User Friendly

LACS
A Computer and Technology User Group

IN THIS ISSUE

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apcug

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)**

MARCH 12, 2024 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM — via Zoom
Socializing and Questions & Answers: 6:30
Topics: 1. Social Media for Seniors or Anyone
           2. Facebook, Creating a Safe Environment
Speaker: Judy Taylour, APCUG Speakers
           Bureau and Region 10 (California) Advisor

What is social media? Do you want to find old friends, make new friends, or keep up with what your children and grandchildren are doing? Learn about what to share and what not to share. How often you should post and more will be included in this presentation. Doctors say that social media is healthy — it keeps seniors mentally and socially vital. Learn what you need to do to be more secure when using Facebook.

Meet Our Presenter

Judy Taylour is a 34-year member of the Santa Clarita Valley Computer Club where she serves as President, Editor, and Webmaster. She was also co-facilitator for the Southern California Regional User Group Summit (SCRUGS), a group of computer clubs' leaders in Southern California that met quarterly for over 20 years to share ideas and presenter information, solve problems, etc. Judy taught adult education computer classes for 22 years in her local high school district. She is also a member of the Pierce College Computer Applications and Office Technologies Advisory Committee. It meets annually to suggest courses and hardware for the next school year.

She is a firm believer in life-long learning.

LACS members on the PC groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link to this meeting before or on **March 10**. Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net before or on **March 10.**
See more information about LACS at www.lacspc.org.

🌼 FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR 🌼

WELCOME NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS TO LACS

Gavin Faught,
LACS Treasurer

New Member: (2)

Patte Barry

Elaine Sitron

Members Who Renewed This Month for 2024: (1)

Melvin Gaines

IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR LACS DUES FOR 2024, PLEASE DO SO NOW.

YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS ANY OF THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP.

See pages 8 and 19 for information for paying by PayPal, Zelle, or check. If you have questions, please contact our treasurer, Gavin Faught. gmfaught@gmail.com

Our bank requested that we write out Los Angeles Computer Society on our checks — not just LACS.

LACS LUNCHEON MEETING

The next LACS lunch meeting will be on Thursday, **March 21**, 2024 at 11:30 AM at the Culver City Sizzler at 5801 Sepulveda Blvd. At the September lunch meeting we had fun, good food, and lots of social and tech talk. It would be nice to have more participants in March. It is enjoyable to be together in person.

You may invite family and friends.

Please RSVP to Stephanie at

nordlacs@aol.com   or phone her before or on Tuesday, **March 19**. Watch your email for updates.

LACS ROSTER

This year I won't be publishing the LACS Roster until the May issue of *User Friendly.* This is to make sure all members understand the new once-a-year dues-paying system, and get their dues paid in time to be on the roster. If you have the 2023 roster, please check it to be sure your contact info is correct. If you don't have the roster, please send me your name and the phone number and email address you want to use for LACS. I want **EVERY** member to send me a short email telling me that it is correct or giving me any corrections **before April 3**.

Send it to leahjc@sbcglobal.net

Thank you for your helpfulness.

If you want to send a condolence card to Gilbert Ialongo for the loss of his wife, please contact Leah Clark for his address.

leahjc@sbcglobal.net

GENERAL MEETING REPORT
February 13, 2024

By **Leah Clark,** LACS President/Editor
Topic: Comparing Windows 10 with Windows 11 and Chromebooks
Speaker: Bill James
          APCUG Speakers' Bureau
Computer Club of Oklahoma City

Bill gave us a walk-through of Windows 11, and he pointed out some of the changes from Windows 10. After that, he gave us a look at the Chromebook.

Comparing Windows 11 with Windows 10

Task Bar Alignment: Windows 11 has set the start button toward the center of the taskbar. Bill showed us how to move it to the left as it is in Windows 10. Tap on the Taskbar for Taskbar Settings to get to the Personalization page. Go to Taskbar Behaviors for Taskbar Alignment to move the start button to the left. You cannot move the taskbar to the top as in prior versions.

Start Menu: When you click on the taskbar in Windows 11, the Start Menu comes up with the icons of your frequently used applications. This replaces the tiles in Windows 8 and 10. Click on **All Apps** to see the list of your apps. Click on an icon to drag and drop it to any location on the apps page. The icons can also be put into folders.

Recommended are recently viewed documents and applications. Go to Personalization, then to Start to see thumbnails of the Start menu where you can choose the ratio of pins to recommended apps on the Start menu.

Your Profile is the next section of the start menu. Click on your name and picture to change your account settings, to lock your screen, or to sign out. The old Control Panel is gradually migrating to Settings. The Control Panel is still in Windows 11. Bill showed more ways to personalize the Start Menu. Click on the search box and type in Control Panel to see the familiar Control Panel.

Settings: Here, you can make changes to your display and taskbar, and you can see and search all your installed apps. Bill took us through Home, System, Windows Updates, and much more. He suggested we go into Settings and explore. He thinks we may find it more intuitive than the Control Panel.

File Explorer has gone through a major overhaul. All your folders will be listed on the left side. Quick Access appears on the right side. File Explorer now has tabs, where you can put a file in a tab. Then you can toggle between the tabs. Bill showed us a lot of options and ways of using and customizing the new File Explorer.

Notifications You can fix receiving pesky notification popups by clicking on System in Settings and then on Notifications. Select the items you want turned off.

Most functions in Windows 10 are also in Windows 11. You can Google to find lots of tips for Windows 11 and ask questions. If you upgrade to Windows 11, you have 10 days to revert to Windows 10 if you wish.

Chromebooks

Those whose computer can't be upgraded to Windows 11 may want to go to a Chromebook, especially if they use their computers only for browsing the web, doing email, or other simple things. They are less expensive than buying a new PC.

Click on the start button to see all the apps you have on your Chromebook. Click on the Settings icon; it looks similar to the Chrome browser. You can search and manage your settings and apps, including categories and subcategories, from the long menus. Also, there's not much difference from Windows 11. Everything works from tabs along the top. All of the applications are cloud-based, not on your hard drive. Bill demonstrated

opening Word on his Chromebook. He showed the Chromebook keyboard and explained the few differences from a regular keyboard.

Google Docs is the word processor that comes with Chromebooks. It is web-based. Attendee, Judy Taylour, pointed out that the Google Office Suite is completely free and is almost as good as the Microsoft Office apps.

Attendees and LACS members received the link to the recording of this informative and helpful presentation. ❖
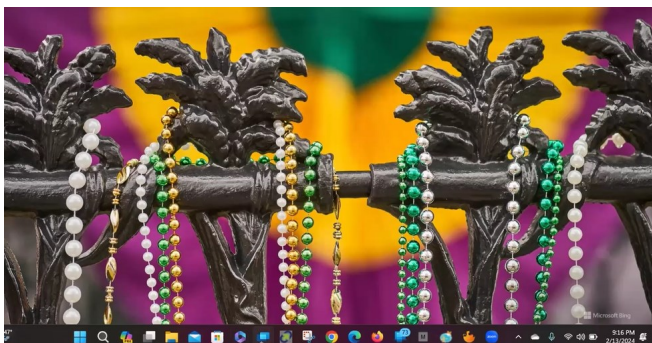
Bill's Mardi Gras desktop

HOW TO TAME YOUR OVERFLOWING EMAIL INBOX

By **Bob Rankin**

https://askbobrankin.com/askbob.html

Is your inbox overflowing? Are important messages getting lost in the shuffle? Are you spending too much time managing your email? If so, it is likely that you're not using **filters** to direct the flow of incoming emails. Learn how to automatically file messages in folders, forward them to someone else, or dump them straight into the trash. Oh, and if your Spam folder is gobbling up messages that don't belong there, I'll show you how to solve that problem, too.

Create Your Own Email Rules and Filters

If your inbox typically has hundreds (or thousands) of unread messages, you may feel anxious just thinking about what you might have missed. You may be wearing out the

Delete button out of frustration. And your family or friends may wonder why you haven't replied to them.

How to Get WordPress Emails in Your Inbox - Instead of Spam

Much time is spent sorting, moving, forwarding, and deleting email instead of reading and acting upon it. **Email filters**, also called **Rules**, can relieve you of some of this administrative burden. Today, I'll explain how they work and how they can work for you!

Read on for help using filters or rules to automatically direct your incoming email messages in a way that makes sense for you. The goal is to decrease the amount of time you spend managing your inbox and increase the time you spend actually reading and replying to your emails. Below, you'll find instructions for how to do that with several of the most popular email services.

To create a filter in Gmail, log in to your account and click the "Show search options" icon inside the search box at the top of the page. A window displaying search options will appear. Parts of a message that can be searched include the From, To, Subject, and Body fields and the message body. You can optionally select messages with attachments or are part of chat sessions. You can also filter based on the size or date of the message.

To find all mail from a specific contact, start typing their name or email address in the "From" field. Select the desired contact from those that appear. If you want to filter ALL messages from a specific domain, you can

enter **example.com** (for example) in the From box.

When you've entered all your criteria, click the "Create filter" link in the window's bottom right corner. Some actions that can be applied to matching messages are obvious: Skip the Inbox (archive), delete (move to trash), and forward to another address. One action that I find very useful is "Never send to Spam." I subscribe to a few newsletters that would occasionally end up in the Spam bucket, so this ensures they always make it to my inbox.

Gmail does not have user-defined folders; instead, "labels" can be created and attached to messages. You can think of them as folders because they work in much the same way. You can funnel all messages that match your criteria into a label with a filter. Combining the "Apply the label" option with "Skip the Inbox" is a helpful trick.

IMPORTANT: If you check the box "Also apply a filter to matching conversations," your new filter will be applied to existing messages, as well as new messages as they arrive. This lets you apply your filter retroactively, which can help to organize the messages you've already accumulated.

Outlook.com formerly called **Hotmail**, (not to be confused with the Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express desktop email programs) calls its filters **Rules**. To create a custom rule, start by clicking the gear icon near the top right on Outlook.com's main menu, then select "View all Outlook settings" in the dropdown window. Click the "Rules" link in the Settings dialog, then click the "+" icon to begin creating a rule.

You can filter messages based on the sender's name or email address, words in the message's subject or body, message size, whether it has attachments or not, and who the message was sent to. Matched messages can be moved to another folder,

marked as junk mail, labeled with a category name, deleted immediately, flagged for follow-up later, or forwarded to another email address.

Outlook.com lets you create rules to automatically handle email as it comes in, but it doesn't give you the option to apply your new rule to messages that have already arrived.

Yahoo! Mail's filtering procedure is similar to Outlook.com's. Start at the main menu and select the gear icon at the top right of the window, then "More Settings. " Click the Filters link and then click "Add new filters" to create a new filter.

Areas you can search include From, To/CC, and Subject fields and the body of messages. Options that can be applied to the target text (search keywords) include Contains, Does Not Contain, Begins With, and Ends With. You can specify whether the filter should be case-sensitive or not. For example, if you specify "banana" as a word to look for in the Body, and you check the "Match case" box, then messages containing "banana" will match, but those with "Banana" or "BANANA" will not.

Options are somewhat limited here. You can move messages that match the filter criteria to other folders (including Trash, Spam, or a filter you create), but you cannot forward a message to another email address or apply your filter to existing messages.

To create filters in Apple's iCloud Mail, log in to your iCloud.com account and select the Mail app. Click the gear icon at the bottom-left corner and select "Rules" from the pop-up menu. Select "Add a Rule" to get started.

iCloud Mail's filtering options are limited compared to those in the OS X desktop Mail client. (So are Outlook.com's compared to the MS Office Outlook client.) But creating a filter is easy.

- First, elect a condition to be met using drop-down menus, i.e., "If a message is from…"

- Second, complete the condition statement by entering text, i.e., "me@mymail.com."

- Third, specify the action to be taken, i.e., "Move it to…" trash, spam, some other folder, etc.

AOL Mail filters can divert incoming messages to specified folders or send an alert to your AOL Instant Messinger (AIM) or mobile phone (not the whole message, just a warning that you have an email from so-and-so waiting).

To create a filter in AOL Mail, start by clicking the down arrow next to your Username in the upper-right corner of the AOL Mail screen. Click Mail Settings and then select "Filters Settings." Click "Create filter," name the new rule, then set up the condition(s) and action to be performed on messages that meet the condition(s).

Are you still using a desktop email client like **Microsoft Outlook or Thunderbird**? If so, some Googling (or the Help screens in those programs) will point you to the instructions for creating filters there. The concepts should be very similar to what I've discussed above. I've been using Gmail since 2004 and can't imagine being tied to a single desktop for my email. Webmail services such as Gmail, Yahoo, and Outlook.com allow you to manage your email from any computer (or mobile device) with an Internet connection.

It's worthwhile learning the capabilities of the filters or rules in your email client. Doing so will keep your inbox tidy and organized and will save you time and tedium. Gmail has the most flexible and powerful filtering options of all the ones I've worked with, which is one of the reasons I use it to manage my inbox.

I should mention that you can avoid the need for a filter if the offending items can be squelched by simply unsubscribing.

Look for the "Unsubscribe" or "Manage subscription" link, which is usually buried at the bottom of the email message. Sometimes, it's in a tiny font or is masked with a color that makes it hard to find.

Here's one final tip: If your email doesn't have the type of filtering you want, create a free Gmail account and forward all your messages to that address, where they can be filtered according to your needs. You can even configure Gmail to send outgoing messages with your old address in the "From" line, so your friends will never know the difference. ❖

MAKE A WI-FI QR CODE USING ANDROID

By **John Krout**
Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society,
www.patacs.org

Instead of forcing family, friends, and user group members to type a long, convoluted password to access Wi-Fi, use your Android phone to make a QR code including the password, enabling all to connect by scanning the QR code.

Introduction

The basic purpose of QR codes is to convey useful information in a form that a smartphone, tablet, or computer can read. Any situation where info has to be hand-keyed can be improved by offering a QR code containing the same info. Recent Android and Apple phones and tablet models can read and apply the info contained in QR codes.

The second advantage of QR codes is to avoid the hassle of typos. That hassle factor increases as the length of the info increases, making a QR code even more attractive.

QR codes contain various types of data. Some of the data types are URL (web page address), vCard (street address and phone numbers), and email (including recipient

email address, subject line, and even the message text).

A **Wi-Fi QR code** typically contains three data elements: the Wi-Fi network name, also known as SSID (Service Set Identifier), the password, and the type of encryption used by the Wi-Fi network. Devices that scan a Wi-Fi QR Code can connect to the Wi-Fi network if it is in range.

In this article, you will learn how to use your smartphone or tablet running the Android 11 or later operating system to create a Wi-Fi QR code and to store it as an image, just like a photo.

You will learn how to test the QR code to make sure it works. Then you can display it, enabling anybody nearby to scan it and connect to the Wi-Fi network, and you can print it so it can be posted for others to scan even if you are not present at the time.

Log In To The Wi-Fi Network Manually

Initially, you use your Android device to log into the Wi-Fi network using the usual method, including typing the password manually.

At that point, your Android device has all the info required to create a QR code. It has the network name, the password, and the network encryption type.

This article was prepared, and screens were captured, using Android 12.

Generate A Wi-Fi QR Code

The **Settings** app that enables you to connect to the Wi-Fi network and type the password can create a Wi-Fi QR code for logging in to the network.

Open the Android Settings app, and tap Connections. You should see a screen like that in **Illustration 1**, with the Wi-Fi network SSID at the top. Tap the SSID, which is circled in **Illustration 1.**

You should see a screen like the one depicted in **Illustration 2**. The SSID appears under the heading **Current network**. Tap the gear icon
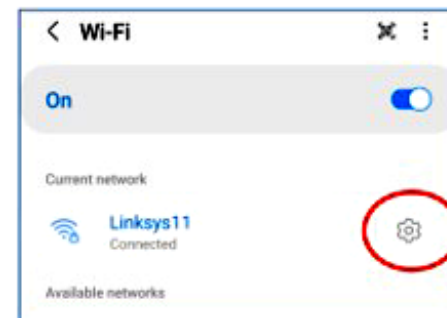

Illustration 1

Illustration 2

Illustration 3

to the right of the SSID, which is circled in **Illustration 2.**

You should see a screen like the one depicted in **Illustration 3**. Tap the button labeled QR code at the bottom left, which is circled in the illustration. You should see a generated QR code as in **Illustration 4**. (Some of the QR code is blocked for security purposes.)
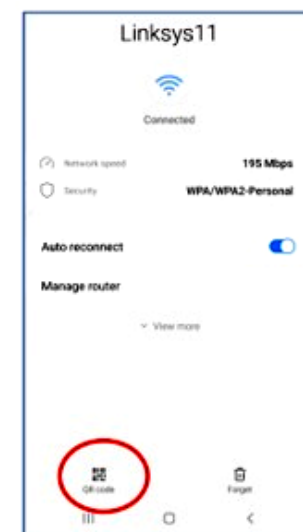

Illustration 4

Tap the button in the lower-left corner, labeled **Save As Image**, to save the QR code image on your device. That button is circled in the illustration.

On my device, within the DCIM folder, the QR code was saved in the internal storage folder named **Screenshots**.

LACS INFORMATION

PAY DUES BY PAYPAL OR ZELLE

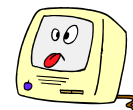**To pay by PayPal,** go to this link: www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024 and then click on **Send**. You'll be asked to log in to your PayPal account or sign up for an account so that PayPal will know where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Once you have entered your dues amount, click on **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: **lacomputersociety@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 an active general email list: PC@LACS.Groups.IO. This email address goes to all members on the list. Use it to ask questions, offer suggestions or help, and to conduct official LACS business.

New LACS members should receive an invitation to join our list with two weeks to accept. Other LACS members who want to join the list should send an email to Stephanie, our Groups.IO Coordinator, at nordlacs@AOL.com and she will send you an invitation to join. If you have any problems or questions about joining, please contact Stephanie.

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

LACS Board Meeting, Monday, March 4

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

Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

LACS General Meeting: Tuesday, March 12

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.

March 4: LACS Board Meeting

March 8: International Women's Day

March 10: Ramadan Begins

March 12: LACS General Meeting

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 19: Spring Begins

March 23: Purim Begins

March 31: Easter

VISIT OTHER APCUG COMPUTER USER GROUPS AND SEE THEIR NEWSLETTERS

Many APCUG groups allow members of other groups to attend their meetings. LACS heartily 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**. The list of groups sharing meetings is arranged by time zones.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

March 12, 2024: Social Media and Facebook Safety with Judy Taylour

March 21: LACS Lunch Meeting
See page 2 of this issue

April 9: TBA

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.

If you have any questions or if you don't receive the link by the morning of the meeting day, contact Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net

ZOOM RECORDINGS

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

HYPERLINKS

Underlined text (blue in the color edition) in User Friendly usually means it's a hyperlink to a website. Click on the link in the online version to see the referenced place. You can also copy and paste it into your browser's search or 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
Android Smartphones - 8
Apple devices - 11
Anti Malware and Backup - 7, 8
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3
Genealogy - 8
Groups.IO - 8

Hardware - 7
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 7
Mozilla Firefox - 7
MS Excel - 8, 11, 12
MS Word - 1, 3, 8, 12
MS Outlook - 1, 8, 10
MS PowerPoint - 8, 11
MS Publisher - 2

PDF - 8
Photoshop - 10
Quicken - 8, 12
Thunderbird - 7
Utilities - 7, 8
Windows - 7, 8
WordPerfect - 8
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 Berkom, 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	Donna Benton	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.

WHICH DESKTOP COMPUTER MONITOR IS BEST?

By **Bob Rankin**
http://askbobrankin.com

When choosing the best desktop computer monitor, it's important to consider your specific needs and preferences. With so many options available in the market, finding the perfect monitor can be overwhelming. However, you can make an informed decision by understanding your requirements and researching. Read on for my tips and advice.

Tips For Buying a Computer Monitor

A computer monitor (also called a screen or display) is often kept for many years, even longer than the computer to which it was originally connected. So when it's finally time to replace your monitor, you may find that new rules apply to its purchase that were unheard of when you bought it. Here are some of those new rules without getting too geeky or extravagant.

One important factor to consider is the type of computer monitor. Various types are available, including LCD, LED, OLED, and CRT monitors. Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages, so it's essential to understand the differences before making a choice. We'll de-geekify all those buzzwords in just a minute.

Another aspect to consider is the size of the monitor. The size of the monitor depends on your personal preference and the purpose for which you will be using it. A larger monitor can provide a more immersive experience or help users with vision challenges. A smaller one may be more suitable for limited desk space.

Additionally, looking for specific features that meet your requirements is crucial.

These features may include monitor resolution, refresh rate, response time, panel type, connectivity options, and ergonomic design. And again, we'll go over what all those mean and which are most important.

Knowing where to buy a computer monitor is also helpful in making the best decision. Various online and offline retailers offer a wide range of options. Before making a purchase, it's important to compare prices, read reviews, and consider the return policy. By considering these factors and doing some research, you can find the best desktop computer monitor that suits your needs and enhances your computing experience.

What Are the Different Types of Computer Monitors?

Computer monitors come in various types, each with its own unique features and advantages. Understanding the different types can help you make an informed decision when choosing the best computer monitor for your needs.

One common type of computer monitor is the **LCD** (Liquid Crystal Display) monitor. LCD monitors are known for their slim design, energy efficiency, and sharp image quality. They use liquid crystals to display images and they are available in various sizes and resolutions.

Another type is the **LED** (Light Emitting Diode) monitor, which is similar to LCD monitors but uses LED backlighting instead of fluorescent tubes. Compared to LCD monitors, LED monitors offer better color accuracy, higher contrast ratios, and improved energy efficiency.

OLED (Organic Light Emitting Diode) monitors are another option to consider. These more expensive monitors use organic compounds that emit light when an electric current is applied. OLED monitors offer deep blacks, vibrant colors, and wide viewing angles, making them ideal for multimedia and

gaming purposes.

Lastly, **CRT** (Cathode Ray Tube) monitors are the older, bulkier monitors that were commonly used in the past. While they are less common today, CRT monitors still offer excellent color accuracy and are preferred by some professionals for graphic design and video editing.

Each type of monitor has its own strengths and weaknesses, so it's essential to choose the one that best suits your needs.

Understanding Computer Monitor Buzzwords

When shopping for a computer monitor, you may come across various buzzwords and technical terms that can be confusing if you're not familiar with them. Understanding these buzzwords can help you make an informed decision and choose the best monitor for your needs. I'll do my best to explain them in plain English.

One important buzzword to know is **Resolution**. The resolution refers to the number of pixels on the screen and determines the level of detail and clarity. Common resolutions include Full HD (1920x1080), Quad HD (2560x1440), and 4K Ultra HD (3840x2160). At the extreme high end, 8K monitors boast 7680 x 4320 pixels. Higher resolutions offer sharper images, but remember that you'll need a powerful graphics card to support them.

Most users will not need anything more than the Full HD option, but if you're into graphic design, video editing, or you use your computer to view 4K streaming video content, go for the higher resolution models.

Another buzzword is **Refresh Rate**. The refresh rate refers to how many times the monitor updates the image per second. A higher refresh rate, such as 144Hz or 240Hz, can provide smoother motion and reduce motion blur, making it ideal for gaming or watching fast-paced videos.

Aspect ratio is another term to be familiar with. It refers to the ratio of the width to the height of the screen. The most common aspect ratio is 16:9, which is suitable for most multimedia content. However, if you work with professional applications or prefer a wider screen, you may consider an ultrawide monitor with a 21:9 aspect ratio.

Lastly, **HDR** and **Contrast Ratio** are important buzzwords related to image quality. HDR (High Dynamic Range) enhances the color and contrast range, resulting in more vibrant and lifelike images. Contrast ratio measures the difference between the darkest and brightest parts of an image, with higher ratios providing better image depth and detail.

Another buzzword you may encounter is **IPS** (in-plane switching). IPS monitors offer deeper blacks and more accurate color rendering than LCD or LED monitors. They also have wider viewing angles, so the picture looks the same, even if you're not directly in front of it. The ViewSonic 27-inch IPS 1080p Frameless LED Monitor is a good example.

Along with IPS, you'll also find **TN** (Twisted Nematic) and **VA** (Vertical Alignment) LCD displays. Here's a quick, non-geeky overview of the three types: TN offers the best response times with lesser picture quality and viewing angles. IPS has the best picture quality and viewing angles, but lower reaction time. VA is exactly in the middle - it has good picture image, viewing angles, and reaction time.

By understanding these buzzwords, you can navigate the world of computer monitors with confidence and choose the one that meets your specific needs and preferences.

Keep in mind, though, that if you use your computer exclusively for web browsing, email, and word processing, you may not care much about any of those monitor characteristics.

The next paragraph is where the rubber meets the digital road for most of us.

What Size Should My Computer Monitor Be?

When it comes to choosing the size of your computer monitor, there are a few factors to consider. The first is the amount of desk space you have available. If you have limited space, a smaller monitor, such as a 24-inch or 27-inch, may be more suitable. On the other hand, if you have a spacious desk (and a fatter wallet), you can opt for a larger monitor, such as a 30-inch, 32-inch, or even a 34-inch ultrawide.

Another factor to consider is your intended use for the monitor. If you primarily use your computer for basic tasks like web browsing and word processing, a smaller monitor may suffice. However, if you are a gamer or a graphic designer, a larger monitor with a higher resolution can enhance your experience and allow for more screen real estate. Larger monitors can also be helpful for people with visual impairment. A larger screen allows one to increase font sizes for better readability.

There is a sharp price jump between 24-inch full-HD and 27-inch 4K monitors; the former should cost $150 or less, while the latter is probably in the $350 to $500 range. If you watch lots of movies or play sophisticated games, the bigger and costlier monitor makes sense. Or, you could put that money into a big 4K television set, and stream your PC display to it. Very little 8K content exists at this time, so I would not spend the money on an 8K monitor.

A curved screen may be helpful on monitors 32 inches or larger. A curved screen puts the vertical edges nearer to your eyes, reducing the amount of refocusing they must do when looking from the center of the screen to one of the edges. Curved screens also reduce the amount of head-turning you must do to view every part of the screen. And they don't have to be super expensive.

Ultimately, the size and shape of your computer monitor should be based on your personal preferences and needs. Consider the available desk space, your intended use, and your budget when making your decision. By finding the right balance between size and functionality, you can ensure an optimal viewing experience.

What Other Features Should I Look For In A Computer Monitor?

When choosing a computer monitor, there are several key features to consider that can greatly enhance your overall experience.

First and foremost, consider the display technology. Two popular options mentioned above are LED and LCD. LED monitors offer better energy efficiency and a wider color gamut, while LCD monitors provide better image quality and viewing angles. This ensures that you get vibrant and accurate colors, regardless of your viewing angle.

Connectivity options are also crucial. Look for a monitor that has multiple ports, such as HDMI, DisplayPort, DVI, and USB, to ensure compatibility with various devices. This allows you to connect your monitor to different devices like laptops, gaming consoles, and media players without any hassle. If you purchase a monitor that doesn't have the same connectivity options as your computer, there are adapters available to bridge the gap. For example, my older PC's video card had only DVI ports, but the monitors I chose were HDMI. A DVI-to-HDMI adapter solved that problem.

Did you notice I said "monitors" and not "monitor"? Yes, I use a dual-screen setup, and if you find yourself limited by a single screen, or you're constantly switching from one application to another, it might be right for you. See my related article

[Dual Monitors: 7 Good Reasons to Upgrade (askbobrankin.com)](askbobrankin.com)

Lastly, consider ergonomic features. Adjustable stands, tilt, swivel, and height adjustments can greatly improve comfort and reduce strain on your neck and eyes during long hours of use. This ensures that you can position your monitor at the most comfortable angle for your viewing pleasure.

By considering these features, you can find a computer monitor that meets your specific needs and provides an optimal viewing experience. Whether you're a gamer, a designer, or a casual user, these features will enhance your overall enjoyment and productivity.

What are some of the best places to buy a computer monitor?

When it comes to buying a computer monitor, it's important to choose a reliable and reputable retailer. Here are some of the best places to buy a computer monitor.

1. Amazon: As one of the largest online retailers, Amazon offers a wide selection of computer monitors from various brands. You can read customer reviews, compare prices, and choose from different models to find the perfect monitor for your needs. Plus, Amazon often offers competitive prices and fast shipping options.

2. Best Buy: Known for its extensive range of electronics, Best Buy is a popular choice for purchasing computer monitors. They have knowledgeable staff who can assist you in finding the right monitor for your requirements. Best Buy also offers price matching, allowing you to get the best deal possible.

3. Newegg: If you're a tech enthusiast, Newegg is a great place to buy a computer monitor. They specialize in computer hardware and electronics and offer a wide selection of monitors at competitive prices. Newegg also provides detailed product descriptions and customer reviews to help you make an informed decision.

4. B&H Photo Video: B&H is a trusted retailer known for its extensive range of photography and electronics equipment. They offer a variety of computer monitors from top brands, ensuring high-quality options. B&H also provides excellent customer service and reliable shipping.

Strings, Sealing Wax, and Other Fancy Stuff

If you run Windows 10 or 11, you may want a touchscreen monitor. But don't get one if you normally sit at full arm's length from the screen, or further. It's just too awkward to use a touchscreen at a great distance.

The monitor stand should be adjustable to the height and viewing angle that you prefer. Pay attention to how easily the stand can be adjusted, and how firmly it supports the monitor.

Higher-priced monitors may be packed with extras like speakers, front-panel display control buttons, or even all the components of a desktop PC. Buy what you need, not what's on sale. The fewer things inside of a monitor, the fewer things that can cause overheating and early death.

Finally, read warranties carefully; a five-year warranty doesn't help if it excludes dead pixels that develop after one year. Don't buy third-party warranty extensions. Sellers push them so hard because they are extremely profitable, and they're extremely profitable because hardly anyone ever qualifies for a replacement under their terms.

Personally, I've not found the brand to be an important factor in computer monitors. Some people are loyal to ASUS, LG, HP, Samsung, or other well-known brands, but I've had no-name monitors that have served me well. Pay attention to the specs I've mentioned above, and check consumer forums for experience with specific models before buying, and you'll do fine. ❖

BASIC WINDOWS DESKTOP

By **Jim Cerny,** Sarasota Technology Users Group

Perhaps a good refreshing review of the Windows Desktop screen would be helpful? It is easy to find ourselves in a "computer rut" where we are doing the same things the same way. We may forget there are other options that we may find helpful or fun. Here are some tips about using the Desktop in Windows.

The main screen area of the desktop is where you keep links or shortcuts to the things you use most often. These items are called **icons**. You double-click your right mouse button to open them in a window. Not only can you have programs or app icons on your desktop, but you can also place a file or web page link on your desktop as well.

The bar across the bottom of the desktop is called the **Taskbar**. Let's look at the large desktop screen area. One important icon on your desktop is the **Recycle Bin**, which you can open to see things you have deleted from your computer. From here, you can restore them if you want. However, if you empty the recycle bin, these things are gone.

Did you know the desktop is a folder? Yup, if you open Windows File Explorer to look at all your files and folders, there is a folder called **Desktop**, and you can use it just like any other folder – move things to it, delete things, etc. This is very handy and helpful.

If you **right-click** an empty area of your desktop, you will get a nice menu of desktop and screen display options. Here, you can select how to **View** and **Sort by** your icons - how big you want the icons to be, and how to organize them on your desktop. I like the **Medium icons** option and also the **Align icons to grid**, which does not allow the icons to be too close to each other and displays them in a neat grid pattern. Of course, I can still drag an icon anywhere I want on my desktop and put it where I want it. If you drag icons to a place on the desktop, do not sort again, or you will have to relocate your icons all over again! I like having my desktop icons in the same familiar place on my screen.

Also on this menu is the **Display settings** option that will open the "Display" menu of options. Yes, you can get to this menu other ways, but it is handy to look over these options to see if you want to change something like the size of text, screen (monitor) display resolution, and use multiple displays. Believe it or not, there is actually a **night light** option to help you sleep (who thought this one up?)!

The last one I want to cover in this article is the **Personalize** option on that menu. Here, you can change your desktop's background photo or color and even choose your own photo if you like. There are many fun options here to play around with, but of these, I recommend **Taskbar** – **Lock the taskbar** be set to **On**. This keeps your taskbar on top of anything else and on the bottom of your screen, so you can always see it. Do not **hide** your taskbar or move it to a different location (top or side) - this will only frustrate you and anyone trying to help you use your computer.

The point is that there are always many options you can choose to change where things are on your computer or, in this case, how your Desktop looks. I do not recommend you change things from the normal default Windows settings unless you have a good reason. It is very frustrating for someone trying to help you when things are not in their familiar or usual places!

One more (hopefully humorous) example: Did you know you can change and reverse the buttons on your mouse – so that the "left" button is really the "right" button and the " right" button is on the left? Don't ever do that (I am not going to tell how to do it!) Unless, someone you don't like wants to use your computer! Then watch them get super frustrated! ❖

Make a Wi-Fi QR Code Using Android
Continued from page 7

Test The Wi-Fi QR Code

Before making the Wi-Fi QR code available to anyone else, testing it is a good idea. The test consists of two steps:

1. Force the Android device to forget the Wi-Fi network
2. Scan the Wi-Fi QR Code image stored on the device.

How To Forget the Wi-Fi Network

For an Android device, the sequence of taps to **Forget** the current Wi-Fi network is: **Settings→Connections→Wi-Fi→SSID→Gear icon→Forget** (trash can button in the lower right corner in **Illustration 3**). There is no request from the phone to confirm that you really want the device to Forget. It immediately deletes its record for the current Wi-Fi network.

How To Test the Wi-Fi QR Code Image File

Then tell your Android device to scan the

Illustration 5

same QR code saved in the device.

Pull down the Shade menu from the top of the Android screen.

On my Android phone, the Shade menu pulls down halfway. A second downward swipe pulls it down, revealing the **Scan QR code** button circled in **Illustration 5**. Tap that button. A camera window opens and displays the legend **Find a QR Code**, as shown in **Illustration 6**.

Illustration 6

That screen includes a button to scan a photo file instead of a displayed or printed QR code. That button is circled in the illustration. Tap that button.

A screen appears showing photos, with subfolders listed in the left pane. Navigate to the **Screenshots folder**, and select the stored **Wi-Fi QR code**.

In my case, after scanning the selected Wi-Fi QR code image into **Screenshots**, the **Settings** app is immediately connected to the Wi-Fi Network. I confirmed that by switching to the Settings app and checking for a secured Wi-Fi network.

Older Versions Of The Android OS

I tested it using my Samsung Galaxy S10 smartphone running Android 12.

The Settings app on my Galaxy Tab S5 lite running Android 11 displays the same user interfaces in a column instead of displaying an entire screen, but the steps for creating a Wi-Fi QR code and testing are identical.

Google informs me that the Wi-Fi QR code creation capability was introduced in Android 10, and the ability to scan a QR code was introduced in Android 8.

Illustration 7

Users of older versions of the Android OS can install a free app such as **QRbot** that will scan QR codes and make appropriate use of the info provided by the QR code, including logging into a Wi-Fi network.

Illustration 7 shows the icon of the QRbot app. ❖

FOR MANY HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS
Go to https://www.apcug2.org for all aspects of computing and operating systems.

SPECIAL OFFERS
Go to the APCUG website at https://apcug2.org/discounts-special-offers-for-user-groups/ for discounts and special offers for Members of User Groups. Avast Anti-virus and Acronis True Image, and several book, media and training sites offer discounts including the two mentioned below.

- Members can save at the **Pearson Technology** websites: InformIT, Cisco Press, Pearson IT Certification, Que Publishing, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.
Informit.com/user_groups/index.aspx
Code for print books: **ITCOMMUNITY.**
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TECHBOOMERS.COM
For learning how to use internet-based websites and applications for free.

- https://TechBoomers.com
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2-bwYlYu1I

LAUGHING OUT LOUD

"According to Google Maps, the appendix is on the right."

"It's your turn. The last time I told him to clean his room he wouldn't fix my computer."

Cartoons from How-To Geek

NOTICE
The columns, reviews and other expressions of opinion in *User Friendly* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Los Angeles Computer Society. LACS became a California non-profit corporation on July 17, 1991. Its predecessor was the UCLA PC Users Group.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION and BENEFITS of MEMBERSHIP

Annual Membership Dues:

Regular New and Renewal,
   Printed Newsletter $ 40
   Electronic Newsletter   30
Family-Associate   12
Students   18
Contributor   50
Supporter   75
Benefactor   100
Gift Membership   20

A subscription to *User Friendly* is included with membership. **Associate members** use the same mailing as a regular member; they do not receive their own subscriptions to *User Friendly*, but may read it on the LACS website. **Students** must prove full-time status. A member may give a 1-year, 1-time gift to a non-member.

Monthly general meetings are via Zoom. In-person or hybrid meetings may take place in the future.

Members also enjoy these special benefits:

— **Monthly Newsletter** *User Friendly*. We publish your article submissions or free classified ads to buy or sell your computer items.

— **Get FREE help** by phone or email (See your roster) from knowledgeable members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly.*

— **Get help by email** by using our group email list. Send your questions to PC@LACS.Groups.IO

— **Receive important news** and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's email list.

— **Free APCUG (**International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups) **Webinars, virtual conferences, programs, and technical information.** Check *User Friendly* and your email to see what's offered.

— Occasional **free software and computer books**, if you review them for *User Friendly*.

— **Annual Holiday Party**

— **Social Interacting** with others who have like interests in computers and technology.

— **Special Interest Groups** (SIGs) on various topics may be created by members.

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All renewals are due in January. New members will pay the annual amount when they join.

Date: _____   *LACS*   **New or Renewal Membership Application**

Check # _____   **Dues may be paid by PayPal, Zelle, or check. If paying by check, make the check out to "Los Angeles Computer Society", and mail it with this form to:**
   Los Angeles Computer Society, **11664 NATIONAL BLVD. #343, LOS ANGELES CA 90064-3802**

Please PRINT Clearly   [   ] New   [   ] Renewal

[   ] New / Renewal with printed newsletter - $40.00 [   ] Associate - $12.00 [   ] Student - $18.00

[   ] New / Renewal with electronic, no paper, newsletter - $30.00   [   ] Gift Membership - $20.00

[   ] Contributor - $50.00   [   ] Supporter- $75.00   [   ] Benefactor - $100.00   [   ] Other

Name: First   Last

Name of Associate: First   Last
(Same address as a primary member)

Address:

City, State, Zip + 4

E-mail Address: E-mail of Associate

Preferred Phone: Publish Contact Info in Roster [   ] Yes   [   ] No

Did a member of LACS invite you to join? If so, who? If not, how did you hear about LACS?

First Class Mail

Los Angeles Computer Society

GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM.

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know. When you click on the link, you will enter a waiting room. Then the host or a co-host will admit you to the meeting.

Please try to arrive at least a few minutes before the meeting start-time so you don't interrupt the meeting and any technical problems can be solved. If you need to take a break during a meeting, do not click on Leave or End. If you do, the meeting will be interrupted for someone to re-admit you from the waiting room. You may turn off your video when you are gone.