

Newsletter

Useful Programs Reviewed in 2025

Of the 160 topics and articles in the 2025 newsletters these are worth thinking about.



Alternative to
Microsoft Office
[ONLYOFFICE - Secure
Online Office | ONLYOFFICE](https://www.onlyoffice.com/)



Find an alternative program

[AlternativeTo - Crowdsourced soft-
ware recommendations | AlternativeTo](https://www.alternativeto.net/)



[NanaZip – Modern Open Source
File Archiver for Windows](https://www.nanazip.com/)



[QRCode Monkey - The free QR Code Generator to cre-
ate custom QR Codes with Logo](https://www.qrcode-monkey.com/)



Disable your Facebook account
<https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/>



ChatGPT is an
AI chatbot



Print your own calendar
[https://www.vertex42.com/calendars/
printable-calendars.html](https://www.vertex42.com/calendars/printable-calendars.html)

PerplexityAI—Use AI to answer
any question
[Perplexity for Windows -
Download it from Uptodown
for free](https://www.perplexity.ai/)



Scan suspicious files
online
[Jotti's malware scan](https://www.jotti.org/)



Linux Alternative operat-
ing system to Windows
[Home - Linux Mint](https://www.linuxmint.com/)

Everything



Portable Windows program to
erase all disk data
[https://
www.diskwipe.org/](https://www.diskwipe.org/)



Having trouble finding a file in
Windows?
[voidtools](https://voidtools.com/)

Travel— International Traveller Magazine advised you should not use airport USB sockets to charge your phone. Cyber criminals use charging ports to access your device while charging. Once its connected its possible to steal personal data, install malicious software and even control your device remotely.

Turn Off automatic connections and sharing
Disabling your device will prevent it from connecting to a potentially malicious network without your knowledge. Turning off file sharing features like AirDrop on apple devices prevents unsolicited access to your files.

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I've reported on a variety of programs during 2025 and the ones on page one are worth considering if you need a program for a task.

I trust you find the Futurism headlines interesting. They are almost unbelievable.

Happy Computing

Lindsay



OneNote Your 2026 Bullet Journal

Using a bullet journal can be a good way of keeping track of your notes, personal projects, medical info, and random notes.

- Digital note taking app
- Free standalone app download
- Platforms - Windows, macOS, iOS, Android, web version
- Syncing across devices
- Web clipping
- Drawing
- search, link and reuse notes
- Advance features are available with a Microsoft 365 subscription. Includes copilot
- App is in windows store or download at [Microsoft OneNote | The digital note-taking app for your devices](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/p/onenote/9nblggb34848)

Consider tracking your medical history, medication, appointments, etc.

Reference: Lea David

Videos on using OneNote and other products are available on Lea's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@LeaDavid>

Driverless Delivery Vans in China Are Rampaging Through Cities Like Grand Theft Auto

Reference:: Futurism

Support ends for Windows and Office Versions

Microsoft has confirmed end of support for W11 24H2 and W11 SE on 13 October 2026 Microsoft Office 2021 standalone expires October 13 2026 and Office LTSC 2021 ends on the same date

Reference: Techspot



DelFast version 1.2

A fast folder deletion tool for Windows

- Free download
- Open Source
- Single program 185 KB EXE
- No background activity
- Almost no CPU use
- No internet required
- Available for Windows 10/11
- Ideal for deleting large folders like node or temp files

<https://delfastsite.web.app/>

Trending Topics

Meta blocks 544,000 under 16s accounts since the age ban began.

Google's Gemini artificial intelligence models will be used to power Apple's Siri upgrade in 2026.

Reference: InformationAge

Bluetooth Headphones — unpatched leads to hacking

Researchers found critical flaws with Bluetooth headphones and earbuds powered by Airoha system-on-chips. These are used widely in consumer electronics.

Critical flaws may enable

- eavesdropping via the device's microphone
- Data theft
- Smartphone compromise

How to reduce the Bluetooth Security Risk

- Update Bluetooth and earbuds using official manufacturer apps when firmware updates are available
- Keep smartphones fully updated with the latest operating system
- Remove unused, unknown or unnecessary paired devices from smartphones
- Disable Bluetooth when not actively in use and avoid pairing devices in public.
- Periodically reset and re-pair Bluetooth headphones after firmware updates
- For high risk individuals or sensitive use cases, use wired headphones.

<https://shorturl.at/luRPS>

Reference: eSecurity planet

Windows phone-based activation method retired

Microsoft announced from December 3 2025 it has retired its offline phone based activation method for Windows and Office after 20 years.

To activate Windows 11 or Office the easiest way is to link your license to a Microsoft account which will verify the product.

For perpetual licenses, advanced customers can use the Product Activation Portal that requires use of the internet. After logging in and entering the details you can activate Windows offline.

Reference: Windows Latest

Gemini AI coming to Gmail inbox

New AI features are coming to the free Gmail inbox and Google Workspace (paid) Gmail inbox.

Features include;

- New AI inbox to test
- Snapshot of your most important emails (determined by Gemini)

Google One Ultra and Pro subscribers

- AI overviews for Gmail Search
- Proofread—one click fixes for grammar, structure and word choice when writing emails

Reference: Windows Central

Man Planning to Raise Adopted Children With AI Girlfriend as Their Mother

Reference: Futurism

BeConnected

Microsoft PC Manager



<https://shorturl.at/pam0P>

If you've been computing for a few years you may have seen ads and even downloaded a program or two that claims to clean and speed up your PC.

PC Manager is a Microsoft App with the following features;

- PC Boost—Cleaning & optimizing performance
- Health Check—scans computer for issues and malware
- Manage storage—cleans up unnecessary files.
- Pop-Up management—reduce distracting app notifications
- Toolbar—App displays a mini toolbar showing your system's status.
- Note: The App does not do anything with the Registry.

Michael Muchmore in an article in PCMag tested PC Manager. Its available in the Microsoft Store and his testing found the app;

- simplifies the process of cleaning and maintaining the PC
- Reduces the storage footprint by allowing a scan to clean up delete duplicate files and large files and manage downloads.
- Slightly improves performance boost.

Reference: PCMag

Past Sands Tech Group Newsletters can be found at this link. <https://sandslifestylebfs.wixsite.com/scgbfs>

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