

News Journal

“Members Helping Members”

June 2020

Volume 38, Issue 03

Desktop vs. Laptop

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December 2019 issue, The Space Coast Journal
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At a recent learning center meeting, the topic of what was better to get, in my opinion, a desktop or a laptop? We agreed to include various other devices in the category of ‘laptop’ - tablets, Chromebooks, netbooks, notebooks, etc. Let’s take a look at the various factors that should influence your decision.

Performance – This used to be the biggest differentiator between laptop versus desktop decisions, but this is not true any longer. The modern CPU (Central Processing Unit) chip designs have greatly reduced the heat generated and thereby eliminated one of the biggest problems with portable devices; the need to cool down the CPU effectively in a limited space within the case. The latest Intel and AMD CPUs are available in basically the same speeds and formats across both desktop and laptop motherboards.

However, the smaller size of laptops does command a premium price over that of desktops due to higher manufacturing costs for the same performance, as a general rule. SSDs (Solid State Disks) are available for both and their performance will be similar in either PC.

Storage Capacity – This is the other major area that has dramatically changed. Desktops typically have had larger capacity hard drives for storage – a 3.5” width hard drive case is still the standard in desktops while laptops standardized on a 2.5” width form. Large capacity drives (1TB+) are cheaper and were only available in the desktop size until the last 2 years or so when SSDs became available at a competitive cost to traditional hard drives. When fitted into a desktop case, newer cases have drive bays sized for the 2.5” SSD case, while cheap brackets are available for fitting them into any 3.5” case opening.

The latest developments are to move away from both 2.5” and 3.5” sizes to a “stick” SSD. There are several sizes in use today; one of the most common is called m2.

These SSDs clip into a slot directly on the motherboard, similar to how a memory stick would. This saves significant space that would otherwise be used by the storage drive in either a desktop or a laptop case.



(Continued on page 6)

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News Journal

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Membership

LCACE membership is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club hotline, and are now available on our web site at <http://www.lcace.org>.

Meetings

LCACE meetings are usually held on Saturdays at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Newsletter Submissions

Club members are welcome to submit classified ads, reviews, tips and other articles for publication, to our newsletter editor in Microsoft Word format (.doc). **Publication deadline is the 20th of the month for all ads and articles.** Please do not use tabs or special formatting.

Newsletter Advertising

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Phil's Ramblings



Hello, all

The novel Coronavirus has affected the lives of Americans in many ways. Our routines have been disrupted, we may have been required to take on new roles and our households may be crowded, with everyone there at the same time 24X7. Since we are a computer club, let's take a look at the technology side of this new world....

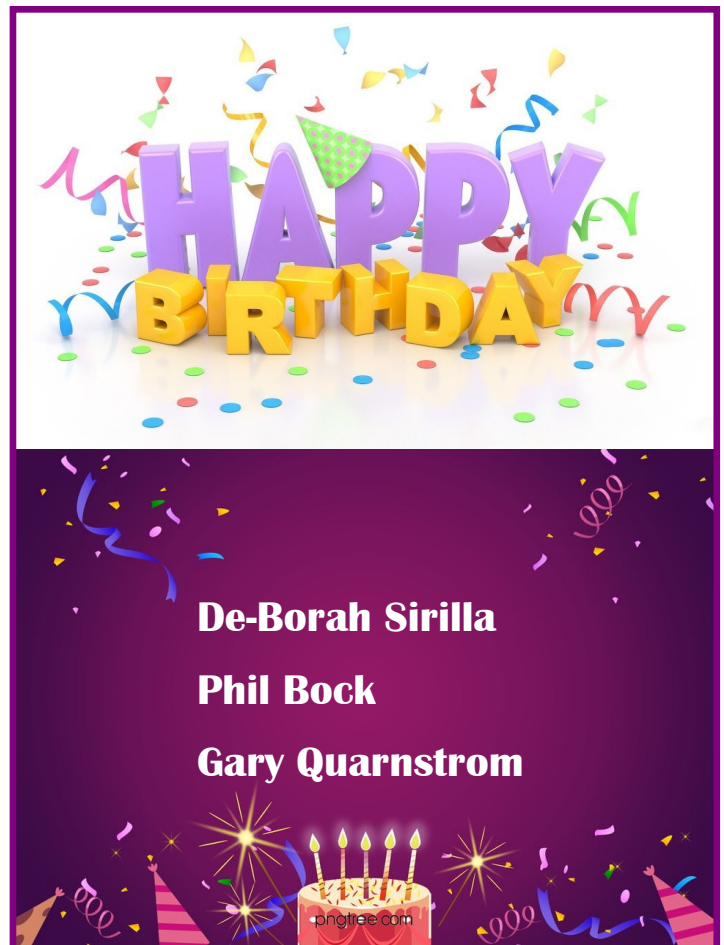
Have you heard the term "Digital Divide" before? If not, here is Wikipedia's definition: "*A **digital divide** is any uneven distribution in the access to, use of, or impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) between any number of distinct groups.*" Think computers, Internet service, smartphones, wireless service, cable TV and all the associated technologies and products. Not only are there big differences in the access to, use of and impact of these products and services between countries, we also have significant differences between U.S. citizens – depending on their location, wealth, age, and education.

These differences have become more evident as COVID-19 spreads across America. Some employees are fortunate enough to have all the tech tools and access they need to work from home already installed in their home; others who must work at home may be provided with a computer and/or other tech gear by their employer, but are facing slow (or no) home Internet service. Ditto for their kids; one-third of Chicago Public School students were forced to start remote learning (when CPS closed the schools) without access to a computer in their home. As a result, CPS is in the process of purchasing and loaning over 115,000 computers to these students to fill this gap. Good news? Sort of; but many of those students have no access to Internet service. CPS is now working with Comcast to secure free Internet service for the balance of the school year for those students. Good news? Sort of; but an estimated 17,000 CPS students are homeless! So, CPS is purchasing mobile hotspots for those students to use. Just think about the logis-

tics and learning curves involved! Then think about the same scenario being repeated virtually everywhere across the United States, differing only in degree. (Many rural areas have their own problems, with slow or no Internet service and weak or no wireless service.)

As individuals, businesses, governments, and organizations scramble to upgrade their technology to meet these new demands, shortages are popping up for all sorts of tech gear. The shutdown of technology companies in China and other overseas manufacturing locations has compounded the problem. Pickings are slim for some items, or customers may face long lead times. And, as so often happens with scarcity, prices are rising.

(Continued on page 5)





APCUG is pleased to announce that we will be having online workshops during the summer and fall.

Getting to Know Windows from An Insiders Point of View

The second Wednesday of the month at:
9 am PT, 10 am MT, 11 am CT, 12 pm ET

[May 13, 2020](#)

June 10, 2020

July 8, 2020

August 12, 2020

Moderator: Bill James, APCUG Advisor, Region 8

The four 2-hour workshops will be on how to get the best out of Windows 10. There will be how-tos, hands-on demos, and discussion with ample time for Q&A.

Week 1

What's new with Windows 10, the 2004 Spring feature update.

Have you customized your Start menu, Taskbar, and Notifications? What are those Hidden Icons? How can I immediately get back to my Desktop? Can you easily see your mouse pointer? How about the Display text size? We'll also take a look at the powerful Search options.

Week 2 Settings

We'll explore the many options you can change to make your computer more secure. Do you know how much Ram you have? What version of Windows? What about the Security & Update area, do you take a look at every once in a while? Do you check your custom settings after the spring and fall Feature update?

Week 3 File Explorer

Back-in-the-day, Bill Gates told us to think of our hard drive as a file cabinet and to organize our files. File Explorer is our handy file cabinet. We'll dig into File Explorer to see how it can help us with our daily life with our computer. Have you added the helpful checkbox?

Week 4 Edge

It's now a Chromium-based browser. It brings a lot of new features to the table. We will explore all of

them and find out if it is the best browser. We'll also learn how to earn \$\$ by using Bing.

We will use the same Zoom password encrypted meeting URL for each workshop. You will receive the URL after you have registered by [completing this form](#).

Judy will be the contact point for these workshops and will be available to assist you in connecting to the Zoom sessions.

The registration list will be used to identify everyone in the Waiting Room before being admitted to the session.

The next series of workshops will be on Home Automation for Seniors – same time, same place on:

September 9, 2020

October 14, 2020

November 11, 2020

December 9, 2020

Week 1 - Why do I need it?

Week 2 - Where do I start?

Week 3 - Lights, doorbells, locks, and cameras

Week 4 - Doing It Myself vs Having It Done

We will begin by explaining why home automation is important to Seniors. What products are on the market, costs, security, and some real-world testimonials. In the second week, we will talk about how to go about planning your home automation project and best practices. In the third week, we will talk about applications using lights, doorbells, locks, and cameras. Lastly, we will talk about the benefits of making it a DIY project or having a professional install.

Duplicate Photo Cleaner



[Duplicate Photo Cleaner](#) is absolutely the best way to remove duplicate photos from your PC and phone!

Tired of cluttered photo albums? Get DPC at a special AskWoody discounted price, and delete duplicate and similar photos from your computer and smartphone in a flash!

AskWoody special: Add **File Cleaner** for just \$9.95!

Click [here](#) to claim your exclusive discount! Duplicate photos won't stand a chance.

(Continued from page 3) Phil's Rambling's

(I looked for an inexpensive webcam for a friend a month ago and found an excellent Logitech model on the Best Buy website listed at \$39.95 on May 1st. Unfortunately, it was out of stock. I just checked the Best Buy website again (on May 30); this model is still out of stock but is now priced at \$59.95. The same model is currently listed on the Logitech website at \$69.99 – and is out of stock. But, good news, it is available from a third-party seller through the Amazon.com website (with Prime delivery) for only \$108.99!) Now is probably not a good time to buy technology gear unless you absolutely must...

Moving along, I recently bought a new Android tablet and was surprised to see that it offers a battery protection option that limits charging to 60% of capacity. I had not run across this before, so I did an Internet search for battery protection and related topics. This turned up a variety of articles dealing with tablet and phone batteries, offering suggestions to slow your battery drain and to extend the life of your battery. Here is one such article: <https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/how-to-save-battery-life-on-your-smartphone/>. I encourage you to do your own search, to see what else is out there. What these articles told me about the battery protection option on my new tablet was this: Lithium Ion batteries will no longer hold a charge after a certain number of charge/ discharge cycles, typically in the multiple hundreds. However, the most

damage to their longevity comes from 100% cycles (complete discharge; 100% charge). On the other hand, if you keep your battery in the 30% to 60% or 40% to 80% range with frequent brief rechargings, it will age very slowly, if at all. Early on, many cell phones came with removable batteries; it was relatively easy and inexpensive to buy a new battery. Most of today's phones come with a battery soldered into the phone; you will have to take it to an expert to have the battery replaced, at considerable cost. If you follow the guidelines mentioned above, you may never need to replace your battery.

Stay safe!

Phil



Windows **FREE** Snip and Sketch Tool is new and replacing the old

Author: Jim Cerny, Forums Coordinator

December 2019 issue, STUG Monitor

www.thestug.org

jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com



The new Windows "Snip and Sketch" tool was part of the Windows 10 October 2018 update. This tool is intended to REPLACE the old "Snipping Tool" of previous Windows editions. But they (Microsoft) did something to actually help us users this time – they kept the old tool! So you can play and learn the new Snip and Sketch and keep the old Snipping Tool too! Maybe they learned not to force users into using updated or changed apps right away – we need time to adjust and learn, right? Everything you could do in the old Snipping Tool you can do in Snip and Sketch, plus you get a few more tools and options. Thankfully these new additions are easy to see and use, and they can be ignored if you do

(Continued on page 10)

Currently, only traditional 3.5” drives have very large capacities available (4TB+), but as time goes by, SSDs will become cheaper and a much better alternative. Check out my journal article earlier this year where I compared the two for full details. Display – This is an area where desktops can be a better value for the flexibility to connect to whatever size display you have. Whether it is a 4K UHD 75” panel or a 24” desk LCD panel, either will work on a desktop. Now, many laptops offer HDMI or other ports to connect to displays, but if the reason for the laptop is portability, then the size of the laptop screen is what you’ll be using most of the time, typically 13” to 17”. The larger the screen, the weight will also increase proportionally on a laptop.

Graphics – Without a doubt, desktops are better suited for gaming due to the flexibility to replace and upgrade the video card. Some laptops, such as those from Alienware, do offer several video card options to compete with the best desktop offerings, but these are limited and more costly. For non-gamers, the basic video in either laptops or desktops is sufficient 95% of the time.

In the December 2019 issue of Consumer Reports, there just happens to be an article about this very topic. They report that in a survey taken in 2009, about 72% of the households have a desktop versus the 52% reporting having a laptop. Jump forward to 2019 and the number is now reversed with more households reporting laptops than desktops in almost the same ratio – about 74% laptops and 52% desktops now. Check it out for their recommended models and other factors you may want to consider.

If you have suggestions for topics that you would like to see explained, please let me know!

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Cable or Air? - What’s your choice?

By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer, The Computer Club December 2019
www.scccomputerclub.org Philsorr (at) yahoo.com

Most TVs default to Cable, so if you get your TV programming via a cable company like Spectrum or Frontier, you don’t have to answer this question. But if you want to get “broadcast TV,” you will have to select “air” when given the choice. (Your specific television may use the term “broadcast” or over the air (OTA) instead of “air”.) Way back in the 30’s/40’s when Television was being developed,

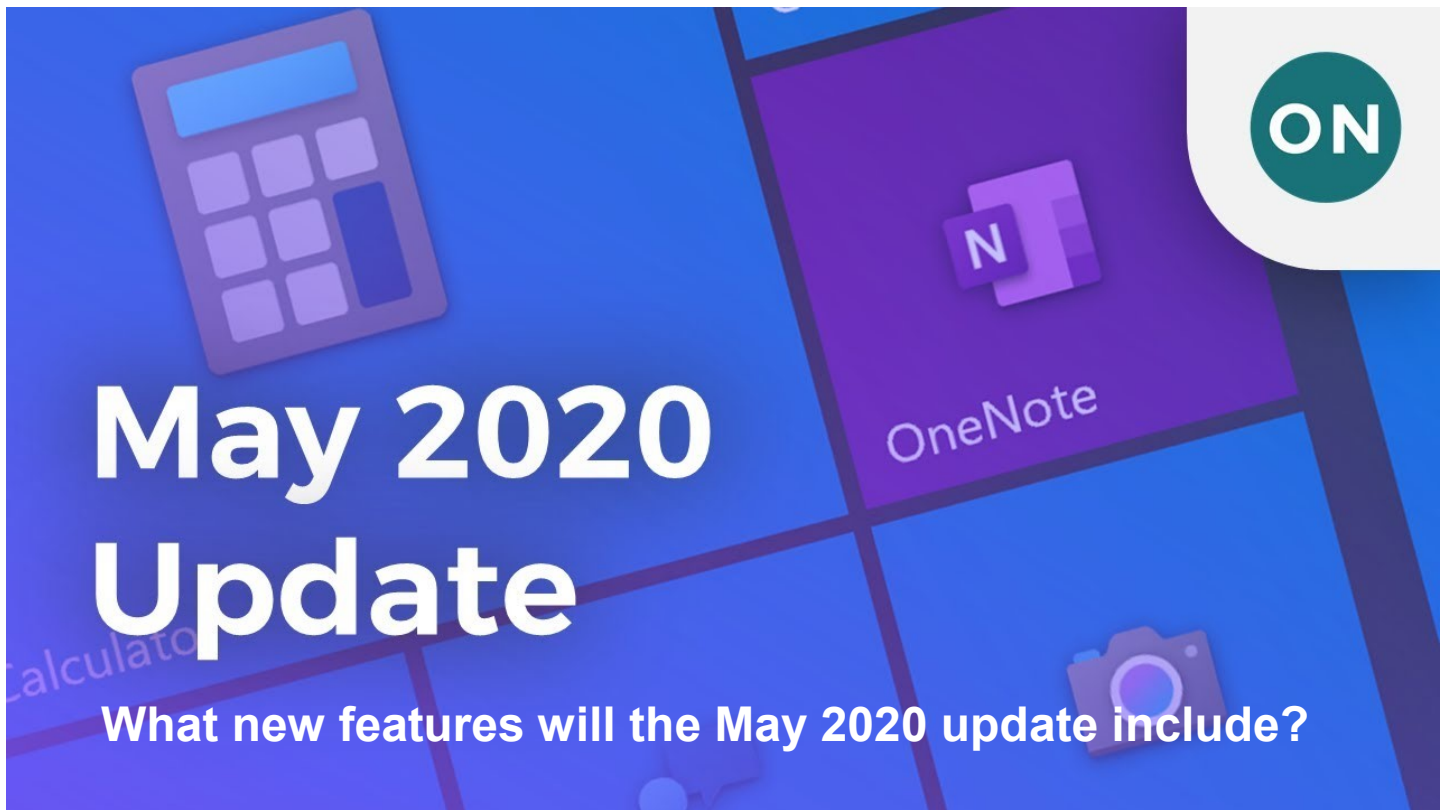
the inventors had to establish the bandwidth for a broadcast television channel. Based on the video and audio information needed to be packed into the signal, the decision was made to allocate 6 MHz to a broadcast channel. So every television broadcast channel signal was designed to take up 6 MHz of bandwidth. Remember, that was in the prehistoric days of Analog television signals. We are now in the digital television age, as evidenced by the many nice slim, large screen TVs around us. If you’ll remember, this transition took place way back in 2009, June 12, 2009, to be exact. That was the day our old Television sets could no longer bring us entertainment and information unless we acquired an analog to digital converter box.

The government even gave us the opportunity to purchase two of these devices for \$35 each, in advance of the transition, so we could make the transition and not miss a single television show. (I only had one TV at the time, so I only purchased one of these devices, and believe it or not, I still have it. I used it for a while until I stepped into the digital television age. Anybody still need a converter box?)

Now we have digital television, but we still have the 6 MHz television channel bandwidth. The bandwidth of a signal is related to the modulation scheme used to create the modulated signal. The modulated signal must fit within the bandwidth allocated, otherwise, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will be very unhappy. (First, just a quick technical explanation. Modulation is the process of putting a signal (video or audio) on a carrier frequency signal. The carrier frequency signal (think WCTQ is on 96.3 MHz) is the frequency used to carry the signal from the transmitting antenna to the receiving antenna. Then at the receiving television set, the modulated signal is demodulated to recover the original signal. End of explanation.)

So when the transition to digital was being explored, in the latter days of the last millennium and the early days of this millennium, the broadcast industry and the cable TV industry had to decide what type of modulation scheme to use with the new digital television signals. (By the way, here’s a nearly useless piece of trivia, the analog television modulation scheme was called Vestigial Sideband modulation.) When TV was invented there was only one industry, that was the broadcast industry, but now there two ways of getting television signals to customers, over the air, and over the cable. Due to the differences in transmitting signals over the air and transmitting signals over a cable, the two industries decided on two different modulation schemes. Here are two other pieces of trivia. The Over the air signal is modulated using an Eight Level Vestigial Sideband (8VSB) modulation technique and the cable signal is modu-

(Continued on page 10)



The Windows 10 May 2020 update includes a number of changes for users, according to Microsoft, such as:

Cortana: Microsoft says Cortana is evolving into a "personal productivity assistant" that can help you use Microsoft 365 apps. Cortana will be undocked from the taskbar, so you can move or resize it like any other app. An improved email feature lets you use Cortana to create emails (for example, you can say, "Send an email to Mary letting her know I'm running late" or "Show me emails from Jeff"). An improved calendar lets you do the same to create and ask about meetings. And Windows lets you use the assistant to open apps and adjust settings like brightness.

- **Search Home:** Access four quick searches to your Search Home for easier access: weather, top news, today in history and new movies.
- **Kaomoji:** Microsoft adds kaomoji -- like `_(ツ)_/` -- to its keyboard shortcut along with other emoji.
- **Virtual desktops:** Rename your virtual desktops, instead of getting stuck with the system-issued names like Desktop 1.
- **Automatically open apps:** Opt in to a setting to automatically open Universal Windows Platform apps after you restart your machine.

Bluetooth pairing: Pairing Bluetooth devices with your machine will occur through notifications, so you won't need to go to the Settings app to finish pairing.

New tablet experience for two-in-one convertible PCs: Available in beta for Windows Insiders, when you detach your two-in-one's keyboard, you'll still keep the familiar look of your desktop without interruption, while still optimizing the screen for touch.



May 9, 2020

Membership Chairperson Report

Members: 46

Meeting Attendees: 22

THANKS FOR JOINING

None

THANKS FOR RENEWING

Linda Rohlfing

Henry Henriksen

Thomas Krissek

De-Borah Sirilla

Linda & Roger Busch

Johanna Triggs

Barton & Diane Berndtson

Donna Kalinoski

Dorothy Bulls

Gary Quarnstrom

Ted Zalewski

Phil Bock

THANKS FOR VISITING

Dean Berglund WI (MCS)

Judy Taylour CA (APCUG)

Bob Gostischa, NM

Bob Berry

**STAY HOME
STAY SAFE**

WANDER THE WEB

Cautionary Tales

A podcast about mistakes and the lessons we can learn from them. The show is hosted by Tim Harford, author of "The Undercover Economist."

Timharford.com/articles/cautionarytales/

Ditch Your Cable Subscription

If you want to learn about who to replace your cable TV with Internet Streaming, this site is a great place to start.

Cordcutternews.com

High-quality Cockpit Videos

Ever wonder what happens inside a cockpit? Fly alongside former military aviator Greg Mink as he flies his Beechcraft Premier 1 business jet (Using the YouTube button on the page linked below.)

Premier1driver.com



[Facebook](#) has a new video chat on Messenger allowing up to 50 people to join in.

Looking to make your photo look better on your Android or iPhone, well here are [8 photo apps](#) to help you out.

Looking to buy a new cheap [Windows 10 laptop](#). The check out these ten for less than \$350.

When is the last time you defrag your hard drive or have you ever? Let us show you how to [defragment your hard drive](#), if you are running Windows 10.

If you like photography then consider taking one of these online [photography courses](#) – from beginner guides to masterclass.

[How to speed up your Wi-Fi](#) by optimizing your internet connection.

Like some of us, we are curious of [unique new products](#), so here are 22 that you may drool over.

Q&A

Computer Tune-ups, Anti-virus, Software, and Voice Assistants

By Bob DeLaurentis

Q. What is an effective way to keep my laptop running like new?

A. There is a powerful technique that can work miracles, but it also requires great care - reinstall the operating system. This is not the best option for everyone, but done properly it can keep your computing life nearly trouble-free. System resets are known by different names, the most common are "Reset this PC" (Windows), "Reinstall macOS" (Macintosh), and "Powerwash" (ChromeOS). Unless you have experience backing up and restoring data, a reset is best left to the professionals.

Backup protection is where the cloud can be your best friend. The more you take advantage of cloud services, the easier it becomes to keep your data and system files separate. ChromeOS is almost entirely cloud based. Apple's iCloud can be configured to protect all your data as well. Windows is more complex but using cloud services for data is a good start.

When all your data is backed up in the cloud, reinstalling the operating system is much easier. Here are the basics:

Performing a fresh installation is different for every operating system. You will need to spend some time with Google, searching for guidance that fits your computer.

Early on during the reset process you will have a choice between reinstalling "on top" of your current install or erasing everything. Reinstalling provides a fresh copy of all the system files while preserving everything else.

Erasing everything is the nuclear option. It will wipe out every bit of data and reset the computer as if it was brand new. Once complete, any personal data will have to be restored from a backup.

The bottom line is that storing personal data in the cloud combined with yearly system rebuilds will keep your computer in first class shape.

Q. I finally replaced my aging computer with a new Windows 10 laptop. Do I need to buy a new anti-virus utility as well?

A. This answer may surprise you: no. But as always, the details matter. For years, the general advice was that a free version of something like Kaspersky AntiVirus was good enough for many situations. For high-risk users, third-party, paid anti-virus utilities were best.

Microsoft Windows Defender has had a troubled history and a less than stellar reputation. But that is no longer the case. The version that comes with

Windows 10 is excellent. It provides a good balance of safety, security, and ease of use. And considering that it is kept up to date automatically as part of Windows, I think that makes it the best option for nearly everyone.

My advice is to use Defender, and enjoy your new laptop. Windows 10 is a fantastic product.

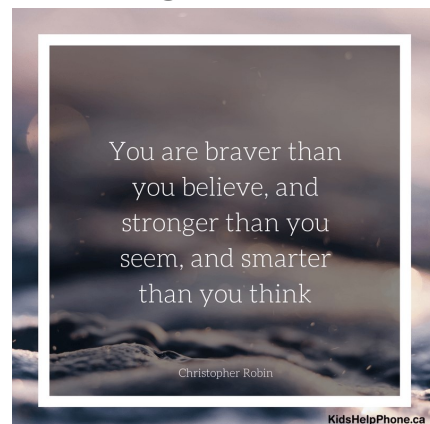
Q. The correct spelling of my name has silent letters that confuse Siri. Is there a way to teach her how to say my name properly?

A. Both Apple's Siri and Google Assistant can take elocution lessons for pronouncing names. Depending on the name, the results can range from almost perfect to rather poor. The easiest method is to ask Siri to say your name. When she responds, you say, "That is not how to pronounce my name." She should reply by asking how to say it properly. Speak your name clearly. In response, she should offer several choices for you to choose from.

There is also a way to add pronunciation instructions with your address book. Special phonetic spelling fields can be added to a contact that shape Siri's pronunciations. To add one or more of these fields, open Contact on our iPhone, select a name, and tap the Edit button at the top right. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and tap "Add Field: A list of potential new fields, including phonetic options, will appear.

Google Assistant has a similar feature to add phonetic spellings to entries in Android's contact list. For Amazon's Alexa, the options are limited. Adding a new Skill can help but overall performance is so uneven I suggest that living with Alexa until better options are available.

A tech enthusiast his entire life. Bob is currently developing an educational software project. When not writing, he is in the kitchen cooking up something unusual, or outside with a camera. He can be contacted at techtalk@bobodel.com



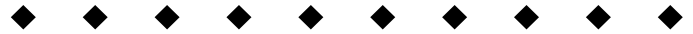
(Continued from page 6) Cable or Air?

lated using a Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM) technique.


The meaning of each of these is not germane to this discussion except for the fact that they are different. And it is that fact that forces the television manufacturer to include both types of de-modulators on the television. So, all digital televisions are capable of using either signal. Most, if not all, are defaulted to use the cable signal, probably because nowadays most people receive their television from a cable TV provider rather than over the air. So, if you are a cord-cutter, you will have to go into the settings of your TV and find the location where “Air” or “Cable” is chosen. Once you have made the “Air” choice, you will have to let the TV scan for all of the channels in your area. Once scanned, your TV will be set up for your local, over the air, television channels. (A cord cutter is someone who has decided to stop receiving their television entertainment from their cable provider, which means they no longer get cable channels. They receive over the air television channels using an antenna, and they stream entertainment from such providers as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu, over their internet connection. Streaming services require a subscription, and there are some streaming providers that include cable channels.)

Now we still have a 6 MHz broadcast channel but, because we have digital modulation schemes which are more efficient than the older analog modulation schemes, the television stations can now fit more channels into the 6 MHz bandwidth. That means that where we may have had one analog channel, say channel 8, we now have multiple digital sub-channels, maybe 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3. In fact, WEDU, the local educational channel has six sub-channels, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6, all transmitted within the basic 6 MHz bandwidth (isn't digital wonderful). Typically the base sub-channel, the .1 channel is a High Definition (HD) channel, and the other sub-channels are Standard Definition (SD) channels. (High or Standard Definition refers to the quality or resolution of the picture displayed on the television screen. HD is referred to as 1080p or sometimes 720p, while SD is referred to as 480p. (The number is the number of horizontal lines used to create the picture and the “p” indicates a progressive scan, as opposed to an interlaced scan that was used for analog TV.) SD is about the same quality as the old analog TV picture. HD channels will also typically provide 5.1 audio, but that's entirely another story.) So it turns out that the original decision to allocate 6 MHz for a television channel seems to have been a pretty good design decision. Or, at least the designers of the digital television equipment have been

very clever in using the allocated bandwidth to their and our advantage.



(Continued from page 5) Windows Snip

not want to use them. Microsoft promises more options to come. Be sure to search Google for videos on how to use Windows Snip and Sketch! I am including here only the basic options. Click on the Windows logo in the lower-left corner of your desktop and you will find Snip and Sketch in the alphabetical list of apps that appear. It is not inside the Windows Accessories folder of apps (where the Snipping Tool still remains). I recommend dragging this app to your desktop screen to always keep it handy. But you can also open it anytime by holding down the Windows key + Shift key + S on your keyboard. Upon opening the app, your whole screen goes gray and you will see the small controls rectangle at the top. Here you select HOW you want to select what you want to snip or capture. From left to right you can select a rectangular area, freeform selection, the entire window, or your full screen. If you select the rectangle, you drag your mouse on the screen to select whatever you want. As soon as you release your mouse – presto, your selected image has been captured and saved on the clipboard to do with whatever you want! You can open a Word document for example, place your cursor where you want, and “paste” your clip right in your document. Or you can open the Windows Paint app and you can “paste” it there if you want to do more editing. At the same time that your snip is placed on the clipboard, you will also see a message stating that you can edit, draw, or markup your selection. Click to do that and Snip and Sketch opens in its own window with its own menu of options. Various easy marking tools are available for you to play with and try. There are highlighters and markers, and clicking on the down arrows will open things like color choices, etc. Once you have “sketched” on your “snip” you can save it as a “.jpg”, “.png”, or “.gif” format by clicking on the old floppy disk save icon and selecting the file type you want. The new Snip and Sketch is easy to use and very helpful for saving and sketching on any image on your screen for any purpose. Why not give it a try? 



Who was offered an internship at Hewlett-Packard in the 8th Grade.

- ⇒ Bill Gates
- ⇒ Steve Jobs
- ⇒ Nolan Bushnell
- ⇒ John Sculley

Windows 10 News and Tips

PCWorld

How-To Geek

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Do you have computer questions
or need help with your computer,
smartphone or tablet?

WE'RE READY TO HELP!



HELPDESK



11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

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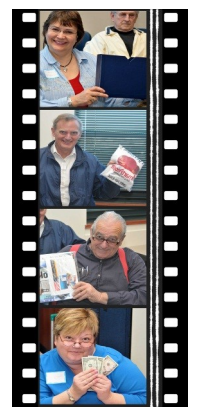
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