



OTTAWA

PC NEWS

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March 2020

ARTICLE

File History by Chris Taylor

Most people in the OPCUG know I am a huge fan of multiple backups of important files. My defense against data loss from malware, hardware failure, fire, theft, and accidental deletion is a daily image backup and a periodic offsite backup. I can recover anything from a single file to my entire computer, to the day, for at least the previous 3 months.

File History is a feature built into Windows 10 that can add to the resilience of your backup regime by automatically backing up files in selected folders to an external or network drive. I will describe using an external drive, but File History works the same way if you choose a networked drive.

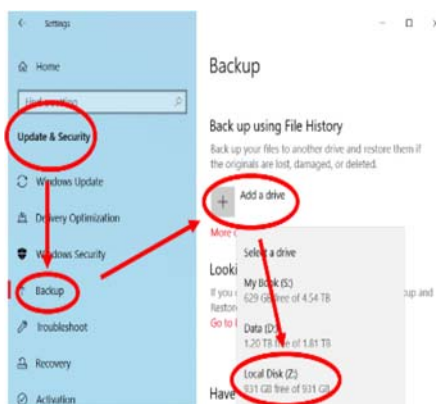
File History can monitor for changes as frequently as every 10 minutes and will keep multiple versions of your files. Because it is only backing up selected folders, it typically does not use a lot of space. On my main computer, File History is backing up folders containing about 150 GB of files. With changes to those folders running about 10 GB per month, I can keep years worth of backups on my 1 TB backup drive.

To start using File History, plug in an external drive. The drive does not have to be dedicated to File History.

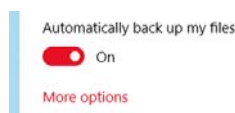
When you plug in a new external drive, Windows assigns it the lowest drive letter available at that time. I recommend locking the File History drive to a higher drive letter so it never gets

assigned a different drive letter. Right-click the Start button and choose *Disk Management*. In the list of drives, right-click the drive you will use for File History and choose *Change Drive Letter and Paths*. Click the *Change* button and choose a drive letter high in the alphabet.

In *Settings* | *Update & Security* | *Backup*, select the option to *Add a drive*. In the list of available drives, choose the one you will use for File History.



The screen will update to show *Automatically backup my files* and it will be toggled on. Click *More options* to configure File History.



Back up my files: The frequency File History looks for new / modified files in folders being monitored. Default is

Every hour. You can change this to between *Every 10 minutes* and *Daily*.

Keep my backups: How long File History keeps old versions of files before automatically deleting them. Default is *Forever*. Of course, this means eventually you will run out of space on the backup drive. I suggest changing this to *Until space is needed*. File History will then keep as many versions of files as space allows.

Back up these folders: The list of folders File History monitors for new / modified files. There is a long list of default folders, such as *Documents*, *Pictures*, *Download*, *Desktop*, etc. For any you don't want to back up, click on the entry and choose *Remove*. To add additional folders, click *Add a folder* and choose any folder.

(Continued on page 6)

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Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, March 11th, 2020**

Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 11th

Topic: Scripting and automation

Speaker: Chris Taylor, OPCUG

Following Alan's presentation on computer programming in February, Chris will discuss techniques for automation and scripting. Forget those confusing "write-only" programming languages like APL. There are plenty of ways mere mortals can take away the drudgery of repetitive tasks so they are done easily, consistently, and reliably.

All the techniques Chris will show require a minimum of learning, don't require that you spend a dime on a programming language/compiler, and can reward you with the ability to have more work done automatically by your computer.

Coming Up in May...

Wednesday, May 13th

Topic: Chromebook, is this the future?

Speaker: Lawrence Patterson

Why are Chromebooks the darling of Education providers? What's the allure of buying an "Internet Computer" that can't hold a candle to either a MAC or Windows computer and how is it that it is severely put down by professionals? Lawrence will discuss the history of Chromebooks and what was Google's original sales pitch versus the sales growth and excitement it generates currently.

Though a Windows person from the get go, Lawrence will explain why he keeps his Windows convertible shelved, traded his Android tablet for a Chromebook convertible and how he uses the system to provide a reliable data entry device that is enjoyable to use.

In addition, we'll explore what options / models there are, how they compare to the Windows equivalents, Google's very public support policy, and what a Chromebook can't do, no matter how hard you try (though who knows, the impossible may be possible).

Also Coming Up...

April 8

Topic: Rebel.com: An Ottawa Success Story

Speaker: Rob Villeneuve, CEO of Rebel.com

June 10

Annual Pizza Night and presentation (TBA)

February Prize Winners

The winner of door prize #1 - an ergonomic Vertical Mouse, was **Gail Eagen**.

Door Prize #2 - a "grab bag" containing a Surge protector and an SD Card Wallet was won by **Mike Periera**.

For meeting updates and additional details, visit <https://opcug.ca/regmtg.htm>.

2020 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, March 11 th	7:30 p.m. at the Riverside United Church , 3191 Riverside Drive, Ottawa. Parking is free. OC Transpo bus #90 stops nearby. Visit https://opcug.ca/regmtg.htm for directions.
Q&A Session	Wednesday, March 11 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting. (approx. 9 pm)
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, March 11 th	10:00 p.m. (after the Q&A) at Moose McGuire's , 3320 McCarthy Rd. Map: https://goo.gl/maps/zAtCx9ZcxRVPtSY68

PRODUCT REVIEW

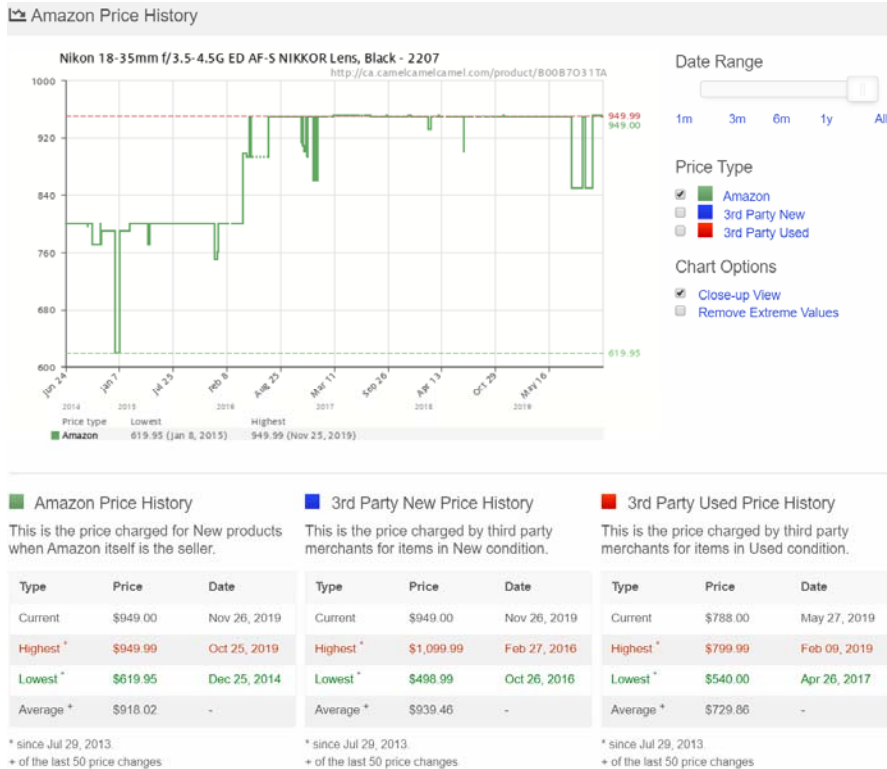
Shop till you the price drops *by Chris Taylor*

I shop quite a bit at Amazon Canada. While prices are generally good, they can fluctuate wildly. If you are not in a rush, why not track the price to see if it drops? But manually tracking prices is so...pre-automation!

The Camelizer (<https://camelcamelcamel.com/>) is a free service for tracking prices at Amazon.

Last summer, I was looking for a wide-angle lens for landscape photography. After a lot of research, I settled on Nikon's 18-35mm. Nikon's SRP is \$980. Amazon had it for \$950.

I copied the URL from Amazon and plugged it into the search box at the Camelizer web site. It showed me the Amazon price history for the lens over the past five years! The current price was at its highest but there had been lower prices – as low as \$620 in December, 2014. I wasn't in a rush, so I created a price watch. A few weeks later, I received an email saying the price had dropped to \$850. I snapped it up with a \$100 savings. Not too shabby.



If you use Google Chrome or Firefox, install the Camelizer add-on from the *Tools* section at the Camelizer web site to make things even simpler. From any product page at Amazon, click the Camelizer icon to get the pricing history and create price watches to notify you by email if the price drops below a certain level.

In the past few years, Camelizer has saved me over \$300.

Bottom Line:

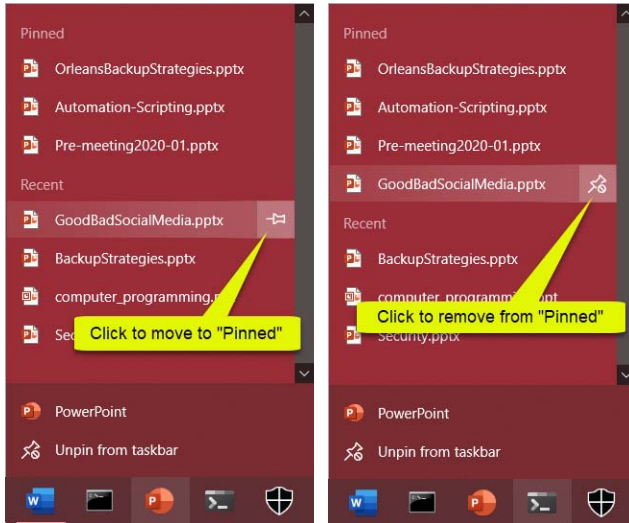
Camelizer: free price tracking for Amazon products
<https://camelcamelcamel.com/>



ARTICLE

Fixing jump lists by Chris Taylor

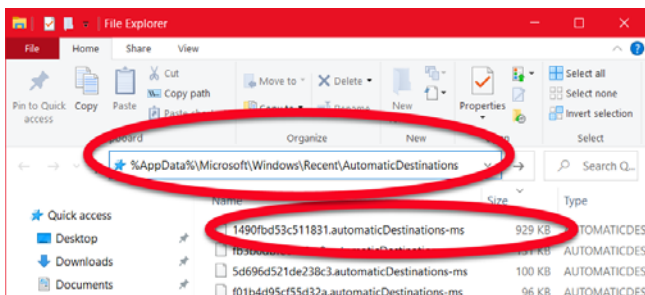
I am a big fan of jump lists in Windows. Right-click an icon for a program in the Start menu or on the task bar to get a pop-up with recently-opened files. Jump lists are dynamic, with newer-opened files replacing older ones automatically. To have a recently-opened file stay on the jump list, hover the mouse over its entry and click the push-pin to move the entry to the *Pinned* section at the top. Click the push-pin of a *Pinned* entry to remove it from that section.



I find this the fastest way to access the documents I am working on. It is so handy that I was very frustrated when it stopped working for Excel. There were some entries on the jump list, but the list was static; I could not add or remove any entries.

Each jump list is maintained as a separate file and these can become corrupted and stop working. If this happens, close all instances of the program with a broken jump list and then run File Explorer. In the address bar, put;

%AppData%\Microsoft\Windows\Recent\AutomaticDestinations



The list of files will all be named *randomletters-numbers.automaticDestinations-ms*. Delete any file that is close to 1 MB or larger. The jump list for that program should start working again.



THROUGH THE LENS

A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts

After the click of your camera, you're only half done!

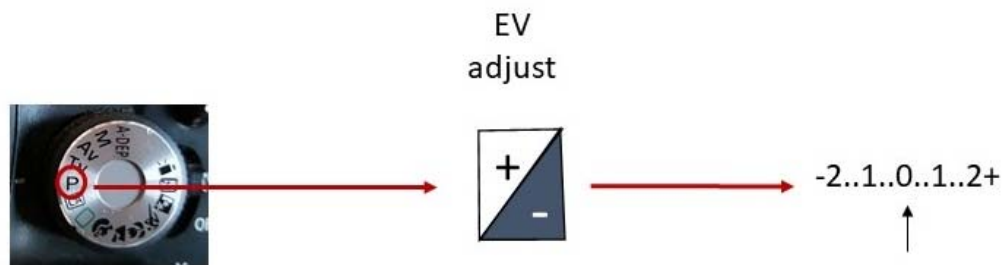
First step to getting off Auto setting

by Lynda Buske

If you have never taken your camera off the Auto setting, there is a good chance that some of your photos have been either over or under exposed. Certainly, there are adjustments that can be made with photo editing on your PC but overly bright or overly dark areas can be difficult or impossible to rescue. If you are shooting in RAW format (instead of jpeg) you have a bit more leeway with dark photos but an overly bright section of an image may be too “blasted out” to fix. In other words, the camera sensor has recorded the maximum value for light and as such will render it pure white with no detail or texture. The safest way is to nail the exposure, as best you can, while taking the photo and then just tweak on your PC later. In an overly bright or dark situation, it is easy to override your auto setting to make a simple exposure adjustment.

For many cameras, this means turning the mode dial off Auto and on to “P” which stands for program mode. A or S/Tv modes will also work, but we will leave that for a future article. With the P mode setting, aperture and exposure times are still automatic but you can further adjust the exposure for a bright or dark situation. While it is located in different areas depending on the make and model of camera, there is usually an EV (exposure value) adjustment in the shape of a +/- box that, when activated, provides a sliding scale to adjust the amount of light entering the camera by small increments. Left on automatic, the camera will assume a middle ground for exposure making the assumption that you wanted the picture neither too dark or too light. But you may wish a sunset shot to be dark and a snow scene to be bright. In these circumstances, it is nice to override the camera’s decision and give yourself a little less or more light. You can then fine tune later with photo editing software on your PC. Most photo editing programs allow you to selectively brighten or darken specific tonal areas such as shadows, mid-tones, and highlights.

Finally, if you are in a tricky lighting situation, take multiple exposures, at different EV adjustments and then choose the best when you review your photos on your computer. Using the Program mode of your camera with EV adjust is a good way to begin taking control!



Lynda regularly gives presentations for the OPCUG at the **Ottawa Public Library** (<https://opcug.ca/OPL.htm>).
This article is also in PDF format on the OPCUG website (https://opcug.ca/Lens/through_the_lens.htm).

Review of OPCUG 2019 Financial Records

I reviewed the Treasurer's financial records for the year 2019, and found them to be in good shape. The dollar amounts agree with those in the Treasurer's financial report submitted to the board. There were a few minor errors with the reporting of some transactions. These were dealt with to my satisfaction by the Treasurer. Thanks to Alan German for a job well done.

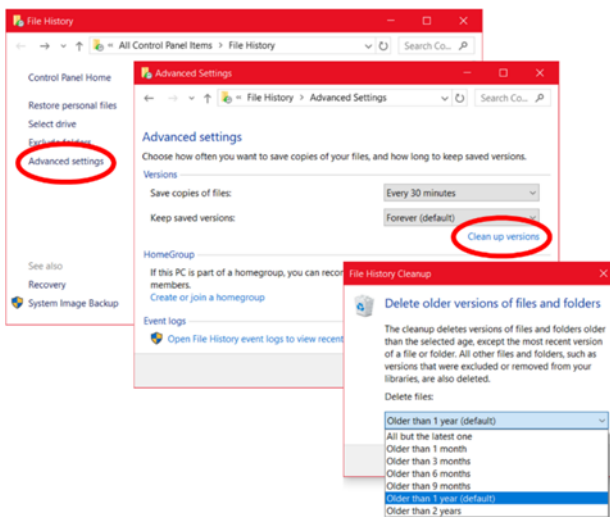
Richard Aylesworth,
February 2020

File History (Continued from page 1)

Exclude these folders: Useful when you want to back up files in a folder but exclude some sub-folders. Click *Add a folder* and choose folders to be excluded from being backed up.

Back up to a different drive: Choose if you decide you want to change to a new backup drive. It will not remove the backups you already have on the current backup drive.

Related settings: If you chose a *Keep my backups* option other than *Until space is required*, at some point you may need to manually clean up some old backups. Click *See advanced settings* to open Control Panel (inexplicably, there are still configuration functions that can only be done in Control Panel almost 7 years after



PC Settings was introduced in Windows 8!). Click *Advanced settings* in the left panel. Click *Clean up versions* to delete some old versions.

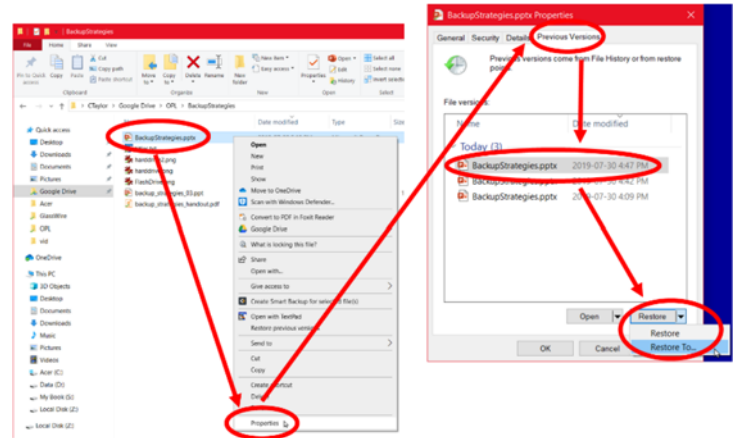
If you periodically remove the backup drive from your computer, File History handles things rather elegantly. It will continue taking backups of your new and modified files by backing them up to drive C: at;

C:\Users\username\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\FileHistory\Data

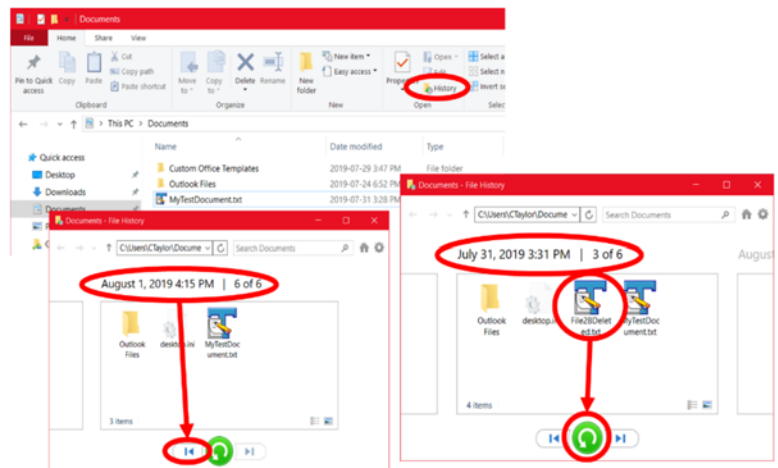
When you plug in the backup drive again, File History will automatically move these backup versions to the backup drive. If you don't reconnect your backup drive for many days, File History will stop backing up your files and will notify you in the Action Center.

Recovery of old versions of files is simple. In File Explorer, right-click a file and choose *Properties*. On the *Previous Versions* tab, select the version you would like

to recover. Choose *Restore*, which will overwrite the current version of the file, or *Restore To...*, which allows you to recover the older version to a different location.



If you deleted a file, there is nothing in File Explorer to right-click on. Go to the folder where the file used to exist and click *History* on the *Home* tab. It will list the files in the latest backup. Use the *Previous version* button to go back in time until you find a backup set that includes your deleted file. Select the file and click the *Restore to original location* button.



File History can backup files for multiple users on the same computer and a single drive can even be used to backup multiple computers. If you browse the *FileHistory* folder on the backup drive, you can see the way backups are structured and you can even access and restore files directly from there.

Kudos to Microsoft for creating an elegant solution for backing up important files.



MS OFFICE TOOL TIPS



PowerPoint “Slide Master” mysterious no longer—Part 1 (Intro)

By Lawrence Patterson lawrence@opcug.ca

Let us take a vote: How many of you organically learned PowerPoint (i.e. you opened up the program and just did it)? Being on both sides of the teacher’s pedestal, I can tell you that good PowerPoint training should emphasize presentation rules, as pretty much anyone (young and old) can fire off a presentation quickly with minimal technical guidance (with Mr. Google at the ready) – a testament to PowerPoint’s intuitive design and ease of use.

Before we move on to the “Slide Master” overview, let us take a moment to discuss some presentation rules that will allow you to get your point across (see <https://www.mcgill.ca/skillsets/files/skillsets/powerpointguidelines.pdf> for a more detail overview):

1. KISS (Keep It Simple Silly) with minimal animations, colours / fonts that are easy to read, and use content / graphics / pictures that are on topic.
2. Keep your points to a minimum for each slide (3-6), keeping the wording for each point succinct, and don’t read verbatim everything that’s on the slide.
3. Tell a story, emphasizing a beginning / why they should be interested, content / how it’s important to them and ending / what they should take away from the presentation.

With that taken care of, let’s take a walk on the wild side of PowerPoint and unlock the mystery of the “Slide Master”. Never heard of “Slide Master”? Not surprised as many of us only use it the one time (setting up an organization’s template) or not at all as the designated template is already in place.

“Slide Master” is in the **View** toolbar, in the **Master Views** section. The View toolbar contains many goodies, including my favourite, **New Window**, which shows multiple views of your presentation.

Upon opening the “Slide Master” you’ll be presented with a number of templates consisting of the “Slide Master” at the top and a number of “Layout Masters” below it.

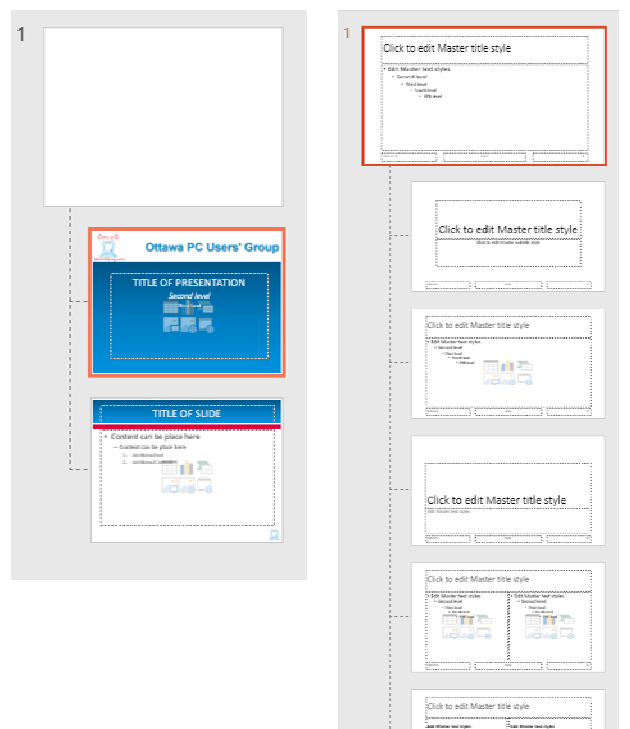
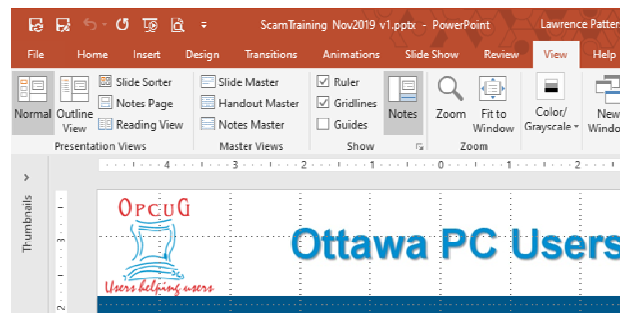
As you can see from the right-side graphic, there’s a number of “Layout Masters” templates to which you can assign various slides in your presentation. Each “Layout Master” can be setup with various text and graphic placeholders with the purpose of providing guides on how to layout your presentation.

Opening up a new PowerPoint document will provide 11 various templates to be used for a variety of layouts. The purpose isn’t to use all 11 or even more than a couple of layouts (remember KISS) but to select a couple for building your presentation using a specific pattern.

In the left side graphic, you can see that for my SCAM presentation, I’m using just two templates: “Title Slide Layout” for slide 1 only, and then “Title and Content Layout” for slide 2 and the remaining slides. Note that I deleted the rest of the layouts to minimize the complexity of the setup for my presentation.

In our next article we’ll review how to set up the “Slide Master” and how to use it within your presentation.

Take Care.



OPCUG Free Software Guide—Part 96

Compiled by Alan German
and Andrew Webber

This guide features an annotated list of free computer programs. The software mentioned has not been reviewed (except where noted) nor have any tests necessarily been conducted. Consequently, no guarantees are provided that the individual programs will perform as described. Rather the list of available software is provided for the information of our members who may find one or more of the programs useful.

PDFCreator

Convert any printable document to PDF and many other formats including JPG. Merge multiple documents into a single file. Compress and resize images to reduce the file size. Encrypt your PDF's and protect them with a password. Change the security settings on a PDF file.

Current Release: Version 3.5.1

Web Site: <https://www.pdfforge.org/pdfcreator>



Free AVS Disc Creator

Burn all types of files to CD, DVD and Blu-Ray disks. Create boot disks to run various operating systems or to use as recovery disks. Make ISO images with the capability to edit, delete, or add new files.

Current Release: Version 6.1.7.557

Web Site: <https://tinyurl.com/y4my8cmw>

CamScanner

Use your phone's camera to scan and digitize all kinds of paper documents such as: receipts, business cards, invoices, notes, and whiteboard discussions. The app has image cropping and enhancement tools and OCR capability. Save your scanned documents as PDF or JPG files. Add annotations, watermarks, and password protection.



Web Site: <https://tinyurl.com/scceczzo>

ocenaudio

A cross-platform, easy to use, fast and functional audio editor. This is the ideal software for people who need to edit and analyze audio files without complications. But the program also has powerful features of use to more advanced users.

Current Release: Version 3.7.7

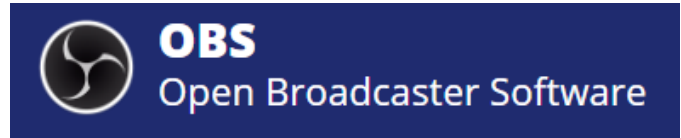
Web Site: <https://www.ocenaudio.com>

OBS Studio

Open-source software for video recording and live streaming with real-time audio and video capturing and mixing. Create scenes from multiple sources including window captures, digital images, text, browser windows, webcams, capture cards and more. A streamlined settings panel gives you access to a wide array of configuration options to tweak every aspect of your broadcast or recording.

Current Release: Version 23.2.1

Web Site: <https://obsproject.com>



Libby

Did you know that the Ottawa Public Library has thousands of E-books and audio-books available for you to borrow? With this app, and your library card, you can download, read, and return them using your smartphone or tablet. Versions of the software are available from Microsoft, Google, and Apple.

Web Site: <https://meet.libbyapp.com>

Icecream Image Resizer

Resize your images quickly and conveniently. Add multiple files and even whole folders with photos and resize them in seconds. The tool supports all major graphic formats such as JPG, PNG, BMP and TIFF. You can also set the desired width and height values either manually or using presets while retaining the original aspect ratio if desired.

Current Release: Version 2.09

Web Site: <https://icecreamapps.com/Image-Resizer/>



Google Earth Pro

Explore world-wide satellite imagery and 3-D buildings and terrain for hundreds of cities in your browser. Zoom to your house or anywhere else, then dive in for a 360° perspective with Street View. Use advanced features such as distance measuring and high-resolution printing. The "Pro" version is totally free!

Web Site: <https://www.google.com/earth/>

Sudoku Classic!

Classic Sudoku for beginners and advanced players. Choose any level you like. Features that make the game easier include hints if you become stuck, or auto-check to see your mistakes as you go. Make notes to keep track of possible numbers. And, each time you fill in a cell, the notes are automatically updated!

Web Site: <https://tinyurl.com/tascoey>

OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, at the Riverside United Church, 3191 Riverside Drive, Ottawa. Parking is free at the church. OTranspo bus #90 stops nearby. Details at <https://opcug.ca/regmtg.htm>.

Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. followed by a Q&A Session until 10 p.m.

OPCUG Membership Fees: \$20 per year
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How to get the OTTAWA PC NEWS by e-mail



Here's how to get the OPCUG newsletter by email:

Create a Google Account

Any valid email address can be used as a Google Account. Pick an email address you want to use and browse to <https://accounts.google.com>. Click *Create account* and follow the instructions.

Make sure your new Google Account is functioning properly by going to <https://accounts.google.com> and signing in.

Sign up for the OPCUG Google Groups

Browse to <https://groups.google.com>. If you are not signed into your Google Account, click the *Sign in* button at the top.

1. In *Search for groups or messages*, type *OPCUG*. The top of the search results will show Groups matching OPCUG. Click on *See all 3*.

2. Click on *OPCUG-Newsletter*, then click the *Join group* button. In the resulting dialog box, you can opt to change some preferences, such as;

- If *My display name* shows as your email address you can change this to something like *firstname lastname*
- Email preferences can be changed to only send daily summaries or not email you at all when new postings are made (meaning you must manually check at the web site to see if there are any new postings)

3. Click the *Join this group* button.

4. You will then see the list of postings that have been made to the group. Click on any entry to see the actual posting.

More detailed instructions on how to join this and other OPCUG Google Groups are found here:

<https://opcug.ca/GoogleGroups.html>

There are no issues of the newsletter published in July or August.