TC/PC Exists to Facilitate and Encourage the Cooperative Exchange of PC Knowledge and Information Across All Levels of Experience

January 2024

General Meeting [4]
Tuesday, January 9, 2024
7:00 PM

Show Us Your Gadget

Via Zoom Only

It's that time of year when someone may have treated you or you treated yourself, for all your hard work this year, with a new gadget. Share the wealth with your fellow members at January's meeting with a short description and maybe photos. But the term gadget encompasses anything tech so feel free to share:

- Software
- Hardware
- Tips for technical topics
- Deals you found
- Solutions to common tech problems
- Or gadgets, literally.

Looking forward to everyone participating.

Note: All TC/PC Meetings and SIG Groups will be virtual until further notice. Visit tcpc.com for info.

Tech Topics with Jack Ungerleider via Zoom at 6pm before the General Meeting.

The Digital Viking

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Meets once or twice per year. All members welcome to attend.
Visit www.tcpc.com for meeting details.

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Windows 11 "Accessibility" Features Introduction

by Tom Burt, Vice President
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This month, we'll look into a collection of Windows 11 settings called the "Accessibility" features. These features are aimed at helping users who have various challenges, such as impaired vision or hearing or physical handicaps that make using a mouse and keyboard difficult. Much of this material also applies to Windows 10's "Ease of Access" settings.
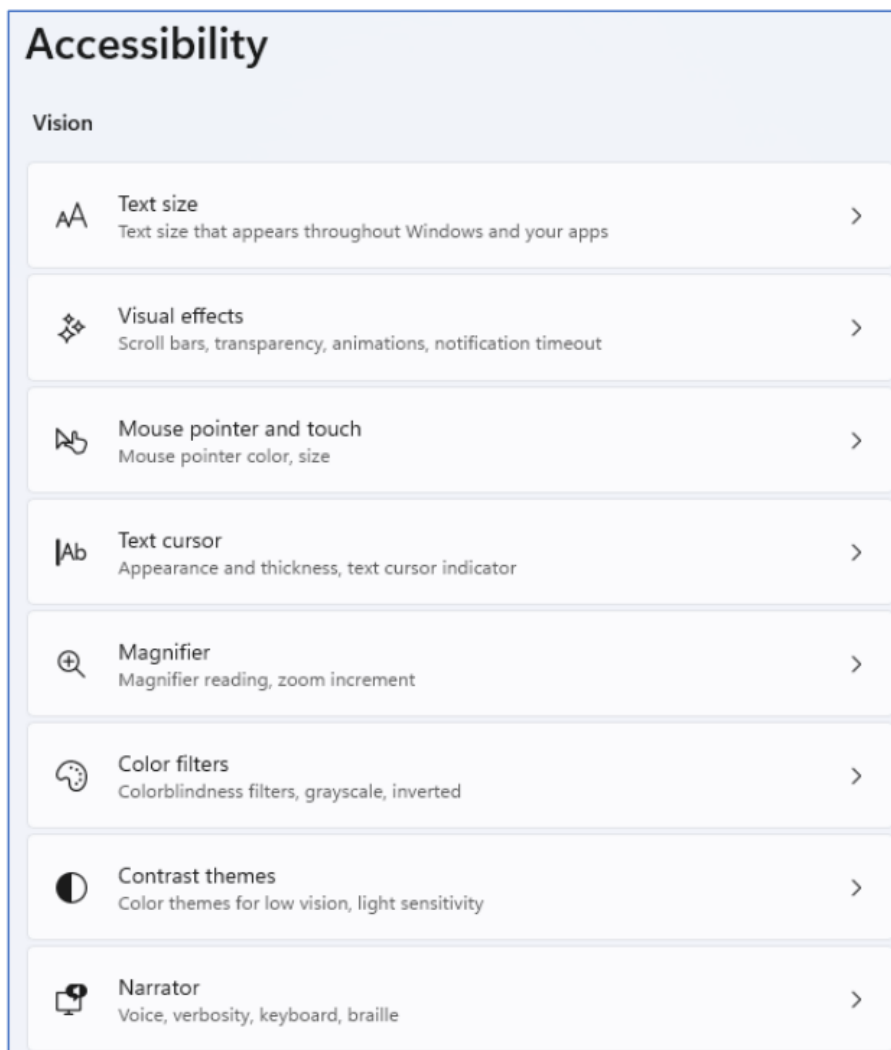
Accessibility Settings Screen – Vision

Many of the Accessibility settings are also helpful for non-challenged users, so it's worth learning more about these.

To reach the Accessibility settings, click the Windows Start icon in the Taskbar and then the Settings (Gear) icon. Then, in the main Settings window, click Accessibility.

The Accessibility settings are divided into three main categories: Vision, Hearing, and Interaction. The screenshot above shows the Vision settings.

The "Text Size" setting can be useful when working on a high-resolution screen with small font sizes (8 or 10 points). You can use the slider to scale up the fonts displayed on the screen to make them more readable. For example, I've scaled up text sizes by 10% in the screenshot below. The range on the slider is 100% (no scaling) to 225%.
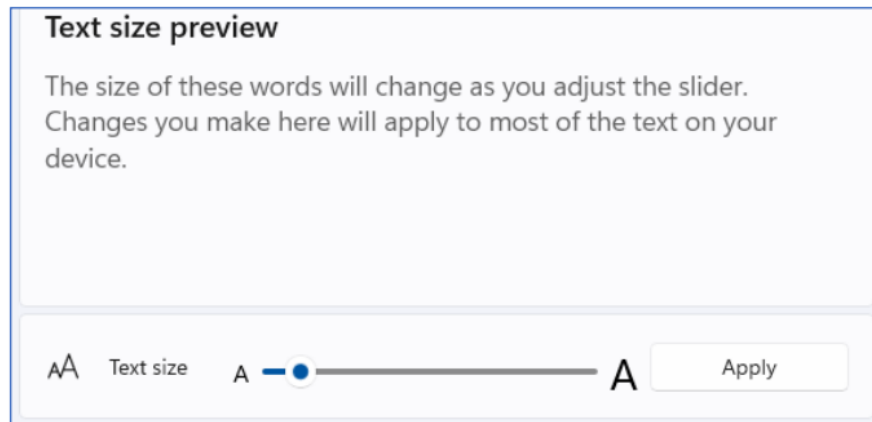
Text size setting

The "Visual Effects" setting allows you to control (via an On/Off slider) whether scrollbars are always shown or fade into view as you hover the mouse over a window. There are also sliders for Transparency and Animation effects and a dropdown for how long notifications are on the screen.
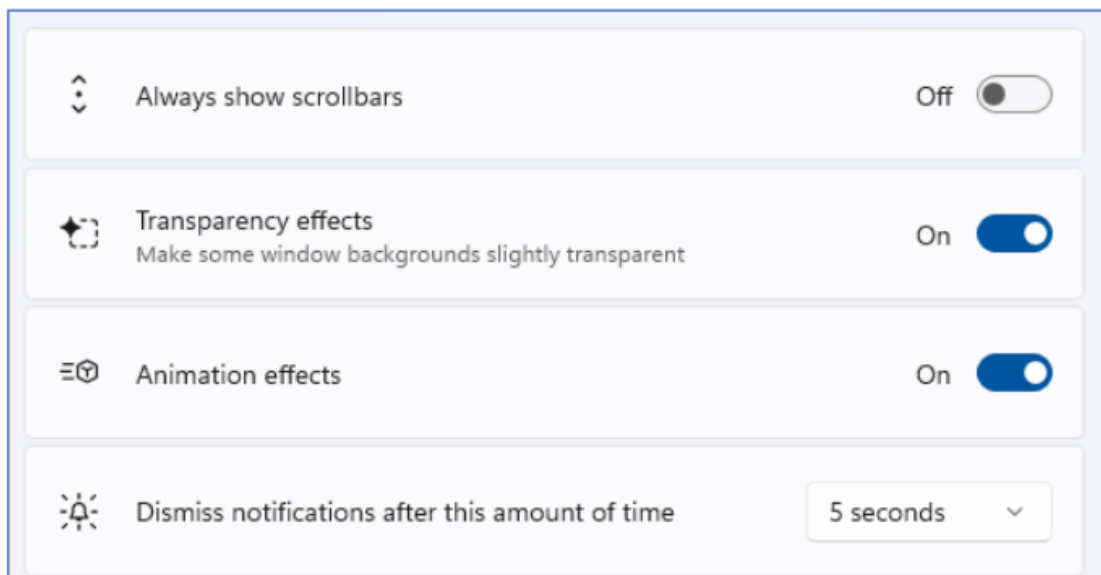
Visual effects setting

The "Mouse pointer" setting allows you to select the mouse pointer's style, color, and size. The size slider goes in steps of 1, representing a scale factor. For example, I've selected the outline pointer with a color of gold and a scale factor of two. This makes it easier to see and follow.
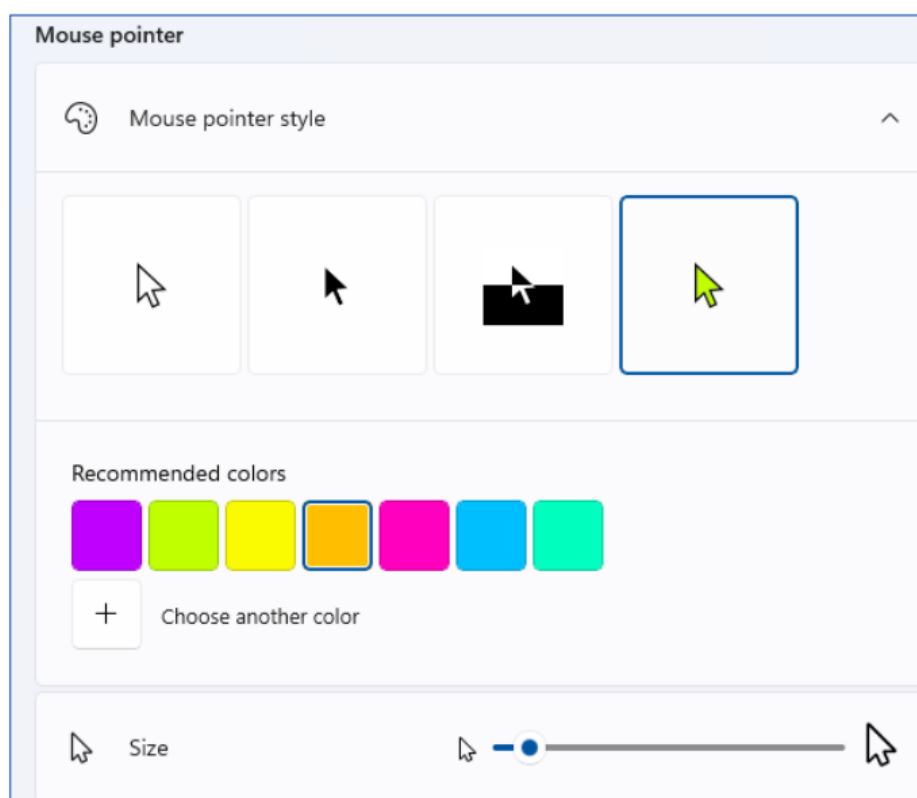
Mouse pointer setting

The last Vision setting we'll look at is the Magnifier. See the screenshot below. The Magnifier is turned on by pressing the Windows and + keys together. This will magnify (scale up) the screen by the Zoom level setting (default is 200%). You can turn off the Magnifier by pressing the Windows and Esc keys together.

You can press the Windows key and the + key together to increase the scale by the Zoom increment and press the Windows key and the – key together to decrease the scale by the Zoom increment. You can also press the Ctrl and Alt keys together and use the scroll wheel on your mouse to scale the Magnifier up or down.

You can pan around the magnified screen by moving your mouse pointer to the edges of the magnified screen. I'll leave it to my readers to explore the other Vision settings on their own.
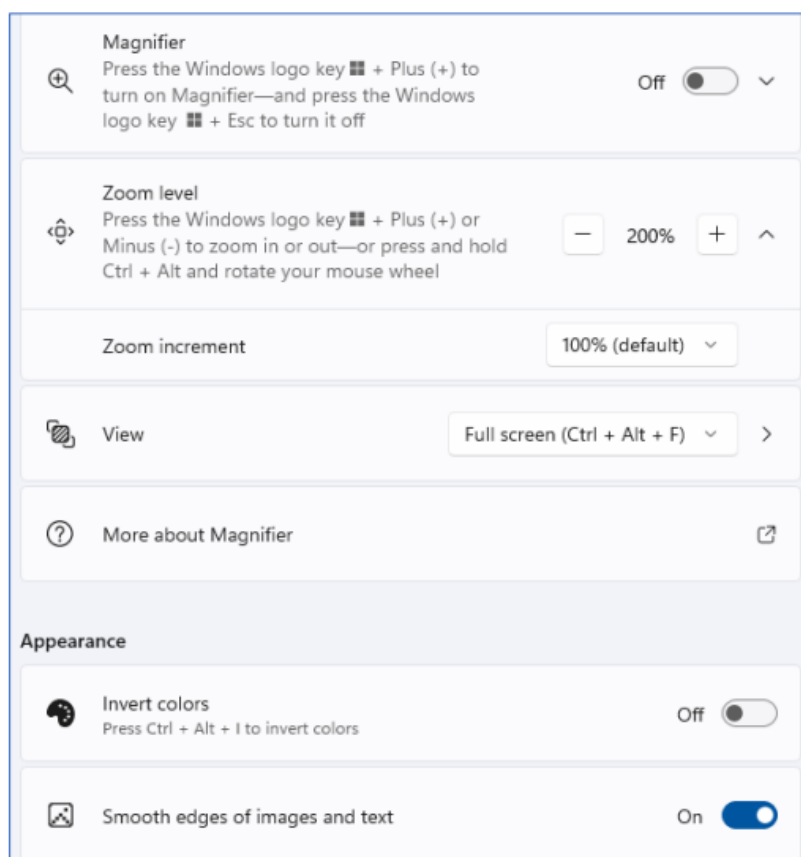
Magnifier setting

Under the Accessibility > Hearing settings is one for Captions styles settings. These allow you to configure how closed captions appear on your screen. You can select from several default layouts or create a custom layout of your own. Settings > Accessibility > Captions. Click the button for Caption style and change it from default to another option, such as White on black, Small caps, Large text, or Yellow on blue.

Under Accessibility > Interaction (see the following screenshot) are various settings for Speech recognition and dictation, special keyboard behavior, using the keypad to move the mouse cursor, and using an eye tracker device to allow you to type using eye movements. For example, see the screenshot following.

Voice typing (dictation) is very easy to use. Place the mouse cursor into any text box on the screen (e.g., a Notepad or MS Word window) and press the Windows and H keys together. A small window will appear with a microphone icon in it. Click the icon to turn the microphone on or off. You can dictate when the microphone is on, and Windows will convert your spoken words to text in the on-screen textbox.
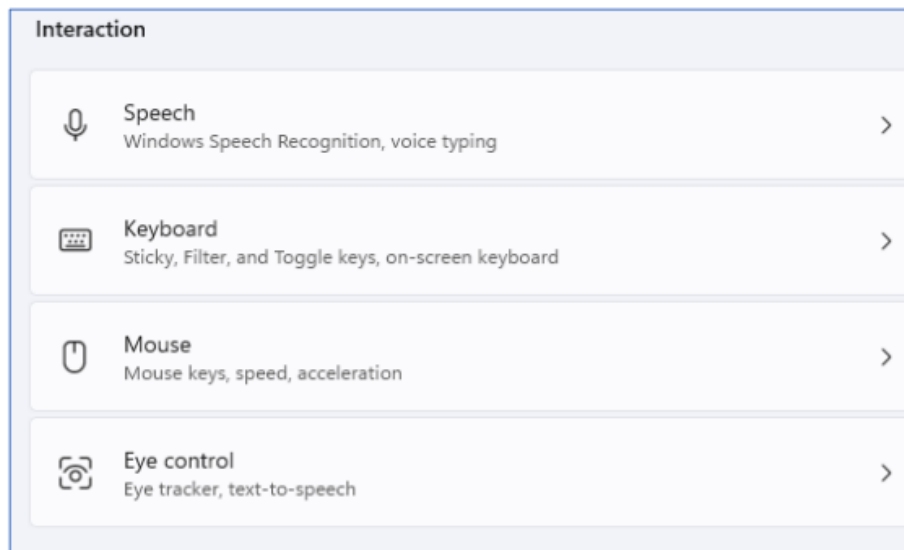
Interaction settings

The following is an example of dictation in a Notepad window. Once you have dictated into Notepad, WordPad, MS Word, or any other editor, you can edit, copy and paste the resulting text as if it had been typed in on the keyboard.
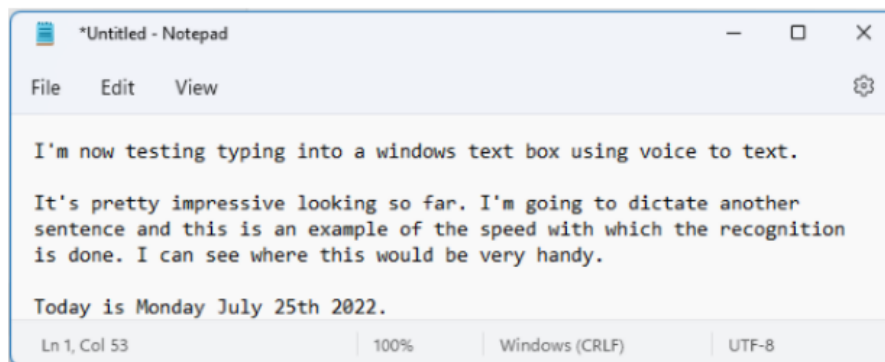
Voice Typing Example

Go to Page 1

Without a Manual, Can Understanding be Automatic?

By Greg Skalka, President
Under the Computer Hood User Group
https://uchug.org/
president ** uchug.org

Not long ago, writing was the primary format for human knowledge. Once we graduated from cave drawings to the written word, our knowledge was stored this way. Information was preserved and passed on through writing, from stone tablets to books. Though a picture may be "worth a thousand words," it often needs some explanation. Libraries were the repositories of knowledge from ancient times through just recently. Now the Internet and the World Wide Web are vying for that position.

While stone tablets have lasted for many thousands of years, and printed books have been around for a little over a thousand years; the Internet has existed for only about 50 years, and the World Wide Web for a little over 30 (the Web is a service that runs on the Internet). It has been estimated that all the books ever printed would be equivalent to about 175 terabytes of storage; that is only 175 of those one-TB hard drives you probably have. In contrast, the amount of data estimated to be on the Internet in 2022 is 94 zettabytes (an unimaginable 94 x 10^10 one TB hard drives). We are generating more data than we know what to do with. It is believed that 90% of the world's data was developed in the last two years.

Product user manuals used to be actual printed books, but now they are migrating to the Web. In the best case, the manual is a pdf. In most cases, however, the only product information is web pages, separate articles, and user forums. The printed manual for many products consists only of some basic connection and power-up directions, along with a web link to additional information. Sometimes the manual information is built into a help menu in the product.

A few types of products remain where detailed paper user manuals are still usually provided; automobiles are one example. However, the manual is very limited or nonexistent for many of our most complex high-tech products. Computers, televisions, cell phones, and most software have little or nothing for user manuals. Since those hardware products heavily depend on software, I guess it is unsurprising. Since software and software-based products can be easily updated and changed, making a detailed manual would be like aiming at a moving target. For particularly complicated and widely used products, sometimes third-party vendors provide manuals confused users can purchase (the "for Dummies" series, for example).

What is a Windows 11 user to do with a question or problem? Do they go to the Microsoft website to search for answers? Do they turn to a search engine and comb the Web for help? Do they turn to friends, family, or the tech guru they hopefully know to get advice on their problems? Do they look for a product forum online for answers? Do they join a user group? Do they simply figure things out by trial and error? Do they just remain frustrated?

Today's tech products are too unfamiliar, complicated, and unsupported for many seniors. For example, the smartphone is probably the most complex consumer product ever made for its size and weight.

Even when put into the hands of someone familiar with the concept and use of a conventional telephone, its menus and features can be overwhelming. In the last year of his life, my 85-year-old father went through several cell phones and smartphones (some "senior-friendly"), looking for one he could understand and use. Unfortunately, he was unsuccessful in his search. He was not technology-challenged; my father had used and even built computers for many years. He was

losing his tech edge with age but struggled to learn a new tech tool. While it is a device that young children can often pick up and use (at least in some way), he could never utilize a smartphone to his satisfaction.

Even I feel behind the curve on smartphone knowledge. I am sometimes frustrated with my limited understanding of the features and capabilities and the lack of documentation. I admit I wasn't an early adopter of smartphones as I thought they were too expensive. I still feel that way, but I now appreciate their importance in our society. I used my first smartphone, a Samsung Galaxy J3, for five years and have had my second, a Samsung S22, for almost a year. I thought I knew something about using smartphones until I got my new one. While from the same manufacturer and using the same OS (Android), the new instrument and the new OS version were sufficiently different to require some relearning. And, of course, there was no user manual to help guide me.

The lack of standardization in products does not help in understanding products. For example, my old phone had four hard buttons, while my new one has only three. A lot of the basics of operation were the same, but one of the first problems I had with my new phone was shutting it off. On my old phone, holding the power button (the unpaired side button) would bring up the phone's power-down menu. On my new phone, doing the same brought up Samsung's Bixby app (a voice-activated assistant similar to Google Assistant). I finally figured out that I had to simultaneously press and hold the power and volume down buttons to get the power-down menu on my new phone.

I have learned some new phone tricks for my Samsung S22, but they were difficult to figure out. I imagine every software developer believes the features they add to a product are "intuitive" and don't need any explanation or directions. Unfortunately, intuition does not seem standardized in humans; what is obvious to one person may not be to another. A good friend with the same S22 phone showed me a neat capability in the new Android version – the ability to nest icons in icons. Instead of having all apps represented by icons at the same screen level, he showed me that I could create a Home Control icon and put all my home control app icons into it (like a folder on the screen for grouping icons). It is a good feature, but now I can't remember how to do it again (and I have no manual to refer to). It does not seem as intuitive as when he first showed me.

I paid my friend back by showing him a new feature he did not know about. I don't recall where I found it, but if you double-press the power button, it brings up the phone camera (and bypasses the PIN entry). This is handy if you need to take a quick photo with the phone. Another new feature I found is that a quick double tap on the screen will soft start the phone (the same as a quick press of the power button).

There are some things I have not figured out, and so far, I've not found the answers on the Web. For example, in some Samsung TV commercials, phone users were shown taking selfies using Google Assistant ("Hey Google, take a selfie"). I tried this at the time (a month ago) and was successful. Unfortunately, now this no longer appears to work for me. I did get a recent Android update, which could have changed things. My web searches give various instructions for doing this, but none seem to work for my phone now. What I'd give for a manual (that is, of course, accurate and complete).

More Inconsistencies

Whenever there is more than one way to do something, there will be a different opinion on how it should be done. One example of this is the low battery charge indicator on a product. I have three different products, each indicating battery charge with a single LED indicator differently.

My old Philips Norelco rechargeable electric razor has a single LED to indicate battery charging

status. When the charging cord is first plugged in, the LED turns on solid to show the battery is charging. When the razor's battery reaches a full charge, the LED switches to flashing. My Cygolite rechargeable rear bike light has a single red LED that can flash in various patterns to indicate my presence to cars approaching behind me. When the charging cable is plugged into it, the LED flashes low to indicate the battery is charging. When the battery reaches full, the LED switches to a low-intensity solid.

My Wyze Night Lights have a single LED to indicate battery status. When the charging cord is first plugged in, the LED turns on solid to show the battery is charging. The LED switches off when the Wyze light's battery reaches full charge.

Each of these charging indicator methods is valid, but with the razor and the bike light, I can never remember which situation indicates a full charge. When I come back a few hours later, I'm typically scratching my head, wondering if flashing means fully charged or still charging. The Wyze method seems the least ambiguous. Why can't everyone do the same? 🖥️

Interesting Internet Finds—March, April, May 2023
by Steve Costello
scostello ** sefcug.com

While going through more than 300 RSS feeds, I often encounter things that might interest other user group members.

The following are some items I found interesting in March.

How (And When) To Reset Your PC's Network Adapters
https://www.ricksdailytips.com/reset-network-adapters-windows/

I get problems with my network adapters, so I keep a copy of this post handy now. (Note: This does not happen frequently, but knowing how to fix the problem is good to know before it happens.)

Is Facial Recognition And Fingerprint ID Safe?
https://askleo.com/is-facial-recognition-and-fingerprint-id-safe/

Leo Notenboom gives his take on this question. If you watch a lot of TV and movies, you might think these options are easily bypassed. If that is the case, check out Leo's post.

How To Find The Right Kindle For Your Reading Needs
https://www.reviewgeek.com/144298/how-to-find-the-right-kindle-for-your-reading-needs/

Are you Thinking about buying a Kindle? If so, check out this *Review Geek* post outlining the different options and why each is best for different needs.

Chrome High Efficiency Mode
https://cynmackley.com/2023/03/13/enable-chromes-high-efficiency-mode/

If you use Google Chrome, and you probably do, following these instructions will help with memory issues if you have a lot of tabs open.

10 Ways To Improve Your Wi-Fi Without Buying Anything

https://www.howtogeek.com/874841/10-ways-to-improve-your-wi-fi-without-buying-anything/

I am always interested in ways to improve things without buying anything. This HowToGeek post shows different ways to improve your Wi-Fi at no cost. Some of these ways are very simple but often overlooked.

Google Keeps Asking To Fill Image Captcha? 6 Ways To Fix It

https://techviral.net/google-keeps-asking-to-fill-image-captcha/

I don't use the Google Search engine much anymore, but when I did, frequent captchas were annoying. If you use Google Search and get asked to fill image captchas often, check out this post to fix it.

New Privacy Tool: Mullvad Browser

https://firewallsdontstopdragons.com/new-privacy-tool-mullvad-browser/

I currently use Google Chrome, Firefox, Tor, and Vivaldi browsers, depending upon the level of privacy and identity hiding needed. Still, I found this post about the Mullvad browser interesting.

Still Using Windows 10 21H2? Time To Upgrade

https://www.computerworld.com/article/3692869/still-using-windows-10-21h2-time-to-upgrade.html

For those using Windows 10, this is a must-read article. It gives the reasons you should upgrade to 22H2 and some reasons you might not have already. (Note: Both my Windows 10 machines are using 22H2.)

Top 10 Ways To Turn Flashlight On And Off In Android

https://www.online-tech-tips.com/smartphones/top-10-ways-to-turn-flashlight-on-and-off-in-android/

Just the day after I read this post, my wife asked me if there was a way to get a shortcut to turn the flashlight on and off for her Samsung Galaxy S3. Luckily, I remembered reading this, and now she has a flashlight shortcut on her lock screen. If you use an Android phone or tablet, check out this post.

What Can You Do With The USB Port On Your Router?

https://www.howtogeek.com/791384/what-can-you-do-with-the-usb-port-on-your-router/

I had never thought about the USB port on a router until I read this post. Unfortunately, my router does not even have a USB port. But I have a neighbor with a 2 TB drive setup on his router for sharing files and backing up his travel laptop.

What's My IP Address And How To Find It

https://www.thewindowsclub.com/whats-my-ip-address-and-how-to-find-it

You might not know your IP address or even need to know right now. Even if that is the case, you should know how to find it, so this post might come in handy someday.

What's The (Number) Added To Some Of My Downloads?
https://askleo.com/whats-the-number-added-to-some-of-my-downloads/

This is one of those things that come up from time to time. When it happens to me, I usually know what it is and why it happens, but not everyone knows about this. If you are one of those that don't know, check out this post.

How To Have Unlimited Email Addresses
https://davescomputertips.com/how-to-have-unlimited-email-addresses/

It is easy to have many email addresses. Also, it is not necessarily expensive. Dave's Computer Tips blog post explains different ways to get alternate email addresses. It also explains why and when you might want to use the varying methods.

How To Block Google Popups
https://firewallsdontstopdragons.com/how-to-block-google-popups/

If you get popups to "Sign in with Google," you should check out this post to learn how to block them. The use of third-party tools to do the same thing is also discussed.

8 Streaming Services That Still Let You Share Passwords
https://www.mentalfloss.com/posts/streaming-services-allow-password-sharing

As you know, Netflix is cracking down on password sharing. In this blog post, you will learn about eight other streaming services that still allow password sharing.

10 Firefox Features You Should Be Using
https://www.howtogeek.com/891045/10-firefox-features-you-should-be-using/

If you use Firefox as your web browser, check out this post. I found three things I should have been doing all along but did not know about.

Skip The Wireless Earbuds And Buy Something That'll Last
https://www.reviewgeek.com/152420/skip-the-wireless-earbuds-and-buy-something-thatll-last/

Wireless earbuds are convenient but earbuds, or their batteries need to be replaced too often. That is what this post is all about. I know I can't go completely wired, but try to as much as possible. Check out this post and see if it makes sense for you too.

Will AI Crack Your Passwords?
https://askleo.com/will-ai-crack-your-passwords/
AI is the big thing right now. Leo Notenboom talks about AI and password cracking in this post. If you are concerned about AI and password cracking, you should check out this post for yourself.

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Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Most SIGs will meet at Edina Executive Plaza, Conference Room #102, 5200 Willson Road, Edina, MN
 Confirm with a SIG group if they meet elsewhere.
For more info contact the SIG Leader(s) listed here.

Get SIG announcements!
Link from www.tcpc.com

Board of Directors*
All members are welcome! Check www.tcpc.com for location.
Selected Saturday mornings

Linux on Saturday
This is for the Linux newbie and those trying to come over from Microsoft to a different operating system.
Second Saturday @ 9 AM-Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Jack Ungerleider   612/418-3494 c
                         jack@jacku.com

Tech Topics
Technical presentation/discussion on various technical topics from the following areas:
- **Web/Internet**
- **Mobile Devices and Apps**
- **Playing with Programming**
- **DIY (3D Printing, R-Pi, other hobby electronics, etc.)**

Second Tuesday @ 6:00-7:00 PM
Every month
Right before the general meeting.

Jack Ungerleider   612/418-3494 c
                         jack@jacku.com

Microsoft Access
All levels. Presentations by expert developers within the group and by MS reps.
Third Saturday 9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
                         skuhlmey@hotmail.com

Microsoft Office
Addresses the use, integration, and nuances of the Microsoft Office applications.
Combined with Systems on Saturday
Third Saturday of the Month
9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
                         skuhlmey@hotmail.com

Directions to **Accord, 1515 Energy Park Drive** for **General Meetings**:
From I-94 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go north on Snelling Avenue about one mile to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.
From I-694 or Hwy 36 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go south on Snelling Avenue past Como Avenue to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.

Directions to **Edina Executive Plaza** for **Systems on Saturday, Access, Word and Picture Perfect SIGs**: Take Highway 100 to the 50th Street/Vernon exit. [If you have come from the north, cross back over Highway 100 to the east side.] Take the first right and go past Perkins [The golf course will be on your left.] and continue on the east frontage road (Willson Road) to the next building—5200 . There is ample parking in the building's lot. Conference Room #102 is on 1st floor.

Help yourself by helping others!
Join the team & share your knowledge with others.

Contact TC/PC at www.tcpc.com

Meetings start at 7:00 PM (9:00 AM on Saturday) unless otherwise noted. *Virtual Meetings during Covid pandemic.*

January

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 7pm General Mtg Show Us Your Gadget 6pm Tech Topics	10	11	12	13 Linux on Saturday SIG 9am—Noon
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 MS Office SIG (includes Access) 9am—Noon
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

February

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Linux on Saturday SIG 9am—Noon
11	12	13 7pm General Mtg Show Us Your Gadget 6pm Tech Topics	14	15	16	17 MS Office SIG (includes Access) 9am—Noon
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Twin Cities PC USER GROUP

You have just read an issue of The Digital Viking.

Would you like to receive this delivered directly to your email or business each month?

As a member of TC/PC, the Twin Cities Personal Computer Group, one of the benefits
is reading this monthly publication at www.tcpc.com..

As a member of TC/PC, you may attend any or all of the monthly Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings and be eligible for
software drawings. The small membership fee also includes
access to real-live people with answers via our helplines, discounts, and various other perks.

Does membership in this group sound like a good way to increase your computer knowledge?

It's easy to do! Simply fill in the form below and mail it to the address shown.
(If you use the form in this issue, you will receive an extra month for joining now.)

1/24

Here's the info for my TC/PC Membership:

Full name_____

Company name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

❍Home ❍Business ❍Change address: ❍Perm. ❍Temp. 'til _____

Home phone_____ Work phone_____

Online address(es) _____

Where did you hear about TC/PC? _____

❍ I DO NOT want any of my information disclosed.
❍ I DO NOT want to receive any mailings

I'm signing up for:4
❍ Individual/Family Membership ($18)
❍ Business Membership ($100)
If an existing member your # _____

Make checks payable to:
Twin Cities PC User Group
341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

Or sign up on our website:

http://www.tcpc.com

❍ Check #_____ ❍ Bill me
❍ New member ❍ Renewal ❍ Prior member
I'm interested in:
❍ Training classes ❍ Volunteering
❍ Special Interest Groups: New User, Access, etc.
List here:

Administrative Use Only Rec'd_____ Chk#_____

January 9, 2024
7:00 pm
General Meeting

Show Us Your Gadget

Via Zoom Only

Twin Cities
PC USER GROUP

341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

FIRST CLASS MAIL