BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Google Chrome

Everything it can do — and how it helps you — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for every Chrome user

Take your time — you can't break it

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(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For Chrome on computers, Android & iPhone · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to Google Chrome, the web browser on your computer and phone. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test. Every feature comes with what it does *for you*, plus slow, step-by-step directions. If a screen looks a little different on your device, the idea is still the same.

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PART 1

Getting Started with Chrome

What Chrome is, how to get the real one safely, how to make it your everyday browser, and a calm tour of the screen.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you use a computer or an Android phone, there's a very good chance you look at the internet through **Google Chrome** every single day. It's the window you read the news in, check the weather, pay a bill, and look at the grandkids' photos. Yet most people were never shown how it really works. They just started clicking.

I've spent 30+ years in professional technology work, and I now help folks right here in Portage County, Ohio, get comfortable with their computers and phones. Chrome comes up constantly: a pop-up that won't go away, text that's too small, a password that vanished, a strange message saying the computer is "infected." This guide gathers the answers in one place, in plain English.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this guide does for you

It shows you how to find your way around Chrome, keep your favorite sites one click away, make pages easier to read, let Chrome remember passwords safely, and, most important, spot and shut down the tricks scammers use inside a web browser. Every chapter says what a feature does *for you*, then walks you through it slowly.

Who this guide is for

- Anyone using Chrome on a **Windows computer, a Mac, or a Chromebook**.
- Anyone using Chrome on an **Android phone or tablet**, or an **iPhone or iPad**. Where the phone version is different, I'll say so.
- Family members helping a parent or grandparent who'd like a friendly reference to share.

The big promise: you almost can't break it

Clicking around Chrome's menus won't hurt your computer. Close a tab by accident and you can bring it back. Change a setting and you can change it back. I'll be honest about the few places where care really matters: deleting saved passwords, exporting them to a file, the "Allow" button on notification requests, and anything a website asks you to download or install. Those get a clear warning box when we reach them.

TIP

Read in any order

There's no test and no need to go front to back. Start with Chapter 5, *A Tour of the Chrome Screen* if Chrome still feels unfamiliar, or jump straight to Chapter 28, *Stopping Notification Spam* if pop-up ads are driving you up the wall.

You're never stuck alone

If something on your screen doesn't match what's written here, or you'd simply rather have someone walk you through it, call or text me at **(330) 200-8042**. Menus do change from time to time, and that's exactly the kind of thing I sort out every day.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Chrome Is, and Which One You Have

A **web browser** is the program you use to visit websites. Chrome is Google's browser, and it's free. Other browsers you may have heard of are Microsoft Edge (built into Windows), Safari (built into Apple devices) and Firefox. They all show the same internet. Chrome is simply the one many people choose, and it comes already installed on Android phones and Chromebooks.

Chrome on each kind of device

Device	What's different
Windows computer	You install it yourself from google.com/chrome. It needs Windows 10 or later.
Mac	You install it yourself from google.com/chrome. It needs macOS 13 Ventura or later.
Chromebook	Chrome is built in. The whole computer is designed around it, and it updates along with the computer.
Android phone or tablet	Usually already installed. The menus sit at the top or bottom right, behind three dots.
iPhone or iPad	A free app from the App Store. It uses Google's menus and your Google Account but runs on Apple's built-in web engine, and it doesn't take add-on extensions.

Words you'll see in this guide

Word	What it means
Tab	One web page inside the Chrome window. You can have many tabs open, like folders in a drawer.
Address bar	The long box at the top where you type a website's name or a search.
More menu	The three dots, usually at the top right. Nearly every setting starts here.
Google Account	Your Google sign-in (often your Gmail address). Chrome can save your bookmarks and passwords to it.
Extension	A small add-on program for Chrome on a computer. Helpful ones exist; harmful ones do too.
Site	Short for website, like weather.gov or your bank's site.

GOOD TO KNOW

Phone menus look a little different

On a computer you *click*; on a phone you *tap*. On Android the three dots are usually at the top right; on an iPhone they're at the bottom right. The names of the settings are mostly the same, so once you know one, you can find your way on the other.

TIP

Not sure which browser you're using?

Look at the very top of the window or the icon you clicked to open it. Chrome's icon is a round circle of red, yellow and green around a blue center. If yours is a blue-green swirl, that's Microsoft Edge; a blue compass is Safari. Much of this guide's safety advice still applies to them.

CHAPTER 3

Getting the Real Chrome (and Avoiding Fakes)

Chrome is free, and there is exactly one safe place to download it for a computer: **google.com/chrome**. Scammers know people search for "download Chrome," so they buy ads and build look-alike pages that hand out a booby-trapped installer instead. Going straight to the real address avoids all of that.

SCAM ALERT

Fake "download Chrome" pages and "update your browser" pop-ups

Never install Chrome from an ad, an email, a pop-up or a link someone sends you. Real Chrome never costs money, never asks for a credit card, and never needs a "technician" to install it. A website that suddenly says your browser is out of date and offers a download is a trap. Chrome updates itself from inside Chrome (see Chapter 34, *Keeping Chrome Up to Date*).

To install Chrome on a Windows computer

1. Open the browser you have now (often Microsoft Edge) and type **google.com/chrome** into the box at the top. Press **Enter**.
2. Click **Download Chrome**.
3. If Windows asks "Do you want to run this file?" click **Run**.
4. If it asks "Do you want to allow this app to make changes to your device?" click **Yes**.
5. Wait a minute. A Chrome window opens when it's finished.

To install Chrome on a Mac

1. In Safari, go to **google.com/chrome** and click **Download Chrome**.
2. Open the downloaded file called **googlechrome.dmg**.
3. In the window that opens, drag the Chrome icon into the **Applications** folder. Your Mac may ask for your computer password.
4. Open Chrome from your Applications folder or Launchpad.
5. In Finder's sidebar, click the **Eject** button next to "Chrome" to tidy up.

On a phone

On Android, Chrome is normally already there. If it isn't, get it from the **Google Play Store**. On an iPhone or iPad, get it from the **App Store**; look for "Google Chrome" made by **Google LLC**. Ignore look-alike apps from other makers.

GOOD TO KNOW

Chromebooks don't need an install

On a Chromebook, Chrome is part of the computer itself. There's nothing to download, and you can't remove it. Bill's separate Chromebook guide covers the rest of that computer.

CHAPTER 4

Making Chrome Your Default Browser

Your **default browser** is the one that opens when you click a link in an email or a document. If you like Chrome, making it the default means links always open where your bookmarks and saved passwords are. If you'd rather keep a different browser, that's fine too. Nothing breaks either way.

On a Windows 11 computer

Windows handles this in its own Settings, not inside Chrome.

1. Click **Start**, then **Settings**.
2. Click **Apps**, then **Default apps**.
3. Under "Set defaults for applications," type **Chrome** in the search box and click **Google Chrome**.
4. Next to "Make Google Chrome your default browser," click **Set default**.

On a Mac

1. Open Chrome and click the three dots at the top right (the **More** menu), then **Settings**.
2. Find the section called **Default browser**.
3. Click **Make default**. If there's no button, Chrome is already your default.
4. If your Mac asks you to confirm the change, choose the option that keeps Chrome.

On a phone

On an **Android** phone, the choice lives in the phone's own Settings app under the default apps section; the exact wording differs between Samsung, Pixel and other phones. On an **iPhone**, open the Settings app, find **Chrome** in the list of apps, and look for **Default Browser App**.

HEADS UP

Pop-ups begging you to switch

Windows and other browsers sometimes show messages urging you to switch back to them. You can simply close those. Your choice stays your choice. A message from a website (not your computer) that says you "must" install a different browser to continue is a red flag.

CHAPTER 5

A Tour of the Chrome Screen

Chrome keeps its screen simple on purpose, so it's easy to miss what each part does. Here's the layout on a computer, from the top down.

Part of the screen	What it does
Tab strip (very top)	Each open page has a little tab with its name. Click a tab to switch to it. The **X** on a tab closes it. The **+** opens a new tab.
Back and Forward arrows	Go back to the page you were just on, or forward again.
Reload (circle arrow)	Loads the page fresh. Handy when something looks stuck.
Address bar	Shows where you are. Type here to search or to go to a site.
View site information	The small icon at the left end of the address bar. Click it to see a site's permissions, like notifications or your location.
Star	At the right end of the address bar. Click it to bookmark the page.
Profile picture	Shows which Google Account (if any) is signed in to Chrome.
Three dots (More)	The main menu: new windows, history, downloads, bookmarks, passwords, Settings, Help.

The More menu: where nearly everything lives

When this guide says **More > Settings**, it means: click the three dots at the top right, then click **Settings** in the list. Inside Settings, the sections run down the left side, such as **Autofill and passwords**, **Privacy and security**, **Performance**, **Appearance** and **Default browser**. You can also type a word into the **Search settings** box at the top.

TIP

A colored button near the three dots

Sometimes a small colored button appears near the top right, such as one that says **Update**. That's Chrome telling you something needs attention. It's safe to click, because it comes from Chrome itself, not from a website.

The side panel

Some tools open in a panel along the side of the window instead of a new page: your Reading list, Reading mode, and Gemini in Chrome among them. Close the panel with its **X** whenever you like.

HEADS UP

Trust the top of the window, not the middle

Chrome's own buttons and messages sit in the top strip, above the page. Anything inside the page itself, however official it looks, comes from the website. A "Chrome security alert" drawn in the middle of a page is just a picture on a website. See Chapter 29, *Pop-ups, Redirects and Fake Virus Warnings*.

CHAPTER 6

The Address Bar: Searching and Going Places

Chrome's address bar does two jobs. Type a website's address, like **weather.gov**, and press **Enter** to go there. Type a question or a few words, like **pharmacy hours near me**, and Chrome searches for you. There's no separate search box to hunt for.

To search or visit a site

1. Click once inside the address bar at the top. The current address turns blue (selected).
2. Start typing. Whatever was there is replaced.
3. As you type, Chrome shows suggestions underneath. Click one, or just press **Enter**.

Handy shortcuts you can type

Type this	What happens
@bookmarks	Type this, press the space bar, then a word to search only your bookmarks.
@history	Search only the sites you've visited before.
Delete browsing data	Type the words and Chrome offers a button that takes you straight there.

SCAM ALERT

Look-alike addresses

Scammers register addresses one letter off from the real thing, like an extra letter in a bank's name or ".co" instead of ".com." For your bank, Medicare or Social Security, type the address carefully yourself or use a bookmark you made (see Chapter 9, *Bookmarks and the Bookmarks Bar*). Be wary of the first results marked **Sponsored**, which are ads, when searching for a company's phone number.

TIP

Search results that say "Sponsored"

Ads appear at the top of search results with the word Sponsored. Some are fine, but fake "customer service" numbers often hide there. For a company's phone number, use the one on your bill, your card, or the company's own website.

GOOD TO KNOW

AI answers may appear too

Google search sometimes shows an AI-written summary at the top of results. It can be handy, but it can also be wrong. For anything about your health, money or safety, click through to a trusted source.

PART 2

Everyday Browsing

Tabs, bookmarks, history, bigger text and easier reading: the everyday tools that make Chrome comfortable.

CHAPTER 7

Tabs: Open, Close, and Bring Back

Tabs let you keep several pages open at once, say your email, a recipe and the weather, and flip between them without losing your place. Each tab is a separate page sitting in the same Chrome window.

The everyday tab moves

I want to…	Do this
Open a new tab	Click the **+** at the end of the tabs, or press **Ctrl+T** (Mac: **Cmd+T**).
Switch tabs	Click the tab you want.
Close a tab	Click the **X** on the tab, or press **Ctrl+W** (Mac: **Cmd+W**).
Bring back a tab you closed	Press **Ctrl+Shift+T** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+T**). Press it again to reopen the one before that, in the order they were closed.
Find one tab among many	Press **Ctrl+Shift+A** to search your open tabs by name.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

The "oops" button

Ctrl+Shift+T is the single most comforting shortcut in Chrome. Closed the tab with your half-typed message or the article you were reading? Press it and the page comes right back.

Without the keyboard

You can also find recently closed pages by clicking **More > History**. The top of that menu lists pages and windows you closed recently; click one to reopen it.

On a phone

On Android and iPhone, tap the small square with a number in it (the **tab switcher**) to see all your tabs as cards. Tap a card to open it, or tap its **X** to close it. Tap **+** for a new tab. If you close one by mistake, Chrome usually shows an **Undo** button for a few seconds.

TIP

Too many tabs is normal

Lots of people collect dozens of tabs. It doesn't hurt anything, though it can slow an older computer. If Chrome feels sluggish, see Chapter 35, *When Chrome Is Slow or Crashing*.

CHAPTER 8

Tab Groups and Pinned Tabs

When you have a lot of tabs, two tools keep them tidy on a computer. **Pinning** shrinks a tab you always keep open, like email, into a small icon at the left. **Tab groups** gather related tabs together under a colored label, like "Trip to Florida" or "Medicare plans."

To pin a tab

1. Right-click the tab (on a Mac you can also hold Control and click).
2. Choose **Pin**. The tab shrinks to a small icon at the far left.
3. To undo it, right-click the pinned tab and choose **Unpin**.

To make a tab group

1. Right-click a tab you want in the group.
2. Choose **Add tab to group**, then **New group**.
3. Type a name for the group and pick a color. Press **Enter**.
4. To add another tab, right-click it, choose **Add tab to group**, then pick your group's name.
5. Click the group's name or colored circle to fold its tabs away. Click again to open them back up.

Closing versus deleting a group

Right-click a group's name for more choices. **Close group** puts it away but keeps it saved, so you can reopen it later from **More > Tab groups**. **Delete group** removes it for good. **Ungroup** leaves the tabs open but removes the label.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A saved project, one click away

A closed tab group is like a folder of web pages you can reopen anytime. Planning a trip or comparing insurance plans over a few weeks? Put those pages in a group, close it when you're done for the day, and pick up right where you left off tomorrow.

GOOD TO KNOW

Groups can follow you

If you're signed in to Chrome with your Google Account and saving your history and tabs, your saved tab groups appear on your other computers too.

CHAPTER 9

Bookmarks and the Bookmarks Bar

A **bookmark** saves a website's address so you can return with one click, without remembering or retyping it. It's also one of the best scam defenses there is: a bookmark you made yourself to your bank always goes to the real bank.

To bookmark a page

1. Go to the page you want to save.
2. Click the **star** at the right end of the address bar (or press **Ctrl+D**; Mac: **Cmd+D**).
3. Give it a short name you'll recognize, like "My bank" or "Pharmacy."
4. Choose a folder. **Bookmarks bar** puts it in the strip just under the address bar.
5. Click **Done**.

To show the bookmarks bar

The bookmarks bar is a row of your favorite sites just under the address bar. To turn it on, click **More > Bookmarks and lists > Show bookmarks bar**, or press **Ctrl+Shift+B** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+B**).

To tidy up your bookmarks

1. Click **More > Bookmarks and lists > Bookmark Manager**.
2. Drag bookmarks up and down to reorder them, or into folders.
3. To rename or delete one, click the three dots next to it and choose **Edit** or **Delete**.

TIP

Your "safe list" of important sites

Take ten minutes to bookmark the real websites for your bank, credit card, pharmacy, Medicare, Social Security, and your email. From then on, use the bookmarks rather than searching. That one habit sidesteps most fake-website traps.

GOOD TO KNOW

On a phone

In Chrome on Android or iPhone, tap the three dots, then the **star** to bookmark the page you're on. Tap the three dots, then **Bookmarks**, to see them. If you're signed in, bookmarks from your computer show up on your phone too.

CHAPTER 10

Reading List and Saving Pages for Later

The **Reading list** is for articles you want to read once and then let go of, so your bookmarks don't fill up with one-time stories. Think of it as a "save for later" pile.

To add a page to your Reading list

1. Open the article.
2. Right-click its tab and choose **Add tab to reading list**. Or click **More > Bookmarks and lists > Reading list > Add tab to reading list**.

To read it later

1. Click **More > Bookmarks and lists > Reading list > Show reading list**.
2. Your list opens in the side panel. Click an item to open it.
3. Close the side panel with its **X** when you're done.

To keep a copy of a page on your computer

Sometimes you want a permanent copy, like an order confirmation or a recipe that might disappear. Click **More > Cast, save, and share > Save page as…** and choose where to put the file. You can also print the page to a PDF from **More > Print** by choosing **Save as PDF** as the printer.

> TIP
>
> **Reading list or bookmark?**
>
> Use a **bookmark** for places you'll visit again and again, like your bank or the library. Use the **Reading list** for a single article you want to get to this week.

CHAPTER 11

History: Finding a Page You Saw Before

Chrome keeps a list of the pages you've visited, so you can find that article you read last Tuesday even if you didn't bookmark it. Chrome keeps this history for about 90 days.

To look through your history

1. Click **More > History > History**, or press **Ctrl+H** (Mac: **Cmd+Y**).
2. Scroll down the list, which is sorted by date with the newest first.
3. Or type a word in the **Search history** box at the top, like "recipe" or "Medicare."
4. Click any entry to open that page again.

To remove one entry

On the History page, click the three dots next to an item and choose **Remove from history**. To clear a whole stretch of time at once, see Chapter 12, *Delete Browsing Data (Clearing Your Tracks)*.

GOOD TO KNOW

History is private to you, mostly

Your history stays on your computer, and in your Google Account if you're signed in and saving history. Anyone who uses your computer under your Chrome profile can see it. If several people share the computer, give each their own profile (Chapter 19, *Profiles for Different People*).

TIP

Shortcut from the address bar

Type @**history**, press the space bar, then a word, and Chrome searches only the pages you've visited.

CHAPTER 12

Delete Browsing Data (Clearing Your Tracks)

What used to be called "Clear browsing data" is now called **Delete browsing data**. It lets you wipe your history, cookies, or Chrome's stored copies of pages. People use it for privacy, and it's also a common fix when a site acts strangely.

To delete browsing data on a computer

1. Click **More > Delete browsing data**, or press **Ctrl+Shift+Delete** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+Delete**).
2. Choose a time range, such as **Last hour** or **All time**.
3. Tick the boxes for what you want removed (see the table below).
4. Click **Delete data**.

Checkbox	What it removes
Browsing history	Removes the list of pages you visited and their shortcuts on the New Tab page.
Cookies and other site data	Removes the little files sites use to remember you. **This signs you out of most websites**, so have your passwords handy.
Cached images and files	Removes copies Chrome kept so pages load faster. Safe to delete; pages may load a little slower at first.
Download history	Removes the list of downloads. The files themselves stay on your computer.
Autofill form data	Removes saved form entries.

HEADS UP

It reaches your other devices

If you're signed in to Chrome and saving to your Google Account, deleting history here also removes it from your other devices and your account. Your saved passwords are **not** deleted here; they live in Google Password Manager (Chapter 20, *Google Password Manager*).

TIP

The gentle fix for a misbehaving site

If one website won't load right, try deleting just **Cached images and files** for **All time**. It doesn't sign you out of anything and often clears up the problem.

CHAPTER 13

Bigger Text and Zoom

If web pages are hard to read, you don't have to squint. Chrome can make everything bigger on one site, or make every site bigger at once.

To zoom in on the page you're on

I want to…	Do this
Zoom in	Press **Ctrl** and **+** (Mac: **Cmd** and **+**).
Zoom out	Press **Ctrl** and **-** (Mac: **Cmd** and **-**).
Back to normal	Press **Ctrl+0** (zero). Mac: **Cmd+0**.
Use the menu instead	Click **More**, then the **+** or **-** next to "Zoom."

Chrome remembers your zoom for each site, so your newspaper stays big next time you visit.

To make every site bigger

1. Click **More > Settings**.
2. On the left, click **Appearance**.
3. Next to **Page zoom**, choose a bigger size, like 125% or 150%.
4. Or next to **Font size**, choose **Large** or **Very large** to enlarge only the words.

TIP

Page zoom usually works better

Some websites won't let Chrome change only the font size. **Page zoom** enlarges everything, words and pictures together, and works on nearly every site.

GOOD TO KNOW

On a phone

On Android, open Chrome's **Settings** and look for **Accessibility** to set a default text size. On any phone, you can also spread two fingers apart on a page to zoom in.

CHAPTER 14

Reading Mode and Listen to This Page

Many web pages are cluttered with ads, menus and boxes that jump around. **Reading mode** shows just the article's words in a calm, clean panel where you choose the font, the size and the colors.

To use Reading mode on a computer

1. Open the article you want to read.
2. Click **More > More tools > Reading mode**.
3. The article's text appears in the side panel.
4. Use the toolbar at the top of the panel to change the **font**, **font size**, **color theme**, **line height** and **letter spacing**.
5. Like it? Choose **Pin to toolbar** so Reading mode is one click away next time.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Easier on the eyes

Large, dark text on a plain light background, with nothing flashing beside it, makes long articles much more comfortable. Try a dark color theme in the evening.

Listen to this page (Android)

On an Android phone or tablet, Chrome can read a web page out loud to you, which is handy for long articles or tired eyes.

1. Open the article in Chrome on your Android phone.
2. Tap the three dots, then **Listen to this page**.
3. A small player appears at the bottom. Use it to pause, skip, or change the speed and voice.
4. Keep listening while you switch to another app, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you don't see it

Listen to this page only shows on pages it can read, like articles. It needs the setting **Make searches and browsing better** turned on. Regular playback works in many languages; the newer, more natural-sounding "AI playback" is English only.

CHAPTER 15

More Comfortable Browsing: Captions, Alerts and Translation

Chrome has a few lesser-known settings that help with hearing, focus and language. None of them cost anything, and all of them can be switched off again.

Live Caption on a computer

Live Caption puts on-screen captions over videos and audio playing in Chrome, even when the website doesn't offer its own captions. It's found under **More > Settings > Accessibility**. Turn it on and a small caption box appears when sound plays.

GOOD TO KNOW

Captions are a best effort

Automatic captions are usually good but not perfect, especially with names, accents and background noise. They're processed on your own device.

Make the screen flash for notifications

If you might not hear a notification chime, Chrome on a computer can flash the screen instead.

1. Click **More > Settings**, then **Accessibility**.
2. Click **Audio and Captions**.
3. Turn on **Flash Notifications**. You can pick the flash color too.

Pages in another language

When you visit a page in a language you don't read, Chrome usually offers to **translate** it with a small box near the address bar. Click your language and the page is translated in place. It's handy for a relative's post or a recipe from abroad.

TIP

Keyboard lovers

For a full list of time-saving keys, see Chapter 16, *Handy Keyboard Shortcuts*.

CHAPTER 16

Handy Keyboard Shortcuts

You never *need* a shortcut; every one of these is also in a menu. But a few of them save a lot of reaching for the mouse. On a Mac, use the **Cmd** key where Windows uses **Ctrl**, except where noted.

What it does	Windows and Chromebook	Mac
New tab	Ctrl+T	Cmd+T
Close tab	Ctrl+W	Cmd+W
Reopen closed tab	Ctrl+Shift+T	Cmd+Shift+T
New Incognito window	Ctrl+Shift+N	Cmd+Shift+N
History	Ctrl+H	Cmd+Y
Downloads	Ctrl+J	Cmd+Shift+J
Bookmark this page	Ctrl+D	Cmd+D
Show or hide bookmarks bar	Ctrl+Shift+B	Cmd+Shift+B
Zoom in / out / reset	Ctrl and + / Ctrl and - / Ctrl+0	Cmd and + / Cmd and - / Cmd+0
Delete browsing data	Ctrl+Shift+Delete	Cmd+Shift+Delete
Search your open tabs	Ctrl+Shift+A	Cmd+Shift+A
Chrome Task Manager	Shift+Esc	(use the menu)

TIP

Pick just two

Don't try to learn all of these. Start with **Ctrl+Shift+T** (bring back a closed tab) and **Ctrl and +** (make it bigger). Those two solve the most everyday frustrations.

GOOD TO KNOW

Chromebook keyboards

Chromebooks use the same Ctrl shortcuts as Windows. Some keys look different, such as a search or launcher key where Caps Lock would be.

HEADS UP

Shortcuts some scam pages suggest

A web page that tells you to press a combination of keys, such as the Windows key and R, and then paste something is trying to get you to run a harmful command. Close the tab. Real companies never fix problems that way. See Chapter 29, *Pop-ups, Redirects and Fake Virus Warnings*.

CHAPTER 17

Chrome on Your Phone: Android and iPhone

Chrome on a phone does the same job as on a computer, squeezed onto a smaller screen. If you're signed in with the same Google Account, your bookmarks, saved passwords and open tabs can follow you from one to the other.

Where things are

What	Where to find it
Three dots (More)	Android: top right. iPhone: bottom right. Settings, history, bookmarks and downloads are in here.
Tab switcher	The small square with a number. Shows all your open tabs.
Address bar	Top of the screen on most phones. Some let you move it to the bottom.
New tab	Tap the tab switcher, then **+**.

Big differences to know

- **No extensions on phones.** Add-ons like ad blockers are a computer feature (Chapter 30, *Extensions: Helpful Add-ons and Bad Ones*).
- **Incognito** is called **Open in a new Incognito window** on Android phones and **New Incognito Tab** on iPhone (Chapter 31, *Incognito: What It Does and Doesn't Do*).
- **Notifications** from websites are a bigger nuisance on Android, where they look like regular phone alerts. See Chapter 28, *Stopping Notification Spam*.
- **Listen to this page** is an Android feature (Chapter 14, *Reading Mode and Listen to This Page*).
- On **iPhone**, Chrome can fill your saved passwords in other apps too, if you choose it as an AutoFill provider in the iPhone's Settings.

TIP

Phone text too small?

Spread two fingers apart on the page to zoom. On Android, Chrome's **Settings > Accessibility** has a text-size slider.

SCAM ALERT

Phone pop-ups that say you've "won"

On phones, scam pages often claim you've won a prize, that your phone has a virus, or that your battery is "damaged." Don't tap anything on the page. Just close the tab from the tab switcher.

PART 3

Your Account, Passwords & Autofill

Signing in, separate profiles for each person, and letting Chrome remember passwords and addresses safely.

CHAPTER 18

Signing In to Chrome and Your Google Account

You can use Chrome without signing in at all. But when you **sign in to Chrome** with your Google Account (the same one you use for Gmail or an Android phone), Chrome can save things like your bookmarks, passwords, history and autofill details to that account. Then they're waiting for you on your phone, a new computer, or after a repair.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Your browser, rescued

If your computer dies or you buy a new one, signing in to Chrome brings back your bookmarks and saved passwords in minutes. Without it, they're stuck on the old machine.

To sign in on a computer

1. Click your **profile picture** or the person-shaped icon at the top right of Chrome.
2. Choose the option to sign in, and enter your Google Account email and password.
3. Chrome asks what you'd like to save to your account. The choices it shows are safe to accept.
4. Your picture or initial now appears at the top right.

What gets saved, and where

When you're signed in, Chrome can store your data in your Google Account so it appears on every device where you sign in to Chrome. Your saved passwords are protected and can be viewed at **passwords.google.com** from any browser. You choose what's saved, and you can change your mind later in Chrome's Settings.

HEADS UP

Only on computers you own

Never sign in to Chrome with your Google Account on a library or hotel computer, or a friend's laptop. Your passwords and history would follow you onto it. Use a Guest window there instead (Chapter 19, *Profiles for Different People*), or Incognito (Chapter 31, *Incognito: What It Does and Doesn't Do*).

SCAM ALERT

"Verify your Google Account" emails

Google won't email or text you asking for your password or a verification code. If you're worried about your account, open Chrome yourself and go to **myaccount.google.com**. Bill's separate guide to your Google Account goes deeper.

CHAPTER 19

Profiles for Different People

If two people share one computer, Chrome **profiles** give each person their own Chrome: their own bookmarks, passwords, history and Google Account, all kept separate. It's like giving each person their own drawer.

To add a profile

1. Click your **profile picture** at the top right of Chrome.
2. Choose **Add Chrome profile** (or **Add**).
3. Sign in with the other person's Google Account, or continue without an account.
4. Pick a name and a color so you can tell the profiles apart at a glance.

To switch between profiles

Click the profile picture at the top right and choose the other person's name. Their Chrome opens in a separate window with their own colors. You can have both open at once.

Guest mode for visitors

When a visitor wants to check their email on your computer, open a **Guest** window from the same profile menu. They can browse without seeing your bookmarks or passwords, and Chrome forgets what they did when the Guest window closes.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

No more mixed-up accounts

Profiles end the "why is my husband's email open?" problem. Each person signs in once, and Chrome always opens the right email, the right bookmarks and the right passwords.

HEADS UP

Removing a profile removes its data on that computer

Deleting a profile erases its bookmarks, history and passwords *from that computer*. If the profile was signed in and saving to a Google Account, the account's copy is still safe.

CHAPTER 20

Google Password Manager

Chrome's built-in password keeper is called **Google Password Manager**. When you sign in to a website, Chrome offers to save the password. Next time, it fills it in for you. If you're signed in to Chrome, your passwords are saved to your Google Account and work on your other devices too.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Stronger passwords without memorizing them

The safest password is long, random and different for every site, which is impossible to remember. Letting Chrome remember them means you can use strong passwords everywhere without a sticky note on the monitor.

To save a password

1. Sign in to a website as you normally would.
2. Chrome shows a box asking whether to save the password.
3. Check the username and password it shows. Fix them if needed.
4. Click **Save**.

To see or change a saved password

1. Click **More > Passwords and autofill > Google Password Manager**.
2. Under "Passwords," click the site.
3. Click the eye icon (**Show password**) to see it. Your computer may ask for its own password or fingerprint first.
4. Click **Edit** to change it, or **Delete** to remove it.

Let Chrome make up a strong password

When you create a new account on a website, click in the password box and choose **Use strong password**. Chrome invents a long random one and saves it to your Google Account automatically.

TIP

Your passwords from any computer

Signed in? You can look up your saved passwords from any browser at **passwords.google.com**. Bill's guide to passwords and password managers compares Google's with the others.

HEADS UP

Add a lock for extra privacy

In **Google Password Manager > Settings**, Windows users can turn on **Use Windows Hello when filling passwords** and Mac users **Use your screen lock when filling passwords**, so Chrome asks for your PIN or fingerprint before filling a password. It's off unless you turn it on.

CHAPTER 21

Password Checkup: Is a Password Leaked?

Companies get hacked, and sometimes lists of usernames and passwords end up published online. **Password Checkup** compares your saved passwords against known leaks and tells you which ones to change. It also flags passwords that are weak or reused.

To run Password Checkup on a computer

1. Click **More > Passwords and autofill > Google Password Manager**.
2. On the left, click **Checkup**.
3. Read the results: **compromised** passwords (found in a leak) matter most, then **reused** and **weak** ones.
4. For each compromised one, go to that website and change the password.

"Change it for me"

On some websites, when Chrome spots that the password you just used was found in a public data breach, it shows the message **Your password was found in a public data breach** and offers a button called **Change it for me**. Chrome then changes the password on that site and saves the new one. If it can't, choose **Change it on the site** and do it yourself. Keep the tab open until it says **Password changed**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Fix the leaks before a crook uses them

Leaked passwords are how many accounts get broken into. Ten minutes with Password Checkup every few months closes doors you didn't know were open.

GOOD TO KNOW

Warnings while you browse

With Safe Browsing on, Chrome can also warn you right when you sign in with a password that was in a breach. That's controlled by **Warn you if a password was compromised in a data breach** in **Settings > Privacy and security > Security**.

SCAM ALERT

Real warnings live in Chrome, not in email

A genuine password warning appears inside Chrome's own window or in Google Password Manager. An email or text with a link saying "your password was leaked, click here" may itself be a phishing trap. Go to Password Checkup yourself instead.

CHAPTER 22

Passkeys: Signing In Without a Password

A **passkey** is a newer way to sign in that replaces the password with your device's own lock, such as your fingerprint, face or PIN. There's nothing to type, nothing to forget, and nothing a fake website can trick out of you.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Phishing-proof sign-in

A passkey only works on the real website it was made for. Even if you land on a perfect copy of your bank's site, your passkey won't work there, so there's nothing to steal.

Where Chrome keeps passkeys

Chrome can save passkeys in **Google Password Manager** and make them available on your other devices where you're signed in. This works on Windows 10 and later, Mac, Chromebooks and Android. On an iPhone it needs iOS 17 or later, with Chrome turned on as an AutoFill provider in the iPhone's settings. You'll be asked to set up a Google Password Manager PIN the first time, which you use to unlock your passkeys on a new device.

To make a passkey

1. Sign in to a website that offers passkeys. Google does, and a growing number of stores and banks do too.
2. Look in the site's security settings for **Create a passkey** or similar.
3. When Chrome asks where to save it, choose **Google Password Manager**.
4. Confirm with your fingerprint, face or computer PIN.

HEADS UP

Remember your Google Password Manager PIN

Write your Google Password Manager PIN somewhere safe at home, and keep your Google Account recovery phone number up to date. They're how you get your passkeys back on a new device.

TIP

There's no rush

You don't have to switch everything to passkeys. Start with your Google Account itself. Keep using Password Manager for sites that don't offer passkeys yet.

CHAPTER 23

Sharing, Exporting and Deleting Passwords Carefully

A few Password Manager tools are powerful enough to deserve a pause before you use them. Here's what each one does and when to be careful.

Sharing a password with family

If you've set up a Google **family group**, Chrome can share a copy of a saved password with a family member, for example the streaming service you share. Open the password in Google Password Manager and choose **Share**. The step-by-step is in the "Ways Chrome Can Make Life Easier" section of this guide.

Exporting passwords: the big caution

Google Password Manager can export all your passwords to a file: open Google Password Manager, click **Settings** on the left, then **Download file** next to "Export passwords." Think hard before you do.

STAY SAFE

Export only if you must, and delete it right after

The exported file is ordinary text with no lock on it: anyone who opens it can read every password. Only export when you are moving to another password manager, and only on your own computer. Import the file right away, then delete it and empty the Trash or Recycle Bin. Never email the file, store it in the cloud, or save it on a USB stick.

SCAM ALERT

Nobody legitimate needs your password file

A caller or "technician" who asks you to export your passwords, or to read them out, is a scammer. Hang up. Real tech support never needs them.

Delete all Google Password Manager data

In Google Password Manager's **Settings** there's also **Delete all Google Password Manager data**. It erases every saved password and passkey. It's meant for people who are leaving Google Password Manager entirely. If you're unsure, don't use it.

CHAPTER 24

Autofill: Addresses and Payment Cards

Chrome can fill in your name, address, phone number and email on online forms with one click. It can also save payment cards. The address part is a real time-saver with little risk. Cards deserve a little more thought.

To manage your saved addresses

1. Click **More > Settings**.
2. Click **Autofill and passwords**.
3. Click **Addresses and more**.
4. Edit, add or delete addresses. The switch **Save and fill addresses** turns the feature on or off.

To manage saved payment cards

1. Click **More > Settings > Autofill and passwords > Payment methods**.
2. Review the cards listed. Remove any you no longer use.
3. Turn on **Verify it's you to autofill payment methods**, so Chrome asks for your computer's PIN, fingerprint or password before filling in a card.
4. Turn off **Save security codes** if you'd rather Chrome not keep the three-digit code from the back of your cards. There's also **Delete saved security codes**.
5. To stop saving cards altogether, turn off **Save and fill payment methods**.

HEADS UP

When not to save a card

Don't save cards on a computer other people use under your profile, or on any computer you don't own. Consider skipping debit cards tied straight to your checking account; a credit card has stronger fraud protection. And never let Chrome save a card on a website you don't fully trust.

TIP

Autofill on the right site only

Autofill fills in whatever page you're on, so glance at the address bar first. If you got there from an email link or a pop-up, stop and type the store's address yourself.

PART 4

Staying Safe in Chrome

Safety Check, Safe Browsing, permissions, notification spam, fake virus pages, extensions, Incognito and downloads.

CHAPTER 25

Safety Check: Chrome's Own Checkup

Safety Check is Chrome looking over its own shoulder. It runs automatically in the background and, when it finds something worth your attention, shows it when you open the three-dot menu. You can also run it yourself anytime.

What Safety Check looks at

- Saved passwords that are **compromised**, reused or weak.
- Whether **Safe Browsing** protection is on.
- Whether a **Chrome update** is waiting.
- Sites sending **unwanted or abusive notifications**.
- **Unused site permissions**, which Chrome removes from sites you haven't visited in a while.
- **Potentially harmful extensions**.

To run Safety Check on a computer

1. Click **More > Settings**.
2. On the left, click **Privacy and security**.
3. Under "Safety Check," click **Go to Safety Check**.
4. Work through anything it lists. Each item has a button that takes you to the fix.

On Android

Tap the three dots, then **Settings**, then **Safety Check**. Safety Check may also appear on Chrome's New Tab page with a **Review** button.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Five minutes, once a month

Make Safety Check a monthly habit, perhaps the day you pay a regular bill. It catches leaked passwords, pushy sites and sneaky extensions before they cause trouble.

CHAPTER 26

Safe Browsing: Standard or Enhanced Protection

Safe Browsing is Chrome's built-in warning system. It checks the sites you visit and the files you download against Google's lists of dangerous ones, and shows a big warning before you walk into trouble. There are three levels.

Level	What it does
Enhanced protection	Google's strongest setting. Warns about dangerous sites, downloads and extensions, including new ones Google hasn't seen before. Sends more information to Google (the address and a small sample of the page) to do that. Also warns when a password was in a breach.
Standard protection	The default. Warns about sites, downloads and extensions already known to be dangerous, with more privacy protections on what's sent.
No protection	Turns Safe Browsing off. Not recommended.

To choose your level on a computer

1. Click **More > Settings**.
2. On the left, click **Privacy and security**, then **Security**.
3. Under "Safe Browsing," choose **Enhanced protection** or **Standard protection**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Bill's suggestion: Enhanced protection

For most people I help, Enhanced protection is worth turning on. Google's newest scam-spotting features (next chapters) only work with Enhanced protection, and Google says it doesn't noticeably slow things down. The trade-off is honest: Chrome shares more about the pages you visit with Google, used only for security. If that bothers you, Standard protection is still good.

HEADS UP

You can still click past a warning

A red Safe Browsing page offers a way to continue anyway. Please don't. If you were expecting the site to be safe, close the tab and get there another way, such as your own bookmark.

CHAPTER 27

Site Permissions: Camera, Location and More

Websites must ask before using your camera, microphone, location, or sending you notifications. Chrome remembers your answer for each site. You can look over those answers and change them anytime.

When a site asks

A small box drops down from the address bar. Depending on the request, you'll see choices like **Allow this time**, **Allow while visiting the site** or **Never allow**. Only allow what makes sense: a video-call site needs your camera; a recipe site does not.

To check one site's permissions

1. Go to the site.
2. Click **View site information**, the small icon at the left end of the address bar.
3. Switch individual permissions on or off, or click **Site settings** for the full list.

To review all sites at once

1. Click **More > Settings > Privacy and security > Site settings**.
2. Click a permission, such as **Location**, **Camera** or **Notifications**.
3. You'll see which sites are allowed and which are blocked. Remove any you don't recognize.

GOOD TO KNOW

Chrome tidies up for you

Chrome automatically removes permissions from sites you haven't visited in a while, and lists what it removed in Safety Check so you can undo it if you like.

TIP

On Android

Tap the icon at the left of the address bar (**Page info**), then **Permissions**, to see and change what the site you're on can do.

CHAPTER 28

Stopping Notification Spam

This is the most common Chrome headache there is. A website asks "Show notifications?", someone clicks **Allow** (often because the page pretended it was a "click Allow to prove you're not a robot" check), and from then on fake virus alerts, prize announcements and ads pop up in the corner of the screen or on the phone, even when Chrome is closed. The good news: it's easy to stop.

SCAM ALERT

"Click Allow to continue" is a trick

No real website needs you to allow notifications to prove you're human, play a video, or download a file. If a page insists, close the tab.

To stop notifications on a computer

1. Click **More > Settings**.
2. Click **Privacy and security**, then **Site settings**, then **Notifications**.
3. Look under "Allowed to send notifications." Any site you don't recognize or want: click the three dots next to it and choose **Block**.
4. For peace and quiet going forward, choose **Use quieter messaging**, so sites can't interrupt you with a pop-up request (a small bell appears by the address instead), or choose the option that doesn't let sites ask at all.

To stop notifications on an Android phone

1. Open Chrome and tap the three dots, then **Settings**.
2. Tap **Notifications**. (On some versions, it's under **Site settings** or **Permissions**, then **Notifications**.)
3. Find the spammy site in the list and turn it off, or tap it and choose **Block**.
4. Quicker fix: when a spam notification arrives, pull down your notifications and tap **Unsubscribe** right on it. Tap **Undo** if you hit it by mistake.

GOOD TO KNOW

Chrome now fights back on its own

On Android, Chrome uses on-device machine learning to spot notifications that look like scams. A flagged notification is hidden behind a warning with two buttons: **Unsubscribe** (which you can follow with **Report spam to Chrome**) or **Show notification** if you trust it. Since late 2025, Chrome on Android and computers also automatically removes notification permission from sites that send lots of notifications you never interact with.

TIP

On an iPhone

Website notifications from Chrome are much less of a problem on iPhone. If you see spammy alerts there, check the iPhone's **Settings > Notifications** list for the app sending them.

CHAPTER 29

Pop-ups, Redirects and Fake Virus Warnings

Chrome blocks most pop-up windows automatically. When it does, you'll see a small **Pop-up blocked** message in the address bar. That's Chrome protecting you. The bigger danger is a page that takes over your whole screen claiming your computer is infected.

Allowing pop-ups for one site you trust

Some legitimate sites, like a bank statement viewer, open a pop-up on purpose. Click the **Pop-up blocked** message, choose **Always allow pop-ups and redirects from** that site, then **Done**. The full list is at **Settings > Privacy and security > Site settings > Pop-ups and redirects**.

SCAM ALERT

"Your computer is infected! Call Microsoft now!"

These fake warnings may fill the screen, flash red, sound a siren, or speak. They show a phone number for "support." It's all a website, and the people on the phone are scammers who want remote access and payment. Your computer is almost certainly fine. Do not call the number, do not click anything on the page, and never let a stranger connect to your computer.

To get out of a scary scam page

1. Don't click inside the page, not even its "Close" or "Cancel" buttons.
2. Close the tab with its **X**, or press **Ctrl+W** (Mac: **Cmd+W**).
3. If the page won't let go, close Chrome completely. On Windows, press **Ctrl+Shift+Esc** to open Task Manager, click Google Chrome, then **End task**. On a Mac, press **Cmd+Option+Esc** and Force Quit Chrome.
4. When you reopen Chrome, if it offers to restore the tabs, say no.
5. Run Safety Check (Chapter 25, *Safety Check: Chrome's Own Checkup*) and look for unfamiliar extensions (Chapter 30, *Extensions: Helpful Add-ons and Bad Ones*).

Chrome's AI scam spotting

Since 2025, Chrome with **Enhanced protection** has used Google's Gemini AI to recognize tech-support scam pages and warn you before you fall for them. In October 2026, Google moved this to a more powerful Gemini model, extended it to everyone who has Enhanced

protection on, and taught it to catch fake antivirus and fake browser-update pages too. Chrome now also shows a milder "suspicious site" warning alongside its full red "dangerous site" page, and warns about pages that tell you to copy and paste commands. Google says page text is only sent for checking when there are strong signs of a scam, and isn't stored.

TIP

Turn on Enhanced protection to get these

These AI warnings need Enhanced protection, covered in Chapter 26, *Safe Browsing: Standard or Enhanced Protection*. With Standard protection you still benefit from Google's lists of known scam sites, but not the newest warnings.

FROM BILL

If you already called the number

It happens to smart, careful people. Hang up, turn off the computer's Wi-Fi or unplug its internet, call your bank if you paid anything, and call me. I'll check the computer and remove anything they installed.

CHAPTER 30

Extensions: Helpful Add-ons and Bad Ones

An **extension** is a small add-on program that adds a feature to Chrome on a computer, like a grammar checker, a coupon finder or an ad blocker. Extensions can see the pages you visit, so a bad one can show you ads, change your search results or snoop. Keep only the few you truly use.

Only install from the Chrome Web Store

Get extensions only from Google's **Chrome Web Store** (reach it from **More > Extensions**). Never install one because a pop-up or a website told you to. With Enhanced protection on, Chrome warns you if an extension is **not trusted by Enhanced Safe Browsing**.

To see and remove extensions

1. Click **More > Extensions > Manage extensions**.
2. Look at each one. Don't recognize it, or don't use it? Click **Remove**.
3. Click **Remove** again to confirm.
4. Or right-click an extension's icon next to the address bar and choose **Remove from Chrome**.

HEADS UP

Signs of a bad extension

Your home page or search engine changed by itself; extra ads appear on every site; searches go through an unfamiliar search site; or Chrome says an extension was turned off because it's harmful. Remove the extension, then run Safety Check. If things keep coming back, see Chapter 36, *Resetting Chrome to a Fresh Start*.

Ad blockers and the 2025 change

Chrome switched to a newer extension system called **Manifest V3**. Older-style extensions were turned off in Chrome in July 2025, and by the end of August 2026 the remaining old-style extensions were removed from the Chrome Web Store. The popular ad blocker **uBlock Origin** was one of them; its makers offer a lighter official replacement called **uBlock Origin Lite**, with fewer features. Other ad blockers have new versions too.

SCAM ALERT

Fake "security" extensions

An extension that pops up to say "your computer is at risk, install our protection" is the risk. Chrome already includes Safe Browsing, and Windows and Macs have their own built-in security.

CHAPTER 31

Incognito: What It Does and Doesn't Do

Incognito opens a private window. When you close it, Chrome forgets the history, cookies and site data from that session. It's handy for shopping for a surprise gift, or checking your email on someone else's computer.

Incognito…	
Does	Keep pages you visit out of your Chrome history once you close the window.
Does	Sign you out of sites when the window closes, and not sign you in automatically.
Does keep	Bookmarks and downloaded files you choose to save.
Doesn't	Make you invisible. Websites, Google, an employer or school, and your internet provider can still see your activity.
Doesn't	Protect you from viruses, scams or fake websites.

To open an Incognito window

Device	How
Computer	Click **More > New Incognito window**, or press **Ctrl+Shift+N** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+N**).
Android phone	Tap the three dots, then **Open in a new Incognito window** (tablets: **New Incognito window**).
iPhone	Tap the three dots, then **New Incognito Tab**.

TIP

Lock your private tabs on a phone

On Android, **Settings > Privacy and security > Lock Incognito windows when you leave Chrome** asks for your fingerprint or PIN before showing them again. On iPhone, the setting is **Hide Incognito tabs**, where you choose to lock them right away, after a few minutes, or not at all.

GOOD TO KNOW

Gemini isn't available in Incognito

Chrome's AI assistant, Gemini, doesn't work in Incognito windows. See Chapter 33, *Gemini in Chrome: The AI Helper*.

CHAPTER 32

Downloads and Download Warnings

When you download a file, like a PDF from your doctor or a photo from a relative, Chrome saves it to your **Downloads** folder and shows it in the download list. Before saving, Safe Browsing checks it.

To find your downloads

Press **Ctrl+J** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+J**), or click **More > Downloads**. Click a file to open it, or choose to show it in its folder.

What the warnings mean

Warning	What to do
Dangerous download blocked	Chrome is sure the file is harmful. Leave it blocked.
This file may be dangerous / suspicious	Chrome isn't sure but is worried. Choose **Cancel download** unless you know exactly who sent it and why.
Unverified	Safe Browsing is turned off, so Chrome couldn't check. Turn Safe Browsing back on.
Insecure	The file came over an unprotected connection and could have been tampered with.

TIP

A deeper scan with Enhanced protection

With Enhanced protection, Chrome can send a suspicious file, even a password-protected zip file, to Google for a closer look, then tells you **Scan complete** with the result.

SCAM ALERT

Downloads nobody asked for

If a site starts downloading something you didn't ask for, or an email says "open the attached invoice" from a company you don't deal with, don't open it. Files ending in **.exe**, **.msi** or **.dmg** install programs. Only open those if you went looking for that exact program on its maker's real website.

PART 5

AI, Upkeep & Getting Help

Gemini in Chrome, keeping Chrome up to date, fixing a slow or crashing browser, and when to call Bill.

CHAPTER 33

Gemini in Chrome: The AI Helper

Gemini in Chrome is Google's AI assistant built into the browser. You type (or speak) a question, and it answers using the web page you're looking at. Ask it to sum up a long article, explain a confusing paragraph, adjust a recipe, or compare information across a few open tabs.

What you need

- A **Windows** computer, a **Mac**, or a **Chromebook Plus**, with Chrome up to date. It's also available in Chrome on **iPhone** and, in the US, on many **Android** phones (for adults, in English).
- To be **signed in to Chrome** with a personal Google Account. It doesn't work in Incognito.
- To be 13 or older (18 or older on Android) and in a supported country, including the United States.
- Google is releasing it gradually, so it may not show up for everyone yet.

To ask Gemini about a page on a computer

1. Open the page you have a question about.
2. At the top of Chrome, click **Ask Gemini** (the Gemini sparkle icon).
3. The first time, follow the on-screen steps to opt in.
4. Type your question, such as "Summarize this in five bullet points" or "What does this paragraph mean in plain English?" and press **Enter**.
5. To include other open tabs, type @ and pick a tab. You can share up to 10.

STAY SAFE

An honest privacy note

To answer, Gemini reads the content of the tab you share with it, and that content goes to Google. Don't open Gemini on pages showing your bank balance, medical records or other private details unless you're comfortable with that. You can stop sharing a tab with **Show shared tabs**, then **Remove tab**, and turn off **Share current tab by default** in Chrome's Settings under **AI innovations**. The same section has switches for Gemini's access to your **Precise location** and **Microphone**.

HEADS UP

AI can be wrong

Gemini is quick and often useful, but it can misread a page or state something false with confidence. Double-check anything that matters, like a medication dose, a deadline or a dollar amount, against the original source.

Letting Gemini "browse for you"

Google is also adding **auto browse**, where Gemini can carry out multi-step tasks on websites for you. It has its own on/off switch, **Let Gemini browse for you**, in the same AI innovations settings. My advice: if you try it, never let it handle payments or account changes without watching every step.

TIP

Don't want Gemini at all?

Open **More > Settings > AI innovations > Gemini in Chrome** and turn off **Show Gemini at the top of the browser**. You can also right-click the top of the browser and choose **Unpin Gemini**. Nothing else in Chrome changes.

CHAPTER 34

Keeping Chrome Up to Date

Chrome updates itself in the background, usually without you noticing. Updates fix security holes that criminals actively try to use, so staying current is one of the most important things you can do.

Signs an update is waiting

A small **Update** button may appear near the top right of Chrome, and Safety Check also tells you when an update is available. Chrome finishes updating when you close and reopen it. If you rarely close Chrome, the update can sit waiting.

To check for an update on a computer

1. Click **More**, then **Help**, then **About Google Chrome**.
2. Chrome checks right away and downloads any update.
3. Click **Relaunch** when it appears. Chrome reopens your tabs afterward.

On phones and Chromebooks

- **Android**: Chrome updates through the **Google Play Store** along with your other apps.
- **iPhone**: Chrome updates through the **App Store**.
- **Chromebook**: Chrome updates as part of the Chromebook's own system updates. Restart the Chromebook when it asks.

SCAM ALERT

Real updates never come from a web page

A website that says "Your Chrome is out of date, download the update here" is fake, and Chrome's own AI warnings now watch for exactly these pages (Chapter 29, *Pop-ups, Redirects and Fake Virus Warnings*). Real Chrome updates come only from Chrome itself, the Play Store or the App Store.

GOOD TO KNOW

Old computers eventually stop getting updates

Chrome needs Windows 10 or later, or macOS 13 Ventura or later. On an older computer, Chrome stops receiving updates, which isn't safe for banking. That's a good time to talk about your options.

CHAPTER 35

When Chrome Is Slow or Crashing

Chrome can bog down when dozens of tabs are open, when an extension misbehaves, or on an older computer. Work through these steps in order. Most slowdowns are fixed by the first two.

Quick fixes, in order

1. **Close tabs you aren't using.** Bookmark anything you want to keep first.
2. **Close and reopen Chrome**, which also finishes any waiting update.
3. **Restart the computer.**
4. **Turn off extensions** one at a time at **More > Extensions > Manage extensions** to see if one is the cause (Chapter 30, *Extensions: Helpful Add-ons and Bad Ones*).
5. **Delete cached images and files** (Chapter 12, *Delete Browsing Data (Clearing Your Tracks)*).
6. If none of that helps, **reset Chrome's settings** (Chapter 36, *Resetting Chrome to a Fresh Start*).

Let Chrome save memory for you

In **More > Settings > Performance** you'll find two helpers for computers. **Memory Saver** puts tabs you haven't looked at in a while to sleep, so the one you're using runs smoothly. A sleeping tab reloads when you click it. You can pick **Moderate**, **Balanced (recommended)** or **Maximum**. **Energy Saver** stretches laptop battery life when the laptop is unplugged or low on charge.

> TIP
> **Keep important sites awake**
> If a site you rely on loses its place when Memory Saver puts it to sleep, add it under **Always keep these sites active** on the same Performance page. Pinned tabs and tabs playing audio or video aren't put to sleep anyway.

Find the tab that's hogging things

Chrome has its own **Task manager**. Open it with **More > More tools > Task manager** (or **Shift+Esc** on Windows). It lists each tab and extension with how much memory it uses. Click one and choose **End process** to stop it.

GOOD TO KNOW

"Performance issue alerts"

Chrome may pop up its own suggestion to put tabs to sleep when things are slow, with a **Fix now** button. That message comes from Chrome itself and is safe. You can turn it off under **Performance**.

HEADS UP

If Chrome crashes over and over

Repeated crashes, the same unwanted page always opening, or Chrome refusing to start can point to harmful software on the computer, not just Chrome. That's worth a proper look.

CHAPTER 36

Resetting Chrome to a Fresh Start

If Chrome has been hijacked (a strange home page, a search engine you didn't choose, ads everywhere) and removing extensions didn't fix it, **resetting Chrome's settings** puts things back the way they were when Chrome was new, without deleting your important things.

To reset Chrome on a computer

1. Click **More > Settings**.
2. On the left, click **Reset settings**.
3. Click **Restore settings to their original defaults**.
4. Click **Reset settings** to confirm.

Gets reset	Your start-up page, New Tab page, search engine, pinned tabs, site permissions and content settings. Cookies and site data are cleared. Extensions are turned off.
Is kept	Bookmarks, history and saved passwords.

TIP

Turn back on only the extensions you need

After a reset your extensions are switched off, not removed. Go to **Manage extensions** and turn back on only the ones you recognize and use. Remove the rest.

HEADS UP

If the problem returns

If the hijacked home page or the ads come back after a reset, something on the computer itself is changing Chrome. That's when it's time for a security scan or a call to me.

CHAPTER 37

When to Call Bill

This guide covers a lot, and you can handle most of it yourself. But some Chrome problems are worth a second pair of eyes, and there's no shame in asking. Here are good reasons to call.

Good reasons to reach out

- A **"your computer is infected"** page won't go away, or you called the number on one.
- Notification spam keeps coming back after you've blocked it.
- Your home page or search engine keeps changing, or ads appear on every site, even after a reset.
- Password Checkup shows many **compromised** passwords and you'd like help changing them safely.
- You're moving to a new computer and want your bookmarks and passwords to come along.
- You'd like separate **profiles** set up for everyone who uses the computer.
- Chrome won't open, crashes constantly, or says it can no longer be updated on your computer.
- You want Enhanced protection, passkeys and Safety Check set up properly, once.

These all fall under my **Computer Help** service: I'll look at Chrome with you, clean out anything that doesn't belong, and leave it set up the safe way.

SCAM ALERT

I will never pop up on your screen

Real help never arrives as a pop-up, a surprise phone call, or a warning with a phone number on a web page. If you didn't call me first, it isn't me. When in doubt, hang up and call my number below.

How to reach me

- Call or text **(330) 200-8042**.
- Book a time online at **billshometech.com/book**.
- If you reach my assistant **Sophie** on the main line, she can answer simple questions and get you on my schedule.

- Bill's Home Tech serves **Portage County, Ohio**, with 30+ years of professional experience behind every visit.

FROM BILL

Simple, honest pricing

My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. The guides, including this one, are free to read and share. If you're not sure whether something is worth a call, call anyway and we'll figure it out together.

— Bill

CHAPTER 38

Your Chrome Cheat-Sheet

The most-used steps from this guide, in one place.

Everyday

I want to…	Do this
Bring back a closed tab	**Ctrl+Shift+T** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+T**)
Make the page bigger	**Ctrl** and **+**; back to normal with **Ctrl+0**
Bookmark a page	Click the **star** in the address bar
Show the bookmarks bar	**More > Bookmarks and lists > Show bookmarks bar**
Find a page from last week	**More > History > History**
Read without clutter	**More > More tools > Reading mode**
Private window	**Ctrl+Shift+N**

Safety and upkeep

I want to…	Do this
Run Safety Check	**Settings > Privacy and security > Go to Safety Check**
Choose Enhanced protection	**Settings > Privacy and security > Security**
Stop notification spam	**Settings > Privacy and security > Site settings > Notifications**
Check passwords for leaks	**More > Passwords and autofill > Google Password Manager > Checkup**
Remove an extension	**More > Extensions > Manage extensions > Remove**
Delete browsing data	**More > Delete browsing data**
Update Chrome	**More > Help > About Google Chrome**
Speed up a slow Chrome	**Settings > Performance > Memory Saver**

Five safety rules

1. Get Chrome and extensions only from Google: **google.com/chrome** and the Chrome Web Store.
2. Never click **Allow** on a notification request you didn't expect.
3. A page saying your computer is infected is a scam. Close the tab; never call the number.

4. Use bookmarks you made yourself for your bank and other important sites.
5. Never export your passwords or read them to anyone who calls you.

Keep this handy

Item	Your notes
Google Account email used in Chrome	_____
Google Password Manager PIN kept at	_____
Recovery phone on my Google Account	_____
My bank's real website	_____
Who else uses this computer (profiles)	_____
Bill's Home Tech	(330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book

FROM BILL

You've got this

Chrome is just a window onto the web, and now you know how to arrange it, enlarge it and lock it down. Keep this guide nearby, and when something new pops up, you know where to find me.