



# OTTAWA

# PC NEWS

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## ARTICLE

### Private Browsing: Is it all it's cracked up to be?

by Chris Taylor

For well over 10 years, web browsers have offered **private browsing**, designed to keep your browsing—well—private.



Google Chrome calls it an **Incognito window**, Firefox, Opera & Brave call it a **Private window**, Microsoft Edge calls it an **InPrivate window**. The easiest way to get there is to right-click the browser's icon on the taskbar and choose the appropriate **New...** item from the pop-up context menu.

When in a private browsing window, browsing history, cookies & site data (such as images and contents of webpages), and information entered in forms are not saved to your computer. Other users on your computer will not be able to see your web browsing activities. When browsing, web servers won't automatically recognize you as a returning user and you won't be automatically signed into websites.

When you close a private browsing window, the browser discards site data and cookies created during that

session. Note that you need to close the private browsing window to remove traces. Until you do, a simple click on the back button will return you to the previous page visited in that window.

Private browsing deactivates extensions. You can enable extensions in private browsing windows if you need them. For example, in Google Chrome click the kebab menu (⋮) at the top-right of the window. Choose **Settings**. Find the extension you want to allow in Incognito windows and click **Details** under that extension. Toggle on **Allow in Incognito**.

#### Private browsing not a panacea

It does not prevent all tracking. While websites do not have the luxury of using cookies to track you, there are many other means of tracking. For example, a web server can know your operating system, browser version, extensions you have loaded, screen resolution, IP address, and more. These data items can be used to fingerprint and track you.

Private browsing does not prevent ads. It does not prevent malware. It does not hide where you are browsing from your ISP or employer.

As Gizmodo reported in October 2022, *Even Google's Own Staff Thinks 'Incognito Mode' Isn't All It's Cracked Up to Be* - <https://gizmodo.com/google-incognito-mode-google-chrome-1849648071>

#### Where is private browsing useful?

If you are using a computer at a public kiosk, it will prevent the next person using the computer from easily seeing where and what you browsed.

If you use multiple accounts on a single website, a private browsing window can help you keep things separate.

If you are using another person's computer, it can be helpful in making it less likely you leave traces behind.

Strangely, I have encountered shopping sites that required private browsing for the checkout process to work properly. I guess they didn't want to sell things to me all that badly.

For more information about private browsing, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Private\\_browsing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Private_browsing).



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Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

# Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

## Celestial Shadows – Eclipses of the Sun and Moon

**Speaker:** Howard Simkover

Every couple of years, somewhere on the Earth, the Moon's shadow touches down and sweeps at supersonic speed across oceans and continents. People situated in the path of this celestial shadow experience the unforgettable sight of a total eclipse of the sun. While some ancient civilizations had a good understanding of solar eclipses, it was not until the early 18th Century that the date, time and trajectory of an eclipse could be calculated with reasonable precision. [\[more...\]](#)

Howard Simkover has a lifelong interest in astronomy, owns and uses several telescopes, and was a Producer–Lecturer with the Montreal Planetarium. He has lectured about astronomy at the Canada Museum of Science & Technology, and to groups in Ottawa and elsewhere both in person and via Zoom technology. In this highly visual presentation, he will offer some perspectives on solar and lunar eclipses, and will share some of his personal experiences of these phenomena.

This meeting will be via Zoom video conference.

Join us at <https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting>. The Zoom link will be live at 7:15 pm. The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.

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**

# Coming Up...

(click on blue links for full details)

## October 25

### Weekly Q&A Session

Members answer questions and share their insights and discoveries on computer issues in short presentations. Non-members are welcome to attend Q&A sessions and ask their own questions. There is no charge for this service.

## December 13

### Efficient YouTube Viewing: Tips & Shortcuts

**Speaker:** Bob Herres (OPCUG)

Join Bob for valuable insights on maximizing your YouTube experience, from shortcuts to personalized lists. Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your viewing efficiency!

## January 10

### Fraud 101: Beware of Scammers

**Speaker:** Constable Sébastien Lemay (OPS)

Cst. Sébastien Lemay from the Ottawa Police Service will be giving a presentation on how to spot fraud attempts and what to do if you fall victim to a fraudster. Please invite others to attend this important presentation.

## February 14

### Using ChatGPT to program in Python

**Speaker:** Tom Trottier (OPCUG)

Follow Tom as he tries to cajole ChatGPT into creating a python program to combine chat and caption transcripts together by time. This will be Tom's first Python program.

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

## 2023 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
Regular Monthly Meeting	Wednesday, November 8 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 pm via Zoom video conference: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting">https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting</a> To see all scheduled events, visit <a href="https://opcug.ca/#upcoming">https://opcug.ca/#upcoming</a>
Next Q&A Session	<a href="#">Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup></a>	Until further notice, Q&A sessions are no longer held after regular monthly meetings. Join us on all other Wednesdays for <a href="#">weekly Q&amp;A</a> .
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, November 8 <sup>th</sup>	Enjoy a cold brew or other beverage in the comfort of your home during the video conference.

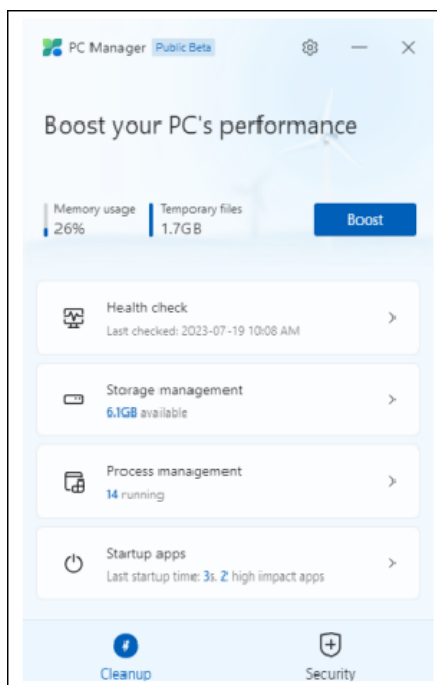
## PRODUCT REVIEW

# Computer Cleanup with PC Manager

by Alan German

At the Q&A session on November 2, 2022 ([https://opcug.ca/qa\\_recordings/20221102\\_PowerPoint.pdf](https://opcug.ca/qa_recordings/20221102_PowerPoint.pdf)), Chris Taylor presented a review of the features of Microsoft's PC Manager. Interestingly, one of Microsoft's promotional messages was that this software would provide a "one-click speed boost". So, when I was thinking about the possibilities of cleaning up – and perhaps speeding up – an old desktop computer, I decided to apply the tools available in the current version of PC Manager to see what might be achieved.

One thing to note is that, while PC Manager is free to download and install (<https://pcmanager.microsoft.com>), the program is still positioned as a beta release. This doesn't seem to affect the functionality of the software, but it does mean that there is little to no documentation of the various program features. There is no help menu and, consequently, users must rely on the names of the various menu items, and whatever brief textual descriptions are provided on screen.



Running the program brings up the main window which, in my case, indicates that there is 1.7 GB taken up by temporary files, the implication being that these files can be removed to free up disk space. Further, intuitively, it would appear that clicking on the big, blue *Boost* button would be the method by which this action could be accomplished. And, indeed, pressing this button results in messages indicating "Cleaned 1.7 GB of temporary files" and "Temporary files 0 KB".

However, the clean-up process took less than two seconds which seems overly optimistic for the deletion of 1.7 GB of files, especially considering that nothing ended up in the recycle bin. Nevertheless, viewing the properties of Drive C:, both before and after the cleanup process, showed an additional 1 GB of free space. In contrast, disk space that could be recovered using the Disk Cleanup utility went down by only 10 MB, with 76 MB is regular files, and 221 MB in system files, still nominally available for clean-up.

So, the actual modifications made by the boost process are unclear; however, there are several other options for the recovery of disk space. To see these we need to dive deeper into PC Manager's menu options. Note that there are categories for *Health check*, *Storage management*, *Process management*, and *Startup apps*. The two icons for *Cleanup* and *Security* are actually tabs where *Cleanup* loads the main program menu shown in the screenshot, and *Security* provides access to a second window with further options.

The *Health check* option displays disk space items that can be cleaned up by categories, e.g. Windows and browser caches, temporary files, etc. while *Storage management* offers a similar process, with a *Deep cleanup* option providing even more categories. Both of these options free up some space on the system disk but running Disk Cleanup is still necessary to recover the disk space available from this separate utility. The storage management screen also offers a *Manage large files* option to locate files

of 10 MB to 1+ GB and display these in File Explorer for review and possible deletion.

*Health check* also performs some form of system scan and displays information on viruses, "potential issues", and a list of startup apps with the option of disabling any that are deemed unnecessary. On my system, nothing was identified in the categories of viruses and potential issues so I have no idea what comprises the latter category.

Many of the remaining features of PC Manager are also available through other aspects of Windows itself. For example, *Storage management* has options for *Manage apps* that loads *Settings – Apps & features*, and *Storage sense* that loads *Settings – Storage – Configure Storage Sense*. Reviewing installed applications can be useful to identify software that is no longer required and so can be uninstalled to recover additional disk space. And, for some users, the ability of Storage Sense to monitor disk space, and automatically delete temporary files, subject to user-defined rules, can be a useful strategy.

The *Process management* menu option lists "unused" processes that can be ended to "make your system run faster". Review and use this list with caution as not all the entries are necessarily unused. For example, on my system, PC Manager listed both GlassWire and Microsoft Word as possibilities to be shutdown. Neither of these actions was advisable in my view. GlassWire is a software firewall providing real-time system protection, and closing Word would have prevented me from completing this article. (Of course, some readers might agree with PC Manager in the latter regard!)

The final option on the main menu is *Startup apps*. This is a strange option given that, on face value, it should be a repetition of the *Startup apps to disable* from the *Health check* menu. However, even stranger, there are some differences in the apps listed by the two options. It is not clear why this should be so.

(Continued on next page)

## Computer Cleanup *(Continued from previous page)*

The *Security* tab provides a new window with a number of additional options. A Scan button implements an immediate disk scan, using Windows Defender, over a range of locations, and reports the results (hopefully as “No threat found”.) *Windows Update* provides an opportunity to conduct an instant system update with a list of items that can be updated.

*Default Browser settings* offers to “Prevent other programs from modifying the default browser”. The *Change* menu offers to change the default browser to either Edge or Firefox so, if you are intent on using any other browser, this option is of no use. A similar option offers *Taskbar Repair* which can enable News & interests, Edge, and Microsoft Store on the taskbar. If, like me, you don’t use any of these items, and have knowingly disabled them, the option to reinstate the icons on the taskbar is not really welcome.

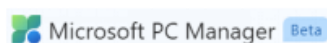
Finally, there is a *Pop-up Management* option that says it will “Block pop-up windows in apps”. Since the only pop-ups that concern me are those that appear in my web browser, and I already have a blocker in place to prevent these, I didn’t experiment with this PC Manager option. There are no details of what the option does other than the note on the menu screen.

So, my conclusions with regard to the beta version of PC Manager are that one can remove multiple files to free up disk space but it is still necessary to run Disk Cleanup to recover additional space. The option to locate large files, possibly buried deep in the file system, and forgotten about (my case!), can be very useful. Similarly, reviewing startup apps, and installed apps in general, can identify software that either doesn’t need to be loaded on bootup, or that is no longer used and can be deleted in order to recover more disk space. The links to Windows Defender and Windows Update are essentially redundant for most users who will have these packages running automatically. Similarly, the ability to retain Edge as the default browser, “repair” the taskbar, and block pop-ups may also be less than useful for many of us.

My bottom line was that by applying the various options to delete temporary files, and remove files and applications that were no longer required, recovered a total of 8 GB of disk space on my Windows system drive. In addition, the boot time on my 12-year-old desktop decreased from 27 to 19 seconds providing a 30% boost. So, while I could presumably have obtained the same results through the use of multiple operations, PC Manager provided a convenient mechanism for cleaning up my disk drive.

### Bottom Line

PC Manager (Freeware)  
Public Beta Version  
Microsoft Corporation  
<https://pcmanager.microsoft.com>

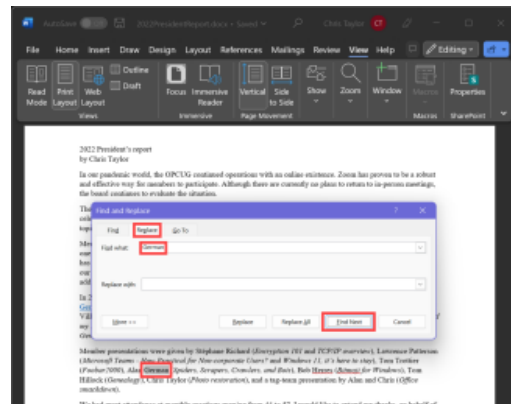


(PDF available at <https://opcug.ca/reviews/>)

## Quick Tip 57: Searching in Microsoft Word by Chris Taylor

In Word, pressing Ctrl-F used to bring up a small search window in the middle of the screen. At some point, Microsoft changed the behaviour of Ctrl-F: it now brings up a search pane on the left side of the screen. This typically ends up using quite a bit of screen real estate.

If you prefer the small search box, press Ctrl-H. The *Find and Replace* dialogue box will appear. The focus will be on the *Replace* tab but you don’t have to switch to the *Find* tab. Enter your search text and press the *Enter* key—*Find and Replace* defaults to *Find Next* rather than *Replace* (or click *Find Next* or press Alt-F). Keep pressing the *Enter* key to find subsequent instances of the search text.



## Nominations for OPCUG Board for 2024

Once a year, the OPCUG holds elections for the 9-member Board of Directors. We are once again coming up to this annual event.

We encourage all members to consider running for a board position or getting involved in some other manner in the operations of the OPCUG.

**We currently have two vacant positions: Meeting Coordinator and Public Relations.** The most pressing position is Meeting Coordinator. If you like our monthly meetings, please participate in the nomination process (you can nominate yourself!).

If you want more information about what is involved, please contact me or any current or past Board member. Names are listed on the back page of this newsletter and on the web site at <https://opcug.ca/executives/>.

Nominations can be submitted by sending an email to: [nominations@opcug.ca](mailto:nominations@opcug.ca).

Nominations must be received by midnight, December 31, 2023.

Please get involved. Help the OPCUG continue in its role of *Users helping users.*

Bob Herres  
Election Chair, 2024  
[Bob.Herres@opcug.ca](mailto:Bob.Herres@opcug.ca)



# THROUGH THE LENS

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

## Printing your photos

by Lynda Buske

**D**espite our digital world, it is really nice sometimes to print a photo that you can stick on your fridge, display on your wall or even frame and give as a gift. The main thing to remember is that there may be limitations in the print size for a digital image.

All digital cameras and cell phones have sufficient megapixels to provide the resolution for a 4x6 or 5x7 photo enlargement. Many would even have enough for much larger prints (e.g., 8x10 or 11x14). However, cropping in post-production will reduce your image dimensions.

The best starting point is to determine what a good quality home printer or commercial printer will provide. In most instances, the gold standard is 300 dpi (dots per inch) which you can equate to 300 pixels. That means, if you want to print an 8x10, the long side of your image, ideally, would be at least 3000 pixels (10x300). For 16x20, you would probably want the long side to have around 6000 pixels.

The table below provides a rough guideline for what is the maximum print size of good quality that you can expect based on the number of megapixels your camera has.

Camera resolution	File size at high resolution (pixels)	Max print size at 330 dpi
2 megapixels	1200 x 1600	4 x 5
3 megapixels	1536 x 2048	5 x 7
8 megapixels	2448 x 3264	8 x 10
10 megapixels	2592 x 3888	8 x 14
12 megapixels	2800 x 4000	8 x 14
16 megapixels	3264 x 4920	11 x 14
21 megapixels	3744 x 5616	12 x 18
24 megapixels	4000 x 6000	16 x 20

If you have a 24MP camera, then your images will probably be 6000x4000 pixels. This means you can do a lot of cropping before going under the 3000 pixel threshold. If you shoot with a 12 MP camera and then crop your images significantly, you may not be able to print an 8x10. But if your cropped image dimension is still around 1200x1600, based on the chart above, you could print a 4x6. Some older cell phones have only 5 or 6 megapixels so be careful when deciding what size to print. Unfortunately, many of the family pictures that we want to treasure are taken at social events with cell phones so get in close to minimize the need to crop. Unless you are sure your cell phone has an optical zoom on the camera, don't "zoom" with the finger spread as that is just cropping and hence losing resolution. Even if cell phones tout 20MP or 100MPs, almost all only output 12MP due to pixel binning [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pixel\\_binning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pixel_binning)].

The easiest way in the *Windows* environment to see the dimensions of your image is to go to *File Explorer* and right click on the photo. Then click on *Properties*, select the detail tab and find the dimensions below.

One final consideration when making prints is the viewing distance. If you print a 4x6, there is a good chance it will be held in your hand or in an album and hence very close to your discerning eye. If, on the other hand, you make an 11x14 print for your wall, it may never be viewed at less than a few feet and therefore the resolution does not have to be as good.

You may have to experiment as to which image dimensions produce an adequate enlargement for your viewing needs as well as which printing service provides the quality you want. My recommendation is to print one 8x10 as a test before committing to a company. When submitting digital photos online, many services will give you a warning if the resolution is not adequate for the print size you have requested.

I have found the quality of prints at Shutterfly and Photobook Canada to be very good but there are significant delivery fees. Staples on the other hand has the quality but no delivery fees if you pick it up at the store. However, it takes five business days. If you want a quick turn around of 4x6 prints, a place like Walmart is probably all you need.



# 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](mailto: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: Until further notice, all our events are via video conference.

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

## Mailing Address:

3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6

## Web address:

<https://opcug.ca>

## Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/opcug>

## Follow us on Twitter:

<https://www.twitter.com/opcug>

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## Q&A HAS GONE ON-LINE! WEEKLY!

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

Join us every Wednesday (except on regular monthly meeting nights) 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](mailto: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**).

# OPCUG



*Users helping users*  
for over 40 years