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Microsoft Edge

Tabs, favorites, Copilot, passwords and a calmer, safer browser — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide to the web browser that comes with Windows

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

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For Microsoft Edge on Windows, Mac, iPhone & Android · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your Microsoft Edge guide. Edge is the web browser that comes with every Windows computer, the program you use to visit websites, read the news, shop and check email on the web. This guide shows you how to get around with tabs and favorites, how to quiet the news feed and other clutter, what the Copilot button is (and how to hide it), how Edge saves your passwords, and how to stay safe from fake virus warnings. Read it in any order. Menus in Edge move around a little with updates, so if a button isn't exactly where this guide says, look nearby or use the search box at the top of Edge's Settings.

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PART 1

Getting to Know Edge

What Edge is, why it's already on your computer, a tour of the screen, and signing in so your favorites and passwords follow you.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you have a Windows computer, you already have Microsoft Edge. It's the blue-and-green swirl icon on your taskbar, and for many people it's the program they use every single day without ever thinking about its name. Maybe you just want the news feed to stop shouting at you. Maybe you closed a tab by accident and want it back. Maybe a scary warning took over your screen and you'd like to know what to do next time. Wherever you're starting from, you're in the right place.

I'm Bill. I have 30+ years of professional experience with computers, and these days I help families here in Portage County, Ohio, feel comfortable with their technology. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it at your kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, one step at a time. When a word might be new, I'll stop and explain it right then.

The big promise: you can't break it

You cannot break Edge by clicking around. The worst that can happen is that you change a setting you didn't mean to, and every setting can be changed back. The only places to slow down are the ones I'll point out: anything that asks for money, anything that asks you to call a phone number, and anything that wants to install a program. I'll flag each of those.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this guide does for you

By the end you'll move between tabs with confidence, get back a page you closed by mistake, keep your favorite websites one click away, turn off the clutter you don't want, let Edge remember your passwords safely, have a web page read out loud to you, and know exactly what to do when a fake virus warning appears.

I'm only a phone call away

If you'd like a hand with anything in here, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. There's no such thing as a silly question, and we'll go at your pace.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Edge Is, and Why It's Already on Your Computer

A **web browser** is the program you use to look at websites. Microsoft Edge is Microsoft's browser, and it comes built into Windows 11 and Windows 10. Other browsers you may have heard of are Google Chrome, Apple's Safari and Mozilla Firefox. They all do the same basic job; they just look a little different.

A few things worth knowing

- **Edge is free.** It comes with Windows, and the versions for Mac, iPhone, iPad and Android phones are free downloads too. Nobody legitimate will ever charge you to "activate" or "renew" Edge.
- **It updates itself.** Edge quietly downloads updates in the background and finishes them when you close and reopen it. You don't have to do anything.
- **It's built on the same foundation as Google Chrome.** That's why most websites work the same in both, and why many of the keyboard shortcuts are identical.
- **It's tied to your Microsoft account** if you sign in, so your favorites and saved passwords can follow you to a new computer or your phone (Chapter 4).

Still on Windows 10?

Microsoft stopped regular support for Windows 10 in October 2025, but it has said Edge itself will keep getting updates on Windows 10 (version 22H2) until at least October 2028. So Edge stays a safe browser on an older Windows 10 computer for now, even though Windows itself is no longer getting regular fixes.

GOOD TO KNOW

The old Internet Explorer is gone

If you remember the blue "e" of Internet Explorer, Edge replaced it years ago. If a website or a caller tells you that you "need Internet Explorer," that's out of date. Edge handles everything you need.

SCAM ALERT

Nobody calls about your browser

Microsoft does not phone people about their browser, their computer or a "virus" they've detected. Real Microsoft error messages never include a phone number to call. If someone calls or a pop-up says otherwise, it's a scam. Hang up or close the page; Chapter 24 shows you how.

CHAPTER 3

A Tour of the Edge Screen

Let's take a slow look around. Open Edge by clicking its swirl icon on the taskbar along the bottom of the screen, or click **Start** and type **Edge**. Here's what you'll see, from the top down.

Across the top

What you see	What it does
Tabs	Each open web page sits in its own **tab**, like a folder tab across the top of the window. Click a tab to see that page. (Chapter 5 covers tabs.)
Address bar	The long box where you type a website address, like **weather.gov**, or a search such as "Kent State parking." Press **Enter** to go.
Back and Refresh	The left arrow takes you to the page you were just on. The circular arrow reloads the page.
Star (favorites)	At the right end of the address bar. Click it to save the page as a **favorite** (Chapter 9).
Copilot button	A small colorful icon near the top right. It opens Microsoft's AI helper (Chapter 12).
Your picture or initial	Your **profile**: the account Edge is signed in with (Chapter 4).
Three dots (…)	**Settings and more**. Almost everything in this guide starts here.

The three dots: Settings and more

The three dots in the top-right corner open Edge's main menu. Microsoft calls it **Settings and more**. From here you can open a new window, see your favorites, history and downloads, print, zoom the page bigger and, at the bottom, open **Settings**.

TIP

Use the search box in Settings

Edge's Settings page has a **Search settings** box at the top. If you can't find something this guide mentions, type a word like "password," "startup" or "Copilot" there, and Edge shows you the matching switches. It's the easiest way around, especially after an update moves things.

Making the page bigger

If the writing on a website is too small, hold the **Ctrl** key and press the **+** (plus) key. Each press zooms in a bit more. **Ctrl** and **-** (minus) zooms out, and **Ctrl** and **0** (zero) puts it back to normal. You'll also find the zoom buttons in the three-dots menu.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Zooming makes the whole page, words and pictures, easier to read without changing anything about the website. Edge remembers your zoom for each website, so your favorite news site stays big next time.

CHAPTER 4

Signing In and Keeping Things in Sync

Edge works fine without signing in. But if you sign in with your **Microsoft account** (the same email and password you use for Outlook.com, OneDrive or Windows itself), Edge can **sync** your things. Sync means keeping a copy in your Microsoft account so the same favorites, passwords and settings show up on your other computers and on Edge on your phone.

Check whether you're signed in

1. Look at the top-right corner of Edge for a small round picture or initial. That's your **profile**.
2. Click it. If it shows your name and email address, you're signed in. If it says **Sign in to sync data**, you're not.
3. To sign in, click **Sign in to sync data** and follow the steps with your Microsoft account email and password.

Turn sync on, and choose what syncs

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Profiles**, then **Sync**.
3. Turn sync on if it's off. You'll see a list of things that can sync, such as favorites, passwords, history and open tabs. Leave on the ones you want on your other devices.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

When you get a new computer, you sign in to Edge and your favorites and saved passwords simply appear. Nothing to copy, nothing to write down. It's also how Edge on your phone shows the same favorites as your computer.

HEADS UP

One profile per person

If you share a computer with a spouse or grandchild, each person should use their own Windows account or their own Edge profile. Otherwise everyone can see everyone's saved passwords and history. Chapter 20 explains why that matters.

GOOD TO KNOW

Can't remember your Microsoft account password?

That's an account problem rather than an Edge problem. Our separate guide, Your Microsoft Account, walks through getting back in safely. Never get help from someone who calls you out of the blue offering to "fix" it.

PART 2

Tabs and Getting Around

Opening, switching and closing tabs, getting back the ones you closed by mistake, the side-of-the-screen "vertical tabs" view, and searching from the address bar.

CHAPTER 5

Tabs: The Basics

A **tab** lets you keep several web pages open in one Edge window, the way you might keep several folders open on the kitchen table. Each tab sits along the top of the window with the page's name and a tiny picture (called an icon) for the website.

The everyday tab moves

To do this	Do this
Open a new tab	Click the **+** just to the right of your last tab, or press **Ctrl + T**.
Switch tabs	Click the tab you want. Or press **Ctrl + Tab** to step to the next one.
Close a tab	Click the small **X** on the tab, or press **Ctrl + W** to close the one you're looking at.
Open a link in a new tab	Right-click the link and choose **Open link in new tab**. Your first page stays put.
Move a tab	Click and hold the tab, then slide it left or right.

Pinning a tab you use every day

If you keep the same page open all day, such as your email or a news site, you can **pin** it. A pinned tab shrinks to just its icon at the far left and stays there, even after you close and reopen Edge.

1. Right-click the tab you want to keep.
2. Choose **Pin tab**.
3. To undo it later, right-click the little pinned icon and choose **Unpin tab**.

TIP

Too many tabs?

Lots of open tabs can slow an older computer down and make the names too small to read. It's perfectly fine to close the ones you're done with; if you need one again, Chapter 6 shows how to get it back.

GOOD TO KNOW

Tabs versus windows

A **window** is a whole separate Edge, with its own row of tabs. **Ctrl + N** opens a new window. Most people find one window with a few tabs easier to manage than several windows stacked on top of each other.

CHAPTER 6

Getting Back Tabs You Closed by Accident

It happens to everyone: you click the wrong X and the page you were reading vanishes. Don't worry. Edge remembers what you closed, and getting it back takes a couple of seconds.

The fastest way: one keyboard shortcut

Hold down **Ctrl** and **Shift** together and press **T**. The tab you just closed comes right back, on the same page. Press it again, and the one you closed before that comes back too. It even works if you closed a whole Edge window by mistake: the window reopens with its tabs.

The mouse way

1. Right-click an empty spot on the row of tabs (or on any tab).
2. Choose **Reopen closed tab** (if you closed a whole window, it may say **Reopen closed window**).

Finding something from earlier today or last week: History

Your **history** is Edge's list of pages you've visited. It's the place to look when the page you want was closed a while ago.

1. Press **Ctrl + H**, or click the three dots (…) and choose **History**.
2. A list appears, newest first. There's a **Recently closed** section for tabs and windows you closed.
3. Click any page to open it again. You can also type a word in the search box at the top of the history list, such as "recipe" or "pharmacy."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Closing a tab is never a disaster. You can tidy up freely, knowing anything you close by mistake is one shortcut or one click away.

When Edge closed everything at once

If Edge closed itself, or the computer restarted for an update, Edge usually offers to put your tabs back. Look for a **Restore** button near the top of the window when it reopens. If you missed it, open **History** and look under **Recently closed**; a whole window of tabs shows there as one line you can click.

TIP

Make Edge always reopen your last tabs

If you like to pick up where you left off every morning, Chapter 19 shows how to set Edge to open your previous tabs each time it starts.

CHAPTER 7

Vertical Tabs: Your Tabs Down the Side

When several tabs are open, their names along the top get squeezed until you can't read them. Edge has a different way to show them: **vertical tabs**, a list down the left side of the window. Each tab gets its own line with its full name, which many people find much easier to read.

Turn vertical tabs on

1. Look at the top-left corner of the Edge window for the **tab actions** button (a small square icon to the left of your first tab).
2. Click it and choose **Turn on vertical tabs**.
3. Your tabs move to a panel on the left. Click any line to go to that page.

Turn them back off

Click the same tab actions button, now at the top of the left panel, and choose **Turn off vertical tabs**. Your tabs go back across the top. Nothing is lost either way.

TIP

Make the panel smaller or bigger

The left panel can shrink to just icons to save space and widen again when you point at it. Look for a small arrow or pin symbol at the top of the panel to switch between the two.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Full tab names in a tidy list mean less squinting and fewer wrong clicks. It's especially handy on a wide laptop or desktop screen, where there's spare room at the sides anyway.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you don't see the button

On some versions the button is hidden. Open **Settings**, type "vertical tabs" in the search box at the top, and turn on the switch that shows the vertical tabs button.

CHAPTER 8

Searching and Typing Addresses

The long box at the top of Edge, the **address bar**, does two jobs. Type a website address and press **Enter**, and Edge goes straight there. Type anything else, like "hardware store near Ravenna," and Edge searches the web for it.

Going straight to a website you know

1. Click once in the address bar. Whatever is there turns blue (selected).
2. Type the address, for example **ssa.gov**. You don't need the "www" or "https" part.
3. Press **Enter**.

HEADS UP

Type real addresses, especially for money

For your bank, Social Security, Medicare or a store, type the address you know, or use a favorite you saved yourself. Search results can include paid ads, and scammers sometimes buy ads that look like the real thing. Look carefully before you click a search result that wants you to sign in or pay.

Searching

Edge uses Microsoft's **Bing** search engine unless you've changed it. Type your question in plain words, press **Enter**, and you'll see a page of results. Click a blue link to visit that website, then use the **Back** arrow to return to the results.

GOOD TO KNOW

AI answers at the top

Bing may show an answer written by AI (Copilot) above the regular results. It can be a handy summary, but it can also be wrong. For health, money or legal questions, check what it says against the actual websites it lists.

Prefer Google for searching?

You can switch Edge's search engine. Open **Settings**, type "search engine" into the search box at the top, and pick the one you want from the **Search engine used in the address bar** list. Or simply go to **google.com** and search from there; there's no wrong way.

TIP

Find a word on a long page

Press **Ctrl + F** and type a word. Edge highlights every place that word appears on the page, which is great for long articles, recipes and bills.

PART 3

Favorites

Saving the websites you use most, keeping them one click away on the favorites bar, and tidying, bringing over and backing up your list.

CHAPTER 9

Saving Your Favorite Websites

A **favorite** is a saved shortcut to a web page. Other browsers call them bookmarks; it's the same idea. Save your bank, your pharmacy, your grandchildren's school page and the weather once, and you'll never have to type or search for them again.

Save the page you're looking at

1. Go to the page you want to keep.
2. Click the **star** at the right end of the address bar, or press **Ctrl + D**.
3. A small box appears. You can change the **Name** to something short and clear, like "Bank" or "Weather."
4. Choose a **Folder** (the favorites bar is a good choice for everyday sites; see Chapter 10).
5. Click **Done**. The star turns blue to show the page is saved.

Open a favorite

Click the **Favorites** button near the top right (a star with lines), or press **Ctrl + Shift + O**. Your list opens; click any favorite to go there. If you've put it on the favorites bar, it's even quicker: just click it.

Save all your open tabs at once

Researching something across several pages, such as a trip or a new hearing aid? Press **Ctrl + Shift + D**. Edge saves every open tab as a favorite in one new folder, so you can close them and come back later.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Favorites are safer as well as faster. When you open your bank from a favorite you saved yourself, you know it's the real website, not a look-alike from a search ad or an email link.

TIP

Remove a favorite

Right-click it in your favorites list or on the favorites bar and choose **Delete**. If you delete one by mistake, press **Ctrl + Z** straight away while the favorites list is open, or simply save the page again.

CHAPTER 10

Showing the Favorites Bar

The **favorites bar** is a thin row just under the address bar that holds your most-used favorites as buttons. One click and you're there. Out of the box, Edge often shows it only when you open a new tab, so many people never notice it.

The quick way: a shortcut

Press **Ctrl + Shift + B**. That switches the favorites bar between always showing and never showing. If it disappears when you didn't expect it, press the same keys again to bring it back.

The menu way

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Appearance** (or type "favorites bar" in the search box at the top).
3. Find **Show favorites bar** and choose **Always**, **Never** or **Only on new tabs**.

Putting things on the bar

- When saving a favorite with the star, pick **Favorites bar** as the folder.
- Or drag a page's padlock icon from the left end of the address bar down onto the favorites bar.
- To fit more, right-click a button on the bar and choose **Edit**, then shorten its name. Some people leave the name blank so only the website's little icon shows.
- Drag buttons left and right to put them in the order you like.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Your five or six everyday websites become one-click buttons, always in the same place. It's one of the easiest ways to make Edge feel like your own.

TIP

Too many to fit?

When the bar fills up, extra favorites tuck behind a small **>>** at the right end. You can also make a folder on the bar (right-click the bar and choose **Add folder**) for things like "Doctors" or "Shopping."

CHAPTER 11

Organizing, Bringing Over and Backing Up Favorites

A long jumble of favorites is hard to use. A few folders make it easy. And if you're coming from Chrome or another computer, Edge can bring your old bookmarks with you.

Make folders

1. Open your favorites with **Ctrl + Shift + O**.
2. Look for the **Add folder** button at the top of the list (a folder with a plus sign).
3. Type a name, like "Health" or "Money," and press **Enter**.
4. Drag favorites into the folder.

Bring over bookmarks from Chrome or Firefox

1. Click the three dots (…), then **Settings**.
2. Type "import" in the search box at the top and choose **Import browser data**.
3. Pick the browser you're coming from, tick **Favorites or bookmarks** (and passwords, if you want them), and click **Import**.

Your favorites are already backed up if you sync

If you're signed in with sync turned on (Chapter 4), your favorites are kept in your Microsoft account. A new computer, or Edge on your phone, gets them as soon as you sign in. If you'd like an extra copy on a USB drive, the favorites page has an **Export favorites** choice (under the three dots in the favorites panel) that saves them as a single file.

Where did Collections go?

Edge used to have a feature called **Collections** for gathering pages and notes. Microsoft retired it: it is no longer available starting with Edge version 149, released in June 2026. Microsoft suggests using favorites instead. If you relied on Collections and can't find something you saved there, that's a good time to call for a hand.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Folders mean you find things by subject instead of scrolling. A synced, exported list means a broken or replaced computer never costs you years of saved websites.

PART 4

Copilot: Microsoft's AI Helper in Edge

What the Copilot button is, what happened to "Copilot Mode," how to use it sensibly, and how to tuck it out of the way if you'd rather not.

CHAPTER 12

What Copilot in Edge Is

Copilot is Microsoft's AI assistant. AI stands for artificial intelligence: a computer program that can read what you type and write an answer back in ordinary sentences. In Edge, Copilot lives behind a small colorful button near the top right of the window. Click it and a panel opens where you can type (or speak) a question.

What people use it for

- **"Summarize this page."** Copilot can read the long article or terms-and-conditions page you have open and give you the main points.
- **Plain-English explanations.** "What does 'deductible' mean on this insurance page?"
- **Help with writing.** A thank-you note, a polite complaint letter, a birthday message.
- **Comparing things.** Microsoft has added the ability to look across several open tabs at once, which can help when you're comparing products or plans.

What happened to "Copilot Mode"?

In 2025 Microsoft tried a separate **Copilot Mode** in Edge, a whole different way of browsing that you switched on and off. In May 2026 Microsoft announced it was retiring Copilot Mode as a separate mode. The AI features from it, such as looking across your tabs and talking to Copilot by voice, are now reached through the regular Copilot button instead. So if an older article or a friend tells you to "turn off Copilot Mode," you may not find that switch any more. Chapter 14 shows what you can turn off today.

GOOD TO KNOW

Does it cost anything?

The Copilot button in Edge works without paying when you're signed in with a Microsoft account. Microsoft also sells paid plans with extra AI features; you never need one to use Edge, and Edge never needs to be "upgraded" for you to browse the web.

HEADS UP

AI can be confidently wrong

Copilot writes smoothly, which makes its mistakes easy to believe. It can misread a page, mix up numbers or invent details. Treat it like a helpful neighbor who's sometimes wrong: useful for a first look, but double-check anything about your health, money, medicine or legal matters with the real source.

CHAPTER 13

Using Copilot Sensibly and Safely

If you'd like to try Copilot, here's a gentle way to start, and a few guardrails that keep it safe.

Ask Copilot about the page you're reading

1. Open a web page you'd like help with, such as a long news story.
2. Click the **Copilot** button near the top right of Edge.
3. In the box at the bottom of the panel, type something like **Summarize this page in five short points** and press **Enter**.
4. Read the answer. You can ask follow-up questions in the same box, like "What does the third point mean?"
5. Close the panel with the **X** at its top when you're done.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A long, dense page becomes a few clear sentences, and you can ask "what does that mean?" as many times as you like without feeling rushed.

Guardrails worth keeping

- **Don't type private numbers** into Copilot: no Social Security number, bank or card numbers, passwords or Medicare number. It doesn't need them to help you.
- **Be careful when it's looking at your page.** When you ask Copilot about the page or tabs you have open, it reads them. Close your bank or medical records first if you're asking about something else.
- **Check the links it gives you.** Copilot often lists the websites it used. Click through and read the real page before acting on anything important.
- **It won't phone you.** Copilot never needs you to call a number, buy a gift card or let someone onto your computer. If anything inside Edge asks for those, stop (Chapter 24).

SCAM ALERT

Fake "Copilot support" and fake AI apps

Scammers use popular names. Be wary of ads, emails or pop-ups offering a "Copilot upgrade," "AI security scan" or "Copilot support line." Copilot is already built into Edge; you never need to download it from a link in an email or pay someone on the phone to turn it on.

CHAPTER 14

Hiding Copilot if You'd Rather Not

Not everyone wants an AI helper, and that's perfectly fine. You can hide the Copilot button and keep the AI version of the new tab page out of your way. One honest caveat first: Microsoft doesn't offer a single switch that removes every bit of Copilot from Edge. You can tuck it out of sight; it may still appear in a menu or on Bing search results.

Hide the Copilot button from the toolbar

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. In the **Search settings** box at the top, type **Copilot**.
3. Look for a switch called **Show Copilot button on the toolbar** (on many versions it's under **Appearance** > **Copilot**, or in a **Copilot** or **AI** section of Settings).
4. Turn that switch off. The button disappears from the top of the window.

Turn off the Copilot new tab page

Some versions of Edge show a Copilot chat box on every new tab instead of the usual page. To switch that off, open **Settings**, search for **Copilot new tab page**, and turn the switch off. You can also type **edge://settings/ai** in the address bar and press **Enter** to go straight to Edge's AI settings page, where many of these switches live.

GOOD TO KNOW

Menus differ from computer to computer

Microsoft has moved these AI switches several times in 2026, and work or school computers may have them locked by an administrator. If you can't find a switch by name, searching Settings for "Copilot" or "AI" is the reliable way. Nothing you switch off here can harm Edge, and you can turn it back on any time.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A plainer, quieter Edge that looks and works the way a browser always has, with fewer things to click by mistake.

PART 5

Turning Off the Clutter

A calmer new tab page, what's become of the shopping pop-ups and the sidebar, stopping website notifications, blocking pop-ups, and choosing what Edge opens to.

CHAPTER 15

A Calmer New Tab Page (Turning Off the News Feed)

Every time you open a new tab, Edge shows its **new tab page**. Out of the box it's busy: a search box, a row of website shortcuts, sometimes a big background photo, and a scrolling **feed** of news stories, weather, ads and headlines from MSN, Microsoft's news service. Many people find the feed distracting or upsetting. You can turn it off.

Turn off the news feed

1. Open a new tab (**Ctrl + T**).
2. Click the **gear** icon near the top right of the new tab page. This is **Page settings**.
3. Look for a switch called **Show feed** and turn it off. (On some versions you'll instead see a **Content** choice; set it to **Content off**.)
4. While you're there, you can also turn off the background image and choose whether the row of quick links shows.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A new tab becomes a clean page with a search box and your shortcuts, with no surprise headlines, celebrity gossip or ads that look like news stories. Many people find Edge simply feels calmer.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why does the wording change?

Microsoft redesigns the new tab page often, and different computers can show different versions. If you don't see **Show feed**, look for anything in the gear menu about the feed, content or news and turn it off. You can't break anything by trying.

SCAM ALERT

Ads in the feed can look like news

Some stories in the feed are paid advertisements dressed up as articles, such as miracle cures, "one weird trick" money schemes or celebrity endorsements. If a story promises something too good to be true, or asks for your card number, close it. Turning the feed off removes the temptation.

CHAPTER 16

Shopping Pop-Ups, the Sidebar and Other Extras

Over the years Edge collected a lot of extra features. Several were recently changed or removed, which is good news if you prefer things simple. Here's where things stand as of November 2026.

Shopping and coupons

Edge once had its own shopping button that popped up coupons and price comparisons. Microsoft has retired the Coupons feature and moved what's left of shopping help, such as price comparison, price history and cashback, into Copilot. The separate shopping icon is being phased out, so you're less likely to see shopping pop-ups than before.

TIP

Still seeing shopping suggestions?

Open **Settings** and type "shopping" in the search box at the top. If your version still has a shopping switch, you'll find it there and can turn it off.

The sidebar

Some Edge windows had a narrow strip of app icons down the right side, called the **sidebar**. Microsoft has been retiring it during 2026: new apps can no longer be added to it, and the remaining ones are being removed. If you still see a strip of icons on the right, open **Settings**, type "sidebar" in the search box, and turn off the switch that always shows it. Removing the sidebar does not affect the Copilot button.

Collections

As covered in Chapter 11, **Collections** was removed starting with Edge 149 in June 2026. Use favorites instead.

Extensions you didn't add

An **extension** is a small add-on program that runs inside Edge. Some are helpful, like a password manager. Others sneak in with free downloads and fill your screen with ads or change your search engine. To check:

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Extensions**, then **Manage extensions**.
2. Look at the list. If there's anything you don't recognize or remember adding, click **Remove**.
3. If you're not sure, turn its switch off for a few days instead. If nothing you need stops working, remove it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Fewer extras means fewer things popping up, a faster Edge and fewer ways for a sneaky add-on to show you ads.

CHAPTER 17

Stopping Website Notifications

Have you seen little boxes pop up in the corner of the screen from a website, even when you weren't on that site, or even when Edge was closed? Those are **website notifications**. A website asks "Show notifications?" and if anyone clicks **Allow**, it can keep sending messages. Scam websites use them to send fake virus alerts. You can stop any of them.

Block one website's notifications

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Privacy, search, and services**.
3. Click **Site permissions**, then **All sites**.
4. Click the website that's bothering you.
5. Next to **Notifications**, choose **Block**.

Do it from the website itself

If you're on the website, click the icon at the left end of the address bar (**View site information**), choose **Permissions for this site**, and set **Notifications** to **Block**.

TIP

Stop websites asking at all

In the same **Site permissions** area there's a **Notifications** page where you can turn off the switch that lets sites ask to send notifications. Then no website can even ask.

HEADS UP

Pop-ups and notifications aren't the same thing

A **notification** appears in the corner of the screen, outside Edge. A **pop-up** is a new window or tab a website opens. Chapter 18 covers pop-ups. If you're getting scary corner messages about viruses, it's almost always a website notification someone allowed by accident; block it here.

CHAPTER 18

Blocking Pop-Ups

A **pop-up** is an extra window or tab that a website opens on its own. Edge blocks most of them automatically. Here's how to make sure that's still turned on, and how to allow pop-ups for the one website that genuinely needs them, such as a bank statement or a doctor's portal.

Check the pop-up blocker is on

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Privacy, search, and services**, then **Site permissions**.
3. Under **Content**, click **Pop-ups and redirects**.
4. Make sure the setting is **Blocked (recommended)**.

Allow pop-ups for one trusted site

On that same **Pop-ups and redirects** page there's an **Allow** list. Click **Add** next to it and type the website's address, for example your bank's. Only add websites you know and trust.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **Some ads can't be blocked**
>
> Ads that are drawn inside the web page itself aren't pop-ups, so the blocker can't stop them. If a page is crowded with ads, it's usually that website, not Edge. If ads appear on *every* website, check your extensions (Chapter 16).

CHAPTER 19

Choosing What Edge Opens To (Start-Up and Home Page)

You can decide what you see when Edge first opens: a clean new tab, the tabs you had open last time, or a page you choose, such as your favorite newspaper.

Choose what Edge opens with

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Start, home, and new tabs**.
3. Under **When Edge starts**, choose one: **Open the new tab page**, **Open tabs from the previous session**, or **Open these pages**.
4. If you picked **Open these pages**, click **Add a new page** and type the address, such as **weather.gov**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

"Open tabs from the previous session" means you pick up exactly where you left off yesterday. "Open these pages" means your morning news or email is waiting the moment Edge opens.

Add a Home button

On the same **Start, home, and new tabs** page, look for the **Home button** section. Turn on **Show home button on the toolbar** and type the page you want it to take you to. A small house icon appears next to the Refresh button. Click it any time to go "home."

HEADS UP

If your start page changed by itself

If Edge suddenly opens to a website you never chose, or your searches go through an unfamiliar site, an extension or a program you downloaded may have changed it. Choose your start page again here, then check your extensions (Chapter 16). If it keeps changing back, that's a good time to call for help.

PART 6

Everyday Tools

Letting Edge remember your passwords, finding the things you download, having pages read out loud, and the privacy settings worth knowing.

CHAPTER 20

Passwords: Letting Edge Remember Them for You

Edge has a built-in **password manager**: a locked list of your website passwords, kept in your Microsoft account. When you sign in to a website, Edge offers to save the password. Next time, it fills it in for you. This is called **autofill**.

Saving a password

1. Sign in to a website the usual way, typing your email and password.
2. Edge shows a small box near the top right asking whether to save the password.
3. Click **Save** if it's your own computer. Click **Never** for a website you don't want saved.
4. Next time you visit that website, click in the sign-in box and choose your saved account from the little list.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You no longer have to remember dozens of passwords or keep them on a sticky note by the monitor. And because Edge only fills a password on the real website it was saved for, it won't fill it on a look-alike scam site, which is a quiet extra warning sign.

Seeing your saved passwords

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Type **passwords** in the search box at the top and open the **Passwords** page (on some versions it's under **Profiles** > **Passwords**).
3. You'll see a list of websites and usernames. To see a password, click the eye icon next to it. Edge will ask for your Windows PIN, fingerprint or password first, to make sure it's really you.

HEADS UP

Anyone who can open your computer can open your passwords

Edge asks for your Windows PIN before showing a password, so keep that PIN to yourself, and lock the computer (press the **Windows** key and **L**) when you step away in a shared space. Each person in the house should have their own Windows account or Edge profile (Chapter 4).

Let Edge suggest strong passwords

When you create a new account on a website, Edge may offer a **suggested strong password**, a long jumble of letters and numbers. If you accept it, Edge saves it for you, so you never have to type or remember it. Edge can also warn you when one of your saved passwords has turned up in a known data leak, so you know to change it.

Coming from Microsoft Authenticator?

Some people used the **Microsoft Authenticator** phone app to fill in passwords. Microsoft ended that in August 2025. The passwords themselves weren't lost: they stayed in your Microsoft account and are available in Edge, on your computer and in the Edge app on your phone. Saved payment cards were not carried over. Authenticator still works for approving sign-ins and for passkeys.

SCAM ALERT

Edge will never ask for your password by phone or email

Microsoft, your bank and Edge will never call, text or email asking you to read out a password or a sign-in code. If someone does, it's a scam, even if they know your name. Hang up and call the company on a number you look up yourself.

GOOD TO KNOW

Already use another password manager?

If you use Apple's Passwords, Bitwarden, 1Password or similar, that's fine. You can tell Edge not to offer to save passwords (search Settings for "offer to save passwords") so you don't end up with two different lists.

CHAPTER 21

Downloads: Finding What You Saved

When you **download** something, such as a PDF bill, a photo someone sent you, or a form to fill out, Edge copies it from the internet onto your computer. Here's how to find it again.

Right after downloading

A small **Downloads** panel drops down near the top right of Edge when a download finishes. Click the file's name to open it. Or click the folder icon next to it to see where it's saved.

Later on

1. Press **Ctrl + J**, or click the three dots (…) and choose **Downloads**.
2. Your recent downloads are listed, newest first. Click one to open it.
3. Or open **File Explorer** (the yellow folder on the taskbar) and click **Downloads** on the left. That's where Edge saves things unless you've told it otherwise.

Choose where downloads go, or be asked each time

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**, then click **Downloads**.
2. Next to **Location**, click **Change** to pick a different folder, such as Documents or your desktop.
3. Or turn on **Ask me what to do with each download** if you'd like Edge to check with you every time.

HEADS UP

The fake "Download" buttons

Websites that offer free programs, free movies or "driver updates" often surround the real link with big green **Download** buttons that are actually ads. Only download programs from the company's own website or the Microsoft Store. If Edge warns that a file "isn't commonly downloaded" or "could harm your device," believe it, and choose **Delete**.

TIP

A clean Downloads folder

The Downloads folder fills up over the years. It's safe to delete old things you no longer need from it. Anything important, like tax papers, is better moved into your Documents folder.

CHAPTER 22

Read Aloud and Easier Reading

Edge can read web pages out loud to you in a natural-sounding voice, and it can strip a cluttered page down to just the words, in big clear print. These are two of Edge's nicest features, and they're free.

Have a page read to you

1. Open the article or page you'd like to hear.
2. Right-click any empty spot on the page and choose **Read aloud**. (Or press **Ctrl + Shift + U**.)
3. Edge starts reading from the top, highlighting each word as it goes.
4. A small bar appears at the top of the page with **Pause**, skip buttons and **Voice options**, where you can choose a different voice and make the reading slower or faster.
5. Click the **X** on that bar to stop.

TIP

Read just one part

Select (highlight) a paragraph with the mouse, right-click it and choose **Read aloud selection**. Edge reads only that part.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Tired eyes get a rest. You can listen to a long article while you fold laundry, follow a recipe hands-free, or have a medical page read slowly so nothing is missed.

Immersive Reader: just the words

On many articles, Edge shows an **Immersive Reader** icon (it looks like a little open book) in the address bar. Clicking it (or pressing **F9**) opens **Immersive Reader**, which hides the ads, menus and pop-ups and shows only the article's text and pictures. From there you can make the text bigger, change the background color and spacing, and use Read aloud. Click the icon again, or press **F9**, to go back to the normal page.

GOOD TO KNOW

Not every page has it

Immersive Reader works best on articles and stories. On shopping pages, sign-in pages and other busy pages, the icon may not appear. Read aloud still works, though.

CHAPTER 23

Privacy Settings and Tracking Prevention

As you browse, many websites and advertisers try to keep track of what you look at, so they can show you ads. Edge has built-in **tracking prevention** that blocks a lot of this. It's on already; here's how to check it and the other privacy tools worth knowing.

Check tracking prevention

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Privacy, search, and services**.
3. Find **Tracking prevention** and make sure it's turned on. You'll see three levels.

Level	What it means
Basic	Blocks only the worst trackers. Fewest websites break, but the least protection.
Balanced	The usual setting and a good choice for most people. Blocks trackers from sites you haven't visited, and most websites still work normally.
Strict	Blocks the most. Some websites, videos or sign-ins may not work properly; if a site acts up, try Balanced.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Fewer companies following you around the web, and fewer of those "how did it know I looked at shoes?" ads. On Balanced you get that without websites breaking.

Clear your browsing history and cookies

Cookies are small notes websites leave on your computer, mostly to remember that you're signed in or what's in your shopping cart. Clearing them can fix a website that's acting strangely, but it also signs you out of websites.

1. Press **Ctrl + Shift + Delete** (or open Settings and search for "clear browsing data").
2. Choose a **Time range**, such as the last hour or all time.
3. Tick what to clear. If you only want to fix one misbehaving website, cookies and cached images are enough. Leave **Passwords** unticked unless you really mean to erase them.
4. Click **Clear now**.

InPrivate browsing

An **InPrivate** window doesn't keep a history of where you went once you close it. Open one with **Ctrl + Shift + N**, or from the three-dots menu. It's handy for planning a surprise gift on a shared computer, or when you use a friend's computer to check your email.

HEADS UP

Private doesn't mean invisible

InPrivate only stops *this computer* from remembering. The websites you visit, your internet company and, on a work computer, your employer can still see what you do. And InPrivate doesn't protect you from scams or viruses.

PART 7

Staying Safe and in Charge

What to do about fake virus warnings, how Edge's scareware blocker helps, and how to choose (and keep) the browser you want.

CHAPTER 24

Fake Virus Warnings and the Scareware Blocker

This is the most important chapter in this guide. One of the most common scams aimed at older adults starts in the web browser: a page suddenly fills the whole screen, an alarm sounds or a voice speaks, and a message says your computer is infected, "locked" or "hacked," and that you must call Microsoft (or Windows Defender, or Apple) right away at a phone number on the screen. It looks terrifying. It's fake. This kind of page is called **scareware**.

SCAM ALERT

The truth about these warnings

Real Microsoft error and warning messages never include a phone number to call. Microsoft does not lock your computer and ask you to phone for help. Anyone who answers that number will try to get remote access to your computer, your bank details, or payment by gift card, wire or cryptocurrency. Never call the number, never let them onto your computer, and never pay.

What to do, calmly, in order

1. **Don't call the number** and don't click anything on the page, including buttons that say "OK" or "Cancel."
2. **Leave full screen** by pressing the **Esc** key (top-left of the keyboard), and hold it for a second or two.
3. **Close Edge**: press **Alt + F4**. If Edge won't close, press **Ctrl + Shift + Esc** to open Task Manager, click **Microsoft Edge**, and click **End task**.
4. **Still stuck?** Hold the computer's power button until it turns off, wait a moment, and turn it back on. It's safe.
5. When Edge reopens, **don't restore** the tabs if it offers; open a fresh new tab instead.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing these steps turns a frightening moment into a 30-second chore. The page can't hurt your computer on its own; the danger is only in calling the number or letting someone in.

Edge's scareware blocker

Edge has a built-in defense against exactly this trick, called the **scareware blocker**. When it spots a page that looks like a tech-support scam, it pulls Edge out of full screen, stops the blaring audio, and shows a calm warning page instead, with a small picture of what the scam page looked like. From there you can close the page safely. Microsoft says it checks pages on your own computer and doesn't send screenshots off it.

Check that it's turned on

1. Click the three dots (…) and choose **Settings**.
2. Click **Privacy, search, and services**.
3. Scroll to the **Security** section.
4. Make sure **Scareware blocker** is turned on.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **Why you might not see the switch**
>
> The scareware blocker is on by default on most Windows computers and Macs that have enough memory and processing power. On some very low-powered computers it isn't available, and the switch won't appear. In that case, the steps above are your protection, and a call to someone you trust is never a bad idea.

If you already called, or let someone in

It happens to careful, intelligent people every day; the scammers are professionals. If you called the number, gave remote access, or paid anything:

- Turn off the computer's Wi-Fi or unplug its internet cable, so they can't stay connected.
- Call your bank or card company on the number on the back of your card and tell them what happened.
- From another device, change your email and Microsoft account passwords.
- Report it to Microsoft at **microsoft.com/reportascam**, and to the FTC at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**.
- Have someone you trust check the computer for remote-control programs the scammer may have installed.

FROM BILL

This is exactly what I'm here for

If a scareware page got the better of you, call me at (330) 200-8042. I'll check the computer for anything the scammer left behind, help you lock down your accounts, and there's no judgment, ever.

GOOD TO KNOW

More on this

Our separate guide, Pop-Ups and Fake Virus Alerts, goes deeper into every kind of scary pop-up on computers and phones.

CHAPTER 25

Making Edge Your Default Browser (or Not)

Your **default browser** is the one Windows uses automatically when you click a link in an email, a document or a message. You get to choose. Some people want Edge; others prefer Chrome or Firefox. Either is fine.

Make Edge your default on Windows 11

1. Click **Start**, then **Settings** (the gear).
2. Click **Apps**, then **Default apps**.
3. In the search box, type **Edge** and click **Microsoft Edge**.
4. Click **Set default** at the top.

From inside Edge you can also open **Settings** > **Default browser** and click **Make default**, which takes you to the same place.

Prefer a different browser?

Follow the same steps, but in step 3 search for the browser you want, such as **Google Chrome**, and click **Set default** there. Edge stays on the computer either way (it's part of Windows, and some Windows features still open in it), but your links will open in your chosen browser.

HEADS UP

"Switch back to Edge?" messages

After you choose another browser, Edge or Windows may occasionally suggest switching back, and Chrome may ask you to make it the default too. These are sales pitches from the companies, not warnings. You can safely click **No**, **Not now** or **Keep** the browser you've chosen. Nothing is wrong with your computer.

GOOD TO KNOW

Windows 10

On Windows 10 it's **Start** > **Settings** > **Apps** > **Default apps**, then click the browser shown under **Web browser** and pick the one you want.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Every link you click, in email, in Word, anywhere, opens in the browser you know, with your own favorites and passwords, instead of a strange-looking one.

GOOD TO KNOW

Using Chrome instead?

Our separate Google Chrome guide covers that browser step by step. Most ideas in this guide, such as tabs, favorites (called bookmarks there) and the pop-up blocker, work much the same way.

PART 8

Edge on Your Phone

Using Edge on an iPhone, iPad or Android phone, with the same favorites and passwords as your computer.

CHAPTER 26

Getting Edge on Your Phone or Tablet

Edge isn't only for Windows. There's a free Edge app for iPhone, iPad and Android phones and tablets. If you use Edge on your computer and sign in to both with the same Microsoft account, your favorites and saved passwords appear on your phone too. You don't have to use it, though: Safari on an iPhone and Chrome on an Android phone are perfectly good browsers.

Install it

1. On an iPhone or iPad, open the **App Store**. On an Android phone, open the **Google Play Store**.
2. Search for **Microsoft Edge**. Check that the developer shown is **Microsoft Corporation**.
3. Tap **Get** (iPhone) or **Install** (Android). It's free.
4. Open Edge and, when it asks, sign in with the same Microsoft account you use on your computer.

SCAM ALERT

Only the real app

Install Edge only from the App Store or Google Play, never from a link in a text message or a pop-up that says your phone's browser is "out of date." The real Edge is free and has no in-app "security upgrade" to buy.

Finding your way around

On a phone, Edge puts most of its buttons along the bottom of the screen, where your thumb can reach them. You'll find a button to see your open tabs (a square with a number in it, showing how many are open), and a menu button (three lines or three dots) that holds **Favorites**, **History**, **Downloads** and **Settings**. Tap the address bar at the top or bottom to type a website or search.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The websites you saved on your computer are right there on your phone when you're out, such as your pharmacy, your bank or the library, without saving them twice.

A calmer new tab page on your phone

The phone app also shows a news feed on new tabs. To turn it off, open the menu, tap **Settings**, then look for **New tab page** and switch the news feed off. Wording varies a little between iPhone and Android.

GOOD TO KNOW

Copilot on the phone

The phone app has a Copilot button too. As of November 2026 there doesn't appear to be a switch to hide it on phones, so you can simply ignore it if you'd rather not use it.

CHAPTER 27

Passwords and Favorites on Your Phone

One of the best reasons to use Edge on a phone is that it can fill in the passwords you saved on your computer, inside other apps as well as websites. That's especially useful since Microsoft Authenticator stopped filling passwords in 2025 and pointed people to Edge instead.

Make sure your passwords are there

1. Open Edge on your phone and make sure you're signed in (tap the menu, then your profile picture or **Settings**).
2. In Edge's settings, look for **Privacy and security** or **Passwords** (the name varies a little by phone).
3. You should see the same saved passwords as on your computer. If the list is empty, check that sync is on for passwords, both here and on your computer (Chapter 4).

Let Edge fill passwords in other apps

Phones let you choose one or more password services that can fill in sign-in boxes across all your apps. To use Edge:

- **iPhone or iPad:** open the phone's **Settings** app and search for **AutoFill**. In the AutoFill & Passwords page, turn on **Edge** in the list of apps that can fill passwords.
- **Android:** open the phone's **Settings** app and search for **autofill**. Choose Edge as your autofill or password service. Menu names differ between Samsung, Google Pixel and other phones.

HEADS UP

Lock your phone

If your phone fills in passwords, anyone holding your unlocked phone can sign in as you. Make sure your phone has a passcode, fingerprint or face unlock turned on.

Favorites on the phone

Tap the menu and choose **Favorites** to see the same folders and favorites as on your computer, including the favorites bar folder. To save the page you're on, tap the menu and look for the star or **Add to favorites**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Save a password once on your computer, and your phone knows it too. Fewer forgotten passwords, fewer "reset your password" emails, and fewer locked accounts.

PART 9

When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

An honest word about when a hand is worth it, and one page that sums up the whole guide.

CHAPTER 28

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so you can do nearly everything in it yourself. But some days it's simply easier, and calmer, to have someone patient sit beside you. Here's my honest advice on when a call is worth it.

Times it's well worth a call

- **A scary pop-up got through**, and especially if you called a number, let someone onto your computer, or paid anything (Chapter 24). Sooner is better.
- **Edge keeps changing by itself**: a start page or search engine you didn't choose, ads on every website, or extensions you don't recognize.
- **Moving to a new computer** and wanting to be sure your favorites and passwords come with you.
- **Setting things up once, properly**: favorites bar, a calm new tab page, Copilot hidden, passwords saved and synced to your phone.
- **Your saved passwords or favorites seem to have disappeared**, or you can't sign in to your Microsoft account.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace, either in your home here in Portage County or over a remote session where I can see your screen (only when you invite me, and you can end it any time). I have 30+ years of professional experience, and I explain what I'm doing in plain words as I go, so you're more confident afterward. This kind of browser and computer help is part of my **Computer Help** service.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042** or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is $49 remote · $99 in your home. This guide is yours to keep and share, and no question is too small.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may meet Sophie

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you may be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time. The actual help always comes from me.

SCAM ALERT

How to tell it's really me

I'll never pop up on your screen, and I'll never call you out of the blue about a virus. You reach me, at the number above, when you want help. Anyone else claiming to be "tech support" is not.

Thank you for reading. Take your time, click around, and remember: you can't break it. I'm only a phone call away.

— Bill

CHAPTER 29

Your Microsoft Edge Cheat-Sheet

The whole guide on one page. Print it and keep it by the computer.

The handiest shortcuts

Press	To
Ctrl + Shift + T	Bring back the tab (or window) you just closed
Ctrl + T / Ctrl + W	Open a new tab / close this tab
Ctrl + D	Save this page as a favorite
Ctrl + Shift + B	Show or hide the favorites bar
Ctrl + H	History: pages you've visited
Ctrl + J	Downloads
Ctrl + plus / minus / 0	Make the page bigger / smaller / normal
Ctrl + F	Find a word on this page
Ctrl + Shift + U	Read this page aloud
Alt + F4	Close Edge (use it on a scary pop-up)

Where things are

I want to	Go to
Turn off the news feed	New tab > gear (Page settings) > **Show feed** off
Hide Copilot	Settings > search "Copilot" > **Show Copilot button on the toolbar** off
What Edge opens to	Settings > **Start, home, and new tabs**
Saved passwords	Settings > search "passwords"
Notifications	Settings > Privacy, search, and services > Site permissions > All sites
Pop-up blocker	Settings > Privacy, search, and services > Site permissions > Pop-ups and redirects
Scareware blocker	Settings > Privacy, search, and services > Security
Default browser	Windows Settings > Apps > Default apps

Write it down once

Keep handy	
My Microsoft account email	_____
Where I keep my Microsoft account password	_____
My Windows PIN is kept	_____
My browser of choice	_____
Websites on my favorites bar	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Scary warning or alarm? Don't call any number. Press **Esc**, then **Alt + F4**.
2. Closed a tab by mistake? **Ctrl + Shift + T**.
3. Favorites bar vanished? **Ctrl + Shift + B**.
4. A website acting strangely? Refresh it, then clear its cookies (Chapter 23).
5. Ads or a start page you didn't choose? Check **Extensions** and **Start, home, and new tabs**.
6. Edge itself acting up? Close it completely and reopen it, or restart the computer.
7. Still stuck, or worried? Call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

SCAM ALERT

The golden rule

Nobody real asks for gift cards, wire transfers, remote access or a code sent to your phone. When in doubt, close the page or hang up, and call back on a number you looked up yourself.