



THE WYSIWYG



April 2021

Volume 33 Issue 4

STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, Michigan 48311-0385

**MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY APRIL 6
7:00 PM**

Same day/time as usual
Location: Your house,
Video conference

(Please use your real name when you log in, just as we all do when we attend our in-person meetings. The ZOOM event host may restrict admittance to confirmed club members only.)

IN THIS ISSUE:	
About SHCC	2
President's Pen	3
The USB Paradox: Why Do USB Connections Need Three Tries?	4
How to Securely Shop Online: 8 Tips to Protect Yourself	5
Free Up Google Storage	6
Website Not Secure	7
How To Resize An Image	9
What Is a Meme (and How Did They Originate)?	10
LastPass Changes	11
World Backup Day 3/31/2021	12
R.I.P.	13
Web Page Reviews	13 & 14

This Month's Main Meeting Topic:

“Using A Webcam to Spy on Something”

will be presented online by
APCUG Speakers Bureau member

Francis Chao

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

DUES: \$30/YEAR

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CLUB WEB PAGE: <http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>

2021 SHCC Officers – Thanks for all your hard work!!!

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Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

SHCC Coordinators

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Don VanSyckel
Greeter for visitors	Jim Waldrop
Newsletter Publisher/Editor	Paul Baecker
Program Coordinator	Mike Bader
Publicity	Patrick Little
Publicity	Phil Reynaud
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Club Dues Amounts

The club dues were increased to \$30 per year at the November 2018 meeting.

This includes a digital version of the newsletter sent monthly, except for July and August, when the club does not meet.

A paper version of the newsletter is available in place of the digital newsletter, for an additional \$31 per year (increased at March 2019 meeting).

Associate memberships, for a second member of a household, remain at an additional \$15 per year.

Two-Month Meeting Schedule

MAY 2021	JUNE 2021
4 - SHCC Main Meeting 9 - SEMCO meeting	1 - SHCC Main Meeting 13 - SEMCO meeting

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

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The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel



Coming up in April is a remote presentation "Using A Webcam to Spy on Something " by Francis Chao from Association of Personal Computer User Groups. At first you might think, I don't want to spy on anyone. But wait, turn spy into watch and you might think of several things you'd like to watch or check on when not at home. How about your pet, the water level in the sump pump, level of seed in the bird feeder, packages on the front porch, and other stuff around the house? Most people wish they could check on something. Attend the April meeting and learn how you can spy on just about anything.

There three things that all computer users should do:

- 1) Backup, backup, backup
- 2) Save all passwords in a secure location and don't use the same password at multiple places
- 3) Don't click on unknown links in emails

There are probably more items some of you would like to add to the list above, but these three are very important and universal to all computer users.

#2 is probably the one you've heard the least about, possibly nothing. The first part is saving your passwords in a secure location. I'm not a fan of saving my cache of passwords on line in any way, shape, or form. Any web site or other web based service can be unavailable for a number of reasons. I prefer to keep passwords locally so that they are always available. I suggest using an encrypted file or a file in an encrypted directory or disk volume. Having a password on your computer is good but it doesn't prevent someone from pulling your hard drive and mounting in on another computer and accessing everything on the drive. So having the file encrypted is the only really safe method. The file type I suggest is either a spreadsheet or a database., not a word processor.

Some columns or fields you might consider are:

- company
- URL
- user name
- password
- account number
- notes

The other path you can take is to use a password manager software package that stores the data on your local hard drive. I haven't used any of these because I already had an encrypted disk volume and I saw no value in these packages. If you do go this route, I suggest you use a package that has an export feature. You might want to change packages in the future, and exporting your information from the old package will be handy.

If you do choose to record user name, for an extra level of security you can also consider using different user names on various web sites.

Note, browser such as Firefox can securely save your user name and password for most sites. Beware there are clean-ups that you can do that will erase the user name and password cache. So I prefer to have my main data file totally under my control.

We have all heard about hacks and data leaks. If someone hacks into a company's user information and steals your user name and password, you don't want that to give them access to your accounts at other sites. This is why you want at least a different password at each site, but also different user names for better protection.

Doing this might sound like a lot of work, and it is more work than doing nothing. Little in life that's worthwhile is totally free. This is also where backups are important. If your hard drive crashes with your encrypted password file on it you'll be very happy that you have a backup. This is true if you use my homegrown method or a password manager.

Last Month:

We had a presentation last month in March by Hewie Poplock from Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) Speakers Bureau. Hewie presented "Learning Resources For Seniors". He shared many useful tips and web sites for continuing to learn and doing research on topics of interest.

* * * * *

{Ed. note: You can backup the IDs and passwords that you have Firefox remembering. This is a smart move, because if you have to reinstall Firefox for any reason (such as it gets corrupted, or just isn't working properly), you will lose all of your stored IDs/passwords.

- Open Firefox (of course)
- Click on "Open Menu" (click on the 3-horizontal-lines icon in the upper right corner)
- Select "Logins and Passwords" (This is where your IDs and logins are stored, if you choose to let Firefox do so)
- Click on the 3-horizontal-dots "Open Menu" icon near the upper right corner
- Select "Export Logins..."
- In the warning box, select "Export..."
- File Explorer will open. Select the location where you want to save the logins.csv file and save it.

This logins.csv file can be opened (just double-click it) in a spreadsheet to view the contained ID/passwords, along with their respective web site addresses (URLs).

Remember that anyone who steals your PC can see this file, too. Protect it, perhaps by encrypting it, or storing it off of your PC (on a flash drive).}

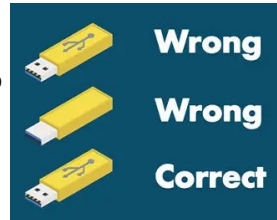


The USB Paradox: Why Do USB Connections Need Three Tries?

By Chris Hoffman

<https://www.howtogeek.com>

It's happened to everyone: You try to plug in a USB connector, and it doesn't work. So you flip it, and it still doesn't work. Frustrated, you flip it a third time — and it fits! Why is this experience so common with USB?



Decades of Flipping USB Cables Around

We're talking about the classic USB hardware here — specifically, the “type-A” connector that [dates back to USB's first release in 1996](#).

Modern [USB-C connectors](#) don't have this problem. You can plug them in either way. USB has definitely improved on its design, and the problem is going away.

But we've still been flipping those USB sticks back and forth for decades now. So let's look at why that is.

The Joke Explanation: USB Superposition

Many geeks have speculated that USB connections have a sort of “superposition.” You must spin a USB device around three times because it has three states — up, down, and a third position we do not fully understand. Only in this position will the connection be in a correct, pluggable state.

That's all pretty funny, but of course, it's just a joke. However, it's funny because there does seem to be something unusual about USB compared to the other common connectors we use every day.

These USB connection issues are a meme at this point. This problem is also known as the “USB paradox”: If there are only two ways a USB connector can fit, why does it take three tries to plug it in?

A Design That Appears Symmetrical But Isn't

Physically, a USB type-A connector appears to be symmetrical. It's rectangular in shape. Unlike HDMI, for example, there's nothing about the physical shape of the connector that makes it look like one side is up and one side is down.

But it is! Just look inside the connector and you'll see that it isn't symmetrical. One side must be up and one side must be down.



But unlike with something like HDMI, there's nothing about the shape that makes it easy to tell which side is up and which side is down. USB is just asking for trouble.

It's Unclear Which Side Is the Top

Without any clear indication of which side is actually the top of the USB cable, you don't have much choice. You either carefully look at the inside of the connector, or you flip it around and experiment, right?

Actually, the USB standard tries to help.

Did you know that there is something that's supposed to tell you which side is the top of the USB connector?

There's often a USB logo on top of the connector, and you can see it — and possibly feel it with your fingers. If you see the logo while looking down at the USB connector, then you know that the USB connector is in its correct orientation and that you should just be able to plug it in.

If you have a vertical USB connection — for example, on the back of your monitor — the USB cable should be plugged in with the logo on the connector facing you.

This logo position is required by the official USB specification, but not every company follows it. Since not every USB connector has a logo on it, you can't take this for granted. Also, on some devices, the USB ports themselves are upside down inside the device — this may be necessary to fit a bunch of components inside a laptop, for example.



So, not only do most people not know about this logo trick, but it also doesn't necessarily work all the time.

Even if you know the trick, you might still find yourself flipping the connector three times, just trying to find which orientation is correct by trial and error.

Trial and Error — But Why Three Times?

So, with a connector with an unclear design and unreliable marking of which side belongs on top, what do you do?

Sure, you could look at the inside of the USB connector and the inside of the USB port you're plugging it into and determine the correct orientation with your eyes. But why bother? It may be difficult to see the inside of the USB port — for example, if it's on the back of a comput-

(Continued on page 12.....USB)

How to Securely Shop Online: 8 Tips to Protect Yourself

By Marshall Gunnell

<https://www.howtogeek.com>

Cybercrime is an epidemic. In the U.S. alone, nearly half a million complaints are filed about it each year, according to the FBI — and that's just what's reported. Here's how you can stay safe and avoid becoming a statistic.

Only Shop on Sites Using HTTPS

Let's start with the most obvious advice: Only shop with sites that use HTTPS encryption. If the site is using HTTP, any data transferred over the connection, including payment details and passwords, is unencrypted, meaning that it can be read by anyone with some basic cybercrime know-how.

Connecting to a site that uses HTTPS ensures that all transmitted data is encrypted and that would-be criminals can't eavesdrop on your data.

Keep in mind that while an encrypted connection (HTTPS) is obviously better than HTTP, that only means that your connection is secure. It doesn't mean that the website is secure. The website could still be full of vulnerabilities and exposed databases and may have plenty of other weak spots.

HTTPS is good, [but it doesn't mean that you're completely safe](#).

Be Careful Who You Shop With

Although cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated, you can generally spot a fraudulent site fairly easily. Here are some of the telltale signs to look for:

- **Poor Site Design:** The first thing you're likely to notice when you go to a site is its design. E-commerce sites, in particular, dedicate a lot of resources to creating a beautiful site with great usability on both desktop and mobile. If a site looks like it was thrown together in a couple of hours, it's probably not a good idea to trust it with your credit card details.
- **Poor Spelling/Grammar:** As with site design, reputable sites put a great amount of effort and resources into the content of the site. Typos occasionally happen, but if there is an obvious deficit in high-quality content, there's a good chance that the site is malicious. That isn't to say that sites that do look legit can't also be malicious — just that sites with glaring issues obviously present more of a risk.
- **Weird Business Names, URLs, or Emails:** It's generally pretty easy to spot these, but some can be sneaky. If the website address (URL) looks

something like "best-gifts-at-super-low-prices.com", then it's probably a scam. Also, be mindful of emails or URLs that have almost unnoticeable tweaks in their names compared to the actual company they are pretending to be. It's all about being able to spot the difference between rnicrosoft, micorsoft, and microsoft.

- **No (or Sketchy) Contact Details:** Ecommerce sites always provide a way to get in touch. If the website doesn't provide a way to talk to support, that probably means it's illegitimate — and even if it is legitimate, you don't want to deal with a company that doesn't provide decent support.
- **Unsecure Site:** As mentioned above, if a site is missing the "S" in HTTPS, don't trust it with your credit card details. Sending your information over HTTP puts it at risk.

In general, shop with who you know. And if you don't know them, read what others are saying about them before you consider shopping with them.

Shop Online with Credit Cards If Possible

If you have a credit card, it's generally a good idea to use it instead of your debit card when making online purchases.

The main reason is that when using a credit card, if your payment details are stolen via formjacking (a method of stealing your credit card details from online forms), your bank account usually won't be immediately affected. In most cases, your bank account is debited at the time of purchase when you use your debit card, whereas your credit card is only paid once per month. This means that you have a much larger window to fix any issues before your money disappears.

Also, as highlighted by the [Federal Trade Commission](#), your liability for fraudulent charges is drastically different between a credit card and a debit card.

Don't have a credit card? You can link your bank account to an online payment platform (such as [Google Pay](#) or [Apple Pay](#)) so that the retailer never even sees your payment information.

Frequently Check Your Credit Card Statements

As a matter of good practice, check your credit card statements as often as possible. Most credit card companies have an app or will let you sign up to receive texts when a charge has been added to your account. Do an inventory. If something doesn't look right, give your credit card company or bank a call and try to sort it out. If you have any concerns, put a hold on your cards. You can even cancel them and have new ones sent to you. It's better to be without a credit or debit card for a few weeks than to be without money you didn't spend.

(Continued on page 8.....Shopping)

Free Up Google Storage By Cyn Mackley <https://cynmackley.com>

Google offers a handy tool to help you free up storage space in your Google Cloud storage account.

Start by following this link: <https://one.google.com/storage/management>

Manage your account storage will open.

Manage your account storage

Free up space across Gmail, Google Photos, and Google Drive when you review and remove extra, discarded, and large items. [Learn more](#)

Discarded items

You can free up to 1.1 MB

Deleted emails
Emails you moved to the Trash but haven't been permanently deleted

No emails in Trash

Spam emails
Emails marked as spam

[Review and free up 1.1 MB](#)

Deleted files
Files you moved to the Trash but haven't been permanently deleted

No files in Trash

Large items

You can free up to 1.1 GB

Emails with large attachments

3d-printer.jpg
aaron-carter.jpg
68519496_2385161328469981_548...
9-11-memorial-site.jpg
ada.jpg
ml.jpg
[+ more attachments](#)

[Review and free up 96.5 MB](#)

Large files

PDF PDF
AMERICAN
Crash

[Review and free up 1 GB](#)

Large photos and videos

No large photos or videos

You can start by checking out deleted files and emails and spam.

Discarded items

You can free up to 1.1 MB

Deleted emails
Emails you moved to the Trash but haven't been permanently deleted

No emails in Trash

Spam emails
Emails marked as spam

[Review and free up 1.1 MB](#)

Choose which items you want to get rid of.

Spam emails

[To free up account space, select items to permanently delete. \[Learn more\]\(#\)](#)

All items (32)

<input type="checkbox"/>	▲ Laurie R. King	The Buzz from LRC: Wedding Anniversary, Awards, Finished Book—and the NQK Lecture
<input type="checkbox"/>	▲ Stonewall Kitchen	Road all day with our new Napa Valley Natural winegrape!
<input type="checkbox"/>	Warner Bros. Home Entertainment	Are You Single? Today is Your Day! Celebrate Singles Awareness Day with 4 Movies for \$19.99!
<input type="checkbox"/>	▲ Stonewall Kitchen	Salute the Red, White and Blue(berry) with 20% OFF!
<input type="checkbox"/>	▲ Stonewall Kitchen	We're celebrating stars, stripes and savings with 20% OFF!
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dear Amazon Shopper	👉 THANK YOU 🙏
<input type="checkbox"/>	▲ Stonewall Kitchen	20% OFF has our vote!
<input type="checkbox"/>	Warner Bros. Pictures	Judas and the Black Messiah Now Playing!
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Boston Globe	Address: The Luxury Market, Decor for Teens, and a Record Sale
<input type="checkbox"/>	▲ Melinda Perez	📢 Announcing the TOP volunteers of 2020!

Then you can check out large files stored in files or attached to an email.

Emails with large attachments

3d-printer.jpg
aaron-carter.jpg
68519496_2385161328469981_548...
9-11-memorial-site.jpg
ada.jpg
ml.jpg
[+ more attachments](#)

[Review and free up 96.5 MB](#)

Large files

PDF PDF
AMERICAN
Crash

[Review and free up 1 GB](#)

Large photos and videos

No large photos or videos

Google will also find other items like unsupported videos that you may wish to delete.

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(Shopping....continued from page 8)

tions you can take to protect yourself and help prevent others from becoming a victim.

If your bank details or personal information was stolen, call your bank and let them know that your information has been compromised. They'll cancel the old card details and issue you a new card. This may be inconvenient, but it's the safest way to prevent more money from leaking out of your accounts.

If a fraudster is taking out loans or new credit cards in your name, report the incident to credit agencies and request what's known as a "credit freeze." [According to the FTC](#), this makes it more difficult for identity thieves to open new accounts in your name.

Finally, [report the incident to the Internet Crime Complaint Center](#) (IC3), which is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C). If you're not based in the U.S., your local government likely has a similar system for reporting cybercrime, and a quick Google search (such as "report cybercrime <location>") will probably return relevant results. Taking this action may prevent other people from becoming victims.

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{Ed. notes: Also consider viewing the buyer ratings of your chosen online seller. Ignore the highest (4 or 5 star) ratings (could be written by employees or friends). Look for the lower ratings, to read about buyers' problems and how they were (or were not) resolved. My library's Amazon page is rated at 100% (= 5 stars), and we exert much effort to maintain it; and that can be challenging at times.}



Website Not Secure

By Cyn Mackley

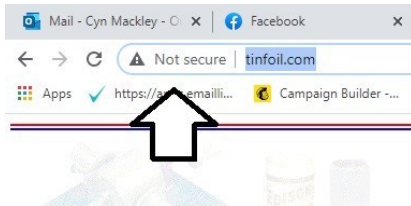
<https://cynmackley.com>

A reader has a question about determining the safety of a web site called Tinfoil.com that I suggested you check out:

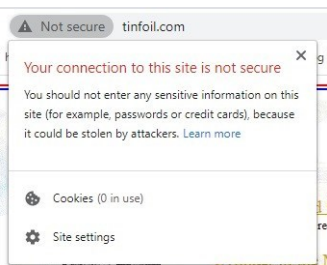


“One question about this website (and the others I encounter) where my system snarls at me and tells me the site is not secure). If I’m REALLY sure I know some background about the site (like it’s recommended by a reliable person such as you!) I will go ahead. But are there ANY general guidelines on when to risk such a site? THANKS!”

Insecure website warnings are alarming but they don’t always mean the site poses a danger to you. Let’s take a look at Tinfoil.com. Chrome shows an insecure alert at the top of the address bar.



Click on that alert and you’ll see more details.

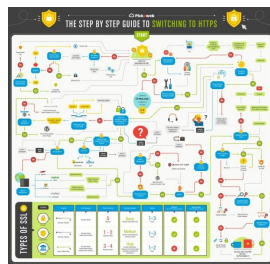


In the case of this site the alert is because the site is an http site and not an https site. <http://www.tinfoil.com/>

HTTP sites aren’t insecure if you’re just viewing them. If you’re supposed to enter information on a site that

can be a problem. If you’re just browsing, it probably isn’t. Sometimes something as simple as having one icon or image with an HTTP address on a site will make it show up insecure. I’ve even come across several local government websites that show this warning.

Converting from http to https is not as simple as flipping a switch. PickWeb made this little diagram to describe the process.



{Ed. Note: The image is no longer at PickWeb. View a zoomable image here:

https://assets.entrepreneur.com/images/misc/1496175145_http-flowchart.jpg }

For many older sites that don’t make a profit, the switch is cost-prohibitive.

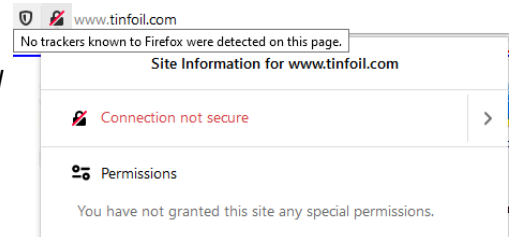
When I speak about the insecure site warnings, I’m not talking about any kind of notification from your security software that it detects malware on a site.

My general guidelines would be to not enter any information or download anything from an insecure site. If it’s a site you’ve been using for years or one that comes from a trusted source, I’d feel a bit safer checking it out.

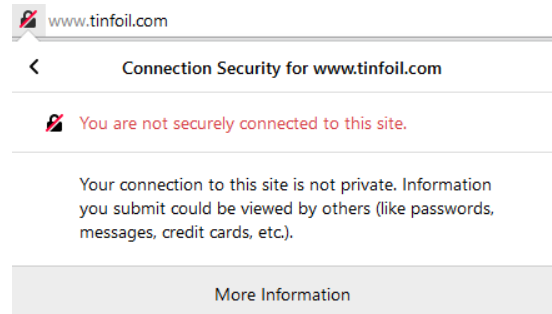
Also, is it a site that makes some kind of offer that’s too good to be true? That’s always pretty suspicious. Make sure you have proper security software installed and activated on your computer.

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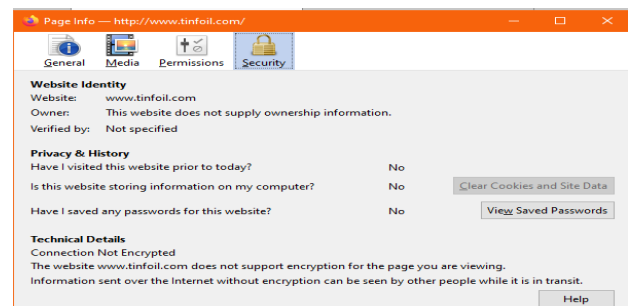
{Ed. note: The Firefox web browser has a similar notification method for “insecure” web sites. Click on the padlock next to the web site address. If it has a red slanted line, it is considered “potentially insecure”.



Click further on the right-pointing arrow next to “Connection not secure”:



Click on “More Information”.



The “Page Info” window opens to offer much more privacy- and security-related information about the web site.



(Shopping....continued from page 5)

Use Strong Passwords

This goes without saying, but use [a strong password](#) consisting of letters (both uppercase and lowercase), numbers, and special characters. Not only does that make it more difficult for would-be fraudsters to guess, but it also makes it extremely hard for anyone to access your account via a brute-force attack.

Don't think you have anything to worry about? At the time of writing, there are 10,599,375,985 hacked accounts, according to the [Have I Been Pwned](#) database. Out of those 10.6 billion accounts hacked, at least one of those accounts was using a password more secure than yours.

If you can memorize your password, it's not secure enough. There are plenty of [password managers](#) to help you keep up with everything.

Use a VPN If Shopping in Public

When you're browsing the internet on public Wi-Fi, anyone can see what you're doing. Threat actors see this for what it is — a chance to monitor your activity and capture your personal information, such as passwords or banking details.

When you use a [Virtual Private Network](#) (VPN), all your traffic goes through an encrypted tunnel — protecting your information from interception. This allows you to safely shop from anywhere — even from a café or airport. Keep in mind, though, that a VPN doesn't protect you from snoopers looking over your shoulder. When you do anything online that requires you to enter your credit card or bank details, it's probably a good idea to do it at home.

Watch out for “Too Good to Be True” Deals

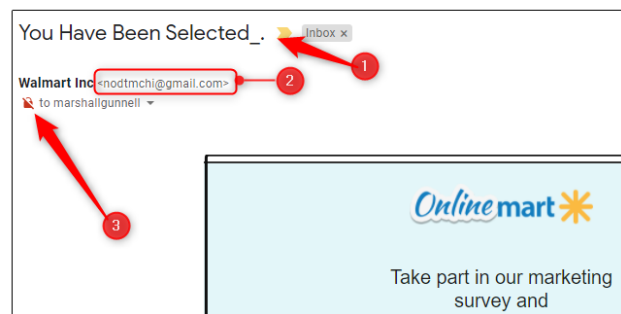
Phishing attacks are by no means new, but they are still prevalent in the world of cybercrime. Why? Because even the most novice threat actor can pull it off.

All throughout the year, but especially during holiday seasons, you will be spammed with phishing attempts via email, social media, and even SMS texts. If something seems like it's too good to be true, it probably is. Don't click that link.

If you're unsure how to tell whether a marketing message is legit, here are a few signs to look for:

1. **Poorly written content:** Most respectable retailers care about their content. If the content is sloppy, contains several typos, reads poorly, etc., be cautious.
2. **Sender email address:** If Walmart is claiming to have a special going on, they won't ask Steve to

3. **Unencrypted email:** In Gmail, for example, if the lock next to the “to” field is red and crossed out in Gmail, the email is unencrypted. This doesn't necessarily mean that the email is a phishing attempt, but it's best not to communicate with the sender, and it's especially important not to share any sensitive information. Anything you send over an unencrypted connection will be sent in plain text for anyone to see.



Verify that everything is real before moving forward. Don't click any links in the email and, instead, visit the official, legitimate site if you have any suspicion about the email or sender. This could save you a world of headache, as even just clicking the link can install malicious software on your local machine.

Know Your Rights and the Return Policies of the Site

On any reputable eCommerce website, you'll be able to find the company's return policy. Amazon is a great example of this, and clearly details the return and refund policies for the various arms of their business. It's always wise to read up on this before you make a purchase, just so you know what you're dealing with.

If you can't easily locate the company's return policy on their website, you can try doing a site search on Google (or on any search engine, really). Just head to the Google search bar and type site: plus the domain name, followed by the search query. For example, if I wanted to search for Amazon's return policy page on Google, I'd type: [site:amazon.com return policy](#).

If you can't easily locate the site's return policy, you should consider that a red flag. And if they don't have one, it's best to avoid them completely. However, even if a site doesn't state its return policy, that doesn't mean that you aren't protected. In the case of fraud or misrepresentation of the product or service, you can even take the retailer to court.

I've Been Hit by Cybercrime, Now What?

If your information has been stolen, there are a few ac-

(Continued on page 6.....Shopping)

How To Resize An Image

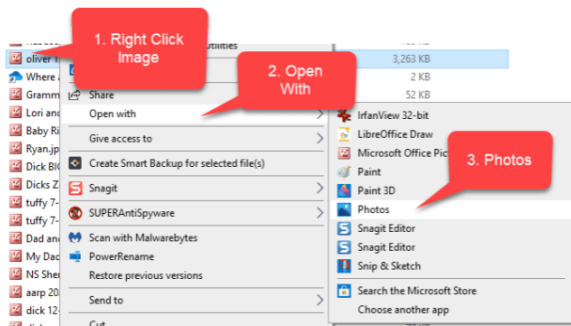
By Dick Evans

<https://davescomputertips.com>

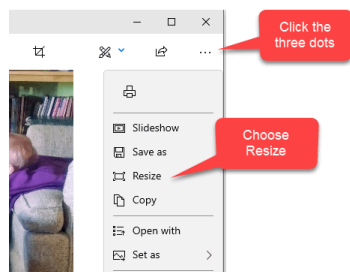
With the high-resolution capability of our cell phone cameras, the size of images can be enormous leading to slow upload times. Attaching them to an email is often limited to just a few at a time. If you have a website, the images you place on a webpage display in slow motion. They open displaying the images a little at a time, from the top to bottom of the image.

When we upload images to Facebook, they automatically resize them to a reasonable size for displaying on their pages. Google Photos also resizes, but not as much as Facebook. You can opt for the image in Google Photos to be left in the original size but then the image is counted against your allocated space in the Google cloud.

There are many resizing applications and some even let you resize in bulk. However, Windows 10 comes with a simple way to resize using a built-in application.

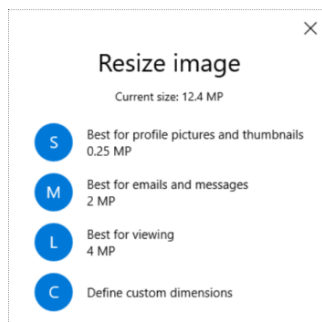


Locate the image that needs to be resized, then right-click it > **Open with** > **Photos**. "Photos" is an application that comes with Windows 10 and is usually the default application to open image files.

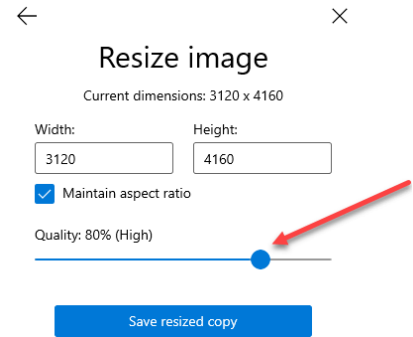


In the upper right corner, click the three dots to open the menu and select **Resize**.

Choose the desired size or click to "**Define custom dimensions**".



When you choose "custom", you will see the current size at the top, can manually adjust the Width and Height, or drag the ball left or right to change the quality.



(Article's Ed. note: Changing the quality will not affect the image dimensions but will proportionately affect image quality and the file size on disk.)

I suggest you save the results with a new name or you will overwrite the original.

Another tool for your toolbox.

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{Ed. note: Most recently, I have used the free [PIXresizer](https://pixresizer.en.softonic.com) tool (<https://pixresizer.en.softonic.com>) for photos to which I need to apply a reduced file size, in order to include them in book listings I post on Amazon or send in email messages. In my opinion, the Windows "Photos" app is rather slow to display a photo. But I will give this app a shot, to see how it measures up to something like PIXresizer for resizing purposes.}



(Why is that IT guy wearing a tie???)

What Is a Meme (and How Did They Originate)?

By Brady Gavin

<https://www.howtogeek.com>



If you've used the internet for more than a few days, you've probably seen a *meme*. They've become an integral part of modern online life. But, where did they get their start? How have they evolved? And where did the word "meme" come from, anyway?

Where Did the Word "Meme" Come From?

The first published case of the word meme (pronounced "Meem," not me-me), dates back to Richard Dawkins' 1976 book, *The Selfish Gene*. Dawkins referred to it as a "Mimeme" — a word derived from Greek that means "that which is imitated." The word was then abbreviated to just "meme" due to its similarity to the word "gene."

Dawkins coined the term because he was trying to figure out whether there was a measurable unit describing how ideas spread and propagated through generations. So, put simply, a meme is to an idea what a gene is to a physical trait. And much like how genes and physical traits evolve through natural selection, Dawkins believed that anything capable of undergoing evolution — like memes and ideas — also did so through natural selection.

This is where the modern form of the word "meme" is derived — the idea of the replication, selection, and evolution of ideas all working themselves out in the biggest proving ground of ideas ever — the internet.

Were There Memes Before The Internet?

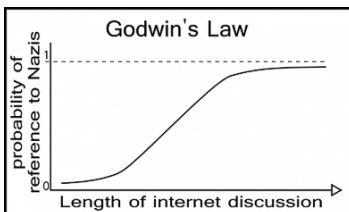
Memes have been around since long before the internet existed. In fact, they have been around since before Dawkins coined the term, showing up as early as 79 AD in a Pompeii ruin and as late as the 1970s, in graffiti.



The Sator Square is a palindrome of the five words "SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS" — one on top of the next. You can read in any direction (assuming you read Latin), including upside down and backward. Although nobody knows for sure what it means, it has shown up over the centuries in different cultures all over the world, including France, England, Syria, and Italy.

Frodo Baggins, the fictional character of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord Of The Rings* trilogy, also became part of a meme. The phrase "Frodo Lives" was plastered all over in graffiti, buttons, and even bumper stickers on cars. It was frequently used by people who felt that Frodo, who was sent off to Mordor on a death mission by powerful people with their own agendas, was a good metaphor for being held down by "The Man."

Another example of memes occurred on Usenet in the early 1990s: Godwin's Law. Although it was initially conceived for a newsgroup discussion forum, it remains as applicable today as it did almost 30 years ago. Godwin's



Law states that "As a Usenet discussion grows longer, the probability of a comparison involving Nazis or Hitler approaches one." Once a thread would reach that point, it was traditionally considered over, and whoever mentioned the Nazis immediately lost any credibility in the argument.

What Were The First Internet Memes?

The first viral internet meme can be pinned back to a particular [dancing baby](#) that was spread around the internet, before finally appearing on an episode of *Ally McBeal*.



In 1996, graphic designer Michael Girard created software that showed how movement could be programmed and projected via computers. The final design was the model of a baby demonstrating different movements from the Cha-Cha-Cha. Girard's employer then sent the demo out to developers to show off their software's capabilities. One of the demos arrived in the inbox of a LucasArts employee, who then turned the video into a GIF and shared it (largely via forums and email, but also on the burgeoning web), sending it into a widespread viral sensation.

[The Hamster Dance](#) was another popular early internet meme. It was a website that featured rows of animated GIF hamsters dancing to a sped up version of "Whistle Stop" — a song used in the credits of Walt Disney's *Robin Hood*. The site was created by a Canadian art student in a competition with her sister and a friend in 1998, to see who could generate the most web traffic online.

After only generating 600 views in 8 months, her website suddenly went viral. In just four days, her site saw over 600,000 views, gaining popularity through email, blogs, and even bumper stickers.

How Have Memes Evolved Since Then?

With the wide use of social media and sites like Reddit, 9GAG, and 4Chan, it has become increasingly easy for memes to gain popularity and go viral overnight, with millions of daily visitors looking to have a lol or two.

Before the internet came along, memes tended to have political or cultural significance, and their popularity lasted much longer than they do today. While some memes today can still show longevity, most go from viral to forgotten in a relatively short time. This is partly due to how fast the internet moves (there's always something new to grab your attention) and partly because of how easy it is to create memes.

Memes have also moved away from political or cultural topics to focus more on pop-culture references and sarcastic life observations, making them relatable, funny, and easier for them to spread like wildfire across the web.



One significant case of evolution in a meme would have to be LOLCats and the whole language surrounding the meme itself. LOLCats use a creative style of spelling with their memes, called lolspeak, personifying cats depicted in images. Using spelling mistakes and improper tenses to make sentences in a common structure, where “Can I have a cheeseburger?” would translate to “i can has cheezberger.”

As of 2010, the [LOLCat Bible Translation Project](#) finished a translation of The Bible into lolspeak, even going as far as to translate The New Testament as well. But things don't stop there: an esoteric programming language called [LOLCode](#) was born, using the very same format of speaking in LOLCats memes, to form an ever-evolving meme beyond a simple picture.

Want to learn more about specific memes? There's no better place to explore than [Know Your Meme](#) — a veritable encyclopedia of all things meme.

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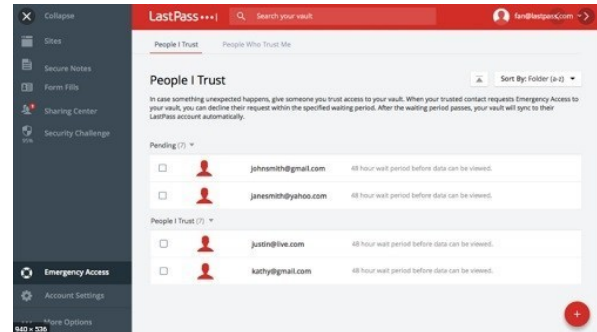
LastPass Changes

By Cyn Mackley

<https://cynmackley.com>

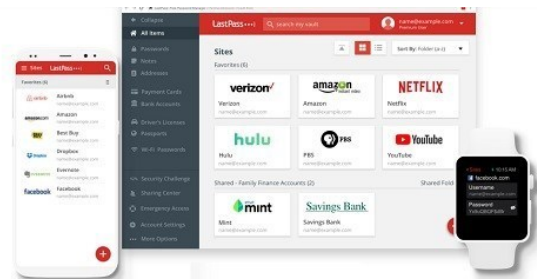
Popular password manager LastPass is making some changes to the free version of the program.

Currently, users can use LastPass on an unlimited number of computers and mobile devices like phones, smartwatches, and tablets.



Starting March 26, LastPass Free will only include unlimited access across one type of device.

If you use LastPass on laptops or desktop computers, you can continue to use it on any computer. But you will no longer be able to use it on your phone or tablet unless you upgrade to LastPass Premium.



If you use it on a phone, you can use it on any phone, tablet, or smartwatch but not on a laptop or desktop unless you upgrade to the premium version.

Your first login after March 16 will determine what type of device you're using. You'll then have three chances to switch the active device type.

Email support will only be available for premium customers. Free users can search LastPass support online. The company says free LastPass users can upgrade to Premium for \$27 annually.

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(USB.....Continued from page 4)

er. It also may be dark in your room. You just need to try two orientations and see which one works — in theory.

To save time, people just try inserting a USB device and seeing whether it works. Did it not connect? Flip it around, now it will work — well, not always. Sometimes you have to flip it again.

Again, it all comes down to USB Type-A's design. When you're trying to connect a USB device, it's very easy to bump the edge of the connector against the edge of the USB port — or the metal or plastic next to it. This feels about the same as if you have the USB connector upside down.

You probably don't want to apply any extra force or jiggle it around — because why force it? You may have the device upside down. Just flip it and try the other way. But if even that doesn't work, you know for sure that you're doing something wrong. You have to apply some extra force and push harder, or you have to jiggle the connection around to correctly align it, or you have to feel the port with your finger to ensure that it's correctly aligned.

In other words: Even when you're kind of close, a USB Type-A port doesn't necessarily guide your connector in. There's no clear, tactile feedback that you're just missing the connection in the correct orientation. It feels the same as if you have the connector the wrong way around.

When you think about how people often start inserting a USB device, the first attempt is kind of a "test" — does it go in easily? If not, you might have the device the wrong way around. Flip it and try again. If even that doesn't work, you'll need to flip it back to the first position and try a little harder.

It's Not You, It's USB

Ultimately, the problem isn't with you — it's with the USB Type-A connector. It's just designed in an unclear way that leads to this problem. Why it's designed that way is a question only the designers can answer.

The good news is that we've learned from the history of flipping USB sticks and other devices around three times. USB Type-C is reversible, so you'll never have to flip it — just plug it in either way. The USB4 standard requires USB Type-C, so USB Type-A is slowly and gradually being phased out.

One day, future generations won't even understand the USB-flipping meme.



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World Backup Day 3/31/2021

News and/or opinion from the Editor

Why are we using up more newsletter real estate on backups? Because we are not all doing it, or not doing it often enough, and we should be.



What is a backup?

A backup is a second copy of all your important files — for example, your family photos, home videos, documents, eBooks, music files, taxes. Instead of storing it all in just one place (like on your computer), you keep another copy of everything somewhere safe.

But why should I backup?

Losing your files is way more common than you'd think. Ever lost your phone, camera or tablet? That counts, too. Your stuff could have been saved with a backup. One small accident or failure could destroy all the important stuff you care about.

A backup is a way in which you keep a copy of your data safe and sound, far away from the natural disasters, thieves, hard drive failures and all the other unpleasantness that threatens your primary data — your digital life.

According to general statistics in the backup world:

- 30% of computer users have never backed up anything
- 29% of digital disasters are caused by human error (31% by malware, 29% by hardware failure, 11% by other problems)
- 113 phones are lost or stolen every minute
- 1 in 10 computers is infected with viruses each month

So how do I backup?

Most people backup their files in one of two ways: to an external drive, or somewhere on the Internet.

Using an external drive is a one-time cost. Web-based services have subscription charges.

Take the pledge:

"I solemnly swear to backup my important documents and precious memories on March 31st."

And I will also tell my friends and family about World Backup Day — *friends don't let friends go without a backup.*

Don't be an April fool.

Be prepared.

Backup your computer on March 31st.



Web Page Reviews Overload

(Web sites that did not fit on page 14)

Understanding the Linux operating system — a four-part illustrated tutorial.

<https://www.tecmint.com/understanding-linux-operating-system/>

How to use Pivot Tables to analyze data in MS Excel.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/701536/how-to-use-pivot-tables-to-analyze-excel-data/>

Everything you need to set up a Plex server to stream audio and video in your home.

<https://www.reviewgeek.com/70552/everything-you-need-to-set-up-a-plex-server/>

Three ways to disable the Windows 10 auto-update process and decide when to install them.

<https://www.windowscentral.com/how-stop-updates-installing-automatically-windows-10>

When your Windows computer crashes, a Memory Dump is created. But what exactly are they for?

<https://www.howtogeek.com/196672/windows-memory-dumps-what-exactly-are-they-for/>

Tips to boost your wireless signal from your router, extend and optimize your Wi-Fi coverage, and speed up your surfing.

<https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/10-ways-to-boost-your-wi-fi-signal>

802.11 Standards explained: 802.11ax, 802.11ac, 802.11b/g/n, 802.11a. Is your modem/router up-to-date?

<https://www.lifewire.com/wireless-standards-802-11a-802-11b-g-n-and-802-11ac-816553>

Charging your phone overnight: Battery myths debunked.

<https://www.pcmag.com/news/charging-your-phone-overnight-battery-myths-debunked>

What's the "Appdata Roaming" folder in Windows for?

<https://askleo.com/whats-the-appdata-roaming-folder/>

Amazon charges its sellers approx. 20% of their prices for Amazon's profits, so your purchase includes that inflation. What are some other places to shop online?

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/best-amazon-alternatives/>

How to make "private browsing" mode the default in various browsers.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/how-to-make-private-browsing-mode-the-default-in-various-browsers>

Select a year from 1950 all the way up to 2010 and a random song from that year opens on YouTube in a new window. Reliving some of those old music videos is cool!

<https://bops.fm/>

Find power hogs on your laptop with Windows Task Manager

<https://www.pcworld.com/article/3610412/find-power-hogs-on-your-laptop-with-windows-task-manager.html>

How to track business or personal expenses using GnuCash (accounting software) in Windows, MacOS, and Linux. Track bank accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, income and expenses. (Link to download the software is at the end of this article.)

<https://www.tecmint.com/gnucash-financial-accounting-tool-to-track-expenses-in-linux/>

How to set up Plex Media Server to stream in your home and watch your movies on any device.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/252261/how-to-set-up-plex-and-watch-your-movies-on-any-device/>

Windows 10's latest update fixes BSODs that occur while printing — caused by a 3/9/21 Windows Update.

<https://www.pcworld.com/article/3611331/windows-10s-latest-update-fixes-bsods-that-occur-while-printing.html>

How to Install Extensions (Add-ons) in Mozilla Firefox

<https://www.howtogeek.com/719529/how-to-install-extensions-add-ons-in-mozilla-firefox/>

R.I.P.

News and/or Opinion from the Editor

After nearly 36 years in business as the one-stop-shop and online resource for high-tech professionals as well as not-so-high-tech web users across nine states and 31 stores, Fry's Electronics, Inc. ("Fry's") has made the difficult decision to shut down its operations and close its business permanently as a result of changes in the retail industry and the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. It closed all of its stores on Feb. 24, 2021 and ceased operations.

"So what?", you say? Yup, this affects you, too, whether you shopped there or not. Many (perhaps most?) of the door prizes that are offered at our in-person meetings were purchased online from Fry's and Newegg. Thus, Fry's has been a major support player for our club. But their often-unbeatable prices are now gone for good.

So, Fry's, we WILL miss you!



Web Page Reviews

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.

Our club members only 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.

Top 20 Windows 10 Tips & Tricks. Learn about the game bar and video editor, delaying Windows updates, multiple pasting, dark mode, read aloud, voice recorder, and much more! (21-min, video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMFZ9N58kMk>

The Windows 10 Clipboard can store up to 25 entries, not just one as in the past. How to use it?

<https://intoput.com/clipboard-on-windows-10/>

How do I keep my Windows file listing the same in all folders?

<https://www.computerhope.com/issues/ch000770.htm>

Trying to uninstall MS Office from your Windows PC, but it keeps failing to completely do it? Go here to get the “Office Uninstall Support Tool” for all versions of MS Office since Office 2007. It works!!

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/uninstall-office-automatically-9ad57b43-fa12-859a-9cf0-b694637b3b05>

How to access and use Microsoft Office for free on the web. (10-min. video)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuQyKM7_V-Y

The LastPass password manager app is tracking you. Here are some other password managers to consider.

<https://www.komando.com/news/password-manager-tracking-you/781081/>

A very extensive history of Port Huron. Over 200 videos created by a longtime resident. Start with “Port Huron History Part 1”. (Most videos are 15-20 mins. each)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/bobnanmol/videos>

Whether on the road, at home, or in the office, a VPN is still one of the best ways to protect yourself on the big, bad Internet. What is a VPN and how does it work?

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/what-is-a-vpn-and-how-does-it-work/>

Facebook page presents many unique old houses with individual photo collections. (Facebook login not needed.)

<https://www.facebook.com/ForTheLoveOfOldHouses>

FBI warns about attacks that bypass multi-factor authentication (MFA). Although rare today, they are on the rise. Read about some successful attack examples.

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/fbi-warns-about-attacks-that-bypass-multi-factor-authentication-mfa/>

What does Ctrl+Z do? More than you think.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/what-does-ctrl-z-do>

How to spot, avoid and report tech support scams. This should be required reading for all PC/tablet/smartphone users.

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-spot-avoid-and-report-tech-support-scams>

Hide your memories on Facebook.

<https://cynmackley.com/2021/03/02/hide-facebook-memories/>

More than booze and beads: The history of Mardi Gras.

<https://www.lifesavvy.com/18365/more-than-booze-and-beads-the-history-of-mardi-gras/>

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

Web Watch Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the **WebPageReviews** section on the club’s web site. There you can see past web sites reviewed in this column. They are arranged into various *keyword* categories to help locate a specific topic or site.