

(Approx. 1,540 words)

Nibblers

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Modular Smart Phones

Project Ara is a plan for a modular smartphone from Google's Advanced Technology and Projects group, the California-based search engine's research and development brain trust. You'll build your phone from modules you choose, each module a square of varying size that attaches to the phone with electropermanent magnets.

<http://www.cnet.com/news/googles-modular-smartphone-project-ara-gets-one-step-closer/>

Media Streaming Sites Compared

This article is intended to be a concise comparison of some of the top streaming services available. Below, you'll find them stacked against each other and compared in the areas of content selection, pricing, and availability to help you find the service that best suits your needs. Read more:

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/home-theater/best-media-streaming-services-version-1429724876/#ixzz3YW1ucTpo>

Biometric Scanning

Bodyprint is a research project, and not something ready to be integrated into our smartphones. However, it proves the potential is there for the future, and biometric scanning doesn't have to be limited to the most expensive devices. Read more:

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/bodyprint-biometric-capacitive-screen-scanner-news/#ixzz3YW0EvKiN>

Ransomware Defenses

To protect yourself from newer "crypto" infections, ensure that whatever email service you use has filtering enabled to remove malicious attachments. Or forward your mail through Gmail, which generally does a good job of blocking suspect attachments.

<http://tinyurl.com/k9utnvw>

Google Earth Tutorials

This set of tutorials can help you understand how to use the fun, powerful features of Google Earth. Each tutorial provides a hands-on lesson using the application. Tutorials topics include:

□□ Navigating on the Earth

Searching for locations and businesses

Marking locations

Exploring Mars, Moon, and Sky (video)

Geotagging photos using Picasa (video, English)

Obtaining coordinates (video, English only)

Making movies in Google Earth Pro and EC □□Importing addresses in Google Earth Pro and EC <https://support.google.com/earth/answer/176576?hl=en>

Next-Generation Firewall

A next-gen firewall can look inside the envelope to check it also doesn't contain dangerous content. Likewise, it can have smarter rules so you can say "block all known dodgy addresses" rather than having to explicitly state "don't allow mail from Joe the scammer at number 23 Spam Lane." The great thing about these smart rules is that you can transfer the responsibility for keeping an updated list of dodgy addresses to your firewall vendor rather than maintaining them manually yourself.

<http://tinyurl.com/o4749p5>

dxdiag

All Windows computers have this tool. It can provide lots of information.

DxDiag is a commonly requested file when dealing with tech problems. It contains information about the hardware your computer has and all sorts of other helpful information. This file does not contain *any sort* of personal information. How to obtain your DxDiag file:

From the desktop click: Start > Run (or windows key + r).

In the blank text field of the window that appears type "dxdiag" without the quotes. Press run or hit enter.

Another window should appear titled DirectX Diagnostic Tool. Near the bottom of the window click on "Save All Information..." A popup should appear with a progress bar, this may take a few minutes.

After it completes a dialog should appear asking you where to save the file.

Recommended: save it to your desktop (automatically selected) with the default name and file type.

Fun Website

Some will crow and others will lament how their crow's feet prematurely age them after uploading a photo of themselves to Microsoft's age-guessing How Old Robot. But this fun website presages a future in which computers can make sophisticated predictions and decisions based on who they're looking at.

<http://how-old.net/#> (This site said I look 10 years younger than I am, love it.)

This Device Lets People Communicate Without A Cell Signal, WiFi, Or Power

The designers are currently finishing their final proof of concept and coordinating with the Philippines Red Cross to plan a rollout across the country. Eventually, they hope to bring it to other countries as well. It's something that could be useful anywhere; even the most-connected places on Earth can't easily communicate when standard infrastructure breaks. <http://www.fastcoexist.com/3045723/>

Edge's Security

Microsoft Edge will defend against common trickery tactics used by hackers to obtain personal information or money, such as phishing, through stronger credentials. Windows 10 will also have Microsoft Passport, a technology that uses asymmetric cryptography to authenticate you to your frequently visited websites. With SmartScreen, Edge will be able to perform a reputation check on all websites you browse. Additionally, it will block sites that it deems prone to phishing. Read more: <http://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/microsoft-edge-security/#ixzz3a1nsuM5p>

Tech Companies Are Moving To 100% Clean Energy, Some Faster Than Others

With people storing gigabytes-worth of selfies online and live-streaming their naps, cloud data centers from companies like Apple, Amazon, and Facebook demand more and more electricity these days. Greenpeace research is being analyzed, examined, praised and criticized. Read the article here: <http://www.fastcoexist.com/3046195/>

Zero Energy Furniture

The ZEF program addresses an open problem: how solving energy efficiency and climate control issues at the furniture scale rather than at the building scale ? <http://zefdesign.tumblr.com/manifesto>

The first product, a table looks fairly ordinary. But when the room around it heats up, the table automatically starts to cool the air. When it gets cold, the table warms things back up. All of this happens without any outside energy use: Instead, the table automatically keeps things comfortable through a hidden layer of a special kind of wax and some simple physics.

<http://www.fastcoexist.com/3046023/>

The Rubber Army

Before he became an acclaimed fashion designer, Bill Blass created deliberately bad camouflage during World War II as a member of the so-called "Ghost Army." Check out the slide show for an illustrated guide to harmless military equipment and read on for a primer in Ghost Army misdirection.

<http://www.fastcocrete.com/3045935/>

ID Picture Contents

Load a picture in the box on this site and the site will make it's best effort to identify the object. Try it here:

<https://www.imageidentify.com/>

YouTube Privacy

A YouTube video on how to make your Facebook completely private. I will run the video as I make the changes because there is so much information.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vqrXIsAPXk Contributed by Sally Northrop

Thirty-Seven Things You Should Keep In Your Car

Packing light has its advantages, but having some items – from a roll of quarters to a roll of duct tape – in your car all the time can be a big help when needs arise.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/Saving-Money/2015/0517/Thirty-seven-things-you-should-always-keep-in-your-car>

Microsoft Match

Answer six quick questions and Microsoft Match from Staples, will find the best suitable Windows device for you. *More the choices, the bigger is the confusion.* Windows offer too many great devices with highly advanced features and specifications, but not every device might suit your actual requirements. Microsoft now wants to help users selecting the correct device for them.

<http://www.staples.com/sbd/cre/products/microsoft/match/index.html>

Display A Program's Startup Impact On Windows

Windows 8 displays startup information in the Windows Task Manager and not in msconfig. There you find listed a selection of programs that start with Windows. The startup impact column highlights programs that have a high impact on the system's startup which can be useful in determining whether you should disable the autostart of a program listed there. Use Ctrl-Shift-Esc to open the Task Manager. It is alternatively possible to right-click on the taskbar and select Task Manager from the context menu that opens up.

Switch to the Startup tab once the Task Manager has loaded.

There you find listed the startup impact column. You can sort it with a click on the column header.

<http://tinyurl.com/nv6aljw>

Device Guard Joins Windows

Device Guard, announced at last month's RSA Conference in San Francisco, will be an option for those who want deeper protection against APTs and malware in instances where intruders get in.

<https://redmondmag.com/blogs/the-schwartz-report/2015/05/device-guard-lockdown-windows-10.aspx>

Portable Power

If you travel for business regularly a useful accessory to carry is a mobile battery pack to keep phones and tablets running for hours. That's easy to do with the Cheero Power Plus 3 that packs a whopping 13,400 mAh battery in a gadget only 3.8 x 3.1 inches small. The Cheero has two USB ports and can charge two devices at the same time.

<http://tinyurl.com/pwhwjcl>

Windows 8 Recovery Media

Recovery media is kindergarten simple to create in Windows 8. I used a 1GB USB drive and completed the project in less than 15 minutes. I hope I never need it but it gives me peace of mind to have it. The instructions here: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-8/create-usb-recovery-drive>

Emoji Count Increasing in 2016

The Unicode emoji subcommittee (yes, such a thing exists) finalized and submitted a list of 38 new emojis for encoding in version 9.0 of the Unicode Standard. The proposal document includes notes for each new emoji, which contains some entertaining tidbits. For instance, the emoji subcommittee says the left-facing and right-facing-fists can be used in tandem to create a fist bump.

Read more: <http://www.digitaltrends.com/web/38-new-emojis-could-be-coming-in-2016-including-baconsselfie-avocado-call-me/#ixzz3b44H4e5G>

Link to Wikipedia article defining current emoji: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoji>

Extend the Life of your Gadget's Batteries

Tips to help maintain the health of Lithium Ion batteries:

Avoid deep discharge;

Charge devices to around 50% before storing;

Never store a device that is either fully charged or completely discharged for extended periods. Tips like this and more are explained in this article. Read it here:

<http://tinyurl.com/mlwf6lp>

Juice Jacking

The process of charging smart devices at public kiosks is a route to infection and/or data loss. Follow these guidelines if you must use a public charging kiosk.

<http://www.techadvisory.org/2014/09/whatsjuicejacking>