OTTAWA PC NEWS

ARTICLE

Scaling Windows

by Chris Taylor

With the myriad of monitor sizes and resolutions, it's little wonder that Windows has a hard time displaying things so they are just the right size for me … or you. Microsoft has made great strides in giving us control over this but it's a work in process. If you find things in Windows uncomfortably large or small, try out the following adjustments. But be prepared to tweak a lot and perhaps live with some oddities.

Scaling everything

Press and hold the *Windows* key ( ) and press *i* to run the *Settings* app. Select *Devices | Display | Scale and layout*. First set the lower slider (resolution) (see 1 below) to the native resolution of the monitor. It will show as *(recommended)*. Then adjust the upper slider (scaling) (see 2 below) to whatever looks best for you. If you have multiple monitors, you can set scaling on a per-monitor basis. This is great if you have something like a laptop screen of 1366 x 768 resolution and a 4K monitor connected.
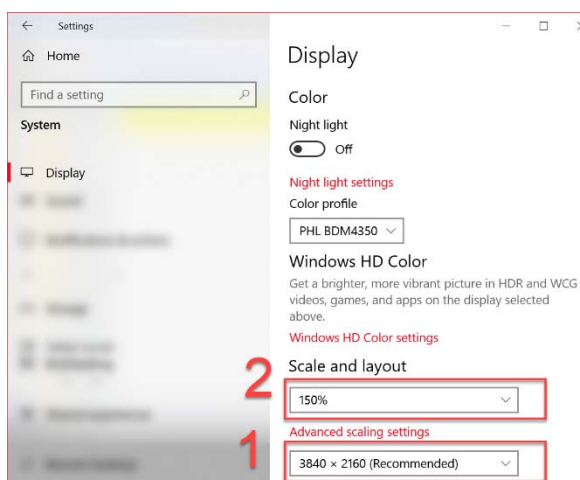

This should work perfectly for all Microsoft Store apps (which includes a lot of the built-in apps like Calculator, Weather, Photos, etc.) as well as most Win32 programs (non-Store apps like Chrome, Firefox, Word, WordPerfect, etc.). Some Win32 programs don't adjust well to changes in scaling. In these cases, the only work-around is to adjust the resolution. While far from ideal, it might work for you.

Scaling text

Some people prefer to just adjust the size of text so it is readable, as opposed to all screen elements. Text scaling to the rescue … sort of … maybe.

Click the Start button | Settings . Select *Ease of Access | Display*. Use the slider *Make text bigger* to scale text in programs while leaving other screen elements unchanged.
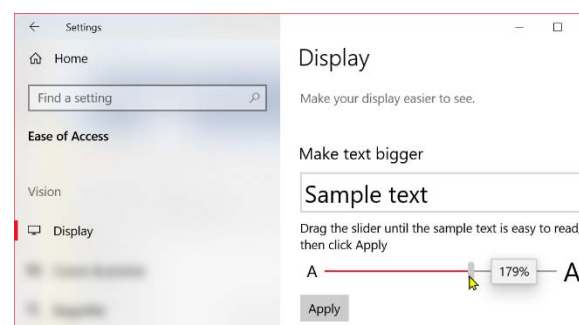
Next Meeting: WEDNESDAY, October 14th, 2020

Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 14, 2020
As has been the case since the onset of COVID-19, this meeting will be via Zoom teleconference (connection details below).

Managing Your Android Phone
Speaker: Alan German, OPCUG

What is happening "behind the curtain" of your Android smartphone? In this presentation we will review some of the basics of the Android operating system, the underlying file system, and the apps. We will see that you don't need to be limited to just the software that came bundled with your phone. There are lots of third-party apps – many of them free – that can make your life a whole lot easier. However, there are also some annoyances with Android, and we will see how to workaround some of these. Finally, we will take take a brief look at the ultimate solution – but, one only applicable to those brave enough – replacing that outdated version of Android with a custom ROM!

The Zoom link will be live at 7:20 pm. Join us at https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting.

Those using the Zoom client will need to enter the following:
Meeting ID: **924 9556 0898**.
Password: **opcug**

Instructions for using Zoom are provided here:
https://opcug.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Zoom-instructionsv2.pdf

There will be a Q&A session after the regular meeting at approximately 9 pm and on the same teleconference. Everyone is welcome to attend Q&A sessions and to ask questions about their specific computer-related problems.

Coming Up…

November 11, 2020
COMPUTERS AT WAR
Presenter: Bob Walker, OPCUG

In honour of the November OPCUG Meeting being on Remembrance Day, we'll look at how the development of early computers was brought about by World War Two. In particular we will be looking at the codebreakers of Bletchley Park like computer pioneers Alan Turing, Gordon Welchman, Tommy Flowers and Max Newman who developed Colossus, the world's first programmable, electronic, digital computer, and used it to break the German Enigma codes and shorten the war by two years. We'll also look at some of the other computer developments related to the war and how some of it led directly to the development of the Internet.

December 9, 2020
Topic*: WiFi Offerings & What to Watch Out For*
Speaker*: Lawrence Patterson, OPCUG*
(topic details to follow)

March 10, 2021
Keeping passwords safe
Speaker: Chris Taylor, President, OPCUG
(topic details at https://opcug.ca/events/keeping-passwords-safe/)

Did you know?

Our Fraud Watch web page is updated regularly. Scroll down to the **Baddie Updates** section to read Lawrence Patterson's latest news on scams. Be aware of the many ways fraudsters try to steal your money and identity.

Technical Solutions 2020

The Ottawa PC Users' Group is considering presenting a series of Zoom video-conferences to provide answers to your technical issues. This is your chance to request topics that you would find useful and suggest the best times to run such sessions.

Review the topics listed at https://opcug.ca/technical-solutions/ and then click on the link at the bottom of the web page to send your preferences to the organizers.

All scheduled events, including regular monthly meetings, weekly Q&A sessions, and OPCUG@OPL webinars, are posted on our website at http://opcug.ca/. All events are via video conference until further notice.

2020 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, October 14th	7:30 pm via Zoom video conference: **https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting** To see all scheduled events, visit http://opcug.ca/.
Q&A Session	Wednesday, October 14th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting. (approx. 9 pm) on the same video conference.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, October 14th	Enjoy a cold brew or other beverage in the comfort of your home during the video conference.

An Awesome Duplicate Photo Finder *by Alan German*

A club member recently requested some help in removing duplicate photos from various folders on his hard drive. A little surfing on the web identified a number of candidate programs that claimed to facilitate this process. The first one I tried was *Awesome Duplicate Photo Finder* which turned out to be – well – awesome!

The program allows one or more folders to be specified, with or without their sub-folders, simply by clicking on the plus icon in the *Folders* menu and browsing for the desired photos. Selecting *Start Search* then produces a list of duplicate images with the first pair of such duplicates shown in adjacent windows. The similarity of the photos is shown as a percentage, and the size of each photo is given in both pixels and megabytes.

The screenshot below shows a test folder, "Texas", with an "E-mail" sub-folder. The first pair of photos being displayed has only 2% similarity which results from the file sizes being somewhat different, and the subject being in a different pose, but in essentially the same location. Double-clicking on either one of these photos loads it into the default image viewer where it can be seen in more detail.

Two of the photos (IMG_3700.JPG and IMG_3799.JPG) located in both folders are identical (100% similarity), while the two "Small" variants of these images in the Email sub-folder are 74 and 86% similar respectively. This results from the original images being copied to the E-mail folder, and then resized from 4000 x 3000 px to create "small" images of 640 x 480 px.

As we have seen, duplicate images can be very easily identified using this utility. By default the search routine identifies both identical and similar images. An option in the program's settings allows "100% identical pictures" to be specified as the search criterion. On-screen options allow any image file to be moved or deleted, or the entire contents of its file folder to be viewed. A further option in the program's settings allows selection between moving deleted files to the recycle bin (default) or deleting them permanently.

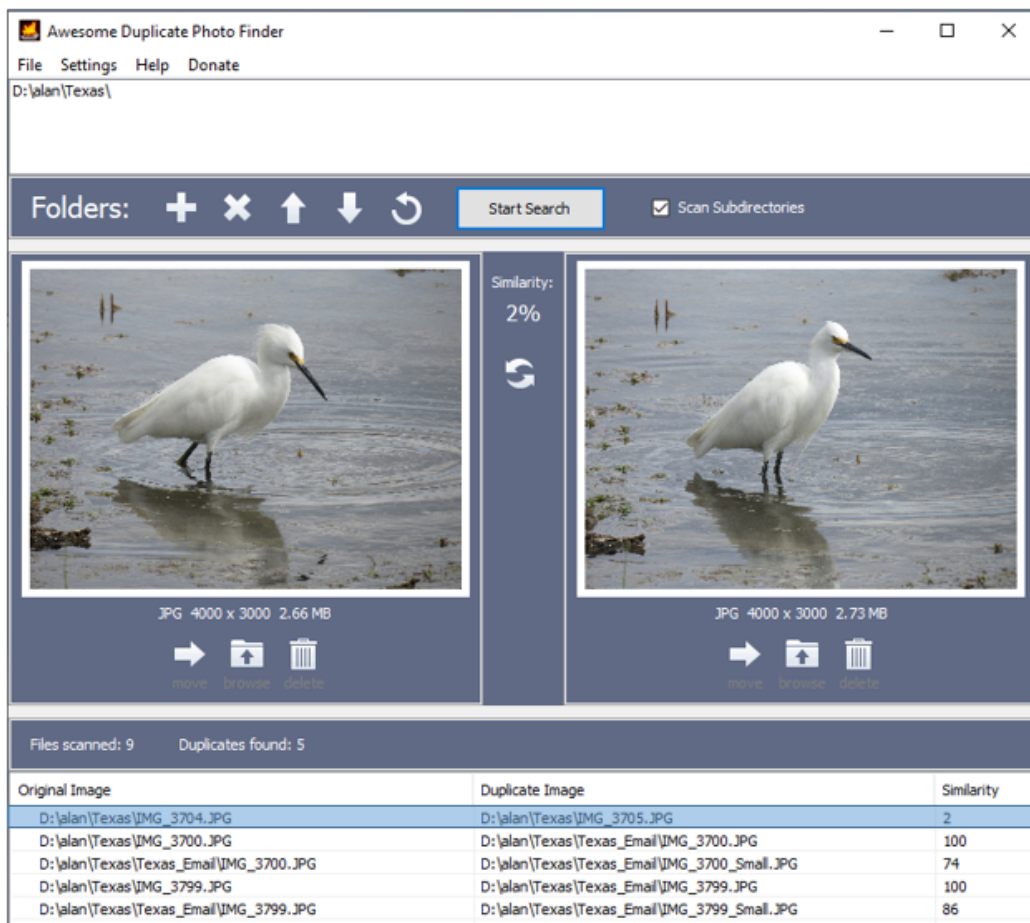So, the program is easy to use, efficient, and is simply – awesome!

Bottom Line

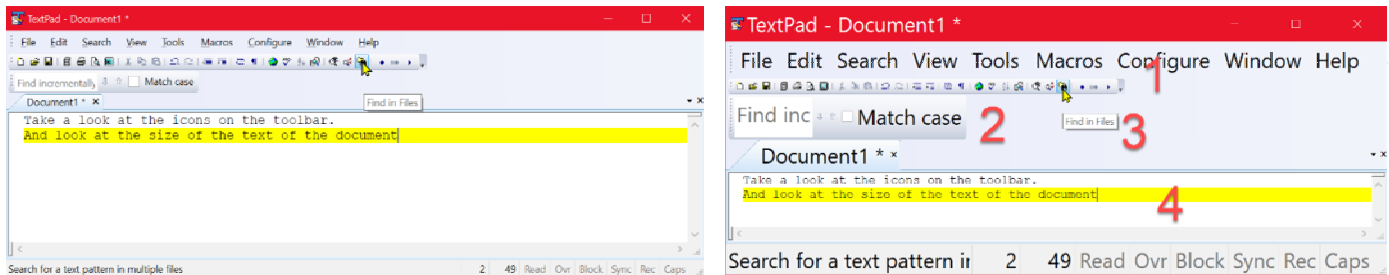Awesome Duplicate Photo Finder (Freeware)
Egor Chernyshev
Version 1.1.1
https://www.duplicate-finder.com/photo.html

Scaling Windows *(Continued from page 1)*

Results can sometimes be … less than ideal. Here is an example of TextPad with *Make text bigger* left at 100% and then set to 225%.


The text in the title, menu, and status bars were made larger. But, while the upper toolbar (1) was left unchanged as expected, the lower toolbar (2) was enlarged because it contains text elements. The text entry box was truncated from *Find incrementally* to *Find inc*. There is no way to make the text entry box wider. Text in tooltips (3) were left unchanged. The document text (4) was not changed. In this case, I could make that change within the configuration of TextPad itself.

A bit of a mess. But wait, things can get worse.

Consider the following dialogue box when text was enlarged to 225%. The buttons Delete and Cancel are chopped in half. I can imagine cases where the buttons might be totally lost.

Compare the SnagIt screen when text is left at 100% compared to 225%. Tooltips (1) get enlarged and the menu bar (2) is un-changed – the opposite of TextPad. Icons in the toolbar (3) are almost eliminated. The right end of the toolbar, *More*, *Undo*, and *Redo* (4), is really messed up. Not pretty.
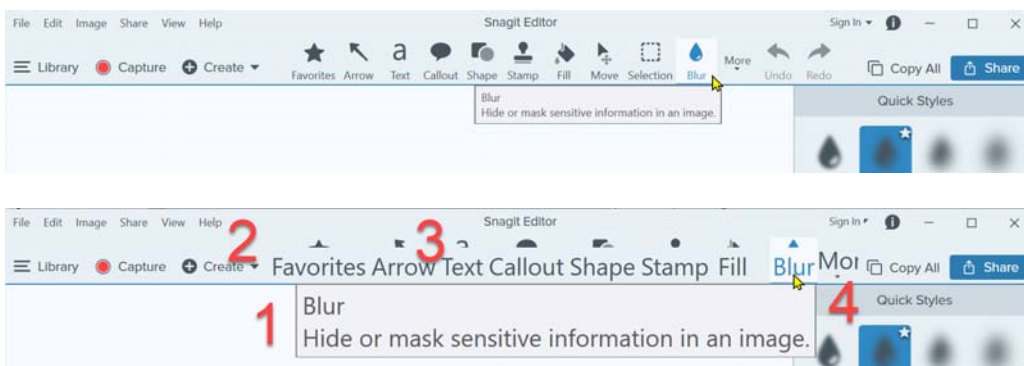
When heading down the rabbit hole of sizing screen elements, I suggest starting with the overall resolution and screen scaling. These will generally give more reliable and expected results. Text scaling is much more problematic. I would try it only if overall scaling does not meet your needs. I don't think this is Microsoft's fault. I suspect it comes more from the way programmers create some screen elements without considering the ways Windows can modify scaling.

◆◆◆

Lawrence's Thoughts	# Wi-Fi Part 1: Ain't going to work without a quality signal!	By Lawrence Patterson lawrence@opcug.ca

Leading up to my Wi-Fi presentation for December's 2020 meeting on Wi-Fi offerings & what to watch out for, I wanted to start with an overview on what is a good Wi-Fi signal and a tool to figure out if you have it or not. November's article will cover another tool to figure out what is on your network and December's will deal with securing your network recommendations.

Let us start with some basics between the different signal types, 2.4 and 5 GHz, which are offered by most of today's dual band routers.

	Max Speed	Max Distance	Usefulness – Practical limitations
2.4 GHz 802.11n	150 Mpbs	125 Meters	-used by majority of Internet connected devices (along with microwaves, baby monitors, garage door openers, Internet connected cameras) -able to penetrate solid objects (doesn't work well if there's metal embedded in the object) -typically handles distances better
5 GHz 802.11ac	1 Gbps	Up to 125 Meters	-greater speed -typically less congestion / fewer devices using the network -doesn't work as well penetrating solid objects (line of sight works best)

-Oh, that "solid object" includes your body and sometimes what you're wearing, and if you're positioning yourself in between.

Next is understanding dBm rating without getting into the engineering speak. "dBM" is used to measure your overall Wi-Fi strength, with -10 being the theoretical best. Standing underneath my router, I obtained a top figure of -33 with 2.4 GHz (once I sat back down ~7 meters away it decreased to -40ish, so it doesn't take much to decrease its effectiveness).

As you can see in the right-hand table, for average computer / streaming use, you do not want to be in a situation where you're less than -67 dBm.

Signal Strength dBm	Description
-30	The best signal, though unlikely to maintain.
-67	Good signal, usable with VoIP or streaming.
-70	Ok, solid, but don't expect it to be speedy.
-80 & less	Forget about it, even if it works it won't be reliable.

Now that we have that out of the way, let us review how we can assess our signal, regardless of the type. For that I came across https://www.techrepublic.com/google-amp/article/how-to-diagnose-and-fix-wi-fi-network-problems-using-a-windows-10-pc/ by Brandon Vigliarolo (September 11, 2020) and his overview of what he considers to be "one of the most popular wireless diagnostic tools for Windows 10": WiFi Analyzer by Matt Hafner - https://matthafner.com/ .

Wifi Analyzer turned out to be a quick Windows Store installation, and I agree with Brandon's overview, especially the big take away in seeing how many networks are sharing the same channel as my Wi-Fi connection.

Ahh, channels. Let's think of channels as available roads in rush hour; some channels / roads offer less congestion than others, and making sure your router is running on a less congested channel is key to giving you a better experience (remember, having the fastest router in your area isn't going to be worth a damn if everyone else is on the same channel). With WiFi Analyzer, I was able to see that I'm good, still need improvement, but my neighbour's signal strength is unlikely to cause problems (like slower cars in the right-hand travelling lane). Yet, if you review the TechRepublic article, you'll see the author has lots of company on the one channel and such needs to switch channels to get a better-quality signal.

Ok, now that you have the software tools and the basics, what to do next:
- Find out how good your "dBm" is from where you work or play and see if moving the router or your device can change things for the better (remember, it's the built in antenna you're dealing with, not necessarily the device itself);
- Check that you're on a less congested channel and see your router's instructions on how to change it if it isn't;
- Does switching from 5 GHz to 2.4 GHz (or visa versa) make for a more reliable experience? (quality of signal is key versus brute speed, especially if you have barriers in the way)

Take care.

THROUGH THE LENS

A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts.
After the click of your camera, you're only half done!

Tips for travel photography
by Linda Buske

Due to the interests of this group, I tend to pass on photography information that is technical in nature, either adjustments within the camera or post processing on your PC. However, now that we can travel at least within our own province, I decided to write about my first love – vacation photography! Setting aside the odd stellar single image I may get while on holidays, my primary aim of a good set of travel photos is to tell a story and perhaps even inspire my audience to visit the same locale someday. When I'm shooting, I purposely think about what travel brochure pics look like. They want to tell enough of the story in a few images to entice you to buy a ticket.

The following are a few guidelines that are good starting points that frequently work well:

Tip 1: Use the rule of thirds for good composition when placing objects of interest. There may actually be a grid on your camera to help you achieve this but if not, you will probably be able to find this grid when you are back home and cropping your pics. Place objects of interest at the intersection points, not the centre (top picture).

Tip 2: Use foreground liberally to add context or framing for a three-dimensional effect. Make the viewer feel like they are stepping into your photo and enjoying the scene from your perspective. For me, a travel photo that can tell a small story just by itself is ideal. This is particularly useful in open areas of sky and water like beaches, lakes and sunsets. The odd pic with negative space is fine but for the most part, try to limit big empty spaces in your picture (second picture).

Tip 3: Don't avoid people. People add richness and often size context. While you may not want huge crowds, get to a place early or be the last one on the bus so you can selectively add people for human interest. With most of the western world dressing in a similar fashion, it is often difficult (especially from behind) to tell a tourist from a local. Your best bet, if you want the illusion of a local, is to look for young people who aren't carrying cameras (third picture).

Tip 4: Include a variety of photo types. Even if landscapes are your specialty, include some action shots, food, people, landscape, closeup details, flowers, birds, boats, buildings, etc. Shoot from lower down or from higher up or from behind a tree or fence to add variety (bottom picture).

Tip 5: Review your pics in a shady area before leaving a tourist site. Zoom in close to make sure focus is in the right spot and there hasn't been too much camera motion. I get back to the bus 10 mins early so if I have messed up a photo, there is a chance I can run out and quickly reshoot it.

*Lynda regularly gives presentations for the OPCUG at the **Ottawa Public Library** (https://opcug.ca/opl-presentations/).*
*This article is also in PDF format on the OPCUG website (https://opcug.ca/digital-photography/).*

CHRIS TAYLOR'S QUICK TIPS

Quick Tip 07: Bluetooth battery level

It can be a real pain to be using a Bluetooth device and suddenly have the battery go dead. If you are running Windows 10 version 1809 or later, you can check the battery level from within Windows.

Press and hold the *Windows* key (⊞) and press *i* to run the *Settings* app. Click on *Devices* and choose *Bluetooth & other devices* (1). If your Bluetooth device supports it, the battery level will be shown to the right of the device (2).
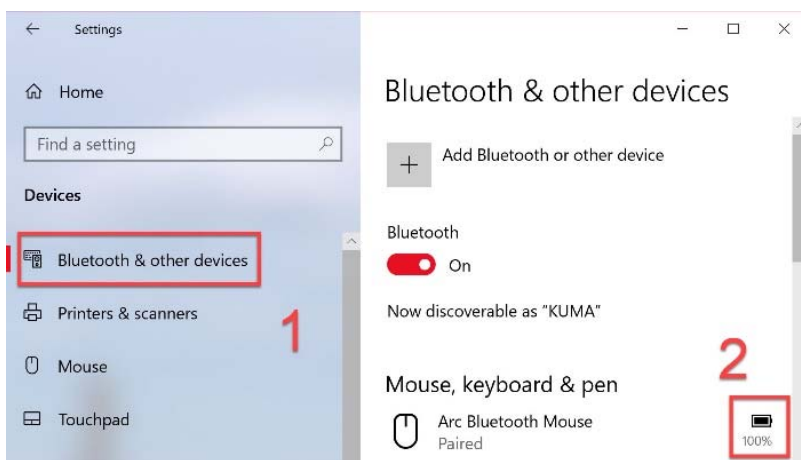

Quick Tip 08: Windows Magnifier

In *Scaling Windows*, I showed two ways to change the size of screen elements. Another way is with Windows Magnifier.

Hold down the *Windows* key (⊞) and press the *Plus* key (+) to start Magnifier. By default, it will be in *Full screen* mode at 200%. Move the mouse pointer to the edges to show different parts of the screen.

Use the small window near the top-left of the screen to control Magnifier.
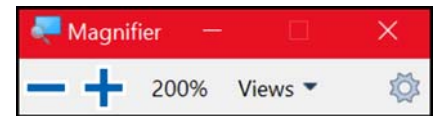
Click –/+ to change the magnification factor. Or use the keys ⊞ (+) and ⊞ (-).

Views allow you to change between *Full screen*, *Lens* (entire screen is visible, a box shows the enlarged portion), and *Docked* (like *Lens*, but the enlargement is a bar at the top of the screen. You can drag it to any location.)

The gear icon ⚙ lets you can change options for Magnifier.

Press ⊞ (Esc) to exit Magnifier.

Nominations for OPCUG Board for 2021

O nce a year, the OPCUG holds elections for the 9-member Board of Directors. We are once again coming up to this annual event.

We encourage all members to consider running for a board position or getting involved in some other manner in the operations of the OPCUG.

If you want more information about what is involved, please talk to me or any current or past Board member. Names are listed on the back page of this newsletter and on the web site at https://opcug.ca/executives/.

Nominations can be submitted to **Bob Herres**, Election Chair, by sending an email to nominations@opcug.ca.

Nominations must be received by midnight, December 31, 2020.

Please get involved. Please help the OPCUG continue in its role of *Users Helping Users*!

Bob Herres
Election Chair, 2021
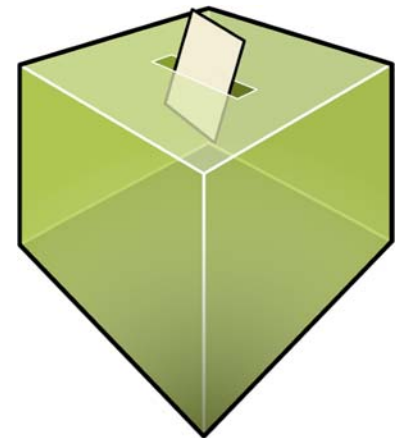
OTTAWA PC NEWS

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.

To receive the monthly newsletter by email, send an email to:
opcug-newsletter+subscribe@googlegroups.com (leave subject and body fields blank)
You do **not** need to create a Gmail or Google Groups account.

To subscribe to other OPCUG Google Groups member services, go to:
https://opcug.ca/google-groups-how-to/

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. OCTranspo bus #90 stops nearby. Details at https://opcug.ca/venue/.
(NOTE: Due to COVID-19 safety guidelines, all our events are via video conference until further notice. Details at https://opcug.ca/venue/)

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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Follow us on Facebook:	**https://www.facebook.com/opcug**
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Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Bring your old computer books, software, hardware, and paraphernalia you want to GIVE AWAY to the General Meetings, and leave them at the table near the auditorium's entrance. Please limit magazines to publication dates under two years.

You may TAKE AWAY any items of use to you.

Any items left over at the end of the meeting have to be taken back home by those who brought them in.