



THE WYSIWYG



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STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

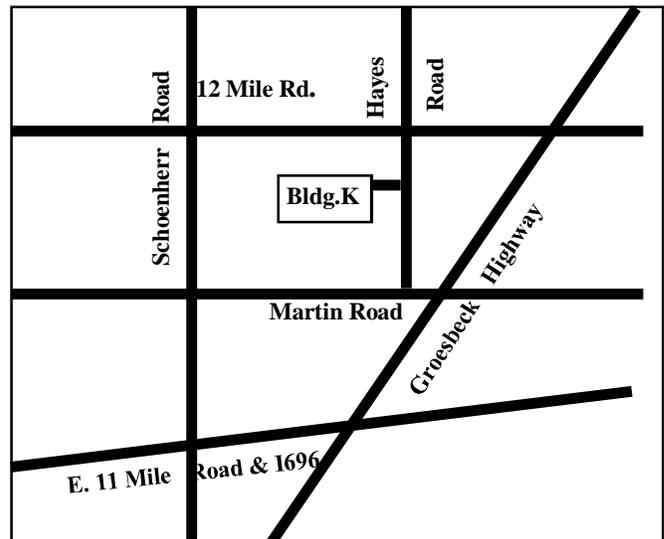
PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY DEC 6

6:30 PM

**Macomb Community College
South Campus
14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren
John Lewis Community Center
(Building K)**



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This Month's Main Meeting Topic:

"How To Choose Replacement Batteries And Bulbs For My Devices" by Greg Beltowski, Franchise Owner Of Batteries Plus

No SIG meeting in December.

SIG meetings are held every other month. The next SIG meeting will be in January.

Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding to become a member or not. Meetings include the main meeting and SIG. July and August don't count since there is no main meeting. Membership includes admission to all SHCC functions and the newsletter. Membership is open to anyone. It is not limited to the residents of Sterling Heights.

DUES: \$25/YEAR

CLUB ADDRESS: PO Box 385, Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385
CLUB E-MAIL ADDRESS: Info@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org
CLUB WEB PAGE: http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

Resource People:

Family Tree	Rick Schummer
Firefox	Don VanSyckel
FoxPro	Rick Schummer
General Computer Questions	Jack Vander-Schrier
Hardware	John Rady
MS Publisher	Rick Kucejko
MS Word	Rick Schummer
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

SHCC Coordinators:

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Don VanSyckel
Greeter for visitors	Jim Waldrop
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
Program Coordinator	Mike Bader
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
PC SIG	Jack Vander-Shrier
Welcome & check-in desk.	Jim Waldrop
Web Site	Don VanSyckel
Web Watch column	Paul Baecker

2016 SHCC Officers

President: Don VanSyckel
 Secretary: Rick Kucejko
 V. President: Mike Bader
 Treasurer: Paul Baecker

Four Month Meeting Schedule:

DECEMBER 2016

- 6 - SHCC - "How To Choose Replacement Batteries And Bulbs For My Devices" by Greg Beltowski, Franchise Owner Of Batteries Plus
 7 - COMP meeting
 11- SEMCO meeting

JANUARY 2017

- 3 - SHCC - "Creating A Home Inventory Record Using Any Spreadsheet" by member Paul Baecker
 4 - COMP meeting
 8 - SEMCO meeting
 ? - PC SIG

FEBRUARY 2017

- 7 - SHCC - Main Meeting
 8 - COMP meeting
 12 - SEMCO meeting

MARCH 2017

- 1 - COMP meeting
 7 - SHCC - "Quadcopter With Computer Control" by Sam Chapatwala of the Detroit Beagle-bone Community Meetup
 12 - SEMCO meeting
 ? - PC SIG

Other Computer Clubs:

As a member of SHCC, you can attend meetings of other clubs where we have reciprocating membership agreements, at no charge.

Computer Club of Marysville and Port Huron (COMP)

Time: 1st Wednesday, 7:00PM
 Place: Mackenzie Bldg, Room 201, St Clair Community College, Clara E McKenzie Library-Science Building, 323 Erie St.
 Port Huron, MI (810) 982-1187
 Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org
 Reciprocating: Yes

South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO)

Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:30PM
 Place: Altair, 1820 E Big Beaver Road, Troy, MI 48083
 (248) 840-2400
 Web page: http://www.semco.org
 Reciprocating: Yes

Royal Oak Computer Club

Time: Every Wednesday at 12:30
 Place: Mahany/Meiniger Senior Community Center 3500 Marais Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48073
 248-246-3900
 Reciprocating: No

Contact Information:

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Rick Schummer	586-254-2530	rick@rickschummer.com
Don VanSyckel	586-731-9232	don@vansyckel.net
Jack Vander-Schrier	586-739-5952	jvanders@comcast.net
(Call Jack after noon)		

Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to :

WYSIWYG Publisher
 5069 Fedora, Troy, MI 48098
 OR at the e-mail addresses: newslet-

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The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel



I hope you had a good Thanksgiving Holiday. We did. We were in Arizona; kids and grand kids. It was hard to believe Thanksgiving was coming when it was in the 70's days before the holiday. Back to reality now. Leaf-less trees and cold weather. So now is the time for using the PC inside and staying warm?

The company I work for uses Microsoft Office and recently upgraded the Office Suite to MS Office 2013. MS changed a lot of things and not for the better. Maybe it's because I don't like change or maybe MS actually made it harder to use. I find the new interface is intrusive and non-productive.

I don't like change in the tools I use; yes, I consider Office a collection of tools, I never turn on the PC to have fun writing a new spreadsheet or word document. I only use Office to accomplish some task, such as writing this column, doing a budget, tracking movies, etc. When doing a task I want to do it as quickly and efficiently as I can. This is why I settle on a set of tools and use those tools over and over again. The more I use them the better (more efficient and more fea-

tures used) I get at using them. Now enter MS who changes the user interface every time the Office Suite is issued. I don't look at it as a change, but I see it that MS hid all the controls and options from me and I have to go on a treasure hunt to go find them. This is NOT the way I want to spend my time and I resent the intrusion on my productivity the Office Suite upgrades force on me.

So I'm stuck with using MS Office 2013 at work. Then a short while ago an email was issued informing the company employees that because the company used MS Office the employees are eligible to purchase MS Office 2016 to use at home for \$10. The suite was to be downloaded and a DVD could be purchased for an additional \$15. I wanted an updated version of MS Access (database) so I bit. I bought the download. Well, I was lied to. Office was not downloaded, but it was installed from the web. A huge difference. Downloaded, I could re-install the product if it became necessary, even if I was "up North" with no internet access. Installed from the web, the product could only be re-installed if I have internet access, the

"install-from" site is still available (the site was not a MS site), both are working and still in business, and MS has not changed their rules about installing. For instance, you installed this on PC X before and you can't install it on your new replacement PC Y, your company no longer uses MS Office so you can't reload, or you no longer work for that company so you can't reload.

So when I figured out the product was web installed versus downloaded, I ordered the DVD. I still considered this a deal, \$25 for MS Office 2016, the current version, not a crippled wannabe. Then I started trying to use it and ran head long into the questions about the cloud and how data would go to the cloud. I searched for ways to turn off the cloud and could not find any way in MS Office 2016 to turn off cloud access. I knew one sure way to stop MS Office 2016 from sending my data to the cloud. I uninstalled it totally from the PC. My data is my data to be stored on my PC and backed up on my backups with no access to anyone else except by my express permission. You've heard about hackers breaking into various companies. What happens when hackers break into the cloud server where all your personal files are stored and they steal all your

(Continued on page 12)

Club Membership Drive

All Sterling Heights Computer Club members,

The club is holding a membership drive through January. Not that you have to stop bringing in new members after January, they just won't be a part of this membership drive.

The rules are simple:

- 1) Bring in new people to SHCC and have them list you on the sign in form as the reason they came in.
- 2) You get credit for each person that joins SHCC from now until the time of the drawing early in the January meeting.
- 3) In January, whoever has the most new members to their credit will be in a drawing for the prize. (Could be a drawing of one.)
- 4) Previous SHCC members who rejoin do not count.
- 5) People who visited the club previously but never joined count if they join this time.
- 6) New associate members also count. They can be an associate of an existing member or a new member as long as the associate has never been a member before.
- 7) Prize is a \$25 gift card and a one year extension of your SHCC membership.



Door Prizes

Door prize drawings are held at regular club meetings. The winner's circle for November included:

Rick Kucejko won copy paper

Ralph Osinski won a thumb drive

Bill Appleberry won a thumb drive

Sharon Patrick won a power strip

Walter Jendhoff won a power strip

Bernie DeFazio won a HDMI cable

Louise Manning won a power strip



Is There A Way To Know Where A URL-Shortened URL Is Going To Take Me?

Link-shortening services make it hard to tell a link's final destination. When you receive one in an email, you may want to do some detective work to see where it's going - before you click.

Before deleting spam, I often hover over the link to see where it is supposed to take me. These days, most spammers use a TinyURL. Is there a way to find out the real URL without clicking on it?

Yes. In fact, there are a couple of ways.

But first, let's talk about links in email and short links in general.

Links in email: avoid them if you can

This is an excellent time to remind everyone of something I always say.

Be extra cautious when clicking links in email.

If the link is obviously spam, or you just don't trust where it came from, it's simple to assume it's bad and get on with your life.

Sometimes it's not obvious, however. Some clues about the email might be:



- Not addressing you by name.
- Having a message body that seems out of character for the person sending you the mail, such as a terse "look what I found" type of statement.
- Having no text at all, just a link.

Having a name you recognize in the From: field, but (if displayed) a corresponding email address that is clearly wrong, or one you've never seen before.

All of these are potential clues that the email isn't what it claims to be, and that the link should best be avoided. It could lead to scams, malware, phishing attempts, and more.

Short links

URLs, or Uniform Resource Locators, are those strings beginning with http or https. They tell a web browser what website or page you want to view.

Sometimes URLs can be quite long. For example, here's a URL for a Google map of Microsoft's location in Redmond:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Microsoft+Corporation/@47.6435107,-122.1252991,15.88z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x1a52969ee03899e!8m2!3d47.6396259!4d-122.1283767>

The problem with long links is that they often break when they're wrapped to fit a particular line length, window, or screen size, particularly when sent in email. **[Ed. Note: This is what we sometimes see with addresses in the WWW column of the WYSIWYG].**

Enter "short link" services. They allow you to create a short, manageable URL that redirects to the longer one. For example:

<https://go.askleo.com/msredmond>

This is a short URL (using my own service) that takes you to the longer URL listed above. It's easier to type, easier to remember, and not prone to break in email programs and the like.

There are many link shortening services; examples include TinyURL, Bit.ly, and Goo.gl.

The problem with a short URL is that it's not obvious where it'll take you until you click on it. In fact, they're often also referred to as "cloaking links", because they hide, or cloak, the final destination.

Typically, the only way to find out where this link goes is to click on it: <https://go.askleo.com/mystery>. That one's safe, but there's no way to know for sure.

Particularly if you have reason to be concerned, suspicious, or skeptical about a link you get in email, it's not unreasonable to want to know where it goes before you click.

Previewing shortened URLs

Some services do have preview features. For example, if you visit tinyurl.com/preview.php, TinyURL will help you turn on a cookie-based feature in your browser. Then, when you click on a link, you can preview where it goes prior to going there.

Bit.ly also allows you to do this. Simply add a plus sign to the end of the URL, and Bit.ly will display where you would have gone rather than taking you there.

There are also several sites that show you where a shortened link will take you. Some current services¹ include:

unfurlr.com
GetLinkInfo.com/URLUncover2

Each of these display the target and some additional information about a short URL.

The bottom line, really, is to stay away from mysterious links sent to you through spam. But when you receive a shortened link from a trusted source and you aren't sure why, investigate with these preview tools.

This article is republished, with permission, from the [Ask Leo! Newsletter](#).



Update Upsets

by *Greg Skalka, Under the Computer Hood User Group*
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More and more of the things we own and use require updates, and a lot of them require updating more and more. When you think of updates, computers typically come to mind first, but so many other products now allow or require updates that keeping them current can seem overwhelming. Updates can be beneficial to insure safety or improve performance, but there are darker sides to this seemingly perpetual updating as well.

It used to be that the product you bought was the product you had, and updates were only for the correction of serious health and safety issues. When changing the product meant physical manipulation of the product's hardware parts, updates were costly to the manufacturers and usually had to be mandated by law to correct some serious safety error on their part. Mandatory Federal product recalls of automobiles for safety issues were the only way to get problems like gas tanks that ruptured when rear-ended or seat belts that became unbuckled in a crash corrected, so that innocent consumers were not further endangered. Sometimes the nature of the problem and the difficulty in making an update meant the product had to be returned or discarded, as there was no economical way to correct the hazard (a toy with small parts that represented a choking hazard for a small child, for example). While these kinds of hazards and the update of product hardware still occur all too often today, the age of computers changed the paradigm of product updates.

The personal computer was perhaps the first consumer product whose functionality was less defined by the hardware you bought as the programming it could contain. Since this programming came in the form of firmware (in addition to peripherals) and software that could be purchased later, the computer as a product was a work in progress. Just as functions could be added easily, corrections to existing capabilities could be made without onerous efforts. Most

updates could be, and usually were required to be installed by the owner, and this became the norm for computers.

There are many levels of updating possible in a personal computer, and some are typically overlooked by the owners (until something goes wrong). At the lowest level, the computer's BIOS, or Basic Input-Output System, can often be updated. This is considered firmware (or microcode), which is programming stored in a semi-permanent manner on a non-volatile memory device in hardware (firmware is software that is not easily erased). In the computer, it is the BIOS code that provides the computer a way to understand the components it contains and how to use them in a general manner. BIOS developers often provide updates to their products to correct hardware compatibility issues and other errors; these updates are downloaded from their web site (perhaps also hosted on the computer manufacturer's site) as a file, and a special programming procedure is typically required to replace the old BIOS file in hardware with a new one. Things can get messed up if you don't follow the update instructions or if you install an inappropriate BIOS file.

The next level of programming in the computer is the operating system; the BIOS helps load this software from a hard drive (or solid-state drive) when booting. Whether you use Windows, Chrome OS, Apple Mac OS or a Linux variant, your OS will require periodic updates to stay current and secure. The amount of control you have over this depends on the OS and the update settings it allows. Chrome automatically installs updates without exception; Windows provides a lot of flexibility in when and if updates are applied.

A third level of programming related to the hardware is device drivers, which apply to internal computer hardware or external connected de-

vices. These drivers also get updated periodically as compatibility issues arise, though most users don't concern themselves with them as long as everything is working.

The final level of programming is the application or program software. Users of Microsoft Office products probably know about program updates to Word and other programs to fix bugs and close security gaps. Updates to other popular applications may be out there, but since they may not be as well advertised by the software vendors, users may not consider any are needed. TurboTax is one program I use that always checks for updates when it starts up; these update both the program and the tax forms it uses.

The ease of updating our technology through software can unfortunately create a culture of incomplete or insufficiently tested products. Manufacturers can rush computers and software to market, knowing that they can provide updates on their web sites later to solve their problems.

When the microprocessor spread from the computer to other products, the software update became the benefit and the bane of these devices as well. In addition to our computers and laptops, we must update our tablets and smart phones as well. My auto navigation GPS receiver can be connected to the manufacturer's web site through a PC (and the Internet) to allow its firmware programming to be updated. It can also download updated mapping information. Many consumer products connected to the Internet, like smart televisions, can require periodic software updates. The IoT, or Internet of Things, will bring a lot more devices in our homes connected to the web, and a lot more update opportunities.

Like many users of technology, I have a love-hate relationship with updates. I do want my devices to be as protected as possible from hackers, so I want known vulnerabilities patched as soon as is possible. I do like new features (when I am expecting them) and I like broken features to be fixed. I don't like updates that provide unexpected changes to my user experience, or that cause a previously working device or application to crash. I also don't like

being locked out of the use of my device while a long and unexpected update takes place. I dread the times I'm in a hurry to turn off my laptop and take it somewhere, and as Windows starts shutting down, it says "Updates in progress - Do not shut down your computer". What I want is full control of the update process, something the vendors are not always willing to give.

I have a Chromebook, and am always apprehensive when I see the little up arrow in the lower right corner of the screen that indicates an update is in progress. Google forces Chrome users to take whatever updates it provides, when it provides them. It never says not to shut down, so I disregard the update arrow, trusting Google to work things out and keep my Chromebook protected and operational.

In that regard Microsoft gets a bad rap, as though they generate tons of updates for their software, they do allow a lot of control of the process. I have Windows set to check for updates, but let me choose whether to download and install them. This is supposed to allow me to delay the update until I'm ready, but it still sometimes surprises me. I've had some problem updates at times, and have had to call Microsoft (yes, they provide free phone support for failed updates) when an update resulted in an error message.

I've also found Microsoft updates don't always know best. I recently had two new computers to set up, and spent a few days getting them updated initially. I am embarrassed to admit that one was a new Lenovo desktop computer that I'd bought for myself two years ago but had never gotten around to setting up. The other was a recent purchase by my dad (an HP desktop) that I offered to set up for my mom.

When I plugged everything in to run my new Lenovo, I knew I'd be in for a wait, as there were probably a lot of accumulated updates over the last two years. After asking Windows to check for updates, it took several hours before it came back with 211 important updates that were needed. I let it download and install them, but progress was slow and I had to let it continue overnight.

When I got up the next morning, it was waiting to reboot after the update installation. I let it reboot and went downstairs for breakfast. When I came back, it said something like: "Failed to configure Windows updates - reverting changes". It had some problem and wanted to undo all 211 updates. I let it go back to its previous state, and it again asked to try these 211 updates. I'd seen things like this before, where Windows seemed to choke on too many updates all at once. I selected only the first 40, and those installed successfully. I repeated with another 40, and another, until no more updates were shown to be needed. Unfortu-

nately, this took several days to resolve.

My dad's HP PC was much quicker to update, as it was much newer. Windows only reported 34 important updates, and I was able to run it through the three update cycles needed to be current in just one day.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.



Ad/Popup Blockers and the Internet Advertising War

by Mike Morris, Front Range PC Users Group, Fort Collins, CO
<http://www.frpcug.org> twritertext@gmail.com

According to InfoWorld:

"The Web's basic business model -- free content supported by advertising -- is badly broken"

"The Internet is at war with itself. An online arms race is pitting users against advertisers, publishers against the developers of ad and cookie blockers, and Apple against Google." Source: <http://www.infoworld.com/article/3013565/web-browsers/advertisers-versus-ad-blockers-race-to-internet-armageddon.html>

Certainly Google derives most of its revenue from selling advertising. In 2015, that revenue was \$67.39 Billion (yes that's Billion with a B), according to [statista.com](http://www.statista.com/statistics/266249/advertising-revenue-of-google/).

That's about 90% of total revenue (<http://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/020515/business-google.asp>).

See also <http://www.statista.com/statistics/266471/distribution-of-googles-revenues-by-source/>.

Not every company is doing as well as Google:

". . . Yahoo, despite claiming more than 800 million active users, hasn't been able to increase its ad revenue and may even be forced to sell off most of its assets."

". . . it's no accident that even the most successful news operations, including the New York Times, charge for access to their content. They were forced to." Source: <http://www.infoworld.com/article/3013565/web-browsers/advertisers-versus-ad-blockers-race-to-internet-armageddon.html>

So you should not be surprised when you see ads, popup or otherwise, on any website to which you connect. Nor should you be surprised at the rapidly increasing "countermeasures" for those ads.

Internet ads are **NOT** just an annoyance. Those ads can contain some seriously malicious software, as the NY Times, BBC, NFL, etc. recently discovered:

"Major sites including New York Times and BBC hit by 'ransomware' malvertising" (<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/mar/16/major-sites-new-york-times-bbc-ransomware-malvertising> - March 16th, 2016)

"The malware was delivered through multiple ad networks, and used a number of vulnerabilities, including a recently-patched flaw in Microsoft's former Flash competitor Silverlight, which was discontinued in 2013."

Big-name sites hit by rash of malicious ads spreading crypto ransomware (<http://arstechnica.com/security/2016/03/big-name-sites-hit-by-rash-of-malicious-ads-spreading-crypto-ransomware/> - March 15th, 2016)

Blocking internet ads has become a major industry. And note that this is a task that is separate from privacy issues and from making sure that you have up-to-date security software on your computer.

Mobile users, who have a data limit, according to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ad_blocking, can derive a financial benefit from ad blockers, since those ads consume data – especially when streaming audio and/or video

You can see why the use of these applications is growing rapidly. And the growth is, indeed, rapid:

"As of Q2 2015, 45 million Americans were using ad blockers. In a survey research study released Q2 2016, MetaFacts reported 72 million Americans, 12.8 million adults in the UK, and 13.2 million adults in France were using ad blockers on their PCs, Smartphones, or Tablets."
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ad_blocking

Most browsers today offer some sort of ad blocking/popup blocking, although their effectiveness varies. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_popup_blocking_software for a list of browsers and browser add-ons that provide ad blocking/popup blocking.

However, beware. Not all ad blockers block all ads. For example: "Adblock Plus—possibly the most popular ad blocker on the Internet—is a business. . . . Adblock Plus doesn't block all ads, but rather operates what it calls an "acceptable ads" program, where ads that meet its criteria for things like placement, size, and distinction, are "whitelisted"—that is, if the company displaying the ads is willing to

split the revenue gained by whitelisting with Adblock Plus. Companies can apply to have their sites whitelisted, but Adblock Plus has also reached out to some to solicit their business."
Source: <http://www.wired.com/2016/03/heres-how-that-adblocker-youre-using-makes-money/>

There are effective ad blockers:

". . . there are the ad blockers that block, well, nearly every ad and tracker. Privacy Badger, for example, is a nonprofit blocker operated by the Electronic Frontier Foundation that detects and blocks what it calls "non-consensual tracking," or ads and trackers that follow you around from site to site, serving you up, say, an ad about sneakers in a banner after you browse the Nike site. In effect, if you use Privacy Badger, it prevents your browser from loading anything from third-parties that you haven't agreed to see. The EFF accepts donations (and coding help), but the site itself operates as a nonprofit."

Source: <http://www.wired.com/2016/03/heres-how-that-adblocker-youre-using-makes-money/>

I use ad blockers because I find the ads a significant annoyance and also because of the potential security problems associated with the ads. I generally use the Firefox and Chrome browsers. I have the following add-ons installed¹:

Firefox:

- Disconnect (prevents tracking browsing/search history – see <https://disconnect.me/> for more information)
- HTTPS-Everywhere (from Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTTPS_Everywhere): ". . . automatically makes websites use the more secure HTTPS connection instead of HTTP, if they support it.")
- No Script (" . . . allows JavaScript, Java, Flash and other plugins to be executed only by trusted web sites of your choice (e.g. your online bank - see

<https://noscript.net/> for more information.")

- Privacy Badger (" . . . blocks advertisements and tracking cookies that do not respect the Do Not Track setting in a user's web browser." See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Privacy_Badger for more information)
- uBlock Origin (provides content-filtering and ad-blocking. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UBlock_Origin for more information)

Chrome:

- Disconnect
- HTTPS-Everywhere
- Privacy Badger
- uBlock Origin

When using these add-ons, it is important to remember TANSTAAFL:

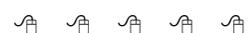
There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch

With browser add-ons installed, you may find that you cannot connect to a website of interest. Or, at least, nothing from the website will be displayed when you connect. If it is a website that you do, in fact, want to access, check the add-on settings/features for a temporary disable feature. Or, you may have to temporarily disable the add-on to view the website.

With an up-to-date operating system, up-to-date security software and browser ad blocker add-ons, there is a reasonable chance you will be able to keep your computer secure and free from malicious software.

However, you must still remember to backup at least your important data: financial info, photos, music and any other documents.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.



PDF File Type – What And Why?

by Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer, The Computer Club, Florida
<http://scccomputerclub.org> / Philsorr.wordpress.com philsorr@yahoo.com

The Portable Document File (.pdf) file type has been around since 1993 when Adobe Systems made the specification available to all, free of charge. However, PDF was initially a proprietary format, controlled by Adobe, until it was officially released as an Open Standard in 2008. Since then it has been controlled by a committee of volunteer experts who are part of the International Organization for Standardization. The .pdf file type was developed as a way to share documents that would include text, formatting, and inline images, among computer users of different types of computers from different companies (PCs, Apple, IBM, Sun, anyone remember DEC?). The PDF standard endeavors to present documents in a consistent manner that is independent of application software, hardware and operating system. The .pdf file type, by its very nature and name - Portable, was intended to be a file that could be a complex of text, graphics and so on, and be easily shared by people who didn't have the same hardware or software. So, the real benefit was that the file would look exactly the same when displayed on all different types of computer systems.

Each .pdf file encapsulates a complete description of a document, including text, fonts, graphics, forms, annotations, outlines, and other information needed to display the file. .pdf files can also contain links, buttons, audio, video, and business logic; and where security is important, they can be password protected. So a .pdf file can end up as a pretty big file. (When I was almost finished with this article I saved it as a .doc and a .pdf. The .doc was 36KB, and the .pdf was 106KB. I also looked at a PowerPoint presentation, 127 slides with lots of graphics; it was 11.5MB saved as .ppt, and 32.4MB saved as .pdf. Finally, I saved a fairly large Excel spreadsheet (125 rows, with columns that went out to column AT, with quite a few calculations within the spreadsheet), which was 157K saved

as .xls and 475 KB as .pdf. So from that limited testing it looks like the .pdf will be about 3 times the native applications size.)

.pdf files can easily be viewed on your computer using a free PDF Reader from Adobe called "Acrobat Reader DC". A mobile "Acrobat Reader DC" App is also available, free, for your Smartphone or Tablet. And for Windows 10 users, who are also Microsoft Office owners, PDFs can now be created from the Office Apps, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. (By the way, you may have seen a reference to an .xps file type along with .pdf. The .xps file type is Microsoft's alternative to .pdf. It was introduced with Windows Vista but never attracted much of a following. Of the two, the .pdf format is the preferred choice.)

At this point in computer evolution, .pdf files can be opened by just about every major operating system (Windows 7, 10, OS X, iOS, Android) and can be used by many different applications. In addition, the majority of modern web browsers (Chrome, Edge, and Firefox) allow .pdf files to be read without the use of an external application, making them easy to use in web applications. (Though the literature doesn't give these internal PDF readers much of a good review; and advice on how to replace the internal PDF reader is easily found.) Also, Mobile Operating Systems (Android, iOS) are including PDF readers, making the PDF format almost universally useable. (This can't be said of any other file type; even though we all may be familiar with Microsoft's Word format (.doc), this format can only be used by a limited number of applications.)

There are hundreds of file types on a typical computer, and that you can inspect and change the association between a file type and the program that uses that file type, using the Control Panel. ("Default Programs", followed by "associate a file type or protocol with a program.") So, you have

to have a program on your computer that knows how to use the .pdf file type. If you are having trouble opening a .pdf document, you probably don't have a program that knows how to use the .pdf file type, on your machine. If this is your situation, consider getting the free Adobe Reader, from the Adobe website, <http://www.adobe.com>.

Normally, .pdf files cannot be modified by the user, making these files perfect for use by an "end user", i.e., someone who needs the content of the file without being able to modify the file contents. In other words the file was not intended to be changed, once it was created or "published". So, originally there was no way to change a .pdf file without using the very expensive PDF Creator software from Adobe (or lesser expensive PDF creation software from Foxit). However, there are situations where it makes sense to change the contents of a received .pdf file, like "if you need to fill in some information on a PDF form".

"PDF to Word" conversion websites like "PDF Converter", "PDF to Word" or "PDF Online" are websites that advertise that will do the conversion for free. (Google "free pdf to word" and you'll see many possibilities.) Also, you could try "free document converter" found at www.hellopdf.com. I haven't any experience with these, but the literature claims they work as indicated. And, for those of you who need to do a lot of these conversions, Adobe offers "Adobe Acrobat DC" for about \$15/month or you could buy it for around \$200. There must be a large enough number of people who need to convert .pdf files to .doc files because when I Googled "pdf to word", I was pointed to many websites that could supposedly help me in my quest. There even was a YouTube video that indicated that you could upload a .pdf file to Google drive, (yes, you'll probably need a Google Drive account), and then download it as a word (.doc) document. When I tried it on a pretty simple PDF, the conversion didn't seem to preserve a lot of the formatting, so it didn't look like it would be acceptable, at all, on a more complex document. I haven't had the occasion

to need to convert a document, but if the situation ever arises I'm sure I'll be able to get it done, though I just might have to go to the lab and get some help from one of the very able and helpful monitors. So, when all is said and done, the PDF standard is deeply ingrained in modern computing because it allows a single file to

provide a display that looks the same on all different types of computers.

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My Experience With Windows 10

by Jim Cerny, Columnist, Sarasota TUG, FL
www.thestug.org / jimcerny123@gmail.com

You can spend a lot of time researching all about Windows 10 (Win10) on the internet and what I have found is really too much information, more information than I need or would use. There are countless videos on the internet about downloading Win10 (and installing it) and about the many changes from Windows 7 and 8. I hope my one story here relating my experience may be useful to many of you who are considering going to Win10.

In my case, my five-year-old Toshiba laptop needed to be replaced even though it was working just fine. My thought was that it is much easier to migrate to a new computer while your old computer is still working -- it is so much easier to transfer your files, etc. So, my path to Win10 was to get it on a new computer and not "upgrade" my old computer to it. Perhaps that would be something for you to consider as well. It would avoid any upgrade issues. It turns out that I bought another Toshiba laptop on sale for around \$350. It should have all the memory and processing speed I need.

After using Win10 for several weeks, I have found that I can do what I used to do on Win7 easily. It has always been a sore spot with me that upgrades change too many things and you are faced with a whole new look and not a clue where to find things. This makes me frustrated that I cannot do today what I did yesterday using the previous version. Well, my "learning curve" to Win10 was the shortest and easiest I experienced in a long time. All my software programs were installed on my new computer

and they all worked. This may not be true for everyone.

But I did have a few issues and here they are:

My worst issue was that my new computer could not stay connected to my Wi-Fi modem even though I was using it in the same place. After moving around my laptop I found that the Wi-Fi range was reduced to only about 20 to 25 feet. I called Verizon, my internet provider, and they sent me a new modem but I still had the same short-range. So I went and purchased a "range extender" which I placed halfway between my modem and my computer and, so far, it is working all right. I noticed that the Wi-Fi signal strength is not consistent -- that is, the signal strength can still vary from strong to weak. After talking to Verizon and Toshiba, I still do not know if this is an issue with Win10 or my laptop.

The next issue for me was that I could not easily put icons on my desktop screen. It seems that Win10 is discouraging me from using icons on my desktop as my preferred way to start programs or apps. Using Google I learned that I still can put icons (shortcuts) on my desktop but to do so I have to search for the program and go to where the program actually is on my computer and then I can "drag" an icon of the program to my desktop. You cannot "drag" a program or app icon from the all apps list. Win10 seems to want you to search for the program or app you want to open or to use the Start Menu "all apps" option. Of course you can easily drag an app or a pro-

gram from the all apps list to your "tile screen" or the taskbar. [Ed note - just drag the icon from the start menu to the desktop. The program leaves the icon in the start menu, and copies it to the desktop.]

As a minor issue, I noticed whenever I plugged in an external flash drive I saw TWO entries for that drive (same letter) in File Manager. The two entries are exactly the same and I do not know why Windows puts them in the device list twice. I Googled this and the consensus of the comments was that Microsoft should fix this in a future update.

You could spend your lifetime learning all there is to learn about Win10, but I wanted to end this article with something positive. In Win10, when you double-click on a photo file to open it, it opens in a new viewer app which, unlike the old Win7 photo viewer, allows you to edit the photo in many ways, including brightness, lighting, contrast, etc. Since I am not a professional photographer, I do not think I will need a separate program anymore to change or edit my photos. I like that.

So do not be scared of Win10. It does not have the uncomfortable changes that many experienced going from Win7 to Win8. By buying a new computer I skipped Win8 completely and so far I am glad I did.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.



Club Record Changes

To update your e-mail address, phone number, etc., please e-mail the club secretary at: Secretary@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org. Using this address will provide the smoothest and quickest venue for any changes.



Backing Up Using Windows File History

by Tom Burt, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, NV
<http://www.sccsc.club/> tomburt89134@cox.net

It can't be stressed enough that computer users need to back up their PC's data files regularly. Without backups, the inevitable failure of a PC's disk drive means that all that data becomes lost permanently. A backup regimen usually includes some kind of full clone or image process that makes a complete backup of everything on the hard drive. However, full backups are time-consuming and so are not convenient to perform every day or even every week. Also, in a full backup, probably 95% of the data being backed up has not changed since the last backup.

To complement the full backup process, it would be nice to have a facility that automatically backs up just those files that have changed within a designated set of folders. Enter Windows File History. File History appeared in Windows 8 and has been improved in Windows 10. Its ancestry goes back to Windows XP's little known or used Volume Shadow Copy feature. File History makes regular backup copies of files in a designated set of folders to a designated backup drive. Commonly, the backup drive is an external hard drive, a USB flash drive or a folder on another PC on your network. Generally, you will want to leave this backup drive plugged in continually.

File History has to be turned on and a backup location has to be designated. To get started, go to the File History Settings via the Control Panel. The screen copy shown on this page is from Windows 8.1, but the screen from Windows 10 is similar. Plug in the desired external hard drive or flash drive, or create a Mapped drive to a network share on another PC. In my case, I am using a 64GB USB 3.0 flash drive as the backup drive.

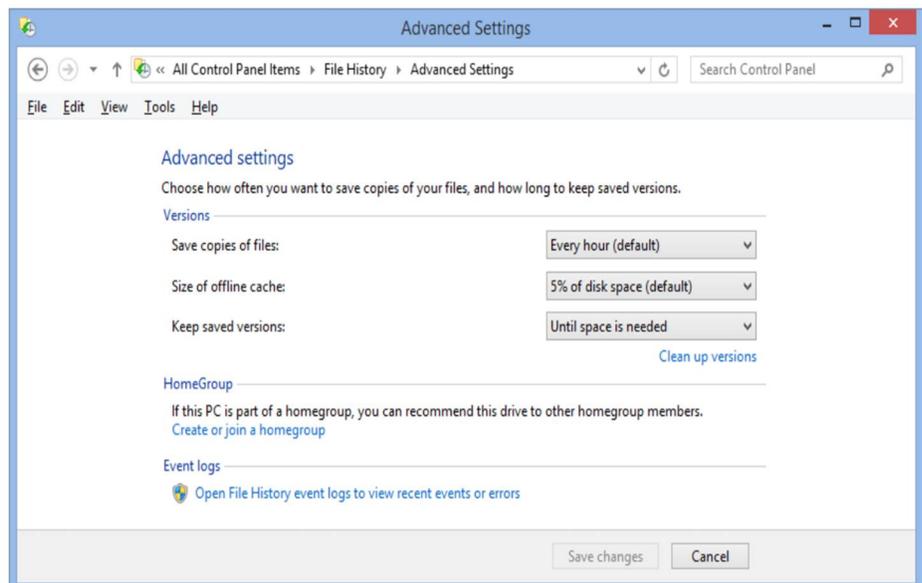
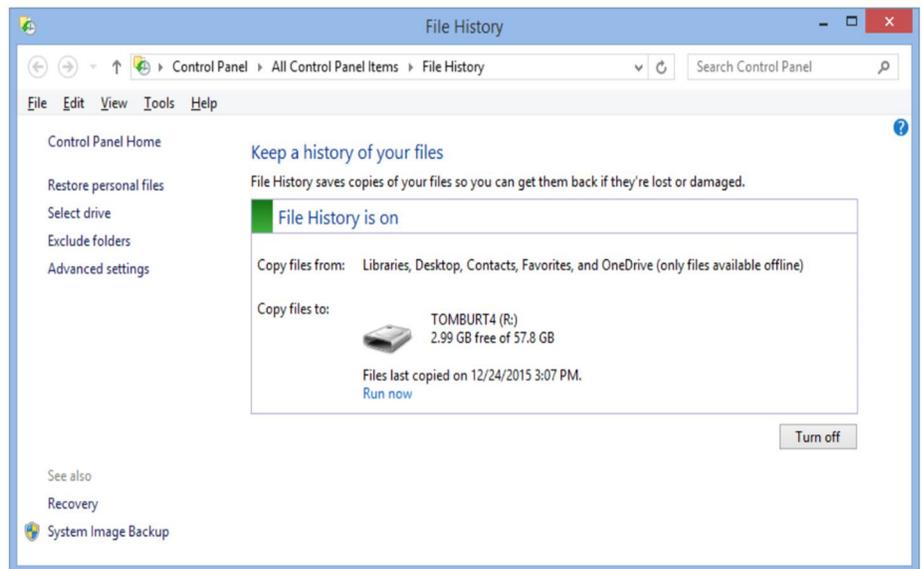
Click the "Turn On" button and specify the drive letter of your backup drive. Then click the "Advanced Settings" button and review the detailed settings for how often the backup runs, the size of the offline cache (space on the regular PC hard drive used to save copies if the backup drive is not

plugged in) and conditions on how long to keep backup versions of files.

File History takes care of backing up files in my "profile folder" that change frequently, such as saved emails, Internet favorites, contents of "My Documents" and other libraries. In Windows 8.1, you can add other folders as libraries and they will then get backed up. In Windows 10, File History was improved to allow you to specify an open-ended list of folders to include in the backup.

Each time a file in one of my "profile folders" changes, File History will create a new backup version of that file, also keeping previous backup versions. I set File History to keep saved versions until the backup drive gets full. File History will then automatically delete the oldest versions to make room for new backups.

The File History backup drive is visible in the File Explorer, just like any other drive. Let's say you've accidentally deleted a file within one of the folders File History is backing up and then you also emptied the recycle bin. You can start File History and then click "Restore personal files" (see the first screen shot above) to find that file on



the File History drive and copy it back to the original location. You might want to restore an earlier version of a file if the live version of the file gets damaged in some way (maybe you accidentally deleted a large paragraph in a Word document and saved it before you noticed).

This has been just a quick overview of File History. So far, I've been very happy with File History as an ongoing

complement to my full system image backups. Once it's set up, it just quietly works in the background and I can be confident that ALL my data files are backed up to within the last hour.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.



allowing me to choose when they happen is important.

- I should also be able to choose not to install the update at all, at least until the next new update becomes available.

There are some software packages that offer everything I've described, and I really do appreciate them. Sadly, most offer incomplete mixtures of those features.

Most often, I *do* accept the updates.

I also believe that's exactly what the average user should do. You should not be required to understand what each individual update is about. In most cases, "just take 'em" is my general recommendation.



Windows: Oh, Windows....

Updates to the Windows operating system are a special case, and unfortunately not a good one. Windows update is a case of things getting worse, rather than better.

If you walk that list of functionality I want from applications, you'll note that the most recent versions of Windows fail miserably.

- There's no notification that updates are available. (Only that it's time to reboot after they've been installed.)
- There's almost no information about what the update includes,

Are Automatic Updates A Good Thing?

*From the Ask Leo Newsletter
<https://askleo.com>*

Unless you're willing to pay a lot of attention on a very regular basis, automatic updates are an important part of keeping your machine safe.

“What are your thoughts on automatic updates? Windows updates, but also automatic updates for my spyware and antivirus programs. I have several and I have automatic updates turned on on all. Could this lead to problems by leaving my computer open to the net?”

This one's easy: I *love* automatic updates.

Let me explain why, and how to make sure your automatic updates are safe and doing what you think they are.

I'll also explore one area where things have gotten worse instead of better over the years.

Anti-malware: absolutely

I *strongly* believe automatic updates for anti-malware tools are an *absolute must*. There are simply so many changes – quite literally every day, sometimes multiple times a day – that keeping them up to date is a must. Doing it automatically is by far the easiest and most reliable way.

The issue with anti-malware tools is what I call “the race”. Those who create malware do so constantly. Anti-malware tool vendors are always playing catch-up. They're constantly updating either their tools, or the databases

of malware information, so they can catch even the most recent threats.

Making sure your anti-malware tools have not only the most recent versions of software, but also the most up-to-date versions of the malware database, is critical to staying safe and secure.

Doing so automatically is by far the best approach when it comes to your security.

Applications: yes, please

I treat application updates somewhat differently. I want automatic *notification* of updates and new versions. This means:

- The update notification should be a true notification – not an every-so-often “do you want to check for updates now?” Automatically check it for me, and bother me only if there is something I should be aware of.
- The update notification should tell me what it is, and what it's going to do for me, including how important or critical the update might be – in terms I can understand.
- I should be able to choose to delay the update and be reminded to install it later. Updates can interfere with work in progress, or have other adverse impacts, so

and certainly not in language the average user can understand.

- The ability to delay an update has been severely crippled.
- The ability to avoid an update has been removed.

Windows has gone to the other extreme: you will take all updates as they're made available. Period. At best, you can set up a time window during which your machine won't reboot, to avoid those middle-of-a-presentation frustrations.

What's frustrating is that *in an ideal world, that would actually work*. But Windows has proven time and time again that we don't live in an ideal world. Updates can cause problems. Updates can happen at inopportune times. Updates can absolutely feel forced on you ... because ultimately, they are.

Automatic updates are a good thing when they work, and work reliably. Windows has yet to achieve that bar.

Automatic updates and security

As for your concern about security, I'm not terribly concerned.

Most automatic updates are handled through the same mechanisms your web browser uses to visit web sites. The result is that for most instances, you're not "opening up" any additional vulnerabilities by enabling automatic updates. As long as you're dealing with reputable vendors, the chances of "automatically" downloading malware is next to zero.

You're at much greater risk if you're not behind a firewall, visit a malicious web site, or mistakenly click on an emailed attachment.

Or you don't take updates.

Sadly, Windows itself represents the biggest risk today, forcing you to take updates whether you're ready or not, and having a track record that makes that unfortunately risky. All I can recommend to protect yourself here is to make sure you're backing up regularly.

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The President's Pen

(Continued from page 3)

information. For instance, I have all my passwords stored on the PC, but the data is on an encrypted drive so even if the PC or laptop is compromised, no one can get to the data, and it's not MS encryption with their built-in back door. Also I have backups.

I was talking with someone about this and they reminded me of MS Office 365 which is in between MS Office 2013 and MS Office 2016. MS Office 365 is cloud based and MS attempted to lease the suite to people for \$10 a month. You don't hear about MS Office 365 now do you? I guess MS didn't get the message or thought they could skirt around it in the new office suite.

So no cloud for me, no MS Office 2016 for me, no \$25 for me. The old adage stands, of "Buyer Beware".

This month is a presentation from Batteries Plus Bulbs just in time to be prepared for Christmas and the days after for all those battery requirements. This is an informative and relevant meeting topic for us all. See you Tuesday.



If your dues are paid in the month they are due, as shown on the invoice the club sends, you automatically get an extra month of membership. This policy has been in effect for many years but newer members may not be aware of this "free month" policy.

Member Ads

Ads are available free to SHCC members, and are limited to computer related items for non-commercial purposes. Any ad shall be a maximum of twelve newsletter lines of text.



SHCC Post Office Box

After 9-11 some of the rules have been changed concerning post office boxes. These changes are intended to make it more difficult for persons using post office boxes to remain anonymous, at least to the post office. If you send anything to the club's PO box don't put a person's name on it. It's OK to use titles such as President, Treasurer, and such. If you use a person's name, your mail will sit at the post office until that person can get to the post office with ID and claim the mail. This just slows down your mail and inconveniences the addressee.



SHCC Emergency Cancellation

Sterling Heights Computer Club meets at Macomb Community College (MCC). We will meet if MCC is open and will not if MCC is closed. MCC closure is announced with other school closings on many local TV and radio stations and on their web site. All members of SHCC have an email address. One of the SHCC officers will send an email to the addresses SHCC has on file alerting members to the event cancellation. If your email is broken, call an officer; don't leave a message, call another officer if you don't talk to someone live. It is your responsibility to keep the email address you have listed with SHCC current.



WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

by Paul Baecker webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org



This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing, and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything. Club members are encouraged to submit favorite sites (a description is optional) to the e-address noted above, for inclusion in a future WYSIWYG issue. Also check the SHCC web site ("Web Page Reviews") for previous gems.

What is Safe Mode in Windows? What are the different types of Safe Mode?

<http://www.thewindowsclub.com/different-types-safe-mode-windows/>

Paranoid or prudent: Should you tape over your webcam? (Yes, says the FBI.)

<http://cameras.reviewed.com/features/paranoid-or-prudent-should-you-tape-over-your-webcam/>

Making Windows screen shots using the Print Screen key (PrtScn) and other tools.

<https://davescomputertips.com/windows-10-quick-tips-fast-screenshots/>

What are the ways malware can infect your Windows computer? What types of files carry virus and malware?

<http://www.thewindowsclub.com/how-can-you-get-computer-virus>

Turn off the Windows Customer Experience program.

<http://www.ghacks.net/2016/10/26/turn-off-the-windows-customer-experience-program/>

How to use a custom drop-down list for choices in Excel 2010 (as well as other versions).

<https://davescomputertips.com/how-to-use-a-custom-drop-down-list-for-choices-in-excel-2010/>

How to find all merged cells in an Excel worksheet.

<https://davescomputertips.com/how-to-find-all-merged-cells-in-an-excel-worksheet/>

DDoS Attack: How to identify vulnerable devices. How secure is yours?

<https://davescomputertips.com/ddos-attack-how-to-identify-vulnerable-devices/>

Fix Windows Explorer crashing.

<https://davescomputertips.com/fix-windows-explorer-crashing/>

How to diagnose (and possibly fix) Windows Explorer crashes.

<https://davescomputertips.com/how-to-diagnose-and-possibly-fix-windows-explorer-crashes/>

Use multiple references to the same Word 2010 footnote.

<https://davescomputertips.com/use-multiple-references-to-the-same-word-2010-footnote>

Is the online "Reimage Repair" offering legitimate? (Hint: Doesn't appear to be.)

<https://davescomputertips.com/is-reimage-repair-legitimate>

What a file's metadata is and how to edit it in Windows.

<http://www.digitalcitizen.life/what-file-s-metadata-and-how-edit-it>

Can you match the two parts of these odd facts? (14 different quizzes)

<http://www.sporcle.com/games/babymonkee/odd-but-true-facts-iii>

What to look for in a telescope and photographic equipment, and where to point them.

<http://www.astronomyforbeginners.com>

New Windows 10 keyboard shortcuts.

<http://www.ricksdailytips.com/windows-10-keyboard-shortcuts/>

HDR (High Dynamic Range-technique) imaging is a set of techniques that allow a far greater dynamic range of exposures than normal digital imaging techniques. Here are 35 examples.

<https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/03/35-fantastic-hdr-pictures/>

Fill rows of pieces to score points.

<http://hex.frvr.com>

What is UAC (User Account Control) & why you should not turn it off.

<http://www.digitalcitizen.life/uac-why-you-should-never-turn-it-off>

Easily uninstall/reinstall Windows 10 applications.

<https://davescomputertips.com/easily-uninstallreinstall-windows-10-apps>

22 websites to teach you how to code.

<http://johnnylists.com/22-websites-to-teach-you-how-to-code/>

How to create a password protected folder without any extra software.

<http://www.howtogeek.com/105633/how-to-create-a-password-protected-folder-without-any-extra-software/>

Evolution of the Rifle (downloadable infographic file).

<http://www.cannonsafe.com/infographics/the-evolution-of-the-rifle.html>

20 Windows registry hacks to make your PC more awesome. (Proceed with caution. Make a backup copy of your computer's registry file before changing anything in it.)

<http://www.techradar.com/news/software/operating-systems/20-registry-hacks-to-make-your-pc-more-awesome-590803/2>

How to make Windows 10 look and feel like Windows 7.

<http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/make-windows-10-like-windows-7>

5 Ways to make Screenshots in Windows 10 (yes, there are other ways, too).

<http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/capture-screenshots-windows-10>

Windows 10 settings you should change right away. (No, do NOT disable User Account Control.)

<http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/windows-10-settings-to-change>

Before you resort to MS Paint or piracy, give these free image-editing tools a shot.

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/best-free-photo-editing-software/>

What you can do to make a Windows PC faster.

<https://www.lifewire.com/speed-up-your-computer-3506852>

How to describe your problem to a PC repair professional.

<https://www.lifewire.com/how-to-describe-your-problem-to-a-pc-repair-professional-2619036>

Is your Windows Desktop dotted with files? Have you noticed that your fast computer has been running slower and slower? How to clean your Windows desktop.

<https://www.lifewire.com/cleaning-and-speeding-up-windows-desktop-3506952>

Learn how to develop a logical Windows folder structure, and save yourself loads of time locating your files.

<https://www.lifewire.com/organize-your-stuff-with-windows-folders-3507017>

How to use the excellent and free VLC media player software to download videos from www.youtube.com. Other tools are also discussed in this article.

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-download-youtube-videos/>

Let's say you have a large ISO file on your Linux computer and you want to access, extract or copy one single file from it. In Linux there are a few ways to do it.

<http://www.tecmint.com/extract-files-from-iso-files-linux/>

50 tricks and hacks which you (probably) don't know about your PC.

<http://www.talktogamer.com/2015/10/50-tricks-and-hacks-which-you-dont-know.html>

Just move the mouse to change the three-dimensional shapes.

<http://js1k.com/2016-elemental/demo/2552>

How to find your lost Windows or Office product keys.

<http://www.howtogeek.com/206329/how-to-find-your-lost-windows-or-office-product-keys/>

13 ways you're screwing up your own computer.

<https://www.lifewire.com/ways-youre-screwing-up-your-computer-2624710>

A comprehensive guide to the anatomy of type.

<http://www.typographydeconstructed.com>

The changing configuration of the National Hockey League (NHL) from 1942-2016.

<https://i.redd.it/o8ok7hc8tvux.gif>

Pupils come in a variety of shapes. Why do some animals have vertical pupils, whereas others have round or horizontal?

<http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/1/7/e1500391.full>

NOTE: Many of the links in the digital newsletter connect to the Internet if clicked. For those that do not, copy and past the link into your Internet browser.

World Wide Web Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the WebPageReviews section on the club's web site. You can see past web sites reviewed in this column on our club web page. They are arranged into various key word categories to help locate a specific site.

