



OTTAWA

PC NEWS

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ARTICLE

Setting Up a New Computer – Backup, Update, Repeat... by Alan German and Chris Taylor

In the first article in this series, we showed how to perform the initial setup of a new computer. The next tasks are to ensure that the Windows operating system is fully up to date, and to create a comprehensive set of system backups, but not necessarily in that order!

Disk Imaging

Our first suggestion is to download and install your favourite disk imaging software* and make a full system backup to an external USB drive. Create a new folder on the USB drive and give it a name such as *ModelNo_Backups* (where ModelNo is the identifier for your new computer.) Save the disk image to a file named *ModelNo_AsReceived.xxxx* (where the file extension will be determined by the imaging software).

We know that, since we have already installed the imaging software, this backup isn't quite "as received" but it's as close as we can get without some fancier footwork, and it's certainly close enough for our purposes.

We now have a full system backup image that we can restore should anything go wrong with the next steps. In particular, this backup will restore all the initial setup procedures that we spent considerable time and effort implementing! So, now it's time to move on and ensure that the operating system is fully up to date.

*** If you don't have a current favourite disk imager, Alan and Chris suggest trying either *Macrium Reflect Free Edition* or *Easus ToDo Backup Free* which are the programs that they use.**

Windows Update

It's practically certain that the version of Windows that comes with a new computer, and certainly the software provided on any installation DVD, will not be up to date. Windows will have been installed on the computer and/or copied to an installation disk quite some time ago and, given that patches for the operating system are issued monthly (at a minimum), updates will likely be available and these should now be installed.

By navigating to *Start – Settings (the gear wheel icon) – Update & Security*, Windows Update will scan the operating system and list any pending updates. Click on the *"Install Now"* button and be patient while the update process runs to completion. Even if a message now indicates that *"You're up to date"*, press the *"Check for updates"* button to determine if any of the updates trigger any further updates. Yes, it is sometimes necessary to check for updates several times until the check returns *"You're up to date"* two times in a row and you can have confidence that this is indeed the case.

Remove Bloatware

Most new computers come with at least a few pieces of "free" software that are bundled by the manufacturer but do not necessarily provide advantages to the end user. Of particular note are limited-time (usually 30-day) trials of software that requires some form of purchase for continued use after the trial period expires. Typical offerings include anti-virus programs with annual subscription fees. Such programs can be readily discarded as Microsoft Defender, that is built in to Windows and is free to use, provides more than adequate malware protection and an Internet firewall.

To remove any unwanted software, navigate to *Start – Settings - Apps*. The *Apps & features* section will list all the installed program. Click on any item that is not required. Select *Uninstall*, follow the prompts, and the selected software will be removed from the system.

(Continued on page 7)

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Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, June 9th, 2021**

Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 9th, 2021

Topic: [Origins of EdTech](#)

Speaker: Mariana Ludmila Cortés, CEO, One Laptop Per Child

The term EdTech has become commonplace, particularly in recent years when digital technology is more available to children. Few people know its history and how it originated. Did you know that AI, the Maker Movement, the use of computers for education, and educational robotics have the same origin? How are these things related to learning beyond schooling, to philosophy, to Mathematics and Cognitive Science?

This presentation will expose the origins of educational technology and what was the vision of its impact on the world. Have we achieve this or are we far from what the original intention was? Mariana Ludmila, CEO of One Laptop per Child, will share the origins of this term and more.

Mariana Ludmila Cortés is the CEO of One Laptop Per Child, a non-profit organization which has provided more than 3 million laptops to children in developing countries. She has been nominated for the Excellent in Positive Change award by Global Thinkers Forum and is the founder of Edularity, a global hub of experts and researchers of knowledge, seeking a paradigm shift in traditional education.

This meeting will be via Zoom video conference.
([instructions for using Zoom](#))

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

The above link includes the meeting ID and password. However, if you are prompted for the information, use:

Meeting ID: **924 9556 0898**

Password: **opcug**

There will be a Q&A session after the regular meeting at approximately 9 pm and on the same video conference.

Coming Up...

September 8th

Topic: Members' Favourites

Speakers: Members of the Ottawa PC Users' Group

The best presentation given by a club member (BOD members are excluded) will win a 2TB portable USB drive! The winner will be the "people's favourite" as determined by a real-time, online poll. [\[more...\]](#)

October 13th

Topic: History of the Digital Revolution

Speaker: Bob Walker, OPCUG

We'll have a look at the development and evolution of personal computers, the internet, email, social media, smartphones, e-commerce, digital cameras and more. [\[more...\]](#)

November 10th

Topic: Astronomy

Speaker: Tim Cole and Andrea Girones, Royal Astronomical Society

There is no magic security bullet, no single protection against others trying to scam you, ransomware you, or steal your identity. What you can do is what people do in the winter: put on layers. [\[more...\]](#)

December 8th

Topic: Security Layers

Speaker: Tom Trottier, OPCUG

There is no magic security bullet, no single protection against others trying to scam you, ransomware you, or steal your identity. What you can do is what people do in the winter: put on layers. [\[more...\]](#)

January 12th, 2022

Topic: Encryption 101

Speaker: Stephane Richard, OPCUG

If you are using a computer and the internet, you are using cryptography. This presentation provides a basic introduction to cryptography. It covers the definitions of the terms used in cryptography and basic cryptographic processes. [\[more...\]](#)

This is the last regular meeting until September, but our [weekly Q&A sessions](#) will continue until further notice, so keep tuning in!

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

2021 CALENDAR

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

CLUB LIFE



Speakers Wanted!

The club's meeting programme has been set until the end of the current "season" (June, 2021). We are now looking to the fall and the cupboard is bare. Topics on any aspect of computing are required – and speakers to give presentation on those topics!

What sorts of issues would you like to hear about this fall at our regular monthly meetings and the weekly Q&A sessions? The club's Board of Directors welcomes all your suggestions.

Also, do you know of any individual or group who would be prepared to make a presentation to our club? Identifying speakers is challenging for the small team of individuals who work

to bring the meeting programme to you. Any assistance that you can offer in this regard would be doubly welcome.

Perhaps you have a specific computing interest that other club members would find informative, useful, and/or entertaining. Do you run a local area network on your home system? Does it include a NAS component? These are two topics that have been suggested previously but ones for which the Board has been unable to identify a speaker. Have you undertaken any on-line learning? Have you found an on-line course or a source of useful tutorials on any interesting subject?

LAN, NAS, and on-line learning are all examples of the types of presentations that members would like to see, and which many members are capable of providing. But, we are also interested in your specific ideas and contributions. So, why not volunteer your ideas, your contacts, your knowledge and expertise, and assist the Board in developing a fabulous fall meeting programme?

Your contribution can be a suggestion for a specific topic, the offer of a full presentation at a monthly meeting; a 15-30 minute presentation at a Q&A session or members' favourites night (see *My favourite whatchamacallit* at right); or simply speaking to a couple of slides at Q&A.

To provide your suggestions and offers of presentations, or to ask for any further information that you may require, send a message to SuggestionBox@opcug.ca.

My favourite whatchamacallit

Have you noticed that presentations at Members' Favourites' nights are almost exclusively given by Board members? We want to change this by re-activating an idea from a year ago - with a twist! We have scheduled a Members' Favourites' night for September, 2021. At this meeting we will offer a 2TB portable USB drive as the prize for the member giving the best presentation. (Current members of the Board of Directors will not be eligible for the prize.) A real-time poll over Zoom will allow all those present to cast their vote for the members' favourite!

You have lots of time to consider your topic of choice, sharpen your thesis on the issues involved, and create your presentation masterpiece with which to wow the crowd. So start planning your presentation today. September 8 - and a possible external USB drive - beckon!

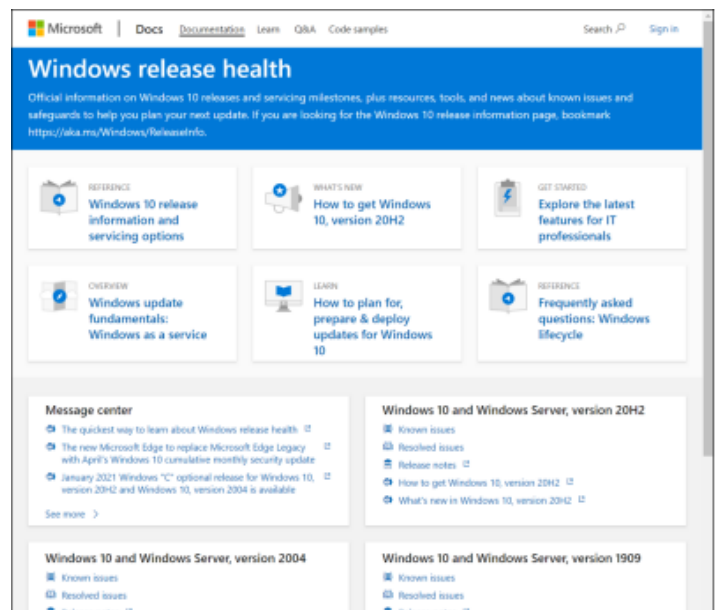


Quick Tip 29: Windows release health

by Chris Taylor

Microsoft has created *Windows release health* to bring a lot of important information about Windows 10 to a single place. The portal includes useful details on things like known issues, release notes, how to get the latest version, end of service dates, latest features, resources, and more.

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-gb/windows/release-health/>



REVIEW

Tracking eWalk-Abouts

by Alan German

Do you regularly walk around the block or several different blocks? Would you like to know how far you have travelled, how long it takes, and perhaps record the route that you took? All these are possible if you own a smartphone. All you need is an app.

But, that's where the problems start. Most of the route tracking apps are for runners, cyclists or hikers and these hyperactive people all seem to want to share their prowess with the world. Or, at least, most of the apps insist on sharing the data with other users or with the app's developer. It's difficult to find an app that doesn't require you to upload the data to a web server somewhere, or register on some website or other in order to actually use the software.

However, there is at least one app that allows you to simply use the on-board GPS system in the phone to record information. The basic version of Walkmeter, from Abvio Inc, is one such app. Of course, you can share your data with friends over Twitter, upload the information to Strava, or make use of several other platforms, but these features are entirely optional (and may require purchasing the paid version).

For those of us who just want to know how far we walked and how long it took, the basic version of Walkmeter is just fine.

Recording the route uses the phone's GPS in conjunction with Google Maps. If you don't have a data plan (or don't want to use it), you can connect to the Internet over your home's Wi-Fi, establish the location where you intend to walk, and view the map in Walkmeter's main screen. The GPS will indicate your initial position, so press Start and off you go!

Once you complete your walk and press Stop, Walkmeter will display the time taken, distance travelled, your pace (minutes/km), and the number of calories expended. Switching to the map view shows your route overlaid on a local street map.

One oddity in the reporting system in my view is the "speed" measurement that is expressed in minutes per kilometre. Perhaps it's just me, but this sounds like km/l for an individual who grew up on mpg. Of course, it's pretty easy to convert the data into a "real" speed. For example, 1.67 km in 28 minutes and 14 seconds gives an average speed of 5.6 km/h.

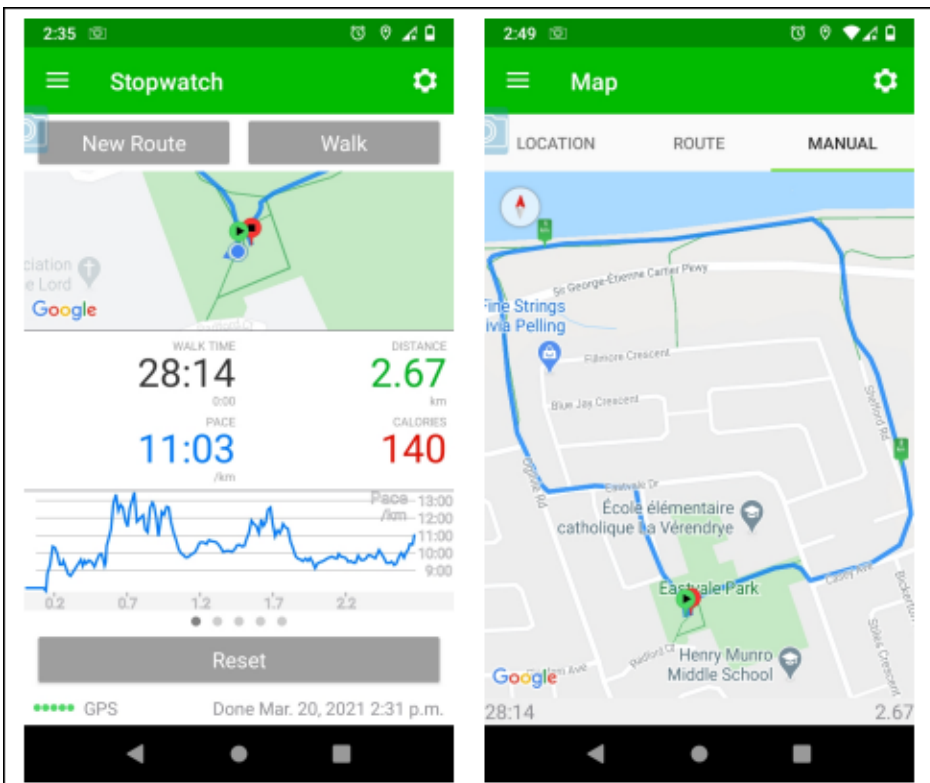
For those who want more from this type of app, Walkmeter has a number of other features. There are graphs with timelines for pace, elevation, and calories; the ability to export data in GPS exchange format or CSV; split and lap times, historical records, and much more. But, for mere mortals, time, distance, and a route map should be perfectly adequate.

Bottom Line

Walkmeter GPS Pedometer - Walking, Running, Hiking (Freeware)
Version 1.1.09
Abvio Inc.



<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.abvio.meter.walk>



THROUGH THE LENS

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

Say Cheese! How to take better people pictures

by Lynda Buske

There is no doubt that taking photos of people can be challenging so here are some tips that I have found to be helpful.

Shooting strangers

Having a few locals (and even tourists) in your travel photos can add a lot of richness and context. Besides, we all like looking at other people...it's human nature.

The safest way to shoot strangers is from behind or with indistinguishable faces. I would especially recommend this with children when you do not have parental permission. The additional advantage to shooting behind is your eye goes past the person and through to the end of the photo. Therefore, this technique is useful even when photographing people you do know.

For shop owners, artisans or anyone else who is dependent on tourist dollars, I typically offer a small amount of money or buy something from their shop. People are then amazingly cooperative to pose or move so you can get a great shot. If I haven't asked for permission, I take a few shots quickly and move before I'm notice. Removing the sound from your camera can help in this situation. In most instances I will shoot wide so it looks like I'm taking the general scene, then crop later to the individual.



Consider black and white.

Often colours can detract from the areas of greatest interest. The distracting colours below draw us away from the man's face and the fish. It was not my intention to have your eye go to his yellow hat or orange belt before his face, but it probably did. I think it works better in black and white.



Family events

If you are asked to take pictures at a family event, I recommend that you team up with someone. It is difficult to pose people, get them relaxed and also be thinking of which camera settings would work best in a particular lighting situation. When Chris and I did two family weddings, I posed the people and he took most of the photos.

Shooting children is probably easiest outdoors where they have the freedom to move around and you have enough light to catch the action. If you have to a more formal pose, the best way to get a natural looking smile is to make them laugh. Doing or saying goofy things may work such as poking fun at their parents.

Look for triangles when posing a single person either standing or seated. Angle the body and move a leg forward or back, reposition an arm, etc.



(Continued on page 6)

Say Cheese! *(Continued from page 5)*

Group shots

With the exception of perhaps a bride, most people do not want to spend a lot of time posing so, if possible, scout out a site out beforehand and plan where best to position people based on light and traffic flow (i.e., keep away from the bar area). Check indoor and outdoor backgrounds for garbage cans, parking lots, signs, cars, etc. Outside it is best to find well lit areas that aren't in the direct sun to avoid harsh shadows cast by chins and noses. However, don't choose under a shady tree if there are shadows casting ugly black stripes across people's faces and bodies. Inside, an area with natural light is best but try not to have people backlit against a window. If it is unavoidable, underexpose a bit and adjust in photo editing later.

If you are in a living room or hotel lobby that has a couch, shoot from the corner to minimize the empty spaces between heads and fit more people in. Even standing, you can shoot from the edge of the group, rather than in front, to minimize gaps. If folk are facing the camera, have them angle their bodies and even tilt their heads slightly towards the next person.

Another tip is to place a group of people on stairs since much of our height differences are in the legs. For a really large group, you can climb on a ladder or go up to a second story and shoot down.



Crop tightly

When you are editing your pictures on your computer later, make sure the faces are well lit and crop tightly to see expressions clearly. Don't hesitate to chop off elbows or legs or even hair.



(Crop tightly cont'd)



Bad Photo

People looking in different directions, large gaps between some. Cluttered background. Neither full length nor cropped.



Better Photo

More coordination, smaller gaps, better cropping, easier to see expressions, less cluttered background.



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/>).

New Computer *(Continued from page 1)*

Another Backup Image

Now that Windows is fully patched, no doubt after multiple iterations, and any unwanted programs have been removed, this is a good time to make another full system backup. Using the disk imaging software, create a backup file named *ModelNo_23Apr21.xxx*. The date that is included in the file name will be associated with an entry in the maintenance log for the computer. (You did update the maintenance log with the system changes that were just made, didn't you?) We will see how this date tag is used shortly.

Anti-Virus Scan

Even though, to date, we have only been working with files added to the hard disk by the computer manufacturer and through Windows Update, it's good practice to run a scan of the entire system to ensure that no malware is present. Once we know that the system is clean, we can be reasonably assured that the on-access scanning implemented by Microsoft Defender will provide on-going protection.

To run Microsoft Defender, navigate to *Start - Windows Security - Virus & threat protection - Scan options - Full scan - Scan now*. The scan will likely take considerable time as there are hundreds of thousands of files to be checked. Eventually, perhaps after just a few minutes on a fast machine, the scan will complete and Defender will report that no problems were detected.

Install Favourite Programs

Now that we have completed the basic setup procedures for our new computer system, we can install any additional soft-

ware that meets our specific purposes (e.g. office suite, E-mail client). This is also a good time to check that the software is updated to the most-recent release.

Yet Another Backup

Now that our new system has been finalized it's wise to add further notes to the maintenance log and make yet another full system backup. Once again, we add the current date to the disk image file name (e.g. *ModelNo_24Apr21.xxx*). This will be the first "real" backup in our dedicated set of such image files.

If we run into a problem and have to recover the system using one of our backup disk images, usually we would restore the most recent image. There are a number of things to do to bring the system as up to date as possible. Firstly, the disk imaging software is used to restore the backup disk image. Then, Windows Update is run to install any recent patches to the operating system. The maintenance log is now consulted, using the relevant date entry, and any programs installed after the backup was made are re-installed. Similarly, updates to previously installed applications and other changes to the system are re-applied. Finally, the current backups of all personal data files are loaded onto or synchronized with the hard drive in order to bring the entire system up to date. (Note that the degree to which this can be achieved will depend on how frequently these data files have been backed up.)

Our new computer is now fully set up and ready to go. In the next article in this series we will discuss how to ensure that the operating system and the applications remain updated and how to manage an adequate set of backup disk images.



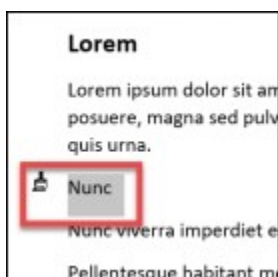
Quick Tip 30: Format Painter in Microsoft Office

by Chris Taylor

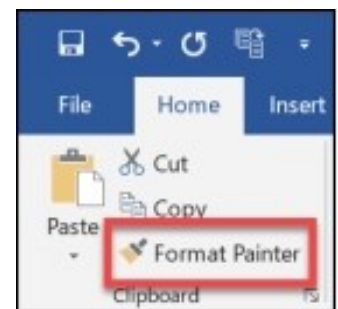
Format Painter, a tool on the *Home* tab of the ribbon in Microsoft Office programs, can copy the format from one part of a document to another. It works with text attributes (font face/size, bold, italics, etc.) as well as attributes such as borders for graphics, shapes and text boxes.

For text formatting, place the cursor within the text that has the formatting you want elsewhere. If you want to include paragraph formatting, select the entire paragraph including the paragraph mark. For graphics, select the object. Click the Format Painter icon. The mouse pointer will turn into a paintbrush.

Click and drag over the text or graphics where you want the formatting applied.



When you release the mouse button formatting is applied and Format Painter is turned off. To apply the same formatting to multiple objects, double-click the Format Painter icon. It will remain active until you hit the Esc key.



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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Q&A HAS GONE ON-LINE!

Because of the pandemic, the OPCUG is holding weekly Q&A sessions in Zoom video-conferences.

Join us every Wednesday at 7:30 pm to discuss computer issues. Questions (and answers) on any computer-related issue are welcome. Or, do you have a favourite computer program or topic that you would like to share with the group? Send your questions, answers, or the details of what you would like to share to: SuggestionBox@opcug.ca.

Everyone is welcome to attend Q&A sessions and to ask questions about their specific computer-related problems. Join us at: <https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting> (if you use the Zoom client, the meeting ID is **924 9556 0898** and the password is **opcug**).

