

Computer Tips

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Which Browser Should I Use?

Your internet browser is the main software tool that allows you to navigate the internet for work and play. And, just as when you're buying a new car, it's important to get the right combination of speed, security and versatility for your needs. That's why this week we've summarised the pros and cons of the three major browsers, so you can make the choice that's best for you.

Firefox

According to research performed in February 2015, Firefox is the world's third-most popular browser, with more than half a billion users. Firefox is free and open-source, which means that its source code can be accessed and improved by coders across the world. As a result, it has developed a reputation as an unusually responsive browser, with constant updates to enhance its security and incorporate new technologies (such as HTML5).

Firefox is intuitive, highly customisable and a strong performer. In fact, a recent study showed that, in comparison to other major browsers, Firefox scores highest in memory efficiency, reliability and various measures of speed. You can enhance the Firefox experience with various add-ons, from the popular Adblock tool to numerous browser themes. The browser is available across most computer operating systems (including Windows, Apple Mac and Linux), and there's an Android mobile app.

Google Chrome

Since its launch in late 2008, Google Chrome has quickly grown to become the world's most popular browser. In January 2015, StatCounter found that Google Chrome not only accounts for more than half of all desktop browser usage, but is also the most popular browser on mobiles and tablets. Chrome's popularity is largely due to its seamless integration with Google accounts, and consequent ability to synchronise user data across multiple devices. Like Firefox, it offers quick page loading times, numerous add-ons, and frequent updates to optimise speed and security.

Microsoft Internet Explorer

Once the leader in browsers, Internet Explorer's popularity has declined in recent years due to issues with speed (it remains the slowest of the major browsers) and its limited compatibility with latest technologies and offering of add-ons. Nevertheless, it is still used on a significant portion of Windows computers, mainly because it comes pre-installed.

In January 2015, Microsoft announced that it would be discontinuing development of Internet Explorer and replacing it with a new browser called Microsoft Edge. Early tests indicate that Edge will significantly outperform Internet Explorer and may even rival Chrome and Firefox. So keep your eyes open for its official launch with Windows 10 on 29 July this year.

Other options

Of course, there's no reason to limit yourself to the major browsers. Opera is a popular alternative, with Safari being the default browser on iOS and Mac devices. It is really a personal choice which browser you use, finding the best fit for how you use the internet.

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