

10+ Chrome Tips for Incredibly Busy People

Please also see the associated [10+ IT Tips for Incredibly Busy People Google+ Community](#).

A web browser is the program you use to navigate and browse web pages. By far the best browsers to use are Google Chrome and Firefox ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾. The version of Internet Explorer available to us at the university (IE9) is no longer classed as a modern browser so should be avoided (as it doesn't render web pages correctly).

Google's Chrome browser is full of shortcuts, useful functions and tweaks that can save you time and improve your productivity. All you have to do is learn how to take full advantage of them. There are loads of great things you can do!

1. Installing Chrome



Google Chrome regularly comes out top in browser comparisons.

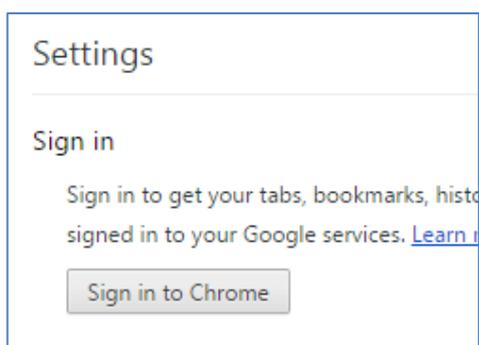
Chrome is very easy to install and takes less than 2 minutes.

You don't even need the IT helpdesk to do this. Do it yourself going to the below link (on any browser), and then following the instructions - www.google.com/chrome/browser/desktop/.

After installing Chrome, take the time to [import Favourites from your usual browser into Chrome](#).

Alternatively have a spring clean and start again from scratch.

2. Signing in to Chrome



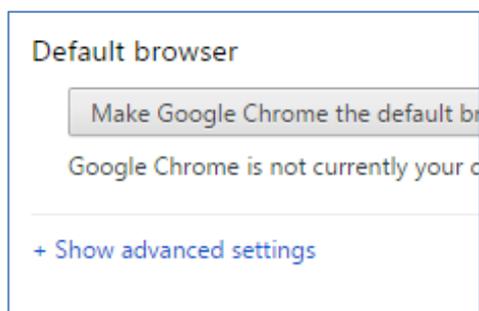
Sign into Chrome to access stored favourites and more on any computer

Access on *any* computer your usual favourites, bookmarks, history, extensions and settings.

Do this by signing into Chrome via the top right 'burger menu'  > Settings > Sign in to Chrome.

You will need a Google account. This is free and easy to set up. You could create a work one and keep it separate to any personal accounts too if you wanted.

3. Get to know what's available under Settings



Manage privacy settings and more with + Show advanced settings.

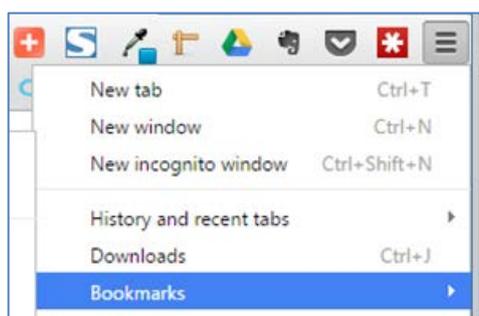
The top right menu is full of useful features and settings including opening new tabs, incognito mode, history and more.

Scroll down this menu and access the *Settings* section which is worth exploring and understanding more.

Within Settings, 'On start-up' lets you configure what pages to open when you first open Chrome.

Scroll to the bottom and click '+ Show advanced settings' to access Privacy settings (e.g. clear browsing history) or to manage passwords and form auto-fill.

4. Turning on the Bookmarks bar



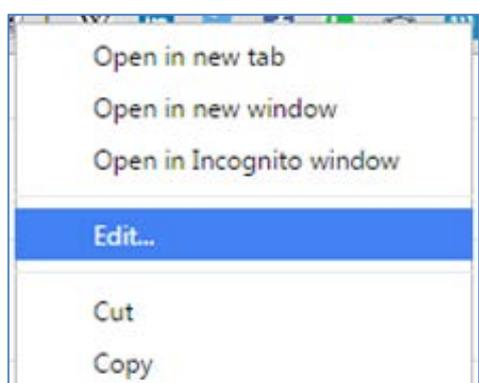
Press Ctrl+Shift+B to quickly turn your bookmarks bar on or off

Press Ctrl+Shift+B to quickly turn your bookmarks bar on or off. Alternatively click menu > Bookmarks > Show bookmarks bar.

Ctrl+Shift+0 further opens the bookmark Manager to add folders, delete, rename and move favourites.

The pop-out menu allows access to the Bookmarks Manager where you can fully edit all bookmarks. See the tip below for a few more tricks..

5. Adding bookmarks, renaming, dragging around, folders



In Chrome 'Bookmarks' and 'Favourites' are the same thing

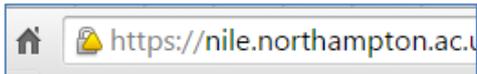
After adding bookmarks to your bookmarks bar, left click and hold to drag them around easily into a more manageable order. Or drag them into folders (first, right click on the bookmarks bar to create new folders).

Right click on any bookmark to edit and rename. You could even delete and leave the name completely blank, so that all that remains in your bookmarks bar is a row of icons. This way you can fit more in!

Eg.



6. Using the omnibox (joint address and search bar)

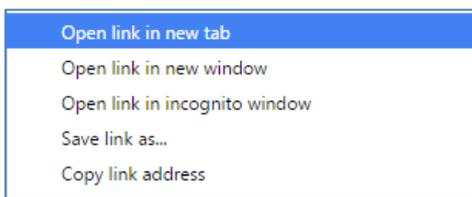


The Omnibox is a search bar, navigation bar and address bar all rolled into one.

The Omnibox shows both the current web page address and also operates as a search bar.

As you type in this box, suggestions from recent searches or visited websites will appear below. Choose from these results by clicking on them or using the directional keys on your keyboard.

7. Dragging tabs



Right click on any link on a web page to alternatively open the link in a new tab or a new window rather than using the same window all the time.

Tabbed browsing is now a major feature of all modern web browsers. Use these tabs to open up multiple web pages which you can then easily skip between should you need to.

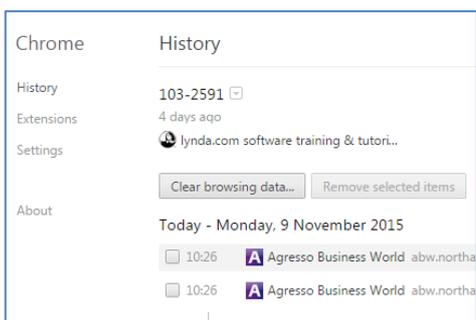
Ctrl+T opens a new blank tab, or alternatively click on the new tab shape in the top .

Ctrl+N opens a new blank tab but in a new window.

Alternatively, **right-click on any link within a web page to decide where to open that link** (for example in a new tab or a new window).

Drag tabs around so they're in a relevant sequence, or even to other screens, by left-clicking in the middle of the tab, holding and dragging away.

8. History and recent tabs

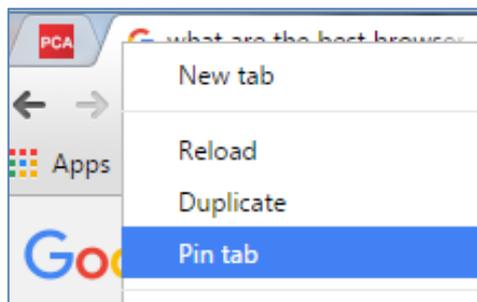


*Access your history in Chrome by using **Ctrl+h**.*

Closed a tab by mistake? Use *Ctrl+Shift+T* to open previous tabs (keep using to access older tabs). Alternatively download an extension to Chrome called 'Undo Closed Tabs' which offers far more options – see further below for an introduction to extensions.

Ctrl+H opens your history to see previous pages. Open a selection of sites by right-clicking on them and choosing to open them in new tabs. Or use the drop down option to remove sites from history.

9. Pinning Tabs



Pin tabs to the top so that they cannot be closed down by mistake.

Right click on the tab and select Pin tab. Un-pin using the same method.

Pinned tabs always float to the left. You can click and drag pinned tabs into any order you wish, but cannot mix them between normal tabs.

Pin your most regularly used tabs to Chrome so that you cannot close them by mistake.

10. Take note of the Status bar at the bottom of the screen



As you hover over any link on a web page, the address of that link is displayed in the bottom left-hand corner of the browser.

This identifies where the hyperlink goes to, i.e where exactly you will be visiting when you click on it. It's important for security and helps identify any unsound links, such as those used in phishing scams.

The status bar in the bottom left of the Chrome browser window (highlighted in orange above) identifies the target location for any hyperlink.

11. The Home button



For all UN staff, the home button default is to go to www.northampton.ac.uk/staff (the UN intranet).

So all the useful links contained within the intranet are never far away, including: Webmail, OASIS, Events, Staff Directory, ABW, the UN public website, Student Hub and more.

The home button accesses the UN intranet.

12. Chrome apps and extensions - lovely, lovely, lovely



You can greatly enhance the usefulness of Chrome by adding extensions and apps. Google 'Chrome web store' then visit both Apps and Extensions for more.

One of the big, BIG benefits of most modern browsers, including Chrome, is that you extend the functionality of them easily by installing either extensions (which alter the functionality of Chrome) or apps (where you actually install the 'app' but within Chrome— confusing as they're very similar!).

For example, want to be able to clip any web page to OneNote or Evernote? Then add the appropriate chrome 'web clipper' extension.

Want to be able to share any web page easily? Then add any number of sharing platforms to Chrome, like ShareThis or AddThis.

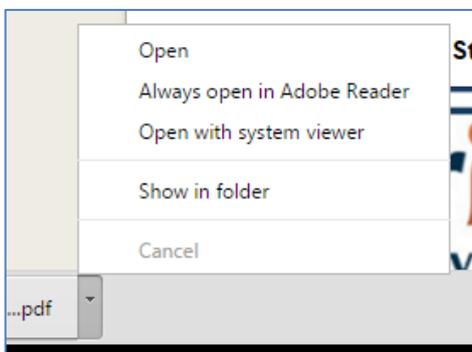
Want to be able to save an entire web page as a PDF? Then use the Save As PDF extension.

You name it...there will be a Chrome extension or app for it!

Most apps that you have on your smartphone will have either a Chrome extensions or allow you to install the App within Chrome. By adding them to Chrome on your work PC, you can work much more easily across devices, by syncing activity and much more.

Go to <https://chrome.google.com/webstore> to view all extensions and apps. Nearly all are free but as with everything, take time to read the details.

13. Downloads



Quickly access Chrome downloads using Ctrl+J

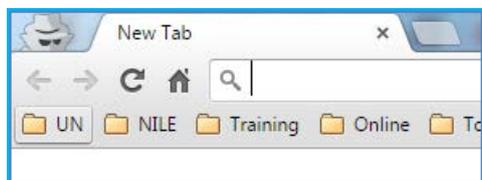
If you download a document on a web page, Chrome will ask where you want to save it to.

It will then show the downloaded file at the bottom of the browser. Click on the file icon to open the file, or use the menu to 'Show in folder', which then accesses the folder location via Windows Explorer.

If you 've closed this bottom bar by mistake and want to access a list of all files downloaded through Chrome, either:

- go to `chrome://downloads/`
- use the top right burger menu >> Downloads
- or use Ctrl+J

14. Incognito window



Going incognito doesn't hide your browsing from your employer, your internet service provider or the websites that you visit.

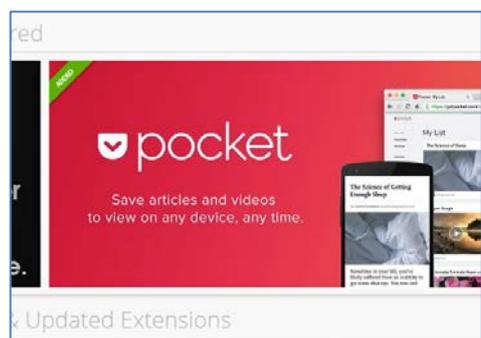
The incognito window has useful applications at work as it disallows a website from downloading temporary internet files such as cookies to your computer.

This is often very useful for online security – for example if you're accessing social media on a shared computer; it won't remember your login details and so won't accidentally allow another user to access your account after you've finished.

To open a tab in incognito mode, either:

- use the top right burger menu >> New Incognito Window
- or use Ctrl+Shift+N

15. Save page as



The Pocket extension has the benefit that any saved web page is synced and accessible across any device you log into

It may seem peculiar to want to save a webpage as an offline file, but you may have a future need – for example a disruption to your internet connection or when travelling.

You could save the page as an html file (via Ctrl+S) but this often is messy and creates a 'thicket' file where lots of linked files are saved separately.

Instead, either start using the app 'Pocket' or use a Chrome extension like 'Save As PDF'. Both are far simpler and have the same desired result.

The Pocket extension has the benefit that any saved web page is synced and accessible across any device you log into, such as a smartphone or tablet - great for reading content on long train journeys etc!

16. Using autofill

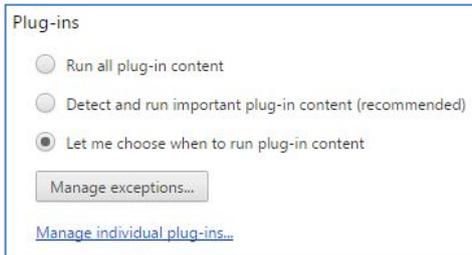


Use autofill to automatically populate address details etc

Save time when filling out forms by using Chrome Autofill. Autofill saves your information every time you fill out a form so the next time you're in a form, you'll see a drop-down list of options to choose from.

Access and edit autofill via chrome://settings/ and Manage Auto-fill settings under Passwords and Forms. Using Chrome to save passwords **is not** endorsed by IT. You could use a Chrome app like LastPass or 1Password instead.

17. Stopping content from auto playing



Stop videos and other Flash content from automatically playing

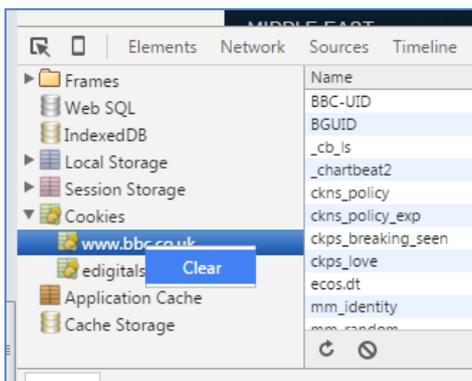
Sometimes it's really useful to stop videos and other Flash content from automatically playing when visiting a web page.

To do this type chrome://settings/content into Chrome's Omnibox (aka its address bar) OR go to Settings >> Privacy >> Content Settings, scroll down to the section labelled "Plug-ins," and select "Let me choose when to run plug-in content."

After this, any piece of multimedia content will appear as a greyed-out box until you click to activate it.

Be aware that this may cause issues with certain websites; you'll probably want to click the "Manage exceptions" button and whitelist sites that rely heavily on plug-ins to operate - YouTube, Vimeo, and Pandora, for instance - in order to avoid any unwanted behaviour.

18. Inspect Element



Delete single cookies using F12

On nearly any webpage you can press F12 to pull up the Chrome Developer Tools (DevTools for short). DevTools are used by web developers to see mark-up code and more (especially useful when right clicking on any web page element and selecting Inspect Element).

A useful general use function for the DevTools is that you can delete individual cookies, rather than having to wipe *all* cookies form the web browser.

Press F12, then on the 6th tab along 'Resources' open up the Cookies menu on the left, right click any cookie to then clear it.

References

1. (n.d.). *Best Browsers 2015: the top five candidates for your PC*. Retrieved from techradar: <http://www.techradar.com/news/software/applications/best-browser-which-should-you-be-using-932466>
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3. (n.d.). *Which is the best browser?: Chrome vs Firefox vs Internet Explorer*. Retrieved from IT PRO: <http://www.itpro.co.uk/web-browsers/24796/which-is-the-best-browser-chrome-vs-firefox-vs-internet-explorer-2>