copy the main text of the Samsung printer review from ***www.snipca.com/X2606***, then double-click the text frame to edit its contents and paste the copied text into it.

There is too much body text to fit into the first text frame, so create a second one using the guides for the middle column. We now need to continue the 'overmatter' text from column one into column two and this is done by linking the two frames. Click to select the first text frame and click the Link Text Frames button on the toolbar (on the far right). Then end by clicking the second text frame make the link – the text from the first frame will then flow into the second.

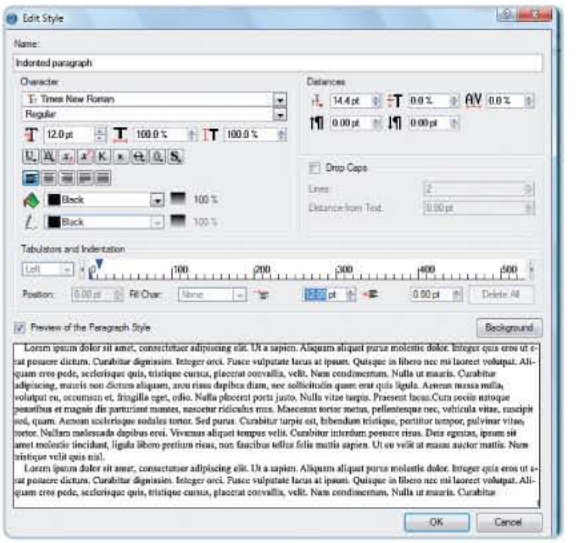
There is still more overmatter in the second text frame, though, so create a third frame for column three and link it with column two in the same way. With the three text frames linked, you can now resize any one and the text will reflow to and from the other two automatically.

## Applying text styles

Next, we need to tidy up the text to make it more readable. As in part one of this feature, we will do this by indenting the first line of each new paragraph and adding a 'drop cap' (a large capital letter) to the first paragraph. In Scribus, paragraph formatting is done by creating and then applying text styles, so start by selecting Paragraph Styles from the Edit menu. When the dialogue box appears, click the New button to create the first style.

The Edit Styles dialogue box is complex, but most of it can be ignored for simple paragraph formatting. Start by giving the style a name in the box at the top — 'Indented paragraph', in this case. Leave the font settings as they are for now and just increase the first line indentation value (the third box along under the Position settings) to 12.00 pt. Click the OK button to save the style and close the dialogue box. Back in the New Style dialogue box, click the New button again to create another style. Name this one 'First paragraph drop cap' and this time, just enable the Drop caps option on the right of the dialogue box. Click the OK button to save the style, and again on the Edit Styles dialogue box to close it.

The next step is to apply these two new styles to the body




▲ **Add styles such as indented paragraphs to your document**

text. Click the Select Item button on the toolbar (the arrow), then hold down the Shift key and click to select each text frame in turn. With all three text frames selected, right-click any one of them and select Properties from the menu that appears. This opens a narrow dialogue box. Click the Text option towards the bottom to expand it, then choose the Indented paragraph style from the Style dropdown menu. With the style applied, close the dialogue box by clicking the Close button at its top-right corner.

We only want to apply drop caps to the first paragraph, so double-click the first text frame to edit its contents, then right-click somewhere on the first paragraph and choose Properties from the menu. Apply the 'Drop caps' style in the same way and this will replace the current Indented paragraph style for this paragraph – text in Scribus can only have one style at a time (though a style can incorporate many formatting options). Finally, we need to enable hyphenation to help balance the line lengths in each text column, so do this by selecting Hyphenate Text from the Extras menu.

We have finished the text layout by shortening the three

### Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

**Double-click** To click twice quickly in succession on a mouse button. If you double-click on an application icon, Windows will attempt to launch it.

**Drag and drop** To click the left mouse button on an item, drag the mouse to a new area and release the button to drop it into place.

**Dropdown menu** A list of options that appears when you click a menu bar or button.

**Desktop publishing** The design, layout and printing of documents, books and magazines using special software, such as Microsoft Publisher.

**Open source** Software that is developed, released to and used by the public, free of charge as an alternative to software from large companies.

## Paid-for programs

Like a lot of open-source software, Scribus has more than its fair share of quirks, but if you can't get along with it there are alternatives. Serif Pageplus Starter Edition (www.snipca.com/X2661) is a free, cutdown, version of the full £68 application.

Microsoft Publisher 2010 costs £120, which is cheap by comparison to some other tools, and is included with some versions of Office 2010 (***www.snipca.com/X2662***).

Beyond Publisher, there are two professional tools: Adobe Indesign and Quark Xpress.

Just about every magazine and newspaper you can buy is put together using one of these applications (Computeractive is created in Quark Xpress), but unless you are producing many documents the price may be too much: InDesign CS5 costs £714 (***www.snipca.com/X2663***) and Quark Xpress 8 £779 (***www.snipca.com/X2664***).

## Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

**Right-click** Most actions in Windows are performed by clicking the left mouse button. However, since the arrival of Windows 95, many programs, and Windows itself, make use of the right mouse button click to display a pop-up menu.

**Word processor** A software application for preparing largely text-based documents, from basic letters to company newsletters and reports. Most word processors go far beyond simple typing, allowing you to add pictures and text effects, link to other documents, and check spelling and grammar.

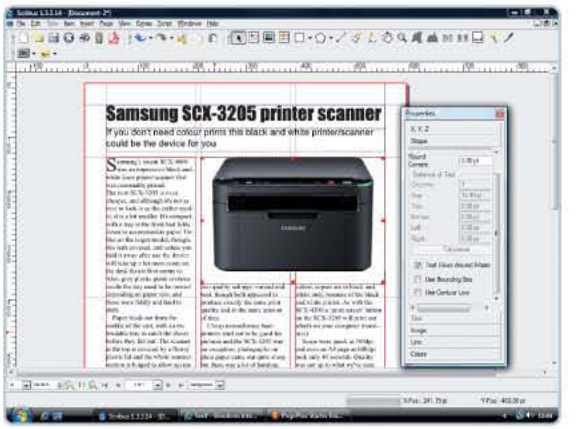
text frames to create room at the top of the page for two new ones – one each for a headline and standfirst. These two new text frames have been formatted appropriately (we used the Impact font for the headline and Arial for the standfirst) using the same Properties dialogue box as above. We have also aligned the tops of the three text frames used for body text using a horizontal guide – see the box below for more details on how to do this.

### Adding images

Once you have mastered adding and formatting text, it is time to add pictures. First add an image frame using the Insert Image Frame toolbar button, which is found next to the Insert Text Frame button. Drag and drop the image frame across the tops of columns two and three roughly as shown above– ignore the text frames below and don't worry about the exact shape for now.

With the image frame in place, right-click it and choose Get Image from the menu. Browse for and select the image you want – we downloaded the Samsung printer image from our website and used that. The image is too large to fit into the frame (a common problem), so right-click the image, select Properties and enable 'Scale to Frame Size' under the Image option. You can now resize and reposition the image frame to fit the layout and the image inside will be resized accordingly.

Since the image is now hiding text in columns two and three, we need to make changes to its text wrap settings (the way in which text flows around it). Right-click the image, choose Properties and, when the dialogue box opens, click the Shape section. Enable 'Text Flows Around Frame' and the text in columns two and three will then flow around the image frame above them.




▲ Add styles such as indented paragraphs to your document

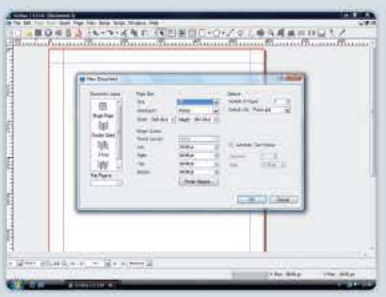
### Final flourishes

We have finished off our page layout by adding sub-headings in the Arial Bold font to break up the text and removed the Indented paragraph style of both these and the paragraph below each one. We have also added a caption to the image – this is just another text frame.

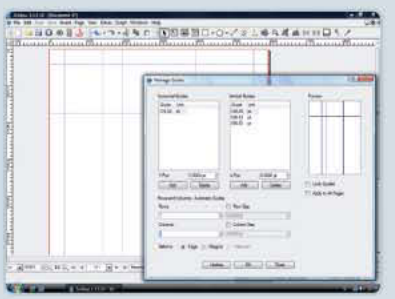
With a tool such as Scribus it is easy add another article to the same page or, if you don't like the look of it, to shuffle all the boxes around until you do.

And, of course, you can design more than one page at a time by accessing the options in the Page menu. With several pages in your document you can easily flow text articles from box to box, which is ideal for newsletters. The only limit is your creativity, so why not give it a go and send us the results.

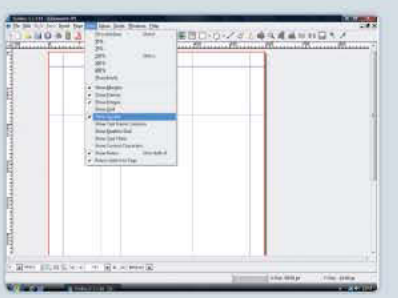
## STEP BY STEP | GET TO GRIPS WITH GUIDES



**1** Layouts can be created by eye, but it's better to use guides – visual aids that let you position text and image frames more accurately. Guides appear on-screen as dotted blue lines, but they won't show on the printed or exported document. Scribus always creates page margin guides by default (solid blue lines), based on the Margin Guides settings in the New Document dialogue box.



**2** Guides can be placed on the page quickly by dragging the horizontal or vertical ruler: we have created a horizontal guide this way for aligning the top of three text frames when inserting a headline. Guides can also be added using Manage Guides from the Page menu. This dialogue box lets you add guides based on a ruler measurement, or by dividing the page into a number of rows or columns.



**3** Guides can be moved around on the page by clicking and dragging them, but to stop this you can select the Lock Guides option in the Manage Guides dialogue box. Snap to Guides (also on the Page menu) makes the guides 'sticky' so that the edges of frames are attracted to them for accurate positioning. You can also hide guides and margins using the View menu to preview a page.

Computer active

# WORKSHOPS

## Jargon Buster

**Attachment** A computer file, such as a word-processor document or spreadsheet, sent along with an email message.

**Cursor** A flashing shape on the screen showing where the next character you type in will appear.

**Desktop** The background area on screen where Windows files and icons appear.

**Drag and drop** To click the left mouse button on an item, drag the mouse to a new area and release the mouse button to drop it into place.

**Encryption** The science of scrambling data to hide it from prying eyes.

**Field** In a database, a container that can hold a particular type of information.

**Instant messaging** Real-time text-based communication over a network using a program

**ISP** Internet service provider. A company that provides you with an internet connection.

**Jpeg** A type of image file. Jpeg images are compressed and the small file size makes them ideal for web pages.

**Notification Area** An area on the screen that shows which programs are running in Windows.

**PDF** Portable Document Format. A file format that allows pages of text and graphics to be viewed correctly on any PC.

**Playlist** A list of audio tracks queued for playback.

**Pop-up menu** A menu that appears on screen when you click something.

**Radio button** A type of button where only one choice can be made at any time.

**Shortcut** A file that acts as a link to something else, such as a program file or hard disk drive.

**Taskbar** The bar that runs along the bottom of the screen in Windows.

**Tooltip** A small message that appears when the cursor hovers over an option.

**Upload** Transferring information to another computer on the internet.

**URL** Uniform Resource Locator. A technical term for the unique address of a web page.

## In this Issue...


**Organise Windows with virtual desktops**
Discover how virtual desktops can make it easier to work in Windows p56

**Retract a Facebook friend request**
We explain how to cancel Facebook friend requests – but you'll need to act fast p59

**Enhance Windows' right-click menus**
Learn how to add extra options to right-click menus in Windows p60

**Make pictures smaller without losing quality**
Use free software to compress image files without compromising quality p63

**Give Windows Media Player a new look**
Find out how to change the look and feel of Windows Media Player 12 p66

**Open different file types online**
Use an online service to view unrecognised file types p68

**Hints and tips** p70

## WHAT THE WORKSHOP LEVELS MEANS...

**1 2 3** Suitable for the most anxious novice, **Level 1** deals with simple tasks that every computer user can try.

**1 2 3** More involved, but simple enough for all to complete, **Level 2** may introduce you to new features in applications.

**1 2 3** **LEVEL 3** will bolster your existing knowledge and help you to see how much your computer can do. Clear but demanding.

INCREASE DESKTOP SPACE

# Organise Windows with virtual desktops

Discover how virtual desktops can make it easier to work in Windows

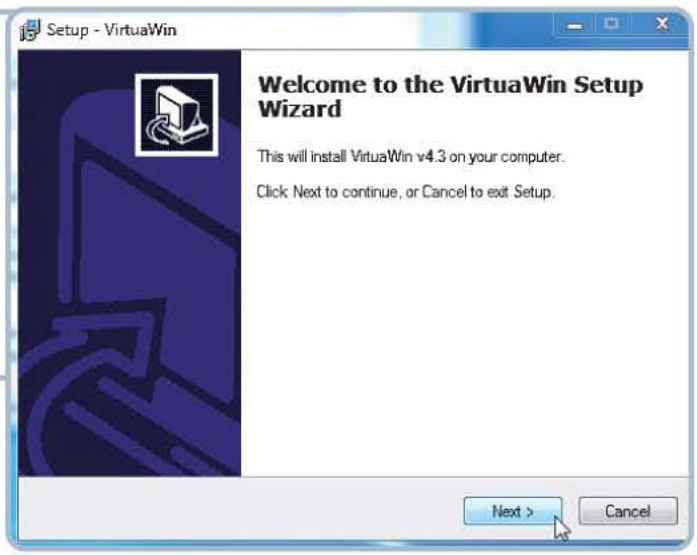
**It doesn't take much for the Windows Desktop to become cluttered: open just a handful of windows and the space is soon gobbled up. Adding a second monitor can alleviate the problem but it's expensive and requires extra space on your desk.**

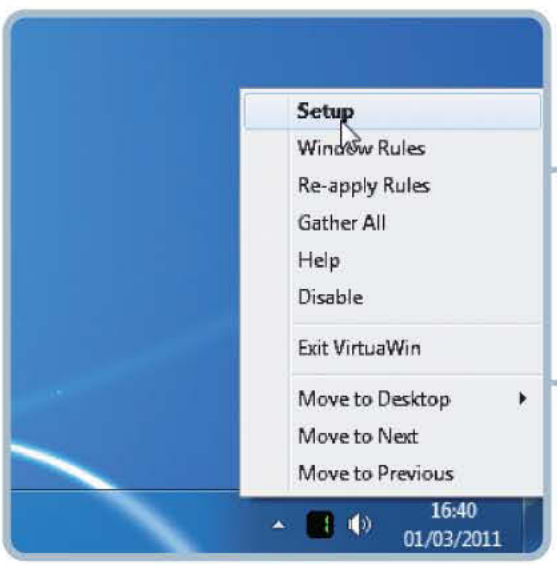
**An alternative is to use 'virtual' desktops. These behave in exactly the same way as the normal Windows Desktop but several can be managed at once, flipping between them as you go. You could, for example, keep open Word documents on one desktop while reserving another for web browsing.**

**In this workshop we will show how the free Virtuawin application, which is compatible with Windows XP, Vista and 7, can be used to create up to 20 virtual desktops.**

## Step 1

**TO START, LAUNCH A** web browser and visit www.snipca.com/X2999. When the page appears, click the Virtuawin download link at the top of the page to get the latest version of the program – 4.3 when we visited. If the File Download Security Warning dialogue box appears, click Save and then choose a location for the downloaded file. Firefox users should select Save File to save the download to Firefox's default download folder. Now locate and double-click the downloaded file and follow the installation instructions. Once the installation process has completed, launch the Virtuawin application. ▼



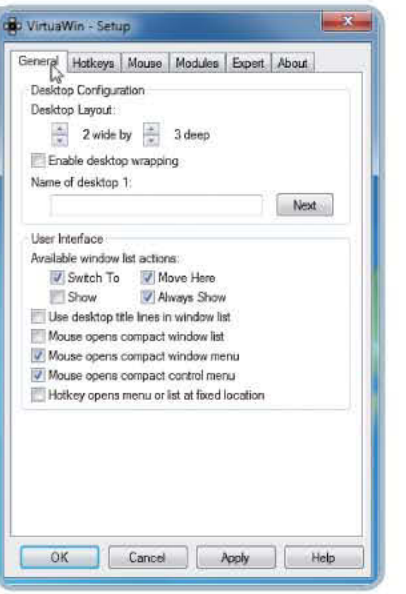



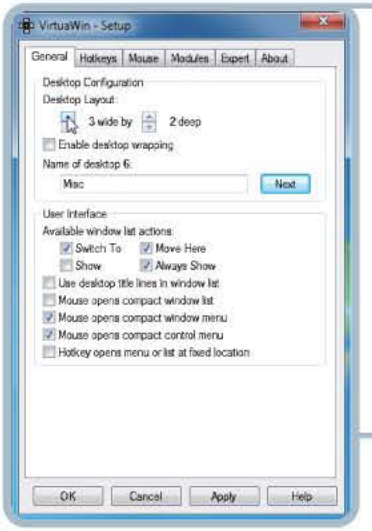

## Step 2

**A NEW ICON** (a green '1' in a black square) will appear in the Notification Area, at the bottom right of the Taskbar. To configure Virtuawin, either double-click this icon or right-click it and choose Setup from the pop-up menu. ▼

## Step 3

**THE VIRTUAWIN SETUP WINDOW** will now appear, with six tabs running along the top of it. The General tab will be selected by default, and it's here that the main settings are configured. The first section of the General tab is labelled Desktop Configuration. Virtuawin lays out virtual desktops in a notional grid, allowing the user to quickly move between them using shortcut keys. By default, Virtuawin has six virtual desktops in a grid layout of two wide by three deep. To change this, simply click on the relevant up and down arrows; a maximum of 20 virtual windows can be created.



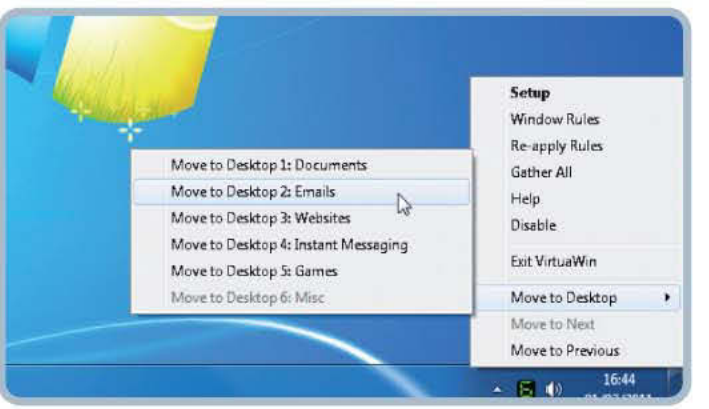



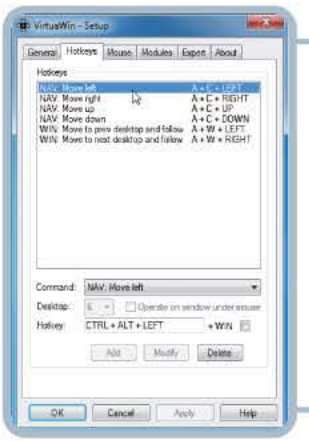

## Step 4

Each virtual desktop can be named. Having named desktops helps when using some of Virtuawin's more advanced features, which we'll explore later. To name the first virtual desktop, click the box beneath the 'Name of desktop 1' label and enter an appropriate name ('Documents', for example). Click the Next button and repeat the process to name the rest of the desktops. Click OK when finished.

## Step 5

**TO SWITCH BETWEEN** the virtual desktops, right-click the Virtuawin icon in the Notification Area, point to Move to Desktop and choose the appropriate one. When a new virtual desktop is chosen, all the usual icons will be present but there will be no open windows. The number displayed in Virtuawin's Notification Area icon will also change to indicate the desktop being used. Open a window within a virtual desktop and it will be visible only on that specific desktop, meaning it won't clutter up the other desktops.



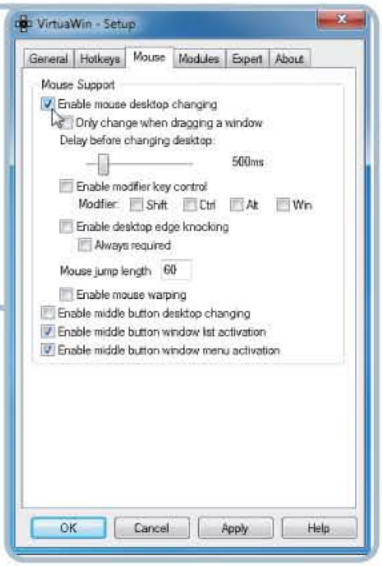

## Step 6

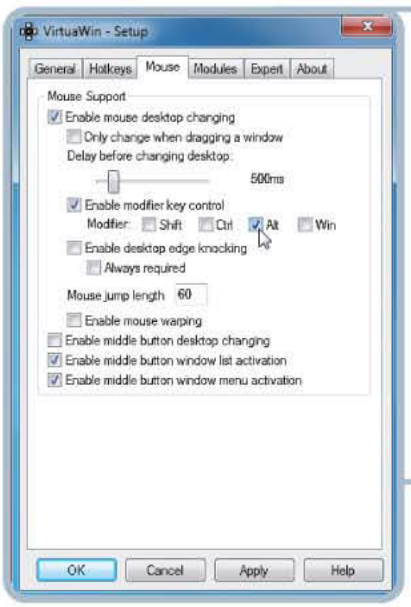
**TO MAKE SWITCHING EVEN EASIER,** Virtualwin can be controlled with keyboard shortcuts. To do this hold down Ctrl (Control) and Alt keys and use the cursor (arrow) keys to move around the grid of desktops defined in Step 3. To move from Desktop 1 to Desktop 6 within a two-wide-by-three-deep grid, for example, hold down Ctrl and Alt, then press the right arrow key once followed by two presses of the down arrow key. To view all the available shortcuts (or create new ones of your own), click the Hotkeys tab within Virtuawin's setup window.

# INCREASE DESKTOP SPACE

## Step 7

**ANOTHER WAY TO MOVE** around the virtual desktop grid is to use the mouse. To enable this, return to the Virtuawin setup window and click the Mouse tab. Next, click to place a tick in the 'Enable mouse desktop changing' box and click OK. Now, to move from Desktop 1 to Desktop 2, for instance, move the mouse pointer to the right-hand edge of the Windows Desktop and hold it there. After a short pause, Desktop 2 will appear on screen.




## Step 8

**HOWEVER, ACCIDENTALLY SWITCHING BETWEEN** desktops as a result of accidental mouse movements can be annoying, so it pays to use some of the advanced settings to tailor exactly how it operates. Return to the Mouse tab within the setup window and click to tick the 'Enable modifier key control' box. Next, place a tick in one or more of the four available Modifier boxes – the available Modifier keys are Shift, Ctrl, Alt and Windows (Win). Now, the mouse pointer's position will only switch desktops if the specified Modifier key is held down.

## Step 9

**TO MOVE AN OPEN** window from one virtual desktop to another, first left-click the Virtuawin icon in the Notification Area. A box showing all open windows will appear, along with the number of the desktop on which they reside. To move a window to the current desktop, click on the appropriate entry within the Move Here column. Alternatively, clicking the same entry within the Switch To column will switch to that window on that virtual desktop. Clicking an entry in the Always Show column, meanwhile, will force the chosen window to be visible on all desktops – handy for an instant-messaging chat window.

## Step 10

**IF YOU WANT ALL** windows to be visible on one desktop, there are a couple of ways to do this. One way is to simply close the Virtuawin application. However, another method – useful for temporary requirements – is the Gather All feature. To use this, right-click the Virtuawin icon in the Notification Area and choose Gather All. All application windows will now be moved to the currently active virtual desktop (leaving all other virtual desktops empty)

# Retract a Facebook friend request

## Act fast and you can cancel Facebook friend requests

**Facebook can be a fantastic way to catch up with people from your past. It's equally good at helping find new friends, as it allows you to explore friendship networks or seek out those with similar interests or who support the same cause.**

**However, while most friend requests – where you approach someone electronically to ask them to be your friend – are measured enough, some do take place on the spur of the moment. Given time for reflection, you might decide that it wasn't such a good idea.**

**If the person has already seen the request and responded then that's that – they can accept if they want and you may need to explain if you later drop them as a Facebook friend. But if they haven't yet spotted the request it can be cancelled. Here's how.**

### Step 1

**VISIT THE FACEBOOK WEBSITE** and log in as usual. Now find someone with whom you would like to be friends. In this example we have typed the name of someone we know into the search panel at the top of the Facebook page. When their page appears, add them as a friend in the normal way –click the Add as Friend button at the top. When the pop-up window appears, click the Send request button to send the electronic request to your new would-be friend. ▼

### Step 2

**NOTICE THAT FACEBOOK NOW** changes the label on the 'Add as Friend' button to 'Friend request sent'. If you quickly change your mind about wanting to be friends – and let's face it, that's sometimes the case – you may be able to get away scot free. Scroll down the person's Facebook page to find the Cancel friend request link on the left-hand side – click it. After a moment it will change to say 'Friend request cancelled'. The Add as Friend button will also become active again. ▼

### Step 3

**WHAT ABOUT THE EMAIL** that Facebook sends to the person to notify them of the friend request? Well, if you're really quick it might not get sent. Otherwise, when the recipient opens the email and clicks the link to confirm or ignore the request, their web browser will launch to display the Facebook page where their current friend requests are listed, like the ones shown here. With the friend request cancelled, your name won't be listed and, hopefully, they'll assume the email was just some kind of Facebook glitch. ●

EDIT RIGHT-CLICK MENUS

# Enhance Windows' right-click menus

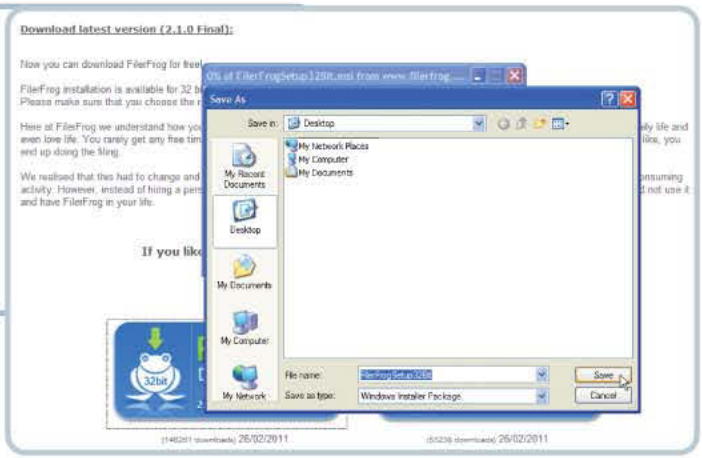
Use Filerfrog to add extra options to right-click menus in Windows

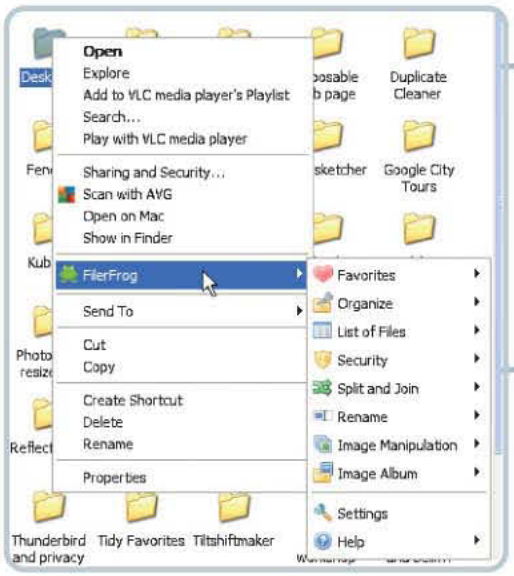
**Clicking the right-hand mouse button is known as 'right-clicking'. Right-click something in Windows and, typically, a little menu will pop up with a list of options. These change according to where and what you click – options such as copying, pasting and deleting. This context-sensitive nature is obviously useful but the user generally has no control over what appears on right-click menus.**

**However, Filerfrog makes it possible to customise Windows' right-click menus in countless ways, including adding options aren't normally available in Windows. It's free to download, quick to install and easy to use – and we'll demonstrate all you need to know. We've tested Filerfrog with Windows XP, Vista and 7 but as ever with free software, there's no guarantee that it will work flawlessly in all situations.**

## Step 1

**LAUNCH A WEB BROWSER** and visit www.filerfrog.com. When the site appears, click the Download button. At the next screen, choose the version of Filerfrog to download (in most cases, this will mean the 32-bit edition – so click the left-hand button). If the File Download Security Warning dialogue box appears, click Save and then choose a location for the downloaded file. Firefox users should select Save File to save the download to Firefox's default download folder. ▼



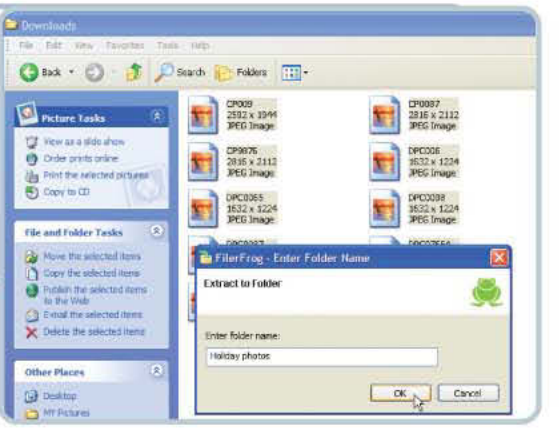

## Step 2

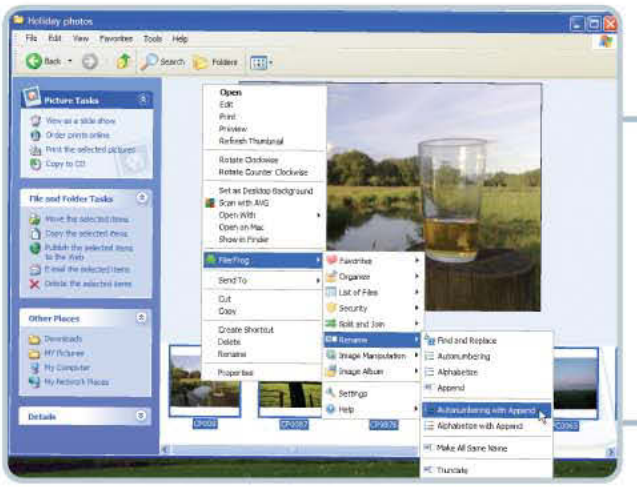
**NOW LOCATE AND DOUBLE-CLICK** the downloaded file to start the installation. Follow the instructions, accepting the licence agreement and all the default settings. When the program has finished installing, click the Close button. Filerfrog then needs to restart the PC to finish setting itself up – click Yes to agree. When Windows has restarted, open a folder and then right-click on one of the folders or files inside that. Notice the new Filerfrog entry on the context (pop-up) menu: point to this to see a load of new options. ▼

# EDIT RIGHT-CLICK MENUS

**Step 3**

**WE'RE GOING TO USE** Filerfrog to organise some downloaded photos. Here we've opened a folder called Downloads and then highlighted all the pictures inside. Then, we've right-clicked on one of the photos, pointed to Filerfrog followed by Organize then clicked Extract Files to Folder. Filerfrog will ask for a name for the new folder before moving all the highlighted photos into the new folder. Click OK to continue.



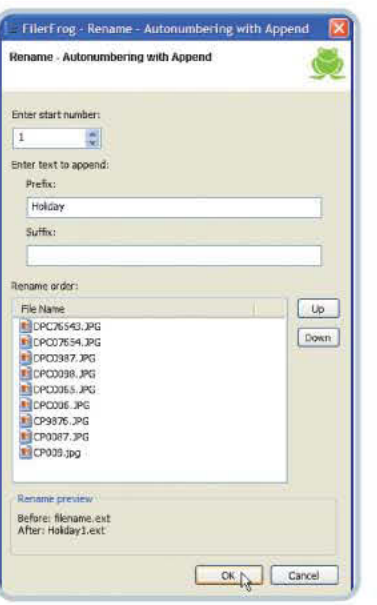



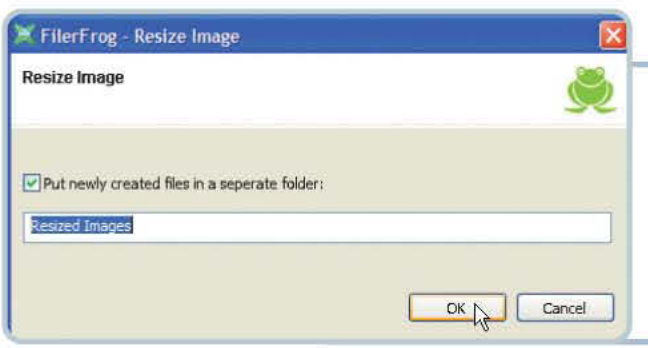

**Step 4**

**FILERFROG HAS MOVED ALL OUR** photos from the Download folder into a new folder that we called 'Holiday photos'. Looking inside that, we can see that the photos have the meaningless names given to them by the camera. We can use Filerfrog to sort that out. Highlight all the photos and then right-click, point to Filerfrog and then click Rename. The program offers several useful ways to rename files – for this particular job we're going to select Autonumbering with Append.

**Step 5**

**THIS DIALOGUE BOX ALLOWS** us to do several things. We can highlight individual files in the main list and then use the Up and Down buttons to change their relative positions. We can also rename all the photos and number them automatically. Type a 1 as the start number in the top field and then type Holiday into the empty Prefix field. This will change the incomprehensible filenames into sensible ones such as Holiday1, Holiday2 and so on. Click OK to confirm.



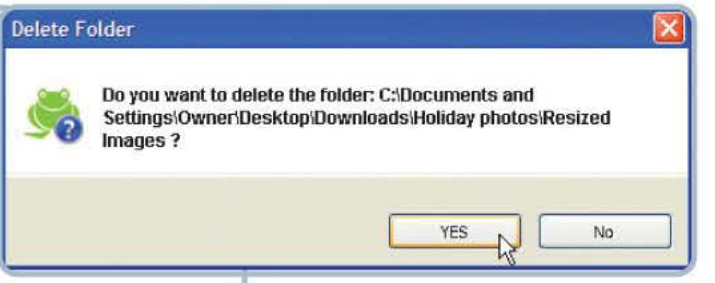

**Step 6**

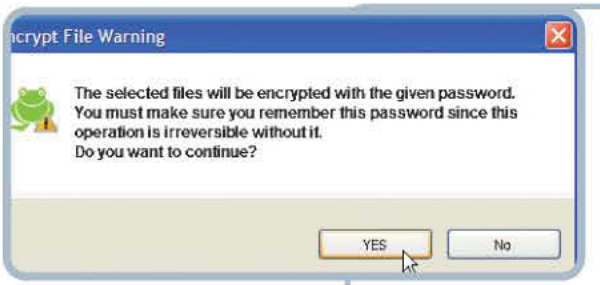
**WE CAN ALSO USE** Filerfrog to reduce the size of photo files, which is handy when it comes to sharing them via email, for example. Highlight some photos, then right-click, point to Filerfrog followed by Image Manipulation and then click 50 per cent. When the dialogue box appears, leave the settings as they are: this will create a new folder called Resized Images, containing the shrunken files. The original photos will be left untouched.

# EDIT RIGHT-CLICK MENUS

## Step 7

**IF YOU'RE HAPPY WITH** the quality of the smaller versions of the photos, use Filerfrog to delete the originals. Select all the originals, right-click on one and then choose Delete from the pop-up menu. Next, right-click on the Resized Images folder created in the previous step and choose Filerfrog followed by Organize then clock Extract Files from Folder – this will pull all the new smaller images out of the folder and into the original Holiday photos folder. A dialogue box will appear to ask whether you want to delete the empty Resized Images folder when finished; click Yes.




## Step 8

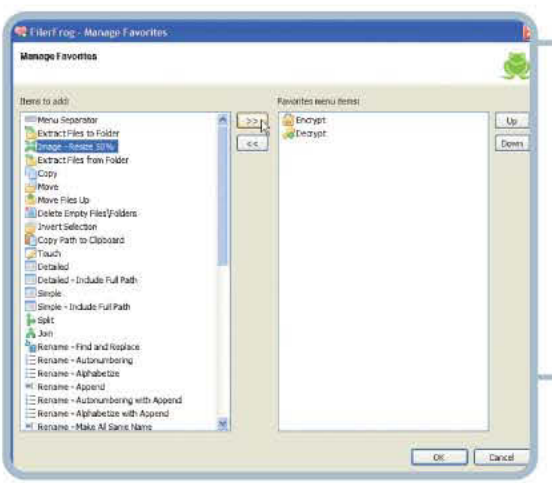
**FILERFROG HAS A BUILT-IN** encryption tool, too. This can be handy for hiding or otherwise securing sensitive files and folders. To do this, first highlight the relevant files or folders then right-click, choose Filerfrog followed by Security and click Encrypt. When the dialogue box opens, choose a password and type it into the top field and then into the field underneath to confirm it. Click OK. Filerfrog warns that you must remember the password in order to open the file again – click Yes to confirm.

## Step 9

**NOW TRY DOUBLE-CLICKING ONE** of the encrypted files (they're depicted by an icon of a green frog holding a padlock). Filerfrog will prompt for a password before it can be accessed: type your code it into the empty field and click OK and moments afterwards, the file will be decrypted. This restores the file to its previous, unencrypted state. Encryption can be removed from lots of files at once. Here we've highlighted the other files in the folder and then right-clicked, clicked Filerfrog, then chosen Security and Decrypt. Typing in the password removes encryption on all selected files.

## Step 10

**FINALLY, NOTICE THAT FILERFROG** has a Favorites item at the top of its menu. Choose this followed by Manage Favorites. A Customize dialogue box, similar to that used by Microsoft Word, will be displayed. This allows you to select favourite commands from the list on the left and add them to the Favorites menu by clicking the button with the two right-pointing arrows –moving them over to the right-hand column. Next time you open Filerfrog, they'll be available in the Favorites menu.



# Make pictures smaller without losing quality

## Use free software to compress image files without compromising quality

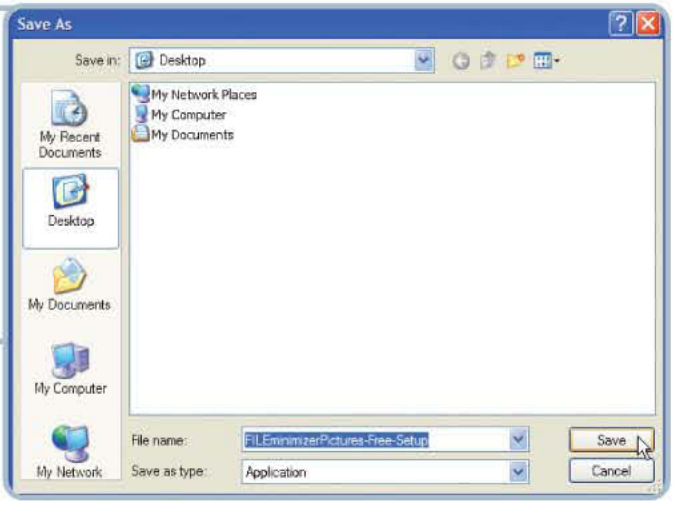
**As digital cameras become more sophisticated, the file sizes of the photographs they capture gets ever larger. In terms of storage, this isn't generally a problem as home computers tend to have huge hard disks these days.**

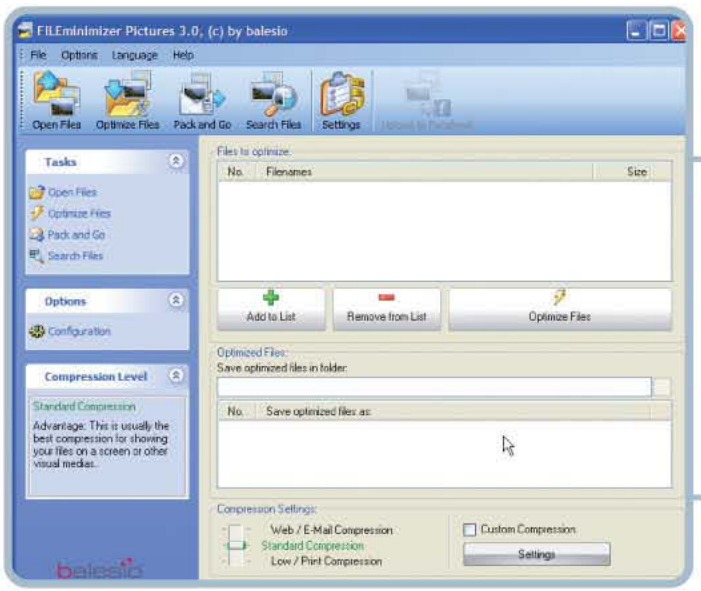
**However, it's a different matter when it comes to sharing photos via email or online: large image files take an age to upload, while many internet service providers (ISPs) place limits on the size of email attachments.**

**There are various ways to compress images so they take up less space but picture quality can sometimes suffer. The Fileminimizer program lets you reduce digital photo files to a fraction of their original size without affecting their appearance. Here's how it works.**

**Step 1**

**LAUNCH A WEB BROWSER** and click once in the Address Bar where all the 'http://' stuff is. Replace what's highlighted there by typing www.balesio.com and then press Enter. When the web page loads, choose Fileminimizer Pictures FREE from the Downloads menu. If the File Download Security Warning dialogue box appears, click Save and then choose a location for the downloaded file. Firefox users should select Save File to save the download to Firefox's default download folder. ▼



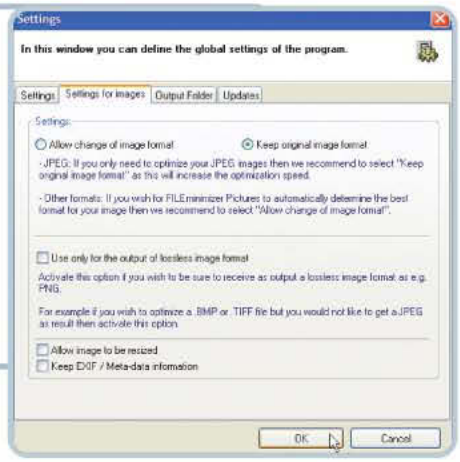

**Step 2**

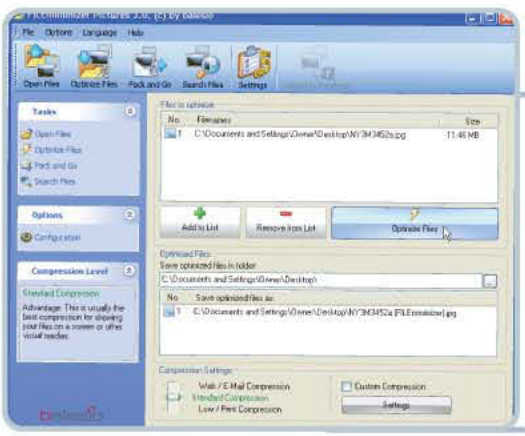
**NOW LOCATE AND DOUBLE-CLICK** the downloaded program. If Windows displays a security warning, ignore it and click Run. Follow the instructions and leave all the defaults as they are – including the options to add Fileminimizer to Windows' context (right-click) menus and install the Facebook Uploader – and at the end, click the Finish button to complete the installation and load the program. Here's what it looks like – menu bar along the top, task commands down the side and working windows in the middle. ▼

# COMPRESS LARGE IMAGES

**Step 3**

**BEFORE DOING ANYTHING ELSE,** click the Settings button and when the dialogue box opens, click the Settings for images tab. By default, Fileminimizer will choose the best combination of image format and physical size to produce the smallest possible image. Most digital cameras store pictures in JPEG format. Assuming you don't want that to change, click to select the 'Keep original image format' radio button. We'd also suggest removing the tick from the 'Allow image to be resized' box, as this will prevent the physical size of images from being reduced. These settings should produce images that look identical to the originals, just smaller.



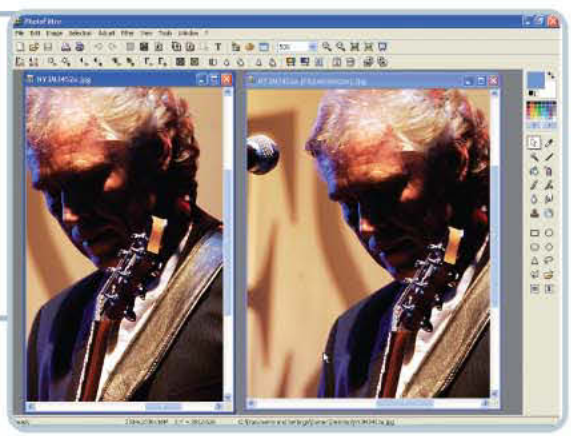



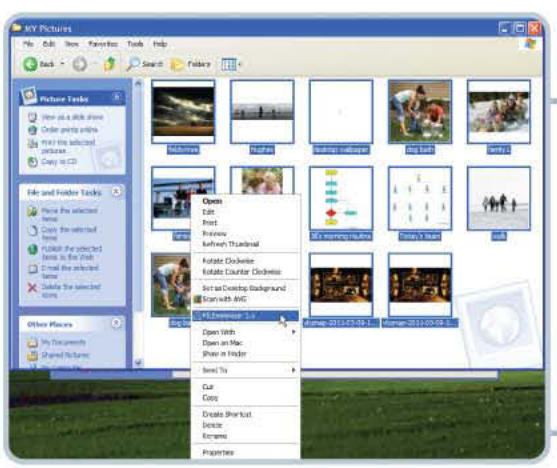
**Step 4**

**NOW FIND A LARGE PICTURE** to work with. We've popped one on the Windows Desktop that we know is 3,504 x 2,336 pixels and takes up 11.4MB of space – a very large image file. We can drag and drop that into the top window or if it's stored somewhere else, click the Open Files button, use Windows' file commands to find it and click Open. By default, Fileminimizer puts the new smaller version of a picture in the same location as the original and differentiates it by appending '(FILEminimzer)' to the end of the file name. Click the large Optimize Files button to start.

**Step 5**

**WHEN FILEMINIMIZER HAS FINISHED** its job, the old size and new size will be displayed in the top window. In our example, it has compressed the original photo by 92.7 per cent, down from 11.4MB to a mere 850KB. But what does it actually look like compared to the original photo? Here we've opened the before-and-after shots in an image-editing program and then zoomed in on both. The level of detail in the new 'small' version on the right is incredible and it's hard to believe that it's less than one-tenth the size of the original.





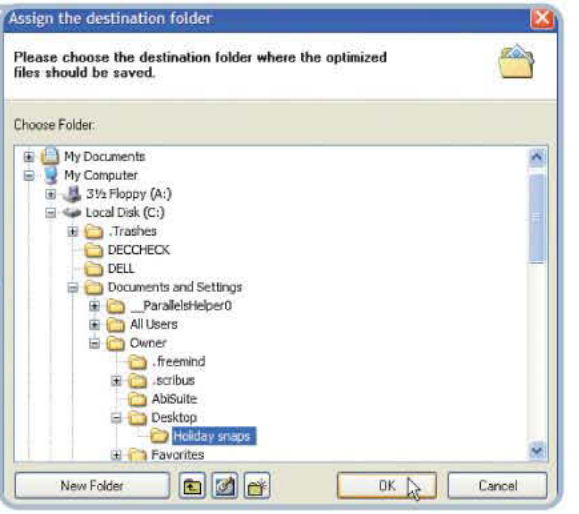
**Step 6**

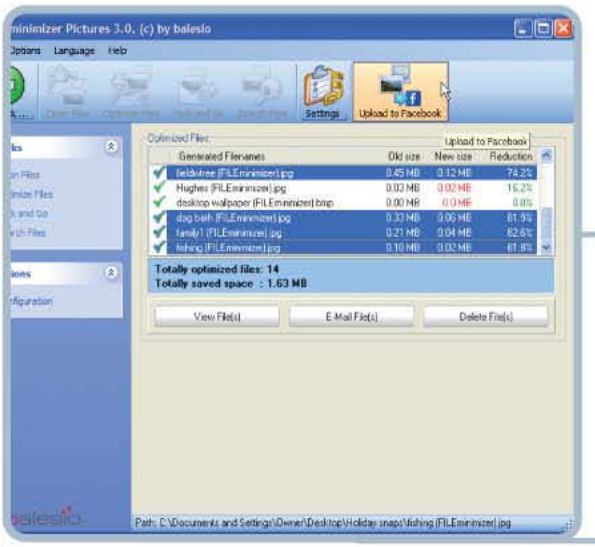
**EVEN THOUGH THE PICTURE** has been compressed using Fileminimizer, the program isn't required to open it elsewhere – so these smaller pictures are perfect for sharing. To compress more than one picture at a time, drag and drop several files into the top window using the mouse or by clicking the Open Files button and then selecting multiple pictures with Windows Explorer. Alternatively, just open a folder of pictures, select them all and then right-click on one – notice that Fileminimizer has been added as an option to the menu.

# COMPRESS LARGE IMAGES

## Step 7

**SELECT IT AND THEN** flip back to the Fileminimizer. If we process these pictures now, they'll just get dumped one by one into the same folder as the originals. Let's change that by defining a separate destination folder. Click the button next to the 'Save optimized files in folder' option (it's got three dots on it) then scroll up to click Desktop. Click the New Folder button and type in a folder name and press Enter. Select the new folder and click OK.



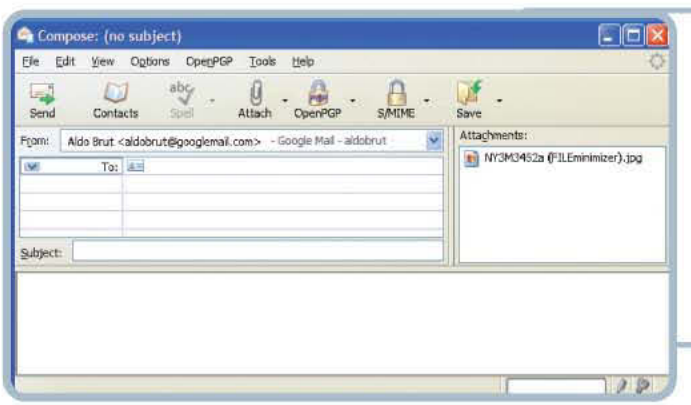




## Step 8

**CLICK THE OPTIMIZE FILES** link and Fileminimizer will do its stuff, putting the new, smaller versions of the image files into the folder created in the previous step. If you want to share them on Facebook, highlight all the photos in the top window by holding down the Ctrl (Control) key and then tapping A or be selective by holding down the Ctrl key and clicking with the mouse pointer. Click the Upload to Facebook button in the toolbar. You'll need a Facebook account for this to work.

## Step 9

**FILEMINIMIZER WILL ASK IF** you really want to upload the photos to your Facebook account. Click Yes. When the login page appears, type in your username and password, tick the 'Keep me logged in' box and then click the Log in button. At the next screen, click the Allow button. After a moment, Fileminimizer will start to upload the selected photos to Facebook. When complete, click the Visit Facebook button. When the browser launches, sign in to Facebook again and you'll see the photos on your News Feed page.




## Step 10

**BACK AT FILEMINIMIZER, CLICK** the Close button to get rid of the Facebook Uploader dialogue box. Not a Facebook user and want to share a large photo with a friend? From the main Fileminimizer window click the Pack and Go button on the button bar. Use Windows Explorer to locate and select the photo and then click Open. When Fileminimizer asks if you want to start the optimisation, click Yes. After a moment, the default email application will launch with the compressed version of the photo already attached, ready to address and send.

# Give Windows Media Player a new look

Find out how to change the appearance and feel of Windows Media Player 12

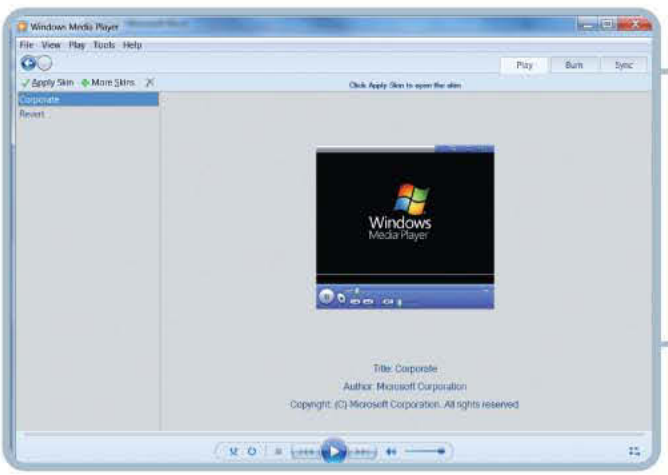
**Windows Media Player 12, included with Windows 7, is the most sophisticated yet. In addition to being able to play traditional CDs and DVDs, it can cope with a wide variety of digital audio and video formats.**

**However, left untouched, Windows Media Player (WMP) looks pretty boring. And because of the way some of its better visual features are hidden away it is perfectly possible to use WMP every day and never find them. That's where this workshop comes in handy. We will demonstrate how to access the various different skins that are included with WMP 12.**

**Skins don't change the way WMP works – but they do make it much more fun to use. Here's what to do.**

**Step 1**

**LAUNCH WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYER** in the usual way – it will be on the Start menu or pinned to the Taskbar at the bottom of the screen. By default, WMP takes up a lot of screen space and isn't very inspiring, so let's see what we can do about that. Hold down the Ctrl (Control) key on the keyboard and tap M to reveal the hidden menu. Open the View menu and click Skin chooser. ▼



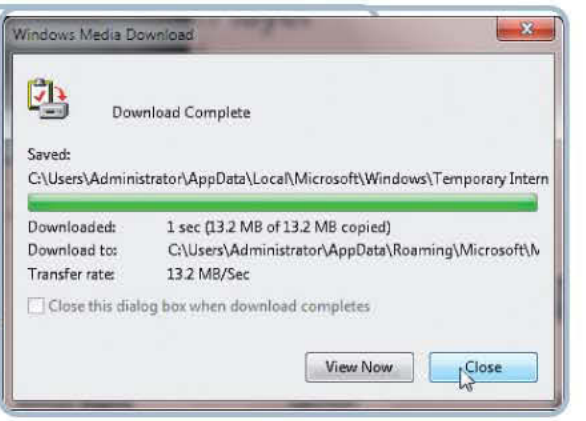

**Step 2**

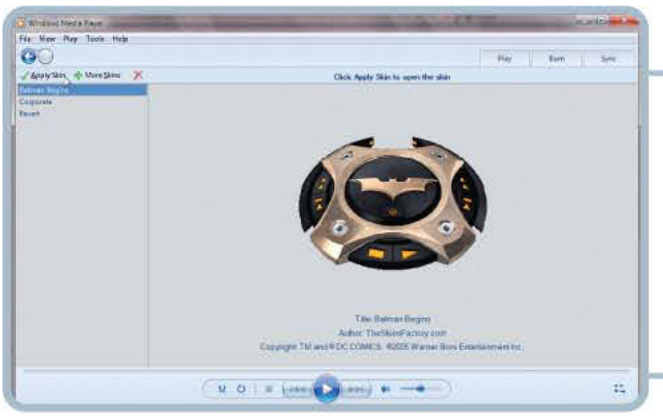
**THIS IS WHERE WMP 12** stores its skins. They're listed on the left and when one is clicked it will be previewed in the main window so you can see what it looks like. We've chosen Corporate: this is much smaller than the 'standard' WMP front end and may be useful to people who have small displays or are short of screen space. To use it click the Apply Skin button at the top of the list. ▼

# ADD SKINS TO WMP

## Step 3

**ALTHOUGH USEFUL, THIS SKIN** is pretty basic – so let's download something fancier. Open the View menu and again click Skin chooser. This time when the Skin chooser window opens click the More Skins button on the button bar. This launches Microsoft's Skins for Windows Media Player website in the default browser. Pick a skin you like the look of and click the Download link. When the File Download dialogue box appears, click Open and then after that, click Yes to install the skin. When it's finished, click the Close button.



## Step 4

**FLIP BACK TO THE WMP** application window and once more pick Skin chooser from the View menu. The downloaded skin should be listed on the left – click to select it. We've chosen a Batman Begins skin, which is quite different from the standard skins supplied with WMP. Indeed, as we'll see in just a moment, it's both flashier and a lot more entertaining to use. To make the change to the new look and feel, click the Apply Skin button.

## Step 5

**AND HERE'S THE BATMAN** Begins player in action on the Windows Desktop – it springs to life with a nice rolling animation (you'll just have to take our word for that part). Many of the commands, such as Play, Pause and Stop, are pretty self-evident but some of the others are a bit more opaque. Try hovering the mouse pointer over any of the buttons and Windows will display a little tooltip explaining what it does. Perhaps the most important one is Return To Full Mode, which returns WMP to the default view (see Step 1).

## Step 6

**BATMAN BEGINS DEMONSTRATES WHAT** a good skin can offer. Here we've opened various options that are included with the player by clicking the icons at the bottom of the central oval window to open the Visualization window (the blue swirly thing at the bottom) the playlist above it and the graphic equalizer to the left of that. All these windows are resizable so they can take up as little or as much space as you like.

VIEW AND CONVERT FILES

# Open different file types online

## Use an online service to view unrecognised file types

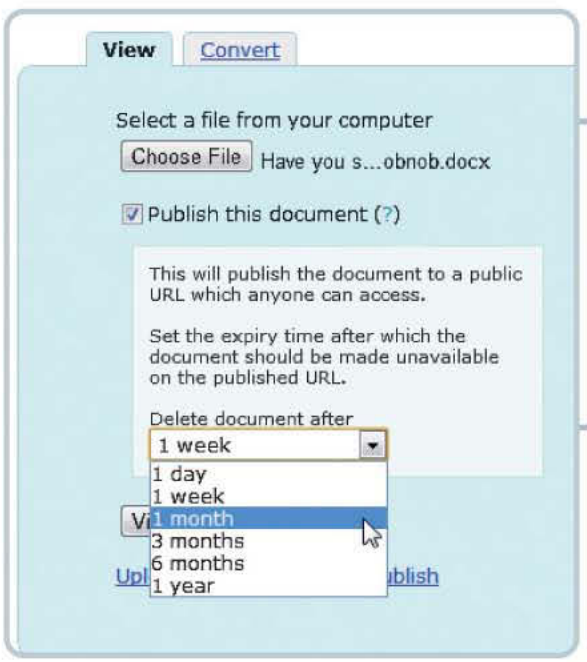
**It's very frustrating to receive a file as an email attachment only to find that your computer refuses to open it. There are a number of reasons why this can happen. It could because you have a different office suite installed, perhaps, or because the sender created the file using an old or arcane format that few people use.**

**Of course, one way to deal with this would be to track down and install a compatible application that can open or otherwise view the file. However, this takes time and effort.**

**As an alternative, the Zoho Viewer provides a simple online service that can view or open most document file types. Better still, Zoho Viewer can convert files between different formats – so you can get the document in the format you want.**

**Step 1**

**LAUNCH A WEB BROWSER** and visit http://viewer.zoho.com. When the site appears, click the View tab. The file needs to be uploaded to Zoho Viewer, so click the Choose File button, browse to where it is saved then select it and click Open. Alternatively, if the file is stored online somewhere, type or paste the full URL of the document in the space on the right-hand side of the page. Now click the View button to open the file. ▼



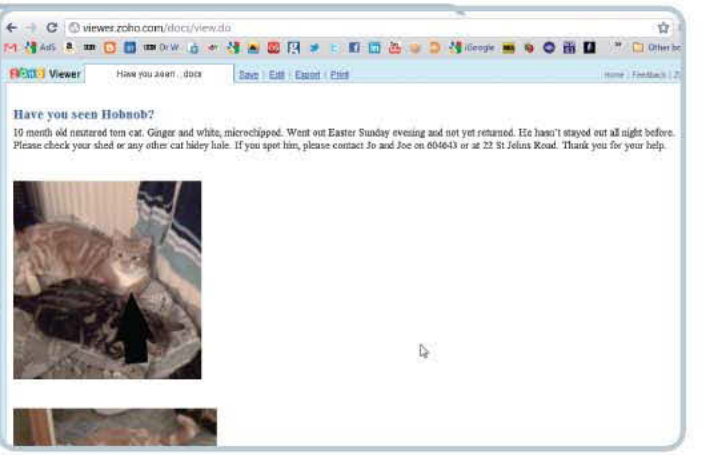

**Step 2**

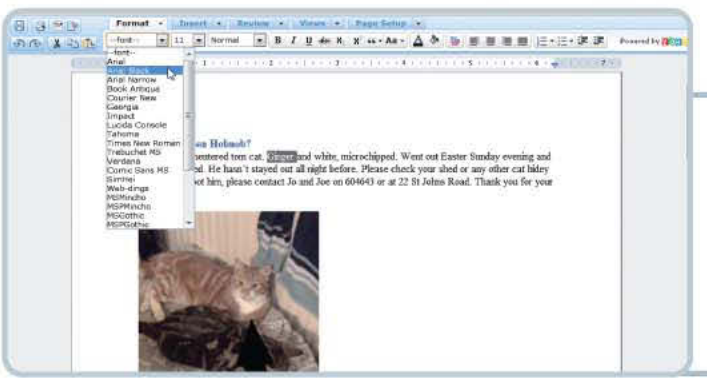
**ZOHO VIEWER ALSO MAKES** it possible to publish documents for a limited period of time, which can be useful for sharing with friends or family. To do this, tick the box labelled 'Publish this document' then use the dropdown list to set the publication duration – from one day to a whole year. To upload more than one document, click 'Upload multiple files and publish' followed by the Browse Button. When the time period is up, the document will be automatically deleted. Click View. ▼

# VIEW AND CONVERT FILES

**Step 3**

**WHEN A DOCUMENT IS** published in this way, its URL appears in the browser's Address or Location bar. To share the document with a friend, click to highlight this URL and use the Ctrl (Control) and C keyboard shortcut to copy it, before using Ctrl and V to paste the link elsewhere. It's worth noting that, though Zoho Viewer will display the contents of most document files containing formatting may not be perfect. Click the Print link to print a hard copy or click Save to download a copy of the original file.



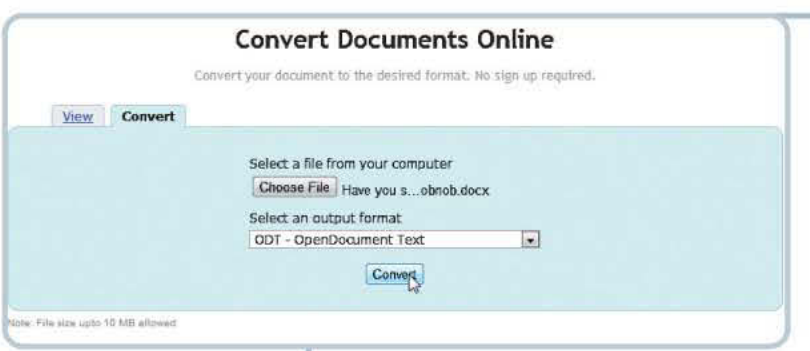



**Step 4**

**TO MAKE CHANGES TO** the current document click Edit. This opens a new browser tab, with the document opened in Zoho Writer. This is an online word processor that provides many editing features. To change the font of part of the text, for example, highlight it, select the Format tab and then choose the desired font from the dropdown list. Once all changes to the document are finished, click Save and return to its original tab.

**Step 5**

**TO CONVERT AN UPLOADED** file to a different format, click the Export link. A selection of file types appears in the dropdown list: this will vary according to the original file type. Here, for example, we are about to turn a Word document into a PDF. Choose the required format and the converted file will download right away.

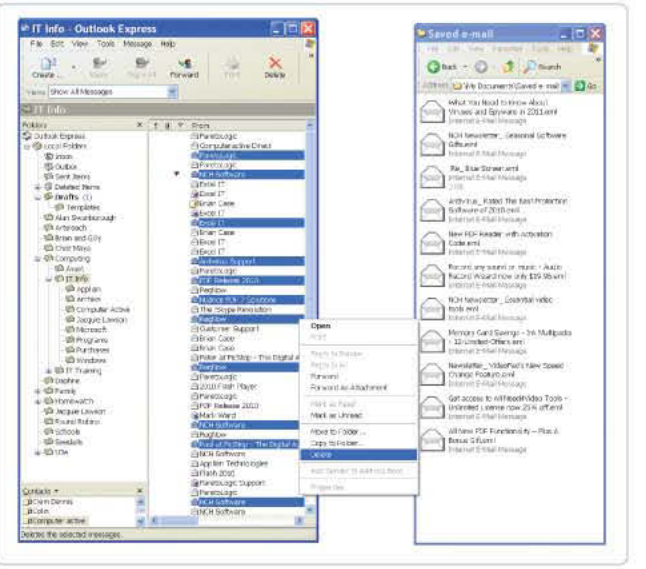



**Step 6**

**FINALLY, ZOHO VIEWER CAN BE** used to convert files without requiring them to be viewed first. To do this, return to the Zoho Viewer home page and select the Convert tab. Click Choose File, browse to the relevant file and click Open. Assuming the file is of a type that Zoho Viewer can handle, the dropdown list below will offer a variety of alternative formats. Choose one and click Convert to begin downloading it in the converted format.

## OUTLOOK EXPRESS

# Back up emails



I wanted a way to make backups of my emails in Outlook Express but the Save As option in the file menu only saves one message at a time and the Move option in the Edit menu only moves emails between folders. I found that it is possible to drag and drop multiple emails from Outlook Express into a Windows Explorer window.

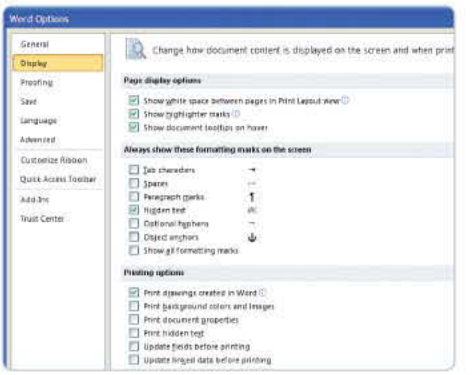
Open the correct folder in Outlook Express and arrange the window so it only takes up half of the screen. Hold down the Ctrl button and left-click on all the emails that you want to save.

Click on the Start button and then My Documents to open a Windows Explorer window. Then create a new folder for the selected emails. Drag and drop the emails into this folder to create a copy. If you don't want them in Outlook Express any more, they can now be deleted.

The limitation with this system however, is that the emails can only be sorted by date or subject.

## WORD 2010

### Show formatting marks



It can helpful to see special characters in Word that don't appear when the document is printed, such as space and tab markers, to track down formatting problems.

Text can also be hidden, which is handy if you want to explain sections of documents without this appearing on the printout.

The icon to display these marks is found in the Paragraph section of the Home tab in the Ribbon, and it looks like ¶.

If you would rather have only one or two of these marks visible all the time, click on the File menu and then on Options. Click on Display and click in the boxes to select the different formatting marks you would like to see. Click on OK to save the changes.

This option can be found in Word 2007 by clicking on the Office button and then Word Options. Click on Display in the left-hand column to see the options.

## FACEBOOK

### Change email notifications

It can be irritating to receive emails about every update on Facebook but it is easy to change when they are sent. Sign in to Facebook and click on the Account button at the top-right corner. Click on Account Settings and then Notifications.

The page that follows is rather long but divided into helpful sections covering all the different ways that people can draw attention to you on Facebook. There are also some useful reminders such as a weekly email with details of friends' birthdays.

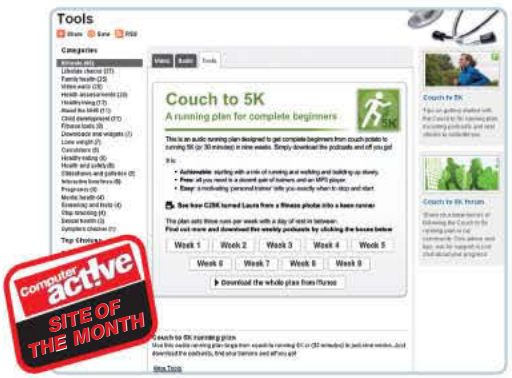
The last options cover the messages that Facebook Apps can send you.

Scroll down to the bottom of the page when you are happy with the choices and click on the Save Changes button.

It is possible to have notifications sent to your mobile phone as text messages as well as emails. The phone must be activated for Facebook Mobile first.

# BEST OF THE WEB

We take a look at some of the best websites for helping you keep fit and healthy




## Couch to 5k running plan

*www.snipca.com/X2934*

**This is an audio running plan designed to get people from sitting on the sofa to running 5km in just nine weeks. The NHS website has a podcast for each week, starting with brisk walking and 60-second bursts of running and progressing to a full 30-minute run in week nine. The podcasts talk you through each run, so it's like having your own personal trainer.**

*www.snipca.com/X2933*

**This online tool asks you questions to give you your 'health age'. There's also advice on how to get in better shape.**

*www.mapmyrun.com*

**This site has various running routes to follow submitted by other users. You can also plot your own route.**

*www.malehealth.co.uk*

**Male Health offers some frank advice on various health issues that affect men. There's also a guide for health checks.**

*www.bbc.co.uk/health/tools*

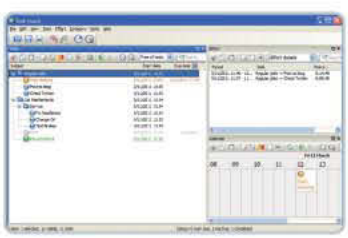
**The BBC Health website has a number of 'health calculators' and other useful information.**

# THE BEST FREE TOOLS FOR YOUR PC

Try a great audio editor, stay organised and in touch with friends, and offer technical support

### Reaper

**Reaper is an inexpensive but capable program for recording and editing audio and MIDI files for creating music tracks. This is a 30-day trial.**
**Type:** Time Limited Demo
**File size:** 4.9MB
**Overall:** ★★★★★
**Download at:** *www.reaper.fm*



### Task Coach

**Task Coach is a to-do list manager that can keep you up to date with any jobs that need doing, and can even record the amount of time spent on tasks.**
**Type:** Freeware
**File size:** 10.9MB
**Overall:** ★★★★★
**Download at:** *taskcoach.org/*

### Trillian

**Trillian can be used with a wide range of online chat accounts and includes a tool to automatically import settings on different computers.**
**Type:** Freeware
**File size:** 15.5MB
**Overall:** ★★★★★
**Download at:** *www.trillian.im*

### Teamviewer

**This is an excellent tool for giving or receiving computer help that lets you safely take control of another computer over the internet.**
**Type:** Freeware
**File size:** 3.1MB
**Overall:** ★★★★★
**Download at:** *www.teamviewer.com*

WESTERN DIGITAL 1970-2010 40 YEARS OF INNOVATION

# Max Payne 3

## An entertaining shooter with its roots in film noir

The lead characters in most modern games tend to be sprightly, young and often imbued with some kind of superpower.

Max Payne is different. He is overweight, over the hill and the closest thing he has to a special power is a high alcohol tolerance brought on by years of hard drinking.

If Max seems familiar, it is more likely because he's a direct descendant of Raymond Chandler's hard-nosed anti-hero Philip Marlowe, complete with Humphrey Bogart-style hangdog look and gravelly first-person voiceover.

Characters and narrative are the most interesting aspects of Max Payne 3, which is a straightforward third-person shooter that is an excellent example of how grown-up storytelling can work in a video game context. You play the burned-out ex-cop who flees his native New York after a run-in with a local mafia boss and winds up in São Paulo playing bodyguard to a rich, decadent Brazilian family. When his employer's wife is kidnapped, the situation goes downhill rapidly, dragging Max with it.

It is like a gritty film noir, with plenty of requisite twists and turns. While the busy editing style and flashy graphical effects that occur throughout can be a little distracting at first, they certainly complement the mood of the game.

As for gameplay, Max Payne 3 does not offer a huge amount that we have not seen in similar titles. The 'bullet time' feature (where you can dive and shoot in slow motion) was once relatively unique but is a little old hat now, though it is still fun to pull off. The multiplayer mode plays quite differently to the main solo campaign but, again, feels similar to that of other games.

A modern PC is needed to get the best performance from the game and you'll need 35GB of free disk space to install it. Check the full requirements at www.snipca.com/6447.

A good, old-fashioned story told in a modern way, Max Payne 3 is bleak and bloody but a fun shooterV

**MAX PAYNE 3**

**OVERALL:** ★★★☆☆

# The Walking Dead

## Unsettling but a good antidote to run-of-the-mill zombie games

Games based on films and television prgrammes rarely impress us but The Walking Dead is an exception.

It is based on the graphic novel of the same name, which has also been adapted for TV, and depicts a world at the festering hands of a zombie outbreak. The game's plot and characters run parallel to the events of the original story. Unlike the majority of zombie games on the market, however, The Walking Dead is not just a shooting gallery.

Instead, it is more like a Monkey Island-type point-and-click adventure but with moments of added real-time action.

The distinctive look openly apes the style of the graphic novel. Confusingly, the viewpoint switches between third and first person, while the mouse and keyboard control system takes getting used to.

However, this only adds to the panicky atmosphere that pervades the game. When you respond to dialogue, for example, there is a timer that forces you to select a response quickly. You can't ponder and you can't reload your previously saved game if you want to select an alternative option. The choices you make have serious repercussions later in the story.

The Walking Dead does not require a massively powerful PC (see www.snipca.com/6480 for full system requirements) but it is worth noting the game is only available as a direct download, so broadband is needed. The game is also being released episodically. The £21 price buys you a 'season pass' that allows you to download each of the five episodes as they are available; one and two are ready to play.

If you are a zombie fan, The Walking Dead is well worth checking out – as long as you are happy with strong language and lashings of gore.

An intelligent and unsettling game about choice and consequences.

**THE WALKING DEAD**

**OVERALL:** ★★★★☆

# NO PROBLEM

noproblem@nextgenpublishing.net

# Q&A ANSWERS TO PC PROBLEMS

Our team of experts solves your computer, software & internet problems

## Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

- **Add-on** Web browser add-ons add new features to make browsing more effective. Some examples include extra toolbars, download managers and privacy tools.
- **Compression** The process of reducing a file's size by encoding the data.
- **Cookies** Text files generated by websites and stored on your hard disk to record settings and preferences.
- **Drag** Clicking on something with the left mouse button, keeping the button pressed and moving (dragging) the object.
- **Email** Electronic mail. A system of sending notes and memos between computers via the internet.
- **Field** In a database, a field is an individual container that can hold a particular type of information.
- **Icon** A small image used by Windows to identify a file or application.
- **Pixel** The smallest part of an image displayed on a monitor or captured by a scanner or camera.
- **Radio button** A type of button where only one choice can be made at any time.

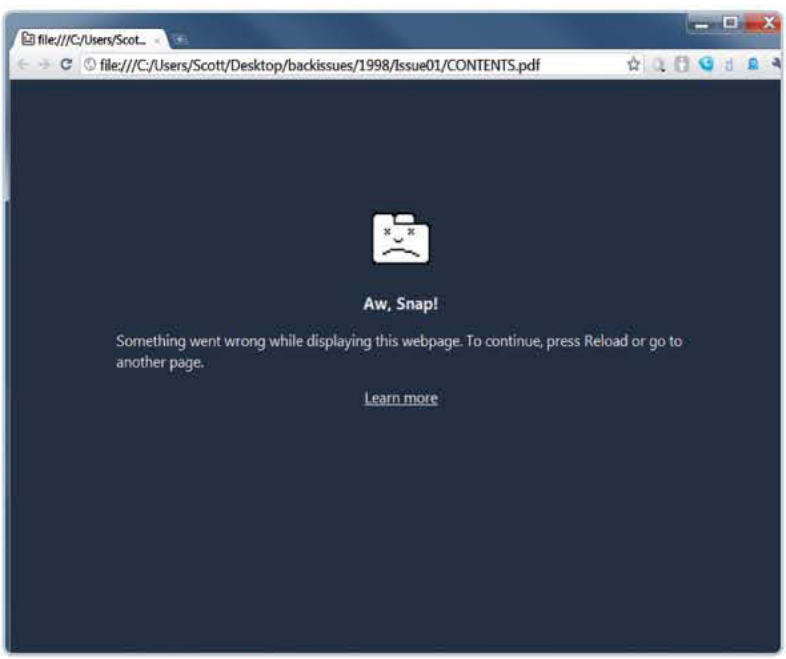
## Odd bulge on USB cable

**Q I've noticed that cables supplied with USB devices often have a cylinder close to one end, and I'm wondering why. Can you tell me what they're for? I have one such cable that was supplied with a scanner, that's now defunct. Is it okay to re-use such a cable with other devices, or is it better to recycle it?**

*Ketan Ganger*

A These cylinders are ferrite beads, or chokes, and they are designed to reduce electromagnetic interference – there is nothing more to them than that. From the look of the one in the photograph you sent to us, it appears to be a clip-on variety: these may be used by manufacturers as a cheap way to modify an existing stock of cables. You can even buy new ones for use on cables that lack such beads (if you have devices that are suffering from electromagnetic interference): Maplin (www.maplin.co.uk), for instance, sells a pack of four for just over £2.

The answer to your question, then, is that it is perfectly safe to reuse the cable – with or without the ferrite choke. If you find it gets in the way, just unclip and remove it (though if you later experience problems with the device to which it's attached, you will need to refit it).




▲ The 'Aw, Snap!' page is Chrome equivalent of Internet Explorer's '404' error message

## Google Chrome's 'Aw, snap!' warning message

**Q I've been using the Google Chrome web browser for a few months now, with no problems. In fact, I find it much more reliable (and faster) than either Firefox or Internet Explorer. However, recently it has been throwing up an odd page at irregular intervals. The page is all grey, has a sad face in the middle and 'Aw, snap!' displayed as a main message in the centre. A secondary message suggests that reloading the page may fix the problem and, indeed, this does sometimes work. But what is causing this?**

*Ishita Chopra*

A Google Chrome's 'Aw, snap!' page is the browser's response to anything that causes web page to crash. As such, it is unlikely that the 'Aw, snap!' page you're seeing has a single cause – particularly if it seems to be only appearing sometimes.

The first thing to try, then, is to reload the affected pages. Just click the Reload button to the left of the Chrome toolbar. If that doesn't work, try visiting subpages of the original domain or page. If other subpages work, then the problem likely lies with the web page itself – and there is not a lot to be done about that, other than trying again later.

Beyond that, it's possible that your firewall or other security software is stepping in to prevent certain pages from being displayed. Google itself has a few ideas on this topic – read them at www.snipca.com/X2781. The company has also published a list of applications known to cause Chrome to crash: you'll find this at www.snipca.com/X2868. Finally, if you have a recent version of Chrome installed, typing 'about:

conflicts' into the bar and pressing Enter will display a list of known and suspected conflicts."

## Can I sell my Microsoft Office package?

**Q I recently bought Microsoft Office Home and Student 2007 (on CD) from a retail shop. I understand that this comes with licences for use on up to three PC. However, I have decided that I want to uninstall it from my PC and instead buy and use the 2010 version (for the new features). Can I sell the 2007 version and can the buyer use it? I have tried looking through Microsoft's website for the answer but to no avail.**

*Binoy Ghosh*

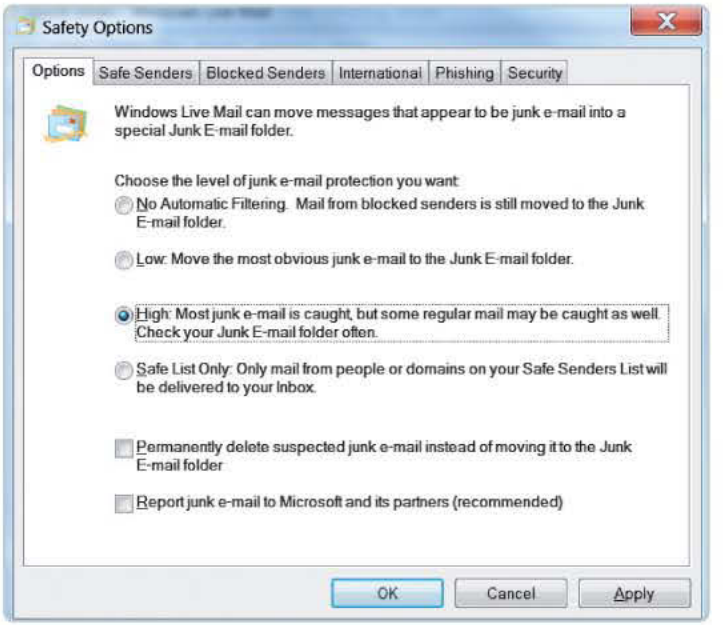
A Like all software, Microsoft's products are sold under licence. So, while you may buy or possess a physical disc, the licence may not be transferable. Microsoft publishes the licence terms for all its products online. To look them up, visit www.snipca.com/ X2773.

The good news for you is that the licence of the retail version of Microsoft Office Home and Student 2007 is transferable. Specifically, the licence states that the "first user of the software may make a one-time transfer of the software, and this agreement, directly to a third party. The first user must uninstall the software before transferring it separately from the device."

So you are free to go ahead and sell the physical product and its licence and the buyer is entitled to install and use it. When they do, though, the software will demand to be activated anew. To do this the buyer must call a telephone number and explain the situation to Microsoft.

Note, though, that Microsoft requires you to include the proof of the licence, which is the Certificate of Authenticity supplied in the box, when selling. In other words, if you don't have the proof of licence, it would be against the licence terms to sell it on.

Note, too, that the buyer would constitute the second user of the software and, as such, would not themselves be entitled to sell the software later on.




▲ Windows Live Mail includes several levels of spam filtering to choose from

## Is this email a scam?

**Q I keep getting messages from an email address ending in @rocketmail.com. The message body asks me to click on a contained link, but I wonder if this is someone trying to infect my computer? Although I just delete the email I find it annoying that I am being contacted this way. Have you heard of this address before and is there anything I can do about it?**

*Tanvir Sing*

A We haven't heard of the specific address supplied, but spammers employ literally millions of different email addresses. The simplest response we can give is that, if you don't recognise the sender's name or email address, then don't trust the message content. You are currently deleting these unsolicited emails and that is what we recommend you carry on doing .

If you want stop such messages appearing in your inbox then there are a variety of ways to achieve this. Unfortunately, you didn't tell us anything about your computer or email setup so we can't offer specific guidance. However, if you are using Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express, Windows Mail or Windows Live Mail then look for the 'junk email' options.

Windows Live Mail, for example – which is Microsoft's latest email application, available as a free download from www.snipca.com/X2856 – offers several levels of spam filtering. To control how this works, start Windows Live Mail then click the Menus button in the upper-right corner of the screen. Choose Safety options and then click the Options tab. By default, the junk email protection level is set to 'Low', which moves only the most obvious junk email into Windows Live Mail's Junk E-mail folder. To receive fewer junk messages, click to select the High radio button instead – though understand that by doing so some legitimate messages may be marked as spam and placed in the Junk E-Mail folder.

## Lost Hibernate option in Windows

**Q I have a laptop running Windows Vista Home Basic edition. Following a recent spate of downloads from Windows Update, the Hibernate option has disappeared from my Start menu. Where did it go and how do I get it back?**

*Richa Shah*

A Windows displays the Hibernate option only on PCs it deems able to support the feature. It is possible that the laptop's manufacturer enabled the Hibernate feature in error or

## We can work it out!

If your PC or software is driving you up the wall, send us the details of the problem and we'll try to print a solution that will help you

Contact us by email at noproblem@nextgenpublishing.net or by post at: No Problem, Computeractive, Next Gen Publishing Ltd., 2nd Floor, C Wing, Trade World, Kamala Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai 400013 .

Whether responding by post or email, please include your telephone number and address. Unfortunately, we can't reply personally to your letters and emails or give technical advice over the phone. When sending a query, tell us about your PC and include full information about the hardware and software you're using. Screenshots of your problem would also be useful (try hitting the Print Screen button and then using Paste in the Edit menu of your image processor).

## Corrigendum

Dear readers,
In the September, 2012 issue Hot New Products section Antec 3x cleaning solution has been misspelt as Antex. The contacts for that product should be as follows:
Contact - **www.antecindia.co.in**
Buy - **indiainfo@antec.com**
Marketing Related Enquiries - ***mbhatia@antec.com***

otherwise later found it to be unreliable – and duly informed Microsoft about the issue. As such, the disabling of this feature from your laptop could have been a routine inclusion in any one of the hundreds of Windows Update fixes Microsoft issues each year. However, this is just a theory – we can't be sure.

You wish to have the feature reinstated so we assume that you have previously used Hibernate without problem, though you did not explicitly say this. The first thing to do, then, is to check whether your computer is able to support Hibernate. To do this, click Start, type cmd into the Search box and, when cmd.exe is highlighted above, press Enter. If you are prompted for an administrator password, type it in and press Enter or click Continue. The Command window will open. At the command prompt, type powercfg /a and press Enter. This will return a list of 'sleep states' available to your PC. If Hibernate is listed as being available (and we predict it will be) then it can be re-enabled by typing powercfg /hibernate on and pressing Enter. Once you have done this, restart Windows and the option should reappear.

Incidentally, you will find more options related to Hibernate (and Sleep and Standby modes) in the Hardware and Sound section of Control Panel (from the Start menu). Just click the Change plan settings link followed by the Change advanced power settings link to explore.

## Blind copy en masse

**Q I have to send regular messages to some 350 email addresses. These are located in various areas of the country and are stored in groups of 12 to 50 in my address book. The emails are using the blind carbon copy (BCC) field in, to avoid revealing the email addresses to the recipients. Is there any way of sending these addresses to the BCC field by default, as it is rather tedious having to move them from the To field each time. I use both Outlook and Gmail, so a solution for either one will do.**

***Jayesh More***

A There are various ways to achieve this in both Outlook and Gmail. However, the methods for Outlook generally rely on commercial add-ins, so we will concentrate on a free technique for Gmail. If you are interested in achieving the same in Outlook, though, visit Microsoft's Download Marketplace (at www.snipca.com/ X2854) and explore the 'Mail, e-mail and fax' category – the Always BCC add-in should do the job for you, for example.

To use this procedure to enable automatic blind carbon copying in Gmail, you will need to use the Firefox web browser. If you don't have this installed already, it can be downloaded free from www.firefox.com. Then, you will need to download and install Greasemonkey: this is a free add-on for Firefox that can be used to customise the way websites look and function, with the help of user-written 'scripts' – little bits of computer code. You can get Greasemonkey from www.greasespot.net – just click the Download link at the top of the page followed by the green Add to Firefox button then follow the prompts.

Now it's time to find a Greasemonkey script that will make Gmail behave in exactly the way you want. Visit http://userscripts.org and search for 'BCC'. One that seems to do what you want is Gmail Auto BCC (www.snipca.com/X2855), though we found several more that work in a variety of different ways. To try one out, just click the green Install button on the script's summary page.

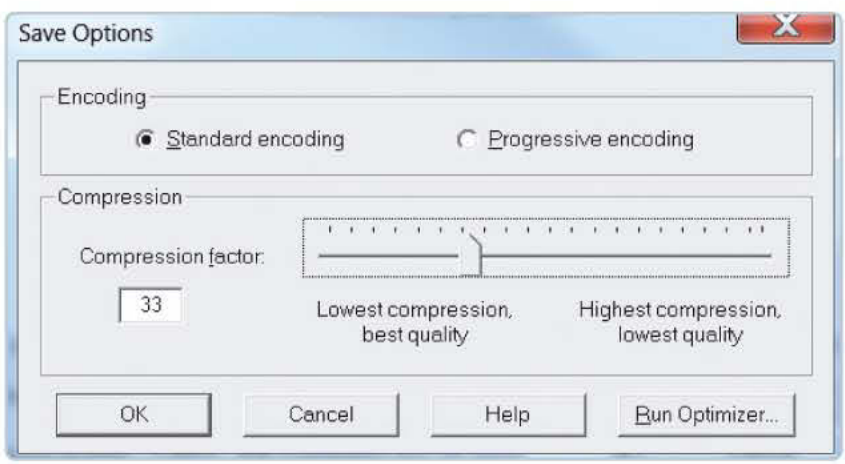
## Reduce photo file sizes

**Q I exchange digital photos with a friend, via email. We both ensure to save the photos in JPEG format, so that they are compressed before emailing. However, his files are always much smaller than mine, even though the photos themselves seem to be the same size when viewed. How can this be?**

***Ravi Menon***

A The JPEG image format allows for variable compression rates. In essence, the lower the compression rate, the higher the image quality will be – but at the expense of file size. It is possible to apply a high level of compression that will result in a tiny file size, but the picture quality will be appalling. The upshot of this is that the user must make a trade-off between image quality and file size.

Because JPEG compression is very efficient in the first place, most image-editing programs will by default apply a low compression factor. However, it is usually possible to change this setting to reduce the file size. Indeed, it can be surprising quite how far it is possible to increase the JPEG compression factor before most people can notice a change in image quality. So, assuming that all else is equal – and specifically the image's pixel resolution – our guess is that your friend is employing a higher level of




When saving JPEGs you can choose between size or quality of the file

## Jargon Buster

Techno babble demystified...

**Resolution** The amount of detail shown in an image, whether on screen or printed.

**Toolbar** A strip of icons that runs across the top of most Windows applications. Used to provide quick access to certain important features, such as saving and printing.

**Web browser** A program developed for viewing websites.

JPEG compression when saving his images.

You didn't tell us which image-editing software you use, so we can't tell you how or where to change the JPEG compression settings. However, this will typically be in the program's Options or Preferences page, or it may an option that is displayed when saving images as JPEGs.

## Headers and footers

**Q I have a problem inserting dates into headers and footers in Microsoft Word. When I choose the Author, Page#, Date option from the Header/Footer submenu within the Insert menu, the dates appear in US format (so month, day then year) – but I obviously want UK format (day, month then year). How do I do this?**

*Rakshya Lad*

A You didn't tell us which version of Word you are using. Fortunately, from the specific option names included in your original email we believe that your version of Word is 2003 (or earlier).

If this deduction is correct then the date format used by this particular menu option is drawn from the document's language setting. To change this, click to open the Tools menu, point to Language then choose Set Language from the submenu. If necessary, scroll through the language list to find the 'English U.K.' entry, click to highlight it and then click OK. Note that this will not change the format of dates you've already inserted, so they will need to be reapplied.

## Delete your Google search history

**Q I found the recent article on the browsing history very helpful indeed.**

**I am still trying to resolve deleting some of the unwanted items now accumulating in Google search box, which appears to keep every enquiry regardless of its importance for future needs for that one off search. Can items be deleted at all on Google?**

*Teena Chaudhari*

A There are several possible answers to this question.

First off, if you have Google Toolbar installed in your web browser, then the history it stores can be cleared by first clicking the down-pointing arrow to the right of the search box and then clicking the Clear History link at the foot of the History list. Alternatively, this History feature can be permanently disabled. To do this, first click the spanner icon on the Google Toolbar then select the Search tab. Now click to remove the tick from the 'Store search history on my computer' box and click Save.

If, on the other hand, you are not using Google Toolbar, there are a couple of other ways to stop Google keeping tabs on your search history.

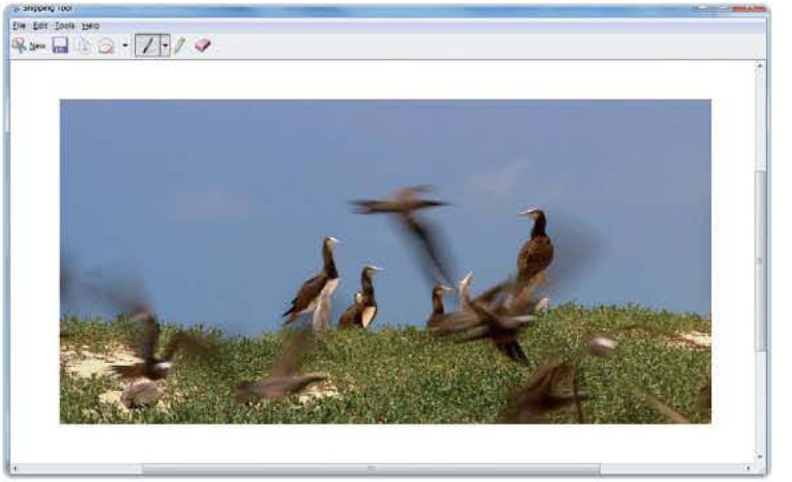
If you have a Google Account log in as normal then click the My Account link at the top right of the page. Now click Edit (next to the 'My products' heading) followed by the Delete Web History link and then follow the prompts to confirm your desire to opt out.

Even if you don't have a Google Account (or otherwise aren't logged in), Google still logs searches by using a cookie stored on your computer. To stop this behaviour, visit www.google.com as normal and perform a search for anything (it really doesn't matter what).

Now click Web History in the top-right corner of the page. To stop Google storing all future search terms in a cookie, just click the 'Disable customizations based on search activity' link.

Finally, if you would prefer to keep this facility but merely wipe the slate clean from time to time, then clearing your browser's cookies will do suffice.

To do this in Internet Explorer, for example, select Internet Options from the Tools menu then click the Delete button in the Browsing history section within the General tab. Make sure the Cookies box is ticked (along with any other history categories you wish to eradicate) then click the Delete button.



▲ There are several ways to extract frames from video files to serve as still images

## Capture stills from video

**Q I was supposed to take a photo of a group of people, but for some unknown reason the camera slipped into video mode. I did not realise this until I transferred the file to my computer to view it.**

**The film runs for just a few seconds, stopping on the very picture that I thought I had taken. I have tried to copy just the picture but every attempt just ends up with the complete video. How can I capture the still shot that I want?**

*Divya Nayak*

A There are numerous sophisticated applications that can extract frames from video files to serve as stills: these would be the best option for capturing a particular frame at the highest possible resolution. However, for a one-off grab like this both Windows Vista and 7 have a built-in tool that should suffice.

First, double-click the video you want to take the image from – this should start playback in Windows Media Player (or your computer's default media-playing application).

Click the maximise button at the top right to make the playback window as large as possible. Now, hover the mouse pointer over the pause button and be ready to click to stop playback the moment the shot you want appears in view. Now click Start, followed by All Programs and Accessories then click Snipping Tool.

A small Snipping Tool program window will appear. Click the down-pointing arrow next to New and choose Rectangular Snip – the whole screen will turn grey.

Now click and drag to select the area of the video-playback window showing the desired still shot and release the mouse button.

The captured area will be displayed in a new (and larger) Snipping Tool window. If the captured image isn't quite right, just repeat this process. Otherwise, save the photo by choosing Save As from the File menu.

# Win!!!!!!

Computer Interactive

&

IMS

## Quiz # 16

Now, the fun at Computer Interactive gets even more rewarding! Take a crack at this **IMS-Computeractive Quiz** and win! Find the answers on page X and shoot before 30th October 2012 to win a Digitek Handy Scanner or Envie Speedster.
Mail to ***ca@nextgenpublishing.net***.

**1) Ni-MH batteries are rated in "mAh"**

a) True ❑
b) False ❑

**2) Rechargeable alkaline batteries provide lower performance than ordinary alkaline batteries but can be recharged up to about 20 times.**

a) True ❑
b) False ❑

**3) Rechargeable batteries (Ni-Cd, Ni-MH, Li-Ion) consist of two electrodes immersed in a solution (electrolyte).**

a) True ❑
b) False ❑

**Winner!**
**Quiz # 15**
**T N Ashok,** Kerala, (Digitek Handy Scanner)
**Ashitosh Roy,** Kolkata, (Envie Speedster)

Name: _____
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The decision of the judges will be final and binding and no queries shall be entertained. The employees of IMS Mercantiles and Next Gen Publishing cannot participate in this contest. Participants can also send their entries by fax or photocopies at the Next Gen mailing address listed on colophon page. Winners will be decided by Lucky draw.

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# QUIZ-1

## A CHANCE TO WIN

**Various Prizes from Techcom (4 Winners)**

Now, the fun at Computer Interactive gets even more rewarding! Take a crack at this Techcom-Computer active Quiz and win! For clues log on to **www.techcomindia.com**

So read, Find the answer and shoot before 20th, Oct. 2012 to win Mentioned Prizes

Mail to ca@nextgenpublishing.net with the subject-line: ComputerInteractive Quiz 1

1) In which year Techcom Brand was launched in India?

a) 2001 ☐
b) 2003 ☐
c) 2007 ☐

2) Techcom Technologies Pvt. Ltd Head office is situated in which city?

a) Mumbai ☐
b) Kolkata ☐
c) New Delhi ☐

3) SSD-WH-223TF Wireless Headphone support which type of storage card?

a) CF Card ☐
b) Micro SD card ☐
c) MS PRO card ☐

The decision of the judges will be final and binding and no queries shall be entertainment. The employees of Techcom and Next Gen Publishing cannot participate in this contest. Participants can also send their entries by fax or photocopies at the Next Gen Publishing mailing address listed on the last page. Winner will be decided by Lucky draw.

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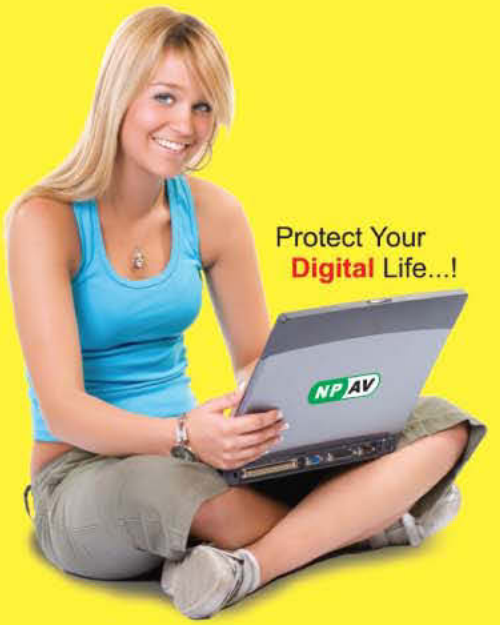


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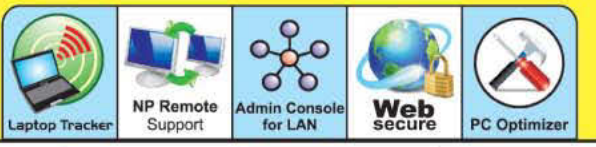


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