

# User Friendly

Volume 44 Issue 3

March 2026

LACS

A Computer and  
Technology User Group

## IN THIS ISSUE

From Your President/Editor	2
General Meeting Report	3
8 Run Commands Every Windows User Should Know	5
LACS Information	8
LACS Calendar	9
<b>Attending a Zoom Meeting</b>	9
Members Helping Members	10
Officers, Directors, and Leaders	11
How Do Spam Filters Work?	12
Quick Computer Tip	16
Tech Trivia Quiz	17
Special Offers	18
Laughing Out Loud	18
Membership Information	19



## LACS WEBSITE

For information about LACS, go  
to <https://www.lacspc.org>

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

<http://www.apcug2.org>

[www.facebook.com/APCUG](http://www.facebook.com/APCUG)

[www.X.com/apcug](http://www.X.com/apcug) (Twitter)



## TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026 GENERAL MEETING

**Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9-00 PM - via Zoom**

**Socializing, Questions & Answers: 6:30-7:00**

**Topic:** Windows Performance Tune-up

**Speaker:** Chris Taylor, APCUG

If your Windows computer is getting sluggish, you don't have to reinstall Windows just to gain back lost performance. Chris Taylor, President of the Ottawa PC Users' Group, will demonstrate and explain how to safely use many native and free 3rd-party tools to speed up Windows.

**Chris Taylor** worked for the Canadian Federal Government for over 36 years in user and server support, IT architecture, and IT security. He has been active in community groups for over 40 years, and is currently the president of the Ottawa PC Users' Group.



Chris has given almost 600 presentations at the Ottawa Public Library and over 30 presentations to APCUG and to APCUG member groups. He has written articles for GlassWire's Cybersecurity News and was on the Community Review Board for the SANS OUCH! newsletter.

Chris has been awarded 15 times as a Microsoft Most Valuable Professional. He received the Ottawa Mayor's City Builder Award and the Ontario Volunteer Service Award in recognition of his volunteer efforts.

## TO JOIN A LACS GENERAL MEETING

LACS members on the PC Groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link to meetings two days before the meeting. Click on it to enter.

Guests may ask for the link two days before at Leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net

## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT/EDITOR

### THE COMPUTER CLUB DECIDED IT WAS FINALLY TIME TO “CLEAN UP OUR COMPUTERS.”

By **CHAT GPT**

Everyone agreed this clearly meant different things.

Carl showed up with a can of compressed air, a microfiber cloth, and the intense focus of a neurosurgeon. He spent 20 minutes removing a single speck of dust from his keyboard, narrating the process like a documentary. “Notice the precision. This crumb has been here since Windows 7.”

Meanwhile, Denise was “cleaning” her desktop by creating a new folder called Old Stuff and dragging everything into it. Five minutes later, she created Old Stuff 2. Then Old Stuff 2 FINAL. Then Old Stuff 2 FINAL v3.

Across the table, Raj announced proudly, “I ran Disk Cleanup.” Everyone nodded respectfully. He added, “I don’t know what it did, but I feel lighter.”

In the corner, two members debated whether uninstalling a program counted as cleaning if you immediately reinstalled it because you got nervous.

The club president tried to restore order. “Let’s focus. Goal: remove unnecessary files.”

At that exact moment, someone asked, “Does anyone know what this file does?”

Silence.

No one had ever seen it before. It had a

long, terrifying name like: system\_core\_runtime\_auxiliar\backup\_DO\_NOT\_DELETE\_v5.dll.

Naturally, they deleted it.

Carl froze. “You’ve angered the operating system.”

Denise whispered, “Put it back.”

“No one knows where it was,” Raj replied, eyes wide.

After a long pause, the president declared, “New rule: we are now cleaning physically only. Nobody touches software.”

Within seconds, everyone was back to wiping screens, blowing dust, and carefully aligning their mice.

At the end of the meeting, nothing had been organized, three laptops were slightly shinier, and one member accidentally discovered he had 47 browser tabs open from 2019.

They all agreed it was the most productive computer cleanup session they’d ever had.

### TIP

When you empty your computer’s Recycle Bin or Trash, the files are not deleted immediately. The operating system removes the file pointers and marks that space as available, meaning the data remains on your hard drive until it is overwritten by new data.

- **Useful Tip:** If you accidentally delete a file, stop saving new files immediately to maximize the chance of recovery.

### GENERAL MEETING REPORT

By Leah Clark, LACS President/Editor  
February 13, 2026

**Topic:** Declutter Your Digital Life  
**Speaker:** Judy Taylour, APCUG



Judy Taylour inspired us to clean up and organize our digital lives. Here are the main topics she covered.

#### Dust Bunnies

If your CPU gets too warm with not enough air circulation, it will slow down. Laptops also need circulating air. You need a Swiffer to dust your keyboard, monitor, tower, and even your smart screen TV.

#### Germ

Studies have shown that smartphones are the most germ-infected objects in our lives, followed by desktops, keyboards, mice, and toilet seats. We touch these things every day.

#### Clean Your Keyboard.

Shut down and unplug your keyboard, dust with a Swiffer, turn it upside down, tap to empty debris between the keys, use compressed air to blow debris from between the keys, and dampen a cotton swab with computer cleaner to use between the keys. Wipe down the rest of the keyboard with a microfiber cloth dampened with computer cleaner.

#### Clean Your Monitor Screen

Turn off the computer, and the monitor or laptop, and dust with a Swiffer. Use LCD screen cleaner with a microfiber cloth, and gently wipe in one direction. Don't spray directly onto your monitor. Dry the screen with another cloth. Use this process to clean your flat screen TVs, tablets, and Smartphone screens.



#### Keep Your Computer Healthy

- Restart it regularly—at least once a week. Computers need regular diagnostic checks and the ability to fix minor issues.
- Clean your hard drive using Windows processes or automate with CCleaner.
- Don't forget your Smartphone and Tablet.
- Restart* performs a full shutdown before it restarts.

#### Create a Restore Point

Use *System Restore* to go back to a time when your computer worked better, to undo changes without affecting personal files, before letting someone else use your computer, before downloading a program or app, and before doing preventative maintenance.

#### Uninstall Unnecessary Programs

Start Button < This PC > File Tab to see a list of files in alphabetical order, or type Uninstall in the search bar. Judy discussed the Download folder. And what, where, and how to save what you want and to delete what you don't need. Pictures take up a lot of memory on your hard drive. Check your download folder at least once a month and delete any files you no longer need.

#### Update Your Operating System

Judy prefers to decide for herself which updates to install and when. You can set active hours for updates.

#### Update Your Software

Your software needs to be updated for security reasons. Judy explained using File Hippo, Ninite, and Patch My PC. You can set your updating schedule, and it happens in the background. Judy uses Patch My PC.

**UPDATE ARE AVAILABLE**

Required updates need to be installed.

### Disk Cleanup

- a. Select which drive you wish to clean up. Check the boxes that you are not sure what they do to read the description.
- b. *Storage Sense* can automatically free up space by getting rid of files you don't need.

### Optimize Startup

Many programs add themselves to start up during installation. Your computer will start faster if you use *Task Manager* to disable programs that you don't need every time you start up. You can do the same thing from Start > Settings > Apps > Startup. Move the sliders to turn startup apps on or off.

### Organize Your Hard Drive

Your hard drive is your computer's file cabinet, organizing your data in folders, categories, subjects, and subfolders. Judy keeps the folders she uses most at the top of the list. Organize pictures by folder name, year, or subject.

### Organize Your Desktop Icons

The desktop is not a storage area but a quick way to get to where you need to go. Arrange icons in folders. Judy showed how to place folders on your desktop.

### Organize and Delete Email Messages

You can search by sender or for photos and attachments. Delete what is no longer needed. Check your Spam folder. Unsubscribe from emails you no longer read. Don't reply to an email from someone you don't know.

### Clean and Optimize Your Android Devices

Turn off the device, then clean it with a microfiber cloth and the LCD screen cleaner

you use. Clean with a disinfectant wipe at least weekly, and wipe your headphones and earbuds. Restart at least once a week. Place the apps you use most on the main screen and keep all apps up to date. Delete apps, texts, and messages you no longer need. Check app permissions, and review privacy and security settings. Back up photos, clean up contacts, and be sure you have the contact info you need. And optimize your Android and iPhone devices with CCleaner — it's free.

### Clean and Optimize Your iPhone

Unplug and turn off. Use a slightly damp, lint-free cloth. Wipe the exterior with 70% isopropyl alcohol or Clorox Disinfecting Wipes, and wipe the screen with a microfiber cloth. Take the cover off, and use a disinfectant wipe to clean it. Wipe down headphones and earplugs. Don't use bleach, hydrogen peroxide, or compressed air. Restart at least weekly.

Keep apps up to date, delete those you're not using, and close apps running in the background. Disable location services like GPS until you need them. Clean up junk files, automatic downloads, contacts, and old texts and messages. Check app permissions.

### New Legislation in California

Judy discussed California's new legislation called "[Delete Request and Opt-Out Platform \(DROP\)](#)," which allows residents to opt out of data brokers' use of their personal information. She suggested we take advantage of this and explained how to do it.

Judy shared her experience with managing digital assets and the importance of having a digital executor.

The meeting concluded with questions and further discussion.

See the recording of the meeting for details on each topic. ❖

### 8 RUN COMMANDS EVERY WINDOWS USER SHOULD KNOW to access hidden Windows settings and save time

By **Shan Abdul**  
How-To Geek  
February 3, 2026



Shan Abdul is a Senior Writer at HTG and MUO. Having used Windows for over a decade, he has extensive experience with the OS. He's been writing on a variety of Windows topics for over three years, incorporating his expertise to teach readers how to get the most out of their Windows devices and resolve issues with the operating system.

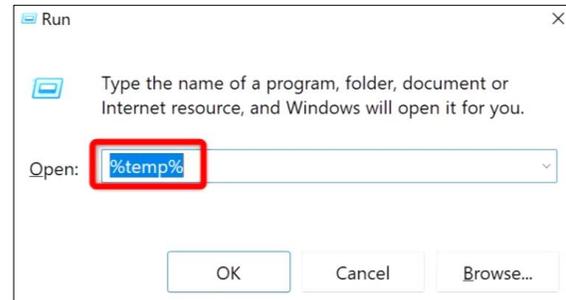
Digging through Settings or Control Panel to make simple changes—like switching default audio device, managing users, or deleting temporary files—isn't the best use of your time. With a few simple Run commands, you can do the same tasks faster. Here are some commands to keep at your fingertips.

#### **%temp%**

Your system and the apps you use constantly create temporary files, which can accumulate and consume valuable storage space over time. In many cases, when an app or the OS starts acting up and other fixes don't help, clearing temporary files can resolve the issue. Regularly cleaning them can also improve overall system performance.

Finding this folder manually means digging through multiple directories, but there's an easier way. Just use the **%temp%** command to open the folder instantly and delete the files inside.

To open the panel, press **Win+R**. Do this for each function described here.



#### **timedate.cpl**

Although we rarely need to adjust the date and time—since Windows updates it automatically—when we do, it usually means navigating through multiple menus in the Settings app. But if you remember the classic Date and Time panel, you can manage your system time, adjust formats, add extra clocks, and more—all from a single window.

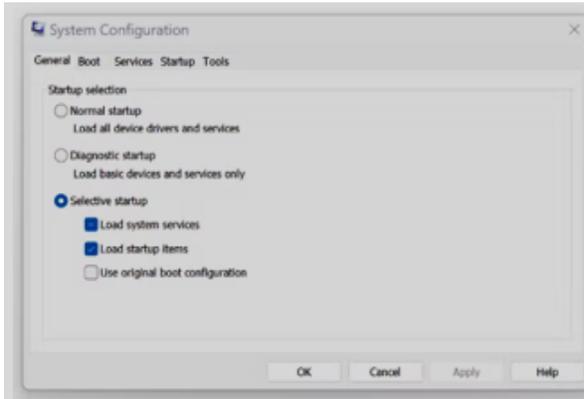
To open this panel, press **Win+R**. and ,type **timedate.cpl**, and hit Enter. You can change your system time in the "Date and Time" tab and add other time zones under the "Additional Clocks" tab.



### msconfig

Three of the most common troubleshooting steps for Windows issues are [booting into Safe Mode](#), disabling startup apps, and turning off third-party services. Normally, this means opening three separate tools, which can be time-consuming and frustrating. Luckily, you can handle all of these tasks from a single place using the System Configuration window.

Windows lets you quickly open this window via the Run dialog. Simply type **msconfig** and press Enter. From there, you can manage all settings under the “Boot,” “Services,” and “Startup” tabs.



### charmap

Windows includes a lesser-known but surprisingly handy tool that lets you browse and copy special characters and symbols that aren't easily accessible from your keyboard—and that many apps don't offer quick access to. Instead of searching online for a symbol, you can launch this tool with a simple command and copy the character directly.

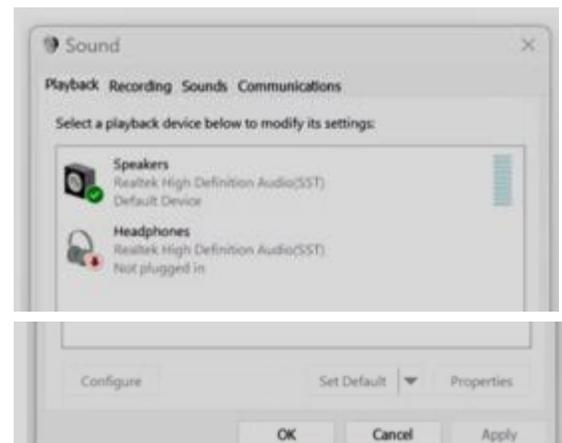
To use it, press Win+R, type **charmap**, and press Enter. You'll be able to browse symbols, accented characters, arrows, and more, then copy and use them wherever you need.



### mmsys.cpl

I can't stand navigating through multiple menus and submenus just to adjust sound settings or [switch default audio devices](#). I much prefer the classic Sound settings panel, which lets you do everything in one place. Type **mmsys.cpl** and press Enter. This opens the Sound panel directly, where you can set your default devices under the “Playback” and “Recording” tabs.

You can also use the “Sounds” tab to customize system and notification sounds, or make simple tweaks, such as turning off the Windows startup sound.



### main.cpl

Do you remember the small window from the XP and Windows 7 days that let us [adjust pointer speed](#), change button layouts, tweak wheel scrolling, and even run basic hardware diagnostics? You can still access this window today to manage almost every mouse property—including ones you can't adjust through the modern Settings app.

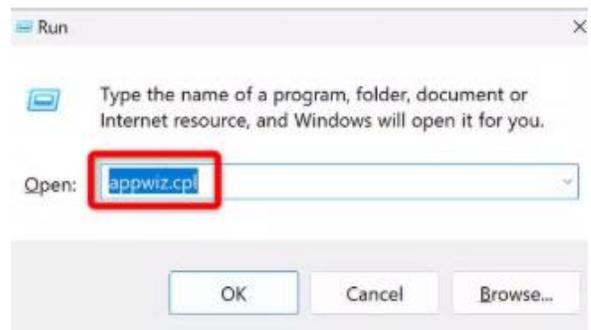
For example, it allows you to fine-tune double-click speed or enable ClickLock, which lets you highlight or drag items without holding down the mouse button—features often missing from Settings. To open it, just type **main.cpl** and press Enter. Then, use the "Buttons," "Pointers," "Pointer Options," and other tabs to quickly customize your mouse properties.



### appwiz.cpl

Let's be honest—checking your installed apps and uninstalling them through the Settings app often means digging through multiple menus and endlessly scrolling. Compare that to the classic Programs and Features window, which displays all installed apps in a clean list and lets you [uninstall them](#) with a single click.

You can open this panel directly with a simple Run command. Press Win+R, type **appwiz.cpl**, and hit Enter. You'll see a list of all installed programs—just select one and click "Uninstall."



### SystemPropertiesPerformance

Visual effects, processor scheduling, memory usage, and virtual memory are settings we often need to adjust. All of them are managed from the Performance Options window, but opening it usually means [digging through accessibility settings](#) or the Control Panel—often taking longer than making the actual changes.

You could try searching for the window, but that assumes you remember the exact term—and that Windows Search returns the right result, which isn't always reliable. A much faster option is to use the **SystemPropertiesPerfor-**  
**mance** command, which opens the Performance Options window instantly and lets you manage everything from one place.

*Continued on page 16*

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## LACS INFORMATION

### HOW TO JOIN LACS' MAIL LIST

LACS has an active, general email list, [PC@LACS.Groups.IO](mailto:PC@LACS.Groups.IO), that goes to all members on the list. Members will receive meeting notices and Zoom links via this list. Members can also ask questions, offer suggestions, and help others.

New LACS members will receive an invitation from Groups.IO to join this list with two weeks to accept. Other LACS members may join the list by sending an email to Larry McDavid, Groups.IO Manager. See the roster for contact information. They will receive an invitation to join. Contact Larry with any questions about joining.

### USING PAYPAL OR ZELLE

**To pay LACS by Zelle**, log into your bank with your username and password. Select **Transfer Money > Send Money with Zelle**. Follow the instructions. The recipient is **Los Angeles Computer Society**. Select **Send by email**. Enter **lacompetersociety@gmail.com**. Add a note telling what the payment is for and your contact information. The wording may be a little different on your bank's site.

**To pay LACS by PayPal**, go to this link: [www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024](https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024), and then click on **Send**. Log in to your PayPal account or sign up for an account so that PayPal knows where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Enter the amount to pay, then click on **Add a note**. Say what the payment is for. If it is for dues, add your physical and email addresses, preferred phone number, and if you want a hard copy or an electronic copy of *User Friendly*.

### 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](http://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.

### CHANGE CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to [www.lacspsc.org](http://www.lacspsc.org). Click on **Join LACS** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update**, select **Click Here** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out; email it with your changes to Leah Clark. See the LACS roster. Or mail it to Los Angeles Computer Society  
6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St. # 4095  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

### 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

See back issues and indexes of *User Friendly* at <https://www.lacspsc.org>

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## LACS CALENDAR



**LACS Board Meeting**  
**Monday, March 2**  
**Time: 7:00 P.M.** (Open from 6:30)  
**Place:** Wherever you are via Zoom

**LACS General Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 10**  
**Place:** Wherever you are via Zoom

**March 2: LACS Board Meeting**  
**March 8:** Daylight Saving Time Begins  
**March 10: LACS General Meeting**  
**March 17:** St. Patrick's Day  
**March 19:** Eid of Fitr  
**March 20:** Spring begins



## VISIT OTHER APCUG COMPUTER USER GROUPS AND SEE THEIR NEWSLETTERS

LACS heartily welcomes visitors from other user groups, and we are welcome to join other groups' meetings.

Go to [www.APCUG2.org](http://www.APCUG2.org). Click on **Member Benefits**, then on **Groups Sharing Meetings** or on **Newsletters Online**.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

**March 10:** Windows Performance  
Tune-up  
Chris Taylor, APCUG

**April 14:** TBA

Please watch your email and User Friendly for updates and changes.

## ATTENDING A ZOOM MEETING

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

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

**You can put an icon to the link to a meeting 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.
7. Click **Finish**.

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone or during the hours listed below. Please select a topic from the list below 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, email Leah Clark at the address below. 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, to make corrections, or to ask questions, please email Leah Clark at leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net

Android Smartphones —5	Mozilla Firefox —7	Photoshop Elements —2
Apple devices —7	MS Excel —5, 7, 8	Quicken —5, 8
Anti-Malware and Backup —3, 5	MS Word —1, 5, 8	Thunderbird —3
Genealogy —5	MS Outlook —1, 5	Utilities —3, 5
Groups.IO — 4	MS PowerPoint —5 ,7	Windows —3, 5
Hardware —3	PDF 5 —8	WordPerfect —5
Lotus Word Pro, Approach —3		Zoom —2, 6

Preferred Time for Phone Calls			
Number	Name	From	To
1	Loling Beckman	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Leah Clark	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Jim McKnight	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
4	Larry McDavid	Contact by email	
5	Stephanie Nordlinger	9:00 AM	9:00 PM
6	Mark Presky	Any	Any
7	Paula Van Berkom	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Joan Wilder	9:00 AM	9:00 PM

**Note:** Times are Pacific Times

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND LEADERS

POSITION	NAME	TERM
President	Leah Clark	2026
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2026
Acting Secretary	Stephanie Nordlinger	2026
Treasurer	Gavin Faight	2026
Director	Loling Beckman	2027
Director	Donna Benton	2027
Director	Howard Krevoy	2027
Director	Mark Presky	2027
Director	Jim McKnight	2026
Director	Paula Van Berkon	2026
Director	<b>Open</b>	2026
APCUG Representative	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Database Manager	Loling Beckman	
Groups.io Manager	Larry MvcDavid	
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark	
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Publicity	Mark Presky	
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark	
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkon	

**LACS Mailing Address: 6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St. # 4095, Los Angeles, CA 90045**

**LACS Website: <https://www.lacspc.org>**

Please use your LACS roster for email addresses and phone numbers to contact any officer, board member, or other member. **Only LACS members may receive a roster.**

**Please note:** The 2025 roster was in the middle pages of the May User Friendly. It was mailed to all LACS members, including those who usually receive only the electronic version. The roster will not be sent electronically to anyone. Be sure to keep it where you can easily find it when you need it. If you don't have the roster, please contact Leah Clark at < leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net >.

## HOW DO SPAM FILTERS WORK?

**Mysteriously!**

by [Leo A. Notenboom](#)

<https://askleo.com/18972>

Spam filters can be sophisticated or simple. I'll look at some of the characteristics of email that spam filters check.



These days, spam filters are complex, sophisticated pieces of software that check much more than you might think.

### Spam Filters

Spam filters analyze multiple email characteristics to determine spam probability. They consider factors like sender details, subject lines, message content, and unseen headers. No single rule guarantees filtering; instead, a combination of traits increases the likelihood of being marked as spam.

### Your Mileage May Vary

I have to point out that **there is no single spam filter, spam-filtering technique, or spam-filtering set of rules.**

How the spam filter works on your email may differ from how it works on mine. As we'll see in a moment, for large email providers, that's almost guaranteed to be the case.

No single set of rules or factors will determine whether an email is marked as spam. If there were such a set of comprehensive, public rules, spammers would just use them to game the system, rendering the rules ineffective the moment they were implemented.

### It's All About Probability

Even the word "rules" is technically incorrect. There's no magic rule or set of rules that, once broken, guarantees email will be placed into a spam folder. Instead, we're talking

spam folder. Instead, we're talking about a much fuzzier concept: probability.

What we can examine are the characteristics of email that increase or decrease the probability that a message will be marked as spam.

Any single characteristic by itself is not enough to make that determination. However, a message that shows *multiple* characteristics of being spam is *probably* going to get filtered as spam. Think of each as a strike against the message. Too many strikes and the message is judged as spam.

Of course, not all characteristics are created equal. One characteristic might be a stronger indicator of spamminess than another. Nor do they stay the same over time: spam topics come in waves and react to current events. For example, a word that was completely benign in an email last year might be an indicator of spam tomorrow.

So just what are these characteristics?

In no way is this a comprehensive or official list, but here are *some* of the types of things that spam filters *can* look for.

### [How to Get Rid of Spam Emails](#)

If you're not getting spam now, you will soon -- and probably lots of it. What can you do? There's no magic answer, but there are various things you can do to help.

#### **The From: Line**

It is possible to block spam based on the "From" line alone. This is helpful when you're dealing with someone emailing you from a consistent address.

But spam doesn't work that way. Each spam message is likely to come from a different email address. That said, a spam

filter may maintain a list of names, email addresses, or email domains that increases the likelihood of an email being marked as spam.

One test that spam filters can use is this:

From: someone@somerandom-service.com <askleoexample@hotmail.com>

This “From:” line has both a display name and an email address. They both look like email addresses, *and they don’t match*. That’s a common characteristic of spam. (This only works if the display name looks like an email address.)

### The To: and Cc: Lines

The same “display name versus email address” check applied to the sender can apply to every recipient’s email address.

Other checks on the recipients might include:

- Are there many? Spam is often sent to many recipients at once via the To: or Cc: lines.
- Does the delivery account appear on either To: or Cc:? This could be legitimate — perhaps you were [Bcc](#)’ed on an email message — but spammers often use Bcc to send to many more recipients than the message might show.
- Are there any recipients? Spam often has blank To or Cc lines.

### The Subject: Line

- There may be a list of currently common spammy subjects that increase a message’s chance of being filtered as spam. A message having no subject at all, I’m sure, is on that list.

- Similarly, words currently common in spam subject lines could count against any message using them.
- Grammar counts, though not as much as the body. Many legitimate subject lines are grammatically incorrect, but most spam subject lines are. Spelling, unusual spacing, or capitalization of words can also have a negative effect.
- Language — both in word choice and the set of characters used — can signal spam. If a message originates in an English-speaking country and is destined for an English-speaking country, seeing it in a foreign language or seeing foreign characters in the message could be a clue.

### The Body of the Message

The body of the message is where things get interesting. This is where the phrase “looks like spam” really applies at its fuzziest, since what looks like spam to one person might not look like spam to another. Spam filters fight this battle every day.

Spam filters check for these and other issues in the body of the message.

- **Just a link.** A common [phishing](#) attempt is to send just a link in the email body, particularly when the message originates from a hacked email account. Trusting that the sender is indeed one of their contacts, people will often blindly click the link.
- **Spammy topics.** Topics related to body enhancement, politics, and money-making schemes are very common in spam and are likely to

be filtered as such.

- **Grammar and spelling.** No, you and I are not perfect, but most spam is worse. The quality of the writing can be factored in as a sign of potential spam.
- **Language and character set.** Just like the subject line, messages in languages that are foreign to both the sender and the receiver can be a sign of spam.
- **Images.** Email messages with images are common in spam and thus can act as a sign. In particular, an email that is only an image or is mostly images — geared to try to trick you into allowing images to be displayed — can be a red flag.
- **Spacing.** This is obscure, but I see it used a lot: the top part of a message body might be an explicit call to action for some spammer's goal. But since it's so clearly spammy content, they add several blank lines to the message and append non-spammy, often random, content at the end. The presence of non-spammy content might tilt the balance in favor of the message not being identified as spam when it obviously is.

I'm sure I'm missing many more possible indications used by spam filters when they analyze the body of an email message.

### Unseen Headers

The headers in email you don't normally see are lines (much like the To: and Subject: lines) that include a bunch of technical information about how the email was routed and formatted.

They may include what a spam filter thought about it.

Spam filters analyze some headers for clues. The most interesting is what I'd call the chain of custody.

The chain is nothing more than a sequence of information that looks something like this:

- I'm server A, and I got this message from server B to be delivered to my customer, someone@some-randomservice.com.
- I'm B, and I got this from C.
- I'm C, and I got this from D.
- I'm server D, and I originated this message.

Each of those steps is identified by an IP address and, often, a name. Now, while we can't use an IP address to identify a specific source or person (and I have many articles on the topic), there are generalizations about the IP addresses in the chain of custody that can affect the probability of that message being spam.

- **DNS.** DNS maps names to IP addresses. So, if server D, for example, has a name, does it match the IP address? If not, that's a strike against it. Better yet, is there *any* name associated with the IP address at all? If not, that's typically a serious issue and a sign of spam.
- **IP location.** Does the location of the IP address the message came from ("server D") match where the email address supposedly exists? Email from your local [ISP](#)'s domain, for example, should never originate from a server in a foreign country.

- **IP ownership.** Does the source IP address of that message match the servers that are supposedly sending for that domain? For example, if that's a message from a Gmail account, did it originate on a Gmail server?
- **Chain of custody.** Is the chain broken? For example, if the line "I'm C, and I got this from D" wasn't present, then the message somehow appears to have hopped from D to B without C recording anything. That's highly suspicious and often a sign of header forgery.
- **Chain reasonableness.** As we travel from D to C to B to A, is the path the message took "reasonable"? Did the message appear to take an unnecessary trip through a foreign server? Once again, that's a possible sign of header forgery and spam.

These are just examples, and made-up ones at that. But they should give you some idea of the analysis that's possible when spam filters review the headers you don't normally see.

### SPF, DKIM, and DMARC

SPF and DKIM are standards that control aspects of mail content and delivery. As a (very gross) overgeneralization:

- **SPF** – Sender Policy Framework – is *mostly* about identifying servers that originate email for given email domains. For example, only Yahoo! servers can originate email from Yahoo! email addresses, and Yahoo! has stated that anything not matching that should be considered spam.
- **DKIM** – Domain Keys Identified Mail – is *mostly* about using [encryption](#) and digital signatures to authenticate that the claimed sender of a message is the real sender of that message, and possibly also that the message content has not been tampered with. If the confirmation fails, that's a possible sign of spam.
- **DMARC** – Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance – is a framework that a) allows the apparent sending domain (say, Yahoo.com) to indicate what should happen if either SPF or DKIM checks fail, and b) provides a mechanism for reporting back to the sending domain what's happening.

### Training Your Spam Filter

One of the most potentially confusing things about spam filtering is that what is spam to you might not be spam to me.

When we "mark as spam" in many email programs and on many email services, what we're saying is, "Email like this is spam to me."

Sophisticated email filtering systems then use that specific email message (that you said is spam) to do two things:

- Analyze its characteristics and update the things that the filter looks at to check for spam *for everyone*. For example, if many people mark a specific message as spam, the filter takes that message's characteristics into account during the analysis I've been discussing above.
- Use those same characteristics — perhaps a little more aggressively — to update the spam filter specifically

for you. The net result is you end up with a spam filter customized to your indication of what is and is not spam.

### Failure Is Always an Option

Here's where things get disappointing.

Spam filtering is complex and can also be wrong.

Depending on the sophistication of the spam filter and its ability to adapt not only to new spam (as spammers try to weasel their way around the filter) but also individual user preferences, and depending on its ability to do its job in a reasonable amount of time, spam filters run the range from pretty darned good to relatively pointless.

Some spam will make it through, and some “[ham](#)” (legitimate mail — the opposite of spam) will occasionally end up in the spam folder.

### Do This

My recommendation for dealing with spam remains as it has been for some time.

- Train your email program or service's spam filter: mark spam as spam and mark those false positives you find in the spam folder as not-spam.
- Never reply to spam.
- Never try to [unsubscribe from spam](#). (If you asked for the email by subscribing, then it's not spam, and “unsubscribe” is the right way to stop it.)

And above all, don't let spam stress you out. It's an everyday fact of life on today's internet. Mark it as spam and move on. ❖



## 8 Run Commands Every Windows User Should Know

*Continued from page 7*



While Windows has shifted most options from the old Control Panel to the Settings app, the classic panels are often easier to navigate and quicker to adjust. Opening them directly with Run commands saves a few extra clicks—and those small time savings add up. So it's worth using these commands more often and exploring others as well. ❖

### QUICK COMPUTER TIP 💡

Use **Windows + V** instead of Ctrl + V.

This opens your **clipboard history**, letting you paste items you copied earlier — not just the last thing.

You can even pin frequently used text (like email addresses or signatures).

*(First time only: press Windows + V and turn it on.)*

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## TECH TRIVIA QUIZ

By Sharon Walbran  
Twin Cities PC Users Group  
<https://tcpc.com>  
sharon.walbran (at) gmail.com

1. What does the ZIP in ZIP code stand for?
2. What college did Bill Gates graduate from?
3. Who invented the Python programming language?
4. In what year was the first installment of the Mario Party franchise released?
5. What was the top-selling video game ever as of 2023?
6. What 2006 home video game console pioneered the use of motion sensors?
7. What was the first Pixar film to be released on Blu-Ray?
8. What British computer scientist is widely credited with inventing the World Wide Web?
9. What app has a green owl as a mascot?
10. What was the most downloaded app of the 2010s?
11. How long do Snapchat stories stay online before they disappear unless archived?

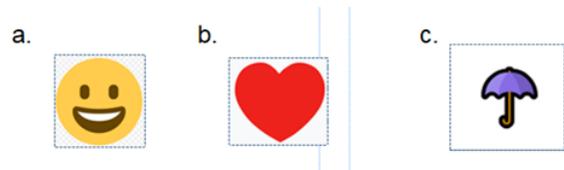


12. What is the name for a computer virus which replicates itself and uses up all a computer's processing space?

a. Spy-ware	b. Trojan Horse	c. Vi-rus	d. Keylog-ger
-------------	-----------------	-----------	---------------

13. Which one of these kinds of malware disguises itself as legitimate software before its true intent is discovered?

14. Which of these was the first emoji created?



QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Zone Improvement Plan
2	None
3	Guido van Rossum
4	1998
5	Minecraft
6	Wii
7	Cars
8	Tim Berners-Lee
9	Duolingo
10	Facebook
11	24 Hours
12	Worm
13	b
14	b

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## 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 [Discounts & Special Offers For User Groups – APCUG](#) for discounts and special offers for members of User Groups on books, media, and training sites, including these:

- **Pearson / Que / Informit / Sams Program – 35% Discount**

Contact: [community@informit.com](mailto:community@informit.com)

Enroll in the program at <http://bit.ly/2dK4L> for well-known Pearson technology brands, including Addison-Wesley Professional, Cisco Press Exam Cram, IBM Press, Prentice Hall Professional, Que Publishing, and Sams Publishing.

- **Take Control Books – Apple and Windows eBooks**

Use the form at <https://apcug2.org/contact-us/> to request the discount code.

Subject – General

Body of form – Name of your computer club and discount code.

## COPYRIGHT © 2026

by the Los Angeles Computer Society, a tax-exempt IRC Section 501(c)(3) non-profit California corporation. All rights reserved. *User Friendly* is published monthly. Subscriptions are included in membership dues. Reproduction of any material here by any means is expressly prohibited without written permission, except that other non-profit User Groups may reprint LACS articles in substantially unaltered form if credit is given to the author and this publication and an e-mail is sent to LACS via its website, [www.lacs.org](http://www.lacs.org), reporting the reprint user group and the name and date of the publication. Product and company names are trademarks of their respective owners.

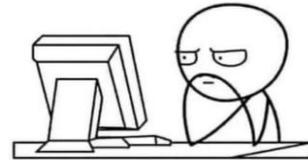
## LAUGHING OUT LOUD



He sits behind his computer all day, so I take him out for some exercise.

*From How-To Geek*

Never let your computer know that you are in a hurry.



Computers can smell fear. They slow down if they know that you are running out of time.

## TECH LIFE UNITY (TechBoomers)

<https://www.techlifeunity.com>

For learning how to use internet-based websites and applications for free.

## DISCLAIMER

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.

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

March 2026

## 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 address as regular members; 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.

### Benefits of LACS Membership

**Monthly meetings** with presentations via Zoom.

**Monthly Newsletter, *User Friendly*** —

Your article submissions and free ads to sell your computer items

**Free help** by email or phone — See page 10.

**Group mailing list** to contact or ask questions of all members at [PC@LACS.Groups.IO](mailto:PC@LACS.Groups.IO)

**Important news** and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's mail list.

**Webinars, virtual conferences, programs, and technical information** free from APCUG, an International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups

**Annual Holiday Party**

**Social interaction** with others who have interests in computers and technology

**In-person luncheons** at a restaurant

**Renewals are due in January. New members' dues will be prorated quarterly.**

**Check # \_\_\_\_\_ New or Renewal Membership Application.**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_** Dues may be paid by Zelle, PayPal, or check. If paying by check, make it out to "Los Angeles Computer Society" and mail it with this form to

**6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St., # 4095, Los Angeles, CA 90045**

**Please Print Clearly**     **New**     **Renewal**

New/Renewal with printed newsletter - \$40     Associate - \$12     Student - \$18

New/Renewal with electronic, no paper newsletter - \$30     Gift membership - \$20

Contributor - \$50     Supporter - \$75     Benefactor - \$100     Other

Name: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Associate: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip +4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email of Associate \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Publish Contact Info in the roster  Yes  No

To Contact in Case of an Emergency: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

**First Class Mail**

Editor.....Leah Clark  
Indexer.....Leah Clark  
Proofreaders.....Jim McKnight,  
Stephanie Nordlinger, Mark  
Presky, and Charlotte Semple

***User Friendly*** is published by the  
**Los Angeles Computer Society**  
6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St. # 4095, Los Angeles, CA 90045  
<https://www.lacspc.org>

## **GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM.**

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. **Just click on the link.** If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know at [leahjc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:leahjc@sbcglobal.net) .

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 when you re-enter. You may turn off your video while you are gone.