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This Week's Top Downloads [Download Roundup]

- [Chrome OS Virtual Machine Build Ready for Your Testing \(All Platforms\)](#)
If you're aching to try out Chrome OS after taking a glimpse earlier today, friendly power user Mark Renouf has compiled a VMware image of Chrome OS for testing out in your virtual machine environment.
- [Office 2010 Professional Beta Available for Download \(Windows\)](#)
Wanna give Office 2010's online document syncing, Windows 7 taskbar integration, and killer quick steps a go? Microsoft has thrown open the doors on a free beta of Office 2010 Professional-for those who can wait out the download.
- [Vitamin D Turns Your Web Cam into a Security Camera \(Windows/Mac\)](#)
<http://lifelifehacker.com/5404307/vitamin-d-turns-your-web-cam-into-a-security-camera>
- [Sumatra 1.0 is a Blazing Fast Replacement for Adobe Reader \(Windows\)](#)
The Sumatra PDF Viewer is a tiny, open-source, portable, and, most of all, lightning-quick replacement for the bloated Adobe Reader we've all learned to replace. It's only a 1.2 MB download, so why not give it a try?
- [Growl for Windows Updates to 2.0 \(Windows\)](#)
Open source notification system Growl for Windows has finally hit the 2.0 milestone, and with it comes a ton of new features that let you further customize the way you receive your pop-in corner notices.
- [Google Tasks Client Puts Tasks \(or Any Google App\) On Your Desktop \(Adobe Air\)](#)
We've written about a lot of desktop clients that are essentially site-specific browsers (SSBs), but free AIR client Google Tasks helps you consolidate your clients by allowing access to most Google apps in mobile form.
- [Fedora 12 Available for Download \(All Platforms\)](#)
The final release of Fedora's 12th edition, code-named Constantine, is available for download. Want much better Bluetooth, the latest network and chat apps, and CPU and graphics efficiencies? Grab a live CD or USB image and give it a go.
- [MyPorts Gives You Detailed Information on Open Ports \(Windows\)](#)
We've talked about ways to portscan your computer before, but if you're looking for a simpler solution to secure your connection, free utility

MyPorts shows you what open ports are being actively used and which may be unnecessary.

- Adobe Flash 10.1 Beta Brings Hardware Acceleration to Web Videos (Windows/Mac/Linux)

Adobe is offering up a "prerelease" of its inescapable Flash software, adding in GPU acceleration for H.264 video in Windows, multi-touch support, and bug fixes. Anyone with Adobe AIR apps can also grab a 2.0 prerelease of that platform.

- SyncToy 2.1 Update Speeds Up Windows File Syncing (Windows)

Microsoft's SyncToy is a simple but effective tool for mirroring folders across hard drive locations, networks, or USB devices. With a 2.1 update, it's been retooled to run faster, back up configurations, and handle errors much better.

Build Your Own 3D Camera Rig with Two Hacked Canon Cameras [Camera Hacks]

You don't need to spend a mint on the new 3D-capable camera from Fuji. You can throw two basic Canon point-and-shoot cameras together with \$20 worth of parts and make your own for 3D fun.

You'll need a pair of matching Canon PowerShot cameras that have modified firmware—the CHDK (Canon Hack Development Kit) we shared with you last year. You need two cameras in order to simulate the view from the left and right eye.

In addition to the two cameras you'll need about \$20 worth of hardware that includes a simple bracket made with basic hardware store parts and a USB trigger button with dual outputs. The USB trigger will take a tiny bit of electronics know-how but if you can wire a lamp you can turn an Altoids tin and a simple circuit board into a dual-trigger for your 3D camera rig.

Once you've got the camera and trigger assembled you're in business on the taking-the-pictures side of things. On the post-processing side of things you'll need to offset the image with proper coloration for 3D glasses—the most popular tool is a free application called StereoPhoto Maker. Using StereoPhoto Maker you can combine and tweak your images for maximum 3D effect. Check out the full tutorial at MaximumPC for a detailed build guide and lots of photos.

Have experience with 3D photography or video? Let's hear about it in the comments.

[How to Build Your Own 3D Camera Rig for Under \\$20 \[via Gizmodo\]](#)

Use a Spoon to Prevent Milk from Boiling Over [Food Hacks]

You're boiling milk, you turn your back for a moment, and—boom!—like Godzilla rising out of the bay, the milk is boiling over the pot and all over the stove. Prevent that mess with this simple hack.

First, courtesy of food blog [thekitchn](#), a little background on why milk boils over, unlike a pot of plain water:

As milk heats, the water in its structure starts evaporating from the surface. This concentrates the remaining fat and proteins into a thicker layer at the top of the pot. This layer eventually becomes so thick that water vapor rising through the milk can't break through very easily and gets trapped.

While this complex interaction of protein and fat is what makes milk awesome for things like the creamy froth that goes into cappuccinos, it's also the reason that it boils over. The quick and dirty fix for the problem is to put a long-handled spoon into the pot as it is heating. The spoon breaks the surface tension and the skim of milk fat and protein forming and allows the steam to escape without violently erupting. It's a trick your grandmother might have known, but not something she necessarily felt the need to pass on in the age of microwaves.

Not as popular as they were in generaitons past, you can also use a [milk watcher](#). A milk watcher is essentially just a glass, metal, or ceramic disc that helps to distribute the heat and steam in such a way to prevent film from forming on the surface. You can pick a glass one up for a few bucks at specialty food stores or online.

Have your own cooking tip or trick to share? Pleased to finally know why exactly your grandma used to throw a little metal UFO into the hot chocolate pot? Let's hear about it in the comments.

[Why Milk Boils Over...And How to Stop It! \[TheKitchn\]](#)

Make a Lighted Christmas Ball [Holidays]

If you're tired of the same old outdoor holiday decorating routine of simply wrapping a tree in lights, you'll definitely want to check out these lighted tree balls, a cheap and novel way to brighten your neighborhood.

The design of the tree balls is extremely simple. You take a length of chicken wire, roll it in a tube, fold the top and bottom edges in while shaping it into a ball, and wrap the whole affair in a strand of Christmas lights to create a glowing sphere you can suspend from a tree. While that part of it is interesting, more interesting is the story of how they became popular and the impact an entire street making and hanging them has had on their community. Watch the video below to see lighted Christmas balls being made and hear the story of the good they've done:

You can download the simple instructions for making them—in PDF format—by clicking [here](#). For more information about the balls check out the blog dedicated to them at the link below. Have experience making some? Would love to start a tradition like this in your neighborhood? Let's hear about it in the comments.

[Lighted Christmas Balls](#)

Fishbowl Brings Facebook to Your Desktop [Downloads]

Windows only: Fishbowl, the Facebook client demoed at Microsoft's introduction to Silverlight 4, is now available for download—and it adds quite a few new desktop features to the Facebook experience, including badges, a mini news feed, and more.

At first glance, Fishbowl looks a lot like a reorganized, slightly better looking version of Facebook. Along the top you have the usual sections of Facebook—Home, Profile, Photos, etc.—and on the left sidebar you have options for the window you're in. Navigating these sections is just like Facebook's web site, so it's pretty intuitive.

However, as a desktop client, it adds a few new features that really enhance Facebook's usability. It turns the photos section of Facebook into an almost iPhoto or Picasa-like interface—you can scroll through albums and view pictures as usual, but once in single-photo view you can zoom, view as a slideshow, save the picture, or even print them directly from Fishbowl. You can also upload your own pictures using Fishbowl's built-in photo uploader, which is as easy as dragging and dropping.

Notifications are also handled very nicely, as would be expected from a desktop app—Fishbowl's taskbar icon has support for badges when someone writes on your wall, sends you a message, or comments after you on a post. To view your notifications, you can go into the program and click on the notifications icon, or just right click on the taskbar icon and see them in the jumplist—and open them up in Fishbowl right from there. Also, the Aero Peek view has small buttons that allow you to navigate directly to the Home, Friends, Profile, or Photos sections of Facebook in Fishbowl.

When you're not actively browsing through Facebook (hey, you have to work sometime), Fishbowl has a great mini-mode window that shows you the most recent status update on your news feed—you can also scroll through the last 200 or so entries to catch up if you stepped away—but it's a nice way to keep your news feed open while you're doing other things.

The only issue I had with the client is that in full view mode, some pages (the news feed especially) are a bit slow to load. Not slow enough to make me not want to use it, but slow enough that I tap my foot for a few seconds in mild boredom. Also, for some reason, the news feed view only shows the live feed; it won't show Facebook's new news feed (which attempts, and does a good job I might add, of giving you updates

for only the people you stay in contact with). It's definitely a great client, though, and a fantastic use of Silverlight (especially considering it was designed as a trial application to demo Silverlight). Until more people jump on the bandwagon and start making desktop clients for Facebook, it's definitely worth a look-see from avid Facebook users.

Fishbowl is a free download for Windows systems, requires Silverlight to use.

[Fishbowl](#) [via [Download Squad](#)]

Use a Waffle Maker to Roll Your Own Pizza Pockets [Clever Uses]

If you want to squeeze even more miles out your seemingly one-trick waffle iron, you can use it to roll your own homemade Hot Pocket knockoffs.

More than a few people have taken a long hard look at their waffle maker and said, "Certainly, you must be good for more than waffles." We've already shown you how you can use a waffle maker to crank out some quick cookies and make some great bacon, but now we're back to share how one munchie-driven Instructables user turned his into a homemade pizza-pocket maker.

You'll need a tube of crescent roll dough and whatever filling you want to use. The original author opted to put cheese and pepperoni inside and dip it into the sauce to minimize the mess, but you can put whatever you want into it. You simply unroll the dough, put the ingredient you want inside your pocket, and then fold over the remaining dough. You don't even need to grease the waffle iron, since the crescent roll dough is made to be used with an ungreased pan.

Check out the full tutorial at Instructables for additional photos and tips. Have a culinary hack of your own to share? Let's hear about it in the comments below.

[Waffled Pizza Pockets](#) [Instructables]

Top 10 Ergonomic Upgrades for Your Workspace [Lifehacker Top 10]

It's easy to forget about your body's needs when you're deep into your work or the net—until your body offers a painful reminder. Save your physical shell some strain with these cheap, customizable ergonomic workspace upgrades.

Photo by [IMG 3771 on Flickr - Photo Sharing!](#).

10. Elevate your laptop to eye level

Your neck can't text you to explain how annoying it is to have to keep looking down at your laptop. Over time it will let you know, though, in a nagging, painful way. If your laptop is your day-to-day work machine, elevate it to eye level using any one of a number of clever solutions. Perhaps one among our [Top 10 laptop stands](#) will do the trick, or a built-to-fit [DIY pipe stand](#). Any of them are better than imagining yourself as a hunched old man or woman, constantly warning the neighborhood kids to sit up straight and look ahead.

9. Mix up your positions with a standing desk

It's hard to slouch when you're not in a seat. To help your body benefit from your upright instinct, and give your lower body a break from sitting, work a standing desk into your workspace. You can go for it in a big way, like with this [handcrafted setup](#), stick with something as simple as a [\\$20 model](#) or a [surface on a storage rack](#). If you want to go really fancy, you could try a [treadputer](#) or something like [this adjustable desk](#). It doesn't have to be your only desk, either—just a break room for your butt.

8. Get better sleep support

How your back, neck, and joints fare over eight hours of work can be influenced by how they spent eight hours in bed. Give your body a better night's sleep by catching up on [Lifehack.org's pain and posture basics](#). According to the post, the standard, no-pain position to shoot for is "on your side, knees bent, pillow between the knees, and your head resting on a single pillow," or on your back with one pillow under your knees and one under your head. You might need to leave out an element

or two from that ideal if you've got a hard-set sleeping habit, but it's worth considering a switch-up. *Photo by [james.thompson](#). ([Original post](#))*.

7. Invest in a *real* mouse and keyboard

If you've stuck with your mouse and keyboard just because your desktop came with them, we feel for you. If you've been using a laptop at a desk without an external mouse or keyboard, we're in tears. Invest in the tools your hands spend thousands of hours on every year by perusing the [best mouse recommendations from Lifehacker readers](#) and their [ultimate keyboard picks](#). All of them are designed with a good hand feel and better functionality in mind. Consider your hand comfort worth five cents an hour? You'll amortize these puppies in no time.

6. Align yourself properly with your computer

Adam's had his problems with hand, wrist, and back pain from repetitive stress and other conditions at his workspace, and a few years ago, he decided to [set up a healthy, usable workspace](#) to get back in shape. His post is a front-to-back assessment of what healthy working spaces should include, but his basic sitting setup involves keeping your elbows bent near 90 degrees, keeping a mouse comfortably within reach of a keyboard, avoiding slouching, and keeping a monitor at eye level, between 18-28 inches from your face.

5. Build your own ergonomic desk from scratch

You don't have to have Bob-Vila-level woodworking skills to craft your own workspace—after all, college students have been laying doors on cinder blocks for years. To [make an actually ergonomic desk from medium-density fibreboard](#), you need two power tools (your neighbor has them if you don't), time enough to sketch and plan your cuts, and measurements to know how high you should set up the legs, so your monitor is at eye level and you've got just enough room for everything you're working with. When you're done, you can paint or stain it whatever color you'd like, and when your friends ask where you got that desk, well, you know the answer. ([Original post](#))

4. Use exercises to ward off RSI

You can do a lot to prevent stress and pain in your hands working at a computer all day, but you'll almost inevitably have bad days full of overly long hours, and, over the long haul, risk sidling yourself with repetitive strain injury (RSI). Percussionist David Kuckhermann knows a thing or two about repetitive wrist and forearm strain, as does [RSI expert Sherry Smith](#), and they both recommend and demonstrate a few simple exercises that can ward off and heal the effects of working your hands into knots. ([Original post](#))

3. Fine-tune your desk spacing

Are you the type that busts out the tape measure whenever you're putting anything up on the wall? For setting up your workspace with proper distances and heights between yourself and your computer tools, ergonomic goods firm Ergotron offers a [ergonomic workspace planner](#) that, once you enter your height, gives up the details on suggested seat heights, monitor heights and distances, and keyboard shelves. If you're thinking about working in a standing desk, they've got measurements for that, too. ([Original post](#))

2. Use software enforcers

It's great that you're dedicated to pushing out this project on time, but unless your deadline's right this hour and you need every second, you should be stepping back occasionally to give your wrists, eyes, and arms a rest—and maybe even read something off-screen, while you're at it. If mental reminders aren't enough, apps like [AntiRSI](#) and [Timeout](#) for Macs, and [Workrave](#) for Windows and Linux, force you, in differing levels of subtlety, to take a break and physically remove your hands from the keyboard every so often. (Original posts: [AntiRSI](#), [WorkRave](#), [Time Out](#))

1. Go easy on your eyes

Eye strain is particularly bad news for those who write (code, copy, or anything else) or assemble things on a computer all day—it hits you right in what feels like your brain, and makes concentration terribly hard. Two simple solutions are to [turn on ClearType and increase your monitor refresh rate](#) in Windows systems, or install a serious protection

scheme like EyeDefender. Reader's Digest suggests other easy eye fixes, like keeping your monitor *slightly* below eye level to bring less glare into your retinas. And simply using a darker desktop theme is often a nice first step toward reducing the amount of time you feel like you're staring into a flashlight with words written on it.

What improvements, big or small, have made the greatest difference in your workspace health? Pass on the knowledge in the comments.

Make a Wine Tote Out of Your Old Clothes [DIY]

Have an old t-shirt or skirt lying around? With little more than a pair of scissors and a sewing machine, you can turn your old clothes into a nifty wine tote for that bottle of Merlot you're giving to mom.

Practically any item of clothing will do, from football jerseys to old jeans. This video provides all the details on measurements, sewing techniques, and even how to hide a stain or tear on your soon-to-be wine tote. Spend a weekend making a few of these babies, buy a case or two of wine, and consider your holiday shopping done.

If you're not hauling or giving away bottles of wine, these bags are still pretty neat. What else could you use them for? Brainstorm in the comments.

[Via [Wines of Yadkin Valley](#)]

From the Tips Box: Gmail Remember the Milk, Touchpad Tricks, and Repelling Mosquitoes [From The Tips Box]

Readers offer their best tips for updating Remember the Milk with Gmail's canned responses, avoiding mouse jumps while typing with touchpads, and repelling mosquitoes with Listerine.

Don't like the gallery layout? Click [here](#) to view everything on one page.

About the Tips Box: Every day we receive boatloads of great reader tips in our inbox, but for various reasons—maybe they're a bit too niche, maybe we couldn't find a good way to present it, or maybe we just couldn't fit it in—the tip didn't make the front page. From the Tips Box is where we round up some of our favorites for your buffet-style consumption. Got a tip of your own to share? Add it in the comments or email it to tips at [lifehacker.com](mailto:tips@lifehacker.com).

Easily Send Tasks to Remember the Milk

Tote shares a tip that uses Gmail Labs' canned responses to send tasks to Remember the Milk:

Use Gmail's canned responses to easily create tasks from email in RTM. If you get an email that you want to turn into a task forward it to your RTM inbox address and use a canned response to direct specify the task. Put the email contents between the '—' and '-end-' to add it to the notes. Canned response:

List:

Priority:

Due:

Repeat:

Estimate:

Tags:

Location:

—

-end-

Wear Gloves to Stop Touchpad Annoyances

Photo by [Nessa Land](#).

Miguel tells us how he keeps his mouse from jumping on laptops:

If you're writing on a laptop, and you constantly find your palm brushing against the touchpad, thereby making your insertion point dance around, put on some thin knit gloves. It will keep incidental contact from registering on the touchpad. If that makes your fingers too thick for typing, or if you still want to be able to use the touchpad, just cut off the fingers.

Bypass Megavideo's Time Limitation

Luka shows us how to watch more videos on Megavideo:

I suspect that most of you use or have used Megavideo, an excellent video [sharing] service, however as most of [you] would know it does have an annoying time-limit on its videos to force payment out of you.

So the first thing you could use is this site <http://megastreaming.org/> all you need to do is type in the URL of your video in the provided space and it will generate a link without the time limit.

Illitmux is a handy Firefox plug-in that does the same thing as the previous website, basically what they have is a load of gold accounts and when [you] press the button they just stream you the video via the gold account. Here is the link [Illitmux](#)

Luka's original blog post can be found [here](#).

Use Listerine to Keep Mosquitoes at Bay

Photo by [Vox Efx](#).

[guanoguck](#) informs us of a household object that keeps mosquitoes away:

Mosquito Spray... I was at a deck party awhile back, and the bugs were having a ball biting everyone. A man at the party sprayed the lawn and deck floor with Listerine, and the little demons

disappeared. The next year I filled a 4-ounce spray bottle and used it around my seat whenever I saw mosquitoes. And voila! That worked as well. It worked at a picnic where we sprayed the area around the food table, the children's swing area, and the standing water nearby. During the summer, I don't leave home without it.

If you're spraying Listerine in the air around you, just be careful not to get it in your eyes. You can, however, open your mouth for a nice minty pick-me-up, though.

UPDATE: A number of you have mentioned that this myth has been debunked. Apologies for the false information and thanks to everyone who sent this in.

This Week's Most Popular Posts [Highlights]

This week we rounded up the best online backup tools and explained how you're backing up wrong, detailed how to build an excellent Boxee-based media center, and cured your various aches and pains with some simple home remedies.

- [Five Best Online Backup Tools](#)
Local backup is a useful and necessary part of securing your data against catastrophe, but with the advent of broadband and inexpensive online storage, you've got little reason to not back up critical files to the cloud as well.
- [You're Backing Up Your Data the Wrong Way](#)
Time and time again, people tell me that they've bought an external hard drive to back up their pictures, music, and documents. Great, right? Sadly, that's not always the case.
- [Build a Cheap But Powerful Boxee Media Center](#)
Adam thinks XBMC is the best media center around, but I roll with Boxee for its awesome streaming web content. Here's how I turned a relatively cheap yet powerful home theater PC into a DIY Boxee Box for my HDTV.
- [Pingtest Assesses the Quality of Your Internet Connection](#)
You'll find an abundance of tools to test your internet connection speed but what if you want to test the quality and reliability of the connection? Pingtest gives you feedback on your connection.
- [Increase the Quality of Cheap Vodka with a Water Filter](#)
Save yourself some money and improve the quality of a bottle of cheap vodka with a little at-home filtration.
- [Top 10 Homemade Remedies for What Ails You](#)
Feeling under the weather? Thinking—as you look around your office—that you might be soon? Hone your home remedy skill set with a look at 10 of our favorite DIY cures for illnesses and your body's annoyances.
- [Office 2010 Professional Beta Available for Download](#)
Windows: Wanna give Office 2010's online document syncing, Windows 7 taskbar integration, and killer quick steps a go? Microsoft has thrown open the doors on a free beta of Office 2010 Professional—for those who can wait out the download.
- [The Treehaus Workspace](#)
You won't find a law that says a workspace has to be in a gray fabric-

covered box or a white-walled room. Today's workspace proves that with the beautiful, airy openness of a childhood tree house.

- **Make a Moss Terrarium for Low-Maintenance Greenery**

If you want some greenery in your home or office but you're not too keen on, or skilled at, tending a high-maintenance plant, a moss terrarium is a hassle-free bit of greenery you practically have to try to kill.

- **Make Better, Less Messy Bacon in a Waffle Iron**

You love bacon, but cooking it in a pan is tough to time and leaves you with scalding-hot grease to dispose of. The microwave? Please. Food science miracle worker Alton Brown shows how a waffle iron makes the best bacon.

PTS Desktop Live Makes Performance Benchmarking Simple [Downloads]

If you want to put your computer through the paces and get some feedback and benchmarks, you'll be hard pressed to find a tool more packed with tests than the Phoronix Test Suite Live CD.

PTS Desktop Live is an Ubuntu Live CD with the Phoronix benchmarking suite preconfigured and installed. Reboot your machine with the CD in your drive—or on a USB drive—and you'll boot into the test suite with access to 52 tests and 10 profiles. The profiles are set up to help you stress test and benchmark based on what you'll be using the machine for.

The desktop interface and suite is set up so that even users unfamiliar with Linux can jump right in and start testing without having to do any special modifying or downloading of additional files. You can save your benchmark results or share the results online with the Phoronix Global benchmark sharing system.

Have a favorite benchmarking tool or Live CD packed with goodies? Let's hear about it in the comments.

[Phoronix Test Suite](#) [via [MakeUseOf](#)]

Twitter/Facebook Client Brizzly Open for Sign-Ups [Social Networks]

Brizzly, the web-based social media manager that ranked as one of our readers' favorite Twitter clients, has dropped the invite code requirement and is available for anyone to log into. It's still technically in "beta," but mostly to keep up the fairly rapid pace of feature development. [via TechCrunch]

Windows Surface Scanner Finds Bad Hard Drive Sectors [Downloads]

Windows: When your computer starts acting hinky and spitting out error messages, it's hard to know exactly where to begin to diagnose the problem. Windows Surface Scanner gives you a place to start.

This free utility takes a look at your hard drives and ferrets out any physical errors it finds, so you know what might be causing random crashes or system flakiness. Windows Surface Scanner won't fix damaged sector problems—it simply diagnoses them. Once you've figured out the issue, you can use the native Windows check disk tool to make repairs.

One important thing to note about this tool: If you start getting a lot of sector errors, stop scanning right away. Keep testing, and you might damage the hard drive you're searching.

We've recommended our [five best Windows maintenance tools](#), but what other diagnostic tools do you use to troubleshoot your computer when you feel there's something wrong deep inside? Let us know in the comments.

[Windows Surface Scanner](#) [Via [freewaregenius](#)]

MinimizeToTray Revived Puts Firefox in Your System Tray [Downloads]

Windows only: Firefox extension [MinimizeToTray Revived](#) is a replacement for the [popular MinimizeToTray extension](#) (which has since been abandoned and doesn't support Firefox 3 or later). The simple extension puts Firefox in your system tray with a click of your mouse or a keystroke.

Once you've installed the extension, Firefox will start minimizing directly to the system tray, though there are lots of choices in the options panel for how you would like to minimize the window—you can choose to minimize automatically, replace the close button with minimize, or even use a toolbar button instead. If you want to put Firefox in the system tray, it's definitely worth a look. [MinimizeToTray Revived](#) is a free download, works for Firefox on Windows.

[MinimizeToTray Revived](#) [Mozilla Add-ons via [How-To Geek](#)]

Hand Out Your Invites in the Google Wave Invitation Donation Thread [Google Wave]

In our continuing efforts to help as many of our readers get a chance to play around with Google Wave as possible, we're back again with our weekly Google Wave invitation donation thread. Note: Read the entire post carefully before commenting.

If you've got Wave invitations you're willing to donate, post a comment below, saying something like: "I've got 10 Wave invites; who wants one?" In that case, the first ten people to *reply* to that comment providing that generous soul with a means to invite you get invitations.

Here's the important part:

Do not start a thread unless you have invitations to hand out. These threads get unwieldy very quickly if we don't follow some ground rules. Despite that, we really want to help give our readers a chance to try Wave, so we're giving it a go anyway. Please, please only start a thread if you've got invitations. Don't just post your email address thirty times hoping someone will grab it. If you want an invitation, reply to someone who's offering one. Finally, it takes our interns hours to admin comments every day, and these threads wreak havoc on their efforts, so **if you don't already have an approved commenter account, please don't comment on this thread.**

Make sense? Good luck, and thanks to everyone who's donating invitations. If you do happen to secure an invitation, be sure to check out [The Complete Guide to Google Wave](#), Gina and Adam's comprehensive book on Wave.

Note: If you're posting comments but they aren't showing up on the post, that means you are not an approved commenter. How can you become an approved commenter? [Read our comment FAQ](#). In the meantime, please don't post any more comments on this thread asking for invitations if you're not an approved commenter.

Wallpaper Roundup: Turkey Time and Pumpkin Pie [Wallpaper Roundup]

Turkeys are being purchased, pie recipes dusted off, and the folding chairs are being dragged out from the basement. It's that time of year again—celebrate Thanksgiving with some fresh wallpaper for your computer.

We've rounded up some Thanksgiving and fall-themed wallpapers for you to browse through. If you have a great resource for holiday wallpapers or a few wallpaper-size pictures of your own to share, leave a comment with a link to the pictures and everyone can enjoy them. In the mean time, grab a new wallpaper from our gallery to put yourself in the Thanksgiving spirit.

Note: The "Full Size" link directly under the picture only shows you the full size of the sample image we uploaded for this gallery. You need to click on the name of the particular wallpaper in the right hand column to access the full range of sizes at the source site or click on "Direct Link to Largest Available Image" to jump right to the biggest size available—if the site allows linking.

Not keen on the gallery layout? See all the larger images on one page [here](#).

Happy Thanksgiving by DK Design Studio

[Direct Link to Largest Available Size.](#)

Thanksgiving by DK Design Studio

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Give Thanks! by Kevin Dooley

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Penguin Harvest = Bokeh Thanksgiving! by Amanda SG

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Gourd Harvest by Idle Type

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Fall Colors by Idle Type

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Horn-o-Plenty by Brooke Condolra

Direct Link not available, visit the main page by clicking on the site name above for additional sizes.

Thanksgiving 09 by Crucial Design

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Thanksgiving 08 by Cruciald Design

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Turkey by Push Me Pull You Designs

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Corn Harvest by mi9

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Thanksgiving Sides by mi9

[Direct Link to Largest Available Image.](#)

Give Wireless Charging Mats a Natural Wood Look [DIY Creations]

Wireless charging mats are a clever way to charge your gadgets without cords or power bricks, but a big black mat can easily stick out in any room. Instructables shows you how to make a more stylish wooden induction charger.

Instructables user jvalal has been working on altering the aesthetics of his [all-black power mat induction charger](#). First he removed the electronic guts from the unit, then mounted them into a routed-out piece of wood. He intentionally made the mat longer than he needed to, allowing space for his wallet and keys at the end of the night.

jvalal writes that the hardest part of the creation was getting the wood thin enough to make a positive lock on the charging coils below the surface— without going through the wood. The piece was finished off with felt feet, although we think a few coats of linseed oil would help keep the wood conditioned over time. Simply wipe on (preferably before the electronics are secured in place) and buff off the extra.

Are you into wireless charging? Or will you be sticking to your wall warts for a little longer? Sound off in the comments.

[Wood Induction Charger](#) [Instructables via [Make](#)]

YouTube Will Soon Block Access From Set-Top Devices [Media Center]

It won't affect your PS3, Wii, TiVo, or other licensed YouTube partners, but Google's streaming video service will start blocking API access to TV-connected devices as of Dec. 2. The COO of set-top box maker Popcorn Hour writes that the firm tried to negotiate with YouTube to retain the service, but YouTube/Google seems to be standing firm—just as the site starts to transition to 1080p video. TV-oriented apps will certainly find work-arounds—Boxee, for example, uses a Mozilla-based browser to stream otherwise blocked Hulu videos—but it's not a promising vision of the media center landscape. [Connected and Digital Media via Engadget]

TorrentFetcher Searches for Torrents from Your Desktop [Downloads]

Windows only: Most people use torrent sites like Mininova or The Pirate Bay to search for torrents online, but free program TorrentFetcher lets you search straight from a desktop program and quickly start the transfer in your BitTorrent client of choice.

Torrent sites offer a lot of information about the torrents they have available, but sometimes you just don't want to navigate to the site and look at all the annoying ads, or maybe you just want something a little simpler. TorrentFetcher is an easy solution, offering desktop search of btjunkie.org so you don't even have to open your browser.

While the program doesn't offer some of the really advanced information that web sites might, it is a quick, easy alternative that does offer some advanced options. Like most torrent sites, you can search by the usual predetermined categories such as Music, Movies, or Software and you can choose how many results show up in the window (up to 1,000). It even has green and red color coding for good and bad quality torrents, respectively. There is also an option to decide whether you want them to automatically start after downloading—that way, all you have to do is search, double-click on the torrent you want, and it will automatically open up in your default BitTorrent client.

TorrentFetcher is a free download, Windows only.

[TorrentFetcher](#) [via [gHacks](#)]

The 40/30/30 Rule Preps You for The Game of Life [Motivation]

When you've placed yourself where you need to be, kept at something past your initial doubts, and taken a risk at failing, you're running at 100 percent. Weblog The Simple Dollar suggests thinking of challenges that way—40/30/30—to stay motivated.

Photo by [martinhoward](#).

Financial blogger Trent Hamm at The Simple Dollar breaks it down:

What is the 40-30-30 rule? Simply put, it's an argument that when you prepare for anything in life, only 40% of the preparation is physical – the rest is mental. Thirty percent of preparation is technical skill and experience, and the second thirty percent is the willingness to take risks.

Trent's quick essay on how those ratios come into play, both day-to-day and on personal or career projects, launches off a [post at The 99 Percent blog](#), and is worth reading if you find yourself not exactly hitting your marks at getting up, getting into something, and sticking with it when it doesn't quite seem practical.

We always take these sorts of broad self-help guidelines with a grain of salt, but often they are helpful in examining how we approach work and life, which in itself can be a very helpful exercise. So how about you: Does risk stress you out and make you *more* anxious or do you find it motivating? What are some of your best tips for prepping for the challenges life throws at you? Talk about it in the comments.

[The 40/30/30 Rule](#) [Via [99%](#)]

Use an Over-Under Wrap to Keep Your Headphones Kink-Free [Headphones]

Headphones have a magic way of tangling themselves in inexplicably complicated knots. Many techniques for keeping headphones tangle-free work but they badly kink and over tighten them in the process. Use an over-under wrap for easy and cord-friendly storage.

Over at [HackCollege](#) they tested out a bunch of different cord-wrapping techniques with the goal of finding a technique that was easy to use, didn't impart kinks or curls to the headphone cord, stress the headphone jack, or require any fancy undoing to return the headphones to their natural state. They ended up using an over-under wrap held in place with a simple twist tie. Watch the video below to see it in action—you can jump to around the 1 minute mark to skip the intro and get right into the technique.

Have another cord-wrapping technique or tool that you think is a better solution? (We've always liked the [devil horns method](#).) Let's hear about it in the comments.

[Ultimate Earbud Wrapping Technique](#) [via [Instructables](#)]

Treat Yourself with a Healthy Dose of Open Thread [Open Thread]

You may have every corner of your work life streamlined, but that doesn't mean you don't still need a quick break from work after a long week. Take a little breather in our open thread.

Photo by [lepiaf.geo](#).

The open thread is your weekly opportunity to strike up conversations with your fellow readers on any topic that tickles your fancy, whether or not it has anything to do with Lifehacker. All you need is a commenter account to join, and if you don't have one already, getting one's a piece of cake. Happy Friday!

The Complete Guide to Google Wave Preview Edition PDF Available for Download [Announcements]

The preview edition of Gina and Adam's new book, *The Complete Guide to Google Wave*, is now available in PDF form for your offline, ebook-reading pleasure.

Google Wave is a young tool that's not terribly easy to understand for a lot of folks, but at least a couple of your Lifehacker editors are completely nuts for Wave and its potential. The DRM-free, 102-page personalized PDF of *The Complete Guide to Google Wave* is available for six bucks, but keep in mind that the content of our book will *always* be available for free at any time at <http://completewaveguide.com/>.

The preview edition is just the start. We plan to release the first edition of the guide in early 2010 as both a PDF and a softcover print book, with new editions to follow throughout the year as Wave evolves.

For a quick look at why we're so excited about Wave, check out Gina's keynote speech at the Web 2.0 Expo this week in NYC, and follow [@gwaveguide](#) on Twitter for a regular stream of useful Wave tips and for updates on the book. If you do decide to purchase the PDF, you have our sincerest thanks for supporting our little project, but as I said, it's always freely available on the web site. Beyond that, we're all ears for suggestions on how we can improve the guide in the comments.

[The Complete Guide to Google Wave Preview PDF](#)

Use a Paring Knife to Sharpen Your Vegetable Peeler [Kitchen]

It's important to keep your knives sharp for a safe and efficient kitchen, but it's easy to neglect the other bladed tools, like your vegetable peeler. Food weblog Chow shows how to keep a sharpener's edge with a paring knife.

By running the tip of a paring knife along each blade of your peeler, the metal-on-metal action will restore some of your blade's edge. Most don't even notice their peelers starting to dull, but once you give this tip a try you'll dig how much less resistance you'll have as you take on potato after potato, carrot after carrot, this holiday season.

The same trick can be applied to any metal grater or blade in your kitchen. If you have the patience, try sharpening up your box grater or cheese slicer. Hit up discount stores, as you can usually find paring knives right around the dollar mark, and you won't mind if they get roughed up a bit.

Do you have another tip for keeping non-knife edges sharp in the kitchen? Let us know in the comments.

[How Do You Sharpen A Vegetable Peeler? \[Chow\]](#)

ShopSavvy Prices and Locates Better Deals [Downloads]

Android/iPhone: ShopSavvy proved itself one of the most popular Android apps out of the gate, and it's easy to see why. Now on iPhones, the app lets you scan item barcodes, see who has it for less, and locate them.

Beyond the simple price comparisons via barcode scanning, ShopSavvy saves a history of items you've looked at, and can send price alerts when items drop below the prices you've already seen and given a casual "Meh" to. It locates the stores nearby that have your items for less, and allows you to save items you've scanned to wish lists. In other words, it harnesses all the cool things about the iPhone into a single app for smarter shopping.

Here's a demonstration of the app in action on an iPhone 3GS.

ShopSavvy is a free download, now for iPhone and Android models.

[ShopSavvy iPhone](#) [Big in Japan]

Lock in a Fixed Schedule to Keep Work-Life Balance [Time Management]

Being attached at the hip to your smartphone doesn't mean you're productive, just attached. The I Will Teach You To Be Rich blog showcases how three workers put a real fence around their work time and ended up more free.

Writer Ramit Sethi's first example, Jim Collins, might be familiar to those read up on productivity techniques as the author of *Good to Great*, and enthusiast of dividing up your time into percentages. His second case, Elizabeth Grace Saunders, seems a more familiar case: a copywriter who couldn't stop answering emails and working late hours. Her solution?

Saunders adopted a 40-hour a week schedule. This new structure had two immediate impacts. First, she found herself focusing only on the most important tasks. With only a few hours to spare on business development, for example, she couldn't justify wasting time with the small, ineffectual website tweaks and exploratory e-mails that used to keep her up late into the night. Instead she focused on the core activities that produced results, such as sales calls or the development of new products. The focus generated by this constraint ended up generating more results than her previous schedule, which was more expansive, but also more scattered.

The second impact was her discovery that she could teach her clients how to treat her.

The full post offers a lot of good links to explore, as well as more (hopefully) inspirational takes on firewalling your work time. Have you implemented your own actual, realistic deadlines and prospered from it? Tell us about it in the comments.

[Time management: How an MIT postdoc writes 3 books, a PhD defense, and 6+ peer-reviewed papers - and finishes by 5:30pm \[I Will Teach You To Be Rich\]](#)

KidsEatFor Helps Keep Your Dinner Bill Low [Food]

Pare down the bill for your next meal out by picking a restaurant where kids get special treatment with the help of web site KidsEatFor.

We've shared a resource with you before for [finding places that offer free meals to kids](#), but KidsEatFor is definitely a more sophisticated tool for finding free places to feed your band of french-fry grubbers. Plug in your zip code and it spits back a calendar with listings for every day of the week. Restaurants are flagged as locations where kids eat free or cheap and you can click on the bottom of each column for additional listings for each day when available.

If you search for your locale and the results are sparse, search for the nearest big city. Most likely kids-eat-free policies are throughout an entire restaurant chain and a quick phone call will confirm if the local spot participates. Have a money-saving or other kid-related hack? Let's hear it in the comments.

[KidsEatFor](#) [via [MakeUseOf](#)]

Fix Unread Gmail Favicons in Better Gmail 2 and Greasemonkey [Updates]

Firefox: Gmail recently made a few tweaks to its message count API, leaving tools like the favicon message indicators by [Eric Bogs](#) and [Peter Wooley](#), along with Gina's own [Better Gmail 2 Firefox extension](#), broken. Now they're fixed.

Bogs and Wooley, whose clever user scripts cleverly show your unread message count in your Gmail or Google Apps mail's browser tab icon, both updated their code to adapt to Gmail's API changes. Gina, whose Better Gmail 2 extension utilizes Bogs' and Wooley's scripts, has re-rolled those changes into her extension.

Those with Better Gmail 2 already installed should see update notices soon. If you're seeing only installation errors instead, hit the link for a direct (but non-updating) link. If you're rocking just Greasemonkey and one of these two scripts, head to one of their UserScripts.org pages and click "Install" to update your browser.

[Better Gmail 2's Favicon Unread Count Fixed \[Smarterware\]](#)

[Gmail Unread Message Count in Favicon for Greasemonkey](#)

[Gmail Favicon Alerts 3 for Greasemonkey \[UserScripts.org\]](#)

Office 2010 Mobile Available for Beta Download [Downloads]

Windows Mobile 6.5: If you're rocking a fairly new Windows Mobile phone, Microsoft offers a beta build of its portable Office applications until April 2010. That means free viewing and editing of Excel, Word, Powerpoint, OneNote, and other documents.

The app seems to require a touch interface, along with the 6.5 system, so it's not exactly meant to flood the mobile masses. Still, for those willing to put up with an occasional bug and goods you know will expire, it's a nice little upgrade. Launch the Marketplace app to grab the Office Beta, or read up on it at the link.

[Windows Office Mobile Beta \[Windows Marketplace\]](#)

Use Windows 7 Themes in Vista or XP [Themes]

Microsoft put far more work into the look and themes of Windows 7 than its previous operating systems. Pull down that design work into your non-7-system with Digital Inspiration's simple work-arounds.

You can't just grab the files from Windows 7's themes gallery and set them as your own. You can, however, use tools like [7-Zip](#) and [John's Background Switcher](#) to pull out each theme pack's files, install them, set them to rotate (*a la* Windows 7), and even get the sounds, cursors, and other elements running.

It's a bit more work than "Click to install," but it's also a new source of themes, wallpapers, and other modifications that are more than compatible.

[Download and Install Windows 7 Themes on your XP or Windows Vista Computer](#) [Digital Inspiration]

Chrome OS Virtual Machine Build Ready for Your Testing [Downloads]

If you're aching to try out Chrome OS after taking a glimpse earlier today, friendly power user Mark Renouf has compiled a VMware image of Chrome OS for testing out in your virtual machine environment.

While Chrome OS is far from ready for the regular user, lots of us are aching to play around a little with Google's young operating system. This virtual machine-friendly build looks like a good way to do just that, and you can grab it via BitTorrent now. From The Pirate Bay page:

This is a ChromeOS image converted to VMware .vmdk file.

It was built from instructions provided on the ChromiumOS developers site:

<http://sites.google.com/a/chromium.org/dev/chromium-os/building-chromium-os/build-instructions>

Built from sources retrieved on 11/19/2009, following the announcement of the opening of the ChromeOS source code.

Shared user password (for sudo, etc is 'chromeos')

If you give it a download and try it out, let's hear how it worked for you (and share any images you manage to grab) in the comments.

Update: Alternately, you can download a VMware build directly from web site gdgt as well, "no strings attached" (as long as you don't consider creating an account at gdgt and giving them your email address "strings").

ChromeOS [The Pirate Bay via ironicsans]

Best Screencasting Tool? [Hive Five Call For Contenders]

With the rise of broadband not only do we share pictures of our screens but full out video. This week we want to hear about your favorite tool for screencasting your virtual workspace.

Photo by [Tim Dorr](#).

Earlier this year we had a Hive Five focused on screen capture tools to find out your favorite tools for capturing static images. Now we're interested in finding out how you record screencasts on your computer to share things that aren't easily communicated with a simple screenshot.

Hive Five nominations take place in the comments, where you post your favorite tool for the job. We get hundreds of comments, so to make your nomination clear, please include it at the top of your comment like so: **VOTE: Screencasting Tool**. Please don't include your vote in a reply to another commenter. Instead, make your vote and reply separate comments. If you don't follow this format, we may not count your vote. To prevent tampering with the results, votes from first-time commenters may not be counted. After you've made your nomination, let us know what makes it stand out from the competition.

About the Hive Five: The Hive Five feature series asks readers to answer the most frequently asked question we get: "Which tool is the best?" Once a week we'll put out a call for contenders looking for the best solution to a certain problem, then YOU tell us your favorite tools to get the job done. Every weekend, we'll report back with the top five recommendations and give you a chance to vote on which is best. For an example, check out last week's [Five Best Online Backup Tools](#).

Remains of the Day: Doughnuts Into Cranberry Jelly Edition [For What It's Worth]

YouTube starts hitting 1080p resolution, courts start respecting work email privacy a bit, and cheap food gets the gourmet makeover.

- YouTube 1080p roll-out begins
If you're shooting something new, feel free to go as big as your storage card allows. If you've already waited out a giant upload, it might be available in pore-defining HD soon. [Download Squad]
- Some Courts Raise Bar on Reading Employee Email
Don't feel free to tell your friends how you really feel about your workplace just yet. Consider, however, whether your firm has clearly defined how and when they monitor your email—it might mean everything in court. [WSJ.com]
- GIMP To Be Removed From Lucid; F-Spot Has Challengers
It's big, it's fairly complicated, and most users just want to make simple edits to photos, so it's being dropped from future editions of Ubuntu in favor of apps like F-Spot. [OMG! UBUNTU!]
- Gmail Users Better-Connected, More Likely to Tweet than Members of other Webmail Services
A social media firm determines that AOL email users are the most likely to be Facebook members, Gmail-ers to be on Twitter, and Yahoo Mail senders on MySpace. Discuss amongst yourselves. [ReadWriteWeb]
- Sony In Talks With Mozilla?
To bring Firefox to the PS3, of course—not the other, possibly more fun vice-versa situation. Still, an intriguing rumor, especially if it involves streaming content. [PSInsider]
- Serve Fast Food on Thanksgiving
The creative food hacker behind FancyFastFood (which we've previously admired) shows Wired's How-To Wiki how to put together a Thanksgiving plate from assorted food that's terrible for you. [Wired How-To Wiki]

YouTube Adds Machine-Generated Automatic Captions [YouTube]

YouTube clips have previously allowed for captioning, but it was a system that was a little buggy and only worked from YouTube's site. That's all changed with the advent of machine-generated captions and auto-timing.

Google's automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology has been paired up with YouTube's caption system to create automatic captions for the majority of the videos that are uploaded (at the rate of 20 hours of footage every minute). It should cover the needs of your caption viewing needs, although they'll continue to streamline and improve this technology as things progress.

If you don't want to leave the captioning of your video to the hands of the YouTube caption system, they've also added an auto-timing function, which allows you to upload a simple text file to be read. The text will sync up with your video without any timing breaks or coding added to the file. The previous system of captioning was mainly user generated and required a little professional know how when it comes to coding and video editing—thus, most videos were caption-less, making them inaccessible to those with hearing impairments.

For those who aren't in need of captions, there's still an added bonus for you. With the advent of all the new text in association with what's on screen, it will make videos easier to search for and find, even if you don't know the title.

[Automatic Captions in YouTube](#) [The Official Google Blog]

LockThis! Password Protects Your Open Programs [Downloads]

Windows only: If you've ever wanted to keep a program safe from prying eyes but don't want to close it, free utility LockThis! will let you easily protect any open program, so that un-minimizing it requires a password.

LockThis! is extremely easy to use—to lock an application, all you need to do is press Ctrl while minimizing the window that you want protected. It will ask you for your admin password (which by default is LockThis! but can be changed from the admin window), and then keep the window minimized until you want it open again.

You can use your admin password for all protected programs, set a separate password for all programs, or specify the password on a per-program basis as you minimize them. It's up to you. It runs in the system tray, staying out of your way except to prompt for passwords—even if you try to open the admin window or exit LockThis!, it will prompt you for your admin password so no one can just shut it off.

LockThis! is a free download, Windows only.

[LockThis!](#) [via [Life Rocks 2.0](#)]

Sisimizi Organizes Your Game Catalog [Downloads]

Windows: Gaming is fun. Organizing all your personal video games isn't. Sisimizi takes the hassle out of managing your collection so you can get back to raiding villages and killing zombies.

Sisimizi Game Catalog is a free, open-source database application that supports classic and recent video game consoles. It retrieves game info from the internet, imports from other databases or formats, and even keeps track of games you've loaned out to friends. Sisimizi groups games by platform, year, or genre, and you can even tote it around on a thumb drive or USB stick.

Do apps like this help you manage your towering piles of video games or do you have a better method for keeping track of them all? Share your ideas in the comments. Sisimizi is a free download for Windows systems only.

[Sisimizi](#)

Shape Collage Online Makes Great Photo Collages in Your Browser [Photos]

Web application Shape Collage quickly turns your online photos into embeddable photo collages with nothing more than a few clicks. It's a interesting way to showcase your pictures online without a lot of work.

Making your own collage requires simply adding URLs to the individual photos, or in the case of sites like Flickr, simply adding in the URL that contains the photo—Shape Collage will do the rest, grabbing your photos from your Flickr, Picasa, Photobucket, or even a public Facebook page, and adding them into a collage of your choosing. Once the collage is generated, which just takes a few seconds, you'll be presented with an embeddable widget with each photo hyperlinked to the original image.

Shape Collage Online is free to use, though readers should note that you shouldn't use the online tool for private photos, since the collages are hosted on the Shape Collage servers—instead, you can just download the previously mentioned Shape Collage desktop application for any platform, and generate collages in image format.

[Shape Collage Online](#) [Shape Collage]

First Glimpse at Google Chrome OS [Chrome Os]

Google offered up everything but a finished Chrome OS today, releasing its source code and explaining how it's different than other operating systems. Here are the features, functions, and screenshots you'll want to know about.

Want the short version, sketched out on a notepad, uploaded as a video, and narrated with a carefree tenor? Here's Google's explanation:

Want the much more in-depth, screenshot-by-screenshot rundown of what was (not really) revealed? Check out [Gizmodo's live-blogged announcement](#).

When, on what, and how much?

Google released Chrome OS' source code today, but one of Chrome's lead engineers, Idan Avraham, said a finished Chrome OS arrives "about a year from today." They took pains to note that Google itself won't be offering Chrome OS as a download to install on any system you have. They're developing Chrome OS for machines with "specific reference hardware," as their machines will boot directly from those machines and skip a lot of the hardware checking steps that standard operating systems run through.

The developers didn't offer pricing hints or targets from hardware partners. They did say, however, that they intend to "push" manufacturers to release netbooks with larger keyboards and mousepads, and crisper resolutions, and devices will be released "in the price ranges people see today."

How fast is it?

From a single boot-up shown on a livecast, and some live demonstration, pretty darned fast. The lead developer cited a seven-second boot-up to a universal sign-on screen on an eeePC, and then to the desktop after another four seconds. It does this by working on specialized firmware, written for hardware Chrome OS' developers work with, and relying on a Google Chrome browser written specifically for the Chrome OS. It's also written exclusively to run on solid-state, or non-hard-disk, drives, with a minimal amount of locally-stored data.

What makes it different?

For you, the user, nothing entirely whole-cloth new. But a whole lot of interesting bits:

- **Utilizing multi-core CPUs and graphics chips for Chrome:** Your web browsing, video playing, and other activities inside Chrome OS' main browser will get a boost from hardware normally reserved for gaming and traditional applications.
- **Chrome (browser) on Chrome (OS) will be faster:** Faster than how it runs on your Windows, Mac, or Linux computer, anyways, because it's been re-tooled for this OS.
- **There are no "traditional" applications:** "Every application," according to Chrome's project head, "is a web application. There are no conventional applications. (Whatever you use), it's a webapp, it's a link, it's a URL."
- **Anyone can log in and use any Chrome OS netbook:** Since Chrome OS will presumably be tied to your Google account, you could easily jump on a friend's netbook and log in for your own email, documents, and other stuff.
- **Everything you use is online:** You probably guessed that—Gmail, Google Docs, Calendar, and other apps have had offline abilities for some time. But even the small notepad application in Chrome, and your particular Wi-Fi and system settings, are backed up to your Google account as well. You'll be able to store data offline using HTML 5's capabilities—but, then, you can do that with Firefox or Safari as well.

So, it's a Google OS for people obsessed with Google?

Not *exactly*. Avraham demonstrated the OS' ability to assign specific webapps to different files and links by clicking an .xls (Microsoft Excel) file, which then opened in Microsoft's online Office suite.

Will it ever arrive on laptops or desktops?

Eventually, assuming it gains any foothold in the market. Chrome's developers said their primary focus for the year, and the immediate future, would be netbooks, and that laptops and desktop releases would follow, without offering any specific time frame.

Will it print?

Oh, right—Avraham said "you will be able to print," but said the OS would take a "more innovative approach" to supporting printers. More to come.

So, how does Google Chrome OS strike you? Is it something you'd want on a netbook, or were you expecting something more? Share what you saw, and see coming, in the comments.

Before and After: The Loft Workstation [Featured Workspace]

It's bad enough having a super messy workspace, but when your workspace is lofted above the rest of your living space and all your cable clutter and your ugly desk become an eyesore something must be done.

Lifehacker reader [aloftindenver](#) lives, shockingly enough, in a loft in Denver. They've been cataloging their adventures in furnishing the loft—largely by creating their own designs and furniture—at their blog [A Loft In Denver](#). While we'd highly recommend reading over the entire blog, especially if you're into loft living and modern design, what really caught our eye is the amazingly sleek workspace they built from scratch.

The problem, as you can see in the above picture, was their workspace was in an area of the loft that was itself elevated above the rest of the space. Not only did they have a messy workspace with some out of control cables but the entire workspace was even uglier when viewed from below in the living space.

Rather than enclose the space and hide the cable clutter, which would decrease the openness of the loft, they opted to build an awesome workstation from scratch that maintains the airiness of the loft while hiding nearly all the cables. Besides the visible, but neatly displayed, cord for the monitors all the other cables are routed in a single bundle up behind the monitors on the wall and across the room tucked into the lip of one of the support beams. The cables go into a closet at the back of the office where the computers themselves are stored.

All you see sitting at the desk is the monitors mounted to the backstop, the open desk, and the keyboard tray. It's definitely as "cordless" as a workspace that relies on actual cords can be.

Check out the pictures below to peek at the before and after of the workspace. If you want to read more about the construction of the workspace and see step-by-step pictures of the workspace in progress, you can see all the workspace-related entries on their blog [here](#).

If you have a workspace of your own to show off, throw the pictures on your Flickr account and add it to the [Lifehacker Workspace Show and Tell Pool](#). Include some details about your setup and why it works for you, and you just might see it featured on the front page of Lifehacker.

Before and After: The Loft Workstation [Lifehacker Workspace Show and Tell Pool]

DIY Cameraphone Zoom and Lighting Lens [DIY]

If the iPhone's zoom just isn't doing it for you, and you prefer a higher-quality optical zoom to lesser digital zoom apps, DIY web site Instructables details how to make a contraption that'll help you achieve just the frame you're looking for.

While this particular how-to is built for an iPhone, the idea can be easily used (or adjusted) for any phone with a camera. For this project, you'll need a jar lid, a suction cup, and some old camera lenses—generally, if you're a camera buff, you may have some scrapped cameras around that you can steal these from. If you want to add a light source, too, you'll need a few more electrical supplies. The project also requires a bit of drilling and soldering, but nothing seasoned DIY vets like yourselves can't handle. Hit the link for the step-by-step guide.

[iPhone Magnifying Camera Mod \[Instructables\]](#)



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