

# Downloading, Installing and uninstalling programs

**What can be downloaded!** – Virtually anything displayed in your browser can be copied. Today we will concentrate on programs.

**Computer based programs** – These are programs that are downloaded and installed on your computer. Once installed, they do not require internet access to function. There are millions, both free and paid. The free versions are generally cut down versions of the original offering fewer functions. The free versions meet most peoples' requirements so are very popular.

**Apps (applications)** – Web-based applications (programs) that are designed to be used entirely within the browser. Using apps, you can do things like create documents, edit photos, and listen to music, without having to install complicated software. They are particularly suited to tablets and smart phones. Apps tend to be associated with the device's operating system. Windows 8 has the Windows store; Apple has the App Store; Android, as a Google system, uses the Chrome store. Many apps are free, others you pay for.

**Computer check** – It is a good idea to check your computer before doing any downloading. Make sure that your anti-virus and malware programs are up to date and do full scans. I am using Microsoft Security Essentials <http://tinyurl.com/3fmxjg8> (It is included in Windows 8 as Windows Defender) on my computer. I also use Malwarebytes <http://tinyurl.com/kc5t3bg>.

Make sure that the cordless mouse batteries are charged and empty the recycle bin. If you accidentally delete something, it is easier to find it in an empty recycle bin.

**System restore** – Just In case anything goes wrong, it pays to put in a restore point. Windows and many other programs automatically put in a restore point. In other cases put one in anyway. To do this click **Start/Control Panel/System/System Protection** then click **Create** at the bottom. You can then use System Restore to revert to the earlier time. Personal files are not affected but any updates or programs installed since the restore point was put in will be deleted and will need to be replaced.

**Types of programs** – Most programs come in their finished version but you may come across some others. Alpha programs are in an early stage of development and should not be touched. Beta programs are in an advanced stage of development and are published for user comments. They are usually quite safe.

**What to download** – Your choice but use well known sites. Use the original site if possible or a well known download site e.g. Cnet, <http://www.cnet.com/>; FileHippo, <http://www.filehippo.com/> You can check rating with Web of Trust [www.mywot.com](http://www.mywot.com)., and keep yourself safe from spyware, adware, spam, viruses, browser exploits, unreliable online shops, phishing, and other Internet scams. There are a number of web sites that provide a similar service. They are not infallible but a lot better than nothing!



**A word of warning** – Always closely examine the web page that you are downloading from, as the program you are looking for, or its free version, may not be prominently displayed. Also be careful with pre-checked dialogue boxes.

Windows Secrets has done a great article on this <http://tinyurl.com/q7fw3sy>. . If time permits, I will also download a program called Iivid, which is a video downloader and will illustrate some of the things you have to watch for.

**Check proposed location of file** – If you do not specify a location for the downloaded file, it will probably end up in a folder called Downloads; make sure you know how to locate it. I prefer to put downloaded programs on the Desktop where I can see them. The method of doing this varies between browsers and you may have to hunt.

**Go to site and follow download instructions** – I am going to download a program called [Soluto](#). It has its own website but in this instance, I will download it from Cnet. You will have heard that too many items in the Start Menu can slow down computer start up. This program tells you which items can be removed, may be removed, or should not be removed. It also can delay the loading of start items. The programs themselves are never touched



**The set up file** – What we have downloaded is the program set up file. It can be likened to a package of kitset furniture; it is all there but it must be put together or installed before it can be used. Before you open it right click on the icon or file name and scan it with your antivirus program.

**To install** – Double click the icon or file name and an install wizard will usually come up. Answer the questions as they appear but do not change the proposed file location. Make sure you uncheck the boxes against any items that you do not want e.g. toolbars. You may need internet access during the process and you may need to restart your computer. Once I have established that the program is working as it should, I usually delete the set up file. Unless you wish to copy it for someone else, it will not be needed again.

**To uninstall** – Because the installation will have put file and links in many places, never try to uninstall a program by deleting its files. You must use an uninstall program. You can either use the program that comes with whatever you want to uninstall or use the Windows uninstaller – **Start/Control Panel/Programs and Features**, highlight the program and click uninstall. The method that I prefer is to use a third party uninstaller called Revo, <http://www.revouninstaller.com/>. This is a well established program that is safe to use. It comes in two flavours, free, or free for thirty days then pay. The latter has more features but the former is perfectly adequate. In addition to performing the usual uninstall program, Revo does a second scan to pick up mostly registry items that may have been missed (and they frequently are!)

**Regular updates** – There are a number of programs that update either automatically or by sending a message to tell you that an update is available. The common ones are Windows, Antivirus and malware programs, Sun Java (a programming language used extensively on the internet), Adobe Flash and Shockwave (used for animations). They should always be updated. Windows offers a choice; of either automatic or manual installation. Windows update sometimes offers updates for drivers on your machine. You are advised to reject this. The principle “If it aint broke don’t fix it” applies here and if it is broken go to the manufacturers site. The preferred update setting is **Download updates but let me choose whether to install them**.

To find this option go to **Control Panel/Windows Update/Change Settings**.