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# MONITOR

Vol. 31, No. 9

September 2013

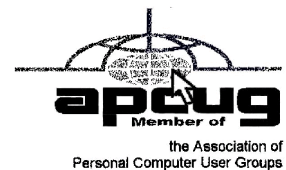
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Tuesday, September 10

Everything You Need to Know about Android Tablets  
with Mark Zinzer

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## Free Security Utilities from MalwareBytes

by Ira Wilsker

Regular readers of this column will know that in several previous columns I had reviewed and recommended the free and paid “Pro” versions of the MalwareBytes security software. The



publisher of MalwareBytes also has five free utilities available to perform other types of security scans, as well utilities to enhance system performance. These free utilities, some in “beta” or pre-release (not a final version or build), each perform a different task that PC users may find helpful, if not outright necessary.

These five free utilities can be downloaded directly from MalwareBytes at [www.malwarebytes.org/products/other\\_tools](http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/other_tools). The free utilities available from MalwareBytes are Chameleon, Malware bytes Anti-Rootkit BETA, StartupLite, FileASSASSIN, and Reg ASSASSIN.

Much of the worst malware in circulation is purposely designed to protect itself from removal or destruction by a variety of means; one of the most common self-protection methods used by this malware is to prevent the running of anti-malware utilities that could possibly detect and kill the malware. Since MalwareBytes is one of the most popular free-standing malware detectors and killers, it is one of the prime targets of the malware authors, who ingeniously come up with ways to prevent MalwareBytes from installing, loading, and executing, meaning that if MalwareBytes cannot be installed or run, it cannot remove the malware. MalwareBytes has created a utility, Chameleon ([malwarebytes.org/products/chameleon](http://malwarebytes.org/products/chameleon)), that will often be able to load and run MalwareBytes on a computer infected with self-protecting malware by tricking the malware into thinking that an innocent, non-protective program is loading. Just like the small reptile that can change its colors, Chameleon loads the MalwareBytes anti-malware program under a variety of different program names, at least one of which may possibly be able to execute, which would then be able to detect and neutralize the malware. Chameleon is a 1.37mb file, downloaded in the common ZIP (compressed) format, which can be uncompressed (un-ZIPPED) using the native Windows Explorer (file manager) built into Windows. The instructions provided by MalwareBytes on the installation and use of Chameleon are simple; first, “Unzip the contents to a folder in a convenient location.” I created a Chameleon folder on my C: drive which I used to hold the unzipped Chameleon files. The second instruction references the built-in Chameleon Help File (CHM, or standard Windows help file format), “Follow the instructions in the included Chameleon CHM Help File or, if the help file will not open, simply try to run the files by double-clicking on them one by one until one of them remains open, then follow the onscreen instructions.” The CHM help file, which is opened by simply clicking or double-clicking on it to open, displays very simple instructions on how to trick the malware on the infected computer into allowing the full MalwareBytes anti-malware utility to install, load, and execute. The CHM Help File says, “Just click on the first button below and see if it runs. You’ll know it’s working if a black DOS window appears, slays malicious programs, and then starts Malwarebytes Anti-Malware. If the first button doesn’t work, try the next one. If that one doesn’t work, just keep trying until you find one that does! Then use Malwarebytes Anti-Malware as you normally would to run a Quick Scan and remove the malware. Click the buttons, one at a time, to attempt to run Chameleon.” Twelve radio buttons are displayed, aptly named Chameleon #1 to Chameleon #12, each of which loads a different iteration of Chameleon, one of which is likely to defeat the self-defense capabilities of the malware, and allowing the Malware Bytes anti-malware to run and clean the infected computer.

Since most traditional anti-virus software, and some anti-malware software, only looks at program files and components on the hard drive, malware and virus authors found a way to avoid detection by writing malware to the

Windows registry. The registry is a massive database of information and instructions, that is not normally scanned by most traditional security software. Another way of malware and viruses hiding from detection is to place their operating code in a part of the hard drive not normally scanned by security software, such as in the MBR or “Master Boot Record” of the hard drive. According to Wikipedia ([wikipedia.org/wiki/Rootkit](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Rootkit)), “A rootkit is a stealthy type of software, often malicious, designed to hide the existence of certain processes or programs from normal methods of detection and enable continued privileged access to a computer.” MalwareBytes has published a free “BETA” (pre-release or “not totally refined” version) of its Malwarebytes Anti-Rootkit BETA available for download from [malwarebytes.org/products/mbar](http://malwarebytes.org/products/mbar). According to Malware Bytes, “Malwarebytes Anti- Root kit BETA removes the latest nastiest rootkits and repairs the damage they cause. Malwarebytes Anti-Rootkit BETA is cutting edge technology for detecting and removing the nastiest malicious rootkits.”

Being a BETA version, a current download has a finite life, with an expiration date, preventing the BETA from being used for a long period of time; once expired, a more recent “BETA” version, or even a final version, may be downloaded. Since thousands of new malware builds appear every day, this anti-rootkit utility needs its digital signature files updated frequently, as several updates are released every day; these updates enable the anti-rootkit software to detect the latest known rootkits. The scan is very comprehensive, and may take quite a while to complete, as it scans the sectors of the hard drive, the installed drivers (a popular place for malware to hide itself), operating system files, and the registry. Once the scan is completed, any suspected rootkits are displayed. I recommend checking the box enabling the creation of a restore point prior to the removal of any rootkits found, just in case a false positive is encountered, and a legitimate file is incorrectly identified and removed as a rootkit, the restore point file can be used to bring back whatever was deleted.

A common complaint among PC users regards the slow booting of the computer when turned on; this is often because too many programs, often unnecessary, are being loaded each time the computer is booted. Not just does this slow the boot process, it also consumes system resources, such as memory and processor capacity, as unneeded programs are always loaded and running. Microsoft has a crude but effective startup manager built into Windows, the “MSCONFIG” command invoked by entering the command from the Start - Run process. The demand and need for easy to use startup managers is so great, that many PC utilities incorporate a startup manager of some type in their products. MalwareBytes is now offering its free “StartUpLite” from its website at [malwarebytes.org/products/startup lite](http://malwarebytes.org/products/startup%20lite). The sole purpose of StartUpLite is to speed the boot process by eliminating unnecessary programs from the boot process; a secondary benefit is the improvement of the system’s performance since fewer programs are loaded and running. The process is simple, as the file is ready to run when downloaded to a convenient location; no special installation or configuration is necessary, as StartUpLite is ready to run as downloaded. Being a “Lite” program, it is small and not very powerful, but it can detect many of the most common hogs of boot time, allowing the user to remove these unwanted programs from the boot sequence. The user needs to be aware that removing a program from the boot sequence does not delete or uninstall the program itself, but only stops it from loading at boot.

Many users are aware that files that are loaded and running cannot be easily removed, as they appear to be locked, and inaccessible. FileASSASSIN is a free utility that can unlock and delete any type of locked file on the computer. While legitimate files are often locked because they are in use, or are critical system

files, many varieties of malware and viruses are also locked to add a layer of difficulty in their removal; FileASSASSIN can unlock and delete these files. Since necessary system files are often locked in order to protect them from accidental (or intentional) removal, MalwareBytes includes the following warning on the FileASSASSIN website: “Warning: Please use caution with FileASSASSIN as deleting critical system files may cause system errors.” If used with extreme care, File ASSASSIN can be a very useful utility, but it may not be appropriate for inexperienced users, as it is too easy to use it to unlock and delete legitimate required or critical system or data files.

Just as malware can lock files in order to make them difficult to delete, malware can also lock registry entries for the same reasons. Some of these locked registry keys have been known to reinstall malware after the actual malware program files have been deleted. MalwareBytes offers RegASSASSIN as a free utility to unlock these malware placed locked registry entries by utilizing a simple two step process. “RegASSASSIN removes malware-placed registry keys in two simple steps - just reset permissions and delete!” As with the other ASSASSIN products, MalwareBytes includes the following: “Warning: Please use with caution as deleting critical registry keys may cause system errors.” The RegASSASSIN file is a tiny 63.7kb file that is ready to run when downloaded, with no further installation. The instructions are simple; first, run RegASSASSIN by clicking on it to open it. The second and final step is to, “Enter the registry key you wish to remove or reset and click Delete.” Just as with the other ASSASSIN products, this may not be for the novice, but for the experienced user or technician, as it would be too easy to delete a valid registry key, causing other substantial problems. I strongly recommend using any one of the many registry backup utilities, or by using Windows’ built in System Restore function ([windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista /What-is-System-Restore](http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/What-is-System-Restore)), which will allow the user to easily recover from an erroneous registry key deletion.

These are five good free utilities from MalwareBytes. Consider using them as appropriate, but be sure to use them with appropriate care and responsibility. Never forget that the three most important words in computing are, “Backup, Backup, and Backup.”

#### Websites:

[http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/other\\_tools](http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/other_tools)  
[http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes\\_free](http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes_free)  
<http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/chameleon>  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rootkit>  
<http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/mbar/> (anti-Rootkit)  
<http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/startuplite/>  
<http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/regassassin/>  
<http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/fileassassin>  
<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/What-is-System-Restore>

## Useful Bits & Pieces

by Lorrin R. Garson

*Columnist, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society, MD*

## Open Garden

**O**pen Garden has nothing to do with horticulture. It’s a technology that interconnects devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets to form a wireless peer-to-peer mesh network for access to the Internet. For example, by installing Open Garden on your cell phone and laptop (PC and Mac), your laptop has access to the Internet via your phone when Wi-Fi hot

spots are not available. If others have Open Garden installed on their devices you would all share connectivity and bandwidth. It is the digital equivalent of grazing on the commons. Open Garden provides an “automatic path choice.” When the software detects multiple Internet connections, it will select the fastest one available and will switch to another connection if the original slows or goes off line. The advantage is that it can offload traffic from an overburdened access route to one less utilized, say from a 3G or 4G connection to an enabled Wi-Fi\_\_33 connection.

Currently Open Garden is available for Android, Windows, and Macintosh operating systems. An iOS version (for the iPhone) is planned for the future. In principal widespread deployment of this technology could reduce capital expenditures for wireless carriers such as Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, etc. by transferring traffic from their cellular circuits to Wi-Fi\_\_33. However, the carriers might revolt if they perceive they will lose revenue that is not made up by lower capital investments. It is a complex business situation and no one knows at this time how the cell phone companies will react or if consumers will adopt Open Garden. For more information see <http://opengarden.com/>, <http://opengarden.net/> and <http://opengarden.co/story.php>.

### Improving PC Performance by Adding Memory

Increasing the amount of memory in your PC is the simplest and least expensive way to improve performance. The procedure is quite simple even for those who are hardware challenged. These instructions pertain to desktop PCs, although adding or changing memory in laptops is similar (see [http://www.wikihow.com /Upgrade-YourLaptop%27s-RAM-Memory](http://www.wikihow.com/Upgrade-YourLaptop%27s-RAM-Memory)).

- 1: Determine how much memory is currently in your computer (instructions for Windows 7) by: left-click on Start, right-click on Computer, then left-click on Properties. Under System will be a line “Installed memory (RAM).”
- 2: Determine how many memory slots are available in your computer. This can be done by consulting your PC owner’s manual, opening up your computer for inspection (more on this later), or using one of the tools such as that available from Crucial.com (see below).
- 3: Determine how much memory you need. This is rather subjective. Many will advise “you can’t have too much memory”, but 4-8 GB is probably adequate for most people. 12-16 GB or more may be advisable for those doing video or photo editing. For those playing computer games or doing heavy duty processing, the more the better.
- 4: Determine the correct memory needed for your computer. Again, this information should be available in your PC owner’s manual. For example, for the HP Pavilion HPE h8xt the memory specified is SO-D I M M , 2 0 4 - p i n DDR3DIMM, PC3-10600 (1333 MHz) DDR3-SDRAM, Unbuffered, non-EC (64-bit) DIMMs, 1.5 V memory only. It is crucial that you buy the correct memory; there are many kinds of memory (DDR, DDR2, DDR3, RDRAM, SDRAM, etc.) sold by numerous vendors (A m a z o n , N e w e g g , TigerDirect, Micro Center,



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**[www.podcomputers.com](http://www.podcomputers.com)**

etc.) including some manufacturers. Companies that sell memory will sometimes provide a tool you can download that will tell you the type of memory your computer uses, the number of memory slots available on your machine, etc. For example see Crucial.com at <http://www.crucial.com/store/drammemory.aspx>. It is generally advisable to use exactly the same brand, model with the precise specifications for all memory rather than just add additional memory.

#### 5: Installing the memory.

- 1: Unplug everything from the computer, although some recommend leaving the power cord plugged in to ground the computer, but be certain the computer is not running.
- 2: Be sure to ground yourself to the computer case before working on the machine. Static electricity can seriously damage components of your computer. It is preferable to use an antistatic wrist strap for this purpose (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antistatic\\_wrist\\_strap](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antistatic_wrist_strap)). These devices are quite inexpensive.
- 3: Open up the computer's case. This will be somewhat different for every machine. Sometimes a screw driver will be needed.
- 4: Locate the memory module(s) and carefully remove them, assuming they are being replaced. Some memory cards have clips at the ends while others tilt forward or backward to remove. Look carefully and go gently.
- 5: Snap the new memory module(s) in place taking care to seat them correctly. Apply pressure evenly across the width of module. Often you will hear a "click" as the module is seated.
- 6: Close up the computer and reattach all the peripherals.
- 7: Boot up the computer and check to verify (step #1) that the computer "sees" all the memory you installed.

See <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/setup/addmemory.aspx#fbid=jzzxbLYldz7> for useful information on this topic from Microsoft.

*From the May 2013 issue of PATACS Post, newsletter of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society, MD. Courtesy of APCUG.*



## Why Rebates, Not Discounts?

**Q.** Why do online companies offer rebates instead of just selling a product at a lower price? It seems like there are always strings attached such as receiving a rebate check that can only be used to purchase other company products. I love your weekly newsletter, Mr. M. Keep up the good work.

**A.** Companies have various reasons for offering rebates, but in general, there are three primary reasons: First, the time between the purchase and the rebate can be several months, a period in which your money is in the company's possession, undoubtedly earning interest or working in other ways to its advantage. This may seem insignificant, but to a company that sells hundreds of thousands (or millions) of widgets, it can be substantial.

Second, what better way for a company to obtain your personal data for subsequent contact or to sell to others than by offering you money (in the form of a rebate) for your information?

Third, companies know that most people are busy or lazy (or both) and won't go to the trouble of cutting out a bar code or providing the requisite paperwork

to obtain a rebate. In this way, the company gets to attract purchasers by advertising a low price, and in most instances selling an item for a higher price because the purchaser never applies for the rebate. What a deal!

Q. Would it be beneficial to purchase a copy of Windows 7 and set it aside for a future installation? Now that Windows 8 is out, I'm worried that Windows 7 won't be available a year or two from now. I would appreciate your thinking on this matter, Mr. M.

A. While there are no guarantees when it comes to operating systems, it's been my experience that previous versions of Windows tend to be available for years after they are no longer the current operating system. For example, Windows Vista replaced Windows XP in January 2007, more than six years ago, yet if you search amazon.com, you will find a number of retailers who still have it available. If history does indeed repeat itself, Windows 7 is going to be available for many years to come.

Q. I know this is a weird question, but what is the proper name for the little mouse pointer?

A. Weird questions are always welcome here in Mr. Modemville! The object that moves on the screen when you move the mouse is often called a cursor, although some annoying purists might argue that technically only the blinking line that comprises a DOS prompt can be properly called a cursor. For most users, myself included, the terms "pointer" and "cursor" can be used interchangeably.

A cursor can take several forms. For example, it may change into a small hand when hovering over a link, or it may become an animated cursor, in the form of a rotating hour glass, when Windows is in the process of loading a page or program. (My cousin Leo became an animated cursor once when he got hit in the head by a golf ball. No damage to the ball, fortunately.)

## **Mr. Modem's DME (Don't Miss 'Em) Sites of the Month**

### **Color**

This color-matching game is deceptively easy at first, then becomes progressively difficult. (Wouldn't it be nice if there was a game that started out difficult and became progressively easier?) Your job is to mouse over the color wheel to find a matching color for what is displayed. There is one small catch: Your cursor is tied not to just one point on the color wheel, but to two points and then four points as the game progresses. To play, click the color wheel, then use your mouse to match the color on the outside rim of the circle to the color displayed in the center of the circle. Each round becomes more difficult as you have more points or colors around the circle to match. When you reach a color that matches, click to select it. You will then receive a color-matching score. Highest score, or the first person to get a splitting headache, wins.

<http://color.method.ac>

### **HackerWatch**

This is a free service that can test your firewall by doing a simple probe and/or a port scan. The site also tracks general hacking on the Internet so that you can learn about potentially vulnerable areas of your system.

[www.hackerwatch.org/probe](http://www.hackerwatch.org/probe)

### **ImageSplitter**

Here you will find free tools for tasks you might want to perform on an uploaded image, such as resizing, converting, splitting or cropping. To use it, upload an image by clicking the Browse button, locate your file on your computer and click Upload Image. Once uploaded, you can edit it on one of three tabs. By default your image will appear on the Convert and Resize tab where



you can resize the image by changing the values in the width and height fields, or you can convert it by selecting the desired file type from the drop-down menu. Other tools allow you to split an image and crop it.

<http://imagesplitter.net>

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## Overheating: Enemy Number One

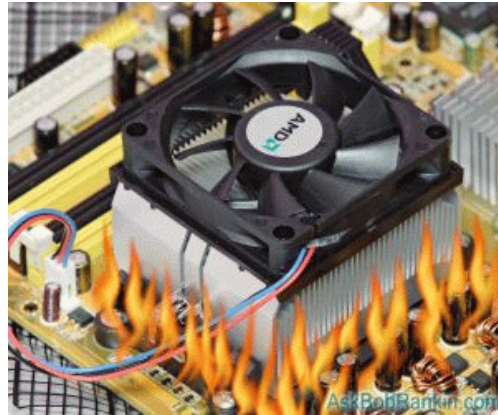
by Bob Rankin  
[www.bobrankin.com](http://www.bobrankin.com)

**A** reader asks: 'My computer sometimes shuts down at random times. A friend said it's probably overheating. How can I find out for sure, and what can be done about overheating?' Read on to learn why heat is your computer's worst enemy, and how to keep your PC or Mac from being damaged by overheating...

### Signs of Overheating - and What to do

Electronic components in your computer and other devices generate heat. The harder they work, the more heat they generate. But heat is the mortal enemy of all things electronic. So it's important to be alert to temperature spikes in your computer, and take steps to cool it down when necessary.

How can you tell if your computer is overheating, and what can you do to keep it from frying like an egg? Sudden, inexplicable shutdowns of your computer are often due to overheating. Other symptoms of overheating include declining performance after running processor-intensive tasks for several minutes or hours. Games may run sluggishly, video may skip, and response to mouse clicks may be delayed. More alarming are sudden software crashes, random reboots, and the dreaded Blue Screen of Death. These symptoms may have multiple causes, but overheating is one suspect that needs to be confirmed or eliminated.



The computer's BIOS (Basic Input/Output System) detects when the CPU, motherboard, hard drive, or graphics adapter is approaching its maximum operating temperature and shuts things down to avoid damaging that vital and expensive part. If you are experiencing shutdowns, measure your computer's temperatures and do something to lower them immediately.

Temperature sensors are built into many computer components; the trick is accessing these sensors to read temperatures. Microsoft Windows and Mac OS do not have built-in utilities to let users read temperatures. You have to find third-party software. Fortunately, there are several free temperature-monitoring utilities. Some can not only monitor temperatures but also do something to lower them.

SpeedFAN is a long-standing favorite temperature monitoring utility. It also monitors voltages in various devices and the speed of the fan(s) which cool your CPU, power supply, and other components. Some motherboards allow users to control fan speeds while others do not; if fan speed can be controlled, SpeedFan will do it automatically to optimize the fan's cooling.



**NOTE:** Unfortunately, there are sometimes misleading ads on the SpeedFan website with big “DOWNLOAD” graphics. Be sure to click the Download link near the top of the page (next to Screenshots). On the next page, look for “The latest version is...” You’ll find the download link there.

Open Hardware Monitor is a free system monitoring program for Windows and Linux computers. It monitors all of the voltage, temperature, fan speeds and other sensors built into your motherboard, including CPU temperature.

Temperature Monitor 4.6 is a similar utility for Mac computers. It’s part of a suite of Mac monitoring utilities written by Marcel Bresink, and it’s available free of charge. This one does not control fan speeds.

CoreTemp is designed for Intel and AMD multi-core CPUs. It can monitor the temperature in each core in each processor in your system. It also has a logging feature to record temperatures over variable periods of time.

If you can find a fan-speed controller that works with your system, it will provide several benefits. First, it will keep the temperature of your CPU and other components under the critical level, protecting your hardware and preventing shutdowns. Second, it will extend the life of your fan by running it only when it’s really needed. Third, it will minimize that irritating noise than cooling fans often make.

### **Other Overheating Solutions**

A good rule of thumb is to make sure your CPU temperature is under 70 degrees Celsius, but each processor has a different safe operating range. I recommend that you see my article *What’s Going On Inside My PC?* to find out what hardware is under the hood, and then search for information on the maximum safe temperatures.

If adjusting the fan speed doesn’t bring the problem under control, there are several other possible causes for overheating. Dust is a common cause of overheating. You can buy cans of compressed air to clean the dust out of heat sinks, fans, and airflow vents. Crack open the system unit every few months and you’ll be surprised at how much dust accumulates there, and how it affects your system temps.

Adequate air flow is important. A tower system should be placed so that its vents are not blocked by desk, wall, or other obstructions. A laptop can be elevated on a lap pad to allow air to circulate under the machine.

It’s possible that the fans themselves may need to be replaced. If a fan is noisy, that’s a sign that it’s not working properly. Some components have built-in fans that can fail. This recently happened to the graphics adapter on my desktop machine. My computer was shutting down unexpectedly, and SpeedFan revealed that the temperature of that component was hitting 120 Celsius (about 250 degrees Fahrenheit). After opening the system unit case, I saw that the fan attached to the graphics card wasn’t spinning. As a temporary workaround, I’m leaving the case open and cooling things down with a small electric fan that clips on the side of my desk. Not pretty, but it works.

It could also be that the thermal seal between the CPU and the heat sink (which draws heat away) is not good. You can remove the heat sink and reapply thermal grease, but that’s beyond the scope of this article. You can find YouTube tutorials on how to do that.

*Read more at: [http://askbobrankin.com/overheating\\_enemy\\_number\\_one.html#ixzz2c3nvw2WE](http://askbobrankin.com/overheating_enemy_number_one.html#ixzz2c3nvw2WE)*

## Mac2008 support

If you happen to have Office for Mac 2008 please note.

Microsoft ended support for Office for Mac 2008 on April 9. The company reminded users in a blog post on their website. Office for Mac 2008 will continue to function on computers, but Microsoft will no longer be providing security updates or bug fixes. Users will still be able to download the latest updates until April 19, 2014. Microsoft, of course, reminded everyone that it's a great time to purchase an Office 365 subscription (which includes Office for Mac 2011) and all future upgrades to the product. Those looking for a free alternative, might want to consider LibreOffice or Open Office.

## Using the Command Prompt to Reveal Hidden Files

Some viruses leave behind nasty side effects, even when your antivirus program has cleaned the actual virus from your computer. If your desktop icons are missing and your C: drive appears blank, don't panic — your files haven't gone permanently AWOL. Common viruses, such as the Windows 7 Recovery virus, will hide your files in an attempt to coerce you into paying for the virus's removal. When you view your desktop or click on your C: drive, it may appear that all of your files have been deleted, but they haven't — the virus has simply hidden them. You can restore them easily using a simple command prompt trick that works in Windows XP, Vista, and 7.

1. Click the Start button in the lower left corner of your task bar.
2. Type cmd in the search box at the bottom of the menu and press Enter.
3. If you're using Windows XP, click Run and type cmd into the Run box.
4. Type `attrib -s -h -r c:/*.* /s /d` and press Enter to execute the command.

Allow the command to finish executing (it may take a few minutes). When it's done, close the command prompt window and check your desktop — your files, hidden by the virus, have been restored. You can use the same trick to restore files the virus may have hidden on other drives, including removable storage such as flash drives and external hard drives; just change the drive letter in the command above to the drive letter of the storage device with the hidden files.

## Tweeting ... Instagramming ... YouTubed ... What Does it All Mean?

So you want a picture of your granddaughter and they said it was Tweeted and Instagrammed. What does any of that even mean?"

For those of us who frequently use social media, we throw around newly-created verbiage like Tweeted, Facebooked, and YouTubed like everyone should understand. This is a little list for those of you who even know what a FaceTwit is. What makes social media different from traditional media like newspapers, television, radio and film, is that instead of a professional making content like a video or a story and showing it to the audience, the audience is participating by making the content.

So here are some handy definitions.

Facebook is a site with over a billion users so you may have heard of this one. Facebook is a site that allow you to share what they call status updates – such as “Having spaghetti for dinner” or “Off to visit Grandma.” The service is also popular for sharing personal digital photos, links to stories on websites, and images with inspirational and political quotes. You can also send private messages, similar to e-mail or text messages, within Facebook. The people you

choose to interact with on Facebook are called “Friends.” Users add people they like as friends and “unfriend” those they no longer wish to communicate with.

You may also choose to like “pages” for celebrities, products, stores etc. You’ll hear people saying they “Facebooked” a photo, meaning they posted a picture to the site or they “Facebooked” a person, meaning they contacted that person via Facebook. Facebook may be accessed with your computer, tablet, or phone.

Twitter, this service allows people to share their thoughts – usually in short sentences. You may also share photographs and links to web sites. You follow Twitter users to see their updates. The service is popular with news junkies who follow news outlets for a continuous updates. Many celebrities have large followings on Twitter. Actor William Shatner has nearly a million and a half followers, while Ashton Kutcher has over 14,000,000.

You might hear someone say that they “Tweeted” a message. If someone shares your Twitter message with others, they have re-Tweeted. It can be exciting for a Twitter user to be re-Tweeted by a celebrity. You will often see the hashtag symbol # at the bottom of a television screen during a program or movie (example: #americanidol). The hashtag invites Twitter users to share their thoughts on the program, using that particular hashtag so it’s easy for others to find those thoughts and share their own. Programs will often announce that actors from a show will Tweeting at a certain time and responding to questions and comments from fans.

Twitter can be used from a computer, tablet, or smartphone; though it is more often accessed from a smartphone.

Instagram, is a photo sharing and editing service that owes its existence to smartphones and their handy cameras. When you take a picture with your smartphone, Instagram allows you to edit the photos right on your phone, adding “artistic” filters. One of the most popular changes is to make digital photos look like old Polaroid Instamatic prints. The service lets you share the shots with friends of your choosing. Those photos can also be shared to Facebook and Twitter. You can access your Instagram account with a computer, but the service is most frequently used on smartphones and tablets that feature cameras.

YouTube is a site where people share videos, most of them made by non-professionals. Users shoot videos on cameras or their smartphones and upload them to the site where others can watch them. Before YouTube, it was pretty difficult for someone to just make a video and have the opportunity for millions of people to view their work. With YouTube, almost anyone can shoot a video and have the whole world as a potential audience.

Some users’ videos become so popular that advertisers pay to be featured on their work. Violinist Lindsey Stirling has nearly 2,000,000 subscribers and almost 300,000,000 video views.

YouTube is very popular with musicians, so much so that Billboard is now including YouTube views into the calculations it uses to determine the most popular songs on the music charts. The site can also be a treasure trove of older TV programs, commercials, music etc... It is a unique environment when you can see cell phone videos of cats right alongside elaborately-produced HD masterpieces. YouTube can be accessed from computers, tablets and smartphones.

A major factor is the popularity of all these services is that you can use them for free.

### **What Is Memory Card Class?**

We all use SD cards. You find them in your camera, MP3 players, and now especially in tablets. But there are differences in the class of memory cards.

The class of memory card refers to the speed at which information can be read and written to the memory card. Some cameras and devices support high-speed cards, while others will only take advantage of speeds up to a certain point. While using a faster card than the device supports won't damage it, you won't see any improvement over a slower-speed card.

*From the May 2013 issue of the The LVCG Journal, newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Computer Group in Pennsylvania. Courtesy of APCUG.*

## Freeware

by Berry F. Phillips

*Member, Computer Club of Oklahoma City*

**D**uring the many years that I have been writing the Computer Hysteria Column, I have been a strong advocate of using freeware. On my computer, the only commercial software is my operating system. All the rest of the software on my system is freeware. Perhaps this frugality has something to do with my Scottish ancestry or I could be considered just plain cheap! In any event,

I have done my best to give my readers some tips on freeware that I have used on my system that is exceptional. Free software is a valid choice for the home computer, office computer and Internet server uses. It is very important to remember that freeware is not cheap or an inferior option. Freeware comes in two basic types, free software with proprietary (private) code, and open-source software. Some freeware can be functionally superior to equivalent commercial software and even of higher quality.

For example, the Firefox browser was built and developed by a large distributed workforce as opposed to a small centralized one. A large number of programmers can contribute a range of skills, and whose input is graded by peer review. These programs can be tested and developed in a wide variety of locations and situations. These community based projects would cost millions to create commercially. The bottom line, free software can be of the highest quality and should not be considered inferior to commercial products. The products they generate are among the most successful applications in the world, PHP, MySQL, Apache, and various types of Linux.

What are the best free programs that work the best? It used to be utilities. However, today there are many priceless small programs that work better than the operating systems resident applications. Free software is a viable solution in every possible area of a computer's work. The acceptability of freeware is demonstrated as the standard server solution. Freeware is widely used in PC security situations. Free versions of popular firewalls, antivirus, and antispyware programs are often accepted as first choice. How do you find the best freeware to use on your system?

For years I have recommended Gizmo's Freeware be bookmarked on your computer for fast reference when you need fully reviewed and recommended freeware. In August 2010, *PC Magazine* included Gizmo's Freeware in its "100 Top Websites of 2010." As of November 2011 it was rated by Alexa in the top 3,000 sites in English speaking countries and in the top 5,000 worldwide with more than 100,000 people visiting the site every day. It is also the most bookmarked site under "freeware" at most of the web's major bookmarking services.

Gizmo's Freeware is a community-based site dedicated to keep the site independent and noncommercial. The site is maintained by hundreds of volunteers. Freeware is reviewed for safety and performance by these volunteer editors with comments from users. Gizmo's best freeware list is available at the website and has been used for years to locate the best freeware. You can post on

forums, respond to reviews after using the freeware, and even write review depending on your computer skills. I would strongly encourage you to bookmark and visit this website which will save you money as well as increase your computer capabilities.

<http://www.techsupportalert.com>

I will have to admit that I am “hysterical” about this website.

*From the April 2013 issue of eMonitor, newsletter of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City. Courtesy of APCUG.*



## Gizmo's Freeware: Scan Any Suspicious File, or Windows Process, with 40+ Security Products

**A**s you probably know, every program that we recommend on Gizmo's site is checked out by us first, and that includes scanning it with VirusTotal. This is a web-based system that scans any uploaded file with more than 40 different antivirus products, and if the program we're writing about doesn't score 100% with VirusTotal, then we don't write about it.

You can use VirusTotal to check your own computer too. The simplest way is just to head to [www.virustotal.com](http://www.virustotal.com) in your web browser and upload any file you're concerned about. However, did you know there's also an official downloadable Windows utility that can do this for you automatically, and which has some extra capabilities that aren't available via the web site?

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/scan-any-suspicious-file-or-windows-process-40-products.htm>

## SkyDrive and Office Web Apps

by Lynn Page

*Editor/Webmaster, Crystal River Users Group, FL*

**W**ith a Windows Live ID you have access to Microsoft's Office Web Apps. This lets you open, edit and share Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents online using SkyDrive. So you can work with your documents from any computer whether it has the Office applications installed on it or not. Go to <http://skydrive.live.com> in a web browser to log on or sign up for a Windows Live account.

Store Office documents on SkyDrive to view and edit them in a browser. Or share documents stored on SkyDrive by linking to them in an email, blog or social network.



## Save to or Upload to SkyDrive

Documents generated on your home computer can be saved to SkyDrive or uploaded. Use Save & Send to save an existing Word, Excel, or PowerPoint file. Select Save to Web, Sign in to your Windows Live Account, and then click OK. Specify a folder on SkyDrive, and click Save As. Type a name for the file and click Save.

I think it is easier to create the document save it on the hard drive and then upload it to SkyDrive. In the SkyDrive menu bar click Upload. Then either drag and drop files from your Documents folder to the upload box or browse to and select them for upload. To open a document in SkyDrive, select the folder where document is saved, and click the file name.

## **Create New Documents in the Web Browser**

With the Office Web Apps you can create Word, Excel, or PowerPoint files right in a web browser. The Office application doesn't have to be open or even installed on the computer.

Sign into SkyDrive and click the kind of document to create in the Create drop down menu. In the dialog box type a name for the document and click the Create button.

A new document opens for editing in the appropriate Web App. Simply create the document as you would in the Office application. The Web App will not have the full features of the Office 2010 application but is familiar.

## **Share Files on SkyDrive**

SkyDrive allows you to share your Office documents, photos and other files. You can share individual files or an entire folder. In SkyDrive locate the folder or file to share and place a check in the selection box. Click Sharing on the Menu bar. The default method of sharing is by email. This lets you give specific people permission to access and even edit your files. Add the email addresses for those who will be reviewing the files, add a message and click the Share button. To access the document the recipients must have an account or create one.

The Post to option places a link to your SkyDrive files on a social media service like Facebook. I wouldn't choose this method of sharing as it is open to any of your friends or their friends if they repost.

The Get a link sharing option creates a link you can send to others. The advantage is they do not need to have a SkyDrive account. The disadvantage is that anyone with the link can access the file. I would use the View only option for sharing a link. It allows anyone with the link see the file. The View and Edit link allows anyone with the link to see and edit the shared files. If you select Public sharing anyone can search for and view the public files.

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## Organize/Manage SkyDrive

SkyDrive storage can be managed in a similar way as Documents on your hard drive. A new SkyDrive account will have three folders: Documents, Pictures, and Public.

Create new folders with the Create drop down menu. Folders can be nested within these three main folders or added on the main file location. Go to the location to add a folder, click Create and select Folder from the drop down menu. Enter a name for the folder and it is all set for storing files. The path to the files or folders is shown in the title bar. The number in the bottom right corner of a folder shows the number of files it contains.

If you change your mind about how folders should be organized you can move them. To move a folder, go to it in SkyDrive. On the Mani menu click Folder actions and select Move folder to from the drop down menu. In the dialog box add a new folder or select the location to move the folder.

The Manage drop down menu is used to manage files. It allow for renaming, deleting, moving and copying files. The trick is that you must go the folder containing the file and place a check in the selection box. That opens additional commands on the Menu bar.

To move the file place a check in the selection box (top right corner), click Manage in the Menu bar and select Move to in the drop down menu. In the dialog box select the location for the file to be moved.

## Word Web App

The Home tab contains basic text and paragraph formatting including Styles.

The Insert tab is used to insert tables, pictures, clip art and links. To insert a table in the Insert Table drop down point to the number of rows and columns and click.

Clicking the Picture icon opens Windows Explorer to select a picture to insert into the document. Browse to and select the picture and click Open. The picture is uploaded and inserted into the document.

Clicking the Clip Art icon opens a search box. Type in a description and click the search symbol. Browse through the clip are pieces, select one and click the Insert button.

Once a picture or clip art has been uploaded a Picture Tools Format tab appears when the graphic is selected. Tools are available to Grow or Shrink the picture and add a Picture Style.

The Page Layout tab specifies page setup and paragraph indent and spacing. Page Setup options include margins, page orientation and size.

Save the document when it is complete. Clicking Save on the File tab saves it on your SkyDrive. Clicking Save As allows you to download a copy and save it on your hard drive.

## Excel Web App

The Home tab has font formatting and alignment, number formatting and table formatting. The Cell commands allow for insertion or deletion of rows, columns, cells and new sheets. The Formulas group includes the commonly used functions. The Data group can refresh the workbook connections and recalculate or search the workbook to Find something.

Insert Functions, Tables, Charts, and Links from the Insert tab. The number of charts available is limited but sufficient.

The View tab has only two options. You can use the standard Editing View or choose Reading View to look at the data without toolbars.

## PowerPoint Web App

When creating a PowerPoint presentation on the web app there are a very limited number of themes. In the first dialog box choose a theme. There are also four customize buttons that change the color scheme. Once the theme has been set and the Apply button clicked a new presentation opens.

The Home tab has the Clipboard, Slides, Font, Paragraph and Drawings groups. The font and paragraph formatting commands are limited to the basic functions. The number of shapes is limited but you still have styles, fill and outline. I like the new Delete group as it provides one click option to delete a slide.

The Insert tab has a New Slide button to open the dialog to select a slide style to add to the presentation. Adding pictures and clip art is the same as in the Word Web App. Shapes and SmartArt are added in the Illustrations group.

The Text group contains the Text Box icon.

The Design tab offers the same themes and variations shown in creating the presentation. So if you decide that the selected theme isn't working change it to one more suitable. Set the animation on the slide and timing or reorder the animations on the Animation tab. Slide transitions are limited to none, fade and push and are controlled on the Transitions tab. The View tab has three Presentation Views as well as Notes and Comments. The Editing View is the normal view you would use in PowerPoint with slide icons for selecting or sorting and the active slide pane. The other options are Reading View and Slide Show.

*From the March 2013 newsletter of the Crystal River Users Group in Florida. Courtesy of APCUG.*

## *Windows 8 Hacks*

by Preston Gralla

Reviewed by Iris Yoffa

*Member, Tucson Computer Society, AZ*

**W**indows 8 Hacks is a nifty little task-oriented volume. It is not an overview or introductory text to Microsoft's latest Operating System. And granted, much of what is contained within these pages can be found online. However, I fall into the category of not knowing enough about Windows 8 and its underpinnings to know what to ask the Great Google to fetch for me. So I looked through this book and thought it would be a great instructional guide to learning the ins and outs of customizing this OS. As I continued to browse, I noticed some of the hacks I was interested in require Windows 8 Pro or Enterprise to be installed on my machine. Microsoft has eliminated many of the command-line utilities we all love to use to get "under the hood" in a new computer's edition of the OS that's installed by default. Sadly, even the first hack, Disable Windows 8's Lock Screen, just won't work for me because gpedit.msc is not accessible on my new laptop. I feel as if I just bought a cripple-ware computer! But enough whining.

This book contains an abundance of useful step-by-steps for making Windows 8 more efficient for you. Even more important, there are great explanations of how the particular subject of the hack works. For example, Hack 70: Hack DNS to Speed up Web browsing (a way to speed up your web browsing using any type of connection). This hack has a succinct explanation of the Domain Name System and how to implement the free OpenDNS service on your computer and/or entire network. It's simply a matter of changing the DNS addresses in Internet Protocols on your PC or router. Windows 8 Keyboard Shortcuts are listed nicely in a table in Hack 38.

This is really handy for us non-touchscreen users. Using the keyboard for direct access to features is so much more efficient than pointing at corners of the screen and then click-click-click. Hack 39 is a table of Windows 8 Gestures. Hack 44 is all about SkyDrive, what it is, how to use it, and why you should download SkyDrive for Windows (not the one preinstalled) to gain full functionality.

I surely miss the Start Menu. I hear I am far from alone in this complaint. Hack 8 explains how to create a folder that contains a complete listing of all your installed applications, including the system apps and Win8 apps.

Pin it to the start menu and drag it into an accessible spot. Double-click the folder to see the complete list and use the new File Explorer search bar to find anything quickly. Hack 85 contains instructions for accessing the Win8 secret administrator account. This account is not subject to the UAC controls. Think super-user or root on Linux systems.

So once you figure out how to get past your start screen, you'll find Preston Gralla's book a great asset in modifying or optimizing everything Windows 8. From startup and desktop to networking and security to e-mail, hardware and the registry, every aspect of the OS is touched upon.

While the title uses the term Hacks, I consider them 121 gems of hidden keys to opening up the potential of Win 8.

About: *Windows 8 Hacks: Tips & Tools for Unlocking the Power of Tablets and Desktops*

Publisher: O'Reilly Media

<http://shop.oreilly.com/product/0636920024958.do>

ISBN-13: 978-1449325756

Price: \$24.99, \$14.45 @ Amazon

*From the May 2013 issue of eJournal, newsletter of the Tucson Computer Society, AZ. Courtesy of APCUG.*

## Society News

### President's note:

On Tuesday August 13<sup>th</sup> we had our annual picnic. Everyone had a ball. Thank you, Tony, for cooking! The food was fabulous – there are a lot of good cooks in the group. We had nineteen in attendance and all agreed on that. The silent auction as usual was fun and brought in some much needed cash.

Hope to see everyone at next year's picnic. You know, the more people, the more fun for everyone.

–Steve Staub

## The Lighter Side



"I made a stain on the carpet that looks just like Elvis.  
You can clean it up, but first we should try to sell it on eBay."