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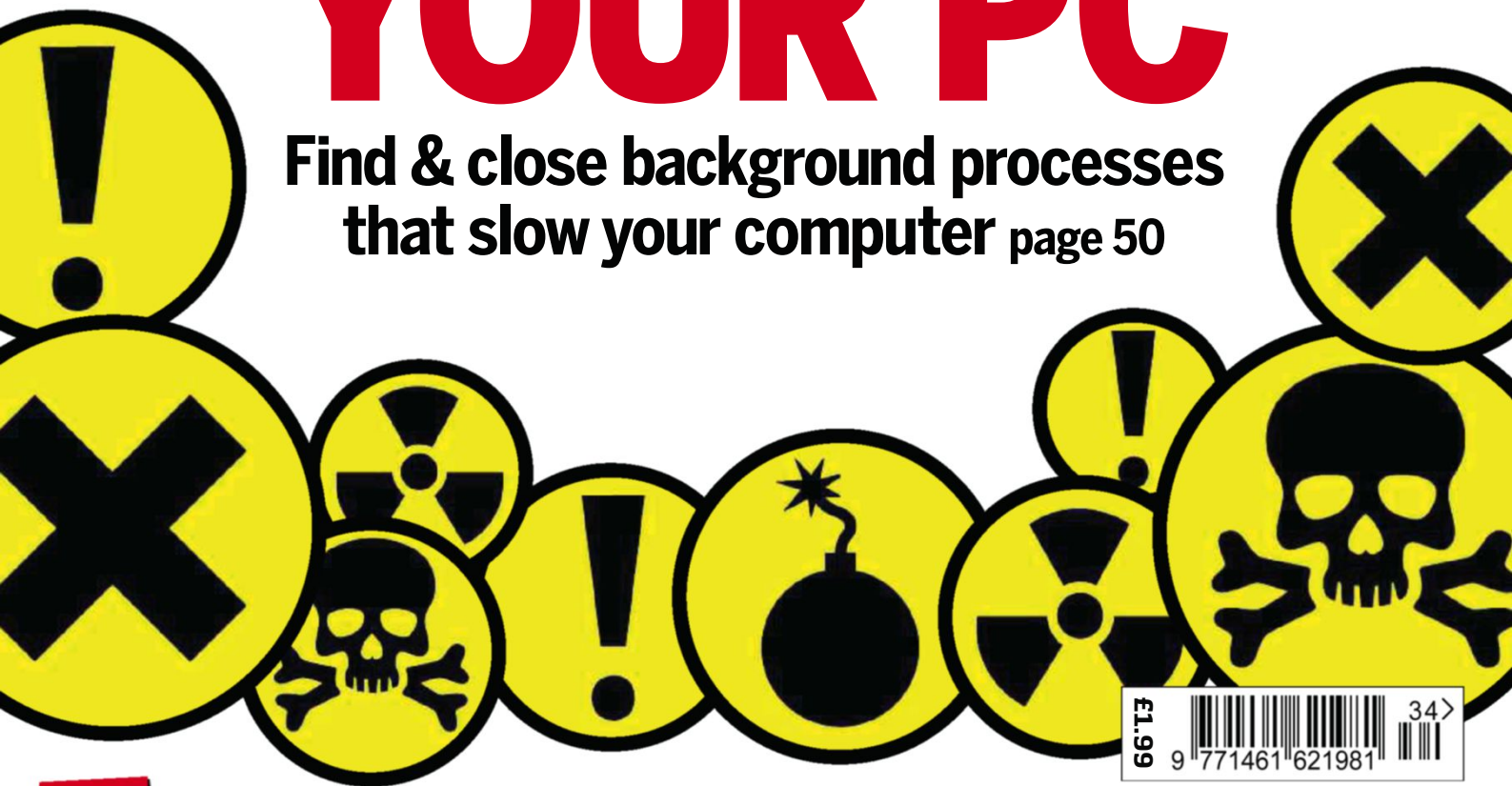


**Computer**  
**active**  
Your friendly guide to technology

ISSUE 430 | 20 AUG – 2 SEPT 2014

# STOP JUNK KILLING YOUR PC

Find & close background processes  
that slow your computer page 50



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## From the Editor

When your PC starts to run slowly, or behaving in strange ways, it's often because something untoward is happening in the background. It could be a program that's decided to launch without your permission, or maybe browser **plug-ins** and **extensions** causing chaos.

Whatever the culprit is, it's not easy to spot, and relying on Windows Task Manager won't get you very far.

You'll find help in our Cover Feature (page 50), where we reveal how junk runs in the background from the moment you turn on your PC. We recommend software you should use to monitor these processes and tell you which ones you should close. Of course, some



processes are crucial to your PC's health, so we'll also tell you what you should leave running.

Also vital to your PC's wellbeing is a good antivirus. Read our latest Antivirus Megatest on page 58 to find out which security software we recommend. Anyone who uses Malwarebytes Anti-Malware will find it especially interesting.

**Daniel Booth**

editor@computeractive.co.uk



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**£190**

Average broadband-cancellation fee according to Citizens Advice Bureau – **p7**



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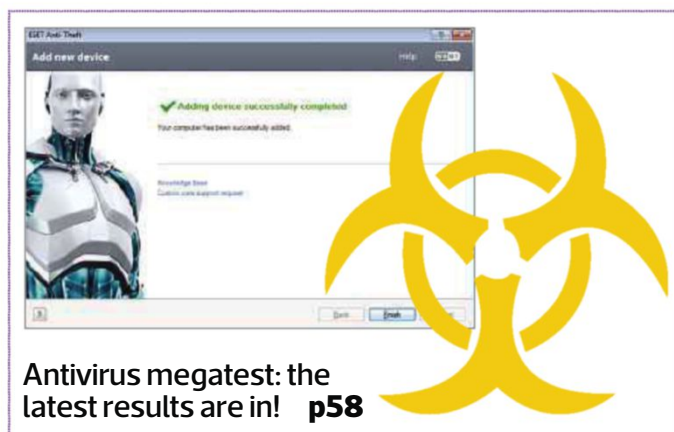
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## New from Computeractive

Tips, tricks and hacks for your tablet and smartphone



**Buy it now from Amazon**  
at [www.snipca.com/12476](http://www.snipca.com/12476)

## Help for CryptoLocker victims as file-unlocking website goes live

Victims of the **ransomware** CryptoLocker can now get their files back for free, thanks to the work of security experts.

The deadly malware, which was discovered last year, was controlled by the same servers that hosted Gameover Zeus. These were taken down by an international law enforcement effort in May 2014, although the alleged mastermind – Russian Evgeniy Mikhailovich Bogachev – is still at large (see his FBI ‘Wanted’ poster at [www.snipca.com/13114](http://www.snipca.com/13114)).

In the past eight months CryptoLocker infected some 500,000 Windows computers, encrypting users’ files and demanding an average of \$300 (£178) to release them. It’s been estimated that the criminals had managed to extort at least 41,928 Bitcoins from victims – equivalent at the time to about \$27 million – in the first three months of



its operation.

Until now, users have had to pay up to recover their files. But researchers at security companies FireEye and Fox-IT have launched the Decrypt CryptoLocker website ([www.decryptcryptolocker.com](http://www.decryptcryptolocker.com), see screenshot right), where victims can unlock their files.

They will need to enter their email address and upload one of the affected files. They will then receive a master



decryption key, plus a download link to the recovery program, and be able to decrypt the remaining files.

The website was created

### COMMENT

Normally we would warn readers to be suspicious of companies claiming to offer a quick security fix (see story below), but FireEye and Fox-IT have good reputations in the security community, and we advise any CryptoLocker victims to use the website. It’s important to be aware that the ransomware is still a live threat, albeit a diminished one. It peaked in October 2013 when it infected 155,000 PCs, a number that has fallen to around 50,000 PCs a month since. Sadly, though, criminals are no doubt already working on the next ransomware.

after security researchers obtained a copy of CryptoLocker’s database of victims.

## Questions raised over company that ‘recovered’ 1.2bn stolen passwords

Doubts have been cast on the motives of a security company that claims to have recovered a haul of 1.2 billion stolen passwords from the Russian criminal gang CyberVor.

US company Hold Security said that the haul represented the “largest data breach known

to date”. But in an unusual move, the company is charging websites \$120 a year to find out if they were hacked, leading some to suspect that the company is trying to cash in on an exaggerated security scare.

Chester Wisniewski of security company Sophos said

that he doesn’t know if Hold’s claim is “a big deal” because not enough information has been made public.


Hold is also advertising a similar service for consumers at [https://identity.holdsecurity.com](http://https://identity.holdsecurity.com), but the method has been slammed as “idiotic” by

respected security blogger Graham Cluley.

Once you type your email on the site, Hold tells you if it’s been stolen. If it has, you’re asked to type an encrypted version of your password. Cluley says this gives hackers the ability to use **keylogging**.



 **You’ll like this...** Google will prioritise websites using ‘https’ encryption in its search results ([www.snipca.com/13079](http://www.snipca.com/13079))

 **...but not this** A security expert claims to have found flaws that would let criminals hack into planes’ communications ([www.snipca.com/13168](http://www.snipca.com/13168))



# Scrap broadband-cancellation fees 'when customers have problems'

Fees for cancelling your broadband contract early should be scrapped if you have suffered persistent connection problems, say Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

It's also calling on ISPs to tread carefully before passing on to debt collectors the details of people who have refused to pay such fees.

Gillian Guy, CEO of CAB, said: "Internet service providers must not shackle customers seeking a better service with unreasonable fees that can turn into shock debt".

According to the Bureau's research, based on thousands of reported cases, the average broadband-cancellation fee is £190. However, people have also reported paying as much as £625 to switch providers.

More than half of the complaints made to CAB were from users who claim



to have experienced a substandard service, with slow connection speeds, persistent faults and bad customer service often cited.

Furthermore, it has also received complaints from people who've been hit with early cancellation fees when they move house, even though their new property isn't served by their existing supplier.

These findings were based on 3,300 reports made to the CAB in England and Wales, and a further 4,500 issues raised with the service across England, Scotland and Wales between July 2013 and June 2014.

Guy says it should be made easier for people to switch ISPs. "All internet users need to be able to easily have a way out of inadequate contracts and broadband speeds that only give them daily frustration," she said.

"People are finding themselves held captive by bad broadband services. Some consumers who have stood up to problem suppliers have found themselves being punished for switching when they've been hit with a cancellation fee that is then passed over to a debt-collection agency," she added.

## Google and Microsoft catch people sending images of child abuse

Two people have been charged in the US with possessing images of child abuse after Google and Microsoft spotted the images in Gmail and OneDrive respectively.

Google contacted the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) in the US when it detected explicit images of a young girl in an email sent by the alleged offender, John Henry Skillern (pictured right).

The NCMEC got in touch with police in Houston, who were able to get a warrant on the basis of the information Google provided.

Police found child-abuse images on Skillern's smartphone and tablet, as well as emails and text messages

discussing his interest in children. In 1994, he was convicted of sexually assaulting an eight-year-old boy.

It was already known that Google uses technology to identify images of child abuse online, but it's now apparent that the company checks Gmail users' inboxes too.

In a separate case, Microsoft told the NCMEC that it detected an image of child abuse in the OneDrive storage account used by Tyler James Hoffman, a 20-year-old man from Pennsylvania. Police arrested him on five charges relating to possession and distribution of child-abuse images.

The cases highlight the fact that nothing people save or send online using a company's



service is truly private. Emma Carr from Big Brother Watch said firms should be more transparent about how they "monitor and analyse messages for illegal content, including details of what sorts of illegal activity may be targeted".

## IN BRIEF

### EX-XP USERS CHOOSING WINDOWS 7 OVER 8

It appears that more people are moving to Windows 7 than 8 after leaving XP, according to statistics from internet-analysis firm Net Applications. The number of people browsing the web on XP dropped from 37 per cent to 25 per cent over the past 12 months. Windows 7's market share has grown from 44 to 51 per cent, while Windows 8/8.1 has grown from 7.65 to 12.48 per cent.

### PAY FOR BUS JOURNEYS USING YOUR PHONE

Customers on the EE phone network can now pay on London buses by tapping their Android smartphone on the Oyster card reader. The service uses EE's free 'mobile wallet' app Cash on Tap ([www.snipca.com/13066](http://www.snipca.com/13066)). To use it, you need an NFC-enabled smartphone (see list here: [www.snipca.com/13067](http://www.snipca.com/13067)) and an NFC SIM card, which EE customers can request from the customer service team. The service will be extended to the London Underground and Overground network on 16 September.

## Tomorrow's world

Scientists at Stanford University have invented batteries with lithium anodes, which could replace today's lithium-ion batteries, leading to phones and tablets lasting four times longer between charging. Yi Cui, head of the research team, says the breakthrough is the "holy grail" of battery research. You can read more about the group's pioneering work at [www.snipca.com/12985](http://www.snipca.com/12985).

## IN BRIEF

### CHARMS BAR 'TO BE AXED' IN WINDOWS 9

Microsoft won't include the Charms bar in Windows 9, according to rumours from Windows news site WinBeta. The Charms bar has been unpopular with many Windows 8 users, especially those who prefer to use a keyboard and mouse and find it fiddly to operate. Other reports circulating online suggest that Windows 9 will be the first version of the operating system to have **virtual desktops**, a feature long available to Mac and Linux users.

### CD-RIPPING FINALLY MADE LEGAL

It's finally no longer illegal to rip music from CDs or copy an MP3 from one device to another after The House of Lords made **format-shifting** exempt from copyright law in late July. However, breaking any Digital Rights Management (DRM) restrictions to make copies is still banned.

## Time to switch from IE? Microsoft to end support for older versions

Microsoft is killing old versions of Internet Explorer by removing support and security updates, though you have over 16 months to prepare.

From January 12, 2016, Microsoft says Windows 7 will only run version 11 of Internet Explorer. In a blog post ([www.snipca.com/13110](http://www.snipca.com/13110)) the company urged Windows 7 users still using IE8, 9 or 10 to "migrate to Internet Explorer 11 to continue receiving security updates".

Microsoft will only provide support for the most recent version of IE that works on each of its respective operating systems, which means IE 9 on Windows Vista, for example. Anyone still using Windows XP should stop using Internet Explorer immediately and switch to another browser.

The decision most affects people still using Internet Explorer 8, because support for this version will completely cease to exist. Millions of



people still use IE8, according to internet analysts at Net Applications, who say that 20 per cent of all PCs worldwide use the browser.

Microsoft's announcement came a day after it introduced a security measure in Internet Explorer that will block parts of websites with out-of-date ActiveX controls to protect users from security flaws in **plug-ins** such as Adobe Flash and the notoriously insecure Java.

The browser will show a

message (which you can see at [www.snipca.com/13073](http://www.snipca.com/13073)) when a webpage is trying to launch an outdated plug-in on your PC, though you'll still be able to interact with parts of the page that aren't affected. You can override the block or update the affected ActiveX control.

These plug-ins, particularly Java, have been a major attack route for malware. Microsoft claimed that Java exploitations represented 84.6 to 98.5 per cent of all vulnerabilities detected in 2013. Last year, security experts even advised users to disable it.

ActiveX will only be blocked in IE8 to 11 on computers running Windows 7 Service Pack 1 or Windows 8 and up. Download IE 11 at [www.snipca.com/13074](http://www.snipca.com/13074).

## Teenagers 'more tech-savvy' than over-60s

Children aged 14 and 15 are the most "technologically-savvy" age group in the UK, according to new Ofcom research.

The organisation's 11th Communications Market Report ([www.snipca.com](http://www.snipca.com))

[com/13121](http://www.snipca.com/13121)) found that this so-called 'Millennial' generation is the first to take fast broadband for granted.

Ofcom surveyed nearly 2,000 adults and 800 children to discover how often they use technology such as smartphones, tablets and PCs, and how confident they are doing so.

Using the results Ofcom gave each person a DQ (Digital Quotient) score. The average for 14-15-year-olds

was 113. This falls to 94 for 50-54-year-olds, 91 for 60-64-year-olds and 80 for people aged over 75.

The study also confirmed the fast-rising popularity of tablets and smartphones. Nearly half of all households own a tablet, while six in 10 adults now use a smartphone, compared to just one in five four years ago.

You can find out your own DQ score by taking Ofcom's 'How tech savvy are you?' test at [www.snipca.com/13123](http://www.snipca.com/13123).



Is Ofcom underestimating how tech-savvy the older generation is? Please let us know at [letters@computeractive.co.uk](mailto:letters@computeractive.co.uk).



## What's new from Google

Google has made it a lot easier to remove junk from your Gmail inbox. It now looks for an 'unsubscribe' button in emails such as newsletters and other promotional material, and moves it to the top of the email, saving you the hassle of hunting for it at the bottom of messages. One click and you'll never be bothered by that email sender again. Read more on this Google+ post: [www.snipca.com/13083](http://www.snipca.com/13083).



## Question of the Fortnight

# Is your USB stick hacking you?

Experts have exposed a fatal flaw in USB sticks that hackers could have been exploiting for years without anyone knowing

Security researchers have discovered a flaw in USB **firmware** that turns any USB device – from a memory stick to a keyboard – into a tool hackers could use to break into your computer.

The flaw, called BadUSB, was discovered by Jakob Lell and Karsten Nohl from German security company Security Research Labs (<https://srlabs.de>), and demonstrated at the Black Hat Security Conference (<https://www.blackhat.com>) in early August. They showed how firmware on USB-connected devices can be permanently reprogrammed to hack your PC undetected. It could, for example, install a **keylogger** that tracks everything you type – including your passwords.

Hackers could also use the flaw to infect your mouse, and thereafter transfer the virus to every PC the mouse gets plugged into. Worse still, BadUSB could be used to trick



This may sound drastic but, as Egeman Tas of security firm Comodo points out, there's always been malware that infects USBs. However, he recognises the BadUSB threat

hackers have exploited BadUSB yet, but Tas believes it's most likely to have been used as part of some "state-sponsored cyber-intelligence activity".

Some experts suspect the US's National Security Agency was using this hacking technique – codenamed 'Cottonmouth' – to hide malware on USB devices. It's hard to know to what extent – if at all – hackers and security organisations have exploited the flaw.

Assuming the worst, then, how can we defend ourselves? We might all heed Karsten Nohl's advice ("nobody can trust anybody"). It may sound paranoid, but it's not bad advice. Lell and Nohl advise you not to plug your USB devices into other peoples'

computers, and think twice before letting anyone plug their device into your computer. If you don't know where the USB device/stick has been, don't let it anywhere near your computer.

You should also only buy USB devices from companies with good reputations. Don't be tempted by cheap offers on eBay or unknown sites. Typically, cheap USB products lack the requisite safeguards that would prevent their firmware from being changed, making them easy to hack.

Of course, the main responsibility for the security of USB products lies with the manufacturers. Security firm Sophos has suggested that USB devices should include an 'interlock' switch that can prevent the firmware writing data to your computer, a security measure similar to the plastic write-protect switch first seen on floppy disks. These were introduced years ago, so it's baffling that such a basic level of security has been neglected on USB devices for so long.

“BadUSB could be used to trick your PC into thinking a USB stick is a keyboard, giving hackers full control”

your PC into thinking your USB stick is a keyboard, giving hackers full control of your computer.

Lell and Nohl called for a "new way of thinking" about USB devices, saying "you have to consider a USB infected and throw it away as soon as it touches a non-trusted computer".

is more serious and incredibly hard to detect. "If we start seeing malware that propagates itself by exploiting USB firmware," he warns, "or maliciously tampered USB drives shipped to consumers and businesses from the factories, it would be a forensic analysis nightmare."

It's not known whether

## THE FACTS


- BadUSB is a firmware flaw that can permanently infect your devices with undetectable malware
- The best way to stay safe is to avoid plugging your USB devices into computers you're not familiar with
- Experts suspect that security agencies have used this technique to hack computers

# Letters

Tell us what's on your mind

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## Epic browser is 'terribly fragile'

 You often recommend using the privacy-focused Epic browser ([www.epicbrowser.com](http://www.epicbrowser.com)). I have been using it for some time now, and the fact that no record remains of one's browsing is a distinct asset. However, anyone thinking of using Epic should be aware that it's terribly fragile. It crashes several times a week, often carries a message saying that for optimum performance you should close and re-open it from time to time, and sometimes just freezes.

Chrome, which I use as an alternative and upon which Epic is based, gives me none of these failings. Internet Explorer, meanwhile, is something I flatly won't consider, having had endless trouble with it in the past.


Tony Hall

## Don't frighten novices when installing software

 In the last seven years or so I've noticed an increase in the number of computer-illiterate people taking the dive and joining the digital age. My late grandma and mother are two prime examples. They had never touched a computer before, and had never wanted to, but felt they should. Anyway, my point is that when you install a new piece of software you have two options: the 'Quick' installation and the 'Custom/Advanced/Experienced/Daunting/Fearsome' installation. This latter option, which lets people opt out of installing a load of pointless toolbars and system-clogging software, is often given a name that frightens novice computer users, so they ignore it. It's not a big problem, but it deserves more attention.

Charles Arundell

## Hooray for Facebook's poor-parking pages

 At last, someone has found a positive use for Facebook. I refer to the news story in Issue 429 about the man from Lowestoft called 'Stuart' who has set up a page to photograph badly parked cars ([www.snipca.com/12917](http://www.snipca.com/12917)). Some people might call him a nosey do-gooder, but I applaud his campaigning spirit.


As a disabled person, nothing annoys



me more than people parking in places reserved for disabled people. The selfishness and ignorance of these people amaze me. I wondered if there was a Facebook page providing photos of these incidents, and searched on Google. I came across this page: [www.snipca.com/12983](http://www.snipca.com/12983). It's not as popular as the Lowestoft page, but hopefully publicising it in *Computeractive* will get more people visiting it.

Leslie Pickford


## Windows 8 is a 'cracking' operating system

 It's interesting that Microsoft is already intending to launch a new operating system early next year (see Question of the Fortnight, Issue 428). After all the bad press Windows 8 has received, I was looking to keep using Windows 7, which is arguably one of the best operating systems to date and then move to Windows 9.

However, my Acer laptop had slowed to a crawl after six years of heavy use and although I did eventually do a complete re-install I was left with all the Acer crapware being reloaded and 48 hours of Windows and software updates before I could get any serious work done (there's no superfast broadband round our way!)

A work colleague pointed out that I could purchase both Windows 8.1 and Office 2013 for about £7.50 each through my employer. Therefore, I took the plunge and installed both. I must say that overall I'm impressed with Windows 8.1. Without any documentation I've managed to set it up and, using the in-built search and help functions, I've got it running smoothly using all of my current hardware and software. It loads

## Libraries have human touch that Amazon lacks

 Thank you for highlighting the plight of the UK's libraries in Issue 429 (Question of the Fortnight). I'm a recently retired librarian so I know all about the funding cuts, but the threat posed by Kindle Unlimited could be another serious blow. I do have faith in the resilience of libraries, though, because of the human element involved. Book-lending is only a small part of the role libraries play in the community. At my library we hold groups for new mothers, painting lessons, flower arranging and loads of reading events for children. Amazon may have the money and the clever technology, and I'm sure lots of people will use Kindle Unlimited. But don't underestimate the dedication of librarians, the enthusiasm of



volunteers and the reassurance of human contact.

Tricia Pearson





and closes faster than Windows 7, it feels robust and I can still use my mouse and keyboard most of the time.


And Office 2013 is incredible,

though I admit I'll never make use of all its numerous functions (but for £7.50 I'm not complaining!).


I'm sure the experts out there will provide another hundred reasons why Windows 8 is rubbish, but it's proving to be a cracking OS and I haven't experienced a single crash to date. Windows has got better and better over the years, letting us do some pretty amazing things at work or at play, and I for one am looking forward to the next incarnation in 2015.

Iain Middleton

## Lamenting the demise of tech manuals

 Hear, hear! How I agree with Stuart Andrews' moan about missing manuals (The Final Straw, Issue 428). With devices becoming much more complicated a manual is essential. It must be written in clear, understandable English (or the language of the country the item is intended for). I had a DVD player which I couldn't get to work because the manual was so confusing. My daughter had a similar problem which no one was able to solve. Please bring back clear manuals.

Paula

 Instruction manuals are beneficial to both users and producers of software, as I know only too well. During the late 1980s and early 1990s I was part of a four-person group that wrote and supported a software suite used in-house across British Telecom. The number of calls requesting help had passed 100 per day and was rising as we rolled out all the enhancements and upgrades demanded by our customers. So in desperation, two of us (largely in our own time) wrote a detailed instruction manual. Within days of distribution the number of calls dropped to about 10 a day – mostly about spelling mistakes in the manual! Instantly we were free to concentrate on fixing real bugs, work on better enhancements and produce a revised and improved manual in departmental time.

James Wood

## STAR LETTER

### Web scams are bad, but at least we don't live in Russia

Well, *Computeractive*, Issue 429 was a bit gloomy! There seemed to be a different scam on every page, some of them truly horrible.

I'm not complaining though. You do an excellent service highlighting these scams. Where else would people – many vulnerable and inexperienced with computers – read about such dangers? As you rightly say, scams look more real than ever.

We should take a step back, though, and celebrate the fact that, despite all these threats, the web remains a wonderful place, and still relatively free from outside interference – in the UK, at least.

The same isn't true in Russia. I read this morning about a new law ([www.snipca.com/13029](http://www.snipca.com/13029)) that's forcing Russian bloggers to register with the country's media regulators, and stick to the rules they've implemented. You can bet that those laws won't include a duty to report impartially on what Vladimir Putin gets up to with his cronies.

No one who's been following events in Russia and Ukraine can be surprised

by this move. Putin's biggest fear is the freedom of information. Like all power-hungry leaders, he can't bear to let something as sprawling as the internet set the national mood. He will always want to control it, like his fellow tyrants in China, North Korea and Iran.

Us Brits can be cynical about freedom of speech and human rights. We've had both for so long that it's easy to be flippant about them, moaning when undesirables benefit. But we should always keep things in perspective. If I wanted to, I could start a blog with the sole intention of publishing photos


that made David Cameron look stupid, and there would be nothing the Government could do. Likewise, I could mock Ed Miliband by building a web game in which you had to eat nothing but bacon sandwiches, and there would be nothing he could do.

Try lampooning Putin in Russia and your blog wouldn't last long. It could even be the last thing you ever write online.

Raymond Daniels



### The Star Letter writer wins a *Computeractive* mug!

 I must agree with Stuart Andrews about missing manuals. I bought a new tablet the other month. It came with two pieces of paperwork – a warranty, and a small diagram showing the main elements of the tablet. Useful, I thought! Fortunately, I'd borrowed a copy of *Android Tablets for Dummies* from my local library. Because of this, I knew how to go about setting up the tablet, and getting some apps for it.

Manuals had their faults and some were poorly written. But if you had a problem with a piece of technology, you could refer to the manual and get some idea where the problem lay. Right now, with the manufacturers trying

desperately to cut costs, this is next to impossible.

Marek Wesolowski

**CA says** Along with Marek, James, Paula and many other readers who have emailed us since Stuart Andrews' column (Issue 428), we mourn the demise of manuals. Marek's right to point out that there are books you can buy which serve as replacements for manuals. In fact, our new 148-page book *The Definitive Guide To Android* does exactly that job. It's available now on Amazon, and is more than £5 cheaper than the Dummies guide! You can buy it at [www.snipca.com/12476](http://www.snipca.com/12476).



# Consumeractive

## How can I get the £20 top-up Orange owes me?

**Q** On the 16 May I topped up my Orange phone online with £20, paying with my debit card. The money was taken but I never received my top-up. Can you help?

Brian Bartlett

**A** We've contacted Orange (now part of the EE Group) pointing out that Brian's been waiting nearly three months for this to be resolved. We've given the company his details and the dates so it should rectify the problem immediately. Because Brian paid by debit card it shouldn't have been difficult for Orange to check why his phone hadn't been topped up. We hope Orange apologises to Brian and considers some form of compensation.

We reported a similar case in Issues 426 and 428 involving reader Brian Turton who'd bought a £20 Orange voucher with cash, but who'd lost the receipt and voucher. The company acted commendably by topping up his account, despite Brian having no proof of purchase.



## We've been conned by a Facebook advert – what can we do?

**Q** My wife ordered a free trial of VitaLean tablets she saw on an advert posted to her Facebook page. When they arrived there was a message saying she would be charged £75 a month, through her credit card, to receive regular supplies. They also sent vitamin patches, which she didn't order. We cancelled the order and wanted to send back the contents which were unopened. But the company hasn't responded to our emails and we've now been charged £37.50 for the patches. Can you help us get our money back?

Harry Connell

**A** Unfortunately, there's probably not much we can do. We'll try, but at the moment we're not sure which company is involved in this scam. It may turn out that it's based abroad and therefore beyond UK law.

We've told Harry to contact his credit-card company. It may be able to issue a chargeback, which reverses the transaction. But to be on the safe side, he may need to inform the bank that his card's been compromised and get it to send him another to stop this company taking any more money.

We hate these adverts for slimming



or beauty products on Facebook. They're incredibly misleading, and thousands of people have been conned over the past few years. Facebook appears to do nothing to limit the damage or ban these companies, possibly because the advert's terms and conditions legally cover the companies. We'll find out if this is the case.

Readers may be able to help us track down this or other companies by providing some information if they've been scammed by the same or similar adverts on Facebook. If so, please get in touch with us. We'll also ask Trading Standards and the Advertising Standards Authority if they can shed any light and offer legal advice for victims. Meanwhile, we'll contact Facebook about this scam and let you know what it says.



## Does Royal Mail owe me for losing my phone?

**Q** I found out I could get £183 for my Samsung Galaxy S4 from the mobile-phone recycling company MobileCashMate ([www.mobilecashmate.co.uk](http://www.mobilecashmate.co.uk)). I used MobileCashMate's freepost envelope to send the phone, but unfortunately it never arrived.

Royal Mail admitted it lost the phone but have only offered me £50 compensation, which I don't think is fair. Do I have a legal case to demand more?

Richard Maxwell

**A** Richard can't demand more money from Royal Mail because he doesn't have a legal contract with the company. This is because he used a free service to post the phone. In fact, Royal Mail doesn't have to give Richard any money, so we're a bit confused why it paid him £50.

If you're sending something valuable through the post you need to make sure you're using the appropriate service from Royal Mail or any courier. The maximum compensation for something sent First Class is £20, but this jumps to £50 for

First Class signed deliveries.

So if an item costs more you should choose a service such as Special Delivery ([www.snipca.com/12968](http://www.snipca.com/12968)), which provides compensation up to £500.

Citizens Advice's website Adviceguide ([www.snipca.com/12974](http://www.snipca.com/12974)) has information about claiming for loss or damaged items. You can make a claim against Royal Mail at [www.snipca.com/12975](http://www.snipca.com/12975).







We stand up for your legal rights

✉ Contact us so we can investigate your case

Email: [consumeractive@computeractive.co.uk](mailto:consumeractive@computeractive.co.uk)

Write: Consumeractive, Computeractive, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD

Please include both your phone number and address.

Unfortunately, we can't reply to all your letters.

## Can I cancel a mobile contract which has 10 months to run?

**Q** I bought a Samsung Galaxy 4 phone from Phones 4u on an Orange contract in May 2013. It's developed a lot of faults over the past four months. Orange says it can't help and Phones 4u says it will repair the phone, but it could take a month, which is too long. Can I cancel my contract with Orange, which runs until May 2015?

Lee Yeomans



package from a third party, such as Phones 4u, you're taking out two contracts: one for the phone and one for the airtime. In this case Orange is responsible for the airtime and Phones 4u the phone itself, even though the cost of the phone is included in Lee's

monthly bill to Orange.

Lee told us there's nothing wrong with the mobile service, so there's no breach of contract by Orange. Because Lee's had the phone longer than 30 days, Phones 4u doesn't have to refund him immediately. Instead the company can try to have the phone repaired. If it can't repair the phone, it must give Lee a replacement or offer a pro-rata refund.

After considering all this, Lee decided to get an early upgrade from Orange. This means Orange, and not Phones 4u, is responsible for any problems Lee may have in future with his new phone or airtime.

**A** Lee can cancel his contract, but he'll still have to pay Orange £410 for the 10 months outstanding. When you buy a

orange™

**CASE CLOSED**

### CASE UPDATES



#### Reader accepts loss of money

We have an update on a previous case concerning the dispute between Robert Miller and James Barker, which we reported in Issue 429. We emailed Robert letting him know that

James, who runs the technical help website [onthespotit.co.uk](http://onthespotit.co.uk), was absolutely refusing to give him a refund and his only legal recourse was in the small claims court. Robert told us that for the amount involved (£59.50) he didn't think it wasn't worth pursuing.

We agree with him in this case, although not because of the amount involved, which isn't insignificant to a pensioner like Robert, but because he would have struggled to win the case. We always advise only to go to court as a last resort if you're owed money, and only if you believe you've got a very strong case. The company or person you're pursuing may just decide to pay up rather than go through the court procedures. At the very least you'll have made a point and this could force a company or individual to have a rethink.

There's some very good advice on how to go about this on the Citizens Advice website ([www.snipca.com/12967](http://www.snipca.com/12967)). But we also suggest anyone wanting to take small-claims action to consider mediation as an alternative. You can search for a civil mediation provider at [www.civilmediation.justice.gov.uk](http://www.civilmediation.justice.gov.uk).



### THIS WILL COME IN USEFUL

#### Ombudsman services

**Financial Ombudsman**  
0800 023 4567

Email: [complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk)  
Twitter: @financialombuds

**Pensions Ombudsman**  
020 7630 2200

Email: [enquiries@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Housing Ombudsman**  
0300 111 3000

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Local Government Ombudsman**  
0300 061 0614

Complaint form: [www.snipca.com/12890](http://www.snipca.com/12890)  
Twitter: @LGOmbudsman

**Legal Ombudsman**  
0300 555 0333

Email: [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)

Twitter: @Legal\_Ombudsman

**Communication and Energy Ombudsman**  
0330 440 1614

Email: [enquiries@os-communications.org](mailto:enquiries@os-communications.org)

**CISAS (Communications and Internet)**  
020 7520 3827

Email: [info@cisas.org.uk](mailto:info@cisas.org.uk)

**Energy Ombudsman**  
0330 440 1624

Email: [enquiries@os-energy.org](mailto:enquiries@os-energy.org)

**Parliamentary and Health Ombudsman**  
0345 015 4033

Email: [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)  
Twitter: @PHSOmbudsman



# Protect Your Tech

Scams and threats to avoid, plus new security tools

## WATCH OUT FOR...

### Facebook scams that install malware

#### What happened?

Security company Bitdefender revealed that the UK's most clicked-on Facebook scam attempts to trick you into thinking you can see how many people have viewed your profile (see screenshot, right). Bitdefender says this is by far the most effective scam on Facebook, comprising 30 per cent of fake links that have been clicked in users' News Feed.

The company's list of the 10 most clicked scams shows that criminals' main tactic is to tempt users with scams relating to Facebook itself – for example, by promising to show you how to change the colour of your Facebook page from blue. These particular scams can be hard to spot because they are presented as Facebook introducing a new feature.

Only one scam in Bitdefender's top 10



uses the bait of a celebrity sex video, which has previously been a common tactic used by hackers. In 2013, millions of people fell for a scam claiming to show a sex tape of US pop star Taylor Swift. This year, the promise of a sex video featuring Barbadian

singer Rihanna is a more popular weapon for hackers.

Clicking any of the scams will take you to a malicious website that tries to infect your PC with a virus.

#### What should you do?

Be aware that scammers are increasingly trying to con you on Facebook by offering tools for the site that don't actually exist. One way these may appear in your News Feed is because they've been unwittingly 'liked' by one of your Facebook friends. To keep yourself safe, install Bitdefender's Safego ([www.snipca.com/13055](http://www.snipca.com/13055)), which is a free Facebook app that scans links you receive from your friends. If Safego identifies a link as malicious, you should click the button next to it to warn the friend that sent it.

## New tools

### AVG PrivacyFix 3.0

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

As explained above, scammers think there's lots of money to be made conning you on Facebook. But legitimate companies also seek profit in social-media sites, and track your activity to target you with adverts. One of the best tools to help prevent this is AVG's free PrivacyFix, the third version of which arrived in early August. For the first time it lets you limit how much of your personal info Twitter leaks, adding to the tools AVG provides that control how Google and Facebook track you.

AVG calls PrivacyFix an "online privacy dashboard", and that's a pretty good description. The main drawback is that it only works in Chrome and Firefox, though AVG says it's working on a version for Internet Explorer. There are iOS and Android apps too. For more information on PrivacyFix 3.0 read AVG's blog: [www.snipca.com/13105](http://www.snipca.com/13105).



## ScamWatch

READERS WARN READERS

### Scammed by pop-up survey

I can't believe that I was recently conned by a pop-up survey scam. As I played Lotto on The National Lottery website, a survey asked me some questions in return for a free gift. I chose a beauty treatment as the gift and only had to pay the £2.95 postage. After entering my card details my bank immediately told me that fraudulent activity had been detected on my account and I should cancel my card. When I looked at an NHS website later, another survey popped up asking similar questions. My laptop is now infected with a pop-up virus that I'm in the process of clearing.

Tony Parry



Warn your fellow readers about scams at [letters@computeractive.co.uk](mailto:letters@computeractive.co.uk)



# QNAP

## Turbo NAS Key Business Features

- Intuitive QNAP QTS 4.1 NAS OS
- Centralised data storage
- Cross-platform file sharing
- Real-Time Remote Replication(RTRR)
- Cloud backup
- Powerful iSCSI IP-SAN Unified storage solutions
- Energy-saving technology
- Affordable scalability options

## Technologies Unite Powerful & Expressive

### QvPC Technology



- Use your NAS as a PC
- Integrated XBMC Media Player
- HDMI-out for direct local playback
- Streamlined system installation

### Virtualisation Station



- Supports Windows, Linux and UNIX
- Import/Export VMs
- Snapshots for backup & restore
- Compatible with VM markets

## QNAP's unique Transcoding technology with 7.1 channel

MOV  
AVI MP4 MPEG

- On-the-fly & offline transcoding
- Automatic/Manual media conversion
- Video-on-demand streaming
- Multi-device compatibility

# VERSATILITY OF PERSONAL CLOUD HAS A NEW FACE

A New Pinnacle in the NAS, World's FIRST with QvPC Technology



## TS-x51 Series NAS MORE EXCITEMENT WITH EVERY BREATH

Supercharge your digital life with a range of powerful features



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## MULTIPLE HOME APPLICATIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL VALUE

- Over 120 apps to download & use from the QTS App Centre
- Complete multimedia apps for daily entertainment needs
- Access your data and manage your NAS with mobile apps
- Extend the functionality even further with virtualisation
- Stream your multimedia via DLNA, AirPlay and Plex



## Unrivalled Home/SOHO Multimedia Centre Series



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Where to buy

Product info.

# Best Free Software

Brilliant new programs that won't cost you anything

## PASSWORD MANAGER

### Dashlane 3

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

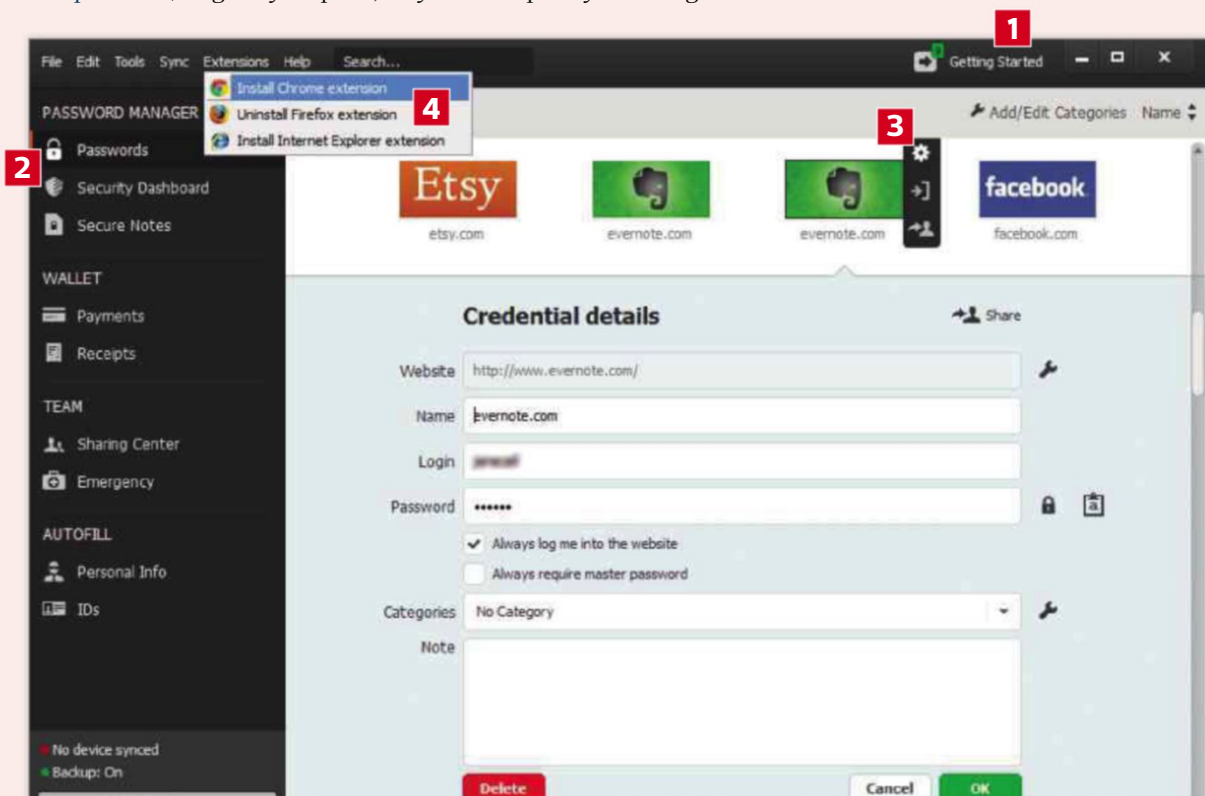
**What you need:** Windows XP, Vista, 7 or 8

The apparent theft of 1.2 billion passwords by Russian hackers (see page 6) is just the latest of many recent reminders that you must keep your online logins safe. It's vital that you use different passwords for all your online accounts and change them regularly. But remembering them all can be a nightmare, even if you use clever mnemonics, while storing them in websites puts them at risk. So Dashlane creates and remembers passwords for you, using military-grade AES-256 encryption to ensure that no one – including Dashlane's own servers – can see them.

Dashlane has been completely redesigned and is now a serious rival to the best known password manager, LastPass (<https://lastpass.com>). It gives you quick, easy and completely

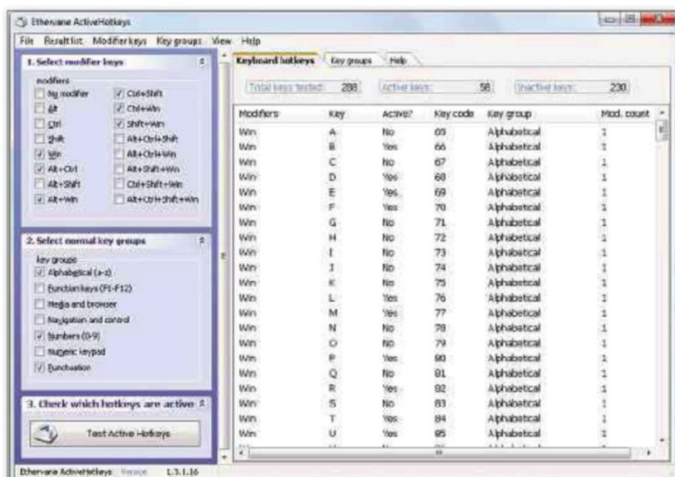
secure access to all your online accounts from one Desktop dashboard and integrates beautifully with your browsers. Its new version lets you share notes securely with trusted contacts and create an encrypted database of any personal data you choose. You can even specify an emergency contact who can access your data if something happens to you.

As ever when installing free software, you need to click the Custom button during setup. In this case, it's not to avoid any unwanted extras (there aren't any), it's to link Dashlane to your installed browsers. We'd recommend leaving only your default browser ticked at first. Dashlane installs its free extension on any browsers you leave ticked, but you can change this later.



- 1** Dashlane opens by default on a list of its main features, which you can click to get more information about them online. Click Getting Started to return to this page at any time.
- 2** Click Passwords to manage all your online logins and Security Dashboard to find out how secure your logins are. Secure Notes is your own personal encrypted notepad.
- 3** On your Passwords page, hover over a thumbnail and click the cog icon to check or edit your login details for that account. Click Delete to remove the account and clear your data from it.
- 4** Click Extensions to install or uninstall Dashlane in Chrome, Firefox or IE. The browsers you ticked during setup will have the extension installed by default.





#### KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

## Ethervane ActiveHotkeys

[www.snipca.com/13174](http://www.snipca.com/13174)

**What you need:** Windows XP, Vista, 7 or 8

Many of your installed programs assign shortcuts to the keys on your keyboard so you can carry out functions quickly and easily. Ethervane ActiveHotkeys reveals which key combinations are used as shortcuts. Run the program and click the Test Active Hotkeys button to see a full list of hotkeys (including modifiers such as Alt, as well as letters and numbers), each with a 'Key code' to identify it. Scroll down the download page and click the Download Ethervane ActiveHotkeys link for the installer (which doesn't try to add any extras) or the portable version.

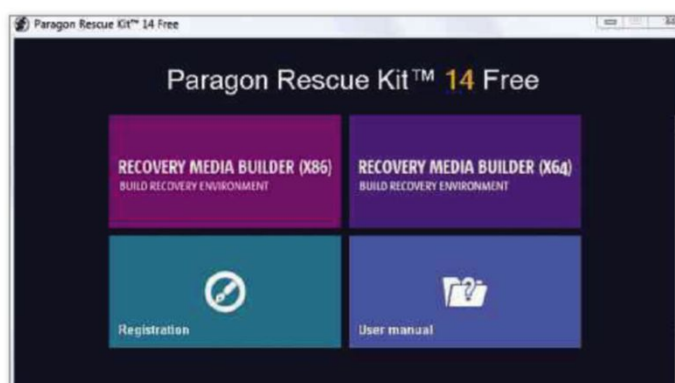
#### BACKUP TOOL

## Paragon Rescue Kit 14 Free

[www.snipca.com/13172](http://www.snipca.com/13172)

**What you need:** Windows XP, Vista, 7 or 8

Paragon's backup and rescue suite can rescue deleted partitions and restore valuable data you've lost. This new version lets you create virtual backup disks and has an Express Launcher that resembles Windows 8's Modern tile interface. It's a huge program, so you'll need to be patient when installing it. Click the red Free Download button then click Download Now to get the monster-sized installer (299MB). You'll need to register and enter a product key during setup, even though the program is free. Click the blue 'User manual' square to open a user guide in your default PDF reader.



#### SYSTEM OPTIMISER

## Auslogics BoostSpeed 7

[www.snipca.com/13134](http://www.snipca.com/13134)

**What you need:** Windows XP, Vista, 7 or 8

Speed up your PC and plug privacy leaks with this new free version of Auslogics' paid-for system tool. When you open the program it scans your PC quickly for hard-drive junk, which you can remove with a single click or investigate further. Ignore the green 'Download now' button at the top of the download page – that's for a trial of the premium version (\$49.95; about £30). Instead, scroll down and click Go Free, then click 'Thanks, just give me the installer'.

The setup wizard doesn't include any crapware opt-outs, but you should click 'more options' and untick 'Launch program at Windows startup' if you don't want BoostSpeed to launch automatically every time you switch on your PC.



## WHAT SHOULD I DOWNLOAD?

We tell you what software to use

## What's the best program for creating posters?

**Q** We used to use PrintMaster to create posters and greetings cards on our old XP machine, and now that we've upgraded to Windows 7 we're looking for a new program. What should we use?

Sue Vernon

**A** PrintMaster still exists – it's now on version 6 and includes photo-editing tools and thousands of templates ([www.printmaster.com](http://www.printmaster.com); \$39.99, about £24). But there are many better programs around, including the superb **open-source** desktop-publishing tool Scribus ([www.scribus.net](http://www.scribus.net)). It's a modern, user-friendly tool that works on all versions of Windows as well as Linux and Mac, and even has its own support Wiki ([www.snipca.com/13173](http://www.snipca.com/13173)).

Also try the brilliant free online design tool Canva ([www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)), which we featured in a Workshop in Issue 424.



Do you need our advice on what software to use? Just email us at [letters@computeractive.co.uk](mailto:letters@computeractive.co.uk)

# Reviews

New products tested by our experts

**WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY** | £1,000 [www.snipca.com/12944](http://www.snipca.com/12944)

## Google Glass Explorer Edition 2.0

Google's much-hyped wearable computer

Google Glass is unlike any product we've reviewed before. It's a voice-activated computer that you wear like a standard pair of glasses; one of the lenses has a small display that floats in the upper-right corner of your vision.

The version on sale in the UK is Explorer Edition 2.0, which has a slightly faster **processor** than the US edition. It's a **beta** device (or prototype) and you're encouraged to give feedback to Google. A final 'consumer' version of Glass has been promised, but no firm date has been set.

Glass weighs 43g, which is around twice the weight of standard metal-framed glasses, but this is still light. The build quality is superb – it's sturdy and waterproof. Google has released a range of frame styles, which accommodate prescription lenses. One is included free and other companies have already released their own styles.

To use Glass you need to pair it with an Android or iOS mobile device over Bluetooth using the free MyGlass app



([www.snipca.com/13021](http://www.snipca.com/13021)), so Glass can use your device's internet connection. You can then use Glass for tasks such as dictating and sending messages (a feature currently available only for Android users), web browsing, taking photos and making phone calls. This all sounds a bit gimmicky, but it at least takes away the temptation to tap away at your smartphone instead of interacting with the people around you. Plus, the unique hands-free way in which Glass works makes it more convenient than a smartphone.

### The world through Glass

To view the Glass display, simply turn your gaze upwards. The display appears to hover in the air a few feet in front of you, but when you look directly ahead, it vanishes from view. Gaze up again, and it returns. It's a handy gesture that means

your line of sight remains unobstructed and content only appears when you need it. Alternatively, you can activate the display by tapping the small touchpad on the right hand side of the frames.

With the display turned on, say the words "OK Glass" and a list of commands appear: Google, Post An Update (on social networks), Take A Photo, Record A Video and Get Directions. Speak a command out loud to perform the relevant action.

Some basic flaws with the hardware quickly became apparent during our test. It often overheated, displaying a "Glass must cool down" error message, during which time the interface became very slow. And the battery life is between two and six hours depending on how often you use Glass – far shorter than any smartphone.

As you might expect, we were subject to numerous bemused glances and questions from inquisitive passersby while using Glass in public. Children were especially curious and seemed far more accepting of Glass than the more sceptical adults. Unlike some Glass users in the US, we didn't experience any physical or verbal abuse, nor did anyone request that we turn it off or remove it.

### Is Glass any use?

Although the camera can't match the quality of a good smartphone camera, we were nonetheless impressed with it. Glass's unobtrusive presence meant people soon forgot it was there, leading to shots that were less staged and more spontaneous. Because you can take snaps



Use Google Glass to view internet-based gardening tips as you work





Using Glass's GPS while driving proved to be a major – and somewhat dangerous – distraction

and record video hands-free, you can achieve results that would otherwise be difficult or impossible to capture with a standard camera, such as point-of-view shots while cycling.

You can even take photos by winking. This means you can capture images far more surreptitiously than using the voice command, and this raises obvious privacy questions. To be on the safe side, you should always ask permission when using Glass to photograph or record people.

Web browsing on Glass isn't that great. You can tilt your head up and down to scroll through webpages, but it's hard to read a webpage on such a tiny display. At a pinch, it can be useful for quickly finding snippets of information such as alternative prices for an item in a shop or gardening tips when you're working in the garden (see image left).

You can't use Glass's voice recognition to take notes or edit documents, but you wouldn't want to. It was accurate enough for dictating text messages and short emails when we tested it, but it often mangled the punctuation.

Where Glass really comes into its own is in presenting context-sensitive information and the best examples of this are from the small, but surprisingly good selection of apps – all of which are free. Star Chart displays the names of stars and constellations as you gaze at the night sky. Word Lens translates blocks of foreign-language text as you read it. It works best with smaller chunks of text, such as street signs and posters, rather than longer examples like menus or paragraphs. Both apps have smartphone and tablet equivalents, but it feels more natural and convenient using them

hands-free.

The Google Now personal assistant is also available on Glass, but for some reason isn't built in and has to be downloaded separately. If you're a heavy user of Google services such as Gmail and Calendar then Now will automatically show you information from those services that it thinks you'll need most. Particularly useful examples include reminders for upcoming events in your calendar and updates about any flights you're booked on.

We thought that getting traffic directions and using GPS would be our favourite Glass feature, but we hated it. Having Google Maps constantly floating above our line-of-sight while driving (see image above) proved to be very distracting.

## Conclusion

Google Glass, in its current state, is flawed with unfinished hardware and software. Unless you're a wealthy, very keen tech enthusiast with time to spare, it's clearly not worth spending £1,000 to help Google work out their product's flaws. There's no guarantee that Google will eventually iron out these faults or that it'll ever become socially acceptable to wear a computer on your face. Yet, despite this, we're enthusiastic about Glass. It's fun to use and apps such as Google Now, Word Lens and Star Chart demonstrate its incredible potential to be more than just a gimmick. We can't wait for the consumer version to arrive with a drop in price.

## SPECIFICATIONS

Android 4.4 KitKat • Five-megapixel camera • 12GB of storage • Micro USB • 802.11b/g • Bluetooth • Requires smartphone or tablet running Android 4.0.3 or iOS 7  
[www.snipca.com/12946](http://www.snipca.com/12946)

## HOW WE TEST

*Computeractive* is owned by Dennis Publishing, which owns a hi-tech facility for testing the latest technology. You'll often read references to our benchmark testing, which is a method of assessing products using the same criteria. For example, we test the speed of every PC and the battery life of every tablet in exactly the same way. This makes our reviews authoritative, rigorous and accurate.

Dennis Publishing also owns the magazines *PC Pro*, *Computer Shopper*, *Web User*, *Micro Mart* and *MacUser*, and the website Expert Reviews ([www.expertreviews.co.uk](http://www.expertreviews.co.uk)). This means we can test thousands of products before choosing the most relevant for *Computeractive*.

## FAIR AND IMPARTIAL

Our writers follow strict guidelines to ensure the reviews are fair and impartial. The manufacturer has no involvement in our tests.

## OUR AWARDS



We award every product that gets five stars our Buy It! stamp of approval. It means we were extremely impressed by the product, and we think you will be too.



Every product that gets a four-star review is given the Great Pick award. We highly recommend these products, although they just fail to meet the high standard of our Buy It! winners.

## PRICES

Our reviews contain a link to the best price we found online at the time of press.

**VERDICT:** Too expensive and still a bit clunky, but Google Glass is by far the most interesting and promising piece of technology we've seen in a long time



**ALTERNATIVE:** LG G Watch  
**£159** Google's other wearable computer isn't a futuristic headset, but a watch that's a lot cheaper than Google Glass but with flaws of its own



# Reviews

**TABLET** | £119 from [www.snipca.com/13032](http://www.snipca.com/13032)

## Asus MeMOPad 7

Budget Android tablet from the makers of the Nexus 7

Asus is the company that makes Google's superb Nexus 7 Android tablet, and now the Taiwanese giant is making even cheaper tablets. The MeMOPad 7 costs just £119 and is available in a range of striking, attractive colours, including black, yellow, white, blue and our personal favourite red (see image, right).

For such a cheap tablet, The MeMOPad 7 is surprisingly sturdy and well made. The thin borders on the longer sides of the screen and the smooth, slippery rear surface can make it difficult to get a comfortable, firm grip on it, though. The MeMOPad 7 has neither the soft, easy-to-grip rear of the Nexus 7 nor the thumb-rejection technology of the iPad Mini 2 (this detects when you are actively using the screen as opposed to simply resting your fingers on the edge of it – see our reviews, Issues 407 and 416 respectively).

The 7in screen itself isn't the brightest we've seen, but it's adequate and its colour accuracy is generally good. The 1280x800-pixel resolution is a bit on the low side compared to other mini tablets, but text still looks sharp enough to ensure a comfortable reading experience.

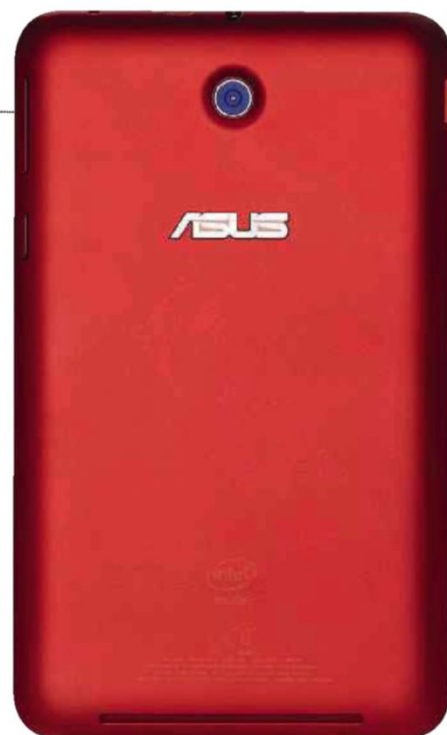
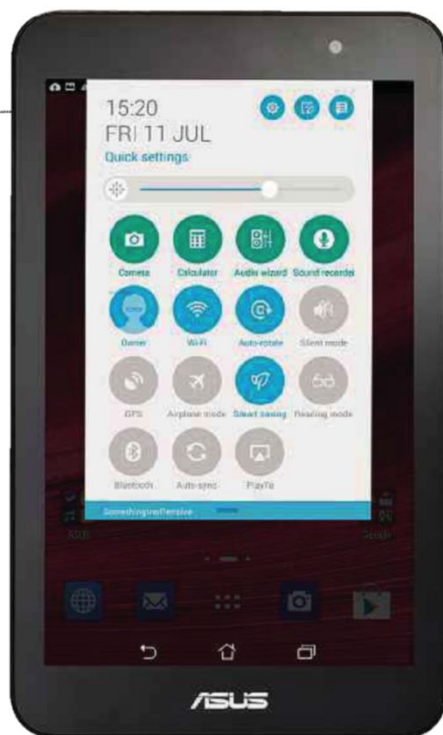
“It's let down by poor performance and responsiveness”

Asus claims a battery life of nine hours for the MeMOPad 7. It actually exceeded that length of time when playing videos continuously, surviving for nine hours, 17 minutes. Although other, more expensive mini tablets can last longer, this is still a respectable result.

Unusually for an Android device, the MeMOPad 7 uses an Intel processor

### SPECIFICATIONS

7in 1280x800-pixel touchscreen • 1.86GHz Intel Atom Z3745 quad-core processor • 1GB memory • 16GB storage • Android 4.4 KitKat • 295g • 10x114x189mm (HxWxD) • One-year warranty [www.snipca.com/13033](http://www.snipca.com/13033)



instead of the ARM processors found in the vast majority of Android tablets and phones. The 1.86GHz quad-core Atom Z3745 may sound impressive on paper, but in our benchmark tests it was almost twice as slow at loading webpages as the Nexus 7, which uses an ARM processor from Qualcomm.

Opening and switching between apps was also noticeably slower. However, the Atom didn't have a problem running our apps smoothly once they'd loaded, so we suspect these performance problems aren't the fault of the processor but are down to the meagre 1GB of memory. Responsiveness was also problematic – the touchscreen sometimes struggled to keep up with our finger gestures when typing or scrolling through webpages.

We wouldn't want to use the MeMOPad 7's five-megapixel camera unless there was no other camera to hand. Even shots taken in bright daylight were blighted by noise and a distinct lack of sharpness. If you are tempted to use the MeMOPad 7 as a camera, then we'd suggest you buy a microSD card, because the 16GB of built-in storage can fill up quickly – especially if you also plan to store loads of apps and videos.

The MeMOPad 7 runs Android KitKat 4.4, which Asus has modified. Almost all the alterations are cosmetic though – for example, more colourful icons in the Notifications drawer – so Android still pretty much functions as it always has. To make life easier, Asus has bundled a couple of useful apps such as a file manager and a to-do list app.

If you want a tablet on a very tight budget, then the Asus MeMOPad 7 isn't bad, but it's let down by its poor performance and responsiveness. It's worth spending a bit more for the Nexus 7 if you can – its longer battery life, faster performance and almost flawless responsiveness make it much better value.

**VERDICT:** An average tablet spoiled by the numerous compromises made to keep the price low

★★★★☆

**ALTERNATIVE:** Asus Nexus 7 £170 A little more expensive, but a superior mini Android tablet in almost every way







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Custom PC Magazine

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## 10.1" Voyager 2-in-1

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# Reviews

**SMARTWATCH** | £159 [www.snipca.com/13013](http://www.snipca.com/13013)

## LG G Watch

The first Google smartwatch is here, but we're underwhelmed

The LG G Watch is the first smartwatch equipped with Google's new Android Wear operating system. The rectangular watchface (which is waterproof), black colour scheme and rubber strap make for a rather bland look. But it uses a standard strap fitting, so you can swap the included strap for something more stylish.

The 1.6in touchscreen is bright and easy to read indoors, but is illegible outdoors in direct sunlight. We eked out only two days' use between charges and suspect this is due to the display constantly showing the time. Although this is the least we'd expect from a smartwatch, the battery clearly isn't up to it. You can use either the bundled charging dock or a standard **micro USB** cable to charge the battery.

You have to pair the G Watch with an Android smartphone (running version 4.3 or later) over Bluetooth, because most of its features need your phone's internet connection to function. Once connected, any apps installed on your phone that are compatible with Android Wear will automatically send information to the watch. There are also a few specific Android Wear apps available in the Google Play Store ([www.snipca.com/13023](http://www.snipca.com/13023)). Useful apps are thin on the ground, but one of our favourites is Wear Aware which sounds an alarm on the watch if you wander away from your phone. It's very useful if you're forgetful, but it should really be a built-in feature.

Android Wear has several other features built in. It can show you the current weather or the name of the track you're listening to on your phone. It also works as a basic fitness tracker, counting the number of steps you take every day. Unlike Samsung's very similar Android Wear watch – the Gear Live – the G Watch lacks a built-in heart-rate monitor, but you're unlikely to miss this unless you're

a dedicated fitness enthusiast.

The G Watch can also show notifications from apps on your phone, such as new text messages, emails, Facebook updates and phone calls. Swiping from the right of the screen lets you respond to the notifications by opening the relevant app on your phone. Google designed Android Wear to supplement your phone rather than replace it, but some basic interactivity would still be useful, such as the ability to accept Facebook friend requests or send a quick email reply without having to reach for your phone.

You can choose which apps on your phone send notifications to your watch,

“The Google Now feature brings useful info to your wrist”

but we'd like more nuanced control, such as the ability to restrict whose emails and calls you are notified of, which would make the constant stream of notifications more manageable. You can just swipe to dismiss notifications or ignore them until you want to deal with them. Alternatively, you can temporarily mute all notifications when you don't want to be disturbed, such as when you're at the cinema.

Android Wear's most useful feature is Google Now, the voice-activated personal assistant that's also built into Android phones running 4.1 Jelly Bean and later. This brings useful information from your paired smartphone, such as timetables for nearby bus stops or calendar reminders, to your wrist.

Android Wear does a great job of accurately recognising voice commands and transcribing dictations of texts and emails, although it struggled with



punctuation in our tests. We felt very conspicuous speaking into our wrist when out and about though, and preferred using the speech recognition built into our phone.

It's impossible not to compare the G Watch and Android Wear with Google Glass (see our review, page 18), even though the two are very different. Android Wear is far less ambitious in scope than Glass and there are more useful apps for Glass because it's been in development for longer. Unless you constantly miss important calls and messages, we're not convinced that having notifications on your wrist is particularly useful, and we also think Google Now works better on Glass.

Despite all that, as long as developers can come up with useful, innovative apps then Android Wear does have potential. Google has promised a software update that'll let you use a Wear watch to unlock your Android phone or tablet instead of a passcode. Even if you are taken with Wear, we'd skip the G Watch and wait for the Motorola Moto 360 due to arrive this autumn – it's far more stylish and will hopefully have longer battery life.

**VERDICT:** Android Wear needs better hardware than the G Watch and more quality apps to be a truly worthwhile purchase

★★★★☆

**ALTERNATIVE:** Samsung Gear 2 Neo £200 A non-Android smartwatch with more fitness features, but also more expensive



### SPECIFICATIONS

1.6in screen • 1.2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 400 processor • 512MB memory • 4GB of storage • replaceable wrist strap • Android Wear • 63g • 38x47x10mm (HxWxD) • Requires Android 4.3 smartphone [www.snipca.com/13013](http://www.snipca.com/13013)



**TABLET | £229 (32GB)** from [www.snipca.com/13042](http://www.snipca.com/13042)

## Dell Venue 8 Pro

A slim and affordable, yet flawed Windows 8.1 tablet

There may not be as many apps available for Windows 8.1 tablets compared to iPads and Android tablets, but tablets running Microsoft's operating system are at least affordable. At just £229 for the 32GB version, the Dell Venue 8 Pro is a cheap 8in tablet, but it's not quite the bargain it seems to be at first glance.

You'll only be able to use half of the Venue's 32GB of storage for your own apps and files, due to the space taken up by the Windows operating system. Thankfully, you can add more storage by plugging in **microSD** cards. There's no option to use the USB port to connect a monitor or TV using an **MHL** adapter – you'll have to do this wirelessly using a **Miracast** adapter instead.

The Venue looks very plain, with a ribbed rear and wide screen borders that make it easy to hold. The casing flexes too much, especially when you grab the tablet by either end and twist it, but it's sturdy enough for normal handling. Unusually, the Windows button is located on the top edge of the tablet (in portrait orientation) next to the headphone socket, rather than on one of the borders. This does make it harder to press inadvertently though, which is a frequent annoyance with other Windows tablets.

It's light for a 8in tablet at 350g, but its battery life isn't good enough for long trips away from a power socket. When playing videos on a loop, it lasted just under six hours, which is disappointing. Performance is also far from perfect. The 2GB of memory and Intel Atom Z3740D **quad-core processor** are quick enough for basic tasks, but running multiple apps simultaneously is enough to bring the tablet to its knees.

The 8in screen has a **resolution** of 1280x800 pixels, so text is sharp enough for a comfortable reading experience. It's also very bright, but has a grainy sheen

### SPECIFICATIONS

8in 1280x800-pixel touchscreen • 1.33GHz Intel Atom Z3740D quad-core processor • 2GB memory • 32GB storage • Intel integrated graphics chip • Windows 8.1 • 350g • 8.5x130x216mm (HxWxD) • One-year warranty [www.snipca.com/13042](http://www.snipca.com/13042)



which, combined with the so-so colour accuracy, spoils the look of photos.

The Dell Venue 8 Pro is a disappointing tablet in almost every way. If you want a Windows tablet, then the Lenovo Miix 2 8 (see our review, Issue 429) is better thanks to its longer battery life, but it shares many of the same problems as the Venue. Unless you really need the microSD slot or want to run Windows programs, other mini tablets such as the Android Nexus 7 (see our review, Issue 407) are a better choice.

**VERDICT:** This tablet fails to impress on most criteria. It's slow, has a poor battery and a grainy screen

★★★★☆

**ALTERNATIVE:** Lenovo Miix 2 8  
**£250** Not perfect either, but its longer battery life and even slimmer casing makes it a better choice if you want a Windows 8.1 tablet



## Weird... but useful



### Contour Mouse

**£124** from [www.snipca.com/13069](http://www.snipca.com/13069)

An oddly shaped USB mouse designed for RSI sufferers and others who have trouble using standard mice. It comes in four sizes, as well as right- and left-handed variants.

### Maplin Pro Wireless Ergonomic Laser Mouse

**£50** from [www.snipca.com/13070](http://www.snipca.com/13070)

This wireless ergonomic mouse is cheaper than the Contour (above) and shaped like a joystick. It has a built-in wrist rest and a button for adjusting its sensitivity.



### Netatmo Urban Weather Station

**£140** from [www.snipca.com/13071](http://www.snipca.com/13071)

A pair of indoor and outdoor sensors aimed at health and weather enthusiasts that let you measure temperature, humidity and CO2 levels. The data is sent to your iOS, Windows Phone or Android device via Bluetooth so you can analyse it. More indoor modules and an outdoor rain gauge are available separately.



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# Reviews

**LAPTOP** | £549 from [www.snipca.com/13034](http://www.snipca.com/13034)

## Dell Inspiron 15 5547

A quality good-value 15in laptop for Windows 8.1

Most budget 15in laptops tend to be chunky and plain-looking, or just downright ugly, but that's not the case with the Dell Inspiron 15 5547. Although most of this Windows 8.1 laptop is made of plain black plastic, the metal lid adds a touch of class. It's a surprisingly slender laptop too, helped by the omission of a DVD writer.

The 5547 is still relatively heavy though at 2.3kg, rising to 2.7kg with its charger. This doesn't make it ideal for regular use while out and about, but if you do need to travel with it then at least the 5547's battery is certainly up to it – lasting an impressive nine hours, 47 minutes. It's a shame the casing isn't more rigid though – it bends and flexes under pressure quite easily.

As you might expect for a laptop at this price, the 15in screen has a lowly 1366x768-pixel **resolution**, but that's still sufficient for most programs. Image quality is average and the appearance of colours can change dramatically depending on your viewing angle, but at

least it's very bright. Surprisingly, the screen isn't touch-sensitive, but this is no great cause for concern – using an upright touchscreen soon becomes a pain in the arm over long periods. If you really want a touchscreen, you can add one when ordering for £50 extra.

Dell has squeezed in a number pad alongside the keyboard. The number pad's keys are a little cramped as a result, but all the keys are comfortable to type on as they have plenty of **travel**. If anything, they're a little too spongy for our liking, but we got used to it quickly. The large touchpad is spacious and accurate, although the buttons built into the bottom of the pad don't give quite enough **feedback**.

Where the 5547 really excels is performance. The **dual-core** 2GHz Intel Core i7 4510U **processor** is more than fast enough for most tasks, while the AMD Radeon HD R7 M265 **dedicated graphics chip** is powerful enough to play most modern 3D games with reasonably high levels of graphic detail. Most other laptops at this price settle for **integrated graphics**. Cleverly, the 5547 can automatically switch to an Intel integrated graphics chip when not



plugged in to prolong battery life.

It's often nigh on impossible to upgrade memory and storage in most modern laptops, but thankfully that's not the case here. The bottom panel is easily removed, giving access to the interior. You can then replace the generous 1TB hard drive with an even bigger model or an **SSD** as well as boost the 8GB of memory to a maximum of 16GB.

The Inspiron 15 5547's screen and keyboard aren't perfect, but they're good enough. Add long battery life, fast performance and easy upgradeability and you have a great-value budget laptop.

**VERDICT:** A well designed, good-value laptop



**ALTERNATIVE:** Dell Chromebook 11 £215  
A budget ChromeOS laptop that's far lighter and much cheaper



### SPECIFICATIONS

2GHz Intel Core i7 4510U dual-core processor • 8GB memory • 1TB hard drive • AMD Radeon R7 M265 dedicated graphics chip • 15.6in 1366x768-pixel screen • 802.11ac/a/b/g/n • Windows 8.1 • 2.3kg (2.7kg with charger) • 22x380x259mm (HxWxD) • One-year warranty [www.snipca.com/13034](http://www.snipca.com/13034)

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Ross Kildare

**A** Although you could buy a traditional web-design program that runs on your

computer, such as Serif's excellent WebPlus X7 (see our review, Issue 414), doing so for all the members of your band will be expensive – it's £84 a copy from [www.snipca.com/12338](http://www.snipca.com/12338).

A far better-value option is a website-design and hosting service that you access entirely through your web browser, such as WordPress.com. You can create a website and set up accounts for all your fellow band mates with differing levels of editing privileges if need be.

WordPress.com's basic service is free,



but features such as a custom web address, a customised appearance that isn't based on a template and extra storage will cost extra.

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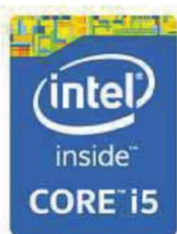
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\* Chillblast won more awards in the leading IT press publications PC Pro, PC Advisor and Computer Shopper combined than any other retailer 2010-2013

\*\* World's fastest PC as tested by PC Pro Magazine - <http://www.pcpro.co.uk/reviews/desktops/371152/chillblast-fusion-photo-oc-iv>

# Reviews

**THERMOSTAT** | £179 (£249 with installation) from [www.snipca.com/13019](http://www.snipca.com/13019)

## Nest Thermostat

A wireless thermostat that programs itself

The internet has finally reached central-heating systems, with a flurry of smartphone-controlled thermostats arriving in recent months. If you're currently making do with an outdated timer that's either on or off, or grappling with a programmable thermostat that requires an engineering degree to operate, the prospect of being able to set your home's temperature via a user-friendly app wherever you are holds instant appeal. Plus, having more control over your heating should allow you to use it more efficiently, thereby saving you money.

A Nest Thermostat costs £179, but it makes sense to order it with installation for £249, unless you happen to be a trained electrician. The stylish round thermostat can be mounted on the wall or on an equally attractive metal stand (sold separately for £29). The thermostat connects to the small Heat Link box

“The most user-friendly heating-control system we've seen”

(normally mounted on the wall next to your boiler) and switches it on and off. It's compatible with most common types of heating systems – check Nest's website ([www.nest.com/uk](http://www.nest.com/uk)) if your system is less conventional. It doesn't control hot water, so we kept our existing timer for that sole purpose.

The thermostat connects to your mobile devices and internet via your home's Wi-Fi network. It communicates with the Heat Link box via a proprietary wireless connection, or via mains wiring, so it'll still work should your network cut out for any reason. If you want multiple heating zones in your home (one upstairs, one downstairs, for example) so you can control the temperature in each separately, you'll need to buy one Nest Thermostat per zone.

Controlling the temperature via the thermostat couldn't be easier: twist the outer ring clockwise for hotter, anti-



clockwise for cooler. The colour display shows the current and requested temperatures, and whether your system is currently firing. The displays acts as a giant button – pressing it shows additional controls, including the weekly scheduler and usage history, although these are easier to manage via the iOS and Android apps or your PC's browser.

Remote control from a smartphone, tablet or browser is just one of the Nest Thermostat's many talents. If you don't want the rigmarole of setting a weekly schedule, simply adjust the temperature as you see fit. It will then automatically identify daily and weekly patterns and create a schedule for you. We found the auto-scheduler a little hit and miss, but you can run both manual and automatic schedules alongside each other.

Our favourite feature is the Nest's ability to learn how long it takes to heat up your home. If you set it to 20 degrees at 7am, it'll come on at whatever time is needed to reach 20 degrees at 7am. This is based on past performance of your heating system, and also on local weather information automatically downloaded from the web.

The Auto-Away feature was less successful in our test. It's supposed to detect a lack of movement when no one's at home and turn off your heating. However, the thermostat can only monitor the room in which it's located – although multiple thermostats and Nest

### SPECIFICATIONS

Requires Wi-Fi network • 802.11b/g/n • iOS app requires iOS 6.0 or later • Android app requires Android 2.2 or later • 290x830mm (height x diameter) • 254g [www.snipca.com/13019](http://www.snipca.com/13019)



Protect smoke alarms (see our review of the Protect, Issue 416) can communicate with each other to work out whether someone is home. With two thermostats installed (one upstairs, one downstairs) in our home, the Auto-Away function sometimes switched on and off repeatedly. This happened when we were in another room and also when we were on holiday. It's annoyingly erratic, but it's easy to switch this and any other feature on or off in the app's preferences screen.

The intelligent features aren't faultless, and some people will be nervous about sharing intimate details of their daily lives with a Google-owned company. The plainly written privacy policy is reassuring, though, and the company's CEO has promised that any changes to the policy will be opt-in for existing users. The Nest Thermostat is the most user-friendly heating-control system we've seen and, while it's not cheap, it can help you heat your home more efficiently and therefore save you money in the long run.

**VERDICT:** Not perfect, but an elegant, sophisticated system that's a pleasure to use



**ALTERNATIVE:** Heatmiser Neo Kit 2 £265 (without installation)  
Smartphone-controlled thermostat that also controls hot water, but requires a wired connection to your boiler







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# Reviews

**SMART TV** | £505 from [www.snipca.com/13043](http://www.snipca.com/13043)

## Samsung UE40H6400

A voice-controlled smart TV with a novel remote control

We recently reviewed the Samsung UE32H6200 (see Issue 427), a 32in smart TV with good image quality and every terrestrial TV catch-up service you could need. The 40in UE40H6400 is the next size up, but the bigger TV differs in several areas besides screen size.

Unlike the UE32H6200, the UE40H6400 comes with two remote controls. One is the standard version, the other a pebble-shaped device. It has fewer buttons and, much like a Nintendo Wii controller, you simply point it at the screen and move it around in the air to move your onscreen cursor, making for easier navigation and selection of the various onscreen menu options. It works very well; so much so, we'd be happy to use this kind of remote control all the time.

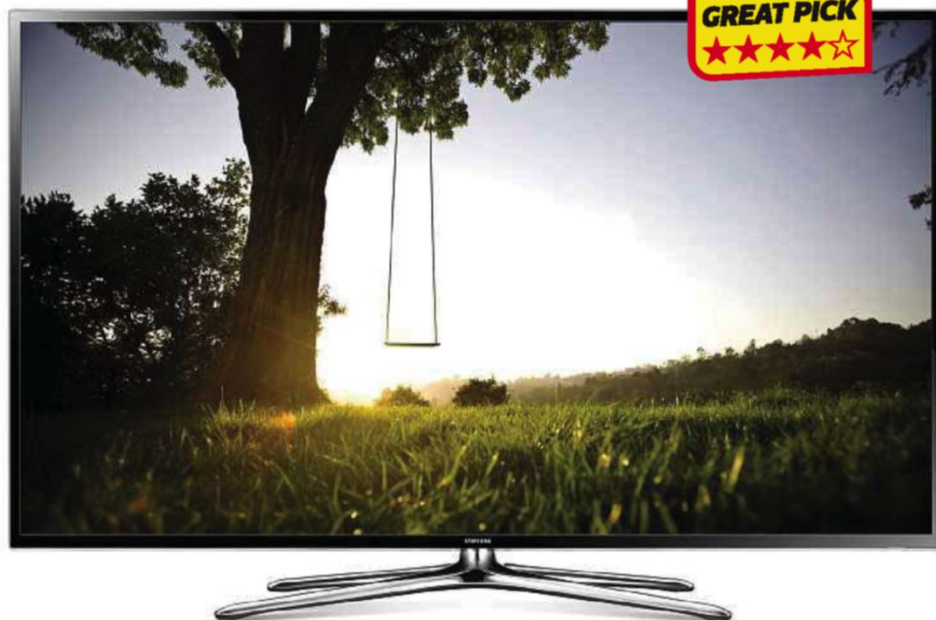
The pebble remote control also lets you operate the TV with your voice, but the technology for this is patchy at best. If you speak a word or phrase into the remote, the TV shows search results sourced from the installed apps. A search for "commonwealth games", for example, showed results for a TV programme that was currently on air, an upcoming listing for which we could schedule a recording, and a selection of YouTube videos.

“You use the pebble-shaped remote much like a Nintendo Wii controller”

Searches for films and TV programmes would reveal results from the Wuaki.tv and ITV Player apps, but not from Netflix, BBC iPlayer, 4oD or Demand 5. It's a shame that only some of the apps can be searched in this way, but we

### SPECIFICATIONS

40in LED TV • 1920x1080-pixel resolution • 4x HDMI • 3x USB2 • 1x component, 1x composite, 1x Ethernet ports • Wi-Fi • Freeview HD • 598x918x267mm (HxWxD) • 9.5kg • One-year warranty [www.snipca.com/13044](http://www.snipca.com/13044)



hold out hope that Samsung and their app developers will fix this. At least the smart TV interface itself is smooth and speedy thanks to the TV's fast **quad-core processor**.

Standard-definition TV footage initially looked unpleasant in our test, with jagged lines and lots of **noise**, but turning on all the noise-reduction settings made a significant difference. Whether you prefer the slightly soft-focus appearance of these processed images will be down to your own personal taste, although you can fine-tune them to your preference.

If you want Blu-ray and other high-definition content to look its best then you'll need to invest a considerable amount of time tweaking the UE40H6400's various image settings. You may save time by trying the image-quality presets as a starting point. The default "Normal" preset isn't a great choice. We preferred the "Natural" preset because it looks much more vibrant even though it is blindingly bright (you may want to reduce the brightness somewhat).

Contrast is not as good as it could be due to the lack of any backlight-dimming – a feature that lets you turn down the backlight for darker areas of an image to boost contrast even further.

The UE40H6400's built-in speakers aren't bad, but they're lacking in bass and they're not especially loud either. It's worth buying a soundbar such as the LG NB3540 (see our review, Issue 430) to enjoy better sound quality. Extras include built-in Wi-Fi and the ability to act as a basic **PVR** when a USB hard drive is plugged in.

The Samsung UE40H6400 has an excellent choice of online services, good image quality and a handy alternative remote control, even if its voice-controlled search feature isn't all it's cracked up to be. It's still a great smart TV, but if you don't mind using a more old-fashioned remote or want a smaller TV for a smaller living room, then the 32in UE32H6200 is better value.

**VERDICT:** Its smart controls could be better and image quality needs tweaking, but this is still a superb smart TV

★★★★☆

### ALTERNATIVE:

Samsung UE32H6200 £400

A smaller and cheaper smart TV with the same online video features





**LAPTOP** | £749 from [www.snipca.com/13040](http://www.snipca.com/13040)

# Dell Inspiron 14 7437

A good-looking, but flawed ultra-portable laptop

Most thin, lightweight Windows 8.1 laptops tend to be more than £1,000, especially those that come with metallic casings and high-resolution screens. The Dell Inspiron 14 7437 proves – at just £749 – this doesn't have to be the case.

The 7437 is heavier than some similar laptops at 1.8kg, rising to 2kg with its charger, but is still light enough to carry around all day with ease. One reason it's relatively hefty is the chunky, solid metal casing, which is exceptionally rigid and robust. However, its sharp, angular edges can dig into your flesh when you pick it up.

The battery life of seven hours, 49 minutes when playing videos

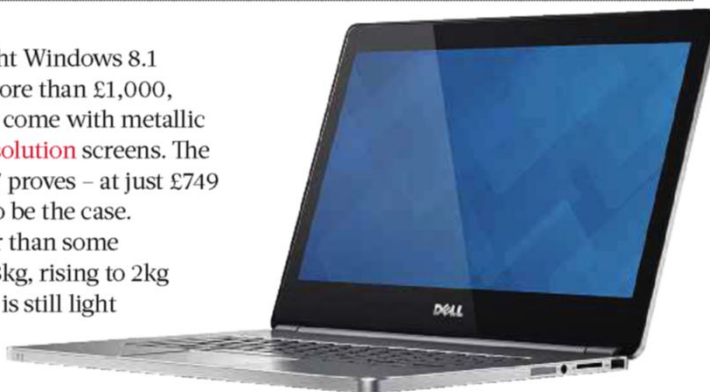
“It's stylish and affordable, but you'll find better value elsewhere”

continuously falls short of other ultra-portable laptops. It even lags behind some heavier, cheaper laptops, such as Dell's own Inspiron 15 5547 (see our review, page 24). We suspect this is partly due to Dell equipping the 7437 with a hard drive rather than a more power-efficient SSD. At least it's fast – the 2GHz Intel Core i7 dual-core 4510U processor and 8GB of memory sped through our benchmark tests in no time.

The 13in screen has a high resolution of 1920x1080 pixels, so you can easily work on a large spreadsheet, or on two

## SPECIFICATIONS

2GHz Intel Core i7 4510U dual-core processor • 8GB memory • 1TB hard drive • Intel HD4400 integrated graphics chip • 13.3in 1920x1080-pixel screen • 802.11a/b/g/n • Windows 8.1 • 1.8kg (2kg with charger) • 15x345x240mm (HxWxD) • One-year warranty [www.snipca.com/13040](http://www.snipca.com/13040)



documents side by side. It's not especially bright, though, and it also has a grainy sheen. Colour accuracy is middling at best and deteriorates even further if you change your viewing angle.

We were also disappointed by a number of flaws in the keyboard and touchpad. Although the keys are a good size and backlit for use in poor light, they don't have enough travel, so typing errors are likely. The large touchpad is accurate and smooth, but it was a little slow at recognising our finger movements when performing gestures such as swiping two fingers to scroll up and down. Another letdown is that the buttons in the bottom of the pad are somewhat stiff.

The Dell Inspiron 14 7437 may be stylish and affordable, but so is the Acer Aspire S3-392G (see our review, Issue 421). Although it's not quite as fast and far from perfect, it's lighter, has a better keyboard and longer battery life, making it better value.



**VERDICT:** A light and robust laptop, but it's flawed in too many ways to recommend enthusiastically

★★★★☆

**ALTERNATIVE:** Acer Aspire S3-392G £799 Not quite as fast, but it does have longer battery life and a better keyboard



## COMING SOON

### SEPTEMBER 2014

The Motorola Moto 360 Android Wear smartwatch will apparently support wireless charging, have a heart-rate monitor, be water- and dust-resistant and have a battery life of two days.



### SEPTEMBER 2014

Rumours suggest the iPhone 6 will come in two sizes – 4.7in and 5.5in, with the smaller model released first. The screens will allegedly have a resolution of 1704x960 pixels and a scratchproof sapphire coating.



Martin Hayek

### AUTUMN 2014

The latest leaked information suggests the Nexus 9 tablet, the HTC-made successor to the Nexus 7, will have a whopping 5GB of memory and a 2560x1440-pixel 9in screen.



Android Police

### AUTUMN 2014

The Samsung Galaxy Note 4 phone will reportedly have a metal casing, a huge 2560x1440-pixel resolution, a fingerprint reader, an improved camera and even an eye-scanner.



## NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE  
3 Sept



**Nokia Lumia 930** The latest Windows Phone handset

**Salter MiBody Blood Pressure Monitor** Track your blood pressure from your iPad

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## LAPTOP

**Apple MacBook Air 13in 128GB**  
**£849** from [www.snipca.com/10020](http://www.snipca.com/10020)  
**Tested:** Issue 402



Apple's latest MacBook Air isn't cheap, but it's the best lightweight laptop available. It has excellent battery life, a comfortable keyboard, a sensibly sized screen, a sturdy and classy build and great bundled software.

**ALTERNATIVE:** Dell Chromebook 11 A Chrome OS ultra-portable laptop with good battery life and a great keyboard. £179 from [www.snipca.com/12413](http://www.snipca.com/12413)

## DESKTOP PC

**Palicomp AMD Kaveri Evolution**  
**£500** from [www.snipca.com/11804](http://www.snipca.com/11804)  
**Tested:** Issue 422



A budget PC with a fast overclocked processor. It also has good upgrade potential and comes with a surprisingly good 24in monitor, as well as a quality USB keyboard and mouse.

**ALTERNATIVE:** Braebo Hemera A cheap complete PC system that's powerful enough for basic tasks. £350 from [www.snipca.com/12606](http://www.snipca.com/12606)

## TABLET

**Asus Nexus 7**  
**£170** from [www.snipca.com/13075](http://www.snipca.com/13075)  
**Tested:** Issue 407



An excellent budget 7in Android tablet with a high-resolution screen and good battery life. It's not quite as cheap as the original Nexus 7 and Android still needs more high-quality tablet apps, but it's still a fantastic bargain.

**ALTERNATIVE:** Apple iPad Air A lightweight 10in tablet with an excellent screen and peerless selection of apps. £399 from [www.snipca.com/10545](http://www.snipca.com/10545)

## PHONE

**Motorola Moto G**  
**£150** without contract from [www.snipca.com/13076](http://www.snipca.com/13076)  
**Tested:** Issue 413



Motorola's budget Android smartphone is a steal. It's responsive, well made, fast and has a good screen. It's better than many phones at twice the price.

**ALTERNATIVE:** Apple iPhone 5s An excellent smartphone with a fingerprint scanner, a great-quality camera and very fast performance. £549 without a contract from [www.snipca.com/10171](http://www.snipca.com/10171)

## DIGITAL CAMERA

**Panasonic Lumix DMC-GF6**  
**£300** from [www.snipca.com/12607](http://www.snipca.com/12607)  
**Tested:** Issue 405



This compact interchangeable lens camera is small and reasonably priced, yet it has well-designed controls, a wide range of available lenses and shoots excellent quality photos. The GF6 really is unbeatable value.

**ALTERNATIVE:** Fujifilm XF1 If you don't need the flexibility of removable lenses, this slim compact is a great choice. £130 from [www.snipca.com/11115](http://www.snipca.com/11115)

## E-READER

**Kobo Aura**  
**£98** from [www.snipca.com/12147](http://www.snipca.com/12147)  
**Tested:** Issue 410



A great e-reader with an easy-to-read lit touchscreen that can be tweaked extensively through its settings. There's no 3G version for downloading books on the go, but, unlike the Amazon Kindle, you can buy ebooks from independent retailers that use the ePub format.

**ALTERNATIVE:** Amazon Kindle Paperwhite (2013) An e-reader with a brilliant screen and some useful features. £109 from [www.snipca.com/10532](http://www.snipca.com/10532)



## SECURITY SOFTWARE

### Kaspersky

#### Internet Security 2014

£25 from [www.snipca.com/12054](http://www.snipca.com/12054)

Tested: Issue 430



The best malware protection suite for the second year running also has good parental controls and the ability to create a rescue disc for emergencies. Click the link above for a 3-device licence, or buy a 1-device licence on our Software Store for just £17.99 ([www.snipca.com/11134](http://www.snipca.com/11134)).

**ALTERNATIVE: Norton Internet Security 2014** Great antivirus software, but sometimes blocks legitimate software. £37 from [www.snipca.com/11279](http://www.snipca.com/11279)

## PHOTO EDITING

### Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 5

£99 from [www.snipca.com/12926](http://www.snipca.com/12926)

Tested: Issue 402



Lightroom is a consistently elegant, powerful and fast photo-management program packed with sophisticated features. If you want to keep on top of your photos and make them look great, there's no better software to do it with.

**ALTERNATIVE: Adobe Photoshop Elements 12** A fast and polished photo-editing program with excellent advanced editing tools. £63 from [www.snipca.com/12739](http://www.snipca.com/12739)

## PC MONITOR

### Dell UltraSharp U2412M

£204 from [www.snipca.com/12740](http://www.snipca.com/12740)

Tested: Issue 378



An exquisite monitor with superb image quality, an adjustable stand, a high resolution and even a built-in USB hub. It costs a little more than other monitors, but it's money well spent. It's easily the best value monitor we've seen and is the one by which all others are judged.

**ALTERNATIVE: AOC i2360PHU** A good-quality budget 23in monitor that's easily adjustable and has a built-in USB2 hub, too. £155 from [www.snipca.com/12927](http://www.snipca.com/12927)

## SECURITY CAMERA

### Y-cam HomeMonitor HD

£140 from [www.snipca.com/11646](http://www.snipca.com/11646)

Tested: Issue 420



A home-security camera that's well priced and easy to set up. Plus, it has great picture quality, useful apps and there's no need to subscribe to any extra services. It's a worthy successor to the original HomeMonitor, our previous favourite security camera.

**ALTERNATIVE: D-Link Wireless-N Day & Night Camera** A good-value security camera with excellent night vision. £90 from [www.snipca.com/12741](http://www.snipca.com/12741)

## ROUTER

### Trendnet TEW-812DRU

£89 from [www.snipca.com/12609](http://www.snipca.com/12609)

Tested: Issue 427



An incredibly fast 802.11ac router that's also one of the cheapest we've seen. It's superb and the router to buy if you're ready to make the jump to 802.11ac. It's easy to set up, too.

**ALTERNATIVE: Linksys WRT1900AC** More expensive, but even faster and with loads of features, too. £220 from [www.snipca.com/12928](http://www.snipca.com/12928)

## NAS

### Synology DiskStation DS213j

£160 from [www.snipca.com/10575](http://www.snipca.com/10575)

Tested: Issue 404



This NAS enclosure has it all – fast performance, easy configuration and plenty of extra features. It's not perfect – disk installation is a little fiddly and it's a little pricey – but there are few other NAS devices we would rather buy.

**ALTERNATIVE: Synology DS414j** A four-drive NAS that's generally fast and easy to set up and use too. £258 from [www.snipca.com/12545](http://www.snipca.com/12545)

## WEB DESIGN

### Serif WebPlus X7

£84 from [www.snipca.com/12338](http://www.snipca.com/12338)

Tested: Issue 414



WebPlus X7 is one of the best programs available for designing a website without having to write a line of code. It comes with lots of templates, with more available for purchase if you need them. It also has lots of specialist tools for building a small business website.

**ALTERNATIVE:** **Jimdo Pro** This browser-based program for creating websites is slick and feature packed, but lacking in high-quality templates. £60 a year from [www.jimdo.com/pricing](http://www.jimdo.com/pricing)

## SMART TV

### Samsung UE32H6200

£400 from [www.snipca.com/13101](http://www.snipca.com/13101)

Tested: Issue 427



A stylish 32in smart TV with great picture quality and apps for all the terrestrial TV catch-up services. It has plenty of extras, too, such as recording-to-USB storage, 3D, playing media files stored on a NAS or USB stick, and plenty of HDMI ports.

**ALTERNATIVE:** **Sony KDL-42W705B**

Excellent image quality, stylish looks and a 42in screen. £519 from [www.snipca.com/12931](http://www.snipca.com/12931)

## MULTIFUNCTION PRINTER

### Canon Pixma MG4250

£50 from [www.snipca.com/12457](http://www.snipca.com/12457)

Tested: Issue 382



This budget multifunction printer (MFP) isn't the fastest available, but it's cheap to buy and inexpensive to run. Just as importantly, both prints and scans look great. Unless you need faster print speeds or separate ink tanks for each colour, this MFP is the one to buy.

**ALTERNATIVE:** **Canon Pixma MX535**

A MFP aimed at small offices with duplex, ADF and fax, but also good photo print quality. £74 from [www.snipca.com/12909](http://www.snipca.com/12909)

## SOLID-STATE DRIVE

### Crucial MX100 512GB

£153 from [www.snipca.com/12743](http://www.snipca.com/12743)

Tested: Issue 427



A blindingly fast, high-capacity SSD at a remarkably low price. If you've been put off buying a SSD because of the cost, then now is finally the time to take the plunge. It's far faster than any hard drive and is one of the best upgrades you can fit to your computer.

**ALTERNATIVE:** **Crucial M550 SSD 1TB**

If you need a bigger SSD, this fast 1TB model is great value. £316 from [www.snipca.com/12932](http://www.snipca.com/12932)

## EXTERNAL HARD DISK

### Western Digital My Passport Ultra 1TB

£55 from [www.snipca.com/11908](http://www.snipca.com/11908)

Tested: Issue 307, Computer Shopper



The My Passport Ultra 1TB is a very fast USB3 portable hard drive that's very keenly priced. It comes bundled with backup software, although it can be clunky to use.

**ALTERNATIVE:** **Toshiba StorE Canvio**

**500GB** Not as good value or as fast, but it does come with better bundled software. £40 from [www.snipca.com/12459](http://www.snipca.com/12459)

## HOMEPLUGS

### TP-Link AV500 Nano Powerline Adapter Starter Kit (TL-PA4010KIT)

£25 from [www.snipca.com/10742](http://www.snipca.com/10742)

Tested: Issue 395



TP-Link's tiny Homeplug adapters are a great choice, especially if socket space is at a premium or you don't want to block an adjacent socket. Despite their low price, they're also very fast making them great value.

**ALTERNATIVE:** **Devolo dLAN 500**

**AVPlus Starter Kit** These fast Homeplug adapters can block adjacent sockets, but they do have a passthrough socket. £75 from [www.snipca.com/12933](http://www.snipca.com/12933)



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# Workshops & Tips

PULL OUT  
& KEEP  
Issue 430

14 pages of easy-to-follow workshops and expert tips

**35** Stop websites stealing your personal info  
**38** Send lengthy videos in seconds

**40** Use your tablet as a telescope  
**42** Remove toolbars that clutter your PC

## PLUS

**43** Readers' Tips  
**44** Phone & Tablet Tips  
**46** Make Windows Better

**47** Make Office Better  
**48** Secret Tips For... Internet Explorer 11

## Stop websites stealing your personal info

**What you need:** 360 Internet Security; Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8 or 8.1

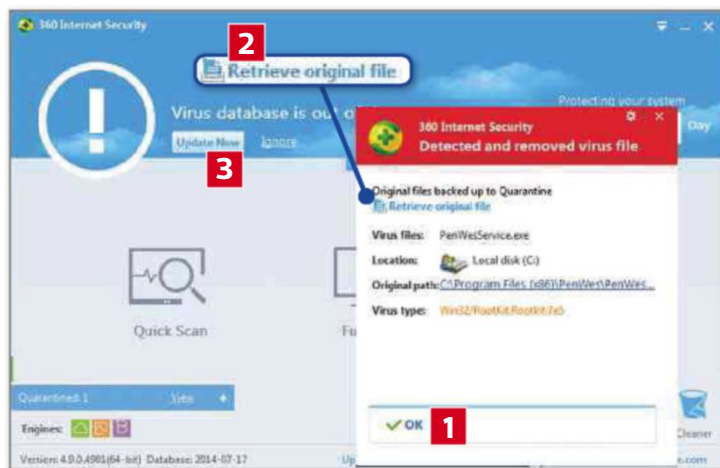
**Time required:** 40 minutes

The latest version of 360 Internet Security provides vital protection against cyber-fraud by notifying you whenever a **phishing** website is requesting your personal information – such as your login or bank details.

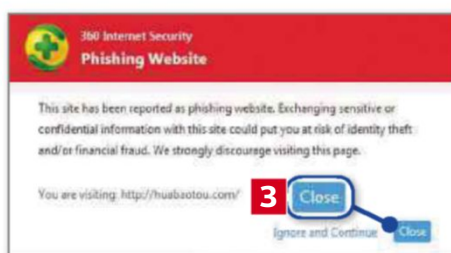
It also has its own **sandbox** in which you can safely run programs, documents and media files you think are corrupted. Its powerful scan options will find and delete files that are taking up space and slowing down your PC.



**STEP 1** To download 360 Internet Security, go to [www.snipca.com/13035](http://www.snipca.com/13035) and click the Download button. Click the setup file that downloads to your PC, then click Yes, tick the T&C box and click Install. As soon as 360 Internet Security installs, it begins scanning your PC and detecting potentially harmful files. Click OK **1** to permanently delete a file from your PC or click 'Retrieve original file' **2** if you want to access the file from its source. Click Update Now **3** to update all your **virus definitions**.

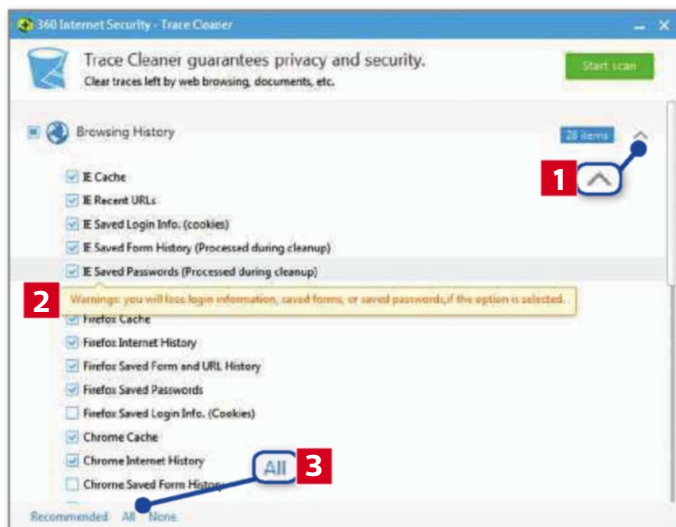


**STEP 2** To switch on your online protection, click the dropdown menu **1** and click all the sliders to turn them on **2**. Phishing websites are harmful websites that pose as genuine ones and request personal details, such as your username, password and bank details, to use fraudulently. With your Internet Protection sliders



switched on, you will be notified whenever you visit a phishing website (see second image, left). Whenever you see this notification, click Close **3**.

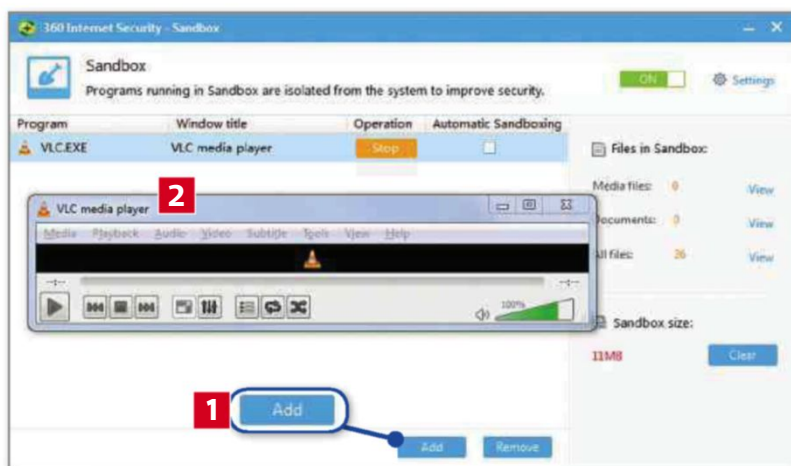
# Workshops



**STEP 3** 360 Internet Security also lets you delete your browsing history. Click Cleaner at the bottom right, then click the Browsing History dropdown menu **1**. 360 Internet Security supports all the most popular browsers. Tick the Saved Passwords, Form History, Internet History and Recent URLs boxes for each of your browsers to delete them. Hovering your cursor over an option will tell you what you'll lose if you tick the box **2**. If you want to tick all the boxes in one go, click All **3** below.



**STEP 4** Scroll down and click the dropdown menu beside Windows History. Here, you'll see options to clean traces of leftover Windows files, which will clear space on your PC. Tick the items you want to delete or leave them on the default Recommended (ticked boxes) settings. Scroll further down and click the dropdown menu beside Office History, and repeat the process. Next, close any open programs and click Start Scan. To see scan results for a particular file type, click the dropdown menu beside a section heading **1** and then click Detail **2**. Click 'Clean up' **3** to delete all the listed items and then close the Trace Cleaner window.



**STEP 5** Another great feature of 360 Internet Security lets you run programs, media files or documents that you suspect might be corrupted or a potential danger to your PC in a virtual Sandbox. This is a quarantined environment that provides a safe testing area. Click Sandbox at the bottom right, then Add **1**, navigate to the program you want to test on your Desktop and then click Open. Alternatively, drag the program's icon and drop it into the sandbox **2**. The program will run exactly as it would normally, but it won't run from your computer, so any potential problems won't affect your PC.

**STEP 6** To run a media file or work on a document within the sandbox, simply drag and drop the item into it. You can add as many items as you want. To run an item within the sandbox, click Start **1**. Click Stop **2** to close it. If you want a particular program or file to automatically run from within the sandbox when you launch it from your Desktop, tick the Automatic Sandboxing **3** box beside it. Some programs (such as browsers) display a small box at the top indicating they're running from the sandbox. Close the sandbox when you've finished.





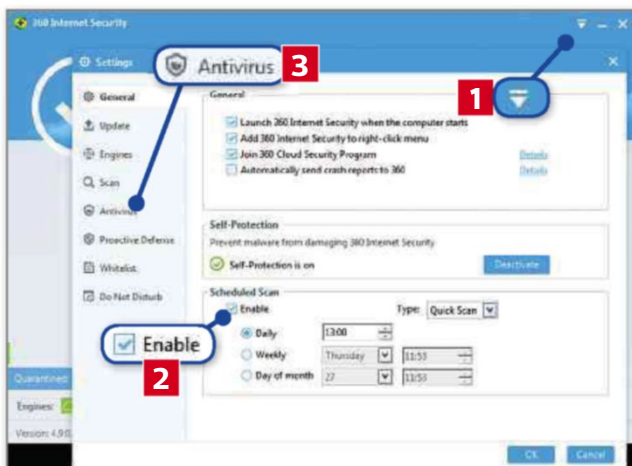
## Stop websites stealing your personal info



**STEP 7** To run a quick system scan of your PC, click the dropdown menu on the main screen and then click Quick Scan. To pause or stop the scan, click those options **1**. Tick 'Shut down computer when complete' **2** if you want (this option will delete everything it finds). Alternatively, once the scan's finished, untick any item you're sure is not harmful to your PC. Click Resolve to remove the ticked files. Click 'Restart now' to rid your PC of these problems immediately or 'Restart later' to postpone this.



**STEP 8** If the Quick Scan isn't thorough enough, you should perform a Full Scan, which analyses every file on your system. Click Full Scan **1** and then click Best Performance at the top. While the Quick Scan takes a few minutes, the Best Performance Full Scan can take anything up to 30 minutes. Remove the harmful files (as in Step 7) and then click 'Restart now' or 'Restart later'. 360 Internet Security also lets you scan a particular section of your PC. Return to the main screen, move your mouse over Custom Scan **2** and select what you want to scan **3**.



**STEP 9** To change 360 Internet Security's default settings, click the Menu icon **1** and then Settings. To schedule an automatic daily scan, tick Enable **2**, select Daily, type a time (in 24-hour format). Next, click the Type dropdown menu and select Quick Scan. You can also set Weekly or Monthly scans in the same way. Click the Antivirus tab **3** and increase the Protection Level slider to High (your scans will now take longer but will be more thorough). Select 'All files' under Monitored File Types and then click OK.



**STEP 10** To change your theme, click the Menu icon, Themes, then click the theme you want. To see a log of all the changes 360 Internet Security has made to your PC, click the Menu icon and then Log. Click any of the tabs on the left **1** and then click View **2** to access in-depth results of that particular operation (date and time, number of files scanned, threats cleared, the scan settings, etc). Tick the box **3** to clear your log history after 30 days, then click Close. ●

## Send lengthy videos in seconds

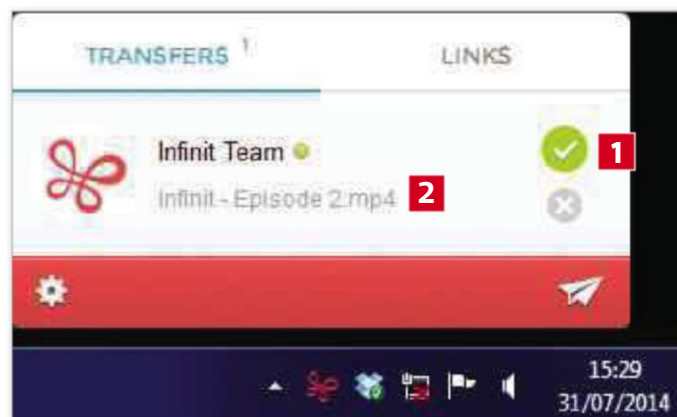
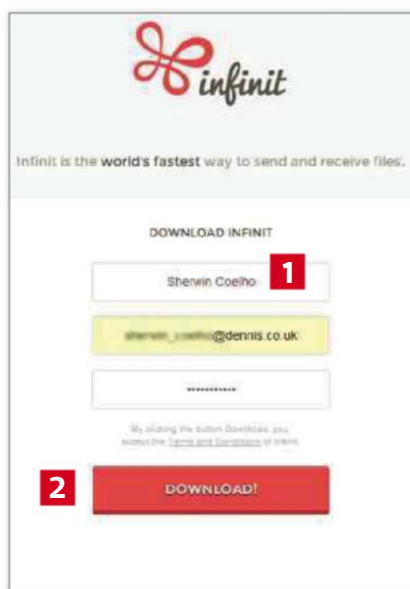
**What you need:** Inifit; Windows 7, 8 or 8.1 **Time required:** 20 minutes

**I**nifit is a new file-transfer service that transfers files of any format and size (such as lengthy videos and zipped files) in less than half the time of Google Drive or Dropbox. It lets you stream media

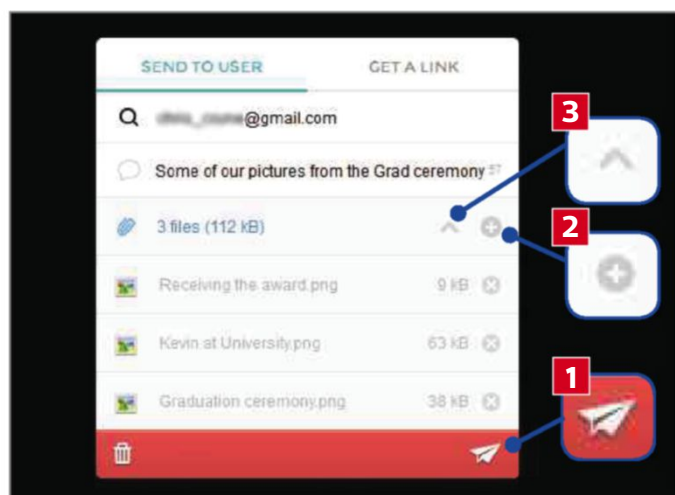
files while they're being downloaded to your PC. You can send files to anyone, even if they don't have an Inifit account. All transfers are protected by end-to-end encryption, so your data is always secure.



**STEP 1** To download Inifit, go to [www.snipca.com/13024](http://www.snipca.com/13024), enter your name **1**, email address, password and then click Download **2**. Click the installation file that downloads to your PC and follow the instructions to install it. Enter your username and password again and click Login. You'll see the small Inifit icon at the bottom right of your taskbar. If it's in the hidden icon tray (this happens when you have a lot of taskbar icons), click the small arrow to reveal the tray and then click and drag the icon onto your taskbar.

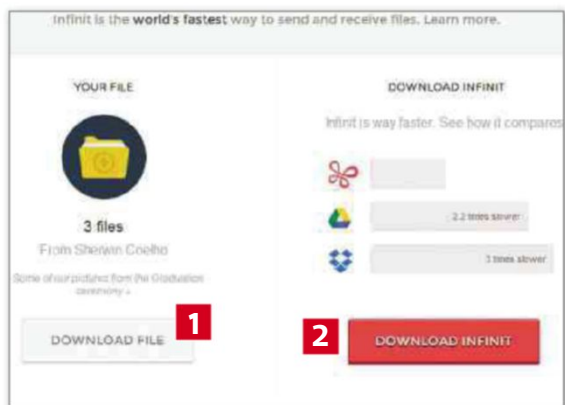


**STEP 2** Click the Inifit icon and you'll see a test file (which is a video advert from Inifit). Click the tick **1** to accept it. You'll see a notification telling you the file is being downloaded to your Downloads folder. Click the Inifit icon again, then the name of the file **2** to access the folder. Click the 'Inifit - Episode 2' video to play it in your default media player. Inifit recommends using VLC Media Player ([www.snipca.com/13025](http://www.snipca.com/13025)).

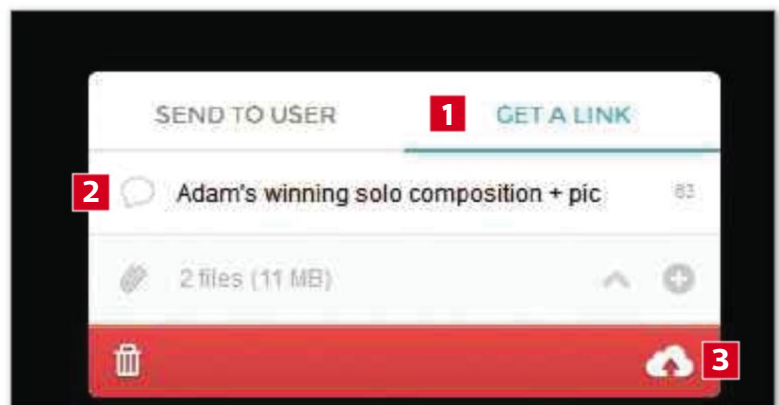


**STEP 3** Transferring video files is much faster when both you and the recipient have Inifit installed (see Step 4). Click the Send (paper aeroplane) **1** icon. Type the recipient's email address and a message (optional) of up to 100 characters. Next, click 'Add files', navigate to the file and click Open. To add another file, click the '+' icon **2**. To see all the files you've added, click the dropdown menu **3**. Click X beside any files you want to remove from the send list. Click the Send icon when you've finished. This will close the current Inifit window, but your files will continue to be transferred.



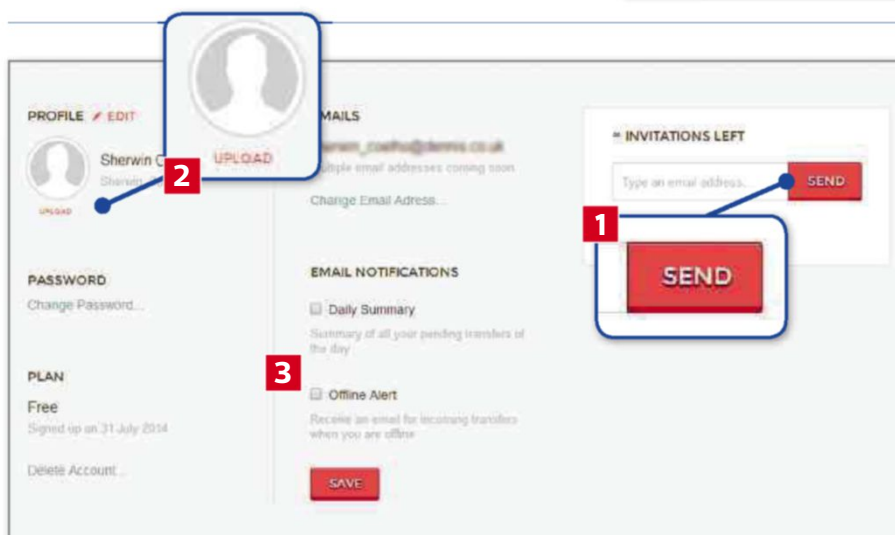
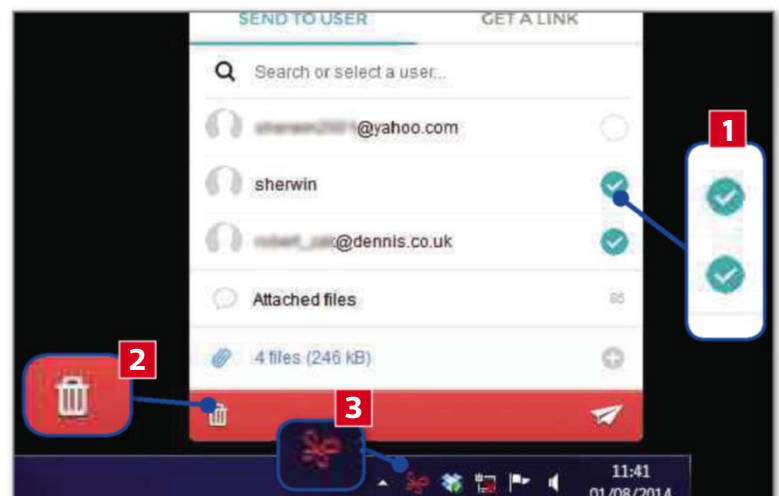


**STEP 4** To view your transfer progress, click the Infinit icon. If at any point, you decide to cancel the transfer, click the X. Once the recipient receives the file, they'll need to click the Download File button in their email. In a new tab, they'll have the option to download the file **1** or download Infinit **2**. Clicking Download Infinit will require them to sign up, download and install the program (see Step 1).



**STEP 5** Infinit also lets you create a cloud-based link to your files so that anyone can download them. Click the Infinit icon on your taskbar, the Send icon and then Get A Link **1**. Next, type a message (optional) **2** and click 'Add a File' to navigate to the relevant file. You can also drag and drop files into the Infinit window. Click the cloud icon **3** when you've finished to copy the link to your clipboard. Paste the link into a Word document or Notepad file to save it, or directly into an email or social-media site. Recipients will need to click the link, then click Download to access your files.

**STEP 6** Infinit keeps track of all the people you've sent files to so that next time you can do this by simply clicking their name. Click the Send icon and then tick the circles next to the contacts you want to send files to **1**. Next, drag and drop the files you want to send into the window. If at any point you decide to cancel the transfer, click the Bin icon **2**. To minimise the window, click the Infinit icon **3** in your taskbar.



**STEP 7** To make changes to your Infinit account, go to <https://infinit.io>, and click Login at the top right. To invite others to download Infinit, type their email addresses in the Invitations Left field and then click Send **1**. To change your personal details click Change Email Address or Change Password. To upload a profile picture, click Upload **2** and drag and drop a photo into the window. Untick both boxes under Email Notifications **3** if you want to unsubscribe from Infinit's daily emails and alerts. Click Save. ●

## Turn your tablet into a telescope

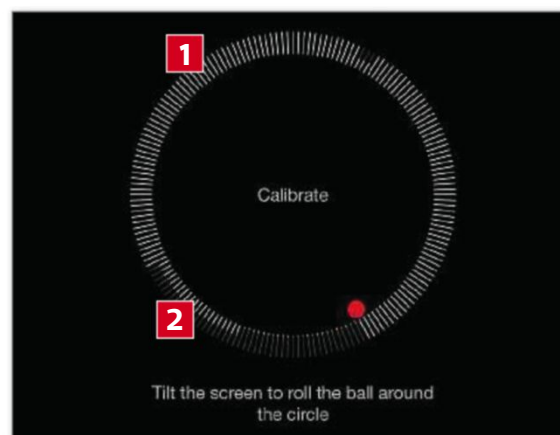
**What you need:** Star Chart; Android, iOS (phones and tablets) **Time required:** 20 minutes

**S**tar Chart is a free Android ([www.snipca.com/13106](http://www.snipca.com/13106)) and iOS app ([www.snipca.com/13107](http://www.snipca.com/13107)) that – when you point your device to the sky – shows you what constellation, star or planet you're looking at. It gives you detailed information about these

objects and lets you take a 3D tour around the planets. You can also change your location to view the night sky from another city and travel back in time to see what the sky looked like in years gone by. We're using an iPad for this Workshop.



**STEP 1** Open the app and tap the screen if you want to skip the video introduction. Tap OK (to set your location by GPS) and then Accept. Point your device to the sky to see all the heavenly bodies. You'll see dots of different intensities. The brightest dots in the app will be visible in the sky on a clear night, but most others won't (as they're likely to be much further away). Zoom in and out. If the app loses your position, it'll ask you to recalibrate it. To do this, hold your iPad still and turn it slowly in a circular motion. Make sure all the lines are filled **1**. If any are incomplete **2**, turn it that way again.



**STEP 2** Tap any point of light **1** to learn more about it – such as its distance, brightness, radius, etc. In the left panel, tap '+' **2** to zoom right into the object. This is great if you've tapped a planet as you'll be able to see it in better detail. Tap its Constellation **3** to see a graphical outline of the constellation and all the stars within it. Tap a star to see a brief description of it.



**STEP 3** We'll now search for Saturn. Tap the Search icon **1** and then tap Saturn. On an Android device, you can also tap the mike icon and say 'Fly me to the moon' or 'Take me to Saturn'. Tap the small Zoom icon **2** to see a zoomed-in, 3D view of the planet. Zoom in and out and swipe up and down to see it better. Tap the Play icon at the top left to see an animated movie of Saturn and its moons. Tap the Search icon and then tap Saturn again to see all its moons. Tap one **3** to see its orbit around the ringed planet. To close the left panel, swipe it inwards. To close the right panel, tap Back at the top.



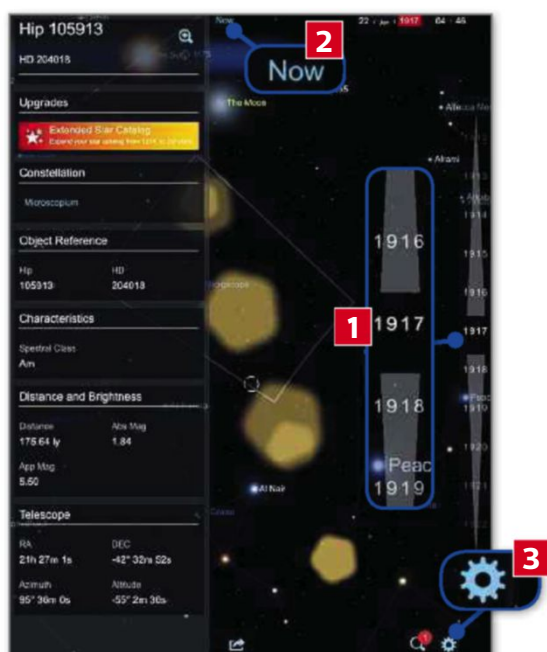


**STEP 4** If you want to search for a star, tap the Search icon at the bottom right, Stars, the search bar **1**, type the star's name (such as 'Betelgeuse') and then tap the correct autosuggest option. Tap the 'X' to clear your selection. Now tap Constellations, scroll down and tap a constellation **2** you want to see. The app will point in its direction with information on the left. Scroll down the left panel and tap a star to find out more about it. Messiers objects are groups of heavenly bodies such as galaxies and star clusters that usually can't be seen with the naked eye. Tap Messiers **3** and tap one of the 110 objects to see where they are and learn more about them.



**STEP 5** Tap Calendar **1** to see forthcoming astronomical events. Tap one of the items **2** and then tap View to know exactly where to point your device to see it. This is great to discover when and where the new moon, eclipses, planetary conjunctions (the point where two planets cross each other's path) and opposition cycles (when the Sun, Earth and another planet form a straight line) take place. You'll need to pay to know where to point your device to see some astronomical events, such as meteor showers and comets.

**STEP 6** To view the sky in the past, close both the panels and then tap the time at the top right. Now tap the year (to turn it red) and then swipe the slider on the right **1** downward quickly. You'll see the sky spin quickly within the app. Tap the screen to halt it on a particular date. Swipe the slider up or down to move to a date in the past or future up to 10,000 years each way. Tap Now **2** to jump back to the present day. To change your display settings, tap the Settings icon **3** and then tap Display Settings.



**STEP 7** Another great feature in Star Chart is the ability to view the night sky from another city in the world. To do this, tap the Settings icon at the bottom right and then tap Location. Spin the 3D globe around, zoom into your chosen country (such as Australia) and tap a city there (for example, Sydney) **1**. Next, tap OK at the top right and then Back at the top left. Point your device and navigate around the sky to see what the night sky in Sydney looks like. To reset your location, tap the Settings icon, Location, the small Satellite icon **2**, 'Update from GPS' **3** and then OK at the top right. ●

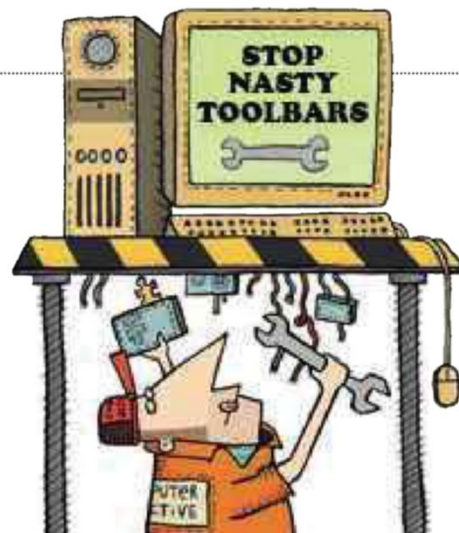
## Remove toolbars that clutter your PC

**What you need:** AdwCleaner; Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8 or 8.1

**Time required:** 10 minutes

**A**dwCleaner is the best free tool to identify and remove unwanted toolbars, adware, **browser hijackers** and software that installs without your permission. It's incredibly easy to use,

finding these items with just one click. You can then choose to remove all of them or a select few. And, because it's a portable program, you can easily use it on any PC via a USB stick.



**STEP 1** Go to [www.snipca.com/13038](http://www.snipca.com/13038) and click Download Now **1**. Click the setup file that downloads to your PC, then click Run, Yes and agree to the T&Cs. Click Scan **2** to scan your PC for toolbars, adware, hijackers and PUPs (potentially unwanted programs) – software that's bundled when you install legitimate programs. The scan will take a few minutes to complete. Next, click the Internet Explorer (IE) tab to see all IE's toolbars. Click the right arrow **3**, then click the Firefox and Chrome tabs to see their toolbars.



**STEP 2** Before clicking Clean, click each tab **1** to make sure the ticked items are ones you want to remove. If you're not sure what an item is, leave it ticked. Untick any item you want to retain. Click Report **2** if you want to see a Notepad log of the detected files across all tabs. Close any open programs and then click Clean **3**. Finally, click OK twice to remove all this junk and restart your PC. After rebooting, you'll see a Notepad report documenting all the changes made.



**STEP 3** Because AdwCleaner doesn't install on your PC, you'll need to run it from your browser's Downloads folder if you want to use it again. To do this in Chrome, click the three lines **1**, Downloads **2**, then find the AdwCleaner setup file and click 'Show in folder' **3**. In IE, click the top-right cog icon, then 'View downloads'. In Firefox, click the down arrow at the top and then click All Downloads. Copy the setup file and paste it to a USB stick, so you can run it from any other PC you want.

## NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE  
3 Sept

- Stop adware changing your settings
- Download videos without adverts
- Uninstall multiple programs in one go
- Zip every file format for free

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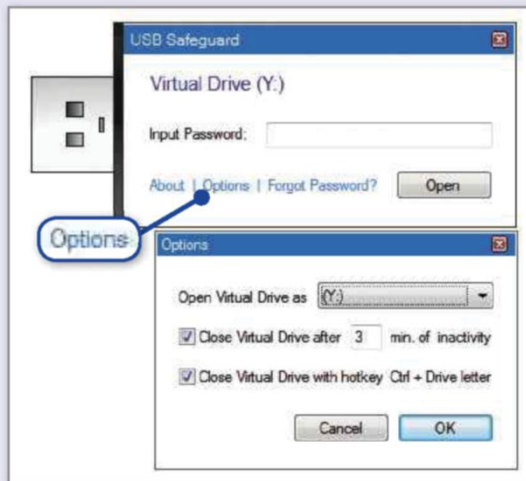


## TIP OF THE FORTNIGHT

### Create a hidden virtual drive within your USB stick

My memory is slowly failing me and so I've created a Word document containing all my passwords and bank-account details. I've saved this in an encrypted folder on my PC and on my 2GB USB stick using a brilliant, free online program called USB Safeguard to lock it in a hidden virtual drive there. This drive appears as an additional location on your PC and you can set it to automatically close when it hasn't been used for a certain length of time.

Go to [www.snipca.com/13056](http://www.snipca.com/13056) and click Download Now below USB Safeguard 7.4 (Free). Copy the setup file that downloads to your PC



and paste it to your USB stick. Open the file, click Run and then Next. Tick 'Don't format', click Next again and

then click Finish. Now click I Agree, enter and confirm your password, enter a password hint and then click OK twice. Finally, enter your password and click Open to access your USB's virtual drive. Add whatever you want to it.

To activate the settings that automatically close Safeguard, unplug and replug your USB stick into your PC, click the USB Safeguard setup file and then click Options (see screenshot). Click the dropdown menu and select a letter for this virtual drive (such as 'Y'). Tick the first box and type after how many minutes of inactivity you want the drive to close. Tick the box below and you'll now be able to close the drive by pressing Ctrl and the drive letter ('Y') on your keyboard. Finally, click OK.

Ben Mitchell



The winner of every Tip of the Fortnight wins this exclusive Computeractive mug!

#### ONLINE DICTIONARY

#### Quickly find meanings and synonyms of words

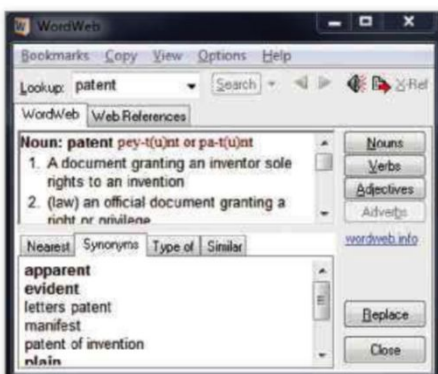
I'm Russian and moved to England a few years back. As English is not my first language, I still have trouble understanding and pronouncing some English words, but a small free online tool called WordWeb has helped me immensely.

Go to [www.wordweb.info/free](http://www.wordweb.info/free) and click the Download WordWeb button. After you've installed it, you can access it from your taskbar (or your hidden icon tray). Whenever you don't understand the meaning of a word online, highlight it and open WordWeb to see its meaning, along with a list of synonyms. Click the small speaker icon at the top right to hear its

correct pronunciation. It has many other useful features (such as Similar words).

Type words whose meaning you want to know. The dropdown menu at the top lists all the words you've searched for, so you can revisit them whenever you want. It also has a free app for Android ([www.snipca.com/13061](http://www.snipca.com/13061)) and iOS ([www.snipca.com/13062](http://www.snipca.com/13062)).

Dmitri Kerzhakov



#### PRIVACY

#### Selectively delete your web history

It's my 23rd wedding anniversary in two weeks and on the past few such occasions my husband has found out what I was getting him for a present by checking my web history (I managed to get him to confess this the last time). This year I've decided to be two steps ahead of him. A friend told me about a feature in Chrome that lets you selectively delete web pages so that they don't appear in your History.

To do this, click the three lines at the top-right and then click History. Move your cursor to the web page you want to delete and tick the small box that appears in its left. Repeat this for all the web pages you want to delete, click the 'Remove selected items' button at the

top and then click Remove. Poor hubby is convinced I'm not buying him anything this year!

Beatrice Delaney

#### PHOTO SHARING

#### Create photo albums from Dropbox images

I'm too old to use any of the modern-day social-media websites such as Facebook, Instagram or Tumblr, but I do like creating photo albums that I can share. Because all the photos I take on my phone are automatically uploaded to Dropbox, I've found a new, quick way to create and share photo albums.

Go to [www.boxpx.com](http://www.boxpx.com) and click 'Choose photos from Dropbox'. Click all the photos you want in your album (they'll need to be from the same Dropbox folder) and then click Choose. Give your album a title and description then drag and reposition the thumbnails to rearrange the photos however you want. Type a caption for each photo and click the 'X' beside the ones you want to delete (if any). Click '+Add images' to add more. Finally, select your photo size (from Small to XLarge) and then click Save & View Album. Copy the 'Share link' URL and send it to whoever you want.

Michael Mills

# Phone and Tablet Tips

Brilliant things to do on your device

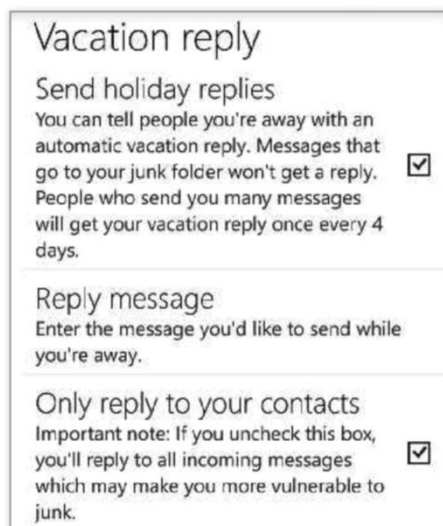
## ANDROID

### Set an automatic reply from your device



In the latest version of the Outlook.com app ([www.snipca.com/13080](http://www.snipca.com/13080)), you can set an automatic reply (Outlook refers to this as 'Vacation reply') directly from your device. This is a great way to let people know that you're busy or that you won't be checking your email for a few days.

Open the app, tap the three dots at the bottom right, 'Settings', Email and then 'Vacation reply'. Tick both the boxes (see screenshot, below). Now everyone who sends you an email will automatically get your reply. Tap 'Reply message', type the message you want them to receive and then tap OK.



To disable this, navigate back to the 'Vacation reply' screen and untick both boxes.

## ANDROID

### Silence your device between specific times and at certain locations

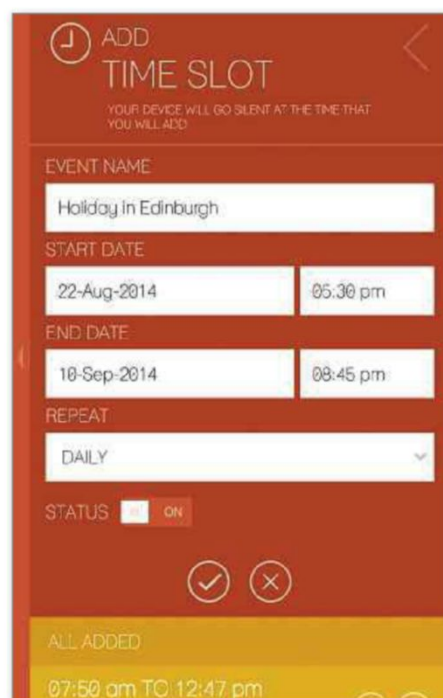


A new free app called 'Mr Silent, Auto silent mode' ([www.snipca.com/13081](http://www.snipca.com/13081)) lets you automatically silence your device between any dates you want and for set times on each day during this period. You can set this timer to repeat daily, weekly or monthly within that time frame. It also lets you automatically silence your device when you're near a specific location.

Open the app and tap Time Slot. Tap the Event Name field (see screenshot, right) and name it. Tap Start Date, tap a date on the calendar, then tap the Tick below. Next, tap the time beside Start Date, tap the hour hand, then the minute hand on the dial that appears and then tap the tick at the bottom. Repeat the same thing by tapping End Date and the time beside it.

Tap the Repeat dropdown menu and then either tap Once, Daily, Weekly or Monthly. Finally, tap the tick icon below. To create another timer, tap Add New.

To set your device to Silent mode at a specific location, tap Back to go the main screen, tap Locations and then the tick to enable your phone's GPS. Tap Enter Title and type a place name. Tap Radius and set within what radius of the place (in



metres) you want the Silent setting to be activated (by default it's set to 10 metres). Next, tap the pin icon, the search bar at the top, type a postcode and then tap the tick at the bottom of the map. Check the address generated is correct and then tap the tick to confirm your settings.

## ANDROID

### Create your own preset image filters



The stock Android Gallery on the Nexus has preset filters you can apply to your images by tapping.

## Best New Apps

What you should install this fortnight

### PandaDoc

Free

iOS (iPad only): [www.snipca.com/13082](http://www.snipca.com/13082)

This is a great app to sign PDF documents from your iPad. You can use a scanned version of your signature and upload documents in any format from all the popular cloud and email services. If you email the documents, you'll get a notification when they've been viewed.



### Better Open With

Free

Android: [www.snipca.com/13084](http://www.snipca.com/13084)

Better Open With lets you set default apps for particular files. You can of course do this from your device, but it isn't easy. The app gives you a pop-up window from where you can choose all the apps that'll open your file and then select the default.

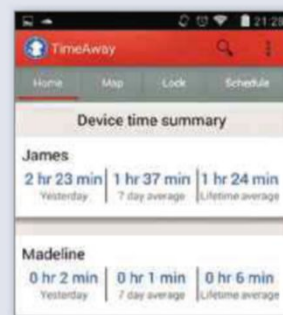


### TimeAway

Free

Android: [www.snipca.com/13085](http://www.snipca.com/13085)

TimeAway lets you set times during which children can use a phone or tablet device, restrict app purchases and remotely locate the device on a map. The app even informs you how long they use their device for. Install the app on all devices and set yours to 'Parent' mode.





But did you know that you can easily create and add a filter of your own?

Open your Gallery app and tap any photo you want to edit. Now tap the small Pen icon at the bottom left to see all the preset effects (Punch, Vintage, B/W and so on).

To create your own, first tap the border icon (second from bottom) and select a border you want for your filter. Now tap the last icon at the bottom, select an effect (such as Autocolour, Vignette, Graduated, etc) and tap and drag the sliders to adjust the effect value. Tap the tick to confirm the change or the 'X' to undo it. Add as many effects as you like.

Once you're happy with your new image's overall effect, tap the first icon at the bottom, scroll to the right and then tap '+ Preset'. Name the effect and tap OK.

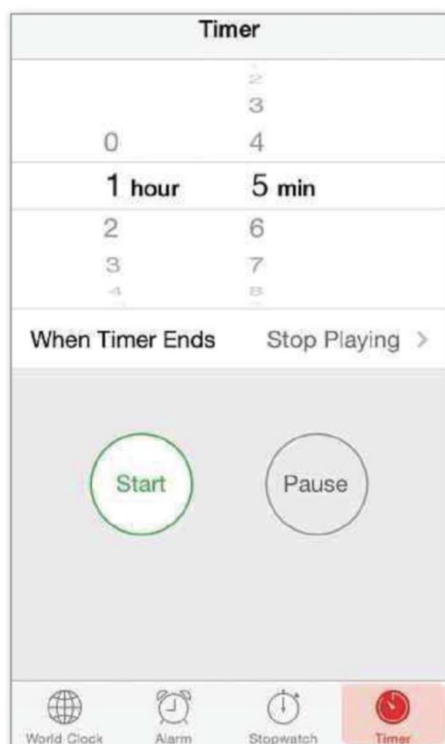
iOS

## Set a sleep timer for music and radio on your iPhone



Did you know that your iPhone's Timer can also be used as a sleep timer for your default music or radio apps? This is great, especially if you listen to music before going to sleep.

Swipe up from the bottom of your device to access your Control Panel and then tap the Timer icon (second from bottom). Scroll the hours and minutes sliders to set a time that you want. Tap When Timer Ends, scroll to



the bottom, tap Stop Playing and then tap Set. Finally, tap Start to begin the timer.

ANDROID/iOS

## Attach Google Drive files to Gmail messages



The latest Gmail update lets you attach your Google Drive files. You don't need the Google Drive app installed, as long as your login details for Gmail and Google Drive are the same. We're using an iOS device in the following instructions, but it works the same on Android.

Open the Gmail app (Android [www.snipca.com/13077](http://www.snipca.com/13077); iOS [www.snipca.com/13078](http://www.snipca.com/13078)) and then tap the pen icon at the top right (envelope icon in Android) to compose a new email. Tap the To field and add a recipient by typing their email address. Tap Subject, type one, tap the

body of the email and type your message.

Once you're done, tap the Attachment icon in the Subject field (in Android, tap the three dots at the top right) and then tap 'Insert from Drive'. Tap a folder in Google Drive and then tap a file that you want to add. Tap the small Share icon at the top right (in Android, tap Select). The file will now appear as an attachment in your email. Repeat this to add more files. Tap the top-right Send icon to send your email.

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## Games With Kids

What to play together on your phone and tablet

AGES 0-5

### Toca Pet Doctor

£1.99 [www.snipca.com/13086](http://www.snipca.com/13086) (Android)

£1.99 [www.snipca.com/13087](http://www.snipca.com/13087) (iOS)

This app introduces your kids to 15 animals that they can play with, but first they need to help each animal with a slight problem. For example, they need to put a plaster on the rabbit's bruises, apply an ice pack to the canary's swollen head and untangle the earthworm.



AGES 6-10

### Planes: Fire & Rescue

Free [www.snipca.com/13088](http://www.snipca.com/13088) (iOS)

Based on the animated Disney sequel, this app lets you control the lead character, Dusty. You need to collect coins while navigating him around obstacles. There are also jigsaw puzzles based on the movie. Kids will love it whether they're fans of the film or not.



AGES 11-16

### Haste

Free [www.snipca.com/13089](http://www.snipca.com/13089) (iOS)

In this iPhone-only game, you need to make as many words as you can by swiping over adjacent letters in a grid. Uncommon letters have more points so try using them. Challenge your kids to see who can find the most words in 90 seconds.



# Make Windows Better

Clever tips for every version

## WINDOWS 7, 8, 8.1

### Add more columns to your folders



Opening any folder and changing the View setting to Details displays four columns – Name, Date, Type and Size. You can filter these columns, delete them and even add new ones.

Open any Windows folder, click the View dropdown menu at the top right, and then click Details. Click any of the column headings to filter your files. To reposition the columns, click the headings and drag them left or right.

To add or delete columns, right-click a heading, and then click More. You'll now see the four sections ticked (see screenshot, below) with additional sections below. Tick any sections you want to add and untick the ones you don't want. Click OK when you've finished. To change the width of a column, click its right corner and drag it left or right.



## WINDOWS XP

### Add locations to the Send To menu



When you right-click any file on your PC, you'll see a Send To option. Moving your cursor over this option reveals a default list of locations that you can send files to. This includes 'Compressed (zipped) Folder' and 'Desktop (create shortcut)'. But did you know you can add more locations to this Send To menu?

Click Start, Run, type **sendto** and then press Enter. This opens your Send To folder where you'll see a list of options.

## WINDOWS 7, 8, 8.1

### Adjust the brightness and contrast of your monitor



The Windows tool Display Color Calibration lets you adjust your monitor's display to see your screen better. It also explains how to do this by pressing the buttons on your monitor, if you prefer doing it manually.

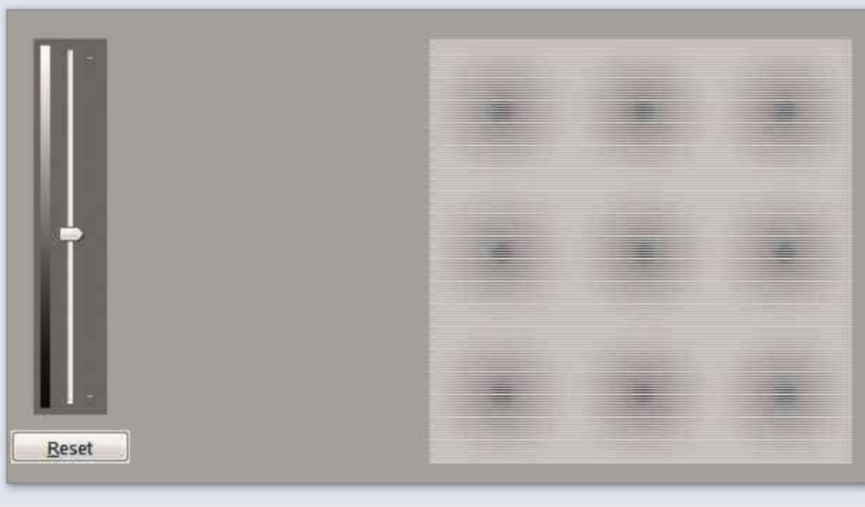
Click the Start button, type **display color**, click 'Calibrate display color', then Next at the bottom right. Reset your PC's colour settings to its default by clicking the menu button at the front of your monitor (consult your monitor's manual for precise instructions on how to do this).

If you prefer to use Microsoft's tool, click Next at the bottom right to begin recalibrating using Windows.

Make note of the 'Good gamma' image in the three examples displayed and then click Next. Now adjust the slider to match that image (see screenshot) and then click Next. If you want to see the image again click the Back button at the top left.

Adjust your brightness and contrast from the front of your monitor. If you can't do this, click the 'Skip brightness and contrast adjustment' button.

Follow the onscreen instructions and then click Next. Adjust the red, green and blue sliders at the bottom of your PC and then click Next again. Now click 'Previous calibration' to see your earlier settings and 'Current calibration' to see your new one. Click Finish to save your changes.



To add an option to this folder, copy its shortcut from your PC and paste it into the Send To folder. For example, if you want to add Dropbox as a location, copy the Dropbox icon from your Desktop and paste it into the Send To folder. Now, every time you right-click an item and go to the Send To menu, you'll see Dropbox as an option.

## WINDOWS 8, 8.1

### Add sources to the News app



The News app on the Modern tile interface displays the latest news as a live tile throughout the day. This news is automatically generated from default sources such as Sky News,

The Times newspaper and Reuters. However, you can easily customise your news sources.

Click the News tile and then click the Pen icon beside Our News Sources. You'll see a circle containing an 'X' next to your existing sources. Click the circles next to the sources you want to remove. To add your own news sources, click the '+' section. You'll see a list of your current sources, along with sections on the left. Click a section (such as International News, Sports, Entertainment, etc) and then click the '+' beside the sources you want to add. Click the arrow at the top left when you've finished.



## POWERPOINT 2010

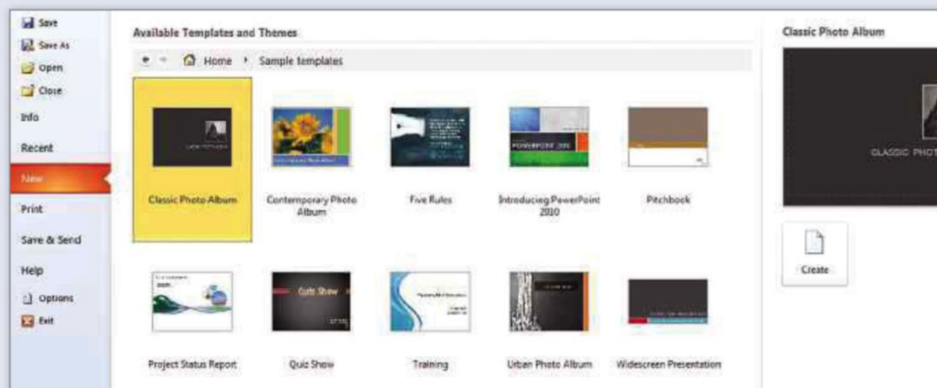
### Create a presentation using existing templates



The fastest way to create a presentation in PowerPoint 2010 is to use the sample templates and themes, then customise the slides within them.

To do this, click File at the top left, then New. By default, PowerPoint files open as a 'Blank presentation', but click 'Recent templates' if you want to use a template you've worked on previously. Click Themes to apply a theme from a selection of thumbnails, 'My templates' to select one that you created earlier and 'New from existing' to open an existing presentation.

To access the pre-set templates, click 'Sample templates', then click the one you want to use (see screenshot). Next, click Create at the right to see it in full.



If you don't like it, repeat the steps and select another one.

Click any placeholder text in the template and type what you want. Likewise, right-click any picture, click Change Picture, navigate to a picture on your PC and then click Insert.

To re-order the slides within the

presentation, drag them from the Slides menu on the left and drop them. To delete or duplicate a slide, right-click it from the slides menu and select that option. To quickly change text you've written, click the Outline tab at the left and overwrite any text within the slides.

## EXCEL

### Copy a webpage with links



One of Excel 2007 and 2010's lesser-known features lets you copy a webpage into Excel and access all the links in the webpage.

To do this, open the relevant webpage and copy its URL. Now open a new Excel sheet, click File at the top left (Office button in Excel 2007), then click Open and paste the URL into the 'File name' field. If the URL address isn't prefaced by 'http://', type this. Click the All Excel Files dropdown menu, change it to All Web Pages, and then click Open. In a few seconds, your Excel sheet will feature your selected webpage, albeit in a slightly different format. Double-click any of the links to open them (if you are online).

document (see screenshot below). Click the first tab to search for those words within document Headings or the second tab to see search results within individual pages of the document.

Excel has a much faster way to locate a word within a large spreadsheet. Press Ctrl+F (to bring up the 'Find and Replace' window), type your word and then click Find All. This will list all instances of the word you want to

search for within the window. Click the correct instance of the word here to jump to it in your spreadsheet.

## ONENOTE

### Create side notes



OneNote lets you create side notes, which are the equivalent of sticky notes and can be used to scribble content you don't want to use in your notes but want to base your actual notes on.

To create a side note in OneNote 2007, click Window on your Ribbon and then click New Side Note Window. A new pop-up note will open in which you can type whatever additional info you want. To see these notes, click the Unified Notes (three pages) icon at the bottom left. Your most recent side note will open, with all the other side notes as separate pages on the right.

In OneNote 2010, click the View tab and then click New Side Note. To access these, click Unfiled Notes at the bottom left. In OneNote 2013, click New Side Note at the top right and type your note in the yellow notebook. The keyboard shortcut to create a New Side Note in all versions of Office is Ctrl+N.

## WORD & EXCEL

### Quickly find a word in a huge document or spreadsheet



Office 2010 introduced a faster way to search for words within a file. This works slightly different in Word and Excel. In Word, press Ctrl+F to bring up the Navigation pane, type the word you want to find, then click the up and down arrows till you locate the word in your





# Internet Explorer 11

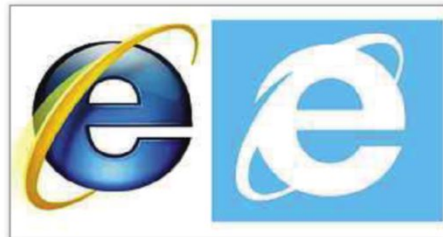
Make the Windows 8.1 version easier to use, sync tabs across devices and stop websites tracking you

## Access IE tabs from all your PCs or devices

If you're using a Windows 8.1 PC, you can sync any open Internet Explorer 11 (IE11) tabs across multiple PCs or devices (such as Windows Phone or tablets). You'll first need to log in to your Microsoft account from the PCs or devices you want to access the tabs on. On a Windows 8.1 PC, open your **Charms bar** by moving your cursor to the bottom right of your Modern tile interface. Click Settings, 'Change PC settings', Accounts, 'Connect to a Microsoft account' and follow the on-screen instructions. Open a new tab in IE11 and beneath the frequently opened website tiles, you'll see three dropdown menus showing all the devices your PC has synced IE11 with. Click the device from which you want to access these open tabs.

## Make the Desktop version of IE11 your default in Windows 8.1

Windows 8.1 has two versions of IE11 – the Desktop version and the tiled app on the Modern tile interface. By default, IE11 will launch in the tiled app. But if you want to access it via the Desktop



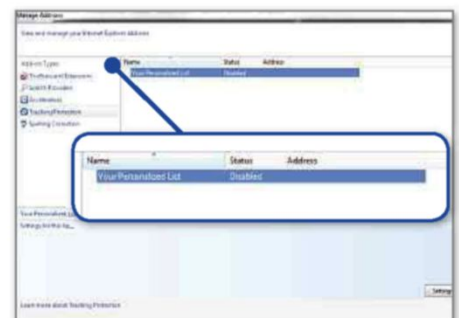
Set IE11 to open by default in the Desktop version (left) rather than the tiled app (right)

version, go to the Modern tile interface, type **internet explorer** and press Enter. Next, click the Tools cog at the top right, Internet Options and then the Programs tab. If IE11 is not your default browser, click the 'Make Internet Explorer the default browser' link and follow the instructions. Once you've finished, repeat the steps until you reach the Programs tab, then click the first dropdown menu, select 'Always in Internet Explorer on the desktop', tick the box below it, click Apply, then OK.

## Don't let sites track your web browsing

IE11 has a built-in tool that informs you which websites – and which tools within

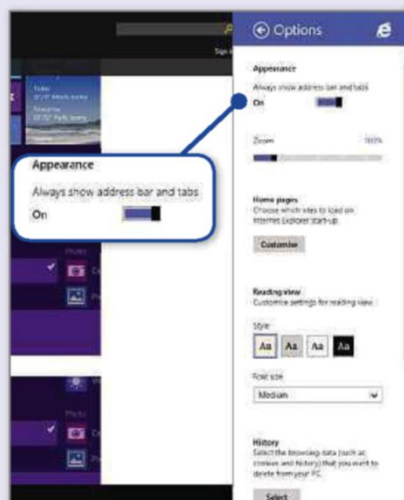
those websites – track your browsing habits. You can then choose to block tracking or allow it and continue using the website. Click the Tools cog at the top right, then click 'Manage add-ons'. Click Tracking Protection, Your Personalized List and then the Settings button. In the new window, select 'Choose content to block or allow', click OK and then Enable. From now on, any sites you visit will appear in this list, which shows you the extent to which each site is tracking you. You'll have the option to Allow or Block tracking on these listed sites. You can also download the DoNotTrackMe add-on by going to [www.snipca.com/12851](http://www.snipca.com/12851) and clicking the 'Add to Internet Explorer' button. This blocks tracking from a preset list of over 600 common websites.



Enable Tracking Protection to block sites from seeing your browsing activities

## Make the IE11 Modern tile app more user-friendly

The IE11 app on Windows 8.1 has several features that make it more like the Desktop version, and therefore easier to use, such as making the address bar and tabs permanently visible. Click the IE tile on the Modern tile interface and then open the Charms bar. Next, click Settings, Options and click the 'Always show address bar and tabs' slider to On. The IE11 tile app also lets you split your screen, so you can read two sites at the same time. Right-click a tab from the bottom-left and click 'Open tab in new window'.



Make the IE app more like the Desktop version by turning on 'Always show address bar'

## Organise your bookmarks using Windows Explorer

As you add more and more bookmarks (called 'Favorites' in IE) to IE11, it naturally gets harder to keep them organised. Thankfully, there's a way you can manage your bookmarks through Windows Explorer. Right-click any blank space at the top of the IE window and then click 'Menu bar'. Next, click Favorites at the top left, hold down the Shift key and then click 'Organize favorites'. This will open a Windows Explorer folder with your saved bookmarks. Here, you can delete bookmarks and organise them into folders.

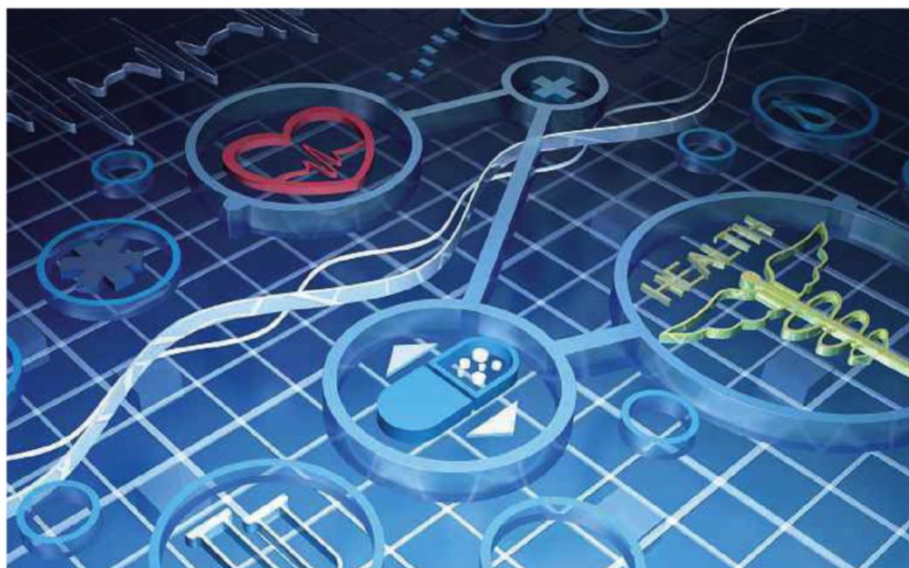


# Google Baseline

Google's next mission is to work out what makes humans healthy.  
We explain how that will work

## What is it?

A project funded by Google X – Google's futuristic technology lab – that aims to give the fullest picture to date of what comprises a healthy human being. By attempting to define what the 'baseline' health of a human should be, scientists hope to be able to spot abnormalities earlier, making it possible to detect and treat diseases faster. A team of 70 to 100 researchers at Stanford and Duke universities in the US will initially collect anonymous biochemical information from 175 volunteers, before adding data from thousands more later. Using Google's immense computing power the team will look for changing biochemical patterns – or 'biomarkers' – in the test subjects.



## Sounds like a good cause, but what's in it for Google?

They will probably see the study's results before any other company, giving them a head start in the race to produce better healthcare and fitness technology. Google is moving into this market, having in June announced Google Fit ([www.snipca.com/13022](http://www.snipca.com/13022)), an open-source health-tracking platform for Android that developers will use to make fitness apps for smartphones and smartwatches.

## Will Google try to sell health data to advertisers?

No, because they won't have access to it, only to the overall results. The data will remain anonymous, and therefore useless to advertisers. This is a medical study, not corporate research, so its data will be strictly protected by US medical review boards. The science boards at Duke and Stanford will decide what happens to the data, not Google.

That said, some sceptics have speculated that Google will find a way round this, pointing out that more than 90 per cent of the company's revenue comes from

advertising, and that a Google employee – Dr Andrew Conrad – is leading the research. It seems unlikely, though.

## Enough about Google. What's in it for me?

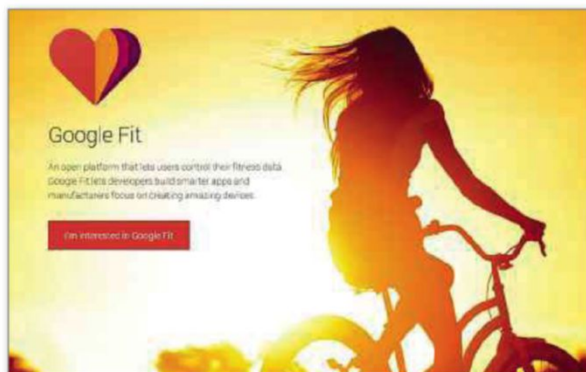
It's not a project you can participate in, so you can't offer yourself as a Google guinea pig. However, the research may benefit you in years to come as doctors offer bespoke treatment better suited to your body's individual needs.

For example, Baseline's researchers might find biomarkers that make the human body good at breaking down fatty

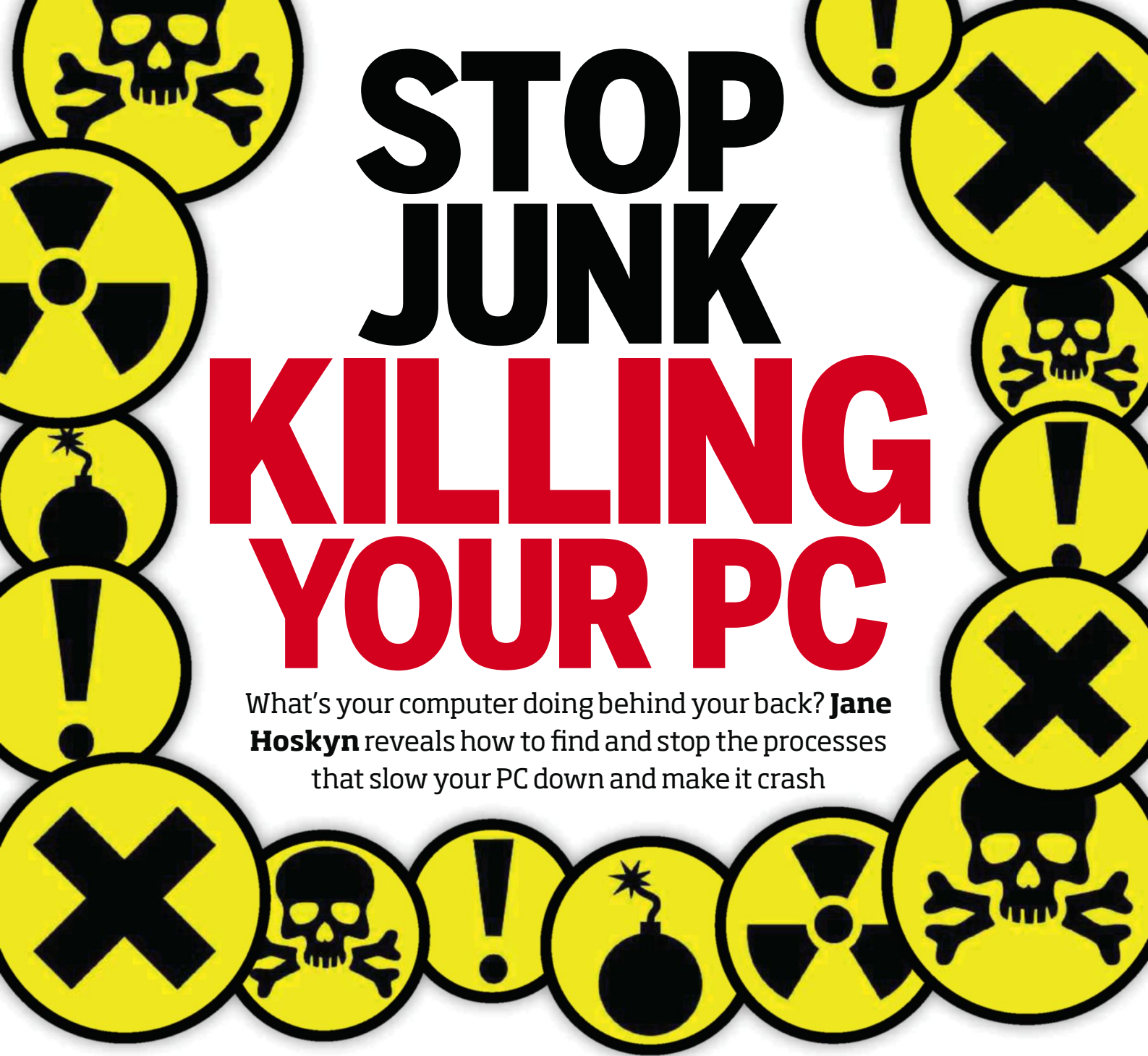
foods, meaning that people with these biomarkers needn't worry so much about high cholesterol levels and heart attacks. To benefit from results like this, you'd need to find out your body's biomarkers by arranging a DNA test through your doctor.

## When will we start seeing these benefits?

It will be a while yet. Dr Conrad says that the project will progress in "little increments", while Dr Sam Gambhir, who's also working on the project, stresses that Baseline "is not a software project that will be done in one or two years". Gambhir also criticised the tendency of researchers to make headline-grabbing statements, which he wants to avoid with Baseline. "We used to talk about curing cancer and doing this in a few years," he said. "We've learned to not say those things anymore." So you should ignore any sensationalist headlines about Baseline providing miracle cures overnight. The benefits are more likely to come from years of research, analysis and testing.



Google has also announced Google Fit, which will lead to new health and fitness apps



# STOP JUNK KILLING YOUR PC

What's your computer doing behind your back? **Jane Hoskyn** reveals how to find and stop the processes that slow your PC down and make it crash

Using a PC can at times feel like herding frogs. Pop-ups appear out of nowhere, hidden objects make weird noises and every now and then it all goes mad. Sometimes these problems are caused by malware, but usually they're a result of background processes running out of control.

## KEY POINTS

- Stop Windows services that Task Manager won't let you touch
- Find out what any process or service is and why it's there
- Close memory-hogs before they make you crash
- Find out if a process is safe to stop
- Stop any malicious processes – even those your antivirus missed

Background processes are essential – they're the things that turn your computer from a metal box into a PC. But if there are too many of them crowded into your humble machine, they can make it slow and unstable and even stop it working altogether.

You can always press Ctrl+Alt+Delete and force a restart or use Windows Task Manager to claw back some control over runaway processes, but these are blunt instruments that only provide temporary relief and don't tell you what's causing the problem. Task Manager contains little information, but still manages to overcomplicate it anyway. It dresses up perfectly simple processes with incoherent names like 'wscntfy.exe' or 'ccsvchst'; its Description column doesn't describe anything; and its Options menu only lets you re-position the window. Task Manager

is so bad that it's potentially dangerous. In particular, its reluctance to give you information about system services (see right) can easily lead you to delete something that's vital to the safe running of your computer. A restart usually fixes any fallout, but constant restarts won't get you a faster or safer computer.

Over the next few pages we'll show you how to take control of all the background processes that hog your computer's resources. We'll also explain the difference between processes and services and ask whether that distinction really matters. We'll outline how to tell the junk processes from the useful ones and stop those you don't need with a single click, and even show you how to foresee crashes and avoid them automatically. All the tools we mention here are free.





## WHAT IS YOUR PC DOING RIGHT NOW?

### Use Process Hacker to see what Task Manager can't

Open-source tool Process Hacker ([www.snipca.com/13090](http://www.snipca.com/13090)) is everything that Task Manager should be, but isn't. Unlike Task Manager it opens immediately, updates in real time and uses a folder-hierarchy view that clearly shows which processes stem from which program. Its three tabs – Processes, Services and Network – are updated every second with information about every action's CPU and memory usage and its connection status. All items are colour-coded, so you can see at a glance whether they're system processes, malicious processes (which are immediately removed) or processes that you started.

Like Task Manager, Process Hacker has a Description column, and unlike Task Manager the Description column is quite

useful. But to really investigate what a process actually does, right-click it and click Search Online to run a search in Google. Process Hacker's right-click menu lets you stop a program and every process associated with it, as well as individual processes or services, and there's an option to suspend and resume processes if you're worried that ending it might cause your PC to crash.

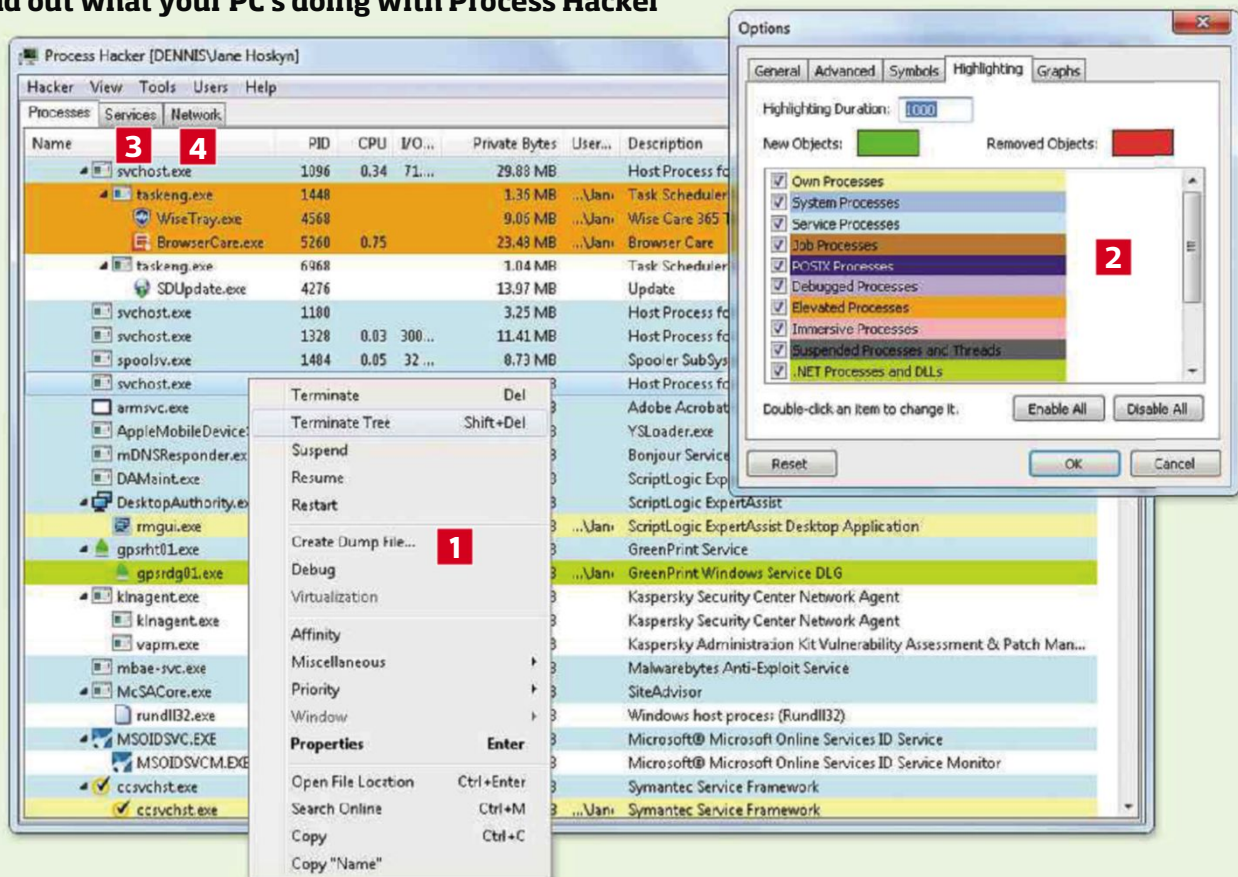
When you install Process Hacker, click 'Custom installation' and untick all the boxes other than 'Main application', which is greyed out. If you give it a try and decide that there's no point in ever using Task Manager again, open Options in Process Hacker, click Advanced and tick 'Replace Task Manager with Process Hacker'. Now when you press Ctrl+Alt+Delete, you'll see an option to open Process Hacker instead of Task Manager.

### PROCESS vs SERVICE

So what's the difference between a process and a service? To you and your computer's processor, they're the same thing. They're actions that run in the background, triggered by programs or Windows, often without your say-so. But Task Manager and Process Hacker list them separately.

Essentially, processes are items you interact with (such as browser extensions), while services run on their own (such as drivers or your antivirus). Task Manager doesn't trust you to control services, so it limits what you can do with them or even know about them. But the difference is negligible. They're all background tasks that use memory and can slow down your PC.

### Find out what your PC's doing with Process Hacker

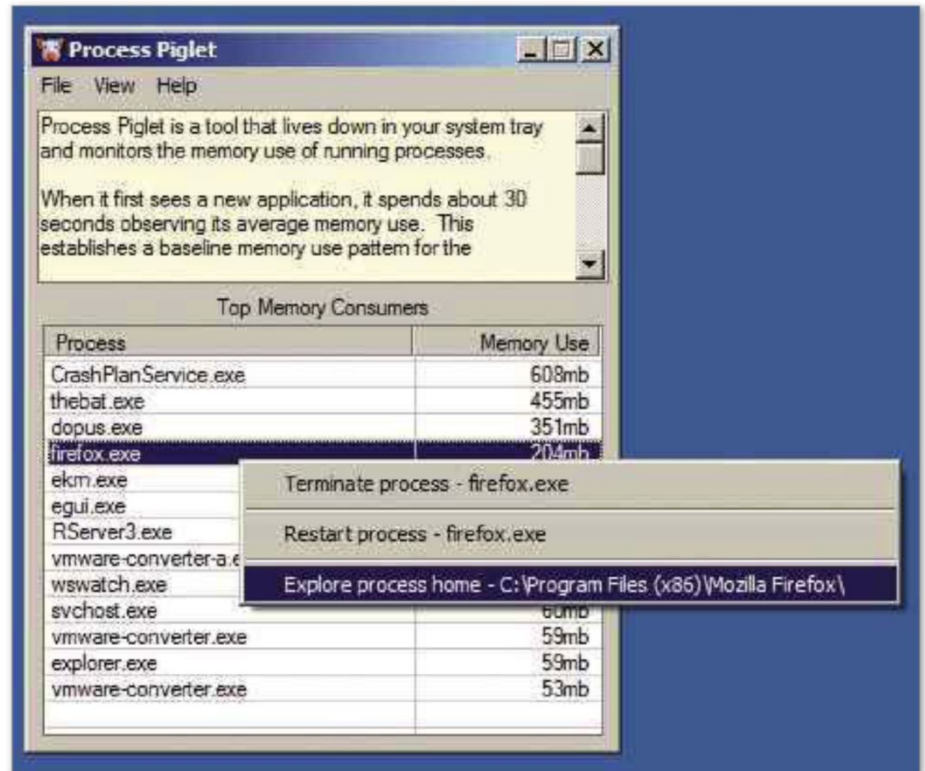


- 1 Right-click any item on Process Hacker's Processes tab, and click Terminate to end it. Try fixing a misbehaving program by clicking Restart.
- 2 Processes are colour-coded to convey instantly what they do and how crucial they are. Customise colours by clicking Hacker, Options, Highlighting.
- 3 On the Services tab, right-click any item and click Properties to see and edit details such as permissions, which you can't see in Task Manager.
- 4 Click the Network tab to see all your incoming and outgoing internet connections. Right-click any item and click Close to terminate the connection.

## Stop crashes before they happen

Process Hacker's colour-coded list is great for revealing which processes are working your PC too hard, but only if you're actually looking at it. Process Piglet ([www.snipca.com/13093](http://www.snipca.com/13093)) is a tiny free program that does the looking for you. It runs quietly in the background and alerts you when one of your running processes starts to hog too much memory. You can then force-restart the culprit with a single click in the Process Piglet pop-up, or open Process Piglet's program window to find out more about the process and your other 'Top Memory Consumers'.

To spot and stop memory hogs automatically before they can cause crashes, run the portable version of Shutter ([www.snipca.com/13094](http://www.snipca.com/13094); click the 'Portable 0.86MB' button) and link an event (such as memory load) with an automatic action (such as closing a program). It's free if you click Accept in the Open File box the first time you run it.



Stop and restart processes before they make you crash with Process Piglet

## Weed out troublesome drivers

All processes and services can slow your computer down, but hardware drivers are the main cause of crashes. Drivers aren't just needed to support printers and other peripherals, they're also essential links between your operating system and your computer's processor, motherboard and hard drive. If you keep crashing or seeing

'the blue screen of death' ([www.snipca.com/13091](http://www.snipca.com/13091)), your drivers may need updating or fixing.

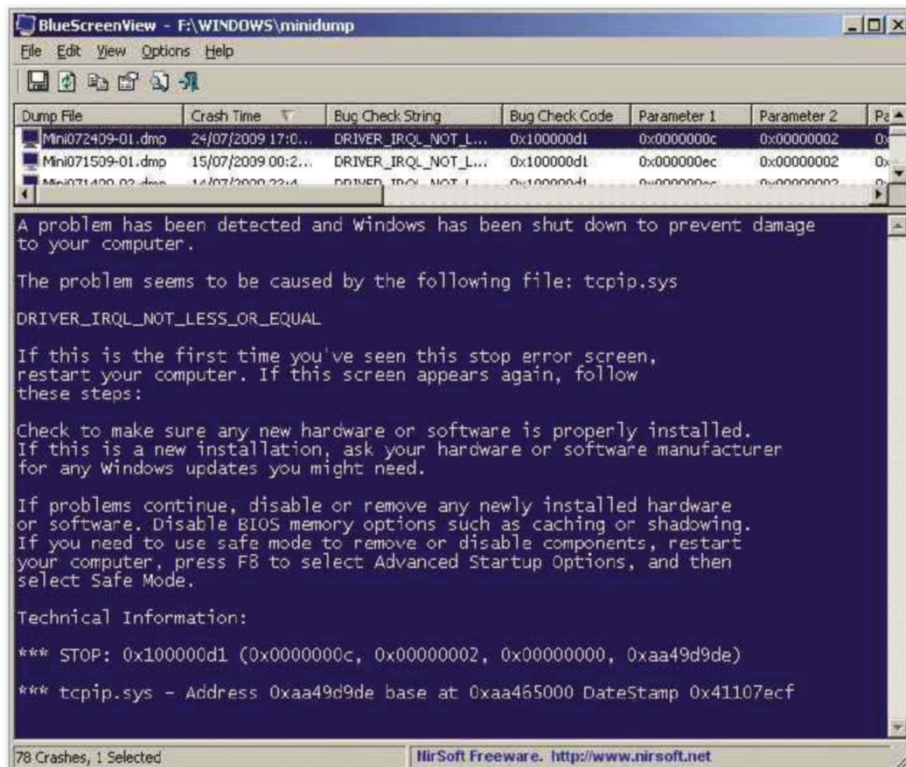
First, find out what made your PC crash. WhoCrashed ([www.snipca.com/13092](http://www.snipca.com/13092)) is a simple tool that analyses your crashes and looks for the drivers and other services that may have caused them. As well as generating a list of suspects, it

gives you a plain-English report that's much more informative than Windows' own complicated crash logs.

Free NirSoft tool BlueScreenView ([www.snipca.com/13102](http://www.snipca.com/13102)) has a portable version that's particularly useful for running on XP machines that aren't connected to the internet, but may still be clogged with junk drivers. It gives you a whole raft of information about what occurred during crashes and lets you run an instant Google search for bugs associated with different crashes. To download it, scroll down the page, click 'Download BlueScreenView (in Zip file)' and extract the portable EXE file. Another NirSoft tool, DriverView ([www.snipca.com/13111](http://www.snipca.com/13111)), gives you a deeper insight into your installed drivers.

To update all your drivers with one click or tweak their settings, use SlimDrivers Free ([www.snipca.com/13112](http://www.snipca.com/13112)). Ignore the big green Download button and click the small 'or Download SlimDrivers Now from SlimWare Utilities' link below it, and untick 'Download MyPCCheckUp' during setup.

Once you've weeded out the culprits for your crash, check that your processor is up to the job of supporting all your drivers and other processes. New tool PassMark RAMMon ([www.snipca.com/13095](http://www.snipca.com/13095)) reveals how much physical memory you've got installed and how much of it is currently being used.



Run BlueScreenView on an XP PC to find out which drivers keep making it crash





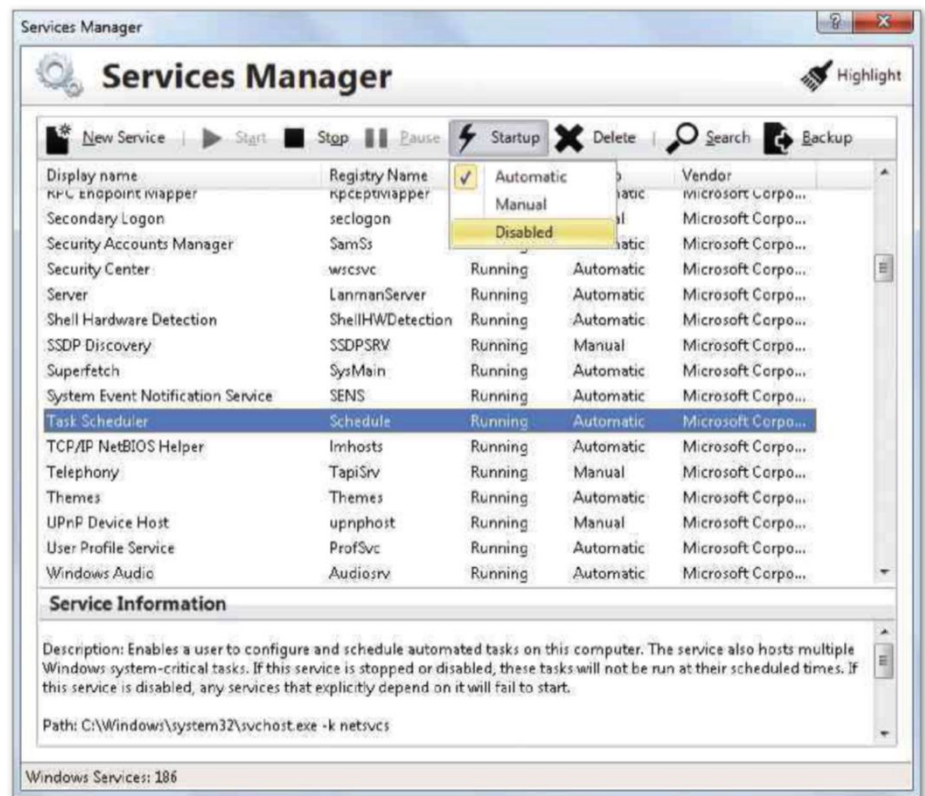
## STOP WINDOWS SERVICES THAT SLOW YOUR PC DOWN

### Stop any Windows service with one click

Windows doesn't always know best, but it thinks it does – so it runs loads of services automatically without asking. Some are innocuous and usually unnecessary items like Themes and 'Plug and Play', while others are system components that hog memory but sound too important to switch off, like Windows Defender and Task Scheduler (this includes the particularly infuriating Automatic Maintenance tool in Windows 8).

Free new program WinTweaks (<http://wintweaks.com>) lets you take control of these services and their settings quickly and easily. Its default Home Window reveals at a glance how much memory you're using (ours was a nerve-wracking 83 per cent) and your current CPU usage. Click Services Manager to open a list of all your installed Windows services, and click the Status column header to see all the currently running services at the top. You may be shocked to find 30 or more Windows services with obscure-sounding names running in the background, from Application Experience to Workstation and plenty in between. Below the running services you'll see all the services that are installed but stopped, and below these are Other Services – non-Windows processes like Adobe updates and your antivirus.

Click any service to see a brief



WinTweak's Services Manager tool lets you stop Windows services or disable them at startup

description and its file path, then click Search to find out more via Google. Click Stop to end the process instantly, and Startup to choose whether the service should run automatically next time you switch on your computer.

WinTweaks insists on being

downloaded via a [mirror](#), which we're never keen on doing, and we had trouble opening the link in Chrome. But we found a reliable download source ([www.snipca.com/13097](http://www.snipca.com/13097)) and the program installed quickly, without any unwanted junk.

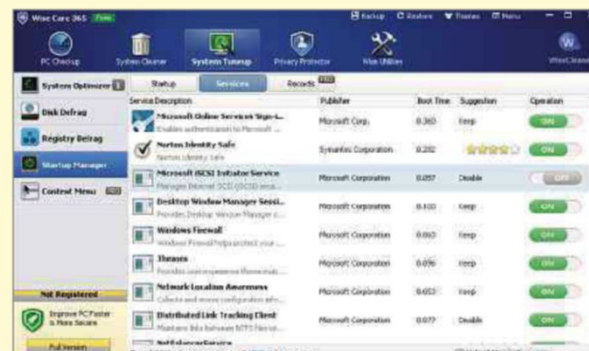
## WHICH PROCESSES SHOULD YOU STOP?

You could hire an IT expert to sit next to you and shout "Don't touch that!" whenever you're about to terminate an important Windows service – or you could use the System Tuneup tool in Wise Care 365 ([www.snipca.com/13098](http://www.snipca.com/13098)) to do the job for free. System Tuneup has a similar function to WinTweaks, but uses ratings from other users and 'suggestions' to help you decide which services should stay and which should go. Open Wise Care and click System Tuneup, Startup Manager, then Services. Third-party services that run in the background, such as Norton Identity Safe, get a star rating out of five. Next to Windows services, such as Windows Firewall and Network Location Awareness, you'll see a suggestion (Keep or Disable). To stop any service running at startup, move the ON slider to OFF – but we wouldn't recommend doing this with the services marked 'Keep'.

Slim Computer ([www.snipca.com/13104](http://www.snipca.com/13104)) works in a similar way, using a community-based ratings system to help you decide which services are dispensable. It looks for settings and startup items on your PC that its users have voted as 'optional', and lets you decide whether to stop them.

Slim Computer and Wise Care 365 are both big, slick programs that use a fair bit of memory themselves, so for a quicker insight go to Should I Block It (<http://shouldiblockit.com>). This free online tool maintains a real-time database of services and assesses their safety

and usefulness. Type a Windows component into the search box to find out what it is, what it does and whether you should block it. For example when we searched for 'crss.exe', we got a page of useful information about Microsoft's Client Server Runtime Process, including statistics about which versions of Windows it's distributed on.



Wise Care's System Tuneup tool suggests whether to Disable or Keep system services

## Stop annoying notifications

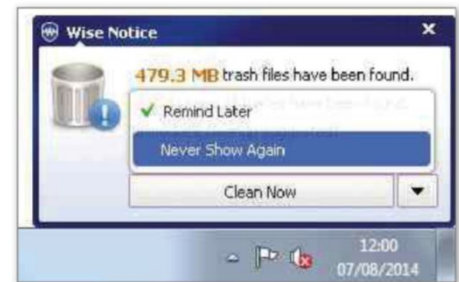
Windows balloon pop-ups annoy us only slightly less than those intrusive tips boxes you used to get in Windows 95. Most of these balloons tell you about things you don't care about or already know. You can get rid of the balloons completely but you'll need to do make a change to your **Registry**. To save you the trouble (and minimise the risk) of doing this, download a ready-made Registry edit from [www.snipca.com/13115](http://www.snipca.com/13115). Click the blue Download button under 'To Disable Balloon Notifications for All users'. Save the file ('Disable\_Notifications.reg') to your Desktop, double-click it, click Run, Yes and OK. When you restart your PC, you won't see any more balloons. Before you run this file or make any other changes to the Registry, you must create a **system restore** point in case anything goes wrong.

Not all annoying pop-ups are from Microsoft. Wise Care 365, for example, includes an irritating – and somewhat impertinent – Wise Notice tool that pops



Windows balloon messages are more annoying than helpful – but you can switch them off with a Registry edit

up regularly from your system tray telling you to Clean Now. To block this without wading through your Wise Care settings, click the arrow in the pop-up and select Never Show Again. We're not picking on Wise Care – some of the best free programs bring with them some of the most irritating unwanted notifications, and they all get in the way and use up memory. Most include an option to switch them off from inside the pop-up. You can switch any others by opening your system tray, right-clicking a notification icon and clicking 'Hide icon and notifications'. To switch them all off, download the 'Turn



Click Never Show Again in the Wise Notice pop-up to prevent it bothering you again

Off Always show all taskbar icons and notifications' Registry tweak from [www.snipca.com/13116](http://www.snipca.com/13116). Again, create a restore point first.

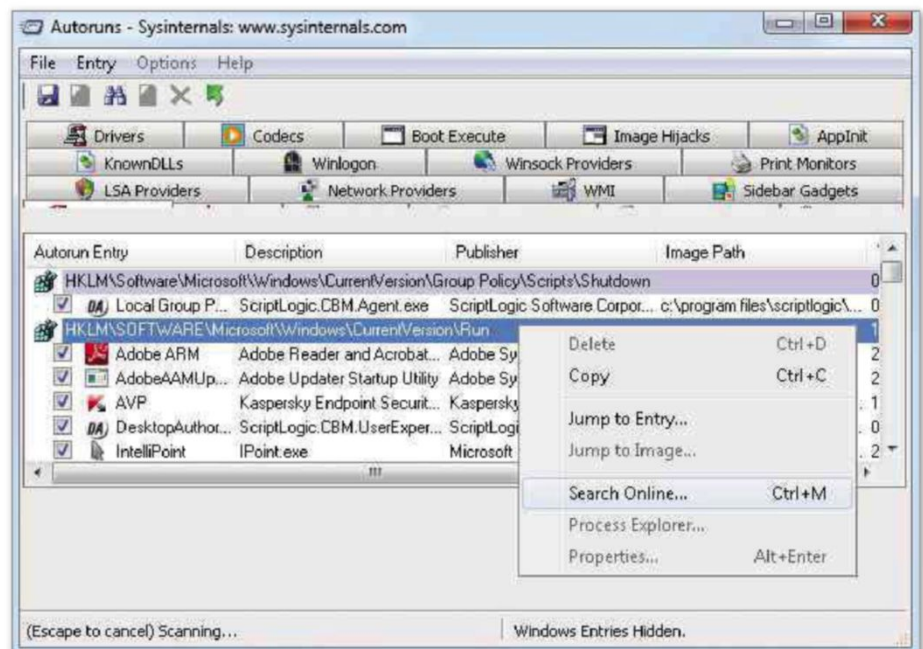
## STOP ANY PROGRAM RUNNING IN THE BACKGROUND

### Stop junk slowing down your boot time

When your PC was new, nearly all the processes that started automatically when you switched on your computer were Windows services. But it doesn't take long for your list of startup items to get cluttered with third-party programs and their accompanying processes – often because they've added themselves to it without asking you first.

Windows has a built-in startup manager in its MSConfig tool. Type **msconfig** in the Start menu (Windows 7) or on the Modern tile interface (Windows 8), press Enter and look at the Startup tab. Untick anything you don't want to run automatically, click Apply and restart your PC.

Unfortunately, like Task Manager, MSConfig doesn't give you much information about the processes and programs it lists, so you could end up removing startup items that are useful or essential, so use Wise Care's System Tuneup tool instead. Next to the Suggestion column on its Startup Manager Services tab (see page 53) you'll see a Boot Time column that tells you exactly how much time each service added to your last Windows boot. To see all the items that run automatically at



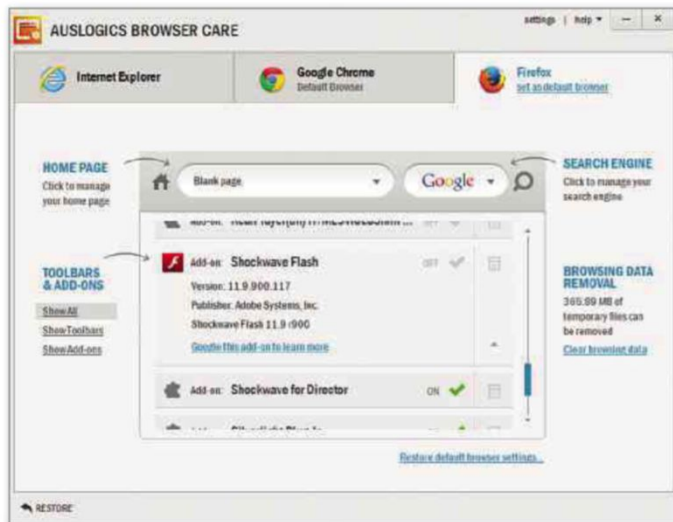
Run Autoruns from a USB stick to investigate any startup item on any computer

startup, including scheduled tasks, update installers, drivers and plugins as well as program and system processes, click the Startup tab. Click the Boot Time column heading to see the biggest offenders at the top. These will usually be update installers, such as Google Update, and your antivirus. To stop any of them running at startup, move the ON slider to

OFF – but don't switch off your antivirus.

If you don't want to install a big program like Wise Care, try the small portable tool Autoruns ([www.snipca.com/13118](http://www.snipca.com/13118)). Run it from a USB stick on any computer (Windows XP or later) to see all its startup items divided into categories such as Drivers, Sidebar Gadgets and Network Providers, and





**Disable plugins and extensions in Internet Explorer, Firefox and Chrome with Auslogics Browser Care**

right-click to find out more about it online. The latest version of Autoruns comes with an additional 'Autorunsc.exe' tool that runs from the command line.

The small NirSoft tool WhatInStartup ([www.snipca.com/13117](http://www.snipca.com/13117)) is similarly lightweight and lets you disable any startup process quickly and easily.

You can disable all startup programs if you really want, but it's best not to disable any Microsoft services that you haven't heard of. Malwarebytes' StartUpLite ([www.snipca.com/13119](http://www.snipca.com/13119)) helps you identify and disable unnecessary items. Some processes, such as update

installers, are fine to disable at startup, but should be enabled again once your system is up and running. To save you the chore of doing this manually, use AnVir Task Manager Free ([www.snipca.com/13120](http://www.snipca.com/13120)) to make them start automatically on a delay. AnVir also lets you set a priority order, so that your programs don't all start at once and make your PC grind to a halt.

## Stop unwanted browser junk

Your browser, like your operating system, is actually another installed program – it's just a very large one, packed with processes that send and receive data to and from the internet even when the browser window is closed. You can see and disable junk processes manually by using Chrome's built-in Task Manager, Internet Explorer's Tools menu or by adding the 'about:addons-memory' extension for Firefox, but we'd recommend the excellent free browser manager Auslogics Browser Care ([www.snipca.com/13122](http://www.snipca.com/13122)) instead.

Click a tab to choose one of your installed browsers, and you'll see all its extensions, toolbars, plugins (such as Flash and Java) and other RAM-clogging processes in one simple window. Running processes have a green tick, while stopped processes are greyed out. You can delete any of them by clicking the bin icon, or batch-delete them by ticking them and clicking 'Delete selected'. Auslogics also lets you completely wipe then restore your browser, which may be the best option if it's crashing a lot. To apply any of these changes in Chrome, you'll need to un-link Chrome from your Google account temporarily.

The program is simple to install and doesn't bring any junk along with it, but we'd recommend disabling a couple of default settings during installation. In the setup window, click 'more options' and untick 'Create a desktop icon' and 'Launch program at Windows startup'. Extras like these may not be as disruptive as adware, but they will slow down your PC.

To stop adverts and pop-ups interrupting you online, use the free extension Flashblock for Firefox ([www.snipca.com/13124](http://www.snipca.com/13124)) or the similarly named FlashBlock for Chrome ([www.snipca.com/13125](http://www.snipca.com/13125)). This doesn't delete Flash from your browser, but it stops Flash content loading automatically. To make the content load, for example in YouTube, click the video player that's greyed out.

## FIND AND STOP MALWARE THAT TAKES OVER YOUR PC

### Find and kill adware

Adware sneaks into your system by hitching a lift in innocuous setup files, tricking you into clicking web links or downloading fake extensions. Once it's there, it wreaks havoc. It hijacks your browser, infests your Desktop with scary pop-ups, changes your system settings, funnels unwanted internet traffic into your computer and eventually renders it completely unusable.

Most of the usual process-killing tools we've featured so far aren't strong enough to find and stop adware, and even a specialist malware-remover like Malwarebytes ([www.malwarebytes.org](http://www.malwarebytes.org)) – which can remove Trojans and botnets – struggles to beat browser hijackers like Conduit, Optima and the nefarious newcomer Real Deal. The brilliant free tool AdwCleaner ([www.snipca.com/13126](http://www.snipca.com/13126)) is one of few tools that can find this stuff and get it off your PC. It's



**See which processes are safe and which are malicious with SuperAntiSpyware**

incredibly thorough and can also clear out leftover processes from old adware and uninstalled programs. For a guide to using AdwCleaner, see our Workshop on page 42.

Avoiding opportunistic malware and adware is much easier than removing it, so only install extensions from trusted sources such as the Chrome Web Store ([www.snipca.com/13127](http://www.snipca.com/13127)), and use Web Of Trust ([www.mywot.com](http://www.mywot.com)) to check a website's reputation before downloading from it. When installing free software, always choose the 'Custom install' option if offered (don't be fooled by any reference to 'Advanced users' – everyone should use the custom option) and untick any optional extras.

The new version of SuperAntiSpyware ([www.superantispyware.com](http://www.superantispyware.com)) includes a System Investigator tool that scans all the processes currently running on your



computer and quickly sorts the malware from the non-malware. It lacks AdwCleaner's reassuring tone and appearance (its website is quite off-putting) but it's fast, effective and lifts the lid on your system in a way that's easier to understand than AdwCleaner. Click the red Free Edition Download button to get the installer, and ignore the 'Product registration' bit during setup. SuperAntiSpyware doesn't try to add any unwanted extras (as you'd expect from a security product), but it does badger you to get the paid version (\$29.95, about £18), which adds real-time protection and scheduled scanning, which are services that your antivirus should already provide. If you see a pop-up asking you to start a free trial, click Decline.

## Block botnets and other internet threats

Most of the data ('connections') your PC receives from the outside world is safe, but some is not. Bot Revolt ([www.botrevolt.com](http://www.botrevolt.com)) is a free program that works alongside your antivirus to automatically stop the malicious connections before they can do any harm. It also lets you stop or block any connection with a single click.

When you launch Bot Revolt it immediately starts monitoring incoming connections and adds them to a list that updates in real time. Many of these connections will have nothing to do with your browser – they'll be from your ISP, Microsoft, your antivirus, internet plugins and numerous other sources. Safe traffic is shown in black, while malicious items (such as botnets) are shown in red and automatically blocked. To stop any connection manually, right-click it and choose whether to block it for 15 minutes, one hour or permanently.

The official way to download Bot Revolt



**Always decline additional tools when installing free software – or you may fall victim to adware**

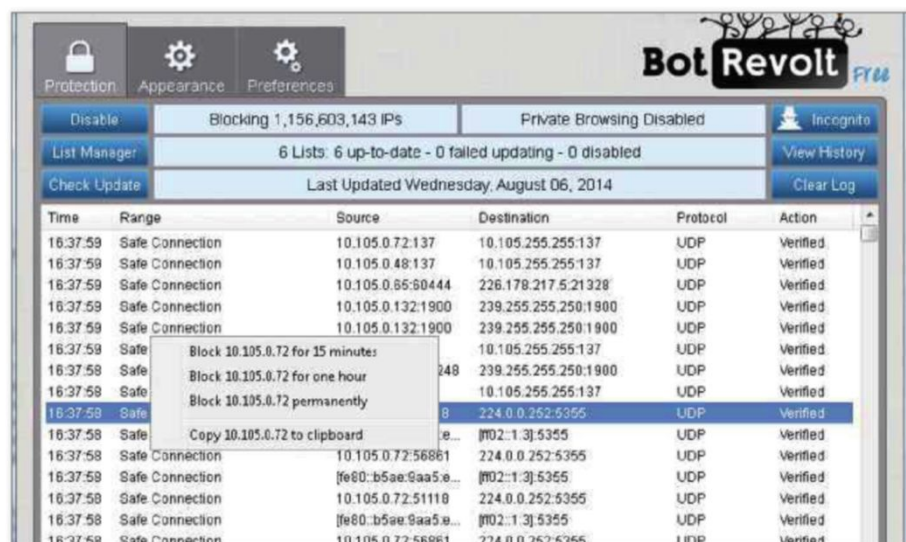
is to click the orange Free Download button on the homepage, but this gets you to give your name and email address in return for a link to a hidden download page. Don't bother – here's a shortcut to the hidden page: [www.snipca.com/13100](http://www.snipca.com/13100). The program installs quickly, without trying to install any unwanted extras. The free version only updates its database of internet threats the first time you use it. This won't leave you unsafe as long as your antivirus is working properly. Don't

be tempted to use Bot Revolt instead of a full antivirus suite – it's just a useful companion. The full version, which costs \$47 (£28) per year or \$4.95 (£3) per month, updates its database constantly and includes an Incognito Mode to prevent anyone tracking you online.

Whichever version you go for, you can check that it's working properly with a quick Command Prompt trick. Type **cmd** on your file screen or Start menu, open 'cmd', type **ping 3.0.0.0** and press Enter. This triggers an incoming connection that should be blocked by default. Windows should show the message 'General failure' (or

'Destination host unreachable' if you're running XP) and Bot Revolt should show the process as Blocked.

Bot Revolt continues to run in the background when you close the program window, but it's specially designed to run quietly and lightly (it describes itself as the security program that "doesn't bother you"). If you do want to close it completely, right-click the Bot Revolt icon in your system tray and click Exit or Disable. **ca**



**Monitor all your internet connections and block any of them with Bot Revolt**

**NEXT ISSUE** On sale Wednesday 3 September

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**3 Sept**

## Best Free Apps to transform your tablet

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  - 20 best programs of all time – the countdown begins...

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# 9 THINGS WE WANT TO SEE IN WINDOWS 9



With rumours of Windows 9 coming thick and fast, we reveal the nine improvements we'd like to see in Microsoft's next operating system

## 1 Lower price

Microsoft needs to dangle a carrot to convince sceptical users it'll be worth their while splashing out on a Windows 9 PC. Something similar to the limited-period reduced price offer for Windows 8 might work, but it's possible that Windows 9 might even be available for free, though we've heard that before (see What's All The Fuss About?, Issue 419). Microsoft might need such a drastic measure to tempt the millions of people still happy with Windows XP.

## 2 Better battery life

Windows PCs have long been known to burn through battery power quicker than their Mac OS X counterparts. Indeed, the latest version of Apple's OS was so efficient, it actually added an extra 60 minutes of battery life to older hardware that upgraded to the new OS. Microsoft needs to include more power-saving features in Windows 9 or risk falling further behind future Macs.

## 3 Desktop-only mode

Windows 8's Modern tile interface has alienated many loyal Windows users, so Microsoft is going to have to work hard to bring some old fans back. Windows 8.1 went some way towards making things better with the option to boot straight to Desktop, but we want to be able to switch the interface off, so when you turn on Desktop-only mode, images open in Windows Gallery, not the Metro Preview app.

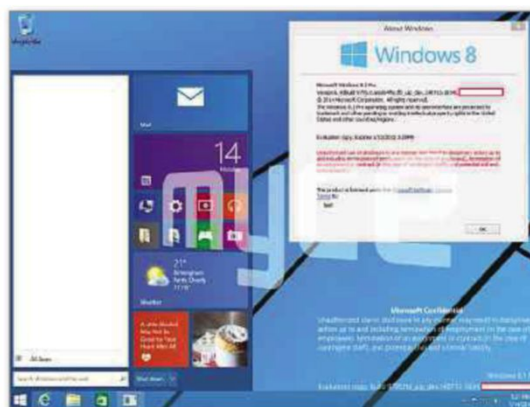
## 4 Virtual desktops for improved productivity

Linux and Apple's OS X have had virtual desktops for years, letting you keep

multiple sets of windows open on one computer. Microsoft should build this feature into the next version of Windows, so you don't have to install third-party software.

## 5 Bring back the real Start menu

Microsoft caved in to popular demand when it put a Start button in Windows 8.1, but this only takes you to the tile interface. It was rumoured for some time that the much-missed Start menu would return with Windows 8.1 Update 2, but sources claim it's been delayed until June 2015 when it's thought Windows 9 will also arrive. The latest leaked screenshot, from technology website [www.myce.com](http://www.myce.com) (see below), suggests our wish will be granted. It shows the Start menu split between a conventional search bar on the left and pinned apps on the right.



The latest leaked Windows screenshot suggests the Start menu will return in Windows 9

## 6 Remote system recovery

Apple Mac devices can reinstall OS X by simply downloading files from the internet. A similar system for Windows would make it easier to recover

computers because it's much simpler than digging through BIOS boot settings and trying to find your recovery USB.

## 7 Better display scaling

Windows has not been able to cope with the high-resolution devices now being pumped out by manufacturers. As screen resolutions head beyond 1920x1080, icons can appear tiny and pixellated in some photo- and video-editing software. Microsoft needs to add better support for **Retina-quality** displays to make sure the next version of Windows still looks good on devices like the Surface Pro 2.

## 8 Improved antivirus

Microsoft has built Microsoft Security Essentials into Windows 8, but you shouldn't rely on it. It has come bottom of our past two antivirus group tests, and it's actually getting worse – blocking only 56 per cent of malware in our latest test (see page 58), down from 60.

## 9 Fix Windows Update

Updating Windows software has driven many people to the brink of insanity. If ignored for long enough, Windows will tend to reboot your PC at the worst possible moment, leaving you trapped in what seems like a never-ending cycle of updating and rebooting. Surely Microsoft could leverage its Windows Store to deliver updates more efficiently and simultaneously, instead of forcing you to endlessly download more fixes. **ca**

✉ What features do you want to see in Windows 9? Please let us know at [letters@computeractive.co.uk](mailto:letters@computeractive.co.uk)

# Antivirus megatest

## Why Malwarebytes is not enough

In our latest lab tests, Kaspersky still leads the pack, while the most popular free program falls well behind. Jane Hoskyn reveals why

**K**aspersky Internet Security tops the leader board, Norton and ESET do brilliantly and Microsoft Security Essentials (MSE) is terrible. So far, so similar to our last quarterly antivirus lab test results (Issue 425). But there's a shock towards the bottom of the leaderboard – and it may signal a fatal flaw in your security setup.

Malwarebytes Anti-Malware Free ([www.snipca.com/13004](http://www.snipca.com/13004)), one of the most popular security tools, performs almost as badly as MSE in our latest tests. At first, we were surprised. How could a program we've used so many times to clear rogue files and get Windows running smoothly again, fail so badly?

The reason is simple: Malwarebytes isn't antivirus software. It doesn't attempt to stop nasties getting onto your system, instead it helps you find and remove them. But our security team at Dennis Technology Labs (DTL, [www.dennistechnologylabs.com](http://www.dennistechnologylabs.com)) included Malwarebytes in the latest antivirus test because it claims to 'protect you from malware', which suggests that it blocks threats. It doesn't. That's no reason not to use it (see box on opposite page), but this is a timely reminder that not all security programs protect you in the same way.

In this round-up, we reveal which programs will stop malware getting into your PC and explain why Malwarebytes still deserves a place on your hard drive.

### TOP 10 PROGRAMS

- 1 (1) Kaspersky Internet Security 2014
- 2 (2) Norton Internet Security
- 3 (3) ESET Smart Security 7
- 4 (8) Bitdefender Internet Security
- 5 (5) Avast Free Antivirus
- 6 (4) McAfee Internet Security
- 7 (7) Trend Micro Titanium Internet Security
- 8 (6) AVG AntiVirus Free 2014
- 9 (-) Malwarebytes Anti-Malware Free
- 10 (10) Microsoft Security Essentials

Previous positions in brackets (see Issue 425)

### WINNERS AND LOSERS

Our top three programs hold their lead, but McAfee has fallen back a couple of places. It's also expensive (£59.99, <http://home.mcafee.com>). Bitdefender (£49.95, [www.bitdefender.co.uk](http://www.bitdefender.co.uk)) is the big improver this time, taking fourth place. Avast Free Antivirus ([www.snipca.com/13003](http://www.snipca.com/13003)) surges ahead of the poorly performing AVG Free ([www.snipca.com/13001](http://www.snipca.com/13001)), and Trend Micro (£32.97, normally £59.95; [www.snipca.com/13002](http://www.snipca.com/13002)) remains mediocre. MSE ([www.snipca.com/13012](http://www.snipca.com/13012)) still manages to come last, blocking even fewer threats (56 per cent) than a program that isn't actually an antivirus.

### HOW WE TEST

Dennis Technology Labs infects test computers with 100 real-life viruses, malicious files and exploit codes under controlled conditions and measures how programs cope with the onslaught. You can download the full April-June 2014 report as a PDF from [www.snipca.com/12991](http://www.snipca.com/12991) (click the second-to-last link).

### 1 KASPERSKY INTERNET SECURITY 2014

**K**aspersky Internet Security 2014 equalled its previous winning score of 100, blocking 99 of 100 threats (one more than last time) and killing the other one before it could do any harm. The

program also offers useful extra tools including a two-way firewall and Secure Keyboard, which guards against key-logging. The suite currently costs £35.99 for a one-year, one-PC licence ([www.snipca.com/12996](http://www.snipca.com/12996)). To buy it for the special price of £17.99, see our Reader

Offer on page 33.

Beware third-party download links claiming to offer the new Kaspersky Internet Security 2015; they may do far more harm than good to your PC's security. The real 2015 suite will be available from Kaspersky's website in early September.



Kaspersky Internet Security 2014 wins our antivirus lab tests again – and blocks even more threats than last time





## 2 NORTON INTERNET SECURITY



Symantec's Norton antivirus performed almost as well as Kaspersky. It was only by thoroughly analysing the results that our lab team

could prise them apart in the rankings. Norton's extra tools include Scam Insight, which checks a website's reputation before you type any personal details, and an Identity Safe for storing your passwords. Like Kaspersky, ESET and Avast, it updates its virus database every few minutes and runs constantly in the background. A

one-year, three-PC licence costs £44.99 ([www.snipca.com/12994](http://www.snipca.com/12994)).



Norton Internet Security performed almost as well as Kaspersky

## BEST FREE ANTIVIRUS



4 Of the four free programs in our test, Avast Free Antivirus is the only one that rivals the best paid-for

antivirus suites. It blocked as much malware as ESET, found fewer false positives than Norton and achieved the same overall score as Bitdefender. It has a few extra features, including a SafeZone 'virtual window' where you can conduct online transactions without being detected by hackers, and a Rescue Disk tool that lets you create a bootable CD or USB for scanning and fixing PCs that aren't connected to the internet. There's no firewall, phishing protection or safe banking tool unless you upgrade to Avast Internet Security (£39.99), but if you're just after reliable, uncomplicated protection against the latest threats, Avast Free Antivirus does the job. Avast also makes a couple of highly rated free Android apps, including Mobile Backup ([www.snipca.com/12992](http://www.snipca.com/12992)) and Antivirus & Security ([www.snipca.com/12993](http://www.snipca.com/12993)).

## 3 ESET SMART SECURITY 7



ESET's antivirus and internet security suite achieved the same overall score as last time (95) and improved its record on false positives. It's a

light, quick program that includes an Identity Theft Protection tool for guarding against the latest scams and an Anti-Theft service to keep your laptop safe. A one-year, one-PC licence costs £39.99 ([www.snipca.com/12997](http://www.snipca.com/12997)).



ESET Smart Security includes an Anti-Theft tool to keep your laptop safe

## SHOULD YOU STOP USING MALWAREBYTES?



We like Malwarebytes. It's free, simple and quick, and we often use it to find and remove bugs from our PCs. But its free version doesn't block malware in real time or even try to, and therefore it's not an antivirus program.

DTL's Simon Edwards argues that Malwarebytes' marketing claims could lead computer users to believe otherwise, so it was included in our tests to clear up any confusion. "Malwarebytes makes some quite serious claims about this product," Edwards said. "It doesn't work in the same way as the other products, but plenty of people will see it as a protection tool."

It's a shame that Malwarebytes' lofty claims have landed it in a straight fight against Kaspersky and co. Make no mistake, Malwarebytes is very good at cleaning your PC. Whenever Windows slows down suddenly or behaves strangely, a quick scan with Malwarebytes often weeds out the Trojan, virus or rogue file that's causing the problem. We value it as part of our Windows-cleaning arsenal,

alongside CCleaner ([www.piriform.com/ccleaner](http://www.piriform.com/ccleaner)), Revo Uninstaller ([www.revouninstaller.com](http://www.revouninstaller.com)) and the brilliant toolbar-remover AdwCleaner ([www.snipca.com/12987](http://www.snipca.com/12987)). All these programs are free and they all help to keep you safe by clearing junk. But you should use them alongside your installed antivirus, not instead of it.

### GET THE RIGHT SECURITY MIX

You can run – and install, uninstall, update and upgrade – programs like Malwarebytes and CCleaner without affecting the performance of your installed antivirus, but you shouldn't have more than one antivirus running at any one time. They will conflict, preventing each other from working properly.

If you decide to switch to a new antivirus, you should uninstall the old one first.

Remove it using its official uninstaller, then run a scan with CCleaner to ensure that any leftover files and folders have gone. Avast has published a list of links to official antivirus-uninstaller tools, from Avira to ZoneAlarm, at [www.snipca.com/13005](http://www.snipca.com/13005). Have the new program ready to install, and don't connect to the internet at any point between uninstalling and installing. **ca**



Malwarebytes scans for threats on your PC and can remove them – but it won't block them



# USE YOUR TABLET AS A SCANNER

Did you know you can scan photos and documents faster using your tablet than your flatbed scanner? Robert Zak shows you how

**W**hile it might not live up to the image quality of your trusty old flatbed scanner, scanning with your tablet is a handy option if speed and convenience are your priorities. Here we highlight a number of scanner apps that use your device's camera to create high-quality scans in a fraction of the time your flatbed takes.

Taking a photo with your tablet won't flatten the page as your scanner will, but the apps we mention here remove creases, straighten text that's askew because of folds in the page, and remove borders around the edges of your document. Features such as **batch-scanning** multiple documents and photo negatives make your tablet a surprisingly powerful alternative to your scanner.

Another advantage of using your tablet to scan is that you can choose exactly how much

you want to scan in one go, whether it's just a couple of lines from a document or several pages.

## Make scans using the apps you already have

Before buying a scanner app, make sure you don't already have an app on your tablet that can do the job. One such app is Google Drive for Android ([www.snipca.com/12894](http://www.snipca.com/12894)).

com/12894) – just tap the Scan button at the bottom right, then take a picture of a document or photo with your tablet. It will instantly be added to your online Drive account, a feature missing from the iOS version ([www.snipca.com/13027](http://www.snipca.com/13027)).

Evernote's app is also worth trying (available for iOS and Android at <https://evernote.com/evernote>). First, tap the camera in the left-hand pane, then on the camera screen tap the bottom-left camera symbol and select Document Camera. Take a photo of your document, and Evernote will remove any flaws then save it in your account, ready for you to access online from any device.

## Turn scanned documents into editable text

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is a feature that reads text from a scanned document and converts it into a text



CamScanner uses OCR to let you batch-scan and edit text





## Use your tablet as a scanner

format you can edit. Several scanner apps use this impressive technology, though these tend to be paid-for ones.

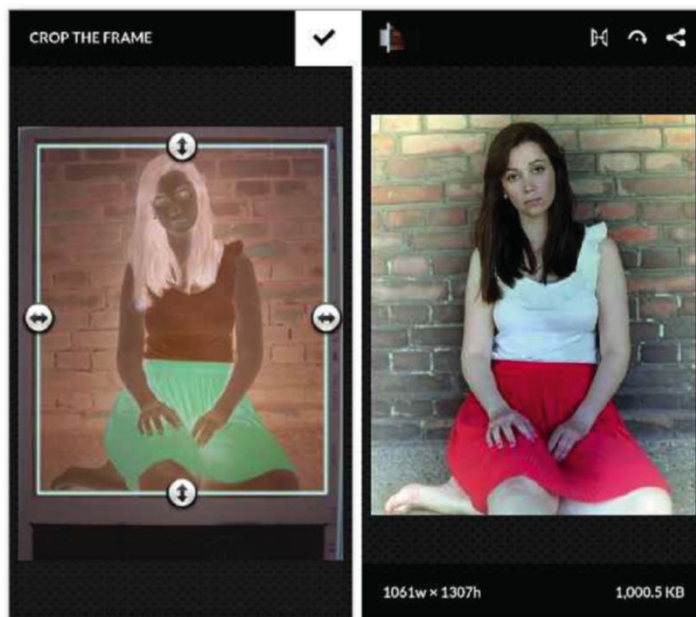
One example is CamScanner, which is available on Android and iOS. To add OCR to the free Android version of CamScanner HD ([www.snipca.com/13058](http://www.snipca.com/13058)), you'll need to download the license for the full version ([www.snipca.com/13052](http://www.snipca.com/13052), £1.16). This will let you turn scanned documents into editable text and also search your scans for specific words or phrases. The iOS version – CamScanner + ([www.snipca.com/13057](http://www.snipca.com/13057), currently on offer for £1.49) – has all the features you'll find in the Android version.

Droid Scan Pro PDF ([www.snipca.com/12958](http://www.snipca.com/12958), £2.99) is integrated with OCR tools from Google Drive and Evernote. This means when you convert the document to text, you can edit it immediately in either of these apps.

### Scan your photo negatives

Many of us have old photo negatives stashed away, sometimes without the original prints. If you want to turn these negatives into digital photos, install the free Android app Helmut Film Scanner ([www.snipca.com/12961](http://www.snipca.com/12961)) then take a photo of your negative using your tablet's camera. Helmut will convert the negative into a digital photo that you can store on your tablet or share online.

When taking photos of old negatives, make sure you do it in evenly lit conditions and ideally place the negative on a glass surface. Try to keep the film perforations out of the scans.



Helmut saves you time and money by turning your negatives into photos

### Scan multiple photos and documents at once

The free version of the iOS app Pic Scanner ([www.snipca.com/12984](http://www.snipca.com/12984)) has lots of great features for customising your photos once you've scanned them using your tablet. However, the app's cleverest trick – letting you scan up to four photos at once – is only in the paid-for version, which costs £1.99 as an in-app purchase. Just place the photos (or documents) half an inch apart on a white surface and take a picture. The app will automatically separate, straighten and optimise them for you.

There are several other apps that let you easily batch-scan several pages into a single file or PDF. CamScanner HD (CamScanner + for iOS) lets you quickly and easily batch-scan several documents you'd like to have in the same file. Just tap the button to the right of the camera button in CamScanner, take photos of all the pages (the free version allows up to three pages), then save.

TinyScan for iOS ([www.snipca.com/13063](http://www.snipca.com/13063), £2.99) also lets you batch-scan documents, with the added bonus that you can send them to other devices on your Wi-Fi network.

### Print your scans from your tablet

If you have a **cloud printer** you can make use of the cloud-printing tools found within many scanner apps, including CamScanner, TinyScan, Genius Scan and Droid Scan Pro PDF. If you have a conventional Wi-Fi printer, you should instead use an app that connects your tablet to it. iOS users should first try 'Print n Share' ([www.snipca.com/12988](http://www.snipca.com/12988), £2.99) which lets you

wirelessly connect your tablet to a Wi-Fi printer, or even a USB printer that's connected to a computer on your network. The good thing about this app is that it lets you print from a wide range of devices. PrinterShare ([www.snipca.com/13053](http://www.snipca.com/13053)) is the Android equivalent, but will cost you £7.45 if you want unlimited printing from it.

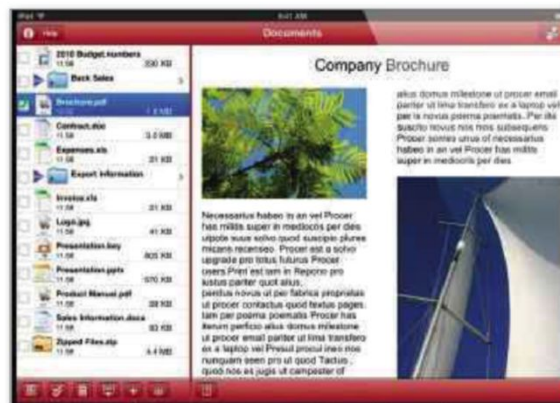
If you don't want to spend any money you can use an app that's limited to your specific brand of printer. Each major printer manufacturer offers its own iOS and Android app that will connect your tablet to your printer via Wi-Fi or Wi-Fi Direct (a recent technology that omits the need for a router to wirelessly connect devices). The apps (Brother iPrint&Scan, Canon Mobile Printing, Epson iPrint, HP ePrint, and Lexmark Mobile Printing) vary in quality, but they're a sure way of getting your scans printed if you own one of these printers. **ca**

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## PROBLEM OF THE FORTNIGHT

### Why am I receiving these graphics-card warnings?

**Q** I'm wondering if you can help me with my Windows Vista problems. They don't appear to affect the computer's performance or my ability to use it, but do result in annoying messages that appear every time I start my PC. The first message appears just after I switch on, saying "Unsupported Video Configuration Detected". It also says that my computer "has an add-in graphics card but the monitor cable is plugged into the integrated video connector". I am offered the option to press F1 to continue or F2 to enter setup. I press F1 and all seems fine. Then, when Windows has launched, I get this warning: "The Catalyst Control Centre is not supported by the driver version of your [obscured words] graphics adapter. Please update your ATI graphics driver, or enable your [obscured words] using the Displays Manager." The obscured words are off the edge of the screen, so I can't read them. Do you have any idea what's causing this and how to silence these annoying messages?

Andrew Norris

**A** The messages contain clues to the cause of your problem. Catalyst Control Centre is software from a company called ATI, which makes graphics cards. So, your PC has a dedicated ATI graphics card installed and also a graphics card that's integrated onto the **motherboard**. From the warning messages it sounds like your monitor's cable is plugged into the connector for the motherboard's graphics card. That's fine if that's what you or the manufacturer intended, but your PC detects a dedicated graphics card fitted, so you're seeing these messages.

The solution most likely to work is to look around the rear of your PC and plug the monitor cable into the other



Install Microsoft's .NET framework to get the Catalyst Control Centre working properly

connector. If it does, all well and good – your problem is solved.

If not, it could be that your drivers are out of date or that you need to install Microsoft's .NET framework, which is required for ATI's Catalyst Control Centre to work correctly. You can download the latest version of .NET from [www.snipca.com/12665](http://www.snipca.com/12665) and the latest version of your graphics card's **drivers** from [www.snipca.com/12666](http://www.snipca.com/12666).

Finally, there's also the outside possibility that the dedicated graphics card has been loose or faulty since you bought it, so you've always relied on the motherboard's graphics connector, consider this normal and have put up with the messages. If this is the case, then switch off the computer and remove the power cable, earth yourself by touching a metal-grounded object (like a radiator) then carefully open up the case and look inside. Remove the graphics card's retaining screw then remove and reinsert the graphics card, using firm thumb pressure. Reassemble, attach the monitor cable to the graphics card's connector then fire up your PC.

If it doesn't work, open the case again and then remove the card completely. This should fix your first message. If the second still appears when Windows loads, use Control Panel to uninstall Catalyst Control Centre.

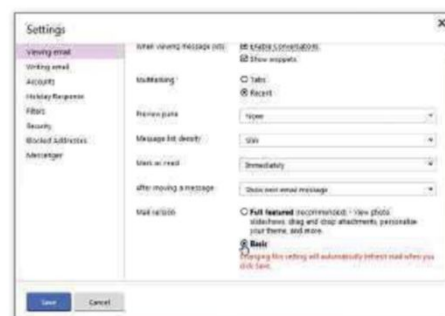
### How do I remove Yahoo's sponsored emails?

**Q** I've started to get 'sponsored' emails in my Yahoo inbox. The tick box to the left of the email is replaced by a logo and to the right of the email header the word 'sponsored' appears. The options to delete, move or mark as spam are greyed out. Opening another email folder simply means the sponsored email appears there instead. Is this another marketing ploy from Yahoo or something more sinister? If the former, how can I stop Yahoo sending them? If the latter, how do you get rid of them and stop receiving anymore?

Barry Draper

**A** Sadly, it's the former – Yahoo is intentionally putting these sponsored messages into its users' webmail inboxes. Not only that, but these adverts-posing-as-messages sit at the top of the inbox and follow you around the folders. There's no option to delete, move or hide them, so there's seemingly no escape.

Equally sadly, there's no option to disable these adverts or otherwise opt out. However, there is a workaround if you're prepared to forgo some functionality. Click the cog icon at the top right then choose Settings. Now select the Basic button and click Save. This puts Yahoo Mail into a stripped-down mode within which you'll be unable to drag and drop attachments or view photo slideshows. On the plus side it also prevents the sponsored messages from appearing – at least for the time being.

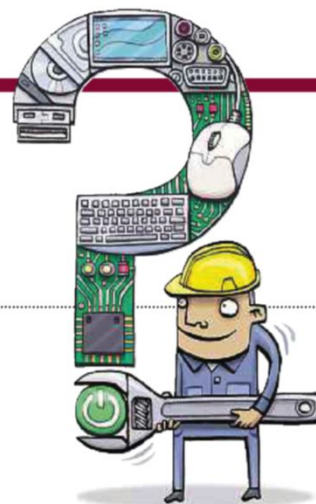


Select the Basic button option to prevent sponsored messages from appearing



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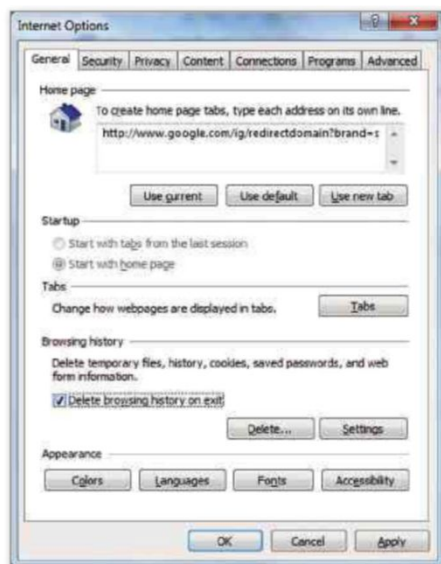
## Why won't my bank remember me?

**Q** My bank's login page has a tick box labelled 'Tick this box to remember your login ID'. This would be useful to me, so I tick it. But next time I log in, the box is again clear and my login ID has not been remembered. This occurs every time I log in. What is going on? And how do I get my bank to remember my login ID?

William Chalmers

**A** When you tick a box like this, you are instructing the web browser to allow the website to create and store a cookie on your computer hard drive – a tiny, innocuous file that contains some personal or otherwise relevant information. In this case your bank's website creates a cookie that contains your user name (the login ID). The next time you visit, your bank's website requests the information that's stored in the cookie to fill in the login ID field.

The reason your bank is unable to do this is almost certainly because your web browser is set to automatically delete browsing information, including cookies. This is obviously a good idea



Go to Internet Options in Internet Explorer to save browsing information, including cookies

for privacy, but not so great if you'd like websites – such as your bank – to remember time-saving information such as your login ID.

You didn't tell us which browser you're using, but the fix is to disable (or customise) what information is deleted, and when. In Internet Explorer 11 (IE11),

for example, click the cog icon at the top right and then choose 'Internet options'. On the dialogue box that appears our guess is that you'll find the 'Delete browsing history on exit' box is ticked. This means that every time you close IE11, some or all of your personal data is deleted. To disable the feature entirely, just remove this tick.

However, it's smarter to keep this feature enabled and customise the way it works by making use of the two adjacent buttons – Delete and Settings. Click the Delete button and then use the tick boxes on the Delete Browsing History dialogue box. For example, leave 'Cookies and website data' unticked to save cookies between browsing sessions. Use some of the other options here in conjunction with the aforementioned Settings button. For example, click Settings followed by the History tab to specify how much of your browsing history IE11 should delete when you close it.

## How do I get the iPad version of iPlayer onto my TV?

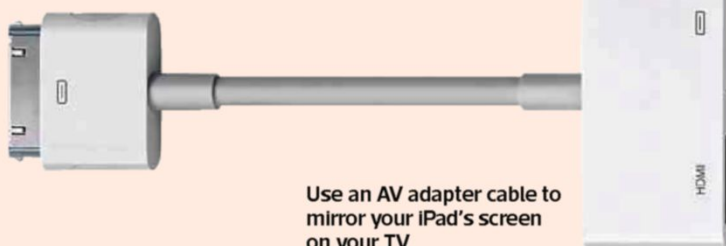
**Q** I have a lovely new iPad on which I use BBC iPlayer. I'd like to watch and hear this through our TV. I thought I had read that there was a device to plug into the telly to enable this. Can you name it and suggest a supplier? It would also be nice to have the same for my hi-fi. Basically, I don't want to have to pay the cost of an Apple TV. Also, your pages have much to say about security. Am I right in thinking that there is no problem if accessing the internet via the iPad?

Peter Hannam

**A** The wireless technology you're talking about is AirPlay, which is Apple's own invention. Some

hi-fis have this built in, but if you want to mirror your iPad's screen on your TV wirelessly then, right now, the only option is to buy the Apple TV device, which has recently been reduced by £20 to £79 ([www.snipca.com/12633](http://www.snipca.com/12633)).

You could do it a bit cheaper with Apple's Digital AV Adapter cable, which is £35 or £40 depending on whether you need the older 30-pin or newer Lightning connector – see [www.snipca.com/12634](http://www.snipca.com/12634).



Use an AV adapter cable to mirror your iPad's screen on your TV

You can find similar cables much cheaper on the likes of eBay ([www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)) and Amazon ([www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)), but expect to receive a poor-quality counterfeit.

Finally, the 'closed' nature of Apple's iOS operating system means that the iPad is generally safer online than, say, a Windows PC. However, safer doesn't mean immune – you could still be fooled by phishing websites, for example.

# Problems Solved

## How do I fix this Windows Media Player error?

**Q** When I try to open Windows Media Player (WMP), I get a message that says a file has the wrong version number, and a different (earlier) version was expected. It asks me if I want to download the correct version, but while clicking Yes does take me to the website, I cannot find a download for Windows 7 – it states that WMP comes with Windows 7, but there is no way to download it. What should I do?

Roger Havard

**A** It sounds like your WMP version number has somehow become out of step with what's stored in the Windows Registry. This could happen if your computer crashed during a Windows Update operation, say.

There are a few possible fixes. Click Start, type `cmd`, then right-click `cmd.exe` in the list above and choose 'Run as administrator'. At the command prompt, type `unregmp2.exe /updatewmpversion` and press Enter. Close the Command and try WMP again. If it doesn't work, repeat the above, but this time type `regsvr32 wmp.dll` and press Enter.

If this fails, click Start, Control Panel and then 'Turn Windows features On or Off'. Scroll to the Media Features section, untick Windows Media Player and click Yes to confirm. Restart your PC then repeat this step, re-ticking the Windows Media Player box.



Untick and then re-tick Windows Media Player if you're having problems starting it

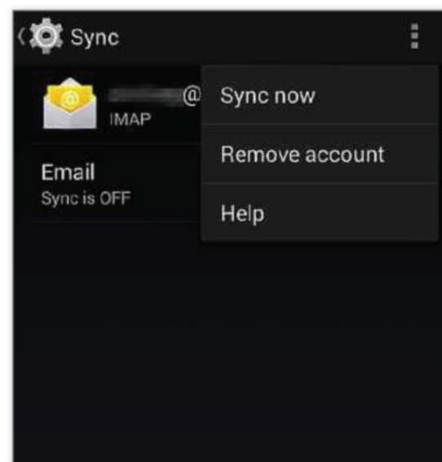
## How do I deal with messages stuck in my email outbox?

**Q** I have emails stuck in the outbox on my Nexus 4 phone and Nexus 7 tablet. They seem to be there indefinitely and are making the devices useless for sending emails. Help!

Alan Strowger

**A** You didn't tell us which email tool you're using, but it could be that the email attachments are too large. The default ('stock') email app, Email, won't allow you to attach messages larger than 5MB. However, the Gmail app that's now part of Android 4.4 allows attachments of up to 25MB, even if you're not using Gmail as your email provider – and that could be more than your internet service provider (ISP) will accept. So, navigate to the Outbox folder, press and hold an affected message to highlight it, then delete it by tapping the dustbin icon at the top.

If this doesn't work, then we'd suggest deleting the account and setting it up from scratch. So long as you have your emails backed up, or keep them on your



Tap Settings, IMAP, the account name and then 'Remove account' to delete an account

email provider's server, it's a quick and easy way to solve all sorts of problems. From your Nexus 4/7 home page, tap Settings then tap **IMAP** (or Google) under Accounts. Next, tap the account name then tap the menu button (three stacked dots) at the top right and choose 'Remove account'.

## Can I turn PDFs into Word documents?

**Q** Do you know of an easy way to turn PDF files into normal documents that I can edit in Word? I receive perhaps one PDF a month and the programs I've found are so expensive for a pensioner who is unlikely to be using them often enough to justify the cost.

Robert M Roberts

**A** There are loads of web services that'll do just this, with no need to install anything or pay. The free services generally have a few restrictions, but for your purposes they're unlikely to be a problem. For example, the PDF Converter ([www.freepdfconvert.com](http://www.freepdfconvert.com)) website lets you upload and convert only one PDF every 30 minutes – you pay only

if you need to use the **server** more frequently.

Click the 'Select files' button, select your PDF file then click Open. Now choose the document type from the 'Convert to' dropdown menu then click Convert. After a few moments, the converted file will be ready, so just click the green Download button to save it to your computer.



The PDF Converter website lets you upload and convert PDFs into documents that can be edited in Word



## Why do all these junk images appear in my photo gallery?

**Q** I would appreciate your help in stopping all these junk images that appears by the hundred in my photo gallery. I delete them all, but as soon as I view the photo gallery again, they're back. Why is this happening and how do I stop it?

Mike Kelly

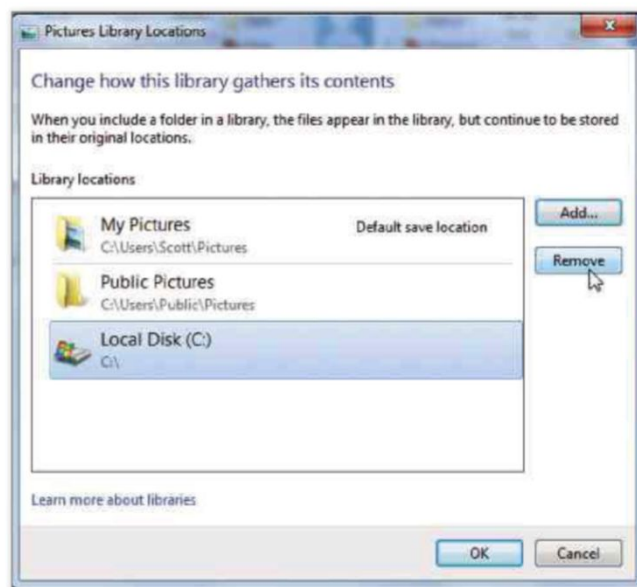
**A** You didn't say which photo-gallery tool you're using but from the blurry photograph you supplied we're sure it's Microsoft's own Windows Photo Gallery. By default this indexes Windows 7's Pictures and Videos libraries, which is all many people want.

However, Windows Photo Gallery can also be set up to index any folder on the hard drive – or even the entire hard drive. The 'junk' images in your photo included all manner of company logos and credit-card icons – and that's strong evidence of the contents of a web

browser's **cache**.

Your web browser stores these images on your computer's hard drive to save time downloading them every time you visit the related web pages. That's normal and safe – but it seems Windows Photo Gallery is indexing the folder in which they're stored. It doesn't matter that you delete them, because as soon as you visit some websites, the browser caches the images anew and Windows Photo Gallery once more indexes them.

In Windows Photo Gallery, right-click 'All photos and videos', then choose



Go to Library Locations to make the necessary changes if you find junk images appear in your photo gallery

'Include a folder in the gallery'. Now select the offending entry in the 'Library locations' list – our guess is that the whole hard drive will be there ('Local Disk C:', for example) – then click Remove.

## How do I access the Boot Menu?

**Q** I currently operate a Windows XP and until I make a decision on what to do longer term, I opted to **dual-boot** Linux, as described in Issue 420. All went well up to Step 6, where I found it impossible to see the key I need to press in order to enter the Boot Menu screen mentioned in your Workshop – the **BIOS** screen just passes too quickly to see anything. Do you have any suggestions or any other way of getting to Boot Menu?

James Stevenson

**A** The requisite key varies from PC to PC, but is typically one of the Function (F) keys – often F12 – or Escape (Esc). One option would be to use a camcorder or smartphone camera to video the start-up procedure and then play back the recording in slow motion to see if you can spot the message.

However, we should have pointed out that some PC BIOSes don't actually have a Boot Menu screen. All is not lost, as it is possible to change the



When dual-booting your PC you can change the order of what boots first in the Boot Menu in your PC's BIOS

drive-boot order in the BIOS, but, of course, you'd still need to access the BIOS to do this. That presents the same problem, as you need to know the key to tap to access this – it's usually Delete (Del), F2 or F10.

Once you're in the BIOS, look for the Boot Order or Boot Device Priority

menu and then use the cursor (arrow) keys and Enter to put your CD or DVD drive at the top of the list. Press Escape (Esc) to exit the BIOS and save your changes. Remember to revert this change later to stop your PC looking at the CD/DVD drive every time you start in future.

# Problems Solved

## How do I find John Doe?

**Q** I use a Gmail address that follows the format 'john.doe@gmail.com'. I've recently started receiving emails addressed to 'johndoe@gmail.com', which are obviously intended for some other person called John Doe. Incidentally, John Doe is not my real name, but an example to illustrate my problem, else your readers would guess my real email address. I have tried in vain to contact Google, but just got brushed off and directed to forums and FAQ sites. I've even tried to contact the other John Doe (using his 'johndoe@gmail.com' address), but the message somehow ended up back in my inbox! Any ideas? All I can think of is to move away from Google, or start a web campaign to try to get Google to improve its security.

John Doe

**A** If you have registered 'john.doe@gmail.com' as a Gmail address, then you are in fact 'johndoe@gmail.com', without the dot. You are also



**To avoid receiving someone else's emails by mistake, reply to the sender suggesting a correct address format**

'j.o.h.n.d.o.e@gmail.com' and 'j.o.h.n.d.o.e@gmail.com', because Gmail doesn't recognise full-stops in email addresses. This explains why your attempt to contact 'johndoe@gmail.com' ended up in your 'john.doe@gmail.com' inbox – they're one and the same.

While it's possible that someone is genuinely trying to contact another 'John Doe' (your real name isn't so

uncommon, after all), it is just as likely that you are a victim of spam. If that's the case, there's not a huge amount you can do about it, though if you mark the sender or senders as spam, Gmail will label all future messages as spam. To do this, just click the Spam button at the top of the message window.

If you are certain that

the messages are not junk but misdirected attempts to contact another John Doe, then you could reply to the sender politely pointing out that they are using the incorrect email address. However, be aware that spammers use a variety of methods to fool people into responding, including pretending to be real people – so you could be falling into someone's trap.

## How do I stop Spotify launching automatically?

**Q** I've had the Spotify music-streaming program installed on my Windows 7 PC for several months. I love it and use it every day. Recently, though, it has taken to launching itself as Windows finishes loading, taking up the whole screen as it does so. It's not a big deal as I can minimise or close the window and – as I said – I do use it all the time. However, I

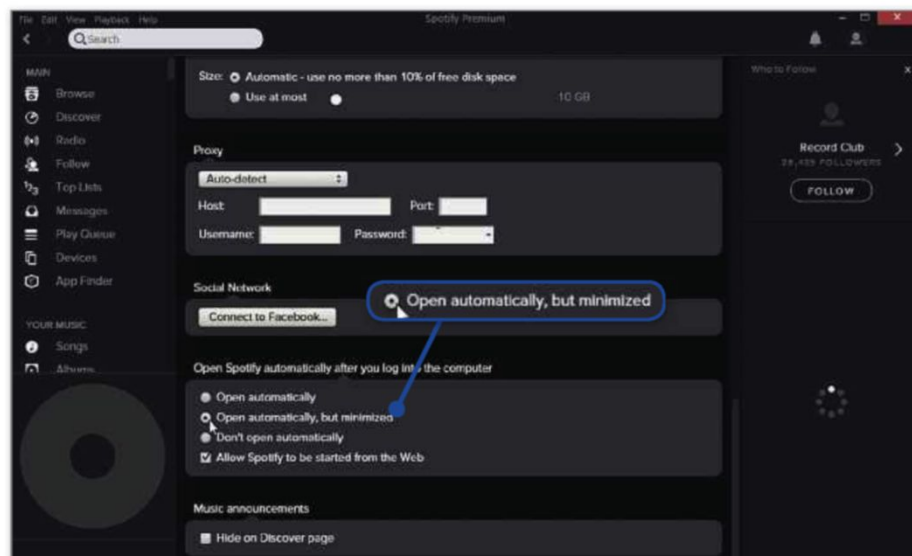
just find this particular behaviour annoying. What's changed and how can I stop it?

Sarah Parsons

**A** In common with an increasing number of modern programs, the Windows version of Spotify updates itself automatically. So, what's happened here is that Spotify has

updated itself and the newer version has default options to launch when Windows starts. Unfortunately, short of disconnecting from the internet, there's no way to stop Spotify from updating itself.

However, you asked about Spotify's launch behaviour – and that's easily remedied. In Spotify, open the Edit menu and choose Preferences. Next, scroll down to the 'Open Spotify automatically after you log into the computer' section and select one of the other two radio buttons. We'd suggest that 'Open automatically, but minimized' is a good option for the way you use Spotify, but 'Don't open automatically' will prevent launch at start-up entirely.



Change the way Spotify launches at start-up via the program's Edit menu

### NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE  
3 Sept

- Is my Windows 8 PC useless because I missed the upgrade?
- How do I re-open Word's Document Recovery pane?
- How do I get my Kindle working?
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# iTunes 11

Stop iTunes crashing, regain access to the iTunes Store, and fully uninstall it

## Can't download or play media from iTunes Store

If iTunes doesn't let you access your shared folder, iTunes Store or anything that you've downloaded, then the file that authorises your PC to access your Apple account may have become corrupt. In Windows Explorer, click Organize, 'Folder and Search Options', then click the View tab. In the list, select 'Show hidden files, folders, and drives', then click OK. Next, navigate to **C:\ProgramData\Apple Computer\iTunes**, right-click the folder called SC Info, click Delete, then click Yes. Restart your PC, and iTunes will prompt you to authorise your computer for your Apple account. Enter your Apple account details to reinstate all your iTunes privileges, which will create a new SC Info folder.

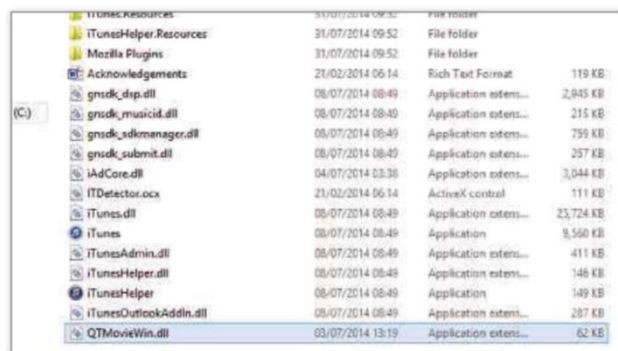


Delete the SC Info folder to solve problems accessing or playing content in iTunes Store

## Locked out of your iTunes Library

If you recently upgraded Windows, or are moving a pre-existing iTunes library onto a new computer, you may get the error message starting: "The iTunes Library.itl file is locked..." If so, it means Windows has removed your permissions to access your iTunes library, and you will need to re-set them. Navigate to your iTunes folder in Windows Explorer (**C:\My Music\iTunes** is the default path), right-click 'iTunes Library', then click Properties. In the new dialogue box, click the Security tab, then Edit. Click your account name in the 'Group or user names' list, tick the box next to 'Full control' in the list below, then click OK.

Alternatively, your iTunes library might be corrupted. In your iTunes folder, drag 'iTunes Library' to the Desktop, open the Previous iTunes Libraries folder, then right-click the file called iTunes Library YYYY-MM-DD (the date here signifies when you last updated iTunes). Copy this file into the main iTunes folder, and rename it 'iTunes Library'.



Copy the QTWinMovie.dll file into the iTunes folder to stop iTunes crashing in Windows 8

## iTunes keeps crashing in Windows 8

There's a bug in Windows 8 and 8.1 which can cause iTunes 11 to crash when you try to access iTunes Store, download content, or carry out any number of activities that involve Apple servers. This is because Windows 8 reads certain iTunes processes from a different folder to other Windows versions. To fix this, navigate to **C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Apple\Apple Application Support** in Windows Explorer, find the file named QTWinMovie.dll, right-click it, then click Copy. Next, navigate to **C:\Program Files (x86)\iTunes**, right-click any empty space, then click Paste.

## iTunes is slowing down your computer

One way iTunes slows your PC is by adding four other programs that deal with things such as updates, networking and support, all of which can be demanding of your **CPU**. One of these programs is Bonjour, which identifies devices on your local network that you can share your iTunes library with. If you don't think you'll use this feature, you

should delete Bonjour to speed your computer up. Go to Control Panel, 'Programs and Features', and uninstall Bonjour. Bonjour can be one of those programs that's tough to get rid of, however, so in Windows Explorer navigate to **C:\Program Files\Bonjour** and delete the files 'mDNSResponder.exe' and 'mdnsNSP.dll'. Restart your computer, then delete the Bonjour folder.

## Can't uninstall or re-install iTunes 11

As mentioned in the previous fix, downloading iTunes adds several other programs that work in tandem with it. If you want to uninstall iTunes completely, or re-install it in such a way that it doesn't malfunction

all the time, you need to remove these programs. Go to Control Panel, 'Programs and Features', then uninstall the following programs in the following order: iTunes, Apple Software Update, Apple Mobile Device Support, Bonjour, and Apple Application Support.

Next, navigate to Program Files in Windows Explorer (or 'Program Files (x86)' if you have a **64bit** PC) and delete the following folders: Bonjour, iTunes, iPod. Go to the Common Files folder, Apple, then delete the folders Mobile Device Support, Apple Application Support and CoreFP.



Uninstall these extra programs to remove all traces of iTunes from your PC





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PG50 Black 28ml	£12.99
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CL38 Colour 12ml	£12.99
CL41 Colour 24ml	£16.99
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PG1520 Black 19ml	£10.99
CL1521 B/C/M/Y/GY 9ml	£9.99
PG1520/CL1521 set of 5	£46.99
PG1525 Black 19ml	£10.99
CL1526 B/C/M/Y/GY 9ml	£9.99
PG1525/CL1526 set of 5	£46.99
PG1550 Black 15ml	£10.99
CL1551 B/C/M/Y/GY 7ml	£8.99
PG1550/CL1551 set of 5	£42.99
PG40 Black 16ml	£14.99
CL41 Colour 12ml	£18.99
PG50 Black 22ml	£21.99
CL51 Colour 21ml	£25.99
PG510 Black 9ml	£11.99
CL511 Colour 9ml	£15.99
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CL513 Colour 13ml	£20.99
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No.58 Photo 24ml	£12.99
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No.88XL CMY 17ml	£8.99
No.110 Colour 12ml	£10.99
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No.300XL Colour 18ml	£16.99
No.336 Black 10ml	£7.99
No.337 Black 24ml	£10.99
No.338 Black 24ml	£10.99
No.339 Black 34ml	£12.99
No.342 Colour 12ml	£10.99
No.343 Colour 21ml	£12.99
No.344 Colour 21ml	£14.99
No.348 Photo 21ml	£12.99
No.350XL Black 34ml	£14.99
No.351XL Colour 21ml	£16.99
No.363 Black 20ml	£6.99
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No.56 Black 19ml	£19.99
No.57 Colour 17ml	£28.99
No.110 Colour 5ml	£19.99
No.300 Black 4ml	£10.99
No.300 Colour 4ml	£12.99
No.301 Black 3ml	£9.99
No.301 Colour 3ml	£11.99
No.301B/C Combo	£17.99
No.336 Black 5ml	£12.99
No.337 Black 11ml	£18.99
No.338 Black 11ml	£18.99
No.339 Black 21ml	£25.99
No.342 Colour 5ml	£14.99
No.343 Colour 7ml	£20.99
No.344 Colour 14ml	£28.99
No.348 Photo 13ml	£23.99
No.350 Black 4.5ml	£11.99
No.351 Colour 3.5ml	£14.99
No.363 Black 6ml	£13.99
No.363 CMY/PC/PM ea.	£9.99
No.363 Set of 6	£39.99
No.364 Black 6ml	£7.99
No.364 PB/CMY 3ml ea.	£6.99
No.364 Set of 4	£22.99
No.364XL Black 14ml	£14.99
No.364XL PB/CMY 6ml	£13.99
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No.24 Colour	£12.99
No.26 Colour	£12.99
No.27 Colour	£11.99
No.28 Colour	£11.99
No.29 Colour	£12.99
No.31 Photo	£11.99
No.32 Black	£9.99
No.33 Colour	£11.99
No.34 Black	£11.99
No.35 Colour	£12.99

**Lexmark Originals**

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**Ink Test Winner!**









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T008 Colour	£23.99	40ml £4.99 50ml, 3 for £13.99	Photo 790, 870, 890, 895, 915
T009 Colour	£29.99	66ml £4.99 70ml, 3 for £13.99	Photo 900, 1270, 1290
T026 Black	£39.99	16ml £3.99 20ml, 3 for £10.99	Photo 810, 830, 830u, 925, 935
T027 Colour	£29.99	40ml £4.99 50ml, 3 for £13.99	
T040 Black	£44.99	17ml £3.99 20ml, 3 for £10.99	C62, CX3200
T041 Colour	£39.99	37ml £4.99 40ml, 3 for £13.99	
T050 Black	£32.99	16ml £2.99 16ml, 3 for £7.99	440, 640, 660 Photo 700, 1200
T051 Black	£36.99	24ml £2.99 24ml, 3 for £7.99	740, 760, 800, 850, 860, 1160
T052 Colour	£36.99	35ml £3.99 35ml, 3 for £10.99	440, 640, 660, 740, 760, 1160
T053 Colour	£26.99	43ml £3.99 40ml, 3 for £10.99	Photo 700, 750
T0441-4 Set of 4	£44.99	£14.99, 3 sets for £42.99	C64, C66, C84, C86, CX3600/3650, CX4600, 6600
T0441 Black	£19.99	13ml £3.99 13ml, 3 for £13.99	
T0452-4 Set of 4	£99.99	£3.99 13ml, 3 for £10.99	
T0481-6 Set of 6	£69.99	£19.99, 3 sets for £57.99	R200, R220, R300, R320, R340
T0481-6 Set of 6	£15.99	13ml £3.99 13ml, 3 for £10.99	RX500, RX600, RX320, RX640
T0540-9 Set of 9	£109.99	£35.99, 3 sets for £99.99	Photo R800, R1800
T0540 Gloss	£89.99	13ml £3.99 21ml, 3 sets for £13.99	
T0541-9 Set of 9	£14.99	13ml £4.99 21ml, 3 sets for £13.99	
T0551-4 Set of 4	£34.99	£14.99, 3 sets for £42.99	Photo R240, R245
T0551 Black	£89.99	£4.99 8ml, 3 sets for £10.99	RX420, RX425, RX35W, RX52S
T0552-4 Set of 4	£89.99	£3.99 8ml, 3 sets for £10.99	
T0581-9 Set of 9	£99.99	Check Website.	Photo R2400
T0581-9 Set of 9	£12.99	13ml Check Website.	
T0611-4 Set of 4	£34.99	£14.99, 3 sets for £42.99	D68, D88
T0611 Black	£89.99	£4.99 8ml, 3 sets for £13.99	DX3800/3850, DX4200/4250
T0612 Black	£89.99	£3.99 8ml, 3 sets for £10.99	DX400/4050
T0711-4 Set of 4	£34.99	£14.99, 3 sets for £42.99	SX200, SX1001/1050/2050/2052
T0711 Black	£8.99	7.4ml £3.99 7.4ml, 3 sets for £13.99	SX400/4051/15615, D7862/21
T0711-4 Set of 4	£8.99	5.5ml £3.99 7.4ml, 3 sets for £10.99	DX400/4050/500/6000/7400/8000
T0791-6 Set of 6	£74.99	Check Website.	Photo 1400
T0791-6 Set of 6	£12.99	10ml Check Website.	
T0801-6 Set of 6	£51.99	£19.99, 3 sets for £57.99	P50, R265/265-360, RX560/580
T0801-6 Set of 6	£89.99	7.4ml £3.99 7.4ml, 3 sets for £10.99	R65/850, PX700/7100/8015
T0870-9 Set of 9	£74.99	Check Website.	Photo R1900
T0870 Gloss	£77.99	£11.4ml Check Website.	
T0871-9 Set of 9	£99.99	£11.4ml Check Website.	
T0961-9 Set of 9	£74.99	Check Website.	Photo R2880
T0961-9 Set of 9	£99.99	£11.4ml Check Website.	
T1281-4 Set of 4	£29.99	£14.99	S22, SX125, SX130, SX235W, SX320W/425W/435W/445W, BX305F
T1281 Black	£77.99	5.5ml £4.99 5.5ml	SX255W/420W/425W/435W/445W/455W, BX305F
T1282-4 Set of 4	£77.99	3.5ml £4.99 3.5ml	SX320W/420W/425W/435W/445W/455W, BX305F
T1291-4 Set of 4	£42.99	£16.99	RX300
T1291 Black	£10.99	11ml £5.49 11ml	RX300
T1292-4 Set of 4	£20.99	7.4ml £4.49 7.4ml	RX300
T1571-9 Set of 9	£120.99	25ml Check Website.	R2000
T1591-9 Set of 9	£14.99	17ml Check Website.	Pro 3800, 3880
T5801-9 Set of 9	£41.99	80ml Check Website.	Workforce WF-2010W, 2510WF
No.16 Set of 4	£24.99	£14.99	2510WF, 2530WF, 2540WF
No.16 Black	£6.99	5.4ml £4.99 5.4ml	
No.16 CMY, each	£5.99	3.1ml £3.99 3.1ml	
No.18 Set of 4	£22.99	£14.99	Expression Home XP30, XP102, 202, 405
No.18 Black	£6.99	5.2ml £4.99 5.2ml	
No.18 CMY, each	£5.99	3.1ml £3.99 3.1ml	
No.24 Set of 6	£44.99	No.24XL Set of 6 £69.99	Expression Photo XP750, 850
No.24 B/L/C/M, ea	£7.99	1.5ml £11.99 8.6ml	
No.24 CMY, each	£7.99	4.6ml £11.99 8.7ml	
No.26 Set of 4	£30.99	No.26XL Set of 4 £54.99	Expression Premium XP600, 805, XP700, 805
No.26 Black	£8.99	6.2ml £14.99 12.1ml	
No.26 Photo Black	£7.99	27ml £13.99 9.2ml	
No.26 CMY, each	£7.99	4.5ml £13.99 9.7ml	

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Data supplied by [www.broadbandgenie.co.uk](http://www.broadbandgenie.co.uk). Correct as of 29/07/2014

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



# Jargon Buster

**32bit** A measure of how much information a PC can process at once. Most older computers are 32bit, modern ones are 64bit.

**Batch-scanning** Scanning multiple documents simultaneously

**Beta** A version of software that's being tested. They are often released so they can be tested.

**BIOS** Basic Input-Output System. Essential software built into every PC that connects the vital components. It's visible for a few seconds when the PC starts.

**Bootable** A DVD with system files on it so it can be used to start up your computer.

**Botnet** A group of infected computers connected together via the internet, and used to infect other PCs, send junk email and perform other criminal tasks.

**Browser hijackers** Programs that change your default browser, its homepage and search engine, without prior warning, when you install them.

**Cache** A temporary space for storing information. Can be memory used on a computer processor, or space on a hard drive used by a web browser.

**Cloud printer** An internet-connected printer.

**CPU** Central Processing Unit. Another term for a PC processor.

**Dedicated graphics chip** A graphics card or chip that has its own dedicated memory, rather than using system memory like integrated graphics.

**Driver** A file that tells Windows how to work with a peripheral device.

**Dual boot** To set up a PC with two operating systems, so that one must be chosen each time it starts.

**Dual core** When two processors are combined into a single chip.

**EXE** A program file designed to run in Windows. Named after the file extension .exe.

**Extension** A program that adds extra features to your browser.

**False positive** When an anti-virus program erroneously detects a malware infection.

**Feedback** The tactile response that the keys on a keyboard give when they've been pressed.

**Format-shifting** The conversion of media files into different formats.

**HDMI** High-definition media interface. A type of connection that transmits high-definition video and audio signals. It is found on many new TVs, media PCs and high-definition products such as Blu-ray disc players and the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 games consoles.

**HDR** High-dynamic range. A camera that takes more than one photo with different levels of colour and contrast.

**Imap** Internet Message Access Protocol. A method for email that lets the user manage messages stored on a remote server.

**Integrated graphics chip** A device that has a chip for processing graphics data built on to its motherboard, rather than having a separate graphics card.

**Keylogging** Recording everything someone types. Normally used to steal passwords.

**Megapixel** A measure of the amount of detail that can be recorded by a digital image. A one-megapixel image is made up of a million dots (pixels).

**MHL** Mobile high-definition link. A technology that lets you connect a smartphone or tablet to a TV for showing content, as well as charge its battery, using a cable.

**Micro USB** A miniature version of USB, often found on smartphones, tablets and portable hard drives.

**MicroSD** A small type of memory card. Can be converted to SD size using an adapter.

**Miracast** A standard for connecting a computer to a TV or monitor wirelessly.

**Mirror** Third-party download site that hosts software installers.

**Motherboard** The main circuit board inside every PC into which all other parts connect.

**NFC** Near-field communication. A technology that allows two devices to communicate by being touched together. Can be used to pay for items in some shops using compatible mobile phones.

**Noise** Visible dust-like speckles that appear in some camera and TV images. In photos, they are caused by the camera's own sensor. In TV images, they can be caused by the TV's processor or by a flaw in the broadcast signal itself.

**Open source** Software that can be modified by anyone, rather than just by the employees of the company that created it.

**Phishing** A form of internet fraud that tries to trick you into revealing personal details.

**Platform** A particular type of operating system, such as Windows, Android and Linux.

**Plug-in** A small program that adds extra features to your web browser or to other applications, and is loaded only when it's needed.

**Processor** The processor – or central processing unit (CPU) – is the brain of a computer. Processors now are tiny and are capable of carrying out millions of calculations every second.

**PVR** A video recorder that uses hard drives instead of tapes/discs.

**Quad core** A PC that has four processors on a single chip, which allows it to operate faster than standard (single-core) computers.

**Ransomware** Malware run by hackers who take over your PC and demand a payment to release it.

**Registry** The part of Windows that stores information on all hardware and software installed on your PC. The Registry can be edited to tweak settings but incorrect changes can damage the PC.

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

**Restore Point** A Windows backup of system files and settings.

**Retina Quality** Video with a resolution of at least 3840x2160 pixels

**Sandbox** A digital barrier that protects an operating system.

**Scart** A standard connector for video and audio signals.

**Server** A computer on a network, such as the internet, that distributes information to other PCs.

**SSD** Solid-state drive. Storage that, unlike a hard drive, uses no moving parts. Faster but more expensive than conventional hard drives.

**Subwoofer** A special type of speaker designed to reproduce deep bass sounds only. Even on a stereo system, only one subwoofer is required because human ears cannot detect the direction of bass frequencies.

**System Restore** A Windows feature that reverts your computer's system files to an earlier point in time.

**Travel** The distance the keys of a keyboard have to be pressed before the keystroke is recognised.

**Trojan** A malicious computer program that's disguised as a different, harmless program. For example, a Trojan may be disguised as a game but it's actually a program that steals your internet username and password.

**Virtual desktop** A Desktop environment which you can expand beyond the physical confines of your PC's screen.

**Virus definitions** A database of known viruses and other malware used by an anti-virus program when scanning your computer.

**VPN** Virtual Private Network. A technology for keeping all internet communication safe and private even on insecure networks.

# The Final Straw



STUART ANDREWS is  
Computeractive's Mr Angry  
@SATAndrews

In this issue Stuart Andrews feels the time isn't right for ...

## Smartwatches

So, it looks like wearable technology is this year's Next Big Thing. Google has finally released its Glass smart-specs in the UK and the first Android Wear watches are hitting the stores. My local supermarket has fitness bands stacked next to the Bluetooth speakers and pay-as-you-go phones, while an autumn launch for Apple's iWatch is on the cards. It seems that tech isn't just something we carry now, but something we want close to us, all the time.

“

I want a watch that just works, and I worry that if the battery won't last the day I'll end up leaving it at home

”

At this point you might think I'm going to vent my spleen at the thought of more so-called 'smart' gadgets, but actually I'm intrigued. A device that keeps you up to date with incoming emails and social-network posts without getting your phone out seems pretty useful, even if it does feed into the widespread belief that you're the centre of the known universe and must be kept updated at all times. I can imagine taking sneaky peeks at a smartwatch to check things, while appearing to give those I'm with my full attention. It's far less conspicuous than a 5in smartphone.

Smartwatches seem like the thinking man's wearable. I can see Google Glass



working in professions where you need to work hands-free, or in jobs where it might be handy to record what you're seeing and hearing. Yet I can't help noticing that many people struggle to focus on one thing at a time, and having a little heads-up-display in constant view can only make things worse. Thought the smartphone zombies were bad? Just wait until we have a nation of 'glassholes' not quite looking where they're going. How annoying will it be when your friends don't make eye contact during conversation because they're too busy checking out their Twitter feed?

Smartwatches have the potential to be just as annoying, but at least they'll be annoying in a less obtrusive way. Sure, the use of speech recognition is a worry, and I anticipate a stream of badly dictated, poorly formatted emails with dreadful punctuation, but I can't help feeling a boyish thrill at the idea of talking to my watch, like a secret agent or the hero of an Eighties sci-fi saga. I'm tempted to give smartwatches a chance.

But then I look at the first few models, check the technical details and read the first reviews (such as our own of LG's G Watch on page 22). Firstly, it seems the speech-recognition function isn't quite there yet, and I really don't fancy barking instructions at my wristwatch in the vain hope it might understand. I already get

people looking at me strangely; I don't need to give them any more reasons. Perhaps eyeball-tracking keyboards are the answer. Maybe we'll have to wait for mind control.

I'm also hearing bad things about the screens. Call me crazy, but I'd like to tell the time in bright sunlight, not just indoors. Battery life, though, is my biggest concern. At this stage, I don't need another gadget that needs regular recharging every other day. I want a watch that just works, and I worry that if the battery won't last the day I'll end up leaving it at home. Find me one that lasts Monday to Sunday, and I might just buy the thing.

So I'm having doubts. Once technology becomes wearable it becomes about as ubiquitous as it can get without becoming part of us, and I'm really not ready for that yet. I think we could all do with spending more time away from our gadgets and the constant whirl of information. Nor do I want to get caught up in another upgrade cycle, worrying whether my watch has enough processing power. In short, my biggest worry is that smartwatches will be just like all our other gadgets: too smart in some ways, too dumb in others, and too demanding of our lives, money and time.

✉ Do you agree with Stuart?  
Let us know at [letters@computeractive.co.uk](mailto:letters@computeractive.co.uk)



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## WHAT'S ON AT TECHNOPOP?

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WEEK 2 15-19 October	IN TOUCH WITH TECHNOLOGY
WEEK 3 22-26 October	BUILT ENVIRONMENT
WEEK 4 29-2 November	SPORT SCIENCE & THE HUMAN BODY

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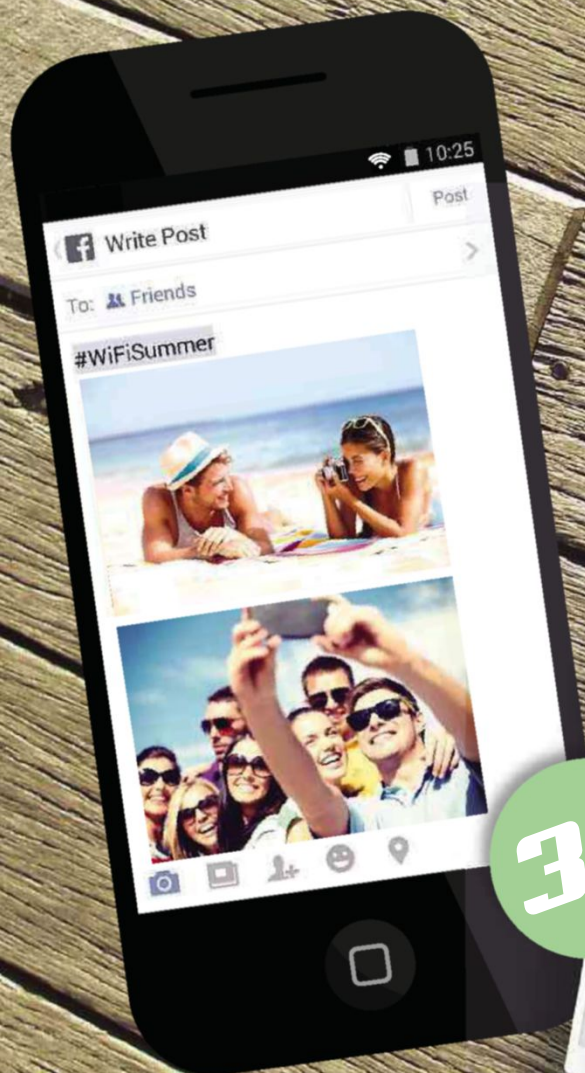
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