

April 2025

This is another informative newsletter to help keep you up to date about various computer and technology related trends and topics.

Microsoft 365 Subscription Price Increase

Microsoft has increased the price of their Microsoft 365 (Office) online subscription plans recently. A yearly subscription to Microsoft 365 Personal is now \$159 and Microsoft 365 Family is now \$179. Previously prices were \$109 and \$149 respectively. Retail boxed versions are hard to find now, which were slightly cheaper. You may need to purchase Microsoft 365 either digitally via a retail store or directly from Microsoft by adding an auto payment option to your Microsoft Account for yearly direct debit. I currently have retail boxed versions available.

Microsoft 365 and Office Apps End-of-Support on Windows 10

Microsoft 365 and Microsoft Office (2016 to 2024) apps will no longer be supported on Windows 10 after it reaches end of life on the 14th of October 2025. Apps include Word, Excel, Outlook (classic), PowerPoint, Publisher and Access. Your options are either upgrading to Windows 11 (if supported by the hardware in your computer), using a free online web-based version like Microsoft 365 (free) or Google apps, or by purchasing a new computer.

Microsoft Outlook (new) forced onto your PC

The new free version of Microsoft Outlook, simply called Outlook (new), has been force installed onto many computers recently. This new free version is not a replacement for the more advanced Outlook (classic) app. If you currently use Outlook (classic), do not switch over to this version as it's an inferior app, regardless of its name.

If you've been switched over, simply open Outlook (new) and toggle the 'try the new Outlook' option above (top right corner) to off. This may not work and uninstalling the Outlook (new) app doesn't do anything either as it's reinstalled immediately without any user interaction. This has become an annoying problem for some people as it automatically switches you over no matter what you do. There is currently no fix for this stupid problem.

Microsoft OneDrive Cloud Backup Notification

If you receive a notification from Microsoft OneDrive to back up your data on your computer, please know that if you accept this, your data will be moved off your computer and into Microsoft OneDrive online cloud storage. Backing up your data is something you want to do, but this is causing problems for many people, not knowing what they're accepting and what it's doing.

If you have a large amount of data on your computer, with internet upload speeds being very slow, data can take forever to upload to OneDrive which will slow your internet speed until complete. I suggest turning OneDrive off completely, if you have no need for it, so your data stays on your computer. If you have an external Hard Disk Drive with Windows File History auto backup turned on, you have a backup in place already. If you have any problems with OneDrive and want it turned off properly, please let me know.

Microsoft Account Requirement Coming Soon

Microsoft is soon making a Microsoft account and internet connection mandatory during Windows 11 setup and has removed the workaround for bypassing this requirement. Users will be required to sign in with a Microsoft account during the initial installation and setup of Windows 11, regardless of the edition (Home or Pro). Microsoft states that this change is intended to enhance security and improve the user experience of Windows 11. No timeframe has been mentioned but will most likely come with the 25H2 feature update coming later this year.

Microsoft Skype to be Retired in May

Microsoft will retire Skype on the 5th of May 2025. You will need to move to Microsoft Teams or another similar product for a similar experience after this date.

New Norton 360 Version 24 Released

Norton has released version 24 of their Norton 360 security software suite which is a free upgrade to your current version. It includes an updated unified user interface with a more streamlined look and new Norton Genie scam protection for emails and text messages on all your devices.

Nvidia GeForce RTX 50 Series Graphics Cards Released

Nvidia have released their next generation of graphics cards for PC gaming with the GeForce RTX 50 series. Models include the high-end GeForce RTX 5090 and RTX 5080, the mid-range GeForce RTX 5070 Ti and RTX 5070 and the entry level GeForce RTX 5060 Ti and RTX 5060. These cards are very expensive but if you're still gaming on a GeForce RTX 30 series card or below, it may be time for an upgrade.

AMD Radeon RX 9000 Series Graphics Cards Released

AMD have also released their next generation of graphics cards for PC gaming with the Radeon RX 9000 series. Only 2 models have been released, the Radeon RX 9070 and Radeon RX 9070XT. A new naming scheme is being used for the new cards to better align with Nvidia's offerings to make it easier for consumers to compare.

Replacement Laptop Batteries

If you need a new replacement battery for your laptop, please know that no computer store sells them due to the thousands of laptop models on the planet. Either contact your laptop manufacturer directly for a genuine replacement (if available) or purchase one through a third-party online retailer that manufactures replacement laptop batteries as their sole business. I've used **betterbatt.com.au** and **laptopbatterydirect.com.au** many times.

Mechanical Hard Disk Drive Upgrade

If your computer has a slow clunky mechanical hard disk drive installed as your Windows boot drive, then replacing it with a faster solid-state drive is all but essential today. This will increase the speed of your computer tremendously for all tasks. A hard disk drive is way too slow for even the most basics tasks today. Software and games are designed to utilise the speed benefits a solid-state drive offers. Hard disk drives are great for data storage only.

Refurbished Computers for Sale

I constantly have older refurbished desktop and laptop computers for sale if you want a better one than you currently own, but don't want to spend big bucks on a brand-new one. Refurbished computers have been partly rebuilt with brand new components and all software reloaded from scratch. Prices vary depending on the age of the technology and the new hardware installed. Let me know if you're interested.

Restart Your Computer/Device First

Please restart (or turn off) your computer/device first before contacting anyone about any problem you have. It's the first thing you should always do to troubleshoot any basic problem. Make sure to leave any computer/device turned off for at least 3 minutes before turning it back on. The same also applies to internet or email connection problems. If restarting or turning off your modem router doesn't work, contact your internet service provider first, as it's common for internet and email servers to be down for various technical reasons.

Computer Service & Maintenance

I generally recommended that you have your computer serviced, checked, and updated every 3 to 6 months to keep it running well. Computer software and hardware drivers are updated regularly to improve performance, fix problems, and/or add new features for your computer to utilise.

Also, as a constant reminder to everyone, make sure to back up your data regularly onto an external hard disk drive, USB thumb drive or to the cloud. Hardware failure is very common, so keep your data stored on at least 2 devices minimum. Refer to my website for handy hints, FAQ's, downloads, and other information.

Business Hours & Contact Information

My contact details are located above, with business hours being between **9am-5:30pm Monday-Friday** and **9:30am-3:30pm Saturday**. My mobile will usually be turned off outside of these hours, but please leave a message and I'll get back to you asap. If you prefer to email, please do so and I'll reply to you asap. If you require anything, please don't hesitate to contact me. I hope that you find this information useful.