

User Friendly

LACS
**A Computer and
Technology
User Group**

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**Don't forget to pay
your 2024 LACS dues
in January 2024.**

Watch your email for APCUG
workshops and
other upcoming events.



**LACS IS A MEMBER OF
APCUG**

**An International
Association of Technology
and Computer User Groups**

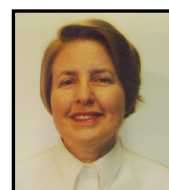
www.apcug2.org

www.facebook.com/APCUG

www.X.com/apcug (Twitter)

JANUARY 9, 2024 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM — via Zoom
Socializing and Questions & Answers: 6:30
Topic: Recommended Websites
Speakers: Stephanie Nordlinger, LACS Vice
President, YOU and any attendee



Most of us have visited the internet often for years, but you probably have not found all of the great websites. All of us will discuss places where you can learn about using your computer, mobile phone, etc. The second half will cover websites for shopping, science, politics, hobbies, sports, music, entertainment, medicine, travel, recipes, etc.

I intend to email LACS members a list of some topics and websites we may discuss. Joining organizations and getting on email lists and podcast sites that discuss the things you care about is helpful. Much is free, and digital subscriptions are often less expensive than paper ones. Many websites offer free or nearly free events, webinars, publications, tech support, etc. *Consumer Reports* and *National Geographic* give more information to digital members than to paper subscribers or nonsubscribers. *Washington Post Live* has numerous free interviews each week live and on its website. The *New York Times* sends emails on recent developments on science and many other subjects.

Meet Our Presenter

Stephanie is an attorney who bought her first PC in 1985. A member of the UCLA PC Users Group, she helped to form LACS in 1991. She joined AOL in 1995. She has been LACS's president, editor, etc. She has many interests, including computers, politics, genealogy, natural history, and gardening.

LACS members on the PC groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link to this meeting before or on **January 7**. Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at LeahClark424 (at) gmail.com before or on **January 7**. More information about LACS is at www.lacspc.org.

**FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR****WELCOME NEW AND
RENEWING MEMBERS TO LACS****Gavin Faught, LACS Treasurer****New Member: (1)**

Howard Posner

**Members Who
Renewed This
Month for 2024: (15)**

Newton Bernstein

Paul Cooley

Shelby Croft

Sylvia Davis

Lee Freehling

Allan Greenberg

Marcia Jacobs

Roger Kohn

Mark Presky

E. J. Rozek

Sims, Regina

Aldo Vendramin

Huie Wade

Hedy Zhang

Patrick Zillacus

**WARNING: THE ANNUAL DUES
AMOUNT IS DUE
IN JANUARY 2024
FOR ALL MEMBERS.**

See page 8 of this issue for how to pay your dues by PayPal or Zelle. You may also send a check made out to Los Angeles Computer Society to 11664 National Blvd, #343, Los Angeles, 90064-3802. If you have any questions about your dues, please contact our treasurer, Gavin Faught.

LACS IN 2024

LACS members are looking forward to a good year in 2024. We hope more members will offer suggestions for presentations, newsletter articles, and other activities.

What do you want from LACS in 2024?**What do you want to do for LACS in 2024?**

Our board member, **Irv Hershman**, sent some quotes from Winston Churchill. Here are a few that may give LACS members something to think about.

- He who fails to plan is planning to fail.
- We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.
- A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.
- It is better to do something than to do nothing while waiting to do everything.
- If we are together nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail.
- Success comes from continuing to strive, fail, and learn without losing enthusiasm.

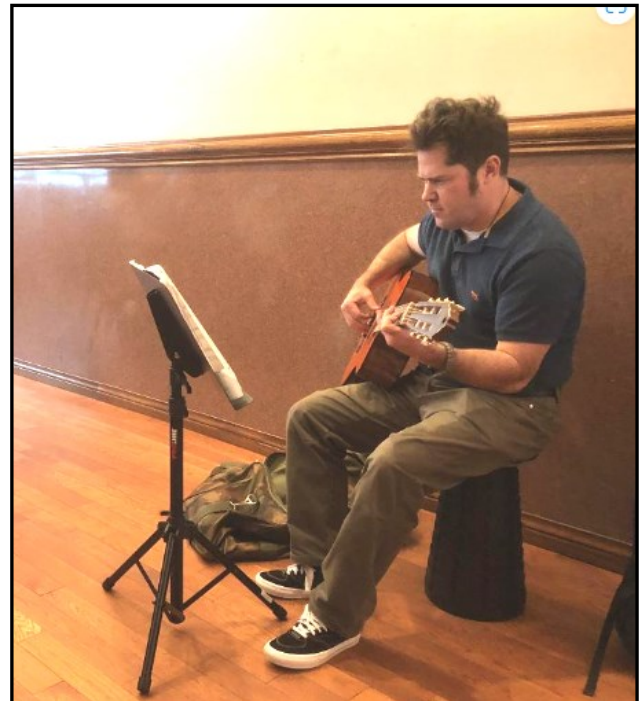


LACS HOLIDAY PARTY**December 2, 2023**

By Leah Clark, LACS President/Editor

Those who came to the LACS Holiday luncheon party at Fu's Palace had a fun time. We all enjoyed tasty and abundant Chinese cuisine, while enjoying the guitar music played by our treasurer, Gavin. The conversation was both technical and social with everyone happy to be together.

We give thanks for a good LACS year in 2023. We are looking forward to learning and friendship in 2024.



**Happy
New Year,
LACS**

SPEED UP YOUR LAPTOP

By **Bob Rankin**, Ask Bob Rankin

<https://askbobrankin.com/askbob.html>



An AskBob reader with a need for speed asks: "How can I speed up my laptop? It's so much slower than my desktop for most tasks, and it bogs down when I try to open more than one program. Should I replace the hard drive, add more memory, or buy a newer model?" Check out my advice on how to improve the performance of your trusty laptop. Most of these tips will help if you have a desktop, too! Read on...

Before we begin, here's the bad news: laptop computers are generally slower overall than desktops, unless you spend thousands of dollars on one of the highest-performance "desktop replacement" laptop models. Portability is lovely, but speed definitely matters, too. The good news is that there ARE some things you can do to speed up your laptop, even if it's fairly new.

As you guessed, you may need to spend a few bucks on a new hard drive, add some RAM memory, do some cleanup, or tweak some system settings. Let's start by taking inventory of your hardware. For that, see my article [Should You X-Ray Your Computer?](#). As the name implies, it will show you the inside of your machine -- what kind of hard drive, the amount of memory, the speed of the CPU, and other facts about your laptop. And you don't even have to pop the hood — it's all done with free software programs. Even if you have a desktop, it's worth your time to do this. You'll learn something interesting about your computer.

Many laptops, especially the lower-cost models, come standard with a 5400 rpm magnetic hard drive. They're reliable and have sufficient storage, but not very fast when it comes to launching programs, opening large

files, or managing resources when multiple programs are open. Replacing a standard 5400 rpm hard drive with a faster drive is one of the best investments you can make to speed up your laptop.

Disk read/write operations are the biggest bottleneck in all but the cheapest, underpowered laptops. Replacing a laptop's hard drive is much easier than the same upgrade on a desktop machine. A 7200 or 10,000 rpm drive will be 33 to 50% faster, and an SSD (solid-state drive) will give an even bigger boost, albeit with a higher cost.

There's usually just one screw to remove the bottom of the laptop. Then you pull off the drive bay cover, pull out the hard drive, slip in the new one, format the new drive, and install all your software and data. The restoration of programs and data is easier if you make a disk image copy before removing the old drive. See my article ["Here's How to Upgrade or Replace Your Hard Drive"](#) for additional information on replacing a hard drive.

Adding more RAM memory will improve laptop speed, up to a point. Going beyond 8 GB yields only small performance increases, so it's seldom worthwhile. However, if you use your laptop to manipulate large databases, video files, or graphic files, you may want additional RAM to avoid "paging." That happens when your computer is low on memory, and it needs to swap information between memory and disk. The combination of low memory and a slow hard drive can result in frustrating delays. See [Adding Memory: A Silver Bullet for Your Computer?](#) to assess your memory needs, find out what kind of memory you need, and where to buy it.

Defragmenting your traditional magnetic hard drive can provide noticeable laptop speed increases, particularly if your hard drive is running 75 percent full or more. A file that is all in one piece can be read much faster than one that lies scattered all over the drive in

several fragments. Windows has a built-in defragger that runs automatically, but there are third-party tools that promise to do a better job of optimizing your drive's performance. You'll find links to some of those in my article [Need a PC Tuneup? Free PC Maintenance Tools](#). (SSD drives don't need to be defragmented -- another good reason to upgrade.

Maybe the problem isn't your slow laptop. If the slowdowns are most noticeable when accessing websites, downloading files, or streaming video content, your Internet connection might be the cause of poor performance. See my article [How to Get a Faster Internet Connection](#) for tips and tools to help you go faster on the information highway.

Keep your hard drive free of unneeded files, so that the operating system has fewer files to index and search when one is needed. Empty your Recycle Bin and delete temporary files regularly. Uninstall programs and delete old pictures and videos that you haven't used in a long time. Don't be a packrat. See [Here's How to Clean Computer Clutter](#) for help cleaning digital clutter. That article also covers how to get rid of "bloatware," the trial software that comes pre-installed on new computers. (Click on the links or go to <https://askbobrankin.com> to search for the references.) ❖

INTERNET SECURITY – ONCE OVER EASY, WITH HASH

By **Phil Sorrentino**, Secretary & APCUG Rep
Sun City Center Computer Club, FL

<https://www.sccccomputerclub.org/>

philsorr (at) yahoo.com



The Internet is essential to so many things we do, like shopping, investing, and banking, that you may have wondered how secure the Internet is. Additionally, how secure is my private information during an Internet transaction? And now that

we're thinking about it, how is the Internet made secure? If knowing a little about how the Internet is kept secure is interesting, read on; if not, jump to the next article.

The Internet provides essential communications between tens of millions of people and has become an essential tool for commerce; therefore, security has become a tremendously important issue. Internet security has many facets, ranging from keeping communications private to protecting passwords and guaranteeing secure commerce transactions and payments.

Computers are an integral part of the Internet, and when it comes to computers, security is a concern on many different levels. There is physical security that keeps your computer hardware from being stolen. There is software security that keeps people out of our private files. There is "malware" security that keeps your computer software from being infected with viruses, spyware, worms, and the like. And finally, there is "network" security that keeps private data protected as it goes from one computer (or client) to another computer (or server) on the Internet. These security concerns are important, but the subject here is network security. Network Security is implemented by applying cryptography to messages sent on the Internet.



Remember the "s" in "https://" and the little lock icon on the browser when you go to a "secure" website? Well, cryptography is

behind all that security. Cryptography is used to secure telephone, Internet, and email communications (as well as to protect software and other digital property). Cryptography is nearly as old as written language itself. It was invented to address the age-old question: How can I communicate with my friend so that no one else listening will know what was shared?

Cryptography becomes necessary when communicating private information over a public or "un-trusted" medium, such as the Internet. Typically, you can be sure that the message you send over the Internet will reach your desired destination. Still, you cannot guarantee that intermediaries (computers along the way) will not be able to see and/or read your message if it is not protected. With a collection of not-so-expensive equipment and a good deal of knowledge, a message on the Internet can be intercepted (sniffed), and if it is "plain text," it can be read. For mundane email messages, this is not much of a concern; for messages that contain private information, such as personal information like bank account or social security numbers, this could be an invitation for Identity Theft.

To get a bit technical here (here's the once over, with hash), we need to address the following four security concerns to guarantee messages are secure on the Internet.

- 1) *Privacy*: Ensuring that no one can read the message except the intended receiver.
- 2) *Integrity*: Assuring the receiving party that the received message has not been altered from the original.
- 3) *Authentication*: The process of proving one's identity.
- 4) *Non-repudiation*: A mechanism to prove that the expected sender sent this message.

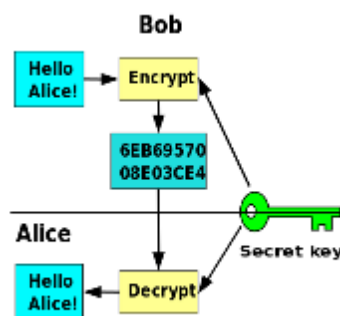
There are, three types of cryptographic schemes typically used to accomplish these goals, each of which can be researched in great detail by doing a Google search on the subject and settling in for some rigorous mathematics and explanations.

- Secret-key cryptography
- Public-key cryptography
- Hash functions

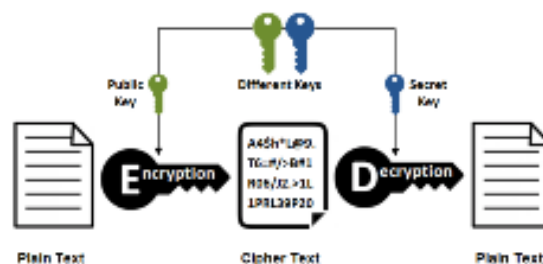
However, here is a brief summary.

Secret-key Cryptography

Secret-key cryptography, sometimes called symmetric cryptography because the sender and receiver use the same key, is the more traditional form of cryptography where the same key is used to encrypt and decrypt a message.



Public-key cryptography



On the other hand, public-key cryptography uses algorithms to create two asymmetric keys, a public, and a private key. (Unlike secret-key cryptography, it does not require a secure initial exchange of secret keys to both sender and receiver.) The asymmetric keys are a mathematically related key pair: a secret private key and a published public key. These keys protect a message by creating an encrypted message using the public key, which can be decrypted only by using the private key, providing **privacy**, the first security concern.

Hash Functions

Hash functions are mathematical transformations used to irreversibly encrypt data, meaning that the hash results cannot be reversed to recover the original message. Hash functions are well-suited for ensuring data **integrity**, the second security concern, because any change made to the contents of a message will result in the receiver calculating

a different hash value than the one sent by the sender. Since it is doubtful that two different messages will yield the same hash value, data *integrity* is ensured to a high degree of confidence.

Authentication, the third security concern, is accomplished in nearly all modern computer systems using passwords that authenticate users attempting to access computer resources. For security reasons, passwords are not typically kept on a server in plaintext. Hash functions are commonly used to convert passwords to an irreversible data pattern. When you type in your password, a Hash function converts it to a data pattern and compares it to the data pattern previously stored for your password.

Your password is never stored on your machine or your server's machine; only the hash function results are stored. There is no way of going backward from the hash function data pattern to the password (remember, the hash function is irreversible). So now you know how the passwords are protected, and why when you forget a password, the server can't tell you what it was; they can only reset it to a new password.

Digital Signature



The fourth security concern, **non-repudiation**, ensures the message was sent from the expected sender. This is accomplished by a digital signature, which ensures that the sender cannot deny the authenticity of its signature or later deny sending the message. A digital signature is created using the private key of an asymmetric key pair. The signature can be

verified by the corresponding public key of the asymmetric key pair, thus proving that the document was "electronically signed" by the private key owner, thus guaranteeing the message's source.

THE MOST GROUNDBREAKING INVENTIONS AND TECHNOLOGIES IN SCIENTIFIC HISTORY

From www.recordstrivia.com

Science has played a significant role in the development of the world as we know it today. Over the years, we have seen many groundbreaking inventions and technologies that have revolutionized the way we live and work. In this blog post, we will explore some of the most remarkable inventions and technologies in scientific history.

The Printing Press

The printing press is one of the most important inventions in human history. It was invented by **Johannes Gutenberg** in the mid-15th century and revolutionized the way books were produced. Prior to the printing press, books were copied by hand, making them expensive and rare. The printing press made it possible to produce books quickly and cheaply, making them accessible to a wider audience. This led to an increase in literacy rates and the spread of knowledge, which had a significant impact on the development of modern society.

The Steam Engine

The steam engine, invented by **James Watt** in the 18th century, was a significant technological advancement that had a profound impact on the Industrial Revolution. The steam engine was used to power machines such as textile mills and locomotives, leading to the mechanization of many industries. This increased productivity and efficiency,

(Continued on Page 17)

LACS INFORMATION

PAY DUES BY PAYPAL OR ZELLE

To pay by PayPal, go to this link:

www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024

and then click on **Send**. You'll be asked to log in to your PayPal account or sign up for an account so that PayPal will know where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Once you have entered your dues amount, click on **Add a note**. Tell us of any updated information: physical address, email address, phone number, and what type of dues you are paying: regular, electronic *User Friendly*, etc. or if you don't want your contact information published in the roster.

To pay by Zelle, log into your bank with your username and password.

Select **Transfer Money > Send Money with Zelle**. Follow the instructions. The name of the recipient is **Los Angeles Computer Society**. Select **Send by email**. The email address is:

lacompetersociety@gmail.com. The wording may be a little different on your bank's site. Email questions to Gavin at gmfaught@gmail.com

HOW TO JOIN LACS'S MAIL LIST

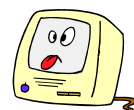
LACS has **one** active general list:

PC@LACS.Groups.IO. Use this email address to ask questions, to offer any comments or suggestions, and to conduct official LACS business.

New LACS members should receive an invitation to join our list with two weeks to accept. LACS members who want to join the list should send an email to

LACS+subscribe@Groups.IO from the email address they want to use with their name and phone number. Stephanie, our Groups.IO Coordinator, will check your membership and add you to the PC list. Contact her at nordlacs@AOL.com

FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?



LACS member and presenter, **Jim McKnight**, has an open offer to LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free. There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net.

Non-members can wisely invest in a one-year **new regular** LACS membership (\$40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to www.lacspc.org. Click on **Member Forms** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update**, select **Click Here** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out, and email it with your changes to Membership@lacspc.org or snail-mail it to

Los Angeles Computer Society
11664 National Blvd. #343
Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802.

ATTENDING A ZOOM MEETING

LACS members who are on our PC email list will receive a link, meeting ID, Passcode, and instructions to attend the LACS general meetings a couple of days before the meeting. **Please let Leah Clark know by the morning of the meeting if you don't have it or have any problem.**

You can put an icon to the link on your desktop so it's handy at meeting time.

1. Right-click a blank spot on your desktop.
2. Select **New** from the drop-down menu.
3. Select **Shortcut**.
4. Type or copy and paste the link in the box that says "Type the location of the item."
5. Click **Next**.
6. Type a name for the shortcut.

LACS CALENDAR



January

LACS Board Meeting, Wednesday, January 3

Note: Date change due to New Year holiday.

Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

Please log in early so we can start on time.

LACS General Meeting: January 9

Topic: Recommended Websites

Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

Please log in early so we can start on time. Allow extra time to be sure you have the link, to get or update your Zoom software if you have not used it before or recently, or to solve other issues before the meeting starts.

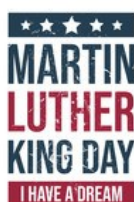
January 1: New Year's Day

January 3: LACS Board Meeting

January 9: LACS General Meeting

January 15: Martin Luther King Day

HAPPY NEW YEAR



VISIT OTHER APCUG COMPUTER USER GROUPS AND SEE THEIR NEWSLETTERS

Many APCUG groups allow members of other groups to attend their meetings. LACS heartedly welcomes visitors from other user groups, and we are welcome to join other groups' meetings.

Go to www.APCUG2.org. Click on **Member Benefits**, then on **Groups Sharing Meetings** or on **Newsletters Online**. A list of groups sharing meetings is arranged by time zones.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

January 9, 2024: TBA

February 13, 2024: Recommended Websites

Check your email and *User Friendly* for updates to this schedule.

ZOOM MEETINGS

Members on our PC email list will receive, via email, an invitation to join LACS Zoom general meetings. Click on the URL in the invitation before the meeting and follow the prompts. Contact leahjc@sbcglobal.net Leah Clark at if you have any questions or if you don't receive the link by the morning of the meeting day.

ZOOM RECORDINGS

LACS members will receive links to the recordings of Zoom meetings via email.

HYPERLINKS

Underlined text (blue in the color editions) in *User Friendly* usually means it's a hyperlink to a website. Click on the link on the online version to see the referenced place. Or, copy and paste it into your browser's search or into the address bar.

USER FRIENDLY BACK ISSUES AND INDEXES

To see back issues of *User Friendly*, go to <http://www.lacspc.org/category/user-friendly/>.

For indexes to past issues, go to <https://www.lacspc.org/category/uf-index/>

To find a specific article or topic, use the search box on the top right.



MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone or during the hours listed below. Select the topic from the list and then contact a person whose number is listed next to it.

Find a helper's email address and phone number on your roster. If you don't have your roster, call 424-261-6251. Only members in good standing may receive a roster. We hope you find this LACS free service useful.

If you are experienced using a particular program or hardware, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert. To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please email Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net or call her at 424-261-6251.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF, InDesign, Photoshop, etc. - 10	Hardware - 7	PDF - 8
Android Smartphones - 8	Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 7	Photoshop - 10
Apple devices - 11	Mozilla Firefox - 7	Quicken - 8, 12
Anti Malware and Backup - 7, 8	MS Excel - 8, 11, 12	Thunderbird - 7
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3	MS Word - 1, 3, 8, 12	Utilities - 7, 8
Genealogy - 8	MS Outlook - 1, 8, 10	Windows - 7, 8
Groups.IO - 8	MS PowerPoint - 8, 11	WordPerfect - 8
	MS Publisher - 2	Zoom - 2, 9

Preferred Time for Phone Calls			
Number	Name	From	To
1	Beckman, Loling	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Clark, Leah	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Hershman, Irv	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
7	McKnight, Jim	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
8	Nordlinger, Stephanie	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
9	Presky, Mark	Any	Any
10	Rozek, E. J.	Noon	8:00 PM
11	Van Berkomp, Paula	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
12	Wilder, Joan	9:00 AM	9:00 PM

Note: Times are Pacific Times

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

TITLE	NAME	TERM
President	Leah Clark	2024
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2024
Secretary	Marcia Jacobs	2024
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2024
Director	Loling Beckman	2025
Director	Howard Krivoy	2025
Director	Mark Presky	2025
Director	Irv Hershman	2024
Director	E. J. Rozek	2024
Director	Annette Tossounian	2024
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2024
Immediate Past President	Stanley Johnson	
APCUG Representative	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Database Manager	Loling Beckman	
Groups.IO Email Lists	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark	
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Publicity – Press	Mark Presky	
Publicity – Online Media	Open	
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark	
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom	

Mailing Address: 11664 National Blvd., #343, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802

Website: www.lacspc.org

Contact the President/Editor at 424-261-6251. Follow the prompts. This is a Google Voice number.

Please use your roster for **email addresses and phone numbers** to contact any officer, board member or other member, or you may leave a message at the above number. If you don't have your roster, please contact Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net and she will mail you a copy. Only LACS members may receive a roster.

DESKTOP LINUX MINT 21.2

By **Tom Burt**, Vice-President
Sun City Summerlin Computer
Club <https://www.scscc.club>
Tomburt89134(at)cox.net



Even though I'm pre-dominantly a Windows 10/11 user, every 18 months or so, I teach a seminar on "What's New with Linux." As you might guess, it doesn't usually draw much of a crowd. My favorite "distro" (version) is Linux Mint because it's free (open source), it comes with a very nice graphical desktop (actually, a choice of three), it includes lots of bundled applications, it's well-supported and it performs great on old, low-end hardware. Also, because of its internal design, Linux is innately very secure. Support from Microsoft for Windows 7, 8, and 8.1 is long gone, and Win 10 support is steadily fading. If you're now among the Windows orphans, you might want to consider installing Linux Mint to replace or run alongside Windows on your "well-seasoned" PC. The following is an overview of Linux Mint 21.2, the newest version released in November 2023.

How to Get and Install Linux Mint 21.2

Browse to: <https://linuxmint.com/>. Click the Download button. Click one of the buttons to choose which desktop version (Cinnamon, Mate, Xfce, or Cinnamon Edge) to download. A page of information, including download links, will appear. Click one of the "USA" download links to download a 64-bit "ISO" (DVD) image file to a folder on your PC's hard drive.


It's also a good idea to click the links for "New Features" and "Release Notes." Once the Linux Mint ISO download is complete, you can burn the ISO image to a DVD to make a bootable setup DVD. Or you can download and use a free program called **balenaEtcher** <https://www.balena.io/etcher/> to convert the bootable ISO image to a bootable USB flash drive.

To get a feel for Linux Mint, you can simply boot and run Linux Mint from the boot media without installing it. This is called a "live session". The live session desktop includes an "Install Linux" icon that will let you install Linux. In the installer, you can choose to replace the current operating system, or you can install Linux Mint alongside the current operating system. This will configure your PC to dual-boot Linux and Windows. The 64-bit Linux Mint configuration defaults are fine, and the installer will automatically handle secure boot and UEFI issues.

For comprehensive Linux Mint installation instructions, see: <https://linuxmint-installation-guide.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>

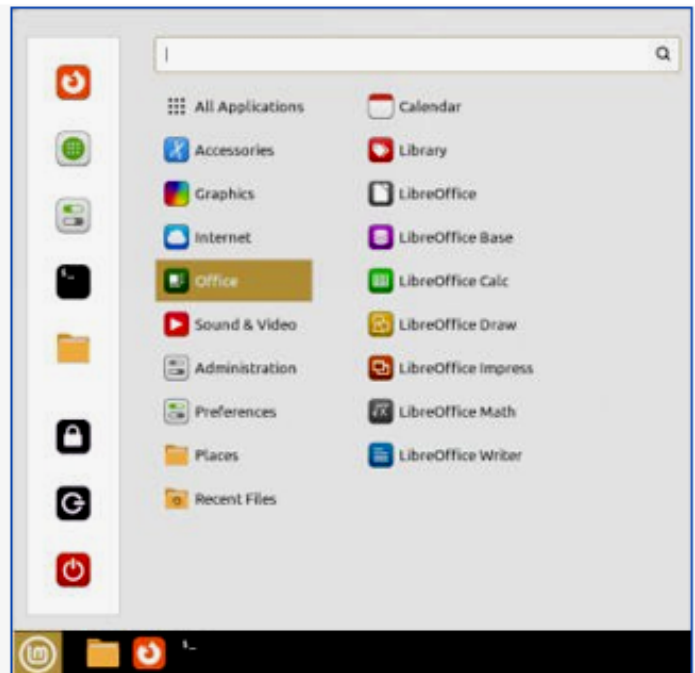
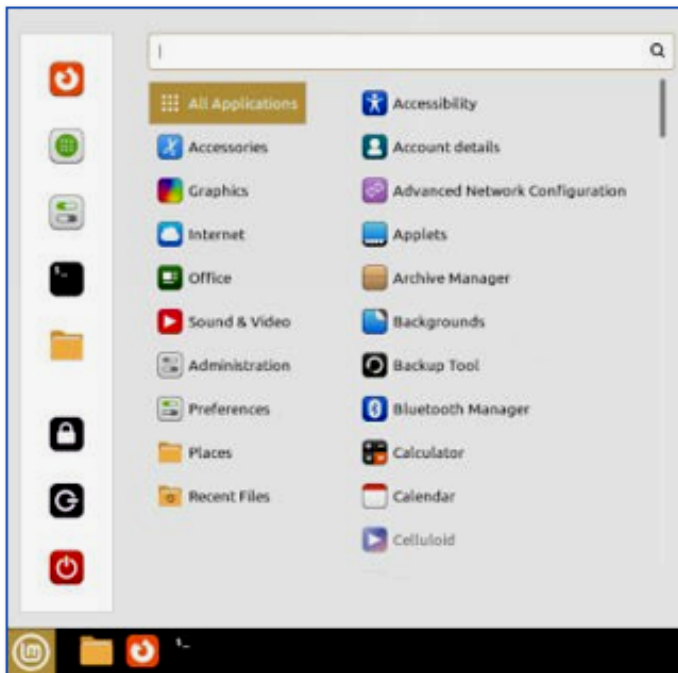
Another alternative that I use is to set up Linux Mint on a virtual machine (VM). For this, I use **Oracle Virtual Box** (<https://virtualbox.org>). After an empty virtual machine has been set up, with the ISO file as the virtual DVD drive, boot the VM from the Linux Mint ISO and install Linux Mint to the VM's virtual hard drive. To learn more, see my **Virtual Machine seminar** at: https://www.scscc.club/smnr/Virtual_Machine_Primer.pdf.

Linux Mint is a Windows 7 work-alike, so it's relatively easy for a Windows user to get going with it. The screenshot on page 13 shows desktop icons, a Task Bar with a Start button, "quick launch" icons, a tray area, and a customizable desktop background.

Open the Start Menu by clicking the  button in the lower left corner. The Start Menu has a pane at the left for launching key applications and functions, a search window at the top, a column of application categories, and, for a selected category, a list of the applications in that category. A scroll bar appears at the right edge when needed.

Linux Mint Cinnamon Start Menu Screen

Among the bundled applications in *Mint 21.2*



is **Libre Office**, which includes a spreadsheet, word processor, presentation graphics, drawing and flowcharting, and several others. Libre Office can open and save in MS Office file formats. The Firefox web browser and the Thunderbird email program are also bundled. Mint 21.2 features a new video player named Celluloid and a music player named Rhythmbox. Accessories include a calendar, calculator, file viewer, a password manager, and a note-taking tool.

The **Preferences** settings tool allows you to customize the look and feel of Linux Mint as well as a collection of other system settings. It's the equivalent of the Windows Control Panel. The look and feel settings include choosing your desktop background (pictures, solid colors, gradients), icon types, colors for the taskbar, folders, window title bars, and more.

The **Update Manager** handles checking for and installing updates to Linux Mint and its applications. The Update Manager alerts when new updates are available via its tray icon, but YOU decide when to actually download and install them. To launch it, click its icon on the tray. You can select any or all of the available updates. Generally, you will want to install all of them.

The **Software Manager** allows you to access Mint's online repository, which claims over 60,000 free, open-source applications, and install whichever ones you desire. Launch the Software Manager from the Start Menu > Administration > Software Manager. When you click the link for an item, it opens a details page to help you decide whether the program is what you're looking for.

Final Thoughts

I set up Linux Mint 21.2 in a Virtual Box virtual machine to get the screenshots for this article. I booted the virtual machine from the downloaded Mint 21.2 64-bit ISO image, and then I double-clicked the "Install" icon on the desktop. Other than that, I made a few clicks to select the language, keyboard, and time zone, and I entered my account credentials. The entire setup was done in about 15 minutes. I chose a desktop background, set up some theme and color preferences and was ready to go. My virtual machine boots to the Linux desktop in about 15 seconds. What could be easier?

Check out my Linux seminar handout at:

https://www.scscc.club/smnr/Desktop_Linux_Mint.pdf ❖

WINDOWS 11 ONEDRIVE

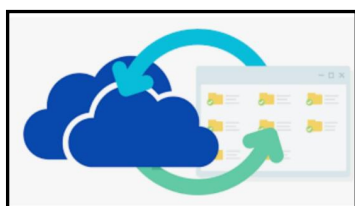
Are You Missing Out??

By **David Kretchmar**, Hardware Technician
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

<https://www.scscc.club>

(The screen shots accompanying this article are on page 16.)

OneDrive is the 5GB of free cloud storage built into the Windows 11 operating



system. (See the screen shots.) Microsoft has integrated OneDrive more closely into Windows 11 than with

Windows 10, presumably to get more users onboard with what OneDrive has to offer. In this article I'm going to get into the "nuts and bolts" of the operation of OneDrive in Windows 11 and discuss some advantages of using OneDrive, and hopefully convince some users who have not taken advantage of this feature to consider it. Even if you're experienced with OneDrive, you might learn something about OneDrive's newer features.

Either using or losing (deleting) OneDrive are the least used options for this tool. Most users simply ignore OneDrive. It is unfortunate that more users are not using OneDrive; they're missing an opportunity to utilize some valuable features, especially secure storage of important documents and pictures.

Microsoft has built OneDrive into a solid, reliable, useful service that gives you a minimum of 5GB of cloud storage for free. Over time my free OneDrive cloud has grown, first to 15GB as the result of "loyalty bonuses". Then last year I finally paid \$99.99 and got a Microsoft 365 account which includes the Office Professional suite and a terabyte of online storage, for up to 6 computers.

OneDrive Settings

Several of the features I will describe require making changes to your OneDrive Settings. To get to OneDrive Settings, click the OneDrive icon (the cloud) in the notification area on the right side of your Taskbar, then click on the gear icon and click Settings.

Set up Your Local Sync Folder

When you go into OneDrive Settings, you get a chance to choose the folder where any files you choose to sync from the cloud will be stored. The default location is a folder called **OneDrive** in your user profile. That location is usually fine, but you can choose a different location if you have a secondary drive (formatted using NTFS) if you need more storage than your system drive.

Next, under **Account**, choose which folders you want to make available locally. Open OneDrive Settings, click the Account tab, and then click Choose Folders.

That "Make all files available" box near the top doesn't sync the files themselves; it just makes them available to you in File Explorer.

The default is to make all your files available; even if you have hundreds of gigabytes of files in the cloud and limited local storage. This is still the right option, because of a feature called "Files on Demand."

Setup Files on Demand

Files on Demand is a feature of OneDrive in Windows that gives you the ability to browse through your entire collection of OneDrive files using File Explorer even if those files are not synced to your PC.

If you open a file in the cloud, OneDrive downloads it immediately (that's the "on demand" part). You can also mark files to be available even if you're not connected to the internet. To use this feature, right-click any file or folder and then click "Always keep on this device". A solid green checkmark icon in

the Status column shows which files are available offline.

If you no longer need to keep those offline copies, right-click the file or folder and then click “Free up space” to remove the local copies. (They remain available in the cloud and on demand.)

Note that, if you do not designate a file to be available when you are not connected to the internet, you cannot access that file if you do not have an internet connection. I had not paid much attention to this feature until last year when my internet was down for 5 days. Since I had not designated any files to be accessible offline, I could not access any of the files I had saved for years since they were all synced to OneDrive!

Sync Your Folders

This feature appeared in 2018 with little fanfare and is very useful. You have the option to redirect any or all of three system folders that are part of your user profile to the cloud instead. The effect is the same as if you had changed the default location of the Desktop, Documents, or Pictures folder to a folder with matching names in your OneDrive folder.

To make this change, open OneDrive Settings, click the Backup tab, and choose the option you prefer for each of the three folders.

Keeping these system folders synced to the cloud is an effective way of backing them up.

After you make the change, OneDrive moves files from the current folder in your local profile to that same-named folder in OneDrive and merges any existing files from the cloud-based folder. Any changes you make to the files in the OneDrive folder on any device will be synced to all your devices. Remember to designate the files and folders you want available offline.



Share a File

If you have a file stored in OneDrive and you want to share it with someone else, there's an easy way to accomplish that. Right-click the file in File Explorer and then click Share. OneDrive generates a short link and copies it to the Clipboard, ready for you to paste it into an email message or a chat window.

The default is that anyone who has that link can open and edit the file, so use this option only when you're sending a file to a trusted friend or colleague. You can change the access mode from Edit to View by clicking the “>” next to “Anyone with the link can edit”.

Share Files with Extra Security

Quick links are convenient, but you might want a little more control when sharing a file or folder from OneDrive. For example, you might not want the addressee to be able to make changes to the file, or you might want the link to expire so it can't be reused if someone finds it in an old email. Or maybe you want to protect the shared link with a password.

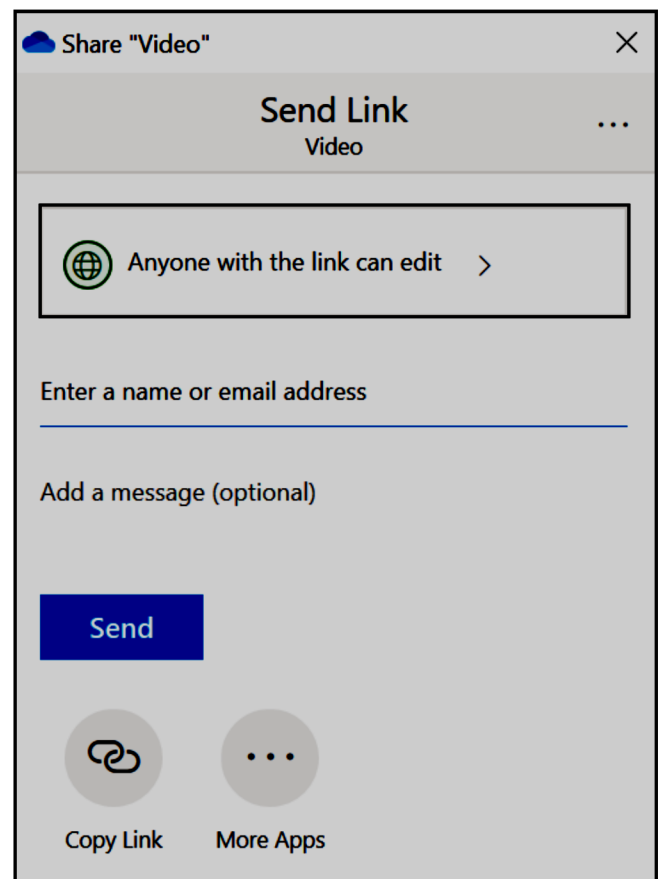
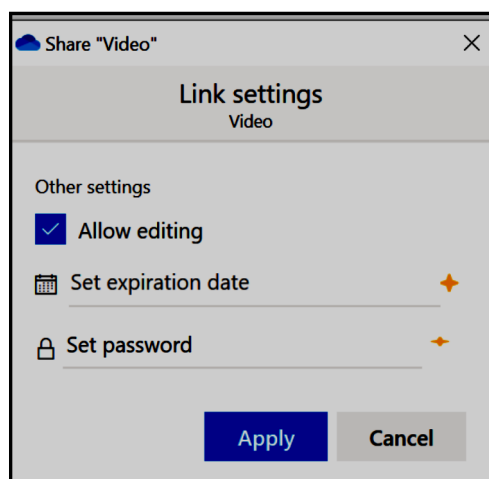
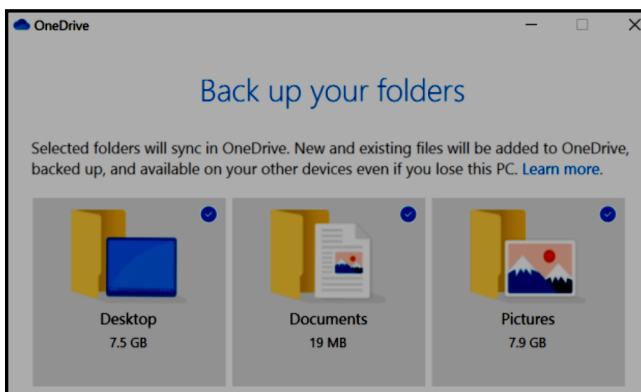
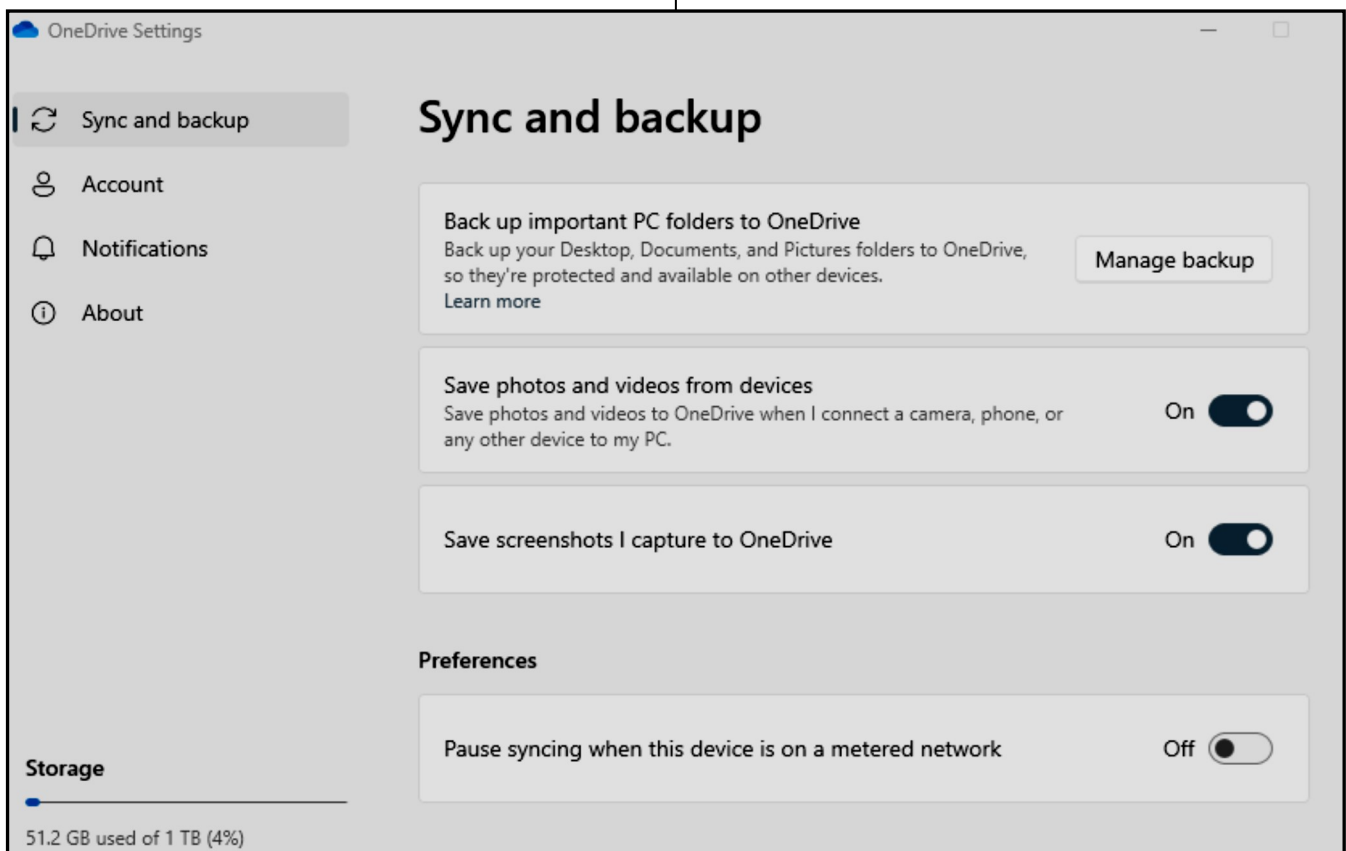
You can do any or all of those things by right clicking a file or folder in File Explorer and then choosing more OneDrive sharing options. That opens OneDrive in your web browser with the Share dialog box open for the object you selected, as shown here.

Set an expiration date of just one or two days to prevent links from being reused later.

Conclusions

This is a discussion of what I consider the most important aspects of Microsoft OneDrive. As a minimum, you should use free cloud storage as a backup for files you cannot afford to lose.

Remember to make those files available offline so they will be available if you lose your internet connection. ❖



The Most Groundbreaking Inventions and Technologies in Scientific History

(Continued from page 7)

leading to a significant increase in economic growth and development.

The Telephone

The telephone, invented by **Alexander Graham Bell** in the late 19th century, revolutionized communication. Prior to the telephone, the only way to communicate with someone was through written messages or in person. The telephone made it possible to communicate with people in real-time over long distances. This had a significant impact on business and personal communication, making it easier and more efficient.

The Light Bulb

The light bulb, invented by **Thomas Edison** in the late 19th century, revolutionized lighting. Before the light bulb, people used candles or gas lamps to light their homes and workplaces. The light bulb made it possible to have affordable, safe, and reliable lighting, which had a significant impact on productivity and quality of life.

The Automobile

The automobile, invented in the late 19th century, revolutionized transportation. Prior to the automobile, people relied on horses and other forms of transportation to get around. The automobile made it possible to travel long distances quickly and easily, leading to the development of modern transportation infrastructure. This had a significant impact on economic growth and development, as well as personal mobility and freedom.

The Computer

The computer, invented in the mid-20th century, revolutionized information technology. The first computers were large, expensive, and difficult to use, but they laid the foundation for

the development of modern computing technology. Today, computers are used in almost every aspect of modern life, from business and education to entertainment and communication. The development of the computer has had a significant impact on the way we live and work.

The Internet

The internet, invented in the late 20th century, revolutionized communication and information sharing. The internet made it possible to connect people from all over the world and share information in real-time. This had a significant impact on business, education, and personal communication, making it easier and more efficient to access information and connect with people.

The Smartphone

The smartphone, invented in the early 21st century, revolutionized personal communication and computing. The smartphone enabled a powerful computer to be in your pocket, with access to the internet, email, and social media. This had a significant impact on the way we communicate and access information, making it easier and more convenient to stay connected and informed.

Over the centuries, science has led to many remarkable inventions and technologies that have revolutionized the way we live and work. From the printing press to the smartphone, these inventions and technologies have had a significant impact on economic growth, personal mobility and freedom, and the spread of knowledge and information.

As we continue to develop new technologies and push the boundaries of science, we can expect to see even more groundbreaking inventions and technologies in the future. ❖



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SPECIAL OFFERS

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LAUGHING OUT LOUD

From the Sarasota Technology User Group

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